

come at any moment, and so he distributed his money and goods to the poor, let free all his slaves, and left directions to provide for those who were in any way dependent upon him. And thus prepared for death he approached the Emperor and pleaded for the innocent Christians, demanding as the least that could be granted to them liberty to worship as they pleased since, said he, this liberty could hurt no one. The Emperor was furious at his demand and ordered his immediate arrest, and after many months of imprisonment and torture he was beheaded on the 23rd day of April A. D. 303, and twenty years afterwards a magnificent church was built in his honor and called after his name by the Emperor Constantine the Great. After this, he was selected as the Patron Saint of soldiers and military men, and thus stands for ever before the young manhood and Christendom as one of its great champions, a true soldier of Christ, whose order and decoration was that of the Cross and not the Crown. St. George, in the course of time, became the Patron Saint of England, supplanting King Edward the Confessor in that capacity. And since St. George was a foreign saint and St. Edward a truly national one, Saxon by birth, and Norman by breeding, it must have required a strong impulse to dislodge such a saint from the position which he held in the national regard, and set up another in his stead. And such an impulse was formed in the Crusades, which stirred to the very depths the pious enthusiasm of the martial spirit of England. When the Norman nobles under Robert, Duke of Normandy, son of William the Conqueror, joined the Crusades, they became acquainted with legends and myths connected with the name of St. George, a martyr, who is mentioned in all the martyrologies both of east and west. It is said that when the Crusaders were hard pressed by the Saracens, they saw, or imagined they saw, the Martyr St. George coming to their assistance, and a subsequent appearance to Richard I, in a dream during his campaign in Palestine, under the Norman and Plantagenet Princes, to put themselves under the patronage of St. George, but he was not finally appointed as the Patron Saint of England, till the time of Edward III., who in the year 1348 founded the Royal Chapel at Windsor, and dedicated it to the memory of St. George. But his crowning triumph was reserved for the time of King Henry V. On the field of Agincourt St. George was supposed to have appeared once more, and supported the

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