



MAURITIUS CATHEDRAL AFTER THE HURRICANE.

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devotion for feminine society, which, in point of fact, he dearly loved, he solemnly married himself to the Virgin Mary! Pausing before an image of the Virgin, in Oxford, he made the vow of celibacy, and, taking two rings, placed one on his own finger and one on that of the unsympathizing image, and went forth to be happy for life, not only as the sworn knight, but as the devoted husband of the mother of our Lord.

Things of this kind were regarded as proofs of the highest sanctity, and the reputation of this young man, in this respect, was so great that he was known, in his own day (as history also has honored him), by the title of St. Edmund. Educated at Paris (for the young men of England deemed it more scholarly to be trained there, while young Frenchmen thought it their highest accomplishment to be alumni of Oxford), he returned to the university of his own country and became a lecturer there. Afterwards he was appointed Treasurer of Salisbury Cathedral. His own name was Rich, Dr. Edmund Rich, and, strange to say, it was Bishop Poor, of Salisbury, that gave him this fine appointment; and it was here that his friends joyfully announced to him, in 1233, that he had been elected Archbishop of Canterbury. At first he modestly declined this high honor, but yielding to the entreaties of his friends he at length accepted it, and was consecrated at Canterbury, in the midst of much pomp and splendor, on the 2nd of April, 1234. Thus the see had been vacant for nearly three years.

For six years Dr. Edmund Rich, or Edmund

of Abingdon, or St. Edmund (by which various titles he is equally known), was Archbishop of Canterbury, and during that time there was the usual wearisome struggle between the papal party abroad and the patriotic or English party at home. St. Edmund favored the latter, but his austere piety increasing in severity as he grew older rendered him indisposed to carry on religious war. His constant refusal of food (which frequently consisted of bread and water only) rendered him, at length, almost incapable of receiving it, and his refusal to take proper rest unfitted him for public duties. This latter he carried to an insane extent, banishing all comfort from his bed, so that he lay upon hard boards or the cold earth itself, and finally re-

fusing to lie down at all. He had a hard wooden chair made which permitted him to recline slightly, and in this uncomfortable way he took what sleep a poor jaded nature forced upon him.

Yet he was true to the English party, and solemnly warned the unpatriotic king, Henry III., a man of no very great account in the annals of his own country, that if he persisted in giving preferments to foreigners and encouraging them to the exclusion of his own people, he would pass upon him the sentence of excommunication. Henry, terrified at such a prospect, governed himself accordingly, to the great benefit of his kingdom. The archbishop struggled hard to reform the lives of his clergy, which, according to his "constitutions," as they have come down to us, were much in need of reformation. Irregularities of the worst kind were rampant amongst them, and to a soul disciplined by such austerity as that of the archbishop this was most harassing.

The king, unknown to the archbishop, applied to the pope for a legate who should reside in England and act as the king's adviser. This was a severe blow to St. Edmund, and to all those who were true Englishmen. The legate arrived. His name was Otho, and though only in deacon's orders both of the English archbishops had to submit to the humiliation of doing homage to him. Otho soon found, however, that the bulk of the English people were not as base-minded as their king, and, personally timid, he lived in constant dread of his life. In much fear, guarded by a band of for-