

SAINT ALBAN, THE ENGLISH PROTO-MARTYR.

BY THE REV. S. J. STONE IN PARISH MAGAZINE.

THE story of the Saint, as we have it from Bede and other sources, is shortly this: He was the wealthy and cultured heir of a Roman house, and lived at Verulam, in Hertfordshire, about the year 280 A. D. A hunted Christian priest sought refuge in his house. His intercourse with this fugitive led to his conversion and baptism. The author of "Martyrs and Saints of the first Twelve Centuries" (S.P.C.K.)—says admirably that the priest "attracted him by no seductive promises: it was the old trumpet call to believe and follow, to sacrifice and suffer, which penetrates so much deeper, and leads so much higher." This has suggested the refrain of this hymn. Alban, after his baptism, saved the life of this priest at the sacrifice of his own. He was brought before the Roman Judge, and, after having been tortured, he was beheaded on June 22nd, A. D. 283.

"Thus was Alban tried,
England's first martyr, whom no threats could shake,
Self-offered victim; for his friend he died,
And for the Faith."
WORDSWORTH.

England, by thine own Saint Alban
Put thy Christian heart to school;
Learn to sacrifice and suffer
By thy Proto-Martyr's rule.
Life in Christ is stern and selfless,
Gentle though it be and bright;
Life in Christ is dying with Him,
Though in sweet and living light.

Refrain.

England, by thine own Saint Alban
Put thy Christian heart to school:
Learn to sacrifice and suffer
By thy Proto-Martyr's rule.
Meteor-like athwart the darkness
Flashes still the Signal Cross:
Still like trumpet on the night-wind
Sounds the summons unto loss:
Yet how blessed is the losing,
And how stately is the war:
And how beautiful the ending
In the bliss for evermore!
England, by thine own, &c.

See! thy hero, prudence scorning,
All for noble pity dares:
Finds the priest he saved his prophet,
Meets "an angel unawares":
Sits as at the feet of Jesus,
Soon is to His Laver led;
Then himself as on an altar
Offers in his teacher's stead.
England, by thine own, &c.

"I am Christ's: I therefore suffer.
I am Christ's: I therefore die.
I am Christ's: so am I happy,
And my life is His on high;"
Thus he faced the Roman's torture;
Youth, wealth, honor sacrificed,
Losing thankfully the whole world
That he might be found in Christ.
England, by thine own, &c.

Primal Hero-Saint and Soldier!
Still thy story speeds us on;

Though, since thou didst bravely witness,
Twice eight hundred years have gone.
Lord, Who gavest him to England,
Grace like his, to England give—
Grace to bear Thy cross with gladness,
Grace to die that we may live.
England, by thine own Saint Alban,
Put thy Christian heart to school:
Learn to sacrifice and suffer
By thy Proto-Martyr's rule.

AMEN.

THERE are four gigantic diamond mines in South Africa—the biggest "holes" on the earth's surface—named Kimberley, De Beers, Du Toit's Pan, and Bultfontein. One of these districts is described by a missionary as a vast place of one-story houses, chiefly of red earth color, or merely of corrugated iron, painted and ornamented with wood-carving; huge market-place, crowded with waggons drawn by sixteen, eighteen or twenty oxen, and the English Church in the centre, an imposing edifice of red brick. He describes a service in a Kaffir "compound," which is an enclosure where some 500 or 600 Kafir men are living under certain restrictions during the time they work in the mine. It contains a shop, where the necessities of life may be had, at which the men buy all they want. They are not allowed outside the compound during the time of employment. It has an entrance passage leading down into the open mine. The men have to pass through a searching-house, stripped, to prevent stealing or illicit diamond-buying. The missionary began by taking a large handbell and going round the various quarters (all of which open into a courtyard). He passed through groups of most extraordinary-looking beings, some wrapped in gaudy blankets, others fairly clothed, and many unclothed—sleeping, cooking, Kafir-beer making, gambling, letter-writing, yarnning, mending or reading; one was having his leg bled, another playing a native violin. It ended in some sixty (all clothed in blankets) crowding on their haunches to listen and worship. It was a wonderful service, in two languages, Sesuto and Seshuana, that is, the languages of Bechuanaland and Bechuanaland. Each short sentence of the sermon was translated into the two languages, the first interpreter clothed in a flannel shirt and trousers, the second in a blanket. After the service they crowded round to buy books.

THE late J. H. Shoenberger, who was in New York a member of St. Thomas' Parish, has left money to the amount of \$1,500,000 to various charitable and religious purposes, amongst them \$30,000 to the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society. When shall we have bequests for our Canadian Society?

THE very day the American Baptist Missionary Union accepted the Livingstone Inland Mission, 200,000 gallons of rum were taken from Boston in a single ship for the Congo region.