

## THE BLACK LETTER SAINTS.

It is frequently asked why it is, that while protesting against Romish error and superstition, we retain in our Calendar, the names of those whom Rome has canonized and given to them the distinctive title of saints. And to this question we have no satisfactory reply; although various reasons have been given for the adoption of them. In all probability they marked the observance of some events in political or civil life which it was convenient to notice; and they were commonly distinguished as Black Letter Days, but, without any regard to their being made special holy days by the Church. Of these we have four noted in the coming month of June: the first is Nicodeme, a Roman priest and martyr, who is said to have been converted by Saint Peter; and having been discovered as a disciple of Christ, by the honourable burial he gave Felicula a Christian martyr, was beaten to death with leaden plummets by the sentence of Domitian the heathen Emperor.

The next in order, is Boniface, Bishop of Metz, a Saxon priest born in England. His proper name was Wirsiel; but, being sent by Pope Gregory the second, to the north of Europe, from the success of his mission he obtained the name of "the apostle of Germany." He is represented to have been a great friend and fellow-worker of the Venerable Bede. He is said to have obtained a martyr's crown in Frisia in the year 755.

We could almost wish that some greater honour had been put upon the 17th day of this month; as dedicated to the memory of our first Christian martyr St. Alban; who, if not distinguished by the fabulous achievement of St. George on the battle field of the Crusades, far excelled him in the self-devotion of pure life and Christian

love. He owed his spiritual life to a Welsh priest, and he bravely laid down his own natural life to save the persecuted man who had converted him to the faith of the Gospel. The story of his death may be acceptable to our young parishioners, as showing the power of a practical faith. Amphialus having fled from persecution into England, was hospitably received and entertained by Alban at Verulum in Hertfordshire, now called from him St. Albans; in which there still remains the noble church dedicated by the same name. There, when by reason of the strict search made for his guest, he could entertain him in safety no longer, he dressed him in his own clothes and by that means gained him an opportunity of escaping. But this being soon discovered, the furious pagans summoned him to do sacrifice to their gods; and on refusing, they first miserably tormented him and then put him to death. The only traditional history we have of King Edward is that he was barbarously murdered by his mother-in-law; for what cause we are not told; and it is very difficult to assign a reason for glorifying him in the Calendar of the Church.

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## THE DAYS AND SEASONS OF THE CHURCH.

The branch of the Christian Church now found existing in England, we believe was planted there by one or more of the Apostles. When Augustine came over from Rome in the year 590, he found there the three orders of clergy, and a faithful people attending their ministrations. Roman power overawed these, and England's Apostolic Church was subjected to foreign power for a thousand years, when the yoke was broken. At the Reforma-