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DOMINICAN MARTYRS OF GREAT BRITAIN

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DOMINICAN MARTYRS OF
GREAT BRITAIN

DOMINICAN MARTYRS OF GREAT BRITAIN

BY

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Nihil obstat

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FOREWORD

THE Contents-page by itself is almost sufficient introduction to this little book. The author's aim has been simply to give an account, short but as far as possible complete, of three Dominicans who laid down their lives for the Faith in Great Britain. The name of one of these is already on the list of those English Martyrs who have been declared Venerable: will it be too much to hope that the following pages may lead towards the Beatification of all three? In every country and in every age the white habit of Saint Dominic has been decked with the blood of Martyrs; and it is but natural for us to wish that due honour may be paid to those of our own nation, who for God's sake gave up their bodies to sufferings and to death itself.

R. P. D.

*Feast of the Compassion
of our Blessed Lady 1911.*

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In obedience to the Decrees of Urban VIII., we declare that when giving the title of Blessed or Venerable, Martyr or Confessor, to any persons mentioned in these pages, or when speaking of miraculous and extraordinary deeds and events, we do so only in accordance with the usage of ordinary language, without meaning in any way to anticipate the judgment of the Church.

DOMINICAN MARTYRS OF GREAT BRITAIN

FATHER JOHN BLACK

HOLYROOD

9th March 1565-66

FR. JOHN BLACK first comes to our notice in 1544, as a member, already of some standing, of the Dominican community at Aberdeen. For in that year, on 24th August, counter actions for "strubance"¹ took place between him and one Marjory Gray.² In 1547 the Friars Preachers of Aberdeen were engaged in a troublesome lawsuit, and on 30th April and 23rd May Black was one of the two

¹ *i.e.* fraudulence (?)

² *Aberdeen Friars: Red, Black, White, Grey.* Preliminary Calendar of Illustrative Documents, compiled by P. J. Anderson (Aberdeen University Studies), Aberdeen, 1909, p. 85.

Friars who appeared on behalf of the Convent. The verdict unhappily seems to have been finally given against the Friars.¹ Fr. Black became Procurator of the Community before very long, for in that capacity he went to law in January 1547-48 "against David Low and Janet Lesly his wife for an annual of 36s. from deceased Robert Endeauch's land without Futeis port;"² and in the March of the following year "against John Litster for an annual of 10s. from deceased Andrew Stevinson's land on the west of the Gallowgait now pertaining to Elspet Annand."³ Finally, on 17th January 1549-50, he was again in court as "collectour and procutour" because Elspet Annand herself had neglected to pay the Friars the annual rent (5 lib. Scots) of some other land; and he won his case.⁴ That he was Procurator may be also seen from an account,⁵

¹ The whole account of this interesting lawsuit may be read in the *Extracts from the Council Register of the Burgh of Aberdeen, 1398-1570*, Aberdeen; Spalding Club, 1844, p. 225 *et seq.*

² *Aberdeen Friars*, p. 87.

³ *Ibid.* p. 88.

⁴ *Extracts from the Council Register, &c.*, p. 265.

⁵ *Registrum Magni Sigilli Regum Scotorum, 1546-1580*, 10th Feb. 1574-75, No. 2360.

posthumous as regards Black, of a royal concession to Alexander Hay, in which the Friar is referred to as having been once the owner of some land.

Fr. Black may have been Procurator till as late as 1556;¹ and it was perhaps during these years that he wrote some of his works,² for David Chalmers [Camerarius] says that at Aberdeen he gave many proofs of his piety and learning (*Aberdoniae plurima pietatis et doctrinae argumenta exhibuisset*).³ Henceforth, however, Edinburgh seems to have become his headquarters. On 27th September 1558 William Ogilvy, Chamberlain of Murray (possibly James Stuart, Earl of Murray, afterwards Regent), promised in presence of the Lords of Council at Edinburgh "to content and pay to Friar John Black, preacher, . . . the sum of £20, usual money of this realm, within twenty days."⁴ But the time of peace was fast draw-

¹ *Aberdeen Friars*, p. 93.

² His works were: (1) *De reali praesentia corporis Christi in sacramento altaris*, lib. i.; (2) *Acta colloquii cum Willoxio symmista*, lib. i.; (3) *Conciones piae*, lib. i.; (4) *Monitorium ad apostatas*, lib. i.; cf. Tanner, *Bibl. Brit.*, p. 104.

³ *De Scotorum Fortitudine*, Parisiis, 1631, p. 202.

⁴ *The Exchequer Rolls of Scotland*, xix. (1557-67), App. *Liber Responsionum*, p. 428.

ing to a close, and the great storm of the Reformation soon burst upon the land. From the middle of 1559 to the middle of 1560 civil war raged in Scotland. The violent Reformers, having already burnt and pillaged many monasteries and religious houses in the provinces, succeeded in the beginning of July 1559 in destroying or desecrating all the churches, including that of the Black Friars, in the capital itself. The tide of fortune, however, soon turned in favour of the Queen Regent and the Catholics. In August Mary of Lorraine, daughter of Claude Duke of Guise and mother of Mary Queen of Scots, came from Dunbar, and, having re-entered Edinburgh, took possession of Holyrood House. Fr. Black no doubt attended her, unless indeed he had secretly remained in the city; for, as will be seen, he was her confessor. The following account, belonging to the period that now ensued, shows us something of the Friar's work, and of his reputation for learning: "Dureing this tyme, the Queene Regent maintained still the Masse in the Palace of Hallyrudhouse, wher the Papists resorted to her, and amongst the rest the Bishopp of S.

Andrewes;¹ who upon a day in this moneth of August, past to the pulpitt in the Abbay,² shewing his commeing; and after he had vomited a little of his superstition, he declared that he had not bein weill exercised in that profession;³ therefore desyred the auditors to hold him excused. In the meantyme, he shewed unto them that there was a lerned man, meaning Fryer Blake, who wes to come immediately after him into the pulpit, who would declare unto them the trueth; and therefore desyred them to lett him cease."⁴

It was now that the English came to assist the Reformers; and on 7th May 1560, these allied forces attacked the stronghold of Leith, which was defended by the Scotch Catholics and the French. The following account is given by John Knox himself:—"The Queen Regent sat at the time of the assault—which was both terrible and long—upon the forewall of the castle of Edinburgh, and when she perceived the overthrow of us, and that the ensigns

¹ *i.e.* Archbishop John Hamilton, successor of the celebrated Cardinal Beaton, who had been murdered on 29th May 1546.

² *i.e.* Holyrood.

³ *i.e.* of preaching.

⁴ *The Miscellany* of the Wodrow Society, 1844, p. 67.

of the French were again displayed upon the walls, she gave a gaff of laughter, and said, 'Now will I go to the Mass and praise God for that which my eyes have seen.' And so was Friar Black ready for that purpose. . . ."¹ But Mary of Lorraine had long been ailing. Her health now gave way completely, and she died on roth June. During her last illness she had an interview with John Willock, whose name will appear again in this paper. He was an apostate Friar² and a prominent Reformer. And so much notice has been taken of this interview that no one, it seems, has left any record as to who performed the last rites of the Church for the dying Queen Regent. Fr. John Black was most certainly her confessor at this time,³ and so it will not, perhaps, be very rash to conjecture that it was he who administered the last sacraments.

Thomas Wood, who transcribed MS. W.

¹ Knox, *History of the Reformation of Scotland*, ed. 1831, p. 198.

² Some historians say that Willock was an apostate Franciscan; others, following Leslie, assert that he had been a Dominican. It is a curious fact, however, that he is nowhere to be found mentioned as a member of either Order.

³ Knox, *loc. cit.*, and *Calendar of State Papers, Foreign*, 1562, No. 1172.

of Knox's *History*, has inserted a poem playing upon the Friar's name "because he was borne in the *Blak* Freirs in Edinburgh, and was a man of *Blak* personage, called *Blak* to his name, and one of the Ordour of *Blak* Friers."¹ But a more complete version of this doggerel describing Mary Queen of Scots' "Black Chaplane," which bears the date 1636, is given by Calderwood. "This Frier Black," the few lines of introduction begin, "was Black in the threefold consideration: first in respect of his Order, for he was a Black Frier by profession; secondly in respect of his surname; thirdly in respect of his Black works. Whereupon these black verses following wer made as a black trumpet to blaze forth all his blackness:—

'A certain Black Friar, weill surnamed Black,
And not nicknam'd; for black were all his workes,
In a black houre borne, in all black deedes frack;
And of his black craft one of the blackest Clerkes;
etc.'"²

The remaining lines are hardly fit to print.

¹ Cf. *Works of John Knox*, coll. and ed. by David Laing, 1848, Wodrow Society, vol. ii. App. p. 592, No. iv.; "Notices of John Black, a Dominican Friar"; and Kirkton, *History of the Church*, Edinburgh, 1817 (4th), p. 10, n. ² *Ibid.*

This may be the best place to explain that, like other religious men of that stormy and in Scotland almost barbarous time, Black was the object of the foulest calumnies. Fortunately, however, there is abundant proof of the integrity of the Friar's character. Among his fellow-Catholics he enjoyed the highest reputation, and at the time of his death was styled by a Protestant Bishop *Papistarum antesignanus*,¹ that is, held in great estimation among the Papists. And this is the more remarkable in that the Catholics of that time were the comparatively few who, worthy of their name, had not been overcome in the general upheaval of the Scottish Reformation, and had clung bravely to the ancient Faith. Moreover, all Catholic historians who mention his name assert, or at least imply, that Black was a man of exemplary life. Dempster (1627), though he must be quoted with caution, describes the Friar as a famous soldier of Christ and an invincible warrior or athlete of the Catholic religion (*praeclarus Christi miles, ac invictus*

¹ *Zurich Letters*, Parker Society, 1842, p. 99.

religionis Catholicae pancratiasta), and the like.¹ George Con (1628) simply says that he belonged to the family of the godlike Dominic (*ex D. Dominici familia*),² as though Black's having remained a Dominican in those trying times was quite sufficient recommendation. Chalmers (1631) actually calls him Blessed John Black.³ Again, Leslie, the not altogether happily famous Bishop of Ross, who wrote his history only three or four years after the Friar's death,⁴ says that he was a most strenuous champion of the orthodox

¹ *Hist. ecclesiast. Gent. Scot.* Bononiae, lib. ii. n. 146, p. 85.

² *De duplici statu religionis apud Scotos*, Romae, lib. ii. p. 133.

³ *De Scot. Fort.*, p. 202.

⁴ Leslie's *History of Scotland* from 1436 to 1562 was written between 1568 and 1570, in part in the Scottish language. It remained unpublished till 1830, when it was printed by the Bannatyne Club. The Latin edition of the history entitled *De Origine, Moribus, et Rebus Gestis Scotorum*, extending from the earliest times down to 1562, was published in Rome in 1578. A Scottish translation of this edition was made by Fr. James Dalrymple, O.S.B., in 1596, which in 1889-90 found an able editor in Fr. E. G. Cody, O.S.B. Leslie left in manuscript a meagre narrative of events from 1562 to 1571, an English translation of which is published in Forbes-Leith's *Narrative of Scottish Catholics* (Edinburgh, 1885), but it contains no information concerning Friar Black.

Faith and also a man of the deepest learning.¹ Moreover, the Jesuits in their *Report upon the state of Scotland during the reign of Queen Mary*, written not later than 1594, state that Sir John Black, as they call him, and certain other "Catholic preachers, came forward, who not only refuted the errors of the heretics with great spirit from the pulpit, but also kept the people to their duty when they were dropping away; and this they did by the publication of many works in the Scottish language." A little further on, the account continues: "At this time there was in Scotland a considerable number of scholars, well versed not only in scholastic theology but in the works of the Fathers, and indeed in every department of antiquity. These men held frequent public disputations with the heretical ministers, especially in the celebrated University of Aberdeen, and in Edinburgh, which is the abode of royalty. By this means many persons were kept safe in the Catholic faith; for, even in the opinion of persons who were only moderately versed in such

¹ *De Origine, Moribus, et Rebus Gestis Scotorum*, Romae, 1578, p. 577.

matters, the heretics were always defeated in discussions of this nature. It was impossible that a better mode of proceeding could be followed at a time when everything was done by violence and arms."¹ This is the testimony of the older Catholic historians; and they have been followed not only by Catholics but, either directly or indirectly, by all recent writers. Moreover, the charges against the Friar can be refuted on their own evidence; and in the opinion not only of the present writer, but of eminent critics and historians, they are plain calumnies unworthy of consideration. Friar Black, says Bellesheim, and his words may be taken as summing up the case, was "an exemplary priest and a staunch upholder of the ancient Faith."²

¹ *Report upon the state of Scotland during the reign of Queen Mary* (sent to Pope Clement VIII.), by the Jesuit Priests of Scotland; translated from an early Latin copy in the Barberini MS. xxxiii. 210 (1197), quoted in *Memoirs of Mary Queen of Scots* (by Claude Nau), edited by Jos. Stevenson, S.J., Edinburgh, 1883, App. I.

² *History of the Catholic Church in Scotland*, trans. Hunter-Blair, Edinburgh, 1887, vol. iii. p. 97. If the reader would have a full account of this nauseous subject, he will find it dealt with in an article by the present writer in the *American Catholic Quarterly*, July 1910.

Sometime during Cecil's visit to Edinburgh in 1560—that is, between 16th June and 20th July—Fr. John Black courageously disputed with the Protestants in Holyrood Abbey. What the result was is not recorded. Randolph, Queen Elizabeth's ambassador in Scotland, is the only authority I have been able to find who makes mention of this affair at all. He does so in a despatch, written three years afterwards, but unfortunately does nothing more than remind his correspondent of the bare fact.¹ In the August of the following year, 1561, just before the arrival of Mary Queen of Scots in the kingdom, Black's zeal led him into another public disputation at Edinburgh, this time with the apostate John Willock, of whom mention has already been made. It was about the Holy Eucharist and the Sacrifice of the Mass, and the questions proposed were three in number: "Quhether the naturall body of Christ was really in the sacrament of the altar, be vertue of the wordis spokin be the priest or no? Quhether in the

¹ *Calendar of State Papers relating to Scotland and Mary Queen of Scots*, ed. Bain, vol. ii., 1563-69, No. 9, and *passim* for the dates of Cecil's letters from Edinburgh; also *Diurnal of Occurrents*, Maitland Club, 1833, p. 59.

sacrament efter the wordis of consecration, war any uther substance than the substance of the body and bluid of Christ? Quhether in the Messe war a sacrifice propitiatorie for the sinnes of the quicke and the deid?" The immediate results of this conference, which lasted two days, were not very satisfactory. Black, described as a learned man and a true defender of the Catholic doctrine, was unable to persuade Willock to abandon his heretical opinions. In the words of Leslie, who has given us this account, the Friar "culd not bring Willox from defendeng his haeresie, nor culd turne him from his obstinacie." So the controversy, which was very keen and animated, ended where it had begun, and the common people "mekle mair doubted" and did not know which of the two disputants to side with.¹ From Chalmers² one would gather that Black was brought to Edinburgh as a prisoner (*raptus Edinburgum*), and that he overcame Willock in the dispute that followed. The latter statement sounds, at first, like the expres-

¹ Leslie, *History of Scotland*, ed. Cody, O.S.B., 1889-90, part iii. p. 455.

² *De Scot. Fort.*, p. 202.

sion of an over-zealous admirer; for this historian wrote some seventy years after the event, whereas Leslie, who states that in the disputation neither party secured the victory, was Black's contemporary. And yet to pass such a judgment would, I think, be hardly just; for the words of Chalmers are corroborated by those of other writers. The Jesuits in their *Report*, which was quoted above at some length, expressly declare that, even in the opinion of those only moderately versed in such matters (though very likely not in that of Leslie's "ruid people" or common people), the heretics were always defeated in discussions of this nature. Moreover, George Con,¹ in his account of this particular disputation, speaks of Willock as *egregie confusus*, put to utter confusion. And after all, the fact of Leslie's stating that neither party secured the victory is no real contradiction of this. For, as Con goes on to say, although Black quite outwitted Willock, the heretic refused to give in. And the explanation of this unsatisfactory state of things would seem to lie in the same

¹ *De duplici statu religionis apud Scotos*, Romae, 1628, lib. ii. p. 133.

historian's last observation: Truly, he says, of what use was it to have overcome by argument men who had undertaken to carry all things through by sheer force of arms?¹ It was a case of might against right. The apostate Friar had the arms of the Reformers to rely upon; and it was quite impossible for Fr. John Black, at least on this occasion, to do anything more for the Catholic cause.

In the spring of the year 1562, Fr. Black's enemies created an unpleasant disturbance in Edinburgh;² and in the following November we find the Friar staying in the north of England. This appears from the following letter, which, being of some interest, I shall give in full as printed in the State Papers. It is from the Earl of Rutland and Sir Henry Percy to Cecil:—

"Percy being in familiar talk with him [Rutland], he said that he heard it reported that Sir James Crofts, Mr. Pawlet, and Mr. Stocks should go to

¹ *Verum quid profuit ratione vicisse eos qui omnia aperta armorum vi peragenda susceperant?*

² *Extracts from the Records of the Burgh of Edinburgh, 1557-1571*, Scottish Burghs Record Society, Edinburgh, 1875, iii. p. 131.

serve at Newhaven.¹ Sir Henry said that if what he heard lately was true, one of them was very unmeet to serve. He chanced to be at a gentleman's house where there was a priest, whose name he asked, who answered John Noyre; by which feigned French word and other marking he understood plainly what he was; for indeed he was Friar Black, confessor to the Scottish Queen Dowager. Talking of the journey of Leith,² Black told him that the Scottish Queen had from time to time true and perfect intelligence of all the proceedings and devices in the English camp, by one chief of the council there, named Sir James Crofts, who gave intelligence by the Laird of Blanern,—York, 2nd December 1562. (*Signed.*) H. Rutland, Henry Percy.”³

It may be interesting to note in passing that this Sir Henry Percy's father, Sir Thomas Percy, was executed in 1537 for his share in the Pilgrimage of Grace; that his mother, Lady Percy, whose name will appear again below, was a very staunch Catholic; that his elder brother, Blessed Thomas Percy, Earl of Northumberland, was martyred for the Faith

¹ *i.e.* Havre-de-Grace, which had fallen into the hands of the English some two months previously.

² *i.e.* the siege in the spring of 1560.

³ *Cal. State Papers, Foreign, 1562, No. 1170.*

in 1572; and yet that *he*, as regards religion, was an occasionalist.

Fr. Black must have returned to Scotland shortly after the letter just quoted was written; for he is supposed to have been stoned to death by a Protestant mob in Edinburgh on 7th January 1562-63. The statement to that effect, which has been generally accepted and believed, comes from Dempster and Chalmers.¹ But that these historians were, beyond any possible doubt,

¹ Dempster, *Hist. Ecclesiast. Gentis Scot.* (1627), lib. ii. n. 146, p. 85; who has been followed by:—

Quetif and Echard, *Scriptores Ord. Praed.*, ed. 1721, vol. ii. p. 182.

Tanner, *Bibl. Brit.*, p. 104.

Hurter, S.J., *Nomenclator Literatus Theologiae Catholicae*, ed. 3a, 1906, Tom. ii. Num. 671.

Chalmers, *De Scot. Fort.* (1631), p. 202 (who gives an alternate date for the Friar's death, viz. 15th December 1562); who has been followed by:—

Collections for the Shire of Aberdean and Banff (Spalding Club, 1843), vol. i. p. 202; and, together with Dempster, by:—

James Grant, *Old and New Edinburgh* (1880-82), vol. ii. p. 286.

A writer in the *Rosary Magazine*, January 1886.

Mr. T. F. Henderson, in the *Dictionary of National Biography* (new edition), “Black.”

Mr. P. J. Anderson, in his *Aberdeen Friars* (1909), p. 99. The last-named writer has acknowledged his oversight, and kindly corrected a mistake in my chronology.

misinformed, is obvious, seeing that other records of the Friar's life after this, and the real date of his death three years later, have been unerringly chronicled by contemporary writers. To show, however, for certain whence their mistake arose is no easy task. On the authority of Chalmers, it has been supposed that this violent assault upon Fr. Black was connected with his disputation with Willock. Leslie, it is true, who gives by far the most complete account of that disputation, has left no record of any attack having been made upon the Friar after its close; and Balfour, in his *Annals of Scotland*¹ (written under Charles II.), is likewise silent on that point. But this is easily explained by the fact that there was an interval of almost a year and a half between the conference and the assault. Besides, neither of these historians was writing a biography of Friar Black; indeed, the account of the disputation is the only piece of information that they give concerning him, and they do not record his

¹ *Annals of Scotland*, Edinburgh, 1824, vol. i. p. 321, *ad ann.* 1561.

death at all. And, of course, Leslie's history only goes down to the year 1562. Therefore, in my opinion, the most obvious conclusion to be arrived at is that, either as a later result of the disputation—possibly on Black's publication of his *Acta colloquii cum Willoxio symmista*—or for some other similar reason, the Friar was at this date set upon by his enemies, the Protestant Reformers, and nearly killed. He would not be the first man to have been stoned and taken for dead.

A few months later, 19th May 1563, Archbishop Hamilton and many other priests were tried at Edinburgh, on the charge of hearing confessions and celebrating Mass. The performance of these actions was contrary to the law, and many of the accused, therefore, were thrown into prison. The Queen, it is true, obtained their liberation after a few months; but so hostile to Catholicism were the feelings of the party then in power that even this gentle interference gave the greatest offence to the Protestants. Randolph, writing to Cecil, says:—

“ Many other priests summoned to a day to underly the law; seeing the good treatment of their marrows,

take the nearest way over the water of Tweed, minding I am sure, to do no less mischief in England than they have done in Scotland. I am sorry so many Scots are received in our country: it will be the common refuge of papist offenders that cannot live here and are unworthy to live anywhere. One in special of whom your honour has heard, Friar Black, . . . is now with the Lady Percy, the old lady I mean, [who was then living at her Ellingham estate in Northumberland]¹ where he said Mass at Easter and ministered to as many as came. To verify this, I being at St. Andrews, my servant espied a fellow that said he came from England, and coming to 'my speache,' like a trusty servant for such a master, told me he served Friar Blacke and had letters from him to the bishops of St. Andrews, Dunblane, Murraye, Lords Seton and Somervell, and divers others. I got such credit as to see the letters, and for a piece of money won the favour that he should return by me with the answers; as he did, and though there was little 'effecte' in one or other, I took copies of them, and delivered them to Murray 'as presentes sent unto me from the Borders.' I write this for the sure knowlege I have, by a servant of the friar's own, named, as his master is, John Blacke, at this time with him within four miles of Newcastle; and within a mile of him there is another 'as honeste as he'

¹ Philipps, *Life of Blessed Thomas Percy*, Catholic Truth Society, 1898, p. 8.

that serveth a cure named []. There is also a notable famous friar 'the greatteste lyer that ever was' (saving Friar Maltman alias Heborne, as he now calls himself); he dwells and sometimes preaches beside Hull. 'Yt muste neades be holesome doctrine that commethe owte of these mens mouthes! Savinge my charitie, I wolde theie were all hanged that gyve me occasion at thys tyme to troble your honour with so maynie wordes!' If it pleased you to warn the bishop of Durham, he would spy them out and cause them to return to their 'olde kynde a begging' rather than 'welthylie' lie lurking in corners working mischief. . . . With your leave I will shortly write to the Bishop, and warn the wardens that such gallants be looked to, and convoyed through the 'dayngers' of the Borders, if more come that way. . . . Edinburgh, (signed) Tho. Randolph."¹

It must be remembered, of course, what sort of a man Randolph was—a friend of the Reformers, quite unscrupulous, a man to whom the very name of Friar must have been odious.²

Nothing seems to have been preserved concerning Fr. Black's career in the year 1564.

¹ *Cal. State Papers relat. to Scot., &c.*, ed. Bain, vol. ii, No. 9.

² Cf. Tytler, *History of Scotland*, Edinburgh, 1873, vol. iii. pp. 205-6, 215-16.

Towards the end of 1565 Friars were appointed to preach at Holyrood—an office they had not apparently fulfilled in public for seven years. It is not surprising to find that Black, once more in his own country, “was admitted for one of the Queen’s chief preachers;” and at this time he “gave in a supplication for himself and his brethren to have a place erected for them.”¹ Another honour that our Dominican received (when, precisely, cannot be told), was his appointment by the Archbishop to the position of Second Master of St. Mary’s College, St. Andrews, a position that he retained until his death.²

The last year of Fr. Black’s life opened with an assault upon his person. On 5th January 1565–66, between eight and nine o’clock at night, in the “Cowgait” at Edinburgh, between “Nevyderis Wynd” and “Friar Wynd,” the Dominican was suddenly set upon. He was given two or three blows with a cudgel, and was stabbed with a dagger between the

¹ *Cal. S. P. relat. to Scot., &c.*, ed. Bain, vol. ii. No. 358.

² *Register of Presentations and Benefices*, vol. i. fol. 25, quoted by Laing.

shoulders “to the effusioune of his blude.” His chief assailants (most probably there were others as well) were four in number, namely, Andrew Armstrong; James Young, a cutler; William Johnston, a bow-maker, who also secured Black’s cloak; and Thomas Brown, a shoe-maker, all burgesses of Edinburgh; and their object was undoubtedly to kill him. Indeed, the wound in his back very nearly cost the poor Friar his life, and Johnston’s face was bespattered with his blood. Armstrong had been among those Reformers who had forcibly objected to the celebration of Mass at Holyrood towards the close of the summer of 1563;¹ and in this attack upon the Friar he was probably the leader, and the other three men his hired ruffians. They were, of course, arrested and imprisoned.²

Scarcely had the Friar recovered from this shameful assault, before he was again marked out, and this time slain. The tragic death

¹ Calderwood, *History of the Kirk of Scotland*, ed. 1842, vol. i. p. 230.

² Pitcairn, *Criminal Trials*, Edinburgh, 1833, vol. i. pp. 475*, 476*; and *Cal. State Papers relat. to Scot., &c.*, ed. Bain, vol. ii. Nos. 358, 359.

of the famous David Riccio, Queen Mary's secretary, on the night of the 9th March 1565-66, was followed by a tumult at Holyrood during which Fr. John Black was murdered in his bed. Bishop Parkhurst of Norwich, one of those who record this dastardly deed, is unable even at this juncture to refrain from playing upon the Friar's name. He says: A certain despicable Brother, by name Black, held in great estimation among the Papists, was killed in the Court at the same time. (*Fraterculus quidam nomine Blacke [niger, swartz], Papistarum antesignanus, eodem tempore in Aula occiditur.*)

"Sic Niger hic Nebulo, nigra quoque morte peremptus,

Invitus Nigrum subito descendit in Orcum."¹

Which lines have been rendered thus:—

"Seized by black Death this blacker Knave
Descended to the gloomy grave."²

¹ *Zurich Letters*, Parker Society, 1842, p. 99.

² Cf. Laing, *op. et loc. cit.*

Bedford and Randolph, in their letters to England a few days later, both record the murder of Black.¹ Guzman de Silva also, the Spanish ambassador in London, reports to King Philip II. the affair of the double murder of Queen Mary's secretary and of Friar Black, her "confessor." He also tells us that Queen Elizabeth had received a letter "saying they were killed at night."² So there can be no doubt whatever that 9th March 1565-66 is the correct date of Fr. Black's death.³ As to his having been Queen Mary's

¹ *Cal. State Papers relat. to Scot., &c.*, ed. Bain, vol. ii. Nos. 358, 359.

² *Spanish State Papers, Cal. of Letters, &c., relating to English Affairs preserved at Simancas, 1558-67*, ed. Hume. Cf. 23rd March 1566. On reference to this letter, it will be seen that a man from Scotland said "that the confessor died the same night from natural causes." But as there are four or five first-hand authorities against him, this man must have been mistaken.

³ Among modern writers, G. Chalmers (*Life of Mary Queen of Scots*, London, 1822, vol. i. p. 259) and Bellesheim (*History of the Catholic Church in Scotland*, trans. Hunter-Blair, O.S.B., vol. iii. p. 97), give this, without question, as the date of the Friar's death. Laing also (*op. cit.*), on the authority of Parkhurst's letter, shows that Dempster was mistaken in placing it in January 1562-63. But Laing himself falls into error when he says that Dempster quotes Leslie as his authority for that assertion. For Dempster (*op. cit.*) simply said: "Orthodoxae veritatis propugnator strenuissimus, intima eruditione praeditus,

confessor, this evidence is perhaps hardly sufficient to render the fact absolutely certain. At the same time, if the Friar had been confessor to the Queen's mother, was afterwards one of Mary's "chief preachers," and was called in mockery, in the next century, the Queen's "Black Chaplaine," it seems very probable—apart from the statement of Guzman de Silva—that he was also actually confessor to the Queen of Scots. And if critics would urge the absence of other authorities, it is easy to reply that all the other writers who might have recorded the fact were Protestants, and therefore not nearly so likely to advert to it as the Catholic Spanish ambassador.

But a much more important question now arises, namely, can Friar Black be claimed as a Martyr? Dempster, Chalmers, Quetif and

inquit Leslaeus"; and "De ejus constante Jo. Leslaeus," *lib. x. p. dlxxvii*. George Grub, *Ecclesiastical History of Scotland*, Edinburgh, 1861, ii. 148-49, Burnet's *History of the Reformation* (ed. Pocock, Oxford, 1865, iii. 542, and vi. 538), and James Walsh's *History of the Catholic Church in Scotland* (Glasgow, 1874, p. 361), also give the correct date. Finally, M. Lecarpentier (*Le Catholicisme en Ecosse*, Paris, 1905, p. 36) mentions as a single fact the assassination of Riccio and *d'un dominicain confident de Marie Stuart*.

Echard, and Hurter—in fact, speaking generally, all those who, on the authority of the first two named, place the Friar's death in 1563, state that he suffered martyrdom. But seeing that the Friar was not killed at all in that year, the testimony of these writers may at first sight appear to be of little value. On second thoughts, however, it will be seen that their evidence is really of considerable weight. It embodies the tradition that Black was martyred, and the date, after all, is an accident. Moreover, a conclusion identical with that of these writers may be drawn from other and contemporary records, as I shall now endeavour to show.

As has been said, two old historians, Dempster and Chalmers, who have been generally followed by more recent writers, state that Friar Black was attacked and killed by the Reformers in January 1562-63. Black, however, as we have seen, was not actually killed then. But we know that he strenuously opposed the Protestants: he had been doing so all his life, both by word of mouth and by his pen. Moreover, his moral victory over Willock, and the publication of his controversy

with that apostate, must have deeply offended the Reformers. I have therefore come to the conclusion that Black was indeed attacked by the Reformers at the time when Dempster and Chalmers say he was killed, and that he was so severely injured that he was taken for dead. Secondly, three years after this assault almost to a day, namely, 6th January 1565-66, the Friar was again set upon and all but slain, and once more his assailants were the Reformers. Finally, on 9th March of this same year, 1565-66, in the tumult that followed Riccio's murder, Friar Black was attacked for the third time and at last killed. But by whom, and why? Randolph, after recording the Friar's death, refers to the assault made upon him by the Reformers in the previous January and to the number of persons imprisoned on that account, and then adds the significant clause: "perchance some of them [were] the authors of his end."¹ This suggestion is all the more noticeable in that the names of "John Knox and John Craig, preachers"² are on the first official list of those implicated

¹ *Cal. State Papers, &c.*, ed. Bain, vol. ii. No. 359.

² *Ibid.* No. 363.

in the murder of Riccio.¹ And when, lastly, it is remembered that the tumult at Holyrood, during which the Friar was slain, was created by the Reformers,² the conclusion is irresistible that it was the Reformers who killed him. They had tried to kill him before, and had failed. But catching him now quite defenceless, they succeeded.

And now, why was he murdered? Bedford says that Black was killed at the same time as Riccio and "by like order."³ This may be true. But whereas there may be found in the letters printed in the State Papers manifest hints of the intended murder of Riccio, there are none with regard to the Friar. Nor is there any more information to be found in the letters (or Knox's *History*) written after his death. The Reformers, it seems, who could not speak of Fr. Black without abusing and maligning him, were not generous enough to supply us with details concerning his untimely end. But we know that Knox and Craig and

¹ Tytler maintains (*History of Scotland*, vol. iii. pp. 403-9) that this is unquestionably the true and correct list, because intended for Cecil's eye alone.

² Tytler, *History of Scotland*, vol. iii. pp. 216-20.

³ *Cal. State Papers, &c.*, ed. Bain, vol. ii. No. 358.

their party were endeavouring to extirpate the Romish "idolatry," and that they held that idolatry was punishable by death.¹ We know that they had a special grudge against this Dominican for having dared to oppose their champion Willock, and that he was a constant stumbling-block in their way. His inexhaustible zeal and energy on behalf of the ancient Faith was his one offence. This it was that had made the Reformers his enemies, and—the conclusion is natural—this it was that occasioned his violent death. Surely this evidence is sufficient to show that Friar Black was a real Martyr. He was killed—there can be no doubt about that; and by the Reformers who had tried to kill him before—no one will deny this; and because he was a zealous and learned Catholic priest.²

¹ Cf. Tytler, iii. pp. 216, 407.

² In this connection the opinion of another writer may be of some value. "Father Black, one of the Catholic priests who had for several years defended the Church and its clergy from the vile imputations of Knox and the preachers, was also murdered on this occasion [9th March] in the palace of Holyrood. Father Black was a Dominican friar, a man of great abilities and learning, and earnestly devoted to the discharge of his sacred functions. These qualities made him hateful to the ruffians who murdered Riccio, but gained for him the martyr's

Fr. John Black was rightly called a valiant soldier of Christ; for in an age of bitter religious warfare, he died, as he had lived, an invincible champion of Catholicism.

crown" (James Walsh, *History of the Catholic Church in Scotland*, p. 361).

VENERABLE ROBERT NUTTER

LANCASTER

26th July 1600

THERE is no need to prove that the Ven. Robert Nutter was a Martyr, for he has always been recognised as such, and the Church has allowed the introduction of his cause; but it is not generally known that in all probability he died a Dominican Friar. Fr. Nutter was a native of Lancashire, the Nutters being a family of some position in Pendle Forest.¹ After passing through Brasenose, Oxford,² he was admitted with his elder brother, John, into the English College at Rheims, on 23rd August

¹ Gillow, *Bibliographical Dictionary of the English Catholics*, London, 1885.

² Cf. *Catholic Encyclopedia*, "Nutter." Mr. Wainwright, the author of this article, makes no mention of the question of Nutter's being a Dominican. In view, however, of the following pages, he has kindly promised to do so in the "Errata" and "Addenda" of the *Encyclopedia*.

VENERABLE ROBERT NUTTER 33

1579.¹ On 21st December 1581, Fr. Robert was ordained priest, and on the following 16th January he was sent with another future Martyr, Fr. George Haydock, to England.² "He seems to have used the *alias* of Askew and been an itinerant missionary in the counties of Oxford, Berks, Bucks, Southampton, and Sussex, and also in London. On 2nd February 1583-84, he was committed to the Tower, where he remained in the pit forty-seven days. He wore fetters during forty-three days, and twice suffered compression in the iron hoop known as the 'scavenger's daughter.'³ On 10th

¹ Gillow, *op. cit.*

² *Records of the English Catholics under the Penal Laws*, The Douai Diaries, First Series, London 1878, pp. 10, 184, 261.

³ Lingard describes the scavenger's daughter as "a broad hoop of iron, so called, consisting of two parts, fastened to each other by a hinge. The prisoner was made to kneel on the pavement, and to contract himself into as small a compass as he could. Then the executioner, kneeling on his shoulders and having introduced the hoop under his legs, compressed the victim close together, till he was able to fasten the extremities over the small of the back. The time allotted to this kind of torture was an hour and a half, during which time it commonly happened that from excess of compression the blood started from the nostrils; sometimes, it was believed, from the extremities of the hands and feet" (*History of England*, London, 1849, vol. vi. p. 688, App.).

November 1584 Fr. Nutter was again confined to the pit," where he remained for more than two months.¹ Two prison bills for his keep in the Tower have been published by the Catholic Record Society. The demands for his "dyett and chardgs," for the "keaper," and for "fewell and candell," from 26th March to 25th June 1584, that is, thirteen weeks, amounted to £14, 10s. 4d.; and from 1st October of the same year until 21st January 1584-85 when Nutter was "dismyssed," that is, sixteen weeks, to £21, 17s. 4d.²

On 21st January 1584-85 Fr. Nutter was banished with twenty other priests, "who being brought by their keepers from their several prisons to the Tower wharf," says Dr. Worthington, who was himself one of the number, "and there commanded to enter into a ship [the *Mary Martin*] ready provided to carry them into banishment, declared publicly to the commissioners that they did not accept of that banishment as of any grace or mercy at all; for they had not committed any fault

¹ Gillow, *op. cit.*

² Catholic Record Society, *Miscellanea III.*, London, 1906, Nos. xx. and xxi.

neither against their Queen nor country, as this pretended mercy falsely supposed; and, therefore, in express terms, required rather to be tried and to answer their accusers at Westminster and at Tyburn, than to be thus carried against their wills out of their native country from their friends and neighbours, whom they were to serve according to their priestly functions—affirming, moreover, that though perforce they were carried away, yet they would assuredly return to the same work as soon as God and their spiritual superiors would permit them so to do."¹ Another account, after naming Robert Nutter and certain others, continues: "In all we were one and twenty, [and] when expecting nothing of the sort were by the Queen's command put on board a ship, and against our will put ashore on the coast of Normandy, and not long afterwards fifty [one] followed us into exile, and we were all expressly threatened with pain of death if we ever returned to our country."²

¹ Cf. Challoner, *Memoirs of Missionary Priests*, ed. T. G. Law, Edinburgh, 1878, vol. i. pp. 251-52.

² Cf. Foley, *Records of the English Province S.J.*, London, 1878, Series I. p. 401.

On 8th July 1585 we find Fr. Nutter in his old college at Rheims.¹ How long precisely he remained abroad we do not know; and he next appears in July 1586 as a prisoner in Newgate. He had apparently changed his *alias* to Rowley,² and it is rather curious to find that there was another priest of that name in Newgate and that both were classed together as "banished men" "to be disposed of."³ In December of the same year the two names again appear in the same list, this time "to be banished";⁴ but plans were evidently changed, for in 1587 we find Nutter among the "Seminarie priestes" in the Marshalsea,⁵ and in the March of the following year, 1588, still in the Marshalsea, he is first called Robert Nutter, *alias* Rowley.⁶ On 30th September of the same year the name of "Robert Nutter preeste" is on the list of those persons who "are by their owne confessions gultyte

¹ *Records of the English Catholics*, p. 207; cf. Foley, Series ix.-xi. pp. 515-16.

² Cf. *infra*.

³ C.R.S., *Miscellanea II.*, No. xxiii. pp. 253-56.

⁴ *Ibid.* No. xxxi. pp. 272-73.

⁵ *Ibid.* No. xxxiii. p. 277.

⁶ *Ibid.* No. xxiii. (xxxv. ?) pp. 278-79.

of Treason and ffellonye,"¹ as it had been in the previous July on that of those "preests that will take the Q. part etc."² This last entry, synchronising as it does with the Spanish Armada, has reference perhaps to the fact that some priests were supposed to be, as indeed they were, loyal to their Queen and country, and that some were not.

Fr. Nutter was finally transferred to Wisbeach (1589-90), where he was to remain until the spring of 1600, that is, some nine or ten years. He is described in the State Papers as "Nutter, *alias* Rowley, a Seminary prieste, a very perilous man and desperate to attempte any mischief and therefore especially to bee regarded, hee soughte under coloure of reformation to obteyne libertie."³ Wisbeach was a stronghold in the Isle of Ely, and in the last decade of the sixteenth century, was in point of hardships a far less unpleasant place of detention than any of the London prisons. It had been set apart for the custody of certain

¹ C.R.S., *Miscellanea II.*, No. xxxix. p. 282.

² C.R.S., *English Martyrs* (1908), No. li. pp. 150-56.

³ Law, *Jesuits and Seculars in the Reign of Elizabeth*, London, 1889, App. A.

Catholics as far back as 1579, and the Government continued to make more and more use of it as time went on. The prisoners were at first locked up in separate rooms, but they met for meals (at which "the keeper sat at one end of the table and his wife at the other") and also for recreation in the garden. No visitors were allowed, but alms might be received. The priests, too, managed to say Mass in their rooms, and even decorated their altars with pictures. The place was of course strictly guarded by night. This severity, if such it can be called, lasted only three or four years, and gradually gave place to even more lenient treatment. After the Armada much more liberty was allowed the prisoners, perhaps because the Spanish danger was less, perhaps because the keeper was more heavily bribed, or perhaps because, as has been suggested, Cecil and Walsingham thought that if the prisoners had "rope enough they would hang themselves." At the time of Fr. Nutter's arrival the inmates of Wisbeach lived almost like private gentlemen, paying, though at exorbitant prices, for their board and lodging. Friends came to visit and dine with

them. They could get leave to go out when they wanted. They were even allowed to keep boys and educate them. They naturally became popular with the tradesmen, and, on account of their charity, with the poor. Lectures on Scripture and debates also were held within the walls. The castle became in time quite a place of pilgrimage, and was compared, not altogether unfittingly, to the catacombs of the early Church.¹

Unfortunately Wisbeach soon became the scene of conflict. It is a noteworthy fact that all through that "now happily forgotten discord" Fr. Nutter was one of what may be called the Jesuit party. In 1587 Fr. Weston, S.J., an austere, well-meaning, if narrow-minded man, arrived as a prisoner at Wisbeach. Not long after his arrival, it is said that two or three of the inmates of the castle took part in some schoolboyish rioting which called for the interference of the magistrates. Fr. Weston did not conceal his displeasure, and from that time, perhaps, may be said to date his influence over a certain section of the priests in

¹ Law, *Jesuits and Seculars in the Reign of Elizabeth*, London, 1889, Introd. pp. xxxviii.-xliii., and App. A. Cf. Morris, *Two Missionaries under Elizabeth*, London, 1891, chs. xv.-xvii.

Wisbeach. He gradually came to be looked upon as the leader of eighteen priests, among whom was Nutter, who wished to make their confinement as conducive as possible to their sanctification. If matters had stopped there, we should not have heard of the Wisbeach "stirs." But unfortunately the rupture between these eighteen priests with their leader and the remaining minority became complete. At Christmas 1594-95, some members of the latter party introduced into the hall for their amusement a hobby-horse. Disgusted beyond measure, Fr. Weston and his followers withdrew altogether from the association of their fellow-prisoners. They dedicated themselves in a special way to our Blessed Lady, and followed certain rules.¹ Moreover, on 7th February 1594-95, Fr. Nutter and his companions wrote to Fr. Garnet, the Provincial of the English Jesuits, and asked that Fr. Weston might officially be made Superior over them.² Fr. Nutter's name also appears on the list of

¹ Law, *Jesuits and Seculars in the Reign of Elizabeth*, London, 1889, pp. xliii.-lv.

² C.R.S., *Miscellanea I.* (1905), p. 110. This letter in Latin is printed in *Dodd's Church History* (ed. Tierney, London, 1840), vol. iii. App. No. xix.

those persons who signed in favour of the institution of an archpriest to govern the Catholic body in England; and here again we see that he was on the side of the Jesuits.¹

In the spring of the year 1600, unable any longer to restrain his burning desire to be working for the souls of his countrymen, Fr. Nutter with several others escaped from Wisbeach into his native county, Lancashire. But it was not long before he was apprehended for the third time, and again cast into prison. He was brought to trial in the summer assizes, and condemned solely on account of his priestly character. The sentence was carried out with barbarous severity, and at Lancaster on 26th July 1600 the Ven. Robert Nutter was hanged, drawn, and quartered. Dr. Champney, writing some eighteen years afterwards, says that he was a man of strong body but of a stronger soul, who despised rather than conquered death, and who went to the gallows before his companion, the Ven. Edward Thring, with as much cheerfulness and joy as if he had been going to a feast, to the astonishment

¹ C.R.S., *English Martyrs*, pp. 384-85.

of the spectators.¹ The memory of both these holy Martyrs was preserved in *A songe of four Priestes that suffered death at Lancaster* :—

“ Amongst these gracious troupe, that followe Christ
his traine,
To cause the Devill stoupe, four priestes were latlie
slaine.
Nutter’s bould constancie with his swete fellow
Thwinge,
Of whose most meeke modestie Angells and Saints
may singe.”²

The other two Martyrs were the Ven. Robert Middleton and the Ven. Thurstan Hunt, who suffered in March 1601.

After the repeated mention of Fr. Robert Nutter as a seminary priest, the reader may well ask why is he put among the Martyrs of the Order of St. Dominic. Fr. Nutter was ordained as a secular priest; he came to England and laboured for the Faith as a secular priest; he was imprisoned, tortured, and then transported to Normandy a secular priest. And indeed the secular clergy must ever look upon him as one of the most glorious sons of the English College at Rheims. There

¹ Cf. Challoner; Gillow; and Foley, Series xii. (1879), p. 763.

² C.R.S., *English Martyrs*, p. 385.

is evidence, however, in spite of Mr. Gillow’s assertion to the contrary, that Fr. Robert Nutter died a Dominican.

Blessed John Nelson, S.J., was martyred on 3rd February 1577-78. Fr. Thomas Stephenson, S.J., in his MS. *History of Thomas Pound, S.J.*, written between 1615 and 1624 (that is, about forty years later), states that Nelson was admitted into the Society of Jesus. The holy Martyr must have applied abroad for admission, as the Jesuits had not then arrived in England; but—and here his case differs from those of the other Jesuits received in prison—it is not known to which Provincial he addressed himself, nor at what date he made his application. However, the evidence of Fr. Stephenson, who has of course been quoted by writers of succeeding generations, was considered quite sufficient by the Sacred Congregation of Rites; and, permission having been granted by the Holy See, the Fathers of the Society of Jesus keep the feast of Blessed John Nelson with that of their other beatified English Martyrs.¹

¹ Cf. Camm., *Lives of the English Martyrs*, London, 1905, vol. ii. pp. 199-202, 233; and Gillow, *Bibliographical Dictionary*, “Pound.”

The Venerable Robert Nutter was martyred on 26th July 1600. Fr. John Lopez, O.P., in his *La Historia general de Santo Domingo y de su Orden* (published at Valladolid only fifteen years afterwards), takes it for granted that Nutter was a Dominican. "Of those who did not escape," he writes, "there was martyred Friar Robert Nutter, an Englishman, because with great profit to both Catholics and heretics he had preached the Catholic Faith. After he had been twenty-two years in prison, they put him to death at Lancaster in the year sixteen hundred with most horrible torture."¹ This evidence, however, is open to obvious criticism. In the first place, Lopez' Spanish for Lancaster, *Bamcastro*, is a little odd; but the mis-spelling of names by foreigners is even nowadays, it must be owned, quite common. Secondly, the author says that Fr. Nutter was in prison twenty-two years. Now, we have seen that Nutter was certainly not in prison

¹ Lopez, *La Historia general de Santo Domingo y de su Orden*, Valladolid, 1615, part iv. lib. iv. cap. i. "De los que no salieron, fueron martirizados fray Roberto Natures Ingles, porque con gran fruto de Catholicos y hereges predicava la fe Catholica. Estuvo veynte y dos años preso, y el año de mil y seyscientos le mataron en Bamcastro con terribles tormentos."

for more than sixteen years at the most; but this mistake too may perhaps be overlooked as of little consequence. Thirdly, Lopez goes on to say that there was another Martyr in England, "Friar Thomas Francis, of the Province of Languedoc, who died with great constancy, confessing the Faith of the Roman Church, which he had so unceasingly preached."¹ What are we to say to this? Has any one ever heard of a Fr. Thomas Francis being martyred in England? However, I do not think that even this affects the case of Nutter in the least. Lopez may indeed possibly have been mistaken about the Dominican from Languedoc (though we can by no means say definitely that he was, for it is known that we are ignorant of the names of several persons who suffered for the faith in England and who might be claimed as Martyrs); but there is no reason to suppose that his statement that Nutter was a Dominican is also an error. For, on the other hand, Lopez enjoys the reputation of being a sound

¹ Lopez, *La Historia general de Santo Domingo y de su Orden*. "El maestro fray Tomas Frances de la Provincia de Lenguadoc que acabo con una constancia grande, confessando la Fe del Iglesia Romana que siempre avia predicado."

historian, and is freely quoted by modern historical writers as well as ancient.

Fr. Nicholas Janssens, O.P., who wrote thirty-two years after the martyrdom, also asserts that Nutter was a Dominican. "That it may be seen," he says, "that most glorious Martyrs have not been wanting to the Order of Preachers: I shall add the names of some who have obtained the glory of martyrdom since the year 1600. Now in England in that very year Fr. Robert Nutter died amidst the most cruel torments."¹ With these words no fault or flaw whatever can be found; and Fr. Janssens stands as a second witness to corroborate what was true in the testimony of the first. It now remains to be seen how the belief that Nutter was really a Dominican has been handed down to us.

Fr. Peter Malpaco, O.P. (1635), three years

¹ Janssens, *Beneficia FF. Praed. a Diva Virgine collata, &c.*, Antwerpiae, 1632, p. 239. "Ut autem constet Ordini Praedicatorum non defuisse gloriosissimos Martyres: nonnullos attexam qui ab anno 1600 Martyrii laudem sunt adepti. In Anglia etenim hoc ipso anno P. Robertus Nutter crudelissimo supplicii genere interit." There is a German edition of this book in the British Museum. Janssenius, *Erzeigte Wolthaten den Prediger Ordens Brüdern von der Heiligsten Jungfrauen, und hergegen der Prediger Ordens, &c.*, Colln. 1642 (pp. 252-53).

after Fr. Janssens, is the next to assert the fact. His reference is to Lopez, though he has *Lancastriae in Anglia* correctly, but then adds a wrong date, namely, 25th August, in which mistake he has been followed by many later writers.¹

Fr. John de Rechac, O.P. (1650), has the same as Malpaco.²

Fr. Vincent Fontana, O.P. (1675), refers to Lopez, and has *Bancastrum*.³

Fr. Gravina, O.P., has the same as Malpaco.⁴ Together with Lopez, he is quoted by Fr. Frederic Steill, O.P.⁵

Fr. Thomas Souéger, O.P. (1696), refers to Lopez.⁶

A book entitled *Ex Agiologia Dominico*, published in the seventeenth century,⁷ and

¹ *Palma Fidei S. Ord. Praed.*, Antwerpiae, 1635.

² *Les vies et actions memorables des Saints, Bienhereux, et autres personages illustres de l'ordre des Frères Prêcheurs*, Paris, 1650, tom. iii. p. 905.

³ *Monumenta Dominicana*, Romae, 1675, ad ann. 1576 et 1600.

⁴ *Vox Turturis*, p. 293.

⁵ *Ephemerides Dominicano-Sacrae* (about 1676), ad 12 Aug.

⁶ *L'Année Dominicaine*, Amiens, 1696, 25 août, p. 433.

⁷ Lisbon, 17th century, vol. iii. p. 525.

M. de Vienne, in 1700,¹ bear the same testimony.

More modern authors could be cited, but let us conclude with a long but interesting and quaint quotation from the mid-eighteenth century historian of the English Province, Fr. John Martin, O.P.

“1576. Indurable were the persecutions which those of the Order in England, in common with other religious, at this time suffered, whilst in secular attire they were forced secretly to remove from place to place for the assisting of others; many of them being taken, and confined to perpetual imprisonment. In ye number was Fr. Robert Nutures or Nutter, one remarkable both for his birth, and piety, and of ye Order of St. Dominic. He was this year taken,² confined to a loathsome prison, condemned to dye: yet kept in this forlorn condition, as if they refused him even ye ease of death itself till about July, an. 1600,³ at what time they brought him forth to slaughter, hanged him at Lancaster dismembered, bowelled, and quartered him after a miserable con-

¹ *L'Année Dominicaine: ou Sentences pour tous les jours de l'année*, Paris, 1700, tom. ii. 26 août.

² This is of course the old mistake repeated. Fr. Nutter was not admitted at Rheims till 1579, and was imprisoned for the first time in 1584.

³ Fr. Martin here refers in the margin to Howe's *Chronicle*, p. 789.

finement of more than two and twenty years: And they made him a glorious Martyr of Jesus Christ. (Fontana, *Monumenta Dominicana*, pag. 537 et 565, et Lopez, par. 4.)

“Mr Edmond Howe, in his *Chronicle*, pag. 789:—

“In his *Chronicle of England* mentions hime and ye cause of his execution in these words: ‘Also in the month of July were drawn hanged and quartered at Lincoln two priests named Hunt and Garat, for coming into this realme, contrary to the statutes: two other priests, Edward Thring and Robert Nuttar, were likewise executed for the offence at Lancaster. Also Thomas Palasar a priest executed at Durham, and a gentleman with him, for relieving and lodging him in his house.’ Thus Howe.

“I must remark that his life and sufferings are mentioned by Bp. C[hallow]ner in his fifth volume of the *Missionary Priests*, page 381, but no mention of his being a Dominican is there found; tho Fr. Fontana is more than ordinary positive of ye matter, mentioning his imprisonment page 537 and his martyrdom page 565 in these words: *Anno 1600, Dum annus Jubilaei maxima cum laetitia celebratus in Urbe, Dominicano sanguine irrigatus Catholica ecclesia in variis Orbis partibus. In Anglia P. Robertus Nuttures apud Bancastrum, post molestissimos carceres continuo viginti duorum annorum cursu toleratos pro catholica fide, ab ipso contra haereticos propugnata, ab iisdem patibulo suspensus, antiquam animam efflaret,*

exenteratus, corde ac visceribus extractis, in multas partes conciso corpore, Sanctorum consortio adjunctus est (Lopez, p. 4, *Hist. Ord.*).

“What renders Fr. Robert Nutter being a Dominican notwithstanding more probable is, first, that these authors [*i.e.* Lopez and Fontana] were his contemporaries as John Lopez dying in 1632 aged 108 years: and Fr. Fontana about 1675; secondly, that Fr. Nutter was there mentioned by y^m in that manner, *ex professo*, in their respective histories of the said Order of which he is so positively said to be off: whilst on the other side, it not being mentioned by others, is no real objection. The design in compiling the names and manners of ye suffering martyrs is principally the glory of God in his saints: and it often exposes to common view ye barbarity and brutal cruelties of ye persecutors of God’s Church so unbecoming the Christian profession. All such has no share in, or regard ye different profession of the dying party: and indeed it is possible ye distinctive Order of particular persons might not be known to ye Author, or Authors, in those times of tribulation; whilst even in these our days it is unknown by many of ye same rank, who knows you to be priests, but not whether of this or that Order, as not available to ye thing in question; yt being ever sufficient that they be professors of ye true Church of Christ, to render you Martyrs in the sight of God and of his Church. Now if this be fact in ye generality, how

much more ought it to be considered in regard to ye particular Order of St. Dominic with reference to ye English Province at that time almost buried in oblivion, it not having one single convent of men then in being, and always entering among foreigners in different kingdoms, and seldom two in ye same place. This and ye gross neglect of ye Order in ye English Province in keeping exact registers, seems to me to be ye real reasons why we have so small account of them handed down to us, and why probably they and their acts are for ever buried.”¹

Fr. John Martin’s reasoning is very true, though his censure of the Province is perhaps a little severe. With regard to religious who were not known by their enemies to be members “of this or that Order,” we may instance the case of William Atkins, S.J., who eighty years later, at the time of Oates’s plot, was arraigned as a seminary priest,² or the case of Robert Nutter himself, who was once called a Jesuit.³ And as to the old English Catholic writers who mention Nutter’s death but do not call him a Dominican, it is not at

¹ MS. *History of the English Province*, 1221–1642 (c. 1754), in the archives of the Province, pp. 130–31.

² Cf. Challoner, ii. p. 282.

³ Cf. C.R.S., *English Martyrs*, p. 103.

all surprising that they did not know he had become one. Dr. Thomas Worthington, S.J., who wrote in 1614 (or in 1608 if he is the author of the earlier *Catalogue*), must indeed have known Nutter at the time of their banishment in 1585, when both were secular priests, but he can have known little or nothing about him during the last years of Nutter's life.¹ Again, Antony Champney's MS. *History* was only begun in 1618, three years after Lopez's *Historia* had been published. After all, on such a point as Nutter's reception into the Order, the Dominicans themselves were the most likely to know about it. Blessed John Nelson and Thomas Woodhouse, S.J., and several other religious, it must be remembered, have often been classed by Catholic writers as secular priests.

Such, then, is the proof. The extracts from Lopez, Malpaco, and Fontana, and some of the other authors were sent to the late Fr. John Morris, S.J., when he was undertaking the cause of the English Martyrs. In a letter before me, dated 24th Oct. 1891, he promised that when they reached him he would get

¹ Cf. Gillow, *op. cit.* "Worthington."

them "in due time put before the Congregation of Rites. The Martyr will then be called *Ord. Praed.* in the next Decree in which he is mentioned." In another letter in my possession, from the highest authority on the subject in England, I learn "that it was agreed that in future lists of the Martyrs, the name of Robert Nutter should be put down as O.P." In point of fact, however, the Venerable Robert Nutter is not yet generally known as a Dominican.

As to the when and where of his admission into the Order of St. Dominic, just as in the case of Blessed John Nelson's entrance into the Society of Jesus, it is impossible to do more than conjecture. He may have been received just before returning to England from his exile, or from his prison cell he may have written to some foreign Provincial—there was only a titular Provincial of England in those days. Or again, he may have used the medium of some Dominican serving at one or other of the foreign embassies. Or, finally, he may have been received by an English Friar Preacher. There were not, it is true, many English Fathers in the country; indeed

they might perhaps be counted on the fingers of one hand. But it is a curious coincidence that just about that time Fr. Andrew Bayley, O.P., suffered imprisonment more than once, and in 1603 was dismissed from the Tower and banished with our old friend Fr. Weston, S.J.¹ However, as I say, all is conjecture. But the parallel cases of several Benedictines and Jesuits who from the ranks of the secular clergy became religious, taking their vows in prison, show that the supposition with reference to Nutter is quite reasonable. The conclusion, at all events, is the same. In the words of the late Fr. Morris, S.J., in a letter dated 29th June 1892, "The passages [and he had not seen that of Fr. Jansens quoted above] seem to me quite sufficient to show that the Venerable Robert Nutter is considered a Dominican Martyr."

¹ Foley, Series i. pp. 51-52, 675; and Morris, *Two Missionaries under Elizabeth*, p. 279.

FATHER DAVID JOSEPH KEMEYS

NEWGATE

6th February 1679-80

FR. DAVID JOSEPH KEMEYS is the last Dominican who laid down his life for the Faith in this country. Born of honourable parentage in the beginning of the seventeenth century, he was probably a relative of Sir Nicholas Kemeys, the staunch Royalist who fought and died in the service of King Charles I.¹ Being inspired with zeal for a higher and more noble cause, Fr. Kemeys entered the Order of Preachers;² and having been professed and in due course ordained priest, he came on the English mis-

¹ Gillow, *op. cit.*

² It is not known where Kemeys received the habit of religion. Mr. Gillow by mistake says that he was professed at the Dominican Convent of SS. Giovanni e Paulo at Rome. This convent did not come into the hands of the Order until 1676, when the Dominican Cardinal Howard obtained it for the English Province.

sion. This was probably as far back as 1634, when there were some twenty Dominicans in England; at all events, Kemeys was one of the six Fathers who remained in the country during the Commonwealth—that is, from 1649 onwards.¹

An eminently religious man from the first, with years he acquired great prudence. It is not surprising, therefore, to find that in time he became chaplain and confessor to the Countess-Dowager of Arundel, mother of Fr. Philip Thomas Howard; and this meant that London was to be the scene of his labours.² Fr. Kemeys also displayed great enthusiasm for the canonical re-establishment of his Order in England. This was much to be desired, for the state of things as then existing was, to say the least, unsatisfactory. When therefore in 1655, Fr. Howard came over to England to consult him and the other Fathers about the scheme for founding an English novitiate on the Continent, we may readily imagine with what eagerness he took the matter up. He

¹ Palmer, *Life of Cardinal Howard*, London, 1888, pp. 77-78.

² *Ibid.* p. 96; and *Obituary Notices of the Friars Preachers*, London, 1884, p. 3.

explained the whole affair to his friend Fr. David Morris, a secular priest, and “begged him to try to incline for the reviving Province any young men of good hope he knew, who were well disposed for the clerical state.” The zealous Friar did not long remain unrewarded, for Fr. Morris found a fitting subject in Mr. Martin Russell, whom he therefore generously counselled to become a Dominican. Mr. Russell, of the Russells of Little Malvern, had been an officer in the army of Charles I., and had fought in the battle of Worcester. He now took the advice that he had been given—this was in 1656—and having passed his year of probation in the Dominican convent at Ghent, was one of the first six Friars who inhabited the newly acquired English convent of Bornhem in Belgium. He proved himself in after life a worthy successor to Fr. Kemeys, working well and long on the English mission. He suffered like him imprisonment for the Faith, and died at a good old age in 1716, after a most fruitful life in God’s service.¹

On 27th May 1675 Pope Clement X. created

¹ *Life of Cardinal Howard*, pp. 96-97, 105-7, 190-92; and Kirk, *Biographies of English Catholics*, London, 1909.

Fr. Howard Cardinal-Priest; and in the October or November of the same year Fr. Kemeys, spoken of as "a good and prudent religious," went over to the Cardinal in Belgium to convey the congratulations of his mother, the Countess Elizabeth, on his promotion. His Eminence was just about to start for Rome, and had already decided on certain arrangements.¹ Fr. Kemeys, however, for various reasons, conscientiously thought that it was of the utmost importance that these decisions should be reversed, and he did not hesitate to say so to the Cardinal. The latter, on his side, lent a ready ear to such a prudent counsellor as Fr. Kemeys, and was not slow to act on his advice and change his own arrangements.²

From 1675, or at least from the beginning of the new year until his death in February 1680, this good Father, now getting on in life, continued the same apostolic work as hitherto. Once or twice perhaps he went across to

¹ *Life of Cardinal Howard*, pp. 161-62.

² Cf. MSS. in the archives of the Province, copied by Fr. Raymund Palmer, O.P., S.T.M., in his folio MS. *Anglia Dominicana*, in the library at Haverstock Hill Priory, N.W., 1862, p. iii. A. p. 490.

Bornhem—he signed some document there on 29th May/9th June 1677¹—but otherwise he was the chaplain of the Countess, and the priest and confessor of the poor persecuted Papists for many a mile around.

Every English Catholic knows the true story of the famous Popish Plot made up by Titus Oates; so there will be no need here to record anything not immediately connected with Fr. David Joseph Kemeys, who through it lost his life and thus won the Martyr's crown. Having been impeached by Oates, this old but valiant son of St. Dominic was arrested and cast into Newgate. He was accused by Oates of being a popish conspirator guilty of high treason. Indeed, the perjurer's *Narrative* would be quite amusing were it not for the knowledge of the innocent lives it cost. He said that in July 1678 Fr. Strange, the Provincial of the Jesuits, had told him that the Papists had realised £14,000 by the Fire of London in 1666. So Oates asked him "how they came to effect that great and famous business"; and Fr. Strange told him

¹ Cf. *Anglia Dominicana*, p. iv. A. clx.

that certain " Jesuits with some others, together with one Keimash, a Dominican Fryar, joined with one Green, and met at one William West's house, who kept the Green-Dragon in Puddle dock: the said West was by Trade a Taylor, whom they employed to make them some Cloathes; and there did debate about the manner of firing the City, and where they should begin, and did attempt it in February 1664-65. But not being provided with assistance enough, and the Thames being frozen over, and the Sickness coming on a-pace, they then altered their purpose. And in January 1665-66, they met with this Green again, who closed in with them in this Design. And that they might ingratiate themselves with this Green, furnished him with £30 (he being poor) yet they found him an active man, and fit for the purpose." For various reasons Green advised them to postpone the fire, "and this motion pleased the Jesuits and the Dominican well, and so it was put off. In a very little time after, the said Green . . . together with the four Jesuits and the Dominican above named, were suspected by the said West that kept the said house in Puddle

dock and were forewarned his house. And presently after, Green and his eight acquaintance were clapt up in prison (but for what," adds Oates, "the said Strange did not tell the Deponent). And upon the imprisonment of these nine persons, the said Jesuits and Dominican did go to St. Omers, and there remained till the May after the Execution of eight of these persons thus imprisoned (Green dying in Newgate)." But the Fathers being told that their names were not mentioned in the business of those men, "thought they might safely return. So in the latter part of May they set forth for England, and got to London in the beginning of June; and then concealing their Names and Lodgings, they began afresh to consult about this Fire . . . and determined to cut off the King, *that the number of the Beast might be accomplished.*" And they "got fifty or sixty Irish to ply the work, and one Edw. Everard was very diligent to preserve their Fire-works which they had made." And they "were in Fee also with several Frenchmen, who were faithful in the business: And all things being ready, and the place pitched upon, Strange removes his

Quarters, and got to lye at a house in Fan-church-street, and went by the name of Walker; and this he did in the month of August 1666 and with him he took Keimash the Dominican, and lodged together. . . . In a word the said Strange told the Deponent that they spent 700 Fire-Balls, and when the Fire-Merchants were at work, then others (Men and Women) were employed to plunder what they could." They got, among other things, great quantities of plate and a box of jewels, which of course they hid. They finally "sold them for £35,000 sterling in Flanders, and had a fish dinner into the bargain at the Salutation Tavern in Holborn at the Return of the Money."¹ A little later, in his *Narrative*, Oates again speaks of Fr. Kemeys. Under the date 1678 he makes mention of "Keimash and Jones a priest meeting with others on Thursday and Sunday nights"; and he goes on to say that "all these are employed by the Jesuits to villify the House of Commons, and go about the city of London to incense the people against them and against the Bishops of the

¹ Oates, *True Narrative of the Horrid Plot and Conspiracy*, London, 1679, item xxxiv. pp. 22-24.

Nation; and they deliver this treasonable proposition: That the Commons assembled in Parliament are the Devil's representatives and not the Nation's. Which treasonable and detestable word the Deponent did hear in the same Club (which is kept at the Pheasant in Fullers Rents near Grays Inne) in the month of August. And the Deponent was ordered by the Jesuits in London to give the said persons great Respects, and in their Names to thank the Club for their faithfulness to them in that particular."¹ Again, "18 August 4 in the afternoon Keines [a Jesuit] took Deponent to the following meeting in Covent Garden viz. Mr. Vincent, Provincial of the Dominicans in England, Joseph David Keimash, Mr. Dominic, Mr. Collins, Mr. Fedding, Mr. Mansel, Mr. Lumsdale (as they said) in the name of the rest of the Order in England, to consult and comply with the Fathers of the Society to propagate the Catholic Faith; and when John Keines was set with the Fathers of the Society with him all of a side viz. John Keines, Father Harcourt, Fa. Fenwick, Fa.

¹ Oates, *True Narrative of the Horrid Plot and Conspiracy*, London, 1679, p. 36.

Wright, Fa. Blundel, the said John Keines propounded to the Dominicans to contribute to the design of killing the king and carrying on the business of England and Scotland. The Dominicans replied by their Provincial, that they were poor and not able to do much for they had but little or no money but that they would let them have their personal assistance and counsel and would procure what interest they could, but as for Money they could not part with any at all, for they were in debt and had scarce £400 in stock and the most they could make *per annum* of their Estate was not above £360. At which Consult the Deponent was to and fro, and what was more said he cannot tell, for he was sent with the Proposals to the Carmelites . . . who said they had not a penny in stock, nor any Income besides what the Spanish Ambassador allowed them for assisting in his Chappel. All this was acted by Order from the Provincial of the Society, 1678." ¹ Lastly, Oates declared that "the Pope had issued out a Bull," and "hath been pleased to order and dispose of Bishopricks of England, and other

¹ Oates, *True Narrative of the Horrid Plot and Conspiracy*, London, 1679; item lxi. p. 40.

Dignities," and that he had appointed to the see of "Bangor, Joseph David Keimash, a Dominican Fryar." ¹

Therefore on 27th January 1679-80, together with Fr. Albert Anderson, O.P., and Fr. Alexander Lumsden, O.P. (for there were several other Dominicans imprisoned for the same cause), and two Benedictines, two Secular Priests, and one Franciscan, Fr. Kemeys was arraigned at the Old Bailey before the Lord Chief Justice, Sir William Scroggs. He was not arraigned, however, on account of the supposed conspiracy, but for high treason, as being a Catholic priest and remaining in the country contrary to the law. Death for such a cause is sufficient to constitute a true Martyr, and it was for this cause that Fr. Kemeys suffered and died. We have a graphic account of the proceedings as far as they went. The case was opened by the Clerk of the Crown. "Keeper, set Joseph Kemish to the Bar (which was done). David Joseph Kemish, hold up thy hand (which he did). Thou standest indicted by the name of

¹ Oates, *True Narrative of the Horrid Plot and Conspiracy*, London, 1679; item lxxii. p. 51.

Joseph David Kemish of the Parish of St. Giles in the East of the County of Middlesex, Clerk ; for that thou being born within the Dominions of our Sovereign Lord the King, and being a Priest—made and ordained by Authority derived from the see of Rome, after the Feast of the Nativity of St. John Baptist, in the first year of the Reign of Queen Elizabeth, and before the 15th day of November in the Thirtieth year of the Reign of our Sovereign Lord the King that now is, The Laws and Statutes of this Kingdom of England not regarding, nor the Penalties in the same contained any ways fearing, the said 15th day of November, in the thirtieth year of the King aforesaid, at the Parish of St. Giles in the Fields in the County of Middlesex aforesaid, traitorously, and as a false traitor of our Sovereign Lord the King, thou wast and didst remain and abide, against the form of the statute in this case made and provided, and against the Peace of our Sovereign Lord the King, his Crown and Dignity. How sayest thou, David Joseph Kemish? Art thou guilty of this High Treason, whereof thou standest Indicted, or Not guilty?"

Needless to say, Fr. Kemeys pleaded "Not Guilty."

"Culprit, how wilt thou be tried?" resumed the Clerk of the Crown.

"By God and my Country," was the bold reply.

"God send thee a good Deliverance," said the Clerk.

Then comes a piteous appeal. Kemeys, overcome with sickness and weakness, said in a scarcely audible voice: "I cannot speak, and I am not able to stand upon my legs a quarter of an Hour."

"What does he say?" asked the Lord Chief Justice, who could not hear him. And the gaoler, Captain Richardson, had to explain: "He says he is so ill and weak he is not able to stand."

"Then he must have a Stool," was the curt reply evoked from the Chief Justice.

Then Kemeys again protested: "I am not able to speak in my own defence, and I have had no time to prepare myself."

And here it may be noted that other prisoners made the same complaint. They had received little or no warning of the trial,

and yet were supposed to have some ten days in which to prepare themselves. But the Lord Chief Justice seemed to pay no heed to Fr. Kemeys's remonstrance.

"Captain, he shall speak softly to you, and you shall report it to the Court again," as though his speaking softly was the remedy for absence of preparation.

"You may speak softly to me," repeated Captain Richardson to Kemeys, "and I will give an account of what you say."

Then the Chief Justice said again: "How will he be tried? Ask him."

But Fr. Kemeys, gathering up all his strength, said to the Court: "I would desire that my trial might be deferred till I be in a condition to answer for myself."

There was no fear in this request; and had strength been given him he would have spoken as his fellow-Dominican, Fr. Anderson, was to speak in a few minutes. The latter was not worn out with age and imprisonment, and though he too had been allowed no time to prepare for his trial, he conducted his own defence most manfully—and was condemned to death.

Fr. Kemeys's little speech evidently moved the Court.

"What say you, Brothers," said the Chief Justice; "I think his request is very reasonable; he appears not to be in a condition of taking his Trial now, and Mr. Attorney is willing he should be set aside till next Sessions."

Sir Creswel Leving, the Attorney-General, seemed quite willing.

"'Tis, I think, very fit, if your Lordships please."

But Mr. Justice Dolben insisted: "He must Plead first. Have you recorded his Plea?"

"Yes, 'tis recorded," said the Clerk of the Crown.

"Why, then," concluded the Lord Chief Justice, "look you, Captain Richardson, you must take him back; the Court does think fit, and Mr. Attorney does think fit, by reason of his extraordinary Infirmity, that it is not seasonable to Try him now. And that the World may not say we are grown Barbarous and Inhumane, we are all contented he should be set by. Therefore let him be returned back, and in the meantime you must take care that

he have that reasonable looking to as is fit for a man in his Condition to have."

It would seem that Fr. Kemeys was hardly conscious of what was going on around him. The Lord Chief Baron, William Montague, thought it fit to say: "Acquaint him with what the Court says."

"I will, my Lord," answered the gaoler, as though he could not then.

"My Lord," said the Attorney-General finally, "I desire that the Judges may declare their opinion in it."

"They have done so already," said the Lord Chief Justice; "we do all consent to it: therefore take him, and go get him a bed."¹

But the bed and any other "reasonable looking to" came too late; and it was not within the power of man to take from this aged Friar the palm of martyrdom—the palm that he had won in the cruel treatment he had received in the loathsome gaol of

¹ The arraignment of F. David Joseph Kemeys, and the trials of FF. Albert Anderson *alias* Munson and Alexander Lumsden for high treason as Romish Priests, at the Old Bailey, London, Jan. 17/27, 1679–80. From the *Printed Trials published by authority in 1680* at the Old Bailey, London, Jan. 17th, 1679–80. Cf. *Anglia Dominicana*, p. iv. A. cccii.

Newgate. For ten days more he languished, and at last, on 6th February 1679–80, Fr. David Joseph Kemeys gave up his soul to its Creator.¹

Never, however, up to the present, has Fr. Kemeys been honoured with the title of Martyr, at least not in print. Possibly this is in some measure due to the fact that Bishop Challoner, apparently even unaware that Kemeys was a Dominican, had not been able to find out, as he himself confesses in his *Memoirs of Missionary Priests*, whether or not he died in prison.² I find also that Charles Dodd did not know that he was a Dominican, nor that he died in Newgate. He calls him "John Kemish, clergyman," and says he was condemned on account of his Orders, but was reprieved and pardoned,³ all of which, as we have seen, is erroneous. The

¹ In the words of the Chapter Rolls of the Province (compiled in 1719): 1678, R.P.F. *David Kemys, Obijt Londini Missarius Apłicus in Carcere propter Fidem die 27 Januarij*. The 27th January is, of course, in the old style, ten days behind the correct date. The year 1678 is, as Fr. Palmer notes, a mistake for 1679, which according to modern reckoning (the year beginning on 1st January and not on 25th March) is 1680.

² Vol. ii. p. 283.

³ *Church History*, Brussels, 1742, vol. iii. p. 400.

name of Fr. Kemeys is, however, on the list of *Praetermissi*, or of those who were passed over at first, but who have since been proposed as possible candidates for Beatification.¹ His case or cause, then, is at least open for consideration; and it is with confidence that I now claim for him the much-coveted title of Martyr.

Prison life in England in the seventeenth century was very hard, to say the least. "Prisoners were treated in a way that would now be considered shameful," says a writer well qualified to pass an opinion. According to the general practice, they were heavily ironed, and until life was thought in danger they had nothing but the boards on which to lie. "The greatest hardship arose from the cold," says the same writer, "against which there was no real provision."² And this is to say nothing of the lesser inconveniences. Now, in December 1678, just a year and a month before Fr. Kemeys succumbed under the treatment, the Ven. Edward Mico, S.J., passed to his reward from the same gaol of

¹ *Catholic Encyclopedia*, "English Confessors and Martyrs."

² Pollock, *The Popish Plot*, London, 1903, pp. 136-37.

Newgate. He had been accused and arrested by Oates and hurried away to prison, although he was already labouring under a heavy fever. He was "found dead on his knees, oppressed by the weight of his irons." The Ven. Fr. Momford or Bedingfield, S.J., "in like manner perished in the gatehouse a few days later."¹ Both these Fathers have deservedly been declared Venerable. In the case of Fr. Kemeys, there is no authority for thinking that he was ill before he was cast into Newgate. But he was an old man, and by the time his trial was due to take place, we have seen that he was very ill indeed. Taking into consideration, then, the severity of prison life—the irons, the absence of any sort of bed, and above all, the raw cold of an English winter—no one, it seems to me, will care to deny that his sufferings in prison were the cause of Fr. Kemeys' death. *Vir erat bonus et prudens*—he was a good and prudent man—says the *Annals of the Province*² concerning him. And it will not, I trust, be any less true

¹ Cf. Challoner, vol. ii. p. 256.

² MS. *Annals of the restored Province* (c. 1710), in the Archives.

to add, in the words of such a calm critic as the late Fr. Palmer, that Fr. David Joseph Kemeys was "a victim of religious persecution, and a true Martyr of the Faith."¹

¹ *Anglia Dominicana*, p. iii. A. p. 448.

APPENDIX

VENERABLE ARTHUR M'GEOGHAN

TYBURN

7th December 1633

THE Ven. Arthur M'Geoghan was an Irish Dominican martyred in England. He was returning from Lisbon to his native land, and was passing through England in order to transact some business for the Viceroy of Portugal, when he was arrested in London and accused "of having said in Spain, that it was lawful for anyone to kill the King of England." The accusation, brought under the notice of Queen Henrietta Maria herself, was afterwards proved to have been totally false. In the meanwhile, however, Fr. M'Geoghan had been condemned and butchered alive at Tyburn on 27th November (in the new style on 7th December) 1633. Before dying he made an open profession that he was a Catholic and a Dominican, and his last words were: *In manus tuas commendo spiritum meum quia redemisti me, O Deus veritatis mee.* Several miraculous occurrences took place after his death, not the least remarkable being the sweet odour that, as in the case of St. Dominic,

exhaled from the Holy Martyr's remains. For further details, I must refer the reader to the book entitled *Our Martyrs* (Dublin, 1896), by Fr. Denis Murphy, S.J., pp. 265-68; and to the *Année Dominicaine* (Lyons, 1906), Novembre, 2^{ième} partie, pp. 814-16; or, best of all, to an article in the *Irish Ecclesiastical Record*, October 1894, by Fr. Reginald Walsh, O.P.

VENERABLE VINCENT GERALD DILLON

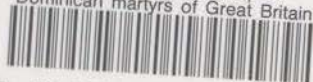
YORK PRISON

13th September (?) 1651

ANOTHER Irish Dominican who died for the Faith in England was Ven. Vincent Gerald Dillon. He was stationed at London during the Parliamentary war, and acted as confessor to the Catholics in the royal army. At the battle of Marston Moor, 2nd July 1644, where Prince Rupert was defeated by Cromwell, Fr. Dillon was taken prisoner. He was thrown into prison at York, where he died of hunger and bad treatment in 1651, probably on 3rd, or, as we should say, on 13th of September. Cf. Murphy, *op. cit.*, pp. 336-37, and O'Heyne's *Irish Dominicans* (Dundalk, 1902), edited by Fr. Coleman, O.P., pp. 87-88. The process for the Beatification of the Ven. Vincent Gerald Dillon and the Ven. Arthur M'Geoghan is, it is stated, progressing satisfactorily.



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