

THE FOUR MARTYRS

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The Four Martyrs by A. F. Rio

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A. F. RIO

**THE FOUR
MARTYRS**

THE
FOUR MARTYRS.

BY
A. F. RIO.

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BY AUTHORITY OF THE AUTHOR.

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TO

The Memory

OF

COUNT AUGUSTE DE LA FERRONNAYS,

WHO DIED AT ROME, JAN. 17, 1842.

E se 'l mondo espesse 'l cuor oh' egli ebbe,

Assai lo loda, e più lo loderebbe.

DANTE.

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PREFACE.

Two of the biographical notices contained in this volume, those of Ansaldo Cebà and Helena Cornaro, were intended to form a part of the great work I had in contemplation when, twenty years since, I prefixed to my volume on *Christian Art*, the ambitious title, since withdrawn: *On Christian Poetry, in its principles, its subject-matter, and its forms.*

Martyrdom, regarded as the subject of art in general and of poetry in particular, seemed to me a theme both new and fruitful; and as my materials increased, it became the object of my almost exclusive predilection.

I do not pretend that I have exhausted the varieties of martyrdom, but I do think that I have here set forth four types of it, each of which in its own way combines all the conditions of the religious ideal. And in this part of the domain of art the religious and the poetical ideal are one.

I do not mean that I have *idealized* my heroes or my heroines in order to add to the romantic interest of my narrative. That were not only a fault in taste, but a profanation and a sacrilege. The history of Ansaldo Cebà, which