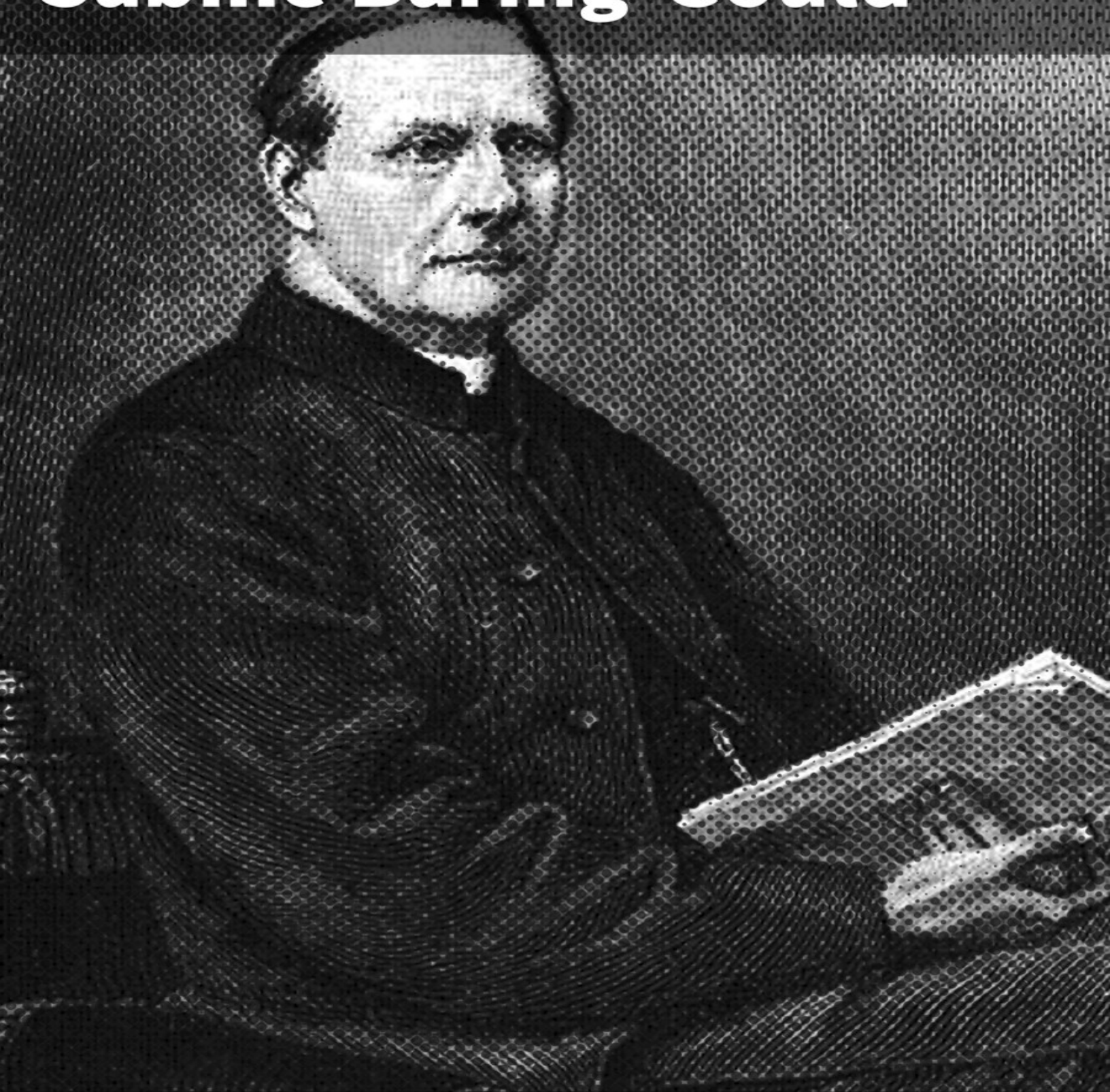


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*S. George*

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# Curious Myths of the Middle Ages — S. George

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**A** MORE interesting task for the comparative mythologist can hardly be found, than the analysis of the legends attaching to this celebrated soldier-martyr;—interesting, because these legends contain almost unaltered representative myths of the Semitic and Aryan peoples, and myths which may be traced with certainty to their respective roots.

The popular traditions current relating to the Cappadocian martyr are distinct in the East and the West, and are alike sacred myths of faded creeds, absorbed into the newer faith, and recoloured. On dealing with these myths, we are necessarily drawn into the discussion as to whether such a person as S. George existed, and if he did exist, whether he were a Catholic or a heretic. Eusebius says (Eccl. Hist. B. viii. c. 5), “Immediately on the first promulgation of the edict (of Diocletian), a certain man of no mean origin, but highly esteemed for his temporal dignities, as soon as the decree was published against the Churches in Nicomedia, stimulated by a divine zeal, and excited by an ardent faith, took it as it was openly placed and posted up for public inspection, and tore it to pieces as a most profane and wicked act. This, too, was done when two of the Caesars were in the city, the first of whom was the eldest and chief of all, and the other held the fourth grade of the imperial dignity after him. But this man, as the first that was distinguished there in this manner, after