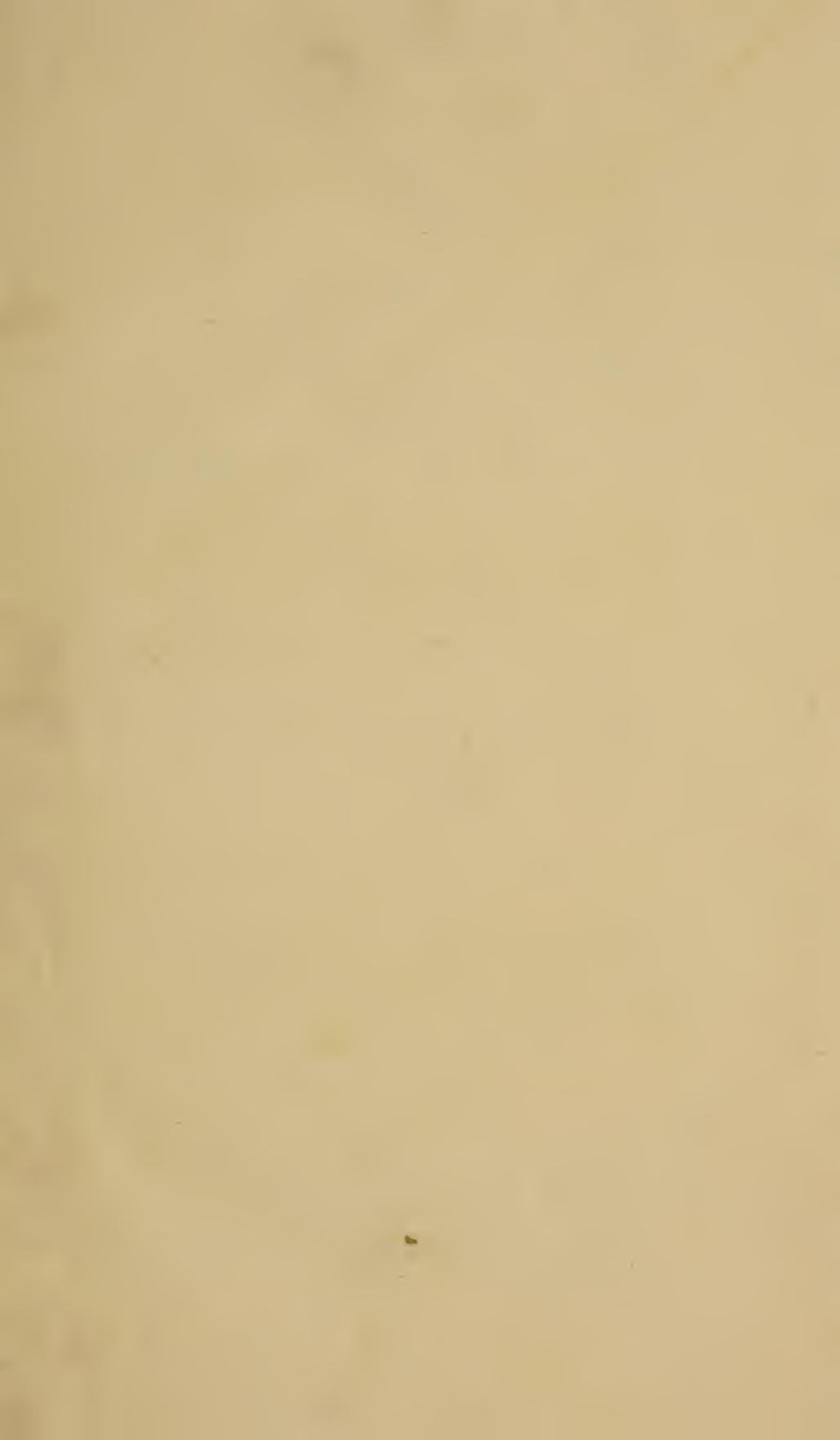






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The life and letters of  
Thomas a Becket





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THE LIFE

AND

LETTERS

OF

THOMAS À BECKET,

NOW FIRST

GATHERED FROM THE CONTEMPORARY

HISTORIANS

BY THE REV.

J. A. GILES, D.C.L.

LATE FELLOW OF CORPUS CHRISTI COLLEGE, OXFORD.

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Est pro justitia cæsus in ecclesia.

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IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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LIFE AND LETTERS  
OF  
THOMAS À BECKET.

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CHAPTER XXVII.

THE ARCHBISHOP MADE LEGATE FOR ENGLAND—  
HIS REMOVAL FROM PONTIGNY.

THE Christian Church, very soon after its establishment throughout Europe, was divided out in the different kingdoms into the dioceses, which exist with very little alteration of the original plan until the present day. The strict discipline which has always appeared in its practice, is due to the regularity and completeness of its first constitution. The bishops of the different dioceses, though each independent of the other, were united in obedience to the archbishop, who was their metropolitan, and to whom on their consecration they professed obedience. These me-

tropolitans, in their turn, were united in subjection to the patriarch: and the strong distinction, which has always existed between the East and the West, the Greeks and the Latins, has virtually, as far as the Latin kingdoms of Europe are concerned, caused the patriarch of Rome, which is the capital of the empire of the Latins, to be considered as the head of the Catholic or universal Church. Such was the constitution of the ecclesiastical establishment which succeeded the ages of the apostles. We have seen in a former chapter the authority and effect with which this institution carried out its decrees and enforced its ordinances. There were, however, many additional modes by which so vast a machine was kept in order, more particularly for removing obstacles to its motion and derangements of its parts, such as were sure to arise in so vast an extent of empire. The successive gradations of papal, metropolitan, and episcopal jurisdiction could not be long maintained without the power of appeal; and the pope to whom the appeal was ultimately made, must be frequently liable to have his attention distracted to all parts of Europe at the same time. This led to the institution of legates, to whom was committed so much of the papal power as was sufficient to effect the object required, or as might be consistent with the views of the pontiff who at that particular period filled

the papal chair. It was not usual for the popes to give full powers to their legates; for delegated authority is proverbially liable to abuse: the cardinals, who were generally sent on these missions, could speedily release themselves from all their obligations by throwing them on the shoulders of the pope, and, as they were less inaccessible to corruption than their superior, the cause of the Church might suffer, and the integrity of the holy see be impaired by their cupidity. It was more usual to appoint legates, with limited and well-defined powers, from the prelates of the country in which the legatine authority was to be exercised. This was more agreeable to the temporal monarch, and gave no additional stimulus to bribery and corruption, for the archbishop of Canterbury or any other high dignitary of the English Church, acting in his own country as the pope's legate, would have no more temptation to exercise his power wrongfully, than if he were without the accession of dignity, which as the deputy of the pope he possessed. It was an important privilege to be made the pope's legate, for he who bore this commission had power to rectify all abuses in the dioceses of other bishops, which otherwise could only come before him by an appeal. When archbishop Becket prepared himself to fulminate the excommunications at Vezelay, he did not lose sight of

the advantage which a legatine commission might give him; "for," says Herbert de Bosham, "we had once before sent some of our professors to the apostolic see, and through them obtained the legatine authority over all England." This was done by way of precaution, that an ecclesiastical sentence might come with greater force and authority, whether pronounced against the king or his subjects; wherefore, when the archbishop pronounced his threat against the king at Vezelay, as we have before related, he was legate of the apostolic see, although prevented by his situation from entering the country of his legation.

This was the position of things, when it became necessary for both parties to send delegates to Rome, where the court was now held, in prosecution of the appeal of the bishops. A splendid embassy was accordingly sent from England, to represent the king, the bishops, and others who were concerned in the controversy. On the part of the archbishop were sent some of his clerks, and we may fully believe the historian, who says that they had no gold nor silver to take with them as presents, and that they hardly carried more than was sufficient for their journey.

Meanwhile the king, burning with indignation at the excommunication of several of his subjects, and the threats which had been held out against himself, devised a mode of annoying his enemy,

which was equally ungenerous as his former act, of banishing the archbishop's kinsfolk. The monastery of Pontigny, in which Becket had now been residing nearly two years, belonged to the Cistercian order, and was situated not far from Citeaux, the principal house of the Cistercians. A general chapter of the Cistercians was held in the month of September, 1166<sup>6</sup>, and a letter was then read from the king of England, signifying to the fraternity that they were harbouring in one of their houses his personal enemy, Thomas, archbishop of Canterbury. If, however, they attached any value to the houses and lands which the Cistercian order possessed in his dominions either in England or on the continent, they would no longer entertain the archbishop. This hint, by which the dissolution of their society throughout the territories of king Henry was not obscurely intimated, was too serious to be neglected. The proceedings of the chapter lasted three days, after which the Cistercian abbat himself, Gilbert by name, the bishop of Pavia, who had once been a monk of the order, and several other abbats with him, hastened to Pontigny, to communicate the king's letter to the brethren. A meeting was at once called, and the archbishop was present. The deputation read the king's letter to

<sup>6</sup> " Proximo die sanctæ crucis." Herb. de Bosham.

the brethren, and then addressed their discourse to the archbishop. "My lord," said they, "the chapter does not drive you out of their house in consequence of an order such as this: they merely lay the letter before you and your wise counsellors, whom you have about you, that you may consider and decide what is to be done. The chapter knows well, and we who are here present know well, that your regard for the Cistercian order is too great to allow a heavy calamity to befall it."

This hint was as intelligible to the archbishop and his clerks as the king's message had been to the Cistercians: but it could hardly give offence to the exiles, who had been so long maintained in the monastery, and the threatened vengeance of the king was too severe to allow the archbishop's exposing his generous hosts to suffer from its infliction. A few hasty words were exchanged with his clerks, by whose advice he at once signified his intention of withdrawing from the hospitable roof. "The Lord," continued he, "who feeds the birds of the air, and clothes the lilies, will provide for me and my fellow exiles." "All the assembly," as Herbert de Bosham, who was present, relates it, "and particularly our own abbat and the brethren of Pontigny, who had been so kind to us, were moved at these words, and left the room in tears.

For I will state what I saw and heard : Warin de Garland, of blessed memory, who was then abbat, and all the brethren of that monastery were unwilling that we should leave them, and opposed our departure as long as they were able." But the stern necessity of the case, implicating, not themselves, but their whole order, compelled them to submit, and it only remained for the archbishop and his clerks to determine where they should seek a new asylum. In this emergency the promise which had formerly been made by the French king to aid them in time of need, recurred to their minds. Herbert de Bosham was dispatched forthwith to the French king, whom he fell in with as he was on a journey with his whole court. The news of the archbishop's removal from Pontigny caused him much surprise, and he expressed his regret that the monks should still be so attached to the world, as to fear the threats of princes. The result of this interview was even more favourable than had been anticipated ; for the messenger returned to Pontigny with authority from the king to choose whatever town, castle, or monastery suited them best in his dominions, and they were further assured that the royal treasury should furnish every thing that was necessary for their support. This favourable intelligence was received with joy by the exiles, who departed

without further delay, amid the regret and lamentations of their hospitable entertainers<sup>7</sup>. They bent their steps to the city of Sens, which was not far from Pontigny, and withdrew to the monastery of St. Columba, a short distance without the walls, because they there hoped to unite the advantages of a town with that retirement from the bustle of the streets which was favourable to meditation and literary pursuits. In this new place of residence the archbishop and his party remained four years in undisturbed tranquillity, when, peace being at length made between them and the king, he returned to England, to Canterbury, and to martyrdom !

Whilst this change of residence was occupying the attention of the exiles at Pontigny, events were passing over the stage with dramatic rapidity at Rome and in the king's dominions, both

<sup>7</sup> When the archbishop was taking leave of the brethren of Pontigny, he burst into tears, and was rebuked by the abbat for his unmanliness. "Why do you mourn," said he, "do you want money for your necessities, or a more splendid equipage? Is there aught more that we can do for you?" "It is not that," replied the archbishop, "but I feel that my days are numbered: I dreamt last night that I was put to death." "Do you think you are going to be made a martyr then?" said the abbat; "you eat and drink too much for that: martyrdom and good living do not well agree together." "I know I indulge too much," said the archbishop, "but God is merciful, and he has revealed his will to me; albeit I am unworthy of his favour." Will. Cant.

insular and continental : the legatine commission of the archbishop could not be exercised until notice of it had been sent to the bishops of the several dioceses : on the other hand, the king, since the receipt of the archbishop's denunciatory letters, had issued the most severe proclamations against any one who should bring letters from the pope into his dominions ; for the appeal, by its very nature, could last no longer than the period which was originally fixed for it, and his ambassadors at the court of Rome were doing their uttermost to secure the appointment of legates who might be friendly to his party. All these negotiations occupied the latter part of the year 1166. To the same period belong the letters contained in the next chapter, which bring down the history to the month of December, when the cardinals, William and Otho, were appointed legates, to effect, if possible, a mediation between the parties.

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

LETTERS WRITTEN IN THE YEAR 1166, BEFORE THE  
APPOINTMENT OF THE LEGATES.

## LETTER XL.

“ THE ARCHBISHOP TO HENRY OF WINCHESTER.

“ THOMAS, BY THE GRACE OF GOD HUMBLE MINISTER OF THE  
CHURCH OF CANTERBURY, TO OUR VENERABLE BROTHER  
HENRY, BY GOD'S GRACE BISHOP OF WINCHESTER, THE  
SPIRIT OF KNOWLEDGE AND OF WISDOM.

“ WITH what earnestness we sympathize with you  
the Searcher of hearts best knows. We are not  
ignorant how many things there are to annoy you,  
and how few there are, or rather none, who stand  
by you, or encourage you in the storm. But  
cheer up, and strengthen yourself, lest our ene-  
mies prevail, and entangle you in their wiles and  
circumventions. Those who tread among serpents,  
and along a tortuous path, must use the cunning  
of the serpent. This we speak to you as a brother,  
and one beloved in Christ.

“ But we have somewhat against you,—even a  
serious offence, at which we have much been  
grieved. We have heard for certain that you  
have alienated from your Church its silver cross ;

a most imprudent act, which we pronounce to be contrary to all the canons. For the canons strictly forbid such alienations. We enjoin you, therefore, and command you, by virtue of your obedience, within forty days after the receipt of this letter, to use every means for restoring the aforesaid cross to the possession of the Church, over which, by God's permission, you preside. Failing which, we cite you within two months after the forty days, to appear in our presence to answer for the above-named alienation. And so, my brother, farewell!"

## LETTER XLI.

“ JOHN OF SALISBURY TO THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY.

“ THE consolatory letters which your faithful children, the bishops of the province of Canterbury, lately sent you, after your long exile and proscription, I have carefully perused, and I look upon them as dictated by Ahitophel himself come to life, and written by a second Doeg of Idu-mea, thirsting for the blood of Christ and his elect. Everything is therein so perverted that it is easy for any one to see how irreconcilable they are with public opinion and the voice of truth, and how manifestly they have been framed to give a colour of justice to the appeal of the bishops. Solomon says, in the Proverbs, that the end is

better than the beginning; but in this case it is most assuredly worse: they begin with health and obedience! and I could have wished that the salutation had been sincere, and that they had not offended against God's commands by speaking peace with their lips and bearing malice in their hearts. Then follows a plausible history, which a condemned criminal would be glad to listen to in commutation of his sentence, in which they justify their conduct, calling good evil and evil good, and seem to draw the inference, that whoever resists a king deserves death. They say, Heaven knows with what truth, 'we do not assert that our lord the king has never erred, but we say and assert with confidence, that he has always been ready to make atonement to the Lord for what he may have done amiss.' Must not their face be as brazen as a harlot's, and their forehead harder than adamant, to assert so confidently the innocence of one whose malice is so notorious to all Christendom? The bishops of London and Hereford, it is said, called him to account, and he told them that he would listen to reason; but was not this bishop of London the man who first rent the unity of the Church in England, and laid the foundation for all these disturbances? Does not the letter exhibit all the malice of Ahitophel and Doeg, with the addition of his own, in which he is inferior to

neither of them? His language betrays him. I do not mind what he says about your entrance upon the episcopal office, because I was present and saw what happened. He was the only person who objected to your promotion, because, as may be shown in many ways, he aspired more than all the others to the station which you occupy. Yet he did not dare to murmur long, because the others checked his ambition and his impudence. Whatever then might be his feeling, which God alone can judge, he was one of the foremost in electing you, and applauded the choice more than any one. What shall I say about him of Hereford?—only that he for a very long time remained with only the shadow of a reputation, and that not a great one, before he was known at last to the world. And now, because he is supposed to be learned by those who know no more of learning than they do of him, they try to make him a veil for their own malice, that their own conduct may be thought reasonable, because it is approved of by a bishop and an elder. To reply to both these, or to acquiesce in their united opinion, is to adopt altogether the opinion of the bishop of London, according to what was said of Cæsar and Bibulus.

“ Non Bibulo quidquam nuper, sed Cæsare gestum est ;  
Nam Bibulo gestum consule nil memini.

“ With what effrontery can the bishops state that the king thinks compliance sweet when he is admonished of his errors? All the world knows how impatient he is of correction, how he persecutes the Church, and prefers his own ordinances to the holy canons. To say nothing of you and your clerks, has he not unjustly proscribed women, children, and infants, all driven by his insane cruelty to the extremity of destitution and suffering? He has revived the schism in the Church, which had almost died away, and resuscitated the storm by which the apostolic vessel is almost overwhelmed. If men can look on these things as nothing, what do they consider as acts of guilt? All these things need no proof, but are as clear as the light of day, and the Church feels it by her daily sufferings. If the king deems ‘compliance sweet’ when he is admonished, what traitors must they be who suffer their lord, for whom they are responsible, to offend so enormously? O Israel, thy prophets are like foxes in the desert! our pastors are weaving a web to the destruction of the Church; they preface their wiles by a humble salutation of devout obedience, and end their arguments with crucify him! crucify him! Do not save him, but Barabbas! This is the health, this the obedience, which they offer to their father! this their mode of effecting peace between the throne

and the altar ! I have no doubt that all who know of our exile are acquainted with these things as well as I ; but when I reflected on their impudence, treachery, deceit, and lying, I could not resist alluding to the subject ; for—

“ Si natura negat, facit indignatio verbum.  
Omne in præcipiti vitium stetit !

“ Nature is dumb : but indignation speaks  
When vice thus stands on tiptoe !

“ Their depravity is so great, that all the subtilities and refinements of posterity will be unable to add anything to it. But no more of this : may God requite them, and unless truth has been turned into falsehood and falsehood into truth, He will most assuredly requite them according to their desert.

“ Your reply to their malicious letter is, I think, most elegant and most judicious : you have most ably shaken to pieces the wiles which they had spun. Your letter is certainly long, but it contains no more than was necessary. I wish, however, you had been more particular in pointing out the patience which you have so long manifested, and your anxiety to re-establish peace : how you addressed a letter to the king with all humility, and how afterwards the pope's messenger, as well as your own, the king's own

mother, to whom he ought to have listened, several of the bishops, both Norman and English, templars, hospitallers, and the king of France himself, interceded for you ; and lastly, how you sought an interview yourself and were repulsed. But the bishops write next, that the king has always been ready to listen to justice and to do what justice demands. Now my advice to you is, to summon all the bishops, and especially those who sent this letter, his lordship of Salisbury, who complains of being unjustly suspended, and him of your own creation, the bishop of Worcester, and all the rest, and put this assertion of the king's willingness to the test. Perhaps they will not come : if so, an appeal will not justify disobedience, but your cause will be justified, because their falsehood and malice will be revealed. I cannot believe that all the bishops and clergy have consented to this nefarious act : in eighteen dioceses there are surely ten persons for whose sake God will spare that island-church, and save it from sharing the fate of its sisters, whose luxury and impiety it is imitating. There is silence I admit, but surely there are many, who in piety, faith, and the consciousness of good works, are awaiting the kingdom of heaven. Joseph was found in the house of Pharaoh, Lot in Sodom, Daniel in

Babylon, Abdias in the palace of Ahab and Jezebel, and they kept silence because they could do no good by speaking.

“ It would be wise, therefore, if the gulf which is fixed so widely between us and our country allow it, to send your letter to all the bishops and churches, and so confirm the waverers, and stir up all to feeling. Urge each of them mildly and gently, by frequent letters, to return to a sense of their duty : but above all, be cautious that you show no sign of arrogance or want of moderation. I have heard that the bishop of Hereford was formerly, in the schools, as eager of praise, as he was a despiser of money. Perhaps nothing would have so much influence on him as a letter from the prior of St. Victor's, and the other schoolmasters and priors who were once so intimate with him in France. Let them exhort him by letter to show himself a bishop such as he used formerly to describe a bishop in the schools, and to redeem his fame by casting off the vices which he then censured. The same plan may be followed with the bishop of Worcester. However, I have no great hopes of them, nor do I anticipate much good from the king of France, when it comes to the worst ; but you must consider this, like all the rest, said to you in confidence. I do not place much reliance on the court of Rome : whose necessities and

mode of acting I now see through. Our lord the pope, indeed, is a holy and righteous man, and his abbat, as I am told by many, does his best to imitate him : but their necessities are so great, and the dishonesty and cupidity of the Romans are so startling, that the pope sometimes uses his prerogative, and by dispensation obtains what may benefit the state, but cannot benefit religion. I fear you will have to wait till the appeal day, and then I apprehend presents will have their weight, and the givers will expect something in return. The times are very bad, and the circumstances of all parties create apprehension. Our enemies, who are the enemies of Christ and his Church, are resolved to wound us out of what has been despoiled from us. If it were not so, they might, out of regard to their own ease, be really zealous in making peace for us. This is only an aggravation to their malice, that they are enjoying their pleasures and rolling in wealth, whilst all the toil and hardships fall on us. The aid of man is denied us : let us pray to God that He may save us from these evils, present and to come, and cover us with the shield of his mercy."

## LETTER XLII.

“ THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY TO GILBERT, BISHOP OF  
LONDON.

“ WE remember having ordered you to hold as excommunicate throughout your diocese, and to signify the same to your brethren, certain persons whom for their injuries towards the Holy See and the Church of Canterbury we formerly excommunicated. If you have faithfully discharged this order to the honour and advantage of the Church and your own salvation, we congratulate you for your fraternal obedience. But if not, we mourn for you, not on our account, but for the wrong done to the pope and the holy see. And may God avert from you the consequences of disobedience. For though the anger of the sovereign pontiff may be delayed, and his hand seems slow, yet the wound with which he punishes demerit, never can be healed: and no one under the sun can save a man out of his hand. No one but an infidel, or what is worse, a heretic or schismatic, can refuse to obey his mandates. But we are addressing one who knows the law, as well as we, who has been nurtured in virtue, in religion, in obedience, and who needs no teaching. A man may cheat his own soul, but cannot cheat the word of God, which says, ‘Woe to them who justify the wicked, and call good evil, and dark-

ness light.' At present he is pronouncing that woe! but will soon inflict it bitterly. He punishes the powerful, and exercises the severest judgments on those who neglect the duties of their rank, and refuse to warn the wicked of their wickedness. Hereafter he will crown in triumph those who faithfully obey, and meanwhile consoles those who strive against injustice.

“ We beg of you, therefore, and beseech you in the Lord Jesus, that whereas crimes have for our sins multiplied in the world, you do rise up to support the Church, and put forth the sword of the word, which is committed to us, to punish the evil and protect the good, that you may not be found to bear that sword in vain. If you shall see any remiss in doing right, animate and encourage them, and take to yourself what Christ, who is now again crucified by the wicked, said in the moment of his passion, ‘ And thou, when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.’ You will have us to aid you in liberating the Church, and in nothing that concerns God’s honour will we fail to give you our support, as far as his mercy shall give us strength. But our lord the pope will give you the aid that is required; and he has already committed to us to be his representative in England, as you may perceive from the letters which we here forward to you.

“ We, therefore, command you, my brother, and in virtue of your obedience, and in peril of your orders, we enjoin you, on the authority of the pope, to communicate these our letters to the fellow bishops of your province, and to the bishop of Durham, as speedily as possible, and afterwards to have them restored to us.

“ Moreover, by the same authority, and under the same perils, we command you to show due respect to the bearers, who are the accredited agents of our lord the pope, and provide for their full security, as you wish regard to be shown to your own dignity.”

#### LETTER XLIII.

“ THE ARCHBISHOP TO THE BISHOP OF LONDON AND THE  
OTHER BISHOPS OF ENGLAND.

“ WE hereby forward to you letters from our lord the pope, in which he commands, under peril of his anathema, that all the possessions which have been taken away from our clerks shall be restored by those to whom the king has assigned them. Wherefore we command you, by the authority of the apostolic pontiff, within two months after the receipt of these letters, to cause restitution to be made to us of all that you have received from the above-named possessions,

lest what the pope threatens fall upon you. We also command you to compel the clerks of your diocese to make similar restitution of all that they have received."

## LETTER XLIV.

"JOHN OF SALISBURY TO BARTHOLOMEW OF EXETER.

"I HAD a great many things to write to you about, but the short time which I have to spare, and the worry of my necessary occupations, prevent me from doing more than alluding to them at present. My brother is come, thank God, and is most grateful to you for all your care of him: this adds to the weight of obligations under which I already lie towards you on my own account. I have had letters by the hand of a friend, warning me, and begging me to warn you, that the king has commanded Joceline de Baliol, and other ministers of his royal clemency, to take you and the bishop of Worcester, and treat you as public enemies. God grant that my fears may not be realised, but whatever the bishops may say in their letters of appeal, about his gentleness, justice, affability, and reverence to the clergy, there is no act of impiety towards God or cruelty towards men, of which the Franks and Latins do not think him capable. All are

astonished to hear with what effrontery you have dared to write an episcopal letter in support of the man's innocence, when his injustice is the talk of all men, and the whole world is acquainted with his mode of condemning and injuring people. The words of your letter in the king's behalf, which your notary attempts to justify, are these, 'The king promises strict justice, and is ready to show it by his deeds. He deems compliance sweet, when he is admonished to correct the offences which he has committed against God. He is not only ready to give satisfaction, but if justice requires it, to make a considerable sacrifice for that purpose.' A little further on it is stated, that 'he does not wish to withdraw himself in the slightest particular from the judgment of the Church, where its claim of jurisdiction is well-founded, on the contrary, he willingly bows his neck to the yoke of Christ.' A little higher up it is said, 'We do not say that our lord the king has never erred, but we say, and confidently assert, that he has been always ready to make amends to the Lord for his errors.' This, they say, is a pretty assertion for the English bishops to make, a genuine and unbiassed testimony to give in support of the Church's liberties! A clown or stage-player, they say, would be ashamed to make such an assertion even in jest. If your scribe wishes to obtain credit for what he writes, he

must go where Latin is unknown. Wherever such an assertion is read in our part of the world,

‘*Quære peregrinum, vicinia rauca reclamat.*’

However, your scribe has guarded against your being thought to give unqualified support to the constitutions by the following: ‘The king is ordained by the Lord to provide for the peace of his subjects; and to preserve this to the churches and people committed to his care, he demanded that the royal dignities which had been observed towards his ancestors, should be observed towards himself.’ What did the Church of France say to this? ‘May God and the holy Evangelist watch over those who wrote such language: the king, perhaps, may be the guardian of his people’s peace, but it must be by his absence, for wherever he is present, he throws every thing into confusion!’ The bishops, or, as I should rather say, the bishop<sup>2</sup>, proclaims peace! but all reply, there is no peace, but bitterness, yea, the worst of all bitterness! If the king, as your Demosthenes states, wants only his lawful constitutions, he ought to be content with those which do not impugn the law of God, or injure public morals, or dishonour the clergy, or bring

<sup>2</sup> The bishop of London.

souls into danger, or subvert the liberties of the Church, his mother, from whom he received the sword to protect her from injury. But what he desires is very different from this, as is evident from the roll which the pope and the holy father condemned, and which all the clergy and people exclaim against to this very day. I fear much that the bishops themselves will be obliged to contravene their own letter, and unsay what they have said, to justify what they have condemned, and to condemn what they have justified. The statement which is drawn up in the name of all, bears the seal of only three of them, namely, that chief of the synagogue, he of London, my lord and friend, whom I meanwhile forgive, the bishop of Winchester, and that equally learned man, and old schoolmaster, though new bishop, his lordship of Hereford. Their authority would have been overwhelming, had not consent in evil-doing, and testimony to manifest falsehood, as evinced by this letter, and their seals attached to it, cast a prejudice over their fair fame. The other bishops, meanwhile, whose names appear in the inscription of the letter, are discussed more gently; for it cannot be believed that so many learned and pious men came and agreed together to defeat the divine law and the canons, and bring ruin on the Church, to the end that iniquity might prevail and justice be oppressed.

Yet all, as I hear, have given weight to that character. If they saw this, it was unholy of them to give testimony to such wickedness; if they saw it not, it was foolish to interpose their own characters, and so lend authority to the iniquity of others.

“But when I have so many other things to say, why do I waste arguments on so clear a subject? That writing of yours, though you were to do nothing in the matter, would, by our diligence, find its way to the Roman pontiff, who by good proof knows the character of him whose conduct you seek to justify: he will speedily discover in what sincerity the bishops have given this testimony, and what were the feelings of him who acted as your scribe, who, as God did not further his wishes to become archbishop over the English Church, has been made head of the synagogue by the consent of those who are now persecuting Christ. Our lord the king has lately written to him through Ralph de Diceto his archdeacon, informing him that he will submit himself, his kingdom, and the cause which lies between him and the Church, to his judgment, as his spiritual father and most faithful friend: and he has commanded his officers to obey him in all things. If any wrong, therefore, befall you, or your Church, or his lordship of Worcester, it is to this same person that you

must apply, that he may admonish the king thereof; for in that noble letter, which is now spreading through kingdoms and provinces, his majesty has declared, that ‘he thinks compliance sweet, when he is admonished to correct an offence that he has committed against God.’ Now he who sins against his neighbour, sins against God, and a man undoubtedly dishonours Christ the Bridegroom, when he dishonours the Church his bride. For Christ and his Church are one body, one spirit, and what is more, they are by grace one God, inasmuch as by a mysterious bond the Church confers that which is fleshly on the Lord, and receives from Him in return the fullness of the divine nature, and abounds, even to overflowing, with the oil of gladness. \* \* \*

“The king of England, as they say who have seen the chief of the synagogue’s letters of appeal, has bishops well suited to him, who have taught their tongue to speak a lie, and have laboured to commit injustice. He solicits others that he may subvert them, and himself suffers the same at their hands. What a glorious, what a truly catholic and religious letter he must have written lately to the schismatical bishop of Cologne, if you may conjecture by his reply, which is sent you: it must be evident to all with what truth he made that bold assertion about our king’s piety and regard for justice.

“ His majesty has lately received some ambassadors from the marquis of Montferrat, those vain deceivers the abbat of Selsey and the bishop elect of Hipporum, demanding one of the king’s daughters in marriage for the marquis’s son, and promising in return to have the archbishop of Canterbury deposed. This has led the king to send back with them as ambassadors, John Cumin, Ralph de Tamworth, and John of Oxford, though there is a sentence against the last, confirmed by the pope, depriving him of his deanery. The deed of deposition is in the hands of the archbishop, who is primate of England and legate of the apostolic see, and the sentence which he has passed against the king’s counsellors and spoliators of the Church of Canterbury has been ratified by the pope, who has commanded all the bishops on both sides of the water to observe it. The archbishop has got the legation, and is confirmed in his primacy. He has written to the bishop of London, and to all of you, on this subject; and I believe the same bishop of London has received the letters, which he is bound to show to you all.

“ The archbishop has also, on apostolical authority, excommunicated, or commanded to be excommunicated, all those who watch the ports, to impede appellants, or others who, for purposes of devotion, travel to the threshold of the holy apostles, or who make visits to himself, and has

ordered all the bishops to cause his sentence to be observed in their dioceses. Moreover, though he does not hold as valid the appeal which the bishops have made against himself, yet as the king, bishops, and nobles, look upon it as valid, placing their confidence on a fleshly arm, namely, their own prudence, they are bound to observe the appeal, and to alter nothing whilst it is pending.

“After this, William the chaplain, and others of the clergy, to say nothing of laymen, were captured by the king’s orders, and besides being stripped of their ecclesiastical benefices, were treated atrociously into the bargain. The archbishop, therefore, denounced the king to the pope, as having offended against the canon, and in consequence excommunicate, unless his holiness looked upon the laws of the Church as no better than those of the state, which, according to Anacharsis, like spiders’ webs catch little flies, but let large ones escape. The pope had given orders that the bishops of Bourges, Rouen, Tours, Bourdeaux, and York, should observe, and cause to be observed in their dioceses, the sentence which the archbishop of Canterbury should pronounce against the spoliators of his Church. But he added in the letters, that he neither commands nor forbids him to excommunicate the king in person, for he is unwilling to deprive the arch-

bishop of his usual prerogatives, particularly as the king abuses the patience of the Church in many ways. He has also commanded, under peril of anathema, that all who, by the king's order, have seized the property of the archbishop's clerks, shall make plenary restitution, because the king, acting himself as a spoliator, can give no just title to others.

“I did my best with his grace of Canterbury to keep back those letters, but he was over-persuaded by the advice of others, who urged him not to delay the powers which the pope gave him, lest his holiness should die, an event which the king was looking out for; and they further pointed out, that any backwardness on his part led to renewed ferocity on the part of the king. However, if these mandates reach you, do not be alarmed about any property which may have been abstracted from us in your parts, for any disposition of our property which has met with your approbation, will, please God, meet with ours also. Let us retain our rights, and our parsonages, and we care little for our moveables, particularly if you benefit by our losses. We have established your innocence with the archbishop, and he is now sufficiently convinced of it: do not let any one persuade you to the contrary. He has sent you letters of summons, commanding you, by apostolical authority, in virtue of your obedience

and in peril of your orders, to appear before him within forty days, without excuse or delay, to hear the pope's mandates, and to consult on the necessities of the Church. If it suits you, you will make use of this command as an excuse for coming, but if not, you have the consent of the writer to look upon it as no command at all. For we have not been trying to lay a trap for you, as was done to one of his friends by that negligent species of diligence which was shown in the matter; on the contrary, we have ordered that the letters shall be given to Master Baldwin, the archdeacon, or your brother, R. Fitz-Giles, and afterwards to you or not, just as you please. You may, however, be sure that if the king does not set William the chaplain at liberty, sentence of anathema will be pronounced on his own head, for no mercy will be shown to any one who shall dare to commit such atrocities."

## LETTER XLV.

"THE KING OF ENGLAND TO THE CARDINALS.

"As regards the message which my lord the pope has sent, in which he asserts that I have alienated my mind from the holy see, I answer, in the first place, and you can substantiate from your own knowledge my assertion, that I have always loved his person, and have endured much in his

behalf. To omit other instances, I would remind you that I was not persuaded by others to take his part, when the question of his succession was first raised, but did so voluntarily, and persuaded others also. And we have never changed these feelings of devotion towards him, but he has been most troublesome to me for a long time past, as his acts show; for he tampers with my nobles, tries to cover my person with infamy, and now both in his speeches and writings he calls me the persecutor and assailant of the Church. Let his lordship consider whether it is consistent of him to advise me to preserve a fair reputation, that chief object of a king's solicitude, and to endeavour himself, both by word and deed, to throw aspersions upon it. We wish you to believe that whatever honours, dignity, or power we possess, as well as our kingdom itself, and every thing else committed to our care, we hold all as the gift of our great Creator, to whom our gratitude is given, not as much as He deserves, but as much as we are able to bestow. May our lord the pope pray God that we may be enabled to thank Him, and to reverence Him as we ought.

“It is our wish also to continue in favour and love with our lord the pope, if he will have the same regard towards us, whether as concerns our person or dignity, which his predecessors had towards my ancestors. He says that we prevent

appeals being made from our kingdom to the Roman court, but we wish your prudence to be informed that we have never thrown impediments in the way of appeals being made, as they were made of old in the time of our ancestors, according to the customs and dignities of our kingdom, as the ancients and learned men of our kingdom, both clerks and laics, have received them. Whereas he accuses me of having corresponded with excommunicates, we do not think that we have in this offended God, or acted contrary to reason; for, as we heard from our lord the pope's own mouth, he never looked on the emperor Frederic as excommunicated; and whereas we have given our daughter in marriage to his son, we have no doubt that we have acted lawfully, for our grandfather Henry gave his daughter also in marriage to Henry the emperor, of excellent memory, and we, by the advice of our councillors, have followed his example.

“Moreover, he has written to us that we should recall the archbishop of Canterbury, whom he says we have banished, and reinstate him in his see. Now we wish your fraternity clearly to understand that we did not banish him; but it was his own perversity and folly which led him to flee of his own accord, and to do all he could to derogate from my honour, and to injure me. But if the same archbishop is willing to return, and to

pay me that obedience which is due to his lord and king, we also, with the consent of our people, on both sides of the sea, will act towards him as we ought. But we will not recall him, for we have never banished him. Also we will, with the consent of our clergy and barons, willingly redress whatever we have done amiss: but if any one attempts to impede or abate the rights, customs, and dignities of our sovereignty, we will hold him as a public enemy, for we will not put up with any diminution of dignities and customs, which we have received from our predecessors of excellent memory, as they were in the days of former Roman pontiffs.

“ Lastly, whereas he has informed us through you, that we do afflict, or cause to be afflicted, certain ecclesiastical persons in our dominions; God is our witness, and our own conscience, that we have never done so even to this very day, nor have we allowed the same to be done by others.”

#### LETTER XLVI.

“ ARNULF OF LISEAUX TO THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY.

“ HARDLY had I been three days with his lordship of Meaux, when William Durentent came with your letter on the first of April. I was delighted at receiving it, and ready to comply with

your wishes, for the next morning, if it can be called the morning, when it was still dark, I waved the sacredness of the day, and having received my friend the bishop's blessing, I came to Senlis, and had an audience with the king of France, whom I requested with all humility to procure a lodging for you. He answered with his usual kindness, that according to his arrangement with the pope, you were to take up your residence in the Cistercian monastery of Val St. Marie, near Pontisare, until you should be invited to an audience, and that there was no need of troubling about it in the meantime, for it was uncertain whether you are yet come. To this I said that it was desirable to provide beforehand, on account of the numbers that would come together, lest you and your clerks might be at a loss where to go. Upon which he said that he would take care, when it came to that point, to provide for you according to your dignity. This was all I could get from him, notwithstanding all my earnestness. I therefore tell you what I have done in your matters, and wait to hear your pleasure on the subject. My brother's house is at your disposal, but it is three leagues distant from the place of conference. Meanwhile I will do what lies in my power to get you a lodging nearer the spot; but I am sorry that your instructions did not reach me sooner. Pray tell your messenger to be

speedy, that the matter may be settled as soon as possible. It is very short notice, and every thing is in such a bustle that there is scarcely a place unoccupied. God bless you, my dear lord !”

## LETTER XLVII.

“JOHN OF SALISBURY TO GERARD PUCELLE<sup>3</sup>.

“THAT I have not written to you before, and indeed that I write to you so seldom, and not until you have written twice to me, arises from the want of a bearer to carry my letters, besides which, the distance is great, and our people are unacquainted with the road. But friendship lives, though the offices of charity are dormant, and we cannot indulge as we would wish in an interchange of thought. But in this personal absence, the vigour of our feelings is increased, and the mind is schooled to bear its load with patience. Yet I wish we could come together, and indulge in sweet converse, and strengthen one another against all contingencies. But God wills it otherwise, and we cannot change his will, and to those who obey Him every thing will work for good. You have told me all about yourself,

<sup>3</sup> Gerard was at this time residing among the adherents of the antipope Octavian, and the schismatical emperor Frederic.

and I thank you much for it. You have asked my advice by the agency of master Ralph. I reply that I hope God's mercy may provide for you without my interference, and that by my humble services, he may deign to bestow on you whatever may conduce to your honour, your profit, and your salvation. I will tell you what I think without disguise, as becomes a friend, and with that fidelity which has always given such satisfaction to my masters. Know then, that there are various opinions about your departure, many blame the change, some make excuses for it. The multitude did not know your intentions and necessities, nor the indulgence which you had received from the Roman pontiff, or the profit that may accrue to the Church from this arrangement. They look only to the crime of schism, the malice of those to whom you have gone over, and the danger of living among those who are excommunicated. They judge rightly, and when they see a man mixed up with the reprobate, they think that he is consenting to their error. But I, who know your motives intimately, agree with the multitude in part only. In condemning schism they are right: for the punishment of Dathan, Korah, and Abiram, shows what God has thought of schism from the very first, as we read their history in the book of Numbers. The same infer-

ence may be drawn from the history of Elisha and Naaman, in the fourth book of Kings<sup>4</sup>.

“If then Naaman, who was a Gentile, so feared to enter the temple of Rimmon, what ought a Christian philosopher, a teacher of the law, to feel? But he who, living among such, is a bold assertor of the truth, is not tainted by their contact. Thus Lot dwelt in Sodom, Joseph in Pharaoh’s house, and Daniel received commands from God in the city of Babylon. It is, therefore, my wish, that among schismatics you should preach peace with that wisdom and moderation which shall be serviceable to the Church, for whose sake God has sent you among those barbarians. The apostle became all things to all men, that he might gain all, and he preached Christ through evil report and good report. So you should preach Christ to the emperor, if you can, for to his lordship of Cologne you undoubtedly will be able. They will not strive to cloak their error: their conscience condemns them, and their power is already falling. Who could equal Frederic, till he became a tyrant and a schismatic, instead of a king and a Catholic? I do not say that he has erred on matters of faith, but of Church discipline. He has severed the priesthood from the Lord, and now the Lord has

<sup>4</sup> According to the Latin vulgate.

severed his own empire from him. The king of England also, who was once the terror of the neighbouring kings, has lifted up his heel against the Church, and tried to reduce her to servitude, and now he is made the victim of an unarmed race<sup>5</sup> of men, and obliged to ask help from others: you tell me he is still forming scheme after scheme, but unless God's Spirit speak falsely his wiles shall fall upon his own head, for the wicked are caught in their own snares, and he who digs a pit for others, shall fall into it himself.

“ I sent your letter to his lordship of Canterbury, but because I could not detain your messenger beyond the feast of St. Remy [Oct. 1], I have not yet received the archbishop's answer. It is certain that he feels grateful to you for your services, and when he has an opportunity will requite them. There is no doubt that in his own person, he has gained both in moral virtues and in learning more than enough to compensate for the king's oppressions. His primacy is moreover confirmed to him afresh, and the archbishop of York is commanded to recognize it and to obey him. He is also legate of all England, except the province of York, which is exempted from our

<sup>5</sup> The king of England had about this time met with some severe reverses in his wars against the Welsh.

jurisdiction, because its archbishop is legate of Scotland, and the Roman Church is not used to subject one legate to another. But on the other hand, it does not cancel allegiance if it exists on any other grounds.

“Our king hopes that William of Pavia and another cardinal may be sent as legates, to decide the question, as he thinks, in his favour. But he has himself prevented this by his unheard-of exactions and injuries.

“It seems to me, therefore, that you should persuade his lordship of Cologne to see the king face to face, in the hope of advice and friendship, to point out to him the difficulties in which his cause is involved. For how can the archbishop, according to the canons, be compelled to carry on his cause after an appeal, whilst he is in a state of spoliation? He should first be restored, and peace be made, besides many other things which the canons prescribe. He and his men have been spoiled to the value of more than ten thousand marks, and until all this is made good, his persecutors, even if they had justice on their side, could not compel him to answer.

“Thus, then, is a wide field of negotiation open to you, if by any chance you can persuade him through your friend of Cologne, to desist from these outrages, which give his adversaries so many handles against him. A short time since the bishop of

Chichester tried this, telling the king he was the best supporter the archbishop had; 'For,' said he, when asked what he meant, 'you put him in the right by your own violent proceedings; and, whatever were the merits of your own cause, you make them of no avail. You provide him too with the counsel and assistance of the best or some of the best clerks in your dominions, by driving them into exile with him, and not permitting their return.' The king was moved at this, and betrayed his solicitude with sighs; but wrath prevailed over wisdom.

"To go on to another point: you know you once had a friend in the king of France; and you cannot tell what the future may bring about; so, whether he is offended at your departure or not, I advise you to present him some little token from you, in the one case to recover his favour, or in the other to renew it. There is nothing however which would do so much for you with himself and the whole French Church, and even the Romans, as to make it known that, as becomes a philosopher and a Christian, you bear your testimony to the truth, preferring honesty to the wealth of Cræsus and all manner of delicacies. If a moralist and a heathen could so well say in the praise of literature

'Quia vatis avarus

Haud temere est animus,'

ought not a philosopher and a herald of the Gospel to be ashamed of encumbering himself with this world's goods? But I hope in the Lord, that by some counsel or inquisition, or in some other way, as He sees best, He will give you an opportunity to speak truth in the ears of Princes, to the advantage both of their souls and your own, and may the spirit of your father give it effect!

“Do not be deterred, by what you see faulty in the Roman Church: our Lord tells us not to imitate the acts of those who sit in Moses's seat, but in our own acts to exemplify their doctrines. Farewell, and forget not your friend, for he never forgets you!”

#### LETTER XLVIII.

“WILLIAM BISHOP ELECT OF CHARTRES TO POPE  
ALEXANDER.

“As the strength of the limbs flows from the head, so the safety of all the Churches proceeds from the holy Roman see, which is their head. A noble member of that body is the see of Canterbury, the metropolitan Church of the English nation: which was the means of converting all the island from idolatry, and all the other Churches of that land ought to revere her as their mother in Christ. The king of England

is doing his best not to cripple but to destroy her, and to destroy with her all ecclesiastical liberty, so that the authority of the apostolic see will speedily be annihilated, and his own will become law in all his dominions. Unless his audacity is checked, it is to be feared that other kings and potentates will be encouraged to similar acts of daring against God's Church, for men think lawful whatever they see goes on unpunished. The noble archbishop of Canterbury is exiled amongst us because he opposed such iniquities, and dared to uphold the apostolic privileges, and speak in the Church's cause. This matter concerns you, holy father, for it is you who will feel the evils of such presumption. God's mercy hath reserved for you in the exercise of your apostolic authority to subdue this tyranny, and the victory will redound to your glory. If the king prevails, which God forbid! the English Church is lost, and the Gallican Church is in danger. Your devoted son, the most Christian king of the French, together with the Church and nobles of his kingdom, are waiting to see what help you will bestow on the archbishop who is exiled in the Church's cause, and what consolation you will offer to the suffering and fainting Church. They are waiting, I say, and they will consider whatever you may do for the archbishop as a service

rendered to themselves more especially if you will confound that John of Oxford and his accomplices, for having made an execrable treaty with the emperor against the Church of God. If you will examine minutely the contrivances of the English king, you will detect the cunning of the fox, and the Church's liberties will be safe. All that king's actions are so suspicious to us and our neighbours, that it is become a proverb among us, 'Blessed is he who dashes his little ones against the rock.' As he is thoroughly known to all his neighbours, I hope he may be known to your holiness and to all the world. We pray your majesty, therefore, to open your ears to the people's vows, and to hear the prayers which the archbishop and his followers put up in the cause of God and his Church. For your holiness may be sure that the king and nobles of France join most heartily in their cause."

## LETTER XLIX.

"THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY TO SILVESTER, TREASURER OF LISIEUX.

"IF the man speaks proudly, who can introduce novelties into the compact of an oath, we hold it in no wise a thing to be wondered at. It is better for us to fall by the wickedness of another than by our own fears. You may be certain,

whatever the consummate duplicity of that oath-taker may invent, whatever the capricious tyranny of our persecutor may threaten us with, yet, by God's mercy, neither death nor life, nor angels, nor any other creature shall separate us from the love of God, which has caused us this present tribulation. Neither shall his lordship of Pavia, until this iniquity is complete, and this load upon us removed. At such concurrence of events some traces of liberty may begin to show themselves, and the same zeal, by which it was considered to be almost destroyed, shall thus be the means of its rising again more vigorous than before. Do you not know that the largest trees, which have required years to grow, are cut down in one hour? It is foolish to look for their fruits, and yet to be unprepared for their fall. Let it be your consolation then, that God's enemies, however honourable and exalted they may have been, shall nevertheless fade away like the smoke. Listen awhile to the whisper of the breeze, in which the Lord speaks: yet a little while, and the sinner shall not be: his place shall be sought and shall not be found. But enough of this.

“ If those whom we excommunicated are to receive absolution, or are already absolved, it is the same thing: it is admitted that they are excommunicated. It follows, therefore, that those who communicated with them have incurred the

taint of excommunication. Let them look to the consequences.

“ John of Oxford did not receive all these benefits from the pope for nothing. It is some consolation to us, as we have learnt for certain from those who are on their return from the court, that in the king’s name he renounced the royal constitutions, which his majesty was so eager to get confirmed. We wish the king to learn this through you, and your countrymen, but not as coming from me. Do not, however, let it be reported as resting on your own authority. Thus, that garrulous fellow will be confounded in his presumption, and be hurled from the pinnacle of his glory. Be not out of spirits: our release or the infliction of ecclesiastical severity is much nearer at hand than falsehood can invent or pride take for granted. Give my good wishes to our good Nicolas. Wait the end with joy, it is the end which characterizes every thing, and which tests a man’s expectations. God bless you again and for ever.”

#### LETTER L.

“ THE BISHOP OF LONDON TO KING HENRY.

“ So great a load of superior authority weighs me down at present, my lord, that I know not what to do, and am compelled to apply to your high-

ness for advice and assistance. An appeal does not nullify the mandates of the apostolic pontiff: I must obey them or be guilty of the sin of disobedience.

“ Now as I was standing before the altar at London, on St. Paul’s day, [Jan. 25<sup>3</sup>,] a stranger put into my hands a letter from my lord the pope, wherein it was notified that his holiness granted to the archbishop of Canterbury the legatine commission over all England, save the province of York: also that I and the other bishops should obey him as legate, and humbly present ourselves at his bidding to answer on all matters concerning our dioceses, and receive his orders; also that all, who have by your authority occupied benefices belonging to the archbishop’s clergy, shall restore them within two months, under pain of excommunication without appeal; also that I shall collect Peter’s pence from my brethren, the other bishops, and forward it in full by the messengers sent for that purpose; also that if I wish to retain my station and sacerdotal order unharmed, I must forward to all the other bishops the pope’s commission as contained in the above letter.

“ Seeing this, we throw ourselves at the feet

<sup>3</sup> This letter properly belongs to the beginning of the year 1167, but is added here because it has reference to others contained in this chapter.

of your highness, and entreat your royal consideration to save us from being reduced to nothing, whilst we are occupied in the business of your kingdom. We pray you to permit our obedience to the pope's mandate, by sending Peter's pence, restoring the benefices, and instructing the bishops, if they find anything against the customs of the kingdom in the archbishop's letters, to appeal at once to our lord the pope or to his legates who are coming to your court. By consenting to this, you will both save me from disobedience, and advance your highness's own cause through our appeal.

“ May God lead you to do his will, and to relieve us from the anguish which we are suffering. Farewell.”

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## CHAPTER XXIX.

PROCEEDINGS OF WILLIAM AND OTTO DURING THE  
YEAR 1167.

WITHIN a few days after the exiles had removed from Pontigny to Sens, the ambassadors whom the archbishop had sent to meet the appeal, returned from the papal court with the intelligence that the king of England's intrigues, carried on by

John of Oxford and his colleagues, had been successful, and that the pope was on the point of despatching two legates a latere one of whom was known to favour the king's side, to enquire into the points at issue between the parties. This commission was notified to Becket in the following letter.

## LETTER LI.

“ THE POPE TO THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY.

“ THAT we do not oftener visit you with our letters, my brother, proceeds from this circumstance, that we communicate with you through your envoys, to whom we impart matters that we do not choose to commit to writing. We now wish to notify to your discretion, that in our desire to make peace, we have dispatched our beloved sons, William, cardinal of St. Peter's, and Otto, of St. Nicolas, to our dear son in Christ, Henry, King of England, to discharge the legatine office in his territories on this side of the water ; and especially to endeavour to effect a reconciliation between you and the aforesaid king. Wherefore, as we value your peace and that of the Church, and wish only to provide for the interests of the Church at large, we ask of you and enjoin you by apostolical autho-

rity, to consider how much the church committed to your care requires your presence and superintendence, and strive to your utmost that peace may be re-established between you and the king, consistently with your own honour and the credit of the Church. And if every thing does not turn out to your wishes, yet bear with it for the present, that at a future time you may be enabled, with God's assistance, to restore things to their former state. And do not take occasion from what we have intimated to our dearest son in Christ, the king of France, to throw any impediment in the way of peace, so long as you can preserve your honour therein, as we before said, and the credit of the Church. For you will have abundant opportunity hereafter, if you use discretion, to abolish many things, which, if now mentioned, would be at once invested with importance. You may confide in the cardinals above-named without reserve, and without doubting in the good will of William of Pavia; for we have strictly commanded him to do all he can to make your peace, and he has given us his promise thereon, so that we can in no wise doubt his word. For the rest, we request and advise you, my brother, to apply to the illustrious count of Flanders on our behalf, and admonish him, in consideration of the Church's necessities and our own, that he cannot confer more ac-

ceptable alms than by giving us his worthy assistance at present, to defend the liberties of the Church.”

This letter was followed by others, dated Dec. 1, addressed to the king and the bishops of England, notifying to them the same fact, with which, however, they were previously acquainted, for the nomination of legates so favourable to the royal party had been effected by the intrigues of his ambassadors at the papal court. One of the legates, William of Pavia, was decidedly favourable to the king: the other, Otto of St. Nicolas, when half way on his journey towards Sens, addressed to Becket the following letter, which does not speak very favourably of the vicissitudes to which travellers in those days were exposed, nor of the respect which was paid to the highest dignities of the Church.

#### LETTER LII.

“ OTTO THE CARDINAL TO THE ARCHBISHOP.

“ THIS is to inform you, my dear brother, that in pursuance to our lord the pope's mandate, we set out upon our journey, and after travelling through places beset with snares and dangers, we arrived, by God's mercy, at Venice: our enemies lay in wait for us on every side, but thank

God, the snare was broken and we were delivered. From Venice we travelled no longer by stealth, but openly, amid the joy and congratulation of our friends, through Mantua, Verona, our own native town Brescia, Pergamos, Milan, near Novara, Vercelles, near Turin, thence to St. Michael's de Clusa, and so on through Provence to St. Giles's and Monte Pessulano, where we arrived safe and unharmed. When your friend, my lord W., comes, whom our lord the pope has sent, we shall again move forward: meanwhile we send on the bearer, to whom you may speak without reserve, as to our own self, and entrust to his keeping any message that you wish to send back to us. Farewell."

The archbishop's messengers not only brought intelligence that the legates were on their way, but that whilst their commission lasted, the archbishop was forbidden to put in force the powers of the Church, or to launch its thunders against the offending king and bishops.

"Thus," says Herbert de Bosham<sup>4</sup>, whose narrative we now follow, "we remained many days, awaiting the arrival of the cardinals. At length they arrived, and paid us the first visit at Sens, which lay on their way to the king. They explained to us the cause of their coming, namely

<sup>4</sup> Book iv. chap. 22.

to make peace between us and the king, to the honour of God, and saving the liberties of the Church. This intimation gave us satisfaction, and the legates continued their journey to the court of king Henry, which was at that time held in Normandy. Here they remained some time without returning to us, or giving us any information of their proceedings. For the king, as was reported, and as the event proved, sought only to protract the time; and though he pretended that he was anxious to effect a reconciliation, the cardinals had repeated audiences, but in vain. At last, that they might not appear to have come altogether on a fruitless errand, they summoned us to a conference at a place on the borders of France and Normandy, between the town of Trie and Gisors.”

The night before the interview took place, if we may believe the account of the same rambling, but apparently honest biographer<sup>5</sup>, the archbishop had a remarkable dream, “as he told his companions the next day on their way to the place of meeting: it seemed to him in his sleep that some one offered him poison in a golden cup.” The material and intellectual worlds are so united, yet nevertheless so ill-defined, that the whole subject is one which presents the great-

<sup>5</sup> Herbert de Bosham, iv. 22.

est difficulties to him who enters on the inquiry. That the events of the preceding day often leave traces on the memory which develop themselves in the most fantastic forms during the ensuing night, is a fact too well established to be refuted. The impression thus produced on the mind sometimes extends to an apparently prophetic view of the future, arising no doubt from the innate tendency of the reason to continue if possible always in action, and to draw conclusions which previous known facts will warrant. This may have exemplified itself in the case of Becket, who, on more than one occasion, is said by his biographers to have related dreams which may no doubt have been produced by the stirring and vital scenes amid which the last years of his life were passed. "The dream was verified," says Herbert de Bosham, "for one of the cardinals, the above-named William of Pavia, was a man of elegant speech, and smooth and persuasive words: what he said appeared at first sight to be dictated by a love of peace; but when examined minutely, was fraught with danger to the liberties of the Church. When we thought of the archbishop's dream, we recognized its accomplishment in the address and manner of the cardinals; wherefore we suspected what they said, and feared to be caught by their words, which were smooth and honeyed, yet at the same

time sharp as arrows. To sum up all in few words, it was their endeavour to persuade us in our terms with the king, to make no mention of the constitutions, which had been reduced to writing, and that the archbishop should thus be allowed to return to his Church, without alluding to a subject which would infallibly stand in the way of a friendly accommodation. ‘For,’ they added, ‘it would be a dishonour to the king to be compelled to renounce in words what had been sanctioned by all his barons and prelates, and recognized as belonging to the crown. Now, if the king grants you peace without mentioning these constitutions, they are thereby understood to be abolished by implication, and as this is the sole cause of the present disagreement, you will in reality have gained your cause; for the king will tacitly have withdrawn the obnoxious constitutions. Of this we have a precedent in the case of a bishop who bestows holy orders on a clerk: he does not mention the obligation of celibacy, yet the clerk is bound to observe it.’ To this they added other instances of consent being implied when nothing was actually said on the subject.

“ We, however, in reply urged, that the constitutions, which had actually been reduced to writing, should expressly be annulled: otherwise

the peace would be hollow, and the liberties of the Church insecure, for the archbishop had been led by a stratagem to give his consent to them, which he would now seem to ratify, unless their abolition was expressly stated. It was not a simple case in which silence would give consent, for consent had already once been given, though fraudulently obtained, and silence would now seem to confirm it. To this were added the expressions of the canons, all of which showed that the constitutions would, without a doubt, be confirmed by us, if we did not insist upon their actual and express withdrawal. We next spoke of the property, real and personal, which had been taken away from our Church and clerks, and of which we claimed restitution. In fine," continues Herbert, "we shaped our proposition in this way, because we had been warned beforehand by some friends whom we had at the king's court, and we determined not to relax our demands, for we knew that the cardinals had on their part urged us to accept terms which they knew the king would never have been prevailed upon to accede to. One of the cardinals openly espoused the king's side, and their wish was to make it appear that we and not his majesty had rejected the proposed terms, and that their own mission had not been altogether fruitless. Thus,

when they found that they could do nothing with us, they left us, and returned to the king's court, whilst we hastened back to Sens."

This useless negotiation occupied ten months of the year 1167: the appeal of the bishops made in June of the preceding year had already long ago expired: the king's party looked, therefore, with some anxiety to the movements of the cardinals, for when it should be publicly and clearly known that they had failed in their mission, the authority of the metropolitan over his suffragans, which the pope had temporarily suspended, would return in all its force, and their experience led them to anticipate that the present possessor of that authority would exercise it with no gentle hand.

In this state of things the bishops called on the cardinals to pronounce sentence in the cause which they had been hearing, for that it was the contumacy of the archbishop and not of themselves, which stood in the way of peaceable arrangement. The dismay both of the king and the suffragans, when they heard that the cardinals were not invested with full power to act, may be better imagined than described. The former treated the cardinals with rudeness: the latter held a hasty meeting, and again, in presence of the legates, renewed their appeal to the pope, fixing, as the term of its being heard, the octave

of St. Martin, in the ensuing year 1168, and thus adding another tedious year to the archbishop's tedious exile. The events thus briefly enumerated form the principal subjects of the following letters, written in the course of the year 1167, and during the continuance of the first legatine commission.

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## CHAPTER XXX.

LETTERS WRITTEN DURING THE YEAR 1167, ON THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE LEGATES, WILLIAM AND OTTO.

### LETTER LIII.

“ POPE ALEXANDER TO LOUIS, KING OF FRANCE.

“ AMONG other marks of your magnificence and devotion, we are most sensible of the honourable reception and ample presents which you have given to our venerable brother Thomas, archbishop of Canterbury, whose character for religion, discretion, and uprightness, has endeared him both to us and to the Church. For these things we thank your highness from our heart, and commend your clemency to the Lord, to whom, in

the person of the archbishop, you have rendered these services, and He will, we believe, requite you for them as much as if they had been done to our own person. And whereas we are most anxious to make peace for the same archbishop, we have thought fit to send our beloved sons, William, cardinal of St. Peter's ad Vincula, and Otto, cardinal deacon of St. Nicolas's, to the court of our dearest son in Christ, Henry, king of England, to make peace between the king and the archbishop, and to hear all causes that may arise in the king's dominions on this side of the water, and to discharge there the legatine commission of the apostolic see. Wherefore we exhort your highness, by these our apostolical letters, for the honour of the Church of God and of St. Peter, and of ourself, to interpose your good offices with the aforesaid king, that the two parties may be brought together, and make peace with one another, without dishonour to the archbishop himself, or the Church. If by the agency of the aforesaid cardinals, and your intervention, peace can be re-established, the Church, which, next to God, depends on you for support, will derive thence no small advantage, and you will obtain due reward from Almighty God. But if, which God forbid! they cannot be reconciled, it would please us much, with your royal approbation and consent, and if it could be done without offence to the

clergy of your kingdom, to confer an especial honour on the archbishop, and make him our representative in those parts. Wherefore we entreat your highness, if they cannot make peace consistently with the Church's honour, which would be our first wish, to communicate to us your wishes as speedily as possible, and in the meantime to keep this letter as secret as possible."

## LETTER LIV.

" THE ARCHBISHOP TO JOHN, HIS ENVOY.

" YOU may imagine from what I am going to relate to you, what universal ridicule has fallen on myself, and obloquy on the pope and cardinals. If we have any friends at court, make them acquainted with these facts. John of Oxford, and the other ambassadors of the king, are returned from the court, exalting themselves above all that is called God, or is worshipped; and boasting that they have obtained all their desire; viz. that the king is exempted in regard to excommunication from all episcopal authority, except that of his lordship the pope; and that he is to have the legate he asked for, William of Pavia. This our more than declared enemy is to come with full powers over the king's whole territory, to plant and to build, and especially to root up and overthrow, without appeal; and, above all, to

decide the principal cause between ourself and the king, and all its incidents which may give rise to exception in time to come.

“ With this pomp and boast is John of Oxford returned to England. On his landing he found our brother, the Bishop of Hereford, waiting for a wind to cross the water, and in concealment; for the king’s officers would have prevented his crossing openly. On finding him, he forbade him to proceed, first in the name of the king, and then of his holiness the pope. The bishop then inquired, as I am assured by his messenger, who came afterwards to excuse his lordship’s non-appearance, ‘ whether he had any letters to that effect?’ He asserted that he had, and that the pope forbade him and the other bishops as well, either to attend our summons, or obey us in any thing, till the arrival of the pope’s legate a latere, who had been obtained by the king, and was coming with full powers to determine the matter on which they had appealed, and the principal cause and all its incidents. The bishop insisted on seeing the letters, but he said he had sent them on with his baggage to Winchester, about twelve miles from Southampton. On considering the matter, the bishop sent back his clerk to Winchester, M. Edward, in whose veracity I confide, and he saw the letters, in company with the bishop of London, who was likewise waiting to

cross the water. When the bishop of London saw them, he said aloud, as if unable to restrain himself, 'Then, master Thomas, you shall never be archbishop more.'

"John of Oxford added, that his own person was privileged, so that we had no power to excommunicate him, or even rebuke him, except in the pope's presence; and that he might present the deanery of Salisbury to any one he pleased; and that our authority was in all points curtailed till the legate's arrival.

"Of all this the bishop informed me, through his chaplain, a canon regular, a holy man, whom he has sent to excuse his neglect of our summons. For we had summoned him once and again, and a third time, with a peremptory mandate to appear in our presence before the Purification, as a man of weight, and in the king's confidence, to assist in effecting peace, if possible, between the king and ourself. All this the canon was ready to swear that he had heard from the bishop, and that he was commissioned on his part to inform me of it.

"If this is true, then, without doubt, his lordship the pope has suffocated and strangled, not only our own person, but himself and every ecclesiastic of both kingdoms; yea, both churches together, the Gallican and the English. For what will not the kings of the earth dare against the

clergy, under cover of this most wretched precedent? And on what can the Church of Rome rely, when it thus deserts and leaves destitute the persons who are making a stand in its cause, and contending for it even unto death? And what if any thing should befall his holiness the pope, while the king and others are in possession of these privileges and exemptions? They will be transmitted to posterity, from whose hands none will be able to wrest them. Nay more, let the Church say yea or nay, other princes will extort like privileges and exemptions for themselves, till in the end the liberty of the Church perishes, and with it the power and jurisdiction of the bishops. For none will be at hand to coerce the wickedness of tyrants, whose whole efforts are at this day concentrated against God's church and ministers. Nor will they desist till these are reduced to like servitude with the rest.

“ However, the result is as yet unseen : what we do see is, that, whether the above assertions are true or false, we at any rate are troubled above measure. No obedience or respect is now shown us in any thing, either by the bishops or abbots, or any of the clergy, as if our deposition was now a settled thing.

“ Of one thing, however, let his lordship the pope assure himself,—no consideration shall induce us to enter the king's territories as a litigant,

nor to accept our enemies as our judges, especially him of Pavia, who thirsts for our blood that he may fill our place: which, as we understand, is promised him in case he rids the king of us.

“ There is another thing that grieves us. The great men of France, nobles, bishops, and other dignitaries, as if despairing of our cause, have sent back our unhappy co-exiles whom their charity hath sustained; and these must perish of cold and hunger, as some indeed have perished already.

“ Be careful to impress all this on his lordship the pope; that if, as we even yet hope, some zeal for God remains with him, he may take steps to relieve us.

“ Farewell, and send back some messenger in all haste, to inform us about those matters. If what is stated proves true, we are indeed in a difficulty.”

#### LETTER LV.

“ THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY TO THE POPE.

“ WE hereby send to your highness the bearer of this letter, who for his station in life is very intimate with us, and for his great talent, a man of fidelity and capacity. We pray your mercy to hear him in our behalf, for our miserable condition is become wearisome, perhaps even loath-

some to our friends, and as some tell us they imagine by your silence, a subject for contempt with your holiness. Even our enemies cannot but look upon us with compassion. Rise, my lord, I pray you, and make no longer tarrying: let the light of your countenance shine upon us: save us and our wretched companions in exile, for we are perishing. Let us not be put to shame among men: our adversaries insult us and Christ's Church; let us not be brought to contempt among the people, when we have invoked you by name, holy father, to watch over us. Not by us, my lord, not by us, but by the name of the Lord Jesus, earn for yourself a name for ever, and restore your endangered reputation; depressed as it is in France by the return of that excommunicated and false schismatic John of Oxford, and the vaunts which he has promulgated. God knows that I am speaking the truth: if you do not believe me, ask those in France, who are most zealous of your honour, and most desirous to promote the advantage of the Church. Your reputation, I say, is at stake; your reputation which has hitherto passed without spot or blemish among mankind, and been preserved harmless through all dangers, when every thing else has been polluted. Let your authority resume its force, and go forth, my father, so that that prate-apace may be confounded, and may

acknowledge that he has spread what is false, promulgating lies. Let him feel your severity, for he has cut off all hope of forgiveness; let him feel your vengeance, for he has abused your kindness: let the world be told that he has found Christ's vicar founded on a rock not easy to be moved, that he is not a reed as the malignants whisper, but the upholder of equity and justice; not an acceptor of persons, nor a favourer of either party in his judgment, but a dispenser of justice equally to the king and to the peasant. God bless your holiness, that it may be well with us and our wretched companions in exile."

## LETTER LVI.

"THE ARCHBISHOP TO CONRAD ELECT OF MAYENCE.

"TO THE HALF OF MY SOUL HEALTH, AS TO MYSELF! YEA,  
MORE; FOR TO MYSELF THERE IS NO HEALTH!

"BETWEEN the uprightness of my conscience and the hardness of my lot, I know not how either to show respect to my feelings or to the times. The bitterness of my mind urges me at all hazards to speak what I think, whereas the necessity of the times prompts me, however unbecomingly, to keep silence. Good God! which way shall I turn myself? There is danger on every side: I am not strong enough to speak without danger:

for I faint to speak with risk to the Church, yet silence involves both her and me in one common ruin. That I may not perish in the Church's downfall, I speak sorrowing on a matter that too much calls for sorrow. The glorious city is captured, that city which subdued the world is subverted and sunk before the love of human favour; and that which could not be slain with the sword, has been cut off by the poisons of these western regions. With shame be it spoken: by her fall the Church's liberties have been sacrificed for the sake of temporal advantages. The road to her ruin lay through the sinuous paths of riches: she has been prostituted in the streets to princes, she has conceived iniquity, and will bring forth oppression to the undeserving. Woe is to us! what shall we do? the authority of the city is failing, and how shall our own necks escape from being bent? Her children are shut out and step-sons are admitted, so that strangers enjoy the mother's inheritance, with which her true heirs should have been nourished. She that ought to have cherished in her bosom the oppressed, and to have administered comfort to the sick, now contributes to the exaltation of the oppressor, and keeps down his victims under a load that crushes them. What safety can we hope for the future, if those who perversely refuse satisfaction are absolved instead of having

their sentence confirmed as it ought to be; if they are allowed to triumph at being forgiven, instead of feeling the vengeance which is their due; if they bring back favour and indulgence, instead of the punishment which they were conscious of having deserved? Would that I had not been reserved to see the sufferings of my people and of the saints, unless it be that, as the Scriptures say, it is necessary for many righteous to suffer for righteousness' sake. It would be some consolation to us if this bitterness of the tree were compensated by the sweetness of the fruit: for disagreeable beginnings often lead to a pleasant termination. This is often indeed the case, but with me it is not so; for that nothing may be wanting to complete our crown of suffering, every thing seems to turn out adverse, and the evil which we experience in the outset appears to lead most untowardly to more bitter sufferings, that are still to come. We are severed from the bosom of our Church and mother, and the mercies of our Father are closed up against us; he that hath no desert has pillaged the deserving; the man of evil conscience hath taken that which belonged to the innocent; the slow hath won the race from the rapid, and he that deserved punishment hath carried off the crown. What have I done that I should thus suffer? If I have shown devotion and faith beyond what

men expected of me, and beyond the wishes of my friends, if I have left every thing, and with my wretched fellows followed my father and my lord, exposing myself to every sort of danger; is this the reward of my discomfiture, these the amends for what I have lost; this the fruit of the tree which is to atone for its bitterness of root? Will not the populace cry out upon this iniquitous retribution? Let God look to this, let Him judge my cause, whether this be justice. A strange thing indeed this is, contrary to all law, and destroying the authority of justice and equity. The rashness of the persecutor hath overspread the rights of the persecuted: so that punishment is awarded to him that has gained the victory, the inglorious triumphs, and the man who deserved bonds has carried off the prize. This legatine commission, which I would had never been thought of, is the cause of all these evils: it was got up for the ruin of all of us who are in exile, and will bring detriment upon the whole Church. But they may strain till they burst themselves, they shall never, by Christ's grace, make me deviate from the path of justice or from the great cause of liberating the Church, or from the duties of my station, which is the love of God, whose will it is that I should suffer tribulation until the just Judge shall come, who will weigh both sides in his even-handed balance, and

will dispense to all, young and old, king or private man, according to his deserts. To Him I look as my judge; to Him, as the avenger of my wrongs; firm in my own good conscience, and secure in the sincerity of my devotion, rooted in faith, and confident that those who in the love of justice suffer injury can never be confounded: nor those who break the horns of the persecutors of the Church be deprived of their everlasting reward. I write thus to you who are the half of my own soul, that you may see the anguish of your friend, that you may dispel his sorrows, and relieve him from his burdens. For there is no grief like to my grief. For I am talked of as betrayed into the hands of enemies, given up to the will of the envious, torn by the teeth of the malignants, and consigned to destruction at the sentence of one of those who persecute me. It is a cruel thing—a hateful and horrible thing, and its very iniquity deserves the censure of posterity for ever. Those men of Pavia should have been content with ruining Italy, without destroying the whole world and the liberties of the Church by their officiousness. I should have much more to say to you, had I not been worn out by the wrongs and indignities that are done me. I dread to disturb your peace of mind by a relation of my sufferings: it would only augment your cares and vex you;

whereas I require all your equanimity that you may save me from ruin.

“Peace then to him who is the sounder half of myself, that the diseased half may become sound also. Haste thee to help me, lest I perish utterly; and receive for recompense glory on earth, an everlasting crown in heaven. Farewell again, and again farewell, and repose the greatest confidence in the bearer, as well as others who, ere long, will be sent to you, by God’s mercy, in my behalf.”

#### LETTER LVII.

“THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY TO JOHN, THE CARDINAL OF ST. JOHN’S AND ST. PAUL’S.

“It is not unknown to your discretion, with what zeal and fidelity, with what devotion and ready service the Church of Canterbury has ever done the will of the Roman see, untempted by the smiles of prosperity, unalarmed by the storms of evil fortune. She once rejoiced to have you for her protector, in the times of my predecessor; from you she derived counsel and comfort, and assistance in the hour of her necessity. All her devotion was to you-ward, and she deemed it a triumph and element of success if an opportunity occurred for her to render you a service, or if her

exertions could in any way benefit you. And we also, who by God's grace are her unworthy minister, have often, as we well remember, done our best to serve you and to gain your good will. Would to God that you had remembered it also! But as you seem to be more forgetful in this matter than is expedient to us in our necessities, we beg of you to listen to what our brother shall tell you, for he is worthy of credit, regarding our devotion towards you. If we have not served you in person since our promotion to the episcopal station, it is not for want of the will but of the opportunity. We still had hopes; for our services were not at an end, they were only put off to a future time. We had intended to pay the debt of friendship largely to our friend and lord, with interest for the whole time that it had been delayed. We wonder, therefore, beyond measure who can have weaned away your affections and your patronage from the Church of Canterbury; particularly in God's cause, the loss of which would endanger the liberty of the whole English Church, and the authority of the Roman see in England, and would leave every thing to be done at the king's caprice. If we had consented in the beginning to the constitutions, as he requested of us, we should not now have wanted your help, or that of any other person

to protect us. Look to it then, whether the wiles of that oath-taker<sup>6</sup>, which have so signally been detected, should have led you so soon to abandon your friend, and to despise the services of the Church of Canterbury. She for her part, although rejected, will never abandon you, nor will we ever, so please you, desist from our devotedness towards you, but when the accepted time shall come, will study by all means to promote your honour. Confiding in this determination, and having the testimony of a good conscience, we earnestly pray you not to reject the Church of Canterbury which offers herself to you: not to desert God's cause, which is undoubtedly in your hands, lest God also desert you, and judge you in the same way that you have judged. Let the Church of Canterbury experience the fidelity of her ancient friend; for he that abandons a friend in ill-fortune is a lover not of the man, but of his prosperity. We warn you as our faithful friend and lord, that it will profit you less to cultivate the friendship of that base oath-taker than it will injure you to cast off the allegiance of the Church of Canterbury; and he has but the spirit of a slave who is brought to reason only by chastisement."

<sup>6</sup> John of Oxford.

## LETTER LVIII.

“ THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY TO THE BISHOP OF LONDON.

“ *To be wise and eschew evil,  
To obey God rather than man.*

“THOUGH your aim has been all along to effect the downfall of the Church and of ourself, thereby excluding you from communion with the faithful, and from the benefit of salutation ; yet in regard for your salvation, which, as God knows, we earnestly wish for, and considering that though Christ came to call not the righteous, but sinners to repentance, yet He rejects a feigned repentance, and judges of its sincerity by our deeds ; considering also that the tree is known by its fruits ; we, therefore, for your disobedience and contumacy, to say nothing of the rest of your conduct, can no longer pass you over with impunity, though in charity we shall rejoice if even now you will repent and produce fruits worthy of repentance : we shall then no longer bear in mind the things which you have done to our prejudice, if your repentance is sincere, and your actions in uniformity therewith. We invite you to this with fatherly solicitude, we exhort you to look thoughtfully unto your ways, to deeds worthy of a bishop, that we may not be obliged, in administering punishment, to have recourse to severe

measures. We command you, therefore, by virtue of your obedience, in peril of your orders and rank, to send back to us our lord the pope's letters concerning our legateship, which we sent to you that you might show them to our brother bishops.

“ If you have so shown them, it is well; but if not, know for a certainty that you will have to answer for having suppressed them. May God's mercy inspire into you a penitent heart. If you are wise in time, and hasten to make atonement, God will spare you, and speedily convert you.”

#### LETTER LIX.

“ JOHN OF SALISBURY TO THE BISHOP OF CONSTANCE.

“ THE affliction of my lord of Salisbury, however just may have been its cause, gives me annoyance, and the more so, because I do not clearly see the issue of this crisis. What entreaties I have used with his lordship of Canterbury to relax the sentence, is known to Him who is the inspector and judge of the heart. But I failed, and I think it useless to detail to you the reasons of my failure, because your friend, master Gilbert, has heard them from the archbishop's own mouth. To say nothing of the rest, that which principally vexes the archbishop is, that his lordship of

Salisbury has set an example of disobedience to others, and to this hour is aiding and abetting the bishop of London and his adherents, who are seeking the archbishop's life to take it away. He says, also, that Salisbury has written to him contumaciously, and sought to cloak his sin of disobedience under the pretext of a frivolous appeal. But he has not even yet repented of his presumption or renounced his appeal, but dissembling the injustice of it by a certain hesitation both in word and in action, throws impediments in the way of his superior who would correct him, and yet, with a pretence of humility, sues for mercy. No one, therefore, can prevail on the archbishop to do more than this, to show fatherly mercy on the bishop, and treat him with benevolence for the future, if he will withdraw from the appeal, openly confess his offence, and remain henceforth in his obedience. For of the archbishop's kindness, if the bishop will only do what is necessary, I have not the slightest doubt. You know what the pope has lately written on the subject, and what remedy the dean has obtained in this cause from the apostolic see. If, however, his promises do not fail, but what he swore to is fulfilled, the archbishop and his clerks will make his peace in a very short time, and a truce will be proclaimed between the throne and the altar. Meanwhile, as you must

have heard, we are forbidden by authority from telling what has been done at Rome. When the bargain comes to be ratified or broken, we shall be at liberty to tell all. But since his lordship of Salisbury and Reginald the archdeacon urge me in this matter, wishing me to write to them and tell them what I can discover, I beg of you to let the archdeacon have this letter which I send for him, and do your best to get him well through the business.”

## LETTER LX.

“JOHN OF SALISBURY TO ARCHDEACON REGINALD.

“HE must be an inhuman and impious man, who is not grieved at the affliction of his father, particularly when so many and great marks of fatherly kindness have been shown, as clear as the daylight, towards the son. The Lord condemned the Canaanites to perpetual slavery, because their father Ham, from whom they derived their name and race, behaved inhumanly towards his parent; for an impious deed entails a taint upon the descendants of the doer. Thus the hateful yoke of slavery was a warning to all men against such impiety.

“I should consider myself as worse than any of the Canaanites, if I did not sympathize with my suffering parent, and feel in my soul the stripes

which he receives, even more severely than the sore of my own wounds. My conscience is the best witness of this fact, and God who searches the heart, and who, sooner than was believed, will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the counsels of the heart. We are now standing before his tribunal, and await his sentence in our cause, so that it is foolish and rash to lose by deviating from the truth the reward of all our labour, of all our life, if indeed our sufferings have been to our salvation, and our actions conformable to the rule of right. I have laboured hard with his lordship of Canterbury, as he well knows, using language at one time palliative, at another time of rebuke: but all my arguments, I grieve to say, have failed. It would be tedious, and indeed unnecessary, to state the objections which he makes to our arguments and entreaties, for master Gilbert, of whose fidelity to you I have no doubt, will hear all most fully from his own mouth. I call God to witness, and will answer for it with my life, that the archbishop sincerely loves the bishop, and desires that he should stand safe and unharmed. But he insists, that as he has given an example of disobedience to others, he shall now in his own person give an example of salutary and indispensable obedience. If the bishop will do this, for which he has the au-

thority of Scripture, the advice of his friends, and the commands of the pope, he will find the archbishop, whom he, perhaps, fears unnecessarily, an affectionate father, and more prone to forgive than to punish. For you may well remember the rescript which the bishop of Constance lately received from the holy see, and of which information was sent, or ought to have been sent to you. You know also what consolation your own dean brought back from thence. If you do not know, I wish every thing which he did at Rome, in other causes as well as this, had been made known, not only to you, but to all the world. Moreover, if it were lawful to publish such things, we could easily state what has been done in the matter of the constitutions, about which the quarrel began between the king and the priesthood, the reconciliation of the archbishop, the liberties of the Church, and the restoration of the exiles. I could also tell of the oath which has been taken, and the articles of agreement between the parties. At present we have orders not to speak of these things, as long as there is hope that the parties will be as good as their word. But there is nothing hidden which shall not be made known, and that soon too by God's good pleasure. For the hour is at hand, when those who are detected in perjury shall be destroyed; the time of visitation and of vengeance

is approaching. Meanwhile, if my advice is asked, I answer before God, whom I invoke to witness the truth of my words on the last day, I answer freely and fully, and with that faith which is due to my father; first, that we should study to follow the precepts of the divine law; but if that is silent, let us turn to the canons and precedents of the saints of old, and if there we find nothing to the point, we must explore the writings and receive the counsel of those who are wise in the fear of the Lord, and especially of those, whether few or many, who prefer God's honour to every thing besides. For no one can walk safely, if he neglects the law of God, that unerring rule, which all should follow."

## LETTER LXI.

"THE ARCHBISHOP TO ROGER OF WORCESTER.

"It cannot, we think, have escaped your memory, that last year we summoned you by messenger and letters to appear before us, but you disobeyed our mandate, and have not yet come. Be assured that we have for many reasons treated you with much deference, and spared you as our beloved son, not only because we know you to be devotedly faithful to your mother of Canterbury, but also for the nobility of your birth,

and for the esteem which we feel towards you. We therefore repeat our command, and enjoin on you, in peril of your orders and by virtue of your obedience, that from the moment of your landing on this side of the sea, you do not fail to appear before us, that we may take counsel together, for I have much to say to you. For the rest, as touching the point at issue between you and the archbishop of York and the excommunicates of St. Oswald's and the rest of that province, we command you to be influenced by no entreaty or consideration, nor let any threats of either king or cardinals induce you to absolve them, or take any other measures in their behalf without our cognizance and consent."

## LETTER LXII.

"CARDINAL WILLIAM OF PAVIA TO THE ARCHBISHOP OF  
CANTERBURY.

"ALTHOUGH from the altered character of the times, and a wish not to increase the schism in the holy Roman Church, we may seem to some to have been engaged in various ways to your disadvantage, yet God, who is the inspector of hearts, is my witness that I have ever cherished in my breast the same regard towards you. But as we have often before intimated to you, we

have studied, as far as in us lay, how we might avoid incurring the suspicion of the king of England, that so we might at length, by friendly intervention, preserve peace between him and you, and retain the devotion of so great a prince to the holy Roman Church. At present we are deputed, together with our revered brother Otho, cardinal-deacon, to go down into his dominions, and terminate the quarrel which lies between you and the aforesaid king, as shall seem to us most expedient to the cause of God's Church. Wherefore we exhort you, and earnestly intreat you, to avoid, as far as you are able, all subjects which may generate further strife between you, and hold fast to every means that may offer of promoting peace. For by God's grace, we will be no accepters of persons, but will endeavour to forward the establishment of peace and your own happiness, and with God's assistance, time will show that this has been our only study. Farewell."

## LETTER LXIII.

" THE ARCHBISHOP'S REPLY.

" WE have lately received your highness's letter, wherein we are made to drink wormwood, ill concealed by the honey of its beginning, or the oil of its conclusion. You tell me that you have

come down to these parts to decide the questions which lie between our lord the king and us, as shall seem to you most expedient. We do not believe that you are come for this, nor do we admit your intervention, for many reasons, which at a fitting time and place we will state. If, however, any good or chance of peace shall be brought about by your means, I thank God and you for it. May it be well with your highness, that so it may be well with us also."

LETTER LXIV.<sup>7</sup>

THE SAME TO THE SAME.

"HEALTH AND COURAGE TO RESIST THE INSOLENCE OF PRINCES.

"THANKS to your excellency's kindness for the letter with which you have at last deigned to visit our insignificance. That insignificance derives its character in the minds of many from our present condition, not from the past; and may be changed, if God pleases, into a much more bright and prosperous future. You say that whereas many think you have been engaged in various ways to our disadvantage, this has proceeded from your wish not to incur the suspicion of the king, or to cause him to become

<sup>7</sup> Probably this letter and the last were not both sent.

less zealous towards the Church and less disposed to make peace with us. God knows whether this is true, and the event will show. But whereas you say that you are come down into these parts to judge between us, as may seem to you best for the Church; this certainly is not impossible. We believe, however, that we know well what you are come for, and what we have to suspect at your hands. We wish to exhort your discretion in the Lord, to conduct yourself in this business to the honour of God, the re-establishment of the Church, and your own credit among the people. If any good or chance of peace shall result by your means, we thank God and you for it. We earnestly hope that you will consider what burdens the English Church and we have endured and are still enduring, and how the same suffering extends from us to the Church at large. The eyes of all men are directed to this matter, and they are waiting to see the end, in what way the pride of kings will plume itself in triumph, or bear up under defeat. We pray God that it may suffer defeat, and not gain a victory by your intervention. Farewell, farewell to you, that it may be well with us also and the Church.”

## LETTER LXV.

“ THE ARCHBISHOP TO CARDINAL HYACINTH.

“THE more we confide in your affection and sincerity, the more confidently do we recur to you as our friend and last resource in the pressing emergencies of our Church. Trusting in you, therefore, as an especial friend, we beg to remind you, how you vouchsafed to receive us and our Church, or rather your Church, under your protection, that Church, whose rights and privileges we must now defend from violation, as both you and I must now make manifest by our deeds. For deeds are the tests of man's affections. We therefore earnestly entreat you to use all your zeal, and all your prudence, to preserve the dignities, rights, and liberties of our Church intact and inviolate. But enough on this subject. We send you, my lord, letters from his lordship of Pavia, which he has sent us to announce his coming. They are not altogether destitute of vanity and pomposity: you can read them, and you will find that they contain no little boasting. We had hoped that his mission would have brought us peace and comfort; but he has caused us desolation rather than consolation. He boasts that the

pope has sent him into the king of England's dominions principally to settle the dispute between the king and us, as he shall judge best for the Church. We had not expected, nor deserved of the court of Rome, that we should be thus made subject to the arbitration of one whom all the court knows to be an enemy to us and to our Church. Know it of a surety that we will never admit his arbitration, nor abide by his decision. For the rest, we throw all our hopes upon you, next to God, and we intreat you that, whereas we have no hope of peace from him, you will use all your discretion with our lord the pope against him, and persuade his lordship to command all the clergy on both sides of the sea to respect the sentence, which we shall most righteously pronounce against the king and his dominions. Moreover, please to interpose your good offices, that the pope may again confirm us in the primacy, as he did upon our first arrival at Sens. Farewell, and may we ever retain a place in your memory, as you do in ours. Send back the bearer as soon as you can, and inform us through him of the state of the Church, of our lord the pope, and your own. Once more, farewell!"

## LETTER LXVI.

"THE ARCHBISHOP TO THE POPE.

"HEALTH, AND FIRMNESS OF MIND, TO RESIST THE CRUELTY  
OF PRINCES.

"IN our solicitude for your health and well-being, we hoped that we had certain intelligence about you and your brethren, and the marvellous doings of the Lord towards yourself and his Church. For the news reached our ears, and spread through all France, of the humiliation with which God has lately visited the schismatical Frederic, in sight of his people and nation. But since reports are both right and wrong, we earnestly entreat your fatherly goodness to communicate to us by letters and messengers the glad tidings, as soon as possible, if God has done towards you as He generally does towards those who trust in Him, and do not place their reliance on a frail arm of flesh, or in the deceitful aid of princes. If the event is really as it is reported, blessed be God, who knows how to deal mercifully with his servants. How great is his power, how boundless his mercies! Unless He keep the city, he that guards it watches in vain. If we only view rightly what has happened, God has never wrought a more signal act of mercy since time began. He

has justified his justice, by crushing the contrivers of this wickedness, the authors of this persecution: He has consumed them by a most signal destruction. I pray also that He may have consigned that prince himself whilst still living to perpetual infamy before all the people, so that he may be a derision to every passer by, and that every one's finger may point at him, whilst they say, "Look, there is he who did not make the Lord his helper!" He trusted in his power, and has fallen in his vanity. Better would it have been, if he had died gloriously fighting against his foes, than to have lived, and so become the laughing-stock of all men. Who then that is Christ's vicegerent on earth, will dare to be servile towards princes, and to spare those who sin to the confusion of the Church? Let him who dares, do this; not I, lest the sin of the offender be transferred to my own shoulders, lest I become guilty of dissembling guilt, though I have done nothing guilty. But on this subject I have said enough to my lord. Whosoever wisely examines the works of God, will speedily discover what is next to be done.

"In the second place we wish to inform your holiness, that our fears have been realized respecting the presumption and arrogance of my lord William of Pavia, as you may see by his letters, which he addressed to us on his first arrival.

From the tenour of your holiness's letters to the king of France and to us, we had hoped to receive consolation and peace, and not confusion, from his mediation between the king of England and us. For he is not the man to whose arbitration we ought to bow in this matter ; particularly when it was the urgency of the king of England which induced you to send him, rather than your own bidding. We hold it inconsistent with justice to abide the judgment of any man who seeks to make a profit out of our blood, and hopes to obtain reputation and glory from the price of iniquity. We therefore affectionately entreat your fatherly goodness, if you have any regard for us, that the power of this man, if he has any over us and ours, may, by your interference, be revoked. Relieve us, we pray you, my father, from the weight of this flail, which is exercised over the clergy, in compliance with the will of princes, rather than over princes, in accordance with the will of God. On all these points, and others which the bearer will inform you of, we pray you in compassion for our exile to hear us. Have mercy upon our protracted miseries, for all mankind are now looking to see them ended. Let your authority resume its force, and the sword of St. Peter be unsheathed, to avenge the injuries of Christ and of his Church. Let those who have for a while dissembled, and despised the

avenging hands of St. Peter, feel at last their weight, that so the Church's liberties may have time to breathe, after their long depression, and that the world may rejoice and glorify God for his mercies towards you, that so the bark of St. Peter, which all thought was sunk, may, by your means, ride triumphant, and the presumption of kings be beaten down, which all thought had been successful. I should have had much to say to your holiness on this subject, but to avoid prolixity, I here make an end, hoping to hear from you what my soul longeth after. One thing, however, I will add, which must not be passed over in silence. My lord William, and his friend the king, thought, perhaps, by protracting the time, to have eluded your authority by some casualty or other. But God will, I hope, cause all casualties to turn out for good, and so he who thought to delude you, will himself be deluded, and, by God's mercy, fall into the snare which he laid for you. God bless your holiness, and preserve your years, that it may be well with all of us."

## LETTER LXVII.

"THE ARCHBISHOP TO THE POPE.

"THE load of our miseries, the bitterness of our sorrows, had pierced the hearts of my fellow exiles

and myself, and scandalized his most Christian majesty and the nobles of France, who fancied that the Church, at the arrival of John of Oxford, was given up into the hands of those who sought to deprive it of existence, and that faith and truth were altogether banished from the earth. But you have poured consolation and joy into our afflicted hearts, and may your paternal piety meet with its due reward from the Author of all mercies, most righteous Judge, most loving Father, most faithful Guardian of the liberties of the Church. For hope has now revived us, and the most Christian king of France and his people pray for blessings on your apostleship, which may God sanctify and protract to a distant period: all their anger is now turned on those who boasted that they triumphed over your majesty by their unscrupulous and perjured oaths. Since the king has received your letters of explanation, he highly extols your prudence, holiness, and regard for justice, and execrates the malice and tricks of those who, by their false reports, so scandalized the Church of France, and sometimes when he has an opportunity he speaks of it with triumph to the adverse party. But he has still more rejoiced since the interview with your legates, whom he admitted with much respect to an audience, and learnt from them, as he acknowledges, that they were not sent to

prejudice us or the liberty of the Church, but to mediate between the king of England and us, and if possible to reconcile the king to the Church. God grant that they may succeed in this attempt, in which they shall have all the assistance we can give them, to the glory of God and the liberty of the Church.

“They summoned us to a conference at the end of ten days on the frontiers, when, to say the truth, we had no more than three horses in our stables: so we contrived to gain seven more days, on the plea that we wished to assemble together our brothers in exile, who are most lamentably dispersed in different directions, to comfort us by their company on the way, and by their advice in the conference. After much difficulty on so short a notice to find funds for the journey, they joined us, and we met the legates on the octave of St. Martin’s, between Gisors and Trie, where we were all very munificently entertained at the expense of the French king, who sent commissioners for that purpose. As you have already had intimated to you by certain, our enemies try to weary us out by long and expensive journeys, that we may become a burden on the liberality of the French king, who bestows his bounty upon us, amongst other poor servants of Jesus Christ. For their malice would be gratified if they could make short work with

us, by driving us out of the asylum which God has found for us, and deprive us of the king of France's protection, as they did of our home at Pontigny.

“ My lords the cardinals were accompanied by no one but the archbishop of Rouen, for the bishops and abbats of our own province, whom the king had summoned, were detained at Rouen. They then at once reminded us of the unbending character of the king, the wickedness of the times, the necessities and sufferings of the Church, which is assailed by enemies in every country except France, and is shaken by storms which she can hardly bear up against. They said a good deal about the grandeur and power of the king, the love and honour which he displayed towards the Roman Church, the friendship, favour, and benefits which he had conferred on us, whilst on the other hand, they exaggerated his causes of complaint against us, and said that we had brought him into a war with the king of France and the count of Flanders. They urged us to be humble, and by a show of moderation to endeavour to appease his anger ; if indeed such ferocity can be appeased, or such unbounded severity be mitigated. They also begged us, as we know his character so well, to tell them the best way of softening him. For he had also treated them roughly, when he heard that they

were not empowered to pass sentence on us, as John of Oxford's promises had led him to expect. His language in presence of his bishops had better be told you by word of mouth from the bearer, if so please God, for it is not fit to be put down in writing. We, however, giving thanks to your excellency for the regard which you have shown for the peace of the Church and ourself, which is your true glory, as it is of God himself, wiped out the suspicions which the king tries to cast upon us, by good and sound arguments; and on the following day the French king, in presence of the cardinals, cleared us on oath of the accusation which the Ruler and Judge of the heart knows us to be innocent of! For we are not so dull and slow to believe the law and the prophets and the Gospel, as to throw down our spiritual arms of apostolic discipline in so great an emergency, and have recourse to carnal weapons, which priests ought never to make use of. We know that no trust can be placed on princes, and that cursed is the man who placeth his reliance on an arm of flesh. That no such suspicion might be entertained of us, we kept aloof from an interview until the king himself summoned us, when we approached in order to present in writing our apology, and to obtain safe conduct from my lord Otho, the legate, who had sent to us his clerk, Papias, for this very

purpose. His majesty suspected the result of this legatine commission, both because it had been obtained at the king of England's request, and because, as he told us, that he had already been once injured by them, at the time when he had acknowledged your highness as pope, besides which, he was vexed to hear the boasts of John of Oxford and his associates. He admitted our apology most graciously, and when we had got the safe-conduct, we returned to the habitation which God has granted to our indigent circumstances, there to remain in expectation of His salvation. But because humility and modesty are ever pleasing to so great a prince, we readily answered the king of England in the way that your legates wished, that we would show him obedience and service with all humility and devotion, because he is our king and lord, saving the honour of God and of the apostolic see, the liberty of the Church, the honour due to our own person, and the possessions of the Churches. And if anything ought to be added, or any reservation or alteration made in this profession, we requested that they would tell us of it, because it was our wish to obey them as far as the law of our order and vows would allow us. But they replied that they had no definite instructions on this head, and were come not to advise but to consult us; and they asked us temptingly, inas-

much as, according to the words of my lord William, we are not better than our forefathers, whether we would promise to observe towards him all the customs which our predecessors had observed towards us, and so an end would be put to this contention, and the king would receive us into favour, and allow us to return to our province. But we made an answer that no one of our predecessors had been compelled to make any such promise to any of his ; nor would we, by God's grace, ever pledge ourselves to the observance of usages such as these, from which your holiness, in the presence of themselves and many others, so mercifully absolved us at Sens ; adding, in a manner becoming a successor of the apostles, what we pray God to preserve ever in our memory, that rather ought we to submit our neck to the executioner, than become a party to such perversities, and for base traffic of temporal advantages, or from the love of life, to abandon the pastoral care. The depraved constitutions were then read in their presence : some of them we had already condemned, or rather the holy Church had condemned them, together with those who upheld them in many a public council. We asked, not whether it was lawful to observe them, but whether a priest might ever use dissimulation on such a subject without danger of his orders and of his salvation. To this also we added, that

we had sworn fidelity to the king saving our order, and we would keep our oath, only so that our allegiance to God might not be set aside. On this, one whom as your holiness knows we have suspected, and still most justly suspect, intimated that perhaps it were better for ourself to withdraw altogether, than that the Church of God should be thus tormented. We answered, that by thus withdrawing, we should set an example which must ruin the liberty of the Church, and perhaps bring into jeopardy the Christian faith itself; for if other shepherds withdrew in like manner, who was there to rise up and oppose himself, as a wall for the house of Israel? We added, that neither your holiness, nor your apostolic predecessors, had so instructed the Church by your example.

“They then proceeded to ask whether we proposed to abide by their judgment, as to the points in dispute between ourself and the king; and here if we had refused, it would have given a semblance of justice to the king’s cause; yet if it pleases your holiness, one who has shown himself our adversary ought never to be our judge. Nor indeed should we be safe anywhere, except in your holiness’s presence; for that king, by proscribing some and harassing others, has caused such consternation among all, that no one with his knowledge would dare to show us any good.

After considering everything, we so tempered our answer as neither positively to decline their judgment, nor yet to expose ourself to so dangerous a trial; stating, that whereas ourself and ours had been deprived of our see, our authority and all our goods, we would be willing, on receiving full restitution, to submit ourself whenever and wherever your holiness pleased, either to your own judgment, or to that of any persons whom you should please to appoint; but that till then, our poverty made litigation impossible, for that we could never call on his most Christian majesty to be at the expense of supporting ourself and our fellow-exiles for a long time together in hired houses.

“They proceeded to a third question, whether we would acknowledge ourselves as judges, in the case of appeal made against us by our bishops? We answered, that on this head we had received no instructions from your holiness, and that our poverty ill suited with an expensive litigation.

“It was the object of our adversaries, as we learn from those who can hardly be mistaken, to seek some occasion of stigmatizing us in the presence of the legates, and thus by one means or another to hurt our cause. It is thought that no one of our countrymen would have dared to take part with us against the king, and that thus our ruin would have been effected. The king

has summoned none but those who have taken part against us from the beginning of these troubles, and who are notoriously the instigators of the whole; viz. the archbishop of York, and the bishops of London and Chichester, with whom the bishop of Worcester is joined, as a blind. Yet, as your holiness's wisdom will recollect, these very persons who are now most clamorous on the king's side, and, as every one knows, thirst after our blood, on a former occasion, when they petitioned your holiness for our pall, and for the confirmation of our election, used very different language. But now, in contradiction at once to the truth and to themselves, they have exposed themselves to contempt for their falseness and for their flattery, saying, yea, nay, at the king's will, like the slave in the comedy.

“ These are they, holy father, who give horns to the offender, and urge him on, when he seems to hesitate in his mad career, putting cushions under his arms, and pillows on which his head, weighed down with evil deeds, may repose itself. These were thought to be the pillars of the Church, but now their cry is against both her and us, they are arming our persecutors with their authority, and encouraging them by their own example, so that it is not safe for us to submit to judgment except in your holiness's presence and before your holiness's tribunal. Though the

Church and myself may hope for the best from one of the legates, especially in things which concern the Almighty, yet there is no one but you to whom we can fully trust. May God turn the heart of the other legate, and make him what may be best for his own salvation, and as best befits a cardinal of the holy Roman Church. We fear much that the prudential character and plausibility of my lord William may lead him to exert his authority too much in unison with the power and perverseness of the English king ; lest such propositions should be offered to us as would offend us to listen to them, such as we could not grant without offending God and the whole world. The care of all the Churches rests upon you ; turn your eyes all around you and see how the Church is treated throughout the West : let my lord Otto, who is, we believe, actuated by the Spirit of God, tell you what he has seen and knows about the Church in the province of Tours, what he has heard about the English Church, and what he has experienced in Normandy. We believe you will exclaim with us, ‘ Never was any sorrow like unto this sorrow.’ To say nothing of the dioceses of Canterbury and Tours, which you know how he has treated, and I wish you knew more fully, there are no less than seven bishoprics vacant in the provinces of Canterbury and Rouen, the revenues of which the king himself enjoys,

and will not allow successors to be consecrated. The clergy of his kingdom are given up to his satellites to be trodden underfoot, and to be made a spoil. If we dissemble such things, holy father, what shall we answer to the Lord on the day of judgment? Who shall resist Anti-Christ when he comes, if we show such patience towards the vices and crimes of his precursors? By such leniency we encourage kings to become tyrants, and tempt them to withdraw every privilege and all jurisdiction from the Churches. But blessed is he who dashes such little ones against the stones! for if Judah does not obey the law by exterminating the Cananæans, they will grow up and unite with his enemies. Be of good courage, then, holy father, they be more which are with us than are against us. The lord has crushed the impious Frederic and will crush the others shortly, unless they come to their senses and make peace with the Church of God. And now, in conclusion, we abide judgment from your lips only, or from His who is wont to take away the breath of princes, and to free the poor from the hands of the powerful. The bearers will tell you more, which I fear to commit to paper. Your holiness may depend upon it, that if we had intended to acquiesce in the illegal constitutions, there would have been no need of the intervention of a cardinal or of any other person. The examples

of Sicilians and Hungarians, are, if it please God, held out to us in vain: they would not shield us in the day of judgment, if we set aside the institutions of the apostles in favour of the cruelty of tyrants, and make the pride of secular kings our rule of life, rather than the eternal law which the Son of God confirmed by his death. To sum up, then, all that has been said into one lamentable conclusion, consider whether these are the due fruits of our labour and our exile, that we are to submit to judgment, whilst we are stripped of our goods, and to incur all the anguish of a suit, because we dared to defend the Church's liberty against its oppressor; whereas we had expected daily to receive comfort out of our desolation, joy from the termination of our miseries, and vengeance on the oppressors of the Church from God and from you after the injuries which Christ has suffered. Ought not they who seek our life, to be content with having slain some of us, and brought on us the poverty and destitution which makes us live on the alms of others, without protracting our time from year to year by these legatine commissions, which should never have been granted, by which our grief is aggravated and our rights turned to the ruin of all of us? Good God, what will be the end of this? Arise, O God, and judge thy cause, avenge the blood of thy servants, who have sinfully been

slain, and of others also, who faint under their insupportable afflictions: for there is no one but our lord the pope and a few others with him, who is willing to deliver us out of the hands of our enemies. May your holiness live long and in health, that we may live and prosper likewise, we and our miserable companions in exile."

## LETTER LXVIII.

"JOHN OF SALISBURY TO A FRIEND IN ENGLAND.

"I DO not doubt that you are anxious about the state of the Church and the issue of the legatine commission. I therefore write to inform you thereof briefly, and to give you and other pious friends as much consolation as is in my power. You must know, then, that our lord of Canterbury and certain of his fellow exiles had an audience with the cardinals on the octave of St. Martin's, [Nov. 18,] between Gisors and Trie. The legates said much about the kindness of his holiness the pope, and the solicitude with which he regards us, about their own labours, and the dangers of their journey; about the king's greatness, and the exigencies of the Church; about the badness of the times, about the favours the king had formerly bestowed on his lordship of Canterbury, and the honour he had always

rendered him ; something too they added, about the injuries the king complained of receiving from his lordship, intimating among other things that he had instigated the king of France to war. Finally, they wished to devise some means for allaying the existing irritation, which they said could not be effected but with much humility, moderation, and deference.

“ His lordship of Canterbury, with the greatest dignity and gentleness, expressed his sense of their kindness, and that of his holiness the pope ; and proceeded to show the futility of the king's complaints, and the extent of the Church's sufferings. As to the humility and deference which they recommended, he was most anxious to exhibit it in every possible way, saving only the honour of God, and the liberty of the Church, and the dignity of his own station. If this seemed too little, or too much, or in any way different from their view, he was ready to make any compliance consistent with his oaths, and saving his order.

“ They answered, that they were not sent to advise, but to consult him, and, if possible, to contrive some terms of reconciliation ; and proceeded to inquire whether, in the presence of the legates, he would pledge himself to observe the usages which had been observed towards former kings by his predecessors ; and thus to re-

turn to the king's favour, and to the duties of his see, and to procure peace for himself and his.

“The archbishop replied, that no king had ever exacted such a pledge from any of his predecessors, nor would he, by God's grace, pledge himself to observe usages manifestly opposed to the law of God and the rights of the apostolic see, and destructive of the Church's liberty. That these usages had been condemned in the presence of the legates themselves, and of many others, by the pope at Sens; and that some of them had been anathematized, with their observers, by himself, on the pope's authority—for which proceeding there were many precedents.

“He was asked if, though he could not conform, he would at any rate promise to overlook and tolerate them, or, without making any mention of them one way or another, to return to his see in peace. He answered with the proverb of our nation, that in such a case ‘silence is consent.’ For that, if at a time when the usages are actually enforced, and the Church is submitting under compulsion, all collision was to cease, and the subject was to be dropped, under the sanction of the legates; this would be a positive acknowledgment of the king's claims. He added, too, that he would endure exile and proscription for ever, and, if it pleased God,

death in a just cause, rather than buy peace at the cost of his own salvation, and of the liberty of the Church. After this the schedule of these abominations was read over, and the cardinals were asked whether they were such as any Christian could observe, much less a shepherd of Christ's flock.

“ They proceeded to another question, asking whether he would abide by their judgment as to the matters between himself and the king. He said that he relied on the goodness of his cause; and that whenever himself and his should be restored to their possessions which had been confiscated, he would readily let the law take its course, and had neither the power nor the will to decline the arbitration, either of their lordships, or of any others whom his holiness the pope should appoint in such time, place, and manner as should be right. But that, in the meantime, neither he nor his could be required to enter on litigation, nor indeed had they means wherewith to do so: for that they depended, even for their daily bread, on the munificence of his most Christian majesty.

“ He was then asked whether he would consent to their hearing evidence on the appeal of the bishops, for that the appellants were ready. The archbishop, remembering the circumstances under which the pretended appeal had been no-

tified to him, and that it had been conceived in the name of all the bishops, abbats, and dignitaries of his province, whereas he well knew that they had not been assembled at Rouen, and indeed that most of them had known nothing of it, while of those who did, many disapproved it as being rather an evasion than an appeal; answered, that he had received no instructions from the pope upon the subject, but that on receiving them, he would return such an answer as he might judge reasonable. Finally, that the poverty of himself and his friends disabled them from undertaking lawsuits and expensive journeys,—nor would he consent to encroach on the bounty of his most Christian majesty, by asking him to maintain them in hired houses.

“ The day following his most Christian majesty admitted the legates to an interview, and, with the ceremony of an oath, asserted the innocence of his lordship of Canterbury, protesting that he had always counselled peace on such terms as should secure the honour of the two kings, and the tranquillity of their people.

“ The archbishop requested the legates to favour him with their advice, and to point out any line of conduct which they might judge to be for the interest of the Church. They expressed their confidence in his zeal, and compassion for his sufferings, and thought his present

line of conduct could not be altered for the better. On this they parted with mutual expressions of good will.

“Such is now the state of things, and, God willing, such it shall remain, till our persecutors are either converted or perish. The Church is instant in prayer for you, that your faith fail not; and do you, in your turn, strengthen your brethren. Show these things to those to whom you are sent,—raise the fallen—strengthen those who stand. They who are with us are more than they which are against us. HE will not desert the Church in its affliction, who laid down His life to purchase it. The saints will not desert the cause for which they feared not to shed their blood. The whole army of the heavenly powers join in defending it. And, if we may trust the hope of the faithful, and the promises of the fathers, that MAJESTY, which treads Satan under His feet, shall ere long arise against his members the ministers of iniquity; and the issue shall be swift, easy, and joyful.”

#### LETTER LXIX.

“TO THE ARCHBISHOP FROM A FRIEND AT THE KING’S  
COURT.

“ON the Tuesday following the octave of St. Martin’s, [Nov. 18,] the cardinals reached the

monastery of Bec; from thence they proceeded the next day to Lisieux, and on the third day to St. Peter's on the Dive. On the fourth day, which was on the ides of December preceding our Lord's advent, they arrived at Argenton. The same day the king went out two leagues to meet them, and having saluted them with much cheerfulness and urbanity, escorted them both to their lodgings. On the following day, after mass, they were invited at an early hour to wait on the king, and entered the audience-chamber in company with the archbishops, bishops, and abbats, who were admitted. After they had been closeted about two hours they came out, and the king followed them as far as the outer door of the chapel, where he turned round and said aloud in their hearing, 'I hope to God I may never again set eyes on a cardinal!' He then dismissed them with so much haste, that though their quarters were not far off, there was no time for them to get their own horses, but they were obliged to take the first that they could find waiting on the spot. There were only four persons at the utmost who came out with the cardinals: the others, archbishops, bishops, and abbats, were still in council with the king, where they remained until a late hour in the evening: after which they came out and rejoined the cardinals, all of them evidently in great dis-

may. When they had remained in their company some time, they separated and returned to their lodgings.

“The next morning the prelates and the others were with the king until twelve o’clock, and then went backwards and forwards from the king to the cardinals, and from the cardinals to the king, carrying private messages from one to the other.

“On the following day, which was St. Andrew’s eve, the king rose at an early hour, and went with his dogs and falcons, intentionally, as it was reported, that he might absent himself from the cardinals. The bishops met early at the royal chapel, and from thence adjourned to the audience-chamber: where they held council together without the king, and then went to the Church which was near the cardinals’ hotel. There were present the archbishops of Rouen and York, the bishops of Worcester, Salisbury, Bayeux, London, Chichester, and others, also several abbats, and a large number both of the clergy and laity. The cardinals having been invited to attend and hear what was proposed, entered and took their seats: whereupon the bishop of London rose, and betrayed his agitation by the rapid and inelegant style of his address: he spoke thus. ‘You have heard that we have received letters from our lord the pope, and that they are in our possession at this

moment : wherein the pope commanded us to meet you when you should summon us, and he stated that you had full powers to decide the cause which is pending between the king and the archbishop of Canterbury, and between us, the bishops of England, and the same archbishop. In consequence of these instructions we no sooner heard of your arrival in these parts than we came to meet you, ready to plead or be impleaded, and to leave the cause to your decision. Our lord the king also offers to abide by whatever sentence you may choose to pronounce between him and our lord of Canterbury. Since, therefore, neither the king nor we have thrown difficulties in the way of the pope's mandate, let the blame rest on the shoulders of those who deserve it. Meanwhile, however, as the archbishop does every thing precipitately, and strikes without notice, and excommunicates without warning ; we have, therefore, appealed to the pope in order to avoid a sudden and unexpected sentence. We already once before made an appeal to his holiness : we now renew it, and all England joins in it.' His lordship then explained the grounds of quarrel between you and the king : ' His majesty claims of the archbishop 44,000 marks of silver, on account of the revenues which were committed to his keeping when he was chancellor ; and the archbishop replies that he was not held to give

account when he was promoted to the archbishopric, and that if he was bound to give account, he was absolved from it by his very promotion.' The bishop then began to make a joke of you, saying that you fancied consecration wiped away debts as baptism does sin. He then proceeded to relate the causes of alarm, which had led him and the other bishops to appeal: these were their own humiliation, the interests of their churches, and separation from the Roman Church: for that the king would perhaps abandon the holy see, if your interdict should be carried into effect. He also mentioned how you throw dishonour upon him on account of his statutes: and protested that the king was willing to revoke the statute by which appeals were forbidden, that he had only enacted it to save the poor clerks from expense, and that he was now provoked to find them ungrateful for it. If, therefore, they liked, they might carry ecclesiastical causes before the ecclesiastical judge, provided that in all civil causes they appeared before the civil tribunal.

“ Lastly, he said that you imposed unfair burdens on himself, commanding him to disperse your briefs through England, and that forty couriers were not enough for this: and, as a farther grievance, that you had withdrawn from his jurisdiction nearly forty churches, on the

ground that they had formerly paid rents to the monastery of St. Trinity or St. Augustine's; and that you had your dean stationed in the city of London, to keep a look out on him, and to try causes which concerned the aforesaid churches; and that these grievances were directed against himself more than any other bishop.

“ His lordship of Salisbury joined in the appeal, in his own name and that of the bishop of Winchester. Likewise the archdeacon of Canterbury appealed against you, and one of the monks of your convent.

“ The cardinals left the king the Thursday following the first Sunday in Advent. On their departure the king entreated them most humbly that they would intercede with the pope to rid him of you altogether. In asking this he shed tears in the presence of the cardinals and others. Lord William of Pavia seemed to weep too, but lord Otto could scarcely conceal his amusement.

“ The sum of the matter is this: Lord William of Pavia sends a chaplain of his, a relative of Master Lombard, with all haste to the pope; and the king sends two envoys, a retainer of the bishop of London, called Master Henry, and with him Reginald, son of the bishop of Salisbury.

“ Moreover, the Saturday before the second Sunday in Advent, master Jocelin of Chichester,

and the precentor of Salisbury, left the cardinals, who were then at Evreux, to denounce to your lordship the appeal made by the clergy of England. Likewise they bear letters to you. The cardinals salute you with the style and title of legate of the apostolic see, but in the conclusion of the letter they forbid you, on the pope's authority, to pronounce an interdict against the kingdom of England or its clergy.

“Lord Otto gives the pope secret information, that he will neither authorize nor consent to your deposition. The king seems to have no wish but for your head in a charger. Farewell.”

#### LETTER LXX.

“WILLIAM OF PAVIA TO GILBERT OF LONDON.

“REGARD for the friendship by which we are bound towards yourself and the illustrious king of England, will not suffer me to deviate from my wish to serve you to the utmost of my power, and to yield a ready assent to all that tends to advance your honour. We have therefore endeavoured to promote your wishes, as signified to us in your letter, as much as we were able. From the first moment of our acquaintance with my lord the king of England, we have done our best to obtain for him the support and countenance of the

Roman see, that so, by our intervention, severity might be tempered with moderation, and regard for the royal dignity, as well as his many services, might outlive in the memory of the apostolic pontiff the slight coolness in his devotion and respect which later times have developed. By our watchful care, therefore, no severe measures have yet been taken, nor will any for the future, as we hope, by God's mercy, to prevent it, until a readier way of peace be found, and the former good understanding be restored between him and the Church. Farewell."

## LETTER LXXI.

" THE ARCHBISHOP TO THE POPE.

" HEALTH AND EVERY GOOD !

" WE send to your holiness our faithful clerks the bearers of these letters, two of our wretched fellow-exiles, to inform you what has happened to us in these latter days, and to tell you of our misery and our anguish, which is immense. May your holiness grant to us at length that long-hoped and long-delayed release from the oppressions to which ourself and our Church are exposed. Hold out the right hand of compassion and raise us up, lest we faint beneath tribulation more severe than was ever before felt since tribulation

first began. We have been drawn along, as your excellency well knows, no less cruelly than unjustly, from one season to another, so that our soul sinks under its sufferings; we are worn out and almost ground beneath the weight of our miseries, and what is worse, your apostolical authority is meanwhile departing, which, by God's mercy, should have lifted us up out of our anguish before we were entirely spent. Incline thine ear then, my lord, and hear me; let thy eyes look upon me, and behold if there ever was wickedness like this, if there ever was grief like mine: we are given over to be plundered, unless God's mercy, by your hand, visit us. We are become a derision to those who are round about us, by the authority of your legates, who have acted no less wickedly than presumptuously towards us and the Church. If they have done so to us in the green wood, what will they do in the dry; what will they do if their legation lasts, which I wish had never been granted? They have suspended us, as far as in them lay, from all the authority which we possessed over the English Church. This never could have been done by you towards me at any prince's or other man's bidding, nor shall it now, by God's mercy, be done, as your highness has most surely promised us. Why, my lord, have you given the legation to that man? My lord should have considered,

if he will allow me so to speak, what else could be expected from one, whose whole soul has been poured out to sacrifice the dignities of the Church, if he can but gain the king's favour? My lord, my lord, it is to you that we look to save us from perishing. Help us, my lord, and fulfil the promises, which I hope did not exhilarate our hearts in vain. We waited, as your highness bade us, we waited for peace and it came not. We waited for good at the hands of your legates, and behold greater affliction, and more intense tribulation. Pity us, O lord, pity us, for there is no one next to God who will fight for us but you and your faithful ones. Pity us, that God may pity you at the last judgment, when you shall render an account of your stewardship. You are, next to God, our only refuge: for even those who out of respect for the holy Roman Church ought to have stood by us and fought for us, set themselves against us, that they may gain the favour of men. We have exhausted our means, and have endured vexation upon vexation, nor have we strength left us to endure the least of their annoyances. We pray your highness then to aid us and the Church, and check this wickedness, whilst there is still time. We can scarcely breathe for our anguish; hasten then to bestow your grace upon us, before we perish. May your excellency's life, which next to God's love is so

dear to us, be long spared, to bestow upon us your munificence, and recall us from the gates of death. Be it known to your discretion, that three days before these evils came upon us, our messenger set out for your court, bearing our letters, in which we told you we had parted from your legates. The king and queen of France, and some of the princes and bishops of his kingdom, together with some other more humble friends of yours, wrote to you, giving thanks to God and to you, that the falsehoods of John of Oxford and the other ambassadors of the king, about our downfall and deposition, were at last refuted by the arrival of your legates. For it was felt as a scandal by all in France, and by all every where, among whom that report was spread, except among the adversaries of the Church and ourself. But now our harp is turned to mourning, our joy to sadness, and the last error is worse than the first. We pray you, therefore, to apply a speedy remedy to the approaching evil, that the truth may be manifest to all, how these things have been done without your knowledge or commands. God bless your holiness, and for ever !”

## LETTER LXXII.

“ TO HIS REVERED LORD AND BROTHER, WILLIAM, BY GOD’S GRACE, PRIEST AND CARDINAL OF THE HOLY ROMAN CHURCH, THOMAS, BY THE SAME GRACE, HUMBLE MINISTER OF THE CHURCH OF CANTERBURY AND MISERABLE EXILE ! HEALTH ! AND SO TO ACT, THAT HE MAY LIVE IN THE LORD !

“ I DID not think that I was to be set up for sale to the buyers, or that you would make gain of my blood, and procure out of the price of iniquity a name and reputation for yourself. You would have looked for another field wherein to reap your harvest, if you had not been perilously forgetful of your station, and weighed the sports of fortune in a very different balance from mine. You were encouraged, perhaps, to do so by the contemplation of my humbled condition ; you beheld my adversity, but you should have looked forwards to greater prosperity hereafter. The vicissitudes of things are great, and as the fall from success and triumph is easy, so may we also rise again. I cannot believe your prudence to be ignorant, though you have yet had no personal experience of the truth, that there is nothing exalted, which has not danger lurking near it ; nothing humble which good fortune may not shine on ! I write thus, that you may be led to direct your attention

to those sudden changes ; observe them well, and when you have done so, be indulgent. The vessel of St. Peter ought not to have been exposed to these storms : though she cannot be crushed, she may yet be shaken ; she cannot sink, but will float again, however the waves may toss her. If then you wish to be a true disciple and good seaman of that Pilot and true fisher of men, as you have often felt the favouring breezes of prosperity, so should you present yourself with courage under every danger to meet the frowns of adversity. If you have received good from the hand of fortune, shall you not receive evil also, evil which perhaps will endure but for a moment ? Thus our master, Peter, the chief of the apostles, not by yielding, but by resisting kings and disturbing the peace of the wicked, gained for himself by martyrdom a name on earth and glory in heaven. In this way has the Church gained strength and renewed vigour, when it was thought that she was annihilated. In short, this is what I wish you to do ; so act here that you may live happily in the Lord. God bless you, that I too may be blessed !”

## CHAPTER XXXI.

ATTEMPT TO PROCURE THE RESTORATION OF THE  
ARCHBISHOP'S CLERKS—INTERVIEW WITH THE  
KING.

THE failure of every attempt which had yet been made to procure the archbishop's restoration was attended with inconvenience to many besides his lordship: for the numerous clerks<sup>1</sup> and retainers who adhered to the archbishop, were all suffering from the want of their ecclesiastical revenues, and also from the necessary evils that accompany expatriation. The king and nobles of France made many attempts to intercede effectually in their behalf. On one of these occasions the king of England so far conceded as to admit some of these exiles into his presence, for he could not deny that their faults consisted only in being zealous and faithful in their master's service. The interview between them and his majesty is curious, and is told by Fitz-Stephen in these words.

“The king of England consented, and gave the

<sup>1</sup> It is difficult to say in what year of the archbishop's exile this attempt was made to obtain the restoration of his clerks. Froude places it in 1165, but this seems too early: it is not, however, a matter of much importance.

clerks a safe-conduct, to last during the time they should remain in his dominions, and until they returned back to their present residence. In consequence of this permission, on the first Sunday after Easter, they came to Angers, where the king had been celebrating the festival, and on a certain day the king, attended by his court, gave audience to the clerks. The first who came before him was John of Salisbury, who on entering the room saluted the king, and asked to be allowed to return to England in peace, and be restored to his ecclesiastical preferments, because he had never knowingly done anything to offend the king, and was ready to serve him as his earthly master with all devotion and fidelity, saving his own order. To this it was replied on the part of the king, that John was born in his dominions, and all his relations obtained their subsistence there, and that he had risen under his majesty's protection to riches and honour, and he ought, therefore, to be faithful to the king in everything, not only against the archbishop but against every body in the world; and when this was said, they put before him a form of oath, binding himself to be faithful to the king in life and limb, and to defend the earthly honour of his majesty against all persons whatsoever, and in particular, that he would observe the royal constitutions and dignities as they had

been reduced to writing, notwithstanding all that the pope or the archbishop might do to prevent him. John assented to all this until he got to the constitutions, but here he stuck, saying that the church of Canterbury had nurtured him from his youth, and that he had sworn obedience to the pope and to the archbishop, and that he could not, therefore, desert the Church of Canterbury or his lord the archbishop, nor undertake to observe any of the constitutions without their authority, but he was prepared to conform to all which met with their approval, and to reject all that they rejected. This answer, however, did not satisfy the king, and John of Salisbury was ordered to withdraw.

“Herbert de Bosham was then called in. ‘Now,’ said king Henry to his attendants, “you will see a pretty pompous fellow.’ Herbert was of a great stature and good-looking, and had on a handsome dress of green cloth of Auxerre, consisting of a tunic and a cloak, which hung over his shoulders in the German fashion down to his ankles, with every other article of his toilet corresponding to it. He entering, saluted his majesty and took his seat. He was questioned in the same manner as John, and made for the most part the same answers. On the mention of loyalty, and the archbishop, he said that the archbishop above

all men was most especially loyal, for that he had not suffered his majesty to go astray unwarned. Of the usages he spoke as John had done, and added, that he wondered the king had put them in writing. ‘For,’ said he, ‘in other kingdoms likewise there are evil usages against the Church; but they are not written, and for this reason there is hope, by God’s grace, that they may become disused.’ The king wishing to catch him in his words, asked, ‘And what are the ill usages in the kingdom of our lord the king of France?’

“*Herbert.* The exactions of toll and passage money from the clergy and strangers. Again, when a bishop dies, all his moveables, even the doors and windows of his house, become the king’s. Again, these and similar ill usages, though they exist, are still not written in the realm of the king of Germany.

“*The king.* Why do you not call him by his proper title, the emperor of Germany.

“*Herbert.* His title is king of Germany, and when he styles himself emperor, it is emperor of the Romans, semper Augustus.

“*The king.* This is abominable. Is this son of a priest to disturb my kingdom and disquiet my peace?

“*Herbert.* It is not I that do it; nor, again,

am I the son of a priest, for I was born before my father entered orders; nor is he a king's son, whose father was not king when he was born.

“Here Jordan de Tarsum, one of the barons sitting by, said to his neighbour, ‘Whosoever son he is, I would give half my barony that he should be mine.’

“The king was angry and said nothing; Herbert was dismissed and withdrew.

“Philip de Calve was then called in: he was by birth a Londoner, and had studied at Tours two years before the archbishop went into exile: he was very well-informed in the Scriptures, and a most eloquent man, but from ill-health he did not accompany his patron into exile, nor did he go to Rome, or mix himself up at all in the quarrel with the king. All this was now explained to his majesty; and his cause was supported by some influential advocates, who told the king that when Richard had heard of his having been deprived of his property in England on the archbishop's account, he exclaimed, ‘Good God, what can our noble king expect to get from me?’ The king was persuaded in his favour, and remitted the oath, together with a free-pardon and the restitution of all his possessions. After which, his majesty rose from the sitting and turned his attention to other matters.”

Thus, with the exception of Richard de Calve,

who was allowed to return to England, this interview failed altogether, and no other attempt was made to procure the restoration of the exiled; for it was evident that they were not disposed to abandon the cause of their master, and it was inconvenient for them to make distant journeys for nothing. This is actually stated by John of Salisbury in a letter to a friend<sup>2</sup>.

“I do not wish to go to the king’s court any more about obtaining my pardon, unless there is a reasonable prospect of succeeding. My circumstances are narrow, and as I gain my livelihood by teaching, I cannot afford to be absent or to spend money; particularly at present, when I have fewer means and more incumbrances. I spent thirteen pounds in going to Angers last Easter, and lost two horses, besides losing my labour and experiencing many other annoyances.”

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## CHAPTER XXXII.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE YEAR 1168—ENVOYS SENT  
FROM THE POPE—LETTERS, &c.

THREE tedious years had now passed over the heads of the exiles, and they seemed still to be

<sup>2</sup> Epistolæ J. Sar. 183.

as far off as ever from making peace with the king, and returning in safety to their native land. But three more years were to elapse before their privations would be at an end. The bounty of the French king had supplied them not only with a sufficiency, but, as it would appear, with some degree of magnificence, which, though far short of the splendour that reigned in the numerous palaces of the archbishop at home, nevertheless served in a manner to keep up an appearance suited to the high rank of the English primate. But with all the alleviations which wealth or favour may furnish, exile is still an evil, and that Becket felt it so is the plain inference which we may draw from all his letters. This fact must strengthen our admiration of a man who could so long hold out against his sovereign. The most unbending pertinacity might be thought insufficient to maintain a cause for so long a time: it remains then to infer, that the archbishop was sincere in so long and so often refusing to withdraw the condition, "Saving God's honour and his own," without which he refused to yield to the king's solicitations. If it had been his intention to yield, as we have seen in his own letter, there would have been no need of mediators: the cardinal-legates might have remained in the pope's conclave at Rome, for the ground of quarrel between the king and the archbishop was

apparently of the narrowest description. Even the king, they said, had wavered, and as the bishop of London in his letters stated, he was willing to modify his constitutions according to the wishes of the Church. But the archbishop knew that this disposition of the king could not be relied on: he was too well acquainted with that monarch's character to suppose that he would retract or recede one step from his pretensions: he was also well aware that the apparently slender cause of quarrel between them was the thread on which the liberties of the Church depended<sup>3</sup>. He had now borne some-

<sup>3</sup> It is quite clear from all our ancient chroniclers and historians, that the principle on which the Church acted in the early period of our history was very different from that which actuates it at present. "A modern high Churchman has been taught from his youth to identify the Church and the Establishment—to suppose that the respectability of the clergy is the result of their connexion and intercourse with the higher classes,—and that in the event of any change which should render the clerical profession distasteful to the wealthy and well-connected, the Church must necessarily sink into insignificance. Such, however, was certainly not the case in the times now spoken of. The high-church party of the twelfth century endeavoured as much as possible to make common cause with the poor and the defenceless. Becket always speaks of the poor as 'Pauperes Christi:' and the condescension which his party practised towards them, both before and after his time, appears to us incredible." An instance of the patronage which the Church afforded to the common people is distinctly pointed at in the 16th article of the council of Clarendon ;

what patiently the delays which the appeal of the bishops and the legatine commission had interposed; and now at the end of the year 1167, discovered that the intrigues of the king and cardinals had been so far successful, that the pope had interposed between his enemies and himself, and shielded them from the ecclesiastical sentence which he was prepared to launch against them. This suspension of the archbishop's powers was indeed based on a professed belief that an arrangement would speedily be effected between him and the king. That the pope was compelled

which declares "that the sons of peasants ought not to be ordained without the consent of the lord of whose land they are acknowledged to be born the serfs. It is clear from hence, that the privileges of the Church, which made ordination equivalent to emancipation, were exerted for the benefit of the lower orders: who were thus enabled to emerge from hereditary vassalage, and sometimes even to attain an elevation equal to that of the highest lay nobility. How extensively this system was acted on, may be inferred from a speech of Henry II. [Gervas. in Scrip. Hist. Ang. a Twysden, p. 1595], in which he complains bitterly of the monastic orders for admitting as brothers such men as tanners and shoemakers, of whom not one ought even on a pressing necessity to be promoted to a bishopric or an abbacy." Froude. Thus the English Church, which in the present day is censured by the people for arrogance and aristocratical overbearing, was in those days assailed by the nobles for identifying herself too much with the lower classes. Has this arisen from a change in the Church herself, or in the parties who at each period have censured her?

to act with indecision throughout the whole of these tedious negotiations, is too clear to admit of a doubt. Few men have probably extricated themselves from almost hopeless difficulties so successfully as Alexander III. The embers of the schism which had raged so hotly in the beginning of his pontificate were still unquenched, and he might still, not without reason, fear that the king of England would resent any decisive measures that might be taken against him.

These motives led his holiness again to interpose delay; at one moment to suspend the archbishop from all exercise of his powers, and at another, to restore them to him. This state of things remained all the year 1168, until some new legates were appointed. During the interval the archbishop wrote the following letters.

#### LETTER LXXIII.

“ THE ARCHBISHOP TO ALEXANDER AND JOHN, HIS  
AGENTS.

“ BEFORE your departure you were aware that we had sent a canon regular of St. John's to our lords the cardinals, with a copy of the pope's letter, in which he allowed them to absolve our excommunicates on their promising by oath to restore to us and to ours all that had been taken

from us, failing which, they would again be placed under anathema as before. Afterwards, however, we sent those same letters to the cardinals by the hands of Osbert, sub-deacon of the court, and received for reply through the canon before-mentioned, that the persons excommunicated, whose names we had recited in the schedule, had obtained possession of our revenues by the king's command and authority, and that so long as they remained in his dominions, it was unlawful to exercise ecclesiastical severity upon them. They added further, that from the odium which our very name creates in the king's feelings, neither themselves nor any other person dared to speak to him on our behalf, or to call upon him in any way to come to an arrangement on the subject. My lord Otto said also to the messenger in private, and I request you to keep it secret also from every body but the pope, and the most trustworthy of our friends, that his holiness would on no account give them any such instructions to the detriment of the king, whom they would take care not to offend, whilst they remained within his territories, either for the sake of the pope or of any other person. It is, therefore, not only desirable but absolutely necessary that you do your utmost with the pope to procure the recal of the cardinals, and that they be compelled by fear of censure to leave

the king's dominions entirely. As regards the bishops of London and Salisbury, do not forget what we ordered you, but endeavour to accomplish it successfully.

“ We send you, by the bearer, the king's letter, written in our behalf, together with those of the cardinals, which they sent to us by the canon, and also my lord Otto's private letter, which we wish you to keep secret and to show to nobody but the pope.

“ In addition to the above, we have been told by somebody, that according to what William of Pavia hinted to the king, and perhaps to others, his majesty would never have adhered so strongly to the scheme of our translation, if he had not foreseen that it would be agreeable to the pope. But we would have our lord the pope and our other friends to know, and I request you to impress it firmly and constantly upon them, that we would suffer ourself to be put to death, as God, who is the searcher of hearts, well knows, rather than to be torn away alive from our mother, the Church of Canterbury, that has nursed us, and exalted us to our present state. Their attempts, therefore, are of no use, for such is the settled purpose of our mind. You may say, moreover, that if there were no other cause than the spoliation of our Church and of other Churches in the land, by the hand of that man,

we would rather, God knows, die any kind of death, than live in dishonour, or that he should escape without receiving from us the punishment, which, unless he repent, will be his due."

## LETTER LXXIV.

"THE ARCHBISHOP TO RICHARD ELECT OF SYRACUSE.

"THE consolation which your letters have given us is very great: they are a proof that you are in good health, which we ardently desire: they combine elegance of style, with prudence and with sincere friendship, whilst every sentence breathes love to God and regard to virtue, which might inspire not only the lukewarm, but even those whose breasts are frozen to feelings of piety. It is evident from them also, that neither the caprice of fortune, nor distance of place, nor length of time, can destroy or even weaken that charity which streams of water are unable to quench. You have used your influence for us, and that powerfully, with my lord William of Pavia, your friend, and I hope you have not done so in vain. If his power had equalled his will, he would have been a thorn in my eye and an arrow in my side, to mortify the souls which do not die, and to vivify those which cannot live. May God forgive him and his associates,

that on the last day, our blood and that of our fellows in exile, yea, the blood of the Church itself, may not be required at their hands, because they have furnished horns to the sinful, and, as far as was in their power, exposed the law to be profaned by the Gentiles and trodden under-foot. But why do we revive this subject, save that you may sympathize with the Church, and give us the benefit of your intercession both before God and the Roman Church, whenever an opportunity shall occur? There is a testimony against those men greater than that of John, for the deeds which they do bear testimony against them. The Church, indeed, shall be set free, and we will willingly endure exile so long as it shall please God, exposed to all the winds of heaven, together with our wretched exiles, one of whom is the bearer of the present letter, our sister's son, whom we confide to your protection whenever he may be in need of it, and we do so the more from our confidence in your friendship, giving thanks to God, that He has thought us worthy to suffer punishment."

## LETTER LXXV.

## THE ARCHBISHOP TO THE POPE.

“ TO HIS MOST LOVING FATHER AND LORD, ALEXANDER, BY THE GRACE OF GOD, SOVEREIGN PONTIFF, THOMAS, HUMBLE MINISTER OF THE CHURCH OF CANTERBURY, A WRETCHED EXILE, AND NOW MORE THAN USUALLY WRETCHED, HEALTH, AND THE OBEDIENCE WHICH IS ALWAYS HIS DUE, EVEN IN ADVERSITY.

“ WE send back to your holiness the bearer of the present, who will faithfully and accurately explain to you the unfortunate nature of his business, and how he and his brothers have been dealt with in England in consequence of your letters. Unless the Divine clemency stretch forth its hand to raise them up by your agency, it is all over with the fortunes of their order. May it please you then to let him and his brothers experience the benefit of our intercession, for the unjust vexations which they have suffered, render them fitting objects of your commiseration. And I pray you, my lord, to consider attentively into what irremediable confusion the English Church has been thrown, and what evils have resulted to every class of persons living in that kingdom, from that pernicious indulgence which the king boasts he has obtained of the court, by the intervention of certain of his friends, who show more regard to princes than to their God.

Though this indulgence may easily be revoked, yet the pernicious precedent has been set, and will encourage his successors to similar acts of daring, from a certainty of being able, by some means or other, to escape punishment.

“ We have one miserable source of consolation in all this, if you will allow me to say so: that the Roman Church takes this mode of rewarding its friends and faithful children. May God comfort her better than she provides for herself: may he comfort the Church of England and us, and all our wretched ones. I know what grieves me most; it is this; that crime can never be blotted out or become obsolete by time: there is no forgetfulness for sin, but evil deeds become at last evil examples. God bless your holiness, and give you health, and may He, if it so please Him, deign to raise us from our misery, that we may at least live, whereas at present our life is but a slow death, and God knows how undeservedly!”

Among those who exerted themselves to bring the king and the archbishop to a conference, and so to expedite the restoration of the exiles, was John, bishop of Poitiers, formerly treasurer of York. This prelate had been more compliant than Becket, and so escaped the effects of king Henry's anger; but, though he had not fortitude enough to suffer for the Church, his sympathy was strongly enlisted throughout in the arch-

bishop's cause; and in his present exertions, to bring about an interview between the king and Becket, his zeal somewhat outran discretion, as would appear by the following letter, which the archbishop sent him in reply, and which is the only letter we have remaining addressed by Becket to the bishop of Poitiers.

## LETTER LXXVI.

“ THE ARCHBISHOP TO JOHN OF POITIERS.

“ DEAREST friend, why have you dealt with me thus? Why have you strangled both me and yourself? You have given that man a handle for disparaging both of us and of maligning me. The animal is greedy of glory, and already too prone to destroy the Church; and now he will have it published in the streets and proclaimed in the face of the Church, that we have yielded unconditionally to his wishes, without mentioning God's honour or our own order, though it is less than ever proper to pass these over, when by doing so we bring confusion and ignominy on the Church, which is clear and manifest apostasy.

“ If you will only recollect yourself, we parted at Estampes on a very different understanding from this. When we took leave of one another, I told you to insist on this condition only, that

the man should restore us his favour according to our lord the pope's instructions, and give us back our Church in free possession. You asked me whether I would have a day appointed for an interview if he should wish to see me, and I replied, that I would have no day fixed till he should obey the pope's mandate, but that as soon as he had done that, we could meet him on any day that he might appoint, and do all that lay in our power, *saving God's honour* and our own order. It was on this footing, my dear friend, that we parted. To this understanding you ought to have adhered, for no one knows better than you, that we do not dare to go one step beyond this, consistently with our duty to our God. I would have you to know, therefore, my soul's half, that it is not our intention, nor is it safe, to have a day fixed on, or to go to a conference until he shall have received the pope's mandate, and further, if so please him, until he shall have put it in execution; lest perchance, which God forbid, if we give occasion for delay, the failure of our lord the pope's mandate may be imputed to us; which would clearly be against our interests. Farewell ever!"

## LETTER LXXVII.

“ THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY TO SIMON AND BERNARD  
DE CORILO.

“ You have been ordered by our lord the pope to demand of the king that he shall restore to us our Church and his own favour. Now we were ready, as you have seen, to place ourselves, to the honour of God and himself, at the mercy of God and his majesty. This form did not please him, unless we bound ourselves to observe the constitutions, which our predecessors observed towards his. We, therefore, promised that we would observe them willingly, saving our own order, and would readily do all that was consistent with our duty to God, in order to recover his favour. But he would not consent to this, unless we should promise to observe the constitutions unconditionally. This, indeed, was altogether impossible, because some of those constitutions have now been condemned by the apostolic see. We are, however, ready, if it shall seem good to his majesty, to return to our Church according to the apostolic mandate, and to the king's favour. Remember also, that though our lord the pope has ordered you, in virtue of your obedience, to execute his mandate, he has given no orders that we should be bound to make any

promises. We, therefore, entreat your holinesses not to hesitate, but to endeavour, like righteous men, to pay obedience to the pope's orders."

By the exertions of the pope's envoys, aided by the king of France, it was at length arranged that Henry should admit the archbishop to a conference at Montmirail, where the two kings were to meet on other political matters unconnected with the present subject. It is however important to notice, as will appear more fully in the result of the conference, that the English king came to this meeting with the intention of obtaining peace at almost any price. Whatever advantages the king of France might derive from this, would have the natural effect of making him more lukewarm in favour of the archbishop, whose cause he had hitherto supported, if not altogether, yet certainly in a great measure, from jealousy of the great and daily increasing influence of his rival. An impartial judge of human nature cannot conceal from himself this truth; but it would be unfair to deprive Louis of the credit, which is undoubtedly his due, of having faithfully supported the archbishop through a long period of suffering; though there are few instances on record of the path of honour coinciding so identically with that of interest. The interview at Montmirail interrupted this harmony between the archbishop and his royal patron, though the

interruption was but momentary, and served to reunite the two speedily afterwards in a bond still stronger than before. The archbishop's secretary and faithful chronicler, Herbert de Bosham, has left a minute account of all that occurred at the conference <sup>4</sup>, which took place on the day of Epiphany, 1169, his narrative runs as follows:—

“The advice of all parties was that the archbishop should submit the whole question to the king's mercy, and place himself in his majesty's hands unconditionally. Now he had already, at the instance and by the advice of the mediators, avowed in the presence of all of them, that he would do this, ‘saving God's honour;’ but those of the mediators who were most intimate with him, men of experience in counsel, and on whom the archbishop placed the greatest confidence, urged him to omit the words ‘saving the honour of God,’ because they said that the king would be scandalized thereby. It was, therefore, the opinion of all that he should submit the whole question to the will and pleasure of the king, and so gratify his majesty by giving him honour before the meeting; at this the king would be

<sup>4</sup> The pope's envoys, Simon prior of Montdieu, and Engelbert prior of Val St. Pierre, seem to have taken no prominent part in the business of the conference, though both they and their associate, Bernard de Corilo, had by their mediation brought about the meeting.

pleased, and would restore him his favour and make peace with him. Now this phrase which was added about the king's constitutions was similar to that which had been used when we were still in England. The archbishop had there said that he would observe the king's constitutions 'saving his own order,' as we have related it above in our history. And now a similar phrase was added. In England it ran, 'saving our order,' it was now 'saving God's honour.' And the arguments and speeches that were made against the former were now used over again to induce the archbishop to omit the latter. Indeed, he would at the present meeting have retained the same form which he had used in England, if he had not known that the king would be offended at it; he therefore adopted the second phrase, at which the king, as we shall presently shew, was offended as much as he was before. However, not to multiply words, he was so urged and drawn now one way, and now the other, that he seemed at last to be persuaded. And when he spoke a few words with his professors apart, as long as the time would permit, and told them what the mediators had said, all their wisdom seemed to fail them: for on the one hand they anticipated peace and the king's favour which they so much desired: on the other hand it would be not only disgraceful but irreligious and

humiliating to the Church if the archbishop should submit himself and the whole question, which was of an ecclesiastical nature, to the will of a layman, without any reservation of God's honour, particularly too, as this was the very point on which the whole dispute had turned. Yet the mediators, among whom were men of the highest character for religion, men of experience, and on whom the archbishop could rely, having in view the advantage of the Church and the interests of all of us, as they confidently anticipated, used all their exertions to persuade him to omit this reservation. Our professors, therefore, one and all, hesitated, and were afraid to advise him, lest the failure of the peace and the injury to the Church which would ensue, should be thrown on their shoulders. They were all silent therefore; and all their wisdom was baffled. Some of them,<sup>5</sup> indeed, murmured in a low voice that it was not safe in such a case to omit all mention of God's honour and the liberties of the Church for the sake of man's favour; which would be the same, they said, as putting a candle under a bushel, as we have stated above, when the other phrase, 'saving our order,' was for the sake of peace withdrawn in England. . . . Whilst we were thus hesitating and thinking

<sup>5</sup> Herbert's pertinacious disposition leads us to suspect that he may have been one of these.

what to do, the mediators, many of whom were influential<sup>6</sup> men, and most intimate with the archbishop, so plied him with their advice, and urged him now on the one side, and now on the other, that at last they thought he was persuaded to follow their counsel.

“Now the two kings were sitting together, and waiting to see what would be done; and when the mediators and others were escorting the archbishop into their presence, the disciple who wrote this narrative pushed himself, though with great difficulty, through the crowd, and whispered a few words hastily, for there was not time to say much, into his patron’s ear, ‘Take care, my lord, and walk warily: I tell you truly and conscientiously, that if you suppress those words, ‘saving God’s honour,’ as you formerly suppressed the corresponding phrase, ‘saving your own order’ in England, your sorrow will again be renewed upon you, and the more bitterly, because though you have already suffered for it, yet it has not taught you wisdom.’

<sup>6</sup> “The archbishops of Rheims, Sens, and Rouen, the king of France, the bishops, and the abbat of Montdieu of the Carthusian order, urged him not to speak of the constitutions of Clarendon: ‘What necessity is there,’ they said, ‘to mention them? You have already condemned them by your own writing, on the pope’s authority, and have absolved all who had sworn to observe them from their obligation.’”—FITZSTEPHEN.

“At these words he turned round and looked me in the face, but was unable to answer me for the crowd who thronged him, and tried to speak to him: and so he was led into the presence of the two kings. He knew that humility will soften the hardest heart, and is a virtue which beyond all others is agreeable to the high and mighty; wherefore at the first sight of the king he rushed forward and threw himself at his majesty's feet. He was for the sake of honour accompanied by the son of the great and noble Count Theobald, namely, the venerable and excellent prelate William, now archbishop of Sens, for Hugh of blessed memory, whom we have before mentioned as archbishop of that city when we first went to live there, was now dead. The king seeing the archbishop on his knees before him, immediately caught him by the hand and made him rise.

“The archbishop, standing up in the presence of the kings, began humbly to entreat the royal mercy on the English Church, which was committed to so unworthy a sinner as himself, and in the beginning of his speech, accused himself, as every just man does, ascribing to his own demerits the troubles and afflictions which she had suffered. At the conclusion of his address he added, ‘On the whole subject, therefore, which lies between us, my lord the king, I throw myself on your

mercy and on your pleasure, here in presence of our lord the king of France and of the archbishops, princes, and others who stand round us' —but here he added what neither the king, nor the mediators, nor even his own friends anticipated — 'SAVING THE HONOUR OF MY GOD!' . . . . When he added these words, the king was scandalized, and burst into rage against the archbishop, assailing him with much contumely and reproach, abusing him as proud, vain, and entirely forgetful of the royal munificence towards him, and ungrateful for all his favours. And because the character of 'our master,' as we have stated in the beginning of this history, even from his youth, was so pure that his greatest and most mendacious enemies feared to bring a false charge against him, he could find no other point on which to accuse him but this, that when he was chancellor, he received oaths of allegiance from the king's subjects on both sides of the sea, in order, as he said, to disinherit his lord and sovereign, who had conferred so many favours on him, and to become king in his stead. 'It was for the same reason,' the king added, 'that he lived so splendidly, and acted with so much munificence in his chancellorship.'

"The archbishop heard all this patiently, and without showing the least sign of perturbation, answered the king's abuse with humility and modesty,

in terms neither too unbending nor too submissive. When he had replied to all the other points of the king's speech, and came to the charge about his chancellorship, he said, 'My lord, you accuse me for what I did when I was chancellor; but it is your anger which leads you thus to censure as a fault, what ought to have earned for me your majesty's endless gratitude. It does not beseem me, nor is it necessary at present, to revive, for the sake of my own glory, what I then did in your service, or the fidelity with which I served you. Our lord the king of France here knows it; all who stand round know it; the whole world knows it: my deeds themselves testify for me, and declare how I behaved in that office, whilst I was still in your majesty's court, to promote your advantage and your honour. It would be degrading and unbecoming in me to revive the advantage which I rendered by my services, or to taunt you with them, for the world saw it and knows it to be true.'

"The king would hear no more, but taking the words out of his mouth, he said to the king of France, 'Hear, my lord, if you please, how foolishly, and vainly, this man deserted his Church, though neither I nor any other person drove him out of the kingdom, but himself fled away privately by night; and now he tells you that his cause is that of the Church, and that he

is suffering for justice's sake; and by this showing he deceives many, and those men of influence. I have always been willing, as I am at present, to allow him to rule the Church, over which he presides, with as much liberty as any of the saints his predecessors held it or governed it.

“‘But take notice, if you please, my lord,’ continued Henry, addressing the king of France, ‘whatever his lordship of Canterbury disapproves, he will say is contrary to God’s honour, and so he will on all occasions get the advantage of me; but that I may not be thought to despise God’s honour, I will make this proposition to him. There have been many kings of England before me, some of greater and some of less power than I. There have also been many good and holy archbishops of Canterbury before him. Now let him behave towards me as the most holy of his predecessors behaved towards the least of mine, and I am satisfied.’ All present exclaimed aloud, ‘The king humbles himself enough’<sup>7</sup>!

“The king of France, as if struck by what the English king said about the archbishop’s predecessors, and so inclining in his majesty’s favour, said to the archbishop, ‘My lord archbishop, do you wish to be more than a saint?’ And this speech, which was uttered rather insultingly by

<sup>7</sup> This paragraph is from Alan of Tewkesbury.

the French king, gave no little pleasure to the king of England and his party, whose sole wish was to justify their own cause and to disparage ours in the eyes of the French king, that so his good-will, which by God's grace had so long befriended us and been our sole refuge, might be alienated from us.

“ But the archbishop did not appear to be in the least moved or disturbed, though both the kings were against him, for he replied with composure and equanimity, that he was ready to resume the charge of his Church with all its liberties, such as the holy men his predecessors had enjoyed, but would not admit any fresh ones passed with a view to the Church's detriment, and would reject and condemn them as being contrary to the institutes of the holy Fathers. ‘ It is true,’ continued he, ‘ that there have been archbishops before me, holier and greater than I, every one of whom extirpated some of the abuses in the Church, but if they had corrected all, I should not now be exposed to this hot and fiery trial<sup>8</sup>.’ He then began to apologise for his flight, which he had effected by night without the knowledge of the king, but the mediators of the peace, who, as we have said, were many, and men of great respectability, justly considering that this subject would

<sup>8</sup> This sentence is from Alan.

be much more likely to exasperate the king than accelerate the peace, drew the archbishop aside, and began again to urge him as before, crying out, 'Give the king due honour, and suppress that phrase which offends him; submit yourself unconditionally to his will and pleasure; now or never is the time for a reconciliation, when the king and nobles are present, and all wish for peace but yourself.' The same arguments were used by the other nobles and bishops who were present, both French, English, Normans, Bretons, and Poitevans, as also by certain men of the religious order<sup>9</sup> who had been deputed by the pope to attend the meeting especially on our behalf. They all urged him to suppress that little word, 'saving God's honour,' that peace might be obtained both for himself and his followers in the presence of both the kings and their nobles.

"If you had then seen the archbishop, you would have thought him a victim standing before the executioners, whose tongues were their weapons, all of whom sought to suppress God's honour, yet thinking that in this they were doing Him service. Afterwards, however, as will be shown, they acknowledged themselves to have been circumvented and deceived. But let us now resume.

<sup>9</sup> Simon, Engelbert, and Bernard de Corilo.

“The archbishop standing, as we have said, turned now to one, now to another, assuring them that he would do as they wished him, as far as was consistent with God’s honour: but that it did not become a priest and a bishop to submit himself in any other way to the will of the men of this world, especially in a question which concerned the liberties of the Church; and that this ought to be sufficient, and indeed was more than sufficient, if the peace of the Church did not warrant his doing it.

“The king, as we have mentioned above, was offended in England at the phrase ‘saving his order,’ and the archbishop for the sake of peace withdrew it, by the advice of several, and by doing so he did not recover the king’s favour, but suffered from it much more severely than before. He therefore feared that the same would again happen, and stood firm in the midst of all their solicitations like a city founded upon a rock. . . .

“The mediators of peace, therefore, seeing him firm and inflexible, departed from him and he was left alone. The nobles of both kingdoms rose up, imputing the failure of the negotiation to the arrogance of the archbishop; and one of the counts who were present said, that as he set himself in opposition to the will of both kingdoms, he was unworthy of the protection of either: ‘He

is rejected by England, let him find no countenance or support in France<sup>1</sup>!”

Night now approaching put an end to the conference, and the kings mounting their horses, rode off in haste without saluting the archbishop or waiting to be saluted by him. The king of England, as they were riding away, continued still to vent abuse on the archbishop, though they had now parted; amongst other things, he said that he was now fully avenged on the traitor. The courtiers also, and the mediators of the peace, censured the archbishop to his face as they were returning from the place of meeting, saying that he had always been a proud man and wise in his own eyes, and always endeavouring to gratify his own will, and to have his own opinion: they added, moreover, that it was a great pity he had ever been raised to be a ruler of the Church, which was already almost ruined through him, and would very soon be ruined entirely.

But the archbishop put a restraint upon his tongue, and though he was thus assailed and reproached by all around him, yet he appeared as if he did not hear them,—with one exception however: for when his friend John bishop of Poitiers, who was by birth an Englishman, reproached him with bringing destruction upon the Church, he

<sup>1</sup> This sentence is from Alan. The quotation from Herbert ends here.

replied mildly and modestly, "Nay, brother, take care that the Church is not destroyed by you: for by God's grace she will never be destroyed by me."

The clerks who had attended the conference in their master's company, were disappointed, as was natural, at its failure; for they had been four years in exile, and though their fortitude in enduring their bitter fortune had hitherto been most exemplary, yet now that the cause of the failure seemed to be of so trivial a nature, it was hardly to be expected that all of them would endure it with equanimity. One of them, whose name was Henry de Hocton (or Houghton), was riding immediately in front of the archbishop, when his horse made a false step and stumbled. "Come up," said the rider, "saving the honour of God and the Church and my own order!" The archbishop heard what he said, and was vexed, but remained silent.

At this moment the loquacious Herbert, who probably had no small share in encouraging the archbishop to persevere in his resistance to the king, by the advice which he whispered in his ear as they were going to the conference, again approached to his master's side; "God be praised, my lord," said he, "that through all the worriment to which you have this day been exposed, you have been sustained by the Lord, and gone through the

whole of it without flinching, and have not suffered the tongue, that slippery member, to betray you into any thing subversive of God's honour or disrespectful to his majesty. There is no doubt that the Most High will honour you even yet, in return for the honour which you have this day showed to Him!"

Thus ended the conference at Montmirail; which so far from healing, rather widened the breach between Becket and the king, and seemed likely to deprive him moreover of the French king's protection, which had hitherto been his only support.

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## CHAPTER XXXIII.

### BREACH OF THE TRUCE, AND THE RENEWAL OF THE FRENCH KING'S FAVOUR—LETTERS.

THE conference, of which the particulars are recorded in the last chapter, was held in a large plain not far from the castle of Montmirail, between Chartres and Leman. The archbishop's party had come thither from Sens under the protection of the French king, and were lodged together with the court of his benefactor in the castle of Montmirail. The exiles arrived at their

quarters on the evening of the day of meeting, some time before the king of France, who had probably accompanied the English monarch part of the way on his return. When Louis arrived, he did not call at the archbishop's lodgings, as had been his custom. But it must not be concealed that there was now a much better understanding between the rival kings, and the strong medium of self-interest, which drew Louis for the moment towards his former rival, might now fortunately be concealed under fancied disapprobation at Becket's unyielding conduct. At an early hour on the following morning the exiles departed from the castle, without bidding farewell to the French king, who was fatigued by the events of the preceding day, and had not yet left his bed. They travelled with all possible speed towards Chartres: on their way thither the archbishop consoled his companions for the ill-success which they had met with, and on their arrival at Chartres, where they spent the night, the whole party had recovered their former equanimity. The news, however, of what had happened at the conference flew before them, and the country people eagerly enquired who they were, as they passed rapidly along. When they were informed that it was the archbishop and his party, they testified their approbation in such a way, that the horsemen could not but understand their meaning.

The Church was in fact universally popular at this period, and the proscribed archbishop was often gratified by the testimony of approbation which he invariably received during his exile from the French peasantry. Applause is naturally agreeable to the human mind, and it perhaps contributed not a little to remove the discontent with which some of the party had set out from Montmirail.

They left Chartres on the following morning, and after two more days arrived at Sens: where they resumed their tranquil mode of life, and again turned their attention to those literary pursuits, which for four years had been almost their only occupation.

But before many days had passed over their heads, this calm was disturbed by the sudden intelligence that the king of England had not only failed in all his engagements, and broken the treaty which he had made, under the French king's sanction, with the Bretons and Poitevins, but had accompanied this breach of faith with acts of violence and rapine. One of the nobles of Poitou, named Robert de Silli, was among the sufferers. This statement is no doubt too vague to enable us to form a just opinion of the renewed quarrel between the two kings, but the change which it produced in Becket's prospects was sudden and decisive. The French king set

out immediately for Sens to see the archbishop. A scene of a somewhat dramatic character is said to have taken place between them.

The party at St. Columba's were discussing the events which had lately happened, and the failure of their journey to Montmirail. They had also another subject for conversation, in the supposed alienation and continued silence of the French king. The archbishop smiling at the different suggestions that were offered, said, "I am the only one amongst you whom king Henry wishes to injure, and if I go away, no one will impede or harm you: do not be afraid." "It is for you that we take thought," replied they, "because we do not see where you can find refuge; and though you are so high in dignity, yet all your friends have deserted you." "Then do not care for me," said he, "I commend my cause to God, who is very well able to protect me. Though both England and France are closed against me, I shall not be undone. I will not apply to those Roman robbers, for they do nothing but plunder the needy without compunction. I will adopt another mode of action. It is said that the people who live on the banks of the Arar in Burgundy, as far as the borders of Provence, are more liberal. I will take only one companion with me, and we will go amongst those people on foot, and they will assuredly have

compassion on us." At that moment an officer appeared from the French king, inviting the archbishop to an interview. "He means to turn us out of his kingdom," said one of those who were present. "Do not forebode ill," said the archbishop, "you are not a prophet, nor a son of the prophets."

When they came to the king's lodgings, they found his majesty sitting alone, and evidently suffering from vexation. On the archbishop's entering the room, the king rose and threw himself on his knees before him, exclaiming, "Forgive me, my father, forgive me; you were the only wise man among us. We were, all of us, blinded and besotted, and we advised you to make God's honour submit to the will of a man. I repent of it, my father, and entreat you to bestow on me your absolution for my offence. I commit myself and my kingdom from this moment to your keeping, and will support you to the best of my power, and be guided by your advice." The archbishop freely forgave the king, and absolved him from his supposed offence.

They then consulted together on the best mode of renewing their exertions to obtain peace, and to remedy the failure of their negotiations at Montmirail. After much deliberation it was determined that the king, the principal of his clergy, and those who had been sent by the pope to

mediate between the parties, should address letters immediately to the sovereign pontiff, informing him of the ill success of their mediation, which they attributed to king Henry's obstinacy, and calling on his holiness to interfere in Becket's favour still more powerfully than before,

Another step, however, remained to be taken, which had already received the sanction of the apostolic pontiff. His envoys, Simon and Engelbert, delivered the second of the pope's letters to king Henry, no longer inviting him, as before, to a reconciliation, but threatening him with the vengeance of the holy father if he should still persist in not listening to his exhortations. Some few of the letters which were written at this time have been preserved, and will serve to elucidate the narrative up to the point at which it has now arrived.

#### LETTER LXXVIII.

“ THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY TO THE POPE.

“ IF the cause of our exile, holy father, had not been stated to you in dark colours by our enemies, we have no doubt that the king of England would not so long have abused your patience with impunity. But lo! the truth has at last come out, and our persecutor's designs, by God's

grace, are revealed. For lately, when we implored his mercy, on our knees, in the presence of his most Christian majesty, his archbishops, bishops, counts and nobles, he declared that he only required of us that we should observe the constitutions of his kingdom, which our ancestors had observed towards his, and that I should promise this on the word of a priest and bishop, as our messengers will faithfully explain to you. May it please your holiness, therefore, to listen to our faithful servants, who have shared with us in our exile, who were present and heard all that passed, for the English Church is now on its last legs, unless the hand of God and your hand apply a speedy remedy. The king of England boasts that you have conferred on him a privilege, by which he is to be freed from all ecclesiastical censure from us until we return to our Church and be reconciled towards him. It is a thing unheard of amongst us, that a bishop should be obliged to bind himself towards a secular prince, to observe anything else besides what is contained in the oath of allegiance. We fear, therefore, though, by God's grace, our fears will be groundless, lest an additional obligation exacted from us may be a pernicious example to other princes, involving not only our contemporaries but our successors. Indeed, it is plain, that if the required constitutions shall be conceded,

the authority of the holy see in England will become little, or perhaps nothing. This indeed, as is evident from the writings and accounts of our forefathers, would long ago have happened, if the Church of Canterbury had not interposed itself to resist princes on behalf of the Church and her liberties. For there has seldom been a ruler of that Church who has not drawn the sword for righteousness' sake, and suffered exile or proscription. It is wonderful, therefore, and altogether astonishing, that he who now persecutes the apostolic see even more than us, should boast that he has found partizans in such a cause even at your own court. Nor need you fear that he will pass over to the schismatics, for Christ has so humbled him by the hand of His faithful servant, the French king, that he cannot depart from doing what he wishes."

## LETTER LXXIX.

" TO THE POPE FROM HIS ENVOYS, SIMON, PRIOR OF MONTDIEU,  
AND ENGELBERT, PRIOR OF VAL ST. PIERRE.

" ACCORDING to your holiness's instructions, we delivered your admonitory letters to the king of England, and exhorted him to the utmost of our power to listen to what was therein contained, and make peace with his lordship of Canterbury,

and restore him to his Church, with permission to rule it in freedom as before. We waited long and patiently, hoping that God would soften his heart. But failing in this, we then delivered to him your second letter, not of admonition, but of commination, which he made much difficulty about receiving, but he was at last prevailed on to do so, at the instance both of ourselves and the other men of influence who were present; and after much other conversation, which we forbear to mention, he said as follows,—‘I did not expel the archbishop, and yet if he will do as he ought towards me and observe my constitutions, I will, out of regard for my lord the pope, make peace with him, and allow him to return.’ And after many other different remarks, he said that he would call together the English bishops and comply with their advice, but he did not appoint any day, nor did we get anything from him on which we can rely, respecting the restoration of the archbishop and the execution of your instructions. For he constantly varied his answer; and when we asked him if the archbishop might return to his see and be at peace, he replied that the archbishop should never return till he promised to act towards his sovereign as he ought, and as others had acted. We then asked him to grant letters patent, stating his answer, because it was our duty to report it to you, which we had

not yet done, because he changed his answer so often. To this, however, he would not consent. The archbishop, on the other hand, replied when we informed him of this, that he was ready to do all that he was bound to do, and to observe all that his predecessors had done, saving his own order, but that without the authority of the pope he could not promise to enter upon new obligations, 'except with a reservation of his own order,' because such a precedent would be injurious, and because you had prohibited him from doing so. He added also, that you had censured him for not having submitted to be put to death rather than comply, except with a reservation of his order. 'But,' said he, 'if the king will restore to me his favour, and allow me to resume peaceable possession of my Church, with everything that has been taken from it, I will comply with his wishes, and serve him to the best of my ability.' May it please your holiness, therefore, to succour the Church in her distress: for if you only persevere, we are persuaded peace will soon be made. And as the brothers of Grammont never write letters, we certify that in all this we have the concurrence of our brother and associate, Bernard, who publicly gave his consent, and requested that others would write to you, who were not under the same obligation as he is."

## LETTER LXXX.

“ THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY TO THE POPE.

“ THE riches of your long-suffering and the abundance of God’s goodness, have hitherto been treated by the king of England with contempt, whilst he is ignorant, or pretends to be so, that your patience has for its end only to invite him to repentance. He is deaf to entreaties and to admonitions, boasting, to the dishonour of the apostolic see, and to the reproach of your blessed name, that you have granted him a privilege, by which he will be safe from us as long as he pleases, notwithstanding all the persecutions with which he may assail us and the Church of Canterbury. And the better to persuade mankind of so incredible an assertion, he is exhibiting all over Germany, France, and England, rescripts of letters which you have furnished him with against us, and woe is me that I should say so, against your ownself. Thus he requites your favour and kindness, so that his last deeds are worse than the former. But God has at last brought to light what I wish you had believed at first, for the justice of our cause and the real nature of his intentions have been declared in the face of the world.

“ For a short time since, at the second con-

ference, in the hearing of his most Christian majesty and of all present on both sides, after receiving your letters comminatory, which he had often rejected, and then scarcely accepted, he owned that what he requires at our hands is nothing else than the observance of his usages, to which, as your holiness has seen and may remember, God's law and the sacred canons are evidently and altogether opposed.

“At the instance of the most Christian king, and of the holy men whom your holiness has sent, he was indeed prevailed on to drop the mention of usages; but he changed the word without changing his meaning; requiring that we should promise, on the word of truth, simply and absolutely, to act as our predecessors had acted. This, as he said, was the only way for us to obtain our Church and peace in his dominions; but that even then we should not have his favour; which he added, because he conceives that by your holiness's rescript our authority is suspended till such time as his favour is restored us.

“On this proposal being laid before us by the holy men, Simon, prior of Montdieu, and brother Bernard, we answered, ‘that we could not square our conscience by the acts of our predecessors; though indeed we know, from authentic documents, that some of them have suffered banish-

ment in a like cause ; however, that we were prepared to yield him every service, even more than our predecessors had done, saving our order ; but that new obligations, unknown to the Church, and such as our predecessors were never bound by, ought not to be undertaken by us ; first, because it was bad as a precedent ; secondly, because your holiness's self, when in the city of Sens, absolved me from the observance of those usages hateful to God and the Church, and from the pledge which force and fear had extorted from me, in a special manner ; and after a grave rebuke, which, by God's grace, shall never pass from my mind, prohibited me from ever again obliging myself to any one in a like cause, except saving God's honour and my order.' You added, too, if you are pleased to recollect, that not even to save his life should a bishop bind himself, except saving God's honour and his order. For these reasons we made our promise to the holy men, 'that if the king would fulfil your holiness's mandate, by restoring us his favour and peace, and our Church, and what he had taken from ourself and ours, then we would endeavour with our whole might, saving God's honour and our order, to serve himself and his children ;' but we stated, 'that, without authority from your holiness, we might not make changes in a formula which the whole Western Church acknowledges,

and which is expressed even in those very reprobate usages for which we are banished. For there it is contained, that before consecration, bishops elect shall swear fealty to the king concerning life and limb, and earthly honour, saving their order.' Why is it then that we alone are to be compelled by this captious pledge which is exacted from us, to drop all mention of God's honour and the indemnity of our order? What Christian ever made such a demand on Christian?

“He has eluded the solicitations of the holy men by shifting his answers, and, after much saying and unsaying, has left them, regretting the toils and expense which have availed nothing. He did indeed pretend that he would summon the English bishops and consult them; but in reality what he is waiting for is the return of his envoys from your holiness. For, as I learn from those who may be credited, they boast that, as they did on a former occasion, they will obtain from your holiness what the king desires, either by promises or threats. I cannot however believe, that the apostolic see will compel any one to suppress God's honour, or prohibit his mentioning the safety of his order. And truly, if your holiness dismisses them, as they deserve, you will re-establish Church liberty, and the fair fame of the apostolic see. May it please you to deal

manfully ; for most undoubtedly, if it is your pleasure to put the wicked in fear, you will restore peace to the Church and a perishing soul to God. You have already seen what gentleness can effect ; now essay the other method. In the severity of justice you will most assuredly triumph. Exact what we have been despoiled of, yea to the last farthing. Let it not get abroad among our contemporaries and posterity, that such rapine has escaped unpunished, and thus embolden himself and his successors to repeat it. We have also to request most earnestly, that if the malefactors whom we excommunicated venture into your holiness's presence, or send to you, you will not absolve them to our prejudice. If this had not been done on a former occasion, the Church would have been at this day in the enjoyment of peace.

“ If he shall compel us, which, by God's grace, he shall slay us rather than we will consent to do, to submit to this obligation (for we have not forgotten the oath which we made to you and the Roman Church when we received the pall), he will by this precedent compel all the bishops and clergy to do as we have done. And other princes will have no difficulty in following his example. No knight or peasant in our country is required to do so much as he demands from us.”

## LETTER LXXXI.

“ THE ARCHBISHOP TO WILLIAM OF PAVIA.

“ TRUTH may be overshadowed for a time, but cannot be destroyed, and light comes upon us the more agreeably after the darkness which previously annoyed us has been removed. I wish you could have been convinced long ago of that which is now clear from the testimony of our persecutor himself. For lately, in the presence of the most Christian king, his archbishops, bishops, counts, nobles, and all the others who were present, he publicly professed that the only cause of our exile was our unwillingness to observe the constitutions which our ancestors had observed to his. He also constantly added that he required nothing more of us than that we should promise this on the word of truth, without the condition, saving our order or the honour of God, or any other phrase which might be a protection to our own consciences. And because we will not promise unconditional obedience to the constitutions, some of which nullify the authority of the holy see, and destroy the liberty of the Church, the king departed without making peace with us.

“ We, therefore, entreat your kindness to undertake strenuously the cause of the Church of

Canterbury, which is the cause of justice. And as you promised us at your departure, do not hesitate to stand firm as becomes your honourable character, in defence of the liberties of the Church and our own person, for we are ready to comply with what is right, and oppose ourself to those who oppose themselves to the cause of justice. You may place implicit confidence in whatever the bearers tell you as coming from me."

#### LETTER LXXXII.

"THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY TO CONRAD OF  
MAYENCE.

"TO THE HALF AND MORE THAN HALF OF HIS SOUL,  
THOMAS OF CANTERBURY, THE MISERABLE EXILE, HEALTH  
AND ALL THAT HE IS, SAVING HIS MISERY, WHICH I  
WISH ALL MY FRIENDS TO BE FREE FROM.

"MAY God comfort you in all your distresses, for you have sorrowed at the sufferings of my fellow exiles and myself, as if they had been your own, and as facts have shown, you have endeavoured with all your might to protect God's Church and our poor household from the stings of exile and of misery. The king of England is boasting in the streets of both kingdoms, as if by the voice of the crier, that our hands are tied, and in proof of my being thus put to confusion,

and to render me still more burdensome and odious in the sight of men, he produces letters from the apostolic see. He boasts also that my suspension is to last until he receives me into favour, that is, if he so wills it, to the Greek calends—or never. You advise me in the mean time to bear it patiently, and you say a great deal in praise of the virtue—patience, without considering that there is no want of persons to quote those words of the comic poet,

‘ Omnes, quum valemus, recta consilia ægrotis damus :’

but if you were in my place you would think differently. For who ever had his throat cut without pain, except a stupid and insensate fellow? But even this, since it is necessary, and God so wills it, my mind shall bear with fortitude, but not I, but the grace of God which is with me.

“ You also commend the sincerity and friendly diligence of my lords the cardinals : and I too do not entertain suspicions about some of them, particularly in a cause which concerns God and the Roman Church, rather than me or mine. May God requite them for the good which they do or are likely to do to Christ’s poor exiles ! But the others, may God convert them, that they may feel it at His hands, and not take bribes to the subversion of all justice, the dishonour of the

apostolic see, and their own damnation, making gain of calumnies, and aiming after rewards. But these also say in their letters that they sympathize with me and my exiles ; but the ethic writer answers in irony :

‘ Omnes compatiuntur, nemo succurrit :’

and rightly so, for their deeds testify of them. You advise me by all means to make peace with the tyrant, the persecutor and tormentor of the Church. But the Roman Church, and certain of the cardinals, by whose counsels he is influenced, as he says, have closed up the way of peace. For lately, when there was a hope of peace, they caused me to be invited a second time to a conference by the count of Flanders, when his own messengers and those of his cardinals returning from our lord the pope brought with them the letters containing our suspension, and so gave horns to the transgressor, by which he may reject the peace as long as he pleases, and mean time keep the Church of God in suspense, as if by the authority of the apostolic see.

“ You write me word that fortune is labouring for the injury of the Roman Church, by disturbing the unity of the most powerful cities of Italy. Why do you suppose that this has happened, my dear friend, except because you do not give

due thanks to God your Redeemer, but seek what concerns yourselves alone, as if it were your own arm and not your Lord's, which accomplished the mighty deeds of the past year? Nor would I say this for you and others, who walk in the right path, but for those who expose God's Church to its persecutors and seek after lucre. And because the Church of Canterbury is almost destroyed, and I and my fellow exiles are attenuated and afflicted beyond measure, I pray you, earnestly, to join your friends with you, and persuade our lord the pope to have compassion on our misery, and among other things, to restore the primacy to our Church."

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## CHAPTER XXXIV.

CONDUCT OF THE BISHOP OF LONDON—HE AND THE BISHOP OF SALISBURY ARE EXCOMMUNICATED BY THE ARCHBISHOP—LETTERS.

EVENTS passed over the stage with considerable rapidity at the beginning of the year 1169. The representations sent to the court of Rome by the parties who had been present at Montmirail,

threw the balance of argument decidedly in the archbishop's favour, and when the pope expressed his determination not to deprive Becket of the power to punish offences by the spiritual sword, the field again lay open to him, and the party of the king and the bishops were alarmed in a corresponding degree, lest ecclesiastical censure should now fall upon them. The archbishop had already more than once threatened excommunication, and had, in fact, once before pronounced it against the bishop of London for disobeying the orders of his metropolitan. The account of this former sentence, which was passed in 1167, in defiance of the second appeal of the bishops, but had been afterwards, when there was a prospect of peace, deferred, is given by Herbert de Bosham as follows, and though it belongs to a previous part of our narrative, has been reserved until now, that the subject may possess the advantage of continuity.

“ We immediately began to consider whether we should pay attention to the appeal of the bishops or not; for although the law makes no distinction, and says, that when an appeal is interposed, whether it is admitted or not, no move shall be made by either party, and this is done in order that no impediment may lie in the way of the decision. In the canon as well as the civil law, the appeal devolves to the hearing of

him to whom the appeal is made, but our professors, being well versed in such questions, drew many distinctions, and explained the meaning of the law about appeals. We forbear here to give their reasonings, especially as those who know the canon law are well acquainted with this subject. We therefore came to the decision that the appeal was made to elude justice, and to oppress those who were oppressed enough already. Wherefore we would pay it no attention. But we all of us advised, entreated, and even supplicated the archbishop to exempt the person of the king only from his meditated censure.

“The archbishop, therefore, knowing from the words of the prophet that the man is cursed who withholdeth his sword from blood, or does the work of God negligently, made himself ready for his work: and first he cited some clerks of the court, who by reason of orders or the gift of ecclesiastical benefices were under allegiance to himself, to appear before him without delay. On others he enjoined the performance of certain duties in virtue of their obedience and in peril of their orders; but the former did not appear at the summons, nor did the latter execute the duties enjoined on them. The archbishop, therefore, not heeding their appeal, smote them with the sword of God’s word, and bound them publicly by a sentence of anathema: and he fulfilled

the requirements of the canons as far as the evil temper of the times allowed, by sending letters of excommunication to the proper persons. This sentence was passed both on clerks and laymen of the court, and for various reasons : on some because they violently kept possession of ecclesiastical property, on others because they had received farms belonging to his see, not from himself but from the king, during the period of his own exile. All, moreover, who had taken into their keeping farms or possessions belonging to his see or to any of his clerks, on the authority of the king, were now sentenced to excommunication. But amongst them were also some of the bishops for manifest disobedience, and because they had been from the beginning stirrers up of the strife between him and the king, and did not cease still to foment it. Gilbert Foliot, bishop of London, was one of these.

“ Now these excommunicates were some of the most familiar of the king’s counsellors, and the number of them, some being in their own persons excommunicated, and others by communion with those who were, was so great, that there was hardly one in the king’s chapel who could offer to his majesty the ‘kiss of peace’ in the celebration of the communion. For the archbishop neither could nor would have patience any longer. He would not spare them, even though the apos-

tolie pope had, by his own paramount authority, absolved those whom he before had bound with the same sentence: namely, the bishop of Salisbury and that clerk of the court who, as we have already related, made an unlawful treaty in Germany with schismatics, against the peace of the Church and the apostolic pontiff."

Among the clerks thus involved in one common sentence was the archbishop's own archdeacon, Geoffrey Ridel, who had been guilty of certain offences, and, like the bishop of London, neglected to appear before the archbishop when cited. The bishop of Worcester, who, it will be remembered, was closely related to the king, had also been summoned, and with the king's permission obeyed the mandate, and appeared before the archbishop. On his return to court, the excommunications had been pronounced. The bishop was received with much courtesy by the king after his return: and they one day entered the chapel together to hear mass. When they had taken their places, the archdeacon of Canterbury, Geoffrey Ridel, entered, and the bishop of Worcester, in obedience to the canon, withdrew, that he might not communicate with one who was under the anathema of his archbishop. The king was surprised at the bishop's going out, and asked the reason; when they

informed him of it, he burst into a violent fit of passion, and sent a servant after the bishop, ordering him to leave not only the chapel but the kingdom. The bishop paid prompt obedience to this order, bade his retainers to follow him speedily, and sent a messenger to tell the king that he was gone. The servants had already packed up their baggage to follow their master, when some of the king's courtiers interfered and expostulated with the king. "My lord," said they, "what have you done? you have banished from the country a bishop who is not only most faithful to you, but connected with you by blood. If you will allow us to speak, you have not done well. Besides which, you have now given the archbishop an opportunity which he has long wanted. Our lord the pope has not yet had any just cause for proceeding against you, but he will embrace the opportunity which is now presented. You cause sorrow to your friends and triumph to your enemies: you proscribe the innocent, and have now banished a bishop." These arguments brought the king to reason, and he dispatched messengers to recal the bishop, but he was obliged to repeat his message three times before the bishop would return. At last however he came back, and spoke his opinion pretty freely to the king, who did not take offence at it: but

as long as he was at court, the excommunicated archdeacon did not dare show himself in the chapel or about the king's person."

The bishop of Hereford was one of those whom the archbishop cited to appear before him, but he could not obtain permission to cross the water, and it was hazardous to attempt it secretly, for the same strict guard was kept up all along the coast. This cause of uneasiness preyed so upon the bishop's mind, that he fell ill and died shortly after. These two bishops of Hereford and Worcester had always been well disposed towards the archbishop and favoured his side, for they received consecration from his hands, and were probably the only bishops in England who, not having known the primate before his election, were not disposed to feel jealousy or to draw comparisons to his disadvantage.

These details, which are preserved by Fitz-Stephen, belong to the latter part of the year 1167, for it was in that year that the see of Hereford became vacant by the death of Robert de Melun; but the intervention of the pope's legates, and other causes rapidly succeeding to one another, had induced the archbishop of Canterbury not to press the excommunications. But now, in the beginning of the year 1169, after the failure of the conference at Montmirail, he determined at once to put in force the last

weapons of the Church. The bishop of London had been guilty of contumacy by refusing to appear to any of the summonses that were sent him; his lordship of Salisbury was considered as an accomplice in disobedience, and the two bishops were not long suffered to remain in suspense: a final summons was sent them in the month of February or March of this year, to appear before their metropolitan; and this summons gave rise to the following correspondence.

## LETTER LXXXIII.

“ THE BISHOP OF LONDON TO THE BISHOP OF SALISBURY.

“ WHILST our lord of Canterbury is machinating as much harm as possible against the commonwealth, he is singling us two out, as they tell me, as an especial mark for his arrows, that he may vent on us the first effects of his anger, and so make us recognize his power by the harm it does us; for I at least have never yet experienced any good resulting from it. He has lately, so they say, summoned us into France to appear before him, threatening if we fail to do so, that he will pass sentence of excommunication upon us. As I consider myself aggrieved in this, I have already appealed publicly against him, and shall send off one of my clerks on Tuesday next, God willing,

to give the archbishop notice of my appeal. I have thought fit to notify this to you, that if you choose to adopt the same course, one of your clerks may go also in company with mine. If you have had any certain information about this matter, please to send me word at London, where I hope to remain from Friday of the present week to Wednesday of the week next ensuing."

The bishop's messenger departed on the day appointed, bearing with him the following letter, notifying to the archbishop the course which the writer had adopted.

#### LETTER LXXXIV.

" TO THOMAS, ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY.

" GILBERT, BISHOP OF LONDON, THAT HE MAY GOVERN HIS CHARGE BY THE FITTING RULE OF REASON !

" YOUR severity, my lord, has naturally given cause of alarm to my lord of Salisbury and myself; wherefore, judging by the past, and fearing lest you may pass sentence of interdict on our lord the king of England and his kingdom, or on us, the suffragans of your Church, we have appealed to our lord the pope in the beginning of the present Lent, and fixed the octaves of the purification of St. Mary, as the term of our

appeal. This we signify to you by our present letter, that if you have aught against us, you may bring it forward in the presence of his holiness, and we will answer to the same, and humbly abide by his decision. May God avert his anger from us, that you may not put in execution what you purpose."

This proceeding on the part of the bishops did not, however, save them from the punishment which had been so long delayed. On Palm Sunday the archbishop pronounced solemn excommunication at Clairvaux, against the delinquent bishops, together with Hugh, earl of Norfolk, Randolf de Broc, Thomas Fitz-Herbert, Hugh St. Clare, Nigel de Sackville, Richard de Hastings, and the clerks, Robert de Broc and Letard de Norflece. He also threatened to pass a similar sentence on several others, if they should not make atonement before Ascension Day.

The report of this speedily reached London, although the written documents did not find their way without great difficulty. The bishop being informed of what had happened, immediately set out for the metropolis, and called together the canons and clergy of St. Paul's, together with the abbats, priors, and other officials of the adjoining churches, to whom he related the rumour which had reached him, and how he had been excommunicated; but to the surprise of all, he did not

act as if he intended to obey the sentence. Not long after he called a general synod of his diocese, and informed them of what had been done; alleging that he had not been summoned, and so had been condemned absent and unheard. But he contended also that it was impossible for him to be summoned, because no one could be found to convey the summons contrary to the king's orders. He concluded his address with disclaiming all allegiance to the archbishop, to whom he had professed no obedience when he was translated from Hereford, and asserted that the see of London from the time of the ancient Britons had been metropolitan. "In all this debate," says Fitz-stephen, who relates it, "the bishop's cause found much benefit from his having no opponent to speak against it." This was, however, a critical moment for the bishop. If he should receive letters of excommunication, such was the discipline of the Church, it would be necessary for him to submit. His friends were divided in their opinions; some advised him at once to consider himself as excommunicated, and to act accordingly; others advised him to wait at least till he should receive letters containing his sentence; and they also suggested that he might probably contrive to avoid receiving them at all. The king's justiciaries were now informed that such letters would

possibly ere long arrive, and they in consequence redoubled their vigilance along the whole of the English coast.

The archbishop was for some time sorely at a loss to find a person who would venture to convey this sentence into England. At last a young layman named Berenger offered himself, and we learn from the narrative of Fitz-stephen in what manner he discharged his mission.

On the festival of Ascension-day a priest, an excellent but timid man, named Vitalis, was officiating at the high altar of St. Paul's church, London, when just as they began to chaunt the *Offerenda*, and the priest had presented the bread and wine and made ready the chalice, a stranger named Berenger approached, and falling down on his knees, held out to the priest what appeared to be his donation to the offertory. The priest, astonished at the man's behaviour, held out his hand to receive the oblation. Berenger put into his hand a letter, saying, "The bishop of this diocese is not present; no more is the dean; but I see you as Christ's officiating minister, and I here in the name of God and our lord the pope, present to you this letter from the archbishop of Canterbury, containing the sentence which he has pronounced on the bishop of London, also another letter to the dean, enjoining him and his

clergy to observe this sentence. And I forbid you by God's authority to celebrate in this church after the present mass, until you have delivered to the bishop and the dean these letters." The stranger having spoken these words, disappeared amid the crowds of people who were moving off to their homes, as was usual after the Gospel had been read, for they had already heard mass in their own parish churches. A buzz went round among those who were nearest to the altar, and they began to ask the priest if divine service was prohibited in the cathedral. On his answering in the negative, the people said no more, and the man retired unmolested. The priest meanwhile continued the service of the mass, but the king's officials made search in all parts of the city for Berenger, and placed guards at all the crossings of the streets, but he could no where be found.

Not many days elapsed before the bishop and dean returned to London, when the priest Vitalis delivered to each his letter: the tenour of these letters was as follows:—

## LETTER LXXXV.

“ TO THE BISHOP.

“ THOMAS BY GOD'S GRACE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY AND LEGATR OF THE APOSTOLIC SEE, TO GILBERT BISHOP OF LONDON—WOULD THAT HE COULD SAY HIS BROTHER —THAT HE MAY TURN FROM EVIL AND DO GOOD.

“ YOUR extravagances we have long enough borne with: and we hope that our patience may not be as detrimental to the whole Church as it has been to ourselves. You have abused our patience, and would not listen to the pope or ourselves in the advice which concerned your salvation, but your obstinacy has become worse and worse, until, from regard to our sacred duty, and to the requirements of the law, we have for just and manifest causes passed sentence of excommunication on you, and cut you off from Christ's body, which is the Church, until you make condign satisfaction. We therefore command you, by virtue of your obedience and in peril of your salvation, your episcopal dignity, and priestly orders, to abstain, as the forms of the Church prescribe, from all communion with the faithful, lest by coming in contact with you the Lord's flock be contaminated to their ruin, whereas they ought to have been instructed by your teaching, and led by your example to everlasting life.”

## LETTER LXXXVI.

“ TO THE DEAN AND CLERGY.

“ THOMAS BY THE GRACE OF GOD ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY AND LEGATE OF THE HOLY SEE, TO THE DEAN, ARCH-DEACON, AND CLERGY OF LONDON, HEALTH, AND FAITHFULLY TO ABSTAIN FROM COMMUNION WITH THE EXCOMMUNICATE.

“ IT must not be forgotten by your prudence, how perversely, as all the Latin world well knows, our brother Gilbert the bishop of London, availing himself of the general schism which exists, has behaved in matters connected with the Church, and done his best to disturb its peace. We have borne with him until now with much patience; but he has continually abused our patience, and with incorrigible obstinacy has added disobedience to disobedience. Wherefore, being no longer able to dissemble, and compelled both by the necessity of the case and the law, we have publicly excommunicated him, and command you in virtue of your obedience, and in peril of your orders and salvation, to abstain altogether, as faithful Christians, from his communion.

“ In like manner we command you, under the same perils, to avoid as excommunicate those whose names are written here below.

“ We will also on Ascension-day involve in the same sentence the others whom we have solemnly

summoned before us, unless they make satisfaction in the interim. These are, Geoffrey archdeacon of Canterbury, and Robert his deputy, Richard of Ilchester, Richard de Lucy, William Gifford, Adam de Chere, and all those who with the aid or counsel of the king, or by his mandate or authority, have seized on the goods of ourselves or our clerks: those also who notoriously have instigated the king to injure the Church, or to proscribe and banish the innocent, and impede the pope's messenger or our own, so that they may not discharge the commissions of the Church.

“Let not your hearts be troubled, nor take alarm at these things, for against the wiles of the malignant, and the subterfuges of the appellants, by God's mercy, we are safe under the protection of the apostolic see.

“These are the names of the excommunicates. Joceline bishop of Salisbury, Earl Hugh, Randolf de Broc, Thomas Fitz-Bernard, the clerk Robert de Broc, Hugh de St. Clair, the clerk Letard of Norflece, Nigel de Sackville, and Richard the brother of William de Hastings, who also occupied our Church of Manech. Farewell.”

This notice thus regularly served put the fact of the excommunications beyond all doubt; but the bishop of London now did his utmost to induce the other prelates to join in the appeal which he had previously set up. A letter from

the bishop of Worcester to the chapter of Canterbury would lead us to infer that several councils were held at London for the purpose of procuring their assent.

## LETTER LXXXVII.

“THE BISHOP OF WORCESTER TO THE CHAPTER OF CANTERBURY.

“I SHALL relate to you the proceedings of our party in few words. Alarmed at the threat of an interdict, they took counsel together, and sending for our bishops, after speeches had been made, they asked each individually whether he wished himself and his Church to be included in the appeal which our bishops had made in the beginning of Lent to the term of the Purification, which by common consent they also proposed to renew on the octave of Whitsunday. The bishop of Durham therefore, who sat first, replied that he had not been present at that appeal, nor heard anything at all of a threat, either written or unwritten, that he would consult his metropolitan on the subject, and would act advisedly in the matter, whatever might be best, saving God's order and his own. By this contrivance he gained the good-will of all who heard him and obtained delay. The bishop of Exeter being then asked his opinion, replied that the bishops his colleagues had taken refuge in an appeal without asking his

advice, that it was inconsistent to rest on the appeal, and at the same time to shun the company of the excommunicates, that there was great reason to apprehend lest the supreme pontiff should confirm the interdict, which was a risk that nothing should induce him to encounter. If, however, they wished to promote the advantage of the Church, and the royal favour would allow him to leave the kingdom, he had no objection to appeal afresh about an injury to be apprehended but not already inflicted, although a special remedy might be obtained against every appeal. If he were aware of this, and the sentence of his superior passed upon him, he should bear it patiently. At these words the bishop of London made his religion ridiculous, and his lordship of Exeter was from that time put out of the synagogue.

“The bishop of Winchester was cited to answer at Northampton about this question that was proposed to his colleagues, but he wrote back in these terms: ‘The law of God prescribes that when a man is summoned before a superior judge, he cannot appeal to an inferior. Now he who appeals, binds himself of a necessity to prosecute his appeal. For this reason it is that I, who am sinking under disease and old age, and HAVE RECEIVED A SUMMONS FROM THE ALMIGHTY, AM INCAPACITATED FROM PREFERRING AN APPEAL TO AN

EARTHLY TRIBUNAL. I pray your brotherly kindness, therefore, not to thrust me into the embarrassment of an appeal, by which I may incur the sentence of an anathema.' This answer created suspicion in the minds of those who heard it, but the bishop of Winchester preferred to incur the anger of man than to offend against the law of God. This suspicion was made evident, by his afterwards publishing the sentence of excommunication that was sent him<sup>3</sup>, and by his avoiding all correspondence with the excommunicates. We are informed that Reginald archdeacon of Wiltshire obtained reconciliation for his father, and that his lordship the pope was altogether ignorant of the sentence that was passed." . . .

In this endeavour therefore to combine all the bishops of England in his cause, Gilbert Foliot was evidently baffled; and his attempt to establish the independence of his own see only served to create ridicule against him. "He boasts," said John of Salisbury in a letter to a friend, "that London was once the seat of an arch-flamen when Jupiter was worshipped in Britain. So wise and religious a man as he might perhaps like to see the worship of Jupiter restored, that, if he cannot be archbishop, he may at all events be arch-flamen."

<sup>3</sup> The noble-minded Henry of Winchester incurred the odium of many of the king's party, by sending money and necessaries to Becket during his exile.

The archbishop however, knowing that this foolish attempt to dispossess Canterbury of its prerogative had been more than once made, gave orders that the necessary proofs of its supremacy should be sent to Rome, whither Gilbert Foliot was now hastening: but before the latter started, he sent the following letters to the king.

## LETTER LXXXVIII.

“ TO HENRY KING OF THE ENGLISH, GILBERT BISHOP OF LONDON, FAITHFUL AND DEVOTED OBEDIENCE.

“ YOUR excellency, my lord, cannot be ignorant how heavily his lordship of Canterbury has put forth his hand upon us and certain others of your faithful servants, and aimed with the right hand of iniquity his spiritual sword against our person, contrary to all justice. It is clearly laid down in the canons that no one shall prematurely, that is, unsummoned or unconvicted, be condemned: no bishop can excommunicate a man until the cause is proved of which he is accused. Since then his lordship has deviated from justice, we trust in God, that his sword which he has aimed at us may smite nothing but the air. For we anticipated the blow by appealing to the pope, and an appeal made in the beginning of Lent must nullify a sentence passed on the Palm-sunday following.

Pope Sixtus ordained that when a bishop deems himself aggrieved by his metropolitan, or holds him in suspicion, he shall appeal to the Roman see, which shall give him a hearing, and in the mean time no one shall excommunicate him until the cause has been decided. And if any sentence shall be passed in the interim, it shall altogether be without effect.”

This letter was shortly after succeeded by the following :—

LETTER LXXXVIII.

“THE SAME TO THE SAME.

“TO HIS DEAREST LORD HENRY, THE ILLUSTRIOUS KING OF THE ENGLISH, HIS BROTHER GILBERT, MINISTER OF THE CHURCH OF LONDON, HEALTH AND THE DUE SERVICE OF DEVOTED FIDELITY.

“WE send to your lordship our household clerk master H., a man devoted to your service, entreating you most affectionately to hear us, and to assist us with your royal mercy in our present necessity. This your majesty may do by writing to our lord the pope, and begging him to admit the appeal which we have made to him, as justice demands, and to suspend by his authority the sentence which has been passed on us since we appealed, until he shall have heard our cause and decided between the parties. We pray of you

also to give us letters to our lords the cardinals your friends, that they may intercede with his lordship the pope, and by their intercession procure for us the favour which we speak of, namely listening to an appeal, for that is due to every one who suffers injustice and oppression. For pope Sixtus ordains that ‘when a bishop thinks that he is treated wrongfully by his metropolitan, or holds him in suspicion, he shall appeal to the Roman see, and whilst he shall claim to be heard by it, no one shall excommunicate him until his case shall be decided by the authority of the holy pontiff.’

“Furthermore, as it is highly necessary that we should enjoy your converse and advice as often as possible, we pray your excellency most fervently to allow us to cross the water, and permit the messenger whom we are sending to our lord the pope, to await our arrival on the other side. May Almighty God preserve your highness for ever.”

#### LETTER LXXXIX.

“HENRY KING OF ENGLAND TO HIS BELOVED AND FAITHFUL GILBERT BISHOP OF LONDON, HEALTH AND LOVE.

“I HAVE heard of the outrage which that traitor and enemy of mine Thomas has inflicted on you and on other of my subjects, and I am as much

displeased as if it had fallen on my own person. Wherefore be it known to you for certain that I will do my best, through our lord the pope, the king of France and all my friends, that henceforth he shall not have it in his power to injure us or our dominions. It is my will and advice that you do not suffer this matter to prey upon your mind, but defend yourself to the best of your ability, and either come over to me here at once into Normandy, or remain in England, as you may think most expedient. For I leave this to your own discretion: but you may be assured that if you determine to come, and wish to proceed to Rome, I will furnish you with every thing necessary for your journey, or that may conduce to maintain my own dignity. Witness G——, my clerk at St. Macaire's in Gascony."

The bishop of London lost no time in availing himself of the assistance which was thus offered: he crossed over immediately into Normandy, and shortly afterwards set out for Rome, whilst the king redeemed his pledge, by writing to the pope and requesting his interference.

#### LETTER XC.

"THE KING OF ENGLAND TO THE POPE.

"YOUR serene highness knows full well how I and my whole kingdom have been troubled and

injured by that enemy of mine, Thomas of Canterbury, though my conscience does not reproach me with having done any thing to deserve it. I believe you cannot have forgotten how your fatherly goodness formerly sent the cardinals to inquire into this matter, but it pleased you to exempt the archbishop from their jurisdiction, and so my innocence, being fettered by these instructions of yours, could not be satisfactorily brought to light. I have on several, indeed on all occasions, been ready to abide by a fair trial in the face of the Church, and if I have done the least wrong, which I cannot call to mind that I have done, to make atonement for it, as is reasonable, and more so indeed than my predecessors were, though they were much superior to me. I cannot, therefore, be sufficiently surprised that your prudence should suffer a devout son of the Roman Church, who has always been most ready to abide by justice, to be thus oppressed, as it seems to me, contrary to all justice, and to be harassed by most unreasonable annoyances. The archbishop, who still persists in attacking the innocent, has now added a fresh injury to the many that have preceded. Backed, as he says, by your authority, he has again excommunicated those faithful sons of the Roman Church, the bishops of London and Salisbury, though they had already made an appeal, and were ready to

submit to justice, and this too without convicting them, and even without summons or previous admonition. He threatens, moreover, to pass the same sentence on several of my friends, though he has no reasonable cause against them. This gives me as much annoyance as if the censure had been inflicted on my own person. How insupportable this is, and injurious to my own fame and yours, I believe your prudence may well imagine. It seems as if your fatherly goodness had discarded me, for you do not attend to the injuries which your son is suffering; but to increase my ignominy and reproach, you suffer my enemy to make most shameful assaults upon me, and the violence of his injustice meets with no restraint from your fatherly hand. I entreat, therefore, your highness to show the affection of a father towards your son, and without delay to put a check upon the injuries which are done to me and my people. I entreat you also most earnestly to annul what my enemy Thomas aforesaid has done illegally, and after appeal, against the people, clerks and laymen, of my kingdom. Witness G. Vasatur, bishop at St. Macaire's in Gascony."

## LETTER XCI.

“ THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY TO HUMBALD BISHOP OF  
OSTIA.

“ WE are often compelled to pour our sorrows into the ears of your holiness; for they are increased beyond number and beyond measure: and besides yourself there are few or none to console us in our tribulation, or to promise us consolation. We will say nothing at present of the deaths of our relatives, the slaughter or imprisonment of Christ’s priests, the cruel decree, far exceeding that of Herod in barbarity, by which he proscribed all whom he suspected, of every age and sex, infants in the cradle, and depending for sustenance upon their mothers’ milk. For by dwelling on these things, our sorrows are protracted also, and it is always an alleviation of punishment to reduce it within a narrow compass. Our persecutor ought to be content with having so long tormented our Church, and kept us five years in exile, waiting till our patience should soften him to mercy. Examine, if you please, all ancient history, look at the deeds of all the tyrants that are therein recorded, retrace all the annals of the Church, and you will have difficulty in finding one of its persecutors who so steadily pursued his victim, and used every art to involve so many innocent

persons in the same suffering. His attempts to draw our blood, and with us to destroy the Church's liberty, and the authority of the apostolic see, are so manifest, that we wonder how the Roman pontiff can bear with him so long, and endure his unreasonable demands, to the injury of that Church which his holiness is appointed to defend.

“‘To quell the haughty but to spare the fallen,’ was the ancient motto of the Romans, and it is surely the doctrine of Christ's Church, ‘Behold, I have set thee over nations and kingdoms,’ &c. Should there be any regard for persons among the successors of St. Peter? This is not so with God, who treats prince and plebeian alike as they have deserved. What glory can there be either for God or man in giving the poor man his rights and restraining princes from heinous crimes? Justice severely punishes the powerful, and exercises her harshest prerogative over those who are in office. Who was ever before allowed, with the connivance of the Roman pontiff, to abuse the property of the Church so licentiously as the king of England has done? He has now for five years held the revenues of our see and all our goods, besides the bishoprics of Lincoln, Bath, Hereford, and Ely, whilst the possessions of the see of Landaff have been almost all squandered upon his knights, and Bangor has been ten years without a bishop, be-

cause the king will not consent to an election. What shall I say of the abbacies which he keeps in his own hands? It is, in fact, impossible to number them. And all this he defends under the name of his constitutions, which the Roman Church ought to have denounced at once, together with those who observed them, as hostile to God and his eternal law. If we had submitted to those constitutions, no harm would have happened to us or to any belonging to us: and if we will now submit to them, we may return as soon as we like to our country, and to the king's favour. But God forbid that we should purchase advantage to ourselves, by the public detriment of the Church, or derogate from the privileges of the holy see, receiving for ourselves eternal damnation in exchange for temporal advantage.

And now, because we will not consent to the Church's downfall, the king is aiming to ensure our own ruin. We will not exchange God's law for the iniquity of a tyrant: and so he aims at getting us transferred to another see, though there is no necessity or benefit to be derived therefrom, but rather it is a breach of the law. Because we will not consent to this iniquity, he wishes the Roman court to translate us, that so he and his accomplices may carry on, by our translation, some sort of traffic of our blood, whatever it may be.

“ What else can be his meaning in trying to bribe the Milanese, Cremonese, and Parmese against us? How did we ever harm the Pavians or any other people of Italy that they should wish our exile? In what have we offended the sages of Bologna, for neither promises nor threats could induce them to consent to our ruin? We did not, most assuredly, proscribe Robert de Basseville, and yet he was led to use his exertions with you, that our exile might be perpetuated: but when he found out the deceit, he repented, and intreated that his former unjust petition might be refused. Richard, bishop elect of Syracuse, was induced, by the promise of the see of Lincoln, to aid our persecutors by his money, his counsel, and all his power. Even the king of Sicily, in whose dominions you live, has been promised the king of England’s daughter, if he will join in effecting our ruin. Have they not also bribed all the most influential of the Romans, like hired banditti, not to persuade, but actually to bear down the Roman Church? But besides all this, they promise to procure peace with the emperor and the Saxons, and to bribe all the Romans to take the oath of allegiance to the pope, if he will gratify the king of England by deposing us. It is now clear what kind of safe-conduct he meant to furnish us with: for it mattered not to him how our creditors were to

be paid, or my companions, if I could get any, be furnished with necessaries for the journey, or the cruelty of deserting those who for five years have borne the severity of exile. The same kind of attentions on the part of the king's ministers, for we cannot suppose himself to be privy to it, might easily furnish us with poisoned vessels; it is difficult for a man to protect his life, when the steward of his household is the traitor. Not to multiply words or protract my letter, no invitation shall ever induce us to meet such hazards. For if a man, from any cause, does not shrink from death, he had better at once use a knife or a halter.

“The king has recently sent the bishop of Seez and Geoffrey, archdeacon of Canterbury, to his most Christian majesty, earnestly intreating him to expel us from his kingdom. But that pious king replied that he had received as an inheritance from his ancestors a custom which had always prevailed in France, namely, to entertain those who were exiled for the truth, and to show them all due hospitality. He added, that he would, by God's grace, never abandon this hereditary duty; for that he had received us from the pope, his only superior on earth, and no king or emperor should induce him to give us up; for God is on our side, because we are suffering wrongs and insults in defence of his law. With

this answer the bishops were dismissed in confusion, and the king, though he has always been kind and liberal towards us, is now, God bless him for it, more kind and liberal than ever. He says, that in our cause he shall be enabled to prove the sincerity and vigour of the Roman Church and the truth of our lord the pope, whose faith and constancy he commends on this account especially, that the king of England has been repulsed in his unjust claims; if, at least, what he has heard from the newsmongers be true, and our lord the pope has persisted in what he promised concerning us. There are certain of the opposite party, who dissuade us from asking restitution of what has been taken from us, and advise us, if the question of peace be discussed, to pass over all the different particulars without much discussion; but these men do not consider what a dangerous example this would be, for cupidity will thus be excited, and he may be led to banish and proscribe the bishops, and then make peace with the Church, no matter what may be the loss to her. Such dissimulation as this excites the avarice of the temporal power, and gives wicked men an opportunity of sinning boldly. It would be better for us never to have been born, than to have brought so pernicious an example into the Church: particularly since it is easy for him to compensate, in a great

measure, for the loss of possessions, by immunities, privileges, uncultivated land, and other benefices.

“ Nor will it be easy for them to extort consent from me by violence, if the pope only stands by me. For though he may use threats, yet all the world have trembled since they have seen the contumacious bishops, their satellites and accomplices in iniquity, delivered over to Satan, to the destruction of the flesh. If they repent and are contrite, he will the sooner and the more easily be subdued, and his lightnings be converted into rain. You may believe those who have had experience, for we know the character of the man; we have borne the burden and the heat of the day, nor do we fear an engagement in behalf of the Lord and the liberties of his Church. Believe me, I say, that he is a man of such a nature that he cannot be amended without punishment. And because the bishop of London is the encourager of all his malice, and has lately rushed into such an unblushing course of action as to say, that since his translation he owes no obedience to the Church of Canterbury, to which he has made profession, boasting, moreover, that he will get the archiepiscopal see transferred to London; it is necessary to bruise the head of so great iniquity, that the English Church may recover. Our brothers and colleagues have op-

posed him in his machinations against the unity of the Church, and he in return has taken over the king's official from the continent to crush them, because they would not join him in being stamped with the image of the beast. The Lord has raised you up to protect the Church of Canterbury. Be pleased then to recall those things to the memory of our lord the pope, and confirm your brethren as you are wont in maintaining the Church, that so by our patience in suffering, the apostolic see may effect the delivery of the English Church. For we will die in exile rather than see the divine law set aside in favour of tyrannical traditions. Pardon me if my necessity compels me to write so lengthily: it is consolatory to pour my sorrows into the ear of my dearest lord and father.

‘ ’Tis sweet to those who once have suffered, thus  
To tell their tale of woe.’

And we entreat you earnestly to bear it in your recollection also. Farewell, and remember me in your prayers before the Lord !”

The names of the excommunicated who were incorrigible and have been denounced the second time, are as follows:—Geoffery, archdeacon of Canterbury, Robert, his deputy, Richard of Ilchester, Richard de Lucy, William Gifford, and Adam de Cherings.

## LETTER XCII.

“THE ARCHBISHOP TO CARDINAL JOHN.

“THE word of the Evangelist says, ‘He who is not with me is against me, and he who gathereth not with me scattereth abroad.’ And now I would ask you, what have I ever done to offend your highness, or what lukewarmness in your service have I ever shown, that your able and kind assistance should not be rendered to me in my present tribulation, or what is harder still, that you should not at least withhold your hand from adding to the cares and troubles, and increasing the misery of a banished and wretched man ?

“ You surely should not take this reflection to your conscience as a source of pride or credit. Forbear then, I entreat you, forbear to aggravate the ill fortune of the unfortunate, or to wound the innocent. For though I was once in prosperity, I have been taught by the existing state of things to bear adversity ; and it is the best thing that can befall the wretched—to know their lot.

“ But further, how can you have forgotten, how, at the request of our lord the king of France, at his forest near Orleans, you received us from his hands into your patronage, to protect us against all men, except our lord the pope alone ? How

has this undertaking failed? We do not believe that it has become obsolete by any fault of the king, and we are certain that in our own conduct towards you, we have done nothing to lose your favour or to merit your anger. But enough of this.

“To come to our business; the bishop of London is proceeding as fast as possible to the court, at your suggestion, it is said, that whilst we have no enemies there and very few friends, he may by smooth flatteries, unbounded promises and threats, whether on his own part or of the king's, obtain favour there instead of punishment, which he has deserved, and so get absolution, whereas he merits nothing but condemnation. Let no one pretend that mercy is the prerogative of the holy see, or that she delights rather to look with compassion on sinners than to visit them with punishment. We answer you in the words of Scripture, Righteousness and peace so far love one another, that he who acts with righteousness will find peace, for ‘Righteousness and peace have kissed each other.’ There is, however, one thing which we ask of you above all others, never to be unmindful of the long and patient course of avarice: she is a gulf that never can be filled up, never rejoicing in the fruits of her earnings, but ever harassed by an insatiable appetite. Take care then not to be deceived by the wiles

of a most malignant man; his religion is but a veil, his curious refinements are bounded by no law, whilst his empty promises are calculated to blind the eyes and to shake the force of all authority. The end of these things is death: their fruits dust and ashes, which are blown away by the winds and instantly disappear. Let not unlawful gain tempt you to protect by your authority the crimes of that man, which deserve to be punished.

“What need I say more? May the Holy Spirit work with you, that by means of you and your brethren the man of sin may be revealed, and his iniquity recoil on his own head. May God quash the counsel of Ahithophel, and arraign him before his face, that he may receive punishment for his sins from that tribunal which wields the sword of St. Peter, to the chastisement of the wicked and the praise of them that do well. So will there be glory in heaven before God and his angels, and on earth peace, good will towards men.

“God bless you, again and again, that it may be well with us also, and our wretched fellows in exile, especially in the present emergency.”

## CHAPTER XXXV.

GRATIAN AND VIVIAN APPOINTED LEGATES — CON-  
FERENCE AT ST. DENYS AND MONTMARTRE —  
LETTERS.

THE scene must now for a moment be shifted to Rome, where the pope's envoys, soon after the meeting at Montmirail, delivered their report of the failure of their negotiations, and messengers dispatched by the king's party recommenced their solicitations to the apostolic father, that he would interfere at once, and decisively, against the archbishop. But the king of France was now again on Becket's side, and the statement of the reasons which led to the ill-success of the mediators was decidedly favourable to the Church party. The pope finding himself once more in this dilemma, again removed the contention to a distance, by deputing Gratian and Vivian to mediate for the third time between the parties.

## LETTER XCIII.

“ VIVIAN TO THE ARCHBISHOP.

“ THAT we might return as speedily as possible to the court, in company with the archbishop of

Rouen or his messengers, we turned off to Tours, and on the 29th of October we received, through the prior of Bec and another nobleman, letters from the king of England, the archbishop of Rouen, and the archdeacon of Canterbury. We now transmit to your excellency copies of the same, entreating you not to listen to the suggestions of any clerk whatever, even should he be an archbishop, if you do not find the king's letters to contain what is consistent with your honour. We request you to send us a courier or one of your clerks as soon as possible, who may signify to us your pleasure, and not to pay so much deference to master Gratian as to trample under foot, in our person, one who is your good friend and chief supporter at the court of Rome."

#### LETTER XCIV.

"THE SAME TO THE SAME.

"BLESSED be God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is ever ready, contrary to the expectation of many, to join in the indissoluble bond of charity what has been severed by the counsels of the wicked. We went back, as we were recalled, into the king's presence, where, by Divine grace, we witnessed nothing in which the honour of God and of His Church was vio-

lated. If then you have already received the messenger of the most Christian king and of his lordship of Rouen, as we fully believe you have, we rejoice thereat. For things had been arranged to that very end. And if master John of Salisbury, your clerk, and our dear friend, has returned to you, as we trust he has, since he has received the message, we have reason to be thankful. In any case, however, reverend father, we entreat you, and advise you in the name of our lord the pope, to present yourself, without any hesitation, at the conference which is about to take place between the kings at St. Denys, on the Sunday after the feast of St. Martin's. For there, if it please God, you will be greeted with the hymn, 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace; good will towards man!' Your friend the chamberlain priest of the great cardinal William, salutes you as he would his own lord and master: he is our associate in our labours, and represents his master: he has in his custody certain secrets of the king, which tend in every way to your exaltation. There is another reason, which we will explain when we see you, why you should come to this interview, for you will find the king and his sons all ready to be at your disposal. We are going as fast as possible to his serene highness the French king, and at the same time wish to see you at the conference.

We salute you and all who are with you in exile; and we hope that our dear friend and companion, master Long, may act prudently in this business, as men of his nation generally do."

## LETTER XCV.

"THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY TO MASTER VIVIAN.

"As regards the legation which you have received, and the business committed to your charge, I could wish that no part of it had been forgotten in consequence of your visit to the English king, and that the authority of him who sent you had not suffered,—that you had done nothing to his disparagement or mine. For so far as your duty extended in this matter, when you have once discharged the commission entrusted to you, the fixing of a certain time for the accomplishment of your embassy ought to have taught sufficient caution to a man like you, well acquainted with the laws. Take care, therefore, that your knowledge is guided by prudence, and that you walk prudently, lest you become a joke and laughing-stock to the nobles. If, however, on your own authority you have undertaken a new legation, let him who is concerned submit to it, the weight of it should fall upon the shoulders of him who will benefit by it: I owe no respect to its juris-

diction. As to the co-operation, which you name, of a certain great cardinal's chamberlain, that priest I mean bearing his master's authority, I am as much surprised at the presumption of the accomplice, as I am at the eagerness of his principal. If any one runs a risk thereby, let him have a care how he may best avoid the evil consequences of such presumption. But I think I have now said enough to a wise man.

“We thank you, however, for the zeal which you have shown to obtain peace for us and ours, and we wish your prudence had equalled your zeal. We greatly fear that your time and labour may be thrown away in consequence of the subtleties and circumlocutions which are used towards you, and so all your zeal will have been misspent. We cannot understand from your instructions why you should so strongly urge us to go to the conference which is to be held next Sunday at St. Denys, and we wonder why you have been so easy in suffering us to be summoned. However, out of respect to the holy Roman Church, and from regard for you, we will meet you, God willing, at Corbeil Castle, on Friday, to hear from your own mouth what fruit we are likely to gain from all your labours and exertions, and what honour and credit are likely to accrue from them to yourself.

“Farewell! and may God protect you from the

king's snares, which hardly any one of all that have had any dealings with him has been able to escape."

The narrative of the ensuing events which the pen of Becket's secretary and faithful chronicler has left us, is too graphic to be here omitted; nor will the reader regret that we have taken every opportunity to introduce the words of contemporaries and eye-witnesses, for it is hardly possible to produce by any other language the same striking picture of the scenes which followed one another in rapid succession in this contest of principle between Church and State.

"The pope did not send legates a latere as before, but others, men of erudition and zeal from the court, to put in force the apostolic mandate. One of these was Gratian, of blessed memory, nephew of the late pope, Eugenius; the other was Vivian, an advocate in the causes which come before the court. These men travelled down from Rome without delay; for they had less baggage and furniture than the cardinals, and they went straight to the king, without stopping to see us by the way. In addressing his majesty, they used exhortations and admonitions with all mildness, mixing them however with threats of the Church's anger; and one of them used no sort of flattery whatever, but put the king's conduct in its true light, and reproved him

for it to his face. This was Gratian, who was not only gracious to us, as his name implies, but was even more vivacious<sup>4</sup> than Vivian, his colleague. His object was by all means to restore to us the king's favour and peace to the Church, and by his exertions to effect this, he gained honour both before God and man. Moreover, he took care to keep his embassy free from even the breath of scandal, for he despised and rejected gold and silver, which often sway the minds even of the wise, and would not receive any sort of bribe or gift whatever, unless he should first accomplish the purpose for which he had been sent. And so, as he desired to have nothing, his desire was gratified, for he received nothing.

“After some time, Gratian and his colleague came to see us, after having again and again, but in vain, solicited and warned the king to make peace with us. They told us that in every particular, about which they had talked to him, they had never met with such a turn-coat and crafty dissembler as he had proved himself: for he was always seeking how he might contrive to put off and delay the business in hand, so as to justify his own cause and to injure ours. It was Gratian, especially, who gave us this state-

<sup>4</sup> The pun is almost as bad in the Latin original; but bad puns were less offensive in the twelfth century than they are now.

ment; and as he found himself now unable to effect a reconciliation consistently with God's honour and the credit of the Church, he determined to return to Rome, and accordingly departed, turning a deaf ear to all the crafty promises that were held out to him, and as unincumbered by bribes as when he came—he returned, I say, like a faithful messenger, and told the apostolic pontiff what he had seen and heard: but the other, Vivian, who had been joined with him in the embassy, remained with us on this side of the Alps; for he had been tainted by the poisons of our Western isle, and was so loaded with our wealth, that it disqualified him from using the same speed in returning.

“The king of England, therefore, seeing that Gratian, like a faithful messenger, was already gone back to the pope, without caring whether he had incurred favour or enmity by the mode in which he had discharged his embassy, began immediately to consider what was the best course to take; for he supposed, and not without reason, that Gratian would disparage his cause, whilst he exalted ours; and he reflected that the king of France, in revenge for the violation of the truce with his nobles, would excite the pope against him. And so he considered in what way he could pacify the offended king, and avert or delay the ecclesiastical censure which he saw

impending. He, therefore, thought it best to appease the king of France by an appearance of humility, which is pleasing even to the most haughty. For which reason he gave out that he meant to make a pilgrimage to St. Denys, the martyr and apostle of France, and at the same time to see his young lord<sup>5</sup>, the king's son, who was then a boy. This is that amiable boy," adds Herbert, writing nearly sixteen years later than the events he is recording, "the only son of his father, given him late in life by the Lord, to succeed him in his dominions. His name is Philip, and may he reign long and prosperously.

"After a few days, then, the king suddenly and unexpectedly entered France, without requesting an interview with Louis, who he knew would refuse it: and so he came under the appearance of a pilgrimage to St. Denys, the apostle of France, hoping that the king, hearing of his arrival, would come and meet him, and bring with him the archbishop of Canterbury, to try to make peace between them as before. For, as we have been credibly informed, king Henry repented already that he had not made peace with us at the former

<sup>5</sup> It is hardly necessary to inform the reader that Henry II. though by far the most powerful sovereign in Europe, was vassal to king Louis for the dominions which he held in France.

meeting, even subject to the condition, ‘ saving the honour of God.’

“ Things turned out as the king had anticipated : the king of France met him, and we also went to meet him at the chapel, which is called the Martyrdom, at the foot of a hill named Montmartre, between Paris and St. Denys. This chapel has its name from the glorious martyr St. Denys, who was slain there. To this chapel we came ; but the two kings, who had arrived before us, and gone on to see the young prince, who was brought out from Paris to meet them, were awaiting our arrival in a plain beyond the chapel. When one of the company urged the archbishop to make haste, because the kings were only waiting for him to come up that they might begin the conference, he replied that a priest ought to travel with gravity and decorum. Now the kings remained without the chapel of the Martyrdom, whilst we entered within the walls. The legate Vivian, who stopped behind when Gratian returned to Rome, perceiving that he had now a fair opportunity of doing something, began both in his own person and through the French king and others who were present, to solicit the king of England in our behalf : and he was the more anxious to do this, because, as his colleague was gone, the credit of making peace would be all his own. The mild king of France, therefore, with

his bishops and nobles, interposed their kind offices to effect a reconciliation, going backwards and forwards, in company with the mediators, from the king to us, and from us to the king. At last, after much discussion and argument, partly in public and partly in private, all difficulties seemed smoothed down and every preliminary adjusted. All the objectionable constitutions, though not expressly, yet virtually, were withdrawn and abandoned by the king, and full effect was given to the liberties of the Church, though nothing was expressly stipulated by either party on these heads. For all agreed that specification would do harm, because it might tend to impede the reconciliation. The phrase, which had always before been added, and had caused so much difficulty, namely, 'saving the honour of God,' was now virtually suppressed: nor indeed was it necessary to retain it; because there was now no wish shown to subject the archbishop in ecclesiastical matters to the king's will. The king only made this stipulation, that the archbishop should return to England, from which however his majesty denied that he had ever expelled him, and there discharge his metropolitan duties in all respects as before, submitting to all the royal customs and prerogatives, and that he should not under plea of the Church usurp what belongs to the king, nor would the king under plea of the royal prerogative claim any privi-

leges which belonged to the Church. But the archbishop among other things spoke to the French king and the mediators about the property which he and his followers had been deprived of, urging both upon the clerks and laity who were present, the obligatory force of that divine precept, by which restitution is enforced before absolution can be given; adding moreover, that it was unbecoming the royal magnificence to confiscate to his own use the goods of the poor and of the Church, and equally unlawful of him to make grants out of what was not his own: which was the same as if one should make an offering to one altar out of what he had robbed from another, or as if one should crucify Paul to redeem Peter<sup>6</sup>. Now he valued the amount of money of which he and his clerks had been deprived at thirty thousand marks [20,000*l.*] But the king of France and the other replied that it was equally discreditable and unlawful for him for the sake of money to stand in the way of peace, which was so necessary both for the kingdom and the Church, particularly between so great a king and so great an archbishop. They also, among other arguments, reminded him of their ancient friendship, and the benefits and services which

<sup>6</sup> Is this the origin of our modern proverb, "robbing Peter to pay Paul?"

had been conferred on both sides : remarking at the same time, that a holy and righteous pastor would not persist, if every other impediment was removed, in opposing a reconciliation, and alienating himself any longer from his Church, for the sake of a pecuniary consideration : he ought rather to embrace the Church as his spouse, in the two arms of his love, and do his duty to her, no matter how torn or tattered might be her condition. However, the mediators said they would readily go and speak to the king on this subject. This they accordingly did, and his majesty replied, that, when the amount could be ascertained through his procurators, he would make restitution of all, according as his ministers should advise him : and whereas the archbishop had raised a question not only about moveables but also about fixtures, the king said that he would speak about them also in good time.

“Thus every storm seemed to be blown over, and we were, as we thought, on the point of entering the harbour, when the archbishop, through the mediators, demanded some guarantee of the conditions ; not, as he said, because he suspected the king of treachery, but that he naturally entertained suspicions about some of the courtiers after so long a quarrel, and he wished that some outward sign or token of peace should pass between them. Now the archbishop,

being a prudent man, had some days before the meeting consulted the apostolic pontiff what caution he should require, if the king should allow him after so long variance to return to his Church. To this question the pope replied, that as a churchman and priest he could not exact a pledge or oath from the king; that the cause between them was one of justice and the peace of the Church, for which, whether in open quarrel or after peace was made, it was precious to yield one's life. None of the ordinary guarantees were therefore to be required in such a case; 'but,' added his holiness, 'if, God willing, you could prevail upon the king to let a kiss of peace<sup>7</sup> pass between you, with that you might be content, without requiring any other caution, unless it should be spontaneously offered.'

"The archbishop, fortified by this advice, when every thing else was arranged, followed the pope's counsel, and desired that the king should give him a kiss as a token of their reconciliation; but when the king received this communication through the mediators and the king of France, he replied, that he should have been very ready to do as the archbishop required, if he had not

<sup>7</sup> The custom of men kissing one another is still retained in every other country of Europe except Great Britain and Ireland.

formerly sworn publicly that he would never kiss him, even if he should at some future time be persuaded to make peace with him; and that the sole cause of his refusing now to kiss the archbishop was his wish not to break his oath.

“The king of France and most of the mediators hearing this, entertained a suspicion that under the honied words which had hitherto passed between them, they had perhaps been made to drink poison. So they returned in haste to the archbishop, who was waiting in the chapel of the Martyrdom, and reported the king’s answer. And being timid men, and now entertaining suspicion, they made no comment on the subject, but delivered duly the king’s answer, just as he had spoken it.

“Now the archbishop was one of the most wary of men, by reason of his experience of the world, and as soon as ever he heard the king’s answer, he and his followers became alarmed. The first words which he uttered showed at once that he saw far into the future: for he did not wait to consult any one, but answered decisively and absolutely that at present he would not make peace with the king, unless, according to the advice of the apostolic pontiff, it should be ratified by the kiss of peace. This decisive reply cut short the conference, just as night was coming on: and the kings had a long journey before them to Mantes, where their

quarters had been prepared, at the distance of thirty-six miles from Paris.

“The king of England, who had been busy the whole day, and now had a long way to ride by night, repeatedly on his journey cursed the archbishop, reckoning up the various annoyances and causes of vexation which he had given him.

“Whilst the kings thus took their departure, we retired to pass the night in a house called the Temple, belonging to the Templars, and situated just outside the walls of Paris. As we were leaving the chapel of the Martyrdom, in which the business of the day had been transacted, one of our people came up to the archbishop and addressed him thus: ‘My lord, this day’s conference has been held in the chapel of the Martyrdom, and it is my belief that nothing but your martyrdom will ever ensure peace to the Church.’ ‘Be it so,’ answered the archbishop. ‘God grant that she may be redeemed even if my life is sacrificed!’”

After this the exiles again returned to St. Columba’s, and a variety of letters passed between the different persons who had been engaged in the late events.

## LETTER XCVI.

“ THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY TO THE ARCHBISHOP OF SENS.

“ TO HIS REVEREND FATHER AND DEAR LORD WILLIAM, BY GOD’S GRACE, ARCHBISHOP OF SENS, THOMAS, HUMBLE MINISTER OF THE CHURCH OF CANTERBURY, ALL THAT THE DEVOTION OF AN EXILED AND PROSCRIBED MAN CAN OFFER.

“ IT is impossible that the mind of the wicked can be at rest, when the pricks of his conscience are ever stinging him, and filling him with continual alarm lest he should meet with the reward of his evil deeds. Anxiety ever preys upon his mind; and whilst he assails all men, even his best friends, with suspicion, his consciousness of treachery denies in others the existence of that integrity which is wanting in himself. Thus the English king, when he heard of your journey, conscious of his guilt, and fearing that zeal for the law and for virtue, which you always feel, is alarmed, lest the legatine commission should be given you over his dominions, because there is no other in the Gallic Church who is able to repress or check his malice, nor is there any one in the Roman Church, of whom he has any fear, except my lord Gratian. For, if what he boasts is true, he will find no difficulty in con-

verting to his own views all that are sent to him, and most commonly not without some stain upon their fair fame. He hears that Gratian returned in your company, and he cannot conceal the uneasiness which this gives him, lest by your means he should be compelled to make peace, or to submit to great loss both of money and reputation.

“ For these reasons, he sent letters to recall Vivian, together with letters from the archbishop of Rouen and Geoffrey Ridel. And he pledged his word to Vivian, as the latter has publicly acknowledged, that in re-establishing the peace of the Church he will be guided by the advice of Vivian and the pope. He also caused letters to be sealed with his own seal, which he shewed to whomsoever he pleased, in which he promised that for the love of our lord the pope he would restore to us the Church of Canterbury and all the possessions which have been taken from us, in full peace and security, that by these means he might induce Vivian to treat of some mode of peace, which, whatever others may say, he seemed to be anxious about, solely from fear of Gratian and you. He did not, however, mention the things which have been taken from us, except so far as hinting, that if we would follow Vivian’s decision in making peace, he would place us at the head of his kingdom, and on no account

suffer us to be in want. Vivian was, therefore, recalled, and listened to what was thus proposed, upon which the king, under pretence of devotion, set out for St. Denys, but in reality to do what he has almost succeeded in doing, namely, to circumvent his most Christian majesty. For it was agreed between them in the conference at St. Denys, that he should commit his son, Richard, to the care of the king of France to be educated, and that the count of St. Giles should be summoned to Tours to answer to the said prince Richard for the county of Toulouse.

“ The king of France, master Vivian, and the other wise men, compelled us to go to the conference, that so whilst we were at Paris and the king at St. Denys, peace might more easily be made between us. But when Vivian urged him to fulfil his promise, he retracted, as he always does, and showed himself in such colours that Vivian, coming back to us, said publicly that he did not remember to have ever seen or heard of a greater liar. And we afterwards heard that Vivian did not spare him, but told him plainly to his face all that the circumstances justified his saying; so that, by thus reproving the king’s duplicity, he in a great measure has redeemed his own reputation, which he had somewhat injured by suffering himself to be so cajoled and overreached. We make you acquainted with these

particulars, that you may inform the pope of them, in case Vivian should, on his return to Rome, affect to throw a veil over the tricks of that deceiver. For as Providence so ordered it that Gratian, after conducting himself most honourably, returned to Rome, and you, whom God has made a pillar in the Church, and who know the man so well, should at this moment be on a visit to the Roman see, so do we believe it is by God's especial over-ruling that Vivian, whatever might be his inward sentiments, has remained in France, to illustrate the Church's righteousness and to vindicate the honour of Gratian. Thus the king's own partizan has helped to undeceive the world about his real intentions, and our lord the pope and the whole court will in future be less liable to be circumvented by his stratagems.

“ When the king of England was returning from St. Denys, we met him at Montmartre, and the venerable prelates of Rouen and Seez and others presented to him a petition from us, that for the love of God and our lord the pope, he would grant to us and to ours his grace, with peace and security, together with the restoration of all our possessions, whilst we offered on our part to show towards him all the obedience which an archbishop owes to his king. He replied that he readily, for his part, forgave us for every cause

of offence he had ever had against us ; and as touching any claims or complaints we might have against him, he was ready to stand by the decision of the king of France or the clergy of France, or the scholars of Paris. We rejoined to this, that we had no objection to refer the question to the king's courts or to the church of France, but we would rather that he should arrange it amicably with us than refer it to a court of law. And if he was ready to restore to us our Church and our property, together with full peace and security ratified by a kiss of peace, we said that we were ready to receive them, and we demanded that half of the movables should be restored to the Church to pay our debts, to repair our houses and farms, and to restore many things about them, which by the fraud and robbery of his officials had been reduced to the last stage of dilapidation. And to prevent our demands from appearing immoderate, and at the same time to guard against his lubricity, and hold him to the engagement, we had our petition put into writing, and modified according to the views of the messengers who passed between us. This petition, of which we here send you a copy, was presented to him in public, that all might see we did not refuse to accede to any terms that might be at all tolerable for the Church. This writing was read and approved by all for

its moderation; upon which the king said something in his mother's language, but in so involved and intricate a style, for he has abundance of words at his command, that whilst plain men would take for granted that he yielded every thing, the more acute hearers saw that this assent was qualified by certain most perverse and intolerable conditions. All, however, agree in one point, that he refused to give us the kiss of peace. His most Christian majesty immediately said that he would not advise me, for his weight in gold, to return to England without receiving in public the kiss of peace. Count Theobald added, that it would be perfect madness, whilst many of those who were present recalled to mind and whispered to one another the fate of Robert de Silli, who had not found even the kiss of peace a sufficient protection. But the king did not even send us his answer, either through the bishops, who were the mediators, or through any other person, for whilst we were still waiting for his reply, he set off towards Mantes. On the way they brought to him the king of France's dear little prince Philip, whom he received, as they say, with a melancholy look, and when he had spoken two or three words to him, hastily sent him away. God, however, inspired it into the mind of that chosen youth, that he opened his mouth, and to the surprise of the bystanders,

warned his majesty to love France and its king, and that would ensure him favour both before God and man. The king of France accompanied him to Mantes, and from thence almost to Passy, expecting to receive prince Richard into his charge; but the king said he would consign him to his care at their next meeting at Tours, so that it became evident they had been cheated. Thus it appears that the two kings parted worse friends than they had met. It is also thought that the next interview, to which he alludes, will never take place, because it is liable to so many impediments. Thus we returned, without any reply from the king, to the refuge which God has provided us, casting all our hopes on Him, who never deserts those who repose all their trust in Him and await his consolation.

“ But the king of England, they say, afterwards sent a messenger to Vivian with fifty marks, requesting him again to interest himself in making peace. But Vivian, as we are credibly informed, rejected the gold and replied by a letter, of which we send you a copy. The king has no other cause for being alarmed than the journey of Gratian and yourself to Rome; and he is only trying to catch Vivian, to prevent his falling into your hands, or Gratian’s. They tell me that he has sent Giles, archdeacon of Rouen, John of Oxford, and John of Seez, to

the court, to prevent your getting the legation over his dominions, or anything else being done that may injure him or the count of Flanders. You know something of the messengers by sight, but perhaps our people who are with you on our business, will know them better. Since, therefore, the man is so afraid of your integrity and of Gratian's, which he knows by experience, it is as clear as the day, that if our lord the pope had frightened him at first with the authority of the supreme pontiff, rather than borne with him after the affection of a father, the Church of God would long ago have been enjoying tranquillity, and a stop been put to the fury of a man, who unrelentingly persecutes the weak and yielding, but submits at once to those who boldly resist him.

“ We have poured our complaints into your ear in part, because we would not weary you by telling you everything: your kindness will take care to ensure for us, from the pope, such a peace as may be creditable for us, for the Church, and for himself: for all eyes are now turned to see what he will do in this cause. If the robber will not restore what he has taken, or make compensation for it, or shall extort from us some new obligation by the authority of the holy pontiff, the pernicious precedent will never be set aside, but will pass to other countries.

What less can we ask of him than that which is contained in the petition below, drawn up and corrected by his own party? If our lord the pope will even now send back his messengers in confusion, and prepare to lay heavy hand on his dominions on this side of the sea, there is no demand which he may not get conceded to us without difficulty or delay. For the nobles favour the Church; it is only the clergy who water with their exhortations the madness which their evil counsels planted. Some of these in England are revelling in the sufferings of the Church, whilst others are running to and fro to excite the apostolic see and all the temporal powers in Christendom to conspire against her. We are compelled to add, and we do so with shame and sorrow, that whilst the temporal powers will not have anything to do with this great iniquity, there are always found some at Rome, whom they boast of having won over to share in their wickedness."

#### LETTER XCVII.

"THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY TO HIS CLERKS, JOHN AND ALEXANDER.

"WHAT took place at the conference of the kings on the octave of St. Martin, [Nov. 18,] at St. Denys, you will learn more fully from the

letter which we forwarded to his lordship of Sens. But because we did not want to weary him, we have here set down in writing certain matters which we wish you to communicate to him by word of mouth.

“ Their lordships of Rouen and Seez, who had undertaken to mediate, required that we should name expressly all such of the possessions of the see of Canterbury as we wished to be restored. We answered that the length of our absence and the cessation of intercourse with England, had made it impossible for us to know what the king or his officers had alienated ; but that we required the restoration of everything which had been held by our predecessor of blessed memory, Theobald, and which we ourself came into possession of, on our accession to the see of Canterbury, and which we held afterwards when we went to the council of Tours, and always till the king began to persecute us. And besides these, we demanded and still demand the land which was held of us by Henry of Essex ; for since, on his being disinherited, the land which he held under the crown escheated to the king, so ought those which he held under the archbishopric to escheat to us. We demand likewise the fee of William de Ros, which the king took from us, contrary to the oath he made to king Stephen on being adopted as his son, and as heir to the kingdom.

For on that occasion he swore solemnly and publicly, that he would preserve to the Church all that his lord and adopted father had bestowed on it. Moreover, he has taken from us the lands of Muncheham, and most unjustly and irreligiously bestowed it on John Mareschal, on whom and on his children, the intended heirs of this sacrilege, the blessed Anselm, as you know, took vengeance; for by the providence of God they all died shortly after. These three possessions then, namely, of Henry, of William, and that bestowed on John, we expressly required and do still require to be restored to us, choosing rather to remain in exile for ever, than to buy peace with the goods of the Church.

“The mediators expressed hopes of procuring the restitution of these possessions, but about the movable goods they spoke less hopefully: yet his lordship of Seez and master Vivian asserted, on the king’s authority as they said, that if the negotiation succeeded, a thousand marks should be paid me in lieu of them. We had demanded a moiety of the goods, leaving the rest to be decided by his lordship the pope or a council of holy men. For we feared above every thing the evil which might result from such a precedent, and we feared as much on account of the king’s salvation as of our own—of our own on the one hand if we should connive at such sacrilege, of

his, on the other hand, because if he did not make restitution or satisfaction, his offence could not be forgiven him. Now there are many kinds of compensation, which he might offer without much loss, and which we are ready to accept. For that we should grant him absolution, whilst he is still unrepentant for what he has taken from God's Church, is a point which nothing shall induce us to consent to. If, however, he will repent, and make compensation in part, we for the rest will bear with him in all patience, for the devotion which he shall show to the Church, and the affection which he shall show towards ourself. For it is expedient both to the Church of Rome and the Church of England that he shall have something in his own possession, which may be objected to him when he is planning disturbance or disaffection. Otherwise, if a man should divest him altogether of it, he would only arm his ferocity to destroy the Church.

“The king is now so circumstanced, and has been so alarmed by the journey of his lordship of Sens, and of Gratian, whose praise is spoken in both kingdoms, that, whatever he may pretend and threaten, he would not dare to refuse any thing, were his lordship the pope but to raise his hand against his continental dominions, and to dismiss his envoys in disgrace.

“He has lately sent Geoffrey Ridel to England

to torment the ecclesiastics, and extort nefarious oaths from them; and this person, together with Richard, archdeacon of Poitiers, and the other officers of state, have summoned all the bishops to London in the king's name, to give security that they will observe the king's edict, and receive no messenger from his lordship the pope or ourself without the king's permission, nor obey any interdict, if such should be promulgated, nor pronounce any anathema against any of the king's faithful subjects. However, none of the bishops, nor any of the abbats, except him of St. Augustine's, chose to obey the summons. First of all his lordship of Winchester publicly protested, and declared that, while he lived, he would through all things obey the apostolic decrees, and those of the Church of Canterbury, to which he has professed his fealty and obedience: also he has charged all his clergy to do likewise. The bishop of Exeter followed his example, prepared to obey in all things; and has taken refuge in a religious house till the storm of iniquity passes over. His lordship of Norwich, though expressly forbidden in the king's name and in the presence of his officers, has nevertheless excommunicated Earl Hugh and the others, as he was instructed: on descending from the pulpit he placed his pastoral staff upon the altar, saying that he would see who dared extend a hand

against the Church and its possessions. He has entered the cloister, and is living with the brethren. So likewise his lordship of Chester is ready to execute all orders; and, to secure himself from the officers, has taken refuge in that part of his diocese where the Welsh live.

“From all this it is clear, that if his lordship the pope acts vigorously, and does not wilfully reject the crown thus prepared for him by the Lord, he may now triumph in England, to the glory of God and the everlasting honour of the apostolic see. The impious one knows not where to turn himself, but, as those who are about him say, has every where before his eyes his lordship of Sens, and that son of grace Gratian, whose credit is much advanced by the delay which Vivian has made, for the latter is now convinced of the king of England’s deceits, and does not cease to publish them in the streets. When he does this at Rome, Gratian’s conduct will be fully justified.

“You must yourself do your best, and beg lord Hyacinth to do so too, as he promised he would, that the king’s envoys may be baffled. If he does so and acts faithfully by us, give our lord the pope the letters which we have written in his behalf. For as we have heard on good authority, he now in his departure has reproached the king with falsehood, and has in a great mea-

sure redeemed his reputation, which he had before injured. If, however, he shows a disposition to play two parts, which we do not believe, for he is said to have been inaccessible to bribes, retain the letters, and keep an eye upon him that he may do no harm. We have been urged by some, with the king's privity and consent, to go and meet him in Normandy; nor have we any objection to comply, if we are met on the frontiers, as was promised, by any one who will guarantee our safe conduct. But you must endeavour to persuade the pope to forbid our incurring any new obligation, not warranted by the customs of the Anglican and Gallican Churches, and not to depart from the form which we sent in writing to the king, to command that a decent portion of our property shall be restored to us, to alarm the king by the threat of an interdict on his continental dominions, to write earnestly to the king charging him to receive us in the kiss of peace, and to issue fresh letters commanding the restoration of the lands which we named as having been taken away from the see of Canterbury, the restoration of which is essential to the peace. He must forbid us to absolve any of the excommunicates unless they submit to take the oath, according to the forms of the Church. For among all the prerogatives of his constitutions which he claims to God's prejudice,

if we may believe men of experience, this is the most pernicious. If he fails in his presumption on this point, he will not, we trust, insist upon the other, lest he be again confounded. Furthermore, his holiness should write and thank his most Christian majesty for the consolation he has held out to us, pointing out to him what a sin and sacrilege it is to take the property of the Church, and without just cause to defraud ecclesiastics of their goods, and how impossible it is to forgive sin, unless there be repentance and restitution when there is opportunity of making it. If stolen property is not restored, it is but a visionary repentance, and so far from leading to salvation, serves to accumulate greater damnation.

“ We forward to you the petition<sup>9</sup> which we

<sup>9</sup> As this written petition has been frequently alluded to, we subjoin both it and the king's answer.

“ THE ARCHBISHOP'S PETITION.

“ WE ask of our lord the king, by the command and with the advice of our lord the pope, that for the love of God and of our lord the pope, for the honour of our holy Church, and the salvation both of himself and his heirs, he shall receive into his favour all those who in our behalf and in our company have been exiled from the kingdom, and grant to us his peace and full security at the hands both of himself and his partizans without reserve, and restore to us the Church of Canterbury as fully and freely as we held it when we were made archbishop, together with all its possessions to have and to hold as freely, as peaceably, and honourably as the Church and we had and

offered to the king, and desire that you do not depart from it, unless you can better our cause, also the letter which we sent to Master Vivian, and which, as we have heard, he forwarded to the king. You will thus be better provided for advancing the Church's interests. If any of the talkers presume to blame us for not entering the king's dominions without the kiss of peace, let

held them when we were promoted to be archbishop ; and in the same way shall allow our followers to have all the churches and prebends belonging to the archbishopric, which have fallen vacant since we left the kingdom, that we may deal with them as with our own, as shall seem good to us, and we will perform to him all that an archbishop owes to his king and prince, saving the honour of God and our own order."

“ THE KING'S ANSWER.

“ FOR the love of God and of our lord the pope, for the salvation of ourselves and of our heirs, I remit to the archbishop of Canterbury and to his adherents who are in exile with him and on his behalf, all my anger and offence, and I forgive the same all the previous quarrels whatsoever that I may have had against him ; and I grant to him and his adherents true peace and security from me and mine ; and I restore to him the Church of Canterbury, as fully as he held it when he was made archbishop, together with all the possessions which the Church and he have had and held, to have and to hold, as freely and honourably as he and his adherents had and held them ; and likewise I restore to him all the churches and præbends belonging to the archbishopric, which have fallen vacant, since the archbishop left the kingdom, to do with the same as shall seem to him good, saving the honour of my kingdom.”

them remember the case of Robert de Silli, who was not safe either by the kiss or by the pledge given to the king of France: and unless they are out of their senses, they will not, I think, blame me.

“May God direct both you and me too, that we may do his will in all things, and whether by joy or sorrow to ourselves, restore liberty to his Church. You will communicate this to his lordship of Ostia, and tell him also what I wrote to the archbishop of Sens, and as he shall advise you, to other of our friends who are waiting for the redemption of Israel.

“The bishop of Lizieux, as you know, persecutes us, and whilst he calls himself our friend, like Sinon, whose character he has all his life sustained, gives arms at one moment to the Greeks against the Amazons, and the next moment to the Amazons against the Greeks: now assisting the state against the Church, and now the Church against the state. See what he has lately written for the bishop of London, whose deserts are well known to you, and then recall to mind the advice which he used to give us. You see how truly he is playing the part of Sinon, and the etymology of that cunning Grecian’s name well applies to him, for he is always hesitating between Si! and Non! That priest and clerk of his lordship of Pavia has persevered to the end the

same as he was in the beginning. What that is, I believe, my lord Gratian knows as well as I. For he sided with him when he was here, and since that he has always stuck to the king."

## LETTER XCVII.

"GRATIAN TO GEOFFREY RIDEL AND OTHERS.

"It ought not to have slipped from your memory that on your binding yourselves by oath, we caused you to be absolved, on a prospect of peace being made. But because peace has not ensued according to our wishes, we intimated through the venerable archbishops of Rouen and Bourdeaux, that if peace should still not be made before the feast of St. Michael then ensuing, you should by no means avail yourself of the benefits of our absolution, but should without evasion or reservation submit to the sentence which the archbishop of Canterbury has passed upon you. Since, therefore, peace has not followed, and the archbishop aforesaid has replaced you under the same sentence, we command you by virtue of your oath to observe the sentence, until you shall obtain absolution. May God give you his grace to turn to Him, and do his will rather than that of man."

Vivian also wrote a letter of similar import to the excommunicates.

## CHAPTER XXXVI.

BISHOP OF LONDON ABSOLVED—BECKET'S DISTRESS  
—PRINCE HENRY CROWNED IN DEFIANCE OF  
THE POPE'S MANDATE—BISHOP OF WORCESTER.

WHILST the court of Rome, at the end of the year 1169, was exerting itself more vigorously than before to procure the restoration of the archbishop, king Henry was meditating a new attack upon his opponent by an infringement of the privileges which from time immemorial had belonged to the see of Canterbury. It was far from improbable that the sovereign pontiff, no longer entangled by his wars with the emperor Frederic, would at length let fall the full weight of his severity upon the English king; and the foretaste which the archbishop had already given him of ecclesiastical discipline was a sufficient warning of what might be expected to follow. Two of his bishops and a large number of his immediate attendants were cut off from all the duties and privileges of social life. What would be the state of things, if his whole dominions should be laid under an interdict; whereby every church throughout the country would be closed, every bell silent, no one to shrive the dying or

to bury the dead ; the marriage rite no longer to be obtained, and infants doomed either to die under the Church's curse, or to live without her benediction ; every bond of society loosed, and perhaps an especial anathema pronounced against the king's own person? All this had at one time or other happened since the establishment of the Church, and might happen again ; nor can we suppose that so acute a monarch as Henry II. would be blind to the probability that all this might now perhaps be hanging over his head. When, therefore, he kept Christmas at the beginning of the year 1170, at the city of Nantes, in Brittany, his thoughts again turned to a scheme which had before occurred to him for anticipating the designs of the enemy. The mode by which he proposed to effect this was, by transferring the sovereignty of his dominions, with all its responsibilities, to his eldest son, Henry, who had formerly been the archbishop's ward and pupil, and was about fifteen or sixteen years of age. This expedient, which in the end caused much annoyance to the king, by raising immediate hopes, which he was not disposed to gratify, in the mind of his son, appeared at this critical moment to be too advantageous to be lost sight of: and preparations were immediately made for carrying it into effect. But such an intention could not be kept secret, and was, more-

over, difficult to be carried into execution. His active-minded adversary, the archbishop, was not likely to allow the sacred solemnity of the coronation to be performed by any other person than himself; and the king would of course be still more unlikely to allow the archbishop to officiate. Intelligence was speedily conveyed to Sens, that the project of crowning the young prince was again under consideration. This led to fresh messages from one to another, and a series of negotiations were set on foot, which occupied all the first half of the year 1170, without any fresh attempt to bring the principals in the dispute to any more conferences. But all the different parties were now engaged in what more immediately concerned themselves. The king was busy in receiving the homage of his new subjects in Bretagne, until the first week in Lent, [Feb. 18—26,] when he suddenly crossed to England, and was almost shipwrecked on the passage. The archbishop was doing his best to secure the fidelity of his suffragans, that they might prevent the young king from being crowned by any other than himself. The pope was exerting himself with more activity than usual to make peace for Becket. The bishop of London was endeavouring to obtain absolution, and was gone to Rome for that very purpose. Thus, though no prominent measures were taken for some months, yet

all parties were engaged in different schemes, which by being brought simultaneously to a termination, might prepare the way for a crisis, or in some way or other give a new appearance to the state of things. This actually did so turn out in the sequel; and the facility with which a reconciliation was at last effected at Freitval, between the king and the archbishop, can be accounted for on no other grounds than the altered position or altered sentiments of the parties, which no longer held out motives for their continuing at variance. But some months were still to elapse before this longed-for reconciliation could be effected. The following letter from the archbishop to the king breathes the same feelings of loyalty as he always professed—saving the king's constitutions. It bears no date, but seems to have been written about this time.

#### LETTER XCVIII.

“THE ARCHBISHOP TO THE KING.

“YOUR majesty's greatness may remember, how I offered in the presence of our lord the king of France and of several others who were present, to place myself, ‘to the honour of God and your majesty,’ on your royal mercy, that so I might recover your favour and have peace. But this

form of words did not please you, my lord, unless I promised to observe the constitutions which my ancestors had observed towards yours. I submitted, therefore, to observe them, as far as I could, 'saving my own order,' and if I could promise anything more amply or more expressly, I was willing, under God, to do so, and am still willing, that by so doing I may regain your favour. And I never served you more readily than I am again prepared to serve you now. And whereas this did not satisfy your majesty, I entreat you to remember the services which I rendered you and the favours which you conferred upon me. For I do not forget that I am bound by oath to serve you in life and limb, and to show you all earthly honour; and I am ready, so far as is consistent with my duty to God, to do all that I can for your majesty, as my dearest lord and master. And God knows that I never served you more readily than I would again, if it pleased your majesty. Farewell, my lord."

The bishop of London, it will be remembered, was endeavouring at Rome to procure absolution from the sentence which the archbishop had passed upon him the preceding year. But the pope was unwilling to grant him absolution, for fear that the archbishop should take offence; he, therefore, adopted the usual expedient in such cases, and referred Gilbert Foliot to the arch-

bishop of Rouen and the bishop of Nevers, whom he deputed to carry the last message of the Church to the king of England. The pope's letter to these prelates, in which he grants them permission to absolve the bishop of London, is curious, for he enjoins secrecy upon them, until the bishop's absolution could be made public with safety to his own person. We are left to guess what harm could have ensued from the fact becoming immediately known; and it seems much more reasonable to suppose that this condition was inserted to prevent Becket from taking umbrage. As might have been expected, the prohibition was not observed, for the absolution which took place at Rouen, on Easter Sunday, was immediately noised abroad, and as the archbishop of Rouen performed it alone, without waiting for the presence of his colleague, the informality drew from Becket the following letter.

#### LETTER XCIX.

“ THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY TO THE ARCHBISHOP  
OF ROUEN.

“ THANKS to your kindness for the care which you have had of us! I wish, however, that you had not exceeded the pope's instructions in the

absolution, as you term it, of the bishop of London. You know how far you were authorized to act without your colleague in a business which concerned you both, particularly when your colleague had not been summoned, and it was by no means certain that he could not come if he had been summoned. Now the instructions were, that if either could not come, the other might act in his absence. Our lord the pope inserted this condition; but it has not been complied with, so that it is a question for men of experience in such things, to say how far what has been done fails from the failure of the prescribed condition. But why need I say more? You know what you have done, and we, by God's permission, know how far your authority extended. But how is it possible to keep it secret? Let them see to it who know how, if indeed there be any one who can do so. For before we received your instructions on the subject, it was already the public talk in the streets, and the bishop of London had already published it every where; for he has celebrated divine service in our own city and cathedral Church."

## LETTER C.

“THE ARCHBISHOP TO CARDINAL ALBERT.

“I WISH, my dear friend, your ears were hard by the mouths of some of our people, that you might hear what is chaunted in the streets of Ascalon to the discredit of the Roman Church. Our last messengers seemed to have brought us some consolation in the pope’s letters which we have received, but their authority has been altogether nullified by other letters, commanding that Satan should be set free to the destruction of the Church. Thus by the apostolic mandate the bishops of London and Salisbury, one of whom is known to have been the fomenter of the schism, and the contriver of all this wickedness from the beginning, and to have inveigled the bishop of Salisbury and others into the crime of disobedience, have been absolved from excommunication. I know not how it is; but at your court Barabbas is always let go free, and Christ is crucified. Our proscription and the sufferings of the Church have now lasted nearly six years. The innocent, poor and exiled, are condemned before you, and for no other cause, I say conscientiously, than because they are Christ’s poor and helpless ones, and would not recede from God’s righteousness: whilst on the other hand

the sacrilegious, murderers, and robbers, are acquitted, however impenitent, though I say on Christ's own authority, that St. Peter himself, sitting on the tribunal, would have no power to acquit them. For he says, according to St. Luke, 'If thy brother offend, rebuke him; and if he be repentant, forgive him,' &c. These words, 'if he be repentant,' are not superfluous or idle. Christ will not have to give account for those words as idle on the day of judgment, He will rather condemn those who presume, contrary to his commands, to forgive offenders who do not repent, and so to vivify souls that cannot live. Surely if what is stolen can be restored, and is not restored, that man's repentance is but feigned. The Holy Spirit will shun falsehood, for He is Truth itself. Let him take the burden upon him who dares to do so: let him absolve robbers, homicides, the sacrilegious, the perjured, the bloodthirsty, without repentance; I for my part will never grant remission to the impenitent who have plundered the Church of God. Is it not the spoils of us, or rather of our Church, which the king's envoys are lavishing or promising among the cardinals and the courtiers? What sin shall ever be revealed, if that which is committed against God's Church is concealed? We can no longer defend the liberty of the Church, because the apostolic see has now protracted our exile

to the sixth year. O God, look to it and judge our cause! Yet for that Church we are prepared to die. If all the cardinals rise up against us, and arm not only the English king, but all the world to our destruction, I will never, with God's blessing, either in life or in death, withdraw from my fidelity to the Church. I commit my cause for the future to God, for whom I am suffering exile and proscription. May He heal my sorrows as He deems best for me. I have no further occasion for troubling the Roman court, I will leave that for those who prevail in their evil deeds, who triumph over righteousness, lead innocence captive, and return victorious to the confusion of the Church. Would to God that looking to Rome had not killed so many of my fellow-exiles! Who will in future resist the king, whom the Roman Church has inspired by so many triumphs, and armed with a pernicious precedent that will have due effect upon posterity? God bless your holiness, and may you think of me in your prayers to the Lord."

But what were the letters of consolation which the archbishop had received,—the hopes which were thus suddenly quashed by the unlooked-for absolution of the bishop of London? It has been related that the king spoke of his intention to crown the young prince his son, and that the

archbishop as speedily exerted himself to prevent this solemnity from being performed. His clerks, Alexander and John, were again at the papal court, and in the early part of February, 1170, they received from their master the following letter.

## LETTER CI.

“THE ARCHBISHOP TO HIS CLERKS, ALEXANDER AND JOHN.

“BE zealous in attending to our business, and use continued and unflinching diligence to counteract our adversaries, especially that spurious offspring of fornication, and enemy of the peace of the Church, that son of a priest, Reginald of Salisbury, who is every where defaming our character to the utmost of his power, saying that we have acted treacherously, and that we promised him we would not in any way aggrieve his father<sup>1</sup>. We would no more make such a promise to him than to a dog. He says also that if our lord the pope was to die, he would get our name blotted out of the book of life, for he boasts that the court may be bribed to grant him what he likes. He has also suggested to the king of England to make a petition to our lord the pope, that he shall

<sup>1</sup> The bishop of Salisbury.

grant permission to some English bishop to crown the king's son, and consecrate new bishops, and so deceive the pope. When the king replied to all this, that he did not believe the pope would consent, Reginald answered, 'Our lord the pope will act like a fool if he does not grant your requests.' We, therefore, entreat your kindness, for we confide unhesitatingly in your fidelity, to stand firm with our friend Hugotio of Rome, who is just gone back out of France, and with our other friends and your own, in defending our cause, and the justice and liberties of the Church; to the defeat and confusion of that fabrication of falsehood and deceit, that his wickedness may be revealed and recoil on his own head, that he may repent of ever having come to the court, and may be held up to the world as having been defeated in his schemes, as he deserves. For, as you know well, if our lord the pope were to lend an ear to the king's petitions in such a matter, which God forbid, he may be sure that the authority of the Roman Church in England will for ever fall, and no one shall ever again dare to mention the name of its apostolic authority. But if our lord the pope, as is best for him to do, sends away the king's ambassadors foiled and baffled, he may be sure that by God's mercy we shall immediately obtain peace. For the king of England insists most on these two points, the coronation of his

son and the consecration of the bishops, and he will be compelled to make peace with us, if he sees the pope firm. Among other things take care not to talk with the above-named Hugotio on our business in presence of the cardinals or any other person, but take an opportunity of speaking to him privately about the settlement of our matters: so that no one may know there is any intimacy between you and him."

The envoys of Becket were not idle in accomplishing the archbishop's wishes: a papal rescript was immediately forwarded to Sens, enclosing letters to the archbishop of York and the other bishops of England, forbidding them to crown the young prince, or to implicate themselves in any transactions which might tend to injure or deteriorate the primacy of the see of Canterbury.

The two following letters appear to have been addressed to the archbishop of York in rapid succession, or perhaps one of them may have been forwarded direct to that prelate, and the other enclosed under cover to the archbishop of Canterbury.

LETTER CII<sup>2</sup>.

“ THE POPE TO ROGER ARCHBISHOP OF YORK, HUGH BISHOP OF DURHAM, AND ALL THE BISHOPS OF ENGLAND.

“As we have been told on the authority of several informants, that the coronation of the kings of England belongs by ancient custom to the Church of Canterbury, we command you most authoritatively by these our letters, not to crown the king of England’s son, if he shall ask you to do so, whilst our venerable brother Thomas, the archbishop of Canterbury, is in exile, or in any way to interfere in that cause. Which if any of you shall presume to do, yet know of a surety that the deed will redound to the peril of his orders and of his office, for we have determined that no appeal shall be listened to, and no excuse admitted.

“ Given at . . . Feb. 26.”

<sup>2</sup> The king’s party pleaded afterwards that they had received permission from the pope that the archbishop of York should crown the young prince: and in fact the following letter is found in the same Bodleian MS., which contains the two prohibitory letters given in the text; but it may have been sent twelve months previously and afterwards revoked.

“ THE POPE TO THE ARCHBISHOP OF YORK.

“ WHEREAS, through our dearest son Henry king of the English, many benefits and advantages are known to have ac-

## LETTER CIII.

“THE POPE TO THE ARCHBISHOP OF YORK AND THE OTHER BISHOPS OF ENGLAND.

“SUCH is the dignity and precedence of the Church of Canterbury from ancient times, as we have heard, that the prelates of that see have always had the privilege of crowning and inaugurating the kings of England in the beginning of their reign. For this cause it is that we, both from a sense of duty, and out of regard to our venerable brother Thomas, archbishop of that see, who is a most religious, honest, and pious man, and wishing to preserve to his Church all her rights and privileges without violation, do hereby

crued to the Church of God in her necessities, and whereas we love him affectionately for the constancy of his devotion, so much the more anxious are we for everything which may advance his honour and tend to his exaltation. For this cause it is that at the petition of the aforesaid king, and having consulted with our brethren, we hereby, on the authority of Saint Peter and our own authority, allow his eldest son Henry to be crowned in England.

“Since then this duty devolves upon you, we command you by this apostolical letter, when summoned by the same our son the king, to place the crown upon his son’s head by the authority of the holy see. And we do hereby confirm and give validity to all that you shall do in this behalf. And we command you to show him all due respect and obedience, and to enjoin the same on others, saving in all things the obedience due unto his father.”

forbid all men, by virtue of our apostolical authority, from presuming to crown the young king, if by chance this question should arise, without the consent of the aforesaid archbishop, or his successors, and of the Church of Canterbury, or in any way attempting to impugn or detract from the ancient privileges of that Church.

“ Given at the Lateran, April 7.”

These letters were the cause of the satisfaction to which the archbishop alluded, before his hopes were again destroyed by the absolution of the bishop of London. His next consideration was, in what way they should be conveyed across the water. The bishop of Worcester was on the point of returning to England, and the archbishop, availing himself of the circumstance, penned the following letters to the archbishop of York and to his lordship of Worcester.

#### LETTER CIV.

“ THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY TO THE ARCHBISHOP OF  
YORK.

“ YOUR discretion well knows that God will take vengeance on those who ungratefully return evil for good, and on those who avail themselves of an opportunity to injure their benefactors. It is not necessary to remind your excellency of the

many and great benefits which you have received from the see of Canterbury, and how she promoted you to the highest office of the priesthood. Not only is this known to all, but it is doubtlessly fixed firmly in your own memory. And indeed, the same your Mother Church is ready, so long as your sanctity shall think fit, to continue the same course of love and regard towards you, and prays that you may recompense her with a reciprocity of kindness. Nor shall it be our fault, if we do not hold the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace towards you. Although we are proscribed and in exile, we hope by the grace of Him for whom we suffer, to be able to recompense you in the Lord. But we have perceived that whisperers are at work, endeavouring to instigate your sincerity to injure the Church of Canterbury, by placing the crown on the head of the king's son, (God bless him!) and so raise him to the kingly dignity. But this is manifestly contrary to the prerogatives of our Church. If therefore any one harbours in his mind such a presumptuous intention, our lord the pope forbids it, both to yourself and to all the other bishops of England: and we also forbid it on apostolic authority, and appeal against every one who shall implicate himself in the act, and we fix the Purification of the Blessed Virgin as the term of our appeal.

“ We likewise forbid all who are under our au-

thority, either in virtue of our metropolitan or of our legatine commission, under sentence of anathema, to assist in so rash an act."

#### LETTER CV.

"THE ARCHBISHOP TO ROGER OF WORCESTER.

"THE illustrious earl Robert of Gloucester, your father, though he had many sons, is thought to have loved you the best of all, because you were the son of his old age, and by Divine Providence, all the prudence and virtues of that excellent man have been transferred into that one of his children, whom, as his most precious gift, he has offered to the Lord. What a bold and magnanimous man was that noble earl! how he withstood the might of a brave, generous, and influential king, who possessed moreover the dukedom of Normandy and the county of Boulogne. He not only deprived him of his throne, but cast him into prison, and so little did he regard the caprice of fortune in comparison with faith and virtue, that he feared no dangers if he could only uphold the obligation of an oath. At last he chose to be imprisoned rather than his sister and queen should suffer any diminution of her rights. Though fortune had thus made him a prisoner, yet he was so highly esteemed by the counsellors,

that they gave up the king, and resigned the kingdom to obtain his release. Take courage from the contemplation of his virtues, and exemplify to your contemporaries and to posterity the merits of him who has so ennobled your birth. To this is to be added that nobler title, your episcopal dignity, which, as it dignifies the deserving, also degrades the base and abject. Salt, when it has lost its savour, is of no more account than dung, with which unfertile fields are manured: for, as the martyr Cyprian says, ‘If a bishop is timid, it is all over with him, for if the fear of the world renders him mute, he is entirely useless. Let charity then expel this fear and release the leader of the people, for when the leader faints with fear, his exhortation fails to encourage the soldiers.’ We believe that Divine Providence has led you in these days to cross the water, that you may perform your promise, and personally resist those who injure your mother the holy Church of Canterbury, and afflict her without provocation, and seek her life to take it away. That you may, with God’s grace preventing you, the better effect this object, we have thought fit to furnish you with letters from our lord the pope, by way of weapons, that you may the more strongly confirm your brethren in the Lord. We ask you, therefore, and beseech you in our Lord Jesus Christ, and

command you in virtue of your obedience and in peril of your office, honours, and benefice, to show the apostolical letters which we send you, to our venerable brother Roger of York, and our other brethren and fellow-bishops, and command on the authority of our lord the pope, that the aforesaid archbishop of York shall not presume, if requested, to consecrate the king's son, or to place the crown upon his head. We command you, also, on the same perils, to forbid the bishops of London and Salisbury and others, if they shall presume to undertake the same task.

“ God who is our judge is also our witness that we command this, not to wrong our lord the king or his son, or any Church, or any person, but because it is incumbent upon us to defend the rights of the Church of Canterbury. For we are ready, if it please the king, to crown his son, as is the duty of our office, and to show due honour and respect both to the father and to the son. Let not your faith waver, dearest brother, in executing this task, for God is faithful, and will not suffer you to be tempted beyond your strength. Trust in Him, who conquered the world, and remember that the snow shall overwhelm him who fears the frost, and he who shuns the arms of steel shall fall upon the bow of brass :

whereas grace shall help and glory crown the bold. Whatever others may do, we are persuaded that no assailing storm shall ever shake your firmness, and that the words which have proceeded out of your mouth and are contained in your letter and in that of the bishop of Lisieux, stamped and impressed with the characters of both the writers, will not turn out in vain. God forbid that noble blood should be the residence of a degenerate spirit, that your father's title should be obliterated in you, or that the slightest trembling of the mind or hesitation of heart should call in question the judgment of your father who preferred you to all his other children. For according to the pious belief of the faithful, he lives more gloriously in the Lord than in his children, and according to your deeds, so may you gain or lose his favour."

All these precautions were, however, baffled; for although there was at first some difficulty in conquering the repugnance which several of the English bishops felt to intrude so palpably on the rights and duties of their primate, yet this reluctance could hardly extend to the metropolitan of York, who backed by their lordships of London and Chichester yielded a ready assent to the king's wishes. We follow the narrative of Fitzstephen in the account of what ensued.

"The young prince was crowned the day before

the feast of St. Vitus and Modertus, [June 18,] and the king immediately afterwards crossed into Normandy. When he had travelled about three miles beyond the town of Falaise, he fell in with the bishop of Worcester, who was advancing to meet him. Now the king had sent orders to the bishop to cross the sea, and be present at the coronation of his son ; but he had omitted to tell him that it was the archbishop of York who would perform the ceremony. The bishop accordingly, hoping that everything was right, set out for England, and arrived at the port of Dieppe. The king had already sailed ; but the queen and Richard de Humet, the justiciary of Normandy, had remained behind, and they now sent letters to the bishop of Worcester, ordering him not to embark : to make sure of it, they sent other letters, addressed to the captains and seamen who were in that port, forbidding them to take the bishop on board. These orders were given by the queen and Richard, because they knew that the bishop of Worcester would not consent that the young prince should be crowned by any other than the archbishop of Canterbury, and that if he were present at the ceremony, which they knew was going to be performed by the archbishop of York, he would certainly interfere to prevent it. Thus the bishop was detained in Normandy ; and now, when he came to meet

the king, the latter burst into one of his habitual fits of anger, and loaded the bishop with many opprobrious epithets, 'Now I know,' said he, 'that you are a traitor: for I commanded you to be present at my son's coronation, and you did not appear on the day I named. It is evident that you have no regard for me nor for my son's advancement. You favour my enemy, and are disaffected to myself: but do not expect that I shall let you keep the revenues of your bishopric. I will immediately deprive you of them, for you do not deserve to have a bishopric or any other ecclesiastical preferment. You cannot be the son of the good earl Robert, who brought us both up in his castle together, and had us taught the first elements of morals and learning.' The bishop, confident in his innocence, told the king in few words how it had happened, and that on his arrival at the sea-side, he had received letters, ordering him to proceed no further. The king would not believe him at first, and replied in great anger,— 'The queen is at this moment at Falaise, and Richard de Hamet is either there or will soon arrive: do you give them as your authorities?' 'Not the queen,' said the bishop, 'for either her respect or fear of you will make her conceal the truth, and so you will be more angry against me than you are at present; or if she states the truth, your indignation will then fall on that

noble lady: the matter is too trifling for her to hear one harsh word from you about it. I am glad things are in their present state, and that I was not a witness of the coronation, which was unjust, and contrary to God's law, not for any fault of the prince, but of the man who crowned him; and if I had been there, I would not have allowed it. You say that I am not the son of earl Robert. I cannot tell whether I am or not; but I am certain that I am the son of my mother, who was the companion of my father in the honours of the protectorate; and you are exhibiting but a very sorry proof of being nephew to earl Robert, who bred you up so honourably, and fought against your enemy, king Stephen, sixteen years, until at last he was taken prisoner fighting in your cause. If you had reflected on all this, you would never have reduced all my brothers to nothing as you have done. Your grandfather, good king Henry, gave my brother, the earl, an honour of a thousand knights, and you have curtailed it to two hundred and fifty. My younger brother R. was a bold knight, as they say, and you have let him become so impoverished that he has been obliged to enter the hospital of Jerusalem, and adopt their uniform to maintain himself. This is your mode of recompensing your relations and friends; and now you threaten to take away my bishopric. Be it so then, if you

are not satisfied with the revenues of the archbishopric and six other sees, besides numerous abbacies, which you have already got hold of, at the risk of your soul's salvation.' All this was said aloud in the presence of the king's attendants, one of whom, a knight of Aquitaine, not knowing the bishop, asked who he was, and when he was told it was the bishop of Worcester, he replied, 'It is lucky for the king that he is a bishop and not a soldier: for if he were a soldier, he would not leave the king a couple of acres of land that he could call his own.' Another of those who were present, thinking to please the king, used opprobrious language to the bishop, but his majesty hearing it, was angry, and turning to the speaker, abused him heartily and said, 'Do you think, you rascal, that if I choose to say what I like to my relation, the bishop, you or any other person is to abuse or threaten him? I can hardly keep my hands off from your eyes: neither you nor any body else is to use your tongue in this way to a bishop.' They soon after went to their lodgings, and after dinner the king and he conversed together about the archbishop, and the propriety of making a reconciliation with him."

## CHAPTER XXXVII.

HENRY II. THREATENED WITH AN INTERDICT—  
PEACE MADE AT FREITVAL—THE POPE'S LET-  
TERS, SUSPENDING AND EXCOMMUNICATING THE  
BISHOPS—THE KING'S TARDINESS IN FULFILLING  
HIS ENGAGEMENTS—THE ARCHBISHOP TAKES  
LEAVE OF HIS HOSTS AT ST. COLUMBA'S, AND  
OF THE FRENCH KING.

OUR narrative, which, owing to the rapidity with which events succeeded one another, has been continually shifting from one place to another, must continue so to the last; for at the very time that the king was infringing one of the most valued privileges of his antagonist, as has been just related, the archbishop and pope were concerting measures for reducing him to a state of helplessness, by laying his kingdom under that dreaded ban of the Church—AN INTERDICT. Letters containing the sentence were already prepared and placed in the hands of the archbishop, who had also drawn up forms of notice to the bishops of England; and though the king at this moment gave way, and so rendered the publication of these letters unnecessary, yet they have

all come down to us in the same voluminous collection of letters which Alan, abbat of Tewkesbury, afterwards put together, and from which we have already extracted so largely. The letter of notice to the bishop of London, now reconciled to Becket, and absolved as we have seen, may serve as an example of the others, which were conceived pretty much in the same words.

## LETTER CVI.

“ THE ARCHBISHOP TO THE BISHOP OF LONDON.

“ THE calamities of your mother, the holy Church of Canterbury, must be the better known to you, because from the proximity of our sees, and from having been on the spot personally (though, alas! not in sympathy), you have had abundant opportunities of knowing them. We have waited now nearly six full years for the repentance of our lord the king; but, with grief do we speak it, he has so abused the patience of the Lord and of the holy Roman Church, that his last deeds are worse than the former. Wherefore, lest by our too great lenity, the blood of the Church be required at our hands, we command you, by authority of the pope, in virtue of your obedience, in peril of your orders, dignity, and preferment, within fifteen days after the receipt of these letters, to forbid the celebration of divine service

throughout all your diocese, except the baptism of infants and the penance of the dying, and to command this sentence of interdict to be inviolably observed by all those under you. You will also communicate the letters of our lord the pope, which we here send you, to your brethren and colleagues, the other bishops, and when they have read them you will return them to us without delay; taking care that no injury befalls the bearer, as you wish respect to be shown to yourselves and to your order. And if you do not faithfully discharge this mandate, know of a surety that you will incur the peril of everlasting damnation.”

These missives were now ready to be despatched, and it is morally certain that the king would have been compelled by positive necessity to condescend to much worse terms than those upon which peace was actually made. The emperor of Germany, Frederic, was a warning to all secular princes of the power of their spiritual Superior, and Louis of France would certainly not have let slip the opportunity of spoiling his too powerful vassal of his French provinces. The archbishop, moreover, determined that he would not again procrastinate, as he had done previously to the young prince's coronation, for it was owing to his delay in sending the letters of prohibition

that the king had succeeded in anticipating his intentions. Another element was also at work, which much facilitated a reconciliation. "Why do you persist in keeping the archbishop abroad?" said somebody to the king<sup>3</sup>, "he would be much better in England than out." The idea thus conveyed might produce its effect on so shrewd a politician; but the same shrewdness would induce him to conceal his motive; still less likely would he be to acknowledge that fear of his enemy led him to concede: though Herbert de Bosham tells us that this was his motive. Let us hear his account of THE PEACE in his own words.

"The king, therefore, seeing matters reduced to this extremity, promised to make peace without fail. Wherefore we were summoned to attend at a meeting which was to take place between the kings, and we went thither accordingly. On the third day of the conference the business of the two kings was ended, and they immediately began to consider how peace might be made between king Henry and us. The king of France went away, not wishing to be present in the business, and so we were handed over to the protection of certain great men of his kingdom who were to mediate in our favour. But why need I mul-

<sup>3</sup> Fitz-stephen.

tiplly words? Peace was there made between us, and the kiss which had before been the obstacle, was now neither demanded by the archbishop nor offered by the king. No mention was made of it: the king only granted us peace and security before the prelates and princes who were present. As regards the royal customs, and the property both moveable and immoveable which had been taken away from us, the same form of peace was observed now as we have before described at the previous conference, where the refusal to grant the kiss was the impediment to our success. And now Christ's champion, eager for peace, and not afraid of death, did not demand the kiss, lest this should be an impediment to the peace, but he accepted the terms of it as they were offered, influenced rather by charity than by fear of death. This reconciliation was made on the feast of St. Mary Magdalene, on the borders of Maine and Chartraine, between two castles, one of which is called Viefui, the other Freitval, in the midst of a verdant meadow, which, as we have heard many years since the event, was called in ancient times, 'Traitor's Field.'

“But the king and archbishop turned aside on their horses and rode together towards a level place, talking in private to one another; and there among other subjects the archbishop asked

permission without offence to inflict ecclesiastical punishment on the archbishop of York and his own suffragans for the injury which they had done to the prerogative of the Church of Canterbury by crowning the young prince Henry. To this the king assented: and the archbishop, grateful for this concession, immediately in the sight of all that were present jumped from his horse, and threw himself humbly at the king's feet. But when the archbishop was going to mount his horse again, the king held the stirrup for him, whilst all who were present looked on and wondered, not knowing the cause, until the archbishop related it privately to his friends as they were returning. And then you might see the thoughts of many hearts revealed, especially among the courtiers, some of whom rejoiced, whilst others were downcast, because they had always up to that moment been contriving sedition and discord. Others, however, showed neither joy nor sorrow at what had been done, for they suspected insincerity, and anticipated that the peace might lead to nothing but grief and disappointment. And in this they were not deceived, as the event showed."

After the conference was concluded the archbishop returned with his clerks to St. Columba, and immediately despatched messengers to England to prepare the way for his own re-

turn. We find also that he did not forget to purchase wines and other products for which France was famous as she is at present, for future consumption in the numerous houses and castles belonging to the see of Canterbury; and the ferocity of the temporal barons once more, as we shall presently see, developed itself in the shameful conduct of his old enemy Ralph de Broc, who intercepted the archbishop's vessels on the passage.

The conduct of the bishops also, who had assisted in crowning the young prince, was not passed over. On application to the pope, that holy pontiff, now no longer dilatory, granted letters to the archbishop, inflicting condign punishment on the offenders; but these, as we shall find by a future letter of the archbishop, were rather more severe than he wished, and were consequently exchanged for others. All this occupied the month of August, and perhaps part of September; for we have no date assigned to a mission on which our loquacious biographer Herbert de Bosham was sent to the king, but it probably was in the month of September: his words are these:—

“The archbishop came to this resolution, principally because our lord the king had bargained that he would restore certain farms that were of the fee of Canterbury, namely, the fee of William

de Ros, and Saltwood castle near Canterbury, which a great baron, Henry of East Saxony, or of Essex, as he is called, once held of the archbishop, before the duel in which he was vanquished. And besides these, the custody of Rochester castle, which the archbishop again and again constantly asserted to belong to his church. These were what the archbishop demanded, and what the king promised to restore when he should return to Normandy. Our lord therefore sent Master John of Salisbury, afterwards bishop of Chartres, of pious memory, and the disciple who wrote this history, commanding us also, if the king should fulfil the promised restitution, to proceed afterwards to England, but if not, to return to him as speedily as possible. We therefore set out on our journey to Normandy, where we found the king; but he was confined to his bed by a tertian fever, and from this cause we were detained there much longer than we expected. When the king was recovered from his illness, we had an interview with him in the name of the archbishop, on the subject of the restitution which he had promised to make. But in reply to our exhortations he put it off again and again, but at last in consequence of our urgency he gave us a final answer, addressing himself to Master John, who was the spokesman, in these words: ‘O John, I shall by no means

deliver up the castle to you until I see you behave yourselves towards me in a rather different manner than you have lately done.' Having received this answer, and presuming that it was of no use to go to England, we returned to our lord in France as fast as we could."

This reluctance on the king's part to fulfil his engagements is a sufficient proof that his majesty was not thoroughly reconciled to the archbishop, and the courtiers who were inimical to that prelate were not likely to lose sight of the circumstance. It seems also to furnish some argument for supposing that the peace was at last made for the purpose of getting the archbishop into the king's power, rather than from any real wish to be reconciled.

#### LETTER CVII.

" TO THE ARCHBISHOP FROM HIS MESSENGERS.

"YOUR commands have, to the best of our ability, been fulfilled: we delivered your letters to William de Eynesford and William Fitz-Nigel, and brought them with us on their peril to London, together with Thurstan and Osbert. When we were on the point of showing our letters to the younger king, not one of them ventured to appear in his presence; for some one had given

them a caution beforehand, and they declined being associated with us in this business. Thus ourselves, on whom the matter devolved, taking with us Robert the sexton of Canterbury, and having first consulted William Fitz-Aldel and Ralph Fitz-Stephen, went boldly to the king in his chamber at Westminster on the Monday after the feast of St. Michael, whilst he was sitting in company with earl Reginald, the archdeacons of Canterbury and Poitiers, William St. John, and many others. When they heard that peace was made, earl Reginald and several, but not all of the others, said at once, 'Thank God,' in the king's presence. But his majesty, when he had read the letters, said he would take counsel on the subject after our departure. He then called Walter de Lisle, and when he had asked his advice, we were again summoned, and in our presence your own archdeacon of Canterbury said as follows: 'Our lord the king has received the message and commands of his father, and has taken counsel thereon. His reply is this: Randolph de Broc and his agents have held the lands and possessions of the archbishopric, together with the goods, churches, and revenues of the archbishop's clerks in different places, like all other agents, by order of the young king's father: and since the restoration cannot be seen to and effected without summoning the aforesaid agents,

our lord the king assigns you Thursday which follows the morrow of St. Calixtus's day for carrying into force these orders.' In consequence of this protracted period, some assert that the peace which is said to have been made admits of a sinister interpretation, and others will not endure the arrival of this distant term: which is very natural. All your friends, therefore, whom we have found in England, are in despair about the peace, and are neither willing nor able to give credit to the king's letters which we showed with the seal attached, nor would they believe us who were present when the peace was made, and are ready to attest it on our oath. Some of us approached the king, as he was on his journey from London to Windsor, and saluted him humbly and earnestly in your name: he answered us kindly, and with a much more cheerful look than he had before shown us in the audience before his justices.

“ Many of our friends here tell us to advise you to remain about the king's person, if you can, until you have more fully recovered his favour and good-will. Almost all those with whom we have spoken love your person and your company, and you cannot imagine how eagerly they look forward to your coming, but fear compels them to dissemble their good-will. We have had good and credible information from one who was for-

merly intimate with you, that our lord the king has sent Walter de Lisle with briefs to summon Roger of York, so called archbishop, Gilbert of London, and Joceline of Salisbury, and four or six persons, clerks, out of all the churches which are vacant in England, to elect bishops according to his pleasure and the advice of the above-named bishops, and when so elected, to send them to the supreme pontiff to be consecrated, to the detriment of the church of Canterbury and your own confusion, which may God avert! This is why he is so eager for you to return to England, and persists so obstinately to put you to shame. We see every where too certain signs of this diabolical machination, and all the inhabitants of this country see them as well as we. For he of London, no true bishop, though he bears the name, has been stopping some time near Beverly, and pretended that he wished to pay his vows to St. John of that city, that so, like his master, he may detract from the deeds of him who is set over him, and in fact, with bloody hands, put him to death. For all these matters, my revered lord, you will not fail to make due provision, according to the wisdom which may be given you from above, that so, with watchful diligence and discreet mind, and with the aid of God, who never abandons those who trust in Him, you may burst through the snares with which they are

trying to encompass you. For the rest, my lord, we heard that as soon as ever the king's letter was read, the younger king and the archdeacons immediately sent off a messenger into Normandy, but we do not know the nature of his instructions. We, therefore, send the bearer of these to you in all haste, that you may be informed what we have heard. Do not delay to send the same or another in his stead back to us to make us acquainted with your wishes ; for as he will tell you by word of mouth, we are alone and unaided. No one has dared to obey your orders, except Robert the Sexton, who has done his best in the case. As soon as the act of restitution takes place, if it ever does, we will send you word. Farewell, my lord. The bearer will tell you some things which, although abominable, are yet true. They need not be told to more, wherefore, my lord, when you have heard them, let them, if you please, be buried in oblivion. We beg to remind you again and again not to return to England, till you are on better terms with the king. There is no one here among them on whom you trusted, who does not despair of the peace ; and they all avoid us, and will have nothing to say to us, even those who ought to take part with you, and on whom we placed the greatest reliance."

## LETTER CVIII.

“ THE ARCHBISHOP TO THE POPE.

“ FROM the moment, my father, that the trump of apostolic vengeance sounded in the king of England’s ear, and he believed that its severity was about to fall on himself and his dominions, he at once made peace with us, and promised that not one jot or tittle of your commands should be left undone. But having thus escaped the sentence which was impending, he has since, in some particulars, departed from his agreement; for he still keeps back from us certain possessions of the Church, which our predecessor enjoyed without molestation all the days of his life, and ourselves also, before this storm began to blow upon the Church of England. We have more than once applied to him on the subject, but he promises that if we will have patience, and pay him due allegiance as formerly, he will satisfy us, and leave us no just cause for complaint. But these promises lose their weight with us, for we know the character of the man, and his deeds declare the same, and we have been unable to obtain from him anything but words. To explain this to you more fully, we have sent you the bearer with letters from our commissaries, whom we despatched to regulate our affairs in England. In

the meantime, we will take care not to rescind the treaty of peace which has been commenced, though it preys much upon our conscience, that we do not exert our pontifical authority in behalf of Christ's Church and his poor ones, who are exiled and proscribed in his behalf. We dread to furnish an example which, unless the Divine compassion prevent it, may be hurtful to posterity: but because your prudence and that of my lord's, who summoned you, has so wished it, we have kept silence for the sake of peace, though we whisper into your ears, with none else besides the Omnipotent to hear us, that the impenitent shall meet with no pardon or mercy at our hands. We know that at the tribunal of the last day, the great Judge will not pass over offences; and the wounded and suffering Church is daily crying out to Him, 'Lord, I suffer violence, answer thou for me.' In her cry do we join, and for her behalf. Though meanwhile we clasp this shadow of reconciliation which is held out to us, until the day shall dawn and the shadows shall flit away and disappear. We will hold fast to the favour of this man as much as is possible, consistently with the liberties and honour of the Church, and will make trial by experiment whether he can be brought back to tranquillity.

“Your kindness has sent me letters conceived and dictated by the Spirit of God, wherein you

administer rebuke and correction to the archbishop of York, and our fellow-bishops, and check the excesses of the king in a manner worthy of the successor of St. Peter and Christ's vicegerent. But we fear, lest harsh language may irritate the tender ears of so great a potentate and impede the reconciliation; and we humbly entreat your holiness to omit all mention of the king's excesses, and the enormity of the oath which he has administered, of the depraved customs and the irregularity of the young king's coronation, and to inflict the sentence on the above-named archbishop and bishops for having presumed to perform the coronation in our province, when we were suffering exile in the cause of justice and the Church's liberties; though all men know that this is a privilege which belongs to our see, and of which it ought never to be deprived without a trial. In this way we trust, their presumption may be easily and conveniently punished, to the glory of God and the honour of the apostolic see, and yet no impediment be thrown in the way of the reconciliation. We also deem it necessary that you should write earnestly to our lord the king, for to this end are you placed in this holy pontificate, as it were in a watch-tower, to examine into the causes of all the faithful, and deal forth to them reward or punishment according to their deserts. No one, therefore, should be

offended at being obliged to act at your bidding, that he may not be sent in the presence of angels and men into the fire which is everlasting. You have shown much deference to the king, but though you have spared him, you do not dare dissemble the excesses and crimes of priests. Moreover, as we fear, lest various causes may interfere to obstruct and embarrass our reconciliation, we pray you to commit the suspension or excommunication of the bishops to our own judgment, for which we shall render an account, excepting always, if you shall think fit, the archbishop of York, who is the stirrer up and head of all these evils. And although the bishop of London has been the standard-bearer of this sedition, not to say schism, we entreat you to give us power to pardon him and the bishop of Salisbury, if we find that they cannot be punished without a renewal of the schism. And whereas, you have commanded us to proceed in this matter by the advice of his most Christian majesty, the king of France, in showing or suppressing your letters, it is his advice to us that we should obtain special letters to suspend the archbishop of York without touching the king, and others to excommunicate the two bishops, with others also containing the excommunication of all the bishops generally. These we shall also use according as the occasion or the emergency shall

require. For the English Church, though about to enter the port, still struggles with the waves, and unless the king fulfils the conditions of peace, she requires to be armed against her enemies and persecutors by your protection and consolation. To ensure this, your holiness should command our venerable brother of Meaux and the pious abbat of St. Crispin's, Soissons, to wait on the king and summon him to restore our possessions, and make good our losses at the peril of ecclesiastical censure lighting upon him if he disobeys your instructions. In that case, we entreat your holiness to confer on us the same authority which you conferred on the bishops of Rouen and Nevers, or even greater ; for the more powerful and fierce the individual, the stronger should the bonds be to bind him, the stouter the staff with which he is corrected.

“The source of all these disturbances is to be found in the attempt which the archbishop of York made to withdraw his church from its obedience to the church of Canterbury. Restore unity, therefore, if it please your highness, to the English Church, by commanding the archbishop and clergy of York to recognize, without delay or appeal, the primacy and privileges of our see. If you wish to follow in the steps of your predecessors, inspect their registers and you will find it impossible to do otherwise. God knows that we

do not ask this for our own glory: would to God that we had never undertaken this pastoral office, pregnant as it is with everlasting death, or at least, innumerable woes! but it is our wish to remove every occasion of schism in these our days, and by your bounty to restore perpetual peace to the English Church. We say this to you before Him, who is the Judge of both of us, and to whom we must give account for all things. May He inspire you and show you what you ought to do. You have heard our anguish, but according to a proverb of our country, those only feel the heat who are near the fire.

“ We believe that we shall return to England, but whether for peace or suffering, we know not. God knows in His providence what our lot shall be. We commend our lives to your prayers, holy father, and thank you for all the consolation you have given us in our time of need. Be assured, moreover, that our venerable brother, Bartholomew of Exeter, is free from the sin of the coronation, and has suffered much for righteousness’ sake, from the adversaries of the Church. Farewell.”

#### LETTER CIX.

“ THE ARCHBISHOP TO THE KING OF ENGLAND.

“ It is known to the Inspector of the heart, the

Judge of souls, the Avenger of crimes, Jesus Christ, in what purity and sincerity we made peace with you, believing that we should be met with singleness of heart and good faith. For what other conclusions, my most serene lord, could be drawn from your words which your kindness addressed to us, either to convince or to pacify us? You sent letters to my lord the young king, your son, that he should restore to us and to our adherents all the possessions which we had before we left England; what idea could we form from them, but of benevolence, peace, and security? But lo! your honour is at stake, which, God knows, we value beyond your profit, and the sequel shows neither good faith nor singleness of heart. For the restitution, which you commanded to be made to us, is put off to the tenth day under pretence of Randolf de Broc, whose presence your son's counsellors thought necessary to the performance of your orders. Who those counsellors are, and with what fidelity to you they have acted in this matter, will be a subject for your enquiry, when it shall seem good to you. We, however, are persuaded that these things are done to the injury of the Church and to the loss of your own credit and salvation, if you do not correct them. For the aforesaid Randolf is, in the meantime, seizing on the property of the Church, and openly storing up in Saltwood

castle the victuals which he has taken from us ; and as we have been told by those who can prove it to you whenever you shall demand it, he has boasted in the hearing of many, that we shall not long enjoy the peace which you have granted us ; and he threatens to take away our life, before we have eaten one whole loaf in England. You know, my most serene lord, that the man who has the power to correct what is wrong and neglects it, becomes a party to the crime. The above-named Ralph can have nothing to do in the matter, unless backed by your wishes and supported by your authority. Your discretion will be made acquainted with the answer which he returns to the king your son's letter, and you will judge of it according to your good pleasure. And whereas the church of Canterbury, which is the spiritual mother of the British isles, is evidently perishing in consequence of the odium which falls on us, we will serve her at the peril of our own life ; we will expose our own head, with God's permission, to that persecuting Ralph and his accomplices ; he shall kill us, not once but a thousand times, if God will only, by his grace, give us strength and patience to endure it.

“ It was our intention, my lord, to return to you, but woe is me, necessity drives me to my suffering Church. I go thither by your licence and under your protection, to die in its behalf,

unless your filial piety vouchsafe speedily to give me consolation. But whether we live or die, we are yours in the Lord, and ever will be: whatever may happen to us and ours, may God bless you and your children!"

A short time after this a conference was to be held at Tours between king Henry and Theobald count of Blois, and Becket determined on going thither himself to see the king: Henry on hearing that he was approaching that city, sent out some of his attendants to meet him, and afterwards went out himself. When they met, the bystanders remarked that the king's thoughts seemed totally occupied about the archbishop, though he very seldom fixed his eyes upon him, and no communication of any kind passed between the king and the attendants of Becket. The next morning it was said that the archbishop would probably attend the king's chapel at the mass, when his majesty would be hardly able to avoid receiving the kiss of peace from the archbishop. At the suggestion of one of the courtiers the king ordered the mass "pro defunctis" to be said that morning, and so avoided the necessity of kissing the archbishop. After the service the two rode together on their way to the place where they were to meet the count of Blois, and did nothing but load one another with mutual reproaches, each remind-

ing the other of the many services he had rendered, and from this beginning of the conference we are not disposed to wonder that they parted, notwithstanding the count of Blois's good offices, without coming to an understanding about the lands which the archbishop claimed to be restored.

A short time after this, the king happened to be at Chaumont near the town of Blois, and the archbishop determined to pay him a visit, not of form or business, but in the same spirit which characterised their early intimacy, when he was still chancellor. This meeting was consequently of a different character from the preceding: the king received him gladly and kindly, and as they were talking together, his majesty exclaimed, "Why is it that you will not do what I wish you? I should put all my affairs into your hands, if you would only yield to my pleasure." When Becket afterwards told this speech of the king to Herbert de Bosham, he added, "I thought of the words which the devil said to Jesus Christ, 'All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.'"

The archbishop returned to Sens, where he took leave of his hospitable entertainers, and began to make preparations for returning to England. Letters, however, arrived from Henry, which, though not unfriendly, caused a little un-

easiness to his party, in consequence of the doubtful character of the man by whom they were to be escorted.

## LETTER CX.

“ KING HENRY TO THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY.

“BE it known to you that I could not meet you at Rouen according to our agreement, because I received information from my friends in France that the French king was preparing to make an irruption upon my subjects in Auvergne, and distress both them and my territory. The men of Auvergne sent me the same intelligence, and requested me to send them help. For this reason I was unable to meet you at Rouen as we agreed. I now send to you John dean of Salisbury, my favourite clerk, to escort you into England, and I have directed him to intimate to king Henry my son that you are to take possession of all your property without molestation, in all honour and good faith. And the same my son will redress any thing that has been done amiss, as concerns you or your see. And whereas many things have been reported to me and to my son about your delay in these parts, more than the truth, it is desirable in my opinion that you should cross the water as soon as possible. Witness the king himself at Loches.”

“The preparations for our departure,” says Herbert, “were such as poor exiles could make : not that I mean to imply by the word poor, that the archbishop was accompanied by a mean or small train, for when we set off from Sens to travel down to the sea-coast, our party amounted, if I am not deceived, to no less than a hundred horsemen.”

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## CHAPTER XXXVIII.

THE ARCHBISHOP LANDS—HIS PROGRESS TO CANTERBURY—TO LONDON AND BACK—THE BISHOPS GO TO THE KING — HIS ANGER — THE FOUR KNIGHTS.

THE archbishop and his party arrived safely, under the escort of John the dean of Salisbury, at the sea-coast of Flanders. His mind was firmly made up to cross over into England by the first favourable wind, and a letter which he had just received from the pope encouraged him to persevere in his design. He also bore with him letters to suspend the archbishop of York and the other bishops who had been present at the unlawful coronation of the young king, and to revoke the absolution of the bishops of London

and Salisbury, which had been granted provisionally, thereby replacing them under their former sentence of excommunication. As these prelates were well acquainted with Becket's intention to return as soon as possible, they were already on their way to embark and cross over to the king into Normandy. But the archbishop thinking that this would probably be the course which they would pursue, determined to dispatch the letters in advance, that the bearer might have a better chance of delivering them before his own arrival. This was now done, and as fortune would have it, with unexpected success; for the three bishops were already at Dover, and on the point of embarking, when the messenger<sup>4</sup> gave a most unpleasant check to their haste, by serving on them the letters of suspension and of excommunication.

During their delay on the Flemish coast the party amused themselves by walking on the beach, and looking at the vessels which entered or left the port. One day as they were thus engaged, Milo dean of Boulogne came towards them, and the archbishop supposing he was come to speak to him about the expenses of the voyage, began to address him on the subject; but Milo replied, "That is not my business; I have a message to

<sup>4</sup> This was perhaps Idonea the nun, to whom Becket addressed a letter which has been given in vol. i. p. 192.

you from the count of Boulogne: he bids you beware, for the English coast is beset with enemies, who will either murder you or make you prisoner, as soon as you land." The archbishop answered: "It is of no consequence to me; for if I am torn limb from limb, I will go. It is now seven years since my church has been deprived of a pastor; and it is my request, perhaps my last request, to my friends, that if I cannot return to Canterbury alive, they will carry me there dead." On the morning after the letters of excommunication were sent they saw a ship which was just arrived from England, and fell into conversation with the sailors about the news from home, and what was thought of the archbishop's return. The seaman replied that every body would be glad to have him back again among them, and were looking out with great impatience for his landing. But one of them, who seemed to be the captain, took Herbert de Bosham aside and said to him, "Are you mad? What folly is this! Do you know that there is a body of soldiers waiting for you at the port where you intend to land, to seize you and your master? So it is reported at least by those who have good opportunities of knowing. The whole country is exasperated against him, and particularly the king's party, who say that at your very first landing you have thrown every thing into confusion by anathematising and excommu-

nicating the bishops: and this too, during the time of year which is our Lord's Advent, when you ought to do your utmost to preserve peace and tranquillity." Herbert de Bosham thanked the captain for his advice, and shortly afterwards heard the same intelligence from others of the party. He then took the bishop aside and communicated to him what he heard. His words were overheard by master Gunter, a plain honest man, who had adhered to the archbishop through all he had suffered. "If I were asked my advice," said he, "I should say we had better not go on just at present, but remain quiet until this matter be a little blown over: for it will be much worse when the king comes to hear of the bishops being suspended." "And what do you say, Herbert?" said the archbishop. "My lord," replied Herbert, "it is difficult for me to hazard an opinion, and it is a pity that our learned clerks are not with us: but as they are either gone before us to England, or are about our business in France, we must come to the best decision we can without them. If we go back after having bidden farewell to all our friends out of England, and got the pope's licence and blessing, it will redound to our disadvantage and dishonour. It will be said that his lordship of Canterbury is again retreating as he did before at Northampton."

These arguments, however, had but little weight

with the archbishop: for he had already determined that nothing should arrest his journey. Accordingly, on the 3rd<sup>5</sup> of December the party took ship with a fair wind and set sail for England. "Look, my lord," said one of his clerks, "there is England," as they hastily hurried on board. "You are very eager to go," replied he, "but before we have been there forty days, you will wish yourselves any where else."

But the warnings which had been given them before they started were not altogether to be neglected, and the steersmen received orders to alter the direction of their route and sail for Sandwich. This port belonged to the see of Canterbury, and its inhabitants were lieges of the archbishop. In a few hours they entered the harbour, and the cross of Canterbury which towered above the prow of the vessel, speedily drew the whole population of the town to the water's edge. Amongst others came the king's officers Gervais de Cornhill sheriff of Kent, and Reginald de Warenne, with a train of followers having arms under their clothes, but when they saw that the archbishop was escorted by the dean of Salisbury

<sup>5</sup> Duobus tribusve diebus exactis post festum beati Andree.—Herb. de B. But Fitz-Stephen says that they embarked on Tuesday the 1st of December. Becket says himself, in his letter to the pope, that they crossed the day after the messenger who bore the letters of excommunication.

they abstained from violence, and contented themselves with demanding whether there were any foreigners on board, that they might exact of them the oath which the king required, to the effect that they had no intentions hostile or sinister to the peace of the country. The archbishop told them that the whole party consisted of his own clerks, one of whom only was a foreigner, the archdeacon of Sens, and that it was not customary for oaths to be demanded of the clerks of an archbishop of Canterbury. The officers then reproached him with having set the country in a ferment by excommunicating the bishops, and demanded that he should immediately absolve them. In reply they were told that they had been excommunicated with the king's consent, and that the archbishop could not promise to absolve them until he should have more time for deliberation on the subject. On hearing this they offered no further molestation, and the travellers retired to repose and refresh themselves after their voyage.

The inhabitants of Sandwich did their best to welcome the return of their ecclesiastical superior after so long an absence. But the reception which they gave him was nothing to that which awaited him in the villages along the road to Canterbury, where the news of his landing spread with great rapidity. When he left his quarters in the morning to proceed thither, he

found the road thronged with people. The clergyman of every parish had formed a procession of his parishioners and came to meet him, bearing the cross before them. The road through each village was almost carpeted with their garments, the people sang for joy, and the bells rang out a merry peal, indicative of the enthusiasm which was generally felt at the return of the people's favourite.

At Canterbury they all, high and low, could hardly restrain their feelings: they decked out the cathedral, and all classes put on their holiday clothes; a numerous procession conducted him into the city, where a public dinner was given to celebrate his coming. Anthems and hymns of thanksgiving were put up in the different churches, and the "halls of the city resounded with the trumpets." The archbishop having first saluted on the cheek every one of the monks of Canterbury, went up into the cathedral church from which he had been so long absent: and after prayers, preached to the people a talented and forcible discourse on the text, "Here we have no continuing city, but seek one to come<sup>6</sup>," after which he retired to his residence in the monastery, and the rest of the day was spent in demonstrations of the joy that universally prevailed.

Whilst these events were going on, Geoffrey

<sup>6</sup> Heb. xiii. 14.

Ridel, the archdeacon of Canterbury, and Richard, archdeacon of Poitiers,, were on the point of entering the town, on their way to the king, who was in Normandy, but when they heard of the reception which had been given the archbishop, they turned off to the west, and embarked at a different port. This was taken as an ill omen by some, who inferred that peace was not yet thoroughly made between Becket and the king.

The next morning, the officers who had accosted him at his first landing, again presented themselves, in company with certain clerks, and Randolf de Brock amongst them, sent by the excommunicated bishops, who had not yet left the neighbourhood. They were come, they said, to demand that the bishops should be absolved, and they represented, moreover, that it was unbecoming of him to enter the kingdom with fire and sword, trampling on his suffragans, who were unable to wait and pay their respects to him on his arrival, by being thus unexpectedly put out of the pale of the Church. The archbishop returned an answer in strict conformity with the ecclesiastical canons; that it was the pope who had inflicted the sentence and not himself; that he would, however, step beyond his duty, and absolve them, if they would pledge themselves to abide the judgment of the Church on the offence for which they had been condemned. This, how-

ever, did not satisfy them, though it was reported that the bishops of London and Salisbury would have acquiesced, but that the archbishop of York dissuaded them, saying, "My coffers still contain eight thousand pounds, thank God; and I will spend every farthing of it in beating down Thomas's insolence, which is even greater than he himself will be able to persevere in. Do not let him get round you, my brethren: but let us set off to the king, who has all along stood by us, and will do so, if we will let him, to the last. Do not suppose that this reconciliation can be sincere after so long and bitter a quarrel: if we give over the contest, he will justly set us down as deserters, and if he comes to a severe reckoning with us, we shall be turned out of all our possessions. What will you do then? You will be made beggars. But if you stand by the king, your persecutor can do nothing. He has already done his worst, and has extorted this sentence from the pope under false pretences." These arguments confirmed the waverers, and all three hastened off with as much speed as possible to Normandy, to inform the king of what had happened.

When the archbishop had been eight days at Canterbury, he determined to pay a visit to the young king, for whom, as his old pupil, he had always felt a great affection. As a mark of his

regard, he had brought over from Flanders three fine horses, remarkable for their speed, size, and beauty, as a present to the young prince, and he now sent in advance a message to give notice of his visit. On his way to London it was necessary to pass through Rochester, where the bishop and clergy came out to meet him, and received him with every mark of honour. At London he was met by a third procession, which conducted him to St. Mary's, a church of canons regular in Southwark. An immense multitude of all classes, men and women, clergy and laity, went out to meet him, and to bless God for allowing him to return amongst them. About three thousand<sup>7</sup> poor scholars and clerks attached to the Churches of London formed a separate body, about three miles from the city, and when the archbishop came in sight, they all struck up singing *Te Deum laudamus*. The archbishop himself bowed to the multitudes as they saluted him, and showered money amongst the lower classes, which made them redouble their acclamations. In this manner he reached the porch of St. Mary's, where the canons came out in a procession to meet him, singing, "Blessed is the Lord God of Israel," in which all those who followed him united.

<sup>7</sup> This was when the population of London was about 300,000; at present there are nearly 2,000,000 of people in London: are there 3000 scholars?

But amid this general satisfaction, there was a "mad-woman," says Fitz-stephen, "named Matilda, who was in the habit of pushing herself into all public meetings, and on the present occasion, she attracted the notice of several of the by-standers by calling out, "Archbishop, beware of the knife ! archbishop, beware of the knife !"

At the distance of about a hundred yards from the west-end of the present St. Saviour's Church, Southwark, and surrounded by unsightly warehouses, such as show how widely mercantile wealth is removed from taste and elegance, is an old wall, retaining little of detail, save its thickness, an ancient fire-place and a pointed door-way, to indicate its primeval character. This fragment is all that remains of the palace of Henry of Winchester, in which Thomas Becket passed the night of the 13th of December, 1170 ; it is also hard by the place of his birth, where the hospital, dedicated to him under the name of Saint Thomas, still dispenses the blessing of health to the poor inhabitants of this now vast metropolis.

On the next day, or that which succeeded it, Joceline de Arundel, the queen's brother, came on the part of the young king, forbidding the archbishop to traverse the country as he was doing, and ordering him to return to his own diocese. "Is it then the young king's intention to forbid me his presence ?" asked he. "His

commands," said Joceline, "are as I have said," and he immediately left the room; but as he went out, met a rich citizen of London, with whom he was acquainted. "And are you going to see the king's enemy?" said Joceline. "If he is the king's enemy," replied the citizen, "we know nothing about it, for we heard that they were reconciled; and we have been told nothing to the contrary." These incidents, which proceeded perhaps entirely from the malice of the courtiers, gave some little uneasiness to the more reflecting of the archbishop's adherents.

The day after, he was preparing to return to Canterbury, when news reached him that Randolf de Broc had seized a vessel of his loaded with wine which had just arrived, and that he had killed some of the crew, and shut up the rest prisoners in his castle of Pevensey. On receiving this intelligence, he sent the prior of Dover and the abbat of St. Alban's to inform the young king of it, by whose orders the vessel was restored and the sailors liberated. He now set out on his return to Canterbury, taking with him an escort of only five lances, to protect him from the freebooting assaults which were at that time so common all over Europe. This was the only foundation for the report which reached the king in Normandy, of the military expeditions which the archbishop was making throughout the

country; and even these five soldiers were dismissed as soon as he arrived at Canterbury. On his way he passed through Wrotham, where a priest named William, of Chidington, had an interview, the real nature of which was probably concealed under a foolish legend concerning the relics of St. Lawrence, St. Vincent, and St. Cecilia. The priest was told to return to the archbishop when he was at Canterbury, and he should be provided for.

Meanwhile Randolf de Broc and Gervais de Cornhill, the king's officers, professing to be acting by the king's command, summoned the priors of the churches and the citizens of London, to give account for having made a procession in honour of the king's enemy, and called on them to give bail; but the priors did not attend, and the citizens refused to give bail, because they had not received any warrant from either the king or his justices.

The archbishop was now once more in his own city, but still experienced persecution from the De Brocs, who resided in the castle of Saltwood, from which they issued whenever an opportunity offered of annoying the archbishop or his retainers; they lay in wait for them on the public roads, hunted in his chase, killed his deer, and carried away his dogs. At last, a little before Christmas-day, Robert de Broc, who had succes-

sively been a priest, a friar, and an apostate, surprised some pack-horses belonging to the archbishop, and on their way to Canterbury, and his nephew John de Broc, at his uncle's instigation, cut off the tail of one of them close to the stump.

But these causes of annoyance did not take off his attention from the concerns of his diocese, which had so long been deprived of his superintendence: one ray of sunshine at least shone upon him in the repentance of Hugh earl of Norfolk, who had been excommunicated. Two of the archbishop's letters on this subject have been preserved; a third addressed to the pope, contains an account of the principal events which had happened to the archbishop since the peace of Freitval: it is therefore unnecessary to insert it, but the other two will be of interest to the reader, as the last letters which this celebrated man wrote whilst still in this world.

#### LETTER CXI.

“ TO EARL HUGH.

“ WHEN I read the words of your affection, together with the letters of the canons, in which they testified that they experienced the daily benefits of your liberality, my spirit so brightened up within me that my bosom swelled with the

praises of Him, of whose gift cometh so signal a conversion, wonderful and salutary to your soul. Glory in heaven will be your reward, joy in spirit is mine, and the sweet odour of your example will spread through all the kingdom: so that the other enemies of Christ's cross may learn from you, if they will, to shake off from them the yoke of the devil, and to run after your sweet odours. For this cause it is that we will, by God's permission, ever be zealous to promote your honour and advancement, because, in the very beginning of our peace, even before we entered the kingdom, you fulfilled our mandate, not only with kindness but with magnificence, furnishing thereby an example to others to do the same. But the urgency of your entreaties for those disobedient priests causes us no little embarrassment. Your discretion knows, my dear son, that as humble poverty deserves to be rewarded, so do the proud merit castigation. Now consider, if you please, how contumaciously, how proudly and how disobediently those poor clerks, as you call them, have behaved; and when you have considered the excess of the delinquents, you will see, I have no doubt, that there is not room for mercy. These are the men who, persisting in manifest disobedience, have fought against God, and caused scandal and mourning to the world. By an act of detestable example they

have polluted Christ's body, for, persisting in manifest disobedience, they have presumed to consecrate Christ's body and to celebrate the other ceremonies—ceremonies which the best of men, even possessed of angelic purity, are but too unworthy to perform. But we will say no more of their crimes, lest we be compelled to aggravate their punishment in proportion. And surely, if it had not been for your valued intercession, the axe would already have been laid at the root of the unfruitful tree. Their own iniquity would have condemned them everlastingly, for by your favour they will obtain no slight compassion. But we wish them to remain at present as they are, until, as we hope, we shall go to see you, when we will fulfil your wishes, as far as our duty to God will allow, by absolving these interdicted priests. Meanwhile, out of respect and love to you, we have granted to the bearer permission to preach the Gospel, to baptize infants, and to shrive the dying, if at least man's last necessity shall require it."

#### LETTER CXII.

"TO WILLIAM, BISHOP OF NORWICH.

"WHEREAS your brotherly love has signified to me, that all would be done according to our commands in the absolution of the noble earl Hugh,

we have received no slight pleasure from the same. For we have rejoiced with no slight joy at the finding of the lost sheep, which the pious shepherd has brought back upon his shoulders to the fold. You add, that you have uplifted your hands to Almighty God, who in these last days has vouchsafed to look down upon the earth: my own soul too doth magnify the Lord, who hath wrought gloriously for us, changing our storm into a favourable wind, and calming the motion of the waves. We now earnestly pray of Him in his goodness to grant that we may see you before you depart hence, and flee from this mortal country to that region of immortals, where you will dwell with your fellow-citizens and fellow-servants in the household of the Lord. For we hope that your presence will communicate no slight support and strength to our weakness; by the blessing of God, who in these days hath set you to be a firm column in his temple.

“Concerning the interdicted clerks, in whose favour the noble earl Hugh has written to us, we have determined to make no change at present, but we wish them to remain in their present condition, until by God’s favour we go amongst you, to enjoy your counsel on these and other matters of the Church. But meanwhile, out of respect to the person by whom the bearer is sent, and from compassion towards himself also, we

have granted to him the privilege of preaching the Gospel, of conferring baptism, and of shriving the dying, if the last necessity of life shall so require it. Farewell."

The visit to Norfolk, hinted at in these letters, never took place: Christmas was now come: on the eve of that high festival the archbishop read the Gospel "The book of the generation," &c.

The next day he celebrated high mass himself, and first preached a sermon on his favourite text, "On earth peace, good will towards men." When some of the clerks spoke of saints and their famous martyr of Canterbury he said, "Yes, we have one martyr, St. Elphage, and we may perhaps have another before long!"

In punishment for the cruelty done to his horse he pronounced sentence of excommunication against Robert de Broc, but he first gave him notice of his intentions, and received an insolent message in return by a soldier named David de Rummel, who said that, "if Robert were excommunicated, he should do the same as other excommunicates." He pronounced the same sentence on two others who had repulsed his officials, and would not resign his churches of Harrow and Thirlwood, which they had usurped. The day after Christmas-day is St. Stephen's-day, and he again celebrated mass, as he did also on the next,

which is dedicated to St. John the apostle and evangelist. On the same day he sent off three of his clerks with letters to the pope: these were master Herbert, Alexander Llewellen his cross-bearer, and Gilbert de Glanville. Two other clerks, namely, his chaplain Richard and John Planeta were dispatched to the bishop of Norwich, authorizing him to grant absolution to the priests on the estates of earl Hugh, who had become excommunicate by having administered the mass knowingly to excommunicates, but at the same time to exact from them an oath to send two deputies to the pope before the end of a year, and to abide by his decision. He also remembered the promise which he had made to William the priest at Wrotham, and having in vain sent William Bevin to inquire for him in the town, he drew up a charter by which he conferred on him the chapel of Penshurst, with a sentence of excommunication attached against any one who should attempt to deprive him of it. After the archbishop's death, William Bevin delivered this deed to the priest, who in consequence came into peaceable possession of the gift<sup>8</sup>.

All these matters occupied the archbishop during the Christmas week and a few days immediately preceding and following it. In the mean

<sup>8</sup> Fitz-Stephen.

time the archbishop of York, with the bishops of London and Salisbury, and the archdeacon of Poitiers, arrived at Bur near Baieux in Normandy, where the king then was, leaving behind them Geoffrey Ridel, the archdeacon of Canterbury, who had suffered so much on the voyage that he was unable to accompany them. But notwithstanding the haste of the bishops, common report had anticipated their coming, and the king already knew all the particulars of what had happened in England. The arrival of the bishops, however, led to a recapitulation of the fresh offences which were laid at the archbishop's door; and the king seems to have forgotten, or, worse still, to have kept back from them the permission which he had given Becket previous to his departure, to punish those who had offended against the privileges of his see. "My lord," said the archbishop of York, "I alone of the three have the power of opening my mouth, and speaking to your majesty; for my two colleagues are excommunicated, interdicted the use of fire and water! no one dares hold converse with them, for fear of being involved in the sentence which that ingrate, unmindful of your majesty's mercy in allowing him to return, has launched against all who were concerned in your son's coronation. And now that he is come back, he is making armed progresses throughout the country, and

endeavouring to strengthen himself against your majesty's displeasure for the future, by getting admission to the castles and fortresses of the land. We, my lord, are indifferent to all the toils and sufferings we may have to undergo in your majesty's cause, and we do not seem likely to escape without considerable loss both of comfort, dignity, and reputation." "By God's eyes," exclaimed the king, "if all who were concerned in my son's coronation are to be excommunicated, I will be one of the number." "Have patience, sir," said the archbishop of York, "the storm cannot be turned aside, but by proper management we may bear it without much detriment, and even gain the character of being the injured party: but to succeed in this we must have patience, and let him go on his own way for the present." "What then would you have me do?" asked the king. "It is not our duty to advise your majesty," replied they, "your barons will do that,"—"but," added one of them, "so long as Thomas lives, you will never enjoy one day's tranquillity." At these words such a fit of passion seized on the king, that his countenance was changed, his eyes flashed fire, and his whole look was disordered. "A curse," said he, "a curse light upon all the false varlets that I have maintained, who have left me so long exposed to this insolence from a priest, and have not attempted to relieve me of him!"

This fatal speech did not escape unheeded: among the retainers of the court who were present were four knights, Reginald Fitz-Urse, William de Tracy, Hugh de Morville<sup>9</sup>, and Richard Briton, on whose ears the king's words made too deep an impression. They started as at a summons, and leaving the royal presence, briefly but boldly laid their plan for action, and quitting the court, went with the speed of malice to the coast, each separately for safety's sake, but bound to meet again in Saltwood castle.

The king called a council of the barons, and laid before them the reported conduct of the archbishop: he had returned to England like an invading foe, rather than as a subject and an ecclesiastic; he had suspended the metropolitan of York, excommunicated several bishops, and seemed to have in view to deprive his son Henry of the crown which had so recently been placed upon his head; added to which, he bore powers from the pope which were inconsistent with the

<sup>9</sup> A curious anecdote is told of Hugh de Morville's wife; she cherished a lawless passion for a young man named Lithulf; and finding him insensible to her blandishments determined on revenge. At her request the young man advanced towards her as if in sport with his drawn sword: at which she cried out to her husband, "Huwe of Morville, war, war, war! Lithulf haveth his sword ydrawn!" The young man was seized, condemned for an attempt to commit murder, and boiled alive!—WILL. CANTUAR.

king's prerogatives and the peace of the kingdom. To this address of the king, the earl of Leicester was the first who made reply. "My lord," said he, "the archbishop was my father's intimate friend, but since he gave up your majesty's favour and left the kingdom, I have never sent a message to him, nor he to me!" Engelgere de Bohun, uncle to the excommunicated bishop of Salisbury, then spoke. "The only way to take vengeance on such a fellow is to plait a few withs into a rope and draw him up on a gallows." The next speaker was William Malvoisin, nephew of Eudes count of Bretagne. "When I was at Rome," said he, "on my way back from Jerusalem, I asked the landlord of the house where I lodged some questions about the popes, and he told me, among other anecdotes, that one of them had been killed for his insupportable insolence and pride."

These are all the speeches which the historian has recorded as having passed on this occasion, and we may no doubt suppose that the whole discussion was conducted on equally sound principles, and with equally logical regard to premises and conclusion. One fact, however, was too important to be lost sight of. The absence of the four knights had already attracted notice, and William earl of Mandeville, Sayer de Quincy, and Richard

de Humet were dispatched to overtake them, and charged with a commission to arrest the archbishop. The earl of Mandeville and Sayer de Quincy only went as far as the coast, where they halted, but Richard de Humet passed over into England, and sent orders to Hugh de Gundeville and William Fitz-John, the young king's tutors at Winchester, to march as privately as possible with the household troops to Canterbury. Meanwhile he remained on the coast to seize the archbishop, if he should attempt to escape, and his two colleagues on the other side of the water held themselves ready to act in the same contingency. In this disposition of things they remained, whilst events were occurring at Canterbury, with which the reader must now be made acquainted.

The four knights arrived at Saltwood castle on the day of the Holy Innocents, [Dec. 28,] and spent a night in arranging their plans for the next day. Randolf de Broc, their host, was not only instigated by old enmity to the archbishop, but also by his apprehensions of what might happen if his castle should fall into the archbishop's hands, for Saltwood was one of the fees which were claimed of the king as belonging to the see of Canterbury. To make sure of the object for which the knights were come, Randolf left the

castle, and pretending to bear a warrant from the king, raised all the military in the neighbourhood.

On the morning of Tuesday, the 29th, the whole party set out for Canterbury, where they arrived in the early part of the afternoon. The four knights, accompanied by twelve others, went to the archbishop's palace, whilst the others sought out the authorities of the city, and commanded them to call together the citizens and proceed with them on the king's service.

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## CHAPTER XXXIX.

OF THE MARTYRDOM OF THE ARCHBISHOP IN THE  
CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF CANTERBURY.

WE are now arrived at the last scene in the life of this extraordinary man, exhibiting a deed of violence, perpetrated, not only with cold blood, but with all the accompaniments of forethought and premeditation. It is not, however, certain that the murderers entered the sacred building with the intention of murdering the archbishop within its precincts: their first object was evidently to drag him forth and carry him away prisoner, but the course of events hurried them

on as they had not foreseen, though, as the sequel shows, they were fully prepared to act as the emergency might prompt them.

The archbishop was sitting after meals with his clerks and attendants on the afternoon of the 29th of December, A. D. 1170, when the events happened which are thus related by Edward Grim<sup>1</sup>, a monk, who, as has before been noticed, had come to Canterbury on a visit to Becket, and was present during the whole of the proceedings of that fatal day.

“The four wretches above-mentioned, unworthy of the name of knights, no sooner landed than they summoned the officials of the king, whom the archbishop had excommunicated, and proclaiming that they were acting by the king’s orders and authority, they persuaded many knights and others of inferior rank to join them. They then collected in a body, ready for the perpetration of any crime, and arrived at the palace of their innocent victim,” [at the tenth hour<sup>2</sup>] “on the fifth day after Christmas, which was the day after that of the Holy Innocents. The hour of meals was over, and the holy man had retired with his domestics from the crowd into an inner chamber, to transact some business. A noise was

<sup>1</sup> A few supplementary passages are added in brackets from the other contemporary writers.

<sup>2</sup> Four o’clock.

heard in the hall without, and the four soldiers, with only one attendant, entered. They were received with respect, as servants of the king, and well known: and those who had been waiting on the archbishop, being now at table themselves, invited the new-comers to be seated. The invitation was rejected by those murderers, whose thirst was for blood, and not for food. By their orders the archbishop was informed that four men were come from the king and desired to speak to him: on his giving permission, they entered the room and took their seats, where they remained some time without saluting him or speaking a word. Neither, however, did he salute them immediately on their entering, for in his wisdom he remembered the words of Scripture, 'By thy words shalt thou be justified,' and he wished to discover their intentions from the questions which they should put to him. After a while, however, he turned to them, and carefully scrutinizing their looks, he spoke a few words of greeting to them: but the unhappy wretches, in league with the powers of death, at once returned his salutation with abuse, and *ironically* prayed God's blessing on him. At these words of bitterness and malice, the man of God coloured deeply, for he now saw that they were come for evil purposes. Whereupon Fitz-Urse, who seemed their leader and the most daring among them, breathing fury against

the bishop, addressed him thus, ‘We bring you a message from the king, tell us if you wish it to be delivered in public.’” [Master John of Salisbury said to him, ‘My lord, let us discuss this in private:’] “to which the archbishop, knowing the nature of what they were going to deliver, replied, ‘These things must not be spoken in private or in a closet, but before the world.’ Now the miserable men were so bent on murdering him, that, as they afterwards confessed, if the door-keeper had not called back the clerks, who had been ordered to withdraw, they would have killed the archbishop on the spot with the shaft of the cross which stood by. The clerks returned and the spokesman continued: ‘When the king made peace with you, and every cause of dispute seemed ended, he sent you back to your own see in entire freedom, according to your request; but you, on the other hand, have added insult to your former injuries, and setting at nought the terms of reconciliation, have wrought an evil deed in yourself against the king; for those servants of his, by whose ministry his son was crowned and invested with the honours of sovereignty, have been suspended through your pertinacity and pride; moreover, you have anathematized the king’s ministers, by whose prudent counsels the business of the kingdom is transacted, so that it is evident you would deprive the king’s

son of his crown if you were able, and the persevering schemes by which you endeavour to accomplish your designs against the king are now known to all men. Say then, are you prepared to accompany us before the king to answer on all these heads; for this is the object of our coming?' To this the archbishop replied: 'I declare before God, it never was my wish to deprive my lord the king's son of the kingdom, or in any way to lessen his power: I would rather give him three kingdoms, and should have every motive both in reason and equity to aid him in obtaining a more ample extent of territory. But on the other hand, it is unjust for my lord the king to be offended because my people accompany me, and come out to meet me, through the cities and towns, when they have for seven years been deprived by my exile of the consolation of my presence. And even now I am ready to satisfy him, whenever it shall please him, for whatever I have done amiss, but he has denounced me in the strongest terms, and forbidden me to enter any of his towns, cities, or villages. As to the suspension of the bishops, that was done by our lord the pope and not by me.' 'But it was done by your means,' replied the infuriate wretches, 'and we require you to absolve them.' 'I do not deny,' said the archbishop, 'that it was done by my means, but it

is beyond my authority, and incompatible with my station, to loose those whom my lord the pope has bound: let them go to him whom they have offended by the contempt which they have shown towards their metropolis, Christ's Church of Canterbury.' 'Well then,' said the murderers, 'this is the command of the king, that you leave the kingdom and all other of his dominions, with everything belonging to you, for from this day there can be no peace between him and you or any of your people, because you have broken the peace.' 'No more of these threats and recriminations,' said the bishop; 'I trust in the God of heaven who suffered on the cross for his own: no one shall again see me separated by the ocean from my Church:' [I have already once fled from my duty; but will never do so again.] "I did not come back to run away again, and whoever wants me shall find me here. Besides which, it ill suits the dignity of a king to issue such a mandate; the injuries which I and my people have already received from his ministers are quite sufficient, without such threats as these in addition.' 'Such, however,' replied they, 'are the orders of our lord the king, and we will stand by them; for whereas you ought to have shown respect to the king's majesty, and deferred gratifying your vengeance to his justice, you have blindly followed the impulse of your passion, and

shamefully excommunicated his ministers and servants.' At these words Christ's champion, rising in the fervour of his soul against their calumnies, exclaimed, 'Whoever shall presume to violate the laws of the holy Roman see or the privileges of Christ's Church, and shall refuse to come of his own accord and give satisfaction for the offence, whosoever he may be, he shall meet with no mercy at my hands, nor will I delay to inflict the censures of the Church upon the delinquent.'" ['But as for you,' continued he, 'I wonder at your behaviour in this matter, considering the tie that exists between us.' This he said in allusion to the fact, that three of them, Reginald Fitz-Urse, William de Tracy, and Hugh de Moreville, had voluntarily become his vassals when he was chancellor.] "The knights, confounded at these words, started upon their feet, for they could no longer bear the constancy of his replies, and coming up close to him: 'We tell you plainly,' said they, 'that what you have said will recoil on your own head.' 'Are you then come to slay me?' said he: 'I commit my cause to the great Judge of all mankind, and will not be moved from my purpose by your threats: your swords are not more ready to strike than my soul is to suffer martyrdom: go, pursue those who would flee from you; but for me, I will meet you foot to foot in the Lord's battle.'

“The knights then left the room with much noise and abuse, whilst one of them, whose *bearish* name” [Urse] “well describes the man, exclaimed in a brutal manner, ‘Ho you, clerks and monks, we order you in the king’s name to seize that man and keep him, that he may not escape, until the king shall take ample justice on his person.’ With these words they departed, and the man of God following them to the door, said, ‘Here shall you find me; here will I await you.’ At the same time he raised his hand to his head, as by a presentiment marking the place where he should receive their strokes.”

[On their way out, they took with them William Fitz-Nigel and Ralph Morin, two of the archbishop’s knights: and removed the archbishop’s porter, putting one of their own men in his place: the gate was shut, and only the wicket left open. They stationed William Fitz-Nigel and Simon de Crioil, one of the knights of St. Augustine’s, in the porch of the hall, and Reginald Fitz-Urse, seeing a carpenter there repairing some steps, took up his axe and carried it away with him.]

“After this the archbishop returned to his seat, and consoling his clerks exhorted them not to fear, and it seemed to us who were present, that though he was the only one amongst us whose death was intended, he was nevertheless as

calm and undisturbed as if he had been invited to a wedding. Before long the murderers returned, with their armour on, with swords and axes in their hands, and such other instruments as might be of use for perpetrating the crime which they meditated. Finding the doors barred and no one opening to them, they passed by a private entrance through the orchard, and turning aside to a wooden partition which stopped them, they began to cut and hack it down with their weapons. At this noise almost all the servants and clerks were terribly frightened and dispersed in all directions, like sheep in the presence of the wolf. Those who remained called out to the archbishop to flee into the church; but he did not forget the pledge which he had given, not to flee but to await his murderers, wherefore he refused to escape or to flee in such an emergency from city to city, choosing rather to give an example to those who were beneath him, that they should submit every one of them to death rather than see the Divine law set at nought and the holy canons subverted. Moreover, he now saw that the hour of his martyrdom, for which he had long sighed, was approaching, and he feared lest it might be delayed, if not pass away altogether if he retired into the church. But the monks persisted, saying that he ought not to absent himself from nones and vespers, which at that very moment were

beginning to be chaunted.” [At hearing this he no longer refused, but ordered the holy cross to be brought, and Henry of Auxerre, a clerk, bore it before him. When we had got into the cloisters, the monks wished to shut the door behind us. At this he was displeased, and made them all go on before ; and there was not the slightest sign of fear about him ; his dress was unruffled, and his look as calm as his heart was undaunted. Once, indeed, he looked behind him, perhaps to see if any one was pursuing him, or it might be that he feared somebody had stopped behind to shut the door.] “ Still he loitered in the place of less reverence where he was standing, for he had now in his mind caught a sight of the moment of happy consummation for which he had longed so ardently, and he feared lest the greater sanctity of the church should deter his murderers from their purpose and cheat him of the heart’s desire. For soon after his return from exile, feeling sure that he would be removed by martyrdom from this world of woe, he is said to have exclaimed before a large audience<sup>3</sup>, ‘ You have already amongst you one true and holy martyr, Saint Elphage, whom God loved, and by his divine mercy you will soon have another !’ Oh how sincere ! how trustful was

<sup>3</sup> This was said in the church, as the reader will no doubt remember. See above, p. 310.

the conscience of this good shepherd, who in defending the cause of his flock would not delay the hour of his death even when he was able, nor avoid the executioner, but glutted the ravening wolves with his own blood, and saved his sheep from their fury. Thus when neither argument nor entreaties could prevail on him to flee into the church, the monks caught hold of him in spite of his resistance, and some pulling and some lifting they forced him towards the church, notwithstanding all his adjurations to be let go: but here they met with a sudden obstacle, for the door leading into the monks' cloister had been kept carefully shut for some days, and as the murderers were now at hand, there seemed no chance of his escaping, when one of them running forwards caught hold of the lock, which, to the surprise of all, flew open as if it had been held together with glue. The monks rushed into the church, and the four knights were rapidly pursuing them, having in their company one Hugh, a subdean as bad as themselves, and known for his evil character by the surname of Mau-clerk, for he had no regard either to God or his saints, as the sequel plainly showed.

“The vespers had just begun when the holy archbishop entered the church, but the monks breaking off the service, ran up to meet him, and thanked God he was not killed as had been re-

ported, but was still alive and well amongst them.”

[And now he was in the church and was going to the high altar, where he usually sat during the “horæ” and “missæ familiares.” He had ascended four of the steps, when Reginald Fitz-Urse appeared at the cloister door in a complete suit of mail, and with his sword drawn; and immediately the three others, armed at all points, but with their visors up, and many more in their train.] “Upon which the monks were proceeding to bolt the doors of the church and secure him from the swords of the pursuers, but this remarkable champion of the Lord forbade them, saying, ‘It is not right to make a fortress of Christ’s church, which is a house of prayer; it is able to protect its own, even if its doors are open; and we shall triumph over our enemies by suffering rather than by fighting; for we came here to suffer, not to resist.’ Thus, there being no impediment, the murderers entered the house of peace and reconciliation with drawn swords, whilst their very looks and the rattle of their arms caused no small terror in the minds of the beholders. All present were in a state of great commotion, for those who had been engaged in singing vespers had now joined the others to see the dreadful sight.”

[John of Salisbury and the other clerks fled, some to the altars, some to other places of safety,

all except Robert the canon, William Fitz-Stephen, and Edward Grim, who had lately entered the archbishop's household. And the archbishop himself, if he had liked, might have easily saved himself by flight; for it was evening, and a long dark winter's night was at hand; and besides the crypt which was near, there was a door within where was a winding staircase leading to the lofts and roof of the church, but he did not attempt to escape.]

“The murderers inspired with fury, called out, ‘Where is Thomas Becket, traitor to the king and the kingdom?’ As he made no reply, they exclaimed more furiously than before, ‘Where is the archbishop?’ At this question, with a firm heart, and remembering the words of Scripture, ‘The just shall be without fear like a bold lion,’ he descended from the steps up which the monks had forced him through fear of the soldiers, and answered aloud, ‘Here I am; no traitor to the king, but a priest of the Lord: what do you want of me?’ And whereas he had before said that he feared them not, he now added, ‘Here I am, ready to suffer in the name of Him who redeemed me with his blood; far be it from me to flee or flinch from what is right for fear of your swords.’ As he said this he turned towards the right under a pillar, having on one side the altar of Christ's blessed mother, the ever-virgin Mary, on the other

side the altar of Saint Benedict, by whose example and encouragement he crucified himself to the world and the lusts thereof, and stood with a firm heart, as if he were no longer in the flesh, and endured all that his murderers heaped upon him. ‘Absolve those whom you have excommunicated,’ exclaimed they, following him; ‘and restore those whom you have suspended.’—‘They have offered no satisfaction,’ replied he, ‘and I will not absolve them.’—‘Then you shall die, as you deserve.’—‘And I am ready to die,’ rejoined he, ‘for the Lord: that the Church may obtain liberty and peace in my blood: but I forbid you in the name of Almighty God to do the least injury to any of these, whether clerks or laymen.’ How piously, how thoughtfully did the blessed martyr thus provide for the safety of his flock, that no one near him should be hurt, and that no innocent blood should taint the glory in which he was speedily to ascend before the throne of Christ! Thus did it behove the blessed martyr to follow the steps of his Leader and Saviour, who when he was inquired for by the wicked, said, ‘If you seek me, let these go their way.’ All at once they laid on him their sacrilegious hands, foully endeavouring to drag him from the church, that they might either kill him or carry him away prisoner, as they afterwards acknowledged.” [One of them struck him with the flat of his sword between the shoul-

ders, crying out, 'Flee, or you are a dead man!'] "But they could not force him away from the pillar, and when one of them pressed on him more closely and obstinately than the others, he thrust him back, called him *a pander*, and said, 'Touch me not, Reginald; you owe me allegiance and subjection, and you and your accomplices are acting madly.' The knight, fired to anger at this severe rebuff, waved his sword over the archbishop's hallowed head, exclaiming, 'I owe thee no subjection contrary to my allegiance to our lord the king.' The invincible martyr therefore perceiving that the hour was at hand when he should exchange frail mortality for the crown of immortality which had been promised him by the Lord, bent his neck in the attitude of prayer, and raising his clasped hands to heaven, commended the cause of himself and the Church to God, the holy Virgin Mary, and the blessed martyr Dionysius. Scarcely had he uttered these words, when the blood-thirsty knight [Reginald Fitz-Urse], lest the people might interpose and save him alive, rushed at once upon him and inflicted a blow upon the lamb that was to be slain, whereby he shaved off the top of the sacred crown by which he had dedicated himself to God, and with the same stroke wounded the arm of the writer of this narrative. For he alone stuck close to the holy archbishop, when all the others

both monks and clerks fled, and held him in his embrace, until the arm which he interposed was wounded." [Upon which, warned by the blow, and apprehensive of receiving another still more severe, he fled to the nearest altar, not knowing who had struck him.] "But the blessed martyr united in him the meekness of the dove and the wisdom of the serpent, for he yielded his body to their strokes that he might with his head save his soul and the Church unharmed; nor would he avail himself of any forethought or contrivance against his murderers in the flesh, whereby he might escape from this extremity. Worthy shepherd! who thus opposed himself so boldly to the teeth of the ravening wolves, that the flock might not be worried! Whereas he had cast aside the things of this world, so the world in essaying to crush him, unwittingly exalted him! He received a second blow upon his head [from William de Tracy], but still stood unshaken. At the third stroke [given him by the same William de Tracy], his knees and elbows relaxed, and he yielded himself a living sacrifice, exclaiming, 'I am ready to die for the name of Jesus and the protection of his Church.' But the third [Richard Briton] gave him a fourth blow, as he was falling, with such violence that the sword broke against the pavement," [and the archbishop's skull,] "and the whole of his ample tonsure was shaven from

his head." [‘Take that,’ cried Richard, ‘for the sake of the king’s brother, my lord William!’ This William had wished to marry the Countess de Warrene; but had been forbidden by the archbishop, because of their relationship.]

“The red blood issued forth, mingling itself with the whiteness of his brains, and blending together stained our holy virgin Mother Church with the colour of the lily and the rose, depicting the life as well as the death of God’s martyr and confessor! The fourth soldier meanwhile” [Hugh de Morville] “prevented any one from interfering, so that the others might the more easily perpetrate the deed. But the fifth among them<sup>4</sup>, no knight, but the clerk who had entered with them, as if in order that a fifth blow might not be wanting to complete the similitude between the saint and Christ, whom in all other respects he had imitated, placed his foot upon the neck of the blessed priest and precious martyr, and, horrible to say, scattering his blood and brains over

<sup>4</sup> This was Hugh Mauclerc, as he is called by Edward Grim, Roger de Pontigny, and Fitz-Stephen; but Herbert de Bosham attributes this brutal act to Robert de Broc, and says that the murderers had already left the church, when they suddenly halted as if in doubt whether they had fully accomplished their horrid deed. To make sure of which, Robert de Broc returned into the church, and mangled the corpse in the way described.

the pavement, exclaimed, 'Now, soldiers, let us be off, he will never get up again.'

[Thus they left the church by the same way as they had come, brandishing their swords, and exclaiming, "For the king! for the king!" to every one they met.]

These particulars, which have been thus minutely described by the pen of Edward Grim, who was present, may be relied on as most accurate: they are borne out by all the other contemporary writers. There are, as might be expected, many points of inferior importance added in it by each of the original narrators, but the account of Edward Grim is the most complete, and the writer having undoubtedly been present, and stood his ground when all the others fled, possesses higher claims on our belief than the others, who either had their information from hearsay, or were present during part only of the tragic scene. Two others<sup>5</sup> describe themselves as having witnessed his death, as well as many other passages of his history: their evidence has been adduced wherever it seemed to deserve attention; but in the description of the closing scene, it was evident that no testimony could be so interesting as that of one who shared so largely in its horrors. We may however mention the following facts, which occur in the other

<sup>5</sup> Fitzstephen, and Anon. Lamb.

narratives, curious in themselves as illustrating so dreadful an event, but adding very little to the account which has already been given at length.

The first passage which we shall quote is from the fragments of Abbat Benedict's work preserved in the *Quadrilogus*, wherein we were informed more fully of the manner by which the murderers gained an entrance into the palace when they returned the second time.

“The profane knights having hastened back to their companions and followers, put on their armour and returned in all speed to the palace with swords and hatchets, bows, arrows, battle-axes, and other such weapons as might be of use either for breaking through doors and locks, or for effecting any other object connected with their nefarious purpose. But certain men ran on before, and told the archbishop. ‘My lord, my lord, they are arming!’ ‘What is that to us,’ replied he, ‘let them arm if they will.’ Among that bloody and detested band was that son of perdition, Robert de Broc, who for the enormity of his crimes had been anathematized and excommunicated on Christmas day. He knew all the ways and outlets of the palace, because during the archbishop's exile he had been entrusted by his lord, Randolph de Broc, with the custody of the whole archbishopric. Now, whilst the conspirators were hurrying to secure the entrance of the hall,

the servants, getting there first, made it fast against them. The gate being thus closed and bolted, they were at a loss how to get in, until the aforesaid Robert guided them to a private staircase which led down from the outer dormitory into the orchard; thither they turned their steps with all speed, and having demolished the nearest window, they then unbarred the door also. The servants running before, cried out to God's brave champion to flee, but he disdainingly to fear death in Christ's cause, stood his ground undaunted. Then both clerks and monks urged him with every kind of entreaty to take to flight, but still he stood without fear, for he would not condescend to act with those who have faith for a time, but in the moment of temptation fall away. But the monks, of whom but few were present, wishing to break open the door which led from the cloister into the church, and so lead the holy father off in that direction, although against his consent, but at the same time desirous of cloaking it under some more specious reason, told him that it was the hour of vespers, and that he ought to attend them. Upon this the holy man, in observance of our Lord's command even to the letter, which says, 'Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me,' ordered the cross to be carried before him, and proceeded onwards: but when some of them began to urge him to speed,

he stopped, as if ashamed of his flight. The monks were nevertheless clamorous in exhorting him to go on, whereupon, either to check such unwonted and irreverent speed, or else to encourage and console his followers, he said to them repeatedly, ‘How is this, my masters, what are you afraid of?’ When they approached the cloister door, and could neither burst it open, nor find any key at hand to open it with, lo! Richard and William, the two cellarers of the church of Canterbury, hearing the tumult and clang of arms in the cloister, came to make a way for him, and now they at once pulled out the bar and opened the door for the archbishop.”

The narrative is continued by William, the monk of Canterbury, as follows:—

“Two lads had already found their way among the brethren who were chaunting vespers, and given notice more by their fright than by words of the irruption of the enemy.

“Hearing therefore the clatter of arms, some of the brethren ran away in terror to hide themselves, but the rest continued their prayers. Some of them however wished to go to his assistance, and one of them went out and said to him, ‘Come in, father, come in and stop with us, that if it be necessary we may die with you, and be glorified with you. We have been dejected at your absence, let then your presence console us.’ To

which he replied, 'Go and finish the holy service which you have begun;' and standing at the door he continued, 'So long as you are afraid of death, I will refuse to enter.'

It is not necessary to continue this narrative any further; for it is in substance the same as the account given by Edward Grim. Not so, however, is the description which Benedict gives us of what passed in the private chamber when the murderers left it on their first visit. John of Salisbury was present at the scene which then took place. When the knights left the apartment, "the man of God returned to his seat, and complained to those about him of the king's message and the abusive language of his messengers; upon which one of his clerks, Master John of Salisbury, a man of much learning, great eloquence, and profound wisdom, and what is better than all these, one stedfast in the fear and love of God, returned this answer to his complaints, 'My lord, it is a most remarkable thing that you will take advice from no one. What need was there in a man of your rank to rise up, only to exasperate them still more, and to follow them out to the door? Would it not be better to have taken counsel with those who were with you, and given them a milder answer; for their malice seeks only how to do their worst against you, and by provoking you to anger to catch you tripping in your talk.' But

the holy man, who longed for death as for the enjoyment of rest and peace in defence of right, and the liberty of the Church, replied, 'My counsel is now all taken; I know well enough what I have to do.' 'I trust to God it will be so,' said Master John, 'and that it may turn out well?'

It would indeed be marvellous to meet with any individual, whose life and actions have been so minutely enquired into and criticised as those of Becket, without detecting some blemish or other among the virtues with which nature had endowed him. A censure, proceeding from the mouth of so upright a man, and so correct a judge of human conduct as John of Salisbury, could not have been pronounced without cause. This brief interchange of words between the two furnishes another argument in proof of the view of Becket's character, which we have before been led to entertain. He was a man of exquisite ability, and qualified to succeed in every thing that he undertook, because he had not only the genius to perceive great ends, and facility in the adoption of means to attain them, but his mind was of so indomitable a nature, that the pertinacity with which he clung to all that he undertook would, in most cases, be a valuable element of success. But his unbending spirit was perhaps in this instance fatal to him. It is no doubt a hard thing for those who stand on safe ground to advise or reprove those who are

engaged in a mortal struggle, and when the disgraced and outraged prelate poured his complaints into the ears of his faithful adherents, we may believe that he complained in sincerity and truth; that the king's renewed unkindness, and still more the choice of such brutal messengers of his will, had cut him to the quick; there are spirits still as invincible as those of Becket, in whose souls the same unconquerable perseverance is united to the same sensitiveness to injustice; and if they did once feel some little doubt whether they had not gone too far, when an additional load of wrong or insult obliterates the faint impression, and precipitates them on their headlong course, it is the frailty of the species which is in fault, and not of the individual. We may be sure that the monitor, who gave so sharp a rebuke to the archbishop, and yet adhered to him to the last, would hardly have done so to a man in whom obstinacy was a leading, and not rather a minor and subordinate point of character. But the reproof which John of Salisbury bestowed upon his friend, so soon to be martyred, would seem to derive its justice from the practicability of the advice which had been tendered, and which the archbishop had refused. When John of Salisbury advised him to communicate with the murderers on their first visit through his attendants, it would no doubt have been wise of the archbishop to assent; but whether

those fierce soldiers would have allowed it, is a question which cannot now be decided, though the course of events which followed, seems to show that they would have been content to communicate with no other than the archbishop himself. Whether a milder reply might have been given to their message, is a question also beset with difficulties; but this was just the difficulty which a deputed agent might have avoided; if, according to the advice of John of Salisbury, the archbishop had appointed him or some other equally able diplomatist to negotiate for him with the messengers: but meeting them in his own person, he had no other alternative than to give or withhold his consent to absolve the bishops who had been excommunicated.

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## CHAPTER XL.

OF THE SPOLIATION OF THE ARCHIEPISCOPAL PALACE, AND OF THE UNTIMELY END OF THE MURDERERS.

LET us follow the perpetrators of the deed of blood from the Church where their victim's body was lying, to the palace, whither they went as fast as their legs could carry them. "Whilst some of

them forcibly removed the horses out of the stables, others attacked and wounded the servants, and breaking open the desks, coffers, and treasuries of the palace, divided among them all the gold and silver, clothes and other ornaments which they could find <sup>6</sup>." Whilst this work of pillage was proceeding, a singular circumstance happened, which is thus related by Herbert de Bosham.

"Among other things they found two shirts of sackcloth, which Christ's holy champion used to wear next to his naked skin; these they neither divided, nor yet drew lots for them, but cast them aside as rubbish, and of no use to them. They were somewhat astonished at finding so strong and evident a proof of the archbishop's zeal for religion. Wherefore also some of their band confessed with the centurion in the Gospel, though in smothered accents for fear of the others, 'Truly this was a righteous man!' and they went away from the palace beating their breasts with their hands. One of the murderous knights repenting of what he had done, made confession afterwards to the bishop of his diocese, that whereas they had gone to the Church at first with all alacrity of mind, and even with rejoicing, yet the deed was no sooner done than they returned with hesitating steps, the ground seemed to yawn beneath them,

<sup>6</sup> Benedict.

as if it would swallow them up alive. The bishop, to whom this confession was made, was Bartholomew, of excellent memory, bishop of Exeter, but the murderer who made this confession was William de Tracy before-mentioned."

By these acts we may form some idea of the lawlessness which still prevailed in England, notwithstanding all that Henry II. had done to remedy it. Robbery and murder were still inseparable companions, and even the solemnity of public justice could with difficulty be maintained, without such scenes of pillage as has been just related in the plundering of the palace of Canterbury.

The contemporary writers dwell with satisfaction on the contrast between the glorious martyrdom of the saint, and the subsequent ill fortunes of his murderers. Let us take the panegyric of John of Salisbury as a sample of what all have written on the same subject.

"Under this dispensation of Almighty Providence, we must not omit to notice what has attracted the admiration of all men, as tending to display the glory of God and his martyr; how all the minute circumstances of his passion combined to set forth his praise, and the impiety and eternal reprobation of his persecutors. If we would contrast their persons; on the one hand, we have a pious archbishop, primate of all Britain, and legate

of the Apostolic See, a righteous judge, the acceptor neither of persons nor of presents, the assertor of the liberty of the Church, a very tower set up in Jerusalem looking towards Damascus, a mallet to crush the wicked, but a consoler of the poor, and of those who mourn. Let those who choose consider whom they have to place in the opposite scale against him. If it be the cause which makes the martyr, of which no one has ever entertained a doubt, what can be more just or holy than the cause of that man, who, despising all the wealth and glory of the world, and holding as nothing the affection of friends, and of all his kindred in comparison with the love of Christ, submitted to banishment, exposing himself and his followers to poverty and every danger, and strove to the death against the wicked abuses of former tyrants, and when he had once fallen, but recovered himself again, could not be induced by the schemes of his enemies to consent to any thing that was required of him, but to every form of words added the clause, 'Saving the honour of God, and the credit of the Church.' Nor was he one of those whose faith is moderate, and lasts only for a time, but in the hour of temptation falls away; for he endured his exile and bitter proscription with all its adversities, even to the seventh year, treading so firmly in the path of constancy, and the footsteps of Christ's apostles,

that his mind could neither be broken by the open assaults of fortune, nor softened by its blandishments. Consider, too, where he fell. In the Church of Canterbury, the capital of the kingdom, and mother in Christ of all its other churches; before the altar, among his fellow-priests and other religious men who had been brought to witness the horrid sight by the tumult which his murderers excited. If then he had long before prepared himself a living sacrifice pleasing and acceptable to God, if he had in his prayers and watchings, by fastings and the severest use of sackcloth, crucified the flesh, and the desires thereof, if he had exposed his back to the lash, (though only those who were most intimate with him knew it,) like a little child of Christ, if after having offered on the altar the body and blood of Christ, he at length offered there his own body a victim to the hands of the wicked, did there ever live a man who had a more glorious title to be called a martyr?"

With this encomium on the martyr, let us contrast the account of what befel his murderers.

“Whereas they had been originally great and noble in the world, owners of large possessions, brave knights, and skilled in the art of war, and were in the flower of their age; no sooner had they done the deed than they abandoned every thing, and setting out for Jerusalem, entered on a

long course of penance. All of them were cut off from this life within three years; in real and fruitful penitence (as is believed by those who witnessed it) for the enormity of their crime, which they seemed to have ever hanging before their eyes, both whilst they yet lived, and at the moment of their death; their whole body trembled with horror and convulsions; whilst they unceasingly, both living and dying, supplicated pardon of Him who is the patron of sinners, through the very mediation of him on whom they had wrought so great a sacrilege.

“One of the murderers, however, following evil advice, delayed his departure for Jerusalem from day to day after the others were gone, hoping to achieve his penance without crossing the sea; but he was surprised with his last illness, whilst in the king of Sicily’s dominions at a large city called Consentia<sup>7</sup>, where in the course of his illness his limbs began to rot, and the sick man himself would tear off portions of the flesh without any difficulty, and throw them into the middle of the room, so that his bones and nerves were exposed to sight. In particular, the flesh of his hands and arms would not remain on his bones, but seemed desirous of being separated from the person of that bloody, but I hope repentant soldier, and they

<sup>7</sup> Cosenza.

fell, as if voluntarily, upon the floor. You might have fancied that the flesh was indignant at forming part in the composition of hands that had perpetrated so horrible a crime. But all this time, whilst the wretch was thus tearing his limbs, and casting his flesh from him, he unceasingly, with sighs and groans, and contrition that no words can describe, implored pardon and protection of the glorious martyr. This was William de Tracy, on whom the God of vengeance thus visited the blood of his saint which cried to him for justice. For it was he who spurred on the others, and who dared first amongst them, as is thought, to wave his sword aloft, and inflict a wound on the head of the servant of the Lord. It was therefore a just retribution of the Almighty, that his limbs should rot, contrary to the laws of nature, even whilst he was alive, and the hand and arm decay which had wielded the murderous sword. We have this account from the bishop of the aforesaid city, who confessed the above-named William in his last illness.

“To return to his three partners in iniquity, whose death most miraculously and undoubtedly took place, as we have said, within the short space of three years; thus in so brief an interval not one of them was left; and no doubt the Divine mercy, as is the general belief, so ruled it with them, and so cut them off to the terror of

evil doers, and the miraculous vindication of his servant, that those men of blood, however penitent, as we have said they were, might nevertheless, according to the word of the Lord, see only half the usual length of life.”

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## CHAPTER XLI.

### OF THE REMOVAL AND BURIAL OF THE BODY.

THE legends of the Church, though far removed in style from the simplicity of the ancient classics, yet abound in wild and picturesque description, and not unfrequently mount very near to the regions of true sublimity. Poetic imagery breaks out occasionally in their narratives, which it requires no peculiar study to appreciate. If the sacrifice of Iphigenia has pleased us in the tragic page of Euripides, we shall recognize the same beauty of thought in the following description of Becket's resignation to his untimely fate.

“Our holy father thought it no trifling part of his martyrdom to fall with that decency which became the death of one who died for Christ; for until all was finished and the sacrifice complete, he remained immovable in his position, with his knees bent beneath him and his hands clasped

above his head<sup>8</sup>: controlling the infirmity of human nature, he raised neither his arm nor his robe to shield himself from their blows, nor did one groan, one sound, escape him to show that he felt the pain, but when he had held his head undauntedly to receive the stroke, he would not draw it back, until it became a mass of blood and brains, and his body sunk upon the floor in an attitude of prayer, whilst his spirit ascended to Abraham's bosom<sup>9</sup>."

It appears that the alarm had been given in the city, even before the deed of murder was completed, and if we are to interpret some expressions of the preceding accounts literally, the people had already begun to flock together to the church. "All were thunderstruck at such an awful event, and rushed to the spot, beating their breasts and clasping their hands in agony for the loss of their father and protector. Not the rich, whose fear overcame them, but the poor hastened to view the body of the soldier of the great King, who had thus been murdered; for, whilst still militant on earth, he had always been the support of the poor, a father to the orphan, the aider of those who were in the state of pupillage, the judge of the widow, and the consoler of those who mourned. All these, and these alone, flocked

<sup>8</sup> Herbert de Bosham.

<sup>9</sup> Edw. Grim.

together to the church. They threw themselves upon the holy corpse, which was still lying senseless on the floor, kissing with the utmost reverence the hands and feet<sup>1</sup>.

“At length the monks dismissed the multitude and closed the doors of the church<sup>2</sup>. Night was now approaching, for it was in the evening that the deed of darkness was perpetrated; the skull with its crown of anointing was hanging like a quoit from the martyr’s head, to which it was attached by a small portion of skin: this they restored to its place, fitting it on as well as they were able. They then lifted the hallowed corpse just as it was lying on the pavement, without taking off the clothes or washing it, as monks generally do when they bury a dead body, and carrying it on their shoulders, laid it down in front of the high altar<sup>3</sup>. On moving the corpse from the ground, they found under it an iron hammer and a battle-axe which the murderers had left behind them<sup>4</sup>. Moreover, the blood had congealed round his head in the form of a crown, typifying, probably, his sanctity; but his face was entirely free from stains, save one slender stream,

<sup>1</sup> Herbert de Bosham.

<sup>2</sup> Roger de Pontigny.

<sup>3</sup> Herbert de Bosham.

<sup>4</sup> “One of the murderers, besides his sword, had an axe for bursting open the door: he put this down on the pavement; and it still remains there.”—FITZ-STEPHEN.

which had descended diagonally from the right side of his forehead to the left side of his neck. And some who had never heard of this circumstance said, that he had appeared to them in a vision in that state, describing it as minutely as if they had seen it with their own eyes.

“Whilst the body still lay on the pavement, some of them smeared their eyes with the blood, others brought bottles and carried off secretly as much of it as they could, and some cut off shreds from their garments, and, dipping them in the blood, kept them as relics. At a later period no one was contented who had not carried away something or other as a memorial of the precious body, and indeed when every thing was in such a state of tumult, there was nothing to prevent them from doing as they pleased. Some of the blood was carefully and cleanly gathered up into a clean bottle and treasured up in the church. His pall and outer pelice, stained with blood, were with indiscreet benevolence given to the poor to pray for his soul: and happy would it have been for them if they had not with unadvised haste sold them for a little paltry money<sup>5</sup>.

“The monks placed the body for the night before the high altar (as we have before said), and kept watch themselves round it with much sor-

<sup>5</sup> Benedict.

row and tribulation<sup>6</sup>. During the whole time, in addition to the copious discharge which had taken place at the first, drops of blood continued to ooze from the suture where the severed skull had been replaced<sup>7</sup>; this was caught in a dish which the monks placed for that purpose<sup>8</sup>. Though so much blood had flowed from the wound, yet the face did not turn pale or become thinner than before: the forehead was not more wrinkled, nor the eyes smaller or more sunk; there was no dropping from the mouth and nostrils, the neck was not emaciated, nor the shoulders fallen; the body retained its elasticity and the skin its firmness<sup>9</sup>. The beauty of his countenance still remained, and even in death he bore that serene and hallowed smile upon his lips which he had always cherished in his mind. He seemed, in fact, not so much to have breathed his last, as to have closed his eyes whilst the fresh colour was still upon his cheeks, and to have fallen into a sound slumber<sup>1</sup>.

“Thus the night passed away in lamentation and mourning, not a ray of gladness shed its light upon the sad scene, and when the day dawned, it seemed to be the harbinger of greater tribulation<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>6</sup> Roger de Pontigny.

<sup>7</sup> Herbert.

<sup>8</sup> Roger de Pontigny.

<sup>9</sup> Herbert de Bosham.

<sup>1</sup> William of Canterbury.

<sup>2</sup> Benedict.

“In the morning a large number of men were assembled in arms outside the walls of the city, and it was said that they intended to carry matters still further<sup>3</sup>. Soon after, Robert de Broc appeared on the part of Randolf de Broc, and calling together the monks addressed them thus: ‘The world is at last relieved of that disloyal traitor, who deserves to be handled just as roughly now he is dead, as when he was alive; do you therefore remove him out of the way as fast as possible, and throw him into some place where nobody may know of it: or else I warn you we will drag him out by the feet, and tear him in pieces for the dogs and swine<sup>4</sup>.’ Herbert de Bosham adds to this account, that the monks were strictly forbidden to place his coffin along with those of the archbishops his predecessors.

“In this emergency the monks, fearing lest the threat of mutilating the body should be put in execution, and so precious a treasure be taken from them, prepared to bury it with all despatch. They therefore had no time to wash and embalm the body, according to the custom of the Church of Canterbury<sup>5</sup>. ‘And this,’ says Benedict, ‘we must believe to have been occasioned, not so much by the malice of men as by the providence of

<sup>3</sup> Benedict.

<sup>4</sup> Roger de Pontigny.

<sup>5</sup> The narrative is Benedict’s; Herbert de Bosham, however, says they did wash the body.

God. For the saint who had been anointed in the stream of his own blood, could have no need of the embalmment of less precious perfumes.' They therefore stripped the body of its outward clothing, and put on it the pontifical robes; in doing which they discovered a shirt of sackcloth no less painful from its stiffness than from other causes; attended with an additional circumstance of which we know of no example in the case of any other saint<sup>6</sup>: they found the whole body covered with sackcloth, not only his back, but his shoulders, arms, and thighs<sup>7</sup>. On seeing this, the monks looked at one another, astonished beyond measure at this proof of a religious severity which he had hitherto kept concealed, and at this second cause of sorrow, burst again into a flood

<sup>6</sup> Benedict.

<sup>7</sup> Herbert de Bosham. Fitz-Stephen's account of this is as follows:—"Here brother Robert, a priest and canon of the religious house of Merton, who was confessor to the archbishop, and had been his chaplain and constant companion since the day he was ordained, discovered to the monks what none of us were till then aware of, that the archbishop was in a hair shirt; and thrust his hand into his bosom, showing us the hair shirt next his skin, and above it the habit of a monk.

"The monks, in an ecstasy of spiritual joy, lifted up their heads to heaven, and magnified God, for the archbishop's twofold martyrdom—the voluntary one of his life, the violent one of his death. They prostrate themselves; they kiss his hands and feet; they proclaim aloud the glorious martyr and saint. All come to see the new attire of the once splendid chancellor."

of tears. How could they suspect such a man of ambition or treachery? Could he ever have set his thoughts upon an earthly kingdom, who had thus in secret preferred sackcloth above all earthly pleasures? Was he not the betrayed rather than the betrayer of his king, who would neither slay his betrayers, those sons of perdition, nor when he was able, resist them? He had it in his power, if he had so minded, to avoid the rage of his enemies, or to repel it by force<sup>8</sup>."

Such are the reflections in which the historians indulge in recording the discovery of the sackcloth when the archbishop's body came to be stripped for burial. Whatever opinion may be entertained in the present day respecting such mortifications of the flesh, it is certain that at the period of which we are writing, they were considered high proofs of a religious life. It is equally clear from the unvarying testimony of all the biographers, that Becket did not wear the sackcloth shirt by way of ostentation, for it was unknown that he wore it at all till the day of his burial. There seems no reason for doubting that he was sincere in those feelings which prompted him to assume this austere garb, whatever may have been the other traits of his character, to form the darker shades of the moral picture.

<sup>8</sup> Benedict.

But to return from this digression : “ When the body had been stripped of its clothing, the monks put other vestments upon it, such as the archbishops of Canterbury are usually buried in. There was in the crypt of the cathedral a tomb that had been made some days before, most appropriately as it happened, and made, as one might fancy, for this very purpose ; it was hewn out of stone, and no one had ever yet been buried in it. Here, therefore, they placed the dead body of the archbishop in this new tomb before the altars of Saint John the Baptist and Saint Augustine, Apostle of the English, and they kept the place concealed as much as possible, for fear of those who had been persecuting them <sup>9</sup>.”

In conclusion, we learn from Abbot Benedict that Becket was killed on Tuesday the twenty-ninth of December, about five o'clock in the evening, in the year of our Lord one thousand one hundred and seventy, and in the fifty-third year of his age.

<sup>9</sup> Herbert de Bosham.

## CHAPTER XLII.

SENSATION PRODUCED ON THE KING AND THROUGH  
EUROPE BY THE DEED—LETTERS.

THE dreadful event which we have thus traced minutely through all its details was speedily borne to the ears of king Henry, who was then at Argenteuil in Normandy. The following letters will furnish the best description of what passed when the mournful intelligence arrived.

## LETTER CXIII.

“TO HIS BELOVED LORD AND FATHER ALEXANDER, BY THE GRACE OF GOD SUPREME PONTIFF OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH, ARNULF HUMBLE MINISTER OF THE CHURCH OF LISIEUX, HEALTH, LOVE, AND OBEDIENCE.

“WHILST we were lately assembled in council before our lord the king, and supposed we were going to discuss important matters connected with the Church, the sudden news about the archbishop of Canterbury plunged us all into the deepest distress, so that our senses were astounded and our deliberations were turned into mourning. We are told by some who are just come over from England, that certain enemies of the archbishop, provoked to madness, it is said, by frequent causes of exasperation, have suddenly set upon him, and

— I can hardly write for my tears — have attacked his person and put him to a cruel death. This lamentable deed has already reached the king's ears; for such a thing could not be concealed from him, whose duty it assuredly is that the crime shall not pass unpunished. At the first words of the messenger the king burst into loud lamentation, and exchanged his royal robes for sackcloth and ashes, acting more like a friend than the sovereign of the deceased. At times he ceased his cries and became stupid; after which he burst again into cries and lamentations louder than before. Three whole days he spent in his chamber, and would receive neither food nor consolation, but by the excess of his grief it seemed as if he had thoroughly made up his mind to die. The state of things indeed became alarming, and we had now a double cause of anxiety. First we had to lament the death of the bishop, now we almost despaired of the life of the king, and so in losing one we thought our evil fortune would deprive us of both. When his friends, and particularly the bishops, complained that he seemed determined not to abandon his grief, he answered that his fear was, lest the perpetrators of the deed, together with their accomplices, remembering his old enmity with the bishop, might have promised themselves impunity on that account: he thought it likely that his enemies would endeavour to

sully his reputation, by saying that the deed had been done with his privity; whereas he called God to witness that he neither had consented to it, nor knew that it was going to be perpetrated, and that he had practised no deception by which it could have been brought about, unless it were an error that the world knew he was not yet quite reconciled to the archbishop. On this head he submits himself to the judgment of the church, whose award he will abide by, whatever it may be. Thus, then, after a consultation held, the matter is referred to the wisdom and authority of the apostolic see, which the whole of Christendom knows to possess both the spirit of wisdom and plenitude of power; before whose tribunal the king will study to prove his innocence in the proper way according to the canons. We entreat you, therefore, according to the spirit of counsel and authority which God has given you, to recompense the authors of this deed according to the heinousness of what they have done, and in your apostolic affection to uphold the king's innocence. May Almighty God preserve your person in safety to rule his Church for many years to come!"

#### LETTER CXIV.

“ THE ARCHBISHOP OF SENS TO POPE ALEXANDER.

“ As I sat down to write these lines, nay, even

before I took my pen in hand to write, I stopped to consider in what words I could describe to your holiness the dreadful deed which has been wrought on the person of God's chosen servant. I doubt not that the cry of the whole world has already filled your ears, how the king of England, enemy to Christ and all his angels, has wrought his malignity on the holy man, son of your right hand, whom you had chosen. You have, no doubt, my father, heard of his death and the manner of his death, but I will endeavour to give your holiness an account of what has been told me by those who were present, and it is impossible for the imagination to conceive a deed more atrocious. At Christmas, the day after the feast of the Holy Innocents, at the hour of vespers, four armed murderers, whose ever to be execrated names are these, William de Tracy, Reginald Fitz-Urse, Hugh de Moreville, and Richard Briton, advanced ferociously to the holy man, and when saluted by him, made him no return, but demanded of him the immediate absolution of the excommunicates. When he modestly replied that it was not in his power to interfere against your superior authority, they threatened him on the part of the king and returned to their band, calling on the archbishop's servants to accompany and aid them. A similar proclamation was issued through the whole city. But Christ's champion

paid no heed to the threats of princes, and could hardly be prevailed on to leave the spot where the message of death had been declared. At last, by God's providence, he entered the Church, which is dedicated to the name of Christ, and there he was offered up a victim for Christ's name, where he had often offered up Christ a victim to propitiate God the Father! When his hour was come he stretched forth his head and bent his neck to receive the cup that he was to drink, and had the crown of his head shaved off by the four murderers, after having first been loaded with every epithet of abuse, that he might in all respects be assimilated to the passion of our Lord himself. He forbade them to harm any of his household, and entered the holy of holies, himself the priest, himself the only victim. And whereas since his death, we have heard from many that God's power has through him wrought many miracles, I must not pass them over without notice. It is said, and asserted with confidence, that since his passion he has appeared to many, and told them that he is not dead but alive, and shewed them not wounds, but healed cicatrices where wounds had been.

“Arise then, thou man of God, and put on the strength of those whose seat thou fillest; up, thou son of the smiters! Let anger and pity

both rouse thee; the one for thy son, the other for the tyrant: and maintain on earth the glories of him, whom God so glorifies from heaven! but let ignominy be his who has on earth so horribly persecuted the Lord. He has slain the father in the bosom of his mother, he hath rent thy child from thee, and trodden in the dust him whom thou lovedst above all men, and his foul and un-circumcised vassals have slain him without regard to the age or the paternal feelings of thee his father! Put forth then the zeal of thy predecessors. Ahab slew, and Ahab took possession; but this crime surpasses all the crimes of the wicked, the cruelty of Nero, the apostasy of Julian, and the sacrilegious perfidy of Judas. What a noble victim, and in what a noble Church!—slain also at the holy time of Christmas, and on the day after that of the blessed Innocents, a deed in these our days equal to the barbarity of Herod.

“Nor was the tyrant deterred from the crime by the peace which he had publicly granted; and, as if his own frenzy were insufficient, he was urged on by those false and execrated sons of the Church, Roger, not arch-bishop but arch-devil of York, and the bishops of London and Salisbury, who slew their brother Joseph in reality, without regard to their aged father’s malediction.

Whose life, that it may be in perpetual bitterness, and their death a curse, is the retribution which your holiness can give us.

“The bearers of these present are Master Alexander and Master Gunter, good and honest men, who were associated with God’s martyr in his life, and cannot be separated from him in death. We beg to recommend them to your notice, and have commissioned them to tell your holiness by word of mouth, many things which we were unwilling to commit to writing.”

#### LETTER CXV.

“THE SAME TO THE SAME.

“To your apostleship, holy father, is given all power both in heaven and in earth . . . . We have deemed it right to inform your holiness, that whereas you deputed his lordship of Rouen and myself to place all the king of England’s dominions on this side of the sea under an interdict, unless he should observe the peace which he pledged to his lordship of Canterbury, of blessed memory, and whereas you authorized either of us to fulfil your orders, if the other could not be present; this is to certify, that the archbishop of Rouen aforesaid, came to Sens according to your orders, in company with Arnulf of Lisieux,

Giles of Evreux, Roger of Worcester, and other clerks and laics of the king's household; where after many excuses and tergiversations he appealed to the apostolic see, saying, that he was already on his way to your presence, and would not add any further exasperation to the king of England's anger. We, therefore, according to your commands, and having taken counsel with all our brethren the bishops, with the abbats of St. Denis, St. German *des prés*, Pontigny and Wallace, and other religious persons, have pronounced sentence on all his cismarine dominions, and enjoined the bishops in your name to obey the sentence. For we know that the king has not restored the possessions, nor observed the peace, as the death of the martyr testifies. Moreover he sent word to us by the Carthusian monk, who went to him from us, that he had given occasion for his death, and was, in fact, his murderer. We, therefore, entreat your clemency to ratify this our sentence, and cause it to be observed to the honour of God and credit of ourselves, who have endeavoured, as far as in us lay, to uphold the sanctity of the apostolic see. Farewell!"

## LETTER CXVI.

“THE KING OF ENGLAND’S CLERKS, R. ABBAT OF WAL-  
LATIA, AND MASTER HENRY, TO THEIR MASTER.

“BE it known to your majesty, that Richard de Barre went on at great risk before us to the court of our Lord the pope, and we four with the two bishops, and the dean of Evreux and master Henry, arrived at Sens with much difficulty. There we were detained some days, for Count Macaire was lying in wait at all the roads, and it was next to impossible to pass. After many attempts, we were reduced to great perplexity, and at length by common consent escaped privately by night. Thus after a most perilous journey over mountains and wilds, we reached Tusculanum. We there found Richard de Barre doing his utmost, as was his duty, to promote your interests, but much vexed because neither the pope nor any other person showed him any attention. This was also our case; for the pope would not admit us to the kiss, nor even to approach the foot of his throne. And the cardinals, for the most part, would hardly speak a word to us. This gave us much uneasiness, and we entreated those of your party to persuade the pope to give us audience. By their mediation his

lordship, the abbat of Wallatia, and the archdeacon of Lisieux, who were the least objects of suspicion, were admitted to an audience. But even they no sooner spoke of you as a devoted son of the Church, than the whole court exclaimed, 'Hold! hold!' as if even your majesty's name was offensive in their ears. Late in the evening they went again before his holiness, and, as we had all agreed together, explained to him your majesty's instructions, and recalled to his memory the individual acts of service which you had rendered the archbishop of Canterbury, and the excesses which he had committed against your dignity. All this was said first in private, and afterwards in the presence of the pope and all the cardinals, whilst Alexander Lewellen, and Gunter the Fleming, clerks of the archbishop, spoke against them in favour of the opposite side of the question. As Thursday before Easter was at hand, in which the pope is used to pronounce public absolution or excommunication, we were sure that they had deliberated on the propriety of dealing harshly with you and your kingdom, wherefore we consulted those whom we looked upon as your majesty's friends, namely, his lordship of Portus, Hyacinth, his lordship of Pavia, of Tusculum, and Peter de Mirso, for John of Naples was absent, and we entreated them to find out what were the pope's intentions. Their report was unfavourable, and brother Frank, on whose

fidelity you can rely, told us also the same, namely, that the pope intended on that day to excommunicate you by name, and lay all your dominions on both sides of the sea under an interdict. In this strait we used all our influence to persuade his holiness to waive this intention, or to defer it till your bishops should arrive. Failing in this, and feeling it our duty not lightly to suffer this severity to fall on your majesty's person and kingdom, we called together all our friends and the cardinals, and adopted a plan for averting the impending sentence, and took all the hazard upon ourselves, from a firm conviction that things would turn out agreeably to your wishes, and to what we think ought to be your wishes. For in our alarm we signified to the pope through the mediation of the cardinals, that you had instructed us to swear in his presence that you would abide by his decision, and that you will ratify this by your own personal oath. On that same day, therefore, namely Thursday, about the ninth hour, your messengers and those of the bishops were summoned, and all of us, namely the abbat of Wallatia, the archdeacon of Salisbury and Lisieux, master Henry and Richard Barre, swore in full consistory that you will abide by his sentence, and will take this oath yourself at his bidding.

“The pope, therefore, on that day excommunicated in general terms the murderers of the arch-

bishop, and all who had given them counsel, approbation, or assistance, and all who had received them into their estates. The lord bishops of Worcester and Evreux, with Robert de Newburgh, and Master Henry, were to come the next day. We left them beyond measure vexed that they could not come, as they wished, to discharge your errand. It was their opinion, as well as our own, that we should go on before them as well as we could, and prevent the disgrace and detriment which we knew our enemies to be preparing for you. We knew the court had some intentions of inflicting it upon you, and we feared much the practice of that day. We have heard nothing more of the envoys, whom you sent to the emperor. As for your secret which you sent us by Reginald in presence of William Fitz-Hamon, and afterwards the abbat of Wallatia, we have good hopes that it will be done. Farewell, and may your highness long prosper; be not discouraged, for this cloud will soon be followed by sunshine. We arrived at the court on the Saturday before Palm Sunday, and the bearer of this starts on Easter Sunday.”

## LETTER CXVII.

“ RICHARD, ARCHDEACON OF POITIERS, TO A FRIEND.

“ Who were the first messengers that the king

sent, who the second, and what both deputations wanted, and how they left the court, I will tell you in as few words as possible. The first envoys were John Cumin and master David, and their object was to obtain absolution and indulgence for the bishops. John Cumin arrived about fifteen days before Master David, and with much entreaty was admitted to a hearing, not however until he promised a *douceur* of five hundred marks. He was backed by some clerks from the archbishop of York, and an envoy from Durham who spoke much in extenuation of the offence of the bishops. And it is my opinion that they would have obtained their absolution, if the news of the archbishop of Canterbury's death had not come, and thrown every thing into confusion. Our lord the pope was so shocked at the news, that for eight days he refused to see even his own people; and issued a general edict that no Englishman should be admitted into his presence. All their negotiations were at once suspended.

“The second embassy consisted of the bishops Worcester and Evreux, the abbat of Wallatia, the archdeacons of Salisbury and Lisieux, lord Robert de Newburgh, Richard Barre, Master Henry Pinchim, and a Templar; their object was to defend the king from having either ordered or wished that the archbishop should be put to death; but they did not deny that he had given cause for his death

by uttering words which had led the murderers to slay him. But these second envoys did not arrive together, nor would the pope admit them or give them a hearing. In the next place, at the entreaty of certain of the cardinals, the abbat, and archdeacon of Lisieux were admitted. The Thursday before Easter was approaching, and it was generally said in the court that his lordship, the pope, would that day pass sentence of excommunication on the king and the kingdom. The ambassadors, therefore, in terror signified to the pope through the mediation of the cardinals, that they were instructed by the king to swear that he would abide by his holiness's decision, and would himself make oath in his own person to the same effect. On Thursday, therefore, about the same hour, the messengers of the king and of the bishops were summoned, and the former, namely, the abbat of Wallatia, the two archdeacons, Henry, and Richard Barre swore in a full consistory that the king would abide by the pope's sentence, and make oath to that effect in his own person. The envoys of the bishops of Lónon and Salisbury then swore, that their master would stand by his decision and would make oath to do so, in like manner.

“On the same day the pope excommunicated in general terms the murderers of the archbishop of Canterbury, and all who had given counsel,

consent, or assistance to them, or received them on their estates. After Easter the bishops of Worcester and Evreux arrived, but I do not know whether they were called on to take the oath: it is certain that they did not take it. When they had been more than fifteen days at court, they were summoned to hear their answer: for they had made common cause with the others, as well in excusing as in accusing the king, as I have before stated. Whilst they were expecting a favourable reply, the pope confirmed the sentence of interdict, which his lordship of Sens had pronounced against the king's cismarine territories, and the excommunication and suspension which had been passed on the bishops. He ordered also that the king should abstain from entering the Church; and added, that he would send legates to see if the king was truly humbled.

“ At last, after much urgency on the part of the envoys, and the intervention of certain cardinals, not without a large sum of money, as it is said, passing between them, it was decided that the pope should write to the archbishop of Biourges with instructions, if he should not hear that the legates had passed the Alps within a month after the arrival of the envoys in Normandy, to absolve the bishops of London and Salisbury from excommunication, having first administered an oath to them and others who were

suspended, that they would abide by the pope's decision. Thus the envoys returned without any further answer. I do not believe even the cardinals know who are to be the legates, or when they are to start. However, you are now freed from all fear of an interdict in England, as I believe, if the king will listen to the legates. His lordship the pope has also written to the king, exhorting him to humility. But they had much difficulty in persuading him to write."

## LETTER CXVIII.

“ FROM A FRIEND TO A FRIEND.

“THE first meeting between our lord the king and the legates took place at Gorham on the Tuesday before Rogation: and the legates were admitted to kiss his majesty on the cheek. The next day they came to Savigny, where the archbishop of Rouen and many bishops and nobles were assembled. After a long conference, the king refused to take the oath which they required, and left them in great anger, saying, ‘I shall return to Ireland, where I have many things to attend to; and you may go any where you please in my dominions, and exercise your legation as you think proper;’ and so saying he left them.

“After this the cardinals held a secret council with Lisieux, the archdeacon of Poitiers, and the

archdeacon of Salisbury, and by their mediation the king and cardinals again met at Avranches on the following Friday. His majesty then heard all the cardinals had to propose, and assented with great urbanity and kindness to all their suggestions. But he wished his son to be present, and join in the terms which should be agreed to, for which reason the meeting was again adjourned to the following Sunday, which was the Sunday before our Lord's ascension. On that day the king, laying his hand upon the Gospels, made oath that he had never commanded nor wished that the archbishop of Canterbury should be put to death, and that when he heard of it, he rather grieved than rejoiced. He added also of his own accord, that he grieved more than he did for the death of his father or mother, and swore that he would perform to the letter whatever penance or satisfaction the cardinals shall require of him. For he admitted before all, that he had been the occasion of the archbishop's death, which had taken place entirely through him; not that he had commanded it, but that his friends and attendants seeing the alteration in his countenance and the flashing of his eye, judged how his mind was disturbed within him, and when they heard his words of complaint about the archbishop, they prepared to revenge his wrongs: for which cause

he would now do all that the legates required of him.

“ Upon this the legates signified to him that he should find two hundred knights at his own expense, and maintain them for a year at the rate of three hundred guineas a man, to fight against the Saracens in the Holy Land, under the command of the Templars.

“ Secondly, to renounce the unlawful statutes of Clarendon and all other bad customs which had been introduced into the Church during his reign ; and to allow all such bad customs as had been introduced before his own reign to be investigated and modified by the authority of the pope and a council of religious men.

“ Thirdly, to make ample restitution to the Church of Canterbury, both of its goods and landed possessions, in the same state as they existed the year before the archbishop incurred the king’s anger ; and to reinstate all others who had been in disgrace for adhering to the archbishop, and take them again into his favour.

“ Fourthly, if necessary, and the pope should require it, to go into Spain and free that country from the pagans.

“ Besides all this, they enjoined him privately to practise fasting and almsgiving, and other acts which never came to the knowledge of the public.

The king readily assented to all, saying, ‘ My lords the legates, I am wholly in your hands, and shall do whatever you tell ; I will go to Rome, to Jerusalem, or to Saint Jago, if you wish it.’ All who were present were much moved at the humility and contrition of his manner.

“ When this was settled, the legates, to leave nothing undone, led the king out with his own free will out of the Church, and there kneeling upon his knees, but without stripes, he received absolution, and was introduced anew into the Church.

“ In the next place, that some of the French king’s people might be informed how this ceremony had been performed, it was determined that the archbishop of Tours and his suffragans should be requested to meet the king and the legates at Caen on the ensuing Tuesday after Ascension-day.

“ The king made oath that he would perform all that had been agreed on, and the young prince swore, that if his father should be prevented by death or any other cause from doing as he had promised, he would himself discharge the obligation for him.”

## LETTER CXIX.

“ POPE ALEXANDER TO THE CHAPTER OF CANTERBURY.

“ JOY for the whole body of the faithful at the miracles of that revered saint Thomas your archbishop; but joy in particular for you, who have with your own eyes witnessed his miracles, and whose church is honoured by his sacred corpse. We, therefore, considering the glorious merits by which his life was distinguished, the public fame of his miracles, and the testimony of our beloved sons, the cardinals Albert and Theodwine, and others in whom we place full confidence, and having moreover taken counsel with our brethren in the Church before a large multitude of the clergy and of the laity, have solemnly canonized him, and decreed that he shall be enrolled in the catalogue of the saints and martyrs; and we command you and the whole English Church by apostolical authority to solemnize his feast yearly on the day on which he finished his life by glorious martyrdom. Since, therefore, it is right and expedient to yourselves that his holy body should be buried with the reverence and honour that is his due, we command you to make solemn procession on some fitting day, when the clergy and people are met together, and place his body with all reverence on an altar, or elevate it in a chest suitable for the purpose, and

pray that his pious intercessions for the whole body of the faithful, and the peace of the universal Church, may be offered up unto the Lord. Given at Signia, the 4th before the Ides of March.”

## LETTER CXX.

“POPE ALEXANDER, TO THE CARDINALS ALBERT AND THEOD-  
WINE.

“WE command you to make reconciliation for the Church of Canterbury, but not to repeat the sacrament of its original consecration, but only to follow the custom which prevails in our own Church of St. Peter, and sprinkle it with holy water. Farewell.”

## APPENDIX,

CONTAINING

SEVERAL ORIGINAL DOCUMENTS CONNECTED WITH  
THE LIFE OF ARCHBISHOP BECKET.

## I.

FITZ-STEPHEN'S DESCRIPTION OF THE CITY OF LONDON; FORMING  
THE PREFACE TO HIS LIFE OF SAINT THOMAS OF CANTERBURY.

I, WILLIAM FITZ-STEPHEN, to the glory of Almighty God, to perpetuate the memory of the blessed St. Thomas, and to the edification and profit of all those who read or hear this history, have endeavoured to write the life and passion of that excellent archbishop and martyr. I was the fellow-citizen of the same my good lord; and in the capacity of his clerk, I dwelt also in his house. It was by his special invitation and word of mouth, that I took part in the cares of his ministry; when he was chancellor, I was his dictator; when he officiated in the chapel, I acted as his sub-dean; during his sittings to hear causes, and to examine letters and such other instruments as were presented to him, I attended him as reader. Sometimes at his bidding I took on me the charge of certain causes, and when the council was held at Northampton, where things reached so important a crisis, I was present with him; I witnessed his martyrdom at Canterbury; and there are many other events mentioned in this book, some of which I saw with my own eyes; others I heard talk of; and some were told me by those who had themselves witnessed them.

Plato has given us a description of a commonwealth; Sallustius has in his history enlarged on the geography of Africa on the occasion of the Carthaginian rebellion, when the Roman armies so often passed the sea to reduce that people to subjection; and in like manner am I led, in speaking of the blessed St. Thomas, to preface my history with an account of the municipality of London.

*The Description of the Noble City of London.*

Among the celebrated cities of the world, known to fame, is the city of London, the seat of the English monarchy. As its reputation has extended to every part of the globe, so also have its wealth and its traffic, and it holds its head higher than any other city. It enjoys a most salubrious climate, and, whilst it is blessed by the religion of Christ, it has the proudest walls for its defence, and the most favourable position for commerce; and in the manly honour of its citizens, the matronly chastity of its women, the sports and games invented for its pastimes, and the noble courage of its numerous male population, it is unrivalled. But let us examine these different points in order.

In the first place, the mildness of the climate has a softening influence on the minds of its inhabitants, not to sink them in voluptuousness, but to make them kind and generous, not fierce, nor brutal.

The bishop's seat is in the church of St. Paul; it was once metropolitan, and is thought likely to become so again, if ever the natives return back into the island; unless perhaps the archiepiscopal title of St. Thomas the martyr, and his bodily presence in the Church of Canterbury shall secure the dignity for ever where it now is; but on the other hand, as St. Thomas has honoured both these cities, London by his birth, and Canterbury by his death, the former of them has the better claim to urge, inasmuch as in addition to the plea of right, it has also been favoured by a portion of the patronage of the saint. As regards the Christian religion, there are also in London and the suburbs thirteen large conventual churches, besides smaller parish churches to the number of one hundred and twenty-six.

On the eastern side of London is the Tower, which is also a palace, of great size, and strongly fortified; the area and walls of which rise from foundations of the most solid construction, for the cement used for it was mixed with the blood of animals. On the west are two strong castles; the wall of the city is high and thick, in a continued circle, with seven doubled gates, and turreted at intervals on the northern side. In the same manner the city was walled and turreted on the south; but that great river, and full of fish, the Thames, washes it on the south, and its waters which ebb and flow have, by length of time, undermined and destroyed the walls. Also on the western side, the king's palace towers over the river, an incomparable edifice, with an outer wall and battlements, two miles from the city, to which it is united by one long street.

All round the city are suburban houses in the midst of gardens, planted with trees, spacious and beautiful, and so numerous that one touches the other.

On the north also are fields, pasturages, and the most delightful level meadows, intersected by flowing streams, on which are mills, whose murmur and rapid motions give life to all around. In the immediate neighbourhood is a large forest, with lawns embosomed in the woods, full of animals, stags, fallow deer, and wild boars.

The ploughed lands belonging to the city do not consist of a hungry gravelly soil, but are like the fertile plains of Asia,

Which yield abundant crops, and load the barns  
Of those who reap them with the gifts of Ceres.

There are also certain remarkable fountains in the suburbs towards the north of London, the water of which is sweet and wholesome, very clear, and running over a gravelly bottom. The principal of these are Holywell, Clerkenwell, and St. Clement's Well. These are the best known, and are most frequented by the scholars and youth of the city who go out to enjoy the fresh air on the summer evenings. It is, indeed, a good city if it only has a good master.

It is honourable for its men, adorned by its deeds of chivalry, and contains a numerous population; so that in the time of the civil wars under King Stephen, when those who were qualified for military service went out to a review, they were reckoned at twenty thousand armed cavalry, and sixty thousand infantry. The citizens of London are every where noted above all others, for the polish of their manners, their genteel dress, and well ordered table. The inhabitants of other cities are called citizens, but those of London are called nobles. An oath with them decides every dispute. The matrons of the city are very Sabines.

There are three churches in London which have schools famous for their privileges and ancient dignity. But very often by especial favour of any of the better known, more schools are allowed, according to the particular department of philosophy. On holy days the magistrates have festive meetings at the churches. The scholars hold disputations, some in demonstrations, others in rhetoric; some deal forth enthymemes, others prefer to use the more accurate syllogism. Some exercise themselves in disputation for display, as between rivals; others for the sake of truth. Sophists and pretenders signalize themselves by the volume and multiplicity of their words; others deal in paradoxes. Some of them who are orators occasionally speak with rhetorical eloquence calculated to produce persuasion, taking care to observe the precepts of the art, and to omit nothing of contingent matters. The boys of different schools dispute with one another in verse, or contend about the principles of the grammatical art, or in the rules of præterits and supines. Again, there are others who employ that trivial style of loquacity which the ancients had among them, for epigrams, rhythms, and metres, and with Frescennine licence assail their companions with the utmost freedom, but suppress their names. Thus abuse and scoffing fly about: the faults of their companions, or perhaps of their ancestors, are made the subject of their Socratic wit, or satirized in bold dithyrambics more severely than by the "tooth of Theon." The audience—

Receive each witticism as it flows,  
And laugh and laugh again with wrinkled nose.

#### *Of the Disposition of the City.*

Those who practise each particular profession, as well as the sellers of each separate merchandise, and those who expose the several products of their labour, locate themselves every morning in places as distinct as their occupations. There is, moreover, in London a public cook-shop, among the wines which are set to sale in the vessels and the wine-cellar. Here you will get every day, according to the season, all

kinds of meats and dishes, roast, baked, fried, and boiled, fish both great and small, flesh of a coarser sort for the poor, but more delicate for the rich, venison, poultry, and game. If any one of the citizens is surprised by a visit from his friends, tired by their journey, and disinclined to wait till fresh food can be bought and cooked to allay their hunger,

Whilst ready menials bread in baskets bring,  
Towels for their hands, and water from the spring;

some one runs down to the quay, where he finds every thing they want. Whatever may be the multitude of soldiers or foreigners who enter the city or leave it, at any hour of the day or night, there is no need that the former should come in to fast, or the others set out on an empty stomach; down to the quay they go if they like, and each there gets what he wants. Indeed, those who like to take care of themselves, need not look about for pheasants, or quails from Africa or Ionia, when they see what dainties will here be set before them. This, then, is the public cook-shop, and it is as beneficial to the city as it is useful in promoting civility. Hence we read in the *Gorgias* of Plato, that next to medicine is the office of the cook, which contains in it the fourth part of all civilization. There is immediately on the outside of one of the gates in the suburb a certain plain<sup>1</sup>, both level in reality, and called so by name. Here every Friday, unless any superior festival prevents it, there is a weekly show of horses exposed for sale; and those who happen to be in the city, both earls and barons, knights and citizens, go out to buy or to look at the horses. It is most amusing to see the palfreys with shining trappings, and walking delicately, raising and lowering at the same time both their feet on the same side, like subalterns in logic. In one place are horses calculated to be knights' chargers, walking more heavily, but yet nimbly, raising and lowering their opposite feet like logical contradictories. Elsewhere are young thorough-bred colts not yet broken in,

With lofty step and limber legs advancing.

Here may be seen pack-horses, with large and sinewy limbs; there war-horses of great value, elegant in form, and tall of stature, with pricking ears, lofty neck, and broad haunches. Those who intend to buy them watch their steps and paces: first they try them at walking, and then they make them gallop, whilst they raise their front feet at the same time, and also their hind feet, and again lower them, like contraries in logic. When there is a race between these steeds, and others perhaps who are equally strong of their sort for carrying burdens, and stout in the race, there is a general clamour raised; all vulgar horses are ordered to go apart. The riders of the horses, young lads, three together, sometimes two and two, according to agreement, prepare themselves for the contest, and skilful in governing the horses, they rein in their fierce mouths with bits that nothing can resist. They do every thing in their power to prevent their rivals from carrying off the victory. The horses, too, strain every nerve for the contest in the

<sup>1</sup> Smith-field, properly perhaps Smooth-field.

same way ; their limbs tremble all over, as if they were impatient of the delay, and they are hardly able to stand in their places ; at a signal given they rush forward at full stretch with a speed that baffles competition. The riders, bent on glory, and in the hope of victory, spur the flying horses, and animate them both with the lash, and with words of exhortation. You would think that every thing was in motion, according to Heraclitus, and that the opinion of Zeno was false, who says that there is no such thing as motion in the matter. In another part at a distance are the wares of the rustics, instruments of agriculture, swine with long flanks, and cows with distended udders,

Cows of unwieldy size and woolly sheep,

mares for ploughs, drays, or waggons, some in foal, others with their colts following them, wanton young things, unwilling to leave their mothers. To this city, out of every nation under heaven, resort merchants with their merchandise brought from beyond the sea.

Arabia sends her gold, Saba its frankincense ;  
 Scythia her arms, and rich soil'd Babylon  
 Her oil of palms, the Nile its precious stones,  
 China her purple vests, Gallia her wines,  
 Norwegians, Russians, send their grieve and sables.

According to the Chronicles, London is more ancient than Rome ; for whereas both have the same Trojan original, London was built by Brutus before Rome was founded by Romulus and Remus ; wherefore also they still use the same ancient laws, and common institutions. Like Rome, too, London is divided into wards ; for annual consuls it has its sheriffs ; it enjoys the privilege of a council and lesser magistracies ; there are sewers and aqueducts in the streets, and a different forum for the different kinds of causes, deliberative, demonstrative, or judicial, and each kind of merchandise has its stated days. I do not believe there is any city, which has more commendable customs, for going to church and honouring the laws of God, keeping holidays, giving alms, entertaining strangers, ratifying contracts, contracting marriages, giving banquets, amusing their guests, or in performing funerals, and burying the dead. The only plagues which infest London are immoderate drinking on the part of fools, and frequent fires. Moreover, almost all the bishops, abbats, and nobles of England are, as it were, citizens, and enjoy the privileges of the municipality. They have beautiful houses in the city, where they reside, and make great expense, when they attend the councils and great meetings, summoned by our lord the king, or their metropolitan, or brought thither by their own private business.

#### *Of its Games.*

We now come to speak of the sports of the city, for it would not do that it should be only a place of usefulness and serious business, if it were not also a place of mirth and pleasure ; wherefore also on the seals of the supreme pontiffs, even to the time of the last Pope Leo, on one side

of the bull is engraved the figure of Peter the fisherman, and above him the key, as if held out to him from heaven by God, and round him a verse,

For me the vessel thou didst leave,  
Therefore from me the key receive.

On the other side was stamped the city, with the inscription, 'Golden Rome.' Moreover, it was said in honour of Augustus Cæsar, and of Rome—

It rains all night : sports usher in the day:  
Thus Cæsar holds with Jove divided sway.

London, in place of theatrical sights and scenic exhibitions, has games of a holier character, and representations of the miracles, which the holy confessors wrought, or of their sufferings, by which the constancy of the martyrs was proved. Furthermore, every year on the day called the Carnival, if I may begin with the games of the children (for we were all children once), all the school-boys carry to their masters their fighting-cocks, and the whole morning is given up to the sport of seeing the cocks fight in the schools. After dinner, all the youth of the city go out into the fields, under the city-walls, to play the favourite game of ball. The scholars of each faculty have their own ball; and the followers of every occupation in the city have theirs also. The elders, fathers, and rich men of the city, come on horseback to see the young men play, and in their own way they grow young again in the company of the young. Their natural heat seems to be stirred up in them, at the sight of so much activity, and by sympathizing in the more unrestrained mirth of the younger ones. Every Sunday in Quadragesima, after dinner, a fresh swarm of youths go forth into the country on war-steeds, ever foremost in the contest;

Taught to manœuvre in the rapid course.

The sons of the citizens who are laymen, sally forth in bodies from the gates, armed with lances and warlike shields; the younger ones with spears without iron, sharpened at the end; they get up a sham-fight, and carry on warlike games and all kinds of military exercise in the meadows. Many courtiers also are present, for the king himself is not far off; and many young men from the households of the bishops, councillors, and barons, who have not yet been rewarded with the belt of knighthood, come there for the pleasure of contending with one another. All are encouraged by the hope of victory, whilst the fiery horses neigh and champ their bits. When at length their loud hoofs ring along the ground, the young men, their riders, divide into squadrons; some follow those who are before them, but cannot catch them; others overtake their comrades, upset them, and gallop off, leaving them sprawling on the ground. On the days of Lent they represent a kind of naval battle. They fix a target on a mast, a vessel is then impelled by oars and the current, bearing on the stern a young man armed with a lance to strike the target with. If he shatters the spear in pieces on the target, and keeps his footing, he effects his purpose;

but if the lance remains unbroken by the blow, the man who bears it is thrown overboard into the river, and the vessel floats quickly by. There are, however, two other boats moored one on each side of the target, with several young men on board, whose business it is to pick up the man that falls overboard, either when he first sinks, or when he again rises to the surface. Meanwhile, the bridge and the quays along the river are crowded with spectators, ready enough to laugh at what is going on. During the summer, the young men exercise themselves every holiday in leaping, shooting with the bow, running, wrestling, and slinging, and practising with buckler and javelin, which they throw beyond a mark, and pull back with a thong.

And whilst the moon shines on them from the sky,  
 In circles swift the youths and maidens fly;  
 Weave curious mazes as around they go,  
 And trip the earth with light fantastic toe.

In winter almost all their holidays before dinner are spent in seeing another kind of sport; either the foaming boar fights for his life, and uses his lightning-tusks to save his bacon, or stout bulls with fierce horns, and huge bears fight with dogs that are let loose against them. When the great marsh which washes the northern walls of the city is frozen over, numerous bands of young men go out to play on the ice. There they arrange their feet at a set distance, and gaining additional rapidity as they move, they traverse an enormous space with one side advanced before the other. Others make seats of a large mass of ice, and whilst one sits, the others holding by their hands pull him along, with such rapidity of motion on so slippery a surface, that they often trip their feet, and all fall together. Others of them are more knowing in their play, for they fit the leg-bones of animals to their feet, binding them firmly round their ankles, and hold in their hands poles shod with iron, which they strike against the ice, and thus impel themselves on it with the swiftness of a bird or a ball from an engine. Sometimes it is agreed that two of them shall advance one against the other in this way from a great distance; they rush together, each lifts his staff to strike the other, and the contest ends by one or both falling, and receiving some severe bodily injury; for after they are down, the velocity still acting, carries them past one another, and wherever the ice comes in contact with their head, they become wholly excoriated. Sometimes a leg or an arm, if they fall with it under them, is broken; but theirs is an age that covets glory; youth is fond of victory, and practises itself in sham battles that it may succeed better in real ones. Many of the citizens take pleasure in hawks, falcons, hounds, and such-like sports; they have the right of hunting in Middlesex, Hertford, the whole of Chiltrey, and in Kent as far as the river Cray. Formerly the Londoners were called Trinovantes; and they repelled Julius Cæsar, whose delight it was to wade through paths steeped in blood: wherefore Lucan says, he

Assailed the Britons, and then turned and fled.

The city of London has produced several men who have subjected

many kingdoms, and even the Roman empire ; besides other heroes whose fame has reached to heaven, as was promised to Brutus by the oracle of Apollo ;

Far in the west, beyond the Gallic realms,  
There lies an isle wash'd by the waves of ocean :  
Thither direct thy course ; there shalt thou rest,  
And there a second Troy thy sons shall greet ;  
There kings shall reign, claiming thee for their sire,  
And all the land to them shall subject be.

Afterwards when Christianity had spread, this city produced Constantine, son of the Empress Helena, who dedicated the Roman city and his imperial insignia to God and St. Peter, and to Silvester, Pope of Rome, to whom also he humbled himself like a servant, and took no more pleasure in being saluted as emperor, but as the defender of the holy Roman church. He it was who, to prevent the peace of our lord the pope from being annoyed by the bustle of his own presence, gave up the city altogether to his lordship the pope, and went and built for himself the city of Byzantium. In modern times, also, London has produced the most illustrious and magnificent sovereigns, the Empress Matilda, King Henry III., and St. Thomas, the archbishop, that glorious martyr of Christ, of whom we may say with the poet,—

No nobler, brighter character e'er dwelt  
Upon this earth, none ever lived more dear  
To all good men within the Roman world.

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## II.

### THE PREFACE OF HERBERT DE BOSHAM TO HIS LIFE OF SAINT THOMAS.

*To the most holy arch-prelate of the holy Church of Canterbury, Baldwin and his successors, as many as shall be canonically elected to succeed his holiness, the least of his servants, Herbert de Bosham, health in the Lord, and the obedience which is due to fathers.*

I have penned this history of the life and actions of our glorious new martyr, Saint Thomas, your predecessor, not in that magnificence of style and solemnity of expression which the dignity of the subject demands, but as power has been given me from on high. "Lofty themes," says a certain writer, "do not suit humble talents." But that the great actions of that great man may not in a long succession of fleeting generations become faint by time, or entirely forgotten, I have willingly and knowingly taken upon my shoulders a burden to which they are unequal, particularly as nearly all those who witnessed with me the passion of that blessed saint, have now been removed from the world, and are asleep in Christ ; wherefore it especially behoves

me who survive them to execute this task. I have therefore put my hand to the work, for I would rather, if it must be so, be charged with imprudence than with backwardness or neglect. Nor do I doubt that your fatherly love will pardon me, if with filial devotion I endeavour at length to restore to you and to the world by my pen the great example that was snatched out of it; an example without stain, which you may imitate, by which you may direct the administration of your episcopal duties, and whose history you may daily read. To you especially doth his example appertain, that as he did, you may do likewise. Wherefore also throughout the whole of this history I have painted him as an example not to be admired for his miracles, but to be imitated for his deeds. For in the whole of this history I have passed over the miracles which others saw, and which were exhibited to convince the unbelieving. Those miracles alone of the exemplary man have I related, which were shown to the faithful that they might reverence and imitate them. To you doth this especially appertain, who have been called by God, and have obeyed his call, though hesitatingly, if I am not deceived, to enter the field, and to fill the pastoral chair after so great a champion. God grant that you may have his zeal, whose ministry you have received; his virtues, whose commission has been entrusted to you; his diligence in all things, whose pastoral seat you fill. And I a little sheep of your flock pray and trust, after my long wanderings, through the paths, and pathless places of the desert of this world, to be brought back upon your shoulders into our Lord's fold!

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### III.

#### CATALOGUE OF THE LEARNED MEN IN THE COURT OF THE ARCH-BISHOP.

*From Herbert de Bosham.*

As I have had frequent occasion in the course of this history to mention the learned men and professors of Thomas, our late lord and glorious martyr, who so zealously, and at their own peril adhered to the holy father whilst he was steering the vessel of the Church through so tempestuous a sea, I have thought it right to set down their blessed names at the end of this narrative, that they may not be lost for ever.

I. First and foremost of all was he the most learned of them all, THOMAS himself. And as more learned, so was he more distinguished than they, washing in red wine his robe, and in the blood of the purple grape his mantle. Like his great Master, alone he trod the wine-press, and coming out of Edom with stained garments from Bosra, ascended into heaven.

II. But among the professors of Thomas, the most learned was a distinguished man, by birth and name a LOMBARD, from the celebrated city of Placentia. He was long nurtured on the milk of his nursing

mother, Christ's spouse, the Church, but at length was weaned therefrom, and separated from her bosom, became great in learning and wisdom, and during the exile and retirement of our master, taught him the sacred canons. At his feet sat the disciple who writes these things. He and I were his inseparable companions, until for his distinguished merit he was called away from exile, and made a cardinal of the holy Roman church, and finally promoted by the Roman pontiff to the archbishopric of Beneventum.

III. After him comes JOHN OF SALISBURY, an Englishman, and deriving his surname from the place of his birth. By God's grace he implanted in himself the two eyes of the Church, wisdom and learning, which were abundantly given him by the Spirit. He remained with our late martyr in all his temptations even to the end; and for his high merits, not his own, but those of the illustrious martyr, as he fancied, was called out of his native land by the Lord, to preside over the diocese of Chartres, in the province of Sens, where he had been with us before in exile.

IV. After him comes ROBERT FOLIOTH, an Englishman by birth, and at this time archdeacon of Oxford, a person of much grace and virtue, whose life and conversation would point him out as a second Laban, married to two sisters. But for some reason or other, he did not accompany his father into exile, for which he had previously obtained the holy man's licence and blessing. At a later period, for his distinguished merit he was advanced to the bishopric of Hereford.

V. Next comes REGINALD, by birth an Englishman, but by surname and education a Lombard, a man of prudence for his time of life, in action bold and strenuous. He was with us for some time in our exile, but was the first who gave us cause for sorrow by receding from us and returning to the court, there to serve the prince, and militate against us. But in the precious and triumphal death of our lord, by the providence of the Most High, he turned back to him who had been his former master. Afterwards by his own industry and honesty he was removed from the court to the Church, and promoted to the bishopric of Bath.

VI. We next have GERARD PUCELLE, an Englishman of high name and reputation. After long drinking the troubled waters of Syor, he at length quaffed the purer streams of Siloe. Our lord and father, before he went abroad, admitted him to holy orders, and bestowed on him his first ecclesiastical preferment. After running the whole day with us, towards its close he relaxed his speed, and seeking rest turned aside from following us. But after the removal of our lord from the world, his good and honest life, combined with his learning, earned for him the bishopric of Coventry.

VII. After him follows HUGH NUNAUNT, by birth a Norman, and at that time archdeacon of Lisieux, discreet in council for his years, and combining in his actions both prudence and bravery. He was reconciled to the king before our exile was ended, and with the permission of our father returned home. For years he remained faithful to the king, and was afterwards promoted either by the Church or the court, I cannot say which; but at all events he succeeded on the death of the abovenamed Gerard to the bishopric of Coventry.

VIII. GILBERT, surnamed GLANVILLE, was by birth an Englishman;

the manner of his life was good and honest; he conformed himself to all those with whom he conversed, and obtained distinction for his knowledge both of canon and civil law. When once he had joined us, he departed not from us, though he was the last of all that were called to join us. Yet though he was the last that took part with our father, he is at present, whilst I am writing, nearer to him than all the others, being elevated to the dignity of bishop of Rochester.

IX. And now I must enumerate those, who though not bishops, but in a private station, were nevertheless great and able men. First comes **RANDULF DE SERRA**, who though not a bishop, equalled a bishop in the sanctity of his life. Though he tasted not the sour grape, yet were his teeth set on edge thereby. For though neither of the family nor of the household of the archbishop, yet he was driven into exile with his parents, who were fitter for the grave than for banishment. Afterwards, for his distinguished worth he was promoted to the deanery of the metropolitan church of Rheims.

X. Next to him was **JORDAN**, or as he is called by others **GORDIAN** de Melbourn, an Englishman, at that time archdeacon, and afterwards dean of Chichester. He had made considerable progress in learning for the short time which he had devoted to it; but because he had bought a house, he excused himself, and did not follow the holy father into exile.

XI. Next comes **MATTHEW**, [English] an Englishman both by name and nation, of the city of Chichester, an honest youth of bold and industrious habits. He had already made much progress in letters when he was drawn aside by the cares of the court, and of the world. Whilst I am writing this, he is dean of Chichester, but because he had no call, he did not follow our father into banishment.

XII. After him comes **GERVASE**, surnamed of Chichester, where he also was born. He was a youth of much praise, both for his learning and for his conduct; but as like the former he had no call, he did not leave his native land.

XIII. Next is **JOHN OF TILBURY**, by birth an Englishman, of much courage and eloquence. Like a learned and ready scribe, he brought forth from his treasure things both new and old; but his feebleness of body and advanced years excused him from following the holy father.

XIV. After him was **PHILIP DE CAUNE**, an Englishman, of a mild and simple character. He had exhausted the powers both of his mind and body in studying the laws of men, and followed our father into exile; but when he had borne for a while the weight of poverty, he found his shoulders unequal to it, and yearned for relief: wherefore, with the permission and blessing of our holy father, he returned to his native land.

XV. Then comes **HERVEY** of London, where he was born. He had borrowed of the Ægyptians vessels both of gold and silver, but when he was in the desert he desired to be fed with manna. Our father sent him on a message to the apostolic pontiff, but he was cut short on the road by death.

XVI. After him comes **GUNTER**, surnamed of Winchester, which was the place of his birth. He was a mild and upright man, though timid, but without reproach. What he wanted in learning, was amply made up in the purity of his life. Like Zaccheus he was short of

stature, and had mounted the sycamore-tree to see our lord pass by. He remained with our master through all his trials, faithful and constant to the last.

XVII. Next to him was ALEXANDER, called in his native tongue CUELLIN [LEWELLEN]: he was by birth and surname a Welshman, of much learning, witty and talkative. But words were not his only virtues: for though he was prompt in his tongue, he was prompter still in action, and took part with our father and for our father, now bidden, now unbidden, and again when sent on an embassy: for amidst besetting dangers he conducted himself with equal caution, courage, and constancy; besides which he possessed that feature so valuable in the character of his nation, that he was as faithful as he was clever.

XVIII. and XIX. There were moreover two brothers ROLAND and HARIALD, Lombards, of much industry and learning. As they were both poor, our father, in respect of their wisdom and learning, gave them a yearly pension out of his own small stock, ten marks to the first, and a hundred shillings to the second; this he did during all the years of his foreign pilgrimage.

XX. There is one still remaining of our lord's company, who was much beloved by his holy master. I place him here by himself apart, because of his singular greatness and great singularity of character, and because he was among the last that was called to join us. His proper name was HUMBERT, and he was by nation a Lombard, of the illustrious city of Milan, eloquent in discourse and able in action. He ascended through the ranks of the Church from one virtue to another whilst we were still in exile: he was first archdeacon of Bourges, and then was called by our lord and became one of us. But afterwards for his distinguished merits he was promoted to be archbishop of his native city of Milan; and in the second or third year after, being elevated to the sovereign pontificate of Rome, at this moment, under the name of Urban the Third, rules the universal Church.

From this catalogue then we may judge how great and magnificent was our lord the glorious martyr himself; who, though stripped of every thing and banished from his country, rallied around him such champions in the cause of God and the Church.

There were moreover others, learned and zealous, whom I do not now mention, who nevertheless ran the race even to the goal, and were faithful to our master. Among whom, by God's providence, was he, the premature one, the least of all of them, the disciple who writes this history, HERBERT by name, an Englishman by nation, and surnamed from the place of his birth, HERBERT DE BOSHAM.

And let me not omit to mention here that clerk of whom I have before spoken, who was wounded in the arm during our master's death-struggle, EDWARD GRIM, an Englishman; and I place him here apart from the rest, because though of the archbishop's diocese, yet he was not of his household; for it was only by accident that he had come to visit the archbishop after his return from exile, wherefore I cannot place him in the number of the archbishop's learned men; but he is now dead, and placed, I hope, by the Most High in the number of his saints in heaven.

## IV.

## COUNCIL OF CLARENDON.

In the year of our Lord 1164, in the sixth year of Pope Alexander and the eleventh of Henry II., the illustrious king of the English, in the presence of the same king, was made an inquiry and revision of part of the customs, liberties, and dignities of his ancestors, to wit, King Henry his grandfather and others, such as ought to be observed in his kingdom. And it was in consequence of the strife and dissensions which had arisen between the clergy and the king's justices and the barons of the kingdom about the customs and dignities of the kingdom, that this inquiry or revision was made, in presence of the archbishops and bishops, the clergy, earls, barons, and nobles of the kingdom; and when the said customs had been revised by the archbishops, bishops, earls, barons, nobles, and ancients of the kingdom, they were acknowledged and conceded by—

Thomas, archbishop of Canterbury; Roger, archbishop of York; Gilbert, bishop of London; Henry, bishop of Winchester; Nigel, bishop of Ely; William, bishop of Norwich; Robert, bishop of Lincoln; Hilary, bishop of Chichester; Joceline, bishop of Salisbury; Richard, bishop of Chester; Bartholomew, bishop of Exeter; Robert, bishop of Hereford; David, bishop of Menevia; Roger, bishop elect of Worcester; who declared by word of mouth that they would observe them faithfully towards our lord the king and his heirs in good faith and without subterfuge; in the presence of Robert, earl of Leicester; Reginald, earl of Cornwall; Conan, count of Brittany; John, count of Agy; Roger, earl of Clare; Godfrey, earl of Mandeville; Hugh, earl of Chester; William, earl of Arundel; Earl Patrick; William, earl of Ferrars; Richard de Lucy, Reginald de St. Valerie, Roger Bigod, Reginald de Warenne, Richard de Aquila, William de Bracy, Richard de Cambilla, Nigel Mowbray, Simon de Beauchamp, Humphrey de Bohun, Matthew de Hereford, Walter Meduan, Manasseh Biset the butler, William Mallet, William de Courcy, Robert de Dunstanville, Joceline de Baliol, William Lanvalis, William de Caisneto, Godfrey de Vere, William de Hastings, Hugh de Moreville, Alan de Neville, Simon Fitz-Peter, William Malduit the chamberlain, John Malduit, John Marshall, Peter de Mara, and many other nobles, both spiritual and temporal.

Part of these customs and dignities are contained in this present writing: the heads of which are as follows:—

I. Of the advowson and presentation to churches: if any dispute shall arise between laics, or between clerks and laics, or between clerks, let it be tried and decided in the court of our lord the king.

II. Churches of the king's fee shall not be given in perpetuity without his consent and licence.

III. Clerks accused of any crime, shall be summoned by the king's justice into the king's court, to answer there for whatever the king's court shall determine they ought to answer there, and in the ecclesi-

astical court for whatever it shall be determined that they ought to answer there: yet so that the king's justice shall send into the court of the holy Church to see in what way the matter shall there be handled: and if the clerk shall confess or be convicted, the Church for the future shall not protect him.

IV. No archbishop or bishop, or any other person, shall leave the kingdom without the king's licence: and if they wish to leave it, the king shall be empowered, if he pleases, to take security from them that they will do no harm to the king or kingdom, either in going or remaining, or in returning.

V. Persons excommunicated are not to give bail *ad remanens*, nor to make oath, but only to give bail and pledge that they will stand by the judgment of the Church, that they may be acquitted.

VI. Laics shall not be accused, save by certain legal accusers and witnesses in presence of the bishops, so that the archdeacon may not lose his rights, or any thing which accrues to him therefrom. And if those who are arraigned are such that no one is willing or dares to accuse them, the sheriff on demand from the bishop shall cause twelve loyal men of the village to swear before the bishop that they will declare the truth in that matter according to their conscience.

VII. No one who holds of the king in chief, nor any of his domestic servants, shall be excommunicated, nor their lands be put under an interdict, until the king has been first consulted, if he is in the kingdom, or, if the king is abroad, his justiciary, that he may do what is right in that matter, and so that whatever belongs to the king's court may therein be settled, and the same on the other hand of the ecclesiastical court.

VIII. Appeals, when they arise, must be made from the archdeacon to the bishop, and from the bishop to the archbishop, and if the archbishop shall fail in administering justice, the parties shall come before our lord the king, that by his precept the controversy may be terminated in the archbishop's court, so that it may not proceed further without the consent of our lord the king.

IX. If a dispute shall arise between a clerk and a laic, or between a laic and a clerk, about a tenement, which the clerk wishes to claim as eleemosynary, but the laic claims as lay-fee, it shall be settled by the declaration of twelve loyal men through the agency of the king's capital justice, whether the tenement is eleemosynary or lay-fee, in presence of the king's justice. And if it shall be declared that it is eleemosynary, it shall be pleaded in the ecclesiastical court; but if a lay-fee, unless both shall claim the tenement of the same bishop or baron, it shall be pleaded in the king's court: but if both shall claim of that fee from the same bishop or baron, it shall be pleaded in his court, yet so that the declaration abovenamed shall not deprive of seizin him who before was seized, until he shall be divested by the pleadings.

X. If any man belonging to a city, castle, borough, or king's royal manor<sup>1</sup>, shall be summoned by the archdeacon or bishop to answer for a crime, and shall not comply with the summons, it shall be lawful to place him under an interdict, but not to excommunicate him, until

<sup>1</sup> Dominico manerio regis.

the king's principal officer of that place be informed thereof, that he may justify his appearing to the summons; and if the king's officer shall fail in that matter, he shall be at the king's mercy, and the bishop shall forthwith coerce the party accused with ecclesiastical discipline.

XI. The archbishops, bishops, and all other persons of the kingdom who hold of the king in chief, shall hold their possessions of the king as barony, and answer for the same to the king's justices and officers, and follow and observe all the king's customs and rectitudes, and like other barons be present at the judgments of the king's courts with the barons, until the judgment is carried to the loss of members or death.

XII. When an archbishopric, bishopric, abbacy, or priory of the king's domain shall be vacant, it shall be in his hand, and he shall receive from it all the revenues and proceeds, as of domain. And when the time shall come for providing for that church, our lord the king shall recommend the best persons to the church, and the election shall be made in the king's chapel, with the king's consent, and the advice of the persons of the kingdom whom he shall have summoned for that purpose. And the person elected shall there do homage and fealty to our lord the king, as to his liege lord, of life and limb, and of his earthly honours, saving his order, before he is consecrated.

XIII. If any of the king's nobles shall have refused to render justice to an archbishop or bishop, or archdeacon, for himself or any of his men, our lord the king shall justify them. And if by chance any one shall have deforced our lord the king of his rights, the archbishops, bishops, or archdeacons, shall justify him that he may render satisfaction to the king.

XIV. The cattle of those who are in forfeiture to the king shall not be detained by the Church or the *cemetery*, in opposition to the king's justice; for they belong to the king, whether they are found in the Church or without.

XV. Pleas for debts which are due, whether with the interposition of a pledge of faith or not, belong to the king's court.

XVI. The sons of rustics shall not be ordained without the consent of their lord, in whose land they are known to have been born.

These are the royal customs and dignities, which were revised by the aforesaid archbishops, bishops, earls, barons, nobles, and ancients of the kingdom at Clarendon, on the fourth day before the Purification of the blessed Virgin Mary, in presence of the king and our lord Henry, the king's son.

THE END.





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The life and letters of Thomas a Becket,

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