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THE

STANHOPE PRIZE ESSAY,

1875.

BY

RICHARD LODGE,

EXHIBITIONER OF BALLIOL COLLEGE, OXFORD.

OXFORD:

THOS. SHRIMPTON & SON, BROAD STREET.

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It is impossible not to notice in reading history, how little attention some periods, as compared with others, have received from historians. These seem to bestow the greatest part of their trouble and attention on those times which are full of great movements, and which will therefore yield an easy and imposing result to their labours. But those periods which contain the germs of those great events are comparatively neglected: they are more difficult to understand, and the result gained is not so specious; yet, for a real understanding of history, they are to the full as important as the periods in which the great events themselves take place. No period in history, perhaps, has been so much examined and discussed as the sixteenth century, while the fifteenth has been comparatively neglected. The cause of this is that the events of the former century were in themselves so important, and have had such important and lasting effects, that it afforded an immense harvest for historical gleaners; yet it is impossible to understand these events from a study of the sixteenth century alone. To fully comprehend them, and appreciate their true force and meaning, it is necessary to study carefully the process of germination, the more important as it is the more difficult and concealed. There were two great facts, the one political and the other religious, which especially distinguished the sixteenth century; and both of these were gradually being fostered and prepared throughout the fifteenth century. These were, the formation of strong and centralised nationalities, and the Reformation. We may consider them separately.

Some periods of history comparatively neglected.

e.g., the fifteenth century.

A time of germination.

There is scarcely any word in our language so often used, and yet so often misunderstood, as the word "nation." What do we imply by this word nation? Many people would probably answer, Community of origin, of manners, laws, language, etc. Now there is no doubt that these elements are nearly always present in what we call a nation; and, when they are present, they greatly aid in the formation of a distinct nationality; yet they are not all the essential elements, and by themselves they will not form a nation. They are the twigs and fuel laid ready, but the spark is wanting

Meaning of the word "nation."

which is to kindle them into a flame. This spark, the most important element of all, is community of interests. It was in the fifteenth century that this spark was applied to the materials already prepared. Modern historians—with that inability to avoid modern ideas and phrases which is such a prevalent and almost inevitable fault—when relating the history of the old feudal times, tell us of the deeds of the French, or of the French nation. But this is an abuse of terms. The French nation, in the modern sense of the word, had at this time no existence. What they dignify with the name of a nation was merely a very loose confederacy of small clans, each clan consisting of a feudal noble and his retainers. Gradually these heterogeneous elements began to assimilate, under the pressure of various influences, both external and internal. In the fifteenth century this process of assimilation was reaching its completion. By a series of such events as in France the war with England, and in Spain the conflict with the Moors and the final triumph at Granada, the last links were being forged in that chain which led from the barbaric disunion of the dark ages to the well-balanced political system of modern times. This process of gradual union may be thus briefly described.

Rise of nations in the fifteenth century.

Conflict of two tendencies during the Middle Ages.

After the fall of the Roman Empire, two tendencies, as they may be termed, were thrown into juxtaposition, and at first into violent opposition. These were, the Roman tendency of centralisation, and the Teutonic tendency of localisation and independence. The struggle at first resulted in a victory for the latter tendency, which was far the stronger, and its great outcome was the Feudal System. But the Roman tendency, fostered as it had been by so many centuries of empire, did not die out, but only lay concealed. Represented by the Empire, the Church, and the Municipalities, and aided by various external events, such as the Crusades, it gradually rose up side by side with its rival, and the result was in the fifteenth century a gradual fusion of the two tendencies which produced as its result the powerful monarchies of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

Their final fusion.

Two religious movements.

The religious movement of the fifteenth century was a combination of two movements, both tending to the same end, though originating in opposite poles of society. These movements were: firstly, the popular demand for reform, heard, at the beginning of the fifteenth century from both east and west of Europe; and, secondly, the attempt at external reform made by the higher classes of both Clergy and Laity at the great General Councils of this period. Both these movements failed at the time, and, to all appearance failed lamentably. Huss perished, in spite of safe conduct, at Constance; and Lollardism was stifled in England by the fires of persecution. Yet, notwithstanding this appa-

Apparent failure.

failure, a new feeling had been aroused in the breasts of the people of England, Bohemia, and elsewhere, which, though stifled for a time, merely lay concealed till a more favourable opportunity offered itself in the sixteenth century. Again, the demands for reform made at the Councils of Constance and Basle by such men as Gerson and d'Ailly, were dexterously evaded by the wily policy of Martin V. and his successors; but in this case also there was only a temporary reaction, and the tempest which threatened the Church was only the more boisterous and destructive for the short lull in its fury.

The Renaissance.

There was also another movement in the fifteenth century, which has received more attention from historians than either of the other movements. This was that development of intellectual individuality, that growing desire for a new and higher culture, which we usually term the "Renaissance." The effects of this movement, which was something infinitely wider than the mere revival of the study of classical antiquity, on the religious, social, and political progress of the age were immense; but as it scarcely reached England at all in this century, it is so little connected with our subject, that it may here be passed over with this cursory notice.

Necessity of this general sketch.

Though, looking strictly at the limits of the subject, we are only concerned with the first half of the fifteenth century, yet this brief account of its general history and progress seemed not only advantageous but even necessary; for without a general knowledge of the whole, the history of a part is not only far less interesting, but also unintelligible and almost useless. After having seen the general tendency of the events of the age, we shall be in a position to appreciate and understand the separate occurrences in which the distinguished personage whose life is now to be recorded played so important a part.

Beaufort's early life.

Of the early life of Henry Beaufort we know very little indeed. The very date of his birth is uncertain. He was the illegitimate son of John of Gaunt and Catherine Swynford; but in 1397 the four children of this connexion were legitimated by special Act of Parliament, and all offices in the kingdom were to be open to them, on condition of their renouncing all possible claims to the throne.[a] Henry seems to have received a good education according to the fashion of that day, having studied the usual course

His education.

[a] *v.* Rot. Parl., iii., p. 343. The wording of the Rolls runs thus: "Johanni militi, Henrico clerico, Thomæ domicello." From this it would appear that, while his younger brother was still a minor, Henry was now of age. This and also inherent probability points to about A.D. 1376 or 1377 as the date of his birth. It is curious that, while various charters have granted legitimacy to the King of England's foreign subjects, this is the only extant instance in which the power was exercised in favour of an English subject.

of canon and civil law at Peterhouse, Cambridge,[b] and Queen's College, Oxford, but principally at Aix, then one of the chief schools of legal knowledge. Destined for the Church, and a near kinsman to royalty, his success, in a profession in which patronage has almost invariably prevailed, was certain. While still a mere boy, he received the prebends of Thame and Bockingham in the diocese of Lincoln, and in 1396 he was promoted to the deanery of Wells. The next year, which was that of his legitimation, we have an instance of that arbitrary interference of the Popes with the national churches, which caused such loud complaints at this time. John, bishop of Lincoln, was in this year against his will "absolved from the bond which bound him to his church," and translated to the see of Lichfield and Coventry,[c] which, however, he refused to occupy, but retired to a monastery at Canterbury, where he died.[d]

His early preferments.

Into the vacant see of Lincoln was thrust the youthful dean, who was now probably about twenty or twenty-one years of age.

Made Bishop of Lincoln.

But even at this early period he must have displayed some signs of that political capacity which afterwards so highly distinguished him. He was one of the three bishops who were with Richard II. in Ireland[e] at the time when Henry of Lancaster landed at Ravenspur, prepared to enforce his rights to his paternal inheritance, and probably already dreaming from that height to reach the crown itself. With Richard and the others, Beaufort crossed over to Milford, and on Henry's arrival in Wales he went over to his side. For this conduct Beaufort has been accused of gross ingratitude and political inconsistency.[f] There is, of course, no denying that he deserted his old master; but his conduct on this occasion does not appear to have been so black as it has been painted, or as that of many older and wiser men whose example he might plead in his defence. At such an early age he can scarcely have adopted any decided line of policy, and it is unlikely that he had any very strong ties to bind him to King Richard. Moreover, it must be remembered that Henry was his half-brother, and there really seem to have existed between them

With Richard II. in Ireland.

Joins Henry.

[b] There is an account of Beaufort's occupying rooms here in 1388, for which he paid twenty shillings a year.

[c] Rymer's Fœdera, vol. viii., p. 41.

[d] Capgrave (Rolls Series), p. 267, Godwin, de Præsul.

[e] Capgrave, p. 271.

[f] This character has been attributed to him in some clever but rude verses by an eye-witness of these events:—

"Le tiers si fu evesque de Nicole
Qu nacontoit pas une poire mole
A touz leurs faiz;
Car il estoit frère germain parfaiz
Du duc, pensant que bien feroit sa paix
Toujours à lui."—*Archæol.* xx., 322.

some ties of affection, or, at least, of respect. In 1399 the King placed his youthful son under the care and tuition of Beaufort, who was at this time appointed Chancellor of the University of Oxford, an office, however, which he seems to have held for only one year. At Henry's first Parliament he appeared as Bishop of Lincoln, and gave his signature to the warrant for the perpetual imprisonment of his late sovereign.[g]

Having seen Henry Beaufort elevated to the episcopal throne at the age of twenty-one or thereabouts, we naturally turn to look at the position of the higher clergy at this time. Never before had the English clergy been so secular as they now become. Throughout Europe the same thing is to be seen. The ecclesiastics[h] are the great statesmen, the great men of business. The care of their flocks is quite subsidiary to their political duties, and, in fact, scarcely occupies their attention at all. This state of things first originated in Italy, where it was a natural consequence of the immense number of priests, far out of proportion to the spiritual needs of the people. From Italy the example spread all over Europe. The pope, by means of reservations and other inventions, appointed Italian priests to the sees of the national churches, their sole duty in those sees being to receive the emoluments, and spend them at Rome. This naturally irritated both the prelates and laymen of the country thus treated as a cat's-paw, but it also set the former an example which they were not loth to follow. In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries nearly all the leading politicians were ecclesiastics. They were men who in the present day would be considered utterly unfit for the church, but who entered that profession chiefly on account of its wealth, which was their great aid on the road to political advancement.

Secularity of the clergy at this time.

Originated in Italy.

The accession of the House of Lancaster was very important for the Church of England. From the first they allied themselves with that body, and steadily supported its interests; and during a great part of the time of their rule it was the greatest political power in the realm. This, of course, still further increased what has been termed above the secularity of the church, which now rose to an unexampled height. On embassies, negotiations, and all other kinds of political business, the most important posts are almost invariably filled by the prelates of the realm. The church, instead of a religious, became almost wholly a political body. It may seem strange that, if it departed so far from its clerical duties, it should have insisted as it did on the destruction of the heresy of the Lollards. But

Connexion of the Lancastrian princes with the Church.

Persecution of the Lollards.

g Rot. Parl., iii., 424.

h The race of ecclesiastical politicians in England, which began with Dunstan, and was continued through Lanfranc, Becket, Langton, and others, ended in the sixteenth century with Wolsey and Cranmer.

it must be recollected that, after the death of Wickliffe, the Lollards became a political rather than a religious sect. Their chief points were rather communistic than theological, and they directed their shafts more against the wealth and power of the church than against its doctrinal basis. But it was precisely this wealth and power that the clergy, as a political body, could not do without; and they endeavoured to punish and suppress the Lollards rather as rebels and troublers of society than as heretics and disbelievers.

Beaufort early obtained secular employment from his brother. In 1402, together with the earls of Gloucester and Worcester, he was entrusted with the charge of bringing over to England Henry's second wife, Joan of Navarre, duchess of Brittany. On the third of April, 1402, the duchess was solemnly contracted to Henry, at Eltham, by her proxy Antony Rys, in the presence of the chief peers of the realm. On the twenty-sixth of December she left Nantes and embarked on board the vessels despatched by the king, with the intention of landing at Southampton. The weather, however, was unpropitious, and after a stormy passage of five days the ships were forced into a port of Cornwall, whence she proceeded northwards, and was married on the twelfth,[1] and crowned at Westminster on the twenty-fifth of February. We possess a letter from Beaufort and his colleagues to the Council on this occasion, dated at Plymouth, the 9th of December, 1402.[2] From this it appears that they had already crossed over to Brittany, but had been driven thence by contrary winds, and forced to return to Plymouth. This letter exhibits rather remarkably the low state of the exchequer at this time, for the writers pray that the crews of the vessels may be paid their wages, and express apprehensions of a mutiny unless this is done.

Beaufort appointed to bring over Joan of Navarre.

Particulars of this marriage.

His letter on this occasion.

Beaufort's conduct in this affair of Henry's marriage seems to have satisfied the king, for a few days after the queen's coronation, in March, 1403, he was appointed to the Chancellorship. Shortly after this we find him engaged in diplomatic relations with a nation at this time of very recent origin and small importance, but which has in our own day risen to such a height of power and glory, that this instance of its early connexion with England is not without interest.

Beaufort appointed Chancellor.

Treats with Prussia.

Herman von Salza, afterwards the great grand-master of the Teutonic order, who headed his knights in their colonisation of the inhospitable shores of the Baltic, was in 1235 sent by the Emperor Frederick II., with whose interests he was always

[1] For an account of this marriage, which has scarcely been noticed by English historians, *v.* Lobinau's Histoire de Bretagne, ii., 874-878.

[2] Acts of Privy Council, i., p. 188.

Early connexion of England with the Teutonic order.

closely connected, to the court of England to arrange a marriage with the princess Isabella. Thus began the connexion of England with Teutonic knights: a connexion which was subsequently strengthened by Richard, earl of Cornwall, and Edward I., both crusaders, and the former intimately connected with German affairs. It was about this time that the cities of the Hanseatic league, the original parents of the order, were rising into importance, and the great privileges which their merchants possessed in England were shared by the subjects of the grand-masters, both being included in London under the one name of "Easterlings." But in the disastrous reign of Richard II., this peaceful intercourse was broken. An embargo was laid upon Prussian goods in English ports, and quarrels were constantly been fought out by rival merchant vessels. It was not till the 21st of August, 1388, that the commerce between the two nations was renewed by the treaty of Marienburg, which restored matters to their former state.

Commercial intercourse.

Frequent aid given by England to the Teutonic order.

But from the time of Herman von Salza another relation, besides commerce, had bound England to the Teutonic order. Prompted by the crusading spirit of the times, the English knights used frequently to seek adventures by crossing over to Prussia and aiding the knights in their struggle against the heathen. At length these wars became quite a regular training-ground for noble youths. Chaucer describes his knight as having served his apprenticeship to chivalry in this manner:—

> "Full ofte tyme he hadde the bord bygonne
> Aboven alle naciouns in Pruce,
> In Lettowe hadde he reysed and in Ruce,
> No cristen man so ofte of his degre."

Henry IV., like his son, seems throughout his lifetime to have had a strong desire to go on a crusade, and this was perhaps fostered by his youthful adventures. In 1390, while he was still earl of Derby, he headed an expedition into Prussia, where he did good service in the cause of the order, and formed close relationships with the grand-master and his chief subjects. This connexion became of great importance when he ascended the throne of his cousin, and throughout his reign he displayed a great knowledge of Prussian affairs, and a strong desire, in spite of the complication of interests, to maintain amicable relations between the two nations. In 1403 some differences had occurred on commercial matters, and a treaty had to be arranged between Beaufort and William de Roos on the one hand, and the two ambassadors of Conrad de Jungingen, who then held the dignity of grand-master, on the other. By this it was arranged that before the coming Easter all merchants of England

Henry IV. in Prussia.

Beaufort's negotiations with Prussian envoys.

and Prussia should return to their respective countries, and from that time no traffic should be carried on.[k]

Beaufort opens Parliament in 1404.

At a Parliament which met on the fourteenth of January, 1404, Beaufort, as Chancellor, declared the causes of its meeting in the usual speech, which was a mixture apparently of a modern "Queen's Speech" and of a sermon. Taking as his text the words "Multitudo sapientum," he showed, "molt discretement et clergialment," that each realm resembled the body of a man, the right hand representing the Holy Church, the left the temporality, and the other members the commonalty of the realm.[l]

The Commons attack the wealth of the Clergy.

At this Parliament a memorable attempt was made by the Commons, which sufficiently points out their opinion on the subject of endowments. The Chancellor having pressed for supplies, they came forward in a body and, representing the immense wealth of the Church, which evidently made the clergy negligent in the performance of their duties, they prayed the king to seize part of their revenues, since by this action he would not only relieve the wants of the state, but would also confer a real blessing on the Church. The Archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Arundel, stood up to defend the Church, pleading that, though personally the clergy might appear useless, yet their prayers were of the utmost efficacy and were necessary for the welfare of the state. This argument, though sneered at by the Speaker, was sufficient for Henry, who leant on the Church for support in the throne which he had usurped, and he announced his resolution to do nothing adverse to the position of the clergy. The Commons, however, persevered with their petition; but, owing to the king's influence and the archbishop's arguments, it was promptly thrown out by the Lords.

Defence of the Church; which succeeds.

Another significant event which took place during Beaufort's chancellorship was the execution of the archbishop of York. On the refusal of Sir William Gascoigne to try him, he was brought before another judge, convicted of high treason, and sentenced to death; a clear sign of the diminished respect now paid to clerical privileges and exemptions.

Execution of the Archbishop of York.

At the close of the year 1404 died William of Wykeham, a prelate whose munificence will never be forgotten so long as the great memorials of his name shall flourish. To the vacant see of Winchester was promoted the youthful chancellor, who now from his ecclesiastical position and his royal relationship rose to high consideration in the land. Shortly, however, after his translation, on the

Beaufort made Bishop of Winchester,

[k] Rymer viii. 334. Henry orders this "appunctuamentum" to be proclaimed in every sheriff throughout the land.

[l] Rot. Parl., iii., 522.

and resigns the great seal.

twenty-seventh of February, 1405, he resigned the great seal, which was given to Thomas Langley, afterwards bishop of Durham.

No connected record of Beaufort during the rest of the reign of Henry IV.

During the remainder of this reign it is impossible to glean anything like a connected history of Beaufort's life.[m] He seems to have remained a member of the Privy Council, in which capacity he signed, in 1406, the important acts which entailed the succession of the crown upon the four sons of the king.[n] Probably during this period he was never wholly withdrawn from public business, as he only made a few scattered visits to his diocese; yet from the scanty memorials of the time we cannot trace any decided connexion with its chief movements. The obscurity is only broken occasionally by the record of an unimportant embassy or of some money transaction. In 1406 he was sent to France with three colleagues to treat for a truce, he himself receiving further power of treating for a perpetual peace and for a marriage between the Prince of Wales and a daughter of the French king.[o] In 1409 he was employed on a similar diplomatic visit to the same country.

Beaufort opens Parliament in 1410.

His speech.

At a Parliament which met on the twenty-seventh of January, 1410, there being no Chancellor, proceedings were opened by a speech from Beaufort, who took as his text the words "Decet nos implere omnem justitiam." In his discourse on this, he divided governments into two classes, the one "de jure regiminis," and the other "de jure subjectionis." In illustration, it is to be supposed, of the latter form of government, he related an anecdote about Alexander the Great, who, after the capture of some great city, asked Aristotle how he might most securely fortify it, by walls or otherwise. To this the philosopher replied that "the sovereign security and safeguard of every realm, is to possess the entire and cordial love of the people, and to maintain them in their laws and rights." His conclusion, therefore, was that the people owe three things to their sovereign, namely, honour and obedience, reverence and benevolence, and cordial assistance.[p]

The Commons, however, seem to have thought that the demands for assistance might with advantage be turned from themselves to another quarter. Accordingly their former project of secularisation, which had failed six years before, was renewed. Sir John Oldcastle brought forward a petition stating that, by confiscating part of the excessive revenues of the Church,[q] the king might

Petition of the Commons to secularise Church property.

[m] The only record of Beaufort in the latter part of 1405 is a grant made by the king on 30th November, to the Bishop of Winchester and his mother, the Countess of Hereford, of goods to the value of 100 marks, and some other goods. Rymer, viii., 422.

[n] Rot. Parl., iii., 576.

[o] Rymer, viii., 434, 435.

[p] Rymer, viii., 585—587, 599.

[p] Rot. Parl., iii., 522.

[q] The temporal possessions of the Clergy are estimated at 322,000 marks of yearly rent.

provide himself with "15 earls, 1,500 knights, and 5,200 esquires," and he might found moreover "100 alms-houses for the relief of poor people," more than there were then in England. Each earl was to receive yearly 3,000 marks, each knight 100 marks and 4 ploughlands, each esquire 40 marks and 2 ploughlands, and every almshouse 100 marks; yet after this the king, it was stated, might pocket £20,000 a year. A stipulation was added that "every township should maintain its own poor, that could not labour, on condition that if any were overburdened with them, they might be relieved by the almshouses aforesaid."[r] But with the king on their side the Church had very little to fear from these attacks. Henry repeatedly sent to the Bishops to assure them of his protection, and by the Upper House the bill was cast out.

Its failure.

On the twentieth of March, 1413, died the first of the Lancastrian princes; a man who, whatever may be thought of his usurpation of the throne and of his treatment of his cousin, certainly deserves our admiration for his political qualities, for his firm and judicious administration, and for his warm desire to do his best for the country which he ruled. He was succeeded by his more famous son, the future conqueror of Agincourt, and the determined supporter of the national Church.[s] The first act of the new monarch was to raise his uncle and former tutor to the Chancellorship. A Parliament which assembled on the twenty-fifth of May, was opened by Beaufort with a speech from the text, "Ante omnem actum, consilium stabile." There is nothing very noticeable in this speech, which states that the king intended to aim at three objects in his reign: the due maintenance of his own royal estate, the good governance of his kingdom, and the chastisement of his adversaries outside his kingdom; for the accomplishment of which laudable purposes he requires above all things the good counsel and advice of his subjects.[t]

Death of Henry IV.

Beaufort again Chancellor.

The Commons accordingly presented their petitions, the chief of which was directed against the pestilent heresy of the Lollards, a petition which the new king was not at all indisposed to gratify. If his father had chastised those detestable heretics with whips, he determined to chastise them with scorpions. A new ordinance was therefore issued against the heretical preachers who were at

Petitions of the Commons against the Lollards.

[r] Walsing, ii., 282. The tendency of these propositions is so decidedly communistic, that from them alone, if we had no other proofs, it would appear how similar were the tenets of the Lollards to those of Carlostadt and his followers at a later date.

[s] See the character given him in some verses on his son's coronation:—

"And Henry V. a noble knyghte was founde,
For Crystes cause in actes marcyall,
Cherysshed the churche, to Lollers gave a falle,
Gyvynge example to kinges that succede."—*Fabyan.*

[t] Rot. Parl., iv., 3.

this time being sheltered at Crawley Castle, the residence of Sir John Oldcastle.

Sir John Oldcastle.

This Sir John Oldcastle, Shakspeare's "old man of the castle," is one of the most remarkable men of his time, and in many points of his character is not unlike his sovereign and former friend, Henry V. In his early youth he had become a soldier, and in that profession had gained considerable reputation. At the close of Richard's reign he had been banished, and on this account he joined Bolingbroke, after whose accession his estates were restored to him. In 1409 he married a lady of the family of the Cobhams, whence he derived the name he is often known by of Lord Cobham. His acquaintance with the Prince of Wales probably arose during the wars against Owen Glendower, where his determined bravery was of great service. It is not known at what time Oldcastle was converted to the new doctrines, but he embraced them with all the vigour and energy which so markedly characterised him. It was probably the communistic rather than the religious tenets of the Lollards that attracted him; for he was too much of a man of the world to become a fanatic for theological principles. Violent, austere, and determined, no dread of penal statutes could divert him from his purpose. When the Lollard preachers were outlawed, he received them into his own castle, and the result of the new proclamation was that his castle was besieged and he himself captured. Shortly after this he was brought for trial before the ecclesiastical court.

Contemporary account of Oldcastle's trial.

The trial of Sir John Oldcastle is very instructive as an index of the views of the time, and its interest is enhanced by our possessing a contemporary account of it by one of the chief actors, Thomas Arundel, the Archbishop of Canterbury. That prelate writing subsequently to the Bishop of London encloses a full account of the "great trial," which he wishes to be published in the Bishop's diocese.[u]

Convocation having determined that, "to repair the rent in our Lord's seamless garment," it was necessary to put a stop to the teaching of the pestilent heretics called Lollards, of whom Sir John Oldcastle was said to be the "chief receiver, favourer, protector, and defender," the Archbishop of Canterbury resolved to summon that knight to answer for his conduct. Before, however, doing this, "out of respect for the king, whose friend the said Sir John then was," and for the order of knighthood, it was decided to inform the king of the matter. Henry asked them to postpone their proceedings until he had tried the efficacy of personal persuasion.[v]

The king attempts persuasion.

[u] Printed in Rymer, iv. 61. Fasciculi Zizaniorum, p. 433.

[v] Considering the way detractors of Henry V. have dwelt on his sacrifice of his personal friend, this offer of mediation deserves notice.

Oldcastle summoned.

But the king having failed in his attempt, a summons was issued ordering Sir John Oldcastle to appear before the ecclesiastical court. As, however, he took no notice of this, but shut himself up in his castle, "on which account a strong suspicion of heresy arises against him," the sentence of excommunication was fulminated against the knight, and the aid of the secular arm was invoked for his apprehension.

Excommunicated.

He is brought to trial.

On the day appointed, the twenty-third of September, Sir Robert Morley brought the accused before the Archbishop and the Bishops of London and Winchester, who sat in the Chapter House of St. Paul's. His offences having been recited "in good and gentle terms, and in a very soothing manner," absolution was offered to him by the primate. To the extreme surprise of that prelate he took no notice of this offer, but brought forward a schedule containing the articles of his faith. In this schedule, which is couched in very general terms, he professed his intention ever to believe in the holy sacraments of the Church, and his conviction that the "most worshipful sacrament of the altar is Christ's body in form of bread." Images he declares to be "ordained to be calendars to lewd men (*i.e.* laymen) to represent and bring to mind the passion of our Lord Jesus Christ and the martyrdom and good living of other saints;" but any one worshipping them or preferring one to another is guilty of idolatry. As to pilgrimages he holds that "he that knoweth the holy commandments of God, and keepeth them to his end, he shall be saved, though he never in his life go on pilgrimages, as men use now, to Canterbury or Rome, or to any other place."

Presents the articles of his creed.

Answer of the judges.

The prelates, having discussed these articles, answered that they contained "many good things and Catholic enough," but they wished for a fuller explanation as to his belief in transubstantiation, and in the necessity in the sacrament of penance of confessing to a priest ordained by the Church. To these questions Oldcastle absolutely refused to give an answer; whereupon his judges, with an evident desire to do their utmost for his conversion, postponed the trial till the following Monday, and drew up a number of articles for him to answer, which were to be given to him on Sunday, that he might have time for deliberation upon them.

The trial postponed.

Renewed on Monday.

On Monday accordingly Oldcastle was again brought before his judges, and again they besough him to seek and obtain absolution from the Churc but he refused, saying that he would seek absolution from God alon Upon this they requested his answer to the propositions they ha submitted to him, and this he proceeded to read. As to the doc trine of transubstantiation as stated in their article he pronounce

Oldcastle's answers.

it to be contrary to Holy Scripture, and said that it had been made up after the Church had been endowed and poison poured into her. Confession to a priest he declared unnecessary to salvation, "for by contrition only can the soul be saved." As for the honour to be paid to the cross, "the only honour he would pay to it would be to make it clean and place it in good keeping." With respect to the power of the keys as stated by the bishops, "he said that the Pope is very Antichrist, that is the head of the same, the archbishops, bishops, and other prelates the members, and the friars the tail;" which pope, archbishops, bishops, and prelates a man ought not to obey, unless so far as they may be imitators of Christ and St. Peter in life, manners, and conversation; and that he is the successor of St. Peter who is better in life and purer in manners, and none other."

His warning to the spectators.

Sir John then turned to the bystanders, and exclaimed aloud, "These men who judge and wish to condemn me, will seduce you all and lead you with themselves to hell: therefore, beware of them."

After this the prelates made one last ineffectual attempt to persuade him to recant; but finding him still obstinate in his views, they proceeded to pronounce sentence upon him, declaring him excommunicate, and "leaving him for the future as a heretic to the secular arm." Oldcastle was then committed to the Tower, there to remain for the usual fifty days' grace, after which a final opportunity would be given to him to recant, and if still obstinate he would be executed. But, before this time had elapsed, by some means or other he contrived to escape, and, joining his religious associates, began to meditate some desperate scheme. But the government forestalled him, and having attacked and defeated a large body of Lollards collected in St. Giles' Fields on the twenty-fourth of January, 1414, they executed all who were captured. Oldcastle himself escaped, and lived for some years in concealment in Wales, but in 1418 being at length captured, he was brought to London, where he perished at the stake on the old charge.

Sentence pronounced.

He is imprisoned.

Escapes.

His final capture and death.

The conduct of the judges often harshly construed,

from prejudice in favour of the persecuted,

The account of this important trial, if read impartially, does not seem to justify the harsh constructions which have been put upon the conduct of the judges on this occasion. Persecution in the abstract is opposed to our modern sense of justice; and consequently modern judgments on all actions which have any appearance of persecution have been almost universally harsh. Moreover, the habit is too prevalent of

[w] An intense hatred of the mendicant friars always characterised the Lollards. Wickcliffe first rose into notice by his denunciations of them at Oxford.

and from religious prejudice.

considering that all opposition to the Romish faith in the Middle Ages was an attempt in the direction of Protestantism, and that, had they been successful, Luther's work would have been anticipated. Consequently modern religious prejudices are summoned up to bias our judgment as to all attempts which were made to put down this opposition. Now it is very probable, if not certain, that these so-called "reformers" would, as a rule, have failed to justify their title to this name, if their aims had been crowned with success. The tenets of the Albigenses, for instance, consisted chiefly of no religion at all, or rather of opposition to all religions, especially that of Rome, which was most obnoxious to them only because it was the nearest, and because they longed for its wealth and were jealous of its power. The religious views which they did profess, but which were not recommended by their actions, were in all probability derived from the old doctrine known as Manicheism, which had been carried into Southern Gaul by the sect of the Paulicians. The next great opponent of the Romish Church was Wickliffe, who personally appears to have been a good man, although unfortunately such allies as John of Gaunt and Richard II. cannot be included in the same category. But his followers, the Lollards, certainly degenerated after his death. Throughout the Middle Ages the attacks upon the Church had been usually made not on its doctrines, but on its external abuses, the wealth and power of the Clergy. It was this side of the question that was taken up by the Lollards; but though reforms were necessary on these points, and though some of the Lollards undertook them from pure and conscientious convictions, it cannot be denied that the motives of the majority were pure selfishness and greed, motives which can scarcely give them a right to the name of Reformers. It must be recollected, therefore, that the blame is not wholly on one side; and in the trial of Oldcastle, although we may admire the inflexible determination of the accused, we cannot but observe with some degree of approbation an evident desire on the part of his judges to be as lenient as they could to the leader of a heresy which they deemed to be noxious, and to treat him with courtesy and consideration.

Opposition to the Church not necessarily reform.

In the case of the Albigenses,

and of the Lollards.

On the thirtieth of April, 1414, in a speech from the text "Posuit cor suum ad investigandas leges," Beaufort alluded to the recent disturbances of the Lollards, and their detection and suppression by the king. Had not the All-powerful brought this about by "his true and loyal servitour," these heretics would have subverted the Church, the Christian faith, and the laws of God, and have crushed both the spiritual and temporal constitution of the realm. The king, however, he added, wishing to make matters secure for the future,

Speech about the Lollards.

desired the advice upon this subject of the Lords, Knights, and Commons, now assembled in Parliament.[x] Accordingly the Commons, probably really alarmed at the late revolutionary proceedings, presented a petition expressing their horror of the heretical doctrines,[y] and the king issued a proclamation stating that the Lollards had purposed "to destroy him, his brothers, and several of the spiritual and temporal lords, to confiscate the possessions of the Church, to secularise the religious orders, to divide the realm into confederate districts, and to appoint Sir John Oldcastle president of the commonwealth." In consequence of this it was enacted that all persons suspected of Lollardism should be arrested and handed over for judgment to the ecclesiastical court; and that convicted Lollards should suffer the punishment of felons. The laws were made stricter against unlicensed preaching, the reading of Wickliffe's translation of the Bible, and other such offences.

Petition of Commons.

The King's charges against them.

Laws passed against them.

At a Parliament towards the end of this year, Beaufort seems to allude to the king's intention of making war against France. He says that to everything has been granted two stages. Just as a flower has a "temps germine," in which it bears flowers and fruit, so man has a time for peace, and a time for war and labour. The king, while thanking God for the peace which has hitherto reigned in his land, thinks that the latter time has now arrived, and that it befits him "to make war on his enemies without, and therefore, in the words of his text, 'Dum tempus habemus, operemur bonum.'"[z]

Speech alluding to intended war.

At this Parliament the Commons again brought forward their projects against the Church; and it has been stated that on this occasion, to avoid the attack, the clergy determined "to offer the king a great sum of money, and excite him to make war with the French, to assert his title to that crown, which, falling to Edward II. by marriage, was by him transmitted to his successors."[a] For this purpose, it is said, the Archbishop of Canterbury convened a synod at London, where he made a very long and equally absurd speech, to prove the lawfulness of the King's claim to the crown of France, and to urge him to imitate his ancestors by asserting it.[b] Unfortunately, however, there is no record of this transaction, and though it is certain that the clergy favoured the war, there is no need of this invention to explain either the failure of the petition of the Commons, or Henry's invasion of France; the former being a very likely event in any case, and the latter, as appears from the Chancellor's

Attack upon the Church.

Story that the Clergy urged on war with France.

Probably untrue.

[x] Rot. Parl., iv., 15. [y] Ib. 24. [z] Rot. Parl., iv., 34.
[a] Duck's Life of Chicheley, p. 47. [b] Ib., pp. 50-61.

speech, having been already resolved upon. It may, however, be noticed that from this time till the time of Henry VIII. the projects for secularising the clerical revenues ceased entirely. In fact the Lollards were gradually being crushed, and their spirit, destructive rather than reforming, soon ceased to be politically powerful, though it was secretly nourished by many, especially among the lower classes, until, handed down from one generation to another, it was finally gratified in the next century.

No more open attacks upon the Church till the reign of Henry VIII.

Before the king departed on his expedition, he had a testament drawn up, to which he added in his own handwriting, "This is my last Will, subscribed with my own hand, R. H. — Jesu mercy and gramercy ladie Marie help."

Henry V.'s Will.

First among the names of the executors comes the name of Beaufort, a fact which, one would think, ought in itself to have been a sufficient answer to future accusations of plots against his nephew's life.

Beaufort an executor.

On the Monday after All Saints' day, a Parliament having been assembled, Beaufort had the honour of declaring to it the glorious victory which had been won about a week before. Taking as his text the words "Sicut ipse fecit nobis, ita et nos ei faciamus," he pointed out that, after having made several attempts to recover his rights by a peaceful treaty, the king had at length determined to set out and recover them by arms. In this invasion he had "trusted wholly in his loyal quarrel and in the All-powerful God, for, in the words of the sage, 'Certa pro justitia et Dominus pugnabit pro te.'" And certainly God had fought for the king. After a safe voyage across the sea, he had laid siege to Harfleur, "which was the strongest town in those parts of the world, and the greatest enemy of the liege subjects of the king," and without the effusion of his people's blood had been enabled to capture it in a short time. Then, though he had left a large part of his forces in this town, and though his forces were much diminished, some having died of a sickness which God had sent as a visitation, and others having been allowed to return home, the king had nevertheless pressed on through the heart of France, and there, by the grace of God, had achieved a marvellous victory over "a great number of dukes, counts, barons, and seigneurs, and all the chivalry and power of France," with small loss on the part of the English. After that triumphant event, he had, "praise to God, reached his town of Calais with his prisoners, to the greatest honour and profit that the realm of England ever gained in so short a time."[d]

Beaufort announces the victory at Agincourt.

In the spring of the following year England was visited by Sigismund, king of the Romans, who came from the Council

[c] Rymer, ix., 289.

[d] Rot. Parl., iv., 62.

Visit of Sigismund to mediate peace.

of Constance to endeavour to settle peace in all the kingdoms of Catholic Europe, that thus all the monarchs might unite to put an end to the schism which was distracting the Church. Henry was really very enthusiastic in his desire for religious unity, but he was not particularly eager to give up the advantages he had recently gained in France. However, he professed the greatest moderation, and offered to resign his claim to the crown of France, on condition that Charles VI. should agree to perform all the articles of the treaty of Breligny. But the French were not likely to resign such a large part of their territory as this would necessitate, to procure the withdrawal of what was as yet, in spite of the victory of Agincourt, nothing more than an empty claim. To all these propositions, therefore, the only reply that they returned was an attempt to recover Harfleur, but this was defeated by the prompt action of the English fleet.

Henry's terms,

refused by the French.

But at this time signs were to be seen of the approach of an event which was to bring the greatest misery on France—the connexion between the duke of Burgundy and the English. The Armagnacs had now the ascendancy in France, and the duke thought that it might be possible to regain his power by means of the English. It is not probable that as yet he had any idea of forming a permanent alliance with England; he only desired to have the aid of that country for the humiliation of his foes. During the whole of this year he carried on a correspondence with the English king, and expressed his desire for a personal interview. Henry accordingly crossed over to Calais on the fifth of September, taking Beaufort with him on account of his talent and influence. At Calais Sigismund, Henry, and Duke John met together, ostensibly for the purpose of deliberating on the state of the Church, and the best means of restoring it to unity; but probably, as the French suspected at the time, of arranging such a compact between England and Burgundy, as would force the king of France to yield to the general desire for peace. But no such agreement was formed, probably because the duke was more solicitous of his own interests than of those of the Council or the king of England.

English connexion with Burgundy.

Negotiations at Calais.

Their failure.

On the tenth of October, Henry and Beaufort returned to England, and on the twelfth* the latter received again the great seal, which, during his absence, had been entrusted to Simon Gaunstede, the Master of the Rolls. On the nineteenth a Parliament was held at Westminster, which was opened by Beaufort

Beaufort returns,

opens Parliament.

* Rymer, ix., 385.

with a speech from the text "Operam detis ut quieti sitis." Just as the Holy Trinity had in six days made the world, and on the seventh day rested, so, he said, the king, having laboured from the beginning of his reign for the honour of God and of the English Church, and for the great honour and profit of his realm, now desired to give to himself and his subjects the seventh day of rest; for, in his war with France he had followed the maxim of the sage: "Bella faciamus ut pacem habeamus, nam finis belli pax."[f]

Declares that the king desires peace,

But nothing seems to have been further from Henry's mind at this time than peace. His great object was to collect funds for the vigorous prosecution of the war. A tenth and a fifteenth had been granted by the Commons, but they were not yet collected, and recourse was had as usual to private loans. Beaufort advanced the great sum of £14,000, for which he received in pledge a golden crown.[g]

when he is really preparing for war.

But his Chancellorship which had lasted four years was now to end. On the twenty-third of July, 1417, he delivered up the great seal of gold to the king, who gave it to the Bishop of Durham.[h] It is impossible from existing sources of information to discover what were Beaufort's motives in this resignation of the lucrative office of Chancellor, an office which he had probably turned to good account. It has been conjectured that his reluctance to lend his money had disgusted the king, but this seems highly improbable. It is not impossible that he may have really wished to resign; either from a desire to take some part in the important proceedings of the General Council, or from a determination to fulfil his early vows of pilgrimage.

Beaufort resigns the great seal.

Obscurity of his motives for this act.

This close of Beaufort's Chancellorship gives a fitting opportunity for some consideration of his position as a lawyer. A man of his power and energy must naturally be expected to have left some mark on the profession in which for some time he occupied the highest dignity. Unfortunately we can glean very little from the records of the time about his performance of his judicial duties. It is certain, however, that he largely extended the equity jurisdiction of the Chancellor, especially over the marriage of infants, probably with the intention at the same time of enlarging his profits. At a Parliament which met about the middle of the year 1416, the Commons presented a petition against this arbitrary extension of his jurisdiction,[i] stating that "writs of certiorari and subpœna are made and issued out of the Chancery

Beaufort as a lawyer.

He extends the equity jurisdiction.

Petition of the Commons against this.

[f] Rot. Parl., iv., 94.
[g] Ib., iv., 111, 112.
[h] Rot. Clans. 4 Hen. V. Rymer, ix., 472.
[i] Rot. Parl., iv., 84.

and Exchequer, for matters determinable by Common Law," which used not to be done. They pray, therefore, that if any such writs are issued in time to come, "the said writs and all the proceedings depending thereon shall be wholly void and held as null."

Another method by which the Chancellor had contrived to extend his jurisdiction was the old one of a legal fiction. Plaintiffs who had suits properly belonging to the common-law courts, wrote on the back of them some reference to the Chancellor, and then brought them before him. In a Parliament which met in October, 1416, the Commons protested against this proceeding, begging that any one who resorted to this practice should be called upon to answer "for breaking the laws of the English realm."

Two days before his resignation of the great seal Beaufort had petitioned for leave to go on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, and letters of safe-conduct had been granted to him for that purpose.[j] But before starting he took the precaution, one scarcely knows what against, of procuring a pardon for all offences.[k] This pardon is couched in the most general terms, and it is to be hoped that the Chancellor was not exposed to all the charges contained therein: probably, however, it was drawn up in a fixed form, and in those days of treachery and deceit it may have been a common precaution, much as people insure their lives in these days of railway accidents.

Beaufort obtains leave of pilgrimage,

and a pardon.

Beaufort seems to have lost no time in making his preparation and setting out. On the fourth of September he is at Bruges, whence he writes to the Bishop of Durham, the Chancellor, on public business, desiring him to cause restitution to be made to the burgomaster and échevins of Bruges of their goods which had been seized in a Genoese carrack at Plymouth, adding that, if this were not done, he felt assured that they would indemnify themselves with goods of the English merchants in the town of more than ten times the value. On the following day he wrote another letter to the Chancellor, stating that when he was at Calais the wife of one Roger Salvayn had asked him whether or no it was the king's pleasure that her husband should fill the office of treasurer; and on this point he begged the Bishop to answer her.[l] Now, however, leaving Beaufort to continue his journey eastwards, we must turn to a brief consideration of recent European affairs.

He sets out.

Writes to the Chancellor from Bruges.

From the beginning of the fourteenth century, Europe was scandalised by the sight of the Bishops of Rome, the heads of the Catholic Church, taking up their abode at a distance from their see and living in quiet subjection to foreign rulers. At length, in 1376, after the Popes

Popes at Avignon.

[j] Rymer, ix., 467.

[k] Ib., ix., 471.

[l] For these letters, *v.* Acts of the Privy Council, vol. ii., pp. 234, 235.

had resided at Avignon for more than seventy years, during which their grand old city gradually sank into the most lamentable condition, with its walls and monuments decaying and broken, and its inhabitants demoralised under the dominion of brigands and assassins, Gregory XI. betook himself to Rome. So wretched, however, did he find the city, that he was thinking of again quitting it, when his plans were interrupted by death. The Cardinals now met at Rome to debate on the election of a successor; but the populace of Rome, irritated by long years of neglect, insisted with threats and riot upon having a Roman or at least an Italian as Pope. At length, after long hesitation, the Archbishop of Bari, a Neapolitan, obtained the votes of the conclave, and took the name of Urban VI. For some time the Cardinals held to their choice; but so harshly were they treated by Urban, that at length, pleading his election to be invalid on the ground of intimidation, they withdrew from Rome, and elected a new Pontiff who was known as Clement VII. Thus began the Great Schism, which was to have such important effects. Clement took up his abode at Avignon, while Urban remained in Rome. To the former adhered France, Spain, Portugal, Scotland, and Sicily; to the latter, Italy, the Empire, England, and the greater part of northern Europe. For a long time this state of things continued, to the disgust of every member of the Church. Attempts were made to procure abdication on the part of the Popes. Both loudly professed that the unity of the Church was their chief wish, and promised to resign, but these promises they continually managed to evade. The Cardinals at Rome elected three successors to Urban, and their opponents, on the death of Clement, placed on the throne Benedict XIII. (Peter de Luna). Thus matters went on for a quarter of a century, till at length the very Cardinals who supported the rival Pontiffs, wearied with the useless and interminable strife, quitted them and summoned a General Council to meet at Pisa.

Return to Rome.

Great Schism.

Council of Pisa.

This Council, in 1409, deposed both the Popes then ruling, and in their stead elected Alexander V. This decision, however, being disputed, and the old Popes still retaining some supporters, the Schism was only widened, there now being three Popes to choose between. The only resource was another General Council, and in 1414 this was summoned to meet at Constance.

Council of Constance.

Never, it has been remarked, was there an assembly which had a better right to the name œcumenical than this Council of Constance. Not only were all the best men of Europe there, but there was also no inconsiderable representation of the worst men. The proper object of this Council was, in one word, reform. At the head of the reforming party was a very remarkable man in many points of view, Jean Gerson, the Chancellor of the University

of Paris. He and his followers aimed at two chief stand-points of reform: to restore, firstly external unity, and secondly internal unity, to the divided Church.[m] Besides this they wished to bring about such an alteration of the old state of affairs as to prevent the recurrence of such evils and abuses as Europe now groaned to behold. Their first step was to proclaim the superiority of a General Council to the Pope, and this they successfully carried in spite of the opposition which was made by the Cardinals. Then followed the shameless execution of John Huss, and the deposition of John XXIII., who had succeeded the chosen Pope of the last General Council, and of his two rivals. Now, however, came the really difficult and important point for debate. Though the Council had been declared superior to the Pope, could it continue to sit and to reform the Church, while the Papal throne was vacant, while the Church was without its head? On this point the Papal party took up a firm stand, and taking advantage of the late hostilities, they endeavoured to stir up the national pride of the English (for the votes of the Council were taken by nations), that they might give their vote against their adversaries the French.

Plans of reform.

Was a Pope to be elected before making reforms in the Church?

At this juncture the news was brought that Beaufort had arrived at Ulm on his way to the Holy Land.[n] Though he was not one of the English ambassadors, yet as a relative of the king, and a leading prelate, in a nation upon which so much depended, his presence caused considerable stir. Sigismund, who had met him in England, and again at Calais, wrote to him with his own hand to ask him to come to the Council. He endeavoured to reconcile the opposing parties, and his influence determined the vote of his countrymen. The day went against reform, or rather the day had not yet come for reform. A conclave was formed into which were admitted six representatives from each nation;[o] and at length after a long debate the Bishop of London nominated Otto Colonna, who was elected and ascended the throne by the name of Martin V. A consummate master of the art of Italian policy, Martin easily contrived for the remainder of the session of the Council, to evade all projects of reform, which were still brought forward and urged with all the violence of despair by the French and Germans. To satisfy the most pressing demands, concordats

Arrival of Beaufort.

His influence.

Election of Martin V.

[m] Michelet, Hist. Franc., lib. ix., chap. iii.

[n] v. A. P. C., ii., 236, where there is a letter to the king from the Bishops of Bath and Lichfield, in which they mention Beaufort's arrival. Some accounts, with strange inaccuracy, say that he was now on his way *from* the Holy Land; but this, if we look at the dates, is impossible.

[o] It is curious that, though Bishop Hallam, the chief of the English Embassy, was dead, Beaufort did not represent England now.

were drawn up with each nation, and of these that with England[p] may be taken as an example. It consisted of sixteen articles, hardly any of which affected in the slightest degree the relations of the Church of England to that of Rome. The chief and in fact the only important articles related to the two great evils, *viz.*: the plurality of benefices and the non-residence of Bishops;[q] but in both of these Martin makes an ingenious reservation, which he could interpret as he wished. No more dispensations were to be granted to hold more than one benefice, "nisi personis nobilibus et viris eximie literatis," who were the only persons likely to have a chance of such a windfall; and no one was for the future to be allowed the privilege of non-residence "absque causa rationabili et legitima." No evil measures were to be recalled, unless they were so evil as to cause scandal: a decision which is in the highest degree characteristic of Martin's general policy, which aimed at preserving outward appearances, while beneath them he secretly laid the foundations of his own power. There is one other article, however, which deserves attention, as bearing on Beaufort's subsequent position, and as a curious indication of a peculiarity in our national character. While Englishmen had been all this time inveighing against the Church of Rome, and by the statutes of Provisors and Præmunire had been endeavouring to destroy its power in our island, their national vanity had been secretly piqued because, while Frenchmen and Germans daily rose to the highest positions in the Church, an English Cardinal was a rarity, and only one Englishman had ever ascended the papal throne. This was a great opportunity for Martin, who pretended to aim at the gratification of the nation, though, as will be seen, he was really strengthening his own hand, when in the last article of the concordat he granted that henceforth Englishmen, with the single provision of fitness, should be raised to the offices of the Curia just as members of other nations.

Concordat with England.

Rise of Ultramontanism.

With the Council of Constance ends the old Papacy, and from this time we enter upon a new phase in the history and policy of the Roman see. From the election of Martin V. must be dated the rise of that principle[r] which in our own day has met with so much attention under the name of "Ultramontanism," and which must carefully

[p] *v.* Rymer, ix. 730-732.

[q] These articles were never held to by the Popes, and the English government does not seem to have expected it. Martin V. appointed his nephew Prosper de Colonna to the Archdeaconry of Canterbury (*v.* "Correspondence of Bekynton," i., 284); and Eugenius IV. gave to Louis of Luxembourg, Archbishop of Rouen, the Bishopric of Ely, which he administered for five years in spite of the protest of Chicheley (Wilk., iii., 426) who on this occasion seems to have made a ludicrous mistake, for the fact was that Louis had been appointed at the request of the government (*v.* "Correspondence of Bekynton," i., 4, 12). Nicholas V., bolder than his predecessors, adopts a dictatorial and insulting tone towards Henry (*v.* his letters, ib., pp. 156-158.)

[r] It must be recollected that it was only the *principle* which was introduced by Martin. He was unable to realise the *fact*, though he made several steps towards it.

be distinguished from the Catholicism of the Middle Ages.[s] Before this time, each nation had an independent national church under the government of its own officers, though partly owning and partly disowning certain rights on the part of the Church of Rome; and this state of things was recognised by the Popes, who, in fact, never aimed at anything beyond making the most of those indefinite rights, and by means of them gaining as much money as possible from the national churches. In late years various steps had been taken, such as the recent penal statutes in England, which tended still further to isolate the national churches. But Martin V., finding himself placed in an unexpectedly advantageous position, endeavoured to do away with the old state of things. His aim was,—and by the aid of a reaction in favour of the Papacy, he partially and temporarily succeeded in his aim,—to subjugate the national churches under the recognised sovereignty of Rome, to place his own officers at the head of these churches, and thus to make them colonies from Rome. With this object in view, and desirous also of recompensing in some degree the man who had contributed so much to his exaltation, he now proceeded to nominate Beaufort to the Cardinalate, and expressed his intention of making him legate *a latere* in England.

Martin's policy.

He wished to make Beaufort a Cardinal.

This was an extreme and somewhat premature measure, and as yet it could not succeed. The name of legate *a latere* was hateful to Englishmen, who knew by tradition the extortion and oppression of men who had formerly borne that title. Moreover there was a strong, dogged, English prepossession in favour of the long established primacy of the Archbishops of Canterbury; and the present successor of Augustine, a man in the prime of life, was not likely to stand by and see himself superseded, even by the uncle of his sovereign. Accordingly he wrote a vigorous letter on the subject to Henry V., recommending himself as the king's "humble servant and devout bedesman."[t] In this letter, which is well deserving of attention, the Archbishop reminds the king, that by his letters from Caen on the twenty-fifth of September, it had been "ordained that all manner of your subjects, what estate or condition that they be of, should abstain" from sending letters or requests to the new Pope, until he had written to the king and received an answer, "as it hath been accustomed of honest of your land." This order had been obeyed hitherto, but now the Duke of Bedford had requested the Archbishop to write and ask if the king had received any letters from the Pope, and how they were to act hereafter.[u]

Chicheley's remonstrance.

[s] See some remarks upon this subject in Hook's "Lives of the Archbishops of Canterbury," vol. v., pp. 38-90.

[t] For this letter *v.* Duck, pp. 115-31.

[u] Martin did not announce his election to the king till the 23rd of December, 1417. Rymer, ix., 535.

Moreover he is bound by his allegiance, and by his duty to God and the English Church, to open unto the King the following matter,—that it is openly affirmed that the Bishop of Winchester is to be made a cardinal, and to have the bishopric *in commendam* for life; that, moreover, he is to be made a legate *a latere*, which office he is to hold for life and exercise throughout the King's "obedience." At the present time he dares boldly to assert that the Church of England is, "blessed be Almighty God and under your worthy protection, the most honourable Church Christian, as well as to divine service as to honest living thereof, governed after strict laws and holy constitutions, that be made of them without any great exorbitances, or any thing that might turn to the slander of your foresaid Church or of your land, and if any trespass of man's frailty here falleth he may be corrected and punished by the ordinaries there as the case falleth." But this office of legate, of which he knows no precedent, and such holding of bishoprics *in commendam*, may turn to the evil of the Church and against the good governance of the land, as he trusts the king will in his "high wisdom" consider. That the king may know the real nature of this office of legate, he encloses to him a scroll, in which the regulations of the Papal law are given. But besides this a legate may have special powers given him by the Pope, "for it standeth in his will to dispose as him good liketh." On an inspection of "laws and chronicles," he assures the king that no legate *a latere* was ever sent to any land, and especially to England, "without great and notable cause;" and even then they never remained more than a year. Besides, even if the new legate resigned his office after a short time, "he might have used it largely to the great oppression of your people. Wherefore, most Christian Prince and Sovereign Lord, as your true priest, whom it hath liked you to set in so high estate, the which without your Gracious Lordship and supportation I know myself insufficient to occupy, I beseech you, in the most humble wise that I can devise or think, that you will this matter take tenderly at heart, and see the state of the Church maintained and sustained, so that all the ministers thereof hold them content with their own part: for truly he that hath least hath enough to reckon for."

The King's reply.

This letter was well calculated to gain the support of Henry, who, warmly devoted as he was to the Catholic Church, was especially careful of the interests of that branch which was established in his own nation. Accordingly he wrote to Beaufort urging him not to accept the Pope's offer, and positively refusing to allow him to hold his bishopric if made a cardinal, and, it is said, going so far as to declare that he would rather his uncle wore the golden crown of England than the red hat.

Beaufort had therefore to decline the proffered dignity, for, however much he may have desired it, he could not afford to

Beaufort declines the Cardinal's hat,

resign his bishopric at home, whence he derived that wealth which formed the chief source of his power. But Martin, though thwarted in his desire, determined to do something to honour Beaufort and to attach him to his interests. Accordingly on the seventh of January, 1418, he wrote to him from Constance, enclosing a copy of a letter which on the fifth of that month he had sent to the King of the Romans to request him to deliver up to deputies whom he should appoint, the person of Balthasar Cossa, late Pope John XXIII. He therefore, remembering the labours which Beaufort had recently undergone "for the peace and union of the Holy Catholic Church, and for the position of God and myself," had appointed him to be his deputy on this occasion. He is authorised to receive from the King of the Romans and Louis of Bavaria the Count Palatine, the person of the late Pope, and to draw up documents, as he shall devise, for the satisfaction of his late keepers. Of the whole transaction he is to write two accounts at least, one of which to be sent to the Pope, and the other to be given to the Count.[v]

and is appointed to receive the late Pope.

Receives the homage of the Bp. of Bayeux.

On the first of April, 1418, Beaufort with the Bishop of Bath and Wells was authorised by the king to receive the homage of the Bishop of Bayeux, this homage to be renewed to the king personally at the earliest opportunity.[w] In this year he seems to have returned to England, bringing with him an illustrious stranger.

Poggio Bracciolini.

Poggio Bracciolini, one of the great Italian representatives of the Renaissance movement, had gone to the Council of Constance in his capacity of secretary to Pope John XXIII. On the deposition of that pontiff, he remained at Constance amusing himself by watching the progress of events, of which he sent graphic accounts to his numerous correspondents. While here he met with Beaufort, who invited him to come over to England. What motive Beaufort had in giving this invitation is not clear. He does not appear to have been a very learned man, or to have rivalled, or attempted to rival, Gloucester in patronising learned men. It is possible, however, that he wished to gain some reputation in this manner, but it is more probable that he wished to gain the favour of Poggio, in order that, if he went again to Rome as he probably would do, he might there support Beaufort's interests. But at any rate the invitation was accepted, and Poggio came to England, where he received a pension from the Bishop. Beyond this, however, Beaufort, probably occupied with business, seems to have done nothing for him, and Poggio's letters display great irritation at this neglect. He speaks of his patron sarcastically as his "lord" or his "master,"

Invited to England by Beaufort.

His discontent.

[v] For Martin's letter, v. Rymer, ix., 540-41.

[w] Rymer, ix., 567.

who, he says, "continuo abest, vagus ut Scytha, ego autem hic dego in quiete, libris involvor." He complains of the pittance which is allowed him, his "peculium" as he indignantly terms it, which is barely sufficient to provide him with food and garments. His disappointed hopes are continually alluded to, and his painful experience "quanta fides adhibenda sit verbis." He declares that he cannot find anything in England to increase his collection of manuscripts, for though he has procured inventories of several monasteries, which are considered to be of ancient origin, he has found in them "nil exquisitum." He reconciles himself to his fate on account of the time which he has for reading and study ("nam herus peregre abest ut Scytha, ego opperior hic quietus et negotiis vacuus"), and he has learnt to disregard the promises of his "friend," who, he says, "ut verborum est artifex, multa pollicetur, et id in diem magis."[x] At length, however, not improbably through the influence of Beaufort, Poggio received from Martin V. the offer of the post he had held under his predecessor, and, having eagerly accepted this, he quitted this country, which does not appear to have made a very good impression on his mind, and of the manners in which he has left some not very flattering accounts.

He returns to Rome.

In 1419, Beaufort and the Archbishop of Canterbury were appointed ambassadors in France, to treat with the envoys of the dauphin for a perpetual peace and a marriage between Henry and the Princess Catharine.[y] This negotiation was being carried on with every appearance of success, when it was suddenly interrupted by the unexpected intelligence of the reconciliation of the dauphin with the Duke of Burgundy. The tragical death, however, of John Sans-Peur not long afterwards, led to a renewal of negotiations between the Queen of France and the new Duke of Burgundy, the result of which was the famous treaty of Troyes. By this treaty it was agreed that Henry should marry Catharine, that he and his heirs should succeed Charles VI., and that during the life of that monarch Henry should act as regent in France.[z]

Beaufort's negotiations with France.

Their failure.

Treaty of Troyes.

In 1421, Beaufort again appears in England, where, with the Duke of Bedford and Jaqueline of Bavaria, he stood sponsor to the infant prince.[a] After this he seems to have remained in England and to have taken his share in the not very important public business that was going on, until the death of his nephew the King, which took place at Vincennes

Beaufort a sponsor to Henry VI.

Death of Henry V.

[x] *v.* Poggii Epistolæ, vi., vii., and viii. These letters (written between March and July) appear from the allusions in them to belong to 1419, though they are usually attributed to 1420.

[y] Rymer, ix., 670, 703, 704. [z] Ib., 895.

[a] Walsingham, Historia Anglicana (Rolls Series), p. 342.

on the 31st of August, 1422. In his last will Henry did not forget Beaufort, who is one of the executors[b] and also a feoffee of a large part of the duchy of Lancaster.[c]

The Dukes of Bedford and Gloucester.

The death of Henry V. left at the head of affairs the Dukes of Bedford and Gloucester, two men whose characters were totally the opposite of each other, the former being as conspicuous for firmness and evenness of temper, as the latter was remarkable for the absence of these qualities. They seem at first to have felt strongly the responsibility thus suddenly thrown upon them, and they made the somewhat novel resolution of tightening the bonds of fraternal affection by means of a civil obligation, to which end a treaty was regularly drawn up between them. By this curious document,—which was probably never signed, for such resolutions perish as quickly as they are formed,—the two brothers bound themselves ever to be loyal to the King, and, after the King, to maintain the closest affection for each other, and to strive to promote by all the means in their power each other's advantage. They promise never to join any alliance without the other's consent, not to believe any evil reports of each other, and on no account to aid the designs of each other's enemies.[d] But the Duke of Bedford shortly afterwards left England, to maintain as best he could the King's power in France—a task to which he devoted the greater part of his life, and on the failure of which he died broken-hearted. Gloucester's temptation now came: he thought, probably with some feelings of elation, that now he was about to possess sole power in England. But he was grievously mistaken. His character was too well known for any one to suppose that his government would be for the country's advantage, and he discovered, to his disgust, that the baronial and ecclesiastical party had leagued themselves together to resist any encroachments on his part.

Their compact.

Bedford goes to France.

Gloucester's design.

Opposed by Beaufort.

At the head of this party, and its chief supporter, was his uncle, Henry Beaufort. It was political opposition, rather than any deep personal feeling, that caused those frequent collisions between the two relatives, which have fostered the supposition that the deepest enmity subsisted between them. To oppose Beaufort and the barons, the hasty and hot-headed Duke threw himself into the arms of the people—a line of conduct which has certainly sent his name down to posterity with the title of "good" prefixed to it, but which, to the impartial judge of events, will scarcely appear either patriotic

[b] Rot. Parl., iv., 399. [c] Ib., iv., 463.

[d] For this interesting document *v.* "Correspondence of Bekynton," i., 138-145. It is noticeable that Beaufort's name is not mentioned, which seems to show that it was drawn up very soon after Henry's death.

or honest. But this was as yet of no use to him in the matter of political power or influence. The Council, which rose to great power during the long minority of the King, steadily opposed his views. They treated him with the utmost deference, respectfully received his advice, but took good care to show him by their actions that receiving his advice did not necessarily imply that they would follow it. Thus, finding himself possessed of numerous high-sounding titles and useless privileges, but with no real power to correspond to them, Gloucester determined to seek absolute power elsewhere; and to this course he was doubtless urged on by his wife, a woman to whom he was certainly well matched, if similitude of character is sufficient to constitute a good match.

Gloucester's power only nominal.

Jacqueline of Bavaria was the only daughter of William, Earl of Holland and Hainault, and on his death in 1417 she was left heiress of all his dominions. Few women have undergone such remarkable adventures as were to fall to the lot of this youthful princess. Before her father's death, on the 29th of June, 1416, she had been married to the dauphin of France, but in a few months his decease left her a widow, and she now received from Charles VI. the addition of the county of Ponthieu to her other estates. The hand of the owner of so eligible a territory was eagerly sought after; but she accepted the offer of John, duke of Brabant, the nephew of the duke of Burgundy. This, however, was a very ill-assorted marriage, and the lively and high-spirited Jacqueline soon tired of her sickly husband. She applied, therefore, to Martin V., for a divorce upon the usual pretext of kinship, but it was refused. The aged anti-pope, however, Benedict XIII., who was still holding out with indomitable resolution, was more complacent; and having received from him a decree of divorce, Jacqueline departed for Calais, whence she sent a messenger across the Channel to beg for permission for her to go to England. Her request was granted, and she was warmly received at the English court, to which at one time she might have connected herself.[e] Henry allowed her £100 a month during her stay in this island,[f] and in 1421 she was one of the sponsors of the infant Prince Henry.[g] It has been suggested that before the death of Henry V. she had been secretly married to Gloucester, but there is no ground for this supposition, the marriage probably taking place early in the year 1423.

Jacqueline of Bavaria.

Her early career.

She comes to England;

and is married to Gloucester.

Now was to be seen the futility of all attempts to bind by means of paper treaties such a spirit as that of Gloucester, when his own advantage or his own

Selfishness of Gloucester's policy.

[e] Henry V. had wished her to marry Bedford, before her alliance with the Duke of Brabant; *v.* A. P. C., ii., 241.

[f] Rymer, x., 134. A. P. C., ii., 291. [g] Walsingh., p. 342.

whims pointed in a contrary direction. He had promised, if he had not sworn, about two years before, that he would never act contrary to the interests of his brother, yet he was now about to pursue his own plans without the slightest regard for those interests. The Duke of Bedford was maintaining at this time a desperate struggle in France, a struggle in which he displayed the highest qualities as a soldier, a general, and a statesman. One thing was necessary to him in this struggle; in fact, without it, success, as in the sequel it proved, was wellnigh hopeless: this was the support of the Duke of Burgundy.

Yet Gloucester deliberately, and without the slightest regard for any obstacles, set himself to alienate that prince from the English interests, and to disgust him with English faithlessness. The Duke of Brabant was the Duke of Burgundy's nephew, and it was well known that the latter would be in the highest degree enraged if an attack were to be made upon his nephew's territories. Yet it was nothing less than this that Gloucester, in his frenzy of selfishness, was determined to do. On the sixteenth of October, 1423,[h] he left Dover for Calais, where he waited some time for the remainder of his fleet, which, detained by contrary winds, only joined him at Guisnes after the lapse of nearly a month. He now united his troops, amounting to about five thousand men, with an army raised by his wife's mother, and, invading Hainault, overran the country and captured Mons. For a short time he and Jacqueline enjoyed this part of her possessions, during which they continued to beg Martin V. to confirm the divorce of the duchess.[i] But the Duke of Brabant now applied for assistance from Burgundy, which was at once promised him. The Duke of Burgundy urged Bedford to interfere and put a stop to his brother's rash proceedings, but unfortunately this was beyond his power. The Regent's entreaties, expostulations, and even threats, were all equally disregarded by Gloucester; and Bedford was forced finally to give up to Burgundy, as a peace-offering, the counties of Maçon and Auxerre.

He invades Hainault.

This sop quieted the Duke of Burgundy for a time; but the headstrong Gloucester soon overthrew all Bedford's hopes by suddenly renewing the quarrel with increased bitterness. On the twelfth day of January, 1425, he wrote to the Duke as the "high and potent prince, my very dear and well-beloved cousin." The occasion of this letter was the assembling of troops under John of Luxembourg: and Gloucester wishes to show the duke that "if proximity of lineage is of any avail, you should be more inclined to serve me

Gloucester writes to the Duke of Burgundy.

[h] There is a most wonderful variety in the date assigned to this event, some giving 1423, others 1424, and others both. The former date, however, seems certainly correct.

[i] *v.* "Wars of the English in France" (Rolls Series), vol. ii., pp. 392-3, 401-2. The same petition is made by Bedford (ib., pp. 388-9), and by subjects of the duchess (pp. 391-2).

than my adversary, seeing that my companion and spouse is your cousin-german by two lines, and that my cousin of Brabant is not so nearly related to you." Moreover he maintains that the duke is bound to them by a solemnly sworn oath, which is not the case with his opponent. In consideration of this and of all that he has done in the duke's service, he begs him to reconsider his determination to aid his adversary: but, if he will not, "God, to whom nothing is hidden, will defend my just rights, if you be regardless of your oath to maintain them."[j]

A duel arranged.

The Duke of Burgundy's reply to this epistle was a challenge to single combat, which was accepted by Gloucester,[k] and the combat was fixed to take place on the approaching St. George's festival. The Pope issued a bull forbidding this duel,[l] but the Duke of Burgundy was determined that it should take place. Gloucester, however, thwarted him by suddenly leaving Hainault and returning to England; and when, on St. George's day, the duke entered the lists, no one appeared to oppose him. The reason usually given for Gloucester's sudden departure is that he wished to make preparations for the duel; but this was probably only a pretext, the fact being that he was thoroughly tired of his wife, and had formed a new attachment to Eleanor Cobham, who was at this time one of the countess' suite. After his departure Jacqueline's prospects were not encouraging. The Brabanters invaded Hainault, laid siege to Mons, and by July forced it to surrender. The countess was given up to the custody of the Duke of Burgundy at Ghent, whence, however, a few months afterwards she contrived to escape. For three years, with occasional aid from England,[m] she waged a dubious war with the Burgundian forces, till in 1428 she again had to submit. Her further adventures, which did not end till in 1436 her chequered career abruptly closed in death, concern us no longer, as she soon lost almost all connexion with English affairs.

Gloucester returns to England.

Jacqueline's further fortunes.

This expedition advantageous to Beaufort.

This expedition of Gloucester's, ruinous as it was to the English interest in France, was of the utmost service to Beaufort and his party, and they made the most of their opportunity. One of the personal attendants of Gloucester—whether, as he himself says, actuated by a desire to do some service to Beaufort,[n] or hired for the purpose by that prelate, cannot be decided—sent him constant accounts of the progress of the campaign. There is extant, moreover, a letter to

[j] *v.* Monstrelet, ii., xxvi.

[k] In this letter Gloucester displays his sentiments towards Bedford. He will only accept of him as judge of the field, "because my fair brother is nearest at hand." Monst., ii., ccvii.

[l] "Wars of the English in France," ii., 412-14.

[m] *v.* A. P. C., iii., 271-4; iv., 334. Rymer, x., 374.

[n] "Wars of the English in France," ii., 396-400, 409-11.

Letter to the Council, probably written by Beaufort.

the Council warning them of the dangers likely to arise to England from this quarrel between Gloucester and Burgundy, which we are probably not far wrong in attributing to Beaufort, or, at any rate, to his prompting. The writer reminds the Council of the "vigilia ac sudores" with which Henry V. had toiled to unite the realms of England and France, and professes his amazement that the Duke of Gloucester, who had solemnly sworn to maintain the treaty of peace, should be now making war against the Duke of Burgundy, "the very root and origin of all the title, power, and authority which ye possess in the kingdom." "If the root is cut away, do not the branches wither? and if the foundation is broken, does not the building fall?" The Council, therefore, must beware lest they should gain the questionable repute of Hannibal, "that he knew well how to gain the victory but not how to use it." He prayed, therefore, that Christ the Father of peace would deign to turn their hearts to the maintenance of the treaty, lest, by the rashness of Gloucester, they should lose all power and rule in France.

Increase of Beaufort's power.

All these things aided to strengthen the feeling already prevalent in the Council of the necessity of opposing Gloucester, and so tended to exalt Beaufort as his chief opponent. In 1424 he was again made Chancellor, and on the twenty-third of February, 1425, it was agreed that, in consequence of the laborious duties thrown upon him in the absence of the two dukes, he should receive an addition of two thousand marks to his wages.[p] At the first Parliament which met in his chancellorship, on the thirtieth of April, 1425, he appears to be aware of the extent of his power. As if to show the nullity of the protectorate, he had the infant king brought into the House sitting on his mother's knee. He then declared the causes of the summoning of Parliament, taking as his text "Gloria et honor et pax omni operanti bonum." Dwelling on this last word, he divided good actions into three kinds, the first of which, the "bonum honestum," was specially the characteristic of the Most High, the second, the "bonum delectabile" was chiefly the part of the prince. Thus "glory" is the reward of the Deity, "honour" of the prince, and "peace" that of the people for the aid and support which they afford to the king and the state. He then went on to assert that superiors, even though they be evil, ought always to be obeyed by those under them, as the Apostle said, "Obedite præpositis vestris non solum bonis, sed etiam discolis." After this he dilated on the benefits of good counsel and advice, for "in the multitude of counsellors there is wisdom." The good counsellor he compares for three qualities

His speech in Parliament.

[o] "Wars of English in France," ii., 386-7.

[p] A. P. C., iii., 105. It was specially added that this was not to form a precedent.

to the elephant, because that animal is without gall, inflexible, and "immensæ memoriæ." He dwelt on the glories that had so far marked the reign of the youthful prince, for not only had the realms of England and France been well governed "in the sweetness of peace and quiet," but also many fortresses, camps, and strong places had been captured, which proved the saying to be true of the king that the hand of God fought for him. He concludes by bidding the Commons to contribute to the "aid and support of the king and of the state," by meeting on the morrow to choose a Speaker, whom they were to present to his Majesty without delay.[q]

Quarrel between Gloucester and Beaufort.

It has been mentioned before that Gloucester had succeeded in gaining the affection of the lower orders. More especially was this the case with regard to the citizens of London, who were devoted to his cause. Accordingly Beaufort had taken advantage of Gloucester's absence to secure the submission of the city by fortifying the tower with a strong garrison and a plentiful supply of victuals. In command of the fortress was placed an esquire, named Richard Wydeville,[r] who seems to have received orders from the Chancellor not to admit any one more powerful than himself. The sudden and unexpected return of Gloucester in April prevented Beaufort's taking any more steps in that direction. The Protector presented himself at the Tower, but was refused admittance. This exasperated Gloucester to the utmost, and, collecting a large number of his adherents in the city, he proceeded to shut the gates and man the walls. The next day Beaufort, applying for admittance at the gate by London Bridge, was peremptorily refused, and his retainers seizing arms, a destructive conflict might have ensued but for the timely interposition of the civic authorities, who managed to prevent bloodshed until the arrival of the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Prince of Portugal, then on a visit to England. These latter, after eight journeys backwards and forwards between the would-be belligerents, at length managed to patch up a hollow and temporary reconciliation.[s]

Oath of the Council.

The Privy Council, seeing the dangers which were likely to arise from this quarrel between the two chief personages of the realm, bethought themselves how they might best avert the peril. A form of oath was accordingly drawn up "to the intent of good and sure keeping of peace and tranquillity in this realm," which was to be taken by each

[q] Rot. Parl., iv., 261.

[r] Appointed on the 26th of February, 1425, *v.* A. P. C., iii., 167. This Wydeville may be taken as a type of the "adventurer" of the day. He was one of the handsomest men of the day, and married Bedford's widow against the orders of the king, for which he was fined a large sum. The last we hear of him is a duel with a Spanish knight. *v.* Rymer, x., 677, 828.

[s] Fabyan's Chronicles, p. 595.

member of the Council. The purport of the oath was, that they were "to withstand any persons, of what condition, estate, or degree that they be of, that would by way of 'feet' or else attempt or intend unto the contrary of peace and tranquillity."[t]

Beaufort's letter to Bedford.

Beaufort, however, was not satisfied with this precaution, and probably dreading Gloucester's popularity with the people, if, as he really seems to have expected, matters came to a civil war, he wrote a letter to the Duke of Bedford begging him, as he valued the welfare of England, in which, he says "standeth the profit of France," to lose no time in crossing over: "such a brother you have here. God make him a good man."[u]

Bedford comes over.

This placed Bedford in a most perplexing position. He had not long ago won the great battle of Verneuil, but he had not been able to follow up the victory, and the most untiring watchfulness and activity were required of him to maintain matters in their present state. However, he saw the truth of Beaufort's argument that the profit of France stood in the welfare of England, and he felt that it was no use to spend his time in efforts to reduce France, when England was in danger of a civil war. Accordingly, leaving the Earl of Warwick as his lieutenant in France, he hastened to cross the Channel, and summoned an assembly of the chief nobility to meet at St. Alban's. Gloucester, however, refusing to attend, and the time being spent in quarrels between the rival factions, the regent saw that the matter was not so easily set at rest, and, dissolving the useless assembly, he summoned a Parliament to meet at Northampton on the thirteenth of February. Meanwhile, to prevent this from being rendered useless by Gloucester's obstinacy, the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Earl of Stafford, and other delegates of the Council were sent to him to endeavour to induce him to be present.

Deputation to Gloucester.

Their instructions.

The instructions given to these commissioners[v] shed a great deal of light upon the way in which the Council dreaded the ambitious spirit of Gloucester, who was already suspected of aspiring some day to wear the crown. They were commanded to charge him, "as he loveth the good of the king and of this realm, that he fail not to be on the said day at the town of Northampton," and to promise him that "him so coming unto the king, at the day and place aforesaid, justice and reason shall duly and indifferently be ministered unto him in all things that he hath said or will say as for occasion or matter of the displeasure and heaviness abovesaid." If the duke object to Beaufort's presence, and point out the danger that might arise from a conflict between their respective followers if they met in one city, they are to reply that, to prevent all fear of disturbance,

[t] A. P. C., iii., 174-7. [u] Fabyan. [v] A. P. C., iii., 181-7.

Beaufort had agreed to dismiss "a notable part of the meyne which he is now accompanied with," and that they hope he will use his authority with his retainers to prevent any misconduct on their part. Moreover, if necessary, the king will take forcible measures for the suppression of riot and the maintenance of his peace. If he still hesitate, the commissioners are to give a hint of their suspicion of his intentions by saying that, if he "were in the greatest authority that he might be in this land, that is to say king and sovereign lord," yet, if any of his peers offended him, he could not without the highest injustice refuse to hear him in his defence. They were to assure the duke of the great desire of the Duke of Bedford and the Council to lighten "his griefs the which as he saith cause his displeasure and heaviness." If, however, he made a condition of his presence the taking of the great seal from Beaufort, they were to desire him to consider that no one holding office under the king could be deprived of that office except by the king's authority; and that it was unreasonable for a subject to dictate to his sovereign about the appointing or deposing of any of the royal officers. If finally he persisted in his refusal, they were to charge him to come to a Parliament at Leicester on the eighteenth of February, "at which Parliament the king will minister indifferently just law and reason to all his subjects of what estate or condition that they be."

"Parliament of bats."

Gloucester refused to go to Northampton, but agreed that the matter should be settled at Leicester, at which town Parliament was assembled on the eighteenth of February, 1426. "This," says Fabyan, "was cleped the Parliament of bats; the cause was for proclamations were made that men should leave their swords and other weapons in their inns, the people took great bats and stones in their necks, and so followed their lords and masters into Parliament. And when that weapon was inhibited them they took stones and plummets of lead, and trussed them secretly in their sleeves and bosoms."

Gloucester's accusation.

On his arrival Gloucester issued a bill of complaint against Beaufort, containing six articles. In this he accused him of having intended to shut the king up at Eltham, so as to have power over him: of having attempted to assassinate Henry V., one of his emissaries having been discovered behind the tapestry of the king's chamber and having been afterwards secretly made away with; and also of having urged Henry, while Prince of Wales, to rebel against his father. The accusations referring to himself were that Beaufort had had the Tower shut upon him, had attempted to assassinate him, and had finally calumniated him to the regent. To these accusations Beaufort issued a reply. As for the exclusion from the Tower, he said that, on Gloucester's return, the Council had heard that he condoled with the citizens of London for the tyranny which had been exercised

Beaufort's reply.

towards them and which he would have prevented had he been present. He also recounted various instances of riotous conduct on the part of the Londoners, how, for instance, certain low persons assembled on the wharf in the Vintry expressed a wish that they had the Chancellor there, for they would "teach him to swim with wings." After boldly denying the truth of the next four articles, he proceeded to justify himself in the matter of his letter to Bedford, which, he said, had been written with a desire not of creating feuds and disturbances, but of putting an end to all such.[w]

Beaufort opens Parliament.

The real business of Parliament was commenced by a speech from Beaufort, as Chancellor, on the text, "Sic facite ut salvi sitis." In this he makes no particular allusions, merely urging the necessity of protecting the Church against heretics, of giving good advice, and of granting liberal subsidies.

Oath of the Lords.

The Duke of Bedford and all the lords spiritual and temporal assembled in Parliament now took an oath to "proceed truly, justly, and indifferently, without any partiality, in all manner of quarrels moved or to be moved betwixt my Lord of Gloucester on that one part and my Lord of Winchester on that other part." Arbitrators were then chosen, and on the 7th of March Gloucester and Beaufort both published declarations, signed by their own hands, to the effect that they would submit themselves to any decision that might be come to by the arbitrators. The decision, after evidence had been heard on both sides, was issued on the 12th, and ran as follows:—

Their decision.

"The said causes, matters, and quarrels by us seen, heard and diligently examined, we decree and, by the assent of the said parties, ordain and award that my said Lords of Gloucester and Winchester, for anything done or spoken by that one part against that other, or by their followers or any other person and persons, afore the seventh day of this present month, never hereafter take cause, quarrel, displeasure or heaviness, that one against that other, nor never against the counsellers, adherents, or favourers of that other; but for all these things and them notwithstanding, my said Lord of Gloucester be good lord to my said Lord of Winchester, and have him in love and affection as his kinsman and uncle. And my said Lord of Winchester have towards my Lord of Gloucester true and fatherly love and affection, do and be ready to do to him such service as pertaineth of honest to my said Lord of Winchester and to his estate to do. And that each of them be good lord to all the adherents, counsellers and favourites of that other, and shew them at all times favour, love and affection, as for any things done by them or said, before the foresaid seventh of March." After this

[w] For Gloucester's accusations and answers to them, *v.* Fabyan, Hall, &c.
[x] For all the proceedings of this Parliament, *v.* Rot. Parl., iv., 295-301.

decision had been proclaimed, Beaufort had to make the following declaration:—

Beaufort addresses the King.

"My Sovereign Lord,—I have well understood that I am noised through the estates of your land, how that the King our sovereign lord that was that time being prince and lodged in the green chamber at Westminster: by the 'rees of a spaynell' there was on a night taken behind a tapet in the said chamber a man which should have been delivered to the Earl of Arundel to be examined upon the causes of his said being there at that time, the which should then have confessed that he was there by my excitation and procuring, to have slain the prince there in his bed. Whereupon the said earl let sack him and drown him forthwith. And furthermore I am noised how that I should have stirred the king that last died, the time also that he was prince, to have taken the governance of this realm and the crown upon him, leaving his father the same time being king: through which language and noising I feel my name and fame greatly blemished in divers men's opinions. Whereupon I take God first to witness, and afterward all the world, that I have been at all times, and am, true lover and true man unto you, my Sovereign Lord, and shall be, an God will, all my life. And also I have been unto my sovereign lord that was your father all the time of his reign, true man, and for such he took, trusted, and cherished me unto his life's end, as I trust no man will affirm to the contrary; never in my life procuring or imagining death nor destruction of his person nor assenting to any such thing or like thereto, the time that he was either king or prince, or else in other estate. And in like wise I was true man to King Henry the Fourth, all the time he was my sovereign lord and reigned upon me. In which matters, in all manner of wise that it like to you, my Sovereign Lord, to command me, I am ready to declare me furthermore where how and when it shall like you, by the advice of your Council, to assign me. Wherefore I beseech you, my Sovereign Lord, as humbly as I can, considering that there be no grounded proofs, by the which I might lawfully in these matters aforesaid be convicted, blessed be God, to hold me and declare me, by the advice of all the lords spiritual and temporal being in this Parliament, true man to you my Sovereign, and so to have been to my sovereign lords that were your father and your aieul, and true man also to have been at all times unto your said father, whiles he was prince or else in other estate, the said slander and noising notwithstanding; and the same declaration to be enacted in this your present Parliament."

The king's reply.

After this declaration, the Duke of Bedford rose and addressed Beaufort: "Dear Uncle,—My Lord, by the advice of his Council, hath commanded me to say unto you how that he hath well understood and considered all the matters which you have declared openly in his presence"

(no easy task for a child of five years old!) "and thereupon your desire and petition, and that he will declare you, and by the advice of all the lords spiritual and temporal being in this present Parliament, declareth you, true man to him, and that you so have been to my lords his father and grandfather, and also true man to my lord his father, whiles he was prince or else in any other estate: the said slander and noising notwithstanding: and wills that his said declaration be so enacted in this present Parliament."

Beaufort's address to Gloucester.

Beaufort now rose and addressed Gloucester:—"My Lord of Gloucester,—I have conceived to my great heaviness, that you should have received by divers reports that I should have purposed and imagined against your person, honour and estate, in divers manners for the which you have taken against me great displeasure: I take God to witness that what reports soever have been made unto you of me, peradventure by such as have not great affection for me, God forgive them! I never imagined or purposed thing that might be hindering or prejudicial to your person, honour, or estate; and for so much, I pray you that you will be unto me good lord from this time forth, for by my will I gave you never other occasion nor purpose not to do hereafter through God's grace." To this Gloucester replied:—"Fair Uncle,—Sithen you so declare you such a man as you say, I am right glad it is so, and for such I take you;" and, after a formal shaking of hands, the dispute was apparently ended.

Formal reconciliation.

Beaufort resigns the great seal:

In spite of the objections which the deputation had been authorised to make to Gloucester's possible demand for the removal of Beaufort from the Chancellorship, no sooner had the dispute been settled than the latter petitioned for leave to resign the great seal, which was granted.[y] We have no very clear indication of his motives for this action; but the probable explanation is that Gloucester had privately made this a condition of his yielding, although in deference to the arguments of the Council no mention is made of it, and that Bedford, in his earnest desire for peace, persuaded his uncle to make the sacrifice.[z] Beaufort now presented a petition[a] for leave to go on his long-deferred pilgrimages "beyond the sea;" and, this being granted, he began to make preparations for his departure.

Obtains licence of pilgrimage.

Policy of the Council.

But before he went[b] he had the pleasure of beholding the manner in which the Council were determined to prosecute his policy, and to oppose

[y] Rot. Parl., iv., 299.

[z] It is possible, though scarcely probable, that Beaufort was aware of the Pope's present intentions and wished to be away from England when invested with his new dignity, that the first storm might blow over in his absence.

[a] Rymer, x. 588. A. P. C., iii., 195. Ellis' Original Letters (2nd Series), vol. i., xxiii.

[b] Some accounts say that he left England in 1426, but he appears to have crossed to Calais with Bedford, who certainly did not go till early in 1427.

any encroachments on the part of the king's uncles, and especially of the younger and more dangerous. On the twenty-eighth of January, 1427, the Council summoned the Duke of Bedford to their presence, and the Archbishop of York, who had succeeded Beaufort as Chancellor, addressed him in their name. He said that they had no desire to diminish "in any part the worship or estate belonging or growing unto his high person or birth," but rather to increase it; and that they had ventured to send for him on this occasion because they remembered the "good and notable exhortations and stirrings" which he himself had made to them, to the effect that they should aim at the good governance of the realm, without any respect of persons. Moreover, now in the king's tender age the executive power lay in the Council, excepting the authority given to the Dukes by act of Parliament: and that therefore the members of the Council "durst not take upon them longer to sit there considering divers words that have been said before" as well by Bedford as by Gloucester. He, therefore, prayed the Duke not to be angry with them for thus summoning him, but to let them know "his good and gracious intent in this matter."

Their interview with Bedford.

Chancellor's address.

To this speech the Duke of Bedford returned a very gracious and satisfactory answer, saying that "first he thanked God that, of His great mercy, He had sent the king in his tender age so true and diligent a Council as he saw and felt then indeed he had. And, secondly, he thanked all my said lords that them lust so in the king's name for to send for him, praying them so to continue; offering him ready in such case lowly ever to obey to their sending, and promised forthwith, in the most hearty manner that he might, as it seemed in all things that might touch the profit and weal of the king and his realms and lordships, to be ruled and governed like as my said lords would counsel and advise him," begging them, if ever he went wrong, to tell him of it, and he would follow their advice. "And after that freely and of his own will he sware on the Holy Evangelists being there open before him, to be counselled and ruled by them and to assist them in all things that may be for the king's weal and profit, and to live and die with them if need be for conservation of the king's estate, his right, and his laws. These words and other gentle words my lord of Bedford said there so benignly and goodly, that for very hearty affection and truth the tears sprung as well out of his eyes as out of the eyes of all my said lords that were there present and heard him."

Bedford's reply.

He swears.

On the next day, as Gloucester was ill and consequently unable to attend on the Council, all the members went to his house, and there the Chancellor addressed him as he had done the Duke of Bedford. But

Interview with Gloucester.

Gloucester was by no means so submissive as his brother; he vowed that if he had done anything which touched the king's estate, he would not answer for it to any living man, save to the king alone when he came of age, and added, "Let my brother govern as he lust whiles he is in this land, for after his going into France I will govern as me seemeth good," which hasty speech only too well corroborated the suspicions of the Council and justified the former conduct of Beaufort.

Upon this the Chancellor expressed his hope that he would not be less gracious than his brother of Bedford, and told him of the answer that the latter had given them the day before. While he was saying this, Gloucester recovered from his first fit of anger, and saw that he had gone too far and expressed himself too freely. Determining to mend matters, he thanked the Council for their zeal and promised to submit himself to their advice, declaring "that it never was his intent, will, nor purpose, whatever had happed him to say before, to govern himself or by his authority, but by the king's authority, and with my said lords of the Council and by their advice and none otherwise." He concluded by a further promise to submit to their guidance, and he ordered his answer to be written down "in token that he would never vary therefrom."[c] It was noticed, however, at the time, that he did not, like his brother, offer to take any oath.

Gloucester's Petition.

This profession of Gloucester's was undoubtedly insincere; for, on the third of March, when his brother and Beaufort were well out of the land, he presented a petition in Parliament, insisting that the peers should state what authority he possessed as Protector and Defender of the realm, and till they did so he refused to take his seat in Parliament.

Answer of the Lords.

The peers now assembled in Parliament (the only one, it may be remarked, which was called between the times of Beaufort's departure and return), after considering the request, returned an answer which, though it certainly displays to advantage their sagacity and firmness, can scarcely have been very gratifying to Gloucester. They reminded him that, at the first Parliament after the King's accession, when Beaufort, the Duke of Exeter, and others were present, it had been determined that in the absence of the Duke of Bedford he should be chief of the Council, and therefore they had given him the name of "Protector," which gave no "authority of governance in the land," but only implied "a personal duty of attendance to the actual defence of the land." They stated to him in the plainest terms that all his special authority was as chief of the king's

[c] For these interviews with Bedford and Gloucester, *v.* A. P. C., iii., 231-242, where there are two memoranda of them, of which the latter and fuller has been followed above.

[d] For this petition and the answer, *v.* Rot. Parl., iv., 326.

Council; in Parliament he was nothing more than Duke of Gloucester, and had no other powers than such as belonged to him as a peer of the realm. They begged him, therefore, to be content with the power which he possessed, and not to endeavour to increase it; their answer, they said, was final and they intended to abide by it. They urged him to come to Parliament as he was bound to do, and aid them in settling the matters that were there being discussed.

Beaufort receives the Cardinal's hat, and a letter from Martin V.

Meanwhile Beaufort had crossed over to Calais with the Duke of Bedford. Here he was met by Salviatus de Genazano, who was on his way to him from Martin V., bringing from that pontiff the Cardinal's hat which had been offered before and which was now unhesitatingly accepted. The Pope also sent by the same messenger a letter to Beaufort, in which he says that, on account of his birth, wisdom, devotion, and experience, he had always thought that he would be a great support to the Church in every position, but especially in "that which is next to the highest." It had been, therefore, his constant intention to make him a cardinal, although hitherto prevented by the distance which separated them. Now, however, he begs him to accept the "pileum rubrum," and expresses a hope that beneath it, as beneath "an impenetrable helmet," he "will terrify the foes of the Church and confound the darts of the malignant."[e]

Martin's policy.

Martin had now, apparently, resolved to push to the utmost his "ultramontane" policy with regard to the English Church, and he had certainly chosen an opportune time, far more opportune than when previously he had wished to inaugurate his pontificate by bestowing the red hat upon Beaufort. In the place of the bold and uncompromising Henry V., the sceptre was grasped by the feeble hand of a sickly minor, and the head of the English Church, whether it was that his health was enfeebled, or that he had before been supported by the strong arm of his sovereign[f] which was now withdrawn, was certainly not the man who only nine years before had so energetically protested against any attempt on the dignity of the English Church and his own position. Martin's first step had been to elevate his supporter Beaufort, his next was to degrade the Primate.

Attack on Chicheley.

Chicheley, as Hook observes, represented that principle of a national Church which Martin wished to overthrow, and against him, therefore, were directed attacks which were also intended to shake the nationality of our Church. What specially excited the Pope's wrath was the little regard which was paid in England to the Papal provisions.

[e] Raynaldus, "Annales Ecclesiastici," vol. ix., p. 47.

[f] Probably his words contained more truth than he himself thought, when in his letter to Henry V. he spoke of his high dignity, "the which, without your gracious lordship and supportation, I know myself insufficient to occupy."

Accordingly he wrote to the two archbishops,[g] violently declaiming against the policy of the English government, and the cowardly submission of the English clergy. These provisions were contrary to the laws of the land, but the Pope bade them obey his orders rather than those laws, and in case of refusal he threatened them with personal excommunication.

His reply.

To this letter the Archbishop of Canterbury sent a very submissive reply, but, with an utter misconception of the whole case such as he displayed also on a subsequent occasion, he confuses everything and mixes up with his own exculpation that of the Duke of Gloucester, whom Martin had never mentioned. The latter at once wrote back to ask whether he had no better defence to make than to excuse a person whose conduct had never been called in question.

Letters in his defence.

If Chicheley's correspondence with Martin does not greatly redound to his reputation for intellect, there is abundant testimony at this time to the goodness of his heart. Roused by the sight of the degrading position in which the metropolitan of the national Church was placed, the clergy, the temporal lords, and the University of Oxford hasten to write to the Pope, deprecating his wrath, and expatiating fondly on the merits of the Archbishop. The University speaks of him as "the mirror of life," "a candle set up in the Church of England," and begs the Pope not to "suffer the credit of so eminent a prelate to be blasted by the secret calumnies of detractors."[h]

Another letter from the Pope.

Martin, however, seems utterly to have disregarded these petitions in favour of the Archbishop, and his next letter to him[i] is very energetic in its denunciation. Chicheley is called upon to remember that his ecclesiastical dignity was not given to him "to gain power over men or to heap up riches," but to care for the souls of his flock. So far was he from attending to his sheep that in his very presence they wander after poisonous herbs, "in his presence the wolf devours them, while he lies still like a dumb dog, unable to bark." The Pope then directs his wrath against the Statute of Præmunire, "if such a thing can be termed a royal statute, which destroys the laws of

[g] Wilkins' Concilia, iii., 471-2. This letter is addressed "Venerabilibus fratribus, Eboracensi et Cantuarensi archiepiscopis." That Martin can purposely have placed the Archbishop of York before the Primate can hardly be supposed; but perhaps Hook is right in his theory, though it is rather too ingenious to be implicitly relied upon, that he intends this as an expression of his policy, to signify that under the headship of the Pope all other dignitaries in the Church are equal.

[h] For these letters, *v.* Wilkins, iii., 476-9.

[i] Ib., iii., 482-3. By a very curious mistake, Raynaldus, ix., 42, gives this letter as written from Martin to Beaufort. He says: "Pontifex Henricum episcopum Wyntoniensem in Anglica aula authoritate florentem hisce litteris excitavit." Yet he gives the date as "anno x," *i.e.* 1427, a time when Beaufort was not in England but on the continent, and he was now a Cardinal, whereas the letter is addressed merely to the Bishop of Winchester. Moreover anything more dissimilar from the tone which Martin uses to Beaufort than that of this letter can scarcely be imagined.

God and of the Church." From this statute it would appear that the King, and not St. Peter, held the keys of heaven. By its infamous provisions the clergy are forbidden to feed their flocks, —that high command which our Lord Himself had laid upon St. Peter and his successors. To such a pitch of audacity did its authors go, that they ordered the bearer of the Apostolic blessings and censures to be executed as if guilty of sacrilege or felony. Yet in spite of all this the Archbishop remains silent. Why does he not imitate the example of the blessed St. Thomas, and raising his voice like a trumpet, tell "the people of their sins, and the house of Israel of their iniquities"? Let him go as soon as possible to the councillors of the king and bid them, "as they fear the punishment of those who break the laws of God," to do away with that execrable statute, and thus show their regard for the honour of God and of His holy Church.

Papal Bull.

This letter the Pope followed up with a Bull[j], by which he took away the legatine authority claimed by the archbishops of Canterbury "ex quadam consuetudine," and declared as null all sentences of excommunication, interdict, suspension, &c., which had been made by virtue of this legatine authority. The King, however, wrote to Chicheley, saying that he has heard that some Bulls had been sent to him by the Pope, and ordering him not to publish them, but to keep them safe till the feast of St. Michael, when they are to be laid before the Council.[k]

Beaufort formally made a Cardinal.

Meanwhile at Calais on the twenty-fifth of March, Beaufort had been invested with all the insignia of his new dignity by the Duke of Bedford himself,[l] who then took him on his right hand and conveyed him to his lodging. Shortly afterwards he received letters from Martin,[m] who had set his heart upon signalising his pontificate by the suppression of the heresy in Bohemia, stating that he had created him legate *a latere* throughout Germany and in the kingdoms of Hungary and Bohemia. He gave as his reasons for this the great wisdom and prudence which Beaufort had recently displayed at the union of the Church, his noble birth, and the authority this would give him. Moreover the heretics will not suspect him, and the glory of his nation will terrify them. He urges him not to decline the offer, but to offer up "has cardinalitii primitias." The Pope

Is offered the position of legate in Germany.

[j] Wilkins, iii., 484-485.

[k] Ib., iii. 484-485.

[l] Fabyan, 597. "Wars of the English in France," ii., 760. Bedford, probably irritated at Gloucester's continued opposition to his plans, seems to have been a good deal under Beaufort's influence now. A slight incident in Fabyan shows this. The citizens of London presented the regent with a purse of gold, "but the bishop had so incensed him against the city, that they received but small thanks for all their labour and cost."

[m] Raynaldus, ix., 49, sub ann. 1427.

also wrote to Henry VI., and desired him to persuade the Cardinal to accept the task, reminding him what a great glory it would be for him and for his kingdom, if Beaufort's labours should be able to root out that deadly plague from their midst.[a]

He accepts the offer.

Beaufort probably accepted the office without any reluctance. Probably, as some hints in Martin's letters seem to show, he was already hoping at some period to wear the tiara, and what would give him a better title to the favour of the conclave than the crushing of a heresy more formidable than any which had arisen before? Moreover he had a good deal of that warlike enthusiasm, that crusading impulse which characterised so many of his family. John of Gaunt, as son-in-law of Peter the Cruel, had asserted a claim to the crown of Castille, and had resorted to arms in support of it. Henry IV. expressed throughout his life a great desire to serve under the cross, and it has been seen that he did exert himself against the heathen Prussians. The last wish of Henry V., when lying on his death-bed, was that he might have been allowed to fulfil his purpose of going on a crusade after the conquest of France. A very similar spirit seems to have actuated Beaufort, and is to be seen in his vows of pilgrimage, which were not the mere pretence they have been supposed to be. In all probability, therefore, he grasped at the thought of leading a crusading army against the professors of a heresy, which, as a member of the Catholic Church, he abhorred, and which, from the connexion with Lollardism universally attributed to it, he had, as an English prelate, additional reasons for detesting. At all events he wrote an answer to Martin on the fifteenth of June, from Mechlin in Belgium, in which he accepted the onerous duty thus thrust upon him.

Preparation for the Crusade.

Martin immediately wrote back[b] overjoyed, and expressed his thanks, in the first place to God for inspiring the determination, and in the second place to Beaufort's goodness in offering his aid to the Church at a time of such need. He at once set to work to make the necessary preparations. He issued proclamations of the crusade, offering the usual indulgences, and large numbers collected round the standard, among whom were the Bishops of Bamberg and Herbipolis and Frederick Marquis of Brandenburg. Three armies were formed; one under the Duke of Saxony, another under the Marquis of Brandenburg, and the third under the Archbishop of Trèves. Some of the imperial cities of Swabia also sent men to aid in the expedition. The forces were united and a camp fixed before the town of Misia, which had recently been taken by the heretics, and which they determined to retake before proceeding further. The Bohemians with a hastily collected force were advancing against the foe, but the very

Invasion of Bohemia.

[a] Raynaldus, ix., 50.

[b] Ib., ix., 50.

announcement of their approach was sufficient, and the crusaders fled without seeing the enemy. At Thacovia they were met by Beaufort, who had not yet joined them. He upbraided them for their cowardice, and commanded and prayed them to turn, but it was in vain. While he was thus urging them, the Bohemians coming up attacked their rear, and the Cardinal was forced to join the disgraceful flight, which ceased not till the pursuit ceased too.[p]

Flight of the troops.

The news of this calamity, which reached Martin through Nicholas Bildeston, Beaufort's chancellor, was very dispiriting to him, but he did not yet despair. He wrote to Beaufort[q] commending the bravery and constancy he had shown, and urging him to raise a fresh army, and to press the German chiefs for aid. With the view probably of flattering Beaufort's love of power by giving the appearance of reality to his legatine authority, he added that he had heard grievous reports of the evil living of the German clergy, especially of the Bishops of Cologne and Herbipolis, and this state of things he hoped he would reform.

Martin writes to Beaufort.

But, in making Beaufort his legate in Germany, Martin had aimed at something more than gaining his personal aid in the Hussite war. He looked forward to getting some money out of Beaufort's country for the purpose. Accordingly, after this reverse he sent a papal nuncio, Conzo de Zwola, into England in order to persuade both the clergy and laity to grant a subsidy for the war in Bohemia. On the sixteenth of May, 1428, he was admitted to the Privy Council, when he presented Papal Bulls announcing the existence of a "pestilent heresy" in Bohemia, and requesting aid for the collection and maintenance of an army to suppress this heresy.[r] No answer was given on this occasion;[s] but we find in July of this year the Bishop of London with two others proceeding on an embassy to Rome,[t] but it is uncertain whether this was about the subsidy, or, as is more probable, to settle the dispute, which has been mentioned before, between the Pope and the Archbishop of Canterbury[u].

Papal nuncio in England.

Appeal to the Council.

On the ninth of June, Conzo came before convocation, assembled at Canterbury, and informed them of the "vexation and persecution of the heretics in

Appeal to Convocation.

[p] Æneas Sybirus, Historia Bohemica (in Freheri Scriptores Rerum Bohemicarum, i., p. 155).

[q] Raynaldus, ix., 51-52.

[r] A. P. C., iii., 295.

[s] There is no record of any answer to this request, but it appears from Beaufort's petition a year latter (ib. 330) that either now or subsequently the Council granted some forces.

[t] Ib., p. 301.

[u] What makes this the more probable is that in the petition of the Commons about this dispute they mention the "ambassadors that shall go to the court of Rome" (Rot. Parl., iv., 322).

Bohemia against the Church of God, and Christ's faithful and Catholic people, urging them on that account and requiring them on behalf of our most Holy Lord, and soliciting by all ways and means in his power a notable subsidy for resisting the said heretics."[v] In spite of this earnest appeal convocation seems to have been very unwilling to discuss the matter, and it was continually put off, until on the twenty-first of July convocation was prorogued till the twelfth of November.

Beaufort's return.

Meanwhile, in September, Beaufort returned to England, having been sent by the Pope[w] to use his influence in obtaining some aid either of men or money. He was received with great pomp, and the mayor and citizens of London, with whom when he left England he was not on the best of terms, went out to meet him and escorted him to his residence at Southwark.[x] Probably his crusade against the Hussites had raised him for a time to be a national hero in the eyes of the citizens, who thus had gradually forgotten their former quarrel. With Beaufort there apparently came over a second Papal nuncio, named James, who bore fresh bulls from Martin V. On the twenty-third of November, Conzo and James came together to convocation, and the former, reminding them of what he had said at his previous audience, handed the new bulls to the Archbishop.[y] The nuncios then withdrew, and the bulls being opened it was discovered that the Pope imposed a whole tenth to be levied in England for the Bohemian war. Still, in spite of the clerical indignation, nothing was done, no decision was come to or attempted. Convocation seems to have decided to leave matters alone, and either to let the state take the initiative or to oppose a dignified silence to such outrageous demands. The remaining sessions were employed in the usual occupation of trying Lollards, and on the seventh of December convocation was again prorogued till the nineteenth of October, 1429.

Another appeal to Convocation.

The Archbishops accused.

But the Papal nuncios were not to be put off in this manner. James appears to have accused the Archbishops of Canterbury and York of conspiring to oppose the Pope's wishes; and Chicheley, in a letter[z] which has no date, but evidently belongs to the year 1429, endeavours to justify himself against this accusation.

Chicheley's defence.

He begins by a general tirade against the malice of detractors, especially bewailing the manner in which they continually fasten on him. He has heard that one James has hinted to the Pope that, when the clergy wished to give a "notable subsidy" for the extirpation of the heretics, he and his brother of York opposed that wish. He has also accused them ("quod nemo crederet nisi insaniret") of governing the nation as they list, and

[v] Wilkins, iii., 493.
[w] Ib., iii., 495.
[x] Fabyan.
[y] Wilkins, iii., 496.
[z] Printed in "Correspondence of Bekynton," i., 255-7.

of being the chief opposers of the liberties of the Church. Of all these things, he says, God, his conscience, and the world's voice, acquit him. In the matter of the subsidy nothing was done without the knowledge of the Cardinal, and his advice had been followed in everything. When convocation was assembled, the demands of the Pope and of the King, both urgent, were laid before the clergy, and when the Cardinal had to choose between men and money, he had deliberately chosen the former; and therefore the question of the subsidy had been deferred, and convocation had been prorogued until the morrow of St. Luke's day, in order that after the expedition had been prepared, and this obstacle had been thus removed, discussion upon money matters might be renewed with greater freedom.

Beaufort privy to everything.

Had chosen men in preference to money.

In February, 1429, Beaufort obtained letters patent authorising him to proceed to the marches of Scotland, or into that kingdom, to treat with the Scottish sovereign on important matters "concerning as well matters of faith and the honour and usefulness of the universal Church as the honour and advantage of the two kingdoms."[a] The political object of this embassy was to persuade the king not to send to France some troops which, it was rumoured, he had promised, and to persuade him to keep on good terms with England. The religious object was to induce him to give some aid, either of men or money, to the Bohemian crusade. In neither of these objects does he seem to have had much success,[b] as the English government were not relieved of their dread of a Scottish alliance with France, and there is no record of any aid being given to the crusade. With characteristic caution, and probably with a very well-defined suspicion that his enemies, who were daily increasing their power, would take advantage of the slightest slip on his part, Beaufort professed that he dared not go on this embassy without special leave and licence, which was granted.

Beaufort's embassy to Scotland.

And certainly his suspicions were well founded, for his adversaries, enraged at the renewal by the Pope of his attack upon Chicheley, were on the watch for some opportunity to humble the Cardinal. They soon fixed on a plan of attack. By the constitution of the Order of the Garter, the Bishop of Winchester was *ex officio* the prelate of that order, and as such always officiated at Windsor Chapel, which was in his diocese, on the festival of St. George. Beaufort, who had held the bishopric for twenty-four years, was preparing to renew his duties on the first St. George's day after his return; but his opponents, headed by the Duke of Gloucester, were determined to

Plots of his opponents.

[a] Rymer, x., 410. A. P. C., iii., 318-19.

[b] Lingard (iv., 28) thinks that he was successful in his political object because the auxiliaries never left Scotland. But this was probably the result of other causes.

oppose his continued possession of his see as contrary to the law of the land, and they could not let this occasion pass of raising the question with regard to one of the most honourable, if not most important, duties of his office.

Discussion as to Beaufort's officiating on St. George's day.

Accordingly, on the seventeenth of April, 1429, six days before St. George's day, Gloucester caused a Great Council to be assembled and the matter was laid before them for decision. Beaufort's influence was still too great for any decided measures to be taken, but so jealous were men of the Papal power as represented by him, that it was decided that he should be directed to abstain from officiating on that occasion as Bishop of Winchester.

The Earls of Stafford and Northumberland announced this decision to Beaufort, who determined to make a resolute stand. Accordingly, on the next day, he appeared before the king at Westminster, and, stating that he had for twenty-four years peaceably officiated at this festival, he prayed that justice might be done to him therein, or that reasons might be shown to the contrary. Upon this, the matter was again referred to the Council, and the Lords replied that it was an unusual thing for a Cardinal to hold an English bishopric, and therefore they begged him to refrain from officiating on this occasion.[c]

Beaufort's petition.

On the eighteenth of June the same year Beaufort, nothing daunted by this rebuff, presented to the Council the "remembrance of things that I, H. cardinal and legate, ask and desire of the King my Sovereign Lord and of his noble Council on the behalf of our Holy Father, for the well sustaining defence and exaltation of our Christian faith."[d] He makes no mention of a money grant, probably because he knew that it would be hopeless, but begs that the grant of men previously made to Conzo de Zwola may "stretch unto the number of five hundred spears and five thousand archers."

Answer of the Council.

To this petition the Council returned a very cautious answer, which clearly shows the dread they had of Papal aggression. They agree to allow the gifts of goods out of devotion to the cause, but only on condition that "notable and sufficient persons" shall be appointed to receive the goods, and to report the amount to the Council, so that no gold or silver may pass out of the kingdom, but that whatever is given may be spent in buying merchandise for the expedition. As for personal enlisting, considering the decrease of population lately owing to wars and other causes,[e] and especially of "defensable men and persons like for war," they limited the number of men to be enlisted to two hundred and fifty men at arms and two

[c] *v.* A. P. C., iii., 323-4.

[d] For this petition and the answer, *v.* ib., 330-6.

[e] Epidemics seem to have been common at the beginning of this century. Poggio (Epist. vii.) writes "Omnem fere insulam pestis vexat."

thousand five hundred archers. After this we come to an important condition, which is probably due to the clerical part of the Council, still enraged at the recent attempt on their revenues, to the effect that the Pope shall content himself with voluntary contributions and shall not make "any common charge to be borne of any of the estates of the land, let it be clergy or any other." Another condition attached to the grant was that the Cardinal should use his influence with the King of Scots, to induce him to keep the truce he had made and to remain in sure friendship with England.

Beaufort agrees that his forces shall invade France.

So far matters had gone on steadily in one direction. Beaufort had been steadily losing ground in England, though gaining good opinions from the Pope and curia, and his enemies were looking forward to the time of his departure for Bohemia, probably hoping to ruin him in the people's eyes. But suddenly a new agreement made between the King and Beaufort disappointed all their expectations and gave a totally new aspect to affairs. In "the articles of the appointment made at Rochester the first day of July between the king by the advice of his Council on that one part, and my lord the Cardinal on that other part,"[r] was set forth the great jeopardy of the Duke of Bedford and the English in France, "like to be lost and subverted unless hasty and undelayed provision of succours and relief out of his realm of England be disposed and sent thither." In consideration of this, the Cardinal, "for the most singular love, zeal, and tenderness that he beareth to the security, welfare, and prosperity of the king and all his lands and subjects there," agreed to allow the forces which he had collected for the "expugnation of the heretics of Beeme," to serve in France for six months, and he himself promised to go with them in person. To prove that it was not in contempt of the Pope or the Church that this was done, but for the "necessary eschewing of open and evident perils," all the money expended by the Pope in wages or any other thing, was to be repaid by the first of May, and after that date the same number of men or more should be granted to the Pope for the same purpose as before. Messengers were to be sent to the Pope[s] moreover to assure him that it was not the Cardinal's fault that this delay had taken place, and to secure that prelate's "good name and fame." To Beaufort was granted, of the king's liberality, a reward of a thousand marks, and the wages of the soldiers for the half-year were to be paid by the exchequer.

The Pope indignant;

The news of this treaty caused the utmost indignation at Rome. The Pope was placed in a most awkward position. He had been throughout the

[r] A. P. C., iii., 339-344.

[s] On the fifteenth of July an embassy was despatched to Rome, probably for the purpose here spoken of. *v.* A. P. C., 347.

constant ally of Charles VII., yet now forces, raised in his name and with his money, were about to be turned against that monarch. The inference was unavoidable, but Martin wrote at once to avert suspicion.[h] In this letter he expresses his astonishment at the report that Beaufort, whom he had understood to have prepared an army which was just going to set out for Bohemia ("prout necessitas postulabat"), had been diverted from the cause of the orthodox faith at the time of its greatest need, and was preparing an attack upon France. If this report be true he begs the king to believe that this movement of the Cardinal is totally unauthorised by him, and as little expected as it is desired. Martin also wrote to Beaufort, upbraiding him for thus leaving the cause of the Church: but the Cardinal wrote back an excuse, saying that it was not of his own will but in obedience to a command from the king, a command which could not be evaded, that he had turned aside into France; and moreover that the forces which he had collected were determined to obey the king, and he could not compel them to do otherwise: he promised too that all the expenses of his Holiness should be repaid.[i]

writes to Charles VII.,

and to Beaufort.

The King of France replied to Martin's letter begging him to use his influence with Beaufort to prevent his invading France; upon which the Pope wrote back,[j] redoubling his lamentations, and telling him of the excuses he had received from the Cardinal. He again begs him to believe that this event, which is as displeasing to him as to the king, is not his fault, but that of others, "who preferred to prosecute their own private cause rather than the common cause of the orthodox faith." As the king requests it, he will again write to Beaufort, but he expresses a fear that further expostulations will be useless, because the English, on account of their distance from Rome, cannot be compelled against their will to obey the Pope rather than their own king. Martin's next letter to Beaufort forbade the Cardinal to wear the insignia of a legate of the Apostolic see while in France, and engaged on a work which tended "to the disgrace of the Pope and to his own ignominy and opprobrium."[k]

But however unfavourably this event affected Beaufort's favour in the Pope's eyes, there can be no doubt that it was a master-stroke of policy with regard to his position at home. From being an object of suspicion and dread to all parties, he was suddenly raised into a national hero, who had sacrificed all other interests for the benefit and salvation of his country. Beaufort knew too that the Pope's

Beaufort regains his power.

[h] v. Raynaldus, sub ann. 1422. On Charles VII.'s accession, Martin wrote to acknowledge him, and to promise him his aid and support. Comp. also Monstrelet, ii., xxix.

[i] Raynaldus, ix., 77, sub ann. 1429. [j] Ib., ix., 78. [k] Ib., ix., 78.

anger, which possibly was not so great as he would have it appear, could not last very long. His aid was necessary to the Pope's plans, and he had only to wait a little for a complete renewal of their old relations. Meanwhile he directed his attention to English affairs, to which he rendered great service.

Embassy to Burgundy.

On the fourth of October he went over to Burgundy, where he stayed for more than three months.[1] He finally succeeded in persuading the Duke to increase his efforts in the war, promising him speedy and effectual aid from England. While on this embassy he managed to procure for the English cause the services of John of Luxembourg,[m] Count of St. Pol, who became celebrated in these wars, and who, among other achievements, at length effected the capture of Joan of Arc.

Beaufort admitted to the Council.

At the end of this year Beaufort seems to have recovered almost all his former power. At a Parliament which met at this time, a resolution was carried to the effect that, though it was an unusual thing for an Englishman after having been made a Cardinal to be admitted to the councils of the king, yet in the case of the "Cardinal of St. Eusebius, commonly called the Cardinal of England,"[n] considering his relationship to the king, and the industry, discretion, and fidelity, "with which he had been notably endowed by the Most High," it had been determined that he should be admitted to the King's Council, in spite of his position as Cardinal. The only condition attached to this important concession was that he should withdraw from the Council if anything were debated touching the relations of the English realm with the Roman Church; to which Beaufort consented.[o] As if to show the reality of his appointment on the Council, some articles for the governance of that body having been agreed to, Beaufort's signature is appended, and on this occasion, as ever afterwards, his name comes before that of the Archbishop of Canterbury.[p]

Proofs of his influence.

This was certainly a triumphant answer to the previous attempts of his opponents to deprive him of his bishopric, and as such they seem to have felt it very severely. Moreover, additional proofs of his influence kept showering upon them. At this same Parliament, the Commons, granting a tenth and a fifteenth, expressly state that they do so at the request of the Cardinal, whom they specially recommend to the favour of their sovereign.[q] In January, 1430, Dr. Bildeston was sent by the king to Rome, on account of a report that the Pope was about to send certain Cardinals to France to mediate a peace; and he received orders to beg that these Cardinals may be

[1] Till the twenty-ninth of October. *v.* "Wars of the English in France," ii. 126.

[m] Rymer, x., 460. A. P. C., iv., 44.

[n] This is his style in all public documents, and is preserved by himself in his will (*v.* Nichols' "Royal Wills," p. 321).

[o] Rot. Parl., iv., 338. [p] Ib., iv., 343. [q] Ib., 337.

not unfavourable to the English,[r] and also specially to request that Beaufort, "qui per triginta annos et amplius interessendo consilius regiis studiose tractavit negotia regia ea statumque," may be present either as a mediator or as the king's ambassador, according as his Holiness should think best.[s]

Plans of his opponents.

All these proofs of the confidence placed in Beaufort naturally irritated the party of his opponents, who looked round for some means to recover the power they had lost. Their next manœuvre was certainly well-planned, and was successful. They saw that, as long as Beaufort remained in England, he was far too wary to fall into any trap, and that he would certainly keep the power he held. How then were they to remove him from the island? In accordance with the wishes of Bedford, the king was about to quit England for France, to be formally crowned in the latter country; and if they could but procure that Beaufort should accompany him, the field would be left clear for the Duke of Gloucester, who would of course be appointed regent during the king's absence. This plan they determined to execute; and at a Council[t] held on the sixteenth of April, Gloucester, dwelling upon the great services done by Beaufort, and the advantages which would result from his presence in France at this time, succeeded in gaining over the Council to his views, and by their solicitations the Cardinal was prevailed upon to consent to accompany the king to France, and to stay there as long as his Majesty stayed, if he found "at his thither coming that the lords and captains and other that go at this time also over with the king, will be of good rule and governance, and eschew division and taking parties one against another, by dissension or by their authority," for otherwise he would return to England, and report the cause of his departure to the Council. He made the most he could of the matter, by procuring a decision that directly the king set foot in France, the regent's authority there should cease.

He agrees to go to France.

Double government.

It was now arranged that there should be two Councils, or rather that the Council should be divided into two parts, one to sit in France, and the other in England. On this occasion, the rules for settling their relations were determined upon. Certainly no system could have been formed better calculated to impede that unity of counsel and decision of action which were above all things necessary, if the very shadow of power was to be preserved in France. The intri-

[r] There is one circumstance on which undue stress has been laid, as proving that the Pope favoured the English. This is the mention in A. P. C., iv., 71, of a loan of 2,000 marks by a certain "master Leonard, a retainer of the Pope, 'for the maintenance of the war.'" This has been represented as a direct loan from the Pope, but it will scarcely bear this construction. Martin V. seems to deserve the credit of a true desire for peace, and, had he favoured either party, it would have been the French.

[s] A. P. C., iv., 12-15. [t] *v.* A. P. C., iv., 35. Rot. Parl., v., 195.

cate arrangement of the references from one Council to the other must have put a stop to all real business being done; and one ceases to wonder on reading this that the English interests in France perished as quickly as they did.

The Pope's attempt to withdraw Beaufort from the king.

We come now to a rather curious incident, of which it is not easy to see the true bearing. On the sixth of November, payment was made to Beaufort of £1,000 for a quarter's attendance on the Council in France, but on the next day an order was issued which requires some attention. It begins by setting forth that it is understood that the Pope, at the importunate request of the king's enemies, is endeavouring to withdraw from the king the person of his dearest relative, the Cardinal of England, "qua, sine maximo nostri et universæ republicæ nostræ dispendio, carere non possumus."[u] From a desire therefore to defeat the "malice and wily manœuvres of the foresaid enemies," it is ordained that no liege subject of the king shall associate with or accompany the Cardinal if he quits the king's presence, without special leave and licence.[v]

Meaning of this.

It would appear from this that the Pope, probably at the request of the French monarch, had renewed his solicitations to Beaufort to cease hostilities against France. In that case, though it seems strange that Beaufort should have been more willing now than before to obey the Pope, the king would be perfectly justified in preventing Beaufort, even if he himself left France, from taking any of the English subjects with him. But another construction has been put upon this edict. It has been said[w] that Beaufort desired to return to his place in the English Council, for the purpose of raising up troubles there, and that to justify himself in this conduct he brought forward the Pope's authority. The only ground for this statement is the probability that Beaufort chafed indignantly at having to remain in France while his enemies in England were at liberty to intrigue against him. But at this time he kept up close relations with England, and once or twice he crossed the Channel. Moreover there is not the slightest foundation for the supposition in the order itself, which seems to point pretty clearly to the former explanation, and this is probably the true one.

Henry VI. goes to France.

Although it had been decided on the sixteenth of April, 1430, that Henry should go over to France to be crowned there, yet it was not till six months after this that he set out. The great obstacle was want of money, and it was only in November that, this difficulty having been got over, he crossed to Calais, whence he proceeded to Rouen. Here, however, he had to remain; for Bedford intended his coronation to take place at Rheims to rival that of Charles VII., but the road

[u] A. P. C., iv., 68. [v] Rymer, x., 472. [w] Rapin, i., 553.

being blocked up by the enemy's forces, it was as yet impossible to proceed. The court, therefore, was fixed at Rouen, and it was here that the French branch of the Council, at the head of which was Beaufort, held its sittings. In May, 1431, certain articles were sent by the Duke of Burgundy to the Council, representing the expenses to which he had been put, and requesting speedy and effectual aid. From the answer given to this petition it appears that Beaufort had recently been to England, probably to settle some matters of general business, and also to learn the state of public opinion there. "As to the thirteenth article, which makes mention of my lord of Savoy, for the matter of the deliverance of my lord of Bourbon, there has been some conversation upon this affair with my lord the Cardinal, who has lately returned from England. He says that he did not know that any conclusion had been arrived at there upon the business of my said lord of Bourbon. It is quite true that this has been talked of previously, and that some arrangements have made therein, but they were not at all entertained on the side of my lord of Bourbon. And so the matter has stood over. Nevertheless, it shall be ascertained whether, since the departure from England of my lord the Cardinal, any conclusion has been arrived at therein, and if it be so, the king will cause my lord of Burgundy to be acquainted therewith."[x]

Stops at Rouen.

By the bearer of this answer, Beaufort sent a private note to his "most honoured and beloved nephew," expressing his anxiety as to his welfare, of which he hopes he will send him intelligence. "And as to the matters on which your receiver, Jehan de Groos, has here been employed in your name, may you be pleased to take as agreeable the answer which the said de Groos will convey unto you upon these matters, committed to him by us who are of the Council of my lord the king, and hold yourself pleased therewith at this time." He adds that if there is anything he can do for the duke, he hopes the latter will let him know of it.[y]

Beaufort's letter to the Duke of Burgundy.

While the king was staying at Rouen, residing in the castle which Henry V. had built on the banks of the Seine to overawe the town, a most affecting tragedy was being enacted close by him, of which it is to be hoped the young boy knew nothing. On the twenty-third of May, 1430, Joan of Arc had been taken prisoner by the Burgundian forces, who afterwards sold her to the English. The great object of both Beaufort and the Duke of Bedford at this time was to revive the drooping spirits of the English. It was for this purpose that the young king had been brought over to France. But still more important for their purpose was the removal of the source of

Trial of Joan of Arc.

[x] "Wars of the English in France," ii., 193.

[y] Ib., ii., 194-5.

that magic, which, as they believed, had terrified and paralyzed the hearts of the English soldiers.

Heartless and horrible as the trial of Joan of Arc appears and must appear to us, yet it is surely incredible that the actors in it can have been such monsters of cruelty as French writers have delighted to portray them. Mistaken and misled they undoubtedly were, but it was as much the fault of the age as of themselves. From various sources we know how prevalent the belief in sorcery and witchcraft was in those days, and there can be no doubt that Beaufort and Bedford did believe that the influence which Joan exercised and the victories she had won, were the result of magical and devilish arts. We know that many of the French of her party were possessed of the same belief, and it was not likely that the English should be free from it, the nation to whom she had wrought such harm, and against whom she bore a hatred that can scarcely have been inspired from above. But that belief most assuredly did not justify them in barbarously executing a young maiden, from whom the devil might surely have been exorcised by some milder means. The death of Joan of Arc will ever remain a blot upon the names of all, both English and French, who shared in bringing it about. And certainly Beaufort cannot be absolved from a large share of the odium of this deed. Though he himself did not act as judge, yet the Bishop of Beauvais was merely his creature, and there can be no doubt that the Cardinal was the chief director of the trial. There is no need of a lengthened account of the trial which has been described so often and at such length by both English and French writers. Two scenes, however, of the tragedy merit some notice here.

Her confession.

On the twenty-fourth of May in the cemetery of St. Owen three platforms were erected. On one of these sat Beaufort and the judges, on another the Bishop of Noyon and Norwich and several ecclesiastics who had been present at the trial, and on the third was placed the prisoner herself, guarded by her gaoler, and William Erard, who commenced the proceedings by a sermon. After this the Bishop of Beauvais read the sentence of condemnation, which had been drawn up by the instructions of Beaufort. Joan was pressed to sign a confession, to which, after long hesitation, she consented. Cauchon now turned to the Cardinal to ask what was to be done. "Admit her penance," was the reply. The "sentence of grace" was then read, which had also been drawn up beforehand by Beaufort. "We condemn you out of our grace and moderation, to pass the rest of your days in prison, on the bread of grief and water of anguish, and so to mourn your sins."

Her execution.

But shortly after this she was discovered to have resumed her male attire, and this being taken as a proof of a relapse, she was condemned to the stake. On the thirtieth of May she was again brought out of prison and

led to the market-place of Rouen. There, on a lofty platform, surrounded by ecclesiastics, and robed in state, sat the Cardinal, prepared to behold the death of his victim. Condemned as "a rotten limb to be lopped off from the Church," and placed on a lofty scaffold that the huge multitude might behold her, the deliverer of France perished in the flames with the word "Jesus" on her lips.

The King proceeds to Paris.

Beaufort now turned his attention to the second great object he had in view. After a long delay at Rouen, the roads to Rheims being still dangerous, it was at length determined that the coronation should take place at Paris. Accordingly at the end of November the king set out for that city, which he entered with great pomp on the second of December. Shows and masques were acted before the prince as he passed through the streets, accompanied by large bodies of the chief citizens. But the Parisians, though, as usual, they could not refrain from joining the procession and the sight-seeing, felt sad at heart. They could not forget that they were viewing the magnificence of foreigners and of conquerors. Sismondi[x] tells us how, "as the convoy passed before the Hotel de Saint Paul, the Queen Isabella of Bavaria, the widow of Charles VI. and grandmother of Henry IV., stood at the window with her ladies. Forgotten by the whole world, unable to maintain more than a small suite, she lived in this palace, surrounded by souvenirs of a monarchy which had fallen to pieces around her. The boy as he passed, took off his hat and saluted her graciously; she humbly returned his salute, and turned away to weep."

His coronation.

The coronation took place on the sixteenth of December, and was celebrated by Beaufort, to the great discontent of the Bishop of Paris. On this occasion the Cardinal presented a golden ring to the King, which afterwards formed part of the wedding ring of the ill-fated Margaret of Anjou.[a] The festivities after the coronation were on a very grand scale, but were marked by none of the old customs so familiar to the citizens of Paris. There were no largesses to the people, no release of prisoners, "so that all the ceremony by which the English intended to render their young king more popular, left in the minds of the Parisians only discontent and disgust."[b] A few days after this ceremony the king was taken back to Rouen and there he spent Christmas.

Gloucester made Lieutenant of England.

During the King's absence in France, Gloucester had been appointed lieutenant of England, and he received all the executive power possessed by the monarch. He was authorised to hold Parliaments and Councils, and to ordain such things as should be necessary for the king and the realm; to grant congés d'élire for the election of Bishops, and to restore to them their temporalities. But to all

[x] "Histoire des Français," xiii., 207. [a] Rymer, xi., 76. [b] Sismondi, xiii., 208.

this was added the important restriction, that he should in all these matters act by the advice of the Council and not otherwise.[c]

His policy and power.

He now, however, set himself to increase his popularity, and with this end in view he vigorously prosecuted the persecution of the Lollards. He also aimed at amassing wealth that he might thus be able to cope with Beaufort on more equal terms. In November, 1431, he succeeded in inducing the Council to increase his salary to six thousand marks while the king was away, and five thousand after his return, "in consideration of the great expense and labour which the Duke has often sustained, as well in the King's presence as in his absence, in the good government and preservation of the kingdom against rebels, traitors, and enemies, particularly lately in the apprehension and execution of the heretic calling himself Jack Sharp." To show the ascendancy he had now gained in the Council, and to give a back-handed blow to all pretensions of Beaufort, it is stated that the grant has been made to him "for the better maintenance of his rank, and that he might always have followers about him for the defence of the Church, the Catholic faith, and the true subjects thereof, as him to whom, after the King and his eldest uncle the Duke of Bedford, they ought to have their chief recourse in all their necessities and distresses."[d]

Plans of Beaufort's opponents.

But Beaufort's enemies did not content themselves with these indirect attacks upon him. They took advantage of his absence to bring forward the old complaint about his keeping possession of his English see, after having been made a Cardinal. Their persistent recurrence to this point must not be taken as indicating an abstract regard for the liberties of the English Church. They knew that it was the revenues of his bishopric, the richest in England, that formed the basis of Beaufort's power, and it was of these revenues that they wished to deprive him. Their previous attempt, which had been made indirectly against his officiating on St. George's day, had only temporarily succeeded even as far as that point was concerned,[e] and his hold on his see was undisturbed. Since that time the Cardinal had been too powerful for his opponents to think of renewing their attack. But now, when he and his chief supporters in the Council were absent in France, the time appeared singularly opportune, and the government, that is the Duke of Gloucester, determined to take the matter up seriously. The King's attorney opened the case before a Great Council on the sixth of November, 1431.[f] The chief precedents he adduced were those of Langham and Kilwardby, who had been obliged to resign the see of Canterbury, when

Proceedings against him before a Great Council.

[c] A. P. C., iv.

[d] Ib., 105-106.

[e] It is certain that Beaufort officiated several times after this on St. George's day, *e.g.* in 1433, 1435, and 1442.

[f] For these proceedings *v.* A. P. C., iv., 100 et seq.

made Cardinals. He therefore required that the Cardinal of St. Eusebius should be removed from the Bishopric of Winchester. After this Gloucester stood up, and asked the Bishop of Worcester whether it was a fact that Beaufort had purchased an exemption of his diocese from the jurisdiction of the Archbishop of Canterbury. The Bishop replied, after some hesitation, that he had heard so from the Bishop of Lichfield, who had himself purchased the exemption, and had been repaid by the Cardinal. Though the Bishop of Lichfield was present, he seems never to have been questioned on the point, and the only evidence brought forward being this hearsay testimony of the Bishop of Worcester, the chancellor proceeded to ask for the decision of the lords assembled. This was that, in consideration of the Cardinal's relationship to the King and his services to the state, no further proceedings should be taken in the matter until he should return.

Proceedings before Privy Council.

But Gloucester was not discouraged. If a Great Council would not serve his purpose, the Privy Council was more devoted to him, and to it he would now refer the matter. Accordingly, on the twenty-eighth of the same month, at a meeting of the Privy Council,[s] the subject was again brought forward, and it was ordered that writs of præmunire facias should be sealed against the Cardinal. The Abbot of Chertsey, however, Beaufort's vicar-general, protested against these proceedings, and dwelt upon the injustice and unseemliness of condemning in his absence a prelate, so nearly related to their sovereign, who had done so much for the state, and who had gone into France at the special request of that Council which now wished to pass this sentence upon him. The Council would not agree to annul the writs, but they consented, in spite of Gloucester's protests, that the execution of them should be deferred until the return of the king.

Beaufort obtains leave to go to Rome.

Henry VI. left Rouen early in 1432, and crossing to Dover, arrived in London on the ninth of February, where he was received with the most magnificent demonstrations of joy. As far as Calais he was accompanied by Beaufort, who did not cross over to England, but obtained leave to go to Rome, pleading the orders of the Pope. When, however, he had got as far as Flanders on his journey, he seems to have heard of the sentence that was hanging over his head, and he instantly determined by a bold stroke of policy to confound his malicious opponents. Accordingly, he straightway set out for England, and suddenly appearing in Parliament, he declared the object of his arrival to be the assertion of his loyalty and the removal of the stain that had fallen on his fame and honour; and demanded to be confronted with his accusers. Gloucester was too

Suddenly appears in England.

[s] *v.* A. P. C., iv., 103-5.

much taken aback to make any open opposition, and the lords, after a short deliberation, answered that no one accused him or suspected him, and that the king held him to be his loyal subject. Beaufort thanked them for this answer, and prayed that certain good and jewels of his which had been seized at Sandwich might be restored to him. In this matter, however, considering "evidentem regnicolarum paupertatem," and wishing to display his zeal for the public good, he agreed to lend the king £6,000, on condition that within six years the causes of the arrest of his goods[h] should be declared to the king or to his successor, and if it is then decided that the seizure was just and lawful, the £6,000 is to be kept by the king, but otherwise it is to be restored to him. The Cardinal also agreed, in consideration of the poverty of the exchequer, to lend an additional sum of £6,000, for the payment of which the lords of the Council are to give security. On these conditions, and because of his great services, the lords agreed to restore to Beaufort his goods and jewels, with the reservation that if the Duke of Gloucester should chance to discover that he had any claim on part of these goods, he should be satisfied by the king out of the £6,000 above mentioned.

The Commons petition for his pardon.

There still, however, remained against Beaufort the writs of præmunire which had been sealed by the Privy Council on the twenty-eighth of November last. From all fear on this score Beaufort was released by a petition of the Commons, who prayed that no proceedings might be taken against Beaufort, who had rendered such services to the king and to his father, for having broken the Statute of Provisors, "ou par cause d'ascun exemption, resceit, acceptation, admission, ou execution d'ascunx bulles papalles." To this petition the answer was returned, "Facta prout petitur quantum ad præsentem Cardinalem et omnes alios qui occasione ejusdem Cardinalis impeti poterunt vel implacitari."[i]

Beaufort's success.

Thus, by a single move, Beaufort had raised himself from a position of the utmost danger to the height of his former power. His opponents lay

[h] This seizure of Beaufort's goods is inexplicable from the documentary evidence that we possess. When and why were they seized? The only solution that appears probable is that they were being prepared in England for Beaufort to take with him to Rome, when they were seized upon the plea that they were going to be exported without leave, which was forbidden by the laws. In that case the news of their seizure would have been one of the causes which brought Beaufort from Flanders.

[i] For the proceedings at this Parliament *v.* Rot. Parl., iv., 390-393, and Rymer x., 516-518. The order of these events given above, which is that of the Rolls, seems far the more natural. Lingard, however, has taken the order given in Rymer, but his whole account of these events is highly improbable. For instance, he states that the petition of the Commons was assented to before Beaufort's appearance in Parliament. Is it likely that Gloucester and his party, after having taken so much trouble to gain his condemnation, would quietly let him be acquitted without opposition, unless they were deterred by his presence, or were frightened by his previous success in procuring the passing of the former measures?

prostrate. It is a sure sign of Beaufort's political talents and vigour that the only time when his enemies could gain any advantage over him was in his absence. If he were present they were powerless. Even when he was so far distant as Rouen, they did not dare to make their attempt to deprive him of his see: they had to wait until he was just setting out for Paris, and could not possibly come over. But while he was thus enjoying the fruits of his sudden victory in England, affairs in France were taking a turn not very favourable to the national interests.

Quarrel between Bedford and the Duke of Burgundy.

On the thirteenth of November, 1432, the Duchess of Bedford died. This was a most fatal event for the English cause, which wholly depended upon the support of the Duke of Burgundy. Between that duke and Bedford a gradual estrangement had for some time been growing up, and it was only by the greatest efforts that the Duchess of Bedford had managed to keep matters straight between her husband and her brother. Now the last link of connexion was snapped. To make matters worse, Bedford precipitately married again Jacquetta of Luxembourg, the niece of the celebrated John of Luxembourg. This still further enraged the Duke of Burgundy, who had never been consulted in the matter, though the house of Luxembourg were his subjects, and were moreover related to him. He had long thought that the English were using him as their tool, and he wished to free himself from his disagreeable bonds.

Beaufort attempts to reconcile them.

The breach insensibly widened. Beaufort exerted all his influence to reconcile the two dukes, but in vain. He even succeeded so far as to secure a personal interview between them at St. Omer. Both came to the town, but neither would consent to the humiliation of making the first advances, and the brothers-in-law separated without exchanging a word.

Ambassadors from Burgundy to England.

Two months after this ambassadors were sent by the Duke of Burgundy into England to discuss the projects of the Pope for the mediation of peace. These ambassadors have left their own account of this embassy, which gives us a most interesting glimpse into the state of political matters in England at this time.

Their interview with the Cardinal.

On the morning after their arrival in London, "as we were going to the mass of my lord the Cardinal, we presented to him your letters, and said unto him all that we thought would be profitable for the good and expedition of our charge. The said lord Cardinal received us very graciously, and asked a great deal about you, promising to employ himself in all that he thought likely to forward your pleasure and our discharge. But, truly, we did find him somewhat stranger than before this we have been accustomed to do." After this, they had an audience of the king ("who is a very beautiful child, and

well grown") who told them to come before his Council on the Tuesday or Wednesday following.

On Wednesday, therefore, they explained their authority to the Council, and then were requested to state the matter privately to the Cardinal, the Archbishop of York, and the Earl of Warwick. The next day, at the house of the Cardinal, they told them of the duke's plans with respect to the dukes of Brittany and Richemont, and of his intention to speak to the Duke of Savoy, and to try to gain him over to the interests of England. "These things they took in very good part; and, after many questions thereupon made, we told them that it appeared to many wise and notable men that, if the king wished to put an end to this war, it would be necessary that he should be assisted by the great and powerful lords of the kingdom of France and the neighbouring countries, and that with his power in England he should find means of contenting them with lands, estates, money, etc."

Their second interview.

They received a formal answer from the king on Tuesday the sixth of July, but were referred to Beaufort for the answers to the matters privately stated in his presence. "And on the same day we went to my said lord the Cardinal who told us in effect that the king prayed that you would always be so good as to carry on the business between the Duke of Savoy and of Brittany and the Count of Richemont, and to do the best therein that you could for the good of the king. And that, moreover, until the Parliament, which the king has at present summoned at London, shall be finished, the king could not and it was impossible for him to present, procure, or promise anything to the said lords; but that immediately the said Parliament should be finished, my said lord the Cardinal thought it certain that the king would send a notable embassy to you, along with you to treat and consider this and many other great matters which at present could not be declared. And this being done, we went to take leave of the king to return home."

They receive their answer from him.

In 1433, shortly after the failure of the negotiations at St. Omer, the Duke of Bedford crossed over to England, where he was warmly received. The Commons petitioned that he would remain in England, and in a modest answer he agreed to do so for a time.[k] Beaufort seems to have assented to, if he did not prompt, this measure, and it is not easy to discern his motives. Perhaps he thought that by this means he should put a strong curb upon Gloucester, who strenuously opposed the Cardinal's plans for peace, by thus taking away his position as the chief subject in the realm. Another possible

Bedford in England.

[j] The letter containing this account, dated at Lille, 18th July, 1433, is given in "Wars of the English in France," ii., 218, seq.

[k] Rot. Parl., iv., 423.

reason is that he wished some strong hand to guide the state while he pursued his foreign projects, to which allusion will be made hereafter. At all events the measure excited great indignation on the part of Gloucester, who had been so long accustomed to be nominally head of the government, that he thought it very hard that he should now be superseded by his brother. Another event also highly exasperated the Duke. His salary had for some time been fixed at £5,000 a year; but Bedford had agreed, while pointing to his brother's salary, to receive only £1,000. This example Gloucester was forced to imitate, and shortly afterwards he consented to perform his duties for £1,000 annually.[1] These things led to quarrels between the two brothers. Gloucester and his party cast reflections upon Bedford's conduct as regent in France. On the thirteenth of July Bedford met these slanders by a challenge to any one who dared accuse him to meet him on the field. No answer to this challenge being made, the lords assured him that no defamatory reports had reached the King or his Council, but that the King ever held him to be his faithful subject and his dearest uncle. Accordingly Bedford seems quietly to have assumed the position offered him, and in December we find him submitting articles to Parliament for the filling up of vacant offices, and for the regulation of the Council.[m] These open proofs that his power had gone from him stung Gloucester's pride to the quick. He determined to humble, if possible, this new superior.

Slanders of him.

He is attacked by Gloucester.

At a Great Council in Westminster on the twenty-fourth of April, 1434, Gloucester made some observations on the conduct of the wars in France, when Bedford, starting up, demanded that this might be reduced to writing. Two days afterwards they were publicly read, and Bedford, declaring that they touched his honour, asked for a copy, that he might answer the accusations. On the eighth of May he read his answer, which contained some retorts on Gloucester, whereupon he would have a copy of it, and demanded a day to be fixed for his answer. But Beaufort and the lords of the Council thought that the matter might have serious effects if carried any further, and, therefore, they persuaded the king to put an end to it. In answer to Gloucester's request the king declared that the quarrel should end here, and that the writings which had been presented should be considered null and void. Nothing therein did he deem prejudicial to the honour of either, and he held them to be his affectionate and faithful uncles, wherefore he prayed them to quit this vain strife and to act together in true friendship.[n]

The quarrel hushed up.

Decision about Beaufort's goods.

On the tenth of May, 1434, Beaufort was gratified by a decision of the king on the seizure of his goods

[1] A. P. C., iv., 185. [m] Rot. Parl., iv., 422, 424. [n] A. P. C., iv., 210, 213.

and jewels two years ago. At a Great Council on this day the lords spiritual and temporal, dwelling upon the services of the Cardinal, asked whether the government was going to retain the £6,000 which he had lent on that occasion, or not. The answer returned was that "We, by the advice and consent of the foresaid lords, considering that we never had a good, just and conscientious right to the foresaid goods and jewels, have therefore of our own free will determined, conceded, and with our own voice declared that the said sum of £6,000 shall be restored and repaid to the Cardinal as his own property." In consideration of this gracious decision, Beaufort offered to lend 10,000 marks "per viam præstiti."[o]

Beaufort's plans of going abroad.

At this time Beaufort's intentions seem to have been fixed upon going abroad, intending probably to arrive at Rome by some means. His mind appears to have been made up to endeavour to ascend the Papal throne at the next vacancy, and he wished to be able to canvass. At the beginning of 1432, he had received leave after the King's coronation to proceed directly to Rome,[p] but this had been prevented by his accusation in England. In 1433, with the Archbishop of York and several others of his party, he received a passport to proceed to the General Council at Basle which had at this time quarrelled with the Pope. Why this mission was not accomplished is uncertain. It may have been that the late quarrel with Burgundy had raised such indignation in England that the balance of power turned in favour of Gloucester and the war party. If this were the case, there would be no need to seek further for Beaufort's motives in inducing Bedford to remain in England. But, whatever were the causes, it is certain that he did not proceed to the General Council. The next year, however, he still retained his purpose of going abroad. On the fifth of June, 1434, he presented a petition containing six articles to the Council, which received their assent.[r] Five of these related to his loans to the crown, but the other deserves particular attention. It was as follows:—

His petition.

"Item, forasmuch as I am under certain avows the which I cast me with God's grace to perform as I am bound and holden, and that it were me to jeopardise that the time of my departing or the place or places that I have made my avow unto were known: I beseech the King my Sovereign Lord of his grace to grant me his licence to go at what time and to what places me lust, with such goods of mine, be it in money, plate, or other thing as me lust to take with me without impeachment of my said Sovereign Lord or of any of his officers, considering that my full purpose is with the grace of God for to die in this land."

[o] Rymer, x., 591, 592. A. P. C., iv., 236, 239.
[q] Rymer, x., 525, 538, 539, 540.
[p] Rot. Parl., iv.
[r] A. P. C., iv., 233,-236.

What can have been the object of this secrecy? Why was it necessary for him to assure them of his intention to die in England? It has been supposed that the Council intended to despatch him on some secret intrigue, and that the vows of pilgrimage were merely invented as a screen for ulterior objects. But this seems improbable, for in that case there would have been no occasion for him to make a special point of not meeting his death abroad. The better solution appears to be, that the Council were really ignorant of his purposes, but wished to secure his return to the land. But why should they have desired his return so much? The only reason that can be assigned is that they could ill spare either his person or his wealth. They probably felt that, if matters came to the worst in France, Beaufort's diplomatic ability, and his real, though small, influence over the Duke of Burgundy and the King of France, were something more to be relied upon than the military skill of the Duke of Bedford, whose temper was soured by disappointments and reverses, and who had irreconcilably quarrelled with Burgundy, or the rashness and pride of his younger brother.

But, whatever were Beaufort's aims abroad, he had soon to relinquish them, and turn to political matters. In July, with the Dukes of Bedford and Gloucester, he was appointed to treat for peace with France.[a] This negotiation came to nothing, but the next year the solicitations of the Pope and the General Council brought about a congress of the belligerent powers at Arras.

Congress of Arras.

At this congress Eugenius IV. was represented by the Cardinal of Santa Croce, and the Council of Basle by the Cardinal of Cyprus. The greater part of the English ambassadors, including the Archbishop of York, the Earl of Suffolk, Lord Hungerford and others, crossed over early, and were there in time to receive the Duke of Burgundy on his arrival. When the French ambassadors came up, the English remained in their quarters, but the Duke of Burgundy excited their suspicion by going out to meet them with great pomp. The English, feeling on this the insecurity of their position, withdrew from the town till the Cardinal, who was the chief ambassador, should arrive. He entered Arras on the nineteenth of August, and was received with great state, the Duke of Burgundy according to him the almost regal honours which had been given to the other cardinals.

The congress, at which were present ambassadors from nearly the whole of Europe, from Castille, Aragon, Naples, Sicily, Poland, Denmark, Milan, and the Hanse towns, was commenced with jousts and feasting. But during all this Beaufort perceived that a close understanding existed between the French and his nephew of Burgundy; and the Duke of Bourbon, who headed the French embassy, employed his time in gaining the goodwill of the English

[a] A. P. C., iv., 279, 280.

ally. At length business commenced, the Cardinal
Negotiations. of Santa Croce haranguing the assembly upon the evils of war, which he hoped that they would speedily turn into the blessings of peace. After this the proposals on both sides were brought forward and debated. On the whole the offers of the French were as moderate as could have been expected, although of course they insisted upon the renunciation by Henry of all claims to the French crown. But on that point the English were obstinate. They had no right, they said, to despoil their master of a crown to which he had an incontestable right. The fact is that the English ambassadors, who mostly represented the party of peace, would personally have been very willing to accept the terms offered them for the sake of peace. But they knew that the people of England, though rather humbled by recent reverses, were still too proud of the victories of Agincourt and Verneuil, to agree to the renunciation of all claims to a crown for the sake of which for a hundred years they had expended both their treasure and their blood. Had the ambassadors yielded, so great a storm of indignation would have been raised against them, that not only would their political power have been lost for ever, but probably their lives also would have been endangered. Moreover, they cannot but have felt indignant at the evident pre-
Prejudice against the English, judice against them. The Duke of Burgundy, their nominal ally, was hand and glove with their foes; and the representatives of the Pope and the Council, though they certainly aimed at peace, would rather attain their end by a treaty between Burgundy and France, which would force the English to yield, than by one directly between the kings of England and France. On the sixth of September, Beaufort with
who leave the Congress. the whole English embassy quitted Arras and returned homewards. Not long afterwards the news arrived in England, to the intense indignation of all parties, that peace had been made between the Duke of Burgundy and the French, or rather, as Michelet says, that a pardon had been granted by the former to the King of France.

Before the arrival of this last piece of news, the
Death of Bedford. Duke of Bedford had expired at Rouen, broken-hearted at the approaching failure of what had been the object of his life. He seems to have been throughout a constant friend and supporter of Beaufort, and in his will he made him one of the executors. He was succeeded in France by the Duke of York; but from this time the wars in France are of little interest, consisting mainly of small sieges and skirmishes, in which however the English cause was bravely supported both by the Duke of York and by Lord Talbot.

The Duke of Burgundy never threw himself
Siege of Calais heartily into the war. He appears to have been somewhat ashamed of having deserted the English

cause, and it is stated that some of his nobles openly upbraided him with his conduct and refused to fight in his cause. After a short time of neutrality, however, he was induced by the people of Flanders to attempt the siege of Calais. Gloucester, at last embarking in the war instead of criticising it from afar, petitioned to be allowed to raise the siege. His request was granted, and a loan of nine thousand marks was obtained from Beaufort. Gloucester now sent a challenge to the Duke of Burgundy, asking him to meet him in battle under the walls of Calais, and regretting that he was unable to name a day on account of the uncertainty of the winds and weather.[t] But Burgundy, though his pride was roused by this challenge, had already made up his mind to retire, and he was forced to adopt this humiliating course. Two days afterwards Gloucester, on crossing over, found the field deserted, and was enabled, as Burgundy had been on a previous occasion, to exult over his bloodless victory.

raised by Gloucester.

During Gloucester's absence, Beaufort renewed his petition to the king to be allowed to go to the court of Rome, "for to do his duty, considered that he hath the king's patent of rest, also that now God hath set the king in such age that he may the better absent himself." The lords of the Council, to whom the matter was referred, "considering the insecurity of the way and the great jeopardy of his power, and the great good and nighing to the peace that his presence might do, whether he were on the treaty or else here in England, concluded that in no wise they durst counsel the king to excuse him after his desire, and mainly at this time, and that therefore he might be stirred by the king to leave his said desire."[u] The motives of the Council expressed in this answer do not seem, as some have asserted, to have been insincere. It is probable that they really felt that affairs in France were in a most perilous condition, and that there was no person on whom they could so safely rely as Beaufort, because of his high European position, his well-known talents, and his influence over the enemy. Now that Bedford was gone, there was no one who had nearly so much knowledge of French affairs as the Cardinal. The Duke of York was recalled from the regency in this year, and Gloucester, besides that he was far too rash and hasty to be trusted in a delicate negotiation, had only lately taken any part in foreign affairs, and had then speedily relinquished them.

Beaufort's petition for leave to go abroad.

Refused.

In June, 1437, we find another general pardon granted to Beaufort.[v] In the instrument there is nothing remarkable; it is couched in much the same terms as that granted twenty years before, though the enumeration of offences is somewhat less full. But it is remarkable that such a measure as this should be taken without any

General pardon granted to Beaufort.

[t] *v.* Rymer, x., 704.

[u] A. P. C., v., 9.

apparent reason. Perhaps Beaufort thought that in his present position of power he might take some precautions for the future, much as a man who has a good deal of money in his pocket puts some by for a rainy day. At all events the Cardinal seems now to have been, both in name and in reality, at the head of the government. He appointed royal officers, and to him reports were made.[v] Whether Gloucester was absent or not at this time, Beaufort was apparently acting as chief councillor. But the greater his power, the less willing were the government to part with him. In February, 1438, an express stipulation is placed on the minutes of the Council, "That the King grant no license to my lord the Cardinal to go to the General Council."[x]

Beaufort released from tithes.

On the eighth of December, 1437, a high compliment was paid to Beaufort, which shows how great was his ascendancy at this time. The king, in consideration of the constant and willing services rendered to him by his "dearest uncle," and wishing to show his gratitude for those services, granted him an exemption from the payment of tithes for the future. At the same time, to repay him "for the services which he is daily rendering and will render for the future by his attendance at our Council," an annuity of forty pounds was allowed him "to be paid in quarterly instalments, on Christmas, Easter, St. John the Baptist's, and St. Michael's days, as long as we shall please."[y]

Receives an annuity of forty pounds.

The Duke of Burgundy aims at peace.

The Duke of Burgundy soon tired of the war with England. The great source of his power was the wealth derived from the commerce of the great Flemish lawns, and that commerce was almost ruined by warfare with the English. Accordingly, he set himself to procure a general pacification, and his wife undertook the office of mediator. Beaufort was appointed as mediator on the English side, and in January, 1439, he had a conference with the Duchess of Burgundy at Calais,[z] when it was determined that the kings of France and England should be requested to send a solemn embassy to that place, and that the Duke of Orleans should be present on that occasion.

Instructions to the English ambassadors.

Accordingly on the twenty-third of May, a commission was issued, constituting the Archbishop of York, the Duke of Norfolk, etc., ambassadors to treat for peace. By their instructions[a] they were ordered to demand that Henry should be allowed to enjoy the crown and realm of France, with all the appurtenances as he ought of right to do. The arguments they were to use to justify this claim were scarcely likely to satisfy the French. They were to advance the decision of Heaven as manifested in the great

[v] Rymer, x., 670.
[w] A. P. C., v., 80-82.
[x] Ib., v., 93.
[y] Rymer, x., 681.
[z] Ib., x., 715.
[a] Ib., x., 724.

victories of the English, forgetting that the French had an equal claim to set up the successes of Joan of Arc as divine; and they were to urge the obsolete agreement between Henry V. and Charles VI. If these arguments were not admitted, they were to offer the cession of the countries beyond the Loire to be held of the English crown. The absurdity of this commission seems to imply that the war party was still too powerful to be openly offended, for it can never have been dreamt that such conditions as these would be heard with anything but contempt. Probably, therefore, they were a blind to conceal the real aims of Beaufort, who was resolved to do his utmost to gain peace.

Arrival of the embassy at Calais.

Beaufort arrived at Calais on the twenty-sixth of June, with all the English ambassadors, except Whitingham, the treasurer of Calais, and Beckington, the author of the journal[b] from which the details of the embassy are derived, who did not arrive till the next day. On Monday, the twenty-ninth, the French ambassadors demanded that a day of meeting should be fixed, and the reply was given that it should be settled between the two mediators, the Cardinal and Duchess of Burgundy.

Preparations for the Conference.

Pavilions were erected on the place appointed for the conference, about seven miles from Calais on the road to Gravelines, and it was arranged that proceedings should commence on Monday, the sixth of July, each party to be attended by three hundred men armed only with swords and daggers. The Cardinal's arrangements were on a very large scale. His pavilion contained a hall to hold three hundred persons, besides a kitchen, pantry, wine-cellar, etc.[c] The Duchess of Burgundy, arriving at the hour arranged, was met by her uncle, and after an affectionate embrace, they entered the central pavilion, followed by the ambassadors of both nations. Beaufort took his seat between the duchess and her neice, the Princess of Navarre, and proceedings were begun by a Latin speech from the Archbishop of York, followed by an exchange of credentials between the ambassadors. They then separated, and while the Cardinal was at dinner, a message came to him from the duchess, saying that the French objected, as was not unnatural, to the commission under which the English ambassadors acted. They objected to their king being styled "Charles of Valois," and to the absence of sufficient powers to conclude a peace; and so persistent were they, that it was arranged that a new commission should be procured, which, on its arrival, was ante-dated the twenty-first of May for convenience' sake. A fresh commission having been also prepared and similarly ante-dated by the French, the proceedings were again

Business commenced.

[b] Printed in A. P. C., x., 335-407.

[c] See also Monstrelet for an account of his magnificence.

commenced by a Latin speech from the Archbishop of York, who, in a spirit characteristic of the time, appealed to the revelations of St. Bridget as justifying Henry's claim to the crown of France. The Archbishop of Rheims, replying for the French, quoted the prophecies of John the Hermit to the effect that, though for her sins France should long be afflicted by the English, yet finally they should be driven out. On this Kemp asked if he would put the authority of John the Hermit on a level with that of St. Bridget, and urged the French to enter upon a negotiation. They however desired the English to make the first proposals, and then proceeded to declare that they would proceed no further until Henry had renounced all claims whatever to the crown of France. After this the parties separated.

Arrival of the Bishop of Vicq.

On Saturday, the eleventh of July, the Bishop of Vicq arrived from the Council of Basle, to act as a mediator on behalf of that body, and on the next Wednesday he received an audience from the English embassy, when he harangued them in set terms on the blessings of peace. The English disliked this interference on the part of the Council, which assembly they considered by its partiality to have been instrumental in causing the failure of the negotiations at Arras. This the Archbishop of York pointed out in his answer, whereupon the delegate of the Council defended its conduct, but expressed himself strongly against Pope Eugenius IV.

Postponement of the meeting.

The Duchess of Burgundy, who had been forced to leave because of the illness of her husband, returned on the sixteenth of July, and, having discovered that both parties obstinately refused to yield, she told the Cardinal that she thought a perpetual peace impossible, but urged a truce for a limited number of years, during which the claims of the two parties were to be in abeyance. This proposal he submitted to the English ambassadors, who asked to have it in writing, but it was then found to be entirely different from what they had understood from the Cardinal. On the twenty-ninth of July, after a long conference, it was determined that the proposals of the Duchess of Burgundy and the Duke of Orleans should be reduced to writing, that the ambassadors should demand instructions from their respective sovereigns, and that the convention should be adjourned for that purpose, till the eleventh of September. The Archbishop of York, the Earl of Stafford, and four others, were sent back to England for fresh instructions, while the rest of the ambassadors spent the time in doing nothing, the dulness being only broken by an occasional visit to the Cardinal at Ham Castle, who received them "with great humanity, and a cheerful countenance, and feasted them in the most solemn and costly wise."[h]

[h] *v.* a Letter from Bekynton to William Say, in "Correspondence of Bekynton," i., 103.

The English bring their instructions.

During the interval Beaufort was for some time ill, but recovered before the return of the ambassadors on the ninth of September. The fresh instructions testify to the influence at home of Gloucester and his party. They declare the articles requiring the abandonment of the title of King of France and the release of Orleans to be "right unreasonable." Yet the king would agree to be satisfied with retaining Normandy (including St. Michael's Mount, which the French had specially excepted), the Duchy of Guienne, Calais, and Guisnes; but these were to be held "immediately of God," and under no "earthly creature."

These conditions were at once perceived by the ambassadors to be hopeless, for the French would not hear of leaving an inch of their territory in the hands of the English without exacting homage. They proceeded, however, to the place of convention on the day appointed, but found no French ambassadors; and in answer to their protest against this behaviour, it was stated that the French assembly could not meet till the twenty-fifth of September, and till then consequently they could gain no instructions. They requested therefore that the convention might be further postponed. This was certainly an insult to the English ambassadors, who determined to return to England. On the second of October they landed at Dover, having been delayed in their passage by contrary winds.

The French absent.

The English envoys return.

Failure of the negotiation.

The failure of this embassy must be attributed to the unexpected demand of the French for homage. This had not been provided for before the ambassadors started, and consequently had to be referred to the government at home. But there the war party, in the absence of so many of their chief opponents, had gained such strength that all hopes of a conciliatory decision were impossible. Beaufort's conduct throughout this important negotiation seems to have been marked by prudence, integrity, and a true patriotism, which preferred the lasting good of his country to the vain glitter of military success and foreign rule. But Gloucester took advantage of his failure to bring a most bitter personal attack against him.[e]

Gloucester's attack upon Beaufort.

His first charge is that Beaufort had dared to take upon himself the estate of Cardinal, which had been specially denied him by the late king, "saying that he had as lief set his crown beside him, as to see him wear a Cardinal's hat, for he knew full well the pride and ambition that was in his person, then being a

[e] These articles are given in "Wars of the English in France," ii., 440-451: but they are said to be a protest against the release of the Duke of Orleans, and are attributed to the year 1440. But the release of Orleans is only incidentally mentioned, and the articles, which are merely a general attack upon Beaufort and his party, evidently belong to the end of 1439.

Bishop," and feared that it would become intolerable if he was made a Cardinal. "And also him thought that it should be against the freedom of the chief Church of this kingdom, which he worshipped duly, as ever did prince, that blessed be his soul." Then, turning against Beaufort the reply which he himself had received twelve years ago, he said that though the King liked to set him in his Privy Council, yet in Parliament, "where every lord spiritual and temporal have their place, him ought to occupy himself but as Bishop." When Beaufort had been made Cardinal, he was "assoiled of his Bishopric," but he had obtained bulls from the Pope restoring it to him; though thereby he was breaking the Statute of Provisers, for which he ought to have forfeited all his goods, so that in this he had defrauded the King of his just rights.

The third article shows that jealousy was the cause of his attack. "It is not unknown to you, my Lord, that through your lands it is noised that the said Cardinal and the Archbishop of York have had and have the governance of your Highness, which none of your true subjects ought to usurp nor take upon them; and have also estranged me, your sole uncle, my cousin of York, and many other lords of your kin, to have knowledge of any great matters that might touch your high estate or other of your kingdom. And as of lords spiritual, of right the Archbishop of Canterbury should be your chief councillor, the which is also estranged and set aside; and so be many other right sad lords and well advised, to great hurt of you, my Lord, and of your realms."

Then follow various complaints of the money frauds which Beaufort has practised upon the king: how when he had forfeited jewels and plate to the value of £1,000, he got them restored "for the loan of a little parcel thereof;" and how, though he had lent great sums of money to the king, yet his loans had "been so deferred and delayed that for the most part the convenable season of employing the good lent was lost, so that little fruit or none came thereof." He blames the Cardinal's waste on useless embassies, such as that at Arras, made for a "feigned colourable peace," which resulted only in a treaty between the Duke of Burgundy and the king's adversary; and the recent negotiation at Calais, during which the French captured the city of Mieun and the adjoning territory. After a final tirade against Beaufort's presumption and abuse of power, and some hints as to the manner in which his wealth had been acquired, he concludes with a petition that the king will dismiss from his Council the said Cardinal and Archbishop, that men may speak what they consider true, "for though I dare speak of my truth, the poor dare not so."

Negotiations renewed.

But this petition failed in its end. Beaufort still remained at the head of affairs, and his policy continued to be prosecuted. In January, 1440, he returned to Calais to resume the negotiations for peace in conjunction with the Duchess of Burgundy. Shortly afterwards the

English ambassadors were appointed, but for some reason hardly any of those who acted last year were re-appointed, the most notable absentee being the Archbishop of York. Negotiation with France failed as usual, the French envoys protesting against the insufficiency of the powers of the English. But Beaufort was now determined on making the first step towards peace, by the release of the Duke of Orleans, and to this end he devoted all his skill.

Gloucester protests against the release of Orleans.

Gloucester, however, still determined to oppose the Cardinal, and, to avoid what he considered disgrace, published on the second of June a protest against this contemplated release of their illustrious prisoner.[f] He dwelt on the indisposition of the French sovereign, and the probability that Orleans would be appointed regent of France, in which capacity, knowing as he did the condition of English affairs, he would be unwilling to conclude a peace to the honour and profit of the English king. If he were set free, would he be more likely, he asks, to keep an oath imposed upon him when a prisoner in preference to his former oath of allegiance to his sovereign? He grieves as much as any one over the great sacrifice of life in France, where had perished his two brothers Clarence and Bedford, "and many other dukes, earls, and lords, and many a trusty knight and squire," but he can never agree to such a violation of his brother's last will ("whom God assoil"). For fear, therefore, of his being "otherwise noised," he has submitted this protest, in his own writing; and for his true acquittal he desires it to be exemplified under the great seal.

The Duke of Orleans released.

But this protest was of as little avail as his former one. The people were becoming thoroughly tired of the war, which they desired to be ended as soon and as honourably as possible, but at any rate to be ended. In July the convention for the release of Orleans was signed, by which he undertook to pay a ransom of forty thousand nobles within six months: if, however, by his efforts peace is made, this is to be remitted, and in case of his failing to perform his promise he will return to prison.[g] On the twenty-eighth of October, the duke appeared at Westminster, and in the presence of the king and all the lords sware faithfully to observe all the stipulations agreed upon. The passionate Gloucester, however, to show his disapprobation, appeared in the church, but when the mass began, abruptly left and went on board his barge.[h] At the beginning of November, Orleans was formally released from his captivity, and joyfully set out for Calais, whence he wrote on the twelfth to

[f] Rymer, x., 764-767.

[g] Ib., x., 776.

[h] Paston Letters, i., 4. "Tidings that the Duke of Orleans hath made his oath upon the sacraments, and used it, never for to bear arms against England, in the presence of the king and all the lords, except my lord of Gloucester, and proving my said lord of Gloucester agreed never to his deliverance, when the mass began took to his barge."

acknowledge his liberation.[i] At Gravelines he was met by the Duke of Burgundy, and a most affectionate greeting took place between the two princes. Thence they proceeded to Bruges, to which city the Duke of Burgundy granted a pardon on the intercession of his cousin. But it was long before the Duke of Orleans could fulfil his promises. Shut out from court by the intrigues of his opponents, it was not till 1444 that he gained any influence over the king's councils. At that time Beaufort had retired from public affairs, but he still directed the actions of the Earl of Suffolk, who succeeded to his policy of peace. That nobleman and the Duke of Orleans endeavoured to negotiate a peace, but they failed to arrive at a general agreement. An armistice, however, for two years was concluded, and thus a short respite was granted from the warfare which for so many years had wasted both the blood and treasure of England.

Peace delayed till 1444.

It has been seen before how prevalent at this time was the belief in sorcery and witchcraft. Among Gloucester's literary associates was one Roger Bolingbroke, a priest, who was famous for his skill in necromancy and astrology. In fact Gloucester himself, a real enthusiast in the pursuit of knowledge, did not scruple very much as to the mode of gaining that knowledge, and he himself was probably a dabbler in the black arts. However in 1441 Bolingbroke, who was chaplain in Gloucester's house, was accused of endeavouring to bring about the death of the king by sorcery and magic incantations. A rumour arose that Eleanor Cobham, formerly the mistress and now the wife of Gloucester, was implicated in the transaction. Bolingbroke confessed that at her instigation he had endeavoured to discover whether she or her husband would ever sit upon the throne of England. The duchess was accordingly arrested and imprisoned in Leeds Castle;[j] and among those who were seized as her accomplices was Margery Jourdemain, the witch of Eye, who had been accused of witchcraft ten years before.[k] Bolingbroke, Margery, and two others met the death of traitors, but it was impossible, even if it had been desired, to go so far with the duchess. She was brought before an ecclesiastical commission, at the head of which were the two Cardinals, Beaufort and Kemp,[l] and accused of

Accusation of the Duchess of Gloucester.

Her trial.

[i] Rymer, x., 829.

[j] Ib., x., 851.

[k] A. P. C., iv., 114. On the ninth of May, 1432, the Council decided that Margery Jourdemain, who had been accused of witchcraft and imprisoned in Windsor Castle, should be acquitted on her husband's giving security for her future behaviour.

[l] *v.* Lament of the Duchess of Gloucester, in "Political Songs and Poems," ii., 205-208.

"I come before the spiritualité,
Two Cardynals, and Bischoppis fyve,
And oder men of gret degré,
Examened me of alle my lyffe.
And openly I dide me shryffe
Of alle thyng they asked me."

having caused a waxen effigy of the king to be made, which, at her bidding, was exposed to a slow fire, in order that as the wax melted the king's health might decay. She appears to have confessed her crime, and was condemned to a humiliating penance. On three days out of the week she had to walk barefoot, clad in a sheet, and bearing a lighted torch, through the principal streets, and to visit the chief churches, where she made her confession at the altar. After this she was given into the custody of Sir Thomas Stanley, and the remainder of her life she passed a prisoner: at first in the castle of Chester, then at Kenilworth, and lastly at Peel Castle in the Isle of Man.

Sentence.

This must have been a great humiliation to Gloucester, though he himself was not implicated, his wife being supposed to have bewitched him. But that this disgrace was purposely brought upon him by the direct or indirect influence of Beaufort there is not the slightest proof. Almost every writer on this event has attributed some political motive to the actors in it, yet there really seems to be no cause for this. It is certain that men of those times, men of the greatest practical wisdom, did believe in witchcraft and magic. Many people were accused of practising the art, and what is still more curious, many confessed their guilt, although death in this case was inevitable. Moreover, Henry had not fulfilled the promise of his early years; he was feeble both in body and mind, and not long afterwards became positively imbecile. In an age of superstition is it improbable that this should have been attributed to sorcery? It is not at all unlikely, moreover, that the duchess, a woman of bad character but of great ambition, should have desired to wear the crown, or that she should have resorted to magic to procure the realisation of her desire. Her judges may fairly be acquitted of anything approaching to party spite. In all likelihood they were as much shocked at the crime of the accused as modern historians have been at their cruelty and baseness in taking this means of wounding their political opponent.

This probably not a political action.

Shortly after this event Beaufort retired to his diocese of Winchester, determined to pass the remainder of his days in quiet seclusion. This resolve in one who had been throughout his life such an active politician (vagus ut Scytha), would surprise us were we not acquainted with numerous examples of such men as Sulla and Charles V., who, after a distinguished career of active labour, retired in their old age to enjoy the rest they had so well earned. In fact an active life of this kind always seems to leave a void somewhere. A man cannot live by action alone: unless he has something else to satisfy the complement of his nature, either domestic ties or literary occupation, he must sooner or later find out that he has been pursuing a shadow,—a discovery the more heartrending in proportion as the pursuit has been more vigorous.

Beaufort purposes to retire.

Beaufort confesses at this time that he has found by experience "how deceitful, transitory, and ever fading is this life, which appears rather a shadow that quickly passes away than eternity of days."[m]

General pardon.

Before taking his leave of public affairs he proceeded to secure himself against all possible attacks in the future, by procuring a general pardon. This was granted to him on the second of March, 1443, for all offences committed before the first of the preceding month. We cannot but be struck by this last act of the veteran statesman, as cautious and provident as in his most ambitious days. But

Not wholly severed from politics.

though he thus voluntarily sought retirement, he had for so long guided the state, and the king had so long been accustomed to lean on his support, that he could not avoid all participation in politics. News was sent to him of the chief political measures, and his approval was considered almost as important as the sanction of the king.[n] The termination of hostilities, that object to which he had devoted so much of his time and attention, and the accomplishment of which he quietly left to another after he had overcome the first and most difficult obstacles, was undoubtedly directed by him from his retreat. He was probably also a prompter, certainly an approver, of the next great movement of his party, the marriage of the king to Margaret of Anjou. There must have been something strangely pleasant in being thus able to direct the course of affairs, without being personally mixed up in the turmoil of political agitation. How many men would consider a life which had such a result, "a shadow that quickly passeth away"?

Beaufort's acts in retirement.

The history of Beaufort's retirement must be sought rather in the results than in any records of his actions. The wealth which he had amassed, and which had procured for him the title of the "rich Cardinal," was spent in a manner worthy of a Christian and of a prelate. The beautiful cathedral which his predecessor had begun, was by him completed and adorned. The famous hospital of St. Cross claims him as its second founder.[o] To the original foundation of Henry of Blois he added a new establishment, which was to consist of thirty-five brethren, two chaplains, and three female nurses. This he intended specially for the relief of what are usually termed "decayed gentlemen," and he gave it the name of "the Almshouse of Noble Poverty." The greater part of the present building of the hospital was raised by his munificence, parts of which still bear the name and commemorate the bounty of their illustrious builder. There is something in these acts of charity that cannot but strike

[m] Nichols' Royal Wills, p. 321.

[n] See A. P. C., v., 19.

[o] Beaufort seems to have taken a considerable interest in hospital work. On the 21st of February, 1436, he obtained licence to unite the Hospital of Sandon in Surrey to that of St. Thomas, Southwark. *v.* Rymer, x. 633.

us as inconsistent with the character usually ascribed to Beaufort. Some of the most famous acts of munificence have been performed from a vain selfishness rather than from any real desire to do good. Nothing would have been easier for Beaufort than to have imitated the example of his illustrious predecessor, William of Wykeham, and built some great school or college as a monument of his munificence, which in future ages should send forth men who, in gratitude to their benefactor, would hand his name down to the blessings of posterity. But this was not what he chose to do. By building on another's foundation, he succeeded in doing a large amount of good with little ostentation, and this, if anything, seems to be the spirit of true charity. While Beaufort was employing himself in these works and was directing the affairs of his diocese, an illness seized him, and as he lay on his bed of sickness the news came of the death of his old opponent, the Duke of Gloucester. To this event, as Beaufort has been accused of procuring it, we must briefly turn.

Arrest of Gloucester.

Of late years, disappointed in his hopes of succeeding to the throne by the king's marriage and conscious of having failed in the great objects of his career, the Duke of Gloucester seems to have become reckless and to have assumed a threatening attitude. He was suspected, and more than suspected, of meditating an attempt to gain the crown as his father had done before. The ministry determined to anticipate his measures. A Parliament was summoned at Bury St. Edmunds on the tenth of February, 1447, and troops were distributed along the roads leading to the town, and the king's abode safely guarded as if an attempt at insurrection was expected then. On the eighteenth Gloucester arrived, and was immediately arrested by the high constable, Lord Beaumont, on a charge of treason. On the same day a number of his dependents were arrested, charged with having purposed to dethrone the king, to make Gloucester king in his stead, and to liberate Eleanor Cobham.

His death.

On the twenty-third the Duke was found dead in his bed, with no marks of external violence on his body, which was exposed to view.

On the whole it is extremely improbable that Gloucester was murdered, though undoubtedly this was the suspicion of his adherents. But a record has come down to us of a medical report on the duke's health which had been made by a distinguished physician at the request of the duke himself.[p] This report certainly shows that Gloucester's constitution was thoroughly undermined at that time, and it is not at all impossible that in such a state of health a shock like that of his unexpected arrest and disgrace may have produced such an effect upon the duke's irritable temperament as to cause death. But even if Gloucester

[p] Gilbert Kymer, who subsequently reported on the mental condition of the king.