

# KING JOHN AND THE PAPAL INTERDICT.<sup>1</sup>

By C. R. CHENEY, M.A. (Oxon.),

PROFESSOR OF MEDIEVAL HISTORY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER.

ON Sunday 23rd March, 1208, an Interdict was pronounced in England and Wales, with the effect that these lands lay under the ban of the Church from the Monday next following for more than six years, until 2nd July, 1214.<sup>2</sup> This fact—that there was a prolonged ecclesiastical strike in England—is a schoolboy's commonplace. And although this particular Interdict has not been the subject of any special monograph, all scholars who have written about the reign of King John have had to discuss it.<sup>3</sup> Yet it remains amazingly obscure. Even in stating the precise date of its beginning, I am at variance with some of the pundits, and if we proceed to enquire into the terms of the Interdict, its application, the king's counterstrokes, the effect on popular opinion, we immediately run into darkness and contradictions. It is down this dark path that I wish to go exploring this afternoon; I can do no more than assemble, at

<sup>1</sup> A lecture delivered in the John Rylands Library on Wednesday, the 14th of April, 1948.

<sup>2</sup> There are numerous independent witnesses to the fact that the Interdict began on Monday, but the solemn pronouncement could only be effectively published on a Sunday, when all churchgoers would hear it, and publication on Sunday would explain the date given by several chroniclers (*Memoriale Fr. Walteri de Coventria* (Rolls series), ii. 199, *Annales monastici* (Rolls series), i. 29 iii. 30; F. Liebermann, *Ungedruckte anglo-normann. Geschichtsquellen* (1879), pp. 146, 168). The Winchcomb annals in Cottonian MS. Faustina B. i (fo. 24 r) say 'Veniente igitur dominica qua cantatur officium *Iudica me deus*, iubentur omnes sacerdotes per Angliam accensis candelis pulsatis campanis omnes excommunicare qui in personas ecclesiasticas vel res aut possessiones earum manus violentas inicere presumerent. Igitur per totam Angliam et Walliam interdictum feria secunda subsequenti districtissime observatur.' It may be noted that in accordance with liturgical usage a ban pronounced for Monday might take effect on Sunday evening after vespers.

<sup>3</sup> The most elaborate essay is that of J. Armitage Robinson, on 'Bishop Jocelin and the Interdict', *Somerset Historical Essays* (1921), pp. 141-159; and the best general survey is in the admirable pages devoted to the Interdict by Sir Maurice Powicke in *Cambridge Med. Hist.*, vi. (1929), 233-237.

various points along the track, a few illuminating facts, many of them familiar, a few of them less well known.

Let us begin with the one feature which stands out clearly : the cause of the Interdict. The archbishop of Canterbury had died in July, 1205. The monks who had to choose his successor had made two irregular elections and then, in December 1206, under papal guidance, elected Stephen Langton at Rome.<sup>1</sup> Pope Innocent III consecrated Langton as archbishop ; but John would have none of him, refusing to confirm the election or let Langton enter England. He maintained that Langton was unfit to be archbishop and that, in accordance with the approved English custom, the king's consent to Langton's election should have preceded consecration. The pope entreated and then threatened : he demanded unconditional surrender. John hardened his heart and the pope's delegates laid the Interdict on England as punishment for the king's resistance.

An interdict constituted a serious disturbance of the normal life of the Church. Why, then, did the ecclesiastical authorities impose interdicts? They were, after all, not uncommon. Innocent III had already been responsible for an interdict on the kingdom of Leon which lasted from 1198 to 1204,<sup>2</sup> for interdicts on Normandy and on the kingdom of France in 1199,<sup>3</sup> for another interdict on France in 1200<sup>4</sup> and another on Normandy in 1203.<sup>5</sup> Besides papal sentences, there were countless interdicts imposed on smaller areas by bishops. From the eleventh century onwards, when the local interdict was clearly distinguished from personal forms of ecclesiastical censure, it had been applied to all sorts of infringements of ecclesiastical rights, whether committed by laymen or clergy.<sup>6</sup> Men recog-

<sup>1</sup> The only good account of these elections is by Professor David Knowles, *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, liii. (1938), 211-220.

<sup>2</sup> E. B. Krehbiel, *The Interdict, its History and its Operation* (American Hist. Assoc., 1909), pp. 104-106.

<sup>3</sup> Roger of Hoveden, *Chronica* (Rolls series), iv. 94.

<sup>4</sup> A. Cartellieri, *Philipp II August*, IV. i (1921), 27-33.

<sup>5</sup> F. M. Powicke, *The Loss of Normandy* (1913), p. 248.

<sup>6</sup> An excellent discussion of interdicts in general will be found in P. Hinschius, *System des kathol. Kirchenrechts*, vols. iv and v (1888, 1895). W. Richter, *De origine et evolutione interdicti* (Textus et documenta : series theol. 12 and 13 ; Pontificia Universitas, Rome, 1934) is a useful collection of early texts.

nized that it weighed on the innocent as well as on the guilty, but this very fact made it more effective. For the interdict not merely deprived the guilty of spiritual consolations, it was designed to make the innocent sufferers hostile to the guilty party. By the time of Innocent III it was a diplomatic weapon, and the pope used it as a diplomatic weapon when he ordered that it be imposed on England. Doubtless he hoped for an immediate result: the acceptance of Langton by King John. In fact, he misjudged his adversary. John treated the Interdict as tantamount to a declaration of war, and war between king and pope, *regnum* and *sacerdotium*, continued for five years before an armistice was made in May 1213. Even then the Interdict, the occasion of the war, could not be lifted. The different interests of the pope, who had gained a vassal by the armistice, and of the English clergy, who had suffered heavy material losses during the preceding five years, confused and prolonged negotiations for more than a twelve-month.

The time of the Interdict may be regarded, then, not merely as a period when England was subject to a peculiar kind of ecclesiastical censure, but as a period of war between pope and king. As in many medieval wars, hostilities did not prevent constant efforts from both sides to negotiate a peace, nor should we describe it as 'total war'; but war it was. It follows that, if we would measure the effects of the Interdict on England, we must look not only at its terms and its application, but also at the king's retaliatory measures. The two aspects of the matter are brought out by Giraldus Cambrensis when he speaks of the Interdict as a double wound involving both the withdrawal of divine service and the plundering of the clergy's possessions.<sup>1</sup>

The first question is: what was involved in the withdrawal of divine service? The pope's original instructions to the three bishops who were told to promulgate the sentence were brief. The bishops were to permit no church-service (*officium*) to be celebrated in England except the baptism of children and the penance of the dying.<sup>2</sup> Everyone understood this to exclude in

<sup>1</sup> *Opera* (Rolls series), viii. 311.

<sup>2</sup> Migne, *Patrologia latina*, ccxv. 1210. Also in Gervase of Canterbury, *Hist. works* (Rolls series), ii. p. lxxviii.

general all celebration of the mass, all marriage-services and burial-services ; but there was plenty of room left for doubt. For instance, what was the position of the religious Orders with privileges which mitigated interdicts ? How were infants to be baptized with chrism, if chrism was not to be consecrated ?<sup>1</sup> There was as yet no common law of interdicts ; and it is curious to observe that, despite Pope Innocent III's great reputation as a lawyer, he allowed his draftsmen repeatedly to draw up mandates for interdicts which the administrators of those interdicts found to be insufficient. Time after time, prelates of France, of England, of Italy, have to write to the pope for interpretations or amplifications of an earlier papal mandate.<sup>2</sup> The prevailing uncertainty in this particular case is reflected in the ambiguity and contradictions of the records which have come down to us. The two fullest surviving mandates for the application of the interdict are both of doubtful authority. The first is a *Forma interdicti*, printed in the eighteenth century from a manuscript at Mont-St-Michel, which may have emanated from one or all of the bishop-executors.<sup>3</sup> Our second source, not in all respects compatible with the first, is an interpolated version of Innocent III's supplementary instructions of 14th June, 1208 ;<sup>4</sup> who composed it we cannot guess. These point to divergent practices in different parts of the country. The annals of Dunstable, which probably represent the practice in the diocese of Lincoln, give another not wholly identical picture.<sup>5</sup> While the *Forma interdicti* provides that children should be baptized at home, our second source provides for baptism within the church, behind closed doors, and this harmonizes with the practice reported by the annalist of Dunstable. The exclusion of laity from the churches seems, indeed, to have been variously applied. According to the *Forma*, no layman might enter unless he were some influential person who was not excommunicate and devoutly sought admittance and could not be refused without evil

<sup>1</sup> Migne, ccxv. 1423.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Krehbiel, pp. 116-117 ; Migne, ccxv. 1423, 1582 ; *Decretales*, V. 38, 11.

<sup>3</sup> E. Martène and U. Durand, *Thesaurus novus anecdotorum* (1717), i. 812, reprinted, Migne, ccxvii. 190.

<sup>4</sup> Gervase of Canterbury, ii. p. xcii.

<sup>5</sup> *Annales monastici*, iii. 30.

consequences : such a person might be admitted simply to hear a sermon. On the other hand, the Dunstable annalist says that priests granted access to the altars to those who wished to make offerings. In one place the priest might be advised not to distribute *panis benedictus* or holy water ; elsewhere he might receive contrary instructions. An unpublished letter of Peter of Blois, archdeacon of London, shows that the bishop of Salisbury looked to the chapter of St. Paul's for guidance and that in some particulars the advice he received left discretion to the parish-priests themselves.<sup>1</sup> Peter of Blois knew of a letter which Innocent III had written on another occasion to the bishop of Paris, mitigating the severity of an interdict, but he did not know whether the pope intended this to apply to England.<sup>2</sup> Again, although Innocent III, in 1209, told the bishop of Ferrara that baptized children might be confirmed, no such decision is known to have reached England, and we do not know how the English Church acted in this matter.

Early in 1209 the pope permitted conventual churches to celebrate mass once a week behind closed doors ;<sup>3</sup> but, again, his brief mandate left much unexplained, including the precise meaning of 'conventual church'. Peter of Blois proceeded to put to the bishop of London no less than eight separate questions on the matter. Late in 1212<sup>4</sup> a further mitigation of the Interdict's hard terms was granted : the *viaticum*, or last communion, was to be permitted to the dying. But still the terms were hard. Most people were still deprived of all sacraments save baptism and *viaticum*, and were confronted everywhere with closed and silent churches. Nobody at all was permitted Christian burial

<sup>1</sup> The two letters of Peter of Blois cited in this paper are contained in the Erfurt Amplonian MS. F. 71 fos. 194v, 196r. I am indebted to Mr. R. W. Southern, who discovered them, for transcripts.

<sup>2</sup> It is in *Decretales*, V. 38, 11 without address. Peter probably knew it in the collection of Alanus (V. 20, 1) where it is addressed to the bishop of Paris (*Ztsch. Savigny-Stiftung für Rechtsgeschichte*, Kanon. Abt. xxix (1940), 301-302).

<sup>3</sup> Migne, cccv. 1529 and Gervase, ii. p. xcvi.

<sup>4</sup> Probably after 1st July, 1212, when Mauger, bishop of Worcester, died, since the permission was communicated by the bishops of Ely and London (Rad. de Coggeshall *Chronicon* (Rolls series), p. 165). The Reverend T. M. Parker tries unsuccessfully to connect this with Innocent's letter of 14th June, 1208 ('The terms of the Interdict of Innocent III', *Speculum*, xi (1936), 260).

until the Interdict was lifted in July 1214. So far as can be seen, the clergy obediently observed what they believed to be the terms of the Interdict. The Cistercians, it is true, maintained, until called to order by the pope, that their privileges exempted them; but this may have been due to a genuine misunderstanding. While there may have been some grumbling at the policy the pope had adopted—for this is hinted at by Matthew of Rievaulx<sup>1</sup>—we hear of no large-scale evasion of the interdict, as occurred in France in 1200 and in London in 1216.<sup>2</sup> Positive evidence is admittedly scanty; there are, however, records from several monasteries and from the city of London of the setting aside of special unconsecrated ground for cemeteries.<sup>3</sup> Bishops who died in England during the Interdict are recorded as having shared the common fate in this respect. Ralph of Shrewsbury, bishop of Bangor, was buried at his own request in Shrewsbury market-place in 1213.<sup>4</sup>

This was the pope's way of waging war. Now let us look at the other side. King John's immediate reaction to the Interdict remains unknown, for his orders were conveyed to the county-courts by word of mouth. We cannot attach much importance to Roger Wendover's picturesque account of the king's passionate outburst against the bishop-executors, of his threat to slit the noses and tear out the eyes of all Italians and papal clerks in

<sup>1</sup> A. Wilmart, 'Les mélanges de Mathieu préchantre de Rievaulx', *Revue Bénédictine*, lii (1940), 83: 'Ceterum non bene sapit quisquis ex nostris precipitanter et insolenter derogat et diiudicat actus apostolici. Non etenim expedit os in celum ponere et de huiusmodi loqui'. Stephen Langton administered a similar rebuke to critics in the sermon he preached at St. Paul's on 25th August, 1213: 'Vos enim cum sitis laici, vestros prelatos tales esse debetis credere ut omnia discrete agant et cum consilio. Dominus papa christianitatis dominus est et ei oportet obedire.' (G. Lacombe, 'An unpublished document on the Great Interdict, 1207-13 (sic)', *Catholic Hist. Rev.*, xv (1929-1930), 417).

<sup>2</sup> Cartellieri, *op. cit.*, IV. i. 30-31; Matthew Paris *Chron. maiora* (Rolls series), ii 644-645. We cannot be sure how it was observed in Wales. Cf. Cheney, 'Alleged deposition of King John', in *Studies in mediæval history presented to F. M. Powicke* (1948), pp. 103-4, 115-6.

<sup>3</sup> Liebermann, *op. cit.*, p. 172 (St. Albans); *Chron. abbatiae de Melsa* (Rolls series), i. 351 (Meaux); Krehbiel, *op. cit.*, p. 61 (St. Bartholomew's, Smithfield, and London). Cf. *Book of Fees*, i. 197.

<sup>4</sup> *Annales monastici*, ii. 273; *Hist. dunelmensis scriptores tres* (Surtees Soc.), p. 26; H. Wharton, *Anglia sacra* (1691), ii. 347.

England, of his amnesty to a highwayman who had killed a priest; but there is nothing incredible in it. Two of the bishops certainly left the country in a hurry, and the third, Mauger of Worcester, disappears from John's court early in the month of May. Some luckless Roman moneylenders had their property seized and were themselves turned out of the country.<sup>1</sup> It is not impossible that John pardoned some violence to the clergy, for he was a cruel and capricious man. But here the evidence is contradictory; for while we have a royal precept, dated 11th April, 1208, which expressly forbids action against monks or clergy, the *Annales londinienses*, of the early fourteenth century, which show a particular interest in legal procedure, say that during the Interdict the king ordered that no coroner in England should hold enquiries into the murder of clerks, in consequence of which many clerks perished.<sup>2</sup> John, abbot of Ford, writing in 1210, implies that the clergy had to fear personal violence as well as loss of property.<sup>3</sup> 'Benefit of clergy' was generally respected. During the Interdict felonous clerks were handed over to the church courts as before, and the recorded infringements of privilege are few. There was the famous case at Oxford in 1209 which caused the dispersal of the University. Two other cases, of Master Honorius, archdeacon of Richmond, and Geoffrey of Norwich, are examples of the arbitrary imprisonment without trial of persons whom the king may have suspected of treason.<sup>4</sup>

John chiefly adopted what we may call 'economic sanctions' to dissuade the English clergy from obeying the pope. On 18th March, 1208, he sent letters to the bishoprics of Lincoln and Ely to say that royal custodians would take into their hands on Monday, 24th March all the lands and goods of abbots and

<sup>1</sup> *Chron. abb. de Evesham* (Rolls series), p. 225.

<sup>2</sup> *Rotuli litt. clausarum* (Rec. Comm.), i. 111a (and in *Foedera* (Rec. Comm.), I. i. 101); *Chron. of Edward I and II* (Rolls series), i. 8.

<sup>3</sup> Balliol Coll. MS. 24, containing the sermons of John of Ford, has two sermons (no. 41 fo. 99r and no. 76 fo. 173v) which bear on the Interdict, written respectively in 1210 and 1212. I am obliged to Professor R. A. B. Mynors for indicating these writings to me, and to the Librarian of Balliol for furnishing photographs of them.

<sup>4</sup> *Rot. litt. claus.*, i. 115a; Liebermann, *op. cit.*, p. 155.

priors and all religious and clergy of these dioceses who would not celebrate divine service.<sup>1</sup> We may safely assume that orders of this sort covered the whole country. The monastic chroniclers almost all speak of a general seizure or confiscation of ecclesiastical property at this juncture. The work may have been left in some part to the sheriffs, but generally special custodians were detailed to take possession of both the landed property and the movables of the clergy. John can hardly have found enough officials to do more than supervise the performance of this enormous task. It involved the substitution of new personnel for the monastic obedientiaries in charge of estates and the appointment of controllers for the sale of the clergy's farm-produce and the provision of their daily bread. This work was entrusted to local men. 'Four legal men' of each parish or vill were appointed to assess the maintenance-allowance or 'estovers' of the clergy, and they, it seems, actually took possession of the clergy's barns in the king's name and administered the supplies which were contained there.<sup>2</sup> It was a thankless (and presumably unpaid) task. The men fell under sentence of excommunication for laying hands on ecclesiastical property, and had to render account to royal officials.<sup>3</sup> The letter written by Peter of Blois early in 1209, to which reference has been made, discusses the circumstances in which absolution might be given to 'the groups of four villagers (*rustici*) wickedly standing guard over the clergy's barns'. Opinion in the chapter of St. Paul's was divided, he says, 'but we are agreed in this, that if any of them come to your eminence [the bishop of Salisbury] in a state of penitence and devotion and humbly seek absolution, he might be absolved . . . Doubtless such as these ought to be brought into the embrace of the Church, for so long as the Church militant endures, there may be found sheep and goats in Jacob's flock, good fish and bad in Peter's net, thorns and lilies in the garden of Abraham.' Ralph Niger, in one of the few passages on these years where his chronicle adds to the printed chronicle

<sup>1</sup> *Rot. litt. patentium* (Rec. Comm.), p. 80b, cf. p. 80a.

<sup>2</sup> *Gesta abbatum S. Albani* (Rolls series), i. 236; *Annales monastici*, ii. 260-261; *Rot. litt. claus.*, i. 109b, 111b. I cannot subscribe to Professor A. B. White's interpretation of the procedure (*American Hist. Rev.*, xvii (1911-1912), 12-16).

<sup>3</sup> Migne, ccxvii. 191-192; *Annales monastici*, ii. 261.

of Coggeshall tells us that in 1209 'the four men of each vill who last year had taken charge of the clergy's movables by the king's command were now called upon miserably to answer for their stewardship'.<sup>1</sup>

It is not easy to estimate all the implications of this measure. There are few detailed instructions to show how it was applied, no reports or accounts of custodians, no record (save in comparatively few cases) of how and when the king relaxed his hold. Both the Close Rolls and Fine Rolls of chancery are missing for the tenth and subsequent years of King John, and the other classes of chancery and household records are fragmentary for the period of the Interdict.<sup>2</sup> The Pipe Rolls of the exchequer are almost silent on the matter. Yet it deserves investigation. If this measure was widely applied for five years (until the king made submission to the pope) it must have brought great wealth to the king and at the same time strained his administrative staff to the uttermost. It must have been a constant irritation to the clergy and must have limited their activity in various directions. Actually, the royal policy seems to have changed. The first confiscation was general. But very soon, in many cases within a few weeks, the king relinquished control of much of the Church's property. Although, in these cases, he restored administration of the property but not its profits, he may in fact have abandoned both. The evidence is scrappy and cannot be analysed in the course of a single lecture, but it points in this direction. Certainly, if John continued for five years to take the revenues of the bulk of the clergy and the monasteries, it is hard to explain the silence of the records. The royal receipts from this source might, indeed, have gone to swell the resources of the *camera regis* without being accounted for at the exchequer;<sup>3</sup> but the

<sup>1</sup> British Museum, Royal MS. A. xii fo. 89r. Niger records a second seizure of the clergy's crops in 1209 (*ibid.*); cf. *Ann. mon.*, ii. 264.

<sup>2</sup> The Close Rolls begin again on 3rd May, 1212, the Fine Rolls a year later. The Charter and Patent Rolls are missing from May 1209 to May 1212. The only Misae Rolls run from May 1209 to May 1210 and from May 1212 to May 1213.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Pipe Roll 10 John (Pipe Roll Soc., n. s. 23, 1947), p. xii. But the renders to the chamber recorded in the next Pipe Roll all concern ecclesiastical property which was in the king's hand by reason of vacancies. P.R.O., Pipe Roll 11 John rot. 1 m. 2 (Chichester), rot. 6 m. 2d. (Lincoln), rot. 8 m. 1d. (Exeter).

chancery records of 1212 and 1213, the returns of sheriffs in 1212, and the papal correspondence seem only to be concerned with the property of the exiles. According to Adam of Eynsham, who wrote his life of St. Hugh of Lincoln during the Interdict, almost all the rectors of England redeemed their property.<sup>1</sup> The many who accepted confiscation passively during the first few weeks of the Interdict may well have groaned under their custodians as weeks lengthened into months and years; and as the prospects of peace receded they may have fared with the king to regain control of their property.

Adam of Eynsham's remark about the rectors of England was intended to present a contrast with the noble self-denial of Raymond, archdeacon of Leicester, who preferred to go into exile and forfeit his revenues. The king's animosity, in fact, was directed against those who fled, not those who stayed. It is indeed possible that he presented the clergy with the plain alternative of redeeming their confiscated property or forfeiting it by flight. (In 1210 he set about the tallaging of the Jews by a somewhat similar method.) Many undoubtedly fled, especially after the excommunication of the king in November 1209. Early in 1211 John ordered (if the Waverley annalist can be trusted) 'that all bishops and clergy with revenues in England and dwelling abroad should return within a fortnight of the feast of St. John the Baptist, or be deprived of their revenues in England'.<sup>2</sup> A year later (5th June, 1212) the king ordered the seizure of all churches and revenues of clerks who had been instituted by the authority of the exiled prelates, and the expulsion of the persons so instituted.<sup>3</sup> The returns of the sheriffs

<sup>1</sup> *Magna vita S. Hugonis* (Rolls series), pp. 303-304.

<sup>2</sup> *Ann. mon.*, ii. 266. Coggeshall (p. 164) says that the exiles 'vocitantur . . . per edictum publicum in vicecomitatibus'. This suggests the process of outlawry which John renounced at his submission in 1213 (*Rot. litt. pat.*, p. 100a and b). It may have been as a result of this action that the Pipe Roll 14 John (1211-1212) includes in the account of the bishopric of Lincoln '£92 8s. 8d. de exitibus ecclesiarum que fuerunt hoc anno in manu regis unde nomina et particule sunt in rotulo qui est in thesauro' (*rot. l m. l*); also under York, '£308 7s. 2½d. de ecclesiis et prebendis archiepiscopatus existentibus in manu regis' (*ibid.*); also under Bath, '£85 7s. 3d. de exitibus ecclesiarum et prebendarum' (*rot. l m. ld*).

<sup>3</sup> *Rot. litt. claus.*, l. 130b. The editor of the *Book of fees*, i. 53, failing to note the official enrolment, quotes Wendover's slightly garbled version. Cf. *Ann. mon.*, iii. 33.

to the king's writ have only survived for five counties. They record institutions to the deanery of Wells, the archdeaconry of Bath, and only nine parishes.<sup>1</sup> The returns do not generally state what action has been taken to seize the property or expel the parsons, but in two cases the execution of the writ had apparently been anticipated. First, 'Elias', to whom the bishop of Lincoln had given the church of Sleaford, was 'overseas and the church has been seized into the king's hand by the servants of Brian de Lisle'.<sup>2</sup> Secondly, the bishop of Bath had given the deanery of Wells to Master Ralph of Lechlade, 'but it is in the lord king's hand'.<sup>3</sup> These were now the objects of the king's displeasure, and it was for them that special provision was made in the armistice terms of May, 1213.

The dramatic confiscation of property in March 1208 was only applied to a limited extent. All sections of the clergy, nevertheless, were obliged to pay large sums to the king during the Interdict. We may take it that they normally recovered possession of their property on paying a fine; in the case of St. Albans, this amounted to 600 marks, with a *donum* of 500 marks into the bargain.<sup>4</sup> Besides this, the clergy was taxed. In the year 1211 the secular clergy of the Northern province paid more than £3,700 as gifts (*dona*), and the monasteries (especially the Cistercians) were very heavily mulcted.<sup>5</sup> Finally, bishoprics and monasteries were left vacant for years on end so that the Crown might enjoy their revenues. By May 1213 there were seven vacant bishoprics and dozens of abbeys without abbots. But these two last sources of royal income, *dona* and vacancies,

<sup>1</sup> *Book of fees* (H.M.S.O., 1920-1931), i. 70, 81, 141, 149, 197.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, i. 197.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, i. 82. This fact gives a fact in the career of Ralph of Lechlade unnoticed by Armitage Robinson, *Somerset Hist. Essays*, p. 188. Ralph had been precentor, and is said to appear as dean in 1217 (*ibid.* and Le Neve, *Fasti*, i. 150), but can this be substantiated? He was not dean between 30th Sept., 1213 and 11th July, 1215 (*Hist. MSS. Comm. Report on . . . Wells*, i (1907), 53, 67, 490), when Leonius was dean. Ralph acted as dean when overseas with Bishop Jocelin (*ibid.*, i. 58) and he was probably abroad in March 1213 (*Rot. litt. claus.*, i. 128b).

<sup>4</sup> *Gesta abbatum S. Albani*, i. 241-243.

<sup>5</sup> S. K. Mitchell, *Studies in Taxation under John and Henry III* (Yale, 1914), pp. 106-108.

should not strictly be placed to the account of the Interdict. They were only incidentally part of the king's reaction to the pope's anathemas. English kings (John included) had not needed the stimulus of an interdict to make money from vacancies deliberately prolonged. In 1203 Innocent III had complained to King John that he was preventing an election to the wealthy see of Lincoln in order to enjoy the revenues the longer.<sup>1</sup> *Dona* were demanded from the clergy in 1199, 1203, 1204, and 1205; taxation of the clergy in a more formal way began with the income-tax of 1207, and was soon to lose all air of novelty. The chronicles of the time and modern historians have tended to represent all these measures too exclusively as the depredations of a king at war with the Church rather than as the financial devices of a ruthless fiscal expert.

One 'economic sanction' applied by the king is in line with other indications which point to a certain roguish humour in John's temperament. He gave orders, we are told, to the officials charged with confiscating the clergy's goods, that they were to lock up the mistresses, housekeepers, and lady-loves (*amasiae*) of priests and clerks and hold them to ransom.<sup>2</sup> It was a piquant stroke at ecclesiastical authority. The clergy's women-folk caused a scandal which the canon law denounced but which disciplinarians had long rebuked in vain. The king now traded on the ill-success of the Church in controlling its ministers, and contrived to do so without infringing clerical immunity. Abbot John of Ford, preaching in 1210, condemns those priests who account this privation the worst feature of the Interdict, and who hasten to devote the churches' revenues to the ransom of their mistresses.<sup>3</sup> How much this action profited the Crown we cannot say. The Pipe Roll of 13 John shows that Hugh de Nevill was to be charged with receipts 'de sacerdotissis et rebus clericorum'.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Migne, ccciv. 1176.

<sup>2</sup> *Ann. mon.*, ii. 261. The Bury annalist, Wendover, Coldingham, and Niger also report this action.

<sup>3</sup> Balliol Coll. MS. 24 fo. 100r.

<sup>4</sup> P.R.O., Pipe Roll 13 John, rot. 14 m. 2. No sum is stated, but the corresponding entry next year gives it as 100 marks (Pipe Roll 14 John, rot. 16m. 2d.). This sum was still outstanding in 1215 (Pipe Roll 17 John, rot. 5 m.2).

I have suggested that John treated the Interdict as a declaration of war. But his war was against the pope, not against the English Church or the Christian religion. His economic sanctions and his threats of violence were designed to discourage the English clergy from obeying the pope, not to wreck the ecclesiastical system in England. The king himself, whether or no he had earned his reputation for impiety, continued active in devotional works and promoted Christian piety among his subjects. His excommunication in 1209 made no difference. Not only do the exchequer records show that the regular accounts of 'elemosine constitute'—royal subscriptions for charitable purposes—continued as before. We also find in 1212 a long list of fresh gifts to religious houses.<sup>1</sup> Although the king regularly neglected the fasts enjoined by the Church, his household accounts were as regularly charged with the expense of his penance: a hundred poor people were fed at Tewkesbury on 31st July, 1212, at a cost of 9s. 4½d, because the king had eaten twice on the preceding Friday at Ludgershall, and so on many more occasions.<sup>2</sup> The household accounts contain more convincing evidence of the king's observance of religious propriety in expenditure during 1212 on candles to be set upon coffers of relics.<sup>3</sup> In the same year sumpter-horses were hired and bought to carry relics in the king's train, and he visited the relics of St. James at Reading Abbey (in which he had always taken special interest). On Good Friday, 1213 the king made his offering of 13d. at the Cross; and, what is more, paid 8d. for the knights who offered with him.<sup>4</sup> Thus he advertised his orthodoxy, though excommunicate.

In view of this, we need not be surprised that the everyday administration of the Church was allowed to proceed as usual. Within the last twenty years the publication of the Curia Regis Rolls has enabled us to see more clearly how the king's court dealt with the clergy. When the Interdict began, the curia regis sometimes postponed a suit *sine die* because one of the litigants

<sup>1</sup> *Rot. litt. claus.*, i. 123b. Cf. H. Cole, *Documents illustrative of English History* (1844), pp. 233-234, 240, 247.

<sup>2</sup> Cole, *op. cit.*, p. 236, cf. *ibid.*, 231-235, etc. and *Rotuli de liberate ac de misis et prestitis* (Rec. Comm.), pp. 110-111, 117, 120, 122, 136, etc.

<sup>3</sup> Cole, *op. cit.*, p. 237.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 231, 233, 246, 258 (cf. *Pipe Roll 2 John*, p. xviii).

was a religious house whose property was in the king's hand ; but it did not do so always. After the summer of 1208 the plea was not admitted as a cause of postponement.<sup>1</sup> The clergy, secular and religious, continually appear in court as plaintiffs and defendants in disputes over advowsons and landed property. Final concords concerning them are continually executed at Westminster and at assizes in the shires. Nowhere is there the least suggestion that the scales are weighted against an ecclesiastical litigant. The chroniclers of Worcester, Dunstable, and Peterborough, each reports a successful lawsuit in which his house engaged during the Interdict.<sup>2</sup> The honorial courts of bishops and abbeys (through their custodians) successfully contest the jurisdiction of the king's court in several cases.<sup>3</sup>

It is never easy in the early thirteenth century to find out how the church courts worked, but so far as we can see their work was not interrupted by the Interdict. The king's court hears of cases which have been improperly called into the court christian, and allows felonous clerks to be removed to the court christian. On one occasion, Aubrey de Vere, earl of Oxford, is told not to impede the process of a tithe-case before the archdeacon of Colchester.<sup>4</sup> But this freedom was seriously restricted in one respect. In 1210 (if we may believe the chroniclers)<sup>5</sup> John forbade the hearing of ecclesiastical law-suits on the authority of papal mandates. The cessation of papal jurisdiction is confirmed by the record of several cases which show otherwise inexplicable delay. For instance, a papal commission to judges delegate dated 20th May, 1210, is recorded in a report by the judges in 1216, and a commission of 28th July, 1210, leads to a judgment late in 1214 or after. A composition reached in October 1214 is based

<sup>1</sup> The only case between Trinity Term 1208 and the end of the Interdict concerns the abbot of Waverley, in Michaelmas Term 1210, and then a later day was appointed 'because it is not known whether the abbey is in the lord king's hand or not' (*Curia Regis Rolls*, vi. 69). This was an exceptional occasion, when the heavy taxation of the Cistercians had led to the temporary dispersal of the convent and the flight of the abbot (*Ann. mon.*, ii. 265). And the case went on.

<sup>2</sup> *Ann. mon.* iii. 33, iv. 397 ; *Hist. Anglicanae scriptores varii*, ed. J. Sparke (1723), ii. 106.

<sup>3</sup> *Curia Regis Rolls*, v. 317, vi. 8, 206.

<sup>4</sup> *Rot. litt. claus.*, i. 124a.

<sup>5</sup> *Ann. mon.*, iii. 33, iv. 54 ; Walter of Coventry, ii. 202.

on a mandate dated 30th November, 1212.<sup>1</sup> Other papal commissions survive from 1209, 1210 and 1212, but there is no indication of the date at which they were executed, and they are strikingly few in number.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, there is no evidence that English suitors carried their cases to Rome during this period. By a letter dated 29th October, 1210, Innocent III stopped a case until the storm in the English Church should have ceased.<sup>3</sup>

Apart from litigation, a good deal of routine business had to be done. Vacancies on the episcopal bench had to be filled; and although the king was frequently obstructive, he did not impose a veto on all elections. Following papal letters of January 1209, elections took place at Chichester, Exeter, Lichfield, and Lincoln.<sup>4</sup> Throughout the Interdict, rectors and vicars were instituted in livings, and we hear of nuns receiving solemn benediction, religious houses entering into confraternity. The prebend of Ogbourne was created in the church of Salisbury in May 1208, and a vicarage was established in the Sussex church of Henfield in 1209.<sup>5</sup> In 1210-1211 Peter FitzHerbert arranged

<sup>1</sup> *Monasticon Anglicanum* (1817-1830), VI.ii. 908; *Hist. MSS. Comm. Report on MSS. of Duke of Rutland*, iv. 33 and *Cartulary of Darley Abbey*, ed. R. R. Darlington, ii. 439-440 (cf. *Rot. litt. pat.*, p. 125ab); Westminster, Dean and Chapter muniments, 15684. A writ of prohibition was issued in 1210 or 1211, probably directed to judges delegate of the pope: 'Stephanus de Ebroic' debet vi canes de mota pro habendo precepto regis ad abbatem de Evesham et priorem (sic) de Davintr' et de Ely ne procedant in loquela' (Pipe Roll 13 John, rot. 12 m. 2d.).

<sup>2</sup> *Coucher Book of Kirkstall Abbey* (Thoresby Soc.), p. 254 (Nov. 2nd, 1209); Migne, ccxvi. 374 (Dec. 13th, 1210); Westminster, muniments, 2596 (17th Dec., 1210); *Cartulary of St. Frideswide's* (Oxford Hist. Soc.), ii. 50 (Apr. 25th, 1212); *Hist. MSS. Comm. Report on var. Collections*, iv. 64 (May 7th, 1212). A case which had lasted a long time (*diutius*) between St. Guthlac's, Hereford, and St. John's, Brecon, was settled by judges delegate on Apr. 9th, 1214 (*Archaeologia Cambrensis*, 4th series, xiv (1883), 26-27).

The statement of the Waverley annalist, s.a. 1207 (*Ann. mon.*, ii. 259): 'Facta est hoc anno prohibitio domini regis ne placita domini papae in Anglia teneantur' is probably misplaced. Cases were conducted in England on papal mandates in 1208 and 1209 (*Brit. Mus.*, Cotton MS. Vesp. E. xx fos. 92 and 240, and Migne, ccxv. 1504); in the exchequer year ending Michaelmas 1209 Master John de Rammesbiri offered three palfreys to have royal letters to judges delegate ordering them to proceed in a case (*Wm. Salt Soc. Collections*, ii. 148, 154, 161; cf. *Curia Regis Rolls*, vi. 189).

<sup>3</sup> *Memorials of Fountains Abbey* (Surtees Soc.) i. 172.

<sup>4</sup> Migne, ccxv. 1528-1529; *Ann. mon.*, iii. 31, iv. 54.

<sup>5</sup> *Register of St. Osmund* (Rolls series), i. 189; *Victoria County Hist. Sussex*, ii. 7.

with Robert de Ros to divide between them the advowson of a Yorkshire church 'if it could be done with the archbishop's agreement'; if the archbishop would not give his assent, the two parties were to present alternately to the living.<sup>1</sup> The archbishop for whom this nice regard was shown was the exile, Geoffrey Plantagenet. We cannot assume (as is often done) that church-building was at a standstill. Dunstable Priory built a new almonry during 1208. In January 1209 the canons of Lincoln had the king's permission to transport without hindrance the timber and lead which they had bought for the work on their church. A little later we hear of appeals for repairs to the church of St. Mary and St. Chad at Lichfield, and for work on the church of St. Andrew's Northampton. In the same year the church of St. Mary Overey, Southwark, was rebuilt after the fire of 1207. These records all belong to the early part of the Interdict. But early in 1213 King John subscribed to building operations at Barlings, Beaulieu, and Romsey Abbeys.<sup>2</sup>

Scanty as our evidence is, it suggests that there was no deliberate obstruction of ecclesiastical business, with the important exception of appeals to Rome in and after 1210. This immediately raises the question: was business indirectly impeded by shortage of personnel? Were the exiled clergy so numerous and so important that their absence precluded sound administration? This is one of the hardest questions connected with the Interdict. For we can neither discover the names of all who left England, nor measure their importance. A few facts may, however, dispel a few illusions. As regards the episcopate,

<sup>1</sup> P.R.O., Pipe Roll 13 John, rot. 4 m.1: 'Petrus filius Hereberti reddit compotum de 500 marcis pro habenda alia medietate ville de Wichton' cum pertinentiis, ita quod capitale mesagium cum gardino remanebit predicto Petro sed faciet Roberto de Ros rationabile escambium mesagii illius de parte sua in eadem villa. Medietas autem advocacionis ecclesie de Wichton' si fieri possit de assensu archiepiscopi remanebit predicto Roberto et alia medietas predicto Petro, et si de assensu archiepiscopi ita fieri non possit, predictus Robertus dabit ecclesiam illam cum vacaverit una vice et predictus Petrus alia vice'. Ecclesiastical authorities opposed this division of livings (cf. *Curia Regis Rolls*, ii. 211 and Council of Oxford (1222), c.xiii, Wilkins, *Concilia*, i. 587).

<sup>2</sup> *Ann. mon.*, iii. 30, 451; *Rot. litt. pat.*, pp. 88b, 90a; Cole, *op. cit.*, pp. 251, 257. In the year ending Michaelmas 1212 he had spent no less than £354 2s. 7d. on work at Beaulieu, his own foundation (P.R.O., Pipe Roll 14 John, rot. 11 m.1).

none of the chroniclers is a safe guide. Until November 1209 the only absent diocesans out of a total of seventeen in England were the two primates and the bishops of Ely, Hereford, London, and Worcester. But the sees of Durham and Lichfield fell vacant during 1208, and Chichester, Exeter, Lichfield, and Lincoln were filled by bishops unconsecrated in November 1209. The excommunication of the king seems to have been a signal for further desertions: the bishops of Bath, Lincoln, Rochester, and Salisbury all went abroad. Thereafter, most of the episcopal bench were absent from England until the summer of 1213. This state of affairs was, beyond doubt, unhealthy; but it may not seriously have impaired the workings of diocesan government. Just as the government of England went on in the king's absence during the reigns of Richard I and John, so also in the dioceses of England administration had reached an impersonal stage where the diocesan's presence was not absolutely necessary. Archbishops Baldwin and Hubert can have spent comparatively little time in the personal conduct of diocesan business. Archbishop Geoffrey of York was absent from his see as often as he was present—and perhaps, in view of his fiery Plantagenet temper, that was just as well. The secular activities of bishops and long vacancies of sees had caused a great deal of diocesan business to devolve on the officials and the archdeacons. The *officialis* had emerged in most English bishoprics by the beginning of the thirteenth century—in time to take over during the Interdict all the routine work connected with the parochial clergy. He is constantly mentioned in royal letters of presentation. We have letters of the exiled Mauger, bishop of Worcester, to his two officials, Robert, prior of Worcester, and Master Robert of Clipston, in 1211,<sup>1</sup> and the notice of Langton's appointment of the prior of Worcester to be official after Mauger's death.<sup>2</sup>

Concerning cathedral dignitaries, regulars, and the inferior clergy, we cannot hope for the whole truth. Richard Poore, dean of Salisbury, and Raymond, archdeacon of Leicester, were at Paris during the Interdict. Benedict of Sansetun, precentor of St. Paul's, and Robert Grosseteste, may have been there

<sup>1</sup> Brit. Mus., Harl. MS. 3650 fo. 47v. Miss K. Major kindly drew my attention to these documents.

<sup>2</sup> *Ann. mon.*, iv. 401.

too.<sup>1</sup> Among those found abroad with the brothers Jocelin and Hugh, bishops of Bath and Lincoln, are the dean of Wells, several canons of Wells, and the celebrated Master Elias of Dereham.<sup>2</sup> In the early part of the Interdict Adam, monk of Eynsham, biographer of St. Hugh, visited France, but he was back in England in 1211 or 1212. We also find English monastic prelates in Ireland and Scotland, but we cannot assuredly count them among the exiles. The impression we gain is that the clerical exiles were comparatively few in number: some clerks who had incurred the king's displeasure, some who were men of unbending character and high principles, some scholars who could pursue their studies most satisfactorily abroad; they could be counted in dozens, not in hundreds. Their absence meant a diminution but no dearth of ecclesiastical lawyers and administrators in England. With the exception of Poore and Grosseteste and Sansetun, nearly all the bishops of the next generation seem to have lived under the Interdict in England, many of them as trusted servants of the king; they include Walter de Gray, the chancellor, Henry de Londres, Richard de Marisco, Simon of Apulia, William of Cornhill, Ranulf of Wareham, Walter Mauclerk, Eustace of Fauconberg, Geoffrey de Burgh. There were others, too, who, although they never reached the episcopate, held cathedral dignities and archdeaconries and had responsibilities as churchmen. One may name among them Master Roger of Rolveston, dean of Lincoln, William de Monte, chancellor of Lincoln, Peter of Blois, archdeacon of London, Thomas of Chabham, subdean of Salisbury, John of Brancaster, archdeacon of Worcester, Robert of Gloucester, archdeacon of Stafford, William of Wrotham, archdeacon of Taunton.

To sum up with a guarded opinion on this ill-recorded subject, we may say that ecclesiastical government was undoubtedly disturbed by the Interdict. There could be no appeals to Rome, and if synods and visitations could, theoretically, be held by the bishop's deputies, in fact they were less likely to occur,

<sup>1</sup> Benedict was in the schools at Paris when elected bishop of Rochester in Dec. 1214 (Wharton, *Anglia sacra*, ii. 386). Grosseteste suggests that he heard the exiled Langton in France (Matt. Paris, *Chronica maiora*, v. 404).

<sup>2</sup> J. A. Robinson, *Somerset Hist. Essays*, p. 154.

and we have no trace of them. In the notorious cases of the exempt abbeys of Evesham and Westminster much-needed disciplinary action had to await the coming of a papal legate. There was also the imponderable depressing effect of the Interdict itself and the fear of the king's tyranny, tending to produce pessimism and inertia in church government. The normal routine of diocesan administration went on, but at a somewhat reduced tempo.

This paper has already touched on enough doubtful matters, but before I close I shall make bold to raise a still more difficult question, which is also perhaps the most interesting of all: What was the effect of the Interdict on the religious life and practices of the people of England? Here again I can only offer a few shreds of information which cannot always be interpreted with confidence. Contemporary comment on the Interdict is for the most part the comment of monks, from their own special standpoint; not a single layman's opinion of these events is on record.

The first reaction of the people of England to the solemn pronouncement of the Interdict must have been confused by John's propaganda. The king anticipated the sentence by sending his agents to the shires to give his version of the dispute with Innocent III. In appealing to the custom of England, he had a plausible case, and never once admitted that he was wrong, until his submission in 1213. The laity, in so far as they thought about the matter, might be expected to take his side rather than adopt a high 'ultramontane' point of view. The clergy, too, were in a great measure the products of the system which the pope opposed, and there was room (if not so much room) for honest disagreement about the rights of the case as there was in the case of Becket, which had divided the English clergy a generation earlier. The Cistercian annalist of Margam Abbey makes the remarkable statement that all the laity, most of the clergy, and many religious were on the king's side at the outset of the dispute over the Canterbury election.<sup>1</sup> The Interdict, by

<sup>1</sup> *Ann. monastici*, i. 28: 'Pro cuius electione quia facta fuit contra profanas illas consuetudines, quas vocant avitas leges et regias libertates, orta est statim discordia inter Papam Innocentium et Iohannem tyrannum Angliae, faventibus

emphasizing a conflict of loyalties, must have bewildered many. When the king was excommunicated, matters became worse; many of his subjects now had to decide between ignoring the sentence and going into exile. The majority seems to have ignored the sentence. The lay magnates remain at court attesting the king's charters and participating in government, and although the clerical element in the royal circle is reduced, it still includes two bishops, two Cistercian abbots, various members of the two orders of the Temple and the Hospital, and a large number of secular clerks.

All this must have been demoralizing to the persons immediately concerned and to the onlookers. Their orthodoxy was tested in another way by the removal of the usual stimuli to devotion. In the margin of Matthew Paris' *Chronica maiora*, at the year 1208, is a drawing of a church-bell, with the bell-rope looped up so that it cannot be used.<sup>1</sup> The cessation of bell-ringing was a minor evil, but symbolic of the silence which had descended on the churches. Abbot John of Ford, in a sermon preached in 1210, remarks on the danger that Christian piety will expire if help is not brought by the Father of Mercies, because the sacrament of the Last Supper has been withdrawn. 'To a few of us' he says, 'by the mercy of God, is left a modicum of refreshment with the Bread of Life, but the masses have waited in continual fasting for nearly two years now, denied all participation in the sacraments. And there is no doubt that they will die on the road and completely cease to remember their fatherland if their hunger goes on increasing.'<sup>2</sup> The denial of the sacraments was a check upon religious devotion which was likely to have permanent results. Some ninety years later Pope Boniface VIII recognized that as a result of the denial of the sacraments during interdicts 'the indevotion of the populace grows, heresies pullulate, and infinite spiritual dangers arise'.<sup>3</sup>

ei et consentientibus omnibus laicis et clericis fere universis, sed et viris cuiuslibet professionis multis, sicut plenius habetur in quodam libello qui inscribitur *De symonia*.' I have failed to identify this book.

<sup>1</sup> Facsimile in M. R. James, 'The Drawings of Matthew Paris', *Walpole Soc. Publications*, xiv (1925-1926), pl. 7.

<sup>2</sup> Balliol Coll. MS. 24 fos. 99v, 101r.

<sup>3</sup> *Sext*, V. 11, 24.

The mitigation in favour of the conventual clergy (1209), to which Abbot John refers, by which they might celebrate mass once a week behind closed doors, caused scandal rather than comfort to the rest of the people, who saw in it unjust discrimination.<sup>1</sup> There was added the discouragement to men who wished to enter the priesthood; for they could not receive ordination in an interdicted land.

On the other hand, the local ecclesiastical authorities tried to keep alive religious practices which were not positively prohibited by papal mandate. Priests were exhorted to say their hours in private, to preach regularly to the people, to announce the feast-days, and open their church-doors to their parishioners on the patronal festivals. Confession was to be encouraged, although the penitent could not be given absolution (save *in articulo mortis*). On Good Friday, priests might set up, outside the church, a cross for the customary adoration of the parishioners.<sup>2</sup> At London there was no blessing of candles at Candlemas, but ashes were blessed in the chapter-house of St. Paul's on Ash Wednesday, 1209, for distribution to the canons and cathedral clergy.<sup>3</sup> In 1210 an attempt was made to kindle the Londoner's faith by the burning of a heretic, if we may believe the jejune and solitary record of the *Liber de antiquis legibus*.<sup>4</sup>

Adversity sometimes produces a state of mind favourable to religious observances. Some of those who took hardly the cessation of church-services, or who experienced the oppressiveness of John's arbitrary rule, regarded the Interdict as a divine judgment, an encouragement to works of penance. John of Ford expatiates on the wickedness of the clergy and concludes, 'What wonder if the hand of the Lord has been stretched out

<sup>1</sup> Peter of Blois writing to the bishop of London about March 1209, says: 'Primores nostre civitatis graviter scandalizantur et murmurant quod cum per episcopos et clericos sicut asserunt procuratum sit interdictum et ipsi ab hoc penitus sint immunes, clericis aliqua relaxatione gaudentibus illi sine causa remanent obligati.' Cf. Innocent III's letter to the Cistercians, Migne, ccxvi. 20.

<sup>2</sup> These details are from the sources mentioned above, p. 298, notes 3, 4, 5.

<sup>3</sup> From the letter of Peter of Blois to the bishop of Salisbury.

<sup>4</sup> *Liber de antiquis legibus*, ed. T. Stapleton (Camd. Soc.), p. 3: 'Hoc anno concrematus est quidam Ambigensis apud Londonias'. Maitland, *Roman canon law*, p. 161 accepts this story. Mr. H. G. Richardson remarks that the victim was 'presumably a foreign merchant'. *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, li (1936), 1.

against all these?' Matthew of Rievaulx, another Cistercian, attributes the Interdict to sin. He discusses the evil of lay influence on elections of prelates and says: 'This is the original reason and the definite apostacy which explains why the voice of the turtle-dove—that is, Mother Church—is not heard in our land. For this reason chiefly the Lord of Sabaoth has closed the mouths of those who praised him and abandoned us to scorn and derision, so that people and priesthood are deprived of sacred rites and sacrifices.'<sup>1</sup> Religious exercises were stimulated by these considerations. We need not be surprised if pilgrims flocked to the shrines of saints during the Interdict, and if signs and wonders ensued. (Whereas most churches remained shut, monastic churches which were frequently visited by pilgrims were told to admit visitors by a side door.<sup>2</sup>) The annalist of Waverley tells us that in 1211 one 'St. Simon was martyred in the Isle of Wight, and very soon miracles were worked at his tomb.'<sup>3</sup> In 1212 a miraculous cure at the tomb of St. Wulfstan brought to Worcester a substantial grant of land in Ireland.<sup>4</sup> At Eastertide in 1213 'the miracles of God and St. Frehemund, king and martyr, so increased in the church of Dunstable that the news of them spread far and wide and the people gave thanks abundantly.'<sup>5</sup> Giraldus Cambrensis, in his life of St. Hugh of Lincoln, gives a detailed account of five miracles worked at this saint's tomb during the Interdict and of another at Worksop Priory.<sup>6</sup> Many years afterwards, in 1228, when evidence was collected towards the canonization of St. Osmund of Salisbury, Master Thomas of Chabham and other witnesses told of two miraculous cures effected at Osmund's tomb in the old cathedral, which could not be adequately signalled and celebrated by the ringing of bells because of the General Interdict which lay on England at the time.<sup>7</sup> I do not wish to over-emphasize the significance of these incidents. They do, however, show that the normal expressions of religiosity were not lacking.

<sup>1</sup> *Revue Bénédictine*, lii. 83.

<sup>2</sup> Gervase of Canterbury, ii. p. xcii. cf. above, p. 298.

<sup>3</sup> *Ann. monastici*, ii. 266.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, iv. 401.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, iii. 39.

<sup>6</sup> *Opera* (Rolls series), vii. 137-147.

<sup>7</sup> A. R. Malden, *The canonization of St. Osmund* (Wilts Rec. Soc., 1901), pp. 37-8, 40.

The Interdict left a mark on English society which was not easily forgotten, particularly by the clergy. Did it fulfil its purpose? The clergy suffered material losses; the laity lacked in great measure the clergy's ministrations. But for five years King John—the sole object of the pope's displeasure—remained unmoved. In Stubbs's words, 'he grew richer and stronger as he grew more contumacious'.<sup>1</sup> When at last he submitted, his submission was a diplomatic move, prompted by fear of rebellion at home combined with invasion from abroad. These political circumstances may conceivably have been due in part to the Interdict, but this cannot be demonstrated. Still, Innocent III, by maintaining the Interdict for five years, had exhibited his tremendous authority over the English Church. He was able to go on enforcing this spiritual punishment until political circumstances led John to want a papal alliance; then the king accepted the terms which the pope had offered in 1211 and admitted Langton to the see of Canterbury. It was a considerable victory for the pope, but it was a victory without the prospect of peace. It did nothing to relax the tension which the conflicting claims of Church and State had created in medieval society.

<sup>1</sup> *Constit. Hist. of England*, ch. xii. § 153.