Odo of Champagne, Count of Blois and 'Tyrant of Burgundy'

FOREMOST among the group of feudatories who stood half protectingly, half menacingly around the throne founded by Hugh Capet in 987, and whose struggles for the mastery over one another and over the crown itself chiefly make up the history of this new kingdom of the French during the first century of its existence, was the house of Blois, represented throughout the greater part of the reign of Hugh's successor by Count Odo II of Blois, Chartres, and Tours, in his later years also count of Champagne and, as an old writer puts it, 'tyrant of Burgundy'—in other words, claimant of the crown of Arles. The story of Odo's life is a story of wasted talents, perverted energies, misused opportunities, and unfulfilled possibilities: yet it is a story not without interest; for the possibilities were such that their fulfilment might have changed the whole after-history of both France and England, if not of all western Europe.

The founder of the house of Blois had been a Scandinavian 'pirate' who, when his comrades were finally driven out of the duchy of France, consented to become the vassal of its duke for three of its fairest districts, the counties of Blois, Chartres, and Tours. These three counties made up together a territory greater in extent than any other underfief of the duchy, and nearly as great as that which the duke retained in his own hands, and which on his elevation to the crown became the 'royal domain.' The importance which they gave to their holder was shown by the marriage of Theobald the Trickster, second count of Blois, with a daughter of the great house of Vermandois and Champagne, closely akin to the dukes of the French. Theobald's son and successor, Odo, won a bride of yet loftier rank, Bertha, eldest daughter of Conrad the Pacific, king of Arles. Odo died about a year before Hugh Capet, in 995; in less than ten years his two elder sons followed him, and in 1004 the youngest became Count Odo II of Blois, Chartres, and Tours.

The really important task of Odo's life—a task whose importance he seems never to have realised, and indeed could not possibly have realised in all its fulness without a prophetic knowledge of the

after-history which has made it evident to us—was his struggle with his neighbour Fulk of Anjou for the mastery in central Gaul. In that task he failed, and the consequence of his failure was the establishment on the black rock of Angers of a power which grew and spread till it gave an Angevin duke to Normandy and an Angevin king to England. Some of the causes of his failure lay, without doubt, in the character of his rival; but other causes lay in the character and circumstances of Odo himself. He had lost his father when scarcely more than a child; within a year his mother, Bertha of Arles, had married her kinsman the new king Robert of France. Odo had thus grown to manhood amid the anarchy and misery that sprang from the interdict with which this marriage between second cousins was punished by the Church. He caught but too readily the lawless spirit of the time, and began his career—possibly in 996, more probably in 999—by a struggle with his royal stepfather for the castle of Melun, a struggle which ended in the young rebel's ignominious flight, but not till Robert had been obliged to call in against him the aid of Duke Richard of Normandy.¹ A few years later Odo was again in open rebellion, this time in concert with Count Otto William of Burgundy.² Again Richard of Normandy came to the king's assistance,³ although by this time his sister Matilda was probably Odo's wife. Her dowry consisted of half the county of Dreux; she died, however, soon after her marriage, and, as she left no child, her brother claimed the restoration of the dower. This Odo refused, and a war followed, in which, according to a Norman historian, the count of Blois—as Odo had now become—proved so nearly a match for the Norman duke that the latter was fain to call in the aid of certain heathen 'sea kings,' of whom one was no less a personage than Olaf Haraldson, future saint and martyr, and whose presence in the land so terrified King Robert that he took the matter out of their hands by citing both disputants to a great council at Contras, where he settled their dispute by his own royal authority, supported by all the princes of his realm. The settlement was a compromise; Odo kept the castle of Dreux, but Richard kept the surrounding land, and a far more important fortress which he had built on its western border, Tillières.⁴

Odo speedily married a second wife, Hermengard of Auvergne.⁵ His chief employment during the next few years was the defence of

¹ Richer, l. iv. cc. 74–78; Hugh of Fleury, *Rer. Gall. Scriptt.* x. 220, 221; *Vita Burchardi Com.*, ib. pp. 354, 355; W. of Jumièges, l. v. c. 14.

² 'Chron. Virdun.' *Rer. Gall. Scriptt.* x. 208.

³ W. Jumièges, l. v. c. 15; R. Glaber, l. ii. c. 8.

⁴ W. Jumièges, l. v. cc. 11, 12. See Freeman, *Norm. Cong.* i. 508–510.

⁵ See Arbois de Jubainville, *Hist. des Comtes de Champagne*, i. 208–209. The suggestion in p. 208 as to a connexion between Odo's second marriage and the favourable terms granted to him by Robert is based upon a view of Queen Constance's parentage which is now known to be erroneous.

the counties of Tours, Chartres, and Blois, which had devolved upon him by his brother's death, against the aggression of his western neighbour, Count Fulk of Anjou. Master by inheritance of two strongholds in the heart of Touraine, Amboise and Loches, Fulk was carefully planning and already beginning to execute a scheme for the gradual annexation of the whole county of Tours. Ten years of intermittent warfare, conducted with consummate strategical skill on the Angevin side, but in somewhat desultory fashion by the Count of Blois, came to a crisis in July 1016, when Odo, on his way to attack Fulk's castle of Montrichard, found himself unexpectedly confronted by the allied forces of Anjou and Maine, and was by them totally routed in a pitched battle at Pontlevoy.⁶ His ambition, however, was seeking another field than the 'garden of France.' Odo, as well as Fulk, was setting his face eastward. Already in 1015 he had ceded an outlying fragment of his dominions, the little county of Beauvais, to its diocesan bishop, Roger, in exchange for Roger's patrimonial county of Sancerre.⁷ Beauvais lay at the north-western extremity of the royal domain, isolated from Odo's other possessions; Sancerre, on the other hand, flanked on the east his own county of Blois; and Chartres, Blois, and Sancerre, all linked together in a single hand, formed a strong chain of territories that ringed in the royal domain from the Norman to the Burgundian border, while the great fief that lay on its eastern side, Champagne, was now parted from Odo's dominions only by the little counties of Auxerre and Nevers. It was on Champagne that Odo's eyes were fixed. After the death, in 943, of Herbert II, count of Vermandois and Champagne, his vast territorial possessions had been parcelled out by a family arrangement among his sons. Amiens and Vermandois formed the share of the two elder; the scattered but extensive and valuable lands in Champagne were divided between the two younger brothers, Robert and Herbert, and on Robert's death without a surviving son Herbert came into possession of them all. His only son, Stephen, died childless in 1019 or 1020. The male line of Herbert II was thus extinct so far as Champagne was concerned; for his two elder sons seem to have renounced all claim upon the eastern half of his dominions. Of his descendants by the spindle side the nearest and most conspicuous was Odo of Blois, the grandson of his eldest daughter, Luitgard, by her marriage with Theobald the Trickster.

Odo's consanguinity might give him a title to the investiture of Champagne; but it was a title which the king was not necessarily bound to recognise. So to do would be to wedge in the royal domain between the territories—amounting to more than double its extent—of one man, and that man not the most trust-

⁶ *Gesta Cons. Andeg.*, ed. Marchegay (*Chron. des Comtes d'Anjou*), pp. 107-108.

⁷ Alberic of Trois-Fontaines, *Rer. Gall. Scriptt.* x. 288.

worthy among the vassals of the crown. Robert might well shrink from such a risk; and it seems by no means unlikely that he entertained some idea of keeping the lapsed fief in his own hands, a course in which he would be strengthened by his own descent from Beatrice, daughter of the first Count Herbert of Vermandois. No considerations either of loyalty or of prudence, however, could check Odo's impatient ambition; regardless of the royal rights, without waiting for investiture, he seized to himself the cities of Troyes and Meaux and all the broad lands of Champagne.⁸ It seems that Robert, powerless to dislodge him, was obliged to put a good face on the matter by granting him the investiture of the county. But Odo was one of those men who seem to receive the favours of fortune only to throw them blindly, if not wilfully, away. To north and east Champagne bordered upon the great duchy—now divided into two parts—of Lotharingia or Lorraine, which on the final break-up of the Carolingian empire had been formed out of the northern half of the old 'middle kingdom,' and after many changes of ownership and overlordship had settled down in the days of Otto the Great as a fief of the East Frankish realm, but was still regarded with somewhat wistful eyes by the rulers of West Frankland. Before the new count of Champagne had been many years in possession he quarrelled with Theodoric, the duke of Upper Lorraine. Odo seems, indeed, to have done nothing worse than what Fulk of Anjou had been doing with impunity for years past in Touraine—building castles on his neighbour's land. But an encroachment on Lorraine was something far more serious than a mere aggression against a fellow-vassal; it was a violation of the territory of the empire. The strife of Odo and Fulk put in jeopardy nothing but the peace of Touraine and Anjou; the strife of Odo and Theodoric narrowly missed putting in jeopardy the peace of all France and Germany by reopening the vexed question of their respective relations with Lotharingia. Happily, the well-grounded confidence of King Robert the Pious in the saintly emperor Henry II suggested to him a means of turning the difficulty into a bond of union between them, and using it to gain the help of a stronger hand than his own in managing the troublesome count of Champagne. Robert handed over the whole matters in dispute, not only between Odo and Theodoric but also between Odo and himself, to the decision of the emperor. The case was tried before Henry at Verdun in September 1023, and decided against Odo. The encroaching castles were pulled down;⁹ and then, strong in the emperor's support, Robert withdrew the extorted investiture of Champagne. Odo found himself suddenly alone, on the verge of ruin. He made a passionate appeal to Robert's clemency and justice, professing

⁸ R. Glaber, l. iii. c. 2.

⁹ 'Chron. Camerac.' *Rev. Gall. Scriptt.* x. 202.

unbounded loyalty, vehemently declaring that he had done nothing to deserve such treatment and would rather die than live deprived of his honours.¹⁰ The appeal gained its end, partly, no doubt, because it was helped by other causes. The moral support which might have kept Robert firm was taken away at the critical moment by Henry's death in July 1024. No ties of friendship or fellow-feeling bound Robert to his successor; the French king's sympathies turned at once from the overlord of Lotharingia to its invader, and suddenly reversing his policy, he made, or let his imperious second wife make for him, a close alliance with Odo.¹¹

Just at this moment, when Odo was thus at the height of his prosperity, basking in the full sunshine of court favour and master of all the wealth and all the forces of Champagne as well as of Chartres and Blois, there came to him the first whispers of a temptation which was one day to lead him to his ruin. The chief nobles of Lombardy, hoping to find in the death of Henry II an opportunity to fling off the yoke of a German sovereign, sent an embassy into Gaul in search of a prince who should be willing to accept their crown and able to fight for it against Henry's successor, Conrad the Salic. Robert of France wisely declined to entertain their proposals either for himself or for his son, but he left the envoys free to treat of the matter with his feudatories, and allowed them to make overtures first to Duke William of Aquitaine and then, it seems, to Count Odo of Champagne.¹² Their negotiations with Odo came to nothing, and were perhaps only intended to hasten the decision of William; but they seem to have conjured up before Odo's eager eyes a vision which haunted him for the rest of his life. Thenceforth he looked upon the Angevin enemy who threatened him in Touraine as a mere hindrance to loftier schemes of ambition. To sweep the obstacle out of his way, as he hoped, once for all, he set forth in 1026 at the head of all the troops that he could muster in his own territories and borrow from the royal domain, to dislodge the Angevins from a great camp which they had formed some ten years before on the Montboyau, nearly opposite Tours. As, however, his notion of strategy, like his notion of policy, never went beyond dashing with all his forces straight at the one point which chanced to have caught his eyes at the moment, he was rash enough to call out all the fighting men of Touraine to join him in the siege, thus leaving the whole country south of the Loire a clear field for Fulk's attack. The consequence was that in striving to win the Montboyau he lost a far more important stronghold, the key of his

¹⁰ Letter of Odo to Robert, *ib.* p. 501.

¹¹ *Chron. Rain. Andeg.* a. 1028; *Chron. Vindoc.* a. 1025.

¹² R. Glaber, l. iii. c. 9, *Rer. Gall. Scriptt.* x. 89; letters of Fulbert of Chartres and Fulk of Anjou, *ib.* 474, 500-501.

western border, Saumur.¹³ Next year he sought vengeance in an attack upon Amboise, in which he was joined by young Henry of France, King Robert's eldest son. The attack failed; ¹⁴ and thenceforth Odo left Touraine to its fate. His heart had never been in his work there. The old chroniclers are right in the spirit, though wrong in the letter, when they call him 'Odo of Champagne' long before he had entered upon his cousin Stephen's inheritance. All his life long the blood and the spirit of his grandmother Luitgard of Champagne and his mother Bertha of Arles were prompting him to turn his back upon the home and the work bequeathed to him by his father, and urging him ever further and further eastward till they goaded him at last to his doom.

In July 1081 King Robert died. His widow, Constance, hated her eldest son, the new King Henry, 'with a step-mother's hatred,' as says a chronicler of the time; and to oust him from his throne she sought to purchase the aid of Count Odo. She knew his price and she had it ready to her hand. On the border of Champagne and the royal domain stood the city of Sens, of which half belonged to the archbishop, and the other half was a secular fief which had been forfeited to the crown by the misdoings of its count Rainard, aided and abetted by Odo himself, in the days when the surrounding Champagne was still held by Odo's cousin Stephen.¹⁵ As whatever was in the power of King Robert was virtually in the power of his wife, she was able at his death to make over this half of Sens to Odo; and for this paltry bribe he readily turned against his lawful sovereign and late ally and joined hands with the queen-mother to place her younger son upon the throne.¹⁶ Her death put an end to this project in July 1082. Archbishop Leutheric of Sens had died about a month earlier. Odo at once made common cause with the local clergy against a new archbishop—Gelduin (brother of the late Count Rainard)—who was appointed by the young king. When Gelduin came to take possession of his see 'he could not get in anyhow;' and King Henry himself, when at harvest-tide he laid siege to the place, met with a like fate. Next year he came again with three thousand men and spent another week in ravaging the neighbourhood, but with no better success. In the third year Odo yielded; not only was Gelduin admitted, but the lay half of Sens was restored to the king.¹⁷ By that time indeed Odo's thoughts were concentrated upon a prize compared with which Sens was a trifle scarce worth fighting for. King Rudolf of

¹³ *Gesta Cons.* pp. 108-109; *Gesta Ambas. Damin.*, *ib.*, p. 165; *Hist. S. Flor. Salm.*, ed. Marchegay (*Chron. des Eglises d'Anjou*), pp. 275-280; *Chron. Rain. Andeg.* a. 1026, *ib.* p. 10.

¹⁴ *Chron. Vindoc.* a. 1027.

¹⁵ 'Chron. S. Petr. Senon.' *Rev. Gall. Scriptt.* x. 223, 224.

¹⁶ Hugh of Fleury, *ib.* xi. 158.

¹⁷ R. Glaber, l. iii. c. 9, *ib.* x. 40; 'Chron. S. Petr. Senon.' *ib.* 225, and xi. 196.

Arles was dead, and Odo had plunged headlong into a struggle with the emperor for his crown.

Rudolf's heritage was the last independent fragment of the 'middle kingdom,' which had once formed an enormous marchland between the East and West Frankish realms. That kingdom, set up by the treaty of Verdun in 843 to serve as a sort of neutral zone between its two neighbours, was a purely artificial creation, arbitrarily formed out of a long straggling chain of countries, reaching from the mouth of the Weser to that of the Tiber, without a natural boundary anywhere save at its northern extremity, where it ended of necessity on the shore of the North Sea, and peopled by races differing widely from each other in blood, speech, and traditions. In little more than ten years it fell to pieces. Its northern half took the name of Lotharingia from its second sovereign, who was also its last independent ruler. Its southern half—the land between the Saône, the Alps, the Alemannian and Lotharingian duchies, and the Mediterranean Sea—flung off the Carolingian rule altogether towards the close of the ninth century, set up kings of its own, and formed two sovereign states, Provence and transjuran Burgundy, which in 993 were united and became a single independent monarchy, free of all connexion with its western neighbour the French king, owing homage to the eastern in his imperial character only, and having its chief seat in the old Roman city from whose name it was commonly known as the kingdom of Arles. The third king of this united Burgundy, Rudolf III, came to his throne in 993. He was a man of gentle, somewhat weak disposition, ill fitted to be ruler of a country whose inhabitants comprised people of the most diverse blood and temper, from the half-Teutonic folk of his paternal Transjurana to the Aquitanian Celts of the banks of the Saône, and the semi-Italian natives of the Alpine valleys and the land which still proudly remembered that it had been the original Roman 'Provincia.' Rudolf found himself set at naught by his rebellious nobles; his marriage brought him no children; and caring no longer to keep for himself such a troublesome crown, he made two attempts to cede it to his sister Gisela's son, the emperor Henry II.¹⁸ No sooner, however, was the cession formally completed in 1020 than the Burgundian nobles protested against it as illegal without their consent. In default of a direct heir they claimed the right to choose a king for themselves, and so strongly did their patriotism revolt at the prospect of having a stranger to rule over them that they entreated the hitherto despised Rudolf to resume his sceptre.¹⁹ The emperor waived his claim and the transaction was held void; but in 1082 Rudolf died, and from his death-bed he, in fulfilment of a

¹⁸ Thietmar of Merseburg, *Ger. Gall. Scriptt.* x. 182; Albert of Metz, *ib.* 189; Sigebert, a. 1020, *ib.* 218.

¹⁹ Albert of Metz, *l.c.*

fresh engagement made five years before,²⁰ sent his crown and the spear of St. Maurice, the sacred insignia of Burgundian royalty, to Henry's successor, Conrad the Salic.²¹

Conrad was far more of a stranger to the Burgundian house than Henry had been, for he could claim kindred with it only through his wife, a daughter of Rudolf's youngest sister, Gerberga. Politically, however, the dying king's choice was the wisest that could have been made for his country; but it bitterly disappointed another of his kinsmen who was not of a temper to sit down quietly under such a disappointment. Odo of Champagne was the only surviving son of Rudolf's eldest sister, and therefore considered himself Rudolf's sole lawful heir. Characteristically, however, he seems never to have taken any steps to procure either from Rudolf or from the emperor any recognition of his claims as heir-apparent, but trusted to his own sword for its vindication whenever the crisis should come. The crisis chanced to come at a lucky moment for him. When Rudolf died, in September 1092, Conrad was busy warring against the Poles. Odo seized the opportunity to invade transjurane Burgundy and make himself master of its chief strongholds.²² Conrad hurried back to keep Christmas at Strasburg, and thence marched through Solothurn into Burgundy. Stranger though he might be, he was at any rate less of a stranger than the count of Champagne, a feudatory of an alien sovereign; great and small ratified their dead king's choice, elected Conrad as his successor, and crowned him in the abbey church of Payern on Candlemas day 1093.²³ Owing to the intense cold of the winter, however, he found it impossible to dislodge the invader; so when summer came he made a counter-raid into Champagne. Three weeks of ravaging with fire and sword brought Odo to his knees and wrung from him a renunciation of his claims upon Burgundy;²⁴ but the renunciation was merely formal; he did not withdraw his troops from the country; and his submission to Henry of France next year, which, followed as it was by a visit to his long-neglected patrimonial dominions,²⁵ looked for the moment like a tacit abandonment of his schemes of aggrandisement in the east, was in reality intended only to free his hands for their more vigorous prosecution.

In that summer—1094—Conrad advanced to expel Odo's troops from Burgundy; he was joined by Rudolf's widow, and by Count Hugh of Provence at the head of the loyal Burgundian nobles who had taken refuge beyond the Alps. The united host took Morat,

²⁰ Wipo, *ib.* xi. 3.

²¹ 'Chron. Virdun.' *ib.* 148; Otto of Freising, *ib.* 260; Herm. Contr. *ib.* 18; 'Chron. Saxon.' *ib.* i. 281.

²² Herm. Contr. and Otto Freising, *l.c.*; Hepidan, 'Annales,' *ib.* xi. 8.

²³ Wipo, *l.c.*

²⁴ Wipo and Otto of Freising, *l.c.*

²⁵ He was witnessing charters in Touraine in July 1094, and again in July 1095 (*Gall. Christ.* viii. 412-418).

and the party of Champagne at once gave way. All the land as far as the Rhône was subdued, and the hasty crowning at Payern two years before was supplemented with a more formal ceremony at Geneva on August 1.²⁶ Odo, however, nothing daunted, was insolent enough to ask Conrad to grant him the investiture of the Burgundian realm,²⁷ and on the emperor's refusal he again dashed into the country. This time he penetrated into cisjurane Burgundy, besieged and took Vienne, and went so far as to fix a day for his coronation there.²⁸ It seems, indeed, to have been at nothing less than the crown of the old Lotharingian middle kingdom that he was aiming now, for the next of his erratic movements was an attack upon Toul.²⁹ Soon a yet more tempting lure was held out to him from across the Alps. The attempt made by the Lombard princes, at the opening of Conrad's reign, to set up a king of their own choice had proved unsuccessful; but it was not without a struggle that the emperor had put on the Lombard crown on his way to take the Roman one in 1027, and fresh troubles at Milan brought him to that city again at the opening of the year 1037. His presence seemed only to aggravate the disturbance; he suspected that Archbishop Herbert was at the bottom of the mischief, and sent him into honourable captivity at Placentia. Thence Herbert speedily contrived to make his escape home. Finding that the emperor was planning to deprive him of his see, he at once counterplotted with some of the many malcontents in northern Italy to deprive Conrad of his throne; and while the emperor was besieging Milan to regain possession of the archbishop, the Milanese prelate and citizens, in concert with the bishops of Vercelli, Cremona, and Placentia, were secretly calling Odo to come and take not merely the Italian kingdom, but the Roman empire itself.³⁰

The astute Italians had guessed his own thoughts: 'I will not be king, but king's master,' he had said when, with Burgundy in his power, he delayed to assume its crown.³¹ A day had been fixed for a solemn reception and homage of the Italian envoys, when the plot was discovered and foiled by the activity of Conrad's friends. But when once Odo had become a candidate for the imperial crown it mattered little whether he struck at it through Milan or through Aachen. Disappointed in his Italian scheme, he rushed upon his doom in another quarter: 'with the proud heart that goeth before destruction' he set out to march upon Aachen, vowing that before Christ-

²⁶ Wipo and Hepidan. *Ucc.*

²⁷ Alberic of Trois-Fontaines, a. 1035.

²⁸ *Chron. Virdun.* a. 1035.

²⁹ Sigebert, a. 1035.

³⁰ Arnulf of Milan, Muratori, iv. 17-18; R. Glaber, l. iii. c. 9, *Rer. Gall. Scriptt.* x. 41. The Annalista Saxon, ib. xi. 420, thus describes the negotiations: *Misris nuntiis cum saepedicto Ottone Burgundiae tyranno pacificantur, quomodo ipse in Romanum Imperium, suo suorumque complicitum iuvamine, Augusto fugato aut negato, introducatur.*

³¹ Wipo, *Rer. Gall. Scriptt.* xi. 4.

mas he would be seated on its throne.³² In the middle of November he besieged and took Bar. The duke of Lorraine was even then advancing to meet him. Duke Frederick, the son of his old enemy Theodoric, had died leaving only daughters, and with the emperor's consent the upper duchy was now reunited with the lower under Gozilo the Great. Gozilo and his son Godfrey thus came against Odo with all the forces of both duchies; Count Gerard of Alsace joined them; so did the bishop of Liège, who, on hearing that France and Burgundy were conspiring to ruin not only Lorraine but the Holy Roman empire itself, chose to head his troops in person in behalf of so sacred a cause. The two armies met close to Bar on November 15.³³ The Lotharingian left wing fell back before the onset of the men of Champagne; Odo then flung himself with all his forces on the right, which consisted of the men of Liège. The bishop encouraged his followers by word and example, Gozilo rallied his own troops, and those of the count of Champagne were soon in headlong flight. It was a rout like that of Pontlevoy, but with a more tragic issue. Odo fell unnoticed amid the general confusion; next day the bishop of Châlons and the abbot of St. Vito of Verdun searched the battle-field for his dead body, but, if we may believe an historian of the time, their search was vain till his own wife joined them and, by a mark known only to herself, identified a mangled, naked, and headless corpse, which was borne back to his old home in Touraine for burial in the chapter-house of Mar-moutier, while his standard, having fallen into the victors' hands, was sent down into Italy as a token whereby the emperor might know that his rival was indeed slain.³⁴

Odo's fall was a death-blow to the anti-imperial party in Burgundy, if any such party existed. Next year the emperor's son Henry, who as a child of their late king's niece, and therefore in some sense one of their own race, was likely to be more acceptable to the Burgundians than Conrad himself, was formally established as king of Arles. A year later still Henry succeeded to his father's thrones; and thenceforth the Burgundian and German monarchies were never separated again till the former became altogether a thing of the past. Once indeed, in 1198, the investiture of the Burgundian realm was granted to an utter stranger, who chanced, singularly enough, to be the lineal representative of Odo's old antagonist Fulk of Anjou—Richard Cœur-de-Lion. But the Angevin king, though he did homage for his new kingdom to the emperor Henry VI, and though his rank as one of the chief princes of the empire was formally recognised at

³² 'Chron. Saxon.' *Rer. Gall. Scriptt.* xi. 215. ³³ 'Chron. Lobienae,' *ib.* 415.

³⁴ 'Hist. Leod.' *Rer. Gall. Scriptt.* xi. 171-172; Wipo, *ib.* 5; 'Chron. Hildesheim,' *ib.* 214; 'Chron. Virdun.' *ib.* 143-144; Otto of Freising, *ib.* 261; R. Glaber, l. iii. c. 9, *ib.* x. 41.

the election of Henry's successor in 1197, was never crowned at Arles; in fact, he never set foot in the country. From the day when Odo fell at Bar the middle kingdom only reawakened to the consciousness of a distinct corporate existence for a moment now and then, when some emperor-elect on his way from Aachen to Monza and Rome thought it worth while to turn aside and receive a fourth crown at the hands of the archbishop of Arles.

So ended Odo's visions of empire. Had he possessed tact, prudence, and perseverance, such as alone could have justified him in entertaining them, he might possibly have built up on the eastern side of Gaul a dominion which in after years might have played a part not unlike that actually played in the west by the dominion founded by his Angevin rival. If, on the other hand, he could have been content to 'dwell among his own people'—to guard his plain interests and do his plain duty as count of Blois and Chartres and Tours—the growth of the Angevin power might have been checked at its outset and never have come to maturity at all. As it was, the fairest portion of his patrimony, Touraine, was all but lost to him and altogether lost to his successor. Odo of Champagne, the torment and the terror of baron and bishop, king and emperor—he the 'tyrant of Burgundy,' the would-be restorer of the middle kingdom and founder of a new imperial dynasty—he who to the alarmed imaginations of Lorraine and Germany seemed the very incarnation of successful western aggressiveness, and whose fame spread to more distant lands in so magnified a shape that they set him down at once as 'king of the French'³⁸—left to his sons a diminished inheritance and to history an empty name.

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³⁸ Tighernach, a. 1038 (O'Connor, *Rev. Hib. Script.* i. 287); 'Ann. Ulster,' a. 1038, (*ib.* iv. 324).