JOHN OF JENSTEIN, ARCHBISHOP OF PRAGUE, 1378—1397.

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EVENTS in the history of one nation frequently bear a striking similarity to events in that of another. But along with the points of similarity, there are usually in such cases points of contrast also, which make the comparison more interesting than if the similarity had been complete. The life of Thomas à Becket, first the friend and chancellor, then Archbishop of Canterbury and the unyielding opponent of our Henry II., and his violent death before the altar of his cathedral, form one of the most remarkable episodes both in English history and in the history of the long struggle between the so-called temporal and spiritual powers, which is still continuing at the present day. Very singular also and interesting are both the points of similarity and the points of contrast presented by the life of John of Jenstein, Archbishop of Prague, towards the end of the fourteenth century, and his struggle with Wenceslas IV., King of Bohemia and King of the Romans, as compared with the life of Becket, and his contest with Henry II. of England.

Although few will be found to deny the palm of superiority to Becket as compared with John of Jenstein, and to Henry II. of England as compared with Wenceslas IV. of Bohemia, still so many singular circumstances combine, in the case of the two Bohemians, to render their contest interesting, that it will be well worth while to devote a little time to the consideration of the life and acts of the Bohemian Thomas à Becket.

Both Thomas à Becket and John of Jenstein would have

come in their youth under the category of gay ecclesiastics; and both were converted—the former by change of station and the responsibilities of office, the latter by a severe illness —into thorough ascetics. Both commenced as friends and chancellors of their respective kings, and ended as their determined adversaries. But Thomas à Becket is generally supposed to have been actuated by a more single-minded zeal for the Church and its head, the Pope, than John of Jenstein, whose zeal was clearly rather for his own authority and his own prerogatives than for those of the see of Rome. Although it must be admitted that in Becket's days the Pope was one and powerful, while in those of John of Jenstein the great schism was at its height, the Papacy, split up between rival claimants, was greatly weakened in its authority, and indeed few could have felt really certain who was the true and veritable successor of Peter.

Again, Thomas à Becket both suffered and obtained canonization in his own person and on his own merits, whereas John of Jenstein suffered in the person of one of his most trusted friends and advisers, his General Vicar, who was eventually canonized; while John of Jenstein's own claims to canonization do not appear to have proceeded beyond the pages of his biography, written between 1402 and 1404 by an ardent admirer. Neither did the General Vicar himself obtain canonization on his own merits, but owing to a singular legend which became attached to his name, and eventually caused his division into two personages—the one legendary, the other historical, separated in date of death by the space of ten years, the former of which was solemnly canonized as late as 1729, after two long processes under commission from the Roman Curia.

John of Jenstein was son of Paul of Jenstein, a Bohemian "zeman," or esquire, who was chief notary (*notarius cameræ regis*) during great part of the reign of the Emperor Charles IV., King of Bohemia, *i. e.*, from 1351 to 1374. He was brought up in the lap of luxury in the house of his father, who was one of the most esteemed courtiers of the Emperor,

and already when a boy was incumbent of seven different benefices. On the income of these he lived luxuriously during his student life, which he appears to have commenced and ended unusually early, and during which he studied first at Prague, and then at Padua, Boulogne, Montpellier, and Paris. At six-and-twenty, and apparently before he had completed his university course, he was nominated (1375) by Pope Gregory XI. to the bishopric of Meissen. The messenger who brought the news found him fast asleep at midday, so light and careless was the life he led. He never undertook the government of his diocese, neither did he ever reside at Meissen, but merely enjoyed the title and revenues of the see. Three years afterwards (1378) he was nominated successor to his uncle, John of Oczko, in the archbishopric of Prague. The Emperor Charles, a few days afterwards, appointed him chancellor to his son Wenceslas, whom he had associated as joint ruler with himself; and in the second year of Wenceslas's sole reign (1380) he became chancellor of the whole realm of Bohemia. A man of thoroughly worldly mind, John of Jenstein knew well how to obtain favour in the eyes of the young king, being like himself a passionate huntsman, and "in military and courtly exercises," to use the words of his biographer, "not liking to be last,—nay, endeavouring to surpass others."

But ere long a complete change took place in him. In the year 1380 he was stricken with a severe illness during what his biographer terms a "*pestis generalis*," from which he recovered, contrary to the expectations of his medical attendants, and from that time forth began to think of penitence for his previous thoughtless mode of life. Still more was he affected when in 1382 he heard of the awful death of the Archbishop of Magdeburg, who perished in the attempt to escape, on an outcry of fire being raised, from a ball-room in which he was dancing in the tight-fitting attire of a gallant of the day with ladies of rank. Henceforth he gave himself up to works of repentance so far as in him lay, spending his time in solitude, in prayer, in contemplation, and in writing,

for which purposes he had small rooms fitted up in his castles of Raudnitz and Helfenburg, and also in a tower of his archiepiscopal palace at Prague, in which he did not allow himself the slightest comfort. His body he mortified with fasts frequent and severe, far beyond the ordinances of the Church; he chastised himself sometimes with rods, sometimes with thorny sticks; slept little, and that on a hard bed; allowed no fire in his room even in severe frosts, till at length he caused himself bodily ailments, and suffered from colic and rheumatism. He was also lavish in almsgiving beyond the limits which good sense would have imposed. Devoting thus overmuch time to himself, he was behindhand with many of the most especial duties of his pastoral office, withdrawing as he did not only from clerical society, but also from people who came to consult him in their necessities, for which he is severely reprehended in the writings of Matthias of Janow. Nothing was more annoying to him than to be called away from his devotions, and he was frequently so morose and impatient that his councillors, officials, and servants sometimes found themselves in very difficult circumstances when anything occurred to thwart him. Moreover his humility, exhibited in prayers and penitential works, did nothing towards the eradication of self-conceit and ambition from his heart, so that he entertained an unusually high estimate of his spiritual power, which, in accordance with the conceptions then dominant among the clergy, he confounded with the worldly power and wealth of the clerical body. Thus he looked upon every opposition to what he considered his rights, everything that touched the property or revenues of his archbishopric, as an injury to God's ordinance, and deserving to be punished with the whole force and energy of ecclesiastical law. But he never ceased to delight in external splendour around him, considering it a thing which his dignity required; nor did any of his predecessors equal him in the maintenance of a magnificent court, consisting of knights, esquires, and other servants, whom he supported at very great expense to himself.

During the whole time of his life as archbishop he was more or less involved in disputes with his clergy, both with individuals and corporate bodies, in which he was sometimes in the right and sometimes in the wrong, but always oversensitive and touchy towards any invasion of what he deemed his rights. His first dispute was with the Archdeacon of Prague, in which he was successful; his second with the chapter of his own cathedral, the result of which is unknown. In 1383 he was at loggerheads with the archdeacons of his diocese; and in 1384 with the chapter of the Vyssegrad concerning some private affairs, in which he nevertheless betook himself to the ecclesiastical armoury. Somewhat later he had a dispute with the Pope's collectors, on account of which he was excommunicated himself in 1387, shut himself up in his tower at Prague all Palm Sunday and Passion Week, and did not venture to perform divine service in public.

One very laudable action was performed by Archbishop John of Jenstein for the benefit of the serfs attached to the archbishopric. A custom contrary to ancient law had commenced before his time, causing the patrimony of childless peasant farmers to escheat to the archbishop as lord of the manor, instead of going to their surviving relatives. Archbishop John put an end to this usage, and restored his peasant tenants their former freedom, in spite of objections raised by several members of the chapter of Prague.

Less meritorious was his conduct in a dispute with the learned Magister Albert. John of Jenstein was especially devoted to the worship of the mother of God, introduced the new festival of the Visitation of the Virgin Mary into his diocese, and wrote pamphlets in defence of it. Magister Albert, like his younger friend Matthias of Janow, was opposed to the excessive multiplication of festivals, and set forth his opinion on the subject in writing. The archbishop replied in a very passionate tone, nor would he allow the magister rest even on his death-bed. When Magister Albert fell sick unto death in 1388, he sent the provost of Raudnitz

to warn him to desist from his blasphemies against the Virgin Mary, or dread her anger. And when the magister died on the day of the Assumption of the Virgin, he interpreted this as the fulfilment of his warning.

It was impossible that a man of such a temperament could long retain the friendship of King Wenceslas IV., who was passionate and headstrong, and equally touchy as regards his real or supposed rights. After John of Jenstein had been converted from a man of the world into a solitary devotee, various collisions took place between them, sometimes relating to the private rights of the archbishopric, and sometimes respecting the relations of the temporal and spiritual powers. With regard to these quarrels W. W. Tomek remarks, in his History of Prague,* that "although we have for the most part one-sided accounts of these collisions proceeding from Archbishop John himself, yet it is plain that he did not always conduct himself righteously in them, either appropriating what did not appertain to him, or commencing the process of obtaining his rights by violence when he ought to have proceeded in due form of law."

The first dispute of any magnitude with the king occurred in 1384. King Wenceslas's under-marshal, John Czuch of Zasada, had begun to construct a weir for the purpose of fishing in the Elbe at Lobkovitz under Kosteletz, in the neighbourhood of the archbishop's estate at Neratovitz. The archbishop, who claimed the river in these parts as his own, saw injury therein to his fisheries, and, instead of taking legal proceedings, caused his servants to destroy the weir by force. Czuch complained to the king, who appears to have been already irritated against the archbishop on account of other lesser matters. The king summoned the archbishop to Karlstein, kept him there several days under arrest, and ordered in the meantime his estates to be plundered as a punishment for his high-handed conduct. Cattle, corn, and other things were taken, and damage done which the archbishop estimated at 6,000 kops of groschen.† Czuch

* Vol. iii., p. 362.

† A kop is threescore.

reconstructed his weir, and made use of it henceforth without let or hindrance. King Wenceslas, in consequence of this affair, deprived the archbishop of the chancellorship of the realm, and even—either at this very time or somewhat later —carried on negotiations with Pope Urban with the view of depriving John of Jenstein of his see.

Soon afterwards the archbishop had a dispute with the citizens of Leitmeritz respecting the rights of his subjects, the citizens of Raudnitz. According to the contention of the archbishop the people of Raudnitz had had, from time out of mind—at any rate during the time of his three predecessors, —the right of conveying corn free of toll in boats from Bohemia to the German districts lower down the Elbe. On the other hand, the people of Leitmeritz had an ancient privilege confirmed by the late Emperor Charles IV., according to which all goods passing down the Elbe as far as their town ought to be deposited in it; and in accordance with this privilege they prevented the people of Raudnitz from sailing past. The archbishop took the part of his subjects in the manner usual in those days when any assault was made upon ecclesiastical property—that is, by excommunication and laying an interdict on the town of Leitmeritz. The king came to the aid of the citizens of Leitmeritz, and refused to allow the archbishop to be judge in his own cause. At his request the archbishop removed the excommunication, and the king agreed to the appointment of an extraordinary judge, or "conservator," whom the archbishop requested and obtained from the Pope. This judge was the Scottish abbot at Vienna, who, after some years, gave sentence against the people of Leitmeritz, who, however, appealed to the Pope and obtained another judge, which they could scarcely have succeeded in doing without exhibiting good grounds for the new trial. Meanwhile they remained in possession of their alleged right, which was confirmed by King Wenceslas in a charter dated Feb. 11, 1391. The archbishop estimated the damage to himself and his town of Raudnitz at 30,000 florins.

Meanwhile the archbishop considered it an injury when,

with the licence of the king, two rows of houses were built by the wall of the archbishop's palace on the Klemscite of Prague; and also took umbrage at the refusal—no doubt on public grounds—to allow some houses close to the bridge at Prague, which paid him rent and which had been burnt down, to be rebuilt. He had also had a dispute ever since 1386 with the Town Council of the Old Town of Prague about a ferry over the Moldau below the town, of which, as he supposed, they had taken possession at the secret instigation of the king. The archbishop excommunicated them several times, but was obliged to withdraw the excommunication at the instance of the king, who commanded the Town Council to pay the money obtained from the ferry over to a sequestrator appointed for the purpose until the case should be finally determined. For some reason which has not come down to us, Archbishop John had also a dispute with a gentleman in the king's service named Dietrich Hes, of Malow, who formally defied him, and commenced to do damage on the estates of the archbishopric; and the king himself was said to have sent armed men to his assistance. This dispute lasted some months, until the archbishop was obliged to submit it to the decision of Bishop John of Litomysl, who decided against him, so that the archbishop was obliged to pay 50 kops to Hes without obtaining any redress for the damage he had sustained. He received similar treatment in a dispute with Terak, the king's burggrave at Kugelwait, who without any defiance proceeded to lift cattle on the archiepiscopal estate at Rokytzany. The archbishop complained to the king, who expressed his sorrow at the event, and said that it had been done without his knowledge. But as the king was not sufficiently active and energetic in causing justice to be done, the archbishop lost patience, and sent his armed retainers to requite the damage he had sustained. At this the king became exceedingly angry, ordered the archbishop's men to be pursued, and caused him still greater injury than he had previously sustained.

It is extremely probable that when ill-will had arisen

between the king and the archbishop, the courtiers, especially the chief confidants or so-called "favourites" of the former, egged him on still more by various insinuations against the clergy; while, on the other hand, the archbishop was encouraged in his unconciliatory attitude by his chief officials, those "great canons of his," as Matthias of Janow designated them, who sought to obtain his favour by the most violent support of the privileges and rights of the ecclesiastical order. The greatest incentive to dispute was given by the exemption of spiritual persons of even the lowest grade from the secular tribunals. These men, exhibiting as they did in their mode of life scarcely any difference from the laity, frequently drew the eyes of justice upon themselves by various misdemeanours, while yet they could not be duly punished like other people. Relying upon the feeling adverse to the clergy, which was dominant at court, the lay officials began more frequently than before to disregard the exceptional position of spiritual persons in such cases. Thus, some time in the beginning of the year 1392, a student, who was a cleric, was arrested for some crime in the New Town of Prague and beheaded by order, or at any rate with the approval of the king's under-treasurer, Sigismund Huler—an event which the archbishop's officer allowed to pass in silence. Again, early in 1393 another cleric was arrested in the New Town, and not only not surrendered to the archbishop, who wanted to take him into his own custody, but was actually burnt by order of the under-treasurer. The nature of the crimes committed by these men is unknown, but in the records of the New Town of that date mention is made of a cleric named Dietrich, who was proved guilty both by evidence and his own confession of robbing a church at Holubitz of chalices, patens, a cross, and a monstrance with holy relics. If this were not one of the crimes in question, they were probably of a still darker dye.

On occasion of the latter of these two circumstances Archbishop John of Jenstein paid no regard to the cause of condemnation, but merely to the encroachments of the

temporal power, and determined to commence a resolute resistance. He first gave in to King Wenceslas a written complaint, through the king's council, in his own name and that of the whole clergy of his diocese, embracing everything that had been done against himself or his views, and requested amends to be made. The archbishop complained, with regard to the secular authorities, that they dragged spiritual persons before their tribunals, making thereby especial mention of the clerics arrested in the New Town; alleged as a grievance that he was hindered in the execution of his judicial power, and particularly in the proclamation of his own and the Pope's excommunications, giving as an instance that not long previously the person engaged in executing an order of the Pope's had been dragged through the church of St. James, wounded even unto effusion of blood, and afterwards detained for a considerable time in secular ward in the town hall, whereby he said the church was desecrated and the sacraments dishonoured; affirmed that many persons were inducted into benefices without reference to his office by the mere will of the king, they defending their conduct upon the ground of some permission unknown to him, which had been granted to the king by the Pope; complained of the want of free will in marriage, maidens being, as he said, compelled to marry against their will, and also of the oppressive treatment of widows and orphans, and the wrong done to the clergy by the refusal of the king's officials to admit their rights of inheritance; and also in the prohibition of the sale of landed estates to the clergy, and interception of such estates into the king's hands, with regard to which he said he did not know by what authority it was done, there being a universally known law of the Emperor Charles in that behalf; complained of the manner in which conventual institutions were oppressed by subsidies and other burdens; and of the contempt in which the clergy in general were held, so that even the Jews, the enemies of Christ, enjoyed a better position; adjuring the king to amend all these great and manifold evils, to order the restora-

tion of the estates taken from the clergy, to punish the guilty, and to hold a protecting hand over the rights and liberties of the clergy as his humble chaplains. He entreated him finally, if there were any of his councillors who desired to bring the clergy into odium with him, not to believe them, but to esteem them deceitful persons, the greatest enemies of his salvation, his honour, and that of the whole realm—yea, the enemies of God, the servants of the devil, and the emissaries of Antichrist.

The finale of this document shows at once that the archbishop had no expectation of a gracious reception of his plaint, at any rate on the part of the king's councillors, to whom he delivered it. To save appearances he allowed a few days to pass, and then proceeded to more energetic measures. That is to say, he issued through his officers—the official Nicholas Puchnik, and the General Vicar John of Pomuk—a citation to the king's under-treasurer, Sigismund Huler, to appear before his tribunal to answer not merely for the execution of the two clerics in the New Town of Prague, but also for alleged words and actions which savoured of heresy. Huler replied that he would appear, but with two hundred lances. Thereupon the archbishop excommunicated him for contumacy. Hence arose great anger on the part of the king, of Margrave Prokop, who was then his assistant in the government of the realm, and who especially interested himself on the side of Huler, and also of all the courtiers opposed to the clergy. They were exasperated not merely against the archbishop himself, but more especially against Puchnik, Pomuk, and some of his other chief councillors. But as yet the king curbed his anger. It only appears that on account of the excommunication issued against Huler, he deemed it necessary to order all the royal towns to renew their oath of obedience and fidelity to him as his under-treasurer.

By a bull given at Rome on January 15, 1393, Pope Boniface IX. appointed, in compliance with King Wenceslas's request preferred two years previously, a special year of

jubilee for Bohemia and the other Crown lands, a thing which the king regarded as a great and special token of consideration. The indulgence thereby granted was as full and complete as that enjoyed by all those who had performed the pilgrimage to Rome in 1390. Whoever desired to obtain it was required to visit four churches appointed for the purpose; if a citizen of Prague, fifteen times; if he had come from any other place, seven times. Secondly, to confess to one of twenty-four or more confessors to be specially appointed by the Archbishop of Prague or his General Vicar; by the Pope's legate, Ubaldino, or his General Vicar; and by the receiver of the revenues of the apostolic treasury in Bohemia or his representative. Thirdly, in lieu of the trouble he would have had in travelling to Rome, to perform such works of charity as his confessor should enjoin. And fourthly, to deposit as much money as his journey to Rome and back would have cost him, and the amount that he would have had to offer in the churches there appointed for the purpose, upon the altar or altars designated for the purpose in the church of the Vyssegrad. The amount of this was to be determined by the receiver of the money, who was to be appointed by the archbishop and the other persons above named, and who was to have power to relieve the poor of the whole or part of the payments. Half this money was to go to the church of the Vyssegrad for building or other requirements, and the other half to be sent to Rome for similar purposes. The year of grace was to commence on the fourth Sunday in Lent (*i. e.*, on March 16 of that year), and to continue till the elevation of the Holy Cross (*i. e.*, till September 14).

But not long after the arrival of the Pope's bull at Prague, a new matter arose between the king and archbishop, which brought the ill-will long smouldering between them into full blaze. King Wenceslas had long had in contemplation to obtain from the Pope the erection of a new bishopric in Bohemia, and had intended to divert the revenues of the Benedictine monastery at Kladruby to its endowment, even

as formerly, at the foundation of the bishopric of Litomysl, the monastery of the Præmonstratensians at Litomysl had been incorporated with it. The king was also particularly desirous of rewarding one of his favourite court chaplains with the new see. There is no doubt that this intention was no secret, and must have been perfectly well known to the archbishop. The king was only waiting for the death of Ratsek, the aged abbot of Kladruby, to whom it was his intention that no successor should be appointed. But the erection of a new bishopric, however desirable on public grounds, and the consequent diminution of the Archbishopric of Prague, was not agreeable to the archbishop and his consistory, and their resolution was to prevent the execution of the king's intention. When, therefore, Abbot Ratsek died—it is not known on what day, but probably at the very end of February or beginning of March—the monks of Kladruby proceeded to the election of his *locum tenens*, Olenus, as abbot, before March 7, and Archbishop John, without a word to the king, caused a limited time to be set for objections to the election ; and no opponent having appeared, the General Vicar, John of Pomuk, gave the new abbot the archbishop's confirmation of his election on March 10.

As soon as King Wenceslas learnt this, his anger against the archbishop knew no bounds, and directed itself also against his chief councillors, whom he suspected of having instigated him to take the course he had adopted. The king was then residing at Zebrak, which he quitted for Prague with the most wrathful intentions. Hearing of this, the archbishop's official, Nicholas Puchnik, and his General Vicar, John of Pomuk, immediately fled from Prague to Raudnitz, where the archbishop was then residing. This was about March 15. Shortly after there arrived letters from some of the king's council urging the archbishop to come to Prague. He was afraid so to do ; nevertheless by the advice of Puchnik and John of Pomuk, as well as of his steward, Nepr of Raupow, he betook himself with them to a certain place (possibly Kyje) which belonged to the archbishopric, only a

Bohemian mile distant from Prague. At this place there came to him two of the king's confidants, Brother Nicholas, the king's confessor, and John Czuch of Zasada, the under-marshal, who greatly urged him to come to Prague to negotiate with the king about a reconciliation, promising him personal safety both in their own names and in that of the king's high steward, Henry Skopek of Duba. From King Wenceslas they delivered the archbishop a letter, which certainly gave him no ground to expect any good. It was written in German, and was worded, "Thou archbishop! give me back my castle of Raudnitz and my other castles, and depart from my land of Bohemia. And if thou shalt attempt aught against me or mine, I will drown thee, and put an end to the dispute. Come to Prague!" But the king's councillors, whom the archbishop entertained with meat and drink, diminished the harsh impression conveyed by the letters by saying, that although the king was exceedingly angry, yet he would be glad to see and negotiate with the archbishop, that henceforth there might be peace between him and the king, and between his people and the king's people. Eventually the archbishop gave in to these arguments, and betook himself to Prague with his confidants on the 18th of March.

On the next day, March 19, an appointment was made with him for a conference for negotiating a reconciliation with the king, the Margrave Prokop, and the under-treasurer Hulet, to which both the king and the archbishop sent several of their councillors. These settled the terms of an agreement respecting all matters in dispute affecting the king and Huler, but adjourned the questions that had arisen between the archbishop and Margrave Prokop. This agreement was to be solemnly confirmed the next day, March 20, at a personal meeting of the king and archbishop. To this end the king betook himself with his court to the monastery of St. Mary belonging to the Knights of St. John at the end of the bridge, as being near the residence of the archbishop on the Klemseite, and the archbishop presented himself before him

with his councillors and the rest of his suite. But as soon as the king caught sight of the archbishop and those of his officials whom he especially disliked, anger took such complete possession of him that he refused to listen to a word about the agreement made with his councillors to whom he had previously given plenipotentiary powers, and stormed against the archbishop with all the fury of his passionate nature which was also perhaps inflamed by wine. "Thou archbishop," said he, "thou excommunicatest my officers without my knowledge, and hast confirmed the Abbot of Cladrub. Thou accusest my under-treasurer of heresy and error. Thou hast asked no question, and dost it arbitrarily. Know that thou shalt mourn for this!" Then espying the archbishop's steward, the Knight Nepr, he cried out against him also, "Away with thee hence, or I will break thy head." And forthwith he commanded his men, "Seize for me these four," that is the archbishop, Nicholas Pucnik, John of Pomuk, and Wenceslas, the Provost of Meissen, "and conduct them carefully." At the same time he threatened several: "Thee and thee will I have drowned," and commanded them to be conducted to the chapter house at the cathedral in the Hradschin; there would he ascertain by whose counsel this or that had been done. The archbishop, in utter terror at this language, endeavoured by humbling himself to assuage the king's wrath, and knelt down several times before him. But the king mocked and mimicked him, bending his knees as if about to kneel. Thereupon the archbishop appears to have been rescued by his armed retainers, and conveyed in safety to his own house, but the others were led away according to the king's orders to the chapter house.

The king followed them thither, and began to deal evilly with all who had opposed him. He gave the old Dean of Prague, Bohuslaw, several blows on the head with the hilt of his sword till the blood flowed, and caused him afterwards to be taken with his hands tied behind his back to the burggrave's house on the Hradschin. He then, probably because his inquiries had not led to the desired result, caused the first three

to be arrested, and with them the aged Nepr, the archbishop's steward, to be conducted down from the Hradschin to the town hall of the Old Town, and thence to the justice-room and kept asking all the time for the archbishop, whether they had him also, thinking especially to vent his wrath upon him. The king went again in person to the justice-room of the Old Town, and there, it being already evening, ordered the executioner to bind the four captives hand and foot, and caused two of them, Puchnik and Pomuk, to be tortured before his own eyes, by being burned with torches and lighted tapers in the side and elsewhere,—ay, even in his fury burned them with his own hands, and finally commanded all four to be drowned. He then recollected himself; in all probability it suddenly occurred to him that such assaults on persons of priestly station might have disagreeable consequences at the Court of the Pope. He therefore required the four prisoners to make him a promise, confirmed by oath, not to tell any one that they had been arrested and tortured, and on that condition promised to grant them life. Nicholas Puchnik, Wenceslas the Provost of Meissen, and the Knight Nepr did this, and subscribed a document drawn up for the purpose by the public notary. But the fourth, the General Vicar, John of Pomuk, was so injured, and in particular one of his sides was so burnt, that his life was hopeless, and therefore any acknowledgment on his part would have been useless to the king. He therefore caused him to be taken away to death. He was dragged through the streets to the bridge, there his hands were tied behind him, a piece of wood was thrust into his mouth, his feet were tied to his head in the form of a wheel, and he was thrown into the river Moldau about the third hour of the night, or, as we should say, about nine o'clock in the evening.

Meanwhile Archbishop John remained for several hours in his palace. But when he heard that the dean had been wounded, and his confidential councillors taken to the justice-room, he dreaded evil and fled secretly from Prague. It was the king's intention to arrest him, only he did not quite like

to make a forcible attack upon the archiepiscopal residence, but he placed watchmen in several places to seize him, if possible without noise, when attempting to escape. To this end all the ferries over the Moldau at Prague were stopped for several days, so that none could pass by them from one side to the other; and precautions were taken against the escape of the archbishop at all the gates, and in various places outside the city. Proclamation was also made throughout all Prague, that no priest or cleric was to walk in the streets at night, or the priest would be arrested, while a cleric of inferior rank would lose his hand. But the archbishop was already out of the town, and had betaken himself to one of his most distant castles, Supihora, on the frontier beyond Töplitz. There he arrived in great terror after a difficult and dangerous journey of five days and nights, and then, and not till then, did he hear of the torture of his officials and the drowning of John of Pomuk.

Meanwhile the excessive fury of the king passed away, and he began to think of the consequences which his over-hasty actions might have, and how best to avert them. Eventually ascertaining that the archbishop had secured himself by flight, and was at Supihora, he determined to seek a reconciliation with him, and sent one of his courtiers, Lord Henry Pluk of Rabstein, to him, with two canons of Prague, requesting him by them to return to Prague, promising to submit the dispute to the decision of the archbishop's own chapter, and sending beforehand a safe-conduct for the archbishop himself and his suite. They were to tell him that the king was sorry for what had happened, and greatly grieved thereat; if he had done wrong, he wished to amend it and give satisfaction according to the decision that should be pronounced, even if he had to kneel on his knees before the archbishop. They were to say that, if the archbishop showed any disinclination to this, the king would become desperate and do much evil. If then he had any mercy, let him accept his penitence. But besides this the year of jubilee just granted was of great importance to the king; for all sins confessed were remitted by

it, and also church censures incurred through them, without excepting even excommunications, greater or lesser, and interdicts. As its commencement, appointed by the Pope for March 16, had fallen on the time when the archbishop was not at Prague, and his official and General Vicar had fled to him at Raudnitz on account of the king's anger, the proclamation of the year of jubilee had been made hurriedly and defectively, not having been issued in the name of the archbishop or the legate Ubaldino or their vicars, who had been named in the Pope's bull in the first instance, but merely by Wenceslas Potulanus, a canon of Prague, the receiver of the Pope's treasury, and another canon of Prague, Peter of Wserub, who was not alluded to in the bull. Nevertheless the year of jubilee commenced at the appointed time, and King Wenceslas performed the prescribed acts of devotion, and in consequence obtained absolution, by which he was released from all fear of ecclesiastical censures on account of his late conduct.

Archbishop John, not forgetting the danger from which he had barely escaped, was at first doubtful whether or no to return to Prague at the king's request. Not till after much persuasion on the part of the king's ambassadors did he make up his mind and agree that the chapter should deal with the question of a reconciliation between himself and the king, saying that he would set forth his articles of complaint for consideration, and the king should set forth his. The ambassadors immediately asked him of what nature these articles would be, and he replied in the strain and nearly in the words of the letter of complaint previously delivered to the king's council, besides requiring full powers to "fulminate excommunications" without let or hindrance, and demanding full satisfaction and payment of damages from the king. On hearing this the ambassadors laughed outright, well knowing that the king's penitence did not extend far enough for him to submit to the archbishop in everything, and said that those were serious matters, and counselled the archbishop to have patience, thus throwing cold water on his hopes. However,

he agreed to go to Prague if the king would grant him the escort of those lords whom he named for the journey there and back. To this the king agreed, although he did not grant the escort of the three lords named by the archbishop, but assigned him three others, and sent the archbishop a safe-conduct by them. This satisfied him, and he came to Prague on March 29, the Saturday before Palm Sunday.

On the next day the negotiations were recommenced in the Monastery of the Mother of God, at the end of the bridge. Several of the king's councillors were deputed by him for the purpose. Here the archbishop learned, contrary to his expectations, that his own chapter, which ought to have mediated, had neither the wish nor the resolution to take his part, for fear of the king. He had a preliminary conversation with some of the canons, wishing to come to an understanding with them as to how they should act; but they declined to come to any such understanding, reserving to themselves their own right of judgment, and afterwards held with the king's council in all respects. Before considering the question of a reconciliation with the king himself, the archbishop had to come to terms with the under-treasurer Huler, and with Margrave Prokop. On behalf of Huler it was demanded that the archbishop should take no further proceedings against him for the execution of the two clerics; that, as regards the proceedings taken by his vicar, he should say that they were taken without his knowledge; and that as regards the charge of heresy he should say, "What I did to him, I did at the instigation of others, I now voluntarily allow it to drop." To Margrave Prokop the archbishop was obliged to give up the usufruct of certain estates in Moravia for three years, with respect to the reasons for demanding which we have no means of forming a judgment, being entirely ignorant of the nature of the dispute between the parties. The archbishop long resisted, but eventually yielded this concession, and in his apology to Huler at first insisted on omitting the word "voluntarily," but at last consented to utter it, bethinking himself while doing so that he was only letting

the prosecution drop for the time, but in future would not leave the conduct of the under-treasurer unpunished. When, therefore, the under-treasurer according to agrhement offered him his hand and begged him to pardon him, the archbishop took his hand and said, "I forgive thee whatsoever thou hast done against me," but thought meanwhile that what the under-treasurer had done against God was not affected thereby. A personal reconciliation with Margrave Prokop took place on March 31, when a meeting was arranged for the next day at eight o'clock in the morning for a personal reconciliation with the king.

The archbishop, as had been agreed, on coming into the king's presence made obeisance and requested the king to pardon him if he had done aught against him. He expected that the king also would humble himself and promise satisfaction for his evil deeds. But the king did nothing of the kind, but simply told him for the future not to issue excommunications against his officers without his knowledge; and moreover required the archbishop to proclaim the year of jubilee anew in due form, and recommend it to the people. This the archbishop did, so that the proclamation now went forth in his name and the names of the other persons designated in the Pope's bull.

After this reconciliation, such as it was, the king betook himself to the Abbey of Zbraslaw, while the archbishop remained in Prague and performed the usual Easter rites and ceremonies. But now, in consequence of the fresh proclamation of the year of indulgence, it began to be noised about in Prague that the irregularity of the first proclamation rendered everything previous to the second proclamation invalid. Several priests spoke in their pulpits to this effect, and when the king returned to Prague on Easter Sunday (April 6) he was informed that the archbishop had caused it to be so given out himself. At this the king was again greatly exasperated, because his own pilgrimages, having been previously performed, were thus rendered inoperative. He sent four of his privy councillors to the archbishop to

reproach him for this, and inquire why he had done it. The archbishop replied that he had neither done any such thing himself, nor advised the preachers to do it. The king sent Brother Nicholas, then Bishop of Lavant, and Ubaldino, the Pope's legate, to him again, requiring him to give him a letter under his own seal stating that the year of jubilee was valid before the second proclamation; and at the same time betook himself to the Monastery of the Mother of God, and there awaited his answer. The archbishop refused, nor was it till after a great deal of persuasion that he summoned his secretary and ordered him to write merely that he had not given orders for the declaration of the invalidity of the year of indulgence previously to his own proclamation of it. This was not satisfactory to the king's ambassadors, and therefore many lords and gentlemen then present with the archbishop sought to induce him to cause the letter to be written as the king required. Finally, as it was growing late, they prevailed upon him to go to bed and leave the matter in the hands of his secretary, who wrote the letter in accordance with the king's wishes. The archbishop was afterwards informed that if the king had failed to obtain the letter from him, he would that night have made an attack on him and his servants with a large body of armed men, which he had ready in the town-hall of the Old Town, and that neither the late reconciliation, nor the safe-conduct, nor the lords appointed for his protection, who were still with him, would have been of any avail to him.

The next day—that is, Easter Monday, April 7—the king returned to Zebrak, and the archbishop to Raudnitz. Meanwhile the estates in Moravia were not surrendered to Margrave Prokop, because the chapter, to whom the archbishop had assigned the duty in a very dubious manner, in all probability hesitated until it received more definite powers from him. The archbishop's adversaries now complained to the king again, that he would not fulfil the conditions of the reconciliation which had been agreed upon. The archbishop learning that the king was again enraged and threatening

him, wrote him a letter of excuse, saying that he did not know in what manner and form to *alienate* those estates from the Church. The king stopped short at the word "*alienate*," apparently not understanding its exact effect, and said to the messenger that he did not desire to "*alienate*" any estates from the Church, and if any of his council affirmed that he did, he lied in his throat. He then said, "Take the archbishop my service and grace, and let him come to Prague to exhibit the imperial relics and ornaments (*risske swatosti*) to the people and pilgrims." The day of the exhibition of these things, *i.e.*, the Friday after the first Sunday after Easter, which the Germans call "White Sunday" and the Bohemians "Procession Sunday" (April 18), was now approaching.

At this gracious summons the archbishop came to Prague, conducted the usual exhibition, which had been instituted by Charles IV., a great collector of relics, true and false, and performed the usual services and ceremonies. The next day he was about to depart early, but while he was still sitting at breakfast an order came to him from the Bishop of Lavant and Sigismund Huler, the under-treasurer, bidding him not to depart, for they had a message to him from the king. Ere long they arrived themselves, and informed him, firstly that the king had given his consent to the surrender of the estates in Moravia to his cousin Prokop; secondly, that it was the wish and will of the king that the archbishop and his chapter should assent to the erection of the Abbey of Kladruby into a bishopric, and that the archbishop should write to the Pope to that effect. Archbishop John requested time for consultation with his chapter, and on the next day (April 20) the canons gave their assent in accordance with the king's wishes, and the ambassadors went with it to the archbishop, desiring the same from him. In vain did he allege in excuse that he could not do this with honour, as he had already regularly confirmed the new abbot. The bishop and under-treasurer told him that the abbot ought to surrender his dignity into the king's hands. In addition

to this they suddenly laid before him another requirement on the part of the king. That is to say, the king now raised a claim—it is difficult to understand on what grounds—to the patronage of all rectories in Prague, and some not in Prague, and required the archbishop to refer the legal decision of the question to the Bishop of Lavant and the Dean of the Vyssegrad, Wenceslas Burenitz, who was one of the king's privy councillors and especial confidants.

Evidently the audacity of the king was increasing daily, in consequence of the terror of the archbishop and the submissiveness of his chapter, so that he set no bounds to his arbitrary will and pleasure in dealing with him. His aim was to render all the clergy in the metropolis dependent on him and his favour. The archbishop looked upon the matter in that light; but was again urged, especially by the dignitaries of the cathedral of Prague, to fulfil the king's will. Besides this, he was also informed that the king was about to require him to bind himself with sureties to keep perpetual silence with regard to all that had happened between them, and never to raise any legal question respecting it either before the Pope or in any other way—nay, intelligence was brought him of reiterated threats on the part of the king to drown still more of them, and among these he was himself to be the first. He now began to think of flight, and in order to get safely out of Prague promised to act in accordance with the king's will. Having thus contented the king's ambassadors, he withdrew at once to his castle of Raudnitz. Once there, he revoked the appointment of the Bishop of Lavant and the Dean of Vyssegrad as judges in the patronage question, and informed them that he reserved for himself the right of acting as judge in any disputes that might arise between the king and the patrons of the benefices in question. About two days afterwards (April 23) he set out for Rome, with the intention of seeking justice against the king from the papal see, and the Abbot of Kladruby accompanied him to Rome.

The archbishop presented to the Pope two bills of plaint

against the king, one a longer and the other a shorter one, whence we derive our whole information respecting these disputes, and requested the Pope's most energetic interference on his behalf. But the papal court was by no means so minded as John of Jenstein imagined. Why should Pope Boniface IX. proceed with severity against King Wenceslas whom he expected to come personally to his aid against his enemies in Italy, and on whom he rested his principal hopes of victory over his rival at Avignon?

As soon as King Wenceslas learnt the departure of the archbishop, he wrote both to the Pope himself and to his own procurator at the papal court, that although a complete reconciliation had taken place between himself and the archbishop, so that he had given up all angry feeling against the archbishop, and received him again into favour, yet he was informed that the archbishop was about to prefer complaints against him. He therefore requested the Pope not to grant the archbishop a hearing, but to adjourn the matter until the arrival of the grand embassy, which he contemplated sending to Rome upon that and other business. Meanwhile he enjoyed the advantage of performing a considerable service for the Pope, which could not but obtain an increase of good-will towards him at the papal court.

The year of jubilee, with which the Pope had so highly honoured King Wenceslas, savoured greatly of covetousness; for the full indulgences granted at it were manifestly to be purchased with money, half of which was to flow to Rome. Although these things did not pass without remark from the party among the Bohemian clergy which objected to everything in the shape of simony, yet no one ventured publicly to oppose the year of jubilee and consequent traffic in indulgences according to the prices prescribed by the Pope, because King Wenceslas held his protecting hand over it. Only the rector of St. Martin-in-the-Wall, Magister Wenceslas of Jiczin, ventured to say in private that they were not indulgences, but deceptions; and the king's jester went about for a couple of days from church to church in an

extraordinary hat, singing, "Strawberries! strawberries! how early have ye bloomed!" Large sums were collected, of which the legate Ubaldino was receiver. King Wenceslas discovered that this man was making gain by means of this money for himself—lending part to certain princes for military purposes, putting part aside for himself, and intending to send the remainder to certain money-changers in Italy, no doubt to bear interest for himself. The king stopped his proceedings by seizing the money found in his possession and placing it in safe custody, with the intention of sending it to the Pope by a special embassy of his own.

Thus Archbishop John of Jenstein stayed several months at Rome at great cost to himself, both there and in Bohemia, where he was obliged to garrison his castles strongly for fear of an attack on the part of the king. But all his efforts were in vain, and seeing no inclination in the papal court to meet his views, he eventually recognised the fact that he had been under a delusion, and returning home in the autumn of 1393 retired into privacy in his castle of Helfenburg. A storm now began to develop itself against King Wenceslas, both in his own family and among his principal nobles, in which, however, Archbishop John does not seem to have taken any prominent part, although its leader, Lord Henry of Rosenberg, was one of his greatest friends, whose secret instigator he may possibly have been. He was at any rate present at Prague, when the lords were planning the arrest and imprisonment of the king in 1394, just two days before the event took place. In order, therefore, to get rid of so suspected a person, Prince John of Gorlitz devised a plan very acceptable to the king for obtaining the archbishop's resignation of his see, and appointing his nephew, Olbram Olbramowitz, Provost of St. Apollinaris, in his room. The archbishop had now little or no enjoyment in his high position, and found little sympathy in, and absolute refusal of aid from, the clergy of his diocese. He went again to Rome, and finding the Pope in favour of the king, agreed to resign his archbishopric, and recommended Olbram as his successor some time in the year 1395.

On March 9, 1396, Olbram paid 1,500 florins into the Pope's treasury as the first instalment of the assessment due to the Pope on his promotion. On Easter Sunday (April 2) John of Jenstein formally resigned his see, and on April 23 Olbram, as archbishop-elect, presided over the transference of the body of St. Voytech and the five brethren from the old cathedral of Prague into the centre of the nave of the new one. Finally, on July 2, his favourite festival of the Visitation of the Virgin, John of Jenstein himself consecrated and installed Olbram as archbishop in the cathedral. According to the agreement between them, which was approved by the Pope, Olbram was to pay him an annuity, and allow him to reside in his favourite castle of Helfenburg. Thither the ex-archbishop betook himself at first, but in the next year (1397) went again to Rome, where the Pope elevated him to the high but barren dignity of Patriarch of Alexandria.

For his confirmation as archbishop Olbram was required to pay to Boniface and his court 3,000 florins as firstfruits, and 2,416 for the pallium and 12 bulls issued on account of his promotion. Of the 3,000 he had already paid 1,500 florins, and by aid of his clergy he also paid the 2,416 before his consecration. But so bad were the times, that at the beginning of 1401 he was still indebted to the papal court in the sum of 582 florins, although in 1399 he had been excommunicated for non-payment of the instalment then due. No wonder then that poor John of Jenstein did not receive his annuity in full, and lived in want at Rome, where he died on June 17 in the year 1400.

The only other interesting fact in the life of John of Jenstein is, that he laid the first stone of the chapel called Bethlehem, which was afterwards the scene of Huss's preaching. But it is plain enough that he was hindering an excellent public object in objecting to the division of the huge and unwieldy diocese of Prague by the erection of the Abbey of Kladruby into an episcopal see.

It now only remains to give a brief account of the canonization of John of Jenstein's confidant, John of Pomuk, or

rather of his imaginary double, and both the parallel and contrast withThomas à Becket will be complete.

Somewhat late in the first half of the fifteenth century a report appears to have been current that John of Pomuk was confessor of Wenceslas's second wife Queen Sophia, and that his death was in some way connected with the seal of confession. Later on a story was promulgated that Wenceslas had entertained suspicions of his queen (which he certainly never did), and put to death, by drowning, her confessor, the Dean of All Saints, for refusing to divulge the name of her admirer. In the next century the victim of Wenceslas's fury was divided by the chronicler Hajek into two, an imaginary confessor of Wenceslas's first wife, Queen Johanna, martyred in 1383, and the real John of Pomuk, put to death as above narrated in 1393. The suppression of literature and literary life in Bohemia, especially by the action of the Jesuits after the thirty years' war, produced a crop of stories about the martyrdom of the queen's confessor, which were embodied in a romance entitled "The Life of John Nepomucen," by the Jesuit Balbinus, which was henceforth taken for and treated as genuine history.* Finally, after the farce of two solemn processes in the ecclesiastical court at Prague, the imaginary protomartyr of the confessional was canonized in 1729 under the name of ST. JOHN NEPOMUCEN, the great patron of bridges, and protector of all who, whether deservedly or undeservedly, have reason to be in fear of shame and disgrace.

But in 1754, Wokaun, suffragan Bishop of Prague, procured from the Vatican, on occasion of a legal dispute with the Abbot of Brzewnow, a copy of Archbishop John of Jenstein's official complaint against King Wenceslas, which must have fallen like a bombshell among the venerators of the saint. Between 1780 and 1790 a tolerably lively controversy took place upon the question whether there was one St. John

* It is so treated in the Rev. S. Baring Gould's Life of St. John Nepomucen in his "Lives of the Saints" for the month of May. The same writer treats the English Becket very severely.

Nepomucen or two (*unusne an duo?*), and the very existence of the saint was called in question in educated circles. As the present century advanced, a great revival of Bohemian literature and historical research took place, and Dr. Palacky wrote his grand history of Bohemia, but was prevented by the action of the censorship of the press from expressing his real opinion as to the purely legendary character of this saint. But in 1875, the censorship having long ceased to trouble the historian, the third volume of W. W. Tomek's "History of the City of Prague" appeared, and in it this mighty saint finally received his *coup de grâce*.

It is indeed one of the strangest circumstances known in ecclesiastical history that when a careless chronicler had divided a historical character into two personages, one real and the other imaginary, the Roman clergy in Bohemia should have moved heaven and earth to procure, and the Roman curia and Pope should have assented to, the solemn canonization of THE WRONG ONE!*

* For a full account of the details of the history of the saint and his canonization see my "Life of St. John Nepomucen."