



REV. MASAZO KAKUZEN--See page 173.

mained on the continent. His enforced election, as described above, took place in December, 1206, and on the 17th of June, 1207, the pope, immediately after receiving King John's indignant letter, consecrated him at Viterbo. The newly consecrated archbishop retired to the monastery of Pontigny, where Becket, in his exile, had spent a large portion of his time. Here he employed his time by writing books, and in a diligent study of the Holy Scriptures. He is said to have written many beautiful poems, a life of Mahomet and a life of Becket. But his favorite study was the Bible. It is he, we are told, who first divided it into chapters, and in this he lives in many lands to the present hour. He was of a mild and conciliatory temper, and would have gladly withdrawn from the fierce battle of which he was the centre if the pope—who had been his personal friend before he was elevated to the papacy—would have allowed him; and when England lay under the interdict, on his account, he used his influence to have much of its hardships mitigated. So years flew by. In August, 1211, King John declared, "Never shall that Stephen obtain a safe conduct of force sufficient to prevent me from suspending him by the neck the moment he touches land of mine!"

But fear of assassination, or sudden superstitious terror, or some cause perhaps unknown to history, drove King John, as we have seen, to surrender, in the hour of his greatest strength, to the pope, who, of course, insisted that Stephen Langton should be received as Archbishop of Canterbury. This was in the spring of the year 1213, and in July of that year the

archbishop with his retinue, in all an imposing cavalcade, arrived in England. This was an undoubted triumph for the pope, and a blow at the independence of the English Church.

The archbishop met the king at Winchester. The mean-spirited monarch, for reasons of his own (afterwards very apparent), fell at the archbishop's feet, imploring his pity. The bishop in solemn tones absolved him, after he had made him take oath that he would defend the rights of his people, and then in the noble cathedral of Winchester, at that time a hundred years old, in the presence of a weeping and grateful people, the archbishop celebrated a high service of praise and thanksgiving—the first that had been celebrated for six years.

On what principles can an interdict be defended? For six years a Christian country must do without the means of grace, the church bells hushed, the sick unvisited, the children uninstructed, the wicked unwarned, the righteous uncomfortable—because a papal power, hundreds of miles away, was offended!

Stephen Langton saw the hardships of it the moment he landed in England.

And he was the first, on the assumption of his real power as archbishop, to disobey it; for when he celebrated his high service in Winchester cathedral, England was still under the blighting interdict.

And for this the pope never forgave him. The fact is, Stephen Langton was not the man the pope supposed him to be. From his landing in England he went upon the principle of "England for the English," and regarded himself as one whose duties should be to uphold the Church whose primate he felt it a high honor to be.

After long and painful negotiations and disputings as to terms the interdict was removed, after which it soon became apparent that the wretched John had a deep design in all this sudden obedience to the Church. He paid large sums of money towards the restoration of Church property, which had been confiscated during the interdict, and even enrolled himself as a crusader—the highest act of piety of the period. But his design soon became evident.

He was afraid of his barons, and hope through the power of the papal Church to crush them under his heel. But in this the honest-hearted Stephen Langton would not help him. Indeed he bitterly opposed him in it and sided with the barons. He was a born statesman—a man for the period. He called the barons together and made them hunt up the written constitution of England, as handed down from the days of Edward the Confessor. This had been ratified by Henry I., renewed by Stephen, and confirmed by Henry II., though observed by these kings or not, according to their own despotic will. This was called the charter of King Henry. The archbishop caused it to be