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MATTHEW PARIS'S
ENGLISH HISTORY.

VOL. III.

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MATTHEW PARIS'S
 ENGLISH HISTORY.

FROM THE YEAR 1235 TO 1273.

TRANSLATED FROM THE LATIN,

BY

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INCLUDING A GENERAL INDEX TO MATTHEW PARIS AND
 ROGER OF WENDOVER.

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MATTHEW PARIS'S

ENGLISH HISTORY.

Of the archbishop's arrival in England.

IN the octaves of the festival of St. Martin, Boniface, archbishop of Canterbury, arrived in England ; at whose coming no one rejoiced ; indeed—we say it unwillingly—people were rather troubled by it ; for each and all recalled to memory how extraordinarily and how cruelly he acted at London, when he there exacted from religious men the right of visiting them ; how, moreover, he had in manifold ways impoverished the kingdom and the church, by extorting formerly eleven thousand, and lately six thousand marks, which were exacted on the occasion of his tyrannical visitation ; and also how enormously he had impoverished the noble church of Canterbury, which had been under the rule of so many saints, by cutting down the woods, and trampling the convent under his feet ; and again, how he had given away entirely to foreigners the rich revenues which had become vacant in his time. Hence, it was thought the building, which was raised on a marshy foundation, would be a weak one. This, however, must be left to the disposal of the Most High.

Of the disagreement between the archbishop and the bishop elect of Winchester.

Just before the octaves of St. Martin, in this year, a certain priest, acting on the authority of the bishop elect of Winchester, inducted himself to the guardianship of an hospital in Southwark, which was well known to be in the diocese of Winchester. The guardian of that hospital (which was said to have been founded by St. Thomas the Martyr), by a custom amongst the inhabitants, receives the title of prior. But Master Eustace of Lynn, an official of the archbishop of Canterbury, considered the above proceeding to be an infringement of his right ; because, by virtue of his

patronage, his consent ought to have been obtained, which had been omitted out of contempt; and he therefore admonished the aforesaid priest twice and three times to give up possession, on the ground that his entrance on the office was injurious and presumptuous; but with this admonition the priest, or prior as he was styled, refused to comply, relying on his possession of the post. The official thereupon excommunicated him for his contumacy, under which sentence the prior aforesaid remained for forty days, giving utterance to repeated threats and insults. The official, then, unable to endure such pride and presumption, ordered him to be seized as a contumacious person; on hearing which, the prior put on his sacerdotal dress for protection, and took refuge in the church. But the officers who had been sent to take him, did not spare him on that account, because, being excommunicated, he had shown contempt for the keys of the Church. The official then ordered him to be taken to Maidstone, a manor of the archbishop's, to be detained there till it should be decided what should be done with him; for it was reported that the archbishop was near.

Of the presumptuous proceedings of the bishop elect of Winchester.

On hearing of this proceeding, the bishop elect of Winchester was enraged beyond all proper bounds, and made heavy complaints to his brethren, as if he had suffered great injury and disgrace; and being encouraged by advice and assistance from them, he assembled an armed band of knights, and sent them with a large body of attendants to find out and seize the perpetrators of this act of violence. They thereupon set out with great impetuosity and shouting, and went at once to Southwark, thinking to find those they were in search of at that place; but after searching every part of Southwark, without finding any one they wanted, they proceeded with all haste to Maidstone, to release the captured prior; there they broke open every barrier that opposed them, and searched every secret place; but as they could not find him they sought, as he had been concealed, they called for fire, intending to reduce the whole place to ashes. Not finding him they sought there, and being informed by some tale-monger that the official was at

Lambeth, near London, they hurried off thither in crowds, after doing much injury at Maidstone. Arrived at Lambeth, they broke open the doors, or tore them away from the door-posts, and entering the house tumultuously and suddenly before the hour of dinner, they ignominiously seized the official, who little expected such a proceeding; they then at once placed him on a horse, to take him whither they chose, like one of the vilest of criminals, taken in an act of theft, without even allowing him to hold the reins to guide the horse. What rash presumption! What inexcusable want of respect could have possessed them to persecute and treat thus ignominiously a man in such high authority, one of such learning, so remarkably famous, and one who represented the person of the archbishop? They also insulted and ill-treated a chaplain, who performed duty in the chapel, who fled to the altar; and they assailed the church property with their sacrilegious hands. Master Henry of Ghent, on hearing the tumult, was overcome with fear, which might have been the case with a bolder man than he, and cautiously made his escape, that he might not fall into the hands of those who sought his life. After they had perpetrated all the atrocities which their anger, or rather their fury, prompted, they dragged the official away by the bridle of his horse to Farnham, intending to detain him there forcibly, and against his will, until they should get information of the restoration of the prior. At length, however, he was suffered to depart, and was driven away sorrowfully and ignominiously; but he, rejoicing for the time at having escaped their hooked and rapacious hands, ran on foot, old man as he was, without daring to look behind him, lest he should be turned into a statue, as far as Walerle, a house belonging to the Cistercians. The monks of that place, on seeing him, wondered what misfortune had driven him to them a fugitive, and alone; he, however, received consolation there, and began to breathe freely again.

Of the complaint made to the archbishop.

The archbishop's dependants, having suffered such a great injury, with tears and lamentations laid a complaint of this great piece of audacity and presumption before the archbishop, with, however, a great deal of exaggeration. The