
A table of contents for *The Churchman* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_churchman_os.php

AYMER DE VALENCE, BISHOP OF WINCHESTER.

By H. P. Palmer, M.A.

ISABELLA, daughter of Aymer, Count of Angoulême, was the wife of King John and by him the mother of Henry III and several other children. She is described as the Helen of her age and was certainly a lady whose virtues were less resplendent than her beauty. John treated her badly and confined her for some time in Gloucester Abbey. He is said to have hanged some of her lovers. On John's death, in 1216, Isabella returned to Angoulême with her daughter Joan. The girl became engaged to Hugh de Lusignan, Count of March, to whom her mother had once been betrothed and whom she had deserted for the charms of King John. The Count, however, found the attractions of his former mistress irresistible. He bade farewell to Joan and married Isabella, her mother. Joan eventually indemnified herself by bestowing her hand on the King of Scotland. By the Count, Isabella became the mother of four sons and a daughter. Of the sons, Aymer, the future Bishop of Winchester, was the youngest.

Isabella's family had little reason to love Poitou, the district in which their lot was cast. As faithful subjects of Henry III, they were derided as traitors to their country and pointed at with the finger of scorn by the Poitevins, who hated the English rule. They hailed with delight, therefore, an invitation from their half-brother, the English King, to live in his country, which for them was to prove a land flowing with milk and honey. Guy of Lusignan, William of Valence, Aymer of Valence and their sister Alice, arrived in 1247. Their brother Geoffrey came later.

King Henry, with his natural ebulliency, welcomed his brothers and sister with embraces and kisses. He promised them wealth and fortune, and fulfilled his promise only too well, to the loss and displeasure of his subjects. He provided handsomely for two of his brothers and found a rich husband for his sister. Aymer, a young man about twenty years of age, had embraced the clerical profession. Henry knew well how to push him forward and tried to make him run before he could walk. Those were days when pluralism ran riot, when a single individual was known to own thirty livings, which, if served at all, were served by hack priests on a starvation wage of ten marks a year. Though Aymer was only in minor orders, the King kept the sharpest watch for vacant preferment.

There was, however, another with the eye of a hawk for everything of value. Pope Innocent IV was as deeply interested in finding benefices for his countrymen as was Henry in pushing the fortunes of his brother. Inasmuch as the greater part of the livings were appropriated to the monastic bodies, and in their gift, the

Pope was insistent in claiming them from the Abbots and Priors of these institutions. About the time of Aymer's arrival in England, he sent a mandate to the Abbot of Abingdon, demanding a provision for " a certain Roman." This favoured priest came to England and waited, vulture-like, until a really valuable piece of patronage fell vacant. Such a living was that of St. Helen's in Abingdon, worth a hundred marks, or in modern values, two thousand pounds a year, which was vacated in 1248. On receiving the news of the vacancy, the Roman swooped down immediately and claimed it. The King was not to be outdone and sent a mandate, demanding the church for Aymer. The Abbot was in a sore strait. He saw, that whatever he did, he must make a powerful enemy either in the Pope or in the King. After much mental conflict, he decided to confer the living on Aymer and to ask for the King's protection, should the Pope in any way proceed against him. But he found in Henry only a broken reed. The disappointed " Roman," enraged at losing the living, went at once to Rome and persuaded the Pope to cite the Abbot before him. The Abbot, though stricken in years and in infirm health, was compelled to obey the Papal order, and incur all the trouble, risk and expense of the long journey. Only by the gift of fifty marks a year to the Roman, was he able to propitiate the angry Pontiff.

In the next year, 1249, the see of Durham, almost the richest in the Kingdom, was vacated by the resignation of the Bishop, Nicholas of Farnham. The retiring prelate was a distinguished scholar and theologian, who had been a professor at the University of Paris and had afterwards studied medicine at Bologna. He had then turned his attention to theology and lectured on this subject. He was both the physician and the confessor of the King and of the Queen, ministering as he did alike to the maladies of the body and the worse diseases of the soul. Moreover, he was the intimate friend of Grosseteste, the greatest scholar and divine of his age. It is scarcely credible, but it is the fact that, on the news of the vacancy, the King sent messengers to the Convent of Durham to elect such a whipper-snapper as Aymer to the see that had been held by so eminent a man as Nicholas. The monks assumed a valiant attitude. " Remember," they instructed his messengers to say to the King, " Remember your Coronation oath. Did you not promise to respect the liberties of the Church and its right of free elections ? Do you not know, as everyone else knows, that this youth, your brother, is utterly unfit in age and in attainments for such a position ? " The King is said to have threatened the monastery with leaving the see vacant for eight or nine years. At the expiration of that time, Henry sarcastically suggested, the monks might regard Aymer as old enough to please them. He contented himself with this threat and did not attempt to interfere with the election. It was in 1250 that the see of Winchester fell vacant. There was no greater ecclesiastical prize in England, for its revenues were said to be only exceeded in value by those of the King himself.

At the last vacancy of the see twelve years before, Henry, at

the solicitation of his wife, had urged the monks of the Abbey to elect her uncle, Boniface, as bishop. He was a man more fitted to be a prize-fighter than a bishop, yet he was appointed soon afterwards to the Primacy. The Convent refused the royal request and elected William de Raleigh as their bishop. Greatly incensed, the King had visited his wrath on those of the monks who had favoured this election and had punished them by ejection and imprisonment. Turning his attention to the Bishop, he had shut him out of Winchester, forbidden the citizens of London to supply him with food and appealed to Rome against him. A reconciliation between the King and the Bishop was eventually brought about by the Pope, who, " being well remunerated, opened his bosom of consolation." The Bishop was so impoverished by his struggle with the King and by his payments to the Pope, that in order to husband his resources, he spent his closing days at Tours with quite a small retinue. That " watchful and unwearied searcher after gain," the King, was delighted at the news of the fresh Winchester vacancy. He was on the alert at once. Though Aymer was only an acolyte and about twenty-three years of age, Henry lost not a moment in sending two of his principal clerks to urge the monks to elect him to the see. They begged, they entreated, they threatened. For a fortnight they were instant, bringing all their artillery to bear in favour of Aymer. But they spent their breath in vain. The monks were resolute. They could not, and they would not, elect an ignorant youth like Aymer to the Church of St. Swithun. The envoys, at the end of the fortnight of entreaty and cajolery, found that they were powerless to break the will of the monks. On receiving their report, the King decided himself to proceed to Winchester and try the effect of a personal appeal. The Prior and the brothers were summoned into the church and presently the King and his retinue entered. The King was conducted to the episcopal throne and proceeded to preach a sermon, prefacing it, as was and still is, the custom, with a text. Henry chose as the text of his discourse, which was in Latin, part of the 10th verse of the 84th Psalm, " Justitia et pax osculatae sunt invicem "— " Justice and peace have kissed each other." Of the more spiritual part of the oration nothing remains, and the world is probably not the poorer. The practical part of it bore reference to the election and was a mixture of coaxing, threats and far-fetched scriptural allusions. The sting of the sermon was in the tail, for it concluded with a sentence which must have struck terror into the hearts of the monks. " If," said the preacher, " my wishes are not respected, I will confound you all."

The unfortunate brothers, at the King's command to proceed at once with the election, left the church and discussed the situation, remembering only too well their " former tribulations," when they had ventured to resist the royal will. They knew that, if they opposed the King again, they would incur his bitter enmity. They would also make an enemy of the Pope, who was " in a tight corner " and " corruptible." If, on the other hand, they elected the young

foreigner, Aymer, what mischief he would do not only to the see but to the whole Kingdom! They were indeed between Scylla and Charybdis. They had no help, no comfort anywhere. Yet there was no means of preventing the election, save at the cost of their own ruin. The brothers therefore decided that they must yield, and Aymer was unanimously elected.

The King's delight on receiving the news was apparent in every tone, look and gesture. At once he instructed his most facile letter-writer to indite an epistle to the Pope, urging him to consent to the election. Moreover, he sent "eloquent" messengers to Rome, men acquainted both with the Pope and the Cardinals, and able to accomplish much alike by prayers and payments.

The King was not disappointed, for the Pope proved as pliant as was expected. His price for this service was an annuity of five hundred marks to the young son of the Count of Burgundy. It may be remarked that where money was concerned, the Pope always dealt in large figures.

The King's brothers from Poitou had now been upwards of four years in England. Of all the numerous foreigners introduced by the King into the country, they proved the worst importation. Presuming on their relationship to the King, they supposed that everything became them and were the pest of the community. Even theft was not beneath them and it was their pleasure not infrequently to seize the horses, the clothing and the provisions of others not strong enough to resist them. We are told that one of them made exactions from monasteries, "the recital of which would draw tears from the reader's eyes."

Aymer, after a visit to Lyons to receive the Papal confirmation of his election, returned in triumph to England with a princely retinue in the summer of 1251. He was greeted with a warm welcome by King Henry, by his brothers and by a crowd of his countrymen, who had left Poitou to get what they could from a racked and impoverished country.

Aymer was now confirmed in his possession of the see of Winchester and had obtained that Papal sanction without which an election was nugatory. Yet he was not consecrated as bishop, probably because he had not reached, nor nearly reached, the canonical age for this appointment. He remained for ten years Bishop-elect and was always designated by that title until his consecration in 1260. In consequence, he could perform no episcopal duty of a spiritual nature. He could not ordain, nor confirm, nor consecrate churches, nor altars, nor holy oil. This disability for spiritual work probably troubled Aymer but little. He was quite content to leave such things to hirelings, Welsh or Irish bishops, who drew but an infinitesimal part of the income of the see. He possessed all that his ambition coveted, a splendid position, wealth "passing the dreams of avarice" and the powers of administering the affairs of the diocese. That power gave him ample opportunities of enriching his friends and of vexing his enemies.

In the meantime, Henry was constant in his practice of con-

ferring benefices on unknown and ignorant foreigners, coming either from Provence, the home of the Queen, or from Poitou, the home of his brothers. Such a man was a certain chaplain in the service of Geoffrey de Lusignan. He is described as " despicable in speech, in dress, and in person " ; as utterly foolish and besotted. Yet the coarse wit of this chartered libertine which delighted the King and his Court, won him the living of Preston, which had been held by the King's treasurer and was one of the most valuable benefices in the country. Matthew Paris himself watched the proceedings of this caricature of the priesthood one late summer evening of the year 1252, in the orchard of St. Alban's Abbey. This light of the Church was in the company of the King, his brother, and " other magnates." He was diverting himself by throwing sods, stones and green apples at the distinguished guests of the Abbey and was even squirting the juice of unripe grapes into their eyes. In such wise did the great unbend in those days and such were some of their companions.

Aymer, Bishop-elect of Winchester, soon showed himself in his true colours. He was a man violent, greedy and unscrupulous —" parcus Deorum cultor et infrequens," emphatically one who minded only earthly things, a reproach and a scandal to his profession.

Insolence and ignorance went hand in hand with him, as was seen about this time in the affair of the Hospital at Southwark. This hostel or hospital belonged to the diocese of Winchester, but, as the Archbishop was its patron, his concurrence had to be obtained in making appointments in connection with it. Aymer chose to ignore a practice which was both legal and courteous. He appointed a Prior, without communicating with the Official, Eustace of Lynn, who represented the Archbishop, then absent from the country. This Official at once ordered the new Prior to relinquish his position. He refused. The Official then excommunicated him as contumacious. As the law stood, unless a person under excommunication surrendered within forty days, he was arrested. In compliance with custom, the Official ordered that this should be done in the case of the Prior. The latter defied arrest by sheltering himself in the church and barring it against his pursuers. The ministers of the law soon effected an entry and carried off the Prior to the Archbishop's gaol at Maidstone, in which, many years later, the famous priest John Ball was confined. The news of this arrest reached Aymer, who became frantic with rage. At once he called upon his brothers for aid. They readily responded and went with a large band of followers in pursuit of the Official. They proceeded first of all to Southwark. After they had searched the Hospital in vain, they hurried to Maidstone, to free the imprisoned Prior. Once more they were baffled, for he too had disappeared. In impotent anger they then set fire to the Primate's buildings and went on to Lambeth. They effected an entry into the Palace by breaking down the doors, and on entering, found the Official. They seized him and treated him as they would a serf, who had been caught in

the act of theft. They forgot, if they ever knew, that the Official was a priest, that he was the representative of the Archbishop, that he was renowned as a scholar and a man of letters. Placed on a horse and not allowed to guide it, they dragged him by the reins the whole distance to Farnham and kept him for some time a prisoner. At last they gave him his freedom. The Official, an old man, half-dead with fright and seriously injured, fled for his life to Waverley Abbey, where he was nursed and tended by the Cistercian monks of that institution.

At the time of these outrages, Archbishop Boniface was absent from England, but he returned almost as soon as they had been committed. He was naturally a man of a choleric disposition and quite capable of becoming, and willing to become, a pugilist on an emergency. On this occasion, he took more orthodox measures. He set out for London with two of the bishops, and the three prelates afterwards went to the Church of St. Mary-le-bow. There, in the presence of an immense congregation, which had been called together " by the voice of the crier," the three prelates, wearing their pontifical robes, solemnly excommunicated " the authors and favourers " of the outrage on his Official. In this sentence the Bishop-elect of Winchester and his brothers were, of course, involved. Moreover, the Primate ordered the sentence to be read in all the churches of his province. The Bishop-elect retaliated by ordering the Dean of Southwark to denounce the sentence in the very face of the Archbishop as " frivolous and a foxy excuse for sins." The Archbishop possessed two cardinal virtues. He was vigorous and he was prompt. Surrounded by his friends, chaplains and men-at-arms he proceeded to make a stately journey to Oxford. He meant, when he reached that city, to make his visit the means of publishing the infamy of Aymer and of his brothers to all the world.

When the procession was within a mile or two of Oxford, the Doctors, Proctors, Regent Masters and Scholars of the University came to meet the Primate. Many of them were riding on noble steeds, which were gaily caparisoned. So imposing was this great procession, that the Archbishop and his Provençal companions were surprised and delighted. They declared with one accord that the University of Oxford might fairly be considered as a rival of that of Paris. The Archbishop, on entering at the city, was entertained at a magnificent banquet.

On December 7th, 1252, being the morrow of the Feast of St. Nicholas, the knolling of a bell summoned the entire University to hear the sentence of excommunication read. It was probably in St. Mary's Church that Aymer and his brothers were thus held up as examples and warnings—as men liable to a severe penance, before they could again associate with their fellow-men. From them, however, such a penance seems never to have been exacted.

Less than three weeks after the Archbishop's visit to Oxford, on Christmas Day, 1252, Henry III was feasted by the citizens of Winchester. The King repaid this hospitality by a demand of two hundred marks, thus " turning delight to dole." Aymer's excom-

munication was for the King a skeleton at the feast, and both he and the Queen strained every nerve to procure his absolution. The Bishop-elect swore publicly that he had never consented to the attack on the Official and the other acts of violence of which his brothers had been guilty. He was taken at his word, even if he were not believed, was absolved and received the kiss of peace. In order that things might not be done by halves, all the persons concerned in the outrage on the Official received soon afterwards "the benefit of the most comprehensive absolution."

The King had received many warnings that his frequent breaches of Magna Carta were intolerable alike to the clergy and the people. The bishops, in 1253, had informed him that they could not consent to a subsidy of tenths from the Church, for which he was asking through the agency of the Pope, unless he were willing once more to promise to observe the Charter and to respect the liberties of the Church. Even Aymer was found on the side of the bishops, and the King made it very clear how indignant he was at this conduct. When, on asking the royal permission to return to his diocese, the Bishop-elect commended the King to God, the latter replied, "and I commend you to the living devil."

The same terms were demanded in the following year from the King by a great Council at Westminster before either the tenths from the clergy or a scutage from the knights were granted. More than a fortnight was spent in negotiations between the King on the one hand, and the bishops, barons and knights on the other. The bishops sent as messengers to the King, the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Bishop of Salisbury, the Bishop of Carlisle and the Bishop-elect of Winchester, imploring him to respect the Great Charter, and not interfere in episcopal and other ecclesiastical appointments. The King expressed his repentance, but caustically remarked that the very bishops who stood before him and were lecturing him, owed their positions to his intervention.

"Is not that the case," said the King, "with the Archbishop?" "Did I not," he inquired of the Bishop of Salisbury, "exalt you from being the writer of my briefs to your present dignity?" "You, Silvester of Carlisle," he continued, "do you not remember how I raised you to your see, though you were a petty clerk in my Chancery when there were many theologians and men of repute to choose from? Similarly, brother Aymer, against the wishes of the monks, I elevated you to the noble height of the Church of Winchester, when you were only fit to be at school."

"Surely all four of you," he concluded, "ought to assume a penitential attitude and resign what you have unjustly obtained, lest you fall into eternal condemnation."

The bishops must have felt the sting of the royal remarks, but contented themselves with saying, "We are not speaking of the past, but we propose to provide for the future."

The fruits of a fortnight's discussion were seen on May 3, 1253, when the Charter actually signed by King John was produced before the King and the Assembly in Westminster Hall. The

bishops in their robes then solemnly pronounced the sentence of excommunication "against the transgressors of ecclesiastical liberties and the free customs of the realm, and especially those contained in the Charter of the liberties of the realm of England and the Forest Charter." The King, while the sentence was being pronounced, was serene and cheerful. When the candles were thrown down on the floor and the bells clashed, he declared, "All these obligations will I keep, as I am a man, as I am a Christian, as I am a knight, as I am a crowned and anointed King." It will scarcely be believed that Henry's evil advisers soon told him that he could easily break the Charter by bribing the Pope to give him absolution for his breaking his word.

The harsh and tyrannous character of the boy-bishop Aymer was seen in his treatment of the monks of Winchester. On one occasion, he kept them fasting in their church for over three days, probably because they refused to show him their accounts. So miserable were the monks under the Bishop-elect, that many of them left their monastery and fled to St. Alban's and other convents, where they were warmly welcomed. They described the Bishop as ignorant of grammar and of all the arts, as unacquainted with the English language, as incapable of preaching, of hearing confessions, or of any other spiritual duty. In place of the monks who had left Winchester, Aymer selected drunkards and men illiterate and utterly unsuited for the cloister. Even the King was provoked by Aymer's conduct to the monks, telling him that he was returning evil for good to the men who had made him their bishop. Aymer, in reply, reminded Henry that "His innocence knew the cupidity of the Roman Court." He added in vindictive language, "that his own resources were inexhaustible and that he would spend them freely in the right quarter in glutting his vengeance on the spongy entrails of the monks." The Bishop-elect added to his injuries by himself appointing a new Prior.

William of Taunton, the Prior deprived by Aymer, went to Rome in the hope of obtaining justice for himself and the monks from the Papal Court. He found that Aymer's purse was longer than his and was not restored to his position. The injustice with which he had been treated was, however, so glaring that certain lands were assigned for his support. The Bishop-elect of Winchester found it easier to place men without character in the Priory than to make them stay there. They apostatized and gave up a life every detail of which must have been irksome. The Bishop-elect, in consequence, was compelled to summon back to the Priory the brethren whom his harshness had driven away. We shall find evidence that, at the close of his life, he seemed sensible of his misconduct towards them.

A worse case of cruelty was the outrage on a priest presented by a private patron to a living of which the Bishop-elect claimed the patronage. It is almost certain that Aymer's claim rested on insufficient grounds, as the patron appointing was the son of the Justiciary of Ireland and is described by the chronicler as "distin-

guished by his high birth, his riches and his influence." Moreover, this patron seems merely to have consented to a provision to the living by the Pope himself. Despite these circumstances, the priest and his servants were so savagely attacked by Aymer's orders and by his agents, that some of them died within a few days of the assault.

The patron, on appealing to the King, was begged not to bring about a scandal by making an accusation against the Bishop-elect. The deed was, however, brought to the notice of the Council, when the popular party had the upper hand.

The year 1258 was long remembered as one of famine and mortality. The home crop of corn seems to have failed and such supplies as came from the Continent were purchasable only by the rich. Many died of starvation or of the pestilence that stalked through the land. Their bodies, we are told, lay unburied along the streets, or on dung-hills.

The same year is remarkable for the determined efforts of the barons to hold the King in check. He had proved as elusive as Proteus himself, and his oaths and promises of amendment were invariably broken. But the historic assembly of the barons, known as the Oxford Parliament, which held the greater part of its session in the House of the Dominican Friars, most certainly removed some of the worst abuses from which the Kingdom suffered. The barons and knights and their military attendants came to Oxford armed, with the express purpose of compelling Henry to submission. At once they demanded the observance of Magna Carta by the King and also required that both he and Prince Edward should swear to obey the ordinances of the Parliament. Proposals were soon made to resume certain of the extravagant grants of land made by the King to his brothers and others. The brothers swore " by the death and wounds of Christ " that they would never surrender lands granted to them by the King " as long as they breathed the vital air," and William of Valence seems to have been the loudest in his protestations. He was promptly told by Simon de Montford, himself the brother-in-law of the King, that if he did not restore these lands, he would " lose his head."

The brothers, who had done what they could to wreck all measures of reform, saw the temper of the Parliament and were aware that they were so detested that the country people were already engaged in demolishing their castles. They therefore fled for their lives to Wolvesey Castle, the fortress of the Bishop-elect. They were, however, pursued by the barons and they surrendered. With their retinues they were conducted to the sea, banished from the country and " committed to Neptune." They were afterwards enclosed in Boulogne by a force brought by Henry, son of Simon de Montford, who was burning to avenge William of Valence's insult in calling his father " an old traitor." After being compelled to wait for a considerable time in Boulogne, the brothers at last obtained permission from Louis IX to travel through France, and hastened to Poitou, where they were as little loved as in England.

The barons had succeeded in dismissing the King's brothers and the other Poitevins, who for a decade had done so much to harass and impoverish the country. Yet they were aware that the exiles would strain every nerve to bring about their return. They were determined, if possible, to prevent this catastrophe. They were anxious, above all, that Aymer, the most powerful of the brothers, should never see England again. They decided to invoke the aid of the Pontiff, who at this time was Alexander IV, and in a letter to him denounced the Bishop-elect and his brothers as guilty of such excesses that the cry of the poor rose to Heaven against them. They denounced them as the determined enemies of reform, as obstructionists who had moved Heaven and earth to prevent it and as corrupters of the King and Prince Edward, his son. The barons and knights who signed and sealed this letter to the Pope " in behalf of the whole community " implored the Pontiff in the most earnest terms to deprive Aymer of his see. This letter was conveyed to Rome by an embassy, whose expenses were paid out of money belonging to the brothers, which had been seized and confiscated at Dover. The ambassadors handed the letter to the Pope, and, in a personal interview, acquainted him with " the homicides, rapines and oppressions " which the Bishop-elect and his brothers had committed. The letter and the embassy accomplished little or nothing, for it was followed by a second letter gravely reflecting on the partiality of the Pope. In that letter Aymer was described as " a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence," as a " liar," as " a base seeker of sordid gain," as " a man given over to death wherever in England he might be found." The baronage found the Pope still unsympathetic, for the second letter was followed by a third, couched in similar terms. At length a reply to the last two letters was received from the Pope. It treated of anything and everything save the conduct of the Bishop-elect and of his brothers. The latter were ignored and Aymer was dismissed in a very few words. If what was said of him were true, declared Alexander, he regretted it, but, as Aymer had not been represented before him by counsel, nothing could be done.

Alexander IV, like his immediate predecessors, was always in desperate need of money, and the suspicion is provoked, a suspicion which seems to have been entertained by the barons, that he was corrupted by Aymer's wealth. From a letter of Henry to the Pope written in September, 1259, it appears that Brother Velasius, a Papal chaplain and penitentiary, was sent by the Pontiff to England to demand Aymer's restoration to his see. This friar appeared before the King and his Council and threatened excommunication if the request were refused. The King appealed from the Nuncio to the Pope and stated that Aymer by his " grave and notable excesses " had made his return to England impossible.

Aymer had made up his mind at all costs to go back to Winchester. As a preliminary step, he succeeded in obtaining consecration from the Pope, and the ceremony was performed either on the Feast of the Ascension or on the Vigil of Trinity Sunday, 1260.

The Bishop was aware that, outlaw as he was, he would never be able to make a peaceful entry into England and take possession of his see. But he was resolute. For some time, doubtless with the aid of his brothers, he must have been collecting a considerable force of men and ships, with which he hoped to achieve his desperate purpose. He had also obtained from the Pope the power of laying an interdict on the country, and the Bishop of Tours was chosen for this purpose. What would have happened if Aymer had appeared as an invader, can only be conjectured, but there is little reason to doubt that the adventure would have cost the Bishop and his companions their lives. Fortunately the bold experiment was never made, for it was arrested by the hand of death. Aymer expired at Paris, so the Osney chronicler tells us, about the middle of December, 1260. The heart of the Bishop was brought to Winchester and buried on the north side of the high altar where it still rests. It may be that Aymer repented of his evil deeds before his death, for he bequeathed the manor of Portland to the monks of Winchester. This manor had passed from the monks to the Bishop, owing to expenses incurred by them in appealing to the Pope against him.

Messrs. George Allen & Unwin publish *Jewish Views Of Jesus*, by the Rev. Thomas Walker, D.D. (4*s*. 6*d*. net). In the introduction he explains some of the Jewish traditions concerning Jesus, and then gives a selection of Six Views, representing Jewish Orthodoxy, Jewish Liberalism, and two Jewish portraits of Jesus by Jacobs and Klausner. A closing chapter gives some reflexion on these Jewish views, showing that on the part of some there is a high appreciation of many aspects of the Life and Teaching of Jesus.

The Student Christian Movement Press has issued *Morning Prayers and Readings for School and Family*, arranged by Mrs. Guy Rogers (3*s*. net). The purpose of the book is to arrange a series of prayers and readings in systematic order to meet the needs of Morning-prayer in schools and families. The series is arranged for twelve weeks with appropriate Scripture passages for each period of the year. A special section is devoted to Lent and Easter and other special days. Prayers are drawn from a wide variety of sources; a large number of them are taken from Mr. Thornhill's *Family Prayers*, which is one of the best and cheapest forms which we know.