

opened the new campaign, and the mark had been successfully hit. Sir Ranulf de Broc searched the town with a drawn sword for the audacious messenger, but the messenger had vanished.

It would have gone ill with Becket had he landed in the midst of the storm which the delivery of the letters instantly kindled. The ground of the censures was the coronation of the young king. To excommunicate the bishops who had officiated was to deny the young Henry's title to the crown. The archbishop had come back then, it seemed, to defy the government and light a civil war. The next morning, when he and his friends were examining the vessel in which they were about to embark, an English boat ran into the harbour. Some one leaped on shore, and, coming straight to Herbert, told him that if the archbishop went to Dover he was a dead man; the excommunications had set the country on fire. A rapid council was held. Several of the priests were frightened. The certain displeasure of the king was admitted with a frankness which showed how little Becket really supposed that Henry would approve what he had done. Becket asked Herbert for advice. Herbert, always the worst adviser that he could have consulted, said that they must advance or be disgraced. Let the