

to see the young king himself. He assured them that the archbishop had meant no injury to him. No one in the realm besides his father loved the prince more dearly. The displeasure was only that other hands than those of the primate had placed the crown upon his head. He repeated the story that the old king knew what was to be done to the bishops. He trusted that the young king would not refuse to receive a person who only desired to do him loyal service.

The court was evidently perplexed by the confident assertions with respect to Henry. The Earl of Cornwall advised that Becket should be allowed to come; they could hear from himself an explanation of the mystery. Geoffrey Ridel, the Archdeacon of Salisbury, happened, however, to be present. Ridel was one of Henry II.'s most confidential advisers, whom Becket had cursed at Vezelay, and habitually spoke of as an archdevil. He had been intimately acquainted with the whole details of the quarrel from its commencement, and was able to affirm positively that things were not as Becket represented. He recommended the guardians to consult the king before the archbishop was admitted; and the Prior of Dover was, in consequence, dismissed without an answer.