

or weeks an answer came in a form to which in that age no rejoinder was possible, and the only uncertainty which remained at Canterbury was whether it was lawful to use the ordinary prayers for the repose of the dead man's soul, or whether, in consequence of the astounding miracles which were instantly worked by his remains, the pope's judgment ought not to be anticipated, and the archbishop be at once adored as a saint in heaven.

XI.

MARTYR for the Church of Christ, or turbulent incendiary justly punished for his madness or presumption? That was the alternative which lay before the judgment of the Christian world. On the response which would be given depended interests which stretched far beyond the limits of Becket's own island home. How vast were the issues, how possible was an unfavourable conclusion, may be seen in the passionate language in which Benedict of Canterbury describes the general feeling, and relates the influences by which alone the popular verdict was decided in the archbishop's favour.

The crown of our head was taken from us, the glory of