

1318.—Richard Ledred, a Franciscan Friar, was prov. to the See by the Pope on April 24, 1317, and a mandate for him to be cons. at Avignon by Nicholas, Bishop of Ostia, was issued (*C.P.L.* ii., 148). He seems to have been so cons. (*Theiner*, 413). Ware says that he was cons. there in 1318, following, I suppose Clyn (*Annals*), who states that he was cons. there by the Pope on April 20, 1318. In May, 1317, he got a faculty to contract a loan of 500 florins "to meet his expenses at the Apostolic See" (*C.P.L.*). On July 24, 1317, the King ordered the temps. to be rest. to him, he having been appointed by the Pope "which preferment the King has accepted" (*C.P.R.E.*, 1317, p. 3). He held a Synod of his clergy in Kilkenny on Sep. 29, 1317, as recorded in the *Red Book*.

Very soon after his cons. he fell into disputes with Arnold Poer, the Seneschal of Kilkenny, and other officials. It was chiefly concerning the celebrated prosecution of Lady Alice Kyteler (or Kettle) and others in the Bishop's Court for witchcraft; and when Petronilla de Midia was burned at the stake in Kilkenny for heresy Poer took the part of William Outlaw, Lady Alice's son, and was excommunicated by the bishop, who accused him of heresy, and got him imprisoned in Dublin Castle. Roger Outlaw, brother-in-law of Lady Alice, who was then Prior of Kilmainham and Lord Justice of Ireland, favoured Poer's cause, and was also accused by the bishop. The case came before the Irish Parliament, who acquitted Roger. Meanwhile Poer died in prison, and the bishop himself was accused of heresy by the Abp. of Dublin, Alexander de Bicknor. On Aug. 12, 1320, the Pope, writing to the Justiciary of Ireland, orders "satisfaction to be made to Richard, Bishop of Ossory, touching injuries he had received in person, property, &c. . . . Under colour of false accusations he has been molested by Royal officials, his tithes have been withheld, and he has been despoiled of £200, and thrown into prison with criminals, and three of his servants maltreated in the city of Kilkenny" (*C.P.L.* ii., 206). Ledred's disputes made Ireland uncomfortable for him, so that we find him getting a Safe conduct to England, Sep. 12, 1327, and going to Rome, June 14, 1329 (*C.P.R.E.*, 1327, pp. 164, 400). In 1335 a Pope's Letter to King Edward requested him "to order that whatever has been taken from the Church of Ossory since the Bishop set out to the Papal Court shall be restored," and also "that the Secular Arm help the Bishop, and other Irish prelates against heretics." (*C.P.L.*, 6 Nov.,; see *Theiner*, 269). Ledred is in England again in Aug., 1341, and in Feb., 1344 (*C.P.R.E.*, 1340, p. 278 and 1343, p. 200). We find the temps. in the King's hands from Easter, 1342, to 20 Nov., 1342, when they were restored to the bishop. (*Pipe R.*, 43 *Rep. D. K.*, p. 62). On 19 Aug., 1346, he got an Indult from the Pope to visit his Churches, &c., by deputy (*C.P.L.*, iii., 47). On Mar. 20, 1347, the Bp. was

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prosecuting an appeal at Rome (*C.P.R.E.*, 1345, p. 202). The result appears in *C.P.L.* of 11 April, 1347, viz.—Papal Mandate to the Abp. of Cashel, and Richard Elect of Armagh. On the part of Richard, Bp. of Ossory, to make enquiry touching Alexander, Abp. of Dublin, a notorious fosterer of heretics, who has defended Robert de Conton, suspected of heresy, against the Bp. of Ossory (see also *C.P.L.* of 30 July, 1343) whom after forcing him to release Robert from prison, he cited to Dublin, a place not safe for the said Bp., who appealed to the Pope, but found the ports closed against him by order of the Abp. and of the Governors of the island. Double procurations have been extorted by the said Abp. on his yearly visitation of Ossory (note - Clyn in his *Annals*, says that until the Abp. visited Ossory no visitation had taken place in it for 40 years) and for 20 years he has disregarded ecclesiastical sentences, and for 15 years has suspected as a fosterer of heretics." On the following day a Papal decree was issued "annulling whatever had been done against the Bp. by the Abp. of Dublin and placing him, his city and diocese, immediately under the Apostolic See, the Bp. having been imprisoned by heretics for 17 days." On the day after, he received Papal absolution, "having been excommunicated by the Abp. of Dublin for having appealed to the Apostolic See." (*C.P.L.* iii., 226, 227, 232; see *Theiner*, 286); and on July 7, 1347, the Pope asked King Edward "to order his Irish Ministers to restore the goods of the Bp. and his See—seized on his going to Rome on business touching certain heretics" (*C.P.L.*). In consequence, the King ordered the temps. to be restored to him on Aug. 19, 1347, and a pardon to be granted to him, Dec. 5, 1347, but this pardon was afterwards revoked "he having been guilty of enormous seditious" (*C.P.R.E.*, 1345, pp. 402, 441, and 1351, p. 55). The Pope subsequently restored the rights of visitation over the See to the Abp. of Dublin, 22 June, 1351 (*C.P.L.*, iii., 361).

In his later years Ledred seems to have enjoyed peace and Royal favour, and resided in, and administered his diocese; though in 1361 he is returned as owing the Crown, on his decease, among other sums, 100 marks "for the escape of Henry Hunger, chaplain, a convicted felon, from his prison" (*C.P.R.E.*, 1361, p. 478).

It appears that one of the conditions of the pardon of Wm. Outlaw (above), in 1324, was that the latter engaged to cover the Cathedral with lead; Roger Outlaw, his relative and Prior of Kilmainham, is believed to have carried out this condition (see *Graves and Prim*, p. 54); but on Friday, 22 May, 1332, the belfry fell, bringing down a great part of the choir, side Chapels and bells (Clyn's *Annals*). In 1354 Bp. Ledred set about restoring the Cathedral, which he beautified with stained glass windows—so beautiful that in 1645, the Papal Legate, Rinuccini, offered £700 for them. Cromwell's soldiers are said to have broken all these

windows; some remnants were discovered in 1846, and are preserved.

Bp. Ledred is said to have composed some *Hymns*, *Letters to Popes*, and *Constitutions of a Synod* (see *Carrigan* i., 46-9). He closed a turbulent life and d. in 1360, and was bur. in the Cathedral on the Gospel side of the high altar (*Ware*). As he was the only Franciscan known to have held the bishopric, it is believed that the effigy of a bishop, habited in Franciscan robes, which is now in a niche on the N. side of the Choir, is a monument to him. (See *Graves and Prim*, and *Langrishe*). *Carrigan* places Ledred "among the greatest and most illustrious of the Bishops of Ossory." I confess that I cannot endorse that eulogium. He seems to me to have been of the hard unlovely "Spanish Inquisitor" type—a predecessor of the Gardiners and Bonners of later times.