MEMBRANE 11d—cont.

Dec. 22. Wallingford

To Master Robert de Ludelawe. In reply to his letters the king cannot sufficiently express his surprise that whereas, trusting to his discretion, he sent him to restrain the folly of lay persons lest they should attempt anything which might be to the detriment of the king's cause against W. de Ralegh the bishop, he has done what even a lay person ought not to have done, in arresting both within and without the church the goods and victuals which the bishop had caused to be brought from the parts of Norfolk, and in calling for armed force to perpetrate such things as the king abhors to express in writing, and such as, if he wished to have had done, which God forbid, he would not have ordered to be done by a clerical hand. Hence the king is moved not a little and commands him upon sight hereof to cause all the bishop's goods arrested by him as well in church as without and also all goods arrested by reason of the bishop to be delivered, and to abstain from the execution of the other cruelties contained in his letters. For although the king intends his appeal and those who adhere to him therein to be defended by the said Robert, he does not wish any cruelty to be committed against others, but rather that he shall pursue a middle way in the protection of the king's appeal and party, and be chargeable neither with harshness nor negligence. He therefore commands him to observe the orders which he had from the king by word of mouth, and which the king formerly demanded from the sheriffs and other bailiffs, and if he is in doubt on any point to seek the king's counsel before attempting any new harsh thing.

MEMBRANE 10d.

Jan. 1. Windsor

To the guardians of the bishopric of Winchester. Although the king has appealed against W. de Ralegh the bishop in the words above [see Membrane 11] and after the appeal which the king made by the counsel of such men of the realm learned in the law as he could then have, and although he consulted the masters of Oxford reading in law (magistros in jure legentes) and others, men of religion and learned in the law, and the said appeal was approved by all, yet the said bishop has nevertheless entered the said bishopric, celebrated orders, and proffered divers sentences of excommunication and suspension and has now excommunicated the mayor and bailiffs of Winchester contrary to the king's privileges prohibiting anyone from proffering such sentences except by authority of an apostolic rescript making special mention of the said privilege, and has placed the city of Winchester under interdict, all which things, as they blacken the king's fame, he cannot pass by.

Therefore he commands the said guardians to call together the abbot of Hyde, the prior of the Friars Preachers with two or three of the friars, the guardian of the Friars Minors with as many friars, and other religious men, and go to the said bishop and cause all the above to be read word for word, and offer on the king's part that he is prepared to send forthwith to Paris to all the masters regent in law (magistros in jure ibidem regentes) and others learned in the law who can be found, and if they declare the king's contention to be frivolous, the king will recall his proctors from Rome and will do whatever the bishop desires; but if they find the king's contention reasonable, the bishop shall go out of the said bishopric, and the clerks whom he has ordained shall remain suspended and he shall revoke all that he has done, according to the award and counsel of the masters, and if he refuse then to do this the king shall so proceed against him that, taught by the penalty, he shall perceive that he has erred.