APPENDIX IV

CREDITOR OR DEBTOR?

While it is impossible to establish a balance sheet for Peter's contest with the French crown and so prove or disprove M. Levron's assertion that the duke exhausted the resources of Brittany in the futile struggle, one can easily show that the calculations on which that scholar based his opinion were completely erroneous. M. Levron believed that the large sums of money which Henry III gave to Peter were in repayment of loans which the duke had made to the king.¹ There is no basis whatever for this view. The English chancery was extremely precise in its phraseology, and it had developed set formulas for referring to loans. Peter did make several small loans to Henry, and the documents which mention them leave no doubt as to the nature of these transactions.² But the letters patent of October 8, 1230, which Levron accepted as a promise by Henry to repay a loan of 6,000 marks contain none of the phrases which the chancery used in speaking of loans.³ In fact when the agreement of September 23 by which Henry undertook to pay a body of troops in Peter's service is considered, it becomes clear that the 6,000 marks must have been intended as a first installment on their wages.⁴ This is confirmed by a note in the liberate rolls regarding the financial convention made between Henry and Peter in April 1233—"Memorandum, that the king made fine with the count of Brittany for 10,000 marks for all debts and arrears that the king owed to him of the agreement made between them concerning a number of knights... to be found by the count in times of peace and of war."⁵ In short

¹ Catalogue, pp. 190-191; Pierre Mauclerc, pp. 117, 188.
³ Scialis quod de VI milibus marcarum quas debemus dilecto et fadii nostro P. duci Britannie et comiti Richemundio, tenemur ei reddere.... Ibid., p. 403.
⁴ Ibid., p. 399.
⁵ Calendar of liberate rolls, 1226-1240, p. 239.
M. Levron's calculations were in error by at least 15,000 marks or £10,000 sterling—a sum equal to about £30,000 of Paris and exceeding by £3,000 of Paris the net annual revenue of the county of Champagne. This magnificent mistake would alone make his opinion of Peter's financial status at the end of the war absolutely worthless. It is, however, impossible to resist the temptation to give one more example of M. Levron's technique in dealing with financial matters. In discussing Henry III's sojourn in Nantes in the summer of 1230 he states "Le 7 juin, il [Henry] demanda au duc de lui faire expédier vingt mille des carreaux (monnaie de compte) déposés au château de Rennes. Somme considérable. Comptait-il, avec cet argent, acheter la fidelité des seigneurs Poitevins?" 6 This statement is clearly based on letters close of June 7, 1230, which read as follows—Mandatum est comiti Britannie quod mitti faciat ad dominum regem usque Nonetas XX milia quarellorum de quarellis domini regis qui sunt in castro suo apud Resnes.7 Obviously the XX milia quarellorum are 20,000 cross-bow bolts or quarrels. This incredible error on M. Levron's part can be explained in only one way. In M. Berger's Blanche de Castille there appear two illuminating sentences. "Le 7 juin, il [Henry III] demande à Pierre Mauclerc vingt mille carreaux qu'il a déposés dans le château de Rennes. En mai, en juillet, en août, en septembre, il se fait envoyer de l'argent." 8 Berger was, of course, fully aware that a carreau was not a money of account, but one can easily see how M. Levron became confused.9 These samples of M. Levron's accuracy in research seem to me sufficient not only to discredit his account of the financial relations between Peter and Henry III but also to justify my course in completely ignoring his Pierre Mauclerc. They are, however, merely two tidbits chosen from a large supply of similar delicious morsels.

6 Pierre Mauclerc, p. 113.
7 Close rolls, 1227-1231, p. 414.
8 Blanche de Castille, pp. 170-171.
9 On a later page M. Berger makes clear his conception of the meaning of carreaux. "Le maire et la commune de Bordeaux furent avertis...d'envoyer à leur prince, pour les arbalétriers, trente-mille de ses carreaux." Ibid., p. 180. In this case also the Latin form was quarellorum. Close rolls, 1227-1231, p. 422.