1945

An Annotated Translation of the Life of St. Thomas Becket By Herbert Bosham (Part One)

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AN ANNOTATED TRANSLATION OF THE LIFE OF ST. THOMAS BECKET
BY HERBERT BOSHAM

(Part One)

by

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A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Loyola University

1945
VITA

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PREFACE

This is the first in the series of translations of Herbert Bosham's Life of St. Thomas, Archbishop and Martyr. The text used for the present translation is taken from Materials for the History of Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury, edited by James Craigie Robertson, volume three, pages 155-238. Canon Robertson has prepared his text from the two manuscripts of Herbert's writings which are known to exist; namely, the Oxford MS., which is in the library of the Corpus Christi College, and the Arras MS., which is in the Public Library of Arras. Since both MSS. have suffered through decay and mutilation, several gaps appear in the text, which could not be supplied by the existing copies of the abridged forms, chief of which is the Phillipps MS.

1 Publishers: London: Longmans and Company, Paternoster Row, 1877
2 Cf. Materials 3.xxvi-xxvii
INTRODUCTION

Among the most illustrious of English statesmen and martyr-saints, the name of Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury, stands preeminent. Few characters in medieval history can claim, as Thomas does, the support of at least twelve contemporary biographers, who were his personal friends and who were eye-witnesses of many of the incidents they relate. To add to our knowledge of the great champion of the Church, there is extant a large collection of letters written by Thomas himself, his friends, and his enemies. "Of no other personage in the Middle Ages," says William Holden Hutton, "would it be so easy to compile the 'Life and Letters.'"

The last of the contemporary biographies was written by Herbert Bosham, fourteen years after his Archbishop's death. All that we know of Herbert is derived from his own writings and some contemporary fragments. He was a native of England, probably born at Bosham in Sussex. It is not known when he entered the household of the Archbishop, but it is certain that he became an adherent of Thomas long before the latter's consecration. Herbert himself relates that while on the journey from London to Canterbury for the consecration, the archbishop-elect desired Herbert to censure him for any fault, and to report to him any unfavorable criticism. Herbert

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1 Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury, (Cambridge: At the University Press, 1926) p.2
2 Cf. pages 47 and 48
attended his master at the Councils of Tours and of Clarendon, and was ever faithful to Thomas throughout the last troublesome day at Northampton. When the Archbishop fled by night from this scene of tyranny, Herbert departed to Canterbury, where he collected as much revenue as possible, as directed by his bishop. Seven or eight days later, he arrived at St. Omer to await the arrival of his Lord.

During the archbishop's exile, Herbert was ever faithful in attendance or engaged in his service elsewhere. Once during this time he distinguished himself in an audience with the king, who was then endeavoring to gain the support of Thomas's adherents with promises to return all confiscated property if the followers of the Archbishop would abandon their leader. His free and manly bearing provoked the king to refer openly to Herbert as the "son of a priest." To this Herbert waxed indignant and retorted, "I am not the son of a priest; for I was not begotten in priesthood, although my father later became a priest; nor is he a king's son, unless his father was a king when he begot him." 3 This reference to the king's father was a contributing factor to the failure of the conference.

When the reconciliation between the archbishop and the king had been effected, Herbert returned with his master to Canterbury; but, perhaps due to the forethought of the primate.

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who had despatched him on a mission to France on the day preceding that of the murder, Herbert was not a witness of the sacrilegious deed of December 29, 1170.

From then on little is known of Herbert's life. Perhaps he spent the remaining years abroad, neglected and ignored by the clergy of his native land, and only returned to England during the writing of his great life work--the biography of his great master and friend, Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury. The time and place of his death has not been determined; but his tomb is popularly believed to be in the Church at Bosham.

Herbert's biography consists of seven long, verbose books, of which Books I and II and the first sixteen chapters of Book III are offered in the present translation. It is not necessary to give a resume of each book, as Herbert has very meticulously set down the contents of each in his outline; and as Herbert says himself, he has prefaced each volume with a summary. He annexed a Liber Melorum and a Homily on St. Thomas which are of practically no historical value and "hardly readable even by an editor"; yet throughout there is "a touch in them so pathetic and so simple as to bring to the

4 Cf. pages 4-6
5 Cf. page 6
6 James Craigie Robertson, Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury (London: John Murray, Albermarle Street, 1859) p.5
reader's eyes the tears that one feels sure were never far from his own when he wrote of his dear lord whom he loved with such reverence and yet with such intensely human affection."

As a means of edifying the reader and of enhancing the virtues of his primate, Herbert throughout his long and prosy biography painstakingly digresses into a long discourse on every occasion possible; and then, as if to apologize for his interruption, he delays the story longer, giving the necessity for such a digression. The biography, prolonged beyond the patient endurance of the reader, is, nevertheless, "valuable as the work of a man who had opportunities for knowing his subject scarcely inferior to those enjoyed by John of Salisbury and Fitzstephen."

7 Hutton, op. cit., p. 293-4
8 Lewis B. Radord, Thomas of London before His Consecration (Cambridge Historical Essays, No.7, Cambridge; At the University Press, 1894) p.254
The Life of St. Thomas, Archbishop and Martyr

by

Herbert Bosham

The Letter of Herbert Bosham to Baldwin,¹

Archbishop of Canterbury, and to His Catholic Successors

To the Most Reverend Archbishop of the holy Church of Canterbury, Baldwin, and to his successors, as many as shall be canonically elected, the least of the servants of His Excellency, Herbert Bosham, health in the Lord and reverence due to Fathers.

I have worked out the account of the life and deeds of our glorious new martyr, blessed Thomas, your predecessor, not in that magnificence of style, and that grandeur of diction which the dignity of the subject demands, but just as it has been given me from above. "For humble talents," says a certain writer, "are not suited to lofty themes." Lest posterity throw over such renowned actions of that great man through such numerous and such continual successions of passing generations or force them into oblivion, I, knowingly and consciously have taken upon my shoulders a burden too great for them.

¹ Baldwin, Archbishop of Canterbury (1185-1190). He is not the immediate successor of Thomas, but is preceded by Richard (1174-1184).
In a special manner does this duty fall upon me who still survives, particularly, since nearly all my confrères who were witnesses with me of his passion, have been drawn from the world and are now resting in Christ. I have, therefore, put my hand to the task, choosing if it be so expedient, to be accused of imprudence rather than of backwardness or neglect. Nor do I doubt that my filial devotion will excuse me in your fatherly love, one who desires to restore to you by my pen that great example which was snatched from the world--an example that is truly untainted, which you should daily read that you may imitate him and rule as he did. Especially to you has he been given as an example that as he has done so may you do likewise. Wherefore, throughout the whole of this biography, I have painted him as an example, not to be honored for his miracles, but to be imitated for his deeds. Those miracles, which were wrought for the unbelieving, which others have seen and have related, I have, throughout the entire account of his life, silently passed over. Those alone will I describe which were given to the faithful that they might reverence and imitate them--especially to you who have been called by God, you who dared although a bit fearfully, unless I am mistaken, to enter the fight, to undertake your duty, and to fill the episcopal chair after such a great athlete.

3 John 13.15
4 Cf. 2 Timothy 4.6ff
May the Almighty grant that you may receive his zeal, whose ministry you follow; his virtues, whose office has been entrusted to you; his diligence in all things, whose bishopric you fill. And I, your little lamb, hopefully pray that after my long wanderings through the paths and pathless ways to be brought back upon your shoulders to our Lord's flock.

5 Cf. Acts 1.20; Psalms 108.8
6 Luke 15.4ff
Contents of this Biography of the Martyr

We have divided this biography of the glorious martyr Thomas into seven volumes.

1. The first volume briefly and perfunctorily, as if in passing, describes his birthplace, his parents' names, and the first years of his life.

II. The second volume deals more extensively with his youth and his actions of that period; his admittance to the service of the renowned Father Theobald, then Archbishop of Canterbury; his elevation to the archdeaconry of Canterbury and the reason for the promotion; and further, how he was transferred from the archbishopric, as it were from the church to the court, indeed, to the court of the illustrious King Henry II, in the position of chancellor; where he was apprized of the character and manner of the court procedure. "This man, therefore..."  

1 Theobald, Archbishop of Canterbury (1139-1161)
2 Henry II (1154-1189) ruled England for thirty-five years, setting many precedents in administration and instituting many reforms in law. His meddling in ecclesiastical affairs culminated in the murder of his one-time friend and adviser, St. Thomas a Becket.
3 This unfinished line is the beginning of the opening sentence of Book II. Herbert has thus indicated the introductory sentence of the remaining books.
III. The third volume explains how after the death of the esteemed father, he was turned back to his mother, the Church—elevated from the chancellorship of Canterbury to the archbishopric of Canterbury; how, once he learned what the perfection of that state is wont to exact, he eagerly applied himself to discharge his pastoral duties both before God and among men; hence, what were the many and varied trials and tribulations, afflictions, and persecutions that soon arose; and what was the cause of all these evils; how a very great, yea, the greatest alliance of love, such as the world sees and hates, was cunningly plotted against so that an unholy dissension arose between such a powerful king and such a noble archbishop. "As these things were happening, therefore, . . ."

IV. The fourth volume deals with the archbishop's flight into exile, he who now was so afflicted, so weighed down, so troubled, yet shunning not that which would intensify the heat of the persecution. It describes the good as well as the evils of his exile, its time and place. "After he had disembarked from the skiff. . . ."

V. The fifth volume relates the kind of and reason for a reconciliation wrought at last between himself and the king; his return from exile to his native land; the wrath of the king which was renewed later; and the causes for its renewal against him—not by one cunning connivance but by many. "The king beholding, therefore, . . ."
VI. The sixth volume describes the passion of the martyr after his persecution in exile, adding an account of the character of the martyr—both his perseverance and fortitude. "Since the soldiers were armed..."

VII. The seventh volume sets forth an enumeration of Thomas's learned friends, of whom mention will be made throughout the biography, and the reason why this account should not be abridged. At its close, he intrusts himself to the prayers of those reading this biography. "And since...

At the completion of the biography, he annexed a writing to the account, which he entitled "Songs" from the subject matter, since nearly all the content depends upon the biography. And so this little book forming the three songs from its triple harmonies resounds like the guitar. The prologue prefaced to the book points out these harmonies from which are fashioned three songs.

Completing the Book of Songs with its three melodies, he appends his own Homily concerning the martyr which has this beginning, "Let us sing to the Lord, for He is gloriously magnified." This dangerous article written as one's own handwriting has been placed at the end of all, because at the beginning we have the cause of the archbishop's exile and

4 Exodus 15.1
finally, the cause of his martyrdom which dissolved the loving friendship between so powerful a king and so honorable an archbishop, such as the world sees and hates. Since some of the seven books which we have penned are short and others more verbose, we have written a separate and an appropriate summary for each book, so that one may discover with greater facility that for which he is searching.
Chapters of the First Volume

1. The ecclesiastical custom in which the life of the holy fathers is described. Reasons.

2-3. The great love of God for Thomas; his birthplace and the names of his parents; the mere mention of his boyhood and adolescence, except to relate a vision to Thomas, while a boy. The disciple mentions nothing concerning the testimony of his master except that which he, himself, witnessed.

The First Book of the Biography of the Life and Deeds of Saint Thomas, Martyr and Archbishop of Canterbury

1. It is the custom of the Church to set forth the eminent lives of its holy fathers and those immortal works which they accomplished for posterity while they were yet living. As it is fitting to inscribe them in a literary monument, so through the medium of a pen they shall be restored to the world, which was not worthy for them. Let us, who now survive, who still live in the trials of this present life, draw from these a challenge to the course, let us quicken for the fight, and with certain hope let us await victory. And this is the word in the Canticle of Love of the lover to the Beloved, of the Spouse to the Bridegroom, of the Church to Christ:

"The new and the old fruits, my Beloved, I keep for you."

1 John 21.24
2 1 Corinthians 9.24
3 Cf. Canticle of Canticles 7.13
In a literary journal, the Church, an apothecary, stores away the fruits of the good deeds, plucked from trees, healthful as well as fruitful, sometimes from the ancients and now from the modern fathers. Daily for the instruction of the Christian mode of living, like the need for daily refreshment, she fondly and cheerfully dispenses the works of our exemplary fathers and the examples of their deeds to Christ's poor for His honor and glory.

Wherefore, brethren, let us with the Hebrew children not only pluck bows from the trees, nor recall so much the dicta of the saintly fathers, but their deeds as well. Cherishing these, let us run now with both feet of a two-fold charity to a certain new tree bearing for us fresh fruit, a new apple. Conforming to the promise of the spouse, let us preserve for the Bridegroom this new fruit along with the old. Yes, among the other trees in God's Paradise, there is one, salutary as well as fruitful, from whence we pluck more effectively a new fruit for these times. And there stands among the other leaders of God's church, our predecessors, after whom we continue to chant according to the Psalmist, one who, I say, is singularly celebrated, to whom in our day there is no comparison--one who fought for the law of his God.

4 John 12.13
5 Canticle of Canticles 8.13
In accordance with the Psalms, he now stands, I say, among the foremost leaders. If not his countenance, at least his wound distinguishes him. With his head wholly mangled, he stands a martyr exuberant and triumphant. Lest any of you doubt who this man might be, let us attune our ears, let us recognize by name that leader as being our advocate and father; Thomas is his name. He is that Thomas who was at one time the bishop of Canterbury, but now primate in the world as well as in the city. Nay rather, he is now assisting the One Who rules the universal world and he will judge not only the city, but the world as well.

2. The Love of God for Thomas

Oh, the unspeakable love of Divine Charity toward you, Thomas! Oh, the incomprehensible secrets of the Divine Scheme! For we behold you, Thomas, a man like unto us, one who is capable of suffering, one who shares in our burdens, one who participates in our weakness. "We behold," I say, your birth at London, begotten in the flesh by a certain Gilbert...
as your father and Matilda as your mother. Behold, how your lot is with the blessed and how you "are reckoned among the children of God." 12 Behold, how people have come from afar, these from the north and the coast, others from the south to beg favors of the martyr resting in the tomb, to seek his patronage, and to honor his wounds, these wounds which breathe and sprinkle a certain life-giving odor of wonderful sweetness. Indeed, this is his work who raises the needy from the earth and lifts up the poor from the dunghill that he might sit with the princes and obtain a place of glory.

3. His Boyhood and Adolescence

Since I have undertaken a brief description of his deeds for the aid of mankind, I pass over his boyhood and adolescent years for the present. Only those deeds which I myself witnessed and heard shall I relate for a testimonial; concern-

11 Matilda, as the legend continues, was the daughter of Gilbert's captor. In love with Gilbert, she followed him to England. Upon her arrival there, she wandered through the streets of London, incessantly repeating "London" and "Becket," her only knowledge of the English language. At length, she was discovered by Richard, Gilbert's serving man, who brought her to her future husband.

12 Wisdom 5.5
13 Ephesians 5.2
14 Psalms 112.7,8
ing these things, beyond doubt, this is a true testimony.
So it is that even though I live without honor and though my writings be held in disgrace, I may be fittingly characterized by that saying of the evangelist, "This is the disciple who bears witness concerning these things, and has seen, and has written these things." I now make no mention of those years of his boyhood and adolescence except that which others tell, who would truly know. This I have learned that he passed those years, as it is fitting, in simple goodness and purity. There is, however, one incident which I learned from his telling it to me, and this I have wished to insert here. At one time, while still a boy, he was seized with a fever, and as the illness grew worse, a sweat gradually poured over his whole body. A certain lady appeared to him, comely in her calm countenance and bearing. Standing by the bedside of the sick child, she placed in his hands two golden keys as a promise for the recovery of the boy's health, saying, "Thomas, here are the keys of Paradise of which you shall now be the custodian." And with these words she disappeared.

15 Cf. John 21.24
Chapters of the Second Volume

1. His growth in age and grace among men, but not yet before God.
2. His continence in youth.
3. His youthful service under lay masters.
4. His entrance into the service of Theobald, Archbishop of Canterbury.
5. The winning of favor in the eyes of his master. Reasons for the favor.
7. After his elevation, he did not assume the duties of the archdeacons.
8. His transference to the great King Henry II; his elevation to the chancellorship.
9. His neglect of his character as a deacon and his putting on the character of a chancellor.
10. His enjoyment of the king's favor above others.
11. His life as chancellor; the strenuous tasks of his office, which are merely mentioned and are not explained.
12. The sudden but secret envy of the courtiers, when they realize his favor and honor.

1. His Growth, in Age and Grace among Men, but not yet before God

Completing his boyhood and adolescence, Thomas advanced in age and grew in attention and favor with men but not so with God. That we may understand why I speak thus, let us recall this twofold favor. For among men, favor is twofold; it is a certain worldly grace, cultured, kind, sweet, sociable, looking always to the love of itself, by which a man pleases the world more and God less. Devoid of real worth, it is, so to speak, a certain worldly kindness which lacks goodness.

1 Cf. Luke 2.52
2 Ibid.
3 Ibid.
Although it is worldly and cultured, without concomitant goodness it is, as it were, a deceptive and vain passing grace. In this can the vanity of the world be observed more than any disgraceful act or any sin. And yet this favor, although it be deceitful and vain is, nevertheless, from God. As the exterior of the body is enchanting, so is this favor of the world; it is, indeed, from God, although it may be deceitful and vain. Accordingly says the Wise Man, "Favor is deceitful, and beauty is vain." Only then is grace outstanding when the highest type of kindness is joined to this kindness in goodness.

There is another grace, not of the world but of heaven, opposed, as it seems, to this grace which we have mentioned. In the first, there is kindness without any goodness, and, in the second, there is goodness without any kindness. For this is more solemn, more rigorous, more austere; not like the former, which becomes all things for all, this is for itself alone and for God. By this man pleases God more and the world less. Since it is more solemn and severe, it attracts less by its sweetness, but is rather by its dour appearance critical of men of the world and those who are one with them. Indeed, this is a companionship, spiritual, holy, and good, yet less

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4 Proverbs 31.30
5 1 Corinthians 9.22
advantageous and pleasant. Those who excel in his are certainly good but not yet kind. The first grace does this, namely, the cultured worldly grace. Whence it is vitally important to excel in this twofold favor, especially for those who are in the world and tarry among the men of the world; that if they be good, they may also be kind. And though these are so gifted with this twofold favor, as citizens of Jerusalem, yet those are the better suited who carry on the affairs of both cities, Jerusalem and at the same time Babylon. So it is that Joseph, favored by God and man, was endowed with this twofold grace. Although a citizen of Jerusalem, he prudently and zealously administered the government of the Egyptians while in Egypt. So too, did David manage the affairs of the Babylonians. The great teacher excelled in this twofold grace and was made all things to all men. That he might point out for us that these two qualities

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6 Isaias 5.3; Zacharias 12.10
7 Jerusalem is a type of heaven; Babylon, a type of the world. Cf. Apocalypse 3.12
8 Genesis 41
9 Cf. Prophecy of Daniel
10 i.e. St. Paul; 1 Corinthians 9.22
should be closely allied within ourselves, after enumerating the fifteen works of the flesh, he places goodness after kindness among the twelve fruits of the Spirit. For then, not only is that goodness good, but it is also pleasing, if it has as an ally, kindness; namely, that grace, worldly and polite, from which we have begun. In the first years of his youth, Thomas excelled in this grace, although bereft of that goodness, which the teacher places in the first place among the fruits of the Spirit Himself. But our God, as He is kind and good, later gave to him that goodness admired, yet despairs of by the world; and He augmented this kindness with goodness that he might advance in grace both among men and before God. For the good and kind God is wont to regard the kindness of man before the other virtues—not only, that kindness which has goodness as its companion, but that

11 In reality St. Paul mentions seventeen works of the flesh: "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are fornication, uncleanness, immodesty, luxury, idolatry, witchcrafts, enmities, contentions, emulations, wraths, quarrels, dissensions, sects, envies, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like." Galatians 5.19ff
12 Galatians 5.22f: "But the fruit of the Spirit is: charity, joy, peace, patience, benignity, goodness, longanimity, mildness, faith, modesty, continency, chastity."
13 Ibid.
14 Luke 2.52
also (which we mentioned), which is devoid of goodness. He is wont, I say, to care for such by joining goodness to it as and when He desires. For the Spirit breathes where and when He wishes that those who come last shall equal those who have preceded.

Following the things of a child at the beginning of his youth, he gave up discipline and fled from those lessons which he had learned in his tender years at school. He, like Effraim, fed on the winds and followed the shadow. He thus spent that charming and familiar period of his life, as the poet says:

"He enjoys horses and hounds and the grass of the sunny field."

Intently on courtly trifles, he busied himself with vain and inconstant pursuits. That he might distinguish himself before all others, he had an ever insatiating desire for more costly attire in preference to all others. Although the teacher may restrain vulgarity which is in no way profitable, and the wise man may admonish that one should not glory in dress, the more ambitious a person is, the more

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15 John 3.8
16 Cf. Matthew 19.30; Mark 10.31; Luke 13.30
17 Osee 12.1
18 Horace, Ars Poetica 162
19 i. e. St. Paul; Ephesians 5.4
20 Ecclesiasticus 11.4
difficult it is for him to escape suspicion. Nor did he allow a proper estimate of himself, though his whole bearing was not based on passion but on virtue. Following at court the spirit of popular acclaim which as a youth, he so eagerly sought, he had no regard for the master's admonition, nor did he follow the advice of the wise man.

2. The Continence of Thomas during his Youth

Yet, it is more than certain that in the heat of this period of his life and in the luxury of the world in which he was living, Thomas at all times kept a most ardent love of chastity. In this he was like one of the saints, of whom we read that, although he was haughty and vain, yet was considered to be chaste in body. Moreover, he always detested "lying lips" and a "back-biting tongue." For the almighty and merciful Lord very often in all justice abandons His chosen ones for a time because of the stains of some minor faults, yet, at the same time, He does not refrain from helping them in some other way through some gift of grace. Hence he allows them to fall by abandoning them that being freed

21 Ephesians 5.4
22 Ecclesiasticus 11.4
24 Proverbs 12.22
25 Proverbs 25.23
they may be more amenable to grace. Besides by helping them, he does not permit them to rush headlong into the depths, lest, as a sinner, should he come to this stage, he would be indifferent to penance, with the well closing over him and shutting his mouth. The prophet, himself, unless I am mistaken, calls attention to this—namely, that in one and the same person there may be some stains of guilt and yet some gifts of grace, saying: "The Lord rained upon a certain part of one city, but He left one part arid and dry." Indeed, though a man's steps be faltering, there is, however, some spark of hope in a man, if we see him fall through some pleasures of sin, he is, on the other hand, held back from falling too deeply through some assistance of grace. The Lord supports with his hand and lifts up him, who is cast down. Such was our Thomas. Although as a youth, he was so infected with vain glory, the venom of virtues, that he seemed not to be too secure, he was not, however, entirely destitute of every grace of the virtues. He was a lover of chastity, as we have said, a champion of truth, always loyally cherishing his faith—even that faith which belongs to earthly rulers.

26 Cf. Psalms 68.16
27 Cf. Amos 7
28 Psalms 36.24
29 Psalms 145.8
3. His Service under Lay Masters

In the first years he was obsequious for a time to his earthly potentates, noble men but worldly minded. Through loyalty and prudence and unremitting devotion to duty, for his age and according as our masters in deference can advance through such means, did he advance quickly. As the profession of each is different, so each manner of living is wont to differ.

4. His Entrance into the Service of Theobald, Archbishop of Canterbury

So our Thomas, realizing that this profession is contrary to that, and this mode of life the opposite of that, determined to transfer from the worldly courts to some noble ecclesiastic. Aided and inspired by the Lord Who confirmed his decision, he transferred his service to Theobald, then the venerable Archbishop of Canterbury.

5. The Favor Which He Gained for His Service

At this time, for many years of his youth he rendered to his archbishop service, which the more pleasing it was, the more faithful and devoted it was to the bishop. He soon found great favor and friendship in the eyes of his master. Even now, in preference to all others, who were many and zealous in their service, he enjoyed more and more intimate conversation with the archbishop and delighted in his counsel.
6. His Elevation to the Archdeaconry

The bishop, therefore, perceiving that now a new shoot of virtue was sprouting from this young tree of ours, determined to transplant this shoot of the Lord among the fruits of the valley in the garden of the Spouse. Inspired by God, Archbishop Theobald, according to canon law in that holy and humble congregation of monks, ordained Thomas first in the minor orders, then to the deaconate and at the same time to the archdeaconate of his own church. Fully confident of the fruit in the future, he ordained, I say, him, whom the sprouting seeds of virtue foreshadowed, though the deadly atmosphere of worldly glory often scattered and tried to spoil these very shoots while they were yet growing. Wherefore the bishop, instructed in this by God, had no doubt, but was rather mindful of that along with the other gifts of grace which we have enumerated above. Although in other things, as a youth, he might have departed with a certain youthful levity to the pomp of the world, with a strict rein, nevertheless, against the nature of that age and above his strength, he always forced himself with the bit of continency, admirable in that age but imitated by a few. And so these youthful excesses, which befall the chaste integrity of the body and the inviolate continency, seem necessarily to be attributed to nature more

30 Cf. Canticle of Canticles 5.1
than to weakness, to the age rather than to error, even among
the wise, who themselves have made the experiences of that age.
Those pleasant inanities of youth, over and above the beauty
of his physical makeup, other gifts (which we mentioned before),
gifts of virtue in early youth excused him, and there was
positive hope of future development.

In the beginning of his youthful years, his faults, as
it often happens, were coupled with virtues—faults which
usually expel virtues, unless the stronghold of virtue is
defended by chastity, which is the shield of the flesh. Certainly,
only then are all virtues secure if they have been protected
by the garrison of that shield; secure, that is, if anything
can be secure in such a slippery age, and among so many snares
of this present way of life. The downfall of a certain noble
and renowned person proves my words. But why do I mention the
noble and the renowned? Yes, the greatest and most celebrated,
the most outstanding of the prophets, unless I am mistaken.
That person is David, who when still young shone with many
gifts of grace, yet, because as a youth he was without the
shield of the flesh spoken of above, fell through impurity and
was prostrated in the flesh by a woman. At the same time
through trickery, he killed in the flesh a man who was just.

31 i.E. Bethsabee; 2 Kings 11.2ff
32 i.e. Urias, the husband of Bethsabee; 2 Kings 11.6ff
For as a youth, our David had many gifts of grace, but he was, nevertheless, deprived of that one gift of continency with which our Thomas was endowed. David is that prophetic city, upon which we touched, which was left dry in one part and did not receive any rain. Because in youth he was without the one gift of continency, through incontinency, the opposite of this virtue, he was deprived of the other gifts of grace which he possessed; he was stripped and despoiled.

For such a city, for such a youth, who has some gifts of grace on the right, and on the left, those that oppose these virtues so as to strip the longings of youthful years, there is great help in the security derived against the loss of graces and of virtues, if chastity, which is a grace of the flesh, be the helper and the preserver of virtues. This is the most loyal preserver as a pure vase where spiritual perfumes are to be preserved. For the sake of our Lord, what is pure chastity of the body, unless it is that complete perfection of a certain remarkable and precious vase, in which the gifts of spiritual treasures, as it were, the precious spices of the bride and bridegroom are placed in the treasure chest of the virtues? Whence the teacher says: "For this is the will of God, your sanctification; that you abstain from immorality; that every one of you learn how to possess his vessel in

33 Cf. note 27, page 19
holiness and honor, not in the passion of lust like the Gentiles who do not know God." This same chastity is the faithful protector and at the same time a very brave assistant both for the preservation of these spices and for the storehouse of the virtues, lest they be borne away by thieves and robbers along the way. After repulsing the vices, bravely and persistently, chastity is wont to build a free, quiet, and peaceful home for the virtues. Even though the door is closed, the allurements to vice still definitely keep up their obstinate and return attack. These vices, standing at the doorway, especially of youth, as though they were less impudent, return to the attack, even though they have been repulsed. But with the doors of the house secure, as we have said, the zealous and brave virtue of continency quickly beats down those that are striking back so frequently, so rudely, and so shamelessly. And so it is, if these faults have been retained in youth, but have been coupled with virtues. As it may be briefly stated, he possessed such great courage and steadfastness in his youth that for the sake of the Lord, it is not much for a youth who has this virtue that I dare to say: "You possess chastity--do whatever you will." It is entirely opposed and contrary to the wantonness of old age. Nor are we speaking of those virtues by which he lives uprightly, but of those other

34 1 Thessalonians 4.3ff
gifts of grace, even those that are given to a man who is not yet just. Frequently, through these when he is sleeping, as it were, he is called, he is moved, he is drawn, that he might be deeply aroused against these evil habits. Indeed, he is such, who possesses the vices together with the virtues, that in no wise does he sleep soundly but he is sluggish, who bowing his head, bends now with impending sleep. Now through the force of virtues, which he holds, as it were, in his right hand is he withdrawn from worldly and "carnal desires." Then, again by reason of the weight of vices, which are lying in the snare at the left, he is inclined that way, alternately nodding his head towards them. Forthwith, unless he is brought back through these bonds of virtue, which he holds in his hand, yea, unless he is more courageously dragged with the Lord supporting him with His hand, after sleeping, as if sluggish, he will be too drowsy. According to this, the above mentioned young King David, who was first drawn by the Lord through some virtues of grace and afterwards was deeply aroused, said, "If I shall give sleep to my eyes, or slumber to my eyelids." Behold,

35 1 Peter 2.11
36 Psalms 36.24
37 Cf. page 22
38 Psalms 131.4
he, who was first an adulterer, who first slept in the dregs of an adulterous flesh and who was overcome by sleep, killed in trickery a just man. Now, he no longer drowses nor sleeps, who, as a king, protects Israel with those virtues which he had once upon a time, when God offered him His help, gently drawing the sound sleeper and removing afar sleep and the dream of sleep. And so, at first, many are drawn by some gifts of grace formerly united to themselves, that afterwards deeply aroused they may run vigorously and so later arrive at the course and, finally, they gradually embrace the prize of glory. Accordingly the spouse says to the Bridegroom, "Draw me: we will run after Thee to the odor of Thy ointments;" and the Bridegroom, Himself, answers, "No one can come to Me unless My Father draw him." And so a chaste youth, another Joseph, our Thomas, at first drawn through chastity and other gifts of grace ran, afterwards in the odor of virtue, until, as we now see, he did not only run in the odor of virtue, but embraced the very "Lord of hosts, the very King of Glory.

39 i.e. David. 2 Kings 11.2ff
40 2 Timothy 4.7f; 1 Corinthians 9.24
41 Canticle of Canticles 1.3
42 John 6.44
43 Psalms 23.10
7. His Life as an Archdeacon

Let us see how he, who had obtained the rank of deacon, as we said before, came to the race in the odor of virtue, not yet running but drawn thither; and how, when the course was finished, he embraced the prize of the race at the end without an end. For he did not shoulder the burden of the deacons immediately upon becoming an archdeacon; but he labored more for the things that belong to the world, since he despised any mediocrity, which is found in men especially of the sacred order. He, therefore, after receiving his order, assumed after a time not the courtly haughtiness of his fellow-courtiers, but that of a king; and entering the court, he transcended the other courtiers in every magnificence. This, as it often happens, must be related cursorily in a short space.

8. His Elevation to the Chancellorship

At the beginning of the reign of the illustrious King Henry II of England, whose empire extended not only on this side of the ocean, but also beyond his kingdom across the sea

44 2 Timothy 4.7f
from the North Sea as far as the Pyrenees, Theobald, the archbishop of happy memory, who was mentioned before, succeeded after a time in getting our Thomas, while yet a youth and a new archdeacon, to enter the court of the new king and also to assume court duties in the court. The bishop perceived that the youth, whose actions and zeal he had already experienced in various circumstances of affairs, was untiring in work, trustful in counsel, wise in doubtful issues, brave in adversities, genteel in attire, liberal in bestowing gifts, prompt in executing a command, faithful in obedience, and finally, prudent and circumspect in every action. And so, he thought that Thomas would be worthy of the court, acceptable to the court, and rightly so. His hope was by his activity and attention that the peace and the bond of unity would be stronger and more acceptable. Through the agency and providence of Bishop Theobald, Thomas enters the court and at the king's bidding, accepts the office of courtier at the court, that office which is now commonly called chancellor—

45 By right of his father, Geoffrey, Earl of Anjou, Henry II possessed the provinces of Anjou, Maine, and Touraine. He possessed Normandy in the right of his mother, Matilda. With his marriage to Eleanor, the divorced wife of Louis VII king of France, he received as a dowry, the seven provinces of Guienne, Poitou, Saintonge, Auvergne, Perigord, Angoumois, and the Limoges. Thus when he succeeded to the throne of England, as duke of Normandy, earl of Anjou, duke of Aquitaine, Henry possessed in his foreign territories more than one third of the whole French monarchy.

46 Cf. page 19
an office with regal benefices but with many a care, which those who have experienced this office know full well.

9. He Neglects His Character as a Deacon for a Time

Thus our deacon entered the court and accepted the office of chancellor. For a time, he laid aside his role as deacon and put on that of a chancellor. How great, how admirable was our youth in zeal that was seasoned with discretion at the outset of his chancellorship. Singular was his service in virtues and actions of prudence. With this equipment of virtues, he disguised the works that fell under the eyes of men, and he became the savor of sweet wisdom, in which most of that which is done is feigned not less wisely than knowingly, and is thought to do that which it does not perform, and not to work that which it does. Through such an instrument, it often happens that it may in charity work against charity, oppose the law for the law, and champion goodness against goodness. Whence that great character of so many facets, that outstanding teacher of the Gentiles, the foster-child of the synagogue, the friend of the Jews, following the prudence given him from charity against charity wished to be anathema from Christ for the sake of his brethren. He purified himself and cut his hair in the temple against

47 Romans 7.15ff
48 i.e. St. Paul. Romans 9.3
49 Acts 18.18; 21.24
the law in behalf of the law. Against piety for piety, he circumcised Timothy, already a young man. Likewise, David feigned insanity that he might escape, and Judith pretended to be a harlot that she might save Israel. So also acted this deacon of ours. Though our words do not excuse him, the illustrious examples of his wonderful deeds do. Thus our deacon, entering the court readily laid aside the deaconship for a time, eagerly yielding more to circumstances rather than to reason, to vain glory than to truth, as if he might be heard daily to proclaim to his associates, the courtiers, that portion of the dictum of the Apostle, "I have become foolish! You have forced me." I do not say, nevertheless, that silks and velvets, and other insignia of rank, and rich apparel are not becoming to a man of this station, to the chancellor of the king, even if "those who wear soft garments are in the houses of kings." Wherefore, I say, that unless there has been cause that he should be an archdeacon and not a courtier, trappings of the court would not have been becoming. Indeed, in the case of our archdeacon, there is a reason that he should

50 Acts 16.3
51 1 Kings 21.13
52 Judith 10-13
53 2 Corinthians 12.11
54 Matthew 11.8
enter the court—we already mentioned this. For by what marvelous dispensation of Divine Judgment was he afterwards withdrawn from the world through a short martyrdom, not raised up more than he had lived in the flesh, as is understood today. He was an aid to the priesthood and to the kingdom.

10. **His Enjoyment of the King’s Favor**

Thus, our Thomas, fulfilling his chancellorship, laying aside, as it were, his deaconate, ardently bore the burden of the chancellorship and zealously carried on its duties. According to the opinion and prayer of the bishop, often spoken about, the king, wise and keen for his time, beyond other gifts of grace was daily experiencing his trust and discretion in counsels, his forethought and strength in doubtful issues, his bravery and fearlessness in dangers. It is these doubtful and hard issues that accompany a man in great power. Though life be short, cares are innumerable and lasting. Doubtful and adverse events of human fortune, hiding in ambush, as it were, and spreading snares, rise daily in a sudden and unforeseen way against one in high position. Whence, contrary to these perils and dangers, which appear so frequently, especially when one is elevated, it is necessary

55 Cf. pages 28, 29
56 i. e. Theobald
daily to break the snares and to evade the pitfalls by strong counsel. In perils and dangers, as someone has said, strong counsels will be best. As the days went on, the ambitious king experienced in Thomas this fortitude and wise counsel.

11. His Life as Chancellor

Since the king appreciated his chancellor's greatness of soul coupled with prudence, the chancellor advanced in favor with the king from day to day; and to say it briefly, as he excelled in magnanimity of soul before every one, so did he excel, in a brief time, in favor with the king to such a degree that whoever came first in his counsel were made subordinate. Indeed he merited this. For how strenuous he was in his duties, I can hardly enumerate here. That is in what way and how diligently, he restored to his lordship, the King, according to his every wish and desire, five well-fortified strongholds on the confines of France and Normandy (which were considered to belong from olden times to his jurisdiction) from the king of France by matrimony.

57 In 1158, King Henry II was intent on the extension of his power on the continent by obtaining the five fortresses of the Vexin, the military frontier between his Norman duchy and the dominions of Louis VII, King of France. The Vexin was then in the hands of the French king. To accomplish his purpose through diplomacy, Henry sent Thomas to arrange a marriage between Louis' infant daughter, Margaret, and little Henry, the eldest surviving heir to the throne of England, and thus to secure the Vexin as Margaret's dowry.
He held them without the sword, without spear, lance or battle—namely, the castle of Gizor, the most garrisoned fortress, and four others. And what is yet greater, boldly and determinately, with a small army, he remained true to his lordship, the King, in the territory of Toulouse beyond the borders of Gascony for besieging Toulouse. This, as he claimed, should be subjected to him when every law was broken. It is probable that this was always defended through the patronage of Saint Exuperius. The king broke up the citizen's

The countship of Toulouse, Henry claimed through Eleanor, his queen. Louis VII of France, by whom she had been divorced in 1152, also pressed the claim that through her he had a right to Toulouse. In 1159, Henry made preparations to take Toulouse by force. Alarmed by this move of Henry, the French King threw himself into Toulouse. Respecting the suzerainship of Louis, Henry would not attack his person. Castles were taken, the lands of Toulouse were ravished, Quercy was conquered, and the city was blockaded for a time; but no siege was pressed, and the operations of the south ended with the conquest of Quercy, the sole result of the enterprise.

Thomas contended that Louis had forfeited the privileges of a feudal lord by lending open assistance to Henry's enemies in contravention of the existing alliance between the two. Cf. Materials, 3.33f

Bishop of Toulouse, 405-415
blockade and returned with his huge army, leaving his chancellor behind in that rebellious land to protect the castles captured by him. How he preserved them and zealously acquired others in military engagement, both these and the many other trying tasks of his chancellorship, which every one knows, I now pass over. So, therefore, with these omissions I may return to his greatness of soul, he who beyond the obligations of his assumed office, whose burden was known to be severe, was ever beneficent beyond measure, generous in all things, he who respected above all and before all, as noble in spirit, great in stature, and distinguished in appearance. There was nothing about him except superiority, nothing except noble-mindedness. If at anytime he was idle, he spent his leisure fowling among the birds of the heavens or hunting the chase among the beasts of the field. Allured by these things, as is usual among men, the knights flocked to him; from all sides the young noble sons of the upper classes, great sons of great men, throng around him as "olive plants round his table." Hence, it was that questions cropped up among the ministers. Because, as we have mentioned, by a certain wariness of prudence, he

61 Psalms 127.3
62 Cf. Chapter 9, page 22f
cast off his clerical duties for a time, they were from his household, but apart. You could see the whole household surrounded by that illustrious one as by "a morning star," although there are other shining stars. When Thomas had reached the highest grade of favor with the king, entrusting him with the highest care, the king made him tutor of his son, Henry, the heir of the world, and made Thomas his father that he may consider him to be his son through grace, to whom the king is the father through grace. This was the position the chancellor enjoyed with the king.

12. Envy of the Courtiers

Because of these circumstances in court, as this favor and glory increased, a worm, the envy of the courtiers, was growing and crawling through the court, but doing it secretly. This worm was especially cherished and fostered in the courts among the courtiers, but it constantly crawled secretly throughout the courts and hid as a serpent does. The more secretly this worm gnaws, the more deeply does it harm the courtiers dressed in velvets and they who are imbibed with the glitter of jewels. Even if they themselves do not prick, because they are at the top, they are, nevertheless, stung by those who are higher in rank, as if by a serpent that has been stepped upon.

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63 Ecclesiasticus 50.6
of necessity must he leave the court who fears the poison of that court serpent and who flees the poison of that serpent. Because, if perchance, he himself does not sting, the wound is, nevertheless, inflicted by someone else. It is the more dangerous, the more hidden it is, because it is not known who has wounded. And this is so especially in the courts, that one does not know against whom one must guard himself, as in the psalm: "If my enemy had reviled me, I would verily have borne with it. And if he that hated me had spoken great things against me, I would perhaps have hidden myself from him." 64

Whom should one avoid at court or from who should he hide himself? For all are friends and all are enemies; all applaud and all stab; all praise and all drag you down. They kiss publicly and betray secretly. This courtly serpent works honey in the mouth, bitterness in the soul, and a thorn in the back. Because this worm, gliding and hiding imperceptibly throughout the court amid the great favor and glory of Thomas, feared to vomit forth its hidden poison, I pass over it for the time being.

64 Psalms 54.13f
65 Psalms 118.103; Apocalypse 10.9
Chapters of the Third Volume

1. The death of Theobald, Archbishop of Canterbury; the King's desire for the promotion of Thomas, his chancellor, to the metropolitan see.
2. The Chancellor's election.
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5. Why the disciple fears to describe the virtues of the consecrated.
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10. The fourth banquet; but first about the double spiritual reflection; namely, the table of the Sacred Scripture and the table of the Altar.
11. First, the table of the Sacred Scripture.
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23. The king pleas for the peace of his people.
24. The Archbishop, on the contrary, pleas for the freedom of his clergy.
25. The castles which the king sought from the Archbishop; the bishops who deserted him.
26. The Archbishop is deserted by the bishops.

1 Ephesians 4.22, 23
2 John 13.34
27. Those that "are wise to do evil."
28. The summoning of the Archbishop to Clarendon.
29. The Constitutions that were demanded.
30. The grief and sadness of the Archbishop.
31. The Archbishop is absolved by the Pope.
32. The summoning of the Archbishop to Northampton.
33. The work of the first day on which he came to the council.
34. The work on the second day.
35. The work on the third day.
36. The work on the last day.
37. The Archbishop’s address to the bishops.
38. The Archbishop’s first flight.

1. At the Death of Archbishop Theobald, the King

Desires the Promotion of His Chancellor to

the Metropolitan See

At this time, our Thomas stood far above all others at court in the most gracious favor of the king and in prestige, as though he were already engaged in the chief duties. The celebrated Archbishop of Canterbury, Father Theobald, a man preeminent in every virtue and sacred duty, was both a chariot and charioteer to our Thomas. Now an old man and full of days, he was entering upon the decreed path of all flesh. For twenty-two years he had been a zealous and prudent ruler of the Church of Canterbury. When this news reached the king and courtiers, suspicions were rife; some murmured secretly; others declared that the chancellor would be the successor of the late archbishop. The people foreshadowed what would happen. But the

3 Jeremias 4.22
4 April 18, 1161
disguised his feeling. The archiepiscopal position, as is the custom in episcopal and even vacant abbatical preferments, was handed over to the care and protection of the chancery. By certain forebodings and conjectures, the chancellor foreknew the king's intention; yet as the king was secretive about it, he pondered about it silently.

At this time, the king accompanied by his chancellor was residing across the sea, out of his kingdom. Because of frequent disturbances among the Welsh, and other political issues, the king decided to send the chancellor to England. Since the issues were many and serious, he entrusted the embassy to the chancellor—no one else in his household was capable of the task. As the days went on, he assumed the role of legate and at the very outset of the departure, he entered the court of that camp in Normandy, which is called Falaise, that he might bid farewell to the king privately and soon start on his journey. Calling Thomas aside the King whispered secretly, "You do not yet know the object of your embassy. It is my intention," he added, "that you should be the Archbishop of Canterbury."

Then the chancellor with a smile pointed to the gay clothing in which he was attired and with a doubtful expression in his eyes answered the king, "And you desire a religious, a saint to be in charge of such a celebrated and holy congregation of monks!' I know most assuredly that if this should happen
with the Lord's ordaining it, you will turn your mind against me and the favor, which we now have, would then be turned into the most bitter hatred. For I know that you exact at present and will continue to exact much in ecclesiastical matters which I cannot approve. And whenever an opportunity presents itself, the envious will interfere; they will stir up an everlasting enmity between us when favor is gone."

Oh the amazing greatness of Thomas, who thus threatened his master, who had the power of bestowing the honor or of denying the same to the very one who was threatening! Oh, the genuine purity of his heart, which is not solicitous for honor nor yet refused it, but with dignity soon prepared his shoulders to bear the burden of the honor. I say, "soon," because of the first report of the favor; for he was a man of experience who knew how much burden this honor bears with honor. Oh how great, how true would be the foreboding words of the good shepherd of the Church! In the very remarks he made before his departure from the king, he clearly stated that he was ruled neither by his own will nor by another. Even the king would scarcely have added one single word more to him. The king was not moved by the threatening expression of his chancellor, his chosen one, but was steadfast in his proposal. In the presence of his chancellor, the king enjoined with all earnestness upon the great and important retinue, which
accompanied the embassy to England, his wish and desire to be made known to the sacred congregation of the metropolitan church and to the clergy of his kingdom. Speaking directly to one outstanding legate, (this was Richard de Luci), "Richard," he asked, "if I were lying dead on my bier, would you not bend every effort that my firstborn, Henry, be elevated to throne?"

"Yes, My Lord," was the reply, "to the fullness of my power."

Then the king said, "I wish that you would work for the promotion of the chancellor to the see of Canterbury."
Certainly in this we can see the chancellor's greatness of soul and purity of heart, which was not ambitious. We also see the constant grace of the king and the glory of kingly magnificence. By this very fact, if I am not mistaken--the turn of events soon after proves it--he was more determined to promote his chancellor, even after hearing this remark by which he considered him even less ambitious. But even prescinding from this, one can well understand that the hearts of kings

5 Associates in the embassy were: Hilary, Bishop of Chichester; Bartholomew, Bishop of Exeter; Walter, Bishop of Rochester; and Walter, Abbot of Battle and brother of Richard de Luci.
6 Chief Justiciary of England under Henry II.
are in the hands of God and that they can in no way oppose the dispositions of the Most High. This digest of his biography, I learned from the archbishop, who often spoke of it long after, while in exile. The prophecy had then been fulfilled. Since the Archbishop himself related the incident to me, I have made it a point to insert this portion of his life here. My intention is more fixed since it is true; especially so, that from this history of both the king as well as the chancellor, the greatness of his virtues may from then on be understood. And so into this mission the king despatched his chancellor. He landed in England after a few days.

2. The Chancellor's Election

Immediately after the chancellor's arrival into that holy and religious assemblage of the holy Church of Canterbury, and after the bishops were summoned for the elevation, the king's will and desire were announced. As it is usual, soon various dissenting opinions were made manifest, especially in that holy assemblage of monks; namely, that the discussion rested with them before any others. Some asserted that this would be a good move; others, on the contrary, that it would be an evil. Some voted the king's choice, that through such an obliging mediator between the king and the priesthood of the Church, there would be a continuous peace—a safe and a prosperous peace.

7 Proverbs 21.1
Others, on the contrary, raised the objection that the king's favor would not be advantageous, but would for that very reason hinder the Church in particular. Since the bishop was not chosen from the Church but from the court, some of the sacred officials and especially some of the courtiers would have freer action against the property of the Church; it would be entirely improper and against every divine law to appoint a man, who was subject to military service rather than to a clerical office, a white-haired companion and feeder of birds, as shepherd of the flock over such a holy congregation of monks, over the large and numerous flock of the Lord—a flock that is widespread throughout England: yea, because of the avarice of the court and, as it were, a wolfish greed, this man must be suspected as a destroyer and devourer of the entire flock rather than a shepherd. Because of the spirit of popularity, he will scatter everything and will explain it with a courtly arrogance.

O how many there were whom suspicion overcame in this act and in their pride, how their senses were dulled! They saw the vanity of the man, ignorant of the true worth to come. This they did not see. Oh the divine judgments, although terrible

8 A reference to his court life when he enjoyed falconry to the utmost. At the Council of Clarendon Thomas said of himself, "De pastore avium factus sum pastor ovium." Cf. Materials 3.290
9 Cf. Romans 1.21
in judgment over "the sons of men," which are, nevertheless, pleasing. Oh the imprudent judgments of men, though probably true, at times so deceiving. So these men of the world judged a man of the world according to its standards. But for the man of the world there was a more preferable and a happier lot, not according to the foolishness of the world, but according to the delightful judgment of God. Wherefore, the king and prophet said, "Turn away my reproach which I have apprehended, for Thy judgments are delightful." Truly delightful is God's judgment against the hope of the world, against every idea of the world, bringing forth honey from a stone and olive-oil from hard rock, and "out of these stones raising up sons to Abraham." "Turn away," he says, "my reproach which I have apprehended." Fow who would believe unless this belief be turned away by God himself? Who would not allign himself with the one who asserts that a white-haired follower and shepherd of birds, as it were, would be so good and so faithful a shepherd of sheep? For what would not

10 Psalms 4.3
11 Psalms 118.39
12 Cf. 1 Corinthians 3.19
13 Psalms 118.39
14 Psalms 118.39
15 Deuteronomy 32.13
16 Ibid.
17 Matthew 3.9; Luke 3.8
18 Psalms 118.39
only be better but also more pleasant and more worthy for God among the works of God? It is more worthy of God, the more compassionate it is and by it God is more wonderful. For in such great power, although all things are unspeakably to be admired, yet nothing is worthy of esteem and of such wonderment than that there be such great goodness, coupled with such great power. For this reason, the wise man warns against praising or blaming a man before his death. "For who knows whether God will return and forgive and leave a blessing after Him?" Whence the teacher says, "Pass no judgment before time." Therefore with every suspicion removed for the present and contention cast aside, according to the Divine Will, Which all serve, and according to the wish of the king and courtiers, by the common consent of both the provincial bishops and of the congregation of the holy Church of Canterbury, Thomas was chosen archbishop of the same church in the archbishopric of London, in that royal and famous monastery, Westminster. He was chosen, I say, after having performed his duties as chancellor for five years. He was now almost forty-four years old. Later he was presented to the king's son, Henry, the boy-heir of the kingdom. As we said

19 Ecclesiasticus 11.30
20 Joel 2.14
21 i. e. St. Paul: 1 Corinthians 4.5
22 May 23, 1162
before, the chancellor had received Henry as a son and foster-child, who by order of his father performed the duties of his father, the king. And now that the royal connivance for the ecclesiastic election was accomplished, Thomas was discharged by the king's authority from all legal obligations; he was returned a free man to the church of England and in that freedom, he was received by the church with great joy and in the customary hymns and spiritual canticles.

3. The Elect Resolves on a Change of Life

Therefore, our Thomas, no longer chancellor of the court, but an elect of the Church, and freed from all secular duties, as a man awaking from a heavy sleep, meditated in his heart who he had been for a long time and how he should act in the future. For sometime at court, asleep as it were, he forgot; but now returning to himself, he meditated in his heart. From this meditation, his heart grew warm, and little by little, the fire began to burn. Whence a new man, who was thought to be dead, strengthened and encouraged began to grow, but not yet to raise his head. This new man, however, as we have said before, by a certain prudence and precaution was more

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23 Cf. p.35
24 Psalms 76.7
25 Ibid.
26 Psalms 38.4
27 Cf. Book 2, Chapter 9, Pages 22ff
concealed under the appearance of an old man than actually pressed down by old age. Perhaps, the concealment was like an oppression. But soon in the very strangeness of his change, the new man sought to be revealed and would no longer allow itself to be hidden.

As the elect was born at London, so he was chosen there. Immediately after his election as metropolitan of Canterbury, he set out with a cortege of many illustrious personages, for the consecration. Along the journey, not turning aside into the fields but on the very road, he called his disciple, who wrote this. In secret, Thomas told him that on that very night he had seen a vision—a venerable personage appear and entrust to him ten talents. His disciple at that time made little note of the dream and missed its meaning. When the will of the Most High was fulfilled, which was not thought of then, the servant of the Gospel, who after receiving five talents by lot, gained in trafficking five other talents over and above his portion, without any hesitation or doubt, solved the point very clearly. Besides, at the same time, he spoke secretly to the same disciple, "I wish this; I enjoin this upon you. From now on you must tell me in private and confidentially

28 Cf. 2 Corinthians 5.17
29 Cf. note 9, page 10
30 Matthew 25.14ff; Luke 19.12ff
31 Ibid.
who men say that I am. If they say I am laboring under any fault, I order you tell me freely and confidentially, but privately. For from now on they will utter many things about me, but not to me—as they do about others, especially the rich. Here and there they say many things in common conversation about them and few or nothing to them. Likewise, point out to me any excess if in this you shall see me and shall have judged that I have been intemperate." Adding this at the end of his speech, he said, "Four eyes see more prudently and clearly than two eyes." I believe that the same was told perhaps at other times to others, who were more holy and more circumspect than I. I am not the least bit holy and circumspect.

Oh the prudence of Thomas! Oh the episcopal model in a man not yet a bishop, both to be admired and imitated by all but especially by the bishops. Oh the prophetic, oh the observing creature of the one who sees the unseen! Lest in the darkness of the distorted and winding paths of life, he should strike some snare, he already adapted his eyes for what was to come and what was behind. Indeed that shepherd and disciple of the Shepherd, in giving this injunction to his shepherds and disciples said, "Who do men say that the Son of

32 Matthew 16.13
Man is?" Giving an injunction, I say, that those who are the "light of the world," who have been given to the world in the light, should in no wise despise the common opinion about themselves from their own subjects, but seek it. Thus by their ignorance, the foul and black cloud of detraction may not obscure the rays of its own light, or hostile pride of some perverse rumor scatter its rays. Then, (may God forbid) the "light of the world," the lamp of the word, the candlestick of the temple will give forth more smoke than flame, more darkness than illumination. Lest this happen, the Shepherd, the Model of shepherds, asks His own disciples men's opinion of himself. In this point, he realized that many perverse things are spoken about us which are not said to us. So, for the most part in human relations this lamentable thing happens, that, he who is conscious of nothing to himself might, perhaps, from some "appearance of evil" be brought into disrepute, while he himself is ignorant of what perverse statements men allege against him. With his eyes open to the things that were before him and closed to those that were

33 Matthew 16.13  
34 Matthew 5.14  
35 Ibid.  
36 The Apocalypse 15.8  
37 Matthew 16.13
behind, he paid attention to that was said about him, not because of himself but because he cannot, nor what is said by another because he is indifferent or neglects the truth, but only what is said to himself.

4. Thomas Is Consecrated with Splendor

Although he was not yet consecrated, our chosen one assumed an episcopal character; and hardly elected, he appointed those to whom he might appoint a particular duty, that of his personal visitation. All of us, therefore, came from London, where the election was held, to Canterbury. In this metropolis, the consecration must take place following the custom and canon law of the metropolitan see. Out of love for the one to be consecrated, almost the entire kingdom gathered for this consecration—the clergy, as debtors; the rich and powerful of the kingdom that they might pay the friendship and obedience of honor to the king as well as to the elected, who had come from the court. Therefore, in that sacramental time, in those days of anointing wonderful as well as inspiring, in the week of Pentecost, on the Sabbath, with the sacraments harmonizing in time and order, as it was evident, the archbishop-elect of the church was ordained to

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40 Cf. Philippians 3.13
41 June 2, 1162
the priesthood, who on the morrow, the Lord's day, was to be consecrated bishop. After the ordination to the priesthood, the bishops questioned among themselves who of the provincial bishops should impose the first hand in the consecration.

Since the episcopal seat at London, to which this belonged as was known, the Bishop of Winchester, who carried on the work in the provinces in the absence of the prelate at London or when there was no one in charge, asserted that, in every way, this right pertained to him. On the other hand, the Bishop of Rochester, from the fact that from the foundation and right of his church, he was the chaplain of this special and particular archbishop, contested that the right should be his and not that of another. On account of some events, which, for the present I omit to insert, with the right of the Church of Rochester impaired in this respect, the consecration of the archbishop was deputed to a venerable man, outstanding in holiness and generosity, Henry, Bishop of Winchester. On the next day, the day of our Lord in the octave of Pentecost,

42 Richard de Belmeis II, Bishop of London, died on May 2, 1162, just a month before the consecration of Thomas. Gilbert Foliot, his successor, was not appointed to that see until the following year.

43 Henry, Bishop of Winchester (1128-1171)
44 Walter, Bishop of Rochester (1148-1182)
45 In memory of that date, Thomas instituted in England the festival of the Holy Trinity to be observed on the octave of Pentecost. In the fourteenth century, Pope John XXII extended the feast to the universal Church.
with as extraordinary and glorious festival as was fitting such a great future bishop, the consecration was performed. At his consecration, there were present fourteen bishops of the neighboring provinces (the one who was consecrated made the fifteenth, unless I am mistaken). There were also present an innumerable gathering of the wealthy nobles of the kingdom—the most outstanding was the eminent youth Henry, son of a king and heir of a kingdom. The consecration of our elect took place, as we mentioned before, when he was about forty-four years old.

47 Messengers were forthwith dispatched to Alexander III of happy memory, the Pontiff of the Roman See. Because of a schism in the Roman Church at that time, he had recently gone to Montpellier, where for some time he had been detained. Those commissioned men, religious, scholarly, and noble, urgently demanded, as is fitting, the insignia of a metropolitan called a pall. Since those who petitioned were in favor,

46 Cf. page 45
47 Among these were Adam, Abbot of Evesham, and John of Salisbury.
48 Alexander III reigned from 1159 to 1181.
49 Of the twenty-two cardinals present to elect a successor to the papacy at the death of Adrian IV in 1159, all but three voted for Orlando Bandinelli, who took the immortal name of Alexander III. In opposition to Cardinal Orlando, the three cardinals, who were supported by Frederick Barbarossa, chose Cardinal Octavian, who assumed the title of Victor IV. Fugitive, therefore, from the strength of his imperialistic rival and also from the factions of his own city, Alexander III fled to Normandy.
50 Alexander III was at Montpellier from April 15 to the month of July.
but especially that person was beloved for whose use this insignia was sought, the pall was obtained very quickly and easily from the Apostolic See. In a short time, the messengers, overjoyed at their success, returned with the pall. And thus our Thomas receiving the pall with the greatest devotion from the bishop was created archbishop.

5. The Disciple Fears to Describe the Virtues of the Consecrated

Since I, whatever type painter I may be, have thus far sketched in some way an image of a man of the world through the good times of the age, even like a man directing his skiff over a placid sea, I must now depict the image of the heavenly man, a man of God, a bishop of Christ, passing through the good and evil days of the world. The present task is not to direct a skiff over tranquil waters with a favorable wind, but rather, with sails unfurled, the mast set, and the cables loosened, to launch a trader's vessel into the deep sea and to pilot it past many rocky cliffs, past the Syrtes and the dogs of Scylla. For our Thomas, not as a court attendant but

51 On the feast of St. Lawrence, August 10, 1162
52 1 Corinthians 15.49
53 Ibid.
54 Vergil, Aeneid 7.302; Syrtes are two shallow bays on the north coast of Libya, now the Gulf of Sidra and the Gulf of Cabes.
55 Vergil, Aeneid 3.424ff; Scylla, a monster hideously fashioned of serpents and barking dogs, dwelt in a cave high upon the cliff of Sicily, from whence she was accustomed to thrust forth her barking dogs to molest mariners.
as a bishop of the Church, put out to sea to carry on trade in many waters. I, as an old man, therefore, without any style save a mediocre and prosaic one, ponder over the novelty and the magnitude of the theme. With my pen which is so commonplace, I now stand hesitatingly on the threshold, uncertain how an inexperienced and ignorant dauber can worthily portray not the "earthly image" of a man of the world, but the lineaments of the image of the heavenly man in a newly created and great bishop of Christ. In my description, I shall accompany that merchant's ship, bearing so many precious commodities amidst the great perils of the sea to the port of salvation toward which he always directed his course. Look for one who finds this an easy task. I admit that for me it is truly a difficult one. For he, who is of the earth, speaks of the earth and can easily fashion a terrestrial likeness -- for he that fashions is similar to the one fashioned. As is the earthly man, so also are the earthly. He who is of the world is worldly. Verily, how can he who is of the earth and will in a short time be returned to the earth, worthily unfold the celestial image of anyone? And as the heavenly

56 1 Corinthians 15.49
57 Ibid.
58 1 Corinthians 15.48
59 Ibid.
60 Ibid.
61 1 Corinthians 15.49
man, such also are the heavenly. Hence a celestial representation demands a heavenly artist, not an earthy one or one of clay. It may be added, although it be not enough for the fashioning of a heavenly image, that the newness of the subject-matter, for the dignity, and the magnitude demand for the future that mankind should now depict the new and episcopal image of the Bishop, Christ, considered thoroughly and definitely set down by an inner and careful insight. It should be looked upon and copied for all ages to come. It must be fashioned now, or silence must be maintained forever. Moses, great not only in appearance but also in wisdom, is lead apart to the mountain-top and there he sees in a fore-shadowing example the model of the tabernacle to be built with its appurtenances of ministering and the priests themselves and also the order of the rite of ministering.

"Behold the pattern," said the Lord to him. Besides, unless I am mistaken, very specially is shown the model of a lawful pontiff and of ministering unto Him in the pattern. But behold, this priest is more than a priest of the old law. Moses was of the law, but this one is of the Gospel. But yet, I am so poor—more a vile sinner than a trustworthy painter. Although

62 1 Corinthians 15.48
63 Exodus 24-30
64 Cf. Exodus 25.40; Acts of the Apostles 7.44; Hebrews 8.5
I have undertaken the portrayal of his character, I have not been led apart from the world with Moses to the mountain top, nor even with Josue to any declivity of a mountain, but in a valley of tears, living amidst my people with their same faults and punishments. Wherefore, I, an old man, intend to describe a new man. My mind is astounded at the novelty of the theme. My pen, mediocre and prosaic as it is, which has thus far depicted in writing a man traversing the transitory things of life, grows weary at its magnitude. As the bright splendor of the radiant theme drives me off, so too does its dignity. Instructed by the heavenly grace of the Creator and Moulder of mankind and aided by this vision, I, not as a conceited being but one humbly ignorant, will alter my style as I can, and will describe the celestial likeness and pontifical model in Christ's bishop, which men of my time and in future generations may contemplate and admire, and which bishops should especially imitate. He should be painted more with antimony rather than delineated with a pen. I will, nevertheless, describe him, I say, with the aid of some vision. For if I must boast, yea, I must and it is now

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65 Exodus 19.3
66 Josue 5.13
67 Ephesians 4.24
68 1 Corinthians 15.48
69 In ancient times, this was used by women in the form of powder to color their eye-brows and eyelashes black. Herbert has played on the words: "stibio" and "stylo."
expedient because I beheld the pattern not from the mountain, but it was shown me in this vale of tears. I saw, and following the archbishop I attended him during his whole lifetime, even to his last day, through the many and divers snares.

Because I must now boast, throughout this entire time, I was favored with the honor of his friendship, in which respect, I believe, I was second to none. So it is, unless I am mistaken, by a secret disposition of the Most High, since almost all those who were witnesses with me or who were fellow-servants to the bishop have been withdrawn from the world, this task is reserved for me alone, as it were, the only one still living, that according to the pattern, which before many others likewise devoted to the archbishop, I studied more earnestly and more tenderly, I may unfold for present and future generations the celestial image of heaven! It is now the fourteenth year since his departure from this world that I write this biography. The providence of Almighty God, unless I am mistaken, without Whose will a leaf does not fall from the tree, arranged it so and delayed my writing this for years. So it is best. I can now with the Lord's instruction transmit to posterity in writing not only those actions which I witnessed

70 2 Corinthians 12.1
71 2 Corinthians 12.1
72 1 Corinthians 15.48
73 A.D. 1186
74 Cf. Matthew 6.26ff
of his earthly life, but those which occurred after or through his death, which was precious and triumphant. But let us return to the theme of this biographical song.

6. Casting Aside the Old Man, He Puts on the New Man

Our Thomas, therefore, no longer a court official or one preconized by the Church, was now a consecrated bishop. Beyond the expectation of all, after laying aside his chancellorship, he lived as a bishop in the power of the Spirit suddenly coming from heaven, with whom in those days of grace, the anointed was replete. He put off the old man entirely, shook him off and drove him out so that not a vestige of his former self remained. Whence the new man, whom we mentioned before was vested for a time under the raiment of the old man more than he was weighted down by his former self, was revealed; and receiving more strength in the unction given by the Spirit, soon disclosed his entire self, and bound himself zealously and actively to his duties—especially to those which pertain to a new archbishop. He was not rubbed down but anointed with the sacred oil. He ran swiftly, as a light runner, not as before with the new man still concealed in the odor of virtue,

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75 Psalms 115.15
76 Ephesians 4.24
77 Acts 2.2
78 Ephesians 4.24
79 Ibid.
80 Cf. 2 Timothy 4.7
but in the brave and strenuous tasks of virtue—not merely in the odor of virtue, as formerly, but now in the exercise of virtue. He, who before his election pondered and meditated in his heart, as though he was deliberating, from the spirit, to lay aside the purple, and to put on the hairshirt. Soon he discarded the purple, the raiment of his former self, leaving the court bodily as well as spiritually. Rejecting the purple, he put on the hairshirt—a new garment for a new man—but one that is unused to the courtiers and entirely foreign at court.

Behold our Thomas, like a second Joseph, discards his mantle, and flees, and does not fear the hands of an adulteress. Behold our Thomas, in spirit and courage, a second Elias, clothes himself in camel's hair. Behold another virgin beloved of the Lord, shedding fine cotton stuff, wearing a hairshirt next to his flesh, flies from the men of blood, enemies to the cross of Christ, and as a new recruit in a hairshirt follows the standard of a new King. A new recruit of a new King, whose voice is heard in the psalm, "But as for me, when they were troublesome to me, I was clothed with haircloth," and again, "And I made haircloth my garment and I became a byword to them."

81 Psalms 76.7
82 Genesis 39.7ff
83 i.e. St. John; Mark 14.51f
84 Psalms 138.19
85 Psalms 34.13
86 Psalms 68.12
Oh Thomas, Thomas, now not Thomas and yet truly Thomas—now not the silk-and purple-clad Thomas, who once nourished that delicate and tender flesh amid the wealth of Croesus, the riches of Darius, and the delicacies of Sardanapalus, now is wrapped around in a sack of hair cloth. His weak body is covered with this course garment. Oh how great and worthy of every admiration was the "change of the right hand of the Most High" over you, Thomas, you who were brought up among the court riches and delicacies of the palace—who were so renowned among the courtiers and remarkable in beauty, who seemed to brighten up the very palace—now you are clothed in

87 Croesus, king of Lydia (560-546 B.C.) was so proud of his treasures, which were greater than any king before him that he carried his love of splendor to extravagance and thought himself the happiest of men.

88 Darius I, king of Persia (558-485 B.C.), was one of the most notable rulers the East has ever produced, for he distinguished himself as a statesman and organizer of a vast empire won by his predecessors. His triumphs and achievements are inscribed on a lofty cliff in Western Asia, known as the Behistun Rock.

89 Sardanapalus (668-624 B.C.), according to the account of Ctesias (preserved by Diodorus,23) was the last king of Nineveh, and he is described in terms that have made his name proverbial as the type of splendid and luxurious effeminacy. Ctesias' story cannot be called historical; but the name Sardanapalus seems to be a corruption of Assurbanipal. Cf. Juvenal 10.362

90 Psalms 76.11
the filthy and rough skin of an animal, wearing a sackcloth for sandals, a hairshirt for velvet, and choosing ashes for a cloak. What more? Now truly you are a new soldier of a new King; now for you, "the former things have passed away; behold they are now made new"; a new King, a new law, a new flock, a new garment, and a new man. Behold all things are new: the new King is Christ; the new law, Christ's love; the new flock, Christ's church; the new cloak, the hairshirt; the new man, and the new recruit of Christ. In the very boot training of our recruit are the new weapons with which he will be equipped when he goes out to fight the beasts. He puts on this soldier's uniform received in that sacramental time of Pentecost when he was consecrated and with the apostles became an apostle, "clothed with power from on high." In those days of anointing at the commencement of his bishopric, this was the first counsel given from above to the Lord's anointed. This was the beginning of his works.

Those who put out their hands to strong things, are at the beginning "fervent in spirit," but in the course of time, as though worn out from the race or overwhelmed too much

91 2 Corinthians 5.17  
92 Luke 24.49  
93 Proverbs 31.19  
94 Romans 12.11  
95 Cf. Acts 20.24
with burdens, as the days pass, gradually are accustomed to
grow lukewarm, until at last forgetfulness, ever inimical to
the duty of an assumed sacred office, overtakes them by
surprise. Finally, the deceiving allurements of the flesh, the
daily pleasures of this life, and the various occupations ex­
tinguish the spirit so ardent in the beginning. In a certain
base and unsightly alteration from being very zealous souls,
they are ultimately changed, so to speak, into insensible and
lifeless bodies or rather into corpses. Or with that poor
woman (who put aside all human semblance as though changed
into a statue) they become like a cadaverous or an infatuated,
or (I shall coin a new word) an unstable spirit, which
according to the prophet, was first brought up in scarlet,
has now embraced the dung. Concerning such qualities, the
teacher says, "Are you so foolish that after beginning in the
Spirit, you now make a finish in the flesh?" Like an animal
with his eyes wide open, he as a priest put on both shoulders
the insignia of his sacred office, which is called the stole
or orarium, because it belongs to the priesthood. This he,
day after day, wore in sight of all, even as the Lord in the
sign of the ten Commandments, keeping this stole ever suspended

96 i.e. Lot’s wife: Genesis 19.26
97 i.e. Jeremias; Lamentations 4.5
98 Galatians 3.3
before his eyes and, as it were, as a sign bound on his hand. By this evangelical stole of the fringes of the law, which were introduced at the Lord's command, there was in this evangelical priest, a likeness to the pattern. Truly at God's command, these fringes were made at the folds of the cloaks of the children of Israel that when they beheld them they were mindful of the commandments of God, lest following their own thoughts and eyes, going astray after divers things. So too, according to the fringes of the law, this was included in the gospel stole that this priest of the gospel might always recall the yoke of the gospel, which he had taken upon himself. Going about with this stole upon either shoulder, unless I am mistaken, he accepted symbolically an insignia from heaven. In this way, he openly prophesied what good things he had accepted from the hand of the Lord, also what evils he would suffer patiently for God. This was the covering for both shoulders—on one side good; the other, an evil. For another reason, he wore it day and night, that he would always be prepared to perform the sacrament of Confirmation, for which above all others, he was at all times very prompt and devout. We have, therefore, in the archbishop as in the Lord, the two insignia which he wore—the hair shirt and the orarium: the first badge, the hairshirt.

99 Deuteronomy 6.8
100 Numbers 15.37ff
101 Ibid.
marks him out as a soldier of Christ; and the second, the orarium, as a priest of Christ, as if he were to pray much for the people and his holy city. Pricked by the first, he realizes that he is a soldier of Christ; but by the second, which he has on, he realizes he is His priest. Adorned with these two, he daily went out among the public, except his hair shirt was hidden—as the respect of his name and the necessity of his piety demanded. And no one was conscious of it, except one without whom this could not be worn. Whence throughout his life, he did not lay aside that mark of his first campaign, until he had won the triumph of his glorious fight. The other emblem, called the stole and which he wore in public, he did put off when he was driven into exile—a distinction not befitting an exile in foreign provinces. And, therefore, as this mark of his priestly honor was put off because he was sent into exile, so too, he was in the same manner unpriested. These are the distinguishing features in the dress of our archbishop. During that entire year, he was well-groomed and renowned in the rest of his daily and public attire. After a time, he wore the common garb of a cleric, so that as someone has said

102 2 Timothy 2.3
103 Hebrews 7.27
104 2 Timothy 4.
they were not exquisite shabbiness nor affected luxuries. His fine garments were put aside, his long clothes were dark, and his robe, while not precious, was of wool. Wherefore, he was suspected from the similarity of his dress to be, as it is commonly called, a canon regular. With devotion alone, which is common to all the faithful, was he a canon, but not by profession. The bishop's robes, as they were cheaper, were changed more frequently. By that very fact the poverty-stricken of Christ, yea Christ himself in His poverty was very often clothed with the same garments with which God's anointed was covered.

Since a model was pleasingly received by a great bishop of Christ, certainly all the anointed bishops of Christ, the Lord, should especially take this to heart, so that Christ in His poor may also be clothed with that with which they are clothed. Let neither these nor those be clothed by these very things with which the anointed of the Lord except Christ, alone and stripped, is clothed, Who committed to them the milk, the wool, the fleece of His flock. Let a deed of one not yet a

105 St. Jerome, Epistle 22.37. James Craigie Robertson makes this comment in his Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury (London: John Murray, Albemarle Street, 1859, p.57, note c): "'Ita ut nec exquisitae essent sordes, nec affectate deliciae.' This comes originally from St. Jerome (ad Eustoch. Ep. xxii 37, ed. Vallarsi, 'Nec affectatae sordes nec exquisitae munditiae convenient Christiano') but Herbert probably got the quotation through the medium of Gratian (Dist.xli, 1) who reads 'deliciae' for 'munditiae,' and then himself interchanged the epithets for the worse.
bishop, as an example, be recalled especially by the bishops, one, who having nothing else save a cloak with which to clothe himself, shared it with a poorly-clad beggar. Wherefore, on a following night, he heard Jesus speaking with a clear voice to a multitude of surrounding angels, "Martin, while yet a catechumen, has clothed Me with this garment." Let him see, therefore, what he will do as a bishop, if a man while yet a catechumen acts in this wise. Let him see (I repeat it) what he will do with all the changes of his garments, with his worn garments, when this catechumen with only one cloak in his possession cloaked himself and the beggar, yea, according to the testimony of Christ, Christ Himself in the poor man. For not as that according to the prophet in the old law, was this cloak shortened, but in the new law under the law of grace was it widened from charity to cloak Him Who fills and covers heaven and earth, and also Martin. Discontinuing the story of this cloak of Martin, yea of Christ, one that is shared by them, let us return to the new garb of our new pontiff, of the new soldier of Christ. His bodily and visible raiment for his body was such as we have described.

But yet there was another new robe for the new soldier--

106 Sulpicius Severus; De Vita B. Martini, 1.3
107 Isaiah 28.20
108 Jeremias 23.24
far more remarkable—not a corporeal and a visible one, but a spiritual and an invisible one. It was stronger, the more interior and the more inaccessible it was to any approach. The military tribune, the teacher, says, "Put on the armor of God, the breastplate of justice, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the spirit, having your feet shod."

Behold, in this shield of justice, the Master's new equipment for the new soldier of the Lord. As it was preeminent in the soldier of the Lord, so it was esteemed more by the officer. This shield, however, must be put aside and taken up in its own time. For "all things have their season; a time of love, a time of hatred, a time of war, and a time of peace." Let this shield be put aside and guarded.

7. The First Table of the Archbishop, Which is a

"New Commandment."

Meanwhile, let us view the innovations which surround the new bishop. After we have in our writing lightly touched upon the bishop's dress, let us proceed to the bishop's table, beholding his fare, as well as his raiment. The life of anyone is not truly portrayed if where and how he lived is omitted; more so, if that new table of a new bishop be so pontifical, so rich, so splendid. It abounded more in the works of piety

109 Ephesians 6.11ff
110 Ecclesiastes 3.1, 8
111 John 13.24
than in a variety of bodily food stuffs, with which, never­
theless, it was very well­stocked. To this table all are to
be invited--but especially you bishops. To it your new
brother, the archbishop, invites you all that you may approach
it as is fitting and right. For at this table, that great
Master of the house, the Shepherd and Teacher of shepherds,
reclined at the head and after Him, according to rank, His
twelve disciples. At this new table, a new bishop as a new
steward of the Lord, putting aside his garments and girding himself, ministers to the Lord reclining with His twelve.
In a hairshirt and stole, he stands before his reclining Lord,
ministering to his new King. With these distinctions of a new
steward, he is a new soldier and priest of the new King, Christ.
This is "a new commandment" which as a new man he
established. For every day, after the office had been chanted,
which he was accustomed to chant immediately after the cock­
crowing in the silence of the night, into some secret supper­
room, there were introduced thirteen brothers secretly. Laying
aside his garments and girding himself, he served the reclining
men and bestowed upon each four silver coins. Every night,

112 John 13
113 John 13.4
114 John 13.34
115 Ephesians 4.24
he carried out the secret, yet not covered, command. With reason, he feared that if he performed it during the day, from the sight of men, it would be corrupted with vainglory, the poison of virtues, with which as a youth he (as we mentioned before) was so infected that he seemed to be incurable. The more secretly he did this, the more secure he became. And besides, as his desire was to carry it out without light, as it generally happened, and what was more, such a devout recreation should not fall upon the gaze of men, it really was a pious work, and engaged in it, it was a devotion which he carried out devoutly at night. For you could see the bishop in the deep silence of night, as a light in the darkness, prostrate at the feet of each one begging a prayer from him and weeping over him. As the tears, the outlet of water, are brought out through the eyes, so he seems to wash the feet of each one more with a fountain of tears than with water. Frequently repeating, crying loud and in the cry, saying, "My eyes have sent forth springs of water because they have not kept Thy law."

O holy sinner, yea, o good shepherd, like to that sinful woman who, as she is giving water and when receiving pardon,

116 Cf. Book 2, Chapter 2, Page 19  
117 John 1.5  
118 Psalms 118.136
washes the feet of the Lord even more by a fountain of tears than with the water! 0 "new command" from a new bishop, secretly but not covertly fulfilled at night. The very sun of justice shone with the radiance of its own splendor in the midst of the shadow of night. O new light of the world a new bishop performing in the darkness, not works of darkness but of light! Truly night has preceded him; day, however, has now approached. Truly "a light shining in the darkness, but the darkness grasped it not." O bishop and bishops! he gave you an example in this and in other things that as he has done, so you do likewise. Truly a good exemplar—at least, you may have the form of the model. Especially the bishops should ever imitate this form of his command, if not daily, at least frequently when they have leisure, performing the duty in their own persons. Daily Thomas carried this out, unless there was some hindrance; then one of the brethren whose charge was the poor, fulfilled the command. Moreover on account of the lofty provocation and the badge of humility, according to the rule

119 i. e. St. Mary Magdalen; Luke 7.38
120 John 13.34
121 Malachias 4.2
122 John 1.5
123 Romans 13.12
124 John 1.5
125 John 13.15
of St. Benedict, "filled," as one doctor says, "with the spirit of all the just," this bath of humility was moved to locked chambers; that not only on the fifth day of that week of penance before the Pasch, which is the end of absolving or rather cleansing, but almost every week on Saturday each might wash the feet of one another in this labor of humility—as those who conscientiously know that they very often gather a great amount of fruit from the seed of this humble deed. Our Archbishop, therefore, not only on the fifth feria of that penitential week nor only on the Saturday of each week, but daily frequented this bath of humility as a second baptism, going to the bath, more than bathing, and certainly (nor am I mistaken) having each day, a day of cleansing and of absolving.

Indeed among so many self-worshippers and lovers of their own passions (with which the world is now filled); in such open magnitude of iniquity which cannot be covered; among such delights of the body and carnal joys which forced our Thomas to this vow; in such powerful tanglement of cupidity by which men are now miserably held captive; among such entangling snares of purple-clad courtiers with their arrogance, our Thomas, a man not of our age or lukewarmness, was one of the very brave

126 St. Benedict, Regula, 53 (Migne, Patrologiae Cursus Completus, 66.751)
127 i. e. St. Gregory the Great; cf. Dialogi 2.8 (Migne, 66.150)
128 i. e. Maundy Thursday
of David. Truly, a new "son of them that have been roused" he soon aroused himself in his new life. He aroused himself, I say, stripping and putting on another self. What is wonderful! he, who as a youth was so affluent in magnificent riches and delicacies at the court, not as a servant of Augustus but as an Augustus, in that sacred and acceptable time refused the palace for the cross of the poor Christ, Augustus for the cross, and even himself, he denied for the cross. Daily, by a hairshirt he fashioned in himself a soldier of the cross; by the stole, a priest of the cross; by the elevated wood of the cross which he daily carried before his eyes, a victim of the cross; by the daily washing of the feet of the poor, a disciple of the Crucified.

How noble is such an archbishop! With the Bishop of bishops, he is alienated from sinners; moreover, extending every quality into his immeasurable self and following the Primate of bishops, he enters the very heavens. To him it is not sufficient to fulfill the duties of the bishop, unless he be more than a bishop. Truly, a great soul! how he is raised up by the breath of the Spirit! By spending himself over and above, he even essays to surpass pontifical perfection. Such a

129 Psalms 126.4
130 Ephesians 4.24
bishop was Martin in Gaul, Nicholas in Greece; such was the bishop that Thomas in England choose for his pattern.

8. The Second Table of the Archbishop Which Is His Second Commandment

Meanwhile let those who were invited to the table of the new archbishop be seated and let them wait that they may see those reclining. Not yet have all those who will recline, entered. This second table was not spread during the night but at daybreak. For behold after those twelve who were served by the archbishop, who laid aside his garments and girded himself, had departed, another twelve entered. After these were seated, that brother in charge of the compartments used by the poor, in all humility and devotion in place of the archbishop, washed the feet of each and ministered unto him. Silver coins were not distributed, but food was plentiful. This was the second evangelical command or a second banquet, served in private as the first table, yet not in

131 St. Martin, Bishop of Tours (371-399). He is identified as the Martin who shared his cloak with the beggar. Cf. Book 3, chapter 6, page 66.
132 St. Nicholas, Bishop of Myra in Lycia in the fourth century, is said to have been present at the Council of Nice where he waxed so indignant with the sentiments of Arius that he rushed over and inflicted a tremendous blow on the heretic's ear. His popularity in England has been very great, 376 churches being dedicated to him.
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133 John 13.4
the darkness of night but at daybreak.

9. The Third Collation of the Archbishop Which Is His Third Commandment

Thirdly at break of day, as the sun grew higher, about nine o'clock came the third refection. According to custom, a hundred poor men who were called prebendaries were introduced. Two brothers charged with the care of the needy served these at table. And these were the three tables which the archbishop served every day, setting these three tables daily, as though celebrating three Masses daily—one at night, a second at dawn, and the third in the morning. But in this he was mystically led on by an unction so that by these three meals as by three Masses, pleasing sacrifices to God, the Saviour's new birth might strengthen in him a new man, as though a new birth, that as the old servitude had held them under the yoke of sin, so as a new man he might put on the new man, Christ.

10. About the Fourth Banquet; but First about the Double Spiritual Refection, Namely, the Table of the Sacred Scripture and the Table of the Altar

134 Ephesians 4.22ff
135 Ibid.
After these ceremonies had been religiously performed, the archbishop with his household went out for his public table. Here I stand in hesitation, wondering whether I might join this bodily food as a fourth successive table to the three which have preceded. In hesitation, I say, because the two which preceded this meal were not material but spiritual—one the reading of Sacred Scripture and the other the Sacrament of the Lord's Altar. Although the first pertains to the physical and the second to the spiritual, according to order in time and dignity, considering the intention of those who will recline, these two spiritual foods are placed before that bodily food—especially since bodily food is common to all. In the physical, there is nothing served up, except what is an animal food—whence, dogs and mice and other animals besides man could refresh themselves. Truly these spiritual foods are not common to the animals, nor even to men, but only to the learned or to those who love study. To these two spiritual tables, as two evangelical banquets and heavenly reflections, our new archbishop invites all men of our rank—especially priests, and among them, bishops. Unless a priest have a previous knowledge of the Scriptures, he will be judged as an idol rather than a priest, because he lacks all spiritual sense; and should be reckoned among the idols and not among the priests of the temple. The Lord said in prophecy, "O shepherd and
Would that, according to that prayer of the prophet, those who do this and establish such in the Church of God would become like to them. For such a priest ministers in the Church as a monkey does in court. But about this in some other place.

11. First about the Table of Holy Scripture

Our wide-awake breathing animal, paying attention right from the start on the idea of such an idol very indistinct and exceedingly deformed, struck as it were by some panic, fled very quickly from its reflection. Then at the beginning of his new life, with the greatest attention he embraced the Sacred Scriptures with all their imagery, that by a new learning his former ignorance which for so long a time he had contracted from the world would be overcome, and a new image of an archbishop would be formed in the new pontiff. Therefore, after the night chanting of the office, and when the evangelical banquet of the twelve brethren, in which (as we mentioned before) he himself served those eating, was over, and when to refresh his senses he had tasted the sleep of a short nap, he would go alone in the morning to the sacred books while the others were yet sleeping. He summoned only one of his

136 Zacharias 11.17
137 "Ecclesiae" in the text is probably a misprint for "ecclesia," which the sense of the passage seems to require.
138 Cf. Book 3, chapter 7, page 68
attendants who had been practiced in this as he saw it, to
discover with him the mysteries of the Sacred Scripture. When
the "floodgates of heaven were opened," so to speak, he
gathered early in the morning the manna of the heavenly banquet
for the food of his soul. This is the disciple who gives
139 testimony of these things who witnessed and wrote them, be-
cause he had been summoned by his master. But only summoned,
140 I say. As the archbishop believed, he always feared to make
mistakes in such profound and obscure passages of Scripture,
if he proceeded without a guide; even in the evident findings
of his intelligence, he usually required a verification. If
in the understandable things of his intelligence, he requested
someone to verify them, so always in the obscurities of life,
he requested a guide. When the collation was over, he who was
called was quickly dismissed; and only the bishop remained
inclosed in his chamber as if he were brought into the wine
141 cellar of the Spouse. Not for any reason, until nine
o'clock was he accessible to anyone; as if in prophecy, he
might proclaim with the prophet, "Depart from me, ye malignant:
142 and I will search the commandments of God." Whence, he who

139 Genesis 7.11
140 John 21.24
141 Canticle of Canticles 2.4
142 Psalms 118.115
for so long a time had contracted an inveterate ignorance among the briars and subtleties of the world, in a short time became learned. Yes, in that heavenly manna which he gathered every morning, over and above water he was refreshed that he might give out to others what he had tasted, that he might sow the seed of the word first among the clerics and then among the laity.

Behold our Thomas, who had already "put out his hand to the strong things." As by preference, so by the loftiness of his deeds, he climed the lookout post of virtue; yet, in the path of Scriptures, he walked so humbly and so simply. In this he did not step ahead of his knowledge nor place too much reliance on himself. Behold that learning of the humble and unpretentious David, which is found in the inscription of the psalms. This was the work and attention of the bishop who picked up and read the manna in the morning. Everyday he addressed God in sweet and pleasing interchange and God in turn spoke to him. While he read, he prayed; and while he prayed, he read, especially realizing this as the days passed

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143 Matthew 13.23
144 Proverbs 31.19
145 Herbert has made a play upon words in three instances; "legendi" "colligendi"; "mane" "manna"; "opus" "opera." The English translation does not bring this out clearly.
that reading by the revolving of the flintstone sharpens the piercing virtue of prayer — prayer, one of the keys of David will unlock the ark of sanctification, the mysteries of the Sacred Scriptures. For these mysteries are deeply hidden in the sacred page, as it were, in the ark of sanctification. Manna is kept in the ark of sanctification; mysteries in the Scriptures.

But let us return to our Thomas. He was carried along by such a great love of the Scriptures that very often in his travels, when not engaged otherwise, he would turn his horse aside as another eunuch in a chariot, and would call aside his disciple who writes these things and gives testimony of them. He would apply himself to the sacred studies, far more intent on the path of life's morals than on that of his journey. Speaking to me on his journey, he kept on repeating: "O that I could lay aside all worldly cares and causes and in peace and quiet, apply myself to Sacred Studies. With the Lord's grace, how I would attend to this most fruitful work and how zealously I would atone for time lost." Yea, again and

146 Horace, Ars Poetica 304
147 Isaiah 22.22; Apocalypse 3.7
148 Psalms 131.8
149 Ibid.
150 Acts of the Apostles 8.27ff
151 John 21.24
again, sometimes among his travels, sometimes giving attention to other things, he sighed for Rachel's coveted embraces. In his full sleeves, he often rolled up some pages which contained an element of building that could not be set aside, so that when he read he would have something to learn.

12. The Learned Companions of Thomas

We should not pass over this fact in silence, but should extol it with praise—namely, that at his feastings on the Sacred Scriptures, he had many eminent companions, men possessing probity of conduct and morals, outstanding in the field of knowledge, well-prepared for the explanation of Scripture, versed in the mysteries, fruitful in the sacred collation, so that it happens daily in such company any wise person may become wiser. All this favored the plan which was so dear to the heart of the bishop. When he was at leisure, he derived great advantage in learning and wisdom from these men from day to day. O home, befitting the archbishop, supported by such columns, how honored, how resplendent it is. Supported, I say, by columns and not by reeds as his exile

152 Herbert compares Thomas's longing for a knowledge of Scriptures to Jacob's longing for Rachel, for whom Jacob served Laban (father of Rachel) fourteen years. Genesis 29

153 Herbert has played on the words: "columnis" and "calamis." Cf. Matthew 11.7; Luke 7.24
will later show and manifest in its own time. Indeed this home is an image of that heavenly abode, according to the psalm: "I have loved the beauty of thy house; and the place where thy glory dwelleth." This was the catalogue of Thomas's learned companions. Toward the end of this entire biography, as a kind of catalogue demands, we will again set down the names of each individual companion, arranging them in order. Let it suffice merely to mention this catalogue. For the rank of his office, this catalogue of Thomas's learned companions is similar to that which is read as the catalogue of the soldiers of David. What they were in the army, these are in the Scripture.

Among those surrogates of the Sacred Law, I pass over for the present that band of skilled men in forensic law, which he always had with him for secular lawsuits—not those trained in theology but rather in civil eloquence. This is nothing to them and to me, for they were not of this table. Rather theirs was another profession and another gathering. For it often happens in various human circumstances that those who are not disciples of Christ are suddenly and unexpectedly made teachers over Christ's disciples and are constituted pastors of souls, ignorant of the Scriptures. This happens especially,
when as our Thomas, they are taken from the court to the Church. For such abound among the flock, but when the pasture is deficient they have nothing wherewith they might feed themselves or the flock. Nor do I say it for this purpose; namely, that the hapless beggar and the ignorant of the Scriptures should be chosen for the priesthood or preferred for the episcopate. Yet it often happens. May such shepherds with the disciples of their own flock follow our new shepherd.

13. Secondly, the Table of the Altar

Let us open up the new pattern of ours and in it read another lesson. For as we read the works of fruit-bearing deeds in men as in books, how much more powerful is the voice of the deed done than the voice of a word spoken. Behold he, who at the morning's first hour began to sit at the table of the Scriptures (as we mentioned before) about nine o'clock leaving his chamber as if from the wine-cellar of the Spouse, in which he was inebriated, walked abroad. Soon a similar spiritual table is set before him. This is the appointed and canonical hour that he reclined at this table. Not before, but in this very hour the bread of life is baked by the fire of love, for here it will be served to those reclining with

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155 Cf. Book 3, chapter 11, pages 76,77
156 Canticle of Canticles 2.4
him at this table. At the third hour, Christ was crucified by tongues, not by hands. Wherefore, at this hour this second table is served up, similar to the first and as spiritual. And I do not say similar, but it was even more priceless, more wonderful, and more abounding. At this table the Bread of Life, which satiates citizens who are in the country and sustains wayfares, is set before him. The archbishop ready to sacrifice this supersubstantial bread by the sacerdotal minister approached his table.

I now pass over these days on which he assisted only and did not celebrate this Sacrament of life. For he did not say Mass everyday; and like the centurian, this was, as I learned from the archbishop himself, not due to negligence, but reverence. With the centurion, he humbly addressed the Lord, "O Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldst come under my roof," and with Peter, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord." Some sacrifice every day and others, at certain times. As it seems to me, some see in the consecration an argument for a holier way of living; and others, a mark of reverence and humility. Although the teacher may say concerning the High Priest, Christ, "He does not need to

157 Matthew 8.8
158 Ibid.
159 Luke 5.8
sacrifice daily (as the other priests did), first for his own 
160 
sins." Let priests realize from this a need to sacrifice 
daily because Christ is the High Priest. But concerning priests 
of the old law, there is a statement which says, "As the other 
161 
priests did first;" now we speak of priests of the Gospel. 
Nevertheless, there are priests of the new law who must sacrifice 
daily for their own and the sins of the people or for the 
faithful departed. It is necessary, I say, under obligation, 
so to speak, because of the command of him who is in charge, 
or on account of his own devotion and the pious intention of 
the people. But the first expression by no means applies to 
these latter, but rather concerns those upon whose wish and 
devotion it depends whether or not they sacrifice daily. The 
Scripture is truly canonical, as it does not command nor forbid, 
does not advise for or against that a priest offer daily. But 
this is stated that it suffices to celebrate once a day, as 
163 
"Christ was offered only once" and declares that he is 
exceedingly blessed, who worthily says Mass once a day. For 
one, it is in reverence that he does not dare to receive daily;

160 Hebrews 7.27
161 Ibid.; the misconstruction of the text can be seen.
162 Ibid.
163 Hebrews 9.28
and for another, it is also in reverence that he dare not to let any day pass by unless he receives. This bread does not wish to become a subject of scorn; nor manna, or object of disgust. For the present, I shall pass over those who are unworthy of mention—who are priest not of Christ but of the World, who desiring advantage, sacrifice, no rather, tear to pieces the same sacrificed offering, not once a day but freely over and over again, because they have the Son of God as an object of gain and show.

From these contemptible priests, let us turn back to our great priest—one who should be numbered among those reverent priests of the Most High, who fear and are in awe to say Mass daily. Since it thus happens, let us direct our attention to see with what great fear and trembling, he approached to sacrifice—he, who had come forth on foot from the wine cellar in which he was inebriated. Would that every one of you priests, who have been invited to this table, would heed and obey likewise; especially, since this is your table and is peculiar to your priesthood, to which neither pilgrim, nor foreigner, nor an uncircumcised person has any access. As our bishop was preparing himself for Mass, and his ministers were giving him those mystical and priestly vestments proper for the celebration, soon at the first sight, not as yet vested,

164 Canticle of Canticles 2.4
he aroused himself and wept. He wept, I say, and he aroused his heart that he might pour forth a fountain of tears from his eyes. He is that Thomas in a sea of water, in a sea of bronze in which, under the shadow of the law, priests who were about to sacrifice washed their hands and feet.

When he was clothed in his sacerdotal garments, standing at the altar ready first to atone for his own sins and those of the people and then to sacrifice, he was so humble and contrite of heart that in his sacred prayers he sighed more with tears than with words. To suppress any vain and wandering distractions in his heart during Mass, while his ministers were chanting the sacred canticles in the Mass of the Catechumens, he always had some book of morals and more frequently, a little prayerbook, as it were, his own enchiridion. This book, one of his predecessors, catholic to the core, cudgel of heretics, hammer of tyrants, armory of

165 Jeremias 9.1
166 A reference to the brazen sea, a large basin of copper or bronze, resting upon twelve brazen oxen. The lavor was ten cubits in width, five deep, and thirty in circumference with a capacity of about 16,000 gallons. It was used by the priests of the old law to wash their hands and feet before they proceeded to offer sacrifice. Cf. 2 Paralipomenon 4.1ff
167 Hebrews 7.27
Scripture, trumpet of the Gospel, column of justice, 168
St. Anselm, had picked out from the innermost marrow of his devotion with a pen healthfully piercing and piercingly 169
healthful and elegant. He had this book, I say, betaking himself in the same manner from prayer to reading.

But let us return to the tears and sighs which the priest poured forth during the sacrifice at the altar. Here was a spiritual emotion in the priest, in which, through poverty of spirit, he trod the earth and in which through fortitude of spirit he freely leaped toward heaven—freely, I say, as it is allowed in this mortal life. And so he ate the Lamb. Especially at this time, he wept very copious tears as if he poured them forth from the innermost core of his devotion. Sometimes sighs burst forth among the tears as if he were tearing out the whole inner being of his heart and pouring it into the wounds of Christ which he touched. To these things which are now mentioned, not only the disciple who saw and

168 St. Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury, (1093-1109). Prior to his succession to the archbishopric, the see had been vacant for four years and the revenues had been seized by the state. Anselm devoted himself to abolishing this encroachment, thus incurring the hostility of the king. Banished by William, he was recalled by Henry I, but the quarrel was renewed and it was not until 1107 that settlement was made, resulting in a victory for the Church.

169 Migne, Patrologia 158.910
wrote them, but the Church can be witness to such great devotion, especially those who more frequently stood by him when he was offering sacrifice in public. He was accustomed to finish in a hurry; at the beginning of the Mass, he often read only one collect, sometimes three, and hardly any more. It was an original custom that only one was read—as there is one epistle and one Gospel, so one collect. Later many were added which according to canon law cannot exceed seven. In his method of prayer, our priest observed shortness and in the sacramental eating of the flesh of the Immaculate Lamb, he observed speed because he revered the passover of the Lord as having been taught by the Lord, according as it is written in the law: "And you shall eat in haste: for it is the Phase (that is the Passage) of the Lord." He ate quickly for fear of distraction of the evil angels, those pernicious surprises from the wanderings of his thoughts. In his sacramental reception of the body of the Lord, he was not slow, he was not morose. He added nothing except that laid down in the canon. Especially at this time, he wept very copious tears as if he poured them forth from his inmost being and he sighed, tearing out the inner core of his heart and pouring it forth on the

171 John 21.24
172 Exodus 12.11
173 Psalms 77.49
wounds of Christ which he touched. Whoever assisted him as he
offered in public can give testimony to this great devotion.

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For the first there is little or no condemnation, who confess
not only the power by which they are probably lead on, or as
I shall speak more harshly, are seduced. They even confess
the work of the power for its own safety; but that is not true.
First, they do not believe in the benefit conferred; because
they do not believe, the consuming of all graces is ingrati-
tude. Secondly, those who believe in a favor not granted, which
they, nevertheless, believe it has been granted, this is a sweet
and pleasing fault. Although some punishment awaits them,
since they believe falsely, as I now feel, there will not be
in the least for them an eternal punishment at death. Rather
their devotion will be rewarded, which they piously and
devoutly had in believing that the Lord had compassionately
ordained for their salvation, although He did not. Let none
cast that saying of the teacher at me, "And if Christ has not
risen, vain is our preaching, vain too is your faith."

Let none, I say, cast that saying of the teacher at me. For

174 Here begins a hiatus in the text. Both the Arras MS. and
the Phillipps MS. from which Robertson has prepared his
text have a gap at this point.
175 1 Corinthians 15.14
the apostles in particular, he soon adds, "Yes, and we are found false witnesses as to God, in that we have borne witness against God that He raised Christ—Whom He did not raise, if the dead do not rise." The teacher seems to speak not only for the Apostles, but also about those and for those who, by flattering lies, as if the God-Man could be softened and fondled, honor and extol the Lord. Speaking against this, one of the doctors says that any falsehood spoken against God would be an abomination, even though it might seem to redound to His praise. For it is not by a lesser, but by a greater sin against God that that falsehood is lauded than truth is dishonored. Behold the words of the doctor: "There is nothing to me or to those that agree with God as there is nothing to them or to God. It is thus because I, differing from them, yea, deeply opposing them say what I think, what I feel; namely that if anyone piously and devoutly believes, probably for his own salvation that Christ has risen, although He has not, there will be little or no punishment, who believes thus concerning Jesus Christ."

But perhaps, from what has been said someone will raise this objection: What if from the Scriptures and from many more likely signs and prodigies and good works, the Church and her

176 1 Corinthians 15.15ff
salvation should profess that the Lord in mercy had become incarnate and yet had not appeared actually in the flesh? Just as the synagogue mistakingly believes that the Messias has not yet come but that He would come; yet denies that the Lord will be incarnate, teaching that the Messias will be only man? So this is nothing to them or to us who have no belief either in a present or even in a future incarnation. What if the Church should believe that the Lord was thus incarnate and actually had not yet appeared in the flesh? A great many, indeed, will believe and not unreasonably so that if the Church should believe thus, the Church would least of all be liable to condemnation for such teaching. This, however, only if in the other articles of faith, especially in the one and triune God, her faith were true. But on the other hand, Cornelius was least of all subject to condemnation even though he did not believe that Christ was incarnate; and yet this Christ before Cornelius believed had already assumed flesh. Yet before he believed that Christ already incarnate was made man, an angel said to him, "Thy prayers and thy alms have gone up and have been remembered in the sight of God." And even this was written about him first that "he was devout and God-fearing." Having touched

177 Acts of the Apostles 10.4
178 Acts of the Apostles 10.2
upon this one point, there is no place for a longer dissertation concerning it. To come back to our former statements, this is certain without any affirmation on our part about this aforesaid belief of the incarnation—this is certain, even if the sacramental change of the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ; which the Catholic Church believes with definite faith, would not occur; yet, and this is remarkable, there would be an oblation of our Holy Mother, the Church, clean and clear, simple and sincere and devout in bread and wine alone according to the order of Melchisedech. Cleaner, I say, more true than the sacrificed flesh and the sprinkling of blood of a thousand bulls, goats, or fattened rams. Purer, indeed, and simpler is this evangelical offering of the Church than ever was that of the synagogue. As can readily be seen according to the law, it is not so much a pious oblation of the executioners as of the priests; it is rather, as it were, a cruel and inhuman killing of beasts at morning and at night. There, day after day, so many oxen, so many sheep, so many bulls, so many goats, so many lambs, so many calves, so many wethers are slain. By this killing, the honesty of purpose does not protect the dove; nor chastity, the turtledove.

179 Psalms 109.4; Hebrews 7.17
180 Matthew 10.16
Truly our sacrifice, the sacrifice of the Gospel of Holy Mother Church, for us is the pure, as it seems, the only sacrifice of praise—not one of mangled carcasses, nor of torn out entrails, nor of stinking bowels, nor of filth, nor of smoke, nor of dung. In no way, as is seen, is it a sacrifice of the unjust or of the sinner. Accordingly the Lord sings in the psalm: "Shall I eat the flesh of bullocks or shall I drink the blood of goats?" Later as if distinguishing the sacrifice of the new law from that of the old, He adds, "Offer to God a sacrifice of praise." And at the end of the canticle, "The sacrifice of praise shall glorify me." Hence in this sacrifice of praise, as it has more honor, more directness, more salvation, more peace, and is, as it were, a sacrifice of justice, the more acceptable is it to the Lord, and by that very reason, does the angel of annihilation produce more subtle, more piercing, and more frequent distractions at the hour of sacrifice. To such a degree, if he can prevail without any defense, without delay, and without compassion, he will strike down that faith newly-born in preference to other virtues—faith, which triumphs by

181 Psalms 49.13
182 Psalms 49.14
183 Psalms 49.23
184 Psalms 77.49
suppressing reason—and thus, if he were able, blot it out forever. Let no one believe or suspect that what I have written here has been written through diffidence, or hesitation, even the slightest type, about such a glorious, such a saving sacrament of our whole salvation. Yet, when once upon a time, I began to think of this, as it were, questioning it, it happened that on the following night I saw the host turn itself quickly round and about in the chalice as if in continued motion. When on the following day, I made a report of this in secret to my lord, the Archbishop, how I had meditated, as it were, hesitated, he replied that the motion of the host in the chalice indicated the disturbance of my mind. Whence I always stand more secure and thence more devout in the faith of this sacrament through the grace of God. But let us return to the aforesaid evil distractions of the bad angel.

If, perhaps, he observes that the faith is grown up and so deeply rooted, that it may waver (I do not say that it may be annihilated nor harassed even slightly by any pricks of incredulity), he connives another kind of distraction which we experience daily. Would that we were free of those pricks of unbelief, which we have mentioned. He turns himself, therefore, to other means, he to whom there are a thousand

185 Psalms 77.49
names, a thousand means of ill, that he may at least soften the heart that is steadfast and constant in faith, which he does not pierce by the barbs of unbelief. He puts into the heart, wandering and vain thoughts, which are vacillating and weak thoughts, as it is said of him, "And during the supper the devil having already put it into the heart of Judas to betray him." Behold this sending or putting in is clearly expressed first by the prophet and secondly by the very evangelist, who drank it in from the very heart of Wisdom Itself, as he leaned upon It. For what is that which is put into the heart unless it be a distraction? The evangelist says, "That he might put into the heart." That the Teacher of humility, the Lord of majesty might be betrayed, mocked, scourged, spit upon, used for gain and for show, and finally, crucified with tongues and with hands, the spirit of evil uses such adverse suggestions or with adverse suggestions "works on the children of unbelief." God Himself, as the prophet has already testified, uses these suggestions for the testing of the wicked through His evil spirits. But these

186 Vergil, Aeneid 7.336f
187 John 13.2
188 Psalms 77.49
189 i. e. St. John; John 13.23; 21.20
190 John 13.2
191 Psalms 77.49
192 Ephesians 2.2
193 i. e. there is no merit unless one has been tested.
distractions (about which we speak), the same evil spirit employs daily not only on "the children of unbelief," but even on the devoted sons of the Church, and even on the very first-born of the Church, on the very anointed of the Lord, I say, the priests of Christ; and there especially, where the priests show forth their work and perform the rite of sacrifice. At this hour especially, the evil spirits daily send wandering and vain, vacillating and weak thoughts, which come and go. These thoughts, as infectious flies in such sweet-smelling sacrifice, soon corrupt the whole fragrance of such great sweetness. In vast numbers they rush in especially at the hour of sacrifice, unless they are immediately driven away by the fan of the Holy Spirit, by a faithful servant girl of the sacred rite, namely a wise and prompt spirit of devotion.

So that he, anticipating distractions, might shun those that pierce as well as those that soften the heart, our priest, our new archbishop, (for whom this entire article is written) was always wont to eat reverently, as well as quickly for reverence to the mandate of the law. Throughout this entire banquet of the Lord, as he was pleasant in his mystical and sacerdotal attire, so he was quick in eating and (as we mentioned before) he was very brief in prayer. Although he

194 Ephesians 2.2
195 Exodus 12.11
196 Cf. page 88
celebrated rapidly because of the above mentioned reasons, yet he was devout and worthy. Yet in the very act, the quicker he celebrated, the more devout he was. For only in the whispering of the gentle breeze, only in passing did the Lord speak to Elias, as he leaving his cave, was standing on its threshold. For only through an image and in an enigma, as it were, in the whispering of the gentle breeze to them, who leave the clay dwellings of their bodies, and departing stand at the entrance of their clay caves, wishing to be dissolved and to be with Christ, requesting for their souls that they might die, it is to them, and then only in passing, does the Lord speak. To them these manifestations of the Lord are made frequently, but always hurriedly and very quickly disappearing; the splendors and exultations of God are revealed in the hearts of saints. Although they do not satisfy that longing of the soul for heavenly things, yet they do warm and illumine it. But the hour is short and the stay is brief—it was as long as Elias. stood at the threshold of his clay cave until he had completely left. "For the corruptible body,"

197 Cf. page 88
198 3 Kings 19.9ff
199 1 Corinthians 13.12
200 Philippians 1.23
201 3 Kings 19.9ff
says the wise man, "is a load upon the soul, and the earthly habitation presseth down the mind that museth upon many things." In these manifestations of the Lord, the hour is short and the delay brief. Hence it is that the spouse in the Canticle of holy love sought her Bridegroom so often, so attentively, so diligently, with much sighing. While seeking and sighing, now she finds Him, now she loses Him; now He flees, now He turns aside, now He knocks at the door, now He stands, now He slips away, now He returns, now He does not answer the call, now calling He answers. Whence the spouse likens her Bridegroom to the roe and young hart leaping among the mountains or jumping over the hills. Since the spouse has frequently experienced this, she teaches us in her parable that the sacrifices should be performed with greater haste, the more necessary it is that they be enacted more devoutly. The more quickly our new priest, our new archbishop, celebrated this sacrament of the altar (about which we have written at great length) the greater was his desire to celebrate and receive more devoutly.

And so it happens that because of the example of this great priest many other priests are taken to task, who as they are

202 Wisdom 9.15
203 Canticle of Canticles 5
204 Canticle of Canticles 8.15
considered devout or perhaps because they are, draw out the sacrament of the Altar, which is carried out in such few words, and this special type of short prayer, which has to be very short, though not in the Mass of the Catechumens at least in the Mass of those who partake of the Sacraments. They are taken to task in this example, I say, who, as they are different, so they prolong and draw out the sacrifice. I, who am present and hear Mass and who should meditate beyond the vain and swift chariot of my thoughts, ascend and even fly from the east to the west. Along the way, my unharmed and foreign money raises up villages, forts, and towns without any labor or expense. Now and then, as if carried on by the impulse of the spirit, I create many wars without any bloodshed, or I meditate in another frivolous and idle manner. As I shall speak for myself, so I walk, so I come, so I labor, so I meditate. And so, unless I am mistaken, do other hearers at Mass meditate. It is wonderful if that man so like to us, I speak of our priest, who is about to offer the same sacrifice of our salvation for us, preparing himself for Mass, or even at Mass has not the same thoughts within himself. Or if he does not feel thus, he should at least, as our priest, have compassion toward us and condescend to us that according as the

205 Ezechiel 1.12
as the teacher praised the High-Priest, we may have a priest who can suffer our infirmities. I mention this because it is a manifest hypocrisy of this priest (about whom we now speak) who is so slow at Mass or it is a religion that is not understood. But that these priests may suffer for us, and all you priests who have been invited to the banquet, you who are already seated with the new priest, our new archbishop, shall you know that you should prepare in like manner. For he has given you an example, that as he has done, so you may do likewise.

After reclining at the spiritual table according to his orderly arrangement and our above promise, let us now proceed to the bodily table, unless it is not the hour for reclining, especially for the bishop, whom so many and various duties and interests, both secular and ecclesiastical, draw away; or unless it is not yet about the sixth hour.

14. The Archbishop as a Judge

When he has finished celebrating his Mass, the archbishop leaves the Church and soon thereafter enters the court-room. He takes his seat to pass judgment, ascending it from the seat

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206 Hebrews 4.15
207 John 13.15
208 Cf. page 75
209 i. e. noon
of a bishop to that of a judge. As at table, so at the court, he assembles all his brethren, especially his provincial bishops to assist him and with him to interpret the laws. Now he is seated as a judge. This is now the time to speak concerning the giving of judgments and the accepting of gifts, which are wont to pervert judgments, observing the character of our new judge, of our new bishop in his judgments. First, our judge, our new archbishop turned his hands against the acceptance of gifts to such a degree that from them whom he knew had lawsuits he would not take a penny, not even a greeting; unless, perhaps, the gift offered were food or drink, which common courtesy could not refuse. Since a discourse presents itself concerning the accepting of gifts that we might freely digress to the magnificent praise and the civil work of our new judge, let us see how he acted toward the accepting of gifts. Certainly he always refused the gifts of those for whom he believed it was more of a necessity to accept gifts than to give them. Yea, he was most accustomed and very prompt to give to such people, especially to those who are ill at ease to ask. Though at times he accepted gifts, but only rarely, even from those to whom there was an offense because of the suit, even though they might be rich. With the Lord, despising Cain and his gifts, he looked at the gifts of Abel only because of Abel, and not upon him
because of his gifts. With great thanks, he accepted gifts from others, whom as his friends he knew were cheerful givers and after the gift would not suffer any loss. Rightly was he taught that in giving and receiving benefactions, the choice should be made with great prudence, especially with such a noble person. Accordingly that censor of eithics of heathen morals says, "Look to whom you give." This is a paternal advice for giving. In regard to receiving, the wise man says, "The gift of the fool shall do thee no good." As that censor of morals instructs the giver so the wise man instructs the recipient. The former spoke to the giver, "Look to whom you give," and the latter says to the recipient, "Look from whom you take." Accordingly says the Lord, "I will not take calves out of the house or he goats out of thy flock." For, as the wise man says, the Most High does not approve the gifts of the wicked. Throughout many instances in Scripture, it is found that He always rejected them. Yet, I say this for a testimony since our new judge never while I knew him—"I who write these things or I who was more intimate (if indeed, there is some one endowed with this favor more than I)—he never, I

210 Genesis 4.3ff
211 Ecclesiasticus 20.14
212 Psalms 49.9
say, while he was thus freely and quietly judging in his own ecclesiastical power, accepted anything from anyone making the demand. As that saying of the prophet is interpreted differently by different people, so our new judge would interpret by this very act in this definite way of procedure in order to give us instruction.

So indeed, one of the prophets in chiding the covetousness of kings says, "The prince asks," and later adds, "And the judge is in the giving." He places this sin of the covetous prince, judged by him first and foremost, saying, "The prince asks." For what is this demand of the prince which is intimated to the subject unless it is, so to speak, a forceful exaction from the subject or a hard extortion from the unwilling? Then by enforcement, he subjoins another vice of the already covetous and equally sorrowful prince. "And the judge," he says, "is in the giving." Thus as though the prophet said, upbraiding the cupidity of the king, that if, perchance, the prince asking is not heard nor does he obtain from the subject what he desires, either immediately or that he may cover up his chicanery in the course of time, he institutes another inquiry on the same or on some other topic

213 Ecclesiasticus 20.14
214 There seems to be no statement, such as this, quoted in the Old Testament. Possibly it is a reference to Micheas 3.9,11.
against his subject from whom he has suffered repulse, whether personally or through another. This action is brought against him as though he were a troublesome detainer of the request. Thus he may obtain through some sort of sentence that which at first he could not obtain through a favor, when he made the request. So he who was first the prince who asks, but obtaining nothing, afterwards is made the judge who obtains his request through chicanery. Thus he is the very one who gives this to himself through a false decision, whether by himself or by one compelled to render it to the prince, who before refused to give gratis what was demanded. There is, therefore, a great sin of covetousness in a prince even to demand from the subject, though he be free of the other fault which is added by the prophet; namely, in as far as after the refusal, he takes no action against the one making the refusal. For to ask this from the subject of the prince, though it involves no other evil, is little or no difference from a disgraceful and troublesome demand or rather an unwilling extortion. The vineyard, which first belonged to Naboth and afterwards at Achab, strengthens this our interpretation above that of the prophet. For King Achab demanded the vineyard of Naboth. Behold the first sin of the covetous king.

215 3 Kings 21.1ff
But after suffering a refusal, through Jezabel, the mistress, he was made the judge in the return. Behold the second sin which is by far worse than the first. Read the sacred history in that place and you will clearly seethat this is so. Likewise, this interpretation is affirmed by our new judge, our new ecclesiastical leader in this new work, in both cases, as though neither differ from an extortion, as he always avoided any extortion or demand. For as I learned so frequently from his own testimony, in this was he especially disturbed, when from some case, even a very urgent one, as it occasionally happens, it would be necessary for him to take up some other man's case, even though the former had expected to be heard devoutly and promptly. As he accepts gifts with difficulty, so with greater difficulty he asks, mindful of the words of the Lord: "It is more blessed to give than to receive." So therefore, our new judge shook his hands from gifts that with the holy prophet and most just judge of all Israel, equally gloriously immune, he could question his subjects whether he took anyone's ox or ass, whether he falsely accused anyone, whether he oppressed another, whether he had taken a gift from anyone; likewise, with the teacher, the just judge

216 Acts of the Apostles 20.35
217 i. e. Samuel; 1 Kings 12.3
of the Gentiles and illustrious doctor, he could boast that he had coveted the silver and gold or clothing of no one. Foremost among the first lessons, our new judge was taught by the unction, in those days of anointing (as we have shown above) by which the princes of the Church, the despisers of the world, the judges are anointed and he himself was anointed—foremost, I say, he was taught that of the legislator, "Gifts blind the eyes of the wise, and bend the force of authority." To this the wise man agrees, "Presents and gifts blind the eyes of judges, and make them dumb in the mouth, so that they cannot correct." Nor should this be passed over in silence, "Fire shall devour their tabernacles who love to take bribes." Behold how incorrupt our new judge was, also how incorruptible.

For such a long period, shaking off avarice, the pernicious corruption of judges and the deadly poison of judgments not only from himself, but also from his household, he rejected and avoided it to such a degree that he purified his home entirely. As idolatry is in the temple, so is avarice in the home of an archbishop. Our new judge strictly

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218 i. e. St. Paul; Acts 20.35
219 Cf. page 58
220 i. e. Moses; Cf. Deuteronomy 16.19
221 Ecclesiasticus 20.31
222 Job 15.34
ordered now individuals secretly and separately, now everyone in common and publicly that they should not exact nor even accept donations from those under obligation, nor take advantage of the distresses of others for their gain. I do not recall whether salaries were permitted to the lawyers; but this I do know that others were definitely forbidden to receive anything.

Once it happened that a certain abbot entered the court and having a suit, offered some gold pieces now to these and now to those who had authority in judging. But as all declined, the abbot finished his business, took his money, and left the court, making this remark: "I have found a court more than golden which does not hanker after gold but throws it aside, spurns it, and treads it under foot." Indeed this was a glorious encomium of the abbot about the archbishop's house. Yes, his love of justice, his tenderness of compassion, and his hatred against avarice forced the archbishop to condescend to those filing suits so that none were filed in his home for any price—all were filed gratis. The seal-bearer received nothing, nor the signer, nor the notary. Here nothing was sold or bought or traded, neither the wax, nor the paper, nor the seal. For whose inscription is it that should be sold or traded? Certainly it is not the image of Caesar,

223 Matthew 22.20; Mark 12.16
224 Ibid.
but one of the archbishop. Truly this home of our new judge, of our new bishop was not in anyway a house of traffic, but a house of true and equal justice, a house of a holy bishop, truly it is "a house of prayer."

The preeminent qualities of this holy bishop, of this just judge, should be these three: to love holiness of continence; to cherish justice; and to spurn money. Neither the image of the archbishop, nor the seal, the instrument of justice, was sold; hence there was no profiteering. Let this be your consideration whether gain was allowed in the home of the archbishop, you fathers, holy bishops, you who assist our new metropolitan. You be judges. Perhaps it will seem that this should be reckoned more among his gratuitous deeds than among his duties, more among his sacrifices than among his demands, about which we have written above for a short space. One thing I know as a certainty that if anything was permitted for gain, it was not countenanced, especially in the home of the archbishop. Therefore too, unless I am mistaken, it was by far better and more to the glory of the bishop that he put the seal of justice upon acts gratis, and that he lavished on the poor his image of wax impressed by the seal. He felt that he

225 John 2.16
226 Isaias 56.7; Jeremias 7.11; Matthew 21.13; Mark 11.17; Luke 19.46
should spend himself completely for the poor. So all the foulness of avarice was cast forth from the home of the archbishop. There was no one who was a slave to money. Only justice reigned in the archbishop's home. This was the new "breastplate of justice" (about which we spoke before) of the anointed of the Lord, of the new soldier of Christ. It checked all temptations of greed—spurs within itself—and drove them away from itself. A greater courage of his will be revealed in its own time; but not by the spur, but by the halberd and the sword will it be determined. But for the time being this is sufficient. Because of his so remarkable and so fervent zeal for justice, he was given in full measure by the Spirit among his other multiple gifts of the Spirit to have the right spirit of judgment between man and man. For this was not given to him from the learnings of the man but more by the aiding unction, according as he who was anointed above his fellows says, "To everyone who has shall be given, and he shall abound." With the greatest justice and sincerity,

227 2 Corinthians 12.15
228 2 Timothy 2.3
229 cf. Page 67
230 i. e. his martyrdom
231 Cf. Titus 3.5f
232 i. e. Christ; Psalms 44.7; Hebrews 1.9
233 Luke 19.26
without any respect of persons, without any bribe of money, he wielded ecclesiastical justice with his college of learned companions, his counsellors, (whom we have mentioned above). Thus you may perceive that he was as great a judge upon the tribunal as you saw how great a priest he had been at the altar. You provincial bishops, therefore, you who have been invited to be seated with him, unless I am mistaken, already heed the wisdom in judgments of your metropolitan; you hold the pattern; and you see how great was his zeal for justice, how great his contempt for bribery. Would that this emulation would take hold of you that you may be endowed with like zeal of him whose ministry you are following.

When all these things--his reclinings at the table of God and his inquiries about secular suits (on which we have digressed for some space)--were duly accomplished, the archbishop left his tribunal about noon and he entered his private room to prepare for dinner. The bishops would have been invited to this table, as to others, except at this table the refreshment had been only a material one, as it seems, one of the body, and not one of the Spirit. But yet it is fitting and

234 Deuteronomy 10.17; Romans 2.11; Galatians 2.6; 1 Peter 1.17
235 Cf. pages 80-81
expedient that they are even invited to this table, who I hope from what they have seen and what they have heard would approach more readily. Let them be invited, therefore, if it is their pleasure, that as they know the habit of their brother, those reclining with him at the bodily table, after seeing his spiritual nourishment, may behold his bodily food and his manner of living. For, as we remembered to mention above, the life of anyone is not properly described, if his nourishment for this life, without which this present life cannot go on, is overlooked.

15. The Archbishop at Dinner

As we mentioned, the archbishop soon leaving his judicial seat prepares to sit at table. After a slight respite, he is ready to recline with that college of learned associates (of whom we have often made mention), and he publicly goes forth. He sits at the middle of the table, placing his learned companions on the right, and the monks and other religious on the left. For the clerics, who in the chancery by a certain wariness of prudence (of which we spoke above) were then seated far apart from his household, were now seated near him. Others, men not of our rank but soldiers, no matter how renowned or influential, always unless occasionally and then

236 Cf. page 67
237 Cf. Book 2, chapter 11, page 34
rarely, dined apart. A magnificent table was sumptuously prepared where such unlearned people might dine without annoyance from the reading, which was read aloud daily at the archbishop's table from the beginning of the meal to its end. The crossbearer reads at this hour. It had been his duty for a long time in the home of the archbishops of Canterbury. For the reader, daily a chair was placed before the table of the archbishop. From an age-old institution, he whose duty it was to carry the cross while the archbishop was traveling, also performed the duty of reading while the archbishop was eating.

Certain concessions had been made of old in the kind consideration of the archbishops for the cross-bearer for the difficulties of carrying the cross and of reading.

Throughout the entire meal of the archbishop, there was sacred reading aloud, lest during his bodily banquets, the nourishment for his soul should be withdrawn. Whence guests, who frequently visited the archbishop (whom we mentioned), usually dined at a separate table; wherefore, even at a separate table, lest the discussion with his learned associates suffer, which he frequently held about those things he heard in the reading when he made an observation or when an occasion presented itself for discussion; also, lest among the wine and meat either he himself or one of his friends might let slip
some word which might strike a stranger.

When the archbishop was seated at table, one would see a
great swarm of attendants gather around, who, immediately
after the blessing was begun over the table, advanced in
elegant manner to serve—each man taking part in ministering
in the proper place that was assigned him. An old servant,
who was a knight, placed the courses before the archbishop,
which he had taken from the other servers. The others, who
were renowned young men, handsome and well-instructed in such
matters, stood ready to render service for any necessity.
These young men, as purple and rose-colored spring flowers,
as new shoots of a noble transplanting, as adorning and making
the entire table pleasant, served the archbishop and those
seated at his right and at his left. All of them were trained
and often served though no orders were given. The archbishop
had many sons of nobles because by the ancient law of his
predecessors he claimed for his service the second sons of the
nobles of the realm, while they were yet in their boyhood and
not yet given over to the baldric of the soldier. His privi-
lege was requested in the presence of the king and the nobles
of the realm that as the first-born is given to the king, so
the second-born should be given to him as it was done from
antiquity. On account of his greatness, which was so civilly
learned and so politely taught and because he claimed for
himself the second sons of the nobles according to his privilege, even many of the first-born flocked to him. Among these and surpassing all stood that remarkable lad (whom we mentioned before), the son of a king and heir to the crown, Henry, the foster-child of the archbishop. He was surrounded, so to speak, by a purple crown and by violets, as it were, of the sons of nobles, who played with and were subservient to him. With a filial charm toward his father, the archbishop, he was daily solicitous to serve at table. As he desired, as far as the boy was capable, the archbishop in his paternal love permitted him to wait table. Every day the archbishop would toast the lad in pleasant ways during the meal. But why mention this? Everything about this table was magnificent—magnificent in its guests, in its assistants, in its servers and most sumptuous in its food. Everything, I way, was magnificent; everything was tasty and rich. That I speak truly, and those who experienced this with me know that nothing in his home gave the archbishop a dejected appearance more than a barren table, and nothing pleased him more than a bountiful table. And so it happened, while at table he was always accustomed to gaze very quickly at every table, so much so that

238 Cf. pages 35, 45, and 52
he seemed to be less interested in his own eating. And also, that this wide-awake being might prove himself, not in a renowned but in a noble manner by politeness, not in a roving and surprised fashion but with circumspection, he would gaze over the whole room to show deference to whom honor was due. If among so many, one held the last place who should sit higher, the archbishop repaid his more rightful place with many rewards of his own cup and platters. Likewise, he would look to note how those who took part in the serving ministered according to their rank and office. If anything was amiss, the archbishop himself would severely rebuke the negligent in the proper place and time. The servers, who experienced this daily custom of our new head of the family while he was at table, were more solicitous about serving in proportion to their duty. For at table, he cast his eyes at all who reclined, at each individual, at the stewards, and at the servers, so carefully and so circumspectly that one might say that the eyes were only esteemed for the civil and domestic charge of the corporal nourishment alone. If anyone of his learned friends were absent or for any reason sat in a lower place, at this change, with wisdom and politness, our new host would direct his attention to him. According as Saul, a rude king, yet trained civilly in this, when seated at the table beholding David's empty place, said, "Why has not the son of Isai come
to eat either yesterday or today?" Likewise, our head of the family was anxious about his friends and would usually inquire about the absent. The archbishop did not discontinue to show respect in sending and in resending gifts to him who had changed his place so that he who had taken the last place at table could look upon himself as first. If another, whom he might wish to honor, had taking his lodging in a private room or in another corner of the house that he might yield to others or because there was no room for him at table, the archbishop quickly gave him his attention, and as if constantly beholding him among so many guests through the midst of the walls, he honored him by frequently sending special dishes. So by those eyes, which of nature were large and brilliant, he illuminates, he honors, he enlightens the whole meal. In no wise were they those eyes, which, as we mentioned above, gave forth a fountain of tears. In one way, this was a banquet; in another, that was. The latter was the table of God; the former, of the world. There, nourishment of the soul was served; here, foods of the body are set before him. To shed tears here would...

239 There are no words of Saul, such as these, quoted in the Old Testament. Possibly Herbert is referring to the great love Saul had in the beginning for David. Cf. 1 Kings 16.22

240 Cf. Matthew 19.30; 20.16; Mark 10.31; Luke 13.30

241 Cf. Page 87
be inopportune and impolite. There is no similarity between the eyes of tears and the eyes of laughter. There is no comparison between this dining-hall and that secret chamber of the nightly command in which (as we mentioned above) the bishop in sackcloth served his poor guests. There is a far cry between this feasting and that loneliness.

But to what end is this table? Whither does this splendor, so magnificent, lead? For what purpose is this description of such a royal table? This table seems to be one of Caesar and not one of an archbishop. There seems to be no comparison between this sumptuous table and the table of the poor Christ. There is no comparison between this splendor and those ears of corn, which the disciples plucking and rubbing with their hands, ate; or those banquets of the Gospel, where there were only fish and barley loaves or where there was a piece of fish and a honeycomb. Christ, rising from the dead, seeks only simple food, not the limpet, not the boar, not the roe, not the buck, not the fawn, nor the stag, not the pheasants nor the cock, but only simple food, which as He asks

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242 Cf. pages 68, 69.
243 Cf. Matthew 22.21; Mark 12.17; Luke 20.25
244 Matthew 12.1; Mark 2.23; Luke 6.1
245 Matthew 14.15ff; 15.30ff; Mark 6.36ff; 8.1ff; Luke 9.12ff; John 6.5ff
246 Luke 24.42
for it, so He seems to desire it. Truly this table which we have begun to describe seems to be one of Augustus rather than of Christ or of an anointed of the Lord. But you who think thus, stay here; do not go farther, do not judge, but see that you admire and imitate (if you can) that man of many eyes and that character of many countenances. See that 248 disciple being all things to all according to the manner of the Master: rejoicing with them that rejoice; weeping with them that weep; giving to the world the things of the world, and to God the things that are God's. Now he is a saint with a saint, now a sinner with a sinner, now a pagan with a pagan, now a Jew with a Jew, now a servant with servants, now jovial with the merry, now weak with the infirm. According to that word of the wise man, a word to be put in view of the world, "All things have their seasons, a time to weep and a time to laugh; a time to mourn and a time to dance; a time to embrace and a time to be far from embraces. All things, "he says, "have their seasons." This is especially

247 John 21.5
248 1 Corinthians 9.22
249 Romans 12.15
250 Ibid.
251 Matthew 22.21; Mark 12.17; Luke 20.25
252 i.e. Thomas became "all things to all men" in spirit rather than in deed.
253 Ecclesiastes 3.1ff
true to the archbishop that he obeyed time, yielded to time, and conformed himself to it. Otherwise he will not have been a man of many eyes nor a person of many countenances. Otherwise he will not have found favor with God or among men. This is especially demanded of an archbishop, who because of the world cannot devote his time to God alone, nor because of God should he leave the world. "In all things," says the teacher, "please all men." Wherefore this is deservedly written about the Bishop of bishops, Who is the model and glory of bishops, "He advanced in wisdom and grace before God and men." Thus our new bishop, beloved of God and men was all things to God, all things to the world, never his own, yet always his own when giving himself. So it behooves an archbishop to be one who is never free for himself, who never lives for himself, but who knows that he was born for God and his country and not for himself, who is a father to all, loving and protecting all under the shadow of his wings. So it is, that I say, he is a man of many eyes, a character of many facets, who was made "all things to all"; now in a hairshirt ministering to the

254 Cf. Luke 2.52
255 1 Corinthians 10.33
256 Luke 2.52
257 Psalms 16.8
258 1 Corinthians 9.22
poor at table; now in a stole serving the faithful at the altar; now in a "breastplate of justice" putting an end to lawsuits at court; now with temperance rejoicing with those that dine at banquets.

16. The Moderation of the Archbishop

Since it has not been mentioned, it is necessary to consider how moderately he ate. That we may know something of his habit of life, as we promised above, let us likewise examine his own fare amid such a great wealth of table, among so many guests, in so many displays of delicate food. In all these delicacies of table, not in any wise did he imitate Sardanapalus but the bishop so that he could not be singled out as greedy or as pouring himself out entirely upon any food. Accordingly that wise and refined man says, "Be not greedy in any feasting and pour not thyself upon any meat." By no means, therefore, in all this wealth could even the slightest excess be noted in any desire for food. And so, as he was moderate in all things, by a certain affability joined even to the virtue of moderation, he disguised the very virtue of moderation. And, as he was temperate in all things, so especially in this virtue of moderation, as though in a

259 Ephesians 6.14
260 Cf. chapter 7, page 67
261 Cf. note 89, page 60
262 Ecclesiasticus 37.32
special virtue at table, he was pleasing to God and men. Although the virtue of sobriety is always accompanied by a sister virtue, abstinence, that abstinence, nevertheless, he was accustomed to conceal under a disguise of affability on account of those eating at the same time. Thus he seemed "to rejoice with the rejoicing" and to feast with the feasting. He concealed it now by frequent gifts of his dishes here and there; now by an interrupted discussion about the Scriptures with his learned associates, who reclined at his right—not by a tedious discussion, but one suitable for the occasion. At this table, one did not hear the flute—nor the cornet-players, nor the lyre nor the trumpet, nor the guitarist, nor a chorus-accompanist because the Lord through one of His prophets chided a wanton people, "The timbrel, and the lyre, and the harp are in your feasts." At this table, beyond the elegant, splendid and overflowing abundance of food, there was no gluttony, no wantoness, no inducement in any way to dissipation. But as the other instruments and inducements were removed, from the sacred reading the organ of the Holy Spirit alone (as we mentioned above) rang out from the

263 Romans 12.15
264 Isaiah 5.12
265 Cf. page 112
beginning of the meal to its close, interrupted by a pleasing and timely discussion. His abstinence, the companion of sobriety, lay concealed by frequent gifts of his dishes now to these friends, and then to those (as we have said before), now by a discussion on Scripture, which was introduced. But above all, by his pleasing countenance and his jovial expression, he disguised all his abstinence when he entertained the whole table. Whence his abstinence was pleasing to God and burdensome to none. This abstinence because of the guests could not have been noticed, as it was veiled under a cloak of affability.

Let us now hear more definitely the manner of his abstinence and what he was accustomed to eat. For sobriety demands three things; namely, what we eat, the time of eating, and the measure of eating, lest we partake of what is forbidden, or out of due time, or out of proper proportion. Adam who first ate the forbidden fruit was immediately doomed to death.  

Jonathan who ate out of due time was cursed; Israel who ate beyond measure was punished. "And yet their meat was in

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266 Cf. page 115
267 Genesis 3.6ff
268 1 Kings 14.24ff
269 i. e. Jacob. There is no reference in Scripture that Jacob ate before time.
their mouth and the wrath of God came upon them." As the archbishop, the head of this dining hall was outstanding in the virtue of temperance and by far surpassed them, there is no need for talking about the hour and the measure. Only let us hear that he was accustomed to eat; lest in this, he seem, as might easily appear to the too scrupulous and ill-advised religious, to contaminate in some way or another so remarkable, so beautiful, so pure a virtue of temperance, which we relate about him. True, many foods were offered, many varieties were served--but among the many foods, he kept few for his own use and nourishment. Among all the food offered him, which he used, some were very delicate and expensive; and though they were not forbidden, they might to the scrupulous (whom we mentioned) appear entirely foreign to the perfection of moderation and to the man who is perfectly self-possessed. As those rude disciples insulted Christ, so they would insult the anointed of the Lord and shout, "To what purpose is this waste? for this might have been sold and given to the poor." Once at table, a more than just man called attention to the archbishop in a jest. The archbishop somewhat wrought, answered him, "Certainly, my dear brother, if I am not

270 Psalms 77.30f
271 Matthew 26.8
mistaken, you take your beans with greater eagerness than I the pheasant before me." And there was at that moment a pheasant on a platter before the archbishop. This person lived with us for a while, and though he did not care for delicacies, for he was not used to them, he was truly a glutton of coarser food. And indeed this was a wise and prudent remark of the archbishop made to check the brother's habit and to tell the truth. For it is of no concern, as the physicians of the soul, the fathers teach truthfully, what a man eats or how much a man takes. He may gratify his needs and the state of his health, but he may not give way to pleasure. And so the first parent of all, not because he ate a stag or a doe, but because he tasted an apple was driven from Paradise. And so Esau sold his birthright, not on account of the meat but because of the eating of paltry herbs. But David fearing exceedingly to drink the coveted water poured it on the ground and Elias ate morning and night the food that was brought to him. It does not matter what is taken for health or how

272 St. Augustine says that from the case of Esau's mess of pottage, we learn "in vescendo, non cibi genere sed aviditate immoderata quemque culpandum." De Civitate Dei, 16.37
273 i. e. Adam; Genesis 3.6ff
274 Genesis 35.33f
275 2 Kings 23.15ff
276 3 Kings 17.6
much for necessity. But let concupiscence alone be kept out, which is always lying in ambush against the virtue of sobriety and which pays very little attention to what is actually necessary. "For human nature," as some one has said, "is satisfied with a little." Therefore it makes no difference what or how much is taken—let it only satisfy health or necessity, not concupiscence. Whence the teacher says, "For the kingdom of God does not consist in food and drink but in justice and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit." 

The host of our dining room, therefore, could not partake of the coarser foods as he had not been brought up on these, but on rich food stuffs. These he ate sparingly and temperately. For as someone has said about himself that his beast of burden could not be fed with grain since he had been nourished on delicacies from youth. The wise man agrees with him saying, "He that nourisheth his servant delicately from his childhood afterwards shall find him stubborn. It would be altogether foolish and against the virtue of religion if the soul nourished on saffron should be compelled to embrace coarser foods and the beast of burden be driven from

\[277 \text{ Romans 14.17} \]
\[278 \text{ Cf. Proverbs 29.21} \]
\[279 \text{ Lamentations 4.5} \]
his accustomed pasture. Otherwise if he, to whom new foods are served and his usual foods are removed, is driven away for a long time, he will quickly faint in the way and be overcome. The same happens if barley is given to one who has a taste for wheat only, or if vetriš is offered in place of beans, or lentil for oats. So also it would be if anyone would give for a loaf a stone or hand a scorpion in place of a fish. This is altogether unreasonable. The master speaking about the chastisement of the body among other things says, "Your reasonable service." "Reasonable," he says, that the chastisement of your body and the mortification of the flesh should be performed with discretion. If, perchance, there is a prompting of the Spirit according to that common Greek proverb, nevertheless, "Nothing to excess." But instructed by discretion, the director of all virtue, the moderator of work, concession must be made to the weakness of the flesh and all accustomed food should not be denied; and this for the reason that, if the weakened animal is withdrawn from the pastures, it may happen that he might fall under the load before

280 Matthew 7.9
281 Matthew 7.10
282 Romans 12.1
283 Thales; Cf. Diogenes Laertius, De Vitis

phorum 1.41
he carries it or grow faint before he runs. The wise master demands a reasonable service that, if there is zeal in service, there may be wisdom to temper the fervor of the zeal. So it is that the master, as if turned into a physician concerning the apostle, forbids water to his disciple, who was rather immoderate in the chastisement of his body, and he allows him to drink a little wine for his stomach's sake and his frequent infirmities. As it was in this disciple, so it was in this fellow-disciple, the host of our present dining room. For a similar reason, on account of his stomach, which was chronically subject to chills, a drink of water was more than injurious to him. So, according to the admonition of the teacher and physician to the disciple, this fellow-disciple never drank water, rarely drank beer, but only wine. This he drank moderately for sobriety's sake—a sobriety above that which is commendable. It should be admired and imitated by every priest and especially by the bishops. Because this happened miraculously and joyfully as certain as his religious friends knew from a secret confession, he was always so well-balanced that you could not recognize on his face whether he was still thirsty or had imbibed nor more after the wine than before the wine. Moreover, and this enhances his miraculous and singular

284 1 Timothy 5.23
285 Ibid.
prerogative of grace, even amidst the wine and foods and in the benefit of age of strong concupiscence with life not yet lived, he lived with such an angelic purity that there was no rebellion at all in following this type of life entirely and in giving himself to it; but there was rarely a rebellion by the flesh against the spirit, and more often no rebellion at all.

This we have heard of the host of our dining hall. In the dining hall, he was magnificent; at his table, he was generous; he was cultured in taking in guests and learned in court affairs. His elegance showed itself in distributing gratis. He was civilly restrained as far as the world was concerned and religiously restrained as far as God was concerned. Truly at both tables he was great and large-hearted, great at the table of the Lord and great at the table of the world. He was a most devout priest of the altar and a most provident head of the family in the dining hall; and if we add a third point, which we put above as second, he was a most just judge at court. When all things which are celebrated with festivity are completed, it is time that we rise from table. When a hymn has been chanted, the archbishop goes with his learned companions and enters his private room. As it must be said again, once and for all, since throughout this biography you have learned that the archbishop frequently
did this or that with his learned friends, therefore, you know this saying, because in performing those things which pertain to God or those which pertain to the world, no outsider was admitted, except his learned companions alone, and perhaps, some other advisers such as were stewards. Even a visiting cleric did not sit at the archbishop's own table among these learned companions, but honorably and fittingly sat at a table set apart. He was honored with frequent gifts of food from the archbishop. He was not admitted, I say, at the table with the learned friends, unless, perhaps, he might be one whom the archbishop called by name and wished to honor greatly—more out of respect for his holy conversation and knowledge than out of respect for his dignity or office. Wherefore this was especially the rule, lest at the table where the archbishop with his learned companions reclined, some word, as it is wont, would slip, perchance, which would have been better unsaid, especially in the presence of an outsider. So honoring his friends at table, he used precaution both for himself and for his friends. As I might add this by the grace of those things which are mentioned, there was an ancient custom of his predecessors, and so he resolved, following the fathers, that he would retain no cleric in his household, especially one who had been in the counsels of the empire, whom he would know would be under obligation to the king by homage or by an oath of fidelity. Wherefore, as I learned from the archbishop
himself, there is this ancient custom of his forebears because too often in times past an unholy discord between kings and archbishops arose. So a cleric under obligation to a king (as we said), was not admitted to the home and household of the archbishop. In time of strife, the cleric was, as it were, between the hammer and the anvil, hardly loyal either to the king or to the archbishop, or at least he was suspected. Serving and under obligation, he was not able, even though innocent, to give his loyalty in a proper way to either side, as if he did, it was often attended with great injury to himself. These holy fathers realizing this, who were, so to speak, always active and on guard, took precaution for themselves and for others according as the wise man says, "No one can serve two masters." But let us return to the theme of this biography. When the hymn of the meal is sung, therefore, (as we have said) the archbishop with his learned friends arises and goes to his apartments. There he feasts on the Scripture or plans his duties. This he does every day unless he indulges in a little nap. You bishops, who have been called and sit at this table, learn that you should do likewise.

286 Matthew 6.14
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Classical Quotations and Allusions

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References from Becket Materials

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General References


Migne, *Patrologiae Cursus Completus*, 66.150; 66.751; 158.910


The thesis submitted by Sister Mary Imelda Horback, O.P. has been read and approved by three members of the Department of Classical Languages.

The final copies have been examined by the director of the thesis and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated, and that the thesis is now given final approval with reference to content, form, and mechanical accuracy.

The thesis is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts.

November 11, 1945  
Date  

[Signature of Adviser]