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Annotated Translation of the Life of Saint Thomas, Archbishop of Canterbury By John of Salisbury and Alan of Tewkesbury

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**ANNOTATED TRANSLATION OF THE LIFE OF SAINT THOMAS
ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY BY JOHN OF SALISBURY
AND ALAN OF TEWKESBURY**

By

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

June, 1945

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Preface.....	i
Introduction	iv
Brief sketch of the Life of John of Salisbury	
Brief sketch of the life of Alan of Tewkesbury	
Annotated translation: John of Salisbury.....	1
Annotated translation: Alan of Tewkesbury.....	38
Index of persons and places.....	78
Index of Scriptural quotations.....	80
Index of Classical quotations.....	81
Bibliography.....	82

PREFACE

This thesis is one of the series inaugurated in 1941 at Loyola University by Reverend William J. Miller, S. J. It is a translation from Latin into English of the biographies of Thomas Becket (1117-1170). The present thesis includes the translation of the Life of Thomas, Archbishop of Canterbury, as written by John of Salisbury and a supplement to this life by Alan of Tewkesbury. Textual references are given for all classical and scriptural quotations and paraphrases. The Latin from which this translation was made is found in the Materials for the History of Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury, Rolls Series, edited by James Craigie Robertson, London, 1876, Volume II, pp. 298-352. Prefixed to the translation are brief sketches of the life of John of Salisbury and Alan of Tewkesbury.

The purpose of this thesis is to make available to historians and readers the life of Thomas of Canterbury as John of Salisbury and Alan of Tewkesbury saw him, knew him, and lived with him. This is the only complete translation of these two authors. Occasional passages are interwoven in the

history of Henry II by some writers, but these passages are translated with great liberty and seldom adhere strictly to the Latin text. After the present thesis was completed, a translation of the first eleven sections of the Life of Thomas by John was found in a volume from 1639 by Baronius in his The Ecclesiastical History of the Life of Saint Thomas. But no part of this was incorporated into this thesis. Recognition of classical references involved some uncertainty. However, through a reference in a thesis of 1910, written by August Krey at Wisconsin University,¹ it was found that in J. P. Migne's Patrologiae Cursus Completus, Volume 190, neither John nor Alan alluded to classics to any great extent. Both men were scholars. John, in particular, scattered classical quotations profusely in his other writings, yet in this work his zeal for such allusions abated. As regards the scriptural quotations which are so numerous in both writers, utmost care was applied to place them properly.

A thorough knowledge of English History of the time of Henry II is essential for a scholar to penetrate correctly the underlying thought that these writers wanted to convey. Those volumes consulted which served as valuable aid are listed in the bibliography.

The writer wishes to acknowledge the kind direction and able assistance of the Reverend William R. Hennes, S. J. who

¹ obtained through the courtesy of John Crerar Library

generously supplied comments and suggestions on a large number of passages that seemed to leave room for differences of opinion. It was his untiring patience and constant encouragement that brought this thesis to a successful finish.

June, 1945

BRIEF SKETCH OF THE LIFE OF JOHN OF SALISBURY

At the time when the intellectual horizon of the twelfth century was dimmed by continuous struggles and almost darkened by ecclesiastical storm between Henry II and Thomas Becket, there arose in England a distinguished philosopher, historian, churchman, and scholar.¹ This providential man was John of Salisbury. Little is known about his early life beyond the mere fact that he was born sometime between 1115 and 1120. We learn from his many letters that his teachers were men of renown such as Abelard, Gilbert de la Poree, and Robert of Melun. He perfected his learning under his life-long friend, Peter, Abbot of Moutier de la Celle. John was an insatiable scholar. He proves this by the learned treatises he wrote. Dr. Poole says that "beyond dispute he was the best read man of his time."²

Upon the recommendation of St. Bernard,³ John came to the service of the Church of Canterbury as a highly trusted clerk to Archbishop Theobald. John found favor in the eyes of Saint

¹Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. 8, p. 478.

²Illustrations of the History of Mediaeval Thought and Learning, London, 1920, p. 239.

³Bernard, Epistles 261.

v

Bernard through his thirst for righteousness as well as his deeply rooted spirit of devotion to God and man. His reputation advanced rapidly, and in a short time he was well known to all, whether in the papal or king's court or even in secluded cloisters.

While he pursued his studies abroad, he became acquainted with Nicholas Breakspeare, who years afterward became Pope Adrian IV.⁴ It was not only a mere acquaintance but a well grounded friendship that grew up between these two. As a result of this relation between the humble secretary and the eminent Pope, great benefits accrued to England. In 1156, John spent three months at the papal court and obtained from Adrian, by the famous Bull "Laudabiliter,"⁵ the donation of Ireland to Henry II, king of England.

While John lived at the court of Canterbury, his talent for business as well as his remarkable scholarship caused him to be employed in official duties of every type. During the first five years of his reign Henry was absent from England and the Archbishop of Canterbury settled all the affairs of the government. This responsibility became more burdensome to him with the advancing years, and here John acted wholeheartedly as Theobald's secretary. When Theobald died in April, 1161, John was one of the executors of his will. Later, in June 1162,

⁴December 3, 1154--September 1, 1159.

⁵The Bull was prepared in 1156 and issued in 1159.

when Thomas Becket succeeded Archbishop Theobald, John was one of the five commissioners who went to Montpelier⁶ in July to receive the archbishop's pallium for Thomas from the pope.

If John was indispensable to Theobald, he was a second self to Thomas. John was about the same age as Thomas, and a holy friendship arose between the two. Through all the years that they were together, John was Thomas's prudent counsellor and shared with him every turn of fate. He controlled, warned, and advised Thomas in every crisis. Nevertheless, his affectionate admiration for Thomas did not render him a less clear-sighted critic of the impatient unreasonableness and obstinacy of his friend. John was tactful, yet undaunted and loyal to the principles of Christian conduct. He did not fear to reprove the Archbishop, who delighted in hunting, saying that he was indignant when Thomas stooped from so high a rank to the despicable and murderous trade of a hunter. Cardinal Baronius quotes a passage where John intrepidly condemns the conduct of Thomas:

I cannot excuse his promise at Clarendon, whereunto he was drawn by the counsels of the bishops: because such a promise was not to be made: but confession washed away the offense, having received solemn penances from the Pope's Holiness, who in the presence of many, by the Apostolical authority condemned those perverse customs.⁷

⁶Pope Alexander III during his exile made Montpelier his first stopping place.

⁷According to the author this letter was written to Peter of Blois and is omitted in the usual collection of John's epistles. It is placed in the end of the volume. The Ecclesiastical History of Saint Thomas Archbishop of Canterbury, Cologne, (p. 27)

While John rendered faithful services to Thomas, Henry II saw his wholesome influence. He sent John into exile⁸ and thought that Thomas would more readily yield to his own desires if deprived of such a support. But John reached his friend and did not spare his admonition especially in his association with the king. He wrote:

I shall not forbid you to dress in raiment of gold, to dine daily in splendid state to be honored above all; if I may put it tersely, to do as is customary to do in these degenerate days; while remaining upright yourself, and to mock a world that mocks you with its allurements. For you are too great a man to be caught in its tentacles, though it has caught many thus. On your initiative, they say, under your guidance and leadership, the famous King of the English, Henry II, greatest of the kings of Britain, if the results of his action match their beginnings, is thundering in the neighborhood of Garonne;... Amid such scenes of strife with innocency, I beseech you and behold and speak and proclaim equity. Decline not through love and hate, fear and hope from the right path.⁹

So zealous an adherent was John to Thomas "in good report and evil report, at home and in exile, in life and in death,"¹⁰ that he seemed to live according to Saint Paul, "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season: reprove, entreat, rebuke in all patience and doctrine."¹¹

Shortly after the insincere reconciliation of the King with Thomas, John returned to England, November 12, 1170.

⁸In 1163.

⁹Hearnshaw F.J.C., Social and Political Ideas of Some Great Mediaeval Thinkers, London, 1923, p. 77.

¹⁰Morris, J., Life and Martyrdom of Saint Thomas Becket, London, 1859, p. 357.

¹¹2 Timothy 4.2.

His aim in coming ahead of the Archbishop was to prepare a reception worthy of the Primate of England. Here John sensed that the situation had not improved but that malice was steadily growing against the archbishop and his friend. Thomas, on returning to England, also had a presentiment that his days were numbered.

On the day of the murder, when the four knights came with a message from the king, John stood by Thomas beseeching him to receive it privately. There was fear in John, fear for his master, who could easily lose control of himself and utter words which he later might regret. John never lost his temper, and wished to save Thomas from danger. The knights delivered their message and left. But their plans had been made and they were determined to carry them out. After a short time they returned armed to accomplish their sinister task. Whether or not John was a witness to the death of Thomas will remain a controversial question. Some of his contemporaries hold that he was present, and others, that at this critical moment he hid himself.

Nevertheless, in view of the canonization of his friend, John wrote the life of Thomas. This work is rather a character sketch than a detailed life. John was the most intimate friend of Thomas and knew every side of his character, every trouble and care, every tear and joy, every plan and deed. Yet he wrote very little about him, and a great part of the life is

a repetition of a letter written previously.¹² The biography as it is could not have been written later than 1176. For when John was consecrated bishop of Chartres on July 22, 1176, Peter of Blois congratulated him,¹³ and added that, by his own bishop's order, he would certainly himself have written the saint's life if it had not been done already so beautifully by John.

If John was loyal to Thomas during his life, this devotion increased after death. Father John Morris tells us¹⁴ how John showed his attachment, that to every document and even every letter he added, "John, by divine condescension and the merits of Saint Thomas, humble minister of the Church of Chartres." John died October 25, 1180.

¹²Paragraphs 22 to the end is almost a verbatim repetition of a letter written to John of Pavia in 1171. Epistle 304, Migne, J., Opera Patrologiae Latinae, 1868, Vol. 199, cols. 355-359.

¹³Peter of Blois, Epistle 114.

¹⁴Life and Martyrdom of St. Thomas, p. 358.

BRIEF SKETCH OF THE LIFE OF ALAN

A sort of a supplement by Alan of Tewkesbury is connected with the life of Thomas Becket written by John of Salisbury. Scanty as is our knowledge of this Englishman, it is especially unsatisfactory because there are many contradictory statements. The only facts upon which writers agree are that in 1179 he was promoted to the priorship of Christ's Church in Canterbury, that in 1186 he was transferred to the abbacy of Tewkesbury, and that he died in 1202.

Some writers¹ state that at the time of the murder of the Archbishop, Alan was a canon at Benevento, Italy, and that he returned to England in 1174. They find no evidence that Alan and the Archbishop ever met. Yet James Bennet holds,²

He [Alan] was the contemporary and friend of the proud and unfortunate Thomas Becket, and probably witnessed his tragical death; he has been sometimes termed one of his evangelists in consequence of being thought worthy by Archbishop Langton³ to be employed in writing the history of the passion and miracles of Becket, in order to promote his canonization.

¹Giles, Robertson, Hutton, Frode.

²The History of Tewkesbury, London, 1830, p. 116.

³If Langton were born about 1160 he was hardly more than a boy in 1176 and could hardly have had any authority to give orders to Alan.

Alan did not write of the passion of the Archbishop. His narrative comprises the time and events from the date of the Council of Clarendon to the departure of Pope Alexander from France, that is, from January 25, 1164, to November 23, 1165. The incidents that he relates were meant to be an introduction to the large collection of letters relating to the Archbishop's history.

Another interesting point is mentioned by Froude:⁴

"much that he [Alan] tells us consists of detailed conversations which none but a shorthand writer could have repeated accurately, and of which many must have come to his knowledge only by hearsay." Robertson tries to explain these circumstances, conjecturing that if Alan was in Benevento, he could have been informed through Peter Lombard of the progress of the events. At that time the latter was the Archbishop of Benevento where Alan was a canon. When Thomas was in exile he was studying under Lombard, who could have obtained all this information from Thomas directly.⁵

The opinion of Magnusson⁶ could be more probable. He tells us that if Alan was the first to make the collection of these letters, there is no doubt that he had to correspond

⁴Froude, R.H., Remains, Derby, 1839, Part 2, Volume 2, preface page 12.

⁵Such a statement from Robertson is strange. Thomas's exile began in 1164 and extended to November 1169, and Lombard died at the latest in 1164.

⁶Magnusson, Eirikir Life of Archbishop Thomas in Icelandic, London, 1883, preface pp. 89, 90.

with those in whose possession they were. It may also be reasonably supposed that if he asked for the letters he could have asked for the abstracts of their speeches given on the various occasions. The above mentioned writer makes another conjecture. The accuracy of these speeches may indicate that already in those times minutes of the various meetings were made. From these perhaps, Alan drew his material. Magnusson supports his surmise by the expression that John uses in the prologue⁷ "great volumes written by him," which were left behind Thomas.

The collection and arrangements of the letters must have been made during the life of John of Salisbury because Alan alludes to him as episcopus Carnotensis two times, once in the prologue⁸ and again in the first section of the biography.⁹ To this expression he does not add "of happy memory," which means that John was then still living. John was bishop of Chartres in 1176-1180. Therefore Alan's work must have been finished within these four years. Most of the speakers undoubtedly were still living and would be certain to read his work. Therefore, Alan had to recount the events and speeches with unimpeachable accuracy.

⁷Page 5 of this thesis.

⁸Page 1 of this thesis.

⁹Page 39 of this thesis.

In spite of the numerous inconsistencies and regardless of where Alan obtained his material, this is certain that the preface to the collection and the 529 letters, illustrative of the negotiation between Thomas and Henry II was written by him. Without these letters and the portrayal of the position that Thomas held within the span of these two years, there would be a gap in the course of history.

THE LIFE OF SAINT THOMAS OF CANTERBURY ARCHBISHOP AND MARTYR

BY

JOHN OF SALISEURY

AND

ALAN ABBOT OF TEWKESBURY¹

The Prologue to the life and death of the Blessed Martyr Thomas

Everywhere the honor and glory of Thomas shine forth. His lustre, illuminating the four quarters of the world, arouses devotion to him. From everywhere people flock to his shrine. Men and women, young and old, rich and poor are devoted to him. His fame rapidly spreading attracts even barbarous nations. Men who eagerly seek to know his mode of life and above all the cause and circumstances of his martyrdom, will be satisfied with the biography written by a man of venerable life, extraordinary virtue, his own cleric, a companion of his exile, a sharer of all his troubles,² who later became Bishop of Chartres. This is John of Salisbury, who briefly and succinctly portrayed this champion of Christ and his contest. It is true that this account does not explain every

¹Alan's part will be found on pages 38-78.

²Compare Apocalypse 1.9.

detail of his life. For this reason it seems advisable to add to the Life an appendix of letters, containing all things in their proper order. This will supply in full the needs of anyone wishing to learn the life of the man, the story of his exile, or the procedure of his trial and its outcome. The letters in many and dispersed collections are here gathered into a composite whole, as well as could be done, each in its place and order. If, however, some letters are of general nature and less pertinent to the case, and therefore better placed elsewhere, that will affect the continuity of the whole very little. If anyone will select such letters, ponder them, and use more care to affect a better arrangement, there will be no one to envy him the task. The letters are in separate groups, according to the progress of the story. The first group extends from the beginning of the exile to the coming of the cardinals William and Otho.³ What, when, where or by whom things were done, one will learn quite readily through these letters. The second part from that point until Gratian and Vivian.⁴ The third part as far as Simon, Prior of Valle

³William and Otho were cardinal legates of the Pope in 1167. William was a cardinal priest of St. Peter's Chains and a strong partisan of Henry. Otho was a cardinal deacon of St. Nicholas in the Tullian prison.

⁴Gratian, a subdeacon and notary of the Holy See and nephew to Pope Eugenius III. Vivian, an archdeacon of Orvieto and an advocate of the Roman Court. These were the third papal legation in 1169.

Dei, and Bernard of Corilo.⁵ The fourth part to Archbishop Retrou of Rouen⁶ and Bishop of Nevers, and even to Archbishop William of Sens, now the Archbishop of Rheims.⁷ The fifth contains the peace, death, and canonization of the martyr and the reconciliation of the King of England with the Church of Christ.⁸

In these letters the diligent and devout reader will find the image of the man of God more fully depicted. In addition to this study, if it pleases anyone to investigate the saint's traits, there he will find an abundance of material written by the finger of God.⁹ There also can the sacerdotal and episcopal authority recognize itself in the reflection¹⁰ of his battle rendering due service to Caesar and honor to God.¹¹ I shall not prolong this introduction any further. If anyone wishes to know how he ought to defend the liberty of the Church, let him go through the letters of this martyr, and soon he will find his task outlined. First, then, let the work of John be read, that a path may be opened for the rest which follows.

⁵Simon, Prior of Valle Dei (or Mont Dieu) and Bernard de Corilo (or de la Coudre) are two of the members of the second papal legation to arrange reconciliation between Henry and Thomas in 1168.

⁶Retrou de Beaumont, archbishop of Rouen 1165-1183.

⁷William, archbishop of Sens 1168-1176, and Archbishop Rheims 1176-1202.

⁸Alan's chronological order of the letters is wrong according to history, because Simon and Bernard formed the second legation and Vivian and Gratian the third.

⁹Compare Exodus 31.18.

¹⁰Compare James 1.23.

¹¹Compare Matthew 22.21; Mark 12.17.

THE PROLOGUE OF MASTER JOHN OF SALISBURY
TO THE LIFE OF SAINT THOMAS MARTYR

The ancient enemy continually attacks Holy Church, but the Son of God, who with His own blood redeemed the church, protects her and promotes her unto true liberty by the blood of His members. Among them are preeminent the "glorious choir of apostles,"¹ and the purple clad army of the holy martyrs. By their teaching, "the live stones"² "in the building of Christ's Body,"³ are brought together; by their example they are strengthened, by their blood they are united as if by a cement or mortar; so the Church is spread and grows in numbers and in virtue, and becomes a temple holy in the sight of the Lord.⁴ But though all martyrs have the prerogative of eternal glory,⁵ still the title of some is more illustrious than that of others, and the crown of those will shine more brilliantly who, "with a double honor worthy"⁶ of learned men, perform their duty, "being made a pattern of the flock from the

¹Te Deum 8.

²1 Peter 2.5.

³Ephesus 4.12.

⁴Ephesus 2.21.

⁵Compare Baruch 5.1.

⁶1 Timothy 5.17.

heart,"⁷ and in time of necessity lay down their lives for their sheep.⁸ For as "star differs from star in glory,"⁹ so also in the resurrection¹⁰ of the saints, the just, each in his own rank, will shine as the stars,¹¹ and they that instruct many to justice, will be as the splendor of the firmament for all eternity.¹² It is right and proper that St. Thomas, the Archbishop of Canterbury, be associated with these; and as he stood out for Christ as a partaker of His sufferings and tribulations,¹³ so may he also be in Christ a joint-heir of consolation and glory. In order that his merits may be better known, let this narrative briefly and succinctly discuss the most important facts of his life. If anyone wishes to know the whole series of events in his life, they may be obtained from the many great volumes written by him and about him. It will be a credit to God's grace, "which breathes where it will,"¹⁴ for in a short space of various occupations he fulfilled a long time.¹⁵ This is shown by his own letters and the writings of others, full of faith and worthy of telling, which if read diligently, could encourage both the present and future generations to a virtuous life.

⁷1 Peter 5.3.

⁸Compare John 10.11,15.

⁹1 Corinthians 15.41.

¹⁰Compare 1 Corinthians 15.42.

¹¹Compare Wisdom 3.7.

¹²Compare Daniel 12.3.

¹³Compare 2 Corinthians 1.17.

¹⁴John 3.8.

¹⁵Compare Wisdom 4.13.

THE END OF THE PROLOGUE AND THE BEGINNING OF THE LIFE AND
PASSION OF SAINT THOMAS THE MARTYR

1) The above mentioned Blessed Thomas, a native of London, a distinguished descendant of parents of the middle class, was from the earliest years of his youth enriched with manifold graces. He was tall and well built, charming of manners, keen of mind, fluent and pleasant of speech, and lovable for one of his age. Such was his force of intellect that he prudently solved difficult problems which he had never before heard. Moreover, he was gifted with an excellent memory. What he once learned, he could repeat without difficulty as many times as he wished. There were many well-read men who could not match this achievement; and his resources of mind, truly marvelous in the light of his many distracting occupations, were set down as miraculous. Thus grace, his "foster nurse,"¹ attended the future primate, so that at a conference or in the course of a sermon, as he was accustomed to say, she would supply whatever he might need.

¹Wisdom 16.25.

2) From early youth, so he used to relate, he learned from his mother the fear of the Lord, and sweetly to invoke the Blessed Virgin, as a guide of his paths and patron of his life, and to lay all his trust in her after Christ. With the public beggars he was in deep sympathy, and came to their aid so that with Job he could say, "From my infancy, mercy grew up with me and piety came out with me from my mother's womb."²

3) After he left the schools of liberal arts, he turned his attention to the duties of the court. Such was his character that he quickly stood forth in both the serious occupations of the court as well as the more trifling. In this way he easily surpassed his contemporaries³ and co-workers. Although he followed his youthful pursuits as the tastes of his early years urged, yet true zeal for loyalty and magnanimity were always uppermost in his heart. He was anxious for popular favor,⁴ and what is written about Saint Brice of Tours⁵ I would not hesitate to affirm of Thomas, that although he was proud and used their language, yet his observance of chastity must be admired and imitated.

²Compare Job 31.18.

³Compare Galatians 1.14.

⁴Horace, Carmina 3.2.20.

⁵St. Brice, the Archbishop of Tours, was calumniated by his subjects, and as a result he suffered a seven year exile. After his return to Tours he died in 447.

4) When he perceived in the courts of the nobles many points derogative to the ideals of the clergy, and their society to which he was attached, in opposition to his own resolve, prompted by God's grace and under its influence rather than the advice of his friends, Thomas resorted to the Father of happy memory, Theobald⁶ Archbishop of Canterbury. There his untiring industry merited him the honor of being enlisted among the few intimates. What great and arduous labors he undertook for the Church of God, how many times he visited the threshold of the Apostles to settle ecclesiastical needs, how successfully he adjusted matters enjoined upon him is difficult to recount, especially in a compendium which neglects individual items in favor of their total effect, and aims at explaining the cause of his martyrdom.

5) He studied civil and canon law; thus by pleading cases, deciding disputes, and instructing the people, the future primate, predestined by God, was in the making. This experience later aided him to practise more easily the ecclesiastical administration. He was appointed an archdeacon by the aforesaid Archbishop of the holy Church of Canterbury from whose bosom he had sprung.

6) Shortly after, the Duke of Normandy and Aquitania, Henry,⁷ the son of Geoffrey, the Count of Anjou and the Empress

⁶Theobald, archbishop of Canterbury 1139-1161.
⁷Henry II, king of England 1154-1189.

Matilda,⁸ succeeded King Stephen⁹ in the realm of England. The aforesaid Archbishop strove to have his Archdeacon made the royal chancellor. He suspected the youth of the king and he dreaded the foolishness and malice of the lawless young men by whose counsels he seemed to be influenced lest by their instigation he should exercise more insolently "the right of a victor,"¹⁰ for it seemed to him that he had subjugated the people. This, however, was not the case. He managed to have a chancellor appointed in the lower court, that by his help and attention he could check the impetuosity of the new king from taking any untoward action against the church, check his evil designs, put a clamp on the boldness of the officials who conspired to tear away his rights under the cover of public power and under the pretext of the law of the church as well as the people of the provinces.

7) At the very beginning of his chancellorship he withstood many and various tribulations. Furthermore he was worn out by many labors and almost crushed by constant afflictions. Numerous insidious attacks were made upon him and thanks to "the malice of the inhabitants"¹¹ he was exposed to many trials in the court. In consequence of all this, as he repeatedly

⁸Matilda, daughter of Henry I.

⁹Stephen, king of England 1135-1154.

¹⁰Compare Judges 21.22.

¹¹Psalms 106.34.

told the archbishop and his friends--and his tears gave it proof--life became more of a burden¹² as days went on, and, excepting only his eternal salvation, there was nothing that he desired more than, without the stigma of dishonor, to shake himself free from the shackles of the court. Even though the world flattered and applauded him, still he was mindful of his state and his duty. Daily he was obliged on the one hand to strive for the safety and honor of the king, and on the other for the needs of the church and the bishops. He was forced to struggle against his enemies and by various means to elude their stratagems. But this especially was hard on him, that he had to fight "the beasts"¹³ of the court unceasingly, as he used to say, he had to take issue with Proteus¹⁴ or be in constant exercise in a wrestling school. For from nearly every direction, precipitous ruin threatened unless God's grace and his own diligence would save him.

8) In his office as chancellor of the royal palace he found such favor in the eyes of the king that, after the death of the above-mentioned Archbishop of Canterbury, Primate of Britain, the king gave him the See of Canterbury, that he might more easily rule the entire Church of England. Experience had made the king confident that Thomas's greatness of

¹²Compare 2 Corinthians 1.8.

¹³Compare 1 Corinthians 15.32.

¹⁴Horace, Epistles 1.1.90; Sermones 2.3.71.

soul and loyalty met the demands of this high office. He thought also that Thomas could be easily brought over to his own personal view points, and that he would unflinchingly comply with his wishes in both ecclesiastical and secular affairs; if early death should cut short his (the king's) days, this appointment would provide a most faithful protector for his heirs. Thomas, very shrewd as he was and well accustomed, more than words can tell, to weigh the future, pondered well the dangers of such a charge, since he had learned from long experience both the hardships and honor connected with that position. For he knew the whims of the king and his officials, his wickedness and obstinacy, and the influence of the malicious informers in the court. From all this, he surmised very correctly, that his acceptance of the position offered would cost him either the grace of God or that of the king. He could not adhere to the laws of God¹⁵ while following the notions of the king, and he would surely have the king as an enemy if he preferred the laws of the saints.

9) And so for some time Thomas opposed the king and those wishing him to be promoted. But his election to the holy office was so inevitable that when the venerable Henry of Pisa, a cardinal priest and apostolic legate, pressed him with eloquent and repeated demands, he acceded to the king's wish and the counsel of his friends. He preferred to incur danger

¹⁵ Compare Psalms 72.28.

from the king than to prolong the desolation of the Church, which was already subject to many perils. He definitely decided to free the Church from the misery of such servitude or in imitation of Christ to lay down his life for his sheep.¹⁶ For the civil power removed the privileges of the Church and tried in court, without distinction, secular as well as ecclesiastical cases. Thus the clergy were treated as roughly as the common people.¹⁷

10) Although at first certain rivals attempted to hinder his promotion, quite in opposition to Divine Providence, still he whom God had chosen as a future bishop and martyr was unanimously elected.

11) After he was consecrated, Thomas stripped off the old man,¹⁸ and put on a hairshirt and a monk's habit, crucifying his flesh with its vices and concupiscences.¹⁹ Reflecting too that he had taken over the office of a doctor and a shepherd, he fulfilled the duty of a preacher, giving whatever time he could spare from the more urgent affairs to prayer and reading. When he was all alone, strange to behold, his eyes were filled with tears; he celebrated the divine mysteries as if he saw the Passion of the Lord in reality before him. So reverently did he handle the divine sacraments that his very touch strengthened the faith and fervor of those who watched him. His hand

¹⁶ Compare John 10.11, 15.

¹⁷ Compare Isaias 24.2; Osee 4.9.

¹⁸ Compare Colossians 3.9.

¹⁹ Compare Galatians 5.24.

shrank away from every donation and from his house he completely wiped out all stain of avarice. He was prudent in his counsels; he was thorough in settling cases; he was modest as a listener; subtle in questioning; prompt in replying; just, without respect of persons,²⁰ in his judgments; and most exact observer of law in everything. He wore fine clothes to conceal zealously the soldier of Christ,²¹ lest vainglory should diminish his merits, so that, according to the statement of a wise man, "his outward appearance was that of the ordinary man, but within all things were different."²² He could not go to the palace table unless the poor were first led in. For this reason he wished his table to be better, richer, and more complete, so that from the remnants he could more fully and kindly comfort the needy. None of those begging from door to door left his house empty-handed. Through his deputies he carefully looked up and visited the homes of the sick and weak, and sustained them with daily provisions and clothing. His predecessor, Theobald of blessed memory, was accustomed to double the regular alms of the bishops preceding him; Thomas in the spirit of pious competition decreed to double Theobald's donations. For this holy work, he set aside the tenth part of everything he received,

²⁰Compare 1 Peter 1.17.

²¹Compare 2 Timothy 2.3.

²²Seneca, Epistles 3.5.

from whatever source. In the privacy of his cell, he daily knelt and washed the feet of thirteen beggars in memory of Christ. When they had had their fill of refreshments he gave each one four silver pieces. If by chance, which was seldom, he was prevented from doing this in person, he took care that this duty be performed by his deputy. He received men of religious orders with such reverence that one would believe that he venerated in them either the angels or the Divine Presence. In his hospitality and other deeds of mercy he was so generous that whatever was within his means appeared to be the common patrimony of all good men. Although, after the fashion of his country, his house was famous for costly utensils and for displaying various furnishings, he despised riches, affluence, and every worldly possession as dung.²³ He used these transitory things rather for providing necessities than to satisfy his own longings. In food and drink he held the middle course, lest total abstinence should bring the accusation of scrupulosity, or by immoderate use he should be subject to intoxication. Shunning alike the charge of slander and of hypocrisy, he thought that was the best kind of fast which held to the measure of sobriety. Though dressed in fine garments, he was poor in spirit; his smiling countenance disguised a contrite heart, at a sumptuous board he preferred to remain poor, with his stomach empty more

²³ Compare Philippians 3.8.

frequently than filled, more often refreshed than satisfied, always frugal, he conformed himself to those with whom he lived, following the apostle, who by happy dispensation became all things to all men,²⁴ in order to gain all. "He freed the poor from the mighty"²⁵ who in truth was given by God as a "father of the poor"²⁶ and a "consoler of the mournful."²⁷ He freely reprehended vices of the magnates, knowing that where the spirit of the Lord is, there also is liberty.²⁸ Discreet as he was, he weighed the character of those whom he reprimanded and warned, lest he give what is holy to dogs or cast pearls before swine.²⁹ And because he was taught by heavenly unction, he always appeared a remarkably eloquent scholar whether he spoke to learned or ignorant. Importance of matter and purity of diction made his speech attractive and fruitful. After meals and after sleep, as necessity required it, he once more without any regard to time gave himself to business or scripture or pious conversation,³⁰ always avoiding idleness at all costs, lest "the enemy might see him and mock at his sabbaths."³¹ Whatever time he could retrench

²⁴Compare 1 Corinthians 9.22.

²⁵Psalms 71.12.

²⁶Job 29.16.

²⁷Job 29.25.

²⁸Compare 2 Corinthians 3.17; John 4.24.

²⁹Compare Matthew 7.6.

³⁰Retaining the reading studiis et

³¹Lamentations 1.7. His "sabbaths" means his days of rest.

from his nightly sleep without serious physical detriment, he gave to tears and prayers, striving for purity in body, for chastity in heart, modesty in speech, uprightness in everything, so that those whom he was to teach would be moved more powerfully by the example of his sanctity. He attacked incessantly the schismatics and heretics and never could he be induced to deal with the excommunicated. Whoever opposed sound doctrines was unhesitatingly considered his future enemy in Christ. Burning with zeal for justice, he strove to give every man his due, absolutely without respect of persons³² and their donations.

12) When the ancient enemy saw that such a man would be of great benefit to the Church of God, he was angered and in order that the earth might no longer enjoy its cherished peace, he chose many powerful instigators of evil,³³ through whom he sowed the "seed of hatred"³⁴ into the heart of the king and his courtiers. Whenever the latter had any disagreement over the royal customs and the ecclesiastical rights, with the elimination of this holy man in view, he goaded on these sons of perdition³⁵ who were always trying to overthrow the freedom of the church. But though all these were suppressed, the Church of Canterbury gave him more trouble. It had suffered a great loss of power, honor, and influence because of

³²Compare 1 Peter 1.17; James 2.1.

³³Compare 2 Machabees 4.1.

³⁴Genesis 37.5.

³⁵Compare 2 Thessalonians 2.3.

the active opposition of Roger, the archbishop of York,³⁶ and those following his lead, also because of the opposition of many nobles who were of those bound to the service of the church by loyalty and privileges. Moreover, the king frequently kept Thomas from exercising canonical justice upon his subjects when their transgressions demanded it. The secular power usurped everything at will, quite against personal and property rights and the rights of ecclesiastical law, while the bishops were silent or murmured rather than resisted. Therefore the king tried to have the bishops yield to his demand by promises and flatteries. The man of God, firm and founded on a rock,³⁷ could neither be softened by blandishments nor frightened by threats to deviate from the pursuit of justice.

13) Since Thomas led an ascetic life, the ungodly strove by their malicious interpretations to darken the change in the Archbishop which the right hand of the Most High³⁸ had wrought, ascribing everything to scrupulosity. His zeal for justice they misrepresented as cruelty; his care for the interests of the church, they attributed to covetousness. His contempt of worldly favor, they styled as a hunting after glory; his courtly splendor was falsely called pride. That he regularly followed the will which had been taught him from above, was

³⁶Roger of Pont l'Eveque, chief opponent of Becket, consecrated to York 1154-1181.

³⁷Compare Matthew 7.25; Luke 6.48.

³⁸Compare Psalms 76.11.

branded as a mark of arrogance; that in guarding the letter of the law he often seemed to go beyond the bounds of his predecessors, was held to be a token of foolhardiness. Nothing could now be said or done by him without being perverted by the malice of lawless men, inasmuch, that they persuaded the king that if the Archbishop's power should continue, the royal dignity would no doubt perish; and unless he provided for himself and his heirs, the king would be any man whom the clergy would choose, and he would reign as long as it pleased the Archbishop.

14) When the bishops and the nobles gathered by the order of the king to disentangle the problems of the kingdom, a contention arose between the king and the church. It dragged on for a long time, and by the instigation of the devil grew worse every day. The bishops were in unanimous agreement with their archbishop in the idea that in all things that are of God³⁹ they would most loyally obey the king; they agreed moreover to make no pact nor promise to the king unless they could do it without loss to their own prestige.⁴⁰ This being the case, various schemes were launched to break the united front presented by the hierarchy. Acting as agents were certain bishops who to all appearances were pillars of the church and the faith; it was hoped that in their company

³⁹i.e. in accordance with God's will and involving no sin.

⁴⁰salvo ordine suo - this was the formula used by bishops at the ceremony of their consecration, when taking an oath of fidelity to the King of England.

the archbishop too would be perverted, or that, if he chose to stand alone, he would be more easily crushed. There were very many who tried to displace the man of God, but his followers violently resisted their enemy. The man of invincible steadfastness reflected that he is not alone whom God assists. He was inspired by this and took his definite stand, setting himself up as a most solid wall⁴¹ for the house of Israel which could neither be broken by threats nor softened by flatteries. He thought it better to follow the poor Christ as a poor man than to leave the law of Christ,⁴² by whose consolation he was united with the small number of the poor who suffered with him.

15) After the numerous dissensions and abuses the bishops and nobles at last gathered at Clarendon⁴³ by the royal decree. The king demanded urgently that the royal customs, which according to the agreement of the nobles, his grandfather seemed to have observed, should be reviewed publicly and with absolute and expressed assent of all the bishops should be affirmed adding no conditions whatsoever. The Archbishop and bishops who heard this made every effort to hinder or at least to postpone the danger which they believed was inevitable whether from this or that point. If they agreed with faults

⁴¹Compare Ezechiel 13.5.

⁴²Compare Ecclesiasticus 49.6.

⁴³January 13-30, 1164. Clarendon, a royal castle a few miles away from Salisbury. The meeting consisted of the two Archbishops, eleven bishops, and thirty or forty of the highest nobles, with a multitude of inferior barons.

that were deep-set in wickedness, then danger to faith would undoubtedly follow, and if they opposed, the peace of church and preservation of life would be exposed to certain dangers. And they had good reason to fear, for, according to Solomon, "as the roaring of the lion so also is the anger of the king."⁴⁴ However, the full force of the conflict turned against the Archbishop without whose advice, as their leader, the bishops dared nothing and they even dreaded to counsel him to yield. He was more worried about some of his bishops, whom loss of life and limb seemed to threaten because of the old hatred of the king, than about his own dangers, even though these were many and grave. Therefore yielding to pressure rather than deceived by the arguments of great men who made profession of religion, he gave verbal assent to the petition of the king. Thus he himself and the bishops for whom he feared escaped physical danger with the loss of their cause. However, the Archbishop thought physical freedom might involve spiritual ruin; accordingly he began to mortify himself more severely in the matter of food and clothing and suspended himself from the service at the altar until through confession and worthy fruits of penance⁴⁵ he deserved to be pardoned and absolved by the Roman Pontiff.

⁴⁴ Proverbs 19.12.

⁴⁵ Compare Matthew 3.8.

16) But the anger of the king did not quiet down. With terrifying threats he promised still greater severity unless the customs which he tried to enforce against the church be confirmed and signed by the authority of the archbishops and bishops. Because the confessor of Christ, the future martyr, dared to oppose the efforts of the king, he was subjected to many wrongs, struck with abuses and afflicted with injuries,⁴⁶ and finally on an unjust accusation was dragged to Northampton. There through an unfair sentence he patiently endured a condemnation on some financial charge and even gave a sufficient security for the amount judged to be paid to the king. He was brought to court on one charge and judged on another. Under the pretext of rendering a financial account of the offices during the time of his chancellorship, they brought a variety of accusations against him. This procedure, which was contrary to divine and human law, so preyed upon his mind that he felt it necessary to appeal to the Holy See against the bishops, lest they condemn him by an unjust verdict merely to flatter the king. As a result of this procedure he likewise was summoned to the presence of the Pope on the demand of the bishops.

17) The appeal turned out against the nobles. The archbishop neither acknowledged any guilt nor stood convicted, but constantly asserted his rights and those of the Church, and

⁴⁶Compare Ecclesiasticus 10.8.

called upon the aid of the secular power. The nobles were forbidden under anathema to pass a sentence against their father and judge,⁴⁷ nevertheless, adding to their own damnation they boldly passed a verdict against him and thus gave vent to their innate fury. When they wanted to announce the verdict, the holy man took in his hand the cross which he constantly carried about in his heart and body,⁴⁸ raising it on high, departed from the grim court, while the depraved men were shouting that he ought to be arrested as a traitor worthy to be hanged. In order that the servant of the Lord might well understand his title, he heard on all sides, "Crucify, crucify him!"⁴⁹ "He however, passing through their midst walked out."⁵⁰

18) After that he went to an inn where in the silence of the night two prominent and very loyal nobles came to him. Their features were haggard and stained with tears. Striking their breasts,⁵¹ they confessed and protested by the dreadful judgment of God, that they knew beyond doubt that nobles notorious for their evils and defiled by many crimes had planned his murder, and they had bound themselves by mutual oaths to kill him. Therefore lest the cause of the church, which was not yet fully known, suffer disaster by his death,

⁴⁷ Compare Ecclesiasticus 8.17.

⁴⁸ Compare 2 Corinthians 4.10.

⁴⁹ Luke 23.21; Mark 15.14.

⁵⁰ Luke 4.30.

⁵¹ Compare Luke 23.48.

Thomas took to flight that same night, having with him only one brother for company. He hid during the day and continued his journey during the night. After the sixteenth day he reached the port of Sandwich. Since he had no better means of conveyance, he was taken across to Flanders in a small fragile boat, by two priests, because any other travelers would have done more harm than good, delaying the voyage rather than affording any help.

19) Thus exiled, the confessor of Christ was graciously received by Pope Alexander at Sens,⁵² and was recommended to a monastery at Pontigny.⁵³ But the King of England dispatched his bishops and nobles to the Apostolic See. Through them he made many promises on condition that legates be sent to give a final decision in the case of the Archbishop of Canterbury without possibility of further appeal. The king wanted the trial to be transferred to England immediately. For it seemed to him that the cardinals could be influenced and numerous witnesses against every point of the case could be easily secured. But when he learned from the returning legates that his request had been refused, he ordered the church and all the goods of the Archbishop and of his household to be confiscated. And there followed an event unparalleled in history. The king sentenced to exile all Thomas's kindred, together with all his friends and

⁵²Pope Alexander III arrived at Sens in October, 1163.

⁵³At Pontigny, about twelve leagues from Sens, was a Cistercian monastery. Thomas arrived here November 30, 1165.

acquaintances who were proscribed without regard to dignity or rank, condition or fortune, age or sex. Even women in confinement and little ones crying in their cradles were sent into exile. His inhuman rage proceeded further and his cruelty was too dreadful for tender ears. The Catholic Church may pray for heretics, schismatics and perfidious Jews, yet it was forbidden that anyone should aid Thomas with prayers in public. Moreover, the secular officials forced all adults to take oaths that they would go to Pontigny in order to afflict the heart of the Archbishop. There the holy man tortured himself with long fasts and continued prayers for the church, the king and the English kingdom, until Henry by arrangement with the Cistercian Abbots, who had gathered from their own lands for a general chapter, tried to drive him out. But before he left he was comforted by a divine vision. Heaven showed him that he would return to his church with glory, and from there, through the palm of martyrdom, he would depart to the Lord. Just as the Blessed Virgin whose soul a sword of sorrow pierced⁵⁴ is commonly considered more than a martyr, so the confessor in taking upon himself and his friends many great, unheard of tortures showed himself worthy of the crown of martyrdom. Fearing lest these holy monks suffer any loss on his account, he took his departure⁵⁵ quite voluntarily.

⁵⁴Compare Luke 2.35.

⁵⁵November, 1166.

He then went to Louis, the most christian King of France, who received him reverently and until the return of peace, ministered to his needs with every kindness. Louis even begged the Pope, in consideration of the king's own love and services rendered, not to prolong matters by useless delays if he had any love for France and for the prestige of the Holy See. Even William, the revered Bishop of Sens, having taken pity on the desolation of the church of England, undertook a journey to the Apostolic See, and besought the Church of Rome to stop all appeals, and to place the King of England under anathema, and his kingdom under interdict, unless peace be restored to the Church of Canterbury.

20) Meanwhile those who hated peace⁵⁶ of the church were not idle. At their urging, Roger, archbishop of York, ignored alike the Holy Father's prohibition, the rank of the Church of Canterbury,⁵⁷ and its long standing customs⁵⁸ by boldly entering the territory of Canterbury and there officiating at the coronation of Henry, the king's son.⁵⁹ Assisting him were his suffragans, who raised not a word of protest in favor of the

⁵⁶ Compare Psalms 119.7.

⁵⁷ Dorobernensis: Canterbury occupies the site of the Roman Durovernum, and hence is frequently referred to under this name.

⁵⁸ As early as the sixth century Canterbury held the metropolitan rights. The primacy of Canterbury and with it the privilege to crown kings was established through Ethelhard, the archbishop of Canterbury, by the authority of Pope Leo III at the Council of Clevesho in 803. (Hook, Vol. I, p. 267.)

⁵⁹ The king's son i.e. Henry III at the age of fifteen was crowned by Roger, at Westminster June 14, 1170, and again with his queen at Winchester in 1172.

Church of Canterbury. With the increase of insults, with the greater and greater abuse of the "patience of Christ"⁶⁰ a varied definite threat was being aimed against the king and his people. The verdict could not be delayed any longer because the decisive day was approaching. Hence, the king, hard pressed by the canonical severity, at last assented that peace should be restored to the church of England. Everybody in the kingdom rejoiced, thinking that the affair was honorably settled and not done in pretense; but what some of them really did was revealed by the outcome. The 'Pontifex' of Christ, attributing his own good faith to those with whom he was dealing, hoped that better days were at hand. Many urged Thomas not to dare to return until peace was established more firmly. But Thomas, fearing for the church and his souls, and then having been offered a safe conduct by Henry, returned in the seventh year of his exile and was welcomed by the clergy and people as an angel of the Lord.

21) When the Pope received the complaint of Saint Thomas about the aforesaid boldness of the archbishop of York and the other bishops who assisted him, he suspended from the episcopal office both the archbishop of York and the bishops favoring

⁶⁰
2 Thessalonians 3.5.

him. He again pronounced⁶¹ the sentence of anathema over Gilbert of London⁶² and Jocelyn of Salisbury.⁶³ These acts of severity, made known just as Thomas returned, further embittered the king and rendered the poisoned words of the detractors the more effective in harming Thomas. Again, therefore, the athlete of Christ suffered insults and injuries beyond measure and number, and by public edict was forbidden to leave the boundaries of his church. Anyone who smiled at him or at any one of his partisans was considered a public enemy. All this the man of God "endured with great patience"⁶⁴ preferring to suffer the loss not only of property but even of his own life, than without intervention or at least protest to endanger the justice of God and the liberty of the church. With due respect to all the saints, I would say that if a person's sacrifice to God be measured by what is given up for love of him, then one is not easily found to surpass Saint Thomas. For Christ he despised his goods and relatives, he despised the world and despised even himself.⁶⁵

⁶¹On Palm Sunday 1167, Thomas solemnly excommunicated Gilbert and Jocelyn. In 1170 on Easter Day, through the advice of the Pope, the Archbishop of Rouen absolved them. In September of the same year, they were again excommunicated for the substitution of the Constitutions of Clarendon for the coronation oath. Through the intercession of Thomas, the sentence was pronounced only for participating in the coronation.

⁶²Gilbert Foliot, bishop of London 1163-1186.

⁶³Jocelyn de Balliol, bishop of Salisbury 1142-1184.

⁶⁴2 Corinthians 6.4.

⁶⁵Compare 2 Machabees 7.23.

22) Our confessor's death agony is a natural topic for historians, and many capable writers have given accounts of the trials and the characters involved. For this reason I do not wish to delay long on this subject, especially since frequent tellings have made it known and popularized it through the entire Latin speaking world. In this great manifestation of divine providence, however, there is one phenomenon that cannot be ignored, which attracts attention of all and enhances God's glory and that of his martyr. I mean the fact that in the death story of the prelate all details marvelously combined to bring perpetual renown to his name, and to stain with undying opprobrium the name of his impious persecutors. Consider the parts played by Thomas, and then form your estimate of him. He was a devout Archbishop, the Primate of all Britain and Legate of the Apostolic See, a most righteous judge, "neither a respecter of persons,"⁶⁶ nor of gifts, a defender of the liberty of the church, a very tower erected in Jerusalem facing Damascus,⁶⁷ a mallet to crush the wicked, but at the same time, a consoler⁶⁸ of the poor and those grieving. Let each one who wishes to leave the kingdom look out for himself.⁶⁹ And if the cause makes the martyr, as no wise man

⁶⁶Acts 10.34.

⁶⁷Compare Canticles 7.4.

⁶⁸Compare Job 29.25.

⁶⁹The meaning of the Latin in this sentence is not clear. The passage beginning with this sentence to the end of section twenty two is omitted in some manuscripts.

did Thomas prepare himself? For long had he shown himself a living sacrifice,⁷⁵ holy and pleasing to God; by prayer and watching, by fasting⁷⁶ and the use of a rough hairshirt, he had crucified his flesh with vices and concupiscences.⁷⁷ He who was accustomed to expose his back to the scourge (as only his intimate friends knew) like a slave of Christ, and who used to offer on the altar the body and blood of Christ, now prostrate before the altar offered his own blood, shed by the hands of the wicked.

23) It was not permitted to the agents of Satan to be present at the sacrifice of the disciple and servant, as it was to their predecessors at the crucifixion of the Master and Lord. Our Lord's persecutors avoided defiling the city and violating the sabbath⁷⁸ by leading their prisoner outside the city and crucifying Him beyond the gate;⁷⁹ sentence was passed upon Him after a trial, however unjust, and He had had some meager chance to defend Himself. Furthermore, He suffered at the hands of the gentiles who knew not God,⁸⁰ and by the authority of the secular power. The very men who dragged Him away as prisoner were those whose law He seemed to attack, and it was His own disciple, the son of perdition⁸¹ who succeeded in betraying Him. Now compare the case of Thomas. He was

⁷⁵ Compare Romans 12.1.

⁷⁶ Compare 2 Corinthians 6.5.

⁷⁷ Compare Galatians 5.24.

⁷⁸ Compare Isaias 56.2.

⁷⁹ Compare Mark 15.20; Matthew 27.31.

⁸⁰ Compare Judges 2.10

⁸¹ Compare 2 Thessalonians 2.3.

apprehended not merely in the city, but in the church; not at an ordinary time but on a day which the solemnity of our Lord's Nativity sanctified.⁸² By every right was it fitting that the birthday of him who lived innocently and very piously should follow the birthday of Holy Innocents.⁸³ And indeed, it is believed his death was caused by treacherous friends who were assisted by the chief priests; and inasmuch as in malice they greatly surpassed Annas and Caiphas, Pilate, and Herod, inasmuch more were they cautious that he should have no trial⁸⁴ and be met by accusers, that he should not appear before the face of the governor,⁸⁵ lest by the privilege of the sacred place, or time or dignity or rank or condition of a given security of restored peace should he escape sacrilegious hands, not of the gentiles, not of the enemies but of those who professed the law of God and loyalty of friends. Certainly it was by the providence of God, who disposes all things wisely and sweetly,⁸⁶ that this happened; that He who permitted this cruel, brazen murder, did not permit these same things to remain unknown, so that even here on earth may be fulfilled that word of truth, namely, "Nothing is hidden that shall not be revealed."⁸⁷ For the story commonly told about

⁸²Thomas was martyred December 29, within the Christmas Octave.

⁸³Birthday of the Holy Innocents, i.e. in heaven; celebrated on December 28.

⁸⁴Compare Luke 12.58.

⁸⁵Compare Ecclesiasticus 39.4.

⁸⁶Compare Wisdom 8.1.

⁸⁷Matthew 10.26; Luke 8.17; 12.2; Mark 4.22.

Judas, the prince of traitors, applies with equal right to his accomplices. Like offenses call for like punishments, as all christians know from faith, and "the heavens shall reveal their iniquity and the earth shall rise up against them."⁸⁸ Therefore, who of the faithful dares to doubt that God will either convert or crush the authors and perpetrators of such a sacrilege?

24) When he was to undergo his passion in the church before the altar, on hearing the outcries among the crowd of bystanders, "Where is the Archbishop?" made by the soldiers who came to kill him, the martyr of Christ ascended the steps and met them with a fearless countenance saying, "Here I am, what do you wish?" To this, one of the bloodthirsty soldiers in a spirit of frenzy answered, "That you die, for it is impossible that you live any longer." Then the Archbishop replied with steadfastness in voice as well as in heart (for with due respect to all the martyrs, I confidently venture to say that none surpassed him in steadfastness) "I, too, am ready to die for my God and for the defense of the rights and the liberty of the church. But if you seek my life, I forbid you, in the name of the Almighty God and under the penalty of anathema, to harm in any way, anyone, be he monk, cleric, or layman, high or low. Let them be as exempt from punishment as they have been remote from punishable conduct. For not on

⁸⁸Job 20.27.

them, but on me, lies the responsibility if anyone of them has undertaken the cause of the suffering church. I embrace death willingly if through the shedding of my blood the church can obtain peace and liberty." Who can have more ardent charity than a man who, while he offers himself to the persecutors for the law of God, is anxious only that those nearest him should not be hurt? Do not these words remind us of Christ saying in His passion, "If ye seek me, let these go their way"?⁸⁹

25) After these words, seeing his executioners with swords drawn, he bent his head as though for prayer, uttering these last words, "To God and Saint Mary, and to the Patron Saints of this church and to Saint Dennis, I commend myself and the cause of the Church."

26) Who could tell the rest without sighs, sobs, and tears?⁹⁰ My feelings do not permit me to enumerate in detail all that these monstrous cutthroats did, spurning the fear of God, unmindful of their faith, showing not a spark of humanity. It was not enough that they profaned the church with the bloody murder of a priest and violated a most sacred day. They actually lopped the crown off the head which had been dedicated to God by the anointing with sacred chrism, and (terrible to say) drew out with their murderous swords the brains of the dead martyr and cruelly scattered them on the

⁸⁹John 13.8.

⁹⁰Compare Virgil, Aeneid 2.6.

pavement with the blood and bones. They were more cruel than the executioners of Christ, who, when they saw Him dead, agreed not to break His legs,⁹¹ as they always did to those still living. But in all these tortures the martyr was of such unconquerable spirit and admirable steadfastness that he did not utter even a word or cry; not a groan escaped him; neither with arm or garment did he check the blow, but held his head, which he had inclined and exposed to the swords, motionless till his consummation. Finally falling forward to the ground, with body straight, he moved neither hand nor foot, when the insulting assassins declared that with the destruction of a traitor they had restored peace to their country. [The murderers, as greedy as they were cruel, returned to the palace of the Archbishop. This was an insult to the authority of the king and the majesty of God. With an insatiable greed and a boldness beyond measure, they seized all the furniture and whatever could be found in the chests and coffer either gold or silver, clothes or ornaments or books or charters and all other written documents, everything, including even his horses. They distributed all among themselves at their pleasure. They imitated in this those who divided Christ's garment,⁹² although in some way they exceeded the former in crime. To

⁹¹Compare John 19.33.

⁹²Compare Psalms 21.19; Matthew 27.35.

deprive the Archbishop, who had been crowned with martyrdom, of all human esteem, all written documents which the sacrilegious thief stole were sent to the king at Northampton. But in God's providence this happened that the more human rashness endeavored to dim the glory of this bravest of athletes, so much the more did the Lord show it forth "in a manifestation of his virtue"⁹³ and clear signs of miracles. When the wicked men who hated him without measure saw this, they gave orders by civil authority, that no one should dare to publicize the miracles that took place.⁹⁴ Therefore who will cast a shadow over something which God arranges to clarify? These miracles seemed to grow in frequency in proportion to the apparent necessity of keeping them secret. Man sees the face,⁹⁵ God alone searches the reins and hearts.⁹⁶ For when the body of the holy martyr was brought for burial, according to custom, to be vested in the pontifical garb, it was found dressed in a hair shirt reaching to his knees which was filled with lice and vermin, a secret to all but very few. His very underclothing, down to the knees, was discovered to be of haircloth, a thing quite unheard of among our forefathers.

⁹³1 Corinthians 2.4.

⁹⁴The passage in brackets, [The murderers...took place] though printed by Dr. Giles, is omitted in the MSS of the British Museum, Additional MSS 11506 and 10050, also in Cottonian MSS., Claudius, B.11. Yet it is in John of Salisbury, Epistles 304, and seems necessary for the connection of what follows.

⁹⁵Compare 1 Kings 16.7.

⁹⁶Compare Psalms 7.10.

27) Who will be able to tell or hear the following story without tears?⁹⁷ That church which had been desecrated, or rather consecrated, by the martyr's holy blood actually went so far as to suspend itself from divine services. This measure was taken as a protest against the insult offered to God, but, for fear of the reactions of the impious, it was taken only after considerable hesitation and long deliberation. But everyone knew the trend of events, and such terror seized upon the people of the province that very few, if any, dared to refrain from sacred services to assert the cause of justice, or had the human kindness to perform the solemn services rightly due to the faithful departed. It was the aim of the impious to erase Thomas's name forever. In all this the rage of the persecutors did not rest. They said that the body of the traitor ought not be interred - buried among bishops, but thrown into the foulest marsh or exposed on a gibbet.⁹⁸ Therefore, the pious men who were present, fearing to bring violence upon themselves, anticipated the satellites of Satan, who had gathered, intent on this sacrilege, and buried the martyr in a marble tomb in a crypt before the altar of Saint John the Baptist and Saint Augustine, the Apostle of England.

28) There, to the glory of Almighty God, many great miracles take place in the presence of thronging people, that

⁹⁷ Compare Virgil, Aeneid, 2.6.

⁹⁸ Compare Numbers 25.4.

they may see in others and feel in themselves the power and clemency of Him who always is wonderful and glorious in His saints.⁹⁹ For in the place of his suffering, where before the main altar the body remained during the night awaiting burial and where he was finally buried, "paralytics are cured, the blind see, the deaf hear, the dumb speak, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed"¹⁰⁰ the fever-stricken find relief, those possessed by the devil are freed and the sick cured¹⁰¹ from various diseases, blasphemers possessed by the devil are confounded, and (a wonder unheard of from the days of our forefathers)¹⁰² "the dead are brought to life again."¹⁰³ All this and much more, which is too long to narrate, did he perform who alone is blessed above all for all ages.¹⁰⁴ Amen.

⁹⁹ Compare Psalms 67.36.

¹⁰⁰ Matthew 11.5; Luke 7.22.

¹⁰¹ Compare Acts 5.15.

¹⁰² Compare John 9.32.

¹⁰³ Matthew 11.5; Luke 7.12.

¹⁰⁴ Compare Romans 1.25.

The end of the Life of Blessed Thomas Martyr. A few notes here follow to explain subsequent events, which are somewhat less clearly given in the correspondence.¹

1) The life and work of that glorious martyr of God, Thomas, with the story of his sufferings for the liberty of the Church, have been recorded in elegant style by one who was at once secretary and friend of the martyr and subsequently bishop

¹The sequel is by Alan of Tewkesbury. In MS. 2, the following account of miracles is given at the end of the Life by John of Salisbury:

A certain soldier of wealthy and noble birth, Walter de Enicurt, stricken with leprosy, came to Canterbury. After receiving permission from the prior, for three nights he visited the grave of Saint Thomas. Saint Thomas appeared to him in a dream and having embraced his head with both hands, disappeared. But the watchful soldier, from that moment felt entirely different. He gave thanks to God and the holy martyr and in the morning entered the chapter room of the monks and declared in a clear voice that he was cured in his whole body. After the news had been received by the congregation of the friars, with great joy he returned home.

A certain woman whose eyes were dimmed with blindness rubbed them with the blood of the saint and she received sight.

Another woman for two years oppressed with a serious illness, mixed with water a little of the blood of Saint Thomas, which she drank and immediately she vomited the cause of her disease.

A man born blind and mute, used the same medicine and received with the keenness of sight perfectly sound speech.

A certain blind man, well known in Canterbury, whom I myself saw, rubbed his eyes with a bit of cloth dipped in the blood of the martyr and immediately he received sight.

of Chartres, Master John of Salisbury. Because of the brevity of the history some points were intentionally omitted. Since mention of them would stir the devotion of readers and hearers, especially since they throw light on the letters that follow, we have decided to present these points in synopsis form. They cover the interval between the Council of Clarendon² and the departure of Pope Alexander from France,³ and are given on the authority of Master John. The remaining topics find fuller treatment in their proper place in the letters themselves.

2) Therefore while at Clarendon, Blessed Thomas at the suggestion of his brethren, but certainly unwilling himself, promised on his priestly word that to please the king he would observe with the others, the customs which they called ancient. He zealously recalled to mind how many losses could arise against ecclesiastical liberty. As he was leaving the king's court, there arose by the way among his household a murmuring. Some of them, as is usual, asserted that the force of circumstances made this procedure advisable. Others were indignant that the prestige of ecclesiastical liberty should perish at the mere wish of a single man. Among these one man stood forth and said bitterly, "The public power disturbs all things. Iniquity rages against Christ Himself. The 'synagogue of Satan'⁴ profanes God's sanctuary.⁵ The princes have sat and

²January 13-30, 1164.

³November 23, 1165.

⁴Apocalypse 2.9.

⁵Compare Psalms 88.40.

gathered together against the anointed of the Lord.⁶ No one is safe who loves righteousness; in the judgment of the world only those are wise and respected these days who bow to the will of the ruler. The tempest struck even the pillars of the church, and while the shepherd disappeared,⁷ the scattered sheep are hiding before the wolf. From now on what place is left for innocence? Who will stand up against the enemy, who will triumph in battle when the chief is conquered?" Such were the murmurs of him⁸ who was carrying the cross before the Lord of Canterbury. Anxiety kept others silent, but he continued more boldly, taking up a parable,⁹ "He who betrayed his conscience and reputation, how much of virtue has he left for himself?" "To whom do you refer, my son?" asked the Lord of Canterbury. "To you," he said, "this refers, who have completely lost all conscience and reputation, who have left to posterity an example hateful to God and contrary to justice, when your hands consecrated to God¹⁰ were extended to observe the impious customs, and when you joined wicked ministers of Satan to overthrow the liberty of the church." The Archbishop groaned and sighing said, "I repent, and trembling at my error, I am unworthy in my own opinion from now on to approach as a priest Him whose church I have thus so basely sold. I shall sit silent in grief until the Lord arising from on high shall

⁶ Compare Psalms 118.23.

⁷ Compare Ezechiel 34.5; Zacharias 26.31.

⁸ Alexander Lllewelyn.

⁹ Compare Numbers 22.30.

¹⁰ Compare Numbers 3.3.

visit me,¹¹ and until I shall deserve to be absolved by the Pope and by God Himself.

3) Immediately then he dispatched a messenger to the Holy See. Meanwhile the king learned that the Lord of Canterbury wished to retract that agreement, an attitude evidenced by his refusal to abide by the understanding and confirm the document of the customs with his seal. Thereupon the king, exasperated, began to harass Thomas with stronger and more urgent demands, so that it was evident to those who knew the affair that he sought the life and blood of the Archbishop.

4) Therefore the Archbishop in fear turned to flight and came to his manor of Aldington. While the others were sleeping, he secretly started out with only two companions and having found a boat, he embarked on the sea. Worn by adverse wind¹² for a long time, he returned ashore barely alive as day dawned. When his departure was discovered, his household and friends dispersed. One of them, however, bolder than the rest, returning to Canterbury the following night, went straight to the room of the Archbishop, and after dinner, full of anxiety, he began to grieve at the misfortune and distress of his master. It was well after midnight when he wished to rest and said to the boy who was with him. "Go and shut the outer door of the hall that we may sleep more safely." The boy lighted a candle, opened the door, and saw the Lord of Canterbury sitting alone

¹¹Compare Luke 1.78.

¹²Compare Mark 6.48.

in the corner. Terrified at the sight, he thought he¹³ saw a ghost and ran away. When the boy reported this, the cleric would not believe it, until he really proved it personally. He went and found as it was told. The Archbishop called some of the monks of the Church of Canterbury and explained to them what happened to him and how it was the will of God that he should not yet leave. He rested after a light refreshment. In the morning the officials by the order of the king rushed in order that in the Archbishop's absence they might confiscate all, but seeing and hearing him, they were confused into silence by his presence.

5) The king employed a stern hand against the Lord of Canterbury and his followers. He peremptorily commanded that on the appointed day he should render an account of the offices entrusted to him. When time approached, those called came, and when a council convened at Northampton, the Lord of Canterbury was brought to trial. While he sat with his bishops in the closed room, the doors were barred by the order of the king to prevent an exit. The king's party charged that through all these years the Archbishop had in hand the vacant bishoprics, abbacies, and many revenues of the king, without rendering any account of them. The king demanded an explanation. "About these," said the Archbishop, "we wish to consult more prudent men and to give you an answer after the consultation." After

¹³ Compare Mark 6.49

this remark of the Archbishop, there was an interval of silence. Gilbert, the bishop of London¹⁴ and Dean of the Church of Canterbury, and accordingly the next to Thomas in rank, said, "Father, recall from what condition the king has raised you, and what favor he has conferred on you. If you consider the evil times and the ruin which your resistance to his majesty will bring upon the Catholic Church and all of us, then you ought not only give up the Archbishopric of Canterbury, but ten times as much were it necessary; you ought to yield. And perhaps if the king saw this humility in you he would restore everything to you." "Enough," said the Archbishop; "it is evident from what motive you speak."

6) Then Henry, bishop of Winchester,¹⁵ resumed the argument, "This form of a meeting is very pernicious to the Catholic Church and it concerns and confounds us all. If our Archbishop, the Primate of all England, shall leave us the example that at the beck and nod of the king, the care of souls committed to his authority, the bishop ought yield, what will happen to the church if nothing is done according to law but everything is confounded according to one's wish? 'As with the priest so it shall be with the people.'¹⁶ And

¹⁴Gilbert Foliot, one of the ablest politicians and scholars of the time, bishop of London 1148-1186.

¹⁵Henry of Blois, brother to King Stephen, bishop of Winchester 1139-1171.

¹⁶Isaias 24.2; Osee 4.9.

Hilary, the bishop of Chichester¹⁷ (he was boastful in speeches) added, "Unless the need of the times and the confusion of the church demands otherwise, one ought to abide by the words of the sentence. But where the authority of the canons is wavering, severity should be reduced to a minimum, lest it completely destroy what a little mildness and dispensation would remedy. It is my opinion, therefore, that temporarily we ought to yield to the king's wish, lest in our haste we pass a decree, the retraction of which would be harder and quite embarrassing." Then Robert, bishop of Lincoln,¹⁸ a plain, blunt man, said, "It is evident that this man's life blood is being sought, and that of necessity he must give up either the archbishopric or his life. How he will benefit from the archbishopric if he lose his life, that I do not see." Bartholomew, bishop of Exeter¹⁹ said, "It is well known that the times are bad, and if we can, under the guise of dissimulation, survive the attack of the storm unharmed, that should be our first consideration. But we shall never achieve that goal without opposition unless much of our rigidity be discarded. The emergency of the situation requires it, since this persecution is not of a general but of a personal nature. It is better to risk a single life in this one case, than to expose the whole

¹⁷Hilary, bishop of Chichester 1147-1169.

¹⁸Robert of Hereford, bishop of Lincoln 1148-1168.

¹⁹Bartholomew, bishop of Exeter 1161-1184.

church of England to inevitable danger." Roger, the bishop of Worcester,²⁰ when asked what he thought about this, so worded his reply that even his denial made his views plain. He said, "I shall give no advice in this matter, for if on the one hand I say that the care of the souls enjoined by God ought to be dropped at the whim and threat of the king, my words would stifle my conscience and invite damnation; on the other hand, if I advise resistance to the king, here are his men to listen. Through them the king will be notified immediately and I shall be thrown out of the synagogue.²¹ Thereafter my fate will be with the public enemies and the condemned. For this reason I neither state the first nor advise the second."

7) At this point of the discussion they sat for some time in silence, and there was no one who would add any more. Then they sought means by which they could open the door (for they were locked in). The Lord of Canterbury said, "I wish to speak with the two earls who are with the king," whom he named. The door was opened; they were called and quickly entered believing to hear what would satisfy the king's wish. To these two standing before him, the Lord of Canterbury said, "We have discussed the whole matter for which the king convened us, and because we do not have here present those who are better

²⁰Roger, bishop of Worcester 1163-1179.

²¹Compare John 9.22; 12.42.

informed about the matter, therefore we ask adjournment until tomorrow. Then as God will inspire us we will give our answer. The bishops of Rochester and London were sent to take this message to the king. The bishop of London, however, "like a crafty fox,"²² falsified the message to his own advantage. He told the king that the Lord of Canterbury demanded a delay for preparing means, as if he intended on the appointed day to render an account about the charges. Thus the Archbishop of Canterbury would be more obliged to comply with the king's wish. The earls therefore were directed to the Archbishop, bringing from the king the demanded delay on condition that he sanction what of their own accord was suggested by the bishops to the king. When the Archbishop heard this, he remarked that he had not included this in the mandata, nor did he sanction the suggestion made to the king. But he promised that on the following day, by the inspiration of God, he would come and answer as it would be given to him from above. The bishop of London blushed when he saw that he himself had fallen into the trap²³ which he prepared to ensnare his father. The meeting was dismissed that day and both parties adjourned. Many knights and others who gathered there with the Lord of Canterbury, filled with fear of the king, and no longer taking their stand with him, stayed apart. When he learned this, he

²²Horace, *Ars Poetica* 437.

²³Compare *Ecclesiasticus* 27.29.

ordered his servants to go into the highways and byways and call the poor, the lame, and the feeble,²⁴ saying that through such an army he could find a speedier victory than through those who in the time of temptation basely fall away.²⁵ And his house was filled with guests²⁶ and when that day was spent, with joy in the Lord, no mention was made of the previous disturbance.

8) The following day early in the morning our Lord Archbishop was stricken with the passio iliaca²⁷ (for he thus suffered often) so seriously that he could not rise from bed. This caused a longer delay, and his enemies thought that he refused to come to the court of the king. Messengers were sent who sharply demanded an explanation. The Archbishop said, "If only this pain will cease tomorrow with the help of God I shall appear." After he spent that day and the nightly vigil with greatest devotion, he arose in the morning for solemn Mass. He donned the sacred vestments as usual and prayed for help through the merits of the Blessed Martyr Stephen. He ordered the Introit of the Mass to be begun, "For princes sat, etc."²⁸ and he completed devoutly the whole service with all that it included. To the royal officials who were present and silently watched, this seemed strangely

²⁴Compare Luke 14.21.

²⁵Compare Luke 8.13.

²⁶Compare Matthew 22.10

²⁷passio iliaca - perhaps lumbago or some kidney disease.

²⁸Compare Psalms 118.23.

significant. (On that very day the calendar marked the centennial anniversary of the arrival of Normans in England.)²⁹ After he finished the Holy Mass, he removed the mitre and pallium from the shoulders but kept on his other vestments, and putting on his clerical cape he went to the court. On his way to the royal chamber where the king awaited him, he carried the cross in his own hands³⁰ to the very door, while the bishops, who thought it unbecoming, followed. Robert of Hereford, however, ran up to him and said, "Father, permit me to act as your chaplain and carry the cross before your Lordship; thus it will be more becoming." The Archbishop said, "It is better that I carry the banner whose protection keeps me safe; with his banner in sight, I do not doubt under what leader I fight." To this the bishop of London replied, "If the king sees you enter thus armed, he will unsheathe a stronger sword against your head, then you will see of what good your weapons are." "That we leave to God," answered the Archbishop. The bishop of London said, "You have always been foolish in the past, and this foolishness, I see, you will never outgrow in the future." And the procession went on. When the king heard that the Archbishop of Canterbury had come armed, he hid or put away the sword about which the bishop of London spoke and quickly retired to an inner chamber. The

²⁹October 14, 1066.

³⁰Compare John 19.17.

Archbishop sat down alone with a few of his clerics opposite the bishops, who were united among themselves in place and opinion.

9) Finally the bishops were called to the king's council chamber, while the Archbishop was left in suspense. Time dragged while the condemnation of the innocent was sought. The Archbishop with a bold face assumed steadfastness. Roger, the archbishop of York going outside spoke to his clerics, those whom he met (for there were Master Robert the Great and Osbert de Arundel).³¹ "Let us go away from here; we ought not see what will soon happen to my Lord of Canterbury." To this Master Robert replied, "No, I shall not leave until I see what is God's will in this matter if for God and His justice he will have struggled to the death; he could not end his life better or more beautifully." The archbishop of York then left the king's chamber and Bartholomew, bishop of Exeter, entering fell at the feet of the Lord of Canterbury and said, "My Father, have mercy on yourself; have mercy on us too, for today we all perish because of hatred for you. A decree has just gone forth,³² from the king that henceforth every one who stands by the Lord of Canterbury is considered a public enemy and must be punished by death." It is said that Jocelyn, bishop of Salisbury,³³ and William, bishop of Norwich,³⁴ who still

³¹William, earl of Arundel 1139-1176.

³²Compare Luke 2.1.

³³Jocelyn, bishop of Salisbury 1142-1184.

³⁴William of Turbe, bishop of Norwich 1146-1174.

resisted, were immediately dragged off to the torture of bodily mutilation. They too begged the Archbishop for their own safety. Thomas turning to the bishop of Exeter said,

"Flee hence, for 'you do not know the things of God!'"³⁵

Finally from the king's chamber all the bishops rushed out at the same time to the Lord of Canterbury. One of them, the eloquent Hilary, bishop of Chichester, burst into speech.

"Once upon time you were our Archbishop and we were obliged to obey you. You swore fealty to our Lord and king; you swore that his life and person and earthly dignity would be preserved in safety, as well as the customs which he insists must be observed. But these very customs you have striven to destroy, especially such as concerned his earthly dignity and prestige. It is for this reason that we hold you guilty of perjury, and a perjured archbishop we have no obligation to obey for the future. Therefore we place ourselves and all we have under the protection of the Pope and charge you to answer for all this to his Holiness." He appointed the day. "I hear," said Thomas. Then the bishops withdrew to a place opposite and remained sitting by themselves for a long time in deep silence.

10) At last the counts and the barons and a very large crowd proceeded from the king to the Lord of Canterbury. Robert, the earl of Leicester, was first to speak. He said, "The king commands you to come and give an explanation of your charges, as you promised yesterday. Otherwise hear your sentence."

³⁵Matthew 16.23; Mark 8.33.

"Sentence," said the Archbishop rising, "indeed, Lord earl, my son, hear me first. It is no secret how intimate and how faithful to the king I have been by this world's standards. For this reason it pleased him that I should be promoted to the archbishopric of the Church of Canterbury. God knows that I did not wish it, for I realized my infirmity, and rather for the love of the king than of God, I yielded. Today that is clear enough when God turned himself and the king away from me. Yet in my promotion, when the election was made in the presence of Henry, the king's son and heir, who was appointed for this purpose, the question arose, under what condition they assigned me to the Church of Canterbury. The reply was, 'Free and independent of all secular obligations.' So then, free and independent, I have neither the wish nor the obligation to answer further about those things from which I was freed."

"This is different," said the earl, "from what the bishop of London told the king." Thomas added, "Son and earl, listen further. By as much as the soul is worthier than the body, by so much more are you bound to obey God,³⁶ and me rather than your earthly king. Neither law nor reason permits children to judge or condemn their father. Wherefore I reject your sentence, that of the king, or that of anyone else. I am to be judged under God only by the Pope to whose presence before you all I here appeal. I place the Church of Canterbury, my rank,

³⁶Compare Acts 5.29.

my dignity, and everything that pertains to it under God's protection and his. In the same manner, you, my brethren and fellow-bishops who have obeyed man rather than God,³⁷ I summon to the presence and judgment of the Pope and so fortified by the authority of the church and the Apostolic See, I take my departure."

11) While he was leaving, courtiers and the envious followed him with insulting invectives and abuses, calling him a traitor and a perjurer. When he reached the outer gate, the door was locked. He could not go out, nor could the porter be found. And as he was thus held in doubt and fear, by the will of God it happened that there were many keys in a bunch hanging on the wall. The servant of Thomas took the keys and tried one after another until he opened the door.

12) When they were coming out, a multitude of persons suffering of "King's Evil,"³⁸ of poor and weak, shouted and said, "Blessed be God, who delivered and saved his servant³⁹ from the face of the enemy."⁴⁰ For it was believed that he was already dead. A crowd of invalids preceding and following them, with people and clerics, led in joy to the monastery. Seeing the exaltation of the people who followed him, he said,

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Horace, Ars Poetica 453. "King's Evil" so called because the patient was treated with costly remedies. Perhaps it was gout or jaundice.

³⁹ Compare Psalms 85.2.

⁴⁰ Compare Psalms 43.17.

"What a glorious procession escorts us 'from the face of tribulation.'⁴¹ Let the poor of Christ, partakers of my distress⁴² all enter and feast together in the Lord." And the house and the courts everywhere were filled with guests.⁴³

13) The bishops of London and Chichester arrived during the banquet, saying that they found a way for peace. When Archbishop demanded to know under what plan, they said, "Between you and the king there is a pecuniary dispute. If therefore, you place temporarily as a security the manors of Otford and Wingham in the hands of the king, we believe that thereby he will be placated and will return the manors, remit the money and restore you quickly to his favor." To this the Archbishop replied, "The manor of Hecca, as I was told, once belonged to the Church of Canterbury and the king only holds it in dominion. Although he seeks its restitution, still I have no hope that in these times a retribution will be made completely to the Church of Canterbury. Nevertheless, before I shall renounce my right which the Church of Canterbury is said to have in that manor, whether it be for the sake of settling the dispute or regaining the royal favor, I would rather expose this head of mine to every danger." He touched his head. The indignant bishops returned and reported this to the king and his wrath was aroused.

⁴¹Isaias 19.20.

⁴²Compare Apocalypse 1.9.

⁴³Compare Matthew 22.10.

14) Two bishops were sent to the king to ask safe conduct for the Archbishop of Canterbury in returning to his church. The king said that he would consult his courtiers about it the next day and then give him a reply. The Archbishop, realizing the delay to be dangerous and that a snare could thus be prepared for him, began to think about flight. For that night he ordered a bed to be prepared between the two altars in the Church of Saint Andrew. When with a few others he reached there, he prostrated himself and began to chant the seven penitential psalms. Then the litany was said and he genuflected at the name of each saint. After he finished it, he was worn out, and threw himself on the bed pretending to take an opportunity for rest.

15) Later secretly departing through a rear gate, accompanied by one faithful servant, he disappeared. In the morning a sudden and sinister rumor forced his followers to hide and take measures for their own safety; however, it was announced in public that no one should lay hands on the Lord of Canterbury. While this confusion was spreading around, Thomas hid himself for some time. At last coming to Estrey (a priory of the Church of Canterbury) he delayed there in seclusion for a few days. There was an opening in the wall (which was near to the church). He heard Mass with the people, and even had the happiness of receiving Holy Communion without the priest's knowledge of his identity. A certain cleric, who was in this

secret, brought the kiss of peace. After the services, Thomas devoutly gave the people his episcopal blessing before they dispersed, although they were not aware of it.

16) Finally having obtained a passage across the English Channel with much difficulty, for he was driven hither and thither, he succeeded in reaching Flanders in a roundabout way. It was necessary to make the journey as he was not accustomed, on foot; he was dressed in the alb and monk's cape put over the shoulders. He went through in storm and rain and mud; while thus they were travelling they passed some young men, one of whom held in his hand a hawk. When the Archbishop saw the bird, forgetting his exile and recalling his earlier days, he directed his attention to it. One of the young men noticed this and said, "If I am not mistaken, here is the Archbishop of Canterbury." The other replied, "You are foolish; why would the Archbishop travel thus?" The Archbishop was terror stricken, fearing to be detected, and perhaps it was his apprehension that took from him all liking for that empty sport.

17) All worn out he arrived at the town of Clairmarais, and there he rested. Then proceeding for a short while, he lodged in the hermitage which once belonged to St. Bertin,⁴⁴

⁴⁴St. Bertin, abbot of St. Omer, lived about 615-709. At an early age he entered the monastery of Luxeuil, under the rule of St. Columban. When he was sent to assist St. Omer in evangelization of the Morini in northern France, he built a small house which served him as a humble dwelling. Perhaps this was the hermitage to which St. Bertin returned when in advanced age he resigned his position, and which bore his name.

near the abbey, where he met some of his servants who had left England. From there they led him away in a boat (for the journey was by water) and hurried to the monastery. On the way one of them said, "My Lord, you are weary with the journey⁴⁵ and today we are going to men exceedingly kind, who will congratulate you and rejoice in the Lord that you escaped unharmed. Upon your arrival do them the favor of permitting that they eat meat." The lord of Canterbury replied, "Today is Wednesday and a day of abstinence." The speaker rejoined, "Perhaps they have no great supply of fish and we will have to accommodate ourselves to them." "That is for God to provide," said Thomas. While thus he spoke, by the will of God, a large fish leaping from the water threw itself into the lap of the holy man. The fish was of the kind they call brenna. The crossing was made pleasant for them in the glory of the Lord. And thus he was led to Saint Bertin's and there kindly received. He planned to await his followers there.

18) Meanwhile a horrible confusion disturbed the state of affairs.⁴⁶ Everyone looked to his own interests, and sought to please the king by finding an occasion to destroy the anointed one of the Lord.⁴⁷ Therefore the king's personal embassy was sent to the Pope, including the Archbishop of London, the Bishops of Chichester, of Exeter, of Worcester, of Lisieux.

⁴⁵Compare John 4.6.

⁴⁶in the year 1164.

⁴⁷Compare Mark 3.6; Matthew 12.14.

Along with them went a large number of barons and nobles in splendid attire, with gifts and bribes by which as best as they could they might pervert the mind and blind the eyes⁴⁸ of the wise. They believed that by this procedure the Roman Court, occasionally wavering in such matters, could be influenced to that which they themselves desire. Perhaps such counsel had come to the Pope from some of the bishops aligned against the Archbishop of Canterbury. Upon their arrival at Sens⁴⁹ they found first, fear of a public disturbance which could arise from the king's anger; they found also that the hope of gain⁵⁰ drove many cardinals to waver, and a dissension arose among them.⁵¹ Some said that the Archbishop of Canterbury was a defender of ecclesiastical liberty and was supporting a just cause; others called him a disturber of peace and harmony, saying that this boldness of his should rather be checked than supported. The suggestion of the enemy spread so widely, that the messengers whom the Lord of Canterbury sent ahead, men of outstanding virtue and knowledge, did not deserve to be received by the cardinals even with a kiss of welcome. They were distressed seeing the cause of their lord threatened.

⁴⁸Compare Exodus 23.8; Deuteronomy 16.19.

⁴⁹In 1162 Pope Alexander III was driven from Italy by Frederick Barbarossa and the Antipope, Victor IV. During this time he remained in France.

⁵⁰Compare Acts 16.19.

⁵¹Compare Acts 15.39; 23.7; John 7.43; 10.19.

19) The next day, however, when the pope sat in the tribunal, he called a council from the assembled cardinals. The messengers of Thomas were also present in order to see the very end. Opposite to them were the messengers of the king. First to speak was the bishop of London, leader of the group: "Holy Father," he began, "solicitous care for the welfare of the Catholic Church is your concern, so that those who are wise may profit by your prudence and your example of conduct, and those who are unwise may learn wisdom when taken to task and corrected by Apostolic authority. But in your judgment that man is considered not wise who, trusting to his own wisdom,⁵² strives to disturb the harmony of his brethren, the peace of the church and the devotion of the king. Lately a dissension arose⁵³ between the state and the church in England from a slight and trivial occasion which could have been easily set right if ordinary care had been used. But because the Lord of Canterbury used his own exceptional judgment and not ours, he was more insistent than was right, for he had not considered the evil times or the possible dangers of such insistence. He prepared snares for himself and for his brethren. If our assent favored him in his proposition, the matter would be much worse. But because he could not have our connivance as he wanted, (which he had no right to do,) he tried to turn the blame for his rashness on the king and on us, nay, on the entire kingdom.

⁵²Compare Jeremias 9.23.

⁵³Compare Acts 15.39; 23.7; John 7.43; 10.19.

Therefore to give color to his own infamy of mutual fraternity, even though no violence was brought upon him, or threats used against him, he fled, as it is written, 'The wicked man fleeth when no man pursueth.'⁵⁴ The Pope replied, "Spare, brother." "I shall spare him, Lord," answered the Bishop of London, to which the Pope responded, "I did not say spare him, but yourself." At this thundering voice of the Pope the Bishop of London lost his wits and was not able to continue further.

20) Then Hilary, the eloquent bishop of Chichester, took up the argument. He put more confidence in his fluency than in justice and truth, a fact which the sequel made clear. "My Lord and Father," he said, "it is the privilege of your holiness to bring back promptly to a proper state of peace and concord, that what was done amiss to the destruction of all, lest one man's inordinate presumption should be the ruin of many and create a schism in the Catholic Church. Our Lord of Canterbury considered this too little for while he abandoned the counsel of the wise he consulted only himself, and as a result has brought trouble and anxiety upon himself and his followers, the king and the kingdom, the clergy and the people. And certainly such conduct was not becoming, nor did it comport with his high position; in fact it never so comported." (Thus Hilary of Chichester grammaticized, saying oportuebat). "His followers, too, should have known that their approval of his procedure did not comport with prudence." Hearing how this man, a fluent grammarian, "leapt from port to port," all burst out in laughter, ⁵⁴Proverbs 28.1.

and one of them interrupted with, "What a hard time you've had in coming to port!" With which words he so abashed the bishop that thereafter he was silent and speechless.

21) The Archbishop of York, observing the downfall of his two predecessors, endeavored to restrain his feelings. "Holy Father," he said, "no one is better acquainted with the character and activities of the Archbishop of Canterbury than myself. It has been typical of him from the first that, once he has set his mind on a thing, he will not let it be torn from him without a struggle. This fact makes it easy to believe that his latest display of obstinacy is but another instance of his wonted thoughtlessness. And I see no way for his correction, unless to this end your discretion will lay a heavy hand upon him. To one who knows, my statement will suffice."⁵⁵

22) The Bishop of Exeter then added, "Holy Father, it is not necessary to linger long over this matter. This case can not be ended in the absence of the Archbishop of Canterbury. We therefore request legates who can hear the cause between the king and the Archbishop, and having heard, reach a decision." Then he was silent, nor did anyone of the bishops after him add more.

23) Finally the Earl of Arundel seeing this (he was standing in his rank with the rest of the soldiers) asked for a hearing. When all was silent, he said, "My lord, what the bishops here have spoken, we, being unlearned, failed to understand.

⁵⁵Compare Plautus, Persa 4.7.9.

Therefore, it is necessary that we explain as best we can, why we are sent; that is, not to quarrel or to speak ill of anyone in the presence of the Pope, to whose will and authority the whole world rightly bows. But we have come assuredly for this purpose, namely, to present to you before the whole Roman Curia the love and loyalty of the king he has always borne and still bears you. Through whom is this loyalty shown? Through the greatest and noblest of his subjects that he has in all his lands, that is, through archbishops, bishops, earls, and barons. Greater than these he cannot find in all his dominions and if he had, he would have sent them out of reverence for you and the holy Roman Church. To this we may add that your paternity has sufficiently experienced my lord king's loyalty and devotion in his very accession, when he placed himself and all that he had entirely at your will. And certainly there is not within the unity of the Catholic Church over which you rule in Christ, one more faithful, in our opinion, or more devout towards God or more anxious to do his duty in preserving peace. The Lord of Canterbury, too, is no less well qualified for one of his rank and position; prudent and discreet in the business of his office--although some consider him rather too sharp. Were it not for the dissension which now exists between the king and the Archbishop, the kingdom and church would rejoice together in peace and concord under a good prince and a very good pastor.

This therefore is our prayer, that your Grace will watch carefully to remove this dissension and restore peace and love." Thus elegantly spoke the Earl--but in his own language--so that his modesty and discretion were highly commended by all.

24) To this the Pope listened carefully and replied, "We know, son earl, and remember the great devotion with which the King of England conferred many rich benefits upon us; and it is our 'heart's desire'⁵⁶ that, when opportunity offers, with the help of God we may repay him well. But since you have asked for legates, legates you shall have." They kissed the Pope's foot and then withdrew, believing that they succeeded in their mission, for they hoped that the cardinals might be bribed. Wherefore, after the consultation the Bishop of London returned to ask the Pope with what authority the cardinals would come. "With all necessary authority," the Pope replied. "But," said the Bishop of London, "it is plenipotentiaries that we desire, to forestall any appeal." "That," said the Pope, 'is my own prerogative, and I shall not give it to another,'⁵⁷ and certainly, when the defendant is to be judged, he will be judged by us, because no consideration permits us to send him back to England to be judged by his adversaries and among his enemies.⁵⁸ This answer dashed the cherished hopes of the opposition, and they departed to tell their king what answer they received.

⁵⁶Isaias 26.8.

⁵⁷Isaias 42.8; 48.11.

⁵⁸Compare 1 Corinthians 6.1.

25) All this happened at Sens--for the Pope was there at the time. While the king's party was returning, the Archbishop with his retinue approached the court and was really received coldly by the cardinals, whose noses were infected with the "odor of gain,"⁵⁹ all for their own profit. However, sent into the presence of the Pope and after an exchange of commonplace remarks, Thomas received an order on the following morning to explain in the presence of his brethren the causes of his exile. The next day he was asked to present himself to the Pope, and while his companions were asking who of them would explain this cause, each one excused himself so that the burden of the account rested⁶⁰ with the Archbishop. He was sitting next to the Pope and out of reverence wished to rise but was bidden to be seated, and thus give his account. Without any preparation of his own, enlightened by God, thus he began:⁶¹ "Although we are not very wise, still we are not so foolish as to give up the king, all his court and all his possessions in exchange for nothing at all. For if we should want to satisfy his will in all ways in his authority or kingdom, there would not be no one who would obey us willingly. And as long as we were struggling under such conditions with him, what did not succeed according to our wishes? However, from the time we entered on another path,

⁵⁹Juvenal 14.204.

⁶⁰Compare Zacharias 9.1.

⁶¹Compare Matthew 10.19; Luke 12.11-12; 21.14.

mindful of our profession and obedience which we have undertaken for God, the affection which he formerly had for us cooled. Even if we would wish to depart from this position to regain the king's favor, we would not need intervention. But because the Church of Canterbury is accustomed to be the sun of the west, whose brilliance has been dimmed in our day, we would willingly suffer for the Lord any tortures, even a thousand kinds of deaths, if so many might occur, rather than accept with indifference the evils which weigh it down in these days. And in order that it may not seem curious to have begun this out of vain-glory, it is necessary to bear it with affection and visible faith. And as he produced the writing in which were embodied those customs which were the point at issue, he said with tears, "Behold, these customs the King of England decrees against the liberty of the Catholic Church. It is for you to see if these customs can be ignored with no loss of souls."

26) This reading of the customs moved all to tears, nor could those restrain themselves who previously were opposing with all their might. Now they were praising God that in that distress He reserved for Himself at least one who would rise to champion the church of God against its opponents. And those who before held different views in this matter now came to the agreement that the universal church ought to be supported in the person of the Archbishop of Canterbury.

27) The next day when the cardinals sat with the Pope in an inner chamber, the Lord of Canterbury was present and said, "My Fathers and Lords, no one is permitted to lie, particularly in the face of God or in your presence; hence, I confess, unreluctantly but sadly, that these troubles of the Church of England are my fault. I rose into Christ's fold but not through the right door⁶² not as one whom the canonical election called but whom fear of civil power thrust into office. Although I undertook this burden unwillingly, yet, human regard and not divine will led me to it. What wonder then that it turned out to my misfortune? However, should I have renounced the privilege of episcopal authority given to me, as the bishops urged me to do, it would be a pernicious example both to the desire of the princes and to the will of the Catholic Church. Therefore, I deferred this until I should come to your presence. Now, realizing my uncanonical step, and for fear of still worse results, and seeing that my strength is unequal to the burden, lest my tenure of office result in the ruin of the flock of which I have been given a pastor's charge, into your hands I resign the Archbishopric of Canterbury." And with a sob he wept and drove all who were present into tears.

28) Who could refrain from tears on hearing these words?⁶³ So then the Archbishop left with his men who were scandalized by

⁶²Compare John 10.1.

⁶³Compare Virgil, Aeneid 2.6.

these words,⁶⁴ and who undoubtedly began to despair already; meanwhile the Pope began a conference with the cardinals about this matter. Now and then a contradicting opinion arose. The first party thought that here was an opportunity which could more easily pacify the king, if the welfare of the church were entrusted to other hands and a better man⁶⁵ be found for the office at a later time. These were from the pharisees.⁶⁶ However, others "who had their eyes opened"⁶⁷ took a different view of the matter. Any man, thought they, who exposed his riches and reputation, his standing and prestige, even life itself, to the greatest of dangers in his defense of the church, should not be deprived of his rights at the mere wish of the king. If he were to be so deprived, two possibilities would follow. First, to others in similar situation he might be an example of resisting royal authority, if his rights should be preserved inviolate; secondly, should he fall, all bishops would fall, and never in the future would anyone dare to oppose the king. In the latter case the Catholic Church will hang in the balance and the prestige of the Pope will be lost. "Therefore it is necessary," they said, "that this man be restored even if unwilling; and he who fights for us all must be supported in every manner." This opinion pleased all except the pharisees.

⁶⁴ Compare Matthew 15.12; Mark 4.17.

⁶⁵ Compare Psalms 108.8; Acts 1.20.

⁶⁶ Compare Mark 12.13; Luke 7.36.

⁶⁷ Numbers 24.16.

29) Summoning the Archbishop and his followers, the Pope gave this decision: "My brother, 'the zeal for the house of the Lord'⁶⁸ which you had and have is evident to us; clear too, is it with what a conscience you made yourself a wall against the enemy; it is clear what a frank confession you made about the beginning of your administration, and your resignation carried with it the power of atonement. Surely then, you can receive anew from my hand the episcopal investiture; now we shall consider you pardoned. And rightly, since we know you to be a man tried in every kind of temptation, provident and discreet, dear to God and to men, loyal at all times to us and the Holy Roman Church. And just as you have been a sharer and solitary partner of our persecution,⁶⁹ so by the will of God we shall fail you in nothing as long as there is a spark of life in us. But whereas till now you "abounded in luxury"⁷⁰ from now on you shall learn to be what you ought to be, consoler of the poor, and that you cannot learn except under the tuition of the mother of religion - poverty itself. We have, then, thought it wise to entrust you to Christ's poor, to be trained by the Abbot of Pontigny and his brethren. (The Abbot was there present by arrangement.) Nor do I say that you are to be trained elegantly, but simply, as becomes an exile and athlete of Christ; and among the monks with a few friends and

⁶⁸ Psalms 68.10.

⁶⁹ Compare 2 Peter 2.13.

⁷⁰ Canticles 8.5.

relatives, (your other companions being divided among friends) your life ought to be spent, until the day of consolation⁷¹ shall approach and the time of peace shall descend from above. Meanwhile 'be of good courage'⁷² and resist manfully those who disturb peace."

30) Having received the papal benediction the Lord of Canterbury with a few of his followers (since the rest were destined to other places as has been said,) entered Pontigny. He judged himself unworthy to have received the pastoral charge from the Apostolic hand unless he also received the religious habit, because in the episcopal see he had to rule monks as his first begotten children. He also learned that, from the earliest foundation of the Church of Canterbury, nearly all the pastors and bishops were monks, nor according to the ancient histories had there ever been a schism in the kingdom or a transfer occurred except when the administrator was of another profession.⁷³ The Pope, therefore, sent him through messengers a monastic habit, which he himself blessed. It was made from thick, rough, woollen cloth. "Wherefore," he said to the messengers, "tell the Lord Archbishop that we have sent him such a habit as we happen to have, not such as we would wish." The Abbot of Pontigny invested the Lord of Canterbury in the presence of only a few persons. There was standing by one of his

⁷¹Lamentations 1.21.

⁷²Tobias 5.13; 7.20.

⁷³i.e. secular.

followers, (he who previously proposed the question at Glarendon, "How much of virtue has he left for himself who lost his conscience and reputation?"⁷⁴ who, when he saw the hood on the habit too small in proportion to the whole, (it had been so made purposely,) said, "whether this habit is according to the rule or not, I do not know, but it is plain that the Pope has not fitted well the hood to the habit. Thomas smiled and said, "This was done on purpose, lest you mock me again as you have done previously." The man asked, "Where and when was that?" "The day before yesterday," he answered, "while I was putting on the sacred vestments for the solemn Mass, and when I had put on the cincture I seemed stuffed out, you asked why I was so large behind. Now if a large hood hung from my shoulders, there would be formed a hump and you could almost laugh at me as hump-backed. Therefore, this was cautiously provided for me, against such insults." In fact, he wore a hair shirt from the neck to the knees, unknown even to friends, and when he was girt closely, the stiffness of the hairshirt protruded and thus he appeared fat, whereas he was emaciated although pleasant of face.

31) Meanwhile as the legates were coming and going in order to restore peace, the Pope and the king decided to hold a meeting at an appointed time and place so that by their conference a way for peace could be more easily found. The king said that he would come, but in the absence of the Archbishop

⁷⁴Page 40 Alexander Llewelyn.

of Canterbury; because, the king insisted that should Thomas be present he would not see the face of the Pope. The Archbishop of Canterbury remarked to the Pope that there was no reason for the king to have conference without his presence, since he knew his ways very well. Thomas said, "If there will not be a careful interpreter who can draw the plans out of the mind of the king, the apostolic faith can be quickly misled by his ambiguous words. And if the king will know beforehand the weaknesses of the Pope he will set obstacles in his path." When the Pope heard this, modestly he replied to the king, that for centuries there was no precedent to throw anyone of the fold out of the Roman Church at the whim of some ruler, especially one exiled for justice, and it was a part of the privilege and power given to the Holy See to come to the aid of oppressed outcasts, even in the face of the king's anger and violent attacks of wicked men. The messengers indignant left to report this to the king. The Pope started out to return to Rome, and the Archbishop accompanied him as far as Bourges, whence, with permission and blessing, he returned to Pontigny. Never again would he see the Pope alive.

32) Thus we are following historically from the Council of Clarendon⁷⁵ until the Pope's retreat from France, that in the meantime all events may be clear, since the letters written do not sufficiently explain the affair. The following letters are

⁷⁵January 13-30, 1164, to November 23, 1165. Compare section 1, page 39 of this thesis.

clear enough until the very end of the negotiation and apparently need not the assistance of history, with the exception of that which took place in the conference of the king when the management of the case of the Archbishop of Canterbury was entrusted by the Pope to Simon, Prior of Montdieu and Bernard of Cerilo. On another occasion the restoration of peace was disturbed because the Lord of Canterbury did not want to omit the words, "Saving his order," since once the king refused the kiss of peace to the Archbishop of Canterbury. All this is quite clear from the letters placed in their proper order. There it is as it happened. It was suggested to the king that the Lord of Canterbury wished to submit himself to the king's decision, consequently he received him more graciously. Therefore, in the presence of many who have gathered from both kingdoms the Archbishop fell to the feet of the King of England saying, "The whole controversy which has arisen between us I commend to your decision, saving God's honor." When the king heard these words he immediately grew enraged, and said to the King of France, "My lord King, listen if you please. Whatever his lordship of Canterbury disapproves he will say is contrary to God's honor, and so on all occasions he will get the advantage over me, but that I may not seem to want to resist God's honor, I shall say this. There have been in England before me many kings, some of greater and some of less power than mine. There have also been many Archbishops before him--great and holy men.

Therefore, let him do to me as the greatest and holiest of his predecessors has done to the least of mine, and I am satisfied." On all sides was heard, "The king is humbling himself enough." Thomas remained silent for a while. The King of France added, "Lord Archbishop, do you wish to be greater than these holy men, or better than Peter? Why do you doubt? Behold, peace at the door." To this the Archbishop answered. "It is true that there have been archbishops, each in his own time greater and better than I. They extirpated some but not all abuses against God. If all would have been cut out with the roots who would now rouse the fire of temptation against us? How would we be found in comparison with them worthy of honor and glory? Hence it is far better that we do this at God's inspiration that, as on the one hand, we have worked with them, so we should share their rewards. If anyone of them grew tepid by chance or transgressed his authority in anything we are not bound to imitate that example of tepidity or excess. We accuse Peter for denying Christ, but we praise Peter for exposing in every way the attack of Nero, even risking his head. Because Peter did not want to agree with him and he could not conceal his feeling without danger to his soul, therefore he laid down his life as a conqueror of his enemies. From such pressure the Catholic Church arose and grew. Our fathers have suffered because they did not want to withhold the name of Christ, and should I suppress the honor of Christ that a man's favor be restored to me? Banish,

banish the thought." he cried. The nobles of both kingdoms arose, condemning the arrogance of the Archbishop as an impediment to peace. One of the counts from among them, protested, "Because he rejected the advice and will of both kingdoms he deserves the help of neither; rejected by England, let France not receive him."

33) After the conference, with much grumbling each returned to his own quarters, leaving the Archbishop with his fellow-exiles in deepest desperation. After every conference, under the pretext of consolation and reverence, the King of France had been accustomed to visit the Archbishop. Now, however, neither himself nor through any of his attendants did he pay a visit to Thomas. Three days he spent in close proximity to the King of France, yet Louis did not approach him or any one of his party. During such negotiations, the Archbishop was usually provided from the liberality of the king. After that conference, and during the interval we have mentioned, absolutely nothing was given to him. On the way sometimes the Archbishop of Sens, and sometimes the Bishop of Poitiers or someone else helped him as if he were a beggar. This situation terrified many of his followers, as if already they were destitute of all human aid.

34) The third day after their journey, while they were in a hostelry sitting and talking together about the affairs, they discussed how they could change the situation. The Lord of

Canterbury was cheerful, as if he had no troubles and was invincible to the attacks of fate; he answered the condolences of his friends with a gentle smile. "I alone am attacked. When I shall yield there will be no one to persecute you so bitterly. After you obtain your property, you will no longer be destitute of your friends. Take courage and fear not."⁷⁶ They said, "We pity you more, for we do not know how you, a man of such authority, deprived of your most prominent and eldest friends can alter the situation." The Lord of Canterbury replied, "I commit my troubles to God. Since the door of both kingdoms is closed for me, nor can I turn to the Roman robbers for consolation, for they are despoiling the booty of the poor without choice, I must follow another way. I have heard, however, that there are more generous people in Burgundy across the Saone River, up to the regions of Provence. To these people with one companion I will go on foot. Perhaps when they see our affliction, they will take compassion on us and minister for a time to our needs until God shall visit us."⁷⁷ God is able to be with his own to the depth of their greatest misery, and he who distrusts God 'is worse than an infidel.'⁷⁸ Immediately the mercy of God appeared at the door. A servant of the King of France came and said, "Lord, the king calls you to the court."

⁷⁶Compare Isaias 35.4; 2 Paralipomenon 32.7.

⁷⁷Compare Luke 1.78.

⁷⁸1 Timothy 5.8.

In answer to this one of them said, "In order to expel us from the kingdom." The Archbishop of Canterbury replied, "You are not a prophet, nor a son of a prophet; do not forebode evil."⁷⁹

35) When they came, they found King Louis seated with downcast features and he did not arise before the Lord of Canterbury, as was his custom. This fact from the very beginning was ill-foreboding. After those called seated themselves languidly, they remained thus for a long time. The King with his head bent down as if he grieved and reluctantly pondered how he would expel them from his kingdom; and these as if they feared the same. While he burst into tears with a groan he leapt and threw himself to the feet of the Lord of Canterbury, astonishing those who were present. The Archbishop stooped to raise the king, who scarcely could come to himself from anguish. He then said, "Really, Lord of Canterbury, my Father, you alone have seen." And sighing he groaned with grief, "We all have been blind, who have given you advice against your cause, nay, against the cause of God, that you should resign the honor of God to the whims of man. I repent, my Father, I bitterly repent. Forgive me, I beg you, and absolve me a sinner from this fault. I offer to God and to you myself and my kingdom, and I promise that from this hour as long as God wills me to live, I shall not fail you or yours." The Archbishop absolved and gave him his benediction and joyfully started out with his party to Sens, where the king of France treated him royally until his return to

⁷⁹ Compare Amos 7.14.

England.

36) When the King of England heard this, he demanded that the King of France show him by what lawful right he could protect the Archbishop of Canterbury, when in the very presence of His Majesty, the King of England ready for every justice so humiliated himself. It was the Archbishop's fault that he did not have peace which he arrogantly and contumeliously rejected. On this account he said that the King of France, from now on in his own kingdom, to the disgrace and shame of a loyal friend of his, ought not be responsible for his protection. To this Louis replied, "Go tell your king, that if he will not brook the repeal of those customs which they call ancient, although as they say, they are less congruous to divine law, still because they pertain to royal dignity, much less is it permitted me to destroy this liberality, which, with the crown of the kingdom, is mine by heritage. Moreover, France from ancient times was wont to save, support, defend and receive all wretched and afflicted, and especially those exiled for justice, until they shall have peace. God willing, no man's suggestion will ever lead me as long as I live to detract from the honor and esteem of the Archbishop during his exile."

37) For this reason we have placed these letters⁸⁰ here that they should be an unbroken series since we have come to the point where the letters treat certain matters somewhat obscurely. This is in the fourth part where the Prior of Montdieu and

⁸⁰Compare section 1, page 39 of this thesis.

Bernard de Corilo were assigned as executors of the Pope's order. The rest of the letters, in their place and order state the matter more clearly, so that in themselves, they are sufficient for the intelligence of the reader. In the course of the controversy between the king, Thomas, and the Archbishop of York, when it became quite clear that the success of Thomas could not be easily overcome, the Archbishop of York made use of these letters to embitter the heart of the king against the Archbishop of Canterbury. Therefore, he more easily yielded to observe these ancient customs that thus he might conciliate the king to the confusion of Thomas. He even made an ally of Gilbert, bishop of London, who for a long time also aspired to the Archbishopric of Canterbury. Hence, by skillful wiles and plots he tried in vain to overthrow Thomas. He strove more eagerly but covertly to transfer at all cost the pallium from the Church of Canterbury to London. Consequently these two leaders of the whole misunderstanding in this case, so it is said, influenced the king, so that these customs which follow should be decreed against the ecclesiastical liberty, and having decreed them he should publish them in the kingdom of England.

INDEX OF NAMES AND PLACES

All references are to pages.

- Abbot of Pontigny, 67, 68
 Alan of Tewkesbury, 1, 38
 Aldington, 41
 Alexander, Pope, 23, 39, 57
 Andrew, St., 54
 Anjou, 8
 Annas, 31
 Aquitania, 8
 Archbishop of Canterbury,
 Ethelhard, 25
 Archbishop of Canterbury,
 Theobald, 8, 10, 13
 Archbishop of Canterbury,
 Thomas, *passim*
 Archbishop of Rouen, Rotrou,
 3, 27
 Archbishop of Sens and Rheims,
 William, 3, 25, 73
 Archbishop of York, Roger,
 17, 25, 49, 60, 77
 Arnulph, bishop of Lisieux,
 56
 Arundel de, Osbert, 49, 60
 Augustine, St., 36
 Bartholomew, bishop of
 Exeter, 44, 49, 50, 56
 Bernard of Corilo, 3, 71, 77
 Bernard of Nevers, 3
 Bertin, St., 55, 56
 Bishop of Chartres, 1, 3, 39
 Bishop of Chichester, Hilary,
 44, 50, 53, 56, 58
 Bishop of Exeter, Bartholomew,
 44, 49, 50, 56
 Bishop of Lincoln, Robert
 of Hereford, 44
 Bishop of Lisieux, Arnulph,
 56
 Bishop of London, Gilbert
 Foliot, 27, 43, 46, 51,
 53, 56, 58, 59, 62, 77
 Bishop of Nevers, Bernard, 3
 Bishop of Norwich, William,
 49
 Bishop of Poitiers, 73
 Bishop of Rochester, 46
 Bishop of Salisbury, Jocelyn
 de Balliol, 27, 49
 Bishop of Winchester, Henry,
 43
 Bishop of Worcester, Roger,
 45, 56
 Bourges, 70
 Brice of Tours, St., 7
 Burgundy, 74
 Caesar, 3
 Caiphas, 31
 Canterbury, 25, 38, 41
 Canterbury, Church, 8, 16,
 25, 26, 42, 51, 53, 54,
 64, 67, 68, 77
 Canterbury See, 10, 25, 43
 Chartres, 1, 3, 39
 Cistercian Abbots, 23, 24
 Clairmarais, 55
 Clarendon, 19, 69
 Clovesho, 25
 Calumban, St., 55
 Constitutions of Clarendon,
 27
 Council of Clarendon, 39, 70
 Damascus, 28
 Dennis, St., 33
 Dorobernensis, 25
 Durovernum, 25

- England, 9, 23, 56, 58, 62,
 71, 73, 77
 English Channel, 55
 Enicurt de, Walter, 44
 Estrey, 54
 Ethelhard, archbishop of
 Canterbury, 25
 Eugenius III, 2
 Flanders, 23, 55
 France, 25, 39, 55, 57, 70
 73, 76
 Frederick Barbarossa, 57
 Geoffrey, 8
 Gilbert Foliot, bishop of
 London, 27, 43, 46, 51,
 53, 56, 58, 59, 62, 77
 Gratian, 2, 3
 Hecca, 53
 Henry II, passim
 Henry III, 25, 51
 Henry, bishop of Winchester,
 43
 Henry of Pisa, 11
 Herod, 31
 Hilary, bishop of Chichester,
 44, 50, 53, 56, 58
 Holy Innocents, 31
 Italy, 57
 Jerusalem, 28
 Jocelyn de Balliol, bishop
 of Salisbury, 27, 49
 John of Salisbury, 1, 3, 35,
 39
 John the Baptist, St., 36
 Judas, 32
 Leo III, Pope, 25
 Llewelyn, Alexander, 40, 69
 London, 6, 77
 Louis, king of France, 25
 Matilda, 9
 Morini, 55
 Nero, 72
 Nicholas, St., 2
 Normandy, 8
 Normans, 48
 Northampton, 21, 42
 Omer, St., 55
 Orvieto, 2
 Osbert de Arundel, 49, 60
 Otford, 53
 Otho, 2
 Peter, 72
 Pilate, 31
 Pontigny, 23, 24, 68, 70
 Proteus, 10
 Provence, 74
 Robert, earl of Leicester, 50
 Robert of Hereford, bishop
 of Lincoln, 44
 Robert the Great, 49
 Roger, archbishop of York,
 17, 25, 49, 60, 77
 Roger, bishop of Worcester,
 45, 56
 Rotrou, archbishop of Rouen,
 3, 27
 Sandwich, 23
 Saone River, 74
 Sens, 23, 57, 63
 Simon, Prior of Mont Dei,
 (Valle-Dei) 3, 71, 76
 Solomon, 20
 Stephen, king of England, 9
 Stephen, St., 47
 Theobald, archbishop of
 Canterbury, 8, 10, 13
 Thomas, archbishop of
 Canterbury, passim
 Victor IV, antipope, 57
 Vivian, 2, 3
 Walter de Enicurt, 38
 Westminster, 25
 William, archbishop of Sens,
 3, 25, 73
 William, bishop of Norwich,
 49
 William, cardinal, 2
 Winchester, 25
 Wingham, 53

INDEX OF SCRIPTURAL QUOTATIONS

- Acts, 28, 37, 51, 52, 53,
 58, 66
 Amos, 74
 Apocalypse, 1, 39, 53
 Baruch, 4
 Canticles, 26, 67
 Colessians, 12
 Corinthians I, 5, 10, 15,
 35, 62
 Corinthians II, 5, 10, 15,
 22, 27, 30
 Daniel, 5
 Deuteronomy, 57
 Ecclesiasticus, 19, 25, 22
 29, 31, 46
 Ephesians, 4
 Exodus, 3, 56
 Ezechiel, 19, 40
 Galatians, 7, 12, 30
 Genesis, 16
 Isaias, 12, 30, 43, 53, 74
 James, 3, 16
 Jeremias, 58
 Job, 7, 15, 28, 32
 John, 5, 12, 33, 34, 37, 45,
 48, 56, 57, 58, 65
 Judges, 9, 30
 Kings I, 35
 Lamentations, 15, 68
 Luke, 17, 22, 24, 29, 31, 37, 41,
 47, 49, 63, 66, 74
 Machabees II, 16, 27
 Mark, 3, 22, 30, 31, 41, 42, 50
 56, 66
 Matthew, 3, 15, 17, 20, 29, 30
 31, 34, 37, 47, 50, 53,
 56, 63, 68
 Numbers, 29, 36, 40, 66
 Osee, 12, 43
 Paralipomenon II, 74
 Peter I, 4, 5, 13, 16, 29
 Peter II, 67
 Philippians, 14
 Proverbs, 20
 Psalms, 8, 11, 15, 17, 34,
 35, 37, 39, 40, 47,
 52, 66, 67
 Romans, 30, 37
 Thessalonians II, 16, 26, 30
 Timothy I, 4, 74
 Timothy II, 13
 Tobias, 68
 Wisdom, 5, 6, 31
 Zacharias, 40, 63

INDEX OF CLASSICAL QUOTATIONS

Horace, *Ars Poetica*, 46, 52
Horace, *Carmina*, 7
Horace, *Epistles*, 10
Horace, *Sermones*, 10
Juvenal, *Satires*, 63
Seneca, *Epistles*, 13
Virgil, *Aeneid*, 33, 36, 65
Plautus, *Persa*, 60

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APPROVAL SHEET

The thesis submitted by Sister Mary De Chantal (Biala), Fel. O.S.F. 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.

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