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CHAPTER 4

The Chancellor

(i) The Chancellor and the Kingdom

WHEN Henry of Anjou became king the machinery of government needed an almost complete overhaul. The rule of William I after the Conquest was all but entirely personal. The king, who consulted his tenants-in-chief three or four times a year in meetings that replaced those of the Anglo-Saxon Witan, carried out his policy through individuals, both churchmen such as his brother Odo, bishop of Bayeux, and Lanfranc, or leading barons. In the country as a whole the king was represented by his sheriff in each country, and by the marcher lords on the borders of Wales. Gradually a smaller council came into being, consisting of some barons and bishops who were habitually used by the king. When the king went abroad an individual was deputed to take his place: Odo of Bayeux at first, and Lanfranc later, acted in this way. They and other barons considered such great pleas or trials as might arise. The practice of William II was similar, but now with Ranulf Flambard appeared the type of the efficient parvenu rising to the top by reason of his success in meeting the king's need for money and for tolerably smooth administration. Henry I for a long time used his wife and later his son as regents, but when both were dead he turned to Roger, bishop of Salisbury. Roger, like Ranulf, had risen by reason of his great administrative talents, and his bishopric was the reward of service. He is significant as being the creator of what may be anachronistically called the civil service. His official position was that of justiciar, and in this he may be said to have founded the exchequer as an instrument of government, and to have rationalized its business.

The medieval chancellor, who took his name from the lattice behind which the minor Roman official originally did his work, was in origin the head of the royal chapel, that is, the ensemble

of relics, books, furniture and clerks which followed the court wherever it went. He, aided by one or more clerks, executed most of the royal writs, letters and charters, and authenticated them all with the royal seal of which he had custody. As is well known, all the organs of medieval English government developed from the activities of the king's household, and of this the chapel was an important part. Another member was the treasurer, and when the financial business increased the treasurer's department was amalgamated with a part of the chancellor's activities and became the exchequer. This was in origin the office of receipt into which was delivered the 'farm', or monetary contribution to government, of the various shires collected by the respective sheriffs, and any rates and dues not included in the farm. Though the treasurer was the official president, the chancellor, as keeper of the royal seal, was an essential member of the court and alone could issue payments and receipts. Gradually, therefore, his activities and staff expanded, while the treasurer remained principally as custodian and disburser of the king's moneys. Roger of Salisbury, who introduced the abacus, a method of reckoning with counters on a cloth ruled like a chessboard, recruited three of his young relations and ran the administration as a family group. His nephew became chancellor, a second nephew, Nigel, treasurer and bishop of Ely, while another relative, Alexander, bishop of Lincoln, was his ally.

Henry I, a strong king, built up a group of servants partly from the feudal ranks and partly 'from the dust'; they joined Roger and his relatives at the exchequer and served as royal agents and justices, for there was as yet no professional judiciary. The old English courts of hundred (or borough) and shire still functioned, and the latter under the sheriff retained its importance, but the most important pleas came before the Curia Regis, which was a court of first instance for tenants-in-chief and a court of appeal from itinerant justices when these began to function in Henry I's reign. The Curia Regis was composed of the royal household officials and a few other barons. The barons of the exchequer, who were often called upon to adjudicate in matters of payment and went on circuit to assess revenues, were often used by the king to try pleas as members of the Curia.

The history and functions of the exchequer as a financial office have been narrated often and well with the aid of the remarkable

and full *Dialogue of the Exchequer* written by one of its officials in the latter part of the reign of Henry II.¹ The great future which lay before the office and the title of chancellor of the exchequer borne by one of its members (who was in origin a Treasurer's clerk, not the Chancellor himself) has led to a common belief that the exchequer was the chancellor's main sphere of activity. In fact, he seems to have been present but rarely, and for Thomas it was certainly only a small part of his life. As his early training had been financial, he was no doubt perfectly at ease when present, and his remarkable memory would have enabled him to remain *au courant* with its work, but it was not precisely as chief of the chancery or the exchequer that he deployed his gifts. He lifted his title of office momentarily to princely eminence not only and perhaps not chiefly by his work at the exchequer, but by his achievements and conduct as *alter ego* to the king. This phase of his career has been treated only cursorily by historians. Those interested in secular matters find in it little of the great work of legal and institutional reform that made the later decades of the reign so remarkable, and church historians concentrate their interest upon the career of Thomas as archbishop. Yet for a knowledge of Thomas's character and abilities these years are very revealing. Setting aside for the moment all spiritual considerations, we may consider the courage, the decision, and the swift efficiency of the newly-appointed archdeacon of Canterbury in his still more recent office. Without the advantage of birth in the baronage or of a *pied-à-terre* in the form of lands or feudal connections to strengthen his hand and his resolve, without the training in the court and exchequer possessed by his subordinates, Thomas entered upon his office as master of the king's chapel and writing-office by organizing, if not actually leading, those occupied in 'slighting' the adulterine castles of the most powerful barons, including those of the ex-legate and king-maker Henry of Winchester, to whose advocacy he stood beholden. The eight years of his chancellorship, indeed, are all but unique in the annals of the English monarchy between the Conquest and the days of Wolsey. At no other time did a minister of the Crown combine the assets of complete royal confidence and delegation of power with such talents of

1. The latest and best edition is by C. Johnson, *Dialogus de Scaccario*, London 1950, (Nelson's Medieval Texts), with excellent introduction.

administration, of diplomacy and of display. When Thomas became chancellor he was almost exactly thirty-six, while the king was twenty-one. But it was not by age or past experience that he secured his ascendancy. Henry had had his full share of experience in war and diplomacy; he had already added to his dominions by bold action and by the swift appropriation of his rival Louis's discarded but lavishly gifted and fiercely energetic wife Eleanor. But the young king was high-spirited, buoyant, extroverted, and emotional, and Thomas, equally extroverted, always disposed to take his colour from his surroundings, and with no one else to claim his personal devotion, was drawn to his king by both a genuine quasi-elder brother affection, and by the glamour of royalty and court life.

It is difficult to give a connected account of Thomas's activities in the years of his chancellorship. With the exception of Fitz-Stephen the biographers pass rapidly over this period of his life and give a general picture of his relationship with the king rather than a narrative with a series of events in chronological order. This relationship was, indeed, a fact of the greatest significance in Thomas's life. His actions, thoughts and fortunes, were for the sixteen years of his life in high office, so entwined with those of his king, and each was so influenced by the other on the personal, emotional level, that the historian of Thomas must make some attempt to comprehend the character and personality of Henry II.

For such a study the information appears at first sight to be ample. In addition to the king's actions and *acta*, and the many good narrative sources for his policies and reaction to events, there are numerous descriptions of his character. The age was one in which intelligent men examined the outstanding personalities of their time with a sensitivity and a sympathy unknown to any other century of the middle ages. We have only to think of the biographers of Bernard, of Ailred, of Samson of Bury, and of Thomas himself to realize this, and John of Salisbury in his writings and letters gives us pen-pictures of the great men he had known that are unsurpassed in their *finesse* and in their balance. Of Henry himself we have half-a-dozen or more set pieces of characterisation, which both supplement and corroborate each other.

Despite this, Henry remains something of an enigma, partly

because he drew from different men phrases of excessive admiration and hostility, partly because his character and qualities of mind were complex and unusual, and are seen by us against an unfamiliar, almost incomprehensible, background of feeling and thought. One thing at least is clear, that Henry was no ordinary mortal. Those who knew him felt his distinction, and would have agreed with Walter Map, who knew him well, that he was 'one upon whom men gazed closely a thousand times, yet took occasion to return,¹ and with Gerald of Wales, who likewise knew the king intimately, that had he conquered his faults of character 'he would have been beyond comparison among the princes of this world for his many natural gifts',² and with John of Salisbury, who, as we shall see, could on occasion be scathing in his criticism of Henry, but who, even at the height of the great quarrel, could use almost the same words as Gerald, that if only Henry could control himself and show due reverence for the Church 'he has such remarkable gifts of nature and grace (!), that no prince, I would think, or certainly very few princes, as I would say without hesitation, is his equal.'³ Finally, there is the long and celebrated description of Henry and his character by Peter of Blois.⁴ Certainly, in attempting to recreate his personality, we must make allowance not only for human failings, for the bias of those opposed to his policies, and for the medieval animus against authority, but the difficulty still remains that some of the most carefully framed judgments of contemporaries conflict with their own and others' descriptions of the king's behaviour.

1. W. Map, *De Nugis Curialium*, ed. M. R. James in *Anecdota Oxoniensia*, Medieval and Modern Series, xiv. (1914), 237-42. English translation in *EHD.*, ii. (17).

2. Giraldus Cambrensis, *Opera Omnia*, RS., v. 302-6; viii. 155-75, 282-97, 304-6. English translation in *EHD.*, ii. (15, 16). The words in the text are on p. 388.

3. *MB.*, vi. (457), 500.

4. Peter of Blois, *Ep.* 66, printed in *MB.*, vii. (800), 570-6. This galaxy of encomia, set side by side with the eulogies of St Thomas, provide a 'headache for historians'. Peter of Blois, indeed, solves the difficulty by carrying straight on with praise of the martyr, the 'special patron' of the king who, Peter swears, was entirely innocent of the murder. As for Gerald and Map, they provide elsewhere plenty of ammunition to destroy their own constructions.

All agree that life at his court was strenuous to a degree. He was incessantly on the move from crack of dawn till evening, and even then tired his companions out by refusing to sit down. Moreover, his decisions to move, and the direction of his movements, were made to all appearances on the spur of the moment. 'He moved in intolerably long stages, like a special courier, and showed no mercy to his companions'.¹ He was always active and extrovert, discussing and issuing orders even at Mass, yet there was nothing in him of the restlessness of the neurotic. All agree that his fits of rage could be formidable and ungovernable, yet all agree also that he was 'exceedingly good and lovable and that no one 'surpassed him in gentleness and friendliness'.² Unperturbed and affable in the midst of a demanding crowd, he was 'easy of access and condescending, pliant and witty, second to none in politeness'.³ That these qualities are not the invention of courtiers we can see from incidents such as that related by St Hugh of Lincoln. The Charterhouse of Witham housed a lay-brother well known for his freedom of speech. This man on one occasion took the king to task for his failure to provide for his foundation at Witham with such fierceness that Hugh, himself no great respecter of persons, could never recall the incident without a feeling of acute discomfort.⁴ Yet Henry took the rebuke without anger and bore no malice. Mention of Hugh may remind us that Henry respected, and was respected by, three other saints besides Thomas. Hugh the Carthusian, whom he made bishop of Lincoln, he loved in later life so dearly that it was rumoured that the monk was his son. Ailred of Rievaulx dedicated two of his works to him and gave him counsel,⁵ and Henry was one of those who wrote to the pope on behalf of Gilbert of Sempringham when he was the object of calumny to the lay-brothers of his order.⁶

1. W. Map, p. 237; cf. *EHD.*, ii. 389.

2. *EHD.*, ii. 390.

3. Giraldus Cambrensis, *EHD.*, ii. 386.

4. *Magna Vita Sancti Hugonis*, ed. D. Douie and H. Farmer, London 1961-2, i. 66. (Nelson's Medieval Texts).

5. The works were the *Genealogia Regum Anglorum* and the *Life* of Edward the Confessor. Ailred is said to have advised the king to acknowledge Alexander III.

6. Knowles, 'The Revolt of the Lay Brothers of Sempringham', in *EHR.*, l. (1935).

A similar mixture of qualities is seen in his political and diplomatic actions. He could be swift in movement to seize a momentary chance, as in his adolescence when he brought off the remarkable *coup* of marriage with Eleanor of Aquitaine, yet Map notices as one of his faults the interminable delays with which he put off his suitors and claimants.¹ Though he was neither by temperament nor design a lawgiver, and made few if any original additions to legal procedure, his reorganization and regularization of the judicial eyre, the use of the local jury in the possessory and other assizes, the extension of the jurisdiction of the royal courts by means of the possessory writs, and the reissue and development of old unwritten customs and new issues in the Constitutions of Clarendon and the Assizes of Clarendon and Northampton, though all were probably adopted primarily as a means of strengthening the royal control of the country and increasing the revenue of the Crown, were in fact part of the policy of a clear-sighted man who wished to eliminate feuds and self-help, to create an atmosphere of stability, and to collect all the reins of power into the hands of a central, professional group of officials. We are not here concerned chiefly with assessing Henry's work as a great sovereign or assessing the part played by subordinates, but it is on every count remarkable that a monarch with dominions spread so widely, and with diplomatic and dynastic connections widespread over Europe, should have exerted such a potent influence over the government and development of the country which he visited comparatively rarely, and should have inspired trust in so many scattered groups of officials.

Gerald of Wales observed that 'whom he had once hated he scarcely ever loved' subsequently, 'but whom he had once loved he scarcely ever called to mind with hatred'.² His relationship with Thomas Becket provides a commentary upon these words, and we have to decide whether to declare Gerald in error, or to suppose that the king's long war with the archbishop was an endeavour to hurt one whom he had never truly loved and who would not put devotion to the king above all other interests. When all is said, Henry eludes judgement. Few who consider his character can avoid making a mental comparison with Henry

1. W. Map, *EHD.*, ii. 390.

2. Giraldus Cambrensis, *EHD.*, ii. 387. Peter of Blois apparently anticipates Giraldus in *MB.*, vii. (800), 573.

VIII; there is a deceptively similar mixture of great abilities, capacity to evoke loyal service and admiration, lasting achievement, grave character faults and ultimate failure to realize what youth had promised. Yet the differences are as great as the resemblances. Henry II lacked the all-absorbing and ultimately destructive egoism of Henry VIII, as also his ruthless treatment of both enemies and devoted servants. Most of Henry II's ministers, with the obvious exception of Thomas, remained undisturbed in his service throughout their lives; there are no savage executions or judicial murders in his reign. We may almost say that he was unjust only when he lost his self-control. In the matter of religion, while Henry VIII, at least from the middle of his reign onwards, was without a semblance of spiritual religion, Henry II, for all his moral lapses and other faults, never lost the sense that God and the Church of Christ were of a higher order of being than his own affairs. Nor did the reign of Henry II show the eclipse of fair sunshine or the failure to use opportunity that is apparent in that of Henry VIII. The crisis of the tragedy of Thomas Becket was not a climacteric point. Henry recovered his poise and some of his most influential legal reforms date from his last years. His later catastrophes were largely due to the selfish and irresponsible behaviour of his sons, though their father cannot be considered wholly blameless.

The king left England in January 1156 to resist his brother's claims to Anjou and Maine, and to receive homage from Aquitaine. A single reference by a chronicler, Gervase of Canterbury, mentions the presence of the chancellor and his great assistance in the campaign.¹ Thomas was not long abroad, for he was acting in several countries as an itinerant justice later in the year.² In 1158 Henry was abroad again, and it was in this year that the chancellor led his remarkable embassy from the coast to Paris and conducted the negotiations for the marriage of the infant daughter Margaret of Louis VII with the king's eldest son, securing the Vexin for her dowry. The following year Henry moved south to make good his wife's claim to the countship of Toulouse, actually held by Raymund of St Gilles, now brother-in-law of Louis, who supported him against Henry and occupied

1. Gervase, *Chronicle*, i. 162, s.a. 1156.

2. For Thomas as justice itinerant see *Pipe Roll 2 Henry II*, pp. 17, 26, 65, 89. He visited at least ten counties.

Toulouse. The king moved against the city with Thomas as organizer and leader of a part of his army. Thomas urged him to take the city, but Henry shrank from attacking a place occupied by his feudal lord, the king of France.¹ It was in this campaign that the chancellor rode at the head of a company of seven hundred knights raised by himself as well as his own feudal array, plus an alleged twelve thousand mercenaries. All these were paid by the scutage and *donum* now levied on all knights' fees of ecclesiastical as well as of secular baronies.² Thomas himself fought with distinction at the head of his men and ravaged the conquered countryside.³ He may have negotiated the peace terms in 1160; he certainly witnessed the document that contained them. For the next two years he was often in France, though miscellaneous documents issued or witnessed by him from time to time show him at work in England.

During all these years he was carrying a burden of work of which only a few traces can be seen in the records. Besides being responsible for all receipts and outgoings at the exchequer, and for the accounting twice yearly of the farms of the shires and towns, he had charge of all ecclesiastical and feudal estates that had lost their lord and not received his successor. He had, also, much judicial business, either in the Curia Regis or when on tour as an itinerant justice. Charters for towns passed through his hands, as also the royal diplomatic correspondence. He repaired the Tower of London between Easter and Whitsuntide (? of 1156), flooding the works with carpenters and smiths.⁴ He received royal and other distinguished visitors on behalf of the king. Beyond this, he had normally to be on hand with the king wherever the court went with its chapel, and, as we have seen, he acted as the king's military adviser and commander of his army. In addition to this, he found time to accompany Henry on some of his hunting and fowling expeditions, and to take part in any sports and entertainments that were going forward. The mere supervision and organization of his staff must have

1. W. FitzStephen, *MP.*, iii. 29-34.

2. Scutage had been levied in 1156 and earlier, but the amount now raised was six times greater than before on church fees (J. H. Round, *Feudal England*, 1895, 275-81). See also below, p. 47.

3. W. FitzStephen, *MB.*, iii. 34-5.

4. *MB.*, iii. 19-20.

taken much of his time. At maximum strength he had fifty-two clerks in action, and his writing-office, whose essential work could be done by two or three scribes, now had fifteen or more.¹

We are better informed as to the personal and domestic detail of his life. Here the magnificence that he delighted in was remarked by all. For financial support he had the provostship of Beverley, prebends at Hastings, the revenue of the Tower of London, the castlery of Eye and the castle of Berkhamstead. He must also have made use, on his expenses account, of some of the vacant bishoprics, abbeys and fiefs.² With these great resources he entertained lavishly every day on gold and silver plate a multitude of guests. The food and drink was exquisite and very expensive, though we are told that he himself was sparing in its use. He was also generous in the extreme, giving away horses, garments and plate as well as minted money. When he crossed the Channel he had a convoy of six ships, and when the king took only one, Thomas gave him three more. England had long been noted for its wealth and abundance of precious things, and the age, indeed the whole of the later middle ages, delighted in a public display of wealth. This is true, and yet on more than one occasion at different times of his life, we seem to note in Thomas a love of the display of wealth and expensive things which is open to criticism, not only as unbecoming in a cleric and even in a devout Christian, but because there is in it a note of rhetoric, if not of vulgarity, that is inconsistent with a character of true dignity. Moreover, the instances of this in Thomas's life are not always explicable as the means chosen by an expert propagandist as the only, or at least the most effective way of gaining his end. Some of them, as we shall see, were criticized by contemporaries as errors of judgment, and a critic might say that ends that could be gained only in this way were, perhaps, not worthy of a wise man's efforts. One biographer, however,

1. *MB.*, iii. 29, and H. Bosham, *MB.*, iii. 176. T. A. M. Bishop, *Scriptores Regis*, Oxford, 1961, especially 9 ff., shows that fifteen separate scribes can be identified in Thomas's time as chancellor, whereas later in Henry's reign only two can be seen. For a discussion on writing-offices of the time, see *GF.*, 212.

2. John of Salisbury, writing in 1160, reminds Thomas that (according to rumour) he is receiving and using the revenues of three bishoprics uncanonically (*viz.* Exeter, Worcester and Coventry, *JS.*, *Ep.* 128, p. 223).

Herbert of Bosham, thought otherwise, and he may be allowed to speak:

'I will return to speak of his magnificence . . . for he was generous far beyond the demands of his high office, expansive to all, magnificent to all and beyond all, great of heart, great of stature and great in display. With him nothing would do but what was great in scale and magnificent in appearance.'¹

Another, William FitzStephen, thus describes his embassy to Louis VII at Paris in 1158:

'In his company he had some two hundred horsemen, knights, clerks, stewards and men in waiting, men at arms and squires of noble family, all in ordered ranks. All these, and all their followers wore bright new festal garments. He also took twenty-four suits . . . and many silk cloaks to leave behind him as presents, and all kinds of parti-coloured clothes and foreign furs, hangings and carpets for a bishop's guest-room. Hounds and hawks were in the train . . . and eight five-horse chariots drawn by shire horses. On every horse was a sturdy groom in a new tunic, and on every chariot a warden. Two carts carried nothing but beer . . . for the French, who are not familiar with the brew, a healthy drink, clear, dark as wine, and finer in flavour. The chancellor's chapel had a special van, his private room another, his cash a third and his kitchen a fourth. Others bore food and drink, others dorsals, carpets, bags of night attire and luggage in general. He had twelve sumpter horses and eight chests of table plate, gold and silver. . . . One horse carried the plate, the altar furnishings, and the books of his chapel. . . . Every horse had a groom in smart turn-out; every chariot had a fierce great mastiff on a leash standing in the cart or walking beneath it, and every sumpter beast had a long-tailed monkey on its back. . . . Then there were about 250 men marching six or ten abreast, singing as they went in the English fashion. At intervals came braces of staghounds and greyhounds with their attendants, . . . then the men at arms, with the shields and chargers of the knights, then other men at arms and boys and men carrying hawks.'

All these were far from being the total numbers of the procession, and

'Last of all came the chancellor and some of his friends. . . . Arrived in Paris . . . he loaded every baron, knight, . . . master, scholar and burgess with gifts of plate, clothing, horses and money.'²

1. H. Bosham, *MB.*, iii. 176.

2. W. FitzStephen, *MB.*, iii. 29-33.

How much of this, we wonder, was paid for by the abbeys and bishoprics that were 'in the king's hand'?

During all these years his intimate friendship with the king endured. They rode together, hunted and hawked together, and together perhaps indulged in the pleasures—which throughout the middle ages had a slightly raffish air—of a game of chess.¹ FitzStephen tells how the king sometimes came to the chancellor's hall to see its latest splendours. Sometimes he rode in on horseback, sometimes fresh from the hunt with arrows in his hand. On one day he would take a drink and be gone at once; on another he would leap the table and sit for a meal next to his host.² Once again we think of another Henry supping with another Thomas at Chelsea, and walking in his garden with his arm about More's neck. A final sign of his high esteem was to entrust to his chancellor his eldest son Henry, to join the company of boys and youths of baronial family who were being brought up under his supervision. All, not only his biographers, but such as John of Salisbury and Gilbert Foliot in their letters, speak of him as holding all power in the kingdom, as Joseph with Pharaoh.

In these years of achievement and success the chancellor often found himself trying to serve two masters. In public he was the king's all-powerful minister and confidant, closer to his master, so it seemed, in sympathy and aim, than even Abbot Suger had been to the king of France or Rainald of Dassel was to be to Barbarossa. Yet he kept at least a sector of his life to himself. He remained entirely chaste in his private life, despite the example of the king.³ He preserved ecclesiastics and monks when he could from some of the king's exactions, and was a principal benefactor of Merton when the canons built the eastern limb of their church. His biographer notes that he was sparing in his personal diet, that he prayed often at night in his bedchamber and visited churches in the early dawn.⁴ He also commissioned

1. W. FitzStephen, *MB.*, iii. 25. The scene in Tennyson's *Becket* is familiar.

2. *MB.*, iii. 25.

3. W. FitzStephen, *MB.*, iii. 21; Anonymous I, *MB.*, iv. 13-4; William of Canterbury i. 6. The last is followed by Guernes, who alone gives the name, Avice of Stafford, of the woman concerned, and the place, Stoke-on-Trent (*GW.*, lines 301 ff.).

4. The twilight visit to a church is in *Thomas Saga*, *RS.*, i. 51, 53.

two secular priests, who are named, one at Canterbury, the other in London, to scourge him penitentially; this was a practice which he kept up as archbishop and intensified during his exile.¹

These years as chancellor deserve careful consideration as the background of what followed. During them Thomas had, within the context of that age, all but supreme power in administration and patronage, as well as financial control and important judicial office. After initial difficulties, he had had great success in dealing with great men and great affairs. He had met and treated with barons of every social type as equals and colleagues in the king's service. He had come to know the bishops and the heads of the greater religious houses, and had on occasion treated them *de haut en bas*. To all these men he had appeared principally as a king's man and a brilliant executant of large plans. He was known also as one apt to put royal policy before church law or custom. As has already been noted, he held a position of trust and power such as had never before been held by a subject in England, and was not to be held again until the days of Wolsey. Like Wolsey, he had held it with loyalty and brilliance, and, unlike Wolsey, he had given no offence by overbearing assurance or by purely personal acquisition of riches.

(ii) The Chancellor and the Church

In 1157 Thomas as Chancellor took part in an episode which to some contemporaries and many historians has seemed to show a conduct inconsistent with his principles and practice as archbishop. This was the plea for exemption from episcopal surveillance on the part of the abbey of Battle, and the events cannot be understood without a glance at the past history of 'exemption' within the monastic body.

From the birth of organized monachism in the fourth century till the tenth century and beyond, the monastery, like all other ecclesiastical persons and institutes, normally lay within the jurisdiction of the bishop of the diocese or region. Nevertheless, by its very nature it had remained outside the currents of diocesan life, and it had been recognised that when all went well, it would

1. For the scourgings, see evidence of Robert of Merton in E. Grim, *MB.*, ii. 418, and W. FitzStephen, *MB.*, iii. 22.