

The Oxford Career of Robert Grosseteste¹

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OUR knowledge of the origins of the University of Oxford is at present scanty and obscure. That there was a school at Oxford in the 12th century, as there was at Exeter, Lincoln, Hereford, Northampton and elsewhere in England,² is certain; but how and when the Oxford school grew into a *studium generale*—whether through a migration from Paris, as Dr. Rashdall claimed,³ or in some other way, as would seem more likely—we cannot say.⁴ Alexander, Prior of Canons Ashby, mentions a master Philip, 'a fount of learning in theology', who taught at Oxford in the late 12th century. A still more famous master, Alexander Nequam, was lecturing on theology about 1190-1. Again, John Grim and Simon of Gloucester are both recorded as teaching theology at Oxford c. 1201-3. 'It is surely significant', remarks Dr. Hunt, 'that we can point to two teachers of theology there at the same time.'⁵ Of greater relevance is the fact that John Grim is described in a deed of 1201 as *magister scholarum Oxonie*.⁶ This official held an important position in the schools and his status was well defined by law and custom. He was the head of the schools, his authority extending over the masters and scholars, and having the right of granting the *licentia docendi*.⁷ It would accordingly be a fair inference to assume that there existed at Oxford at the close of the 12th century and the beginning of the 13th century an organized school with more than one teacher. But two solitary, or even a few, teachers do not make a university.

¹ I am greatly indebted to Professor Sir Maurice Powicke for his help and criticism in preparing this paper, as also to Mr. W. A. Pantin, Fellow of Oriel College.

² Cf. R. W. Hunt, 'English Learning in the late Twelfth Century', *Trans. of the Royal Historical Society*, 4 Ser., xix (1936), 19-42; for Northampton see H. G. Richardson, 'The Schools of Northampton in the Twelfth Century', *E.H.R.*, lvi (1941), 595-605.

³ H. Rashdall, *The Universities of Europe in the Middle Ages*, new edit. by F. M. Powicke and A. B. Emden (Oxford, 1936), iii, 11-47.

⁴ Cf. H. E. Salter, 'The Medieval University of Oxford', *History*, xiv (1929), 57-61; and *Medieval Oxford*, O.H.S., c (1936), 91-3.

⁵ Hunt, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

⁶ Cf. H. E. Salter, *Snape's Formulary and other Records*, O.H.S., lxxx (1924), 318.

⁷ Cf. Alexander III's letter to the bishops of France, 20 Oct., 1170-2, in which the Pope refers to this well-established practice of conferring the *licentia docendi*, while strictly forbidding him to make any charge for its grant: *Chartularium Universitatis Parisiensis*, 1, 4-5. See G. Post, 'Alexander III, the *licentia docendi* and the rise of the universities', *Anniversary essays in medieval history by students of C. H. Haskins* (Boston, 1929), pp. 255-77; G. Paré, A. Brunet, P. Tremblay, *La Renaissance du XIIe siècle* (Publ. de l'Institut d'études médiévales d'Ottawa, iii, Paris-Ottawa, 1933), pp. 66-9.

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On the other hand, traces of the rapid growth of the schools and of their organization become by this time more and more discernible. To begin with, there occurs in contemporary deeds an unusual number of names of masters.⁸ Some of these might have migrated from elsewhere; but others strongly suggest the locality. However that may be, a sudden rise in the number of masters is always a good presumption of the increasing importance of a school. Moreover, in addition to theological and legal teaching, which had continuously been at Oxford from the 12th century, we witness in the first decade of the 13th century the introduction of the 'New Aristotle'. Edmund of Abingdon was lecturing on the *Sophistici Elenchi*, a Master Hugh on the *Posterior Analytics*, John of London (the teacher of John of Garland in his youth) on Avicennian theories, while John Blund was the first to read on the *libri naturales*.⁹ It seems likely that we have here a clear indication of the nucleus, at least, of the three faculties—theology, law and arts. Finally, the *suspendium clericorum* of 1209 obviously implies, as Dr. Rashdall rightly pointed out,¹⁰ that there already existed some kind of corporation of masters and scholars; at least a rudimentary *universitas magistrorum et scholarium*. Hence it would not seem rash to assign its origins to the first decade of the 13th century.

At all events, the earliest indisputable evidence of the existence of the University of Oxford is the Legatine ordinance¹¹ of 1214, which may fittingly be styled its first charter, just as the award granted by Philip Augustus, King of France, in 1200, may be regarded as the first charter of the University of Paris.¹² With the return of masters and scholars to Oxford in 1214, lectures were resumed, the office of chancellor was instituted, and scholastic life gained a new impetus. But it was only after the first quarter of the 13th century that a marked progress became apparent. Two main factors contributed chiefly to this new development: the coming of the Friars, the Dominicans in 1221 and the Franciscans in 1224, and the influx of fresh masters and students in 1229.

Leaving aside for the present the profound influence exercised by the Friars upon the young University and their prominent share in moulding its formation, as well as the intellectual activities of the first generation of secular masters, who worked under the leadership of Robert Grosseteste, or side by side

⁸ Cf. *Eynsham Cartulary*, ed. H. E. Salter, II, O.H.S., LI (1908), 46-7. For an earlier period see *Cartulary of Osney Abbey*, IV, O.H.S., xcvi (1934), 528-9; *ibid.*, v, 286; and Salter, *Medieval Oxford*, pp. 92-3.

⁹ Cf. D. A. Callus, 'Introduction of Aristotelian Learning to Oxford', *Proceedings of the British Academy*, xxix, 12-26.

¹⁰ H. Rashdall, *The Universities of Europe*, III, 47.

¹¹ Cf. *Mediaeval Archives of the University of Oxford*, ed. Salter, I, O.H.S., LXX (1920), 2-6.

¹² Cf. *Cart. Univ. Parisiensis*, I, n. 1, pp. 59-61.

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with him, this paper is exclusively concerned with Grosseteste's Oxford career. Although critical discussion of the dates of some Latin works is necessary (if only to show that they *are* late and do not belong to the period before 1235), our main purpose is to trace Grosseteste's achievements as a lecturer, disputator and preacher in the schools of Oxford.

In the intellectual movement of the first half of the 13th century the central figure in England was undoubtedly Robert Grosseteste. Of his early years we know almost nothing. His name appears for the first time in a charter of Hugh, Bishop of Lincoln, probably *c.* 1186-9, where he is described as *magister*.¹³ It is generally held that he was born between 1170-5; but assuming that he was in his twenties when he gained his mastership, it would be fairly safe to advance the date of his birth and set it at about 1168, at the latest. Thus he would have been well over eighty at his death in 1253; a long life, in Roger Bacon's words.

Matthew Paris says that Grosseteste received his schooling from his early boyhood, 'a primis annis scolis educatus',¹⁴ but he does not tell us where. It is probable that he pursued his studies first at Lincoln then at Oxford. There does not seem any ground, however, for supposing that he went to Cambridge as well. On the authority of Richard of Bardney,¹⁵ Professor J. C. Russell would make him study and teach rhetoric and logic at Cambridge.¹⁶ But this assumption is based on the gratuitous presupposition that Bardney made use of 'an earlier writing, probably of the 13th century hagiographical type, which brings some assurance of accuracy'.¹⁷ This is a very slender foundation indeed. From a letter of Giraldus Cambrensis we learn that Master Robert Grosseteste was in the household of William de Vere, Bishop of Hereford, not later than 1199 (date of the bishop's death). He is praised not only for his remarkable proficiency in the liberal arts and abundant knowledge of literature, but also for his dexterity in handling various affairs and determination of causes and in securing and preserving bodily health.¹⁸ The references to 'the preservation of health' and 'the determination of causes' have with plausible certainty been construed as

¹³ Dugdale, *Monasticon*, v, 191. This charter, generally ascribed to Hugh of Wells (1209-35), is with some probability attributed to Hugh of Grenoble (1186-1200) by J. C. Russell, 'The Preferments and *Adiutores* of Robert Grosseteste', *Harvard Theological Review*, xxvi (1933), 162-3; and *Dictionary of Writers of Thirteenth Century England* (Supplement 3, Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research, London, 1936), p. 136.

¹⁴ *Chronica mai.* (R.S.), III, 306.

¹⁵ Bardney's life of Grosseteste, written in verse in 1503, was edited by H. Wharton, *Anglia Sacra* (Londini, 1691), II, 325-41.

¹⁶ J. C. Russell, 'Richard of Bardney's account of Robert Grosseteste's early and middle life', *Medievalia et Humanistica*, II (1944), 45-54.

¹⁷ Russell, *ibid.*, p. 50.

¹⁸ Gir. Cambrensis, *Opera*, ed. J. S. Brewer (R.S., London, 1861), I, 249.

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pointing to his knowledge of medicine, as well as of canon, if not civil, law.¹⁹

Nowhere is it stated whether Grosseteste left Hereford, or remained there on the death of William de Vere in 1199. It is quite likely that he returned to Oxford to resume his teaching. If this conjecture be true, we may tentatively assign to the first decade of the 13th century his commentary on the *Sophistici Elenchi*, on the *Posterior Analytics*, and also, if they are really his, those on the *Prior Analytics*.²⁰ That Grosseteste, while master in arts, commented on the *Posterior Analytics* is asserted explicitly by Nicholas Trivet, though neither the place nor the time of his lectures is specified.²¹ Thus Grosseteste would be following in the footsteps of Edmund of Abingdon and of Master Hugh, who, as Roger Bacon has it, were the first to teach the *Elenchi* and the *Posteriora* respectively at Oxford.²²

A commentary on the *Physics* is definitely ascribed to Grosseteste in two Oxford manuscripts, Merton College MS. 295 (fol. 120-31^v, 136-45^{ra}) and Digby MS. 220 (fol. 84-105^{ra}). This attribution is confirmed by the quotations of Walter Burley (died c. 1343) and of Wyclif.²³ An earlier and more important piece of evidence, published by Mgr. A. Pelzer to help, he says, in deciding the question of Grosseteste's authorship,²⁴ hitherto unnoticed, occurs in an extensive citation by Henry of Harclay, Chancellor of the University of Oxford, reported by the Franciscan William of Alnwick in his *Determinationes*.

¹⁹ Cf. H. R. Luard, *Roberti Grosseteste Epistolae* (R.S., London, 1861), xxxii, and *D.N.B.*, viii, 718; F. S. Stevenson, *Robert Grosseteste, Bishop of Lincoln* (London, 1899), pp. 12-3.

²⁰ For these works see L. Baur, *Die philosophischen Werke des Robert Grosseteste* (B.G.P.M., ix, Münster i.W., 1912), pp. 16*, 30*; and particularly S. H. Thomson, *The Writings of Robert Grosseteste, Bishop of Lincoln* (Cambridge, 1940), pp. 81, 84, 87. The colophon in Merton College, Oxford, MS. 280 reads: 'Explicit tractatus (not: narratus) super librum Elenchorum datus a magistro Roberto Grostest' (fol. 37^{ra}).

²¹ *F. Nicholai Triveti Annales*, ed. T. Hog (London, 1845), p. 243: 'Qui, cum esset magister in artibus, super librum Posteriorum compendiose scripsit'.

²² *Fratris Rogeri Bacon Compendium Studii Theologiae*, ed. H. Rashdall (B.S.F.S., iii, Aberdonia, 1911), p. 34. Cf. D. A. Callus, *Introduction of Aristotelian Learning to Oxford*, p. 13.

²³ Cf. L. Baur, *Die philosophischen Werke*, pp. 20*-21*; S. H. Thomson, *The Writings*, p. 82. A third manuscript is extant at Venice, S. Marco, MS. vi, 222 (Valentinelli, v, 34).

²⁴ A. Pelzer, 'Les Versions latines des ouvrages de morale conservés sous le nom d'Aristote, en usage au XIII^e siècle', *Revue néoscholastique de philosophie*, xxiii (1921), 397-8 n. 1. Some confusion had arisen from the fact that, in addition to this commentary, two other works purport to be Grosseteste's: (a) *The Summa in VIII Libros Physicorum*; and (b) a gloss on the *Physics* extant in Bodley e Museo MS. 230 (fol. 1-19^v). The *Incipit* reads: 'Quoniam autem, ut dicit Aristoteles, tunc opinamur unumquodque scire cum causas cognoscimus et principia prima, manifestum est quod ad naturalis philosophie notitiam necessaria est cognitio principiorum et causarum: unde ab illis incipiendum est. Et primo dicendum est que sunt principia; 2^o quot sunt. Sciendum est igitur quod contraria sunt principia Expl.: 'quod indivisibile, immobile, incorruptibile est nullam magnitudinem habens. Cui sit laus et imperium. Amen. Explicit optimum opus super octo libros physicorum secundum Lincolnensem.' Notwithstanding this explicit ascription this work has rightly, it would seem, been listed by Thomson among the *spuria* (p. 258). For the problem of the authorship see Baur, *op. cit.*, pp. 19*-24*; Thomson, pp. 82-3, 258.

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William of Alnwick²⁵ was the forty-second regent-master in the Oxford Franciscan school c. 1316. From Oxford he proceeded to teach at Paris, Bologna and Naples; c. 1329 he became bishop of Giovinazzo in the province of Bari,²⁶ and died in 1332. Henry of Harclay was chancellor of the university from December, 1312, till his death at Avignon on 25 June, 1317.²⁷ Hence the disputation, which was held at Oxford, must be assigned to 1316-17.

Discussing the problem: 'utrum in maiori quantitate continua sint plures partes in potentia quam in minori', Alnwick relates a long passage adduced against him by Harclay from Grosseteste's commentary on the *Physics*:

'Item pro ista opinione adduxit iste doctor auctoritatem domini Lyncolniensis, qui super 4. phisicorum, capitulo de tempore, dicit quod unum infinitum est maius alio infinito.' (Vatican, Palat. lat. MS. 1805, fol. 9^r.)

A comparison of the extract published by Pelzer with the Merton and Digby text (MS. Merton 295, fol. 136^{vb}-137^{ra}; Digby MS. 220, fol. 97^{ra}-98^r) made it clear that it came from the same source. Moreover, in his reply to Harclay Alnwick says:

'Est sciendum quod illa verba dominus Lynconiensis scripsit manu sua in margine libri phisicorum, quem non studiose nec complete exposuit sicut librum posteriorum. Sed quando aliqua ymaginatio notabilis sibi occurrebat ibi scripsit ne laberetur a memoria sua, sicut et multas cedulas scripsit que non omnes sunt autentice. Non enim est maioris auctoritatis que dissute scripsit in margine libri phisicorum quam alie cedule quas scripsit, que omnia habentur Oxonie in libraria fratrum minorum, sicut oculis propriis vidi. Unde quamvis dicta domini Lynconiensis que autentice scripsit commentando libros beati dyonisi et in suo exameron et in expositione libri posteriorum sint autentica, non tamen omnia (que) in cedulis et in abditis scripsit debent autentica reputari.'²⁸

The identity of the Merton and Digby text with the passage quoted by Harclay, the testimony of Alnwick that Grosseteste glossed with his own hand in the margin of his copy of the *Physics*, which was in his time still extant in the Franciscan library at Oxford, and which he himself had seen, show conclusively that Grosseteste's commentary on this Aristotelian treatise is the one preserved in the Merton and Digby text. The evidence is early enough, definite and trustworthy.

²⁵ For William of Alnwick cf. A. G. Little, 'The Franciscan School at Oxford in the Thirteenth Century', *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum*, xix (1926), 872-3.

²⁶ Cf. C. Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica Medii Aevi* (Monasterii, 1898), I, 300.

²⁷ Cf. Salter, *Snappé's Formulary*, p. 325. For Henry of Harclay see F. Pelzer, 'Heinrich von Harclay, Kanzler von Oxford, und seine Quästionen', *Miscellanea Ehrle* (Roma, 1924), I, 307-56.

²⁸ MS. Vat. Palat. lat. 1805, fol. 10^r, cited by Pelzer, *ibid.*, p. 398 n.

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In contrast with the work on the *Posterior Analytics*, which Grosseteste expounded thoroughly and in its entirety, the glosses on the *Physics* are simple jottings made in the margin on the spur of the moment, just as some noteworthy idea suddenly struck his mind, lest it be forgotten and thus neglected. The accuracy of Alnwick's description is borne out by the contents. Rather than a systematic, careful and finished exposition, these comments give the impression of hasty and somewhat disconnected annotations, a kind of a summary drawn up in propositions with occasional explanatory matter and long digressions, particularly on topics to which he had a decided leaning, such as space, vacuum, time, the infinite, and so on. One of these, on the non-eternity of the world, which is the concluding section on Book VIII, very slightly abridged, found its way quite early as a separate treatise under the title *De Finitate Motus et Temporis*.²⁹

Alnwick's words direct our attention to another salient point, that of the date. It is plain that this work does not represent Grosseteste's lecture-notes while regent in Arts. This contention is also vouched for by the contents. The parallels with the *Hexameron*, already noted by Dr. Baur, and the development of thought would suggest a later period of philosophical speculation than the first decade of the 13th century. Further, the use of Averroes, translated into Latin and put into circulation about 1230,³⁰ implies a later date. It is hardly possible to assign a precise date; the work went on, perhaps, for several years. Yet we may not be far wrong if we suggest a time between 1230-35.

Nevertheless, to his early scholastic activity at Oxford may tentatively be referred a short *quaestio*, *De Subsistentia rei*, discovered by F. Pelster in MS. 138 (fol. 262^{r-8}) in the Biblioteca Comunale of Assisi.³¹ The attribution to Grosseteste of another *quaestio*, *De Accessu et recessu maris*, in the same manuscript (which contains several *quaestiones* of Oxford masters), was due to a misreading (as Pelster himself in a later work has pointed out³²) of the master's name in the title, which runs:

'*Questio de fluxu et refluxu maris a magistro N (or : A., misread : R(oberto)) Exon. in scolis suis determinata.*'

²⁹ The *De Finitate motus et temporis* has been published by Baur, *op. cit.*, pp. 101-6. See also pp. 93*-5* ; Thomson, *op. cit.*, p. 98.

³⁰ Cf. R. De Vaux, 'La première entrée d'Averroès chez les Latins', *Revue des Sciences philosophiques et théologiques*, xxii (1933), 193-245.

³¹ F. Pelster, 'Zwei unbekannte Traktate des Robert Grosseteste', *Scholastik*, 1 (1926), 572-3. Cf. Thomson, *The Writings*, p. 117.

³² *Recherches de Théologie ancienne et médiévale*, v (1933), 388 n. 38.

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F. M. Henquinet³³ ascribes this *quaestio* to Adam de Marisco, and reads the title as follows :

‘ *Questio de fluxu et refluxu maris a magistro A. Oxon. in scolis suis determinata.* ’

At all events, Grosseteste's philosophical career at Oxford³⁴ would be interrupted by the *suspendium clericorum* which lasted from 1209 to 1214. That he was not one of the masters, who irreverently persisted in teaching after the secession, would not seem open to doubt. As decreed in the Legatine ordinance of 1214, these masters were suspended from lecturing for a period of three years,³⁵ whereas there is good evidence to show that Grosseteste was appointed chancellor of the university.

‘ That he was Chancellor is not a mere legend ’, as Dr. Salter puts it.³⁶ This fact is expressly attested by the Bishop of Lincoln, Oliver Sutton, who said :

‘ *beatus Robertus quondam Lincolniensis episcopus, qui huiusmodi officium gessit dum in Universitate predicta regebat, in principio creationis sue in episcopum dixit proximum predecessorem suum episcopum Lincolniensem non permisisse quod idem Robertus vocaretur cancellarius sed magister scholarum.* ’³⁷

It is true that the exact time of his chancellorship is not disclosed, but cumulative evidence leads to the conclusion that he exercised this function fairly soon after the resumption of lectures. Sutton's statement, that Hugh de Wells, Bishop of Lincoln, would not allow Grosseteste to assume the title of chancellor, but merely that of ‘ master of the schools ’, assures us of the fact that he did indeed hold the office, and at the same time indicates to some extent its date. On the one hand, it excludes quite clearly any time before the recession. The chancellorship was instituted by the Cardinal Legate in 1214. Now if the office itself had not yet come into existence, it is hardly conceivable that there could arise a controversy about the title. Further, in a deed of 1210 a *magister Alardus* appears as ‘ rector of the schools ’.³⁸ We may take it for certain that no rector of the schools was nominated during the dispersion of masters and scholars. Accordingly Master Alard must have been elected in or before 1209. If this is so, Grosseteste could not possibly have preceded him, since we have reason to believe that he was then still master in arts, and, whether styled rector or chancellor, the head of the schools was always a

³³ F. M. Henquinet, ‘ Un recueil de questions annoté par S. Bonaventure ’, *Archiv. Franciscanum Historicum*, xxv (1932), 552.

³⁴ Grosseteste's Aristotelian activity has been discussed in another connexion, cf. D. A. Callus, *Introduction of Aristotelian Learning to Oxford*, pp. 26-9.

³⁵ Cf. *Mediaeval Archives of the University of Oxford*, ed. H. E. Salter, I, 4.

³⁶ H. E. Salter, *Snappé's Formulary*, p. 319.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 52.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 318-9.

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master in theology.³⁹ On the other hand, the contestation of the title by the bishop suggests unequivocally a period of transition when the status of the chancellor was not yet definitely settled, perhaps on the occasion of the first appointment to the new office, that is in or shortly after 1214. But since both office and title were in possession by 1221,⁴⁰ and Grosseteste was not permitted to assume the title of chancellor, it follows that his presidency over the schools must fall between 1214 and 1221. Hence the traditional view that he was the first, or at least one of the first, chancellors of the University of Oxford seems in complete agreement with all the known facts.

The question has often been raised whether Grosseteste studied at Paris. That he went through his theological course and graduated at Paris is asserted by Bulaeus⁴¹ and others, whereas Rashdall is rather inclined to dismiss it.⁴² It is agreed that there is no contemporary evidence, yet more than one hint lends some weight to Bulaeus's statement. The inherent probability of this tradition is summed up by F. S. Stevenson thus :

' Grosseteste's intimate acquaintance with such men as William de Cerda and William Arvernus (of Auvergne), Bishop of Paris, his familiarity with the details of the theological course of studies pursued there, as shown in his letter to the Regents in theology at Oxford, and the references of Cardinal Egidius (Giles de Torres, Archbishop of Toledo) to his fame throughout the whole body of the French and of the English clergy, all tend to confirm the view expressed by Bulaeus.'⁴³

A more relevant clue, which not only alludes to his sojourn in France, but also suggests its date, is found in the words of Grosseteste himself, as related by Matthew Paris :

' Sancti patres et doctores nostri, quos vidimus et audivimus, videlicet magister eximius in Francia praedicator, abbas quoque de Flay Cisterciensis ordinis, magister Iacobus de Vitery, Cantuariensis archiepiscopus Stephanus exulans, magister Robertus de Curcun, praedicando a partibus Franciae . . .'⁴⁴

Modern scholars are rather sceptical of accepting literally Matthew Paris's report of the long discourse of Grosseteste on his death-bed. Nevertheless, as the main point alleged in the above statement is not disputed, we may take it as at least a *prima facie* reason in support of Grosseteste's sojourn in France.

³⁹ As Grosseteste, according to Professor J. C. Russell himself, did not yet begin his theological studies, his theory that Grosseteste may have been head of the schools before 1214 (*Mediaevalia et Humanistica*, II, 52 and n. 40), need not be discussed.

⁴⁰ *Mediaeval Archives of the Univ. of Oxford*, I, 10-11, 15.

⁴¹ C. E. Bulaeus, *Historia Universitatis Parisiensis* (Parisii, 1666), III, 154, 260, 709.

⁴² *The Universities*, III, 239; see, however, the editors' note, *ib.*

⁴³ F. S. Stevenson, *op. cit.*, pp. 15-6.

⁴⁴ *Chron. mai.*, V, 404.

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Grosseteste might have seen and heard the Cistercian abbot, Eustace of Flay, when the latter came to England to preach the crusade in 1200.⁴⁵ But it would only have been possible for him to make personal acquaintance with Robert Curzon in France, since there is no record that Curzon crossed over to England. Still more convincing is the assertion that he heard the Archbishop of Canterbury, Stephen Langton, during his exile, *exulans*. Langton was in exile from 1207 until July, 1213, in the troubled reign of King John, and we know that he was in Paris in September, 1211;⁴⁶ whereas Robert Curzon was regent in theology at Paris from about 1204 to 1210-1.⁴⁷

Obviously, from the mere fact that Grosseteste spent some years in France, it does not necessarily follow that he pursued his theological studies in Paris. Yet, all things considered, once his long stay in France is conceded, it would seem that we can hardly fail to draw that conclusion. The more so since these years coincide roughly with the Oxford dispersion of masters and scholars (1209-1214). It was according to an old-established tradition, and it suggests itself quite naturally, that a master in arts would go to Paris and turn to one of the higher faculties—theology, law or medicine.

We may presume, therefore, that Grosseteste, like Edmund of Abingdon, John Blund and other English masters in arts, migrated to Paris in 1209 to study theology. He may then have known James of Vitry and have possibly been a fellow-scholar of the future bishop of Paris, William of Auvergne, a circumstance which would easily account for his intimate acquaintance with him. It is quite probable that the Englishman Robert Curzon was his master for one or two years. If this is so, the reference to him as *pater et doctor noster* would carry with it its full meaning. Two other English masters in theology were very probably teaching in Paris at this time, Richard le Poore,⁴⁸ Stephen Langton's pupil, dean of Salisbury since 1198, and successively bishop of Chichester, Salisbury and Durham, described by Matthew Paris as 'vir eximiae sanctitatis et profundae scientiae',⁴⁹ and John of St. Albans, later dean of St. Quentin and treasurer of Salisbury, the first teacher to the Friar Preachers at Saint-Jacques. A more outstanding theologian was Philip of Paris surnamed the Chancellor for his having held the chancellorship of Notre Dame from 1218 to 1236. A no less distinguished regent-master was Thomas

⁴⁵ Matthew Paris, *Chron. mai.*, II, 464 ff.

⁴⁶ F. M. Powicke, *Stephen Langton* (Oxford, 1928), p. 78.

⁴⁷ Cf. C. Dickson, 'Le Cardinal Robert de Courson. Sa Vie', *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du Moyen Âge*, IX (1934), 72; P. Glorieux, *Répertoire des maîtres en Théologie de Paris au XIIIe siècle* (Paris, 1933), n. 103, I, pp. 235-7, and Tables.

⁴⁸ From a letter of Innocent III, 10 April, 1213, addressed 'Decano Saresberiensis doctenti Parisius sacram Paginam', we learn that Richard le Poore was then teaching theology in Paris. Glorieux, *Répertoire*, I, n. 115, pp. 275-6, identifies wrongly the dean of Salisbury with Thomas Chabham.

⁴⁹ *Chron. mai.*, III, 391.

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Gallus, canon of St. Victor and afterwards prior and abbot of St. Andrew at Vercelli (hence he is generally known as *Vercellensis*), the famous commentator on Pseudo-Dionysius. From a letter of Adam Marsh we learn of the close friendship between Thomas Gallus and Robert Grosseteste, 'bene valet amantissimus vester dominus Lincolniae'.⁵⁰ It is tempting to presume that their intimacy developed from their early relationship of master and pupil in Paris days.

Thomas Hearne⁵¹ will not have it that Robert Grosseteste had graduated in Divinity from Paris. His authority is Thomas Gascoigne who in his copy of Ranulph Higden's *Polychronicon* (now Balliol College MS. 235) wrote this marginal note (fol. 181^v):

'Iste episcopus Lincolnensis magister Robertus Grostestese fuit Doctor Sacre Theologie de Oxonia, ut patet in sermone suo de Levitis, scripto manu propria ipsius Domini Lincolnensis.'⁵¹

Two among Grosseteste's sermons listed by Thomson may have some claim to the title of 'Sermo de Levitis'; but whether Thomas Gascoigne's allusion is to either of these, or to a different one, I do not know. At all events, an inspection of both sermons gave a negative result. The former, listed under n. 12 (p. 170), begins: 'In libro Numerorum scriptum est de levitis et scient singuli'. The latter (n. 31, p. 176), 'Scriptum est de levitis scilicet de ministris tabernaculi', contains a remark somewhat connected with the schools and two interesting personal allusions, but neither of these has any bearing on the point at issue. Grosseteste, speaking of the priestly duty of preaching, brings forward an argument advanced by some to excuse themselves from fulfilling their obligation. He says:

'Sed cogitant aliqui: non possum predicare quia generosus sum, quia magnus clericus, utpote si rexit in artibus vel phisica. Nollem enim predicare nisi possem subtiliter et excellentius ceteris predicare, et hoc nescio.' (MS. Bodl. 36, fol. 46^{va}; MS. Bodl. 801, fol. 194^f.)

In another passage he refers to his episcopal palace at Lincoln and to his old age and infirmities:

'Verbi gratia, multi aspicientes aulam meam lincolniensem, quia nobilis est et magna, appetunt eam vel ei similem. Sed nullus aspiciens tugurium

⁵⁰ *Monumenta Franciscana*, ed. J. S. Brewer (R.S., London, 1858), 206-7. Cf. D. A. Callus in *Recherches Théol. anc. et méd.*, xiv (1947), 188, 199 f. It is often said that Adam Marsh studied theology for a time at Vercelli under Thomas Gallus. This tradition is, however, unfounded. Cf. Father Cuthbert, *The Romanticism of St. Francis* (London, 1924), pp. 194-5; A. G. Little, 'The Franciscan School at Oxford in the Thirteenth Century', *Arch. Franciscanum Historicum*, xix (1926), 834.

⁵¹ T. Hearne, *Chronicon sive Annales Prioratus de Dunstaple, una cum excerptis e Chartulario eiusdem Prioratus* (Oxonii, 1733), 1, 299 n., and Hearne's Diaries, MS. Bodl. 135, p. 113 (S.C. 15258). See also Gascoigne's note in Lincoln College, Oxford, MS. 54, fol. 17^{va}.

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paupercule alicuius, quia vile, illud desiderat. Ista modo sufficerent de sermone hodierno, quia nescio utrum unquam redeam (*al. l. : redibo*) ad vos, quia vetus sum et eger, et etiam sanus quandoque cito moritur.' (MS. 36, fol. 47^{va-b}; 801, fol. 196^r.)

Finally, describing the different qualities of a person, he gives as an instance :

'primo fui clericus, deinde magister in theologia et presbiter, et tandem episcopus.' (MS. 36, fol. 48^{rb}; MS. 801, fol. 197^r.)

It is quite likely that the phrase 'magister in theologia' caused Gascoigne to infer 'fuit Doctor Sacre Theologie de Oxonia, ut patet in sermone suo De Levitis', if this is the sermon mentioned by him. The significant word *de Oxonia*, however, is in neither manuscript I have examined.

Whether Grosseteste gained his mastership in Paris or took his degree at Oxford after his return, is not easy to determine. In the absence of definite evidence I have been unable to substantiate either view. Naturally, a regular course of university studies should normally be crowned by a master's degree. Moreover, even granted that the word *de Oxonia* was indeed in the autograph seen by him, Gascoigne's statement, that Grosseteste was 'Doctor S. Theologiae de Oxonia', strictly speaking, does not necessarily imply that he obtained his mastership at Oxford, but may simply mean that he taught theology in Oxford, a fact which had never been disputed. Nevertheless, if we assume that Cardinal de Curzon's statute of 1215 (which required at least five years' study for the degree of bachelor in theology) enforced a long-established practice, and also that Grosseteste went to Paris in 1209 and returned to Oxford in 1214, this would allow him a period of five years, that is, the bare minimum to qualify for the bachelorship. In this hypothesis we may take it that he did indeed 'incept' as master in theology at Oxford. One slight difficulty against such a presumption is that his nomination to the chancellorship of the university would be delayed for a few years until his taking of the master's degree; and hence he would not be the earliest chancellor. But after all nowhere is it distinctly stated that he was the very first chancellor of the University of Oxford. To harmonize the different accounts it suffices perhaps to say that he was one of the earliest chancellors.

It has often been repeated after Wood that Grosseteste was a pupil of St. Edmund of Abingdon.⁵² If this assertion refers to his studies in arts at Oxford, it appears to be without solid foundation. There is some reason to suppose that Edmund's regency in arts at Oxford falls between 1202-3 and 1208-9,⁵³ whereas Grosseteste was undoubtedly a master by 1199 at the latest,

⁵² A. Wood, *The History and Antiquities of the University of Oxford*, ed. J. Gutch (Oxford, 1796), II, 738.

⁵³ Cf. D. A. Callus, *Introduction of Aristotelian Learning to Oxford*, pp. 13-4.

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and probably already by 1186-9.⁵⁴ On the other hand, if we accept the tradition that Edmund of Abingdon was the first D.D. of Oxford and that Grosseteste returned from Paris in 1214-5, it is by no means unlikely that he attended Edmund's theological lectures. St. Edmund would be teaching about 1215-25, and it may well be that Grosseteste 'incepted' in theology under him. This, however, is pure hypothesis. All that we may safely maintain is that he obtained his mastership in theology either from Paris or from Oxford and became 'master of the schools' or chancellor of the university some time after 1214.

Of Grosseteste's activities in Oxford at this time little is known. His presence at Oxford is attested in 1229-30 during the visit of the second Master General of the Order of Preachers, Bl. Jordan of Saxony, as he relates in one of his letters :

'Credimus vestram caritatem memoriter tenere quanta familiaritate, cum fuistis Oxoniae, vestra dulcis affabilitas ad privata nos suscepit frequenter colloquia, quantaque caritate sine nostris meritis gratuito vestri gratia nos amplexati estis.'⁵⁵

On 22 June, 1231, at his request and that of the chancellor, Ralph of Maidstone and other masters, the king pardoned some students who were imprisoned for forestry offences.⁵⁶ Again, on 23 June, 1234, he was entrusted, together with the chancellor and the Dominican Robert Bacon, with the charge of seeing that the king's ban from Oxford of women of bad repute was duly carried out.⁵⁷

Far more important was his appointment as the first lecturer to the Franciscans from 1229 or 1230 till his election to the see of Lincoln on 27 March, 1235. 'Under him within a short time', says Eccleston, 'they made incalculable progress both in scholastic discussions and the subtle moralities suitable for preaching.'⁵⁸

The duties of a mediaeval master in theology were *praedicare, disputare, legere*, to preach, to hold disputations and to teach.

(i) *Praedicare*, to preach.

In the *recapitulatio*⁵⁹ of his *Dicta Grosseteste* refers to his sermons *ad clerum* and *ad populum*, which he preached while he was still lecturing, *in scholis*. Some

⁵⁴ Cf. *supra*, p. 44.

⁵⁵ Grosseteste, *Epistolae*, 131-2. For the date of Jordan's visit see A. G. Little and Decima Douie, 'Three Sermons of Friar Jordan of Saxony, the Successor of St. Dominic, preached in England, A.D. 1229', *E.H.R.*, LIV (1939), 1-8.

⁵⁶ *Close Rolls, Henry III, 1227-31* (London, 1902), 520.

⁵⁷ *Close Rolls, 1231-4* (London, 1905), 568.

⁵⁸ *Tractatus Fr. Thomas de Eccleston De Adventu Fratrum Minorum in Angliam*, ed. A. G. Little (Paris, 1909), pp. 60-1. For this appointment see A. G. Little, 'The Franciscan School at Oxford in the Thirteenth Century', *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum*, XIX (1926), 807-10.

⁵⁹ For the text of the *recapitulatio* see *infra*, p. 67.

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at least of those preached *ad clerum* may well have been university sermons. But his numerous sermons have been treated in such detail by S. H. Thomson⁶⁰ that there is no need to discuss them here.

(ii) *Disputare*, to hold disputations.

In his commentary on the Epistle to the Romans⁶¹ Grosseteste has a brief section (disappointingly brief, stopping short when it begins to be more interesting) on disputations, in which he sets forth the duties of the *opponens* and *respondens*, and gives good advice to novices, who should listen quietly and let those talk who know better. But there are those amongst the younger ones who, like Elihu in the book of Job (ch. xxxii ff.), seem to themselves so full of wisdom that they cannot contain themselves :

‘ sed quidam iuniores, velut Heliu, sibi ita sapientes videntur quod non possunt se continere.’

The *opponens* must not argue as if he were fighting, and, on the other hand, the *respondens* must not be so obstinate as to deny the truth ; but they must both strive to let each other calmly bring home his argument without clamour and strong language. Both should avoid useless and senseless questions.

Very few, if any, of Grosseteste's *quaestiones disputatae* remain. We may without much hesitation assign to his teaching period the *De Libero Arbitrio*,⁶² *De Ordine emanandi causatorum a Deo*,⁶³ *De Veritate*,⁶⁴ *De Veritate Propositionis*,⁶⁵ *De Scientia Dei*,⁶⁶ and the *quaestiones theologicae*⁶⁷ extant in MS. 28 (fol. 306^r-7^v), Exeter College, Oxford. But whether they represent *quaestiones* actually disputed in the schools is a more complex problem.

The form in which they came down to us suggests a technique rather of a treatise, or of questions attached to the *lectio*, than of a *quaestio disputata*. Yet, the structure of the arguments against and in favour of the thesis, and certain phrases scattered here and there, which are easily traced, may possibly hint at disputations. I am inclined to think that these opuscles were questions raised or disputed originally in the course of his theological teaching, which Grosseteste later arranged and set into a definite shape.

(iii) *Legere* meant to interpret Holy Writ.

In mediaeval universities the Bible was the alpha and omega, the beginning and the end, of the whole theological course. To study or to teach theology

⁶⁰ S. H. Thomson, *The Writings*, pp. 160-91.

⁶¹ Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, MS. 439, see *infra*, p. 63 f.

⁶² Edited by L. Baur, *Die philosophischen Werke*, pp. 150-241.

⁶³ Edit. Baur, *ibid.*, pp. 147-50.

⁶⁴ Edit. Baur, *ibid.*, pp. 130-43.

⁶⁵ Edit. Baur, *op. cit.*, pp. 143-5.

⁶⁶ Edit. Baur, *ibid.*, pp. 145-7.

⁶⁷ Cf. S. H. Thomson, *The Writings*, pp. 113-4.

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was in university language *in sacra pagina studere, legere, docere*. Likewise, to become master in theology was *in sacra pagina magistrari*.⁶⁸ The doctors in canon law were styled *doctores Decretorum*, since they commented on the *Decretum*. For the very same reason the masters in divinity were called masters 'in Sacred Page', or 'in Holy Writ'⁶⁹ in as much as it was their duty to expound the Scriptures. Hence the Bible, and the Bible alone, was the text-book of the master in theology.⁷⁰

That Robert Grosseteste as master-regent in theology lectured on the Scriptures is not doubtful. Roger Bacon assures us of this fact. To the practice prevalent in his time of expounding the book of the *Sentences* in preference to the Bible, he opposes the custom of the holy doctors and of the wise men of old who used the Scriptures alone as their text-book in the theological faculty, and among these he praises explicitly Robert Grosseteste.⁷¹

Further, that Grosseteste was steeped in the Scriptures is undeniable. All his writings bear witness to this. Biblical turns of language are employed by him on the most unexpected occasions. Even his letters contain a wealth of biblical texts and illustrations such as only long and assiduous study can provide. That he insisted in season and out of season that those whose duty it is to instruct the clergy and the laity alike should have a thorough knowledge of Holy Writ is also certain. In this connexion a letter addressed, after his return from the Council of Lyons, to the Dominican Cardinal Hugh of St. Cher, himself a most prominent biblical scholar, is very significant. The well-being of the Church, and even of the kingdom, in England, he tells him, depends mainly on the Archbishop of Canterbury. On which account he is in utter need of the support of *latera*, not only from those who are familiar with civil and canon law, but especially from those who are deeply versed in the knowledge of the Law of God, that is, Holy Scripture, and have its wisdom inscribed in their minds and hearts. It is through this wisdom that kings rule and law-givers decree just things. But these are not found save in the two Orders of Friars, Dominican and Franciscan. He begs him, therefore, to remind the Pope of his promise to send such *latera*, or constant associates, to the archbishop in order that they may sustain and strengthen him continually and earnestly.⁷²

⁶⁸ Cf. *Collectanea*, II, O.H.S., xvi (1890), 217, 225.

⁶⁹ 'Magistri regentes in Sacra Scriptura', cf. *Monumenta Franciscana* (R.S., London, 1858), I, 347.

⁷⁰ Cf. H. Denifle, 'Quel livre servait de base à l'enseignement des maîtres en théologie dans l'Université de Paris?', *Revue Thomiste*, II (1894), 149-61; P. Mandonnet, *ibid.*, 1929, 489-519; B. Smalley, *The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages* (Oxford, 1941), pp. 156 ff., *et alibi passim*.

⁷¹ Roger Bacon, *Opus Minus*, ed. Brewer (R.S., London, 1859), pp. 328-9. Brewer's text is very faulty: see the text as corrected by Dr. Little on MS. Oxford, Bodl. Digby 218, fol. 59, in *A.F.H.*, XIX (1926), 808-9.

⁷² *Roberti Grosseteste Epistolae*, ed. H. R. Luard (R.S., London, 1861), pp. 335-6.

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Moreover, in a letter written to the regent-masters in theology at Oxford, Bishop Grosseteste stresses the point that all theological teaching should be based on the biblical text. He compares them to skilful master-builders who select with utmost care the stones destined for laying down the foundation, stones which must be really solid, well adjusted and perfectly fitted to support the whole edifice. The foundation-stones of the building, of which the masters in theology are the architects, are the prophetic and other books of the Old Testament, the writings of the Apostles and the gospels. Unless they take heed and watch with great care that no poor material gets mixed with the good foundations, there is a danger that the less solid portion may cause the whole superstructure to crack, and thus bring about its complete ruin. The time best fitted for laying foundation stones is the morning hour, that is, the time appointed for the *lectiones ordinariae*. All the lectures, especially at that time, should be, therefore, on the books of the New Testament or the Old. This is the traditional practice of our fathers and elders and the custom of the regent-masters in theology at Paris from which we must not recede. Finally, in order to show the extreme importance he attached to this vital point, with renewed insistence he begs, warns and exhorts them to dedicate the whole of their time in the *lectiones ordinariae* to the study of the Bible.⁷³

'There could be no doubt', Dr. Little rightly remarks, 'that this was the practice which he followed himself.'⁷⁴ Assuredly, Grosseteste commented on several books of both the Old and the New Testaments; some of these glosses at least may well represent his courses of lectures. Under the heading 'Biblical Commentaries' S. H. Thomson⁷⁵ mentions only five:

- (i) *Prohemium et Glose in libros Sapientiae et Ecclesiastici*;
- (ii) *Commentarium in Epistolam Pauli ad Galatas*;
- (iii) *In Epistolam ad Romanos V-XVI*;
- (iv) *In Psalmos I-C*;
- (v) *Notulae in Psalterium seu in Commentarium Petri Lombardi in Psalmos*.

To these the *Moralis Tractatus*, or *Moralitates super Evangelia* (listed by him among the pastoral and devotional works⁷⁶) and the *Hexaemeron* (included amongst the philosophical and scientific works⁷⁷) should be added. Yet, compared with his other writings and with the long period of his theological career, these are by far too few, particularly on the Old Testament, even

⁷³ *Epistolae*, 346-7.

⁷⁴ A. G. Little, *A.F.H.*, xix (1926), 808.

⁷⁵ S. H. Thomson, *The Writings*, pp. 72-8.

⁷⁶ *Op. cit.*, pp. 134-5.

⁷⁷ *Op. cit.*, pp. 100-1.

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if we take into account that some were lost, or are still untraced.⁷⁸ As the gloss on St. Mark in Pembroke College, Cambridge, MS. 7 (fol. 228^r-267^{vb}), belongs to a well-known set of glosses on the four gospels ascribed almost with certainty to Peter Comestor, its attribution by Dr. Glunz⁷⁹ to Grosseteste needs not to be discussed.⁸⁰

At the outset we may eliminate from Grosseteste's teaching period the *Glosses on Wisdom and Ecclesiasticus*, which must undoubtedly be assigned to a later date; possibly also the treatise on the *Hexaemeron*.

Shrewsbury School MS. I, written in the first quarter of the 13th century by an English scribe, contains the books of *Wisdom* and *Ecclesiasticus* with glosses. Grosseteste wrote a short prologue to the book of *Wisdom* on the fly-leaf and annotated, in his own hand, the text and the glosses throughout. The manuscript belonged to Alexander Stavensby, bishop of Lichfield and Coventry (1224-38), and came into Grosseteste's possession seemingly after Stavensby's death (1238), that is, after his elevation to the see of Lincoln in 1235.⁸¹ If this is so, the glosses could not possibly have been written during his regency at Oxford. They are rather of the kind of annotations jotted down in the margin of his codex on the spur of the moment, in the same manner as the comments on the *Physics*, which, in William of Alnwick's words,

'non studiose nec complete exposuit, sed quando aliqua ymaginatio notabilis sibi occurrebat ibi scripsit ne laberetur a memoria sua.'⁸²

The *Hexaemeron* on the contrary, is, as William of Alnwick has it, a *scriptum authenticum*, the production of mature study, the deliberate expression of his thought. It is a systematic and elaborate commentary on the *Six Days of Creation*, not a set of notes or marginal jottings. In addition to St. Augustine, Ambrose, Jerome, Bede, and other Latin writers, Grosseteste makes use of Gregory of Nyssa, John Damascene, John Chrysostom, and especially of St. Basil.⁸³ Apart from its doctrinal importance, the *Hexaemeron* clearly

⁷⁸ See Thomson, *op. cit.*, p. 271, under the heading: 'Lost or untraced works'.

⁷⁹ H. Glunz, *History of the Vulgate in England from Alcuin to Roger Bacon* (Cambridge, 1933), p. 280. He published some extracts of this gloss from the Pembroke MS. under Grosseteste's name, *cf. ibid.*, pp. 355-9.

⁸⁰ For the ascription of this gloss to Peter Comestor or Manducator see B. Hauréau, *Notices et Extraits*, I, 5; A. Landgraf, 'Recherches sur les écrits de Pierre le Mangeur', *Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale*, III (1931), 366-72. The Pembroke MS. belonged once to Grosseteste. 'There are some marginal notes in his own hand at the beginning of the work, and, at the foot of the first page, Grosseteste began the name of the author in plummet: *venerabilis magistri*, but did not finish.' *Cf.* Thomson, *op. cit.*, p. 254. For a full description of, and the questions connected with, this manuscript see B. Smalley, 'A Collection of Paris Lectures of the later Twelfth Century in the MS. Pembroke College, Cambridge 7', *Cambridge Historical Journal*, VI (1938), 103-13.

⁸¹ S. H. Thomson, *The Writings*, p. 72, *cf.* also p. 34.

⁸² See *supra*, p. 46.

⁸³ How St. Basil on the *Hexaemeron* came into Grosseteste's possession is told by Miss Beryl Smalley, *loc. cit.*

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indicates his technique in the manipulation of his sources. He relishes dwelling on cosmological topics, asserts with certain vehemence the non-eternity of the world and inveighs against those

'moderni qui nituntur de Aristotele heretico facere catholicum, mira cecitate et presumptione. . . . Non igitur se decipiant et frustra desudant ut Aristotelem faciant catholicum, ne inutiliter tempus suum et vires ingenii sui consumant, et Aristotelem catholicum constituendo seipsos hereticos faciant.'

Nevertheless, this great work, as it stands, does not seem to represent his lectures, although it is not unlikely that material from his lectures, as also perhaps from his comments on the *Physics*, may have been embodied in it. S. H. Thomson thinks that 'the literary and linguistic content would point to a date ca. 1240, hardly before'.⁸⁴ Yet, the sources utilized by Grosseteste in his *Hexameron* will enable us, it is hoped, to define more exactly its date.

According to Dr. J. T. Muckle,⁸⁵ there is only one citation from the *Nicomachean Ethics* (Bk. I, iii, 1095 a 3-5); but it suffices to show quite clearly that the *Hexameron* preceded the translation of the *Ethics*:

'Aristoteles quoque in Ethicis suis ait: Civilis doctrine non est auditor puer proprius; expers enim est earum que secundum vitam operationum. Rationes autem et ex his et circa has. Amplius autem passionum secutores inaniter audientes et infructuose, quia finis est non cognitio sed est operatio.'

Comparing this quotation with the parallel passage in the translation of Grosseteste, Dr. Muckle has rightly remarked that the latter 'certainly looks like a revision of the first'. It does not follow, however, as he has tentatively suggested,⁸⁶ 'that Grosseteste was in possession of a Greek text of the *Ethics*', nor that the passage in discussion was translated by Grosseteste himself. As a matter of fact, Grosseteste neither translated himself the passage in question, nor did he depend on a Greek text, but simply made use of an existing version, the so-called *Ethica Nova*, from which the citation is taken verbatim. On the other hand, it is well known that Grosseteste did not translate anew the first three books of the *Ethics*, but merely revised and corrected the older version in the light of the Greek text. A collation of the text of the *Ethica Nova* edited by C. Marchesi with Grosseteste's translation will show at a glance the immediate source of his citation:

⁸⁴ S. H. Thomson, *The Writings*, p. 101.

⁸⁵ J. T. Muckle, 'Robert Grosseteste's use of Greek Sources in his Hexameron', *Medievalia et Humanistica*, III (1945), 36.

⁸⁶ Muckle, *loc. cit.*

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ETHICA NOVA

' Civilis doctrine non est puer propius auditor ; expers enim est earum que ad vitam sunt operationum. Rationes autem ex hiis et circa has. Amplius autem et passionum insecutores sunt inaniter audientes et infructuose, quare finis non cognitio sed operatio.⁸⁷

GROSSETESTE'S TRANSLATION

' Politice doctrine non est proprius auditor iuvenis ; inexpertus enim est eorum qui secundum vitam sunt actuum. Rationes autem de his et ex his sunt. Amplius autem passionum sucutor existens inaniter audiet et inutiliter, quia finis non est cognitio sed actus.⁸⁸

Granted, therefore, that Grosseteste did not use his own translation but the earlier, though less accurate, version of the *Ethics*, Book I, we can hardly escape the conclusion that the *Hexaameron* was written before the translation of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, which latter must be placed not earlier than 1242 nor later than 1246-8.

Another work which we know Grosseteste to have translated from the Greek after 1235 is the *De Fide Orthodoxa* of St. John Damascene. Dr. Muckle assures us that in his many citations from this book Grosseteste 'always uses the translation of Burgundio of Pisa'.⁸⁹ If this is so, we possess a valuable clue for dating the *Hexaameron*. From their stylistic and literary characteristics and from cross-references it may be deduced that the *De Fide Orthodoxa* was one of his earliest attempts at translating. It was certainly completed before the translation of and the commentaries on the Pseudo-Dionysian corpus. Now there are serious reasons which indicate, as I have shown in another connexion,⁹⁰ that the *Angelical Hierarchy*, at least, should be assigned to the years 1239-40 at the latest. Accordingly, if the *Hexaameron* was written before the translation of the *De Fide Orthodoxa* (and otherwise Grosseteste would surely have utilized his own version and not Burgundio's), we are not far wrong in suggesting that the *Hexaameron* belongs either to the very first years of his episcopate or, as seems more likely, to the last years of his scholastic career at Oxford. A more definite date will undoubtedly be determined by Dr. Muckle, who is preparing an edition of this work.⁹¹

The *Moralis Tractatus secundum ordinem quatuor Evangelistarum*, called simply *Moralia* in Lincoln College, Oxford, MS. 79, *Omnie super historiam*

⁸⁷ C. Marchesi, *L'Etica Nicomachea nella tradizione latina medievale* (Messina, 1904), p. xxviii.

⁸⁸ *Textus Ethicorum Aristotelis ad Nicomachum iuxta antiquam Translationem* (Parisii, 1500), p. iiii. This is supposed to be the best edition of Grosseteste's translation.

⁸⁹ Muckle, *op. cit.*, p. 40.

⁹⁰ Cf. D. A. Callus, 'The Date of Grosseteste's Translations and Commentaries on Pseudo-Dionysius and the Nicomachean Ethics', *Recherches Théol. anc. et méd.*, xiv (1947), 186-210.

⁹¹ Cf. Muckle, 'The Hexameron of Robert Grosseteste', *Mediaeval Studies* (Toronto), vi (1944), 157.

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evangelicam in Balliol College MS. 35B, *Compendium Moralitatum super Evangelia*⁹² in University Library, Cambridge, MS. Kk, ii, 1, may possibly represent, as Dr. Little⁹³ has suggested, a course of *lectiones ordinariae*. The contents corroborate this surmise and fit in fairly well with Eccleston's description of Grosseteste's method of teaching the Franciscans. There is such a wealth of subtle moralities and of *exempla* suitable for preaching that it counterbalances abundantly the scantiness of 'scholastic discussion'. Grosseteste aimed at giving his pupils a practical instruction for apostolic work, and especially at training them for popular preaching, rather than at preparing them for an university career. This would account for the homiletic tone of this work; or perhaps we may suppose that it was rewritten in the form of sermons for practical purposes. Internal evidence would rather indicate that it is one of Grosseteste's earlier writings on the Bible. It would accordingly be justifiable to propose for its date the year about 1229-30.

Dr. B. Smalley has called my attention to several marginal glosses on fol. 11^v, 27^r, 43^v, 58^{r-v}, 107^v, in the Lincoln MS., which appear like extracts from a complete commentary, with *distinctiones*, *quaestiones* and references to *claustrales*. It is tempting to ascribe it to Grosseteste himself, or to one of his school.

The 15th-century student and admirer of Grosseteste, Thomas Gascoigne⁹⁴ (1404-58/9), repeatedly asserts that he saw in the Franciscan library at Oxford his *Expositio* on the Pauline Epistles. The accuracy of this statement is borne out by his minute description of the work. He points out that it was written in Grosseteste's own hand in the margin of the *Glosa communis*,⁹⁵ and remarks that it did not cover the whole text of St. Paul, but was only restricted to certain parts:

'Hec dominus Doctor Robertus Grosseteste in expositione sua propria, et propria manu sua scripta super Epistolas Beatissimi Pauli Apostoli super diversos textus Apostoli, sed non super omnes textus Apostoli.'⁹⁶

⁹² The rubric of the list of the *capitula* (fol. 304^{va}) in the Cambridge MS. is identical with that of Balliol MS.: 'Incipiunt Capitula in Omnibus magistri Roberti Grosseteste super Historiam evangelicam.'

⁹³ *Arch. Franc. Hist.*, XIX (1926), 808 n.3.

⁹⁴ For Gascoigne see W. A. Pronger, 'Thomas Gascoigne', *E.H.R.*, LIII (1938), 606-26; LIV (1939), 20-37.

⁹⁵ 'Et expositio domini Lincolnensis in illo libro scribitur in margine illius libri, et ibi exponit certos textus beati Pauli Apostoli, sed non omnes, et etiam Glose communis seu expositionis communis. Glosa enim si dicatur in vulgo aliquo putatur falsitas (Rogers reads: felicitas). Dicunt enim diversi heretici quod Doctores sancti putative glosant evangelium secundum voluntatem suam propriam, quamvis verum est quod Dominus verba eorum confirmavit sequentibus signis, i.e. miraculis.' Lincoln College MS. 118, p. 111b. All my citations are from Lincoln College MSS. 117, 118, henceforth quoted as Gascoigne, I, II, respectively.

⁹⁶ Gascoigne, I, p. 258^a; cf. also n. 95, and: 'super quasdam propositiones et super quasdam textus Epistolarum S. Pauli Apostoli', I, p. 117^{a-b}.

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He refers explicitly to the commentary on the Epistles to the Romans,⁹⁷ I and II Corinthians,⁹⁸ Galatians,⁹⁹ Colossians,¹⁰⁰ I and II Thessalonians,¹⁰¹ I and II Timothy,¹⁰² Titus,¹⁰³ and Hebrews,¹⁰⁴ from all of which long passages are cited.¹⁰⁵ Care is taken to note both the exact position in which the volume is placed in the library, as well as its pressmark :

' et opus suum est Oxonie inter fratres Minores in libraria, ibi registratur in libro de nominibus fratrum : Epistole Pauli. a.'¹⁰⁶

It was in 1455, he is mindful to add, the same year in which he caused a copy to be made of his *De Veritatibus collectis*, that he saw the gloss on Timothy,¹⁰⁷ and five years earlier, in 1450, that on the Romans;¹⁰⁸ whereas he examined the whole commentary some years previously, while he held the office of chancellor to the university.¹⁰⁹ Such detailed evidence, even if late, cannot be altogether disregarded. It is first hand, from one well informed of all the facts ; hence it is trustworthy and of a great value. Gascoigne was indeed a good judge on Grosseteste's writings.

In several passages Gascoigne appeals to an *Expositio particularis* on St. Paul's Epistles :

' Hec dominus Lincolniensis in expositione sua, 2^a ad Corinthios, 13 ; et est illa expositio sua particularis super diversos textus Apostoli, et non super quemlibet textum Apostoli.'¹¹⁰

⁹⁷ Gascoigne, I, pp. 95^b, 114^b, 117^b, 120^b, 646^b, etc. ; II, pp. 2^a, 3^a, 4^a, 10^a, 11^a, 306^{a-b}, 310^b, etc.

⁹⁸ *I Cor.*, Gascoigne, I, pp. 249^a, 253^a, etc. ; II, pp. 111^b, 107^b, etc. ; *II Cor.*, Gasc., I, pp. 95^a, 248^b, 249^a, 254^b, 519^b, 662^a, etc. ; II, pp. 2^a, 3^b, 5^b, etc.

⁹⁹ Gascoigne, I, pp. 115^a, 119^a, 541^a, etc. ; II, pp. 310^{a-b}, etc. ; 11^b.

¹⁰⁰ Gascoigne, I, pp. 247^a, 253^b, etc.

¹⁰¹ Gascoigne, II, pp. 642^a, etc.

¹⁰² *I Tim.*, Gascoigne, I, pp. 97^a, 114^b, etc. ; II, pp. 67^b, 317^b, etc. ; *II Tim.*, I, p. 141^b, etc.

¹⁰³ Gascoigne, I, p. 95^a, etc.

¹⁰⁴ Gascoigne, I, 249^a, etc.

¹⁰⁵ A closer examination of Gascoigne's work, than time has allowed me to make, might result in the discovery of some references to the Epistles to the Ephesians, Philipians and Philemon.

¹⁰⁶ Gascoigne, I, p. 248^b : ' Dominus Lincolniensis in fine communis Glose super Epistolas S. Pauli ; et ego Thomas Gascoigne, tunc Cancellarius Oxoniensis, vidi hec scripta manu sua propria in libro suo qui continebat comunem Glosam super Epistolas Sancti Pauli, et scribitur in penultimo folio illius libri inter fratres Minores Oxonie, et liber registratur Epistole Pauli. a. ', II, p. 234^a. Cf. also II, p. 2^a : ' Et est illi liber in libraria conventus, sed non in libraria studentium, due enim sunt ibidem librerie inter fratres Minores Oxonie. '

¹⁰⁷ ' Hec dominus Lincolniensis in expositione sua super Epistolam Beati Pauli Apostoli ad Thimotheum, 6^a ; et vidi illud opus sic scriptum Oxonie anno Christi MCCCClv^o, in quo anno feci scriptum meum De Veritatibus collectis secundum formam tabule scribi in uno volumine ', II, p. 317^b.

¹⁰⁸ ' Hec dominus Lincolniensis doctor Robertus Grosseteste, magister artium Oxonie et doctor sacre Theologie, in expositione sua propria manu sua scripta super Epistolam Beati Pauli Apostoli ad Romanos, capitulo primo ; vidi enim scripturam suam propriam Oxonie anno Christi 1450^o, I, 246^b ; cf. also 306^b.

¹⁰⁹ Gascoigne, II, p. 234^a, see the text *supra*, note 106.

¹¹⁰ Gascoigne, I, p. 141^a.

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And again :

'Hec dominus Lincolniensis in opere suo particularis expositionis super Epistolas Beati Pauli et super quemlibet Epistolam Beati Pauli.'¹¹¹

The question arises whether the *Expositio particularis* is to be identified with the glosses above mentioned, or is a distinct work. Gascoigne's words, although somewhat ambiguous, do seem to point to a quite different commentary. This supposition is corroborated by the fact that, except when a reference is made to the *expositio particularis*, it is expressly and meticulously stated in each instance that the citation is drawn from Grosseteste's interpretation *propria manu sua scripta*. Accordingly it would seem reasonable to assume that he compiled two sets of glosses on the Pauline Epistles, the annotations jotted in his own hand in the margin of the *Glosa communis*, and the *expositio particularis*.

At all events, of Grosseteste's glosses on the Pauline Epistles two only survive, the *Expositio super Epistolam ad Romanos* and *super Epistolam ad Galatas*.¹¹² The copious extracts from the others given by Gascoigne may lead some day, if they are still extant, to their recovery.

In his *De Cessatione Legalium*, written c. 1231, while lecturing to the Franciscans, Grosseteste refers explicitly to his *expositio* on the letter to the Galatians :

'Verba quoque predicti loci epistole ad Galathas convenienter possunt resonare et quod sensit Ieronimus et quod sensit Augustinus, quod etiam nos pro modulo nostro ostendimus in expositione parvula quam super eandem epistolam scripsimus.'¹¹³

Of this commentary only one manuscript is known, Magdalen College, Oxford, MS. 57 (fol. 1^r-32^v), which is definitely ascribed to Grosseteste in the upper right corner of each recto : 'Lincolniensis super Epistolam ad Galathas'. It is rather late (15th c.) and incomplete, breaking off just before the end, at chapter v, v. 14. The Incipit reads :

'Ut Apostolus revocaret Galathas ad doctrinam evangelicam, quam ab ipso prius susceptam relinquerant, oportuit ut suam personam ostenderet scientem et veracem, et ut solveret que sibi possent obicici, et ut probaret observantiam legis debere cessare et solum ewangelium ad salutem sufficere ; primo ergo in hac epistola suam personam commendat, ut ostendatur sciens veritatem doctrine et amans ac persona sequens suam doctrinam esse veram, statim itaque negat se esse discipulum hominum ; quoniam plerique habent veri ignorantiam, et plerumque verum quod sciunt non veraciter docent, asserens

¹¹¹ Gascoigne, I, p. 257^b.

¹¹² Cf. S. H. Thomson, *The Writings*, pp. 73-5.

¹¹³ Lincoln College MS. 54, fol. 12^v^b.

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se solus esse discipulum Christi, qui unus est magister sciens et docens suos omnem veritatem et infundens eis veritatis amorem. . . .¹¹⁴

A collation of Gascoigne's quotations from the *Expositio ad Galatas*¹¹⁵ with the Magdalen text has shown that they are substantially the same work. Hence it follows that Grosseteste's authorship is well attested. We may take it for granted that it represents his theological lectures at Oxford. And since the *De Cessatione Legalium* was composed about 1231, this commentary must have been written about the same time or a little earlier.

It is not irrelevant to note that Grosseteste by this time was already interested in the study of Greek; he appeals often to the *LXX Interpretes*, and it appears that he made use of Greek manuscripts, as his repeated mention of *codex graecus* and *codices graeci* seem to suggest. A careful study of this commentary may perhaps throw some light on his knowledge of Greek by this period, and on the question whether it was derived from original sources or only second-hand.

The *Expositio super Epistolam ad Romanos* is preserved in MS. 439 (fol. 57-70), Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge. The text is incomplete beginning at chapter v, v. 1: *Iustificati ex fide*. But we know from Gascoigne that Grosseteste expounded the whole epistle. As a matter of fact, in the *De Veritatibus collectis* I came across citations from chapters i (I, p. 120^b, 246^b); iii (II, p. 4^a); and iv (I, p. 117^b; II, pp. 3^a, 11^a), which implies that at Gascoigne's time these passages were still extant. A complete copy, now hidden in some library, may perhaps turn up one day.

S. H. Thomson says:

'Both the age of the MS. and the organization of the material would justify us in regarding the whole as taken down from *lecciones*.'

In support of this contention he adds:

'On fol. 61^a, the scribe of the text has written *Dominica quarta post pentecosten* which, coming in the middle of the commentary on chap. viii, would have no significance unless to date the *leccio*. Further on in the codex, f. 71^a, almost immediately following the commentary, begins a sermon on *Non potest arbor bona* (Mt. vii, 18) which is rubricked by the original hand *Sermo dominica septima post pentecosten*. The natural conclusion would be that the intervening matter had been "read" in the preceding three weeks.'¹¹⁶

While I agree entirely with Professor Thomson that the *expositio* belongs to Grosseteste's teaching period, I would suggest that his evidence points

¹¹⁴ Magdalen College MS. 57, fol. 1^r.

¹¹⁵ Cf. *supra*, p. 61, n. 99.

¹¹⁶ S. H. Thomson, *The Writings*, pp. 74-5.

in another direction. In my opinion the purpose of the marginal notes is not to date the *lectio*, but to call the attention of the reader to the fact that there is here good material for sermons. Indeed the Epistle of the Mass on the fourth Sunday after Pentecost is taken from Romans viii (18-23); hence the scribe rightly rubricated on fol. 61^a: *Dominica quarta post Pentecosten*. Likewise, *Non potest arbor bona* (Mt. viii, 18) is the Gospel appointed to be read on the 7th Sunday after Pentecost, and the scribe annotated it accordingly on fol. 71^a: *Sermo dominica septima post Pentecosten*, meaning that that section of the commentary may be used for a sermon on the 7th Sunday after Pentecost. If my surmise is correct, the marginal notes leave the question of the date quite open, and consequently we cannot conclude 'that the intervening matter had been "read" in the preceding three weeks.'

On the other hand, we find in this commentary a few traces of scholastic discussions. 'Arguunt quidam'; 'dicunt quidam'; 'respondeo'; 'ad hoc respondendum'; 'sed quereretur tunc aliquis'; 'ad istam questionem responderi potest'; 'sed tunc obiceretur'; 'responde quod non sequitur'; 'unde sequitur oppositum conclusionis premissae': 'idem probat per rationationem, que talis est'. The reasoning is given in purely syllogistic form. There are divisions, *distinctiones*, and other indications which suggest the class-room. The allusions to 'clerici et religiosi' would rather hint that the lectures were not addressed to the Franciscans alone, but to a mixed audience of seculars and religious.¹¹⁷

No other parts of the Bible, as Denifle justly pointed out, were more frequently expounded in the schools than the Pauline Epistles and the Psalter.¹¹⁸ Their daily use in the liturgy of the Church, and the conviction that both constitute the main source and basis of theological teaching would obviously commend them to the masters in theology from the twofold aspect of devotion and doctrine. Moreover, the fact that they were both provided with three sets of famous glosses, the *Glosa ordinaria*, the *Media Glosatura* of Gilbert de la Porrée, and the *Maior* or *Magna Glosatura* of Peter Lombard,¹¹⁹ would naturally have placed them in a privileged position, especially at a time when the standard text of the Scriptures in the schools meant the glossed text.

Robert Grosseteste followed in the stream of tradition. From Gascoigne we have learnt that he interpreted the Pauline Epistles, and once again we

¹¹⁷ I am indebted to the kindness of the Librarian of Gonville and Caius College who deposited this manuscript for my use in the University Library, Cambridge.

¹¹⁸ H. Denifle, *Die abendländischen Schriftausleger bis Luther über Justitia Dei (Rom. i, 17) und Justificatio* (Mainz, 1905), p. x.

¹¹⁹ For the Gloss see the excellent papers by B. Smalley, 'Gilbertus Universalis, Bishop of London (1128-34), and the Problem of the "Glosa Ordinaria"', *Recherches de Théologie ancienne et méd.*, vii (1935), 235-62; viii (1936), 24-60; 'La Glosa Ordinaria', *ibid.*, ix (1937), 365-400; 'A Collection of Paris Lectures', *Cambridge Hist. Journal*, vi (1938), 103-13.

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have it on his authority that Grosseteste wrote an *Expositio in Psalmos*. It was seen by Gascoigne himself many times, *pluries*, at the Oxford Franciscan library in and before 1456. It did not comprise the whole Psalter, but embraced only the first hundred Psalms.¹²⁰ There were in the library two glossed Psalters by Grosseteste, one, in his own handwriting, marked, *Episcopus Lincolnensis. d.*; the other, transcribed by an amanuensis, bearing the press-mark, *Episcopus Lincolnensis. ff.*¹²¹ Gascoigne did not specify whether the one written by the scribe was a different exposition from the autograph, or just a copy of it. But the full and abundant citations,¹²² pieced together, may easily lead to the restoration of the whole work.

The manuscript evidence substantiates Gascoigne's statement in favour of Grosseteste's authorship of an *Expositio in Psalmos*. It is extant in two manuscripts: Bologna, MS. A. 893 (fol. 1^r-173^v), once in the possession of the Dominican Priory¹²³ and now in the Archiginnasio; and Eton College MS. 8 (fol. 1^r-203^r,—*Index* 205^r-216^{rb}), amply described by M. R. James.¹²⁴ In the Bologna MS., in early 14th century English hand, it is definitely ascribed to Grosseteste in the colophon, which informs us as well that it was copied from the Oxford exemplar:

'Explicit Lincolnensis super Psalterium quem reperitur ipsum fecisse secundum exemplar librorum librarie Oxonie. Amen.'¹²⁵

The ascription, *Ro. Grosthed in centum Psalmos*, in the Eton MS., written on the first leaf, is in a 16th century hand at the earliest.¹²⁶ Both begin with a prologue, followed by the glosses on Psalm i, *Beatus vir*, to Psalm c, *Misericordiam et iudicium*, which tallies with Gascoigne's account:

'Et vidi expositionem suam propriam super Psalterium scriptam manu sua propria a psalmo primo, *Beatus vir* etc. usque ad psalmum 100m inclusive, scilicet *Misericordiam et iudicium*, qui est psalmus centesimus.'

The *Expositio* is also but partially preserved in Durham Cathedral Library MS.A. III. 12 (fol. 2^r-13^v), 'one of the most important of all Grosseteste's

¹²⁰ 'Et vidi expositionem suam propriam super Psalterium scriptam manu sua propria a psalmo primo . . . usque ad psalmum 100m inclusive. . . . Et vidi ego Oxonie pluries anno Christi 1456 et antea.' Gascoigne, I, p. 640.

¹²¹ 'Et Psalterium expositum et scriptum manu sua propria registratur Oxonie inter fratres Minores, Episcopus Lincolnensis.d. Et Psalterium suum, quod non scribitur manu propria domini Lincolnensis, registratur ibidem, Episcopus Lincolnensis.ff.' Gascoigne, II, p. 306b.

¹²² 'Dominus Lincolnensis in expositione sua propria manu sua scripta super Psalterium, super Psalmum 55m', II, p. 89a. Cf. I, pp. 247a, 248a-b, 249b, 642b, 661a, 662b, 646b, et alibi passim.

¹²³ Cf. Tanner, p. 349.

¹²⁴ 'Robert Grosseteste on the Psalms', *Journ. Theol. Studies*, xxiii (1922), 181-5.

¹²⁵ Cf. Thomson, *The Writings*, p. 75.

¹²⁶ M. R. James, *op. cit.*, p. 181.

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manuscripts', as Thomson puts it,¹²⁷ written in or near 1231, containing the prologue and the comments on the first Psalms, as in the Bologna and Eton texts, with a few omissions, and including moreover the *Regule Tyconii*, greatly abridged.¹²⁸ Further, MS. c Museo 15 of the Bodleian Library, Oxford, written in the first half of the 13th century, has on fol. 1^{r-v} Grosseteste's prologue and the *Regule Tyconii*, as in the Durham MS. But the text, comprising Peter Lombard's commentary on the Psalms (fol. 2^r-205^v), is annotated throughout by several early scribes, some of which annotations, at least, may well be Grosseteste's.

To these manuscripts a fifth may be added, Lincoln Cathedral MS. 144 containing the *Magna Glosatura* of Peter Lombard with *notule* in Grosseteste's own hand, written in the margins. The marginal notes cover both the text of the Psalms and the Lombard's comments as well.¹²⁹

Whereas Grosseteste's authorship of an *Expositio in Psalmos* is firmly established, the question of determining its contents is an exceedingly complex one. 'It is extremely doubtful', says S. H. Thomson, 'if Grosseteste would have consented to call this almost amorphous collection a commentary.'¹³⁰ To disentangle the difficult problem we may perhaps state it briefly thus.

Of the five manuscripts purporting to contain Grosseteste's glosses, two the Bologna and Eton MSS., the only known complete copies, may be taken as representatives of his work on the Psalms. They correspond exactly to Gascoigne's description and to the data we already possess. Their text may, accordingly, be accepted as the basis for any further investigation. Likewise, the Durham MS., so far as it goes, being in substantial agreement with the Bologna and Eton texts, may easily be disposed of. It is unfortunate that the first leaves of the Lincoln manuscript are missing. Nevertheless, the *notule* written in the margin of the *Glosa* of Peter Lombard on the Psalms are certainly Grosseteste's, as Professor Thomson assures us that they are in his own handwriting. The point at issue is to ascertain their relationship to the commentary, whether they are identical or a different set of notes. Again, are the glosses in MS. c Museo 15, or any of them, by Grosseteste? If it is so, it would be important to investigate how far their contents, if any, passed into the commentary. Only a thorough collation of all the texts, including the extracts found in Gascoigne, can provide an adequate answer to all the questions.

A further problem arises from the fact that thirty-seven of the *Dicta* and their introductory section are met with almost verbatim in the commentary

¹²⁷ S. R. Thomson, *The Writings*, p. 34.

¹²⁸ Thomson, *op. cit.*, p. 76. Cf. also pp. 13-7, 34-5, 182, 214.

¹²⁹ Thomson, *op. cit.*, pp. 77-8. See also, pp. 33-4.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 76.

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on the Psalms. S. H. Thomson, supposing that a pupil or a friend was responsible for assembling out of sayings of Grosseteste the material which now forms the commentary, believes that these were taken out of the collection of the *Dicta* and later incorporated into the commentary.¹³¹ I am well aware that it is dangerous to be in disagreement on this point with such an authority on Grosseteste's writings as Professor Thomson. Yet, I have the impression that the more polished form of the *Dicta* suggests that originally they belonged to the commentary, rather than *vice versa*. This view is confirmed by the *recapitulatio* which Grosseteste himself wrote for the collection of his *Dicta* :

' In hoc libello sunt 147 capitula, quorum quedam sunt brevia verba que dum in scolis morabar scripsi breviter et incomposito sermone ad memoriam; nec sunt de una materia nec ad invicem continuata, quorum titulos posui ut facilius quod vellet lector posset invenire. Spondent itaque plerumque plus aliqui tituli quam solvant capitula lectori. Quedam vero sunt sermones quos eodem tempore ad clerum vel ad populum feci.'¹³²

Although in themselves disconnected, he gathered them together from his notes and arranged them in a certain order under different headings to enable the reader to find easily whatever he required. These words seem to indicate an already existing body of notes, some of which may have been in the commentary on the Psalms. However that may be, not even the Bologna and Eton text is free from difficulties.

M. R. James had thus early remarked that 'the structure of the commentary is curiously irregular'.¹³³ From Psalm i to the end of Ps. lxxix the exposition is neither consecutive nor complete; the authorities quoted are the Latin Fathers, Augustine, Gregory, Cassiodorus, Bernard, Rabanus; there is no trace of Greek learning except an occasional etymology. With the beginning of Psalm lxxx to the end of Psalm c a striking change in method and use of sources is noticeable. The whole text is expounded; the exposition is more plentiful; the documentation is wider in range, comprising together with the Latin also the Greek Fathers, John Damascene, Basil, John Chrysostom, Cyril, Origen, Theodoret, Eusebius, Gregory of Nyssa, Maximinus, Athanasius (perhaps the earliest citation of St. Athanasius in the 13th century), whose contribution provides the greater part of the commentary. Among the pagan writers one finds Aristotle's *De Animalibus*, the Pseudo-Aristotelian *De Vegetabilibus* and Pliny's *Historia Naturalis*. The Greek versions of Aquila, Theodosion and Symmachus are discussed, Greek words or readings are adduced, and the *Graeca lectio* is often preferred.

¹³¹ S. H. Thomson, *The Writings*, p. 214.

¹³² *Ibid.*

¹³³ *J.T.S.*, xxiii (1922), 181.

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To account for the fragmentary and irregular structure of the earlier part of the commentary and the change of plan when it reached the eightieth Psalm, James suggested that 'perhaps there was an intention, frustrated by his (Grosseteste's) death, to rewrite the first portion on a larger scale'.¹³⁴ Thomson, in his turn, regarding the theory of 'successive drafts or reworking of his material' as too simple and less satisfactory, proposes as more likely 'that some student or member of his household has made a selection of his unorganized pronouncements on separate passages of the Psalms and put them in as consecutive an order as possible'.¹³⁵

A relevant piece of evidence, which hitherto has not been taken into consideration (used skilfully by Professor Powicke to elucidate Grosseteste's method of working on the *Nicomachean Ethics*),¹³⁶ may perhaps shed some light on this tangled problem.

There was current amongst the Oxford Franciscans a tradition handed down to us through William of Alnwick,¹³⁷ that Grosseteste's works fall into two categories: (a) the *authentica*, those accurately written with much study and mature deliberation; and (b) the *dissute scripta*, that is, unconnected notes jotted down in the margin of his books, or on small pieces of parchment, without much elaboration, *non studiose nec complete*; rather drafts than finished writings. To this kind, I imagine, belong most of his sets of notes for sermons and lectures. A corroboration of this tradition is found in Grosseteste himself, in the *recapitulatio* of his *Dicta*, already mentioned:

Recapitulatio

'Quedam brevia verba que dum in
scolis morabar scripsi breviter et
incomposito sermone ad memoriam.'

William of Alnwick

'Quando aliqua imaginatio notabilis
sibi occurrebat ibi scripsit (in the
margin of his codex) ne laberetur a
memoria sua.'

Grosseteste's words, compared with those of Alnwick, give the impression that they are too closely akin to be a mere coincidence. We are consequently justified, it would seem, in accepting the Franciscan tradition as trustworthy.

On this presumption, I am inclined to think that our commentary on the Psalms represents the two kinds of writings. Whilst the fragmentary and irregular annotations on the earlier part of the Psalter—from which thirty-seven sections were extracted and incorporated in the collection of his *Dicta*—as well as the *notule* extant in Lincoln Cathedral MS. 144, and those of Grosseteste's

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 185.

¹³⁵ Thomson, *The Writings*, p. 76, cf. p. 214.

¹³⁶ F. M. Powicke, 'Robert Grosseteste and the Nicomachean Ethics', *Proc. of the British Academy*

xvi, 15-7.

¹³⁷ We have already discussed this point in connexion with the glosses on the *Physics*, *Wisdom* and *Ecclesiasticus*, and on the *Hexaemeron*, see *supra*, pp. 46 f., 57 f.

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glosses embodied in the Bodleian MS. which are his, would naturally fall under the second division; the more systematic and carefully worked-out comments on Psalms lxxx-c, and also perhaps the prologue, would be better placed among the 'authentic' works. This surmise would perhaps explain more satisfactorily all the data of the problem. The acquisition of a Greek Catena on the Psalms, when the work was already well advanced, would assuredly have spurred Grosseteste to expound the later portion of his commentary *studiose et complete*.

This brings us to one last point, the date of the *Expositio in Psalmos*. That the work belongs to Grosseteste's teaching period does not seem open to question. It is natural to suppose that it represents the substance of his *lectiones ordinariae*. We should not be far wrong if we assigned the earlier portion of the commentary, which would be better described as a set of notes for lectures, to the first years of his readership to the Franciscans. From the *recapitulatio* of the *Dicta* we know that some of these were written while he was still *in scolis*, and we have seen that thirty-seven of them out of 147—nearly a third part when the twenty-seven sermons in the collection are excluded—came from it. The Durham MS. A. III, 12, comprising no less than thirty-three *Dicta* and a good share of the *Expositio*, according to Thomson, cannot be later than 1231. We may with confidence conclude that it was written between 1229 and 1231. The date of the composition of the second part of the commentary can approximately be fixed a few years later during the interval between 1231 and his elevation in 1235 to the see of Lincoln. In his glosses on the Epistle to the Galatians, written about 1230-1, we have proof of Grosseteste's interest in Greek learning. It was perhaps then that he came into possession of the LXX version and of a Greek Catena on the Psalms; and it is almost certain that he knew by this time more Greek than Roger Bacon would have us believe. It is not at all unlikely that during his convalescence, after a severe illness¹³⁸ which befell him in these years, he would occupy his leisure in Greek studies. At any rate, the use of Greek sources shows some proficiency in Greek, even if we suppose that he had one or more 'adiutores' with him. On the other hand, the absence from this part of the commentary of any citation from Suidas, Pseudo-Dionysius,¹³⁹ and other Greek books, which we know Grosseteste to have translated from the Greek after 1235, supplies a strong presumption that its composition falls before 1235. Taking one thing with another, all indications point to the conclusion that the later portion of the *Expositio in Psalmos* was expounded in the last years of his theological regency at Oxford, probably between 1231 and 1235.

¹³⁸ Cf. Grosseteste's *Epistolae*, 43-4.

¹³⁹ Cf. M. R. James, *op. cit.*, p. 105.

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The assertion of the Lanercost Chronicle that Grosseteste 'Psalterium legendo postillavit usque ad medium, nec ulterius licuit propter vitae terminum',¹⁴⁰ does not militate against this inference. Our annalist is correct in the first part of his account that 'Psalterium legendo postillavit usque ad medium'; but he was clearly mistaken in attempting to improve upon his source of information by adding that it was left incomplete by Grosseteste's death.¹⁴¹ The mistake is the more evident as he had in the preceding sentence stated that Grosseteste 'Psalterium legendo postillavit'. This being so, it would also follow that Grosseteste's lectures were interrupted by his death. It did not occur to the author of the Chronicle that not his death, but the nomination to the bishopric of Lincoln, caused Grosseteste to cease from lecturing, and consequently prevented him from finishing the commentary on the Psalms.

Professor Grabmann has grouped Peter Comestor, Peter the Chanter and Stephen Langton as 'the biblical moral school'.¹⁴² Although there is no evidence of any direct influence of Langton upon Grosseteste, we may perhaps ascribe Grosseteste to this school, if by 'biblical moral school' is simply meant a common interest in biblical studies and in practical moral questions with little or no use of dialectics. Better still it may be said that Grosseteste's exegesis is representative of the method and technique of the late 12th or early 13th century Paris masters.

In his letter to the regent-masters in theology at Oxford Grosseteste urged them to fall in with the custom of the masters in theology of Paris. 'Scripture, as expounded at Paris, was the text in the light of both patristic and mediaeval tradition, indissolubly wedded to it in the Gloss.'¹⁴³ His exegetical works show abundantly that Grosseteste conformed himself to this practice. His chief biblical writings, the exposition on the Pauline Epistles and on the Psalter, were written in the margin of his copy of the Gloss, are based on the Gloss, and teem with patristic and mediaeval citations. Preference is given to the allegorical interpretation, 'spiritualis intelligentia', against the literal, 'velamen littere':

' Multa enim in Sacra Scriptura plana videntur ad litteram et infecunda, quorum si sensus mysticus discutiatur idem animarum nostrarum utilitati deservit.'¹⁴⁴

¹⁴⁰ *The Lanercost Chronicle*, ed. J. Stevenson (London, 1839), p. 43.

¹⁴¹ For a very similar mistake in the same chronicle see A. G. Little, *Franciscan Papers, Lists, and Documents* (Manchester, 1943), p. 48-9.

¹⁴² M. Grabmann, *Die Geschichte der scholastischen Methode* (Freiburg i. Br., 1911), II, 476 ff. Cf. the pertinent remarks by B. Smalley, *The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages*, pp. 156 ff.

¹⁴³ B. Smalley, *op. cit.*, p. 246.

¹⁴⁴ *Moralitates super Evangelia*, Lincoln College MS. 79, fol. 97r.

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There is hardly any trace of dialectic subtleties or scholastic discussions ; but an abundance of practical instruction, spiritual advice, virtues to follow, vices and sins to avoid, all illustrated by appropriate and copious *exempla*. The comments on the Romans and Galatians are less homiletic in tone than those on the Psalter, or the Gospels ; but everywhere we meet with many invectives against bad prelates and nobles, judges ecclesiastical and secular, priests with cure of souls forgetful of their duties, clerics and religious leading life not in accordance to their state, or giving all their time to the pursuit of profane learning with great detriment to the study of Holy Scripture.¹⁴⁵ It is a perversion to seek learning for vainglory or pride, for greed or for evildoing. Above all, his indignation is at its height against physicians and lawyers (the phrase, *contra legistas et causidicos*, as he contemptuously calls them, occurs very often), in quest of learning for love of gain, for riches and wealth, and against those, whether lawyers or canonists, physicians or theologians, who follow after diabolical sciences, that is, the *scientie lucrative*,¹⁴⁶ symbolized by the bottomless pit called Satan :

'Puteus, qui vocatur Sathan, quod est nomen diaboli.'

He is fond of dwelling on cosmological or psychological topics. He describes with unmistakable delight such subjects as the properties of stars, mountains, stones, water, birds and animals. On the text : *De somno surgere* (Rom. xiii, 11) he proceeds in great length to deal with sleep and dreams. All kinds of dreams or nightmares may befall one asleep. According as he is well or ill disposed, he possesses health and fortitude, and may have peaceful, patient, meek, wise, prudent, honest, sweet, or charitable dreams ; or contrariwise, he is subject to cruel, turbulent, furibund, monstrous, ugly, disordinate, obscene, indecent, or abominable dreams ; upon these follow sickness, and even death.¹⁴⁷ In the *Ad Romanos* he reduces in a curious fashion practically each theme to the *vis concupiscibilis*, *vis irascibilis* and *vis rationalis*. Even theology and the liberal arts, civil and canon law, and the Ten Commandments are listed in one way or the other under one or other division, or differently under the three of them. It is an attempt at systematization often summed up at the end of a section by means of a scheme. Grosseteste is clearly following

¹⁴⁵ *In ad Romanos*, xv, 4 : 'Heu hodie sine fatigatione possunt fabule et curiosa tam dici quam audiri. Sed doctrina veritatis statim fastidire homines videmus. Paucissimi sunt qui in Scripturis laborare delectantur divinis, sed magis scientiis lucrative vel inflativis . . .', follows a long passage from the *Decretum*, P.I, d. 37 (ed. Friedberg, Lipsiae, 1879, pp. 137-8). MS. G. and C. C., 439, fol. 69^r.

¹⁴⁶ The same invectives against the *scientie lucrative* occur in a contemporary commentary on Job ascribed to Roland of Cremona, cf. A. Dondaine, 'Un Commentaire scripturaire de Roland de Crémone. Le Livre de Job', *Archivum Fratrum Praedicatorum*, xi (1941), 134-5.

¹⁴⁷ MS. Gonville and Caius 439, fol. 66^r.

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the method of the Parisian masters.¹⁴⁸ Eccleston described Grosseteste's exegesis with a characteristic phrase: 'Praedicationi congruis subtilibus moralitatibus', subtle moralities suitable for preaching.

In later years, when as Bishop of Lincoln, the largest diocese in England, Robert Grosseteste had to write to the King, or to his Dean and Chapter, or to Master Martin, the papal Chamberlain and nuncio, he delighted to stress his point by citing side by side with the Bible the wisdom of Aristotle¹⁴⁹—the two absorbing interests in his intellectual life.

This attempt, in which I have striven to describe the scholastic career, both as master in arts and in theology, of Robert Grosseteste, one of the greatest glories of the University of Oxford in the 13th century, and her first chancellor in the crucial years of her formation, cannot more fittingly be ended than with the words of loyal and sincere admiration of another glory of the University, the Dominican Nicholas Trivet:¹⁵⁰

'Hic excellentis vir sapientiae fuit, ac lucidissimae doctrinae, totiusque exemplar virtutis. Qui licet de ima gente Suthfolchiae, Northwicensis dioecesis, originem traxerit, tamen bonam naturae indolem praeceptis Scripturarum exercens, produxit animum generosum.'

¹⁴⁸ For the method of the masters of Paris see P. Mandonnet, 'Enseignement de la Bible "selon l'usage de Paris"', *Revue Thomiste*, nouv. ser. xii (1929), 489-519; B. Smalley, *The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages*, pp. 156 ff. et alibi passim.

¹⁴⁹ Cf. *Robertus Grosseteste Epistolae*, ed. H. R. Luard (R.S., London, 1861), pp. 292, 306-7, 315.

¹⁵⁰ *F. Nicolai Triveti Annales*, ed. T. Hog (Londini, 1845), pp. 242-3. In conclusion I should like to pay a tribute to Professor S. H. Thomson, of the University of Colorado, to whose unremitting labours and wide erudition Grossetestian studies owe so much.