the Meuse and the Rhine belonging to the archiepiscopal prin­cipality of Cologne. “ Ego Thomas Kempis,” he says in his chronicle of the monastery of Mount St Agnes, “ scholaris Daventriensis, ex diocesi Coloniensi natus.” His father was a poor hard-worked peasant; his mother “ ad custodiam rei domesticae attenta, in opere alacris, in victu sobria, in potu abstemia, in verbo pauca, in factis pudica,” as her son fondly says, kept a dame’s school for the younger children of the town. John and Gertrude Hammerken had two sons, John and Thomas, both of whom found their way to Deventer, and thence to Zwolle and to the convent of Mount St Agnes. Thomas reached Deventer when he was barely twelve years old, was taught by a dame the beginnings of his learning, and in a few months to his great joy entered the classes of Florentius Radewyn. After the fashion of the time he was called Thomas from Kempen, and the school title, as was often the case then, pushed aside the family name. Thomas Hammerken was forgotten; Thomas à Kempis has become known to the whole Christian world.

This school at Deventer had become famous long before Thomas à Kempis was admitted to its classes. It had been founded by Gerhard Groot (*q.v.*), a wealthy burgher who had been won to pious living mainly through the influence of Ruys- broeck, the Flemish mystic. It was at Deventer, in the midst of this mystical theology and hearty practical benevolence, that Thomas à Kempis was trained. Gerhard Groot was his saintly ideal. Florentius Radewyn and Gerhard’s other early disciples were his heroes; their presence was his atmosphere, the measure of their lives his horizon. But he was not like them; he was not an educational reformer like Radewyn, nor a man of affairs like Gerhard. He liked books and quiet corners all his days, he says; and so, when conviction of sin and visions of God’s grace came to him in the medieval fashion of a dream of the anger and forgiveness of the Virgin, Florentius told him that a monk’s life would suit him best, advised him to join the Augustinian order, and sent him to Zwolle to the new convent of Mount St Agnes, where his brother John was prior. Thomas was received there in 1399, he professed the vows in 1407, received priest’s orders in 1413, became sub-prior in 1425 and died on the 8th of August 1471, being ninety-one years old.

The convent of Mount St Agnes was poor, and most of the monks had to earn money to support their household by copying MSS. Thomas was a most laborious copyist: missals, books of devotion and a famous MS. Bible were written by him. He also wrote a large number of original writings, most of them relating to the convent life, which was the only life he knew. He wrote a chronicle of the monastery and several biographies— the life of Gerhard Groot, of Florentius Radewyn, of a Flemish lady St Louise, of Groot’s original disciples; a number of tracts on the monastic life—*The Monk’s Alphabet, The Discipline of Cloisters, A Dialogue of Novices, The Life of the Good Monk, The Monk’s Epitaph, Sermons to Novices, Sermons to Monks, The Solitary Life, On Silence, On Poverty, Humility and Patience·,* two tracts for young people—*A Manual of Doctrine for the Young,* and *A Manual for Children·,* and books for edification— *On True Compunction, The Garden of Roses, The Valley of Lilies, The Consolation of the Poor and the Sick, The Faithful Dispenser, The Soul’s Soliloquy, The Hospital of the Poor.* He also left behind him three collections of sermons, a number of letters, some hymns and the famous *Imitatio Christi* (though his authorship of this has been disputed). These writings help us to see the man and his surroundings, and contemporary pious records make him something more than a shadow. We see a real man, but a man helpless anywhere save in the study or in the convent—a little fresh-coloured man, with soft brown eyes, who had a habit of stealing away to his cubiculum whenever the conversation became too lively; somewhat bent, for it is on record that he stood upright when the psalms were chanted, and even rose on his tiptoes with his face turned upwards; genial, if shy, and occasionally given to punning, as when he said that he preferred Psalmi to Salmones; a man who perhaps led the most placid uneventful life of all men who ever wrote a book or scribbled letters. It was not that he lived in uneventful times: it is impossible to select a stormier period of European history, or a period when the stir of the times made its way so well into the obscurest corners. Bohemia, Huss leading, was ablaze in revolt at one end of Europe; France and England, then France and Burgundy, were at death-grips at the other. Two popes anathematized each other from Avignon and from Rome, and zealous churchmen were at their wit’s end to concoct ways and means, by general councils of Constance and Basel and otherwise, to restore peace to a distracted church, and to discipline the clergy into decent living. But Thomas knew nothing about all this. He was intent on his copying, on his little books, and on his quiet conversations. His very bio­graphies are colourless. He had not even the common interest in the little world coming up to the convent gate which most monks may be supposed to have. His brethren made him oeconomiae prefectus, but he was too “simple in worldly affairs ” and too absent-minded for the post, and so they deposed him and made him sub-prior once more. And yet it is this placid kindly fresh-coloured old man who has come down to us as the author of that book the *Imitation of Christ,* which has been translated into more languages than any other book save the Bible, and which has moved the hearts of so many men of all nations, characters and conditions of life.

On the controversy as to the author of the *Imitatio,* see the article Imitation of Christ. Sec also James Williams, *Thomas of Kempen* (1910). The classical edition of the works of Thomas à Kempis by Sommalius—*Thomas Malleoli à Kempis opera omnia* (3 vols. in 1, 1607)—has been many times reprinted. A critical edition in 8 vols, by Μ. J. Pohl, has also been undertaken. The best accounts in Eng­lish of Thomas à Kempis are those by S. Kettlewell (1882) and F. R. Cruise (1887), written from the Protestant and the Catholic stand­points respectively. A penny tract by F. R. Cruise, entitled *Outline of the Life of Thomas à Kempis* (1904), contains substantially all that is known concerning him. (T. Μ. L.)

**THOMAS** (d. 1100), archbishop of York, was a native of Bayeux, and is usually called Thomas of Bayeux. His father was a priest named Osbert, and Samson, bishop of Worcester from 1086 until his death in May 1112, was his brother. Owing largely to the generosity of Odo, bishop of Bayeux, Thomas studied in France, Germany and Spain and became known as a scholar; then he became one of Bishop Odo’s officials and after 1066 one of William the Conqueror’s chaplains, or secretaries. In 1070 he succeeded Aldred as archbishop of York, but declining to promise obedience to the archbishop of Canterbury, Lanfranc, the latter prelate refused to consecrate him. King William, however, induced him to submit and he was consecrated, but his profession of obedience was to Lanfranc personally and not to the archbishops of Canterbury. In 1071 both archbishops travelled to Rome for their palls and while there Thomas wished Pope Alexander II. to decree the equality of the sees of Canter­bury and York. The pope, however, referred the dispute to a council of English prelates, and this met at Windsor at Whitsun­tide 1072. It was then decided that the archbishop of Canter­bury was the superior of the archbishop of York, who had no rights south of the Humber, but whose province included Scot­land. But this decision did not put a period to the dispute. It broke out again, and in 1092 and again in 1093 Thomas protested against what he regarded as infringements of his archiepiscopal rights. The first of these occasions was over the dedication of the cathedral built by Remigius at Lincoln and the second was over the consecration of St Anselm to the archbishopric of Canterbury. In 1100, during Anselm’s exile, Thomas reached London too late to crown Henry I., the ceremony having been hurriedly performed by Maurice, bishop of London, but his anger at this slight was soon appeased. He died at York on the 18th of November 1100. Thomas rebuilt the minster at York, where he appears to have been an excellent archbishop; he knew something of church music and wrote hymns.

Thomas had a nephew, Thomas, the son of his brother Samson, who was also archbishop of York. The younger Thomas became archbishop in 1108 and like his uncle he refused to promise obedi­ence to the archbishop of Canterbury; his consecration was then