

A GERMAN MYSTIC MISCELLANY OF THE LATE FIFTEENTH CENTURY IN THE JOHN RYLANDS LIBRARY.

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§ 1. *Foreword.* Medieval manuscripts containing literature of the German mystics number thousands. A certain number dating from the fourteenth century preserve the complete works of one writer, or selections from the works of a number of writers. By far the largest group, however, are the fifteenth century miscellanies of mystic *writings* in which the contents of the first two groups and later works are to be found—rarely are names of authors mentioned. The first two classes of manuscripts are adequately known, for on them our standard editions of the principal German mystics are based.¹ The fifteenth century miscellanies have been variously exploited but are still relatively unexplored—they have not even been adequately catalogued.² They may be considered negatively, as the record of the disintegration and final decay of German mystic thought and textual tradition. The three classical statements—the abstract-

¹ Meister Eckehart's sermons are an exception; they were taken down by members of his audiences and are transmitted mainly in miscellanies. In consequence it may never be possible to arrive at a critical text of his German sermons, see J. Quint, *Die Überlieferung der deutschen Predigten Meister Eckeharts textkritisch untersucht*, Bonn, 1932.

² When the *Handschriftenarchiv* of the *Deutsche Kommission der Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften* has completed its inventory of all medieval German manuscripts, scientific work on the miscellanies will be possible. (The present writer has described the medieval German manuscripts of the John Rylands Library for these archives, and wishes here to express his thanks to Dr. H. Pyritz of Berlin for the sympathetic interest he has shown in this and other investigations of medieval German sources.)

speculative of Eckehart, the practical-didactic of Tauler and the poetic-rhapsodic of Suso—become fused and merge with those of numberless unnamed emulators; the texts of their works are broken up and enter into strange partnerships. Changing tastes (and an element of chance) determine what shall fall by the wayside and survive intact, and what shall be carried forward, copied and recopied, used and misused. One may speak broadly of a final vulgarisation of classical German mystic literature in the latest miscellanies, in which only a last hesitant repetition of the original statements is still to be heard. They may, however, also be considered positively, as the archives of a nation's century-long struggle to assimilate a difficult heritage; or neutrally, as evidence of the gradual spread of an anti-doctrinal attitude towards religion.

Particularly the more popular miscellanies of the end of the century have hitherto received summary treatment. The editor of the fourteenth century mystic writers need not, we have seen, consult them. He may safely assume that the texts they offer are, to use his term, 'corrupt'. The fact that works of the writer in whom he is interested occur in them—and this information he can derive from the available descriptive catalogues¹—is to him merely evidence of 'the continued popularity' of those works. The historian of German mystic literature may well, when we consider the dimensions of his major task, be excused for dealing more briefly with 'mysticism on the decline', and for referring simply to the complete chaos in the transmission of classical mystic texts in the later miscellanies, and to the relative insignificance of the more recent works they contain. Such miscellanies are in fact part of the task of the future historian of devotional literature in the fifteenth century.

The fifteenth century is in all fields of vernacular literature one of extremely modest individual achievement, and one in which derivative writings assume quite unwonted proportions

¹ It will be seen from the later technical discussion that the identification of the items of a miscellany is an arduous task, even if identification be taken to be merely the mustering of three or four instances of one text. Catalogues are of help only where *incipits* are preserved intact. (Well-known items, amongst which one may include the majority of published and edited texts are traceable through the indices to catalogues.)

and importance. Measured by the standards of other centuries, its literature is, moreover, popular or semi-popular. Applied to the narrower field of devotional literature, these observations are particularly true. The division between author and reading public has here practically disappeared; it is almost impossible to distinguish between authors, editors, copyists and readers. Original authorship is rare, inevitably anonymous, and little removed from thorough-going editorship. On the other hand the most liberal views were entertained as to the duties of a scribe. The scribe, indeed, has no duties, and the very idea of author's copyright has vanished; free-copy merges into paraphrase, and paraphrase into adaptation. And the majority of those who could write seem to have written—at least to have prepared compendia of their favourite devotional literature. What, then, of the total mass of works attested in the miscellanies of the period is one to consider fifteenth century literature? We shall obviously include original fifteenth century works. But a plea may also be made for the fifteenth century copies of classical mystic texts: they may have presented greater difficulties than fifteenth century works to scribes and readers, but they were not for that reason felt to be less contemporary. Amongst them we may find texts which transmit good sources in little-changed form, and freer, more battered and garbled versions. They are all 'corrupt' in that they cannot help the editor of the original fourteenth century source; but 'corrupt' is no final judgment on the fifteenth century versions. Even a very decrepit late version may still make perfectly good reading to the unsophisticated. Adequate or inadequate are thus the only judgments which we may pass upon them. But there are other late 'copies' to be considered. The German folk-lorist has coined the term 'zersingen' to cover the processes which lead to the emergence of the folk-song from the lyric proper.¹ It may be said of certain of the versions of fourteenth century (and later) mystic works which occur in the popular miscellanies of the fifteenth century, that they

¹ The popularity of a given lyric and its melody comes, for reasons which are more easily divined than briefly explained, to exceed the respect which their originator's name can command. They become common property. For generations they are transmitted orally and are 'sung into shape'—'zersungen'.

are 'zerschrieben'.¹ The fifteenth century text reflects intermediate revisions—normally a simplification and popularisation of the content: whereas the original text appears in a late copy in 'badly worn' state, it is here 'recently reconditioned'.² If a copy is adequate, or a version homogeneous, it may claim to be considered as fifteenth century literature. The fourteenth century mystic works which have survived thus long (and the works of epigoni) have now become the property of, and are cultivated in less sophisticated circles than their original, more limited, public; their texts have been disseminated through multiple and serial copying in progressively garbled and simplified form. This is the inflation period of German mystic literature. The late miscellanies represent the devotional reading of a considerable proportion of the population. As this is the eve of the Reformation they merit our attention. In the following, the total contents of such a volume are examined in some detail. It includes copies—some adequate, some inadequate, and editions and adaptations of originally fourteenth century mystic texts, together with fifteenth century mystic writings and a proportion of non-mystic material; they are considered for the purposes of the present account as fifteenth century literature.³

¹ The late mystic text is in this respect better compared with the folk-song than with the chap-book. Rhyme and melody in the one case and theological argument in the other exercise a restraint on adaptors which the plot of a novel cannot do. There are, moreover, further parallel phenomena which recommend this discrimination, see p. 480, note 1.

² There is one important category of 'zerschriebene' texts which cannot be labelled popular, viz. the 'mosaic tracts', on which see Adolf Spamer, *Über die Zersetzung und Vererbung in den deutschen Mystikertexten*, Diss. Giessen 1910 (= Spamer, *Diss.*). In these, adaptors have plundered standard mystic sermons and tracts for snippets and quotations, and constructed new works, more obscure if not more profound, than the sources used. Such works are the product of devotional zeal coupled with excessive *Spieltrieb*. Professor Spamer has succeeded in dismembering a number of the more important examples, and entertains the view that many works at present considered homogeneous may be thus composed. See further, § 15.

³ The *technical* discussion of the items is only in part subordinated to the generalisations of this introduction (which may seem pretentious—it is not addressed to the specialist in medieval German mystic literature).

JOHN RYLANDS GERM. MS. 11.

I. *The Miscellany.*

§ 2. *Date and provenance.* This manuscript was actually written by two scribes; an examination of the contents leaves no doubt that both were nuns. The second begins at the top of a page (226r—not, however, the beginning of a new gathering), in the middle of a sentence in the latter half of the penultimate item—we cannot know what circumstances prevented the first scribe from completing this piece; the last item, the work of the second scribe only, is a short exemplum which, we shall see, is completely in keeping with the further content of the volume: for all practical purposes we may refer in the following to ‘the scribe’. The language of the texts is a Bavarian *Schriftdialekt* of the second half of the fifteenth century. Further evidence, which it will be necessary to review in some detail suggests that the volume was written between 1470 and 1480 in the diocese of Eichstätt.

The scribe refers on one occasion to a source which she has utilised: (rubric) *Item das Stucklein hab ich auß dem taller genomen etc.* (211v). Such a reference indicates not an edition of Tauler’s authentic works, but some collection of *Tauleriana*. About such collections a certain amount is known;¹ a *Tauler* (the spelling *taller* is elsewhere attested)² has not yet been identified as an independent collection.³ It is relevant, before invoking

¹ Professor Spamer (*Diss.*) has described and analysed the contents of a number of important fifteenth century compendia of *mystica*, from Bavarian, Swabian and Middle German regions. The Middle German volumes contain mainly Eckehart and pseudo-Eckehardian material, the Swabian and Bavarian chiefly Tauler and *Tauleriana*. Of the latter group only the *Grosser Tauler* and the *Kleiner Tauler* have been examined at all fully; many others are attested (see below on the Rebendorf collections). If these two volumes prove important for our investigations, there is yet no short-circuit in our mustering of evidence. Professor Spamer’s knowledge of fifteenth century manuscript lore is unrivalled; the detail in which he has considered them is proportionate to their importance in the fifteenth century.

² *Der Taler, Taller*, Ph. Strauch, ‘Zu Taulers Predigten’, *Beitr. zur Gesch. d. deutschen Sprache u. Literatur*, xlv, p. 1 (on Ms. St. Gallen, Stiftsbibliothek, 965).

³ A further reference to a volume *der tauler* (see p. 461, note 2) and various problems of manuscript affiliation may make it necessary for us to postulate the existence of a volume bearing that name, but the issue can be safely postponed.

an at present unknown *Tauler* to consider whether *der taller* may not stand for *der grosse Tauler* or *der kleine Tauler* (GT, KT) which constitute together a well-known entity and the standard Tauler-omnibus of the fifteenth century. For not only does the piece thus acknowledged occur in GT, but two further pieces for which no source is quoted might also have been found there (one actually in GT, the other in KT, but recommended by a cross-reference from GT, see below). These two compendia have been discussed only incidentally to an enquiry into the transmission of Eckehart texts; nothing is known, consequently, of their antecedents and little of the affiliation of the extant copies.

Professor Spamer, basing his descriptions of the two volumes on cgm 627 and cgm 214 (of the Munich Staatsbibliothek) characterises them thus: "Es sind zwei, an Umfang verschiedene und sich einander ergänzende, Auswahlen aus Predigten Taulers, die mit einigen anderen, meist anonymen und zum Teil sich als Kompilationsgebilde erweisenden Traktaten verbunden sind, und von denen der umfangreichere cgm 627 den sogenannten 'grossen', der cgm 214 den 'kleinen Tauler' darstellt" (p. 84). The two volumes supplement one another in that GT contains cross-references to items in KT; in cgm 627 there are in fact twelve such references to the contents of cgm 214. These copies were made, according to a note at the end of cgm 627, by one Konrad Welker of Eichstätt for Prior Johannes, head of the Augustinian monastery of St. Johannes Baptista in Rebdorf in the diocese of Eichstätt. Konrad completed his work on 24th July, 1458; Johannes (Herden) was prior from July, 1458 to 1483.¹ There are further copies of both volumes. In cod. theol. et philos. in folio 283 of the Stuttgart Landesbibliothek, written in 1445 and formerly the property of the Dominican convent of Inzigkofen, near Sigmaringen (Swabia), we have an older GT; this has marginal notes and collations based on a

¹ Professor Spamer considers that the copying of mystica was part of the programme of reform (Windesheim) instituted by Prior Johannes in Rebdorf. A considerable library of mystica comprising folio and quarto compendia and small 8° devotional miscellanies was the result. The store was broken up when the French General Joba sacked the monastery in 1800. Most of the items are now in Munich and in the Bibliothèque Nationale; many apparently are, or were, in the Philipps' collection.

so-called *Exemplar* which Professor Spamer has identified with a Nuremberg manuscript written in 1435. The companion volumes to these copies of GT have not been identified. The Benedictines of St. Quirin in Tegernsee prepared copies of GT and KT in 1468 (cgm 628 and cgm 260). There is evidence, moreover, to show that GT and KT were familiar to the brothers of Rebdorf before 1458, the date of Konrad Welker's copies; the copies which they consulted were indeed Konrad's sources, and part of a collection of mystica belonging to some neighbouring institution, to which the Rebdorf brothers had easy access and habitually referred. Konrad's copies were perhaps to them an inferior duplicate, which were lent to other institutions.¹

We are now in a position to consider the alternatives: (a) Was our scribe's *taller* in fact GT and/or KT?—if so, can she be shown to have used any of the attested copies? (b) Is her *taller* some other compendium of *Tauleriana* which shared some of the contents of GT and KT? ² It has been said that the affiliation of the extant copies of GT and KT has not been investigated fully.

¹ Professor Spamer has already shown that Konrad copied his works, not from a single volume of *Tauleriana*, but from a GT and KT. The evidence is that the cross-references (see above) which his sources already contained, he first copied mechanically, and subsequently rectified to suit his own version of KT. From the material which Professor Spamer publishes, it is possible to deduce further information. The copies of GT and KT which Konrad used are *identical with those to which other Rebdorf manuscripts refer*. According to cgm 627, f. 113 va, Tauler's sermon 37 (the number of the sermon in the Basel edition of 1521) *stet am kleinen tauler am LXXiii* (corrected to *XLI*) *plat*. According to cgm 215, another Rebdorf manuscript written in 1457, the same sermon is to be found in the *kleiner Tauler*, also on p. lxxiii! (Spamer, *Diss.*, p. 95). Reference is frequent in Rebdorf manuscripts, further, to other compendia, *der Wahrheit Kern*, *das grüne Buch*, *das braune Buch*, at present not identified. They were not Rebdorf manuscripts. Works referred to so casually must have been extremely familiar and easily accessible; for which reason we assume the existence of the 'neighbouring institution' whose library contained all these works, including the older GT and KT—Konrad's sources and one of the sources used by the scribe of Rylands (see below). On cgm 627 and 214 as the sources of cgm 628 and 260, see p. 462, note 3.

² The Rebdorf manuscript cgm 215 refers to *kleiner Tauler*, *grosser Tauler*, *neuer Tauler* and *Tauler*. They are possibly but not necessarily all different collections. It was mentioned above that it may be necessary to invoke a *Tauler* to explain the genesis of GT and KT. The *Tauler* referred to in cgm 215 is, however, not identifiable; an 'Ur-Tauler' looms in the background but does not concern us here.

It is therefore extremely fortunate that the piece thus acknowledged has been published, according to cod. theol. et philos. in folio 283 (St., see above) with variant readings from other manuscripts of GT (cgm 627 and 628, Konrad Welker's and the Tegernsee copies, M, m).¹ The comparison of readings shows a remarkable affinity between Konrad's version and the Rylands text.² They had a common source which must therefore be the copy of GT to which the Rebendorf brothers habitually referred, wherewith alternative *b* is automatically eliminated. Hence the suggestion that the Rylands manuscript was written in the diocese of Eichstätt, perhaps in the immediate neighbourhood of Rebendorf.³ The water-mark in the paper used⁴ indicates the lapse of one or two decades between the preparation of the later copies of GT (1458 Rebendorf, 1468 Tegernsee) and the compilation of our miscellany, i.e. 1470-1480.

¹ *Texte aus der deutschen Mystik des 14. und 15. Jahrhunderts*, ed. by Adolf Spamer, Jena, 1912 (= Spamer, *Texte*), p. 125.

² Detailed discussion, § 10.

³ The interpretation of the available evidence is as water-tight as one may hope. There are possible sources of error which it would be foolish to underestimate. The borrowing and lending of books was in the fifteenth century so widespread, that in linking Rylands with its source we may have linked it with a moving object. The danger seems in this case fairly remote, for it was *Konrad's* copies that the Rebendorf brothers lent to Tegernsee. Professor Spamer adduces the following evidence. (a) The cross-references which Konrad at first copied automatically from *his* sources and then corrected, recur in the Tegernsee GT. [This should mean the opposite on the face of things, viz. that the Tegernsee scribe's source had *uncorrected* page references. But a scribe faced with two sets of numbers, both of which are useless to him until he has completed his own KT, would naturally prefer the more boldly written and correctly aligned numbers.] (b) A note occurs in Konrad's copy to the effect that he has had to suspend the copying of one item, because his source was required in a convent over thirty miles (continental, medieval miles !) away. This note is senselessly repeated by the Tegernsee scribe. On these points Spamer, *Diss.*, pp. 96, 106. The view that Konrad's copies were the sources used in Tegernsee is supported by the textual readings of the piece published. More serious is our invoking of the 'neighbouring institution' from which the Rebendorf brothers borrowed GT, KT, *der Wahrheit Kern*, etc. One cannot banish entirely the thought that all cross-references to these sources are possibly inherited from sources. (These scruples may be attributed to the writer's reluctance to commit himself and his fear of misleading others.)

⁴ The water-mark has no exact correspondence in Briquet, *Les filigranes*, etc. It approximates Nos. 14766 and 14767 closely (see, however, vol. IV, col. 743 on variants). They occur in N. Italy and Bavaria in the latter half of the fifteenth century.

One further item (11) was taken from GT ; a third, a genuine Tauler sermon is to be found in KT, and a cross-reference to it in GT may have recommended it to our scribe, but an independent collection of his sermons may equally well have been available. Suso's sermon *Lectulus* may also have occurred in the same collection (see below), or in a miscellany. The *Büchlein von der Liebhabung Gottes* was probably an independent volume, or part of a printed book (see below). The rest would be available in mystic and non-mystic devotional and didactic miscellanies. Further immediate sources, which one might endeavour to locate, cannot be indicated. The diversity of the contents suggests that our scribe had access to a considerable stock of writings.

§ 3. *General remarks on the contents.* No item in the collection seems to be the scribe's own contribution. She has further not consciously adapted or edited the pieces which she has taken into the miscellany, but has on the whole been content to copy her sources. In view of what has been said above concerning the transmission of texts in the fifteenth century, her limited participation must be ascribed her almost completely passive piety. It would consequently be possible, were we interested only in the individual items of the collection to consider the texts as the rough equivalent of her immediate sources—which indeed is done in the later technical discussion, for the scribes who preceded her were not lacking in initiative. But we have chosen for the moment to consider the miscellany as an entity, and cannot therefore dismiss the final scribe thus briefly. Little as, in the end, we may be able to attribute to her, any final modification, however modest which can be shown to be her work, and any principle which can be discerned in her choice and ordering of the items, must be accounted for.

On the first point, her treatment of the text of her sources, little can be said with absolute certainty—the available evidence varies from item to item. It can safely be stated that, measured by fifteenth century standards, her copies are fairly accurate. Failure to comprehend the sense of more intricate passages accounts for most of the deviations of any consequence—inadequate paraphrases, nonsensical renderings and omissions. Our scribe seems to have been accustomed to the reading and

copying of mystic literature ; she handles its difficult idiom, if inaccurately, yet with ease and confidence.¹ In writing out certain speculative passages she was, however, occasionally out of her depth ; but only rarely did she take the simpler course and suspend her copying. The resultant simplification can hardly be called conscious adaptation.

In dealing with the selection of items, one may relevantly ask to what extent the scribe was a free agent. Reviewing the total contents one can recognise certain preferred genres (legends and dialogues), evidently copied with some enthusiasm and adequate in their final form. Others suggest that only the simple piety and the application of the scribe enabled her to accomplish her task. One may safely venture that the *Büchlein von der Liebhabung Gottes*, itself longer than the other twelve items of the collection together, abstract in content and bristling with learned references, and which is divided from the miscellany proper by a blank page, was a recommended work ; the copying was perhaps supervised. The contents of the latter half of the volume, the miscellany proper, are truly miscellaneous and reflect desultory reading and intuitive selection of passages for copying. It is obvious that the scribe did not read all the items in their entirety before she began to prepare her own copies—her interest and concentration have at times flagged ; she was occasionally misled by rubrics and the general tenor of opening passages to expect another content.

It is doubtful whether the scribe was able to distinguish by any objective criterion mystic writings from non-mystic devotional writings. We find in her collection classical, pseudo-classical and popular mystic works, and one long tract and a number of oddments which have no connection with mystic literature. But the mystics were undoubtedly her accustomed and preferred reading. Giving due emphasis to her preferences, and bearing equally in mind what is avoided or inadequately treated, we may say that her volume is, in fact if not in inten-

¹ The idiom of the classical mystic writers is little more than learned jargon with later emulators. To the simpler scribes it had associations but little meaning—about as much meaning as the phrases of the Athanasian Creed to the average church-goer.

tion a primer of *docta ignorantia*.¹ In two pieces God speaks directly to a simple monk or nun and guides and encourages them in their devotions. The choice of items is clearly that of a woman. In three quite outstanding items, a popular adaptation of *Schwester Katrei* and two exempla, the same message is proclaimed in more definite terms: a simple woman may be greater in piety than a learned man in holy orders.

The mystic heritage is in fact here reduced to its simplest terms. We may note firstly that our scribe knew no mystic writer by name. Eckehart is not mentioned and none of his works is represented.² The names Tauler and Suso were copied by the scribe, but were not recognised as the names of writers.³ A sermon by each is copied. Suso's sermons are his least typical works (the one here copied was extremely popular during the fifteenth century; it is little more than a colourful devotional guide); the Tauler sermon is more representative, but one must admit that the scribe has not been able to cope with it. That is the sum-total of the classics in the collection. For the rest, speculative mysticism is still represented by simplified versions of the work of post-classical writers, and in oddments by a few impressive formulations and a battered terminology. Practical didactic mysticism is reduced to a series of annotated precepts. The sentimental mode of Suso's more poetic mysticism alone still rings true.⁴ The average and constant content of the volume

¹ Cgm 628, the Tegernsee copy of the *Grosser Tauler* was evidently prepared when Bernhard Waging (d. 1472), the friend and pupil of Nicolas of Cues was head of the monastery. His correspondence with Nicolas on the merits of *theologica mystica* and *docta ignorantia* is conveniently accessible in Wilh. Oehl, *Deutsche Mystikerbriefe*, Munich, 1931, pp. 531 ff.

² One item, a popular adaptation of the tract *Schwester Katrei* was long attributed to Eckehart. The scribe may have known the name Eckehart in another connection, see below, § 9 on the so-called Eckehart legends.

³ On *der taller*, see above; *der süß*, p. 471, note 4.

⁴ It was originally intended to consider the items in groups: 'Tauler texts and Tauleriana' (items 4, 10, 11), 'Texts of Suso and in the Suso tradition' (2, 8, 3; 5, 6, 13), Mystica of mixed ancestry (12) and Non-mystic texts (1, 7, 9). This would have been a compromise solution. Any thorough-going discrimination would have introduced endless paradoxes in nomenclature; e.g. a genuine Suso sermon is non-representative and must be considered under the heading 'Tauler'—as in the fifteenth century Tauler editions; it is, however, more adequately copied, and must therefore be more fully discussed under that heading

is the following: to lead the spiritual life one must emulate Christ's life on earth and accept sufferings humbly and with gratitude. Through shunning earthly contacts and through self-elimination, through devout prayer and ecstatic contemplation of Christ's Passion, through confession and participation in the mystery of the sacrament, one may attain to communion with God. One should preserve a clear conscience, and not be over-anxious for the safety of one's soul, but rather believe implicitly in the efficacy of prayer and the adequacy of confession. The general tone is one of sentimental enthusiasm, and naïve awe and piety.

II. *The Items of the Miscellany.*

§ 4. [German MS. 11, accession number R 61197 was purchased from J. E. Cornish, the bookseller, in 1926. On the first page, the following entries in pencil: 1/-/, 40/-, $\frac{1968}{B\ 6}$, 32 (obliquely crossed through) and the word *Gottlichen*. Paper. Clear book-Gothic of the latter half of the fifteenth century. Two hands, the second beginning at 226r. Bavarian dialect. 261f. (modern pagination; after 46, an unnumbered page = 46a). The gatherings are a5 + 1, b5, c7, d5, e7, f5, g7, etc. . . . (137 + 1) . . . v6. 150 × 100 mm.; written space, ruled, 100 × 67 mm.; first hand 18, second 16-17 lines to a page. Headings and large initials in red, small initials struck through in red. Binding of red leather, blind tooled, over wooden boards, with five bosses on each side; two clasps missing. Watermark, see p. 462, note 4.]¹

§ 5. 1. *Büchlein von der Liebhabung Gottes.*

Containing (a) The so-called *Karthäuserbrief* (see below).

Inc. 1r (*Rubric*) Die hernach geschriben / materj ist gemacht von / ainē karttauser vnd Sagt / wid' (*sic*) grossen nuczperkait / der göttlichn liebhabung / vnd wirt genent Ain send / prieff oder ain vor red etc. Lieber Bruder . N . ich /

than a genuine Tauler sermon. The writer has already given considerable space to his views. The technical discussion—which may alone be of interest to the student of medieval German mystic literature—follows (except under one single heading) the order in which the items occur in the miscellany itself.

¹ In part reproduced from F. Taylor, *Supplementary Hand-List of Western Manuscripts in the John Rylands Library*, Manchester, Univ. Press, 1937. (The title *Büchlein von der Liebe Gottes*, which heads the description of the miscellany, was adapted by Mr. Taylor for reasons of expediency.) I am exceedingly grateful to Mr. Taylor for his constant helpfulness, and for his patience.

pit dich vnd ermon / dich vleissigklichen das du / zu dem erstn dicz püchlein /
weldest vñ lesen . . . Expl. (10r) der aller / gelerttest vnd der furgen / gist zewien
vnd hat ett / we vil predig pücher / gemacht wann er was / gar ains heiligen leben.

(b) Table of contents.

Inc. 10r (*Rubric*) Hie hebt sich an das Re- / gister des gegen würtigē / püch-
leins vnd halt jñ vñ / wes materj ain yedes capitl (10v) Sagt der selben Capitl
sind xxij an der zal / Das erst sagt wie alle hei / lige geschriff vnd alle / pot
hangen vnd beschlossē / werden jñ disen zwain ge / potñ. . . Expl. 16v in
wellicher weiß / die Junckfraw maria das ge / pot volpracht hab etc.

(c) Preface (see below).

Inc. 16v (*Rubric*) Hie hebt sich an die vor red / des gegenwürtigen püch /
leins der liebhabung gotz / vnd haist jñ latein prolo / gus od' prefacio / IN ainē
warē Cristen / gelauben (etc. see below). . . ES spricht ain lere ge / nant der
groß Albert, / in dem püchlein von den xlij / tugenden. . . Expl. 20v an / ders
wo erfüllt vnd das / wirt nach der zal der Ca / pitel dester pekantlicher / gefunden.

(d) The *Büchlein*.

Inc 20v (*Rubric*) Hie hebt sich an das püch / lein von der lieb gotz vnd / der
grossen nützerkait / der gotlichen liebhabung / Vnd ist gemacht von äy- / nem
karttauser Das / erst Capitl / UND also zemercken / das der lieb haber (21r) Aller
menschē. . . Expl. 146v zu der volkomen lieb die / da jñ dem ewigen leben
yetz / vnd ewigklich erpotñ wirt / jrm lieben kind vnserm her'n / jhū xpō der da
mit got dem / heiligen geist lebt vnd her / scht ain war'e got ewigkl / ich Amen.

The *Büchlein von der Liebe* (or *Liebhabung*) *Gottes* is a vernacular and popular adaptation of *De delectione Dei et proximi*,¹ a Latin tract of Nicholas of Dinkelsbühl (d. 1433). The German work has hitherto received only passing consideration—its theology is semi-popular and its literary merits are negligible; but it was widely read and frequently copied, particularly in southern Germany in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. H. Maschek has established that its author was one Thomas Peutner, who was, after Nicholas of Dinkelsbühl *cappellanus ac confessor illustris domine Elizabeth ducisse Austriae* (wife of Albrecht V), and canon of St. Stephen's, Vienna.² Thomas wrote a number of sermons and other works including an *ars*

¹ Printed by J. Wimpfeling, Strassburg, 1516.

² Hermann Maschek, 'Der Verfasser des *Büchleins von der Liebhabung Gottes*', *Zentralblatt f. Bibliothekswesen*, liii, pp. 361-368. For the substance of this account I am indebted to Dr. Maschek's article and to information generously given in correspondence.

moriendi—all are translations and adaptations of works of Nicholas, his more famous contemporary. According to Maschek they are recognisable by a 'signature'-prayer: *In ainem waren cristlichen glauben, in stetter hoffnung und in einer volkommenen liebe behalt uns der barmherzig got amen*, which occurs, for example, at the beginning of the preface to the *Büchlein* (see above). They were addressed mainly to the lesser clergy and the laity. The popularity of the *Büchlein* is adequately attested by the large number of manuscripts and incunabula.¹ The Rylands version is of importance to those interested in the somewhat complicated textual history of the *Büchlein*.

One must at present distinguish between three principal versions which we may call A, B and C, and which were probably all prepared soon after 1433. B is represented by Konrad Fyner's print of about 1477 (GKW 5688), and some twenty manuscripts;² it consists of a Preface, and a main section subdivided into twenty-two chapters. The author states, however, in this preface: *von der materij der liebhabung gottes han ich vormals ein bûch gemacht. Aber das gegenwertig bûch is ije wol lenger dan disz. Sunst hatt es wenig vnderscheid von diesem. Vnd als ich das ander bûch geteilt hab in xviii Capittel, also hab ich dz bûch geteilt in xxii capittel, vnd dz ist gût vnd nütz, wan das do yetz vberhept ist, das ist anderswo erfüllt, vnd das wirt nach der zal der capittel dester behentlicher funden* (Ancelet-Hustache, p. 2).³ The earlier version here referred to, A, in eighteen chapters and

¹ The manuscripts are provisionally reviewed and classified by Dr. Maschek in his article. On the incunabula, *Gesamtkatalog der Wiegendrucke* (GKW), V, Nos. 5687-91.

² According to one of these, Basel A. X. 117 it was recently published by Jeanne Ancelet-Hustache—*Traité sue l'amour de Dieu, composé vers 1430 par un clerc anonyme de l'université de Vienne* (Bibliothèque du XV^e siècle, xxxii) Paris, 1926, reviews by Ph. Strauch, *Deutsche Literaturzeitung*, xlviii, Sp. 2001, 1927, and G. Müller, *Anzeiger f. deutsches Altertum*, xlix, p. 205, 1930. The editress consulted only the one manuscript. Her volume contains a valuable introduction to the work and an analysis of the contents.

³ The meaning of the phrase *wan das do yetz vberhept ist* sq. is to me obscure. Text A (see below) is not published; one cannot examine the difference between B and A and deduce what the phrase may mean. It means, I think, that what has been added is now accommodated under separate chapter headings; i.e. the old chapters are not expanded, but new chapters are added and can be recognised from the table of contents.

with a naturally different preface, Dr. Maschek has found in a few manuscripts but in no incunabula. A third version C is thus composed: a letter by a Carthusian recommending the work + the Preface of A! + the *Büchlein* according to B! and normally followed by a *Spiegel der kranken und sterbenden Menschen*. This is to be found in a number of manuscripts and in the incunabula GKW 5688-5690 (5691 lacks only the *Spiegel*, etc.). The Rylands version seems so far to stand alone in having the Carthusian's letter followed by the Preface of B, and the *Büchlein* also according to B.¹

We note certain important variants in Rylands. The Carthusian writes in his letter, according to the version followed by Maschek, thus of Nicholas of Dinkelsbühl: N. v. D. 'von dem die nachuolgende vorred ist' (*op. cit.*, p. 362)²—which, added to the data given in the preface would mean that Nicholas wrote the *Büchlein*! Rylands here has correctly 'maister Nick-las von dincklsprüchl von dem die nach uolgent vor-red redent ist' (9v-10r). In other respects Rylands is possibly less reliable. The Carthusian's letter was originally addressed to one *Bruder Konrad*, but in Rylands to *Bruder N.* (cf. the Low German print of Steffen Arndes—*Leuē brodere*, GKW 5691). I defer here to Dr. Maschek's view that *Konrad* is the older reading,³—other proper names in the letter are possibly garbled in our manuscript.⁴

¹ Dr. Maschek confirms by letter that this arrangement was not known to him, but points out that his information on most manuscript versions is derived from descriptive catalogues. Though Rylands is *possibly*, therefore, unique, parallel versions may yet come to light. He inclines to the view that this arrangement reflects an eclectic edition prepared by some scribe to whom B and C were both known.

² The same reading in Phill. 12196 (see Priebisch, *Deutsche Handschriften in England*, I, p. 114). Dr. Maschek informs me that this manuscript is now *ms. germ. oct.* 481 of the Preussische Staatsbibliothek.

³ 'Als Bruder Konrad käme vielleicht Konrad von Münchingen (1445-76), Abt der Kartause Güterstein im Oberamte Urach in Betracht' (communication of Dr. Maschek). It seems incredible that attempts have been made to equate the Konrad to whom the book is recommended with the author—cf. Stämmler, *Die deutsche Literatur des Mittelalters, Verfasserlexikon* II, Sp. 784 ff.

⁴ *her Hannß Wildegefert* and *herr Fridrich von Cristgarten* appear in Rylands as *maister hanns der wilt geuert* and *her fridereich* (8v-9r); *Hans Wildsgefert was*, however, *magister*, see Maschek, p. 362, footnote.

It was suggested above that the *Büchlein* was probably recommended to our scribe. Reviewing her transmission of the texts of the miscellany proper, it seems unlikely that she would voluntarily have undertaken to copy a work of such length—a work moreover of semi-learned, abstract and non-mystic content. That having begun she persevered, may in great measure be explained by the recommendations and admonitions of the unknown Carthusian. His letter has not been published: a summary follows which will simultaneously convey something of the contents of the *Büchlein*.

Dear Brother N! 1. Read this book from beginning to end that you be inspired to a greater love of God and that you may seek God in your works, for otherwise they will be useless, even harmful. 2. Be thankful to God for having blessed us with this work; for no other sacred writings have so persuaded me and made clear to me why one should shun evil, seek absolution and pray for the souls in purgatory; why one should desire eternal life, confess, burn incense and take monastic vows, give alms and love one's neighbour. In the Old and New Testament together you will not find so clear an exposition. Were I to die,—for which I am ill prepared—for all the world I would not sacrifice my knowledge of this work. Had I it not in my possession, but knew that it was to be found in Rome, Aachen or Einsiedeln I would go thither to seek it. In thanks to God I have copied it, and pray that you will do likewise. I know now how one should honour God, and to what end one should pray for the souls in purgatory (etc.). I now pray for all Christians, for all found in mortal sin, not for their own sakes, but to the greater glory of God. (I may wish them to benefit from my intercession, but that thought shall not be uppermost.) The book is a great blessing to all, learned and unschooled; particularly to 'allen geistlichen vnd klosterlichen personen die da vil haben zu singen vnd zu lesen vnd zu petten' (5v).^{*} 3. I ask you to recommend the book to all your friends and patrons that they may similarly profit. Let none, however learned, scorn to read it, even though the substance and argument be familiar. Many believe that through shunning sin and through good works they may save their own souls and shorten their stay in purgatory: they are fools and simpletons. You shall know, Brother Konrad, that many 'priester, pfarrer vnd gelert levt' to-day imagine themselves learned who do not yet know the truths which this book contains and who, though professing to serve God, seek only their own glory and advancement.* The 'pfarrer von Augspurg, genant maister hanns der wilt geuert', a learned man a 'licenciat jn geistlichen rechtē' had the work copied three times,

* These passages particularly must have impressed our scribe. It may be pointed out that the Carthusian's letter is extremely naïve in tone and is symptomatic of the eagerness with which this popular-learned justification of the sentimental content of Christian religion was welcomed by contemporaries.

and 'her fridreich' praised it highly. I say this lest you should scorn the work. 4. I ask you and your friends to pray for me. Read the work frequently as I have done and will continue to do. I knew 'maister Nick-las von dincklsbüchl' who is mentioned in the following preface, when I was a student in Vienna. He was the most distinguished and learned of all the doctors of theology, and wrote many books of sermons and led a holy life.

2. Suso's Sermon '*Lectulus Noster Floridus*'.

§ 6. Dycz Ist ain gütte trostliche / predig ain begnatter / erlewchter lerer von sa / nd *Dominicas* ordn̄ vnd hieß (!) / der süß aller rewern̄ vnd / kranken hewp̄t' vnd verjr / ret̄n consciencz zehilff auß / der mynnēden Sele pūch / also an uachunde etc. / (Rubric) *Eectus floridus noster* / Dise wörtlein stent / gescriben an der mynne / puch vnd sind gesprochen / zu lob ainer lauttern̄ consci / encz vnd sprechnt̄ Also zu / tewtsch vnser petlein das (148v) Jst geplüemet. . . . Expl. 171r do kom / s̄y her wider vnd sagt das / es ir fegfewer hie in zeit was / vnd das s̄y an alles mitl vō / got jn ewigkait enpfangē / ward das hellff auch vns / vnser lieber herr Jhesus xp̄s / Amen / (Rubric) *Et Sic est finis sermonis huius illustrissimi viri* etc.¹

One does not think of Suso² as a writer of sermons; indeed of the four which now find a place in his edited works only the one at present under consideration can be proved to be his.³ At an early date they were confused with the works of Tauler and appear in the Cologne edition of the latter's sermons printed in 1543. Similar confusion there must also have been in the manuscript collections of Tauler's works: this is possibly reflected in the heading to the Rylands version of *Lectulus*.⁴ But

¹ Cf. *Heinrich Seuse, Deutsche Schriften*, ed. Karl Bihlmeyer, Stuttgart, 1907, pp. 495 sqq. *Dominicas* and *Eectus* (!) *floridus noster* underlined in red.

² On Suso (Heinrich Seuse, Heinrich von Berg, occasionally Amandus, c. 1295-1366) see the Introduction to Bihlmeyer's edition of the works and the following: M. Preger, *Geschichte der deutschen Mystik im Mittelalter* (3 vols., 1874, 1881, 1893) II, p. 309 sqq., G. Ehrismann, *Geschichte der deutschen Literatur bis zum Ausgang des Mittelalters* (Handbuch des deutschen Unterrichts), Schlussband, 1935, p. 618 (bibliography). On Suso's sermons further, R. Cruel, *Geschichte der deutschen Predigt im Mittelalter*, Detmold 1879, p. 396 sqq.

³ Reference is made in Suso's *Vita* (Bihlmeyer's edition, p. 131, l. 29) to this: — als er es screib an siner bredien einer, dú da an vahet: *Lectulus noster floridus*.

⁴ The heading given by Rylands will not parse, but can be edited and reveals that the scribe of the source knew the name Suso; our scribe did not even recognise *Süß* as a name. The heading ran originally, . . . by a Dominican called 'der süß, allen rewern vnd kranken hewp̄tē vnd verjrret̄n consciencz zehilff', etc. This is completely garbled in R; the scribe takes *süß* to be a noun followed by a Gen. Pl. The scribe of the source referred again to Suso in an

it will be safer to assume that the sermon was here copied from some miscellany; it is to be found as an independent item in scores of manuscripts.¹ The Rylands text is not itself good, but goes back ultimately to a very good source.² According to her talents the scribe has prepared a readable copy.

added phrase (see var. to 497, 9 below); the Rylands scribe here takes *süss* to be an adjective. I suggest that confusion with Tauler is indicated in the use of the phrase 'ain begnatter erlewchter lerer von sand Dominicas orden'; Suso was a Dominican, but this phrase is the customary circumlocution applied to Tauler, cf. the rubric to Tauler's first sermon in Vetter's edition (*Deutsche Texte des Mittelalters*, xi, p. 7), Strauch on Ms. Ka 2 Karlsruhe, St. Blasien in *Beitr. z. Gesch. d. deutschen Sprache u. Literatur*, xlv, p. 12, and Spamer on the opening of the second book of the Grosser Tauler, *Diss.*, p. 104. (Not only Suso's sermons were taken to be Tauler's property, cf. the statement from Margarete Ebner: 'das buch das man nent Orologium Spatientae ze latin, und das ist unzers lieben vatters Taulers', Strauch, *Margarete Ebner und Heinrich von Nördlingen*, Stuttgart und Tübingen, 1882, p. 229, l. 83.)

¹ Bihlmeyer (Intro., p. 27), notes numerous instances of the sermon in miscellanies. The list is far from complete. From Degering's *Kurzes Verzeichnis der germ. Hss. der preuss. Staatsbibliothek* II and III alone, the following entries: ms. germ. oct. 364, ms. germ. quart 1130 (f. 153v), 1131 (f. 73r) 1592 (f. 302r).

² The Rylands text shows that some intermediate scribe had introduced numerous free expansions of the text; the expansions are usually only a phrase appended to a series parallel statements—a phenomenon particularly frequent in the manuscripts of another fifteenth century text which I have investigated in considerable detail, viz. *Christi Leiden in einer Vision geschaut*, ed. R. Priebisch, Heidelberg, 1936. The Rylands text does not justify the listing of all variants—readers must accept my word that the copy is adequate—but the following selection may help to place its source in the genealogical table. (Bihlmeyer's list of the manuscripts he has consulted, Intro. p. 27 sq.; text, p. 495 sq.) [R does not share the omissions of *g* (497, 16-19; 498, 25-499, 16; 505, 23-506, 4, etc.), *C* (495, 5), *c* (498, 10 and 499, 13-14), *n*¹ (496, 5), *s* (496, 23-24, 25; 497, 17-18, etc.); *m* and *N* are incomplete. Nor can *R* be descended directly from *b*² (cf. Bihlmeyer, variants to 499, 3, 16; 500, 3, 20; 501, 17; 504, 28; 506, 17, 18) or *b* (501, 3, 8; 502, 4; 503, 6). The remaining text *T* is the Tauler edition of 1543,—*R* is not affiliated.] 495 4 consciencz = *c*. 7 *geblümet*] *gezieret* = *g*. 8 *rūwet*] *an rūret*. 11 *rūwende*] *rūrn, gazte*] *verstet*. 496 3 *Electus* (compare *incipit*, above). 4 *kāmerlein* = *c*, *haimligkeit* = *b*³ *c* *n*¹. 10f. *sint uswert*—*gebrete* ÷. 11 *hin inwert*] *ein warcz, ane*] *vōb*. 12 *mūliche*] *notturfftig*. 13 *der*—*geratent*] *den jr leiplich wunden jn wendig jrs leichnās vngehailt sind*. 14f. *daz man*—*mag* ÷. 21 *bi nūte*] *pey nichtē nicht*. 23 *mea* etc. 24 *ettwas*. 25 *in*] *zu, ueger*] *pesser*. 497 1 *hat getr.*] *gezogen hat*. 3 *herten*] *herczen*. 4 *schwärer* = *bC*. 5 *gütten* = *b*. 6 *wesen* = *Cgs*. 9 *bredier*] *disē selben genadē reichen erlewchten predig' dem süssen*. 13 *vergang*] *er gee, verlūrestu*] *v'get dir*. 14 *also*—*do* ÷. 22 *jn drig/keit*. 498 2 *menschl.*] *des menschē*. 4 *der ir*] *die jr*. 5 *gelewttert*. 7 *aller* ÷ = *bb*²*Cc*, *diz lidens* = *bCn*¹. 8 *nūtwan* ÷ = *bg, emzigen*] *stettē*. 8f. *daz sū bringent*—*bringen*] *vnd gedreng dicz leidens des leibs vnd der natur vnd doch an allen*

The works of Suso the author and poet and of Suso the teacher are entirely different in style and tone. The sermons which he, as a Dominican, preached in convents of the order lack the sustained rhapsodic flow and the rich imagery of the *Büchlein der ewigen Weisheit*. He did not include the sermons in the editions of his works which he himself prepared; they have come down to us through the copies made by devout listeners. *Lectulus*, a simple homily on the text *lectulus noster floridus* from the Song of Songs (I, 15) was the most popular, at first in the Gottesfreund circles to which it was addressed, and whose devotions it is meant to aid. (A predecessor of the Rylands scribe seems to have had the cause of the Gottesfreunde particularly at heart, and may well have been one of them.)¹ Later it was popular in much wider circles. No devotional work of the fourteenth century was more fitted to be carried forward unchanged to the fifteenth

schaden der sel. 10 parmherztzigkait. 10f. Ain fliessend = s. 13 *ich* ÷. 14 *Und—daz ist*] von dem selben ander̄n leiden. [*In less detail.*] 20 so getrewe = bg. 21 *bi*] an b²T. 499 3 also = bCn¹. 6 sogetane = bCc. 9 *minne* ÷ = bb²Ccn¹s, mynder pegir vnd loblich danckperkait vñ diemütigen vnd'wurff. 11 wer dir ablas wil sprechen sund vergeben. 13f *grosser eren*] deiner grossen militikait und deines gewalcz vnd deiner ern. 19 gebegen, cf. b²C. 500 13 *geswinde* and *villiht* reversed. 14 vergisset. 18 solichē = gs. 22 gewar = bb². 501 2f. *wanne—sünde*] so ist sy sund. 4 after *gessen*, alain. 4f. Vnd nicht Adam = bc. 6 *gantzen lust*] nach hengen. 10 *so—ist*] so die rew geordnent ist vnd jn beschaidēhait. 12 Chaym = bb²C. 14 das = Ccs, solich = bs. 15 zu jn = bn¹. 22 getr. zu got = bgn¹T. 502 1 leben = bC. 6 solich = b. 13 lautprech. 15 *geschrift*] geschr. oder ainē erlew(chten) frewnt gotz jn dem heiligen geist das vnd'schid wiß. 17 *an in*] an die selben vnderweiser (*vodern* here) vnd an die ratgeb'. 19 *unrechter*] vngeordneter jriger. 23, 25 vnt'schidleich. 503 *verw.*] zerstöret. 7 verhenget = bCg. 8 verirret (= b²sT) vnd enpfridet. 11 *noch* ÷ = bb²sT. 16 vnbedachtigkeit = bC. 17 mut hiet = bC. 22 *zu ungest*] so gepitloß vnd so vngestümig vnd in geprist lanckmütikait. 504 1 vermüt (may be = *vermudet*, see Var.) 3 *zemm. geb.*] zawm vnd sittig zu werdē. 505 10f. *timberheit*] gemüt weis vnd schwärmütikait. 18 *lauttrichait* cf. bcn¹. 22 *ye me vnd mer weget Vnd heczet vnd jm sach gibt zu der anvechtung vnd bechorung.* 25 *rehte* ÷ = bg, verhangt = bCc T, solich = bc. 506 5f. *wanne—versüchet*] wann manig vnschuldig lautter menschen vnd vil heiliger frewnt gotz werdent bekert in solicher anuechtung vnd jn anderm grossē schwärm leiden dick strenglichen versücht. 507 15 *der liden*] solichs fruchper leidens. 24 dicke (!), fruchper wercke. 508 *hie*] hie in zeit. R is affiliated with the group bC.

¹ See certain readings in heavy type in the preceding note.

and to become part of the stock of its devotional literature: it contains little purely speculative argument, little indeed which is uncompromisingly mystic; its idiom is simple and direct. To fifteenth century readers it was possibly a welcome authoritative endorsement of contemporary devotional practise. It contains most of the features enumerated in a foregoing statement on the constant and average content of the Rylands miscellany: a short summary is therefore justified.

The soul of the blessed is a flower-strewn bed on which it is God's delight to rest; the conscience of the intemperate (*gewissen eins ungeordneten menschen*) is a weed-ridden field. (This opening passage exploits the allegorised imagery of the Song of Songs.) 1. A troubled conscience may be caused by one of three ills (*gebresten*): excessive sadness, inordinate melancholy or spasmodic scepticism (*unbescheidene trureikeit, ungeordnete swermutikeit, ungestume zwifelheit*). (The symptoms of each of these diseased states of mind are analysed.) These ills are the source of great affliction. 2. There are four principal afflictions (*liden*): one lacks faith in God, or in God's mercy; one is prompted to question God and his saints; one is tempted to take one's own life. 3. Lack of faith in God's mercy is the most serious affliction and comes from lack of clarity on three points: on the nature of God, of sin, and of repentance. (Elucidation: God is the inexhaustible source of goodness and mercy, etc.; sin is a witting renunciation of the godly life and the pursuit of the vain glories and pleasures of the world—a sin is not mortal which is committed unwittingly; penitence cancels sin, etc.—extravagant penance is reprehensible). A person afflicted by any of these ills (*gebresten*—see above) should note the following six points. (a) That one should not voice grief to all and sundry, but seek out a mentor (*lerer, der es wol habe von der heiligen geschrift*) and place implicit faith in him. (b) One should not be over-scrupulous in confession, for it is the Devil who prompts us to believe that no amount of confession can be adequate. (c) One should not seek to know what cannot be known, but believe. One should, (d) bear one's cross and not murmur, and (e) dismiss all evil promptings (*ungeschaffen gerüne*) and remember that the more holy the season, the more eager is the Devil to mislead. One should (f) not despair in one's devotions, for both our trials and our prayers are acceptable to God.

3. Seven Themes for Meditation.

§ 7. Inc. 171r Uon siben Süssen nüzē / gedencken des menschē / Nu lieber mensch me- / rckh mit vleiß die hernach / geschriben Siben püncktle- / in. . . . Expl. 172r das streng / vrtail des grechten richte's / do der güt wirt gehalten / vnd der pöß wirt ewigkli- / chē verlofē werden etc.

This is one of the miscellany's less pretentious entries. It is a simple enumeration of seven themes on which the pious soul may profitably meditate. *Memento mori* opens the list; then, the bitter Passion and death of Christ, the vanity of the world, the torments of Hell, the bliss of Heaven, the magnitude of our sins and the severity of the judgment of God.

4. Tauler's Sermon 'Estote Unanimes in Oratione.'

§ 8. Inc. 172r (Rubric) *Ein gar gütte Predig.* **MA**n list jn der Epistl an / dem Suntag das mein / Herr Sand peter sprach jr / aller liebsten seit aynmütig / jn dem gepet. . . . Expl. 191r das man jn der war / hait ains mit got wirt daz / vns das allen geschech des / helff vns got Amen.¹

It is difficult to decide why our scribe selected this sermon. One can only suggest that the rubric and the general tenor of the opening passages recommended it. Her copy is in the main inadequate; her source was perhaps not entirely satisfactory.² The opening sections introduced by the question *Was ist ein gepet?* are, however, adequately transmitted. In prayer one surrenders the soul completely to God and puts aside all thought of worldly affairs and of human contacts. True prayer is more than a merely prattling of formulæ and fumbling with beads accompanied by decorative palpitations of the heart. Even where a congregation has been called upon to pray for some special boon in times of need, the individual worshipper may nevertheless seek personal contact with God. (The more speculative section on the *corpus mysticum*, though illustrated by parallels drawn from real life, is beyond the scribe; she has perhaps derived from it the message that one should not envy those of

¹ *Die Predigten Taulers* (Deutsche Texte des Mittelalters xi), ed. F. Vetter, Berlin, 1910, Nr. 39, p. 154 sqq.

² The scribe's source was possibly the *Kleiner Tauler* (see above). Tauler's sermons are attested in a number of collections containing thirty to forty numbers, and in numerous minor collections (see Vetter's edition, Intro.; Strauch, 'Zu Tauler's Predigten,' *Beitr. z. Gesch. d. deutschen Sprache u. Literatur*, xliv, p. 1 sqq.; Dick Helander, *Johannes Tauler als Prediger*, Lund, 1923). The sermon *Estote unanimes* occurs in some twelve of the manuscripts listed by Strauch (Helander I have not been able to consult). In Basel A V 23 it occurs alone; in Paris Ms. all. 222 of the Bibl. Nat. together with *Schwester Katrei*, in Stuttgart cod. theol. et phil. 155 with Suso's *Lectulus*. Vetter's edition is based on a mere fraction of the total Tauler MSS. It is pointless to cite variants.

one's fellows to whom special grace is shown.) There are three stages of spiritual life,¹ the first two of which may be compared to childhood and manhood. The first is *jubilatio* in which we rejoice in God's goodness. The second is one of trial and suffering (this too she follows, but the third stage, for which the second is but the preparation, and in which man may become by Grace what God is by nature, eludes her comprehension). Her version of this sermon is little more than a long footnote to Suso's *Lectulus*.

5, 6, 13. *Mystic Legends.*

§ 9. Inc. 191v *H*ie chümpft der erberg / peicht vater vnd sücht / sein peicht tochter. . . . Expl. 199v Vnd wais doch / wol wer zu got chümen wil / der müß es mit leben erfüllē / jn vnsern her'n jhm xpm etc.

Inc. 199v Ein maister gottlicher / geschrift der kam jn / ain stat do kom ain junge / fraw zu jm pey xxj jaren. . . . Expl. 203r nu sehent / das was ein frewlein der ee / nu schamē sich die jungen fr / awen die nit anders schme / ckent dān fleischlich ding / etc.

Inc. 255r (Rubric) *Von ainer sälligen pegeinen* / Es was ains mals ain salige / pegein Vnd die kam jn ain / dorff Vnd peichtet ainē prei / ster. . . . Expl. 258r Jch frag dich furpas nȳmer mer / war v̄m du nit zw der kirch / en gast etc.

The following remarks are in part a summary of, in part an appendix to, what I have written elsewhere on these three texts.² Of all the pieces in our miscellany they alone seem to

¹ The Rylands scribe has struggled valiantly with a number of passages on the three stages of mystic experience in contemplation, prayer and communion. The underlying concept was sufficiently familiar to her (see § 14 where she has deliberately selected a piece on the subject) but she has rarely been able to cope with its theoretical exposition.

² In an article 'Zu den Gesprächen zwischen Beichtvater und Beichttochter in der erbaulichen Literatur des ausgehenden Mittelalters', accepted for publication by the *Zeitschrift für deutsche Philologie*, where the first text is analysed (compared with the complete *Schwester Katrei* published by Pfeiffer, *Deutsche Mystiker*, II, p. 448 sqq.) and the second and third are edited according to the Rylands and parallel versions. The article was submitted in typescript to Professor Fr. Ranke of Breslau who informed me that Professor Spamer plans a monograph on a related subject, *Die geistliche Hausmagd*, but urged me to publish my contribution—Professor Spamer's work has been in typescript for many years. Since receiving this note I have examined the latter's writings more thoroughly, particularly the article on the transmission of Eckehart's texts in *Beitr. z. Gesch. d. deutschen Sprache u. Literatur*, xxxiv, and profited con-

be strictly contemporary and sprung of the circles in which our scribe herself moved. The latter two belong to a sub-literary genre—are exempla; the first is an adaptation of a well-known tract, *Schwester Katrei* (*Meister Eckehartes tochter von Strâzburg*), long attributed to Eckehart himself. As they stand in Rylands they are simple dialogued storyettes in prose. One theme, when reduced to the following formula is common to them all: a young woman is asked by her confessor to give an account of her religious life; this she does, and he is bound to admit that her life is more holy than his. Such stories, which Spamer has called 'einige der schönsten Erzeugnisse der frauenklösterlichen Mystik,'¹ arose in circles in which for over a century the sensational revelations of visionary nuns, Suso's *Vita* and *Büchlein der ewigen Weisheit* and the writings of the *Gottesfreunde* had been favourite reading matter. (More abstract writings, though revered, laboriously copied and excerpted, were rather 'authorities' to which one turned in piety and as an act of discipline. They have left but one precipitate in these stories—a debased traditional terminology and a number of high-sounding but antiquated formulations.) They dramatise the spirit of *docta ignorantia*.

According to slight variations in the basic scheme (status and number of the questioners and questioned) and in the nature of the questions and answers—there is, in fact, not a constant element in the formula—one can distinguish numerous variants. Two, 'The young woman of two-and-twenty' and 'The pious Beguine' I have already examined in some detail; others (St. Bernhards Tochter, Die fromme Müllerin) I have enumerated. My inquiry was not exhaustive: a group of tales which sprang up about the real or legendary Eckehart, and the *Geistliche Hausmagd*—variants which Professor Spamer will probably consider more central, were not explicitly mentioned. All seem to me to be contemporary, in so far as one will not attempt to derive one from the other. The outline of the story was

siderably. From his footnote references on pp. 405 and 406 I deduce that my second text is known to him, and that he also would include *Schwester Katrei* and the *Beghinchen von Paris* (see below) in his discussion of the type of story here examined.

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 403.

generally known in the fifteenth century, and is probably dateless.¹ According to the circles in which the renewers of the story moved—most were nuns—and in some measure according to the sentimentality of their piety, the questioner became a confessor, a doctor of theology, St. Bernhard, Meister Eckehart or a Prioress; the questioned a young woman, a married woman, a child, a beggar, a Beguine. The nature of the questions and answers depended on the individual writer's recent devotional practice, her reading, and perhaps more particularly on her knowledge of gnostic devotional literature.

The problem of chronology presents itself the moment one turns to specific *texts*. The first Rylands exemplum and the tract *Schwester Katrei* (I do not refer here to the Rylands adaptation) both offer the same variant. In each a young woman (in the exemplum a married woman) seeks advice of her confessor; she would know how a woman may best attain salvation. The confessor questions her on her devotional practice (*übungen*); she distinguishes, in her answer, between 'inwendige' and 'auswendige übungen'; the confessor admits that the woman's spiritual life is holier than his. The tale and the tract are obviously related though they are in further content and in general tone poles apart. I have shown that *Schwester Katrei* (which is known to be a conglomeration of gleanings from tract and sermon) is the contemporary sophisticated version: it is the work of a learned emulator of Eckehart. Not only has our story here become the vehicle of a mass of speculative mystic argument—to the naïvely pious housewife of the exemplum corresponds a veritable blue-stocking, who ousts her own confessor in the subtleties of abstract theological argument, and finally instructs him. The affinity between the tract and the simpler tale was nevertheless appreciated by a fifteenth century reader, the scribe of the source of Rylands. The Rylands *Schwester Katrei* is a completely recast, simplified and popularised version of the tract: it has been reduced by main force to the level of an exemplum.²

¹ Cf. the Macarius story, Migne, lxxiii, 778, and J. A. Herbert, *Catalogue of Romances* III, pp. 515, 593.

² The impression will by now have been conveyed that I attribute nothing but the final copies to the Rylands scribe. Such thorough-going editorship as

But by stamping the one version as sophisticated and the other as simple we have not yet made any pronouncement on the relative chronology of the two. The solution is not free from contradictions. The simple story is *essentially* older than the tract: the whole point of such stories is that a *simple* woman triumphs over a learned theologian. The exemplum is nevertheless, as it stands in Rylands younger than, and dependent on, *Schwester Katrei*. The priority of the latter is guaranteed by the manner in which the questions and answers are transmitted in each. The distinction drawn between 'inwendige' and 'auswendige übungen' is the work of one interested primarily in the theological implications of the story, and has its starting-point in the tract. In the tract ten 'auswendige übungen' and one 'inwendige übung' are listed under appropriate rubrics; in the exemplum six entirely different 'übungen' are arbitrarily divided into two groups of three, and placed under corresponding rubrics.¹ The *correct* division, ten and one, is obviously older than the *incorrect* and distinctly popular division, three and three. My conclusions are (1) The simple story is in outline older than *Schwester Katrei*. (2) The questions and answers constituting the middle section of the exemplum are modelled on the corresponding section in the tract, and were grafted on to the older story during the course of

is represented by the adaptation of *Schwester Katrei* was certainly beyond the competence of the scribe responsible for the copy of the Tauler sermon, and for items 3 and 9. I incline also to attribute the juxtaposition of the texts 5 and 6 to the scribe of her source. [The statement that the adaptation is 'popular' calls for certain reservations: there is still a fairly heavy ballast of theoretical discussion, but it is transmitted in simpler form. The epigrammatic conclusion of the exemplum 'go pray for me, your life is holier than mine' (which could easily have been achieved by the adaptation of Pfeiffer 463, 37-40) is missed. The intention of the adaptor is transparent, the execution imperfect. The main formal achievement is the reduction of four dialogues and a mass of extraneous matter to one dialogue and a reasonable number of digressions. Note that there is no version of *Schwester Katrei* amongst those listed by Otto Simon, *Überlieferung und Handschriftenverhältnis des Traktates S.K.*, Diss. Halle, 1906, which approaches Rylands even remotely (the adaptation is in fact based on the longer versions which Simon calls *Fassung II*).

¹ I have examined five versions of the exemplum. The 'übungen' which occur under the rubric *inwendig* in two versions appear under *auswendig* in the other three and *vice versa*! The six übungen are derived here from some gnomonic compilation—cf. item 3 of the miscellany.

its transmission.¹ (3) The compiler of *Schwester Katrei* utilised a story of the type still represented in all essentials by the exemplum.²

The third text is, it will be remembered, the work of the second scribe (see above). The people in this dialogue are a priest and a Beguine. He asks her why she goes to church only on the Sabbath; she explains that she is busy (unmüssig) on every day but the Sabbath, and mentions some more pressing duty (she must weed her garden, go to market, tend a sick person) which, the priest demurring, she interprets allegorically: her daily tasks are her 'contemplations'.³ The idea is subtle enough; it is doubtful whether an exemplum was the first version.⁴ I have been able to show that there are marked affinities between it and a Middle Low German ballad-like poem known as the *Beghinnen von Paris*.⁵

¹ This is again analogous to a phenomenon one may observe in the transmission of folk-songs, viz. that stanzas occasionally migrate from one song to another—provided that the rhythmical schemes tally and that the content of the loose stanza is stereotyped and non-committal. It has been said that high-sounding mystic formulations had associations but no real meaning to simpler scribes; they were without prejudice transferable from one context to another.

² The one dialogue in the tract in which 'übungen' are discussed is even in the longest versions of *Schwester Katrei* still no longer than in our exemplum. If the tract now takes up twenty-seven pages of close print, it is not owing to any organic elaboration of the main theme, but to simple multiplication (four dialogues instead of one) and the addition of new material before and after. Until recently I believed that I had adduced evidence in favour of a simpler form of *Schwester Katrei*. I pointed out that a 'Priamel' (= preamble, a popular didactic genre, text: *Deutsche Texte des Mittelalters*, xiv, p. 121) in a Wolffenbüttel manuscript gives the same outline story and the ten and one 'übungen,' exactly as in the tract. It seemed impossible that this simple text could be based on the tract, and advanced that the reverse was true,—at least that both were adaptations of some simple prose story. But *Schwester Katrei* has been excerpted by writers preparing mosaic tracts; Professor Spamer notes that the scene in which 'übungen' are discussed was occasionally copied separately (*op. cit.*, p. 367). The Priamel is probably only a secondary adaptation of such a copy.

³ The subject of her contemplations are principally the events of the Passion Week. Works containing 'contemplations' for the different days of the week or for the different hours of the day are extremely numerous in the fifteenth century.

⁴ I know no Middle High German text so completely popular in idiom and syntax as this exemplum. But it was nevertheless copied from a written source: the source had *erctag* for 'Tuesday', a dialectal form strictly limited to southern Bavarian, east of the Lech; our text has *ersten* which can only be a copyist's error.

⁵ The most convenient text of the *Beghinnen* is O. Schade, *Geistliche Gedichte vom Niederrhein*, 1854, pp. 333 sqq.

7. 'Das geistliche Leben.'

§ 10. Inc. 203r O Mensch wildu geistli / ch sein so tu es mit den / wercken
schein. . . . Expl. 204v dein tod be / denck gar aigenlich dar / auf so richt dich
ernstlich / Amen.

This is the only rhymed piece in our manuscript: after the first couplet (above) there are forty-five lines rhyming in *-lich*. It consists of a string of precepts, some moral in the style of the distiches of Cato, some religious; others are simple rules of conduct. There seems to be little arrangement: that one should model one's life on that of Christ comes between the recommendation that one should go modestly about one's business and a warning against night-travel.

This platitudinous rigmarole has had a rich textual development and occurs in varying forms in sources from Switzerland to Silesia. It is not always immediately recognisable, and has received quite unmerited publicity in several independent investigations. Karl Euling first drew together some of the strands, published a long version and measured various others by it.¹ A considerably modified text was recently published by Jos. Klapper, who discovered it in East Middle German manuscripts containing the works of Johann of Neumarkt, the

¹ In a report on MS. 1590 of the Univ. Library of Leipzig, Euling printed a version longer than Rylands by eight further lines rhyming in *-lich* + Amen das es war were + 20 lines with the rhymes *dut/mut/gut*, and a final couplet (*Germania*, xxxiii, pp. 162 sq.). At a later date he rediscovered the poem in the Wolfenbüttel MS. 2. 4. Aug. 2° (= the *Priamelhandschrift* edited in *Deutsche Texte des Mittelalters*, xiv, where the piece occurs as No. 770). He refers (*ibid.*, Intro., p. xv) to further versions to be found in the so-called *Liederbuch der Clara Hätzlerin* (ed. Althaus, 1840) where the poem is 'auf weniger als die Hälfte zusammengeschrumpft' and has only 45 lines. Rylands has 47 lines; 'zusammengeschrumpft' is the wrong word—the lines with the new rhymes must be additions. The *Germania* text is the best basis for comparisons, however. As importance seems to be attached to this poem the Rylands variants follow: (mere morphological variants in the rhyming adverbs are not listed) 3 gar *fuderl*. 5 gar *dult*] gedult. After 9; nach Cristus leben übs formiklich. 10 abentewr! 12 *hüt* du. 13 nichtz, vnnützlich. 14 *sach nit*] scham Vnd. 15 *dir*] dein so. 16 mit *deinen*, genos. 17 *Deinen*] dein. 18 erger, nyemant nit. 19 *al tag* ÷. 26 *jn*]vnd, geittiklich. 27 *wid' stee* gar. 28 all sünt, *streit* gar. 30 dar *jnn* pet andachtiklich. 31 *dē* schweigen hat pehütsamklich. 33 selb pehalt. 34 *pej* so. 36 *eitellich*] trüglich. 37 *selbe halt*] selben en pfach. 40 erwirdigklich. 41 sel gar löblich. 42/43 dein nächsten hab lieb als dich/selber nüt hind'kauff *jn* hässigklich. 44 gewars. 45 *den*] dein, aigenlich. 46 *auf* so. (Rest lacking.)

chancellor of Charles IV—a less apt context it would be difficult to find.¹

8. 'Christi Trostrede an eine Nonne.'

§ 11. In this piece Christ soliloquises a nun at her devotions, and in moving words exhorts her to seek comfort only in him, to invoke his help through fervent prayer, to place trust in his wisdom, to believe always, especially in times of tribulation in his justice and benevolence and, taking courage from the example of the disciples, to await her reward in patience. The tone is that of the writings of the *Gottesfreunde*—to whom *mein knechte(n)* 207r, possibly refers. The Rylands copy is perfectly adequate. The piece has not been noticed previously and merits publication.²

Das der mensch in trübnuß nicht verzagen sol,
sunder gedultiklich warten der göt- (205r) -lichen
tröstung etc.

Chint, Ich pin der herr, der da tröst jn dem tag der petrübnuß; Chüms du nü zu mir, so dir nit wol ist? Das ist, das aller maist hindert vnd irrt die hýmlich tröstung—das du dich als spat cherst zu dem gepet; wann ee du mich jnnigklichen pittest, süchst du vil zeitlicher tröstung vnd erlustet dich jn dem

¹ *Schriften Johannis von Neumarkt, Gebete des Hofkanzlers und des Prager Kulturkreises* (= Vom Mittelalter zur Reformation VI, 4) ed. by Jos. Klapper, Berlin, 1935, pp. 360 sq. This version stands quite apart, having the following incipit: Welch mensche wil geistlichen seyn / Der sal ansehn dis buchelyn / Vnd sal sich dornach richtin gar / So wirt sin lebin on gefar / Versme dy werld gemeinlich, followed by 34 lines rhyming in -lich. The lines appear in different order; there are omissions and additions. Klapper did not identify the piece. I note further versions in G. Binz, *Die deutschen Hss. der öffentl. Bibl. der Universität Basel* I (1907), p. 124 (MS. A X 130 f. 122r.)—Binz prints the first fifteen lines and the explicit, and remarks that the source was probably Bavarian,—and in Degering, *Kurzes Verzeichnis*, etc., III (1932), note on MS. germ. oct. 137, f. 146r.

² The piece is almost certainly complete in itself, i.e. is not excerpted from a longer work. After failing to discover it in the editions of mystic texts and in a number of more detailed descriptive catalogues, I referred the case to Dr. Pyritz of the *Handschriftenarchiv* of the *Preussische Akademie der Wissenschaften* who informed me that it is not recorded. Though the *Archiv* has not completed its inventarisation, it seems improbable that parallels will come to light. Item 12 (below) is similarly not attested elsewhere, but may well be a conglomerate text, not to be identified by its *incipit* and *explicit* alone. As for the text here published, it differs from a diplomatic copy only in so far as capitals at the beginnings of sentences and modern punctuation are introduced and scribal errors are corrected. After the rubric, expanded abbreviations are indicated by italics.

ausseren. Darumb geschichtz, das die alle gar klainen nütz pringen, als lang, pis du merckest vnd erkennest, das ich der pin, der da tröst, die in mich hoffent. Es ist (205v) aus mir chain hilffliche hilff, noch chain nütze hilff, noch chain beleibliche trostung, Sunder : nach diß vngestümhait erküchh deinen geist vnd erfrew dich in dem liecht meiner genaden, wann : 'ich pin nahent den, die ains petrübten herczen sein', spricht der herr, 'das ich wider pring das verlorn nit alain ganczlich, sunder vberflüßigklich vnd hauffen weis'.¹ Ist mir aber ichtz zeschwär, oder pin ich ainem geleich, der da spricht vnd nit tüt? Wo ist dein gelaub?—Ste vesticlich vnd harr, pis starck vnd lanckhmütig! (206r) Vnd dir kumpt die trostung zu seiner zeit. Peit mein, peit l—ich chüm vnd wil dich hailen.

Es ist ain versuchung, das dich petrübt, vnd ain eyttle vorcht, das dich erschreckt. Was ist es nütz, das du sargueltklich pist auff künfftigs vbel, nür das du ain trawrigkait vber die ander habst : 'Es ist genüg aynem yeglichenn tag sein aygen vbel.' Es ist gar eytel vnd vnnütz dem menschen, das er petrübt wirt oder sich frewt chünfftiger ding, die vil leicht nymmer geschent. Es ist menschlich, das der mensch durch soliche ein pildung (206v) betrogen werd. Es ist aber ain zaichen ains klainen gemütes, das der mensch so leicht zogen wirt auf das fürwerffen des veints, wann er acht nit, ob er durch wars oder gelogens den menschen betrieg vnd verspot, ob er durch lieb der gegenwürtigen oder durch vorcht der künfftigen [ding] den menschen fel² vnd nider werff. Darvmb petrüb dein hercz nit so leicht vnd fürcht dir nit so hart : jn mir vnd in meiner³ parmherczikait hab getrawen! Wann du wänst, ich sej dir aller verrist, so pin ich dir oft aller nächst; wenn du wänst, es sej geleich (207r) gancz verlorn, So kert es sich oft zu dem pesten. Du solt nit richten nach dein gegenwürtigen empfinden, noch äiner yeglichen schwärhait oder trübnüsz, wanne,⁴ vnd sy chöment ist, also anhangen vnd auff nemen, geleich als ob nicht hin kömens sej ertrinckens.

Du solt dich nit schätzen als gar verlassen, wie wol das ist, das ich dir zu zeitten schick trübsal vnd dir die pegirlich süssen tröstung en czeuch; wann also get man zu dem reich der hýmel, vnd, an zweiffel, es ist mer nütz dir vnd andern mein knechten, das ir (207v) Also gevbt vnd versucht werdt jn widerwärtikait, dann das ir alle ding nach ewrem willen hiet. Wann ich han erchant dein verporgen gedänckh—das⁵ es dir gar vast nütz ist zu deiner⁶ sel sälligkeit, das du vntter weiben an süssigkait seist, das du dich nit erhebest vnd dir selbs villeicht jn dem geuallen wolcz, das du noch nit pist. Das ich geben han, das mag ich auch wider nemen, vnd mags auch wider geben, wenn ich wil; wenn ichs gib so ist es mein, vnd wenn ichs von dir ným, so han ich das dein nit genomen,

¹ Based on Mark, x. 29-30. The following quotations (Matt. vi. 34 and John, xv. 9) are exact.

² MS. sel.

³ MS. meiner.

⁴ MS. wannē. If this is not corrected, *wannen vnd sy choment* ist would mean 'whence-ever it comes', which is itself satisfactory, but *sunder* would have to be supplied before *also anhangen* I have restored *wanne* which I take to be = *but, however*; the following *vnd* = *if*.

⁵ Is dependent on *ich han erchant*, not *gedänckh*.

⁶ MS. seiner.

(208r) Wann mein ist alles gû vnd alle volkömne gab. Schickh ich dir ain schwärhait, oder was widerwärtikait das ist, pis nit so vnwirdig vnd so vnleydlich vnd petrüb dein hercz nit so vast, wann ich mag dich pald dar aus entheben vnd all dein schwärmüß vnd trübsal zu frewden cheren. Doch so pin ich gerecht vnd pin dar vmb vast zeloben, So ich also mit dir tû, ob du es recht vrtailst Vnd in warhait an sichst; So soltest du nymmer von kainerlay widerwärtigkait wegen so ser betrübt werden, Sunder dich des (208v) frewen, Ja halt, das allain schäczen für gewyn, daz ich dir nicht vber sehent pin vnd dich peinig; wann: 'als mich mein hymlicher vater lieb hat gehabt, also han ich euch lieb', sprach ich zu mein jungeren, die ich für wär nicht schicket zu zeittlichen frewden, Sunder zu grosser widerwärtikait vnd trübsal, nit zu eren, Sünder zu verschmähung, nit zu müssigkait, Sunder zu grosser arbeit, nit zu rue, sünder das si prächten vil frucht in aller gedult. Amen.¹

9. 'Salve Mater Salvatoris.'

§ 12. Inc. 208v **P**Js gegrüst du müter des / pehalters du außewel (209r) tes vas du vas der ern du vas / der hymlichē genaden etc. . . . Expl. 211v ent / ledig die schuldigen behalt / si vmb sünst vnd mach vns / geleich d' glori dein' chlarha / yt etc.

This is a vernacular version of the hymn of Adam of St. Victor.² Prose paraphrases³ and prose translations⁴ of Latin hymns are frequently to be met with in medieval German manuscripts and have, or may have, literary value. What we have here is merely a key⁵ for the use of those 'die da vil haben zu singen'

¹ Based on Matt. x, 16 *sqq.* and I Cor. iv. 9-13.

² Cf. Chevalier, *Repertorium Hymnologicum*, II, pp. 513-514; Mone, *Hymni latini medii ævi*, II, p. 309; Wackernagel, *Das deutsche Kirchenlied*, I, 125.

³ Cf. Jos. Klapper, *Die Schriften Johannis von Neumarkt* (full title above), pp. 220, 277, 292, 299, etc.

⁴ In Cgm. 29 f. 49v-50r ('Übersetzung lat. Hymnen in deutsche Prosa', *Cat. codicum manuscriptorum*, Tomi V, Pars 1, ed. altera, Munich, 1920); ms. germ. oct, 558 (Degering, *Kurzes Verzeichnis*, etc., III, 25, 186); Borchling, *Reisebericht I* (Nachr. v. d. königl. Gesellsch. d. Wissenschaften zu Göttingen, Geschäfl. Mitteilungen, H. 2 pp. 79-316), pp. 250, 286, III (Nachrichten, etc., phil.-hist. Kl. 1900), pp. 55, 229-230, etc.

⁵ The following equivalents will require no comment: stanza 4 *singulare lilium*: der besunder Bilg!; 11 *vapores dulcedinem*] du pist von dir flammē die süssigkait; 13 *Tu es thronus Solomonis / cui nullus par in thronis / arte vel materiā*] Du pist der thron des salomons dem chainer geleich ist vnder allen tron mit chunst noch zuig; line 42 *præsignans mysteria*] du bist vns bedewtten haimligkait; line 43 *Palman præferens singularem*] Du pist füren ain besunderhait des palms. The translation does not bear the slightest resemblance to the translations of the Mönch von Salzburg (Wackernagel II, 445-447) or of Heinrich von Lauffenberg (*ibid.*, II, 581). Binz (*op. cit.*) p. 26, notes, '2 Hymnen lateinisch, mit deutscher Übersetzung nach Art der Interlinearversionen'.

(see p. 470) but know no Latin. It is perhaps somewhat out of place in the collection, but it is interesting to note that the scribe has expended more red ink on this than on any other item.

10. 'Zwiesprach zwischen Gott und Mensch.'

§ 13. Inc. 211v (Rubric) *Item das Stucklein hab ich auß / dem taller genomen etc. / Ain mensch stünd ains / mals vor vnsers her'n / leichnam. . . . Expl. 216v dar jnn / ste ich ledig in ein (sic) / selbs vnd lass dich mit dē / deinē tün was du wild daz / pilleich ist (Rubric) Merck das stücklein.*¹

Professor Spamer published this text from manuscripts of the *Grosser Tauler* (see § 2). It occurs in St (f. 285vb-291vb) with the rubric 'von Säuß? (= Suso)', in M (246vb-291vb) with the title 'visio intellectualis' and in m (88rb-92vb) with the translated title 'Ain verstantliche beschawung'. It is further to be found in ms. germ. quart 1522, f. 11 sqq., and now in abridged form in Rylands = Spamer pp. 125—127, 10 (herze wirt gan Amen) + 136, 7—137, 22 (das ist billich). MmR are closely related and have a common source, and do not belong to the same branch as St.²

¹ Correction signs indicate that *pilleich ist* should read *ist pilleich*. The title 'Zwiesprach, etc.' is taken from Spamer's edition of the piece in *Texte*, etc., pp. 125 sqq.

² RMm have the following readings against St: 125, 12 *ist* ÷. 126, 4 *den menschen*] dem m. 13 *wider*] gegen. 15 *der mensch sprach*. 24 *ewig* ÷. 127, 4 *diu antwurt ich wil*. 8 *pefilch*. 136, 10 *do*] das, wunder werck. 11 *tut*] tet. 12 *zu eren* ÷. 24 *verajñē*. 137, 6 *zu grossen genadē*. 7 see below. 14 *wonde*] wolt. 15 *vnd sprach herr*. 20 *darumbe etc. etc.* whence St. cannot be the source of (Mm)R. Further m has many innovations not shared by R: 125, 2 *petet*. 5 *aller* ÷. 12 *gruntlosz*. 13 *creatur*. 126, 8 *wann ir seit alle plint*. 10 *lieb gehabt*. 127, 3 *von mir sagen*. 136, 21 *haimlich tün*. 137, 2 *vnd gebessert* ÷. 17 *und gemacht* ÷ *etc. etc.* Only one reading speaks against M as the immediate source of R: 125, 3 *mit gancze ernste* St] mit gantzē ernst M mit ganczm̄ herczen m von gantzē hertzē vnd mit ernst R. Professor Spamer is convinced that m is based on M; we must assume that the scribe of m has here modified his source (there are numerous innovations above which encourage one to accept this). R however, must go back to the common source which had the doubled phrase (reduced in M and altered in m) for R does not add elements. The transmission of one further reading emphasises the close affinity between MmR: 137, 7 (*das got*) *nit müg sich in erzeugen* St] in nit müg erzeigen gnad (*gnad* is added in the margin; i.e. *sich* was omitted, and *gnad* added to restore sense) M; m = M but without *gnad*; *das got jn nit müg ertzaigē vnd jn d' g* (crossed through) *die mütkait*, etc. R. The marginal *gnad* of M was not incorporated in m, a copy based on M. The source of R had the marginal *gnad* (witness the

This piece again has, even in the form in which it is transmitted in the *Grosser Tauler* a certain dramatic interest which will have sufficed to recommend it to our scribe: God communes, as in the *Büchlein der ewigen Weisheit* with one of his faithful servants. It has moreover much in common with the items which she has already selected. It is hardly less sentimental in tone than the legends (items 5, 6, 13) and repeats most of the arguments of the *Trostrede* (8) and the sermon *Lectulus*. Whereas these works were obviously the work of nuns or were addressed to nuns, *Zwiesprach* is characterised, in no less degree than the tract *Schwester Katrei*, by its ballast of abstract digression as the work of a man; it was meant for serious and learned readers. Our scribe's abridgment is, none the less, entirely satisfactory, and is even skilfully executed: two long digressions are cut, whereby the almost ludicrous disparity between the simple questions of 'der mensch' and the ponderous answers or revelations which follow is considerably reduced. The final text is a counterpart to the Rylands version of *Schwester Katrei*, and might almost have been considered in conjunction with the legends.¹

A man² prays so earnestly to God when receiving the sacrament, and puts such trust in Christ's mediation that God reveals to him that his sins are forgiven. God communes with him. (a) God reveals that it is within his power to bestow or withhold grace; whatever he may do in the individual case will be for that person's welfare, for God has created man in his own likeness. Men are, however, prone to concentrate on irrelevant things and remain blind to this truth; some must be tempted by outward manifestations,—others tempered by suffering. God prophesies that he (the visionary) will pass through a period of suffering. (b — omitted —) The trials in store are enumerated (long digres-

cancelled g—its position in the line of R indicates that the word thus begun was in the margin of the source). Combining the evidence of these two readings, M and R had a common source, which had the marginal emendation, whence the relationship of MmR and St would be represented by the following scheme: X > Y St; Y > MR; M > m. [Note. R goes against Mm in numerous minor points of syntax, grammar and word order and has occasionally faulty renderings; the most serious instances are 125, 1 leichnam; 127, 9 *versmehung*] versaumung].

¹ The piece is reduced to a quarter of its original length. The scribe has not omitted merely passages which she may perhaps not have been able to follow; she may claim almost to have edited her text—but one will still hesitate to give her the credit for a *conscious* adaptation.

² In the German *Ain mensch*. It is possible that the Rylands scribe considered the person to be a woman.

sions on the nature of God, the nobility of the soul). After three days the visionary is reduced to a state of resignation. (c) He has had great difficulty in preparing himself to receive the sacrament: he has examined his conscience over-scrupulously; his trust in God's grace has been deficient. He acknowledges the omniscience and ineffable grace of God. (d — omitted —) God predicts the visionaries future spiritual life: he will be as one with God.

11. *Fragment of a Mystic Tract on the Sacrament.*

§ 14. Inc. 216v SAnd Bernhart spr-(217r) icht in siberläy ordnung gö / tlich' mynn enphächt der / mensch das ewig wort. . . . Expl. 218v das er sich / . . . / got auff trag jn dem / vernünfftigen bechantnüsß / also das er dem fluss der / warhait folg Amen.

The tract from which this passage is taken occurs in the manuscripts of the *Grosser Tauler* (M f. 266ra-268ra; m f. 101rb-102va; St f. 296ra-299vb). The text has not been published. It is reasonable to assume that the scribe used the same copy as for the *Zwiesprach*. It occurs further in the so-called 'postils' of Heinrich von Erfurt and Hartung von Erfurt.¹ The Rylands text is incomplete.²

The scribe of Rylands was too ambitious when she undertook to copy this piece. It is a purely abstract mystic interpretation of the sacrament. The opening statement is roughly that there are seven possible degrees of participation; four are stages of active and three of contemplative communion. The argument becomes progressively more obscure and the idiom more esoteric. The scribe stumbles over the first antithetical pair: *würkendes leben* (vita activa) and *schauendes leben* (vita contemplativa). She is totally beyond her depth by the time she reaches the fourth stage; what may the following phrase have conveyed to her?—*in der vierdñ ordnung enpfächt der mensch das ewig wort jn ainer üß'geformtē bechantnüsß vernünfftigs vntt'schaidens*—? The rest she omits.³ The following she may have understood. At the first stage the sacrament banishes sin. At the second it bestows enlightenment: one recognises the limitations of human

¹ This information is derived from Spamer, *Diss.*, pp. 109, 206.

² See the *explicit* quoted by Spamer, and the internal evidence, below.

³ Note that the complete tract takes up approximately nine folio half-page columns in the manuscripts of the *Grosser Tauler*. The section which has been transferred to the *Blume der Schauung* (a tract printed in Preger, *Geschichte der deutschen Mystik*, II, 426 sqq.) is not to be found in the Rylands text.

contacts and shuns them. At the third it gives one the strength to do God's will in the face of criticism and opposition. She understood further that the fourth was a dangerous transitional stage.

12. *A Mystic Letter on the Sacrament.*

§ 15. This item was not identifiable: its contents must therefore be examined in greater detail.¹ Though lacking in literary merit the document is extremely interesting and instructive. It is a pseudo-mystic, even bogus mystic work. The writer is consciously or unconsciously a realist—a partisan of formal orthodox religious practice who exploits the idiom and ideas of mystic writers in order to provoke greater enthusiasm in the observance of his readers. Mystic religious experience, on which the ideas are crude, is to him but an apt prelude to communion, and may be provoked by suggestion and induced by the repetition of suitable formulæ. The work consists of a tripartite letter on the sacrament. The first section outlines the preparation required of those who are at the first, second and third stages of enlightenment. The statement is ordered and coherent and may well be based on the work of another. The first Rylands scribe has copied it, possibly without committing a single error. The second and third sections, copied by the second scribe are extremely uneven, disjointed and full of repetitions; for the plan or lack of plan the writer is himself responsible. Certain more freely flowing passages (reproduced below) are possibly free elaborations of sources. The style is ludicrously extravagant and the writer's taste execrable: 'the bread of the holy wafer was kneaded in the belly of the Virgin Mary by God the Holy Ghost and baked by the fire of heavenly love!' ² There is something blatantly negroid in his exploitation of suggestion, and sensationalism.

¹ See p. 482, note 2. The analysis gives incipit, explicit and a number of excerpts with connecting texts. From the data given it should be possible to determine the degree in which the author has pillaged the works of other writers, and examine the justice of my criticism of the piece.

² See p. 491.

I. HOW ONE SHOULD PREPARE TO RECEIVE THE SACRAMENT.
(Scribe 1.)

Inc. 219r (Rubric) *Von dreyerlay menschen / schickung zu dem heiligen / Sacrament etc.* . . . Dēn erst an hebendē men / schē die sich newlich zu / got chert habē zu gehört / das si sein jn warer püss / vnd dar jnn beha'rn. Those who are at the first stage of mystic enlightenment should be truly penitent and hunger and thirst to receive the sacrament and 'sich ganz nīd'werffen vñ / vernichtē durch ware die / mütikait' (219v). 'dise obgeschr / ibne vnd der geleich' are addressed to all. Christ's Passion should be at the centre of all contemplations.

Those who are at the second stage (Rubric: *die zu nementen* 220r) must go further; their whole 'leben vnd wūrken' should be preparation. Let them banish 'all natürlich begird / vnd nāgung all vngeor / dent gelüst vnd lieb' (220v) and discipline their emotions. 'Si sullen sich emssigkl / ichen vben in tugenden Jn / hailsamen betrachtungen / zu grosser vorcht zu tieff' / Diemütikait zu prýnnend' / lieb zu hiczigen pegirden göt / lich' vnd hýmlischer Jtm si / sullen sich einsencken in it / voll' andacht jn die wundē / Jhū durch herczenlich mitley / dung' (221r). The sacrament was instituted in memory of his Passion which one should contemplate; one should use all means, prayer, fasting and the reading of the scriptures in preparation for it. 'Hie werdē / gestrafft vil menschen / die vil vbung haben vnd / sich vast peinigen mit va / stñ petñ wachē vnd and' / leiplich kestigung auch vil / entpfündlich andacht vnd / Sentimēt haben' (22r-22v).¹ At this stage (which you have reached, or should have reached) one should pay particular attention to one's thoughts and conscience. 'Jtm das pettlein jrer gewi / ssen sol wol verziert sein mit / schönen plūmen heilig' tugent / Also das ain yeglicher solich' / tröstlich gesprechn̄ müg ch / üm her mein aller liebste' / vnser pettlein ist vol plue / men für war Jhesus ist / ain schone feld pluem weis / vnd rot ausser welt vnd' / tausentñ vnd er ist lustig / zewonē vnd' den plūmē / vnd lilien dar jnn er lustli / ch gewaydnet wirt Das / ist jn lautern gedencken (224r) Jn heiligen vnd andächtigē / pegirden etc.²

Jtm si sullē auch geziert sein / mit dem hochzeitlichē vnd / künigklichē klaid dardurch / sy zu des groß mächtigen / künigs tisch vnd hoffättel (= hofstaffel) / wol geschickt werden vnd / dem künig wolgeuallē auch / süllen vnd müssen si all chü / nig od' künigin sein die zu / disem tisch zu gen dicz künig / klich klaid hat xvj falten / Davon pauls schreibt.

(Rubric) *Von den volkomen.* Nun die volkomen menschē / die dann aus ungestümer / flammend' pegird vnd aus (224v) Nöttend' geschwind' lieb jres / liebsten gesponsen abwesen / nicht erleiden mügē wann / sy jm volkomēlich geainiget / sind vnd mügen in nicht be / schauen noch niessen jn klar / hait seiner glori darumb zu / trostung vnd auf haltung / jres lebens wellent si tagle / ich seiner

¹ This is the writer's own comment of what he himself has written, but the phrase itself is borrowed. It is repeated 254r.

² An adaptation of the opening passage of Suso's *Lectulus*?

gegen würtikait / nyessen jn maß vnd weis / Als jn müglich ist si girliczēt / glangend vnd pegerēt stā / ttiklich zum kuß seines mu / nds vnd wellent enpfintlich / kosten vnd jnnē werden wie / gar süß vnd wunnsam er / sej etc. Jtm söllichē menschē / zu gehört das jr gancz ge- (225r) müt cristo Jhū durch genad / vnd lieb volkomenlich ein ge / leibt sej vnd jn den geistlichē / leib Cristj ein geformet auch / gancz geformig sej'. A person at this stage is frequently to be seen in a state of trance,—'vnsinnigkait Vnd auch vergessen / hait sein selbs Vnd aller creatur' (227r) 'Dicz sey dir geschribn / kurtzleich Vnd vngenugsā- / leich vō vor schickung ze en / pfachen das frödenreich sacra / ment nach ausweysung drey / erlay wesen der menschn / Vnd wie ain yglicher mēsch / jn seinē stand oder wesen / sol geschickt Vnd berait sein.'

II. (CONTINUATION OF I: FREQUENT COMMUNION). Scribe 2.

Inc. 227r (Rubric) *Gemaine ler.* / Merck fur paß ain gemaine / ler Dier vnd allen menschn / zebehalten Vnd uber die / dan oft das mynreich sacra / ment wegeñ fruchtptäreich / ze enpfachen.

You and other people who wish to communicate frequently should follow the example of Christ and each day consider his sufferings and bitter death, 'da uō / ich anderhalb vil geschribn / han etc.' Not only should you not sin, but should possess seven virtues: 'das ist jn drein gotleichn vnd in vier angel-tugenden (gevt sein)' 227v. The first godly virtue is faith: (Rubric) *Von dem glaubn* (The articles of faith, 'xiii artickel sibn vō der gott / hait Vnd sibn vō der mensch / hait cristi' and the creed are cursorily paraphrased,—the references to Christ's passion in the latter are amplified in spite of the statement 'von dem hie nicht stat noch (229r) zeyt ist zeschreibn'; reference to the Trinity is followed by the lines 'O wunder groß O lieb / ste lieb O licht Vnd leben / O süß Vnd gutt O wun vn / fred O gott mein gott etc.¹ Mary and all the saints, and 'auch all ausser welt gottz frewnt auff / erd Vnd im fegfewer' participate in the sacrament. 'Jch / treib vil wort Vnd ist doch / vil zewenig / (4 lines) / es ist alles plind Vn eittel / was ich geschribn mag die / warhait offenbart sich selbs (231r) ob du mit fleiß suechn Vnd dich / behutten pist etc.' (Rubric) *Von der hoffnung* etc. Place your trust in Christ and hope that the benefits of the sacrament may accrue to you: 'ablass vnd v'gebung (231v) dein' sundt'; this is followed by a long list of benefits (punctuated by *Jtem, Jtem*) which cannot be adequately described, 'aber aus / disen ob geschribn vermanūgn / durch glaubn Vn hoffnūg / solt dw pilleich bewegt Vn / geraitzet werdñ ditz hoch / wirdig sacramēt off begier- / leich ze empfachen (233r). (Rubric) *Von der lieb, etc.*² . . . 'O susste vollustige

¹ Such rhapsodic asides are frequent in this piece, and are meant to provoke enthusiasm. They are possibly first lines of hymns? After reference to Mary, 'O gott wer kan oder mag etc.'

² This passage is quoted almost in its entirety as it shows the strength and weakness of the writer's work. It is probably modelled on some source, but undoubtedly contains phrases of the writer's own coining.

Vnd / wūsāme lieb fur war jn alln̄ / gottes wercken gnadn̄ gaben / Vnd erpar-
 mungen erscheinet / vns nicht so vber mässig wū- / reich Vnd vber wunderleich /
 lieb gottes sam jn disem lieb / sten Vnd wirdigsten sacramēt. (234r) da ist ain
 prinnender kalch offen / gottleich' lieb' . . . 'da ist der uberfließend vn /
 ersigklich prūn gottleich' / süs prinnender liebe an (2 ×) / auffhören stättigklich
 Vn / miltigklich quallen Vn flies / sen dar aus all andächtig gaist / saugen schöpfen
 Vnd genug / samleich trincken Auch jn lieb / Vnd vō lieb oft voltrunckn̄ / Vnd
 synlos werdñ, (in receiving which gift worthily one) jn gott ganz v'senckt / Vnd
 v'schlickt auch gantzleich / vergöttet wert. O gott mein / gott was ist das pin
 ich vil / leicht synlos wordñ oder tru / ncken O gott dw erkennest v- / gib mirs
 es ist hewt sūntag (236v) ¹ O lieb Vnd liebste lieb / Wer mag sich verpergen vor /
 deiner hitze O hercz herttes / hertz Vnd hertt' deñ / adamant das da jn ansech /
 ung diser hitzigisten hailig / isten lieb nicht gantz verfle- / usset noch zerschnil-
 tzet dw / pist todt Wañ du hast jn dir / chain empfindung des lebēs / Oder sag
 mir wie hast du / vnerhitzt beleibñ vor disen / größ gliuendñ pach offen Da /
 hatt gott zesament gehauft- / ent Vnd jn ain' beschliess- / üg ain suñ gemacht
 aller (137r) sein' volkömehait Vnd aller / sein' wunder werck die er / von an
 fanck piß her gewu- / rcket hatt auch ewigklich / wurcken wirrt Auch ist da /
 ain suñ Vnd beschliessung / aller tugent aller gnaden / aller gab Vnd aller
 gaistle- / ich' andacht frucht Vnd salig / kaittñ etc. Zu diser all' besli / essung
 jn disem liebsten / sacrament dar jn volköne / Vnd hochste lieb webeyset / ist
 Vnd dar jn der mensch / alle gütt' Vnd uolkömehait / enpfachñ Vnd besitzñ
 mag (237v) hatt er am creutz ze ende gesp / rochñ Cōsumatū est O mein / kind
 dise alle obgeschribne größ / leich Vnd kurzleich solt dw / mit fleiß kewñ Vnd
 ein tru- / ckñ Vnd behaltñ, for one cannot better fulfil the 'gepet vō der lieb'
 than in receiving the sacrament, and in being every day prepared to receive it.
 (239v he asks: 'O was sol ich sagñ mer dar / durch die lieb jn dir furpas / mer
 ein gefāmett werde' and reverts to the gift of the sacrament.) What mother has
 so loved her child as Christ loves his faithful?—(Further list of the blessings of
 the sacrament 'der da hin nympt Vnd uertreibt (241r) all dein kranckhait. . .
 Vnd dich behalt jn allem / gutt'). Consider moreover the holy wafer: 'Merck
 dicz himelprot / ist geknettñ vō gott dem / hailigñ gaist im pauch der / junck-
 frauñ marie gepachñ / im gliuendñ pachoffen vber / tröffender lieb am hailigñ
 (241r, word missing?) dar vñ das er vns lustig wurd / ze essen.' (Passage on
 the Trinity.) 244r 'Aus allen ob geschriben größ / leich Vnd kurzleich merckest
 (244v) du eigenklich Wie groß dein / schickung Vnd beraittüg sein / sol. . .
 Sprich aus / vollem hertzñ Vnd mit gantzñ / gemutt vere tu es deus meus / et ecce
 totus tuus O gott / dw pist warleich mein gott / Vnd nym war ich pin gantz /
 dein ich glaub ich hoff ich / lieb ich kañ nicht mer etc., 244v. (The four angelic
 virtues, *fursichtigkait*, *mässigkait*, *sterck*, *gerechtigkait* are treated very summarily.
 The foregoing is again briefly summarised). There are many kinds of prayers
 which may help one 'aber vil / wortt jn gepett lob ich nicht / wañ ain kurz
 gemutleiche ge / pett durch tringt all himel' (247v).

¹ This seems to me to be pure sensationalism.

III. DEVOTIONS AFTER COMMUNION.

248r (Rubric) *Wie mā sich haln sol nach d' / enpfachung dz sacrament.*
 'Nach enpfachung des hailign/ sacrament solt dw beharren jn / stätter danck-
 perkait' lest its benefits be lost: 'da mit / du das sacrament an sein' wu / rckung
 Vnd fruchtperkait / jn dir nicht jrrest'. You must then do as you think best,
 'Wan jnn soleichem mag ich / dir kain gesetz machn'. You should continue
 to shun worldly contacts: 'Vnd solt jn / deinem hertzē Also sprechenn / ich
 beraub Vnd enplöß mich / gentzleich aller jrdischait Vn / wid' spricht auch
 gantz allen (249v) aussern dingē die dān jm zeitt / geliebt od' begert mugn wer /
 den Wan mein lieb ihus ist / vber all reichthumb Vnd wir / digkeit Vnd er [ist] vb'
 all frewndt / schafft tröstüg Vnd wollust.'¹ The rest is a further list of
 the blessings of the sacrament punctuated alternately by would-be rhapsodic
 outbursts and 'secondly,' 'thirdly': 'O lieb vor der / sich niemāt v'pergn
 mag O (250v) gutthait die kain poshait ge / schwechē mag O klarheit /
 Vnd schonhait die nyemāt / erschätzē mag Vnd dar ab / sich sūn vnd mon
 verwun / dern'. . . 'Das dritt ist', etc. 'dw pist vber alle / sichtleiche hör-
 leiche köstenleich / berurleiche schmachkleiche / sūnleiche bewegleiche pildlei /
 che v'stentleiche etc.'² . . . (list continued). The writer still feels that he
 can criticise people who practice 'vil leiplich vbüg in vastn / petten wachn seuffzē
 wainē / Vnd and' vil sentimenten Vn / empfindleicher andacht' (254r) Expl. 255r
 halt / dich meiner geschriff vō an / fanck piss her so pist dw ge / sichertt
 allnthalbē etc.

¹ It is instructive to note that the most fundamental of all mystic experiences is here reduced to a mere formula.

² These are probably gleanings from mystic writers. The perfunctory etc. shows that these extravagant phrases were introduced only to produce a desired emotional reaction in the reader.