

## Richard of Caister, and his Metrical Prayer.

COMMUNICATED BY

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THE *Dictionary of National Biography* gives a short account of "Richard Caister, theologian," based mainly upon the writings of Blomefield and Tanner. It mentions that "a fifteenth-century manuscript in Merton Col. Library (Oxford) still preserves a metrical prayer in English verse composed by 'Master Richard Castre.' This composition is followed by another English poem entitled 'Psalterium Fraternalæ Caritatis,' perhaps by the same author."

Nine other MS. versions of the same devotion, either in whole or part, have now come to light, four of which have been printed in recent years. It was also one of the first non-liturgical prayers published in English in the early days of the Reformation.

These evidences of the early popularity of this prayer, and of the value set upon its use, seem to render it desirable to collect together into one publication all that has come down to us from the past concerning the

pious writer himself, and concerning the composition which seems to be the sole remaining evidence of his literary activity and devotional temper.

The publication, side by side, of the various extant versions of the hymn may serve two useful purposes: first, it may supply the expert student of languages with convenient material for comparison; secondly, it may serve the casual archæological reader, who is not an expert, with a handy means of getting a glimpse into the Middle English period in the development of the national language.

And if the filial enthusiasm of a twentieth-century Vicar of St. Stephen's, Norwich, lead him to overtax the patience of the readers with details too many or too minute concerning his predecessor of the fifteenth century, let him plead for their indulgence. He has divided his article into paragraphs and subdivisions; and the experienced reader will easily discover which it may be to his interest to read, and which to skip.

#### I.—BIOGRAPHY OF THE WRITER.

The materials may be collected under two main heads:  
i.—Original documents. ii.—Printed descriptions.

##### i.—ORIGINAL DOCUMENTS.

(1) *Ordination*.—(Bodleian Library, Laud MS. [E. 54] 723, fol. lxb):—

“Titulus.—Primo die Mensis Octobris Anno domini Millesimo ccc<sup>mo</sup> octogesimo quinto concessus fuit titulus Ric. Castr. Norwic. dioc. primam tonsuram habenti ad omnes sacros ordines.”

This is an extract from the Register, or as we might say Roll-book, of Merton Abbey. It seems to imply that the young Richard had migrated from his old

home at Caister, and entered the Monastery at Merton in Surrey, with a view to being ordained. There in 1385, having already been admitted to the "first tonsure," he was given a title for admission to the priesthood.

(2) *Institution.*—From 1385 to 1397 there is a gap in the available evidence. It is possible that during this period he was one of the regular Benedictine clergy of the Norwich Cathedral Priory. In any case, in the latter year he was presented by the Prior and Convent to the Vicarage of Sedgeford, near King's Lynn. After spending five years there, he was transferred to the Vicarage of St. Stephen's, Norwich. A transcript from the Diocesan Institution-book preserves the quaint terms then in use. (Reg. vi., f. 280):—

"Vicaria Sti Stephani in Norwico.—Eodem die [20] mensis Maij Anno et loco predictis [1402] apud Norwicū dominus Ricardus Castre presbyter institutus fuit canonicè per dictum patrem in vicaria ecclesie parochialis Sancti Stephani in Norwico vacante, ad presentationem prioris et conventus ecclesie cathedralis sanctae Trinitatis Norwicensis, verorum ejusdem vicarie patronorum. Recepto ab eo juramento de corporali residentia in dicta vicaria sua facienda, secundum formam constitutionum dominorum Otthonis et Ottoboni quondam apostolice sedi in Anglia legatorum in hac parte editarum."

(3) *Metrical Prayer.*—This composition is the only remaining contemporary document which has come down to us from the period of his ministry. The simplicity, humility, and faith which it displays picture to us a man who might well have been the original of Chaucer's *Poor Parson of a Town*, had he lived but a very few years earlier.

Ten versions, transcribed from extant MSS., are printed side by side in insets with this paper. Professor Skeat

has been so kind as to look through them, and to draw up a "normalised" version, representing the probable original, on the supposition that none of the existing MSS. is the author's autograph. He has also appended a valuable series of notes.

NORMALISED TEXT: DRAWN OUT BY  
PROFESSOR W. W. SKEAT.

CHIEFLY FROM TRINITY MS. AND LAMBETH MS.

PART I.

1. Iesu, lord, þat madest me,  
And wip þy blisful blood hast bouȝt,  
Forȝeue þat I have greued þee  
In word, in werk, in wille, and þouȝt. [4]
2. Iesu, in whom is al my trust,  
That deyed upon the rodë tree,  
Wipdraw my herte from fleischly lust,  
And from al worldly vaniteé. [8]
3. Iesu, for þi woundes smertë  
Of feet, of side, of hondës two,  
Thou make me meek and low of hertë,  
And þee to loue, as I schuld do. [12]
4. Iesu, for þi bitter woundë  
That wentë to þin hertë rotë,  
For sinne, þt haþ myn hertë boundë,  
Thy blessed blood mot be my botë. [16]
5. And Iesu Crist, to þee I callë,  
As þou art fader, ful of miȝt,  
Thou keep me clene þat I ne fallë  
In fleischly sinne, as I haue tiȝt. [20]
6. Iesu, graunt me myn asking,  
Paciencie in my disesë,  
That I ne makë no grucching,  
In whiche I schuldë þee displesë. [24]

7. Iesu, þat art heuenē king.  
 Soopfast god and man also,  
 [Thou] graunt me grace of gode ending  
 And hem þat I am holden to. [28]
8. Iesu, for þi doleful tērēs  
 That þou grettest, al for my gilt,  
 Thou here, and speed my pore preyérēs,  
 And spare me, þat I be not spilt. [32]

PART II.

“Psalterium caritatis fraternæ.”

1. Iesu, for hem I þee bisechē  
 That wrappen þee in ony wisē,  
 Wiphold fro hem þin hond of wrechē  
 And lete hem lyue in þy seruisē. [36]
2. Iesu, ioyful for to seen  
 Unto þy seyntes euerychoon,  
 Thou comfort hem þat careful been,  
 And help hem þat ben woo-bigoon. [40]
3. Iesu, gyde hem þat ben godē,  
 Amende hem þat han greued þee,  
 And sende hem fruytes of erþely fodē  
 As ech man nedep in his degree. [44]
4. Iesu, þat art, wiþ-ouen lees,  
 Almighty god in trinité,  
 Thou cese pese werres, and sende us pees,  
 Wiþ lasting loue and charité. [48]
5. Iesu, þat art þe goostly stoon  
 And ground of holy chirche in erdē,  
 Thou bring þy foldes flok in oon,  
 And reule hem rightly wiþ oon herdē. [52]
6. Iesu, for þy blisful blood  
 Thou bring þo soulēs into blissē  
 For whom I haue had any good,  
 And spare hem þat haue don amissē. [56]

## Line

2. *Blisful* is best.
4. MS. Trin. is best.
10. MS. Trin. is best.
11. Insert *þou* (Trin.).
16. *Blisful* (not *blessed*) is probably better. (See line 2).
18. *Fader* is wanted, for alliteration. (See Trin.).
19. *Neuer* (Trin.) is an obvious error for *ne*; it is unusual and clogs the line.
20. Not *hiȝt* (promised), but *tiȝt* (intended).
21. *Myn asking* seems right. The Trin. MS. has not enough syllables. All the other MSS. have it.
22. *Perfit* is a wrongful addition, and makes the line too long.
23. *Grueching* is a good word. But we must insert *ne*, accidentally omitted in Trinity. *Ne* is required both for grammar and metre.
25. *Is* is Northumbrian. Read *art*. *Our* (Lambeth) is not elsewhere, and is needless. *Heuenē* (pronounced hev'ne) is right grammar; genitive.
27. *Graunt* (not *ȝeue*) is the regular phrase. Trin. omits *gode*; but it is required for metre, and gives a good alliteration.
28. *Hem* better than *alle*; it alliterates with *holden*.
30. Read *grettest*; for the alliteration (Harl. MS.)
32. *Þat* is wanted.
35. *Wreche*; *i.e.*, vengeance.
37. Read *iouful*, for the alliteration.
41. Read *gyde* (not *kepe*), for the alliteration.
42. *Amenāe* (not *mendē*) is the old form.
49. *Stoon*; *i.e.*, rock—"spiritual rock."
50. *Grounā*, foundation; necessary for both alliteration and sense, but only in two MSS.
51. Wrong in most of the MSS. It means: "Do thou bring the sheep of thy fold into one (fold)."
52. *With oon herāe*, "by means of one shepherd; *i.e.*, Thyself. The form *erāe* means, literally, "dwelling-place," but is often used to mean "earth," though it is really a different word.
54. *Tho*, those; in five MSS.
55. "On whose account I have received any property."

(4) *Wills*.—The remaining MS. evidence consists of Caister's own will, with items from several later wills which refer to him.

(a) *Will of Richard Caister*. (Reg. viii., f. 135):—

“Testamentum Vicarij Sti Stephani in Norwico.—In Dei nomine Amen. Ego Ricardus Castre, perpetuus vicarius ecclesie Sti Stephani in Norwico in bona memoria mea condo testamentum meum apud Norwicum 27 die mensis Marcij, a.d. mccccxx, in hunc modum :

“In primis commendo animam meam Deo omnipotenti, beatæ Mariæ virgini, et omnibus sanctis : et corpus meum ad sepeliendum in cancello Sti Stephani supradicti.

“Item lego ad emenda duo antiphonaria ad servienda Deo in dicta ecclesia in divinis x li. [£10]. Item, ex quo bona ecclesie secundum canones sunt bona pauperum, omnia cetera bona mea pro majori parte lego pauperibus, sic quod pauperes parochie mee preferantur. Residuum vere omnium bonorum meorum do et lego in manus executorum meorum, ut ipsi disponant et ordinent pro me prout melius viderint Deo complacere et anime mee prodesse. Hujus antedicti testamenti mei executores meos dominum Johannem Barsham Rectorem Sti Michaelie in Coslane, dominum Henricum Brisslee capellanum, et dominum Johannem Riche, capellanum, eligo et constituo.”

An antiphonary was a choir-book containing all the music for the choral parts of the daily services, or “Hours,” as sung by those assisting the chief minister who officiated. It did not include the music for the Mass. Evidently, the “good Vicar” loved his church music and loved his poor.

(b) Extract from *Will of John Falbek*. (Reg. Brusyard, f. 124), 1458:—

“..... Item lego cuidam fideli homini aliam summam pecunie secundum discretionem executorum meorum solvendam ad peregrinandum usque ad ecclesiam Sti Stephani de Norwycho.”

(c) Extract from *Will of John Leystoft*, Vicar of St. Stephen's, 1457—1461. (Reg. Brusyard, f. 272b):—

“ . . . . . Lego animam meam omnipotenti . . Dei, beate ejus genetrici ac perpetue virgini Marie, Beato Stephano sacri recordationis, Ricardo de Castero, et omnibus sanctis.”

With this testimony to the repute in which our “Saint” was held within half a century of his death, we leave the evidences to be derived from his own time and century.

ii.—PRINTED DESCRIPTIONS OF RICHARD OF CAISTER.

(1) The earliest printed account of our author seems to be that given by *John Bale* (born 1495; died 1563) in his *Illustrium Majoris Britannie Scriptorum Summarium*, Ipswich, 1548. He seems to have visited the chief libraries and bookshops of London, Norwich, and elsewhere, noting down the names of authors and their works. It was in the time following the great destruction of church and monastic properties; and, strong Protestant though he was, he lamented grievously the loss of so many documents of irreplaceable value. His account of his visit to Norwich is worth transcribing, as an introduction to what he wrote about the man who had been vicar of one of the city churches, rather more than a century before, and of whom the story and the reputation would, no doubt, be still loyally kept up.

“I have bene also at Norwyche, our seconde cytie of name, and there all the library monumentes, are turned to the use of their grossers, candelmakers, sope sellers, and other worldly occupyers. . . . . As much have I saved both there and in certen other places of Northfolke and Southfolke concerning the authors names and titles of their works, as I could.” [See Preface to Bale's *Index Brit. Scriptorum*, edited by R. Lane Poole and Miss Bateson, p. xx.]



Here then follows what he had been able to save concerning Richard of Caister:—

“Richard Caistre, LXII.

“Ricardus Castre, ex Nordovolgie comitatu, et prope Nordovicum ipsum oriundus, homo per suam aetatem eruditus ac pius, ad Stephanicq; fanum in ea urbe vicarius cognomine Bonus, vitam apostolicam et innocentem in magna spiritus sui simplicitate duxit. Miranda narrantur de homine isto, sed multa sunt omni veritate vacua. Fuit tamen insigni sanctitate ac prophetico spiritu clarus: Vuiclevisticae doctrinae (potius Christianae) impense, sed tacito favebat, propter metum Papistarum, eorum in aliis expertus tyrannidem. Clericorum impudicos mores et exempla foedissima, modesta correptione in concionibus deflebat, cum alias non posset curare. Multaq; alia pietatis antigrapha praestitit pius homo, atq; inter caetera in patrio sermone scripsit Summam summarum:

“*De decem preceptis.* Lib. 1.

“*De octo beatitudinibus.* Hom. 1.

“*Inter magistrum et servum.* Hom. 1.

“*Inter filium et patrem.* Hom. 1.

“*Inter virum et uxorem.* Hom. 1.

“*De charitate fraterna.* Hom. 1.

“*Ex divo Bernardo.* Hom. plures.

“*Praeter alias Homelias ac meditationes, quas edidit multas.*

“Obiit demum Nordouici, 4 calendas Aprilis, anno salutiferi partus 1420, ad Stephani fanum, in ipso templo adyto sepultus, non sine sanctitatis opinione, sub Henrico quinto.”

(2) We next come to *John Pits* (born 1560; died 1616), a Roman Catholic antiquary, who wrote an account of English writers, with a bias as strongly on his own ecclesiastical side as Bale's had been against it. Neither he, however, nor Bale, seem to have met with the metrical prayer with which we are concerned. The fresh particulars as to the parochial life and preaching of its writer are very striking. [Pitseus, *De Illustribus Angliæ Scriptoribus*, Paris, 1619, p. 600]

"1420.—(773.) Richardus Caistrius, natione Anglus, patria Norfolcensis, non longè ab ipsa civitate Norwico oriundus, in Ecclesia S. Stephani intra civitatem Vicarius. Vir simplex et rectus, & plus quàm mediocriter eruditus. In suis concionibus solebat hominum vitia non tam acrimonia verborum redarguere, quàm lacrymis compassionis deflere. Omnesque hortabatur, ut peccatum fugientes animarum suarum misererentur. Cum imperita multitudine libenter familiares miscuit sermones, et ad pia colloquia turbis se ingerebat. Simpliciores quosque tanquam sui simillimos, maximè diligebat, talium dicitans esse regnum coelorum. Vulgò cognominatus est Bonus. Prophetiæ spiritum dicitur habuisse, et tum in vita, tum post mortem multis miraculis claruisse. Ego suspicor eundem esse, quem alii vocant Robertum Castre vel Castrum, et ferunt quædam ejus opera Anglicè conscripta diù custodita fuisse, et forsàn adhuc esse Oxonii in Collegio Mertonensi. Scripsit Caistrius pleraque Anglico Sermone, quorum tamen titulos omnes Latinè ponam.

"*Summam Summarum de decem preceptis.* Librum unum.

"*De octo beatitudinibus.* Librum unum.

"*De charitate fraterna.* Homiliam.

"*Meditationes ex D. Bernardo.* Librum unum.

"*Inter maritum et uxorem.* Homiliam.

"*Inter patrem et filium.* Homiliam.

"*Inter Dominum et famulum.* Homiliam.

"Et ejusmodi alia non pauca. Penè omnia spiritualia. Norwici tandem mortuus, et in Ecclesia præfata sepultus es quarto Calendas Aprilis, anno postquàm Verbum caro factum est 1420, dum Anglici regni solium teneret Henricus quintus."

(3) *Thomas Tanner* (born 1674; died 1735), at one time Chancellor of Norwich Diocese, and a great collector, in every sense, of MS. materials for Church history, was able to add various details to the accounts of his predecessors. He discovered both the Register of Merton Priory at the Bodleian, and also the MS. of the Metrical Prayer at Merton College. [*Bibliotheca Britannico-Hibernica*, 1748, p. 145.]

The paradysse of the soule. Fo. c. lxxij  
 thy gloriouse ymage. And so with al my loue and  
 hart graunt me grace to loue the and my cristen ney  
 bor for the and thus to dred the i thy hpe power and  
 magesty that I neuer offend finally more agaynst  
 the for velt nor for wo or disirelle that way sal to me  
**C** A deuout thort prayer to Iesu.



**I**esu lord that madest me.  
 And with thy blessed blood  
 hast me bought. Forgiue that I ha  
 ue greued the. With word and will  
 and also with thought. Iesu i who  
 me is al my trust. That dyedest vp  
 vpon the rood tre. With draw me fro  
 sillthy lust. And from alworldly va  
 nite. Iesu with thy wordis smert.

On thy feet and hondis two. Mak me meek & low of  
 hart. And the to loue as I shold do. Iesu for that  
 bytter wound: That went vnto thy hart root. For sin  
 that hath myn hart bound; Thy blood therto be my  
 boote Iesu crist vnto the I call. That art god full of  
 myght. Iiep me cleue that I do not fal in dedly syn  
 both day and nyght.

**C** A deuote prayer for to auoyd the daun  
 gers of thys myserable lyffis that  
 dably sal to vs.

**O** my spetvall and most gratyous lord Iesu my  
 hart lord is in maner confounded for sorowe &  
 dolor by cause I haue ben so ingrat and vnkynde  
 A. iiij agaynst

“CAISTRE [RICHARDUS] prope Norwicum natus.

“A. 1385, Octob. 1, concessus fuit titulus Ricardo Caster Norwic. dioec. primam tonsuram habenti ad omnes sacros ordines.’<sup>1</sup> Ita *Reg. Merton priorat. bibl. E. 54.*

“A. 1402, 22 Maii, institutus fuit ad vicariam ecclesiæ S. Stephani Norwic. A pietate exemplari BONUS cognominatus. Scripsit *Summam Summarum de x preceptis*, lib. 1. *De octo beatitudinibus*, hom. 1. *Inter magistrum et servum*, hom. 1. *Inter filium et patrem*, hom. 1. *Inter virum et uxorem*, hom. 1. *Orationem*. Pr. ‘Jesu Lorde, that madest me,’ 24 vers. Anglic. MS., Merton P. i., 1, ad calcem libri *Psalterium caritatis fraternae*. Pr. ‘Jesu, for them I the beseeche,’ 24 vers. Ibid. *Ex divo Bernardo*, homil. plures. Obiit Norwici, 4 Cal. April, Anno 1420, et in ecclesia sua sepultus jacet. Bal. vii. 62.. Pits, p. 600.”

## II.—THE METRICAL PRAYER.

It remains to add some notes upon the MS. versions, as printed in parallel columns.

i.—The texts are printed on a uniform plan, in stanzas of four lines. It should, however, be noted that they are arranged in the originals on three different methods:—

(1) Trinity and Ashmolean are written in long lines, like blank verse.

(2) Lambeth is written straight on, as if it were prose. The Gough Primer follows it in this, as it does in other particulars. [See reproduction.]

(3) All the others use the four-line stanza, as here printed.

ii.—The verses are also so arranged as to be parallel to one another, the order in each version being indicated at the side by numbers in brackets, so as to show where it differs from the Lambeth copy, taken as a standard.

<sup>1</sup> Actual copy of “Laud MS. [E. 54] 723, fol. lx. dors.,” Bodleian.

## 1.—LAMBETH MS.

Lambeth MS., 853, fol. 28.

"Oratio Magistri Richardi de Caestre quam ipse posuit."

1.  
(1) Jhesu lord þat madest me  
And wip þi blessid blood hast bouȝt  
Forȝene þat I haue greued þee  
With worde, with wyl, & eek with þouȝt.
2.  
(2) Jhesu in whom is al my trust  
Þat deied upon þe roode tree  
Withdrawe myn herte from fleischli lust  
And from al wordli vanyte.
3.  
(3) Jhesu for þi woundis smerte  
On feet & on þin handis two  
Make me meeke & low of herte  
And þee to loue as I schulde do.
4.  
(4) Jhesu for þi bitter wounde  
Þat went to þin herte roote  
For synne þat haþ myn herte bounde  
Þi blessid bloode mote be my bote.
5.  
(5) And Jhesu crist to þee I calle  
Þat art god ful of myȝt  
Kepe me cleene, þat I ne falle  
In deedli synne ne þer be day ne nyȝt.
6.  
(6) Jhesu graunte me myne askinge  
Perfite pacience in my disece  
And neuer mote I do þat þing  
Þat schulde þee in ony wise displese.
7.  
(7) Jhesu þat art oure heuenli king  
Soþfast god & man also  
Ȝeue me grace of good endinge  
And hem þat I am holden unto.
8.  
(8) Jhesu for þe deedli teeris  
Þat þou scheeddist for my gilt  
Here & spede my prayers  
And spare me þat I be not spilt.

## 2.—STONYHURST MS.

Stonyhurst Coll. MS., B. xliiii., ff. 96b—97b.

"Oratio Magistri Ricardi Caestre quam ipse composuit."

1.  
(5) Jhesu, lord, þat madyst me  
& wyth þi blyssed blod me bouȝt.  
Forȝene me þat I haf greuyd þe  
Wyth wurd, worke, wyl and thouȝt.
2.  
(6) Jhesu in qwam is alle my trost  
Þat deyst upon þe rode-tre,  
Wythdrawe my hert fro fleschly lust,—  
From couertyse & from vanyte.
3.  
(2) Jhesu for þi wundys smerte  
Of þe feet & of þe handyn twoo,  
Make me meke & lawe of herte  
& þe to loue as I schuld doo.
4.  
(1) Jhesu for þi wurthy wounde  
That went to þin herte-rote,  
For synne þat hath my soule bounde,  
Lete þi blyssyd blod be my bote.
5.  
(7) Jhesu Cryst, to þe I calle  
Þat art fadyr ful of myȝth;  
Kepe me þat I ne falle  
In fleschly synne as I haue tyȝt.
- (6.)
7.  
(4) Jhesu þat art heuene kyng,  
Sothfast god & man also,  
Ȝeue me grace of good endyng,  
And hem alle þat I am holdyn to.
8.  
(3) Jhesu for þoo doolful teerys  
That þou weptyst for my gilt,  
Here and spede my preyerys  
And spare me þat I be not spylt.

## 3.—MERTON MS.

Merton Coll. Cod. MS., cciv., fol. 211.

"Oratio Magistri Ricardi Caestre quam ipse composuit."

1.  
(1) Jhesu lorde that madest me  
And with thi blessed blod has me boȝt  
fforyene yat I haue greued the  
With word with werk or thought.
- (2.)
3.  
(2) Jhesu for thi woundes smert  
On foote & on handes two  
Make me meke and low in hert  
And þee to loue als I schuld doo.
- (4.)
5.  
(3) Jhesu criste to the I call  
Þat ert fader god ful of myȝt  
Kepe me clene þat I ne fall  
In fleschly synne as I haue tyȝt.
6.  
(4) Jhesu graunt me myne asking  
Perfite paciens in my desese  
And neuer I mote do þat thyng  
Þat schuld þee in ony wise displese.
7.  
(5) Jhesu þat ert heuen kyng  
Sothfast god & man also,  
Ȝeue me grace of good endyng  
And hem þat I am holden to.
8.  
(6) Jhesu for thi doleful teris  
Þat þou gretyst for my gilt  
Here & spede my prayers  
And spare me þat I be not spilt.

## 4.—HARLEIAN MS.

Brit. Mus., MS. Harleian Charters, 58C, 14.

"Oratio venerabilis viri Richardi de Caestre quondam vicarius [sic] Sancti Steffani Norwyc. quam orationem ipse composuit."

1.  
(1) Jhesu lorde yat madest me  
And with yi blyssyd blode hast bouȝt  
fforyene yat I haue greuyd yee  
In worde werke and thought
- (2.)
3.  
(2) Jhesu for yi woundys smerte  
On fote and handys too  
Make me meke and lowe in hert  
And yee to loue as I schulde doo.
- (4.)
5.  
(3) Jhesu to yee I call  
As you art god full of myȝt  
Kepe me clene yat I ne fall  
In fleschly synn as I haue tyȝt.
6.  
(4) Jhesu grante me myn asking  
Perfite pacyonis in my desese  
And neuer I mot doo yat thyng  
Þat schulde yn onythyng dysplese.
7.  
(5) Jhesu yat art heuene kyng  
Sofast boþe god and man also  
Ȝeue me grace of endyng  
And hem þat I am beholdyn to.
8.  
(6) Jhesu for þoo dulful teris  
Þat þou gretyst for my gilt  
Here and spede my preyorys  
And spare yat I be not spylt.  
Pater noster Ave Maria.

## 5.—RAWLINSON MS.

Bodleian, Rawl. MS., Liturg. c. 3, fol. 123, 124.

"This prayer made ye gode vycary of Norwych Mastre Richard Caestre."

1.  
(1) Jhesu lorde that madest me  
& with thi precious blode has bought  
foryef yat I haue greued the  
in worde werke wyl and thought.
- (2.)
3.  
(2) Jhesu for thi woundes smerte  
of body fete and hondes too  
make me meke & lowe of herte  
and the to loue as I schulde doo.
- (4.)
5.  
(3) Jhesu crist to the I calle  
yat arte my god fader ful of myȝt  
kepe me clene yat I no fall  
in fleschly synne day ne nyȝt.
6.  
(4) Jhesu you graunte me myn asking  
perfite paciens in my dysese  
and never yat I mut do yat thyng  
yat schulde yee in any wise displese.
7.  
(5) Jhesu that arte heuen kyng  
sothfast god & man also  
gyfe me grace of gode endyng  
and al them yat I am holden too.
8.  
(6) Jhesu for thi doleful teris  
that you grettest for my gilt  
here & spede me in my prayers  
and spare me yat I be not spylte.

## 6.—ASHMOLEAN MS.

Bodleian, Ashmol. MS., 751, fol. 142a & b.  
(Written in long lines, as Trin. MS.)

"Do fauter of ihesu."

1.  
(1) Jhesu lord yat made me:  
& with yi bleffed blode has boght  
fforgyf yat I haue greued ye:  
with word werk wyl & thoght.
- (2.)
3.  
(2) Jhesu for yi wondes smert:  
of fete & of yi handes tuo  
make me meke & lawe of hert:  
& yo to loue as I schuld do.
- (4.)
5.  
(4) Jhesu crift to ye I call:  
yat art fader ful of myȝt  
kepe me clene yat I no fall:  
in fleschly synne als I haue higt.
6.  
(3) Jhesu graunte me yis thyng:  
paciens in my dyfese  
yat I make ne grucehyng:  
whyk yot (yat) schuld ye diffplefe.
7.  
(5) Jhesu yat ert heuen kyng:  
sothfast god & man also  
gyf me grace of gode endyng:  
& yayne yat I am holden to.
8.  
(6) Jhesu for yo dulful teres:  
yat you gret for my gilt  
here & spede my prayeris:  
& spare me yat I be not spylt.

## 7.—TRINITY MS.

Trin. Coll., Camb., MS., B. 14, 19, fol. 162b.

1.  
(1) Jhesu lord þat made me:  
& wip þi blisful blood hast bouȝt  
fforyue þat I haue greued þee:  
in word in werk in wille & þouȝt.
- (2.)
3.  
(2) Jhesu for þi woundis smert:  
of feet of side of hondis two  
þou make me meke & lowe of hert:  
& þee to loue as I schulde do.
- (4.)
5.  
(4) Jhesu crist to þee I calle:  
as þou art fadir ful of myȝt  
þou kepe me cleene þat I neuer falle:  
in no kynnes synne as I haue higt.
6.  
(3) Jhesu graunte me þis þing:  
pacience in my disece  
þat I make no grucehyng:  
in whiche I schulde þee displese.
7.  
(5) Jhesu þat is heuene kyng:  
soþfast god & man also  
þou graunt me grace of gode endyng:  
& alle þat I am biholden unto.
8.  
(6) Jhesu for þi doleful teeris:  
þat þou weptyst al for my gilt  
þou here & spede my pore praieris:  
& saue me lord I be not spilt.

## 8.—SIDNEY SUSSEX MS.

Sid. Suss. Coll., Camb., MS. 80 Δ 4, 18, fol. 120b-122a.

1.  
(1) Jhesu as thou madest me  
& with thi blessed blode hast me bouth  
fforyeue me that I haue greued the  
In word warke wyl and thouth.
- (2.)
3.  
(2) Jhesu for thi woundes smert  
In fote and hondes to  
Make me meke & low of hert  
The to loue as I schuld do.
- (4.)
5.  
(3) Jhesu lord to the I calle  
As thou art god ful of myȝth  
Ȝeue me grace that I ne falle  
In fle(s)hly synne as I haue tyth.
6.  
(4) Jhesu graunt me myn asking  
Perfite paciens in my disece  
That I may neuer to do that thyng  
In eni wyse schuld the displese.
7.  
(5) Jhesu as thou art heuen kyng  
Stedfast god & man also  
Graunt me grace of gode endyng  
And hem that I am beholden to.
8.  
(6) Jhesu for thi delful terus  
That thou weptyst as for my gilt  
Here and spede my prayers  
And spare me that I be not spilt.

## 9.—ARUNDEL MS.

Brit. Mus., Arundel MS., 285, fol. 177.

"Ane orisoun to ye naim of Jhesu crist."

1.  
(1) Jhesu lord that maid me  
And with thy blissid blude hes bocht  
fforgif yat I haue grevit the  
In will in word in work in thocht.
- (2.)
3.  
(2) Jhesu for yi woundis smert  
On thy feet and handis two  
Mak me meik and law in hert  
The to lufe as I suld do.
- (4.)
5.  
(3) Jhesu crist to ye I call  
That art god full of myȝt  
Keip me cleyne yat I nocht fall  
In deidly syn be day or nyȝt.
6.  
(4) Jhesu grant me myn asking  
Perfite pacience in myne diseise  
And yat I neid do ye thyng  
Quhilk suld ye in ony wise displeise.
7.  
(5) Jhesu yat art heuinnis king  
Suthfast god and man also  
Gif me grace of gude ending  
And yam that I am haldin too.
8.  
(6) Jhesu for thy duifull teris  
That thou grāt for my gilt  
Heir and spede my prayeris  
And grant yat I be nocht spilt.

## 10.—"TALBOT HOURS" MS.

H. Yates Thompson, Esq., "Talbot Hours" MS.,  
No. 83, fol. 133b.

1.  
(1) Jhesu lorde that madest me  
And with thy blessed blode hast bought  
fforgyne me that I haue greved the  
In worde in werke in wyth in thought.
- (2.)
3.  
(2) Jhesu for thy woundes smert  
Yn hert on fete on hands two  
Make me meke & lowe of hert  
And the to loue as I schulde do.
- (4.)
5.  
(3) Jhesu lorde to the I calle  
That art fader of might  
Kepe me clene that I ne falle  
In dedely synne day ne nyȝt.
- (6.)
7.  
(4) Jhesu graunt me myne asking  
Perfite pacience in my disease  
And I neuer do that thyng  
That shulde the in any wise displease.
- (5.)
8.  
(6) Jhesu for thy douifull teeres  
That thou weptest with my guylt  
Here & spede my prayeres  
And spare me that I be not spilt.

iii.—The following is a list of the MSS., as at present arranged and annotated:—

1.—*Lambeth MS.*, 853, p. 28. (See Dr. Furnivall's *Hymns to the Virgin and Christ*, E.E. Text Soc., o.s., 24, p. 15.)

2.—*Stonyhurst MS.*, B. xliii. ff. 96b, 97b. (See Prof. Hulme's *The Harrowing of Hell*, E.E. Text Soc., extra series, C., pp. xxxii.—xxxvii.)

3.—*Merton MS.*, Cod. MS. CCIV., f. 211. (See Coxe's *Catalogue of Oxford MSS.*, vol. i., Merton Section, p. 79.)

4.—*Harleian MS.*, Brit. Mus., Harl. Charters, 58C, 14. (See Brit. Mus. *Catalogue of Harley Charters*.)

5.—*Rawlinson MS.*, Rawl. Liturg., e. 3., f. 123. (See F. Madan's *Summary Catalogue of Western MSS. in the Bodleian*, vol. iii., p. 499.)

6.—*Ashmolean MS.*, 751, f. 142. (See W. H. Black's *Bodleian Catalogue of Ashmol. MSS.*)

7.—*Trinity MS.*, Trin. Coll. Camb., B. 14, 19, f. 162b. (See Dr. M. R. James' *Catal. of West. MSS. at Trin. Coll. Camb.*, p. 418.)

8.—*Sidney MS.*, Sid. Suss. Coll. Camb., 80 Δ 4, 18, f. 120b—122. (See Dr. James' *Catalogue of Sid. Suss. Coll. MSS.*, pp. 62—65.)

9.—*Arundel MS.*, 285, f. 177. (See *Catalogue of Arundel MSS.*, 1834, No. 285.)

10.—*Talbot Hours*. H. Yates Thompson's Collection, No. 83. (See *Catalogue* by Dr. James and the owner, 1902, pp. 218, 226, 232.)

iv.—The following notes upon the ten versions are arranged upon a uniform plan:—(a) A brief description is given of the nature of the MS. in which the version in question occurs; (b) Then a few memoranda are added, detailing any points of interest connected with it, with philological notes in some cases appended.

1.—*Lambeth MS.* (a) *Description*.—A dumpy quarto book, vellum, 233 leaves, containing a number of poems

and other pieces, by Lydgate and other authors; dated, by Dr. Furnivall, "about 1430 A.D."

(b) *Memoranda*.—This was the first version of the Prayer to be printed in recent years. Dr. Furnivall edited it amongst his *Hymns to the Virgin and Christ* (Early English Text Society, No. 24, 1867). It definitely gives the name of "Richardus de Castre" as the composer. It is curious that a seventeenth-century possessor of this volume, William Griffiths, A.M., formerly of Christ's College, Cambridge, who bought it in 1668, as he notes upon the fly-leaf, took our Richard to be the more celebrated Richard of HAMPOLE, in spite of the ascription of it to "Richardus de CASTRE." It is still more curious that the latest editor of *Richard Rolle, the Hermit of Hampole*, falls into the same error. (See No. 6.)

2.—*Stonyhurst MS.* (a) A small quarto ( $6\frac{1}{2}$  by  $4\frac{1}{2}$  ins.), vellum, 122 leaves, containing five different religious pieces, three of which are in prose and of considerable length, written in English; date probably about 1460.

(b) This MS. is here printed next to the Lambeth MS. because it is the only other MS. version which includes the two verses, marked 1a and 2a. The order of the verses will be seen to be more irregular than in any other version. Also this MS. omits the second half of the Prayer—the intercessory part—with the exception of the final verse. The volume also contains two well-known productions of the Middle Ages, "The Gospel of Nicodemus," and "The Charter of the Abbey of the Holy Ghost." The Stonyhurst version of our Prayer has been recently printed by Dr. W. H. Hulme, Professor in Western Reserve University, U.S.A., in his publication, *The Middle-English Harrowing of Hell and Gospel of Nicodemus* (E.E. Text Soc., extra series, C., 1907), where a full account of the contents of the whole volume may be found.

3.—*Merton MS.* (a) A large folio volume, vellum, 209 leaves, containing a number of separate theological treatises in Latin; dated by the copyist himself, 1446-9.

(b) Much human interest attaches to this copy. In the first place, it has the name of the transcriber on more than one page of the book, viz., John Gisburgh, Chaplain. Next, he begins the copying of the first treatise, "*Speculum humane vite*," with an inscription which all editors might well imitate: "*ad utilitatem legencium, videlicet incipiencium, proficiencium, et perfectorum*,"—"for the use of readers, whether beginning, proceeding (? proficients, as we might say), or perfected." Then he begins and ends this treatise with dates: he began it in 1446, and ended it "on the last day of January, 1449." Between two and three years over those 178 folios, written on both sides, with two columns to the page! He took immense pains over his manuscript; his capital letters are gloriously illuminated, with flourishings extending over the whole margins, and above and below the text. What patience and devotion such work required! Finally, on the last spare fly-leaf he illuminates Richard Caister's Prayer. Was he glad to drop for once into the mother-tongue? or may it be that it was not the last entry in the book, but that early in the course of his task he wrote out the Prayer, using the spare leaf at the end; and then daily used it to keep him up to his task? Maybe, he found the work long, and it brought dis-ease, or irksomeness, with it: then he would use his prayer with the more keenness:—

"Jesu, grant me myne askyng,  
Perfite paciens in my desese."

It should also be noticed how he entitles the second half of the Prayer, "*Psalterium caritatis fraternæ*," or as the Ashmolean MS. translates it, "The Psalter of



**D**ante magis hā dante  
quā ipse composuit

**J**hu lord that madeſt me  
And w<sup>th</sup> the bleſſed blod has me bore  
For venē if I have greved the  
For eard w<sup>th</sup> coert or thought  
Jhu for thi woundes ſweet  
On fore & on handes eed  
Make me wele and loce there  
And y<sup>e</sup> to lone, als I ſhuld do

**J**hu cryſte to the I call  
For ſide god ful of myght  
Kepe me here y<sup>e</sup> ne fall  
In fleſhly ſpyn as I have trye

**J**hu graunt me myne aſſuryn  
For ſite patients in my deſyre  
And ned I more do y<sup>e</sup> thynge  
Thynge y<sup>e</sup> in our caſe dyſpleſe

**J**hu y<sup>e</sup> ce henen byng  
Recheuſt god & man aſſe  
Yene me grace of god dymn  
and he y<sup>e</sup> am holden to

**J**hu for thi doleful teyrs  
For you weepſt for my gyle  
Here I praye my prayere  
And ſpate me y<sup>e</sup> be nozt ſpate

**Quarta parte**

**J**hu for hem y<sup>e</sup> beſeche  
That corath y<sup>e</sup> I our wiſe  
Wholde fro the yne hede of dante  
And let hem eide in thi ſuſt

**J**hu joyful for to ſee  
With thi ſervant any chone  
Efor all y<sup>e</sup> careful been  
And help hem y<sup>e</sup> ben coolewound

**J**hu kepe hem y<sup>e</sup> bene gode  
And wende he y<sup>e</sup> han greved y<sup>e</sup>  
And ſend frutes and cress ſave  
As othe man nedet thit deſyre

**J**hu y<sup>e</sup> ce conſourten lece  
Almyghty god in tennice  
Eceſe y<sup>e</sup> ce cece a ſend be pace  
With laſſyn lone & chaute

**J**hu y<sup>e</sup> ce y<sup>e</sup> noſtly ſpaw  
y<sup>e</sup> ce ce ce ce ce ce ce ce ce ce

From the ſoldes ſolt upon  
And rike hem eolone here  
Jhu for thi bleſſed blode  
For the ſoules in to the  
For eceome I have had any gode  
And ſpate hem y<sup>e</sup> you have in myne

**Explicit**

**T**he ceas a conuyn called be  
wente, which metyn eolone  
for in toward his paſſion and ſe  
trus for here anyrſte dand in  
a clothe to clenſe his face, which  
after he had corped hym w<sup>th</sup> a  
ned the ceves ſinne of his face  
which is called the ceve de ceve  
after this ſigne is made

**T**he beith mydile of ſaint Jek  
conſer his hole to this day at  
Glarke and export ſpecial remede  
both for ceemen laboryng in thilde  
And alſo ayenſt the ſenſes if y<sup>e</sup>  
patient be myde ce ſon of hem

**J. Gisburgh**

Charity," *i.e.*, of brotherly love. It is wholly intercessory, whereas the first half is concerned with personal needs.

4.—*Harleian MS.* This copy has two points of contact with its predecessor, though it would seem to be earlier in date: the heading is almost the same; and it has the same title for the second part.

In other respects it has its own points of living interest, perhaps more so than any other of the copies. It is not from a book at all. Mr. Walter Rye gave me the reference, "Harl. Charters, 58C, 14," and on my enquiring for it at the Museum, I found it to be written on the back of a parchment deed, transferring some properties in Rushmere and Mutford from Adam Woolryche of Henstead to John Herman, or Harman, of Rushmere, in the fourteenth year of Henry VI. (1435).

Apparently, John Harman (or was it Robert, whose name is signed at the end of the copy?) had heard of this Prayer—perhaps when in Norwich on business—and had sought about for some means of taking it home. Searching his pockets, he had found this deed, written only on one side. That would do! So he sat down, and took down the words, spelling them in his own peculiar way, and carried the document henceforth about with him. It is so rubbed at the folds, from constant use, that it was almost impossible to decipher it. Mr. J. P. Gilson afterwards filled in some blanks for me.

It should also be noticed how Robert Harman said his Paternoster and Ave Maria at the end of each of the two sections of the Prayer. (*See also the Talbot MS.*)

5.—*Rawlinson MS.* (*a*) An octavo volume ( $3\frac{3}{8}$  by  $5\frac{3}{4}$  ins.), vellum, 128 leaves; a Primer, or Book of Hours; Latin and English; first half of fifteenth century.

(*b*) This version is taken from another type of book. The first three versions were from miscellaneous collections

of extracts in prose and verse from various authors—the common-place books of the Middle Ages. The present version is from one of the *Horae*, or Books of the Hours of the Blessed Virgin. These contained two elements:—(1) A common frame-work of private prayers and devotions, on a systematic plan; and (2) a certain number of special devotions, inserted at the will of the individual writer or transcriber.

This particular book is described by Mr. F. Madan, in his *Summary Catalogue of Western MSS. in the Bodleian* (vol. iii., p. 499), as belonging to the first half of the fifteenth century. He adds: "This book would seem to be connected with the Eastern Counties." It contains 128 leaves, and our two Prayers occur on the 123rd and 124th leaves. Immediately before them are a number of prayers written by St. Bernard, preceded by the following rubric, which may serve to connote the type of religious feeling in the midst of which Richard of Caister lived:—"Saynte Bernarde made this prayer, and he that saythe hem devoutely every day he schal not be disseyned in his nede, and he schal not dye *withouten* housil and schrifte, nor his soule schal not come in helle *yat* day *withouten* dowte. nor he schal not be temptyd with no spirite if he say devouteli and be clene schryven. for the devel tolde saynt Bernarde thise same versis agayn his wyl. and thus thay begyn *with* names of oure lorde ihesu crist at the begynnyng of every verse folowyng" (fol. 120b and 121).

This Rawlinson MS. is the first on our list which contains the same title of the writer as is given by the early bibliographers, viz., "the Good Vicar." Whether the Vicar of St. Stephen's had in those days a right to the pre-eminent title "Vycare of Norwych," might perhaps be disputed by representatives of other parishes. The expression is, however, commended to their attention.

6.—*Ashmolean MS.* (a) It is—according to W. H. Black's *Catalogue of Ashmole MSS.*, 1845,—“a MS. closely written on 155 quarto leaves of thick paper, about the end of the fourteenth century.”

(b) This is another of the MS. common-place books of the Middle Ages, and contains forty-five devotional pieces, in prose and verse, written in one hand. It is in a West Midland dialect, but agrees very closely in its text with the Trinity MS., which is East Anglian in its origin. It may well be that these two come nearest of all to the original text written by the Good Vicar. It is interesting to note that in this case too our Metrical Prayer has been attributed, tentatively, to Richard Rolle of Hampole. In *Yorkshire Writers: Richard Rolle of Hampole and his followers* [Swan Sonnenschein, 1896], edited by C. Horstman, the writer includes the two “Psalters” among “Doubtful Works,” possibly by Rolle. On p. xlii. of the introduction to vol. ii., amongst “Minor pieces in MS. Ashm., 751 (West Midland dialect),” he notes as follows:—“2 short poems: þo sauter of Ihesu, and þo sauter of charyte, each of 12 vv. [rather, of 12 *long lines*], . . . fol. 142; (these pieces would suggest R. Rolle, if they were not intermixed with extracts from Joh. Maundvyle, fol. 48 and 142b).” I give the quotation for what it is worth. I am indebted to it for the reference it gave me to this interesting version. Note that two dots under a letter signify deletion, as “loufe” for “lufe.”

[*Memorandum on Dialect Indications, by Miss Rose Jeffries Peebles, Bryn Mawr College, Pa.*

The dialect of Ashmole MS. 751 is West Midland with strong Northern tendency.<sup>1</sup> Phonological indications:—

<sup>1</sup> Horstman, *Richard Rolle of Hampole*, vol. II., p. xlii., calls Ash. 751 West Midland.

O.E. *a* is retained, but becomes before *n*, *o* as in *mon*, line 18. O.E. *ā* wavers between *o* and *a*. It becomes *o* in *wobegone*, 32; *gostly*, 41; *ston*, 41; *holy*, 42; *one*, 44; and it is retained in *wham*, 47; *any*, 47. O.E. *ea* becomes *a* in *call*, 13; *fall*, 15; before *ld* it varies: *o* in *foldes*, 45; *holden*, 19; and *a* in *withhalld*, 29. O.E. *y* remains, *kyrke*, 41. O.E. *o* remains; before *nd* becomes *a*, *hande*, 29. O.E. *ō* remains, except in *gude*, 47. O.E. *c* becomes *k*, *kyrke*, 42; *ilke*, 36; *everilkon*, 30; *whyllk*, 12; *wreke*, 28; *beseke*, 25. O.E. *hw* becomes *wh*, *whyllk*, 12; *wham*, 47.

Inflectional indications:—Nouns form their plurals regularly in *-s*, *les*, 37; *-es*, *wondes*, 5; *teres*, 21, etc. Pronouns are: *payme*, *wham*, *whyllk*, *ilke*, *everilkon*. Infinitives are without final *n*, *se*, 29; *loufe*, 8; *do*, 8; *lif*, 28. The present participle ends in *and*, *lastand*, 40. The perfect participle keeps *-en*, *holden*, 20. The prefix *y* is not found. The third person singular of the indicative present ends in *-es*, *nedes*, 36.]

7.—*Trinity MS.* (a) A thick quarto ( $8\frac{1}{2}$  by  $5\frac{1}{2}$  ins.), vellum and paper, containing four separate MSS., bound up together in thick leather boards, with the arms of Archbishop Whitgift on both sides: "Of different dates in the fifteenth century" (Dr. James).

(b) The particular section of the book with which we are concerned is the first and longest. It contains four different treatises of medieval mysticism, beginning with Cardinal Bonaventura's "Stimulus Amoris, or the Prick of Love." They are all in English. At the end is the copy of Caister's Prayer, on one page, in long lines like the Ashmolean copy.

The word "Batman" at the foot is the signature of Archbishop Parker's domestic chaplain, Dr. Stephen Batman, or Bateman. He was employed by him to

## 1.—LAMBETH MS.

*Lambeth MS.*, 853, fol. 28.

9.  
(9) *Jhesu*, for þem I þee beseche  
That wrappen thee in ony wise,  
With-holde from hem þin hond of wreche,  
And lete hem lyue in þi seruice.
10.  
(10) *Jhesu*, moost counfort for to se  
Of þi seintis euerychone,  
Counfort hem þat careful been,  
And helpe hem þat ben woo bigoon.
11.  
(11) *Jhesu*, keepe hem that been goode,  
And amende hem þat han greued þee,  
And send hem fruytis of erþeli fode  
As ech man nedith in his degre.
12.  
(12) *Jhesu*, þat art with-uten lees  
Almyhti god in trynnye,  
Ceese þese werris, & sende us pees  
Wip lastinge loue & charitee.
13.  
(13) *Jhesu*, þat art þe goostli stoon  
Of al holi chirche in myddil erþe,  
Bringe þi fooldis & flockis in oon,  
And rule hem rigtli with oon herde.
14.  
(14) *Jhesu*, for þy blissidful blood,  
Bringe, if þou wolt, þo soulis to blis  
For whom I haue had ony good,  
And spare þat þei haue don a-mys.  
Amen.

## 2.—STONYHURST MS.

*Stonyhurst Coll. MS.*, B. xliiii., ff. 96b—97b.

- (8) *Jhesu*, for þi blyssed blode,  
Bryng þe sowlys into blysse  
Of qwom þat I haue ony goode,  
& spare hem þat haue doo amysse.  
Amen.

## 3.—MERTON MS.

*Merton Coll. Cod. MS.*, eciv., fol. 211.

## "Psalterium caritatis fraterne."

9.  
(7) *Jhesu* for hem I þee beseche  
That wrath þee in ony wyfe  
Withholde fro hem þine houde of wreche  
And lete hem ende in thi seruise.
10.  
(8) *Jhesu* ioyful for to seen  
With thi fayntes euerychone  
Comfort all þat careful been  
And help hem þat ben wobegone.
11.  
(9) *Jhesu* kepe hem þat bene goode  
And mende hem þat han greued þee  
And fend frutes and erthly fode  
As eche man nedeth in his degre.
12.  
(10) *Jhesu* þat ert withouten lees  
Almyghti god in trinite  
Ceese þese werris & send us pees  
With lastyng loue & charite.
13.  
(11) *Jhesu* þat ert þe goostly stoon  
Of all holy chirche þe heerde  
Bryng the fooldes folk in oon  
And rule hem with one hert.
14.  
(12) *Jhesu* for thi bleffed bloode  
Bryng the foules in to blys  
For whome I haue had any goode  
And spare hem þat þei haue don amys  
Explicit "J. Gifburgh."

## 4.—HARLEIAN MS.

*Brit. Mus., MS. Harleian Charters*, 58C, 14.

9.  
(7) *Jhesu* for hem þat I beseche  
That wrathyn yee in ony wyse  
Withholde from hem yi hande of wreche  
And lete hem leuyn in yi seruise.
10.  
(8) *Jhesu* ioyfull for to seen  
Of all yi seyntes euerychone  
Chomfort hem þat carfull ben  
And helpe hem þat ar woo begone.
11.  
(9) *Jhesu* kepe hem þat ben goode  
And mende hem þat han greuyd yee  
And sende men frutes of ertheli fode  
As eche man nedyth to hys degre.
12.  
(10) *Jhesu* yat you art wythowteyn lese  
Almyghti god in trynnye  
Ceese þese werris and send us pees  
Wyth lestyn loue and cheryte.
13.  
(11) *Jhesu* yat art ye gosly stone  
Of all holy cherche and erde  
Bryngge yi foldys floke in one  
And reule hem ryghtly with oon herde.
14.  
(12) *Jhesu* for yi blyssyd blode  
[line wanting]  
Of qwom I haue had ony goode  
And spare þat þei han done amysse. Amen.  
Pater noster aue maria, quoti Robt Harman.

## 5.—RAWLINSON MS.

*Bodleian, Rawl. MS., Liturg.* e. 3, fol. 123, 124.

9.  
(7) *Jhesu* for them I the beseche  
yat wrathen the in ony wyfe  
witholde from hem yi hande of wreche  
and lete hem lyfe in thi seruise.
10.  
(8) *Jhesu* ioyful for to seen  
of al thi fayntis euerychone  
thou comfode hem yat careful been  
and helpe hem yat be woo begone.
11.  
(9) *Jhesu* kepe hem that be gode  
& amende hem yat haue greuyd the  
& sende hem frutes of ertheli fode  
as yche man nedes in his degre.
12.  
(10) *Jhesu* that arte withouten lese  
almighty god in trinite  
thou sefe thise werris & sende us pefe  
with lastyng loue and charite.
13.  
(11) *Jhesu* that arte the goffeli ston  
of al holi chirche in erthe  
bryng yi foldis folke in to oon  
& rule hem ryght with oon herde.
14.  
(12) *Jhesu* for thy bliffed blode  
bryng al tho soulis in to yi bliffe  
al hem yat I haue had any gode  
& spare hem yat hathe doon amyffe.

## 6.—ASHMOLEAN MS.

*Bodleian, Ashmol. MS.*, 751, fol. 142a & b.

## "Do sauter of charyte."

9.  
(7) *Jhesu* for yaim I ye beseke:  
yat wrethed ye on any wyfe  
withald fro yaim yo hande of wreke:  
& let yaim lif in yi seruise.
10.  
(8) *Jhesu* joyful for to se:  
to yi fayntes euerychone  
Counfort yaim yat carefull be:  
& helpe yaim yat are wo begone.
11.  
(9) *Jhesu* kepe yaim yat are gode:  
& mende yaim yat greues ye  
And send men frutes of erthly fode:  
als ilke man nedes in his degre.
12.  
(10) *Jhesu* yat art withoutin les:  
almighty god in trinite  
Ceese yese wers & send us pefe:  
with lastand lufe & charite.
13.  
(11) *Jhesu* yat art yo gostly ston:  
& gronde of holy kyrke in erde  
Bryngge yo foldes of folke in one:  
& reuile yaim ryght with one herde.
14.  
(12) *Jhesu* for yi blyffulle blode:  
bringe yo faules in to blys  
for wham I haue had ony gode:  
& spare yat we haue done omysse.  
Amen.

## 7.—TRINITY MS.

*Trin. Coll., Camb., MS.*, B. 14, 19, fol. 162b.

9.  
(7) *Jhesu* for hem I þee bifeke:  
þat wrappiþ þee in ony wyfe  
wipholde fro hem þe hondis of wreke:  
& late hem lyue in þi seruise.
10.  
(8) *Jhesu* ioieful for to seen:  
unto þi seyntis euerychone  
þou comfort hem þat careful ben:  
& help hem þat ben woo bigoon.
11.  
(9) *Jhesu* gide hem þat ben good:  
& mende hem lord þat greuen þee  
and sende men fruyt of erþeli fode:  
as ech man nedith in his degre.
12.  
(10) *Jhesu* þat is wipouten lees:  
almyhti god in trinite  
þou ceesse þis werre & sende us pees:  
wip lastyng loue & charite.
13.  
(11) *Jhesu* þat is gooffli stoon:  
& ground of hooli chirche in erde:  
þou bryngge þese fooldis of folk in oon:  
& reuile hem rigt lord wip oon herde.
14.  
(12) *Jhesu* for þi blifful blood:  
þou bringe her soulis to þe bliffe  
and whom I haue had ony gode:  
& spare al criten þat doon amyffe.  
"Batman." (See Annotations.)

## 8.—SIDNEY SUSSEX MS.

*Sid. Suss. Coll., Camb., MS.*, 80 Δ 4, 18, fol. 120b-122a.

9.  
(7) *Jhesu* for tho I the beseche.  
That wrathyn the in eny wyse  
With hold fro hem thyn hond of wreche  
And lete hem leue in thy seruice.
10.  
(8) *Jhesu* ioyful for to seen  
Wyth thi seyntes euerychon  
Comfort hem that carful ben  
And help hem that beth wobegon.
11.  
(9) *Jhesu* kepe hem that beth gode  
forzeue hem that greuith the  
And send hem frute of erthly fode  
As every man nedyth in his degre.
12.  
(9) *Jhesu* as thow art withouten lese  
Almythti god in trinite  
Stent these warres & send us pese  
With lasting loue & charite.
13.  
(11) *Jhesu* as (thow) art gostely ston  
Of alle holy chirche in erthe  
Bryng thy flocke in to a fold on  
And reuile hem alle with on word.
14.  
(12) *Jhesu* for thi blessed blode  
Bryng the sowles in to blis  
That I haue had of eny gode  
And forzeue hem that han don amysse.  
Amen.

## 9.—ARUNDEL MS.

*Brit. Mus., Arundel MS.*, 285, fol. 177.

9.  
(7) *Jhesu* for yame I the beseik  
That wrathin the in ony wiss  
Withald fra yame thi hand of wreik  
And let yame leif in yi seruice.
10.  
(8) *Jhesu* joyfull for to se  
Off thy sanctis euerylkone  
Confort yame yat cairfull be  
And help yame yat be wobegone.
11.  
(9) *Jhesu* keip thame yat be gude  
And yame amende yat greuis yie  
And send us frute of erdly fude  
As us neidis in our degre.
12.  
(10) *Jhesu* that art without leiss  
Almychty god in trinite  
Ceiss all weris and send us peace  
With lesting lufe and charite.
13.  
(11) *Jhesu* that art ye gaistlie ston  
Off all haly kirk on erd  
Bring thy fled folk into one  
And reull yame rightly on erd.
14.  
(12) *Jhesu* for thy precius blude  
Bring ye saulis into bliss  
for quhom I haue had ony gud  
And forgif yame all thay miss.  
Amen.

[10.—"TALBOT HOURS."  
Part II. wanting.]

collect books, and asserted that he got together 6,700 volumes. The time was singularly opportune, after the dispersion of the great monastic collections, and the scandalous neglect of their value which followed. Some idea of the prices paid for them may be gathered from an inscription of Bateman's on the fly-leaf of this volume:—"This booke cost me 18<sup>d</sup> the yere a<sup>o</sup> 1578 the 4 october."

The second part of this MS. has been reproduced verbatim in my volume, *A Norwich Parish 500 Years Ago*, while the first part is there given in modern English.

8.—*Sidney MS.* (a) Quarto (9½ by 7 ins.), vellum, 130 leaves; a Book of Hours, much resembling the Rawlinson MS.; about the middle of the fifteenth century.

(b) The special interest of this MS. is that it seems to have been produced in the West of England, in the neighbourhood of Bristol (Dr. James' *Catalogue of Sid. Suss. Coll. MSS.*). It will be noticed that the dialect varies widely from that of any other copy here given. Note the use of "bouth" and "thouth" for bought and thought, "stent these warres," and the form "beth" in the phrase, "that beth wo begon," and "that beth gode."

This is one of the four MSS. which have already appeared in print, Dr. James having given it in his *Catalogue*, preceded by the words:—"The English hymn on f. 120b is so beautiful that it must be transcribed in full."

It is a far cry from Norwich to Bristol, but the next copy takes us farther still.

[The Sidney Sussex MS. is Southern, though some Northern forms are preserved. It would appear to be a Northern, or North Midland version rewritten by a Southern scribe. Phonological changes:—O.E. *ā* becomes

*o* in all cases except one, *eny*, line 47. O.E. *ea* becomes *a*; before *ld* it becomes *o*. O.E. *y* becomes *i*. Inflectional changes:—Nouns form their plurals in *es*, *us*, *terus*, 21. The verbs form the most important dialect indication; they are all Southern. Notice especially third person plurals, *beth*, 32, 33; *grewith*, 34.

A characteristic spelling in the Sidney Sussex MS. is the use of *th* for *ʒt*. Dr. Furnivall, commenting on this confusion, makes it characteristic of Capgrave.<sup>1</sup> Skeat considers it simply Anglo-French.<sup>2</sup> The *th* spelling is found in the *Norwich Gilds Reports*,<sup>3</sup> in the *Lynn Gilds*,<sup>4</sup> in the *Coventry Plays*,<sup>5</sup> in the Brome MS., *St. Patrick's Purgatory*, and the *Knight Sir Owen* (East Midland).<sup>6</sup> These, especially the Gild Reports of Norfolk, would tend to confirm Dr. Furnivall's opinion.<sup>7</sup> —R.J.P.]

9.—*Arundel MS.* (a) Small quarto (7½ by 6 ins.), paper, 226 leaves. "A collection of Scottish poetry and prose by various authors" (Brit. Mus. Catalogue, 1834); sixteenth century.

(b) Here is our East Anglian Prayer done into pure Scotch, showing more clearly than ever that in those days they cared nothing for verbal accuracy in reproduction, but that the spelling, and in many cases the wording as well, were adapted by the individual

<sup>1</sup> *Life of St. Katherine of Alexandria*, E.E.T.S., Orig. Ser. 100, p. xxv.

<sup>2</sup> Op. cit., p. xxix.

<sup>3</sup> E.E.T.S., Orig. Ser. 40; *lythe*, 43; *rythe*, 30, etc.

<sup>4</sup> Op. cit., *nythis*, 63; *nouthe*, 87.

<sup>5</sup> The glossary gives *syth*, *ryth*, *dyth* (dight), etc.

<sup>6</sup> *Englische Studien*, IX., p. 3, *myth*, *ryth*, etc.

<sup>7</sup> Miss Rickert, in note to *Emaré*, E.E.T.S., Ex. Ser. 99, p. x., n. 5, commenting on confusion of *t*, *d*, and *th*, says that such pronunciation is marked in Mid-Yorkshire. She refers to C. C. Robinson's *A Glossary of Words pertaining to Dialect of Mid-York* (Lond., 1876, pp. xiv., xviii)—a book I have not been able to examine.



transcriber, as seemed to him best, much in the same way as was done by many nineteenth-century hymn-book editors!

A further interest attaches to this MS. owing to its previous ownership. On the title page is the name "William Howard." This seems to have been none other than the famous "Belted Will" of Naworth Castle, Cumberland, who is so prominent in Sir Walter Scott's *Lay of the Last Minstrel*.

[As the Arundel MS. is Scottish and only a few of its vowels do not show consistent Northern forms, it will be perhaps better to notice these exceptions:—*ony*, lines 1, 26, 47; *wobegone*, 32; *one*, 43; *stone*, 41. Its consonants are all Northern. All dialect indications from inflection are Northern, except the third person plural, *wrathen*, 26.—R.J.P.]

10.—*Talbot Hours MS.* (a) A volume of curious format ( $10\frac{3}{4}$  by  $4\frac{1}{4}$  ins.), 135 leaves; a Book of Hours, written in France, 1424.

(b) This MS. is here printed last because it omits the second part of the Prayer. Otherwise, it is by no means the least interesting, by reason of its known historical associations. The Prayer Book, or "Horæ," in which it occurs bears the name of the *Talbot Hours*. It seems to have been written and illuminated in France for a wedding present in 1424 to John Talbot, the "Hotspur" of the French wars of the early fifteenth century, afterwards for his services created first Earl of Shrewsbury. For the same occasion a companion book was prepared for his bride, Margaret Beauchamp, much resembling its fellow. It has the same curious elongated form, being  $4\frac{1}{2}$  ins. broad by  $8\frac{3}{4}$  ins. long; the *Talbot Hours* has a length of  $10\frac{3}{4}$  ins. The object seems to have been to fit the books to go into the holsters of a riding-saddle, and to be carried upon travels or campaigns.

John Talbot was a great fighter, and Dr. James supposes that this volume of prayers was carried by him on the fatal occasion, when he was overwhelmed and slain by a band of Bretons, near Castillon, in 1453. Was it because of his love of fighting that he bade his scribe omit the second part, with its inconvenient petition, "Cease these wars, and send us peace,

With lasting love and charity"?

He seems to have made up for this defect by adding a Paternoster with each single verse of the first part. In any case it is a remarkable coincidence that both these volumes should have survived to our own day, and after many separate vicissitudes should both have been secured by the same collector of MSS., Mr. Henry Yates Thompson, the one in 1897, and the other in 1899.

[See "A descriptive catalogue of the second series of fifty MSS. (51—100) in the collection of Henry Yates Thompson."—*Camb. Univ. Press*, 1902.]

[The remaining versions considered, Trinity, Merton, Harleian, Rawlinson, Talbot Hours, Lambeth, Stonyhurst, Douce, are all East Midland for the most part, with strong Northern tendency. The Rawlinson shows slight West Midland character; the Harleian and Trinity each show one Southern form.

General phonological indications:—O.E. *ā* becomes *o* usually, *woo-begone*, *gostly*, *stone*, *holy*, etc. O.E. *ea* becomes *a*; before *ld* it becomes *o*, *foldys*, *withhold*, *beholdyn*. O.E. *y* becomes *i*, *Chirche*. O.E. *o* remains; *o* also before *nd*, *hondes*. O.E. *c* becomes *ch*, *chirche*, *eche*, *wreche*, *beseche*.

General inflectional indications:—Nouns form their plural in *es* (*is*), *lees*, *werris*, *woundes*, *foldis*, etc. The pronouns are: *hem*, *whome*, *eche*, *euerychone*. Infinitives vary in ending, *seen*, *loue*, *ende*. The present participles end in *ing*, *lasting*. The perfect participle keeps *n*,

*holden*. The prefix *y* is not found. The third person singular ends in *eth* (*ip*) *nedeth*. The third person plural ends in *-en*, *ben*, *greuen*.

Peculiarities:—Trinity shows preference for *i* spellings in noun and verb endings. In one case there is a Southern verb form, *wrappip*, line 26. The Merton MS. shows *handes* for usual Midland *hondes*. The Harleian shows *is*, *id* spellings, and *handys*, but also Southern *cherche*. The Rawlinson shows slight West Midland influence; *church*, and *nedes*, 36, third person singular. Talbot Hours gives Northern *hands*, 6; *any*, 16. The Lambeth gives preference to *i* spellings. It also has forms, *fleischli*, *eendynng*, *scheeddist*, *ameende*.<sup>1</sup> The Stonyhurst has decided Northern tendency, though clearly East Midland. Notice especially *quam*, and plurals in *yn*, *handyn*. The Douce gives in general no indication that the dialect is not Midland, but the spelling is peculiar—*wothy* (worthy), *mak*, *hart*, *dedly*. It also shows what is usually considered Kentish form in *kiep*.—R.J.P.]

Postscript.—The writer has to acknowledge much help, kindly and graciously given by many experts and students. Professor Skeat's especial kindness has already been acknowledged. The librarians, and others connected with the libraries referred to, have put every facility at the disposition of the enquirer. The Rev. H. J. White, of Merton, took much trouble in the matter, and also obtained the valuable assistance of Professor A. S. Napier. Dr. M. R. James, the late Rev. Edgar Hoskins, Canon Jessopp, Mr. Walter Rye, Dr. Bensly, and Mr. Leonard Bolingbroke, all showed their accustomed readiness to

<sup>1</sup> These spellings are those in general of the Lambeth MS. Note E.E.T.S., Old Ser. 24, p. 67, *freische*; p. 113, *fleischli*; p. 259, *beeste*; p. 284, *eendynge*; p. 143, *eende*.

put their stores of information and materials at the disposal of the investigator. At the last moment Professor Carleton F. Brown, of Bryn Mawr University, Pa, added some further information, and procured the careful notes upon the variations in dialect, drawn up by Miss Rose Jeffries Peebles. The present writer's best thanks are due to these, and to many unnamed helpers. He would be very grateful for any further information, either on other possible extant MSS. of the Prayer, or as to any copies of Richard of Caister's homilies and other prose productions, as referred to by the bibliographers quoted in the paper.

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