

MEDIEVAL ENGLISH SPIRITUALITY AS EXEMPLIFIED
IN THE LIVES AND TEACHINGS OF
SAINT AELRED OF RIEVAULX AND JULIAN OF NORWICH

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To Sister Maureen of the Sacred Heart
with affectionate gratitude

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	1
STATEMENT OF PURPOSE.....	11
Chapter I ASCETICAL AND MYSTICAL BACKGROUND.....	6
Chapter II THE MONK AND THE ANCHORESS.....	33
Chapter III THE TEACHING OF AELRED AND JULIAN ON CHARITY...	77
Chapter IV THE SPIRITUALITY OF AELRED AND JULIAN.....	108
CONCLUSION.....	136
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	140

ABSTRACT

Two medieval English spiritual writers who have only recently come under close scrutiny by historians are Saint Aelred of Rievaulx, a twelfth-century Cistercian monk, and Julian of Norwich, a fourteenth-century English anchoress. In this paper their lives and teachings are examined, compared and contrasted in order to show the influences which played upon them and the ways in which they manifested traits which have come to be associated especially with English spirituality. The first chapter deals with the basic question of their mysticism in the larger setting of western mysticism. This introduction is followed by a study of both lives by means of comparison and contrast. Details not previously assembled together in one article are used to sharpen the biographical picture of Aelred. The following chapter discusses their two approaches to the virtue of charity. The final chapter traces their spiritual teaching on man's relationship with God, salvation, and the "motherhood" of Christ.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The object of this paper is to examine two important developments in the medieval English Church by focussing on the lives of two persons who shared in them and benefitted from them. These two developments are the coming of the Cistercian monks to England and the growth of lay piety in the fourteenth century.

The arrival of the Cistercian monks in the twelfth century was a powerful impetus to Church reform in areas which had supported married clergy and had witnessed the election of bishops under dubious circumstances. This reform movement, on both the hierarchic and the monastic levels, reached its highest point during the lifetime of St. Aelred, Abbot of Rievaulx, regarded by his contemporaries as "the Bernard of the North". In the century which intervened between the two movements with which this paper is concerned, a completely new form of religious life-the mendicant orders-was to spring up and flourish on the Continent and in England. Their influence on the laity was one of the factors contributing to the rise of that phenomenon of late medieval England-the devout layman. The effects of both the preaching of the mendicants and lay piety may be seen in the life of Julian of Norwich, a fourteenth-century anchoress. Her life was shaped by the instruction of the wandering friars and her conduct was guided by St. Aelred's Regula Inclusarum and the thirteenth-century Ancrene Riwe.

The lives of these two persons provide opportunity

to study the development in doctrine and in mysticism which took place in England from the twelfth to the fourteenth century. There is also a chance to examine the institutions of monasticism and anacoritism as they affected the lives of Aelred and Julian. The only full-length biography of Aelred of Rievaulx is a Life written in 1845 by J. D. Dalgairns for John Henry Newman's series: Lives of the English Saints. There remained to be consulted two contemporary vitae, that of an anonymous author, which is printed before Aelred's works in the Patrologia Latina, and that of a contemporary, Walter Daniel, Aelred's secretary and sick-room attendant. The latter life has been admirably edited and translated by Sir Maurice Powicke. Serious secondary biographies are, then, non-existent, although French and English editors of Aelred's works have written a number of relatively short studies of his life and works. For this reason a chapter of the present work will survey the Abbot of Rievaulx's career and will indicate sources available for a biographical study. Moreover, no comprehensive study of Aelred's doctrine has yet been made, although there are a number of articles available on various aspects of his teaching.

The materials for a biographical study of Julian are almost non-existent; the details of her life have therefore to be inferred from her writings and what is known about the lives of other English anchoresses, as well as from the rules available. A critical edition of the longer version of her book, Revelations of Divine Love, is presently being

prepared for the Early English Text Society by Sister Anna Maria Reynolds. To the writer's knowledge, no attempt has yet been made to compare and contrast the lives and teachings of the two writers.

English spiritual writers have been chosen purposely in order to set out more clearly the peculiar flavour or tone of English spirituality. Although it may appear at first that English origin is the only characteristic common to the persons with whom this study is concerned, and that they are too widely separated in time, in profession and in temperament to bear comparison, closer examination reveals many common traits and concepts in their lives and in their writings. It is precisely the time gap between them which allows the assessment of development in English spirituality and of the results of the blending of Anglo-Saxon and Gallic influences upon religious thought. Aelred, living at the height of the Cistercian reform in England, is an example of the monastic vocation lived to its fullest. He benefits from a revolution in the approach to God wrought by Bernard of Clairvaux-an approach which openly used human affectivity as a means to union with God. Julian was also a beneficiary of the Bernardine heritage through the ministrations of the mendicant friars, who encouraged their followers-as Bernard did his monks-to strive for a personal, intimate union with God. In her life the results of both the monastic discipline and grass-roots religious enthusiasm are discernible.

In order to assess these changes in the religious

life of England, changes which had ramifications in all areas of living, it will be necessary to look at the relation of English mysticism to that of the Continent. A detailed comparison is, of course, beyond the scope of this paper, but a general survey of mysticism in which English mysticism can be compared with other forms will form an introduction to the thesis. The comparison of these two lives will, it is hoped, serve to illustrate the evolution of English spirituality and at the same time typify the individual tone of that spirituality.

With these ends in view, the sermons, ascetical and historical writings of Aelred have been consulted for dominant themes and biographical details. Both the long and the short versions of Julian's Revelations, the former in two translations, the latter in one, were used for quotation in this paper, while the four earliest extant manuscripts were consulted in microfilm.

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VITA

Linda Margaret Spear was born on July 23, 1940, in Winnipeg, Manitoba. She received her primary training in Queenston and River Heights Schools, and entered St. Mary's Academy in 1952, graduating in 1958. She attended St. Mary's College of the University of Manitoba, receiving the degree of Bachelor of Arts from the University of Manitoba in 1961. In the same year she entered the novitiate of the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary at Outremont, Quebec. Upon completing her novitiate training she taught in secondary private and parochial schools in Manitoba. During the time she also pursued studies leading to a Certificate in Education. After leaving the Sisters of the Holy Names in 1966, she took a pre-Master year in Medieval History at University of British Columbia. Upon her return to Manitoba in 1967, she obtained a teaching assistantship at the University of Manitoba. During the year 1967-68 she performed the duties of a teaching assistant and completed the studies required for a Master year in Medieval History. She was awarded the degree of Master of Arts by the University of Manitoba on October 24, 1968.

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CHAPTER I

ASCETICAL AND MYSTICAL BACKGROUND

Mysticism, the search for union with God, is a tendency to be found in most religions with a highly developed moral code. Men in all ages have desired and striven for this conscious, though obscure union, in Judaism, Christianity, Mohammedanism, Buddhism and Hinduism. The means used to reach this end have been similar—meditation, asceticism, and a general detachment from transient things. The focus of this paper will be on Christian mysticism in medieval England, as exemplified in the lives and teachings of a twelfth-century Cistercian monk, St. Aelred of Rievaulx, and a fourteenth-century anchoress, Dame Julian of Norwich.

The essence of any true mystical experience is a "oneing" of the human person with Absolute Reality, in such a way that the person knows, in a dark manner, that the union has taken place. The experience takes place in the depths of one's being, at the very root of the personality, and has a profound effect on the mystic's outlook and manner of life. One who has experienced this union with God is at once convinced of its reality, and at the same time unable, except in halting phrases, to communicate the experience to others. Consequently, some mystics have been suspected of unorthodoxy because, in attempting to describe their vision of Divine Reality to others, they use expressions which seem to undermine the teaching

of established religion, In many cases, there is no intention of contradicting accepted doctrine-the difficulties of the mystics in this respect simply reflect the limitations of human speech for the communication of certain realities.¹

Like any other human experience, mysticism is progressive, and human understanding of it grows with time.² Just as, in the study of Scripture, scholars have accumulated a body of knowledge which has resulted in a deeper understanding of it now than in New Testament times, so the cumulative experience of mysticism has given students of its history insights today which were not possible five or eight hundred years ago. The more examples of mystical experience that become available for study, the better the subject can be understood.

1. I Corinthians.

2. The following works were helpful for the background of the early part of this chapter:

On mysticism: Elmer O'Brien, Varieties of Mystical Experience, (New York; Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1964).

Evelyn Underhill, Mysticism, (New York: Meridian, 1960).

On the desert fathers: John Cassian, Conferences I, Vol. XI of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, 2nd. series, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Erdmans, 1964).

Maximus the Confessor, The Ascetical Life and Four Centuries on Charity, ed. Polycarp Sherwood, (Westminster, Md.: Newman, 1947).

Julius Pomerius, The Contemplative Life, trans. Sister M. Josephine Suelzer, (Westminster, Md.: Newman, 1947).

On the background from Augustine to the twelfth century: David Knowles, The English Mystical Tradition, (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1965), especially Chapters I and II.

There is, however, an inherent danger in looking back to the mysticism of the twelfth or fourteenth centuries from the vantage point of the twentieth. The danger is that of reading history backwards, of assuming attitudes or knowledge on the part of the early mystics which they simply did not have. It is one thing to use the terms of Teresian spirituality in describing the experiences of an Aelred or a Julian of Norwich so that one may grasp their meaning. It is quite another thing to attribute to them uncritically the ideas or attitudes of a Teresa of Avila. Mystics, certainly, have much in common, but there has been a development of the understanding of mystical experience and in the precision with which the mystics have described their experiences.

In the study of mysticism, it is necessary to differentiate between certain non-essential occurrences which are frequently mistaken for the reality itself. Such occurrences are often of a sensible nature, such as visions, locutions, levitations, or miracles worked on human beings or on the elements. They may be given by God for the personal sanctification of the individual, or, as in the vision of St. Peter, for the instruction and encouragement of all Christians.³ The Apostle John received a similar manifestation which he recorded in the Apocalypse.⁴

3. Acts X, 9-17

4. Apocalypse I, 19

The levitation of St. Thomas Aquinas was a visible manifestation of ecstasy in which the soul seems to go out of the body to God.⁵ Aelred of Rievaulx's experiences of the sweetness and peace of Sabbath rest seem to have been primarily for his own encouragement, although they may serve as an incentive to anyone who reads of them to seek after the same peace.⁶

In general, spiritual writers and the mystics themselves regard the external experiences described above as non-essential to union with God, and caution against any deliberate seeking of them. The reasons for reserve in dealing with such extraordinary manifestations are evident. Visions and kindred experiences may indeed be sent by God, but they may also emanate from the devil, or from the human psyche itself. The pages of history are strewn with the remains of sincere but deluded visionaries whose revelations were, to say the least, of a highly individualistic and unorthodox nature. Walter Daniel, the biographer of Aelred of Rievaulx, is careful to point

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5. Les Petits Bollandistes Vies des Saints, 17 vols., ed. Paul Guérin, (Paris: Bloud et Baral, 1878), III, p.251. Cited Bollandistes hereafter.
 6. Aelred of Rievaulx, 'Speculum Caritatis,' Patrologiae Cursus Completus, Series Latina, 221 vols., ed. J. P. Migne, (Paris: Garnier Fratres, 1842-1890), CXCIV, col. 521. Cited PL., hereafter.

out that the miracles of themselves are neither guarantees nor causes of Aelred's sanctity.⁷ Similarly, Julian of Norwich takes a matter-of-fact view of her sixteen revelations, remarking that of themselves they do not make her good.⁸ External manifestations, then, are neither necessary to union with God, nor essential hallmarks of sanctity.

It has already been said that mysticism is a cumulative human experience. In order to understand the mystics of the twelfth and fourteenth centuries, it will be necessary to look briefly at the mystical traditions of the Eastern and Western Churches, insofar as they influence the teachings of Aelred of Rievaulx and Julian of Norwich. The New Testament itself contains evidence of both external manifestations of mystical union and of mystical union itself. Peter, James and John were granted a direct experience of the glorified Christ on Mount Tabor.⁹ The ecstasy which Paul describes in II Corinthians would appear to be a very exalted form of mystical union.¹⁰ Between Apostolic times and the beginning of monasticism there is relatively little said about mystical prayer or extraordinary supernatural manifestations. The Egyptian

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7. Walter Daniel, Vita Aelredi; trans. Maurice Powicke, (London: Nelson, 1950), p.31. cited Vit hereafter.
 8. Julian of Norwich, A Shewing of God's Love, ed. and Trans. Sister Anna Maria Reynolds. (London: Longmans Green, 1958), pp. 15-16. "Because of the shewing I am not good, but only if I love God the better, and so may, and so should, each one do who sees it and hears it with good will and true intent." Cited Shewings hereafter.
 9. Luke IX, 29-36.
 10. Corinthians XII, 1-4.

and Syrian monks tend to be more explicit about the means to be taken to subdue the body and to bring it under subjection than they are about their experiences of God. Contemplation is hinted at as an outcome of the desert ascesis, but for the most part the Desert Fathers are reticent in describing their intimacies with the Deity. The fruit of self-abnegation is seen as a profound peace, which is sometimes, but not always, accompanied by a direct experience of God.¹¹ Maximus the Confessor, an early desert writer, does attempt to integrate the ascetical and the mystical life.¹² Descriptions of the lives and experiences of these Desert Fathers were set down by a Western monk, John Cassian, and it is in these Conferences that detailed examples of contemplative prayer are recorded.¹³

Half a century later, a bishop died in a city beleaguered by the Vandals. The city was Hippo, the bishop was Augustine, who had produced a theological corpus which was to shape religious thought in the Western world until the twelfth century. His influence was felt in political life, where the ideal of the City

11. Maximus, The Ascetical Life, The Four Centuries on Charity, trans. Polycarp Sherwood, (Westminster, Md.: Newman, 1955), p. 137, no. 2

12. Ibid., p. 137 ff.

13. John Cassian, Conferences I, Vol. XI of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, 2nd Series, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Erdmans, 1964), p. 296.

of God inspired Charlemagne, in the schools, where his goal of sacred eloquence was striven for, and in the monasteries, where his Confessions pointed the way to experience of the "ancient Beauty, ever new."¹⁴ Dom David Knowles has justly remarked that the terminology and theology were considerably complicated, albeit enriched, by the teachings of Augustine in the fifth century, and those of Pseudo-Dionysius in the sixth century.¹⁵ Both borrowed many philosophical concepts from the Neo-Platonists in order to explain occurrences on the spiritual level. To Augustine also, we owe the "Martha and Mary" differentiation between the active and the contemplative life. Pseudo-Dionysius, who was reputed for centuries to be the disciple of St. Paul, developed a negative way of knowing God, a dark theology.¹⁶ Such great authority was attached to the Dionysian corpus, translated into Latin by John Scotas Erigena, that even Aquinas referred to him as the "Areopagite", just as he referred to Aristotle as "The Philosopher".

These three streams of influence were at work during the period called the "Dark Ages". The writings of the Desert Fathers and of Augustine were known in

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14. Augustine, Confessions, trans. Edward B. Pusey, (New York: Washington Square Press, 1962), p. 195.
 15. David Knowles, The English Mystical Tradition, (New York: Harper Torchbook, 1965), pp 25-28.
 16. Ibid., p. 30.

Ireland and in England during the seventh and eighth centuries, and it was, as we have already stated, a son of Ireland who made the writings of Pseudo-Dionysius accessible. During this period there is little evidence for mystical activity within the Church. An argument from silence is generally dangerous, but at this point two observations seem apropos. Both Elmer O'Brien¹⁷ and David Knowles¹⁸ have surmised that there have been mystics at every age in the Church, but that some are more articulate than others, and the religious climate is more favorable to the recording of the experiences at certain times than at others.

The second observation is really a question which flows from the above statement: What social and religious conditions are favorable to the publishing of mystical experience? What would cause an efflorescence of mysticism like that of the twelfth or fourteenth century? It can only be stated here that a study which would answer these questions is beyond the scope of this paper. It must be said, however, that the more one familiarizes oneself with the lives and writings of the mystics, the more one begins to recognize certain common trends. Some of these trends will emerge in the present study.

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17. Elmer O'Brien, Varieties of Mystical Experience, (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1964), p. 9
18. Knowles, Op. cit., pp.41-42.

In twelfth century continental Europe there was a renewed enthusiasm for the contemplative life and a reaction against the involvement of monks in worldly affairs which manifested itself in several new religious orders, among them the Cistercians, who saw in their order a return to the primitive Rule of St. Benedict. The reform produced a number of mystical writers, the most outstanding of whom was Bernard of Clairvaux. Bernard, it may be said, was the first western writer since Augustine to discuss in detail his own spiritual experiences. Until his time, whatever mystics there may have been were extremely reticent about their most intimate encounters with God. In his Sermons on the Canticles and his Treatise on the Love of God, Bernard writes in passionate terms of this loving, conscious union of the soul with God. His teachings were taken up, debated and expanded by his friend William of St. Thierry, and by Hugh and Richard of St. Victor.

Twelfth century England felt the impact of Bernard's teachings through copies of his sermons which were widely circulated even during his lifetime, and through the writings of Gilbert of Hoiland and Aelred of Rievaulx. Cistercian monks were, without a doubt, encouraged to aspire to the mystical marriage spoken of by Bernard. The mystical marriage and continuing union of the soul with God were described in such an attractive way as to appeal to the innermost longings of medieval people.

Aelred, an Anglo-Saxon monk and former courtier of David I of Scotland, revealed in his writings certain

mystical graces which he had been granted during his monastic career. He developed a doctrine on the phases in the spiritual life differing mainly in terminology from that of Bernard. The soul passes through three Sabbaths as it grows in love of God and of neighbor until it reaches the Sabbath of union with God, characterised by a heavenly peace and rest.¹⁹ while Aelred uses some of the Bernardine terminology and ideas, there is a greater emphasis on tranquility of spirit than is found in the French monk's teachings. Gilbert of Hoiland attempted to continue the Sermons on the Canticle of Canticles²⁰ which had been left unfinished by Bernard's death, and has been blamed by some writers for his temerity in doing so. Isaac of Stella, another English Cistercian of whose life very little is known, also treated the subject of contemplative prayer with some originality.²¹ In general, the Cistercians contributed to mystical theology the revelation of mystical delights and an attempt to understand human psychology, the very ground of these experiences.

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19. Aelred, 'Speculum Caritatis', PL., CXCIV, Lib. I, Cap. XIX, Col. 521 D: "Et quidem magnus dies ille, in quo decussis tenebris, lux Deo jubente resplenduit: magnus et ille, quo aquas inferiores et superiores, interjecto firmamento vox divina discrevit."
20. Gilbert of Hoiland, 'Sermones', PL., CLXXXIV, Cols. 9-252.
21. B. Heurtbize, 'Isaac', Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique, 15 vols, in 30 pts., (Paris: Letouzey, 1908-1950), VIII, Pt. I, (1924), col. 14

This affective approach to the humanity of Christ, enunciated so effectively by Bernard, was conveyed to the laity by the new mendicant orders of the thirteenth century. The Franciscans made use of various devices to stimulate the devotion of the faithful-the Christmas crib and San Bernardino of Siena's monogram of the Holy Name are two examples of very effective methods of mass appeal. The Dominicans, particularly in the Rhineland area, took an active part in cultivating contemplative prayer among Dominican and Cistercian nuns. It was at Helfta, a Benedictine convent which had adopted the Cistercian usages, that a brilliant constellation of women mystics and writers arose.²² Encouraged by her Dominican director, the blind, blunt old Beguine, Mechtild von Magdeburg sought shelter from her enemies at Helfta and endeared herself to the sisters there by her sheer goodness. She left a priceless legacy in the form of her revelations which she dictated to one of the nuns shortly before her death. The abbess who received the old woman was a learned noblewoman, Gertrude von Hackeborn, whose sister was choir-mistress of the convent. This sister, also called Mechtild, had received mystical graces herself which she in turn recorded in The Book of Special Grace.

22. The convent had been under the Benedictine Rule at a different location, but under Gertrude von Hackeborn's predecessor had been moved to Helfta and had adopted the Cistercian Rule. Because of the duplication of names, the three Mechtilds and the two Gertrudes have often been confused.

Another Gertrude was received into the convent by the Abbess Gertrude and was trained in the religious life by St. Mechtild von Hackeborn and also by a third Sister Mechtild. This little "Trutta", as the nuns called her, became an excellent Latinist at a very early age, so that by the time she was sixteen, she had resolved simply to go through the motions of religious life, and to devote herself as exclusively as possible to study. The course of her life was changed, however, by an apparition of Christ, so that she became not only a renowned scholar, but also a mystic. Her experiences were set down in her Spiritual Exercises and in The Herald of Divine Love.

In general, thirteenth-century continental Europe saw an increase in devotion to the humanity of Christ which expressed itself in music, art, poetry, and most important, in the founding of pious confraternities whose members strove to perform works of charity. Paradoxically, the abstract thinker Thomas Aquinas also maintained a very deep devotion to the Passion of Christ. In prayer one day before a crucifix, Aquinas was asked by the figure on the cross what he desired in return for all his writings on God. Thomas replied quite simply. "Nothing but yourself, Lord."²³

This devotion to the humanity of Christ manifested itself on both the Continent and in England in increasing degrees through the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth centuries

23. Bollandistes, XVII, p.251.

Men cast themselves on the mercy of the Saviour and, even more frequently, on that of His Mother. The cult of Mary flourished both in England and in Continental Europe. Cathedrals rose in her honour, hymns were written to her, a religious order, the Servites, promoted devotion to her seven sorrows, while the Franciscans preached and wrote on her seven joys. In England, "Mary's dowry", the beloved shrine of Walsingham drew pilgrims devoted to the Mother of God; lovely lyrics such as "I Sing of a Maiden" and "Of One that Is so Fair and Bright" were composed in her honour. Churches, Cistercian monasteries and schools such as Eton rejoiced in her patronage. Even the flowers of the field, the lady slipper and marigold, bore her name.

It could be argued that the influence of Mary upon the medieval world was a softening one, a humanising force which resulted in the gentle piety so typical of late medieval spirituality at its best. This gradual moderation of spiritual attitudes is apparent on the Continent, but particularly in English writings such as the Ancrene Riwe, the prose and verse of Richard Rolle, and Julian of Norwich's Revelations of Divine Love. This softening of attitude should not, however, be understood as a weakening of the desire for God or of the pursuit of moral perfection. If anything, the desire for mystical union with God is even sharper among the late medieval mystics. Their manner of seeking this union, is, however, more enlightened and their choice of means to this end is more appropriate than that of their predecessors.

They are acquiring the knack of working with, rather than against, their nature.

The preaching friars of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries were the medium through which the devotion to the humanity of Christ and to Mary was popularized among the laity. Their assiduous preaching and hearing of confessions developed among the laity a piety which sought to nourish itself on extra-liturgical devotions, pilgrimages, and on the liturgy itself by saying the canonical hours in the vernacular and, in some cases, in Latin. It was for the devout laymen and for the preachers who sought to minister to them that the vast, and for the most part undistinguished mass of spiritual treatises was written in English. While most of these devotional works are unoriginal in character, certain of them, the works of Rolle, Walter Hilton, the author of the Cloud of Unknowing, and of Julian of Norwich do represent valuable contributions to religious thought, either in the stresses laid on certain heretofore undeveloped doctrines, such as the motherhood of God, or in the depth of their analysis of spiritual experience.²⁴

24. The following books were helpful in writing this brief survey:
 Helen Cam, England before Elizabeth, (New York: Harper and Row, 1960), pp. 131-134.
 Knowles, The English Mystical Tradition, pp. 39-47.
 G. O. Sayles, The Medieval Foundations of England, (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1961), pp 358-367.

The fourteenth and fifteenth centuries saw the rise of popular movements such as the Beguines and the Beghards in the Netherlands, the Rhineland, and some parts of northern France. Some groups of Beguines, pious laywomen who lived alone or in small groups within a city, were under the direction of the Dominicans, who encouraged their penitents to aspire after mystical graces. It was in the early fourteenth century that Eckhardt and his disciples Tauler and Suso were developing a very exalted, almost pantheistic concept of the union of the soul with God, so that a conservative reaction set in among some of the clergy of the Lowlands. Ruysbroeck, an eminent mystical theologian, warned against the dangers of quietism, a state which some well-meaning persons were mistaking for true union with God.²⁵ The teachings of these mystics, their enthusiasm for the mystical life and their attempts to rationalise it, filtered into England, particularly into

25. Jan van Ruysbroeck, De Ornatu Spiritualium Nuptiarum, Opera Omnia, trans. Surius, (Cologne: 1652), l. ii. caps. lxvi., quoted in Evelyn Underhill, Mysticism, (New York: Meridian, 1960), p. 322 "Such quietude . . . is nought else but idleness, into which a man has fallen, and in which he forgets himself and God and all things in all that has to do with activity. This repose is wholly contrary to the supernatural repose one possesses in God; for that is a loving self-mergence and simple gazing at the Incomprehensible Brightness; actively sought with inward desire, and found in fruitive inclination When a man possesses this rest in false idleness, and all loving adherence seems a hindrance to him, he clings to himself in his quietude and lives contrary to the first way in which man is united with God; and this is the beginning of all ghostly error."

East Anglia by means of wandering friars and travelling merchants. Pilgrimages, the Crusades and trade had combined to form a much more mobile society than sociologists would generally associate with pre-industrialism. The northern centers of Hull and Boston exported wool to the Flemish weavers,²⁶ and at the same time shared, through the activities of their merchants, in the new ideas and lay movements which were stirring in the Netherlands. A decade or so after Julian of Norwich received her visions, merchants from Margery Kempe's Lynn established trade with Germany.

The works of Continental writers were circulated, either in Latin, or in some cases in English and French in fourteenth and fifteenth century England. John Newton, a contemporary of Julian of Norwich, disposed in his will of books by Hugh of St. Victor, Johannes Andreae, the Sunday Sermons of Holcot the Dominican, Petrarch's De Remediis utriusque fortunae, as well as works by several other English authors such as John Howden, Walter Hilton and Richard Rolle.²⁷ Margery Kempe refers to "Bride's Book", meaning St. Bridget of Sweden's book, Hilton's Scale of Perfection and Richard Rolle's writings.²⁸

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26. May Mc Kisack, The Fourteenth Century, 1307-1399, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1959), p. 120
27. E. F. Jacob, The Fifteenth Century, 1399-1485, (Oxford: Clarendon, 1961), p. 286.
28. The Book of Margery Kempe, ed. W. Butler-Bowden, (Oxford University Press, 1954), p. 51. Cited Kempe hereafter.

The Imitation of Christ, a book second only to the Bible in its influence upon the daily lives of modern Christians, was transcribed by Brother John Lacey, the Dominican anchorite at Newcastle-upon-Tyne.²⁹ And translated by Master John Drygoun, a reluse near Bethlehem at Sheen.³⁰ The Continental influence extended even to the illumination of manuscripts.³¹

A more direct influence upon English spirituality was exerted by the wandering members of the mendicant orders and by travelling merchants. Through these men, some of them native Englishmen who had travelled and studied in Europe, some of them foreign friars who had come to study or to minister in England, the teachings of the Continental writers reached the laity. J. R. H. Moorman remarks on the number of foreign Franciscans studying or ministering in the Cambridge area.³² Since the Franciscans had a good theology school at Norwich, it is quite probable that some of the brothers from the Continent served and studied in that city while Julian of Norwich was living there as an anchorite. The Dominicans also had houses in both Cambridge and in Norwich and engaged in a similar itinerant ministry conducive to the spread of ideas from the writings of the Rhineland mystics.

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29. A. R. Myers, England in the Late Middle Ages, (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1963), p. 7.
 30. Shewings, p. xli.
 31. Myers, Op. Cit., pp. 180, 239.
 32. John R. H. Moorman, The Grey Friars in Cambridge, 1225-1538, (Cambridge: University Press, 1952), p.82.

Both Continental mysticism and the devotion to the humanity of Christ, to Mary and to the Saints yielded its fruits in the writings of fourteenth and fifteenth century English mystic. An erudite hermit, Richard Rolle, (c. 1300-1349), was one of the first to publish mystical treatises. Wearied with student life at the Sorbonne, Rolle returned from theological studies there and went into solitude close to the Cistercian convent of Hampole, near Doncaster.³³ Here he acted as a spiritual director to the nuns, and composed several works on the spiritual life, one of which was written expressly for Dame Margaret Kirkby, a nun of Hampole.³⁴ His writings reveal a native cheerfulness and optimism, characteristics which in general mark the writings of the fourteenth and fifteenth century English mystics.

Also making its appearance at this time in English spiritual writings was the dark theology of pseudo-Dionysius. The author of the Cloud of Unknowing translated his Mystical Theology into English under the revealing title of Dionise Hid Divinitie. The Cloud itself is heavily influenced by the Dioysian via negativa.

It is worthy of note that many of the works of the English mystics were intended first for specific

33. Paul Renaudin, Quatre Mystiques Anglais, (Paris: Cerf, 1945), p. 25

34. Rolle's works consist of the Incendium Amoris, The Mending of Life, The Form of Perfect Living, and a translation of the Psalms into English.

persons, and then for a more general audience. The author of the Cloud realises that his book may be lent, copied, or otherwise circulated by the person for whom it is written,³⁵ and cautions that person about indiscriminate circulation.³⁶ He plainly states that he believes his reader to be called to the highest perfection,³⁷ so that the book is a guide for one who has passed beyond the preliminary stages of the spiritual life. Walter Hilton, who died in 1396, directed his Ladder of Perfection to an anchoress.³⁸ and his Epistola Aurea to Adam Horsley, Controller of the Great Roll, and afterwards a Carthusian.³⁹ Hilton, an Augustinian Canon who would perform certain functions outside the cloister while living a conventual life, produced, appropriately enough, a treatise on the mixed life, exactly the type of contemplative-active existence which he himself was living. A caution similar to that given in the Cloud is appended by the scribe who took down the revelations of

35. The Cloud of Unknowing, ed. Clifton Wolters, (Harmsworth: Penguin, 1965), p.43 ". . . you should, quite freely and of set purpose, neither read, write, or mention it to anyone, nor allow it to be read, written, or mentioned unless that person is in your judgment really and wholly determined to follow Christ perfectly." Cited The Cloud hereafter.

36. The Cloud, p.44

37. Ibid., p. 51, ". . . it appears that he is not content to leave you just there . . . but in his own delightful and gracious way he has drawn you to this third state, the Solitary. It is in this state that you will learn to take your first loving steps to the life of Perfection, the last stage of all."

38. Walter Hilton, The Ladder of Perfection, trans. Leo Sherley-Price, (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1957), p. 1. Cited Hilton hereafter.

39. Ibid., p. xvii.

Julian of Norwich, (1343-c. 1416).⁴⁰ There was a wide circulation of devotional literature among the laity in fourteenth and fifteenth-century England. Those who could read sometimes took up the practice of saying their daily hours, as the existence of numerous books of hours attests, while those who could not read, eagerly besought kindly priests or clerics to read to them out of holy books and the Scriptures. Margery Kempe, (1373-1438), became acquainted with the works of Hilton, Rolle and St. Bridget in just such a way.⁴¹

In the western world, then, three influences meet and mingle in mystical theology-the Desert Fathers, Augustine, and Pseudo-Dionysius. To these streams the English mystics added their own particular characteristics, gentleness, cheerfulness, and confidence in God. Thus their writings reveal a certain freshness and originality in their approach to the spiritual life, an almost intangible freedom, openness and spaciousness which has not found an equal in Continental writings of either the Medieval period or the Post-Tridentine era.⁴²

40. Clifton Wolters, (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1966). p. 213. Cited Revelations, hereafter.

41. Kempe, p. 51.

42. This peculiar cheerfulness and confidence in God as a Father has found echos in modern times in the writings of 19th century English converts to Catholicism, notably Cardinal Newman, but especially in the teachings of Mother Janet Erskine Stuart, who incorporated much of Julian of Norwich's doctrine into her Letters. Father F. W. Faber and Father Daniel Considine also advocated confidence in God, Faber in particular remarking, "Confidence is the only true worship."

Although in some cases the English spiritual writers make use of the traditional terminology of Continental theology and recommend fasting and corporal discipline as ways of predisposing oneself for mystical union, their recommendations are always tempered with a certain humanity and common sense.⁴³

Mystics in every age have noted distinct stages in the soul's progress to God, and while the traditional number of these stages has been three, St. Benedict distinguished twelve degrees of humility,⁴⁴ which led to the "perfect love of God which casts out fear". and Walter Hilton distinguished degrees within each stage.⁴⁵ It is important to differentiate at this point between states of life, which both Hilton and the author of the Cloud mention, and stages in the spiritual life. Hilton speaks of two states of life, the active and the contemplative, and then goes on to show that there are degrees or stages of contemplation within the contemplative state. The author of the Cloud speaks of four states of life, but it becomes clear from his explanation that one who belonged to the "common state" would, in most cases, belong to what Hilton calls the active state,

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43. The Ancrene Riwe, trans. M. B. Salu, (London: Burns Oates, 1955), p. 188. "For three days after you have been let blood you shall not do anything which taxes your strength, but talk to your maidens and entertain each other with edifying stories, You may do this whenever you feel oppressed or when you feel grief for some earthly cause, or when you are ill; yet all worldly consolations are unworthy of an anchoress."
44. The Rule of St. Benedict, ed. Justin McCann. (London: Burns Oates, 1952), pp. 39-47. Cited Rule of St. Benedict hereafter.
45. Hilton, Op. Cit., Chapters 2 to 10.

that is, leading an ordinary Christian life in the world.⁴⁶ One who belonged to the Special state would, in the author of the Cloud's view, have withdrawn from the world into a convent or monastery.⁴⁷ The third state, that of the Solitary, the author sees as a means of attaining the fourth and final state of Perfection.⁴⁸ In these states the three Dionysian categories may be discerned. A person in the Common state, who endeavored to free himself from sin, would be in the purgative way, as would a beginning religious in the Special state. One who is detached from deliberate sin, whether a layman or a religious, would normally enter upon the illuminative way, a state in which consolation in prayer, which formerly served as an incentive in the soul's efforts to attain virtue, is withdrawn, and the person is left in what the mystics term dryness and darkness. It is in this stage that a person learns to love God for what He is in Himself, and not for any of His consolations. Once the purification of the illuminative way has done its work, the person passes into what is known as the unitive way in which the soul becomes completely united in the very depths of its being with God. This state is synonymous with what

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46. The Cloud, p. 51: "For you are well aware that, when you were in the Common state of the Christian life, living with your friends in the world, God . . . would not allow you to live the kind of life that was so far away from him."
47. Ibid., p. 51: ". . . he kindled your desire for himself . . . and thus led you to that more special life, a servant among his own special servants."
48. Ibid., p. 51.

the author of the Cloud calls Perfection.

At first, there is a reassuring neatness about the way in which these categories dovetail--there is a place for everyone who has begun to lead a life of awareness of God. The neatness, however, is only on the surface, representing the attempts of human beings to describe an experience which is essentially beyond words. In actual practice, the mystics themselves found that the stages of growth in the spiritual life often overlapped, and that a person still in the purgative way could have an experience of God normally considered proper to the unitive way. Conversely, someone in the unitive way could undergo the dryness and darkness that are characteristic of the illuminative way. The whole process of spiritual growth was seen as a constant purification enabling one to grow in awareness of God.⁴⁹ The English mystics had less of a tendency to pigeon-hole persons, less of an inclination to be constantly checking one's spiritual temperature, than the Post-Reformation mystics.

There was also a frank recognition on the part of these writers, that visions, locutions, levitations and miracles were not the stuff of which genuine sanctity was made, and that some of these phenomena were the result of diabolical intervention or of an overtaxed nervous system. Augustine recognised three classes of visions, all of which could have their origin from God, the devil, or the psyche itself: the

49. Revelations, p. 209.

corporeal, perceived by the bodily senses, the imaginative, perceived in the imagination, and the intellectual, perceived in the depths of the soul, in an obscure manner.⁵⁰ Julian of Norwich has her own classification of the "shewings", similar to but not corresponding exactly to the traditional Augustinian categories. She specifies very carefully whether she sees things with her bodily eyes, with her spiritual eyes (imagination), with her intellect, or at the "fine point" of her soul.⁵¹ She was also given certain information without benefit of words after having seen a vivid image of the crucified Christ.⁵² Such precision in describing her manner of perceiving these "shewings" is remarkable, revealing a rare combination of sensitivity and objectivity.

Another interesting characteristic of the English mystics is the fact that they do not try to discourage persons from mystical union with God. They are, on the whole, not concerned over the problems which troubled Post-Tridentine spiritual writers; whether one dare aspire to the heights of prayer or not, whether it is outrageous audacity on the part of a mere human being to desire or ask for such a favor.

50. Underhill, Op.cit., pp. 266-297: Miss Underhill discusses the problem of classification of visions and locutions more fully.

51. Shewings, p. 21: "And after this I saw God in a point that is, in my understanding, by which sight I saw that He is in all-thing."

52. Ibid., p. 22-23. "And then, without voice or opening of lips this word was formed in my soul: 'Herewith is the fiend overcome.'"

Many of the medieval Continental writers viewed the mystical life as a logical outcome of the development of certain powers. Aquinas saw it as the flowering of the gifts of understanding and knowledge, and Bonaventure viewed it more simply as the normal outcome of a life of charity.⁵³ In the thirteenth and fourteenth-century German writers, however, a note of warning begins to be sounded, and more stress is laid on the gratuitousness of mystical graces, with the Flemish writer Ruysbroeck warning against desiring ecstasy.⁵⁴

A certain amount of confusion has been generated by the use in mystical treatises of different words to describe the same state, so that a further clarification is rendered necessary. There is general agreement on the meaning of terms such as the purgative, illuminative and the unitive ways which were defined by Pseudo-Dionysius and re-defined by Richard of St. Victor.⁵⁵ The "prayer of quiet" spoken of in Post-Tridentine literature⁵⁶ resembles Aelred's third Sabbath of love. In this state, the person prays easily, peacefully, wordlessly, attentive to God. The mystics have noted this type of prayer even in beginners in the spiritual life. The terms "dryness" and "darkness",

53. Benedictine of Stanbrook Abbey, Medieval Mystical Tradition and St. John of the Cross, (Westminster: Newman, 1954), p. 63.

54. Ibid., p. 10.

55. Ibid., p. 49.

56. T. V. Moore, The Life of Man with God, (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1956), p. 250.

generally used in connection with the illuminative way, underline the difficulties encountered in prayer at this stage. Concentration is difficult, the consolation with once accompanied prayer is gone, often leaving in its place an inexplicable disgust with things spiritual. Some writers use "contemplation" interchangeably with "mystical union", while others distinguish between acquired contemplation and infused contemplation. Acquired contemplation is generally taken to mean occasional moments of deep intuitive knowledge of God which are granted from time to time to those who are making a serious effort to attain union with God. Infused contemplation is defined as an habitual, intuitive experience of God.⁵⁷ Both Aelred of Rievaulx⁵⁸ and Julian of Norwich⁵⁹ appear to have suffered dryness and darkness, but in varying degrees. Julian, in direct contrast with Aelred, sounds a

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57. J. Aumann, "Contemplation," New Catholic Encyclopedia, 15 vols. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1967), IV, p. 258.
58. Aelred, 'De Jesu Puero Duodenni', PL., CLXXXIV, Col. 863 A: Nunc quasi ulterius non sustinens spirituali, quodam litigio, vel luctamine evincere retardantem conaris. Quae tunc lacrimae? Qui gemitus? Quae suspiria? Quae voces? Nunc oculi fletu graves, cum intimis singultibus eriguntur ad coelum: nunc manus expanduntur et brachia: nunc pectoris tunsione animae tarditas accusatur."
59. Shewings, p. 56: "But yet in all this, oft-times our trust is not full; for we are not full sure that God Almighty hears us, because of our unworthiness, as it seems to us, and because we feel right naught. For we are as barren and as dry, often, after our prayers as we were before, and this in respect of our feeling. It is this folly of ours which is the cause of our weakness, as I have myself experienced." Also on p.64 she states: "I was as barren and dry as if I had had but little comfort before, because of falling again into pain, and for failing of ghostly feeling."

generally cheerful and reassuring note. Aelred, on the other hand, is at times very peaceful, but also at times very quilt ridden.

In examining the lives of both Aelred and Julian, the terminology and the general considerations just discussed must be kept in mind. There is a definite development and maturing of attitudes toward God, one's neighbor, sin and creation, a development which can be discerned by a comparison of the lives and teachings of the two mystics.

CHAPTER II

THE MONK AND THE ANCHORESS

Aelred of Rievaulx was born in Yorkshire in 1109, at a time which saw the first community of Cistercians at Citeaux struggling for survival with seemingly little success. The father of the boy who was one day to be called the "Bernard of the North" was, ironically, one of a dwindling number of married priests, against whose existence the Cistercians were to exert their reforming influence. Eilaf Laureu,¹ a Saxon with perhaps some Danish blood in his veins, was priest of the hereditary church of St. Andrew at Hexham in North Yorkshire. The church and monastery, which dated from the time of St. Wilfrid, enjoyed the privilege of Sanctuary which extended a mile in each direction from the ancient structure.² Everything but the stone work of the church was destroyed by a Danish raid in 875, and it was not until the learned Eilaf took up his duties that any successful attempt at restoration was made.³ The church, which preserved the memory not only of St. Andrew, but also of Sts. Peter, Wilfrid, John of Beverley, Acca and Alchmund,⁴

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1. James Raine, 'The Priory of Hexham, 2 Vols., (London: Surtees Society, 1864), Vol. i, p. lii.
 2. William Dugdale, Monasticon Anglicanum, 6 vols. in 8 pts., new edition, J. Caley, H. Ellis and B. Bandinell, (London: James Bohn, 1846), VI, pt I, p. 150.
 3. Raine, Op. Cit., Vol. II, p. xxviii.
 4. Walter Daniel, Vita, pp. xxxv-xxxvi.

had been acquired by Aelred's grandfather, also called Eilaf, the son of Weston, sacristan of Hexham.⁵ Eilaf had obtained the rights to the temporalities of the church, and also the responsibilities of parish priest from Thomas I, Archbishop of York (1072-1100). Formerly treasurer at Durham Cathedral, he had been deprived of his position because he was married by the reformer, William de St. Carilepse.⁶ Archbishop Thomas, son of a married priest of Bayeux, received him sympathetically and granted him the living of Hexham as a means of support. Eilaf spent the rest of his life attempting to rescue the church from the ruin into which it had fallen. Living at Hexham must have been a difficult undertaking, for the Danish raids and the northern expedition of William the Conqueror in 1069 had so devastated the land that hunting was the only reliable means of subsistence.⁷

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5. Aelred of Rievaulx, Lives of St. Ninian and St. Kentigern, ed. Alexander Forbes, Historians of Scotland, 6 Vols., (Edinburgh: Edmonston and Douglas, 1874), V. p. vii.
 6. Raine, Op cit., I, p. lxiii.
 7. Ibid., Vol. II, p. xxviii.

In 1113 Eilaf, son of Eilaf, was forced by Archbishop Thomas II of York (1109-1114) to surrender the care of the church to Edric and Asketill of the Augustinian canons.⁸ He retained, however, the control of the greater portion of the church's temporalities, causing hardship to the resident canons, and probably also functioned as a priest. In 1138 he retired to the Benedictine monastery of Durham, easing his conscience before he died by restoring to Robert Biset, Prior of Hexham, the remainder of Hexham's temporalities. Abbot William of Rievaulx, Aelred and his brothers Samuel and Ethelwold witnessed this surrender.⁹

8. Raine, *Op. cit.*, I, p.55: "Sed quia poenituit illum ecclesiasticis rebus diu abusum fuisse, quibus Dei servi rectius sustentari debuerant, quomodo melius hanc redditionem facere posset excogitavit. Fecit igitur illum cum pulc (h)ro filaterio, scilicet cruce argentea, in qua Sanctorum confessorum et episcoporum, Accae et Alchmundi, reliquiae continebantur. . . .
"Willelmus, quoque, abbas de Riesvalle, et Ethelredus, monachus ejus et filius ipsius Aeillavi; et, de ecclesia Sancti Cuthberti, Mauricius supprior, et Aldredus secretarius, et Henricus monachus; et de ipsa Hagustaldensi ecclesiam quidam canonicus nomine Ricardus, et duo filii ejusdem Aeillavi, Samuel et Ethelwoldus, hi omnes ad hoc ibi convenerant, ut, in eorum praesentia et testimonie, haec fierent; et sic absque omni reclamatione et contradictione, factum est."

9. No mention is made of Aelred's mother, but there is no reason to assume that Eilaf was not legally married. Married priests had been held in esteem in northern England during the years after the Danish incursions, and bishops such as Thomas I of York were inclined to deal leniently with them. Thomas himself had experienced difficulty in receiving consecration because his father was a priest.

Aelred, then, growing up in an atmosphere which breathed the sanctity of Wilfrid, Cuthbert and Eata, acquired a lasting devotion to the saints of his native land. Of his early life we know little save that he grew up at the manse of Hexham with his brothers and one sister, and probably received some schooling from the Augustinian canons who took up residence after 1113. His sister subsequently became a recluse, and it was for her that Aelred composed his rule for recluses, which was to influence the composition of the Ancrene Riwe in the thirteenth century. Since Aelred speaks of knowing Henry, the son of David I of Scotland, from boyhood,¹⁰ it is not impossible that Henry either lived at or visited the Hexham rectory as a boy. If this were so, Aelred's sojourn at the Scottish court would be a reasonable outcome of such a connection.

10. 'Vita B. Aelredi': Legenda Sanctorum Anglie, ed. Johannes Capgrave, PL., cxcv, cols. 198-199. Cited Capgrave hereafter.

Since Eilaf was called "Laureu", that is, "learned", he very probably passed on his learning to his children. After the Augustinian canons took over the church and priory in Hexham, Eilaf's children would have an additional opportunity for instruction from Prior Asketill. Such an education would in part explain Aelred's predilection for St. Augustine. It was probably during these years that the young boy, who delighted in nothing so much as in friendship, had his first encounter with Cicero's De Amicitia,¹¹ a work which was to exert a powerful influence on his attitudes towards his friends. Already then, while Aelred was still a boy, two of his outstanding characteristics made their appearance in his life-his attachment to Augustine, and his enjoyment of friendship.

In 1124 at the age of fifteen Aelred set out for the Scottish court to broaden his education. Here he enjoyed the company of Henry, his boyhood companion, of Waldeof, David's step-son, and of David I himself.¹²

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11. Aelred, 'De Spirituali Amicitia', PL., CXCIV, col. 659A:
 "Tandem venit mihi in manus liber, quem de amicitia Tullius scripsit, qui statim mihi et sententiarum gravitate utilis, et eloquentiae suavitate dulcis apparebat."
12. Aelred, 'Genealogia Regum Anglorum'. CXCIV, col. 716 A:
 "Ego autem licet peccator et indignus, memor tamen beneficiorum tuorum, dulcissime domine et amice, quae mihi ab ineunte aetate mea impendisti, memor gratiae in qua me nunc ultimo suscepisti, memor benevolentiae que me in omnibus petitionibus exaudisti, memor munificentiae quam exhibuisti, memor amplexuum et osculorum in quibus me non sine lacrymis omnibus qui adherant admirantibus dimisti, libo et pro te lacrymas meas resolvo, affectum meum et totum spiritum meum refundo."

David, noting the intelligence and industry of the young Saxon, made him steward of the court,¹³ in which office Aelred acquitted himself so well that he was entrusted with diplomatic missions to England.¹⁴ Perhaps the loss of this skilful mediator by his subsequent entry into religion was a contributing cause of the culmination of border skirmishes in the Battle of the Standard, 1138.

During his years at David's court, Aelred acquired an enviable reputation for virtue and wisdom, so that the Scottish king determined to provide him with a bishopric.¹⁵ Such favour aroused the jealousy of a certain knight, who accused Aelred before all the court of being disloyal to David and an unfit person to be in charge of his household. As he reiterated and detailed his accusations, the knight treated his hearers to a torrent of abuse. His attempt to discredit the young steward collapsed, however, when Aelred

13. Daniel, *Vita*, p. 3: "A quo tanto amore complexus est ut eum faceret magnum in domo sua et in palacio gloriosum, ita ut rebus preesset multis, mancipiis plurimis et omnibus palatinis quasi dominus alter et secundus princeps haberetur, egrediens et ingrediens ad imperium regis, in uniuersis fidelis, bonis tamen familiaris et cum amore gratus, malis uero terribilis et cum dilectione seuerus."

14. *Ibid.*, p. 10

15. *Capgrave*, col. 199: "Adolescens tanto amore a rege Scotorum David complexus est, ut quasi secundus in curia ejus factus, ad episcopatum eum promouisset, nisi ad Cisterciensem ordinem citius aduolasset."

very calmly agreed that he had not served his king as well as he had deserved.¹⁶ During his residence at the Scottish court, Aelred insisted upon observing a monastic simplicity in dress and manners.¹⁷ By his affability he won the hearts of all, including Waldeof, the king's step-son who was to follow his example by becoming first an Augustinian canon and then a Cistercian monk.

If Aelred's early life is obscured by lack of documentary evidence, that of Julian is even more difficult to piece together, for she has no biographer. The circumstances of her life remain, for the most part, shrouded in obscurity. Even her real name is uncertain -since she was anchoress at St. Julian's Church, Norwich, she may have been commonly referred to as such, and with time the name of the church in whose yard she dwelt may have been attributed to her.

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16. Ibid., col. 199B: "Miles quidam, videns illum a rege prae omnibus amari, et plus ceteris honorari, illum persequi coepit, et gravi odio insectari: quandoque etiam coram rege illum verbis injuriosis appetere Cui ille 'Bene, inquit, dicis, o miles, optime loqueris, et vera sunt omnia quae dicis, et mendacium odis: meque, ut credo, diligis.' Tandem miles considerans Aelredum non turbari, a virtute in aliquo non avelli, poenitentia ductus, veniam petiit, et firmum amicum de reliquo se illi fore apopondit."
17. Daniel, Vita, p. 4-5. "In uestimentis quoque et ornatibus corporis taliter incēdebat cōptus et coerptus ut nulla superfluitas notaretur in superficie uel uane glorie seu cupiditatis affectus, prognosia quadam ueraci future uite seu prophetans laudabilem paupertatem."

A few facts are ascertainable, however. Julian did live, according to the scribe who recorded the shorter version of her book, in the episcopal city of Norwich, and was still living in 1413.¹⁸ She herself declares that she received a series of fifteen visions, or "shewings" from four in the morning until nine in the morning, May 8, 1373, and that she was granted the sixteenth "shewing" the following night.¹⁹ Her age at the time was thirty and a half years, placing her birth date in either December, 1342 or January, 1343. Her mother, present during the illness which preceded the revelations, attempted to close Julian's eyes, thinking that her trance-like state was death itself.²⁰ During the period after her visions, she acquired a reputation for holiness and wisdom which spread throughout the diocese, reaching Margery Kempe at King's Lynn. In the same year that Julian dictated the shorter version of her work, she met with and held spiritual conversations with

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18. Julian, Shewings, p. 1: "Here is a vision shewn by the goodness of God to a devout woman whose name is Julian. She is a recluse at Norwich and is living yet in this year of Our Lord in 1413.
19. Julian, p. 63: "These revelations were shewed to a simple creature that could no letter the year of our Lord, 1373, the eighth day of May."
20. Shewings, p. 29: "My mother, who stood with the others, and beheld me, lifted her hand to my face to lock my eyes, for she thought that I was about to die or had just died; and this much increased my sorrow."

Margery Kempe, of Lynn.²¹ Two wills in 1416 mention the Lady Julian, along with her two servants, Alice and Sarah, as heirs.

Julian, like Aelred, had little formal education, although she was possessed of a penetrating intellect. Her phrase, "a simple creature unlettered"²² has been given interpretations ranging from total illiteracy to a simple ignorance of Latin. Opportunities for education, even for girls, were not lacking in Norwich, for the nuns of Carrow Priory conducted a girls' boarding school which she could have attended. Both Franklin Chambers²³ and Sister Anna Maria Reynolds²⁴ argue convincingly from internal evidence that

21. Kempe, p. 56: "Much was the holy dalliance that the anchoress and this creature had by communing in the love of Our Lord Jesus Christ the many days that they were together."

22. Revelations, p.1.

23. Franklin P. Chambers, Julian of Norwich, an introductory appreciation and anthology, (New York: Harper, 1955), p. 41: "These interjections are not the marks of unplanned and undisciplined writing, and considering she wrote when the English tongue was in comparative infancy as regards the growth of a national idiom, her fluent use of the vernacular at such a time is remarkable."

24. Shewings, p. xxvii: "Yet one remarks at the same time a restraint in tone and the omission of coarse realistic detail of the kind found not infrequently in the earlier and the contemporary vernacular devotional writing. Julian, like Jane Austen, possessed the rare gift of knowing what to leave out.

"Again, her choice of words, though sometimes unexpected, is always expressive: 'a soft dread'; 'God shewed me what sin is, nakedly . . .'. The anchoress is particularly attached to the words homely, courteous, and courtesy, the romance associations of the two latter words being sublimated to convey the exquisite delicacy, condescension, and attentiveness of God in His dealings with the soul."



Julian was not uneducated. It would be ironic indeed if the anchoress whom Evelyn Underhill called "the first English woman of letters" was, in fact, totally illiterate. Learning and asceticism, as is evident in Aelred's life, were not exclusive. Several learned hermits are known to have existed in England before, during and after Julians's lifetime.²⁵

Richard Rolle studied at Oxford and obtained his master's degree in theology at Paris and then, disgusted with university life, became a hermit at Hampole. Julian certainly had time in which to read, and the Ancrene Riwe encouraged her to do so in English and French books.²⁶ Her description of her visions reveals a retentive memory and a care for

25. Ibid., p. xli: "Among other writers or 'book-lovers' who were also recluses, may be noted Brother John Lacey, 'The scribe-illuminator of the Blackfriars, Newcastle-upon-Tyne', who produced a series of devotions as well as extracts from other spiritual books. Miss Clay describes Lacey as 'an indefatigable scribe', the one hundred and fifty-one folios of whose coex are wrought on both sides of the vellum, their borders decorated with floral designs. A little later than this northern Dominican (he finished writing in 1434), we find a southern Carthusian, John Drygoun, Master of Arts and Bachelor of Civil and Common Law, who was enclosed in 1435 beside the House of Bethlehem at Sheen. He is the first known English scribe of the spiritual classic familiar to every devout Christian as the De Imitatione Christi. Then there is almost a century later the celebrated Simon Appulby of London Wall, who produced a volume of prayers and meditations which was printed by Wynken de Worde; and finally the scholarly Benedicta Burton, autograph has been found in a Latin textbook on education now known to have been printed at Basle in 1541."

26. Ancrene Riwe, p. 19.

detail which bespeak a lively intelligence. She shows herself familiar with the Scriptures, although quotations from them do not occur with the same frequency or carefulness of documentation as do those of Aelred.

If it could be demonstrated that Mother Julian had attended Carrow Priory school, the case of her having been a Benedictine nun, either before or after her revelations, would be considerably strengthened. It was at least theoretically possible to live a solitary life as a professed Benedictine,²⁷ and the fact that Carrow possessed a cell shows that the institution of Benedictine anchorites had not yet been discontinued. Although Benedictine writers attempt to claim Julian as one of their own,²⁸ the evidence for their contention is anything but conclusive. The Jesuit, Paul Molinari, discusses the Benedictine influences in her writing, pointing out at the same time that she need not have been a member of the convent to have benefitted from its influence.²⁹

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27. The Rule of St. Benedict, p. 14: "Deinde secundum genus est anachoritarum, id est heremitarum; horum qui non conversationis fervore novicio sed monasterii probatione diuturna, qui didicerunt contra diabolum multorum solacio jam docti pugnares et bene exstructi fraterna ex acie ad singularem pugnam heremi, securi jam sine consolatione alterius, sola manu vel brachio contra vitia carnis vel cogitationum Deo auxiliante pugnare sufficiunt."
28. Oliver L. Kapsner, A Benedictine Bibliography, 2 Vols., (Collegeville, Minn.: St. John's Abbey Press, 1962), I, p. 298.
29. Paul Molinari, Julian of Norwich, the Teaching of a Fourteenth Century Mystic, (London: Longmans Green, 1958). p. 9.

The Benedictine influence is clearer in Aelred's case than in Julian's. His grandfather had been treasurer at a Benedictine cathedral, and the monastery of Hexham in Saxon times had also been under Benedictine rule. Men living under Benedict's primitive Rule had attracted Aelred to Rievaulx in 1134, just two years after they had settled there. His curiosity about the white monks had been aroused while he was on a mission for David I to Archbishop Thurstan of York (1114-1140).³⁰ Seeking the Archbishop's blessing on his quest, he set out as soon as his mission was completed, accompanied by a friend, for new foundation.³¹ They spent the night at Walter Espec's castle of Helmesley, where they were further informed about the new order by their host, Rievaulx's founder.³² The following day they arrived at the rude temporary quarters of the monks, and the day after that Aelred was at their gates, begging admission.³³

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30. Daniel, *Vita*, p. 10: "Paulo post namque in partes Eborace ciuitatis pro quodam negocio deueniens ad Archiepiscopum eiusdem diocesis, didicit a quodam familiarissimo sibi rumore laudabili quosdam monachos ferme ante duos annos ex transmarinis partibus uenisse in Angliam, mirabiles quidem et religione insignes, uestitu quoque albos et nomine."
31. *Ibid.*, p. 13: "Currit cicius ad presulem, cupiditate ductus futurorum, et recepta licencia et benediccione antistitis ad hospiciu concitus recurrit, equos ascendit, nec moram innectit ingressui domus, immo pene insalutatos apud quos hospitabatur relinquens, iumenta urget ire quo nescit."
32. *Ibid.*, p. 14: "Qui et ipse presencia quedam preteritis addens de religione monachorum illorum, humillimi Aelredi spiritum magis ac magis gaudio accendebat inenarrabili."
33. *Ibid.*, p. 15: "Consentit tandem monachum fieri."

Although his actual entry into the monastery was sudden, Aelred had prepared himself in mind and heart for years for such a course.³⁴ His biographer does not explain why he did not enter an established monastery sooner, but it would seem that up until the time of his first encounter with the white monks, he lacked the courage to break off his ties at court. At any rate, his discussions with the Cistercians seem to have clarified his thinking on the matter.³⁵

Like Aelred, Julian was not unprepared for the tremendous experience which was given her at the age of thirty and a half. She tells us that she asked for three graces-remembrance of the Passion of Christ, bodily sickness,

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34. Ibid., p. 10: "Orat in hiis iugiter heros Domini, qui condidit eum, ut cum bona uoluntate domini sui seculi lubricam uagacionem eudere ualeat cetuique monachorum copulari mereatur."
35. Ibid., p. 15: "Nec certe dissimulauit cum ad hoc euentem est facere quod debuit."

and the three wounds of contrition, compassion and longing for God.³⁶ The detail with which the requests were made, and the exactness with which they were answered, from the reception of the last rites to the devil's tempting, have led certain modern writers to assign a purely psychological origin to the illness and to the visions.³⁷ But while it is within the realm of possibility that Julian's illness, could be emotionally induced, such an explanation does not fit the over-all tone of the book, which is calm, clear-sighted and deep. Julian's self-analysis gives the impression

36. Shewings, pp. 1-3: ". . . I desired a bodily sight, wherein I might have the more knowing of the bodily pains of our Lord and Savior, and of compassion of our Lady and of all His true lovers who believed in His pains at that time and afterwards. For I would have been one of them and suffered along with them . . .

"For the second grace: it came to my mind with contrition, freely, without any seeking—a wilful desire to have, of God's giving, a bodily sickness. I would that this bodily sickness might be grievous even to the point of death, so that I might in the sickness receive all the rites of Holy Church, I myself thinking that I should die; and I would that every creature that saw me might think the same . . . In this sickness I desired to have all manner of pains, bodily and ghostly, such as I should have if I were to die: all the dreads, all the temptings of the fiends, and all manner of their pains save of the out-passing of the soul . . .

"The sickness I desired in my thoughts that I might have it when I was thirty years of age.

"For the third grace: I heard a man of Holy Church tell the story of Saint Cecilia, in which I understood that she had received three wounds with a sword in the neck, from the which she pined to death. Moved by this I conceived a mighty desire, praying our Lord God that He would grant me three wounds during my lifetime, that is to say, the wound of contrition, the wound of compassion, and the wound of wilful longing for God."

37. Hilda Graef, The Light and the Rainbow, (Westminster, Md., Newman, 1959), p. 263.

that few of her own motives were hidden from her, and that she would not easily fall into self-delusion. Her experience has the characteristics, not of an ecstasy, in which the person becomes insensible to physical stimuli, but of what Origen calls katastasis, a state in which the person is conscious of God's operation, and yet retains use of his faculties. Julian is aware, for the most part, of what is going on around her, and retains the ability to ask questions, to wonder, and to reflect upon her own mental state. Her self-possession in the face of such powerful experiences is rare in the history of mysticism.

Thus there is evidence in Daniel's description of Aelred's dispositions before entering the monastery, and in Julian's recounting of her petitions, a deep-seated longing for God which could only be satisfied by a total dedication of themselves to His service. The crisis in Aelred's spiritual life came as he hesitated on a hill above Rievaulx, trying to decide whether or not to go down once more to the monastery. The turning-point in Julian's life is less clear-cut—the time of her petition for the three graces seems, however, to have set the subsequent illness and visions in motion. It is not known how long before the illness the requests were made, but Julian specifies that it was when she was quite young. From the way in which the petitions were framed, it is most probable that she had already given herself to a life of prayer, whether as a lay person, a nun, or a recluse. The lives

of both Aelred and Julian were changed after these crises- in Aelred's case the external manner of life was altered radically. In Julian's case it may have led to her entry into the Benedictine Priory of Carrow, or to her enclosure in the cell adjoining St. Julian's Church in the district of Conisford, if indeed she had not already become a recluse. There are indications in her book that she may not have been a recluse at the time of her visions. She speaks of a number of people, including her priest, her mother and a child-an altar boy, who carried a processional cross.³⁸ Later, after she had received fifteen of the shewings, a religious man came to visit her and asked her how she fared.³⁹ It is doubtful if such an assortment of visitors would be allowed into her cell at the convent, and even more unlikely of such a thing happening in an anchoress's cell.

Aelred, like Julian, lived the greater part of his life within a religious framework as a cloistered monk. In spite of his being enclosed, however, he did during his later life as a monk do a considerable amount of travelling and had contacts with various important personages in England and in France. Once Julian was enclosed, it would be almost out of the question for her to leave her churchyard dwelling-an author in the Victoria County History, Norfolk, raises the question of whether she was a John

38. Shewings, p. 5: "They who were with me sent for the priest, my curate, to be at my ending, He came and a child with his, and brought a cross."

39. Ibid., p.64.

Paston's funeral in 1466 and answers it in the negative because of her vow of enclosure.⁴⁰ Another very good reason for her not being present is that given 1343 as her birth-date, Julian would have been at the time of the funeral one hundred and twenty-three years of age! Although Julian lived during what must have been a very trying time for the priory, its inmates and dependant, she gives no hint in her writings of the events during the incumbency of Edith Wilton as prioress. Dame Edith was accused of harbouring two murderers within the precincts of Carrow and was imprisoned.⁴¹ In Aelred's writing, on the other hand, there are allusions to current events, and two of his historical works De Bello Standardi and De Sanctimoniali de Wattun dealt with contemporary events. It is hard to imagine Aelred living through a disasterous fire such as the one that destroyed a good part of Norwich in 1413 without writing a line about it, but the shorter version of Julian's work, dictated in that same year gives no hint of the event.

Before examining Aelred's later life as abbot, his position in English church history may be clarified by looking more closely at the monastic surroundings in which he spent the first eight years of his religious life. The monastery of Rievaulx owed its material origin to the zeal

40. J. C. Cox, "The Priory of Carrow", Victoria County History, Norfolk, 2 Vols., (London: Street, 1906).
p. 352.

41. Ibid., p. 352.

of Walter Espec, who had already founded the Augustinian Priory of Kirkham in 1122⁴² and who subsequently founded the monastery of Wardon, or Sartis (so-called because it was necessary to clear away the forest for the site) as a daughter-house of Rievaulx in 1135. Espec held positions of trust under Henry I, Stephen and Henry II, being justice, justice of the forests, and responsible for the defence of the border against Scottish border raids. In consequence of his closeness to the English kings, he acquired vast holding of land in the north of England, out of which he carved the grants necessary for the foundation of the three monasteries. A legend, to which historians have given varying degrees of credence, attributes their foundation to Walter's grief over the death of his only son and namesake in a fall from a horse.⁴³ The Lord of Helmsley's spiritual advisor, the priest William Garton, advised him to assure himself of spiritual sons by founding three

42. Aelred, 'De Bello Standardi'. PL., CXCIV, col. 704 A

43. Dugdale, V. p. 280, No. II: "Contigit ut quadam die, cum equum velocem ascendisset, et ipsum ad currendum, ultra vires urgeret, apud parvum petrinam crucem, versus Frithby, equus suus graviter cespitavit: et ille subito de equo cadens, collo suo fracto, vitam finivit temporalem."

monasteries.⁴⁴ In 1131 Espec offered Bernard of Clairvaux nine carucates of land in the Rie Valley, a spot secluded enough to satisfy the requirements of the Cistercian usages. Bernard responded to his generous offer in 1132 by sending a contingent of monks from Clairvaux headed by William, a Yorkshireman who had been Bernard's personal secretary and very close friend. Clairvaux was thus the motherhouse of Rievaulx, a relationship which had a profound effect on the spirit of the daughter-house and on the lives of its abbots who looked to the abbot of Clairvaux for advice and inspiration. The fact the Bernard was the ruling abbot from the time of the foundation of Rievaulx until 1154 helps to explain some of the prestige which the monastery acquired. For, unlike Waverley, founded in 1128, Rievaulx attracted outstanding religious men from the surrounding district. Maurice, the holy and learned sub-prior of Durham, known to Aelred at least from 1138 when he witnessed Eilaf's surrender of temporalities, joined the new monks in 1142 or 1143. So impressed were the Cistercians with his virtue and learning, that they elected

44. Cartularium Abbathiae de Rievaille, Ordinis Cisterciensis, ed. J. C. Atkinson, (London: Surtees Society, 1889), p. 16, No. XXIV, Cited Cartularium Rievaille hereafter. Rev. Atkinson tries to discount the legend entirely by pointing out that nowhere in the founding charters is there mention of the welfare of young Walter's soul, and by maintaining that grief for a dead son is not a sufficient reason for founding three monasteries. His first argument is slightly more convincing than the second, although there is a general mention of all the departed of Espec's family, which would include the son. Moreover, if the Cistercian monastery of Dulce Cor (Sweetheart) could be founded to enshrine a nobleman's heart, a monastery could be built to honour a dead son.

him abbot after William's death in 1145.⁴⁵ Waldeof, Aelred's close companion at the Scottish court, left his position as prior of the Augustinian Canons at Kirkham to join the white monks at Wardon in 1143 or 1144.⁴⁶ Perhaps the most spectacular exodus from the Black Monks occurred in 1133, when thirteen Benedictines from St. Mary's Abbey, York, left their life of elaborate ceremonial for the stark simplicity of Cistercian prayer and manual labour, founding Fountains Abbey in the Skell Valley.⁴⁷

During the early years of Rievaulx's existence, Aelred was applying himself to the task at hand—the conforming of his life to the Rule of St. Benedict and the Cistercian Consuetudines. There is a description of the difficult days of the novitiate from Aelred's own pen in the Speculum Caritatis, where he recalls a discussion he

45. Daniel, Vita, p. 33: "Huic successit Mauricius magne sanctitatis uir et preclare prudencie utpote qui potauerat a puero uinum leticie spiritalis in claustro Dunolmensi, et ex pane Cuthberti uiri Dei reffectus creuerat in sublime ita ut a sociis secundus Beda cognominaretur; cui reuera erat in tempore suo tam uite quam sciencie prerogatiua secundus."

46. Ibid., p. xci.

47. "Memorials of the Abbey of St. Mary of Fountains", Vol. 42, ed. John Richard Walbran, (London: Surtees Society, 1863), p. xxx. Cited Memorials hereafter.

had with a disillusioned novice.⁴⁸ The poor food, short sleep, rough clothing, long silence and manual labour must have been a severe trial for the sociable young man from King David's court. It was, however, during Aelred's novitiate that he formed one of his closest friendships, that with Simon, a delicate young monk from Clairvaux.⁴⁹ His peace and self-possession were an antidote for the dissipation from which Aelred was still suffering.⁵⁰ Chronic illness did not prevent Simon from living the austere Cistercian life to the full,⁵¹ and Aelred, not to be outdone

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48. Aelred, 'Speculum Caritatis'. PL., CXCIV, col. 562 D: "At nunc, inquam, qui mores tui, quae vita, qui actus? Et ille subridens, 'In promptu, inquit, est dicere: non enim ignorari se sinunt. Est quidem cibus parcius, vestis asperior: potus e fonte, somnus plerumque in codice. Denique fatigatis membris male mollis matta substernitur; dum somnus suavior fuerit, surgere campana pulsante compellimur. Taceo quod in sudore vultus nostri vescimur pane nostro, quod tribus solum hominibus, et hoc rarissime, et vix de necessariis loquimur."
49. Bede Jarrett, "St. Aelred of Rievaulx". The English Way, ed. Maisie Ward, (London: Sheed and Ward, 1934), p. 91. Aelred laments Simon's death in the Speculum Caritatis, Lib. I, Cap. XXXIV, cols. 539 C-546 D.
50. 'Speculum Caritatis', PL., CXCIV, col. 542 C-D: "Et poteram quidem, Domine, licet lento pede, cum superbiam meam retunderet conse conspecta humilitas ejus, oculis hic objiceretur pia conversatio ejus; cum inquietudinem meam reprimeret considerata tranquillitas ejus, cum levitas mea constringeretur freno mirae gravitatis ejus. Meminimeae saepe, cum oculis huc illucque discurrerem, ad unum ejus aspectum tanto pudore perfusum, ut subito intra memetipsum receptus, manu gravitatis omnem illam compercerem levitatem, ac me ad me colligens inciperem mecum aliquid utile actitare. Simul quidem loqui ordinis nostri nostri prohibebat auctoritas, sed loquebatur mihi aspectus ejus, loquebatur mihi incessus ejus, loquebatur mihi ipsum silentium ejus. Aspectus pudicus, maturus incessus, gravitas in sermone, silentium sine amaritudine."
51. Ibid., col. 540 B: "Quis enim non obstupescat, quis non miretur puerum tenerum et delicatum, clarum genere, forma conspicuum, talem arripuisse viam, et sic arripuisse?"

by his weaker friend, plunged gaily into the round of monastic chores, not sparing his soft hands.⁵²

It was during his novitiate and the years between his profession and his first appointment as novice-master that Aelred came to enjoy the delights of mystical prayer. Later, during his busy abbacy, he was to look longingly back to the days when he could pray uninterrupted by the cares of administration.⁵³ Aelred had been four years a monk when two men whom he greatly esteemed met in the Battle of the Standard in 1138. Walter Espec defended the English border country against the invading army of David I of Scotland. Part of the battle was fought near Aelred's own home of Hexham, the privilege of sanctuary alone saving the church from destruction. The encounter was described by Aelred in his De Bello Standardi, a work containing a striking description of the huge Walter Espec.⁵⁴ In 1141 Aelred was sent as head of a mission to Rome concerning the disputed election of William Fitzherbert to the See of York. The mission, consisting of members of the Cistercian and Augustinian Orders,

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52. Daniel, Vita, p. 21: "Non turbulentur se ante alios ingerit et indecenter agitat, impingens hinc inde in monachos et humeros fratrum frangens, uerum cum animi exultatione et laudabili mocione membrorum, cum humilitate cordis et corporis congrua exercitacione aggreditur hilariter que iubenter."
53. Aelred, 'Tractatus de Jesu Puero Duodenni'. CLXXXIV, col. 896 A: "Illi necessitates quandoque praeponunt contemplationis deliciis: ti eas non praeponas unitati et pace congregationis."
54. Aelred, 'De Bello Standardi' PL., CXCIV, col. 703 D.

failed because those who were actually preferring charges of simony and evil living against Fitzherbert were not present,⁵⁵ but in 1147 the Cistercians succeeded in having the election annulled and Henry Murdac, the Abbot of Fountains, succeeded to the see. This was the fourth disputed election to the See of York since the Conquest: William the Conqueror had appointed Thomas of Bayeux to the position in 1070, but his consecration was delayed until 1072 because he was the son of a priest and refused to do homage to Lanfranc, Archbishop of Canterbury. The Consecration of Thomas II was also delayed for the same reason—Thomas refused, it would seem, on advice from the Pope, to submit to Anselm and thus imply that the Archdiocese of York was inferior in dignity to that of Canterbury. In 1114 the procedure repeated itself—Thurstan also refused the submission. Thus it was becoming an almost normal occurrence that there be a dispute before the consecration of the Archbishop of York.

On Aelred's return journey he stopped at the mother-house of Rievaulx, Clairvaux, and met Abbot Bernard. So impressed was Bernard with the young monk's attitudes and abilities, that the following year he commanded him to compose a treatise on charity. So well did Aelred carry out Bernard's instructions, that his contemporaries thought his Speculum Caritatis to be his masterpiece.⁵⁶

55. Raine, Op. cit., II, p. 221.

56. Daniel, Vita, p. 25.

black and white curtain.⁵⁹ The anchoress was to discourage men from taking a meal in her presence, and to shun any conversation or behaviour that smacked of familiarity.⁶⁰ That Julian had established a reputation for wisdom and understanding is evident from Margery Kempe's testimony, for she consulted her as a woman who "good counsel could give"⁶¹. Judging from the length of time they spent in "holy speeches and dalliance"⁶² Julian was patient, charitable and a good listener. Her reply to Margery's lengthy description of her favours and graces is consonant with the rest of her teachings in both its orthodoxy and its Scriptural basis:

"And a double man is ever unstable and unsteadfast in all his ways. He that is ever doubting is like the flood of the sea which is moved and borne about with the wind, and that man is not likely to receive the gifts of God."⁶³

This is the Julian that those seeking advice met-wise, kindly, candid. Her final remark to Margery shows that she had correctly assessed the latter's boisterous character:

"Patience is necessary to you, for in that ye shall keep your soul."⁶⁴

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59. Ibid., p. 184: "Let no man take a meal in your presence except with your director's permission, general or special, general in the case of the Friars Preachers and Friars Minor, special in all other cases."
60. Ibid., p. 27: "Not only any sensual touch, but also any unclean word, even if there is no more than this between a man and an anchoress, is loathesomely vicious and merits God's anger."
61. Kempe, p. 54.
62. Ibid., p. 54.
63. Ibid., p. 55.
64. Ibid., p. 56.

It is hard to imagine Julian behaving towards the aging Margery as did her anchoress friend at York who, believing the scandalous tales about Margery on pilgrimage, refused to have anything more to do with her.⁶⁵ Julian almost certainly saw and heard much of the basic needs of humanity in her seventy years in her capacity as counsellor.

Julian may also have given some private instructions in the rudiments of reading, provided, of course, that she could read herself, since the Ancrene Riwe allowed her to give some help and guidance and learning.⁶⁶ Both the Riwe and Aelred's Regula Inclusarum discouraged anchoresses from keeping school, but it would appear that occasional tutoring was not objected to. Even Julian's counselling sessions at the parlor window could also be considered instruction in the ways of God, a function Aelred was bound to perform by means of sermons in chapter.

Julian employed two maid-servants, Alice and Sarah, who are mentioned with her in a will of 1416.⁶⁷ The Ancrene Riwe imposed upon her a function parallel to that of Aelred, that of commanding them and of training them.⁶⁸ Julian, of course, was responsible for her two maid-servants; Aelred was responsible at the beginning of his abbacy for

65. Ibid., p. 155.

66. Ancrene Riwe, p. 188: "An anchoress must not turn into a schoolmistress, nor turn an anchor-house into a school for children."

67. Chambers, Op. cit., pp. 26-27.

68. Ancrene Riwe, p. 191.

three hundred monks and brothers. At the time of his death the number had grown to one hundred and forty monks and five hundred laybrothers.⁶⁹

What were the two mystics like in the way in which they commanded? Although we have no concrete evidence of Julian's behaviour, it is difficult to suppose that such an eloquent spokesman for the love of God for men, who showed such concern for her "even-Christians" would be anything but gentle. The Ancrene Riwe enjoins strictness and loving attention to be directed toward the two maid-servants, who lived a life almost as rigorous as that of the anchoress.⁷⁰ Aelred, although demanding in matters of discipline, was gentle in making his demands. If he erred, he erred in the direction of mildness. His biographer remarks that he was singularly free from what he called "pedantic imbecility" with which other abbots of his acquaintance were afflicted.⁷¹ In theory, Aelred was uncompromising, refusing to agree with an Augustinian monk that corporal discipline lessens charity.⁷² In practice, however, he was ready to mitigate monastic discipline in order to keep monks who were finding the life too difficult from leaving the monastery. A case in point is that of the unstable cleric. The biographer does not

69. Daniel, Vita, p. 38.

70. Ancrene Riwe, pp. 188-190.

71. Daniel, Vita, p. 40.

72. 'Speculum Caritatis', PL., CXCIV, cols. 533-534.

say whether the man was in priest's orders or had merely received the tonsure before entering the monastery, he simply speaks of him as a cleric. Aelred had trained him as a novice and taken him to the new foundation of Revesby in 1143. During his novitiate he had already shown signs of his instability, leaving the cloister for a whole day and wandering about in the woods until the darkness forced him back into Aelred's waiting arms. His novice-master refrained from informing the abbot of the man's behaviour in an effort to keep him in the monastery.⁷³ At Revesby the novice declared his intention of leaving the cloister, and would have nothing of Aelred's offers to mitigate the rule for him. As the man left his company, Aelred promised to fast until he returned safely to the monastery. The cleric's mad rush for the gate was suddenly halted by an invisible wall at the enclosure gate; try as he might he could not pass beyond it and had to return to his abbot.⁷⁴ Walter Daniel cites as witnesses to this occurrence Henry and Robert of Beverley, priests and monks, and Ralph the Short, Deacon and monk.⁷⁵ The monk seems to have persevered at Revesby and returned to Rievaulx with Aelred in 1147, for he was sent with Walter Daniel's father to teach the Cistercian way of life to the Savigniac house of Swineshead.

73. Daniel, Vita, p. 25.

74. Ibid., p. 31.

75. Ibid., p. 67.

Returning from this mission, he was seized with a desire to have one last visit with his relatives, but Aelred, who had learned of his imminent death in a dream, persuaded him to come into the monastery without delay. A few days later, the monk died peacefully in Aelred's arms.⁷⁶ Aelred's concern that not one of his sons be lost finds an echo in Julian's constant concern for her "even-Christians"⁷⁷ for whom her revelations were meant.

Although Cistercian monks were supposed to be far removed from the business of the world, they were nevertheless employed both as instruments in church reform, and as civilisers of wild terrain. Their desire to settle in desert places resulted in large areas of hitherto unproductive land coming under cultivation or being used for sheep-grazing. They drained marshes, diverted watercourses, cleared forests and planted hedgerows. Their activity in the field of church reform as similar; their mere presence in a district often served to raise the moral tone of the place, and, as in the case of the disputed election of York they often took a more active part in assuring that the church had worthy bishops. It would appear that the foundation at Revesby under the patronage of St. Mary and St. Lawrence, the patron saint of the parish church,

76. Ibid., p.31.

77. Revelations, p. 74: "Throughout all this I was greatly moved with love for my fellow Christians, that they might know and see what I was seeing, for I wanted it to cheer them too. The vision was for all and sundry."

was made with a view to restoring some sort of order and stability into an area torn by the wars of Stephen's reign.⁷⁸ Aelred established a reputation for zeal and holiness throughout the Lincolnshire countryside by preaching at synods of priests at the request of the bishop. At the same time, the abbey was enriched by generous grants of land from knights who had formerly fought over it. Here Daniel anticipates criticism on the grounds of acquisitiveness by saying that since the laymen of the place had reduced the land to a desert by fighting for possession of it, it was better that the peaceful monks should possess it.⁷⁹

The resignation of the scholarly abbot of Rievaulx, Maurice, in 1147, caused the monks of Rievaulx to elect Aelred in his place. Maurice, however, was not yet clear of abbatial responsibilities., for Henry Murdac, the former abbot of Fountains who was elected Archbishop of York on December 7, 1147, promptly nominated Maurice to succeed him. Maurice however, remained only three months at his new post, returning to Rievaulx to be replaced by Thorold, another monk from the same monastery.⁸⁰

78. Daniel, *Vita*, p. 28: "Volebat ergo monachis cedere ad utilitatem pro qua universi pene pugnabant ad mortem. Et sciebat possessoribus ad salutem proficere Deo dare quod habebant, qui nisi hoc darent ceiam forsitan sine mercede cum uita et illud perdidissent."

79. *Ibid.*, p. 28.

80. *Memorials*, p. 104: "Fontes, interim veniens, monachum quendam Rievallis, Mauricium nomine, in abbatem creavit. Hic Mauricius, non tres plene menses, apud Fontes, faciens, resignata cura in manu archiepiscopi, rediit locum unde assumptus est."

As abbot of Rievaulx, Aelred was in even greater demand than at Revesby for occasional sermons, the witnessing of charters, and the settling of ecclesiastical disputes. In 1154 he headed a commission of abbots to settle the dispute between Savigny and Furness with respect to their jurisdiction over Byland Abbey.⁸¹ The year 1155 found him at his native Hexham, where he preached a sermon on the occasion of the translation of the relics of the saints of the church.⁸² His cousin, Abbot Laurence of Westminster, prevailed upon him to preach the sermon Nemo accendit lucernam at the solemn translation of the relics of St. Edward the Confessor in 1163. Henry II and Becket were present at this ceremony, and it is quite possible that Becket took this opportunity to consult with Aelred on matters which were troubling the church at the time.

The statutes of the Cistercians imposed upon Aelred the duty of visiting Citeaux and Clairvaux, Rievaulx's motherhouse annually after the year 1152. Besides this annual trip to France, which he appears to have made until he received permission to remain in England because of his illnesses,⁸³ he was also obliged to visit all of the daughter-houses of Rievaulx annually. Even during the last

81. Monasticon, V. pt I, pp. 352-353.

82. Raine, Op. cit., I, pp. 173-203.

83. Ibid., p. 39 This dispensation was probably given in 1157, when the petition of the Scottish abbots to be allowed to visit France only every fourth year was also granted.

years of his life he managed to make the difficult journey to Scotland in 1159,⁸⁴ in 1165,⁸⁵ and 1166.⁸⁶

There is a contrast here between the itinerant abbot and the cloistered recluse, but it must not be assumed that Julian spent her days in idleness while Aelred was overwhelmed with activity. Both Aelred in his Regula Inclusarum and the author of the Ancrene Riwe were concerned about how the anchoress was to use her time. Idleness was seen as a danger to chastity and even to the mental health of the recluse.⁸⁷ Prayer, mental and vocal, occupied, as might be expected, a large part of the day. The first chapter of the Ancrene Riwe and the ninth and tenth sections of the Regula Inclusarum spell out in great detail the prayers and devotions the anchoress is supposed to say.⁸⁸ Julian's revelations had, moreover, given her much to think about for "fifteen years and more".⁸⁹

84. Ibid., p. xcii.

85. Ibid., p. 74 Powicke remarks that the chronology is confused in Daniel.

86. Ibid., p. 38.

87. Ancrene Riwe, p. 51: "Looking at her own white hands does harm to many an anchoress whose hands are too beautiful because they are idle. They should scrape up earth every day out of the grave in which they shall rot."

88. Aelred, De Institutis Inclusarum, ed. C. H. Talbot, Analecta S.O.C., VII, (1951), No. 9: "Hiis inspectus, operi manuum, lectioni, et oracioni certa tempora deputemus. Ociositas quippe inimica est anime quam pre omnibus cauere debet inclusa . . . Caueat autem, ne prolixior oracio fastidium pariat. Vtilius est enim sepius orare breuiter, quam semel nimis prolixie, nisi forte oracionem deuocio inspirata ipso nesciente qui orat prolongauerit."

89. Revelations, p. 169.

It was from this pondering upon the shewings that she derived the lengthy expositions which appear in the longer version of of her work. Besides praying and meditating, receiving instruction from wandering friars and giving counsel to those who came to the parlour window, the anchoress occupied herself with reading French or English books, needlework or spinning.⁹⁰ The scholarly activities of certain anchorites and anchoresses has already been commented upon.

Within the monastery, Aelred devoted much of his time to teaching, counselling and writing. In the opening pages of the De Spirituali Amicitia there is a charming picture of Aelred, surrounded by his monks, discussing questions of Scripture and morality.⁹¹ Even during his illnesses the monks crowded into his little infirmary cell in groups of twenty and thirty to chat about religious matters. Daniel describes them sitting or lying on the sick abbot's bed or standing around.⁹² These gatherings must have been exceedingly trying for Aelred, wracked with arthritis and kidney stones, but he continued to welcome his sons and to listen to them patiently. He was possessed of the quality which the French call disponibilité, a mixture of amiability and accessibility, an attitude which he revealed in moving terms in his Tractatus de Jesu Puero

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90. Ancrene Riwe, pp 18-19 "Each may say them [prayers] in the way she likes best, and so also when you say versicles from the Psalter, when you read English or French books, and when you make holy mediations."
91. 'De Spirituali Amicitia, PL., CXCIV, col. 661A.
92. Daniel, Vita. p. 40.

Duodenni.⁹³ Because of his unique attitude towards the admitting of candidates, Rievaulx became a haven for misfit monks and clerics from England and the Continent.⁹⁴ Rievaulx was to be a haven of love and peace for the weak, and in attaining this ideal, Aelred was helped, according to his biographer, by the monks of that house, who showed great kindness to monks who had been expelled from other houses. This policy of granting admission to all comers worked well during Aelred's time, but within ten years of his death, there is evidence that many of the temperamentally unfit were finding life too difficult without his help. The number of defections from the monastery was sufficient to call forth a bull from Alexander III between 1171 and 1181 prohibiting the harbouring of fugitive monks or lay-brothers

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93. 'Tractatus de Jesu Puero Duodenni'. PL., CLXXXIV, col. 868 C: Plerumque enim nobis vel secretis meditationibus, vel privatis orationibus postposita omni actione intentis, si, plus quam subditis expedit, immoremur in mediis deliciis, spiritu nimirum operante, et charitate suggerente; subito venit in mentem memoria infirmorum, ut illum cotitemus contristatum exspectare a paternis visceribus consolationem; alterum tentatum explorare, quando procedens in publicum pater aliquod ei afferat suo sermone solamen; illum irae stimulis agitated, quande non habet ubi conceptum virus confessione salubri exaporet, adversus patrem submurmurae; alterum acedie spiritu victum, ut inveniatur cui loquatur, quem consulat, huc illucque discurrere."
94. Daniel, Vita, p. 37.

from Rievaulx.⁹⁵

Both Julian and Aelred displayed a certain largeness in their attitudes towards their fellow-Christians. Aelred's tolerance of difficult characters brought criticism upon him in his own day, and Julian's writings have, because of certain statements, seemed heretical to some later critics. There is a tendency among writers to seize upon certain statements, notably in Chapter 37 of the longer version, which would seem to indicate that no one was to be damned. This difficulty is overcome when the words. "In every soul to be saved" are recalled.⁹⁶ Julian also speaks of the "elect", a word which has no meaning if all are to be saved. A more serious difficulty appears in the same passage,

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95. Cartularium Rievallense, p. 194, No. CCLXI: "Alexander . . . dilectis filiis, universis personis Ebor. Archiepiscopatus . . . Non parum robor regularis disciplinae deperiret si cuilibet a nota professionis liceret qualibet facilitate recedere, et habitum deponere assumptae Religionis, quam regni caelestis aptitudinem meretur amittere qui manum ponens ad aratrum retro aspicere non formidat. Ideoque universitati vestrae per apostolica scripta praecipiendo mandamus et mandando praecipimus quatinus monachos vel conversos Monasterii Rievallensis nullatenus recipiatis, set potius si deposito Religionis habitu, saeculariter viverint, publice excommunicatos denuntietis, et cautius evitetis, de parrochianis vestris penitus expellatis. Datum Tusculani, viii kal. Martii."
96. Revelations, p. 118: "In every soul to be saved is a godly will that never consented to sin, in the past or in the future. Just as there is an animal will in our lower nature that does not will what is good, so there is a godly will in our higher part, which by its basic goodness never wills what is evil, by only what is good."

however, for it would appear that Julian wishes to say that the elect never commit any mortal sin. E. I. Watkins has provided a metaphysical explanation of this passage which saves Julian from the charge of heresy.⁹⁷ The explanation may seem tenuous, but, unless this passage is dismissed as one in which Julian was simply having difficulty expressing herself, it is difficult to see how it can be seen as not contradicting the traditional doctrine on mortal sin.

Suffering and penance for sin occupied an important place in the lives of both Julian and Aelred. Both underwent physical and mental agonies-serious illnesses and trying temptations. Walter Daniel provided vivid detailed descriptions of his abbot's illnesses, the stone and arthritis. The arthritis may well have been brought on by Aelred's habit, while he was novice-master, of standing up to his

97. Watkins, Op. cit., p. 142: "This doctrine of an indefectible union between the elect and God in the fundamental orientation of the will is as far as I know peculiar among catholic mystics to Julian. It may even seem identical with the Protestant teaching of the indefectibility of grace. But Julian also teaches that a soul that shall be finally saved may fall into mortal sin, 'I saw how sin is deadly for a short time to the blessed creatures of endless life.' This seemingly inconsistent doctrine of a substantial ill-union persisting in spite even of mortal sin is, I believe, Julian's vision of the ground of the soul outside the time series in the eternal Now of God. However a soul is in time, if it is finally saved for eternity, in eternity and therefore in the present vision and reality of God-more real than the time series and its phenomena-it is and therefore in God the will is essentially and fundamentally its final choice."

neck in cold water while he recited the Psalter.⁹⁸ To his physical sufferings were added the administrative cares of a large house which deprived him of the peace and consolation which he had once known in prayer. His biographer refers several times to his delicacy of spirit and of body,⁹⁹ the sensitivity of which must have been heightened by the austerities of his youth. Even the remedies he was forced to take for these ailments caused him another type of suffering-that of accusations from some monks of easy living. Daniel hotly denies these accusations of luxury, pointing out that the abbot could not possibly have enjoyed the hot baths and ointments when he was suffering so much.¹⁰⁰ Towards the end of his life, his agony became so intense that he begged for a quick death.¹⁰¹ His supplication for death was made in English since the word "Christ", being one syllable, was easier to say-a touching reminder of Aelred's Anglo-Saxon lineage. During the last ten days of his life he was unable to take any solid food. For a time his power of speech failed, but three days before his passing he was able to beg once more for an end to his sufferings. He died as

98. Daniel, *Vita*, p. 25.

99. *Ibid.*, pp. 21, 49, 79.

100. *Ibid.*, p. 34: "O ergo tu quid dixisti de lauacris Aelred? Num deliciae in eis fuere, in quibus affuit tanta defeccio?"

101. *Ibid.*, p. 60: "Dicebat ergo, ut uerbis eius utar, 'Festinate, for crist luve,' id est, pro Christi amore festinate."

he predicted, January 12, 1167, the day before the Ides of January.¹⁰²

Although the circumstances of Julian's death are not known, she has given a detailed description of her sickness unto death during which her visions took place. She was afflicted with paralysis which became so serious that on the fourth day of the sickness she was given the last rites.¹⁰³ Her physical and mental reactions are described with great exactness-she was sorry to die, not because of her youth or her will to live, but simply because a longer life might give her greater opportunity to know and love God better on earth and in heaven. Her lower limbs were paralysed, her sight was failing when suddenly, as she gazed upon the crucifix, her pain vanished.¹⁰⁴ At this point, she remembered the graces for which she had asked, and was moved to ask for them again. It was then that the series of the sixteen revelations began, accompanied by a marked improvement in her physical state. The shewings continued through the morning of the fifth day from four until nine o'clock. After the fifteenth vision, her pain returned, and she was left desolate in spirit.¹⁰⁵

102. Ibid., p. 60: "Pridie Idus Januarii migrabit ancilla Domini anima mea a domo sua terrens quam hucusque inhabitavit."

103. Revelations, p. 64.

104. Ibid., p. 66.

105. Ibid., Chap. 66, p. 181: "At one moment I was feeling that I was going to survive, and at the next minute my sickness had returned, first in my head which began to throb, and then suddenly my whole body felt as ill as it had ever been. I was as stupid and berfit as if I had not had a grain of comfort."

There are certain indications which could lead one to believe that Julian's was a psychosomatic illness--more than one modern author has suggested that it was emotionally induced.¹⁰⁶ A psychosomatic or emotionally induced illness is, however, very real, whatever the actual cause. Julian's sickness was an observable physical phenomenon--her mother believed that she was dying.¹⁰⁷

Whether the cause of Julian's experience lay within her psyche or without it, or whether there was a mixture of divine intervention aided by certain psychological predispositions does not materially affect the value of her message. It can be examined independently of Julian for orthodoxy and originality of content. In spite of the questionable passages above, the whole of the text is in line with the traditional teachings of Christianity and provides some very penetrating insights into those teachings, shedding new light upon ancient truth. Julian, moreover, remains firm in her desire not to depart from the teaching of her mother Church.¹⁰⁸ While it is true that the visions which Julian experienced, especially those that impinged upon her senses, could have arisen from a number of images

106. Graef, Op. cit., p. 263.

107. Shewings, p. 56.

108. Revelations, p. 57: "This I was taught, by the grace of God, that I should steadfastly hold me in the faith as I had aforehand understood, and therewith that I should firmly believe that all things shall be well, as our Lord shewed in the same time."

stored in her subconscious from sermons and meditations, nevertheless her readers are forced to marvel at both the sequence of these images and the lessons which she is able to draw from them. The "raw material" in her own subconscious may have been used to teach her certain truths for her own benefit and for that of all her "even-Christians".

In the lives of both Julian and Aelred there is abundant evidence of both affection and concern for their neighbour. The influence for good of Aelred's friends upon him is apparent in his adolescent admiration for David I, his attachment to Simon during his novitiate, and his mature friendship with Bernard, which brought forth the masterful Speculum Caritatis. Aelred snatched away his boyhood friend Waldeof from the Augustinians at Kirkham to the Cistercian monastery of Warden. Besides the contact that he had with his refuse sister, he was also acquainted with the celebrated St. Godric of Finchdale whom he visited in 1159.¹⁰⁹ St. Gilbert, founder of the Order of Sempringham, called upon him to judge the infamous seduction case at the convent of Watton.¹¹⁰

The abbot of Rievaulx, "friendship's child" was no

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109. Reginald of Durham, 'De Vita et Miraculis S. Godrici,' (London: Surtees Society, 1847), p. 176 ff, as referred to in Alberic Stacpoole, "The Public Face of Aelred", Downside Review, LXXXV (1957), p. 324.
110. Aelred, 'De Sanctimoniali de Watton', Pl., CXCIV, cols. 789-96.

less rich in friends within his own order. Walter Daniel has left a testimony to his friendship with his Abbot in the Vita and Apologia, and in his Centum Sententiae which reflect much of Aelred's thought.¹¹¹ Just as his friend Simon's death had called forth an eloquent lament in the Speculum Caritatis,¹¹² so Aelred's own death called forth a similar eulogy from St. Gilbert of Hoiland in his Sermons on the Canticle of Canticles.¹¹³ His friend, Roger, Abbot of Byland which was just over the hill from Rievaulx, was present at his deathbed to give him the last rites.¹¹⁴ C. H. Talbot, in his introduction to his critical edition of Walter Daniel's Centum Sententiae, surveys the intellectual potentiality of the monastery and shows that Daniel, who was called Magister Walterus, had plenty of good company in the scholarly Maurice of Durham, Thorold, Waldeof of Kirkham, the Abbot William who had also obtained his licence to teach, Henry of Beverley, Ralph of Rothwell and Little Ralph. These last three seem to have been Aelred's favorite travelling companions.¹¹⁵

Other friends and acquaintances of Aelred belonged to all stations of life. There was Lawrence of Durham, who may well have taught Aelred as a boy at the monastery school of Durham. Dom Anselme Hoste has published a text of a

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111. Walter Daniel, 'Centum Sententiae', ed. C. H. Talbot, Sacris Erudiri, Vol. XI, 1960, pp. 266-383.
 112. 'Speculum Caritatis', PL., col. CXCIV, 539-540.
 113. Gilbert of Hoiland, Sermones, PL., CLXXXIV.
 114. Daniel, Vita, p. 59.
 115. Ibid., p. lxxvii.

letter from Lawrence to Aelred when he was steward (dispensator) at the Scottish court.¹¹⁶ In this letter Lawrence encourages Aelred to take up once more his life of St. Brigid of Ireland, even though it is written in barbarous Latin.¹¹⁷ It may well have been the influence of Lawrence, which extended beyond the school-room of Durham, which played an important part in Aelred's choice of a monastic vocation. It is also noteworthy that Aelred was not unacquainted with the lives of Irish saints such as St. Aidan, and St. Bridgid. It may have been the influence of their austere practices which led him to adopt the Irish custom of immersing himself in icy water while he recited psalms.

Other influences from the classics and the Church Fathers appear in his writings. Seneca¹¹⁸ and Cicero¹¹⁹ are sources for his one philosophical work, De Anima, and for his treatise on friendship. St. Augustine's Confessions were always at hand, from the time of his entry into the monastery until his death.¹²⁰ The writings of Abelard, Gilbert de la Porée, and, of course, of Bernard of Clairvaux were known to him. In his De Anima he made use of such diverse authors as Jerome, Hugh of St. Victor, John Scotus Eriugena, Rhabanus Maurus and Peter Lombard. His learning,

116. Anselme Hoste, "The Unedited Works of Lawrence of Durham", Sacris Erudiri, Vol. XI, 1960, p. 263.

117. Ibid., p. 263.

118. Aelred, De Anima, ed. C. H. Talbot, (London: Supplement I to Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institute, 1952), p. 100.

119. Ibid., p. 162.

120. Daniel, Vita, p. 58.

apparently acquired in brief snatches of time between work in the fields and Divine Office, was a source of amazement to his biographer.¹²¹

It is far less easy to trace Julian's friends and acquaintances, for in her Revelations she keeps strictly to the matter in hand. The only specific allusions to living people are those which have been mentioned already—her mother, the curate and his acolyte, the religious man, and the friend whom she asked Our Lord about. Margery Kempe, and her servants Sarah and Alice, are known from other sources. It is possible, however, to speculate from knowledge of her contemporaries in Norwich who very possibly would have undertaken to instruct or to avail themselves of instruction from Julian. If Julian were living in St. Julian's parish at the time of her revelations, the priest who came to be at her ending was probably Father Thomas Whiting, the incumbent at St. Julian's from 1351 to 1370.¹²² Down the street from Julian was an Augustinian friary, one of the largest in England.¹²³ These friars, who showed such zeal in acting as spiritual directors (William Flete, an Englishman, was spiritual director to St. Catherine of Siena), must surely have offered instruction and spiritual consolation to such a close neighbour. One of them may have been that

121. Ibid., p. 26.

122. Chamber, Op. cit., p. 29.

123. David Knowles, Medieval English Religious Houses, (London: Longmans Green, 1953), p. 201.

"religious man" who visited Julian during her illness. There were other men in Norwich who had a reputation for sanctity—Richard Castyr, the holy priest of St. Stephen's,¹²⁴ and the Carmelite, William Sowthfield.¹²⁵ To both of these men Margery Kempe poured out the spiritual favours she had received. Perhaps Julian had heard sermons by the learned Adam Easton, the Benedictine who returned to Norwich from Oxford to organize preaching in the cathedral between 1357 and 1363.¹²⁶ Besides the Carmelites and the Augustinians, the Dominicans and the Franciscans also had houses in Norwich and must have stopped by her cell from time to time. The Ancrene Riwe assumed that such would be the case, giving special indulgences for the visits of Dominican and Franciscan friars.¹²⁷ The members of these mendicant orders travelled to the Continent and returned with ideas from the Rhineland mystics, the Flemings and the Italians. Continental writers who were known to devout lay persons such as Cicely, Duchess of York, were St. Bonaventure, St. Mechtild, St. Catherine

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124. Kempe, p. 50: "Dread thee not, I shall make thee strong enough. I bid thee go to the Vicar of St. Stephen's and say that I greet him well . . . "
125. Ibid., p. 53: "This creature was charged and commanded in her soul that she should go to a White Friar, in the same city of Norwich, called William Sowthfield, a good man and a holy liver, to show him the grace that God had wrought in her, as she had done to the good Vicar before."
126. W. A. Pantin, The English Church in the Fourteenth Century, (Cambridge: University Press, 1955), p. 175. Pantin also gives an admirable survey of the religious literature in the vernacular which was being produced at this time, some of which certainly influenced Julian, directly or indirectly.
127. Ancrene Riwe, p. 28; 184.

of Siena and St. Bridget of Sweden.¹²⁸ It is worth noting, as Pantin points out, that Julian was living in the age of the devout layman.¹²⁹

These two mystics, then, living more than two hundred years apart, illustrate in their lives and teachings certain stable elements of English spirituality, notably a devotion to Mary, Mother of the Saviour and a warm affection for their fellow man. Two words which would serve to typify English medieval piety are tenderness and humanness. Aelred's Regula Inclusarum, written for his sister, was by no means an easy rule, but it did take into consideration human frailty. Through it, Aelred may be said to have influenced Julian, for the anchoress relied not only upon the Ancrene Riwe, which borrowed much from the Regula Inclusarum, but also upon the ancient English traditions concerning the eremitical life. The Regula itself formed an important part of this tradition.

In doctrine they deal with similar themes but sometimes from different angles-Aelred, for example, stresses what a human being must do to love God, whereas Julian stresses God's love for man. There is a progression, a broadening of attitudes towards God and creation which makes the spirituality of the fourteenth century distinctively English.

128. Pantin, Op. cit., p. 254.

129. Ibid., p. 253.

CHAPTER III

THE TEACHING OF AELRED AND JULIAN ON CHARITY

Charity is a dominant theme in the writings of both Aelred and of Julian. This virtue, which consists essentially in unselfish love of God and one's neighbour, receives treatment that is unique in many respects in the Middle Ages, although it is a favorite theme with many spiritual writers. The basic message is always the same-charity is the foundation of Christianity-but how differently that message can be understood within the framework of orthodoxy is illustrated by these two writers.

Aelred's most important work, the Speculum Caritatis,¹ is a development of various aspects of love. Julian's only work, in two versions, is exactly what the title indicates-Sixteen Revelations of Divine Love, that is the love of God for man. Besides producing a work on the virtue of charity, Aelred also composed, at a very much later date, a treatise De Spirituali Amicitia,² in which he focussed on the virtue of charity as manifested in friendship. Love, divine and human, was the preoccupation of both mystics.

The Speculum Caritatis is considered by Walter Daniel³ and a modern commentator, Dom Andre Wilmart⁴ to

1. PL., CXCIV, cols. 501-620

2. Ibid. cols. 659-702

3. Walter Daniel, Vita Aelredi, p. 25: "Scripsit etiam tres libros secundum indicium meum pre omnibus quos scripsit laudabilis, quos vocavit speculum caritatis . . ."

4. A. Wilmart, "L'Instigateur du 'Speculum Caritatis' d'Aelred Abbé de Rievaulx." Révue d'Ascétique et de Mystique, Vol. 14, (Oct. 1933) p. 374

be the best of Aelred's works-his masterpiece. The work was composed shortly after Aelred's return from Rome in 1142, probably during his year's term as novice-master at Rievaulx.⁵ In one of his digressions in Book II of the Speculum, he draws on his experiences in helping young men adjust to the hardship of the monastic life in a dialogue with a discouraged novice. The novice is indeed leading a much harder and more virtuous life than before his entry into the monastery, but his only reward seems to be a sense of God's absence, in contrast to great sweetness in prayer while he was still leading a worldly life. Aelred gently draws him out of his despondency by pointing out that what he is doing is pleasing to God and profitable to his soul.⁶

The introductory letter to the Speculum is attributed in Migne to Abbot Gervase of Louth Park.⁷ Wilmart's article deals with the authorship of this letter however, and demonstrates from internal evidence that the letter is almost certainly from Bernard of Clairvaux.⁸ The book was written shortly after Aelred's return journey from Rome, during which he stopped at Clairvaux, and was welcomed by Bernard.

5. Daniel, Vita, p. 25.

6. 'Speculum Caritatis', PL., cols. 562-566.

7. Ibid., cols. 501-504.

8. Wilmart, Op. cit pp. 369 ff.

Since the virtue of charity was coming under close scrutiny on the Continent at this time, by such prominent theologians as William of St. Thierry and Hugh of St. Victor, it is probably that Bernard wanted an essay from the English Cistercians, and could think of no better representative than Aelred. The language of the letter itself betrays the manner of an Abbot of a Mother-house, as Clairvaux was to Rievaulx, not of an Abbot of an inferior abbey, as was Louth Park.⁹ Gervase would have been in no position to give Aelred any commands, nor is it likely that he would have had the temerity to give the headings of the discussion or the title of it.¹⁰ It is to be in the Speculum style, so as to reflect, as in a mirror, the various aspects of charity. Aelred has followed Bernard's instructions to the letter.

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9. 'Speculum Caritatis', PL., CXCIV col. 501-512: "Rogavi fraternitatem tuam, imo praecepi, imo sub attestazione divini nominis adjuravi; ut mihi pauca quaedam scriberes, inter quae etiam quorundam querimoniis, qui de remissioribus ad arctiora nituntur, obviare. Non damno, non reprehendo excusationem, sed prorsus obstinationem accuso."
10. Ibid., col. 503-504: "Praeceptio itaque in nomine Jesu Christi, et in Spiritu Dei nostri quatenus ea quae tibi diuturna meditatione nota sunt, de excellentia charitatis, de fructu ejus, de ordine ejus, stylo adnotare non differas, ut et quid sit charitas, et quanta in ejus possessione habeatur dulcedo, quanta in cupiditate, quae ei contraria est, sentiatur oppressio: quam non ipsam dulcedinem charitatis minuat, ut quidam putant, sed potius augeat, hominis exterioris afflictio; postremo qualis in ejus exhibitione sit habenda discretio, in ipso opere tuo, quasi in quodam speculo agnoscamus. Verum, ut pudori tuo parcat; haec ipsa epistola in fronte operis praefigatur; ut quidquid in Speculo charitatis (hoc enim libro nomen imponimus), lectori displicuerit, non tibi parueris, sed mihi, quid inuitim coegerim, imputetur."

The Speculum is a carefully thought out piece, treating first the excellence of charity, then of the obstacles to it and of how they are overcome, and finally of the ways in which charity is manifested. Strong emphasis is placed on the means that man must take to love God, his neighbour as himself and also himself. The stress on an enlightened love of self is particularly important, for many medieval writers "forgot" this part of the Gospel commandment of love, and viewed the self as an enemy to be conquered in a life-long battle. Aelred's doctrine at first sight seems to differ little from that of Irish monks such as Saint Columban.¹¹ He states categorically that we must love ourselves because Scripture tells us to.¹² He hastens to add, however, that the soul must be preferred in love to the body, and that although the body is not to be hated, yet it must suffer rather than the soul.

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11. Francis MacManus, Saint Columban, (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1962) p. 8: "The monks thought of themselves as spiritual warriors, fighters against pagan beliefs, errors, heresies, and especially against the rebellious, sinful and evasive self."
12. 'Speculum Caritatis', PL., CXCIV, col. 615 C-D, "Sed et Scriptura consulte non ait: 'Diliges proximum tuum', quantum te ipsum; sed 'sicut te ipsum' (Matth. XXII). Modum ergo diligendi praescipsit, non quantitatem indixit. Sic autem sua sibi exhibeatur dilectio, ut primo animae suae, quae potior sui pars est; consulat ad salutem; deinde corpori ad necessitatem. . . . Quod si aliquando incumbat necessitas alterum contemnendi, etiam corporis patiatur interitum; dum tamen animae non sustineat detrimentum. Nec hoc est corpus odire; sed animam corpori in dilectione praeferre."

Man's natural love for himself is, moreover, Aelred's first Sabbath of love.¹³ The proviso that no-one should neglect his soul for the sake of his body ought to be a warning to anyone who might think Aelred's manner of self-love easy. He, himself, practised this kind of "self-love" to the letter, ruining his health rather than allow his concupiscence to gain any sort of a respite.¹⁴ In his Letter to His Sister he reveals a ruthless attitude towards his own flesh¹⁵ which drove him to immerse himself in icy water for long periods of time, and even during his illness to refuse the little comforts normally given to the sick.¹⁶ His understanding of self-love is that of one accustomed to viewing life in the perspective of eternity. He is able to let fall from his hands anything which he considers a hindrance to salvation.

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13. Ibid., col. 577 C: "Sit ergo homini dilectio sui Sabbatum primum; . . ."
14. Aelred, 'De Vita Eremitica ad Sororem Liber'. PL., XXXII col. 1460: "Novi ergo monachum qui cum initio suae conversionis, tam naturalibus incentivis, tam violentia vitiosae consuetudinis, tam suggestionem callidi hostis tentaretur, ut pudicitiam suam periclitare timeret, erexit se contra se, et adversus suam carnem suavissimum concipiens odium nihil magis quam quod ad eam affectaret, expeteret. Itaque inedia macerabat corpus, et quae ei de se debebantur subtrahens, etiam motus ejus simpliciter comprimebat. Sed cum iterum nimia debilitas sibi plus indulgere compelleret, ecce caro rursus caput erigens acquisitam, ut putabatur, infestabat quietem; plerisque se frigidus aquis injiciens, tremens aliquandiu psallebat et orabat."
15. Ibid., col. 1561 C: "Quid enim interest utrum abstinentia, an languore caro superbiens comprimatur, castitas conservetur?"
16. Daniel, Vita, p. 49

A more moderate concept of self-love becomes evident in the thirteenth century in the Ancrene Riwe, which counsels against harsh means of subduing the body.¹⁷ In the fourteenth century the concept of self-conquest is even broader in Julian's writings - life and living itself is a penance which must be borne patiently, cheerfully, for love of God.¹⁸ Thus does the idea of enlightened self-love, so clearly enunciated by Aelred, become tempered and made more humane during the two and a half centuries following his death. An evolution of thought on this crucial point has taken place.

The theme of the three Sabbaths of love is a dominant one in Aelred's Speculum. The true Sabbath of the soul consists in charity, the soul's peace, repose and refreshment. The stress laid on peace would at first sight appear to be in contrast with the mysticism of Aelred's

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17. Ancrene Riwe, pp. 185 - 186: "Let no one wear a belt of any kind next to the skin except by her confessor's permission, or wear anything made of iron or hair or hedgehog-skins, or discipline herself with anything made of these, or with a leaded scourge, or with holly or thorns, or draw blood from her body, without her confessor's permission. Let her not sting any part of her body with nettles, nor scourge herself in front, nor make any cut in her flesh, nor take too severe a discipline at any one time, in order to extinguish temptations."
18. Julian, Revelations, Chap. 77, p. 200: "For he (the Lord) says, 'Do not accuse yourself too much, nor think that your distress and grief is all your fault. It is not any purpose that you should be unreasonably depressed or sorrowful. You will experience distress whatever you do. Therefore I want you to understand your penance and to recognize that your whole life itself is a profitable penance.'"

mentor, Bernard of Clairvaux's more passionate approach to God, described in the language of the Canticle of Canticles and his Sermons on it. Even Bernard, however, recognizes that ultimate union with God is productive of profound peace.¹⁹ In the first book of the Speculum, Aelred defines the Sabbath of love, praising its sweetness and peace,²⁰ and discussing the significance of God's rest on the seventh day of creation. It was a time for God to survey with love what He had made, and to plan the role his creatures were to play in glorifying Him. His reason for creating²¹ was the same reason for His revelations to Julian of Norwich, that is, love.²² This love is manifest in all of creation, the divine goodness even in the tiniest of worms.²³ For a time the theme of Sabbath is left in the background, while the revelation of God's love in each level of creation is discussed, until rational creation, man, is arrived at. After a discussion of love as it appears in man, the Sabbath

19. Hilda Graef, Op. cit., p. 139

20. 'Speculum Caritatis', PL., CXCIV, col. 522 C: "De die septimo nihil tale. Non ei ascribitur veperes, non mane; non finis, non initium. Ergo dies requietionis Dei non temporalis, sed aeternus."

21. Ibid., col. 522 C-D ". nec creasse aliquid, ut suae consuleret egestati, sed ut satisfaceret suae plenissimae charitati."

22. Julian, Revelations, p. 211: "You would know Our Lord's meaning in this thing? Know it well, Love was his meaning."

23. 'Speculum Caritatis', PL., CXCIV, col. 524 B: "Porro si omnem creaturam a prima usque ad novissimam, a summa usque ad imam, a summo angelo usque ad minimum vermiculum subtilius contempleris, cernes profecto divinam bonitatem, dicimus non aliud, quam ejus charitatem;

. . ."

theme returns in Chapter XXVII in which Scripture quotations are adduced to reinforce the idea of charity being true rest.²⁴ Charity and the Sabbath are again linked in Chapter XXXII. The book ends, rather surprisingly, in a heart-rending lament for Aelred's friend of ten years, Simon, who died very suddenly, just as he seemed to be recovering from an illness.

The idea of the Sabbath of Charity is subordinated in Book II, but returns for a very full development in Book III where it is expanded and detailed. It has been noted already that the first Sabbath, corresponding to the Sabbath of the week, is that of the love of man for himself. The second Sabbath, corresponding to the Sabbath of Years, is that of a man's love for his neighbour.²⁵ The ideas of Sabbath rest and God's command to love one's neighbour as oneself, in the manner in which one loves oneself, are reiterated. God must be loved more than either the neighbour or oneself, and it is this love of God which is the Sabbath of Sabbaths, the eternal year of joy, love and repose. Charity then develops from its beginnings as self-love, through brotherly love, to the love of God.²⁶ The emphasis

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24. *Ibid.*, col. 530 D: "Ecce refectio, quasi Sabbati praeparatio. Jam ipsum Sabbatum audiamus: 'Tollite jugum meum super vos, et discite a me, quis mitis sum et humilis corde, et invenietis requiem animabus vestris.' Ecce requies, ecce tranquillitas, ecce Sabbatum."
25. 'Speculum Caritatis' *PL.*, CXCIV, col. 557 C: ". . . dilectio proximi sit secundum; . . ."
26. *Ibid.*, col. 583 C: "Name septimus dies quasi charitas est inchoatio, septimus annual promotio, quinquagesimus annus, qui est post septies septum, ejus est plenitudo."

here is on man as the active lover, and it is in this emphasis that there is the fundamental difference between Aelred's approach to charity and that of Julian. In Julian, the focus is on God as man's lover, on God who takes the initiative in loving. Man's love of God is simply a response to the love which has already been shown to him by God.

Before, however, examining Julian's doctrine in detail, it will be necessary to establish Aelred's attitudes towards love of one's neighbour and love of God, for particularly in the area of love of neighbour, Aelred shows a striking originality and daring in thought, not shared by his contemporaries. He particularizes the concept of brotherly love, examining that aspect of it which is love of friendship, and it is his teaching on this controversial subject which makes him one of the most attractive figures of the monastic writers. In this stress on friendship, Aelred stands in direct contrast to Julian, who mentions a particular friend only once, in the shorter version of her work.²⁷ It might be noted that Julian, with her deep concern for the generality of Christians, says more about brotherly love and friendship in the shorter version.

27. Julian, Shewings, pp 48 - 49: ". . . I desired concerning a certain person that I love, how it should be with her. In such desire I hindered myself, and I was not enlightened on this occasion."

The impulse of love, whether it result in good or evil actions, is in itself a good impulse.²⁸ Love of neighbour is commanded by God—we must love all men in the manner in which we love ourselves.²⁹ Aelred distinguishes three categories of men to be loved—our friends, our enemies, and those who are neither.³⁰ Obviously, love of enemies does not come easily—it takes a divine command to induce men to practise it. Those who are neither friends nor enemies are loved for the same reason, but reason itself tells men to love their friends.

What are some of the characteristics of this second Sabbath, the Sabbath of love of others? The first thing to note, of course, is that it is more perfect, more developed, than the Sabbath of enlightened self-love. There is a shift from rest or release from sin, to rest from cupidity, the root of sinful actions.³¹ From a realisation of the sweetness

28. 'Speculum Caritatis' PL., CXCIV, col. 584 B: "Nam vis illa animae, sive natura, qua hic amor, sive bonus sive malus exercetur, bonum quiddam animae est, et in bono et in malo nunquam potest esse non bonum."

29. Ibid., col. 591 D.

30. Ibid., col. 591 D: "Amicus, quia prodest, vel profuit; non inimicus, quia non nocet nec nocuit; inimicus, quia obest, vel obfuit."

31. Ibid., col. 583 C-D: "Primo requies^{at} in puritate conscientiae; deinde in multarum mentium dulcissima conjunctione; . . . In primo Sabbato vacatur crimine; in secundo a cupiditate; . . . In primo gustat mens, quam dulcis est Jesus in humanitate; in secundo videt quam perfectus in charitate; . . . In primo colligitur ad se, in secundo extenditur extra se; . . ."

of Jesus's manhood, there is a realisation of the all-embracing nature of his love. From simple recollection, the remembrance of God's presence, there is an expansion of the heart so that man loves his fellow men. The second Sabbath is characterised as a community of men living happily together. It goes without saying, of course, that relatives are to be included in this brotherly love.³²

Before discussing the unique characteristics of that special love called friendship at greater length, it might be well at this point to look at Julian's attitude towards her neighbour. Although she mentions human friendship only once, she does discuss the question of love of neighbour, and reveals her own feelings in this direction. Like Aelred, she acknowledges, although only in passing, that we must love ourselves.³³ As children of God, we are to love our brothers and sisters as well as our "Mother" Jesus.³⁴ This love is hindered if we think too much of the sins of other people³⁵

32. Ibid., col. 589 C: "Est praeterea affectus naturalis cuilibet ad carnem suam, matri ad filium, homini ad domesticum seminis sui."

33. Julian, Revelations, p. 123: "His will is that we should be entirely like him in our continuing love for ourselves and our fellow Christians."

34. Ibid., p. 176: "The natural child does not despair of a mother's love; the natural child does not give itself airs; the natural child loves mother and the other children."

35. Ibid., p. 197: "To consider the sins of other people will produce a thick film over the eyes of our soul, and prevent us for the time being from seeing 'the fair beauty of the Lord' - unless, that is, we look at them contrite with the sinner, being sorry for and with him, and yearning over him for God."

rather than consider our own sins.³⁶ Julian's personal attitude towards her "even-Christians" is one of love, a love that desires to share with all men³⁷ the priceless revelation that she has been given. She desires to instruct the uninstructed,³⁸ to give the comfort of which all have need. Christians are to accept the revelations as if they had received them personally.³⁹ They are for all men of good will. Julian's basic attitude towards her fellow-men is one of love, a love which desires to share with all the riches which she has received.

Although it is evident in Aelred's writings that he loves his fellow men, there are no general protestations of that love as there are in Julian. He instructs concerning the manner of loving one's neighbour and one's friends, but he does not proclaim his own love for the generality of men. He does, however, speak explicitly of his love for his friends, and by his general conduct makes it clear that his basic attitude is the same as Julian's—expansive and all-embracing.

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36. Ibid., p. 203: "This taught me to look at my own sin and not at other men's unless it was going to be a comfort and help to my fellow Christians."
37. Ibid., p. 74: "Throughout all this I was greatly moved with love for my fellow-Christians, that they might know and see what I was seeing, for I want it to cheer them too . . . I wanted them to love God, and to remind them who had an example in me, that life is short."
28. Ibid., p. 75: "I am not trying to tell the wise something they know well already; but I am seeking to tell the uninstructed, for their great peace and comfort. And of comfort we all have need."
39. Ibid., p. 74: "For it is God's will that you should receive it with great joy and pleasure, as if Jesus himself had showed it to you all."

It has already been established that the second Sabbath consists in love of others, and that men are commanded by God to love their neighbour as themselves. But Aelred distinguishes between certain kinds of love, and speaks at great length in the Mirror of Charity on friendship, and, many years later, writes a whole book on it.

A term which appears often in his writings on love and friendship is affectus cordis, the feelings of the heart, or affections. He distinguishes between spiritual affection, rational affection, irrational affection, affection for those in authority, natural affection, and carnal affection.⁴⁰ Spiritual affection can be understood in two ways—affection for things of the spirit or a very exalted love of one's neighbour. Rational and irrational affection are distinguished one from the other by their origin - rational affection springs from and is based on reason—irrational affection comes from caprice.⁴¹ Concerning love for those in authority, while admitting friendship's necessity, he counsels against seeking advantages for oneself through friendships with

40. 'Speculum Caritatis', PL., CXCIV col. 587 D: "Affectus autem aut spiritualis est, aut rationalis, aut irrationalis, aut officialis, aut naturalis, vel certe carnalis. . . Nam spirituale quidem affectu animus excitatur, cum occulta et quasi improvisa Spiritus sancti visitatione in divinae dilectionis dulcedinem, vel fraternae charitatis suavitatem mens compuncta resolvitur. Cujus visitationis modum et causas, quam lucide a nobis fieri potuit, superius memini demonstratas."

41. Ibid., col. 539 A.

officials. Natural affection is that which we have for our relatives, or a master for his servants. There are two kinds of carnal affection, depending on their origins. One is based on the natural attractiveness of good people and, although dangerous, it can lead to a more mature love. The other is based on the lowest passions and on no account ought to be tolerated, as it can only lead to spiritual ruin.

Besides the above distinctions Aelred also discusses the difference between love and attraction. Attraction is a sudden, spontaneous drawing towards someone—a friend or a relative. A certain warmth is felt towards a person. According to Aelred, as we have seen before, there are several levels of attraction, ranging from the spiritual down through the carnal.⁴² As an illustration of the difference between true love and attraction he gives the example of two good men — one naturally attractive in looks, the other severe in manner. Justly or not, the man with the pleasing countenance will receive more affection than the dour man. Those who feel this affection for the affable man are being drawn by attraction. A person seeing the worth of the second man would be acting on love alone, unaided by attraction.⁴³ The one does not rule out the other; both elements may be present in the act of loving, but to cherish an affection based on attraction alone, particularly if it is carnal

42. Ibid., col. 587 D.

43. Ibid., col. 592 C.

attraction, can be a very dangerous thing. Even Christ drew others to himself by attraction, and in turn was both attracted by and loved others.⁴⁴ Real love presupposes a freedom and a mastery over one's own acts. Attraction may precede true love, but it is not to be mistaken for it.⁴⁵ Love is based essentially upon reason and will, and may be, in its most perfect form, accompanied by feeling.⁴⁶

Out of this explanation of the difference between love and attraction Aelred's doctrine on friendship flows. First enunciated in the Speculum, it is more fully stated in De Spirituali Amicitia. For, says Aelred, if we love someone to whom we are not naturally attracted, and treat him with affection, then that love is truly supernatural charity. Our friends, however, we cannot help loving and being attracted to; therefore it is even more important that since we love them, we must love them in Christ.⁴⁷

In what does friendship consist, and how does it differ from the love we are to have for all men? The essence of friendship is, of course, love-love for someone who is naturally attractive to us. The friend is to be loved, as in the case of our neighbour, as ourselves, but,

44. Ibid., col. 588 C.

45. Ibid., col. 592 C.

46. Ibid., col. 594 C.

47. Ibid., col. 600 B: "Igitur amicus qui non potest non diligere, diligatur in Deo; inimicus qui non propter se potest diligere, diligatur propter Deum." (Italics mine.)

Aelred hastens to add, not more than ourselves,⁴⁸ for that way lies damnation. The difference between the love of benevolence which is to be shown to all men, and the special love of friendship is, to put it briefly, the fact of enjoyment. Man enjoys loving his friends, indeed, he cannot help doing so. He may enjoy the love which he extends to all men, or he may not, but the love of friends is enjoyable and it is also mutual.⁴⁹ Aelred recognizes that of necessity, the number of friends in whose company a man can enjoy himself and be at home, is relatively small. These are the ones who make life sweeter, more bearable. He speaks of spiritual joys which are communicated by friends, joys which may take the place of consolation from God for certain people. This is indeed a radical and potentially dangerous doctrine—that some men experience no consolation in their love of God and so must turn to their friends for strength and consolation.⁵⁰ The delights of friendship are a foretaste of heavenly union

48. Ibid., col. 615 A: "Neque enim audiendi sunt, qui sic arbitrantur accipiendum quod dicitur, 'diliges proximum tuum sicut te ipsum (Matth. XXII)', ut unumquemlibet diligere debeat tanquam se ipsum, duos autem aut plures supra se ipsum; ideoque magis suam, quam aliorum debeat velle perditionem."

49. Ibid., col. 618 C.

50. Ibid., col. 618 D: "Denique ipsi Deo a multis et electione et motu charitas exhibetur, quibus ipsius dilectionis fructus non in hac vita comeditur, sed post hanc vitam in ejus beatissima visione servatur. Nam et hi quibus in contemplationis lumine, in compunctionis dulcedine, quidam hujus dulcedinis fructus incohatur; si ad futura gaudia spectes, nec ipsi Deo frui dicendi sunt, sed potius uti."

with God. Viewed in this light, how can friendship be seen other than as a good?

Lest anyone think that Aelred, in spite of his long experience as novice-master and abbot in dealing with men, was naively blind to the perversions which cloaked themselves in the mantle of friendship, it may be well at this point to recall his own warnings against sensuality in one's relationships with others. He speaks out very strongly on the possible dangers of friendship, particularly with members of the opposite sex.⁵¹ What is the danger inherent in friendship? It is the same danger inherent in any of the human affections. It may cease to be controlled by reason, so that the human person, instead of ruling and guiding it, is ruled instead by it himself, so that he loses his integrity, and acts like a beast rather than a man.

51. Ibid., col. 601 C: "Novi ego viris pudicissimus et continentissimus, omnemque spurcitiā summo horrere detestantibus, accidisse, ut dum quasdam in tenera adhuc aetate summis virtutibus cernerent accessisse, ac mirabili morum gravitate ac vitae sanctitate in quosdam canos, ut ita dixerim, spirituales incredibiliter profecisse; devotissimo eas ac dulcissimo colerunt simul et amplectarentur affectu. Quibus dum sui copiam pronius indulgerent, ac in eorum aspectus, ut ita dicam, amplexu suavius requiescerent, vitioso quodam affectu subtilius irrepente plurimum fatigati sunt: et qui alios ejus criminis conscios non dico non aspicerent, imo a nauseantis animi sinu summo horrore rejicerent; istos pudicissimos, gravissimos, forte enim virgineo decore serenos, quos et impudicius quis ob ipsam desperationem non nisi pudice conspiceret; vix sine quadam vitii titillatione frequentare potuerint."

True friendship, however, which can exist only between good men, is of very great value. Aelred's description of its effects in the last chapters of the Speculum Caritatis deserves to be quoted in full:

"Porro non modicum vitae hujus solatium est, habere quem tibi affectu quodam intimo ac sacratissimi amoris unire possis amplexu, habere in quo requiescat spiritus tuus, cui ad cujus grata colloquia, quasi ad consolatoria quaedam carmina inter tristia quaeque confugias; ad cujus amicitiae gratissimum sinum inter tot saeculi scandala securus accedas, cujus amantissimo pector ac si tibi ipsi omnium cogitationum tuarum viscera sine cunctatione committas; cujus spiritualibus osculis, quasi medicinalibus quibusdam fomentis languores tumultuantium curarum exsudes; qui tibi collacrymetur in anxiis, collaetatur in prosperiis, tecum quaerat in dubiis; quem vinculis charitatis in illud secretarium tuae mentis inducas, ut licet absens corpore, spiritu tamen praesens sit, ubi solus cum solo conferas; ac quiescente mundi strepitu, in somno pacis, in amplexu charitatis, in osculo unitatis, interfluente Spiritus sancti dulcedine, solus cum solo repaues: imo ita te ei adjungas et applices, et animum animo misceas, ut de pluribus unum fiat."⁵²

52. 'Speculum Caritatis'. PL., CXCV, col. 619 A.

Such language has much in common with the description of human love found in the Canticle of Canticles. What is the element that raises friendship such as this above the level of sensuality? It is, Aelred contends, the fact that such enjoyment is to be had in the Lord. In Chapter 40 of the Speculum, he explains how this is to be achieved:

Sed quaeris, quid sit fruit in Domino?
Dicet de Domino Apostolus: 'Qui factus est
nobis a Deo sapientia, et justitia, et
sanctificatio (I Cor. I).' Cum igitur
Dominus sapientia sit, sanctificatio, et
justitia in Domino frui est frui in
sapientia, frui, in sanctificatione
frui in justitia.⁵³

Such an explanation represents much subtlety of thought, but the connections between loving one's friends in wisdom, justice and holiness are not readily apparent and therefore, one suspects not practical for many of the monks under Aelred's care.

Aelred's doctrine on friendship, contained in germ in the Speculum, and developed in De Spirituali Amicitia, is a very important part of his doctrine on charity. He takes an enlightened view of a phenomenon which certain spiritual writers regarded with suspicion.⁵⁴ His thinking on friendship

53. 'Speculum Caritatis', PL., CXCIV, col. 619 D.

54. G.G. Coulton, Five Centuries of Religion, 5 vols. (Cambridge University Press, 1953) Vol. I, p. 364: "He neglected-indeed he would even have directly combatted-that maxim of his follow-Cistercian, Arnulf of Boyers in his Mirror of Monks: 'let the monk have no familiar friend.'"

was influenced by Cicero's De Amicitia⁵⁵ so that it may be said to have attempted to write a Christian version of the work, the De Spirituali Amicitia. In it we see the results of his own life-long experience, and the influence of one whom he loved according to the rules of Christian friendship, Bernard of Clairvaux.⁵⁶

But if Aelred's enlightened doctrine on friendship formed an important part of his teaching on charity, it is not the whole of it. For the third Sabbath, the Sabbath of Sabbaths, is that of love of God. The Jewish Sabbath's purpose was the opening of souls to God. Charity, love of God, opens the soul to God in a very special way. Charity is the spiritual circumcision of Christians, cutting away all vices.⁵⁷ The final end of charity is the vision of God, securely possessed in the next life, but experienced only

55. 'De Spirituali Amicitia', PL., CXCIV, col. 639 A.

56. Jean Bouton, "La Doctrine de l'Amitié chez Saint Bernard", Révue d'Ascétique et de Mystique, Vol. XXIX 1953, p. 18: "Dans son ouvrage, Aelred ne mentionne pas son maître, Saint Bernard. Rien d'étonnant à cela: il s'est seulement proposé de refaire sur un plan chrétien le De Amicitia de Cicéron. Mais ce qu'il est capital de noter c'est que les principes que nous avons découverts sous la plume de Saint Bernard, nous les retrouvons tous dans le Traité d'Aelred. S'il n'y a pas dépendance directe, il y a au moins étonnante similitude de pensée."

57. 'Speculum Caritatis', PL., CXCIV, col. 520 D: "Vides hanc spiritualem circumcissionem omnium vitiorum esse peremptoriam; etiam omnes sensus corporis divino quodam cultro purificat, oculorum abscindens petulantiam, aurium pruritus eradens, gustus superfluas summitates propellans, linguae procacitatem detrahens, meretricios odores excludens naribus, tactus perniciosam molliem eradicans."

obscurely in this life in contemplation. Contemplation is the Sabbath rest-rest in God. "Sabbath of Sabbaths" is simply Aelred's term for what Dionysius and those using his terminology would call the unitive way. There is every indication that Aelred reached this stage in the spiritual life, albeit less spectacularly than did Julian. It would be surprising if this monk, noted throughout the length and breadth of England for his friendships, for his unique view of God as friendship personified,⁵⁸ did not enjoy the friendship of God.

Aelred and Julian both experience a longing for God which pervades their writing. Aelred's longing is very personal, more agitated, than the calm, patient attitude manifested in the Revelations. This difference is not unexpected nor inexplicable, for, as man and woman, Aelred and Julian compliment each other in their respective active and passive attitudes towards God. Aelred strives towards

58. 'De Spirituali Amicitia' PL., CXCIV, col. 669 A: "O quid est hoc? dicamne de amicitia quod amicus Jesu Johannes de charitate commemorat: Deus amicitia est?"

God,⁵⁹ and experiences desolation when his efforts seem unsuccessful.⁶⁰ He desires the peace of the third Sabbath, but is obliged to strive mightily to attain to it. Julian, on the other hand, asks for the three graces, forgets about all but her last request, until she is granted, in a way unimagined by her, the experience she had asked for. She is reassured by the fact that God desires to possess her as much as she desires to possess Him.⁶¹ In another place,

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59. 'Speculum Caritatis', PL., CXCIV, col. 505C: "Descendat, quaeso, Domine, in animam meam aliqua portiuncula hujus tantae dulcedinis tuae, quae dulcescant ei panes amaritudinis suae. Praegustet cujusdam sorbitunculae experientia, quid desideret, quid concupiscat, ac quid suspiret in hac peregrinatione sua. Praegustet esuriendo, bibat sitiendo. Qui enim edunt te, adhuc esurient, et qui bibunt te, adhuc sitient; satiabuntur autem, cum apparuerit gloria tua cum manifesta fuerit illa magna multitudo dulcedinis tuae quam abscondisti timentibus te, quam non revelas, nisi diligentibus te. Interim, Domine, quaeram te, et amando quaeram te; quia, qui proficit amando te, utique, Domine, quaerit te: et qui perfecte amat te, ipse est, Domine, qui iam invenit te."
60. 'De Jesu Puero Duodenni,' PL., CLXXXIV, col. 862 A: "Nunc quasi ulterius non sustinens spirituali, quodam litigio, vel luctamine evincere retardantem conaris. Quae tunc lacrimae? qui gemitus? quae suspiria? quae voces? Nunc oculi fletu graves, cum intimis singultibus eriguntur ad coelum: nunc manus expanduntur et brachia: nunc pectoris tunsione animae tarditas accusatur."
61. Revelations, p. 109: "Thus does he have pity and compassion upon us, and he longs to possess us."

during the course of her revelations, she was bidden in her intellect to shift her gaze from the crucifix to heaven.⁶²

Although she saw that she would be equally safe to look either upwards or at the road, she showed surprising freedom in declaring, "Me liked no other heaven but Jesus," and in fixing her gaze firmly on the face of the crucifix.⁶³

Julian and Aelred also differ in the way in which they perceive God as present to them. Julian, sees the soul immersed in God, penetrated by Him, surrounded and touched in every part by Him. God is nearer to man than man's own soul.⁶⁴ When Aelred speaks of God, however, He seems to be a Being outside and apart, above and beyond. Aelred tends to seek God more in His heaven than in his own soul.

But although Julian appears to have a consoling sense of the presence of God, she is deprived of it on at

62. Shewings, p. 31: "Then came the thought to my mind, as if the words had been said to me in a friendly way: 'Look up to heaven, to His Father!' Then saw I well, with the faith that I felt, that since there was nothing between the cross and heaven that might have distressed me, it behooved me either to look up or else to answer. I answered and said: 'I may not-for thou art my heaven.' This I said because I would not for I had rather be in that pain, until doomsday than to have come to heaven otherwise than by Him. For I knew well that He who bought me at so sore a cost would release me when He willed."

63. Ibid., p. 32.

64. Revelations, p. 161: "God is nearer to us than our own soul, for he is the ground in which it stands, and he is the means by which substance and sensuality are so held together that they can never separate."

least two important occasions, and we can gather by implication from her writings that she too experienced the temptations and dryness which to a greater extent beset Aelred. The Passion of Christ, moreover, caused her great pain and sorrow.⁶⁵ She was able, through the suffering she endured at seeing Christ suffer, to sympathize with the spiritual martyrdom undergone by Mary at the foot of the Cross.⁶⁶

It was this kind of compassion for which Julian had asked, an ability to feel along with Christ the sufferings of his scourging and crucifixion. There was no need for her to impose upon herself heavy penances. She had penance enough in her illness and in the anchoress's life which she began to lead after. Aelred, on the other hand, had bad habits which stood as obstacles to his love of God, and these he attempted to root out of his life by ruthless means. Such a pruning and trimming is necessary in Aelred's view in order to restore the image of God in man.

Julian's Revelations of Divine Love, show how God takes the lead in restoring this defaced image. The emphasis

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65. Ibid., p. 80: "Furthermore, I could see that the deal skin and tender flesh, the hair and the blood, were hanging loose from the bone, gouged by the thorns in many places. It seemed about to drop off, heavy and loose, still holding its natural moisture, sagging like a cloth. The sight caused me dreadful and great grief; I would have died rather than see it fall off."
66. Ibid., p. 91: "Because of all this I was able to understand something of the compassion of our Lady St. Mary. She and Christ were so one in their love that the greatness of her love caused the greatness of her suffering."

is primarily on the love of God for man, not, as in Aelred, on what man must do to love God. He lays down degrees and kinds of love—those which are dangerous, those which are permissible in circumstances, those which are mandatory. Both Julian and Aelred are agreed that man must love, that he must love God, but they differ on the manner and the point at which emphasis is to be laid. Aelred's manner of loving is associated with frantic striving—Julian's with calm acceptance and trust. It is necessary to begin by being aware of God's love for man, of accepting this fact and acting according to its implications. Julian's way is not easy, for it takes courage to trust, but it is less violent to nature than Aelred's method. Like Aelred's concept of love of God, Julian's demands complete self-denial. It is in this refusal to rest in any created thing that one attains to union with God, or, in Aelredian terms, the Sabbath rest.⁶⁷

67. Ibid., p. 68: ". . . for until I am essentially united with him I can never have full rest or real happiness; in other words, until I am so joined to him that there is absolutely nothing between my God and me. We have got to realize the littleness of creation and to see it for the nothing that it is before we can love and possess God who is uncreated. This is the reason why we have no ease of heart or soul, for we are seeking our rest in trivial things which cannot satisfy, and not seeking to know God, almighty, all-wise, all-good. He is true rest. It is his will that we should know him, and his pleasure that we should rest in him. Nothing less will satisfy us. No soul can rest until it is detached from all creation. When it is deliberately so detached for love of him who is all, then only can it experience spiritual rest." (Italics mine.)

But more important in the relationship between God and man than man's self-denial, is God's tender love for him.

What is Adam's breed, that it should claim they care? Thou hast placed him only a little below the angels, crowning him with glory and honour and bidding him rule over the works of thy hands.⁶⁸

Julian also brings out the restoration theme found in Aelred, going one step further in asserting that man is destined for even greater happiness than that which he lost in Paradise.⁶⁹ She is filled with wonder at the condescension of the all-powerful God who is so gentle with a weak creature such as herself.⁷⁰ An even more surprising element is Christ's willingness to have suffered even more if possible for man's salvation. He asks Julian if she is pleased with His sufferings as proofs of love and when she indicates that she is, He manifests His own delight in her satisfaction.⁷¹ Christ, in his desire to save mankind, would seem almost to have

68. Psalm 8,5.

69. Ibid., p.78: "And he who out of love made man, by the same love would restore him not merely to his former bliss but to one that was even greater."

70. Ibid., p.67: "I was overwhelmed with wonder that he, so holy and so awful, could be so friendly to creature at once so sinful and so carnal."

71. Ibid., p.96: "And the kind Lord Jesus said, 'If you are satisfied, I am satisfied too. It gives me great happiness and joy and, indeed, eternal delight ever to have suffered for you. If I could possibly have suffered more, I would have done so.'"

centred His affection on man. The Passion, Death and Resurrection are the supreme manifestations of His love for man. Perhaps the most striking note about Julian's Revelations is Our Lord's courtesty to her. She herself comments on this many times, particularly when she herself had been guilty of discourtesy towards Him.⁷² Remembering her own discourtesy, she warns her readers to be as polite to the Lord as He is to them.⁷³ One cannot help being struck as one reads the Revelations, with the very high value God places on man.⁷⁴ Julian saw that redeemed man is Christ's reward, given Him by the Father.⁷⁵ His thirst

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72. Shewings, p.49: "God brought to my mind that I should sin, and for the liking that I had in beholding of Him I attended not readily to that shewing, and our Lord full courteously waited until I would attend."
73. Revelations, p.200: "For it is the will of our courteous Lord that we should be as much at home with Him as heart may think or soul desire. But we must be careful not to accept this privilege so casually that we forget our own courtesy. For our Lord is supremely friendly, and he is as courteous as he is friendly: he is very courteous."
74. Ibid., p.97: "We belong to our Lord not only because he bought us, but because we are his Father's kindly gift: we are his joy, his reward, his glory, his crown. It is a unique thought (and delightful) that we should be his crown."
75. Shewings, pp. 34-35: "The working of the Father it is this: that He gives meed to His Son Jesus Christ. This gift and this meed is so blissful to Jesus, that the Father might have given no meed that might have pleased Him better. For the first heaven-that is the rejoicing of the Father showed to me as a heaven-it was full blissful. For He is full blessed in heaven in all the deeds that He has done about our salvation, whereby we are not only His through the redemption, but also by the courteous gift of His Father."

will be slaked only by human souls.⁷⁶

This courteous Lord, who has bought men at such a great price, does not want them to become depressed over their sins or to examine themselves too much,⁷⁷ in contrast with a thirteenth-century novice-master, the Franciscan Bernard of Bessa who in his Speculum Disciplinae ad Novitios prescribed confession three times weekly for the novices!⁷⁸ Quick and humble repentance after a fall is most pleasing to Him—not useless remorse.⁷⁹ Physical and mental anguish are easier to bear if they are borne lightly,

76. Revelations, p. 195: "For the thirst of God is to include everyman within Himself, and it is through this thirst that he has drawn his holy ones in to their present blessedness. He is ever drawing and drinking as it were, as he gets these living members, yet he still thirsts and longs."
77. Ibid., p. 200: "For he says, 'Do not accuse yourselves too much, nor think that your distress and grief is all your fault. It is not my purpose that you should be unreasonably depressed or sorrowful.'"
78. Benedictine of Stanbrook Abbey, Medieval Mystical Tradition and St. John of the Cross, (Westminster, Md.: Newman, 1954), p.86.
79. Revelations, p. 203: "When we fall through our weakness or blindness our Lord in his courtesy puts his hand on us, encourages, and holds on to us. only then does he will that we should see our wretchedness, and humbly acknowledge it. It is not his intention for us to remain like this, nor that we should go to great lengths in our self-accusation, nor that we should feel too wretched about ourselves."

as is the Lord's will.⁸⁰ Julian points out that God does not promise to spare His friends from suffering in this life, but that He does assure them of victory.⁸¹

Perhaps the most touching part of the Lord's courtesy is His thanking of individuals for their sufferings and labours while on earth. We have already seen that, according to Julian, He regarded our whole life as a penance which we had to undergo before coming to bliss in heaven. He thanks those who suffer this lifetime of trial,⁸² and especially those who give themselves over to His service in the first flowering of their youth.⁸³ A person is

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80. Ibid., p. 179: "It is God's will that we should take his promises and his consolations as generously and as comprehensively as we can, and at the same time take the waiting and the discomfort as casually as possible, as mere nothings. The more casually we take them, and the less store we set by them for love of him, the less will be the pain we experience, and the greater our thanks and reward."
81. Ibid., p. 185: "This word, 'You will not be overcome' was said very distinctly and firmly to give us confidence and comfort for whatever troubles may come. He did not say, 'You will never have a rough passage, you will never be overstrained, you will never feel uncomfortable,' but he did say, 'You will never be overcome.'"
82. Ibid., p. 85: "God showed me the three degrees of bliss enjoyed by every person who has served him deliberately in any way on earth: (i) The most valuable thanks that God shall give him when he is relieved of his suffering. . . (ii) All blessed heavenly beings are aware of that most worthwhile gratitude, for God makes a man's service known to all heaven. . . . (iii) The freshness and pleasure with which it is at first received shall last for ever."
83. Ibid., p. 86: "In particular those who willingly and freely offer their youth to God are rewarded and thanked, supremely and wonderfully."

thanked and rewarded for undergoing trials necessary for his own happiness. Such is the generosity of the gracious King!

Both Aelred and Julian are filled with longing for the King of Heaven, but in Aelred, this longing was a supremely painful one, sharpened by physical agony throughout the last twenty years of his life. Julian's longing was, on the contrary sweetened with the knowledge that it would be rewarded. She knows that God will not allow her to suffer more than necessary, but also that He will not allow her to lose her reward through not having undergone what really is necessary.⁸⁴

Julian and Aelred long not only to possess God, but also to grow in love of God. Aelred's furious penances were nothing else but an attempt to overcome obstacles to his love of God. In the Speculum, he gives three arguments to increase the love of God in oneself.⁸⁵ Julian develops the idea of three necessities of man-love, longing and pity.⁸⁶ As usual with Julian, though it is man who needs

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84. Ibid., p. 121: "His will it is that no one getting there shall be deprived of any of the benefits gained by his hardships."
85. 'Speculum Caritatis', PL., CXCV, col. 591 B: "Igitur ratio ut ad desiderium conditoris sui animum excitet tepescentem, tribus innititur argumentis: nostrae videlicet necessitati vel utilitati, illius autem dignitati. Suadet ratio Deum esse diligendum, quia necessarium hoc nobis, quia commodum, quia dignum."
86. Revelations, p. 195.

someone to long after him, to love him, to pity him. It is, of course, God who loves man, longs after him, pities him. Again and again the lesson is driven home-it is always God who makes the first move, God who loves, who calls, who invites, and man's love of God is a response to God.

Thus there is in Julian a development of Aelred's ideas-a development in unexpected directions. The concept of love of God is taken up and viewed from a completely different angle. God loves man and man responds. There is a greater stress on love of God for man, and on the confidence which should shape man's attitude toward's God. God is, as Aelred wished to indicate, supremely friendly to man, and this friendship should be a source of joy during even the most difficult trials.

CHAPTER IV

THE SPIRITUALITY OF AELRED AND JULIAN

Julian and Aelred both speak of God, but how different are their accents! The concept of God which Aelred holds differs in several important respects from that which Julian holds. Salvation and damnation are viewed in different contexts, as is Mary, the Mother of God. The daring view of Christ as "Mother", found in the works of Anselm, Aelred, Gertrude the Great, Mechtild von Hackeborn and Marguerite d'Oyngt receives its fullest and most beautiful development in Julian's Revelations. A comparison of their doctrines on God, salvation, Mary and the Motherhood of Christ will form the substance of this chapter on their spirituality.

Aelred draws his ideas of God primarily from the Scriptures and the Fathers, especially St. Augustine. Personal experience of God helps to shape his thought but it plays a secondary role, whereas in Julian's case her personal experience takes precedence over what she has learned from books and from other people about God. In Aelred's attitude towards God the influences of Benedict's degrees of humility, of Bernard's teaching on the humanity of Christ, and of his own affectionate may be discerned. It is, in short, an attitude which one could expect to find in a monk who took his vocation seriously, who nourished himself on Scripture and steeped himself in the writings of the Fathers. Aelred has deliberately centered his whole existence in God, and has used all the means at his

disposal-prayer, fasting, vigils and corporal penance-to maintain and deepen his basic orientation. In a word, he strives after God.

The key to the difference between the two approaches of Aelred and Julian may be found in the word "strive", for Julian, unlike Aelred, allows God to act. For Aelred, God is a person to whom man progresses-it would seem that He is outside man, rather than, as Julian puts it, nearer to man than man is to himself.¹ Aelred would of course agree that "prayer oneth the soul of God"² but one has the impression that Aelred has to travel some distance before coming into the presence of God, whereas Julian simply has to make herself aware that He is in all things, particularly her soul, for she says, "in us is his homeliest home and endless dwelling."³

Although the orientation of Aelred's teaching is God, in order that his fellow monks may more readily attain to union with God, he writes much about human psychology, the ground on which this union takes place. For him, friendship signified love-the most genuine and beneficial love that he had experienced. It is no wonder, then that he preferred the language of friendship when speaking about the soul's relationship to God. He takes up the

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1. Julian, Revelations, p. 114.
 2. Ibid., p. 76.
 3. Ibid., p. 139.

Johannine concept of God as love⁴ and particularizes that love in the way most personal and most meaningful to himself by saying that God is friendship.⁵

It would seem that Aelred is more at home with man than with God, for he prefers to approach God by means of human friendship.⁶ Although he appears to have enjoyed moments of deep contemplative union with God, he is clearly out of his element in the rarified atmosphere of divinity. It is in friendship with other men—he is careful to specify those who love God—that he attains to Christ, who is the very ground of true friendship.⁷ Julian, on the other hand, is completely at home with God.⁸ She asks questions,⁹ wonders out loud, laughs,¹⁰ and grows sad,¹¹ and blesses God. Aelred's approach to God has something in common with the breast-beating attitude of St. Augustine, who indeed had much to be sorry for. By contrast, Julian's attitude seems to have been influenced by her loving relationship with her mother, so that she was able to speak with ease of God not only as a father but as a "mother" also. In his addresses to God, Aelred is alternately studied and intellectual, then

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4. I John, 4, 16. col. 669.
 5. 'De Spirituali Amicitia', PL., CXCIV, col. 670A.
 6. Ibid., 672 A.
 7. Ibid., 662 B-C.
 8. Revelations, p. 8: "He is our clothing that for love wrappeth us, clasbeth us, and all becloseth us for tender love, that he may never leave us; . . ."
 9. Ibid., p. 9.
 10. Ibid., p. 26
 11. Ibid., p. 27

passionate and agonized, Julian, on the contrary does not need to draw near to God, for He is nearer to her than she is to herself.¹² God is "homely", tender, courteous and loving to man. It is this knowledge which sweetens the anchoress's existence and enables her to bear her longing for God. She realizes, moreover, what Aelred appears to overlook as he yearns after God, namely, that her longing for God is more than equalled by His longing for her.¹³

Both Julian and Aelred see man's ultimate destiny as union with God. Since man through original sin has been weakened in nature and has experienced a withdrawal, a recessus, from God, he must reorient his life so that it becomes a reditus, a return to God. In one passage he speaks of men becoming stones in the throne of God.¹⁴ In the treatise on friendship, he uses the imagery of the kiss, borrowed from the Canticle of Canticles, to describe both

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12. Ibid., p. 114: "God is nearer to us than our own Soul: for he is [the] Ground in whom our Soul standeth, and he is the Mean that keepeth the Substance and Sensuality together so that they never shall dispart."
13. Ibid., p. 54: "Therefore this is his thirst and love-longing, to have us altogether whole in him, to his bliss, -as to my sight. For we be not now as fully whole in him as we shall be then."
14. Aelred, Sermones Inediti, ed. C. H. Talbot, (Romae: S.O.C., 1952), p. 32: "Nunc interim fabricatur solium illud de duplici materia, angelis videlicet et hominibus. Et angeli quidem iam parati sunt in excelsis, sed de preparato habitaculo suo respicit super eos qui habitant terram, ;ut et in imis lapidis colligantur, dolentur, planentur, et sic. . . de inferioribus ad superiora transferantur."

human friendship and union with God.¹⁵ Bernard, his friend and guide, also made use of this same image, speaking of spiritual kisses exchanged by Christ and the soul. They are, like Aelred's three in number-the kiss of the feet, the kiss of the hands, and the most intimate of all, the kiss of the mouth. Bernard also speaks of the recessus and reditus, a reformation that ends in intimate union with God. These passages of Bernard quite possibly influenced Aelred in his writings on conversion and reformation. He adds, however, his own touches to the Bernadine doctrines, stressing different aspects, such as friendship with men as well as with God. Both, however, emphasize man's role in the process of reformation-an arduous process of prayer and bodily penance which must be undertaken wholeheartedly.

Julian goes beyond Aelred in her concept of the reformation of man, laying greater stress on God's role in the process. Far from denying man's weakness, she positively affirms it, and the consequent need for God to take a hand in reforming human nature, painful though that process may be.¹⁶

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15. Elmer O'Brien, Op. cit., p. 122: (quoting from St. Bernard) "The soul's return is her conversion to the Word, to be reformed through Him and to be conformed to Him. In what respect? In love . . . Such conformity joins the soul in marriage to the Word, when, being already like Him in nature (as image, free will), it shows itself no less like Him in will (resemblance, exercise of will), loving in the same way it is in itself loved."
16. Revelations, p. 55: "Thus he hath ruth and compassion on us, and he hath longing o have us: but his wisdom and his love suffereth not the end to com till the best time."

Unlike Aelred, she does not go through a carefully reasoned out, point-by-point account of the purification of the senses. Her asceticism is primarily of the heart and, as such, is more mature and more advanced than that of Aelred. She speaks of the Christian's manner of accepting suffering, of forcing oneself not to think too much about it, but rather to pass over it quickly and rejoice.¹⁷ Life itself is a penance for the soul longing for God and God generously considers the very process of living as a purification.¹⁸ Aelred also takes up this idea, pointing out the humiliating weakness of the human condition.¹⁹

The reformation and salvation themes are almost one, but the salvation goes beyond reformation in considering

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17. Ibid., Chap. 15, p. 30: "For it is God's will [that] we hold us in comfort with all our might: for bliss is lasting without end, and pain is passing and shall be brought to naught for them that shall be saved, And therefore it is not God's will that we follow the feelings of pain in sorrow and mourning for them, but that suddenly passing over, [we] hold us in endless liking."
18. Ibid., p. 18: "And so on the contra-wise, as we be punished here with sorrow and with penance, we shall be rewarded in heaven by the courteous love of Our Lord God Almighty, who willeth that one that come there lose his travail in any degree."
19. Amédée Hallier, Un Éducateur Monastique, Aelred de Rievaulx, (Paris: Gabalda, 1959), p. 39: "Cette amère expérience doit, dans la pensée de Dieu, être salutaire pour l'homme et servir de prodrome à la conversion. Le pauvre prodigue, dans la souffrance et l'humiliation, prend conscience de son exil, il sent sa déchéance et voit sa difformité; c'est l'expérience, mais à l'envers, de sa vraie destinée: la misère et la douleur le font aspirer à une restauration, don de Dieu sans doute, mais répondant aux aspirations de tout l'être humaine."

not only man's renewal, but also his ultimate destiny—damnation or the enjoyment of the eternal Sabbath with God, the soul's true rest.

Characteristically, Aelred's attitude is more concrete, more circumscribed by time and space, than is that of Julian. He thinks of his own salvation and to ensure it goes to great lengths—his penances damaged his health irreparably. Monastic life was, to him, a way to salvation, the most excellent means that a man could take to avoid damnation and reach heaven. Although everyone wants to reach heaven, not all take the necessary means to attain to it. Aelred envisions three cities: the first is occupied by those who cannot or will not observe chastity and are not married. These perish. The second is occupied by the married, and the third by celibates vowed to chastity. All of these cities exist within a larger one, the Church.²⁰ It is interesting to note that in this particular passage, the key to salvation would appear to be not charity, but chastity. Aelred would, however, deny that this emphasis is a distortion of evangelical doctrine, by explaining that one who sins against chastity, sins also against charity, love of God and of neighbour. He sees charity as the antidote to

20. Aelred, 'Sermo II,' PL., CXCIV, col. 221 A.

all vices, including lust.²¹ He goes on in Sermon II, a Christmas sermon, to praise the security of monastic life in glowing terms, using the metaphor of a castle to bring out the different aspects of that security.²² The monastery was to be a haven of peace where all could seek salvation far from the dangers of the world. How could he then, refuse admission to anyone, whether an illiterate peasant or a reprobate monk from another monastery? In actual practice he received all comers, although sometimes with a show of reluctance,²³ so that the monks took a hand in the matter by pleading with him for the reception of a new candidate. Within the monastery he was the anxious father, striving to make himself available to his sons, to make himself sensitive to the needs of each individual.²⁴ He does not hesitate,

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21. Aelred, 'Sermo I' I, Pl., CXCIV, col. 221 B-C:
 "Munitissima civitas est ordo noster, et vallata undique bonis observantiis, quasi quibusdam muris et turribus, ne hostis noster nos decipiat, ne nos ab exercitu nostri imperatoris avertat. O qualis murus paupertas, quomodo nos defendit contra superbiam mundi contra vanitates et superfluitates noxias et damnabiles! Qualis turris silentium, quod premit assultum contentionis, rixae, dissensionis, et detractionis! Quid obedientia, humilitas, vilitas vestium? Quid asperitas ciborum?"
22. "Speculum Caritatis", PL., cols. 520C to 21D.
23. Daniel, Vita, p. 38
24. Aelred, 'Oratio Pastoralis' ed. A. Wilmart, Révue Bénédictine, Vol, XXXVII, (1935), p. 269: "Discam magisterio spiritus tui mestos consolari. Pusillanimes roborare. lapsos erigere. infirmari cum infirmis. uri cum scandalizatis, omnibus omnia fieri."

when the salvation of his monks is at stake, to warn them that one has received communion sacrilegiously,²⁵ and that another has given way to the devil during the night.²⁶

Coupled with his vigilance, however, was a mildness which prevented him from expelling anyone from the monastery during his twenty-year abbacy, although, Daniel relates, four ran away, three of whom eventually returned.²⁷ During his rule, Rievaulx became known, according to his wish, as a place of salvation for all, both the strong and the weak.²⁸

Julian, living in more cloistered circumstances than Aelred, directly concerned with her own salvation and that of her maidservants,²⁹ speaks about salvation in a more general sense. It is important to note at the outset that she speaks only of those who are to be saved.³⁰ She states that her revelations were concerned only with those who were to be saved,³¹ and simply omits comment on the number who are damned. The most specific mention of anyone's spiritual welfare is her inquiry about the well-being of a certain friend, whom she loved well. To her question she received a general, friendly answer.³²

25. Daniel, Vita, p. 52.

26. Ibid., p. 51.

27. Ibid., p. 40.

28. Ibid., p. 37.

29. Ancrene Riwe, p. 191.

30. Julian, Shewings, p. 17: "I speak of those who shall be saved, since at this time God shewed me none other."

31. Revelations, p. 154: "But well I wot our Lord shewed me no souls but those that dread him."

32. Shewings, pp 48-49.

The means of salvation and reformation are for Julian, as for Aelred, charity and penance. Her view of Aelred. She stresses the importance of charity as love of God and of neighbour for salvation—a man who does not love his neighbour is not at peace with God.³³ As for penance, the best that man can undergo is that which is given him by God Himself, the penance of living in exile from heaven.³⁴ Her teaching on penance could be viewed as an expansion of Sirach 18, 8-10:

What is his span of life? Like a drop in the ocean, like a pebble on the beach, seem those few years of his, a hundred at the most, matched with eternity. What wonder if God is patient with his human creatures, lavishes his mercy on them?

She speaks not at all of scourgings and fastings, but of the mortification of the heart, of cheerfulness in suffering, of patience and of confidence. Man is to take his sicknesses,

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33. Ibid., p. 16: "So if any man or woman withdraw his love from any of his fellow-Christians, he loves right naught, for he loves not all; thus at that time he is not safe, for he is not in peace."
34. Revelations, p. 156-157: "For the penance that man taketh of himself was not shewed me: that is to say, [it] was not shewed specified. But specially and highly and with full lovely cheer was it shewed that we shall meekly bear and suffer the penance that God himself giveth us, with mind in his blessed Passion. (For when we have in mind in his blessed Passion, with pity and love, then we suffer with him like as his friends did that saw it. . .) For he saith: 'Accuse not [thy]self overdone much, deeming that thy tribulation and thy woe is all for thy fault; for I will not that [thou] be heavy nor sorrowful indiscreetly. For I tell thee, howsoever thou do, thou shalt have woe. And therefore I will that thou wisely know thy penance; and thou shalt soothly see that all thy living is penance profitable."

his lack of comfort and the seeming absence of God,³⁵ with a light heart, Mother Julian's attitude towards penance is unstrained. She sees that God does much of the work, the task of man being to keep himself open to the working of God. At first sight, this seems to be an easier task than Aelred's self-inflicted penances, but Julian is quick to point out that it must absorb all of man's energies.³⁶ In their teaching on the reformation of man, then, Aelred and Julian agree basically that human nature is not as fully in the love of God as it will be in heaven.³⁷ They differ, however, on the question of how this reformation is to be accomplished. For Aelred, man must work out his salvation in tears and sighs;³⁸ for Julian, man must co-operate with God in the task of reformation.

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35. Ibid., p. 30: "For it is God's will [that] [we] hold us in comfort with all our might: for bliss is lasting without end, and pain is passing and shall be brought to naught for them that shall be saved. And therefore it is not God's will that we follow the feelings of pain in sorrow and mourning for them, but that suddenly passing over, we hold us in endless liking."
36. Ibid., p. 21-22: "It is God's will that we have three things for our seeking: -The first is that we seek wilfully and busily, without sloth, as it may be through his grace, gladly and merrily without unskilful heaviness and vain sorrow. The second is that we abide him steadfastly in his love, without grudging and striving against him, to our life's end; for it shall last but a while, The third is that we trust in him mightily of sure faith, for it is his will."
37. Ibid., p. 165: "But our good Lord willeth ever that we hold us much more in the Beholding of the higher, and [yet] leave not the knowing of the lower, unto that time that we be brought up above, where we shall have our Lord Jesus unto our meed and be fulfilled of joy and bliss without end."
38. Daniel, Vita. p. 20.

With regard to those who refuse to undertake this work of reformation, neither Aelred nor Julian has very much to say. There is an intriguing incident in the life of Aelred in which he was confronted by a contumacious abbot of a daughter-house. The man attacked Aelred violently with curses and blasphemy. Finally Aelred prayed for a speedy end to his malice and the abbot, upon returning to his monastery, promptly fell sick and died.³⁹ Nothing, however, is said about the fate of his soul. Aelred, as was noted before, saw sins against chastity as being particularly dangerous to salvation. Julian, on the other hand, mentions sins against charity in particular, and in general an enduring attachment to sin as dangerous to salvation.⁴⁰ Aelred goes into some detail in describing the tortures of those who surrender themselves to vice, particularly pride and cupidity which are deadly enemies of charity.⁴¹ In exposing such follies, he hopes to prevent his monks from succumbing to them. There is an implication in both Aelred's and Julian's expositions, that some men are lost because they choose damnation in spite of God's plan for their salvation.

This solicitude of God for man's salvation is manifested in both the Old and the New Testament under the image

39. Ibid., p. 44.

40. Shewings, p. 71-72: "Thus I am sure that thou art naught, and all those who love thee and like thee and follow thee and wilfully end in thee-I am sure they shall be bought to naught with thee and endlessly confounded."

41. Hallier, Op. cit., pp 100-101.

of a mother's concern for her child. In the Scriptures, God affirms a love as strong and tender as that of a mother for His Chosen People.⁴² In the New Testament Christ pictures Himself as willing to gather Jerusalem to Himself as a hen gathers her chicks.⁴³ Several medieval writers took up this image and developed it at greater length. St. Anselm speaks of both St. Paul and of Christ as being "mothers" to him in a spiritual sense.⁴⁴ Aelred compares Christ's feeding of His children to a mother's care.⁴⁵ The thirteenth-century mystics of Helfta, Sts. Gertrude⁴⁶ and Mechtild both spoke

42. Isaiah, 49, 1 and 65, 12-13.

43. Luke, 13, 34-35.

44. Anselm, 'Oratio' 65, PL., CLVIII, cols. 981-982: "Sed et tu, Jesu, Bone Domine, nonne et tu mater? annon es mater; qui tanquam gallina quae congregat sub alas pullos suos? Vere, Domine, et tu mater. Nam quod alii partuientur, a te acceperunt. Tu prius, propter illos et quos peperunt, parturiendo mortuus es, et moriendo peperisti. . . . Desiderio enim gignendi fillios ad vitam, mortem gustasti et moriens genuisti. Tu per te, illi jussi et adjuti a te. Tu et auctor, illi ut ministri. Ergo tu Domine Deus, magis mater. Ambo ergo matres."

45. 'Speculum Caritatis' PL., CXCIV, col. 568 C: ". . . quoties vero in his animus plus nimio fatigatur, sollicita orationum devotione, ad materna ubera Jesu properandum, ex quorum abundantia, lac tibi mirae consolationis eliciens, dicas cum Apostolo: Benedictur Deus, qui consolatur nos in omni tribulationis (II Cor. I); Et: Sicut abundat passiones Christi in nobis, ita et per christum abundat consolatio nostra (Ibid.)."

46. Sister Jeremy, "St. Gertrude of Helfta", Cross and Crown, VII, (1955) p. 64: "On another occasion Christ spoke of how He never permits His own to be tried beyond their strength, but always moderates their adversity, 'even as a mother who wishes to warn her little child at the fire always holds her hand between the fire and her child.'"

of Christ as a mother,⁴⁷ and Marguerite d'Oyngt, prioress of the Poleteins near Lyons addressed Christ in her Pagina meditationum as mother.⁴⁸ This theme, however receives its most beautiful treatment in the Revelations.

The mother theme, which is introduced in the longer version of the Revelations, in Chapter 52, is part of the Trinitarian teaching of Julian. God is father, mother and spouse of everyman.⁴⁹ Truth is father, Wisdom is mother, and Goodness is lord of the soul.⁵⁰ By becoming man, the Second Person of Trinity shares in man's nature, becoming

47. Revelationes Gertrudianae et Mechtildianae, ed. des Benedictines de Solemses, Paris, 1877, t. 2, Sanctae Mechtildis liber specialis gratiae, p. 2, col. 16, p. 150 as quoted in Andre Cabassut, "Une dévotion médiévale peu connue," Révue d'Ascétique et de Mystique, XXV, (1949) p. 241: "Tu matrem tuam nominabas Minne (-amor), et Amor meus erit mater tua, et sicut filii sugunt matres suas sic et tu ab ea suges internam consolationem, suavitatem inenarrabilem, et illa te cibabit et potabit et vestiet, et omnibus necessitatibus tuis, velut mater filiam suam unicam, te procurabit. . . . Et cur turbatur? . . . Ergo sibi pater in creatione: ego mater in redemptione: ego frater in regni divisione: ego soror in dulci societate."
48. Ibid., p. 240: "Nonne tu es mater mea et plus quam mater? Mater quae me portavit, in partu meo laboravit per unam diem forte, vel per unam nocte, et tu, pulcher Domine dulcis, propter me fuisti vexatur non una nocte vel uno die solummodo, immo, laborasti plus quam XXX annis, Ha! pulcher Domine dulcis, quam amare laborasti pro me, tota vita tua: sed quardo tempus appropinquabat pro parere debebas, labor fuit tantus quam sudor tuus sanctur, fuit ut guttae sanguinis quae per corpus tuum decurrebant usque ad terram . . . "
49. Revelations, p. 103: "And thus I saw that God rejoiceth that he is our Father, and God rejoiceth that he is our Mother, and God rejoiceth that he is our Very Spouse and our soul is his loved Wife."
50. Ibid., p. 110: "For the Almighty Truth of the Trinity is our Father: for he made us and keepeth us in him; and the deep Wisdom of the Trinity is our Mother, in whom we are all enclosed; the high Goodness of the Trinity is our Lord, and in him we are enclosed, and he in us."

mother, brother and Saviour.⁵¹ Julian repeats this exposition of the Trinity seven times, amplifying it, re-phrasing it, and looking at it from all possible angles. She examines the relation of the Second Person of the Trinity to mankind, showing that He is doubly mother of the human person in both its substance and its sensuality.⁵² Julian uses the word "sensuality" not in any derogatory sense, but in the sense of affections and passions-all that goes with the body, and the body itself. Unlike some of the medieval writers she takes a neutral view of the body-it does not occupy an important part of her writings. Aelred pays more attention to it, taking a negative view of it at times, but Julian does not make such a sharp distinction between body and soul. God is maker and keeper of them both. It is the whole of human nature which is the object of the motherly, restorative workings of the Wisdom of the Trinity. This Wisdom, Christ Himself, is the bond of man's being. Christ the mother

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51. Ibid., p. 119: "And in the Second Person in wit and wisdom we have our keeping as anent our Sensuality: our restoring and our saving; for he is our Mother, Brother, and Savior."
52. Ibid., p. 119: "And furthermore, I saw that the Second Person, which is our Mother as anent the the Substance, that same dearworthy Person is become our Mother as anent the sense-Souls." "And he is our Mother in Mercy, in our sensuality taking, and thus our Mother is to us in diverse manners working: in whom our parts are kept undisparted. For in our Mother Christ we profit and increase, and in Mercy he reformeth us and restoreth, and by the virtue of his Passion and his Death and his Uprising, oneth us to our Substance."

acts positively against evil to keep His own safe.⁵³ It is the will of the Father that Christ is mother of human nature.⁵⁴ Throughout Chapters 58 to 63, the Trinitarian and mother themes are closely intertwined and constantly repeated, sometimes in identical terms. This discussion of the workings of the Trinity conjointly with the motherhood of Christ is reminiscent of the words of our Lord to Mechtild von Hackeborn in the thirteenth century:

Ego sibi pater in creatione: ego mater in redemptione: ego frater in regni divisione: ego soror in dulcis societate.⁵⁵

Julian is dealing with profound mystery here, and is brought up sharply in her attempts to communicate her insights. Language is too poor a medium for her experience-she can only repeat and re-phrase slightly.

In Chapter 60 Julian begins to compare and contrast the operations of Divine maternity and human maternity in order to express the exquisite tenderness of God's love of man. A human mother can only bring forth children to a life that ends in death, but Christ can bring forth to unending

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53. Ibid., p. 121: "Thus Jesus Christ that doeth good against evil is our Very Mother: we have our Being of him-where the Ground of Motherhood beginneth-with all the sweet keeping of love that endlessly followeth."
 54. Ibid., p. 122.
 55. Cabassut, Op. cit., p. 241.

life.⁵⁶ A human mother feeds her child with her own milk, but Christ gives Himself, whole and entire, in the Eucharist.⁵⁷ A human is able to lead His children within His breast through the wound in His side.⁵⁸ This last passage, linked with the tenth revelation, in which Julian saw the heart of Christ cleft in two, is one of the many medieval foreshadowings of what come to be known, in the seventeenth century and after, as devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. St. Gertrude received a similar vision, and the Carthusian monks particularly Michael of Coutances and Ludolf of Saxony, composed meditations on and prayers to the Heart of Christ.

In Julian's view, Christ is the mother par excellence for He fulfils all the functions of motherhood perfectly, as no human mother can.⁵⁹ He works in human maternity as well, bringing forth and keeping His children through the actions of His creatures. But human beings can be more sure of Christ's love than that of a mother, for He will not suffer

56. Revelations, p. 124: "He might no more die, but he would not stint of working: wherefore then it behoveth him to feed us; for the dearworthy love of Motherhood hath made him debtor to us. The mother may give her child suck [of] her milk, but our precious Mother, Jesus, he may feed us with himself, and doeth it, full tenderly, with the Blessed Sacrament that is precious food of very life; and with all the sweet Sacraments he sustaineth us full mercifully and graciously."

57. Ibid., p. 124.

58. Ibid., p. 124.

59. Ibid., p. 123-124: "The Mother's service is nearest, readiest, surest: [nearest, for it is most of nature; readiest, for it is most of love; and surest] for it is most of truth. This office none might, nor could, nor ever should do to the full, but be alone."

His little ones to perish.⁶⁰

Why has Julian chosen motherhood as the symbol of God's love, when so many medieval writers, particularly after the time of Bernard of Clairvaux, chose the imagery of the Canticle of Canticles to express the relationship of God and the soul? True, she does speak of God as being pleased with His wife, and of Christ as being mother, brother and spouse, but her favorite image seems to be that of mother.

Several answers suggest themselves. Julian had probably never married and, as a recluse had taken a vow of virginity. If her reading were limited, or if she could not read, if she had led a sheltered existence before her enclosure, the love of spouses for each other may well have been an abstract concept for her. She does, however, mention her mother's presence at the time of her visions. Her words about motherhood suggest that she had experienced a tender relationship with her own mother-⁶¹ this kind of love she knew by experience and so could speak of it with meaning. She describes a mother correcting and beating her child, a function usually reserved for the father. This raises the question of whether Julian had known her own father. The father theme is definitely subordinate in Julian's concept of God-she

60. Ibid., p. 127.

61. Ibid., p. 125: "This fair lovely word Mother it is so sweet and so kind itself, that it may not verily be said of none but him; and to her that is very Mother of him and of all."

needs to call Him a mother in order to best express His love for her and for all mankind. In contrast with Aelred's love for God, that of Julian is singularly free from the grasping characteristic of passion. This is not to say that Aelred did not truly love God—it simply means that he acted towards God as his nature led him to, whereas Julian left herself open to the action of God. Both loved deeply but differently.

Aelred, however, does take up the idea of Christ feeding His children with His own substance in the Eucharist⁶² and in the Scriptures. He recalls the manna in the desert,⁶³ viewed by Scripture scholars as a type of the Eucharist, reminds his brethren of the bread given by Christ to those who followed Him into the desert⁶⁴ and of the unleavened

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62. Aelred, 'Sermo iv', PL., CXCIV, col. 234 B: "Istum panem petitis, sicut parvuli Domini Jesu, de quibus ipse dicit: 'Sinite parvulos ad me venire; talium est enim regnum coelorum (Marc. X)'."
63. Ibid., col. 234 B-C: "Congregatos vos video fratres, ut pascamini cibo qui permanet, pabulo salutaris verbi Dei. Sicut dicit Dominus, 'coelum et terra transibunt', verbum autem Domini permanet in aeternum (Matth. XXIV; Luc. XXI) 'Hic est panis, qui de coelo descendit (Joan. VI)' et dat vitam mundo." . . .
64. Sed ne deficiatis in via, veniendo pasci vultis: Et pasci utique pane illo, qui mentem potius implet, quam ventrem. . . . Det Dominus, ut sit qui frangat eum vobis ne de vobis dicatur: 'Parvuli petierunt panem: nec erat qui grangeret eis. (Threm. IV). Sicut vestrum est petere panem, ita et nostrum est frangere. . . . Frangendus est nobis panis, quem concessit vobis Deus in itinere peregrinationis vestrae, ut ad illum panem pervenire possitis, quem vobis integrum servat cum angelis in patria vestra. Panis peregrinationis vestrae mysterium est Incarnationis Christi et veritas doctrinae, atque exemplum humilitatis ejus, et fidelium suorum. . . . Panis patriae vestrae, quo pascuntur angeli, facies Dei est: participatio divinitatis, et possessio gaudii, quod nec oculus vidit, nec auris audivit, nec in cor hominis ascendit." 'Sermo IV' PL., CXCIV, col. 234B.

bread at the last Paschal meal of Christ and the apostles. It is children's food-pabulum-broken for them by Christ. It is Pilgrim's bread-food for the journey. It is the break of the heavenly homeland; indeed, it would not be too extravagant to refer to it as the home-made bread prepared by God for His little ones. Thus God is seen by Aelred as fulfilling the functions of a father-creating-and of a mother-nourishing.⁶⁵ Aelred and Julian both conceive of God as creating, nourishing and saving man.

Closely linked with the concepts of salvation and the motherhood of God is the teaching of Aelred and Julian on the role of the Mother of Christ. Both affirm that she is the Mother of God⁶⁶ and the Mother of Christ, an incomparable dignity.⁶⁷ Christ came to earth through Mary's co-operation since she provided Him with the many-coloured coat of

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65. Ibid., col. 238 C: "Ipse nos creavit, nutrit, et dedit sensum et intelligentiam: ipse, quod est super omnia, mortem suam pro nobis obtulit, ut tamen nos fuimus ingrati omnibus, et insuper reddidimus mala pro bonis, et odium pro dilectione ejus."
66. Aelred, 'Sermo XX' PL., 322 D- 323 A: "Nos illi debemus honorem, nos illi debemus laudem. Nos illi debemus honorem, quia est mater Domini nostri."
67. Revelations, p. 8: "Also God shewed in part the wisdom and the truth of her soul: wherein I understood that the reverent beholding that she beheld her God and her Maker [with], marvelling with a great reverence that he would be born of her that was a simple creature of his making."

human nature.⁶⁸ She is the door which only Christ can open,⁶⁹ the East in which the rising Sun can shine.⁷⁰ Christ loves Mary, and lovingly shows her to Julian as another manifestation of His love for mankind.⁷¹ She is verily the mother of all Christians.⁷² Through her human nature received a far better birth than it had ever known, exchanging corruption and darkness for incorruption and light.⁷³ Aelred sees her as the mother of wisdom, of justice, and of redemption,⁷⁴

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68. 'Sermo VIII', PL., CXCIV, col 251 D: "Hodie vestivit se noster Joseph polymita tunica, sua id est varia et pulchra, in qua missus est a Patre, ut visitet fratres suos et over."
69. 'Sermo XVII', PL., CXCIV, col. 305 D.
70. "Sermo VIII' PL., CXCIV, col. 252 B: "Et ideo omnino necesse erat ut hoc mirabile lumen oriretur in his tenebris, id est ut Christus in mundo nasceretur."
71. Revelations, p. 45: "And in this sweet word [it was] as if he had said: 'I wot well thou wouldst see my blessed Mother,; for, after myself, she is the highest joy that I might shew thee, and most liking and worship to me; and most she is desired to be seen of my blessed creatures.'"
72. Ibid., p. 117-118: "For in that same time that God knitted him to our body in the Maiden's womb, he took our Sensual soul: in which taking he, us all having enclosed in him, oned it to our Substance; in which oneing he was perfect Man. For Christ having knit in him every man that shall be saved, is perfect Man. Thus our Lady is our Mother in whom we are all enclosed and of her born, in Christ: (for she that is Mother of our Savior is Mother of all that shall be saved in our Saviour;) . . ."
73. 'Sermo' XX, PL., CXCIV, col. 323 B. "Sed per beatam Mariam multo melius quam per Evam nati sumus, per hoc quod Christus de ea nata fuit. Pro vetustate recuperavimus novitatum, pro corruptione incorruptionem, pro tenebris lumen. Ipsa est mater nostrae, mater vitae nostrae mater incorruptionis nostrae, mater lucis nostrae."
74. Ibid., col. 323 C: "Ipsa igitur, quae est mater Christi, mater est sapientiae nostrae, mater justitiae nostrae, mater sanctificationis nostrae, mater redemptionis nostrae. Ideo nobis magis mater quam mater carnis nostrae. Ex ipsa ergo est melior nostra nativitas; quia ex ipsa est nostra nativitas; nostra sanctitas, nostra sapientia, nostra judicia, nostra sanctificatio, nostra redemptio."

while Julian underlines Mary's own great wisdom and truth in recognizing her littleness in comparison with her Creator.⁷⁵ She is the means through which Christ offered Himself for man's salvation, and through which the living bread came down from heaven.⁷⁶ Aelred underlines Mary's intercessory powers much more than does Julian,⁷⁷ urging his monks to pray to her with confidence.⁷⁸ Julian speaks of God's "loved Wife", thinking in

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75. Julian, p. 8: "And this wisdom and truth-knowing the greatness of her Maker and the littleness of herself that was made-caused her to say full meekly to Gabriel: 'Lo me, God's handmaid!'"
76. Aelred, 'Sermo IV' col. 234 C: "Ut istum panem angelorum avidius desideretis, et ad eum ardentius festinetis, Evangelium administrat vobis hodie panem, qui fortitudinem dabit spiritui vestro in via ista exsilii vestri. Apponit vobis purificationem matris Dei sanctae Mariae dominae nostrae, et oblationem ipsius Salvatoris. Frangendus est panis iste, ut comedatur, quia exponenda sunt ista intelligantur. Illa se purificat, quae illum genuit qui mundum purificare, illi dedit sacrificium pro se, qui erat sacrificium pro toto mundo."
77. 'Sermo XVIII, PL., CXCIV, col. 316 A: "Secure ergo illam oremus, quae nobis succurre potest per excellentiam, et vult per misericordiam; quatenus ipsa filium suum interpellat pro nobis, ut sicut de illa pro nobis dignatus est nasci, per illam dignetur nostri miseri, qui cum saeculorum. Amen."
78. 'Sermo XX' PL., CXCIV, col. 322 D: "Ideo cum jucunditate Nativitatem beatae Mariae celebremus; ut ipsa pro nobis intercedat ad Dominum nostrum. Si aliquid boni fecimus per gratiam Dei; si ipsa illud filio suo praesentaverit, non spernet. De malo quod fecimus sine dubio veniam impetrabit. Hoc est ergo nobis necessarium, ut ita nos habeamus coram illa, ut ipsa velit suscipere causam nostram."

terms of the Church or of all humanity⁷⁹ rather than of Mary.

The characteristic of Mary, spouse of God, which Aelred chooses to highlight, is her virginity. Using feudal terms, Aelred describes Mary as preparing a Castellum, a fortress for the Lord. Its moat is lowly humility, its rampart is chastity, and its watch-tower is charity.⁸⁰ In his sermon on the Annuciation, he shows how these three virtues depend upon one another, and afford protection for one another. He dwells on the Old Testament sayings on the childless,⁸¹ and praises the fruitful virginity of Mary. Another Old Testament type of Mary, Gideon's fleece, is taken up and expanded to include the Lamb of God whom Mary brought forth.⁸²

79. Julian, Chap. 58, p. 119: "And in the knitting and in the oneing he is our Very, True Spouse, and we his loved Wife and his fair Maiden: with which Wife he is never displeased. For he saith: I love thee and thou lovest me, and our love shall never be disparted in two."

80. Aelred, 'Sermo XVII', PL., CXCIV, col. 303 D.

81. 'Sermo VIII, PL., CXCIV, col. 253 A-B: "Quatpropter illa prophetia libri Sapientiae satis convenit beatæ Mariae: 'Felix est, et incoinquinata, quæ nexcit torum in delicto; habebit fructum in respectione animarum sanctarum.' Felix utique erat Maria, quæ ut vitaret carnis coinquinationem, elegit carnis sterilitatem. Nec multum illi curæ fuit de illa maledictione Judæorum: 'Maledicta sterilis in Israel'. . . . et illa quia elegit talem sterilitatem virginalem, meruit fecunditatem, et Dei Filium generavit."

82. Aelred, 'Sermo VIII'. PL., CXCIV, "Sic virginitas beatæ Mariae illum rorem, qui de coelo venit, excepit, sed nullam carnis voluptatem sentire potuit. Praeterea quid tam conveniens agno, ut ovem habeat matrem? Videte ergo quam convenientur appellatur ovis, de qua ortus. Est Agnus ille coelestis, qui tollit peccata mundi (Joan. I); qui 'tanquam ovis ad occisionem ductus est; et quasi agnus coram tondente se obmutuit et non aperuit os suum. (Isa. LIII; Act. VIII)'. Porro de Tachel dicit Scripture; 'Erat autem pulchra et venusta aspectu (Ge. XXix.' Licet de beatissima Maria dulce sit opinari, quod fuerit etiam secundum corpus venustissima et formosissima; nos tamen debemus haec verba ad interiorem ejus pulchritudinem derivare."

He emphasizes the traditional paradox-Mary was a virgin before, during, and after childbirth.⁸³ Julian, on the other hand, is not concerned with this aspect of Mary's character, possibly because she was not responsible for inspiring a group of 600 men with the ideal of perpetual chastity. The virginity of Mary is not as vital to her message; consequently it is mentioned only in passing-Mary is referred to quite simply as a maiden. Her main preoccupation is with Mary's Son.⁸⁴ When she does speak of Mary's virtues, the two which come most readily to her mind are wisdom and truth-Mary is wise beyond her years and perfectly true.⁸⁵ The virtue of truth can for Julian, imply much-integrity, clear-sightedness, high mindedness. Mary is lowly and reverent before the mystery of the Godhead.

Both Aelred and Julian speak of the sufferings Mary endured at the foot of the cross. Aelred stresses the anguish of Mary on seeing her son executed as a criminal, and on

83. Ibid., col. 254 B: "Videte, fratres, quales nuptiae et quam coelestes, in quibus sponsus Deus est, sponsa amisit virginitatem suam! Deus per has nuptias non amisit dignitatem suam. Est adhuc in his nuptiis majus miraculum. Sponsus filius est, sponsa mater est quia animam illius sanctissimae Virginis suae divinitati conjunxit filius, quia Deus ipse homo factus, de ipsius utero quasi sponsus de thalamo processit."

84. Julian, p. 35.

85. Ibid., p. 8.

being told to receive John as her son in place of Christ.⁸⁶ Julian goes to the heart of the matter by showing that it was Mary's great love for Christ which was the cause of her great pain.⁸⁷ Mary's sorrow and suffering, moreover, was another suffering for Christ to endure.⁸⁸

Julian was shown Mary at the crucial points of her life: at the conception of Christ,⁸⁹ at the crucifixion,⁹⁰ and in glory in heaven.⁹¹ Aelred deals more specifically with Mary's assumption into heaven in a sermon for that feast. He hesitates to state definitely whether Mary was taken up body and soul into heaven, or whether only her soul was taken up, but he does affirm that she is

86. Aelred, 'Sermo XVIII, PL., CXCIV, col. 314 C: "Gladius doloris, gladius tristitiae, gladius compassionis. Quanta tunc flumina lacrymarum de illius castissimis oculis eruperunt, cum videret filium suum et talem in cruce pendere, potari felle, ab impiis irrideri! Cum quanto dolore audivit: 'Mulier, ecce filius tuus (Joan, XIX), ut scilicet susciperet discipulum pro filio! Utique tunc gladiis doloris pertransivit animam ejus, 'pertingens pene' usque ad fivisionem animae,' et corporis ejus (Hebr. IV). Tunc sine dubio quaesivit, quem diligit nunc anima ejus; quaesivit affectu, quaesivit desiderio; ita quod ipsa non effugerit hoc quod gemebat apostolus: 'Caro concupiscit adversus spiritum, et spiritus adversus carnem (Galad. V)'."

87. Revelations p. 34: ". . . for she and Christ were so oned in love, that the greatness of her loving was cause of the greatness of her pain."

88. Ibid., "(For inasmuch as our Lady sorrowed for his pains, in so much he suffered sorrow for her sorrow; and more, in as much as the sweet manhood of him was worthier in kind.)"

89. Ibid., p. 8.

90. Ibid., p. 34.

91. Ibid., p. 34.

in heaven.⁹² He concludes from this, and from the dignity to which Mary has been raised as spouse and Mother of God, that he and his brethren owe her their service as their heavenly lady.⁹³ He cautions, however, against a superstitious devotion to Mary, pointing out that to honour her to the exclusion of her son would please neither the son nor the mother.

From this discussion of the teachings of the two mystics about Mary, their differences in approach to the spiritual life may more readily be perceived. Aelred is a monk, thoroughly imbued with the Scripture, affected to some degree by the theological debates of the twelfth century, and accustomed to what has been called in Post-Reformation times "Discursive meditation". The Scriptures and the Eucharist are two sources of spiritual enrichment for him. He draws meaning out of Scripture texts on several different levels, and follows passages through carefully, exploring all their implications. He is systematic in his thinking, cautious about certain doctrines, (for example, the assumption) in dispute on the Continent, and in general,

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92. 'Sermo XVIII', PL., CXCIV, col. 315 B: "Si auderem, dicerem, beatissimam Dei genetricem Mariam carnem primo reliquisse, deinde in ipsa carne in aeternam vitam resurrexisse. Sed licet haec non audeam affirmare; quia non habeo, unde possim, si quis resistat, convincere; audeo tamen opinari: affirmare quidem indubitanter audeo, quia hodierna die beata Virgo sive in corpore, sive extra corpus, nescio, Deus scit, coelum conscenderit, omnem illam coelestem civitatem mentis vivicitate circuiert."
93. 'Sermo XX', PL., CXCIV, col. 324 A: "Fratres, nullum servitium placet illi tantum, quantum hoc, ut nos omni amore et affectu humiliemus filio suo; quia omnis laus, omne servitium, quod exhibemus filio suo, hoc totum tenet pro suo."

moderate in tone. In most instances his sermons represent careful, but not brilliant work. He becomes capable of touching the heart when he deals with those topics closest to his heart—the Sabbath rest and friendship.

Julian, on the other hand, is nothing if not inspired. She does not draw her conclusions out of a set of inferences—she receives them from a source outside herself and passes them on in a self-effacing manner. Although the Wyclif controversy was reaching its height at the time of her revelations, she is both orthodox and calm in her orthodoxy, submitting in all things to her holy Mother, the Church.⁹⁴ Her main source of material is the sixteen shewings, upon which she pondered in her cell for fifteen or twenty years. Her writing shows a familiarity with the Scriptures which could have come from constant participation in the liturgy and from listening to sermons. Her Scripture quotations are sometimes paraphrases and are not carefully documented as are those of Aelred. The narrative of her visions shifts suddenly, according to the way in which they were perceived. Consequently, her teaching is much less formal, more conversational, than that of Aelred. This is just what one would expect, since Aelred carefully prepared the material for his sermons in chapter, while Julian was

94. Revelations, p. 18: ". . . But in all things I believe as Holy Church believeth, preacheth and teacheth."

trying to set down by dictation, for an unknown audience, an essentially incommunicable experience. Again, Aelred's studied manner lends itself to a consideration of details, while Julian usually manages to draw a more profound meaning from details. Her view of God and creation is a more general, more spacious one than Aelred's, and it is in this respect that the individuating marks of English spirituality emerging in the fourteenth century are apparent.

CONCLUSION

This study has led to several conclusions concerning the importance of Aelred and Julian to the development of religious thought in England, and the nature of their contribution to that development. Both are influential, but Julian shows more originality of thought than does Aelred.

Aelred may be viewed as the foremost exponent of Cistercian spirituality, if only for the volume of his work as compared with that of other English Cistercians such as Gilbert of Holland, John of Ford and Isaac of Stella. Through him the Bernardine influence was somewhat tempered by Aelred's great gentleness. Much of his writing is a restatement and an amplification of Continental doctrines, but there are important original points as well. His doctrine on the three Sabbaths of charity is a beautiful exposition of the ideal of peace so typical of Benedictine and Cistercian spirituality. His treatment of friendship, modelled on Cicero's De Amicitia, is at once original, daring, and touchingly humane.

His influence continued after his death both in his own order and in that most ancient of orders, the anchorites. The De Institutione inclusarum was used as a guide by anchoresses until the Reformation in its original form, in a modified version, or as it was incorporated into later rules such as the Ancrene Riwe. It is in this respect that Aelred may be said to have influenced the life of Julian.

Devotion to the humanity of Christ, so evident in

Bernard's writings and in Aelred's De Jesu puero duodenni was spread among the laity in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries by the ministrations of the mendicant friars, who preached on the Mother of God, the Incarnation, the Nativity, the Passion and Death of Christ. These subjects for preaching and meditation, already manifest in Aelred's musings on the Passion in the De institutione inclusarum and in the De Jesu puero duodenni are transmitted to the lay people in sermons, miracle plays and books in the vernacular. By the fourteenth century, a religious climate had been created in which lay people should think with ease and delight about the homey details of the lives of Christ, Mary, and the saints.

It was in this milieu that Julian, with her intimate, yet lofty knowledge of God, flourished. Her writings show the other side of the coin of charity, that of the love of God for man. Her originality in general lies in this aspect of her teaching. In particular it lies in the doctrine of the motherhood of God which receives its fullest and most beautiful development in the Revelations. Her teaching on the Trinity throw a more penetrating light on previous theological explanations given to that doctrine. The treatment of sin is also thorough and enlightened, showing a confident grasp of the metaphysical principles involved. Her immense confidence in the goodness of God, her refusal to expect anything but kindness from Him, are typical of the mood of English spirituality at this period.

The characteristics of medieval English spirituality have been mentioned at various points throughout the discussion. It is time now to draw up a list of these characteristics.

One of the most salient marks of this spirituality is a profound and familiar confidence in God. From this confidence flows a tender devotion to the humanity of Christ and to Mary. It should be noted, however, that his tenderness does not, in the case of Julian, degenerate into mere sentimentality, but retains a nobility and balance which bespeaks a strong character. A certain independence of judgment which permits Aelred and Julian to differ respectfully from contemporary opinion, whether it be on friendship, in Aelred's case, or on the right of a woman to speak of the love of God, in Julian's case, is another characteristic of English spirituality. It is this independence which permitted the originality already noted in these two writers, and which insured the continuation of such a difficult vocation as anachoritism, which remained relatively popular in England until the Reformation. It is almost paradoxical that coexistent with this independence is a willingness to submit to the teaching authority of the Church in doctrinal matters; this docility safeguarded orthodoxy.

At this point the uniqueness of these characteristics must be considered. They are not, it is true, entirely lacking in Continental spirituality. The French, German

and Flemish medieval writers were also capable of tenderness towards God and had original insights into spiritual matters. But to an Anglo-Saxon, at least, the English managed to convey a certain sweetness in their approach to God without becoming maudlin. The appeal of the English spiritual writers to Anglo-Saxon Christians who have been nourished on a translated Latin spirituality may be due to semantic factors, but it is a very powerful appeal nonetheless. Perhaps the Latin writers would share this appeal if their translators allowed themselves a little more freedom and rendered phrases such as Christ's addressing the soul "ma bien-aimée" as "my darling" instead of the traditional "beloved". A study of much more ambitious proportions than this would be required to determine the influence of word usage in giving a particular tone to the spiritual writing of medieval England. The question can only be raised here; it cannot be answered.

The two writers who occupy the central portion of this study leave an impression of gentleness, affection and goodness. Their God is a God of love, who desires mercy and not holocausts. The sweetness which they attribute to God spreads itself over their writings and their lives. In this lies their attraction and their glory.

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