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<Text: Myrour of Recluses>

<fol. 7r>in that ne make noon avow . and whan  
 this 3eer is al fully passid ; þanne *prey*  
 euery day the fadir of *mercy* þ<sup>t</sup> he vouche  
 sauf to enspire hym what ys best vnto  
 the helthe of his soule / and finali what  
 schal moost plese good / and 3if he duel  
 le and contynue in his desir as he dide  
 byforn / & þat þ<sup>e</sup> conseil of discreet men  
 conforme & assente vn-to hym by good  
 and ripe avys and *deliberaconn* / þane lat  
 hym stablissche his wil in this caas . &  
 knytte vp his purpoos & take þ<sup>t</sup> lyf or  
 make his avow þerto trustynge in þe *grace*  
 & *mercy* of his god . / oþir-wyse þan þus  
 or lik to þis / wolde . i . nat conseile þ<sup>e</sup> . lyf  
 of Recluses to chese or avow / Natheles  
 aftir a+symple avow is maad or suych  
 lyf admittid / & taken w<sup>t</sup> <sup>[owt]</sup> necessarie deli  
 beraconn & avys ; it schal be kept vnto þ<sup>e</sup>  
 endes of peyne of eterner and euere-lastin  
 ge dampnaconn ¶ Therefore to alle þ<sup>o</sup> þat  
 ben professyd in þat lyf ; is it charitable  
 to putte forth or schewe þ<sup>e</sup> exortaconn of þe  
 <fol. 7v>apostel / Whet he seyth . i . byseche . J byse  
 che 3ow þat 3e walke & go worthili in  
 þ<sup>e</sup> callinge in which 3e ben cleept . Diuers  
 is þ<sup>e</sup> callynge of sondry folk aftir diuerse 3ef  
 tes of god / whepir suich be goodes of þe  
 body . or goodes of þe soule / or goodes

temperel / or contrarie of hem / which hap  
 pyth to be goodes by accidence / þo ma  
 ken folk in diuerse kyndes / stroong or fee  
 ble / symple or prudent / poore or my3ti ¶ For  
 some arn callyd to goddys *seruise* wiþ helpe  
 and strengþe / some wiþ febilnesse & syk  
 nesse / some wiþ good & natural complexion  
 some w<sup>t</sup> euyl complexionn . some w<sup>t</sup> many  
 vertues / some wiþ fewe / some wiþ riches .  
 some with pouert / some wiþ wrecchidnesses  
 and infortunes / and some w<sup>t</sup> al manere of  
 prosperite / alle þese w<sup>t</sup>-outen doute 3if they  
 come fro god and nat of mannys vice schul  
 len more profite finally to her possessoures  
 þan scholde her countries . 3if thei vse hem  
 wiel ¶ O þe hey3nesse of þ<sup>e</sup> wysdom and  
 science of god / o þ<sup>e</sup> gracious *purueynce* of our~  
 <fol. 8r>craitour . o þ<sup>e</sup> excellent mercy of oure lord god  
 þat clerly seep byforn alle þing þ<sup>t</sup> schul  
 len folwen and been possible to falle / &  
 calleþ euery wyght so to helthe / as to estat /  
 condiconn & opir circumstaunces / 3if þ<sup>t</sup> thei  
 hem-self putte noon obstacle ne lettynge  
 þ<sup>t</sup> þei may sufficiently be sauyd / & eschewe  
 þe peril of dampnaconn / Jn+so mochel þat  
 alle maner . harmes þ<sup>t</sup> fallen to goddes  
 chosen peple schullen profite to ay-lastyng  
 helpe . ¶ To hem þat loven god / alle þinges  
 werkyn in-to good or werkyn wiel / and  
 taken good effect to hem þat aftir hir  
*purpos* bien callid seyntes ¶ Forsope aftir  
 her *purpoos* þei ben callyd seyntes / þ<sup>t</sup> ben  
*predestinat* to god to euerlastyng lyf Suich  
 folk ben nat only callyd outward by *ensam*  
 ple by holy scripture / or by *predicaconn* . but  
 also by *enspiryng* & *grace* of *perseuerance*+fyna  
 ly in charite / Jn suich wyse ben folk cho  
 sen in *comparisonn* of al a+multitude  
 which is clepid ¶ her~of beryth crist wytnes

he seith many ben callyd & fewe ben chosen  
 <fol. 8v>Forsoþe tho that god hath predestyned . he  
 hath callyd hem so . And wham he clepte  
 in þat manere ; hem 3if þat þa fall he iusti  
 fieth bi grace of penaunce / and wham  
 þ<sup>t</sup> he iustifieþ so ; hem he magnifieþ be ha  
 bundaunce and plente of *grace* and *vertu* .  
 aftir þ<sup>e</sup> sentence of þ<sup>e</sup> apostel þ<sup>t</sup> seith þus /  
 As many as 3e been þ<sup>t</sup> ben clepid to do  
 penaunce intestat of *perfeccionn* of Recluses  
 beth ioyful and gladip in god trustynge  
 stedefastly on his grace and *mercy* . þat  
 3oure names bien wretyn in heuene  
 wherfor ordeigneth and purueyeth 3ow  
 euyrmore a faget of alle 3oure offences  
 and giltes byforn 3oure eyen of 3oure wil  
 & of 3oure herte ¶ Remembrynge of þe  
 greet *mercy* of god & his manyfold *grace*  
 doon & schewed ~~deon~~ vn-to 3ow and profred  
 frely to hem þat been penytent & repen  
 taunt w<sup>t</sup>outen ende . and for þe offense  
 of god & for his excellent *mercy* medlith  
 to-gidre sorwe w<sup>t</sup> ioye & gladnesse w<sup>t</sup> he  
 uynesse . Thus ofte þ<sup>e</sup> deuoconn of a *perfy*t  
 <fol. 9r>contriconn. tollip out & bringip out glad  
 sum teres and wepynge / gladnesse whil  
 þat þe ende & entent of þe greet *desir* / co  
 meþ out & stillith out be þe een swete  
 dropes of deuoconn / and who so euyr haþ  
 þis *precious licour* / Which is helpe of þe syn  
 ful soule . he wolde nat gladly chaunge  
 yt for a+gret kynges *tresour* . For aftir þe  
 bittir teres of suych contriconn longe *exer*  
 cysed & vsyd ; entriþ þe suetnesse of þ<sup>e</sup> loue  
 of god / which loue ys more þan man  
 can deeme or gesse ¶ O who schal make  
 me partyner of suych holy teres / who  
 schal wassche my felþes wip þe watres  
 of Sylloe þat goon wip silence & stilnesse

syn . i . am al drye / J preie & biseche 3ow  
 þerfore þ<sup>t</sup> þoru3 grace drawen watres in ioye  
 of þe welles of oure saueour / for þe hy mercy  
 of oure lord god . Whan it is wiel w<sup>t</sup> 3ow .  
 remembrith & þenketh+on me . & departiþ with  
 me charitably of þe leeste droopes þat  
 fallen fro 3ow of þe abundaunce of 3our~  
 blysful teres / More-ovir . i . desire þ<sup>t</sup> 3e wacche  
 <fol. 9v>bisili agayn þ<sup>e</sup> temptaconns of þ<sup>e</sup> feend . þ<sup>t</sup>  
 noþing . sleuthe or lache ouyr mochil þe  
 stiburn hardnesse of 3oure lyf / . vndir co  
 lour of fals necessite / no noþing augm<sup>n</sup>ite  
 or ecche it ouyr 3our force or my3t / but  
 aftir þe doom & arbitrement of dicreonn  
 chastise & nursche 3oure body in diuerse ty  
 mes / þat it be soget on þ<sup>t</sup> o side to þe com  
 maundement of 3oure spirites & suffi  
 saunt on þ<sup>t</sup> oþir part to performe & fulfillle  
 þe labour enioyned to þe body . & þerfor  
 in 3our greet febilnesse or infirmite . ordey  
 nyth or purueyth 3ow wysly necessarie  
 recreaonn & refressching to þe body . &  
 whan it is refigured . þat is to seyn þ<sup>t</sup>  
 it haþ cau3t agayn his strengþe and is  
 restored to helþe . þanne my3tyly resumeþ  
 and takeþ agayn þe armes of spiritu  
 al kny3thode / þenkyng þat 3e schul  
 len nat only continue 3oure meritorie  
 & medful werkes for 3oure-self . but  
 also for othir soules þat suffren in  
 purgatorie & for alle cristen peple to  
 <fol. 10r>to þ<sup>e</sup> Which 3e ben obliged and holden  
 be þe lawe of charite ¶ O who can deeme  
 of gesse what turment þo soules suffren þ<sup>t</sup>  
 ben in purgatorie . Whos peyne ys mochel moor~  
 greuous þan any peyne þat is in this lyf .  
 Seynt Gregori hadde hadde leueu chose þ<sup>e</sup>  
 contynuel feuer~s while he lyued here þan  
 suffre þre dayes þe peyne of purgatorie ¶ O

ther nys tonge þat can expresse the smert  
 of þ<sup>e</sup> peynes of helle which ben insuffrable  
 for þ<sup>e</sup>i han noon ende ¶ Therfor ys is ful  
 holy and hoosum <ill></ill> to preye for hem þat  
 ben deede þ<sup>t</sup> þey may ben dissoluyd and  
 vnknet of her synnes . And also for to preie  
 for þe synful men þat lyuen here þ<sup>t</sup> þey  
 may preseruyd and kept fro þe peynes of  
 helle These and oþir þinges lik to þese  
 impressith and receyuyth in to 3our~ myn  
 des & lat hem styre and meeue 3ow to  
 contynue the lyf of perfeconn which 3e haue  
 taken labourynge & travaylynge in orisons  
 wakynges / fastynges / and alle oþer obser  
 uaunces / and thus by þe grace of almy3ty  
 <fol. 10v>god 3e schul perseuere and contynue vn-to þ<sup>e</sup>  
 ende in þe clepynge which 3e ben clept vn  
 to / And in þis wyse by couenable penaunce  
 seep 3oure clepynge and callynge ¶ The  
 þridde cause or entenconn *principal* of Reclu  
 ses may be þe purpos to eschewe oportuni  
 te or þe occasionn & cause which is wont to  
 induce to leede a+man in-to deedly synne  
 The fyve wyttis of þ<sup>e</sup> body as vn-wys mes  
 sageres of mannes herte ben accustomed  
 and wont alwey & ouyral to recorde in  
 hem-self / al þ<sup>t</sup> þei han take and receyuyd  
 be yt veyn þinges or vnprofitable anoy  
 inge greuyng or enclynyng vn-to syn  
 ne Therof happith often sithe / þat þei  
 þat ben symple and feerful to falle &  
 to slyppe in-to deedly synne whan þey  
 byholde & consider~ her freelte & þ<sup>e</sup> perilys  
 of synnes / þ<sup>t</sup> þei ben likly to fallen ine  
 which take her bygynnyng of þe fyve  
 wyttys þat sterten here & þere in þe  
 world wiþ-oute obstacle or bridel . For  
 þ<sup>e</sup> moor~ syker eschewyng of alle þese  
 <fol. 11r>periles of a prudent Ferue.<sup>[nc]</sup>se or of a+feruent

prudence / thei werkyn aftir þe conseil of  
 salomon seyinge in this manere ¶ callyd  
 prudence þi love or þi freend / þ<sup>t</sup> ys to seyn  
 þe wardeyn & keper~ of þi wyl . / O Which  
 and how greet prudence ys askyd and re  
 quyred to þe kepyng of þe wyt of þe sy3te  
 þat inpressith & enpryntyth in þe herte of  
 a+persone what þat he byholdeþ & seeþ as  
 beaute of creatures . preciosite of clopinge  
 schap / port and werkynge / Which engen  
 dryn concupiscence of þe flesch . & nurschen  
 lustes of ye body þ<sup>t</sup> causen ofte a+man to  
 do wykkydly ¶ Wheþir þat þe sy3te of  
 dalyaunce were nat þe cause of þ<sup>e</sup> ruy  
 ne or fallynge of Sampson þat excedyd  
 and passyd alle men in strengthe ¶ wheþer  
 þe sy3te of straunge wommen turnyd nat  
 and chaungyd þe herte of Salomon þe  
 Wyse ¶ wheþir þe sy3te of vries wyf ba  
 pinge her maade dauyd þ<sup>e</sup> holy prophete  
 to falle in-to cursyd avoutrie & man-slau3tr~  
 What þing engendred þefte & stelþe or  
 <fol. 11v>vnlyefful coueytise in Achor / but þ<sup>e</sup> sy3te  
 of precious þinges / what maade oure mo  
 dyr Eve to synne / but þe lycourous look  
 of þe deffendyd or forboden tree / And  
 what maade þe children of Jsrael mor~  
 prest or redy to doon ydolatrie / þan þe  
 sy3te of þe rytes and þe lawes of þe he  
 then peple / and communycaconn or spe  
 kyng wyth suych folk þat honureden  
 and worschipeden feendes ¶ Therfor þe  
 prophete dauyd preieþ oure lord god & seyth  
 þus Torne away myn eyen lest þei seen  
 or byholde vanyte / Moore-ovyr þe ere sou  
 keth and receyuyth al þ<sup>t</sup> euyre he heryth  
 of þ<sup>e</sup> slym & felþe of synne . as songes &  
 karoles of love / foul & vnclene speches /  
 streyve / accusaconns / blamynges . wordes

of detraccon / or bacbytyng / wordes of  
 Envy pride . Auarice glosynges and le  
 synges / Loo alle suych þinges þorough  
 her wykkyd ensample mowe ly3tly dra  
 we and stirie a+man to synne As seyth  
 þ<sup>e</sup> prophete dauid ¶ J am maad he seyth  
 <fol. 12r>as a vessel þ<sup>t</sup> ys loost / for i . haue herd þ<sup>e</sup>  
 accusaconn or blamyng of many folk . þ<sup>t</sup>  
 duellyn in þ<sup>e</sup> circuyt of compas / þ<sup>t</sup> is to  
 seyn of hem þat duellen aboute me . O  
 blessyd is þ<sup>e</sup> ere þ<sup>t</sup> ys so prudently disposid  
 þ<sup>t</sup> he openep nat þe 3ates agayn suych  
 vnleefful noyses & ys schyt & spered agayn  
 þ<sup>e</sup> voluptuous or lusty melodyes of the  
 world & ys stoppyd agayn alle þe sonnes  
 of temptaconns . but in as mochel as ys  
 possible to hym þat lyueth in þis valeye  
 of wrecchidnesse & kepith hem . a feer from  
 alle worldly vanytes as yt schewith by  
 euydence & tokne of Recluses & naamly  
 of Anchoresses þat bien more streytly closed  
 þan oþer religious men & wommen enclosed  
 enclosyd in her houses be leue of he soue  
 reyns . And in alle tymes at her souereyns  
 wyl ¶ Swych Ancres & Ankeresses ben mo  
 re sekerly conseruyd & kept fro þ<sup>e</sup> peryls of  
 þ<sup>e</sup> bodyly wyt of touchyng . by þ<sup>e</sup> which  
 entriþ þe lust of lecherie in sondry wyse  
 as wiel naturel or kyndely as vnnaturel or  
 <fol. 12v>vnkyndely . Which wiþ-drawep a+man  
 fro vertu . & maketh hym abhomynable  
 to Angeles / hatful to god & alieneth hym  
 or maketh hym straunge from al grace  
 Alle suych spices of lecherie ben fer from  
 an Ancresse / but 3if it happe per caas þat  
 of a voluptuous or lusty delectaconn or  
 delyt of þe herte in vnliefful pou3tes  
 loonge abydyng ; ben engendringe w<sup>t</sup>  
 a+consent to delyte in þat same ; þan wiþ



outhen doute yt induceþ a+man in-to deed  
 ly synne . & 3if he contynue suych delyt  
 wakyng vn-to þe tyme þ<sup>t</sup> þe voluptuous  
 pollucorn of þ<sup>e</sup> body folwe . þan ys þer doon  
 amanere of spice of lecherie agayn kynde  
 which is callyd in latyn of þ<sup>e</sup> apostyl . Mo  
 licies . Now be yt no displesaunce to 3ow  
 þat . i . expresse þus vnhonest þinges in my  
 wrytyng to folk of clene & perfyt lyf . For  
 where is possibilite of temptacorn <gap> þer  
 ys a+prudent enformyng of resistance  
 or wiþstondyng ful necessarie & meed  
 ful ¶ For þe trewe storie þ<sup>t</sup> seyth þ<sup>t</sup> þer was  
 <fol. 13r>an hermyte hoolden a+ful holy man Which  
 custumably vsyd þis sinne . & was vexid  
 þerwith þis synne of Molicies and chargid  
 yt nat in his conscience as for synne and  
 repentyd hym nat be contricorn ne confes  
 sionn wherfor he was sodeynly ra.<sup>[v]</sup>lyssched  
 & taken wiþ a+feend and neuyr apperyd  
 aftyr which dede as . i . suppose was sche  
 wyd of god in ensample & to þ<sup>e</sup> doctryne  
 of oþer folk to make hem euyr wiþstonde  
 in al her my3tes . suych manere of volup  
 tuous delyt & neuere 3eue her assent þerto /  
 and 3if þei falle at any tyme in suych  
 caas as god kepe hem þerfro ; to be sory  
 and repentaunt þerof / and so for þ<sup>e</sup> victorie  
 of a+scharp & greuours spirituel bataylle .  
 þei may aftir þis lyf be coroned in ioie .  
 Suych a+corone may cristes knyth deserue  
 wiþdrawyng hym fro excessyf & outrage  
 ous lustes of smellyng & tastyng þat  
 ben engendryd of sauoures & odoures / de  
 licates in metys & drinkes & in spices aro  
 matik / in sote sauour of flour~s & fruytes .