

**UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS STUDIES IN
LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE, VOL. III.
FEBRUARY, 1917, NO. 1. THE AD DEUM
VADIT OF JEAN GERSON: PUBLISHED
FROM THE MANUSCRIPT BIBLIOTHÈQUE
NATIONALE, FONDS FR. 24841**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649480616

University of Illinois Studies in Language and Literature, Vol. III. February, 1917, No. 1. The Ad Deum Vadit of Jean Gerson: Published from the Manuscript Bibliothèque Nationale, Fonds Fr. 24841 by David Hobart Carnahan

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DAVID HOBART CARNAHAN

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UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS STUDIES
IN
LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

VOL. III

FEBRUARY, 1917

No. 1

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PUBLISHED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
URBANA, ILLINOIS

THE AD DEUM VADIT

OF

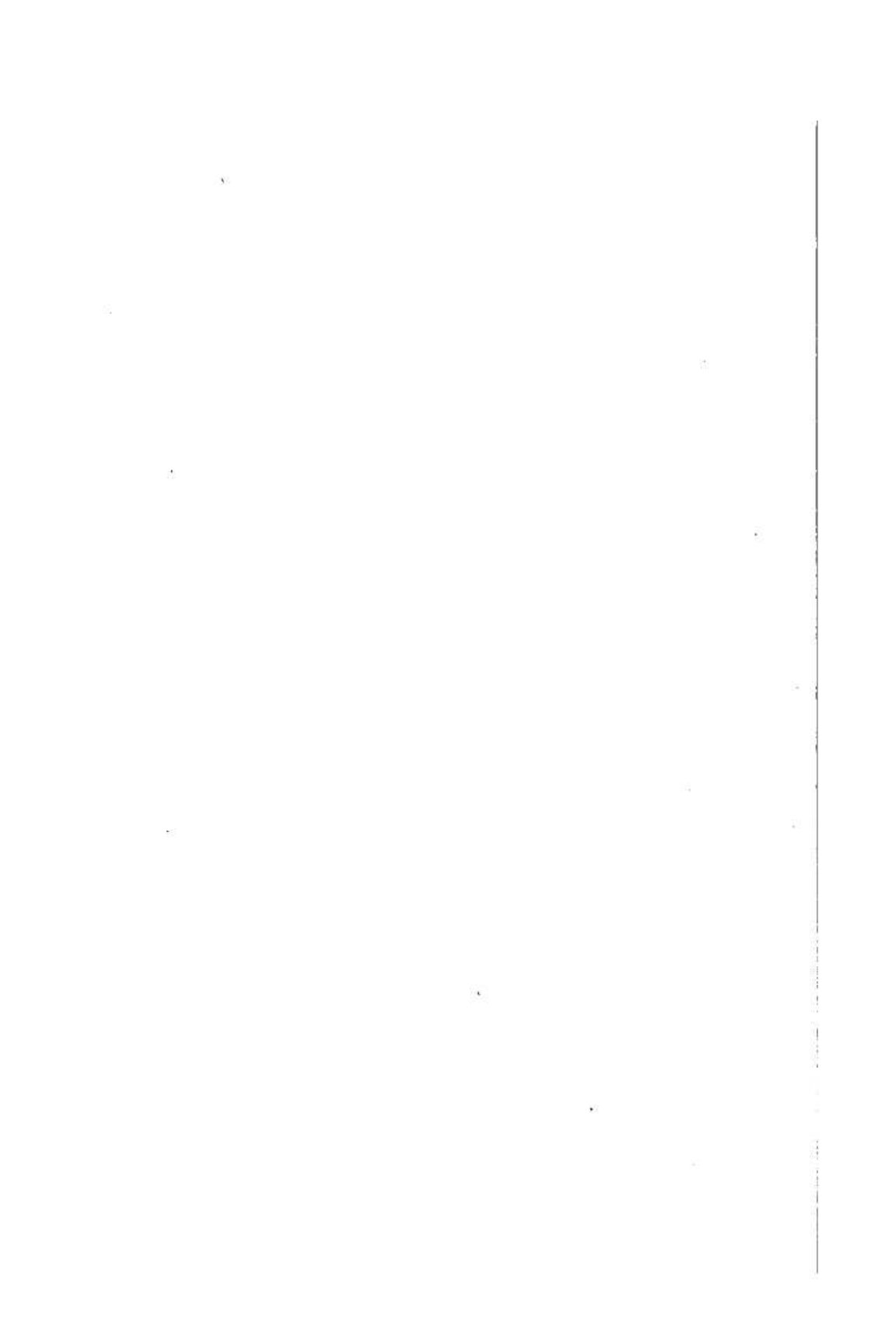
JEAN GERSON

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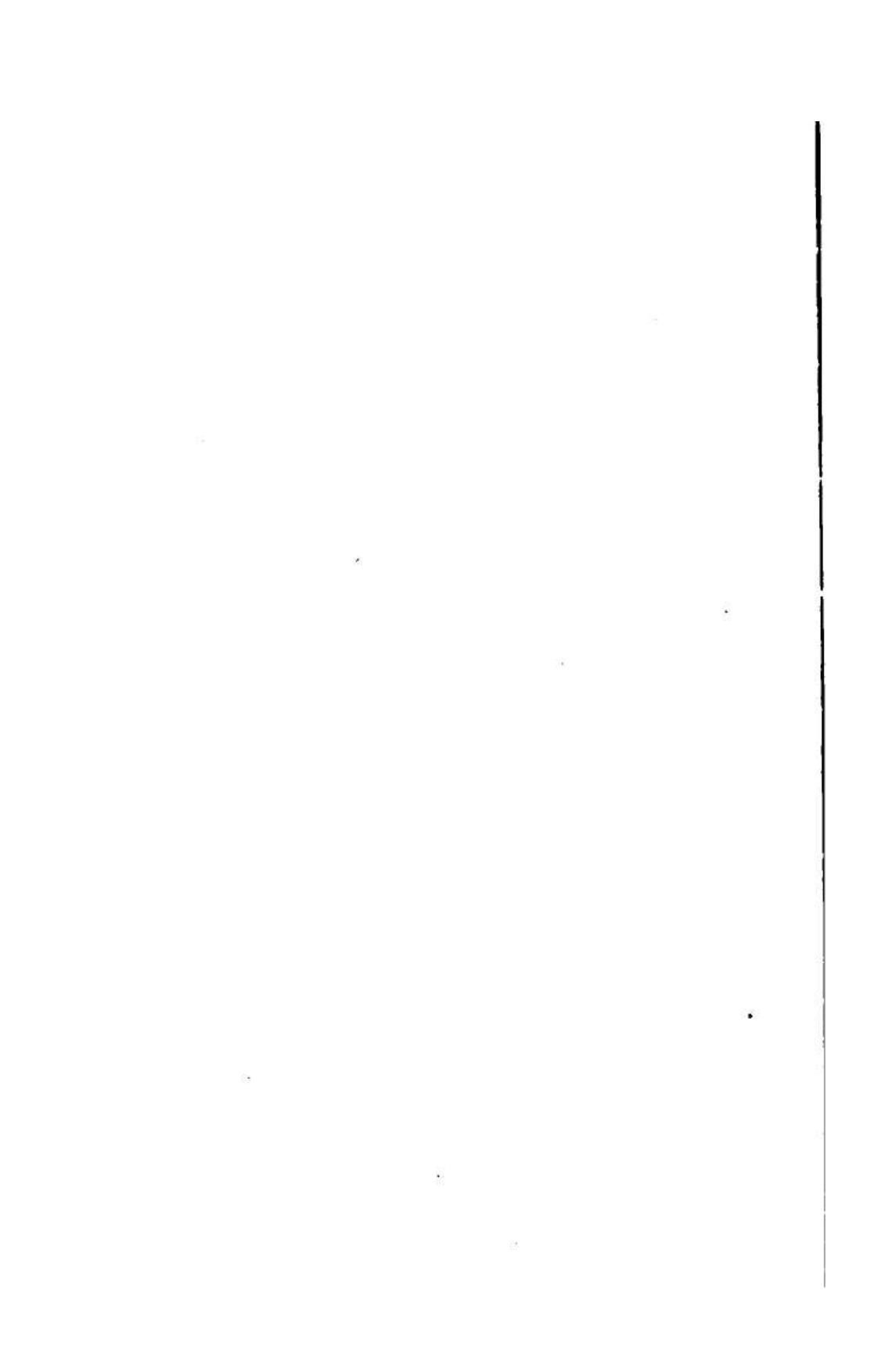
DAVID HOBART CARNAHAN, Ph.D.

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
1917



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PREFACE

The object of this present study is to fill a gap in the history of religious eloquence in France. The original form of Jean Gerson's sermon on the Passion, entitled *Ad Deum vadit*, is published here for the first time. The text of this sermon is based on the best manuscript, No. 24841, fonds français, of the Bibliothèque Nationale at Paris, and is collated with three other manuscripts of the same library.

The French sermons of Jean Gerson are available, for the most part, only in Latin translations or in manuscript form. The various writers who have studied the life and works of this great preacher all express their regret that these sermons have not been published in the form in which they were delivered. The well-known critic, M. Arthur Piaget, speaks of them as "malheureusement encore inédits dans leur forme française;"¹ M. l'Abbé Bourret describes them as "dénaturés presque dès l'origine par une traduction étrangère;"² while M. Victor Le Clerc uses even more emphatic language in regard to them: "On ne les a publiés que traduits dans un latin détestable."³

The *Ad Deum vadit* has been chosen for publication from among the sixty-four French sermons of Gerson because it is the most representative work of the author, and is a typical embodiment of the theological ideas of the time. It was prepared with care, and was preached before the royal court in 1402, when Gerson was at the height of his power. M. Piaget refers to it as "peut-être le plus beau qu'ait prêché Gerson."⁴ The thought and language belong to that interesting period of transition which lies between the real Middle Ages and the Renaissance.

I wish to express my grateful appreciation to Professor Antoine Thomas for valuable information which he courteously gave me regarding certain difficult words. Professor Emile Roy was equally kind in helping me in the study of sources. Professor Kenneth McKenzie, Professor David S. Blondheim, and my other colleagues in the University of Illinois, have also been most generous in their assistance. It should be noted, however, that these scholars have seen only parts of my work; the responsibility for any errors which the edition may contain rests entirely upon me.

D. H. C.

March 28, 1917.

¹*Histoire de la Littérature française*, par L. Petit de Julleville, Paris, 1896, p. 246.

²*Essai historique et critique sur les sermons français de Gerson*, par l'abbé Ernest Bourret, Paris, 1858, p. 45.

³*Histoire littéraire de la France*, Paris, 1896, Vol. XXIV, p. 376.

⁴*Op. cit.*, p. 253.

