

RUYSBROECK

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Ruysbroeck by Evelyn Underhill

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AUTHOR OF

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FOR
JESSIE
TO WHOM IT OWES SO MUCH
THIS LITTLE TRIBUTE TO A MUTUAL FRIEND

EDITOR'S NOTE

A GLANCE at the excellent Bibliographical Note at the end of the volume will reveal the surprising paucity of literature on Ruysbroeck in this country. A single version from the original of one short treatise, published in the present year, is all that we possess of direct translation; even in versions from translation there is only one treatise represented; add to this one or two selections of the same nature, and the full tale is told. We are equally poorly off for studies of the life and doctrine of the great Flemish contemplative of the fourteenth century. And yet Jan van Ruusbroec is thought, by no few competent judges, to be the greatest of all the mediæval Catholic mystics; and, indeed, it is difficult to point to his superior. Miss Evelyn Underhill is, therefore, doing lovers

not only of Catholic mysticism, but also of mysticism in general, a very real service by her monograph, which deals more satisfactorily than any existing work in English with the life and teachings of one of the most spiritual minds in Christendom. Her book is not simply a painstaking summary of the more patent generalities of the subject, but rather a deeply sympathetic entering into the mind of Ruysbroeck, and that, too, with no common insight.