An Allusion in Browne's "Religio Medici"

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ments, usually, of half a crown each week. Three years later, when the Admiral's Men had moved to the Fortune, their actor-sharers apparently borrowed and paid in the old way. Between June 30 and September 5, 1601, Henslowe received from four of them, Richard Jones, Thomas Dowton, Robert Shaw, and William Bird, a number of weekly payments towards 'ther privet deats wch. they owe vnto me'. In any one week the four paid identical amounts, but these amounts vary from one week to the next—a fact which suggests that the payments came from a common source: doubtless each man's part of the company's gallery takings. Henslowe, in short, regularly lent money to his actor-sharers, and as regularly collected from the earnings of their shares. It seems a fair inference, then, that Gabriel Spencer's share and Humphrey Jeffes and Ben Jonson's were all of a kind, and that Jonson in 1597 was not a part owner of the Rose nor yet the Bear Garden, but an actor-sharer in the Admiral's Men. Like Shakespeare, Heywood, Nathaniel Field, and many another playwright, he scored his first success as an actor, for the actor-sharers were players who had made their mark.

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AN ALLUSION IN BROWNE'S 'RELIGIO MEDICI.'

In Part I, Section 30 of the *Religio Medici* we read: 'As the Devil is concealed and denied by some, so GOD and good Angels are pretended by others, whereof the late defection of the Maid of Germany hath left a pregnant example.'

A MS. which was in Wilkins' possession when he edited the *Religio Medici* in 1836 had the following note attached to the words 'Maid of Germany,' 'That lived without meat, on the smell of a rose.' The same MS. for 'defection' had 'detection.' I am informed that another MS. (unknown to Wilkins) which has been for 200 years in the library of St John's College, Cambridge (class-mark H. 15), agrees with Wilkins' MS. in both respects.

It is probably an open question whether the gloss on the words 'Maid of Germany' was added by Browne himself, or by some one else on a MS. then in his hands. It is also uncertain whether Browne is responsible for the two forms 'defection' and 'detection,' or whether one of them is a corruption of what Browne wrote, and in this case which is Browne's word and which is the corruption. Further if Browne wrote 'defection,' in what sense did he use the word?

¹ *H. D.*, I, p. 162.

The allusion to the maiden 'that lived without meat on the smell of a rose' appears to have had no light thrown on it by Browne's commentators. It seems, however, to be illustrated by a ballad of the beginning of the seventeenth century preserved in MS. in Lord Macclesfield's library and printed by Mr Andrew Clark in the *Shirburn Ballads* (1907) p. 54. The heading is: 'Of a maide nowe dwelling at the towne of *meurs* in *dutchland*, that hath not taken any foode these 16 yeares, and is not yet neither hungry nor thirsty; the which maide hath lately been presented to the lady *elizabeth*, the king's daughter of *england*. This song was made by the maide her selfe, and now translated into *english*.'

The maid is made to say:

No thirst nor hunger me annoyes,
nor weakenes my estate;
But liues like one that's finely fed
with dainties delicate.
For daily in my hand I beare
a pleasant smelling flower,
Which to maintaine me safe in health
hath still the blessed power.

She goes on—in agreement with Browne's account of his Maid of Germany—to claim divine assistance:

Then yeldest I the lord aboue
eternall laude and prase
That thus hath made me in my life
a wonder of these daies.

It seems likely that the maid of the ballad was the one that was in the mind of Browne's annotator: and if the annotator was Browne himself she was his Maid of Germany. But the ballad throws no light on the 'detection' or 'defection' of the Maid. Whichever of the two words is the authentic one, the general sense of Browne's allusion would lead us to suppose that the Maid of Germany was somehow convicted of fraud, or gave way under examination.

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LEEDS.

DOORS AND CURTAINS IN RESTORATION THEATRES.

There still remain, it is true, 'a few moot points in regard to...the theatres of the Restoration,' but the number, position, and use of stage doors in the Theatre Royal and at Lincoln's Inn Fields in the days of Dryden are no longer obscure points and difficulties. Mr Allardyce Nicoll, however, who speaks of the stage doors as a 'minor detail,' and almost apologizes for attaching any consequence to 'such apparent