Not yet, then, have I told or conceived, O Lord, how greatly Your blessed shall rejoice. They will rejoice according as they will love, and they will love according as they will know. How far will they know You, Lord, and how much will they love You? Truly eye has not seen nor ear heard, nor has it entered into the heart of man in this life how much they will know You and love You in that life.¹

ST. BONAVENTURE COMPOSED HIS “BREVIOQUUM” TO SHOW HOW THEOLOGY discourses about God, that “the truth of Holy Scripture is by God, from God, in accord with God, and because of God, so that this science may deservedly appear to be a single and orderly science and not undeservedly be named theology.”² After, in the manner of theology, he has described “first, the Trinity of God; second, the creation of the world; third, the corruption of sin; fourth, the incarnation of the Word; fifth, the grace of the Holy Ghost; sixth, the sacramental remedy; and seventh, the state of the final judgment,” and after he has defined the glories of paradise, he ends his whole endeavor of formulating the truth of Scripture with St. Anselm’s description of the joy of heaven.

To describe heaven Anselm uses all the categories by which language can raise the mind to describe the good of heaven. To teach his reader the idea of the good, he describes all goods man may desire, and shows that all these goods shall be enjoyed: “Why do you wander abroad, little man, in search of
the goods of soul and body? Love the one good in which are all goods, and it is enough. Seek the simple good which is all good, and it is enough. What do you love, my flesh? What do you seek, my soul? There is whatever you love, whatever you seek.” Beauty, swiftness, life, satisfaction of hunger and thirst; melody, pure pleasure, wisdom, power, security: “But what a joy and how great it is, where is there a good of such a kind or so great? Heart of man, needy heart, heart acquainted with sorrows, overwhelmed with sorrows, how greatly would you rejoice if you abounded in all these things? Ask your inner self whether it could contain its joy over so great a blessedness for itself.”

To teach his reader to contemplate the extent of man’s joy, he makes him aware how the heart will overflow with joy and its joy be multiplied in so much and to the degree that anyone else whom his heart loves possesses the same blessedness: “Thus in that perfect love of innumerable blessed angels and sainted men where none will love another less than himself, everyone will rejoice for each of the others as for himself.” Then upon this he multiplies the fact that each man will love God beyond comparison and more than himself and all the others with himself: “If they will so love God with all their heart and all their mind and all their soul, still all their heart and all their mind and all their soul will not suffice for the worthiness of this love. Surely they will so rejoice with all their heart and all their mind and all their soul that all their heart and all their mind and all their soul will not suffice for the fullness of their joy.”

But here Anselm breaks off his description as the joy exceeds the capacity of his heart and his words, and he turns with the boldness of perfect love of God to ask, as God bids him to ask, to enter into that joy. Approaching the center of the joy opened to man through the redemption, man can no longer speak. As Bonaventure says, having reached the seventh stage of his journey of the mind to God, “De excessu mentali et mystico, in quo requies datur intellectui, affectu totaliter in Deum per excessum transeunte”:

If you wish to know how these things may come about, ask grace, not learning; desire, not the understanding; the groaning of prayer, not diligence in reading; the Bridegroom, not the teacher; God, not man; darkness, not clarity; not light, but the fire that wholly inflames and carries one into God through transporting unctions and consuming affections. God Himself is this fire, and His furnace is in Jerusalem; and it is Christ who
enkindles it in the white flame of His most burning Passion. This fire he alone truly perceives who says: *My soul chooseth hanging, and my bones, death.* He who loves this death can see God, for it is absolutely true that *Man shall not see me and live.*

Let us, then, die and enter into this darkness. Let us silence all our care, our desires, and our imaginings. With Christ crucified, let us pass out of this world to the Father, so that, when the Father is shown to us, we may say with Philip: *It is enough for us.* Let us hear with Paul: *My grace is sufficient for thee,* and rejoice with David, saying: *My flesh and my heart have fainted away: thou art the God of my heart, and the God that is my portion forever.* Blessed be the Lord forever, and let all the people say: so be it, so be it. Amen.\(^3\)

The Middle English lyrics which we have discussed are fundamentally prayer. Their aim has been ultimate union with God. Yet there is an essential poverty at the center of man's prayer to God. The theologians are unanimous in identifying it, from the time of Paul: "We see now through a glass in a dark manner: but then face to face. Now I know in part: but then I shall know even as I am known" (1 Cor. 13:12). There is a fundamental discrepancy between the world and God no matter how profoundly man searches for God's image in it.\(^4\) The poverty of creation as it confronts God is expressed in different ways. By the mystics it is called darkness.\(^5\) By theologians it is put forth in the fundamental teaching that the world is created for the glorification of God, that nothing is to be loved in itself, but to be used to love God; that all things are signs.\(^6\) At its most creative, the fundamental poverty in the prayer of the world, as in the life of St. Francis, allows the "freedom of the sons of God" and creates a deeper beauty. At its least creative, it produces monotonity and ugliness.

Taken as a group, the medieval religious lyrics reflect the essential disproportion between the experience of delight and both the capacity of man's desire for delight and the unknown possibilities of delight. This poverty of experience is a result both of man's faulty desire, his sin and defection, or his condition; and of the gap between the present moment in sacred history and what is yet to come to pass—the event of the second coming of Christ Who will judge the living and the dead and establish whether a man, depending upon the quality of his desire, shall dwell in eternal sorrow or eternal joy. In spite of the fact of a falling short of the full experience of delight, a fall
which reflects the fall of Adam from original joy, the Christian soul can
name the delight he most deeply desires. Although neither has he experi­
enced it directly nor does he yet know even the full extent of his desire for it,
through the power of grace and with the perspective of theology he can call
upon it. Recognizing this gap between the experience of delight and the
desire for it which theology defines and the life of the Church bridges, will
help us understand why so many of the medieval religious lyrics are unpoetic
and flat. The flat lyrics are those which, seeking delight, use both the
traditional formulations of theology and the traditional forms of poetry in a
way that is not itself a source of delight to the beholder.

For the medieval theologian, the basis of beauty was proportionality, to be
found in the ordered unity and diversity of God's creation. The proportions
of beauty were reflected in the science of numbers—arithmetic and geometry
(time and space)—from which were derived music, the plastic arts and
architecture, and poetry. The divine proportioning of creation and history
was revealed by God through Christ, the New Testament, and established in
its perpetual forms—its order and hierarchy—in the living liturgy of the
Church. Each of the lyrics we have considered so far has been constructed in
some manner proportionate to the event of sacred history it celebrates (the
figure of virgin motherhood for the sequence on the annunciation, the cross
for that on the crucifixion) or to the sorrow or joy it effects in mankind (to
Mary's experience in "Als i lay," to Christ's in "Pe milde Lomb"). The
structural proportions of sacred history transcend the individual arts, finding
their definition in the proportions of the creative action of God, which is
revealed in His Word, the expression of His thought, or Christ.

Rather than evaluating the religious lyrics as they do or do not effect
intensity of the audience's emotion, which has been the tendency of most of
the modern critics, I would like to set up a structural criterion and contrast
the religious lyrics which are ordered in a unity proportioned by their subject
matter to those which are ordered by the poverty of disproportionate dead
forms. To illustrate the differences between religious poems which seem flat
and unproportioned and the proportioned religious lyrics, and also to show
their relationship to the proportioning of sacred history, I would like to
compare the form of "Leuedy, for þare blisse" with that of two other works
which use the five joys of Mary. The first is a prayer which is not in poetic
form, but which uses sacred history to define the third joy of Mary in a way
that figures the delight to be experienced in the proportions of the prayer
itself; this is the prayer of the third joy in the Ancrene Riwle. The second is a
prayer on the five joys which is in poetic form and which uses sacred history, but which does not figure delight in the prayer itself. "Leuedy, for þare blisse" will provide an example of a prayer in poetic form, which uses sacred history, and which at the same time in itself figures forth delight.

O Lady, St Mary, because of the great joy that thou hadst when thou sawest thy dear and precious Son, after His grievous death, risen to joyful life, His Body sevenfold brighter than the sun, grant me to die with Him and to rise in Him, to die to the world and to live spiritually, to share His sufferings as a companion, on earth, that I may be His companion in happiness, in heaven. Because of the great joy that thou hadst, O Lady, in his blessed resurrection, after thy great sorrow, lead me, after the sorrow in which I live here, to thy happiness.

The purpose of this prayer from the *Riexe* is single: that because of Mary's joy in the resurrection, the soul who prays be united to her Son Who is God. The kind of union is established by sacred history, which defines both where man is in the present and who he is in relation to God. Ultimately the desire of the prayer reaches from the relation with God at this present moment to union with God in body and soul through Christ in heaven. Heaven is embodied by the figure of Mary's happiness, for she is in heaven now. What makes us feel the beauty of the prayer is that the author structures the expression of this specific desire in several ways which are proportioned to each other.

The author structures the prayer by three aspects of sacred history, describing (1) Mary's joy, as it is caused by (2) Christ's resurrection, and (3) man's present desire to be led to future heavenly joy by the power of Mary's joy. First, Mary's joy is defined by her seeing her "dear and precious Son, after His grievous death, risen to joyful life." We recall that in the crucifixion poems Mary's deepest sorrow was caused both by her motherhood, which established the "dearness" of her Son to her, and by the fact that He Who died was God Himself, the "best of alle gode," which established the "preciousness" of her Son to her. His death, which by the crucifixion poems has been shown to encompass all sin and sorrow, is spoken of less fully here because the author concentrates on the second aspect of the prayer, Christ's joyful rising. The joy of the event is revealed by the brightness of Christ's body, "sevenfold brighter than the sun." Using the third aspect of sacred
history's definition of desire, the power of the event in relation to man, the author then forms his prayer in correspondence with the resurrection as he has defined it and in virtue of Mary's joy: As Christ died and rose again, so let me die and live.

But man is different in state and nature from Christ, and the author describes the Christian soul's dying and rising in a mode proper to man who is still in this imperfect life. The author draws two analogies of dying and rising as figures of Christ's dying and rising. The first analogy is in the prayer's asking, Grant that I die and rise with Christ by dying to the world (which is what separates me from Christ in heaven) and living spiritually (which is the life that joins me to Christ until the day of my resurrection). The second is expressed in the next clause, that I die and rise with Christ by sharing His suffering as a companion on earth so that I may be—or my suffering through His merit will merit for me to be—His companion in happiness in heaven. The distinctions are theological. Earth is opposed to heaven. Man's suffering is defined as dying to the world while in the world and his suffering is opposed to the happiness of heaven. The prayer then summarizes the three aspects in relation to Mary's fifth and final joy, as it looks forward to the last of the five prayers: Because of your great joy following upon your great sorrow at Christ's crucifixion, lead me from the sorrow I suffer on earth to your great joy now in Heaven.

In all, there have been five different analogies drawn in the prayer, Mary's sorrow becoming joy, Christ rising from death, the Christian soul rising to live spiritually, the soul rising to heaven as Christ's companion, and finally the soul rising to the final joy Mary now has in heaven. The basis of the different analogies is the distinction in nature and state between Christ, Mary and the soul. These distinctions are formulated in terms of time, now and then; in terms of space, earth and heaven; and, because the focus of these differences is man, in terms of his nature of body and spirit, each with its distinct aspect of suffering or sorrow and of joy. These different analogies are fundamentally a result of the way theological distinctions between sorrow and joy, body and spirit are proportioned by the event in sacred history which is the subject of the prayer.

At the same time, the five different analogies are unified in the prayer as a whole. This becomes evident when we consider the structure of the prayer as a work in itself. By "structure" here I mean simply the principle by which the author has ordered the expression of his purpose in the medium through which he speaks, the figures of thought, the configuration of sentences, the sounds.
Each part of the prayer is built on the figure of rising, rising from depth to height, sorrow to joy, body to spirit, this world to the next, and the reader feels increasing delight as he sees the harmony of these figures together. First, encompassing the whole prayer, is Mary's joy in her Son. Then comes the first figure, her Son rising from death to life with His glory, the source of Mary's joy, shining back to her joy. Then comes the second figure, the Christian soul's death told in three modifications of dying and rising, the first to die with Him and rise in Him (now the soul in grace is in Christ; later the soul in glory will be in Christ); second, to die to the world and to live spiritually; and, third, to share His sufferings on earth as a companion, so that the soul may be His companion in heaven. Finally, there is the great concluding summary motion which specifies Mary's joy then, at the time of her third joy, so that the soul may experience now the happiness she had then—a figure, based on the theological definition of time as sacred history, which applies the whole prayer to the expression of the soul's desire. The rhythm of the phrases adds yet another reflection of the proportion in the prayer.

Because the focus on the event in sacred history is the determining factor—in this prayer it has been the resurrection—the principle of similarity between the analogies used by the theologian will change as the character of the event chosen changes. This can be illustrated by contrasting the above prayer to the one in the Ancrene Riwle on the first joy:

O Lady, St Mary, because of the great joy that thou hadst within thee when Jesus, God, God's Son, after the angel's greeting, took flesh and blood in thee, and of thee, receive my greeting with the same Ave, and make me account every outward joy but little. But give me interior comfort, and let me have the joys of heaven through thy merits. And as surely as there was never any sin in that flesh that He took from thee nor in thine own, as we believe, after that taking flesh, whatever there may have been before, cleanse my soul of fleshly sins.11

The unifying event in this prayer is the moment after the annunciation, the moment of the conception of Christ within Mary, as He takes her flesh. Thus in the first part, Mary's joy is described to be within, an inner joy (Christ is within her). Christ is defined both as He was inside Mary, after the angel's greeting, and also as He is God and God's Son. The prayer then defines the joy of the Christian soul in terms of Mary's joy. The greeting that came to Mary is applied to the soul (that he be filled with joy), so that as Mary had
Christ inside her, so may he seek interior comfort (the soul is at war now with concupiscence) only in order that he may have the joys of Heaven through Mary's merits. The second part of the prayer develops, again through theology, how Christ is of Mary's flesh and what the quality of Mary's flesh is, in order to secure the same quality for the Christian soul.

In each of the five prayers on the joys in the *Riuile* the event determines the figure by which the theological concepts are organized. The Christian soul remains the constant element of focus since always there is the correspondence between himself and the aspect of joy in the event, and the whole series is unified by the fact that these joys are all Mary's joys, seen in the light of her final joy.

The fourteenth century "Heyl be þou, marie, milde quene of heuene" will provide an example of a poem which I think is typical of the religious verses we would hesitate to call poetry. Although the language is in poetic form, this prayer lacks the proportioned development of its parts. The poem is a fourteen stanza version of the devotion to Mary's five joys. It is much longer than the six stanzas of "Glade us maiden, moder milde" because to the traditional joys the poet has added an introductory stanza and three concluding stanzas, as well as three stanzas on the passion followed by a stanza of summary petition. Each stanza is followed by the angelic salutation in Latin.

The poem falls into sections: the first, three stanzas including a stanza of introduction, contains the first two joys; the second, of five stanzas, names the third joy of the resurrection, for three stanzas dwells on its complement the passion, and ends with a summary supplication. The third section, of three stanzas, includes the ascension, Mary's assumption and a supplication to Mary in heaven. These last three stanzas ask Mary in three different ways to help the speaker out of sin and to hear his prayer so that he may go to heaven. A study of the first three stanzas will be enough to point out characteristics of this type of poem, since the remaining ones only bear out the principles embodied by the first three.

Heyl be þou, marie, milde quene of heuene!
Blessed be þi name & god it is to neuene.
To þe i mene mi mone, i preie þou her mi steuene,
Ne let me neuere deie in none of þe sennes seuene.

There are three theological aspects to the petition, which reflect the purpose of the poem, (1) a naming of the power the speaker appeals to, (2) a
securing of the energy or the means the speaker desires—the supplication—and (3) the defining of the desired effect of the prayer. As the prayer begins, Mary is named with the words of the angelic salutation, “Heyl be þou, marie,” as if the speaker were using the power of the Ave Maria to reach Mary. Then she is addressed by a second title in virtue of the fact she is now in heaven, “milde quene of heuene.” As if explaining why the poet has named her twice, and again using part of the Ave Maria to do so, the speaker declares, “Blessed be þi name.” Then to be sure there is no ambiguity, he says the same thing in yet a more precise way, “þe god it is to neuene.” This triple naming suggests that the speaker believes there is power in a name, in a word itself, by its mere enunciation. Mary’s name is a special name, and in itself it will bring good.

In the third line the speaker tells his purpose, To you, Mary, I utter sadly my lament. To be more explicit about his purpose he says it a second time, I pray you hear my voice. Then in the last line he makes his request, explaining the effect he desires to achieve by his prayer, Let me never die in any of the seven sins. By specifying “neuere” (and emphasizing it by two negatives), he makes his desire cover all time. It covers both the time of this life and aspires to affect the state of the next: in this life never let me commit a deadly sin; in regard to the next, do not let me leave this life when I am in the state of one of the seven sins. As if to seal his request, to the stanza he adds the angelic salutation in Latin.

Heil, seinte marie, quene cortas & hende!
For þe ioye þat þou haddest wan crist þe aungel sende;
& seide þat þe holi gost scholde in þi bodi wende,
Þou bring me out of sinne & schuld me fram þe fende.

The speaker identifies the first joy. Again he names Mary by echoing the angelic salutation. Again he addresses her as she is now, Queen of Heaven, “cortas & hende.” Now he names her joy, the aspect of her power he is calling upon, For the joy you had when Christ sent the angel and said the Holy Ghost should come into your body. The bare theological facts are given. “Wan crist þe aungel sende” recalls the other poems where the annunciation and birth of Christ have been presented in their profound contrast to Christ’s power as King of Heaven. Here, however, no figure of kingship is given. Christ is named directly, and just as directly the means of His coming is named, as the speaker says, “Þe holi gost scholde in þi bodi
wende." To this account which defines the means of power he wishes to secure, the speaker adds his petition: Bring me out of sin (that I am in now), and shield me from the fiend (whom I shall meet in the future). He speaks to secure his present joy and to preserve it into the future. In this stanza, as in the last, each of the three aspects—the naming, the specifying of the power he desires to use, and finally his petition—is said in two ways. Again the stanza is followed by the Ave.

Ioyful was þin herte with-outen eni drede
Wan ihesu crist was of þe boren fayrest of alle þede,
& þou mayde bi-fore & after as we in bok rede;
Lefdi for þat ioie þou helpe me at nede.

The third stanza is much like the second, except that the order of the naming is varied. The speaker begins by naming first, not Mary, but the joy he uses as the power to gain his desires. Your heart was joyful, without any fear, when Christ was born, the fairest of all men, and you remained a maid before and after. He adds the tag, "as we in bok rede," which, besides completing the line (although it actually disrupts the rhythm), suggests he is adding to his prayer not only the power of precision, but also that of the authority of the written word. "Lefdi," he names her, introducing the name he will use for the next five stanzas, "for þat ioie"—his explicit specifying of the power acts as a repetition—"helpe me at nede." The condition when, as it did above, covers all time, both now when I am in need, and whenever I am in need. The Ave follows.

The qualities of the poem are clear. Each stanza contains a triple naming: of Mary upon whom the fulfillment of the speaker's desire depends; of the power by virtue of which she has her power (ultimately Christ) and with which the speaker appeals to her; and finally a naming of the effect the speaker desires. There are three important conditions to obtain the power, which depend ultimately on the willingness and the accessibility of the power to which the appeal is made. The effectiveness of the speaker's prayer depends first upon his knowledge of the power and of its extent. This is the function of theology here, to establish the correctness of the naming. The theology correct, the first condition is fulfilled. There remains then the power of the appeal itself as a condition of the prayer's success, and this will depend upon the second and third conditions, the accuracy of the triple naming and the intensity with which the soul appeals. In this poem, the intensity of the
petition is not based on an intensity of faith, but rather on argument by insistence.

Already in the first three stanzas we have seen these conditions working. Both clarity and intensity are sought through repetition. On the one hand, each stanza has named Mary, the means of power and the effect desired, and each one has named her not only once, but twice, so that each line seems to fall into two halves. Repetition comes also from the fact that each stanza is made an individual block unit of power, sealed, so to speak, by the Ave which follows it, as if not only the events called upon had power, but the fact of naming and the words themselves have power. Then, too, there are the elements of repetition such as the monorhyming of the stanza, which uniformly breaks into four lines, each with two units; the repetition of words from one stanza to the next, such as in the name "Ladi," or the use of "for he" to introduce the joy; and finally the repetition after each stanza of the Ave. The fact that the Ave is in Latin is an added means of power, as it calls upon the power of traditional phrasing of the salutation in Scripture and in the liturgy, and thus by implication calls on its power in sacred history as the salutation by which all joy came to mankind.

The fundamental source of the poem's poverty of expression is that the elements developed—the naming of Mary, the naming of the joy or power, and the naming of the desired effect—lack any principle of unity or limit proportionate to the subject. The poem develops by what seems to be all-inclusive enumeration, which could stretch to infinity in any direction. The naming of Mary is repetition which is designed to include all namings of her. Mary is addressed "marie" or "ladi" and given her traditional epithets, full of grace, holy, good, lady of counsel, flower of all. But the naming is done for its own power, with no such specific application to the joy mentioned as the naming had above in "Glade us maiden, moder milde."

In regard to the joys by whose power the poet hopes to secure his request, the poet does not relate one joy to the other in any way, but selects only the aspects of each event which make it easy to identify. The principle by which the poet chooses what factors to include is traditional association, which he does not modify into any relationship proportionate to the unity of his poem. The clearest evidence of this is the way the poet includes the prayer of Christ's five wounds. In the two other poems on the five joys discussed above, each poet referred to the passion as it helped to define the resurrection in the context of his purpose for that poem. Here, however, the passion is given three whole stanzas and is used as a source of power independently. The
section is included as a separate devotion which is to add to the power of the speaker's total appeal.

Finally, the third aspect, the effect the poet desires from his prayer, is stated in the same unproportioned way. The poet tries to extend the effectiveness to all occasions: he extends it to the time while he lives, and to the time when he dies, and to the rest of time, forever; he states it negatively—help me out of sin, and positively—bring me everlasting joy; and he states it figuratively—bring me to that high King, to that eternal light. But again he has not defined these appeals in a proportioned relationship to his particular prayer at this particular moment in this particular state.

Quantity, repetition, comprehensiveness are the principles by which the poet selects, and each principle works autonomously. The unity they give to the poem is exterior, independent of any unified configuration of structure, and what we have is a series of petitions unified solely because they are in the same stanza form, organized only in so far as they follow the sequence traditional to the devotion of the five joys and as they articulate the three aspects of the prayer necessary to achieve its purpose.

As a final indication of what sense of unity the poet (or scribe) of this poem had, in the three stanzas which follow the last of the joys, we see that he has given the poem three conclusions. And in the last stanza he has repeated the first. Turning the first stanza inside out, giving it a new end rhyme (but keeping the original rhyme as an inner rhyme), he has repeated the same phrases, the same thoughts, as if to be sure his request were understood by reminding Mary of how it began.

To contrast a theological poem which has proportion to this theological prayer which is in the stanzaic form of poetry but which does not have proportion, let us turn back briefly to describe the structure of "Leuedy, for bare blisse/ hat bu heddest at he frume." The purposes of the two poems are essentially the same: to enter eternal joy by Mary's five joys. In the fourteenth century poem the speaker has sought to secure his end by directly invoking the power or means without considering his prayer as an object of delight in itself. However, the poet of "Leuedy, for bare blisse" conceives what it is he desires by unifying his poem into a proportioned figure of his prayer to be wise. The fourteenth century poet has used exterior principles of form to organize his poem—similarities of sentence structure, rhyme, stanza, and refrain, organized by the numerical sequence of five—whereas these exterior elements of structure are used by the poet of "Leuedy, for bare blisse" in a proportion reflecting the nature itself of his desire.
In "Leuedy, for þare blisse" we find the same three theologically defined aspects as in the prayer from the *Ancrene Riwle*: Mary who experiences joy; Christ Who is the joy itself; and the Christian soul who, in virtue of Christ's redemption of man, through the analogy of man's joy with Mary's desires to enter eternal joy. But they are focused in a new proportion. The purpose of the poem is by contemplating Mary's joys to ask for final joy with Mary in heaven. The poem is a movement in time to make the poet and his audience aware of joy, and because it is founded in the imperfect light and darkness of man's present vision, it unfolds into a double awareness—an increasing awareness of joy and a corresponding recognition of darkness, the gap, or lack of joy.

The double vision of the poem is reflected on several levels. The first is manifested in the telling of Mary's first three joys in the first three stanzas. Each account of joy is complemented by a petition which expresses man's separation from and desire for joy: Mary's joy fills the first part of the stanza, man's petition the second. The first joy speaks of Mary's joy because of her inner knowledge of Christ (He was in her body, He was God). The second speaks of her knowledge of Christ by her senses (her joyful giving birth to Him without pain) and again, her inner knowledge of the joyful fact of His Godhood revealed by this. The third speaks of her inner joy at her sight of His rising to life. The statement of each one of these joys is complemented by a petition. The first is: Now while we are here (separated in space from the "there" that is heaven), we sin (the separation in state from God Who is the source of joy); help us not to miss that life that is to come. The second is: Be our shield from our foe (stand between us and death "now"); give us thy blessing (both "now" and "then"); and protect us forevermore (stand between us and death always, that we may live forever) from all kinds of sinning (on every occasion). And the third is: That Christ make us clean (forgive our sins) and bright (pure so that we may see). These three joys, as in the last poem we discussed, are each introduced by an address which names Mary, "Leuedy," "Moder," "Leuedi."

The second reflection of the double vision is in the symmetrical proportioning of the account of the events of sacred history, where Mary's individual joys are seen as partial in relationship to her present joy in heaven, and her present joy in heaven, in so far as man can know it, is the power by which he aspires to his own final joy. The fourth stanza which tells of the ascension, the moment when Christ, Who is the source of Mary's joy, is above in heaven while Mary remains below, relates the event in sacred history by
which the transformation to joy is worked. As in the *Ancrene Riwele* prayer the resurrection prefigures and is the promise of man's resurrection, so in this poem the ascension, Christ's entry into glory, prefigures and is made the basis of Mary's assumption into heaven. The assumption in turn prefigures and is the promise for the present audience of future joy with Christ in heaven. The moment of the fourth stanza, after Christ's ascension and before Mary's assumption, is the time in Mary's life when her state—joyful for Christ's joy, sorrowful for her separation from Him—prefigures man's own present state in which he makes his prayer. And in this stanza on the ascension, the lines of petition are replaced by a prophecy which looks forward in the poem to the definition of the third proportioned figure of the double vision in the last two stanzas; that is, the petition of the poet below to Mary above, as she is now Queen of Heaven. This last proportioned figure will express the present perpetual relationship of man to joy until his death.

By fulfilling the prediction in the last part of the fourth stanza, as it tells how Mary was assumed bodily into heaven, the fifth stanza completes Mary's joy, while it also defines her separation from man. With this joy the poet defines heaven. First he tells how Mary was assumed by Christ. "Pe king pat wes of þe ibore,/ to heouene he þe vette." (There is implicit in the referring back to the second and third joys, to Christ's birth and His resurrection, another corresponding figure: the King Who descended, temporarily separated from His glory, now has arisen.) Next the poet defines heaven by what man has been and will be in relation to Christ. Christ fetched Mary "to þare blisse þat wes for-lore,/ & bi hym-seolue sette."

The first three stanzas each contained a joy and a prayer, the fourth told of Christ's joy and of Mary's future joy (her prayer), the fifth told of Mary's full joy. Now, corresponding to the petition in the latter part of the first three stanzas, the sixth and the seventh complement the joys in the fourth and the fifth by expanding the petition of man by defining man's distance from joy.

The fact that the poem ends with a prayer to Christ following the prayer to Mary completes its structural symmetry. Mary's joy is the basis of the poet's prayer. Yet Christ Himself, being that Joy, is the source of power, for it was in virtue of His resurrection and ascension that Mary was assumed into heaven, and just as Christ "fetched" Mary into heaven, as the poet foretold He would, now the poet says, So let Him bring us to heaven all together, "for wel þu Miht."

To summarize: The poem recounts and embodies a movement into joy through the power of Christ, a movement which both articulates and pro-
vides the power of man’s prayer. The central figure according to which the stanzas are built is double. It is the moment of Christ’s ascension, when Mary is beholding Him with “eye swete”: as it foreshadows the present moment when the audience, after learning of her joy, stands and beholds Mary’s joy with vision. This double figure is composed of a joy and an unrealized promise of joy. The first three stanzas, with their first lines of the joy and their last of the petition, prefigure this proportion in the poem in a double way. They reflect the fact that at the time when the poem is composed, Mary has already been assumed and the poet and his listener are looking up at her in petition: at the same time these stanzas move back in the past to tell of Mary’s own relation to God, which is the source of her joy, and to prepare for the account of the ascension, which will define man’s position now in relationship to Christ and prepare for hers. The ascension figure is defined then in stanza four and fulfilled by the rest of the poem, in which after her assumption, Mary becomes the medium through which man defines the joy he desires and Christ becomes the clear basis of power. But in relation to man the fulfillment of the ascension figure by the last stanza is qualified. His joy is less fulfilled than Mary’s present joy which is used to express the fulfillment. Mary’s joy as a result of Christ’s resurrection, ascension, and her own assumption defines for man the exact condition of his present moment. It defines the power by which he will reach joy, and at the same time as it defines his lack of joy, it brings him to the joy it has prepared. The last stanzas accomplish, too, the formal fulfillment of the poem, as the poet achieves his purpose: by virtue of Mary’s five joys he raises an efficacious prayer to her expressing man’s desire to enter the final joy Mary has entered.

Whereas the fourteenth century poem was seen to be unified by a numerical series and by a similarity of parts achieved through repetition—organized by the exterior shells of form—we see here that the internal proportions of the thirteenth century poem are further reflected by its stanzatic structure. The shell, or in this case body, of the form—the arrangement of words throughout the whole—has a proportion itself which again reflects the purpose of the whole. The choice of the stanzatic form, a series of octaves, is suited to the deeper form, the double complement of petition and joy. In stanzas one, two, and four the second quatrain is the exact complement of the first quatrain in the octave, as it poses a petition arising out of the definition of joy and man’s distance from joy.

In the case of stanza three, the principle of complementary proportion in stanzas one, two and four argues for a revision of Brown’s punctuation,
which interprets the petition to comprise the last two lines only. It is possible that the poet meant to break this stanza in the middle as well:

Leuedi, al myd rihte
    þu were gled and bliþe
Po crist þureh his myhte
    aros from deþe to lyue.
Pat alle þing con dihte
    and wes i-boren of wyue,
He make vs clene and bryhte
    for his wundes fyue.

The petition would then begin at line twenty-one, and the poet would be repeating the fact from stanza two that Mary's Child was the creator of all things in order to name Christ. With the revised punctuation, the stanza would paraphrase: Lady, with good reason were you glad and joyful when Christ through His own power rose from death to life. [Let Him] Who created all things and was born of womankind by virtue of His five wounds make us clean and bright. Yet in any event, stanza three differs significantly from stanzas one and two in the fact that these lines are a petition not to Mary but to Christ. Coming at this point in the sequence of joys, the petition to Christ reflects the manifestation of His power in the resurrection, and it prefigures and prepares for the final prayer of the poem in stanza seven, where the poet addresses Christ directly.

In stanzas four and five the complementary four lines of the octave are not petitions by man. They focus instead on Mary: in stanza four they present the poet's prophecy of her future joy; in stanza five they describe Mary's joy fulfilled as she enters heaven. The sixth stanza also shows this same complementary structure. It has a first quatrains of negative statement, I pray to you as I know how, do not let the world blind us; the second of a positive statement, help us at our lives' end and send us to heaven. And, finally, in the last stanza we see the effect of the transformation of the whole poem, as in the first four lines where Mary's joy has been presented, the poet appeals to Christ through Mary's beauty in heaven; and in the last four lines, which have reflected man's distance from joy in past stanzas, the poet expresses the desire that Christ cleanse us from sin and, the complement to cleansing, that He bring us to light, bring us to heaven.

To figure delight, a work must have first of all a principle of unity so that
its parts have a proportionate relationship among themselves, beyond any coherence they may have by principles exterior to the unity of the poem, such as the numerical order of five joys, the acrostic order of M-A-R-I-A, or a set stanzaic form. In the poems we have considered, especially "Gabriel, fram evene-king," "Als i lay vp-on a nith" and "Stond wel, moder, vnder rode," in the prayer from the Ancrene Riwle, and in this last poem, the delight the listener takes in the poem comes from the fact that the poem embodies itself in a reflexive way. Its subject and purpose, its structure and use of stanzaic form all bear a proportionate relationship to each other, unified yet disparate in their reflection. Through this proportioning the listener feels some sense of the poem as an entity in itself. Thus he is affected by it as a unified experience which is part of his general experience, but which, not being identical with it, captures his attention and in so far as it speaks to his desire, its beauty of proportion causes delight. It will be the purpose of the following section to show that, as with the other elements of the poetry we have discussed, in the medieval religious lyric this delight has its specific theological dimension.