EPIGRAMMA ERASMI IN MERSPVRGVM

INTRODUCTION

The following epigram, hitherto unpublished, I have taken from a manuscript copy, apparently in the hand of Beatus Rhe­nanus, on the last cover of one of his books in the municipal library of Sélestat. The book is a copy of Cicero's *Epistolae ad Familiares*, Venice, Aldus, 1512, on the fly-leaf of which is the inscription, "Sum Beati Rhenani, nec muto dominum. Basileae. M.D.XIII." The verses on Meersburg are headed simply, "Erasmi Roterodami," and are dated at the foot of the page, M.D. XXIII.

The castle of Meersburg, which in the epigram invites the guest to enjoy its hospitality, was situated on the lake of Con­stance opposite the city. It was the property of the Bishop of Constance, Hugo of Hohenlandenberg 1), who restored it in 1508 and thereafter used it as a country house 2). The bishop had fa­vored the earlier protests of the reformers and in 1518 had en­couraged Zwingli in his attack on the selling of indulgences 3). As the Zwinglian movement developed, however, he was forced into opposition, and in 1526 he left Constance to take up his residence at Meersburg, where he died in 1532. Erasmus first made his ac­quaintance in September 1522, during his visit to John Botzheim at Constance 4). He was evidently received by the bishop with great cordiality 5), and may possibly have been entertained at

1) See E. Egli in *Zwingliana*, I, 1897, pp. 185—91; Ep. 1316, 12 n.
5) Cf. Ep. 1316, 12—14: "Episcopus ipse Constantiensis, vir pro­fecto mitis, probus et integer, nihil humanitatis in me praetermisit."
Meersburg. During the following year he wrote of him with great respect ¹); but his admiration cooled after the bishop’s persecution of Botzheim in 1524 ²).

¹) Cf. Epp. 1331, 2; 1342, 361—73; Catalogus Lucubrationum, Allen, I, 46, 23—5.