In the 1978 Spring issue of this journal Dr. Hans Henning recalled that executions for witchcraft continued in Germany and Switzerland until 1782. If they came to an end then, and well before that date in England and some other countries, this is due in no small measure to Balthasar Bekker and his epoch-making book *De betoverde weereld*, first published at Leeuwarden and Amsterdam in 1691, 1693. It was translated into English in 1695 as *The World Bewitched*, into French as *Le Monde enchanté* (1694), and into German as *Die bezauberte Welt* (c. 1695). It also caused a storm of controversy and cost Bekker his position as minister of the Dutch Reformed Church at Amsterdam—though without loss of income. Yet in the end his compassion for persecuted old women and his defence of God-given reason as a necessary part of religion, of equal importance with faith itself, carried the day.

His concern with the subject of demonic possession and witchcraft dates back to the 1680s when he began preaching against superstition. One such sermon took place on 27 November 1689. By a coincidence which he could not but interpret as encouragement, he received only two days later a letter from England containing the printed report of the apprehension and committal for trial of a suspected witch at Beckington in Somerset. With commendable speed he transformed this account into his *Engelsch verhaal van ontdekte tovery wederleid door Balthasar Bekker* (English narration of discovered witchcraft refuted by Balthasar Bekker) which was printed and published in December 1689 by Daniel van den Dalen at Amsterdam, with a preface dated the third of that month.

This short pamphlet, long recognized as a milestone on Bekker’s path towards the definitive version of *De betoverde weereld*, is at long last represented in the British Library since a copy of the 24-page issue was acquired in April 1977.

At the time of cataloguing it was found to be not so much an original work by Bekker as an accurate translation with commentary by him of a document of which one copy only is recorded: *Great News from the West of England*, printed by T. M. in Jewen-street, London, 1689.

While this item is perhaps the most fascinating of the recent Bekker acquisitions of the British Library and, for its English connections, can be considered as filling a particularly grievous gap, the man who could thus oppose prevailing opinion to the benefit of countries and centuries far beyond his own is surely worth studying also in his other writings and in those of his supporters and enemies. For this reason the following descriptions are offered of works which have come into the Library’s possession since the photographic reproduction of the General Catalogue. The earlier holdings, though by no means negligible, were as yet only moderately satisfactory for a study of Bekker, and even the new
accessions leave many desirable pieces on the wanted list. Nevertheless, with the accessions listed below the present collection of Bekkeriana in the British Library should offer considerable scope to scholars in this country before a journey to the Netherlands is necessary.

I wish to record my indebtedness to the unfailing assistance, advice, and encouragement of Mr. A. R. A. Croiset van Uchelen of the University Library, Amsterdam, and of Mr. Clemens de Wolf and Mr. J. A. Gruys of the Royal Library, The Hague, in this as in so many other investigations. Special thanks are also due to Mr. C. W. Bliss of the Huntington Library, California, for sending a photographic reproduction of the *Great News* in reply to a simple question on the content of that broadside. I am also deeply grateful to Professor Niels Lukman of Hellerup for valuable information on the Oldenburg horn without which the relevant part of note 5 below could not have been written, and to my colleague D. L. Paisey for his criticism and advice.

Abbreviations used:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td><em>B.W.</em></td>
<td>B. Bekker, <em>De betoverde wereld.</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>v.d.W.</em></td>
<td>J. K. van der Wulp, <em>Catalogus van de tractaten, pamfletten, enz. over de geschiedenis van Nederland, aanwezig in de bibliotheek van Isaac Meulman</em> (Amsterdam, 1866–8).</td>
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**1. BERIGHT VAN DEN KINDERDOOF, briefswyse gesteld.** Door Balthasar Bekker, S.T.D. Predikant te Amsterdam. *t* Amsterdam: by Johannes Rotterdam, [1690?]. 4°: pp. 23, (13), (8). The first part is signed: B. Bekker, and dated: 'Begun at Amsterdam and finished at Franeker, 11 October o.s. 1689'. It is a letter addressed to Epke Epkes at Spannum in reply to a request for information on the doctrine of baptism and the difference concerning it between the Calvinist and Mennonist (Anabaptist) Churches. The first edition of this letter appeared at Leeuwarden in 1690. This edition, probably of the same year, includes a critical rejoinder which had since been published by a medical practitioner at Amsterdam called J. de Bakker, entitled *Korte en nodige Aanmerkingen over het Beright van den Kinderdoop, wytggeven door de Heer Balthasar Bekker, briefswyse gesteld*. This is signed: J. de Bakker, and dated: Amsterdam, 27 December 1689, addressed to Pieter Frenken at Maastricht. It is a fair and reasonable reply to
some of Bekker's assertions from a Mennonist point of view. To this Bekker has added his own rejoinder, entitled Nader Berigher over den Kinderdoop, dienende tot Antwoord op d'Aanmerkingen van J. de Bakker, door Balthasar Bekker, signed: B. Bekker, dated: 'From my library i8 January 1690', and addressed to: 'The most learned Mr. J. de Bakker, Med. Doctor at Amsterdam.' The piece is interesting both for Bekker's reference to the time-consuming work on B.W. to excuse the delay in answering Epkes and for the tolerant position he takes between the divergent views of Calvinists and Mennonists. In his opinion the baptism of children is neither demanded nor prohibited in the Bible and Calvinist practice is not altogether free from fault. Only when he tries to prove that Jewish pre-Christian law knew and commended a form of infant baptism can he be accused of bending the evidence in favour of the established custom. He admits, however, that he is here responding to a friend's problem which to him is of minor importance: it is the fight against superstition which completely absorbs him and which he knows is going to produce his most important book.

v.d.L. 10–12. 1609/6178.


A translation, with commentary, of Wing G 1738A: Great News from the West of England, etc., a broadside which Bekker had received at the end of November, 1689. He used it in his campaign against superstition and the belief in witches shortly before the completion of books 1 and 2 of B.W. and included it eventually in book 4 of that work among other reports of supernatural events.

Kn. 13313. 1568/5085. v.d.L. 13 (another edition).


Until it obtained this copy the Library possessed only the edition of books 1 and 2 published earlier in 1691 by Hero Nauta at Leeuwarden without the author's consent. In the present Amsterdam edition Bekker rejects the earlier one and makes sure that buyers will recognize the authorized edition by his own signature at the end of the preface of each part, a practice he applied also to the French edition and to the parts published in 1693. In this copy a former owner, Johann Gottlieb Laurentii, has left a manuscript description in German of this book.
An anonymous English owner has added a further note on Bekker which concludes, 'it has been said that he was in countenance as ugly as the Devil, which supposes somebody to have seen both'.

4. **Authentiske Copye van de Articulen, die van het ... Consistorie van Amsterdam, den 23 Aug. 1691. opgestelt zyn, om voor te houden aan Dr. B. Bekker. En de aanbieding die Dr. B. Bekker daar op gedaan heeft den 30 Augusti 1691. [1691]. 4°: pages not numbered. sig.*4.

The last of the Articles is a demand that Bekker shall publish a recantation of the views expressed in B.W. In his reply he rejects the articles but offers a confession of his belief in the tenets of the Reformed Church which he maintains he has not contravened in his book. He will not recant, but is willing to delay publication of the final books of B.W. to allow his colleagues to reassure themselves of his faithful adherence to those articles which he had signed when he assumed the ministry of the Church. This short piece also contains *Enige trouwloose extracten uyt Dr. Bekkers Betoverde weereled, tweede deel. Daar benevens de extracte uyt de Synode, gehouden . . . 1691. tot Edam, rakende Dr. Bekkers Betoverde weereled.*

As the absence of pagination and imprint suggest, this piece was not intended to be a separate publication although the Royal Library at The Hague also owns such an issue. Its proper place was as an intermediate part in a larger work recorded by Knuttel under no. 13679. But even this fragment is interesting. It records that the Edam Synod agreed with the Amsterdam Church Council and went further in its attempt to suppress the book in so far as it was published and to prevent its continuation while Bekker persisted in his refusal to submit his work for approval. At the end of the pamphlet is printed a poem 'Aan de Heer Bekker' encouraging him to persevere,9 doubtless one of the laudatory poems Bekker was to mention in the *Kort Beright* (7) as having been published without his knowledge. In part 1 of the *Naakt Verhaal* (11), pp. 27, 28, Bekker wrote: 'There followed the Articles which, having been printed elsewhere, do not need to be repeated here. These thirteen Articles were shortly afterwards made public by some one unknown to me although I am accused of having been privy to it.'

5. **Articulen tot satisfactie aan de ... Classis van Amsterdam, van Dr. Balthasar Bekker, Overgeleverd den 22 January 1692. Wegens syn uytgegeven Boek, genaamd de Betoverde Weereld. Tot Amsterdam: by Gerardus Borstius, 1692. 4°: pp. 11.

Issued by the Classis van Amsterdam who did not accept Bekker's defence and suspended him for a limited period. This should have been the
end of Bekker’s troubles, but it turned out to be only the beginning because successive meetings of Church bodies refused to reinstate him, preventing him instead not only from exercising his ministry but even banning him from Holy Communion. Bekker referred to this publication on p. 78 of his Naakt Verhaal where it is not, however, reprinted.

Kn. 13821.


Page 62 ends with the catchword druk-, presupposing another leaf containing errata (drukfouten), not present in this copy. Dated Amsterdam, 9 July 1692 and described in the Kort Bericht as having been composed as a reply to printed and unprinted matter circulated against his book by the Classen and Synoden, i.e. the Church authorities of the city and province. It was written before the meeting of the 1692 Synod in the hope of convincing the majority of members of his orthodoxy, leaving only a few members to support the accusations. The book contains extracts from the proceedings of the 1691 Synod held at Edam.

Kn. 13842.


In the introduction Bekker describes this as the third piece he has published in the last six weeks after having remained silent for nine months. Now he must reply to the many writings
published against him. The previous piece had been the Nodige Bedenkingen (6). He will now list only the important reactions to B.W., omitting those which by their reviling tone and lack of objectivity he deems beneath contempt. On the other hand he denies having himself instigated the works which were published in his support and claims no knowledge at all of the authors of anonymous poems in his praise.

Kn. 13852. 1487.f.29. v.d.L. 76.


Owners of the Kort Beright (7a) could add these pages and attach them to it, thus effectively acquiring the ‘second edition’. A Xerox copy of the copy in the Royal Library, The Hague, was supplied to the British Library for comparison with the corresponding pages in the made-up copy described below (7c) where the text of pp. 71-7 has been rearranged accordingly.

Kn. 13854. 1560/899. Not in v.d.L.

7c. Kort Beright, etc. 1692. 4°: pp. 80.

A made-up copy consisting of the first edition’s title-page and text as far as p. 70, and of pp. 71-80 of the second edition (not in the British Library). A certain amount of text has been lost because several paragraphs preceding p. 71 in the second edition were not present in the first edition. The second edition reprinted the epilogue (Nareden) of the first edition on pp. 78-80.

No such copy recorded in Kn. or v.d.L. 1699/6177.


This is Bekker’s complaint against the arbitrary prolongation of his suspension from office.

Kn. 13844. 1568/5968. v.d.L. 45.


A report, dedicated to the city government of Amsterdam, on his treatment at the hands of the Church for having published his book without Church approval. The Amsterdam magistrates were to prove true friends to Bekker and to freedom of thought by continuing to pay him his stipend and later by supporting his widow.
The report begins with a description of the Dutch Church order ‘for the sake of those who are unfamiliar with the organisation of the church in our country’ which can still be recommended to students who wish to follow Bekker’s fortunes.

v.d.W. 6838.
Kn. 13846 (another edition).

The last part contains Aanmerkinge op de Handelingen der twee laatste Synoden, in de sake van B. Bekker ten opzichte van zijn Boek genaamd de Betoverde Weereld: nu versch iEnkhuizen gedrukt which in the Van der Linde copy also belongs to the two preceding parts to make one whole, while the Royal Library, The Hague, has two separate books, one consisting of the first two parts, the other of the Aanmerkinge. In this work Bekker describes the proceedings instituted against him by the Church so far, not repeated in the subsequent Naakt Verhaal (11). Kn. 13848, 13850.
v.d.L. 49.
1568/5971.

The records of the proceedings of the various Church authorities within the given dates relating to B.W. His earlier accounts are only mentioned in so far as they might be referred to by the reader and are not restated. Part 3, p. 72 is blank and some copies apparently end there, including the copy recorded by Van der Linde. Pages 73-8 contain Nader Bericht over den druk van alle Stukken, rakende 't Boek de Betoverde Weereld, door den Auteur self uitgegeven, i.e. a list of all Bekker's own published writings in the matter of B.W.


The Alkmaar Synod of 1692 endorsed the 'Request' which was thereupon printed after its own proceedings. Bekker had already published a reaction in the Aanmerkinge (pt. 3 of 10). Here he defends himself at greater length and dedicates the piece to the Committee for Church Affairs of the States of Holland. The prefatory letter is signed by him, dated Amsterdam, 19 January 1693.

Kn 13959. 1568/5963. v.d.L. 117.


In this letter Bekker complains at the amount of correspondence expected from him following
the publication of B.W. He has already published a number of such replies, listing the Nodige Bedenkingen of 9 July 1692 (6), the Kort Beright of 21 July 1692 of which a second edition has by now been published (7a, b); and since the Synod of Alkmaar he has published Viervoudige Beantwoordinge of 20 September 1692 (10), Naakt Verhaal of 13 November 1692 (11), Ondersoek en Antwoord of 19 January 1693 (12). He makes shorter mention of Twee Brieven, Drie Resolutien, Kort en Waarachtig Verhaal (9), Aanmerkinge op de Handelingen (10, pt. 3), and recommends his present correspondents to read these and also the new edition of B.W. (3) where between chapters 6 and 7 of book 2 another chapter has been inserted into the text as published in the Leeuwarden edition. They will then find their questions answered.

Kn. 13961. 1568/5965. v.d.L. 72.


The address to the reader quotes the famous passage on books and reading from Ecclesiastes which Bekker says he must now specially apply to himself. Not only has he had to write a large book in place of the small one he had intended, but though only half of this book had so far been published, this first half has already caused a flood of further books which he had been obliged to write. And this is not enough, many people have been demanding even further explanations and for their benefit he has published the Kort Beright (7). He would have preferred spending his time working quietly and completing the remaining parts of B.W. He suspects that people keep burdening him with their demands in the hope of preventing him from completing his book, but they will not succeed. Instead his finished work should go to the printer before the end of this month or at the beginning of the next. There are writers whom he will never answer, including Koelman and Leydekker, because they are not worth it. Nor is Van der Hooght, except that he cloak’s himself in the words of various Church authorities and it is these who deserve his answer. Homma had raised thirteen objections to points made by Bekker in earlier publications, going back many years. At a meeting before witnesses Homma and Bekker arrived at a written agreement here reproduced, dated 9 October 1679. Everhard van der Hooght, minister at Nieuwendam, was now attempting through Jacob Lansman, an Amsterdam notary, to rake up all kinds of scandals from that earlier period concerning matters long settled and forgotten, in order to discredit B.W. Bekker in his turn accuses Van der Hooght of having published opinions conflicting with established orthodox doctrine approved publicly by Bekker.

Kn. 13965. 1568/5970. v.d.L. 117.


Bekker refused to take any notice of this work since it lacked any serious discussion of his arguments (see 14). Jacobus only followed the example of his brother Melchior who had similarly opposed Bekker. Van der Linde’s transcription differs slightly from the title as reproduced here from the British Library’s copy and may rest on some faulty tradition as Van der Linde appears not to have seen the book. In 1943 J. P. de Bie and J. Loosjes,
Dr. Bekkers
Philosophise
duyvel,
en op nieuw
Betooerde wereld
Wederleyd en Ontooverd:
Met een voor-aaf-spraak van het gebruik
en misbruyk der Philosophie, en een
reden van de rampen der gere-
formeerde kerk.
Door
Jacobus Leydecker;
Dienaer J. Chrißti tot Willemstad.

Tot Dordrecht,
Op Dirck Goris, boek-verkooper, woonende bij
de Wijnbrugh in de Griffiën. 1692.
The second part of this book has the title *Den Duyvel van Tedworth, ofte een Historie van Spookery, in Engeland voorgevallen | met de bewijzen van de waarheid van dien: als mede een Brief van ... Henricus Morus, beroemt Philosooph, en Professor tot Cambridge, aangaande 't stuk van Tovery en Waarsegery. Uit het Engels vertaald, door Jacobus Koelman.*

*The Daemon of Tedworth* was a notorious work of Joseph Glanvil which did much to sustain belief in witchcraft in England. It appeared in his book *A Blow at Modern Sadducism* (1668). The letter of Henry More begins on p. 40. It was originally published in Glanvil's *Saducismus triumphatus* of 1681, reprinted in the second edition of 1689. Part one of the *Wederlegging* ends with the promise of more to come within a few months. However, not until 1695 did another work by Koelman appear which can be seen as a continuation of this one. It is his *Schriftmatige leere des Geestes* (Utrecht, 1695). Johannes Boekholt, the publisher, is better known as the publisher of Bunyan in Dutch. Although Bekker would not be drawn into arguing with Koelman (see 14) he made use of the story of *The Daemon of Tedworth* in book 4 of *B.W.* where he declares it to be pure fabrication.

Not in v.d.L. whose no. 124 describes a reply to it by Antony van Dale.

As is generally accepted, Joan Adolphsz is the pseudonym of Zacharias Webbers or Webberus, although a contributor to the *Navorscher* (Amsterdam, 1861), xi, p. 366, who signs himself
J. L. A. I. and is taken to be J. L. A. Immerzeel,10 asserted that the name stood for Bekker himself. This is the less likely as Bekker is not known ever to have adopted subterfuge; on the contrary, as can be seen from the titles above, he always prominently displayed his name, usually with his status and position added to it. Webbers was a portrait painter by profession who used his own name on the title-pages of other books. The Waare Oorspronk was first published in 1695, at a time when it perhaps saved the author some unpleasantness if he could not be attacked for his support of Bekker. It was B.W. which, according to the preface, inspired the author to compile the history of the Devil from Scripture itself, proving that Bekker was right and that demons have no physical existence and therefore cannot be conjured up at will to take possession of unwilling souls. The book was reprinted the same year and had another edition in 1703 before this (third) edition of 1716. It is also interesting to find that the publisher Andries van Damme had evidently taken over Daniel van den Dalen’s stock, for the last five pages of the book which are an integral part of it, contain a catalogue of books to be had at his shop, ending with some books of which he had obtained the copyright. In this catalogue are found no fewer than eight Bekker editions, three of them in a choice of normal quarto or large paper issues. A work by Webbers is advertised twice in the catalogue, both at the beginning and at the end of the books in octavo.

Not in v.d.L. 1509/4449.

2 See list, no. 3.
3 ‘for R. Baldwin’, London. Wing B 1781. This is a translation of book 1 only, made from the French version, and like the French edition it gives a summary of the whole work at the beginning.
4 Published by Pieter Rotterdam at Amsterdam. Bekker had received word that a French version was likely to be printed and therefore himself found a translator whom he could trust. Attempts at thwarting publication had no effect. I. H. van Eeghen, De Amsterdamse boekhandel 1680-1725 (Amsterdam, 1960-78), vol. iv, p. 79 quotes a reference to the publication.
5 The words ‘gedrukt zu Amsterdam 1693’ on the German title-page are sometimes still taken to denote the actual imprint and date of that edition. In my view they only continue the description of the original Dutch edition from which the translation was made, possibly without the author’s knowledge or consent or even after his death. v.d.L. 25 already assigned the first German edition to Hamburg and so does Emil Weller who in his
Die falschen und fingierten Druckorte (Leipzig, 1864, reprinted Hildesheim, 1960), Bd. 1, p. 44 names Hertel, i.e. Zacharias Hertel the younger, at Hamburg as publisher. Neither, however, provides an explanation or source, nor questions the date of this edition. No doubt aware of this attribution J. Bruckner has excluded the German B.W. from his A Bibliographical Catalogue of Seventeenth-century German Books published in Holland (The Hague, Paris, 1971). I too am convinced that the book was not published at Amsterdam and am willing to accept Hertel as the publisher. In Lexikon der Hamburgischen Schriftsteller, etc. (Hamburg, 1849-83), Hft. 13, p. 314, Hans Schroder names Johann Lange of the same city as the translator. But I am also doubtful of the date of this edition which seems not to have been discussed until now. I reject the Amsterdam imprint for the following reason. Had the German translation been published at Amsterdam in the author’s lifetime one would expect Bekker to have adopted his usual practice of signing the prefaces: no such signatures occur. Furthermore, there is in the German edition a far more elaborate, engraved illustration of the Oldenburg horn than in either the Dutch or the French editions. It occurs in book 4 of the B.W. and is the only object presented visually in the Dutch and German quartos while the French duodecimo has several other plates, also in book 4. The illustration in the Dutch edition is a simple woodcut which has served as model for the smaller, reversed engraving in the French version. Neither of these, the one published a matter of months or only weeks before the other in the year after the alleged date of the German edition, is at all related to that found in the German one which follows far more closely the traditional representation of the horn. This drinking vessel is known to be of mid-fifteenth-century Danish workmanship. It was taken to Cologne Cathedral as a votive offering in 1475, came to Oldenburg in the sixteenth century, and through the succession of the house of Oldenburg to the Danish crown reached Copenhagen in 1689. It is still preserved in the royal collection at the castle of Rosenborg. The origin of this exquisitely fashioned piece in silver gilt had become shrouded in myth already in the sixteenth century, no doubt assisted by ancient tales of a ‘white’ woman or even a goddess in Nordic saga welcoming a horseman with the offer of a drink from a horn. The story which Bekker tells, and refutes, had been published several times before, but Bekker who is always careful to quote his authorities had not read it in a book nor seen the illustrations available in print. Instead he openly states in book 4, p. 140, paragraph 16 of the B.W. that he made a drawing after a picture he saw in the inn at Oldenburg at which he was staying in 1691, at a time when the horn had already been removed from the city. The picture, he says, was not very good, but he was assured by local people that it was nevertheless accurate and, not knowing any others, Bekker believed this. He goes on to say that he had a ‘cut’ made from his drawing and although he does not explain whether this was a woodcut or an engraving on copper this is unquestionably the woodcut used in the Dutch edition. Again, if Bekker had had this engraving in time for the German edition, published after the Dutch one but supposedly still in the same year, would he have reverted to the cruder image based on his own drawing for publication in the French version the following year? The most recent critical study of the Oldenburg horn is that by Heinrich Dageforde, Die Sage vom Oldenburger Horn (Oldenburg, 1971), which I have followed in the historical account above. But in his discussion of Bekker’s part in the literature of the horn this scholar has obviously contented himself with examining the first German edition. He mentions the Dutch title, but he does not seem to have seen the book. He makes no reference to the French edition and he accepts the imprint and date of the German title-page without hesitation. He therefore fails to compare the illustrations and, misled by the translator’s words in book 4, p. 146, ‘ich habe es also in Kupfer stechen lassen’, which no conscientious Dutch publisher would have allowed, for Bekker’s own ‘ik hebbe’t dus doen snyden’, he interprets Bekker’s statement as relating to the engraving while at the same time he correctly sees it as modelled on the engraving in Hamelmann’s Oldenburgisch Chronicon of 1599, or on one of its derivatives. But such a derivation contradicts Bekker’s own words. Nor does Dageforde mention Bekker’s transcript of the inscription below the painting which he had copied, which in the Dutch edition is quoted in a somewhat garbled German. This inscription and the inhabitants’ explanations had furnished Bekker with his story. His copy of the words may have been made from a hardly legible text, or his own notes may have been hard to decipher by the printer who could be excused
from knowing obsolete German. In the German edition obvious errors have been corrected and the text has been further 'improved', changing the wording enough to remove it still further from the original. The translation is therefore unlikely to have been made at or near Oldenburg. Already the second German edition of *B.W.* in the translation of Johann Moritz Schwager, edited by Johann Salomo Semler and published at Leipzig in 1781–2, contains a footnote to the much shortened narrative of the Oldenburg horn, Bd. 3, p. 457, stating that Bekker 'does not appear to have known' Hamelmann's chronicle or Johann Just Winkelmann's 1684 edition of *Des Oldenburgischen Wunderhorns Ursprung*. But no reference is made there to the illustration, nor to the date and place of publication of the first edition. The painting which Bekker copied at Oldenburg probably no longer exists, for Dageforde does not mention it in his exhaustive iconography of the horn.


7. See list, no. 2.

8. Wing G 1738A.

9. Aan de Heer Bekker.

   Wat maakt u Boek een groot gewelt?
   In dese Nederlantse werelt,
   Een boek so kostelijk beperelt,
   Dat veel Waan-wysen staan verstelt.


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