methyl groups*. Similar reactions would afford n-propane via $CH_3CH_2(CH_3)_2Au^{III}L$ in slower subsequent steps. Indeed, the NMR spectrum at intermediate stages show the presence of $CH_3Au^{I}L$ and $(CH_3)_3Au^{III}L$, as well as a new species which we tentatively ascribe to $CH_3CH_2(CH_3)_2Au^{III}L$. The lability of ethyl groups is also shown by the formation of n-butane in principal amounts together with smaller quantities of propane and ethane when $EtAu^{I}L$ and $(CH_3)_2Au^{III}IL$ react at $-20°$. Furthermore, it should be emphasized that in the absence of alkyl exchange this system would have afforded mainly propane.

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*Based on the thermal stabilities of alkylgold(I)phosphine complexes (ref. 9).

## Erratum

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The second line below eqn.(12) should read:

(0.98 mole) and $Ph_3SiOPh$ (0.97 mole per mole of initial (III)), indicating the complete