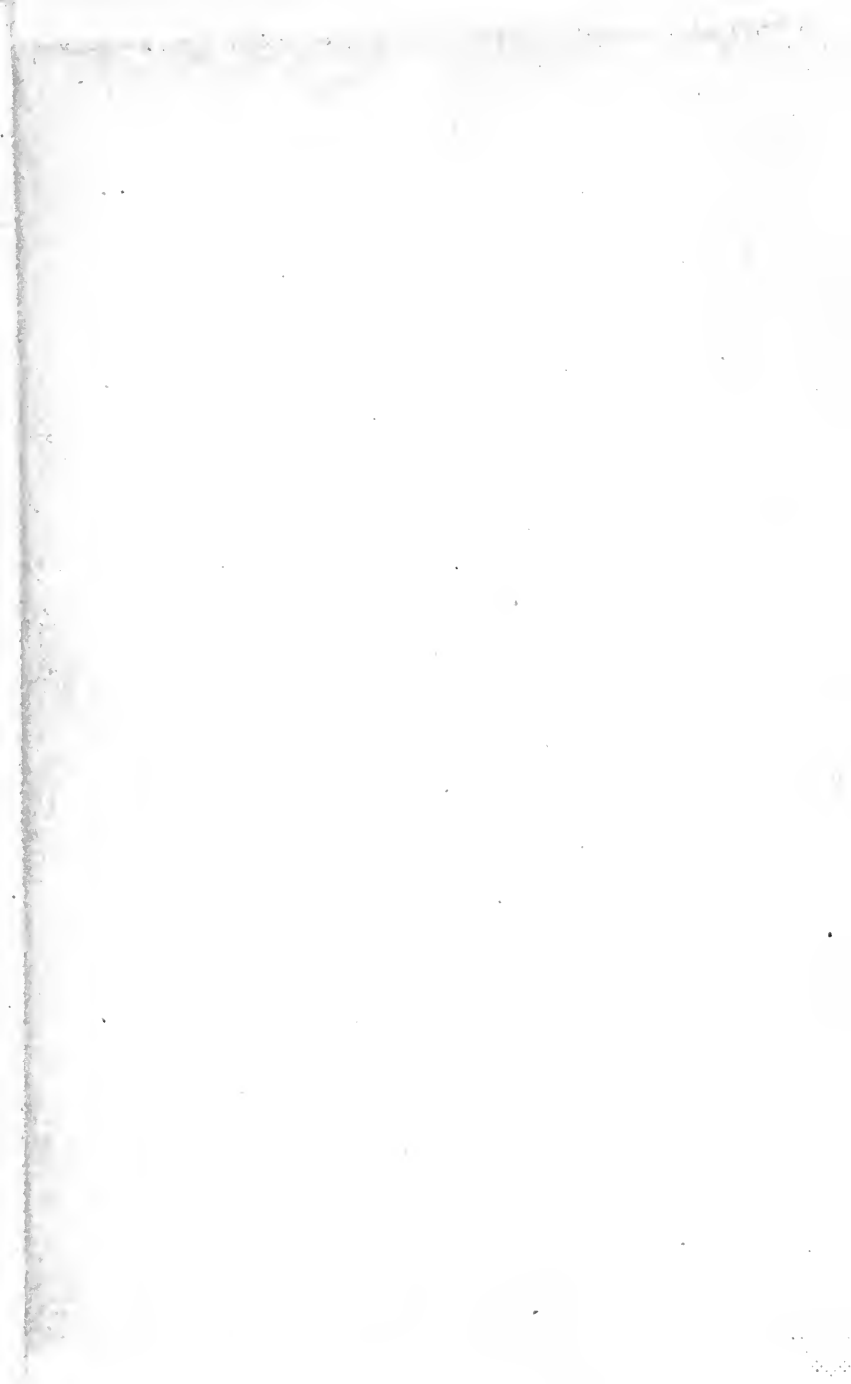


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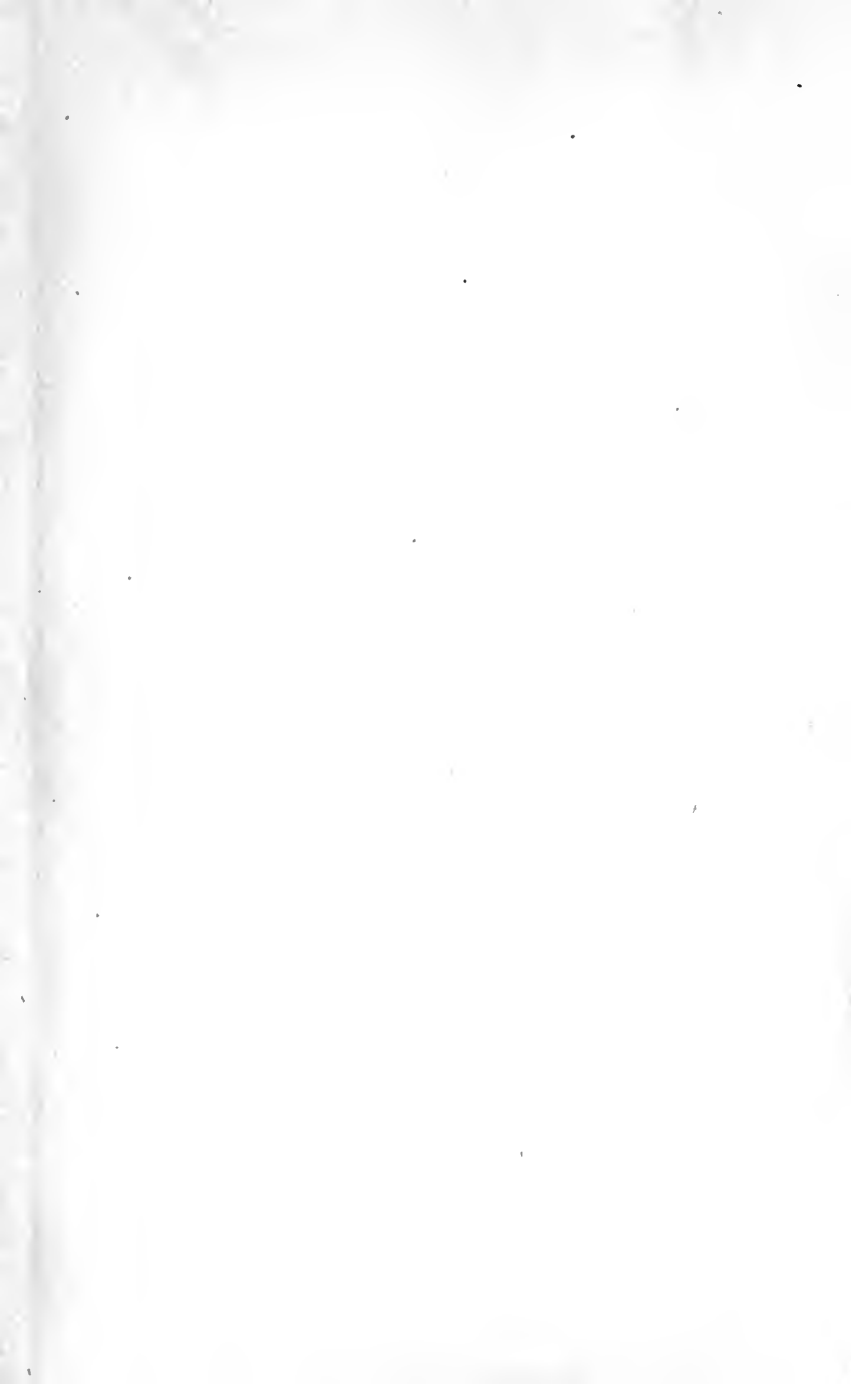


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THE WORKS  
OF  
GEOFFREY CHAUCER



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The Globe Edition

THE WORKS

OF

GEOFFREY CHAUCER

EDITED BY

ALFRED W. POLLARD

H. FRANK HEATH      MARK H. LIDDELL

W. S. McCORMICK

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TO  
FREDERICK JAMES FURNIVALL, Ph.D.  
FOUNDER AND DIRECTOR  
OF THE CHAUCER AND EARLY ENGLISH TEXT SOCIETIES  
THIS POPULAR EDITION OF THE POET  
FOR WHOM HE HAS DONE SO MUCH  
IS DEDICATED IN GRATITUDE  
AND ESTEEM



## PREFACE

EXACTLY a third of a century ago, in the year 1864, the publishers of this edition of Chaucer brought out their 'Globe' edition of Shakespeare, and it was their desire from the outset that it should be followed with as little delay as possible by a similar edition of the works of the greatest of his predecessors. The 'Globe' Shakespeare had been made possible by the previous publication of the splendid 'Cambridge' edition, in which everything that industry and scholarship could effect had been done to obtain a trustworthy text. It was naturally, therefore, to Cambridge that Mr. Alexander Macmillan turned for an edition of Chaucer, and in January 1864 he wrote to Henry Bradshaw, from whose *Memoir* by Mr. G. W. Prothero I am quoting,<sup>1</sup> to ask him 'to join Mr. Earle and Mr. Aldis Wright in editing a "Library" edition of Chaucer's works.' It is clear that this 'Library' edition was proposed mainly to settle the text for a 'Globe' edition, and it seems almost immediately to have been arranged that the Clarendon Press, with which Mr. Macmillan had intimate relations, should have the honour of publishing the 'Library' edition, and that the text should afterwards be used for the 'Globe.'<sup>2</sup> In March 1866 Mr. Macmillan could write to Bradshaw of his delight at hearing that 'the great Chaucer' was in 'so prosperous a condition,' and of his willingness to wait for the 'Globe' edition till after its completion; but a year or two later, Mr. Prothero tells us, it became apparent that the prospect of a large edition was becoming very uncertain, and the idea of the independent publication of a 'Globe' Chaucer was revived. 1870 brought a new scheme, Professor Earle retiring from the task and Bradshaw undertaking to edit

<sup>1</sup> *A Memoir of Henry Bradshaw*, Fellow of King's College, Cambridge, and University Librarian. By G. W. Prothero (London: Kegan Paul, Trench and Co., 1888), page 108.

<sup>2</sup> This seems the most probable explanation of the apparent discrepancy between Mr. Prothero's precise statement already quoted and his subsequent remark (p. 223) that 'the standard edition of Chaucer, to range with that of Shakespeare,' was undertaken in 1864 by Professor Earle, with Mr. Aldis Wright and Mr. Bradshaw as collaborators, for the Clarendon Press.

the 'Library' edition for the Clarendon Press, with Mr. Aldis Wright and Professor Skeat as his collaborators, and twenty-four years afterwards this idea bore fruit in the noble 'Oxford Chaucer' edited by Professor Skeat, to which it is a pleasure to the present editors to doff their caps. But in the seventies Chaucer had still to stand waiting. The 'Globe' edition, as Mr. Prothero remarks, fared no better than the 'Library' one. 'From time to time Mr. Macmillan and Dr. Furnivall stirred Bradshaw up, but to no purpose. At length, in 1879, it was suggested that Bradshaw and Furnivall should do the edition together, and Bradshaw assented. They got as far as discussing the title-page, on which Bradshaw wanted his partner's name to stand first; some specimen pages were put in type' and there the matter ended. In February 1886 Bradshaw died, having done for Chaucer what he had done for many other subjects—marked out the lines on which alone good work could be done, and communicated to others something of his own enthusiasm. That so much of his learning should have died with him, is a calamity which Chaucer-students have to regret in common with philologists, bibliographers, and antiquaries of every kind. In December 1887, with the lightheartedness of his inextinguishable youth, Dr. Furnivall invited the present writer to become his collaborator, and an agreement with the Messrs. Macmillan was duly signed by us both, embracing both a 'Library' and a 'Globe' edition. But, as I have already written, 'the giant in the partnership had been used for a quarter of a century to doing, for nothing, all the hard work for other people,' and, like Bradshaw, 'could not spare from his pioneering the time necessary to enter into the fruit of his own Chaucer labours. Thus the partner who was not a giant was left to go on pretty much by himself.'<sup>1</sup> With the *Canterbury Tales* there was no great difficulty, for the seven manuscripts printed by the Chaucer Society made it possible to produce an adequate text without other help. But for most of the rest of Chaucer's work it was essential for success to get into touch with the manuscripts themselves, and this was for me impossible. Years previously Bradshaw had written, in excuse for his failure to produce a 'Globe' text, 'the fact is that the work would require an amount of *daylight leisure* which I can't give, and which no amount of money would enable me to buy,' and this humbler librarian was pulled up by the same difficulty. Only the length of the King's Library separated me from all the Chaucer manuscripts of the British Museum, but though the consciousness that they were there was pleasing, they were as inaccessible for continuous study as those of Oxford or Cambridge. Fortunately, I was able to find, with Dr. Furnivall's aid, first one, and then a second, and then a third helper, who could not only work at the treasures which a librarian may help to guard but must not study for his own ends, but who also possessed the scientific

<sup>1</sup> Preface to the 'Eversley' edition of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* (Macmillan, 1894).

training in the English language for which Oxford offered far fewer opportunities when I was an undergraduate than it does now. It is pleasant to me to know that two of my collaborators have completed this training at the feet of those distinguished foreign scholars, Ten Brink and Zupitza; Dr. Heath and myself, like Chaucer, are Londoners; Professor McCormick is a successor of the Scottish poets and students who in the fifteenth century did so much for Chaucer's honour; and Professor Liddell is an American just called to the Chair of English Literature in the University of Texas. Thus in this popular edition of Chaucer, which, mainly through the steady persistence of the publishers, now sees the light a third of a century after its first proposal, the final workers may at least claim that they represent, however inadequately, all the different countries in which their favourite poet has been especially loved and studied.

In the division of labour which has thus been effected I have myself remained responsible for the *Canterbury Tales*, the *Legende of Good Women*, the Glossary, and the General Introduction; Professor Liddell has taken the *Boece*, the *Treatise on the Astrolabe*, and the *Romaunt of the Rose*; Professor McCormick, *Troilus and Criseyde*; Dr. Heath, the *Hous of Fame*, *Parlement of Foules*, and all the shorter pieces. Each editor is responsible for his own work and for that only, and in some minor matters, as will be explained, we have each gone our own way. In the main essential, however, we have been from the first in entire agreement, for we all believe that in the present stage of our knowledge the most conservative treatment, consistent with the necessities of common sense and the known rules of Chaucerian usage, is also the best. We have endeavoured, therefore, as far as may be, to produce texts which shall offer an accurate reflection of that MS. or group of MSS. which critical investigation has shown to be the best, with only such emendation upon the evidence of other manuscripts as appeared absolutely necessary, and with the utmost parsimony of 'conjecture.' Our notes of variant readings have been greatly curtailed by consideration of space, but we have endeavoured to record most of those which have any literary or metrical importance, and I think I may say that in some cases, notably in the *Boece*, *Troilus*, and *Hous of Fame*, a real step forward has been taken towards a thoroughly critical text. As regards spelling, we are agreed in our dislike to any attempt at a uniform orthography determined by philological considerations. In the present state of our knowledge any such attempt must come perilously near that 'putting our own crotchets in place of the old scribes' habits' which Mr. Bradshaw once deprecated in editions of mediæval Latin, and which is as little to be desired as it is difficult to carry out. At the same time, every manuscript has its percentage of clerical errors or unusually repellent forms, and to reproduce these in a popular edition would be in the former case absurd, in the latter more or less undesirable. Thus, while we

have all adopted the modern usage of *u* and *v*, *i* and *j*, in other matters each editor has used his own judgment as to the extent of alteration necessary, and has explained what he has done in his introductory remarks. With our common belief that the difficulties raised by variations of spelling have been absurdly exaggerated, and our knowledge of how the balance of advantage shifts with every change of manuscripts, we see no reason to regret that while in some cases a few uncouth forms have been left in order that it might be understood that the text is taken, with only specified alterations, from a given manuscript, in other instances it has seemed advisable to do more to conciliate the eye of a modern reader. Where such alterations have been made, forms found in the Ellesmere MS. of the *Canterbury Tales* have been adopted.

Our refusal to reduce the spelling of the manuscripts to a dead level of philological correctness—were this attainable—has compelled us to use an unobtrusive dot to indicate when the letter *e* is to be fully sounded. This is the less to be regretted as Chaucer's usage in this respect is not quite so rigidly uniform as it is sometimes represented, and few readers will be inclined to grumble at this help which we have endeavoured to offer as modestly as possible.

As regards the order in which Chaucer's works are printed in this edition, the *Canterbury Tales* have been placed first, a precedence which was assigned them in all the old editions, and which is now further justified by our knowledge that they include some of the poet's earliest work, as well as much of his latest. The other pieces are arranged, to the best of my ability, in their chronological order, the Minor Poems being roughly grouped together as Earlier and Later.

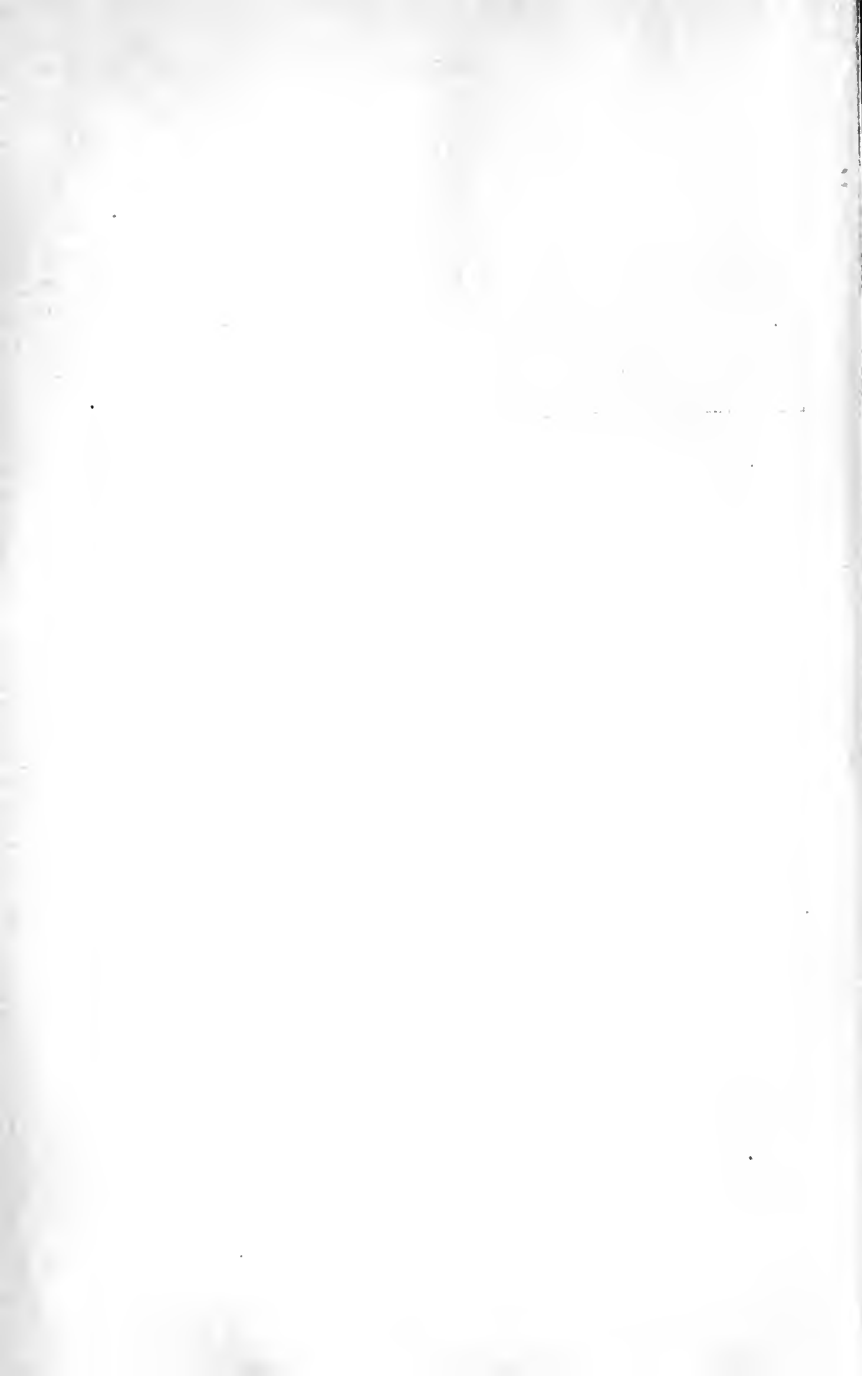
There is one last word which I should like to add. The appearance of this 'Globe' edition, so soon after the *Oxford Chaucer* and the *Student's Chaucer*, which we owe to Professor Skeat, may perhaps seem superfluous, and even intrusive. Against such a criticism the fact that the publishers have contemplated this edition since 1864, while the present writer began it in 1887, these being personal matters, would be no good defence. But I think the case for the present book can be put on higher ground than this. I am so good a Chaucer-lover as to hope that in the near future the student may have not merely two texts from which to choose, but half a dozen. So long as each editor does his work afresh, each new attempt must add something to the common stock. Where independent examination of the materials gathered by the Chaucer Society, or still unprinted, has led to different results, the best text will in the end survive; where the results are the same, every fresh witness adds to the authority of the last. In some cases the texts formed by my colleagues appear to me to take the more adventurous course; but, for myself, the results I have to show for my own collations must set me quoting:—

---

For wel I wot, that ye han her-biforne  
Of makyng ropyng and lad away the corne,  
And I come after glenyng here and there,  
And am ful glad if I may finde an ere  
Of any goodly word that ye han left.

I hope that, more especially in the *Legende*, some three or four of such 'goodly words' may be found, but in editing both this poem and the *Canterbury Tales*, and even more in the tedious task of compiling a glossary, my admiration for the thoroughness and precision of my predecessor has been continually increased. But if some future editor can find new manuscripts or overlooked readings helpful to a better text, I am sure that Dr. Skeat will join me in congratulating him on his good luck.

ALFRED W. POLLARD

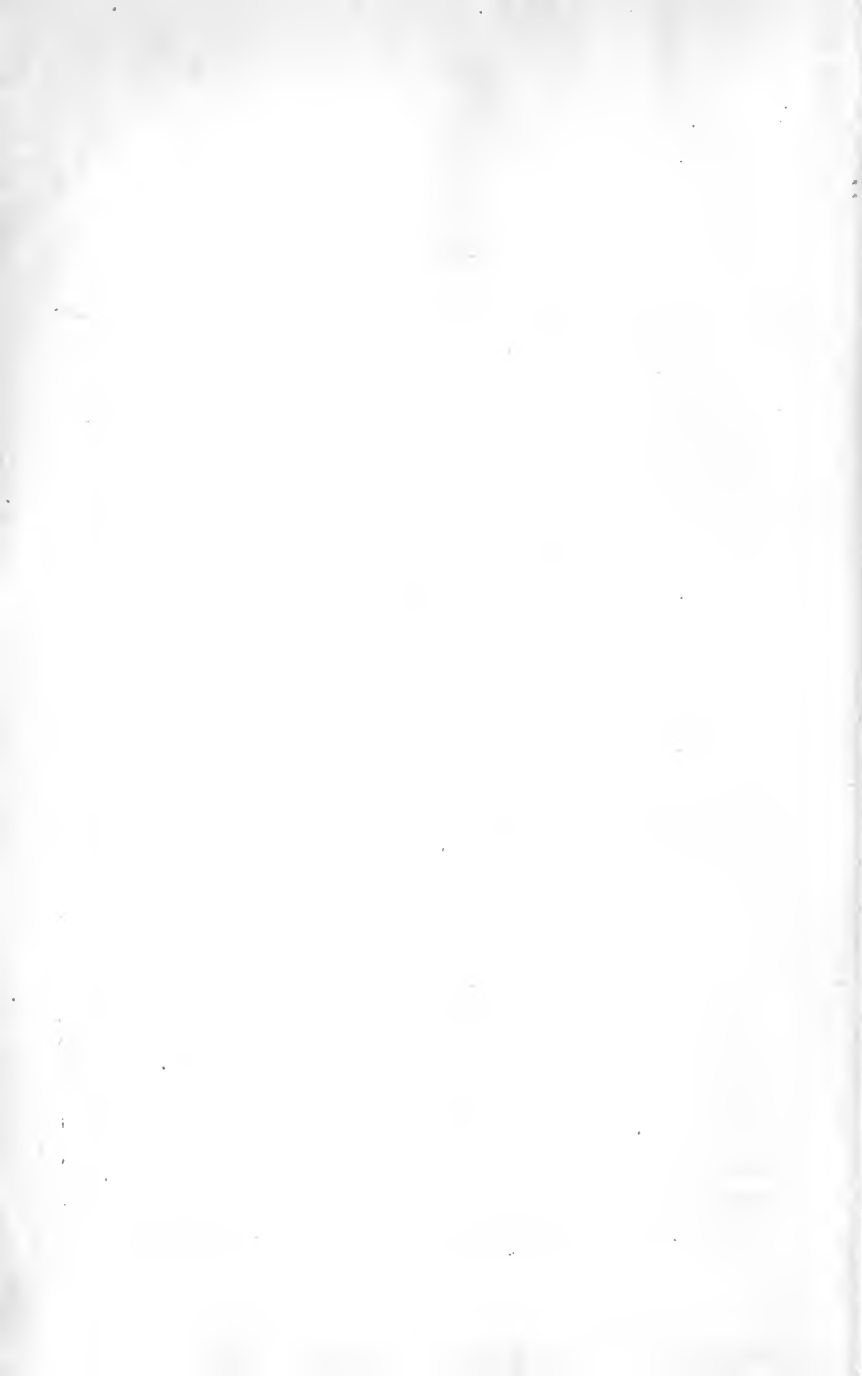




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\* The bracketed references in Roman numerals are to the pages of the Introduction which concern the poem.



# INTRODUCTION

## LIFE OF CHAUCER

(ALFRED W. POLLARD)

GEOFFREY CHAUCER was the son of John Chaucer, a citizen and vintner of London. His grandfather, Robert le Chaucer, the first member of the family of whom we hear, was in 1310 appointed one of the collectors in the Port of London of the new customs upon wine granted by the merchants of Aquitaine. At the time of his death Robert held a small property in Ipswich of the annual value of twenty shillings or thereabouts, *i.e.* some £15 of our present money. The ultimate remainder of other lands in Suffolk was settled on his son John (the poet's father), and apparently for the sake of this property the lad was kidnapped on 3rd December 1324, when he was between twelve and fourteen years of age, with the object of forcibly marrying him to a certain Joan de Westbale, who had also an interest in it. John's stepfather<sup>1</sup> took up his cause; his kidnappers were fined £250 (a crushing amount in those days), and from a subsequent plea to Parliament for the mitigation of this penalty we learn that in 1328 John Chaucer was still unmarried. On the 12th June 1338 a protection against being sued in his absence was granted to him with some forty-five others who were crossing the sea with the King, and ten years later he acted as deputy to the King's Butler in the port of Southampton. At the time of his death, in 1366, he owned a house in Thames Street, London, and was married to Agnes, niece of Hamo de Compton,<sup>2</sup> whom we first hear of as his wife in 1349, and who, soon after his death, married again another vintner, Bartholomew atte Chapel, in May 1367. Thus we know that the poet was born after 1328, that (if his father was only married once) his mother was this Agnes, niece of Hamo de Compton, and that he may have been born in the house in Thames Street, which he subsequently inherited and sold. In October 1386, when he was called upon to give evidence in the suit between Richard, Lord Scrope, and Sir Robert Grosvenor, his age was entered as 'forty years or more,' a statement the value of which is diminished, but not destroyed, by the proved carelessness of entries as to one or two other witnesses. We shall find that the date of about 1340, which this entry suggests as that of Chaucer's birth, fits in very fairly

<sup>1</sup> The biographical sections of this Introduction are mainly taken, with some revision and alteration, from my *Chaucer Primer* (Macmillan, 1895).

<sup>2</sup> John's mother Mary married three times; first one Heyroun, secondly Robert le Chaucer, and thirdly his kinsman or namesake, Richard Chaucer, who at one time was supposed to have been the poet's grandfather. John's kidnapper was Thomas Stace of Ipswich, who may have been a kinsman on his mother's side.

well with everything we know of his career, and until more precise evidence is forthcoming it may be accepted as approximately correct.

The first certain information we have about Chaucer himself is of his service in the household of Elizabeth de Burgh, Countess of Ulster, and wife of Lionel, third son of Edward III. The fragments of her Household Accounts, which contain the name Galfridus Chaucer, were found, appropriately enough, in the covers of a manuscript at the British Museum, containing Lydgate's *Storie of Thebes* and Hoccleve's *Regement of Princes*. The accounts show that in April 1357 the Countess was in London, and that an entire suit of clothes, consisting of a paltock, or short cloak, a pair of red and black breeches, and shoes, was then provided for Geoffrey Chaucer, at a cost of seven shillings (*i.e.* about five guineas present value), and another purchase of clothing for him was recorded the next month. In the following December, when the Countess was at her seat at Hatfield, in Yorkshire, there is an entry of two shillings and sixpence paid to Geoffrey Chaucer 'for necessaries at Christmas.' The entries of similar payments made to other members of the Countess of Ulster's household are for much larger amounts, and we must therefore conclude that, on account either of his youth or of his not being of noble birth, Chaucer's position among her retainers was not a high one. It was probably, however, sufficiently good to enable him to be present at several great festivities at Court in which we know that the Countess took part, and it may have been during the visit which John of Gaunt paid to Hatfield towards the close of 1357 that the poet first attracted his notice.

In 1359, according to his evidence in the Scrope suit, Chaucer took part in the unlucky campaign in France, serving before the town of 'Retters' (probably Réthel, not far from Rheims), until he was taken prisoner. His imprisonment did not last long, as on 1st March 1360 the King contributed £16 (£240 present value) to his ransom, a sum sufficiently large to show that both by his captors and his ransomers he was regarded as a person of some little importance. This may have arisen from his going to the war in the suite either of Prince Lionel or of the King himself. In any case, he must have been taken into the King's household about this time, as on 20th July 1367, in consideration of his past and future services, Edward III. granted him a pension, or annual salary, of twenty marks (£13 : 6 : 8) for life, under the title *dilectus valettus noster*. Chaucer was thus one of the yeomen of the King's chamber, and by Christmas 1368 had been promoted to be an esquire 'of less degree.'

On 12th September 1366 a Philippa Chaucer, one of the damoiselles of the Queen's chamber (*una domicellarum camerae Reginae*), was granted a pension of ten marks yearly for life. We know that this Philippa Chaucer in 1374, and occasionally in subsequent years, received part of her pension by the hands of Geoffrey Chaucer, her husband, and there seems to be no good reason to doubt that they were married as early as 1366. It is probable, though far from certain, that the damoiselle of the Queen's chamber may be identified with Philippa Roet, daughter of Sir Payne Roet of Hainault, and sister of Katherine Roet, who, after the death of her husband, Sir Hugh Swynford, became the third wife of John of Gaunt, in whose family she had been governess. Such a roundabout connection with John of Gaunt would help to explain the many marks of favour which he bestowed on both Chaucer and his wife; but the evidence for it is at present rather slender. If we believe it, we must also hold it probable that Geoffrey and Philippa Chaucer were the parents of a Thomas Chaucer, a man of wealth and note in the next reign, who, towards the close of his life, exchanged the Chaucer arms for those of Roet; also, perhaps, of the Elizabeth Chaucer for whose novitiate at the Abbey of Barking John of Gaunt paid a considerable sum in 1381. But the only child of the poet about whom we have certain

knowledge is the little Lewis, for whom he compiled a treatise on the Astrolabe, calculated for the year 1391, when the boy was ten years old.<sup>1</sup>

In 1369, the year after his promotion to be an esquire, Chaucer took part in the war in France. We know this from the record of a loan of £10 advanced to him by a certain Henry de Wakefield, but the record tells us nothing else. In 1370 Chaucer was abroad on the King's service, and obtained letters of protection from creditors till Michaelmas, when he returned and received his pension on 8th October. He received his pension with his own hands in 1371 and 1372, but we know nothing of his doings until 12th November of the latter year, when he was joined in a commission with two citizens of Genoa to treat with the Duke, citizens, and merchants of that place for the choice of some port in England where Genoese merchants might settle and trade. For his expenses he was allowed an advance of a hundred marks, and a further sum of thirty-eight marks was paid after his return, which took place before 22nd November 1373, when he received his pension in person.

After his return from Genoa Chaucer's affairs prospered greatly. On St. George's Day 1374 the King, then at Windsor, granted him a pitcher of wine daily. He received money in lieu of this in 1377, and the next year it was commuted for a second pension of twenty marks. In May 1374 he leased from the Corporation of London the dwelling-house over the gate of Aldgate. In June he was appointed Comptroller of the Customs and Subsidy of Wools, Skins, and tanned Hides in the Port of London, with the obligation to keep the records of his office with his own hand, and to be continually present. On the 13th of the same month John of Gaunt granted a pension of £10 to Chaucer and his wife for good services rendered by them 'to the said Duke, his Consort, and his mother the Queen.'<sup>2</sup> In 1375 two wardships were granted Chaucer, one of which, that of Edward Staplegate of Kent, subsequently brought him in £104. In 1376 the King made him a grant of £71 : 4 : 6, the price of some wool forfeited at the Customs for non-payment of duty; and just before Christmas he received ten marks as his wages, as one of the retinue of Sir John Burley, on some secret service. In 1377 he went to Flanders with Sir Thomas Percy on another secret mission, and later in the same year was engaged in France, probably with the King's ambassadors, who were then negotiating a peace.

Edward III.'s death on 21st June 1377 caused no interruption in Chaucer's prosperity. Early in the next year he probably took part in a second embassy to France, to negotiate a marriage between Richard II. (then twelve years old) and a daughter of the French king. In May 1378, again, we find him preparing to accompany Sir Edward Berkeley on a mission to Lombardy, there to treat on military matters with Bernabo Visconti, Lord of Milan, and with the English free-lance, Sir John Hawkwood. He obtained the usual letters of protection, and appointed two friends, Richard Forrester and the poet Gower, his agents during his absence. The arrears of his pension (£20), with an advance of two marks on the current quarter, were paid him, and on 28th May he received one hundred marks for his wages and expenses during his mission. Of the mission itself we know nothing, but we find Chaucer at home again on 3rd February 1379, when he drew his arrears of pension for the time he had been absent.

As far as we know, with this journey to Lombardy Chaucer's career as a diplomatist came to an end, and for the next five years or so we must picture him as attending to his duties as Comptroller of the Customs and Subsidies, receiving his

<sup>1</sup> For new (1900) evidence as to Thomas Chaucer see note to p. xix.

<sup>2</sup> A pension of the same amount had been granted by the Duke to Philippa Chaucer on 30th August 1372, and possibly the 1374 pension was only a re-grant of this to the husband and wife jointly.

own and his wife's pensions at irregular intervals, and probably dunning the Treasury for £22 due to him for his last French mission, until in March 1381 it was finally paid.<sup>1</sup> On three successive New Year's Days (1380-82) his wife was presented with a silver gilt cup and cover by the Duke of Lancaster, and in May 1382 Chaucer himself was appointed to an additional Comptrollership, that of the Petty Customs of the Port of London, with leave to exercise his office by deputy. In February 1385 the same privilege was allowed him in regard to his old Comptrollership, after he had been granted a month's leave of absence at the end of the previous year. In October 1386 he sat in the Parliament at Westminster as one of the Knights of the Shire for Kent, and on the 15th of the same month gave evidence in favour of Lord Scrope in the suit between him and Sir Robert Grosvenor as to the right to a certain coat of arms, which he swore that he had constantly seen Henry le Scrope bearing in the campaign before 'Retters' seven-and-twenty years previously. That campaign had ended for Chaucer himself in a short imprisonment, but since his ransom by Edward III. he had enjoyed, as far as we can tell, an uninterrupted career of prosperity, with a considerable income from his pension and official employments, and with his various diplomatic missions to increase his knowledge of the world.

To no small extent Chaucer's good fortune was due to the favour of his patron John of Gaunt, and now the latter had left England in the spring of 1386 to prosecute his claims to the throne of Castile. The Parliament in which Chaucer had sat had demanded a change in the royal advisers, and though the King at first resisted, the Duke of Gloucester was too strong for him. A Board of eleven was appointed to overlook the royal household and treasury, and Chaucer, who belonged to the King's party, lost both his Comptrollerships, his successors in them being nominated in December. Shortly before this he must have given up his house in Aldgate, for in October of this year it was let to another tenant, and we have no knowledge where the poet lived during the next thirteen years. Some time in the second half of 1387 it is probable that he lost his wife, for there is no record of any payment of her pension after midsummer in that year. By May 1388 he must have been in serious financial straits, for we find him assigning both his pensions (*i.e.* the original pension of twenty marks and the twenty marks allowed him instead of his pitcher of wine) to a certain John Scalby, who presumably gave him a lump sum in exchange for them. Exactly a year later (May 1389) the King dismissed Gloucester and the other Lords Appellant from his counsels, and declared his determination no longer to live under governance, and with the return of John of Gaunt to England Chaucer, no doubt, hoped for better times. A brief spell of prosperity came to him by his appointment on the 12th July 1389 to be Clerk of the King's Works at the Palace of Westminster, the Tower of London, and various royal manors, at a salary of two shillings a day, with power to employ a deputy. A year later he was ordered to procure workmen and materials for the repair of St. George's Chapel, Windsor, and was paid the costs of putting up scaffolds in Smithfield for the King and Queen to see

<sup>1</sup> These years, otherwise apparently uneventful, were broken by one unpleasant incident, for on 1st May 1380 a certain Cecilia de Chaumpaigne executed an absolute release to Chaucer from all liability *de meo raptu*. Quite recently, Mr. Reginald R. Sharpe has printed in the *Athenaeum* for 14th August 1897 extracts from the Rolls of Pleas and Memoranda at the Guildhall, which show that on 26th June in the same year 1380 Cecilia Chaumpaigne executed a general release 'ratione cuiuscunque cause a principio mundi,' to Richard Goodchild 'coteler' and John Grove 'armurer,' and that on the same day Goodchild and Grove executed a similar release to Chaucer. On the 2nd of the next month Grove gave Cecilia Chaumpaigne a recognisance for £10 to be paid at Michaelmas, as was duly done. Mr. Sharpe suggests that the £10 may have been paid to the lady by Grove on Chaucer's account, but I do not agree as to this. Unfortunately the interpretation most favourable to the poet points to his having been accessory to some such attempt on Cecilia de Chaumpaigne as the Staces had practised against his own father.

the jousts in May. In the intervening March he had been named, with five others, as a commissioner for the repair of the roadways on the banks of the river between Greenwich and Woolwich, but by the summer of 1391 he had lost both his lucrative clerkships, though he received various payments in connection with them as late as 1393.

Even these short two years of renewed prosperity were marked by at least one unpleasant incident, for on 6th September 1390 Chaucer, by a strange misfortune, was robbed twice on the same day by members of the same gang of highwaymen—the first time at Westminster of £10, the second at Hatcham, near the ‘foul oak,’ of £9:3:8. The money was not his own, but the King’s, and was forgiven him by writ on 6th January 1391. One of the gang turned ‘approver’ or informer against the rest; but being challenged to a wager by battle and defeated, was himself hanged, a fate which seems eventually to have befallen most of his comrades.

After the loss of his clerkships Chaucer’s means of subsistence, so far as we have certain knowledge of them,<sup>1</sup> were reduced to the proceeds of his commissionership of the roadway between Greenwich and Woolwich. From one of these places, probably in 1393, he wrote to his friend Scogan, as one ‘at the stremé’s hede Of grace, of alle honour and of worthynesse’ (*i.e.* the Court at Windsor), a humorous poem which ended with the serious request ‘myndé thy frend ther it may fructifye,’ and it was possibly at Scogan’s request that Richard II. came to Chaucer’s relief with a grant of a new pension of £20 a year for life. During the next few years we find the poet frequently obtaining loans from the Treasury in advance of his pension, and on two occasions these loans are as small as 6s. 8d. (£5 modern value). In May 1398 he obtained from the King letters of protection against enemies suing him, and the protection was needed, for we know that just at this time he was being sued for a debt of a little over £14, nearly three-quarters of a year’s pension. In October of this year Richard granted him a tun of wine yearly in answer to a petition which seems to have begged it somewhat pitifully ‘for the sake of God and as a work of charity.’ A few months later the King himself was deposed. To Chaucer, however, as a follower of John of Gaunt, the change was only that from a good friend to a better, for a poem entitled a *Compleynt to his Purs*, addressed to Henry IV., elicited in October 1399 a fresh pension of forty marks in addition to the £20 granted by Richard II. Thus assisted, Chaucer, on 24th December, took a lease of a tenement in the garden of St. Mary’s Chapel, Westminster, for no less than fifty-three years. He drew an instalment of one pension on 21st February 1400, and £5 on account of another on 5th June, by the hands of a friend. On 25th October, just ten months after he had taken his long lease, he died, and was buried in St. Benet’s Chapel, in Westminster Abbey, where his grave has since been surrounded by those of many later poets.

The fact that Chaucer was a servant of the Crown, and the care with which the public records of this period have been preserved, enable us to trace the poet’s external or business life with a certainty and particularity in strong contrast with the little we know of the lives of most of the men of letters of the next two centuries. The additional information which we can glean from his poems is for the most part

<sup>1</sup> Between June 1390 and June 1391 a Geoffrey Chaucer was appointed Forester of North Petherton Park, in Somersetshire. The post was in the gift of the descendants of Chaucer’s first patroness, the Countess of Ulster, but even with this to help us, it is hardly safe to assume the identity of the forester and the poet. It is made more probable, however, by the fact that in 1416-17 a Thomas Chaucer was appointed to the same post. Since the discovery, in 1900, that a Thomas Chaucer also succeeded the poet in his tenement at Westminster, the tradition that Thomas was Geoffrey’s son is much strengthened, and the occurrence of both names at North Petherton is a further link.

vague and uncertain. The first of his works which we can date, the *Boke of the Duchesse* (an allegorical lament for the death of John of Gaunt's first wife, Blanche of Lancaster, who died in 1369), contains an allusion to an eight years' sickness which has caused much conjecture. Nature, he writes, will not suffer a man to live without sleep and in sorrow.

And I ne may, no nyght ne morwe,  
 Slepe; and this melancolye  
 And drede I havé for to dye,  
 Defaute of slepe and hevynesse,  
 Hath sleyn my spirit of quyknesse  
 That I have lost al lustihede.  
 Suche fantasyes been in myn hede  
 So I noot what is best to do.

But men myghte axé me why so  
 I may not slepe, and what me is?  
 But natheless, who aské this  
 Leseth his asking trewely.  
 My selven can not tellé why  
 The sothe; but trewely, as I gesse,  
 I holdé hit ben a siknesse  
 That I have suffred this eight yere,  
 And yet my booté is never the nere;  
 For ther is phisicien but oon  
 That may me hele; but that is doon.  
 Passe we over until eft;  
 That wil not be, moot nede be left.

It is usual to join with this passage *The Complaynte unto Pite*, or, as it is otherwise called, *The Exclamacion of the Deth of Pite*, a fine but rather artificial poem, in which Chaucer tells us how, when he ran to beg pity to avenge him on cruelty, 'I fond hir deed and buried in an herte.' If, however, we are to search for autobiography in Chaucer's love-poems, *A Complaynte to his Lady* (pp. 334-336), which is even more artificial than the *Pite*, contains some far more explicit phrases as to a hopeless love, and its ill effects in melancholy and loss of sleep. Part of this poem is in *terza rima*, and for this and other reasons it seems impossible to assign it to so early a date as 1369. If we separate these two poems from the passage in the *Boke of the Duchesse*, we are left without any clue to the meaning of the allusion to the eight years' 'sickness' and the one 'physician' who could heal it. It is possible that the 'sickness,' which seems to have been mysterious to Chaucer himself ('my-selven can not telle why'), may have been nothing more definite than the vague melancholy and unrest apt to beset young poets when they do not see their way clear, and in that case the physician may be the 'great physician,' God. It is possible also that the allusion is to a love unrequited, and perhaps unrequitable. It is idle to speculate. All we know is that any passion which Chaucer may have felt left but little trace on his verse, except possibly in the beauty and purity of the fine passage on the relations of lover and mistress in the *Boke of the Duchesse* itself. Save in this one piece Chaucer's contributions to English love-poetry may almost be called insignificant.

If we should be cautious in accepting any theory of an unrequited love upon too slender evidence, we should be no less careful to avoid the exaggeration which interprets the conventional satire which Chaucer in his later poems directs against



women as a proof that the poet's relations with his wife Philippa were unhappy. If read as the work of any other fourteenth century writer would be read, there is nothing in Chaucer's poetry on which to rest such a theory, and it is even possible to contend that if we compare the poems written during his wife's lifetime with those generally assigned to the period after its close, we have some ground for believing that her death removed a moral influence which had previously made itself felt. On the other hand, we are tempted to conjecture that it was the influence of the ex-damoiselle of the bed-chamber which kept Chaucer so long occupied with the fashionable artificial poetry of the day, and that this may have been one of the causes of his abnormally late poetic development.

To pass to matters of more certainty, we find in the *Boke of the Duchesse* an illustration from the side of his poetry of Chaucer's relation with John of Gaunt, while in the two prologues to the *Legende of Good Women* we see him intending to present his book to the Queen, to whose patronage of him we have no external allusions. Lastly, we may note the well-known passages in the *Hous of Fame* (ii. 139-152) and *Legende of Good Women* (29-50), in which the poet alludes to his studious habits and love of flowers, and the remarks of the Host in the *Canterbury Tales* (B. 1884-1894) when he calls upon him for his story. These give us a picture of Chaucer as he imagined that other men would see him, and we have a notable additional help towards realising his appearance in the well-known portrait which his follower, Thomas Hoccleve, caused to be painted on one of the leaves of his own *Regement of Princes*, now Harleian MS. 4866 in the British Museum. Dr. Furnivall's description and comments on this portrait bring out its qualities so well that we cannot do better than quote them. 'The face,' he says, 'is wise and tender, full of a sweet and kindly sadness at first sight, but with much bonhomie in it on a further look, and with deep-set, far-looking grey eyes. Not the face of a very old man, a totterer, but of one with work in him yet, looking kindly, though seriously, out on the world before him. Unluckily the parted grey moustache and the vermilion above and below the lips render it difficult to catch the expression of the mouth; but the lips seem parted, as if to speak. Two tufts of white beard are on the chin; and a fringe of white hair shows from under the black hood. One feels one would like to go to such a man when one was in trouble, and hear his wise and tender speech.' Other portraits exist, but they are less carefully drawn. They serve, however, by their general resemblance to show us that the one which we owe to the piety of Hoccleve is no mere fancy sketch.

The foregoing account of Chaucer's career has been based entirely on authentic records, without any turning aside to notice the many fanciful statements about him, now known to be false. A full account of these will be found in the interesting chapter entitled 'the Chaucer Legend' in Professor T. R. Lounsbury's *Studies in Chaucer*,<sup>1</sup> to another chapter in which<sup>2</sup> students may be referred for an account of the books which we know, from his use of them in his works, that Chaucer must have read. That from our biographical sketch all mention of the poet's works has been so rigorously excluded is mainly due to the fact that, although the sequence of most of these is now well established, by evidence which I have epitomised in my *Chaucer Primer* (pp. 36-60), only in a few cases can we be absolutely sure of the year in which any given poem was begun or ended. In the case, indeed, of many of the poems we cannot even fix the date within five years, and it therefore

<sup>1</sup> Vol. i. pp. 129-224.

<sup>2</sup> Vol. ii. 169-426. A brief sketch of the same subject will be found in my *Chaucer Primer*, pp. 25-36. Professor Lounsbury seems to me a little unduly hard on Chaucer's inaccuracy as a scholar.

seemed impossible to introduce references to his poetry into an account of the poet's external life, of which most of the details we have are so singularly precise. The generalisation which has been accepted of recent years that Chaucer in the earliest stage of his career as a poet was subject only to the influences of French models, that he subsequently transferred his allegiance from Machault and Guillaume de Lorris to Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio, and finally became his own master and developed an 'English' style all his own,—such a generalisation as this may pass muster well enough, but when we attempt to define the years within which these stages were accomplished difficulties spring up on every side.

The date 1369 as that of the composition of the *Boke of the Duchesse* is, if not really a landmark, at least solid ground, but one of the few questions of sequence still undecided is as to on which side of the *Boke of the Duchesse* we should place the translation of the *Romaunt of the Rose*, the *A B C*, and the *Pite*.

Again, it is usual to date Chaucer's 'Italian period' from his Genoa mission of 1372-1373, but if we except a few lines in the invocation before the legend of St. Cecilia, which have the appearance of being translated from Dante (they may be a later addition or derived from a common original), we have no real proof that Chaucer was possessed of any Italian books until his Milan mission of 1378-1379, or indeed that he could read Italian until this date.<sup>1</sup>

Once more, though we have good reason for believing that the plan of the *Canterbury Tales* took shape about the years 1386-1388, we have no clue whatever to the number of years during which Chaucer continued writing them. The authenticity of the *Retraction* at the end of the *Tales* has been doubted, but with the distinct forecast of it given in the conclusion of the *Troilus*, the doubts seem themselves indefensible. It is possible that the unfinished treatise on the Astrolabe, compiled in 1391, practically marks the end of the *Tales*. It is possible, on the other hand, that the poet continued writing them almost to the last, though in this case, as he would hardly have abstained from publication during so many years, it is probable that we should have had a distinct group of manuscripts, containing only a portion of the extant series, put into circulation before the rest were written. But questions of this kind are never likely to be settled, and they are alluded to here chiefly to show how impossible it is to bring the two sides of Chaucer's life into as close connection as we could wish.

When we turn from the attempt to fix the precise date of the beginning or completion of any given poem to trace the development of Chaucer's genius our task becomes much easier. At first sight, indeed, it may seem that here we are merely arguing in a circle, deducing results from an arrangement especially contrived to produce them. But the sequence of Chaucer's poems, though in the early days of the Chaucer Society it was mapped out largely by this very test of development, has since been confirmed by a variety of other tests, and is strongly supported by every approximation to a precise date which we have attained. Thus Chaucer's gradual growth in poetic freedom and power is a real fact, and, as a fact, is worth studying. And at the outset we may note the strong probability that he started as a poet comparatively late in life. He himself went to school before the fashion of construing Latin into French and not into English had been abandoned, and it is probable that in the early years of his service at Court poetry in English would still

<sup>1</sup> The story of Griselda, which is generally and rightly regarded as written soon after the first Italian mission, was translated, not from the vernacular version of Boccaccio, but from the Latin of Petrarch. The sections, again, of the *Monk's Tale*, which are usually regarded as early, are taken from a Latin, not an Italian, work, the *De Casibus Virorum et Mulierum Illustrium* of Boccaccio.

have been rather looked down on, as a little vulgar or, at least, unfashionable. Certainly when Chaucer did begin to write, whether it was with his translation of the *Roman de la Rose*, or with the lost *Boke of the Leoun* (almost certainly a translation of Guillaume Machault's *Dit du Lion*),<sup>1</sup> or with the *A B C* translated from Guillaume de Deguileville, or with the *Boke of the Duchesse*, in which, in addition to some (not very important) direct borrowings from Machault and the *Roman de la Rose*, the form of the whole poem is French,—whichever of these works we may choose to regard as the earliest, there can be no doubt that Chaucer was at starting wholly under the French influences which we may presume to have been predominant at Court, and which indeed were the only ones then open to him. From the three (or should we say the *two*?) extant works we see that even in these days of his apprenticeship Chaucer's verse is full of music, but that he will condescend to very poor padding when he is translating and has to fill out his stanza. In the *Boke of the Duchesse* he is throughout conventional, even his often praised portrait of the knight's lady lacking the individuality which in later years he would have given it with far fewer touches and less piling up of pretty adjectives. Yet with all its conventions the *Boke of the Duchesse* has a certain charm in it, quite different from anything in Chaucer's later work. He writes as the timid lover, who dreams of women afar off; and it is noticeable how in the three next poems which we may attribute to him, the *Lyf of Seint Cecyle*, the story of Griselde and the story of the Emperor's daughter Constance (see below, Introduction to *Canterbury Tales*), he, in each case, takes as his heroines personified virtues whom he certainly never realised to himself as living women. All these poems, it should be noted again, are more or less didactic and religious, though the religious feeling in them is eminently artificial. All three in their present form (more especially the story of Constance, now the *Man of Lawes Tale*) show marks of revision at a later date. But the adoption of the decasyllabic seven-line stanza instead of the octosyllabic couplet, and the breaking away from French influences to a more straightforward method of narration, must have marked them from the beginning.

It was impossible for Chaucer to remain long content with these graceful and tender, but very unreal, personifications of religious zeal, patience, and constancy. Between 1369 and 1379 was, if not the busiest, certainly the most adventurous decade of his life, the period when he was moving about and seeing much of men and things, and also becoming acquainted with a new world of literature. The second and third of the three poems we have mentioned show that he had already learnt his art, was no longer a servile translator, unhappy how to fill out a verse when his original failed him. By this time he was ready to improve on the author he followed, introducing touches of his own, some of which show the first traces of his sly humour,

<sup>1</sup> This lost work is mentioned in the *Retraction*, already alluded to, found in many manuscripts of the *Canterbury Tales*. Other lost works are *Origenes upon the Maudeleyn*, i.e. a translation of the homily on St. Mary Magdalene, falsely attributed to Origen, and the *Wrecched Engendring of Mankynde*, a translation of Innocent III.'s treatise *De Miseria Conditionis humane*. Both these are mentioned in the Prologue to the *Legende of Good Women*, though the latter only in the earlier draft. This list (*Legende*, ll. 414-430), with that in the *Retraction*, and a passage in the Prologue to the *Man of Lawes Tale* (B, 57-89), mentions all Chaucer's more important works. Others are vouched for by Lydgate, or have been preserved in the writing of Chaucer's younger contemporary John Shirley (1366?-1456), or are ascribed to the poet in good manuscripts. A severely tabular statement of the evidence for the authenticity of each poem will be found in my *Chaucer Primer* (chapter iii.), where also I have epitomised (appendix, § 85) the evidence in which various poems at one time commonly attributed to Chaucer are now known not to be by him. For a fuller discussion of these supposititious pieces, see Lounsbury's *Studies in Chaucer* (vol. i.) and more especially Professor Skeat's valuable supplement to his six-volume edition of Chaucer, entitled *Chaucerian and other Pieces* (Clarendon Press, 1897).

and strengthening the web of his poetry with thoughts and reflections culled wherever he could find them. His prose translation of Boethius and his study of Dante now came to help this reflective vein, and on the other hand he had made acquaintance with two of Boccaccio's masterpieces, not the *Decamerone*, which it is probable he never knew, but the *Teseide* and the *Filostrato*. The story of Palamon and Arcite, which, after at least one recasting, has come down to us as the *Knights Tale*, represents his work on the *Teseide*, and *Troilus and Criseyde* that on the *Filostrato*, and these two splendid poems, full of all the colour of mediæval chivalry and love and thought, relieved ever and anon with subtle touches of humour, are the striking achievements of his middle period. In the *Parlement of Foules*, written in 1382, he returns, to please the Court, to the French models of his earlier days, only to show how far he had progressed since the *Boke of the Duchesse* of thirteen years earlier. In the *Hous of Fame* he is much less happy. I think there can be no doubt that Dr. Heath is right in his conjecture (see his Introduction to the poem) that Books i. and ii. were separated from Book iii. by some interval, but the poem raises many difficulties, some of which we are not likely ever to solve. Perhaps it is not amiss to remark here that Chaucer, though one of the world's great story-tellers, is not remarkable for inventiveness. Probably all, or nearly all, of his plots are borrowed, and in the fourteenth century books from which he could borrow were not easily come at. He had brought back the *Teseide* and *Filostrato* from one of his visits to Italy, and perhaps had strained his purse to do it; but when he had used them he was thrown back on the rather jejune material he could find in the books around him. At an earlier period he had probably been driven by some such straits to compile the dreary tragedies of misfortune which we know as the *Monkes Tale*. In the first two Books of the *Hous of Fame* we find him narrating or alluding to almost all the tragedies of hapless love which he soon set himself to tell, till he wearied of them, in the *Legende of Good Women*. The third Book of the *Fame* is in quite a different style, cast in Chaucer's happy discursive vein, and only failing for lack of a climax. In the *Legende* it is the Prologue, in its two drafts, which gives him his opportunity. Of the nine stories of loving women which he had patience to complete, only the first three (those of Cleopatra, Thisbe, and Dido) are in any way worthy of him.

The *Legende of Good Women* was no doubt abandoned from sheer weariness with its monotonous theme, and it was perhaps Chaucer's sense that this monotony must be avoided at all costs that caused him to conceive the plan of the *Canterbury Tales*, of which diversity, the exchange of stories between gentle and simple, bookmen and the bookless, the religious and the irreligious, is the very essence. Once more the scheme was left unfinished, but in this case there is little to regret. If indeed Chaucer had been in the mood, he might have described the adventures of the pilgrims at Canterbury, and the final supper at the Taberd on their return to Southwark, with all the richness of humour which marks the General Prologue or that of the Wife of Bath. But there is some gain in being left with the picture of the pilgrims as still journeying along the Kentish roads, and as for the *Tales*, they run the whole length of the gamut, and seem to leave no note wanting. As is generally agreed, some of the tales of the gentle folk had probably been written at earlier dates, and had now only to be revised and fitted into their places, but his scheme gave Chaucer an excuse for displaying the same mastery in the broad humours of narration as he had shown in his *Troilus* and *Knights Tale* in the fields of romance. It is too true that several of these tales must be reckoned among those which, as the *Retraction* phrases it, 'sounen into sin,' but it is as unfair to take them too seriously as it would be to expose the essential immorality of most fairy-tales, and there can be no question as to the extraordinary

skill with which the tales of the Miller, Reeve, and Summoner, no less than the gentler humours of that of the Nun's Priest, are set forth.

Along with their many masterpieces of humour and romance, the *Canterbury Tales* contain some poorer stories, the very feeble version of the death of Virginia, for instance, and the Manciple's tale of Phœbus and the Crow, and it is not easy to tell whether these represent earlier work foisted into the cycle, or whether we have here the fruits of Chaucer's failing powers. It needs some acquaintance with the workings of the mediæval mind to imagine how, at any period of his career, he could have cared to set forth the weariful prose discourses of Dame Prudence. The Parson's sermon, long as it is, is much more endurable, and though nobody is likely, except for professional reasons, to read it through, as I have done, at least six times, the task is not so repellent as might be imagined. The prose treatise on the Astrolabe, written for little Lewis Chaucer in 1391, though only a tenth of its length, is much more formidable. But in all his prose work Chaucer is merely as any other fourteenth century writer, without a touch of the grace and humour with which his poems are filled. As a poet he needs to-day no one to praise him. He has been praised already, wisely and well, by many clever writers. All that is now needed is that the praise shall no longer be taken contentedly on trust, but that his poems, which in their freshness and restfulness must in this century have more power of pleasure-giving than ever before, should be allowed to speak for themselves to ears no longer deaf.

## THE CANTERBURY TALES

(ALFRED W. POLLARD)

The *Canterbury Tales* are given the place of honour in this edition partly out of deference to a time-honoured precedent, which might fairly claim some weight even against the chronological arrangement which commends itself to modern scholarship, but partly also because their assignment to any other position would be misleading. In addition to two long treatises in prose they contain some 18,000 lines of verse, and it is quite certain that not all of these 18,000 lines sprang from Chaucer's brain after he had conceived the plan which was to link together this wonderful medley. That one, at least, of the tales was written at an earlier period of his career we have clear evidence. In the Prologue to the *Legende of Good Women* we find the *Second Nun's Tale* already alluded to as the *Lyf of Seint Cecyle*, and in its introduction the narrator is made to speak as an 'unworthy sone of Eve' (l. 60) instead of as a woman, and to address those 'that reden that I write' (l. 78) instead of the listeners to a tale told along the highway to Canterbury. Again, with our suspicions thus aroused, we note Chaucer's distinct statement that he learnt the story of Grisilde at Padua of 'Fraunceys Petrak,' who died in 1374, and whom the English poet may have met on his Genoa mission of 1373, when Petrarch was living at Arqua, near Padua. Chaucer was not so well off for subjects for it to be probable that if he learnt this story from Petrarch in 1373 he would have left it unused for a dozen years or more, and there is a general agreement in the belief that he wrote his English version of Petrarch's Latin shortly after his return to England. In the *Monk's Tale*, again, the wearisome tragedies fall into two distinct groups, one of twelve stories of old time, derived from the Bible, Boccaccio's *De Casibus Virorum et Feminarum Illustrium* and *De Claris Mulieribus*, and the *Roman de la Rose*; the

other, of five modern instances, mostly very briefly treated, and one of them recording the death of Bernabo Visconti, Lord of Milan, which occurred as late as 1385. One of the modern stories, that of Ugolino of Pisa, is partly taken from Dante, and is strikingly better than all the rest. In the early stories, though the verse is good enough, the treatment is often careless and unsympathetic, and Chaucer was clearly not interested in them. It cannot be said dogmatically that they show early work, but it seems probable that at some time towards the close of the decade 1369-1379 (to which, it must be remembered, there is strikingly little of his poetry which can be positively assigned) Chaucer began a poem on the same plan as that afterwards adopted by his follower Lydgate in his *Falls of Princes*, and then abandoned it till the need came to suit the Monk with an unexpected but appropriate theme, when it was revised and enlarged. The *Man of Lawes Tale*, once more a curiously inappropriate one, is cast in the same seven-line stanza as the *Seint Cecyle* and the *Grisilde*, and from its subject, style, and tone appears to have been written towards the close of the same period. On the other hand, the *Prioress's Tale* of the little chorister, though it goes back in feeling to this earlier period, is clearly written after the conception of the plan of the *Canterbury Tales*, as is proved by the 'quod she' with which the narration is interrupted (B 1644), while its ripe and mature beauty fully agrees with this evidence.

Whether any of the other *Tales*—all of which, except the Sir Thopas parody, are written in heroic couplets—should be assigned to a date earlier than the immortal General Prologue, is a point much more difficult to determine. Outside the *Canterbury Tales* the only extant poem in which Chaucer used the heroic couplet is the *Legende of Good Women*, and as this certainly preceded the *Canterbury Tales* as a whole, there is a general inclination to regard this as Chaucer's first essay in the couplet, rather than to give any individual Tale precedence over it. On the other hand, there is an allusion in the already oft-quoted list of Chaucer's works in the *Legende* to a poem enshrining

Al the love of Palamon and Arcyte  
Of Thebes, thogh the story is knowen lyte.

It is difficult to believe that the reference here is to the fragment of *Queen Anelida and Fals Arcyte* which has come down to us, as it ought to point to a poem which kept much more closely to the loves of the two knights as narrated in the *Teseide*. Our natural inclination would therefore be to identify this poem with the *Knights Tale*, as we now have it, but the ingenuity of Chaucer's commentators has discovered that there are ten seven-line stanzas translated from the *Teseide* in *Anelida and Arcyte*, sixteen in the *Parlement of Foules*, and three in *Troilus and Criseyde*. Hence has arisen a theory that in addition to the *Anelida* and the *Knights Tale* Chaucer composed a more literal translation of the *Teseide* in seven-line stanzas, subsequently withdrew it from circulation, and used some of his old material in later poems. Ingenious as this theory is, the supposition of the writing and suppression of a poem, necessarily of considerable length, is no light matter, and if Chaucer really wrote such a poem and subsequently used fragments of it in other works it is extraordinary that he should have called attention to a tale thus cruelly treated by an entirely gratuitous reference in the *Legende*. As for the fragments of the *Teseide* found in the three seven-line poems, there is a parallel instance, of the nearly simultaneous use of the same material in two different metres, in the story of Dido and Æneas, which we find first in the octosyllabic couplets of the *Hous of Fame*, and again in the decasyllabic couplets of the *Legende of Good Women*. On the whole,

and with all deference to the great authority of the scholars who have held the opposite view, it seems best to regard the theory of a lost seven-line version of *Palamon and Arcyte* as a needless hypothesis. If this be so, the reference in the *Legend* must be almost certainly to the *Knights Tale*, and this fine poem is thus brought back nearer to the period of the *Troilus*, with which it is so closely allied in style and temper.

If the *Knights Tale* is thus brought back, other Tales, notably those of the Franklin (one of Chaucer's great successes) and the Squire, may perhaps come with it, and we need not hesitate, on the score of their metre, to relegate such poor work as the story of Appius and Virginia as told by the Doctor of Phisik, and the Manciple's tale of Apollo and the Crow, to a less happy period of Chaucer's career than that in which he was writing the Prologue and others of his finest works. Without wishing to press this point too far, it seems fair to point out that there is nothing unreasonable in supposing that when Chaucer conceived his immensely ambitious scheme of the *Canterbury Tales* he had a really considerable amount of material already at his disposal. It is sufficient, however, here to emphasise the fact that inclusion in the *Canterbury* series of itself tells us absolutely nothing as to the date at which any given poem was written, and that we must therefore place the *Tales* as a whole entirely outside the chronological sequence of the poet's other works.

As regards the date at which the idea took shape of a *Canterbury Pilgrimage* as a framework by which to connect a number of otherwise distinct stories, we have only two or three years from which to choose, and we must not attempt to pin it down too precisely to any one of them. We have various good reasons for believing that the six years which succeeded 1379 produced the *Boece*, *Troilus*, *Parlement of Foules*, *Hous of Fame* and *Legende of Good Women*, and it is therefore inconceivable that Chaucer should have planned the *Canterbury Tales* earlier than the end of 1385 or beginning of 1386. Again, no one who has read the talks by the way can doubt that the poet himself had travelled over the ground, while we know that until on 17th February 1385 he was permitted to appoint a deputy in his Comptrollership he was closely tied to his official work, a bondage of which he complains bitterly in the *Hous of Fame*. Chaucer's own pilgrimage, then, may have been made in 1385 or in any subsequent year, but hardly before this. On the other hand, the short poems written towards the close of his life show that the not very advanced age to which he attained pressed heavily on him, and it would be unreasonable to assign the plan of the *Tales* to his last decade. If, as is highly probable, the *Legende* was begun in 1385 and soon afterwards left unfinished in despair, everything points to the scheme of the *Canterbury Tales* as taking form during the next two or three years, 1386-1388. Nearer than this it is not easy to go with safety, for in drawing conclusions from the indications of date which we find in the talks by the road we must remember that Chaucer may have fitted them in either to the year in which he was writing, or back to the year in which he himself took his holiday. In the latter case the dates would be more likely to be real dates, while if we prefer to believe that they are taken from the year in which he was writing, we can hardly imagine that Chaucer was likely to trouble himself to consider too curiously whether this or that week would be a convenient one for some of his imaginary characters to make their pilgrimage. Thus, in drawing conclusions from the mention of 18th April in the talk which precedes the *Man of Law's Tale* (B 5), I do not think we can absolutely rule out of court the year 1386, on the ground that in that year 18th April fell in Holy Week, 'when the Parson and others would be much in

request for the duties which the season imposed on them,<sup>1</sup> or reject 1388 because 19th April then fell on a Sunday, and 'if Sunday travelling had been intended, something would have been said about the hearing of mass.'<sup>1</sup> With this caution, however, I am quite prepared to accept Professor Skeat's assurance that in 1387 'everything comes right,' since the pilgrims could assemble at the Tabard on Tuesday, 16th April, with four clear days before them, and the journey ending conveniently on a Saturday. Whether we should assign this year to that of Chaucer's own pilgrimage, or to that of his imaginary pilgrims, must remain undetermined. In any case we cannot be wrong in believing that in or about 1387 is the most probable date for the *Canterbury Tales* to have been begun. As to whence the idea of this particular framework for story-telling came to the poet, 'out of his own head' seems in every way the best answer. Certainly there is no shred of evidence to prove that he copied it from the very inferior scheme of Boccaccio's *Decamerone*.

The fame of Becket's shrine, the popularity of the pilgrimage to it, and the mediæval habit of turning a pilgrimage into a kind of religious holiday, are all matters of such common knowledge that they do not need illustrating here. Nor need we stop to prove the futility of the idea once current, that the pilgrims were in so great a hurry to bring their holiday to an end as to have accomplished the then well-nigh impossible feat of travelling fifty-six miles over heavy roads in a single day. In 1358 the queen-mother Isabella, on her own pilgrimage, left London 7th June, slept that night at Dartford, slept at Rochester on the 8th, and at Ospringe on the 9th, and reached Canterbury the next day. Two years later John of France slept at Dartford 1st July, dined there next day, slept at Rochester on the 2nd, dined at Sittingbourne and slept at Ospringe on the 3rd, and reached Canterbury 4th July. The records of other fourteenth century journeys confirm the presumption that Dartford, Rochester, and Ospringe (where some traces of the old Pilgrim's House still exists) were the regular sleeping-places on the road, and there can be no doubt that Chaucer intended his pilgrims to make the journey by these stages, and to take four days over it.

As to the exact route they followed some little uncertainty prevails, owing to the line of the modern road not coinciding everywhere with that of the old 'pilgrim's way,' but we have references to Deptford and Greenwich in the talk before the *Reeve's Tale* (A 3906, 3907), to Rochester in the Host's address to the Monk (B 3116), to Sittingbourne in the quarrel between the Friar and the Summoner (D 847), and to Boughton-under-Blee in the *Canon's Yeoman's Prologue* (G 556), and to the still mysterious Bobbe-up-and-down, 'under the Blee,' in the *Manciple's* (H 2). Rochester could not possibly be reached after Sittingbourne, and guided by this fact Henry Bradshaw and Dr. Furnivall were able to correct a mistake in arrangement, found even in the best MSS., by which the five Tales of the Shipman, Prioress, Chaucer, the Monk, and the Nun's Priest (all linked together by the talks on the road) were placed immediately before that of the Second Nun, instead of between that of the Man of Law (with which the tales of the second day were begun) and that of the Wife of Bath, in which Sittingbourne is mentioned. By a less necessary alteration the position of the Tales of the Doctor and Pardoner, which in the best manuscripts come before the Shipman's group, were brought back along with it, but placed after instead of before. There are no references to place or time in these two tales, so that the alteration matters little either way, and we now have the twenty-four extant tales and fragments in a reasonable and probable order. Some of these tales (as has been mentioned in the case of the Shipman's group) are linked together by references, backwards or forwards, in the talks on the road; in other cases there is no link of any kind between

<sup>1</sup> Skeat's *Chaucer*, vol. iii. p. 373.



one tale and the next, Chaucer having left the intermediate talk to be filled in when he had written more of the sixty (or a hundred and twenty!) stories which he at one time contemplated. In this and other editions, since the Chaucer Society issued its great Six-Text edition of the best manuscripts, each group of tales is now marked by a letter of the alphabet (A-I), the line-numeration being consecutive throughout the tales of the group.

The mention of the Six-Text edition, which has been the foundation of all subsequent Chaucer work, must lead to a brief statement as to the manuscripts followed, and the method of quoting them, in this text. The extant manuscripts of the *Tales* are very numerous, but there have here been used only the seven printed by the Chaucer Society, viz. the Ellesmere (E), Cambridge University MS. Gg 4. 27 (Cam.), the Hengwrt MS. 154 (Heng.), the Corpus Christi College, Oxford MS. (Corp.), the Petworth (Pet.), and the Lansdowne MS. 851 (Lansd.), being the Society's Six-Texts, and the very important Harleian MS. 7334 (H), which it subsequently printed. As regards the Harleian MS., there is an interesting footnote in Prothero's *Life of Henry Bradshaw* (p. 225) stating, on the authority of Mr. Aldis Wright, that one of Bradshaw's reasons for stopping short in his project of editing Chaucer 'was his inability to account for the wide divergences which distinguish the Harleian MS. of the *Canterbury Tales* from all the other manuscripts.' Thus the Harleian has much to answer for, and there can be no doubt, also, that its readings are often extraordinarily careless, and even absurd. On the other hand, it has a number of readings (cp. A 74, 257, 363, 415, 559, 727, 782, 791, 799, 803, *smyteth off myn heed* for *I wol yeve you myn heed* in l. 782 being a notable instance) as good or better than those found in any other manuscript, and many of them of a kind which it is very improbable that a copyist would have introduced in transcription. The most probable explanation seems to be that many of these readings represent Chaucer's own 'second thoughts,' introduced into a manuscript which passed through his hand after the *Tales* were already in circulation, and that the Harleian MS. is a careless copy of this manuscript.

At the extreme opposite pole to the Harleian stands the Ellesmere, a most carefully written MS., well spelt and observant of grammatical forms, with readings always straightforward and intelligible. Its discovery by the workers of the Chaucer Society was, perhaps, their greatest achievement.

Between the Ellesmere and the Harleian stand the other five manuscripts, of which the Cambridge and the Hengwrt are both very closely akin to the Ellesmere, while the Lansdowne, Corpus, and Petworth approach, more and more nearly, to the Harleian in their general characteristics, though they seldom agree with it in its most important variants. In all these five manuscripts the process of 'contamination,' *i.e.* the correction or completion of a manuscript of one group by one of another, has been at work, *e.g.* in the *Doctor's Tale* the Cambridge MS. deserts the Ellesmere and Hengwrt to join the Harleian and the other three in a number of readings, a few of which are possible, while many are absurd. But on the whole the relations of manuscript and manuscript are fairly constant. The text of the present edition is based on E, mere clerical errors avoided by the other MSS. being silently corrected, while variants of literary or metrical interest are recorded in the notes, or very sparingly introduced into the text. In recording variants E and H are regarded as mutually exclusive, so that if the reading in the note is assigned to H, that in the text is from E, and *vice versa*. To show further the amount of support accorded to any rejected reading of E or H, an index number is added to the letter. Thus a reading followed by the letter E denotes that the text follows the other six manuscripts, and the variation is supported by the Ellesmere only. E<sup>2</sup> shows that it is supported by the Ellesmere and one other,

almost certainly the Cambridge; E<sup>3</sup> that it is supported by Ellesmere and two others, almost certainly Cambridge and Hengwrt. The numbers 4-6 show the additional support of one, two, or three of the inferior manuscripts, Corpus, Petworth, and Lansdowne. Similarly, a variant followed by the letter H denotes that the text has the support of the Ellesmere and other five manuscripts. H<sup>2</sup> indicates the agreement of one other manuscript, probably the Petworth, with H; H<sup>3</sup>, H<sup>4</sup> the support of one or two more, almost certainly Corpus and Lansdowne; H<sup>5</sup> that these are again reinforced, probably by Hengwrt; H<sup>6</sup> that even the Cambridge deserts the Ellesmere. I do not claim for this system of abridged collation that it is entirely satisfactory, but it gives a rough view of the authorities on either side at a glance, and makes it possible to record variants which otherwise would have to be omitted.

As regards spelling, the modern usage as regards *i* and *j*, *u* and *v*, has been followed throughout. I have also to confess that a personal dislike to the forms *hise*, *evere*, and *nevere* has led me to alter them throughout to *his*, *ever*, and *never*, though Professor McCormick has since convinced me that Chaucer probably pronounced the two latter words as *ev'rè* and *nev'rè*. A few accidental misspellings have been altered here and there; otherwise the excellent spelling of the Ellesmere manuscript has been carefully followed.

For full information as to the sources from which Chaucer drew his stories, students interested in such questions will naturally refer to the *Originals and Analogues* printed by the Chaucer Society, or to the treatment of the subject by Professor Skeat in vol. iii. of the *Oxford Chaucer*, where all the information gleaned by the Chaucer Society, together with the results of the Editor's own researches, will be found set forth. In this edition, to save referring back, the briefest possible indication of the sources, where known, of each Tale has been prefixed to it by way of a preliminary note, and not much need here be added. As we have remarked before, inventiveness in the matter of plots was not a striking feature in Chaucer's equipment as a poet, but given the barest outline of a story he could develop it in his own inimitable manner, and his power in this respect seems to have steadily increased. Thus his indebtedness takes every form from the almost servile translation in the *Lyf of Seint Cecyle* to the re-telling in his own fashion of a tale like that of the *Canon's Yeoman* which he may have heard in the streets. For about one-third of the *Tales* no 'original' properly so called is known to exist, but from the far East or from France, Italy or Germany stories with similar plots have been unearthed which show that the idea was already in existence and only waited for Chaucer to develop it. This is the case with the tales of *The Miller*, *The Reeve*, *The Shipman*, *The Prioress*, *The Nun's Priest*, *The Pardoner*, *The Wife of Bath*, *The Friar*, *The Summoner and the Merchant*. The fable, or apologue or fabliau which can now be produced may be more or less close to the story as Chaucer tells it, but the literary setting is entirely his own, and in no case is there any need to suppose that he had a written original before him as he wrote. If he had once been told the story (as Tennyson, to take a modern instance, was told that of *Enoch Arden*) he would have obtained all the help he needed. In the case of the dull tale of the *Manciple* Chaucer doubtless followed the version of Ovid (*Metamorphoses* ii. 534-632), in that of the Doctor he professes to take Livy's account of the death of Virginia, but really borrowed from the *Roman de la Rose* (ll. 5613-5682). For the story of Dorigen, which he assigns to the *Franklin*, he distinctly mentions his obligation to a Breton 'lay' (F 709-715) and adduces as his authority for the length of Arviragus's absence the fact that 'the book seith thus' (l. 813). Unluckily no such 'lay' can now be found, though Mr. Clouston has discovered several Eastern analogues, from which not only Chaucer's

story, but the similar one (with quite different incidents) told by Boccaccio (*Decam.* x. 5), must be sprung. The loss of the original in this case is regrettable, as it would have been curious to have noted how much of a story so well told was borrowed. Unfortunately there can be no doubt that the one blot in the telling, the unmercifully long recital of the martyrs of chastity drawn from S. Jerome 'contra Jovinianum,' is of Chaucer's own introduction. The original of *The Squire's Tale* has in the same way defied detection, though its sources are plainly Eastern. Even the attempt to prove direct indebtedness to the *Travels of Marco Polo* is something less than convincing. From the fact that the tale is unfinished it seems not unreasonable to believe that Chaucer borrowed only the materials of this story and broke down for lack of a plot ready furnished to him. Of the poet's own *Tale of Sir Thopas*, so rudely interrupted by the Host, the 'original' is to be looked for in the numerous metrical romances which he here parodied so delightfully, and many of the passages which he selected to satirise have been duly pointed out by Dr. E. Kölbinger (*Englische Studien*, xi.).

There remain seven tales derived wholly or in part from literary originals still extant. Chaucer's prose story of Prudence and Melibee is derived from Jean de Meung's adaptation of the *Liber Consolationis et Consilii* of Albertano of Brescia, a jurist who flourished in the first half of the thirteenth century. The *Parson's Tale* is similarly derived, but with alterations and additions, from the *Somme des Vices et des Vertus* of Frère Lourens, who died in 1279, a recent German theory that it was tampered with, after Chaucer's death, or with his consent, by some orthodox priest, being quite unnecessary. I cannot, however, agree with Professor Skeat that this Tale 'was once an independent Treatise, which people could either "herkne or rede," and was probably written before 1380, at much the same time as the *Tale of Melibee*, which it somewhat resembles in style.' The words 'herkne or rede' occur, not in the Tale itself, but in *Envoy or Retraction*, and I see no reason to doubt that this was really the work of Chaucer's old age. When the *Melibee* was translated is nearly as difficult to imagine as why it was ever translated at all.

At the outset of this introduction to the *Canterbury Tales* the sources of the Tales of the Second Nun (*Lyf of Seint Cecyle*), Clerk and Monk have already been indicated. The Man of Lawes story of Constance is derived from the Anglo-French chronicle of Nicholas Trivet, an English Dominican of the first half of the fourteenth century; the Knight's Tale from Boccaccio's *Teseide*, and in the *Eversley Edition* of the *Tales* I have already pointed out with some minuteness how the four Tales of the Nun, Clerk, Lawyer, and Knight illustrate the increasing freedom with which Chaucer handled his material as he felt his mastery in his art increase. In the Second Nun's Tale he is at first servile, but at last begins to condense from sheer weariness and even adds a touch here and there. In the Clerk's, with a better original, he translates with much greater ease, and shows some healthy symptoms of rebellion at the severity alike of Grisilde's trials and her patience. In the story of Constance he is no longer a translator but an adapter, introducing as poetic ornament moral reflections from the *De Contemptu Mundi*, astrological lore from a variety of authors, and, best of all, some very fine speeches and descriptions out of his own head. Lastly in the Knight's Tale we find him improving on the *Teseide* at every turn. It is he who allows Palamon to see Emily first and so have the better claim to her; it is to him we owe the fierce quarrel in prison, the vision of Mercury that sends Arcyte back to Athens, the overheard soliloquy in the wood, and the outburst of anger when Theseus discovers the prison-breakers. When he wrote this story of *Palamon and Arcyte* Chaucer had no longer anything to learn from others, and

thenceforth he might take his plots where he could find them with as good a right as that of Shakespeare to such treasure trove.

## MINOR POEMS

(H. FRANK HEATH)

A text of Chaucer's Minor Poems which shall be even fairly satisfactory is no easy achievement. There is scarcely one of his shorter works which does not offer serious difficulties to the editor. In some cases the poem is found in only one MS. (e.g. *To Rosemounde*); in some, though there may be two or three authorities, they are copied one from the other (e.g. *A Complaynt to his Lady*); in others, though there may be many MSS. extant, they show so much mutual contamination that it is impossible to construct a complete genealogy, and sometimes very difficult to assign some of these authorities to any one group (e.g. the *Parlement of Foules*). In all cases the MSS. are much later in date than an editor would desire, and are far removed from the original or originals. A critical study leads one to feel sure that Chaucer was often responsible for more than one draft of the same poem, and took little or no pains to maintain verbal identity. There is also little doubt that he not infrequently made corrections in later copies of his works which may have fallen in his way. Neither of these practices lightens the labours of a conscientious editor. One example must suffice here. There can be no reasonable doubt that the group of MSS. which read 'lyke' (l. 5), 'amonge us' (l. 10), 'man' (l. 17), and 'wed' (l. 28) in the Balade *Lak of Stedfastnesse* must be traced to a different original from the group to which MS. Harl. 7333 belongs, and which I have followed in this edition.

It is impossible within the limits of this volume to give all the apparatus necessary for a full critical edition, but the text here printed is the result of a careful collation and critical investigation of all the MSS. printed in the Chaucer Society's publications, and of the MSS. in the British Museum, in all cases where it was advisable or necessary to consult them.

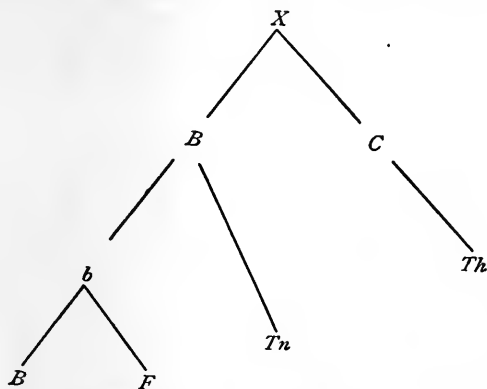
As regards the spelling here adopted, in addition to abandoning the mediæval use of *u* for *v*, and *i* (or *I*) for *j*, and the casual use of capitals in the MSS., I have adopted the modern spelling of the pronouns *thou*, *you*, *your*, *our*, etc. With these concessions to modern practice, the spelling of the text has been assimilated so far as possible to that of the Ellesmere MS. I have been rather more consistent, perhaps, than the fifteenth century scribe of the Ellesmere, particularly where grammatical forms were in question (e.g. in the distinction of the preterite and past participle, *haddē*, *had*; *broghte*, *broght*, etc.); but Chaucer must also have been more particular in these matters, and, be that as it may, the distinction certainly has the advantage of making the construction of the sentence and frequently the run of the verse clearer to the modern reader.

### THE DETHE OF THE DUCHESS

This poem was written soon after 1369, in which year John of Gaunt's first wife, Blanche of Lancaster, died at the age of twenty-nine, her husband being then of the same age. The poem is clearly the work of a young poet, for, though it strikes a

true note of pathos at the close, it is unduly long in approaching the climax, and it has no touch of the characteristic humour and irony which so constantly relieve Chaucer's later work, even when the theme is a romantic one. Nor is the form marked by any originality. It is a dream-poem of the typical discursive order, for which the *Roman de la Rose* was responsible throughout European literature of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, with the usual furniture and scenery of twittering birds, the hunt, and the May morning. It has indeed been claimed altogether for France by Taine, who heartily despised English literature prior to Shakespeare as 'mere servile imitation.' But the *Dethe of the Duchesse*, though it has recollections in it of both the *Roman de la Rose* and the *Remède de Fortune*, is not a translation or imitation of either. The incident of 'Seys' with which it opens is taken from the *Metamorphoses* of Ovid, in which the story of Alcione's appearance to his faithful wife Ceyx is told, and Machault (possibly to Chaucer's knowledge) imitated the same passage in his *Dit de la Fontaine Amoureuse*, but beyond this the matter of the English poem is original.

Of the three MSS. Fairfax 16 is certainly the best, and closely related to it the Bodley MS. My own independent investigation of the MSS. gave the same result as those of Koch<sup>1</sup> and Max Lange,<sup>2</sup> and I therefore reproduce the following genealogy with the more confidence:—



B = Bodley MS. 638 (Bodleian Library).

F = Fairfax MS. 16 " "

Tn. = Tanner MS. 346 " "

Th. = Thynne's Edition (1532).

The conservative treatment of the authorities in this edition will lead readers to the conclusion, I hope, that Chaucer allowed himself licences in the handling of the four-beat line at the beginning of his life which he refused afterwards in the *Hours of Fame*, and certainly would never have allowed in the five-beat line. In other words, they will, I trust, be willing to assume for Chaucer a development in technique similar to that of Shakespeare and some other poets. They will also, if they agree

<sup>1</sup> In *Anglia*, vol. iv. Auz. p. 95.

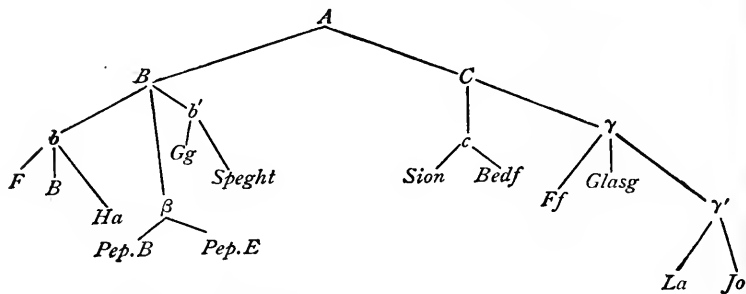
<sup>2</sup> In his *Untersuchungen über Chaucer's Boke of the Duchesse*, Halle, 1883.

with the present editor, resist the temptation of setting down these 'freely' constructed lines either to the poet's bad ear or (when all the MS. authorities agree) to the copyist's careless hand, but will look for an explanation in the survival of that rhythmic but non-syllabic system of verse which still lived on in England down to Chaucer's day, though much corrupted from its original purity. These native measures must have echoed in the young poet's ear when he first began to write in the foreign manner, and hence most of the so-called lame lines in the *Boke of the Duchesse*.

## THE A B C

About the same time as the *Boke of the Duchesse*, perhaps a little later,<sup>1</sup> Chaucer wrote this poetical prayer to the Virgin. It is based upon a similar *A B C* contained in Guillaume de Deguilleville's *Pèlerinage de la vie humaine*, a French Pilgrim's Progress of the fourteenth century.<sup>2</sup> Chaucer simplified the measure by increasing the number of rhymes from two to three, and reducing the length of the stanzas from twelve to eight; but the result is little more than an exercise. He would fain be a literal translator, but is forced by the exigences of the verse away from his model, only rising here and there, notably in the opening and the nineteenth strophes, above mechanical excellence.

There are thirteen MSS. and one printed edition (that of Speght 1602) available as authorities for this poem. I agree with Koch in the following classification:—



F = Fairfax 16 (Bodleian Library).

B = Bodley 638 (Oxford).

Ha. = Harleian 7578 (British Museum), incomplete.

Pep. B } = Pepys 2006, Magdalene College, Cambridge (two copies), both incomplete.  
 Pep. E }

Gg = Cambridge University Library, Gg 4. 27.

Sion = Sion College MS. (Shirley's).

Bedf. = Bedford MS. (Bedford Library).

Ff = MS. Ff 5. 30 in Cambridge University Library.

Glasg. = Glasgow, Hunterian Museum, Q 2. 25.

La. = Laud 740 (Bodleian Library).

John = St. John's College, Cambridge, G. 21.

Speght = Speght's Edition, 1602.

<sup>1</sup> Ten Brink places it as late as 1374.

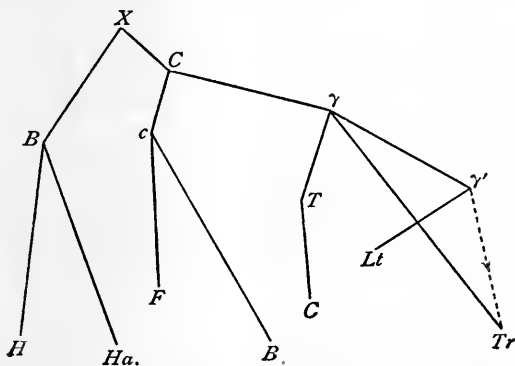
<sup>2</sup> It was commenced in 1330.

The thirteenth MS. Harl. 2257 cannot with certainty be assigned its place in the above scheme. It has general similarity with group B, but it is of little or no value. The best group is C, which is used as the basis of the text.

## THE COMPLEYNT UNTO PITE

This is a better poem than the preceding one, and the mark of sincerity and deep feeling is upon it, though the metaphor is carried too far here and there for clearness. It is usual to place this poem before 1369, and to make it Chaucer's first original work extant, but both the style and the verse lead me to agree with Ten Brink (whose critical edition of the poem should be a pattern for all editors) in assigning a later date than this somewhere in the two years subsequent to the writing of the *Dethe of the Duchesse*. Whatever the date, this poem is the earliest example of the famous Chaucer stanza, or 'rhyme royal,' as it was subsequently called. Professor Skeat has pointed out recollections of a phrase or two from the *Thebeis* (Book xi.), and Mr. Pollard suggests a parallel between the adversaries of Pity and the first part of the *Roman de la Rose*. But the poem, French in style as it is, is yet original, and is generally interpreted, together with a passage of similar feeling in the *Boke of the Duchesse* (l. 30 ff.), as referring to an incident of unrequited love in the poet's life.

There are nine extant MSS., eight of which (in agreement with Ten Brink and Koch) I would arrange in the following scheme:—



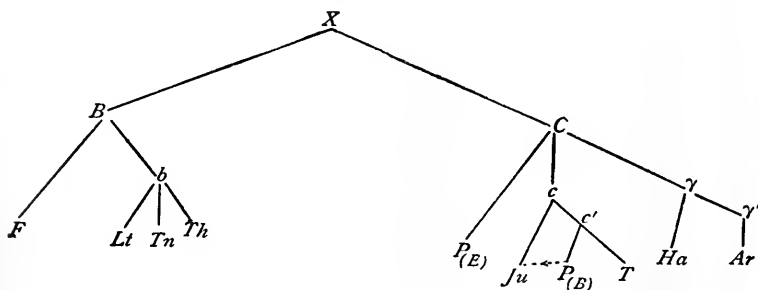
- T = Tanner MS. 346 (Bodleian Library).  
 F = Fairfax MS. 16 " "  
 B = Bodley MS. 638 " "  
 Ha. = Harleian 7578 (British Museum).  
 H = Harleian 78 " "  
 C = Cambridge University Library, Ff 1. 6.  
 Lt. = Longleat MS. 258 (Marquis of Bath).  
 Tr. = Trinity College, Cambridge, R 3. 19.

The dotted line is intended to show that there is evidence of contamination.

MS. Harleian 7578 clearly belongs to the same group as H, but is a much better authority, and more frequently agrees with the derivatives from C. In several cases it supports emendations made by Ten Brink without consulting it (*e.g.* ll. 15, 19, and 101). I am in some doubt whether H and Ha. should be traced from the same original as the other MSS., or whether we should not rather in this case as in others look on H and Ha. as derivatives from an earlier draft of the poem made by Chaucer himself. MS. Phillipps 9053 I have not yet collated. The best group of MSS. is that marked C in the diagram, and of these MS. F has been used as the basis for the text.

### THE COMPLEYNT OF MARS

This poem falls well within the second period of Chaucer's work, and was probably written after the poet's second mission to Italy in 1378-79, while the *A B C* and the *Compleynt unto Pite* came in all probability soon after the date of the first mission in 1372-73. The story is founded on one told in the *Metamorphoses* iv. 170-189 of the love of Mars for Venus and its discovery by Apollo. With this story Chaucer combines the popular astronomy of the day in accordance with which the planet Mars is in conjunction with the planet Venus in the sign of Taurus. Taurus is one of the two astrological houses of Venus, and into this the Sun (Phoebus Apollo) enters on April 12th each year. On the basis of two notes made by Shirley in the Trinity College MS. this astrological mythical story is also an allegory written 'at the comandement of the renowned and excellent Prynce my lord the Duc John of Lancastre,' and 'made by (*i.e.* about) my lady of York, daughter to the kyng of Spaygne and my lord huntingdoon, some tyme Duc of Excestre.' The 'lady of York' was John of Gaunt's sister-in-law, through his second wife Constance of Castile. 'My lord huntingdon' was John Holande, half-brother to Richard II., who married Elizabeth, daughter of Blaunche, first Duchess of Lancaster. There are eight extant MSS. and one edition (that of Julian Notary 1499-1502) available as authorities. Of these the Fairfax, Tanner, and Longleat MSS., which belong to one group, are the best on the whole. The remaining authorities are difficult to arrange with certainty, but the following scheme expresses my view of their general interconnection. There is some room for doubt as to whether groups B and C should be traced to a single original rather than two drafts made by the poet at different times.





- F = Fairfax MS. 16 (Bodleian Library).  
 Lt. = Longleat MS. 258 (Marquis of Bath).  
 Tn. = Tanner 346 (Bodleian Library).  
 P(E) = Pepys 2006 Hand E (Magdalene College, Cambridge).  
 P(B) = Pepys 2006 Hand B           "           "           "  
           T = Trinity College, Cambridge, R 3. 20.  
 Ha. = Harleian 7333 (British Museum).  
 Ar. = Arch. Selden B 24 (Bodleian Library).  
 Ju. = Julian Notary's Edition, 1499-1502.  
 Th. = William Thynne's Edition, London 1532.

The dotted line is intended to show that there is evidence of contamination.

The MSS. belonging to group B are certainly better on the whole than any single MS. in group C, but were a satisfactory example of this latter tradition available it would undoubtedly be the one to form the basis of a text. In ll. 1, 3, 4, 11, and many others the right reading is clearly furnished by one or more of this group, which has possibly been neglected because it has been seen to include such MSS. as the Harleian 7333 and Arch. Selden. These two authorities are of little or no independent value, more particularly the latter, which gives a text that has been purposely edited, yet they sometimes support good readings in MSS. of the B group in opposition to other MSS. of their own group, and such testimony is valuable. Examples are—l. 20, *to dure for to endure*; l. 75, *is for was*; l. 120, *this for the*, and *smoking for smoketh or smoked*; l. 143, *Venus weping for weping Venus*, etc. Had P(E) been complete, it would have been the best basis for this text; as it is, some approach to a satisfactory result has, it is hoped, been obtained by a combination of P(E) as far as it goes (viz. to l. 84) and P(B), with aid here and there from Ju. and T, and the adoption where called for of readings from the B group, such as e.g. l. 66, where the C group read *that thilke*, l. 80, where they read *he fil* (=fell), and some others, among them ll. 20, 75, 120, and 143 referred to above.

#### A COMPLEYNT TO HIS LADY

This interesting *pot pourri* of verse-forms is found in only two MSS. and one edition, that of Stowe 1561. The two MSS. are Harleian 78 (by Shirley), and MS. Phillipps 9053 at Cheltenham, which last I have not been able to consult except indirectly through the critical notes in Professor Skeat's six-volume edition of Chaucer. He there says that Ph. is copied from Harleian 78, and this seems to be the case. All three authorities tack this fragment on to the *Compleynt unto Pite*, which is, however, complete without it. The poem is clearly intended as a metrical experiment, or series of experiments, and should not be taken too seriously. The similarity of a phrase here and there to the *Anelida and Arcyte*, and of the opening of the third section with the *Parlement of Foules* (ll. 90, 91), which are both serious poems, may just as well point to this work preceding them as following them in date. Some time shortly after 1373-74 seems, therefore, still to be most probable.

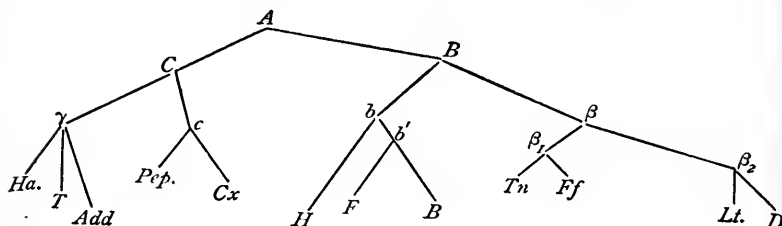
#### ANELIDA AND ARCYTE

This poem, like the preceding one, is chiefly interesting for the elaborate metrical experiments for which Chaucer made it the excuse. It opens with three

stanzas from the *Teseide*, which Chaucer recast later into heroic couplets for his *Knights Tale*. These are followed by four based partly on Statius, and these in turn by three more from the *Teseide*. It is possible that at least the first six stanzas and a half formed part of an earlier translation of the *Teseide*, now lost, and that the poet refers to this earlier work in the Prologue to the *Legende of Good Women* when he says 'he made . . . al the love of Palamon and Arcyte of Thebes, thogh the story is knowen lyte.' At l. 47 commences the story of 'quene Anelida and fals Arcite,' and this continues down to l. 210. What the source of this tale may be we do not know. At l. 211 begins the elaborate 'Compleynt of feire Anelida upon fals Arcite,' a more ambitious poem of the same kind as the *Compleynt to his Lady*. The fourteen stanzas of which it consists are arranged in a proem or introduction, two movements of six stanzas each, and a conclusion. With the exception of the last two stanzas in each of the movements of six, the stanzas are of nine decasyllabic lines rhyming *aab, aab, bab*. The fifth stanzas in the two movements or Strophes of six are divided into two parts, each of eight lines of octosyllabics, except the fourth and eighth which are decasyllabic. In the first part the rhymes run *aaab, aaab*, in the second the same rhymes are used in the reverse order *bbba, bbba*. The sixth stanza in each of the movements is of nine decasyllabics, rhymed as in the main body of the poem, but with the additional ornament of an internal rhyme on the fourth and eighth syllable of each line.

At the conclusion of the *Compleynt* the story is resumed, but breaks off after a single stanza which is only found in five of the eleven MSS. Chaucer doubtless intended to reintroduce Theseus, with whom the poem opens, as the avenger of Anelida.

There are eleven MSS. and one edition (Caxton's) of this poem, which I agree with Koch in arranging as follows:—



Ha. = Harleian 7333 (British Museum).

T = Trinity College, Cambridge, R 3. 20.

Add. = Shirley's Additional 16, 165 (British Museum).

Pep. = Pepys 2006 (Magdalene College, Cambridge).

H = Harleian 372 (British Museum).

F = Fairfax 16 (Bodleian Library).

B = Bodley 638 " "

Tn. = Tanner 346 " "

Ff = MS. Ff 5. 30 (Cambridge University Library).

Lt. = Longleat MS. 258 (Marquis of Bath).

D = Digby 181 (Bodleian Library).

Cx. = Caxton's Edition, c. 1477-78.

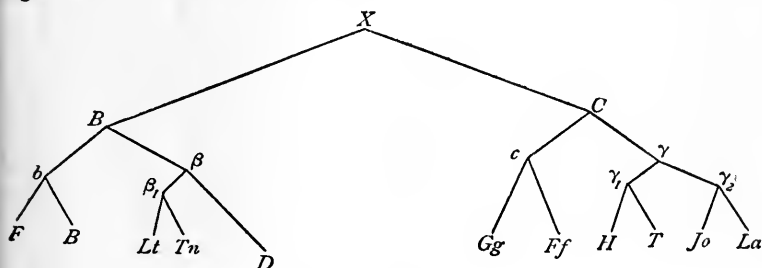
The best group of MSS. is C, and this is the one used as the basis of the text.

## THE PARLEMENT OF FOULES

This charming fancy is the only poem of any length written during the years that Chaucer was engaged upon his great masterpiece, the *Troilus and Cresseida*. As Dr. Koch has shown, the poet must have been commissioned in the summer of 1382 to celebrate the wooing and winning of Anne of Bohemia by Richard II. The marriage had taken place on January 14th of that year, after the successful mission of the English ambassadors to Bohemia in the previous January. Anne is represented in the poem by the formel (*i.e.* female) eagle and Richard by the royal eagle, while the two terrels (*i.e.* males), 'of lower kind,' who plead for her love, are the Prince of Bavaria and the Margrave of Misnia, to each of whom Anne had been in turn contracted.

The material supplied him was too slight in itself for a poem of sufficient length and dignity, so the poet elaborated and ornamented his theme by a summary of Cicero's *Somnium Scipionis*, a description of the Garden of Love taken from the *Teseide* of Boccaccio and a description of Nature and her birds based upon a passage in the *Planctus Naturæ* of Alain de l'Isle, though the Cistercian bishop had represented them in mediæval manner as embroidered on the garment of the Goddess, not, as Chaucer does, full of life and wit. His use of other men's work is seen to be much freer than it once was, and the poem is in all real senses an original one.

There are fourteen MSS. and one printed edition (Caxton's) which serve as authority for this poem, but some of them are so corrupt and show so much evidence of contamination that it is very difficult to discover their relation to the rest. These doubtful MSS. are printed below the remainder, which I agree with Koch in arranging as follows:—



- F = Fairfax 16 (Bodleian Library).  
 B = Bodley 638 " "  
 Lt. = Longleat MS. 258 (Marquis of Bath).  
 Tn. = Tanner 346 (Bodleian Library).  
 D = Digby 181 " "  
 Gg = Cambridge University MS. Gg 4. 27.  
 Ff = Cambridge University MS. Ff 1. 6.  
 H = Shirley's Harleian MS. 7333 (British Museum).  
 T = Trinity College, Cambridge, MS. R 3. 20.  
 Jo. = St. John's College, Oxford, MS. Ivii.  
 La. = Laud MS. 416 (Bodleian Library).

Seld. = Archibald Selden B 24.

Hh = Cambridge University MS. Hh 4. 12.

P = Pepys 2006 (Magdalene College, Cambridge).

Cx. = Caxton's Edition (1477-78).

The best group of MS. is C, and this is the one used as the basis of the text.

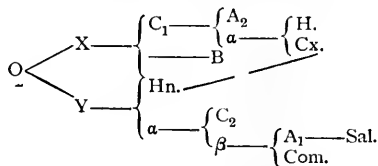
## BOECE

(MARK H. LIDDELL)

The *Consolation of Philosophy* was one of the most popular books of the fourteenth century, and it is not to be wondered that Chaucer should have undertaken a translation of it. How great an interest this classic had over him can be seen from the numerous quotations from it he makes all through his work. His Latin scholarship, however, was by no means adequate to the task, a deficiency which he probably felt himself, for he makes very free use of an existing French version now commonly ascribed to Jehan de Meung. He used also the paraphrase which was common in early texts of the *Consolation*, as well as the commentary ascribed by tradition to Thomas Aquinas, and printed in fifteenth century editions of Boethius.

Despite these props and stays, however, Chaucer makes blunders which cannot be charged to the incompetent scholarship of the time, but must be laid directly to his own insufficient knowledge of Latin idiom, a fault doubtless due to the fact that the *Boece* is one of the earliest of his longer works.

This edition contains a critical text made from all the known MSS. in which the translation has been preserved to us (including two newly-discovered ones). It follows MS. Ii i. 38 (C<sub>1</sub>) Cambridge University Library, with such departures as are justified by critical examination of the other known MSS. These are:—MS. Additional 16,165 (A<sub>2</sub>); MS. Harleian 2421 (H); MS. Bodley 797 (B); MS. Hengwrt 393 (Hn), at Peniarth; MS. Ii 3. 21 (C<sub>2</sub>) of the Cambridge University Library; MS. Additional 10,340 (A<sub>1</sub>); MS. Salisbury 13 (Sal.), in Salisbury Cathedral; MS. Auct. 3. 5 (Com.), in the Bodleian Library. Caxton's edition, made from a with frequent readings from Hn., is denoted by Cx.; Jehan de Meung's French translation is quoted from MS. Fr. 1079 (Fr.) unless otherwise noted. The text is based upon the following arrangement of the MSS., each of which, except Sal., which is a copy of A<sub>1</sub>, has been collated all through the work.



The orthography is that of C<sub>1</sub>, except where the few northern forms peculiar to the MS. have been changed to Chaucer's spelling. Several nonsensical sentences are set right for the first time by the critical method followed, but there still remain some passages which evidently got wrong in the original; it is very fortunate for us that the French version makes almost all of these clear.

## TROILUS AND CRISEYDE

(W. S. McCORMICK)

*Troilus and Criseyde* is based upon Boccaccio's *Il Filostrato*, from which nearly a third is translated or adapted. The characters of the hero and heroine are, however, considerably modified, and Pandarus, who is transformed from the cousin to the uncle of Cressida, is practically Chaucer's own creation. For the development of the story in Book v., Chaucer evidently consulted the *Roman de Troie* of Benoît de Sainte-More, possibly also the *Historia Troiana* of Guido delle Colonne; and for the incidents in Cassandra's exposition of Troilus' dream Chaucer is indebted to Ovid and Statius.

Chaucer's further borrowings are few. Petrarch's eighty-eighth sonnet forms Troilus' love-song in Book i. 400-420. There are three considerable passages from Boethius' *De Consolatione Philosophiæ*, which Chaucer was probably translating about the time of the composition of *Troilus*. The first (iii. 813-833) on 'fals felicité' is put into the mouth of Cressida; in the second (iii. 1744-1768) Boethius' celebration of divine love serves Troilus for another love-song; while the third (iv. 953-1085), Troilus' dreary moralising in the temple, is a fairly close rendering of Boethius' chapter on Free Will and Predestination. In Book v. two passages (ll. 1-14, and ll. 1807-1837) are taken from Boccaccio's *Teseide*, and the first three lines of the last stanza from Dante's *Paradiso*.

It is worth remarking that three of the above passages from *Boethius* and the *Teseide*, viz. iii. 1744-1768, iv. 953-1085, v. 1807-1827, are omitted in some MSS.

The relations of the MSS. of *Troilus and Criseyde* to each other are so complicated and variable, that a detailed statement is here impossible. In many cases portions of the same manuscript have been taken from different sources; and few manuscripts are without traces of contamination. They fall, however, for the most part, into three families (designated here  $\alpha$ ,  $\beta$ , and  $\gamma$ ), which seem to represent three distinct editions or revisions; although in a number of passages, more especially in Book v., the  $\alpha$  and  $\beta$  manuscripts frequently alter their relations to each other, and throughout the poem the variations among the  $\beta$  manuscripts are considerable. It appears probable, from a comparison of the readings of the three types with the originals from which Chaucer was translating, that in a type we have the first draft of the poem, copied in parts during its composition; that manuscripts of the  $\beta$  type give more than one partial revision by Chaucer of copies of his work before or after its completion; and that the  $\gamma$  type represents a later copy, either carelessly corrected by the author, or collated by some hand after Chaucer's death.

The following list of authorities may serve to indicate in a general way the relations of the MSS., or portions of MSS., to each type, at least for the first four Books.

## MANUSCRIPTS

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| { | I. P—MS. Phillipps 8252.  |
|   | $\alpha$ throughout.  |
|   | II. H <sub>2</sub> —MS. Harl. 3943.   |
|   | $\alpha$ (close to P) till iv. 196; $\beta$ (close to H <sub>1</sub> ) later.               |
| { | III. H <sub>4</sub> —MS. Harl. 2392.  |
|   | $\alpha$ (with $\beta$ readings) till iii. 231 (?); $\beta$ (with $\alpha$ readings) later. |

- { IV. G—MS. Gg 4. 27, Cambridge (first and last leaves of all the Books cut out).  
      $\beta$  till II. III. ;  $\alpha$  later.  
 { V. H<sub>3</sub>—MS. Harl. 4912—(ends at IV. 686).  
      $\beta$  till II. III. ;  $\alpha$  later. Throughout close to G.  
 VI. J—MS. LI. St. John's College, Cambridge.  
      $\beta$  (with  $\alpha$  readings) till IV. 400 (?);  $\alpha$  later.  
 VII. R—MS. Rawlinson Poet 163. Bodleian.  
      $\beta$  throughout ; omits Prologues to Books II. III. and IV.  
 VIII. H<sub>3</sub>—MS. Harl. 1239.  
      $\beta$  till II. 1033 ;  $\gamma$  from II. 1034 till III. 231 ; later, collated from various  
     sources, but keeping close to  $\alpha$  through Book IV.  
 IX. S—MS. Arch. Selden B 24. Bodleian.  
     collated throughout from  $\gamma$  and  $\beta$ , and following many of the errors of  $\gamma$   
     till II. 516.  
 { X. A—MS. Addit. 12,044, British Museum. (Ends at V. 1820.)  
      $\gamma$  throughout (with occasional  $\alpha$  or  $\beta$  reading).  
 { XI. D—MS. v. ii. 13. Durham.  
     close to A.  
 { XII. S<sub>2</sub>—MS. Arch. Selden *supra* 56. Bodleian.  
      $\gamma$  throughout (with occasional  $\alpha$  or  $\beta$  reading).  
 { XIII. Dg—MS. Digby 181. Bodleian. (Ends at III. 532.)  
     close to S<sub>2</sub>.  
 { XIV. Cp.—MS. 61 Corpus Christi College, Cambridge.  
      $\gamma$  throughout.  
 { XV. H<sub>1</sub>—MS. Harl. 2280.  
     close to Cp.  
 { XVI. Cl.—MS. Campsall.  
     close to Cp. and H<sub>1</sub>.

[To these may be added two MS. fragments printed in *Odd Texts of Chaucer's Minor Poems* (Chaucer Society, 1880); and one MS. fragment of Book v. 1443-1498 in Cambridge University Library.]

## EDITIONS

- XVII. Cx.—Caxton's Edition (1484).  
      $\beta$  throughout (with  $\gamma$  readings).  
 XVIII. Th.—Thynne's Edition (1532).  
      $\gamma$  throughout (with Cx. and  $\alpha$  readings, more especially in Books I. and II.)

[The Editions of Wynkyn de Worde (1517) and of Pynson (1526) are reprints of Caxton's text. In Sir Francis Kinaston's Latin Translation of the first two Books (1635), the English text is a reprint of Thynne's.]

MSS. J, Cp., H<sub>1</sub>, and Cl. are the most accurate as to grammatical forms ; but none can be depended upon.

The present text is based upon J (MS. LI. St. John's College), and has been corrected throughout from readings of  $\alpha$  and  $\beta$  types alone. But all the authorities have been examined, and all the important variations of  $\gamma$  type are given. In order to curtail the critical notes as much as possible, the mistakes occurring in J *alone* are corrected, and the spelling (including the insertion or deletion of final *e*) is normalised, in most cases, without special mention ; also, where possible,  $\alpha$ ,  $\beta$ , and  $\gamma$  have been employed to represent the MSS., or the majority of the MSS., belonging to these types respectively.

In printing the text for this edition, some assistance has been offered to the general reader by the indication of stressed syllables, by the use of the dotted *è* to

denote a separate syllable in the middle of the line, and by marking elision in such words as *n'as*, *n'il*, *n'olde*, *n'ot*, *th'ilke*, *th'effect*, *m'asterte*, *this'* (for *this is*), etc. The modern use of *i* and *j*, and of *u* and *v*, has been adopted, as well as the modern spelling of *thou*, *you*, *our*, etc. In *her* (= *her*), and *hir* (= *their*), *o* (interjection), and *oo* (= *one*), *on* and *oon* (= *one*), *of* and *off*, *the*, *thee*, and *thé* (= *thrive*), the spelling has been differentiated to indicate the meaning; and in French words ending in *é*, the accent has been retained. The final *e* of *evere*, *nevere*, *levere*, etc., has been retained, as Chaucer's pronunciation was evidently *ev'rè*, *nev'rè*, *lev'rè*, etc.

### CHAUCER'S WORDS UNTO ADAM HIS OWNE SCRIVEYN

This keen *jeu d'esprit* is only found in one manuscript (Trin. Coll. Camb. MS. R 3. 20) and in Shirley's edition of 1561. There can be no doubt as to its authenticity. Its probable date is 1385. (H. F. H.)

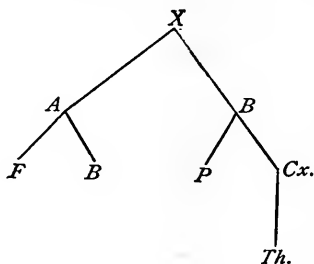
## THE HOUS OF FAME

(H. FRANK HEATH)

With the *Hous of Fame* we leave the period of the poet's finished work. From this time on his plans were far more ambitious, but they were doomed to remain unfinished. The *Hous of Fame*, the *Legende of Good Women*, and, greatest of all, the *Canterbury Tales*, were none of them completed. At the close of the *Troilus* Chaucer had uttered the hope that God would 'Sende (him) might to make in som comedie,' and most critics are agreed that the *Hous of Fame* was meant to be the fulfilment of this intention. There is some reason for thinking, I believe, that the *Hous of Fame* had been commenced some years before 1383, and then laid aside. When the *Troilus* was complete, this unfinished 'comedy' came to Chaucer's mind, and hence the prayer. It is difficult, on any other assumption, to understand the use of the short couplet, an unsatisfactory measure at best, particularly for such a theme as the story of Æneas, which takes up the major part of the first book. Having finished the second book—in which the story advances rapidly enough, and with a light humorous touch throughout—the work was laid aside. When it was again taken in hand on the completion of the *Troilus* a new tone is noticeable, and a new invocation to Apollo, 'god of science and of light,' marks the fresh start. This is followed by an apology for the 'light and lewd' verse. It is not 'craft' but 'sentence' which is his aim, and throughout the humour is no longer playful but deeply ironical, for the poet has learnt to see his art and life in the light of common day. The close of the fragment describing the hall of Fame and the petitioners to the goddess is the purest piece of satire Chaucer ever wrote. But all this destroyed the original playful plan and rendered some striking close necessary. Failing this, no wonder the poet's golden eagle, having borne him up to the realm of Fame, finds it hard, as has been remarked, to get down again. No wonder 'the workmanship of the separate parts of the poem is much more masterly,' as the same critic adds, 'than the general plan.' The fragment we possess of the third book is longer than the first two put together. Chaucer had put new wine into an old

bottle.<sup>1</sup> The care bestowed on the poem is evident from the number of sources from which the poet drew. The mediæval machinery of a dream with a description of the temple of Venus offers the opportunity for giving an outline of the story of the *Æneid*. Then follows the appearance of the eagle and the journey to the house of Fame, the description of which is taken from the *Metamorphoses* xii. 33-63. Professor Ten Brink was the first to point out that in general plan and in a number of individual passages the influence of the *Divina Commedia* can be traced. Both poems are visions, in both there is a heaven-sent guide who may but accompany the poet in parts of his journey; both are divided into three books. Very probably the importance of Vergil in Dante's poem suggested the story of the *Æneid*. Certainly the idea of the golden eagle is taken from him (*Purgat.* ix.). The apostrophe to 'Thought,' at the opening of the second book, was suggested by the *Inferno* (ii. 7-9), the invocation in the third book by that at the beginning of the *Paradiso* (i. 13-27). The philosophy, however, is not Dante's, but rather—as the poet himself suggests—that of Boethius (ii. 464 ff.); yet the poem as a whole is Chaucer's, and none but his.

The *Hous of Fame* was not likely to be popular, and there are unfortunately only three MSS. and two editions to serve as authorities. I arrange them as follows:—



F = Fairfax 16 (Bodleian Library).

B = Bodley 638                   "                   "

P = Pepys 2006 (Magdalene College, Cambridge), incomplete.

Cx. = Caxton's Edition (1477-78).

Th. = W. Thynne's Edition (1532).

The better group is B, and MS. P has been used as the basis of the text so far as it is available. From that point on Cx. and Th. were used with the aid of F and B. Th., it should be remarked, is not merely a reprint of Cx., for Thynne certainly had access to and made use of other authorities.

<sup>1</sup> Some support appears to be lent to this theory by the Fairfax MS., which commences the third book on f. 169, after a wide space, with a large illuminated capital, similar to that used at the opening of the poem; whilst the second book, which commences on f. 161, runs straight on after the close of the first without any space, and with a capital, which, though similar in design to that used for the other two books, is not quite so large.



## THE LEGENDE OF GOOD WOMEN

(ALFRED W. POLLARD)

*The Legende of Good Women*, as Chaucer planned it, was intended to consist of a Prologue, the stories of nineteen women who have been true to love, and lastly, the legend of the crown of womanhood, Queen Alceste, who gave up her own life to save her husband's. Such a series of poems had plainly been for some time in Chaucer's mind. The goodness of Alceste is the subject of two stanzas in the *Troilus*, and in the *Hous of Fame* (Bk. i. ll. 388-426), after telling the story of Dido out of Virgil's *Aeneid*, he gives quite a list of other faithful women, to whom, doubtless, he meant to apply the phrase he uses of Dido, that if it were not too long to endite he would have liked to write her love in full. Chaucer was certainly occupied with the *Hous of Fame* in 1383-1384, and the *Legende*—in which it is mentioned first in the poet's list of his own writings—must have immediately succeeded it. We know that on 17th February 1385 he obtained permission to exercise his Comptroller-ship by deputy, and it has been conjectured that the intention he expresses of sending this new poem to the Queen (ll. 496, 497), and the probability that she was meant to be identified with the good Alceste, are marks of gratitude for this particular favour, which may have been obtained through her intervention. Lydgate, in the Prologue to his *Fall of Princes*, even says that the *Legende* was written 'at the request of the quene,' but if so it would surely have been duly completed. Everything, however, points to 1385 as the year of its composition.

Of the nineteen (or twenty) legends planned, only nine were written. These celebrate (1) Cleopatra, who is represented (not quite in accordance, as Chaucer imagines, with 'storial sooth') as a martyr to her love for Antony; (2) Thisbe, who refused to survive her lover Pyramus (see Bottom's play in the *Midsummer Night's Dream*; (3) Dido; (4) the two victims of Jason's treachery, Hypsipyle and Medea; (5) Lucretia; (6) Ariadne; (7) Philomela, the victim of Tereus; (8) Phyllis, who slew herself for love of Demophon; (9) Hypermnestra, who accepted death at her father's hands rather than treacherously kill her husband. By the aid of some hints in the Prologue, and of a curious mention of these 'seintes legendes of Cupide' in the talk which precedes the Man of Law's story in the *Canterbury Tales*, it is possible to make a fair guess as to the names of the other ten women, in addition to Alceste, whose praises Chaucer was too tired to sing. They belong to the same class of heroines as the nine he wrote of, and we need not trouble about them here. For the nine legends Chaucer had recourse chiefly to the *Metamorphoses* and *Heroides* of Ovid, but he used also two Latin works by Boccaccio, viz. his *De Claris Mulieribus* and *De Genealogia Deorum*, while the story of Dido is taken mainly from Virgil, and that of Hypsipyle and Medea from the *Historia Trojana* of Guido delle Colonne. The only other point that need be mentioned is that the Prologue (much the most interesting part of the poem) exists in two different versions. The one which appears to be the earlier has 545 lines, of which 90—including one long passage on love tales, and a reference to Chaucer's own library of 'sixty bookes olde and newe' all full of stories—do not reappear in the revised text. In this many lines are altered, the position of others transposed, and the 90 omitted lines replaced by 124 new ones, bringing the number in the second version to 579. Some of the alterations seem intended to make the poem more

acceptable to the Queen, the rest are poetical improvements which may easily be studied in the parallel columns in which they are printed in this edition.

Nine MSS., besides Thynne's Edition (Th.), have been collated, as printed by the Chaucer Society, for the text of this poem, viz. Gg 4. 27, Cambridge (quoted as Gg); Fairfax (F); Tanner (Tan.); R 3. 19, Trinity College, Cambridge (Trin.); Arch. Seld. B 24, Bodleian Library (Arch. Seld.); Bodley MS. 638 (B); British Museum Additional MS. 9832 (Add.), and 12,524 (Add.<sub>2</sub>); and Pepys MS. 2006 (Pepys).

Of these MSS. F and B must be derived immediately from the same original, and Tan., which shares most of their glaring faults, from the original of that. The text of Thynne's edition belongs to the same group, but Thynne must have collated it with other MSS., as he has supplied lines and words which F, B, and Tan. omit. In my notes F<sup>2</sup> stands for F and B; F<sup>3</sup> for F, B, and Tan.; F<sup>4</sup> for F, B, Tan., and Thynne.

The leading MS. in a second group is Trin., with which must be reckoned Add., which, however, stops at l. 1986. These two MSS. are almost as nearly identical as F and B, and contain a number of good readings. The other Museum fragment Add.<sub>2</sub>, which only begins at l. 1640, belongs to the same group, as also does Arch. Seld. The latter, however, is a dangerous MS. to use, as its scribe, who may have worked from the same original used for Trin. and Add., has plainly introduced many emendations of his own to smooth away difficulties of sense or metre. I have occasionally denoted the agreement of Trin. and Add. by Trin.<sup>2</sup>; of Trin. Add. and Arch. Seld. by Trin.<sup>3</sup>; and of Trin. Add. Arch. Seld. and Add.<sub>2</sub> by Trin.<sup>4</sup>

The Cambridge MS. Gg stands by itself, in virtue of its possession of the first draft of the Prologue. Its readings are throughout of great importance, but its spelling is bad, and it lacks ll. 1836-1907. The Pepys fragment, which stops at l. 1367, though it has the second draft of the Prologue, is linked to Gg by possessing ll. 960, 961, which the other MSS. omit; but it sometimes agrees with the Trin. group against Gg. Its independent readings (with the possible exception of *yiftes* in l. 1126) are of no value.

In making my text I am sorry now that I did not take the Trinity MS. as my starting-point, but I for a long time suspected it of being overmuch edited. Thus the completeness and comparatively good spelling of Fairfax gave it the preference, but in my final revision I have systematically substituted the readings of the Trinity group, or of Gg, for those of the Fairfax where there was any possibility of doubt. In the matter of spelling I have cleared away a good many of the double vowels (especially *oo*) which are the chief disfigurement of F, and have removed a few eccentricities, though with a very sparing hand.

## LATER MINOR POEMS

(H. FRANK HEATH)

### TO ROSEMOUNDE

To the *Troilus* period belongs this playful ballade, which, like the preceding poem, is only found in one MS. (Rawl. Poet. 163, leaf 114) in the Bodleian Library, where it was discovered some years since by Dr. Furnivall, and afterwards rediscovered and first published by Professor Skeat. The metaphor with which the third stanza opens, and the ironical humour of its combination with the story of Isolde, unmistakably declare the authorship.

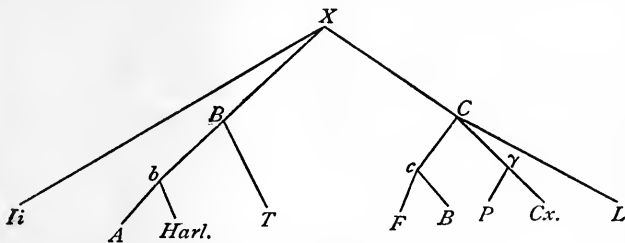
## THE FORMER AGE

This pleasant rhapsody upon the good old times is based upon Boethius' *De Consolatione Philosophiæ* (ii. met. v.), with echoes here and there from the *Roman de la Rose*. It is only found in two MSS., both in the University Library at Cambridge. Their press marks are Ii 3. 21 and Hh 4. 12. The former is the better of the two, and has been used as the basis of the text. This and the next four poems cannot be exactly dated. They were written after 1382, and probably before 1390.

## FORTUNE

*Balades de visage sans peinture*, as this poem is called in the MSS., are a series of ballades, or rather a triple ballade, with a single envoy of seven, and possibly only six lines, in praise of the friend of the 'unpainted face,' who is faithful in adversity. It was possibly written after Chaucer's loss of office in 1386.

There are eight MSS. and one edition of this poem, which I arrange as follows:—



Ii = Cambridge University Library MS. Ii 3. 21.

A = Shirley's Ashmole MS. 59 (Bodleian Library).

Harl. = Harleian MS. 2251 (British Museum).

T = Shirley's Trinity College, Cambridge, MS. R 3. 20 (sheet 7 lacking).

F = Fairfax MS. 16 (Bodleian Library).

B = Bodley 638 (Bodleian Library).

P = Pepys 2006 (Magdalene College, Cambridge).

L = Lansdowne MS. 699 (British Museum).

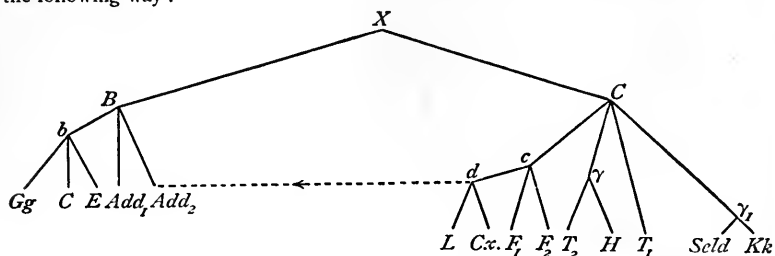
Cx. = Caxton's Edition (1477-78).

Ii is decidedly the best authority, and this has been made the basis of the text.

## TRUTH

This ballade and the next, called *Gentillesse*, show Chaucer in his gravest mood, and reveal the finely-tempered spirit which underlay his ironical and sometimes cynical humour. Both poems, like the *Lak of Stedfastnesse*, owe their suggestion, no doubt, to Boethius, but *Truth* (which is the finest) less so than the others, while they all strike an intensely personal note.

There are thirteen MSS. and one printed edition of *Truth*, which I arrange in the following way:—



The dotted line is intended to show that there is evidence of contamination.

Gg = Cambridge University Library Gg 4. 27.

C = Cotton MS. Cleopatra D vii. (British Museum).

E = Ellesmere MS.

Add.<sup>1</sup> = Additional MS. 10,340 (British Museum).

Add.<sup>2</sup> = Additional MS. 22,139 " "

L = Lansdowne MS. 699 " "

F<sub>1</sub> = Fairfax MS. 16 (Bodleian Library).

F<sub>2</sub> = Fairfax MS. 16 (Bodleian Library), second copy of the poem.

T<sub>1</sub> = Shirley's Trinity College, Cambridge, MS. R 3. 20.

T<sub>2</sub> = Shirley's Trinity College, Cambridge, MS. R 3. 20, second copy of the poem.

H = Shirley's Harleian MS. 7333 (British Museum).

Seld. = Arch. Selden B 24 (Bodleian Library).

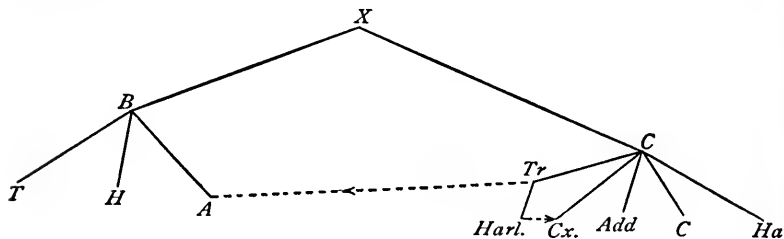
Kk = Cambridge University Library Kk 1. 5.

Cx. = Caxton's Edition (1477-78).

Group B is the better of the two main groups into which the authorities fall, and of this group sub-group *b* is the better. I have used Gg as the basis of the text.

### GENTILESE

This fine ballade on the qualities that make a gentleman reminds one of the speech in which the Wife of Bath discourses upon 'gentillesse' (*Wife of Bath's Tale*, D 1109-1176). There are eight MSS. and one printed edition of this poem, which I arrange as follows:—

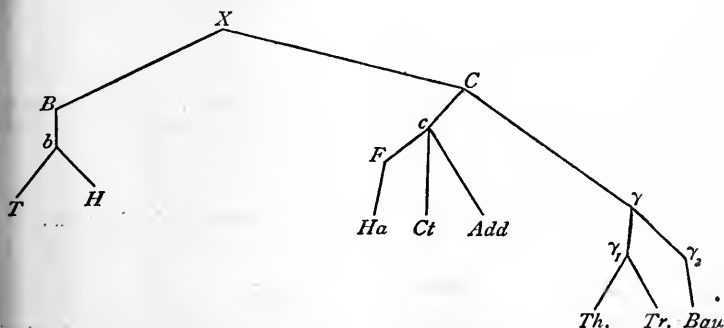


- T=Shirley's Trinity College, Cambridge, MS. R 3. 20.  
 H=Shirley's Harleian MS. 7333 (British Museum).  
 A=Shirley's Ashmole MS. 59 (Oxford).  
 Tr.=Trinity College, Cambridge, MS. R 14. 51.  
 Harl.=Harleian MS. 2251 (British Museum).  
 Add.=Additional MS. 22,139 (British Museum).  
 C=Cotton MS. Cleopatra D vii. (British Museum).  
 Ha.=Harleian MS. 2257 (British Museum).  
 Cx.=Caxton's Edition (1477-78).

The dotted lines are intended to show that there is evidence of contamination.  
 Group C is the better of the two main groups, and has been used as the basis of the text.

## LAK OF STEDFASTNESSE

This ballade, which is chiefly notable for its envoy to King Richard, Shirley and others have placed between 1393 and 1399. But it is difficult to account for Chaucer's sudden accession of reformatory zeal towards the man who could alone fill his quickly-emptying purse. The poet, if we except this poem, had none of Langland's spirit, and was always of the Court party. Mr. Pollard has suggested, and with great show of reason, that this address to the King and reference to the instability of the times probably dates from the time when the young Richard was taking the government into his own hands, and throwing over the tutelage of his guardian uncles with the support of all his people's hopes. This would place the composition in or about 1389, and when read with this in mind the whole poem gains an added force. There are eight MSS. and one printed edition of this poem, which I agree with Koch in arranging as follows:—



- T=Shirley's Trinity College, Cambridge, MS. R 3. 20.  
 H=Shirley's Harleian MS. 7333 (British Museum).  
 F=Fairfax 16 (Bodleian Library).  
 Ha.=Harleian MS. 7578 (British Museum).  
 Ct.=Cotton MS. Cleopatra D vii. (British Museum).  
 Add.=Additional MS. 22,139 (British Museum).  
 Tr.=Trinity College, Cambridge, R 14. 51.

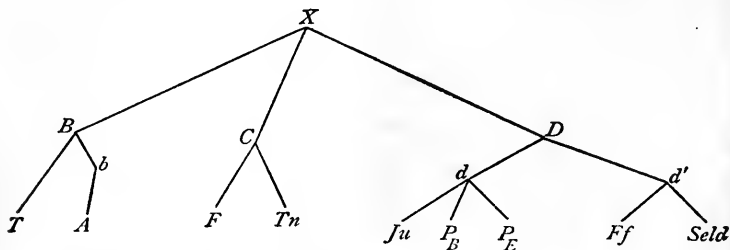
Ban. = Bannatyne MS. 1568 (Hunterian Museum, Glasgow).

Th. = Thynne's Edition (1532).

Group B is the better of the two main groups of authorities, and MS. H has been used as the basis of the text (cp. *supra*, p. xxxii).

### THE COMPLEYNT OF VENUS

These three ballades, to which Shirley gave the above title, are translations, more or less free, from the famous Savoyard poet, Sir Otes de Granson,<sup>1</sup> made probably to please Isabella, Duchess of York, the doubtful heroine of the *Compleynt of Mars*. The envoy, which is the best part of the poem, is wholly original. The date is hard to assign, but it is probably somewhere near 1393. There are eight MSS. and one printed edition of this poem, which I arrange as follows:—



T = Shirley's Trinity College, Cambridge, R 3. 20.

A = Shirley's Ashmole 59 (Oxford).

F = Fairfax 16 (Bodleian Library).

Tn. = Tanner 346 " "

P(B) = Pepys 2006 Hand B (Magdalene College, Cambridge), ll. 65-72 are wanting.

P(E) = Pepys 2006 Hand E " " " contains only ll. 45-82.

Ff = Cambridge University Library MS. Ff 1. 6.

Seld. = Arch. Selden MS. B 24 (Bodleian Library).

Ju. = Julian Notary's Edition (1499-1502).

The best group of MSS. is B, and I have used this as the basis of the text.

### ENVOY TO SCOGAN

About the same time as *The Compleynt of Venus*, Chaucer wrote this playful reproach to his friend Henry Scogan for having given up his lady at 'Michelmesse', when he found her careless of his distress. But some year or two earlier, in 1391 the poet had lost his post as Clerk of the King's Works, and he makes this an opportunity of begging for his friend's influence on behalf of the needy road-comer.

<sup>1</sup> For more concerning Granson, cp. Piaget, 'Oton de Granson and ses Poesies,' *Romania*, vol. xix. 1800.

missioner exiled in the 'solitarie wilderness' of Greenwich. The prayer may have borne fruit in the pension granted him next year.

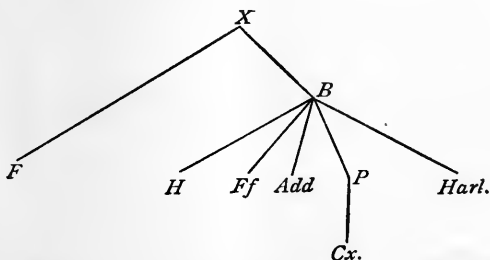
There are three MSS. (MS. Gg 4. 27, Univ. Libr. Camb.; MS. Fairfax 16, Bodleian Libr.; and MS. Pepys 2006, Magd. Coll. Camb.) and one edition (that of Thynne 1532) which serve as authorities for this poem. They all seem to belong to one group; there is certainly no sufficient evidence for dividing them, though MS. Fairfax is, on the whole, the best, and has been used as the basis for this text.

### ENVOY TO BUKTON

This bitter-sweet ballade, in stanzas of eight lines, touches marriage, and is quite characteristic of the poet. It was written in 1396, as we know by the reference to the English prisoners taken in the expedition against Friesland of that year. There is only one MS. (Fairfax 16) besides two early printed editions of this poem, that of Julian Notary (1499-1502), and that of Thynne (1532). The text is based upon the Fairfax MS.

### COMPLEYNT TO HIS PURSE

This sadly humorous poem must be one of the last, if not quite the last, we have from the poet's pen. It was addressed to Henry of Bolingbroke, 'the Conqueror of Brutes Albion,' and it won from him an additional pension of forty marks, which ensured Chaucer against penury in the closing months of his life. Professor Skeat thinks it probable that all the poem except the envoy was written at an earlier date, but without, it seems to me, sufficient ground. There are six MSS. and one early printed edition of this poem, which I arrange as follows:—



F = Fairfax 16 (Bodleian Library).

H = Shirley's Harleian MS. 7333 (British Museum).

Ff = Cambridge University Library MS. Ff 1. 6.

Add. = Additional MS. 22,139 (British Museum).

P = Pepys MS. 2006 (Magdalene College, Cambridge).

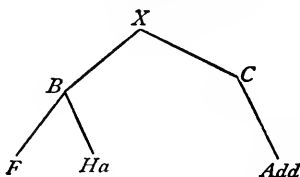
Harl. = Harleian MS. 2251 (British Museum).

Cx. = Caxton's Edition (1477-78).

The best MS. is the Fairfax, which has been used as the basis of the text.

PROVERBS

These two proverbs, if indeed they are Chaucer's, add nothing to his reputation. There are three MSS. of these trifles, two of which, the Fairfax and the Harleian 7578, ascribe the authorship to the poet. I arrange the authorities as follows :—



F = Fairfax 16 (Bodleian Library).  
 Ha. = Harleian MS. 7578 (British Museum).  
 Add. = Additional MS. 16, 165 (British Museum).

B is the better of the two groups of MSS., and MS. F has been made the basis of the text.

DOUBTFUL MINOR POEMS

(H. FRANK HEATH)

MERCILES BEAUTE

This triple roundel immediately follows several of Chaucer's genuine poems in the only MS. (Pepys 2006) in which it is found. Its manner is quite that of the poet, and it seems to have been well known, for its first line is quoted in Lydgate's 'Ballade in commemoration of our Ladie,' St. 22.

The poems that follow have no direct evidence as to their authorship, but they are sufficiently in Chaucer's manner, though they do not show him at his best, if they are his. They are all of an erotic turn.

AGAINST WOMEN UNCONSTANT

The Ballade 'Against Women Unconstant' is found in three MSS. (viz. Cotton Cleopatra D vii.; Harleian 7578; Fairfax 16), and in Stowe's edition of the works published in 1561. These authorities fall into two main groups, one of which consists of the Fairfax MS., the authority nearest to the original on the whole, and therefore made the basis of this text. The remaining authorities constitute the second group, within which the Cotton MS. and Stowe's edition form a subdivision traceable to a copy of the MS., of which Harleian 7578 was a copy.

The subheading of this poem is from the edition of 1561 which reads—'A Balade whiche Chaucer made agaynst women unconstant.'



## COMPLEYNT DAMOURS

The *Compleynt Damours*, much the poorest of these doubtful poems, is also found in three MSS. (Fairfax 16; Bodley 638; and Harleian 7333). They fall into two groups, of which the Harleian MS. forms one, and the remaining MSS. the other. The common source of these two groups was almost certainly a MS. itself one or more removes from the original. None of the existing MSS. are good, but A on the whole forms the best basis for a text, and has been so used in this edition.

The reference to and quotation from the *Parlement of Foules* in the last stanza seems to be no evidence of its genuineness, whilst the subheading given in the Harleian MS. is cryptic and apparently nonsense.<sup>1</sup>

## BALADE OF COMPLEYNT, ETC.

The *Balade of Compleynt* is found in only one MS. (Addit. 16,165, fol. 256b in the British Museum); and the same is true of the *Balade that Chaucier made* (Addit. MS. 34,360, f. 21b), which was first printed in the *Athenæum*.

## TREATISE ON THE ASTROLABE

(MARK H. LIDDELL)

The *Astrolabe* gives us evidence of Chaucer's interest in exact science, as the *Boece* shows his leaning to philosophy. The *Astrolabe*, however, as a translation is far superior. Ripeness of scholarship, certainty of style, clearness of judgment; all these come out clearly in this later work.

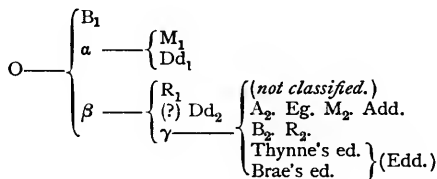
For the evidence of the introduction and the dates given in the body of the tract point to a late period of Chaucer's life. There is little of that uncertainty which characterises the *Boece*, and no infelicities of idiom or mistakes in construing the Latin. It is interesting to note in this connection that the testimony of the Colophon in the St. John's (Cambridge) MS. to the effect that Chaucer wrote the tract for his son Lewis, then under the tutelage of (? Ralph) Strode at Merton College, is borne out by the fact that the problems are adapted to the latitude of Oxford, and that MS. Bodley 619, the best of those that have come down to us, bears evidence of having been written by an Astronomer of Merton College. Chaucer's plan was an ambitious one, and comprehended a complete treatise on the subject (cp. his *First Partie*). He either did not live to complete it or tired of his work and abandoned it. The sources of the tract are Messahala's treatise for most of the 'conclusions,' and John de Sacrobosco's *de Sphæra* for the definitions and descriptive astronomy. The few conclusions not traceable to Messahala may be accounted for by assuming an edition in which there were extra conclusions inserted like those in

<sup>1</sup> It runs as follows:—And next folowyng begynnith an amerowse compleynte made at Wyndesore in the laste May sofore Novembre.

group  $\gamma$  of Chaucer's own tract. The few definitions not directly traceable to Sacrobosco are perhaps additions of Chaucer's own.

The technical character of the work has preserved it in a number of MSS.; eighteen are now known. Many of them are very poor, but, fortunately for a critical text, the inferior ones all derive from the same source which is itself preserved to us in good MSS. The following have been used for the text:—MS. Bodley 619 ( $B_1$ ), the basis of the text; E. Museo 54 ( $M_1$ ), in the Bodleian Library; Dd 3. 53 of the Cambr. Univ. Library; Rawl. D. 913 ( $R_1$ ), in the Bodleian; Dd 12. 51 ( $Dd_2$ ), Cambr. Univ. Library; Ashmole 391 ( $A_1$ ) (fragmentary), Bodleian Library; Ashmole 360 ( $A_2$ ), Bodleian; Bodley 68 ( $B_2$ ); E. Museo 216 ( $M_2$ ) (fragmentary), Bodleian; Rawl. Misc. 3, Bodleian.

MS. Bodley 619 (which was evidently copied by an astronomer) has been made the basis of the text on account of the almost uniform excellence of its readings. The text is critical, based upon an arrangement of the MSS. as roughly shown in the following table:—



$\gamma$  shows a confusion in the arrangement of Pt. II., is late, and contains a number of spurious conclusions.

## ROMAUNT OF THE ROSE

(MARK H. LIDDELL)

The chief interest that attaches to *The Romaunt of the Rose* is due to the possibility of its being wholly or in part the work of Chaucer. Its felicity as a translation, making anew, as it were, the French poem, the beauty and ease of its versification, the fact that Chaucer did translate Jehan de Meung's French poem, and that a large part of this version offers little to hang an objection to as far as Chaucerian grammar is concerned, have combined to enable it to resist most successfully all attempts to fix it among the spurious Chaucer pieces.

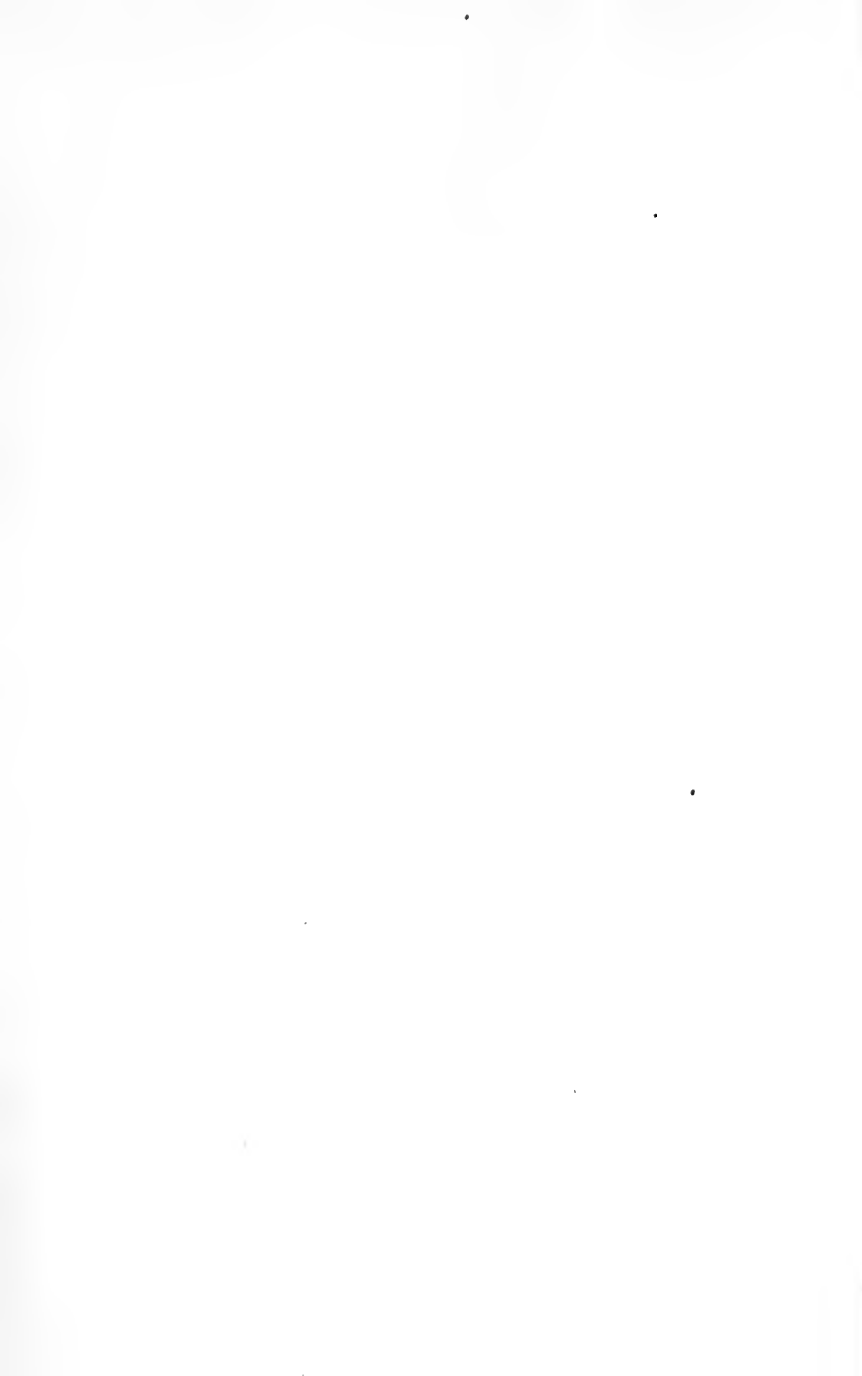
As the matter now stands it is generally agreed that Chaucer could not have written the part beginning somewhere about v. 1705<sup>1</sup> and ending with v. 5810. The last part, extending from this point to the end and commonly called C by scholars, may possibly have been written by Chaucer, though it contains some rhymes that are, to say the least, unusual in Chaucer. The first part, known as A, though brief when compared to B and C, has been held by many to be of Chaucer's early work. It is not possible to decide this question yet. All that we can say at present is that A (vv. 1-1705) may be part of the translation Chaucer says he made; that C is

<sup>1</sup> B is usually supposed to begin with v. 1706, but cp. the note to the verse.

also possibly Chaucer's, but this assumption is less likely than the former; that B (vv. 1706-5810) is probably the interpolation of a northern writer later than Chaucer who made an attempt to join the two parts of the poem A and C, and make a complete translation, but wearied of his task and dropped it at v. 5810. But it is just this part that Chaucer specifically refers to in *Leg.* 430, 431, where he speaks of 'misseying' women. This horrible slander is contained in vv. 4252-4266 of the English version. His translation must, therefore, have extended at least to this point, so that our version, if it is Chaucer's, was originally more complete than it is now. But whoever wrote it, the translation is well worthy to take a place beside Chaucer's best work; and it is difficult to understand how this comes to be the only surviving work of a poet who was such a master of English verse and had such power of reproducing with added skilful touches of his own Jehan de Meung's *Roman de la Rose*.

The present edition offers a text based almost solely upon the Glasgow MS. By comparison with the French original, many unintelligible lines have for the first time been corrected so as to make good Middle-English sense. Many unintelligible words have been put back into their proper form by observing the recurrence of certain scribal errors in the Glasgow MS. *e.g.* *i* and *y* for *e*, *a* for *o*, *e* for *o*, *u* for *ou*, *w* for *v*, *b* for *l*. The notes give such variants as are of any importance, together with such citations of the French original as are necessary to understand the English version.

Throughout the poem *u* and *v*, *i* and *j* are used with their modern values, except that *I* is retained for modern *J*. The dotted *è* is used to denote a separate syllable in the middle of the line.



# THE CANTERBURY TALES

## THE PROLOGUE

*Here bygynneth the Book of the tales  
of Caunterbury*

WHÁN that Aprillè with his shourès  
soote  
The droghte of March hath percèd to the  
roote,  
And bathèd every veyne in swich licour  
Of which vertu engendred is the flour ;  
Whan Zephirus eek with his sweté breeth  
Inspirèd hath in every holt and heeth  
The tendrè croppès, and the yongè sonne  
Hath in the Ram his halfè cours y-ronne,  
And smalè fowelès maken melodye, 9  
That slepen al the nyght with open eye,—  
So priketh hem Nature in hir coráges,—  
Thanne longen folk to goon on pilgrim-  
ages,  
And palmeres for to seken straungè  
strondes,  
To fernè halwès, kowthe in sondry londes ;  
And specially, from every shirès ende  
Of Engèlond, to Caunturbury they wende,  
The hooly blisful martir for to seke,  
That hem hath holpen whan that they  
were seeke.

Bifil that in that seson on a day,  
In Southwerk at the Tabard as I lay, 20  
Redy to wenden on my pilgrymage  
To Caunterbury with ful devout corage,

8. *the Ram.* The sun runs one half course in the sign of the Ram in March, and the second half course in April. The latter ends April 11th.  
17. *martir, i.e.* Thomas à Becket.

B

At nyght were come into that hostelrye  
Wel nyne-and-twenty in a compaignye,  
Of sondry folk, by aventure y-falle  
In felaweshipe, and pilgrimes were they  
alle,

That toward Caunterbury wolden ryde.  
The chambres and the stables weren wyde,  
And wel we weren esèd attè beste. 29  
And shortly, whan the sonnè was to reste,  
So hadde I spoken with hem everychon,  
That I was of hir felaweshipe anon,  
And madè forward erly for to ryse,  
To take oure wey, ther as I yow devyse.

But nathelees, whil I have tyme and  
space,  
Er that I ferther in this talè pace,  
Me thynketh it accordaunt to resoun  
To tellè yow al the condicioun  
Of ech of hem, so as it semèd me,  
And whiche they weren and of what  
degree, 40  
And eek in what array that they were inne;  
And at a Knyght than wol I first bygynne.

A KNYGHT ther was and that a worthy  
man,  
That fro the tymè that he first bigan  
To riden out, he lovèd chivalrie,  
Trouthe and honóur, fredom and curteisie.  
Ful worthy was he in his lordès werre,  
And therto hadde he riden, no man ferre,  
As wel in cristendom as in hethènesse,  
And ever honoured for his worthynesse. 50

23. *was for were, H6.*

E

I

At Alisaundre he was whan it was wonne ;  
Ful oftē tyme he hadde the bord bigonne  
Aboven allē nacions in Puce.

In Lettow hadde he reysed and in Ruce,—  
No cristen man so ofte of his degree.

In Gernade at the seege eek hadde he be  
Of Algezir, and riden in Belmarye.

At Lyeys was he, and at Satalye,  
Whan they were wonne ; and in the  
Gretē See

At many a noble armee hadde he be. 60

At mortal batailles hadde he been fiftene,  
And foughten for oure feith at Tramys-  
sene

In lystēs thriēs, and ay slayn his foo.

This ilkē worthy knyght hadde been also  
Somtymē with the lord of Palatye

Agayn another hethen in Turkye ;

And evermoore he hadde a sovereyn prys.

And though that he were worthy, he was  
wys,

And of his port as meeke as is a mayde.

He never yet no vileynye ne sayde, 70

In al his lyf, unto no maner wight.

He was a verray parfit, gentil knyght.

But for to tellen yow of his array,

His hors weren goode, but he ne was nat  
gay ;

Of fustian he wered a gypon

Al bismótered with his habergeon,

For he was late y-come from his viage,

And wenté for to doon his pilgrymage.

With hym ther was his sone, a yong

SQUIÉR,

A lovyere and a lusty bachelor, 80

51. *Alisaundre*, Alexandria, taken by Pierre de Lusignan, in 1365.

52. *the bord bigonne*, taken the head of the table.

53. *Puce*, Prussia, i.e. in company with the Teutonic Knights.

54. *Lettow*, Lithuania. *Ruce*, Russia.

56. *Gernade*, Granada.

57. *A'gezir*, taken from the Moors in 1344.

57. *Belmarye*, a Moorish kingdom in Africa.

53. *Lyeys*, in Armenia, taken from the Turks 1367.

53. *Satalye*, Attalia, taken from Turks 1361.

59. *the Grete See*, the Mediterranean.

60. *armee*, an expedition, especially one by sea ; *aryve*, a disembarkation, H<sup>2</sup>.

62. *Tramvssene*. a Moorish kingdom in Africa.

65. *Palatye*, a Christian lordship in Anatolia.

74. *was* for *weren*, H<sup>2</sup>, but *hors* may be plural, and refer to the knight's horses in general.

With lökkés crulle as they were leyd in  
presse.

Of twenty yeer of age he was, I gesse.

Of his stature he was of evene lengthe,

And wonderly delyvere and greet of  
strengthe ;

And he hadde been somtyme in chyvachie,

In Flaundrés, in Artoys and Pycardie,

And born hym weel, as of so litel space,

In hope to stonden in his lady grace. 88

Embrouded was he, as it were a meede

Al ful of fresshē flourés whyte and reede ;

Syngynge he was, or floytynge, al the day ;

He was as fressh as is the monthe of May.

Short was his gowne, with slevés longe  
and wyde ;

Wel koude he sitte on hors and fairē ryde ;

He koudē songés make and wel endite,

Juste and eek daunce and weel purtreye  
and write.

So hootē he lovédē that by nyghtertale

He sleep namoore than dooth a nyghtyn-  
gale.

Curteis he was, lowely and servysáble,

And carf biforn his fader at the table. 100

A YEMAN hadde he and servántz namo

At that tyme, for hym listē ridē soo ;

And he was clad in cote and hood of grene.

A sheef of pocok arwés, bright and kene,

Under his belt he bar ful thriftily—

Wel koude he dresse his takel yemanly ;

His arwés droupéd noght with fetherés  
lowe—

And in his hand he baar a myghty bowe.

A not-heed hadde he, with a broun viságe.

Of woodécrafft wel koude he al the uságe.

Upon his arm he baar a gay brácér, 111

And by his syde a swerd and a bokeler,

And on that oother syde a gay daggere,

Harneiséd wel and sharpe as point of spere ;

A Cristophere on his brest of silver sheene ;

An horn he bar, the bawdryk was of grene.

A forster was he, soothly as I gesse.

Ther was also a Nonne, a PRIORESSE,

86. *In Flaundres*, i.e. in minor expeditions against the French.

88. *lady grace* : 'lady' is here a genitive.

115. *Cristophere*, a small figure of St. Christopher worn as a protection from evil.

That of hir smylyng was ful symple and  
coy ;  
Hire gretteste ooth was but by seinté  
Loy, 120

And she was clepéd madame Eglentyne.  
Ful weel she soong the servicé dyvyne,  
Entunéd in hir nose ful semély,  
And Frenssh she spak ful faire and fetisly  
After the scole of Stratford-atté-Bowe,  
For Frenssh of Parys was to hire un-  
knowe.

At meté wel y-taught was she with-alle,  
She leet no morsel from hir lippés falle,  
Ne wette hir fyngrés in hir saucé depe.  
Wel koude she carie a morsel and wel  
kepe, 130

Thát no drope ne fille upon hire breste ;  
In curteisie was set ful muchel hir leste.  
Hire over-lippé wypéd she so clene,  
That in hir coppe ther was no ferthyng  
sene

Of grecé, when she dronken hadde hir  
draughte.

Ful semély after hir mete she raughte,  
And sikerly she was of greet desport,  
And ful plesáunt and amyable of port,  
And peynéd hire to countrefeté cheere 139  
Of Court, and been estatlich of manere,  
And to ben holden digne of reverence.  
But for to speken of hire conscience,  
She was so charitable and so pitous  
She wolde wepe, if that she saugh a mous  
Kaught in a trappe, if it were deed or  
bledde.

Of smalé houndés hadde she that she fedde  
With rosted flessch, or milk and wastel  
breed ;

But sooré wepte she if oon of hem were  
deed, 148

Or if men smoot it with a yerdé smerte ;  
And al was conscience and tendré herte.

120. *seinté Loy*. St. Eligius refused to take an oath which King Dagobert demanded of him, so perhaps this means the Prioress did not swear at all.

125. *After the scole of Stratford-atte-Bowe*, i.e. Anglo-Norman French, still in use in convents such as the Benedictine nunnery at Stratford-le-Bow, where Chaucer probably means that his Prioress was educated. The French spoken at Court at this date would be French 'of Paris.'

127. *At mete*, etc., a reminiscence of a passage in the *Roman de la Rose*, l. 13,612 sqq.

Ful semyly hir wympul pynchéd was ;  
Hire nose tretys, hir eyen greye as glas,  
Hir mouth ful smal and ther-to softe and  
reed,

But sikerly she hadde a fair forheed ;  
It was almost a spannéd brood I trowe,  
For, hardily, she was nat undergrowe.  
Ful fetys was hir cloke, as I was war ;  
Of smal coral aboute hire arm she bar  
A peire of bedes, gauded al with grene,  
And ther-on heng a brooch of gold ful  
sheene, 160

On which ther was first write a crownéd A,  
And after *Amor vincit omnia*.

Another NONNÉ with hire haddé she  
That was hire Chapéleyne, and PREESTÉS  
thre.

A MONK ther was, a fair for the  
maistríe,

An outridere, that lovède venerie ;  
A manly man, to been an abbot able.  
Ful many a deyntee hors hadde he in stable,  
And when he rood men myghte his  
brydel heere 169

Gýnglen in a whistlyng wynd als cleere,  
And eek as loude, as dooth the chapel belle,  
Ther as this lord was kepere of the celle.  
The reule of seint Maure or of seint Beneit,  
By-cause that it was old and som-del  
streit,—

This ilké Monk leet oldé thyngés pace,  
And heeld after the newé world the space.  
He yaf nat of that text a pulléd hen  
That seith that hunters bethnat hooly men,  
Ne that a Monk when he is recchélees  
Is likned til a fissh that is waterlees ; 180  
This is to seyn, a Monk out of his cloystre.  
But thilké text heeld he nat worth an oystre ;  
And I seyde his opinioun was good.

159. *gauded*, dyed, especially dyed green ; or perhaps, having in green the gawdies, or large beads which stood for the Lord's Prayer.

162. *Amor vincit omnia*: Love overcomes all things.

173. *seint Maure*, a disciple of *seint Beneit* or Benedict, established the Benedictine Order in France.

177. *that text*, from the Decretal of Gratian, 'Sicut piscis sine aqua caret vita, ita sine monasterio monachus.'

179. *recchelees*, reckless ; *cloysterles*, H only ; neither reading is satisfactory.

What sholde he studie and make hym-  
selven wood,

Upon a book in cloystre alwey to poure,  
Or swynken with his handés and laboure,  
As Austyn bit? how shal the world be  
served?

Lat Austyn have hisswynk to him reserved.  
Therefore he was a prikasour aright;  
Grehoundes he hadde, as swift as fowel  
in flight: 190

Of prikyng and of huntingyng for the hare  
Was al his lust, for no cost wolde he spare.  
I seigh his sleeves y-purfiled at the hond  
With grys, and that the fyneste of a lond;  
And for to festne his hood under his chyn  
He hadde of goldy-wrought a ful curious pyn,  
A love knotte in the gretter ende ther was.  
His heed was balled that shoon as any glas,  
And eek his face as he hadde been enoynt.  
He was a lord ful fat and in good poynt;  
Hise eyen stepe and rollynge in his heed,  
That steméd as a forneys of a leed; 202  
His bootés souple, his hors in greet estaat.  
Now certainly he was a fair prelaat.  
He was nat pale, as a forpynéd goost:  
A fat swan loved he best of any roost;  
His palfrey was as broun as is a berye.

A FRERE ther was, a wantowne and  
a merye,

A lymytour, a ful solempnè man, 209  
In allé the ordrés foure is noon that kan  
So muchel of daliaunce and fair langage;  
He haddé maad ful many a mariage  
Of yongé wommen at his owene cost:  
Unto his ordre he was a noble post,  
Ful wel biloved and famulier was he  
With frankeleyns over al in his contree;  
And eek with worthy wommen of the toun,  
For he hadde power of confessioun,  
As seyde hym-self, mooré than a curát,  
For of his ordre he was licenciat. 220  
Ful swetely herdé he confessioun,  
And plesaunt was his absolucioun.

199. *he, E it*

210. *ordres foure*, Dominicans, Carmelites, Franciscans, and Augustinians.

212. *ful many a mariage*, etc., *i.e.* he found husbands for women he had himself seduced.

220. *licenciat*, *i.e.* he was licensed to hear confessions without asking leave of the parson.

He was an esy man to yeve penaunce  
Ther as he wiste to have a good pitaunce;  
For unto a poure ordre for to yive  
Is signé that a man is wel y-shryve;  
For, if he yaf, he dorsté make avaunt  
He wisté that a man was répentant:  
For many a man so harde is of his herte  
He may nat wepe al thogh hym sooré  
smerte, 230

Therefore in stede of wepyng and preyères  
Men moote yeve silver to the poure freres.  
His tyet was ay farsed full of knyves  
And pynnés, for to yeven yongé wyves;  
And certainly he hadde a murye note;  
Wel koude he syng and pleyen on a rote:  
Of yeddynges he baar outrély the pris;  
His nekké whit was as the flour-de-lys,  
Ther-to he strong was as a champioun.  
He knew the tavernes well in all the toun  
And everich hostiler and tappestere 241  
Bet than a lazar or a beggestere;  
For unto swich a worthy man as he  
Acordéd nat, as by his facultee,  
To have with siké lazars aqueyntaunce;  
It is nat honeste, it may nat avauce  
Fór to deelen with no swiche poraille;  
But al with riche and selleres of vitaille.  
And over al, ther as profit sholde arise,  
Curteis he was and lowely of servyse, 250  
Ther nas no man nowher so vertuose.  
He was the besté beggere in his hous,\*  
For thogh a wydwe haddé noght a sho,  
So plesaunt was his *In principio*,  
Yet wolde he have a ferthyng er he wente:  
His purchas was wel bettre than his rente.  
And rage he koudé, as it were right a  
whelpé.

252. Hengwrt MS. here inserts two lines:

'And yaf a certeyn ferme for the graunt.  
Noon of his bretheren cam ther in his haunt.'

*i.e.* paid rent for his privilege and was left undisturbed by his brethren. The couplet is probably Chaucer's, but may have been deliberately omitted by him, as it interrupts the sentence.

254. *In principio*, the beginning of St. John's Gospel, to the first few verses from which magical value was attached.

256. *His purchas*, etc. The proceeds of his begging were much greater than the rent or 'ferme' (see note to l. 252) which he paid to his convent.

257. H reads 'and rage he couthe and pleye[n] as a whelpé.'



In lovè-dayer ther koude he muchel helpe,  
 For there he was nat lyk a cloysterer  
 With a thredbare cope, as is a poure scolér,  
 But he was lyk a maister, or a pope ; 261  
 Of double worstede was his semycope,  
 That rounded as a belle out of the presse.  
 Somwhat he lipséd for his wantownesse,  
 To make his Englissh sweet upon histonge,  
 And in his harpyng, whan that he hadde  
 songe,

His eyen twynkled in his heed aryght  
 As doon the sterrés in the frosty nyght.  
 This worthy lymytour was cleped Huberd.

A MERCHANT was ther with a forkéd  
 berd, 270

In mottéye, and hye on horse he sat ;  
 Upon his heed a Flaundryssh bevere hat ;  
 His bootés claspéd faire and fetisly ;  
 His resons he spak ful solempnely,  
 Sownyng alway thencrees of his wynnyng.  
 He wolde the see were kept for any thing  
 Bitwixé Middelburgh and Oréwelle.

Wel koude he in eschaungé sheeldés selle.  
 This worthy man ful wel his wit bisette,  
 Ther wisté no wight that he was in dette,  
 So estatly was he of his governaunce 281  
 With his bargaynes and with his  
 chevysaunce.

For sothe he was a worthy man with-alle  
 But, sooth to seyn, I noot how men hym  
 calle.

A CLERK ther was of Oxenford also

That unto logyk haddé longe y-go.  
 As leené was his hors as is a rake,  
 And he nas nat right fat, I undertake,  
 But lookéd holwe, and ther-to sobrelly ;  
 Ful thredbare was his overeste courtepy ;  
 For he hadde geten hym yet no benefice,  
 Ne was so worldly for to have office ;  
 For hym was levere have at his beddes heed  
 Twénty bookés clad in blak or reed  
 Of Aristotle and his philosophie,  
 Than robés riche, or fithele, or gay sautrie :

277. *Middelburgh*, nearly opposite the Orwell on the Dutch coast. Professor Hales notes that between 1384 and 1388 the wool-staple was at Middelburgh instead of at Calais.

278. *sheeldes*, French crowns or *écus*: he could profit by the turn of exchange.

But al be that he was a philosopfre,  
 Yet haddé he but litel gold in cofre ;  
 But al that he myghte of his freendes hente  
 On bookés and his lernyng he it spente,  
 And bisily gan for the soulés preye 301  
 Of hem that yaf hym wher-with to scoleye.  
 Of studie took he moost cure and moost  
 heede,  
 Noght o word spak he mooré than was  
 neede,

And that was seyde in forme and reverence,  
 And short and quyk and ful of hysentéce.  
 Sownyng in moral vertu was his speche  
 And gladly wolde he lerne and gladly teche.

A SERGEANT OF THE LAWÉ, war and  
 wys,

That often haddé been at the Parvys, 310  
 Ther was also, ful riche of excellence.  
 Discreet he was, and of greet reverence ;  
 He seméd swich, hise wordés weren so  
 wise.

Justice he was ful often in Assise,  
 By patente and by pleyn commissioun :  
 For his science and for his heigh renoun.  
 Of fees and robés hadde he many oon ;  
 So greet a purchasour was nowher noon.  
 Al was fee symple to hym in effect,  
 His purchasyng myghté nat been infect.  
 Nowher so bisy a man as he ther nas, 321  
 And yet he seméd bisier than he was.

In termés hadde he caas and doomés alle  
 That from the tyme of kyng William  
 were falle ;

Ther-to he coude endite and make a thyng,  
 Ther koudé no wight pynchen at his  
 writyng ;

And every statut coude he pleyn by rote.  
 He rood but hoomly in a medlee cote,  
 Girt with a ceint of silk, with barrés smale ;  
 Of his array telle I no lenger tale. 330

A FRANKÉLEYN was in his compaignye.

297. *philosopfre*, an allusion to the philosophy of the alchemists.

310. *Parvys*, church-porch, *i.e.* of St. Paul's, where lawyers met for consultation.

319. *fee symple*. The meaning may be either (literally) that the Sergeant could overcome all restrictions on ownership, or (metaphorically) that he could carry all before him.

Whit was his berd as is a dayésye,  
Of his complexioun he was sangwyn.  
Wel loved he by the morwe a sope in wyn;  
To lyven in delit was ever his wone,  
For he was Epicurus owenê sone,  
That heeld opinious that pleyn delit  
Was verrailly fenicitee parfit.

An housholdere, and that a greet, was he:  
Seint Julian was he in his contree; 340  
His breed, his ale, was always after oon;  
A better envyned man was nowher noon.  
Withoutê bakê mete was never his hous,  
Of fissh and flesh, and that so plenteuous  
It snewêd in his hous of mete and drynke.  
Of allê deyntees that men koudê thynke  
After the sondry sesons of the yeer,  
So chaungêd he his mete and his soper.  
Ful many a fat partrich hadde he in muwe  
And many a breem and many a luce in  
stuwe. 350

Wo was his cook but if his saucê were  
Poynaunt and sharpe and redyal his geere.  
His table dormant in his halle alway,  
Stood redy covered al the longê day.  
At sessiouns ther was he lord and sire;  
Ful oftê tymê he was knyght of the shire.  
An anlaas, and a gipser al of silk,  
Heeng at his girdel, whit as mornê milk;  
A shirreve hadde he been, and a countour.  
Was nowher such a worthy vavasour. 360

An HABERDASSHERE, and a CAR-  
PENTER,

A WEBBE, a DYERE, and a TAPYGER,—  
And they were clothed alle in o lyveree  
Of a solêmpne and greet fraternitee;  
Ful fressh and newe hir geere apikêd was;  
Hir knyvés werê chapêd noght with bras,  
But al with silver, wrought ful clene and  
weel,

Hire girdles and hir pouches everydeel.  
Wel semêd ech of hem a fair burgeys  
To sitten in a yeldhalle, on a deys. 370

332. *heed for berd, E.*

340. St. Julian was famed for providing his votaries with good entertainment.

341. *after oon*, of one kind, *i.e.* the best.

363. *o*, one. H reads 'Weren with uss eeke clothed in oo lyvere.'

364. E<sup>6</sup> add *a* before *greet*, with which reading we must scan: 'Of a só | lempne and |,' etc.

Éverich for the wisdom that he kan  
Was shaply for to been an alderman.  
For catel haddê they ynogh and rente,  
And eek hir wyvês wolde it wel assente;  
And ellês certeyn werê they to blame.  
It is ful fair to been y-cleped *Madame*,  
And goon to vigiliês al bifore,  
And have a mantel roialliche y-bore.

A COOK they haddê with hem for the  
nones, 379  
To boille the chiknês with the marybones,  
And poudrê-marchant tart and galyngale;  
Wel koude he knowe a draughte of  
Londoun ale;

He koudê rooste and sethe and boille  
and frye,  
Mâken mortreux and wel bake a pye.  
But greet harm was it, as it thoughtê me,  
That on his shyne a mormal haddê he.  
For blankmanger, that made he with the  
beste.

A SHIPMAN was ther, wonyngfe fer by  
weste;

For aught I woot he was of Dertémouthe.  
He rood upon a rouncy as he kouthe, 390  
In a gowne of faldyng to the knee.  
A daggere hangyng on a laas hadde he  
Aboute his nekke under his arm adoun.  
The hootê somer hadde maad his hewe  
al broun;

And certainly he was a good felawe.  
Ful many a draughte of wyn hadde he  
y-drawe

Fro Burdeuxward whil that the Chapman  
sleepe.

Of nycê conscience took he no keepe. 398  
If that he faught, and hadde the hyer hond;  
By water he sente hem hoom to every lond.  
But of his craft to rekene wel his tydes,  
His stremês and his daungers hym bisides,  
His herberwe and his moone, his lode-  
menage,

Ther nas noon swich from Hullê to Cartage.  
Hardy he was, and wys to undertake:  
With many a tempest hadde his berd  
been shake;

400. *By water*, etc., *i.e.* he drowned his prisoners.

He knew wel alle the havenes, as they were,  
 From Gootlond to the Cape of Fynystere,  
 And every cryke in Britaigne and in Spayne.  
 His barge y-clepèd was the Maudélayne.

With us ther was a DOCTOUR OF  
 PHISIK ; 411

In all this world ne was ther noon hym lik,  
 To speke of phisik and of surgerye ;  
 For he was grounded in astronomye.  
 He kepte his pacient a ful greet deel  
 In hourès, by his magyk natureel.  
 Wel koude he fortunen the ascendent  
 Of his ymages for his pacient.  
 He knew the cause of everich maladye,  
 Were it of hoot, or cold, or moyste, or drye,  
 And where they engendred and of what  
 humour ; 421

He was a verray parfit praktisour.  
 The cause y-knowe and of his harm the  
 roote, 421

Anon he yaf the sikè man his boote.  
 Ful redy hadde he his apothecaries  
 To sende him droggès and his letuaries,  
 For ech of hem made oother for to wynne,  
 Hir frendshipe nas nat newè to bigynne.  
 Wel knew he the oldè Esculapius  
 And Deyscorides, and eek Rufus, 430  
 Olde Ypocras, Haly and Galyen,  
 Serapion, Razis and Avycen,  
 Averrois, Damascien and Constantyn,

408. *Gootlond*, the Isle of Gottland.

411. *With us ther was*, E<sup>6</sup>; *Ther was also*, H.

415. *a full greet deel*, E<sup>6</sup>; *wondurly wel*, H.

416. *In houres*, i.e. the astrological hours.

418. *ymages*, astrological figures, cp. *Hous of Fame*, iii. 175-180.

420. *hoot, or cold*, etc., the four elements of which the world was believed to be composed.

430. *Deyscorides*, Dioscorides, a physician of the 2nd century A.D., born in Cilicia.

430. *Rufus*, a physician of Ephesus, about the time of Trajan.

431. *Olde Ypocras*, Hippocrates, born in Cos about 460 B.C.

431. *Haly*, or Hali, an Arabian commentator on Galen in the 11th century; John Serapion and the famous Avicenna were his contemporaries.

431. *Galyen*, Galen, born at Pergamus 130 A.D.

432. *Razis*, or Rhazes, an Arabian physician of the 10th century.

433. *Averrois*, born at Cordova 1126.

433. *Damascien*, John Damascene, an Arab physician and theologian of the 9th century.

433. *Constantyn*, Constantinus Afer, born at Carthage in the 12th century.

Bernard and Gatèsden and Gilbertyn.

Of his dietè mesurable was he,  
 For it was of no superfluitee,  
 But of greet norissyng and digestible.  
 His studie was but litel on the Bible.  
 In sangwyn and in pers he clad was al,  
 Lynèd with taffata and with sendal. 440  
 And yet he was but esy of dispence,  
 He keptè that he wan in pestilence.  
 For gold in phisik is a cordial,  
 Therefore he lovèd gold in special.

A GOOD WIF was ther of bisidè BATHE,  
 But she was som-del deef, and that was  
 scathe.

Of clooth-makyng she haddè swich an  
 haunt

She passèd hem of Yprès and of Gaunt.  
 In al the parisshe wif ne was ther noon  
 That to the offrynge bifore hire sholdè  
 goon ; 450

And if ther dide, certeyn so wrooth was  
 she,

That she was out of allè charitee.  
 Hir coverchiefs ful fynè weren of ground,—  
 I dorstè swere they weyèden ten pound,—  
 That on a Sunday weren upon hir heed.  
 Hir hosen weren of fyn scarlet reed,  
 Ful streite y-teyd, and shoes ful moyste  
 and newe ;

Boold was hir face, and fair, and reed of  
 hewe.

She was a worthy womman al hir lyve,  
 Housbondes at chirchè dore she haddè  
 fyve, 460

Withouten oother compaignye in  
 youthe,—

434. *Bernard*, Bernardus Gordonius, a contemporary of Chaucer, Professor of Medicine at Montpellier.

434. *Gatesden*, John Gatesden, Fellow of Merton College, Oxford, and court physician in the first half of the 14th century. He wrote a medical treatise called *Rosa Anglica*.

434. *Gilbertyn*, Gilbertus Anglicus, one of the earliest English writers on medicine, fl. 1250.

442. *pestilence*. The great plague of the 14th century was in 1349, but lesser ones recurred every few years.

450. *to the offrynge*. Offerings in kind or money at mass and other services were presented by the people going up in order to the priest.

460. *at chirche dore*. The first part of the marriage service used to be read there.

But ther-of nedeth nat to speke as  
nowthe,—

And thriës hadde she been at Jerusálem ;  
She haddé passéd many a straungé strem ;  
At Rome she haddé been, and at Boloigne,  
In Galice at Seint Jame, and at Coloigne,  
She koudé muchel of wandrynge by the  
weye.

Gat-tothéd was she, soothly for to seye.  
Upon an amblere esily she sat, <sup>469</sup>  
Y-wymléd wel, and on hir heed an hat  
As brood as is a bokeler or a targe ;  
A foot mantel aboute hir hipés large,  
And on hire feet a paire of sporés sharpe.  
In felawshipe wel koude she laughe and  
carpe ;

Of remedies of love she knew per chaunce,  
For she koude of that art the oldé daunce.

A good man was ther of religioun,  
And was a **POURE PERSON OF A TOUN** ;  
But riche he was of hooly thoght and werk ;  
He was also a lernéd man, a clerk, <sup>480</sup>  
That Cristés Gospel trewély wolde preche :  
His parissheis devoutly wolde he teche.  
Benygne he was, and wonder diligent,  
And in adversitee ful pacient ;  
And swich he was y-prevéd ofté sithes.  
Ful looth were hym to cursen for his tithes,  
But rather wolde he yeven, out of doute,  
Unto his pouré parissheis aboute,  
Of his offryng and eek of his substaunce :  
He koude in litel thyng have suffisaunce.  
Wyd was his parisshe, and houses fer  
asonder, <sup>491</sup>

But he ne lafté nat for reyn ne thonder,  
In siknesse nor in meschief to visite  
The ferreste in his parisshe, muche and lite,  
Upon his feet, and in his hand a staf.  
This noble ensample to his sheepe he yaf  
That firste he wroghte and afterward he  
taughte.

Out of the gospel he tho wordés caughte,

465. *Boloigne*, Boulogne, where an image of the Blessed Virgin was exhibited to pilgrims.

466. *In Galice at S. Jame*, i.e. at the shrine of St. James of Compostella in Galicia in Spain.

466. *Coloigne*, to the shrine of the Three Kings of the East at Cologne.

476. *koude the oldé daunce* ('Qu'el scet toute la vieille dance,' *Rom. de la Rose*), knew the ancient custom.

And this figure he added eek therto,  
That if gold rusté what shal iren doo? <sup>500</sup>  
For if a preest be foul, on whom we truste,  
No wonder is a lewéd man to ruste ;  
And shame it is, if a preest také keepe,  
A shiten shepherde and a clené sheepe.  
Wel oghte a preest ensample for to yive  
By his clenesse how that his sheepe  
sholde lyve.

He setté nat his benefice to hyre  
And leet his sheepe encombred in the myre,  
And ran to Londoun, unto Seint Poules,  
To seken hym a chaunterie for soules ; <sup>510</sup>  
Or with a bretherhed to been withholde,  
But dwelte at hoom and kepté wel his folde,  
So that the wolf ne made it nat mysarie,—  
He was a shepherde, and noght a  
mercenarie :

And though he hooly were and vertuouus,  
He was to synful man nat despitouus,  
Ne of his spechè daungerous ne digne,  
But in his techyng déscreet and benygne,  
To drawn folk to hevене by fairnesse,  
By good ensample, this was his bisynesse :  
But it were any persone obstinat, <sup>521</sup>  
What so he were, of heigh or lough estat,  
Hym wolde he snybben sharply for the  
nonys.

A bettré preest I trowe that nowher  
noon ys ;  
He waited after no pompe and reverence,  
Ne maked him a spicéd conscience,  
But Cristés loore, and his Apostles twelve,  
He taughte, but first he folwed it hym  
selve.

With hym ther was a **PLOWMAN**, was  
his brother,  
That hadde y-lad of dong ful many a  
fother,— <sup>530</sup>

A trewé swynkere and a good was he,  
Lyvyng in pees and parfit charitee.  
God loved he best, with al his hoolé herte,  
At allé tymés, thogh him gamed or smerte,  
And thanne his neighébore right as hym-  
selve.

He wolde thresshe, and therto dyke and  
delve,  
For Cristés sake, for every pouré wight,  
Withouten hire, if it lay in his myght.

His tithés paydè he ful faire and wel,  
Bothe of his proprè swynk and his catel.  
In a tabard he rood upon a mere. 541

There was also a REVE and a MILLERE,  
A SOMNOUR and a PARDONER also,  
A MAUNCIPLE and myself,—ther were  
namo.

The MILLERE was a stout carl for the  
nones,

Ful byg he was of brawn and eek of bones;  
That provèd wel, for over-al, ther he cam,  
At wrastlyng he wolde have away the ram.  
He was short-sholdred, brood, a thikkè  
knarre,

Ther nas no dore that he nolde heve of  
harre, 550

Or breke it at a rennyng with his heed.  
His berd, as any sowe or fox, was reed,  
And thertobrood, as though it were a spade.  
Upon the cope right of his nose he hadè  
A werte, and theron stood a toft of herys,  
Reed as the brustles of a sowes erys;  
His nosèthirlès blakè were and wyde;  
A swerd and a bokeler bar he by his syde;  
His mouth as wyde was as a greet forneys,  
He was a janglerè and a goliardeys, 560  
And that was moost of synne and harlotriès.  
Wel koude he stelen corn and tollen thriès,  
And yet he hadde a thombe of gold, pardee.  
A whit cote and a blew hood werèd he.  
A baggèpipe wel koude he blowe and  
sowne,

And therewithal he broghte us out of towne.

A gentil MAUNCIPLE was ther of a  
temple,

Of which achátours myghtè take exemple  
For to be wise in byynge of vitaille;  
For, whether that he payde or took by  
taille, 570

Algate he wayted so in his achaat  
That he was ay biforn and in good staat.

548. *away*, E<sup>3</sup> *alwey*.

559. *wyde*, H; *greet*, E<sup>6</sup>.

562. *tollen thries*, take threefold his due.

563. *yet he hadde a thombe of gold*. Millers are said to test samples with their thumb. Hence the proverb 'An honest miller has a thumb of gold,' which suggests the meaning here to be 'yet he was honest,—for a miller.'

570. *by taille*, on trust, the debt being scored on a tally.

Now is nat that of God a ful fair grace  
That swich a lewèd mannès wit shal pace  
The wisdom of an heepe of lerned men?  
Of maistrès hadde he mo than thriès ten,  
That weren of lawe expert and curios,  
Of whiche ther weren a duszeyne in that  
hous

Worthy to been stywardes of rente and lond  
Of any lord that is in Engèlond, 580  
To maken hym lyvè by his proprè good  
In honour dettèlees, but he were wood,  
Or lyve as scarsly as hym list desire;  
And able for to helpen al a shire  
In any caas that myghtè falle or happe;  
And yet this Manciple sette hir aller cappe.

The REVÈ was a sclendré colerik man,  
His berd was shave as ny as ever he kan;  
His heer was by his erys round y-shorn,  
His tope was dokèd lyk a preest biforn,  
Ful longè were his leggès and ful lene,  
Y-lyk a staf, ther was no calf y-sene. 592  
Wel koude he kepe a gerner and a bynne,  
Ther was noon auditour koude on him  
wynne.

Wel wiste he, by the droghte and by the  
reyn,

The yeldyng of his seed and of his greyn.  
His lordès sheepe, his neet, his dayèrye,  
His swyn, his hors, his stoor, and his  
pultrye,

Was hoolly in this revès governyng,  
And by his covenant yaf the rekenyng 600  
Syn that his lord was twenty yeer of age;  
Ther koude no man bryngè hym in  
arrerage.

There nas baillif, ne hierde, nor oother  
hyne,

That he ne knew his sleighte and his  
covyne;

They were adrad of hym as of the deeth.  
His wonyng was ful faire upon an heeth,  
With grenè trees y-shadwèd was his  
place.

581. *by his propre good*, on his own property.

586. *sette hir aller cappe*, set the caps of, *i.e.* befooled, them all.

594. *on*, E *of*.

595. *Wel wiste he*, etc., *i.e.* when he had to present his accounts he attributed the loss of the corn he had stolen to bad weather.

601. *he, i.e.* the Reeve, though H reads *they*.

He koudè bettré than his lord purchase.  
 Ful riche he was a-storéd pryvely,  
 His lord wel koude he plesen subtilly 610  
 To yeve and lene hym of his owene good  
 And have a thank, and yet a gowne and  
 hood.

In youthe he lernéd hadde a good myster,  
 He was a wel good wrighte, a carpenter.  
 This Revé sat upon a ful good stot,  
 That was al pomely grey, and highté  
 Scot;

A long surcote of pers upon he hade,  
 And by his syde he baar a rusty blade.  
 Of Northfolk was this Reve of which I  
 telle,

Biside a toun men clepen Baldéswele.  
 Tukkéd he was as is a frere, aboute, 621  
 And ever he rood the hyndreste of oure  
 route.

A SOMONOUR was ther with us in  
 that place,

That hadde a fyr-reed cherubynnés face,  
 For sawcéfeem he was, with eyen narwe.  
 As hoot he was, and lecherous, as a sparwe,  
 With scaléd browés blake and piléd berd,—  
 Of his visagé children were aferd.  
 Ther nas quyk-silver, lytarge, ne brym-  
 stoon,

Boras, ceruce, ne oille of Tartre noon, 630  
 Ne oyné that woldé clense and byte,  
 That hym myghte helpen of the whelkés  
 white,

Nor of the knobbés sittyng on his chekes.  
 Wel loved he garleek, oynons, and eek  
 lekes,

And for to drynken strong wyn, reed as  
 blood;

Thanne wolde he speke, and crie as he  
 were wood.

And whan that he wel dronken hadde  
 the wyn,

Than wolde he speke no word but Latyn.  
 A fewé termés hadde he, two or thre,  
 That he had lernéd out of som decree,—  
 No wonder is, he herde it al the day, 641  
 And eek ye knowen wel how that a jay

624. *cherubynnes face*. The author of the *Philobiblon* speaks of books brilliantly illuminated as 'cherubici libri.'

Kan clepen *Watte* as wel as kan the pope.  
 But whoso koude in oother thyng hym  
 grope,

Thanne hadde he spent al his philosophie;  
 Ay *Questio quid juris* wolde he crie.

He was a gentil harlot and a kynde;  
 A bettre felawe sholdé men nocht fynde.  
 He woldé suffre, for a quart of wyn,

A good felawe to have his concubyn 650  
 A twelf monthe, and excuse hym atté fulle;

And prively a fynch eek koude he pulle;  
 And if he foond ower a good felawe,

He woldé techen him to have noon awe,  
 In swich caas, of the Ercèdekenes curs,

But-if a mannés soule were in his purs;  
 For in his purs he sholde y-punysshed be:

'Purs is the Ercèdekenes helle,' seyde he.  
 But wel I woot he lyéd right in dede,

Of cursyng oghte ech gilty man him drede,  
 For curs wol slee,—right as assoillyng  
 savith; 661

And also war him of a *Significavit*.

In daunger hadde he at his owéne gise  
 The yongé girlés of the diocese,

And knew hir conseil, and was al hir reed.  
 A gerland hadde he set upon his heed,

As greet as it were for an alé-stake;  
 A bokeleer hadde he maad him of a cake.

With hym ther rood a gentil PARDONER  
 Of Rouncivale, his freend and his compeer,  
 That streight was comen fro the court of  
 Romé. 671

Ful loude he soong *Com hider, lovè, to me!*  
 This Somonour bar to hym a stif burdoun,

Was never trompe of half so greet a soun.  
 This Pardonere hadde heer as yelow as wax

But smothe it heeng as dooth a strike of  
 flex;

643. *Kan clepen Watte*, can call Walter.  
 646. *Questio quid juris*, the question is, what  
 is the law?

652. *pulle a fynch*, as we should say 'pluck a  
 pigeon,' plunder a fool.

662. *Significavit*, the opening word of a writ  
 for imprisoning an excommunicated person.

664. *girlés*, youths of both sexes.

670. *Of Rouncivale*. 'An Hospital *Beatae Marie de Rouncivale in Charing, London* is mentioned in the *Monasticon* [Dugdale's], t. ii. p. 443, and there was a Runceval Hall in Oxford. So that perhaps it was the name of some confraternity.'—Tyrwhitt. The parent Roncevaux was in Navarre.

By ounces henge his lokkés that he hadde,  
 And therwith he his shuldres overspradde.  
 But thynne it lay by colpons oon and oon;  
 But hood, for jolitee, ne wered he noon,  
 For it was trusséd up in his walét. 68r  
 Hym thoughte he rood al of the newè jet;  
 Dischevelee, save his cappe, he roodal bare.  
 Swiche glarynge eyen hadde he as an hare,  
 A vernycle hadde he sowed upon hiscappe;  
 His walet lay biforn hym in his lappe  
 Bret-ful of pardon, comen from Rome al  
 hoot.

A voys he hadde as smal as hath a goot;  
 No berd hadde he, ne never sholdé have,  
 As smothe it was as it were laté shave;  
 I trowe he were a geldyng or a mare. 69r  
 But of his craft, fro Berwyk unto Ware  
 Ne was ther swich another pardonor,  
 For in his male he hadde a pilwé-beer,  
 Which that, he seyde, was oure lady veyl;  
 He seyde he hadde a gobet of the seyl  
 That Seinté Peter hadde, whan that he wente  
 Upon the see, til Jhesu Crist hym hente.  
 He hadde a croys of latoun, ful of stones,  
 And in a glas he haddé piggés bones. 70o  
 But with thise relikés, whan that he fond  
 A pouré person dwellynge upon lond,  
 Upon a day he gat hym moore moneye  
 Than that the person gat in monthés tweye;  
 And thus with feynéd flaterye and japes  
 He made the person and the peple his apes.  
 But, trewely to tellen atté laste,  
 He was in chirche a noble ecclesiaste;  
 Wel koude he rede a lessoun or a storie,  
 But alderbest he song an Offertorie; 71o  
 For wel he wisté, whan that song was  
 songe,

He mosté preche, and wel affile his tonge  
 To wynné silver, as he ful wel koude;  
 Therefore he song the murierly and loude.

Now have I toold you shortly, in a  
 clause,

The staat, tharray, the nombre, and eek  
 the cause

Why that assembled was this compaignye  
 In Southwerk, at this gentil hostelrye,  
 That highte the Tabard, fasté by the Belle.  
 But now is tymé to yow for to telle 72o  
 How that we baren us that ilké nyght,  
 Whan we were in that hostelrie alyght;

And after wol I telle of our viage  
 And al the remenaunt of oure pilgrimage.

But first, I pray yow of youre curteisye,  
 That ye narette it nat my vileynye,  
 Thogh that I pleylnly speke in this mateere  
 To tellé yow hir wordés and hir cheere,  
 Ne thogh I speke hir wordés proprely;  
 For this ye knowen al-so wel as I, 73o  
 Whoso shal telle a tale after a man,  
 He moote reherce, as ny as ever he  
 kan,

Everich a word, if it be in his charge,  
 Al speke he never so rudéliche or large;  
 Or ellis he moot telle his tale untrewe,  
 Or feyné thyng, or fyndé wordés newe.  
 He may nat spare, although he were his  
 brother;

He moot as wel seye o word as another.  
 Crist spak hymself ful brode in hooly writ,  
 And wel ye woot no vileynye is it. 74o  
 Eek Plato seith, whoso that kan hym rede,  
 'The wordés moote be cosynto the dede.'

Also I prey yow to foryeve it me  
 Al have I nat set folk in hir degree  
 Heere in this tale, as that they sholdé  
 stonde;

My wit is short, ye may wel understonde.  
 Greet chieré made oure hoost us  
 everichon,

And to the soper sette he us anon,  
 And servéd us with vitaille at the beste:  
 Strong was the wyn and wel to drynke  
 us leste. 75o

A semely man OURE HOOSTÉ was  
 with-alle

For to han been a marchal in an halle.  
 A largé man he was, with eyen stepe,  
 A fairer burgeys is ther noon in Chepe;  
 Boold of his speche, and wys and well  
 y-taught

And of manhod hym lakkedé right naught.  
 Eek therto he was right a myrie man,  
 And after soper pleyen he bigan,  
 And spak of myrthe amongés othere  
 thynges,

Whan that we haddé maad our rekenynges;

727. *pleynly speke*, E<sup>8</sup>; *speke al pleyln*, H.  
 741. *Eek Plato seith*. Chaucer takes his  
 quotation from Boethius, *De Consolatione*, bk.  
 iii. prose 12.  
 753. *is*, E<sup>2</sup> was.

And seyde thus : ' Now, lordynges,  
trewely, <sup>761</sup>  
Ye been to me right welcome, hertely ;  
For by my trouthe, if that I shal nat lye,  
I ne saugh this yeer so myrie a compaignye  
In onés in this herberwe as is now ;  
Fayn wolde I doon yow myrthé, wiste I  
how.

And of a myrthe I am right now bythoght,  
To doon yow ese, and it shal costé noght.

' Ye goon to Canterbury—God yow  
speede, <sup>769</sup>

The blisful martir quité yow youre meede !  
And, wel I woot, as ye goon by the weye,  
Ye shapen yow to talen and to pleye ;  
For trewely confort ne myrthe is noon  
To ridé by the weye doumb as a stoon ;  
And therfore wol I maken yow disport,  
As I seyde erst, and doon yow som  
confort.

And if you liketh alle, by oon assent,  
Now for to stonden at my juggément,  
And to werken as I shal yow seye,  
To-morwé, whan ye riden by the weye,  
Now, by my fader soulé, that is deed, <sup>781</sup>  
But ye be myrie, smyteth of myn heed !  
Hoold up youre hond, withouten mooré  
speche.'

Oure conseil was nat longé for to seche ;  
Us thoughte it was noght worth to make  
it wys,

And graunted hym withouten moore avys,  
And bad him seye his verdit, as hym leste.

' Lordynges,' quod he, ' now herkneth  
for the beste ;

But taak it nought, I prey yow, in  
desdeyn ;

This is the poynt, to speken short and  
pleyn, <sup>790</sup>

That ech of yow, to shorté with your weye,  
In this viage shal tellé talés tweye,—

To Caunterburyward, I mean it so,  
And homward he shal tellen othere two,—  
Of aventúres that whilom han bifalle.

<sup>782.</sup> For *smyteth of* (i.e. *off*), E<sup>6</sup> read *I wol yeve you*.

<sup>791.</sup> E<sup>5</sup> read *oure* for *your*, but this makes the Host too precipitate.

<sup>793, 794.</sup> As the pilgrims progress we see clearly that they are only to tell *one* tale each on their way to Canterbury.

And which of yow that bereth hym beste  
of alle,

That is to seyn, that telleth in this caas  
Talés of best senténcé and moost solaaas,  
Shal have a soper at oure aller cost, <sup>799</sup>  
Heere in this placé, sittyng by this post,  
Whan that we come agayn fro Caunterbury.  
And, for to maké yow the mooré mury,  
I wol myselven gladly with yow ryde  
Right at myn owene cost, and be youre  
gyde ;

And whoso wole my juggément withseye  
Shal paye al that we spenden by the weye.  
And if ye vouché-sauf that it be so  
Tel me anon, withouten wordés mo,  
And I wol erly shapé me therfore.'

This thyng was graunted, and oure  
othés swore <sup>810</sup>

With ful glad herte, and preyden hym also  
That he would vouché-sauf for to do so,  
And that he woldé been oure governour,  
And of our talés juge and réportour,  
And sette a soper at a certeyn pris,  
And we wol reuléd been at his devys  
In heigh and lough ; and thus, by oon  
assent,

We been acorded to his juggément.  
And therupon the wyn was fet anon ;  
We dronken, and to resté wente echon,  
Withouten any lenger taryngé. <sup>821</sup>

Amorwé, whan that day gan for to  
sprynge,

Up roos oure Hoost and was oure aller cok,  
And gadrede us togidre alle in a flok,  
And forth we riden, a litel moore tnan paas,  
Unto the wateryng of Seint Thomas ;  
And there oure Hoost bigan his hors areste  
And seyde, ' Lordynges, herkneth, if  
yow leste :

Ye woot youre foreward and I it yow  
recorde.

If even-song and morwé-song accorde, <sup>830</sup>  
Lat se now who shal telle the firsté tale.  
As ever mote I drynké wyn or ale,  
Whoso be rebel to my juggément  
Shal paye for all that by the wey is spent !

<sup>799.</sup> *oure aller*, of us all. *your aller*, H.

<sup>803.</sup> *gladly*, E<sup>6</sup> *goodly*.  
<sup>826.</sup> *the wateryng of St. Thomas*, a brook near the second milestone on the Canterbury Road, where pilgrims watered their horses.



Now draweth cut, er that weferrer twynne.  
He which that hath the shorteste shal  
bigynne.

= Sire Knyght,' quod he, 'my mayster and  
my lord,

Now draweth cut, for that is myn accord.  
Cometh neer,' quod he, 'my lady Prioress,  
And ye sire Clerk, lat be your shame-  
fastnesse, 840  
Nestudieth noght; ley hond to, every man.'

Anon to drawen every wight bigan,  
And, shortly for to tellen as it was,  
Were it by aventure, or sort, or cas,  
The sothe is this, the cut fil to the knyght,  
Of which ful blithe and glad was every  
wyght :

And telle he moste his tale, as was resoun,  
By foreward and by composicioun,  
As ye han herd; what nedeth wordés  
mo?

And whan this goode man saugh that it  
was so, 850

As he that wys was and obedient  
To kepe his foreward by his free assent,  
He seyde, 'Syn I shal bigynne the game,  
What, welcome be the cut, a Goddés  
name!

Now lat us ryde, and herkneht what I  
seye.'

And with that word we ryden forth oure  
weye;

And he bigan with right a myrie cheere  
His tale anon, and seyde in this manere.

## [TALES OF THE FIRST DAY]

### [GROUP A]

#### KNIGHT'S TALE

##### *Heere bigynneth The Knyghtes Tale*

WHILOM, as oldé stories tellen us,  
Ther was a duc that highté Theseús; 860  
Of Atthenes he was lord and governour,  
And in his tymé swich a conquerour,  
That gretter was ther noon under the sonne.  
Ful many a riché cóntree hadde he wonne;  
That with his wysdom and his chivalrie  
He conquered al the regne of Femenye,  
That whilom was y-clepéd Scithia;  
And weddedé the queene Ypolita,  
And broghte hire hoom with hym in his  
contrée

With muchel glorie and greet solempnytee,  
And eek hir fairé suster Emelye. 871  
And thus with victorie and with melodye  
Lete I this noble duc to Atthenes ryde,  
And al his hoost in armés hym bisyde.

*Knight's Tale.* A discussion of Chaucer's  
adaptation of Boccaccio's *Teseide* in this tale  
will be found in the Introduction.

866. *the regne of Femenye*, the kingdom of the  
Amazons.

871. *saire*, H6 *yonge*.

And certés, if it nere to long to heere,  
I wolde han told yow fully the manere  
How wonnen was the regne of Femenye  
By Theseús and by his chivalrye;  
And of the greté bataille for the nones  
Bitwixen Atthenés and Amazones; 880  
And how assegéd was Ypolita,  
The fairé, hardy queene of Scithia,  
And of the feste that was at hir weddyngge,  
And of the tempest at hir hoom-comýngge;  
But al that thyng I moot as now forbere.  
I have, God woot, a largé feeld to ere,  
And wayké been the oxen in my plough.  
The remenant of the tale is long ynough,  
I wol nat letten eek noon of this route.  
Lat every felawe telle his tale aboute, 890  
And lat se now who shal the soper wyne;  
And ther I lefte I wol ageyn bigynne.

This duc, of whom I maké mencion,  
Whan he was come almost unto the  
toun,

In al his wele, and in his moosté pride,  
He was war, as he caste his eye aside,  
Where that ther kneled in the hyé weye  
A compaignye of ladyes, tweye and tweye,

Ech after oother, clad in clothés blake ;  
 But swich a cry and swich a wo they make  
 That in this world nys créature lyvyngé  
 That herdé swich another waymentyngé :  
 And of this cry they noldé nevere stenten,  
 Til they the reynés of his brydel henten.

‘What folk been ye, that at myn  
 hom-comyngé

Perturben so my festé with criyngé ?’

Quod Thesëus. ‘Have ye so greet envye  
 Of myn honóur, that thus compleyne and  
 crye ?’

Or who hath yow mysboden or offended ?  
 And telleth me if it may been amended,  
 And why that ye been clothéd thus in  
 blak ?’ 911

The eldeste lady of hem allé spak  
 Whan she hadde swownéd with a deedly  
 cheere,

That it was routhé for to seen and heere,  
 And seyde, ‘Lord, to whom fortune hath  
 yeven

Victorie, and as a conqueror to lyven,  
 Nat greveth us youre glorie and youre  
 honóur,

But we biseken mercy and socour.  
 Have mercy on oure wo and oure distresse :  
 Som drope of pitee, thurgh thy gentillesse,  
 Upon us wrecchéd wommen lat thou falle :  
 For certés, lord, ther is noon of us alle  
 That she ne hath been a duchesse or a  
 queene.

Now be we caytyves, as it is wel seene :  
 Thankéd be Fortune and hire falsé wheel,  
 That noon estat assureth to be weel.

And certés, lord, toabyden youre presence,  
 Heere in the temple of the goddessse  
 Clemence

We han ben waityngé al this fourté-  
 nyght ;

Now help us, lord, sith it is in thy  
 myght. 930

‘I wrecché, which that wepe and  
 waillé thus,

Was whilom wyf to kyng Capanëus,  
 That starf at Thebés; curséd be that  
 day !

And allé we that been in this array,  
 And maken al this lamentacioun,

931. *waillé, E<sup>3</sup> crié.*

We losten alle oure housbondes at that  
 toun,

Whil that the seegé ther-abouté lay,  
 And yet now the oldé Creon, weylaway !  
 That lord is now of Thebés, the citee,  
 Fulfild of ire and of inquitee, 940

He, for despit and for his tirannye,  
 To do the dedé bodyes vileynye  
 Of alle oure lordés, whiché that been  
 slawe,

Hath alle the bodyes on an heepe y-drawe,  
 And wol nat suffren hem, by noon assent,  
 Neither to been y-buryed nor y-brent,  
 But maketh houndés ete hem in despit.’

And with that word, withouten moore  
 respit,

They fillen gruf, and criden pitously,  
 ‘Have on us wrecched wommen som  
 mercy, 950

And lat oure sorwé synken in thyn herte.’  
 This gentil duc down from his courser  
 sterte

With herté pitous, whan he herde hem  
 speke.

Hym thoughté that his herté woldé breke  
 Whan he saugh hem, so pitous and so maat,  
 That whilom weren of so greet estat ;  
 And in his armés he hem alle up hente,  
 And hem conforteth in ful good entente,  
 And swoor his ooth, as he was trewé  
 knyght, 959

He woldé doon so ferforthly his myght  
 Upon the tiraunt Creon hem to wreke,  
 That all the peple of Grecé sholdé speke  
 How Creon was of Thesëus y-served  
 As he that hadde his deeth ful wel  
 deserved.

And right anoon, withouten moore abood,  
 His baner he desplayeth and forth rood  
 To Thebésward, and al his hoost biside.

No neer Atthénés wolde he go ne ride,  
 Ne take his esé fully half a day, 969

But onward on his way that nyght he lay ;  
 And sente anon Ypolita the queene,  
 And Emelye, hir yongé suster sheene,  
 Unto the toun of Atthenés to dwelle,  
 And forth he rit ; ther is namoore to telle.

The redé statue of Mars with spere  
 and targe

949. *fillen gruf, fell on their faces.*

So shyneth in his whitè baner large,  
That alle the feeldès glyteren up and doun,  
And by his baner born is his penoun  
Of gold ful riche, in which ther was y-bete  
The Mynotaur, which that he slough in  
Crete. 980

Thus rit this duc, thus rit this con-  
querour,

And in his hoost of chivalrie the flour,  
Til that he cam to Thebès, and alighte  
Faire in a feeld, ther as he thoughtè fighte.  
But, shortly for to speken of this thyng,  
With Creon, which that was of Thebès  
kyng,

He faught, and slough hym manly as a  
knyght,

In pleyn bataille, and putte the folk to  
flyght,

And by assaut he wan the citee after,  
And rente adoun. bothe wall and sparre  
and rafter 990

And to the ladyes he restored agayn  
The bonès of hir housbondes that weren  
slayn,

To doon obsequies as was tho the gyse.  
But it were al to longe for to devyse  
The gretè clamour and the waymentynge

Thát the ladyes made at the brennyng  
Óf the bodies, and the grete honour  
That Thesëus, the noble conquerour,  
Dooth to the ladyes whan they from hym  
wente ;

But shortly for to telle is myn entente.

Whan that this worthy duc, this  
Thesëus, 1001

Hath Creon slayn, and wonné Thebès thus,  
Stille in that feeld he took al nyght his reste,  
And dide with al the contree as hym leste.

To ransake in the taas of bodyes dede,  
Hem for to strepe of harneys and of wede,  
The pilours didnen bisynesse and cure  
After the bataille and disconfiture.

And so bifel that in the taas they founde,  
Thurgh-girt with many a grevous, bloody  
wounde, 1010

Two yongè knyghtès, liggyng by and by,  
Bothe in oon armès, wrought ful richèly,

*977. the feeldes, sometimes wrongly explained  
as the heraldic ground of his banner; but cp.  
Anelida, l. 40.*

*993. obsequies, H exequies.*

Of whichè two Arcita highte that oon,  
And that oother knyght highte Palamon.  
Nat fully quyke, ne fully dede they were,  
But by here cote-armures and by hir gere  
The heraudes knewe hem best in special,  
As they that weren of the blood roial  
Of Thebès, and of sustren two y-born.

Out of the taas the pilours han hem torn  
And han hem caried softe unto the tente  
Of Theseus, and ful soonè he hem sente  
To Athenès, to dwellen in prisoun  
Perpetually, he noldè no raunsoun.

And whan this worthy duc hath thus y-don,  
He took his hoost and hoom he rood anon,  
With laurer crownèd as a conquerour ;  
And ther he lyveth in joye and in honour  
Terme of his lyve ; what nedeth wordès mo?  
And in a tour, in angwissh and in wo, 1030  
This Palamon and his felawe Arcite  
For evermoore ; ther may no gold hem  
quite.

This passeth yeer by yeer and day by day,  
Till it fil onès, in a morwe of May,  
That Emelye, that fairer was to sene  
Than is the lylie upon his stalkè grene,  
And fressher than the May with flourès  
newe,—

For with the rosè colour stroof hire hewe,  
I noot which was the fyner of hem two,—  
Er it were day, as was hir wone to do,  
She was arisen and al redy dight : 1041  
For May wole have no slogardrie a nyght,  
The sesoun priketh every gentil herte  
And maketh hym out of his slepe to sterte,  
And seith, ' Arys, and do thyn óbservaunce.'  
This makéd Emelye have rémembráunce  
To doon honour to May, and for to ryse.  
Y-clothéd was she fresshe, for to devyse ;  
Hir yelow heer was broyded in a tresse  
Bihynde hir bak, a yerdè long, I gesse ; 1050  
And in the gardyn, at the sonne up-riste,  
She walketh up and doun, and as hire liste  
She gadereth flourès, party white and rede,  
To make a subtil gerland for hire hede,  
And as an aungel hevenysshly she soong.

The gretè tour, that was so thikke and  
stroong,

Which of the castel was the chief dongeoun  
(Ther as the knyghtès weren in prisoun,  
Of whichè I toldè yow and tellen shal),

Was evene joynant to the gardyn wal,  
Ther as this Emelye hadde hir pleyynge.  
Bright was the sonne, and cleer that  
morwenynge,

And Palamon, this woful prisoner,  
As was his wone, bi leve of his gayler,  
Was risen, and roméd in a chambre on  
heigh, 1065

In which he al the noble citee seigh,  
Andeek the gardyn, ful of braunches grenc,  
Ther as this fresshé Emelye the sheene  
Was in hire walk and roméd up and down.  
This sorweful prisoner, this Palamoun,  
Goth in the chambré romynge to and fro,  
And to hymself compleynynge of his wo ;  
That he was born, ful ofte he seyde, 'allas !'  
And so bifel, by aventure or cas,  
That thurgh a wyndow, thikke of many  
a barre 1075

Of iren, greet and square as any sparre,  
He cast his eyen upon Emelya,  
And therwithal he bleynte and cridè, 'A !'  
As though he stongen were unto the herte.  
And with that cry Arcite anon up sterde,  
And seyde, 'Cosyn myn, what eyleth thee,  
That art so pale and deedly on to see ?  
Why cridestow ? who hath thee doon  
offence ?

For Goddés love, taak al in pacience  
Oure prison, for it may noon oother be ;  
Fortune hath yeven us this adversitee.  
Som wikke aspèct or disposicioun  
Of Saturne, by sum constellacioun,  
Hath yeven us this, although we hadde  
it sworn ;

So stood the hevene whan that we were  
born ; 1090

We moste endure : this is the short and  
playn.'

This Palamon answerde, and seyde  
agayn,

'Cosyn, for sothe of this opinioun  
Thow hast a veyn ymaginacioun ;  
This prison causéd me nat for to crye,  
But I was hurt right now thurghout myn eye  
Into myn herte, that wol my banè be.  
The fairnesse of that lady that I see  
Yond in the gardyn romen to and fro,  
Is cause of al my cryyng and my wo. 1100  
I noot wher she be womman or goddesse,

But Venus is it, soothly, as I gesse.'  
And therwithal on kneès down he fil,  
And seyde : 'Venus, if it be thy wil  
Yow in this gardyn thus to transfigure  
Bifore me, sorweful, wrecché créature,  
Out of this prison helpe that we may  
scapen.

And if so be my destynece be shapen,  
By eternè word, to dyen in prisoun,  
Of our lynage have som compassioun, 1110  
That is so lowe y-broght by tirannye.'

And with that word Arcité gan espye  
Wher as this lady roméd to and fro,  
And with that sighte hir beautee hurte  
hym so,

That if that Palamon was wounded sore,  
Arcite is hurt as moche as he, or moore ;  
And with a sigh he seyde pitously :  
'The fresshé beautee sleeth me sodeynly  
Of hire that rometh in the yonder place,  
And but I have hir mercy and hir grace,  
That I may seen hire attè leestè weye, 1121  
I nam but deed ; ther is namoore to seye.'

This Palamon, whan he tho wordès  
herde,  
Dispitously he lookèd, and answerde,  
'Wheitherseistow this in ernest or in play ?'  
'Nay,' quod Arcite, 'in ernest, by my  
fey !

God helpe me so, me list ful yvele pleye.'

This Palamon gan knytte his browès  
tweye,

'It nere,' quod he, 'to thee no greet  
honour,

For to be fals, ne for to be traitour 1130

To me, that am thy cosyn and thy brother  
Y-sworn ful depe, and ech of us til oother,  
That never, for to dyen in the peyne,  
Til that deeth departè shal us tweyne,  
Neither of us in love to hyndrè oother,  
Ne in noon oother cas, my leevè brother,  
But that thou sholdest trewely forthren me  
In every cas, as I shal forthren thee.

This was thyn ooth, and myn also certeyn ;  
I woot right wel thou darst it nat withseyne.  
Thus artow of my conseil, out of doute :  
And now thow woldest falsly been aboute  
To love my lady, whom I love and serve,  
And ever shal, til that myn hertè sterve.  
Nay certès, false Arcite, thow shalt nat so ;

I loved hire first, and toldè thee my wo  
As to my conseil, and my brother sworn  
To forthrè me, as I have toold biforn.  
For which thou art y-bounden as a knyght  
To helpen me, if it lay in thy myght; 1150  
Or ellès artow fals, I dar wel seyn.'

This Arcité ful proudly spak ageyn;  
'Thow shalt,' quod he, 'be rather fals  
than I;

And thou art fals, I telle thee, outrèly,  
For *par amour* I loved hire first er thow.  
What wiltow seyn? thou wigest nat yet now  
Wheither she be a womman or goddesse!  
Thyn is affeccióun of hoolynesse,  
And myn is love as to a créature;  
For which I toldè thee myn aventure 1160  
As to my cosyng and my brother sworn.

I posè that thow lovedest hire biforn,  
Wostow nat wel the oldè clerkès sawe,  
That *who shal yeve a lovere any lawe*;  
*Love is a gretter lawe, by my pan,*  
*Than may be yeve of any erthely man?*

And therfore positif lawe and swich decree  
Is broken al day for love, in ech degree.  
A man moot nedès love, maugree his heed;  
He may nat flee it, thogh he sholde be  
deed, 1170

Al be she mayde, or wydwe, or ellès wyf;  
And eek it is nat likly, al thy lyf,  
To stonden in hir grace; namoore shal I;  
For wel thou woost thyselven, verraily,  
That thou and I be dampnèd to prisoun  
Perpetuelly; us gayneth no raunsoun.  
We stryven as didè the houndès for the  
boon,

They foughte al day, and yet hir part  
was noon;

Ther cam a kyte, whil that they weren  
so wrothe,  
And baar away the boon bitwixe hem  
bothe; 1180

And therfore, at the kyngès court, my  
brother,

1147. For *conseil* Lansdowne MS. reads *cosin*, cp. l. 1161.

1163. *olde clerkes sawe*. The proverb is found in Boethius, *De Consolatione Philosophiae*, lib. iii. met. 12, translated by Chaucer: 'But what is he that may yeve a lawe to lovers? Love is a gretter law and a strengere to hymself than any lawe that men may yeven.'

Éch man for hymself, ther is noon oother.  
Love, if thee list, for I love and ay shal,  
And soothly, leevè brother, this is al.  
Heere in this prisoun mootè we endure  
And everich of us take his aventure.'

Greet was the strif, and long, bitwix  
hem tweye,

If that I haddè leyser for to seye;  
But to theffect. It happèd on a day,—  
To telle it yow as shortly as I may,— 1190  
A worthy duc, that highte Perothèus,  
That felawe was unto duc Thesèus,  
Syn thilkè day that they were children lite,  
Was come to Atthenes, his felawe to visite,  
And for to pleye, as he was wont to do;  
For in this world he lovèd no man so,  
And he loved hym as tendrely agayn.

So wel they lovede, as oldè bookès sayn,  
That whan that oon was deed, soothly to  
telle,

His felawe wente and soughte hym doun  
in helle,— 1200

But of that storic list me nat to write.  
Duc Perothèus lovèd wel Arcite,  
And hadde hym knowe at Thebès, yeer  
by yere;

And finally, at réquest and preyére  
Of Perothèus, withouten any raunsoun,  
Duc Thesèus hym leet out of prisoun  
Frelly to goon wher that hym liste over-al,  
In swich a gyse as I you tellen shal.

This was the forward, pleyedly for tendite,  
Bitwixen Thesèus and hym Arcite; 1210  
That if so were that Arcite were y-founde,  
Ever in his lif, by day or nyght, oo stounde,  
In any contree of this Thesèus,  
And he were caught, it was acorded thus,  
That with a swerd he sholdè lese his heed:  
Ther nas noon oother remedie, ne reed,  
But taketh his leve and homward he him  
spedde:

Lat hym be war, his nekkè lith to wedde.

How greet a sorwe suffireth now Arcite!

1193. Chaucer is out here in his mythology, for Pirithous, King of Thessaly, was originally the enemy of Theseus, and invaded Attica.

1200. Chaucer takes this from the *Roman de la Rose*. According to the original legend Theseus and Pirithous visited hell, when the latter was minded to carry off its queen, Proserpina.

1212. oo, MSS. or.

The death he feeleth thurgh his herté  
smyte ; 1220

He wepeth, wayleth, crieth pitously ;  
To sleen hymself he waiteth prively.  
He seyde, 'Allas that day that I was born !  
Now is my prisoun worsè than biforn ;  
Now is me shape eternally to dwelle,  
Nat in my purgatorie, but in helle.  
Allas that ever knew I Perothëus !  
For ellès hadde I dwelled with Thesëus,  
Y-fetered in his prisoun evermo.

Thanne hadde I been in blisse, and nat  
in wo, 1230  
Oonly the sighte of hire, whom that I  
serve,—

Though that I never hir gracè may  
deserve,—

Wolde han suffisèd right ynough for me.  
O deerè cosyn Palamon,' quod he,  
'Thyn is the victorie of this aventure !  
Ful blisfully in prison maistow dure,—  
In prisoun ? certès nay, but in paradys !  
Wel hath Fortune y-turnèd thee the dys,  
That hast the sighte of hire and I  
thabsence. 1239

For possible is, syn thou hast hire presence,  
And art a knyght, a worthy and an able,  
That by som cas, syn Fortune is change-  
able,

Thow maist to thy desir some tyme atteyne,  
But I, that am exilèd and bareyne  
Of allè grace, and in so greet dispeir,  
That ther nys erthè, water, fir, ne eir,  
Ne creäture, that of hem makéd is,  
That may me heele, or doon confort in  
this—

Wel oughte I sterve in wanhope and  
distresse ; 1249

Farwel, my lif, my lust and my gladnesse !  
'Allas, why pleynten folk so in commune  
Of purvieaunce of God, or of Fortune,  
That yeveth hem ful ofte in many a gyse  
Wel bettre than they kan hem self devyse ?  
Som man desireth for to han richesse,  
That cause is of his moerdre, or greet  
siknesse ;

And som man wolde out of his prisoun fayn,  
That in his hous is of his meynec slayn.

1226. *my*, om. H<sup>6</sup>.

1248. *heele*, H<sup>6</sup> *helpe*.

Infinite harmès been in this mateere, 1259  
We witen nat what thing we preyen heere.  
We faren as he that dronke is as a mous.  
A dronké man woot wel he hath an hous,  
But he noot which the rightè wey is thider,  
And to a dronké man the wey is slider ;  
And certès in this world so faren we,—  
We seken faste after felicitee,  
But we goon wrong ful often, trewely.  
Thus may we seyèn alle, and namely I,  
That wende and hadde a greet opinioun  
That if I myghte escapen from prisoun,  
Thanne hadde I been in joye and perfit  
heele, 1271

Ther now I am exilèd fro my wele.  
Syn that I may nat seen you, Emelye,  
I nam but deed, there nys no remedye.'

Upon that oother sydè, Palamon,  
Whan that he wiste Arcité was agon,  
Swich sorwe he maketh that the gretè tour  
Resounèd of his youlyng and clamour ;  
The purè fettres on his shynès grete  
Weren of his bittre, saltè teerès wete. 1280  
'Allas !' quod he, 'Arcita, cosyn myn,  
Of al oure strif, God woot, the fruyt is  
thyn ;

Thow walkest now in Thebès at thy large,  
And of my wo thow yevest litel charge.  
Thou mayst, syn thou hast wysdom and  
manhede,

Assemblen alle the folk of oure kynrede,  
And make a werre so sharpe on this citec,  
That by som aventure, or som tretee,  
Thow mayst have hire to lady and to wyf,  
For whom that I moste nedès lese my lyf.  
For, as by wey of possibilitee, 1291  
Sith thou art at thy large, of prisoun free,  
And art a lord, greet is thyn avauntage,  
Moore than is myn that sterve here in a  
cage ;

For I moot wepe and waylè while I lyve,  
With al the wo that prison may me yeve,  
And eek with peyne that love me yeveth  
also,

That doubleth al my torment and my wo.'  
Therwith the fyr of jalousie up-sterte  
Withinne his brest, and hente him by the  
herte 1300

So woody, that he lyk was to biholde

1278. *Resouned*, H<sup>6</sup> *resouneth*.

The boxtree, or the asshen, dede and colde.

Thanne seyde he, 'O cruell goddes that govérne

This world with byndyng of youre word eterne,

And writen in the table of atthamaunt  
 Youre parlément and youre eterné graunt,  
 What is mankyndé moore unto you holde  
 Than is the sheepe that rouketh in the folde ? 1308

For slayn is man, right as another beest,  
 And dwelleth eek in prison and arrest,  
 And hath siknesse and greet adversitee,  
 And ofté tymés giltélees, *pardee*.

'What governance is in this prescience,  
 That giltélees tormenteth innocence ?  
 And yet encresseth this al my penaunce,  
 That man is bounden to his óbservaunce  
 For Goddés sake to letten of his wille,  
 Ther as a beest may al his lust fulfillle ;  
 And whan a beest is deed he hath no peyne,  
 But after his deeth man moot wepe and pleyne, 1320

Though in this world he havé care and wo ;  
 Withouten douté it may stonden so.  
 The answeere of this I leté to dyvynys,  
 But well I woot that in this world greet pyne ys.

Allas ! I se a serpent or a theef,  
 That many a trewé man hath doon mescheef,

Goon at his large, and where hym list may turne ;

But I moot been in prisoun thurgh Saturne,  
 And eek thurgh Juno, jalous and eek wood,

That hath destroyéd wel ny al the blood 1330

Of Thebés, with his wasté wallés wyde ;  
 And Venus sleeth me on that oother syde  
 For jalousie and fere of hym Arcite.'

Now wol I stynte of Palamon a lite  
 And lete hym in his prisoun stillé dwelle,  
 And of Arcitea forth I wol yow telle.

1320. *But after his deeth man*, etc., so E<sup>4</sup>, throwing a stress, which accords well with the sense, on *his* ; H<sup>3</sup> more smoothly, *But man after his deeth*, etc.

1323. *I leté*, E<sup>6</sup> *lete I*, 'spoiling the accents throughout the line.

The sommer passeth, and the nyghtés longe

Encressen double wise the peynés stronge  
 Bothe of the lovere and the prisoner. 1339

I noot which hath the wofuller mester ;  
 For shortly for to seyn this Palamoun  
 Perpetuelly is dampnéd to prisoun,  
 In cheynés and in fettres to been deed,  
 And Arcite is exiled upon his heed  
 For ever-mo, as out of that contree,  
 Ne never-mo he shal his lady see.

Yow loveres axe I now this questioun,  
 Who hath the worse, Arcite or Palamoun ?  
 That oon may seen his lady day by day,  
 Bút in prison he moot dwelle alway ; 1350  
 That oother wher hym list may ride or go,  
 But seen his lady shal he never mo.  
 Now demeth as yow listé, ye that kan,  
 For I wol tellé forth as I bigan.

## PART II

Whan that Arcite to Thebés comen was,  
 Ful ofte a dayheswelte and seyde, 'Allas !'  
 For seen his lady shal he never mo.

And, shortly to concluden al his wo,  
 So muché sorwe hadde never créature  
 That is, or shal, whil that the world may dure. 1360

His slepe, his mete, his drynke, is hym biraft,

That lene he wexe and drye as is a shaft ;  
 His eyen holwe, and grisly to biholde,  
 His hewé falow, and pale as asshen colde,  
 And solitarie he was and ever allone,  
 And waillynge al the nyght, makynge his mone :

And if he herdé song or instrument  
 Thanne wolde he wepe, he myghté nat be stent.

So feble eek were his spiritz and so lowe,  
 And chaungéd so that no man koudé knowe 1370

His spechè nor his voys, though men it herde :

And in his geere for al the world he ferde,  
 Nat oonly like the loveris maladye

1337. *sommer*, E *sonne*.

1344. *upon his heed*, on pain of losing his head.

1362. *wexe*, E<sup>2</sup> *wexeth*.

Of Hereos, but rather lyk manye,  
 Engendred of humour maléncolik,  
 Biforn, in his owene cellé fantastik.  
 And, shortly, turnéd was al up-so-doun  
 Bothe habit and eek disposicioun  
 Of hym, this woful lovere daun Arcite.

What sholde I al day of his wo endite?  
 Whan he enduréd hadde a yeer or two 1381  
 This cruél torment and this peyne and  
 woo,

At Thebés, in his contree, as I seyde,  
 Upon a nyght, in sleepe as he hym leyde,  
 Hym thoughte how that the wyngéd god  
 Mercúrie

Biforn hym stood and bad hym to be  
 murie ;

His slepy yerde in hond he bar uprighte,  
 An hat he werede upon his heris brighte.  
 Arrayéd was this god, as he took keepe,  
 As he was whan that Argus took his sleepe,  
 And seyde hym thus, 'To Atthénés  
 shaltou wende ; 1391

Ther is thee shapen of thy wo an ende.'  
 And with that word Arcité wook and  
 sterte,—

'Now trewély, hou sooré that me smerte,'  
 Quod he, 'to Atthénés right now wol I fare,  
 Ne for the drede of deeth shal I nat spare,  
 To se my lady that I love and serve ;  
 In hire presence I recché nat to sterve.'

And with that word he caughte a  
 greet miróur 1399

And saugh that chaungéd was al his colour  
 And saugh his visage al in another kynde ;  
 And right anon it ran hym in his mynde,  
 That sith his facé was so disfigúred  
 Of maladye the which he hadde endured,  
 He myghté wel, if that he bar hym lowe,  
 Lyve in Atthénés evermore unknowe,  
 And seen his lady wel ny day by day.  
 And right anon he chaungéd his array  
 And cladde hym as a pouré laborer,

1374. *Hereos*, Eros, Love.

1376. *Biforn*, in his *owene celle fantastik* ; in is from H only ; *owene* from E<sup>2</sup> only. According to medieval theory Mania was begotten in the front cell of the head which was appropriated to the imagination.

1387. *yerde*, Mercury's *caduceus*.

1389. *he*, E. I.

1390. *Argus*, the hundred-eyed guardian of Io. Mercury lulled him with music and slew him.

And al allone,—save oonly a squiér 1410  
 That knew his privétee and al his eas,  
 Which was disguised pouerely as he was,—  
 To Atthénés is he goon the nexté way,  
 And to the court he wente upon a day,  
 And at the gate he profreth his servyse  
 To druggé and drawe, what so men wol  
 devyse.

And, shortly of this matere for to seyn,  
 He fil in office with a chamberleyn  
 The which that dwellynge was with  
 Emelye ; 1419

For he was wys and koude soone espye  
 Of every servaunt which that serveth here.  
 Wel koude he hewen wode and water bere,  
 For he was yong, and myghty for the nones,  
 And therto he was long and big of bones,  
 To doon that any wight kan hym devyse.

A yeer or two he was in this servyse,  
 Page of the chambre of Emelye the brighte,  
 And Philostrate he seyde that he highte.

But half so wel biloved a man as he 1429  
 Ne was ther never in court of his degree ;  
 He was so gentil of his condicioun

That thurghout al the court was his renoun.  
 They seyden that it were a charitee  
 That Thesëus wolde enhauncen his degree,  
 And putten hym in worshipful servyse,  
 Ther as he myghte his vertu exercise.

And thus withinne a while his name is  
 spronge,

Bothe of his dedés and his goodé tonge,  
 That Thesëus hath taken hym so neer,  
 That of his chambre he made hym a squiér,  
 And yaf him gold to mayntene his degree ;  
 And eek men broghte hym out of his  
 contree,

From yeer to yeer, ful pryvély, his rente ;  
 But honestly and slyly he it spente  
 That noman wondred how that he it hadde.

And thre yeer in this wise his lif he ladde  
 And bar hym so in pees, and eek in werre,  
 Ther was no man that Thesëus hath derre.

And in this blissé lete I now Arcite  
 And speke I wole of Palamon a lite. 1450

1424. *long*, EH<sup>3</sup> ; Hengwrt<sup>4</sup>, *strong*.

1428. *Philostrate* : in the *Teseide* Arcite takes the name of Pentheo. The name Philostrate was probably suggested to Chaucer by Boccaccio's poem *Filostrate*, the original of *Troilus and Cressida*.



In derknesse and horrible and strong  
prison

Thise seven yeer hath seten Palamon.  
Forpynéd, what for wo and for distresse.  
Who feeleth double soor and hevynesse  
But Palamon? that love destreyneth so  
That wood out of his wit he goth for wo;  
And eek ther-to he is a prisoner  
Perpetuelly, noght only for a yer.

Who koudè ryme in Englyssh proprely  
His martirdom? for sothe it am nat I;  
Therefore I passe as lightly as I may. 1461

It fel that in the seventh yer, in May,  
The thriddè nyght, as oldè bookès seyn,  
That al this storie tellen moorè pleyn,  
Were it by aventure or destynce,—  
As whan a thyng is shapen it shal be,—  
That soone after the mydnyght, Palamoun,  
By helypyng of a freend brak his prisoun  
And fleeth the citee, faste as he may go,  
For he hade yeve his gayler drynkè so,  
Of a clarree, maad of a certeyn wyn, 1471  
With nercotikes, and opie of Thebès fyn,  
That al that nyght, thogh that men wolde  
him shake,

The gayler sleepe, he myghtè nat awake;  
And thus he fleeth, as faste as ever  
he may.

The nyght was short and fastè by the day,  
That nedès-cost he moot hymselfen hyde,  
And til a grové, fastè ther bisyde,  
With dredeful foot, thanne stalketh Pala-  
moun.

For, shortly, this was his opinioun, 1480  
That in that grove he wolde hym hyde al  
day,

And in the nyght thanne wolde he take  
his way

To Thebès-ward, his freendès for to preye  
On Thesèus to helpe him to werreye;  
And, shortly, outhur he woldè lese his lif,  
Or wynnen Emelye unto his wyf.

This is theffect and his ententè pleyn.

Now wol I turnè to Arcite ageyn,  
That litel wiste how ny that was his care,  
Til that Fortúne had broght him in the  
snare. 1490

1454. *soor*, E<sup>5</sup>; H<sup>2</sup>, *sorwe*.

1472. *Thebes*, in Egypt, not in Greece.

1472. *withe*, E. of.

The bisy larkè, messenger of day,  
Salueth in hir song the morwè gray,  
And firy Phebus riseth up so brighte  
That al the orient laugheth of the lighte,  
And with his stremès dryeth in the greves  
The silver dropès, hangynge on the leves.  
And Arcite, that is in the court roial  
With Thesèus, his squier principal,  
Is risen, and looketh on the myrie day;  
And for to doon his óbservaunce to May,  
Remembrynge on the poynt of his desir,  
He on a courser, stertyng as the fir,  
Is riden into the feeldès hym to pleye,  
Out of the court, were it a myle or tweye;  
And to the grove of which that I yow tolde,  
By aventure, his wey he gan to holde,  
To maken hym a gerland of the greves,  
Were it of wodèbynde, or hawethorn leves,  
And loude he song ageyn the sonnè shene:  
'Máy, with alle thy floures and thy grene,  
Wélcome be thou, fairè, fressshè May, 1511  
In hope that I som grenè getè may.'  
And from his courser with a lusty herte  
Into a grove ful hastily he sterte,  
And in a path he rometh up and down,  
Ther as by aventure this Palamoun  
Was in a bussh, that no man myghte  
hym se,

For soore aferéd of his deeth was he.  
No-tyng ne knew he that it was Arcite:  
God woot he wolde have trowéd it ful lite;  
But sooth is seyð, gon sithen many yeres,  
That feeld hath eyen, and the wode hath  
eres.

It is ful fair a man to bere hym evene,  
For al day meeteth men al unset stevene.  
Ful litel woot Arcite of his felawe  
That was so ny to herknen al his sawe,  
For in the bussh he sitteth now ful stille.

Whan that Arcite hadde roméd al his  
fille,

And songen al the roundel lustily,  
Into a studie he fil al sodeynly, 1530  
As doon thise loveres in hir queyntè  
geres,—

Now in the cropè, now down in the breres,

1494. *That al the orient laugheth*; Dante, *Purg.* l. 20, 'faceva tutto rider l' oriente.' (Skeat.)

1522. *That feeld hath eyen*: 'Campus habet lumen et habet nemus auris acumen.'

1524. *unset stevene*, unappointed time.

Now up, now doun, as boket in a welle.  
 Right as the Friday, soothly for to telle,  
 Now it shyneth, now it reyneth faste,  
 Right so kan geery Venus overcaste  
 The hertés of hir folk ; right as hir day  
 Is gereful, right so chaungeth she array,—  
 Selde is the Friday al the wowke y-like.

Whan that Arcite had songe, he gan  
 to sike, 1540  
 And sette hym doun withouten any moore :  
 'Allas,' quod he, 'that day that I was  
 bore !

How longé, Juno, thurgh thy crueltee,  
 Woltow werreyen Thebés the citee ?  
 Allas, y-broght is to confusioun  
 The blood roial of Cadme and  
 Amphioun,—

Of Cadmus, which that was the firsté man  
 That Thebés bulte, or first the toun bigan,  
 And of the citee first was crouned kyng.  
 Of his lynage am I, and his ofspryng 1550  
 By verray ligne, as of the stok roial ;  
 And now I am so caytyf and so thral,  
 That he that is my mortal enemy,  
 I serve hym as his squier pourèly.

And yet dooth Juno me wel mooré shame,  
 For I darnoght biknowe myn owene name ;  
 But ther as I was wont to highte Arcite,  
 Now highte I Philostrate, noght worth a  
 myte.

Allas, thou fellé Mars ! allas, Juno ! 1559  
 Thus hath youre ire oure kynrede al fordo,  
 Save oonly me, and wrecched Palamoun,  
 That Theséus martireth in prisoun.

And over al this, to sleen me outrey,  
 Love hath his fryr dart so brennyngly  
 Y-stikéd thurgh my trewé, careful herte,  
 That shapen was my deeth erst than my  
 sherte.

Ye sleen me with youre eyén, Emelye !  
 Ye been the causé wherfore that I dye !  
 Of al the remenant of myn oother care  
 Ne sette I nat the montance of a tare,  
 So that I koude doon aught to youre  
 plesaunce. 1571

And with that word he fil doun in a traunce  
 A longé tyme, and afterward up-sterete.

1536. *kan*, H<sup>4</sup> *gan*.

1566. *sherte*, shirt; cp. *Legend of Good Women*, l. 2626, and *Troilus*, 734.

This Palamoun, that thoughte that  
 thurgh his herte

He felte a coold swerd sodeynliché glyde,  
 For ire he quook, no lenger wolde he byde.  
 And whan that he had herd Arcitès tale,  
 As he were wood, with facé deed and pale,  
 He stirte hym up out of the buskés thikke,  
 And seide, 'Arcitè, falsè traytour wikke !  
 Now artow hent, that lovest my lady so,  
 For whom that I have al this peyne and wo,  
 And art my blood, and to my conseil sworn,  
 As I ful ofte have seyde thee heer-biforn,  
 And hast byjapéd heere duc Theséus,  
 And falsly chaungéd hast thy namè thus ;  
 I wol be deed, or ellès thou shalt dye ;  
 Thou shalt nat love my lady Emelye,  
 But I wol love hire oonly, and namo ;  
 For I am Palamon, thy mortal foo, 1590  
 And though that I no wepene have in  
 this place,

But out of prison am astart by grace,  
 I dredè noght that outhur thou shalt dye,  
 Or thow ne shalt nat loven Emelye.  
 Chees which thou wolt, for thou shalt  
 nat astarte !'

This Arcitè, with ful despitous herte,  
 Whan he hym knew, and hadde his talé  
 herd,

As fiers ás leoun pullèd out his swerd,  
 And seyde thus, 'By God that sit above,  
 Nere it that thou art sik and wood for love,  
 And eek that thow no wepne hast in this  
 place, 1601

Thou sholdest never out of this grové pace,  
 That thou ne sholdest dyen of myn hond,  
 For I defye the seurete and the bond  
 Which that thou seist that I have maad  
 to thee.

What, verray fool, thynk wel that love is fre !  
 And I wol love hire mawgree al thy myght.  
 But for as muche thou art a worthy knyght,  
 And wilnest to darreyne hire by bataille,  
 Have heer my trouthe, tomorwe I wol  
 nat faile, 1610

Withoutè wityng of any oother wight,  
 That heere I wol be founden as a knyght,  
 And bryngen harneys right ynough for  
 thee,—

1584. *seyd*, H<sup>5</sup> *told*.  
 1595. *for*, E<sup>6</sup> *or*. 1598. *his*, H<sup>5</sup> *a*.

And chese the beste and leve the worste  
for me,—  
And mete and drynkè this nyght wol I  
brynge  
Ynough for thee, and clothes for thy  
beddyng;e ;  
And if so be that thou my lady wynne  
And sle me in this wode ther I am inne,  
Thou mayst wel have thy lady, as for me.'  
This Palamon answerde, 'I graunte it  
thee.' 1620  
And thus they been departed til a-morwe,  
Whan ech of hem had leyd his feith to  
borwe.

O Cupide, out of allè charitee !  
O regne, that wolt no felawe have with  
thee !  
Ful sooth is seyð that lovè ne lordshipe  
Wol noght, his thankès, have no felawe-  
shipe.  
Wel fynden that Arcite and Palamoun !  
Arcite is riden anon unto the toun,  
And on the morwe, er it were dayès light,  
Ful prively two harneys hath he dight, 1630  
Bothe suffisaunt and metè to darreyne  
The bataille in the feeld betwix hem  
tweyne ;  
And on his hors, allone as he was born,  
He carieth al the harneys hym biforn :  
And in the grove, at tyme and place y-set,  
This Arcite and this Palamon ben met.  
To chaungen gan the colour in hir face,  
Right as the hunters, in the regne of  
Trace,  
That stondesth at the gappè with a spere,  
Whan hunted is the leoun or the bere,  
And hereth hym come russhyng in the  
greves, 1641  
And breketh both bowès and the leves,  
And thynketh, 'Heere cometh my  
mortal enemy,  
With-ouët failè he moot be deed or I ;  
For outhur I moot sleen hym at the gappe,  
Or he moot sleen me, if that me  
mysshappe' :  
So ferden they in chaungyng of hir hewe,  
As fer as everich of hem outhur knewe.  
Ther nas no 'God day,' ne no saluyng,  
1637. *To, H<sup>1</sup> tho.*

But streight, withouten word or re-  
hersyng, 1650  
Everich of hem heelpè for to armen outhur,  
As frendly as he were his owene brother ;  
And after that, with sharpè sperès stronge,  
They foynen ech at outhur wonder longe.  
Thou myghtest wenè that this Palamoun,  
In his fightyng were a wood leoun,  
And as a crucl tigre was Arcite :  
As wildè borès gonnè they to smyte,  
That frothen whit as foom for irè wood,—  
Up to the ancle foghte they in hir blood.  
And in this wise I lete hem fightyng  
dwelle, 1661  
And forth I wole of Thesèus yow telle.

The Destinee, ministrè general,  
That executeth in the world over al,  
The purveiaunce that God hathseyne biforn,  
So strong it is that, though the world had  
sworn  
The contrarie of a thyng by ye or nay,  
Yet somtyme it shal fallen ou a day  
That falleth nat eft withinne a thousand  
yeere.  
For certainly oure appetitès heere, 1670  
Be it of werre, or pees, or hate, or love,  
Al is this reulèd by the sighte above.  
This mene I now by myghty Thesèus,  
That for to huntèn is so desirüs,  
And namely at the gretè hert in May,  
That in his bed ther daweth hym no day  
That he nys clad, and redy for to ryde  
With hunte and horne, and houndès hym  
bisyde.  
For in his huntyngh hath he swich delit,  
That it is al his joye and appetit 1680  
To been hymself the gretè hertès bane,  
For after Mars he serveth now Dyane.  
Cler was the day, as I have toold er  
this,  
And Thesèus, with allè joye and blis,  
With his Ypolita, the fairè queene,  
And Emelyè, clothèd al in grene,  
On huntyngh be they riden roially ;  
And to the grove, that stood ful fastè by,  
In which ther was an hert, as men hym  
tolde,  
Duc Thesèus the streightè way hath  
holde ; 1690

And to the launde he rideth hym ful  
right,—

For thider was the hert wont have his  
flight,—

And over a brook, and so forth in his weye.  
This duc wol han a cours at hym, or tweye,  
With houndès, swiche as that hym list  
commaunde.

And whan this duc was come unto the  
launde

Under the sonne he looketh, and anon,  
He was war of Arcite and Palamon,  
That foughten breme, as it were borès  
two. 1699

The brightè swerdès wenten to and fro  
So hidously, that with the leestè strook  
It seméd as it woldè fille an ook ;  
But what they werè no thyng he ne woot.  
This duc his courser with his sporès smoot,  
And at a stert he was bitwix hem two,  
And pullèd out a swerd, and cridè, 'Hoo !  
Namooere, up peyne of lesynge of youre  
heed !

By myghty Mars, he shal anon be deed  
That smyteth any strook, that I may seen.  
But tellethe me what mystiers men ye been,  
That been so hardy for to fighten heere 1711  
Withouten juge, or oother officere,  
As it were in a lystès roially ?'

This Palamon answerdè hastily  
And seyde, 'Sire, what nedeth wordès mo ?  
We have the deeth disservèd bothè two.  
Two woful wrecches been we, two caytyves,  
That been encombred of oure owene lyves,  
And as thou art a rightful lord and juge,  
Ne yeve us neither mercy ne refuge, 1720  
But sle me first, for seintè charitee,  
But sle my felawe eek as wel as me ;  
Or sle hym first, for though thou  
knowest it lite,

This is thy mortal foo, this is Arcite,  
That fro thy lond is banysshed on his heed,  
For which he hath deservèd to be deed ;  
For this is he that cam unto thy gate  
And seyde that he hightè Philostrate ;  
Thus hath he japèd thee ful many a yer,  
And thou hast makèd hym thy chief  
squiér ; 1730

And this is he that loveth Emelye ;  
For sith the day is come that I shal dye,

I makè pleynly my confessioun  
That I am thilkè woful Palamoun,  
That hath thy prisoun broken wikkedly.  
I am thy mortal foo, and it am I  
That loveth so hoothe Emelye the brighte  
That I wol dyè present in hir sighte.  
Therefore I axè deeth and my juwise ;  
But sle my felawe in the samè wise, 1740  
For bothe han we deservèd to be slayn.'

This worthy duc answerde anon agayn,  
And seyde, 'This is a short conclusioun :  
Youre owene mouth, by youre confessioun,  
Hath dampnèd yow, and I wol it recorde,  
It nedeth noght to pyne yow with the  
corde,  
Ye shal be deed, by myghty Mars the  
rede !'

The queene anon, for verray womman-  
hede,

Gan for to wepe, and so dide Emelye,  
And alle the ladies in the compaignye.  
Greet pitee was it, as it thoughte hem alle,  
That ever swich a chauncè sholde falle,  
For gentil men they were, of greet estaat,  
And no thyng but for love was this  
debaat,—

And saugh hir blody woundès, wyde and  
soore,

And allè crieden, bothè lasse and moore,  
'Have mercy, lord, upon us wommenalle !'  
And on hir barè knees adoun they falle,  
And wolde have kist his feet ther as he  
stood,

Til at the laste aslakèd was his mood, 1760  
For pitee renneth soone in gentil herte,  
And though he first for irè quook and sterte,  
He hath considered shortly, in a clause,  
The trespas of hem bothe, and eek the  
cause,

And although that his ire hir gilt accused,  
Yet in his resoun he hem bothe excused,  
And thus he thoughtè wel, that every man  
Wol helpe hymself in love, if that he kan,  
And eek delivere hymself out of prisoun ;  
And eek his hertè hadde compassioun 1770  
Of wommen, for they wepen ever in oon ;

*1746. to pyne yow with the corde, put you to  
torture, i.e. to extract a confession.*

*1761. For pitee, etc. This beautiful line occurs  
four times in Chaucer.*

And in his gentil herte he thoughte anon,  
 And softe unto hym-self he seyde, 'Fy  
 Upon a lord that wol have no mercy,  
 But been a leoun, bothe in word and dede,  
 To hem that been in répentance and  
 drede,

As wel as to a proud despitous man  
 That wol maynteynè that he first bigan ;  
 That lord hath litel of discrecioun,  
 That in swich cas kan no divisioun, 1780  
 But weyeth pride and humblesse after oon.'  
 And shortly, whan his ire is thus agoon,  
 He gan to looken up with eyen lighte,  
 And spak thise samè wordès, al on highte.

'The god of love, a *benedicite*,  
 How myghty and how greet a lord is he !  
 Ageyns his myght ther gayneth none  
 obstacles,

He may be cleped a god for his myracles,  
 For he kan maken, at his owene gyse,  
 Of everich herte as that hym list divyse.

'Lo heere this Arcite, and this  
 Palamoun, 1791

That quytly weren out of my prisoun,  
 And myghte han lyved in Thebès roially,  
 And witen I am hir mortal enemy,  
 And that hir deth lith in my myght also,  
 And yet hath love, maugree hir eyen two,  
 Y-brought hem hyder, bothè for to dye.  
 Now looketh, is nat that an heigh folye ?

'Whó may been a fole, but if he love ?  
 Bihoold, for Goddès sake that sit above,  
 Se how they blede ! be they noht wel  
 arrayed ? 1801

Thus hath hir lord, the god of love, y-payed  
 Hir wages and hir fees for hir servyse :  
 And yet they wenen for to been ful wyse  
 That serven love, for aught that may bifalle.  
 But this is yet the bestè game of alle,  
 That she, for whom they han this jolitee,  
 Kan hem ther-fore as muchè thank as me.  
 She woot namoore of al this hootè fare,  
 By God, than woot a cokkow or an hare.  
 But all moot ben assayèd, hoot and coold ;  
 A man moot ben a fool, or yong or oold,—  
 I woot it by myself ful yore anon,

1799. *Who may*, etc., i.e. your lover is your only perfect fool. The reading of H, 'who may be a fole if that he love,' necessitates the insertion of *not* after *may*.

For in my tyme a servant was I oon.  
 And therefore, syn I knowe of lovès peyne,  
 And woot howsoore it kan a mandistreyne,  
 As he that hath ben caught ofte in his laas,  
 I yow foryeve al hoolly this trespaas,  
 At réqueste of the queene, that kneleth  
 heere,

And eek of Emelye, my suster deere. 1820  
 And ye shul bothe anon unto me swere,  
 That never mo ye shal my contree dere,  
 Ne makè werre upon me, nyght ne day,  
 But been my freendès in al that ye may.  
 I yow foryeve this trespas every deel.'  
 And they him sworn his axyng, faire  
 and weel,

And hym of lordshipe and of mercy preyde,  
 And he hem graunteth grace, and thus he  
 seyde :—

'To speke of roial lynage and richesse,  
 Though that she were a queene or a  
 princesse, 1830

Ech of you bothe is worthy, doutèlees,  
 To wedden whan tyme is, but nathèlees,—  
 I speke as for my suster Emelye,  
 For whom yehave this strif and jalousye,—  
 Ye woot your self she may nat wedden two  
 At onès, though ye fighten evermo.

That oon of you, al be hym looth or lief,  
 He moot go pipen in an yvy leef :  
 This is to seyn, she may nought havè  
 bothe, 1839

Al be ye never so jalouse ne so wrothe ;  
 And for-thy, I yow putte in this degree,  
 That ech of yow shal have his destynce  
 As hym is shape, and herkneth in what  
 wyse ;

Lo, heere your ende of that I shal devyse.

'My wyl is this, for plat conclusioun  
 Withouten any replicacioun,—  
 If that you liketh, take it for the beste,—  
 That everich of you shal goon where  
 hym leste

Frely, withouten raunson or daunger ;  
 And this day fifty wykès, fer ne ner, 1850  
 Everich of you shal brynge an hundred  
 knyghtes

1838. *go*, om. E. The phrase, equivalent to our *go whistle*, is used by Wyclif.

1850. *fer ne ner*, no later or sooner ; *fifty wykès* are of course used here for a year, Boccaccio's *un anno intero*.

Arméd for lystés up at allé rightes,  
 Al redy to darreyne hire by bataille ;  
 And this bihote I yow with-outhe faille  
 Upon my trouthe and as I am a knyght,  
 That wheither of yow bothè that hath  
 myght,

This is to seyn, that wheither he or thow  
 May with his hundred, as I spak of now,  
 Sleen his contrarie, or out of lystés dryve,  
 Him shal I yeve Emelya to wyve, <sup>1860</sup>  
 To whom that Fortune yeveth so fair a  
 grace.

The lystés shal I maken in this place,  
 And God so wisly on my soulé rewe  
 As I shal evene jugè been, and trewe.  
 Ye shul noon oother endè with me maken  
 That oon of yow ne shal be deed or taken ;  
 And if yow thynketh this is weel y-sayd,  
 Seyeth youre avys and holdeth you apayd.  
 This is youre ende and youre conclusioun. <sup>1</sup>

Who looketh lightly now but Pala-  
 moun? <sup>1870</sup>

Who spryngeth up for joyè but Arcite ?  
 Who kouthe tellè, or who kouthe endite,  
 The joyè that is makéd in the place  
 Whan Thesèus hath doon so fair a grace ?  
 But down on kneés wente every maner  
 wight

And thonken hym with al hir herte and  
 myght ;

And namèly the Thebans often-sithe.  
 And thus with good hope and with hertè  
 blithe

They taken hir leve, and homward gonne  
 they ride <sup>1879</sup>

To Thebés, with his oldè wallés wyde.

## PART III

I trowe men woldè deme it necligence  
 If I forgete to tellen the dispenche  
 Of Thesèus, that gooth so bisily  
 To maken up the lystés roially,  
 That swich a noble theatre as it was  
 I dar wel seyn that in this world there nas.  
 The circuït a mylè was aboute,  
 Walléd of stoon and dychéd al withoute.  
 Round was the shape, in manere of  
 compaas, <sup>1889</sup>  
 Ful of degrees, the heichte of sixty pas,

That whan a man was set on o degree,  
 He lettè nat his felawe for to see.

Estward ther stood a gate of marbul whit,  
 Westward right swich another in the  
 opposit.

And, shortly to concluden, swich a place  
 Was noon in erthe, as in so litel space ;  
 For in the lond ther was no crafty man  
 That géométrie or ars-metrik kan,  
 Ne portreïtour, ne kervere of ymáges,  
 That Thesèus ne yaf him mete and wages,  
 The theatre for to maken and devyse. <sup>1901</sup>  
 And, for to doon his ryte and sacrificse,  
 He estward hath, upon the gate above,  
 In worshipe of Venús, goddesse of love,  
 Doon make an auter and an oratórie ;  
 And westward, in the mynde and in  
 mémorie

Of Mars, he makéd hath right swich  
 another,

That costè largély of gold a fother.

And northward, in a touret on the wal,  
 Of alabastre whit and reed coral, <sup>1910</sup>

An oratorie richè for to see,  
 In worshipe of Dyane of chastitee  
 Hath Thesèus doon wrought in noble wyse.

But yet hadde I forgeten to devyse  
 The noble keryng and the portreitures,  
 The shape, the contenance, and the  
 figures

That weren in these oratories thre.

First, in the temple of Venus maystow  
 se, <sup>1918</sup>

Wrought on the wal, ful pitous to biholde,  
 The broken slepés, and the sikés colde,  
 The sacred teeris, and the waymentynge,  
 The firy strokés, and the desiryngé,  
 That lovés servauntz in this lyf enduren ;  
 The othés that her covenantz assuren ;  
 Plesaunce and Hope, Desir, Foolhardy-  
 nesse,

Beautee and YOUTHÉ, Bauderie, Richesse,  
 Charmés and Force, Lesyngés, Flaterye,  
 Despensé, Bisynesse and Jalousye,  
 That wered of yelewe gooldés a gerland

<sup>1900.</sup> *him*, om. E<sup>3</sup>; H, *hem*.

<sup>1906.</sup> *And westward*, etc., text from H; and *on the westward in memorie*, E<sup>5</sup>; and *on the westward side in memorie*, Petworth.

<sup>1921.</sup> *sacred*, Cambridge MS. *secret*, an attractive reading.

And a cokkow sityng on hir hand ; 1930  
Féstes, instrumentz, carólés, daunces,  
Lust and array, and alle the circum-  
staunces

Of love, whiche that I reken, and rekne  
shal,

By ordre weren peynted on the wal,  
And mo than I kan make of mencioung ;  
For soothly al the mount of Citheroun,  
Ther Venus hath hir principal dwellynge,  
Was shewed on the wal in portreyng,  
With al the gardyn and the lustynesse.

Nat was forgeten the porter Ydelnesse,  
Ne Narcisus the faire of yore agon, 1941  
Ne yet the folye of kyng Salamon,

Ne yet the grete strengthe of Ercoles,  
Thenchauntementz of Medea and Circes,  
Ne of Turnus, with the hardy fiers corage,  
The riché Cresus, kaytyf in servage.

Thus may ye seen that Wysdom ne  
Richesse,

Beautee ne Sleighté, Strengthé, Hardy-  
nesse,

Ne may with Venus holdé champartie,  
For as hir list the world than may she  
gye. 1950

Lo, alle these folk so caught were in hir las  
lil they for wo ful ofté seyde, 'Allas !'  
Juffiseth heere ensamples oon or two,  
And though I koudé rekene a thousand mo.

The statue of Venus, glorious for to se,  
Was naked, fletyng in the largé see,  
And fro the navelé down al covered was  
With wawés grene, and brighte as any  
glas.

A citole in hir right hand haddé she,  
And on hir heed, ful semely for to se, 1960  
A rosé gerland, fressh and wel smellyng,  
Above hir heed hir dowvés flikeryng.

Biforn hire stood hir soné Cupido,  
Jpon his shuldrés wyngés hadde he two,  
and blind he was, as it is often seene ;  
Abowe he bar and arwés brighte and kene.

1933. *reken*, Cambridge MS.; E, *rekned*  
*ave*; H<sup>3</sup>, *rekned*.

1936. *Citheroun*. Chaucer seems to confuse the  
land of *Cythera*, the home of Venus, with *Mt.*  
*itharon*, on the borders of Attica, sacred to  
acchus and the Muses.

1940. *the porter Ydelnesse*, cp. *Romaunt of*  
*le Rose*, ll. 531-593.

1951. *las*, snare; H, *tracc*.

Why sholde I noght as wel eek telle  
yow al

The portreiture that was upon the wal  
Withinne the temple of myghty Mars the  
rede?

Al peynted was the wal, in lengthe and  
brede, 1970

Lyk to the estrés of the grisly place  
That highte the grete temple of Mars in  
Trace,

In thilké coldé, frosty regioun  
Ther as Mars hath his sovereyn mansioun.

First, on the wal was peynted a forest,  
In which ther dwelleth neither man nor  
best,

With knotty, knarry, bareyne treés olde  
Of stubbés sharpe and hidouse to biholde,  
In which ther ran a rumbel and a swough,  
As though a storm sholde bresten every  
bough; 1980

And downward from an hille, under a  
bente,

Ther stood the temple of Mars army-  
potente,

Wrought al of burnéd steel, of which the  
entree

Was long and streit, and gastly for to see ;  
And ther out came a rage, and such a veze  
That it made alle the gatés for to rese.

The northren lyght in at the dorés  
shoon,—

For wyndow on the wal ne was ther noon  
Thurgh which men myghten any light  
discerne,—

The dores were al of adamant eterne, 1990  
Y-clenchéd overthwart and endéloug

With iren tough, and for to make it strong,  
Every pylér, the temple to sustene,  
Was tonnéd greet, of iren bright and shene.

Ther saugh I first the derke ymaginyng  
Of felonye, and al the compassyng ;  
The cruell ire, reed as any gleede ;  
The pyképur, and eke the palé drede ;

1972 *grete temple of Mars in Trace*, i.e. the  
temple under Mt. Hæmus, described by Statius  
in the seventh book of the *Thebaid*, lines 40-63.  
Statius here served as a model to Boccaccio.

1979. *rumbel*, H *swymbel*, moaning (of wind).

1986. *gates*, E<sup>3</sup> *gate*.

1990. *dores were*, E<sup>3</sup> *dore was*.

1998. *pykepurs*. The pickpurs is not mentioned  
in Boccaccio. Wright explains it to refer to the

The smylere, with the knyfe under the cloke ;

The shepné, brennyng with the blaké smoke ; 2000

The tresoun of the mordrynge in the bedde ;

The open werre, with woundés al biledde ;

Contek, with blodý knyf, and sharpe manace ;

Al ful of chirkyng was that sory place.

The sleere of hymself yet saugh I ther,  
His herté blood hath bathéd al his heer ;  
The nayl y-dryven in the shode a-nyght ;  
The coldé deeth, with mouth gapyng up-right.

Amyddés of the temple sat Meschaunce,  
With disconfort and sory contenance.

Yet saugh I Woodnesse, laughyng in his rage, 2011

Arméd compleint, out - hees, and fiers outrage,

The careyne, in the busk, with throte y-corve,

A thousand slayn and nat of qualm y-storve ;

The tiraunt, with the pray by force y-raft ;  
The toun destroyéd, ther was no thyng laft.

Yet saugh I brent the shippes hoppestères ;

The hunté strangled with the wildé beres ;  
The sowé freten the child right in the cradel ; 2019

The cook y-scalded, for al his longé ladel.

Noght was forgeten by the infortune of Marte,

The cartere over-ryden with his carte ;  
Under the wheel ful lowe he lay adoun.

riflers of the dead after a battle. But in Wright's own quotation from the *Compost of Ptolomeus* it is said, 'Under Mars is borne *theves* and *robbers* that kepe hie wayes.'

2009. *Meschaunce*. Statius 'virtus tristissima.' *Arméd compleint*. Statius has 'Mors armata.'

2014. *and nat*, E *and nat oon*, a good reading if we omit *and*.

2017. *the shippes hoppesteres*, the dancing ships. Chaucer is translating *Teseide*, vii. 37, 'Vedeui ancor le navi bellatrici,' and probably read the last word 'ballatrici' in error.

2013. *hunte*, hunter. H ends the line 'with wilde bores corage' to rhyme with 'rage' in 2011, omitting all between.

Ther were also of Martes divisioun,  
The barbourand the bocher, and the smyth  
That forgeth sharpé swerdés on his styth ;  
And al above, depeynted in a toun,  
Saugh I Conquést sittyng in greet honour  
With the sharpé swerd over his heed  
Hángyng by a soutil twynés threed. 2030

Depeynted was the slaughtre of Julius,  
Of grete Nero, and of Antonius,—  
Al be that thilké tyme they were unborn,  
Yet was hir deth depeynted ther-biforn  
By manasyng of Mars, right by figure,  
So it was shewéd in that portreiture  
As is depeynted in the sterres above  
Who shal be slayn or ellés deed for love ;  
Suffiseth oon ensample in stories olde, 2039  
I may nat rekene hem allé though I wolde.

The statue of Mars upon a carté stroud,  
Arméd, and lookéd grym as he were wood,  
And over his heed ther shynen two figures  
Of sterres that been clepéd in scriptures,  
That oon Puella, that oother Rubéus.  
This god of armés was arrayéd thus :  
A wolf ther stood biforn hym at his feet  
With eyen rede, and of a man he eet.

With soutil pencil depeynted was this storie 2049

In rédoutyng of Mars and of his glorie.

Now to the temple of Dyane the chaste,  
As shortly as I kan, I wol me haste

To tellé yow al the descripsioun.  
Depeynted been the wallés up and doun  
Of huntynge and of shamefast chastitee.

Ther saugh I how woful Calistopee,  
Whan that Diane agrevéd was with here,

Was turnéd from a woman to a bere,  
And after was she maad the loodé-sterre

Thus was it peynted, I kan sey yow no ferré. 2061

Hir sone is eek a sterre, as men may see

2025. *barbour*, i.e. barber - surgeon. In Wright's extract from the *Compost of Ptolomeus* it is said, 'These men of Mars . . . wyl be gladly Smythes or workers of iron . . . goo to be a barbour and a blode letter and to draw tethe.'

2037. *sterres*, E<sup>6</sup> *sertres* or *certres*.

2045. *Puella*. 'Signifieth Mars retrograd and Rubeus, Mars direct' (Speght).

2049. *depeynted was*, E<sup>6</sup> *was depeynted*.

2056. *Calistopee*, i.e. the Arcadian nymp Callisto.

2061. *EEK a sterre*, the constellation Boötes.



Ther saugh I Dane, y-turned til a tree,—  
I menè nat the goddessè Diane,  
But Penneus doughter which that hightè  
Dane.

Ther saugh I Attheon an hert y-maked,  
For vengeance that he saugh Diane al  
naked ;

I saugh how that his houndès have hym  
caught

And freeten hym, for that they knewe  
hym naught.

Yet peynted was a litel forther moor  
How Atthalante hunted the wildè boor,  
And Meleagre, and many another mo,  
For which Dyanè wroghte hym care and  
wo.

Ther saugh I many another wonder storic,  
The whiche me list nat drawn to memóric.

This goddesse on an hert ful hyè seet,  
With smalè houndès al aboute hir feet,  
And undernethe hir feet she hadde a  
moone,

Wexynge it was, and sholdè wanye soone.  
In gaudè grene hir statue clothèd was,  
With bowe in honde and arwès in a cas ;  
Hir eyen castè she ful lowe adoun 2081  
Ther Pluto hath his derké regioun.

A womman travaillynge was hire biforn,  
But, for hir child so longe was unborn,  
Ful pitously Lucyna gan she calle  
And seyde, 'Helpe, for thou mayst best  
of alle.'

Welkoude he peynten lifly, that it wroghte ;  
With many a floryn he the hewès boghte.

Now been the lystès maad, and Thesèus,  
That at his gretè cost arrayèd thus 2090  
The templès, and the theatre every deel,  
When it was doon hym lykéd wonder weel ;  
But stynte I wole of Thesèus a lite,  
And speke of Palamon and of Arcite.

The day approacheth of hir retournynge,  
That everich sholde an hundred knyghtès  
brynge,

The bataille to dareyne, as I yow tolde,

2062. *Dane*, i.e. *Daphne*.

2065. *Attheon*, *Actæon*.

2070. *Atthalante*, *Atalanta*.

2072. *hym*, *H hem*.

2085. *Lucyna*, the name of *Diana* as helper of  
women in labour.

2089. *the*, *H<sup>6</sup> thise*.

And til Atthenes, hir covenantz for to  
holde,

Hath everich of hem broght an hundred  
knyghtes

Wel armèd for the werre at allè rightes ;

And sikerly ther trowèd many a man

That never, sithen that the world bigan,

As for to speke of knyghthod of hir hond,

As fer as God hath makèd see or lond,

Nas, of so fewe, so noble a compaignye ;

For every wight that lovèd chivalrye

And wolde, his thankès, han a passant  
name,

Hath preyèd that he myghte been of that

game ;

And wel was hym that ther-to chosen was ;

For if ther fille tomorwè swich a caas, 2110

Ye knowen wel that every lusty knyght

That loveth paramours, and hath his  
myght,

Were it in Engèlond or ellès-where,

They wolde, hir thankès, wilnen to be

there.

To fightè for a lady,—*benedicitee* !

It were a lusty sightè for to see.

And right so ferden they with Palamon.

With hym ther wenten knyghtès many

oon ;

Som wol ben armèd in an haubergeoun,

In a bristplate and in a light gypoun ;

And somme woln have a pairè platès

large ;

And somme woln have a Pruce sheeld or

a targe ;

Somme woln ben armèd on hir leggès weel,

And have an ax, and somme a mace of

steel ;

Ther is no newè gyse that it nas old.

Armèd were they, as I have yow told,

Everych after his opinion.

Ther maistow seen comynge with

Palamon

Lyurge hymself, the gretè kyng of Trace ;

Blak was his berd, and manly was his

face ;

The cercles of his eyen in his heed,

They glowèden bitwyxen yellow and reed ;

And lik a grifphon lookèd he aboute,

2129. *Lyurge*, *Lycurgus*. In the *Teseide* he

fightes on *Arcite*'s side.

With kempé heeris on his browés stoute ;  
His lymés grete, his brawnés harde and  
stronge,

His shuldrés brode, his armés rounde  
and longe,

And, as the gysé was in his contree,  
Ful hye upon a chaar of gold stood he,  
With fouré whité bolés in the trays.

In stede of cote - armure, over his  
harnays 2140

With naylés yelewe, and brighte as any  
gold,

He hadde a berés skyn, col-blak, for-old.  
His longé heer was kembd bihynde his  
bak ;

As any ravenes fethere it shoon for-blak ;  
A wrethe of gold, arm-greet, of hugé  
wighte,

Upon his heed, set ful of stonés brighte,  
Of fyné rubyes and of dyamauntz ;

Aboute his chaar thér wenten white  
alauntz,

Twenty and mo, as grete as any steer,  
To hunten at the leoun or the deer ; 2150

And folwéd hym with mosel faste  
y-bounde,

Colered of gold and tourettes fyléd rounde.  
An hundred lordés hadde he in his route,  
Arméd ful wel, with hertés stierne and  
stoute.

With Arcita, in stories as men fynde,  
The grete Emetréus, the kyng of Inde,  
Upon a steedé bay, trappéd in steel,  
Covered in clooth of gold, dyapred weel,  
Cam ridyng, lyk the god of armés, Mars.  
His cote armuré was of clooth of Tars  
Couchéd with perlés, white and rounde  
and grete ; 2161

His sadel was of brend gold, newe y-bete ;  
A mantelet upon his shulder hangyng,  
Brat-ful of rubyes rede, as fyr sparklyng ;  
His crispé heer, lyk ryngés was y-ronne,  
And that was yelow, and glytered as the  
sonne.

His nose was heigh, his eyen bright citryn ;  
His lippés rounde, his colour was  
sangwyn ;

*2160. clooth of Tars, i.e. Tartary, Chinese  
stuffs which passed through Tartary on their  
way to Europe.*

A fewé frakenes in his face y-spreynd,  
Bitwixen yelow and somdel blak y-meynd,  
And as a leoun he his lookyng caste. 2171

Of fyve and twenty yeer his age I caste ;  
His berd was wel bigonné for to spryng ;

His voys was as a trompé thondryng ;  
Upon his heed he wered, of laurer grene,  
A gerland, fressh and lusty for to sene.

Upon his hand he bar, for his deduyt,  
An egle tame, as any lilye whyt.

An hundred lordés hadde he with hym  
there,

Al arméd, save hir heddes, in al hir gere,  
Ful richély in allé maner thynges ; 2181

For trusteth wel that dukés, erlés, kynges,  
Were gadered in this noble compaignye,  
For love and for encrees of chivalrye.

Aboute this kyng ther ran on every part  
Ful many a tame leoun and leopard.

And in this wise these lordés, alle and  
some,

Been on the Sunday to the citee come  
Abouté pryme, and in the toun alight.

This Theséus, this duc, this worthy  
knyght, 2190

Whan he had broght hem into his citee  
And innéd hem, everich in his degree,

He festeth hem, and dooth so greet labour  
To esen hem, and doon hem al honour,

That yet men weneth that no mannés  
wit

Of noon estaat ne koude amenden it.

The mynstralcy, the service at the  
feeste,

The grete yiftes to the meeste and leeste,  
The riche array of Theséus paleys,

Ne who sat first, ne last, upon the deys,  
What ladyes fairest been, or best daun-  
syng, 2201

Or which of hem kan dauncen best and  
syng,

Ne who moost felyngly speketh of love ;  
What haukés sitten on the perche above,  
What houndés ligger in the floor adoun,—

Of al this make I now no mencion,  
But al theeffect, that thynketh me the beste ;

*2177. deduyt, delight ; H<sup>2</sup>, delite.*

*2188. the Sunday, i.e. the 'this day fifty  
wykes' from the Saturday May 5th in which  
Palamon and Arcite first fought (see l. 1850).*

*2207. al, H of, perhaps rightly.*

Now cometh the point, and herkneþ if  
yow leste.

The Sonday nyght, er day bigan to  
sprynge, <sup>2209</sup>

Whan Palamon the larké herdé syngé,  
Al though it nere nat day by hourés two,  
Yet song the larke, and Palamon also.

With hooly herte and with an heigh corage,  
He roos to wenden on his pilgrymage  
Unto the blisful Citherea benigne,—

I mené Venus, honourable and digne,—  
And in hir houre he walketh forth a paas  
Unto the lystés, ther hire temple was,

And doun he kneleth with ful humblecheer  
And herté soor, and seyde in this  
manere :— <sup>2220</sup>

' Faireste of faire, o lady myn, Venus,  
Doughter to Jove, and spouse of Vulcanus,  
Thow gladere of the mount of Citheron,

For thilké love thow haddest to Adoon,  
Have pitee of my bittre teeris smerte,  
And tak myn humble preyere at thyn  
herte.

Allas ! I ne havé no langage to telle  
Theffectés ne the tormentz of myn helle ;  
Myn herté may myne harmés nat biwreye ;  
I am so cónfus that I kan nocht seye. <sup>2230</sup>

But mercy, lady bright, that knowest weele  
My thought, and seest what harmés that  
I feele,

Consider al this and rewe upon my soore  
As wisly as I shal for evermoore,  
Emforth my myght, thy trewé servant be,  
And holden werre alwey with chastitee ;

That make I myn awow, so ye me helpe.  
I kepé nocht of armés for to yelpe.  
Ne I ne axe nat tomorwe to have victóric,  
Ne rénoun in this cas, ne veyné glorie <sup>2240</sup>

Of pris of armés, blowen up and doun,  
But I wolde have fully possessioun  
Of Emelye, and dye in thy servyse.

2217. *in hir houre.* The first hour of each day  
elonged to that one of the seven deities, Saturn,  
upiter, Mars, Sol, Venus, Mercury, Luna, to  
whom the day was dedicated ; the second to the  
ext on the list, the third to the next, and so on.  
unday being dedicated to Sol, Venus would  
reside over the second, ninth, sixteenth and  
wenty-third hours, the last of which would begin  
wo hours before day-break on Monday.

2219. *with ful, H<sup>6</sup> and with.*  
2220. *and seyde in this manere, H<sup>6</sup> he seide as  
e shal here.*

Fynd thow the manere how, and in what  
wyse ;

I recché nat, but it may bettre be,  
To have victorie of hem, or they of me,  
So that I have my lady in myne armes,  
For though so be that Mars is god of  
armes,

Youre vertu is so greet in hevене above  
That, if yow list, I shal wel have my love.  
Thy temple wol I worshiþe evermo, <sup>2251</sup>

And on thyn auter, wher I ride or go,  
I wol doon sacrifice and firés beete ;  
And if ye wol nat so, my lady sweete,  
Thanne preyre I thee, tomorwe with a spere

That Arcita me thurgh the herté bere ;  
Thanne rekke I nocht, whan I have lost  
my lyf,

Though that Arcita wyne hire to his wyf :  
This is theffect and ende of my preyère,—  
Yif me my love, thow blisful lady deere.'

Whan the orison was doon of Palamon,  
His sacrifice he dide, and that anon,  
Ful pitously with allé circumstaunces,  
Al telle I nocht as now his observaunces ;

But atté laste the statue of Venus shook  
And made a signé, wher-by that he took  
That his preyère accepted was that day ;  
For togh the signé shewed a delay,

Yet wiste he wel that graunted was his  
boone,  
And with glad herte he wente hym hoom  
ful soone. <sup>2270</sup>

The thridde houre in-equal that  
Palamon

Bigan to Venus temple for to gon,  
Up roos the sonne and up roos Emelye,  
And to the temple of Dyane gan she hye.  
Hir maydens, that she thider with hire  
ladde,

Ful redily with hem the fyr they hadde,  
Thencens, the clothés, and the remenant al  
That to the sacrificé longen shal,  
The hornés full of meeth, as was the  
gyse,— <sup>2279</sup>

2271. *The thridde houre in-equal,* three hours  
after 'two hours before sunrise,' i.e. the first  
hour on Monday, that dedicated to Luna or  
Diana : *in-equal* shows that the reckoning is by  
planetary hours, which vary with the length of  
the day.

2274. *she, om. E<sup>5</sup>.*

Ther lakkéd nocht to doon hir sacrificise.  
Smokyng the temple, ful of clothés  
faire,

This Emelye, with herté debonaire,  
Hir body wessh with water of a welle ;  
But how she didé hir ryte I dar nat telle,  
But it be any thing in general ;  
And yet it were a game to heeren al ;  
To hym that meneth wel it were no charge,  
But it is good a man been at his large.

Hir brighté heer was kempd, un-  
tresséd al,

A coroune of a grene ook cerial <sup>2290</sup>  
Upon hir heed was set, ful faire and meete ;  
Two fyrés on the auter gan she beete,  
And didé hir thyngés, as men may biholde  
In Stace of Thebés, and thise bookés olde.  
Whan kyndled was the fyr, with pitous  
cheere,

Unto Dyane she spak as ye may heere :—  
‘O chasté goddesse of the wodés grene,  
To whom bothe hevене and erthe and  
see is sene,

Queene of the regne of Pluto, derk and  
lowe,

Goddesse of maydens, that myn herte hast  
knowe <sup>2300</sup>

Ful many a yeer, and woost what I desire,  
As keepe me fro thy vengeaunce and  
thyn ire,

That Attheon abouthté cruelly ;  
Chasté goddessé, wel wostow that I  
Desire to ben a mayden al my lyf,  
Ne never wol I be no love, ne wyf.

I am, thow woost, yet of thy compaignye,  
A mayde, and love huntyng and venerye,  
And for to walken in the wodés wilde,  
And nocht to ben a wyf and be with childe ;  
Nocht wol I knowe the compaignye of man.  
Now helpe me, lady, sith ye may and kan,  
For tho thre formes that thou hast in thee.  
And Palamon, that hath swich love to me,  
And eek Arcite, that loveth me so soore,

<sup>2290.</sup> *grene ook cerial*, Boccaccio's ‘*quercia cereale*,’ the holm oak.

<sup>2294.</sup> *In Stace of Thebes*, i.e. the *Thebais* of Statius, where, however, no description of these observances occurs.

<sup>2303.</sup> *Attheon*, Actæon.

<sup>2313.</sup> *tho thre formes*. Diana, a ‘*diva triformis*,’ was known as Luna in heaven, Diana or Lucina on earth, and Proserpina in hell.

This grace I preyé thee withouté moore ;  
As sendé love and pees bitwixe hem two,  
And fro me turne away hir hertés so  
That al hire hooté love and hir desir,  
And al hir bisy torment and hir fir, <sup>2320</sup>  
Be queynt, or turnéd in another place.  
And if so be thou wolt do me no grace,  
Or if my destyne be shapen so  
That I shal nedés have oon of hem two,  
As sende me hym that moost desireth me.  
Bihoold, goddesse of clené chastitee,  
The bittré teeres that on my chekés falle.  
Syn thou art mayde, and kepere of us alle,  
My maydenhede thou kepe and wel  
conserve <sup>2329</sup>

And whil I lyve a mayde I wol thee serve.’

The firés brenne upon the auter cleere  
Whil Emelye was thus in hir preyère,  
But sodeynly she saugh a sighté queynte,  
For right anon oon of the fyrés queynte,  
And quyked agayn, and after that, anon  
That oother fyr was queynt and al agon,  
And as it queynte it made a whistélyng,  
As doon thise weté brondes in hir  
brennyng ;

And at the brondés ende out-ran anon  
As it were blodý dropés, many oon ; <sup>2340</sup>  
For which so soore agast was Emelye  
That she was wel ny mad, and gan to crye,  
For she ne wisté what it signyfyed,  
But oonly for the feere thus hath she cried,  
And weep that it was pitee for to heere ;  
And ther-with-al Dyané gan appeere,  
With bowe in honde, right as an hunteresse,  
And seyde, ‘Doghter, stynt thyn hevynesse.

Among the goddés hye it is affermed, <sup>2349</sup>  
And by eterné word written and confermed,  
Thou shalt ben wedded unto oon of tho  
That han for thee so muchel care and wo,  
But unto which of hem I may nat telle.  
Farwel, for I ne may no lenger dwelle.  
The firés whiche that on myn auter brenne  
Shulle thee declaren, er that thou go  
henne,

Thyn aventure of love, as in this cas.’  
And with that word the arwés in the caas  
Of the goddessé clateren faste and ryngé

<sup>2338.</sup> *brondes*, brands ; H, as doth a wete bronde in his brennyng.

And forth she wente and made a  
vanysshynge, 2360

For which this Emelye astonéd was,  
And seyde, 'What amounteth this, allas !  
I putté me in thy proteccioun,  
Dyane, and in thy disposicioun.'

And hoom she goth anon the nexté weye.  
This is theeffect, ther is namoore to seye.

The nexté houre of Mars folwyng this,  
Arcite unto the temple walkéd is  
Of fiersé Mars, to doon his sacrificise 2369  
With alle the rytés of his payen wyse.

With pitous herte and heigh devocioun  
Right thus to Mars he seyde his  
orisoun :—

'O strongé god, that in the regnès colde  
Of Trace honoured art and lord y-holde,  
And hast in every regne and every lond  
Of armés al the brydel in thyn hond,  
And hem fortunést as thee lyst devyse,  
Accepte of me my pitous sacrificise.

If so be that my youthé may deserve,  
And that my myght be worthy for to serve  
Thy godhede, that I may been oon of  
thyne, 2381

Thanne preye I thee to rewe upon my pyne.  
For thilké peyne, and thilké hooté fir,  
In which thou whilom brendest for desir,  
Whan that thou usedeste the béautee  
Of fairé, yongé, fresshé Venus free,  
And haddest hire in armés at thy wille,  
Al-though thee onés on a tyme mysfille,  
Whan Vulcanus hadde caught thee in  
his las, 2389

And foond thee liggynge by his wyf, allas !  
For thilké sorwé that was in thyn herte,  
I have routhe as wel upon my peynés smerte.  
I am yong and unkonnyngé, as thou woost,  
And, as I trowe, with love offended moost  
That ever was any lyvés creature ;  
For she that dooth me al this wo endure  
Ie reccheth never wher I synke or fleete.  
And wel I woot, er she me mercy heete,  
I moot with strengthé wynne hire in the  
place ; 2399

And wel I woot withouten helpe or grace  
Of thee, ne may my strengthé noght availle.

2367. *The nexte houre of Mars*, the fourth  
our of the day.

2369. *Of fiersé Mars*, H *To fyry Mars*.

Thanne helpe me, lord, tomorwe in my  
bataille,

For thilké fyr that whilom brenté thee,  
As well as thilké fyr now brenneth me,  
And do that I tomorwe have victorie.  
Myn be the travaille, and thyn be the  
glorie !

Thy sovereyn temple wol I moost  
honouren

Of any place, and alwey moost labouren  
In thy plesaunce, and in thy craftés  
stronge ; 2409

And in thy temple I wol my baner honge,  
And alle the armés of my compaignye,  
And ever mo, un-to that day I dye,  
Eterné fir I wol biforn thee fynde :  
And eek to this avow I wol me bynde.  
My beerd, myn heer, that hongeth long  
adoun,

That never yet ne felte offensioun  
Of rasour nor of shere, I wol thee give,  
And ben thy trewé servant whil I lyve.  
Now, lord, have routhe upon my sorwés  
soore, 2419

Yif me the victorie, I aske thee namoore !'

The preyère stynt of Arcite the stronge,  
The ryngés on the temple dore that honge,  
And eek the dorés, clatereden ful faste,  
Of which Arcite som-what hym agaste.  
The fyrés brenden upon the auter brighte,  
That it gan al the temple for to lighte ;  
And sweeté smel the ground anon up yaf,  
And Arcite anon his hand up-haf,  
And moore encens into the fyr he caste,  
With othere rytés mo, and atté last 2430  
The statuc of Mars bigan his hauberk  
rynge ;

And with that soun he herde a mur-  
muryngé

Ful lowe and dym, and seyde thus :  
'Victorie !'

For which he yaf to Mars honour and  
glorie.

And thus with joye and hopé wel to fare,  
Arcite anon unto his inne is fare,  
As fayn as fowel is of the brighté sonne.

And right anon swich strif ther is  
bigonne

For thilké grauntyng in the hevene above,  
Bitwixé Venus, the goddesse of love, 2440

And Mars, the stiernè god armypotente,  
That Juppiter was bisy it to stente ;  
Til that the palè Saturnus the colde,  
That knew so manye of adventures olde,  
Foord in his olde experience an art  
That he ful soone hath plesèd every part.  
As sooth is seyde, elde hath greet ávantáge ;  
In elde is bothè wysdom and uságe ;  
Men may the olde at-renne and noight  
at-rede. 2449

Saturne anon, to stynten strif and drede,  
Al be it that it is agayn his kynde,  
Of al this strif he gan remédie fynde.

‘ My deerè doghter Venus,’ quod  
Saturne,

‘ My cours, that hath so wyde for to turne,  
Hath moorè power than woot any man ;  
Myn is the drenchyng in the see so wan,  
Myn is the prison in the derkè cote,  
Myn is the stranglyng and hangyng by  
the throte,

The murmure and the cherlès rébellyng,  
The groynyng and the pryvee empoy-  
sonyng ; 2460

I do vengeance and pleyn correccioun  
Whil I dwelle in signe of the leoun ;  
Myn is the ruyne of the hyè halles,  
The fallyinge of the toures and of the  
walles,

Upon the mynour or the carpenter,—  
I slow Sampson, in shakynge the piler,—  
And mynè be the maladyès colde,  
The derkè tresons and the castès olde ;  
My lookyng is the fader of pestilence ;  
Now weepe namoore, I shal doon dili-  
gence 2470

That Palamon, that is thyn owene knyght,  
Shal have his lady, as thou hast him hight.  
Though Mars shal helpe his knyght, yet  
nathèlees,

2445. *an*, E<sup>2</sup> *and*.

2449. The line is a proverb.

2454. *My cours*. The reference is to the supposed malign influence of the planet Saturn: for its ‘width’ Wright quotes the *Compost of Ptolomeus*, which gives Saturn an orbit of more than thirty years.

2459. *cherles rebellyng*. Possibly Chaucer had in his mind ‘he Jacke Strawe and his meynee’; cp. Group B, l. 4584.

2462. *in signe of the leoun*. Prof. Skeat notes that the first ten degrees of the sign *Leo* are called the ‘face of Saturn.’

Bitwixè yow ther moot be som tyme pees.  
Al be ye noight of o compleccioun,  
That causeth al day swich divisioun.  
I am thyn aiel, redy at thy wille ;  
Weepe now namoore, I wol thy lust  
fulfille.’

Now wol I stynten of the goddes above,  
Of Mars, and of Venús, goddesse of love,  
And tellè yow, as pleynly as I kan, 2481  
The grete effect for which that I bygan.

## PART IV

Greet was the feeste in Atthenès that  
day,

And eek the lusty seson of that May  
Made every wight to been in such  
plesauce,

That al that Monday justen they and  
daunce,

And spenten it in Venus heigh servyse ;  
But, by the causè that they sholdè ryse  
Érly, for to seen the gretè fight,

Unto hir restè wenten they at nyght. 2490  
And on the morwè, whan that day gar  
sprynge,

Of hors and harneys noyse and claterynge  
Ther was in hostelryès al aboute,

And to the paleys rood ther many a rout  
Of lordès, upon steedès and palfreys.

Ther maystow seen divisynge of harneys  
So unkouth and so riche, and wroght so  
weel

Of goldsmythrye, of browdyng, and of  
steel,

The sheeldès brighte, testerès, and  
trappúres ;

Gold-hewen helmès, hauberkes, cot  
armúres ; 2500

Lordès in paramantz on hir courseres ;  
Knyghtès of retenue, and eek squieres,

Nailyng the speres, and helmès bokélyng  
Giggyng of sheeldès, with layneres  
lacyng ;

There, as nede is, they weren no thyn  
ydel.

The fony steedès on the golden brydel  
Gnawynge, and faste the armurers also,

2500. *Gold-hewen*, H *Gold-beten*.

With fyle and hamer, prikyng to and fro ;  
 Yemen on foote, and communes many oon  
 With shortè stavès, thikke as they may  
 goon ; 2510

Pypès, trompès, nakers, clariounes,  
 That in the bataille blowen bloody sounes ;  
 The paleys ful of peplès up and down,—  
 Heere thre, ther ten, holdyng hir  
 questioun,

Dyvynyng of thise Thebane knyghtès two.  
 Somme seyden thus, somme seyde it shal  
 be so,

Somme helden with hym with the blakè  
 berd,

Somme with the balled, somme with the  
 thikkè herd,

Somme seyde he lookèd grymme and he  
 wolde fighte,

He hath a sparth of twenty pound of  
 wighte,— 2520

Thus was the hallè ful of divynyng  
 longe after that the sonnè gan to sprynge.

The gretè Theseus, that of his sleepe  
 awakèd

With mynstralcie and noysè that was  
 makèd,

Seeld yet the chambre of his paleys riche,  
 til that the Thebane knyghtès, bothe y-  
 liche

sonured, were into the paleys fet.

Duc Thesèus was at a wyndow set,  
 prrayed right as he were a god in trone.

He peple preesseth thiderward ful soone  
 hym for to seen, and doon heigh  
 reverence, 2531

And eek to herkne his heste and his  
 sentence.

An heraud on a scaffold made an 'Ho !'  
 til al the noyse of peple was y-do ;

And whan he saugh the peple of noyse  
 al stille

Whan he shewèd he the myghty dukès wille.

'The lord hath of his heih discrecioun  
 considered that it were destruccioun

of gentil blood to fighten in the gyse 2539  
 of mortal bataille now in this emprise ;

Therefore, to shapen that they shal nat dye,  
 he wolde his firstè purpos modifye.

'No man ther-fore, up peyne of los of  
 lyf,

No maner shot, ne polax, ne shorte knyf,  
 Into the lystès sende, ne thider bryng ;  
 Ne short sward, for to stoke with poynt  
 bitýngè,

No man ne drawe, ne berè by his syde.  
 Ne no man shal unto his felawe ryde  
 But o cours with a sharpe y-groundè spere ;  
 Foyne, if hym list, on foote, hym self to  
 were. 2550

And he that is at meschief shal be take,  
 And noght slayn, but be broght unto the  
 stake

Thát shal ben ordeyned on either syde ;  
 But thider he shal by force, and there  
 abyde.

'And if so falle the chieftayn be take  
 On outhir syde, or ellès sleen his make,  
 No lenger shal the turneyngè laste.  
 God spedè you ! gooth forth, and ley on  
 faste !

With long sward and with maces fighteth  
 youre fille.

Gooth now youre wey, this is the lordès  
 will.' 2560

The voys of peple touchèdè the hevене,  
 So loudè cridè they, with murie stevene,  
 'God savè swich a lord, that is so good,  
 He wilneth no destruccioun of blood !'

Up goon the trompès and the melodye  
 And to the lystès rit the compaignye  
 By ordinance, thurgh-out the citee large,  
 Hangèd with clooth of gold, and nat  
 with sarge.

Ful lik a lord this noble duc gan ryde,  
 Thise two Thebanès upon either side ; 2570

And after rood the queene and Emelye,  
 And after that another compaignye

Of oon and oother, after hir degre ;  
 And thus they passen thurgh-out the citec,

And to the lystès comè they by tyme.  
 It nas not of the day yet fully pryme

Whan set was Thesèus ful riche and hyc,  
 Ypolita the queene and Emelye,  
 And othere ladys in degrees aboute.

Unto the settès preesseth al the route,  
 And westward, thurgh the gatès under

Marte, 2581  
 Arcite, and eek the hondred of his parte,

With baner reed is entred right anon.

*2555. chieftayn, cheventein H<sup>3</sup>.*

And in that selvè moment Palamon  
Is under Venus, estward in the place,  
With baner whyt, and hardy chiere and  
face.

In al the world to seken up and doun  
So evene, withouten variacioun,  
Ther nerè swichè compaignyès tweye ;  
For ther was noon so wys that koudè seye  
That any hadde of oother avauntage <sup>2591</sup>  
Of worthynesse, ne of estaat, ne age,  
So evene were they chosen, for to gesse ;  
And in two rengès fairè they hem dresse.

Whan that hir namès rad were  
everichon,

That in hir nombèrè gylè were ther noon,  
Tho were the gatès shet, and cried was  
loude,

‘Do now youre devoir, yongè knyghtès  
proude !’

The heraudes lefte hir prikyng up and  
doun ; <sup>2599</sup>

Now ryngen trompès loude and clarioun ;  
Ther is namoore to seyn, but west and est  
In goon the speres ful sadly in arrest ;  
In gooth the sharpè spore into the syde.  
Ther seen men who kan juste and who  
kan ryde ;

Ther shyveren shaftès upon sheeldès  
thikke ;

He feeleth thurgh the hertè-spoon the  
prikke.

Up spryngen sperès twenty foot on highte ;  
Out gooth the swerdès as the silver  
bryghte ;

The helmès they to-hewen and to-shrede,  
Out brest the blood with stiernè stremès  
rede ; <sup>2610</sup>

With myghty maces the bonès they to-  
breste.

Ile, thurgh the thikkeste of the throng  
gan threste,

Ther, stomblen steedès stronge, and doun  
gooth al ;

He, rolleth under foot as dooth a bal ;  
He, foyneth on his feet with his tronchoun,  
And he hym hurtleth with his hors adoun ;  
He, thurgh the body is hurt and sithen  
y-take,

Maugree his heed, and broght unto the  
stake,

Asforward was, right ther he moste abyde.  
Another lad is on that oother syde. <sup>2620</sup>  
And som tyme dooth hem Theseus to  
reste,

Hem to refresshe and drynken, if hem leste.  
Ful ofte a-day han thise Thebànès two,  
Togydre y-met and wroght his felawe wo ;  
Unhorsèd hath ech oother of hem tweye.  
Ther nas no tygre in the vale of Galgo-  
pheye,

Whan that hir whelpè is stole whan it is  
lite,

So cruell on the hunte, as is Arcite  
For jelous herte upon this Palamoun ;  
Ne in Belmarye ther nys so fel leoun, <sup>2630</sup>  
That hunted is, or for his hunger wood,  
Ne of his praye desireth so the blood,  
As Palamoun, to sleen his foo Arcite.  
The jelous strokès on hir helmes byte ;  
Out renneth blood on bothe hir sydès rede.

Som tyme an ende ther is of every dede,  
For, er the sonne unto the restè wente,  
The strongè kyng Emetrèus gan hente  
This Palamon, as he faught with Arcite,  
And made his swerd depe in his flesh to  
byte, <sup>2640</sup>

And by the force of twenty is he take  
Unyolden, and y-drawe unto the stake.  
And in the rescus of this Palamoun  
The strongè kyng Lygurge is born adoun  
And kyng Emetrèus, for al his strengthe  
Is born out of his sadel a swerdès lengthe  
So hitte him Palamoun, er he were take  
But al for noght ; he was broght to the  
stake.

His hardy hertè myghte hym helpè naught  
He moste abyde, whan that he was caught  
By force, and eek by composicioun. <sup>2650</sup>

Who sorweth now but woful Palamoun  
That moot namoorè goon agayn to fighte  
And whan that Theseus haddè seyn the  
sighte

Unto the folk that fогhten thus echon  
He crydè, ‘Hoo ! namoore, for it is doo  
I wol be trewè juge, and no partie ;  
Arcite of Thebès shall have Emelie

<sup>2626.</sup> *Galgopheye.* Prof. Skeat identifies this with the valley of Gargaphie (in Bœotia), where Actæon was torn in pieces. Tyrwhitt suggests town called Galapha in Mauritania Tingitana. <sup>2630.</sup> *Belmarye*, in North Africa.



That by his fortune hath hire faire y-  
wonne.'

Anon ther is a noyse of peple bigonne,  
For joye of this, so loude and heighe  
with-alle, 2661  
It semed that the lystès sholde falle.

What kan now fairè Venus doon above?  
What seith she now, what dooth this  
queene of love,

But wepeth so, for wantynge of hir wille,  
[il] that hir teerès in the lystès fille?

She seyde, 'I am ashamed doutèlees.'  
Saturnus seyde, 'Doghter, hoold thy pees,  
Mars hath his wille, his knyght hath al  
his boone,

and, by myn heed, thou shalt been esed  
soone.' 2670

The trompès, with the loudè myn-  
stralcie,

The heraudes, that ful loudè yolle and crie,  
Keen in hire wele, for joye of daun Arcite.  
But herkneith me, and stynteth now a lite,  
Which a myracle ther bifel anon.

This fierse Arcite hath of his helm y-don,  
And on a coursar, for to shewe his face,  
He priketh endelong the largè place,  
And okynge upward up-on this Emelye, 2679  
And she agayn hym caste a freendlich eye  
For women, as to speken in comune,  
Hei folwen all the favour of Fortune),  
And was al his, in chiere, as in his herte.

Out of the ground a fyr infernal sterte,  
From Pluto sent, at rēqueste of Saturne,  
For which his hors for ferè gan to turne,  
And leep aside, and foundred as he leep,  
And er that Arcitè may taken keep,  
The pighte hym on the pomel of his heed,  
That in the place he lay as he were deed,  
His brest to-brosten with his sadel-bowe.  
As blak he lay as any cole or crowe,

2683. *And was al his, in chiere, as in his herte.* This is Dr. Furnivall's emendation, no. 5, containing the first *in*—'she was all his in looks, as the queen of his heart'; H reads *and for as*; Hengwrt, *And she was al his chiere, etc., i.e.* 'all his delight, as regarded his art,' but this is not the use of *chiere* here intended.

2684. *fyr, E3 furie.* In Boccaccio (*Tes. ix. 4*) is a fury raised by Venus.

2697. *sadel-bowe.* The 'bow' was a curved piece of wood fixed before and behind the saddle to hold the rider in his seat.

So was the blood y-ronnen in his face.

Anon he was y-born out of the place,  
With hertè soor, to Thesèus paleys.

Tho was he korven out of his harneys,  
And in a bed y-brought ful faire and blyve;  
For he was yet in memorie and alyve,  
And alwey crynge after Emelye. 2699

Duc Thesèus with al his compaignye  
Is comen hoom to Atthenes his citee,  
With allè blisse and greet solempnitee;  
Al be it that this aventure was falle,  
He noldè noght disconforten hem alle,—  
Men seyden eek that Arcite shal nat dye,  
He shal been heeléd of his maladye.

And of another thyng they weren as  
fayn,

That of hem allè was ther noon y-slayn;  
Al were theysoore y-hurt, and namelyoon,  
That with a spere was thirléd his brest  
boon. 2710

To otherè woundes and to broken armes,  
Somme hadden salvès and somme hadden  
charmes,

Fermaciès of herbès, and eek save  
They dronken, for they wolde hir lymès  
have.

For which this noble duc, as he wel kan,  
Conforteth and honoureth every man,  
And madè revel al the longè nyght  
Unto the straungè lordès, as was right;  
Ne ther was holden no disconfitynge  
But as a justès, or a tourneynge; 2720  
For soothly ther was no disconfiture,  
For fallyng nys nat but an aventure,  
Ne to be lad by force unto the stake  
Unyolden, and with twenty knyghtès take,  
O persone allone, withouten mo,  
And haryed forth by armè, foot and too,  
And eke his steedè dryven forth with  
staves,

With footmen, bothè yemen and eek  
knaves,—

It nas aretted hym no vileynye;  
Ther may no man clepen it cowardye. 2730

For which anon duc Thesèus leet crye,  
To stynten allè rancour and envye,  
The gree as wel of o syde as of oother,  
And eyther syde y-lik as ootheres brother;  
And yaf hem yiftès after hir degree,  
And fully heeld a feestè dayès thre,

And convoyèd the kynges worthily  
Out of his toun, a journee largely,  
And hoom wente every man the righte  
way ;

Ther was namoore, but ' Fare wel !'  
' Have good day !' 2740

Of this bataille I wol namoore endite,  
But speke of Palamoun and of Arcyte.

Swelleth the brest of Arcite, and the  
soore

Encresseth at his herte moore and moore.  
The clothered blood, for any lechecraft,  
Corrupteth, and is in his bouk y-laft,  
That neither veynè-blood ne ventusyng,  
Ne drynke of herbès may ben his  
helpynge ;

The vertu expulsif, or animal,  
Fro thilkè vertu clepèd natural, 2750

Ne may the venym voyden ne expelle.

The pipès of his longès gonne to swelle,

And every lacerte in his brest adoun

Is shent with venym and corrupcioun.

Hym gayneth neither, for to gete his lif,

Vomyt upward, ne downward laxatif ;

Al is to-brosten thilkè regioun ;

Nature hath now no dominacioun ;

And certainly, ther Nature wol nat wirche,

Farewel, phisik ! gober the man to chirche !

This al and som, that Arcite moot dye,

For which he sendeth after Emelye,

And Palamon, that was his cosyn deere.

Thanne seyde he thus as ye shal after  
heere :

' Naught may the woful spirit in myn  
herte

Declare o point of alle my sorwès smerte

To yow, my lady, that I lovè moost,

But I biquethe the servyce of my goost

To yow aboven every creature, 2769

Syn that my lyf ne may no lenger dure.

Allas the wo ! allas, the peynès stronge,

That I for yow have suffred, and so longe !

Allas, the deeth ! allas, myn Emelye !

Allas, departyng of our compaignye !

Allas, myn hertès queene ! allas, my wyf !

Myn hertès lady, endere of my lyf !

What is this world ? what asketh men to  
have ?

Now with his love, now in his coldè grave

2770. *ne*, supplied by Tyrwhitt.

Allone, withouten any compaignye. 2771

Farewel, my sweté foo, myn Emelye !

And softè taak me in youre armès tweye.

For love of God, and herkneth what I seye.

' I have heer with my cosyn Palamon

Had strif and rancour, many a day agon,

For love of yow, and for my jalousy,

And Juppiter so wys my soulè gye

To speken of a servaunt proprely,

With allè circumstances trewely,—

That is to seyn, trouthe, honour, and

knyghthede,

Wysdom, humblesse, estaat and heigh

kynrede, 2790

Fredom, and al that longeth to that art,—

So Juppiter have of my soulè part,

As in this world right now ne knowe I non

So worthy to ben loved as Palamon,

That serveth yow and wol doon al his lyf.

And if that ever ye shul ben a wyf,

Forget nat Palamon, the gentil man,—

And with that word his spechè faille gan,

For from his feet up to his brest was come

The coold of deeth, that hadde him over-

come ; 2800

And yet moore-over, in his armès two,

The vital strengthe is lost and al ago.

Only the intellect, withouten moore

That dwellèd in his herte syk and soore

Gan faille when the herte feltè deeth,

Duskèd his eyen two and failleð breeth.

But on his lady yet caste he his eye ;

His lastè word was, ' Mercy, Emelye !'

His spirit chaungèd hous, and wentè ther

As I cam never, I kan nat tellen wher.

Therefore I stynte, I nam no divinistre ;

Of soulès fynde I nat in this registre,

Ne me ne list thilke opinions to telle,

Of hem, though that they writen wher

they dwelle.

Arcite is coold, ther Mars his soulè gye

Now wol I speken forth of Emelye.

Shrighte Emelye, and howleth Palamon

And Thesèus his suster took anon

Swownynge, and baar hire fro the cor

away.

What helpeth it to tarien forth the day

2799. *feet*, EH<sup>3</sup> *herte* ; Petworth, *for from*

*fete unto the herte.*

2801. *in*, E<sup>6</sup> *for in.*

To tellen how she weepe, bothe eve and  
morwe? 2821

For in swich cas wommen have swiche  
sorwe,

Whan that hir housbonds ben from hem  
ago,

That, for the moorè part, they sorwen so,  
Or ellis fallen in swich maladye,

That, at the lastè, certainly they dye.

Infinite been the sorwès and the teeres  
Of oldè folk, and folk of tendrè yeeres,

In all the toun for deeth of this Theban ;  
For hym ther wepeth bothè child and

man ; 2830

So greet a wepyng was ther noon, certayn,  
Whan Ector was y-brought al fressh y-slayn

To Troye. Allas ! the pitee that was ther,  
Cracchyng of chekès, rentyng eek of

heer.

' Why woldestow be deed ? ' thise  
wommen crye,

And haddest gold ynough, and Emelye.'

Nó man myghtè gladen Theseus,

saveynge his oldè fader Egeus,

That knew this worldès transmutacioun,  
As he hadde seyn it chaungen, up and

doun, 2840

oye after wo, and wo after gladnesse,  
And shewèd hem ensamples and liknesse.

' Right as ther dyèd never man,' quod  
he,

That he ne lyvede in erthe in som degree,  
Right so ther lyvèd never man,' he seyde,

In all this world, that som tym he ne  
deyde ;

' This world nys but a thurghfare ful of wo,  
and we been pilgrymes, passyng to and

fro ;

Deeth is an ende of every worldly soore' ;  
and over al this yet seyde he muchel

moore 2850

' To this effect, ful wisely to enhortè  
the peple that they sholdè hem reconforte.

Duc Theseus, with all his bisy cure,

ast busily wher that the sepulture

f goode Arcite may best y-makèd be,

2840. *chaungen*, from Hengwrt; H *torne*; E<sup>5</sup>

1. 2849. *worldly*, E *worldes*.

2854. *busily*, E<sup>6</sup> *now*.

And eek moost honourable in his degree ;  
And at the laste he took conclusioun

That ther as first Arcite and Palamoun  
Hadden for love the bataille hem bitwene,

That in that selvè grové, swoote and  
grene, 2860

Ther as he hadde his amoureuse desires,  
His compleynte, and for love his hootè

fires,

He woldè make a fyr in which the office  
Fúneral he myghte al accomplice ;

And leet comande anon to hakke and  
hewe

The okès olde, and leye hem on a rewe,  
In colpons, wel arrayèd for to brenne.

His officers with swiftè feet they renne,  
And ryden anon at his comandement.

And after this Theseus hath y-sent 2870  
After a beere, and it al over spradde

With clooth of gold, the richeste that ho  
hadde ;

And of the same suyte he clad Arcite.  
Upon his hondès hadde he glouvès white,

Eek on his heed a coroune of laurer grene,  
And in his hond a swerd ful bright and

kene.

He leyde hym, bare the visage, on the  
beere.

Ther-with he weep that pitee was to heere ;  
And, for the peple sholdè seen hym alle,

Whan it was day he broghte hym to the  
halle, 2880

That roreth of the cryng and the soun.  
Tho cam this woful Theban Palamoun,

With flotery berd and ruggy ashy heeres,  
In clothès blake, y-droppèd al with teeres ;

And passyng othere of wepyng, Emelye,  
The rewefulleste of al the compaignye.

In as muche as the servyce sholdè be  
The moorè noble and riche in his degree,  
Duc Theseus leet forth thre steedès

bryngè,

That trappèd were in steele al gliteryng  
And covered with the armes of daun

Arcite. 2891

Upon thise steedes, that weren grete and  
white,

Ther sitten folk, of whiche oon baar his  
sheeld,

Another his spere up in his hondès heeld,

The thriddè baar with hym his bowe  
Turkeys 2895  
(Of bred gold was the caas, and eek the  
harneys);

And riden forth a paas with sorweful  
cheere,

Toward the grove, as ye shul after heere.  
The nobleste of the Grekès that ther were  
Upon hir shuldrès caryeden the beere,  
With slakè paas, and eyen rede and wete,  
Thurgh-out the citee, by the maister strete,  
That sprad was al with blak, and wonder  
hye

Right of the same is al the strete y-wrye.

Upon the right hond wente olde Egèus,  
And on that oother syde duc Thesèus,  
With vessels in hir hand of gold ful fyn  
Al ful of hony, milk, and blood, and wyn:  
Eek Palamon, with ful greet compaignye,  
And after that cam woful Emelye, 2910  
With fyr in honde, as was that tyme the  
gyse

To do the office of funeral servyse.

Heigh labour, and ful greet apparail-  
lynge,

Was at the service and the fyr makyng,  
That with his grenè tope the heven  
raughte,

And twenty fadme of brede the armès  
straughte;

This is to seyn, the bowès weren so brode.  
Of stree first ther was leyd ful many a lode;  
But how the fyr was makéd up on highte,  
And eek the namè that the trees highte,—  
As ook, firre, birch, aspe, alder, holm,  
popeler, 2921

Wylugh, elm, plane, asshe, box, chasteyn,  
lynde, laurer,

Mapul, thorn, bech, hasel, ew,  
whippeltre,—

How they weren feld shal nat be toold  
for me;

Ne how the goddès ronnen up and down,  
Disherited of hire habitacioun,

In whiche they wonèden in reste and pees,  
Nymphès, fawnes, and amadriades;

Ne how the bestès and the briddès alle  
Fledden for ferè, whan the wode was falle;

Ne how the ground agast was of the light,

*2920. that, H<sup>5</sup> how.*

That was nat wont to seen the sonnè  
bright;

Ne how the fyr was couchéd first with  
stree,

And thanne with dryè stokkès, cloven a  
thre,

And thanne with grenè wode and spicerye,  
And thanne with clooth of gold, and  
with perrye,

And gerlandes, hangyng with ful many  
a flour,

The mirre, thencens, with al so greet  
odour;

Ne how Arcite lay among al this,  
Ne what richesse aboute his body is, 2940

Ne how that Emelye, as was the gyse,  
Putte in the fyr of funeral servyse,

Ne how she swownéd whan men made  
the fyr,

Ne what she spak, ne what was hir desyr,  
Ne what jeweles men in the fyr tho caste

Whan that the fyr was greet and brentè  
faste;

Ne how somme caste hir sheeld, and  
somme hir spere,

And of hire vestimentz, whiche that they  
were,

And coppès full of wyn, and milk, and  
blood,

Into the fyr, that brente as it were  
wood; 2950

Ne how the Grekès, with an huge route,  
Thriès riden al the place aboute

Upon the left hand, with a loud shoutyng,  
And thriès with hir sperès clateryng,

And thriès how the ladyes gonnè crye,  
And how that lad was homward Emelye;

Ne how Arcite is brent to asshe colde,  
Ne how that lychèwakè was y-holde

Al thilkè nyght; ne how the Grekès pleye  
The wakè-pleyes; ne kepe I nat to seye

Who wrastleth best naked, with oille  
enoynt, 2960

Ne who that baar hym best in no disjoynt.  
I wol nat tellen eek how that they goor

Hoom til Atthenès, whan the pleye is  
doon;

But shortly to the point thanne wol  
wende,

And maken of my longè tale an ende.

By processe and by lengthe of certeyn  
yeres,  
Al styntyd is the moornyng and the teres  
Of Grekés, by oon general assent. 2969  
Thanne seméd me ther was a parlément  
At Atthenes, upon certein poyntz and caas;  
Among the whichè poyntz y-spoken was,  
To have with certein contrees alliaunce,  
And have fully of Thebens obeissaunce.  
For which this noble Thesëus anon  
Leet senden after gentil Palamon,  
Unwist of hym what was the cause and  
why;  
But in his blakè clothés sorwefully  
He cam at his comandément in hye.  
Tho sentè Thesëus for Emelye. 2980  
When they were set, and hust was al  
the place,  
And Thesëus abiden hadde a space  
Er any word cam fram his wisè brest,  
His eyen sette he ther as was his lest,  
And with a sad visage he sikèd stille,  
And after that right thus he seyde his wille:  
'The Firstè Moevere of the cause above,  
Whan he first made the fairè cheyne of love,  
Greet was thefect and heigh was his  
entente;  
Wel wiste he why and what therof he  
mente, 2990  
For with that fairè cheyne of love he bond  
The fyr, the eyr, the water and the lond,  
In certeyn boundés that they may nat flec.  
That same Prince, and that same  
Moevere,' quod he,  
'Hath stablissed in this wrecchéd world  
adoun  
Certeynè dayés and duracioun  
To al that is engendrid in this place,  
Over the whichè day they may nat pace,—  
Al mowe they yet tho dayés wel abregge,  
Ther nedeth noon auctoritee allegge 3000  
For it is preevéd by experiance,  
But that me list declaren my sentence.  
Thanne may men by this ordè wel  
discerne

2987-3016. *The Firstè Moevere*, etc. Theseus takes the arguments of this speech from Boethius, *De Consolatione*, bk. ii. met. 8; bk. iv. pr. 6; bk. iii. pr. 10.

2994. and that same Moevere, Heng.<sup>2</sup> om. that; Hl. and moevere eek.

That thilkè Moevere stable is and eterne.  
Wel may men knowè, but it be a fool,  
That every part dirryveth from his hool;  
For nature hath nat taken his bigynnyng  
Of no partie, ne cantel, of a thyng,  
But of a thyng that parfit is and stable,  
Descendynge so, til it be corrumpable.  
And therfore of his wisè purveiaunce 3011  
He hath so wel biset his ordinaunce,  
That speses of thyngès and progressiouns  
Shullen enduren by successiouns,  
And nat eterne, withouten any lye;  
This maystow understonde, and seen at  
eye.

'Loo the ook, that hath so long a  
norissyng  
From tymè that it first bigynneth sprynge,  
And hath so long a lif as we may see,  
Yet at the lastè wasted is the tree. 3020  
'Considereth eek how that the hardè  
stoon  
Under oon feet, on which we trede and  
goon,  
Yit wasteth it, as it lyth by the weye;  
The brodè ryver somtyme wexeth dreye;  
The gretè tounès se we wane and wende;  
Thanne may ye se that al this thyng hath  
ende.

'Of man and womman seen we wel  
also,  
That nedeth in oon of thisè termès two,  
This is to seyn, in youthe or ellès age,  
He moot be deed, the kyng as shal a  
page; 3030  
Som in his bed, som in the depè see,  
Som in the largè feeld, as men may se;  
Ther helpeth noght, al goth that ilkè  
weye:  
Thanne may I seyn that al this thyng  
moot deye.

'What maketh this but Juppiter, the  
kyng,  
The which is prince, and cause of allè  
thyng,  
Convertynge al unto his proprè welle,  
From which it is dirryvéd, sooth to telle?

3015. H *And nat eterne be, withoute lye.*

3025. *tounes, E toures.*

3034. *that, om. E<sup>2</sup>.*

3036. *The which, E<sup>6</sup> that.*

And here-agayns no creäture on lyve,  
Of no degree, availleth for to stryve. 3040

‘Thanne is it wysdom, as it thynketh me,  
To maken vertu of necessitee,  
And take it weel that we may not eschue,  
And namely that to us alle is due.  
And whoso gruccheth ought, he dooth  
folye,

And rebel is to hym that al may gye ;  
And certainly a man hath moost honour,  
To dyen in his excellence and flour,  
When he is siker of his goodé name ;  
Thanne hath he doon his freend, ne hym,  
no shame, 3050  
And gladder oghte his freend been of his  
deeth,

Whan with honour up-yolden is his breeth,  
Than whan his name apalléd is for age,  
For al forgotten is his vasselage.  
Thanne is it best, as for a worthy fame,  
To dyen whan that he is best of name.

‘The contrarie of al this is wilfulnessse.  
Why grucchen we, why have we hevynesse,  
That goode Arcite, of chivalrië flour,  
Departed is, with duetee and honour, 3060  
Out of this foulé prisoun of this lyf ?  
Why grucchen heere his cosyng and his wyf  
Of his welfare that loved hem so weel ?  
Kan he hem thank ?—Nay, God woot,  
never a deel—

That bothe his soule and eek hem-self  
offende,  
And yet they mowe hir lustés nat amende.

‘What may I conclude of this longé  
serye,  
But after wo, I rede us to be merye,  
And thanken Juppiter of al his grace ?  
And er that we departen from this place  
I redé that we make of sorwés two 3071  
O parfit joyé, lastyng e evermo.  
And looketh now, wher moost sorwe is  
her-inne,

Ther wol we first amenden and bigynne.  
‘Suster,’ quod he, ‘this is my fulle  
assent,

With all thavys heere of my parlément,  
That gentil Palamon, thyn owene knyght,  
That serveth yow with willé, herte, and  
myght,

3077. *thyn, H<sup>6</sup> your.*

And ever hath doon, syn that ye first  
hym knewe,

That ye shul of your grace upon hym  
rewé, 3080  
And taken hym for housbonde and for  
lord ;

Lene me youre hond, for this is oure  
accord.

Lat se now of youre wommanly pitee ;  
He is a kyngés brother sone, *pardee*,  
And though he were a pouré bachelor,  
Syn he hath servéd yow so many a yer  
And had for yow so greet adversitee,  
It mosté been considered, leeveth me,  
For gentil mercy oghte to passen right.’

Thanne seyde he thus to Palamon ful  
right : 3090

‘I trowe ther nedeth litel sermonyng  
To maké yow assenté to this thyng ;  
Com neer, and taak youre lady by the  
hond.’

Bitwixen hem was maad anon the bond  
That highté matrimoigne, or mariage,  
By al the conseil and the baronage ;  
And thus with allé blisse and melodye  
Hath Palamon y-wedded Emelye,  
And God, that al this wydé world hath  
wrought,  
Sende hym his love that it hath deere  
aboght, 3100

For now is Palamon in allé wele,  
Lyvyng in blisse, in richesse, and in  
heele ;

And Emelye hym loveth so tendrely,  
And he hire serveth al-so gentilly,  
That never was ther no word hem bitwene  
Of jalousie, or any oother tene.

Thus endeth Palamon and Emelye ;  
And God save al this fairé compaignye.  
*Amen.*

*Heere folwen the wordes bitwene the  
Hoost and the Millere*

Whan that the Knyght had thus his  
tale y-toold,  
In al the routé ne was ther yong ne  
oold 3110

3106. *or any, H ne of non.*

That he ne seyde it was a noble storie,  
And worthy for to drawn to memorie ;  
And namely the gentils everichon.

Oure Hoosté lough and swoor, ' So  
moot I gon,

This gooth aright ; unboked is the male ;  
Lat se now who shal telle another tale ;  
For trewely the game is wel bigonne.

Now tellethe on, sire Monk, if that ye  
konne

Sumwhat to quité with the Knyghtés tale.'

The Millere, that for-dronken was al  
pale, 3120

So that unnethe upon his hors he sat,  
He nolde avalen neither hood ne hat,  
Ne abyde no man for his curteisie,  
But in Pilátés voys he gan to crie,  
And swoor by armés, and by blood and  
bones,

' I kan a noble tale for the nones,  
With which I wol now quite the  
Knyghtés tale.'

Oure Hoosté saugh that he was dronke  
of ale,

And seyde, ' Abyd, Robyn, my leevé  
brother, 3129

Som bettere man shal telle us first another ;  
Abyde, and lat us werken thriftily.'

' By Goddés soule,' quod he, ' that wol  
nat I,

For I wol speke, or ellés go my wey.'

Oure Hoost answerde, ' Tel on a  
devele wey !

Thou art a fool, thy wit is overcome.'

' Now herkneþ,' quod the Millere,  
' alle and some ;

But first I make a protestacioun  
That I am dronke, I knowe it by my  
soun ;

And, therefore, if that I mysspeke or seye,  
Wyte it the ale of Southwerk, I you  
preye ; 3140

For I wol telle a legende and a lyf,

3112. *for to drawn to, H to be drawn in.*

3114. *lough, H tho lough.*

3115. *aright, H right wel.*

3117. *on, H<sup>6</sup> ye.*

3124. *in Pilates voys, the ranting tone assigned to Pilate in the Miracle Plays.*

3128. *saugh that he was dronke, H saugh wel how dronke he was.*

3138. *it, H wel.*

Bothe of a carpenter and of his wyf,  
How that a clerk hath set the wrightés  
cappe.'

The Reve answerde and seyde, ' Stynt  
thy clappe !

Lat be thy lewéd, dronken harlotrye ;  
It is a synne, and eek a greet folye  
To apeyren any man, or hym defame,  
And eek to bryngen wyvés in swich fame ;  
Thou mayst ynogh of othere thyngés seyn.'

This dronké Millere spak ful soone  
ageyn 3150

And seyde, ' Levé brother Osewold,  
Who hath no wyf he is no cokéwold,  
But I sey nat therefore that thou art oon,  
Ther been ful goodé wyvés many oon,  
And ever a thousand goode ayeyns oon  
badde ;

That knowestow wel thyself, but if thou  
madde.

Why artow angry with my talé now ?

I have a wyf *pardee*, as wel as thow,  
Yet nolde I, for the oxen in my plough,  
Taken upon me mooré than ynogh ; 3160  
Though that thou deme thiself that thou  
be oon,

I wol bilevé wel that I am noon.

An housbonde shal nat been inquisityf  
Of Goddés pryveteé, nor of his wyf ;  
So he may fyndé Goddés foysoun there,  
Of the remenant nedeth nat enquere.'

What sholde I mooré seyn, but this  
Millere

He nolde his wordés for no man forbere,  
But told his chérclés tale in his manere.  
Mathynketh that I shal reherce it heere ;  
And therefore every gentil wight I preye,  
For Goddés love, demeth nat that I seye  
Of yvel entente, but for I moot reherce  
Hir talés allé, be they bettere or worse,  
Or ellés falsen som of my mateere : 3175  
And therefore, who-so list it nat y-heere,

3148. *swich fame, H yllname.*

3161. *Though, etc.* This reading of H (partly supported by Camb.) is much better than the 'As demen of myself that I were oon' of E<sup>2</sup>.

3167. *moore seyn but this, H seye but that this proud.*

3173. *for, E<sup>2</sup> that.*

3174. *Hir tales alle, be they, etc., H Here wordes alle, al be they, etc.*

Turne over the leef and chese another tale ;  
For he shal fynde ynowe, bothe grete  
and smale,

Of storial thyng that toucheth gentillesse,  
And eek moralitee, and hoolynesse,— 3180  
Blameth nat me if that ye chese amys.  
The Millere is a cherl, ye knowe wel this,  
So was the Reve, and othere manye mo,  
And harlotrie they tolden bothè two.  
Ayvseth yow, putteth me out of blame ;  
And eek men shal nat maken ernest of  
game.

## MILLER'S TALE

*Heere bigynneth The Millere his Tale*

Whilom ther was dwellynge at Oxenford  
A richè gnof, that gestès heeld to bord,  
And of his craft he was a carpenter.  
With hym ther was dwellynge a poure  
scolor, 3190

Hadde lernéd art, but al his fantasye  
Was turnéd for to lern astrologye,  
And koude a certeyn of conclusiouns,  
To demen by interrogaciouns,  
If that men askéd hym in certein houres  
Whan that men sholde have droghte or  
ellès shoures,

Or if men askéd hym what sholde bifalle  
Of every thyng, I may nat rekene hem  
alle.

This clerk was clepéd hendé Nicholas.  
Of deernè love he koude, and of solas,  
And ther-to he was sleigh and ful privee,  
And lyk a mayden meké for to see. 3202  
A chambré hadde he in that hostelrye  
Allone, withouten any compaignye,  
Ful fetisly y-dight, with herbès swoote,  
And he hymself as sweete as is the roote  
Of lycorys, or any cetéwale.  
His Almageste, and bookès grete and  
smale,

*The Millere his Tale.* No original or analogue  
has been discovered for this story, and there is  
no reason to doubt that it is of Chaucer's own  
invention.

3208. *Almageste*, the chief work of the astron-  
omer Ptolemy, called by the Greeks Μεγάλη  
Σύνταξις τῆς Ἀστρονομίας, a name which the  
Arabs by substituting a superlative turned into  
*Al-megiste*, or *Almagest*.

His astrelabie, longynge for his art,  
His augrym stonès, layen faire apart, 3210  
On shelvès couchéd at his beddès heed,  
His presse y-covered with a faldyng reed,  
And all above ther lay a gay sautrie,  
On which he made a-nyghtès melodie  
So swetely, that al the chambré rong,  
And *Angelus ad Virginem*, he song ;  
And after that he song the 'kyngès  
noote' ;

Ful often blesséd was his myrie throte,  
And thus this sweetè clerk his tymé  
spente 3219  
After his freendès fyndyng and his rente.

This carpenter hadde wedded newe a  
wyf,

Which that he lovèd moorè than his lyf ;  
Of eightéteen yeer she was of age.

Jalous he was, and heeld hire narwe in  
cage,

For she was yong and wyld, and he was  
old,

And demed hymself been lik a cokéwold.  
He knew nat Catoun, for his wit was  
rude,—

That bad man sholdé wedde his  
simylitude.

Men sholdé wedden after hire estaat, 3229  
For youthe and elde is often at debaat ;  
But sith that he was fallen in the snare,  
He moste endure, as oother folk, his care.

Fair was this yongé wyf, and therwithal,  
As any wezele, hir body gent and smal.

A ceynt she werede, y-barréd al of silk ;  
A barnclooth eek, as whit as morné milk,  
Upon hir lendès, ful of many a goore ;  
Whit was hir smok, and broyden al bifoore,  
And eek bihyndé, on hir coler aboute,  
Of colblak silk withinne and eek withoute.

3216. *Angelus ad Virginem*. The music of a  
13th-century chant to these words is extant at  
the British Museum. Of the 'kynges noote'  
nothing appears to be known.

3227. *He knew nat Catoun*. The maxim here  
alluded to is not properly one of Cato's; but I  
find it in a kind of Supplement to the Moral  
Distichs, entitled *Facetus* int. *Auctores octo*  
*moraes*, Lugd. 1538, cap. iii.

'Duc tibi prole parem sponsam moresque venustam,  
Si cum pace velis vitam deducere justam'  
(Tyrwhitt). The sentiment is as old as the  
Seven Sages.

3231. *fallen in, H brought into*.  
3232. *folk, H doon*.



The tapès of hir whitè voluper 3241  
 Were of the samè suyte of hir coler ;  
 Hir filet brood, of silk and set ful hye ;  
 And sikerly she hadde a likerous eye.  
 Ful smale y-pullèd were hire browès two,  
 And tho were bent, and blake as any sloo.  
 She was ful moorè blisful on to see  
 Than is the newè pereionettè tree,  
 And softer than the wolle is of a wether ;  
 And by hir girdel heeng a purs of lether,  
 Tasseled with grene and perlèd with  
 latoun. 3251

In al this world, to seken up and doun,  
 There nas no man so wys that koudè  
 thenche

So gay a popelote, or swich a wenche.  
 Ful brighter was the shynng of hir hewe  
 Than in the Tour the noble y-forgèd newe.  
 But of hir song it was as loude and yerne  
 As any swalwè chitteryng on a berne.  
 Therto she koudè skippe and makè game,  
 As any kyde, or calf, folwyng his dame.  
 Hir mouth was sweete as bragot or the  
 meeth, 3261

Or hoord of apples leyd in hey or heeth.  
 Wynsynge she was, as is a joly colt ;  
 Long as a mast and uprighte as a bolt.  
 A brooch sche baar upon hir love coler,  
 As brood as is the boos of a bokeler ;  
 Hir shoes were lacèd on hir leggès hye ;  
 She was a prymerole, a piggesnye  
 For any lord, to leggen in his bedde,  
 Or yet for any good yeman to wedde. 3270

Now, sire, and eft, sire, so bifel the cas,  
 That on a day this hepdè Nicholas,  
 Fil with this yongè wyf to rage and pleye,  
 Whil that hir housbonde was at Osèneye,  
 As clerkès ben ful subtile and ful queynte ;  
 And privèly he caughte hire by the queynte,  
 And seyde, 'Y-wis, but if ich have my  
 wille,

For deernè love of thee, lemman, I  
 spille' ;  
 And heild hire hardè by the haunchè  
 bones,

3256. *Tour*, i.e. the Tower of London, where the Mint was.

3256. *the noble*, a gold coin (6s. 8d.), first minted by Edward III.

3258. *chitteryng*, F<sup>4</sup> *sittyng*.

3274. *Oseneye*, Osney, a village near Oxford.

And seyde, 'Lemman, love me al atones,  
 Or I wol dyen, also God me save !' 3281

And she sproong, as a colt doth in the  
 trave,

And with hir heed sche wryèd faste away,  
 And seyde, 'I wol nat kisse thee, by  
 my fey !

Why, lat be !' quod she, 'lat be,  
 Nicholas !

Or I wolcrie, "out, Harrow," and "Allas !"  
 Do wey youre handès, for your curteisey !'

This Nicholas gan mercy for to crye,  
 And spak so faire, and profred hym so  
 faste,

That she hir love hym graunted attè laste,  
 And swoor hir ooth, by Seint Thomas of  
 Kent, 3291

That she wol been at his comandèment  
 Whan that she may hir leyser wel espie.

'Myn housbonde is so ful of jalousie,  
 That but ye waytè wel and been privee,  
 I woot right wel I nam but deed,' quod  
 she ;

'Ye mostè been ful deerne, as in this cas.'  
 'Nay, ther-of care thee noght,' quod  
 Nicholas.

'A clerk hadde litherly biset his whyle  
 But if he koude a carpenter bigyle.' 3300  
 And thus they been accorded and y-sworn  
 To wayte a tyme, as I have told biforn.

Whan Nicholas had doon thus everideel,  
 And thakkèd hire aboute the lendès weel,  
 He kist hire sweete, and taketh his sawtrie,  
 And pleyeth faste, and maketh melodie.

Thanne fil it thus, that to the paryssh  
 chirche,

Christès owenè werkès for to wirche,  
 This goodè wyf went on an haliday ; 3309  
 Hir forheed shoon as bright as any day,  
 So was it wasshen whan she leet hir werk.

Now was ther of that chireche a parissch  
 clerk,

The which that was y-clepèd Absolon ;  
 Crul was his heer and as the gold it  
 shoon,

And strouted as a fannè, large and brode,

3282. *H and she sprang out as doth a colt in trave.*

3283. *Nicholas, H thou Nicholas.*

3289. *hym, F hire.*

Ful streight and evene lay his joly shode.  
His rode was reed, his eyen greye as  
goos ;

With Powlés wyndow corven on his shoos,  
In hoses rede he wenté fetisly.

Y-clad he was ful smal and proprely, <sup>3320</sup>  
Al in a kirtel of a lyght waget,

Ful faire and thikké been the poyntés set ;  
And therupon he hadde a gay surplys,  
As whit as is the blosme upon the rys.

A myrie child he was, so God me save,  
Wel koude he laten blood and clippe  
and shave,

And maken a chartre of lond or acquit-  
aunce.

In twenty manere koude he trippe and  
daunce

(After the scole of Oxenfordé tho),  
And with his leggés casten to and fro, <sup>3330</sup>

And pleyen songés on a small rubible ;  
Therto he song somtyme a loud quynnyble,

And as wel koude he pleye on his giterne.  
In al the toun nas brewhous ne tavernne

That he ne visited with his solas,  
Ther any gaylard tappesteré was.

But, sooth to seyn, he was somdel  
squaymous

Of fartung, and of spechè daungerous.

This Absolon, that jolif was and gay,  
Gooth with a sencer on the haliday, <sup>3340</sup>

Sensynge the wyvés of the parisshe faste,  
And many a lovely look on hem he caste,

And namely on this carpenteris wyf.  
To loke on hire hym thoughte a myrie lyf,

She was so propre, and sweete, and  
likerous.

I dar wel seyn if she hadde been a mous,  
And he a cat, he wold hire hente anon.

This parissch clerk, this joly Absolon,  
Hath in his herté swich a love longynge,

That of no wyf ne took he noon offrynge ;  
For curteisie, he seyde, he woldé noon.

The moone, whan it was nyght, ful  
brighté shoon, <sup>3352</sup>

<sup>3318.</sup> *Powles wyndow.* The reference is to the  
open-work tracery, like that of the great Rose  
window at Old St. Paul's, in the fashionable shoes  
of the time. <sup>H<sup>2</sup></sup> *wyndowes.*

<sup>3321.</sup> *lyght, H fyn.*

<sup>3322.</sup> *H Schapen with goores in the newe get.*

<sup>3352.</sup> *whan it was nyght, ful, H at night ful  
clere and.*

And Absolon his gyterne hath y-take,  
For paramours he thoghté for to wake ;  
And forth he gooth, jolif and amorous,

Til he cam to the carpenterés hous,  
A litel after cökkés hadde y-crowe,

And dresséd hym up by a shotwyndowe,  
That was upon the carpenteris wal.

He syngeth in his voys gentil and smal :  
'*Now, deerè lady, if thy willé be,* <sup>3361</sup>  
*I prayé yow that ye wolve thynke on me,*'

Ful wel acordaunt to his gyternynge.

This carpenter awook, and herdé synge,  
And spak unto his wyf, and seyde anon,

'What, Alison, herestow nat Absolon,  
That chaunteth thus under oure bourés  
wal ?'

And she answerde hir housbonde ther-  
withal,

'Yis, God woot, John, I heere it every del.'  
This passeth forth ; what wol ye bet  
than weel ? <sup>3370</sup>

Fro day to day this joly Absolon  
So woweth hire that hym is wo bigon ;

He waketh al the nyght and al the day,  
He kembeth his lokkés brode, and

made hym gay,  
He woweth hire by meenés and brocage,

And swoor he woldé been hir owene page ;  
He syngeth, brokkynge as a nyghtyngale ;

He sente hire pyment, meeth, and spicéd  
ale,

And wafres, pipynge hoot out of the gleede ;  
And, for she was of toune, he profreth  
meede ; <sup>3380</sup>

For som folk wol ben wonnen for richesse,  
And somme for strokes, and somme for  
gentillesse.

Somtyme to shewe his lightnesse and  
maistrye

He pleyeth Herodés, on a scaffold hye,  
But what availleth hym, as in this cas ?

She loveth so this hendé Nicholas,

<sup>3354.</sup> *thoghte for to wake, H seyde he wolde  
awake.*

<sup>3362.</sup> *thynke, H rewé.*

<sup>3374.</sup> *He kembeth, H To kembe,* an amusing  
but unlikely variant.

<sup>3377.</sup> *brokkynge, warbling? ; H crowyng.*

<sup>3384.</sup> *He pleyeth Herodes, etc.* The Miracle  
Plays were at first chiefly acted by clerks ; the  
stage or 'scaffold' often had three compartments  
to represent Heaven, Earth, and Hell.

That Absolon may blowe the bukkés horn,  
 He ne haddé for his labour but a scorn,  
 And thus she maketh Absolon hire ape  
 And al his earnest turneth til a jape. <sup>3390</sup>  
 Ful sooth is this proverbe, it is no lye,  
 Men seyn right thus, 'Alwey the nyé slye  
 Maketh the ferré leevé to be looth';  
 For though that Absolon be wood or  
 wrooth,

By-causé that he fer was from hire<sup>s</sup>ighte,  
 This nyé Nicholas stood in his lighte.

Now bere thee wel, thou hendé  
 Nicholas,

For Absolon may waille and synge, allas!  
 And so bifel it on a Saturday

This carpenter was goon til Osénay, <sup>3400</sup>  
 And hendé Nicholas and Alisoun  
 Acorded been to this conclusioun,

That Nicholas shal shapen hym a wyle  
 This sely, jealous housbonde to bigyle;

And, if so be the gamé wente aright,  
 She sholdé slepen in his arm al nyght,  
 For this was his desir and hire also.

And right anon, withouten wordés mo,  
 This Nicholas no lenger woldé tarie,

But dooth ful softe unto his chambré  
 carie <sup>3410</sup>

Bothe mete and drynké for a day or  
 tweye;

And to hire housbonde bad hire for to  
 seye,

If that he axéd after Nicholas,  
 She sholdé seye she nysté where he was,  
 Of al that day she saugh hym nat with  
 eye;

She trowéd that he was in maladye,  
 For for no cry hir maydé koude hym calle,  
 He nolde answer for nought that myghté  
 falle.

This passeth forth al thilké Saturday  
 That Nicholas stille in his chambré lay,  
 And eet and sleepe, or didé what hym  
 leste, <sup>3421</sup>

Til Sunday, that the sonnè gooth to reste.  
 This sely carpenter hath greet merveyle

<sup>3387.</sup> *blowe the bukkés horn*, a phrase meaning  
 'have his trouble for nothing.'

<sup>3405.</sup> *be the, H were this.*

<sup>3416.</sup> *that he was in, H he were falle in som.*

<sup>3417.</sup> *For for no cry hir mayde, H For no cry  
 that hir mayde*, to be taken with next line.

Of Nicholas, or what thyng myghte hym  
 eyle,

And seyde, 'I am adrad, by Seint Thomas  
 It stondest nat aright with Nicholas.

God shildé that he deydé sodeynly;

This world is now ful tikel, sikerly;

I saugh to day a cors y-born to chirche,

That now on Monday last I saugh hym  
 wirche. <sup>3430</sup>

'Go up,' quod he unto his knave anoon,  
 'Clepe at his dore, or knockké with a stoon;  
 Looke how it is, and tel me boldély.'

This knavé gooth him up ful sturdily  
 And at the chambré doré, whil he stood,  
 He cride and knockké as that he were  
 wood,—

'What! how! what do ye, maister  
 Nicholay?

How may ye slepen al the longé day?'

But al for nocht, he herdé nat a word.

An hole he foond, ful lowe upon a bord,

Ther as the cat was wont in for to crepe,

And at that hole he lookéd in ful depe,

And at the laste he hadde of hym a sighte.

This Nicholas sat gapyng ever uprighte,

As he had kikéd on the newé moone.

Adoun he gooth and tolde his maister  
 soone

In what array he saugh this ilké man.

This carpenter to blessen hym bigan,

And seyde, 'Help us, Seinté Frydeswyde!

A man woot litel what hym shal bityde;

This man is fallé, with his astromye, <sup>3451</sup>

In som woodnesse, or in some agonye.

I thoghte ay wel how that it sholdé be,

Men sholde nat knowe of Goddés pryvetee.

Ye, blesséd be alwey a lewéd man,

That nocht but only his bilevé kan.

So ferde another clerk with astromye;

He walkéd in the feeldés, for to pryve

Upon the sterrés, what ther sholde bifalle,

Til he was in a marlé pit y-falle; <sup>3460</sup>

He saugh nat that. But yet by Seint

Thomas,

Me reweth soore of hendé Nicholas!

<sup>3449.</sup> *Seinte Frydeswyde*, still the patron saint  
 of one of the Oxford parishes.

<sup>3451.</sup> *astromye*, a corruption of 'astronomye';  
 the latter word is the reading of H<sup>4</sup>, but both  
 here and in <sup>3457</sup> it spoils the metre.

<sup>3457.</sup> *another clerk*, Thales.

He shal be ratéd of his studyng,  
If that I may, by Jhesu, hevене kyng !

'Get me a staf, that I may underspore,  
Whil that thou, Robyn, hevest of the dore:  
He shal out of his studyng, as I gesse.'  
And to the chambré dore he gan hym  
dresse ;

His knavé was a strong carl, for the  
noones,

And by the haspe he haaf it of atones,  
Into the floor the doré fil anon. 3471

This Nicholas sat ay as stille as stoon,  
And ever gapéd upward into the eir.

This carpenter wende he were in despeir,  
And hente hym by the sholdrés myghtily  
And shook hym harde and cridè spitously,  
'What, Nicholay ! what how ! what,  
looke adoun !

Awake ! and thenk on Cristès passioun !  
I crouchè thee from elvès and fro wightes.'  
Therwith the nyghtspel seyde he anon-  
rightes, 3480

On fouré halvès of the hous aboute,  
And on the thresshold of the dore  
without :

'Jhesu Crist and Seint Benedight,  
Blesse this hous from every wikked wight  
For nyghtès veyre the whitè Pater noster.  
Where wentestow, Seint Petres soster ?'

And attè laste this hendè Nicholas  
Gan for to sikè soore, and seyde, 'Allas !  
Shal al this world be lost eftsoonès now ?'

This carpenter answerdè, 'What  
seystow ? 3490

What, think on God, as we doon, men  
that swynke.'

This Nicholas answerdè, 'Fecche me  
drynke ;

3477. *what* (3rd), *H man*; Heng.<sup>5</sup> om.

3483. *Jhesu*, *H Lord Jhesu*.

3485. *For nyghtes*, etc. Tyrwhitt reads: *For the nyghtes mare the wite pater-noster* (may pater-noster defend thee from night-mare); Morris: *For nyghtes mare veyre the with pater-noster* (guard thyself with pater-noster). But a charm of the 16th century quoted by Mr. Gilman runs:

'White Pater Noster, St. Peter's brother,  
What hast thou in one hand? White-Book Leaves.  
What hast i' th' other? Heaven Gate keys,  
Open Heaven Gates and steike Hell Gates,  
And let every crysom child creep to its own mother:  
White Pater Noster. Amen.'

If this be genuine the *white* must stand.

And after wol I speke, in pryvètee,  
Of certeyn thyng that toucheth me and  
thee ;

I wol telle it noon oother man, certeyn.'  
This carpenter goth down and comth  
ageyn,

And broghte of myghty ale a largè quart,  
And whan that ech of hem had dronke  
his part,

This Nicholas his doré fastè shette 3499  
And doun the carpenter by hym he sette.

He seyde, 'John, myn hoostè, lief  
and deere,

Thou shalt upon thy trouthè swere me  
heere

That to no wight thou shalt this conseil  
wreye,

For it is Cristès conseil that I seye ;  
And if thou tellè man thou art forlore,  
For this vengaucè thou shalt han therfore,  
That if thou wreyè me thou shalt be wood.'

'Nay, Crist forbede it, for his hooly  
blood,' 3508

Quod tho this sely man, 'I nam no labbe,  
Ne, though I seye, I am nat lief to gabbe ;  
Sey what thou wolt, I shal it never telle  
To child ne wyf, by hym that harwèd  
helle !'

'Now, John,' quod Nicholas, 'I  
wol nat lye,

I have y-founde in myn astrologye,  
As I have lookèd in the moonè bright,  
That now a Monday next, at quarter nyght,  
Shal falle a reyn, and that so wilde and  
wood,

That half so greet was never Noees flood.  
This world,' he seyde, 'in lassè than an hour  
Shal al be dreynt, so hidous is the shour ;  
Thus schal mankyndè drenche and lese  
hir lyf.' 3521

This carpenter answerde, 'Allas, my  
wyf !

And shal she drenche? Allas, myn  
Alisoun !'

For sorwe of this he fil almoost adoun,  
And seyde, 'Is ther no remedie in this cas ?'

3499. *fastè shette*, etc. ; *H gan to schitte*, *And dede this carpenter doun by him sitte*.

3510. *Ne, though I seye*, *H though I it seye*.  
3520. *Shal al be dreynt*, *H Shal ben i-dreynit*.

'Why, yis, for Gode,' quod hendé  
Nicholas,

'If thou wolt werken aftir loore and reed ;  
Thou mayst nat werken after thyn owene  
heed,

For thus seith Salomoun, that was ful  
trewe,

"Werk al by conseil and thou shalt nat  
rewe"; 3530

And if thou werken wolt by good conseil,  
I undertake, withouten mast and seyl,  
Yet shal I saven hire and thee and me.

Hastow nat herd how savéd was Noé,  
Whan that oure Lord hadde warnéd hym  
biforn

That al the world with water sholde be  
lorn ?'

'Yis,' quod this carpenter, 'ful yooore  
ago.'

'Hastow nat herd,' quod Nicholas, 'also,  
The sorwe of Noé with his felaweshipe

Er that he myghté brynge his wyf to shipe ?  
Hym hadde be levere, I dar wel undertake,

At thilké tyme, than alle his wetheres  
blake, 3542

That she hadde had a shipe hir-self allone.  
And therefore, woostou what is best to  
doone ?

This asketh haste, and of an hastif thyng  
Men may nat preche or maken taryng.

'Anon go gete us faste into this in  
A knedyng trogh, or ellis a kymélyn,

For ech of us, but loke that they be large,  
In whiche we mowé swymme as in a barge,

And han ther-inne vitaille suffisant 3551

But for a day,—fy on the remenant,—  
The water shal aslake and goon away

Abouté pryme upon the nexté day.  
But Robyn may nat wite of this, thyknave,

Ne eek thy maydè Gille I may nat save ;  
Axé nat why, for though thou aské me,

I wol nat tellen Goddés pryvètee ;  
Suffiseth thee, but if thy wittés madde,

To han as greet a grace as Noé hadde.  
Thy wyf shal I wel saven, out of doute.

3540. *Er that he myghte brynge, H that he  
had or he gat.* In the Miracle Plays Noah's  
wife refused to be saved without her gossips, and  
when dragged in broke her husband's head.

3550. *In whiche we mowe swymme, H In  
whiche that we may rowe.*

Go now thy wey and speed thee heer  
aboute. 3562

'But whan thou hast for hire and  
thee and me

Y-geten us thise knedyng-tubbés thre,  
Thanne shaltow hange hem in the roof  
ful hye,

That no man of oure purveiauncé spye,  
And whan thou thus hast doon as I have  
seyd,

And hast oure vitaille faire in hem y-leyd,  
And eek an ax to smyte the corde atwo,

Whan that the water comth, that we may  
go ; 3570

And broke an hole, an heigh upon the  
gable,

Unto the gardynward, over the stable,  
That we may frely passen forth oure way,

Whan that the greté shour is goon away ;  
Thanne schalt thou swymme as myrie, I

undertake,  
As dooth the whitè doke after hire drake ;

Thanne wol I clepe "how Alisoun, how  
John,

Be myrie, for the flood wol passe anon,"  
And thou wolt seyn, "Hayl, maister

Nicholay ! 3579  
Good morwe, I se thee wel for it is day !"

And thanne shul we be lordés al oure lyf  
Of al the world, as Noé and his wyf.

'But of o thing I warné thee ful right,  
Be well avyséd on that ilké nyght

That we ben entred into shippés bord,  
That noon of us ne speké nat a word,

Ne clepe, ne crie, but been in his preyère,  
For it is Goddés owene heesté deere.

Thy wyf and thou moote hangé fer  
atwynne,

For that bitwixé yow shal be no synne,  
Na moore in lookyng than ther shal in

deede ; 3591  
This ordinance is seyde ; so God thee

speede ;  
Tomorwe at nyght, whan folk ben alle

aslepe,  
Into our knedyng-tubbés wol we crepe,

And sitten there, abidyng Goddés grace.  
Go now thy wey, I have no lenger space

3578. *wol passe, H passeth.*  
3593. *folk ben alle, H men ben.*

To make of this no lenger sermonyng,—  
Men seyn thus, "Sende the wise and sey  
nothyng";

Thou art so wys it needeth nat thee teche,  
Go save oure lyf, and that I the biseche.'

This sely carpenter goth forth his wey;  
Ful ofte he seith 'Allas,' and 'Weylawey,'  
And to his wyf he tolde his pryveete,  
And she was war, and knew it bet than he,  
What al this queynté cast was for to seye;  
But natheles she ferde as she wolde deye,  
And seyde, 'Allas! go forth thy wey anon,  
Help us to scape or we been lost echon!  
I am thy trewé, verray, wedded wyf,  
Go, deeré spouse, and help to save oure  
lyf!'

3610

Lo which a greet thyng is affeccioun!  
Men may dyen of ymaginacioun,  
So depé may impressioun be take.

This sely carpenter bigynneth quake;  
Hym thynketh verrailly that he may see  
Noëes flood, come walwyng as the see,  
To drenchen Alisoun, his hony deere.

He wepeth, weyleth, maketh sory cheere;  
He siketh, with ful many a sory swogh;  
He gooth and geteth hym a knedyng trogh,  
And after that a tubbe and a kymelyn,  
And pryvély he sente hem to his in,  
And heng hem in the roof in pryvétee.

His owene hande he made laddrés thre,  
To clymben by the rongés and the stalkes,  
Into the tubbés, hangyng in the balkes;  
And hem vitailleth, bothé trogh and tubbe,  
With breed and chese and good ale in a  
jubbe,

Suffisyng right ynogh as for a day;  
But er that he hadde maad al this array,  
He sente his knave, and eek his wenche  
also,

3631

Upon his nede to London for to go;  
And on the Monday, whan it drow to  
nyght,

He shette his dore withouté candel lyght,  
And dresseth al this thyng as it shal be;  
And shortly, up they clomben allé thre;  
They sitten stillé, wel a furlong way.

'Now, *Pater noster*, clom,' seyde  
Nicholay;

3612. *Men may dyen (slur may), H A man  
may dye.*

And 'Clom,' quod John, and 'Clom,'  
seyde Alisoun.

This carpenter seyde his devocioun, 3640  
And stille he sit and biddeth his preyere,  
Ay waityng on the reyn, if he it heere.

The dedé sleepe, for verray bisynesse,  
Fil on this carpenter, right as I gesse  
Abouté corfew-tyme, or litel more;  
For travaille of his goost he groneth soore,  
And eft he routeth, for his heed myslay.  
Doun of the laddré stalketh Nicholay,  
And Alisoun ful softe adoun she spedde;  
Withouten wordés mo they goon to bedde.  
Ther as the carpenter is wont to lye, 3651  
Ther was the revel and the melodye.

And thus lith Alison and Nicholas,  
In bisynesse of myrthe and of solas,  
Til that the belle of laudés gan to ryng,  
And frerés in the chauncel gonné synge.

This pariss clerk, this amorous Ab-  
solon,

That is for love alwey so wo-bigon,  
Upon the Monday was at Oséneye  
With compaignye, hym to disporte and  
pleye,

3660

And axéd upon cas a cloisterer  
Ful prively after John the carpenter.  
And he drough hym a-part out of the  
chirche,

And seyde, 'I noot, I saugh hym heere  
nat wirche

Syn Saturday; I trow that he be went  
For tymber ther our abbot hath hym sent;  
For he is wont for tymber for to go,  
And dwellen at the grange a day or two;  
Or ellés he is at his hous, certeyn; 3669  
Where that he be I kan nat soothly seyn.'

This Absolon ful joly was and light,  
And thoughté, 'Now is tymé wake al nyght,  
For sikirly I saugh him nat stiryng  
Aboute his dore, syn day bigan to spryng.  
So moot I thryve I shal, at cökkés crowe,  
Ful pryvély go knokke at his wyndowe,  
That stant ful lowe upon his bourés wal.  
To Alison now wol I tellen al  
My love-longyng; for yet I shal na  
mysse

3679

That at the lesté wey I shal hire kisse.

3643. *verray, E<sup>5</sup> wery.*3658. *alwey so, H so hard and.*

Som maner confort shal I have, parfay.  
 My mouth hath icchéd al this longé day,  
 That is a signe of kissing atté leste.  
 Al nyght me mette eek I was at a feeste;  
 Therefore I wol goon slepe an houre or  
 tweye,  
 And al the nyght thanne wol I wake  
 and pleye.'

When that the firsté cok hath crowe  
 anon

Up rist this joly love Absolon,  
 And hym arraieth gay, at poynt devys;  
 But first he cheweth greyn and lycorys,  
 To smellen sweete, er he hadde kembd  
 his heer. 3691

Under his tonge a trewè-love he beer,  
 For ther-by wende he to ben gracious.  
 He rometh to the carpenterés hous,  
 And stille he stant under the shot-wyn-  
 dowe,—

Unto his brist it raughte, it was so lowe,—  
 And softe he knokketh with a semysoun:  
 'What do ye, hony-comb, sweete Alisoun,  
 My fairé bryd, my sweeté cynamome?  
 Awaketh, lemman myn, and speketh to me.  
 Wel litel thynken ye upon my wo 3701  
 That for youre love I sweté ther I go.  
 No wonder is, thogh that I swelte and  
 swete,

moorne as dooth a lamb after the tete;  
 Y-wis, lemman, I have swich love-long-  
 ynge,

That lik a turtel trewe is my moornyng;e;  
 may nat ete na moorè than a mayde.'  
 'Go fro the wyndow, jakké-fool,' she  
 sayde,

As help me God, it wol nat be, "com  
 ba me"; 3709

love another, and elles I were to blame,  
 Vel bet than thee, by Jhesu, Absclon.  
 So forth thy wey, or I wol caste a ston,  
 And lat me slepe, a twenty devel wey!'

'Allas,' quod Absolon, 'and weylawey,  
 that trewè love was ever so yvel biset!  
 'hanne kyssé me, syn it may be no bet,  
 'or Jhesus love, and for the love of me.'  
 Wiltow thanne go thy wey?' therwith  
 quod she.

3697. *knokketh*, H<sup>4</sup> *cowwith*, *cougheth*, *coughed*.  
 3702. *swete*, H *swelte*, faint.

'Ye certès, lemman,' quod this Absolon.  
 'Thanne make thee redy,' quod she,  
 'I come anon,' 3720

And unto Nicholas she seyde stille,  
 'Now hust and thou shalt laughen al  
 thy fille.'

This Absolon doun sette hym on his  
 knees,

And seyde, 'I am lord at alle degrees,  
 For after this I hope ther cometh moore.  
 Lemman, thy grace, and sweeté bryd,  
 thyn oore.'

The wyndow she undoth, and that in  
 haste,

'Have do,' quod she, 'com of, and speed  
 the faste,

Lest thatoure neighèborès thee espie.'

This Absolon gan wpe his mouth ful  
 drie: 3730

Dirk was the nyght as pich, or as the cole,  
 And at the wyndow out she pitte hir hole,  
 And Absolon hym fil no bet ne wers,  
 But with his mouth he kiste hir naked ers,  
 Ful savourly, er he was war of this.

Abak he stirte, and thoughte it was amys,  
 For wel he wiste a womman hath no berd.  
 He felte a thyng al rough and long y-herd,  
 And seyde, 'Fy, allas, what have I do?'  
 'Tehee!' quod she, and clapte the  
 wyndow to, 3740

And Absolon gooth forth a sory pas.

'A berd, a berd!' quod hendé Nicholas,  
 'By Goddès corps, this game goth faire  
 and weel.'

This sely Absolon herde every deel,  
 And on his lippe he gan for anger byte,  
 And to hymself he seyde, 'I shal thee  
 quyte.'

Who rubbeth now, who froteth now  
 his lippes

With dust, with sond, with straw, with  
 clooth, with chippes,

But Absolon?—that seith ful ofte, 'Allas!  
 My soule bitake I unto Sathanas, 3750  
 But me were levere than al this toun,'  
 quod he,

'Of this despit awroken for to be.

Allas,' quod he, 'allas, I ne hadde  
 y-bleynt.'

His hooté love was coold and al y-queynt;

For fro that tyme that he hadde kiste  
her ers,

Of paramours he settè nat a kers ;  
For he was heeléd of his maladie.  
Full oftè paramours he gan duffie,  
And weepe as dooth a child that is y-bete.  
A softè paas he wente over the strete <sup>3760</sup>  
A smyth men clepèd daun Gerveys,  
That in his forgè smythèd plough  
harneys,—

He sharpeth shaar and kultour bisily.  
This Absolon knokketh al esily,  
And seyde, ‘Undo, Gerveys, and that  
anon.’

‘What, who artow?’ ‘It am I, Ab-  
solon.’

‘What, Absolon! For Cristès sweetè tree,  
Why risè ye so rathe? ey *benedicitee!*  
What eyleth yow? Som gay gerl, God  
it woot,

Hath brought yow thus upon the  
viritoot ; <sup>3770</sup>  
By seintè Note, ye woot wel what I mene.’

This Absolon ne roghtè nat a bene  
Of al his pley ; no word agayn he yaf ;  
He haddè moorè tow on his distaf  
Than Gerveys knew, and seyde, ‘Freend  
so deere,

That hootè kultour in the chymenee heere,  
As lene it me, I have therwith to doone,  
And I wol brynge it thee agayn ful soone.’  
Gerveys answerde, ‘Certès, were it  
gold,

Or in a pokè nobles alle untold, <sup>3780</sup>  
Thou sholdest have, as I am trewè smyth ;  
Ey, Cristès foo, what wol ye do ther-  
with?’

‘Ther-of,’ quod Absolon, ‘be as be may,  
I shall wel telle it thee to-morwè day,’  
And caughte the kultour by the coldè stele.  
Ful softè out at the dore he gan to stele,  
And wente unto the carpenteris wal.  
He cogheth first, and knokketh therwithal  
Upon the wyndowe, right as he dide er.

This Alison answerde, ‘Who is ther,  
That knokketh so? I warante it a theef.’

<sup>3770.</sup> *viritoot*, meaning doubtful—*H very trot*,  
Camb. *merytot*.

<sup>3771.</sup> *Note*, St. Neot.

<sup>3781.</sup> *Thou sholdest have*, H *Ye shul hem  
have*.

‘Why nay,’ quod he, ‘God woot, my  
sweetè leef,

I am thyn Absolon, my deerèlyng.  
Of gold,’ quod he, ‘I have thee brought  
a ryng ;

My mooder yaf it me, so God me save ;  
Ful fyn it is, and therto wel y-grave ;  
This wol I yevè thee, if thou me kisse.’

This Nicholas was risen for to pisse,  
And thoughte he wolde amenden al the  
jape, <sup>3799</sup>

He sholdè kisse his ers, er that he scape ;  
And up the wyndowe dide he hastily,  
And out his ers he putteth pryvèly,  
Over the buttoke to the haunchè bon.  
And ther-with spak this clerk, this  
Absolon :

‘Spek, sweetè bryd, I noot nat where  
thou art.’

This Nicholas anon leet fle a fart,  
As greet as it had been a thonder dent,  
That with the strook he was almost  
y-blent ;

And he was redy with his iren hoot, a  
And Nicholas amydde the ers he smoot.  
Of gooth the skyn, an handè brede  
aboutè, <sup>3811</sup>

The hootè kultour brende so his toute ;  
And for the smert he wendè for to dye.  
As he were wood for wo he gan to crye,  
‘Help, water, water, help, for Goddès  
herte!’

This carpenter out of his slomber sterte  
And herde oon crien ‘water,’ as he were  
wood,

And thoughte, ‘Allas, now comth Noweli  
flood!’

He sit hym up withouten wordès mo,  
And with his ax he smoot the corde atwo  
And doun gooth al ; he foond neither to  
selle, <sup>3821</sup>

Ne breed ne ale, til he cam to the celle  
Upon the floor and ther aswowne he lay  
Up stirte hire Alison and Nicholay,  
And criden, ‘Out and harrow!’ in the  
strete.

The neighèborès, bothè smale and grete  
In ronnen for to gauren on this man,  
That yet aswownè lay, bothe pale and war  
For with the fal he brosten hadde his arm



But stonde he moste unto his owene harm,  
 For whan he spak he was anon bore doun  
 With hendé Nicholas and Alisoun. 3832  
 They tolden every man that he was wood,  
 He was agast so of Nowelis flood  
 Thurgh fantasie, that of his vanytee  
 He hadde y-boght hym knedyng-tubbés  
 thre,

And hadde hem hangéd in the rove above;  
 And that he preydè hem, for Goddés love,  
 To sitten in the roof, *par compaignye*.

The folk gan laughen at his fantasye;  
 Into the roof they kiken and they gape,  
 And turnéd al his harm unto a jape; 3842  
 For, what-so that this carpenter answerde,  
 It was for noght, no man his reson herde;  
 With othés grete he was so sworn adoun,  
 That he was holdé wood in al the toun;  
 For every clerk anonright heeld with  
 oother;

They seyde, 'The man was wood, my  
 leevé broother';

And every wight gan laughen of this stryf.  
 Thus swyvéd was this carpenteris wyf,  
 For al his keypyng and his jalousye; 3851  
 And Absolon hath kist hir nether eye,  
 And Nicholas is scalded in the towte:  
 This tale is doon, and God save al the  
 rowte.

## REEVE'S TALE

### *The prologe of the Reeves Tale*

Whan folk hadde laughen at this nyec  
 cas

Of Absolon and hendé Nicholas,  
 Diversé folk diversely they seyde,  
 But for the mooré part they loughé and  
 pleyde;

Ne at this tale I saugh no man hym greve,  
 But it were oonly Oséwold the Reve. 3860  
 By-cause he was of carpenteris craft  
 A litel ire is in his herte y-laft.

He gan to grucche and blaméd it a lite.  
 'So theek,' quod he, 'ful wel koude I  
 the quite,

With bleryng of a proud millérés eye,—

3858. *moore, H moste.*

If that me listé speke of ribaudye,—  
 But ik am oold, me list not pley for age,  
 Gras tyme is doon, my fodder is now  
 forage;

This whité tope writeth myne oldé yeris;  
 Myn herte is also mowléd as myne heris,  
 But if I fare as dooth an openers; 3871  
 That ilké fruyt is ever lenger the wers  
 Til it be roten in mullok, or in stree.

'We oldé men, I drede, so faré we;  
 Til we be roten kan we nat be rype.  
 We hoppen ay whil that the world wol  
 pype,

For in oure wyl ther stiketh ever a nayl,  
 To have an hoor heed and a grené tayl,  
 As hath a leek; for, thogh oure myght  
 be goon,

Oure wyl desireth folie ever in oon; 3880  
 For whan we may nat doon, than wol we  
 speke,

Yet in oure asshen olde is fyr y-reke.  
 Foure gleeédés han we, whiche I shal  
 devyse,

Avauntynge, liyng, anger, covetise.  
 These fouré sparkles longen unto eelde.  
 Oure oldé lemés mowe wel been unweelde,  
 But wyl ne shal nat failen, that is sooth;  
 And yet ik have alwey a coltés tooth,  
 As many a yeer as it is passéd henne  
 Syn that my tappe of lif bigan to renne;  
 For sikerly, whan I was bore, anon 3891  
 Deeth drough the tappe of lyf and leet it  
 gon,

And ever sithe hath so the tappe y-ronne,  
 Til that almoost al empty is the tonne.  
 The stream of lyf now droppeth on the  
 chymbe;

The sely tongé may wel ryngé and chymbe  
 Of wretchednesse that passéd is ful yooere;  
 With oldé folk, save dotage, is namoore.'

Whan that oure Hoost hadde herd this  
 sermonyng,

He gan to speke as lordly as a kyng. 3900  
 He seidè: 'What amounteth al this wit?  
 What, shul we speke alday of hooly writ?  
 The devel made a Revé for to preche,  
 Or of a soutere shipman or a leche.

3871. *But if, H But yit.*

3887. *faillen, H fayle us.*

3904. *soutere, 'a cobbler may as well turn*

Seyforth thy tale, and tarie nat the tyme,—  
Lo, Depéford, and it is half wey pryme.  
Lo, Grenéwyche, ther many a shrewe is  
inne,

It were all tyme thy talé to bigynne.'

'Now, sirés,' quod this Oséwold the  
Reve, 3909

'I pray yow allé that ye nat yow greve,  
Thogh I answeére and somdeel sette his  
howve,

For leveful is, with forcé force of showve;  
This dronké Millere hath y-toold us heer  
How that bigyléd was a carpenteer,  
Peraventure in scorn for I am oon;  
And, by youre leve, I shal him quite anon.  
Right in his cherlés termés wol I speke;  
I pray to God his nekké moté breke.  
He kan wel in myn eyé seen a stalke,  
But in his owene he kan nat seen a balke.'

### Heere bigynneth The Reves Tale

At Trumpyngtoun, nat fer fro Canté-  
brigge, 3921

Ther gooth a brook, and over that a brigge,  
Upon the whiché brook ther stant a melle;  
And this is verrey sooth that I yow tell.  
A millere was ther dwellynge many a day,  
As eny pecok he was proud and gay.  
Pipen he koude and fisshe, and nettés becte,  
And turné coppés, and wel wrastle and  
sheete;

And by his belt he baar a long panade,  
And of a swerd ful trenchant was the  
blade. 3930

sailor or physician as a reeve take to preaching.'  
'Ex sutore naucerus,' 'ex sutore medicus,' were  
proverbial expressions.

3906. *Depéford*, Deptford.

3906. *half wey pryme*, 7.30 A.M.; H, *passed  
pryme*; Petworth, *almost prime*.

3910. *that ye nat yow greve*, H *that noon of  
you him greve*.

3911. *howve*, cap; for the phrase cp. line 586.

3912. *of*, i.e. off; H<sup>2</sup> *to*.

*The Reves Tale*: probably taken by Chaucer  
from the French fabliau, *De Gombert et des Deux  
Clers*, by Jean de Boves, with hints also from  
another fabliau now in the library at Berne, in  
which the clerks lodge with a thieving miller and  
not with a 'vilein,' as in *Gombert*. Cp. also  
Boccaccio, *Decameron*, D. ix. N. 6. All the  
local colour is of course supplied by Chaucer  
himself, who sets off the Cambridge clerks and  
their miller against the Oxford clerk and the  
carpenter.

A joly poppere baar he in his pouche,  
Ther was no man, for peril, dorste hym  
touche;

A Sheffeld thwitel baar he in his hose.  
Round was his face, and camuse was his  
nose;

As piléd as an apé was his skulle;  
He was a market-betere atté fulle;  
Ther dorsté no wight hand upon hym  
legge,

That he ne swoor he sholde anon abegge.  
A thief he was, for sothe, of corn and  
mele,

And that a sly and usaunt for to stele. 3940  
His name was hooté, deynous, Symkyn.  
A wyf he hadde, y-comen of noble kyn,—  
The person of the toun hir fader was,—  
With hire he yaf ful many a panne of bras;  
For that Symkyn sholde in his blood allye.

She was y-fostred in a nonnerie,  
For Symkyn wolde no wyf, as he sayde,  
But she were wel y-norissed and a mayde,  
To saven his estaat of yomanrye. 3949  
And she was proud and peert as is a pyc.  
A ful fair sighte was it upon hem two  
On haly dayes; biforn hire wolde he go  
With his tytet y-bounde about his heed;  
And she cam after in a gyte of reed;  
And Symkyn haddé hosen of the same.  
Ther dorsté no wight clepen hire but  
'Dame';

Was noon so hardy that wente by the weye.  
That with hire dorsté rage, or onés pleye,  
But if he wolde be slayn of Symkyn,  
With panade, or with knyf, or boidekyn;  
For jalous folk ben perilous evermo; 3961  
Algate they wolde hire wyvès wenden so.  
And eek, for she was somdel smoterlich,  
She was as digne as water in a dich,  
As ful of hoker, and of bisémare.  
Hir thoughté that a lady sholde hire spare,  
What for hire kynrede and hir nortelrie,  
That she hadde lernéd in the nonnerie.

3949. *of*, H *and*.

3953. *y-bounde*, E<sup>3</sup> *bounde*, *bounden*; Heng.<sup>3</sup>  
*wounded*.

3956. *clepen hire but 'Dame'*, H *clepe hir  
but 'Madame'*; cp. line 376.

3957. *that wente*, H *walkyng*.

3958. *ones*, H *elles*.

3966. *a lady sholde hire spare*, H *ladyes  
oughten hir to spare*, i.e. be considerate to.

A doghter haddè they bitwixe hem two,  
Of twenty year, withouten any mo, <sup>3970</sup>  
Savyngè a child that was of half yeer age ;  
In cradel it lay, and was a propre page.  
This wenchè thikke and wel y-grown was,  
With kamuse nose, and eyen greye as glas ;  
Buttokès brode, and brestès rounde and  
hye,

But right fair was hire heer, I wol nat lye.

This person of the toun, for she was feir,  
In purpos was to maken hire his heir,  
Both of his catel and his mesuage, <sup>3979</sup>  
And straunge he made it of hir mariage.  
His purpos was for to bistowe hire hie  
Into som worthy blood of auncetrye ;  
For hooly chirchès good moot been  
despended

On hooly chirchès blood that is descended ;  
Therefore he wolde his hooly blood honoure,  
Though that he hooly chirchè sholde  
deuoure.

Gret sokene hath this millere, out of  
doute,

With whete and malt of al the land aboute ;  
And namèliche, ther was a greet collegge,  
Men cleden the Soler Halle at Cantè-  
bregge ; <sup>3990</sup>  
Ther was hir whete and cek hir malt  
y-grounde.

And on a day it happed in a stounde,  
Sik lay the maunciple on a maladye—  
Men wenden wisly that he sholdè dye,—  
For which this millere stal bothe mele  
and corn

An hundred tyme moore than biforn :  
For ther-biforn he stal but curteisly,  
But now he was a thief outrageously ;  
For which the wardeyn chidde and madè  
fare ; <sup>3999</sup>

But ther-of sette the millere nat a tare ;  
He craketh boost, and swear it was nat so.

Thanne were ther yongè, pourè clerkès  
two,

That dwelten in this halle of which I seye ;

<sup>3980.</sup> *he*, om. H.

<sup>3985.</sup> *hooly*, H *joly*.

<sup>3990.</sup> *Soler Halle*, the hall with the solers, or sun-chambers, i.e. rooms with bay-windows, probably King's Hall, one of the predecessors of Trinity College.

<sup>3996.</sup> *An hundred tyme*, H *a thousand part*.

<sup>3998.</sup> *was*, H *is*.

Testif they were, and lusty for to pleye ;  
And, oonly for hire myrthe and revelrye,  
Upon the wardeyn bisily they crye,  
To yeve hem levè, but a litel stounde,  
To goon to mille and seen hir corn  
y-grounde,

And hardily they dorstè leye hir nekke,  
The millere shold nat stele hem half a  
pekke <sup>4010</sup>

Of corn, by sleightè, ne by force hem reve.  
And at the laste the wardeyn yaf hem leve.  
John highte that oon, and Aleyn highte  
that oother ;

Of o toun were they born, that hightè  
Strother,

Fer in the North, I kan nat tellè where.

This Aleyn maketh redy al his gere,  
And on an hors the sak he caste anon.  
Forth goth Aleyn the clerk, and also John,  
With good swerd and with bokeler by  
hir side. <sup>4019</sup>

John knew the wey, hem nededè no gyde ;  
And at the mille the sak adoun he layth.  
Aleyn spak first, 'Al hayl, Symond,  
y-fayth !

How fares thy fairè doghter, and thy wyf ?'  
'Aleyn, welcome,' quod Symkyn, 'by  
my lyf !

And John also, how now ? what do ye  
heer ?'

'Symond,' quod John, 'by God, nede  
has na peer,

Hym boès serve hym-self that has na  
swayn,

Or elles he is a fool, as clerkès sayn. <sup>4028</sup>  
Oure manciple, I hope he will be deed,  
Swa werkès ay the wangès in his heed ;  
And forthy is I come, and eek Alayn,  
To grynde oure corn and carie it ham  
agayn.

I pray yow spede us heythen that ye may.'

'It shal be doon,' quod Symkyn, 'by  
my fay !

What wol ye doon, whil that it is in hande ?'

'By God, right by the hopur wil I stande,'

Quod John, 'and se how that the corn  
gas in.

<sup>4026.</sup> *na peer*. The two clerks speak throughout in northern dialect.

<sup>4027.</sup> *Hym boes*, behoves him ; H, *salles* ; Camb. *muste* ; rest *bihoves*, *byhoveth*.

Yet saugh I never, by my fader kyn,  
How that the hopur waggès til and fra.ʹ

Aleynanswérdè, 'John, and wiltowsa?  
Thanne wil I be bynethè, by my croun !  
And se how that the melè fallès down  
Into the trough,—that sal be my disport ;  
For John, y-faith, I may been of youre  
sort,

I is as ille a millere as are ye.ʹ

This millere smylèd of hir nycètee,  
And thoghte, 'Al this nys doon but for  
a wyle ;

They wenè that no man may hem bigile ;  
But by my thrift yet shal I blere hir eye,  
For al the sleighte in hir philosophie. 4050  
The moorè queyntè crekès that they  
make,

The moorè wol I stelè whan I take.  
In stide of flour yet wol I yeve hem bren ;  
The gretteste clerkès been noght wisest  
men,

As whilom to the wolf thus spak the mare ;  
Of al hir art ne counte I noght a tare.ʹ

Out at the dore he gooth ful pryvèly,  
Whan that he saugh his tymè softely.  
He looketh up and down til he hath founde  
The clerkès hors, ther as it stooð y-bounde  
Bihynde the mille, under a levèsel, 4061  
And to the hors he goth hym faire and  
wel ;

He strepeth of the brydel right anon,  
And whan the hors was laus, he gynnethgon  
Toward the fen, ther wildè marès renne,—  
Forth with 'Wehee !' thurgh thikkè and  
thurgh thenne.

This millere gooth agayn, no word he  
seyde,  
But dooth his note and with the clerkès  
pleyde,

4046. *smyled of, H smyleth for.*

4051. *crekes, H knakkès.*

4053. *flour, H mele.*

4055. *As whilom, etc.* 'The story alluded to is told of a Mule in *Cent. Nov. Ant.* No. 91. The Mule pretends that his name is written upon the bottom of his hind-foot. The Wolf attempting to read it, the Mule gives him a kick on the forehead and kills him. Upon which the Fox, who was present, observes: *Ogni huomo, che sa lettera, non è savio*' (Tyrwhitt). A variant of the story occurs in *Reynard the Fox*.

4064. *gynneth, H gan to.*

4066. *and, H and eek.*

Til that hir corn was faire and weel  
y-grounde ;

And whan the mele is sakkèd and  
y-bounde, 4070

This John goth out, and fynt his hors away,  
And gan to crie, 'Harrow !' and, 'Weyl-  
away !

Oure hors is lorn ; Aleyn, for Goddès banes  
Stepe on thy feet ; com out, man, al atanes !  
Allas, our wardeyn has his palfrey lorn !'  
This Aleyn al forgat, bothe mele and corn ;  
Al was out of his mynde his housbondrie.  
'What, whilk way is he geen?' he gan  
to crie.

The wyf cam lepyng in ward with a ren ;  
She seyde, 'Allas, youre hors goth to  
the fen 4080

With wildè mares, as faste as he may go ;  
Unthank com on his hand that bouud  
hym so,

And he that bettrè sholde han knyht the  
reyne !'

'Allas,' quod John, 'Aleyn, for Cristès  
peyne,

Lay down thy swerd, and I wil myn als wa.  
I is ful wight, God waat, as is a raa ;  
By Goddès hertè ! he sal nat scape us  
bathe.

Why nadstow pit the capul in the lathe ?  
Il-hayl, by God, Aleyn, thou is a fonne.ʹ

This sely clerkès han ful faste y-ronne  
Toward the fen, bothe Aleyn and eek  
John ; 4091

And whan the millere saugh that they  
were gon,

He half a bussel of hir flour hath take,  
And bad his wyf go knede it in a cake.  
He seyde, 'I trowe the clerkès were aferd ;  
Yet kan a millere make a clerkès berd,  
For al his art ; now lat hem goon hir weye !  
Lo wher they goon ; ye, lat the children  
pleye ;

They gete hym nat so lightly, by my  
croun !'

This sely clerkes rennen up and down  
With 'Keepe ! keepe ! stand ! stand !  
Jossa warderere ! 4101

4090. *han ful faste y-ronne, H speeden hem  
anoon.*

4095. *were, H ben.*

Ga wyghtly thou, and I shal kepe him  
heere.'

But shortly, til that it was verray nyght,  
They koudè nat, though they dide al hir  
myght,

Hir capul cacche, he ran alwey so faste,  
Til in a dych they caughte hym attè laste.

Wery and weet, as beest is in the reyn,  
Comth sely John, and with him comth  
Aleyn.

'Allas!' quod John, 'the day that I was  
born!'

Now are we dryve til hethyng and til scorn;  
Oure corn is stoln, men wil us foolès calle;  
Bathè the wardeyn and oure felawes alle,  
And namèly the millere, weylaway!'

Thus pleyneþ John, as he gooth by  
the way

Toward the mille, and Bayard in his hond.  
The millere sittynge by the fyr he fond,—  
For it was nyght and forther myghte they  
noght,—

But for the love of God they hym bisoght  
Of herberwe and of ese, as for hir peny.

The millere seyde agayn, "If ther be  
eny,

swich as it is, yet shal ye have youre part;  
Myn hous is streit, but ye han lernèd art,  
Ye konne by argumentès make a place  
A mylè brood of twenty foot of space.

At se now if this placè may suffice,  
Or make it rowm with speche, as is youre  
gise.'

'Now, Symond,' seyde John, 'by Seint  
Cutberd,

My is thou myrie, and this is faire answeerd.  
I have herd seyde, "Man sal taa of twa  
thynges,

the firste slyk as he fyndes, or taa slyk as he  
brynges";

but specially I pray thee, hoostè deere,  
let us som mete and drynke, and make  
us cheere,

and we wil payen trewely attè fulle;  
With empty hand men may none haukès  
tulle;

soo, heere our silver, redy for to spende.'  
This millere into toun his doghter sende

For ale and breed, and rosted hem a goos,  
And boond hire hors, it sholdè nat goon  
loos,

And in his owene chambre hem made a  
bed,

With sheetès and with chalons faire y-sprede,  
Noght from his owene bed ten foot or  
twelve.

His doghter hadde a bed al by hir-selve,  
Right in the samè chambre by and by;  
It myghtè be no bet, and causè why?

Ther was no roumer herberwe in the place.  
Theysoupen, and theyspeke hem to solace,  
And drynken ever strong ale attè beste.  
Aboutè mydnyght wentè they to reste.

Wel hath this millere vernysshèd his  
heed:

Ful palehe was for-dronken, and nat reed.  
He yexeth, and hespeketh thurgh the nose,  
As he were on the quakke or on the pose.  
To bedde he goth, and with hym goth  
his wyf,

As any jay she light was and jolyf;  
So was hir joly whistle wel y-wet;  
The cradel at hir beddès feet is set,  
Torokken, and to yeve the child to sowke:  
And whan that dronken al was in the  
crowke,

To beddè went the doghter right anon;  
To beddè wente Aleyn, and also John;  
Ther nas na moore; hem needèdè no dwale.  
This millere hath so wisely bibbèd ale  
That as an hors he snorteth in his sleepe;  
Ne of his tayl bihynde he took no keepe;  
His wyf bar him a burdon, a ful strong,  
Men myghte hir rowtyng heerè two furlong;  
The wenchè rowteth eek, *par compaignye*.

Aleyn the clerk, that herd this melodye,  
He pokèd John, and seyde, 'Slepestow?  
Herdistow ever slyk a sang er now?'

Lo, whilk a compline is y-mel hem alle!  
A wildè fyr upon thair bodyes falle!

Wha herkned ever slyk a ferly thyng?  
Ye, they sal have the flour of il endyng!  
This langè nyght ther tydès me na reste,  
But yet, nafors; al sal be for the beste,  
For, John,' seyde he, 'als ever moot  
I thryve,

4102. *wyghtly*, E<sup>6</sup> *whistle*.  
4105. *he ran alwey*, H *it ran away*.

4138. *it sholde nat goon*, H<sup>6</sup> *he schold no more go*.

If that I may, yon wenchè wil I swyve.  
Som esément has lawe y-shapen us ; 4179  
For, John, ther is a lawè that says thus,  
That gif a man in a point be y-greved,  
That in another he sal be releved.  
Oure corn is stoln, sothly it is na nay,  
And we han had an il fit al this day ;  
And syn I sal have neen amèdément  
Agayn my los, I wil have esément.  
By Goddes sale ! it sal neen other bee.'

This John answerde, 'Alayn, avysè thee ;  
The millere is a perilous man,' he seyde,  
'And gif that he out of his sleepe abreyde,  
He mightè doon us bathe a vileynye.' 4191  
Aleyn answerde, 'I count hym nat a flye.'  
And up he rist, and by the wenche he  
crepte.

This wenchè lay uprighte, and fastè slepte  
Til he so ny was, er she myghte espie,  
That it had been to latè for to crie ;  
And, shortly for to seyn, they were at on.  
Now pley, Aleyn, for I wol speke of John.

This John lith stille a furlong wey or two,  
And to hymself he maketh routhe and wo ;  
'Allas !' quod he, 'this is a wikked jape ;  
Now may I seyn that I is but an ape ;  
Yet has my felawesom what for his harm,—  
He has the milleris doghter in his arm.  
He aunted hym, and has his nedès sped,  
And I lye as a draf sak in my bed ;  
And when this jape is tald another day,  
I sal been halde a daf, a cokénay.  
I wil arise and aunte it, by my fayth ;  
"Unhardy is unseely," thus men sayth.'  
And up he roos and softely he wente 4211  
Unto the cradel, and in his hand it hente,  
And baar it softe unto his beddès feet.

Sooneafter this the wyf hir rowtyng leet,  
And gan awake and wente hire out to pisse,  
And cam agayn, and gan hir cradel mysse,  
And gropéd heer and ther, but she foond  
noon.

'Allas !' quod she, 'I hadde almost  
mysgoon ;  
I hadde almost goon to the clerkès bed.  
Ey, *benedicite!* thanne hadde I foule  
y-sped.' 4220

4183. *sothly, E<sup>2</sup> shortly.*  
4199. *wey, H white.*  
4200. *he maketh routhe and wo, H compleyned  
of his wo.*

And forth she gooth til she the cradel fond :  
She gropeth alwey forther with hir hond,  
And foond the bed and thoughtè noht  
but good,

By-causè that the cradel by it stood,  
And nystè wher she was, for it was derk,  
But faire and wel she creepe into the clerk ;  
And lith ful stille and wolde han caught  
a sleepe.

Withinne a while this John the clerk up  
leepe, 4228  
And on this goodè wyf he leith on soore ;  
So myrie a fit ne hadde she nat ful yoorc ;  
He priketh harde and soore as he were mad.  
This joly lyf han these two clerkès lad,  
Til that the thriddè cok bigan to synge.

Aleyn wax wery in the dawényngc,  
For he had swonken al the longè nyght ;  
And seyde, 'Fare weel, Malyne, sweetè  
wight.

The day is come, I may no lenger byde ;  
But evermo, wher so I go or ryde,  
I is thyn awen clerk, swa have I seel.'

'Now, deerè lemman,' quod she, 'go,  
fareweel !' 4240

But, er thou go, o thyng I wol thee telle ;  
Whan that thou wendest homward by the  
melle,

Right at the entree of the dore bihynde,  
Thou shalt a cake of half a busshel fynde,  
That was y-maked of thyn owene mele,  
Which that I heelpè my fader for to stele ;  
And, goodè lemman, God thee save and  
kepe !'

And with that word almost she gan to  
wepe.

Aleyn up rist and thoughte, 'Er that  
it dawc,

I wol go crepen in by my felawe' ; 4250  
And fond the cradel with his hand anon.  
'By God !' thoughte he, 'al wrang I  
have mysгон ;

Myn heed is toty of my swynk to nyght,  
That maketh me that I go nat aright ;  
I woot wel by the cradel I have mysгон ;  
Heere lith the millere and his wyf also.'  
And forth he goth, a twenty devel way,  
Unto the bed ther as the millere lay.

4225. *And nyste, H Nat knowyng.*  
4231. *soore, H<sup>5</sup> deepe.*

He wende have copen by his felawe John,  
And by the millere in he crepe anon, <sup>4250</sup>  
And caughte hym by the nekke, and softe  
he spak ;

He seyde, 'Thou John, thou swynés-  
heed, awak,

For Cristés saule, and heer a noble game ;  
For by that lord that calléd is seint Jame,  
As I have thriès in this shorté nyght  
Swyvéd the milleres doghter bolt upright,  
Whil thow hast as a coward been agast.'

'Ye, falsè charlot, 'quod the millere, 'hast ?  
A ! falsè traitour ! falsè clerk !' quod he,  
'Thow shalt be deed, by Goddés dignitee !

Who dorsté be so boold to disparage <sup>4271</sup>  
Mydoghter, that is come of swich lynage ?'

And by the throté-bolle he caughte Alayn ;  
And he hente hym despitously agayn,  
And on the nose he smoot hym with his  
fest.

Doun ran the bloody streem upon his brest,  
And in the floor, with nose and mouth  
to-broke,

They walwe as doon two piggés in a poke ;  
And up they goon and doun agayn anon,  
Til that the millere spornéd at a stoon,  
And doun he fil bakward upon his wyf,  
That wisté no thyng of this nycé stryf ;  
For she was falle aslepe a lité wight  
With John the clerk, that wakéd hadde  
al nyght ;

And with the fal out of hir sleepe she  
breyde.

'Help, hooly croys of Broméholm,' she  
seyde,

'In manus tuas, Lord, to thee I calle !  
Awak, Symond ! the feend is on us falle !  
Myn herte is broken ! help ! I nam but  
deed !

Ther lyth oon upon my wombe and on  
myn heed. <sup>4290</sup>

Helpe, Symkyn, for the falsè clerkès fighte !'

This John stirte up, as soone as ever  
he myghte,

And graspeþ by the wallés to and fro

4264. called, H *cleped*.

4272. swich, H *hit*.

4279. agayn, H *they goon*.

4280. sporned, H *stumbled*.

4286. Broméholm, a Norfolk priory.

4288. is on us falle, H is in thi halle.

To fynde a staf, and she stirte up also,  
And knewe the estrés bet than dide this  
John,

And by the wal a staf she foond anon,  
And saugh a litel shymeryng of a light,  
For at an hole in shoon the mooné bright ;  
And by that light shesaugh hem bothé two,  
But sikerly she nysté who was who ; <sup>4300</sup>  
But as she saugh a whit thyng in hir eye ;  
And whan she gan the whité thyng espye,  
She wende the clerk hadde wered a  
volupeer,

And with the staf she drough ay neer  
and neer

And wende han hit this Aleyn at the fulle ;  
And smoot the millere on the pyléd skulle,  
And doun he gooth, and cride, 'Harrow !  
I dye !'

Thise clerkés beete hym weel and leté  
hym lye,

And greythen hem, and tooke hir hors anon,  
And eck hire mele, and on hir wey they  
gon, <sup>4310</sup>

And at the millé yet they tooke hir cake  
Of half a busshel flour ful wel y-bake.

Thus is the proude millere wel y-bete,  
And hath y-lost the gryndyng of the whetç,  
And payéd for the soper everideel  
Of Aleyn and of John, that bette hym weel ;  
His wyf is swyvéd, and his doghter als.  
Lo ! swich it is a millere to be fals ;  
And therefore this proverbe is seyð fulsooth,  
'Hym thar nat wené wel that yvele dooth,'  
A gylour shal hymself bigyléd be, — <sup>4321</sup>  
And God, that sitteth heighe in Trinitee,  
Save al this compaignyé, grete and smale.  
Thus have I quyrt the Millere in my tale.

## COOK'S TALE

### *The prologe of the Cokes Tale*

The Cook of Londoun, whil the Revé  
spak,

4296. a staf she foond, H *sche took a staf*.

4297. shymeryng, H *glymeryng*.

4304. ay, H *hir*.

4309. greythen, equip ; H *greyth hem wel*.

4310. on hir wey, H *hoom anon*.

4311. at the mille yet, H *at the millen dorç*.

4322. Trinitee, H<sup>6</sup> *Magestee*.

For joye him thoughte he clawed him on  
the bak ;

'Ha, ha !' quod he, 'for Cristès passioun  
This millere hadde a sharpe conclusioun  
Upon his argument of herbergage ;  
Wel seyde Salomon, in his langage, <sup>4330</sup>  
"Ne brynge nat everyman into thyn hous,"  
For herberwyng by nyghte is perilous.  
Wel oghte a man avyséd for to be  
Whom that he broghte into his pryvete.  
I pray to God, so yeve me sorwe and care,  
If ever, sitthe I highte Hogge of Ware,  
Herde I a millere bettre y-set a werk ;  
He hadde a jape of malice in the derk.  
But God forbede that we stynté heere,  
And therefore if ye vouché-sauf to heere  
A tale of me, that am a pouré man, <sup>4341</sup>  
I wol yow telle, as wel as ever I kan,  
A litel jape that fil in oure citee.'

Oure Hoost answérde and seide, 'I  
graunte it thee ;

Now telle on, Roger, looke that it be good ;  
For many a pastec hastow laten blood,  
And many a jakke of Dovere hastow soold,  
That hath been twiès hoot and twiès coold ;  
Of many a pilgrym hastow Cristès curs,  
For of thy percely yet they fare the  
wors, <sup>4350</sup>

That they han eten with thy stubbel goos ;  
For in thy shoppe is many a flyè loos.  
Now telle on, gentil Roger by thy name.  
But yet I pray thee be nat wroth for game,  
A man may seye ful sooth in game and  
pley.'

'Thou seist ful sooth,' quod Roger,  
'by my fey !

But "sooth pley quaad pley," as the  
Fleming seith ;

And therefore, Herry Bailly, by thy feith,  
Be thou nat wrooth, er we departen heer  
Though that my tale be of an hostileer :  
But nathéless I wol nat telle it yit ; <sup>4361</sup>  
But er we parte, y-wis, thou shalt be quit.'  
And therwithal he lough and madé cheere,  
And seyde his tale, as ye shul after heere.

4335. *so yeve me sorwe*, H *so gyf my body*.

4347. *a jakke of Dovere*, said to be 'a sea-fish,' but more probably a pudding.

4357. *sooth pley quaad pley*, true jest, bad jest. Cp. 'soth bourd is no bourd.'

*Heere bigynneth The Cookes Tale*

A prentys whilom dwelled in oure citee,  
And of a craft of vitailliers was hee.  
Gaillard he was as goldfynch in the shawe ;  
Broun as a berye, a propre short felawe,  
With lokkés blake, y-kempd ful fetisly.  
Dauncen he koude so wel and jolily, <sup>4370</sup>  
That he was clepéd Perkyn Revelour.  
He was as ful of love and paramour  
As is the hyvé ful of hony sweete.  
Wel was the wenché with hym myghté  
meete ;

At every bridale wolde he synge and hoppe,  
He lovéd bet the taverné than the shoppe.

For whan ther any ridyng was in Chepe,  
Out of the shoppé thider wolde he lepe ;  
Til that he haddé al the sighte y-seyn,  
And dauncéd wel, he wolde nat come  
ageyn ; <sup>4380</sup>

And gadered hym a meynee of his sort,  
To hoppe and synge and maken swich  
disport ;

And ther they setten stevene for to  
meete,

To pleyen at the dys in swich a streete ;  
For in the toun ne was ther no prentys  
That fairer koudé caste a paire of dys  
Than Perkyn koude, and therto he was  
free

Of his dispense, in place of pryvete.  
That fond his maister wel in his chaffare,  
For often tyme he found his box ful bare ;  
For sikerly a prentys revelour, <sup>4391</sup>  
That haunteth dys, riot, or paramour,  
His maister shal it in his shoppe abyé,  
Al have he no part of the mynstralceye ;  
For thefte and riot they been convertible,  
Al konne he pleye on gyterne or ribible.  
Revel and trouthe, as in a lowe degree,  
They been ful wrothe al day, as men  
may see.

This joly prentys with his maister bood,  
Til he were ny out of his prentishood ;  
Al were he snybbéd bothe erly and late,  
And somtyme lad with revel to Newégate ;  
But atté laste his maister hym bithoghte,

4370. *jolily*, H *prately*.

4373. *hyve ful*, H *hony-comb*.

4391. *sikerly a*, H *such a joly*.

4392. *riot*, H *revel*.



Upon a day, whan he his papir soghte,  
 Of a proverbe that seith this samè word,  
 'Wel bet is roten appul out of hoord,  
 Than that it rotie al the remènaunt.'  
 So fareth it by a riotous servaunt,  
 It is wel lassè harm to lete hym pace  
 Than he shende alle the servauntz in the  
 place.<sup>4410</sup>  
 Therefore his maister yaf hym acquitance,  
 And bad hym go with sorwe and with  
 meschance ;  
 And thus this joly prentys hadde his leve.  
 Now lat him riote al the nyght or leve.  
 And for ther is no theef withoute a  
 lowke,  
 That helpeth hym to wasten and to sowke,

Of that he brybè kan or borwe may,  
 Anon he sente his bed and his array  
 Unto a compier of his owene sort,<sup>4419</sup>  
 That lovède dys, and revel and disport,  
 And hadde a wyf that heeld for contenance  
 A shoppe, and swyvèd for hir suste-  
 nance . . .

*Of this Cokes Tale makèd Chaucer  
 na more*

<sup>4422.</sup> *Of this Cokes tale, etc.,* from Hengwrt MS. In many MSS. here follows the Tale of Gamelyn, which Chaucer probably meant to re-write and assign to the Yeoman; but the tale, as it stands, is none of Chaucer's, and is therefore not printed here. The rest of the tales supposed to be told on the first day of the Pilgrimage are lacking, and, almost certainly, were never written.

## TALES OF THE SECOND DAY

### GROUP B

*The wordes of the Hoost to the  
 compaignye*

OURE Hostè saugh wel that the  
 brightè sonne  
 The ark of his artificial day hath ronne  
 The ferthè part, and half an heure and  
 moore,  
 And though he were nat depe experte in  
 loore,  
 He wiste it was the eightètethè day  
 Of Aprill, that is messenger to May ;  
 And saugh wel that the shadwe of every  
 tree  
 Was, as in lengthe, the samè quantitee  
 That was the body erect that causèd it ;  
 And therefore by the shadwe he took his  
 wit<sup>10</sup>  
 That Phebus, which that shoon so clere  
 and brighte,

2. *his artificial day, i.e.* between sunrise and sunset as opposed to the day of 24 hours.

3. *The ferthe part, etc.* On April 18th (April 26th of the reformed calendar) the sun would have accomplished the fourth part of his day's journey at 9.20 A.M., leaving 40 minutes, or 'half-an-hour and more,' to 10 o'clock.

4. *expertise, om. H ; y-stert, E<sup>2</sup>.*

11. *clere, H fair.*

Degrees was fyve and fourty clombe on  
 highte ;  
 And for that day, as in that latitude,  
 It was ten of the klokke, he gan conclude ;  
 And sodeynly he plighte his hors aboute.  
 'Lordynges,' quod he, 'I warne yow,  
 al this route,  
 The fourthè party of this day is gon.  
 Now for the love of God and of Seint John,  
 Leseth no tyme, as ferforth as ye may.  
 Lordynges, the tymè wasteth nyght and  
 day<sup>20</sup>  
 And steleth from us,—what pryvèly  
 slepyngè,  
 And what thurgh necligence in oure  
 wakyngè,—  
 As dooth the stream that turneth never  
 agayn,  
 Descendynge fro the montaigne into playn.  
 'Wel kan Senec, and many a philo-  
 sophre,  
 Biwaillen tymè moore than gold in cofre ;  
 For "losse of catel may recovered be,

12. *Degrees, etc.* The sun attained this altitude exactly at 9.58.

20. *the tyme, etc.* Imitated from the *Roman de la Rose*, cp. the English translation, ll. 369 sqq.

But losse of tymè shendeth us," quod he ;  
It wol nat come agayn, withouten drede,  
Namoorè than wole Malkynes mayden-  
hede, 30

Whan she hath lost it in hir wantow-  
nesse ;

Lat us nat mowlen thus in ydelnesse.

'Sire Man of Lawe,' quod he, 'so have  
ye blis,

Telle us a tale anon, as forward is ;

Ye been submytted thurgh youre free  
assent

To stonden in this cas at my juggèment.  
Acquiteth yow and holdeth youre biheeste,  
Thanne have ye doon youre devoir attè  
leeste.'

'Hostè,' quod he, '*depardieux* ich  
assente ;

To brekè forward is nat myn entente. 40  
Biheste is dette, and I wole holdè fayn  
Al my biheste, I kan no bettrè sayn ;  
For swich lawe as man yeveth another  
wight

He sholde hym-selven usen it by right ;  
Thus wole oure text ; but nathèless certeyn  
I kan right now no thrifty talè seyn,  
But Chaucer, thogh he kan but lewedly,  
On metres and on rymyng craftily,  
Hath seyð hem, in swich Englissh as he  
kan,

Of oldè tyme, as knoweth many a man. 50  
And if he have noght seyð hem, levè  
brother,

In o book, he hath seyð hem in another.  
For he hath toold of loveris up and doun  
Mo than Ovidè made of mencionun  
In his Epistellès, that been ful olde.

What sholde I tellen hem, syn they ben  
tolde ?

'In youthe he made of Ceys and  
Alcione,

And sithen hath he spoken of everichone  
Thise noble wyvès and thise loveris eke.  
Who so that wole his largè volume seke,

57. *of Ceys and Alcione*, the story of Ceix and Alcyone, from Ovid, *Metam.* bk. xi. It forms the subject of ll. 62-220 of Chaucer's *Book of the Duchesse*, which may have been originally an independent poem. The *Book of the Duchesse* was written in 1368, when Chaucer was nearly thirty.

Clepèd the Seintès Legende of Cupide,  
Ther may he seen the largè woundès wyde  
Of Lucesse and of Babilan Tesbee ;  
The swerd of Dido for the false Enee ;  
The tree of Phillis for hire Demophon ;  
The pleinte of Dianire and of Hermyon ;  
Of Adriane and of Isiphilee ;  
The bareyne ylè stondyng in the see ;  
The dreyntè Leandrè for his Erro ;  
The teeris of Eleyne ; and eek the wo 70  
Of Brixseyde, and of the, Ladomya !  
The crueltee of the, queene Médea !  
Thy litel children hangyng by the hals,  
For thy Jasón, that was in love so fals !  
O Ypermystra, Penelopee, Alceste,  
Yourè wyfede he comendeth with the  
beste !

'But certainly no word ne writeth he  
Of thilkè wikke ensample of Canacee,  
That loved hir owenè brother synfully ;  
(Of swichè cursèd stories I sey fy !) 80  
Or ellis of Tyro Appollonius,  
How that the cursèd kyng Antiochus  
Brafte his doghter of hir maydenhede,  
That is so horrible a talè for to rede,  
Whan he hir threw upon the pavèment ;  
And therefore he, of ful avysèment,  
Nolde nevere write in none of his sermons  
Of swiche unkynde abhomynacions,  
Ne I wol noon reherce, if that I may.

'But of my tale how shall I doon this  
day ? 90

Me werè looth be likned, doutèlees,

61. *the Seintes Legende of Cupide* (H *Legendes*), the *Legend of Good Women*, i.e. of Cupid's Saints. In the list which follows, the Man of Law omits the names of Cleopatra and Philomela, of whom Chaucer wrote, while of Deianira, Hermione, Hero, Helen, Briseis, Laodameia, Penelope and Alcestis no legends remain.

63. *Babilan Tesbee*, Thisbe of Babylon.

67. *Adriane*, Ariadne.

67. *Isiphilee*, Hypsipyle.

68. *The bareyne yle*, Naxos.

74. *thy*, H *thilke*.

74. *in*, H *of*.

78. *Canacee*. 'This and the story of Apollonius of Tyre are told in Gower's *Confessio Amantis*, whence it has been supposed that Chaucer intended here to blame that writer—a notion for which there appears to be no good foundation' (Wright).

80. *Of swiche*, H *On whiche*.

84. *for to*, H *as man may*.

To Muses that men clepe Pierides,—  
*Metamorphosios* woot what I mene,—  
 But nathélees, I recché noght a bene,  
 Though I come after hym with hawébake ;  
 I speke in prose, and lat him rymés make.<sup>7</sup>  
 And with that word, he with a sobré cheere  
 Bigan his tale, as ye shal after heere.

## MAN OF LAW'S TALE

### *The Prologe of the Manne of Lawes Tale*

O hateful harm ! condicion of poverte !  
 With thurst, with coold, with hunger so  
 confoundid ! 100

To asken help thee shameth in thyn herte ;  
 If thou noon aske so soore artowy-woundid,  
 That verray nede unwrappeth al thy  
 wounde hid !

Maugreethyn heed, thou most for indigence  
 Or stele, or begge, or borwé thy despence !

Thow blamest Crist, and seist ful bitterly,  
 He mysdeparteth richesse temporal ;  
 Thy neighébore thou wytest synfully,  
 And seist thou hast to lite and he hath al.  
 'Parfay,' seistow, 'somytyme he rekene  
 shal, 110

Whan that his tayl shal brennen in the  
 gleede,  
 For he noght helpeth needfulle in hir neede.'

Herké what is the sentence of the wise :  
 'Bet is to dyen than have indigence' ;  
 Thy selvé neighébor wol thee despise,  
 If thou be poure, farwel thy reverence !  
 Yet of the wisé man take this sentence :  
 'Allé the dayes of pouré men been wikke' ;  
 Be war therfore, er thou come to that  
 prikke ! 119

If thou be poure thy brother hateth thee,  
 And alle thy freendés fleen from thee, allas !

<sup>92.</sup> *Pierides*, 'the daughters of Pierus, that contended with the Muses, and were changed into Pies, Ovid, *Metam.* v.' (Tyrwhitt).

<sup>99.</sup> ll. 99-103, 106-8, 112, 113-5, 118, 120-1, are imitated from the sixteenth chapter of Pope Innocent III.'s *De Contemptu Mundi*. The two Biblical quotations are from *Ecclus.* xl. 29 and *Prov.* xiv. 20.

O riché marchantz, ful of wele been yec,  
 O noble, o prudent folk, as in this cas !  
 Youre baggés been nat fild with *ambès* as,  
 But with *sys cynk*, that renneth for youre  
 chaunce ;

At Cristémasse wel myrie may ye daunce !

Ye seken lond and see for yowre  
 wynnynge ;

As wisé folk ye knowen all thestaat  
 Of regnés ; ye been fadrès of tidynge  
 And talés, bothe of pees and of debaat. 130  
 I were right now of talés desolaat,  
 Nere that a marchant—goon is many a  
 yeere—

Me taughte a talé, which that ye shal heere.

### *Heere begynneth The Man of Lawe his Tale*

#### PART I

In Surryc whilom dwelte a compaignye  
 Of chapmen riche, and therto sadde and  
 trewe,

That wydé-where senten hir spicerye,  
 Clothés of gold, and satyns riche of hewe.  
 Hir chaffare was so thrifty and so newe  
 That every wight hath deyntec to chaffare  
 With hem, and eek to sellen hem hire ware.

Now fil it that the maistrès of that sort 141  
 Han shapen hem to Romé for to wende,  
 Were it for chapmanhode, or for disport,  
 Noon oother message wolde they thider  
 sende,

But comen hem-self to Rome, this is the  
 ende ;

And in swich place as thoughte hem  
 ávantage

For hire entente, they take hir herbergage.

Sojourned han thise marchantz in that  
 town

A certein tyme, as fil to hire plesance ;

*Heere begynneth*, etc. The tale which follows is taken in the main from the Anglo-French Chronicle of Nicholas Trivet, an English Dominican who died some time after 1334. The translation is nowhere very close, and 'of the 1029 lines of which the tale consists, about 350 are Chaucer's additions' (Brock).

And so bifel that the excellent renoun 150  
 Of the Emperours doghter, dame  
 Custance,  
 Reported was, with every circumstance,  
 Unto this Surryen marchantz in swich  
 wyse,  
 Fro day to day, as I shal yow devyse.

This was the commune voys of every  
 man :

'Oure Emperour of Romè, God hym see !  
 A doghter hath that, syn the world bigan,  
 To rekene as wel hir goodness as beautee,  
 Nas never swich another as is shee.  
 I prey to God, in honour hire susteene,  
 And wolde she were of all Europe the  
 queene ! 161

In hire is heigh beautee, withoute pride,  
 Yowthè, withoute grenehede or folye ;  
 To alle hire werkès vertu is hir gyde ;  
 Humblesse hath slayn in hire al tyrannye ;  
 She is mirour of allè curteisye,  
 Hir herte is verrey chambre of hoolynesse,  
 Hir hand ministre of fredam for almesse.'

And al this voys was sooth, as God is  
 trewe ;

But now to purpos lat us turne agayn. 170  
 These marchantz han doon fraught hir  
 shippès newe,

And whan they han this blisful mayden  
 sayn,

Hoom to Surryè been they went ful fayn,  
 And doon hir nedès as they handoon yooere,  
 And lyvenin wele ; I kan sey yow namooere.

Now fil it that these marchantz stode  
 in grace

Of hym that was the sowdan of Surrye ;  
 For whan they cam from any strangè place  
 He wolde of his benignè curteisye  
 Make hem good chiere and bisily espye 180  
 Tidynge of sondry regnès, for to leere  
 The wondrès that they myghtè seen or  
 heere.

Amongès othere thyngès specially,  
 These marchantz han hym toold of dame  
 Custance

168. *for, H and.*

So greet noblesse in earnest, seriously,  
 That this sowdan hath caught so greet  
 plesance

To han hir figure in his remembrance,  
 That all his lust, and al his bisy cure,  
 Was for to love hire while his lyf may dure.

Paraventure in thilkè largè book, 190  
 Which that men clipe the hevene, y-  
 written was

With sterrès, whan that he his birthè took,  
 That he for lovesholde han his deeth, allas !  
 For in the sterrès, clerer than is glas,  
 Is written, God woot, whoso koude it rede.  
 The deeth of every man, withouten drede.

In sterrès many a wynter ther biforn  
 Was written the deeth of Ector, Achilles,  
 Of Pompei, Julius, er they were born,  
 The strif of Thebès, and of Ercales, 201  
 Of Sampson, Turnus, and of Socrates  
 The deeth ; but mennès wittès ben so dulle  
 That no wight kan wel rede it attè fulle.

This sowdan for his privee conseil sente  
 And, shortly of this matiere for to pace,  
 He hath to hem declarèd his entente,  
 And seyde hem, certein, but he myght  
 have grace

To han Custance withinne a litel space,  
 He nas but deed, and chargèd hem in hye  
 To shapen for his lyf som remedye. 211

Diversè men diversè thyngès seyden,  
 They argumenten, casten up and down ;  
 Many a subtil resoun forth they leyden :  
 They spoken of magyk and abusioun ;  
 But finally, as in conclusioun,  
 They kan nat seen in that noon avantage  
 Ne in noon oother wey, save mariage.

185. *seriously*, glossed *ceriose* in E<sup>2</sup>, which  
 may be meant either for *serie* (seriously) or  
*seriatim* (in order); Camb. *certeynly*, Lansd.  
*curiously*, H so *rially* (? for *serially*).

190. *Paraventure*. This and the next five  
 stanzas are Chaucer's own, and probably late  
 work. In ll. 197-201 he is imitating some line  
 from the *Megacosmus* of Bernardus Sylvestri  
 beginning—

'Præjacet in stellis series, quam longior ætas  
 Explicet et spatii temporis ordo suis.'

201. *Turnus*, the opponent of Æneas.

Thanne sawè they ther-inne swich  
difficultee,

By wey of reson, for to speke al playn,  
By-cause that ther was swich diversitee 230  
Bitwene hir bothè lawès, that they sayn,  
They trowè that 'no cristene prince wolde  
fayn

Wedden his child under oure lawè sweete,  
That us was taught by Mahoun, oure  
prophete.'

And he answeárdé, 'Rather than I lese  
Custance, I wol be cristnéd, doutéles ;  
I moot been hires, I may noon oother chese.  
I prey yow hoold youre argumentz in pees ;  
Saveth my lyf, and beth noght recchèles  
To geten hire that hath my lyf in cure ; 230  
For in this wo I may nat longe endure.'

What nedeth gretter dilatacioun ?  
[ seye, by tretys and embassadrie,  
And by the popés mediacioun,  
And al the chirche, and al the chivalrie,  
That in destruccioun of maumetrie,  
And in encres of Cristès lawè deere,  
They been acorded, so as ye shal heere :

How that the sowdan and his baronage,  
And alle his liges, sholde y-cristnéd be,  
And he shal han Custance in mariage, 241  
And certein gold, I noot what quantitee ;  
And heer-to founden sufficient suretee.  
Thissameaccord was sworn on eyther syde.  
Now, faire Custance, almyghty God thee  
gyde !

Now woldé som men waiten, as I gesse,  
that I sholde tellen al the purveiance  
that themperoure, of his gretè noblesse,  
lath shapen for his doghter, dame  
Custance.

Vel may men knowen that so greet  
ordinance 250

lay no man tellen in a litel clause,  
s was arrayéd for so heigh a cause.

isschopes been shapen with hire for to  
wende,

órdés, ladies, knyghtès of renoun,

230. *To geten*, H *Goth, geteth*.

231. *nat longe*, H *no lenger*.

254. *Lordes*, Camb. *Lordyngis*.

And oother folk ynogh, this is the ende ;  
And notifiéd is thurgh-out the toun  
That every wight, with greet devocioun,  
Sholde preyen Crist, that he this mariage  
Receyve in gree and spedè this viage.

The day is comen of hir départynge—  
I seye, the woful day fatál is come, 261  
That ther may be no lenger tariynge,  
But thurward they hem dresen alle and  
some.

Custance, that was with sorwe al overcome,  
Ful pale arist, and dresseth hire to wende,  
For wel she seeth ther is noon oother ende.

Allas ! what wonder is it thogh she wepte,  
That shal be sent to strangè nacioun,  
Fro freendès that so tendrely hire kepte,  
And to be bounde under subjeccioun 270  
Of oon she knoweth nat his condicioun ?  
Housbondes been allè goode, and han  
ben yoore ;

That knowen wyves, I dar say yow na  
moore.

'Fader,' she seyde, 'thy wrecched  
child, Custance,  
Thy yongè doghter, fostred up so softe,  
And ye, my mooder, mysoverayn plesance,  
Over allè thyng, out-taken Crist on lofte,  
Custance, youre child, hire recomandeth  
ofte

Unto your grace ; for I shal to Surrye,  
Ne shal I never seen yow moore with eye.

Allas ! unto the Barbrè nacioun 281  
I mooste anoon, syn that it is youre willc ;  
But Crist, that starf for our savacioun,  
So yeve me grace his heestès to fulfille ;  
I, wrecchè womman, nofors though I spille !  
Wommen are born to thraldom and  
penance

And to been under mannès governance.'

I trowe at Troye, when Pirrus brak  
the wal

Or Iliou brende, at Thebes the citee,

282. *anoon*, E *goon*.

283. *savacioun*, H<sup>6</sup> *redempcioun*.

289. *Iliou*, the citadel of Troy.

Nat Romé, for the harm thurgh Hanybal,  
That Romayns hath venquýsshéd tymés  
thre,<sup>291</sup>  
Nas herd swich tendre wepyng for pitee,  
As in the chambré was for hire partyngé;  
But forth she moot, wher so she wepe or  
synge.

O firsté moevyng, crueel firmament,  
With thy diurnal sweigh that crowdest ay,  
And hurlst al from Est til Occident,  
That naturelly wolde holde another way;  
Thy crowdyng set thehevene in swich array  
At the bigynnyng of this fiers viage,<sup>300</sup>  
That crueel Mars hath slayn this mariage!

Infortunat ascendent tortuous,  
Of which the lord is helpless, falle, allas,  
Out of his angle into the derkeste hous.  
O Mars, O atazir, as in this cas!  
O fieble Moone, unhappy been thy pas!  
Thou knyttest thee ther thou art nat  
receyved;  
Ther thou were weel, fro thennés artow  
weyved.

Imprudent emperour of Rome, allas!<sup>309</sup>  
Was ther no philosophre in al thy toune?  
Is no tyme bet than oother in swich cas?  
Of viage is ther noon eleccioun,  
Namely to folk of heigh condicioun,  
Noght whan a roote is of a burthe y-knowe?  
Allas! we been to lewéd or to slowe!

To ship is brought this woful, fairé  
mayde,  
Solempnely, with every circumstance.

293. *partyngé*, E<sup>6</sup> *departyngé*.

295. *O firsté moevyng*, etc. The *Primum Mobile* is the outermost of the nine spheres, and revolves daily from east to west, carrying the inner spheres with it.

304. *Out of his angle*. The angles were the highest parts of the sphere, and Mars had fallen from his angle to the lowest house in the sphere.

305. *atazir*, planetary influence.

312. *Of viage is ther noon eleccioun?* Only rich people could pay for the calculation of their horoscope from its 'root'; but, when the horoscope was made, the choice of a time for any business became easy, because it was known which planets would be favourable to the undertaker.

316. *brought*, E *come*.

'Now Jhesu Crist be with yow alle,'  
she sayde.  
Ther nys namoure, but 'Farewel, faire  
Custance!'<sup>319</sup>  
She peyneth hire to make good contenance;  
And forth I lete hire saille in this manere,  
And turne I wole agayn to my matere.

The mooder of the sowdan, welle of  
vices,  
Espied hath hir sonés pleyn entente,  
How he wol lete his oldé sacrifices;  
And right anon she for hir conseil sente;  
And they been come, to knowé what she  
mente;  
And whan assembled was this folk in-feere,  
She sette hire doun and seyde as ye shal  
heere.

'Lordés,' she seyde, 'ye knowen  
everichon,<sup>330</sup>  
How that my sone in point is for to lete  
The hooly lawés of oure Alkaron,  
Yeven by Goddés message Makomete;  
But oon avow to getré God I heete,  
The lyf shal rather out of my body sterte,  
Than Makometés lawe out of myn herte!

What sholde us tyden of this newé lawe,  
But thraldom to our bodies and penance,  
And afterward in hellé to be drawe,  
For we reneyéd Mahoun oure creance?  
But, lordés, wol ye maken assurance<sup>34</sup>  
As I shal seyn, assentyngé to my loore,  
And I shal make us sauf for everemoore.'

They sworn, and assenten every man  
To lye with hire, and dye, and by hire  
stonde,  
And everich, in the besté wise he kan,  
To strengthen hire shal alle his frendé  
fonde.  
And she hath this emprise y-take on hond  
Which ye shal heren that I shal devyse;  
And to hem alle she spak right in thi  
wyse:

323. *welle*, H *full*.

330. *she seyde*, H<sup>6</sup> *quod sche*. The speeche  
are Chaucer's.

336. *Than*, H<sup>4</sup> *Or*.

## PART II

'We shul first feyne us cristendom to  
take, <sup>351</sup>

Coold water shal nat greve us but a lite),  
And I shal swiche a feeste and revel make,  
That as I trowe I shal the sowdan quite;  
For thogh his wyf be cristned never so  
white

she shal have nede to wasshe away the rede,  
Thogh she a font-ful water with hire lede!'

O sowdanesse, roote of iniquitee !  
Virago thou, Semyrame the secounde,  
O serpent, under femynynytee, <sup>360</sup>  
lik to the serpent depe in helle y-bounde !  
O feyned womman, al that may confounde  
Vertu and innocence thurgh thy malice  
s bred in thee, as nest of every vice !

O Sathan, envious syn thilkè day  
That thou wert chacéd from oure heritage,  
Vel knowestow to wommen the oldè way !  
Thou madest Eva brynge us in servage,  
Thou wolt fordoon this cristen mariage.  
Thyn instrument so, weylaway the while !  
Takestow of wommen whan thou wolt  
bigile. <sup>371</sup>

This sowdanesse, whom I thus blame  
and warye,  
seet privly hire conseil goon hire way.  
That sholde I in this talè lenger tarye ?  
he rydeth to the sowdan on a day,  
and seyde hym that she wolde reneye  
hir lay,  
and cristendom of preestès handès fonge,  
epentyng hire she hethen was so longe ;

isechyng hym to doon hire that honour,  
that she moste han the cristen folk to  
feeste,— <sup>380</sup>  
To plesen hem, I wol do my labour.'  
he sowdan seith, 'I wol doon at youre  
heeste' ;  
and knelyng, thanketh hire of that  
requeste ;  
so glad he was he nystè what to seye.  
he kiste hir nose, and hoome she gooth  
hir weye.

<sup>358.</sup> *sowdanesse*, Sultanesse. The apostrophe  
Chaucer's.

<sup>360.</sup> *under femynynytee*, in woman's form.

Arryved been this cristen folk to londe  
In Surrye, with a greet solempné route ;  
And hastily this sowdan sente his sonde,  
First to his mooder, and all the regne  
aboute,  
And seyde his wyf was comen, oute of  
doute, <sup>390</sup>  
And preyde hire for to ryde agayn the  
queene,  
The honour of his regnè to susteene.

Greet was the prees, and richè was tharray  
Of Surryens and Romayns met yfeere.  
The mooder of the sowdan, riche and gay,  
Recyveth hire with al-so glad a cheere  
As any mooder myghte hir doghter deere,  
And to the nextè citee ther bisyde,  
A softè paas solempnely they ryde. <sup>399</sup>

Noght trowe I the triumphe of Julius,—  
Of which that Lucan maketh swich a  
boost,—  
Was roialler ne moorè curius,  
Than was thassemblee of this blisful hoost ;  
Bút this scorpioun, this wikked goost,  
The sowdanesse, for all hire flatteryng,  
Caste under this ful mortality to styng.

The sowdan comth hymself soone after this  
So roially that wonder is to telle,  
And welcometh hire with allè joye and blis ;  
And thus in murthe and joye I lete hem  
dwelle ; <sup>410</sup>  
The fruyt of this matiere is that I telle.  
Whan tymè cam, men thoughte it for the  
beste  
That revel styntend mengoon to hir reste.

The tymè cam this oldè sowdanesse  
Ordeynèd hath this feeste of which I tolde,  
And to the feestè cristen folk hem dresse  
In general, ye, bothè yonge and olde.  
Heere may men feeste and roialtee biholde,  
And deyntees mo than I kan yow devyse,  
But all to deere they boghte it, er they ryse.

<sup>400.</sup> *the triumphe of Julius*. The stanza is  
Chaucer's addition.

O sodeyn wo! that ever art successor  
 To worldly blisse! Spreynd is with  
 bitternesse  
 The ende of the joye of oure worldly  
 labour!  
 Wo occupieth the fyn of oure gladnesse.  
 Herkè this conseil, for thy sikernesse,  
 Upon thy gladè day have in thy mynde  
 The unwar wo, or harm, that comth  
 bihynde.

For schortly for to tellen, at o word,  
 The sowdan and the cristen everichone <sup>429</sup>  
 Been al to-hewe, and stikèd at the bord,  
 But it were oonly dame Custance allone.  
 This oldè sowdanessè, cursèd krone!  
 Hath with hir freendès doon this cursèd  
 dede,  
 For she hir-self wolde all the contree lede.

Nether was Surryen noon, that was con-  
 verted,  
 That of the conseil of the sowdan woot,  
 That he nas al to-hewe er he asterted,  
 And Custance han they take anon, foot-  
 hoot,  
 And in a ship all steerèles, God woot,  
 They han hir set and biddeth hire lernè  
 saille <sup>440</sup>  
 Out of Surrye, agaynward to Ytaille.

A certein tresor that she thider ladde,  
 And, sooth to seyn, vitaille greet plentee,  
 They han hire yeven, and clothès eek she  
 hadde,  
 And forth she sailleth in the saltè see!  
 O my Custance, ful of benignytee,  
 O emperourès yongè doghter deere,  
 He that is lord of fortune be thy steere!

She blesseth hire, and with ful pitous  
 voys, <sup>449</sup>  
 Unto the croys of Crist thus seyde she:  
 'O cleere, O weleful auter, hooly croys,

421. *O sodeyn wo!* The stanza is Chaucer's addition, taken from the *De Contemptu Mundi*, i. 23.

427. *or harm that comth*, H *that cometh ay*.

428. *schortly*, F. *soothly*.

442. *thider*, F. *with hire*.

449-62. Chaucer's addition.

Reed of the Lambès blood, ful of pitee,  
 That wesshe the world fro the olde  
 iniquitee,  
 Me fro the feend and fro his clawès kepe,  
 That day that I shal drenchen in the depe!

Victorious tree, proteccioun of trewe,  
 That oonly worthy werè for to bere  
 The Kyng of Hevene with his woundès  
 newe,  
 The whitè Lamb that hurt was with the  
 spere; <sup>459</sup>  
 Flemere of feendès out of hym and here,  
 On which thy lymès feithfully extenden,  
 Me helpe, and yif me myght my lyf  
 tamenden.<sup>?</sup>

Yerès and dayès fleteth this créature  
 Thurghout thesee of Grece unto thestrayte  
 Of Marrok, as it was hire aventure.  
 On many a sory meel now may she  
 bayte;  
 After hir deeth ful often may she wayte,  
 Er that the wildè wawès wol hire dryve.  
 Unto the placè ther she shal arryve.

Men myghten asken why she was na  
 slayn? <sup>470</sup>  
 Eek at the feeste who myghte hir body save  
 And I answeere to that demande agayn,  
 Who savèd Danyel in the horrible cave,  
 Ther every wight save he, maister and  
 knave,  
 Was with the leoun frete, er he asterte?  
 No wight but God, that he bar in his herte

God liste to shewe his wonderful myracle  
 In hire, for we sholde seen his myght  
 werkis.  
 Crist, which that is to every harm triacle  
 By certeine meenès ofte, as knowen clerkis  
 Dooththyng for certein endè that ful derk  
 To mannès wit, that for oure ignorance  
 Ne konne noght knowe his pruden  
 purveiance.

Now sith she was nat at the feeste y-slawe  
 Who kepte hire from the drenchyng in the  
 see?

459. *the spere*, H<sup>6</sup> *a spere*.

470-504. Chaucer's addition.



Who kepté Jonas in the fisshés mawe,  
 Til he was spouted up at Nynyvee?  
 Wel may men knowe it was no wight  
 but He  
 That kepté peple Ebrayk from hir  
 drenchynge, <sup>489</sup>  
 With dryé feet thurgh-out the see passynge.

Who bad the fouré spirites of tempest,  
 That power han tanoyen lond and see,  
 Bothe north and south, and also west  
 and est,  
 Noyeth neither see, ne land, ne tree?  
 Noothly the comandour of that was He  
 That fro the tempestay this womman kepte  
 s wel when she awok as whan she slepte.

Where myghte this womman mete and  
 drynké have,  
 hire yer and moore? how lasteth hire  
 vitaille?  
 Who fedde the Egypcien Marie in the cave,  
 in desert? No wight but Crist, *sanz*  
*faillé.* <sup>501</sup>  
 yve thousand folk it was as greet mervaille  
 with lovés fyve, and fisshés two, to feede.  
 God sente his foyson at hir greté neede.

Where dryveth forth into oure occian,  
 thurgh-out oure wildé see, til atté laste  
 nder an hood, that nempnen I ne kan,  
 er in Northumberlond the wawe hire  
 caste,  
 and in the sond hir ship stikéd so faste  
 nat thennés wolde it noght of al a tyde.  
 The wyl of Crist was that she sholde abyde.

Where constable of the castel down is fare  
 so seen this wrak, and al the ship he  
 soghte,  
 and foond this wery womman, ful of care;  
 he foond also the tresor that she broghte.  
 In hir langagé mercy she bisoghte,  
 the lyf out of hire body for to twynne,  
 hire to delivere of wo that she was inne.

A maner Latyn corrupt was hir speche,  
 But algates ther-by was she understonde.  
 The constable, whan hym lyst no lenger  
 seche, <sup>521</sup>  
 This woful womman broghte he to the  
 londe;  
 She kneleth doun and thanketh Goddés  
 sonde;  
 But what she was she woldé no man seye,  
 For foul ne fair, thogh that she sholdé  
 deye.

She seyde she was so mazéd in the see  
 That she forgat hir myndé, by hir trouthe.  
 The constable hath of hire so greet pitee,  
 Andekehys wyf, that they wepen for routhe.  
 She was so diligent, withouten slouthe,  
 To serve and plesé everich in that place,  
 That alle hir loven that looken in hir face.

This constable and dame Hermengyld,  
 his wyf, <sup>533</sup>  
 Were payens, and that contree everywhere;  
 But Hermengyld loved hire right as hir lyf,  
 And Custance hath so longe sojournéd  
 there,

In orisons, with many a bitter teere,  
 Til Jhesu hath converted, thurgh his grace,  
 Dame Hermengyld, constablesse of that  
 place.

In al that lond no cristen dorsté route, <sup>540</sup>  
 Allé cristen folk been fled fro that contree,  
 Thurgh payens, that conquereden aboute  
 The plagés of the North, by land and see.  
 To Walys fledde the cristyanytee  
 Of oldé Britons dwellynge in this ile;  
 Ther was hir refut for the meené while.

But yet nere cristene Britons so exiled  
 That ther nere somme, that in hir privètee  
 Honouréd Crist, and hethen folk bigiled;  
 And ny the castel swiche ther dwelten  
 thrée. <sup>550</sup>

That oon of hem was blynd and myghte  
 nat see,  
 But it were with thilke eyen of his mynde,  
 With whiche men seen whan that they  
 ben blynde.

536. *sojournéd, H herberwed.*

93. See Rev. vii. 2, 3.  
 97. *awok, E<sup>3</sup> wook*, throwing stress on *As*.  
 100. *the Egypcien Marie*, St. Mary of Egypt,  
 who lived forty-seven years in the desert as a  
 penitent.

Bright was the sonne, as in that  
someres day,  
For which the constable and his wyf also,  
And Custance, han y-take the righte way  
Toward the see, a furlong wey or two,  
To pleyen and to romen to and fro ; 558  
And in hir walk this blyndeman they mette,  
Crokéd and oold, with eyen faste y-shete.

'In name of Crist,' cridè this olde Britoun,  
'Dame Hermengylde, yif me my sighte  
agayn !'

This lady weex affrayed of the soun,  
Lest that hir housbonde, shortly for to sayn,  
Wolde hire for Jhesu Cristès love han  
slayn ;  
Til Custance made hire boold, and bad  
hire wirche  
The wyl of Crist, as doghter of his chirche.

The constable weex abasshed of that sight,  
And seyde, 'What amounteth all this fare !'  
Custance answerde, 'Sire, it is Cristès  
myght 570  
That helpeth folk out of the feendès snare':  
And so ferforth she gan oure lay declare,  
That she the constable, er that it were eve,  
Converteth, and on Crist maketh hym  
bivleu.

This constable was no-thing lord of this  
place  
Of which I speke, ther he Custance fond,  
But kepte it strongly, many wyntres space,  
Under Alla, kyng of al Northhumbrelond,  
That was ful wys and worthy of his hond,  
Agayn the Scottès, as men may wel heere ;  
But turne I wole agayn to my mateere.

Sathan, that ever us waiteth to bigile,  
Saug of Custance al hire perfeccioun,  
And caste anon how he myghte quite hir  
while,  
And made a yong knyght, that dwelte  
in that toun,  
Love hire so hooote, of foul affeccioun,  
That verrailly hym thoughte he sholdè spillen  
But he of hire myghte onès have his wille.

567. *his*, H *holy*.578. *Alla*, reigned A.D. 560-588.

He woweth hire, but it availleth noght,  
She woldè do no synnè, by no weye ; 590  
And for despit he compassed in his thought  
To maken hire on shameful deeth to deye.  
He wayteth whan the constable was aweye ;  
And pryvèly upon a nyght he crepte  
In Hermengylde's chambre, whil sheslepte.

Wery, for-wakéd in hire orisouns,  
Slepeth Custance, and Hermengylde also.  
This knyght, thurgh Sathanas temptaciouns,  
All softly is to the bed y-go,  
And kitte the throte of Hermengylde atwo,  
And leyde the bloody knyf by dame  
Custance, 601  
And wente his wey, ther God yeve hym  
meschance !

Soone after cometh this constable hoom  
agayn,  
And eek Alla, that kyng was of that lond,  
And saugh his wyf despitously y-slayn,  
For which ful ofte he weepe and wroong  
his hond,  
And in the bed the bloody knyf he fond  
By dame Custance ; allas ! what myghte  
she seye ?  
For verray wo, hir wit was al aweye.

To kyng Alla was toold al this meschance  
And eek the tyme, and where, and in  
what wise 611  
That in a ship was fouden this Custance  
As heer-biforn that ye han herd devyse.  
The kyngès herte of pitee gan agryse,  
Whan he saugh so benigne a créature  
Falle in disese, and in mysaventure :

For as the lomb toward his deeth is broght  
So stant this innocent before the kyng  
This falsè knyght, that hath this tresour  
wrought,  
Berth hire on hond that she hath doo  
thys thyng ; 621  
But nathélees, thér was greet moornyng

610-666. These eight stanzas are Chaucer's addition. In Trivet the king does not arrive till after the miracle.

612. *this*, E *dame*.

Among the peple, and seyn they kan nat  
gesse

That she had doon so greet a wikkednesse:

For they han seyn hire ever so vertuous,  
And lovyng Hermengyld right as hir lyf.  
Of this baar witness everich in that hous,  
Save he that Hermengyld slow with his  
knif.

This gentil kyng hath caught a greet motyf  
Of this witness, and thoghte he wolde  
enquere

Depper in this, a trouthe for to lere. 630

Allas ! Custance, thou hast no cham-  
pioun,

Ne fighte kanstow nocht, so weylaway !  
But he that starf for our redempcioun,  
And boond Sathan,—and yet lith ther  
he lay,—

So be thy stronge champion this day ;  
For, but if Crist open myracle kithe,  
Withouten gilt thou shalt be slayn as  
swithe.

She sette hire doun on knees and thus she  
sayde

'Immortal God, that savedest Susanne  
Fro falsè blame, and thou, merciful mayde,  
Mary I meene, doghter to Seint Anne, 641  
Bifore whos child angelès synge Osanne,  
If I be giltlees of this felonye  
My socour be, for ellis shal I dye !'

Have ye nat seyn som tyme a palè face  
Among a prees, of hym that hath be lad  
Toward his deeth, wher-as hym gat no  
grace ?

And swich a colour in his face hath had,  
Menmyghte knowe his face that was bistad,  
Amongès alle the faces in that route ; 650  
Sostant Custance, and looketh hireabout.

O queenès, lyvyng in prosperitee !  
Duchesses, and ye ladyes everichone !  
Haveth som routhe on hire adversitee.  
An emperourès doghter stant allone ;  
She hath no wight to whom to make hir  
mone !

636. open, H<sup>3</sup> upon thee, on thee.

O blood roial, that stondest in this drede,  
Fer been thy freendès at thy gretè nede !

This Alla, kyng, hath swich compas-  
sioun,

As gentil herte is fulfild of pitee, 660  
That from his eyen ran the water doun.  
'Now hastily do fecche a book,' quod he,  
'And if this knyght wol sweren how  
that she

This womman slow, yet wol we us avyse  
Whom that we wole that shal been our  
justise.'

A Briton book written with Evaungiles  
Was fet, and on this book he swoor anoon  
She gilty was, and in the meenè whiles  
An hand hym smoot upon the nekkè boon,  
That doun he fil atonès as a stoon ; 670  
And bothe his eyen broste out of his face  
In sighte of every body in that place !

A voys was herd in general audience  
And seyde, 'Thou hast desclaundred,  
giltèlees,  
The doghter of hooly chirche in heigh  
presence ;  
Thus hastou doun, and yet holde I my  
pees !'

Of this mervaille agast was al the prees ;  
As mazèd folk they stoden everichone,  
For drede of wrechè, save Custance allone.

Greet was the drede, and eek the  
répenteance, 680

Of hem that hadden wronge suspecioun  
Upon this sely, innocent Custance ;  
And for this miracle, in conclusioun,  
And by Custances mediacioun,  
The kyng, and many another in that place,  
Converted was,—thankèd be Cristès grace !

This falsè knyght was slayn for his  
untrouthe

By juggèment of Alla, hastily ;  
And yet Custance hadde of his deeth  
greet routhe ;

And after this Jhesus, of his mercy, 690  
Made Alla wedden, ful solempnely,

670. atones, H anon right.

This hooly mayden, that is so bright and  
sheene ;  
And thus hath Crist y-maad Custance a  
queene.

But who was woful—if I shal nat lye—  
Of this weddyng but Donegild and na mo,  
The kynges mooder, ful of tyrannye ?  
Hir thoughte hir curséd herté brastatwo,—  
She woldé noght hir soné had do so.  
Hir thoughte a despit that he sholdé take  
So strange a créature unto his make. 700

Me list nat of the chaf, ne of the stree,  
Maken so long a tale as of the corn.  
What sholde I tellen of the roialtee  
At mariage, or which cours goth biforn,  
Who bloweth in the trumpe, or in an horn?  
The fruyt of every tale is for to seye,  
They ete, and drynke, and daunce, and  
synges and pleye.

They goon to bedde, as it was skile and  
right,  
For thogh that wyvès be ful hooly thynges,  
They mosté take in paciencie at nyght 710  
Swiche manere necessarys as been  
plesynges  
Tofolk that hany-wedded hem with rynges,  
And leye a lite hir hoolynesse aside,  
As for the tyme,—it may no bet bitide.

On hire he gat a knavé childe anon,  
And to a bissshop, and his constable eke,  
He took his wyf to kepe, whan he is gon  
To Scotlondward, his foomen for to seke.  
Now faire Custance, that is so humble  
and meke,  
So longe is goon with childé, til that stille  
She halt hire chambre, abidyng Cristés  
wille. 721

The tyme is comea knavéchild shebeer,—  
Mauricius at the fontstoon they hym calle.  
This constable dooth forth come a  
messageer,  
And wroot unto his kyng, that cleped  
was Alle,  
How that this blisful tidyng is bifalle,

713. H and halvendel hir holynesse ley aside.

And othere tidynges spedeful for to seye.  
He taketh the lettre and forth he gooth  
his weye. 728

This messenger, to doon his ávantage,  
Unto the kynges mooder rideth swithe,  
And salueth hire ful faire in his langage :  
'Madame,' quod he, 'ye may be glad  
and blithe,  
And thanketh God an hundred thousand  
sithe,  
Myladyqueene hath child withouten doute,  
To joye and blisse of al this regne aboute.

Lo, heere the lettrés seléd of this thyng,  
That I moot bere with al the haste I may.  
If ye wol aught unto youre sone the kyng,  
I am youre servant bothé nyght and day.'  
Donegild answerde, 'As now, at this  
tyme, nay ; 740  
But heereal nyght I wol thou take thyreste.  
To-morwé wol I seye thee what me leste.'

This messenger drank sadly ale and wyn,  
And stolen were his lettrés pryvèly,  
Out of his box whil he sleep as a swyn,  
And countrefeted was ful subtilly  
Another lettré, wrought ful synfully,  
Unto the kyng direct, of this mateere,  
Fro his constable, as ye shal after heere.

The lettré spak, the queene delivered was  
Of so horrible a feendly créature, 751  
That in the castel noon so hardy was  
That any whilé dorsté ther endure.  
The mooder was an elf, by áventure,  
Y-comen by charmés, or by sorcerie,  
And every wight hateth hir compaignye.

Wo was this kyng whan he this lettre  
had sayn,  
But to no wight he tolde his sorwés soore,  
But of his owene hand he wroot agayn :  
'Welcome the sonde of Crist for ever-  
moore, 760  
To me that am now lernéd in his loore !

727. tidynges, H thynges.

746. countrefeted was ful, H countrefeet they  
were.

747. Another lettre, wrought, H Another sche  
him wrote.

Lord, welcome be thy lust and thy  
plesauce :  
My lust I putte al in thyn ordinaunce.

Kepeth this child, al be it foul or feir,  
Andeek my wyf unto mynhoom-comýnge ;  
Crist whan hym list may sende me an heir  
Moore ágreable than this to my líkýnge.<sup>7</sup>  
This lettre he seleth, pryvely wepynge,  
Which to the messenger was také soone,  
And forth he gooth ; ther is na moore to  
doone. . . . . 770

O messenger, fulfild of dronkenesse !  
Strong is thy breeth, thy lymés faltren ay,  
And thou biwreyest allé secreenessé.  
Thy mynde is lorn, thou janglest as a jay ;  
Thy face is turned in a newe array !  
Ther dronkenesse regneth in any route,  
Ther is no conseil hyd, withouten doute.

O Donégild ! I ne have noon Englissh  
digne  
Unto thy malice and thy tirannye,  
And therefore to the feend I thee resigné,  
Lat hym enditen of thy traitorie ! 781  
Fy, mannysh, fy,—Onay, by God, I lye,—  
Fy, feendlych spirit, for I dar wel telle,  
Thogh thou heere walke, thy spirit is in  
helle.

This messenger comth fro the kyngagayn,  
And at the kyngés moodrés court helichte ;  
And she was of this messenger ful fayn,  
And pleséd hym, in al that ever she myghte.  
He drank, and wel his girdel underpighte ;  
He slepeth, and he snoreth in his gyse 790  
All nyghté, til the sonnè gan aryse.

Eft were his lettrés stolen everychon,  
And countrefeted lettrés in this wyse :  
'The king comandeth his constable anon,  
Up payne of hangyng, and on heigh juyse,  
That he ne sholdé suffren, in no wyse,  
Custance in-with his reawmè for tabyde  
Thre dayés and o quarter of a tyde ;

771-784. The next two stanzas are Chaucer's addition from the *De Contemptu Mundi*, ii. 19. 798. *Thre dayes and o quarter of a tyde*, 'deynz quatre iours' (Trivet); as soon as the tide began to rise on the fourth day.

But in the samè ship as he hire fond,  
Hire, and hir yongé sone, and al hir geere  
He sholdé putte, and croude hire fro the  
lond, 801  
And chargen hire she never eft coome  
there !'  
O my Custance, wel may thy goost have  
feere,  
And slepyng in thy dreem been in pen-  
ance,  
Whan Donégild cast al this ordinaunce.

This messenger on morwé, whan he wook,  
Unto the castel halt the nexté way,  
And to the constable he the lettré took ;  
And whan that he this pitous lettré say,  
Ful ofte he seyde, 'Allas ! and weylaway !'  
'Lord Crist,' quod he, 'how may this  
world endure ? 811  
So ful of synne is many a créature !

'O nyghty God, if that it be thy wille,  
Sith thou art rightful juge, how may it be  
That thou wolt suffren innocentz to spille,  
And wikked folk regne in prosperitee ?  
O goode Custance ! Allas, so wo is me,  
That I moot be thy tormentour, or deye  
On shamés deeth ; ther is noon oother  
weye.'

Wepen bothe yonge and olde in al  
that place, 820  
Whan that the kyng this cursed lettré  
sente,  
And Custance, with a deedly palé face,  
The fèrthé day toward the ship she wente ;  
But nathéless she taketh in good entente  
The wyl of Crist, and knelyng on the  
stronde,  
Sheseydè, 'Lord, ay welcome be thysonde ;

He that me kepté fro the falsé blame,  
While I was on the lond amongés yow,  
Ile kan me kepe from harm, and eek fro  
shame,  
In salté see, al-though I se noght how. 830  
As strong as ever he was he is yet now.  
In hym triste I, and in his mooder deere,—  
That is to me my seyl, and eek my  
stecere.'

Hir litel child lay wepyng in hir arm,  
 And knelynge, pitously to hym she seyde,  
 'Pees, litel sone, I wol do thee noon harm !'  
 With that hir coverchief of hir heed she  
 breyde,

And over his litel eyen she it leyde,  
 And in hir arm she lulleth it ful faste,  
 And into hevене hire eyen up she caste.

'Mooder,' quod she, 'and maydè,  
 bright Marie, 841

Sooth is that thurgh wommanès eggèment  
 Mankynde was lorn, and damnèd ay to dye,  
 For which thy child was on a croys y-  
 rent,—

Thy blisful eyen sawe al his torment,—  
 Thanne is ther no comparison bitwene  
 Thy wo and any wo man may sustene.

Thow sawe thy child y-slayn bifore thyne  
 eyen,

And yet now lyveth my litel child, *parfay!*  
 Now, lady bright, to whom alle woful  
 cryen,— 850

Thow glorie of wommanhede, thow fairè  
 May,

Thow haven of refut, brightè sterre of  
 day,—

Rewe on my child, that of thy gentillesse  
 Ruest on every reweful in distresse.

'O litel child, allas ! what is thy gilt,  
 That never wroughtest synne as yet, *pardee?*  
 Why wil thyn hardè fader han thee spilt ?  
 O mercy, deerè constable,' quod she,  
 'As lat my litel child dwelle heer with thee ;  
 And if thou darst nat saven hym for blame,  
 Yet kys hym onès in his fadrès name !' 861

Ther-with she lookèd bakward to the londe,  
 And seyde, 'Farewel, housbonde routh-  
 lees !'

And up she rist, and walketh doun the  
 stronde

Toward the ship,—hir folweth al the  
 prees,—

And ever she preyeth hire child to hold  
 his pees ;

And taketh hir leve, and with an hooly  
 entente,

She blissèd hire and into ship she wente.

Vitailled was the ship, it is no drede,  
 Habundantly for hire ful longè space ; 870  
 And othere necessaries that sholdè nede  
 She hadde ynogh, heryèd be Goddès grace!  
 For wynd and weder, almyghty God  
 purchace !

And bryngehire hoom, I kan no bettrèseye ;  
 But in the see she dryveth forth hir weye.

## PART III

Alla the kyng comth hoom soone after  
 this

Unto his castel of the which I tolde,  
 And asketh where his wyf and his child is?  
 The constable gan aboute his hertè colde,  
 And pleynly al the manere he hym tolde,  
 As ye han herd,—I kan telle it no better,—  
 And sheweth the kyng his seelè and his  
 lettre ;

And seyde, 'Lord, as ye comanded me,  
 Up peyne of deeth, so have I doon certain.'  
 This messenger tormented was til he  
 Mostè biknowe, and tellen, plat and pleyn,  
 Fro nyght to nyght in what place he had  
 leyn ;

And thus by wit and sobtil enquerynge  
 Ymaged was by whom this harm gan  
 spryngè.

The hand was knowè that the lettre  
 wroot, 890

And all the venym of this cursèd dede ;  
 But in what wisè certainly I noot.  
 Theffect is this, that Alla, out of drede,  
 His mooder slow,—that may men pleynly  
 rede,—

For that she traitoure was to hire ligeance.  
 Thus endeth oldè Donegild with mes-  
 chance.

The sorwè that this Alla nyght and day  
 Maketh for his wyf, and for his child also,  
 Ther is no tongè that it tellè may ;  
 But now wol I unto Custancè go, 900  
 That fleteth in the see, in peyne and wo,

<sup>870.</sup> *ful longe space*, five years according to  
 Trivet.

<sup>873.</sup> *weder*, H *water*.

Fyve yeer and moore, as likèd Cristes  
sonde,  
Er that hir ship approched unto the londe.

Under an hethen castel attè laste—  
Of which the name in my text nocht I  
fynde,—  
Custance, and eek hir child, the see up  
caste.

Almyghty God, that saveth al mankynde,  
Have on Custance and on hir child som  
mynde,  
That fallen is in hethen hand eft-soon,  
In point to spille, as I shal telle yow soone.

Doun fro the castel comth ther many  
a wight, 911  
To gauren on this ship, and on Custance;  
But, shortly, from the castel on a nyght,  
The lordès styward,—God yeve him mes-  
chance !—

A thief, that hadde reneyèd oure creance,  
Came into the ship allone, and seyde he  
sholde

Hir lemman be, wher-so she wolde or  
nolde.

Wo was this wrecched womman tho  
bigon ;

Hir childè cride, and she cride pitously ;  
But blisful Marie heelp hire right anon,  
For with hir struglyng wel and myghtily,  
The thief fil over bord al sodeynly,  
And in the see he dreyntè for vengeance ;  
And thus hath Crist unwemmèd kept  
Custance !

O foulè lust of luxurie, lo, thyn ende I  
Nat only that thou feyntest mannès mynde,  
But verrailly thou wolt his body shende.  
Thende of thy werk, or of thy lustes blynde,  
Is còmpleynyng. How many oon may  
men fynde

That nocht for werk somtyme, but for  
thentente 930

To doon this synne, been outhur slayn or  
shente !

925-945. The next three stanzas are Chaucer's  
addition, again suggested by the *De Contemptu*  
*Mundi*, li. 21.

How may this wayké womman han this  
strengthe

Hire to defende agayn this renegat ?  
O Goliath, unmeasurable of lengthe,  
How myghtè David makè thee so maat ?  
So yong and of arature so desolaat,  
How dorste he looke upon thy dredful face ?  
Wel may menseen it nas but Goddès grace.

Who yaf Judith corage or hardynesse  
To sleen hym Olofernes in his tente, 940  
And to deliveren out of wrecchednesse  
The peple of God ? I seye, for this  
entente,  
That right as God spirit of vigour sente  
To hem, and savèd hem out of meschance,  
So sente he myght and vigour to Custance.

Forth gooth hir ship thurgh-out the  
narwè mouth  
Of Jubaltare and Septè, dryvyng alway,  
Som-tymè West and som-tyme North  
and South,

And som-tyme Est, ful many a wery day,  
Til Cristès mooder—blessed be she ay !—  
Hath shapen, thurgh. hir endèles good-  
nesse, 951  
To make an ende of al hir hevynesse.

Now lat us stynte of Custance but a  
throwe,  
And speke we of the Romayn emperour,  
That out of Surrye hath by lettres knowe  
The slaughtre of cristen folk, and dis-  
honour  
Doon to his doghter by a fals traytour,—  
I mene the cursèd wikked sowdanesse,  
That at the feeste leet sleen both moore  
and lesse ;

For which this emperour hath sent anon  
His senatour with roial ordinance, 961  
And othere lordès, God woot many oon,  
On Surryens to taken heigh vengeance.  
They brennen, sleen, and bryngè hem to  
meschance

947. *Jubaltare*, Gibraltar.

947. *Septè*, on the opposite coast. Trivet had  
made the 'hethen castel' (904) in Spain.

961. *senatour*. His name was Arsemius.

Ful many a day, but, shortly, this is thende,  
Homward to Rome they shapen hem to  
wende.

This senatour repaireth with victorie  
To Romé-ward, saillynge ful roially,  
And mette the ship dryvynge, as seith  
the storie,  
In which Custancé sit ful pitously. 970  
No-thing ne knew he what she was, ne why  
She was in swich array; ne she nyl seye  
Of hire estaat, although she sholdè deye.

He bryngeth hire to Rome, and to his wyf  
He yaf hire, and hir yongé sone also;  
And with the senatour she ladde hir lyf.  
Thus kan oure lady bryngen out of wo  
Woful Custance and many another mo;  
And longé tymé dwelled she in that place,  
In hooly werkès ever, as was hir grace.

The senatourés wyf hir aunté was, 981  
But for all that she knew hire never the  
moore.

I wol no lenger tarien in this cas,  
But to kyng Alla, which I spake of yoore,  
That wepeth for his wyf and siketh soore,  
I wol retourne, and lete I wol Custance  
Under the senatourés governance.

Kyng Alla, which that hadde his  
mooder slayn,  
Upon a day fil in swich répentance, 989  
That, if I shortly tellen shal and playn,  
To Rome he comth to receyven his  
penance,  
And putte hym in the popés ordynance,  
In heigh and logh; and Jhesu Crist bisoghte  
Foryeve his wikked werkès that he wroghte.

The fame anon thurghout the toun is  
born,  
How Alla kyng shal comen on pilgrymage,  
By herbergeours that wenten hym biforn;  
For which the senatour, as was usage,  
Rood hym agayns, and many of his lynage,

981. *hir aunté*, really her cousin. According to Trivet, Arsenius married Helen, daughter of Sallustius, Constance's uncle.  
995. *thurghout the toun*, H<sup>6</sup> *thurgh Rome toun*.

As wel to shewen his beighe magnificence,  
As to doon any kyng a reverence. 1001

Greet cheeré dooth this noble senatour  
To kyng Alla, and he to hym also;  
Everich of hem dooth oother greet honour;  
And so bifel that in a day or two  
This senatour is to kyng Alla go  
To feste, and, shortly, if I shal nat lye,  
Custancés sone wente in his compaignye.

Som men wolde seyn at réqueste of  
Custance  
This senatour hath lad this child to  
feeste,— 1010  
I may nat tellen every circumstance;  
Be as be may, ther was he at the leeste;  
But sooth is this, that at his moodrés heeste  
Biforn Alla, duryngé the metés space,  
The child stood, lookynge in the kyngés  
face.

This Alla kyng hath of this child greet  
wonder,  
And to the senatour he seyde anon,  
'Whos is that fairé child, that stondesth  
yonder?'  
'I noot,' quod he, 'by God and by  
Saint John! 1019  
A mooder he hath, but fader hath he noon,  
That I of woot'; but shortly, in a stounde  
He tolde Alla how that this child was  
founde;

'But God woot,' quod this senatour also,  
'So vertuous a lyvere in my lyf  
Ne saugh I never as she, ne herde of mo,  
Of worldly wommen, maydè, ne of wyf;  
I dar wel seyn hir haddè leveré a knyf  
Thurgh out hir brest, than ben a womman  
wikke;  
There is no man koude brynge hire to  
that prikke.' 1029

Now was this child as lyke unto Custance  
As possible is a créature to be.

1009. *Som men wolde seyn*, i.e. Trivet.  
1010. *this child*. With the usual medieval  
prodigality of time Trivet makes Maurice now  
seventeen.

1014. *Biforn Alla*, H *Biforn hem alle*.



This Alla hath the face in remembrance  
Of dame Custance, and theron mused he,  
If that the childès mooder were aught she  
That is his wyf, and prively he sighte,  
And spedde hym fro the table that he  
myghte.

'Parfay!' thoghte he, 'fantome is in  
myn heed!

I oghte deme, of skilful juggèment,  
That in the saltè see my wyf is deed';  
And afterward he made his argument, <sup>1040</sup>  
'What woot I, if that Crist have hyder  
y-sent  
My wyf by see, as wel as he hire sente  
To my contree fro thennès that she wente?'

And after noon, hoom with the senatour  
Goth Alla, for to seen this wonderchaunce.  
This senatour dooth Alla greet honour,  
And hastily he sente after Custaunce;  
But trusteth weel hire listè nat to daunce,  
Whan that she wistè wherfore was that  
sonde; <sup>1049</sup>  
Unnethe upon hir feet she myghtè stonde.

Whan Alla saugh his wyf, faire he hire  
grette,  
And weep, that it was routhè for to see;  
For at the firstè look he on hire sette,  
He knew wel verrailly that it was she,  
And she for sorwe as doumb stant as a tree;  
So was hir hertè shet in hir distresse  
When she remembered his unkyndèness.

Twyès she swowned in his owene sighte.  
He weep, and hym excuseth pitously:  
'Now God,' quod he, 'and alle his  
halwès brighte, <sup>1060</sup>  
So wisly on my soul as have mercy,  
That of youre harm as giltèlees am I,  
As is Maurice my sone, so lyk your face;  
Ellès the feend me fecche out of this place!'

Long was the sobbyng and the bitter  
peyne,  
Er that hir woful hertès myghtè cesse;

1037. The stanza is Chaucer's addition.

1038. *skilful*, H *rightful*.

1051-1078. Chaucer's addition.

Greet was the pitec for to heere hem pleyne,  
Thurgh whichè pleintès gan hir wo en-  
cresse.

I pray yow all my labour to relese,  
I may nat tell hir wo until to-morwe, <sup>1070</sup>  
I am so wery for to speke of sorwe.

But finally, whan that the sothe is wist,  
That Alla giltèlees was of hir wo,  
I trowe an hundred tymès been they kist;  
And swich a blisse is ther bitwix hem two,  
That, save the joye that lasteth evermo,  
Ther is noon lyk that any créature  
Hath seyn, or shal, whil that the world  
may dure.

Tho preydè she hir housbonde, mekelý,  
In relief of hir longè pitous pyne, <sup>1080</sup>  
That he wolde preye hir fader specially,  
That of his magestee he wolde enclýne  
To vouchè-sauf som day with hym to dyne.  
She preydè hym eek he woldè, by no weye,  
Unto hir fader no word of hire seye.

Som men wold seyn how that the child  
Maurice

Dooth this message unto the emperour,  
But, as I gesse, Alla was nat so nyce  
To hym, that was of so sovereyn honour  
As he that is of cristen folk the flour, <sup>1090</sup>  
Sente any child; but it is bet to deeme  
He wente hymself, and so it may well  
seeme.

This emperour hath graunted gentilly  
To come to dynere, as he hym bisoughte,  
And wel rede I, he lookèd bisily  
Upon this child, and on his doghter thoghte.  
Alla goth to his in, and as him oghte,  
Arrayed for this feste in every wise,  
As ferforth as his konnyng may suffice.

The morwè cam, and Alla gan hym  
dresse, <sup>1100</sup>  
And eek his wyf, this emperour to meete;  
And forth they ryde in joye and in  
gladnesse;  
And whan she saugh hir fader in the strete,  
She lightè down and falleth hym to feete;

1086. *Som men*, i.e. Trivet.

'Fader,' quod she, 'youre yongè child,  
Custance,  
Is now ful clene out of youre rémembrance.

I am youre doghter Custancè,' quod she,  
'That whilom ye han sent unto Surrye.  
It am I, fader, that in the saltè see 1109  
Was put allone, and dampnéd for to dye.  
Now, goodè fader, mercy, I yow crye!  
Sende me namoore unto noon hethènesse,  
But thonketh my lord heere of his kyndè-  
nesse.'

Who kan the pitous joyè tellen al  
Bitwixe hem thre, syn they been thus  
y-mette?

But of my talè make an ende I shal,—  
The day goth faste, I wol no lenger lette.  
This gladè folk to dynere they hem sette.  
In joye and blisse at mete I lete hem dwelle,  
A thousand foold wel moore than I kan  
telle. 1120

This child Maurice was sithen emperour  
Maad by the pope and lyvèd cristenly.  
To Cristès chirché he dide greet honour;  
But I lete all his storie passen by;  
Of Custance is my talè specially.  
In the oldè Romane Geestès may men  
fynde  
Mauricès lyf, I bere it noght in mynde.

This kyng Alla, whan he his tymè say,  
With his Custance, his hooly wyf so sweete,  
To Engelond been they come the rightè  
way, 1130

Wher as they lyve in joye and in quiete;  
But litel while it lasteth, I yow heete.  
Joye of this world for tyme wol nat abyde,  
Fro day to nyght it changeth as the tyde.

Who lyved ever in swich delit o day  
That hym ne moevèd outhere conscience,  
Or ire, or talent, or som kynnes affray,

1122. *Maad by the pope.* Trivet says by his grandfather 'par l'assent del pape Pelagie e de tout le senat de Rome.'

1126. *the oldè Romane Geestes, i.e. the Gesta Romanorum*; H om. *the*.

1135. From *De Contemptu Mundi*, i. 22.

1137. *kynnes, H maner.*

Envye, or pride, or passion, or offence?  
I ne seye but for this endè this sentence,  
That litel while in joye, or in plesance, 1140  
Lasteth the blisse of Alla with Custance;

For Deeth, that taketh of heigh and logh  
his rente,

Whan passed was a year, evene as I gesse,  
Out of this world this kyng Alla he hente,  
For whom Custance hath ful greet hevyn-  
nesse.

Now lat us prayen God his soulè blesse!  
And dame Custancè, finally to seye,  
Toward the toun of Romè goth hir weye.

To Rome is come this hooly créature,  
And fyndeth hire freendès ther bothe  
hoolè and sounde. 1150

Now is she scapèd al hire aventure,  
And whan that she hir fader hath y-founde,  
Doun on hir kneës falleth she to grounde;  
Wepyng for tendrenesse in hertè blithe,  
She heryeth God an hundred thousand  
sithe.

In vertu and in hooly almus-dede  
They lyven alle, and nevere asonder wende.  
Til deeth departed hem this lyf they lede,  
And fareth now weel, my tale is at an ende.  
Now Jhesu Crist, that of his myght may  
sende 1160

Joye after wo, governe us in his grace,  
And kepe us allè that been in this place.  
*Amen.*

[*Words of the Host, the Parson, and the  
Shipman*]

Oure Hoste upon his stiropes stode anon,  
And seyde, 'Good men, herkeneth,  
everichon!

This was a thrifty talè for the nones!  
Sir Parish Prest,' quod he, 'for Goddès  
bones,

1149. *hooly, H nobil.*

1163-1190. The text is taken from MS. Arch. Seld. B. 14, the only MS. which preserves the reading *Shipman* in line 1179.

1165. *a thrifty tale*, an allusion to the same phrase in B. 46, showing that the reference is to the Man of Law's Tale.

Tell us a tale, as was thy forward yore ;  
I se wel that ye lernéd men in lore  
Can moché good, by Goddès dignitee !'

The Personehimanswérde, '*Benedicite!*  
What eyleth the man so sinfully to  
swere ?' 1171

Our Hoste answérde, 'O Jankyn, be  
ye there ?

I smelle a Loller in the wind,' quod he.  
'Nowe, good men,' quod our Hosté,  
'herkneth me,

Abydeth, for Goddès digné passiou, n,  
For we shul han a predicacioun ;  
This Loller here wol prechen us somewhat.'  
'Nay, by my fader soule ! that shal  
he nat !'

Seydé the Shipman ; 'here shal he nat  
preche ;' 1179

He shal no gospel glosen here, ne teche.  
We leven alle in the grete God,' quod he,  
'He woldé sowen som difficulte,

Or sprengen cokkel in our clené corn ;  
And therefore, Hoste, I warné the biforn,  
My joly body shal a talé telle,

And I shal clynken yow so mery a belle  
That I shal wakyn al this companye ;  
But it shal nat ben of philosophye,

Ne of phisyk, ne termés queint of lawe ;  
There is but litel Latin in my mawe.' 1190

## SHIPMAN'S TALE

### *Heere bigynneth The Shipmannes Tale*

A marchant whilom dwelled at Scint  
Denys,

That riché was, for which men helde  
hym wys ;

A wyf he hadde of excellent beautee,

1173. *a Loller*, a Lollard. That Chaucer allowed this name to be given to his good parson does not prove that he sympathised with Wyclif's doctrines. Any priest who lived a strict life just then might incur the charge of Lollardy.

1174. *Nowe*, from H ; rest *Howe*.

1178. *my fader*, Arch. Seld. *godis*.

1179. *Shipman*, Heng.<sup>5</sup> *Squier*, H *Sompnour*.

1183. *cokkel*, an allusion to the derivation of Lollard from *lollum*.

1186-1190. *The Shipmannes Tale*. In Heng.<sup>6</sup> here follows the Squire's Tale. No original of the Shipman's Tale has yet been found.

And compaignable and revelous was she,  
Which is a thyng that causeth more  
dispence

Than worth is al the chiere and reverence  
That men hem doon at festés and at  
daunces. 1197

Swiche salutaciouns and contenaunces  
Passen as dooth a shadwe upon the wal ;  
But wo is hym that payen moot for al !

'Thesely housbonde algate he moste paye ;  
He moot us clothe and he moot us arraye,  
Al for his owene worship richely,  
In which array we dauncé jolily.

And if that he noght may, par aventure,  
Or ellis list no swich dispence endure,  
But thynketh it is wasted and y-lost,  
Thanne moot another payen for oure cost,  
Or lene us gold, and that is perilous.'

This noblé marchaunt heeld a worthy  
hous, 1210

For which he hadde alday so greet repair  
For his largesse, and for his wyf was fair,  
That wonder is ; but herkneth to my tale.

Amongés alle his gestés, grete and  
smale,

Ther was a monk, a fair man and a  
boold,—

I trowe of thritty wynter he was oold,—  
That ever in oon was comynge to that  
place.

This yongé monk, that was so fair of face,  
Aqueynted was so with the goodé man  
Sith that hir firsté knoweliché bigan, 1220

That in his hous as famulier was he  
As it is possible any freend to be.

And for as muchel as this goodé man  
And eek this monk, of which that I bigan,  
Were bothé two y-born in o village,

The monk hym claymeth as for cosynage ;  
And he agayn he seith nat onés nay,  
But was as glad therof as fowel of day ;

For to his herte it was a greet plesaunce.  
Thus been they knyht with eterne alliaunce,  
And ech of hem gan oother for tassure 1231  
Of bretherhede whil that hir lyf may dure.

1202. *and he moot us*, H *in ful good*.

1206. *list no*, H *will not*.

1210. *worthy*, H<sup>5</sup> *noble*.

1217. *comynge*, H<sup>6</sup> *drawyng*.

1222. *is*, om. F ; H reads *as it possble is a friend to be*.

Frec was Daun John, and namely of  
dispençe,

As in that hous, and ful of diligence  
To doon plesaunce, and also greet costage :  
He nocht forgot to yeve the leestè page  
In al the hous ; but after hir degree  
He yaf the lord and sitthe al his meynce,  
Whan that he cam, som manere honest  
thyng,

For which they were as glad of his comyng  
As fowel is fayn whan that the sonne  
upriseth ; 1241

Na moore of this as now, for it suffiseth.  
But so bifel this marchant on a day  
Shoop hym to makè redy his array  
Toward the toum of Brugges for to fare,  
To byen there a porcioun of ware ;  
For which he hath to Parys sent anon  
A messenger, and preyed hath Daun John  
That he sholde come to Seint Denys, to  
pleye 1249

With hym and with his wyf a day or tweye,  
Er he to Brugges wente, in allè wise.

This noble monk, of which I yow devyse,  
Hath of his abbot, as hym list, licence,—  
By-cause he was a man of heigh prudence,  
And eek an officer,—out for to ryde,  
To seen hir graunges and hire bernès wyde,  
And unto Seint Denys he comth anon.  
Who was so welcome as my lord Daun  
John,

Oure deerè cosyn, ful of curteisye ?  
With hym broghte he a jubbe of malvesye  
And cek another, ful of fyn vernage, 1261  
And volatyl, as ay was his usage.  
And thus I lete hem ete and drynke and  
pleye,

This marchant and this monk, a day or  
tweye.

The thriddè day this marchant up  
ariseth,

And on his nedès sadly hym avyseth,  
And up into his countour-hous gooth he,  
To rekene with hymself, as wel may be,  
Of thilkè yeer, how that it with hym stood,  
And how that he despended hadde his  
good, 1270

And if that he encessèd were or noon.  
His bookès and his baggès, many oon,  
He leith biforn hym on his countyng-bord.

Ful richè was his tresor and his hord,  
For which ful faste his countour dore he  
shette ;

And eek he nolde that no man sholde  
hym lette

Of his accountès, for the meenè tyme ;  
And thus he sit til it was passèd pryme.

Daun John was rysen in the morwe also  
And in the gardyn walketh to and fro, 1280  
And hath his thyngès seyð ful curteisly.

This goodè wyf cam walkyng prively  
Into the gardyn, there he walketh softe,  
And hym saleweth, as she hath doon ofte.  
A maydè child cam in hire compaignye,  
Which as hir list she may governe and gye,  
For yet under the yerdè was the mayde.  
'O deerè cosyn myn, Daun John,' she  
sayde,

'What eyleth yow, so rathè for to ryse ?'

'Necè,' quod he, 'it oghteynough suffise  
Fyve houres for to slepe upon a nyght, 1291  
But it were for an old appallèd wight,  
As been these wedded men that lye and  
dare,

As, in a fourmè, sit a wery hare  
Were al forstraught with houndès grete  
and smale ;

But, deerè necè, why be ye so pale ?  
I trowè certès that oure goodè man  
Hath yow laboured sith the nyght bigan,  
That yow were nede to resten hastily ;  
And with that word he lough ful murily  
And of his owene thought he wax al reed.

This fairè wyf gan for to shake hir heed,  
And seyde thus : 'Ye, God woot al,'  
quod she,

'Nay, cosyn myn, it stant nat so with me,  
For by that God that yaf me soule and lyf,  
In al the reawme of France is ther no wyf  
That lassè lust hath to that sory pleye ;  
For I may syngc allas and weylawey  
That I was born ; but to no wight,'  
quod she,

'Dar I nat telle how that it stant with me ;  
Wherfore I thynke out of this lande to  
wende, 1311

Or ellès of myself to make an ende,  
So ful am I of drede and eek of care.'

This monk bigan upon this wyf to stare,  
And seyde, 'Allas, my necè, God forbede

That ye, for any sorwe or any drede,  
 Fordo youreself; but tel me of youre grief;  
 Paraventure I may in youre meschief 1318  
 Conseille or helpe; and therefore telleth me  
 All youre anoy, for it shal been secree;  
 For on my porthors here I make an ooth  
 That never in my lyf, for lief ne looth,  
 Ne shal I of no conseil yow biwreye.'

'The same agayn to yow,' quod she,  
 'I seye,

By God and by this porthors I yow swere,  
 Though men me wolde al into peces tere,  
 Ne shal I never, for to goon to helle,  
 Biwreye a word of thyng that ye me telle,  
 Nat for no cosyngne ne alliance,  
 but verrailly for love and affiance.' 1330  
 Thus been they sworn, and heer-upon  
 they kiste,  
 and ech of hem tolde oother what hem  
 liste.

'Cosyn,' quod she, 'if that I hadde  
 a space,

as I have noon, and namely in this place,  
 hadde I telle a legende of my lyf,  
 That I have suffred sith I was a wyf  
 With myn housbonde, al be he of youre  
 kyn.'

'Nay,' quod this monk, 'by God,  
 and Seint Martyn !

There is na moore cosyng unto me 1339  
 than is this lief that hangeth on the tree.  
 Clepe hymso, by Seint Denys of Fraunce!  
 To have the moore cause of aqueyntaunce  
 of yow, which I have loved specially,  
 than boven allé women sikerly;

And thus swere I yow on my professoun.  
 Telleth youre grief, lest that he come adoun,  
 and hasteth yow, and gooth youre wey  
 anon.'

'My deeré love,' quod she, 'O my  
 Daun John,

al lief were me this conseil for to hyde,  
 that out it moot, I may namoore abyde! 1350  
 Myn housbonde is to me the worsté man  
 that ever was sith that the world bigan,  
 that sith I am a wyf, it sit nat me

317. *tel*, H<sup>6</sup> *telleth*.

331. *they kiste*, H<sup>4</sup> *i-kiste*, *kist*.

337. *al be he of youre kyn*, H *though he be  
 yr cosyng*.

To tellen no wight of oure privetee,  
 Neither a-bedde ne in noon oother place—  
 God shilde I sholde it tellen for his grace!

A wyf ne shal nat seyn of hir housbonde  
 But al honour, as I kan understonde,  
 Save unto yow, thus muche I tellen shal;  
 As helpe me God, he is nocht worth at al  
 In no degree the value of a flye; 1361  
 But yet me greveth moost his nygardyne.  
 And wel ye woot that women naturelly  
 Desiren thyngés sixe, as wel as I:

They wolde that hir housbondes sholdé be  
 Hardy and wise, and riche, and therto free,  
 And buxom unto his wyf, and fressh  
 abedde;

But by that ilké Lord that for us bledde,  
 For his honour myself for to arraye,  
 A Sunday next, I mosté nedés paye 1370  
 An hundred frankes, or ellis I am lorn;  
 Yet were me levere that I were unborn  
 Than me were doon a sclandre or  
 vileynye;

And if myn housbonde eek it myghte espye  
 I nere but lost, and therefore I yow preye,  
 Lene me this somme, or ellis moot I deye.  
 Daun John, I seye, lene me thise  
 hundred frankes;

Pardee, I wol nat faille yow my thankes,  
 If that yow list to doon that I yow praye,  
 For at a certeyn day I wol yow paye, 1380  
 And doon to yow what plesance and service  
 That I may doon, right as yow list devise,  
 And but I do, God take on me vengeance  
 As foul as ever hadde Genyloun of France!

This gentil monk answerde in this  
 manere:

'Now trewely, myn owene lady deere,  
 I have,' quod he, 'on yow sogreet a routhe,  
 That I yow swere, and plighté yow my  
 trouthe,

That when youre housbonde is to  
 Flaundrés fare

I wol delyvere yow out of this care; 1390  
 For I wol bryngé yow an hundred frankes';

1368. H reads: *But by that lord that for us  
 alle bledde*.

1370. H reads: *A sonday next comyng yit  
 moste I praye*.

1384. *Genyloun*, the betrayer of Roland.

1387. H reads: *I have on yow so greet pité  
 and routhe*.

And with that word he caughte hire by  
the flankes

And hire embraceth harde and kiste hire  
ofte.

'Gooth now youre wey,' quod he, 'all  
stille and softe,

And lat us dyne as soone as that ye may,  
For by my chilyndre it is pryme of day.

Gooth now, and beeth as trewe as I shal  
be.'

'Now ellès God forbedè, sire,' quod  
she;

And forth she gooth as jolif as a pye,  
And bad the cookès that they sholde  
hem hye, 1400

So that men myghtè dyne and that anon.  
Up to hir housbonde is this wyf y-gon,  
And knokketh at his countour boldèly.

'Qy la?' quod he. 'Peter! it am I,'  
Quod she; 'what, sire, how longè wol  
ye faste?

How longè tymè wol ye rekene and caste  
Yourè sommès, and youre bookès, and  
yourè thynges?

The devel have part on alle swiche  
rekenynges!

Ye have ynough, pardee, of Goddès sonde;  
Com doun to-day, and lat youre baggès  
stonde. 1410

Ne be ye nat ashamèd that Daun John  
Shal fasting al this day alengè goon?

What! lat us heere a messe, and go we  
dyne!

'Wyf,' quod this man, 'litel kanstow  
devyne

The curious bisynnessè that we have;  
For of us chapmen,—al-so God me save,  
And by that lord that clepid is Seint Yve,—  
Scarsly amongès twelvè two shuln thryve,  
Continuèly lastynge unto oure age. 1419  
We may wel makè chiere and good visage,  
And dryvè forth the world as it may be,  
And kepen oure estaat in pryvètee  
Til we be deed; or ellès that we pleye  
A pilgrymage, or goon out of the weye;  
And therfore have I greet necessitee

1417. *Seint Yve*, Saint Ivo.

1418. *two*, F<sup>3</sup> *ten*, Corp.<sup>3</sup> *tweye*.

1423, 24. *we pleye A pilgrymage*, as a pretext  
for keeping out of the way of creditors.

Upon this queyntè world tavyse me,  
For, evermoorè we moote stonde in drede  
Of hap and fortune in oure chapmanhede.

'To Flaundrès wol I go to-morwe at  
day, 1429

And come agayn as soone as ever I may;  
For which, my deerè wyf, I thee biseke  
As be to every wight buxom and meke,  
And for to kepe oure good be curious,  
And honestly governè wel oure hous.  
Thou hast ynough in every maner wise,  
That to a thrifty household may suffice;  
Thee lakketh noon array ne no vitaille,  
Of silver in thy purs shaltow nat faille.'

And with that word his countour dore he  
shette,

And doun he gooth, no lenger wolde he  
lette; 1440

But hastily a messè was ther seyde,  
And spedily the tables were y-leyde,  
And to the dyner fastè they hem spedde,  
And richèly this monk the chapman fedde.

At after dyner Daun John sobrèly  
This chapman took apart and privèly  
He seyde hym thus: 'Cosyn, it standeth  
so

That, wel I se, to Bruggès wol ye go.  
Godand Seint Austyn spedè yow and gyde!  
I prey yow, cosyn, wisely that ye ryde;  
Governeth yow also of youre diete 1451

Atemprèly, and namely in this hete.  
Bitwix us two nedeth no strangè fare;  
Fare wel, cosyn, God shildè yow fro care.  
And if that any thyng, by day or nyght,  
If it lye in my power and my myght,  
That ye me wol comande in any wyse,  
It shal be doon, right as ye wol devyse.

'O thyng, er that ye goon, if it may be,  
I woldè prey yow for to lenè me 1461

An hundred frankès for a wyke or tweye,  
For certein beestès that I mostè beye,  
To stoorè with a placè that is oures,—  
God helpe me so, I wolde it werè youre  
I shal nat faille surely of my day,  
Nat for a thousand frankes a milè way!  
But lat this thyng be secree, I yow preye  
For yet to-nyght these beestès moot I beye  
And fare now wel, myn owene cosyn deerè

1438. *shaltow*, H<sup>4</sup> *thou mayst*.

1445. *At*, H<sup>4</sup> *And*.

*Graunt mercy of youre cost and of youre  
cheere !'* 1470

This noble marchant gentilly anon  
Answerde and seyde, 'O cosyn myn,  
Daun John,  
Now sikerly this is a smal requeste,  
My gold is yourés whan that it yow leste,  
And nat oonly my gold, but my chaffare;  
Take what yow list, God shildè that ye  
spare !

'But o thyng is, ye knowe it wel ynogh,  
Of chapmen, that hir moneie is hir plogh;  
We may creaucè whil we have a name,  
But goldlees for to be, it is no game; 1480  
Paye it agayn whan it lith in youre ese;  
After my myght ful fayn wolde I yow plese.'

This hundred frankes he fette hym  
forth anon  
And prively he took hem to Daun John;  
No wight in all this world wiste of this  
loone,  
Savyng this marchant and Daun John  
allone.

They drynke, and speke, and rome a  
while and pleye,  
Fil that Daun John rideth to his abbeye.

The morwè cam and forth this mar-  
chant rideth

To Flaunders-ward,—his prentys wel  
hym gydeth,— 1490

Fil he cam into Bruggés murily.  
Now gooth this marchant, faste and bisily  
Aboute his nede, and byeth and creauc-  
ceth;

Ie neither pleyeth at the dees, ne daun-  
ceth,

but as a marchant, shortly for to telle,  
Ie lad his lyf, and there I lete him dwelle.

The Sondag next this marchant was  
agon,

To Seint Denys y-comen is Daun John,  
With crowne and berde all fressh and  
newe'y-shave. 1499

In all the hous ther nas so litel a knave,  
Ie no wight ellés, that he nas ful fayn  
for that my lord Daun John was come  
agayn;

and shortly, to the point right for to gon,  
his fairè wyf accorded with Daun John

1483. *hym*, om. H6.

That for these hundred frankes he sholde  
a nyght

Have hire in his armés bolt upright;  
And this acord parfournéd was in dede.  
In myrthe al nyght a bisy lyf they lede  
Til it was day, that Daun John wente  
his way,  
And bad the meynce, Fare wel, have  
good day ! 1510

For noon of hem, ne no wight in the toun,  
Hath of Daun John right no suspicioun;  
And forth he rydeth hoom to his abbeye,  
Or where hym list; namoore of hym I  
seye.

This marchant, whan that ended was  
the faire,

To Seint Denys he gan for to repaire,  
And with his wyf he maketh feeste and  
cheere,

And telleth hire that chaffare is so deere  
That nedés moste he make a chevyssaunce,  
For he was bounden in a reconyssaunce,  
To paye twenty thousand sheeld anon;  
For which this marchant is to Parys gon,  
To borwe of certeine freendés that he  
hadde

A certeyn frankes; and somme with him  
he ladde.

And whan that he was come into the toun,  
For greet chiertee, and greet affeccioun,  
Unto Daun John he gooth hym first, to  
pleye,—

Nat for to axe or borwe of hym moneye,—  
But for to wite and seen of his welfare,  
And for to tellen hym of his chaffare, 1530  
As freendés doon whan they been met  
y-feere.

Daun John hym maketh feeste and murye  
cheere,

And he hym tolde agayn, ful specially,  
How he hadde wel y-boght and gra-  
ciously,—

Thankéd be God!—al hool his mar-  
chandise,

Save that he moste, in allè maner wise,  
Maken a chevyssaunce as for his beste,  
And thanne he sholdè been in joye and  
reste.

1528. H reads: *Nought for to borwe of hym  
no kyn monay*, so Corp.<sup>3</sup> omitting *kyn*.

Daun John answérdé, 'Certès I am  
fayn, <sup>1539</sup>  
That ye in heele ar comen hom agayn,  
And if that I were riche, as have I blisse,  
Of twenty thousand sheeld shold ye nat  
mysse,

For ye so kyndely this oother day  
Lenté me gold ; and as I kan and may  
I thanké yow, by God and by Seint Jame !  
But nathélees I took unto oure dame,  
Youre wyf, at hom, the samé gold ageyn  
Upon youre bench ; she woot it wel certeyn,  
By certeyn tokenes that I kan yow telle.  
Now by youre leve I may no lenger  
dwelle ; <sup>1550</sup>

Oure abbot wole out of this toun anon,  
And in his compaignyè moot I goon.  
Grete wel oure dame, myn owene necé  
sweete,

And fare wel, deeré cosyn, til we meete !'  
This marchant, which that was ful war  
and wys,

Creancéd hath and payd eek in Parys  
To certeyn Lumbardes, redy in hir hond,  
The somme of gold, and hadde of hem  
his bond ;

And hoom he gooth, murie as a papejay,  
For wel he knew he stood in swich array  
That nedés moste he wynne in that viage  
A thousand frankes aboven al his costage.

His wyf ful redy mette hym atté gate,  
As she was wont of oold usage algate,  
And al that nyght in myrthé they bisette ;  
For he was riche and cleerly out of dette.  
Whan it was day this marchant gan  
embrace

His wyfal newe, and kiste hire on hir face,  
And up he gooth and maketh it ful tough.  
'Namoore,' quod she, 'by God, ye  
have ynough !' <sup>1570</sup>

And wantownely agayn with hym she  
pleyde ;

Til atté lasté thus this marchant seyde :  
'By God,' quod he, 'I am a litel wrooth  
With yow, my wyf, although it be me  
looth ;

And woot ye why ? By God, as that I  
gesse

That ye han maad a manere straungénesse  
Bitwixen me and my cosyn daun John,—  
Ye sholde han warnéd me, er I had gon,  
That he yow hadde an hundred frankés  
payed,

By redy tokene,—and heeld hym yvele  
apayed <sup>1580</sup>

For that I to hym spak of chevysauce,—  
Me seméd so, as by his contenance—  
But nathélees, by God, oure hevene kyng,  
I thoughté nat to axen hym no thyng.  
I prey thee, wyf, as do namooré so ;  
Telle me alwey, er that I fro thee go,  
If any dettour hath in myn absence  
Y-payéd thee, lest thurgh thy negligence  
I myghte hym axe a thing that he hath  
payed.'

This wyf was nat aferéd nor affrayed,  
But boldély she seyde, and that anon, <sup>1591</sup>  
'Marie, I defie the falsé monk, Daun  
John !

I kepe nat of his tokenes never a deel !  
He took me certeyn gold, that woot I weel.  
What, yvel thedam on his monkés snowte !  
For, God it woot, I wende withouten doute  
That he hadde yeve it me bycause of yow,  
To doon therwith myn honour and my  
prow,

For cosynage, and eek for beelé cheere,  
That he hath had ful ofté tymés heere.  
But sith I se I stonde in this disjoynt, <sup>1601</sup>  
I wol answeére yow shortly to the poynt.  
Ye han mo slakkere dettours than am I,  
For I wol paye yow wel and redily  
Fro day to day, and if so be I faille,  
I am youre wyf, score it upon my taille,  
And I shal paye as soone as ever I may ;  
For by my trouthe, I have on myn array,  
And nat on wast, bistowéd every deel ;  
And for I have bistowéd it so weel <sup>1610</sup>  
For youre honóur, for Goddés sake, I seye,  
As be nat wrooth, but lat us laughe and  
pleye.

Ye shal my joly body have to wedde ;  
By God ! I wol nat paye yow but abedde.  
Foryive it me, myn owene spousé deere,  
Turne hiderward, and maketh bettre  
cheere !'

This marchant saugh ther was no  
remedie,

1549. *yow*, H<sup>4</sup> *hir*.1557. *Lumbardes*, Lombard money-dealers.



And for to chide it nere but greet folie,  
Sith that the thyng may nat amended be.  
'Now, wyf,' he seyde, 'and I foryeve  
it thee, 1620

But by thy lyf ne be namoore so large;  
Keepe bet oure good, this yeve I thee in  
charge.'

Thus endeth now my tale, and God us  
sende

Talyng'e ynough unto oure lyves ende.  
*Amen.*

*Bihould the murie wordes of the Hoost to  
the Shipman, and to the lady Prioressse*

'Wel seyde! by *corpus dominus*,  
quod our Hoost;

'Now long'e moote thou saill'e by the cost,  
Sire gentil maister, gentil maryneer!

God yeve this monk a thousand last  
quade yeer!

A ha, felawes, beth ware of swiche a jape!  
The monk putte in the mann's hood an  
ape, 1630

And in his wyv'e eek, by Seint Austyn!  
Draweth no monk's moore unto youre in.

'But now passe over, and lat us seke  
aboute,

Who shal now tell'e first of al this route  
Another tale'; and with that word he seyde,  
As curteisly as it had ben a mayde,

'My lady Prioress'e, by youre leve,  
So that I wiste I shold'e yow nat greve,  
I wold'e demen that ye tellen sholde

A tal'e next, if so were that ye wolde. 1640  
Now wol ye vouch'esauf, my lady deere?'

'Gladly,' quod she, and seyde as ye  
shal heere.

## PRIORESS'S TALE

### *The Prologe of the Prioresses Tale*

'O Lord, oure Lord, thy name how  
merveillous

<sup>1618.</sup> nere but greet, H<sup>6</sup> om. greet, H nas for nere.

<sup>1622.</sup> oure, H<sup>5</sup> my, Heng. thy.

<sup>1643.</sup> O Lord, oure Lord, etc., the beginning of Ps. viii.

Is in this larg'e world y-sprad,' quod she;  
'For noght oonly thy laud'e precious  
Parfourned is by men of dignitee,  
But by the mouth of children thy bountee'  
Parfourned is; for on the brest soukyng'e  
Somtyme shewen they thyn heriyng'e.

Wherefore, in laude as I best kan or may,  
Of thee, and of the white lyl'e flour, 1651  
Which that the bar and is a mayde alway,  
To telle a storie I wol do my labour;  
Nat that I may encreessen hir honour,  
For she hirself is honour and the roote  
Of bountee, next hir sone, and soul'es  
boote.

O mooder mayde! O mayde mooder fre!  
O bussh unbrent, brennyng'e in Moyses  
sighte!

That ravysedest doun fro the Deitee,  
Thurgh thyn humblesse, the Goost that in  
thalighte; 1660

Of whos vertu, whan He thyn herte lighte,  
Conceyv'd was the Fadr's sapience,  
Helpe me to telle it in thy reverence!

Lady, thy bountee, thy magnificence,  
Thy vertu, and thy grete humylitee,  
Ther may no tonge expresse in no science;  
For somtyme, lady, er men praye to thee,  
Thou goost biforn of thy benygnytee,  
And getest us the lyght, thurgh thy preyere,  
To gyden us unto thy Sone so deere. 1670

My konnyng is so wayk, O blisful queene,  
For to declare thy gret'e worthynesse,  
That I ne may the weight'e nat susteene;  
But as a child of twelf monthe oold or lesse,  
That kan unneth's any word expresse,  
Right so fare I, and therefore I yow preyere,  
Gydeh my song that I shal of yow seyere.'

### *Heere bigynneth The Prioresses Tale*

Ther was in Asye, in a greet citee,  
Among'e cristene folk, a Jewerye,

<sup>1667-1660.</sup> Imitated from Dante, *Paradiso* xxxiii. 16-18, a passage from which, or from some Latin original, Chaucer had already borrowed in the proem to the 'Tale of St. Cecilia,' assigned in the *Canterbury Tales* to the second Nun.

*The Prioresses Tale.* A poem of a Paris beggar-

Sustenéd by a lord of that contrec, 1680  
 For foule usure and lucre of vileynye  
 Hateful to Crist and to his compaignye ;  
 And thurgh the strete men myghté ride  
 or wende,  
 For it was free, and open at eyther ende.

A litel scole of cristen folk ther stood  
 Doun at the ferther ende, in which ther  
 were  
 Children an heepe, y-comen of Cristen  
 blood,  
 That lernéd in that scolé yeer by yere  
 Swich manere doctrine as men uséd  
 there,— 1689

This is to seyn, to syngen, and to rede,  
 As smalé children doon in hire childhede.

Among these children was a wydwe's sone,  
 A litel clergeoun, seven yeer of age,  
 That day by day to scolé was his wone ;  
 And eek also, where as he saugh thymage  
 Of Cristés mooder, he hadde in usage,  
 As hym was taught, to knele adoun and  
 seye

His *Ave Marie*, as he goth by the weye.

Thus hath this wydwe hir litel sone  
 y-taught 1699  
 Oure blisful lady, Cristés mooder deere,  
 To worshipe ay, and he forgate it naught,  
 For sely child wol alday sooné lecre,—  
 But ay whan I remembre on this mateere,  
 Seint Nicholas stant ever in my presence,  
 For he so yong to Crist dide reverence.

This litel child his litel book lernýnge,  
 As he sat in the scole at his prymer,  
 He *Alma redemptoris* herdé syngé,

boy murdered by a Jew for singing the anthem  
 'Alma Redemptoris Mater,' is among the minor  
 poems of the Vernon MS. and has been printed  
 by the Chaucer and Early English Text Societies.  
 In a French analogue, also printed by the Chaucer  
 Society, the boy sings a 'Gaude, Maria.'  
 1681. *lucre of vileynye*, glossed 'turpe lucrum,'  
 E<sup>2</sup>: H *filonye*.

1699. *sone*, H<sup>5</sup> *child*.

1702. The line quotes an old proverb.

1704. *Seint Nicholas*, who fasted on Wednes-  
 days and Fridays while at his mother's breast.

1708. *Alma redemptoris [mater]*. Two hymns  
 to the B. Virgin, beginning in this way, are still  
 extant.

As children lernéd hire antiphoner ;  
 And, as he dorste, he drough hym ner  
 and ner, 1710  
 And herkned ay the wordés and the noote,  
 Til he the firsté vers koude al by rote.

Noght wiste he what this Latyn was to  
 seye,  
 For he so yong and tendre was of age ;  
 But on a day his felawe gan he preye  
 Texpounden hym this song in his langage,  
 Or telle him why this song was in usage ;  
 This preyde he hym to construe and  
 declare  
 Ful often time upon his knowés bare.

His felawe, which that elder was than  
 he, 1720  
 Answerde hym thus : ' This song I have  
 herd seye

Was makéd of ourc blisful lady free,  
 Hire to saluc, and eek hire for to preye  
 To been oure help and socour whan we  
 deye ;

I kan na moore expounde in this mateere,  
 I lerné song, I kan but smal grammeere.'

' And is this song makéd in reverence  
 Of Cristés mooder ? ' seyde this innocent.  
 ' Now certés, I wol do my diligence  
 To konne it al, er Cristémasse is went, 1730  
 Though that I for my prymer shal be shent,  
 And shal be beten thriés in an houre,  
 I wol it konne oure lady for to honoure !'

His felawe taughte hym homward  
 prively  
 Fro day to day, til he koude it by rote,  
 And thanne he song it wel and boldély  
 Froword toward, acordynge with the note.  
 Twiés a day it passéd thurgh his throte,  
 To scoléward and homward whan he  
 wente ; 1739  
 On Cristés mooder set was his entente.

As I have seyde, thurgh-out the Jewerie  
 This litel child, as he cam to and fro,  
 Ful murily than wolde he syngé and crie  
 O *Alma redemptoris* evermo.  
 The swetnesse hath his herté percéd so

Of Cristès mooder, that to hire to preye  
He kan nat stynte of syngyng by the weye.

Oure firstè foo, the serpent Sathanas,  
That hath in Jewés herte his waspès nest,  
Up swal, and seide, 'O Hebrayk peple,  
allas ! 1750

Is this to yow a thyng that is honèst  
That swich a boy shal walken as hym lest  
In youre despit, and syng of swich  
sentence,  
Which is agayn youre lawès reverence ?'

Fro thennés forth the Jewés han conspired  
This innocent out of this world to chace.  
An homycidè ther-to han they hyred,  
That in an aleye hadde a privee place ;  
And as the child gan forby for to pace,  
This curséd Jew hym hente and heeld  
hym faste, 1760  
And kitte his throte, and in a pit hym caste.

I seye that in a wardrobe they hym threwe  
Where as thise Jewés purgen hire entraille.  
O curséd folk, O Herodés al newe !  
What may youre yvel ententè yow availle ?  
Mordre wol out, certèyn, it wol nat faille,  
And namely ther thonour of God shal  
sprede.  
The blood out-crieth on youre curséd dede.

O martir, sowded to virginitee ! 1769  
Now maystow syngen, folwyng ever in oon  
The whitè Lamb celestial, quod she,  
Of which the grete Evaungelist, Seint John,  
In Pathmos wroot, which seith that they  
that goon  
Biforn this Lamb, and syng a song al  
newe,  
That never fleshy women they ne knewe.

This pourè wydweawaiteth al that nyght  
After hir litel child, but he cam noght,

1754. *yourre*, E<sup>4</sup> *oure*.  
1771. *quod she*. This is, I believe, the only instance in the *Canterbury Tales* in which Chaucer reminds us that we are reading the narrative of a narrative. The words show that the Tale was either written or revised after the idea of the *Canterbury Tales* had been conceived.

For which, as soone as it was dayès lyght,  
With facè pale of drede and bisy thoght,  
She hath at scole and ellès-where hym  
soght ; 1780

Til finally she gan so fer espie  
That he last seyn was in the Jewerie.

With moodrès pitee in hir brest enclosed  
She gooth, as she were half out of hir  
mynde,

To every placè where she hath supposed  
By liklihedè hir litel child to fynde ;  
And ever on Cristès mooder, meeke and  
kynde,

She cride, and attè lastè thus she wroghte,  
Among the curséd Jewés she hym soghte.

She frayneth and she preyeth pitously, 1790  
To every Jew that dwelte in thilkè place,  
To telle hire if hir child wente oght forby.  
Theyseydè ' Nay' ; but Jhesu, of his grace,  
Yaf in hir thoght inwith a litel space,  
That in that place after hir sone she cryde,  
Where he was casten in a pit bisyde.

O gretè God that parfournest thy laude  
By mouth of innocentz, lo, heere thy  
myght !

This gemme of chastitè, this emeraude,  
And eek of martirdom the ruby bright, 1800  
Ther he, with throte y-korven, lay upright,  
He *Alma redemptoris* gan to syngè,  
So loude, that all the placè gan to ryngè !

The cristene folk, that thurgh the stretè  
wente,

In comen, for to wondre upon this thyng ;  
And hastily they for the provost sente.  
He cam anon, withouten tarryng,  
And herieth Crist that is of hevene kyng,  
And eek his mooder, honour of mankynde,  
And after that the Jewés leet he bynde.

This child, with pitous lamentacioun,  
Up-taken was, syngyngè his song alway ;  
And with honour of greet processiou  
They carien hym unto the nexte abbay.  
His mooder swownyngè by his beerè lay ;  
Unnethè myghte the peplè that was there  
This newè Rachel bryngè fro his bere.

With torment, and with shameful deeth  
 echon,  
 This provost dooth the Jewés for to sterve,  
 That of this mordrè wiste, and that anon;  
 He noldè no swich cursednesse observe;  
 'Yvele shal have that yvele wol deserve';  
 Therefore with wildè hors he dide hem  
 drawe,  
 And after that he heng hem by the lawe.

Upon his beere ay lith this innocent  
 Biforn the chief auter, whil massè laste,  
 And after that the abbot with his covent  
 Han sped hem for to burien hym ful faste;  
 And when they hooly water on hym caste,  
 Yet spak this child, whan spreynd was  
 hooly water, 1830  
 And song, *O Alma redemptoris mater!*

This abbot, which that was an hooly  
 man,  
 As monkès been, or ellès oghtè be,  
 This yongè child to conjure he bigan,  
 And seyde, 'O deerè child, I halsè thee,  
 In vertu of the hooly Trinitee,  
 Tel me what is thy causè for to syngè,  
 Sith that thy throte is kut, to my  
 semyngè?'

'My throte is kut unto my nekkè boon,  
 Seydè this child, 'and as by wey of kynde  
 I sholde have dyed, ye, longè tyme agon;  
 But Jhesu Crist, as ye in bookès fynde,  
 Wil that his glorie laste and be in mynde,  
 And, for the worship of his mooder deere,  
 Yet may I syngè *O Alma* loude and cleere.

'This welle of mercy, Cristès mooder  
 sweete,  
 I loved alwey, as after my konnyngè,  
 And whan that I my lyf sholdè forlete,  
 To me she cam, and bad me for to syngè  
 This antheme verrailly in my deyngè,  
 As ye han herd, and whan that I hadde  
 songe 1851  
 Me thoughte she leyde a greyn upon my  
 tonge:

Wherfore I syngè, and syngè moot certeyn  
 In honour of that blisful mayden free,

Til fro my tonge of-taken is the greyn;  
 And after that thus seyde she to me,  
 "My litel child, now wol I fecchè thee  
 Whan that the greyn is fro thy tonge  
 y-take;  
 Be nat agast, I wol thee nat forsake."

This hooly monk, this abbot, hym  
 meene I, 1860  
 His tonge out caughte and took away the  
 greyn,  
 And he yaf up the goost ful softely.  
 And whan this abbot hadde this wonder  
 seyn,  
 His saltè teeris trikked doun as reyn,  
 And gruf he fil, al plat upon the grounde,  
 And stille he lay as he had ben y-bounde.

The covent eek lay on the pavèment,  
 Wepyngè and heryng Cristès mooder  
 deere,  
 And after that they ryse and forth been  
 went,  
 And tooken away this martir from his  
 beere; 1870  
 And in a tombe of marbul stonès cleere,  
 Enclosen they his litel body sweete:  
 Ther he is now, God leve us for to meete!

O yongè Hugh of Lyncoln, slayn also  
 With cursèd Jewes, as it is notàble,  
 For it is but a litel while ago,  
 Preye eek for us, we synful folk unstable,  
 That of his mercy God, so merciàble,  
 On us his gretè mercy multiplie  
 For reverence of his mooder, Marie.  
*Amen.* 1880

*Bihold the murye wordes of the Hoost to  
 Chaucer*

Whan seyde was al this miracle, every  
 man  
 As sobre was that wonder was to se,  
 Til that oure Hoostè japen tho bigan,  
 And thanne at erst he lookèd upon me,

1868. *herying*, E<sup>2</sup> *heryen*.

1871. *tombe*, E *temple*.

1874. *yonge Hugh of Lyncoln*, said to have  
 been crucified by the Jews in 1255.

And seyde thus: 'What man, artow?'  
 quod he;  
 'Thou lookest as thou woldest fynde an  
 hare;  
 For ever upon the ground I se thee stare.

Approchē neer, and looke up murily.  
 Now war yow, sires, and lat this man  
 have place; 1889  
 He in the waast is shape as wel as I;  
 This were a popet in an arm tenbrace  
 For any womman, smal and fair of face.  
 He semeth elvyssh by his contenance,  
 For unto no wight dooth he daliaunce.

Sey now somewhat, syn oother folk han  
 sayd;

Telle us a tale of myrthe, and that anon.'  
 'Hoostē,' quod I, 'ne beth nat yvele  
 apayd,

For oother talē certēs kan I noon,  
 But of a rym I lerned longe agoon.'  
 'Ye, that is good,' quod he, 'now  
 shul we heere 1900

Som deyntee thyng, me thynketh by his  
 cheere!'

## CHAUCER'S TALE OF SIR THOPAS

*Heere bigynneth Chaucers Tale of  
 Thopas*

### THE FIRST FIT

Listeth, lordes, in good entent,  
 And I wol tellē verrayment  
 Of myrthe and of solas;  
 Al of a knyght was fair and gent  
 In bataille and in tourneyment,  
 His name was sire Thopas.

*Chaucer's Tale of Sir Thopas.* 'The Rime of Sir Thopas was clearly intended to ridicule the "palpable gross" fictions of the common timer of that age, and still more, perhaps, the meanness of their language and versification. It is full of phrases taken from *Isumbras*, *i Beaus Desconnus*, and other romances of the same style, which are still extant' (Yrwhitt).

Y-born he was in fer contree,  
 In Flaundrés, al biyonde the see,  
 At Poperyng, in the place; 1910  
 His fader was a man ful free,  
 And lord he was of that contree,  
 As it was Goddēs grace.

Sire Thopas wax a doghty swayn;  
 Whit was his face as payndemayn,  
 His lippēs rede as rose;  
 His rode is lyk scarlet in grayn,  
 And I yow telle in good certáyn  
 He hadde a semely nose.

His heer, his berd, was lyk saffroun,  
 That to his girdel raughte adoun; 1921  
 His shoon of cordewane.

Of Bruggēs were his hosen broun,  
 His robē was of syklatoun  
 That costē many a jane.

He koudē hunte at wildē deer,  
 And ride an haukyng for river  
 With grey goshawk on honde;  
 Ther-to he was a good archeer;  
 Of wraslyng was ther noon his peer,  
 Ther any ram shal stonde. 1931

Ful many a maydē bright in bour  
 They moornē for hym, *paramour*,  
 Whan hem were bet to slepe;  
 But he was chaast, and no lechour,  
 And sweete as is the brenbul flour  
 That bereth the redē hepe.

And so bifel upon a day,  
 For sothe, as I yow tellē may,  
 Sire Thopas wolde out ride; 1940  
 He worth upon his steedē gray,  
 And in his hand a launcēgay,  
 A long swerd by his side.

He priketh thurgh a fair forēst  
 Ther-inne is many a wildē best,  
 Ye, bothē bukke and hare;  
 And as he priketh north and est,  
 I telle it yow, hym hadde almost  
 Bitidde a sory care.

1910. *Poperyng*, not far from Ostend.  
 1927. *for river*, i.e. by the river-side.

Ther spryngen herbès grete and smale,  
The lycorys and cetèwalc 1951  
And many a clowe-gylofre,  
And notémuge to putte in ale,  
Wheither it be moyste or stale,  
Or for to leye in cofre.

The briddès syng, it is no nay,  
The sparhawk and the papéjay,  
That joye it was to heere.  
The thrustelcok made eek hir lay,  
The wodédowve upon the spray 1960  
She sang ful loude and cleere.

Sire Thopas fil in love-longynge,  
Al whan he herde the thrustel syng,  
And pryked as he were wood ;  
His fairè steede in his prikyng  
So swattè that men myghte him wrynge,  
His sydès were al blood.

Sire Thopas eek so wery was  
For prikyng, on the softè gras,—  
So fiers was his corage,— 1970  
That doun he leyde him in that plas  
To make his steedè som solas,  
And yaf hym good forage.

‘O seintè Marie, *benedicite!*  
What eyleth this love at me  
To byndè me so soore?  
Me dremèd al this nyght, *pardee*,  
An Elf-queene shal my lemman be  
And slepe under my goore.

‘An Elf-queene wol I love, y-wis, 1980  
For in this world no womman is  
Worthy to be my make  
In towne.

Alle othere women I forsake,  
And to an Elf-queene I me take  
By dale and eek by downe.’

Into his sadel he clamb anon,  
And priketh over stile and stoon  
An Elf-queene for tespye ;  
Til he so longe hadde riden and goon 1990  
That he foond in a pryvè woon  
The contree of Fairye,

1963. *thrustel*, H *briddes*.

So wilde ;  
For in that contree was ther noon  
That to him dorstè ryde or goon,  
Neither wyf ne childe ;

Til that ther cam a greet geant,  
His namè was sire Olifaunt,  
A perilous man of dede.  
He seyde, ‘Child, by Termagaunt ! 2000  
But if thou prike out of myn haunt,  
Anon I sle thy steede  
With mace !  
Heere is the queene of Fairye,  
With harpe, and pipe, and symphonye,  
Dwellynge in this place.’

The child seyde, ‘Al-so moote I thee !  
Tomorwe wol I meete with thee,  
Whan I have myn armoure.  
And yet I hopè, *par ma fay*, 2010  
That thou shalt with this launcégay  
Abyen it ful sourc ;  
Thy mawe  
Shal I percen, if I may,  
Er it be fully pryme of day,  
For heere thow shalt be slawe.’

Sire Thopas drow abak ful faste ;  
This geant at hym stonès caste  
Out of a fel staf-slyng ;  
But faire escapeth sire Thopas ; 2020  
And al it was thurgh Goddès gras,  
And thurgh his fair beryngè.

Yet listeth, lordès, to my tale  
Murier than the nightyngale,  
For now I wol yow rowne  
How sir Thopas, with sydès smale,  
Prikyng over hill and dale,  
Is comen agayn to towne.

His murie men comanded he  
To make hym bothè game and glee, 2030  
For nedès moste he fighte  
With a geant, with hevedes three,  
For *paramour* and jolitee  
Of oon that shoon ful brighte.

1995. *That to him*, etc., from II only ; B  
omit.

2005. *pipe*, H *lute*.

'Do come,' he seyde, 'my mynstrales,  
 And geestours for to tellen tales,  
 Anon in myn armyngē;  
 Of rómances that been roiales,  
 Of Popés and of Cardinales,  
 And eek of love-likyngē.' 2040

They fette hym first the sweeté wyn  
 And mede eek in a mazelyn,  
 And roial spicerye;  
 And gyngēbreed that was ful fyn,  
 And lycorys, and eek comyn,  
 With sugre that is so trye.

He didé next his whité leere  
 Of clooth of laké, fyn and cleere,  
 A breech and eek a sherte;  
 And next his sherte an akétoun, 2050  
 And over that an haubergeoun  
 For Percyngē of his herte;

And over that a fyn hawberk,  
 Was al y-wroght of Jewés werk,  
 Ful strong it was of plate;  
 And over that his cote-armour,  
 As whit as is a lilye flour,  
 In which he wol debate.

His sheeld was al of gold so reed,  
 And ther-inne was a borés heed, 2060  
 A charbocle bisyde;  
 And there he swoor, on ale and breed,  
 How that the geaunt shal be deed,  
 'Bitydē what bityde!'

Hise jambeux were of quyrboilly,  
 His swerdés shethe of yvory,  
 His helm of laton bright;  
 His sadel was of rewel boon;  
 His brydel as the sonnē shoon,  
 Or as the moonē light. 2070

His spere it was of fyn ciprees,  
 That bodeth werre, and no-thing pees,  
 The heed ful sharpe y-grounde;  
 His steedé was al dappull-gray,  
 It gooth an ambil in the way  
 Ful softely and rounde

2041. *fette*, E. *sette*.2046. *so*, om. H<sup>6</sup>.

In londe.  
 Loo, lordés myne, heere is a Fit;  
 If ye wol any moore of it  
 To telle it wol I fonde. 2080

## THE SECOND FIT

Now holde youre mouth, *par charitee*,  
 Bothé knyght and lady free,  
 And herkneth to my spelle;  
 Of batailles and of chivalry,  
 And of ladyés love-drury,  
 Anon I wol yow telle.

Men speken of romauns of prys,—  
 Of Hornchild, and of Ypotys,  
 Of Beves and of sir Gy,  
 Of sir Lybeux and Pleyn-damour; 2090  
 But sir Thopas he bereth the flour  
 Of roial chivalry!

His goodé steede al he bistrood,  
 And forth upon his wey he rood,  
 As sparcle out of the bronde;  
 Upon his creest he bar a tour,  
 And ther-inne stiked a lillie flour,—  
 God shilde his cors fro shonde!

And for he was a knyght auntrous,  
 He noldé slepen in noon hous, 2100  
 But ligger in his hooode;  
 His brighté helm was his wonger,  
 And by hym baiteth his dextrer  
 Of herbés fyne and goode;

Hym self drank water of the well,  
 As dide the knyght sire Percyvell,  
 So worthy under wede;  
 Til on a day——

*Heere the Hoost stynteth Chaucer of his  
 Tale of Thopas*

'Na moore of this, for Goddés  
 dignitee!' 2109

2085. *And of*, etc., H reads *of lady's love and dreweye*.2089. *of sir Gy*, H<sup>5</sup> om. *of*.2090. *sir Lybeux*, Li biaux desconneus, or Libius Disconius, 'the fair unknown.'2094. *rood*, H<sup>6</sup> *glood*.

Quod ouré Hosté, 'for thou makest me  
So wery of thy verray lewédnesse  
That, also wisly God my soulé blesse,  
Min erés aken of thy drasty speche.  
Now swich a rym the devel I biteche!  
This may wel be rym dogerel,' quod he.

'Why so?' quod I; 'why wiltow  
letté me

Moore of my talé than another man,  
Syn that it is the besté ryme I kan?'

'By God,' quod he, 'for pleynly, at  
a word,

Thy drasty rymyng is nat worth a toord;  
Thou doost noght ellés but despendest  
tyme;

2121

Sire, at o word, thou shalt no lenger  
ryme.

Lat se wher thou kanst tellen aught in  
geeste,

Or telle in prosé somewhat, at the leeste,  
In which ther be som murthe, or some  
doctryne.'

'Gladly,' quod I, 'by Goddés sweeté  
pyne!

I wol yow telle a litel thyng in prose  
That oghté liken yow, as I suppose,  
Or elles, certés, ye been to daungerous.

It is a moral talé vertuous,  
Al be it told somtyme in sondry wyse  
Of sundry folk, as I shal yow devyse.

2130

'As thus; ye woot that every  
Evaungelist

That telleth us the peyne of Jhesu Crist  
Ne seith nat alle thyng as his felawe dooth;  
But nathélees hir sentence is al sooth,  
And alle acorden as in hire sentence,  
Al be ther in hir tellyng difference;

For somme of hem seyn moore, and  
sommé lesse,

Whan they his pitous passioun expresse,—  
I meene of Marké, Mathew, Luc and  
John,—

2141

But doutélees hir sentence is all oon.

'Therefore, lordyngés alle, I yow biseche  
If that ye thyнке I varie as in my speche,  
As thus, though that I tellé somewhat moore  
Of proverbes, than ye han herd bifoore

2118. ryme, E take.

2131. told, E take.

2139. lesse, E<sup>4</sup> seyn lesse.

Comprehended in this litel tretys heere,  
To enforcé with theffect of my mateere;  
And though I nat the samé wordés seye,  
As ye han herd, yet to yow alle I preye,  
Blameth me nat, for as in my sentence 2151  
Ye shul not fynden moché difference  
Fró the sentence of this tretys lyte  
After the which this murye tale I write;  
And therefore herkneth what that I shal  
seye,  
And lat me tellen al my tale, I preye.'

## CHAUCER'S TALE OF MELIBEUS

### *Heere bigynneth Chaucer's Tale of Melibee*

A yong man called Melibeus, myghty  
and riche, bigat upon his wyf, that  
called was Prudence, a doghter which  
that called was Sophie.

Upon a day bifel, that he for his  
desport is went into the feeldes, hym  
to pleye; his wyf and eek his doghter  
hath he left inwith his hous, of which the  
dores weren fast y-shette. [2160] Thre of  
his olde foes han it espyed, and setten  
laddres to the walles of his hous, and by  
the wyndowes been entred, and betten his  
wyf, and wounded his doghter with fyve  
mortal woundes in fyve sondry places,—  
this is to seyn, in hir feet, in hir handes,  
in hir erys, in hir nose, and in hire mouth,  
—and leften hire for deed, and wenten  
away.

Whan Melibeus returned was into his  
hous and saugh al this meschief, he, lyk a  
mad man, rentyng his clothes, gan to  
wepe and crie.

Prudence, his wyf, as ferforth as she  
dorste, bisoghte hym of his wepyng for

2154. murye, H litel.

*Chaucer's Tale of Melibee.* This very dul  
dissertation is taken from Jean de Meung's  
French version of the *Liber Consolationis et  
Consilii* of Albertano of Brescia, composed ca.  
1238.

2157. a doghter which that called was Sophie  
the first of many decasyllabic cadences in the  
early pages of Chaucer's prose.



to stynte ; [2165] but nat for-ty he gan to crie and wepen ever lenger the moore.

This noble wyf Prudence remembered hire upon the sentence of Ovide, in his book that cleped is The Remedie of Love, where as he seith, 'He is a fool that destourbeth the mooder to wepen in the leeth of hire child, til she have wept hir ille, as for a certein tyme, and thanne hal man doon his diligence with amiable vordes hire to reconforte, and preyen hire of hir wepyng for to stynte.' For which reson this noble wyf Prudence suffred hir housbonde for to wepe and crie as for a certein space ; [2170] and whan she saugh hir tyme, she seyde hym in this wise : 'Allas, my lord,' quod she, 'why make ye yourself for to be lyk a fool ! For sothe it aperteneth nat to a wys man to maken swiche a sorwe. Yourre doghter with the grace of God shal warisshe and scape ; and, al were it so that she right ow were deed, ye ne oughte nat, as for hir deeth, yourself to destroye. Senek seith, "The wise man shal nat take to greet disconfort for the deeth of his children, [2175] but, certes, he sholde suffren it in pacience as wel as he abideth the deeth of his owene propre persone."'

This Melibeus answerde anon, and seyde, 'What man,' quod he, 'sholde this wepyng stente that hath so greet a cause for to wepe ? Jhesu Crist, oure lord, hymself wepte for the deeth of azarus hys freend.'

Prudence answerde, 'Certes, wel I noot attemptee wepyng is no thyng deffended to hym that sorweful is amonges folk in sorwe, but it is rather counted hym to wepe.

'The Apostle Paul unto the Romayns writeth, "Man shal rejoysse with hem that taken joye, and wepen with swich folk that wepen"; [2180] but though attemptee wepyng be y-graunted, outrageous wepyng certes is deffended. Measure of

wepyng sholde be conserved, after the loore that techeth us Senek : "Whan that thy frend is deed," quod he, "lat nat thyne eyen to moyste been of teeris, ne to mucche drye ; although the teeris come to thyne eyen, lat hem nat falle, and whan thou hast for-goon thy freend, do diligence to gete another freend, and this is moore wysdom than for to wepe for thy freend which that thou hast lorn, for ther-inne is no boote"; and therefore, if ye governe yow by sapience, put away sorwe out of youre herte. [2185] Remembre yow that Jhesus Syrak seith, "A man that is joyous, and glad in herte, it hym conserveth florissyng in his age, but soothly sorweful herte maketh hise bones drye." He seith eek thus, that sorwe in herte sleeth ful many a man. Salomon seith that "right as motthes in the shepes flees anoyeth to the clothes, and the smale wormes to the tree, right so anoyeth sorwe to the herte"; wherefore us oghte, as wel in the deeth of oure children as in the losse of othere goodes temporels, have pacience.

'Remembre yow up on the pacient Job. Whan he hadde lost his children and his temporeel substance, and in his body endured and receyved ful many a grevous tribulacion, yet seyde he thus : [2190] "Oure Lord hath yeve it me ; oure Lord hath biraft it me ; right as oure Lord hath wold, right so it is doon ; blessed be the name of oure Lord !"

To these foreseide thynges answerde Melibeus unto his wyf Prudence : 'Alle thy wordes,' quod he, 'been sothe, and therwith profitable, but trewely myn herte is troubled with this sorwe so greuously that I noot what to doone.'

'Lat calle,' quod Prudence, 'thy trewe freendes alle, and thy lynage whiche that been wise. Telleth youre cas and

2180. *conserved*, E<sup>6</sup> *considered*, but the Latin text has *servandus*.

2180. *Senek*, Ep. lxxiii. 1 and 9.

2185. *Jhesus Syrak*. A quotation from Ecclus. xxx. 25 is here omitted. The text occurs in Prov. xvii. 22.

2190. *Telleth youre cas*, H *telleth hem your grevaunce*.

2165. *Ovide*, in his book: *De Rem. Am.* i. 1-30.

2170. *Senek seith*: Ep. lxxiv. 20. This and other references are taken from Dr. Thor Sundby's edition of the Latin text (Chauc. Soc. 1873).

herkneht what they seye in conseillyng, and yow governe after hire sentence. Salomon seith, "Werk alle thy thynges by conseil, and thou shalt never repente."

Thanne by the conseil of his wyf Prudence this Melibeus leet callen a greet congregacioun of folk, [2195] as surgiens, phisiciens, olde folk and yonge, and somme of his olde enemys reconciled, as by hir semblaunt, to his love and into his grace, and therewithal ther comen somme of his neighebores that didnen hym reverence moore for drede than for love, as it happeth ofte. Ther comen also ful many subtille flatereres, and wise advocatz, lerned in the lawe.

And whan this folk togidre assembled weren, this Melibeus in sorweful wise shewed hem his cas, and by the manere of his speche it semed wel that in herte he baar a cruell ire, redy to doon vengeance upon his foes, and sodeynly desired that the werre sholde bigynne, [2200] but natheles, yet axed he hire conseil upon this matiere.

A surgien, by licence and assent of swiche as weren wise, up roos and to Melibeus seyde as ye may heere: 'Sire,' quod he, 'as to us surgiens aperteneth that we do to every wight the beste that we kan, where as we been withholden, and to oure pacientz that we do no damage; wherfore it happeth many tyme and ofte that whan twey men han everich wounded oother, oon same surgien heeleth hem bothe; wherfore unto oure art it is nat pertinent to notice werre, no parties to supporte. [2205] But certes, as to the warisshynge of youre doghter, al be it so that she perilously be wounded, we shullen do so ententif bisynesse fro day to nyght that with the grace of God she shal be hool and sound as soone as is possible.'

Almost right in the same wise the phisiciens answerden, save that they seyden a fewe wordes moore; that right

2190. *thou shalt never repente, H the thar never revee.*

2190. *of folk, H of peple.*

as maladies been cured by hir contraries, right so shul men warisshen werre by vengeance.

His neighebores ful of envye, his feyned freendes that semeden reconciled, and his flatereres maden semblant of wepyng, and empeireden and agreggeden muchel of this matiere, in preisyng greetly Melibee, of myght, of power, of riches, and of freendes, despisyng the power of his adversaries, [2210] and seiden outrely that he anon sholde wreken hym on his foes, and bigynne werre.

Up roos thanne an advocat that was wys, by leve and by conseil of othere that were wise, and seide, 'Lordynges, the nede for which we been assembled in this place is a ful hevy thyng, and an heigh matiere, by cause of the wrong and of the wikkednesse that hath been doon, and eek by resoun of the grete damages that in tyme comynge been possible to fallen for this same cause, and eek by resoun of the grete riches and power of the parties bothe, [2215] for the whiche resouns it were a ful greet peril to erren in this matiere; wherfore, Melibeus, this is oure sentence; we conseilte yow aboven alle thyng, that right anon thou do thy diligence in keypyng of thy propre persone, in swich a wise that thou wante noon espie, ne wacche, thy body for to save; and after that we conseilte that in thyng thou sette sufficeant garnisoun, so that they may as wel thy body as thyng defende; but certes, for to moeve werre, or sodeynly for to doon vengeance, we may nat demen in so litel tyme that it were profitable. Wherfore we axen leyser and espace to have deliberacioun in this cas to deme, [2220] for the commune proverbe seith thus: "He that soone deemeth, soone shal repente"; and eek men seyn that thilke juge is wys that soone understandeth a matiere and juggeth by leyser; for, al be it so that alle taryng be anoyful, algates it is nat to repreve in yevynge of juggement, ne

2205. *empeireden, H appaired.*

2210. *foes, and bigynne, H adversaries be bigynnyng of.*

in vengeance takyng, whan it is sufficent and resonable; and that shewed oure Lord Jhesu Crist by ensample, for whan that the womman that was taken in a woutrie was brought in his presence to knowen what sholde be doon with hire persone,—al be it so that he wiste wel hymself what that he wolde answer,—yet ne wolde he nat answer sodeynly, but he wolde have deliberacioun, and in the ground he wroot twies; and by these causes we axen deliberacioun, and we shal thanne, by the grace of God, conseille thee thyng that shal be profitable.'

[2225] Up stirten thanne the yonge folk atones, and the mooste partie of that compaignye scorned the wise olde men, and bigonnen to make noyse, and seyden that 'Right so as, whil that iren is hoot, men sholden smyte, right so men sholde wreken hir wronges while that they been fresshe and newe'; and with loud voys they criden, 'Werre! werre!'

Up roos tho oon of these olde wise, and with his hand made contenance that men sholde holden hem stille, and yeven hym audience.

'Lordynges,' quod he, 'ther is ful many a man that crieth "Werre! werre!" that woot ful litel what werre amounteth. Werre at his bigynnyng hath so greet an entryng and so large, that every wight may entre whan hym liketh and lightly fynde werre; [2230] but certes, what ende hat shal ther-of bifalle it is nat light to knowe; for soothly, whan that werre is ones bigonne ther is ful many a child unborn of his mooder that shal sterve yong by cause of that ilke werre, or elles yve in sorwe, and dye in wrecchednesse; and therefore, er that any werre bigynne, men moste have greet conseil and greet liberacioun.'

And whan this olde man wende to enforchen his tale by resons, wel ny alle atones bigonne they to rise for to breken his tale, and beden hym ful ofte his vordes for to abregge; for soothly, he hat precheth to hem that listen nat heeren his vordes, his sermon hem

anoieth; [2235] for Jhesus Syrak seith, that 'musik in wepyng is a noyous thyng'; this is to seyn, as muche availleth to speken bifore folk to whiche his speche anoyeth, as doth to syng biforn hym that wepeth. And this wise man saugh that hym wanted audience, and al shamefast he sette hym doun agayn; for Salomon seith, 'Ther as thou ne mayst have noon audience, enforce thee nat to speke.'

'I see wel,' quod this wise man, 'that the commune proverbe is sooth, "That good conseil wanteth whan it is moost nede."'

Yet hadde this Melibeus in his conseil many folk that prively in his eere conseilled hym certeyn thyng, and conseilled hym the contrarie in general audience.

[2240] Whan Melibeus hadde herd that the gretteste partie of his conseil weren accorded that he sholde maken werre, anon, he consented to hir conseillyng and fully affermed hire sentence.

Thanne dame Prudence, whan that she saugh how that hir housbonde shoope hym for to wreken hym on hise foes, and to bigynne werre, she in ful humble wise, whan she saugh hir tyme, seide to hym these wordes.

'My lord,' quod she, 'I yow biseche, as hertely as I dar and kan, ne haste yow nat to faste, and for alle gerdons, as yeveth me audience; for Piers Alfonse seith, "Who so that dooth to that oother good or harm, haste thee nat to quiten it; for in this wise thy freend wole abyde, and thyn enemy shal the lenger lyve in drede." The proverbe seith, "He hasteth wel that wisely kan abyde, and in wikked haste is no profit."'

[2245] This Melibee answerde unto his wyf Prudence, 'I purpose nat,' quod he, 'to werke by thy conseil, for many causes and resouns; for certes, every wight wolde holde me thanne a fool.

2235. *is a noyous thyng*: 'Musica in luctu est importuna narratio' (Ecclus. xxii. 6).

2240. *on hise foes, H of his enemyes.*

2240. *Piers Alfonse seith: Disciplina Clericalis, xxv. 15.*

This is to seyn, if I, for thy conseillyng, wolde chaungen thynges that been ordeyned and affermed by so many wyse. Secoundly, I seye that alle wommen been wikke, and noon good of hem alle; for, "Of a thousand men," seith Salomon, "I foond a good man, but certes, of alle wommen, good womman foond I nevere"; and also, certes, if I governed me by thy conseil, it sholde seme that I hadde yeve to thee over me the maistrie, and God forbede that it so were! for Jhesus Syrak seith, that if the wyf have maistrie she is contrarious to hir housbonde; [2250] and Salomon seith, "Never in thy lyf, to thy wyf, ne to thy child, ne to thy freend, ne yeve no power over thyself, for bettre it were that thy children aske of thy persone thynges that hem nedeth than thou be thyself in the handes of thy children"; and if I wolde werke by thy conseillyng, certes, my conseillyng moste som tyme be secree til it were tyme that it moste be knowe, and this ne may nocht be. For it is written, "The janglerie of women can hide thyngis that they wot nought"; furthermore, the philosophre saith, "In wykke conseyl women venyquyse men"; and for these reasons I ought not to make use of thy counsel.'

Whanne dame Prudence, ful debonairly and with greet pacience, hadde herd al that hir housbonde liked for to scye, thanne axed she of hym licence for to speke, and seyde in this wise: [2255] 'My lord,' quod she, 'as to youre firste resoun, certes it may lightly been answered; for I seye that it is no folie to chaunge conseil whan the thyng is chaunged, or elles whan the thyng semeth ootherweyes than it was biforn; and mooreover, I seye that though ye han sworn and bihight to perfourne youre emprise, and nathelees ye weyve to perfourne thilke same emprise by juste cause, men sholde nat seyn therfore that

2250. *For it is written . . . thy counsel*, om. EH<sup>3</sup>, supplied from Camb. MS. in accordance with Latin and French. The quotations are from Seneca, *Controv.* ii. 13, 12, and Publilius Syrus, *Sent.* 324.

ye were a lier ne forsworn, for the book seith that the wise man maketh no lesyng whan he turneth his corage to the bettre, and al be it so that youre emprise be established and ordeyned by greet multitude of folk, yet thar ye nat accomplice thilke ordinaunce but yow like; for the trouthe of thynges and the profit been rather founden in fewe folk that been wise and ful of resoun, than by greet multitude of folk ther every man crieth and clatereth what that hym liketh; soothly, swich multitude is nat honeste.

[2260] 'As to the seconde resoun whereas ye seyn that alle wommen been wikke; save youre grace, certes ye despisen alle wommen in this wyse, and "he that al despiseth al displeseth," as seith the book; and Senec seith, that who so wole have sapience shal no man despise, but he shal gladly techen the science that he kan withouten presumpcioun or pride, and swiche thynges as he nought ne kan he shal nat been ashamed to lerne hem and enquere of lasse folk than hymself; and, sire, that ther hath been many a good womman may lightly be preved, for certes, sire, oure Lord Jhesu Crist wolde never have descended to be born of a womman, if alle wommen hadden ben wikke; [2265] and after that, for the grete bountee that is in wommen, oure Lord Jhesu Crist, whan he was risen fro deeth to lyve, appeered rather to a womman than to his Apostles; and though that Salomon seith that he ne foond never womman good, it folweth nat therfore that alle womman ben wikke, for though that he ne foond no good womman, certes, ful many another man hath founden many a womman ful good and trewe; or elles, per aventure, the entente of Salomon was this, that, as in sovereyn bounte, he foond no womman;

2255. *the book seith*: Chaucer's translation of the 'Scriptum est' or 'il est escript' with which the Latin and French texts introduce an unassigned quotation.

2260. *Senec seith*: in the supposititious *De Quat. Virtutibus*, cap. iii.

2260. *despise*, H<sup>5</sup> *desprayse*.

that is to seyn that ther is no wight that hath sovereyn bountee, save God allone, —as he hymself recordeth in hys evaungellie,—[2270] for ther nys no creature so good that hym ne wanteth somewhat of the perfeccioun of God, that is his maker.

‘Youre thridde resoun is this,—ye seyn if ye governe yow by my conseil it sholde seme that ye hadde yewe me the maistrie and the lordshipe over youre persone. Sire, save youre grace, it is nat so, for if it were so that no man sholde be conseyllid but oonly of hem that hadden lordshipe and maistrie of his persone, men wolden nat be conseyllid so ofte, for soothly thilke man that asketh conseil of a purpos, yet hath he free choys wheither he wole werke by that conseil or noon.

‘And as to youre fourthe resoun; ther ye seyn that the janglerie of women hath hyd thynges that they wiste noght, as who seith that a womman kan nat hyde that she woot, [2275] sire, these wordes been understonde of women that been jangleresses and wikked, of whiche women men seyn that thre thynges dryven a man out of his hous,—that is to seyn, smoke, droppynge of reyn, and wikked wyves; and of swiche wommen seith Salomon, that it were better dwelle in desert than with a womman that is riotous, and, sire, by youre leve, that am nat I; for ye han ful ofte assayed my grete silence and my gret pacience, and eek how wel that I kan hyde and hele thynges that men oghte secreely to hyde.

[2280] ‘And soothly, as to youre fifthe resoun, where as ye seyn that in wikked conseil wommen venquisshe men, God woot thilke resoun stant heere in no stede; for, understood now, ye asken conseil to do wikkednesse, and if ye wole werken wikkednesse, and youre wif restreyneth thilke wikked purpos and overcometh yow by resoun and by good conseil, certes youre wyf oghte rather to be preised than y-blamed. Thus sholde ye understonde the philosophre that seith, “In wikked

conseil wommen venquisshe hir housbondes.”

[2285] ‘And ther as ye blamen alle women and hir resouns, I shal shewe yow by many ensamples, that many a womman hath ben ful good, and yet been, and hir conseyls ful hoolsome and profitable. Eek som men han seyde that the conseillynge of women is outhter to deere, or elles to litel of pris; but, al be it so that ful many a womman is badde and hir conseil vile and noght worth, yet han men founde ful many a good womman, and ful discrete and wise in conseillynge.

‘Loo, Jacob, by good conseil of his mooder Rebekka, wan the benysoun of Yssak his fader, and the lordshipe over alle his bretheren: Judith, by hire good conseil, delivered the citee of Bethulie, in which she dwelled, out of the handes of Oloferus, that hadde it biseged and wolde have al destroyed it: [2290] Abygail delivered Nabal hir housbonde fro David the kyng that wolde have slayn hym, and apaysed the ire of the kyng by hir wit and by hir good conseillyng: Hester enhaunced greetly by hir good conseil the peple of God in the regne of Assuerus the kyng: and the same bountee in good conseillyng of many a good womman may men telle, and moore over, whan oure Lord hadde creat Adam oure forme fader, he seyde in this wise: “It is nat good to been a man alloone; make we to hym an helpe semblable to hym self.”

[2295] ‘Heere may ye se that if that wommen were nat goode and hir conseyls goode and profitable, oure Lord God of hevene wolde never han wrought hem, ne called hem “help” of man, but rather confusioun of man. And ther seyde oones a clerk in two vers, “What is better than Gold? Jaspre. What is better than Jaspre? Wisdom. And what is better than Wisdom? Wom-

2285. *ensamples, H resons and ensamples.*

2285. *benysoun, H blessing.*

2295. *in two vers:*

‘Quid melius auro? Jaspis. Quid Jaspide? Sensus. Quid sensus? Mulier. Quid Muliere? Nihil.’

man. And what is bettre than a good Womman? No thyng." And, sire, by manye of othre resouns may ye see that manye women been goode, and hir conseil goode and profitable, [2300] and therefore, sire, if ye wol triste to my conseil, I shal restooore yow youre doghter hool and sound, and eek I wol do to yow so muche that ye shul have honour in this cause.'

Whan Melibee hadde herd the wordes of his wyf Prudence, he seyde thus: 'I see wel that the word of Salomon is sooth. He seith that wordes that been spoken discreetly, by ordinaunce, been honycombes, for they yeven swetnesse to the soule and hoolsomnesse to the body; and, wyf, by-cause of thy sweete wordes, and eek for I have assayed and preved thy grete sapience and thy grete trouthe, I wol governe me by thy conseil in alle thyng.'

[2305] 'Now, sire,' quod dame Prudence, 'and syn ye vouchesauf to been governed by my conseil, I wol enforme yow how ye shul governe youreself in chesyng of youre conseilours. Ye shul first in alle youre werkes mekely biseken to the heighe God that he wol be youre conseilour, and shapeth yow to swich entente that he yeve yow conseil and confort, as taughte Thobie his sone: "At alle tymes thou shalt blesse God and praye hym to dresse thy weyes, and looke that alle thy conseil be in hym for everemoore." Seint Jame eek seith, "If any of yow have nede of sapience, axe it of God." [2310] And afterward, thanne shul ye taken conseil of youre self and examyne wel youre thoghtes of swich thyng as yow thyneketh that is best for youre profit, and thanne shul ye dryve fro youre herte thre thynges that been contrariouse to good conseil,—that is to seyn, ire, covetise, and hastifnesse.

'First, he that axeth conseil of hymself, certes he moste been withouten ire, for manye causes. The firste is this: he that hath greet ire and wratthe in hymself, he weneth alwey that he may do thyng that he may nat do. [2315] And

secoundely, he that is irous and wrooth, he ne may nat wel deme, and he that may nat wel deme, may nat wel conseil. The thridde is this, that he that is irous and wrooth, as seith Senec, ne may nat speke but blameful thynges, and with his viciouse wordes he stireth oother folk to angre and to ire. And eek, sire, ye moste dryve covetise out of youre herte, [2320] for the Apostle seith that covetise is roote of alle harmes; and trust wel that a covetous man ne kan nocht deme, ne thynke, but oonly to fulfille the ende of his covetise, and certes, that ne may never been accompliced, for ever the moore habundaunce that he hath of richesse the moore he desireth. And, sire, ye moste also dryve out of youre herte hastifnesse, for certes, ye ne may nat deeme for the beste a sodeyn thought that falleth in youre herte, but ye moste avyse yow on it ful ofte, [2325] for as ye herde bifore, the commune proverbe is this, that "he that soone deemeth, soone repenteth." Sire, ye ne be nat alwey in lyke disposicioun, for certes som thyng that somtyme semeth to yow that it is good for to do, another tyme it semeth to yow the contrarie.

'Whan ye han taken conseil of youre self and han deemed by good deliberacion swich thyng as you semeth best, thanne rede I yow that ye kepe it secree. [2330] Biwrey nat youre conseil to no persone, but if so be that ye wenen sikerly that thurgh youre biwreyng youre condicioun shal be to yow the moore profitable; for Jhesus Syrak seith, "Neither to thy foo, ne to thy frend, discovere nat thy secree, ne thy folie, for they wol yeve yow audience and lookyng and supportacioun in thy presence, and scorne thee in thy absence." Another clerk seith, that scarsly shaltou fynden any persone that may kepe conseil sikerly.

2315. *as seith Senec*, rather Publil. Syrus, Sent. 281.

2315. *but blameful*, E *but he blame*.

2325. *as you semeth*, E *as you list*.

2330. *Another clerk*: pseudo-Seneca, *De Moribus*, Sent. 16.

'The book seith, "Whil that thou kepest thy conseil in thyn herte, thou kepest it in thy prisoun, [2335] and whan thou biwreyest thy conseil to any wight he holdeth thee in his snare"; and therfore yow is bettere to hyde youre conseil in youre herte than praye him to whom ye han biwreyed youre conseil that he wole kepen it cloos and stille; for Seneca seith, "If so be that thou ne mayst nat thyn owene conseil hyde, how darstou prayen any oother wight thy conseil sikerly to kepe?"

'But natheles, if thou wene sikerly that the biwreying of thy conseil to a persone wol make thy condicioun to stonden in the bettere plyt, thanne shaltou tellen hym thy conseil in this wise: first, thou shalt make no semblant whether thee were levere pecs or werre, or this or that, ne shewe hym nat thy wille and thyn entente,—[2340] for trust wel, that comunly these conseilours been flatereres, namely the conseilours of grete lordes, for they enforcen hem alway rather to speken plesante wordes, enclynynge to the lordes lust, than wordes that been rewe or profitable; and therfore men seyn, that the riche man hath seeld good conseil, but if he have it of hym self.

'And after that thou shalt considere by freendes and thyne enemys; [2345] and as touchynge thy freendes thou shalt considere whiche of hem been moost eithful and moost wise, and oldest, and most approved in conseillyng, and of hem halt thou aske thy conseil as the caas equireth.

'I seye that first ye shul clepe to youre conseil youre freendes that been trewe, or Salomon seith that "Right as the herte of a man deliteth in savour that is soote, right so the conseil of trewe freendes yeveth swetenesse to the soule"; he seith also, "Ther may no thyng be likned to the trewe freend, [2350] for certes

gold ne silver beth nat so muche worth as the goode wyl of a trewe freend"; and eek, he seith that "A trewe freend is a strong deffense; whoso that it fyndeth, certes, he fyndeth a greet tresour."

'Thanne shul ye eek considere if that youre trewe freendes been discrete and wise, for the book seith, "Axe alwey thy conseil of hem that been wise"; and by this same resoun shul ye clepen to youre conseil of youre freendes that been of age, swiche as han seyn and been expert in manye thynges, and been approved in conseillynges; for the book seith that in the olde men is the sapience, and in longe tyme the prudence; [2355] and Tullius seith, that grete thynges ne been nat ay accompliced by strengthe, ne by delivernesse of body, but by good conseil, by auctoritee of persones, and by science; the whiche thre thynges ne been nat fieble by age, but certes they enforcen and encreescen day by day. And thanne shul ye kepe this for a general reule; first, shul ye clepen to youre conseil a fewe of youre freendes that been especiale; for Salomon seith, "Manye freendes have thou, but among a thousand, chese thee oon to be thy conseilour," for, al be it so that thou first ne telle thy conseil but to a fewe, thou mayst afterward telle it to mo folk if it be nede. But looke alwey that thy conseilours have thilke thre condiciouns that I have seyde bifore, that is to seyn, that they be trewe, wise, and of oold experience. [2360] And werke nat alwey in every nede by oon conseilour allone, for somtyme bihooveth it to been conseilled by manye, for Salomon seith, "Salvacioum of thynges is where as ther been manye conseilours."

'Now, sith I have toold yow of which folk ye sholde been conseilled, now wol I teche yow which conseil ye oghte to eschewe. First, ye shul eschue the conseillyng of fooles, for Salomon seith, "Taak no conseil of a fool, for he ne kan noht conseilte but after his owene lust

2330. *The book seith*: Petrus Alfonsi, *Discip. lxx. iv. 3.*

2335. *Seneca seith*: pseudo-Seneca, *De Mortibus*, Sent. 16.

2355. *Tullius*: Cicero, *De Senect.* vi. 17.

and his affecciuon." The book seith that the propretee of a fool is this, "He troweth lightly harm of every wight, and lightly troweth alle bountee in hym self." [2365] Thou shalt eek eschue the conseillyng of flatereres, swiche as enforcen hem rather to preise youre persone by flaterye, than for to telle yow the soothfastnesse of thynges.

'Wherfore Tullius seith, "Amonges alle the pestilences that been in freendshipe the gretteste is flaterie"; and therefore is it moore nede that thou eschue and drede flatereres than any oother peple. The book seith, "Thou shalt rather drede and flee fro the sweete wordes of flaterynge preiseres than for the egre wordes of thy freend that seith thee thy sothes." Salomon seith that "The wordes of a flaterere is a snare to cacche with innocentz." He seith also that "He that speketh to his freend wordes of swetnesse and of plesaunce, setteth a net biforn his feet to cacche hym"; [2370] and therefore, seith Tullius, "Encline nat thyne eres to flatereres, ne taaketh no conseil of the wordes of flaterye"; and Caton seith, "Avyse thee wel, and eschue the wordes of swetnesse and of plesaunce."

'And eek thou shalt eschue the conseillyng of thyne olde enemys that been reconciled. The book seith that no wight retourneth sauflly into the grace of his olde enemy; and Isope seith, "Ne trust nat to hem to whiche thou hast had som tyme werre or enemytee, ne telle hem nat thy conseil"; [2375] and Seneca

2360. *The book seith*: Cicero, *Tusc. D.* iii. 30. 37.

2365. *Tullius seith*: *De Amicitia*, xxv. 91.

2365. *The book seith*: pseudo-Seneca, *De Quat. Virt.* cap. iii.: 'Non acerba verba, sed blanda, timebis.'

2370. *Tullius*: *De Offic.* i. 26. 91.

2370. *Caton*: Dionysius Cato, *De Morib.* iii. 5.

2370. *The book seith*: Publil. Syrus, *Sent.* 91.

2370. *Isope seith*. In the Latin text the lines are quoted as:

\*Ne confidatis secreta nec hijs detegatis  
Cum quibus egistis pugnae discrimina tristis.'

2375. *Seneca*: rather Publil. Syrus, *Sent.* 389: 'Numquam ubi diu fuit ignis deficit vapor.'

telleth the cause why: "It may nat be," seith he, "that where greet fyr hath longe tyme endured, that ther ne dwelleth som vapour of warmnesse"; and therefore seith Salomon, "In thyn olde foo trust never"; for sikerly though thyn enemy be reconciled and maketh thee chiere of humylitee, and lowteth to thee with his heed, ne trust hym never; for certes he maketh thilke feyned humilitee moore for his profit than for any love of thy person, by-cause that he deemeth to have victorie over thy persone by swich feyned contenance, the which victorie he myghte nat wynne by strif or werre. And Peter Alfonse seith, "Make no felawshipe with thyne olde enemys, for if thou do hem bountee they wol perverten it into wikkednesse."

[2380] 'And eek thou most eschue the conseillyng of hem that been thy servantz and beren thee greet reverence, for peraventure they doon it moore for drede than for love. And therefore seith a philosophre in this wise: "Ther is no wight parfitly trewe to hym that he to soore dredeth"; and Tullius seith, "Ther nys no myght so greet of any emperour that longe may endure, but if he have moore love of the peple than drede."

'Thou shalt also eschue the conseiling of folk that been dronkelewe, for they ne kan no conseil hyde; for Salomon seith, "Ther is no privetee ther as regneth dronkenesse." [2385] Ye shul also han in suspect the conseillyng of swich folk as conseille yow a thyng prively and conseille yow the contrarie openly; for Cassidorie seith that "It is a manere sleighte to hyndre, whan he sheweth to doon a thyng openly and werketh prively the contrarie."

'Thou shalt also have in suspect the conseillyng of wikked folk, for the book seith, "The conseillyng of wikked folk is alwey ful of fraude"; and David seith,

2375. *Peter Alfonse*: *Disc. Cler.* iv. 4.

2380. *doon*, H<sup>6</sup> say.

2380. *Tullius seith*: *De Off.* ii. 7. 25.

2385. *Cassidorie*: *Variar. Ep.* Lib. x. Ep. 18.

2385. *have in suspect*, H *eschiewe*.



"Blisful is that man that hath nat folwed the conseilyng of shrewes." Thou shalt also eschue the conseilyng of yong folk, for hir conseil is nat rype.

[2390] 'Now, sire, sith I have shewed yow of which folk ye shul take youre conseil, and of which folk ye shul folwe the conseil, now wol I teche yow how ye shal examyne youre conseil, after the doctrine of Tullius.

'In the examynynge thanne of youre conseillour ye shul considere manye thynges. Alderfirst thou shalt considere, that in thilke thyng that thou purposost and upon what thyng thou wolt have conseil, that verray trouthe be seyed and conserved; this is to seyn, telle trewely thy tale; for he that seith fals may nat wel be conselled in that cas of which he lieth.

[2395] 'And after this thou shalt considere the thynges that acorden to that thou purposost for to do by thy conseilours, if resoun accorde therto, and eek if hy myght may atteine therto; and if the noore part and the better part of thy conseilours acorde therto or noon. Thanne haltou considere what thyng shal folwe for hir conseilyng, as hate, pees, werre, race, profit, or damage, and manye there thynges. Thanne, of alle these thynges, thou shalt chese the beste, and weyve alle othere thynges. Thanne haltou considere of what roote is engendred the matiere of thy conseil, and what fruyt it may conceive and engendre.

[2400] Thou shalt eek considere alle these causes fro whennes they been sprongen.

'And whan ye han examyned youre conseil as I have seyed, and which partie is the better and moore profitable, and first approved it by manye wise folk, and after, thanne shaltou considere if thou mayst parfourne it and maken of it a good wylde; for certes, resoun wol nat that any man sholde bigynne a thyng, but if he myght parfourne it as hym oghte, ne no

2395. *conceive*, E *conserve*.

2400. *as hym oghte*, H *and make therof a good*  
*de*.

wight sholde take upon hym so hevy a charge that he myghte nat bere it; [2405] for the proverbe seith, "He that to muche embraceth, distreyneth litel"; and Catoun seith, "Assay to do swich thyng as thou hast power to doon, lest that the charge oppresse thee so soore that thee bihoveth to weyve thyng that thou hast bigonne." And, if so be that thou be in doute whether thou mayst parfourne a thing or noon, chese rather to suffre than bigynne. And Piers Alphonse seith, "If thou hast myght to doon a thyng of which thou most repente thee, it is better 'nay' than 'ye'"; this is to seyn, that thee is better holde thy tonge stille than for to speke. [2410] Thanne may ye understonde by strengre resons that if thou hast power to parfourne a werk of which thou shalt repente, thanne is it better that thou suffre than bigynne. Wel seyn they that defenden every wight to assaye any thyng of which he is in doute whether he may parfourne it or noon. And after, whan ye han examyned youre conseil, as I have seyed bifore, and knowen wel that ye may parfourne youre emprise, conferme it thanne sadly til it be at an ende.

'Now is it resoun and tyme that I shewe yow whanne and wherfore that ye may change youre conseil withouten youre repreve. Soothly a man may chaungen his purpos and his conseil if the cause cesseth, or whan a newe caas bitydeth; [2415] for the lawe seith that upon thynges that newly bityden bihoveth newe conseil; and Senec seith, "If thy conseil is comen to the eeris of thy enemy, change thy conseil." Thou mayst also change thy conseil if so be that thou mayst fynde that by error, or by oother

2405. *the proverbe* 'qui nimis capit, parum stringit.'

2405. *Catoun*, *De Mor.* iii. 15:

'Quod potes id tempta, operis ne pondere pressus  
Succumbat labor, et frustra temptata relinquis.'

2405. *Piers Alphonse*, *Disc. Cler.* vi. 12. The Latin 'si dicere metuas unde pœniteas semper est melius non quam sic' is much clearer than the English.

2410. *conseil*, E<sup>6</sup> *conseillors*.

2415. *oother cause*, H *other processe*.

cause, harm or damage may bityde. Also if thy conseil be dishonest, or ellis cometh of dishoneste cause, chaunge thy conseil, for the lawes seyn that alle bihestes that been dishoneste been of no value, [2420] and eek if so be that it be impossible or may nat goodly be parfourned or kept.

'And take this for a general reule, that every conseil that is affermed so strongly that it may nat be changed for no condicioun that may bityde, I seye that thilke conseil is wikked.'

This Melibeus, whanne he hadde herd the doctrine of his wyf, dame Prudence, answerde in this wyse: 'Dame,' quod he, 'as yet into this tyme ye han wel and covenably taught me as in general how I shal governe me in the chesyng and in the withholdyng of ye conseilours, but now wolde I fayn that ye wolde condescende in especial, [2425] and telle me how liketh yow, or what semeth yow by oure conseilours that we han chosen in oure present nede.'

'My lord,' quod she, 'I biseke yow in al humblesse that ye wol nat wilfully replie agayn my resouns, ne distempere youre herte, thogh I speke thyng that yow displese; for God woot that as in myn entente I speke it for youre beste, for youre honour, and for youre profite eke; and soothly I hope that youre benyngnytee wol taken it in pacience. Trusteth me wel,' quod she, 'that youre conseil as in this caas ne sholde nat, as to speke properly, be called a conseillyng, but a mocioun or a moevyng of folye, [2430] in which conseil ye han erred in many a sondry wise.

'First and forward ye han erred in thassemblyng of youre conseilours; for ye sholde first have cleped a fewe folk to youre conseil, and after ye myghte han shewed it to mo folk, if it hadde been nede; but certes, ye han sodeynly cleped to youre conseil a greet multitude of peple ful chargeant and ful anoyous for to heere. Also, ye han erred, for there

as ye sholden oonly have cleped to youre conseil youre trewe frendes olde and wise, [2435] ye han y-cleped straunge folk, and yong folk, false flatereres and enemys reconciled, and folk that doon yow reverence withouten love. And eek also ye have erred for ye han brought with yow to youre conseil ire, covetise, and hastynesse; the whiche thre thynges been contrariouse to every conseil honeste and profitable, the whiche thre ye han nat anientissed or destroyed hem, neither in youre self ne in youre conseilours, as yow oghte. Ye han erred also, for ye han shewed to youre conseilours youre talent and youre affecciou to make werre anon, and for to do vengeance. [2440] They han espied by youre wordes to what thyng ye been enclined, and therefore han they rather conseilled yow to youre talent than to youre profit.

'Ye han erred also, for it semeth that it suffiseth to han been conseilled by these conseilours oonly, and with litel avys, where-as in so greet and so heigh a nede it hadde been necessarie mo conseilours and moore deliberacioun to parfourne youre emprise.

'Ye han erred also, for ye han nat examyned youre conseil in the forseyde manere, ne in due manere as the caas requireth. [2445] Ye han erred also, for ye han nat maked no divisiou bitwixe youre conseilours, this is to seyn, bitwixen youre trewe frendes and youre feyned conseilours; ne ye han nat knowe the wil of youre trewe frendes, olde and wise; but ye han cast alle hire wordes in an hoche pot, and enclined youre herte to the moore partie and to the grette nombre, and there been ye condescended. And, sith ye woot wel that men shal alwey fynde a grette nombre of fooles than of wise men, and therefore the conseils that been at congregaciouns and multitudes of folk, there as men tak moore reward to the nombre than to the sapiencie of persones, [2450] ye se we that in swiche conseillynges fooles ha the maistrie.'

2415. *Also if, etc.*, H *Also thou change thy conseil if that it be dishoneste.*

2430. *thassemblyng*, H *the garteryng.*

Melibeus answerde agayn, and seyde, 'I graunte wel that I have erred, but there as thou hast toold me heerbiforn that he nys nat to blame that chaungeth his conseilours in certein caas, and for certeine just causes, I am al redy to change my conseilours right as thou wolt devyse. The proverbe seith, that for to do synne is mannyssh, but certes, for to persevere longe in synne is werk of the devel.'

[2455] To this sentence answereth anon dame Prudence and seyde, 'Examineth,' quod she, 'youre conseil and lat us see the whiche of hem han spoken most resonably, and taught yow best conseil; and for as muche as that the examynacioun is necessarie, lat us bigynne at the surgiens and at the phisiciens that first speeken in this matiere. I sey yow that the surgiens and phisiciens han seyde yow in youre conseil discreetly as hem oughte, and in hir speche seyde ful wisely that to the office of hem aperteneth, to doon to every wight honour and profit, and no wight for to anoye, [2460] and in hir craft to doon greet diligence unto the cure of hem whiche that they han in hir governaunce. And, sire, right as they han answered wisely and discreetly, right so rede I that they been heighly and sovereynly gerdoned for hir noble speche, and eek, for they sholde do the moore ententif bisynesse in the curacioun of youre doghter deere; for, al be it so that they been youre freendes, therfore shal ye nat suffren that they serve yow for noght, [2465] but ye oghte the rather gerdone hem and shewe hem youre largesse.

'And as touchynge the proposicioun which that the phisiciens encreesceden in this caas; this is to seyn, that in maladies that oon contrarie is warished by another contrarie; I wolde fayn knowe how ye

2450. *The proverbe seith*, S. Chrysost. *Adhortatio ad Theod. lapsum*, i. 14: 'Humanum enim est peccare, diabolicum vero perseverare.'

2455. *aperteneth*, H<sup>2</sup> *appendith*.

2465. *encreesceden*, enlarged on; H *han shewed* 'on.

2465. *how ye understonde this text*, H *thilke ext and how thay understonde it*.

understonde this text, and what is youre sentence.'

'Certes,' quod Melibeus, 'I understonde it in this wise: [2470] that right as they han doon me a contrarie, right so sholde I doon hem another; for right as they han venged hem on me and doon me wrong, right so shal I venge me upon hem, and doon hem wrong, and thanne have I cured oon contrarie by another.'

'Lo, lo,' quod dame Prudence, 'how lightly is every man enclined to his owene desir and to his owene plesaunce! Certes,' quod she, 'the wordes of the phisiciens ne sholde nat han been understonden in thys wise, [2475] for certes, wikkednesse is nat contrarie to wikkednesse, ne vengeance to vengeance, ne wrong to wrong, but they been semblable; and therfore, o vengeance is nat warished by another vengeance, ne o wroong by another wroong, but everich of hem encreesceth and aggreggeth oother.

'But certes, the wordes of the phisiciens sholde been understonden in this wise; for good and wikkednesse been two contraries, and pees and werre, vengeance and suffraunce, discord and accord, and manye othere thynges; [2480] but certes, wikkednesse shal be warished by goodnesse, discord by accord, werre by pees, and so forth of othere thynges; and heer-to accordeth Seint Paul the Apostle in manye places.

'He seith, "Ne yeldeth nat harm for harm, ne wikked speche for wikked speche; but do wel to hym that dooth thee harm, and blesse hym that seith to thee harm." And in manye othere places he amonesteth pees and accord.

[2485] 'But now wol I speke to yow of the conseil which that was yeven to yow by the men of lawe, and the wise folk, that seyden alle by oon accord, as ye han herd bifore, that over alle thynges ye sholde doon youre diligence to kepen youre persone and to warnestooore youre hous; and seyden also, that in this caas yow oghten for to werken ful avysely

2465. *sentence*, H *entente*.

and with greet deliberacioun. And, sire, as to the firste point that toucheth to the keypyng of youre persone, [2490] ye shul understonde that he that hath werre shal evermoore mekely and devoutly preyen, biforn alle thynges, that Jhesus Crist of his grete mercy wol han hym in his proceccioun and been his sovereyn helpyng at his nede; for certes, in this world ther is no wight that may be conseilled ne kept sufficently withouten the keypyng of oure Lord Jhesu Crist.

'To this sentence accordeth the prophete David, that seith, "If God ne kepe the citee, in ydel waketh he that it kepeth." [2495] Now, sire, thanne shul ye committe the keypyng of youre persone to youre trewe freendes that been approved and knowe, and of hem shul ye axen helpe, youre persone for to kepe, for Catoun seith, "If thou hast nede of help, axe it of thy freendes, for ther nys noon so good a phisicien as thy trewe freend."

'And after this, thanne shul ye kepe yow fro alle straunge folk, and fro lyeres, and have alwey in suspect hire compaignye, for Piers Alfonse seith, "Ne taak no compaignye by the weye of straunge men, but if so be that thou have knowe hym of a lenger tyme. [2500] And if so be, that he be falle into thy compaignye, paraventure, withouten thyn assent, enquere thanne, as subtilly as thou mayst, of his conversacioun, and of his lyf bifore, and feyne thy wey,—seye that thou goost thider as thou wolt nat go,—and if he bereth a spere, hoold thee on the right syde, and if he bere a swerd, hoold thee on his lift syde." And after this thanne shul ye kepe yow wisely from all swich manere peple as I have seyde bifore, and hem and hir conseil eschewe.

'And after this, thanne shul ye kepe yow in swich manere [2505] that for any presumpcioun of youre strengthe, that ye ne dispise nat ne accounte nat the myght

of youre adversarie so litel that ye lete the keypyng of youre persone for youre presumpcioun; for every wys man dredeth his enemy, and Salomon seith, "Weleful is he that of alle hath drede, for certes, he that thurgh the hardynesse of his herte and thurgh the hardynesse of hymself hath to greet presumpcioun, hym shal yvel bityde." Thanne shul ye evermoore countrewayte embusshementz and alle espialle. [2510] For Senec seith, that the wise man that dredeth harmes escheweth harmes, ne he ne falleth into perils that perils escheweth. And, al be it so that it seme that thou art in siker place, yet shaltow alwey do thy diligence in keypyng of thy persone; this is to seyn, ne be nat negligent to kepe thy persone, nat oonly fro thy gretteste enemys, but fro thy leeste enemy. Senec seith, "A man that is wel avysed, he dredeth his leste enemye." [2515] Ovyde seith that the litel wesele wol slee the grete bole and the wilde hert. And the book seith, "A litel thorn may prikke a greet kyng ful soore, and an hound wol holde the wilde boor."

'But nathelees, I sey nat thou shalt be coward, that thou doute ther wher as is no drede. The book seith that somme folk han greet lust to deceyve, but yet they dreden hem to be deceived. Yet shaltow drede to been empoisoned, and kepe yow from the compaignye of scorneres, [2520] for the book seith, "With scorneres make no compaignye, but flee hire wordes as venym."

'Now as to the seconde point; where as youre wise conseilours conseilled yow to warnestooore youre hous with gret diligence, I wolde fayn knowe how that ye understonde thilke wordes, and what is yowre sentence.'

Melibeus answerde and seyde, 'Certes, I understande it in this wise: That I

2510. *Senec seith*, Publilius Syrus, Sent. 542.

2510. *that dredeth*, *E he dredeth*.

2510. *Senec seith*, Publilius Syrus, Sentent.

255: om. E.

2515. *Ovyde*, *De Rem. Am.* ii. 25, 26.

2520. *conseilled*, *H warnede*.

2495. *Catoun*, *De Moribus*, iv. 13:

'Auxilium a notis petito, si forte laboras.

Ne: quisquam melior medicus quam fidus amicus.'

2495. *Piers Alfonse*, *Disc. Cler.* xviii. 10.

shal warnestoore myn hous with toures, swiche as han castelles, and othere manere edifices, and armure and artelries, by whiche thynges I may my persone and myn hous so kepen and defenden, that myne enemys shul been in drede myn hous for to approche.'

[2525] To this sentence answerde anon Prudence. 'Warnestoorng,' quod she, 'of heighe toures and of grete edifices appertyneth somtyme to pryde and eek men make heihe toures with grete costages and with greet travaille, and when that they been accompliced yet be they nat worth a stree, but if they be defended by trewe freendes that been olde and wise. And understood wel that the gretteste and strongeste garnyson that a riche man may have, as wel to kepen his persone as his goodes, is that he be biloved amonges hys subgetz and with his neighebores; for thus seith Tullius, that ther is a manere garnysoun that no man may venquysse ne disconfite, and that is [2530] a lord to be biloved of his citezeins and of his peple.

'Now, sire, as to the thridde point, where as youre olde and wise conseilours seyden that yow ne oghte nat sodeynly ne hastily proceden in this nede, but that yow oghte purveyen and appaillen yow in this caas with greet diligence and greet deliberacioun, trewely, I trow that they seyden right wisely and right sooth, for Tullius seith, "In every nede er thou bigynne it, appaill thee with greet diligence." [2535] Thanne seye I that in vengeance takyng, in werre, in bataille, and in warnestoorng, er thou bigynne, I rede that thou appaill thee therto and do it with greet deliberacioun, for Tullius seith, "The longe appaillng biforn the bataille maketh short victorie,"

2520. *kepen*, H *kepen and edifiien*.

2525. *appertyneth* . . . *toures*, text from Corpus; EH<sup>3</sup> om.

2525. *and strongeste*, H *strength or*.

2525. *Tullius*, rather Seneca, *De Clementia*, 19. 5: 'Unum est inexpugnabile munimentum, mor civium.'

2530. *Tullius*, *De Offic.* i. 21. 73.

and Cassidorus seith, "The garnyson is stronger than it is longe tyme avysed."

'But now lat us speken of the conseil that was accorded by youre neighebores, swiche as doon yow reverence withouten love, [2540] youre olde enemys reconciled, youre flatereres, that conseilled yow certeyne thynges prively, and openly conseilleden yow the contrarie, the yonge folk also, that conseilleden yow to venge yow, and make werre anon. And certes, sire, as I have seyde biforn, ye han greetly erred to han cleped swich manere folk to youre conseil, which conseilours been ynogh repreved by the resouns aforeseyd.

[2545] 'But nathelees, lat us now descende to the special. Ye shuln first procede after the doctrine of Tullius. Certes, the trouthe of this matiere, or of this conseil, nedeth nat diligently enquire, for it is wel wist whiche they been that han doon to yow this trespas and vileynye, and how manye trespasours and in what manere they han to yow doon al this wrong and all this vileynye. And after this thanne shul ye examyne the seconde condicioun which that the same Tullius addeth in this matiere; [2550] for Tullius put a thyng which that he clepeth consentyng, this is to seyn, who been they, and how manye and whiche been they, that consenten to thy conseil, in thy wilfulnesse to doon hastif vengeance. And lat us considere also who been they, and how manye been they, and whiche been they, that consenteden to youre adversaries. And certes, as to the firste point, it is wel known whiche folk been they that consenteden to youre hastif wilfulnesse; for trewely, alle tho that conseilleden yow to maken sodeyn werre ne been nat youre freendes.

[2555] 'Lat us now considere whiche been they that ye holde so greetly youre freendes as to youre persone; for al be it so that ye be myghty and riche, certes, ye ne been nat but allone; for certes, ye ne han no child but a doghter, ne ye ne

2535. *Cassidorus*, *Variarum*, Lib. i. Ep. 17.

2545. *Tullius*, cp. *De Offic.* ii. 5. 18.

han bretheren, ne cosyns germayns, ne noon oother neigh kynrede, wherfore that youre enemyes for drede sholde stinte to plede with yow, or to destroye youre persone. [2560] Ye knowen also that youre richesses mooten been dispended in diverse parties, and whan that every wight hath his part, they ne wollen taken but litel reward to venge thy deeth; but thyne enemyes been thre, and they han manie children, bretheren, cosyns, and oother ny kynrede, and though so were that thou haddest slayn of hem two or thre, yet dwellen ther ynowe to wreken hir deeth, and to sle thy persone. And though so be that youre kynrede be moore siker and stedefast than the kyn of youre adversarie, [2565] yet natheless, youre kynrede nys but a fer kynrede, they been but litel syb to yow, and the kyn of youre enemyes been ny syb to hem, and certes, as in that, hir condicioun is bet than youre.

‘Thanne lat us considere also of the conseillyng of hem that conseilleden yow to taken sodeyn vengeance, whether it accorde to resoun. And certes, ye knowe wel, nay; for as by right and resoun, they may no man taken vengeance on no wight but the juge that hath the jurisdiccoun of it, [2570] whan it is graunted hym to take thilke vengeance hastily or attempely as the lawe requireth. And yet mooreover of thilke word that Tullius clepeth “consentyng,” thou shalt considere if thy myght and thy power may consenten and suffise to thy wilfulness, and to thy conseilours. And certes, thou mayst wel seyn that nay; for sikerly, as for to speke proprely, we may do no thyng, but oonly swich thyng as we may doon rightfully, [2575] and certes, rightfully ne mowe ye take no vengeance, as of youre propre auctoritee.

‘Thanne mowe ye seen that youre power ne consenteth nat, ne accordeth nat, with youre wilfulness.

‘Lat us now examyne the thridde point, that Tullius clepeth “consequent.”

2560. *dispended*, H *departed*, Pet. *dalt*.

Thou shalt understonde that the vengeance that thou purposest for to take is the consequent, and therof folweth another vengeance, peril and werre, and othere damages with-oute nombre, of whiche we be nat war, as at this tyme. [2580] And as touchyng the fourthe point, that Tullius clepeth “engendryng,” thou shalt considere that this wrong which that is doon to thee is engendred of the hate of thyne enemyes, and of the vengeance takyng upon that wolde engendre another vengeance, and muchel sorwe and wastyng of richesses, as I seyde.

‘Now, sire, as to the point that Tullius clepeth “causes,” which that is the laste point. Thou shalt understonde that the wrong that thou hast receyved hath certeine causes, [2585] whiche that clerkes clepen *Oriens* and *Efficiens*, and *Causa longinqua* and *Causa propinqua*, this is to seyn, the fer cause and the ny cause. The fer cause is Almyghty God, that is cause of alle thynges; the ny cause is thy thre enemyes. The cause accidental was hate, the cause material been the fyve woundes of thy doghter. [2590] The cause formal is the manere of hir werkynge that broghten ladders and cloumben in at thy wyndowes; the cause final was for to sle thy doghter. It letted nat in as muche as in hem was.

‘But for to speken of the fer cause, as to what ende they shul come, or what shal finally bytude of hem in this cause ne kan I nat deme but by coniectyng and by supposyng. For we shul suppose that they shul come to a wikked end by-cause that the book of decrees seith “Seelden, or with greet peyne, been causes broght to good ende whanne they been baddely bigonne.”

[2595] ‘Now, sire, if men wolde axme why that God suffred men to do yow this vileynye, certes, I kan nat we answere, as for no soothfastnesse. For tha postle seith that the sciences and the

2590. *the book of decrees: Decret. Gratiani*  
P. ii. Causa i. Qu. i. C. 25.

2595. *this vileynye*, H<sup>2</sup> *this wrong and vileynye*.

juggementz of oure Lord God Almyghty been ful depe,—ther may no man comprehende ne serchen hem suffisantly. Nathelees, by certeyne presumpciouns and coniectynges, I holde and bileeve, that God, which that is ful of justice and of rightwysnesse, hath suffred this bityde by juste cause, resonable.

[2600] 'Thy name is Melibee, this is to seyn, "a man that drynketh hony." Thou hast y-dronke so muchel hony of sweete temporeel richesses, and delices and honours of this world, that thou art dronken, and hast forgotten Jhesu Crist, thy creatour; thou ne hast nat doon to hym swich honour and reverence as thee oughte, ne thou ne hast nat wel ytaken kepe to the wordes of Ovide, that seith, [2605] "Under the hony of the goodes of the body is hyd the venym that sleeth the soule"; and Salomon seith, "If thou hast founden hony, ete of it that suffiseth, for if thou ete of it out of mesure, thou shalt spewe, and be nedey and poure"; and peraventure, Crist hath thee in despit, and hath turned away fro thee his face and his eeris of misericorde, and also he hath suffred that thou hast been punysshed in the manere that thou hast y-trespased. [2610] Thou hast doon synne agayn oure Lord Crist, for certes, the thre enemyes of mankynde,—that is to seyn, the flessch, the feend and the world,—thou hast suffred hem entre into thyn herte wilfully by the wyndowes of thy body, and hast nat defended thy self suffisantly agayns hire assautes, and hire temptaciouns, so that they han wounded thy soule in five places; this is to seyn, the deadly synnes that been entred into thyn herte by thy five wittes. [2615] And in the same manere oure Lord Crist hath wold and suffred that thy thre enemyes been entred into thyn hous by the wyndowes, and han y-wounded thy doghter in the foresyde manere.'

'Certes,' quod Melibee, 'I se wel that ye enforce yow muchel by wordes to overcome me in swich manere that I

2600. *Ovide, Amor.* i. viii. 104.

shal nat venge me of myne enemyes, shewynge me the perils and the yveles that myghten falle of this vengeance; but whoso wolde considere in alle vengeancees the perils and yveles that myghte sewe of vengeance takynge, [2620] a man wolde never take vengeance; and that were harm, for by the vengeance takynge been the wikked men dissevered fro the goode men, and they that han wyl to do wikkednesse restreyne hir wikked purpos whan they seen the punyssynge and chastisyng of the trespassours.'

[And to this answered dame Prudence, 'Certes,' said she, 'I grant you that from vengeance come many evils and many benefits, and yet vengeance belongeth not to everyone but only to the judges, and to those who have jurisdiction over evil-doers.]

[2625] 'And yet seye I moore, that right as a singuler persone synneth in takynge vengeance of another man, right so synneth the juge if he do no vengeance of hem that it han disserved; for Senec seith thus: That maister, he seith, is good that proveth shrewes. And, as Cassidore seith, "A man dredeth to do outrages whan he woot and knoweth that it displeth to the juges and sovereyns." Another seith, "The juge that dredeth to do right maketh men shrewes," [2630] and Seint Paule the Apostle seith in his Epistle, whan he writeth unto the Romayns, that "The juges beren nat the spere withouten cause, but they beren it to punyssen the shrewes and mysdoeres, and to defende the goode men." If ye wol thanne take vengeance of youre enemyes, ye shul retourne, or have youre recours to the juge that hath the jurisdiction upon hem, and he shal punyssen hem as the lawe axeth and requireth.'

2615. *sewe*, H *folwe*.

2620. *dissevered*, H *destroyed and dissevered*.

2620. *to do wikkednesse*, H *om. do*.

2620. *And to this answered*, etc. The words in brackets are inserted from the French; they are not given in any of the seven MSS.

2625. *Cassidore, Variar.* i. 4.

2625. *Another seith*, *Publii. Syrus, Sentent.* 528.

'A!' quod Melibee, 'this vengeance liketh me no thyng. [2635] I bithenke me now, and take heede how Fortune hath norissed me fro my childhede, and hath holpen me to passe many a stroong paas. Now wol I assayen hire, trowyng with Goddes helpe that she shal helpe me my shame for to venge.'

'Certes,' quod Prudence, 'if ye wol werke by my conseil ye shul nat asseye Fortune by no wey, ne ye shul nat lene or bowe unto hire after the word of Senec, for thynges that been folily doon and that been in hope of Fortune shullen never come to goode ende. [2640] And, as the same Senec seith, "The moore cleer and the moore shynyng that Fortune is, the moore brotil and the sonner broken she is; trusteth nat in hire, for she nys nat stidefaste, ne stable, for whan thow trowest to be moost seur and siker of hire helpe, she wol faille thee and deceyve thee." And where as ye seyn that Fortune hath norissed yow fro youre childhede, I seye, that in so muchel shul ye the lasse truste in hire and in hir wit; [2645] for Senec seith, "What man that is norissed by Fortune she maketh hym a greet fool." Now thanne, syn ye desire and axe vengeance, and the vengeance that is doon after the lawe and bifore the juge ne liketh yow nat, and the vengeance that is doon in hope of Fortune is perilous and uncertein, thanne have ye noon oother remedie, but for to have youre recours unto the sovereyn juge that vengeth alle vileynyas and wronges, and he shal venge yow after that hym-self witnesseth, where as he seith, [2650] "Leveth the vengeance to me, and I shal do it."'

Melibee answerde, 'If I ne venge me nat of the vileynye that men han doon to me, I sompne or warne hem that han doon to me that vileynye, and alle

2635. *stroong paas*, H *strayt passage*.

2635. *Senec*, Publil. Syrus, Sent. 320.

2640. *broken she is*, H<sup>2</sup> *breketh sche*: for the quotation see Publil. Syrus, Sentent. 189: 'Fortuna vitrea est et, cum splendet, frangitur.'

2645. *Senec*, Publil. Syrus, Sentent. 173.

othere, to do me another vileynye. For it is writen, "If thou take no vengeance of an oold vileynye, thou sompnest thyne adversaries to do thee a newe vileynye." And also for my suffrance men wolden do to me so muchel vileynye that I myghte neither bere it ne susteene, [2655] and so sholde I been put and holden over lowe. For men seyn, "In muchel suffryng shul manye thynges falle unto thee whiche thou shalt nat mowe suffre."'

'Certes,' quod Prudence, 'I graunte yow that over muchel suffraunce nys nat good, but yet ne folweth it nat ther-of that every persone to whom men doon vileynye take of it vengeance; for that aperteneth and longeth al oonly to the juges, for they shul venge the vileynyas and injuries; [2660] and therfore tho two auctoritees that ye han seyde above been oonly understonden in the juges, for whan they suffren over muchel the wronges and the vileynyas to be doon withouten punysshynge, they sompne nat a man al oonly for to do newe wronges, but they comanden it. Also a wys man seith that the juge that correcteth nat the synnere comandeth and biddeth hym do synne; and the juges and sovereyns myghten in hir land so muchel suffre of the shrewes and mysdoeres, [2665] that they sholden, by swich suffrance, by proces of tyme wexen of swich power and myght that they sholden putte out the juges and the sovereyns from hir places, and atte laste maken hem lesen hire lordshipes.

'But lat us now putte that ye have leve to venge yow. I seye ye been nat of myght and power as now to venge yow; for if ye wole maken comparisoun unto the myght of youre adversaries, ye shul fynde in manye thynges that I have shewed yow er this that hire condicioun is bettre than youres; [2670] and therfore seye I that it is good as now that ye suffre and be pacient.

'Forthermoore, ye knowen wel that

2660. *a wys man*, Crec. Balbus, *De Nugis Phil.*: 'Qui non corripit peccantem peccare imperat.'



after the comune sawe, it is a woodnesse a man to stryve with a strengre, or a moore myghty man than he is hymself; and for to stryve with a man of evene strengthe, that is to seyn, with as stronge a man as he, it is peril; and for to stryve with a weyker man, it is folie; and therefore sholde a man flee stryvyng as muchel as he myghte; [2675] for Salomon seith, "It is a greet worshippe to a man to kepen hym fro noyse and stryf." And if it so bifalle or happe that a man of gretter myght and strengthe than thou art do thee grevaunce, studie and bisye thee rather to stille the same grevaunce, than for to venge thee; for Senec seith, that "He putteth hym in greet peril that stryveth with a gretter man than he is hymself"; and Catoun seith, "If a man of hyer estaat or degree, or moore myghty than thou, do thee any or grevaunce, suffre hym, [2680] for he that oones hath greved thee, another tyme may relieve thee and helpe."

'Yet sette I caas ye have bothe myght and licence for to venge yow, I seye that ther be ful manye thynges that shul restreyne yow of vengeance-takyng, and make yow for to encline to suffre and for to han pacience in the thynges that han been doon to yow. First and foreward, if ye wole considere the defautes that been in youre owene persone, [2685] for whiche defautes God hath suffred yow have this tribulacioun, as I have seyde yow heer bifore; for the poete seith, that we oghte patiently taken the tribulacions that comen to us whan we thynken and consideren that we han disserved to have hem; and Seint Gregorie seith, that whan a man considereth wel the nombre of his defautes and of his synnes, the weynes and the tribulacions that he suffreth semen the lesse unto hym; and in so muche as hym thynketh his synnes moore hevvy and grevous, [2690] in so

muche semeth his peyne the lightere, and the esier unto hym.

'Also ye owen to encline and bowe youre herte to take the pacience of oure Lord Jhesu Crist, as seith Seint Peter in his Epistles: "Jhesu Crist," he seith, "hath suffred for us and yeven ensample to every man to folwe and sewe hym; for he dide never synne, ne never cam ther a vileynous word out of his mouth; whan men cursed hym he cursed hem noht, and whan men betten hym he manaced hem noht." [2695] Also the grete pacience which the seintes that been in paradys han had in tribulacions that they han y-suffred withouten hir desert or gilt oghte muchel stiren yow to pacience. Forthermoore, ye sholde enforce yow to have pacience, consideryng that the tribulacions of this world but litel while endure, and soone passed been and goone, and the joye that a man seketh to have by pacience in tribulacions is perdurable, after that, the Apostle seith in his Epistle, [2700] "The joye of God," he seith, "is perdurable," that is to seyn, everelastyng.

'Also trowe and bileveth stedefastly that he nys nat wel y-norissed, ne wel y-taught, that kan nat have pacience, or wol nat receyve pacience; for Salomon seith that the doctrine and the wit of a man is knownen by pacience. And in another place he seith that he that is pacient governeth hym by greet prudence. And the same Salomon seith, "The angry and wrathful man maketh noyses, and the pacient man atempreth hem and stilleth." [2705] He seith also, "It is moore worth to be pacient, than for to be right strong," and he that may have the lordshipe of his owene herte is moore to preyse than he that by his force or strengthe taketh grete citees; and therefore seith Seint Jame in his Epistle, that pacience is a greet vertu of perfeccioun.'

'Certes,' quod Melibee, 'I graunte yow, dame Prudence, that pacience is a greet vertu of perfeccioun, but every man may nat have the perfeccioun that ye

2670. *the comune sawe*, from Seneca, *De Ira*, 34. 1.

2675. *Senec*, Publilius Syrus, *Sent.* 483.

2675. *Catoun*, *De Moribus*, iv. 39.

2680. *greved thee*, *H don the a greivaunce.*

seken, [2710] ne I nam nat of the nombre of right parfite men, for myn herte may never been in pees unto the tyme it be venged; and al be it so that it was greet peril to myne enemys to do me a vileynye in takyng vengeance upon me, yet taken they noon heede of the peril, but fulfilleden hir wikked wyl, and hir corage; and therefore, me thynketh, men oghten nat repreve me, though I putte me in a litel peril for to venge me, [2715] and though I do a greet excesse, that is to seyn, that I venge oon outrage by another.'

'A!' quod dame Prudence, 'ye seyn youre wyl and as yow liketh, but in no caas of the world a man sholde nat doon outrage, ne excesse, for to vengen hym; for Cassidore seith that as yvele dooth he that vengeth hym by outrage as he that dooth the outrage; and therefore, ye shul venge yow after the ordre of right, that is to seyn, by the lawe, and noght by excesse ne by outrage. [2720] And also, if ye wol venge yow of the outrage of youre adversaries in oother manere than right comandeth, ye synnen; and therefore seith Senec, that a man shal never vengen shrewednesse by shrewednesse. And if ye seye that right axeth a man to defenden violence by violence, and fightyng by fightyng, certes ye seye sooth, whan the defense is doon anon withouten intervale or withouten taryng or delay, for to defenden hym and nat for to vengen hym. [2725] And it bihoveth that a man putte swich attemperance in his deffense that men have no cause ne matiere to repreven hym that deffendeth hym of excesse and outrage, for ellis were it agayn resoun. Pardee ye knowen wel that ye maken no deffense as now for to deffende yow, but for to venge yow; and so sheweth it that ye han no wyl to do youre dede attempely, and therefore me thynketh that pacience is good, for Salomon seith that he that is nat pacient shal have greet harm.'

2715. *Cassidore, Variar. i. 20.*

2720. *Senec, the pseudo-Seneca, De Moribus,*

139.

2725. *sheweth, H semeth, Camb.<sup>5</sup> seweth.*

[2730] 'Certes,' quod Melibee, 'I graunte yow that whan a man is inpacient and wrooth, of that that toucheth hym noght and that aperteneth nat unto hym, though it harme hym, it is no wonder; for the lawe seith that he is coupable that entremetteth or medleth with swych thyng as aperteneth nat unto hym. And Salomon seith, that he that entremetteth hym of the noyse or strif of another man is lyk to hym that taketh an hound by the eris; for right as he that taketh a straunge hound by the eris is outhwhile biten with the hound, right in the same wise is it resoun that he have harm that by his inpacience medleth hym of the noyse of another man whereas it aperteneth nat unto hym. [2735] But ye knowen wel that this dede, that is to seyn, my grief and my disese, toucheth me right ny, and therefore, though I be wrooth and inpacient, it is no merveille; and, savyng youre grace, I kan nat seen that it myghte greetly harme me though I tooke vengeance, for I am richer and moore myghty than myne enemys been. And wel knowen ye that by moneye and by havynge grete possessions been alle the thynges of this world governed; [2740] and Salomon seith, that alle thynges obeyen to moneye.'

Whan Prudence hadde herd hir houbonde avanten hym of his richesse and of his moneye, dispreisynge the power of his adversaries, she spak, and seyde in this wise: 'Certes, deere sire, I graunte yow that ye been riche and myghty, and that the richesces been goode to hem that han wel y-geten hem and wel konne usen hem; for, right as the body of a man may nat lyven withoute the soule, namoore may it lyve withouten temporeel goodes; [2745] and for richesces may a man gete hym grete freendes. And therefore seith Pamphilles, "If a netherdes doghter," seith he, "be riche, she may chesen of a thousand men which she wol take to her

2745. *Pamphilles, Pamphilus, De Amore:*

'Dummodo sit dives cujusdam nata bubulci  
Eligit e mille quemlibet ipsa virum.'

housebonde," for of a thousand men oon wol nat forsaken hire ne refusen hire. And this Pamphilles seith also, "If thou be right happy, that is to seyn, if thou be right riche, thou shalt fynde a greet nombre of felawes and freendes; and if thy fortune change that thou wexe poure, farewel freendshipe and felaweshipe, [2750] for thou shalt be al alloone withouten any compaignye, but if it be the compaignye of poure folk." And yet seith this Pamphilles moreover, that they hat been thralle and bonde of lynage hullen been maad worthy and noble by he riches. And right so as by riches her comen manye goodes, right so by poverte come ther manye harmes and veles; for greet poverte constreyneth a nan to do manye yveles, and therefore lepeh Cassidore poverte the mooder of uync,—[2755] that is to seyn, the mooder of overthrowngye or fallyngye doun. And herfore seith Piers Alfonc, "Oon of the retteste adversitees of this world is whan a free man, by kynde or by burthe, is onstreyned by poverte to eten the lmesse of his enemy"; and the same eith Innocent in oon of his bookes; he eith that sorweful and myshappy is the ondicion of a poure beggere, for if he xe nat his mete he dyeth for hunger, [2760] and if he axe, he dyeth for shame; and algates necessitee constreyneth hym to axe. And therfore seith Salomon that et it is to dye than for to have swich overte. And as the same Salomon eith, "Bette it is to dye of bitter deeth than for to lyven in swich wise." By wise resons that I have seid unto yow, and by manye othere resons that I koude seye, I graunte yow that riches been gode to hem that geten hem wel and to em that wel usen tho riches. [2765] and therefore wol I shewe yow how ye

2750. Cassidore, *Variar.* ix. 13: 'materimum necessitas.

2755. Piers Alfonc, *Discip. Cler.* iv. 5.

2755. Innocent [III.], *De Contemptu Mundi*, 14; the passage versified by Chaucer in the rologue to the Man of Law's Tale.

2765. *wol I shewe you*, etc. The substance of the next seventy paragraphs is not given by

shul have yow, and how ye shul bere yow in gaderynge of riches, and in what manere ye shul usen hem.

'First, ye shul geten hem withouten greet desir, by good leyser, sokyngly, and nat over hastily; for a man that is to desiryngye to gete riches abaundoneth hym first to thefte, and to alle other yveles; and therfore seith Salomon, "He that hasteth hym to bisily to wexe riche shal be noon innocent." He seith also, that the riches that hastily cometh to a man soone and lightly gooth and passeth fro a man; [2770] but that riches that cometh litel and litel wexeth alwey and multiplieth. And, sire, ye shul geten riches by youre wit and by youre travaille unto youre profit, and that withouten wrong or harm-doyngye to any oother persone; for the lawe seith that ther maketh no man himselven riche if he do harm to another wight: this is to seyn, that nature deffendeth and forbedeth by right that no man make hymself riche unto the harm of another persone. [2775] And Tullius seith that no sorwe, ne no drede of death, ne no thyng that may falle unto a man, is so muchel agayns nature as a man to encressen his owene profit to the harm of another man. And though the grete men and the myghty men geten riches moore lightly than thou, yet shaltou nat been ydel ne slow to do thy profit; for thou shalt in alle wise flee ydelnesse; for Salomon seith that ydelnesse techeth a man to do manye yveles. [2780] And the same Salomon seith that he that travailleth and bisieth hym to tilien his land shal eten breed, but he that is ydel and casteth hym to no bisynesse ne occupacioun shal falle into poverte, and dye for hunger. And he that is ydel and slow kan never fynde covenable tyme for to doon his profit; for ther is a versifour seith that the ydel man excuseth hym in wynter by cause of

Albertanus Brixiensis in his *Liber Consolationis*, but he refers to a section of his own work *De Amore Dei et Proximi*, whence the French translator, whom Chaucer follows, doubtless took them.

the grete coold, and in somer by enche-  
soun of the heete. For thise causes seith  
Caton, "Waketh and enclyneth nat yow  
over muchel for to slepe, for over muchel  
reste norisseth and causeth manye vices."  
[2785] And therefore seith Seint Jerome,  
"Dooth somme goode deedes, that the  
devel, which is oure enemy, ne fynde yow  
nat unoccupied. For the devel ne taketh  
nat lightly unto his werkyng swiche as  
he fyndeth occupied in goode werkes."

"Thanne thus in getyng richesces ye  
mosten flee ydelnesse; and afterward ye  
shul use the richesces whiche ye have geten  
by youre wit and by youre travaille, in  
swich a manere that men holde nat yow  
to scars, ne to sparynge, ne to fool large,  
—that is to seyn, over large a spendere;  
[2790] for right as men blamen an avaricious  
man by cause of his scarsetee and chyngerie,  
in the same wise is he to blame that  
spendeth over largely. And therefore  
seith Caton, "Use," he seith, "thy richesces  
that thou hast geten in swich a manere  
that men have no matiere ne cause to  
calle thee neither wrecche ne chynche;  
for it is a greet shame to a man to have a  
povere herte and a riche purs." [2795] He  
seith also, "The goodes that thou hast  
y-geten, use hem by mesure, that is to  
seyn, spende hem mesurably; for they  
that folily wasten and despenden the  
goodes that they han, whan they han  
namoore propre of hir owene, they shapen  
hem to take the goodes of another man."

"I seye thanne that ye shul fleen  
avarice, usyng youre richesces in swich  
manere that men seye nat that youre  
richesces been y-buried, [2800] but that ye  
have hem in youre myght and in youre  
weeldyng; for a wys man repreveth the  
avaricious man and seith thus in two vers:  
"Wherto and why burieth a man his  
goodes by his grete avarice, and knoweth  
wel that nedes moste he dye, for deeth is  
the ende of every man, as in this present  
lyf; and for what cause or enchesoun  
joyneth he hym or knytteth he hym so  
faste unto his goodes [2805] that alle his  
wittes mowen nat disseveren hym or

departen hym from his goodes; and  
knoweth wel, or oghte knowe, that whan  
he is deed he shal no thyng bere with  
hym out of this world?" And therefore  
seith Seint Augustyn, that the avaricious  
man is likned unto helle, that the moore  
it swelweth the moore desir it hath to  
swelwe and devoure. And as wel as ye  
wolde eschewe to be called an avaricious  
man or chynche, [2810] as wel sholde ye  
kepe yow and governe yow in swich a  
wise that men calle yow nat fool-large.  
Therefore seith Tullius, "The goodes," he  
seith, "of thyn hous ne sholde nat been  
hyd, ne kept so cloos but that they myght  
been opened by pitee and debonairetee,"—  
that is to seyn, to yeven part to hem that  
han greet nede,— "ne thy goodes shullen  
nat been so opene to been every manne  
goodes."

"Afterward, in getyng of your  
richesces and in usyng hem, ye shul  
alwey have thre thynges in youre herte  
[2815] that is to seyn, oure Lord God  
conscience, and good name. First, y  
shul have God in youre herte, and for  
richeesse ye shullen do no thyng which  
may in any manere displese God, that is  
your creatour and make; for after the  
word of Salomon, "It is bettre to have  
littel good with the love of God, than to  
have muchel good and tresour and les  
the love of his Lord God." [2820] And  
the prophete seith that bettre it is to be  
a good man and have littel good and  
tresour, than to been holden a shrewd  
and have grete richesces. And yet seye  
ferthermoore, that ye sholde alwey doo  
your bisynesse to gete yow richesces, so  
that ye gete hem with good conscience  
and thapostle seith that ther nys thyng  
in this world of which we sholden have so  
greet joye as whan oure conscience beret  
us good witnesse; [2825] and the wys  
man seith, "The substance of a man is fu-  
good whan synne is nat in mannes con-  
science."

"Afterward, in getyng of your  
richesces and in usyng of hem, ye  
moste have greet bisynesse and greet

diligence that youre goode name be alwey kept and conserved, for Salomon seith that better it is and moore it availleth a man to have a good name than for to have grete riches. And therefore he seith in another place, "Do greet diligence," seith Salomon, "in keypyng of thy reend and of thy goode name, [2830] for it shal lenger abide with thee than any resour, be it never so precious." And certes, he sholde nat be called a gentil man that after God and good conscience, alle thynges left, ne dooth his diligence and bisynesse to kepen his good name. And Cassidore seith that it is signe of gentil herte whan a man loveth and esireth to han a good name. And therefore seith Seint Augustyn, that thereen two thynges that arn necessarie and edefulle, and that is, good conscience and good loos; [2835] that is to seyn, good conscience to thyn owene persone ward, and good loos for thy neighebores outward. And he that trusteth hym so muchel in his goode conscience that he spleth and setteth at noght his goode name or loos, and rekketh noght though he kepe nat his goode name, nys but a weel cherl.

"Sire, now have I shewed yow how shul do in getyng riches, and how shullen usen hem, and I se wel that the trust that ye han in youre riches wole moeve werre and bataille. [2840] I conseilte yow that ye bigynne no werre of trust of youre riches, for they ne fisen noght werres to mayntene. And therefore seith a philosopre, "That man that desireth and wole algates han werre shal never have suffisaunce, for the richer he is, the gretter despenses moste he ke if he wole have worshipe and glorie." And Salomon seith that the better riches that a man hath, the more pendours he hath. And, deere sire, be it so that for youre riches ye have muchel folk, [2845] yet bihoveth that, ne it is nat good to bigynne werre here as ye mowe in oother manere have us into youre worshipe and profit. For

the victories of batailles that been in this world lyen nat in greet nombre or multitude of the peple, ne in the vertu of man, but it lith in the wyl and in the hand of oure Lord God Almyghty.

"And therefore Judas Machabeus, which was Goddes knyght, whan he sholde fighte agayn his adversarie that hadde a greet nombre and a gretter multitude of folk and strengre than was this peple of Machabee, [2850] yet he reconforted his litel compaignye, and seyde right in this wise: "Als lightly," quod he, "may oure Lord God Almyghty yeve victorie to a fewe folk as to many folk, for the victorie of a bataille comth nat by the grete nombre of peple, but it come from oure Lord God of hevене."

"And, deere sire, for as muchel as ther is no man certein if he be worthy that God yeve hym victorie [no more than he is sure whether he is worthy of the love of God] or naught, after that Salomon seith, [2855] therfore every man sholde greetly drede werres to bigynne. And by cause that in batailles fallen manye perils, and happeth outhre while that as soone is the grete man slayn as the litel man; and as it is writen in the seconde book of Kynges, "The dedes of batailles been aventureuse and no thyng certeyne, for as lightly is oon hurt with a spere as another"; [2860] and for ther is gret peril in werre, therfore sholde a man flee and eschue werre, in as muchel as a man may goodly, for Salomon seith, "He that loveth peril shal falle in peril."

After that dame Prudence hadde spoken in this manere, Melibee answerde and seyde, "I see wel, dame Prudence, that by youre faire wordes, and by youre resouns that ye han shewed me, that the werre liketh yow no thyng; but I have nat yet herd youre conseil, how I shal do in this nede."

2845. *greet nombre*, H<sup>6</sup> *gretter* for *greet*.

2850. *compaignye*, H *peuple*.

2850. [no more, etc.] The words bracketed are supplied from the French.

2855. *manye perils*, H *many mervayles and periles*.

[2865] 'Certes,' quod she, 'I conseilte yow that ye accorde with youre adversaries and that ye have pees with nem; for Seint Jame seith, in his Epistles, that by concord and pees the smale richesses wexen grete, and by debaat and discord the grete richesses fallen down; and ye knowen wel that oon of the gretteste and moost sovereign thyng that is in this world is unytee and pees. And therefore seyde oure Lord Jhesu Crist to his Apostles in this wise, [2870] "Wel happy and blessed been they that loven and purchacen pees, for they been called children of God."'

A!' quod Melibee, 'now se I wel that ye loven nat myn honour ne myn worshipec. Ye knowen wel that myne adversaries han bigonnen this debaat and bryge by hire outrage, and ye se wel that they ne requeren ne preyen me nat of pees, ne they asken nat to be reconciled. Wol ye thanne that I go and meke me and obeye me to hem and crie hem mercy? [2875] For sothe that were nat myn worshipec; for right as men seyn that over greet humylnesse engendreth dispreysynge, so fareth it by to greet humylytee or mekenesse.'

Thanne bigan dame Prudence to maken semblant of wratthe, and seyde, 'Certes, sire, sauf youre grace, I love youre honour and youre profit as I do myn owene, and ever have doon; ne ye, ne noon oother, syen never the contraire! [2880] And yit if I hadde scyd that ye sholde han purchaced the pees and the reconciliacioun, I ne hadde nat muchel mistaken me, ne seyde amys; for the wise man seith, "the dissensioun bigynneth by another man and the reconcilyng hygynneth by thy self"; and the prophete seith, "Flee shrewednesse and do goodnesse, seke pees and folwe it, as muchel as in thee is." Yet seye I nat that ye shul rather pursue to youre adversaries for pees than they shuln to yow; [2885] for I knowe wel that ye been so

2880. *shrewednesse*, H *schame* and *schrewednesse*.

hard-herted that ye wol do no thyng for me; and Salomon seith, "He that hath over hard an herte atte laste he shal myshappe and mystyde."

Whanne Melibee hadde herd dame Prudence maken semblant of wratthe, he seyde in this wise: 'Dame, I prey yow that ye be nat displeed of thynges that I seye, for ye knowe wel that I am angry and wrooth, and that is no wonder, [2890] and they that been wrothe witen nat wel what they don, ne what they seyn; therfore the prophete seith that troubled eyen han no cleer sighte. But seyeth and conseilte me as yow liketh, for I am redy to do right as ye wol desire, and if ye repreve me of my folye I am the moore holden to love yow and preyse yow; for Salomon seith that he that repreveth hym that dooth folye [2895] he shal fynde gretter grace than he that deceyveth hym by sweete wordes.'

Thanne seyde dame Prudence, 'I make no semblant of wratthe ne anger but for youre grete profit; for Salomon seith, "He is moore worth that repreveth or chideth a fool for his folye, shewyng hym semblant of wratthe, than he that supporteth hym and preyseth hym in his mysdoynge, and laugheth at his folye." And this same Salomon seith afterward that by the sorweful visage of a man, that is to seyn, by the sory and hevye contenance of a man, [2900] the fool correcteth and amendeth hymself.'

Thanne seyde Melibee, 'I shal nat konne answere to so manye faire resouns as ye putten to me and shewen; seyeth shortly youre wyl and youre conseil, and I am al redy to fulfille and parfourne it.'

Thanne dame Prudence discovered a hir wyl to hym, and seyde, 'I conseilte yow,' quod she, 'aboven alle thynges that ye make pees bitwene God and yow [2905] and beth reconciled unto hym and to his grace; for as I have seyde yow hee biforn, God hath suffred yow to have this tribulacioun and discise for youre synnes, and if ye do as I sey yow, God

2900. *hir wyl*, H *hire counsail* and *hire wille*.

wol sende youre adversaries unto yow and maken hem fallen at youre feet redy to do youre wyl and youre comandementz; for Salomon seith, "Whan the condicioun of man is plesaunt and likyng to God, [2910] he chaungeth the hertes of the mannes adversaries and constreyneth hem to biseken hym of pees and of grace." And I prey yow, lat me speke with youre adversaries in privee place; for they shul nat knowe that it be of youre wyl or youre assent; and thanne, whan I knowe hir wil and hire entente, I may conseilte yow the moore surely.'

'Dame,' quod Melibee, 'dooth youre wil and youre likyng, [2915] for I putte me hoolly in youre disposicioun and ordinance.'

Thanne dame Prudence, whan she saugh the goode wyl of hir housbonde, delibered and took avys in herself, thinkynge how she myghte bryng this nede into a good conclusioun and to a good ende. And whan she saugh hir tyme to be sente for these adversaries to come into hire into a pryvee place, and shewed wisely unto hem the grete goodes that comen of pees, [2920] and the grete armes and perils that been in werre; and seyde to hem in a goodly manere how that hem oughten have greet repentance of the injurie and wrong that they hadden doon to Melibee, hir lord, and to hire, and to hire doghter.

And whan they herden the goodliche wordes of dame Prudence, they weren so surprised and ravysshed, and hadden so greet joye of hire, that wonder was to alle. [2925] 'A! lady,' quod they, 'ye unshewed unto us the blessyng of rettesse after the sawc of David the prophete; for the reconsilyng which we seen nat worthy to have in no manere, it we oghte requeren it with greet conecioun and humylitee, ye, of youre grete godnesse, have presented unto us. Now se we wel that the science and the wysnyng of Salomon is ful trewe, [2930] for he seith that sweete wordes muliplieren and encreesen freendes, and

maken shrewes to be debonaire and meeke.

'Certes,' quod they, 'we putten oure dede and al oure matere and cause al hoolly in youre goode wyl, and been redy to obeye to the speche and comandement of my lord Melibee. And therefore, deere and benygne lady, we preien yow and biseke yow as mekely as we konne and mowen, that it lyke unto youre grete goodnesse to fulfillen in dede youre goodliche wordes, [2935] for we consideren and knowelichen that we han offended and greved my lord Melibee out of mesure, so ferforth that we be nat of power to maken his amendes; and therefore we oblige and bynden us and oure freendes to doon al his wyl and his comandementz. But peraventure he hath swich hevynesse and swich wratthe to usward by cause of oure offense, that he wole enjoyne us swich a peyne as we mowe nat bere ne susteene, [2940] and therefore, noble lady, we biseke to youre wommanly pitee to taken swich avysement in this nede that we, ne oure freendes, be nat desherited, ne destroyed, thurgh oure folye.'

'Certes,' quod Prudence, 'it is an hard thyng and right perilous that a man putte hym al outrely in the arbitracioun and juggement, and in the myght and power of his enemys, for Salomon seith, "Leeveth me, and yeveth credence to that I shal seyn; I seye," quod he, "ye people, folk and governours of hoolly chirche, [2945] to thy sone, to thy wyf, to thy freend, ne to thy broother, ne yeve thou never myght ne maistrie of thy body whil thou lyvest."

'Now sithen he deffendeth that man shal nat yeven to his broother, ne to his freend, the myght of his body, by strenger resoun he deffendeth and forbedeth a man to yeven hymself to his enemy. And natheles I conseilte you that ye mystruste nat my lord; [2950] for I woot wel and knowe verraily that he is debonaire and meeke, large, curteys, and no thyng desirous, ne coveitous of good ne richesse;

for ther nys nothyng in this world that he desireth, save oonly worshiþe and honour. Forthermoore I knowe wel and am right seur that he shal no thyng doon in this nede withouten my conseil, and I shal so werken in this cause that, by grace of oure Lord God, ye shul been reconciled unto us.'

[2955] Thanne seyden they with o voys, 'Worshipful lady, we putten us and oure goodes al fully in youre wil and disposicioun, and been redy to comen what day that it like unto youre noblesse to lymyte us or assigne us, for to maken oure obligacioun and boond as strong as it liketh unto youre goodnesse, that we mowe fulfillle the wille of yow and of my lord Melibee.'

Whan dame Prudence hadde herd the answeres of thise men, she bad hem goon agayn prively, [2960] and she returned to hir lord Melibee, and tolde hym how she foond his adversaries ful repentant, knowelechyng ful lowely hir synnes and trespas, and how they were redy to suffren all peyne, requiryng and preiynge hym of mercy and pitee.

Thanne seyde Melibee, 'He is wel worthy to have pardoun and foryifnesse of his synne that excuseth nat his synne, but knowlecheth it and repenteth hym, axinge indulgence. [2965] For Senec seith, "Ther is the remissioun and foryifnesse, where as confessioun is"; for confessioun is neigheboore to innocence. And he saith in another place that he that hath shame of his synne, and knowlecheth it, is worthi remyssion. And therefore I assente and conforme me to have pees; but it is good that we do it nat with-outen the assent and wyl of oure freendes.'

Thanne was Prudence right glad and joyeful, and seyde, [2970] 'Certes, sire,' quod she, 'ye han wel and goodly

2965. *Senec*, the pseudo-Seneca, *De Moribus*, 94.

2965. *And he saith* . . . *remyssion*, text from Petworth and Lansdowne (the latter reading *mercy* for *remyssion*); other MSS. omit wholly or in part.

answered, for right as by the conseil, assent and helpe of youre freendes, ye han been stired to venge yow and maken werre, right so withouten hire conseil shul ye nat accorden yow, ne have pees with youre adversaries; for the lawe seith, "Ther nys no thyng so good by wey of kynde as a thyng to been unbounde by hym that it was y-bounde."

And thanne dame Prudence, withouten delay or tariynge, sente anon hire messages for hire kyn and for hire olde freendes, whiche that were trewe and wyse, [2975] and tolde hem by ordre, in the presence of Melibee, al this mateere as it is aboven expressed and declared, and preyden that they wolde yeven hire avys and conseil, what best were to doon in this nede. And whan Melibees freendes hadde taken hire avys and deliberacioun of the forseide mateere, and hadden examyned it by greet bisynesse and greet diligence, they yave ful conseil for to have pees and reste, [2980] and that Melibee sholde receyve with good herte hise adversaries to foryifnesse and mercy.

And whan dame Prudence hadde herd the assent of hir lord Melibee, and the conseil of his freendes accorde with hire wille and hire entencioun, she was wonderly glad in hire herte and seyde, 'Ther is an old proverbe,' quod she, 'seith that the goodnesse that thou mayst do this day, do it, [2985] and abide nat, ne delaye it nat til to morwe. And therefore I conseilte that ye sende youre messages, swiche as been discrete and wise, unto youre adversaries, tellyng hem on youre bihalve, that if they wole trete of pees and of accord, [2990] that they shape hem withouten delay or tariynge, to comen unto us.' Which thyng parfourned was in dede; and whanne these trespassours and repentynge folk of hire folies,—that is to seyn, the adversaries of Melibee,—hadden herd what these messagers seyden unto hem, they weren right glad and joyeful, and answereden ful mekely and benignely, yeldyng graces and thankynges to hir lord Melibee and to al his com-



paignye, [2995] and shopen hem withouten delay to go with the messagers, and obeye to the comandement of hir lord Melibee.

And right anon they taken hire way to the court of Melibee, and taken with hem somme of hire trewe freendes to maken feith for hem and for to been hire borwes. And whan they were comen to the presence of Melibee, he seyde hem thise wordes: 'It standeth thus,' quod Melibee, 'and sooth it is, that ye, [3000] causeless and withouten skile and resoun, han doon grete injuries and wronges to me and to my wyf Prudence, and to my loghter also; for ye han entred in to myn hous by violence, and have doon swich outrage that alle men knowen wel that ye have disserved the deeth, and therefore wol I knowe and wite of yow [3005] whether ye wol putte the punyusement and the chastisyng and the vengeance of his outrage in the wyl of me and of my wyf Prudence, or ye wol nat?'

Thanne the wiseste of hem thre answerde for hem alle, and seyde, 'Sire,' quod he, 'we knowen wel that we been unworthy to comen unto the court of so greet a lord, and so worthy as ye been, for we han so greetly mystaken us, and han offended and agilt in swich a wise agayn youre heigh lordshipe that trewely we han disserved the deeth; [3010] but for that the grete goodnesse and debonrettee that al the world witnesseth in youre persone, we submytten us to the excellence and benignitee of youre gracious lordshipe, and been redy to obeie to alle youre comandementz, bisekyng yow that of youre merciable pitee ye wol considere oure grete repentaunce and lough bmyssioun, and graunten us foryevesse of oure outrageous trespas and offence; [3015] for wel we knowe that youre liberal grace and mercy stretchen us farther into goodnesse than doon oure outrageous giltes and trespas into wickednesse; al be it that cursedly and unpunably we han agilt agayn youre heigh lordshipe.'

Thanne Melibee took hem up fro the ground ful benignely, and receyved hire obligaciouns and hir boondes by hire othes upon hire plegges and borwes, and assigned hem a certeyn day to retourne unto his court, [3020] for to accepte and receyve the sentence and juggement that Melibee wolde comande to be doon on hem by the causes aforeseyd; whiche thynges ordeyned, every man returned to his hous.

And whan that dame Prudence saugh hir tyme, she freyned and axed hir lord Melibee what vengeance he thoughte to taken of his adversaries.

To which Melibee answerde and seyde, 'Certes,' quod he, 'I thynke and purpose me fully [3025] to desherite hem of al that ever they han, and for to putte hem in exil for ever.'

'Certes,' quod dame Prudence, 'this were a cruel sentence and muchel agayn resoun; for ye been riche ynough and han no nede of oother mennes good, and ye myghte lightly in this wise gete yow a covetous name, which is a vicious thyng and oghte been eschued of every good man; [3030] for after the sawe of the word of the Apostle, "Coveitise is roote of alle harmes." And therefore it were bettre for yow to lese so muchel good of youre owene than for to taken of hir good in this manere; for bettre it is to lesen with worshipe, than it is to wynne with vileynye and shame; and everi man oghte to doon his diligence and his bisynesse to geten hym a good name. And yet shal he nat oonly bisie hym in keypyng of his good name, [3035] but he shal also enforcen hym alwey to do som thyng by which he may renouvelle his good name; for it is writen "that the olde good loos and good name of a man is soone goon and passed whan it is nat newed ne renouvellel."

'And as touchyng that ye seyn ye wole exile youre adversaries, that thynketh me muchel agayn resoun, and out of mesure, considered the power that they han yewe yow upon hemself. [3040] And

it is writen that he is worthy to lesen his privilege that mysuseth the myght and the power that is yeven hym. And I sette cas, ye myghte enjoyne hem that peyne by right and by lawe, which I trowe ye mowe nat do; I seye ye mighte nat putten it to execuciouun peraventure, and thanne were it likly to retourne to the werre as it was biforn; [3045] and therfore if ye wole that men do yow obeisance, ye moste deemen moore curteisly, this is to seyn, ye moste yeven moore esy sentences and juggedmentz. For it is writen that he that moost curteisly comandeth, to hym men moost obeyen. And therfore I prey yow that in this necessitee and in this nede ye caste yow to overcome yowre herte. For Senec seith that he that overcometh his herte overcometh twies; [3050] and Tullius seith, "Ther is no thyng so comendable in a greet lord as when he is debonaire and meeke, and appeseth lightly." And I prey yow that ye wole forbere now to do vengeance in swich a manere, that youre goode name may be kept and conserved, and that men mowe have cause and mateere to preyse yow of pitee and of mercy, [3055] and that ye have no cause to repente yow of thyng that ye doon; for Senec seith, "He overcometh in an yvel manere that repenteth hym of his victorie." Wherfore, I pray yow, lat mercy been in youre mynde and in youre herte, to theffect and entente that God Almyghty have mercy on yow in his laste juggedment; for Seint Jame seith in his Epistle, "Juggedment withouten mercy shal be doon to hym that hath no mercy of another wight!"

[3060] Whanne Melibee hadde herd the grete skiles and resouns of dame Prudence, and hire wise informaciouns and techynges, his herte gan enclyne to the wil of his wyf, considerynge hir trewe entente, and conformed hym anon and

3045. *Senec seith*, Publil. Syrus, Sent. 64: 'Bis vincit qui se in victoria vincit.'

3050. *Tullius, De Offic.* i. 25. 88.

3055. *Senec seith*, Publil. Syrus, Sent. 366.

3055. *mercy, H mercy and pite.*

assented fully to werken after hir conseil; and thonked God, of whom procedeth al vertu and alle goodnesse, that hym sente a wyf of so greet discrecioun.

And whan the day cam that his adversaries sholde appieren in his presence, [3065] he spak unto hem ful goodly, and seyde in this wyse: 'Al be it so that of youre pride and presumpcioun and folie, and of youre necligence and unkonnyng, ye have mysborn yow and trespassed unto me; yet, for as muche as I see and biholde youre grete humylitee, [3070] and that ye been sory and repentant of youre giltes, it constreyneth me to doon yow grace and mercy. Therfore I receyve yow to my grace and foryeve yow outrely alle the offenses, injuries and wronges that ye have doon agayn me and myne; to this effect and to this ende, that God of his endeeles mercy wole at the tyme of oure diynge foryeven us oure giltes that we han trespassed to hym in this wretched world; [3075] for doutelees if we be sory and repentant of the synnes and giltes whiche we han trespassed in the sighte of oure Lord God, he is so free and so merciabe that he wole foryeven us oure giltes, and bryngen us to his blisse that never hath ende.' *Amen.*

*The murye wordes of the Hoost to the Monk*

Whan ended was my tale of Melibee, And of Prudence and hire benignytee, Oure Hosté seyde, 'As I am feithful man, And by that precious corpus Madrian, I haddé leveré than a barel ale 308; That goodélief my wyf hadde herd this tale For she nys no thyng of swich pacience As was this Melibeus wyf Prudence. By Goddés bonés! whan I bete my knaves She bryngeth me forth the greté clobbét staves

And crieth, "Slee the doggès everichoon

3060. *conseil, H reed and counseil.*

3082. *corpus Madrian*, the body of S. Mathurin which wold not accept burial except in France and then worked miracles.

And brek hem, bothé bak and every  
boon !” 3090

‘And if that any neighebore of myne  
Wol nat in chirché to my wyf enclnye,  
Or be so hardy to hire to trespacé,  
Whan she comth home she rampeth in  
my face,

And crieth, “Falsé coward ! wrek thy wyf !  
By corpus bonés ! I wol have thy knyf,  
And thou shalt have my distaf and go  
spynne !”

Fro day to nyght, right thus she wol  
bigynne,— 3098

“Allas !” she seith, “that ever I was shape  
To wedden a milksope or a coward ape,  
That wol been overlad with every wight !  
Thou darst nat stonden by thy wyvès  
right !”

‘This is my lif, but if that I wol fighte ;  
And out at dore anon I moot me dighte,  
Or elles I am but lost, but if that I  
Be lik a wildé leoun, fool-hardy.

I woot wel she wol do me slee som day  
Som neighebore, and thanné go my way ;  
For I am perilous with knyf in honde ;  
Al be it that I dar hire nat withstonde,  
For she is byg in armés, by my feith, 3111  
That shal he fynde that hire mysdooth  
or seith.

But lat us passe away fro this mateere.

‘My lord the Monk,’ quod he, ‘be  
myrie of cheere,

For ye shul telle a talé trewély.

Ó ! Rouchéstre stant heer fasté by !

Lyde forth, myn owenè lord, brek nat  
oure game,

But by my trouthe I knowè nat youre  
name,— 3118

Wher shal I callé you my lord daun John,  
Or daun Thomás, or ellés daun Albon ?

Of what hous be ye, by youre fader kyn ?  
Howe vowe to God, thou hast a ful fair skyn !

Wher is a gentil pasture ther thou goost ;

How art nat lyk a penant, or a goost.

How pon my feith, thou art som officer,

Or som worthy sexteyn, or som celerer,

Or by my fader soule, as to my doom

How art amaister, whan thou art at hoom ;

How poure cloysterer, ne no novys,

3125. *som*, H an.

Bút a governour, wily and wys, 3130  
And therewithal of brawnés and of bones,

A wel-farynge personé, for the nones.

I pray to God, yeve hym confusioun

That first thee broghte unto religioun.

Thou woldest han been a tredéfowel aright ;

Haddestow as greet a leeve as thou hast  
myght

To parfourne al thy lust in engendrure,  
Thou haddest bigeten ful many a créature.

Allas ! why werestow so wyd a cope ? 3139

God yeve me sorwe ! but and I were a pope,

Nat oonly thou, but every myghty man,

Though he wereshorn ful hye upon his pan,

Sholde have a wyf,—for al the world is  
lorn ;

Religioun hath take up al the corn

Of tredyng, and we borel men been  
shrympes ;

Of fieble trees ther comen wrecched ympes.

This maketh that oure heirés beth so  
sklendre

And feble that they may nat wel engendre ;

This maketh that oure wyvès wole assaye

Religious folk, for ye mowe better paye

Of Venus paiémantz than mowè we. 3151

God woot, no Lusshéburghes payen ye !

But be nat wrooth, my lord, for that I  
pleye.

Ful ofte in game a soothe I have herd seye !’

This worthy Monk took al in pacience

And seyde, ‘I wol doon al in my diligence,

As fer as sowneth into honestee,

To tellé yow a tale, or two, or three ;

And if yow list to herkne hyderward,

I wol yow seyn the lyf of Seint Edward,

Or ellis, first, tragédies wol I telle, 3161

Of whiche I have an hundred in my celle.

‘Tragédie is to seyn a certeyn storie,

As oldé bookès maken us memórie,

Of hym that stood in greet prosperitee,

And is y-fallen out of heigh degree

Into myserie, and endeth wrecchedly ;

And they ben versifiéd communely

Of six feet, which men clepen exametron.

In prose eek been endited many oon, 3170

3137. *lust*, H *wil*.

3138. *ful*, om. H<sup>5</sup>.

3152. *Lusshéburghes*, base coins imported  
from Luxemburg.

And eek in meetre in many a sondry wyse ;  
 Lo, this declaryng oghte ynogh suffise.  
 Now herkneth, if yow liketh for to heere ;  
 But first, I yow biseeke in this mateere,  
 Though I by ordre tellé nat these thynges  
 Be it of popés, emperours, or kynges,  
 After hir agés as men writen fynde,  
 But tellen hem, som bifore and som  
 bihynde,  
 As it now comth unto my remembraunce,  
 Have me excuséd of myn ignoraunce.' 3180

### MONK'S TALE

*Heere bigynneth The Monkes Tale, de  
 Casibus Virorum Illustrum*

I wol biwaille, in manere of tragédie,  
 The harm of hem that stooode in heigh  
 degree,  
 And fillen so that ther nas no remédie  
 To brynge hem out of hir adversitee ;  
 For certain, whan that Fortune list to flee,  
 Ther may no man the cours of hire with-  
 holde.  
 Lat no man truste on blynd prosperitee ;  
 Be war by these ensamplés trewe and olde.

At LUCIFER,—though he an angel were,  
 And nat a man,—at hym wol I bigynne,  
 For though Fortuné may noon angel dere,  
 From heigh degree yet fel he for his synne  
 Doun into hellé, where he yet is inne.  
 O Lucifer ! brightest of angels alle,  
 Now artow Sathanas, that mayst nat  
 twynne  
 Out of miserie in which that thou art falle.

Lo ADAM, in the feeld of Damysene,  
 With Goddés owné fynger wrought was he,  
 And nat bigeten of mannés sperme unclene,  
 And welte all paradys savyngé o tree. 3200

*De Casibus Virorum Illustrum.* The title indicates Chaucer's obligations to Boccaccio's *De Cas. Vir. et Feminarum Illust.*, from which and the same author's *De Claris Mulieribus*, Boethius, *De Consolatione*, the *Roman de la Rose*, and the Bible the monk takes his 'old ensamples.'

3189. *Lucifer*, Chaucer's addition ; Boccaccio begins with Adam.

3197. *Damysene*, Damascus ; Boccaccio's 'Ager, qui postea Damascenus.'

Hadde never worldly man so heigh degree  
 As Adam, til he for mys-governaunce  
 Was dryven out of hys hye prosperitee  
 To labour, and to helle, and to mes-  
 chaunce.

Lo SAMPSON, which that was annunciat  
 By angel, longe er his nativitee,  
 And was to God Almyghty consecrat,  
 And stood in noblesse whil he myghté see.  
 Was never swich another as was hee,  
 To speke of strengthe, and therwith  
 hardynesse ; 3210  
 But to his wyvés toolde he his secree,  
 Thurgh whiche he slow hymself for  
 wrecchednesse.

Sampson, this noble almyghty champioun,  
 Withouten wepene save his handés tweye,  
 He slow and al to-renté the leoun,  
 Toward his weddyng walkyngé by the  
 weye.  
 His falsé wyf koude hym so plesé and  
 preye  
 Til she his conseil knew ; and she, un-  
 trewe,  
 Unto his fous his conseil gan biwreye,  
 And hym forsook, and took another newe

Thre hundred foxes took Sampson for ire  
 And alle hir taylès he togydré bond,  
 And sette the foxes taylès alle on fire,  
 For he on every tayl had knyt a brond ;  
 And they brende alle the cornés in tha  
 lond,  
 And alle hire olyveres, and vynés eke.  
 A thousand men he slow eek with hi  
 hond,  
 And hadde no wepene but an asses cheke

Whan they were slayn so thurstéd hyr  
 that he 3220  
 Was wel ny lorn, for which he gan to prey  
 That God wolde on his peyne han sor  
 pitee,  
 And sende hym drynke, or ellés most  
 he deye  
 And of this asses cheké, that was dreye

3205. *annunciat*, from Boccaccio 'Prænu-  
 ante per angelum Deo,' but Chaucer takes his  
 points mainly from the Bible.

Out of a wang-tooth sprang anon a welle,  
Of which he drank ynow, shortly to seyè ;  
Thus heelpè hym God, as *Judicum* can  
telle.

By verray force at Gazan, on a nyght,  
Maugree Philistiens of that citee,  
The gatès of the toun he hath up-plyght,  
And on his bak y-caryed hem hath hee 3240  
Hye on an hillè, that men myghte hem see.  
O noble, almyghty Sampson, liefanddeere,  
Had thou nat toold to wommen thy secree,  
In all this world ne haddè been thy peere !

This Sampson never ciser drank, ne wyn,  
Ne on his heed cam rasour noon, ne sheere,  
By precept of the messenger divyn ;  
For alle his strengthès in his heerès were ;  
And fully twenty wynter, yeer by yeere,  
He hadde of Israel the governaunce ; 3250  
But soonè shal he wepè many a teere,  
For wommen shal hym bryngen to mes-  
chaunce.

Unto his lemman Dalida he tolde  
That in his heeris al his strengthè lay,  
And falsly to his foomen she hym soldè ;  
And slepyng in hir barm upon a day  
She made to clippe or shere his heres away,  
And made his foomen al his craft espyen ;  
And whan that they hym foond in this array,  
They bounde hym faste and putten out  
his eyen. 3260

But er his heer were clippèd or y-shave,  
Ther was no boond with which men  
myghte him bynde ;

But now is he in prison in a cave,  
Where-as they made hym at the queerne  
grynde.

O noble Sampson, strongest of mankynde,  
O whilom juge, in glorie and in richesse !  
Now maystow wepen with thyne eyen  
blynde,

Sith thou fro wele art falle in wrecched-  
nesse.

Thende of this caytyf was as I shal seye ;  
His foomen made a feeste upon a day,  
And made hym as a fool biforn hem pleye ;

3236. *Judicum*, Book of Judges.

And this was in a temple of greet array ;  
But attè laste he made a foul affray ;  
For he the pilers shook and made hem  
falle,

And doun fil temple and al, and ther it lay ;  
And slow hymself, and eek his foomen alle :

This is to seyn, the prynces everichoon ;  
And eek thre thousand bodyes were ther  
slayn

With fallynge of the gretè temple of stoon.  
Of Sampson now wol I namoorè sayn ; 3280  
Beth war by this ensample oold and playn  
That no men telle hir conseil til hir wyves  
Of swich thynge as they wolde han secree  
fayn,

If that it touche hir lymès or hir lyvès.

Of HERCULES, the sovereyn conquer-  
our,

Syngen his werkès laude and heigh renoun ;  
For in his tyme of strengthe he was the flour.  
He slow, and rafte the skyn of the leoun ;  
He of Centauros leyde the boost adoun ;  
He Arpies slow, the cruel bryddès felle ;  
He golden apples rafte of the dragoun ;  
He drow out Cerberus, the hound of helle ;

He slow the cruel tyrant Busirus,  
And made his hors to frete hym, flesh  
and boon ;

He slow the firy serpent venymus ; 3295  
Of Acheloy's two hornès he brak oon ;  
And he slow Cacus in a cave of stoon ;  
He slow the geant Anthèus the stronge ;  
He slow the grisly boor, and that anon ;  
And bar the hevене on his nekkè longe.

Was never wight sith that this world bigan,  
That slow so many monstres as dide he ;  
Thurghout this wydè world his namè ran,

3274. *the*, H<sup>6</sup> two.

3285. *Hercules*. In this and the next stanza  
Chaucer follows closely Boethius, *De Consola-  
tione*, Bk. v. Met. 7, keeping some of the phrases  
of his own translation.

3293. *Busirus*, Busiris, King of Egypt, who  
offered strangers in sacrifice.

3296. *Acheloy's*. The river-god turned himself  
into a bull to fight Hercules the better.

3296. *brak*, H *raft*.

3297. *Cacus*, who stole the cattle of Hercules.

3298. *Anthèus*, Antæus.

What for his strengthe and for his heigh  
 bountee,  
 And every reawmè wente he for to see.  
 He was so stroong that no man myghte  
 hym lette ;  
 At bothe the worldès endès, seith Tro-  
 phee,  
 In stide of boundès he a pileer sette.

A lemman hadde this noble champioun,  
 That hightè Dianira, fressh as May; 3310  
 And as thise clerkès maken mentioun,  
 She hath hym sent a shertè, fressh and gay.  
 Allas, thissherte—allas, and weylaway !—  
 Envenymed was so subtilly withalle,  
 That er that he had wered it half a day,  
 It made his flessch al from his bonès falle;

But nathélees somme clerkès hire excusen  
 By oon that hightè Nessus, that it maked.  
 Be as be may, I wol hire noght accusen ;  
 But on his bak this shertè he wered al  
 naked, 3320  
 Til that his flessch was for the venym  
 blaked ;  
 And whan he saugh noon oother remedye,  
 In hootè coles he hath hymselfen raked ;  
 For with no venym deigned hym to dye.

Thus starf this worthy, myghty Hercules.  
 Lo ! who may truste on Fortune any  
 throwe ?  
 For hym that folweth al this world of  
 prees,  
 Er he be war, is ofte y-leyd ful lowe.  
 Ful wys is he that kan hymselfen knowe !  
 Beth war, for whan that Fortune list to  
 glose, 3330  
 Thanne wayteth she hir man to over-  
 throwe  
 By swich a wey as he wolde leest suppose.

The myghty trone, the precious tresor,  
 The glorious ceptre, and roial magestee  
 That hadde the kyng NABUGODONOSOR,

3307. *Trophee*. E and Heng., wiser than any modern commentator, append the note 'Ille vates Chaldeorum Tropheus'!

3318. *Nessus*, the Centaur whom Hercules slew.

With tonge unnethè may discryvèd bee.  
 He twyès wan Jerusalem the citee ;  
 The vessel of the temple he with hym  
 ladde.  
 At Babiloigné was his sovereyn see, 3339  
 In which his glorie and his delit he hadde.

The faireste children of the blood roial  
 Of Israel he leet do gelde anon,  
 And makèd ech of hem to been his thral.  
 Amongès othere Daniel was oon,  
 That was the wiseste child of everychon,  
 For he the dremès of the kyng expowned,  
 Where-as in Chaldeye clerk ne was ther  
 noon,  
 That wistè to what fyn his dremès sowned.

This proudè kyng leet maken a statue of  
 gold, 3349  
 Sixty cubitès long and sevene in brede,  
 To which ymagè bothè yonge and oold  
 Comanded he to loute, and have in drede,  
 Or in a fourneys, ful of flambès rede,  
 He shal be brent, that woldè noght obeye .  
 But never wolde assentè to that dede  
 Daniel, ne his yongè felawes tweye.

This kyng of kyngès proud was and elaat ;  
 He wende that God that sit in magestee  
 Ne myghte hym nat bireve of his estaat ;  
 But sodeynly he loste his dignytee 3360  
 And lyk a beest hym semèd for to bee ;  
 And eet hey as an oxe, and lay theroute  
 In reyn ; with wildè beestès walkèd he  
 Til certein tymè was y-come aboute ;

And lik an eglès fetheres wex his heres ;  
 His naylès lik a briddès clawès were ;  
 Til God relessèd hym a certeyn yeres,  
 And yaf hym wit, and thanne with many  
 a teere  
 He thankèd God, and ever his lyf in feere  
 Was he to doon amys, or moore trespæce ;  
 And, til that tyme he leyd was on his  
 beere, 3371  
 He knew that God was ful of myght and  
 grace.

3365. *wex*, emend. Skeat for *wax* (E) and *were* (H<sup>3</sup>) etc. of MSS.

His soné, which that highté BALTHASAR,  
 That heeld the regne after his fader day,  
 He by his fader koudé nocht be war;  
 For proud he was of herte and of array,  
 And eek an ydolastré he was ay.  
 His hye estaat assuréd hym in pryde;  
 But Fortune caste hym down and ther  
 he lay,  
 And sodeynly his regné gan divide. 3380

A feeste he made unto his lordés alle,  
 Upon a tyme, and bad hem bliþhé bee;  
 And thanne his officerés gan he calle,—  
 'Gooth, bryngeth forth the vessellés,  
 quod he,  
 'Whiche that my fader in his prosperitee  
 Out of the temple of Jerusalem birafte,  
 And to our hyé goddés thanké we  
 Of honour that oure eldrés with us lafte.'

Hys wyf, his lordés, and his concubynes  
 Ay dronken, whil hire appetités laste, 3390  
 Out of these noble vessels sondry wynes;  
 And on a wal this kyng his eyen caste,  
 And saugh an hand, armlees, that wroot  
 ful fast;  
 For feere of which he quook, and sikéd  
 soore.

This hand, that Balthasar so soore agaste,  
 Wroot *Mane, techel, phares*, and namoore.

In al that land magicien was noon  
 That koude expoundé what this lettré  
 mente;  
 But Daniel expowned it anon, 3399  
 And seyde, 'King, God to thy fader sente  
 Glorie and honour, regné, tresour, rente,  
 And he was proud, and no-thing God  
 ne dradde,  
 And therefore God greet wreche upon  
 hym sente,  
 And hym birafte the regné that he hadde;

'He was out-cast of mannés compaignye;  
 With asses was his habitacioun,  
 And eet hey as a beest in weet and drye,  
 Til that he knew, by grace and by resoun,

3384. *vesselles*. Only *Corpus* and *Lansdowne*  
 make this a trisyllable here.

That God of hevене hath domynacioun  
 Over every regne and every créature; 3410  
 And thanne hadde God of hym com-  
 passioun,  
 And hym restored his regne and his figure.

'Eek thou that art his sone art proud also,  
 And knowest alle these thyngés verrailly,  
 And art rebel to God and art his foo;  
 Thou drank eek of his vessels boldély;  
 Thy wyf eek, and thy wenchés, synfully  
 Dronke of the samé vessels sondry wynys,  
 And heriest false goddés cursedly;  
 Therfore to thee y-shapenful greet pyne ys.

'This hand was sent from God, that on  
 the wal 3421  
 Wroot, "*Mane, techel, phares*," trusté  
 me,—

Thy regne is doon, thou weyest nocht at al,  
 Dyvyded is thy regne, and it shal be  
 To Medés and to Persés yeve,' quod he.  
 And thilké samé nyght this kyng was  
 slawe,  
 And Darius occupieth his degree,  
 Thogh he therto hadde neither right ne  
 lawe.

Lordynges, ensample heer-by may ye  
 take, 3429  
 How that in lordshipe is no sikernesse;  
 For whan Fortuné wole a man forsake,  
 She bereth away his regne and his richesse,  
 And eek his freendés, bothé moore and  
 lesse;  
 For what man that hath freendés thurgh  
 Fortuné  
 Mishape wol maken hem enemys, as I  
 gesse;  
 This proverbe is ful sooth and ful com-  
 mune.

CENOBIA, of Palymerie queene,—  
 As writen Persiens of hir noblesse,—  
 So worthy was in armés, and so keene,  
 That no wight passéd hire in hardynesse,  
 Ne in lynage, ne in oother gentillesse.

3437. *Cenobia*. The account of Zenobia follows  
 closely, omitting details of battles, Boccaccio's  
*De Claris Mulieribus*, cap. 98.

Of kynges blood of Perce is she descended;  
I seyde nat that she hadde moost fairnesse,  
But of hire shape she myghte nat been  
amended.

From hire childhede I fyndè that she fledde  
Office of wommen, and to wode she went,  
And many a wildè hertès blood she shedde  
With arwès brodé that she to hem sente;  
She was so swift that she anon hem hente,  
And whan that she was elder she wolde  
kille 3450

Leouns, leopardes, and berès al to-rente,  
And in hir armès weelde hem at hir wille.

She dorstè wildè beestès dennès seke,  
And rennen in the montaignesal the nyght,  
And slepen under the bussh; and she  
koude eke

Wrastlen, by verray force and verray myght,  
With any yong man, were he never so  
wight.

Ther myghtè no thyng in hir armès stonde.  
She kepte hir maydenhod from every  
wight; 3459  
To no man deignéð hire for to be bonde;

But attè laste hir freendès han hire maried  
To Onédake, a prynce of that contree;  
Al were it so that she hem longè taried.  
And ye shul understandè how that he  
Hadde swichè fantasies as haddè she;  
But nathélees, whan they were knyht infeere,  
They lyved in joye and in felicitee,  
Forech of hem hadde oother lief and deere,

Save o thyng, that she wolde never assente  
By no wey that he sholdè by hire lye 3470  
But onès, for it was hir pleyn entente  
To have a child the world to multiplye;  
And also soone as that she myghte espye  
That she was nat with childè with that  
dede,

Thanne wolde she suffre hym doon his  
fantasye  
Eft soone, and nat but oonès, out of drede;

And if she were with childe at thilkè cast,

3477-80. Chaucer here misunderstands his  
original.

Na moorè sholde he pleyen thilkè game,  
Til fully fourty dayès weren past;  
Thanne wolde she onès suffre hym do  
the same. 3480

Al were this Onédakè wilde or tame  
Hegat na moore of hire, for thus she seyde,  
It was to wyyvès lecherie and shame,  
In oother caas, if that men with hem pleyde.

Two sonès by this Onédake hadde she,  
The whiche she kepte in vertu and lettrure;  
But now unto our talè turnè we.  
I seye so worshipful a creature,  
And wys ther-with, and largè with mesure,  
So penyble in the werre, and curteis eke,  
Ne moorè labour myghte in werre endure,  
Was noon, though al this world men  
sholdè seke.

Hir riche array ne myghtè nat be told,  
As wel in vessel as in hire clothyng.  
She was al clad in perree and in gold,  
And eek she laftè noght, for noon huntyng,  
To have of sondry tongès ful knowyng,  
Whan that she leysur hadde; and for to  
entende

To lernè bookès was al hire likyng, 3499  
How she in vertu myghte hir lyf dispende.

And, shortly of this storie for to trete,  
So doghty was hir housbonde and eek she,  
That they conquéréd manye regnès grete  
In the Orient, with many a faire citee  
Apertenaunt unto the magestee  
Of Romè, and with strong hond held  
hem faste,  
Nenever myghte hir foomen doon hem flee,  
Ay, whil that Onédakès dayès laste.

Hir batailles, whoso list hem for to rede,—  
Agayn Sapor the kyng and othere mo, 3510  
And how that al this proces fil in dede,  
Why she conquered, and what title had  
therto,  
And after of hir meschief and hire wo,  
How that she was bisegéd and y-take,—

3487. tale, H *purpos.*

3492. H *Was nowher noon, in a! this world  
to seeke.*

3501. storie, E *proces.*



Lat hym unto my maister Petrak go,  
That writ nough of this, I undertake.

Whan Onédake was deed she myghtily  
The regnès heeld, and with hire propré hond  
Agayn hir foos she faught so cruelly  
That ther nas kyng, ne prynce, in al that  
lond 3520

That he nas glad if he that gracé fond,  
That she ne wolde upon his lond werreye.  
With hire they maden alliance by bond  
To been in pees, and lete hire ride and  
pleye.

The emperour of Romè, Claudius,  
Ne hym bifore, the Romayn Galien,  
Ne dorstè never been so corageons  
Ne noon Ermyyn, ne noon Egipcien,  
Ne Surrien, ne noon Arabyen,  
Withinne the feelde that dorstè with hire  
fichte 3530

Lest that she wolde hem with hir handès  
slen,  
Or with hir meignee putten hem to flighte.

In kyngès habit wente hir sonès two,  
As heirès of hir fadrès regnès alle,  
And Hermanno and Thymalao  
Hir namès were, as Persiens hem calle ;  
But ay Fortune hath in hire hony galle :  
This myghty queenè may no while endure.  
Fortune out of hir regnè made hire falle  
To wrecchednesse and to mysáventure.

Aurelian, whan that the governaunce  
Of Romè cam into his handès tweye,  
He shoope upon this queene to doon  
vengeaunce ;

And with his legions he took his weye  
Toward Cenobie, and, shortly for to seye,  
He made hire flec and attè last hire hente,  
And fettred hire, and eek hire children  
tweye,  
And wan the land, and hoom to Rome  
he wente.

3515. *Petrak*, i.e. Boccaccio, who, however, is never mentioned by Chaucer, for what reason is not clear.

3519. *so cruelly*, H *ful trewely*, Corp.<sup>3</sup> *trewely*.

3528. *Ermyyn*, Armenian.

Amongès othere thyngès that he wan  
Hir chaar, that was with gold wroght and  
perree, 3550

This gretè Romayn, this Aurelian,  
Hath with hym lad, for that men sholde  
it see.

Biforen his triúmphè walketh shee  
With giltè cheynès on hire nekke hangyngé.  
Coronéd was she after hir degree,  
And ful of perree chargéd hire clothynge.

Allas, Fortunè ! she that whilom was  
Dredeful to kyngès and to emperoures,  
Now gaureth al the peple on hire, allas !  
And she that helméd was in starkè  
stoures, 3560

And wan by forcè townès stronge, and  
toures,  
Shal on hir heed now were a vitremyte ;  
And she that bar the ceptre ful of floures  
Shal bere a distaf, hire costès for to quyte.

O noble, o worthy PETRO, glorie of  
Spayne,  
Whom Fortune heeld so hye in magestee,  
Wel oghten men thy pitous deeth com-  
playne !

Out of thy land thy brother made thee flee,  
And after, at a seege, by subtiltee, 3569  
Thou were bitraysed and lad unto his tente,  
Where-as he with his owene hand slow  
thee,  
Succedyngé in thy regne and in thy rente.

The feeld of snow with thegle of blak  
therinne  
Caught with the lymerod coloured as the  
gleede,  
He brew this cursednesse and al this synne.

3565. *Petro*, Pedro the Cruel, killed by his brother Henry in 1369. In E, Heng. and Camb. this and the three other modern instances come at the end after *Croesus*, but wrongly as the Host's talk shows.

3568. H<sup>1</sup> read *Thy bastard brother made the to fle*.

3572. *regne*, H *lond*.

3573. Du Guesclin's arms were a black eagle on a silver shield, with a bend gules (the lymerod, or lime twig, coloured like a red coal). Wickednest is Sir Oliver de Mauny (mal-ni) of Brittany. The two trapped Pedro to the fatal meeting. The epithet Geynlon refers to the Breton traitor who betrayed Roland.

The 'wikked-nest' was werker of this nede,  
 Noght Charlès-Olyvver, that took ayheede  
 Of trouthe and honour, but of Armorike  
 Genylon-Olyver, corrupt for meede, 3579  
 Broghtè this worthy kyng in swiche a brike.

O worthy PETRO, kyng of Cipre also,  
 That Alisandre wan by heigh maistrise,  
 Ful many a hethen wroghtè stow ful wo,  
 Of which thyn owenè ligès hadde envie,  
 And for no thyng but for thy chivalrie  
 They in thy bed han slayn thee by the  
 morwe.

Thus kan Fortúne hir wheel governe and  
 gye,  
 And out of joyè bryngè men to sorwe.

Of Melan, gretè BARNABO VISCONTE,  
 God of delit, and scourge of Lumbardy,  
 Why sholde I nat thyn infortune acounte,  
 Sith in estaat thow cloumbè were so hye?  
 Thy brother sone, that was thy double  
 allye,

For he thy newew was, and sone-in-lawe,  
 Withinne his prisoun madè thee to dye,—  
 But why, ne how, noot I that thou were  
 slawe.

Of the erl HUGELYN OF PYZÈ the  
 langour

Ther may no tongè tellè for pitee;  
 But litel out of Pizè stant a tour, 3599  
 In whichè tour in prisoun put was he,  
 And with hym been his litel children thre;  
 The eldeste scarsly fyf yeer was of age.  
 Allas, Fortúne! it was greet crueltee  
 Swiche briddès for to putte in swiche a  
 cage!

Dampnèd was he to dyen in that prisoun,  
 For Roger, which that bisshope was of Pize,

3581. *Petro, kyng of Cipre, Pierre de Lusignan, assassinated 1369.*

3582. *Alisandre wan, in 1365.*

3589. *Barnabo, Barnabo Visconti, deposed by his nephew, died in prison 1385.*

3597. *Hugelyn of Pyze, Ugolino of Pisa, starved to death in 1289. See Dante, Inferno, xxxiii., from which Chaucer has borrowed.*

3601. *thre, Dante says four.*

3602. *scarsly fyf yeer, a touch added by Chaucer.*

3606. *Roger, Ruggieri degli Ubaldini.*

Hadde on hym maad a fals suggestioun  
 Thurgh which the peplè gan upon hym rise  
 And putten hym to prisoun, in swich wise  
 As ye han herd, and mete and drynke he  
 hadde 3610  
 So smal, that wel unnethe it may suffice,  
 And therwithal it was ful poure and badde.

And on a day bifil that in that hour  
 Whan that his metè wont was to be brought,  
 The gayler shette the dorès of the tour.  
 He herde it wel, but he ne spak right  
 noght,

And in his herte anon ther fil a thought  
 That they for hunger woldè doon hym  
 dyen.

'Allas!' quod he, 'allas, that I was  
 wroght!' 3619  
 Therwith the teeris fillen from his eyen.

His yongè sone, that thre yeer was of age,  
 Unto hym seyde, 'Fader, why do ye wepe?  
 Whanne wol the gayler bryngen oure  
 potage;

Is ther no morsel breed that ye do kepe?  
 I am so hungry that I may nat slepe;  
 Now woldè God that I myghte slepen  
 evere!

Thanne sholde nat hunger in my wombè  
 crepe;

Ther is no thyng, but breed, that me were  
 levere.'

Thus day by day this child bigan to crye,  
 Til in his fadrès barm adoun it lay, 3630  
 And seyde, 'Farewel, fader, I moot dye!'  
 And kiste his fader, and dyde the samè  
 day;

And whan the woful fader deed it say,  
 For wo his armès two he gan to byte,  
 And seyde, 'Allas, Fortúne! and weyl-  
 away!

Thy falsè wheel my wo al may I wyte!'

His children wende that it for hunger was  
 That he his armès gnaw, and nat for wo,  
 And seyde, 'Fader, do nat so, allas!  
 But rather ete the flessch upon us two;  
 Oure flessch thou yaf us, take oure flessch  
 us fro, 3641

And ete ynogh,'—right thus they to  
hym seyde,  
And after that, withinne a day or two,  
They leyde hem in his lappe adoun and  
deyde.

Hymself, despeired, eek for hunger starf ;  
Thus ended is this myghty erl of Pize ;  
From heigh estaat Fortune away hym carf.  
Of this tragédie it oghte ynough suffice.  
Whoso wol here it in a lenger wise,  
Redeth the gretē poete of Ytaille 3650  
That hightē Dant, for he kan al devyse  
Fro point to point,—nat o word wol he  
faillē.

Although that NERO were as vicious  
As any feend that lith in helle adoun,  
Yet he, as telleth us Swetonius,  
This wyde world hadde in subjeccioun  
Bothe est and west, north and septem-  
trion ;  
Of rubies, saphires, and of peerlēs white,  
Were alle hise clothēs brouded up and  
doon ;  
For he in gemmēs greetly gan delite. 3660

Moore delicaat, moore pompous of array,  
Moore proud, was never emperour than he ;  
That ilkē clooth that he hadde wered o day,  
After that tyme he nolde it never see.  
Nettēs of gold threed hadde he greet plente  
To fische in Tybrē, whan hym listē pleye.  
His lustēs were al lawe in his decree,  
For Fortune, as his freend, hym wolde  
obeye.

He Romē brende for his delicacie ;  
The senatours he slow upon a day, 3670  
To heerē how men woldē wepe and crie ;  
And slow his brother, and by his suster lay.  
His mooder made he in pitous array,  
For he hire wombē slittē, to biholde  
Where he conceyvd was ; so weilaway !  
That he so litel of his mooder tolde.

3654. in helle, H<sup>6</sup> ful lowe.

3655. Swetonius. Chaucer is more indebted  
to the *Roman de la Rose* and to Boethius, *De*  
*Cons.* lib. 2, met. 6.

3657. north, Chaucer's slip for south ; Corp.<sup>2</sup>  
om.

No teere out of his eyen for that sighte  
Ne cam, but seyde, 'A fair womman  
was she !'

Greet wonder is how that he koude or  
myghte

Be domēsman of hire dede beautee ; 3680  
The wyn to bryngen hym comanded he,  
And drank anon,—noon oother wo he  
made.

Whan myght is joynēd unto crueltee,  
Allas, to depē wol the venym wade !

In yowthe a maister hadde this emper-  
our,

To teche hym letterure and curteisye,—  
For of moralitee he was the flour,  
As in his tymē, but if bookēs lye ;  
And whil this maister hadde of hym  
maistrye, 3689

He makēd hym so konnyng and so sowple,  
That longē tyme it was er tirannye,  
Or any vicē, dorste on hym uncowple.

This Seneca, of which that I devyse,  
By-cause that Nero hadde of hym swich  
drede,

For he fro vices wolde hym ay chastise  
Discreetly, as by word, and nat by dede ;  
'Sire,' wolde he seyn, 'an emperour  
moot nede

Be vertuous and hatē tirannye' ;  
For which he in a bath made hym to blede  
On bothe his armēs, til he mostē dye. 3700

This Nero hadde eek of acustumaunce  
In yowthe agayns his maister for to ryse,  
Which afterward hym thoughte a greet  
grevaunce ;

Therefore he made hym dyen in this wise ;  
But nathēlees this Seneca the wise  
Chees in a bath to dye in this manere  
Rather than han another tormentise ;  
And thus hath Nero slayn his maister deere.

Now fil it so that Fortune liste no lenger  
The hyē pryde of Nero to chericē, 3710  
For though he werē strong, yet was she  
strenger ;

3680. Taken verbatim from Chaucer's version  
of Boethius.

She thoughté thus : ' By God, I am to nyce,  
To sette a man that is fulfilled of vice  
In heigh degree, and emperour hym calle.  
By God ! out of his sete I wol hym trice ;  
Whan he leest weneth sonest shal he falle !'

The peplé roos upon hym on a nyght  
For his defaute, and whan he it espied,  
Out of his dores anon he hath hym dight  
Allone, and, ther he wende han benalled,  
He knokkéd faste, and ay the moore he  
cried 3721

The fastere shetté they the dorés alle ;  
Tho wiste he weel he hadde hymself  
mysgyed,  
And wente his wey, no lenger dorste he  
calle.

The peplé cride and rombled up and down,  
That with hiserys herde he how they seyde,  
' Where is this falsé tiraunt, this Neroun ?'  
For fere almost out of his wit he breyde,  
And to his goddés pitously he preyde  
For socour, but it myghté nat bityde.  
For drede of this, hym thoughté that he  
deyde, 3731  
And ran into a garden hym to hyde ;

And in this gardyn foond he cherlés tweye  
That seten by a fyr, greet and reed ;  
And to thise cherlés two he gan to preye  
To sleen hym, and to girden of his heed,  
That to his body, whan that he were deed,  
Were no despit y-doon for his defame.  
Hymself he slow, he koude no better reed,  
Of which Fortúné lough, and hadde a  
game. 3740

Was never capitayn under a kyng  
That regnés mo putte in subjeccioun,  
Ne strenger was in feeld of allé thyng,  
As in his tyme, ne gretter of renoun,  
Ne moore pompous in heigh presumpcioun,  
Than OLOFERNE, which that Fortune ay  
kiste

So likerously, and ladde hym up and down,  
Till that his heed was of, er that he wiste.

3723. E and Heng. have the same line as in  
3731 in place of this.

3746. *Oloferne*, *Holofernes*.

Nat oonly that this world hadde hym in awe  
For lesyng of richesse or libertee, 3750  
But he made every man reneyen his lawe.  
' Nabugodonosor was god,' seyde hee,  
' Noon oother god[ne]sholde adoured bee.'  
Agayns his heesté no wight dorst trespassce  
Save in Bethulia, a strong citee  
Where Eliachim a preest was of that place.

But taak kepe of the deeth of Oloferne :  
Amydde his hoost he dronké lay a nyght,  
Withinne his tenté, large as is a berne,  
And yet, foral his pompe and al his myght,  
Judith, a womman, as he lay upright 3761  
Slepyng, his heed of smoot, and from  
his tente

Ful pryvèly she stal from every wight,  
And with his heed unto hir toun she wente.

What nedeth it of kyng ANTHIOCHUS  
To telle his hyé roial magestee,  
His hyé pride, his werkés venymus ?  
For swich another was ther noon as he.  
Redé which that he was in Machabee,  
And rede the proudé wordés that he seyde,  
And why he fil fro heigh prosperitee,  
And in an hill how wrecchedly he deyde.

Fortune hym hadde enhauncéd so in pride  
That verrailly he wende he myghte attayne  
Unto the sterrés upon every syde ;  
And in balancé weyen ech montayne ;  
And alle the floodés of the see restrayne ;  
And Goddés peplé hadde he moost in hate ;  
Hem wolde he sleen in torment and in  
payne,  
Wenyng that God ne myghte his pride  
abate. 3780

And for that Nichanore and Thymothee,  
Of Jewés weren venquysshed myghtily,  
Unto the Jewés swich an hate hadde he  
That he bad greithen his chaar ful hastily,  
And swoor, and seyde ful despitously  
Unto Jerusalem he wolde eftsoone,  
To wreke his ire on it ful cruelly ;  
But of his purpos he was let ful soone.

3749. *hym in*, H<sup>4</sup> of *him*.

3752. *Nabugodonosor*, *Nebuchadnezzar*.

3752. *god*, H<sup>4</sup> *lord*.

3753. *adoured*, H<sup>4</sup> *honoured*.

3769, 70. *Rede*, H<sup>4</sup> *Redeth*.

3769. *Machabee*, Bk. ii. chap. 9.

God for his manace hym so sooré smoot  
 With invisible wounde, ay incuráble, 3790  
 That in his guttès carf it so and boot,  
 Thát his peynés weren importable ;  
 And certainly the wreche was resonable,  
 For many a mannés guttes dide he payne ;  
 But from his purpos curséd and dampnable  
 For all his smert he wolde hym nat  
 restreyne ;

But bad anon apparailen his hoost,—  
 And, sodeynly, er he was of it war,  
 God daunted al his pride and all his boost ;  
 For he so sooré fil out of his char, 3800  
 That it his lemès and his skyn to-tar,  
 So that he neyther myghté go ne ryde,  
 But in a chayer men aboute hym bar  
 Ál for-bruséd, bothé bak and syde.

The wreche of God hym smoot so cruelly,  
 That thurgh his body wikked wormés  
 crepte,

And therwithal he stank so horribly  
 That noon of al his meynee that hym kepte,  
 Whether so he awook or ellis slepte, 3809  
 Ne myghté nocht for stynk of hym endure,  
 In this meschief he wayled and eek wepte,  
 And knew God lord of every créature.

To all his hoost and to hym self also  
 Ful wlatson was the stynk of his careyne ;  
 No man ne myghte hym beré to ne fro ;  
 And in this stynk and this horrible payne,  
 He starf ful wrecchedly in a monteyne.  
 Thus hath this robbour and this homicide,  
 That many a man madé to wepe and  
 pleyne, 3819  
 wich gerdoun as bilongeth unto pryde.

The storie of ALISAUNDRE is so com-  
 mune,  
 hat every wight that hath discrecioun  
 ath herd somewhat or al of his fortune.  
 his wydè world, as in conclusioun,  
 e wan by strengthe, or for his hye renoun  
 ey weren glad for pees unto hym sende.  
 ne pride of man and beest he leyde  
 adoun,  
 her so he cam, unto the worldés ende.

Comparisoun myghte never yet been  
 maked

Bitwixe hym and another conquerour ;  
 For al this world for drede of hym hath  
 quaked. 3831

He was of knighthod and of fredom flour ;  
 Fortune hym made the heir of hire honour ;  
 Save wyn and wommen no thyng mighte  
 aswage

His hye entente in armés and labour,  
 So was he ful of leonyn corage.

What preys were it to hym though I yow  
 tolde

Of Dárius, and an hundred thousand mo,  
 Of kyngés, princes, erlés, dukés bolde,  
 Whiche he conquered and broghte hem  
 into wo ? 3840

I seye, as fer as man may ryde or go,  
 The world was his,—what sholde I moore  
 devyse ?

For though I writ or tolde yow evermo  
 Of his knyghthode, it myghté nat suffise.

Twelf yeer he regnéd, as seith Machabee.  
 Philippés sone of Macidoyne he was,  
 That first was kyng in Grecé the contree.

O worthy, gentil Alisandre, allas !  
 That ever sholdé fallen swich a cas !  
 Empoysoned of thyn owenè folk thou  
 weere ; 3850

Thy *ys* Fortune hath turned into *aas*,  
 And yet for thee ne weep she never a  
 teere !

Who shal me yeven teeris to compleyne  
 The deeth of gentillesse and of franchise,  
 That al the world weilded in his demeyne ?  
 And yet hym thoughte it myghté nat  
 suffise,

So ful was his coráge of heigh emprise.  
 Allas ! who shal me helpé to endite  
 Falsé Fortúne, and poyson to despise,  
 The whiché two of al this wo I wyte ?

By wisdom, manhede, and by greet  
 labour 3861

From humble bed to roial magestee  
 Up roos he, JULIUS the conquerour,

3862. *humble bed*, Corp.<sup>3</sup> *humblehede*.

That wan al thoccident, by land and see,  
By strengthe of hand, or elles by tretee,  
And unto Romé made hem tributarie ;  
And sitthe of Rome the emperour was he  
Til that Fortuné weex his adversarie.

O myghty Cesar ! that in Thessalie  
Agayn Pompëus, fader thyn in lawe, 3870  
That of the orient hadde all the chivalrie  
As fer as that the day bigynneth dawe,  
Thou thurgh thy knyghthod hast hem  
take and slawe,  
Save fewé folk that with Pompëus fledde,  
Thurgh which thou puttest al thorient in  
awe,—  
Thanké Fortuné, that so wel thee spedde !

But now a litel while I wol biwaille  
This Pompëus, this noble governour  
Of Romé, which that fleigh at this  
bataille. 3879  
I seye, oon of his men, a fals traitour,  
His heed of smoot, to wynnen hym favour  
Of Julius, and hym the heed he broghtc.  
Allas, Pompeye, of thorient conquerour,  
That Fortune unto swich a fyn thee  
broghte !

To Rome agayn repaireth Julius  
With his triúmphé, lauriat ful hye ;  
But on a tyme Brutus and Cassius,  
That ever hadde of his hyc estaat envye,  
Ful privély had maad conspiracye  
Agayns this Julius in subtil wise, 3890  
And caste the place in which he sholdé dye  
With boydékyns, as I shal yow devyse.

This Julius to the Capitolie wente  
Upon a day, as he was wont to goon,  
And in the Capitolie anon hym hente  
This falsé Brutus, and his othere foon,  
And stikéd hym with boydékyns anoon  
With many a wounde, and thus they lete  
hym lye ;  
But never gronte he at no strook but oon,  
Or elles at two, but if his storie lye. 3900

So manly was this Julius of herte,  
And so wel lovede estaatly honestee,

3866. *tributarie*, H *contributarie*.

That though his deedly woundés sooré  
smerte,  
His mantel over his hypés casteth he  
For no man sholdé seen his privetee ;  
And as he lay of diyng in a traunce,  
And wisté verraily that deed was hee,  
Of honestee yet hadde he remembraunce.

Lucan, to thee this storie I recomende,  
And to Swetoun, and to Valerius also,  
That of this storie writen ord and ende,  
How that to this grete conquerourés two  
Fortuné was first frende and siththé foo.  
No man ne truste upon hire favour longe,  
But have hire in awayt for ever-moo ;  
Witnesse on alle this conquerourés  
stronge.

This riché CRESUS, whilom kyng of  
Lyde,  
Of whiché Cresus Cirus soore hym dradde,  
Yet was he caught amyddés al his pryde  
And to be brent men to the fyr hym ladde ;  
But swich a reyn down fro the welkne  
shadde, 3921  
That slow the fyr and made hym to escape ;  
But to be war, no gracé yet he hadde,  
Til Fortune on the galwés made hym gape.

Whanne he escapéd was he kan nat stente  
For to bigynne a newé werre agayn.  
He wendé wel, for that Fortune hym sente  
Swich hape that he escapéd thurgh the rayn.  
That of his foos he myghté nat be slayn  
And eek a swevene upon a nyght he mette  
Of which he was so proud, and eek so fayn  
That in vengeance he al his herté sette.

Upon a tree he was, as that hym thoughte  
Ther Juppiter hym wessehe, bothe bal  
and syde,  
And Phebus eek a fair towaille hyr  
broughte  
To dryen hym with, and therfore we  
his pryde ;

3910. *Valerius*, i.e. Valerius Maximus.  
3911. *ord*, beginning ; Dr. Hicckes' correctio  
for the *word* of the MSS.  
3920. *And to be brent*, etc., cp. Boethius, *L*  
*Consolacione*, Bk. ii. prose 2 ; H reads : *And*  
*the fuyr to brenne him men him ladde*.  
3921. *welkne*, H *heven*.

And to his doghter, that stood hym bisyde,  
Which that he knew in heigh science  
habounde,

He bad hire telle hym what it signyfyde,  
And she his dreem bigan right thus ex-  
pounde : 3940

'The tree,' quod she, 'the galwés is to  
meene ;

And Juppiter bitokneth snow and reyn,  
And Phebus with his towaille so clene,  
Tho been the sonnè-bemés for to seyn ;  
Thou shalt anhangèd be, fader, certeyn,—  
Reyn shal thee wasshe and sonnè shal  
thee drye ;

Thus warnèd she hym ful plat and ful  
pleyn,  
His doghter which that called was Phanye.

An-hanged was Cresus, the proudè kyng ;  
His roial tronè myghte hym-nat availle.

Tragédie is noon oother maner thyng ;  
Ne kan in syngyng criè ne biwaille  
But for that Fortune alwey wole assaille  
With unwar strook the regnès that been  
proude ;

For whan men trusteth hire, thanne wol  
she faille,  
And covere hire brighte facè with a  
clowde—

*The Knight and the Host complain of  
this Tale*

'Hoo !' quod the Knyght, 'good sire,  
namoore of this !

That ye han seyde is right ynough, y-wis,  
And muchel moore ; for litel hevynesse  
is right ynough to muchè folk, I gesse.

seye for me it is a greet disese, 3961  
Where as men han been in greet welthe  
and ese,

'So here of hire sodeyn fal, allas !  
and the contrarie is joye and greet solas,  
as whan a man hath ben in poure estaat,  
and clymbeth up, and wexeth fortunat,  
and there abideth in prosperitee ;

3944. *sonne-bemes*, H<sup>6</sup> *sonne-stre mes*.

3954. *With unwar strook*. The phrase is from  
oethius.

Swich thyng is gladsom, as it thynketh  
me,

And of swich thyng were goodly for to  
telle.'

'Ye,' quod oure Hoost, 'by Seintè  
Poulès belle ! 3970

Ye seye right sooth ; this Monk he  
clappeth lowde ;

He spak how "Fortune covered with a  
clowde"

I noot never what, and als of a "tragédie"  
Right now ye herde, and, *pardèe*, no  
remédie

It is for to biwailè, ne compleyne  
That that is doon ; and als, it is a peyne,  
As ye han seyde, to heere of hevynesse.  
Sire Monk, namoore of this, so God yow  
blesse !

Youre tale anyoeth all this compaignye ;  
Swich talkyng is nat worth a boterflye,  
For therinne is ther no desport ne game.  
Wherfore, sire Monk, or daun Piers by  
youre name,

I pray yow hertely, telle us somewhat elles,  
For sikerly nere clynkyng of youre belles,  
That on youre bridel hange on every  
syde,

By hevene kyng, that for us allè dyde !  
I sholde er this han fallen down for sleepe,  
Although the slough had never been so  
deepe ;

Thanne hadde youre tale al be toold in  
veyn, 3989

For certainly, as that thise clerkès seyn,  
Where as a man may have noon audience,  
Noght helpeth it to tellen his sentence ;  
And wel I woot the substance is in  
me,

If any thyng shal wel reported be.  
Sir, sey somewhat of huntynge, I yow preye.'

'Nay !' quod this Monk, 'I have no  
lust to pleye ;

Now lat another telle, as I have toold.'  
Thanne spak oure Hoost with rudè  
speche and boold,

And seyde unto the Nonnès Preest anon,  
'Com neer, thou preest, com hyder,  
thou sir John. 4000

3972. *covered*, H *was clipped*.

3984. *clynkyng*, H *gingling*.

Telle us swich thyng as may oure hertés  
glade ;

Be blithé, though thou ryde upon a jade.  
What thogh thyn hors be bothé foule  
and lene ?

If he wol serve thee, rekké nat a bene ;  
Looke that thyn herte be murie evermo.'

'Yis, sir,' quod he, 'yis, Hoost, so  
moot I go,

But I be myrie, y-wis I wol be blamed.'  
And right anon his tale he hath attamed,  
And thus he seyde unto us everichon,

This sweeté preest, this goodly man, sir  
John. 4010

### NUN'S PRIEST'S TALE

*Heere bigynneth The Nonnes Preestes  
Tale of the Cok and Hen,—Chau-  
tecleer and Pertelote*

A poure wydwé, somdel stape in age,  
Was whilom dwellyng in a narwe cotage  
Beside a grevé, stondyng in a dale.

This wydwe, of which I tellé yow my  
tale,

Syn thilké day that she was last a wyf,  
In pacience ladde a ful symple lyf,  
For litel was hir eatel and hir rente.

By housbondrie of swich as God hire sente  
She foud hirself, and eek hire doghtren  
two. 4019

Thre largé sowés hadde she, and namo ;  
Three keen and eek a sheep that highté  
Malle.

Ful sooty was hir bour, and eek hire halle,  
In which she eet ful many a sklendre meel ;  
Of poynaunt sauce hir neded never a deel.  
No deyntee morsel passéd thurgh hir  
throthe,

Hir diete was accordant to hir cote ;  
Repleccioun ne made hire never sik,  
Attempree diete was al hir phisik,  
And exercise, and hertés suffisaunce.

The gouté lette hire no-thing for to  
daunce, 4030

Napoplexié shenté nat hir heed ;

*The Nonnes Preestes Tale.* A fable of Marie  
de France, *Dou Coc et dou Werpil*, contains in  
38 lines the germ of this tale.

No wyn ne drank she, neither whit ne  
reed ;

Hir bord was servéd moost with whit  
and blak,—

Milk and broun breed,—in which she  
foud no lak ;

Seynd bacoun and somtyme an ey or tweye,  
For she was, as it were, a maner deye.

A yeerd she hadde, enclosed al aboute  
With stikkés, and a dryé dych withoute,  
In which she hadde a cok, heet Chaun-  
técleer. 4039

In al the land of crowyng nas his peer.  
His voys was murier than the murie orgon  
On messé dayes that in the chirché gon ;

Wel sikerer was his crowyng in his logge  
Than is a klokke, or an abbey orlogge.

By nature knew he eche ascencioun  
Of the equynoxial in thilké toun ;

For whan degreés fiftene weren ascended,  
Thanne crew he that it myghte nat been  
amended.

His coomb was redder than the fyn coral,  
And batailled as it were a castel wal ; 4050

His byle was blak, and as the jeet it shoon ;  
Lyk asure were his leggés and his toon ;

His naylés whiter than the lylle flour,  
And lyk the burnéd gold was his colour.

This gentil cok hadde in his govern-  
aunce

Sevene hennés for to doon al his plesaunce,  
Whiche were his sustrés and his para-  
mours,

And wonder lyk to hym, as of colours ;  
Of whiche the faireste hewéd on hir throthe  
Was clepéd faire damoysele Pertelote. 4060

Curteys she was, discreet and debonaire,  
And compaignable, and bar hyrself so  
faire

Syn thilké day that she was seven nyght  
oold,

That trewely she hath the herte in hoold  
Of Chauntecleer, loken in every lith ;

He loved hire so that wel was hym ther-  
with ;

But swiche a joye was it to here hem  
syngé,

Whan that the brighté sonne bigan to  
sprynge,

4045. *knew he, E<sup>2</sup> he crew ; rest he knew.*



In sweete accord, 'My lief is faren in  
londe'; 4069

For thilké tyme, as I have understonde,  
Beestés and briddés koudé speke and  
syngé.

And so bifel, that in the dawényngé,  
As Chauntécleer among his wyvès alle  
Sat on his perché, that was in the halle,  
And next hym sat this fairé Pertelote,  
This Chauntécleer gangronen in his throte,  
As man that in his dreem is drecchéd  
soore.

And whan that Pertelote thus herde hym  
roore,

She was agast, and seyde, 'O herté deere!  
What eyleth yow, to grone in this manére?  
Ye been a verray sleper; fy, for shame!'

And he answerde and seyde thus:  
'Madame,

pray yow that ye take it nat agrief;  
by God, me mette I was in swich meschief  
Right now, that yet myn herte is soore  
afright.

Now God,' quod he, 'my swevene recche  
aright,

and kepe my body out of foul prisoun!  
Ie mette how that I roméd up and down  
Vithinne our yeerd, wheer as I saugh a  
beest

Was lyk an hound, and wolde han maad  
areest 4090

'pon my body, and han had me deed.  
His colour was bitwixé yelow and reed,  
and tippéd was his tayl, and bothe his  
eiris,

With blak, unlyk the remenant of his  
heeris;

his snouté smal, with glowyngé eyen  
tweye.

et of his look for feere almost I deye;  
his causéd me my gronyng doutéles.'

'Avoy!' quod she, 'fy on yow, herté-  
lees!

las!' quod she, 'for by that God above!  
ow han ye lost myn herte and al my love.

can nat love a coward, by my feith!  
or certés, what so any womman seith,  
e alle desiren, if it myghté bee,

o89. a beest. The description is exactly that  
of 'col-fox' (l. 4405).

To han housbóndés hardy, wise, and free,  
And secree, and no nygard, ne no fool,  
Ne hym that is agast of every tool,  
Ne noon avauntour, by that God above!  
How dorste ye seyn, for shame, unto  
youre love

That any thyng myghte maké yow aferd?  
Have ye no mannés herte, and han a berd?

'Allas! and konne ye been agast of  
swevenys? 4111

No thyng, God woot, but vanitee in  
swevene is.

Swevenes engendren of replecciouns,  
And ofte of fume, and of complecciouns,  
Whan humours been to habundant in a  
wight.

'Certés this dreem, which ye han  
met to-nyght,

Cometh of the greet superfluytee  
Of youré redé colera, *pardee*,

Which causeth folk to dreden in hir dremes  
Of arwés, and of fyre with redé lemes, 4120

Of redé beestés, that they wol hem byte,  
Of contekes and of whelpés, grete and lyte;

Right as the humour of malencolie  
Causeth ful many a man in sleepe to crie,

For feere of blaké beres, or bolés blake,  
Or ellés blaké develes wole hem take.

Of othere humours koude I telle also  
That werken many a man in sleepe ful wo;

But I wol passe as lightly as I kan.  
Lo, Catoun, which that was so wys a man,

Seyde he nat thus, "Ne do no fors of  
dremes"?

'Now, sire,' quod she, 'whan we flee  
fro the bemes,

For Goddés love, as taak som laxatyf.  
Up peril of my soule, and of my lyf,

I conseilte yow the beste, I wol nat lye,  
That bothe of colere and of malencolye

Ye purgé yow, and, for ye shal nat tarie,  
Though in this toun is noon apothecarie,

I shal myself to herbés techen yow  
That shul been for youre hele, and for

youre prow; 4140

And in oure yeerd tho herbés shal I fynde,  
The whiche han of hire propretee by kynde

4120. *lemes*, gleams; H *bemes*.

4121. *redé*, E *gretté*.

4130. *Catoun*, *Dist.* ii. 32: 'somnia ne cures.'

To purgè yow, byneth and eek above.  
 Forget nat this, for Goddès owenè love !  
 Ye been ful coleryk of compleccioun.  
 Warè the sonne in his ascencioun  
 Ne fynde yow nat repleet of humours  
 hoote ;

And if it do, I dar wel leye a grote  
 That ye shul have a fevere terciane,  
 Or an agu, that may be yourè bane. 4150  
 A day or two ye shul have digestyves  
 Of wormès, er ye take youre laxatyves  
 Of lawriol, centaure and fumetere,  
 Or elles of ellèbor that groweth there,  
 Of katapuce or of gaitry's beryis,  
 Of herbe yve, growyng in oure yeerd,  
 ther mery is ;

Pekke hem up right as they growe and  
 ete hem yn ;  
 Be myrie, housbonde, for youre fader kyn !  
 Dredeth no dreem ; I kan sey yow  
 namoore.'

'Madame,' quod he, '*graunt mercy of*  
 youre loore, 4160

But nathèlees, as touchyng daun Catoun,  
 That hath of wysdom swich a greet renoun,  
 Though that he bad no dremès for to  
 drede,

By God, men may in oldè bookès rede  
 Of many a man, moore of auctorite  
 Than ever Caton was, so moot I thee !  
 That al the revers seyn of his sentence,  
 And han wel founden by experience  
 That dremès been significaciouns  
 As wel of joye as tribulaciouns, 4170  
 That folk enduren in this lif present.  
 Ther nedeth make of this noon argument,  
 The verray preevè sheweth it in dede.

'Oon of the gretteste auctours that  
 men rede

Scith thus, that whilom two felawès wente  
 On pilgrimage, in a ful good entente,  
 And happèd so they coomen in a toun,  
 Wher as ther was swich congregacioun  
 Of peple, and eek so streit of herbergage,  
 That they ne founde as mucche as o cotage  
 In which they bothè myghtè loggèd bee ;  
 Wherefore they mosten of necessitee,

4174. *auctours*. Cicero, *De Divin.* i. 27, relates both this and the next story.

4181. H reads: *In which that thay might both i-logged be.*

As for that nyght, departen compaignye ;  
 And ech of hem gooth to his hostelrye,  
 And took his loggyng as it woldè falle.  
 That oon of hem was loggèd in a stalle,  
 Fer in a yeerd, with oxen of the plough ;  
 That oother man was loggèd wel ynough,  
 As was his aventure, or his fortune, 4180  
 That us governeth alle as in commune.

'And so bifel that longe er it were day  
 This man mette in his bed, ther as he lay,  
 How that his felawe gan upon hym calle.  
 And seyde, "Allas ! for in an oxes stalle  
 This nyght I shal be mordred ther I lye.  
 Now helpe me, deerè brother, or I dye ;  
 In allè hastè com to me !" he seyde.

'This man out of his sleepe for feer  
 abraide ;

But whan that he was wakened of his  
 sleepe, 4190

He turnèd hym and took of this no kepe  
 Hym thoughte his dreem nas but a vanitee  
 Thus twiès in his slepyng dreded hee,  
 And attè thridde tyme yet his felawe  
 Cam, as hym thoughte, and seide, "I am  
 now slawe !

Bihoold my bloody woundès, depe an  
 wyde ;

Arys up erly in the morwè tyde,  
 And at the west gate of the toun," quod he  
 "A cartè ful of donge ther shaltow se,  
 In which my body is hid ful prively ;  
 Do thilkè carte arresten boldely ; 4200  
 Mygold causèd my mordrè, sooth tosayn.  
 And tolde hym every point how he w  
 slayn,

With a ful pitous facè, pale of hewe ;  
 And trustè wel, his dreem he foond f  
 trewe ;

For on the morwe, as soone as it was da  
 To his felawès in he took the way,  
 And whan that he cam to this oxes stall  
 After his felawe he bigan to calle.

'The hostiler answerdè hym anon 4210  
 And seyde, "Sire, your felawe is agon  
 As soone as day he wente out of the toun

'This man gan fallen in suspecacioun,  
 Remembrynge on his dremès, that  
 mette,—

And forth he gooth, no lenger wolde  
 lette,

Unto the west gate of the toun, and fond  
 A dong carte, as it were to dongé lond,  
 That was arrayéd in that samé wise  
 As ye han herd the dedè man devyse ;  
 And with an hardy herte he gan to crye  
 Vengeance and justice of this felonye. 4230  
 " My felawe mordred is this samé nyght,  
 And in this carte he lith gapyng upright.  
 I crye out on the ministres," quod he,  
 " That sholden kepe and reulen this citee ;  
 Harrow ! allas ! heere lith my felawe  
 slayn ! "

What sholde I moore unto this talé sayn ?  
 The peple out sterte and caste the cart to  
 grounde,  
 And in the myddel of the dong they  
 founde  
 The dedè man, that mordred was al newe.  
 ' O blisful God, that art so just and  
 trewe ! 4240

Lo, how that thou biwreyest mordre alway !  
 Mordrè wol out, that se we day by day ;  
 Mordre is so wlatson, and abhominable  
 To God, that is so just and resonable,  
 That he ne wol nat suffre it heléd be,  
 Though it abyde a yeer, or two, or thre ;  
 Mordrè wol out, this my conclusioun.  
 And right anon, ministres of that toun  
 Han hent the carter, and so soore hym  
 pyned, 4249  
 And eek the hostiler so soore engnyed,  
 That they biknewe hire wikkednesse anon,  
 And were an-hanged by the nekkè bon.

' Heere may men seen that dremés  
 been to drede ;  
 And certés, in the samé book I rede,  
 Right in the nexté chapitre after this,—  
 gabbè nat, so have I joye or blis,—  
 Two men that wolde han passéd over  
 see,

For certeyn cause, into a fer contree,  
 f that the wynd ne haddè been contrarie,  
 That made hem in a citee for to tarie 4260  
 That stood ful myrie upon an haven syde ;  
 But on a day, agayn the even-tyde,  
 The wynd gan chaunge, and blew right  
 as hem leste.

olif and glad they wente unto hir reste,  
 And casten hem ful erly for to saille.

4242. *that se we, etc., H certes it is no nay.*

' But to that o man fil a greet mer-  
 vaille ;  
 That oon of hem in slepyng as he lay,  
 Hym mette a wonder dreem, agayn the  
 day :  
 Him thoughte a man stood by his beddés  
 syde 4269  
 And hym comanded that he sholde abyde,  
 And seyde hym thus : " If thou tomorwé  
 wende,  
 Thou shalt be dreynt, my tale is at an  
 ende."

' He wook, and tolde his felawe what  
 he mette,  
 And preydè hym his viage for to lette ;  
 As for that day, he preydè hym to byde.  
 His felawe, that lay by his beddés syde,  
 Gan for to laughe, and scornéd him ful  
 faste ;

" No dreem," quod he, " may so myn  
 herte agaste,  
 That I wol lettè for to do my thynges ;  
 I settè not a straw by thy dremynges, 4280  
 For swevenes been but vanytees and  
 japes ;  
 Men dreme al day of owlés or of apes,  
 And eke of many a mazè therwithal ;  
 Men dreme of thyng that never was ne  
 shal ;

But sith I see that thou wolt heere abyde,  
 And thus forslawthen wilfully thy tyde,  
 God woot it reweth me, and have good  
 day ! "

And thus he took his leve, and wente his  
 way ;  
 But er that he hadde half his cours  
 y-seyled,  
 Noot I nat why, ne what myschaunce it  
 eyled, 4290

But casuelly the shippès botmé rente,  
 And shipe and man under the water  
 wente

In sighte of othere shippès it bisyde,  
 That with hem seyléd at the samé tyde !  
 And therefore, fairè Pertelote so deere,  
 By swiche ensamplés olde yet maistow  
 leere,

That no man sholdè been to recchelees  
 Of dremés, for I seye thee doutélees,

4283. *eke, om. E<sup>6</sup>.*

That many a dreem ful soore is for to drede.

‘Lo, in the lyf of Seint Kenelm I rede, 4299  
That was Kenulphus sone, the noble kyng  
Of Mercenrike, how Kenelm mette a thyng.

A lite er he was mordred, on a day  
His mordre in his avysioun he saye.  
His norice hym expownéd every deel  
His swevene, and bad hym for to kepe hym weel

For traisoun; but he nas but seven yeer oold,

And therefore litel talé hath he toold  
Of any dreem, so hooly was his herte.  
By God, I haddé levere than my sherte  
That ye hadde rad his legende as have I.  
Dame Pertélote, I sey yow trewely,  
Macrobeus, that writ the avisioun  
In Affrike of the worthy Cipiou,  
Affermeth dremes, and seith that they been

Warnyng of thyngés that men after seen;  
And forther-moore, I prayowlooketh wel  
In the Oldé Testament of Daniel,  
If he heeld dremés any vanitee.

‘Reed cek of Joseph, and ther shul ye see 4320  
Wher dremés be somtyme,—I sey nat alle,—

Warnyng of thyngés that shul after falle.  
Looke of Egipte the kyng, daun Pharao,  
Iiis baker and his butiller also,  
Wher they ne felté noon effect in dremes.  
Whoso wol seken actes of sondry remes  
May rede of dremés many a wonder thyng.

‘Lo, Cresus, which that was of Lyde kyng,

Mette he nat that he sat upon a tree,  
Which signified he sholde anhangéd bee?

‘Lo heere Andromacha, Ectorés wyf,  
That day that Ector sholdé lese his lyf,  
She dreméd on the samé nyght biforn,  
How that the lyf of Ector sholde be lorne,  
If thilké day he wente into bataille;  
She warnéd hym, but it myghte nat availla;

He wenté forth to fighté nathéles,

4300. *Kenelm*, murdered by his tutor at the desire of a wicked sister.

And he was slayn anon of Achilles;  
But thilké tale is al to longe to telle,  
And eek it is ny day, I may nat dwelle;  
Shortly I seye, as for conclusioun, 4341  
That I shal han of this avisioun  
Adversitee; and I seye forthermoore,  
That I ne telle of laxatyves no stoor,  
For they been venymés, I woot it weel;  
I hem diffye, I love hem never a deel!

‘Now let us speke of myrthe, and stynte al this;

Madamé Pertélote, so have I blis,  
Of o thyng God hath sent me largé grace;  
For whan I se the beautee of youre face,  
Ye been so scarlet reed aboute youre eyen, 4351

It maketh al my dredé for to dyen,  
For, al-so siker as *In principio*,  
*Mulier est hominis confusio*,—  
Madame, the sentence of this Latyn is,  
“Womman is mannés joye, and al his blis”;

For whan I feele a-nyght your softé syde,  
Al be it that I may nat on yow ryde,  
For that oure perche is maad so narwe, allas!

I am so ful of joye and of solas, 4360  
That I diffyè bothé swevene and dreem’:  
And with that word he fly down fro the beam,

For it was day, and eke his hennés alle;  
And with a chuk he gan hem for to calle,  
For he hadde founde a corn, lay in the yerd.

Réal he was, he was namoore aferd,  
He fethered Pertéloté twenty tyme,  
And trad as ofté, er that it was pryeme.  
He looketh as it were a grym leoun,  
And on his toos he rometh up and down;  
Hym deigné nat to sette his foot to grounde. 4371

Iie chukketh whan he hath a corn y-founde,  
And to hym rennen thanne his wyvés alle.

Thus roial, as a prince is in an halle,  
Leve I this Chauntecleer in his pasture,  
And after wol I telle his áventure.

4353. The real meaning of the Latin is: In the beginning, woman is man's destruction.

Whan that the monthe in which the  
 world bigan,  
 That highte March, whan God first  
 makéd man,  
 Was compleet, and [y.] passéd were also,  
 Syn March bigan, thritty dayés and two,  
 Bifel that Chauntecleer in al his pryde,  
 His sevene wyvés walkyng by his syde,  
 Caste up his eyen to the brighte sonne  
 That in the signe of Taurus hadde y-ronne  
 Twenty degrees and oon, and som-what  
 moore,  
 And knew by kynde, and by noon oother  
 loore,  
 That it was pryme, and crew with blisful  
 stevene.  
 'The sonne,' he seyde, 'is clomben up  
 on hevене  
 Fourty degrees and oon, and moore y-wis.  
 Madamé Pertelote, my worldés blis, 4390  
 Herkneþ these blisful briddés how they  
 syng,  
 And se the fresshé flourés how they  
 sprynge ;  
 Ful is myn herte of revel and solas !'  
 But sodeynly hym fil a sorweful cas ;  
 For ever the latter ende of joy is wo.  
 God woot that worldly joye is soone  
 ago,  
 And if a rethor koudé faire endite,  
 He in a cronycle sauffy myghte it write,  
 As for a sovereyn notabilitee. 4399  
 Now every wys man, lat him herkné me ;  
 This storie is al so trewe, I undertake,  
 As is the book of Launclot de Lake,  
 That women holde in ful greet reverence.  
 Now wol I torne agayn to my sentence.  
 A colfox, ful of sly iniquitee,  
 That in the grove hadde wonné yerés  
 three,  
 By heigh ymaginacioun forn-cast,  
 The samé nyght thurgh-out the heggés  
 brast  
 Into the yerd, ther Chauntecleer the faire  
 Was wont, and eek his wyvés, to repaire ;  
 And in a bed of wortés stille he lay, 4411

4389. *Fourty*, H *Twenty*; but perhaps Chaucer  
 laughing at the cock.

4399. E and Heng. assign the saying to Petrus  
 Comestor.

Til it was passéd undren of the day,  
 Waityng his tyme on Chauntecleer to  
 falle ;

As gladly doon thise homycidés alle  
 That in await liggeren to mordré men.

O falsé mordrouer lurkyng in thy den !  
 O newé Scariot, newé Genyloun !  
 Falsé dissymulour, O Greek Synoun,  
 That broghtest Troye al outrély to sorwe !  
 O Chauntecleer, acurséd be that morwe,  
 That thou into that yerd flaugh fro the  
 bemes ! 4421

Thou were ful wel y-warnéd by thy dremés  
 That thilké day was perilous to thee ;  
 But what that God forwoot moot nedés  
 bee,

After the opinioun of certein clerkis.  
 Witnessse on hym that any parfit clerk is,  
 That in scole is greet altercacioun  
 In this mateere, and greet disputisoun,  
 And hath been of an hundred thousand  
 men ;

But I ne kan nat bulte it to the bren, 4430  
 As kan the hooly doctour Augustyn,  
 Or Boece, or the bisshope Bradwardyn,  
 Wheither that Goddés worthy forwityng  
 Streyneth me nedély to doon a thyng,—  
 Nedély clepe I symple necessitee,—  
 Or ellés if free choys be graunted me  
 To do that samé thyng, or do it noight,  
 Though God forwoot it er that it was  
 wrought ;

Or if his wityng streyneth never a deel,  
 But by necessitee condicioneel. 4440  
 I wil nat han to do of swich mateere,  
 My tale is of a cok, as ye may heere,  
 That took his conseil of his wyf with sorwe,  
 To walken in the yerd upon that morwe  
 That he hadde met that dreem that I  
 yow tolde.

Wommennés conseils been ful ofté colde ;  
 Wommannés conseil broghte us first to wo  
 And made Adam fro Paradys to go,  
 Ther as he was ful myric and wel at  
 ese ; 4449

But for I noot to whom it myght displese,

4417. *Genyloun*, the betrayer of Roland.

4432. *Boece*, Boethius.

4432. *Bradwardyn*, author of the 'De Causa  
 Dei contra Pelagium,' d. 1349.

If I conseil of wommen woldè blame,  
 Passe over, for I seyde it in my game.  
 Rede auctours where they trete of swich  
 mateere,

And what they seyn of wommen ye may  
 heere ;

Thise been the cokkès wordès, and nat  
 myne,

I kan noon harm of no womman divyne !

Faire in the soond, to bathe hire myrily,  
 Lith Pertelote, and alle hire sustres by,  
 Agayn the sonne, and Chauntecleer so free  
 Soong murier than the mermayde in the  
 see ; 4460

For *Physiologus* seith sikerly,

How that they syngen wel and myrily.

And so bifel that as he cast his eye  
 Among the wortès, on a boterflye,  
 He was war of this fox that lay ful lowe.  
 No-thing ne liste hym thannè for to  
 crowe,

But cride anon, 'Cok, cok !' and up he  
 sterte,

As man that was affrayèd in his herte,—  
 For naturelly a beest desireth flee  
 Fro his contrarie, if he may it see, 4470  
 Though he never erst hadde seyn it with  
 his eye.

This Chauntecleer, whan he gan hym  
 espye,

He wolde han fled, but that the fox anon  
 Seyde, 'Gentil sire, allas ! wher wol ye  
 gon ?

Be ye affrayed of me that am youre  
 freend ?

Now, certès, I were worsè than a feend,  
 If I to yow wolde harm or vileynye.

I am nat come your conseil for tespye,  
 But trewely the cause of my comyng  
 Was only for to herkne how that ye  
 synge ; 4480

For trewely, ye have as myrie a stevene  
 As any aungel hath that is in hevene.

Therwith ye han in musyk moore feelynge  
 Than hadde Boece, or any that kan synge.  
 My lord youre fader,—God his soulé  
 blesse !

4461. *Physiologus*, i.e. the *Physiologus de naturis xii. animalium*, written by a certain Theobaldus.

4484. *Boece*. Boethius wrote a treatise on music.

And eek youre mooder, of hire gentillesse,  
 Han in myn hous y-been to my greet  
 ese,

And certès, sire, ful fayn wolde I yow  
 plese.

But for men speke of syngyng, I wol  
 seye,—

So moote I brouké wel myne eyen  
 tweye,— 4490

Save yow, I herdè never man so synge  
 As dide youre fader in the morwentyng.  
 Certès, it was of herte, al that he song ;  
 And for to make his voys the moorè strong,  
 He wolde so peyne hym that with bothe  
 his eyen

He mostè wynke, so loude he woldè cryen ;  
 And stonden on his tipton therwithal,  
 And stretché forth his nekkè, long and  
 smal ;

And eek he was of swich discrecioun  
 That ther nas no man in no regioun 4500  
 That hym in song or wisdom myghtè  
 passe.

I have wel rad, in "Daun Burnel the  
 Asse,"

Among his vers, how that ther was a cok,  
 For that a preestès sone yaf hym a knok  
 Upon his leg, wil he was yong and nyce,  
 He made hym for to lese his benefice ;  
 But certeyn, ther nys no comparisoun  
 Bitwixe the wisdom and discrecioun  
 Of yourè fader and of his subtiltee.  
 Now syngeth, sire, for seintè charitee ; 4510  
 Lat se, konne ye youre fader countrefete."

This Chauntecleer his wyngès gan to  
 bete,

As man that koude his traysoun nat espie,  
 So was he ravysshed with his flaterie.

Allas, ye lordès, many a fals flatour  
 Is in youre courtes, and many a losengeour,  
 That plesen yow wel moorè, by my feith,  
 Than he that soothfastnesse unto yow  
 seith,—

Redeth Ecclesiaste of flaterye,—

Beth war, ye lordès, of hir trecherye. 4520

This Chauntecleer stood hye upon his  
 toos

4502. *Daun Burnel the Asse*, in the *Speculum Stultorum* of Nigel Wireker.

4515. *ye lordès*, H *lordynges*.

4516. *courtes*, H *hous*.

Strecchyng his nekke, and heeld his eyen  
cloos,

And gan to crowè loudè for the nones,  
And daun Russell, the fox, stirte up atones,  
And by the gargat hentè Chauntècleer,  
And on his bak toward the wode hym  
beer ;

For yet ne was ther no man that hym  
sewed.

O destinee, that mayst nat been  
eschewed !

Alas, that Chauntècleer fleigh fro the  
bemes ! 4529

Allas, his wyf ne roghtè nat of dremes !  
And on a Friday fil al this meschaunce.

O Venus, that art goddesse of plesaunce,  
Syn that thy servant was this Chauntè-  
cleer,

And in thy servyce dide al his poweer,  
Moore for delit than world to multiplye,  
Why woltestow suffre hym on thy day to  
dye ?

O Gaufred, deerè maister soverayn,  
That, whan thy worthy kyng Richard  
was slayn

With shot, compleynèdest his deeth so  
soore !

Why ne hadde I now thy sentence, and  
thy loore, 4540

The Friday for to chide, as diden ye ?—  
For on a Friday, soothly, slayn was he.

Thanne wolde I shewe yow how that I  
koude pleyne

For Chauntèclerès drede, and for his  
peyne.

Certès, swich cry, ne lamentacioun,  
Was never of ladyes maad whan Ylioun  
Was wonne, and Pirrus with his streitè  
sword,

Whan he hadde hent kyng Priam by the  
berd,

And slayn hym,—as seith us *Eneydos*,—  
As maden alle the hennès in the clos, 4550

Whan they had seyn of Chauntècleer the  
sighte.

But sovereynly dame Pertèlotè shrighte,  
Ful louder than dide Hasdrubalès wyf,

4537. *Gaufred*, Geoffrey of Vinesauf; author of a treatise on the art of poetry, in which, to show how such poems should be written, he bewailed the death of Richard.

Whan that hir housbonde haddè lost his lyf,  
And that the Romayns haddè brend  
Cartage,—

She was so ful of torment and of rage,  
That wilfully into the fyr she sterte,  
And brende hirselves with a stedefast  
herte.

O woful hennès, right so criden ye,  
As, whan that Nero brendè the citee 4560  
Of Romè, cryden senatourès wyves,  
For that hir husbondes losten alle hir  
lyves

Withouten gilt,—this Nero hath hem slayn.  
Now wol I tornè to my tale agayn.

This sely wydwe, and eek hir doghtrès  
two,

Herden thise hennès crie and maken wo,  
And out at dorès stirten they anon,  
And syen the fox toward the grovè gon,  
And bar upon his bak the cok away,  
And cryden, 'Out ! harrow ! and weyl-  
away ! 4570

Ha ! ha ! the fox !' and after hym they  
ran,

And eek with stavès many another man ;  
Ran Colle, oure dogge, and Talbot, and  
Gerland

And Malkyn, with a dystaf in hir hand ;  
Ran cow and calf, and eek the verray  
hogges,

So were they fered for berkyng of the  
dogges,

And shoutyng of the men and wommen  
eek ;

They ronné so hem thoughte hir hertè  
breck.

They yollèden, as feendès doon in helle ;  
The dokès cryden, as men wolde hem  
quelle ; 4580

The gees, for fecrè, flowen over the trees ;  
Out of the hyvè cam the swarm of bees ;  
So hydous was the noys, a *benedicitee* !

Certès, he Jakke Straw, and his meynee,  
Ne made never shoutès half so shrille,  
Whan that they wolden any Flemyng  
kille,

As thilkè day was maad upon the fox.  
Of bras they broghten bemès, and of box,

4586. *Flemyng*, to whose competition the English craftsmen objected.

Of horn, of boon, in whiche they blewe  
and powped,  
And therewithal they skrikéd and they  
howped ; 4590  
It seméd as that hevене sholdé falle.

Now, goodé men, I pray yow herkneth  
alle ;

Lo, how Fortuné turneth sodeynly  
The hope and pryde eek of hir enemy !  
This cok, that lay upon the foxes bak,  
In al his drede unto the fox he spak,  
And seyde, 'Sire, if that I were as ye,  
Yet wolde I seyn, as wys God helpé me,  
"Turneth agayn, ye proudé cherlés alle !  
A verray pestilence upon yow falle ; 4600  
Now am I come unto the wodés syde,  
Maugree youre heed, the cok shal heere  
abyde ;

I wol hym ete in feith, and that anon !"

The fox answerde, 'In feith it shal  
be don' ;

And as he spak that word, al sodeynly  
This cok brak from his mouth delyverly,  
And heighe upon a tree he fleigh anon ;  
And whan the fox saugh that he was  
y-gon,—

'Allas !' quod he, 'O Chauntecleer,  
allas !

I have to yow,' quod he, 'y-doon trespas,  
In as muche as I makéd yow aferd, 4611  
Whan I yow hente and broght out of the  
yerd ;

But, sire, I dide it of no wikke entente.  
Com doun, and I shal telle yow what I  
mente ;

I shal seye sooth to yow, God help me so !'

'Nay thanne,' quod he, 'I shrewe  
us bothé two,

And first I shrewe myself, bothe blood  
and bones,

If thou bigyle me any ofter than ones.  
Thou shalt na mooré, thurgh thy flaterye,  
Do me to synge, and wynké with myn  
eye, 4620

For he that wynketh, whan he sholdé see,  
Al wilfully, God lat him never thee !'

'Nay,' quod the fox, 'but God yeve  
hym meschaunce,  
That is so undiscreet of governaunce  
That jangleth whan he sholdé holde his  
pees.'

Lo, swich it is for to be recchèeles,  
And necligent, and truste on flaterye.  
But ye that holden this tale a folye,—  
As of a fox, or of a cok and hen,—  
Táketh the moralité, good men ; 4630  
For Seint Paul seith that al that writen is,  
To oure doctrine it is y-write y-wis ;  
Taketh the fruyt and lat the chaf be stille.  
Now, goodé God, if that it be thy wille,  
As seith my lord, so make us alle goode  
men,  
And brynge us to his heighé blisse !  
*Amen.*

*Words of the Host to the Nun's Priest*

'Sire Nonnés Preest,' oure Hooste  
seide anoon,

'I-blesséd be thy breche and every stoon !  
This was a murie tale of Chauntecleer ;  
But, by my trouthe, if thou were secular,  
Thou woldest ben a tredéfoul aright ; 4641  
For if thou have coráge, as thou hast  
might,

The weré nede of hennés, as I wene,  
Ye, mo than sevene tymés seventene !  
Se, which braunés hath this gentil preest,  
So gret a nekke, and swich a largé breest !  
He loketh as a sparhawke with his eyen ;  
Him nedeth nat his colour for to dyen  
With brasile, ne with greyn of Portyngale.  
Now, sire, faire fallé yow for youré tale.  
And after that, he with ful merie chere  
Seide unto another as ye shullen heere.

4637. *Sire Nonnes Preest*. Only three MSS., one at Camb. and two at the Brit. Mus., contain this end-link. Its authenticity is not above suspicion ; l. 4641 repeats B. 3135, and 'seide unto another' could hardly have been written by Chaucer.



## [TALES OF THE THIRD DAY]

## [GROUP C]

## DOCTOR'S TALE

*Heere folweth The Phisiciens Tale*

THER was, as telleth Titus Livius,  
A knyght that callèd was Virginius,  
Fulfd of honour and of worthynesse,  
And strong of freendès and of greet  
richesse.

This knyght a doghter haddè by his  
wyf,—

No children hadde he mo in al his lyf.  
Fair was this mayde in excellent beautee  
Aboven every wight that man may see ;  
For Nature hath with sovereyn diligence  
Y-formèd hire in so greet excellence, 10  
As though she woldè seyn, 'Lo, I, Natùre,  
Thus kan I forme, and peynte a creàture,  
When that me list,—who kan me countre-  
fete?

Pigmalion? Noght, though he ay forge  
and bete,

Or grave, or peyntè ; for I dar wel seyn  
Apellès, Zanzis, sholdè werche in veyn,  
Outher to grave, or peynte, or forge, or  
bete,

If they presumèd me to countrefete.  
For He that is the Formere principal  
Hath makèd me his vicaire-general 20  
To forme and peynten erthely creàturis  
Right as me list, and ech thyng in my  
cure is

Under the moonè that may wane and  
waxe ;

And for my werk right no thyng wol I axe ;

GROUP C. These two tales follow the Franklin's  
in E. Dr. Furnivall is responsible for their  
present placing, which is not a matter of certainty.  
*Doctor's Tale*, taken, as to its incidents, as  
Prof. Lounsbury shows, including the reference  
to Livy, from the *Roman de la Rose*, ll. 6324-94.  
In this tale H<sup>5</sup> differ greatly from E and Heng. ;  
though only a few of the variants can be here  
recorded.

6. *No children*, H<sup>5</sup> and never ne (H only, ne).

16. *Zanzis*, Zeuxis.

24. *werk right*, H<sup>5</sup> *werkè*.

My lord and I been ful of oon accord.  
I made hire to the worshiþe of my lord ;  
So do I alle myne othere creàtures,  
What colour that they han, or what  
figures.'

Thus semeth me that Nature woldè seye.

This mayde of agè twelve yeer was  
and tweye 30

In which that Nature haddè swich delit ;  
For, right as she kan peynte a lillie whit,  
And reed a rosè, right with swich peynture  
She peynted hath this noble creàture,  
Er she were born, upon hir lymès fre,  
Where as by right swiche colours sholdè  
be ;

And Phebus dyèd hath hire tresses grete  
Lyk to the stremès of his burnèd heete ;  
And if that excellent was hire beautee,  
A thousand-foold moore vertuouus was she.  
In hire ne lakkèd no condicioun 41

That is to preyse, as by discrecioun.  
As wel in goost as body chast was she,  
For which she flourèd in virginitee  
With alle humylitee and abstinence,  
With alle attemperauce and pacience,  
With mesure eek of beryng and array.  
Discreet she was in answeyng alway,  
Though she were wise as Pallas, dar I  
seyn ;

Hir facound eek, ful wommanly and  
pleyn ; 50

No countrefeted termès hadde she  
To semè wys ; but after hir degree  
She spak, and alle hire wordès, moore  
and lesse,

Sownynge in vertu and in gentillesse ;  
Shamefast she was, in maydens shame-  
fastnesse,

Constant in herte, and ever in bisnesse  
To dryve hire out of ydel slogardye.

Bacus hadde of hire mouth right no  
maistrie,

25. *ful of oon*, H<sup>5</sup> *fully at*.

For wyn and youthè dooth Venus  
enresse, 59

As man in hir wol casten oille or gresse.

And of hir owne vertu unconstreyned

She hath ful oftè tymè syk hire feyned,

For that she woldè fleen the compaignye

Where likly was to treten of folye,—

As is at feestès, revels, and at daunces,

That been occasions of daliaunces.

Swich thyngès maken children for to be

To soonè rype and boold, as men may se,

Which is ful perilous, and hath been yoore,

For al to soonè may she lernè loore 70

Of booldnesse, whan she woxen is a wyf.

And ye maistresses, in youre oldè lyf,

That lordès doghtrès han in governaunce,

Ne taketh of my wordes no displesaunce ;

Thenketh that ye been set in governynges

Of lordès doghtrès, oonly for two thynges :

Outher for ye han kept youre honestee,

Or ellès ye han falle in freletee,

And knowen wel ynough the oldè daunce,

And han forsaken fully swich meschaunce

For evermo : therfore for Cristès sake 81

To teche hem vertu looke that ye ne

slake.

A thief of venysoun, that hath forlaft

His likerousnesse and al his oldè craft,

Kan kepe a forest best of any man ;

Now kepeth wel, for if ye wolde ye kan ;

Looke wel that ye unto no vice assente,

Lest ye be dampnéd for youre wikke

entente ;

For who so dooth a traitour is certeyn ;

And taketh kepe of that that I shal seyn ;

Of allè tresons sovereyn pestilence 91

Is whan a wight bitrayseth innocence.

Ye fadrès and ye moodrès eek, also,

Though ye han children, be it oon or mo,

Youre is the charge of al hir surveiaunce,

Whil that they been under youre gover-

naunce ;

Beth war, if by ensample of youre lyvyng,

Or by youre negligence in chastisyng,

That they ne perisse ; for I dar wel seye,

If that they doon, ye shul it deere abeye.

74. *wordes*, H<sup>4</sup> *word*.

82. H<sup>5</sup> read *Kepeh wel tho that ye undertake*.

84. *olde*, H<sup>5</sup> *thives*.

86. *if ye wolde*, H<sup>5</sup> *and ye wil*.

94. *mo*, F<sup>3</sup> *two*.

Under a shepherde softe and necligent  
The wolf hath many a sheepe and lamb  
to-rent.

Suffiseth oon ensample now as heere,

For I moot turne agayne to my matere.

This mayde, of which I wol this tale

expresse,

So kepte hir self hir neded no maistresse ;

For in hir lyvyng maydens myghten rede,

As in a book, every good word or dede

That longeth to a mayden vertuous,

She was so prudent and so bounteous ;

For which the fame out sprong on every

syde,

111

Bothe of hir beantee and hir bountee wyde,

That thurgh that land they preiséd hire,

echone

That lovéd vertu, save Envye allone,

That sory is of oother mennès wele,

And glad is of his sorwe and his unheele ;

The doctour maketh this descripcioun.

This mayde upon a day wente in the

toun

Toward a temple, with hire mooder deere,

As is of yongè maydens the manere. 120

Now was ther thanne a justice in that toun,

That governour was of that regioun,

And so bifel this juge his eyen caste

Upon this mayde, avysynge hym ful faste,

As she cam forby, ther as this juge stood.

Anon his hertè chaungèd and his mood,

So was he caught with beautee of this

mayde,

And to hymself ful pryvèly he sayde,

' This maydè shal be myn, for any man !'

Anon the feend into his hertè ran, 130

And taughte hym sodeynly that he by

slyghte

The mayden to his purpos wynnè myghte ;

For certès, by no force, ne by no meede,

Hym thoughte, he was nat able for to

speede ;

For she was strong of freendès, and eek she

Confeméd was in swich soverayn

bountee,

That wel he wiste he myghte hire never

wynne

105. *wol*, H<sup>5</sup> *telle*.

117. *The doctour*, glossed ' Augustinus ' in E<sup>2</sup>.

125. *as this*, H<sup>5</sup> *the*.

As for to maken hire with hir body synne ;  
 For which by greet deliberacioun  
 He sente after a cherl, was in the toun, <sup>140</sup>  
 Which that he knew for-subtil and for-  
 boold.

This juge unto this cherl his tale hath  
 toold

In secrete wise, and made hym to ensure  
 He sholdé telle it to no créature,  
 And if he dide he sholdé lese his heed.  
 Whan that assented was this curséd reed  
 Glad was this juge, and makéd him  
 greet cheere,

And yaf hym yiftés, precieuse and deere.  
 Whan shapen was al hire conspiracie,  
 Fro point to point, how that his lecherie  
 Parfournéd sholdé been ful subtilly, <sup>151</sup>  
 As ye shul heere it after openly,  
 Hoom gooth the cherl, that highté  
 Claudius.

This falsé jugé that highte Apius,—  
 So was his namé, for this is no fable,  
 But known for historial thyng notable ;  
 The sentence of it sooth is, out of doute,—  
 This falsé jugé gooth now faste aboute  
 To hasten his delit al that he may ;  
 And so bifel soone after, on a day, <sup>160</sup>  
 This falsé juge, as telleth us the storie,  
 As he was wont, sat in his consistórie :  
 And yaf his doomés upon sondry cas,  
 This falsé cherl cam forth, a ful greet pas,  
 And seyde, 'Lord, if that it be youre wille,  
 As dooth me right upon this pitous bille,  
 In which I pleyne upon Virginius ;  
 And if that he wol seyn it is nat thus,  
 I wol it preeve, and fyndé good wisse  
 That sooth is that my billé wol expresse.'

The juge answerde, 'Of this in his  
 absence  
 I may nat yeve diffynytyve sentence ;  
 Lat do hym calle, and I wol gladly heere ;  
 Thou shalt have al right and no wrong  
 heere.'

Virginius cam to wite the juges wille,  
 And right anon was rad this curséd bille ;  
 The sentence of it was as ye shul heere :—  
 To yow, my lord, sire Apius so deere,

*Sheweth youre pouré servant Claudius,  
 How that a knyght, calléd Virginius, <sup>180</sup>  
 Agayn the lawe, agayn al equitee,  
 Holdeth, expres agayn the wyl of me,  
 Myservant, which that is my thral by right,  
 Which fro myn hous was stole upon a  
 nyght,*

*Whil that she was ful yong ; this wol I preeve  
 By wisse, lord, so that it nat yow greeve.  
 She nys his doghter, nat, what so he seye ;  
 Wherfore to yow, my lord, the juge, I preye,  
 Yeld me my thral, if that it be youre wille.  
 Lo, this was al the sentence of his bille.*

Virginius gan upon the cherl biholde,  
 But hastily, er he his talé tolde,  
 And wolde have preevéd it, as sholde a  
 knyght,

And eek by witnessyng of many a wight,  
 That it was fals that seyde his adver-  
 sarie,—

This curséd jugé woldé no thyng tarie,  
 Ne heere a word moore of Virginius,  
 But yaf his juggément, and seyde thus :—

'I deeme anon this cherl his servant  
 have ; <sup>199</sup>  
 Thou shalt na lenger in thyn hous hir save.  
 Go, bryng hire forth, and put hire in  
 oure warde.

The cherl shal have his thral ; this I  
 awarde.'

And whan this worthy knyght,  
 Virginius,

Thurgh sentence of this justice Apius,  
 Mosté by force his deeré doghter yeven  
 Unto the juge, in lecherie to lyven,  
 He gooth hym hoom and sette him in his  
 halle,

And leet anon his deeré doghter calle,  
 And with a facé deed as asshen colde,  
 Upon hir humble face he gan biholde, <sup>210</sup>  
 With fadrés pitee stikyng thurgh his herte,  
 Al wolde he from his purpos nat converte.

'Doghter,' quod he, 'Virginia by thy  
 name,

Ther been two weyés, outhere deeth or  
 shame,

That thou most suffre ; alas ! that I was  
 bore !

For never thou deservedest wherfore  
 To dyen with a swerd, or with a knyf.

138. maken, H<sup>6</sup> make.

140. cherl, here and passim H<sup>5</sup> read clerk ; the  
*Roman de la Rose* has serjant.

O deerè doghter, endere of my lyf,  
Which I have fostred up with swich  
plesaunce

That thou were never out of my remem-  
braunce ; 220

O doghter, which that art my lastè wo,  
And in my lyf my lastè joye also ;  
O gemme of chastitee ! in pacience  
Take thou thy deeth, for this is my  
sentence.

For love, and nat for hate, thou most be  
deed :

My pitous hand moot smyten of thyn  
heed !

Allas ! that ever Apius the say !  
Thus hath he falsly juggèd the to day ' ;  
And tolde hire al the cas, as ye bifore  
Han herd, nat nedeth for to telle it moore.

' O mercy, deerè fader ! ' quod this  
mayde, 231

And with that word she both hir armès  
layde

About his nekke, as she was wont to do ;  
The teeris bruste out of hir eyen two,  
And seyde, ' Goodè fader, shal I dye ?  
Is ther no grace, is ther no remedye ?'

' No, certès, deerè doghter myn, ' quod  
he.

' Thanne yif me leyser, fader myn, '  
quod she,

' My deeth for to compleyne a litel space,  
For *pardee* Jeptè yaf his doghter grace 240

For to compleyne, er he hir slow, alas !  
And God it woot, no thyng was hir trespas,  
But for she ran hir fader first to see,  
To welcome hym with greet solempnitée.'

And with that word she fil aswowne anon,  
And after, whan hir swowning is agon,  
She riseth up, and to hir fader sayde,

' Blissed be God, that I shal dye a mayde ;  
Yif me my deeth, er that I have a shame ;  
Dooth with youre child youre wyl, a  
Goddès name ! ' 250

And with that word she preyed hym  
ful ofte

That with his swerd he woldè smytè  
softe ;

And with that word aswownè doun she fil.  
Hir fader, with ful sorweful herte and wil,

238. *leyser*, H<sup>5</sup> *leve*.

Hir heed of smoot, and by the tope it  
hente,

And to the juge he gan it to presente,  
As he sat yet in doom in consistorie ;  
And whan the juge it saugh, as seith the  
storie,

He bad to take hym and anhange hym  
faste ; 259

But right anon a thousand peple in thraste,  
To save the knyght, for routhe and for  
pitee ;

For knowen was the false inquitee.  
The peple anon hath suspect of this thyng,  
By manere of the cherlès chalangyng,  
That it was by the assent of Apius ;

They wisten wel that he was lecherus ;  
For which unto this Apius they gon,  
And caste hym in a prisoun right anon,  
Wher as he slow hymself ; and Claudius,

That servant was unto this Apius, 270  
Was demèd for to hange upon a tree ;

But that Virginius, of his pitee,  
So preyed for hym that he was exiled,  
And ellès, certès, he had been bigyled.

The remenant were anhangèd, moore and  
lesse,

That were consentant of this cursednesse.  
Heere men may seen how synne hath  
his merite.

Beth war, for no man woot whom God  
wol smyte,

In no degree ; ne in which manere wyse  
The worm of consciencè may agryse 280

Of wikked lyf, though it so pryvee be  
That no man woot ther-of but God and  
he ;

For be he lewèd man, or ellis lered,  
He noot how soone that he shal been  
afered ;

Therefore, I redè yow, this conseil take,  
Forsaketh synne, er synnè yow forsake.

*The wordes of the Hoost to the Phisicien  
and the Pardoner*

Oure Hoostè gan to swere as he were  
wood ;

275. *The remenant*, the witnesses promised  
in l. 186.

278. *whom*, H<sup>5</sup> *how*.

283. H<sup>5</sup> read *Wher (whether) that he be lewèd  
man or lered*.

'Harrow!' quod he, 'by naylés, and  
by blood!

This was a fals cherl and a fals justise!  
As shameful deeth as herté may devyse  
Come to thise jugés, and hire advocatz!  
Algate this sely mayde is slayn, allas!  
Allas! to deeré boughté she beautee!  
Wherfore I seye al day, as men may see,  
That yiftés of Fortune and of Nature  
Been cause of deeth to many a créature.  
Hire beautee was hire deth, I dar wel  
sayn;

Allas! so pitously as she was slayn!  
Of bothé yiftés that I speke of now  
Men han ful ofté mooré harm than prow.

'But twrely, myn owene maister  
deere,

301

This is a pitous talé for to heere;  
But nathélees, passe over, is no fors;  
I pray to God so save thy gentil cors,  
And eek thyne urynals, and thy jurdones,  
Thyn Ypocras, and eek thy Galiones,  
And every boyste ful of thy letuarie;  
God blesse hem, and oure lady Seinté  
Marie!

So moot I theen, thou art a propré man,  
And lyk a prelat, by Seint Ronyan! 310  
Seyde I nat wel, I kan nat speke in terme?  
But wel I woot thou doost myn herte to  
erme

That I almost have caught a cardynacle.  
By *corpus* bones! but I have triacle,  
Or elles a draughte of moyste and corny  
ale,

Or but I heere anon a myrie tale,  
Myn herte is lost, for pitee of this mayde.  
Thou *beel amy*, thou Pardoner,' he sayde,  
'Telle us som myrthe, or japés, right  
anon!'

'It shal be doon,' quod he, 'by  
Seint Ronyon!

320

But first,' quod he, 'heere at this alé  
stake

289. *fals cherl and*, H<sup>4</sup> *cursed thej*.290. *shameful*, H<sup>2</sup> *schendful*.291, 292. H<sup>3</sup> have the more vigorous couplet:So falle upon his body and his boones,  
The devel I bykenne him, al at oones.317. *lost*, H *brost*.319. H reads *Tel us a tale for thou canst  
any oon*, ending next line *and that anon*.

I wol bothe drynke and eten of a cake.'  
And right anon the gentils gonne to  
crye,

'Nay! lat hym telle us of no ribaudye;  
Telle us som moral thyng, that we may  
leere

Som wit, and thanné wol we gladly heere.'

'I graunte, y-wis,' quod he, 'but I  
moot thynke

Upon som honeste thyng, while that I  
drynke.'

*Heere folweth The Preamble of the  
Pardoners Tale*

'Lordynges,' quod he, 'in chirchés  
whan I preche,

I peyné me to han an hauteyn speche,  
And ryngé it out as round as gooth a  
belle,

331

For I kan al by roté that I telle.

My theme is alwey oon, and ever was,—  
*Radix malorum est Cupiditas*.

'First, I pronoucé whennés that I  
come,

And thanne my bullés shewe I, alle and  
some;

Oure ligé lordés seel on my patente,  
That shewe I first, my body to warente,  
That no man be so boold, ne preest, ne  
clerk,

Me to destourbe of Cristés hooly werk;  
And, after that, thanne telle I forth my  
tales,

341

Bullés of popés and of cardynales,  
Of patriarkes and bishoppés I shewe,  
And in Latyn I speke a wordés fewe  
To saffron with my predicacioun,  
And for to stire hem to devocioun;  
Thanne shewe I forth my longé cristal  
stones

Y-cramméd ful of cloutés and of bones,—  
Relikes been they, as wenen they echoon;  
Thanne have I in latoun a sholder boon

326, 327. H reads *Gladly, quod he, and sayde  
as ye schal heere, But in the cuppe wil I me be-  
thinke*.328. *thyng*, H *tale*.329. *chirches*, H<sup>3</sup> *chirche*.331. *as round as gooth*, H *as loud as doth*.345. *saffron*, H<sup>4</sup> *savore*.

Which that was of an hooly Jewés sheepe.

“Goode men,” I seye, “taak of my wordés keepe,—

If that this boon be wasche in any welle,  
If cow, or calf, or sheepe, or oxé swelle  
That any worm hath ete, or worm  
y-stonge,

Taak water of that welle and wassh his  
tonge,

And it is hool anon ; and forthermoor  
Of pokkés, and of scabbe, and every soor,  
Shal every sheepe be hool that of this  
welle

Drynketh a draughte. Taak kepe eek  
what I telle. 360

If that the goode-man that the beestés  
oweth

Wol every wyke, er that the cok hym  
croweth,

Fastyngé, drinken of this welle a draughte,  
As thilké hooly Jew oure eldrés taughte,  
His beestés and his stoor shal multiplie.

And, sires, also it heeleth jalousie,  
For though a man be falle in jalous rage,  
Lat maken with this water his potage,  
And never shal he moore his wyf  
mystriste,

Though he the soothe of hir defaulté  
wiste,— 370

Al had she taken preestes two or thre.

Heere is a miteyn eek, that ye may se ;  
He that his hand wol putte in this mitayn,  
He shal have multiplieng of his grayn,  
Whan he hath sowén, be it whete or otes,  
So that he offré pens, or ellés grotés.

“Goode men and wommen, o thyng  
warne I yow,

If any wight be in this chirché now  
That hath doon synné horrible, that he  
Dar nat for shame of it y-shryven be, 380  
Or any womman, be she yong or old,  
That hath y-maad hir housbonde coké-  
wold,

Swich folk shal have no power ne no  
grace

To offren to my relikes in this place ;  
And whosofyndeth hym out of swich blame  
They wol come up and offre on Goddés  
name,

385. *blame, E fame.*

And I assoille hem by the auctoritee  
Which that by bulle y-graunted was to  
me.”

‘By this gaude have I wonné, yeer  
by yeer,

An hundred mark sith I was Pardonér.  
I stondé lyk a clerk in my pulpet, 390  
And whan the lewéd peple is doun y-set,  
I preché so as ye han herd bifoore,  
And telle an hundred falsé japés moore ;  
Thanne peyne I me to stretché forth the  
nekke,

And est and west upon the peple I bekke,  
As dooth a dowvé, sittynge on a berne ;  
Myné handés and my tongé goon so yerne,  
That it is joye to se my bisynesse.

Of avarice and of swich cursednesse 400  
Is al my prechyng, for to make hem free  
To yeven hir pens, and namely unto me ;  
For myn entente is nat but for to wyinne,  
And no thyng for correccioun of synne.  
I rekké never whan that they been beryed,  
Though that hir soulés goon a-blaké-  
beried ;

For certés many a predicacioun  
Comth ofté tyme of yvel entencioun ;  
Som for plesaunce of folk and flaterye,  
To been avauncéd by ypocrisie ; 410  
And som for weyné glorie, and som for  
hate,

For whan I dar noon oother weyes debate,  
Thanne wol I styngé hym with my tongé  
smerte

In prechyng, so that he shal nat asterte  
To been defamed falsly, if that he  
Hath trespassed to my bretheren or to me ;  
For though I tellé noght his propré name,  
Men shal wel knowé that it is the same,  
By signés, and by othere circumstances.  
Thus quyte I folk that doon us dis-  
plesances ; 420

Thus spitte I out my venym under hewe  
Of hoolynesse, to semen hooly and trewe  
‘But, shortly, myn entente I wo  
devyse,—

I preche of no thyng but for coveityse ;  
Therefore my theme is yet and ever was,  
*Radix malorum est Cupiditas.*

Thus kan I preche agayn that samé vice  
Which that I use, and that is avarice ;

But though myself be gilty in that synne  
 Yet kan I maken oother folk to twynne  
 From avarice, and soorè to repente; 431  
 But that is nat my principal entente;  
 I prechè no thyng but for coveitise.  
 Of this mateere it oghte ynogh suffice.

'Thanne telle I hem ensamples many  
 oon

Of oldè stories longè tyme agoon,—  
 For lewèd peple loven talès olde,—  
 Swiche thyngès kan they wel reporte and  
 holde.

What! trowè ye, the whilès I may preche,  
 And wynnè gold and silver for I teche,  
 That I wol lyve in povertè wilfully? 441  
 Nay, nay, I thoghte it never, trewely,  
 For I wol preche and begge in sondry  
 landes;

I wol nat do no labour with myne handes,  
 Ne makè baskettès and lyve therby,  
 By cause I wol nat beggen ydelly.

I wol noon of the Apostles countrefete,  
 I wol have moneie, wollè, chese and whete,  
 Al were it yeven of the povereste page,  
 Or of the povereste wydwe in a village,  
 Al sholde hir children stervè for famyne.  
 Nay, I wol drynkè licour of the vyne,  
 And have a joly wenche in every toun;  
 But herkneth, lordynges, in conclusioun.

'Youre likyng is that I shal telle a tale.  
 Now have I dronke a draughte of corny  
 ale,

By God, I hope I shal yow telle a thyng  
 that shal by resoun been at youre likyng;  
 or though myself be a ful vicious man,  
 a moral tale yet I yow tellè kan, 460  
 which I am wont to prechè, for to wynne.  
 Now hoold youre pees, my tale I wol  
 bigynne.'

## PARDONER'S TALE

*Here bigynneth The Pardoners Tale*

In Flaundrès whilom was a compaignye  
 yongè folk, that haunteden folye,

*Pardoner's Tale.* The earliest form of this tale  
 a Buddhist Birth-Story in the *Vedabha*  
*'aka'*: analogues exist in Persian, Arabic, etc.,  
 1 in the *Cento Novelle Antiche*, but Chaucer's  
 ticular original is unknown.

As riot, hasard, stywès and tavérnes,  
 Where-as with harpès, lutès and gyternes,  
 They daunce and playen at dees, bothe  
 day and nyght,

And eten also, and drynken over hir  
 myght,

Thurgh which they doon the devel sacrificise  
 Withinne that develes temple, in cursèd  
 wise, 470

By superfluytee abhomynable.

Hir othès been so grete and so dampnable  
 That it is grisly for to heere hem swere;  
 Oure blissèd Lordès body they to-tere;  
 Hem thoughte that Jewès rentè hym  
 noght ynogh,

And ech of hem at othères synnè lough;  
 And right anon thanne comen tombesteres  
 Fetys and smale, and yongè frusteres,  
 Syngeres with harpès, baudès, wafereres,  
 Whiche been the verray develes officeres,  
 To kyndle and blowe the fyr of lecherye,  
 That is annexèd unto glotonye.

The Hooly Writ take I to my wisse  
 That luxurie is in wyn and dronkènesse.

'Lo, how that dronken Looth, un-  
 kyndely,

Lay by his doghtrès two unwityngly;  
 So dronke he was he nystè what he  
 wroghte.

Herodès, (who so wel the stories soghte,)  
 Whan he of wyn was replet at his feeste,  
 Right at his owenè table, he yaf his heeste  
 To sleen the Baptist John, ful giltèlees.

Seneca seith a good word, doutèlees;  
 He seith he kan no differencè fynde  
 Bitwix a man that is out of his mynde  
 And a man which that is dronkélewe,  
 But that woodnessè, fallen in a shrewè,  
 Persévereth lenger than dooth dronke-  
 nesse.

O glotonyè, ful of cursèdnesse;

O causè first of oure confusioun;

O original of oure dampnacioun; 500  
 Til Crist hadde boght us with his blood  
 agayn!

Ló, how deerè, shortly for to sayn,

474. *Oure blissèd Lordès body*, etc. The  
 phrase occurs also in the Parson's Tale.

492. *Seneca*, E<sup>6</sup> *Senec*; Corp.<sup>2</sup> reading *cek*  
*good worles for a good word*. Tyrwhitt traces  
 the reference to *Ep.* 83.

Aboght was thilké curséd vileynye ;  
 Corrupt was al this world for glotonye :  
 Adam oure fader, and his wyf also,  
 Fro Paradys, to labour and to wo  
 Were dryven for that vice, it is no  
 drede,—

For whil that Adam fasted, as I rede,  
 He was in Paradys, and whan that he  
 Eet of the fruyt deffended, on the tree, 510  
 Anon he was out cast to wo and peyne.  
 O glotonye, on thee wel oghte us pleyne !

O, wiste a man how manye maladyes  
 Folwen of excesse and of glotonyes,  
 He woldé been the mooré mesurable  
 Of his dieté, sittynge at his table !  
 Allas ! the shorté throte, the tendré mouth,  
 Maketh that est and west, and north and  
 south,

In erthe, in eir, in water, man to-swynke  
 To gete a glotoun deyntee mete and  
 drynke ! 520

Of this matiere, O Paul, wel kanstow  
 trete !

‘Mete unto wombe, and wombe eek  
 unto mete,  
 Shal God destroyen bothe,’ as Paulus seith.  
 Allas ! a foul thyng is it, by my feith,  
 To seye this word, and fouler is the dede  
 Whan man so drynketh of the white and  
 rede,

That of his throte he maketh his pryvee,  
 Thurgh thilké curséd superfluitee.

The Apostel wepyng seith ful pitously,  
 ‘Ther walken manye of whiche yow  
 toold have I, 530

I seye it now wepyng with pitous voys,  
 That they been enemys of Cristés croys,  
 Of whiche the ende is deeth, wombe is  
 hir god.’

O wombe ! O bely ! O stynkyng is thi  
 cod !

Fulfilled of donge and of corrupcioun !  
 At either ende of thee foul is the soun ;  
 How greet labour and cost is thee to  
 fynde !

This cookés, how they stampe, and  
 streyne, and grynde,

508. as *I rede*, glossed : Ieronimus contra  
 Iouianum (Bk. ii. cap. 15).

534. *is thi*, om. E<sup>6</sup>.

And turnen substaunce into accident,  
 To fulfillen al thy likerous talent ! 540  
 Out of the hardé bonés knocké they  
 The mary, for they casté noght away  
 That may go thurgh the golet softe and  
 swoote.

Of spicerie, of leef, and bark, and roote,  
 Shal been his sauce y-makéd by delit,  
 To make hym yet a newer appetit ;  
 But certés he that haanteth swiche delices  
 Is deed, whil that he lyveth in tho vices.

A lecherous thyng is wyn, and dronke-  
 nesse  
 Is ful of stryvyng and of wrecchednesse.

O dronké man ! disfigured is thy face, 550  
 Sour is thy breeth, foul artow to embrace  
 And thurgh thy dronké nose semeth the  
 soun,

As though thou seydest ay, ‘Sampson  
 Sampson !’

And yet, God woot, Sampson dran-  
 never no wyn.

Thou fallest as it were a stykéd swyn,  
 Thy tonge is lost and al thyn honeste cure  
 For dronkenesse is verray sepulture  
 Of mannés wit and his discrecioun ;  
 In whom that drynke hath dominacioun,  
 He kan no conseil kepe, it is no drede. 560  
 Now kepe yow fro the white and fro th  
 rede,

And namely fro the whité wyn of Lepe,  
 That is to selle in Fysshstrete, or in Chepe  
 This wyn of Spaigné crepeth subtilly  
 In othere wynés growynge fasté by,  
 Of which ther ryseth swich fumositee,  
 That whan a man hath dronken draughté  
 thre,

And weneth that he be at hoom in Chepe  
 He is in Spaigne right at the toune of  
 Lepe,— 570

Nat at the Rochele, neat Burdeux-toun,—  
 And thanné wol he seye, ‘Sampson  
 Sampson !’

But herkneth, lordyngs, o word, I yo  
 preye,

539. *turnen substaunce into accident*, alter th  
 whole character of. Chaucer is imitating th  
 chapter De Gula in the *De Contemptu Mundi* of  
 Innocent III.

563. *Lepe*, near Cadiz.

564. *Fysshstrete*, H Fleetstreet.



That alle the sovereyn actés, dar I seye,  
Of victories in the Oldé Testament,  
Thurgh verray God that is omnipotent,  
Were doon in abstinence and in preyere ;  
Looketh the Bible and ther ye may it  
leere.

Looke, Attila, the greté conquerour,  
Deyde in his sleepe, with shame and  
dishonour, 580

Bledyng ay at his nose in dronkenesse.  
A capitayn sholde lyve in sobrenesse ;  
And over al this avyseth yow right wel  
What was comaunded unto Lamuel,—  
Nat Samuel, but Lamuel seye I ;  
Redeth the Bible, and fynde it expresly  
Of wyn-veyng to hem that han justise.  
Namooore of this, for it may wel suffice.

And now that I have spoken of glo-  
tonye,

Now wol I yow deffenden hasardrye. 590  
Hasard is verray mooder of lesynges,  
And of deceite, and curséd forswerynges,  
Blaspheme of Crist, manslaughter, and  
wast also

Of catel, and of tyme, and forthermo  
t is repreeve and contrarie of honour  
or to ben holde a commune hasardour  
and ever the hyer he is of estaat,  
the mooré is he holden desolaat.  
that a pryncé useth hasardrye  
in allé governaunce and policye, 600  
he is, as by commune opinioun,  
—holde the lasse in reputacioun.

Stilbon, that was a wys embassadour,  
was sent to Corynthe in ful greet honour  
to Lacidomye to maken hire alliaunce ;  
and whan he cam, hym happedé *par*  
*chaunce*

that alle the gretteste that were of that  
lond

éyyngge atté hasard he hem fond ;  
for which, as sooné as it myghté be,  
he stal hym hoom agayn to his contree,  
and seyde, 'Ther wol I nat lese my  
name, 611

84. *Lamuel*, the mysterious king of Prov.  
i. 1.

83. *Stilbon*. The story is told in the *Poly-*  
*tics* (Bk. i. cap. v.) of John of Salisbury ;  
ambassador's name there being given as  
lon.

Ne I wol nat take on me so greet defame,  
Yow for to allie unto none hasardours ;  
Sendeth othere wise embassadours,  
For, by my trouthe, me were levere dye,  
Than I yow sholde to hasardours allye ;  
For ye that been so glorious in honours,  
Shul nat allyén yow with hasardours,  
As by my wyl, ne as by my tretee !'  
This wise philosophrè thus seyde hee. 620

Looke eek that to the kyng Demetrius,  
The kyng of Parthés, as the book seith us,  
Sente him a paire of dees of gold, in scorn,  
For he hadde uséd hasard ther-biforn ;  
For which he heeld his glorie or his  
renoun

At no value or reputacioun.  
Lordès may fynden oother maner pley  
Honeste ynough to dryve the day away.

Now wol I speke of othés false and  
grete

A word or two, as oldé bookés trete. 630  
Gret sweryng is a thyng abhomináble,  
And fals sweryng is yet moore repreváble.  
The heighé God forbad sweryng at al,—  
Witnesse on Mathew, but in special  
Of sweryng seith the hooly Jeremye,  
'Thou shalt seye sooth thyne othés, and  
nat lye

And swere in doom, and eek in rightwis-  
nesse ;

But ydel sweryng is a cursednesse.  
Bihoold and se, that in the firsté table  
Of heighé Goddés heestés, honourable, 640  
How that the seconde heeste of hym is  
this :

'Take nat my name in ydel, or amys ;'  
Lo, rather he forbedeth swich sweryng  
Than homycide, or many a curséd thyng ;  
I seye that as by ordré thus it stondesth.  
This knowen, that his heestés under-  
stondesth,

How that the seconde heeste of God is  
that ;

And forther over, I wol thee telle, al plat,  
That vengeance shal nat parten from his  
hous

621. *Demetrius*. This story also is from the  
*Polycraticus*.

641. *the seconde heeste*. By the Romau  
Church the first and second commandments are  
regarded as one, and the tenth divided into two.

That of his othes is to outrageous, — 650  
 'By Goddès precious herte,' and 'By  
 his nayles,'

And 'By the blood of Crist that is in  
 Hayles,'

'Sevene is my chaunce, and thyn is cynk  
 and treye,

By Goddès armès, if thou falsly pleye,  
 This daggere shal thurghout thyn hertè  
 go !'

This fruyt cometh of the bicchéd bonès  
 two,

Forsweryng, irè, falsnesse, homycide.

Now for the love of Crist that for us dyde,  
 Leveth youre othès, bothè grete and  
 smale.

But, sires, now wol I tellè forth my tale.

This riotourès thre, of whiche I telle,  
 Longe erst er primè rong of any belle,  
 Were set hem in a tavernne for to drynke ;  
 And as they sat they herde a bellè clynke  
 Biforn a cors, was caried to his grave.

That oon of hem gan callen to his knave :

'Go bet,' quod he, 'and axè redily  
 What cors is this that passeth heer forby,  
 And looke that thou reporte his namè  
 weel.'

'Sire,' quod this boy, 'it nedeth  
 never a deel, 670

It was me toold er ye cam heere two  
 houres ;

He was, *pardee*, an old felawe of yourès,  
 And sodeynly he was y-slayn to-nyght,  
 For-dronke, as hesat on his bench upright ;  
 Ther cam a privee theef, men clepeth  
 Deeth,

That in this contree al the peplè sleeth,  
 And with his spere he smoot his herte  
 atwo,

And wente his wey withouten wordès mo.  
 He hath a thousand slayn this pestilence,  
 And, maister, er ye come in his presence,  
 Me thynketh that it werè necessarie 681  
 For to be war of swich an adversarie ;  
 Beth redy for to meete hym evermoore ;  
 Thus taughtè me my dame ; I sey na-  
 moore.'

'By Sainte Mariè !' seyde this taverner,

652. *Hayles*, Hailes Abbey in Gloucestershire.

659. *Leveth*, E<sup>2</sup> *Lete*.

'The child seith sooth, for he hath  
 slayn this yeer

Henne over a mile, withinne a greet  
 village,

Bothe man and womman, child, and  
 hyne, and page ;

I trowe his habitacioun be there ;  
 To been avyséd greet wysdom it were, 690  
 Er that he dide a man a dishonour.'

'Ye, Goddès armès !' quod this riotour,  
 'Is it swich peril with hym for to meete ?  
 I shal hym seke by wey, and eek by strete ;  
 I make avow to Goddès dignè bones !

Herkneth, felawès, we thre been al ones,  
 Lat ech of us holde up his hand til oother,  
 And ech of us bicomen otheres brother,  
 And we wol sleen this falsè traytour,  
 Deeth ; 699

He shal be slayn, he that so manye sleeth,  
 By Goddès dignitee, er it be nyght !'

Togidres han thise thre hir trouthès  
 plight

To lyve and dyen ech of hem for oother,  
 As though he were his owene y-borè  
 brother ;

And up they stirte, al dronken, in this  
 rage ;

And forth they goon towardès that village  
 Of which the taverner hadde spoke biforn :  
 And many a grisly ooth thanne han they  
 sworn ;

And Cristès blessed body they to-rente, —  
 Deeth shal be deed, if that they may  
 hym hente. 710

Whan they han goon nat fully half a  
 mile,  
 Right as they wolde han troden over a  
 stile,

An oold man and a pourè with hem mette ;  
 This oldè man ful mekèly hem grette,  
 And seyde thus : 'Now, lordès, God  
 yow see !'

The proudeste of thise riotourès three  
 Answerde agayn, 'What, carl with sory  
 grace,

Why artow al for-wrapped, save thy face ?  
 Why lyvestow so longe in so greet age ?'

This oldè man gan looke in his visage,  
 And seyde thus : 'For I ne kan nat fynde

704. *y-bore*, H<sup>3</sup> *sworne*.

A man, though that I walkéd into Ynde,  
Neither in citee, ne in no village,  
That woldé change his youthé for myn  
age;

And therfore moot I han myn agé stille,  
As longé tyme as it is Goddés wille.  
Ne Deeth, allas ! ne wol nat han my lyf ;  
Thus walke I, lyk a restélees kaityf,  
And on the ground, which is my moodrés  
gate,

I knokkè with my staf, erly and late, 730  
And seyè, " Leevé mooder, leet me in !  
Lo, how I vanysshe, flessch and blood  
and skyn ;

Allas ! whan shul my bonés been at reste ?  
Mooder, with yow wolde I chaungè my  
cheste

That in my chambré longé tyme hath be,  
Ye, for an heyré-clowt to wrappè me !"  
But yet to me she wol nat do that grace,  
For which ful pale and welkéd is my face.

' But, sires, to yow it is no curteisye  
To speken to an old man vileynye, 740  
But he trespasse in word, or elles in dede.  
In Hooly Writ ye may your self wel rede,  
Agayns an oold man, hoor upon his heed,  
Ye sholde arise ; wherfore I yeve yow reed,  
Ne dooth unto an oold man noon harm  
now,

Namooré than ye wolde men did to yow  
In agé, if that ye so longe abyde.  
And God be with yow, where ye go or  
ryde ;

I moote go thider as I have to go.'  
' Nay, oldé cherl, by God, thou shalt  
nat so !' 750

Seydè this oother hasardour anon ;  
' Thou partest nat so lightly, by Seint  
John !

Thou spak right now of thilké traytour,  
Deeth,

That in this contree alle oure freendés  
sleeth ;

Have heer my trouthe, as thou art his  
espye,

Felle where he is, or thou shalt it abyde,  
By God and by the hooly sacrament !

732. vanysshe, H<sup>2</sup> wane.

750. or thou shalt it abyde, H<sup>2</sup> or elles thou  
shalt dye.

For soothly, thou art oon of his assent  
To sleen us yongé folk, thou falsé theef !'  
' Now, sires,' quod he, ' if that ye  
be so leef 760

To fyndé Deeth, turne up this crokéd wey,  
For in that grove I lafte hym, by my fey,  
Under a tree, and there he wole abyde ;  
Noght for youre boost he wole him no  
thyng hyde.

Se ye that ook ? Right there ye shal  
hym fynde.

God savè yow that boghte agayn man-  
kynde,

And yow amende !' thus seyde this oldé  
man ;

And everich of these riotourés ran  
Til he cam to that tree, and ther they  
founde, 769

Of floryns fyne, of gold y-coynéd rounde,  
Wel ny a seven bussshels, as hem thoughte.  
No lenger thanné after Deeth they  
soughte,

But ech of hem so glad was of that sighte,  
For that the floryns been so faire and  
brighte,

That douh they sette hem by this precious  
hoord.

The worste of hem he spak the firsté word.  
' Bretheren,' quod he, ' taak kepé  
what I seye ;

My wit is greet, though that I bourde  
and pleye.

This tresor hath Fortúne unto us yeven  
In myrthe and joliftee oure lyf to lyven,  
And lightly as it comth so wol we spende.  
Ey, Goddés precious dignitee ! who wende  
To-day, that we sholde han so fair a  
grace ?

But myghte this gold be caried fro this  
place

Hoom to myn hous, or ellés unto  
yours,—

For wel ye woot that al this gold is  
oures,—

Thanne weré we in heigh felicitee.

But trewely, by daye it may nat bee ;  
Men woldé seyn that we were thevés  
stronge, 789

And for oure owenè tresor doon us honge.

771. seven, E<sup>5</sup> eighte.

This tresor moste y-caried be by nyghte  
 As wisely and as slyly as it myghte.  
 Wherefore, I rede that cut among us alle  
 Be drawe, and lat se wher the cut wol  
 falle ;  
 And he that hath the cut with herté blithe  
 Shal renné to the towne, and that ful  
 swithe,  
 And brynge us breed and wyn ful prively,  
 And two of us shul kepen subtilly  
 This tresor wel ; and if he wol nat tarie,  
 When it is nyght we wol this tresor carie,  
 By oon assent, where as us thynketh best.  
 That oon of hem the cut broghte in his  
 fest,  
 And bad hem drawe and looke where it  
 wol falle ;  
 And it fil on the yongeste of hem alle,  
 And forth toward the toun he wente anon ;  
 And al so sooné as that he was gon,  
 That oon of hem spak thus unto that  
 oother :  
 'Thow knowest wel thou art my sworné  
 brother ;  
 Thy profit wol I tellé thee anon ; 809  
 Thou woost wel that oure felawe is agon,  
 And heere is gold, and that ful greet  
 plentee,  
 That shal departed been among us thre ;  
 But nathélees, if I kan shape it so  
 That it departed were among us two,  
 Hadde I nat doon a freendés torn to thee ?'  
 That oother answerde, 'I noot how  
 that may be ;  
 He woot how that the gold is with us  
 tweye ;  
 What shal we doon, what shal we to hym  
 seye ?'  
 'Shal it be conseil ?' seyde the firsté  
 shrewe, 819  
 'And I shal tellen thee in wordés fewe  
 What we shal doon, and bryngen it wel  
 aboute.'  
 'I graunté,' quod that oother, 'out  
 of doute,  
 That by my trouthe I shal thee nat  
 biweyre.'  
 'Now,' quod the firste, 'thou woost  
 wel we be tweye,  
 And two of us shul strengre be than oon.

Looke whan that he is set, and right  
 anoon  
 Arys, as though thou woldest with hym  
 pleye,  
 And I shal ryve hym thurgh the sydés  
 tweye,  
 Whil that thou strogelest with hym as in  
 game,  
 And with thy daggere looke thou do the  
 same ; 830  
 And thanne shal al this gold departed be,  
 My deeré freend, bitwixen me and thee.  
 Thanne may we bothe oure lustés all  
 fulfille,  
 And pleye at dees right at oure owene  
 wille.'  
 And thus acorded been these shrewés  
 tweye,  
 To sleen the thridde, as ye han herd me  
 seye.  
 This yongeste, which that wente unto  
 the toun,  
 Ful ofte in herte he rolleth up and doun  
 The beautee of these floryns newe and  
 brighte ;  
 'O Lord,' quod he, 'if so were that I  
 myghte 840  
 Have al this tresor to my self alone,  
 Ther is no man that lyveth under the  
 trone  
 Of God, that sholdé lyve so murye as I !'  
 And atté laste the feend, oure enemy,  
 Putte in his thought that he sholde  
 poyson  
 beye,  
 With which he myghté sleen his felawes  
 tweye ;  
 For-why the feend foond hym in swich  
 lyvyngre,  
 That he hadde levé hym to sorwé brynge,  
 For this was outrély his fulle entente  
 To sleen hem bothe and never to repente.  
 And forth he gooth, no lenger wolde he  
 tarie, 851  
 Into the toun, unto a pothecarie,  
 And preydó hym that he hym woldé selle  
 Som poysoun, that he myghte his rattés  
 quelle ;  
 And eek ther was a polcat in his hawe,  
 That, as he seyde, his capouns hadde  
 y-slawe,

And fayn he woldé wreke hym, if he  
myghte,  
On vermyn, that destroyéd hym by  
nyghte.

The pothecarie answerde, 'And thou  
shalt have

A thyng that, al so God my soulé save !  
In al this world ther nis no créature, 861  
That eten or dronken hath of this con-  
fiture,

Noght but the montance of a corn of  
whete,

That he ne shal his lif anon forlete ;  
Ye, sterve he shal, and that in lassé while  
Than thou wolt goon a-paas nat but a mile ;  
This poysoun is so strong and violent.'

This curséd man hath in his hond y-  
hent

This poysoun in a box, and sith he ran  
Into the nexté strete unto a man, 870  
And borwéd hym largé botellés thre,  
And in the two his poysoun pouréd he ;  
The thridde he kepte clene for his owené  
drynke ;

For al the nyght he shoope hym for to  
swynke

In carynge of the gold out of that place.  
And whan this riotour with sory grace  
Hadde filled with wyn his greté botels thre,  
To his felawes agayn repaireth he.

What nedeth it to sermone of it moore ?  
For right as they hadde cast his deeth  
bifoore, 880

Right so they han hym slayn, and that  
anon,

And whan that this was doon thus spak  
that oon :

'Now lat us sitte and drynke, and make  
us merie,

And afterward we wol his body berie' ;  
And with that word it happéd hym,  
*par cas,*

To take the botel ther the poysoun was,  
And drank and yaf his felawe drynke also,  
For which anon they storven bothé two.

But certés, I suppose that Avycen  
Vroot never in no Canon, ne in no fen,  
So wonder signés of empoisonyng 891

890. *fen*, the Arabic name of the sections of  
vicenna's Canon.

Than hadde these wrecches two, er hir  
endyng.

Thus ended been these homycidés two,  
And eek the false empoysouneré also.

O curséd synne of allé cursednesse !  
O traytorous homycide ! O wikkednesse !  
O glotonye, luxurie, and hasardrye !  
Thou blasphemour of Crist with vileynye,  
And othés grete, of usage and of pride !  
Allas ! mankyndé, how may it bitide 900  
That to thy Créatour which that thee  
wroghte,

And with his precious herté-blood thee  
boghte,

Thou art so fals and so unkynde, allas !

Now, goode men, God foryeve yow  
youre trespas,

And ware yow fro the synne of avarice.  
Myn hooly pardoun may yow alle warice,  
So that ye offre nobles, or sterlynges,  
Or ellés silver broches, spoonés, rynges.  
Boweth youre heed under this hooly bulle !  
Cometh up, ye wyvés, offreth of youre  
wolle ! 910

Youre names I entre heer in my rolle anon ;  
Into the blisse of hevене shul ye gon ;  
I yow assoillé by myn heigh power,—  
Yow that wol offre,—as clene and eek as  
cleer

As ye were born ; and lo, sires, thus I  
preche,

And Jhesu Crist, that is oure soulés leche,  
So graunté yow his pardoun to receyve ;  
For that is best ; I wol yow nat deceyve.

'But, sires, o word forgat I in my tale ;  
I have relikes and pardoun in my male  
As faire as any man in Engelond, 921  
Whiche were me yeven by the popés hond.  
If any of yow wole of devocioun  
Offren, and han myn absolucioun,  
Com forth anon, and kneleth heere adoun,  
And mekely receyveth my pardoun ;  
Or ellés taketh pardoun as ye wende,  
Al newe and fressh at every milés ende,—  
So that ye offren, alwey newe and newe,  
Nobles or pens, whiche that be goode  
and trewe. 930

It is an honour to everich that is heer

That ye mowe have a suffisant Pardoneer  
Tassoillé yow in contree as ye ryde,  
For aventüres whiche that may bytde.  
Paraventure ther may fallen oon or two  
Doun of his hors and breke his nekke atwo;  
Looke which a seuretee is it to yow alle,  
That I am in youre felaweshipe y-falle,  
That may assoillé yow, bothe moore and  
lasse,

Whan that the soule shal fro the body  
passe. 940

I redé that oure Hoost heere shal bigynne,  
For he is moost envoluped in synne!  
Com forth, sire Hoost, and offrè first anon,  
And thou shalt kisse my relikes every-  
chon,—

Ye, for a grote! Unbokele anon thy purs.'

'Nay, nay,' quod he, 'thanne have I  
Cristès curs!

Lat be,' quod he, 'it shal nat be, so theeche!  
Thou woldest make me kisse thyn oldé  
breech,

And swere it were a relyk of a seint,  
Though it were with thy fundément  
depeint; 950

But, by the croys which that Saint  
Eleyne fond,

935. *fallen*, H<sup>6</sup> *falle*. 951. *Eleyne*, Helena.

I wolde I hadde thy coillons in myn hond  
Instide of relikes, or of seintuarie.

Lat kutte hem of, I wol thee helpe hem  
carie,

They shul be shryned in an hogges toord.'

This Pardoner answerdè nat a word;  
So wrooth he was no word ne wolde he  
seye.

'Now,' quod oure Hoost, 'I wol no  
lenger pleye

With thee, ne with noon oother angry  
man.'

But right anon the worthy Knyght  
bigan,— 960

Whan that he saugh that al the peple  
lough,—

'Namooore of this, for it is right  
ynough!

Sire Pardoner, be glad and myrie of  
cheere;

And ye, sir Hoost, that been to me so  
deere,

I prey yow that ye kisse the Pardoner;  
And Pardoner, I prey thee drawe thee  
neer,

And as we diden, lat us laughe and pleye.'  
Anon they kiste and ryden forth hir weye.

## GROUP D

*The Prologue of the Wyves Tale of Bathe*

'EXPERIENCE, though noon auctoritee  
Were in this world, were right ynogh to me  
To speke of wo that is in mariage;

For, lordynges, sith I twelf yeer was  
of age,—

Y-thonked be God, that is eterne on lyve!  
Housbondes at chirchè dore I have had  
fyve;

For I so oftè have y-wedded bee;

GROUP D. In the Ellesmere MS. this group follows the Man of Law's Tale, but the mention of Sittingbourne (l. 847) shows that it must come after the Monk's Tale with its reference to Rochester.

6. *at chirche dore*, where the first part of the marriage service used to be read.

And alle were worthy men in hir degree.  
But me was toold certeyn, nat longe  
agoon is,

That sith that Crist ne wente never but  
onis 10

To wedding, in the Cane of Galilee,  
By the same ensample taughte he me  
That I ne sholdè wedded be but ones.  
Herkne, eek, which a sharpe word for  
the nones,

Beside a wellé Jhesus, God and man,

13. Against this line E has the note, 'Qui enim semel ivit ad nupcias docuit semel esse nubendum,' a quotation from St. Jerome, *Adversus Jovinianum*, a treatise in favour of chastity, some of the arguments in which the Wife of Bath from here to line 128 takes up and inverts or combats.

Spak in repreeve of the Samaritan :  
 "Thou hast y-had fyve housbondés," quod  
 he,

"And that ilk man the which that hath  
 now thee

Is noght thyn housbonde"; thus seyde  
 he certeyn.

What that he mente therby, I kan nat  
 seyn ; 20

But that I axé, why the fifthé man  
 Was noon housbonde to the Samaritan ?  
 How manye myghte she have in mariage ?  
 Yet herde I never tellen, in myn age,  
 Upon this nombré diffinioun.

Men may devyne, and glosen up and doun,  
 But wel I woot, expres, withouté lye,  
 God bad us for to wexe and multiplie ;  
 That gentil text kan I wel understonde.  
 Eek, wel I woot, he seyde myn housbonde  
 Sholde leté fader and mooder, and také  
 me ; 31

But of no nombré mencioum made he,  
 Of bigamy, or of octogamy ;  
 Why sholdé men speke of it vileynye.

'Lo, heere the wisé kyng daun  
 Salomon ;

I trowe he haddé wyves mo than oon ;  
 As, woldé God, it leveful were to me  
 To be refreshéd half so ofte as hé !  
 Which yifte of God hadde he for alle his  
 wyvys !

No man hath swich that in this world  
 alyve is. 40

God woot, this noble kyng, as to my wit,  
 The firsté nyght had many a myrie fit  
 With ech of hem, so wel was hym on lyve.

'Y-blessed be God, that I have wedded  
 fyve !

Welcome the sixté, whan that ever he shal,  
 For sothe I wot nat kepe me chaast in al.  
 Whan myn housbonde is fro the world  
 y-gon,

Som cristen man shal weddè me anon ;  
 For thanne, thapostle seith, I am free  
 To wedde, a Goddes half, where it liketh  
 me. 50

He seith to be wedded is no synne ;  
 'Bét is to be wedded than to brynne."

50. *a Goddes half*, on God's part, *i.e.* with His  
 consent.

What rekketh me thogh folk seye vileynye  
 Of shrewed Lameth, and his bigamy ?

I woot wel Abraham was an hooly man,  
 And Jacob eek, as ferforth as I kan,  
 And ech of hem hadde wyvès mo than two,  
 And many another holy man also.

Whanne saugh ye ever in any manere age  
 That hyé God defended mariage 60

By expres word ? I pray you tellethe me ;  
 Or where comanded he virginitee ?

I woot as wel as ye, it is no drede,  
 Thapostel whan he speketh of mayden-  
 hede,

He seyde that precept ther-of hadde he  
 noon.

Men may conseilte a womman to been  
 oon,

But conseillyng is nat comandément.  
 He putte it in oure owene juggément ;

For haddé God comanded maydenhede  
 Thanne hadde he dampnéd weddyng with  
 the dede ; 70

And certein, if ther were no seed y-sowe,  
 Virginitee, wher-of thannesholde it growe ?

Poul dorste nat comanden, atté leeste,  
 A thyng of which his maister yaf noon  
 heeste.

The dart is set up of virginitee,  
 Cacche who so may, who renneth best  
 lat see !

'But this word is nat taken of every  
 wight,

But ther as God lust give it of his myght.  
 I woot wel that the Apostel was a mayde,  
 But nathéless, thogh that he wroot and  
 sayde 80

He wolde that every wight were swich  
 as he,

Al nys but conseil to virginitee ;  
 And for to been a wyf hē yaf me leve  
 Of indulgence, so it is no repreeve  
 To weddè me, if that my makè dye,  
 Withouten excepcioun of bigamy,  
 Al were it good no womman for to  
 touche,—

He mente as in his bed or in his couche ;  
 For peril is bothe fyr and tow tassemble ;  
 Ye knowe what this ensample may  
 resemble. 90

This is al and som, he helde virginitee

Moore profiteth than weddyng in freletee ;  
 Freelte clepe I, but if that he and she  
 Wolde leden al hir lyf in chastitee.

' I graunte it wel I havé noon envie  
 Thogh maydenhede preferrè bigamye :  
 Hem liketh to be clenè, body and goost.  
 Of myn estaat I nyl nat make no boost,  
 For wel ye knowe a lord in his houshold  
 He nath nat every vessel al of gold ; 100  
 Somme been of tree, and doon hir

lord servyse.

God clepeth folk to hym in sondry wyse,  
 And everich hath of God a propre yifte,  
 Som this, som that, as hym liketh to  
 shifte.

' Virginitee is greet perfeccioun,  
 And continence eek, with devocioun ;  
 But Crist, that of perfeccioun is welle,  
 Bád nat every wight sholdè go selle  
 All that he hadde and yive it to the poore,  
 And in swich wisè folwe hym and his foore.  
 He spak to hem that wolde lyve parfitly,  
 And, lordynges, by youre leve, that am  
 nat I.

I wol bistowe the flour of al myn age  
 In the actès and in fruyt of mariage.

' Telle me also, to what conclusioun  
 Were membres maad of generacioun,  
 And for what profit was a wight  
 y-wroght ?

Trusteth right wel, they were nat maad  
 for noght.

Glose who so wole, and seye bothe up  
 and doun,

That they were makyd for purgacioun 120  
 Of uryne, and oure bothè thyngès smale  
 Were eek to knowe a femele from a male,  
 And for noon oother causè,—sey ye no ?  
 The experience woot wel it is noght so ;  
 So that the clerkès be nat with me wrothe,  
 I sey this, that they beth maked for bothe ;  
 This is to seye, for office, and for ese  
 Of engendrure, ther we nat God displese.  
 Why sholde men ellès in hir bookès sette  
 That man shal yeldè to his wyf hire dette ?  
 Now wher-with sholde he make his  
 païement, 131

If he ne used his sely instrument ?

Thanne were they maad upon a creatüre,

92. *profiteth*, H<sup>5</sup> *parfit*.

To purge uryne and eek for engendrure.

' But I seye noght that every wight is  
 holde,

That hath swich harneys as I to yow tolde,  
 To goon and usen hem in engendrure,—  
 Thanne shuld men take of chastitee no  
 cure.

Crist was a mayde and shapen as a man,  
 And many a seint sith that the world  
 bigan, 140

Yet lyved they ever in parfit chastitee.

I nyl nat envie no virginitee ;  
 Lat hem be breed of purèd wheté seed,  
 And lat us wyvès hoten barly breed,  
 And yet with barly breed Mark tellè kan  
 Oure Lord Jhesu refreshed many a man.

' In swich estaat as God hath clepèd us,  
 I wol persèvere, I nam nat precius ;  
 In wyfhode I wol use myn instrument  
 As frely as my Makere hath it sent. 150  
 If I be dangerous, God yeve me sorwe ;  
 Myn housbonde shal it have bothe eve  
 and morwe,

Whan that hym list com forth and paye  
 his dette.

An housbonde I wol have, I nyl nat lette,  
 Which shal be bothe my dettour and my  
 thral,

And have his tribulacioun withal  
 Upon his flesh, whil that I am his wyf.  
 I have the power, durynge al my lyf,  
 Upon his proprè body, and noght he.  
 Right thus the Apostel tolde it untome, 160  
 And bad oure housbondes for to love us  
 weel ;

Al this sentence me liketh every deel.'

Up stirte the Pardoner, and that anon ;  
 ' Now, dame,' quod he, ' by God and  
 by Seint John !

Ye been a noble prechour in this cas.

I was aboute to wedde a wyf, allas !

What, sholde I bye it on my flesh so  
 deere ?

Yet hadde I levered wedde no wyf to-yeere !'

' Abyde,' quod she, ' my tale is nat  
 bigonne. 169

Nay, thou shalt drynken of another tonne  
 Er that I go, shal savoure wors than ale ;  
 And whan that I have toold thee forth  
 my tale



Of tribulacioun in mariage,  
Of which I am expert in al myn age,—  
This to seyn, my self have been the  
whippe,—

Than maystow chesé wheither thou wolte  
sippe

Of thilké tonnè that I shal abroche.  
For war of it, er thou to ny approche,  
For I shal tell ensamples mo than ten,  
“Whosothat nyl be war by othere men, 180  
By hym shul othere men corrected be”;  
The samè wordes writeth Ptholomee;  
Rede in his Almageste and take it there.’

‘Dame, I wolde praye yow, if youre  
wyl it were,’

Seydè this Pardoner, ‘as ye bigan  
Telle forth youre talé; spareth for no man,  
And teche us yongè men of youre prak-  
tike.’

‘Gláddy, sirés, sith it may yow like;  
But yet I praye to al this compaignye,  
If that I speke after my fantasye, 190

As taketh not agrief of that I seye,  
For myn entente is nought but for to  
pleye.

‘Now, sire, now wol I tellè forth my  
tale.

As ever moote I drynken wyn or ale,  
I shal seye sooth, of housbondes that I  
hadde,

As thre of hem were goode, and two  
were badde.

The thre were goodè men and riche, and  
olde;

Unnethè myghtè they the statut holde  
In which that they were bounden unto me;  
Ye woot wel what I meene of this, *pardee!*  
As help me God, I laughè when I thynke  
How pitously a-nyght I made hem swynke!  
And, by my fey, I tolde of it no stoor;  
They had me yiven hir lond and hir  
tresoor,

Me neded nat do lenger diligence  
To wynne hir love, or doon hem rever-  
ence;

They lovèd me so wel, by God above,

182. *Ptholomee*. No one has yet verified the  
references to the Almagest here and in l. 324.

188. *sirés*, H<sup>5</sup> *quod sche*.

204. *lond*, E *gold*.

That I ne tolde no deyntee of hir love!  
A wys womman wol sette hire, ever in  
oon, 209

To gete hire lovè ther as she hath noon;  
But sith I hadde hem hoolly in myn hond,  
And sith they hadde me yeven all hir lond,  
What sholde I taken heede hem for to  
plese,

But it were for my profit and myn ese?  
I sette hem so a werké, by my fey,  
That many a nyght they songen “weil-  
away!”

The bacoun was nat fet for hem, I trowe,  
That som men han in Essexe at Dun-  
mowe. 218

I governed hem so wel after my lawe,  
That ech of hem ful blisful was and fawe  
To brynge me gayé thynges fro the fayre;  
They were ful glad whan I spak to hem  
faire,

For, God it woot, I chidde hem spitously.

‘Now herkneth how I baar me pro-  
prely,

Ye wisè wyvès that kan understonde.

‘Thus shul ye speke, and beren hem  
on honde;

For half so boldély kan ther no man  
Swere and lyè as a womman kan.

I sey nat this by wyvès that been wyse,  
But if it be whan they hem mysavvise. 230  
I-wis a wyf, if that she kan hir good,  
Shal berè hym on hond the cow is wood,  
And takè witness of hir owene mayde  
Of hir assent; but herkneth how I sayde.

‘Sire, oldè kaynard, is this thyn array?  
Why is my neighèborès wyf so gay?

She is honourèd over al ther she gooth;  
I sitte at hoom, I have no thrifty clooth.  
What dostow at my neighèborès hous?  
Is she so fair? artow so amorous? 240  
What rowne ye with oure mayde? *Bene-  
dicite!*

209. *sette*, H<sup>5</sup> *bisy*.

218. *Dunmowe*. The Dunmow fitch is still  
given as a prize to a husband and wife who  
have never quarrelled.

232. *cow*, chough or jackdaw, the reference  
being to a tale like the Manciple’s.

235. From here to l. 315 Chaucer takes his  
text from a fragment of Theophrastus, *De Nup-  
tiis*, preserved in §§ 313, 314 of St. Jerome’s  
treatise against Jovinian.

Sire, oldé lecchour, lat thy japés be !  
 And if I have a gossib or a freend,  
 Withouten gilt thou chidest as a feend,  
 If that I walke or pleye unto his hous.  
 Thou comest hoom as dronken as a mous  
 And prechest on thy bench with yvel  
 preef :

Thou seist to me it is a greet meschief  
 To wedde a pouré womman for costage ;  
 And if she be riche and of heigh parage, <sup>250</sup>  
 Thanne seistow it is a tormentrie  
 To suffre hire pride and hire malencolie ;  
 And if that she be faire, thou verray  
 knave,

Thou seyst that every honour wol hire  
 have ;

She may no while in chastitee abyde  
 That is assailléd upon eché syde.

‘Thou seyst som folk desire us for  
 richesse,

Somme for oure shapé, somme for oure  
 fairnesse,

And som for she kan either synge or  
 daunce,

And som for gentillesse, and daliaunce,  
 Som for hir handés, and hir armés  
 smale,— <sup>261</sup>

Thus goth al to the devel by thy tale !

Thou seyst men may nat kepe a castel wale,  
 It may so longe assailléd been over al.

‘And if that she be foul, thou seist  
 that she

Coveiteth every man that she may se,  
 For as a spaynel she wol on hym lepe,  
 Til that she fyndé som man hire to chepe ;  
 Ne noon so grey a goos gooth in the lake,  
 As, seistow, wol been withouté make ; <sup>270</sup>  
 And seyst it is an hard thyng for to welde  
 A thyng that no man wole, his thankés,  
 helde.

Thus seistow, lorel, whan thou goost to  
 bedde,

And that no wys man nedeth for to wedde,  
 Ne no man that entendeth unto hevене.  
 With wildé thonder dynt and firy levене  
 Mooté thy welkéð nekké be to-broke !

‘Thou seyst that droppying houses,  
 and eek smoke,

And chidyng wyvès, maken men to flee  
 Out of hir owene hous, a ! *benedicitee !* <sup>280</sup>

What eyleth swich an old man for to  
 chide ?

‘Thow seyst we wyvès wol oure vices  
 hide

Til we be fast, and thanne we wol hem  
 shewe,—

Wel may that be a proverbe of a shrewe.

‘Thou seist that oxen, asses, hors, and  
 houndes,

They been assayéd at diversé stoundes ;  
 Basyns, lavourés, er that men hem bye,  
 Spoonés and stooles, and al swich hous-  
 bondrye,

And so been pottés, clothés, and array ;

But folk of wyvès maken noon assay <sup>290</sup>  
 Til they be wedded,—oldé dotard shrewe !

Thanne, seistow, we wol oure vices shewe.

‘Thou seist also that it displeseth me  
 But if that thou wolt preysé my beautee,

And but thou poure alwey upon my face,  
 And clepe me “fairé dame” in every

place ;

And but thou make a feeste on thilké day  
 That I was born, and make me fressh

and gay ;

And but thou do to my norice honour,  
 And to my chamberere withinne my

bour, <sup>300</sup>

And to my fadrés folk and his allyes,—  
 Thus seistow, oldé bareful of lyes !

‘And yet of oure apprentice Janékyn,  
 For his crispe heer, shynynge as gold so  
 fyn,

And for he squiereth me bothe up and  
 doun,

Yet hastow caught a fals suspeciuon,—  
 I wol hym noght, thogh thou were deed

to-morwe !

‘But tel me this, why hydestow with  
 sorwe

The keyés of thy cheste, awey fro me ?

It is my good, as wel as thyn, *pardee !*

What ! wenestow make an ydiot of oure  
 dame ? <sup>311</sup>

Now, by that lord that calléd is Seint  
 Jame,

Thou shalt nat bothé, thogh thou weré  
 wood,

Be maister of my body, and of my  
 good ;

That oon thou shalt forgo, maugree thyne  
eye!

What nedeth thee of me to enquire or  
spyen?

I trowe thou woldest loke me in thy  
chiste;

Thou sholdest seyé, "Wyf, go wher thee  
liste;

Taak youre disport, I wol nat leve no  
talys;

I knowe yow for a trewé wyf, dame Alys."

We love no man that taketh kepe, or  
charge,

Wher that we goon; we wol ben at our  
large.

'Of allé men y-blessed moot he be,  
The wise astrologien, Daun Ptholome,  
That seith this proverbe in his Almageste,  
"Of allé men his wysdom is the hyste  
That rekketh never who hath thé world  
in honde."

By this proverbé thou shalt understonde,  
Have thou ynogh, what thar thee recche  
or care

How myrily that othere folkés fare? <sup>330</sup>

For certeyn, oldé dotard, by youre leve,

Ye shul have queynté right ynogh at eve.

He is to greet a nygard that wolde werne

A man to lighte his candle at his lanterne.

He shal have never the lassé light, *pardee!*

Have thou ynogh, thee thar nat pleyné  
thee.

'Thou seyst also, that if we make us  
gay

With clothyng, and with precíous array,

That it is peril of oure chastitee;

And yet with sorwe thou most enforcé  
thee,

And seye this wordés in the Apostles  
name:

"In habit maad with chastitee and shame,  
Ye wommen shul apparaille yow," quod

he,

"And noght in tresséd heer, and gay  
perree,

As perlés, ne with gold, ne clothés riche."

After thy text, ne after thy rubriche,  
I wol nat wirche as muchel as a gnat.

Thou seydest this, that I was lyk a cat;  
For whoso woldé senge a cattés skyn,

Thanne wolde the cat wel dwellen in his  
in;

And if the cattés skyn be slyk and gay, <sup>350</sup>

She wol nat dwelle in housé half a day;

But forth she wole, er any day be dawed,

To shewe hir skyn, and goon a-cater-  
wawed;

This is to seye, if I be gay, sire shrewe,  
I wol renne out my borel for to shewe.

'Sire, oldé fool, what eyleth thee to  
spyen?

Thogh thou preye Argus with his  
hundred eyen

To be my wardécors, as he kan best,  
In feith, he shal nat kepe me but me

lest;

Yet koude I make his berd, so moot I  
thee!

'Thou seydest eek, that ther been  
thyngés thre

The whiché thyngés troublen al this erthe,  
And that no wight ne may endure the  
ferthe.

O levee sire shrewé, Jhesu shorte thy lyf!

Yet prechestow and seyst an hateful wyf

Y-rekened is for oon of these meschances.

Been ther none othere of thy resemblances

That ye may likne youre parables unto,

But if a sely wyf be oon of tho? <sup>370</sup>

'Thou likénest wommenés love to  
helle,

To bareyne lond, ther water may nat  
dwelle;

Thou liknest it also to wildé fyr,  
The moore it brenneth the moore it hath

desir

To consumen every thyng that brent wole  
be;

Thou seyst, right as wormés shende a tree,  
Right so a wyf destroyeth hire housbond

This knowé they that been to wyvés  
bonde.'

Lordynges, right thus as ye have  
understonde

Baar I stify myne olde housbondes on  
honde,

That thus they seyden in hir dronkenesse;  
And al was fals, but that I took witnessse

357. eyleth, H<sup>5</sup> helpith.

361. make his berd, cheat him.

On Janékyn, and on my nece also.  
 O Lord, the peyne I didde hem and the wo!  
 Ful giltleles, by Goddés sweeté pyne!  
 For as an hors I koudé byte and whyne;  
 I koudé pleyne, thogh I were in the gilt,  
 Or ellés often tyme hadde I been spilt.  
 ‘Who so first cometh to the mille first  
 grynt’;

I pleynéd first, so was oure werre y-stynt;  
 They were ful glad to excusen hem ful  
 blyve <sup>391</sup>  
 Of thyng of which they never agilte hir  
 lyve.

Of wenches wolde I beren hem on  
 honde,  
 Whan that for syk unnethés myghte thay  
 stonde;

Yet tikled it his herté, for that he  
 Wende that I hadde of hym so greet  
 chiertee!

I swoor that al my walkyng out by  
 nyghte

Was for tespyé wenches that he dighte.  
 Under that colour hadde I many a myrthe,  
 For al swich witte is yeven us in oure  
 byrthe,— <sup>400</sup>

Deceité, wepyng, spyng, God hath  
 yive

To women kyndély whil they may lyve;  
 And thus of o thyng I avaunté me,  
 Atte ende I hadde the bettre in ech de-  
 gree,—

By sleighte, or force, or by som maner  
 thyng,

As by continueel murmure or grucchyng.  
 Naimely abeddé hadden they meschaunce;  
 Ther wolde I chide and do hem no  
 plesaunce;

I wolde no lenger in the bed abyde,  
 If that I felte his arm over my syde, <sup>410</sup>  
 Til he had maad his ransoun unto me;  
 Thanne wolde I suffre hym do his  
 nyceete;

And therfore every man this tale I telle,—  
 Wynne who so may, for al is for to selle;  
 With empty hand men may none haukés  
 lure.

For wyngnyng wolde I al his lust endure

<sup>389.</sup> From H; Heng.<sup>4</sup> *Whoso that first to mylle comth first grynt.*

And maké me a feynéd appetit,  
 And yet in bacoun hadde I never delit;  
 That madé me that ever I wolde hem  
 chide;

For thogh the pope hadde seten hem  
 biside <sup>420</sup>

I wolde nat spare hem at hir owene bord,  
 For, by my trouthe, I quitte hem word  
 for word.

As helpe me verray God omnipotent,  
 Though I right now sholde make my  
 testament,

I ne owe hem nat a word that it nys quit.  
 I broghte it so abouté by my wit  
 That they moste yeve it up as for the  
 beste,

Or ellés hadde we never been in reste;  
 For thogh he lookéd as a wood leoun,  
 Yet sholde he faille of his conclusioun.

Thanne wolde I seyç, ‘Goodé lief,  
 taak keepe,— <sup>431</sup>

How mekely looketh Wilkyn, ouré  
 sheepe!

Com neer, my spousé, lat me ba thy  
 cheke;

Ye sholdé been al pacient and meke,  
 And han a sweeté, spicéd consciéce,  
 Sith ye so preche of Jobés pacience.

Suffreth alwey, syn ye so wel kan preche,  
 And, but ye do, certein we shal yow  
 teche

That it is fair to have a wyf in pees.  
 Oon of us two moste hoven, doutélees,  
 And sith a man is mooré resonable <sup>441</sup>

Than womman is, ye mosté been suffrable.  
 What eyleth yow to grucché thus and  
 grone?

Is it for ye woldé have my queynte allone?  
 Wy, taak it al! lo, have it every deel!

Peter! I shrewe yow, but ye love it  
 weel;

For if I woldé selle my belé chose  
 I koudé walke as fressh as is a rose;  
 But I wol kepe it for youre owene tooth.  
 Ye be to blame, by God! I sey yow sooth.

Swiche manere wordés haddé we on  
 honde. <sup>451</sup>

Now wol I speken of my fourthe  
 housbonde.

My fourthé housbonde was a revelour;

This is to seyn, he hadde a paramour ;  
 And I was yong and ful of ragerye,  
 Stibourne and strong and joly as a pye.  
 Wel koude I dauncè to an harpè smale,  
 And synge, y-wis, as any nyghtyngale,  
 Whan I had dronke a draughte of sweetè  
 wyn.

Metellius, the foulè cherl, the swyn ! 460  
 That with a staf birafte his wyf hire lyf,  
 For she drank wyn ; thogh I hadde been  
 his wyf

He sholdè nat han daunted me fro drynke !  
 And after wyn on Venus moste I thynke,  
 For al so siker as cold engendreth hayl,  
 A likerous mouth moste han a likerous tayl.  
 In wommen vinolent is no defence,—  
 This knowen lecchours by experience.

But, Lord Crist ! whan that it remem-  
 breth me

Upon my yowthe, and on my jolitee, 470  
 It tikleth me aboute myn hertè roote !  
 Unto this day it dooth myn hertè boote  
 That I have had my world, as in my tyme.  
 But Age, allas ! that al wole envenyme,  
 Hath me biraft my beautee and my pith,—  
 Lat go, fare wel, the devel go therwith !  
 The flour is goon, ther is namoore to telle,  
 The bren, as I best kan, now moste I selle ;  
 But yet to be right myrie wol I fonde.

Now wol I tellen of my fourthe housbonde.

I seye I hadde in hertè greet despit 481  
 That he of any oother had delit ;  
 But he was quit, by God, and by Seint  
 Joce !

made hym of the samè wode a croce.  
 Nat of my body in no foul manere,  
 But certeinly I madè folk swich cheere,  
 That in his owene grece I made hym frye  
 for angre, and for verray jalousye.  
 by God, in erthe I was his purgatorie,  
 for which I hope his soulè beinglorie ! 490  
 for God it woot, he sat ful ofte and song  
 whan that his shoo ful bitterly hym wrong.  
 Ther was no wight save God and he that  
 wiste  
 a many wise how soorè I hym twiste.

460. *Metellius*. The story is from Valerius Maximus, Bk. vi. ch. 3.

483. *Seint Joce*, Saint Jodocus, a Breton hermit of the 7th century.

He deyde whan I cam fro Jerusalem,  
 And lith y-grave under the roodè beem,  
 Al is his tombè noght so curyus  
 As was the sepulcre of hym Daryus,  
 Which that Appelles wroghtè subtilly ;  
 It nys but wast to burye hym preciously. 500  
 Lat hym fare wel, God yeve his soulè reste,  
 He is now in his grave and in his cheste !  
 Now of my fifthè housbonde wol I telle.

God lete his soulè never come in helle !  
 And yet was he to me the moostè shrewe ;  
 That feele I on my ribbes al by rewe,  
 And ever shal, unto myn endyng day ;  
 But in oure bed he was so fressh and gay ;  
 And therewithal so wel koude he me glose,  
 Whan that he woldè han my belè chose,  
 That thogh he hadde me bet on every bon,  
 He koudè wynne agayn my love anon.  
 I trowe I loved hym bestè for that he  
 Was of his lovè daungerous to me.  
 We wommen han, if that I shal nat lye,  
 In this matere a queyntè fantasye ;  
 Waytè ! what thyng we may nat lightly  
 have

Ther-after wol we crie al day and crave.  
 Forbede us thyng, and that desiren we ;  
 Preece on us faste and thannè wol we fle.  
 With daunger outè we al oure chaffare ; 521  
 Greet prees at market maketh deerè ware,  
 And to greet cheepe is holde at litel prys ;  
 This knoweth every womman that is wys.

My fifthè housbonde, God his soulè  
 blesse !

Which that I took for love, and no  
 richesse,

He somtyme was a clerk of Oxenford,  
 And hadde left scole and wente at hom  
 to bord

With my gossib, dwellynge in oure toun ;  
 God have hir soule, hir name was Alisoun.  
 She knew my herte, and eek my privètee,  
 Bet than oure parisshe preest, as moot  
 I thee.

To hire biwreyèd I my conseil al,  
 For hadde myn housbonde pissèd on a  
 wal,

498. *Daryus*. The tomb which Apelles wrought for Darius by Alexander's order is described in the 6th book of the *Alexandreis* of Gualtier de Lille.

Or doon a thyng that sholde han cost his  
lyf,

To hire, and to another worthy wyf,  
And to my nece, which that I lovéd weel,  
I wolde han toold his conseil every deel;  
And so I dide ful often, God it woot,  
That made his face ful often reed and hoot  
For verray shame, and blamed hymself,  
for he 541

Had toold to me so greet a pryvete.

And so bifel that oncs in a Lente,  
So often tymes I to my gossyb wente,—  
For ever yet I lovéd to be gay,  
And for to walke in March, Averill and  
May,

Fro hous to hous to heeré sondry talys,—  
That Jankyn clerk, and my gossyb dame  
Alys

And I myself into the feeldés wente.  
Myn housbonde was at London al that  
Lente; 550

I hadde the bettre leyser for to pleye,  
And for to se, and eek for to be seye  
Of lusty folk. What wiste I wher my  
grace

Was shapen for to be, or in what place?  
Therefore I made my visitaciouns  
To vigilies and to processions,  
To prechyng eek, and to thise pilgrimages,  
To pleyes of myracles, and to mariages,  
And wered upon my gayé scarlet gytes.  
Thise wormes, ne thise motthes, ne thise  
mytes, 560

Upon my peril frete hem never a deel.  
And wostow why? For they wer used  
weel.

Now wol I tellen forth what happéd me.  
I seye that in the feeldés walked we,  
Till trewely we hadde swich daliance,  
This clerk and I, that of my purveiance  
I spak to hym, and seyde hym how that he,  
If I were wydwé, sholdé weddè me;  
For certainly,—I sey for no bobance,—  
Yet was I never withouten purveiance  
Of mariage, nof othere thyngés eek. 571  
I holde a mouses herte nat worth a leek  
That hath but oon hole for to sterté to,  
And if that faille, thanne is al y-do.

I bar hym on honde he hadde enchanted  
me,—

My damé taughté me that soulttee,—  
And eek I seyde, I mette of hym al nyght,  
He wolde han slayn me as I lay up right,  
And al my bed was ful of verray blood;  
But yet I hope that he shal domegood, 580  
For blood bitokeneth gold, as me was  
taught;

And al was fals, I dremed of it right  
naught,

Bút I folwed ay my damés loore,  
As wel of this as of othere thyngés moore.

But now, sire,—lat me se,—what I  
shal seyn?

A ha! by God, I have my tale ageyn.  
Whan that my fourthé housbonde was  
on beere

I wepte algate and madé sory cheere,  
As wyvès mooten, for it is usage,  
And with my coverchief covered my  
visage; 590

But, for that I was purveyed of a make,  
I wepte but smal, and that I undertake!

To chirche was myn housbonde born  
a-morwe

With neighebores, that for hym maden  
sorwe,

And Jankyn, ouré clerk, was oon of tho.  
As help me God, whan that I saugh hymgo  
After the beere, me thoughte he hadde a  
paire

Of leggés and of feet so clene and faire,  
That al myn herte I yaf unto his hood.

He was, I trowe, a twenty wynter oold, 600  
And I was founrti, if I shal seye sooth;

But yet I hadde alwey a coltés tooth.  
Gat-tothed I was, and that bicam me weel,

I hadde the prente of seinté Venus seel.  
As help me God, I was a lusty oon,

And faire and riche, and yong, and wel  
bigon,

And trewely, as myne housbondes toldé me,  
I hadde the beste quonyam myghté be;

For certés, I am al Venerien 609  
In feelynge, and myn herte is Marcien;

Venus me yaf my lust, my likerousnesse,  
And Mars yaf me my sturdy hardynesse.

Myn áscendent was Taur and Mars  
therinne;

Allas, alas! that ever love was synne!  
I folwed ay myn inclinacioun

By vertu of my constellacioun,  
That madé me I koudé noght withdrawe  
My chambre of Venus from a good felawe.  
Yet have I Martés mark upon my face,  
And also in another, privee, place, 620  
For God so wys be my savacioun,  
I ne loved never by no discrecioun,  
But ever folwedé myn appetit,—  
Al were he short, or long, or blak, or whit ;  
I took no kepe, so that he likéd me,  
How poore he was, ne eek of what degree.  
What sholdé I seye, but at the monthés  
ende

This joly clerk, Jankyn, that was so hende,  
Hath wedded me with greet solemnytee,  
And to hym yaf I all the lond and fee,  
That ever was me yeven ther-bifore ; 631  
But afterward repented me ful soore.  
He noldé suffre nothyng of my list ;  
By God, he smoot me onés, on the lyst,  
For that I rente out of his book a leef,  
That of the strook myn eré wex al deef.  
Stibourne I was as is a leonesse,  
And of my tonge a verray jangleresse ;  
And walke I wolde, as I had doon biforn,  
From hous to hous, although he had it  
sworn ; 640

For which he often tymés woldé preche,  
and me of oldé Romayn geestés teche ;  
How he, Symplicius Gallus, leste his wyf,  
and hire forsok for terme of al his lyf,  
fought but for open-heedid he hir say  
sokyngé out at his dore upon a day.

Another Romayn tolde he me by name,  
that, for his wyf was at a someres game  
withouten his wityng, he forsook hire eke ;  
and thanne wolde he upon his Bible seke  
that ilké proverbe of Ecclesiaste, 651  
There he comandeth, and forbedeth faste,  
an shal nat suffre his wyf go roule  
aboute.

anne wolde he seye right thus, with-  
outen doute :

*Whoso that buyldeth his hous al of salwes,  
and priketh his blyndé hors over the salwes,  
and suffreth his wyf to go seken halwes,  
worthy to been hangéd on the galwes ;*

42. *geestes*. These stories of Sulpicius Gallus  
and Sempronius Sophus are taken from Valerius  
Maximus (Bk. vi. ch. 3).

But al for noght, I setté noght an hawe  
Of his proverbés, nof his oldé sawe ; 660  
Ne I wolde nat of hym corrected be.  
I hate hym that my vices telleth me,  
And so doo mo, God woot, of us than I.  
This made hym with me wood al outrely ;  
I noldé noght forbere hym in no cas.

Now wol I seye yow sooth, by Seint  
Thomas !

Why that I rente out of his book a leef,  
For which he smoot me so that I was  
deef.

He hadde a book that gladly, nyght  
and day,

For his desport he woldé rede alway. 670  
He clepéd it ' Valerie ' and ' Theofraste,'  
At whiché book he lough alwey ful faste ;  
And eek ther was som-tyme a clerk at  
Rome,

A cardinal, that highté Seint Jerome,  
That made a book agayn Jovinian,  
In whiché book eek ther was Tertulan,  
Crisippus, Trotula, and Helowys,  
That was abbessé nat fer fro Parys ;  
And eek the Parables of Salomon,

Ovidés Art, and bookés many on ; 680  
And allé thise were bounden in o volume ;  
And every nyght and day was his custume,  
Whan he hadde leyser and vacacioun  
From oother worldly occupacioun,

To reden on this book of wikked wyves.  
He knew of hem mo legendés and lyves  
Than been of goodé wyvés in the Bible ;  
For, trusteth wel, it is an impossible  
That any clerk wol speké good of wyves,—  
But if it be of hooly Seintés lyves,— 690  
Ne of noon oother womman never the mo.  
Who peyntedé the leoun ? Tel me who.  
By God ! if wommen haddé writen stories,  
As clerkés han withinne hire oratories,  
They wolde han writen of men moore  
wikkednesse

Than all the mark of Adam may redresse.  
The children of Mercúrie and Venus

671. *Valerie*, i.e. Walter Map's *Epistola  
Valerii ad Rufinum de non ducenda uxore*

671. *Theofraste*. See note to l. 235.

676. *Tertulan*, perhaps Tertullian's treatise *De  
Exhortatione Castitatis*.

677. *Crisippus*, *Trotula*, not identified yet  
with any probability.

Been in hir wirkyng ful contrarius ;  
 Mercúrie loveth wysdam and science,  
 And Venus loveth ryot and dispence ; 700  
 And for hire diverse disposicioun  
 Each falleth in otheres exaltacioun ;  
 And thus, God woot, Mercurie is desolat  
 In Pisces, wher Venus is exaltat ;  
 And Venus falleth ther Mercurie is reysed ;  
 Therefore no womman of no clerk is  
 preyed.

The clerk whan he is oold, and may  
 noght do

Of Venus werkés worth his oldé sho,  
 Thanne sit he doun and writ in his dotage  
 That wommen kan nat kepe hir mariage.

But now to purpos why I toldé thee 711  
 That I was beten for a book, *pardee*.  
 Upon a nyght Jankyn, that was oure sire,  
 Redde on his book, as he sat by the fire,  
 Of Eva first, that for hir wikkednesse  
 Was al mankyndé broght to wrecched-  
 nesse ;

For which that Jesus Crist hymself was  
 slayn,

That boghte us with his herté blood agayn.  
 Lo, heere expres of womman may ye fynde,  
 That womman was the los of al mankynde.

Tho redde he me how Sampson loste  
 his heres ; 721  
 Slepynge, his lemman kitte it with hir  
 sheres ;

Thurgh which tresoun loste he bothe his  
 eyen.

Tho redde he me, if that I shal nat lyen,  
 Of Hercules and of his Dianyre,  
 That causéd hym to sette hymself afyre.

No thyng forgat he the penaunce and wo  
 That Socrates hadde with his wyvés two ;  
 How Xantippa caste pisse upon his heed ;  
 This sely man sat stille as he were deed ;  
 He wiped his heed, namooré dorste he  
 seyn 731

But, 'Er that thonder stynté comth a  
 reyn !'

Of Phasifpha, that was the queene of  
 Crete,

708. *worth, etc.*, H is not worth a scho.

717-20. Omitted in H<sup>6</sup>.

727. *penaunce*, from Pet.<sup>3</sup> E<sup>2</sup> *sorwe*, H<sup>2</sup>  
*care*.

733. *Phasifpha*, Pasiphaë.

For shrewednesse hym thoughte the talé  
 swete.

Fy ! speke namoore ; it is a grisly thyng,  
 Of hire horrible lust and hir likyng !

Of Clitermystra, for hire lechery  
 That falsly made hire housbonde for to  
 dye ;

He redde it with ful good devocioun.

He tolde me eek for what occasioun 740  
 Amphiorax at Thebés loste his lyf ;  
 Myn housbonde hadde a legende of his  
 wyf,

Eriphilem, that for an ouche of gold  
 Hath prively unto the Grekés told  
 Wher that hir housbonde hidde hym in  
 a place,

For which he hadde at Thebés sory grace.

Of Lyma tolde he me, and of Lucye ;  
 They bothé made hir housbondes for to  
 dye,—

That oon for love, that oother was for hate.  
 Lyma hir housbonde, upon an even late,  
 Emypoysoned hath, for that she was his  
 fo ;

Lucia likerous loved hire housbonde so,  
 That, for he sholde alwey upon hire  
 thynke,

She yaf hym swich a manere lové-drynke  
 That he was deed, er it were by the  
 morwe ;

And thus algatés housbondés han sorwe.

Thanne tolde he me how oon Latumyus  
 Compleyned, unto his felawe Arrius,  
 That in his gardyn growéd swich a tree,  
 On which, he seyde, how that his wyvés  
 thre 760

Hangéd hymself for herté despitus.

'O leevé brother,' quod this Arrius,  
 'Yif me a plante of thilké blisséd tree,  
 And in my gardyn planted it shal be !'

Of latter date of wyvés hath he red,  
 That somme han slayn hir housbondes in  
 hir bed,

And lete hir lechour dighte hire al the  
 nyght,

743. *Eriphilem*, who betrayed Amphiarus to  
 gain the necklace of Harmonia.

747. *Lyma*, an error for 'Livia, who poisoned  
 Drusus; this instance and the next are taken  
 from Map.

757. *Latumyus*. Map calls him Pacuvius.



Whil that the corps lay in the floor  
upright ;

And somme han dryven naylès in hir brayn  
Whil that they slepte, and thus they han  
hem slayn. 770

Somme han hem yeven poyson in hire  
drynke ;

He spak moore harm than hertè may  
bithynke ;

And therwithal he knew of mo proverbes,  
Than in this world ther growen gras or  
herbes.

'Bet is,' quod he, 'thyn habitacioun  
Be with a leoun or a foul dragoun,  
Than with a womman usynge for to  
chyde.'

'Bet is,' quod he, 'hye in the roof abyde,  
Than with an angry wyf down in the hous.'  
They been so wikked and contrarious, 780  
They haten that hir housbondes loven ay.  
He seyde a womman cast hir shame away  
Whan she cast of hir smok ; and forther  
mo,

A fair womman, but she be chaast also,  
Is lyk a gold ryng in a sowès nose.  
Who woldè wenè, or who wolde suppose,  
The wo that in myn hertè was, and pyne ?

And whan I saugh he woldè never fyne  
To reden on this cursèd book al nyght,  
Al sodeynly thre levès have I plyght 790  
Out of his book, right as he radde, and eke  
I with my fest so took hym on the cheke,  
That in oure fyr he fil bakward adoun ;  
And he up stirte as dooth a wood leoun,  
And with his fest he smoot me on the  
head,

That in the floor I lay as I were deed ;  
And whan he saugh how stillè that I lay,  
He was agast and wolde han fled his way,  
Til attè laste out of my swogh I breyde.  
'O hastow slayn me, falsè thief?' I seyde ;  
'And for my land thus hastow mordred  
me? 801

Er I be deed, yet wol I kissè thee.'  
And neer he cam, and knelèd faire  
adoun,

And seyde, 'Deerè suster Alisoun !  
As help me God, I shal thee never smyte.  
That I have doon it is thyself to wyte ;  
'oryeve it me, and that I thee biseke' ;

And yet, eft-soones, I hitte hym on the  
cheke,

And seyde, 'Theef ! thus muchel am I  
wreke. 809

Now wol I dye, I may no lenger speke.'  
But attè laste, with muchel care and wo,  
We fille acorded by us selven two.

He yaf me al the bridel in myn hond,  
To han the governance of hous and lond,  
And of his tonge, and of his hond also,  
And made hym brenne his book anon  
right tho ;

And whan that I hadde geten unto me  
By maistrie al the sovèraynètee,—  
And that he seyde, 'Myn owene trewè wyf,  
Do as thee lust to terme of al thy lyf ; 820  
Keepe thyn honour, and keepe eek myn  
estaat,'—

After that day we hadden never debaat.  
God helpe me so, I was to hym as kynde  
As any wyf from Denmark unto Ynde,  
And also trewe, and so was he to me.  
I prey to God, that sit in magestee,  
So blesse his soulè for his mercy deere.  
Now wol I seye my tale, if ye wol heere.

*Biholde the wordes bitwene the Somonour  
and the Frere*

The Frere lough whan he hadde herd  
al this ;

'Now, dame,' quod he, 'so have I joye  
or blis, 830

This is a long preamble of a tale.'  
And whan the Somonour herde the Frere  
gale,

'Lo,' quod the Somonour, 'Goddès  
armès two !

A frere wol entremette him ever-mo.  
Lo, goodè men, a flye, and eek a frere,  
Wol falle in every dysshè and mateere.  
What spekestow of "preambulacioun" ?  
What? amble, or trotte, or pees, or go  
sit down !

Thou lettest oure disport in this manere.'

'Ye, woltow so, sire Somonour?' quod  
the Frere ; 840

'Now, by my feith ! I shal, er that I go,

836. *and, Corp.<sup>s</sup> and eek, a clumsy device to  
help out the line.*

Telle of a somonour swich a tale or two  
That alle the folk shal laughen in this  
place.'

'Now ellés, Freré, I bishrewe thy face,'  
Quod this Somonour, 'and I bishrewé me  
But if I tellé talés, two or thre,  
Of frerés, er I come to Sidyngborne,  
That I shal make thyn herté for to morne,  
For wel I woot thy pacience is gon.'

Oure Hoosté cridé, 'Pees! and that  
anon'; 850  
And seyde, 'Lat the womman telle hire  
tale;

Ye fare as folk that dronken ben of ale.  
Do, dame, telle forth youre tale, and  
that is best.'

'Al redy, sire,' quod she, 'right as  
yow lest;

If I have licence of this worthy Frere.'

'Yis, dame,' quod he, 'tel forth, and  
I wol heere.'

### WIFE OF BATH'S TALE

In tholdé dayés of the Kyng Arthour,  
Of which that Britons speken greet  
honour,

All was this land fulfild of fairye. 859

The elf queene with hir joly compaignye  
Dauncéd ful ofte in many a grené mede.

This was the olde opinon as I rede,—  
I speke of manye hundred yeres ago,—

But now kan no man se none elvès mo,  
For now the greté charitee and prayeres  
Of lymytours, and othere hooly freres,  
That serchen every lond and every streem,  
As thikke as motés in the sonnè beem,—  
Bléssyng hallés, chambres, kichenes,  
boures,

Citees, burghes, castels, hyè toures, 870  
Thrópés, bernés, shipnes, daýeryes,—

This maketh that ther been no fairyes;  
For ther as wont to walken was an elf,  
Ther walketh now the lymytour hymself,

847. *Sidyngborne*, Sittingbourne.  
*Wife of Bath's Tale*. No original of this tale  
is known. Tyrwhitt compares it to the story of  
Florent in Gower's *Confessio Amantis*, Bk. i.  
867. *serchen*, H *sechen*.

In undermelés and in morwenynges,  
And seyth his matyns and his hooly-  
thynges

As he gooth in his lymytacioun.

Wommen may go now saufly up and down;  
In every bussh or under every tree,

Ther is noon oother incubus but he, 880  
And he ne wol doon hem non dishonour.

And so bifel it that this kyngé, Arthour,  
Hadde in his hous a lusty bacheler

That on a day cam ridyngé fro ryver,  
And happéd that, allone as she was born,

He saugh a maydè walkyngé hym biforn,  
Of whichè mayde, anon, maugree hir heed,

By verray force birafté hire maydenhed;  
For which oppressioun was swich clamour,  
And swich pursute unto the kyng Arthour,  
That dampnéd was this knyght for to be  
deed 891

By cours of lawe, and sholde han lost his  
heed,—

Paraventure swich was the statut tho,—  
But that the queene and othere ladyes mo,

So longè preyèden the kyng of grace,  
Til he his lyf hym graunted in the place,

And yaf hym to the queene al at hir wille  
To chesè whether she wolde hym save  
or spille.

The queene thanketh the kyng with al  
hir myght, 899

And after this thus spak she to the knyght,  
Whan that she saugh hir tyme upon a day:  
'Thou standest yet,' quod she, 'in swich  
array,

That of thy lyf yet hastow no suretee.  
I grante thee lyf, if thou kanst tellen me  
What thyng is it that wommen moost  
desiren,—

Be war, and keepe thy nekké-boon from  
iren,—

And if thou kanst nat tellen it anon,  
Yet shal I yeve thee levè for to gon  
A twelf-month and a day, to seche and  
leere

An answeere suffisant in this mateere; 910  
And suretee wol I han, er that thou pace,  
Thy body for to yelden in this place.'

878. *now*, om. EH4.  
881. *non*, the reading of Camb. MS. only;  
EH6 *but*, which is pointless.

Wo was this knyght, and sorwefully he  
siketh ;

But what? he may nat do al as hym liketh,  
And at the laste he chees hym for to  
wende,

And come agayn right at the yerés ende,  
With swich answeré as God wolde hym  
purveye,

And taketh his leve, and wendeth forth  
his weye.

He seketh every hous and every place  
Where as he hopeth for to fyndé grace <sup>920</sup>  
To lerné what thyng wommen loven  
moost ;

But he ne koude arryven in no coost  
Wher as he myghté fynde in this mateere  
Two créaturés accordyngé in feere.

Somme seyde wommen loven best  
richesse,

Somme seyde honour, somme seyde joly-  
nesse,

Somme riche array, somme seyden lust  
abedde,

And ofté tymé to be wydwe and wédde.  
Somme seyde that oure hertés been moost  
esed <sup>929</sup>

Whan that we been y-flatered and y-pledé.  
He gooth ful ny the sothe, I wol nat  
lye,—

A man shal wynne us best with flaterye ;  
And with attendance and with bisnesse,  
Been we y-lyméd, bothé moore and lesse.

And sommé seyen that we loven best  
For to be free, and do right as us lest,

And that no man repreve us of oure vice,  
But seye that we be wise and no-thing  
nyce ;

For trewely ther is noon of us alle,  
If any wight wol clawe us on the galle, <sup>940</sup>  
That we nyl kiké, for he seith us sooth.

Assay, and he shal fynde it that so dooth,  
For, be we never so vicious with-inne,  
We wol been holden wise and clene of  
synne.

And sommé seyn that greet delit han we  
or to been holden stable and eke secree,  
And in o purpos stedefastly to dwelle,  
And nat biwreyé thyng that men us telle ;  
ut that tale is nat worth a raké-stele.

ardee, we wommen konné no thyng hele ;

Witnesse on Myda,—wol ye heere the  
tale ? <sup>951</sup>

Ovyde, amongés othere thyngés smale,  
Seyde Myda hadde under his longé heres,  
Grownyge upon his heed, two asses eres,  
The whiché vice he hydde as he best  
myghte,

Ful subtilly, from every mannés sighte,  
That save his wyf ther wiste of it namo.

He loved hire moost, and trusted hire also ;  
He preyde hire that to no créature  
She sholdé tellen of his disfigure. <sup>960</sup>

She swoor him nay, for al this world  
to wynne,

She noldé do that vileynye or synne,  
To make hir housbonde han so foul a  
name.

She nolde nat telle it for hir owene shame ;  
But nathélees hir thoughté that she dyde,  
That she so longé sholde a conseil hyde ;  
Hir thoughte it swal so soore aboute hir  
herte,

That nedély som word hire moste asterte ;  
And sith she dorsté telle it to no man,  
Doun to a mareys fasté by she ran. <sup>970</sup>

Til she came there her herté was a-fyre,  
And as a bitore bombleth in the myre  
She leyde hir mouth unto the water doun :  
' Biwreye me nat, thou water, with thy  
soun,'

Quod she, ' to thee I telle it and namo,—  
Myn housbonde hath longe asses erys two.  
Now is myn herte all hool, now is it oute,  
I myghte no lenger kepe it, out of doute.'

Heere may ye se, thogh we a tyme abyde,  
Yet, out it moot, we kan no conseil hyde.  
The remenant of the tale if ye wol heere,  
Redeth Ovyde, and ther ye may it leere.

This knyght, of which my tale is  
specially,

Whan that he saugh he myghte nat come  
therby,

That is to seye, what wommen lové moost,  
Withinne his brest ful sorweful was the  
goost.

But hoom he gooth, he myghté nat  
sojourne,

The day was come that homward moste  
he tourne,

951. Myda, Midas.

And in his wey it happéd hym to ryde  
 In al this care, under a forest syde, 990  
 Wher as he saugh upon a dauncè go  
 Of ladyes foure and twenty, and yet mo ;  
 Toward the whichè daunce he drow ful  
 yerne,

In hopè that som wysdom sholde he lerne ;  
 But certainly, er he came fully there,  
 Vanysshéd was this daunce, he nystè  
 where.

No créaturè saugh he that bar lyf,  
 Save on the grene he saugh sittynge a wyf ;  
 A fouler wight ther may no man devyse.  
 Agayn the knyght this oldè wyf gan ryse,  
 And seyde, 'Sire knyght, heer-forth ne  
 lith no wey ; 1001

Tel me what that ye seken, by youre fey !  
 Paraventure it may the better be ;  
 These oldè folk kan muchel thyng,' quod  
 she.

'My leevè mooder,' quod this knyght,  
 'certeyn

I nam but deed but if that I kan seyn  
 What thyng it is that wommen moost  
 desire :

Koude ye me wisse I wolde wel quite  
 youre hire.'

'Plight me thy trouthe, heere in myn  
 hand,' quod she,

'The nextè thyng that I requerè thee 1010  
 Thou shalt it do, if it lye in thy myght,  
 And I wol telle it yow, er it be nyght.'

'Have heer my trouthè,' quod the  
 knyght, 'I graunte !'

Thannè quod she, 'I dar me wel  
 avaute

Thy lyf is sauf, for I wol stonde therby ;  
 Upon my lyf, the queene wol seye as I.  
 Lat se, which is the proudeste of hem alle  
 That wereth on a coverchief or a calle,  
 That dar seye "nay" of that I shal thee  
 teche. 1019

Lat us go forth withouten lenger speche.'  
 Tho rownéd she a pistel in his ere,  
 And bad hym to be glad and have no fere.

Whan they be comen to the court, this  
 knyght

Seyde he had holde his day as he hadde  
 hight,

And redy was his answerè, as he sayde.

Ful many a noble wyf, and many a mayde,  
 And many a wydwè, for that they had  
 been wise,

The queene hirself sittynge as a justise,  
 Assembled been, his answerè for to heere ;  
 And afterward this knyght was bode  
 appere. 1030

To every wight comanded was silence,  
 And that the knyght sholde telle in  
 audience

What thyng that worldly wommen loven  
 best.

This knyght ne stood nat stille as doth  
 a best,

But to his questioun anon answerde,  
 With manly voys, that al the court it herde.

'My ligè lady, generally,' quod he,  
 'Wommen desiren have sovereynetee,  
 As wel over hir housbond, as hir love,  
 And for to been in maistrie hym above.  
 This is youre mooste desir, thogh ye me  
 kille. 1041

Dooth as yow list, I am heer at youre  
 wille.'

In al the court ne was ther wyf, ne  
 mayde,

Ne wydwè, that contraried that he sayde,  
 But seyden he was worthy han his lyf ;  
 And with that word up stirte the oldè wyf,  
 Which that the knyght saugh sittynge on  
 the grene ;

'Mercy !' quod she, 'my sovereyn lady  
 queene !

Er that youre court departè, do me right ;  
 I taughtè this answerè unto the knyght,  
 For which he plightè me his trouthè there.

The firstè thyng I woldè hym requere,  
 He wolde it do, if it lay in his myght.  
 Bifore the court thanne, preye I thee, si  
 knyght,'

Quod she, 'that thou me take unto thy  
 wyf,

For wel thou woost that I have kept thy lyf  
 If I sey fals, sey "nay," upon thy fey !'

This knyght answerde, 'Allas, and  
 weylawey !

I woot right wel that swich was my biheste  
 For Goddès love, as chces a new  
 requeste ! 1060

Taak al my good, and lat my body go.'

'Nay, thanne,' quod she, 'I shrewe us bothé two !

For thogh that I be foul, and oold, and poore,

I nolde, for al the metal, ne for oore  
That under erthe is grave, or lith above,  
But if thy wyf I were, and eek thy love !'

'My "love" !' quod he, 'nay, my dampnacioun !

Allas ! that any of my nacioun  
Sholde ever so foulé disparaged be !'

But al for noght, the ende is this, that he  
Constreynéd was, he nedés moste hire  
wedde, 1071

And taketh his oldé wyf, and gooth to bedde.

Now wolden som men seye, pará-  
venture,

That for my necligence I do no cure  
To tellen yow the joye and al tharray,  
That at the feesté was that ilké day ;  
To which thyng shortly answeren I shal ;  
I seye, ther nas no joye ne feeste at al.  
Ther nas but hevynesse, and muché sorwe,  
For privély he wedded hire on a morwe,  
And al day after hidde hym as an owle,  
So wo was hym, his wyf lookéd so foule.

Greet was the wo the knyght hadde in  
his thoght,

Whan he was with his wyf abedde y-brought.  
He walweth, and he turneth to and fro ;  
His oldé wyf lay smyllynge evermo,  
And seyde, 'O deeré housbonde,  
*benedicitee !*

Fareth every knyght thus with his wyf,  
as ye ?

Is this the law of kyng Arthúrès hous ?  
Is every knyght of his so dangerous ? 1090  
I am youre owene love, and youré wyf ;  
I am she which that savéd hath youre lyf,  
And certes, yet dide I yow never unright,  
Why fare ye thus with me, this firsté  
nyght ?

Ye faren lyk a man had lost his wit ;  
What is my gilt ? For Goddés love tel it,  
And it shal been amended, if I may.'

'Amended !' quod this knyght, 'allas !  
nay, nay !

It wol nat been amended never mo,  
Thou art so loothly, and so oold also, 1100

And ther-to comen of so lough a kynde,  
That litel wonder is thogh I walwe and  
wynde.

So, woldé God ! myn herté woldé breste !'

'Is this,' quod she, 'the cause of youre  
unreste ?'

'Ye, certeinly,' quod he, 'no wonder is.'  
'Now, sire,' quod she, 'I koude  
amende al this,

If that me liste, er it were dayés thre ;  
So wel ye myghté bere yow unto me.

'But for ye speken of swich gentillesse  
As is descended out of old richesse, 1110  
That therefore sholden ye be gentil men,  
Swich arrogance is nat worth an hen.  
Looke, who that is moost vertuouus alway,  
Pryvee and apert, and moost entendeth ay  
To do the gentil dedés that he kan,  
Taak hym for the grettest gentil man.  
Crist wole we clayme of hym oure gentil-  
lesse,

Nat of oure eldrès for hire old richesse ;  
For, thogh they yeve us al hir heritage,—  
For which we clayme to been of heigh  
parage,— 1120

Yet may they nat biquethé for no thyng,  
To noon of us, hir vertuouus lyvynge,  
That made hem gentil men y-called be,  
And bad us folwen hem in swich degree.

'Wel kan the wisé poete of Florence,  
That highté Dant, speken in this sen-  
tence,—

Lo, in swich maner rym is Dantes tale,—  
'Ful selde up riseth by his branches  
smale

Prowesse of man, for God of his godnesse  
Wole that of hym we clayme oure  
gentillesse ; 1130

For of oure eldrès may we no-thing  
clayme,  
But temporel thyng that man may hurte  
and mayme.'

'Eek every wight woot this as wel as I,  
If gentillesse were planted naturelly,  
Unto a certeyn lynage doun the lyné,  
Pryvee nor apert, thanne wolde they  
never fyné

1126. *Dant, Purgatorio*, vii. 121-3: 'Rade volte risurge per li rami l' umana probitate,' etc  
1131. *eldres may we, H auncestres we.*

To doon of gentillesse the faire office ;  
They myghte do no vileynye or vice.

‘ Taak fyr and ber it in the darkeste  
hous, 1139

Bitwix this and the mount of Kaukasous,  
And lat men shette the dorès and go  
thenne,

Yet wole the fyr as fairè lye and brenne  
As twenty thousand men myghte it  
biholde ;

His office natureel ay wol it holde,  
Up peril of my lyf, til that it dye.

‘ Heere may ye se wel how that  
gentrye

Is nat annexèd to possessionn,  
Sith folk ne doon hir operacioun

Alwey, as dooth the fyr, lo, in his kynde ;  
For, God it woot, men may wel oftenfynde  
A lordès sone do shame and vileynye ;

And he that wole han pris of his gentrye,  
For he was boren of a gentil hous,

And hadde his eldrès noble and vertuous,  
And nyl hymselfen do no gentil dedis,

Ne folwen his gentil auncestrè that deed is,  
He nys nat gentil, be he duc or erl ;

For vileyns synful dedès make a cheryl ;  
For gentillessè nys but renomee

Of thyne auncestrès, for hire heigh  
bountee, 1160

Which is a strangè thyng to thy persone.  
Thy gentillessè cometh fro God allone ;

Thanne comth oure verray gentillesse of  
grace,

It was no thyng biquethe us with oure  
place.

‘ Thinketh how noble, as seith  
Valerius,

Was thilkè Tullius Hostillius,  
That out of poverte roos to heigh noblesse.

Redeth Senek, and redeth eek Boece,  
Ther shul ye seen expressè, that no drede

is, 1169

That he is gentil that dooth gentil dedis ;  
And therfore, leeve housbonde, I thus  
conclude ;

Al were it that myne auncestres weren  
rude,

1159. *renomee*, renown ; cp. Boethius, Bk. iii.  
Prose 6.

1165. *Valerius*, see Valerius Maximus, Bk.  
iii. ch. 4.

Yet may the hyè God, and so hope I,  
Grantè me grace to lyven vertuously ;  
Thanne am I gentil, whan that I bigynne  
To lyven vertuously and weyvè synne.

‘ And ther as ye of poverte me repreeve  
The hyè God, on whom that we bileeve,  
In wilful poverte chees to lyve his lyf,  
And certès, every man, mayden, or wyf,  
May understonde that Jhesus, hevене  
kyng, 1181

Ne wolde nat chese a vicious lyyng.  
Glad poverte is an honeste thyng, certeyn ;

This wole Senec and othere clerkès seyn ;  
Whoso that halt hym payd of his poverte,

I holde hym riche, al hadde he nat a  
sherte ;

He that coveiteth is a povere wight,  
For he wolde han that is nat in his  
myght ;

But he that nought hath, ne coveiteth have,  
Is riche, althogh ye holde hym but a  
knavé. 1190

‘ Verray poverte, it syngeth proprèly ;  
Juvenal seith of poverte, myrily,

“ The pourè man, whan he goth by the  
weye,

Bifore the thevès he may synge and pleye.”  
Poverte is hateful good, and as I gesse

A ful greet bryngere-out of bisynesse,  
A greet amendere eek of sapience,

To hym that taketh it in pacience.  
Poverte is this, althogh it seme alenge,

Possessionn that no wight wol chalenge.  
Poverte ful oftè, whan a man is lowe,

Maketh his God, and eek hymself, to  
knowe.

Poverte a spectacle is, as thynketh me,  
Thurgh which he may his verray freendès  
see ;

And therfore, sire, syn that I nought yow  
greve,

Of my poverte namoore ye me repreve.  
‘ Now, sire, of eldè ye reprévè me ;

And certès, sire, thogh noon auctoritee  
Were in no book, ye gentils of honour

1192. *Juvenal*, *Sat.* x. 22.  
1195. *hateful* (Corp.<sup>3</sup> *hatel*, hostile). E quotes  
in the margin the answer to the question ‘*Quid  
est paupertas* (Odibile bonum, sanitatis mater,  
etc.)’ from the Dialogue of Adrian and Secundus,  
found in Vincent de Beauvais.

Seyn that men sholde an oold wight doon  
favour, 1210

And clepe hym fader, for youre gentil-  
lesse,

And auctours shal I fynden, as I gesse.

'Now, ther ye seye that I am foul and  
old,

Than drede you noght to beena cokéwold ;  
For filthe and eeldé, al so moot I thee !  
Been greté wardeyns upon chastitee :  
But nathéles, syn I knowe youre delit,  
I shal fillulle youre worldly appetit.

'Chese now,' quod she, 'oon of thise  
thyngés tweye : 1219

To han me foul and old til that I deye,  
And be to yow a trewé, humble wyf,  
And never yow displesé in al my lyf ;  
Or ellés ye wol han me yong and fair,  
And take youre aventure of the repair  
That shal be to youre hous by cause of me,  
Or in som oother placé may wel be ;  
Now chese yourselves, wheither that yow  
liketh.'

This knyght avyseth hym and soré  
siketh ;

But atté laste he seyde in this manere :

'My lady and my love, and wyf so deere,  
I put me in youre wisé governance ; 1231  
Cheseth youre self which may be moost  
plesance,

And moost honour to yow and me also ;  
I do no fors the wheither of the two,  
For as yow liketh it suffiseth me.'

'Thanne have I gete of yow maistrie,'  
quod she,

'Syn I may chese, and governe as me  
lest ?'

'Ye, certés, wyf,' quod he, 'I holde  
it best.'

'Kys me,' quod she, 'we be no lenger  
wrothe,

For, by my trouthe, I wol be to yow  
bothe,— 1240

This is to seyn, ye, bothé fair and good.  
I prey to God that I moote sterven wood,  
But I to yow be al so good and trewe,  
As ever was wyf syn that the world was  
newe ;

And but I be to-morn as fair to seene  
As any lady, emperice, or queene,

That is bitwixe the est and eek the west ;  
Dooth with my lyf and deth right as yow  
lest.

Cast up the curtyn,—looke, how that it is.'  
And whan the knyght saugh verraily  
al this, 1250

That she so fair was, and so yong ther-to,  
For joye he hente hire in his armés two,  
His herté bathéd in a bath of blisse ;  
A thousand tyme arewe he gan hire kisse,  
And she obeyéd hym in every thyng  
That myghté doon hym plesance or likyng.

And thus they lyve unto hir lyvés ende  
In parfit joye ; and Jhesu Crist us sende  
Housbondés meeké, yongé, fressha-bedde,  
And gracé toverbyde hem that we wedde,  
And eek, I praye Jhesu to shorte hir lyves  
That nat wol be govérned by hir wyves ;  
And olde and angry nygardes of dispence,  
God sende hem sooné verray pestilence !

#### *The prologe of the Freres Tale*

This worthy Lymytour, this noble Frere,  
He made alway a maner louryng chiere  
Upon the Somonour, but for honestee  
No vileyns word as yet to hym spak he ;  
But atté laste he seyde unto the Wyf,  
'Damé,' quod he, 'God yeve yow right  
good lyf ! 1270

Ye han heer touchéd, al so moot I thee !  
In scolé-matere greet difficultee.

Ye han seyde muché thyng right wel, I  
seye ;

But, dame, heere as we rydè by the weye  
Us nedeth nat to speken but of game,  
And lete auctoritees, on Goddés name,  
To prechyng, and to scolé of clergie,  
And if it lyké to this compaignye  
I wol yow of a somonour telle a game.

*Pardee*, ye may wel knowé by the name 1280  
That of a somonour may no good be sayd.  
I praye that noon of you be yvele apayd,—  
A somonour is a rennere up and down  
With mandémentz for fornicacioun,  
And is y-bet at every townés ende.'

Oure Hoost tho spak, 'A, sire, ye  
sholde be hende

And curteys, as a man of youre estaat,

In compaignye ; we wol have no debaat !  
Telleth youre tale, and lat the Somonour  
be.'

'Nay,' quod the Somonour, 'lat hym  
seye to me 1290

What so hym list,—whan it comth to  
my lot,

By God ! I shal hym quiten every grot !  
I shal hym tellen which a greet honour  
It is to be a flaterynge lymytour ;  
And his office I shal hym telle y-wis.'

Oure Hoost answerdē, 'Pees ! namoore  
of this !'

And after this he seyde unto the Frere,  
'Tel forth youre tale, my leevē maister  
deere.'

### FRIAR'S TALE

#### *Heere bigynneth The Freres Tale*

Whilom ther was dwellynge in my  
contree

An erchédekene, a man of heigh degree,  
That boldely dide execucioun 1301

In punysshynge of fornicacioun,  
Of wichécrafft, and eek of bawderye,

Of diffamaciou and avowtrye,

Of churché-revés, and of testamentz,

Of contractes, and of lakke of sacramentz,

And eek of many another manere cryme,

Which nedeth nat rehercen for this tyme ;

Of usure, and of symonye also. 1309

But certés, lecchours dide he grettest wo ;

They sholdé syngen if that they were hent ;

And smalé tytheres weren foule y-shent ;

If any persone wolde upon hem pleyne

Ther myghte asterte hym no pecunyal  
peyne.

For smalé tithés, and for smal offrynge,

He made the peple pitously to synge,

For er the bisshope caughte hem with  
his hook,

1294, 1295. Between these lines E<sup>6</sup> wrongly  
insert 1307, 1308.

*The Freres Tale.* Two Latin stories, one of a  
wicked seneschal, the other of a lawyer, making  
the same points as this, were printed by Thomas  
Wright, and have been reprinted in Part I. of  
the Chaucer Society's *Originals and Analogues*.  
We may be sure that the setting of this story is  
entirely Chaucer's own.

They weren in the erchédeknes book ;  
And thanne hadde he, thurgh his juris-  
diccioun,

Power to doon on hem correccioun. 1320

He hadde a somonour redy to his hond ;

A slyer boye was noon in Engelond ;

For subtilly he hadde his espaille

That taughté hym whér hym myghte  
availle.

He koudé spare of lecchours oon or two,

To techen hym to foure and twenty mo ;

For thogh this somonour wood was as  
an hare,

To telle his harlotrye I wol nat spare,

For we been out of his correccioun,

They han of us no jurisdiccioun, 1330

Ne never shullen, terme of alle hir lyves.

'Peter ! so been the wommen of the  
styves,'

Quod the Somonour, 'y-put out of my  
cure !'

'Pees ! with myschance and with  
mysaventure !'

Thus seyde our Hoost, 'and lat hym  
telle his tale.

Now telleth forth, thogh that the  
Somonour gale ;

Ne spareth nat, myn owene maister deere.'

This falsé thief, this somonour, quod  
the Frere,

Hadde alwey bawdés redy to his hond,

As any hauk to lure in Engelond, 1344

That tolde hym al the secree that they  
knewe,

For hire acqueyntance was nat come of  
newe ;

They weren his approwours prively.

He took hymself a greet profit therby ;

His maister knew nat alwey what he wan.

Withouten mandément, a lewéd man

He koude somne, on peyne of Cristés curs,

And they were glade to fillé wel his purs,

And make hym greté feestés atte nale ;

And right as Judas haddé purses smale, 1354

And was a thief, right swich a thief was he

His maister hadde but half his duétee.

He was, if I shal yeven hym his laude,

A thief, and eek a somnour, and a baude

He hadde eek wenches at his retenue

1323. *subtilly, H prively.*



That whether that sir Robert, or sir  
Huwe,

Or Jakke, or Rauf, or whoso that it were  
That lay by hem, they tolde it in his ere.

Thus was the wenche and he of oon  
assent, 1359

And he wolde fecche a feynéd mandément,  
And somme hem to the chapitre bothé  
two,

And pile the man, and lete the wenché go.

Thanne wolde he seye, 'Freend, I  
shal for thy sake

Do striken thee out of oure lettres blake,  
Thee thar namoore as in this cas travaille,  
I am thy freend, ther I thee may availle.'

Certeyn he knew of briberyés mo  
Than possible is to telle in yerés two ;

For in this world nys doggè for the bowe  
That kan an hurt deer from an hool y-  
knowe 1370

Bet than this somnour knew a sly lecchour,  
Or an avowtier, or a paramour ;

And, for that was the fruyt of al his rente,  
Therefore on it he sette al his entente.

And so bifel that onés on a day

This somnour, ever waityng on his pray,  
Rod forth to somean old wydwe, a ribibe,  
Feynyng a causè, for he woldè brybe,—  
And happed that he saugh bifore hym ryde  
A gay yeman, under a forest syde. 1380

A bowe he bar, and arwes brighte and  
kene ;

He hadde upon a courtépy of grene,  
An hat upon his heed with frenges blake.

'Sire,' quod this somnour, 'hay! and  
wel atake !'

'Welcome !' quod he, 'and every  
good felawe.

Wher rydestow, under this grene-wode  
shawe,'

Seydè this yeman ; ' wiltow fer to day ?'

This somnour hym answerde and  
seydè, 'Nay,

Heere fastè by,' quod he, 'is myn entente  
To ryden, for to reysen up a rente 1390

That longeth to my lordès duétee.'

'Artow thanne a bailly ?' 'Ye,' quod  
he,—

1356. *sir Robert*, a priest, not a knight.

1364. *thee*, E<sup>2</sup> *hire*.

He dorstè nat, for verray filthe and shame,  
Seye that he was a somonour, for the  
name.

'*Depardieux!*' quod this yeman,  
'deerè broother !

Thou art a bailly, and I am another.

I am unknowen as in this contree ;

Of thyn acqueyntance I wolde prayè thee,  
And eek of bretherhede, if that yow leste ;

I havè gold and silver in my cheste ; 1400  
If that thee happe to comen in oure shire  
Al shal be thyn, right as thou wolt desire.'

'*Grantmercy!*' quod this somonour,  
'by my feith !'

Everych in ootheres hand his trouthè leith,  
For to be swornè bretheren til they deye ;  
In daliance they ryden forth hir weye.

This somonour that was as ful of jangles  
As ful of venym been thise waryangles,  
And ever enqueryng upon every thyng ;  
'Brother,' quod he, 'where is now youre  
dwelllyng, 1410

Another day if that I sholde yow seche ?'  
This yeman hym answerde, in softè  
speche :

'Brother,' quod he, 'fer in the north  
contree,

Where as I hope som tyme I shal thee see.  
Er we departe I shal thee so wel wisse  
That of myn hous ne shaltow never mysse.'

'Now, brother,' quod this somonour,  
'I yow preye,

Teche me, whil that we ryden by the  
weye,—

Syn that ye been a baillif as am I,—  
Som subtiltee, and tel me feithfully 1420

In myn office how I may moostè wynne,  
And spareth nat for conscience ne synne,  
But as my brother tel me how do ye.'

'Now, by my trouthè, brother deere,'  
seyde he,

'As I shal tellen thee a feithful tale,  
My wages been ful streitè and ful smale ;  
My lord is hard to me and daungerous,

And myn office is ful laborous ;  
And therefore by extorcions I lye ;

For sothe, I take all that men wol me yeve,  
Algate by sleyghtè, or by violence. 1431

1395. *deere*, H<sup>2</sup> *lieve*.

1406. *hir weye*, H<sup>3</sup> and *pleye(n)*.

Fro yeer to yeer I wyne al my dispence ;  
I kan no bettré tellé, feithfully.'

'Now certés,' quod this somonour,  
• 'so fare I ;

I sparé nat to taken, God it woot,  
But if it be to hevyr or to hoot,  
What I may gete in conseil privély ;  
No maner conscience of that have I ;  
Nere myn extorcoun I myghte nat lyven,  
Nor of swiche japés wol I nat be shryven.  
Stomak, ne conscience, ne knowe I noon  
I shrewe thes shrifté-fadres everychoon !  
Wel be we met, by God and by Seint  
Jame !

But, leevé brother, tel me thanne thy  
name,'

Quód this somonour ; 'in this meené  
while.'

This yeman gan a litel for to smyle.

'Brother,' quod he, 'wiltow that I  
thee telle ?

I am a feend ; my dwellyng is in helle,  
And heere I ryde aboute my purchasyng,  
To wite wher men wol yeve me anythyng.  
My purchas is theeffect of al my rente. <sup>1451</sup>  
Looke how thou rydest for the same  
entente.

To wynné good, thou rekkest never how ;  
Right so fare I, for ryde I wolde right  
now

Unto the worldés endé for a preyé.'

'A !' quod this somonour, '*benedicite !*  
what sey ye ?

I wende ye were a yeman trewély.  
Ye han a mannés shape as wel as I,  
Han ye a figure thanne determinat  
In hellé, ther ye been in youre estat ?' <sup>1460</sup>

'Nay, certainly,' quod he, 'ther have  
we noon,

But whan us liketh we kan take us oon,  
Or ellés make yow semé we been shape  
Somtymé lyk a man, or lyk an ape ;  
Or lyk an angel kan I ryde or go.  
It is no wonder thyng thogh it be so ;  
A lowsy jogelour kan deceyvé thee,  
And *pardee !* yet kan I moore craft than  
he.'

'Why,' quod the somonour, 'ryde ye  
thanne or goon

In sondry shape, and nat alwey in oon ?'

'For we,' quod he; 'wol us swiche  
formés make <sup>1471</sup>

As moost able is oure preyés for to take.'

'What maketh yow to han al this  
labour ?'

'Ful many a cause, leevé sire  
somonour,'

Seydè this feend ; 'but allé thyng hath  
tyme ;

The day is short, and it is passéd pryme,  
And yet ne wan I nothyng in this day ;  
I wol entende to wynnyng if I may,  
And nat entende our wittés to declare ;  
For, brother myn, thy wit is al to bare <sup>1480</sup>

To understonde, althogh I tolde hem thee.  
But for thou axest why labouren we,—

Forsomtyme we been Goddés instrumentz,  
And meenés to doon his comandémentz,  
Whan that hym list, upon his créatures,  
In divers art and in diverse figures.

Withouten hym we have no myght,  
certayn,

If that hym list to stonden ther agayn.

And somtyme, at oure prayere, han we leve  
Oonly the body and nat the soulé greve ;  
Witnesse on Job, whom that we diden wo ;  
And somtyme han we myght of bothé  
two,

This is to seyn, of soule and body eke ;  
And somtyme be we suffred for to seke  
Upon a man and doon his soule unreste,  
And nat his body, and al is for the beste.  
Whan he withstandeth oure temptacioun  
It is a cause of his savacioun,—

Al be it that it was nat oure entente  
He sholde be sauf, but that we wolde  
hym hente,— <sup>1500</sup>

And somtyme be we servant unto man,  
As to the erchébisshope, Seint Dunstan ;  
And to the Apostles servant eek was I.'

'Yet tel me,' quod the somonour,  
'feithfully,

Make ye yow newé bodies thus alway  
Of elementz ?' The feend answerdè,

'Nay,

Somtyme we feyne, and somtyme we aryse  
With dedé bodies, in ful sondry wyse,  
And speke as renably and faire and wel,

<sup>1479.</sup> *wittes*, H *things*.

<sup>1486.</sup> *art*, H *act, actes*.

As to the Phitonissa dide Samuel ; 1510  
 And yet wol som men seye it was nat he.  
 I do no fors of youre dyvynytee,  
 But o thyng warne I thee, I wol nat jape,  
 Thou wolt alगतés wite how we been  
 shape,  
 Thou shalt herafterwardes, my brother  
 deere,  
 Come there thee nedeth nat of me to leere,  
 For thou shalt by thyn owene experience  
 Konne in a chayer rede of this sentence  
 Bet than Virgilé while he was on lyve,  
 Or Dant also ; now lat us rydè blyve, 1520  
 For I wole holdè compaignye with thee  
 Til it be so that thou forsakè me.'

'Nay,' quod this somonour, 'that shal  
 nat bityde !

I am a yeman knowen is ful wyde ;  
 My trouthè wol I holde as in this cas ;  
 For though thou were the devel, Sathanas,  
 My trouthè wol I holdè to my brother,  
 As I am sworn, and ech of us til oother,  
 For to be trewè brother in this cas ;  
 And bothe we goon abouten oure purchas.  
 Taak thou thy part, what that men wol  
 thee yeve, 1531

And I shal myn,—thus may we bothè  
 lyve,—

And if that any of us have moore than  
 oother,

Lat hym be trewe and parte it with his  
 brother.'

'Igraunté,' quod the devel, 'by my fey !'  
 And with that word they ryden forth  
 hir wey,

And right at the entryng of the townè's  
 ende,

To which this somonour shoope hym for  
 to wende,

They saugh a cart that charged was with  
 hey,

Which that a cartere droof forth in his  
 wey. 1540

Deepe was the wey, for which the cartè  
 stood :

The cartere smoot and cryde as he were  
 wood,

1510. *Phitonissa*, Pythoness, *i.e.* the Witch of  
 Endor.

1518. *i.e.* be able to lecture on this theme.

'Hayt, Brok ! hayt, Scot ! what spare ye  
 for the stones !

The feend,' quod he, 'yow fecchè, body  
 and bones,

As ferforthly as ever were ye foled !

So muchè wo as I have with yow tholed !

The devel have al, bothe hors and cart  
 and hey !'

This somonour seyde, 'Heere shal we  
 have a pley' ;

And neer the feend he drough, as nocht  
 ne were,

Ful privèly, and rownèd in his ere, 1550

'Herkne, my brother ! herkne, by thy  
 feith !

Herestow nat how that the cartere seith ?

Hent it anon, for he hath yeve it thee,  
 Bothe hey and cart and eek his caples  
 thre.'

'Nay,' quod the devel, 'God woot,  
 never a deel.

It is nat his entente, trust thou me weel ;  
 Axe hym thyself, if thou nat trowest me,  
 Or ellès stynt a while, and thou shalt see.'

This cartere thakketh his hors upon  
 the croupe,

And they bigonnè drawn and to-stoupe.  
 'Heyt ! now,' quod he, 'ther Jhesu Crist  
 yow blesse ! 1561

And al his handwerk bothè moore and  
 lesse !

That was wel twight, myn owene lyard  
 boy !

I pray God savè thee ! and Seintè Loy !  
 Now is my cart out of the slow, *pardee !*'

'Lo, brother,' quod the feend, 'what  
 tolde I thee ?

Heere may ye se, myn owene deerè  
 brother,

The carl spak oon thing ; but he thoghte  
 another.

Lat us go forth abouten oure viage ;  
 Heere wyne I nothyng upon cariage.' 1570

Whan that they coomen somewhat out  
 of towne

1559. *thakketh*, smacks ; E<sup>2</sup> *taketh*.

1559. *hors*, plural.

1564. *pray*, E *pray to*.

1564. *thee*, H<sup>2</sup> *thy* (the) *body*.

1564. *Seinte Loy*, St. Eligius.

1568. *thing*, om. F.

This somonour to his brother gan to  
rowne :

'Brother,' quod he, 'heere woneth an  
old rebekke

That hadde almost as lief to lese hire  
nekke,

As for to yeve a peny of hir good.

I wole han twelf pens though that she be  
wood,

Or I wol sompne hire unto oure office,  
And yet, God woot, of hire knowe I no  
vice ;

But, for thou kanst nat, as in this contree,  
Wynnè thy cost, taak heer ensample of  
me.' 1580

This somonour clappeth at the wydwés  
gate :

'Com out,' quod he, 'thou oldé virytrate !  
I trowe thou hast som frere or preest with  
thee.'

'Who clappeth?' seyde this wyf,  
'*benedicitee!*

God save you, sire ! what is youre sweeté  
wille ?'

'I have,' quod he, 'of somonaunce a  
bille ;

Up peyne of cursyng lookè that thou be  
To-morn bifore the erchédeknes knee,  
Tanswere to the court of certeyn thynges.'

'Now, Lord,' quod she, 'Crist Jhesu,  
kyng of kynges, 1590

So wisly helpè me, as I ne may !

I have been syk, and that ful many a day ;  
I may nat go so fer,' quod she, 'ne ryde,  
But I be deed, so priketh it in my syde.

May I nat axe a libel, sire somonour,  
And answeere there by my procuratour  
To swich thyng as men wole opposen me?'

'Yis,' quod this somonour, 'pay anon  
—lat se—

Twelf pens to me and I wole thee acquite.  
I shal no profit han therby but lite, 1600  
My maister hath the profit, and nat I.

Com of, and lat me ryden hastily ;  
Gif me twelf pens, I may no lenger tarye !'

'Twelf pens !' quod she, 'now lady,  
Seinté Marie !

So wisly help me out of care and synne,

1586. *somonauunce*, E *somonce*.

1587. *Up*, E *Upon*.

This wydè world thogh that I sholdè  
wynne,

Ne have I nat twelf pens withinne myn  
hoold ;

Ye knowen wel that I am poure and oold.  
Kithè youre almesse on me, pourè wrecche.'

'Nay, thanne,' quod he, 'the foulè  
feend me fecche, 1610

If I thexcusè though thou shul be spilt !'  
'Allas !' quod she, 'God woot I have  
no gilt.'

'Pay me !' quod he, 'or by the sweete  
Seinte Anne,

As I wol bere away thy newè panne  
For dette which that thou owest me of  
old,—

Whan that thou madest thyn housbonde  
cokewold

I payde at hoom for thy correccioun.'

'Thou lixt !' quod she, 'by my sava-  
cioun

Ne was I never er now, wydwe ne wyf,  
Somoned unto youre court in al my lyf !  
Ne never I nas but of my body trewe. 1621

Unto the devel, blak and rough of hewe,  
Yeve I thy body and my panne also !'

And whan the devel herde hire cursen  
so

Upon hir knees, he seyde in this manere :  
'Now, Mabèly, myn owene moder deere,  
Is this youre wyl in ernest that ye seyde?'

'The devel,' quod she, 'so fecche hym  
er he deye,—

And panne and al, but he wol hym  
repente !'

'Nay, oldè stot ! that is nat myn  
entente,' 1630

Quod this somonour, 'for to repentè me  
For anythyng that I have had of thee ;

I wolde I hadde thy smok and every  
clooth.'

'Now, brother,' quod the devil, 'be  
nat wrooth :

Thy body and this panne been myne by  
right ;

Thou shalt with me to hellè yet to-nyght,  
Where thou shalt knowen of oure privétee  
Moore than a maister of dyvynytee.'

And with that word this foulè feend hym  
hente. 1639

Body and soule he with the devel wente  
Where as that somonours han hir heritage;  
And God, that makéd after his ymage  
Mankyndé, save and gyde us alle and  
some,  
And leve these somonours goodé men  
bicomé !

Lordynges, I koude han toold yow,  
quod this Frere,

Hadde I had leysur for this Somnour heere,  
After the text of Cristé, Poul, and John,  
And of oure othere doctours many oon,  
Swiche peynés that youre herté myghte  
agryse ;

Al be it so no tongé may devyse— 1650  
Thogh that I myghte a thousand wynter  
telle—

The peynes of thilké curséd hous of helle ;  
But for to kepe us fro that curséd place  
Waketh and preyeth Jhesu for his grace,  
io kepe us fro the temptour Sathanas.

Ierketh this word, beth war, as in this  
cas :

The leoun sit in his awayt alway  
'o sle the innocent, if that he may.'  
Disposeth ay youre hertés to withstonde  
he feend, that yow wolde maké thral  
and bonde ; 1660

'e may nat tempté yow over youre  
myght,  
or Crist wol be youre champion and  
knyght ;

and prayeth that these somonours hem  
repente  
' hir mysdedes, er that the feend hem  
hente !

*The prologe of the Somonours Tale*

This Somonour in his styropes hyé  
stood.

on this Frere his herté was so wood,  
at lyk an aspen leef he quook for ire.  
'Lordynges,' quod he, 'but o thyng I  
desire,—  
ow biseke that of youre curteisye,

163. H<sup>5</sup> make the hit more direct, reading  
(oure) sompnour him repente, etc.

165. hye, H up he.

Syn ye han herd this falsé Frere lye, 1670  
As suffereth me I may my talé telle.

'This Freré bosteth that he knoweth  
helle,

And God it woot, that it is litel wonder ;  
Frerés and feendés been but lyte asonder ;  
For, *pardée!* ye han ofté tyme herd telle  
How that a freré ravysshed was to helle  
In spirit onés by a visoun ;

And as an angel ladde hym up and doun,  
To shewen hym the peynés that ther  
were,

In al the placé saugh he nat a frere. 1680  
Of oother folk he saugh ynowe in wo.

Unto this angel spak the freré tho :

"Now, sire," quod he, "han frerés  
swich a grace

That noon of hem shal comé to this place?"

"Yis," quod this angel, "many a  
millioun" ;

And unto Sathanas he ladde hym doun,  
And now hath Sathanas, seith he, a tayl,  
Brodder than of a carryk is the sayl.

"Hold up thy tayl, thou Sathanas,"  
quod he,

"Shewe forth thyn ers, and lat the freré  
se 1690

Where is the nest of frerés in this place" ;

And er that half a furlong wey of space,  
Right so as bees out swarmen from an  
hyve,

Out of the develes ers ther gonné dryve  
Twenty thousand frerés in a route,  
And thurgh-out hellé swarméden aboute,  
And comen agayn as faste as they may  
gon,

And in his ers they crepten everychon ;  
He clapte his tayl agayn and lay ful  
stille.

This frere, whan he hadde lookéd al his  
fille 1700

Upon the tormentz of this sory place,  
His spirit God restoréd of his grace  
Unto his body agayn, and he awook ;  
But nathéles, for feré yet he quook,  
So was the develes ers ay in his mynde ;  
That is his heritage of verry kynde.  
God save yow allé, save this curséd  
Frere!

My prologe wol I ende in this manere.'

## SUMMONER'S TALE

*Heere bigynneth The Somonour his Tale*

Lordynges, ther is in Yorkshire, as I gesse,

A mersshy contreecallèd Holdernesse, <sup>1710</sup>  
In which ther wente a lymytour aboute  
To preche, and eek to begge, it is no  
doute.

And so bifel that on a day this frere  
Hadde prechéd at a chirche in his manere,  
And specially, aboven every thyng,  
Excited he the peple in his prechyng  
To trentals, and to yeve for Goddès sake,  
Wherwith menmyghtè hoolyhouses make,  
Ther as divinè servyce is honoured,  
Nat ther as it is wasted and devoured,  
Ne ther it nedeth nat for to be yeve, <sup>1721</sup>  
As to possessioners that mowen lyve,  
Thankéd be God! in wele and habun-  
daunce.

'Trentals,' seyde he, 'deliveren fro  
penaunce

Hir freendès soulès, as wel olde as yonge ;  
Ye, whan that they been hastily y-songe,  
Nat for to holde a preest joly and gay ;  
He syngeth nat but o masse in a day.  
Delivereth out,' quod he, 'anon, the  
soules !

Ful hard it is, with fleshhook or with  
oules <sup>1730</sup>

To been y-clawèd, or to brenne, or bake ;  
Now spede yow hastily for Cristès sake.'  
And whan this frere had seyde al his  
entente

With *qui cum patre*, forth his wey he wente.

Whan folk in chirche had yeve him  
what hem lest,

He went his wey, no lenger wolde he reste.  
With scrippe and tippèd staf, y-tukkèd hye,  
In every hous he gan to poure and pryde,  
And beggeth melc, and chese, or ellès  
corn.

His felawe hadde a stafe tippèd with horn,

*Summoner's Tale.* The central incident of  
this was, no doubt, common property ; but the  
setting of the tale must be Chaucer's.

1709. *Yorkshire, as, H. Engeland.*

1737. *tipped, H. pyked.*

A peyre of tables al of ivory, <sup>1741</sup>

And a poyntel polysshed fetisly,

And wroote the namès alwey as he stood

Of allè folk that yaf hym any good,

Ascaunces that he woldè for hem prey.

'Yif us a busschel whetè, malt or reye,

A Goddès kechyl, or a troype of chese,

Or ellès what yow lyst, we may nat cheese ;

A Goddès halspeny, or a masse peny, <sup>1749</sup>

Or yif us of youre brawn, if ye have eny ;

A dagoun of youre blanket, leevè dame,

Oure suster deere,—lo heere I write youre

name,—

Bacoun, or beef, or swich thyng as ye

fynde.'

(A sturdy harlot wente ay hem bihynde,

That was hir hostès-man, and bar a sak,

And what men yaf hem leyde it on his

bak.

And whan that he was out at dore anon,

He planed away the namès everichon

That he biforn had writen in his tables.

He servèd hem with nyfles and with fables

'Nay ! ther thou list, thou Somonour !

quod the Frere.

'Pees !' quod our Hoost, 'for Cristè <sup>176</sup>

mooder deere ;

Tel forth thy tale and spare it nat at al.'

So thryve I, quod this Somonour, s

I shal !

So longe he wentè, hous by hous, til he

Cam til an hous ther he was wont to be

Refresshèd moore than in an hundre

placis ;

Syk lay the goodè man whos that th

place is ;

Bedrede upon a couchè lowe he lay.

'*Deus hic !*' quod he, 'O Thoma

freend, good day !' <sup>177</sup>

Seydè this frerè, curteisly and softe.

'Thomas,' quod he, 'God yeldè yow

ful ofte

Have I upon this bench faren ful weel ;

Heere have I eten many a myrie meel'

And fro the bench he droof away th

cat,

And leyde adoun his potente and his ha

And eek his scrippe, and sette hym so

adoun.

His felawe was go walkèd into toun,

Forth with his knave into that hostelrye  
Where as he shoope hym thilkè nyght to  
lye. 1780

'O deerè maister,' quod this sikè man,  
'How han ye farè sith that March bigan?  
I saugh yow noght this fourtényght or  
moore.'

'God woot,' quod he, 'laboured I  
have ful soore,

And specially for thy savacioun  
Have I seyde many a precious orisoun;  
And for oure othere freendès, God hem  
blesse.

I have to day been at youre chirche at  
messe,

And seyde a sermoun after my symple wit,  
Nat al after the text of hooly writ; 1790

For it is hard to yow, as I suppose,  
And therfore wol I teche yow al the glose.  
Glosyng is a glorious thyng certeyn,  
For lettre sleeth, so as we clerkes seyn.

There have I taught hem to be charitable,  
And spende hir good ther it is resonable;  
And there I saugh oure dame,—a, where  
is she?'

'Yond, in the yerd, I trowè that  
she be,'

Seydè this man, 'and she wol come anon.'  
'Ey, maister, welcom be ye, by Seint  
John!' 1800

Seydè this wyf; 'how fare ye, hertely?'  
The frere ariseth up ful curteisly

And hire embraceth in his armes narwe,  
And kiste hire sweete, and chirketh as a  
sparwe

With his lypès: 'Dame,' quod he,  
'right weel,

As he that is youre servant every deel.  
Thankèd be God, that yow yaf soule and  
lyf,

Yet saugh I nat this day so fair a wyf  
in al the chirchè, God so savè me!'

'Ye, God amende defaultès, sire,' quod  
she, 1810

Algatès welcome be ye, by my fey!'  
'Graunt mercy, dame, this have I  
founde alwey,

but of youre gretè goodnesse, by youre  
leve,

woldè prey yow that ye nat yow greve,

I wole with Thomas speke a litel throwe;  
Thise curatz been ful necligent and slowe  
To gropè tendrèly a conscience.

In shrift, in prechyng is my diligence,  
And studie in Petrès wordès and in  
Poules. 1819

I walke, and fisshè cristen mennès soules,  
To yelden Jhesu Crist his propre rente.

To sprede his word is set al myn entente.'  
'Now, by youre leve, O deerè sire,'

quod she,  
'Chideth him weel, for, seintè Trinitee!

He is as angry as a pissèmyre,  
Though that he have al that he kan desire,

Though I him wrye a-nyght and make  
hym warm,

And on hym leye my leg, outhur myn arm,  
He groneth lyk oure boor, lith in oure  
sty.

Oother desport ryght noon of hym have I,  
I may nat please hym in no maner cas.' 1831

'O Thomas, *je vous dy*, Thomas!  
Thomas!

This maketh the feend, this mostè ben  
amended;

Ire is a thyng that hyè God defended,  
And therof wol I speke a word or two.'

'Now, maister,' quod the wyf, 'er that  
I go,

What, wol ye dyne? I wol go theraboutè.'  
'Now, damè,' quod he, '*je vous dy*

*sanz doute*,

Have I nat of a capoun but the lyvere,  
And of youre softè breed nat but a  
shyvere, 1840

And after that a rosted piggès heed,—  
But that I nolde no beest for me were  
deed,—

Thanne hadde I with yow hoomly suffi-  
saunce.

I am a man of litel sustenaunce.  
My spirit hath his fostryng in the Bible,  
The body is ay so redy and penyble  
To wakè, that my stomak is destroyed;  
I prey yow, damè, ye be nat anoyed,  
Though I so freendly yow my conseil  
shewe.

By God, I wolde nat telle it but a fewe!'  
'Now, sire,' quod she, 'but o word er  
I go: 1851

Mychild is deed withinne thise wykés two,  
Soone after that ye wente out of this toun.'

'His deeth saugh I by revelacioun,'

Seith this frere, 'at hoom in oure dortour.  
I dar wel seyn that er that half an hour  
After his deeth, I saugh hym born to blisse  
In my avisoun, so God me wisse !

So dide our sexteyn and oure fermerer,  
That han been trewè frerés fifty yeer,—  
They may now, God be thanked of his  
loone ! 1861

Maken hir jubilee, and walke allone.  
And up I roos, and al oure covent eke,  
With many a tearé triklyng on my cheke,  
Withouten noyse, or claterynge of belles,  
*Te deum* was oure song and no thyng  
elles ;

Save that to Crist I seyde an orisoun,  
Thankynge hym of his revelacioun ;  
For, sire and damé, trusteth me right weel,  
Oure orisons been moore effectuel, 1870  
And moore we seen of Cristés secree  
thynges,  
Than burel folk, al though they weren  
kynges.

We lyve in poverte and in abstinence,  
And burell folk in richesse and despence  
Of mete and drynke, and in hir foul delit.  
We han this worldés lust al in despit.

Lazar and Dives lyveden diversly  
And diverse gerdoun hadden they ther-by.  
Who-so wol preye he moot faste and be  
clene,

And fatte his soule and make his body  
lene. 1880

We fare as seith thapostle ; clooth and  
foode

Suffisen us, though they be nat ful goode ;  
The clenness and the fastynge of us freres  
Maketh that Crist accepteth oure preyeres.

'Lo, Moyses fourty dayes and fourty  
nyght

Fasted, er that the heighè God of myght  
Spak with hym in the mount of Synay.  
With empty wombe, fastyngé many a  
day,

Receyvéd he the lawé that was writen  
With Goddés fynger ; and Elye, wel ye  
witen, 1890

In mount Oreb, er he hadde any speche

With hyè God, that is oure lyvès leche,  
He fasted longe, and was in contemp-  
launce.

'Aaron, that hadde the temple in  
gouvernaunce,

And eek the othere preestés everichon,  
Into the temple whan they sholdé gon  
To preyé for the peple, and do servyse,  
They nolden drynken in no maner wyse  
No drynké which that myghte hem  
dronké make ; 1899

But there, in abstinencé preye and wake,  
Lest that they deyden :—taak heede what  
I seye,—

But they be sobre that for the peple preye,  
War that !—I seye namoore,—for it  
suffiseth.

Oure Lord Jhesu, as hooly writ devyseth,  
Yaf us ensample of fastynge and preyeres ;  
Therefore we mendynantz, we sely freres,  
Been wedded to povérte and continence,  
To charite, humblesse, and abstinence,  
To persecucioun for rightwisnesse,  
To wepyngé, misericordé and clenness ;  
And therfore may ye se that oure pre-  
yeres,— 1911

I speke of us, we mendynantz, we freres,—  
Been to the hyè God moore acceptable  
Than yourés with youre feestés at the table.  
Fro Paradys first, if I shal nat lye,  
Was man out chacéd for his glotonye,  
And chaast was man in Paradys certeyn.

'But herkné, Thomas, what I shal the  
seyn,

I ne have no text of it, as I suppose,  
But I shal fynde it in a maner glose, 1920  
That specially oure sweetè Lord Jhesus  
Spak this by frerés, whan he seyde thus :  
"Blessed be they that povere in  
spirit been,"—

And so forth al the gospel may ye seen  
Wher it be likker oure professioun,  
Or hirs that swymmen in possessioun,—  
Fy on hire pompe and on hire glotonye !  
And for hir lewédnesse, I hem diffye !

'Me thynketh they been lyk Jovinyan,  
Fat as a whale, and walkynge as a swan,  
Al vinolent as botel in the spence. 1931

1929. *Jovinyan*, probably the mythical emperor  
of the *Gesta Romanorum*.



Hir preyere is of ful greet reverence  
Whan they for soulés seye the Psalm of  
Davít,—

Lo, "buf" they seye, *cor meum eructavit*,—  
Who folweth Cristes gospel, and his foore,  
But we that humble been and chaast and  
poore,

Werkeris of Goddés word, not auditours ?  
Therefore, right as an hauk up at a sours  
Up springeth into their, right so prayeres  
Of charitable and chasté, bisy freres 1940  
Maken hir sours to Goddés erés two.

Thomas, Thomas, so moote I ryde or go,—  
And by that lord that clepid is Seint Yve !  
Nere thou oure brother sholdestou nat  
thryve !

In our chapitré praye we day and nyght  
To Crist that he thee sendé heele and  
myght

Thy body for to weelden, hastily.'

'God woot,' quod he, 'no thyng therof  
feele I !

As help me Crist, as I, in fewé yeres,  
Han spent upon diversé manere freres 1950  
Ful many a pound, yet fare I never the bet.  
Certeyn my good I have almoost biset,—  
Farwel my gold, for it is al ago !'

The frere answerde, 'O Thomas, dos-  
tow so ?

What nedeth yow diversé frerés seche ?  
What nedeth hym that hath a parfit leche  
To sechen othere lechés in the toun ?  
Youre inconstance is youre confusioun.

Holde ye thanne me, or ellés oure covent,  
Go praye for yow been insufficient ? 1960  
Thomas, that japé nys nat worth a myte ;  
Youre maladye is for we han to lyte.

Al yif that covent half a quarter otes !

Al yif that covent foure and twenty grotes !

Al yif that frere a peny, and lat hym go !

Jay, nay, Thomas, it may no thyng be so !

What is a ferthyng worth parted in twelve ?

o, ech thyng that is oned in it selve

is mooré strong than whan it is to-scatered.

Thomas, of me thou shalt nat been y-  
flatered ; 1970

hou woldest han oure labour al for noght ;

he hyé God, that al this world hath

wroght,

with that the werkman worthy is his hyre.

Thomas, noght of youre tresor I desire,  
As for my self, but that al oure covent  
To preye for yow is ay so diligent,  
And for to buylden Cristés owene chirche.  
Thomas, if ye wol lernen for to wirche  
Of buyldynge up of chirches, may ye fynde  
If it be good in Thomas lyf of Inde. 1980

Ye lye heere ful of anger and of ire,  
With which the devel set youre herte afyre,  
And chiden heere the sely innocent,  
Youre wyf, that is so meke and pacient ;  
And therefore, Thomas, trowe me if thee  
leste,

Ne stryve nat with thy wyf, as for thy  
beste ;

And ber this word away now, by thy feith,  
Touchynge this thyng, lo what the wise  
seith,

"Withinne thyn hous ne be thou no leoun ;

To thy subgitz do noon oppressioun, 1990

Ne maké thyne acqueyntis fro the flee."

And, Thomas, yet eft-soones I chargé thee,

Be war of yre that in thy bosom slepeth,

War fro the serpent that so slyly crepeth

Under the gras and styngeth subtilly ;

Be war, my sone, and herkne patiently,

That twenty thousand men han lost hir  
lyves

For stryvyng with hir lemmans and hir  
wyves.

Now sith ye han so hooly, meke a wyf,

What nedeth yow, Thomas, to maken stryf ?

Ther nys, y-wys, no serpent so cruél 2001

Whan man tret on his tayl, ne half so fel

As womman is, whan she hath caught an  
ire ;

Vengeance is thanné al that they desire.

Ire is a synne, oon of the greté sevene,

Abhomynable unto the God of hevене,

And to hymself it is destruccioun.

This every lewéd viker, or persoun,

Kan seye, how ire engendreth homycide.

Ire is in sooth executour of pryde. 2010

I koude of ire seye so muché sorwe

My talé sholdé lasté til tomorwe ;

And therefore preye I God, bothe day and  
nyght,

1980. *Thomas*. St. Thomas professed to be an architect, but the palace he built for the Indian king was in heaven.

An irous man God sende hym litel myght.  
It is greet harme and certès greet pitee  
To sette an irous man in heigh degree.

‘Whilom ther was an irous potestat,  
As seith Senek, that durynge his estaat  
Upon a day out ryden knyghtès two;  
And as Fortúné wolde that it were so  
That oon of hem cam hoom, that oother  
nocht. 2021

Anon the knyght bifore the juge is broght,  
That seyde thus: “Thou hast thy felawe  
slayn,

For which I deme thee to the deeth  
certayn”;

And to another knyght comanded he,  
“Go lede hym to the deeth, I chargè  
thee!”

And happed as they wentè by the weye,  
Toward the placè ther he sholdè deye,  
The knyght cam which men wenden had  
be deed.

Thanne thoughtè they it was the bestè  
reed, 2030

To lede hem bothè to the juge agayn.  
They seiden, “Lord, the knyght ne hath  
nat slayn

His felawe; heere he standeth hool alyve.”  
“Ye shul be deed,” quod he, “so moot I  
thryve!

That is to seyn, bothe oon, and two, and  
thre.”

And to the firstè knyght right thus spak  
he:

“I dampnéd thee, thou most algate be  
deed;

And thou, also, most nedès lese thyn heed,  
For thou art causè why thy felawe deyth”;  
And to the thriddè knyght right thus he  
seith: 2040

“Thou hast nat doon that I comanded  
thee”;

And thus he dide doon sleen hem allè  
thre.

‘Irous Cambises was eek dronkelewe  
And ay delited hym to been a shrewe;  
And so bifel a lord of his meynee,

2018. *Senek.* This story is told by Seneca, *De Ira*, i. 16, of Cn. Piso (T.)

2043. *Cambises.* This story is also in Seneca, iii. 14; it differs a little from one in Herodotus, Bk. iii. (T.)

That lovèd vertuous moralitee,  
Seyde on a day bitwene hem two right  
thus:

“A lord is lost if he be vicius,  
And dronkenesse is eek a foul record  
Of any man, and nameli in a lord. 2050  
Ther is ful many an eye, and many an ere,  
Awaityng on a lord, and he noot where.  
For Goddès love drynk moore attemprely!  
Wyn maketh man to lesen wrecchedly  
His mynde and eek his lymès everichon.”

“The revers shaltou se,” quod he anon,  
“And preeve it by thyn owene experiance,  
That wyn ne dooth to folk no swich  
offence.

Ther is no wyn bireveth me my myght  
Of hand, ne foot, ne of myne eyen sight”;  
And for despit he drank ful muchel moore,  
An hondred part, than he hadde doon  
bifore;

And right anon, this irous, curséd wrecche  
Léet this knyghtès sone bifore hym fecche,  
Comandyngè hym he sholde bifore hym  
stonde;

And sodeynly he took his bowe in honde,  
And up the streng he pullèd to his ere,  
And with an arwe he slòw the child right  
there.

“Now, whether have I a siker hand or  
noon?”

Quod he; “is al my myght and mynde  
agon? 2070

Hath wyn byrevèd me myne eyen sight?”  
What sholde I tellè thanswere of the  
knyght?

His sone was slayn, ther is namoore to  
seye.

Beth war, therefore, with lordès how ye  
pleye.

Syngeth *Placebo*,—and I shal, if I kan,  
But if it be unto a pourè man.  
To a poure man men sholde his vices telle.  
But nat to a lord, though he sholde go  
to helle.

‘Lo, irous Cirus, thilkè Percien,  
How he destroyed the ryver of Gysen, 2080  
For that an hors of his was dreynt ther-  
inne,

2079. *Cirus.* See Herodotus, Bk. i., and Seneca *De Ira*, both of whom call the river Gyndes.

Whan that he wenté Babiloigne to wynne.  
He madé that the ryver was so smal  
That wommen myghté wade it over al.

'Lo, what seyde he that so wel teché  
kan :

'Ne be no felawe to an irous man,  
Ne with no wood man walké by the weye,  
Lest thee repente,"—ther is namoore to  
seye.'

'Now, Thomas, leevé brother, lef thyn  
ire,

Thou shalt me fynde as just as is a squyre ;  
Hooold nat the develes knyf ay at thyn  
herte,—

Thyn angre dooth thee al to sooré  
smerte,—

But shewe to me al thy confessioun.'

'Nay,' quod the siké man, 'by Seint  
Symoun !

I have be shryven this day at my curat ;  
I have hym toold hoolly al myn estat.  
Nedeth namoore to speken of it, seith he,  
But if me list, of myn humylitee.'

'Yif me thanne of thy gold, to make  
oure cloystre,'

Quod he, 'for many a muscle and many  
an oystre,

Whan othere men han ben ful wel at eyse,  
Hath been oure foode, our cloystre for  
to reyse ;

And yet, God woot, unnethe the  
fundément

Parfournéd is, ne of our pavément  
Nys nat a tyle yet withinne oure wones,—  
By God, we owen fourty pound for stones !

'Now help, Thomas ! for hym that  
harwed helle,

For ellés mosté we oure bookés selle ;  
And if ye lakke oure predicacioun

¶ Hanne goth the world al to destruccioun.  
¶ For whoso wolde us fro this world bireve,

¶ so God me savé, Thomas, by youre leve,  
¶ he wolde bireve out of this world the  
sonne ;

¶ For who kan teche, and werchen, as we  
konne ?

¶ And that is nat of litel tyme,' quod he,  
¶ But syn that Elie was, or Elise,

¶ Ian frerés been,—that fynde I of record ;

2116. *Elie, E Ennok.*

In charitee y-thanked be oure Lord !  
Now, Thomas, helpe for seinté charitee !'  
And doun anon he sette hym on his  
knee.

This siké man wax wel ny wood for ire ;  
He woldé that the frere had been on fire  
With his false dissymulacioun.

'Swich thyng as is in my possessioun,'  
Quod he, 'that may I yeven, and noon  
oother.

Ye sey me thus, "that I am youré  
brother" ?'

'Ye, certés,' quod the frere, 'trusteth  
weel,

I took oure dame oure lettre and oure  
seel.'

'Now wel,' quod he, 'and somewhat  
shal I yeve

Unto youré hooly covent whil I lyve,  
And in thyn hand thou shalt it have anon,  
On this condicioun, and oother noon ;  
That thou departe it so, my leevé brother,  
That every frere have also muche as  
oother ;

This shaltou swere on thy professioun,  
Withouten fraud or cavillacioun.'

'I swere it,' quod this freré, 'by my  
feith !'

And therwithal his hand in his he leith,—  
'Lo heer my feith, in me shal be no lak.'

'Now thanne, put in thyn hand doun  
by my bak,'

Seydé this man, 'and gropé wel bihynde ;  
Bynethé my buttok ther shaltow fynde  
A thyng that I have hyd in pryvetee.'

'A !' thoghte this frere, 'this shal go  
with me !'

And doun his hand he launcheth to the  
clifte,

In hopé for to fyndé theré a yifte ;  
And whan this siké man felté this frere  
Aboute his tuwel gropé there and heere,  
Amydde his hand he leet the frere a  
fart ;

Ther nys no capul drawyngé in a cart  
That myghte have lete a fart of swich a  
soun.

The frere up stirte, as dooth a wood  
leoun,—

2133. *leeve, H<sup>6</sup> deere.*

'A! falsè cherl,' quod he, 'for Goddès bones!

This hastow for despit doon for the nones;  
Thou shalt abyde this fart, if that I may!'

His meynee, whiche that herden this affray,

Cam lepyng in, and chaced out the frere;  
And forth he gooth with a ful angry cheere,

And fette his felawe, ther as lay his stoor.  
He lookèd as it were a wildè boor,—

He gryntè with his teeth, so was he wrooth; 2161

A sturdy paas doon to the court he gooth,  
Wher as ther woned a man of greet honour,

To whom that he was alwey confessour;  
This worthy man was lord of that village.

This frerè cam as he were in a rage,  
Where as this lord sat etyng at his bord;  
Unnethès myghte the frerè speke a word,  
Til attè laste he seyde, 'God yow see!'

This lord gan looke and seidè,  
'Benedicitee! 2170

What, frerè John, what maner world is this?

I se wel that som thyng ther is amys;  
Ye looken as the wode were ful of thevys;  
Sit doun anon, and tel me what youre grief is,

And it shal been amended, if I may.'

'I have,' quod he, 'had a despit this day,

God yeldè yow! adoun in youre village,  
That in this world is noon so poure a page,  
That he nolde have abhomynacioun 2179

Of that I have receyvèd in youre toun;  
And yet ne greveth me no thyng so soore,  
As that this oldè cherl, with lokkès hoore,  
Blasphemèd hath oure hooly covent eke.'

'Now, maister,' quod this lord, 'I yow hiseke'—

'No "maister," sire,' quod he, 'but servitour,

Thogh I have had in scolè swich honour;  
God liketh nat that "Raby" men us calle,  
Neither in market ne in youre largè halle.'

'No fors,' quod he, 'but tel me al youre grief.'

2172. *se wel that som, E. trowe som maner.*

'Sire,' quod this frere, 'an odious meschief 2190

This day bytýd is to myn ordre and me;  
And so *par consequens* in ech degree

Of hooly chirchè; God amende it soone!

'Sire,' quod the lord, 'ye woot what is to doone;

Distempere yow noght, ye be my confessour;

Ye been the salt of the erthe and the savour;

For Goddès love youre pacience ye holde;

Tel me youre grief'; and he anon hym toldè,

As ye han herd biforn, ye woot wel what.

The lady of the hous al stillè sat 2200

Til she had herdè what the frerè sayde;

'Ey! Goddès mooder,' quod she,—  
'blisful mayde!

Is ther oght ellès? Telle me feithfully.'

'Madame,' quod he, 'how thynké ye hereby?'

'How that me thynketh?' quod she;  
'so God me speede!

I seye, a cherle hath doon a cherlès dede.  
What sholde I seye? God lat hym never thee,

His sikè heed is ful of vanytee;  
I holde hym in a manere frenésye.'

'Madame,' quod he, 'by God I shal nat lye, 2210

But I on oother wise may be awreke,  
I shal disclaundre hym, over al ther I speke,—

This falsè blasphemour that chargèd me  
To partè that wol nat departed be,—  
To every man ylichè, with meschaunce!'

The lord sat stille, as he were in a traunce,

And in his herte he rollèd up and doun  
'How hadde the cherl ymaginacioun,

To shewè swich a probleme to the frere?  
Never erst er now herd I of swich mateere; 2220

I trowe the devel putte it in his mynde.  
In ars-metrikè shal ther no man fynde,  
Biforn this day of swich a questioun.

2211. *wise, E<sup>2</sup> weyes.*

Certès, it was a shrewed conclusioun,  
 That everyman sholde have yliche his part,  
 As of the soun or savour of a fart.  
 O vilè proudè chér! I shrewe his face!  
 Lo, sirès,' quod the lord, with hardè grace,  
 'Who herd ever of swich a thyng er now?  
 "To every man ylikè,"—tel me how?  
 It is an impossible, it may nat be. 2231  
 Ey, nycè chér! God lete thee never thee!  
 The rumblyng of a fart, and every soun,  
 Nis but of eir reverberacioun,  
 And ever it wasteth, litel and litel away.  
 Ther is no man kan demen, by my fey!  
 If that it were departed equally.  
 What, lo, my chér, lo, yet how shrewedly,  
 Unto my confessor to day he spak;  
 I holde hym, certeyn, a demonyak. 2240  
 Now ete youre mete, and lat the chér go  
 pleye.  
 Lat hym go hongè hymself a devel weye!'

*The wordes of the lordès Squier and his  
 kervere for departyng of the fart on  
 twelwe*

Now stood the lordès Squier at the bord,  
 That karf his mete, and herdè, word by  
 word,  
 Of allè thyngès whiche that I have sayd;  
 'My lord,' quod he, 'be ye nat yvele  
 apayd,  
 I koudè tellè for a gowne-clooth  
 To yow, sir frerè, so ye be nat wrooth,  
 How that this fart sholde evenè y-delèd be  
 Among youre covent, if it lykèd me.' 2250  
 'Tel,' quod the lord, 'and thou shalt  
 have anon  
 A gowne-clooth, by God, and by Seint  
 John!'  
 'My lord,' quod he, 'whan that the  
 weder is fair,  
 Withouten wynd, or perturbyng of air,  
 Lat bryngè a cartèwheel into this halle,—  
 But lookè that it have his spokès alle,—  
 Twelwe spokès hath a cartwheel comunly;  
 And bryng me thanne twelf frerès,—  
 woot ye why?

For thritten is a covent, as I gesse;  
 The confessor heere, for his worthynesse,  
 Shal parfourme up the nombre of his  
 covent. 2261  
 Thanne shal they knelè doun, by oon  
 assent,  
 And to every spokès ende, in this manere,  
 Ful sadly leye his nosè shal a frere.  
 Yourè noble confessor there, God hym  
 save!  
 Shal holde his nose upright under the nave.  
 Thanne shal this chér, with bely stif  
 and toght  
 As any tabour, hyder been y-broght,  
 And sette hym on the wheel right of this  
 cart, 2269  
 Upon the nave, and make hym lete a fart,  
 And ye shul seen, up peril of my lyf,  
 By preevè which that is demonstratif,  
 That equally the soun of it wol wende,  
 And eke the stynk, unto the spokès ende,—  
 Save that this worthy man, youre con-  
 fessor,  
 By cause he is a man of greet honour,  
 Shal have the firstè fruyt, as resoun is.  
 The noble usage of frerès yet is this,  
 The worthy men of hem shul first be  
 served,— 2279  
 And certainly, he hath it weel disserved,  
 He hath to day taught us so muchel good  
 With prechyng in the pulpit ther he stood,  
 That I may vouchèsauf, I sey for me,  
 He hadde the firstè smel of fartès three,  
 And so wolde all the covent hardily;  
 He bereth hym so faire and hoolily.'

The lord, the lady, and alle men save  
 the frere,  
 Seyden that Jankyn spak in this matere  
 As wel as Euclide, or Protholomee:  
 Touchyng this chér, they seyden, sub-  
 tiltee 2290  
 And heigh wit made hym speken as he  
 spak;  
 He nys no fool, ne no demonyak;  
 And Jankyn hath y-wonne a newe gowne.  
 My tale is doon,—we be almost at  
 towne.

2224. H<sup>6</sup> read *who schulde make a demonstra-  
 ioun.*

2227. *vile*, H<sup>6</sup> *nycè.*

2272. *preeve which*, H *verray proof.*

2289. *Protholomee*, Ptolemy.

2294. *at towne*, Sittingbourne.

## GROUP E

*Heere folweth The Prologe of the Clerkes  
Tale of Oxenford*

'SIRE Clerk of Oxenford,' oure Hosté  
sayde,  
'Ye ryde as coy and stille as dooth a  
mayde,  
Were newé spouses, sittyng on the bord ;  
This day ne herd I of youre tonge a word.  
I trowe ye studie abouté som sophyme ;  
But Salomon seith "every thyng hath  
tyme."

For Goddés sake ! as beth of better cheere !  
It is no tymé for to studien heere ;  
Telle us som myrie talé, by youre fey !  
For what man that is entred in a pley, <sup>10</sup>  
He nedés moot unto the pley assente ;  
But precheth nat, as frerés doon in Lente,  
To make us for oure oldé synnés wepe,  
Ne that thy talé make us nat to slepe.  
Telle us som murie thyng of áventúres,—  
Youre termés, youre colours, and youre  
figúres

Keepe hem in stoor til so be ye endite  
Heigh style, as whan that men to kyngés  
write ;

Speketh so pleyn at this tyme, I yow  
preye, <sup>19</sup>

That we may understandé what ye seye.'

This worthy clerk benignély answerde,  
'Hosté,' quod he, 'I am under youre yerde,  
Ye han of us, as now, the governance,  
And therefor wol I do yow obeisance  
As fer as resoun axeth hardily.

I wol yow telle a talé which that I  
Lernéd at Padwé of a worthy clerk,  
As prevéd by his wordés and his werk ;  
He is now deed and nayléd in his cheste,  
I prey to God so yeve his soule reste ! <sup>30</sup>

'Fraunceys Petrak, the lauriat poete,  
Highté this clerk whos rethoriké sweete  
Enlumyned al Ytaille of poetrie,—

19. *I, E<sup>2</sup> we.*

27. *Lerned at Padwe.* Petrarch was either at or near Padua from Jan. to Sept. 1373, and Chaucer may easily have visited him on his Genoese mission of that year.

29. *deed.* Petrarch died in 1374.

As Lynyan dide of philosophie,  
Or lawe, or oother art particuler,—  
But deeth, that wol nat suffre us dwellen  
heer,

But as it were a twynklyng of an eye,  
Hem bothe hath slayn, and allé shul we  
dye.

But forth to tellen of this worthy man  
That taughté me this tale, as I bigan, <sup>40</sup>  
I seye that first with heigh stile he  
enditeth,

Er he the body of his talé writeth,  
A prohemye, in the which discryveth he  
Pemond, and of Salucés the contree ;  
And speketh of Apennyn, the hillés hye  
That bethen the boundés of West Lum-  
bardye,

And of Mount Vesulus in special,  
Where as the Poo out of a wellé smal  
Taketh his firsté spryngyng and his sours,  
That estward ay encresseth in his cours <sup>50</sup>  
To Emeleward, to Ferrare and Venyse,—  
The which a longe thyng weré to devyse,  
And trewély, as to my juggément,  
Me thynketh it a thyng impertinent,  
Save that he wole convoyen his mateere ;  
But this is his talé which that ye may heere.'

## CLERK OF OXFORD'S TALE

*Heere bigynneth The Tale of the Clerk of  
Oxenford*

## PART I

Ther is, at the West sydé of Ytaille,  
Doun at the roote of Vesulus the colde,

34. *Lynyan*, an Italian jurist, who died in 1383.

44. *Pemond*, Piedmont.

44. *Saluces*, Saluzzo.

47. *Mount Vesulus*, Monte Viso.

51. *To Emeleward*, i.e. towards the district traversed by the old *Via Aemiliana*.

56. *this is, E<sup>2</sup> this.*

*The Tale of the Clerk.* This is for the most part a close rendering of the Latin version of the Tale of Griselda, written by Petrarch after reading Boccaccio's story in the *Decamerone*. Chaucer's chief departures from Petrarch are pointed out in the notes.

A lusty playne, habundant of vitaille,  
Where many a tour and toun thou mayst  
biholde 60

That founded were in tyme of fadrès olde,  
And many another delitáble sighte,  
And Salucés this noble contree highte.

A markys whilom lord was of that lond,  
As were his worthy eldrés hym bifore,  
And obeisant and redy to his hond  
Were alle his ligés, bothe lasse and moore.  
Thus in delit he lyveth, and hath doon  
yoore,  
Biloved and drad, thurgh favour of  
Fortune, 69  
Bothe of his lordés and of his commune.

Therwith he was, to speke as of lynage,  
The gentilleste y-born of Lumbardye ;  
A faire persone, and strong, and yong  
of age,  
And ful of honour and of curteisye ;  
Discreet ynogh his contree for to gye,—  
Save in somme thyngés that he was to  
blame,—  
And Walter was this yongé lordés name.

I blame him thus, that he considered  
nogh  
In tymé comynge what hym myghte  
bityde ; 79  
But in his lust present was al his thought,  
As for to hauke and hunte on every syde,  
Wel ny alle othere curés leet he slyde ;  
And eek he nolde, and that was worst of  
alle,  
Weddè no wyf, for noght that may bifalle.

Oonly that point his peplé bar so soore  
That flokmeele on a day they to hym  
wente,  
And oon of hem that wisest was of  
loore,—

78. *considered*, E<sup>3</sup> *considereth*. We may quote the original of this stanza to show how close Chaucer keeps to his text: 'vir insignis nisi quod, presentis sua sorte contentus, incuriosissimus futurorum erat. Itaque venatui aucupioque delitus sic illis incubuerat ut alia pene cuncta negligeret; quodque in primis ægre populi ferrebant ab ipsis quoque conjugii consiliis abhorreret.'

Or ellés that the lord best wolde assente  
That he sholde telle hym what his peplé  
mente,

Or ellés koude he showe wel swich  
mateere,— 90  
He to the markys seyde as ye shul heere :

'O noble markys, youre humanitee  
Assureth us and yeveth us hardinesse  
As ofte as tyme is of necessitee  
That we to yow mowe telle oure hevynesse.  
Accepteth, lord, now for youre gentillesse,  
That we with pitous herte unto yow  
pleyne,  
And lat youre erés nat my voys desdeyne.

Al have I noght to doone in this mateere  
Moore than another man hath in this place,  
Yet for as muche as ye, my lord so deere,  
Han alwey shewed me favour and grace,  
I dar the bettré aske of yow a space  
Of audience, to shewen oure requeste,  
And ye, my lord, to doon right as yow  
leste ;

For certés, lord, so wel us liketh yow  
And al youre werk, and ever han doon,  
that we  
Ne koudé nat us-self devyssen how  
We myghté lyven in moore felicitee,  
Save o thyng, lord, if it youre willé be, 110  
That for to been a wedded man yow leste ;  
Thanne were youre people in sovereyn  
hertés reste.

Boweth youre nekke under that blisful yok  
Of soveraynété, noght of servyse,  
Which that men clepeth spousaille or  
wedlok,  
And thenketh, lord, among youre thoghtés  
wyse,  
How that oure dayés passe in sondry wyse,  
For thogh we slepe, or wake, or rome,  
or ryde,  
Ay fleeth the tyme, it nyl no man abyde ;

113. Chaucer here transfers Petrarch's epithets. 'Collumque non liberum modo sed imperiosum legitimo subjiicias jugo' is the Latin.

And thogh youre grené youthé floure as  
 yit, 120  
 In crepeth age alwey, as stille as stoon,  
 And Deeth manaceth every age and smyt  
 In ech estaat, for ther escapeth noon ;  
 And al so certain as we knowe echoon  
 That we shul deye, as uncerteyn we alle  
 Been of that day whan deeth shal on us  
 falle.

‘Accepteth thanne of us the trewe  
 entente

That never yet refusèden thyn heeste,  
 And we wol, lord, if that ye wole assente,  
 Chese yow a wyf in short tyme atté leeste,  
 Born of the gentilleste and of the meeste  
 Of al this land, so that it oghté seme  
 Honour to God and yow, as we kan  
 deeme.

Delivere us out of al this bisy drede,  
 And taak a wyf, for hyè Goddès sake ;  
 For if it so bifelle, as God forbede !  
 That thurgh youre deeth youre lyné  
 sholdé slake,

And that a straungè súccessour sholde take  
 Youré heritage, O, wo were us alyve !  
 Wherfore we pray you hastily to wyve.’ 140

Hir meeké preyere, and hir pitous  
 cheere,

Madé the markys herté han pitee.  
 ‘Ye wol,’ quod he, ‘myn owéne peplé  
 deere,

To that I never erst thoughté streyné me.  
 I me rejoysséd of my libertee,  
 That seeldé tyme is founde in mariage ;  
 Ther I was free, I moot been in servage ;

But nathélees, I se youre trewe entente,  
 And trust upon youre wit, and have  
 doon ay ;

Wherfore, of my free wyl, I wole assente  
 To weddè me as soone as ever I may. 151  
 But ther as ye han profréd me this day  
 To chesè me a wyf, I yow relesse  
 That choys, and prey yow of that profré  
 cesse,

For, God it woot, that children ofté been  
 Unlyk hir worthy eldrés hem bifore ;

Bountee comth al of God, nat of the streen  
 Of which they been engendred and y-bore.  
 I truste in Goddès bontee, and therfore  
 My mariage, and myn estaat and reste,  
 I hym bitake,—he may doon as hym leste.

Lat me allone in chesyngé of my wyf—  
 That charge upon my bak I wol endure ;  
 But I yow preyre, and charge upon yourelyf,  
 That what wyf that I take, ye me assure  
 To worshipé hire, whil that hirlyf may dure,  
 In word and werk, bothe heere and  
 everywhere,  
 As she an emperourés doghter weere ;

And forthermoore, this shal ye swere,  
 that ye  
 Agayn my choys shul neither grucche ne  
 stryve ; 170

For sith I shal forgoon my libertee  
 At youre requeste, as ever moot I thryve !  
 Ther as myn herte is set, ther wol I wyve ;  
 And, but ye wole assente in this manere,  
 I prey yow speketh namoore of this mater.’

With hertely wyl they sworn and  
 assenten

To al this thyng, ther seyde no wight nay ;  
 Bisekyngé hym of grace, er that they  
 wenten,

That he wolde graunten hem a certain day  
 Of his spousaille, as soone as ever he may ;  
 For yet alwey the peplé somewhat dredde  
 Lest that this markys no wyf worldé wedde.

He graunten hem a day, swich as hym  
 leste,

On which he wolde be wedded sikerly,  
 And seyde he dide al this at hir requeste ;  
 And they, with humble ententé, buxomly,  
 Knelyngé upon hir knees ful reverently,  
 Hym thonken alle ; and thus they han  
 an ende

Of hire entente, and hoom agayn they  
 wende.

And heer-upon he to his officerés 190  
 Comaundeth for the festé to purveye ;  
 And to his privee knyghtés and squierés

174. *And but ye wole, etc., not in Latin.*



Swich chargé yaf as hym liste on hem leye ;  
 And they to his comandément obeye,  
 And ech of hem dooth al his diligence  
 To doon unto the feesté reverence.

## PART II

Noght fer fro thilké paleys honorable  
 Ther as this markys shoope his mariage,  
 There stood a throop, of sité delitable,  
 In which that pouré folk of that village  
 Hadden hir beestés and hir herbergage,  
 And of hire labour tooke hir sustenance,  
 After the erthé yaf hem habundance. 203

Among this pouré folk ther dwelte a man  
 Which that was holden pourest of hem  
 alle,—

But hyé God som tymé senden kan  
 His grace into a litel oxés stalle ;  
 Janicula, men of that throope hym calle ;  
 A doghter hadde he fair ynogh to sighte,  
 And Grisildis this yongé mayden highte.

But for to speke of vertuous beautee  
 Thanne was she oon the faireste under  
 sonne,

For pouréliche y-fostred up was she ;  
 No likerous lust was thurgh hire herte  
 y-ronne,

Wel offer of the welle than of the tonne  
 She drank, and for she woldé vertu plesé  
 She knew wel labour, but noon ydel ese.

But thogh this maydé tendre were of age,  
 Yet in the brest of hire virginitee 219  
 Ther was enclosed rype and sad corage,  
 And in greet reverence and charitee  
 Hir oldé, pouré fader fostred shee ;  
 A fewé sheepe, spynnyngé, on feeld she  
 kepte,  
 She woldé noght been ydel til she slepte.

And whan she homward cam she woldé  
 bryngé  
 Vortés, or othere herbés, tymés ofte,  
 The whiche she shredde and seeth for hir  
 lyvyngé,

215-220. Chaucer's addition.

And made hir bed ful harde and no thyng  
 softe ;

And ay she kepte hir fadres lyf on-lofte,  
 With everich obeisaunce and diligence  
 That child may doon to fadres reverence.

Upon Grisilde, this pouré créature,  
 Ful ofté sithe this markys sette his eye  
 As he on huntyng rood paráventure ;  
 And, whan it fil that he myghte hire espye,  
 He noght with wantowne lookyng of folye  
 His eyén caste on hire, but in sad wyse  
 Upon hir chiere he gan hym ofte avyse,

Commendynge in his herte hir womman-  
 hede, 239

And eek hir virtu, passynge any wight  
 Of so yong age, as wel in chiere as dede ;  
 For thogh the peplé have no greet insight  
 In vertu, he considered ful right  
 Hir bountee, and disposéd that he wolde  
 Wedde hire oonly, if ever he weddéd sholde.

The day of weddyng cam, but no wight kan  
 Tellé what womman that it sholdé be ;  
 For which mervéillé wondred many a man,  
 And seyden, whan they were in privétee,  
 'Wol nat oure lord yet leve his vanytee ?  
 Wolhenat wedde? alas! alas! the while!  
 Why wole he thus hymself and us bigile?'

But nathélees this markys hath doon make,  
 Of gemmés, set in gold and in asure,  
 Broochés and ryngés, for Grisildis sake ;  
 And of hir clothyng took he the mesure  
 By a mayde lyke to hire of stature,  
 And eek of othere ornamentés alle  
 That unto swich a weddyng sholdé falle.

The time of undern of the samé day  
 Approcheth, that this weddyng sholdé be,  
 And al the paleys put was in array, 262  
 Bothe hall and chambrés, ech in his degree ;  
 Houses of office stufféd with plentee,  
 Ther maystow seen of deyntéuous vitaille  
 That may be founde as fer as last Ytaille.

233. sette, E caste.

238. gan, H<sup>6</sup> wolde.

249-252. Chaucer's addition.

263-266. Chaucer's addition.

This roial markys richely arrayed,  
 Lordes and ladyes in his compaignye,  
 The whiché to the feesté weren y-prayed,  
 And of his retenue the bachelrye, <sup>270</sup>  
 With many a soun of sondry melodye,  
 Unto the village of the which I tolde,  
 In this array the righté wey han holde.

Grisilde of this, God woot, ful innocent,  
 That for hire shapen was al this array,  
 To fecchen water at a welle is went,  
 And cometh hoom as soone as ever she  
 may ;

For wel she hadde herd seyde that thilké day  
 The markys sholdé wedde, and if she  
 myghte <sup>279</sup>  
 She woldé fayn han seyn som of that sighte.

She thoghte, 'I wole with othere maydens  
 stonde,

That been my felawes, in oure dore and se  
 The markysesse, and therefore wol I fonde  
 To doon at hoom as soone as it may be  
 The labour which that longeth unto me ;  
 And thanne I may at leyser hire biholde  
 If she this wey unto the castel holde.'

And as she wolde over hir thressfold gon  
 The markys cam, and gan hire for to calle ;  
 And she set down hir water pot anon <sup>290</sup>  
 Biside the thressfold in an oxés stalle,  
 And down upon hir knes she gan to falle,  
 And with sad contenancé kneleth stille  
 Til she had herd what was the lordés will.

This thoughtful markysspak unto this mayde  
 Ful sobrelly, and seyde in this manere :  
 'Where is youre fader, Grisildis?' he  
 sayde ;

And she with reverence, in humble cheere,  
 Answerd, 'Lord, he is al redy heere' ;  
 And in she gooth withouten lenger lette,  
 And to the markys she hir fader fette. <sup>301</sup>

He by the hand thanne took this oldé man,  
 And seyde thus, whan he hym hadde asyde,  
 'Janicula, I neither may ne kan  
 Lenger the plesance of myn herté hyde.

267. *richely*, H<sup>2</sup> *really* (royally).

281 *sqg.* The form of the soliloquy is Chaucer's.  
 290-294. Chaucer's addition.

If that thou vouchésauf, what-so bityde,  
 Thy doghter wol I take, er that I wende,  
 As for my wyf unto hir lyvés ende.

Thou lovest me, I woot it wel certeyn,  
 And art my feithful ligé man y-bore, <sup>310</sup>  
 And all that liketh me, I dar wel seyn.  
 It liketh thee, and specially therfore,  
 Tel me that poynnt that I have seyde bifore,  
 If that thou wolt unto that purpos drawe,  
 To také me as for thy sone-in-lawe.'

This sodeyn-cas this man astonyed so  
 That reed he wax, abayst, and al quakyng  
 He stood ; unnethés seyde he wordés mo,  
 But oonly thus : 'Lord,' quod he, 'my  
 willyng <sup>319</sup>

Is as ye wole, ne aeynes youre likyng  
 I wol no thyng, ye be my lord so deere ;  
 Right as yow lust governeth this mateere.'

'Yet wol I,' quod this markys softely,  
 'That in thy chambre, I, and thou,  
 and she,

Have a collacioun, and wostow why ?  
 For I wol axe if it hire willé be  
 To be my wyf, and reule hire after me ;  
 And al this shal be doon in thy presence,  
 I wol noght speke out of thyn audience.'

And in the chambre whil they were  
 aboute <sup>330</sup>  
 Hir tretys, which as ye shal after heere,  
 The peple cam unto the hous with-oute,  
 And wondred hem in how honeste  
 manere,

And tentifly, she kepte hir fader deere ;  
 But outrély Grisildis wondré myghte,  
 For never erst ne saugh she swich a sighte.

No wonder is thogh that she were astoned  
 To seen so greet a gest come in that place ;  
 She never was to swiché gestés woned,  
 For which she lookéd with ful palé face.  
 But, shortly forth this talé for to chace, <sup>341</sup>  
 Thise arn the wordés that the markys sayde  
 To this benigné, verray, feithful mayde :

334. *tentifly*, H *tendurly*.

340. Chaucer's conventional addition.

341. *talé*, H<sup>6</sup> *matiere*.

'Grisilde,' he seyde, 'ye shal wel  
understonde

It liketh to youre fader and to me  
That I yow wedde; and eek it may so  
stonde,

As I suppose, ye wol that it so be;  
But thise demandés axe I first,' quod he,  
'That sith it shal be doon in hastif wyse,  
Wol ye assente or ellés yow avyse?' 350

I seye this, be ye redy with good herte  
To al my lust, and that I frely may  
As me best thynketh do yow laughe or  
smerte,

And never ye to grucche it nyght ne day?  
And eek whan I sey "ye" ne sey nat  
"nay,"

Neither by word, ne frowning contenance?  
Swere this, and heere I swere oure alli-  
ance.'

Wondrynge upon this word, quakyng  
for drede,

She seyde, 'Lord, undigne and unworthy  
Am I to thilke honóur that ye me beede;  
But as ye wole youreself, right so wol I, 361  
And heere I swere that never willyngly  
In werk, ne thought, I nyl yow disobeye,  
For to be deed, though me were looth to  
deye!'

'This is ynogh, Grisildé myn,' quod he,  
And forth he gooth with a ful sobré cheere  
Out at the dore, and after that cam she,  
And to the peple he seyde in this manere:  
'This is my wyf,' quod he, 'that standeth  
heere; 369  
Honoureth hire, and loveth hire, I preye,  
Whoso me loveth; ther is namoore to seye.'

And for that nothyng of hir oldé gere  
She sholdé bryng into his hous, he bad  
That women sholde dispoillen hire  
right there;

Of which thise ladyes weré nat right glad  
To handle hir clothés wher-inne she was  
clad;

But nathéless this maydé, bright of hewe,  
Fro foot to heed they clothéd han al newe.

375, 376. Chaucer here varies needlessly from  
Petrarch.

Hir heris han they kembd, that lay un-  
tressed

Ful rudély, and with hir fyngres smale 380  
A corone on hire heed they han y-dressed,  
And sette hire ful of nowches grete and  
smale.

Of hire array what sholde I make a tale?  
Unnethe the peple hire knew for hire  
fairnesse,

Whan she translated was in swich richesse.

This markys hath hire spoused with a  
ryng,

Brought for the samé cause, and thanne  
hire sette

Upon an hors snow-whit and wel amblyng,  
And to his paleys, er he lenger lette,  
With joyful peplé that hire ladde and  
mette, 390

Convoyéd hire, and thus the day they  
spende

In revel til the sonnè gan descende;

And, shortly forth this talé for to chace,  
I seye that to this newé markysesse  
God hath swich favour sent hire of his  
grace,

That it ne seméd nat by liklynesse  
That she was born and fed in rudénesse,  
As in a cote, or in an oxé stalle,  
But norissed in an emperourés halle.

To every wight she woxen is so deere  
And worshipful, that folk ther she was  
bore, 401

And from hire birthé knewe hire yeer by  
yeere,

Unnethé trowéd they, but dorste han swore  
That to Janicle of which I spak bifore  
She doghter nere, for, as by conjecture,  
Hem thoughte she was another créature;

For though that ever vertuous was she,  
She was encresséd in swich excellence  
Of thewés goode, y-set in heigh bountee,  
And so discreet and fair of eloquence, 410  
So benigne, and so digne of reverence,  
And koudé so the peplés herte embrace,  
That ech hire lovede that lookéd on hir face.

Noght oonly of Saluces in the toun  
 Publicèd was the bountee of hir name.  
 But eek beside in many a regioun,  
 If oon seide wel, another seyde the same.  
 So spradde of hirè heighe bountee the fame  
 That men and wommen, as wel yonge as  
 olde,  
 Goon to Saluce upon hire to bihold. 420

Thus Walter lowely—nay, but roially—  
 Wedded with fortunat honestéete,  
 In Goddès pees lyveth ful esily  
 At hoom, and outward grace ynogh had he;  
 And for he saugh that under lowe degree  
 Was ofte vertu hid, the peple hym heelde  
 A prudent man, and that is seyn ful seelde.

Nat oonly this Grisildis thurgh hir wit  
 Koude al the feet of wyfly homlynesse,  
 But eek, whan that the cas requiréd it, 430  
 The commune profit koudè she redresse;  
 Ther nas discord, rancour, ne hevynesse,  
 In al that land, that she ne koude apese,  
 And wisely brynge hem alle in reste  
 and ese.

Though that hire housbonde absent were  
 anon,  
 If gentil men or othere of hire contree  
 Were wrothè, she wolde bryngenhem aton;  
 So wise and rypè wordès haddè she,  
 And juggèmentz of so greet equitee,  
 That she from hevene sent was, as men  
 wende, 440  
 Peplè to save and every wrong tamende.

Nat longè tyme after that this Grisild  
 Was wedded, she a doghter hath y-bore,  
 Al had hire levere have born a knavèchild.  
 Glad was this markys and the folk ther-  
 fore,  
 For though a maydè child coome al bifore,  
 She may unto a knavè child atteyne,  
 By liklihedè, syn she nys nat bareyne.

## PART III

Ther fil, as it bifalleth tymès mo,  
 Whan that this child had soukèd but a  
 throwe, 450

415. *bountee, E. beautee.*

This markys in his hertè longeth so  
 To tempte his wyf, hir sadnesse for to  
 knowe,  
 That he ne myghte out of his hertè throwe  
 This merveillous desir his wyf tassaye;  
 Nedelees, God woot, he thoghte hire for  
 taffraye.

He hadde assayèd hire ynogh bifore,  
 And foond hire ever goode, — what  
 neded it  
 Hire for to tempte, and alwey moore and  
 moore?  
 Though som men preise it for a subtil wit,  
 But as for me, I seye that yvele it sit 460  
 To assaye a wyf whan that it is no nede,  
 And putten hire in angwyssh and in drede.

For which this markys wroghte in this  
 manere;  
 He cam allone a nyght, ther as she lay,  
 With stiernè face and with ful trouble  
 cheere,  
 And seyde thus: ‘Grisilde,’ quod he,  
 ‘that day  
 That I yow took out of youre poure array  
 And putte yow in estaat of heigh  
 noblesse,—  
 Ye have nat that forgeten, as I gesse?’

I seye, Grisilde, this present dignitee 470  
 In which that I have put yow, as I trowe,  
 Maketh yow nat forgetful for to be  
 That I yow took in poure estaat ful lowe;  
 For any wele ye moot youreselfen knowe;  
 Taak heede of every word that I yow seye,  
 Ther is no wight that hereth it but we  
 tweye.

Ye woot youreself wel how that ye cam  
 heere  
 Into this hous, it is nat longe ago,  
 And though to me that ye be lief and  
 deere,  
 Unto my gentils ye be no thyng so; 480  
 They seyn to hem it is greet shame and wo  
 For to be subgetz, and been in servage,  
 To thee, that born art of a smal village;

460. Chaucer is here much more emphatic than  
 Petrarch.

And namely sith thy doghter was y-hore  
 These wordés han they spoken, doutélees ;  
 But I desire, as I have doon bifore,  
 To lyve my lyf with hem in rēste and pees ;  
 I may nat in this caas be recchèlees,  
 I moot doon with thy doghter for the  
 beste,  
 Nat as I wolde, but as my peplé leste ; 490

And yet, God woot, this is ful looth to  
 me ;

But nathélees withouté youre wityng  
 I wol nat doon, but this wol I, ' quod he,  
 ' That ye to me assente, as in this thyng.  
 Shewe now youre pacience in youre  
 werkynge,  
 That ye me highte and swore in youre  
 village,  
 That day that makèd was oure mariage. '

Whan she had herd al this she nocht  
 ameved,  
 Neither in word, or chiere, or coun-  
 tenaunce,

For as it semèd she was nat agreved. 500  
 She seyde, ' Lord, al lyth in youre  
 plesaunce ;

My child and I, with hertely obeisaunce,  
 Been yourés al, and ye mowe save or spille  
 Youré owene thyng ; werketh after youré  
 wille.

Ther may no-thing, God so my soulé  
 save !

Liken to yow that may displesé me ;  
 Ne I desiré no-thing for to have,  
 Ne dredé for to leese, save oonly yee ;  
 This wyl is in myn herte, and ay shal be.  
 No lengthe of tyme, or deeth, may this  
 deface, 510  
 Ne change my corage to another place. '

Glad was this markys of hire answeyng,  
 but yet he feynèd as he were nat so ;  
 And dreary was his cheere and his lookyng,  
 Whan that he sholde out of the chambré  
 go.

Soone after this, a furlong wey or two,  
 He privily hath toold al his entent  
 into a man, and to his wyf hym sente.

A maner sergeant was this privee man,  
 The which that faithful ofte he founden  
 hadde 520

In thyngés grete, and eek swich folk wel  
 kan

Doon execucioun in thyngés badde ;  
 The lord knew wel that he hym loved  
 and dradde :

And whan this sergeant wiste his lordés  
 wille,

Into the chambre he stalkèd hym ful stille.

' Madame, ' he seyde, ' ye moot foryeve  
 it me,

Though I do thyng to which I am  
 constreynd ;

Ye been so wys, that ful wel knowé ye  
 That lordés heestés mowe nat been  
 y-feyned :

They mowe wel been brwailled and  
 compleynèd, 530

But men moot nede unto hire lust obeye,  
 And so wol I ; ther is namoore to seye.

This child I am comanded for to take, '—  
 And spak namoore but out the child he  
 hente

Despitously, and gan a cheeré make  
 As though he wolde han slayn it er he  
 wente.

Grisildis moot al suffren and consente ;  
 And as a lamb she sitteth meke and  
 stille,

And leet this cruel sergeant doon his  
 wille.

Suspecious was the diffame of this man,  
 Suspect his face, suspect his word also, 541  
 Suspect the tyme in which he this bigan ;  
 Allas, hir doghter that she lovèd so,  
 She wende he wolde han slawen it right  
 tho ;

But nathélees she neither weepe ne syked,  
 Consentynge hire to that the markys lyked ;

But atté laste to speken she bigan,  
 And mekely she to the sergeant preyde,

So as he was a worthy gentil man,  
That she moste kisse hire child er that it  
deyde.

And in hir barm this litel child she leyde <sup>550</sup>  
With ful sad face, and gan the child to  
blisse,  
And lulled it, and after gan it kisse ;

And thus she seyde in hire benigne voys,  
'Fareweel, my child, I shal thee never  
see !

But sith I thee have markèd with the croys,  
Of thilkè Fader, blessed moote he be,  
That for us deyde up on a croys of tree.  
Thy soulè, litel child, I hym bitake, <sup>559</sup>  
For this nyght shaltow dyen for my sake.'

I trowe that to a norice in this cas  
It had been hard this reuthè for to se ;  
Wel myghte a mooder thanne han cryd,  
allas !

But natheless, so sad stidefast was she,  
That she endurèd al adversitee,  
And to the sergeant mekely she sayde,  
'Have heer agayn youre litel yongè  
mayde ;

Gooth now,' quod she, 'and dooth my  
lordès heeste ;

But o thying wol I prey yow of youre grace,  
That, but my lord forbad yow, attè leeste  
Burieth this litel body in som place <sup>571</sup>  
That beestès, ne no briddès, it to-race' ;  
But he no word wol to that purpos seye,  
But took the child and wente upon his  
weye.

This sergeant cam unto his lord ageyn,  
And of Grisildis wordès and hire cheere  
He tolde hym point for point, in short  
and pleyn,

And hym presenteth with his doghter  
deere.

Somwhat this lord hath routhe in his  
manere,

But nathelees his purpos heeld he stille, <sup>580</sup>

<sup>554-560.</sup> Chaucer's addition, though Petrarch  
mentions the signing with the cross.

<sup>567.</sup> This pretty line is Chaucer's addition.

As lordès doon whan they wol han hir  
wille ;

And bad his sergeant that he pryvely  
Sholdè this child ful softè wynde and  
wrappe

With allè circumstances, tendrely,  
And carie it in a cofre, or in a lappe ;  
But, upon peyne his heed of for to swappe,  
That no man sholdè knowe of his entente,  
Ne whenne he cam, ne whider that he  
wente ;

But at Boloigné to his suster deere,  
That thilkè tyme of Panik was countesse,  
He sholde it take, and shewe hire this  
mateere, <sup>591</sup>

Bisekyngge hire to doon hire bisynesse  
This child to fostre in allè gentillesse ;  
And whos child that it was he bad hir hyde  
From every wight for oght that may bityde.

The sergeant gooth, and hath fulfild  
this thying ;

But to this markys now retournè we,  
For now gooth he ful faste ymaginyng  
If by his wyvès cheere he myghtè se,  
Or by hire word aperceyvè, that she <sup>601</sup>  
Were chaungèd ; but he never hire koud  
fynde

But ever in oon ylikè sad and kynde,

As glad, as humble, as bisy in servyse,  
And eek in love, as she was wont to be  
Was she to hym in every maner wyse ;  
Ne of hire doghter noght a word spak she  
Noon accident for noon adversitee  
Was seyn in hire, ne never hir doghte  
name

Ne nempnèd she, in ernest nor in game

## PART IV

In this estaat ther passèd been foure yee  
Er she with childè was ; but, as God wolde

<sup>581.</sup> Chaucer's comment.

<sup>589.</sup> *Boloigne*, Bologna.

<sup>590.</sup> *Panik*, E<sup>5</sup> *Pavik*, *Pavie* ; 'Comiti o  
Panico' in Petrarch.

<sup>607-609.</sup> An unhappy translation of Petrarch  
'nunquam siue ex proposito siue incidenter nomen  
eius ex ore matris auditum.'

A knavé child she bar by this Walter,  
 Ful gracious and fair for to biholde ;  
 And whan that folk it to his fader tolde,  
 Nat oonly he, but al his contree, merye  
 Was for this child, and God they thanke  
 and herye.

Whan it was two yeer old, and fro the brest  
 Departed of his norice, on a day  
 This markys caughté yet another lest  
 To tempte his wyf yet ofter, if he may. 620  
 O, nedelees was she tempted in assay !  
 But wedded men ne knowé no mesure  
 Whan that they fynde a pacient creature !

'Wyf,' quod this markys, 'ye han  
 herd er this

My peplé sikly berth oure mariage,  
 And namely sith my sone y-boren is,  
 Now is it worse than ever in al oure age.  
 The murmore sleeth myn herte and my  
 corage ;

For to myne érés comth the voys so smerte  
 That it wel ny destroyed hath myn herte.

'Now sey they thus : "Whan Walter  
 is agon 631

Thanne shal the blood of Janicle succede,  
 And been oure lord, for oother have we  
 noon" ;

Swiche wordésseith my peplé, out of drede,  
 Weloughte I of swich murmur taken heede,  
 For certeinly I dredé swich sentence,  
 Though they nat pleyn speke in myn  
 audience.

I woldé lyve in pees, if that I myghte,  
 Wherefore I am disposéd outrély,  
 As I his suster servédé by nyghte, 640  
 Right so thanke I to serve hym privély.  
 This warne I yow, that ye nat sodeynly  
 Out of youreself for no wosholde outreye—  
 Beth pacient, and ther-of I yow preye.'

'I have,' quod she, 'seyd thus, and  
 ever shal,

I wol no thyng, ne nyl no thyng, certayn,  
 But as yow list ; naught greveth me at al

Though that my daughter and my sone  
 be slayn

At youre comandément ; this is to sayn,  
 I have noght had no part of children  
 tweyne, 650

But first siknesse and after wo and peyne.

Ye been oure lord, dooth with youre  
 owene thyng

Right as yow list,—axeth no reed at me,  
 For as I lefte at hoom al my clothyng  
 Whan I first cam to yow, right so, 'quod she,  
 'Lefte I my wyl, and al my libertee,  
 And took youre clothyng ; wherfore I  
 yow preye,

Dooth youre plesauce, I wol youre lust  
 obeye.

And certés, if I haddé prescience  
 Youré wyl to knowe er ye youre lust me  
 tolde, 660

I wolde it doon withouten necligence ;  
 But now I woot youre lust and what ye  
 wolde,

Al youre plesancé ferme and stable I holde ;  
 For wiste I that my deeth wolde do yow ese,  
 Right gladly wolde I dyen, yow to plesé ;

Deeth may noght maké no comparisoun  
 Unto youre love' ; and whan this markyssa  
 The constance of his wyf, he caste adoun  
 His eyén two, and wondreth that she may  
 In paciencé suffre al this array ; 670  
 And forth he goth with drery contenance,  
 But to his herte it was ful greet plesance.

This ugly sergeant, in the samé wyse  
 That he hire doghter caughté, right so he,  
 Or worsé, if men worsé kan devyse,  
 Hath hent hire sone that ful was of beautee.  
 And ever in oon so pacient was she  
 That she no chieré maade of hevynesse,  
 But kiste hir sone, and after gan it blesse ;

Save this : she preydé hym, that, if he  
 myghte, 680

Hir litel sone he wolde in erthé grave,  
 His tendré lymés, delicaat to sighte,

667. *youré*, Corp.<sup>2</sup>*our*, supported by Petrarch's  
 'nec mors ipsa nostro fuerit par amori.'

Fro fowelés and fro beestés for to save ;  
 But she noon answe're of hym myghté have ;  
 He wente his wey, as hym nothyng ne  
     roghte,  
 But to Boloigne he tendrely it broghte.

This markys wondred ever lenger the  
     moore

Upon hir pacience, and if that he  
 Ne haddé soothly knowén ther-bifoore  
 That parfitly hir children lovéd she, <sup>690</sup>  
 He wolde have wend that of som subtiltee,  
 And of malice, or for cruell corage,  
 That she hadde suffréd this with sad visage ;

But wel he knew, that next hymself, certayn  
 She loved hir children best in every wyse.  
 But now of wommen wolde I axen fayn  
 If these assayés myghté nat suffice ?

What koude a sturdy housbonde moore  
     devyse

To preeve hire wyfhod and hir stedefast-  
     nesse, <sup>699</sup>

And he continuyng ever in sturdinesse ?

But ther been folk of swich condicioun  
 That whan they have a certein purpos take,  
 They kan nat stynte of hire entencioun,  
 But, right as they were bounden to that  
     stake,

They wol nat of that firsté purpos slake.  
 Rightso this markys fullliche hath purposed  
 To tempte his wyf as he was first disposed.

He waiteth, if by word or contenance,  
 That she to hym was changéd of corage ;

But never koude he fyndé variance : <sup>710</sup>

She was ay oon in herte and in visage,  
 And ay the forther that she was in age  
 The mooré trewe, if that it were possible,  
 She was to hym in love, and moore penyble ;

For which it seméd thus that of hem two  
 Ther nas but o wyl, for as Walter leste,  
 The samé lust was hire plesance also ;  
 And, God be thankéd, al fil for the beste.  
 She shewéd wel, for no worldly unreste  
 A wyf, as of hirself, no thing ne sholde <sup>720</sup>  
 Wille in effect, but as hir housbonde wolde.

<sup>696.</sup> It is Chaucer who addresses the query to  
*women.*

The sclandre of Walter ofte and wyde  
     spradde,

That of a cruell herte he wikkedly,  
 For he a pouré womman wedded hadde,  
 Hath mordred bothe his children prively.  
 Swich murmure was among hem comunly.  
 No wonder is, for to the peplés ere  
 Ther cam no word but that they mordred  
     were ;

For which, where-as his peplé ther-bifore  
 Hadde loved hym wel, the sclandre of  
     his diffamé <sup>730</sup>

Made hem that they hym hatedé therfore.  
 To been a mordrere is an hateful name,  
 But nathélees, for earnest ne for game,  
 He of his cruell purpos noldé stente ;  
 To tempte his wyf was set al his entente.

Whan that his doghter twelf yeer was  
     of age

He to the court of Rome, in subtil wyse  
 Enforméd of his wyl, sente his message,  
 Comaundyng hem swiche bullés to devyse  
 As to his cruell purpos may suffyse, <sup>740</sup>  
 How that the pope, as for his peplés reste,  
 Bad hym to wedde another, if hym leste.

I seye, he bad they sholdé countrefete  
 The popés bullés, makyng mencioun  
 That he hath leve his firsté wyf to lete,  
 As by the popés dispensacioun,  
 To stynté rancour and dissencioun  
 Bitwixe his peple and hym ; thus seyde  
     the bulle,

The which they han publicéd atté fulle.

The rudé peple, as it no wonder is, <sup>750</sup>  
 Wenden ful wel that it hadde be right so ;  
 But whan these tidynges cam to Grisildis  
 I deemé that hire herté was ful wo ;  
 But she—yliké sad for evermo—  
 Disposéd was, this humble créature  
 The adversitee of Fortune al tendure,

Abidyng ever his lust and his plesance  
 To whom that she was yeven herte and al,  
 As to hire verray worldly suffisance. <sup>759</sup>

<sup>754.</sup> *sad*, constant ; Petrarch's 'inconcussa.'



But, shortly if this storie I tellen shal,  
This markys writen hath in special  
A lettre, in which he sheweth his entente,  
And secreely he to Boloigne it sente.

To the erl of Panyk, which that haddè tho  
Wedded his suster, preyde he specially  
To bryngen hoom agayn his children two  
In honourable estaat al openly ;  
But o thyng he hym preyède outrely,  
That he to no wight, though men wolde  
enquere, 769  
Sholdè nat tellè whos children they were

But seye, the mayden sholde y-wedded be  
Unto the markys of Saluce anon.

And as this erl was preyéd, so dide he ;  
For at day set he on his wey is goon  
Toward Saluce, and lordès many oon  
In riche array, this mayden for to gyde,  
Hir yongè brother ridynge hire bisyde.

Arrayéd was toward hir mariage  
This fresshé maydè ful of gemmès cleere.  
Hir brother, which that seven yeer was  
of age, 780

Arrayéd eek ful fressh in his manere ;  
And thus in greet noblesse and with glad  
cheere,

Toward Saluces shapyngè hir journey,  
Fro day to day they ryden in hir wey.

## PART V

Among al this, after his wikke usage,  
This markys, yet his wyf to temptè moore,  
To the utterestè preeve of hir corage,  
Fully to han experience and loore  
If that she were as stidefast as bifoore, 790  
He on a day, in open audience,  
Ful boistously hath seyde hire this sentence :

' Certès, Grisilde, I hadde ynogh plesance  
To han yow to my wyf for youre goodnessse,  
As for youre trouthe and for youre obeis-  
ance,

764. Panyk, E<sup>5</sup> Pavyk, Pavie.

770. they, E that they.

777. hire bisyde, H<sup>5</sup> by hir syde.

Noght for youre lynage, ne for youre  
richesse :

But now knowe I in verray soothfastnesse  
That in greet lordshipe, if I wel avyse,  
Ther is greet servitude, in sondry wyse.

I may nat doon as every plowman may,—  
My peplè me constreyneth for to take 800  
Another wyf, and crien day by day,  
And eek the popè, rancour for to slake,  
Consenteth it, that dar I undertake ;  
And trewèliche thusmuche I wol yow seye,  
My newè wyf is comynge by the weye.

Bestrong of herte, and voyde anon hir place,  
And thilkè dowere that ye broghten me,  
Taak it agayn, I graunte it of my grace.  
Retourneth to youre fadrès hous, quod he,  
' No man may alwey han prosperitee. 810  
With evene herte I redè yow tendure  
This strook of Fortune or of aventure.'

And she answerde agayn in pacience :  
' My lord,' quod she, ' I woot and wiste  
always

How that bitwixen youre magnificence  
And my povertè no wight kan ne may  
Maken comparisoun, it is no nay ;  
I ne heeld me never digne in no manere  
To be youre wyf, no, ne youre chamberere ;

And in this hous therye me lady maade, 820  
The heighè God take I for my witesse,  
And also wysly he my soulè glaade !  
I never heeld me lady, ne maistresse,  
But humble servant to youre worthynesse,  
And ever shal, whil that my lyf may dure,  
Aboven every worldly créature.

That ye so longe, of youre benignitee,  
Han holden me in honour and nobleye,  
Where as I was noght worthy for to bee,  
That thanke I God, and yow, to whom I  
preye 830

Foryelde it yow ; ther is namoore to seye ;  
Unto my fader gladly wol I wende  
And with hym dwelle unto my lyvès ende.

808. I graunte it of my grace. Petrarch only has 'dotem tuam referens.'

811, 812. Chaucer's expansion of 'æqua mente.'

Ther I was fostréd of a child ful smal,  
 Til I be deed my lyf ther wol I lede,  
 A wydwe clene, in body, herte and al ;  
 For sith I yaf to yow my maydenhede,  
 And am youre trewe wyf, it is no drede,  
 God shildé swich a lordés wyf to take <sup>839</sup>  
 Another man to housbonde or to make ;

And of youre newé wyf God of his grace  
 So graunté yow wele and prosperitee ;  
 For I wol gladly yelden hire my place,  
 In which that I was blisful wont to bee ;  
 For sith it liketh yow, my lord, 'quod shee,  
 'That whilom weren al myn hertés reste,  
 That Ishal goon, I wol goon whan yow leste.

But ther as ye me profré swich dowaire  
 As I first broghte, it is wel in my mynde  
 It were my wrecchéd clothés, no thyng faire,  
 The whiche to me were hard now for to  
 fynde. <sup>851</sup>  
 O goodé God, how gentil and how kynde  
 Ye seméd by youre speche and youre visage  
 The day that makéd was oure mariage !

But sooth is seyde, algate I fynde it trewe,  
 For in effect it preevéd is on me,  
 Love is noht oold as whan that it is newe!  
 But certés, lord, for noon adversitee,  
 To dyén in the cas, it shal nat bee <sup>859</sup>  
 That ever in word or werk I shal repente  
 That I yow yaf myn herte in hool entente.

My lord, ye woot that in my fadrés place  
 Ye dide me streepe out of my pouré weede,  
 And richely me cladden of youre grace.  
 To yow broghte I noht ellés, out of drede,  
 But feithand nakednesse and maydenhede ;  
 And heere agayn my clothyng I restoore,  
 And eek my wedding ryng, for evermore.

The remenant of youre juelles redy be <sup>869</sup>  
 In-with youre chambré, dar I saufly sayn.  
 Naked out of my fadrés hous, 'quod she,  
 'I cam and naked moot I turne agayn ;  
 Al youre plesancé wol I folwen fayn ;

<sup>836-840.</sup> Expanded from Petrarch's 'Felix semper et honorabilis vidua, quæ viri talis uxor fuerim.'

<sup>853-860.</sup> Chaucer's addition.

<sup>866.</sup> nakednesse, H<sup>2</sup> mkenes.

But yet I hope it be nat youre entente  
 That I smoklees out of youre paleys wente.

Ye koude nat doon so dishoneste a thyng,  
 That thilké wombe in which youre children  
 leye

Sholdé biforn the peple, in my walkyng,  
 Be seyn al baré, wherfore I yow preye,  
 Lat me nat lyk a worm go by the weye.  
 Remembre yow, myn owene lord, sodeere,  
 I was youre wyf, though I unworthy weere ;

Wherfore in gerdoun of my maydenhede  
 Which that I broghte, and noht agayn I  
 bere,

As vouchethsauf to yeve me to my meede  
 But swich a smok as I was wont to were,  
 That I ther-with may wrye the wombe of  
 here

That was youre wyf ; and heer take I my  
 levee

Of yow, myn owene lord, lest I yow greve.'

'The smok,' quod he, 'that thou hast on  
 thy bak, <sup>890</sup>

Lat it be stille, and bere it forth with thee.'  
 But wel unnethés thilké word he spak,  
 But wente his wey, for routhe and for pitee.

Biforn the folk hirselven strepeth she,  
 And in her smok, with heed and foot al  
 bare,

Toward hir fader hous forth is she fare.

The folk hire folwé wepyng in hir weye,  
 And Fortune ay they cursen as they goon ;  
 But she fro wepyng kepte hire eyén dreye,  
 Ne in this tymé word ne spak she noon.

Hir fader, that this tidynge herde anoon,  
 Curseth the day and tymé that nature  
 Shoope hym to been a lyvés creature ;

For out of doute this oldé pouré man  
 Was ever in suspect of hir mariage ;  
 For ever he deméd, sith that it bigan,  
 That whan the lord fulfild hadde his corage,  
 Hym woldé thynke it were a disparage  
 To his estaat, so lowé for talighte,  
 And voyden hire as soone as ever he  
 myghte. <sup>910</sup>

<sup>888.</sup> and heer, etc., Chaucer's addition.

Agayns his doghter hastiliche goth he,  
 For he by noyse of folk knew hire  
 comynge,  
 And with hire oldé coote, as it myghte be,  
 He covered hire ful sorwefully wepyng; ;  
 But on hire body myghte he it nat bryng,  
 For rudé was the clooth and moore of age  
 By deyés fele than at hire mariage.

Thus with hire fader, for a certeyn space,  
 Dwelleth this flour of wyfly paciencie, 919  
 That neither by hire wordés ne hire face,  
 Biforn the folk, ne eek in hire absence,  
 Ne shewéd she that hire was doon offence;  
 Ne of hire heighe estaat no remembraunce  
 Ne haddé she, as by hire contenaunce.

No wonder is, for in hire grete estaat,  
 Hire goost was ever in pleyn humylitee;  
 No tendré mouth, noon herté delicaat,  
 No pompé, no semblant of roialtee;  
 But ful of pacient benyngnytee,  
 Discreet and pridélees, ay honourable, 930  
 And to hire housbonde ever meke and  
 stable.

Men speke of Job, and moost for his  
 humblesse,  
 As clerkés, whan hem list, konne wel  
 endite,  
 Namely of men, but as in soothfastnesse,  
 Though clerkés preiséd wommen but a lite,  
 Ther kan no man in humblesse hym  
 acquite  
 As wommen kan, ne kan been half so  
 trewe  
 As wommen been, but it be falle of newe.

## PART VI

Fro Boloigne is this erl of Panykcome,  
 Of which the fame up sprang to moore  
 and lesse, 940  
 And to the peplés erés, alle and some,  
 Was kouth eek that a newé markysesse

915-917. Chaucer's perverse expansion of  
*attritam senio.*

932-938. Chaucer's addition, in apparent forget-  
 tfulness that it is a Clerk who is speaking.

He with hym broghte, in swich pompe  
 and richesse,  
 That never was ther seyn with mannés eye  
 So noble array in al West Lumbardy.

The markys, which that shoope and  
 knew al this,  
 Er that this erl was come, sente his message  
 For thilké sely, pouré Grisildis;  
 And she with humblé herte and glad visage,  
 Nat with no swollen thoght in hire corage,  
 Cam at his heste, and on hire knees hire  
 sette, 951  
 And reverently and wisely she hym grette.

'Grisilde,' quod he, 'my wyl is, outrely,  
 This mayden, that shal wedded been to me,  
 Receivéd be to-morwe as roially  
 As it possible is in myn hous to be,  
 And eek that every wight in his degree  
 Have his estaat in sittynge and servyse  
 And heigh plesaunce as I kan best devyse.

I have no wommen suffisaunt, certayn, 960  
 The chambrés for tarraye in ordinaunce  
 After my lust, and therfore wolde I fayn  
 That thyn were al swich manere govern-  
 aunce;  
 Thou knowest eek of old al my plesaunce;  
 Thogh thyn array be badde and yvel biseye,  
 Do thou thy devoir at the leesté weye.'

'Nat oonly, lord, that I am glad,' quod  
 she,  
 'To doon youre lust, but I desire also  
 Yow for to serve and plesse in my degree  
 Withouten feyntynge, and shal evermo;  
 Ne never for no welé, ne no wo, 971  
 Ne shal the goost withinne myn herté  
 stente  
 To love yow best, with al my trewe  
 entente.'

And with that word she gan the hous to  
 dighte,  
 And tables for to sette and beddés make,  
 And peynéd hire to doon al that she  
 myghte,  
 Preyngge the chambrérés for Goddés sake

To hasten hem, and faste swepe and shake ;  
And she the moostè servysable of alle  
Hath every chambre arrayed and his halle.

Abouten undern gan this erl alighte 981  
That with him broghte thise noble children  
tweye,  
For which the peplè ran to seen the sighte  
Of hire array, so richely biseye ;  
And thanne at erst amongès hem theyseye,  
That Walter was no fool, thogh that hym  
leste  
To chaunge his wyf, for it was for the  
beste ;

For she is fairer, as they deemen alle,  
Than is Grisilde, and moorè tendre of age,  
And fairer fruyt bitwene hem sholdè falle,  
And moorè plesant, for hire heigh lynage ;  
Hir brother eek so faire was of visage  
That hem to seen the peple hath caught  
plesaunce,  
Commendynge now the markys govern-  
aunce.—

*Auctor.* 'O stormy peple ! unsad, and  
ever untrewè !

Ay undiscreet, and chaungynge as a vane,  
Delitynge ever in rumbul that is newe ;  
For lyk the moone ay wexè ye and wane !  
Ay ful of clappyng, deere ynogh a jane !  
Youre doom is fals, youre constance yvele  
preeveth, <sup>1000</sup>  
A ful greet fool is he that on yow leeveth.

Thus seyden saddè folk in that citee  
Whan that the peplè gazèd up and down,—  
For they were glad, right for the noveltee,  
To han a newè lady of hir toun.  
Namoore of this make I now mencioun,  
But to Grisilde agayn wol I me dresse,  
And telle hir constance and hir bisynesse.—

Ful bisy was Grisilde in every thyng  
That to the feestè was apertinent ; <sup>1010</sup>  
Right noght was she abayst of hire clothyng,

993. *the peple.* Petrarch merely says 'erantque  
qui dicerent.' The next two stanzas are Chaucer's  
addition (marked *Auctor* in E<sup>2</sup>), inserted in revis-  
ing the tale.

Thogh it were rude and somdeel eek to-  
rent,  
But with glad cheerè to the gate is went  
With oother folk to greeete the markysesse,  
And after that dooth forth hire bisynesse.

With so glad chiere his gestès she re-  
ceyveth,  
And konnyngly, everich in his degree,  
That no default no man aperceyveth,  
But ay they wondren what she myghtè bee  
That in so poure array was for to see, <sup>1020</sup>  
And koudè swich honouèr and reverence,  
And worthily they preisen hire prudence.

In al this meenè-while she ne stente  
This mayde, and eek hir brother, to com-  
mende  
With al hir herte, in ful benyngne entente,  
Sowel that no man koude hir pris amende ;  
But attè laste whan that thise lordès wende  
To sitten down to mete, he gan to calle  
Grisilde, as she was bisy in his halle.

'Grisilde,' quod he, as it were in his pley,  
'How liketh thee my wyf, and hire beautee ?'  
'Right wel,' quod she, 'my lord, for in  
good fey  
A fairer saugh I never noon than she ;  
I prey to God yeve hire prosperitee ;  
And so hope I that he wol to yow sende  
Plesance ynogh unto youre lyvès ende.

O thyng biseke I yow, and warne also,  
That ye ne prikkè with no tormentynge  
This tendrè mayden, as ye han doon mo ;  
For she is fostrèd in hire norissynge <sup>1040</sup>  
Moore tendrely, and, to my supposynge,  
She koudè nat adversitee endure  
As koude a pourè fostrèd creature.'

And whan this Walter saugh hire pacience,  
Hir gladè chiere, and no malice at al,  
And he so ofte had doon to hire offence  
And she ay sad and constant as a wal,  
Continuynge ever hire innocence overal,

1039. *mo, more, others* ; cp. Petrarch 'ne han-  
illis aculeis agites, quibus alteram agitasti.  
Even now she will not say 'me.'

This sturdy markys gan his hertè dresse  
To rewen upon hire wyfly stedfastnesse.

'This is ynogh, Grisildè myn,' quod he,  
'Be now namoore agast, ne yvele apayed ;  
I have thy feith and thy benyngnytee,  
As wel as ever womman was, assayed,  
In greet estaat and pouréliche arrayed.  
Now knowe I, goodè wyf, thy stedfast-  
nesse' ;

And hire in armès took, and gan hire kesse.

And she for wonder took of it no keepe,  
She herdè nat what thyng he to hire seyde,  
She ferde, as she had stert out of a sleepe,  
Til she out of hire mazèdnisse abreyde. 1061  
'Grisilde,' quod he, 'by God that for us  
deyde,

Thou art my wyf, ne noon oother I have,  
Ne never hadde, as God my soulè save !

This is thy doghter, which thou hast  
supposed

To be my wyf,—that oother feithfully  
Shal be myn heir, as I have ay purposed ;  
Thou bare hym in thy body trewély ;  
At Boloigne have I kept hem prively.  
Taak hem agayn, for now maystow nat seye  
That thou hast lorn noon of thy children  
tweye ; 1071

And folk that ootherweys han seyde of me,  
I warne hem wel that I have doon this deede  
For no malice, ne for no crueltee,  
But for tassaye in thee thy wommanheede,  
And nat to sleen my children, God forbeede !  
But for to kepe hem pryvely and stille  
Til I thy purpos knewe and al thy wille.'

Whan she this herde, aswownè doun she  
falleth 1079

For pitous joye, and after hire swownynge  
She bothe hire yongè children to hire  
calleth,

And in hire armès, pitously wepynge,  
Embraceth hem, and tendrély kissynge,  
Ful lyk a mooder, with hire saltè teeres  
She bathèd bothe hire visage and hire  
heeres.

1056. *goode*, H<sup>6</sup> *dere*.

1084. *Ful lyk a mooder*, Chaucer's phrase.

O which a pitous thyng it was to se  
Hir swownyng, and hire humble voys to  
heere !

'*Graunt mercy*, lord ! that thanke I yow,'  
quod she,

'That ye han savèd me my children deere.  
Now rekke I never to been deed right  
heere, 1090

Sith I stonde in youre love and in youre  
grace.

No fors of deeth, ne whan my spirit pace !

O tendre, O deere, O yongè children myne !

Youre woful mooder wendè stedfastly  
That cruell houndès, or som foul vermyne,

Hadde eten yow ; but God, of his mercy,  
And youre benyngnè fader, tendrély

Hath doon yow kept'—and in that samè  
stounde

Al sodeynly she swapte adoun to grounde ;

And in hire swough so sadly holdeth she  
Hire children two, whan she gan hem  
tembrace,

That with greet sleighte, and greet  
difficultee

The children from hire arm they goone  
arace.

O many a teere on many a pitous face  
Doun ran, of hem that stooden hire bisyde ;  
Unnethe abouten hire myghte they abyde !

Walter hire gladeth, and hire sorwè slaketh ;  
She riseth up, abaysèd, from hire traunce,  
And every wight hire joye and feestè  
maketh, 1109

Til she hath caught agayn hire contaunce.  
Walter hire dooth so feithfully plesaunce  
That it was deyntee for to seen the cheere  
Bitwix hem two, now they been met yfeere.

Thise ladyes, whan that they hir tymésaye,  
Han taken hire and into chambrè gon,  
And strepen hire out of hire rude array,  
And in a clooth of gold that brightè shoon,  
With a coroune of many a richè stoon

1086-1113. Chaucer's addition.

1088. *that thanke I yow*, H<sup>6</sup> *God thank it*  
(*thanke*) *you*, *God I thank it* (*thank*) *you*.

Upon hire heed, they into halle hire  
broghte, 1119  
And ther she was honúred as hire oghte.

Thus bath this pitous day a blisful ende,  
For every man and womman dooth his  
myght

This day in murthe and revel to dispende,  
Til on the welkné shoon the sterrés lyght;  
For more solempne in every mannés syght  
This festé was, and gretter of costage,  
Than was the revel of hire mariage.

Ful many a yeer in heigh prosperitee  
Lyven thise two in concord and in reste,  
And richèly his doghter maryed he 1130  
Unto a lord, oon of the worthieste  
Of al Ytaille; and thanne in pees and reste,  
His wyvès fader in his court he kepeth,  
Til that the soule out of his body crepeth.

His sone succedeth in his heritage  
In reste and pees after his fader day,  
And fortunat was eek in mariage;  
Al putte he nat his wyf in gret assay.  
This world is nat so strong, it is no nay,  
As it hath been of oldè tymès yooore; 1140  
And herkneth what this auctour seith  
therfoore.

This storie is seyde, nat for that wyvès  
sholde  
Folwen Grisilde as in humylitee,  
For it were inportáble, though they  
wolde,—  
But for that every wight in his degree  
Sholdè be constant in adversitee  
As was Grisildé, therfore Petrak writeth  
This storie, which with heigh stile he  
enditeth;

For sith a womman was so pacient 1149  
Unto a mortal man, wel moore us oghte  
Receyven al in gree that God us sent,  
For greet skile is he preevè that he wroghte.

1124. *lyght*, H<sup>4</sup> *bright*.

1140. *of*, H<sup>6</sup> *in*.

1141. *this auctour*, Petrarch, who added the moralizing of the next three stanzas to Boccaccio's tale.

But he ne tempteth no man that he boghte,  
As seith Seint Jame, if ye his pistel rede.  
He preeveth folk al day, it is no drede,

And suffreth us, as for oure exercise,  
With sharpé scourges of adversitee  
Ful oftè to be bete in sondry wise,  
Nat for to know oure wyl, for certès he,  
Er we were born, knew al oure frelètee;  
And for oure beste is al his governaunce;  
Lat us thanne lyve in vertuous suffraunce.

But o word, lordynges, herkneth, er I go:  
It were ful hard to fyndè now-a-dayes  
In al a toun Grisildis thre or two;  
For if that they were put to swiche assayes,  
The gold of hem hath now so badde alayes  
With bras, that thogh the coyne be fair at eye  
It woldè rather breste a-two than plye;

For which heere, for the Wyvès love of  
Bathe,— 1170  
Whos lyf and al hire sectè God mayntene  
In heigh maistrise, and ellès were it scathe,—  
I wol with lusty hertè, fressh and grene,  
Seyn yow a song, to gládè yow, I wene;  
And lat us stynte of Ernestful matere:  
Herkneth my song that seith in this manere.

#### *Leuoy de Chaucer*

Grisilde is deed, and eek hire pacience,  
And bothe atonès buryed in Ytaille;  
For which I crie in open audience,  
No wedded man so hardy be tassaille 1180  
His wyvès pacience in hope to fynde  
Grisildis, for in certein he shal faille!

O noble wyvès, ful of heigh prudence,  
Lat noon humylitee youre tongè naille,  
Ne lat no clerk have cause or diligence  
To write of yow a storie of swich mervaille  
As of Grisildis pacient and kynde,  
Lest *Chichivache* yow swelwe in hire  
entraille!

1163. *But or word*. What follows is all Chaucer's. Its unsuitableness to the Clerk has often been noticed.

1188. *Chichivache*, the lean cow who fed on patient wives, while her mate Bycorne grew fat on humble husbands. A corruption of *chichefache*, lean-faced.

Folweth Ekko, that holdeth no silence,  
But ever answereth at the countretaille.  
Beth nat bidaffèd for youre innocence, <sup>1191</sup>  
But sharply taak on yow the governaille.  
Emprenteth wel this lessoun in youre mynde  
For commune profit sith it may availle.

Ye archiwyvès stondeh at defense,  
Syn ye be strong as is a greet camaille,  
Ne suffreth nat that men yowdoon offense;  
And sklendré wyvès, fieble, as in bataille,  
Beth egre as is a tygré yond in Ynde; <sup>1199</sup>  
Ay clappeth as a mille, I yow consaille;

Ne dreed hem nat, doth hem no reverence,  
For though thyn housbonde arméd be in  
maille,

The arwès of thy crabbéd eloquence  
Shal perce his brest, and eek his aventaille.  
In jalousie I rede eek thou hym bynde,  
And thou shalt make hym couche as  
dooth a quaille.

If thou be fair, ther folk been in presence  
Shewe thou thy visage and thyn apparaille;  
If thou be foul, be fre of thy dispence, <sup>1209</sup>  
To gete thee freendès ay do thy travaille;  
Be ay of chiere, as light as leef on lynde,  
And lat hym care and wepe, and wryng  
and waille!

### *The Prologe of the Marchantes Tale*

'Wepying and waylyng, care and oother  
sorwe

I knowe ynogh, on even and a-morwe,  
Quod the Marchant, 'and sodoon othere mo  
That wedded been, I trowe that it be so;  
For wel I woot it fareth so with me.  
I have a wyf, the worstè that may be,  
For thogh the feend to hire y-coupled were,  
She wolde hym overmacche, I dar wel  
swere. <sup>1220</sup>

What sholde I yow reherce in special  
fir hye malice? She is a shrewe at al.  
Ther is a long and largè difference  
Bitwix Grisildis grete pacience,  
and of my wyf the passyng crueltee.  
Were I unbounden, al so moot I thee!

I woldè never eft comen in the snare.  
We wedded men lyven in sorwe and care.  
Assayè who so wole and he shal fynde <sup>1229</sup>  
I seyè sooth, by Seint Thomas of Ynde!  
As for the moorè part, I sey nat alle;  
God shildè that it sholdè so bifalle!

'A! good sire Hoost! I have y-  
wedded bee

Thise monthès two, and moorè nat, *pardee!*  
And yet, I trowè, he that al his lyve  
Wyflees hath been, though that men wolde  
him ryve

Unto the herte, ne koude in no manere  
Tellen so muchel sorwe as I now heere  
Koude tellen of my wyvès cursednesse!

'Now,' quod our Hoost, 'Marchant,  
so God yow blesse! <sup>1240</sup>

Syn ye so muchel knowen of that art,  
Ful hertely I pray yow telle us part.'

'Gladly,' quod he, 'but of myn owenè  
socre,

For soory herte, I tellè may namoore.'

## MERCHANT'S TALE

### *Heere bigynneth The Marchantes Tale.*

Whilom ther was dwellynge in Lum-  
bardye

A worthy knyght that born was of Pavye,  
In which he lyved in greet prosperitee;  
And sixty yeer a wyflees man was hee,  
And folwed ay his bodily delyt  
On women ther as was his appetyt, <sup>1250</sup>  
As doon thise foolès that been seculer;  
And whan that he was passéd sixty yeer,  
Were it for hoolynesse or for dotage  
I kan nat seye, but swich a greet corage  
Haddè this knyght to been a wedded man  
That day and nyght he dooth al that he  
kan

Tespien where he myghtè wedded be;  
Preyinge oure Lord to granten him that he

*The Marchantes Tale.* The Pear-tree incident  
in this story is the subject of the ninth novel of  
the seventh day in Boccaccio's *Decamerone*, and  
is found also in a collection of Latin fables by one  
Adolphus, written in 1315, and elsewhere. It has  
probably an Eastern origin.

<sup>1248.</sup> *sixty*, H<sup>2</sup> *fourty*; so H in 1252.

Mighte onés knowe of thilké blisful lyf <sup>1259</sup>  
That is bitwixe an housbonde and his wyf,  
And for to lyve under that hooly bond  
With which that first God man and  
womman bond.

'Noon oother lyf,' seyde he, 'is worth a  
bene,

For wedlok is so esy, and so clene,  
That in this world it is a paradys';  
Thus seyde this oldé knyght, that was so  
wys.

And certainly, as sooth as God is kyng,  
To take a wyf it is a glorious thyng,  
And namely whana man is oold and hoor,—  
Thanne is a wyf the fruyt of his tresor,—  
Thannesholde he take a yong wyf and a feir,  
On which he myghte engendren hym an  
heir,

And lede his lyf in joye and in solas;  
Where as thise bacheléris syngé, 'Allas!'  
Whan that they fynden any adversitee  
In love, which nys but childyssh vanytee;  
And trewely it sit wel to be so

That bacheléris have often peyne and wo;  
On brotel ground they buylde, and brotel-  
nesse <sup>1279</sup>

They fyndé whan they wené sikernesse.  
They lyve but as a bryd, or as a beest,  
In libertee and under noon arreeat,  
Ther as a wedded man, in his estaat,  
Lyveth a lyf blisful and ordinaat,  
Under this yok of mariage y-bounde.  
Wel may his herte in joye and blisse ha-  
bounde,

For who can be so buxom as a wyf?  
Who is so trewe and eek so ententyf  
To kepe hym, syk and hool, as is his make?  
For wele or wo she wole hym nat forsake;  
She nys nat wery hym to love and serve,  
Thogh that he lye bedredé til he sterve.

And yet somme clerkésseyen it nys nat so,  
Of whiche he, Theofraste, is oon of tho.  
What force though Theofrasté listé lye?  
'Ne take no wyf,' quod he, 'for hous-  
bondrye,

As for to spare in houshold thy dispence;  
A trewé servant dooth moore diligence

<sup>1273.</sup> *joye, H mirthe.*

<sup>1294.</sup> *Theofraste.* See Wife of Bath's Tale, ll.  
<sup>235, 671.</sup>

Thy good to kepé, than thyn owené wyf,  
For she wol claymè half part al hir lyf; <sup>1300</sup>  
And if that thou be syk, so God me save!  
Thy verray freendés, or a trewé knave,  
Wol kepe thee bet than she, that waiteth ay  
After thy good, and hath doon many a day;  
And if thou take a wyf unto thyn hoold,  
Ful lightly maystow been a cokéwold.'  
This sentence, and an hundred thyngés  
worse,

Writeth this man, ther God his bonés corse!  
But take no kepe of al swich vanytee;  
Deffié Theofraste and herké me. <sup>1310</sup>

A wyf is Goddés yifté verraily;  
Alle othere manere yiftés hardily,  
As londés, rentés, pasture, or commune,  
Or moeblés, alle been yiftés of Fortune,  
That passen as a shadwe upon a wal;  
But dredélees, if pleynly speke I shal,  
A wyf wol laste and in thyn hous endure,  
Wel lenger than thee list, paraventure.

Mariage is a ful greet sacrament;  
He which that hath no wyf I holde hym  
shent; <sup>1320</sup>

He lyveth helples and al desolat,—  
I speke of folk in seculer estaat;  
And herké why, I sey nat this for nocht,  
That womman is for mannés helpe y-  
wroght.

The hyé God whan he hadde Adam maked,  
And saugh him al alloné, bely naked,  
God of his greté goodnesse seyde than,  
'Lat us now make an helpe unto this man,  
Lyk to hymself'; and thanne he made  
him Eve. <sup>1329</sup>

Heere may yese, and heerby may ye preve,  
That wyf is mannés helpe and his confort,  
His Paradys terrestre, and his disport;  
So buxom and so vertuou is she,  
They mosté nedés lyve in unitee.

O flessch they been, and o flessch, as I gesse,  
Hath but oon herte in wele and in distresse.

A wyf! a! Seinté Marie, *benedicite*,  
How myghte a man han any adversitee  
That hath a wyf? Certés, I kan nat seye.  
The blissé which that is bitwixe hem  
tweye <sup>1340</sup>

Ther may no tongé telle or herté thynke.  
If he be poure she helpeth hym to swynke,

<sup>1316.</sup> *dredelees, H<sup>8</sup> drede not.*



She kepeth his good and wasteth never  
a deel ;

Al that hire housbonde lust hire liketh  
weel ;

She seith not onés, 'nay,' whan he  
seith, 'ye.'

'Do this,' seith he ; 'Al redy, sire,' seith  
she.

O blisful ordre of wedlok precious !

Thou art so murye, and eek so vertuuous,  
And so commended and approvéd eek,  
That every man that halt hym worth a  
leek, 1350

Upon his baré knees, oughte, al his lyf,  
Thanken his God that hym hath sent a  
wyf ;

Or ellés preye to God hym for to sende  
A wyf, to laste unto his lyvés ende ;  
For thanne his lyf is set in sikernesse ;  
He may nat be deceyvéd, as I gesse,  
So that he werke after his wyvés reede.  
Thanne may he boldely kepen up his heed,  
They been so trewe, and therwithal so  
wyse ;

For which, if thou wolt werken as the  
wyse, 1360

Do alwey so as wommen wol thee reede.  
Lo, how that Jacob, as thise clerkés  
rede,

By good conseil of his mooder Rebekke,  
Boondé the kydés skyn aboute his nekke,  
Thurgh which his fadrés benysoun he  
wan.

Lo Judith, as the storie tellé kan,  
By wys conseil she Goddés peple kepte,  
And slow hym Olofernus, whil he slepte.

Lo Abigayl, by good conseil how she  
javéd hir housbonde, Nabal, whan that he  
sholde han be slayn ; and looke Ester  
also, 1371

By good conseil delyvered out of wo  
the peple of God, and made hym Mar-  
dochee

Of Assuere enhauncéd for to be.

Ther nys no thyng in gree superlatyf,  
as seith Senec, above an humble wyf.

1366. *storie*, E<sup>4</sup> *storie eek*.

1375. Glossed in E and Heng. ; 'Seneca : Sicut  
nichil est superius (om. E) benigna conjuge, ita  
hil crudelius est infesta muliere.'

Suffre thy wyvés tonge, as Catoun bit,  
Sheshal comande, and thou shalt suffren it,  
And yet she wole obeye of curteisye ;

A wyf is kepere of thyn housbondryc. 1380  
Wel may the siké man biwaille and wepe,  
Ther as ther nys no wyf the hous to kepe.  
I warné thee if wisely thou wolt wirche,  
Love wel thy wyf, as Crist lovéd his  
chirche.

If thou lovest thyself thou lovest thy wyf.  
No man hateth his flessch, but in his lyf  
He fostreth it, and therfore bidde I thee  
Cherisse thy wyf, or thou shalt never  
thee.

Housbonde and wyf, what so men jape  
or pleye,

Of worldly folk holden the siker weye ; 1390  
They been so knyht ther may noon harm  
bityde,

And namély upon the wyvés syde ;  
For which this Januarie, of whom I tolde,  
Considered hath, inwith his dayés olde,  
The lusty lyf, the vertuuous quyetee,  
That is in mariágé hony sweetee ;  
And for his freendés on a day he sente,  
To tellen hem theffect of his entente.

With facé sad his tale he hath hem  
toold. 1399

He seyde, 'Freendés, I am hoor and oold,  
And almost, God woot, on my pittés  
brynke ;

Upon the soulé somewhat moste I thynke.  
I have my body folily despended ;  
Blesséd be God ! that it shal been  
amended,

For I wol be certeyn a wedded man,  
And that anon, in al the haste I kan.  
Unto som maydè, fair and tendre of age,  
I prey yow shapeth for my mariage  
Al sodeynly, for I wol nat abyde ;  
And I wol fonde tesprien on my syde 1410  
To whom I may be wedded hastily ;  
But for as muche as ye been mo than I,  
Ye shullen rather swich a thyng espyen  
Than I, and where me best were to allyen.

1377. Glossed, 'Cato : Uxoris linguam, si  
frugi est, ferre memento.'

1387. *bidde*, H *warné*.

1390. *siker*, H *righte*.

1408. *shapeth*, H *helpith*.

But o thyng warne I yow, my freendés  
deere,

I wol noon oold wyf han in no manere.  
She shal nat passé twenty yeer certayn,  
Oold fissh and yongé flessch wolde I  
have fayn.

Bet is, quod he, 'a pyk than a pykerel,  
And bet than olde boef is the tendré veel.

I wol no womman thritty yeer of age,—  
It is but benéstraw and greet forage;  
And eek these oldé wydwés, God it woot,  
They konne so muchel craft on Wadés  
boot,

So muchel broken harm, whan that hem  
leste,

That with hem sholde I never lyve in  
reste;

For sondry scolés maken sotile clerkis.  
Womman of manye scolés half a clerk is;  
But certeynly a yonge thyng may men gye,  
Right as men may warm wex with handés  
plye.

Wherefore I sey yow pleynly in a clause,  
I wol noon oold wyf han right for this  
cause;

For if so were that I hadde swich mys-  
chance

That I in hire ne koude han no plesaunce,  
Thanne sholde I lede my lyf in avoutrye,  
And go streight to the devel, whan I dye;  
Ne children sholde I none upon hire  
geten;

Yet were me levere houndés had me eten,  
Than that myn heritagé sholde falle  
In straungé hand, and this I telle yow alle.  
I doté nat; I woot the causé why <sup>1441</sup>  
Men sholdé wedde, and forthermoore  
woot I

Ther speketh many a man of mariage,  
That woot namoore of it than woot my  
page,

For whiché causés man sholde take a wyf.  
Siththé he may nat lyven chaast his lyf,  
Take hym a wyf with greet devocioun,

1417. *twenty*, H<sup>4</sup> *sixtene*.

1418. *fayn*, H<sup>4</sup> *ful fayn*, Pet. *certayn*.

1421. *thritly*, H<sup>3</sup> *twenty*.

1424. *on Wades boot*. The legend of Wade and his adventures in his boat Guingelot has perished.

1446. H<sup>4</sup> *If he ne* (om. Corp.<sup>3</sup>) *may not chast be by his life*.

By cause of leveful procreacioun  
Of children, to thonour of God above,  
And nat oonly for paramour or love; <sup>1450</sup>  
And for they sholdé leccherye eschue,  
And yelde hir dettés whan that they  
ben due;

Or for that ech of hem sholde helpen  
oother

In meschief, as a suster shal the brother,  
And lyve in chastitee ful holly;  
But, sirés, by youre leve, that am nat I,  
For, God be thanked, I dar make avaunt,  
I feele my lymés stark and suffisaunt  
To do al that a man bilongeth to; <sup>1459</sup>  
I woot my-selven best what I may do.

Though I be hoor, I fare as dooth a tree  
That blosmeth, er that fruyt y-woxen bee;  
And blosmy tree nys neither drye ne deed.  
I feele me nowhere hoor but on myn heed;  
Myn herte and alle my lymés been as  
grene

As laurer thurgh the yeer is for to sene;  
And syn that ye han herd al myn entente,  
I prey yow to my wyl ye wole assente.'

Diversé men diversély hym tolde  
Of mariagé manye ensamples olde. <sup>1470</sup>  
Somme blaméd it, somme preyséd it  
certeyn,

But atté lasté, shortly for to seyn,  
As al day falleth altercacioun  
Bitwixen freendés in disputisoun,  
Ther fil a stryf bitwixe his bretheren two,  
Of whiche that oon was clepéd Placebo,  
Justinus soothly calléd was that oother.

Placebo seyde, 'O Januarie brother,  
Ful litel nede hadde ye, my lord so deere,  
Conseil to axe of any that is heere, <sup>1480</sup>  
But that ye been so ful of sapience  
That yow ne liketh, for youre heighe  
prudence,

To weyven fro the word of Salomon.  
This word seyde he unto us everychon,  
'Wirk allé thyng by conseil,' thus seyde he,  
'And thanné shaltow nat repenté thee';  
But though that Salomon spak swich  
a word,

Myn owené deeré brother, and my lord,  
So wysly God my soulé brynge at reste,

1455. *holily*, H<sup>4</sup> *hevenly*.

1477. *called*, H<sup>5</sup> *cleped*.

I holde youre owenc conseil is the beste ;  
 For, brother myn, of me taak this motyf,  
 I have now been a court-man al my lyf,  
 And, God it woot, though I unworthy be,  
 I have stonden in ful greet degree  
 Abouten lordés of ful heigh estaat ;  
 Yet hadde I never with noon of hem  
 debaat ;

I never hem contraried trewely.

I woot wel that my lord kan moore  
 than I ;

What that he seith I holde it ferme and  
 stable ; 1499

I seye the same, or ellés thyng semblable.

A ful greet fool is any conseilour,

That serveth any lord of heigh honour,

That dar presume, or ellés thenken it,

That his conseil sholde passe his lordés wit.

Nay, lordés been no foolés, by my fay !

Ye han youreselfen shewéd heer to-day

So heigh sentence, so holly and weel,

That I consente and conferme everydeel

Youre wordes alle, and youre opinioun.

By God, ther nys no man in al this toun,

Ne in Ytaillé, koudé bet han sayd. 1511

Crist halt hym of this conseil wel apayd ;

And trewely it is an heigh corage,

Of any man that stapen is in age,

To take a yong wyf ; by my fader kyn,

Youre herté hangeth on a joly pyn !

Dooth now in this matiere right as yow leste,

For, finally, I holde it for the beste.'

Justinus, that ay stillé sat and herde,

Right in this wise to Placebo answerde: 1520

'Now, brother myn, be pacient I preye,

Synye han seyde, and herkneth what I seye.

'Senek among his othere wordés wyse

Seith that a man oghte hym right wel avyse

To whom he yeveth his lond or his catel ;

And syn I oghte avysé me right wel

To whom I yeve my good away fro me,

Wel muchel moore I oghte avyséd be

To whom I yeve my body for alwey.

warne yow wel, it is no childés pley 1530

To take a wyf withoute avysément.

Men moste enqueré, this is myn assent,

Vher she be wys, or sobre, or dronkélewe,

Or proud, or ellés ootherweys a shrewe,

1495. *heigh*, H<sup>3</sup> *gret*.

1503. *elles*, H<sup>4</sup> *oones*.

A chidestere, or a wastour of thy good,  
 Or riche, or poore, or ellés mannyssh wold.  
 Al be it so that no man fynden shal  
 Noon in this world that trotteth hool in al,  
 Ne man ne beest, which as men koude  
 devyse,

But nathéles it oghte ynough suffise 1540

With any wyf, if so were that she hadde

Mo goodé thewés than hire vices badde ;

And al this axeth leyser for tenquere,—

For, God it woot, I have wept many a teere

Ful pryvely, syn I have had a wyf.

Preyse who-so wole a wedded mannés lyf,

Certein I fynde in it but cost and care,

And observance of allé blisses bare ;

And yet, God woot, my neighébore aboute,

And namely of wommen many a route, 1550

Seyn that I have the moosté stedefast wyf,

And eek the mekeste oon that bereth lyf ;

But I woot best where wryngeth me my sho.

Ye mowe, for me, right as yow liketh do.

Avyseth yow, ye been a man of age,

How that ye entren into mariage,

And namely with a yong wyf and a fair.

By hym that madé water, erthe, and air,

The yongeste man that is in al this route

Is bisy ynough to bryngen it aboute 1560

To han his wyf alloné ; trusteth me,

Ye shul nat plesen hire fully yerés thre,—

This is to seyn, to doon hire ful plesaunce.

A wyf axeth ful many an observaunce.

I prey yow that ye be nat yvele apayd.'

'Wel,' quod this Januarie, 'and hastow  
 sayd ?

Straw for thy Senek, and for thy provérbes !

I counté nat a panyer ful of herbes

Of scolé termés ; wyser men than thow,

As thou hast herd, assenteden right now

To my purpos. Placebo, what sey ye ?'

'I seye it is a curséd man,' quod he,

'That letteth matrimoigné sikerly !'

And with that word they rysen sodeynly,

And been assented fully that he sholde

Be wedded whanne hym list and where

he wolde.

Heigh fantasye and curious bisynesse

Fro day to day gan in the soule impressé

Of Januarie, aboute his mariáge. 1579

Many fair shape and many a fair visage

1548. *observance*, E<sup>6</sup> *observances*.

Ther passeth thurgh his herté nyght by  
nyght,

As whoso tooke a mirour polissed bryght  
And sette it in a commune market-place,  
Thanne sholde he se ful many a figure pace  
By his mirour ; and in the samé wyse  
Gan Januarie inwith his thought devyse  
Of maydens whiche that dwellen hym  
bisyde.

He wisté nat wher that he myghte abyde,  
For, if that oon have beaute in hir face,  
Another stant so in the peples grace 1590  
For hire sadnesse and hire benyngnytee,  
That of the peple grettest voys hath she ;  
And somme were riche, and hadden  
baddé name ;

But nathélees, bitwixe earnest and game,  
He atté laste apoynted hym on oon,  
And leet alle othere from his herté goon,  
And chees hire of his owene auctoritee ;  
For love is blynd al day, and may nat see.  
And whan that he was in his bed y-brought  
He purtreied in his herte and in his thought  
Hir fresshé beautee, and hir agé tendre, 1601  
Hir myddel smal, hire armés longe and  
sklendre,

Hir wisé governaunce, hir gentillesse,  
Hir wommanly berynge, and hire sadnesse.  
And whan that he on hire was condescended  
Hym thoughte his choys myghté nat  
ben amended ;

For whan that he hym self concluded hadde,  
Hym thoughte ech oother mannés wit so  
badde

That impossible it weré to repplye 1609  
Agayn his choys,—this was his fantasye.  
His freendés sente he to, at his instaunce,  
And preyéd hem to doon hym that ples-  
aunce,

That hastily they wolden to hym come ;  
He wolde abregge hir labour, alle and some ;  
Nedeth namoore for hym to go ne ryde,  
He was apoynted ther he wolde abyde.

Placebo cam, and eek his freendés  
soone,

And alderfirst he bad hem alle a boone,  
That noon of hem none argumentés make  
Agayn the purpos which that he hath take,  
Which purpos was plesant to God, seyde he,  
And verray ground of his prosperitee.

Heseydé ther was a mayden in the toun,  
Which that of beautee haddé greet renoun,  
Al were it so she were of smal degree,  
Suffiseth hym hir yowthe, and hir beautee ;  
Which mayde, he seyde, he wolde han  
to his wyf,

To lede in ese and hoolynesse his lyf ;  
And thanked God that he myghte han  
hire al, 1629

Thát no wight his blissé parten shal ;  
And preyéd hem to laboure in this nede  
And shapen that he faillé nat to spede ;  
For thanne he seyde his spirit was at ese.  
' Thanne is,' quod he, ' no-thing may me  
displese,

Save o thyng priketh in my conscience,  
The which I wol reherce in youre presence.

' I have,' quod he, ' herd seyde, ful  
yoore ago,

Ther may no man han parfite blissés two,—  
This is to seye, in erthe and eek in hevене,—  
For though he kepe hym fro the synnés  
sevene, 1640

And eek from every branche of thilké tree,  
Yet is ther so parfite felicitye

And so greet ese and lust in mariáge,  
That ever I am agast now in myn age,  
That I shal ledé now so myrie a lyf,  
So delicat, withouten wo and stryf,  
That I shal have myn hevене in erthé heere ;  
For sith that verray hevене is boght so  
deere,

With tribulacioun and greet penaunce,  
How sholde I thanne, that lyve in wich  
plesaunce 1650

As allé wedded men doon with hire wyvys,  
Come to the blisse ther Crist eterne on  
lyve ys ?

This is my drede, and ye my bretheren  
tweye,

Assolleth me this questioun, I preyé.'

Justinus, which that hated his folye,  
Answerde anon right in his japeryc ;  
And for he wolde his longé tale abregge,  
He woldé noon auctoritee allegge,  
But seyde, ' Sire, so ther be noon obstácle  
Oother than this, God of his hygh myracle,  
And of his mercy, may so for yow wirche  
That er ye have youre right of hooly chirche,  
Ye may repente of wedded mannés lyf,

In which ye seyn ther is no wo ne  
stryf;

And ellès, God forbedè, but he sente  
A wedded man hym gracè to repente  
Wel oftè rather than a sengle man;  
And therefore, sire,—the bestè reed I  
kan,—

Dispeire yow noght, but have in youre  
memorie, 1669

Paraunter she may be youre purgatorie;  
She may be Goddès meene, and Goddès  
whippe!

Thanne shal youre soulè up to hevene  
skippe

Swifter than doothan arwe out of the bowe.  
I hope to God herafter shul ye knowe  
That ther nys no so greet felicitee

In mariage, ne never mo shal bee,  
That yow shal lette of youre savacioun,  
So that ye use, as skile is and resoun,  
The lustès of youre wyf attemprely, 1679  
And that ye plesè hire nat to amorously,  
And that ye kepe yow eek from oother  
synne.

My tale is doon, for my witte is thynne;  
Beth nat agast her-of, my brother deere,  
But lat us waden out of this mateere.

(The Wyf of Bathe, if ye han understonde,  
Of mariagé, which ye have on honde,  
Declared hath ful wel in litel space.)  
Fareth now wel, God have yow in his  
grace.'

And with this word this Justyn and his  
brother

Han take hir leve, and ech of hem of  
oother; 1690

For when they saughe that it moste  
needis be,

They wroughten so, by sly and wys trettee,  
That she, this mayden, which that Mayus  
highte,

As hastily as ever that she myghte,  
hal wedded be unto this Januarie.

And trowe it were to longè yow to tarie,  
I yow tolde of every scrit and bond

Y which that she was fefed in his lond,  
For to herkenen of hir riche array.

And it finally y-comen is the day 1700  
That to the chirché bothè be they went,  
For to receyve the hooly sacrament.

Forth comth the preest, with stole aboute  
his nekke,

And bad hire be lyk Sarra and Rebekke  
In wysdom and in trouthe of mariagé,  
And seyde his orisons as is usagé,  
And croucheth hem and bad God sholde  
hem blesse,

And made al siker ynogh with hoolynesse.  
Thus been they wedded with solemp-  
nitee,

And at the feestè sitteth he and she, 1710  
With othere worthy folk, up on the deys.  
Al ful of joye and blisse is the paleys,  
And ful of instrumentz, and of vitaille  
The mostè deyntéuous of all Ytaille.

Biforn hem stooð swich instrumentz of  
soun

That Orpheus, ne of Thebès Amphioune,  
Ne maden never swich a melodye.

At every cours thanne cam loud  
mynstralcye

That never trompèd Joab for to heere,  
Nor he Theodomas yet half so cleere 1720  
At Thebès, whan the citee was in doute.  
Bacus the wyn hem skynketh al aboute,  
And Venus laugheth upon every wight,  
For Januarie was bicomè hir knyght,  
And woldè bothe assayen his coragé

In libertee, and eek in mariagé;  
And with hire fyrbrond in hire hand aboute  
Daunceth biforn the bryde and al the  
route;

And certainly I dar right wel seyn this  
Ynénéus, that god of weddyng is, 1730  
Saugh never his lyf so myrie a wedded  
man.

Hoold thou thy pees, thou poete Marcian,—  
That writest us that ilké weddyng murie  
Of hire Philologie and hym Mercurie,  
And of the songès that the Muses songe,—  
To smal is bothe thy penne and eek thy  
tonge,

For to descryven of this mariagé,

1722. Cp. *Hous of Fame*, l. 1245, on which Professor Skeat points out that Chaucer takes his mention of Theodamas from Statius, *Thebaid*, viii. 343.

1732. *Marcian*, Martianus Capella, a writer of the 5th century, whose *De Nuptiis Philologiae et Mercurii* was a treatise on the liberal arts in nine books.

Whan tendré youthe hath wedded stoup-  
yng age ;  
Ther is swich myrthe that it may nat be  
writen. 1739

Assayeth it youre self, thanne may yewiten  
If that I lye or noon in this matiere.

Mayus, that sit with so benyngne a chiere,  
Hire to biholde it semed fairye.

Queene Ester looked never with swich  
an eye

On Assuer, so meke a look hath she.  
I may yow nat devyse al hir beautee,  
But thus muche of hire beautee telle I may,  
That she was lyk the brighte morwe of May  
Fulfilde of allé beautee and plesaunce. 1749

This Januarie is ravysshed in a traunce  
At every tyme he lookéd on hir face ;  
But in his herte he gan hire to manace,  
That he that nyght in armés wolde hire  
streyne

Harder than ever Parys dide Eleyne ;  
But nathélees yet hadde he greet pitee  
That thilké nyght offenden hire moste he ;  
And thoughte, ' Allas ! O tendré créature !  
Now worldé God ye myghté wel endure  
Al my corage, it is so sharpe and keene !  
I am agast ye shul it nat susteene ; 1760  
But God forbede that I dide al my myght,  
Now worldé God that it were woxen nyght,  
And that the nyght wolde lasten evermo.  
I wolde that al this peple were ago ! '

And finally he dooth al his labóur,  
As he best myghté, savyngé his honóur,  
To haste hem fro the mete in subtil wyse.

The tymé cam that resoun was to ryse,  
And after that men daunce and drynken  
faste, 1769

And spices al aboute the hous they caste,  
And ful of joye and blisse is every man,—  
All but a squyer highté Damyan,  
Which carf biforn the knyght ful many a  
day.

He was so ravysshed on his lady May  
That for the verray peyne he was ny wood.  
Almoost he swelte and sownéd ther he  
stood,

So soore hath Venus hurt hym with hire  
brond

As that she bar it daunsyngé in hire hond ;  
And to his bed he wente hym hastily.

Namoore of hym as at this tyme speke I,  
But there I lete hym wepe ynogh and  
pleyne 1781

Til fresshé May wol rewen on his peyne.  
O perilous fyr that in the bedstraw  
bredeth !

O famulier foo, that his servyce bedeth !  
O servant traytour, falsé, hoonly hewe,  
Lyk to the naddre in bosom, sly, untrewé,  
God shilde us allé from youre áqueyntance !  
O Januarie, dronken in plesance

In mariáge, se how thy Damyan, 1789  
Thyn owené squier and thy borné man,  
Entendeth for to do thee vileynye !  
God graunté thee thyn hoonly fo tespye,  
For in this world nys worsé pestilence  
Than hoonly foo al day in thy presence !

Parfournéd hath the sonne his ark  
diurne,

No lenger may the body of hym sojurne  
On thorisonte, as in that latitude.  
Night with his mantel, that is derk and rude,  
Gan oversprede the hemysperie aboute,  
For which departed is this lusty route 1800  
Fro Januarie, with thank on every syde.  
Hoom to hir houses lustily they ryde,  
Where-as they doon hir thyngés as hem  
leste,

And, when they sye hir tymé, goon to reste.  
Soone after that, this hastif Januarie  
Wolde go to bedde, he wolde no lenger  
tarye.

He drynketh yprocras, clarree and vernáge,  
Of spices hoote, tencreessen his coráge ;  
And many a letuarie hath he ful fyn  
Swiche as the curséd monk, Daun  
Constantyn, 1810

Hath writen in his book, *De Coitu* ;  
To eten hem alle he nas no thyng eschu ;  
And to his privee freendés thus seyde he :  
' For Goddés love, as soone as it may be,  
Lat voyden al this hous in curteys wyse '  
And they han doon right as he wol devyse.  
Men drynken and the travers drawe anon  
The bryde was broght a-bedde as stille  
as stoon,  
And when the bed was with the prees  
y-blessed,

1810. *Daun Constantyn*, a monk of Mont  
Cassino. Cp. Gen. Prologue, 433.

Out of the chambre hath every wight hym  
dressed ; 1820

And Januarie hath faste in armès take  
His fresshè May, his paradys, his make.  
He lulleth hire, he kisseth hire ful ofte,  
With thikkè brustles of his berd unsofte,  
Lyk to the skyn of houndfyssh, sharpe as  
brere ;

For he was shave al newe in his manere.  
He rubbeth hire aboute hir tendre face  
And seydè thus, 'Allas ! I moot trespace  
To yow, my spouse, and yow greetly  
offende, 1829

Er tymè come that I wil doun descende ;  
But nathèeles, considereth this, 'quod he,  
'Ther nys no werkman, whatsoever he be,  
That may bothe werkè wel and hastily.  
This wol be doon at leyser parfityl,  
It is no fors how longè that we pleye ;  
In trewè wedlok coupled be we tweye,  
And blessed be the yok that we been inne !  
For in oure actès we mowe do no synne.  
A man may do no synnè with his wyf,  
Ne hurte hymselfen with his owene knyf ;  
For we han leve to pleye us, by the lawe.'  
Thus laboureth he til that the day gan dawe,  
And thanne he taketh asope in fyne clarree,  
And upright in his bed thanne sitteth he ;  
And after that he sang ful loude and cleere,  
And kiste his wyf, and madè wantowne  
cheere.

He was al coltish, ful of ragerye,  
And ful of jargon as a flekkèd pye.  
The slakkè skyn aboute his nekkè shaketh  
Whil that he sang, so chaunteth he and  
craketh ; 1850  
But God woot what that May thoughte  
in hire herte  
Whan she hym saugh up-sittyng in his  
sherte,  
In his nyght-cappe, and with his nekkè  
lene !

She preyseth nat his pleyyng worth a bene.  
Thanne seide he thus, 'My restè wol  
I take ;

Now day is come, I may no lenger wake ;  
And doun he leyde his heed and sleepe til  
pryme.

And afterward, whan that he saugh his  
tyme,

Up ryseth Januarie, but fresshè May 1859  
Heeld hirè chambre unto the fourthè day,  
As usage is of wyvès, for the beste ;  
For every labour som tyme moot han reste,  
Or ellès longè may he nat endure ;  
This is to seyn, no lyvès creature,  
Be it of fyssh, or bryd, or beest, or man.

Now wol I speke of woful Damyan,  
That langwisseth for love, as yeshul heere ;  
Therefore I speke to hym in this manere.

I seye, O sely Damyan, allas ! 1869  
Andswere to my demaunde as in this cas.  
How shaltow to thy lady, fresshè May,  
Tellè thy wo ? She wole alwey seye nay.  
Eek if thou speke, she wol thy wo biwreye.  
God be thyn helpe, I kan no bettrè seye.

This sikè Damyan in Venus fryr  
So brenneth, that he dyeth for desyr ;  
For which he putte his lyf in aventure.  
No lenger myghte he in this wise endure,  
But prively a penner gan he borwe, 1879  
And in a lettrè wroot he al his sorwe,—  
In manere of a compleynte or a lay,—  
Unto his fairè, fresshè lady May ;  
And in a purs of sylk, heng on his sherte,  
He hath it put and leyde it at his herte.

The moonè, that at noon was thilkè day  
That Januarie hath wedded fresshè May  
In two of Tawr, was into Cancr glyden,  
So longe hath Mayus in hir chambre byden,  
As custume is unto thise nobles alle.  
A brydè shal nat eten in the halle 1890  
Til dayès foure, or thre dayès attè leeste,  
Y-passèd been ; thanne lat hire go to feeste.  
The fourthè day compleet fro noon to noon,  
Whan that the heighè massè was y-doon,  
In hallè sit this Januarie and May,  
As fressh as is the brightè someres day ;  
And so bifel, how that this goodè man  
Remembred hym upon this Damyan,  
And seydè, 'Seyntè Marie ! how may  
this be

That Damyan entendeth nat to me ? 1900  
Is he ay syk ? or how may this bityde ?'  
His squieres, whiche that stooden ther  
bisyde,

1887. *In two of Tawr.* The moon could pass through Taurus and Gemini into Cancer in four days.

Excuséd hym by cause of his siknesse,  
Which letted hym to doon his bisynesse,—  
Noon oother causé myghté make hym  
tarye.

'That me forthynketh,' quod this  
Januarie,

'He is a gentil squier, by my trouthe !  
If that he deyde, it weré harm and routhe ;  
He is as wys, discreet, and eek secree,  
As any man I woot, of his degree ; 1970  
And therto manly and eek servysable,  
And for to been a thrifty man right able ;  
But after mete, as soone as ever I may,  
I wol myself visite hym, and eek May,  
To doon hym al the confort that I kan ' ;  
And for that word hym blesséd every man,  
That of his bountee and his gentillesse  
He woldé so conforten in siknesse  
His squier, for it was a gentil dede.

'Dame,' quod this Januarie, 'taak good  
hede 1920

At after mete ye with youre wommen alle,  
Whan ye han been in chambre out of  
this halle,

That allé ye go se this Damyan.

Dooth hym disport, he is a gentil man,  
And telleth hym that I wol hym visite,  
Have I no thyng but rested me a lite ;  
And spede yow fasté, for I wole abyde  
Til that ye slepé fasté by my syde ' ;  
And with that word he gan unto hym calle  
A squier, that was marchal of his halle,  
And tolde hym certeyn thyngés, what he  
wolde. 1931

This fresshé May hath streight hir wey  
y-holde,

With alle hir wommen, unto Damyan.  
Doun by his beddés sydé sit she than,  
Confortyngé hym as goodly as she may.  
This Damyan, whan that his tyme he say,  
In secree wise, his purs and eek his bille,  
In which that he y-written hadde his wille,  
Hath put into hire hand, withouten moore,  
Save that he siketh wonder depe and soore,  
And softély to hire right thus seyde he :  
'Mercy ! and that ye nat discovere me,  
For I am deed, if that this thyng be kyd.'  
This purs hath she inwith hir bosom hyd,  
And wente hire wey—ye gete namoore  
of me ;

But unto Januarie y-comen is she  
That on his beddés sydé sit ful softe.  
He taketh hire and kisseth hire ful ofte,  
And leyde hym doun to slepe, and that  
anon. 1949

She feynéd hire as that she mosté gon  
Ther as ye woot that every wight moot  
neede ;

And whan she of this bille hath taken  
heede,

She rente it al to cloutés atté laste,  
And in the pryvee softély it caste.

Who studieth now, but fairé, fresshé  
May ?

Adoun by oldé Januarie she lay,  
That sleep til that the coughe hath hym  
awaked.

Anon he preyde hire strepen hire al naked,  
He wolde of hire, he seyde, han som  
plesauce ;

And seyde hir clothés dide hym encom-  
braunce. 1960

And she obeyeth, be hire lief or looth ;  
But, lest that precious folk be with me  
wrooth,

How that he wroghte I darnat to yow telle,  
Or wheither hire thoughte it paradys or  
helle ;

But heere I lete hem werken in hir wyse,  
Til evensong rong, and than they moste  
aryse.

Were it by destynee or áventure,  
Were it by influence or by nature, 1968  
Or constellacioun, that in swich estaat  
The hevene stood, that tyme fortunaat  
Was, for to putte a bille of Venus werkes  
(For allé thyng hath tyme, as seyn thise  
clerkes)

To any womman for to get hire love,  
I kan nat seye ; but greté God above  
That knoweth that noon act is causélees,  
He deme of al, for I wole holde my pees ;  
But sooth is this, how that this fresshé May  
Hath také swich impressioun that day,  
For pitee of this siké Damyan, 1979  
That from hire herté she ne dryvè kan  
The remembrancé, for to doon hym ese.  
'Certeyn,' thoughte she, 'whom that this  
thyng displese

1966. than, E<sup>5</sup> that.



I rekkè noght, for heere I hym assure  
To love hym best of any creàture,  
Though he namoorè haddè than his sherte.<sup>1</sup>  
Lo, pitee renneeth soone in gentil herte !

Heere may ye se how excellent franchise  
In wommen is, when they hem narweavise.  
Som tyrant is, as ther be many oon, 1989  
That hath an herte as hard as any stoon,  
Which wolde han lat hym storven in the  
place,

Wel rather than han graunted hym hire  
grace ;

And hem rejoysen in hire cruell pryde,  
And rekkè nat to been an homicide.

This gentil May, fulfillèd of pitee,  
Right of hire hand a lettrè madè she,  
In which she graunteth hym hire verray  
grace.

Ther lakketh noght, oonly but day and  
place

Wher that she myghte unto his lust suffice,  
For it shal be right as he wole devyse ; 2000  
And whan she saugh hir tyme, upon a day,  
To visitè this Damyan gooth May,  
And sotilly this lettrè doun she threste  
Under his pilwe, rede it if hym leste !

She taketh hym by the hand and harde  
hym twiste,

So secrèly that no wight of it wiste,  
And bad hym been al hool ; and forth  
she wente

To Januarie, whan that he for hire sente.

Up riseth Damyan the nextè morwe ;  
Al passèd was his siknesse and his sorwe.  
He kembeth hym, he preyneth hym and  
pyketh, 2011

He dooth al that his lady lust and lyketh ;  
And eek to Januarie he gooth as lowe  
As ever didè a doggè for the bowe.

He is so plesant unto every man,—  
For fater is al, whoso that do it kan,—  
That every wight is faynt to speke hym good,  
And fully in his lady grace he stood.  
Thus lete I Damyan aboute his nede,  
And in my talè forth I wol procede. 2020

Somme clerkès holden that felicitee  
Stant in delit, and therefore certeyn he,

2014. *for the bowe*, a dog used in shooting.

2018. *lady*, the possessive case.

2021. *Somme clerkes*. Cp. General Prologue,  
337, 338.

This noble Januarie with al his myght,  
In honeste wyse, as longeth to a knyght,  
Shoope hym to lyvè ful deliciously.  
His housynge, his array, as honestly  
To his degree was makèd as a kynges.  
Amongès othere of his honeste thynges  
He made a gardyn wallèd al with stoon.  
So fair a gardyn woot I nowher noon, 2030  
For out of doute, I verraily suppose  
That he that wroote the Romance of the Rose  
Ne koude of it the beautee wel devyse ;  
Ne Priapus ne myghtè nat suffise,  
Though he be god of gardyns, for to telle  
The beautee of the gardyn, and the welle,  
That stood under a laurer, alwey grene.  
Ful oftè tyme he Pluto, and his queene  
Proserpina, and al hire fairye,  
Disporten hem and maken melodye 2040  
Aboute that welle, and dauncèd as men  
tolde.

This noble knyght, this Januarie the  
olde,

Swich deyntee hath in it to walke and pleye  
That he wol no wight suffren bere the keye,  
Save he hymself, for of the smale wykèt  
He baar alwey of silver a clykèt,  
With which, whan that hym leste, he it  
unshette ;

And whan he woldè paye his wyf hir dette  
In somer sesoun, thider wolde he go,  
And May his wyf, and no wight but  
they two, 2050

And thyngès whiche that were nat doon  
a bedde

He in the gardyn parfourned hem and  
spedde ;

And in this wysè many a murye day  
Lyvèd this Januarie and fressshè May ;  
But worldly joyè may nat alwey dure  
To Januarie, ne to no creàture.

O sodeyn hape ! O thou Fortune instable !  
Lyk to the scorpion so deceyvable  
That flaterest with thyn heed whan thou  
wolt styngè ;

Thy tayl is deeth, thurgh thyn evenym-  
ynge ! 2060

O brotil joye ! O sweetè venym queynte !  
O monstrè, that so subtilly kanst peynte  
Thy yiftès, under hewe of stidefastnesse,

That thou deceyvest bothé moore and lesse,  
 Why hastow Januarie thus deceyved,  
 That haddest hym for thy ful freend  
 receyved?  
 And now thou hast biraft hym bothe his  
 eyen,  
 For sorwe of which desireth he to dyen.

Allas! this noble Januarie free,  
 Amydde his lust and his prosperitee, <sup>2070</sup>  
 Is woxen blynd, and that al sodeynly!  
 He wepeth and he wayleth pitously,  
 And therewithal the fyr of jalousie—  
 Lest that his wyf sholde falle in som folye—  
 So brente his herté, that he woldé fayn  
 That som man bothé hym and hire had  
 slayn;

For neither after his deeth nor in his lyf,  
 Ne wolde he that she weré love ne wyf,  
 But ever lyve as wydwe in clothés blake,  
 Soul as the turtle that lost hath hire make.

But atté laste, after a monthe or tweye,  
 His sorwe gan aswagé, sooth to seye,  
 For whan he wiste it may noon oother be  
 He paciently took his adversitee,  
 Save, out of douté, he may nat forgoon  
 That he nas jalous evermoore in oon.  
 Which jalousye it was so outrageous,  
 That neither in hallé, nyn noon oother hous,  
 Ne in noon oother placé never-the-mo,  
 He noldé suffré hire to ryde or go, <sup>2090</sup>  
 But if that he had hond on hire alway;  
 For which ful ofté wepeth fressshé May,  
 That loveth Damyan so benyngnely  
 That she moot oother dyen sodeynly,  
 Or ellés she moot han hym as hir leste;  
 She wayteth whan hir herté woldé breste.

Upon that oother sydé Damyan  
 Bicomen is the sorwefullesté man  
 That ever was, for neither nyght ne day  
 Ne myghte he speke a word to fressshé May,  
 As to his purpos, of no swich mateere, <sup>2101</sup>  
 But if that Januarie moste it heere,  
 That hadde an hand upon hire evermo;  
 But nathéless, by writyng to and fro,  
 And privee signés, wiste he what she mente,  
 And she knew eek the fyn of his entente.

O Januarie! what myghte it thee availle

2106. *fyn, sum*

Thogh thou myghtest se as fer as shippé  
 saille?

For al-so good is blynd deceyved be <sup>2109</sup>  
 As to be deceyved whan a man may se.

Lo Argus, which that hadde an hondred  
 eyen,

For al that ever he koudé poure or pryen,  
 Yet was he blent, and, God woot, so  
 been mo,

That wenen wisly that it be nat so;  
 'Passe-over is an ese,'—I sey namoore.

This fressshé May, that I spak of so  
 yooere,

In warm wex hath emprented the clykét  
 That Januarie bar of the smale wykét,  
 By which into his gardyn ofte he wente;  
 And Damyan, that knew al hire entente,  
 The cliket countréfeted pryvely. <sup>2121</sup>  
 Ther nys namoore to seye; but hastily  
 Som wonder by this clyket shal bityde,  
 Which ye shul heeren, if ye wole abyde.

O noble Ovyde! ful sooth seystou,  
 God woot,  
 What sleighte is it, thogh it be long and  
 hoot,

That he nyl fynde it out in som manere.  
 By Pirus and Tesbee may men leere,  
 Thogh they were kept ful longe streite  
 overal,

They been accorded, rownyngé thurgh  
 a wal, <sup>2130</sup>

Ther no wight koude han founde out  
 swich a sleighte.

But now to purpos,—er that dayés eighte  
 Were passéd er the monthe of Juyn bifille,  
 That Januarie hath caught so greet a wille,  
 Thurgh eggnyng of his wyf, hym for to pleye  
 In his gardyn, and no wight but they  
 tweye,

That in a morwe unto this May seith he,  
 'Rys up, my wyf, my love, my lady free!  
 The turtle voys is herd, my dowvé sweete,  
 The wynter is goon with alle his reynés  
 weete;

<sup>2133.</sup> *Juyn*, MSS. *Juyll*, but see l. 2222; the  
 mistake may be Chaucer's.

<sup>2138.</sup> January had been reading the *Song of*  
*Solomon*.

Com forth now with thyne eyen columbyn !  
How fairer been thy brestes than is wyn !  
The gardyn is enclosed al aboute ;  
Com forth, my whitè spouse ! out of doute  
Thou hast me wounded in myn herte, O  
wyf !

No spot of thee ne knew I al my lyf ;  
Come forth, and lat us taken som disport ;  
I chees thee for my wyf and my confort !  
Swiche oldè lewèd wordès used he.

On Damyan a signè madè she, 2150  
That he sholde go biforn with his clikét.  
This Damyan thanne hath openèd the  
wykét,

And in he stirte, and that in swich manere  
That no wight myght it se, neither y-heere ;  
And stille he sit under a bussh anon.

This Januarie, as blynd as is a stoon,  
With Mayus in his hand and no wight mo,  
Into his fresshè gardyn is ago,  
And claptè to the wyket sodeynly.

'Now, wyf,' quod he, 'heere nys but  
thou and I, 2160

That art the créature that I best love ;  
For, by that Lord that sit in hevене above,  
Levere ich hadde to dyen on a knyf,  
Than thee offendè, trewè, deerè wyf.  
For Goddès sakè, think how I thee chees  
Noght for no covetisé doutlees,  
But oonly for the love I had to thee ;  
And though that I be oold and may nat  
see,

Beth to me trewe, and I shal telle yow  
why.

Threthyngès, certès, shal ye wynne therby ;  
First, love of Crist, and to yourself honour,  
And al myn heritagè, toun and tour ;  
I yeve it yow ; maketh chartres as yow leste.  
This shal be doon tomorwe er sonnè reste,  
So wisly God my soulè brynge in blisse !  
I prey yow first in covenat ye me kisse,  
And though that I be jalous, wyte me  
noght.

Ye been so depe enprented in my thought,  
That whan that I considere youre beautee,  
And therwithal the unlikly elde of me,  
I may nat, certès, though I sholdè dye,  
Forbere to been out of youre compaignye ;

2144. *white*, H *swete*.

2147. *som*, H<sup>6</sup> *oure*.

For verray love this is, withouten doute.  
Now kys me, wyf, and lat us rome aboute.'

This fresshè May, whan she thise wordès  
herde,

Benyngnèly to Januarie answerde ;  
But first and forward, she bigan to wepe ;  
'I have,' quod she, 'a soulè for to kepe  
As wel as ye, and also myn honour ;  
And of my wyfhod thilkè tendrè flour 2190  
Which that I have assuréd in youre hond,  
Whan that the preest to yow my body  
bond ;

Wherefore I wole answer in this manere,  
By the leve of yow, my lord so deere ;  
I prey to God that never dawe the day  
That I ne sterve, as foule as womman may,  
If ever I do unto my kyn that shame,  
Or ellès I empeyrè so my name,  
That I be fals ; and if I do that lakke,  
Do strepè me, and put me in a sakke, 2200  
And in the nextè ryver do me drenche,—  
I am a gentil womman and no wenche !  
Why speke ye thus ? But men been ever  
untrewe,

And women have repreve of yow ay  
newe.

Ye han noon oother contenance, I leeve,  
But speke to us of untrust and repreeve.'  
And with that word she saugh wher Damyan  
Sat in the bussh, and coughen she bigan,  
And with hir fynger signès madè she  
That Damyan sholde clymbe upon a tree  
That chargèd was with fruyt, and up he  
wente ; 2211

For verrailly he knew al hire entente,  
And every signè that she koudè make  
Wel bet than Januarie, hir owenè make ;  
For in a lettrè she hadde toold hym al  
Of this matèrè, how he werchen shal ;  
And thus I lete hym sitte upon the pyrie,  
And Januarie and May romyngè myrie.

Bright was the day, and blew the firma-  
ment ; 2219

Phebus of gold doun hath his stremès sent  
To gladen every flour with his warmnesse.  
He was that tyme in Geminis, as I gesse,  
But litel fro his declynacioun

2222. The sun would pass from Gemini into  
Cancer about June 11 or 12, attaining at that time  
its greatest northern declination.

Of Cancer, Jovis exaltacioun ;  
 And so bifel, that brighte morwè tyde,  
 That in that gardyn, in the ferther syde,  
 Pluto, that is the kyng of fairye,  
 And many a lady in his compaignye,  
 Folwyng his wyf, the queené Proserpyne,  
 Ech after oother, right as ony lyne,— 2230  
 Whil that she gadered flourés in the mede,  
 In Claudyan ye may the stories rede,  
 How in his grisely carté he hire fette.  
 This kyng of fairye thanne adoun hym  
 sette

Upon a bench of turvés, fressh and grene,  
 And right anon thus seyde he to his queene :  
 ‘ My wyf, ’ quod he, ‘ ther may no wight  
 seye nay,

The xperience so preveth every day  
 The tresons whiche that wommen doon  
 to man. 2239

Ten hondred thousand [tales] tellen I kan  
 Notable of youre untrouthe and brotil-  
 nesse.

O Salomon ! wys, and richest of richesse,  
 Fulfuld of sapiencie and of worldly glorie,  
 Ful worthy been thy wordés to mémorie  
 To every wight that wit and reson kan !  
 Thus preiseth he yet the bountee of man :  
 ‘ Amonges a thousand men yet foond I oon,  
 Bút of wommen allé foond I noon.’

‘ Thus seith the kyng that knoweth youre  
 wikkednesse,

And Jhesus *filius* Syrak, as I gesse, 2250  
 Ne speketh of yow but seeldé reverence.  
 A wyldé fyr and corrupt pestilence,  
 So falle upon youre bodyes yet to-nyght !  
 Ne se ye nat this honorable knyght ?  
 By-cause, allas ! that he is blynd and old  
 His owené man shal make hym cokéwold.  
 Lo, heere he sit, the lechour, in the tree !  
 Now wol I graunten of my magestee  
 Unto this oldé, blyndé, worthy knyght,  
 That he shal have ageyn his eyen syght,  
 Whan that his wyf wold doon hym vileynye.  
 Thanne shal he knowen al hire harlotrye  
 Bothe in repreve of hire and othere mo.’

‘ Ve shal ? ’ quod Proserpyne ; ‘ and  
 wol ye so ?

2232. In *Claudyan*, i.e. in the *De Raptu Proserpinae*.

2247. See *Ecclesiastes* vii. 29.

Now by my moodres sires soule ! I swere  
 That I shal yeven hire suffisant answer,  
 And allé wommen after, for hir sake,  
 That though they be in any gilt y-take,  
 With facé boold they shulle hemself excuse,  
 And bere hem doun that wolden hem  
 accuse ; 2270  
 For lakke of answer noon of hem shal  
 dyen.

Al hadde man seyn a thyng with bothe  
 his eyen,

Yit shul we wommen visage it hardily,  
 And wepe, and swere, and chidè subtilly.  
 So that ye men shul been as lewed as  
 gees.

What rekketh me of youre auctoritees ?

‘ I woot wel that this Jew, this Salomon,  
 Foond of us wommen foolés many oon,  
 But though that he ne foond no good  
 womman, 2279

Yet hath ther foundé many another man  
 Wommenful trewe, ful goode and vertuus ;  
 Witnessse on hem that dwelle in Cristés  
 hous ;

With martirdom they prevéd hire con-  
 stance.

The Romayn Geestés eek make remem-  
 brance

Of many a verray trewé wyf also ;  
 But, sire, ne be nat wrooth,—al be it so,  
 Though that he seyde he foond no good  
 womman,

I prey yow take the sentence of the man,  
 He menté thus, that in sovereyn bontee  
 Nis noon but God that sit in Trinitee. 2290

Ey, for verray God, that nys but oon,  
 What maké ye so muche of Salomon ?  
 What though he made a temple, Goddés  
 hous ?

What though he weré riche and glorious ?  
 So made he eek a temple of false goddis.  
 How myghte he do a thyng that moore  
 forbode is ?

*Pardee !* as faire as ye his name emplastre  
 He was a lechour and an ydolastre,  
 And in his elde he verray God forsook ;  
 And if that God ne hadde, as seith the  
 book, 2300

2265. *moodres sires soule*, i.e. Saturn's, but  
*sires* is probably a blunder for *Ceres*.

Y-sparèd for his fadres sake, he sholde  
 Have lost his regnè rather than he wolde.  
 I sette right noght, of al the vileynye  
 That ye of wommen write, a boterflye !  
 I am a womman, nedès moot I speke,  
 Or ellès swelle til myn hertè breke ;  
 For sithen he seyde that we been jangler-  
 esses,

As ever hool I mootè brouke my tresses !  
 I shal nat sparè for no curteisye  
 To speke hym harm that wolde us vil-  
 eynye !' 2310

' Dame,' quod this Pluto, ' be no lenger  
 wrooth,

I yeve it up ! but sith I swoor myn ooth  
 That I woldè graunten hym his sighte  
 ageyn,

My word shal stonde, I warnè yow certeyn.  
 I am a kyng, it sit me noght to lye !'

' And I,' quod she, ' a queene of faërye !  
 Hir answer shal she have, I undertake.

Lat us namoorè wordès heer-of make,  
 For sothe I wol no lenger yow contrarie.'

Now lat us turne agayn to Januarie, 2320  
 That in the gardyn with his fairè May  
 Syngeth ful murier than the papèjay :  
 ' Yow love I best, and shal, and oother  
 noon.'

So longe aboute the aleyes is he goon,  
 Til he was come agayns thilkè pyrie  
 Where as this Damyan sitteth ful myrie,  
 Anheigh among the fressshè levès grene.

This fressshè May, that is so bright and  
 sheene,

Gan for to syke and seyde, ' Allas, my  
 syde !

Now, sire,' quod she, ' for aught that may  
 bityde, 2330

moste han of the perès that I see,  
 Or I moot dye, so soorè longeth me

to eten of the smalè perès grene.  
 Ielp, for hir love that is of hevenè queene !

telle yow wel, a womman in my plit  
 Iay han to fruyt so greet an appetit  
 hat she may dyen, but she of it have.'

' Allas !' quod he, ' that I ne had heer  
 a knave

hat koudè clymbe ! Allas, allas !' quod he,  
 That I am blynd !' ' Ye, sire, no fors,'  
 quod she ; 2340

' But wolde ye vouchè-sauf, for Goddès  
 sake,

The pyrie inwith youre armès for to take,—  
 For wel I woot that ye mystrustè me,—  
 Thanne sholde I clymbè wel ynogh,'  
 quod she,

' So I my foot myghte sette upon youre  
 bak.'

' Certès,' quod he, ' theron shal be no  
 lak,

Mighte I yow helpen with myn hertè  
 blood !'

He stoupeth down, and on his bak she stood,  
 And caughte hire by a twistè, and up she  
 gooth,—

Ladies, I prey yow that ye be nat wrooth,  
 I kan nat glose, I am a rudè man,— 2351

And sodeynly anon this Damyan  
 Gan pullen up the smok, and in he throng.

And whan that Pluto saugh this gretè  
 wrong,

To Januarie he yaf agayn his sighte,  
 And made hym se as wel as ever he myghte ;

And whan that he hadde caught his sighte  
 agayn,

Ne was ther never man of thyng so fayn ;  
 But on his wyf his thought was evermo.

Up to the tree he caste his eyen two, 2360  
 And saugh that Damyan his wyf had dressed

In swich manere it may nat been expressed,  
 But if I woldè speke uncurteisly ;

And up he yaf a roryng and a cry,  
 As dooth the mooder whan the child shal

dye.  
 ' Out ! helpe ! allas ! harrow !' he gan to  
 crye ;

' O strongè lady, stoorè, what dostow ?'  
 And she answerdè, ' Sire, what eyleth

yow ?  
 Have pacience and resoun in youre mynde.

I have yow holpe on bothe youre eyen  
 blynde,— 2370

Up peril of my soule, I shal nat lyen,—  
 As me was taught to heclè with youre

eyen,  
 Was no thyng bet to makè yow to see

Than strugle with a man upon a tree.  
 God woot, I dide it in ful good entente.'

' Strugle,' quod he, ' ye, algate in it  
 wente !

God yeve yow bothe on shamés deth to  
dyen!

He swyvéd thee; I saugh it with myne  
eyen;

And ellés be I hangéd by the hals!

‘Thanne is,’ quod she, ‘my medicyné  
fals,’ 2380

For certainly, if that ye myghté se,  
Ye wolde nat seyn this wordés unto me;  
Ye hansom glymsyng, and no parfit sighte.’

‘I se,’ quod he, ‘as wel asever I myghte,  
Thonkéd be God! with bothe myne eyen  
two,

And, by my trouthe, me thoughte he  
dide thee so.’

‘Ye mazé, mazé, goodé sire,’ quod she;  
‘This thank have I for I have maad yow  
see.

Allas!’ quod she, ‘that ever I was so  
kynde.’

‘Now, dame,’ quod he, ‘lat al passe  
out of mynde.’ 2390

Com doun, my lief, and if I have myssayd,  
God helpe me so, as I am yvele apayd.

But, by my fader soule! I wende han seyn  
How that this Damyán hadde by thee  
leyn,

And that thy smok hadde leyn upon his  
brest.’

‘Ye, sire,’ quod she, ‘ye may wene as  
yow lest,

But, sire, a man that waketh out of his  
sleepe,

He may nat sodeynly wel taken keepe  
Upon a thyng, ne seen it parfitly,

Til that he be adawéd verrailly. 2400

Right so a man that longe hath blynd y-be,  
Ne may nat sodeynly so wel y-se,

First whan his sighte is newé come ageyn,  
As he that hath a day or two y-seyn.

Til that youre sighte y-satled be a while,  
Ther may ful many a sighté yow bigile.

Beth war, I prey yow, for, by hevené kyng,

Ful many a man weneth to seen a thyng,  
And it is al another than it semeth.

He that mysconceyvethe, he mysdemeth, —  
And with that word she leepe doun fro  
the tree. 2411

This Januarie, who is glad but he?

He kisseth hire and clippeth hire ful ofte,  
And on hire wombe he stroketh hire ful  
softe;

And to his palays hoom he hath hire lad.  
Now, goodé men, I pray yow to be glad.  
Thus endeth heere my tale of Januarie.

God blesse us, and his mooder Seinté  
Marie!

‘Ey, Goddés mercy,’ seyde oure Hosté  
tho,

‘Now swich a wyf, I pray God kepe me  
fro!’ 2420

Lo, whiché sleightés and subtilitees  
In wommen been! for ay as bisy as bees

Been they, us sely men for to deceyve;  
And from a sooth ever wol they weyve.

By this Marchauntés tale it preveth weel;  
But doutéless, as trewe as any steel

I have a wyf, though that she pouré be;  
But of hir tonge a labbyng shrewe is she;

And yet she hath an heepe of vicés mo,  
Therof no fors, lat alle swiche thyngés

go;

But wyte ye what? In conseil be it seyde.  
Me reweth soore I am unto hire teyd;

For, and I sholdé rekenen every vice  
Which that she hath, y-wis I were to nyce

And causé why, it sholde reported be,  
And toold to hire of somme of this meynee

Of whom it nedeth nat for to declare  
(Syn wommen konnen outen swich chaf

fare),

And eek my wit suffiseth nat therto, 243  
To tellen al, wherfore my tale is do.’

2419. E heads this *The Prologe of the Squiere  
Tale*, printing with it the first eight lines of Group  
F. Camb., Corp. and Lansd. omit.

2405. *y-satled*, H<sup>5</sup> *y-stablid*.

## TALES OF THE FOURTH DAY

## GROUP F

*Words of the Host to the Squire*

'SQUIER, come neer, if it youre willè be,  
And sey somewhat of love; for certès ye  
Konnen theron as muche as any man.'

'Nay, sire,' quod he, 'but I wol seye  
as I kan

With hertly wyl,—for I wol nat rebelle  
Agayn youre lust. A talè wol I telle.  
Have me excusèd, if I speke amys,  
My wyl is good, and lo, my tale is this.'

## SQUIRE'S TALE

*Heere bigynneth The Squieres Tale*

At Sarray, in the land of Tartarye,  
Ther dwelte a kyng that werreyed Russye,  
Thurgh which ther dydè many a doughty  
man.

This noble kyng was clepèd Cambyuskan,  
Which in his tyme was of so greet renoun  
That ther was nowher in no regioun  
So excellent a lord in allè thyng.

Hym lakkèd noght that longeth to a kyng;  
As of the secte of which that he was born,  
He kepte his lay, to which that he was  
sworn;

And therto he was hardy, wys, and riche,  
Pitous and just, and evermore yliche; <sup>20</sup>  
Sooth of his word, benigne and honourable,

1. *Squier*, H *Sir Squier*; Heng., Pet. *Sire Frankleyn*. Camb., Corp. and Lansd. omit these lines.

2. *sey somewhat of love, H say us a tale. Squire's Tale*. Keightley in his *Tales and Popular Fictions* (1834) suggested that the local colour of this Tale was derived from Marco Polo, and Col. Yule notes that Cambyuskan is only a corruption of Chinghiz (or 'the great') Khan. Dr. Skeat has quoted passages from Marco Polo's description of Kublai Khan as the sources of some of Chaucer's lines, but the resemblances are not at all close. On magic horses, rings and mirrors Dr. Clouston has written a whole book for the *haucer Society*.

16. *longeth*, H<sup>5</sup> *longed*.

Of his coràge as any centre stable;  
Yong, fressh, and strong, in armès desirous  
As any bacheler of al his hous.  
A fair persone he was, and fortunat,  
And kepte alwey so wel roial estat  
That ther was nowher swich another man.

This noble kyng, this Tartre Cambyus-  
kan,

Haddè two sones on Elpheta his wyf,  
Of whichè the eldeste hightè Algarsyf; <sup>30</sup>  
That oother sone was clepèd Cambalo.  
A doghter hadde this worthy kyng also  
That yongest was, and hightè Canacee,  
But for to tellè yow al hir beautee

It lyth nat in my tonge, nyn my konnyng;  
I dar nat undertake so heigh a thyng;  
Myn Englissh eek is insufficient;  
It mostè been a rethor excellent,  
That koude his colours longyng for that  
art,

If he sholde hire discryven every part; <sup>40</sup>  
I am noon swich, I moot speke as I kan,

And so bifel that whan this Cambyuskan  
Hath twenty wynter born his diademe,  
As he was wont fro yeer to yeer, I deme,  
He leet the feeste of his nativitee  
Doon cryen thurghout Sarray his citee,  
The last Idus of March after the yeer.

Phebus, the sonne, ful joly was and  
cleer,

For he was neigh his exaltacioun  
In Martès face, and in his mansioun <sup>50</sup>  
In Aries, the colerik hootè signe.

Ful lusty was the weder ànd benigne,  
For which the foweles agayn the sonnè  
sheene,

What for the sesoun and the yongè grene,  
Ful loudè songen hire affeccions,

31. *Cambalo*. Keightley suggests that the name was taken from Kublai Khan's capital, Cambaluc.

47. *The last Idus*, March 15. On this day the sun would be in the 4th degree of Aries, approaching his highest exaltation in the 19th degree. The first ten degrees of Aries were called the face of Mars.

Hem semed han geten hem protecciouns  
Agayn the swerd of wynter, keene and  
coold.

This Cambyuskan—of which I have  
yow toold—

In roial vestiment sit on his deys,  
With diademe, ful heighe in his paleys, 60  
And halt his feeste so solempne and so  
ryche,

That in this world ne was thernoon it lyche;  
Of which, if I shal tellen al tharray,  
Thanne wolde it occupie a someres day;  
And eek it nedeth nat for to devyse  
At every cours the ordre of hire servyse.  
I wol nat tellen of hir strangé sewes,  
Ne of hir swannes, ne of hire heronsewes.  
Eek in that lond, as tellen knyghtés olde,  
Ther is som mete that is ful deynté holde 70  
That in this lond men recche of it but smal;  
Ther nys no man that may reporten al.

I wol nat taryen yow, for it is pryme,  
And for it is no fruyt, but los of tyme;  
Unto my firste I wole have my recours.

And so bifel that after the thridde cours,  
Whil that this kyng sit thus in his nobleye,  
Her knyng his mynstralés hir thyngés pleye  
Biforn hym at the bord deliciously,  
In at the hallé dore, al sodeynly, 80  
Ther cam a knyght upon a steerde of bras,  
And in his hand a brood mirour of glas,  
Upon his thombe he hadde of gold a ring,  
And by his syde a naked swerd hangyng;  
And up he rideth to the heighé bord.  
In al the halle ne was ther spoken a word,  
For merveille of this knyght; hym to  
biholde

Ful bisily ther wayten yonge and olde.

This strangé knyght that cam thus  
sodeynly,

Al arméd, save his heed, ful richély, 90  
Saleweth kyng and queene, and lordés alle,  
By ordre, as they seten in the halle,  
With so heigh reverence and obeisaunce,  
As wel in spechè as in contenaunce,  
That Gawayn, with his oldé curteiseye,  
Though he were comen ageyn out of fairye,  
Ne koude hym nat amendé with a word;  
And after this, biforn the heighé bord,  
He with a manly voys seith his message  
After the forme uséd in his langage, 100

Withouten vice of silable, or of lettre;  
And for his talé sholdé seme the bettre,  
Accordant to his wordés was his cheere,  
As techeth art of speche hem that it leere.  
Al be it that I kan nat sowne his stile,  
Ne kan nat clymben over so heigh a style,  
Yet seye I this, as to commune entente,  
Thus muche amounteth al that ever he  
mente,

If it so be that I have it in mynde.

He seyde, 'The kyng of Arabe and of  
Inde, 110

My ligé lord, on this solempné day  
Saleweth yow, as he best kan and may,  
And sendeth yow, in honour of youre feeste,  
By me, that am al redy at youre heeste,  
This steede of bras, that esily and weel  
Kan in the space of o day natureel,—  
This is to seyn, in foure and twenty  
houres,—

Wher so yow lyst, in droghte or ellés  
shoures,

Beren youre body into every place 115  
To which youre herté wilneth for to pace.  
Withouten wem of yow, thurgh foul or fair  
Or, if yow lyst to fleen as hye in the air  
As dooth an egle whan hym list to soore  
This samé steede shal bere yow ever moore  
Withouten harm, til ye be ther yow leste  
Though that ye slepen on his bak, or reste  
And turne ageyn with writhyng of a pyn  
He that it wroghté koude ful many a gyn  
He wayted many a constellacioun  
Er he had doon this operacioun, 120  
And knew ful many a seel, and many a bond  
'This mirroure eek, that I have in my  
hond,

Hath swich a myght that men may in it see  
Whan ther shal fallen any adversitee  
Unto youre regne, or to youre self also,  
And openly who is youre freend or foe;  
And over al this, if any lady bright  
Hath set hire herte on any maner wight  
If he be fals she shal his tresoun see,  
His newé love, and al his subtiltee, 125  
So openly that ther shal no thyng hyde.  
Wherefore, ageyn this lusty someres tyde  
This mirour and this ryng that ye may see  
He hath sent to my lady Canacee,  
Youre excellenté doghter that is heere.



'The vertu of the ryng, if ye wol heere,  
Is this, that if hire lust it for to were  
Upon hir thombe, or in hir purs it bere,  
Ther is no fowel that fleeth under the hevene  
That she ne shal wel understonde his  
stevene, 150

And knowe his menyng openly and pleyn,  
And answey hym in his langage ageyn;  
And every gras that groweth upon roote  
She shal eek knowe and whom it wol do  
boote,  
Al be his woundés never so depe and  
wyde.

'This naked swerd that hangeth by my  
syde  
Swich vertu hath that what man so yesmyte,  
Thurghout his armure it wol kerve and  
byte,

Were it as thikke as is a branchéd ook;  
And what man that is wounded with the  
strook 160

Shal never behool, til that yow list of grace  
To stroke hym with the plat in thilké place  
Ther he is hurt; this is as muche to seyn,  
Ye mooté with the platté swerd ageyn  
Strike hym in the wounde and it wol close.  
This is a verray sooth, withouten close,  
{t failleth nat whil it is in youre hoold.'

And whan this knyght hath thus his  
talé toold,  
He rideth out of halle, and doun he lighte.  
His steedé, which that shoon as sonnè  
bryghte, 170

stant in the court as stille as any stoon.  
This knyght is to his chambré lad anon,  
And is unarmed and unto mete y-set.

The presentes been ful roially y-fet,—  
This is to seyn, the swerd and the mirour,—  
and born anon into the heighè tour,  
With certeine officers ordeyned therfore;  
and unto Canacee this ryng was bore  
olempnely, ther she sit at the table;  
but sikerly, withouten any fable, 180  
the hors of bras, that may nat be remewed,  
stant as it were to the ground y-glewed;  
her may no man out of the place it dryve  
or noon engyn of wyndas ne polyve;  
and causè why? for they kan nat the craft;  
and therfore in the place they han it left,

165. strike, H<sup>5</sup> stroke.

Til that the knyght hath taught hem the  
manere  
To voyden hym, as ye shal after heere.

Greet was the prees that swarmeth to  
and fro 189

To gauren on this hors that stondesth so;  
For it so heigh was, and so brood and long,  
So wel proporcionéd for to been strong,  
Right as it were a steede of Lumbardye;  
Ther-with so horsly, and so quyk of eye,  
As it a gentil Poilleys courser were;  
For certés, fro his tayl unto his ere,  
Nature ne art ne koude hym nat amende  
In no degree, as al the peple wende.

But evermoore hir moosté wonder was  
How that it koudé go, and was of bras!  
It was of fairye, as al the peple semed. 201  
Diversé folk diversely they demed;  
As many heddes as manye wittes ther been.  
They murmureden as dooth a swarm of  
been,

And maden skiles after hir fantasies,  
Rehersynge of thise oldé poetries;  
And seyde that it was lyk the Pegasee,  
The hors that haddé wyngés for to flece;  
Or elles it was the Grekés hors, Synoun,  
That broghté Troiè to destruccioun, 210  
As men may in thise oldé geestés rede.

'Myn herte,' quod oon, 'is evermoore  
in drede;

I trowe som men of armés been ther-inne,  
That shapen hem this citee for to wynne;  
It were right good that al swich thyng  
were knowe.'

Another rowndé to his felawe lowe,  
And seyde, 'He lyeth! it is rather lyk  
An apparence, y-maad by som magyk;  
As jogelours pleyen at thise feestés grete.'  
Of sondry doutés thus they jangle and trete,  
As lewéd peple demeth comunly 221  
Of thyngés that been maad moore subtilly  
Than they kan in hir lewednesse compre-  
hende,

They demen gladly to the badder ende.

And somme of hem wondred on the  
mirour

That born was up into the hyé tour,

195. Poilleys, Apulian.

201. the peple, E<sup>2</sup> at the peple.

217. it, H<sup>6</sup> for it.

226. hye, H<sup>5</sup> maistre.

How men myghte in it swichè thyngés se.  
Another answerde and seyde it myghte  
wel be

Naturally, by composiciouns  
Of angles, and of slye reflexiouns ; 230  
And seyden that in Romè was swich oon.  
They speken of Alocen and Vitulon,  
And Aristotle, that writen in hir lyves  
Of queynté mirours, and of prospectives,  
As knowne they that han hir bookés herd.

And oother folk han wondred on the  
sward

That woldé percen thurghout every thyng ;  
And fille in speche of Thelophus the kyng,  
And of Achilles with his queynté spere,  
For he koude with it bothé heele and dere,  
Right in swich wise as men may with the  
sward 241

Of which right now ye han youre-selven  
herd.

They speken of sondry hardyng of metal,  
And speke of medicynés therwithal,  
And how and whanne it sholde y-harded be,  
Which is unknowe, algatés unto me.

The speeké they of Canacées ryng,  
And seyden alle that swich a wonder thyng  
Of craft of ryngés herde they never noon ;  
Save that he Moyses and kyng Salomon  
Hadden a name of konnyng in swich art ;  
Thus seyn the peple and drawn hem  
apart.

But nathéles somme seiden that it was  
Wonder to maken of fern-asshen glas,  
And yet nys glas nat lyk asshen of fern,  
But for they han i-knowne it so fern  
Therefore cesseth hir janglyng and hir  
wonder.

As sooré wondren somme on cause of  
thonder,  
On ebbe, on flood, on gossomer, and on  
myst, 259  
And on alle thyng til that the cause is wyst,  
Thus jangle they, and demen and devyse,  
Til that the kyng gan fro the bord aryse.

231. *in Rome*, an allusion to the wizardries attributed to Virgil.

232. *Alocen and Vitulon*. Alhazen was an Arab astronomer of the 11th century, and Vitellio a Polish one of the 13th.

238. *Thelophus*, Telephus of Mysia, wounded and healed by the spear of Achilles.

Phebus hath laft the angle meridional,  
And yet ascendyng was the beesst roial,  
The gentil Leon, with his Aldrian,  
Whan that this Tartré kyng Cambyuskan  
Roos fro his bord, ther as he sat ful hie.  
Toforn hym gooth the loudé mynstralcye  
Til he cam to his chambre of parementz ;  
Ther as they sownen diverse instrumentz  
That it is lyk an hevene for to heere. 271  
Now dauncen lusty Venus children deere,  
For in the Fyssh hir lady sat ful hie,  
And looketh on hem with a freendly eye.

This noble kyng is set up in his trone ;  
This strangé knyght is fet to hym ful soone,  
And on the daunce he gooth with Canacee.  
Heere is the revel and the jolitee  
That is nat able a dul man to devyse ; 279  
He moste han knowen love and his servyse,  
And been a feestlych man, as fresshas May,  
That sholdé yow devysen swich array.

Who koude tellé yow the forme of  
daunces

So unkouthe, and so fresshé contenaunces,  
Swich subtil lookyng and dissymulynges  
For drede of jalouse mennes aperceyv-  
ynges ?

No man but Launcelet, and he is deed.  
Therefore I passe of al this lustiheed ;  
I sey namoore, but in this jolynesse  
I lete hem til men to the soper dresse.

The styward byt the spices for to hie,  
And eek the wyn, in al this melodye.  
The usshers and the squiers been y-goon.  
The spices and the wyn is come anon.  
They ete and drynke, and whan this hadde  
an ende,

Unto the temple, as reson was, they wende.

The service doon they soupen al by day ;  
What nedeth yow rehercen hire array ?  
Éch man woot wel that a kyngés feeste 29  
Hath plentee to the mooste and to the leeste  
And deyntees mo than been in my knowyng

At after soper gooth this noble kyng  
To sen this hors of bras, with all the  
route

Of lordés and of ladyes hym aboute.

263. *angle meridional*. The southern angle answered to the time from 10 A.M. to noon.

265. *Aldrian*, or Aldiran, the star marking the Lion's fore-paws.

273. *the Fyssh*. Venus is 'exalted' in Piscis.

Swich wondryng was ther on this hors of  
bras

That syn the greté sege of Troiè was,—  
Ther as men wondreden on an hors also,—  
Ne was ther swich a wondryng as was tho.  
But fynally, the kyng axeth this knyght  
The vertu of this courser, and the myght,  
And preydè hym to telle his governaunce.

This hors anon bigan to trippe and  
daunce

Whan that this knyght leyde hand upon  
his reyne,

And seyde, 'Sire, ther is namoore to seyne;  
But whan yow list to ryden anywhere  
Ye mooten trille a pyn, stant in his ere,  
Which I shal tellè yow bitwix us two.

Ye mootè nempne hym to what place also,  
Or to what contree, that yow list to ryde;  
And whan ye come ther as yow list abyde,  
Bidde hym descende, and trille another  
pyn,— 321

For therin lith theffect of al the gyn,—  
And he wol doun descende and doon youre  
wille,

And in that placè he wol stonde stille.  
Though al the world the contrarie hadde  
y-swore,

Heshal nat thennès been y-drawe ney-bore;  
Or, if yow listè bidde hym thennès goon,  
Trillè this pyn, and he wol vanysse anon  
Out of the sighte of every maner wight,  
And come agayn, be it by day or nyght, 330  
Whan that yow list to clepen hym ageyn  
In swich a gyse as I shal to yow seyn,  
Bitwixè yow and me, and that ful soone.  
Ride whan yow list, ther is namoore to  
doone.'

Enformèd whan the kyng was of that  
knyght,

And hath conceyved in his wit aright  
The manere and the forme of al this thyng,  
Ful glad and blithe this noble doughty kyng  
Repireth to his revel as biforn.

The brydel is unto the tour y-born 340  
And kept among his jueles leeve and deere,  
The hors vanysshed, I noot in what manere,  
Out of hir sighte,—ye gete namoore of me;  
But thus I lete in lust and jolitee  
This Cambyuskan his lordès festeiynge,  
Til wel ny the day bigan to sprynge.

## [PART II]

The notice of digestioun, the sleepe,  
Gan on hem wynke, and bad hem taken  
keepe

That muchel drynke and labour wolde  
han reste;

And with a galpyng mouth hem alle he  
keste, 350

And seyde, it was tyme to lye adoun,  
For blood was in his domynacioun.

'Cherisseth blood, natúresfreend,' quod he.  
They thanken hym galpyng, by two, by  
thre,

And every wight gan drawe hym to his reste,  
As sleepe hem bad; they tooke it for the  
beste.

Hire dremès shul nat been y-toold for me;  
Ful were hire heddès of fumositee,  
That causeth dreem, of which ther nys no  
charge.

They slepen til that it was prymè large, 360  
The moostè part, but it were Canacee.

She was ful mesurable, as women be;  
For of hir fader hadde she takè leve  
To goon to reste, soone after it was eve.  
Hir listè nat appallèd for to be,  
Ne on the morwe unfeestlich for to se,  
And slepte hire firstè sleepe and thanne  
awook;

For swich a joyè she in hir hertè took,  
Bothe of hir queyntè ryng and hire mirour,  
That twenty tyme she changèd hir colour,  
And in hire sleepe, right for impressioun  
Of hire mirour, she hadde a visioun.

Wherfore er that the sonnè gan up glyde  
She clepèd on hir maistresse hire bisyde,  
And seyde that hire listè for to ryse.

Thise oldè women that been gladly  
wyse,

As is hire maistresse, answerde hire anon,  
And seyde, 'Madame, whider wil ye goon  
Thus erly, for the folk been alle on reste?'

'I wol,' quod she, 'arisè,—for me leste  
No lenger for to slepe,— and walke  
aboute.' 381

352. *blood*, etc. The blood was supposed to be  
'in domination' from 9 P.M. to 3 A.M.

360. *pryme large*, full prime, i.e. 9 A.M.

Hire maistresse clepeth wommen a  
greet route,  
And up they rysen, wel a ten or twelve ;  
Up riseth fresshé Canacee hir-selve,  
Asrodyand bright asdooththeyongesonne  
That in the Ram is foure degrees up ronne.  
Noon hyer was he whan she redy was,  
And forth she walketh esily a pas,  
Arrayed after the lusty sesoun soote 389  
Lightly, for to pleye and walke on foote,  
Nat but with fyve or sixe of hir meynee,  
And in a trench, forth in the park, gooth  
she.

The vapour, which that fro the erthé glood,  
Madé the sonne to semé rody and brood,  
But nathélees it was so fair a sighte  
That it made alle hire hertés for to lighte,—  
What for the sesoun, and the morwényge,  
And for the foweles that she herdé syngé ;  
For right anon she wisté what they mente  
Right by hir song, and knewal hire entente.

The knotté why that every tale is toold,  
If it be taried til that lust be coold  
Of hem that han it after herkned yoore,  
The savour passeth ever lenger the moore,  
For fulsomnesse of his prolixitee ;  
And by the samé resoun thynketh me,  
I sholdé to the knotte condescende  
And maken of hir walkyng soone an ende.

Amydde a tree fordrye, as whit as chalk,  
As Canacee was pleyyng in hir walk, 410  
Ther sat a faucon over hire heed ful hye,  
That with a pitous voys so gan to crye  
That all the wode resounéd of hire cry.  
Y-beten hath she hir-self so pitously  
With bothe hir wyngés til the redé blood  
Ran endélong the tree ther as she stood,  
And ever in oon she cryde alwey and  
shrighte,  
And with hir beek hir-selven so she prighte,  
That ther nystygre, ne noon so crueel beest,  
That dwelleth outhere in wode or in forest,  
That nolde han wept, if that he wepé koude,  
For sorwe of hire, she shrighte alwey so  
loude ;

For ther nas never yet no man on lyve,—

386. *foure* (H<sup>4</sup> *ten*), cp. l. 51 and note. At its rising on the 16th March the sun would be passing from the 4th degree to the 5th.

If that I koude a faucon wel discryve,—  
That herde of swich another of fairnesse,  
As wel of plumage as of gentillesse  
Of shape, and al that myghte y-rekened be.  
A faucon peregryn thanne seméd she  
Of fremdé land, and evermoore, as she  
stood,  
She swowneth now and now for lakke of  
blood, 430  
Til wel neigh is she fallen fro the tree.

This fairé kyngés doghter, Canacee,  
That on hir fynger baar the queynté ryng,  
Thurgh which she understood wel every  
thyng

That any fowel may in his leden seyn,  
And koude answeré hym in his ledene  
ageyn,

Hath understandé what this faucon seyde,  
And wel neigh for the routhe almost she  
deyde ;

And to the tree she gooth ful hastily,  
And on this faucon looketh pitously, 440  
And heeld hir lappe abrood, for wel she  
wiste

The faucon mosté fallen fro the twiste,  
Whan that it swowned next, for lakke of  
blood.

A longé while to wayten hire she stood,  
Til atté laste she spak in this manere  
Unto the hauk, as ye shal after heere :

‘What is the cause, if it be for to telle,  
That ye be in this furial pyne of helle?’  
Quod Canacee unto the hauk above. 449  
‘Is this for sorwe of deeth, or los of love?’  
For, as I trowé, thise been causes two  
That causen moost a gentil herté wo.  
Of oother harm it nedeth nat to speke,  
For ye youre-self upon your-self yow wreke,  
Which proveth well that outhere love or  
drede

Moot been enchesoun of youre cruel dede,  
Syn that I see noon oother wight yow chace.  
For love of God, as dooth youre-selven  
grace,  
Or what may been youre helpe ; for West  
nor Est

428. *peregryn*, the pilgrim falcon, so called because it keeps away from its nest.

436. *answere*, E. *answeren*.

455. *love*, H<sup>5</sup> *ire*.

Ne saugh I never, er now, no bryd ne  
beest 460

That ferde with hymself so pitously.  
Ye sle me with youre sorwè, verrailly ;  
I have of yow so greet compassioun.  
For Goddès love, com fro the tree adoun ;  
And, as I am a kyngès doghter trewe,  
If that I verrailly the causè knewe  
Of youre disese, if it lay in my myght,  
I wolde amenden it er it were nyght,  
As wisly helpe me gretè God of kynde !  
And herbès shal I right ynowe y-fynde  
To heelé with youre hurtès hastily.' 471

Tho shrigte this faucon yet moore  
pitously

Than ever she dide, and fil to grounde anon,  
And lith aswownè, deed, and lyk a stoon,  
Til Canacee hath in hire lappe hire take  
Unto the tyme she gan of swough awake ;  
And after that she of hir swough gan breyde  
Right in hir hawkès ledene thus she seyde :  
'That pitee renneth soone in gentil herte,  
Feelynge his similitude in peynès smerte,  
Is prevèd al day, as men may it see, 481

As wel by werk as by auctoritee ;  
For gentil hertè kitheth gentillesse.

I se wel that ye han of my distresse  
Compassioun, my fairè Canacee,  
Of verray wommanly benignytee  
That nature in youre principles hath set ;  
But for noon hopè for to fare the bet,  
But for to obeye unto youre hertè free,  
And for to maken othere be war by me,  
As by the whelpè chasted is the leoun, 491  
Right for that cause and that conclusioun,  
Whil that I have a leyser and a space,  
Myn harm I wol confessen, er I pace.'

And ever whil that oon hir sorwe tolde  
That oother weepe as she to water wolde,  
Til that the faucon bad hire to be stille,  
And, with a syk, right thus she seyde hir  
wille.

'Ther I was bred, allas ! that hardè  
day, — 499

And fostred in a roche of marbul gray  
So tendrély that no thyng eyléd me, —  
I nystè nat what was adversitee  
Til I koude flee ful hye under the sky. —  
Tho dwelte a tercèlet me fastè by,

472. yet, om. H<sup>2</sup>.

That seméd welle of allè gentillesse ;  
Al were he ful of tresoun and falsnesse,  
It was so wrappèd under humble cheere,  
And under hewe of trouthe in swich manere,  
Under plesance, and under bisy peyne,  
That I ne koude han wend he koudè feyne,  
So depe in greyn he dyèd his coloures.  
Right as a serpent hit hym under floures  
Til he may seen his tymè for to byte,  
Right so this god of love, this ypocryte,  
Dooth so his cerymonyès and obeisaunces,  
And kepeth in semblant alle his obser-  
vaunces

That sowneth into gentillesse of love.  
As in a toumbe is al the faire above,  
And under is the corps, swich as ye woot,  
Swich was the ypocrite, bothe coold and  
hoot, 520

And in this wise he servèd his entente,  
That save the feend, noon wistè what he  
mente

Til he so longe hadde wopen and com-  
pleyned,

And many a yeer his service to me feyned,  
Til that myn herte, to pitous and to nyce,  
Al innocent of his coround malice,  
For-ferèd of his deeth, as thoughtè me,  
Upon his othès and his seurètee,  
Graunted hym love upon this condicioun,  
That evermoore myn honour and renoun  
Were savèd, bothè privee and apert : 531  
This is to seyn, that after his desert,  
I yaf hym al myn hertè and my thought, —  
God woot, and he, that otherwisè noght, —  
And took his herte in change for myn  
for ay ;

But sooth is seyde, goon sithen many a day,  
"A trewe wight and a thief thenken nat  
oon" ;

And whan he saugh the thyng so fer y-goon  
That I hadde graunted hym fully my love,  
In swich a gyse as I have seyde above, 540  
And yeven hym my trewè herte as fre  
As he swoor he yaf his hertè to me ;  
Anon this tigre ful of doublenesse  
Fil on his knees with so devout hum-  
blesse,

510. I ne, H<sup>5</sup> no wight.

515. obeisaunces, H<sup>1</sup> observaunce, reading in  
next line, Under subtil colour and aqueyntaunce.

With so heigh reverence, and, as by his  
cheere,

So lyk a gentil love of manere,  
So ravysshed, as it seméd, for the joye,  
That never Jason, ne Parys of Troye,—  
Jason? Certés, ne noon oother man  
Syn Lameth was, that alderfirst bigan 550  
To loven two, as writen folk biforn;  
Ne never, syn the firsté man was born,  
Ne koudé man, by twenty thousand part,  
Countrefeté the sophymes of his art,  
Ne weré worthy unbokelen his galoche  
Ther doublenesse or feynyng sholde  
approche,

Ne so koude thanke a wight as he dide me!  
His manere was an hevener for to see  
Til any womman, were she never so wys,  
So peynted he, and kembde at point-  
devys, 560

As wel his wordés as his contenance;  
And I so loved hym for his obeisaunce,  
And for the trouthe I deméd in his herte,  
That if so were that any thyng hym smerte,  
Al were it never so lite, and I it wiste,  
Me thoughte I felté deeth myn herté twiste;  
And shortly, so ferforth this thyng is went,  
That my wyl was his willés instrument,—  
This is to seyn, my wyl obeyed his wyl  
In allé thyng, as fer as resoun fil, 570  
Kepynge the boundés of my worshipe ever;  
Ne never hadde I thyng so lief, ne lever,  
As hym, God woot! ne never shal namo.  
This lasteth lenger than a yeer or two  
That I supposéd of hym noght but good;  
But finally thus, atté laste it stood,  
That Fortune woldé that he mosté twynne  
Out of that placé which that I was inne.  
Wher me was wo, that is no questioun;  
I kan nat make of it discripsioun, 580  
For o thyng dare I tellen boldély,  
I knowe what is the peyne of deeth ther-by;  
Swich harme I felte for he ne myghte  
bileve!

So on a day of me he took his leve,  
So sorwful eek that I wende verraily  
That he had felt as muché harm as I,

548. *Jason*, E<sup>2</sup> *Troilus*, an impossible reading.

550. *Lameth*, Genesis iv. 19.

583. *he*, E I

585. *sorwful*, E<sup>6</sup> *sorwefully*.

Whan that I herde hym speke and saugh  
his hewe;

But nat hélces I thoughte he was so trewe,  
And eek that he repairé sholde ageyn  
Withinne a litel whilé, sooth to seyn, 590  
And resoun wolde eek that he mosté go  
For his honóur, as ofte it happeth so,  
That I made vertu of necessitee,  
And took it wel, syn that it mosté be.  
As I best myghte I hidde fro hym mysorwe  
And took hym by the hond, Seint John to  
borwe,

And seyde hym thus: "Lo, I am yourés al;  
Bethswich as I to yow have been and shal."  
What he answerde it nedeth noght reherce;  
Who kan sey bet than he, who kan do  
werse? 600

Whan he hath al i-seyd, thanne hath he  
doon.

"Therefore bihoveth hire a ful long spoon  
That shal ete with a feend," thus herde I  
seye;

So atté laste he mosté forth his weye,  
And forth he fleeth til he cam ther hym  
leste,

Whan it cam hym to purpos for to reste.  
I trowe he haddé thilké text in mynde,  
That "Allé thyng repeyringe to his kynde  
Gladeth hymself,"—thus seyn men, as I  
gesse.

Men loven of propré kynde newefangel-  
nesse, 610  
As briddés doon that men in cages fede;  
For though thou nyght and day take of  
hem hede,

And strawe hir cagé faire, and softe as silk,  
And yeve hem sugre, hony, breed and milk,  
Yet right anon as that his dore is uppe,  
He with his feet wol spurne adoun his cuppe,  
And to the wode he wole, and wormés ete;  
So newefangel been they of hire mete  
And loven novelrie of propré kynde,  
No gentillesse of blood ne may hem  
bynde. 620

'So ferde this tercèlet, allas, the day!  
Though he were gentil born, fresshand gay,  
And godlich for to seen, humble and free,  
He saugh upon a tyme a kyté flee,

601. *i-seyd*, H<sup>5</sup> *wel seyde*.

602. *hire*, H<sup>4</sup> *him*.

And sodeynly he loved this kyté so  
That al his love is clene fro me ago,  
And hath his trouthe falséd in this wyse.  
Thus hath the kyte my love in hire servyse,  
And I am lorn withouten remedie.' 629  
And with that word this faucon gan to crie,  
And swowned eft in Canacées barn.

Greet was the sorwe for the haukés harm  
That Canacee and alle hir wommen made;  
They nysté how they myghte the faucon  
glade,

But Canacee hom bereth hire in hir lappe,  
And softely in plastres gan hire wrappe,  
Ther as she with hire beek hadde hurt hir-  
selve.

Now kan nat Canacee but herbés delve  
Out of the ground, and maké salvés newe  
Of herbés precieuse, and fyne of hewe, 640  
To heelen with this hauk; fro day to nyght  
She dooth hire bisynesse and al hir myght,  
And by hire beddés heed she made a mewe,  
And covered it with veluettés blewe,  
In signe of trouthe that is in wommen sene,  
And al withoute the mewe is peynted grene,  
In which were peynted alle thise falsé  
fowles,

As beth thise tidyves, tercèlletes and owles;  
And pyés, on hem for to crie and chyde,  
Right for despit, were peynted hem bisyde.

Thus lete I Canacee, hir hauk keyng,  
I wol namoore as now speke of hir ryng  
fil it come eft to purpos for to seyn  
How that this faucon gat hire love ageyn,  
Repentant, as the storie telleth us,  
By mediacioun of Cambalus,  
The kyngés sone, of whiché I yow tolde;  
But hennés-forth I wol my proces holde  
to speken of áventures and of batailles,  
That never yet was herd so greet mer-  
vailles. 660

First wol I tellé yow of Cambyuskan,  
That in his tymé many a citee wan;  
And after wol I speke of Algarsif,  
How that he wan Theodera to his wif,  
For whom ful ofte in greet peril he was,  
For he hadde he ben holpé by the steede of  
bras;  
And after wol I speke of Cambalo,

649, 650. These two lines are reversed in the MSS.; Camb.<sup>4</sup> omitting *And*.

That faught in lystés with the bretheren two  
For Canacee, er that hemyght hire wyne;  
And ther I lefte I wol ageyn bigynne. 670

## [PART III]

Appollo whirleth up his chaar so hye,  
Til that the god Mercurius hous, the slye—

*Heere folwen the wordes of the Frankelyn  
to the Squier, and the wordes of the  
Hoost to the Frankelyn*

'In feith, Squier, thow hast thee wel  
y-quit

And gentilly, I preisé wel thy wit,  
Quod the Frankeleyn, 'consideryng thy  
yowthe

So feelyngly thouspekest, sire, I allowe the,  
As to my doom ther is noon that is heere  
Of eloquencé that shal be thy peere,  
If that thou lyve! God yevé thee good  
chaunce,

And in vertu sende thee continuaunce; 680  
For of thy speche I havé greet deyntee.  
I have a sone, and, by the Trinitee!  
I haddé leveré than twenty pound worth  
lond,

Though it right now were fallen in myn  
hond,

He were a man of swich discrecioun

As that ye been; fy on possessioun,

But if a man be vertuou withal!

I have my soné snybbéd and yet shal,

For he to vertu listeth nat entende, 689

But for to pleye at dees, and to despende

And lese al that he hath, is his usage;

And he hath leveré talken with a page

Than to comune with any gentil wight,

There he myghte lerné gentillesse aright.'

'Straw for youre "gentillessé,"' quod  
our Hoost.

'What! Frankéleyn, *pardee*, sire, wel  
thou woost

That ech of yow moot tellen atté leste

A tale or two, or breken his biheste.'

'That knowe I wel, sire,' quod the  
Frankéleyn,

'I prey yow haveth me nat in desdeyn 700

Though to this man I speke a word or two.'

672. The 'half-told' tale breaks off here.

'Telle on thy tale, withouten wordés  
mo !'

'Gladly, sire Hoost,' quod he, 'I wole  
obeye

Unto yow wyl; now herkneþ what I seye.  
I wol yow nat contrarien in no wyse  
As fer as that my wittés wol suffyse ;  
I prey to God that it may plesen yow,  
Thanne woot I wel that it is good ynow.'

### *The Prologe of the Frankeleyns Tale*

This oldé, gentil Britons, in hir dayes,  
Of diverse áventurés maden layes, <sup>710</sup>  
Rymeyéd in hir firsté Briton tonge,  
Whiche layés with hir instrumentz they  
songe,

Or ellés reddeþ hem for hir plesaunce,  
And oon of hem have I in remembraunce,  
Which I shal seyn with good wyl as I kan.

But, sires, by-cause I am a burel man,  
At my bigynnyng first I yow biseche,  
Have me excuséd of my rudé speche.

I lernéd never rethoric certeyn ;  
Thyng that I speke it moot be bare and  
pleyn. <sup>720</sup>

I sleepe never on the Mount of Pernaso,  
Ne lernéd Marcus Tullius Scithero.  
Colours ne knowe I none, withouten drede,  
But swiché colours as growen in the mede,  
Or ellés swiché as men dye or peynte.  
Colours of rethoryk been me to queynte ;  
My spirit feeleþ noght of swich mateere,  
But if yow list my talé shul ye heere.

## FRANKLIN'S TALE

### *Heere bigynneth The Frankeleyns Tale*

In Armorik, that calléd is Britayne,  
Ther was a knyght that loved and dide  
his payne <sup>730</sup>  
To serve a lady in his besté wise ;  
And many a labour, many a greet emprise,

<sup>714.</sup> *oon of hem, etc.* This distinct statement (cp. l. 813) leaves no doubt that this tale follows, probably with some closeness, a French or Breton story, unluckily now lost.

<sup>721.</sup> To disprove his claim of lack of letters he quotes Persius (Prol. l. 2).

He for his lady wroghte, ershe were wonne ;  
For she was oon the faireste under sonne,  
And eek therto come of so heigh kynrede,  
That wel unneþhés dorste this knyght, for  
drede,

Telle hire his wo, his peyne, and his  
distresse ;

But atté laste she for his worthynesse,  
And namely for his meke obeýsaunce,  
Hath swich a pitee caught of his penaunce,  
That pryvély she fil of his accord, <sup>741</sup>  
To take hym for hir housbonde and hir lord,  
Of swich lordshipe as men han over hir  
wyves,

And for to lede the moore in blisse hir lyves,  
Of his free wyl he swoor hire as a knyght,  
That never in al his lyf he, day ne nyght,  
Ne sholde upon hym také no maistrie  
Agayn hir wyl, ne kithe hire jalousie ;  
But hire obeye and folwe hir wyl in al,  
As any lovere to his lady shal, <sup>750</sup>  
Save that the name of soveraynété,  
That wolde he have, forshame of his degree.

She thankéd hym and with ful greet  
humbleesse,

She seyde, 'Sire, sith of youre gentillesse  
Ye profre me to have so large a reyne,  
Ne woldé never God bitwixe us tweyne,  
As in my gilt, were outhere werre or stryf.  
Sire, I wol be youre humble, trewé wyf ;  
Have heer my trouthe, til that myn herté  
breste' ;

Thus been they bothe in quiete and in reste.

For o thyng, sirés, sauffy dar I seye, <sup>761</sup>  
That freendés everych oother moot obeye,  
If they wol longé holden compaignye.  
Love wol nat been constreynéd by maistrie.  
Whan maistrie comth, the god of love,  
anon,

Beteth his wynges and, farewel, he is gon !  
Love is a thyng as any spirit free.

Wommen of kynde desiren libertee,  
And nat to been constreynéd as a thral ;  
And so doon men, if I sooth seyen shal.  
Looke, who that is moost pacient in love,  
He is at his advantage al above.

Páciencie is an heigh vertú, certeyn,  
For it venquysseth, as thise clerkés seyn,  
Thyngés that rigour sholdé never atteyne ;

<sup>739.</sup> *namely, especially.*



For every word men may nat chide or  
pleyne.

Lerneth to suffre, or elles so moot I goon,  
Ye shul it lerne, wher-so ye wole or noon;  
For in this world, certein, ther no wight is  
That he ne dooth, or seith, som tyme amys.  
Irè, siknesse, or constellacioun, 781  
Wyn, wo, or chaungynge of complexioun,  
Causeth ful ofte to doon amys or speken.  
On every wrong a man may nat be wroken;  
After the tyme moste be temperaunce  
To every wight that kan on governaunce;  
And therefore hath this wisè, worthy  
knyght,—

To lyve in esè,—suffraunce hire bihight,  
And she to hym ful wisly gan to swere  
That never sholde ther be default in here.

Heere may men seen an humble, wys  
accord; 791  
Thus hath she take hir servant and hir  
lord,—

Servant in love, and lord in mariage,—  
Thanne was he bothe in lordshipe and  
servage.

Servagè? nay, but in lordshipe above;  
sith he hath both his lady and his love;  
His lady, certès, and his wyf also,  
The which that lawe of love acordeth to;  
And whan he was in this prosperitee 799  
Toom with his wyf he gooth to his contree,  
Nat fer fro Pedmark, ther his dwelling was,  
Wher as he lyveth in blisse and in solas.

Who koudè telle, but he hadde wedded  
be,

he joye, the ese, and the prosperitee  
hat is bitwixe an housbonde and his wyf?

A yeer and moore lastèd this blisful lyf,  
ilthat the knyght of which I speke of thus,  
hat of Kayrrud was cleped Arveragus,  
toope him to goon and dwelle a yeer or  
tweyne 809

Engelond, that cleped was eek Briteyne,  
to seke in armès worshipe and honour,  
or al his lust he sette in swich labour;  
id dwellèd there two yeer,—the book  
seith thus.

Now wol I stynten of this Arveragus,

01. *Pedmark*, Penmark, on the west coast of  
Iceland.

08. *Kayrrud*, the Red City.

And speken I wole of Dorigene his wyf,  
That loveth hire housbonde as hire hertès  
lyf;

For his absencè wepeth she and siketh,  
As doon thise noble wyvès, whan hem  
liketh;

She moorneth, waketh, wayleth, fasteth,  
pleyneth; 819

Desir of his presence hire so distreyneth,  
That al this wydè world she sette at noght.  
Hire freendès, whiche that knewe hir hevvy  
thoght,

Conforten hire in al that ever they may.  
They prechen hire, they telle hire, nyght  
and day,

That causèeles she sleeth herself, allas!  
And every confort possible in this cas  
They doon to hire with all hire bisynesse,  
Al for to make hire leve hire hevynesse.

By proces, as ye knowen everichoon,  
Men may so longè graven in a stoon 830  
Til som figure therinne emprented be.

So longe han they comforted hire, til she  
Receyvèd hath, by hope and by resoun,  
The emprenting of hire consolacioun,  
Thurgh which hir gretèsorwè gan aswage;  
She may nat alwey duren in swich rage.

And eek Arveragus in al this care  
Hath sent hire lettres hoom of his welfare;  
And that he wol come hastily agayn;  
Or ellès hadde this sorwe hir hertè slayn.

Hire freendès sawe hir sorwè gan to  
slake, 841

And preyèd hir on knees, for Goddès  
sake,

To come and romen hire in compaignye,  
Awey to dryve hire derkè fantasye;  
And finally she graunted that requeste,  
For wel she saugh that it was for the beste.

Now stood hire castel fastè by the see,  
And often with hire freendès walketh shee,  
Hire to disporte upon the bank an heigh,  
Where as she many a shipe and bargè seigh  
Seillynge hir cours, where as hem listè go;  
But thanne was that a parcel of hire wo,  
For to himself ful ofte 'Allas!' seith she,  
'Is ther no shipe, of so manye as I se,  
Wol bryngen hom my lord? Thanne were  
myn herte

Al warissed of his bittrè peynès smerte.'

Another tyme ther wolde she sitte and  
 thyнке,  
 And caste hir eyen downward fro the  
 brynke ;  
 But whan she saugh the grisly rokkés blake,  
 For verray feere so wolde hir herté quake  
 That on hire feet she myghte hire noght  
 sustene ; 861  
 Thanne wolde she sitte adoun upon the  
 grene,  
 And pitously into the see biholde,  
 And seyn right thus, with sorweful sikés  
 colde,  
 ‘ Eterné God, that thurgh thy purvei-  
 aunce,  
 Ledest the world by certein governaunce,  
 In ydel, as men seyn, ye nothyng make ;  
 But, Lord, these grisly, feendly, rokkés  
 blake,  
 That semen rather a foul confusioun  
 Of werk than any fair creacioun 870  
 Of swich a parfit wys God, and a stable,—  
 Why han ye wrought this werk unresonable ?  
 For by this werk south, north, ne west,  
 ne est,  
 Thernys y-fostred man, ne bryd, ne beeste ;  
 It dooth no good, to my wit, but anyeth ;  
 Se ye nat, Lord, how mankynde it de-  
 stroyeth ?  
 An hundred thousand bodyes of mankynde  
 Han rokkés slayn, al be they nat in mynde,  
 Which mankynde is so fair part of thy werk,  
 That thou it madest lyk to thyn owene merk.  
 ‘ Thanne seméd it ye hadde a greet  
 chiertee 881  
 Toward mankynde, but how thanne may  
 it bee,  
 That ye swiche meenés make it to de-  
 stroyen,  
 Whiche meenés do no good, but ever  
 anoyen ?  
 I woot wel clerkés wol seyn as hem leste,  
 By argument, that al is for the beste,  
 Though I ne kan the causes nat y-knowe ;  
 But, thilké God that madé wynd to blowe,  
 As kepe my lord ; this is my conclusioun.  
 To clerkés lete I al disputioun ; 890  
 But woldé God that alle these rokkés blake  
 Were sonken into hellé for his sake.  
 These rokkés sleen myn herté for thefeere.’

Thus wolde she seyn with many a pitous  
 teere.

Hire freendés sawe that it was no disport  
 To romen by the see, but discomfort,  
 And shopen for to pleyen somwher elles.  
 They leden hire by ryveres, and by welles,  
 And eek in othere places delitables ;  
 They dauncen, and they pleyen at ches  
 and tables. 900

So on a day, right in the morwe tyde,  
 Unto a gardyn that was ther bisyde,  
 In which that they hadde maad hir or-  
 dinaunce

Of vitaille, and of oother purveiaunce,  
 They goon and pleye hem al the longé day ;  
 And this was on the sixté morwe of May,  
 Which May hadde peynted with his softé  
 shoures

This gardyn, full of levés and of floures,  
 And craft of mannés hand so curiously  
 Arrayéd hadde this gardyn, trewely, 910  
 That never was ther gardyn of swich prys  
 But if it were the verray Paradys.

The odour of flourés and the fresshé sighte  
 Woldé han makéd any herté lighte  
 That ever was born, but if to greet siknesse,  
 Or to greet sorwé, helde it in distresse ;  
 So full it was of beautee with plesaunce.

At after dyner gonné they to daunce,  
 And synge also, save Dorigen allone,  
 Which made alwey hir compleint and hir  
 moone, 920

For she ne saugh hym on the dauncé go  
 That was hir housbonde, and hir love also ;  
 But nathélees she moste a tyme abyde  
 And with good hopé lete hir sorwe slyde.

Upon this daunce, amongés othere men,  
 Dauncéd a squier biforn Dorigen,  
 That fressher was, and jolyer of array,  
 As to my doom, than is the monthe of May  
 He syngeth, daunceth, passyngé any man  
 That is, or was, sith that the world bigan  
 Therwith he was, if men sholde hym  
 discryve, 93

Oon of the besté faryngé man on lyve,  
 Yong, strong, right vertuou, and rich  
 and wys,

And wel biloved, and holden in greet prys  
 And, shortly, if the sothe I tellen shal,  
 Unwityng of this Dorigen at al,

This lusty squier, servant to Venus,  
Which that y-clepèd was Aurelius,  
Hadde loved hire best of any creature  
Two yeer and moore, as was his aventure;  
But never dorste he tellen hire his  
grevance; 941

Withouten coppe hedrankal his penaunce.  
He was despeyrèd, nothyng dorste he seye,  
Save in his songès somewhat wolde he wreye  
His wo, as in a general compleynyng;  
He seyde he lovede, and was biloved no  
thyng.

Of swich matéré made he manye layes,  
Songès, compleintès, roundels, virelayes;  
How that he dorstè nat his sorwe telle,  
But langwisseth as a furye dooth in helle;  
And dye he moste, he seyde, as dide Ekko  
For Narcisus, that dorste nat telle hir wo.  
In oother manere than ye heere me seye  
Ne dorst he nat to hire his wo biwreye,  
Save that paraventure somtyme at daunces,  
Ther yongè folk kepen hir observaunces,  
It may wel be he lookèd on hir face  
In swich a wise as man that asketh grace;  
But no thyng wistè she of his entente;  
Natheles it happèd, er they thennès wente,  
By-causè that he was hire neighèbour, 961  
And was a man of worshipe and honour,  
And hadde y-knowen hym of tymè yoore,  
They fille in speche, and forthè, moore  
and moore,

Unto this purpos drough Aurelius.  
And whan he saugh his tyme he saydè thus:  
'Madame,' quod he, 'by God that  
this world made,

so that I wiste it myghte youre hertè glade,  
wolde that day that youre Arveragus  
Vente over the see, that I, Aurelius, 970  
hadde went ther never I sholde have  
come again;

For wel I woot my servyce is in vayn,  
Iy gerdoun is but brestyng of myn herte.  
I adamiè, reweth upon my peynès smerte,  
or with a word ye may me sleen or save;  
I leere at youre feet God wolde that I  
were grave!  
ne have, as now, no leysen moore to  
seye,—

950. *furye*, Heng.<sup>4</sup> *fuyre*: *fire*, perhaps a better  
ading.

Have mercy, sweete, or ye wol do medeye!'

She gan to looke upon Aurelius:  
'Is this your wyl,' quod she, 'and sey ye  
thus? 980

Never erst,' quod she, 'ne wiste I what  
ye mente;

But now, Aurelie, I knowe youre entente,  
By thilkè God that yaf me soule and lyf!  
Ne shal I never been untrewè wyf,  
In word ne werk, as fer as I have wit,  
I wol been his to whom that I am knyht!  
'Taak this for fynal answer, as for me';  
But after that in pley thus seyde she:

'Aurelie,' quod she, 'by heighè God  
above!

Yet wolde I grauntè yow to been youre love,  
Syn I yow se so pitously complayne. 991  
Lookè, what day that endèlong Britayne,  
Ye remoeve alle the rokkès, stoon by stoon,  
That they ne lettè shipe ne boot to goon,—  
I seye whan ye han maad the coost so clene  
Of rokkès, that ther nys no stoon y-sene,  
Thanne wol I love yow best of any man.  
Have heer my trouthe, in al that ever I  
kan.'

'Is ther noon oother grace in yow?'  
quod he.

'No, by that Lord,' quod she, 'that  
makèd me! 1000

For wel I woot that it shal never bityde.  
Lat swichè folies out of youre hertè slyde;  
What deyntee sholde a man han in his lyf  
For to go love another mannès wyf,  
That hath hir body whan so that hym  
lyketh?'

Aurelius ful oftè soorè siketh.  
Wo was Aurelie, whan that he this herde,  
And with a sorweful herte he thus answerde:  
'Madame,' quod he, 'this were an in-  
possible! 1009

Thanne moot I dye of sodeyn dèth horrible!  
And with that word he turnèd hym anon.

Tho come hir othere freendès many oon.  
And in the aleyes romeden up and down,  
And no thyng wiste of this conclusioun;  
But sodeynly bigonnè revel newe,  
Til that the brightè sonnè lost his hewe,  
For thorisonte hath rest the sonne his  
lyght,—

This is as muche to seye, as it was nyght;

And hoom they goon in joye and in solas,  
 Save oonly wrecche Aurelius, allas ! 1020  
 He to his hous is goon with sorweful herte;  
 He seeth he may nat fro his deeth asterde,  
 Hym seméd that he felte his herté colde.  
 Up to the hevene his handés he gan holde,  
 And on his knowés bare he sette hym  
 down,

And in his ravynge seyde his orisoun.  
 For verray wo out of his wit he breyde,  
 He nysté what he spak, but thus he seyde.  
 With pitous herte his pleynt hath he bigonne  
 Unto the goddess, and first unto the sonne.

He seyde, 'Appollo, god and governour,  
 Of every plaunté, herbé, tree and flour,  
 That yevest after thy declinacioun  
 To ech of hem his tyme and his sesoun,  
 As thyn herberwé chaungeth lowe or  
 heighe ;

Lord Phebus, cast thy merciable eithe  
 On wrecche Aurelie, which that am but  
 lorn !

Lo, lord, my lady hath my deeth y-sworn  
 Withouté gilt, but thy benignytee  
 Upon my dedly herte have som pitee ; 1040  
 For wel I woot, lord Phebus, if yow lest  
 Ye may me helpen, save my lady, best.  
 Now vouchethsauf that I may yow devyse  
 How that I may been holpen and in what  
 wyse.

'Youre blisful suster, Lucina the sheene,  
 That of the see is chief goddesse and  
 queene,—

Though Neptunus have deitee in the see,  
 Yet emperisse aboven hym is she,—  
 Ye knowe wel, lord, that right as hir desir  
 Is to be quyked, and lightned of youre fir,  
 For which she folweth yow ful bisily, 1051  
 Right so the see desireth naturelly  
 To folwen hire, as she that is goddesse,  
 Bothe in the see and ryveres moore and  
 lesse.

Wherfore, lord Phebus, this is my requeste,  
 Do this mirácle, or do myn herté breste ;  
 That now next at this opposioun,  
 Which in the signe shal be of the Leoun,  
 As preieth hire so greet a flood to brynge,  
 That fyve fadme at the leeste it over-  
 sprynge

1060

1045. *Lucina*, or *Diana*, the moon.

The hyeste rokke in Armorik Briteyne ;  
 And lat this flood endure yerés tweyne,  
 Thanne certés to my lady may I seye,  
 " Holdeth youre heste, the rokkés been  
 aweye."

'Lord Phebus, dooth this miracle for me ;  
 Preye hire she go no faster cours than ye ;  
 I seyé, preyeth your suster that she go  
 No faster cours than ye thise yerés two ;  
 Thanne shal she been evene atté fulle  
 alway,

And sprynge-flood lasté bothé nyght and  
 day ;

1070

And, but she vouchésauf in swich manere  
 To graunté me my sovereyn lady deere,  
 Prey hire to synken every rok adoun  
 Into hir owene dirké regioun  
 Under the ground, ther Pluto dwelleth  
 inne,

Or never-mo shal I my lady wynne.  
 Thy temple in Delphos wol I barefoot  
 seke,—

Lord Phebus, se the teeris on my cheke,  
 And of my peyne have som compassioun !'  
 And with that word in swowne he fil adoun,  
 And longé tyme he lay forth in a traunce.

His brother, which that knew of his  
 penaunce,  
 Up caughte hym, and to bedde he hath  
 hym broght.

Dispeyréd in this torment and this thoght,  
 Lete I this woful créaturé lye ;  
 Chese he, for me, wher he wol lyve or dye.

Arveragus with heele and greet honour,  
 As he that was of chivalrie the flour,  
 Is comen hoom, and othere worthy men.  
 O, blisful artow now, thou Dorigen ! 1090  
 That hast thy lusty housbonde in thyne  
 armes,

The fresshé knyght, the worthy man of  
 armes,

That loveth thee as his owene hertés lyf.  
 Nothyng list hym to been ymaginatyf,  
 If any wight had spoke, whil he was oute,  
 To hire of love ; he hadde of it no doute.  
 He noght entendeth to no swich mateere,  
 But daunceeth, justeth, maketh hire good  
 cheere ;

1074. Under her name of *Hecate* *Diana* ruled also in the underworld.

And thus in joye and blisse I lete hem  
dwelle,

And of the sike Aurelius wol I telle. 1100

In langour and in torment furyus,  
Two yeer and moore, lay wrecche Aurelyus  
Er any foot he myghte on erthe gon ;  
Ne confort in this tymè hadde he noon,  
Save of his brother, which that was a clerk.  
He knew of al this wo and al this werk ;  
For to noon oother créature, certeyn,  
Of this matere he dorstè no word seyn ;  
Under his brest he baar it moore secree  
Than ever dide Pamphilus for Gala-  
thee. 1110

His brest was hool withoutè for to sene,  
But in his herte ay was the arwè kene ;  
And wel ye knowe that of a sursanure  
In surgerye is perilous the cure,  
But men myghte touche the arwe, or come  
therby.

His brother weepe and waylèd pryvèly,  
Til attè laste hym fil in remembraunce  
That whiles he was at Orliens in Fraunce,—  
As yongè clerkès, that been lykerous  
To reden artès that been curious, 1120  
Seken in every halke and every herne  
Particuler sciénces for to lerne,—  
He hym remembred that, upon a day,  
At Orliens in studie a book he say  
Of magyk natureel, which his felawe,  
That was that tyme a bachelor of lawe,—  
Al were he ther to lerne another craft,—  
Hadde privèly upon his desk y-laft,  
Which book spak muchel of the operaciouns  
Touchyng the eighte and twenty man-  
siouns 1130

That longen to the moone, and swich folye  
As in oure dayès is nat worth a flye,—  
For hooly chirchès feith, in oure bileve,  
Ne suffreth noon illusion us to greve ;  
And whan this book was in his remem-  
braunce,

Anon for joye his hertè gan to daunce,  
And to hymself he seyde pryvèly,  
'My brother shal be warissshed hastily,  
For I am siker that ther be sciénces 1139  
By whiche men maken diverse apparences,

1110. *Pamphilus*, etc., a reference to the poem *Pamphilus de Amore*, of which Galatea was the heroine.

Swiche as thise subtile tregetourès pleye.  
For ofte at feestès have I wel herd seye  
That tregetours withinne an hallè large  
Have maad come in a water and a barge,  
And in the hallè rowen up and down.  
Somtyme hath semèd come a grym leoun,  
And somtyme flourès sprynge as in a mede ;  
Somtyme a vyne, and grapès white and rede ;  
Somtyme a castel, al of lym and stoon,  
And whan hem lykèd voyded it anoon,—  
Thus semèd it to every mannès sighte. 1151  
Now thanne conclude I thus, that if I  
myghte

At Orliens som old felawe y-fynde,  
That hadde these moonès mansions in  
mynde,

Or other magyk natureel above,  
He sholde wel make my brother han his  
love ;

For with an apparence a clerk may make,  
To mannès sighte, that alle the rokkès blake  
Of Britaigne weren y-voyded everichon,  
And shippès by the brynkè comen and gon ;  
And in swich forme enduren a wowe or  
two. 1161

Thanne were my brother warissshed of his  
wo ;

Thanne moste she nedès holden hire  
biheste,

Or ellès he shal shame hire attè leeste.'  
What sholde I make a lenger tale of  
this ?

Unto his brotheres bed he comen is,  
And swich confort he yaf hym for to gon  
To Orliens, that he up stirte anon,  
And on his wey forthward thanne is he fare  
In hope for to been lissèd of his care.

Whan they were come almost to that  
citee, 1171

But if it were a two furlong or thre,  
A yong clerk romynge by hymself they  
mette,

Which that in Latyn thriftily hem grette,  
And after that he seyde a wonder thyng :  
'I knowe,' quod he, 'the cause of youre  
comyng,'—

And er they ferther any footè wente,  
He tolde hem al that was in hire entente.

This Briton clerk hym askèd of felawes  
1161. *wowke* (week), IIeng.<sup>2</sup> *day*, Corp.<sup>3</sup> *yeer*.

The whiche that he had knowe in oldē  
dawes ; 1180

And he answerde hym that they dedē were,  
For which he weep ful oftē many a teere.

Doun of his hors Aurelius lighte anon,  
And forth with this magicien is he gon  
Hoom to his hous, and maden hem wel  
at ese ;

Hem lakkēd no vitaille that myghte hem  
plesc,

So wel arrayēd hous as ther was oon  
Aurelius in his lyf saugh never noon.

He shewed hym, er he wentē to sopeer,  
Forestēs, parkēs ful of wildē deer ; 1190  
Ther saugh he hertēs with hir hornēs hye,  
The gretteste that were ever seyn with  
eye,—

He saugh of hem an hondred slayn with  
houndes,

And somme with arwēs blede of bittrē  
woundes.

He saugh, whan voyded were thise wildē  
deer,

Thise fauconers upon a fair ryver,  
That with hir hawkēs han the heroun slayn.  
Tho saugh he knyghtēs justyng in a playn,  
And after this he dide hym swich ples-  
aunce 1199

That he hym shewed his lady on a daunce,  
On which hymself he dauncēd, as hym  
thoughte ;

And whan thise maister that this magyk  
wroughte

Saugh it was tyme, he clapte his handēs  
two,

And, farewell ! aloure revel was ago.

And yet remouved they never out of the  
hous

Whil they saugh al this sightē merveillous ;  
But in his studie, ther as his bookēs be,  
They seten stille, and no wight but they  
thre.

To hym this maister callēd his squier,  
And seyde hym thus : 'Is redy oure soper ?  
Almost an houre it is, I undertake, 1211  
Sith I yow bad oure soper for to make,  
Whan that thise worthy men wenten with  
me

Into my studie, ther as my bookēs be.'

1205. was ago, Corp.<sup>3</sup> is y-do.

'Sire,' quod this squier, 'whan it liketh  
yow

It is al redy, though ye wol right now.'

'Go we thanne soupe,' quod he, 'as for  
the beste ;

This amorous folk somtymē moote han  
hir reste.'

At after soper fille they in tretree

What sommē sholde this maistrēs gerdoun  
be 1220

To remoeven alle the rokkēs of Britayne,  
And eek from Gerounde to the mouth of  
Sayne.

He made it straunge, and swoor, so  
God hym save !

Lasse than a thousand pound he wolde  
nat have,

Ne gladly for that somme he wolde nat  
goon.

Aurelius, with blisful herte anoon,  
Answerdē thus : 'Fy on a thousand  
pound !

This wydē world, which that men seye  
is round,

I wolde it yewe, if I were lord of it !

This bargayn is ful dryve, for we been  
knyt 1230

Ye shal be payēd trewely, by my trouthe,  
But looketh now, for no neeligence or  
slouthe

Yetarie us heere no lenger than to morwe.'  
'Nay,' quod this clerk, 'have heer my  
feith to borwe.'

To bedde is goon Aurelius whan hym  
leste,

And wel ny al that nyght he hadde his  
reste.

What for his labour, and his hope of  
blisse,

His woful herte of penaunce hadde a lisse.

Upon the morwe, whan that it was day,  
To Britaigne tookē they the rightē way,—  
Aurelius and this magicien bisyde ; 1241  
And been descended ther they wolde abyde ;  
And this was, as thise bookēs me remembre,  
The coldē, frosty sesoun of Decembre.

Phebus wox old, and hewēd lyk latoun,  
That in his hootē declynacioun  
Shoon as the burnēd gold, with stremēs  
brihte ;

But now in Capricorn adoun he lichte,  
Where as he shoon ful pale, I dar wel seyn.  
The bitter frostés with the sleet and reyn  
Destroyéd hath the grene in every yerd ;  
Janus sit by the fyr with double berd,  
And drynketh of his bugle horn the wyn ;  
Biforn hymstant brawn of the tuskéd wyn,  
And ' *Novel* ' crieth every lusty man.

Aurelius in al that ever he kan  
Dooth to his maister chiere and reverence,  
And preyeth hym to doon his diligence  
To bryngen hym out of his peynés smerte,  
Or with a swerd that he wolde slitte his  
herte. 1260

This subtil clerk swich routhe had of  
this man,

That nyght and day he spedde hym that  
he kan

To wayten a tyme of his conclusioun,  
This is to seye, to maken illusioun  
By swich an apparence or jogelrye,—  
I ne kan no termés of astrologye,—  
That she and every wight sholde wene  
and seye

That of Britaigne the rokkés were aweye,  
Or ellés they were sonken under grounde.  
So atté laste he hath his tyme y-founde  
To maken his japés and his wrecchednesse  
Of swich a superstitious cursednesse.

His tables Tolletanés forth he brought  
Ful wel corrected, ne ther lakkéd nought,  
Neither his collect, ne his expans yeeris,  
Né his rootés, ne his othere geeris,  
As been his centris, and his argumentz,  
And his proporcioneles convenientz  
For his equacions in every thyng ; 1279

And by his eighté speere in his wirkyng  
He knew ful wel how fer Alnath was shove  
Fro the heed of thilke fixe Aries above,  
That in the nynté speere considered is ;

1248. *in Capricorn.* This would be on Dec. 13.  
1273. *tables Tolletanes,* the astronomical tables,  
drawn up by order of Alphonso X. of Castille,  
and primarily adapted to the city of Toledo.

1275. *collect,* a table of a planet's motion during  
a round number of years, as opposed to the *expans,*  
or separate, years.

1280. *And by his eighte speere.* The astrologer  
was calculating the precession of the equinoxes  
by the distance between the true equinoctial  
point—the head of the fixed Aries—and the nearest  
convenient bright star, for which Alnath was  
chosen.

Ful subtilly he kalkuléd al this.

Whan he hadde founde his firsté  
mansioun,

He knew the remenaunt by proporcioun,  
And knew the arisyng of his mooné weel,  
And in whos face, and terme, and every-  
deel,

And knew ful weel the moonés mansioun  
Acordaunt to his operacioun ; 1290  
And knew also his othere observaunces,  
For swiche illusions and swiche mes-  
chaunces

As hethen folk useden in thilké dayes ;  
For which no lenger makéd he delayes ;  
But thurgh his magik for a wyke or tweye  
It semed that alle the rokkés were aweye.

Aurelius, which that yet despeired is  
Wher he shal han his love or fare amys,  
Awaiteth nyght and day on this myracle ;  
And whan he knew that ther was noon  
obstácle, 1300

That voyded were thise rokkés everychon,  
Doun to his maistrés feet he fil anon,  
And seyde, ' I, woful, wrecche Aurelius,  
Thanké yow, lord, and lady myn, Venus,  
That me han holpen fro my carés colde ' ;  
And to the temple his wey forth hath he  
holde,

Where as he knew he sholde his lady see ;  
And whan he saugh his tyme anon right hee,  
With dredful herte and with ful humble  
cheere, 1309  
Salewed hath his sovereyn lady deere.

' My righté lady,' quod this woful man,  
' Whom I mooste drede, and love as I  
best kan,

And lothest were of al this world displese,  
Nere it that I for yow have swich disese  
That Imoste dyen heere at youre foot anon ;  
Noght wolde I telle how me is wo bigon,  
But certés, outhere moste I dye or pleyne.

Ye sle me giltélees for verray peyne,  
But of my deeth thogh that ye have no  
routhe,

Avyseth yow, er that ye breke youre  
trouthe. 1320

Repenteth yow, for thilké God above,  
Er ye me sleen by-cause that I yow love,  
For, madame, wel ye woot what ye han  
hight,—

Nat that I chalange anythyng of right,  
Of yow, my sovereyn lady, but youre  
grace,—

But in a gardyn yond, at swich a place,  
Ye woot right wel what ye bihighten me,  
And in myn hand youre trouthe pligheten ye  
To love me best,—God woot ye seyde so,  
Al be that I unworthy be therto. <sup>1330</sup>

Madame, I speke it for the honour of yow,  
Moore than to save myn hertés lyfright now,  
I have do so as ye comanded me,  
And, if ye vouchésauf, ye may go see.

Dooth as yow list, have youre biheste in  
mynde,

For, quyk or deed, right there ye shal me  
fynde.

In yow lith al to do me lyve or deye,—  
But wel I woot the rokkés been aweye.<sup>7</sup>

He taketh his leve and she astonied  
stood ;

In al hir facé nas a drope of blood, <sup>1340</sup>  
She wendé never han come in swich a  
trappe !

‘Allas !’ quod she, ‘that ever this sholde  
happe,

For wende I never by possibilitee,  
That swich a monstre or merveille myghté  
be ;

It is agayns the proces of nature.’  
And hoom she goth a sorweful créature,—  
For verray feere unnethé may she go.

She wepeth, wailleth al a day or two,  
And swowneth, that it routhe was to see ;  
But why it was to no wight toldé shee, <sup>1350</sup>

For out of towne was goon Arveragus.  
But to hirself she spak, and seyde thus,  
With facé pale and with ful sorweful cheer,  
In hire compleynt as ye shal after heere.

‘Allas !’ quod she, ‘on thee, Fortune,  
I pleyne,

That unwar wrapped hast me in thy cheyne,  
For which tescapé woot I no socour,  
Save oonly deeth or ellés dishonour.

Oon of these two bihoveth me to chese,  
But nathéles yet have I levere lese <sup>1360</sup>  
My lif, than of my body have a shame,  
Or knowe myselfen fals, or lese my name ;

<sup>1355.</sup> As noted in E, the stories referred to in  
this wearisome complaint are all taken from St.  
Jerome’s treatise, *Contra Jovinianum* (ch. 41,  
§ 306 sqq. in Migne).

And with my deth I may be quyt, y-wis ;  
Hath ther nat many a noble wyf er this,  
And many a mayde, y-slayn hir self, allas !  
Rather than with hir body doon trespas ?

‘Yis, certés, lo, these stories beren  
witness

Whan Thretty Tirauntz ful of cursednesse  
Haddeslayn Phidoun, in Atthenés, at feste,  
They comanded his doghtres for tareste,  
And bryngen hem biforn hem in despit,  
Al naked, to fulfille hir foul delit ;  
And in hir fadrés blood they made hem  
daunce

Upon the pavement,—God yeve hem mys-  
chance !

For which these woful maydens, ful of drede,  
Rather than they wolde lese hir mayden-  
hede

They prively been stirt into a welle,  
And dreynete hemselven, as the bookés telle.

‘They of Mecené leete enquere and seke,  
Of Lacedomye, fifty maydens eke, <sup>1380</sup>  
On whiche they wolden doon hir lecherye,  
But was ther noon of al that compaignye

That she nas slayn, and with a good entente  
Chees rather for to dyé, than assente  
To been oppressed of hir maydenhede.

Why sholde I thanne to dyé been in drede ?

‘Lo, cek the tiraunt Aristoclides,  
That loved a mayden heet Stymphalides,  
Whan that hir fader slayn was on a nyght,  
Unto Dianés temple goth she right, <sup>1390</sup>  
And hente the ymage in hir handés two,  
Fro which ymagé wolde she never go :  
No wight ne myghte hir handes of it arace  
Til she was slayn, right in the selvé place.

‘Now sith that maydens hadden swich  
despit

To been defouled with mannés foul delit,  
Wel oghte a wyf rather hirselven slee  
Than be defouled, as it thynketh me.

‘What shal I seyn of Hasdrubalés wyf  
That at Cartage birafte hirself hir lyf? <sup>1400</sup>  
For whan she saugh that Romayns wan the  
toun,

She took hir children alle, and skipte adour  
Into the fyr, and chees rather to dye  
Than any Romayn dide hire vileynye.

<sup>1379.</sup> *Mecene*, Messenia.

<sup>1387.</sup> *Aristocles*, tyrant of Orchomenus.



'Hath nat Lucesse y-slayn hirself, allas !  
At Romè, whan [that] she oppressèd was  
Of Tarquyn ? for hire thoughte it was a  
shame

To lyven whan she haddè loste hir name.

'The sevene maydens of Melesie, also,  
Hanslayn hemself for verray drede and wo,  
Rather than folk of Gawle hem sholde  
opresse,—

Mo than a thousand stories, as I gesse,  
Koude I now telle as touchynge this  
mateere.

'Whan Habradate was slayn, his wyf  
so deere

Hirselven slow, and leet hir blood to glyde  
In Habradates woundés depe and wyde,  
And seyde, "My body, at the leesté way,  
Ther shal no wight defoulen, if I may."

'What sholde I mo ensamples heer-of  
sayn ?

Sith that so manye han hemselven slayn <sup>1420</sup>  
Wel rather than they wolde defouléd be,  
I wol conclude that it is bet for me  
To sleen myself than been defouléd thus.

I wol be trewe unto Arveragus,  
Or rather sleen myself in some manere,  
As dide Democionés doghter deere  
By-cause that she wolde nat defouléd be.

O Cedasus, it is ful greet pitee  
To reden how thy doghtren deyde, allas !  
That slowe himself for swich a manere  
cas. <sup>1430</sup>

As greet a pitee was it, or wel moore,  
The Theban mayden that for Nichanore  
Hirselven slow, right for swich manere wo.  
Another Theban mayden dide right so.

Foroon of Macidonye hadde hire oppressed  
She with hir deeth hir maydenhede re-  
dressed.

What shal I seye of Nicerates wyf,  
That for swich cas biraftè hirself hir lyf ?  
How trewe eek was to Alcebiades

<sup>1409.</sup> *Melesie*, Milesia.

<sup>1414.</sup> *Habradate*. See Xenophon, *Cyropedia*,  
lib. vii., for the story of Abradates and Panthea.

<sup>1426.</sup> *Demociones doghter*. On the death of  
her betrothed, Leosthenes, she killed herself  
rather than take another as husband.

<sup>1432.</sup> *Nichanore*, refused by the Theban maiden  
because he was her conqueror.

<sup>1437.</sup> *Nicerates wyf*, at the time of the Thirty  
Tyrants.

His love, that rather for to dyen chees <sup>1440</sup>  
Than for to suffire his body unburyed be ?  
Lo, which a wyf was Alcesté, ' quod she.  
'What seith Omer of goode Penalopee ?  
Al Grecé knoweth of hire chastitee.

*Pardee*, of Laodomya is writen thus,  
That whan at Troie was slayn Protheselaus,  
No lenger wolde she lyve after his day.

The same of noble Porcia telle I maye ;  
Withouté Brutus koudé she nat lyve,  
To whom she hadde al hool hir herté yive.  
The parfit wyfhod of Arthemisie <sup>1451</sup>

Honouréd is thurgh al the Barbarie.

O Teuta, queene, thy wyfly chastitee

To allé wyvès may a mirour bee.

The samé thyng I seye of Bilyea,  
Of Rodogone, and eek Valeria.'

Thus pleynéd Dorigene a day or tweye,  
Purposynge ever that she woldé deye ;  
But nathéles upon the thriddé nyght <sup>1459</sup>  
Hoom cam Arveragus, this worthy knyght,  
And askéd hire why that she weepesosoore,  
And she gan wepen ever lenger the moore.

'Allas !' quod she, 'that ever I was  
born !

Thus have I seyð,' quod she, 'thus have  
I hym,'—

And toold swyn al, as ye han herd bifore,  
It nedeth nat reherce it yow namoore.

This housbonde, with glad chiere, in  
freendly wyse,

Answerde and seyde as I shal yow devyse,  
'Is ther oght ellés, Dorigen, but this ?'

'Nay, nay,' quod she, 'God helpe me  
so as wys ! <sup>1470</sup>

This is to muche, and it were Goddés wille.'

'Ye, wyf,' quod he, 'lat sleepen that  
is stille,

It may be wel, paraventure, yet to day ;  
Ye shul youre trouthé holden, by my fay !

For God so wisly have mercy upon me,  
I hadde wel levere y-stikéd for to be,

For verray love which that I to yow have,  
But if ye sholde youre trouthé kepe and  
save !

<sup>1451.</sup> *Arthemisie*, of Caria, wife of Mausolus,  
whose tomb she built.

<sup>1453.</sup> *Teuta*, Queen of Illyria.

<sup>1454, 1455.</sup> Bilia was the wife of Duilius, consul  
260 B.C. ; Rhodogone, daughter of Darius, killed  
her nurse for suggesting a second marriage.

Trouthe is the hyeste thyng that man may  
kepe,<sup>2</sup>— 1479

But with that word he brast anon to wepe,  
And seyde, 'I yow forbede, up peyne of  
death,

That never whil thee lasteth lyf ne breeth,  
To no wight telle thou of this aventure,—  
As I may best I wol my wo endure,—  
Ne make no contenance of hevynesse  
That folk of yow may demen harm or gesse.'

And forth he cleped a squier and a mayde ;  
'Gooth forth, anon, with Dorigen,' he  
sayde,

'And bryngeth hire to swich a place, anon.'  
They take hir leve and on hir wey they gon,  
But they ne wistè why she thider wente :  
He holdè no wight tellen his entente.

Paraventure an heepe of yow, y-wis,  
Wol holden hym a lewèd man in this,  
That he wol putte his wyf in jupartie.  
Herkeneth the tale, er ye upon hire crie ;  
She may have bettrè fortune than yow  
semeth ;

And, whan that ye han herd the talè,  
demeth.

This squier, which that highte Aurelius,  
On Dorigen that was so amorus, 1500  
Of aventure happèd hire to meete  
Amydde the toun, right in the quykest  
strete,

Asshe was to goon the wey forth right  
Toward the gardyn, ther as she had hight ;  
And he was to the gardynward also ;  
For wel he spyèd whan she woldè go  
Out of hir hous to any maner place ;  
But thus they mette, of aventure or grace,  
And he saleweth hire with glad entente,  
And askèd of hire whiderward she wente ;  
And she answerdè, half as she were mad,  
'Unto the gardyn, as myn housbonde bad,  
My trouthe for to holde, allas ! allas !'

Aurelius gan wondren on this cas,  
And in his herte hadde greet compassioun  
Of hire and of hire lamentacioun,  
And of Arveragus, the worthy knyght,  
That bad hire holden al that she had hight,  
So looth hym was his wyf sholde breke hir  
trouthe ;

1481. *of*, om. E.  
1503. *bowen*, ready.

And in his herte he caughte of this greet  
routhe, 1520

Considerynge the beste on every syde,  
That fro his lust yet were hym levere abyde,  
Than doon so heigh a cheryssh wreeched-  
nesse

Agayns franchise and allè gentillesse ;  
For which in fewè wordès seyde he thus :  
'Madame, seyeth to youre lord, Arver-  
agus,

That sith I se his gretè gentillesse ;  
To yow, and eek I se wel youre distresse,  
That him were levere han shame,—and  
that were routhe,—

Than ye to me sholde breké thus youre  
trouthe, 1530

I have wel levere ever to suffre wo,  
Than I departe the love bitwix yow two.  
I yow relese, madame, into youre hond,  
Quyrt every surément and every bond  
That ye han maad to me as heer biforn,  
Sith thilkè tymè which that ye were born.  
My trouthe I plighte, I shal yow never  
repreve

Of no biheste, and heere I take my leve,  
As of the treweste and the bestè wyf,  
That ever yet I knew in al my lyf. 1540  
But every wyf be war of hire biheeste ;  
On Dorigene remembreth, attè leeste.  
Thus kan a squier doon a gentil dede  
As wel as kan a knyght, withouten drede.'

She thonketh hym upon hir knees al  
bare,

And hoom unto hir housbonde is she fare,  
And tolde hym al, as ye han herd me sayd :  
And be ye siker he was so weel apayd  
That it were impossible me to wryte.  
What sholde I lenger of this cas endyte ?

Arveragus and Dorigene his wyf 1551  
In sovereyn blissè leden forth hir lyf ;  
Never eft ne was ther angre hem bitwene.  
He cherisseth hire, as though she were a  
queene,

And she was to hym trewe for evermoore.  
Of thisè folk ye gete of me namoore.

Aurelius, that his cost hath all forlorn,  
Curseth the tyme that ever he was born.  
'Allas !' quod he, 'allas, that I bihighte  
Of purèd gold a thousand pound of wighte  
Unto this philosopre ! How shal I do ?

I se namoore but that I am fordo ;  
 Myn heritagé moot I nedès selle,  
 And beea beggere ; heere may I nat dwelle  
 And shamen al my kynrede in this place,  
 But I of hym may geté better grace ;  
 But nathéless I wole of hym assaye  
 At certeyn dayés, yeer by yeer, to paye,  
 And thanke hym of his greté curteisye.  
 My trouthe wol I kepe, I wol nat lye.' 1570

With herté soor he gooth unto his cofre,  
 And broghté gold unto this philosophre,  
 The value of fyve hundred pound, I gesse,  
 And hym bisecheth, of his gentillesse,  
 To graunte hym dayés of the remenaunt,  
 And seyde, 'Maister, I dar wel make avaunt  
 I failled never of my trouthe as yit,  
 For sikerly my detté shal be quyrt  
 Towardés yow, however that I fare  
 To goon a-begged in my kirtle bare ; 1580  
 But wolde ye vouchésauf, upon seuretee,  
 Two yeer, or thre, for to respiten me,  
 Thanne were I wel, for ellés moot I selle  
 Myn heritage ; ther is namoore to telle.'

This philosophre sobrelly answerde,  
 And seyde thus, whan he thise wordés  
 herde :

'Have I nat holdé covenant unto thee ?'  
 'Yes, certés, wel and trewely,' quod he.  
 'Hastow nat had thy lady as thee liketh ?'  
 'No, no,' quod he, and sorwefully he siketh.  
 'What was the causé ; tel me if thou kan.'  
 Aurelius his tale anon bigan,  
 And tolde hym al, as ye han herd bifoore ;  
 't nedeth nat to yow reherce it moore.

He seide, 'Arveragus, of gentillesse,  
 Ladde levere dye in sorwe and in distresse,

Than that his wyf were of hir trouthe fals' ;  
 The sorwe of Dorigen he tolde hym als, —  
 How looth hire was to been a wikked wyf,  
 And that she levere had lost that day hir lyf,  
 And that hir trouthe she swoor thurgh  
 innocence, 1601

She never erst herd speke of apparence ;  
 'That made me han of hire so greet pitee,  
 And right as frely as he sente hire me,  
 As frely sente I hire to hym ageyn ;  
 This is al and som, ther is namoore to seyn.'

This philosophre answerde, 'Leevé  
 brother,

Everich of yow dide gentilly til other ;  
 Thou art a squier, and he is a knyght,  
 But God forbedé, for his blisful myght, 1610  
 But if a clerk koude doon a gentil dede,  
 As wel as any of yow, it is no drede.

'Sire, I releessé thee thy thousand pound  
 As thou right now were copen out of the  
 ground,

Ne never er now ne haddest knowen me ;  
 For, sire, I wol nat taken a peny of thee  
 For al my craft, ne noght for my travaille.  
 Thou hast y-payéd wel for my vitaille ;  
 It is ynogh, and farewel, have good day !'  
 And took his hors, and forth he goth his way.

Lordynges, this questioun wolde I aské  
 now, 1621

Which was the moosté fre, as thynketh  
 yow ?

Now telleth me, er that ye ferther wende.  
 I kan namoore, my tale is at an ende.

1621. E<sup>4</sup> *this questioun thanne.* Possibly the  
 word to be omitted is 'questioun.'

## GROUP G

## SECOND NUN'S TALE

*The Prologe of the Seconde Nonnes Tale*

THE ministre and the norice unto vice  
 Which that men clepe in Englishsh ydel-  
 nesse,

*Seconde Nonnes Tale*, a translation, at first  
 use, afterwards free, of the life of St. Cecilia in  
 the *Legenda Aurea* of Jacobus de Voragine.  
 The stanzas on idleness were probably suggested  
 by the Prologue of the French translator, Jehan

That porter at the gate is of delices,  
 To eschue, and by hire contrarie hire  
 oppresse, —

That is to seyn, by leveful bisynesse, —  
 Wel oghten we to don al oure entente,  
 Lest that the feend thurgh ydelnesse us  
 hente,

de Vignay, but in the Tale Chaucer follows the  
 Latin.

3. *porter*, as in the *Roman de la Rose*.

For he that with his thousand cordés slye  
 Continuelly us waiteth to biclappe, 9  
 Whan he may man in ydelnesse espye,  
 He kalso lightly cacche hym in his trappe,  
 Til that a man be hent right by the lappe,  
 He nys nat war the feend hath hym in  
 honde :  
 Wel oghte us werche, and ydelnesse  
 withstonde.

And though men dradden never for to dye,  
 Yet seen men wel by resoun, doutélees,  
 That ydelnesse is roten slogardye,  
 Of which ther never comth no good  
 encrees ;

And seen that slouthe hir holdeth in a lees  
 Only to slepe and for to ete and drynke,  
 And to deuouren al that othere swynk. 21

And for to putte us fro swich ydelnesse,  
 That cause is of so greet confusioun,  
 I have heer doon my feithful bisynesse,  
 After the Legende, in translacioun,  
 Right of thy glorious lif and passioun,  
 Thou with thy gerland wroght with rose  
 and lillie,—

Thee, meene I, mayde and martir, saint  
 Cecilie.

*Invocacio ad Marian*

And thou that flour of virginés art alle,  
 Of whom that Bernard list so wel to write ;  
 To thee, at my bigynnyng, first I call, 31  
 Thou confort of us wrecches, do me endite  
 Thy maydens deeth, that wan thurgh  
 hire merite,

The eternel lyf, and of the feend victorie  
 As man may after reden in hire storie.

Thow mayde and mooder, doghter of  
 thy sone,

Thow welle of mercy, synful soulés cure,  
 In whom that God, for bountee, chees to  
 wone,

Thow humble, and heigh over every  
 creature, 39

36-56. These three stanzas are partly a translation of some of the first twenty-one lines of Dante's *Paradiso*, Cant. 33, or perhaps of some Latin prayer or hymn which Dante may have imitated.

Thow nobledest so ferforth oure nature,  
 That no desdeyn the Makere hadde of kynde  
 His sone in blood and flessch to clothe  
 and wynde.

Withinne the cloistre blisful of thy sydis  
 Took mannés shape the eterneel Love  
 and Pees,

That of the tryne compas lord and gyde is,  
 Whom erthe, and see, and hevene, out  
 of reeles,

Ay hereyn ; and thou virgine wemmelees  
 Baar of thy body, and dweltest mayden  
 pure,

The creatour of every creature.

Assembled is in thee magnificence, 50  
 With mercy, goodnesse, and with swich  
 pitee,

That thou, that art the sonne of excellence,  
 Nat oonly helpest hem that preyen thee,  
 But often tyme, of thy benygnytee,  
 Ful frely, er that men thyn help biseche,  
 Thou goost biforn and art hir lyvés leche.

Now help, thow meeke and blisful faire  
 mayde,

Me fleméd wrecche in this desert of galle ;  
 Thyнк on the womman Cananee, that sayde  
 That whelpes eten somme of the crommes  
 alle 60

That from hir lordés table been y-falle,  
 And though that I, unworthy sone of Eve,  
 Be synful, yet accepté my bileve.

And for that feith is deed withouten werkis,  
 So, for to werken, yif me wit and space,  
 That I be quit fro thennés that moost  
 derk is.

O thou that art so fair and ful of grace,  
 Be myn advócat in that heighè place,  
 Theras withouten ende is songe Osanne,  
 Thow Cristés mooder, doghter deere of  
 Anne ! 70

And of thy light my soule in prison lighte,  
 That troubled is by the contagioun

62. *sone of Eve*. The phrase (cp. l. 78, *reden that I write*) shows that this legend was not written as one of the Canterbury Tales.

Of my body, and also by the wighte  
Of erthely lust and fals affeccioun !  
O havene of refut, O salvacioun  
Of hem that been in sorwe and in distresse,  
Now helpe, for to my werk I wol me dresse !

Yet preye I yow that reden that I write,  
Foryeve me that I do no diligence  
This ilk storie subtilly to endite, 80  
For bothe have I the wordés and sentence  
Of hym that at the seintés reverence  
The storie wroot, and folwen hire legende ;  
I pray yow that ye wole my werk amende.

*Interpretacio nominis Cecilie*

First wolde I yow the name of Seinte  
Cecile

Expowne, as men may in hir storie see.  
It is to seye in Engliſsh 'hevenes lillie,'  
For puré chaastnesse of virginitee,  
Or for she whitnesse hadde of honestee,  
And grene of conscience, and of good fame  
The sooté savour, lillie was hir name ; 91

Or Cecile is to seye 'the wey to blynde,'  
For she ensample was by good techynge ;  
Or ellés Cecile, as I writen fynde,  
Is joynd by a manere conjoynynge  
Of 'hevene' and 'lia,' and heere, in  
figurynge,  
The 'hevene' is set for thoght of hoolynesse  
And 'lia' for hire lastynge bisynesse.

Cecile may eek be seyde in this manere  
Wantynge of blyndnesse, for hir greté  
light 100

Of sapience, and for hire thewés cleere ;  
Or ellés, loo, this maydens namé bright  
Of 'hevene' and 'leos' comth, for which  
by right  
Men myghte hire wel the hevene of peple  
calle,  
Ensamble of goode and wisé werkés alle.

For 'leos' 'peple' in Engliſsh is to seye ;  
and right as men may in the hevene see

87. *hevenes lillie*, 'cœli lillia.'

92. *the wey to blynde*, 'cæcis via.'

103. *leos*, Gk. *λεως*.

The sonne, and moone, and sterrés,  
every weye,

Right so men goostly in this mayden free  
Syen of feith the magnanymytee, 110  
And eek the cleernesse hool of sapience,  
And sondry werkes brighte of excellence.

And right so as thise philosophres write  
That hevene is swift, and round, and eek  
brennyngé,

Right so was fairé Cecilie the white,  
Ful swift and bisy ever, in good werkynge ;  
And round and hool in good perséverynge,  
And brennyngé ever in charite ful brighte :  
Now have I yow declaréd what she highte.

*Here bigynneth The Seconde Nonnes Tale  
of the lyf of Seinte Cecile*

This mayden bright, Cecile, as hir lif  
seith, 120  
Was comen of Romayns and of noble  
kynde,

And from hir cradel up fostred in the feith  
Of Crist, and bar his gospel in hir mynde.  
She never cesséd, as I writen fynde,  
Of hir preyere, and God to love and drede,  
Bisekyngé hym to kepe hir maydenhede.

And whan this mayden sholde unto a man  
Y-wedded be, that was ful yong of age,  
Which that y-clepéd was Valerian,  
And day was comen of hir marriage, 130  
She ful devout and humble in hire corage,  
Under hir robe of gold that sat ful faire,  
Hadde next hire flessh y-clad hire in an  
haire ;

And whil the organs maden melodie,  
To God allone in herté thus sang she :  
'O Lord, my soule and eek my body  
gye  
Unwemméd, lest that I confounded be ;  
And for his love that dyde upon a tree,  
Every secónde or thridde day she faste  
Ay biddynge in hire orisons ful faste. 140

The nyght cam, and to beddè moste  
she gon

With hire housbonde, as ofte is the manere,  
 And pryvely to hym she seyde anon,  
 'O sweete and wel-bilovéd spouse deere,  
 Ther is a conseil, and ye wolde it heere,  
 Which that right fayn I wolde unto yow  
 seye,  
 So that ye swere ye shul it nat biwreye.'

Valerian gan faste unto hire swere  
 That for no cas, ne thyng that myghte be,  
 He sholdé never mo biwreien here; <sup>150</sup>  
 And thanne at erst to hym thus seyde she :  
 'I have an aungel which that loveth me,  
 That with greet love, wher so I wake or  
 sleepe,  
 Is redy ay my body for to kepe ;

And if that he may feelen, out of drede,  
 That ye me touche or love in vileynye,  
 He right anon wol sle yow with the dede,  
 And in youre yowthe thus ye sholden dye ;  
 And if that ye in clené love me gye,  
 He wol yow loven as me for youre clenesse,  
 And shewen yow his joye and his  
 brightnesse.' <sup>161</sup>

Valerian, corrected as God wolde,  
 Answerde agayn, 'If I shal trusten thee  
 Lat me that aungel se, and hym biholde,  
 And if that it a verray angel bee,  
 Thanne wol I doon as thou hast prayéd me ;  
 And if thou love another man, for sothe,  
 Right with this swerd thanne wol I sle  
 yow bothe !'

Cecile answerde anon right in this wise :  
 'If that yow list, the angel shul ye see,  
 So that ye trowe in Crist, and yow baptize.  
 Gooth forth to *Via Apia*,' quod shee,  
 'That fro this toun nestant but milés three,  
 And to the pouré folkés that ther dwelle  
 Seyhem right thus as that I shal yow telle.

'Tell hem that I, Cecile, yow to hem  
 sente

<sup>142.</sup> *as ofte is the manere*, Chaucer's tag. Cp. *and ye wolde it heere*, l. 145; *wher so I wake or sleepe*, l. 153, and many more.

<sup>172.</sup> *Via Apia*. Chaucer seems to take this as the name of a place. The Latin says 'the third milestone on the Appian road.'

To shewen yow the goode Urban the olde,  
 For secree needés, and for good entente ;  
 And whan that ye Seint Urban han biholde,  
 Telle hym the wordés whiche that I yow  
 tolde, <sup>180</sup>  
 And whan that he hath purgéd yow fro  
 synne,  
 Thanne shul ye see that angel, er ye  
 twynne.'

Valerian is to the place y-gon,  
 And right as hym was taught by his  
 lernynge,  
 He foond this hooly olde Urban anon,  
 Among the seintés buryeles lotynge ;  
 And he anon, withouten tariynge,  
 Dide his messáge ; and whan that he it  
 tolde,  
 Urban for joye his handés gan up holde ;

The teeris from his eyen leet he falle. <sup>190</sup>  
 'Almyghty Lord ! O Jhesu Crist,'  
 quod he,  
 'Sower of chast conseil, hierde of us alle,  
 The fruyt of thilké seed of chastitee  
 That thou hast sowe in Cecile, taak to thee !  
 Lo, lyk a bisy bee, withouten gile,  
 Thee serveth ay thyn owene thral Cecile ;

For thilké spouse that she took right now,  
 Ful lyk a fiers leoun, she sendeth heere  
 As meke as ever was any lamb, to yow' :  
 And with that word anon ther gan appere  
 An oold man, clad in whité clothés cleere,  
 That hadde a book with lettre of gold,  
 in honde,  
 And gan bifore Valerian to stonde.

Valerian, as deed, fil down for drede  
 Whan he hym saugh, and he up hente  
 hym tho,  
 And on his book right thus he gan to rede  
 'O Lord, o feith, o God, withouten mo  
 O Cristendom, and Fader of alle also,  
 Aboven alle, and over alle, everywhere'  
 These wordés al with gold y-writen were

<sup>195.</sup> *bisy bee*, Latin : 'apis argumentosa,' delightful phrase for Cecilia.

<sup>208.</sup> *O Cristendom*, Latin : 'unum baptisma.'

Whan this was rad, thanne seyde this  
 oldē man, 211  
 'Leevestow this thyng; or no? Sey ye  
 or nay.'  
 'I leeve al this thyng,' quod Valerian,  
 'For oother thyng than this, I dar welsay,  
 Under the hevene no wight thynkē may.'  
 Tho vanysshed this olde man, he nyste  
 where,  
 And Pope Urban hym cristned right there.

Valerian gooth hoom and fynt Cecile  
 Withinne his chambre with an angel  
 stonde.

This angel hadde of roses and of lilie 220  
 Córones two, the which he bar in honde;  
 And first to Cecile, as I understonde,  
 He yaf that oon, and after gan he take  
 That oother to Valerian, hir make.

'With body clene, and with unwemmēd  
 thoght,

Kepeth ay wel these córones,' quod he;  
 'Fro paradys to yow have I hem broght,  
 Ne never mo ne shal they roten bee,  
 Ne lese hir sootē savour, trusteth me;  
 Ne never wight shal seen hem with hiseye,  
 But he be chaast and hatē vileynye; 231

And thow, Valerian, for thow so soone  
 Assentedest to good conseil also,  
 Sey what thee list, and thou shalt han  
 thy boone.'

I have a brother,' quod Valerian tho,  
 That in this world I lovē no man so;  
 pray yow that my brother may han grace  
 'oknowethe trouthe, as I do in this place.'

he angel seyde, 'God liketh thy requeste,  
 and bothē with the palm of martirdom  
 e shullen come unto his blissful feste';  
 and with that word Tiburce his brother  
 com,

and whan that he the savour undernom  
 'hich that the roses and the lilies caste,  
 ithinne his herte he gan to wondre faste;

adseyde, 'I wondre, thistyme of theyeer,  
 hennēs that sootē savour cometh so

41. unto his blissful feste, 'ad Dominum.'

Of rose and lilies that I smellē heer;  
 For though I hadde hem in myne handēs  
 two 249

The savour myghte in me no depper go;  
 The sweetē smel that in myn herte I fynde  
 Hath chaungēd me al in another kynde.'

Valerian seyde, 'Two córones han we,  
 Snow white and rosē reed, that shynen  
 cleere,

Whiche that thyne eyen han no myght  
 to see;

And as thou smellest hem thurgh my  
 preyere,

So shaltow seen hem, leevē brother deere,  
 If it so be thou wolt, withouten slouthe,  
 Bileve aright and knowen verray trouthe.'

Tiburce answerdē, 'Seistow this to me  
 In soothnesse, or in dreem I herknē this?'

'In dremēs,' quod Valerian, 'han we be  
 Unto this tymē, brother myn, y-wis;

But now at erst in trouthe ourdwellyng is.'  
 'How woostow this,' quod Tiburce, 'in  
 what wyse?'

Quod Valerian, 'That shal I thee devyse.

The aungel of God hath me the trouthe  
 y-taught,

Which thou shalt seen, if that thou wolt  
 reneye

The ydoles, and beclene, and ellēs naught.'  
 (And of the myracle of these córones tweye,  
 Saint Ambrose in his preface list to seye,—

Solempnely this noble doctour deere  
 Commendeth it, and seith in this manere:

'The palm of martirdom for to receyve  
 Seintē Cecile, fulfilld of Goddēs yifte,  
 The world and eek hire chambre gan she  
 weyve;

Witnesse Tyburcēs and Valerians shrifte,  
 To which God of his bountee woldē shifte  
 Córones two of floures wel smellynge,  
 And made his angel hem the córones  
 brynge; 280

The mayde hath broght these men to  
 blisse above;

251. 'Ita sum refectus.'

The world hath wist what it is worth  
 certeyn,  
 Devocioun of chastitee to love.)  
 Thoshowed hym Cecile, a lopen and pleyn,  
 That alle ydoles nys but a thyng in veyn;  
 For they been dombe and therto they  
 been deve,  
 And chargèd hym his ydoles for to leve.

'Who so that troweth nat this, a beest  
 he is,'  
 Quod tho Tiburce, 'if that I shal nat lye,'  
 And shegan kisse his brest that herdè this,  
 And was ful glad he koudè trouthe espye.  
 'This day I takè thee for myn allye,'  
 Seydè this blissful, fairè maydè, deere,  
 And after that she seyde as ye may heere :

'Lo, right soas the love of Crist,' quod she,  
 'Made me thy brotheres wyf, right in  
 that wise  
 Anon for myn allye heer take I thee,  
 Syn that thou wolt thyne ylolès despise;  
 Go with thy brother now, and thee baptise,  
 And make thee clene so that thou mowe  
 biholde <sup>300</sup>  
 The angeles face, of which thy brother  
 tolde.'

Tiburce answerde and seyde, 'Brother  
 dere,  
 First tell me whider I shal, and to what  
 man?'

'To whom?' quod he; 'com forth with  
 right good cheere;  
 I wol thee lede unto the Pope Urban.'  
 'Til Urban, brother myn Valerian?'  
 Quod tho Tiburce; 'woltow me thider  
 lede?  
 Me thynketh that it were a wonder dede.

Ne menestow nat Urban,' quod he tho,  
 'That is so oftè dampnèd to be deed, <sup>310</sup>  
 And woneth in halkes alwey to and fro,  
 And dar nat onès puttè forth his heed?  
 Men sholde hym brennen in a fyr so reed,  
 If he were founde, or that men myghte  
 hym spye,  
 And we also to bere hym compaignye;

<sup>292.</sup> 'Hodie te fateor meum esse cognatum,' I  
 own you are really of my kin.

And whil we seken thilke divinitee,  
 That is y-hid in hevne pryvèly,  
 Algate y-brend in this world shul we be!  
 To whom Cecile answerdè boldèly,  
 'Men myghten dreden wel and skilfully  
 This lyf to lese, myne owene deerè brother,  
 If this were lyvyng oonly, and noon  
 oother;

But ther is bettre lif in oother place,  
 That never shal be lost, ne drede thee  
 noght,  
 Which Goddès sone us toldè thurgh his  
 grace;  
 That Fadrèssone hath allè thyng y-wrought,  
 And al that wrought is with a skilful thought  
 The Goost, that fro the Fader gan procede,  
 Hath sowled hem, withouten any drede.

By word and by myracle, Goddès sone,  
 Whan he was in this world, declarèd heere  
 That ther was oother lyf ther men may  
 wone.'

To whom answerde Tiburce, 'O suster  
 deere,  
 Ne seydestow right now in this manere,  
 "Ther nys but o God, lord in soothfast  
 nesse,"—  
 And now of three how maystow bere  
 wittnesse?'

'That shal I tellè,' quod she, 'ere I go  
 Right as a man hath sapiences three,  
 Memorie, engyn, and intellect also,  
 So in o beyng of divinitee <sup>34</sup>  
 Thrè personès may ther right wel bee'  
 Tho gan she hym ful bisely to preche  
 Of Cristès come, and of his peynès teche

And many pointès of his passioun,  
 How Goddès sone in this world was  
 withholde  
 To doon mankyndè playn remissioun,  
 That was y-bounde in synne and car  
 colde;

Al this thyng she unto Tiburce tolde,

<sup>322.</sup> 'Si hæc sola esset vita.'

<sup>346.</sup> Hitherto Chaucer has translated literally  
 only eking out his stanzas with tags; he now  
 begins to abridge, at the same time adding stanzas  
 of his own.



And after this Tiburce in good entente  
With Valerian to Pope Urban he wente,

That thanked God, and with glade herte  
and light, 351

He cristned hym, and made hym in that  
place

Parfit in his lernyngé, Goddès knyght ;  
And after this Tiburcè gat swich grace  
That every day he saugh in tyme and space  
The angel of God, and every maner boone  
That he God axéd, it was sped ful soone.

It were ful hard by ordre for to seyn  
How manye wondres Jhesus for hem  
wroghte ; 359

But attè laste, to tellen short and pleyn,  
The sergeantz of the toun of Rome hem  
soghte,

And hem biforn Almache, the Prefect,  
broghte,

Which hem apposed, and knew al hire  
entente,

And to the ymage of Juppiter hem sente ;

And seyde, ' Whoso wol nat sacrificise,  
Swape of his heed ; this mysentencè heer !'  
Anon these martirs that I yow devyse,  
Don Maximus, that was an officer  
Of the Prefectes, and his corniculer,  
Iem hente, and whan he forth the  
seintès ladde, 370  
Iymself he weepe for pitee that he hadde.

Whan Maximus had herd the seintès  
loore,

He gat hym of the tormentourès leve,  
and ladde hem to his hous, withoutè moore,  
and with hir prechyng, er that it were eve,  
hey gonnen fro the tormentours to reve,  
and fro Maxime, and fro his folk echone,  
he falsè feith, to trowe in God allone.

Cecilè cam, whan it was woxen nyght,  
with preestès, that hem cristned all y-feere ;  
and afterward, whan day was woxen light,  
cecile hem seyde with a fulstedefast cheere,

360. *atte laste*. The offence alleged in the  
*gend* is the burial of the bodies of martyrs.

' Now, Cristès owene knyghtès, leeve,  
and deere,

Cast alle away the werkès of derknesse,  
And armeth yow in armure of brightnesse.

Ye han, for sothe, y-doon a greet bataille,  
Youre cours is doon, youre feith han ye  
conserved.

Gooth to the corone of lyf, that may nat  
faillè ;

The rightful Jugè, which that ye han served,  
Shal yeve it yow, as ye han it deserved ;  
And whan this thing was seyde as I devyse,  
Men ledde hem forth to doon the sacrificise.

But whan they weren to the place  
y-broght, —

To tellen shortly the conclusioun, —  
They nolde encense ne sacrificise right noght,  
But on hir knees they setten hem adoun  
With humble herte and sad devocioun,  
And losten bothe hir hevedes in the place ;  
Hir soulès wenten to the kyng of grace.

This Maximus, that saugh this thyng  
bityde, 400

With pitous teeris tolde it anon right,  
That he hir soulès saugh to hevене glyde,  
With angelsful of cleernesse and of light ;  
And with his word converted many a wight,  
For which Almachius dide hym so to-bete,  
With whippe of leed, til he his lif gan lete.

Cecile hym took, and buried hym anon  
By Tiburce and Valerian softely  
Withinne hire buriyng-place under the  
stoon ;

And after this Almachius hastily 410  
Bad his ministres fecchen openly  
Cecile, so that she myghte in his presence  
Doon sacrifice, and Juppiter encense ;

But they, converted at hir wisè loore,  
Wepten ful soore, and yaven ful credence  
Unto hire word, and cryden moore and  
moore,

' Crist, Goddès sone, withouten difference  
Is verray God, this is al oure sentence,

That hath so good a servant hym to serve ;  
This with o voys we trowen, thogh we  
sterve !' 420

Almachius that herde of this doynge  
Bad fecchen Cecile that he myght hire see ;  
And alderfirst, lo this was his axynge,  
'What maner womman artow?' tho  
quod he.

'I am a gentil womman born,' quod she.  
'I axè thee,' quod he, 'though it thee  
greeve,  
Of thy religioun, and of thy bileeve.'

'Ye han bigonne youre question folily,'  
Quod she, 'that wolden two answeres  
conclude

In o demande ; ye axèd lewedly.' 430  
Almache answerde unto that similitude,  
'Of whennès comth thyn answering so  
rude?'

'Of whennès?' quod she, whan that  
she was freyned ;  
'Of conscience, and of good feith  
unfeyned.'

Almachius seyde, 'Ne takestow noon  
heede  
Of my powér?' And she answerde hym  
this :

'Your myght,' quod she, 'ful litel is to  
dreede,

For every mortal mannès power nys  
But lyke a bladdre, ful of wynd, y-wys ;  
For with a nedles poynt whan it is blowe  
May al the boost of it be leyd ful lowe.'

'Ful wrongfully bigonnè thow,' quod he,  
'And yet in wrong is thy perséveraunce ;  
Wostow nat how oure myghty princes free  
Han thus comanded and maad ordinaunce,  
That every Cristen wight shal han  
penaunce,

But if that he his Cristendom withseye ;  
And goon al quit, if he wole it reneye?'

'Yowre princes erren, as youre nobleye  
dooth,' 449

Quod tho Cecile, 'and with a wood sentence  
Ye make us gilty, and it is nat sooth ;

For ye that knowen wel oure innocence,—  
For as muche as we doon a reverence  
To Crist, and for we berea Cristen name,—  
Ye putte on us a cryme, and eek a blame ;

But we, that knowen thilkè namè so  
For vertuous, we may it not withseye.'  
Almache answerde, 'Chees oon of thisè  
two,—

Do sacrifice, or Cristendom reneye, 459  
That thou mowe now escapen by that weye.'  
At which the hooly blisful fairè mayde  
Gan for to laughe, and to the jugè sayde,

'O jugè, confus in thy nycètee !  
Woltow that I reneyè innocence,  
To makè me a wikked wight?' quod she.  
Lo, he dissymuleth heere in audience,  
He stareth, and woodeth in his adver-  
tence.

To whom Almachius, 'Unsely wrecche !  
Ne woostow nat how far my myght may  
strecche ?

Han noght oure myghty princes to me  
yeven, 470

Ye, bothè power and auctoritee  
To maken folk to dyen or to lyven ?  
Whyspekestow so proudly thanne to me?'

'I speké noght but stedfastly,' quod she,  
'Nat proudly, for, I speke as for my syde,  
We haten deedly thilkè vice of pryde ;

And if thou dredè nat a sooth to heere,  
Thanne wol I shewe al openly by right  
That thou hast maad a ful gret lesyng heere.  
Thou seyest thy princes han thee yeven  
myght 480

Bothe for to sleen and for to quyken a wight ;  
Thou that ne mayst but oonly lyf bireve,  
Thou hast noon oother power, ne no leve :

But thou mayst seyn thy princes han  
thèe makèd

Ministre of death, for if thou speke of mo,  
Thou lyest, for thy power is ful naked !'

'Do wey thy booldnesse !' seyde Alma-  
chius tho,

'And sacrificie to oure goddès er thou go !

I recché nat what wrong that thou me  
 profre,  
 For I can suffre it as a philosopfre, 490

But thilké wrongès may I nat endure,  
 That thou spekest of oure goddès heere,  
 quod he.

Cecile answerde, 'O nycé creature!  
 Thou seydest no word syn thou spak to me  
 That I ne knew therwith thy nycétee,  
 And that thou were in every maner wise  
 A lewéd officer and a veyn justise!

Ther lakketh no thyng to thyne outter eyen  
 That thou nart blynd, for thyng that we  
 seen alle

That it is stoon,—that men may wel  
 espyen,— 500

That ilké stoon a god thou wolt it calle.  
 I rede thee, lat thyn hand upon it falle,  
 And taste it wel, and stoon thou shalt it  
 fynde,

syn that thou seest nat with thyne eyen  
 blynde.

It is a shamé that the peple shal  
 scoorné thee, and laughe at thy folye;  
 For comunly men woot it wel overal  
 That myghty God is in his hevenès hye,  
 and thise ymáges, wel thou mayst espye,  
 'o thee, ne to himself, mowen noght  
 profite, 510  
 'or in effect they been nat worth a myte.'

Whise wordès and swiche other seyde she;  
 and he weex wrooth, and bad men  
 sholde hir lede

com til hir house, and 'In hir hous,  
 quod he,

Brenne hire right in a bath of flamès  
 rede';

and as he bad, right so was doon in dede,  
 'or in a bath they gonne hire fasté shetten,  
 and nyght and day greet fyre they under  
 betten.

He longe nyght, and eek a day also,  
 for al the fyr, and eek the bathès heete,

489-497. Chaucer's addition.  
 505-511. Added.

She sat al coold and felte of it no wo;  
 It made hire nat a dropé for to sweete;  
 But in that bath hir lyf she mosté lete,  
 For he, Almachius, with ful wikke entente  
 To sleen hire in the bath his sondé sente.

Thre strokés in the nekke he smoot hire  
 tho,

The tormentour, but for nomaner chaunce  
 He myghté noght smyt al hir nekke atwo;  
 And for ther was that tyme an ordinaunce,  
 That no man sholde doon men swich  
 penaunce 530

The ferthe strook to smyten, softe or soore,  
 This tormentour ne dorsté do namoore;

But half deed, with hir nekke y-corven  
 there,

He lefte hir lye, and on his wey is went.

The Cristen folk which that aboute hire  
 were,

With sheetès han the blood ful faire y-hent.

Thre dayès lyvéd she in this torment,  
 And never cesséd hem the feith to teche  
 That she hadde fostred; hem she gan to  
 preche; 539

And hem she yaf hir moebles, and hir thyng,  
 And to the Pope Urban bitook hem tho,  
 And seyde, 'I axéd this at hevene kyng,  
 To han respit thre dayès and namo,  
 To recomende to yow, er that I go,  
 Thise soulès, lo, and that I myghte do  
 werche

Heere of myn hous perpetuelly a cherche.'

Seint Urban, with his deknès, prively  
 The body fette, and buryed it by nyghte  
 Among his other seintès honestly.

Hir hous the chirche of Sainte Cecilie  
 highte; 550

Seint Urban halwéd it, as he wel myghte,  
 In which, into this day, in noble wyse,  
 Men doon to Crist and to hisseintes servyse.

*The prologe of the Chanons Yemannes  
 Tale*

Whan toold was al the lyf of Sainte  
 Cecile,

535, 536. Added.

Er we hadde riden fully fyve mile,  
 At Boghton-under-Blee, us gan atake  
 A man that clothed was in clothés blake,  
 And undernethe he had a white surplys ;  
 His hackeney, which that was al pomely  
 gryns,

So swattè that it wonder was to see; 560  
 It semed as he had prikéd milés three.  
 The hors eek that his Yeman rood upon  
 So swattè that unnethè myghte it gon ;  
 Aboute the peytrel stood the foom ful hye,  
 He was of foom al flekkéd as a pye.  
 A male tweyfoold upon his croper lay,  
 It seméd that he caried lite array.

Al light for somer rood this worthy man,  
 And in myn hertè wondren I bigan  
 What that he was, til that I understood 570  
 How that his cloke was sowéd to his hood,  
 For which, whan I hadde long avyséd me,  
 I deméd hym som Chanoun for to be.  
 His hat heeng at his bak doun by a laas,  
 For he hadde riden moore than trot or  
 paas ;

He hadde ay prikéd lik as he were wood.  
 A cloté-leef he hadde under his hood  
 For swoot, and for to kepe his heed from  
 heete ;

But it was joyè for to seen hym swete !  
 His forheed dropped as a stillatorie 580  
 Were ful of plantayne and of paritorie ;  
 And whan that he was come he gan to crye,  
 ‘Godsave,’ quod he, ‘this joly compaignye !  
 Faste have I prikéd,’ quod he, ‘for youre  
 sake,

By-causè that I woldè yow atake  
 To riden in this myrie compaignye.’  
 His Yeman eek was ful of curteisye,  
 And seyde, ‘Sires, now in the morwétyde,  
 Out of youre hostelrie I saugh you ryde,  
 And warnéd heer my lord, and my  
 soverayn, 590

Which that to ryden with yow is ful fayn,  
 For his desport ; he loveth daliaunce.’

‘Freend, for thy warnyng God yeveth  
 good chaunce !’

Thanne seyde oure Hoost, ‘for certès it  
 wolde seme

Thylord were wys, and so I may wel deme ;  
 He is ful jocunde also, dar I leye !  
 Can he oght telle a myrie tale or tweye,  
 With which he gladè may this com-  
 paignye?’

‘Who, sire? mylord? ye, ye, withouten  
 lye ! 599

He kan of murthe, and eek of jolitee  
 Nat but ynough ; also, sire, trusteth me,  
 And ye hym knewè as wel as do I,  
 Ye woldè wondre how wel and craftily  
 He koudè werke, and that in sondry wise.  
 He hath take on hym manya greet emprise,  
 Which were ful hard for any that is heere  
 To brynge about, but they of hym it leere.  
 As hoomey as he rit amongès yow,  
 If yehym knewe it wolde be for yourepro ;  
 Ye woldè nat forgoon his áqueyntaunce  
 For muchel good, I dar leye in balaunce  
 Al that I have in my possessioun.  
 He is a man of heigh discrecioun ;  
 I warne yow wel, he is a passyng man.’

‘Wel,’ quod oure Hoost, ‘I pray thee  
 tel me than

Is he a clerk or noon? Telle what he is.’

‘Nay, he is gretter than a clerk, y-wis,’  
 Seyde this Yeman, ‘and in wordès fewe,  
 Hoost, of his craft somwhat I wol yow  
 shewe. 619

‘I seye, mylord kan swich subtilitee,—  
 But al his craft ye may nat wite at me,  
 And somwhat helpe I yet to his wirkyng,—  
 That al this ground on which we been  
 ridyng,

Til that we come to Caunterbury toun,  
 He koude al clenè turne it up-so-doun,  
 And pave it al of silver and of gold.’

And whan this Yeman hadde this tale  
 y-told

Un to oure Hoost, he seyde, ‘*Benedicitee!*  
 This thyng is wonder merveillous to me,  
 Syn that thy lord is of so heigh prudence,  
 By cause of which men sholde hym  
 reverence, 631

That of his worshipe rekketh he so lite.  
 His overslopè nys nat worth a myte,  
 As in effect, to hym, so moot I go !  
 It is al bawdy and to-tore also.

Why is thy lord so sluttissh, I the preye,

603. *craftily, H<sup>b</sup> thriftily.*

555. *fyve mile, i.e. from Ospringe.*  
 573. *som Chanoun.* The description accords  
 with that of a ‘black Augustinian.’

And is, of power bettre clooth to beye,—  
If that his dede accordè with thy speche?  
Tellè me that, and that I thee biseche.'

'Why?' quod this Yeman, 'wherto axe  
ye me?' 640

God help me so, for he shal never thee!—  
But I wol nat avowè that I seye,  
And therefore keepe it secree, I yow  
preye,—

He is to wys, in feith, as I bileeve;  
That that is overdoon it wol nat preeve  
Aright; as clerkès seyn, it is a vice.  
Wherefore in that I holde hym lewed and  
nyce;

For whan a man hath over-greet a wit,  
Ful oft hym happeth to mysusen it.  
So dooth my lord, and that me greveth  
soore. 650

God it amende! I kan sey yow namoore.'  
'Ther-of no fors, good Yeman,' quod  
oure Hoost,

'Syn of the konnyng of thy lord thow woost,  
Telle how he dooth, I pray thee hertely,  
Syn that he is so crafty and so sly;  
Where dwellè ye, if it to tellè be?'

'In the suburbès of a toun,' quod he,  
'Lurkyng in hernès, and in lanès blynde,  
Where as thise robours and thise theves  
by kynde,

Holden hir pryvee sereful residence, 660  
As they that dar nat shewen hir presence;  
So faren we, if I shal seye the sothe.'

'Now,' quod oure Hoost, 'yet lat me  
talke to the;

Why artow so discoloured of thy face?'

'Peter!' quod he, 'God yeve it hardè  
grace,

I am so usèd in the fyr to blowe,  
That it hath chaungèd my colour, I trowe.  
I am nat wont in no mirour to prie,  
But swynkè soore, and lernè multiple;  
We blondren ever, and pouren in the fir,  
And for al that we faille of our desir, 671  
For ever we lakken oure conclusioun.

To muchel folk we doon illusioun,  
And borwè gold, be it a pound or two,  
Or ten, or twelve, or manye sommès mo,  
And make hem wenen, at the leestè weye,  
That of a pound we koudè makè tweye;  
Yet is it fals; but ay we han good hope

It for to doon and after it we grope;  
But that sciéce is so fer us biforn 680  
We mowen nat, al though we hadde it  
sworn,

It over-take, it slit away so faste.  
It wole us maken beggers attè laste.'

Whil this Yeman was thus in his talkyng  
This Chanoun drough hym neer, and herde  
al thyng

Which this Yeman spak, for suspecioun  
Of mennès speche ever haddè this  
Chanoun;

For Catoun seith that he that gilty is  
Demeth alle thyng bespoken of hym, y-wis.  
That was the cause he gan so nyhym drawe  
To his Yeman, to herknen al his sawe,  
And thus he seyde unto his Yeman tho:

'Hoold thou thy pees, and spek no  
wordès mo!

For if thou do, thou shalt it decre abyel  
Thou sclaudrest me, heere in this  
compaignye,

And eek discoverest that thou sholdest  
hyde.'

'Ye?' quod our Hoost, 'telle on what  
so bityde;

Of al his thretyng rekkè nat a myte!'

'In feith,' quod he, 'namoore I do  
but lyte.'

And whan this Chanoun saugh it wolde  
nat be, 700

But his Yeman wolde telle his pryvètee,  
He fledde away for verray sorwe and  
shame.

'A!' quod the Yeman, 'heere shal  
arise a game;

Al that I kan anon now wol I telle,  
Syn he is goon,—the foulè feend hym  
quelle!

For never heer-after wol I with hym meete,  
For peny ne for pound, I yow biheete!  
He that me broghtè first unto that game,  
Er that he dye, sorwe have he and shame;  
For it is ernest to me, by my feith! 710  
That feele I wel, what so any man seith.  
And yet for al my smert, and al my grief,

688. *Catoun: De Morib.* i. 17: 'Consciuis ipse  
sibi de se putat omnia dici.'

690. *That was the cause, II<sup>5</sup> By cause of  
that.*

For al my sorwè, labour, and meschief,  
 I koudè never leve it in no wise.  
 Now woldè God, my wittè myghte suffice  
 To tellen al that longeth to that art ;  
 And nathèles yow wol I tellen part ;  
 Syn that my lord is goon I wol nat spare ;  
 Swich thyng as that I knowe I wol declare.'

### CANON'S YEOMAN'S TALE

*Heere bigynneth the Chanouns Yeman his  
 Tale*

#### [PART I]

With this Chanoun I dwelt have seven  
 yeer, 720  
 And of his science am I never the neer ;  
 Al that I hadde I have y-lost ther-by,  
 And, God woot, so hath many mo than I.  
 Ther I was wont to be right fressh and gay  
 Of clothyng and of oother good array,  
 Now may I were an hose upon myn heed ;  
 And wher my colour was bothe fressh  
 and reed,  
 Now is it wan and of a leden hewe,—  
 Who so it useth, soorè shal he rewe,—  
 And of myswynk yet blerèd is myn eye ; 730  
 Lo, which advantage is to multiplie !  
 That slidyng science hath me maad so  
 bare,  
 That I have no good wher that ever I fare ;  
 And yet I am endetted so ther-by,  
 Of gold that I have borwèd, trewely,  
 That whil I lyve I shal it quitè never,—  
 Lat every man be war by me for ever.  
 What maner man that casteth hym ther-to,  
 If he continue, I holde his thrift y-do ;  
 For, so helpe me God, ther-by shal he  
 nat wyne, 740  
 But empte his purs, and make his wittès  
 thynne ;  
 And whan he thurgh his madnesse and folye  
 Hath lost his owene good thurgh jupartye,  
 Thanne he exciteth oother folk ther-to,  
 To lesen hir good, as he hymself hath do ;  
 For unto shrewès joye it is and ese,  
 To have hir felawes in peyne and disese,—  
 Thus was I onès lernèd of a clerk.  
 Of that no charge, I wol speke of oure werk.  
 Whan we been there as we shul exercise

Oure elvysshecraft, we semen wonder wise,  
 Oure termès been so clerghial and so  
 queynte ;

I blowe the fir til that myn hertè feynte.  
 What shoïde I tellen eche porporcioun  
 Of thyngès whichè that we werche upon ;  
 As on fyve or sixe ounces, may wel be,  
 Of silver, or som oother quantitee ;  
 And bisye me to tellè yow the names  
 Of orpyment, brent bonès, iren squames,  
 That into poudrè grounden been ful smal ?  
 And in an erthen pot how put is al, 761  
 And salt y-put in, and also papeer,  
 Biforn thise poudrès that I speke of heer,  
 And wel y-covered with a lampe of glas ;  
 And muchel oother thyng which that  
 ther was,

And of the pot and glasses enlutyng,  
 That of the eyr myghtè passe out no thyng,  
 And of the esy fir, and smart also,  
 Which that was maad, and of the care and wo  
 That we hadden in oure matires sublymyng,  
 And in amalgamyng and calcenyng 771  
 Of quyk-silver, y-clept mercurie crude ;  
 For alle our sleightès we kan nat conclude.  
 Oure orpyment and sublymèd mercurie,  
 Oure grounden litarge eek on the porfurie,  
 Of ech of thise of ounces a certeyn,  
 Noght helpeth us, oure labour is in veyn ;  
 Ne eek oure spiritès ascencioun,  
 Ne oure matires that lyen al fix adoun,  
 Mowe in oure werkyng no thyng us availle ;  
 For lost is al oure labour and travaille, 781  
 And al the cost, a twenty devel way,  
 Is lost also, which we upon it lay.

Ther is also ful many another thyng  
 That is unto oure craft apertenyng,  
 Thogh I by ordre hem nat rehercé kan,  
 By-causè that I am a lewèd man ;  
 Yet wol I telle hem as they come to mynde,  
 Thogh I ne kan nat sette hem in hir  
 kynde,—

As boole armonyak, vertgrees, boras, 790  
 And sondry vessels maad of erthe and glas ;  
 Oure urynals, and our descensories,  
 Violes, crosletz, and sublymatories,  
 Cucurbitès, and alambikès eek,  
 And othere swichè, deere ynough a leek ;

790. boole armonyak, astringent earth, from  
 Armenia.

Nat nedeth it for to reherce hem alle,—  
 Wátres rubifyng, and bolés galle,  
 Arsenyk, sal armonyak, and brymstoon ;  
 And herbès koude I telle eek many oon,  
 As egremoyne, valerian, and lunárie, 800  
 And othere swiche, if that me listé tarie ;  
 Oure lampès 'brennyng bothé nyght and  
 day,

To brynge aboute oure purpos if we may ;  
 Oure fourneys eek of calcinacioun,  
 And of watrés albificacioun,  
 Unslekkéd lym, chalk, and gleyre of aney,  
 Poudrés diverse, asshes, donge, pisse, and  
 cley,

Cered pokettes, sal-peter and vitriole,  
 And diverse firés maad of wode and cole ;  
 Sal-tartre, alkaly and sal-preparat ; 810  
 And combust matires, and coagulat ;  
 Cley maad with hors and mannés heer,  
 and oille

Of tartre, alum, glas, berme, wort and  
 argoille,

Resalgar, and oure matires enbibyng,  
 And eek of oure matires encorporyng,  
 And of oure silver citrinacioun,  
 Oure cémentyng and fermentacioun,  
 Oure yngottés, testés, and many mo.

I wol yow telle as was me taught also  
 The fouré spirites and the bodies sevene,  
 By ordre, as ofte I herde my lord hem  
 nevene. 821

The firsté spirit quyk-silver called is,  
 The seconde orpyment, the thridde y-wis,  
 Sal-armonyak, and the ferthe brymstoon.  
 The bodyes sevene eek, lo, hem heere  
 anon !

Sol gold is, and Luna silver we threpe,  
 Mars iren, Mercurie quyk-silver we clepe,  
 Saturnus leed, and Juppiter is tyn,  
 And Venus copér, by my fader kyn.

This curséd craft whoso wol exercise 830  
 He shal no good han that hym may suffise ;  
 For al the good he spendeth ther-abouté  
 He lesé shal ; ther-of have I no doute.

Whoso that listeth outen his folie,  
 Lat hym come forth and lerné multiplie ;  
 And every man that oght hath in his cofre,  
 Lat hym appiere and wexe a philosophre ;  
 Ascauncé that crafte is so light to leere !  
 Nay, nay, God woot, al be he monk or frere,

Preest or chanoun, or any oother wyght, 840  
 Though he sitte at his book bothe day  
 and night

In lernyng of this elvysshe nycé loore,  
 Al is in veyn, and, *parde*, muchel moore !  
 To lerne a lewéd man this subtiltee,—  
 Fy ! spek nat ther-of, for it wol nat bee ;  
 And konne he letterure, or konne heneon,  
 As in effect he shal fynde it al oon ;  
 For bothé two, by my salvacioun,  
 Concluden in multiplicacioun  
 Yliké wel, whan they han al y-do,— 850  
 This is to seyn, they faillen bothé twó.

Yet forgat I to maken rehersaille  
 Of watrés corosif, and of lymaille,  
 And of bodies mollificacioun,  
 And also of hire induracioun,  
 Oillés, ablucions, and metal fusible,—  
 To tellen al wolde passen any bible  
 That owher is ; wherfore, as for the beste,  
 Of alle thise namés now wol I me reste,  
 For as I trowe I have yow toold ynowe 860  
 Toreyse a feend, al looke he never sorowe.

A ! nay ! lat be ; the philosophres stoon,  
 Elixer clept, we sechen faste echoon,  
 For hadde we hym, thanne were we siker  
 ynow ;

But, unto God of hevене I make avow,  
 For al oure craft, whan we han al y-do,  
 Withal oure sleighte, he wol nat come us to.  
 He hath y-made us spenden muchel good,  
 For sorwe of which almost we wexen  
 wood, 869

But that good hopé crepeth in oure herte,  
 Supposyng ever, though we soré smerte,  
 To be releevéd by hym afterward.

Swich supposyng and hope is sharpe and  
 hard ;

I warne yow wel it is to seken ever ;  
 That *futur temps* hath maad men to dis-  
 sever,

In trust ther-of, from al that ever they  
 hadde.

Yet of that art they kan nat wexen sadde,  
 For unto hem it is a bitter-sweete,—  
 So semeth it,—for naddé they but a sheete,  
 Which that they myghté wrappe hem  
 inne at nyght, 880

And a brat to walken inne by day-lyght,  
 881. *brat*, cloak ; H6 *bak*, back-cloth.

They wolde hem selle, and spenden on  
this craft ;

They kan nat stynté til no thyng be laft ;  
And evermooré, where that ever they goon,  
Men may hem knowé by smel of brymstoon.  
For al the world they styngen as a goot ;  
Hir savour is so rammyssh and so hoot  
That though a man a milé from hem be  
The savour wole infecte hym, trusté me.  
Lo thus by smellyng, and threedbare  
array, 890

If that men liste, this folk they knowé may ;  
And if a man wole aske hem pryvély,  
Why they been clothéd so unthriftily,  
They right anon wol rownen in his ere  
And seyn, that if that they espiéd were,  
Men wolde hem slee by-cause of hirsience.  
Lo, thus this folk bitrayen innocence !

Passé over this, I go my tale unto.  
Er that the pot be on the fire y-do,  
Of metals with a certeyn quantitee 900  
My lord hem tempreth, and no man but  
he,—

Now he is goon I dare seyn boldély,—  
For as men seyn he kan doon craftily,  
Algate I woot wel he hath swich a name,  
And yet ful oft he renneth in a blame ;  
And wite ye how? Ful ofte it happeth so  
The pot to-breketh, and farewel, al is go.  
These metals been of so greet violence  
Oure wallés mowe nat make hem  
resistence, 909

But if they weren wrought of lym and stoon,  
They percen so, and thurgh the wal they  
goon,

And somme of hem synken into the  
ground,—

Thus han we lost by tymés many a pound,—  
And somme are scatered al the floor aboute,  
Somme lepe into the roof, withoute doute.  
Though that the feend nocht in oure  
sighté hym shewe,

I trowe he with us be, that ilké shrewe !  
In hellé, where that he is lord and sire,  
Nis ther moore wo, ne moore rancour,  
ne ire. 919

Whan that oure pot is broke, as I have  
sayd,

Every man chit and halt hym yvele apayd.  
919. H<sup>5</sup> Nis ther no more wo, ne anger, ne ire.

Somme seyde it was along on the fir  
makyng,

Somme seyde nay, it was on the blowingng,—  
Thanne was I fered, for that was myn office.

‘Straw!’ quod the thridde, ‘ye been  
lewed and nyce,

It was nat tempréd as it oghté be.’

‘Nay,’ quod the fourthé, ‘stynt and  
herkné me ;

By-cause our fir ne was nat maad of beech,  
That is the cause, and oother noon, so  
theech.’

I kan nat telle wheron it was along, 930  
But wel I woot greet strif us is among.

‘What!’ quod my lord, ‘ther is  
namoore to doone ;

Of these perils I wol be war eft-soone.  
I am right siker that the pot was crased ;  
Be as be may, be ye no thyng amased.

As usage is, lat swepe the floor as swithe,  
Plukke up your hertés and beeth glad  
and blithe !’

The mullok on an heepe i-swepéd was,  
And on the floor y-cast a canévas, 939  
And al this mullok in a syve y-throwe,  
And sifted and y-pikéd many a throwe.

‘Pardee!’ quod oon, ‘somwhat of  
oure metal

Yet is ther heere, though that we han  
nat al.

Al though this thyng myshappéd have as  
now,

Another tyme it may be wel ynou.  
Us mosté putte oure good in aventure ;  
A marchant, *pardee!* may nat ay endure,  
Trusteth me wel, in his prosperitee.

Somtyme his good is drenchéd in the see,  
And somtyme comth it sauf unto the londe.’

‘Pees!’ quod my lord, ‘the nexte  
tyme I shal fonde 951

To bryngen oure craft al in another plite ;  
And but I do, sires, lat me han the wite ;  
Ther was defaute in somwhat, wel I woot.’

Another seyde the fir was over hoot ;  
But, be it hoot or coold, I dar seye this,  
That we concluden evermoore amys.

We faille of that which that we wolden  
have,

And in oure madnesse evermoore we rave ;

941. y-pikéd, picked over ; H<sup>5</sup> y-plukked.



And whan we been togidrés everichoon  
 Every man semeth a Salomon ; 961  
 But al thyng which that shyneth asthe gold,  
 Nis nat gold, as that I have herd it told ;  
 Ne every appul that is fair at eye  
 Ne is nat good, what somenclappeor crye.  
 Right so, lo, fareth it amongés us :  
 Hé that semeth the wiseste, by Jhesus,  
 Is moost fool, whan it cometh to the preef ;  
 And he that semeth trewest is a thief.  
 That shul ye knowe, er that I fro yow  
 wende, 970  
 By that I of my tale have maad an ende.

## [PART II]

Ther is a Chanoun of Religioun  
 Amongés us wolde infecte al a toun.  
 Thogh it as greet were as was Nynyvee,  
 Rome, Alisaundre, Troye, and othere  
 three.

His sleightés and his infinit falsnesse  
 Ther koudé no man writen, as I gesse,  
 Though that he lyvé myghte a thousand  
 yeer.

In al this world of falshede nis his peer,  
 For in his termés so he wolde hym  
 wynde, 980

And speke his wordés in so sly a kynde,  
 Whanne he comuné shal with any wight,  
 That he wol make hym doten anon right,  
 But it a feend be, as hymselfen is.

Ful many a man hath he bigiled er this,  
 And wole, if that he lyvé may a while ;  
 And yet men ride and goon ful many a mile  
 Hym for toseke and have hisaqueyntaunce,  
 Noght knowyng of his falsé governaunce ;  
 And if yow list to yeve me audience, 990  
 I wol it tellé heere in youre presence.

But, worshipful chanouns religious,  
 Ne demeth nat that I desclaundre youre  
 hous,

Although my talé of a chanoun bee ;  
 Of every ordre som shrewe is, *pardee*,  
 And God forbede that al a campaignye  
 Sholde rewe o singuleer mannés folye.  
 To sclaunder yow is no thyng myn entente,  
 But to correcten that is mys, I mente.  
 This talé was nat oonly toold for yow, 1000

978. *lyve myghte*, H<sup>6</sup> *nichte lyven*.

But eek for othere mo ; ye woot wel how  
 That among Cristés apostellés twelve  
 Ther nas no traytour but Judas hymselfe.  
 Thanne why sholde al the remenant have  
 a blame,  
 That giltles were ? By yow I seye the  
 same,  
 Save oonly this, if ye wol herkne me,—  
 If any Judas in youre covent be,  
 Remoeveth hym bitymés, I yow rede,  
 If shame, or los, may causen any drede,  
 And beeth no thyng displeséd, I yow  
 preye, 1010  
 But in this cas herketh what I shal seye.

In Londoun was a preest, an annuèleer,  
 That ther-inne dwelléd haddé many a yeer,  
 Which was so plesaut and so servysable  
 Unto the wyf, where as he was at table,  
 That she wolde suffre hym no thyng for  
 to paye

For bord ne clothyng, wente he never so  
 gaye ;

And spendyng silver hadde he right ynow.  
 Ther-of no fors, I wol procede as now,  
 And tellé forth my tale of the chanoun  
 That broghté this preest to confusioun.

This falsé chanoun cam upon a day  
 Unto this preestés chambre, wher he lay,  
 Bisechyng hym to lene hym a certeyn  
 Of gold, and he wolde quite it hym ageyn.  
 ‘Leene me a marc,’ quod he, ‘but dayés  
 three,

And at my day I wol it quiten thee ;  
 And if so be that thow me fyndé fals  
 Another day, do hange me by the hals.’

This preest hym took a marc, and that  
 as swithe, 1030

And this chanoun hym thankéd ofté sithe,  
 And took his leve, and wenté forthe his  
 weye,

And at the thriddé day broghte his moneye,  
 And to the preest he took his gold agayn,  
 Wher-of this preest was wonder glad and  
 fayn.

‘Certés,’ quod he, ‘no thyng anoyeth me  
 To lene a man a noble, or two, or three,

1012. *an*, om. E.1012. *annuèleer*, a priest employed to sing anniversary masses for the dead.

Or what thyng were in my possessioun,  
Whan he so trewe is of condicioun 1039  
That in no wise he brekè wole his day ;  
To swich a man I kan never seye nay.'

'What!' quod this chanoun, 'sholde  
I be untrewé?

Nay, that were thyng y-fallen al of newe.  
Trouthe is a thyng that I wol ever kepe,  
Unto that day in which that I shal crepe  
Into my grave, or ellis, God forbede!

Bileveth this, as siker as the Crede.  
God thanke I, and in good tymé be it sayd,  
That ther was never man yet yvele apayd  
For gold ne silver that he to me lente ;  
Ne never falskede in myn herte I mente ;  
And, sire,' quod he, 'now of my  
pryvètee,—

Syn ye so goodlich han been unto me,  
And kithéd to me so greet gentillesse,—  
Somwhat to quyte with youre kyndénesse  
I wol yow shewe, and if yow list to leere.

I wol yow teché pleynly the manere  
How I kan werken in philosophie ;  
Taket h good heede ye shul wel seen at eye  
That I wol doon a maistrie er I go.' 1060

'Ye,' quod the preest, 'ye, sire, and  
wol ye so?

Marie! ther-of I pray yow hertely.'

'At youre comandément, sire, trewely,'  
Quod the chanoun, 'and ellis God  
forbeede.'

Loo, how this thief koude his servicé  
beede!

Ful sooth it is that swiche profred servyse  
Stynketh, as witnessen thise oldé wyse ;  
And that ful soone I wol it verifie

In this chanoun, roote of alle trecherie,  
That ever moore delit hath and glad-  
nesse,— 1070

Swiche feendly thoughtés in his herte  
imprese,—

How Cristés peple he may to meschief  
brynge.

God kepe us from his false dissymulynge!  
Noght wisté this 'preest with whom  
that he delte,

Ne of his harm comyng he no thyng felte.  
O sely preest, O sely innocent!

With covetise anon thou shalt be blent.  
O gracedees, ful blynd is thy conceite,

No thyng ne artow war of the deceite  
Which that this fox y-shapen hath for thee ;  
His wily wrenchés thou ne mayst nat flee ;  
Wherefore, to go to the conclusioun  
That refereth to thy confusioun,  
Unhappy man, anon I wol me hye  
To tellen thyn unwit and thy folye,  
And eek the falsnesse of that oother  
wrecche,

As ferforth as my konnyngé may strecche.

This chanoun was my lord, ye wolden  
weene—

Sire Hoost, in feith, and by the hevenes  
queene,

It was another chanoun and nat hee, 1090  
That kan an hundred foold moore subtiltee.  
He hath bitrayéd folkés many tyme ;  
Of his falskede it dulleth me to ryme.

Ever whan I speke of his falskede,  
For shame of hym my chekés wexen rede ;  
Algatés they bigynnen for to glowe,  
For reednesse have I noon, right wel I  
knowe,

In my visagé ; for fumés diverse  
Of metals, whiche ye han herd mereherce,  
Consumed and wasted han my reedénesse.  
Now taak heede of this chanons curséd-  
nesse. 1101

'Sire,' quod he to the preest, 'lat youre  
man gon

For quyk-silver, that we hadde it anon,  
And lat hym bryngen ounces two or three,  
And whan he comth, as fasté shal ye see  
A wonder thyng which ye saugh never  
er this.'

'Sire,' quod the preest, 'it shal be  
doon y-wis.'

He bad hisservant fecchen hym this thyng,  
And he al redy was at his biddyng, 1109  
And wente hym forth, and cam anon agayn  
With this quyk-silver, soothly for to  
sayn ;

And toke this ounces thre to the chanoun,  
And he hem leyde faire and wel adoun,  
And bad the servant colés for to brynge.  
That he anon myghte go to his werkyng.

The colés right anon weren y-fet,  
And this chanoun took out a crossélet  
Of his bosom, and shewed it to the preest.

1111. *soothly, H<sup>5</sup> schortly.*

'This instrument,' quod he, 'which that  
thou seest,

Taake in thyn hand and put thyself therinne  
Of this quyk-silver an ounce, and heer  
bigynne, 1121

In the name of Crist, to wexe a filosofre.  
Ther been ful fewe to whiche I woldè profre  
To shewen hem thus muche of myscience :  
For ye shul seen heer by experience,  
That this quyk-silver wol I mortifye,  
Right in youre sighte anon, I wol nat lye,  
And make it as good silver and as fyn,  
As ther is any in youre purse or myn, 1130  
Or ellèswhere, and make it malliabe ;  
And ellès holdeth me fals and unable  
Amongès folk for ever to appeere.

I have a poudre heer, that coste me deere,  
Shal make al good, for it is cause of al  
My konnyng, which that I yow shewen  
shal.

Voydith youre man and lat hym be  
ther-oute,

And shette the dorè, whils we been aboute  
Oure pryvètee, that no man us espie,  
Whilès we werke in this filosofie.'

Al as he bad fulfillèd was in dede ; 1140  
This ilkè servant anonright out yede,  
And his maister shettè the dore anon,  
And to hire labour spedily they gon.

This preest at this cursèd chanouns  
biddýng

Upon the fir anon settè this thyng,  
And blew the fir and bisyed hym ful faste ;  
And this chanoun into the crosselet cast  
A poudre,—noot I wher-of that it was  
Y-maad, outhur of chalk, outhur of glas,  
Or somewhat ellès, was nat worth a flye,—  
To bynde with the preest, and bad hym hye  
The colès for to couchen al above  
The crosselet ; 'For in tokenyng I thee  
love,'

Quod this chanoun, 'thyne owene handès  
two

Shul werche al thyng which shal heer  
be do.'

'Graunt mercy!' quod the preest,  
and was ful glad,

And couchèd colès as that chanoun bad ;  
And while he bisy was, this feendly  
wrecche,

This false chanoun,—the foulè feend hym  
fecche !— 1159

Out of his bosom took a bechen cole,  
In which ful subtilly was maad an hole,  
And therinne put was of silver lemaille  
An ounce, and stoppèd was withouten faille  
The hole with wex, to kepe the lemaille in ;  
And understandeth, that this falsè gyn  
Was nat maad ther, but it was maad bifore ;  
And othere thyngès I shal tellen moore  
Herafterward, whiche that he with hym  
broghte ;

Er he cam there, hym to bigile he thoughte ;  
And so he dide, er that they wente  
atwynne ; 1170

Til he had tervèd hym, he koude nat  
blyne.

It dulleth me, whan that I of hym speke ;  
On his falschedè fayn wolde I me wreke,  
If I wiste how, but he is heere and there,  
He is so variaunt, he abit nowhere.

But taketh heede now, sires, for  
Goddès love !

He took this cole of which I spak above,  
And in his hand he baar it pryvèly,  
And whyles the preest couchèdè bisily  
The colès, as I toldè yow er this, 1180  
This chanoun seyde, 'Freend, ye doon  
amys,

This is nat couchèd as it oghtè be ;  
But soone I shal amenden it,' quod he.  
'Now lat me medle ther-with but a while,  
For of yow have I pitee, by Seint Gile !  
Ye been right hoot, I se wel how ye swete ;  
Have heer a clooth, and wipe away the  
wete.'

And whylès that the preest wipèd his face,  
This chanoun took his cole with hardè  
grace, 1189

And leyde it above, upon the myddèward  
Of the crosselet, and blew wel afterward,  
Til that the colès gonnè fastè brenne.

'Now yeve us drynkè,' quod the  
chanoun thenne,

'As swithe al shal be wel, I undertake.  
Sittè we doun, and lat us myrie make' ;

1171. *terved*, stripped. Dr. Skeat's restoration for the common reading *terned*.

1189. *with hardè* (Camb. *sory*) *grace*, H<sup>5</sup> I *schrewe his faas*.

And whan that this chanonés bechen cole  
Was brent, al the lemaille out of the hole  
Into the crosselet fil anon adoun,  
And so it mosté nedés, by resoun, 1199  
Syn it so evene aboven couchéd was ;  
But ther-of wiste the preest no thyng, alas !  
He deméd alle the coles yliché good,  
For of that sleighte he no thyng under-  
stood ;

And whan this alkamystre saugh his  
tyme,—

‘Ris up,’ quod he, ‘sire preest, and  
stonde by me,

And for I woot wel ingot have ye noon,  
Gooth walketh forth, and brynge us a  
chalk stoon,

For I wol make it of the samé shape  
That is an ingot, if I may han hape ;

And bryngeth eek with yow a bolle or a  
panne 1210

Ful of water, and ye shul se wel thanne  
How that oure bisynesse shal thryve and  
preeve ;

And yet, for ye shul han no mysbileeve,  
Ne wrong conceite of me in youre absence,  
I ne wol nat been out of youre presence,  
But go with yow, and come with yow  
ageyn.’

The chambré doré, shortly for to seyn,  
They openéd andshette, and went hir weye,  
And forth with hem they carieden the keye,  
And coome agayn withouten any delay.  
What sholde I tarien al the longé day ?  
He took the chalk and shoope it in the  
wise

Of an ingot, as I shal yow devyse.

I seye, he took out of his owene sleeve  
A teyne of silver—yvele moot he cheeve !—  
Which that ne was nat but an ounce of  
weighte ;

And taketh heede now of his cursed  
sleighte.

He shoope his ingot in lengthe and  
eek in breede

Óf this teyne, withouten any drede,  
So slyly that the preest it nat espide, 1230  
And in his sleeve agayn he gan it hide,  
And fro the fir he took up his mateere  
And in thyngot putte it with myrie cheere,  
And in the water-vessel he it caste,

Whan that hym luste, and bad the preest  
as faste,

‘Look what ther is, put in thin hand  
and grope,

Thow fyndé shalt ther silver, as I hope.’  
What, devel of hellé ! sholde it ellis be ?  
Shavyng of silver silver is, *parde!* 1239  
He putte his hand in, and took up a teyne  
Of silver fyn, and glad in every veyne  
Was this preest, when he saugh that it  
was so.

‘Goddés blessing, and his moodres also,  
And allé halwés, have ye, sire chanoun !’  
Seydè this preest, ‘and I hir malisoun !  
But, and ye vouchésauf to techen me  
This noble craft and this subtilitee,  
I wol be youre in al that ever I may.’

Quod the chanoun, ‘Yet wol I make  
assay 1249

Thesecondetyme, that ye may taken heede  
And been expert of this, and in youre neede  
Another daye assaye in myn absence  
This disciplyne, and this crafty science.  
Lat take another ounce,’ quod he tho,  
‘Of quyk-silver, withouten wordés mo,  
And do therwith as ye han doon er this  
With that oother, which that now silver is.’

This preest hym bisieti in al that he kan  
To doon as this chanoun, this curséd man,  
Comanded hym, and faste he blew the fir,  
For to come to theeffect of his desir ; 1261  
And this chanoun, right in the meenè  
while,

Al redy was the preest eft to bigile,  
And for a contenance in his hand he bar  
An holwè stikkè,—taak kepe and be  
war,—

In the ende of which an ounce and namoore  
Of silver lemaille put was (as bifore  
Was in his cole) and stoppéd with wex weel,  
For to kepe in his lemaille every deel. 1269  
And whil this preest was in his bisynesse,  
This chanoun with his stikkè gan hym  
dresse

To hym anon, and his poudrè caste in  
As he did er,—the devel out of his skyn  
Hym terve, I pray to God, for his falschede !  
For he was ever fals in thoght and dede,—  
And with this stikke, above the crosselet,

1274. *terve*, H<sup>6</sup> *torne*, *turne*; see l. 1171.

That was ordeynéd with that falsè get,  
 He stired the colès, til relentè gan  
 The wex agayn the fir, as every man,  
 But it a fool be, woot wel it moot nede; <sup>1280</sup>  
 And al that in the stikkè was out yede,  
 And in the crosselet hastily it fel.

Nów, good sires, what wol ye bet  
 than wel?

Whan that this preest thus was bigiled  
 ageyn,

Supposynge noght but treuthè, sooth to  
 seyn,

He was so glad that I kan nat expresse  
 In no manere his myrthe and his gladnesse;  
 And to the chanoun he profred eftsoone  
 Body and good. 'Ye,' quod the chanoun  
 soone,

'Though poure I be, crafty thou shalt  
 me fynde; <sup>1290</sup>

I warnè thee yet is ther moore bihynde.  
 Is ther any copèr her-inne?' seyde he.

'Ye,' quod the preest, 'sire, I trowe  
 wel ther be.'

'Ellès go bye us som, and that as swithe.  
 Now, goodè sire, go forth thy wey and  
 hy the.'

He wente his wey, and with the copèr cam,  
 And this chanoun it in his handès nam,  
 And of that copèr weyed out but an ounce.

Al to symple is my tonge to pronoune,  
 As ministre of my wit, the doublenesse <sup>1300</sup>

Of this chanoun, roote of alle cursednesse.  
 He semed frendly to hem that knewe  
 hym noght,

but he was feendly bothe in werk and  
 thoght.

It weerieth me to telle of his falsnesse,  
 and nathèless yet wol I it expresse

so that entent men may be war therby,  
 and for noon oother causè, trewèly.

He puttè the ounce of copèr in the  
 crosselet,

and on the fir as swithe he hath it set,  
 and caste in poudre, and made the preest  
 to blowe, <sup>1310</sup>

and in his werkyng for to stoupe lowe,  
 as he dide er, and al nas but a jape.

Right as hym liste the preest he made  
 his ape;

and afterward in the ingot he it caste,

And in the pannè putte it at the laste,  
 Of water. In he putte his owene hand;  
 And in his sleve, as ye biforen-hand

Herdè me telle, he hadde a silver teyne;  
 Hesylytooke it out,—this cursèd heyne,—

Unwityng this preest of his falsè craft, <sup>1320</sup>  
 And in the pannès botme he hath it laft,

And in the water rombleth to and fro,  
 And wonder pryvèly took up also

The copèr teyne, noght knowyngè this  
 preest,

And hidde it, and hym hentè by the breest,  
 And to hym spak and thus seyde in his game,

'Stoupeth adoun, by God, ye be to blame,  
 Helpeth me now, as I dide yow whil-er,

Putte in youre hand, and looketh what  
 is ther.'

This preest took up this silver teyne  
 anon, <sup>1330</sup>

And thannè seyde the chanoun, 'Latus gon  
 With these thre teynès whiche that we han  
 wroght

To som goldsmyth, and wite if they been  
 ought;

For, by my feith, I noldè for myn hood,  
 But if they werè silver fyn and good,

And that as swithè preevèd it shal be.'

Unto the goldsmyth with these teynès  
 three

They wente, and putte these teynès in  
 assay

To fir and hamer; myghte no man seye nay,  
 But that they weren as hem oghtè be. <sup>1340</sup>

This sottèd preest, who was gladder  
 than he?

Was never brid gladder agayn the day,  
 Ne nyghtyngale in the sesoun of May.

Nas never man that lustè bet to synge,  
 Ne ladye lustier in carolyngè,

Or, for to speke of love and wommanhede,  
 Ne knyght in armes to doon an hardy dede

To stonden in gracè of his lady deere,  
 Than hadde this preest this soory craft

to leere; <sup>1349</sup>  
 And to the chanoun thus hespak and seyde:

'For love of God, that for us allè deyde,  
 And as I may deserve it unto yow,

What shal this receite costè, telleth now?'  
 'By oure lady,' quod this chanoun,

'it is deere,

I warne yow wel, for save I and a frere  
In Engélonde ther kan no man it make.'

'No fors,' quod he, 'now, sire, for  
Goddès sake,

What shal I payè? Telleth me, I preye.'

'Y-wis,' quod he, 'it is ful deere, I seye.  
Sire, at o word, if that thee list it have,  
Ye shul paye fourty pound, so God me  
save; 1361

And nere the freendshipe that ye dide er this  
To me ye sholdè payè moore, y-wis.'

This preest the somme of fourty pound  
anon

Of noblès fette, and took hem everichon  
To this chanoun, for this ilkè receipt.

Al his werkynge nas but fraude and deceit.

'Sire preest,' he seyde, 'I kepè han  
no loos

Of my craft, for I wolde it kept were cloos,  
And, as ye love me, kepeth it secree; 1370  
For, and men knewen al my soutiltee,  
By God, they wolden han so greet envye  
To me, by cause of my philosophye,  
I sholde be deed; ther were noon oother  
weye.'

'God it forbedè,' quod the preest;  
'what say ye?

Yet hadde I levere spenden al the good  
Which that I have,—and ellès wexe I  
wood!—

Than that ye sholden falle in swiche  
mescheef.'

'For youre good wyl, sire, have ye  
right good preef,'

Quod the chanoun, 'and farewel, *grant*  
*mercy!*' 1380

He wente his wey and never the preest  
hym sy

After that day; and whan that this preest  
sholde

Maken assay at swich tyme as he wolde  
Of this receipt, farwel, it wolde nat be!  
Lo, thus byjapèd and bigiled was he.

Thus maketh he his introduccioun,  
To bryngè folk to hir destruccioun.

Considereth sires, how that in eche staat,  
Bitwixè men and gold ther is debaat  
So ferforth, that unnethè is ther noon. 1390  
This multiplying blent so many oon,

That, in good feith, I trowè that it bee  
The causè grettest of swich scarsetee.  
Philosophres spoken so mystily  
In thiscraft, that men kan nat come therby,  
For any wit that men han now-a-dayes.  
They mowe wel chiteren as doon these  
javes,

And in hir termès sette hir lust and peyne,  
But to hir purpos shul they never atteyne.  
A man may lightly lerne, if he have aught,  
To multiplie, and brynge his good to  
naught. 1401

Lo, swich a lucre is in this lusty game  
A mannès myrthe it wol turne unto game,  
And empten also grete and hevye purses,  
And maken folk for to purchacen curses  
Of hem that han hir good therto y-lent.  
O fy, for shamè! they that han been brent,  
Allas! kan they nat flee the firès heete?  
Ye that it use I redè ye it leete,  
Lest ye lese al, for 'bet than never is late';  
Never to thryvè were to long a date. 1411  
Though ye prolle ay, ye shul it never fynde.  
Ye been as boold as is Bayard the blynde,  
That blondreth forth and peril casteth  
noon.

He is as boold to renne agayn a stoon,  
As for to goon bisidès in the weye.  
So faren ye that multiplie, I seye;  
If that youre eyen kan nat seen aright,  
Looke that youre myndè lakkè noght his  
sight,

For though ye looken never so brode, and  
stare, 1420

Ye shul nat wyne a myte on that chaffare,  
But wasten al that ye may rape and renne.  
Withdraweth the fir, lest it to fastè  
brenne,—

Medleth namoorè with that art, I mene  
For, if ye doon, youre thrift is goon ful clene;  
And right as swithe, I wol yow tellen heere,  
What philosophres seyn in this mateere.

Lo, thus seith Arnold of the Newè-Toun,  
As his *Rosarie* maketh mencion;  
He seith right thus, withouten any lye, 1430  
Ther may no man mercurie mortifie,  
But it be with his brother knowlechyng.

1413. *Bayard*, a typical name for a horse.

1428. *Arnold of the Newe-Toun*, Arnoldus de Villanova, a philosophical physician of the 13th century.

How that he which that first seyde this  
thyng

Of philosophres fader was, Hermes ;  
He seith how that the dragon doutlees  
Ne dyeth nat, but if that he be slayn  
With his 'brother'; and that is for to sayn  
By the dragon Mercurie, and noon oother,  
He understood, and brymston by his  
brother,

That out of Sol and Luna were y-drawe ;  
'And therefore,' seyde he, 'taak heede  
to my sawe ; 1441

Lat no man bisye hym this arte for to seche,  
But if that he thentencioun and speche  
Of philosophres understande kan ;  
And, if he do, he is a lewed man,  
For this science and this konnyng,' quod he,  
'Is of the secree of secrees, *pardee*.'

Also ther was a disciple of Plato  
That on a tymè seyde his maister to,  
As his book *Senior* wol bere witness, 1450  
And this was his demande, in soothfast-  
nesse,

'Telle me the namè of the privee stoon.'  
And Plato answerde unto hym anon,  
'Take the stoon that *Titanos* men name'—

1434. *Hermes, i.e.* Hermes Trismegistus.

1435. *the dragon, Mercury.*

1440. *Sol and Luna, i.e.* gold and silver.

1447. The allusion is to the pseudo-Aristotelian  
*Secreta Secretorum*.

1450. *his book Senior*. 'The book alluded to is  
printed in the *Theatrum Chemicum* under this  
title: "Senioris Zadith fil. Hamuelis tabula  
hemica." The story which follows of Plato and  
his disciples is there told, with some variations,  
of Solomon' (Tyrwhitt). Dr. Skeat notes that  
the name Plato occurs three times only a few  
lines below, which explains Chaucer's mistake.

'Which is that?' quod he. '*Magnasia*  
is the same,'

Seyde Plato. 'Ye, sire, and is it thus?  
This is *ignotum per ignocius*.

What is Magnasia, good sire, I yow preyre?'

'It is a water that is maad, I seye,  
Of elementès fourè,' quod Plato. 1460

'Telle me the rootè, good sire,' quod  
he tho,

'Of that water, if it be yourè wille.'

'Nay, nay,' quod Plato, 'certein that  
I nylle ;

The philosophres sworn were everychoon  
That they sholden discovere it unto noon,  
Ne in no book it write in no manere,  
For unto Crist it is so lief and deere,  
That he wol nat that it discovered bee,  
But where it liketh to his deitee

Man for tenspire, and eek for to deffende  
Whom that hym liketh ; lo, this is the  
ende.' 1471

Thanne conclude I thus, sith that God  
of hevene

Ne wil nat that the philosophres nevene  
How that a man shal come unto this  
ston,

I rede as for the bestè lete it goon ;

For who so maketh God his adversarie,

As for to werken anythyn in contrarie

Of his wil, certès never shal he thryve ;

Thogh that he multipliet erme of his lyve ;

And there a poynt ; for ended is my tale.

God sende every trewe man boote of his  
bale. *Amen.* 1481

1461. *rootè, H<sup>6</sup> roche.*

## GROUP H

*Words of Divers of the Pilgrims*

WOORyenat where ther stant a litel toun,  
Which that y-clepéd is Bobbe-up-and-  
down,

nder the Blee in Caunterbury weye ?

2. *Bobbe-up-and-down*, usually identified with  
arbledown, but in the parish of Thanington  
ere is a field of 'Up-and-Down' which, if,  
is probable, the old Canterbury road took a  
mewhat different direction from the modern  
e, may be the site intended.

3. *the Blee*, Blean forest.

Therganoure Hoostè for to jape and pleye,  
And seyde, 'Sires, what ! Dun is in the  
Myre !

Is ther no man for preyere ne for hyre,  
That wole awake oure felawe al bihynde ?  
A thief myght hym ful lightly robbe and  
bynde.

5. *Dun is in the Myre* (the horse is stuck), the  
name of an old game in which the company had  
to extricate a wooden 'Dun' from an imaginary  
slough.

See how he nappeth ! see how, for cokkès  
bonges !

As he wol fallè fro his hors atones. 10  
Is that a Cook of Londoun ? with  
meschaunce !

Do hym come forth, he knoweth his  
penaunce,

For he shal telle a talè, by my fey !  
Although it be nat worth a botel hey.

Awake, thou Cook, quod he, ' God yeve  
thee sorwe !

What eyleth thee to slepè by the morwe ?  
Hastow had fleen al nyght, or artow  
dronke ?

Or hastow with som quene al nyght  
y-swonke,

So that thou mayst nat holden up thy  
heed ?'

This Cook, that was ful pale and no  
thyng reed, 20

Seyde to oure Hoost, ' So God my soule  
blesse,

As ther is falle on me swich hevynesse,  
Noot I nat why, that me were levere slepe  
Thán the bestè galon wyn in Chepe.'

' Wel,' quod the Manciple, ' if it may  
doon ese

To thee, sire Cook, and to nowight displese  
Which that heere rideth in this com-  
paignye,

And that oure Hoost wole of his curteisye,  
I wol as now excuse thee of thy tale,

For, in good feith, thy visage is ful pale,  
Thyne eyen daswen eek, as that me  
thynketh, 31

And wel I woot thy breeth ful sourè  
stynketh,

That sheweth wel thou art nat wel disposed ;  
Of me certeyn thou shalt nat been y-glosed.

See how he ganeth, lo, this dronken wight !  
As though he woldè swolwe us anon right.  
Hooold cloos thy mouth, man, by thy fader  
kyn !

The devel of hellè sette his foot ther-in !  
Thy curséd breeth infectè wole us alle.

Fy, stynkyng swyn ! fy, foulè moote thou  
falle ! 40

A ! taketh heede, sires, of this lusty man !  
Now, sweete sire, wol ye justen attè fan ?

9. *how, for cokkes, H<sup>4</sup> for Goddess.*

Therto me thynketh ye been wel y-shape !  
I trowè that ye dronken han wyn ape,  
And that is whan men pleyen with a straw.'

And with this speche the Cook wax  
wrooth and wraw,

And on the Manciple he gan noddè faste  
For lakke of speche, and doun the hors  
hym caste,

Where as he lay till that men up hym took.  
This was a fair chyvachee of a Cook. 50

Allas ! he naddè holde hym by his ladel !  
And er that he agayn were in his sadel

Ther was greet showvyng, bothè to and fro,  
To life hym up, and muchel care and wo,

So unweedly was this sory, pallèd goost.  
And to the Manciplè thanne spak oure

Hoost :

' By-causè drynke hath dominacioun  
Upon this man, by my savacioun,

I trowe, he lewedly wolde telle his tale,  
For were it wyn, or oold or moysty ale,

That he hath dronke, he speketh in his  
nose, 61

And freseth faste, and eek he hath the pose.  
He hath also to do moore than ynough

To kepe hym and his capul out of slough ;  
And if he fallè from his capul eftsoone,

Thanne shal we allè have ynogh to doone,  
In liftyng up his hevvy, dronken cors ;

Telle on thy tale, of hym make I no fors.  
' But yet, Manciple, in feith thou art

to nyce,

Thus openly reprove hym of his vice ; 70  
Another day he wole, peráventure,

Reclaymè thee and bryngè thee to lure,—  
I meene, he spokè wole of smalè thynges

As for to pynchen at thy rekenynges :  
That were nat honeste, if it cam to preef.'

' No,' quod the Manciple, ' that were  
a greet mescheef !

Somyghte he lightly bryngeme in the snare,  
Yet hadde I levere payen for the mare

Which he rit on, than he sholde with me  
stryve. 75

I wol nat wratthe hym, al somoot I thryve  
That that I spake I seyde it in my bourde

And wite ye what ? I have heer in a gourdè

44. *wyn ape.* The lion, ape, sheep, and pig represented degrees of drunkenness; the ape answering to the 'joyous' stage, an unkind jest at the cook's sullenness.



A draghte of wyn, ye, of a ripe grape,  
And right anon ye shul seen a good jape.  
This Cookshal drynke ther-of, if that I may.  
Uppeyne of deeth, he wol nat seye me nay.'

And certeynly, to tellen as it was,  
Of this vessel the Cook dranke faste, allas !  
What neded hym? he drank ynough  
biforn ; 89

And whan he haddè pouped in this horn,  
To the Manciple he took the gourde agayn ;  
And of that drynke the Cook was wonder  
fayn,

And thankèd hym in swich wise as he  
koude.

Thanne gan oure Hoost to laughen  
wonder loude,

And seyde, ' I se wel it is necessarie,  
Where that we goon, good drynke we  
with us carie,

For that wol turnè rancour and disese  
Tacord and love, and many a wrong apese.

' O thou Bacus ! y-blessed be thy name !

That so kanst turnen earnest into game,  
Worshipe and thank be to thy deitee !

Of that mateere ye gete namoore of me ;  
Felle on thy tale, Manciple, I thee preyre.'

' Wel, sire,' quod he, ' now herkneth  
what I seye.'

## MANCIPLE'S TALE

*Heere bigynneth The Manciples Tale of  
the Crowe*

Whan Phebus dwelled heere in this  
erthe adoun,

s oldè bookès maken mencion,

le was the moostè lusty bachiler

1 al this world, and eek the best archer.

le slow Phitoun, the serpent, as he lay

lepyng agayn the sonne upon a day,

nd many another noble worthy dede

le with his bowè wroghte, as men may  
rede.

*Manciple's Tale.* 'The fable of the Crow,  
which is the subject of the Manciple's Tale, has  
been related by so many authors from Ovid down

Gower that it is impossible to say whom  
the fable principally followed' (Tyrwhitt).

105. *erthe, E world.*

109. *Phitoun, Python.*

Pleyen he koude on every mynstralcie,  
And syngen, that it was a melodie  
To heeren of his cleerè voys the soun.

Certès the kyng of Thebès, Amphionn,  
That with his syngyng wallèd that citee,

Koude never syngen half so wel as hee.

Therto he was the semeliestè man 119

That is, or was, sith that the world bigan.

What nedeth it his fetures to discryve,

For in this world was noon so fair on lyve.

He was ther-with fulfild of gentillesse,

Of honour, and of parfit worthynesse.

This Phebus that was flour of bachilrie,

As wel in fredom as in chivalrie,

For his desport, in signe eek of victorie

Of Phitoun, so as telleth us the storie,

Was wont to beren in his hand a bowe.

Now hadde this Phebus in his hous a

crowe 130

Which in a cage he fostred many a day,

And taughte it speken, as men teche a jay.

Whit was this crowe as is a snow-whit

swan,

And countrefete the speche of every man

He koudè, whan he sholdè telle a talè ;

Ther-with in al this world no nyghtyngale

Ne koudè, by an hondred thousand deel,

Syngen so wonder myrily and weel.

Now hadde this Phebus in his hous a wyf,

Which that he lovede moorè than his lyf,

And nyght and day dide ever his diligence

Hir for to plesè, and doon hire reverence ;

Save oonly, if the sothe that I shal sayn,

Jaloushe was and wolde have kept hire fayn,

For hym were looth byjapèd for to be ;

And so is every wight in swich degree ;

But all in ydel, for it availleth nocht.

A good wyf that is clene of werk and thought

Sholde nat been kept in noon awayt,

certain ;

And trewely the labour is in vayn 150

To kepe a shrewè, for it wol nat bee.

This holde I for a verray nycetee,

To spillè labour for to kepe wyves ;

Thus writen oldè clerkès in hir lyves.

But now to purpos, as I first bigan ;

This worthy Phebus dooth all that he kan

To plesen hire, wenyngè by swich

plesauce,

147. *in ydel, H<sup>4</sup> for nought.*

And for his manhede and his governaunce,  
That no man sholde han put hym from  
hire grace ; 159

But God it woot, ther may no man embrace  
As to destreyne a thyng which that nature  
Hath natureelly set in a creature.

Taak any bryd, and put it in a cage,  
And do al thyn entente, and thy corage,  
To fostre it tendrely with mete and drynke  
Of allé deyntees that thou kanst bithynke,  
And keepe it al so clenly as thou may,  
Al though his cage of gold be never so gay,  
Yet hath this brid by twenty thousand foold  
Levere in a forest, that is rude and coold,  
Goon eté wormés and swich wretched-  
nesse ;

For ever this brid wol doon his bisynesse  
To escape out of his cagé, if he may ;  
His libertee this brid desireth ay.

Lat take a cat, and fostre hym wel  
with milk  
And tendré flesh, and make his couche  
of silk,

And lat hym seen a mous go by the wal,  
Anon he weyveth milk, and flesh, and al,  
And every deyntee that is in that hous,  
Swich appetit he hath to ete a mous. 180  
Lo, heere hath lust his dominacioun,  
And appetit fleemeth discrecioun.

A she-wolf hath also a vileyns kynde ;  
The lewedesté wolf that she may fynde,  
Or leest of reputacioun, that wol she take  
In tymé whan hir lust to han a make.

Alle these ensamples speke I by thise  
men

That been untrewé, and no thyng by  
wommen ;

For men han ever a likerous appetit,  
On lower thyng to parfourne hir delit 190  
Than on hire wyvés, be they never so faire,  
Ne never so trewé, ne so debonaire ;  
Flesh is so newéfangel, with meschaunce !  
That we ne konne in no thyng han  
plesaunce,

That sowneth into vertu, any while.

This Phebus, which that thoghte upon  
no gile,

Deceyvéd was for al his jolitee,  
For under hym another haddé shec,  
A man of litel reputacioun,

Nat worth to Phebus in comparisoun ; 200  
The moore harm is, it happeth ofté so,  
Of which ther cometh muchel harm and wo.

And so bifel, whan Phebus was absent,  
His wyf anon hath for hir lemman sent.  
'Hir lemman ?' certés this is a knavyssh  
speche !

Foryeveth it me, and that I yow biseche.

The wisé Plato seith, as ye may rede,  
'The word moot nede accordé with the  
dede' ;

If men shal tellé properly a thyng 209  
The word moot cosyn be to the werkyng.  
I am a boystous man ; right thus seye I,  
Ther nys no differencé trewely  
Bitwixe a wyf that is of heigh degree,  
If of hire body dishoneste she bee,  
And a poure wenche, oother than this,—  
If it so be they werké both amys,—  
But that the gentile in hire estaat above,  
She shal be cleped his ' lady,' as in love ;  
And for that oother is a poure womman,  
She shal be cleped his ' wenche,' or his  
' lemman,' 220

And God it woot, myn owene deeré brother,  
Men leyn that oon as lowe as lith that  
oother.

Right so bitwixe a titleless tiraunt  
And an outlawe, or a thief erraunt,  
The same I seye, ther is no difference,—  
To Alisaundré was toold this sentence,—  
That for the tiraunt is of gretter myght  
Byforce of meyne, for to sleen doun right,  
And brennen hous and hoom, and make  
al playn,

Lo, therefore is he cleped a ' capitayn ' ; 230  
And for the outlawe hath but smal meyne,  
And may nat doon so greet an harm as he,  
Ne brynge a contree to so greet mescheef,  
Men clepen hym an ' outlawe,' or a ' thief ' ;  
But for I am a man noght textueel,  
I wol noght telle of textés never a deel ;  
I wol go to my tale as I bigan.  
Whan Phebus wyf had sent for hir lemman,  
Anon they wroghten al hire lust volage.

The whité crowe that heeng ay in the  
cage 240

207. *The wise Plato*, quoted from Boethius,  
Bk. iii. prose 12. Cp. General Prologue, ll. 744,  
742.

Biheeld hirewerk and seyde never a word;  
And whan that hoom was come Phebus,  
the lord,

This crowe sang 'Cokkow! Cokkow!  
Cokkow!'

'What! bryd,' quod Phebus, 'what  
song syngestow?

Ne were thow wont so myrily to syng  
That to myn herte it was a rejoysynge  
To heere thy voys? Allas! what song  
is this?'

'By God!' quod he, 'I syngè nat amys.  
Phebus,' quod he, 'for al thy worthynesse,  
For al thy beautee and thy gentillesse, <sup>250</sup>  
For al thy song and al thy mynstralcy,  
For al thy waityng, blerèd is thyn eye  
With oon of litel reputacioun,  
Noght worth to thee as in comparisoun  
The montance of a gnat, so moote I thryve!  
For on thy bed thy wyf I saugh hym swyve.'

What wol ye moore? The crowe anon  
hym tolde

By saddè tokenes, and by wordès bolde,  
How that his wyf had doon hire lecherye,  
Hym to greet shame and to greet vileynye,  
And tolde hym ofte he saugh it with his  
eyen. <sup>261</sup>

This Phebus gan awayward for to wryen,  
And thoughte his sorweful hertè brast  
atwo;

His bowe he bente, and sette ther-inne  
a flo,

And in his ire his wyf thanne hath he  
slayn,—

This is the effect, ther is namoore to sayn;  
For sorwe of which he brak his mynstralcie,  
Bothe harpe, and lute, and gyterne, and  
sautrie,

And eek he brak his arwes and his bowe,  
And after that thus spak he to the crowe:  
'Traitor,' quod he, 'with tonge of  
scorpioun <sup>271</sup>

Thou hast me broght to my confusioun.  
Allas! that I was wrought! why nere I  
deed?

O deerè wyf! O gemme of lustiheed!  
That were to me so sad, and eek so trewe,  
Now listow deed, with facè pale of hewe,  
'ul gyltèles,—that dorste I swere, y-wys!  
O rakel hand! to doon so foule amys.

O trouble wit! O irè, recchèles!  
That unavysèd smyteth giltèles! <sup>280</sup>

O wantrust! ful of fals suspecioun,  
Where was thy wit and thy discrecioun?  
O every man, be war of rakelnesse,  
Ne trowe no thyng withouten strong  
witnessse.

Smyt nat to soone, er that ye witen why;  
And beeth avysèd wel and sobrelly,  
Er ye doon any execucioun

Upon youre irè for suspecioun!  
Allas! a thousand folk hath rakel ire  
Fully fordoon, and broght hem in the  
mire! <sup>290</sup>

Allas! for sorwe I wol myselfen slee.'

And to the crowe, 'O falsè thief!'  
seyde he,

'I wol thee quite anon thy falsè tale.  
Thou songè whilom lyk a nyghtyngale;  
Now shaltow, falsè thief, thy song forgon,  
And eek thy whitè fetherès everichon;  
Ne never in al thy lif ne shaltow speke;  
Thus shal men on a traytour been awreke.  
Thou, and thyn of-spryng, ever shul be  
blake,

Ne never sweetè noysè shul ye make, <sup>300</sup>  
But ever crie agayn tempest and rayn,  
In tokenyng that thurgh thee my wyf is  
slayn.'

And to the crowe he stirte, and that anon,  
And pulled his whitè fetherès everychon,  
And made hym blak, and refte hym all  
his song,

And eek his speche, and out at dore hym  
slong,

Unto the devel, which I hym bitake!  
And for this caas been allè crowès blake.

Lordynges, by this ensample I yow  
preye, <sup>309</sup>

Beth war, and taketh kepè what I seye;  
Ne telleth never no man in yourè lyf  
How that another man hath dight his wyf;  
He wol yow haten mortally, certeyn.  
Daun Salomon, as wisè clerkès seyn,  
Techeth a man to kepen his tonge weel;  
But as I seyde, I am noght textueel,  
But nathèeles, thus taughtè me my dame:

300. *noyse*, E *noys*.

310. *I seye*, H<sup>4</sup> *ye seye*.

316. *textueel*, H<sup>4</sup> *texted (text) wel*.

'My sone, think on the crowe, on  
 Goddés name ;  
 My sone, keepe wel thy tonge and keepe  
 thy freend ; 319  
 A wikked tonge is worsé than a feend ;  
 Mysoné, from a feend men may hem blesse ;  
 My sone, God of his endeles goodnesse  
 Walléd a tonge with teeth and lippés eke,  
 Formansholde hym avysé what he speeke ;  
 My sone, ful ofté for to muché speche  
 Hath many a man been spilt, as clerkés  
 teche,  
 Bút for litel speche avysély  
 Is no man shent, to speké generally.  
 My sone, thy tongé sholdestow restreyné  
 At allé tymes, but whan thou doost thy  
 peyne 330  
 To speke of God, in honour and preyere.  
 The firsté vertu, sone, if thou wolt leere,  
 Is to restreyné and kepé wel thy tonge ;  
 Thus lerné children whan that they been  
 yonge.  
 My sone, of muchel spekyng yvele avysed,  
 Ther lassé spekyng hadde ynough suffised,  
 Comth muchel harm, thus was me toold  
 and taught ;  
 In muchel speché synné wanteth naught.  
 Wostow wher-of a rakel tongé serveth ?  
 Right as a swerd for-kutteth and forkerveth

An arm atwo, my deeré sone, right so  
 A tongé kutteth freendshipe al atwo.  
 A jangler is to God abhomynable.  
 Reed Salomon, so wys and honourable,  
 Reed David in his Psalmés, reed Senekke.  
 My sone, spek nat, but with thyn heed  
 thou bekke ;  
 Dissimule as thou were deaf, if that thou  
 heere  
 A jangler speke of perilous mateere.  
 The Flemyngseith, and lerne it if thee leste,  
 That "litel janglyng causeth muchel  
 rest." 350  
 Mysone, if thou no wikked word hast seyde,  
 Thee thar nat dredé for to be biwreyd ;  
 But he that hath mysseyd, I dar wel sayn,  
 He may by no wey clepe his word agayn.  
 Thyng that is seyde is seyde, and forth it  
 gooth,  
 Though hym repente, or be hym leef or  
 looth.  
 He is his thral to whom that he hath sayd  
 A tale of which he is now yvele apayd.  
 Mysone, be war, and be noon auctour newe  
 Of tidynges, wheither they been false or  
 trewe ; 360  
 Wher so thou come, amongés hye or lowe,  
 Kepe wel thy tonge, and think upon the  
 crowe.'

## GROUP I

*Heere folweth the Prologe of the Persons  
Tale*

By that the Maunciple hadde his tale  
 al ended  
 Thesonné fro the south lyne was descended  
 So lowé that he ne nas nat to my sighte  
 Degreés nyne-and-twenty as in highte ;  
 [Foure] of the klokke it was tho, as I gesse,  
 For ellevene foot, or litel moore or lesse,  
 My shadwe was at thilké tyme, as there,  
 Of swiche feet as my lengthé parted were  
 In sixe feet equal of proporcioun.

1. *the Maunciple*. According to the notes of time some other tales must have intervened, and *Mauciple* is only the guess of the copyists.

5. *Foure*. The MSS. read *Ten*, which accords with neither line 4 nor line 72.

7. *as there*, i.e. in that latitude ; H *of the yere*.

Ther-with the moonés exaltacioun, 10  
 I meene *Libra*, alwey gan ascende,  
 As we were entryng at a thropés ende ;  
 For whichour Hoost, as he was wont to gye,  
 As in this caas, oure joly compaignye,  
 Seyde in this wisé, 'Lordynges everichoon,  
 Now lakketh us no talés mo than oon ;  
 Fulfilled is my sentence and my decree ;  
 I trowe that we han herd of ech degree.  
 Almost fulfilled is al myn ordinaunce ;  
 I pray to God so yeve hym right good  
 chaunce 20  
 That telleth this tale to us lustily.

10, 11. *the moonés exaltacioun, I meene Libra*. It seems best to suppose with Tyrwhitt that *the moonés* is a blunder for *Saturnes*, Taurus being the exaltation of the moon, and *Libra* of Saturn. H reads *In mena* for *I meene*. *In mene* (in the middle of) has been suggested as a possible reading.

'Sire Preest,' quod he, 'artow a vicary,  
Or arte a Person? sey sooth, by thy fey!  
Be what thou be, ne breke thou nat oure  
pley,

Forevery mansave thou hath toold his tale.  
Unbokele, and shewe us what is in thy  
male;

For trewely, me thynketh by thy cheere,  
Thou sholdest knytte up wel a greet  
mateere.

Telle us a fable anon, for cokkès bones!'

This Persoune answerdè al atones, 30  
'Thou getest fable noon y-toold for me,  
For Paul, that writeth unto Thymothee,  
Repreveth hem that weyveth soothfast-  
nesse,

And tellen fables and swich wrecched-  
nesse.

Why sholde I sowen draf out of my fest,  
Whan I may sowen whete, if that me lest?  
For which I seye, if that yow list to heere  
Moralitee and vertuou mateere,

And thanne that ye wol yeve me audience,  
I wol ful fayn, at Cristès reverence, 40  
Do yow plesauncè leefful, as I kan;

But, trusteth wel, I am a southren man,  
Ikannatgeestè "rum, ram, ruf," by lettre;  
Ne, God woot, rym holde I but litel better;  
And therefore, if yow list,—I wol nat  
glose,—

I wol yow telle a myrie tale in prose,  
To knytte up al this feeste, and make an  
ende;

And Jhesu, for his gracè, wit me sende  
To shewè yow the wey, in this viage, 50  
Of thilkè parfit, gloriosem pilgrymage,  
That highte Jerusalem celestial;  
And if ye vouchésauf, anon I shal  
Bigynne upon my tale, for whiche I preye  
Telle youre avys. I kan no better seye.

'But nathéless this meditacioun  
I putte it ay under correccioun  
Of clerkès, for I am nat textueel.  
I takè but the sentencè, trusteth weel;  
Therefore I make a protestacioun  
That I wol stondè to correccioun.' 60

Upon this word we han assented soone,  
43. *geeste*, etc., tell tales in alliterative metres  
like the northern poets.

58. *the* (om. E) *sentence*, the meaning as op-  
posed to the letter.

For as us semèd, it was for to doone,  
To enden in som vertuou sentence,  
And for to yeve hym space and audience;  
And bedeoure Hoost he sholdè to hymseye  
That allè we to telle his tale hym preye.

Oure Hoostè hadde the wordès for us  
alle:

'Sire Preest,' quod he, 'now fairè yow  
bifalle!

Sey what yow list, and we wol gladly heere';  
And with that word, he seyde in this  
manere: 70

'Telleth,' quod he, 'youre meditacioun;  
But hasteth yow, the sonnè wole adoun.  
Beth fructuous, and that in litel space,  
And to do wel, God sendè yow his grace.'

## PARSON'S TALE

### *Heere bigynneth the Persouns Tale*

JER. VI. *State super vias, et videte, et interro-  
gate de semitis antiquis, quæ sit via bona, et  
ambulate in ea; et invenietis refrigerium ani-  
mabus vestris.*

[75] Oure sweete Lord God of hevене,  
that no man wole perisse, but wole that  
we comen alle to the knoweleche of hym  
and the blissful lif that is perdurable,  
amonesteth us by the prophete Jeremie,  
and seith in this wyse: 'Stondeth upon  
the weyes, and seeth, and axeth of olde  
pathes, that is to seyn of olde sentences,  
which is the goode wey, and walketh in that  
wey, and ye shal fynde refreshynge for  
youre soules.'

Manye been the weyes espirituels that  
leden folk to oure Lord Jhesu Crist, and  
to the regne of glorie; [80] of whiche weyes  
ther is a ful noble wey, and a covenable,  
which may nat fayle to man, ne to woman,  
that thurgh synne hath mysgoon fro the  
righte wey of Jerusalem celestial, and this

*Parson's Tale.* The treatise on the Deadly  
Sins and their cure which is wedged into this  
account of Penitence is taken from the *Somme  
de Vices et de Vertus* of Frère Lorens, a thirteenth  
century writer. Chaucer's authorship of these  
sections has been doubted, perhaps needlessly,  
but the sermon is unmercifully long.

*Jer. vi., v. 16.*

75. *that no man wole perisse*, who desires to  
destroy no man.

wey is cleped penitence ; of which man sholde gladly herknen and enquere with al his herte to wyten what is penitence, and whennes it is cleped penitence, and in how manye maneres been the acciouns or werkynges of penitence, and how manye spesces ther been of penitence, and whiche thynges apertenen and bihoven to penitence, and whiche thynges destourben penitence.

Seint Ambrose seith that penitence is the pleynyng of man for gilt that he hath doon and namoore to do any thyng for which hym oghte to pleyne ; [85] and som doctour seith, 'Penitence is the waymentyng of man that sorweth for his synne, and pyneth hymself for he hath mysdoon.' Penitence with certeyne circumstances is verray repentance of a man that halt hym self in sorwe and oother peyne for his gyltes ; and for he shall be verray penitent, he shal first biwaylen the synnes that he hath doon and stidefastly purposen in his herte to have shrift of mouthe and to doon satisfaccioun, and never to doon thyng for which hym oghte moore biwayle or to compleyne, and continue in goodewerkes, or elles his repentence may nat avaylle ; for, as seith Seint Ysidre, 'He is a japer and a gabber and no verray repentant that eftsoone dooth thyng for which hym oghte repent.' [90] Wepynge, and nat for to stynt to do synne, may nat avaylle ; but natheles men shal hope that at every tyme that man falleth, be it never so ofte, that he may arise thurgh penitence, if he have grace ; but certainly it is greet doute, for, as seith Seint Gregorie, unnethe ariseth he out of his synne that is charged with the charge of yvel usage ; and therefore repentant folk that stynthe for to synne, and forlete synne er that synne forlete hem, hooly chirche holdeth hem siker of hire savacioun. And he that synneth and verrailly repenteth hym in his laste ende, hooly chirche yet hopeth his savacioun, by the grete mercy of oure Lord Jhesu Crist for his repentaunce ; but taak the siker wey.

85. *shrift of mouthe*, verbal confession.

85. *Seint Ysidre*, St. Isidore.

[95] And now sith I have declared yow what thyng is penitence, now shul ye understonde that ther been thre acciouns of penitence. The firste accioun of penitence is that a man be baptized after that he hath synned. Seint Augustyn seith, 'But he be penyent for his olde synful lyf, he may nat bigynne the newe clene lif' ; for certes, if he be baptized withouten penitence of his olde gilt, he receyveth the mark of baptesme, but nat the grace, ne the remission of his synnes, til he have repentance verray. Another defaute is this, that men doon deedly synne after that they han received baptesme. [100] The thridde defaute is that men fallen in venial synnes after hir baptesme fro day to day. Ther-of seith Seint Augustyn that penitence of goode and humble folk is the penitence of every day.

The spesces of penitence been thre. That oon of hem is solempe, another is commune, and the thridde is privee. Thilke penance that is solempe is in two maneres ; as to be put out of hooly chirche in Lente for slaughtre of children, and swich maner thyng. Another thyng is whan a man hath synned openly, of which synne the fame is openly spoken in the contree, and thanne hooly chirche by juggement destreyneþ hym for to do open penaunce. [105] Commune penaunce is that preestes enjoynen men in certeyn caas, as for to goon peraventure naked in pilgimages, or bare-foot. Pryvee penaunce is thilke that men doon alday for privee synnes, of whiche they shryve hem prively, and receyve privee penaunce.

Now shallow understande what is bihovely and necessarie to verray perfite penitence. And this stant on thre thynges : Contricioun of herte, Confessioun of mouth, and Satisfaccioun ; for which seith Seint John Crisostom, 'Penitence destreyneþ a man to accepte benygne every peyne that hym is enjoyed with contricioun of herte, and shrift of mouth, with satisfaccioun, and in werkyng of alle manere humylitee' ; [110] and this is

105. *naked*, i.e. without upper garments.

fruytful penitence agayn thre thynges in whiche we wratthe oure Lord Jhesu Crist. This is to seyn, by delit in thynkyng, by recchelesnesse in spekyng, and by wikked synful werkyng; and agayns thise wikkede giltes is penitence, that may be likned unto a tree.

The roote of this tree is contricioun, that hideth hym in the herte of hym that is verray repentaunt, right as the roote of a tree hydeth hym in the erthe. Of the roote of contricioun spryngeth a stalke, that bereth braunches and leves of confessioun, and fruyt of satisfaccioun. [115] For which Crist seith in his gospel, 'Dooth digne fruyt of penitence'; for by this fruyt may men knowe this tree, and nat by the roote that is hyd in the herte of man, ne by the braunches, ne by the leves of confessioun; and therefore oure Lord Jhesu Crist seith thus, 'By the fruyt of hem ye shul knowen hem.' Of this roote eek spryngeth a seed of grace, the which seed is mooder of sikerness, and this seed is egre and hoot. The grace of this seed spryngeth of God thurgh remembrance of the day of doome and on the peynes of helle. Of this matere seith Salomon, that in the drede of God man forleteth his synne. [120] The heete of this seed is the love of God, and the desiryng of the joye perdurable. This heete draweth the herte of a man to God, and dooth hym haten his synne; for soothly ther is no thyng that savoureth so wel to a child as the milk of his norice, ne no thyng moore abhomynable than thilke milk when it is medled with oother mete. Right so the synful man that loveth his synne, hym semeth that it is to him moost sweete of any thyng; but fro that tyme that he loveth sadly oure Lord Jhesu Crist, and desireth the lif perdurable, ther nys to him no thyng moore abhomynable; [125] for soothly the lawe of God is the love of God. For which David the prophete seith, 'I have loved thy lawe, and hated wikkednesse and hate; he that loveth God kepeth his lawe and his word.' This tree saugh

the prophete Daniel in spirit upon the avysioun of Nabugodonosor, whan he conseiled hym to do penitence. Penaunce is the tree of lyf to hem that it receyven, and he that holdeth hym in verray penitence is blessed, after the sentence of Salomon.

In this penitence or contricioun man shal understonde foure thynges; that is to seyn, what is contricioun, and whiche been the causes that moeven a man to contricioun, and how he sholde be contrit, and what contricioun availleth to the soule. Thanne is it thus that contricioun is the verray sorwe that a man receyveth in his herte for his synnes, with sad purpos to shryve hym and to do penaunce, and nevermoore to do synne; [130] and this sorwe shal been in this manere, ay seith Seint Bernard; it shal been hevny and grevous, and ful sharpe and poynant in herte. First, for man hath agilt his Lord and his Creatour, and moore sharpe and poynant for he hath agilt hys Fader celestial, and yet moore sharpe and poynant for he hath wrathed and agilt hym that boghte hym, which with his precious blood hath delivered us fro the bondes of synne, and fro the crueltee of the devel, and fro the peynes of helle.

The causes that oghte moeve a man to contricioun been sexe. First, a man shal remembre hym of his synnes; but looke he that thilke remembraunce ne be to hym no delit by no wey, but greet shame and sorwe for his gilt; for Job seith, synful men doon werkes worthy of confessioun. [135] And therefore seith Ezechie, 'I wol remembre me alle the yeres of my lyf in bitternesse of myn herte.' And God seith in the Apocalipse, 'Remembreth yow fro whennes that ye been falle'; for biforn that tyme that ye synned ye were the children of God, and lymes of the regne of God; but for youre synne ye been woxen thral and foul, and membres of the feend, hate of aungels,

125. *in spirit upon the avysioun of, E in the avysioun of the kyng.*

125. *Nabugodonosor, Nebuchadnezzar.*

sclaunde of hooly chirche, and foode of the false serpent, perpetueel matere of the fir of helle; and yet moore foul and abhomynable, for ye trespassen so ofte tyme as dooth the hound that retourneth to eten his spewyng; and yet be ye fouler for youre longe continuyng in synne and youre synful usage, for which ye be roten in youre synne as a beest in his dong. [140] Swiche manere of thoghtes maken a man to have shame of his synne and no delit, as God seith by the prophete Ezechiel, 'Ye shal remembre yow of youre weyes and they shuln displese yow.' Soothly synnes been the weyes that leden folk to helle.

The seconde cause that oghte make a man to have desdayn of synne is this, that, as seith Seint Peter, 'Who-so that dooth synne is thral of synne'; and synne put a man in greet thraldom, and therefore seith the prophete Ezechiel, 'I wente sorweful in desdayn of my self'; and certes, wel oghte a man have desdayn of synne and withdrawe hym from that thraldom and vileynye. And lo, what seith Seneca in this matere? He seith thus: 'Though I wiste that God—neither God ne man—ne sholde never knowe it, yet wolde I have desdayn for to do synne.' [145] And the same Seneca also seith, 'I am born to gretter thynges than to be thral to my body, or than for to maken of my body a thral'; ne a fouler thral may no man ne womman maken of his body than for to yeven his body to synne. Al were it the fouleste cherl, or the fouleste womman that lyveth, and leest of value, yet is he thanne moore foule and moore in servitude. Ever fro the hyer degree that man falleth, the moore is he thral, and moore to God and to the world vile and abhomynable. O goode God! wel oghte man have desdayn of synne, sith that thurgh synne ther he was free now is he maked bonde; [150] and therefore seyth Seint Augustyn, 'If thou hast desdayn of thy servant, if he agilte, or synne, have thou thanne desdayn that thou thyself sholdest do

synne; take reward of thy value, that thou ne be to foul to thyself.' Allas! wel oghten they thanne have desdayn to been servauntz and thralles to synne, and soore been ashamed of hemsel, that God of his endeles goodnesse hath set hem in heigh estaat, or yeven hem wit, strengthe of body, heele, beautee, prosperitee, and boghte hem from the deeth with his herte blood, that they so unkyndely agayns his gentillesse quiten hym so vileynsly, to slaughtre of hir owene soules. [155] O goode God! ye wommen that been of so greet beautee, remembreth yow of the proverbe of Salomon, he seith, 'Likneth a fair womman that is a fool of hire body lyk to a ryng of gold that were in the groyn of a sowe, for right as a sowe wroteth in everich ordure, so wroteth hire beautee in the stynkyng ordure of synne.'

The thridde cause that oghte moeve a man to contricioun is drede of the day of doome and of the horrible peynes of helle; for as Seint Jerome seith, 'At every tyme that me remembreth of the day of doome, I quake, [160] for whan I ete, or drynke, or what so that I do, ever semeth me that the trompe sowneth in myn ere, "Riseth up, ye that been dede, and cometh to the juggement."' O goode God! muchel oghte a man to drede swich a juggement, ther as we shullen been alle, as Seint Poul seith, biforn the seete of oure Lord Jhesu Crist, wher as he shal make a general congregacioun, wher as no man may been absent, for certes there availleth noon essoynne, ne excusacioun. [165] And nat oonly that oure defautes shullen be jugged, but eek that alle oure werkes shullen openly be knowe. And as seith Seint Bernard, 'Ther ne shal no pledynge availle, ne sleighte; we shullen yeven rekenynge of everich ydel word; ther shul we han a juge that may nat been deceyved ne corrupt.' And why? for certes alle oure thoghtes been discovered as to hym; ne for preyere, ne for meede, he shal nat been corrupt. And therefore



seith Salomon, 'The wratthe of God ne wol nat spare no wight for preyere ne for yifte'; and therefore, at the day of doom ther nys noon hope to escape.

Wherefore, as seith Seint Anselm, 'Ful greet angwyssh shul the synful folk have at that tyme. [170] Ther shal the stierne and wrothe juge sitte above, and under hym the horrible put of helle open to destroyen hym that moot biknowen his synnes, whiche synnes openly been shewed biforn God and biforn every creature; and in the left syde mo develes than herte may bithynke, for to harye and drawe the synful soules to the peyne of helle; and withinne the hertes of folk shal be the bitynge conscience, and withoute forth shal be the world al brennyng.' Whider shal thanne the wrecched synful man flee to hiden hym? Certes, he may nat hyden hym,—he moste come forth and shewen hym; for certes, as seith Seint Jerome, 'The erthe shal casten hym out of hym, and the see also, and the eyr also, that shal be ful of thonder clappes and lightnynges.'

[175] Now soothly, who so wel remembreth hym of these thynges, I gesse that his synne shal nat turne hym to delit, but to greet sorwe, for drede of the peyne of helle. And therefore seith Job to God, 'Suffre, Lord, that I may awhile biwaille, and wepe, er I go withoute, returnyng to the derke lond, covered with the derknesse of deeth, to the lond of mysese and of derknesse, where as is the shadwe of deeth, where as ther is noon ordre or ordinaunce, but grisly drede that ever shal laste.' Loo, heere may ye seen that Job preyde respit a while to biwepe and waille his trespas, for soothly oon day of respit is better than al the tresor of this world; and forasmuche as a man may acquiten hymself biforn God by penitence in this world, and nat by tresor, therefore sholde he preye to God to yeve hym respit a while to biwepe and biwailen his trespas; [180] for certes, al the sorwe that a man myghte make fro the bignnyng of the

world nys but a litel thyng at regard of the sorwe of helle.

The cause why that Job clepeth helle 'the lond of derknesse': understondeth that he clepeth it londe or erthe, for it is stable and never shal faille; dirk, for he that is in helle hath defaute of light material, for certes, the derke light that shal come out of the fyr that ever shal brenne shal turne hym al to peyne that is in helle, for it sheweth hym to the horrible develes that hym tormenten; 'covered with the derknesse of deeth'; that is to seyn, that he that is in helle shall have defaute of the sighte of God; for certes, the sighte of God is the lyf perdurable. [185] The 'derknesse of deeth' been the synnes that the wrecched man hath doon, whiche that destourben hym to see the face of God, right as dooth a derk clowde bitwixe us and the sonne. 'Lond of misese,' by-cause that ther been thre maneres of defautes agayn thre thynges that folk of this world han in this present lyf; that is to seyn, honours, delices, and richesses. Agayns honour have they in helle shame and confusioun; for wel ye woot that men clepen honour the reverence that man doth to man; but in helle is noon honour ne reverence, for certes, namoore reverence shal be doon there to a kyng than to a knave. For which God seith by the prophete Jeremye, 'Thilke folk that me despisen shul been in despit.' [190] Honour is eek cleped greet lordshipe. Ther, shal no wight serven oother but of harm and torment. Honour is eek cleped greet dignytee and heighnesse, but in helle shul they been al fortroden of develes. And God seith, 'The horrible develes shulle goon and comen upon the hevedes of the dampned folk'; and this is forasmuche as the hyer that they were in this present lyf, the moore shulle they been abated and defouled in helle.

Agayns the richesses of this world shul they han mysese of poverte; and this

185. *despisen*, H *displezen*.

poverte shal been in foure thynges. In defaute of tresor, of which that David seith, 'The riche folk that embraceden and oneden al hire herte to tresor of this world, shul slepe in the slepyng of deeth, and no thyng ne shal they fynden in hir handes of al hir tresor.' And mooreover the mysese of helle shal been in defaute of mete and drinke, [195] for God seith thus by Moyses, 'They shul been wasted with hunger, and the briddes of helle shal devouren hem with the bitter deeth, and the galle of the dragon shal been hire drynke, and the venym of the dragon hire morsels.' And forther-over hire mysese shal been in defaute of clothyng, for they shulle be naked in body, as of clothyng, save the fyr in which they brenne, and othere filthes; and naked shul they been of soule, as of alle manere vertues which that is the clothyng of the soule. Where been thanne the gaye robes, and the softe shetes, and the smale shertes? Loo, what seith God of hem by the prophete Ysaye? That under hem shul been strawed mothes, and hire covertures shulle been of wormes of helle. And forther-over hir mysese shal been in defaute of freendes, for he nys nat poure that hath goode freendes; but there is no frend; [200] for neither God, ne no creature, shal been frend to hem; and everich of hem shal haten oother with deedly hate. Thesones and the doghtren shullen rebellan agayns fader and mooder, and kynrede agayns kynrede, and chiden and despisen everich of hem oother bothe day and nyght, as God seith by the prophete Michias. And the lovyng children, that whilom loveden so fleshly everich oother, wolden everich of hem eten oother, if they myghte; for how sholden they love togidre in the peyne of helle, whan they hated ech of hem oother in the prosperitee of this lyf? For truste wel, hir fleshly love was deedly hate, as seith the prophete David, 'Whoso that loveth wikkednesse he hateth his soule'; [205] and whoso hateth his owene

195. *the bitter deeth, H bitter teeth.*

soule, certes, he may love noon oother wight in no manere; and therfore in helle is no solas, ne no freendshipe, but ever the moore fleshly kynredes that been in helle, the moore cursynges, the more chidynges, and the moore deedly hate ther is among hem.

And forther-over they shul have defaute of alle manere delices; for certes delices been after the appetites of the five wittes, as sighte, heryng, smellyng, savoryng, and touchyng: [210] but in helle hir sighte shal be ful of derknesse and of smoke, and therfore ful of teeres, and hir heryng ful of waymentyng and of gryntyng of teeth, as seith Jhesu Crist. Hir nose-thirles shullen be ful of stynkyng stynk; and, as seith Ysaye the prophete, hir savoryng shal be ful of bitter galle; and touchyng of al hir body y-covered with fir that never shal quenche, and with wormes that never shul dyen, as God seith by the mouth of Ysaye. And forasmuch as they shul nat wene that they may dyen for peyne, and by hir deeth flee fro peyne, that may they understanden by the word of Job, that seith, 'Ther as is the shadwe of deeth.' Certes a shadwe hath the liknesse of the thyng of which it is shadwe, but shadwe is nat the same thyng of which it is shadwe. Right so fareth the peyne of helle; it is lyk deeth for the horrible angwissh; and why? For it peyneth hem ever as though they sholde dye anon, but certes, they shal nat dye, for as seith Seint Gregorie, 'To wrecche caytyves shal be deeth withoute deeth, and ende withouten ende, and defaute withoute failyng, [215] for hir deeth shal alwey lyven and hir ende shal evermo bigynne, and hir defaute shal nat faille'; and therfore seith Seint John the Evaungelist, 'They shullen folwe deeth and they shul nat fynde hym, and they shul desiren to dye and deeth shal flee fro hem.'

And eek Job seith that in helle is noon ordre of rule, and al be it so that God hath creat alle thynges in right ordre and

no thyng withouten ordre, but alle thynges been ordeyned and nombred; yet nathelees, they that been dampned been no thyng in the ordre, ne holden noon ordre, for the erthe ne shal bere hem no fruyt, [220] for, as the prophete David seith, 'God shal destroie the fruyt of the erthe as fro hem, ne water ne shal yeve hem no moisture, ne the eyr no refresshyng, ne fyr no light.' For as seith Seint Basilie, 'The brennyng of the fyr of this world shal God yeven in helle to hem that been dampned, but the light and the cleernesse shal be yeven in hevене to his children, right as the goode man yeveth flessch to his children and bones to his houndes.' And for they shullen have noon hope to escape, seith Seint Job atte laste, that ther shal horroure and grisly drede dwellen withouten ende.

Horroure is alway drede of harm that is to come, and this drede shal ever dwelle in the hertes of hem that been dampned; and therefore han they lorn al hire hope for sevene causes. [225] First, for God that is hir juge shal be withouten mercy to hem, and they may nat plesse hym ne noon of his halwes; ne they ne may yeve no thyng for hir raunsoun; ne they have no voys to speke to hym; ne they may nat fle fro peyne; ne they have no goodnesse in hem that they mowe shewe to delivere hem fro peyne. And therefore seith Salomon, 'The wikked man dyeth, and whan he is deed he shal have noon hope to escape fro peyne.' Whoso thanne wolde wel understande these peynes and bithynke hym weel that he hath deserved thilke peynes for his synnes, certes, he sholde have moore talent to siken and to wepe, than for to syngen and to pleye, for as that seith Salomon, 'Whoso that hadde the science to know the peynes that been established and ordeyned for synne, he wolde make sorwe.' [230] Thilke science, as seith Seint Augustyn, maketh a man to waymenten in his herte.

The fourthe point that oghte maken a

man to have contricioun is the sorweful remembraunce of the good that he hath left to doon heere in erthe, and eek the good that he hath lorn. Soothly, the goode werkes that he hath [left], outhere they been the goode werkes that he hath wrought er he fel into deedly synne, or elles the goode werkes that he wrought while he lay in synne. Soothly, the goode werkes that he dide biforn that he fil in synne been al mortefied and astoned, and dulled, by the ofte synnyng. The othere goode werkes that he wrought while he lay in deedly synne, thei been outrely dede as to the lyf perdurable in hevене.

[235] Thanne thilke goode werkes that been mortefied by ofte synnyng, whiche goode werkes he dide whil he was in charitee, ne mowe never quyken agayn withouten verray penitence; and ther-of seith God by the mouth of Ezechiel, 'That if the rightful man returne agayn from his rightwisnesse and werke wikkednesse, shal he lyve? Nay, for alle the goode werkes that he hath wrought ne shul never been in remembrance, for he shal dyen in his synne.' And upon thilke chapitre seith Seint Gregorie thus: 'That we shulle understonde this principally, that whan we doon deedly synne it is for nought thanne to rehercen or drawn into memorie the goode werkes that we han wrought biforn'; [240] for certes, in the werkynge of the deedly synne ther is no trust to no good werk that we han doon biforn, that is for to seyn, as for to have therby the lyf perdurable in hevене; but nathelees, the goode werkes quyken agayn and comen agayn and helpen and availen to have the lyf perdurable in hevене whan we han contricioun. But soothly, the goode werkes that men doon whil they been in deedly synne, forasmuch as they were doon in deedly synne, they may never quyke agayn; for certes, thyng that never hadde lyf may never quykene; and nathelees, al be it that they ne availle nought to han the lyf perdurable,

yet availen they to abregge of the peyne of helle, or elles to geten temporal richesse, or elles that God wole the rather enlumyne and lightne the herte of the synful man to have repentaunce. [245] And eek they availen for to use a man to doon goode werkes that the feend have the lasse power of his soule. And thus the curteis Lord Jhesu Crist wole that no good werk be lost, for in somewhat it shal availle. But, forasmuche as the goode werkes that men doon whil they been in good lyf been al mortefied by synne folwyng, and eek sith that alle the goode werkes that men doon whil they been in deedly synne been outrely dede, for to have the lyf perdurable, wel may that man that no good werk ne dooth synge thilke newe Frenshe song, '*Jay tout perdu—mon temps et mon labour.*'

For certes synne bireveth a man bothe goodnesse of nature and eek the goodnesse of grace; [250] for soothly, the grace of the Hooly Goost fareth lyk fyr that may nat been ydel, for fyr fayleth anon as it forleteth his wirkyng; and right so grace fayleth anon as it forleteth his werkyng. Then leseth the synful man the goodnesse of glorie that oonly is bihight to goode men that labouren and werken. Wel may he be sory thanne that oweth al his lif to God, as long as he hath lyved and eek as long as he shal lyve, that no goodnesse ne hath to paye with his dette to God, to whom he oweth al his lyf; for, trust wel, he shal yeven acountes, as seith Seint Bernard, of alle the goodes that han be yeven hym in this present lyf, and how he hath hem despended; noight so muche that ther shal nat perisse an heer of his heed, ne a moment of an houre ne shal nat perisse of his tyme, that he ne shal yeve of it a rekenyng.

[255] The fifte thyng that oghte move a man to contricioun is remembrance of the passioun that oure Lord Jhesu Crist suffred for oure synnes, for, as seith

245. *thilke newe Frenshe song.* Quoted again in the *Fortune*, l. 7.

Seint Bernard, 'Whil that I lyve I shal have remembrance of the travaillies that oure Lord Crist suffred in prechyng, his werynesse in travaillying, his temptaciouns whan he fasted, his longe wakynges whan he preyde, his teeres whan that he weepe for pitee of good people, the wo and the shame and the filthe that men seyden to hym, of the foule spitting that men spitte in his face, of the buffettes that men yaven hym, of the foule mowes and of the reprevs that men to hym seyden, of the nayles with whiche he was nayled to the croys, and of al the remenaunt of his passioun that he suffred for my synnes and no thyng for his gilt.'

[260] And ye shul understonde that in mannes synne is every manere of ordre or ordinaunce turned up-so-doun. For it is sooth that God and resoun and sensualitee and the body of man been ordeyned that everich of these foure thynges sholde have lordshipe over that oother; as thus: God sholde have lordshipe over resoun, and resoun over sensualitee, and sensualitee over the body of man; but soothly, whan man synneth al this ordre or ordinaunce is turned up-so-doun. And therefore thanne, forasmuche as the resoun of man ne wol nat be subget ne obeisant to God, that is his lord by right, therefore leseth it the lordshipe that it sholde have over sensualitee, and eek over the body of man. [265] And why? For sensualitee rebelleth thanne agayns resoun, and by that wey leseth resoun the lordshipe over sensualitee and over the body, for, right as resoun is rebel to God, right so is bothe sensualitee rebel to resoun and the body also.

And certes, this disordinaunce and this rebellioun oure Lord Jhesu Crist aboghte upon his precious body ful deere; and herkneth in which wise. For as muche thanne as resoun is rebel to God, therefore is man worthy to have sorwe and to be deed. This suffred oure Lord Jhesu Crist for man, after that he hadde be bitraysed of his disciple, and distreynd

and bounde, so that his blood brast out at every nayl of his handes, as seith Seint Augustyn. [270] And forther-over for as muchel as resoun of man ne wol nat daunte sensualitee whan it may, therefore is man worthy to have shame, and this suffred oure Lord Jhesu Crist for man whan they spetten in his visage. And forther-over for as muchel thanne as the caytyf body of man is rebel bothe to resoun and to sensualitee, therefore is it worthy the deeth, and this suffred oure Lord Jhesu Crist for man upon the croys, where as ther was no part of his body free withouten greet peyne and bitter passioun.

And al this suffred Jhesu Crist that never forfeted, and therefore resonably may be said of Jhesu in this manere: 'To muchel am I peyned for the thynges that I never deserved, and to muche defouled for shendshipe that man is worthy to have.' And therefore may the synful man wel seye, as seith Seint Bernard, 'Acursed be the bitterness of my synne, for which ther moste be suffred so muchel bitterness'; [275] for certes, after the diverse discordaunces of oure wikkednesses was the passioun of Jhesu Crist ordeyned in diverse thynges, as thus; certes, synful mannes soule is bitrayed of the devel by covetise of temporeel prosperitee, and scorned by deceite whan he cheseth flesshly delices, and yet is it tormented by incapacitee of adversitee, and by-spit by servage and subjeccioun of synne, and atte laste it is slayn fynally. For this disordinaunce of synful man was Jhesu Crist first bitrayed, and after that he was bounde that cam for to unbynden us of synne and of peyne. Thanne was he by-scorned that oonly sholde han been honoured in alle thynges and of alle thynges. Thanne was his visage, that oghte be desired to be seyn of al mankynde, in which visage aungels desiren to looke, vileynsly bispet; [280] thanne was he scourged that no thyng hadde agilt; and finally thanne

275. *by-spit, E. dispeir.*

was he crucified and slayn. Thanne was acompliced the word of Ysaye, 'He was wounded for oure mysdedes and defouled by oure felonies.' Now, sith that Jhesu Crist took upon hymself the peyne of alle oure wikkednesses, muchel oghte synful man wepen and biwayle that for his synnes Goddes sone of hevene sholde al this peyne endure.

The sixte thyng that oghte moeve a man to contricioun is the hope of thre thynges; that is to seyn, foryiffnesse of synne, and the yifte of grace wel for to do, and the glorie of hevene, with which God shal gerdone a man for his goode dedes.

And, for as muche as Jhesu Crist yeveth us thise yiftes of his largesse, and of his sovereyn bountee, therefore is he cleped *Jhesus Nazarenus, rex Judæorum*. [285] *Jhesus* is to seyn saveour, or salvacioun, on whom men shul hope to have foryiffnesse of synnes, which that is proprely salvacioun of synnes; and therefore seyde the aungel to Joseph, 'Thou shalt clepen his name Jhesus that shal saven his peple of hir synnes.' And heer-of seith Seint Peter, 'Ther is noon oother name under hevene that is yeve to any man by which a man may be saved,' but oonly Jhesus. *Nazarenus* is as muche for to seye as florissyng, in which a man shal hope that he that yeveth hym remissioun of synnes shal yeve hym eek grace wel for to do, for in the flour is hope of fruyt in tyme comyng, and in foryiffnesse of synnes, hope of grace wel for to do. 'I was atte dore of thyn herte,' seith Jhesus, 'and cleped for to entre; he that openeth to me shal have foryiffnesse of synne; [290] I wol entre into hym by my grace and soupe with hym (by the goode werkes that he shal doon, whiche werkes been the foode of God), and he shal soupe with me' (by the grete joye that I shal yeven hym).

Thus shal man hope for his werkes of penaunce that God shal yeven hym his regne, as he bihooteth hym in the gospel.

Now shal a man understonde in which

manere shal been his contricioun. I seye that it shal been universal and total. This is to seyn, a man shal be verray repentaunt for alle his synnes that he hath doon in delit of his thought, for delit is ful perilous. For ther been two manere of consentynges; that oon of hem is cleped consentyng of affeccoun, whan a man is moeved to do synne, and deliteth hym longe for to thynke on that synne, and his resoun aperceyvehit wel that it is synne agayns the lawe of God, and yet his resoun refreyneth nat his foul delit or talent, though he se wel apertly that it is agayns the reverence of God; although his resoun ne consente noght to doon that synne in dede, [295] yet seyn somme doctours that swich delit that dwelleth longe it is ful perilous, al be it never so lite. And also a man sholde sorwe namely, for al that ever he hath desired agayn the lawe of God with perfit consentyng of his resoun, for ther-of is no doute that it is deedly synne in consentyng; for certes, ther is no deedly synne that it nas first in mannes thought, and after that in his delit and so forth into consentyng, and into dede. Wherfore, I seye that many men ne repenten hem never of swiche thoghthes and delites, ne never shryven hem of it, but oonly of the dede of grete synnes outward; wherfore, I seye that swiche wikked delites and wikked thoghthes been subtille bigileres of hem that shullen be dampned.

[300] Moore-over, man oghte to sorwe for his wikkede wordes, as wel as for his wikkede dedes; for, certes, the repentaunce of a synguler synne, and nat repente of alle his othere synnes, or elles repente hym of alle his othere synnes and nat of a synguler synne, may nat availle. For certes, God Almyghty is al good, and therefore he foryeveth al, or elles right noght. And heer-of seith Saint Augustyn, I wot certeynly that God is enemy to everich synnere, and how thanne he that observeth o synne, shal he have foryifnesse of the remenaunt of his othere synnes? Nay.

[305] And forther-over contricioun sholde be wonder sorweful and angwissous, and therefore yeveth hym God pleynly his mercy, and therefore 'whan my soule was angwissous with-inne me, I hadde remembrance of God, that my preyere myghte come to hym.' Forther-over contricioun moste be continueel, and that man have stedefast purpos to shryven hym, and for to amenden hym of his lyf; for, soothly, whil contricioun lasteth man may ever have hope of foryifnesse, and of this comth hate of synne, that destroyeth synne bothe in him-self and eek in oother folk, at his power; for which seith David, 'Ye that loven God, hateth wikkednesse,' for, trusteth wel, to love God is for to love that he loveth and hate that he hateth.

The laste thyng that man shal understonde in contricioun is this, 'Wher-of awayleth contricioun?' I seye that som tyme contricioun delivereth a man fro synne; of which that David seith, 'I seye,' quod David, that is to seyn, 'I purposed fermely to shryve me, and thow, Lord, reledest my synne.' [310] And right so as contricioun availleth noght withouten sad purpos of shrifte, if man have oportunitie, right so litel worth is shrifte or satisfaccioun withouten contricioun. And moore-over contricioun destroyeth the prisoun of helle, and maketh wayk and fieble alle the strengthes of the develes, and restoreth the yiftes of the Hooly Goost and of alle goode vertues; and it clenseth the soule of synne and delivereth the soule fro the peyne of helle, and fro the compaignye of the devel, and fro the servage of synne, and restoreth it to alle goodes espiituels, and to the compaignye and comunyoun of hooly chirche.

And forther-over it maketh hym that whilom was sone of ire to be sone of grace, and alle these thynges been preved by hooly writ, and therefore he that wolde sette his entente to these thynges, he were ful wys, for, soothly, he ne sholde nat

310. *entente, H herte.*

thanne in al his lyf have corage to synne, but yeven his body and al his herte to the service of Jhesu Crist, and ther-of doon hym hommage; [315] for soothly oure sweete Lord Jhesu Crist hath spared us so debonairely in our folies, that if he ne hadde pitee of mannes soule a sory song we myghten alle synge.

*Explicit prima pars penitentie. Et sequitur secunda pars eiusdem*

The seconde partie of penitence is confessioun that is signe of contricioun. Now shul ye understonde what is confessioun, and wheither it oghte nedes be doon or noon, and whiche thynges been covenable to verray confessioun.

First shaltow understonde that confessioun is verray shewyng of synnes to the preest; this is to seyn 'verray,' for he moste confessen hym of alle the condiciouns that bilongen to his synne, as ferforth as he kan; [320] al moot be seyde and no thyng excused, ne hyd, ne for-wrapped, and noght avaunte thee of thy goode werkes. And forther-over it is necessarie to understonde whennes that synnes spryngen, and how they encreessen, and whiche they been.

Of the spryngyng of synnes seith Seint Paul in this wise, that 'Right as by a man synne entred first into this world, and thurgh that synne deeth; right so thilke deeth entred into alle men that synneden'; and this man was Adam, by whom synne entred into this world whan he brak the comaundementz of God. And therefore, he that first was so myghty that he sholde nat have dyed, bicam swich oon that he moste nedes dye, whether he wolde or noon, and al his progenye in this world that in thilke man synneden.

[325] Looke, that in thestaat of innocence, whan Adam and Eve naked weren in Paradys and no thyng ne hadden shame of hir nakednesse, how that the serpent, that was moost wily of alle

othere beestes that God hadde maked, seyde to the womman, 'Why comaunded God to yow ye sholde nat eten of every tree in Paradys?' The womman answerde, 'Of the fruyt,' quod she, 'of the trees in Paradys we feden us, but soothly, of the fruyt of the tree that is in the myddel of Paradys God forbad us for to ete, and nat touchen it, lest peraventure we sholde dyen.' The serpent seyde to the womman, 'Nay, nay, ye shul nat dyen of deeth; for sothe, God woot that what day that ye eten ther-of youre eyen shul opene, and ye shul been as goddes, knowyngge good and harm.'

The womman thanne saugh that the tree was good to feedyng, and fair to the eyen, and delitable to the sighte. She took of the fruyt of the tree, and eet it, and yaf to hire housbonde, and he eet, and anoon the eyen of hem bothe openeden; [330] and whan that they knewe that they were naked they sowed of fige leves a maner of breches, to hiden hire members.

There may ye seen that deedly synne hath first suggestioun of the feend, as sheweth heere by the naddre, and afterward the delit of the flessch, as sheweth heere by Eve, and after that the consentyng of resoun, as sheweth heere by Adam. For trust wel, though so were that the feend tempted Eve, that is to seyn the flessch, and the flessch hadde delit in the beautee of the fruyt defended, yet certes til that resoun, that is to seyn Adam, consented to the etyng of the fruyt, yet stood he in thestaat of innocence. Of thilke Adam tooke we thilke synne original, for of hym fleshly descended be we alle, and engendred of vile and corrupt mateere; and whan the soule is put in oure body, right anon is contract original synne, and that that was erst but oonly peyne of concupiscence is afterward both peyne and synne; [335] and therefore be we alle bornsones of wratthe and of dampnacioun perdurable, if it nere baptesme that we receyven, which bynymeth us the culpe. But for sothe the peyne dwelleth with us as to temptacioun, which peyne

320. thee of thy, H<sup>5</sup> him of his.

highte concupiscence. And this concupiscence whan it is wrongfully disposed or ordeyned in man it maketh hym coveite by coveitise of flessch, fleshly synne by sighte of his eyen as to erthely thynges, and eek coveitise of hynesse by pride of herte.

Now, as for to speken of the firste coveitise, that is concupiscence after the lawe of oure membres that weren lawefulliche y-maked and by rightful judgement of God. I seye, forasmuche as man is nat obeisant to God, that is his Lord, therefore is the flessch to hym disobeisant thurgh concupiscence, which yet is cleped norrissyng of synne, and occasion of synne. Therefore al the while that a man hath in hym the peyne of concupiscence it is impossible but he be tempted somtime and moeved in his flessch to synne, [340] and this thyng may nat faille as longe as he lyveth. It may wel wexefieble and faille by vertu of baptesme, and by the grace of God thurgh penitence, but fully ne shal it never quenche, that he ne shal som tyme be moeved in hymself, but if he were al refreyded by siknesse, or by malefice of sorcerie, or colde drynkes. For lo, what seith Seint Paul, 'The flessch coveiteth agayn the spirit, and the spirit agayn the flessch; they been so contrarie and so stryven that a man may nat alway doon as he wolde.' The same Seint Paul after his grete penaunce in water and in lond;—in water by nyght and by day, in greet peril and in greet peyne; in lond, in famyne, in thurst, in coold, and cloothless, and ones stoned almost to the deeth,—yet scyde he, 'Allas! I caytyf man, who shal delivere me fro the prisoun of my caytyf body?' [345] And Seint Jerome, whan he longe tyme hadde woned in desert, where as he hadde no compaignye but of wilde beestes, where as he ne hadde no mete but herbes, and water to his drynke, ne no bed but the naked erthe, for which his flessch was blak as an Ethiopeen for heete, and ny destroyed for coold, yet seyde he that the brennyng of lecherie

boyled in al his body; wherfore, I woot wel sykerly, that they been deceyved that seyn that they ne be nat tempted in hir body. Witnesse on Seint Jame the Apostel, that seith that every wight is tempted in his owene concupiscence, that is to seyn, that everich of us hath matere and occasion to be tempted of the norrissyng of synne that is in his body. And therefore seith Seint John the evaungelist, 'If that we seyn that we beth withoute synne, we deceyve us selve, and trouthe is nat in us.'

[350] Now shal ye understonde in what manere that synne wexeth and encreeseth in man. The firste thyng is thilke norrissyng of synne of which I spak biforn, thilke fleshly concupiscence; and after that comth the subjeccion of the devel, this is to seyn the develes bely, with which he bloweth in man the fir of fleshly concupiscence; and after that a man bithynketh hym wheither he wol doon, or no, thilke thing to which he is tempted. And thanne, if that a man withstonde and weye the firste entisyng of his flessch, and of the feend, thanne is it no synne; and if it so be that he do nat so, thanne feeleth he anon a flambe of delit, and thanne is it good to be war and kepen hym wel, or elles he wol falle anon into consentyng of synne; and thanne wol he do it, if he may have tyme and place. [355] And of this matere seith Moyses, by the devel, in this manere: The feend seith, 'I wole chace and pursue the man by wikked suggestioun, and I wole hente hym by moevyng and stiryng of synne; I wol departe my prise, or my praye, by deliberacioun, and my lust shal been accompliced in delit; I wol drawe my swerd in consentyng,'—for certes, right as a swerd departeth a thyng in two peces, right so consentyng departeth God fro man,—'and thanne wol I sleen hym with myn hand in dede of synne'; thus seith the feend; for certes, thanne is a man al deed in soule. And thus is synne accompliced



by temptacioun, by delit, and by consentynge, and thanne is the synne cleped actueel.

Forsothe synne is in two maneres, outhur it is venial, or deedly synne. Soothly, whan man loveth any creature moore than Jhesu Crist oure Creatour, thanne is it deedly synne. And venial synne is it, if man love Jhesu Crist lasse than hym oughte. Forsothe the dede of this venial synne is ful perilous, for it amenuseth the love that men sholde han to God moore and moore. [360] And therefore if a man charge hymself with manye swiche venial synnes, certes, but if so be that he som tyme discharge hym of hem by shrifte, they mowe ful lightly amenuse in hym al the love that he hath to Jhesu Crist; and in this wise skippeth venial into deedly synne, for certes, the moore that a man chargeth his soule with venial synne, the moore is he enclenyd to fallen into deedly synne. And therefore lat us nat be negligent to deschargen us of venial synnes, for the proverbe seith that 'manye smale maken a greet.' And herkne this ensample; a greet wawe of the see comth somtyme with so greet a violence that it drencheth the shipe; and the same harm dooth som tyme the smale dropes of water that entren thurgh a litel crevace into the thurrok, and in the botme of the shipe, if men be so negligent that they ne discharge hem nat by tyme. And therefore, although ther be a difference bitwixe these two causes of drenchynge, algates the shipe is dreynt. [365] Right so fareth it somtyme of deedly synne, and of anoyouse veniale synnes, whan they multiplie in a man so greetly that thilke worldly thynges that he loveth, thurgh whiche he synneth venyally, is as greet in his herte as the love of God, or moore. And therefore the love of every thyng that is nat biset in God, ne doon principally for Goddes sake, al though that a man love it lasse than God, yet is it venial synne, and deedly synne whan

the love of any thyng weyeth in the herte of man as muchel as the love of God, or moore. Deedly synne, as seith Seint Augustyn, is 'whan a man turneth his herte fro God, which that is verray sovereyn bountee, that may nat chaunge, and yeveth his herte to thyng that may chaunge and flitte'; and certes, that is every thyng, save God of hevene. For sooth is that if a man yeve his love, the which that he oweth al to God with al his herte, unto a creature, certes as muche as he yeveth of his love to thilke creature, so muche he bireveth fro God, [370] and therefore dooth he synne, for he that is dettour to God ne yeldeth nat to God al his dette, that is to seyn, al the love of his herte.

Now, sith man understondeth generally which is venial synne, thanne is it covenable to tellen specially of synnes whiche that many a man peraventure ne demeth hem nat synnes, and ne shryveth hem nat of the same thynges, and yet natheless they been synnes. Soothly, as these clerkes writen, this is to seyn, that at every tyme that a man eteth or drynketh moore than suffiseth to the sustenance of his body, in certain he dooth synne; and eek whan he speketh moore than nedeth it is synne; eke whan he herkneth nat benignely the compleint of the poure; eke whan he is in heele of body and wol nat faste whan hym oghte faste, withouten cause resonable; eke whan he slepeth moore than nedeth, or whan he comth by thilke enchesoun to late to chirche, or to othere werkes of charite; [375] eke whan he useth his wyf withouten sovereyn desir of engendrure, to the honour of God, or for the entente to yelde to his wyf the dette of his body; eke whan he wol nat visite the sike and the prisoner, if he may; eke if he love wyf or child, or oother worldly thyng, moore than resoun requireth; eke if he flatere or blandise moore than hym oghte, for any necessitee; eke if he amenuse or withdrawe the

370. *hym oghte, H<sup>6</sup> other folk (other men).*

almesse of the poure; eke if he apparailleth his mete moore deliciously than nede is, or ete to hastily, by likerousnesse; eke if he tale vanytees at chirche, or at Goddes service, or that he be a talker of ydel wordes, of folye, or of vileynye,—for he shal yelden acountes of it at the day of doome; eke whan he biheteth or assureth to do thynges that he may nat perfourne; eke whan that he by lightnesse or folie mysseyeth or scorneth his neighebores; [380] eke whan he hath any wikked suspicioun of thyng ther he ne woot of it no soothfastnesse; these thynges and mo withoute nombre been synnes, as seith Saint Augustyn.

Now shal men understonde that al be it so that noon erthely man may eschue alle venial synnes, yet may he refreyne hym by the brennyng love that he hath to oure Lord Jhesu Crist, and by preyeres and confessioun and othere goode werkes, so that it shal but litel greve; for, as seith Saint Augustyn, 'If a man love God in swich manere that al that ever he dooth is in the love of God, and for the love of God verraily, for he brenneth in the love of God, looke, how muche that a drope of water that falleth in a founneys ful of fyr anoyeth or greveth, so muche anoyeth a venial synne unto a man that is perfit in the love of Jhesu Crist.' [385] Men may also refreyne venial synne by receyvynge worthily of the precious body of Jhesu Crist; by receyvynge eek of hooley water, by almesdede, by general confessioun of *Confiteor* at masse, and at complyn, and by blessynge of bisshopes and of preestes and othere goode werkes.

*Sequitur de septem peccatis mortalibus et eorum dependenciis et speciebus*

Now is it bihovely thyng to telle

*Sequitur de septem peccatis.* At this point Chaucer begins to follow the *Somme de Vices et de Vertus* of Frère Lorens, altering, however, his arrangement, and with less close logical coherence.

whiche been the deedly synnes, this is to seyn chieftaynes of synnes. Alle they renne in o lees, but in diverse maneres. Now been they cleped chieftaynes, for-as-muche as they been chief, and spryngen of alle othere synnes. Of the roote of these sevene synnes thanne is pride, the general roote of alle harmes, for of this roote spryngen certein braunches, as ire; envye; accidie, or slewthe; avarice, or covetise, to commune understondynge; glotonye, and lecherye. And everich of these chief synnes hath his braunches and his twigges as shal be declared in hire chapitres folwyng.

*De Superbia*

[390] And thogh so be that no man kan outrelly telle the nombre of twigges and of the harmes that cometh of pride, yet wol I shewe a partie of hem, as ye shul understonde. Ther is inobedience, avauntynge, ypocrisie, despit, arrogance, inpudence, swellynge of herte, insolence, elacioun, inpacience, strif, contumacie, presumpcioun, irreverence, pertinacie, veyne glorie and many another twig that I kan nat declare. Inobedient is he that disobeyeth for despit to the comandementz of God and to his sovereyns and to his goostly fader. Avauntour is he that bosteth of the harm or of the bountee that he hath doon. Ypocrite is he that hideth and sheweth hym swich as he is, and sheweth hym swich as he noight is. [395] Despitous is he that hath desdeyn of his neighebores, that is to seyn of his evene Cristene, or hath despit to doon that hym oghte to do. Arrogant is he that thynketh that he hath thilke bountees in hym that he hath noht, or weneth that he sholde have hem by his desertes, or elles he demeth that he be that he nys nat. Inpudent is he that for his pride hath no shame of his synnes. Swellynge of herte is whan a man rejoyseth hym of

385. as ire, etc. These are really treated separately, and not as branches of Pride.

harm that he hath doon. Insolent is he that despiseth in his juggement alle othere folk, as to regard of his value, and of his konnyng, and of his spekyng, and of his beryng. [400] Elacioun is whan he ne may neither suffre to have maister ne felawe. Inpatient is he that wol nat been y-taught ne undernome of his vice, and by strif werreieth trouthe wityngly, and deffendeth his folye. Contumax is he that thurgh his indignacioun is agayns everich auctoritee or power of hem that been his sovereyns. Presumpcioun is whan a man undertaketh an emprise that hym oghte nat do, or elles that he may nat do, and this is called surquidie. Irreverence is whan men do nat honour there as hem oghte to doon, and waiten to be revered. Pertinacie is whan man deffendeth his folies, and trusteth to muchel in his owene wit. [405] Veyneglorie is for to have pompe and delit in his temporeel hynesse, and glorifie hym in this worldly estaat. Janglynge is whan men speken to muche biforn folk, and clappen as a mille, and taken no kepe what they seye.

And yet is ther a privee spece of pride that waiteth first to be salewed er he wole sawe, al be he lasse worth than that oother is, praventure; and eek he waiteth or desireth to sitte, or elles to goon above hym in the wey, or kisse pax, or been encensed, or goon to offryng biforn his neighebores, and swiche semblable thynges, agayns his duetee, praventure, but that he hath his herte and his entente in swich a proud desir to be magnified and honoured biforn the peple.

Now been ther two maneres of pride. That oon of hem is withinne the herte of man and that oother is withoute, [410] of whiche soothly these forseide thynges, and mo than I have seyde, apertenen to pride that is in the herte of man, and that othere speces of pride been withoute;

405. *privee spece*, secret kind. This section is Chaucer's addition.

but natheles that oon of these speces of pride is signe of that oother, right as the gaye leefsel atte tavernne is signe of the wyn that is in the celer. And this is in manye thynges, as in speche and contenance, and in outrageous array of clothyng; for certes, if ther ne hadde be no synne in clothyng, Crist wolde nat so soone have noted and spoken of the clothyng of thilke riche man in the gospel. And as seith Seint Gregorie, 'That precious clothyng is cowpable for the derthe of it, and for his softnesse and for his strangenesse and degisynesse, and for the superfluitee, and for the inordinat scantnesse of it.'

[415] Allas! may men nat seen as in oure dayes the synful costlewe array of clothyng, and namely in to muche superfluitee, or elles in to desordinat scantnesse?

As to the firste synne, in superfluitee of clothyng, which that maketh it so deere to harm of the peple, nat oonly the cost of embrowdyng, the degise, endentyng, baryng, owndyng, palyng, wyndyng or bendyng, and semblable wast of clooth in vanitee, but ther is also costlewe furring in hir gownes, so muche pownsonyng of chisel to maken holes, so muche daggyng of sheres; forth-with the superfluitee in lengthe of the forseide gownes, trailyng in the dong, and in the mire, on horse and eek on foote, as wel of men as of wommen, that al thilke trailyng is verraily as in effect wasted, consumed, thredbare, and roten with donge, rather than it is yeven to the poure, to greet damage of the forseide poure folk. [420] And that in sondry wise; this is to seyn, that the moore that clooth is wasted, the moore it costeth to the peple for the scantnesse. And farther-over if so be that they wolde yeven swich powsoned and dagged clothyng to the poure folk, it is nat convenient to were for hire estaat, ne suffisant to beete hire necessitee

410. On the subject of clothes, Chaucer greatly expands his original.

to kepe hem fro the distemperance of the firmament.

Upon that oother side to speken of the horrible disordinat scantnesse of clothyng as been thise kuttet sloppes, or haynselyns, that thurgh hire shortnesse ne covere nat the shameful membres of man, to wikked entente. Allas ! somme of hem shewen the boce of hir shape, and the horrible swollen membres, that semeth lik the maladie of hirnias, in the wrappyng of hir hoses ; and eek the buttokes of hem faren as it were the hyndre part of a she ape in the fulle of the moone. [425] And mooreover the wrecched swollen membres that they shewethurgh the degisyng, in departyng of hire hoses in whit and reed, semeth that half hir shameful privee membres weren flayne. And if so be that they departen hire hoses in othere colours, as is whit and blak, or whit and blew, or blak and reed, and so forth, thanne semeth it as by variaunce of colour that half the partie of hire privee membres were corrupt by the fir of Seint Antony, or by cancre, or by oother swich meschaunce. Of the hyndre part of hir buttokes it is ful horrible for to see, for certes, in that partie of hir body ther as they purgen hir stynkyng ordure, that foule partie shewe they to the peple proudly in despit of honestitee, the which honestitee that Jhesu Crist and his freendes observede to shewen in hir lyve.

[430] Now of the outrageous array of wommen, God woot that though the visages of somme of hem seme ful chaast and debonaire, yet notifie they in hire array of atyr likerousnesse and pride. I sey nat that honestitee in clothyng of man or womman is uncovenable, but certes the superfluitee or disordinat scantitee of clothyng is reprevable. Also the synne of aornement, or of appaill, is in thynges that apertenen to ridyng,—as in to manye delicat horses that been hoolden for delit, that been so faire, fatte, and costlewe, and also to

many a vicious knave that is sustened by cause of hem ; in to curious harneys, as in sadeles, in crouperes, peytrels, and bridles covered with precious clothyng, and riche barres, and plates of gold, and of silver ; for which God seith, by Zakarie the prophete, 'I wol confounde the rideres of swiche horses.' [435] This folk taken litel reward of the ridyng of Goddes sone of hevene and of his harneys whan he rood upon the asse, and ne hadde noon oother harneys but the poure clothes of his disciples, ne we ne rede nat that ever he rood on oother beest. I speke this for the synne of superfluitee, and nat for resonable honestitee, whan reson it requireth.

And forther, certes, pride is gretly notified in holdyng of gret meynce whan they be of litel profit, or of right no profit ; and namely whan that meynce is felonous and damageous to the peple, by hardynesse of heigh lordshipe, or by wey of offices ; for certes, swiche lordes sellen thanne hir lordshipe to the devel of helle, whanne they sustenen the wikkednesse of hir meynce. [440] Or elles whan this folk of lowe degree, as thilke that holden hostelries, sustenen the theste of hire hostilers, and that is in many manere of deceites. Thilke manere of folk been the flyes that folwen the hony, or elles the houndes that folwen the careyne. Swich forseide folk stranglen spiritually hir lordshipes, for which thus seith David the prophete, 'Wikked deeth moote come upon thilke lordshipes, and God yeve that they moote descenden into helle al doun, al doun ; for in hire houses been iniquitees and shrewednesses, and nat God of hevene.' And certes, but if they doon amendement, right as God yaf his benysoun to Pharao by the service of Jacob, and to Laban by the service of Joseph, right so God wol yeve his malisoun to swiche lordshipes as sustenen

440. *Pharao* . . . *Jacob*. All the seven MSS. have the names in this order, so it may be Chaucer's mistake.

the wikkednesse of hir servauntz, but if they come to amendement.

Pride of the table appeereth eek ful ofte; for certes, riche men been cleped to festes and poure folk been put away and rebuked. [445] Also in excesse of diverse metes and drynkes, and namely swiche manere bake-metes and dissh-metes, brennyng of wilde fir, and peynted and castelled with papir, and semblable wast, so that it is abusioun for to thynke. And eek in to greet preciousnesse of vessel and curiositee of myustralcie, by whiche a man is stired the moore to delices of luxurie. If so be that he sette his herte the lasse upon oure Lord Jhesu Crist, certeyn it is a synne; and certainly the delices myghte been so grete in this caas that man myghte lightly falle by hem into deedly synne.

The especes that sourden of pride, soothly, whan they sourden of malice ymaged, avised, and forncast, or elles of usage, been deedly synnes, it is no doute; and whan they sourden by freletee unavysed and sodeynly withdrawn ageyn, al been they grevouse synnes, I gesse that they ne been nat deedly.

[450] Now myghte men axe wher-of that pride sourdeth and spryngeth, and I seye, somtyme it spryngeth of the goodes of nature, and somtyme of the goodes of fortune, and somtyme of the goodes of grace. Certes, the goodes of nature stonden outhur in goodes of body or in goodes of soule. Certes, goodes of body been heele of body, as strengthe, delivernesse, beautee, gentrie, franchise; goodes of nature of the soule been good wit, sharpe understondynge, subtil engyn, vertu natureel, good memorie; goodes of fortune been richesse, hyghe degrees of lordshipes, preisynges of the peple; [455] goodes of grace been science, power to suffre spiritueel travaille, benignitee, vertuous contemplacioun, withstondynge of temptacioun, and semblable thynges; of whiche forseyde goodes, certes, it is a ful greet folye a man to priden hym in

any of hem alle. Now as for to speken of goodes of nature; God woot that somtyme we han hem in nature as muche to oure damage as to oure profit. As for to speken of heele of body, certes, it passeth ful lightly, and eek it is ful ofte enchesoun of the siknesse of oure soule; for, God woot, the flessch is a ful greet enemy to the soule, and therefore the moore that the body is hool the moore be we in peril to falle. Eke for to pride hym in his strengthe of body, it is an heigh folye, for certes, the flessch coviteth agayn the spirit, and ay the moore strong that the flessch is, the sorer may the soule be, [460] and over al this, strengthe of body and worldly hardynesse causeth ful ofte many a man to peril and meschaunce. Eek for to pride hym of his gentrie is ful greet folie, for ofte tyme the gentrie of the body binymeth the gentrie of the soule, and eek we ben alle of o fader and of o mooder, and alle we been of o nature, roten and corrupt, bothe riche and poure. Forsothe o manere gentrie is for to preise—that apparailleth mannes corage with vertues and moralitees and maketh hym Cristes child; for truste wel, that over what man that synne hath maistrie he is a verray chert to synne.

Now been ther generale signes of gentillesse, as eschewynge of vice and ribaudye and servage of synne, in word, in werk, and contenance, [465] and usynge vertu, curteisye, and clenness, and to be liberal, that is to seyn, large by mesure, for thilke that passeth mesure is folie and synne. Another is to remembre hym of bountee that he of oother folk hath receyved. Another is to be benigne to his goode subgetis, wherfore seith Senek, 'Ther is no thing moore covenable to a man of heigh estaat, than debonairetee and pitee'; and therefore these flies that men clepeth bees, whan they maken hir kyng, they chesen oon that hath no prikke wherwith he may stynge.

Another is, a man to have a noble

herte, and a diligent to attayne to heighe vertuose thynges. Now certes, a man to pride hym in the goodes of grace is eek an outrageous folie, for thilke yifte of grace that sholde have turned hym to goodnesse and to medicine, turneth hym to venym and to confusioun, as seith Seint Gregorie. [470] Certes also, who-so prideth hym in the goodes of fortune, he is a ful greet fool, for somtyme is a man a greet lord by the morwe, that is a caytyf and a wrecche er it be nyght; and somtyme the richesse of a man is cause of his deth; somtyme the delices of a man is cause of the grevous maladye thurgh which he dyeth. Certes, the commendacioun of the peple is somtyme ful fals and ful brotel for to triste,—this day they preyse, tomorwe they blame; God woot, desir to have commendacioun of the peple hath caused deeth to many a bisy man.

*Remedium contra peccatum Superbie*

[475] Now sith that so is that ye han understonde what is pride, and whiche been the speses of it, and whennes pride sourdeth and spryngeth, now shul ye understonde which is the remedie agayns the synne of pride; and that is humylitee or mekenesse, that is a vertu thurgh which a man hath verray knoweleche of hymself, and holdeth of hymself no pris ne deyntee, as in regard of his desertes, considerynge ever his freletee.

Now been ther thre maneres of humylitee; as humylitee in herte, and another humylitee in his mouth, the thridde in his werkes.

The humilitee in herte is in foure maneres. That oon is when a man holdeth hymself as noght worth biforn God of hevene. Another is, when he ne despiseth noon oother man. [480] The thridde is when he rekketh nat though men holde hym noght worth.

470. *Remedium.* In the *Somme de Vices*, etc., the remedies and the sins are kept apart. Chaucer brings each remedy after its sin.

The ferthe is when he nys nat sory of his humiliacioun.

Also the humilitee of mouth is in foure thynges; in attempree speche, and in humblesse of speche; and when he biknoweth with his owene mouth that he is swich as hym thynketh that he is in his herte; another is when he preiseth the bountee of another man and no thyng therof amenuseth.

Humilitee eek in werkes is in foure maneres; the firste is when he putteth othere men biforn hym; the seconde is to chese the loweste place over al; the thridde is gladly to assente to good conseil; the ferthe is to stonde gladly to the award of his sovereyns, or of hym that is in hyer degree. Certein this is a greet werk of humylitee.

*Sequitur de Invidia*

After pride wol I speken of the foule synne of envye, which is, as by the word of the philosopre, sorwe of oother mannes prosperitee; and after the word of Seint Augustyn, it is sorwe of oother mannes wele and joye of othere mennes harm. [485] This synne is platly agayns the Hooly Goost. Al be it so that every synne is agayns the Hooly Goost, yet nathelecs for-as-muche as bountee aperteneth proprely to the Hooly Goost, and envye comth proprely of malice, therfore it is proprely agayn the bountee of the Hooly Goost.

Now hath malice two speses, that is to seyn, hardnesse of herte in wikkednesse, or elles the flesh of man is so blynd that he considereth nat that he is in synne, or rekketh nat that he is in synne, which is the hardnesse of the devel.

That oother spece of malice is when a man wcreyeth trouthe, when he woot that it is trouthe, and eek when he wcreyeth the grace that God hath yeve to his neighebre; and al this is by envye. Certes thanne is envye the worse synne that is; for soothly alle othere synnes been somtyme oonly agayns o special vertu,

but certes, envye is agayns alle vertues, and agayns alle goodnesse, for it is sory of alle the bountees of his neighebores; and in this manere it is divers from alle othere synnes; [490] for wel unnethe is ther any synne that it ne hath som delit in itself, save oonly envye, that ever hath in itself angwish and sorwe.

The speses of envye been thise; ther is first, sorwe of oother mannes goodnesse and of his prosperitee; and prosperitee is kyndely matere of joye; thanne is envye a synne agayns kynde. The seconde spece of envye is joye of oother mannes harm; and that is proprely lyk to the devel, that ever rejoyseth hym of mannes harm.

Of thise two speses comth bakbityng, and this synne of bakbityng, or detraccion, hath certeine speses, as thus; som man preiseth his neighebores by a wikke entente, for he maketh alwey a wikked knotte atte laste ende, alwey he maketh a 'but' atte laste ende,—that is digne of moore blame than worth is al the preisyng. [495] The seconde spece is that if a man be good, and dooth or seith a thing to good entente, the bakbiter wol turne all thilke goodnesse up-so-down, to his shrewed entente. The thridde is to amenuse the bountee of his neighebores. The fourthe spece of bakbityng is this, that if men speke goodnesse of a man, thanne wol the bakbiter seyn, 'Pardee! swich a man is yet bet than he,' in displeisyng of hym that men preise.

The fite spece is this, for to consente gladly and herkne gladly to the harm that men speke of oother folk; this synne is ful greet and ay encreeseth after the wikked entente of the bakbiter.

After bakbityng cometh grucchyng or nurruracioun, and somtyme it spryngeth of incipience agayns God, and somtyme agayns man.

[500] Agayns God it is whan a man gruccheth agayn the peynes of helle, or agayns poverté, or loss of catel, agayn eyn or tempest, or elles gruccheth that hrewes han prosperitee, or elles for that

goode men han adversitee; and alle thise thynges sholde men suffre patiently, for they comen by the rightful juggement and ordinance of God. Somtyme comth grucching of avarice, as Judas gruccheth agayns the Magdaleyne, whan sheenoynthe the heved of oure Lord Jhesu Crist with hir precious oynement. This maner murmure is swich as whan man gruccheth of goodnesse that hymself dooth, or that oother folk doon of hir owene catel.

Somtyme comth murmure of pride, as whan Simon the Pharisee gruccheth agayn the Magdaleyne, whan she approached to Jhesu Crist and weepe at his feet for hiresynnes. [505] And somtyme grucchyng sourdeth of envye, whan men discovereth a mannes harm that was pryvee, or bereth hym on hond thyng that is fals.

Murmure eek is ofte amonges servantz, that gruchen whan hir sovereyns bidden hem doon leveful thynges; and, for-as-muche as they dar nat openly withseye the comaundementz of hir sovereyns, yet wol they seyn harm, and grucche and murmure prively, for verray despit, whiche wordes men clepen 'the develes *Pater noster*,' though so be that the devel ne hadde never *Pater noster*, but that lewed folk yeven it swich a name. Somtyme grucchyng comth of ire, or prive hate that norisseth rancour in herte, as afterward I shal declare. [510] Thanne cometh eek bitterness of herte, thurgh which bitterness every good dede of his neighebor semeth to hym bitter and unsavory. Thanne cometh discord that unbyndeth alle manere of freendshipe. Thanne comth scornynge of his neighebor, al do he never so weel. Thanne comth accusynge, as whan man seketh occasioun to anoyen his neighebor, which that is lyk to the craft of the devel, that waiteth bothe nyght and day to accusen us alle. Thanne comth malignitee, thurgh which a man anoyeth his neighebor prively, if he may; and if he noght may, algate his wikked wil ne shal nat wante, as for to

505. *withseye*, contradict; H *withstonde*.  
505. *folk* . . . *name*, H *men calle it so*.

brennen his hous pryvely, or empoysone or sleen his beestes, and semblable thynges.

[515] *Remedium contra peccatum Invidie*

Now wol I speke of the remedie agayns this foule synne of envye. First is the lovyng of God principal, and lovyng of his neighebor as hymself, for soothly that oon ne may nat been withoute that oother. And truste wel, that in the name of thy neighebor thou shalt understonde the name of thy brother; for certes alle we have o fader fleshly, and o mooder, that is to seyn, Adam and Eve; and eek o Fader espritueel, and that is God of hevenc. Thy neighebor artow holden for to love and wilne hym alle goodnesse, and therefore seith God, 'Love thy neighebor as thyselfe'; that is to seyn, to salvacioun of lyf and of soule. And moore-over thou shalt love hym in word, and in benigne amonestyng and chastisyng, and conforten hym in his anoyes, and preye for hym with al thyn herte. And in dede thou shalt love hym in swich wise that thou shalt doon to hym in charitee as thou woldest that it were doon to thyn owene persone; [520] and therefore thou ne shalt doon hym no damage in wikked word, ne harm in his body, ne in his catel, ne in his soule by entissyng of wikked ensample; thou shalt nat desiren his wyf, ne none of his thynges. Understood cek, that in the name of neighebor is comprehended his enemy. Certes man shal loven his enemy by the comandement of God, and soothly, thy freend shaltow love in God. I seye, thyn enemy shaltow love for Goddes sake by his comandement; for if it were reson that a man sholde haten his enemy, forsothe God nolde nat receyven us to his love, that been his enemys.

Agayns thre manere of wronges that his enemy dooth to hym he shal doon thre thynges, as thus: [525] agayns hate and rancour of herte, he shal love hym in herte; agayns chidyng and wikkede

wordes, he shal preye for his enemy; and agayn wikked dede of his enemy, he shal doon hym bountee; for Crist seith, 'Loveth youre enemys, and preyeth for hem that speke yow harm, and eek for hem that yow chacen and pursewen, and dooth bountee to hem that yow haten.'" Loo, thus comaundeth us oure Lord Jhesu Crist to do to oure enemys, for soothly nature dryveth us to loven oure freendes, and *parfey*, oure enemys han moore nede to love than oure freendes; and they that moore nede have, certes, to hem shal men doon goodnesse; and certes, in thilke dede have we remembrance of the love of Jhesu Crist that deyde for his enemys. And, in as muche as thilke love is the moore grevous to perfourne, in so muche is the moore gretter the merite, and therefore the lovyng of oure enemy hath confounded the venym of the devel; [530] for, right as the devel is disconfited by humylitee, right so is he wounded to the deeth by love of oure enemy. Certes thanne is love the medicine that casteth out the venym of envye fro mannes herte. The spesces of this paas shullen be moore largely in hir chapitres folwyng declared.

*Sequitur de Ira*

After envye wol I discryven the synne of ire; for soothly whoso hath envye upon his neighebor anon he wole comunly fynde hym a matere of wratthe in word, or in dede, agayns hym to whom he hath envye. And as wel comth ire of pride as of envye, for soothly he that is proude or envyous is lightly wrooth.

[535] This synne of ire, after the discryvyng of Seint Augustyn, is wikked wil to been avenged by word or by dede. Ire, after the philosophre, is the fervent blood of man y-quyked in his herte, thurgh which he wole harm to hym that he hateth. For certes, the herte of man, by eschawfyng and moevyng of his blood, wexeth so trouble that he is out of alle juggement of resoun.



But ye shal understonde that ire is in two maneres; that oon of hem is good and that oother is wikked. The goode ire is by jalousie of goodnesse, thurgh which a man is wrooth with wikkednesse, and agayns wikkednesse; and therfore seith a wys man, that ire is bet than pley. [540] This ire is with debonairetee, and it is wrooth withouten bitternesse, nat wrooth agayns the man, but wrooth with the mysdede of the man, as seith the prophete David, *Irascimini, et nolite peccare.*

Now understandeth that wikked ire is in two maneres, that is to seyn, sodeyn ire, or hastif ire withouten avisement and consentynge of resoun. The menyng and the sens of this is, that the resoun of man ne consente nat to thilke sodeyn ire; and thanne it is venial. Another ire is ful wikked, that comth of felonie of herte, wyssed and cast biforn with wikked wil to do vengeance, and therto his resoun consenteth; and soothly this is deedly synne. This ire is so displeasnt to God that it troubleth his hous and chaceth the Hooly Goost out of mannes soule, and wasteth and destroyeth the liknesse of God, that is to seyn, the vertu that is in mannes soule, [545] and put in hym the liknesse of the devel, and bynymeth the man fro God that is his rightful lord. This ire is a ful greet plesaunce to the devel, for it is the develes fourneys that schawfed with the fir of helle. For certes, right so as fir is moore mighty to estroyen erthely thynges than any other element, right so ire is myghty to estroyen alle spiritueel thynges.

Looke how that fir of smale gleedes, nat been almost dede under asshen,ollen quike agayn whan they been touched with brymston. Right so ire of evermo quyken agayn whan it is touched by the pride that is covered in mannes herte; for certes, fir ne may nat comen out of no thyng, but if it were first in the same thyng naturelly, as fir drawn out of flyntes with steel. [550] And, right so as pride is ofte tyme

matere of ire, right so is rancour norice and keper of ire. Ther is a maner tree, as seith Seint Ysidre, that whan men maken fire of thilke tree and covere the coles of it with asshen, soothly the fir of it wol lasten al a yeer or moore, and right so fareth it of rancour; whan it is ones conceived in the hertes of som men, certein it wol lasten peraventure from oon Estre day unto another Estre day and moore; but certes, thilke man is ful fer fro the mercy of God in thilke while.

In this forseide develes fourneys ther forgen thre shrewes: Pride, that ay bloweth and encreesseth the fir by chidyng and wikked wordes; [555] thanne stant Envye, and holdeth the hooite iren upon the herte of man with a peire of longe toonges of long rancour; and thanne stant the synne of Contumelie or strif and cheeste, and batereth and forgeth by vileyns reprevynges. Certes, this cursed synne anoyeth bothe to the man hymself and eek to his neigebore. For soothly, almost al the harm that any man dooth to his neigebore comth of wratthe; for certes, outrageous wratthe dooth al that ever the devel hym comaundeth: for he ne spareth neither Crist, ne his sweete mooder. And in his outrageous anger and ire, allas! allas! ful many oon at that tyme feeleth in his herte ful wikkedly both of Crist and of alle his halwes.

[560] Is nat this a cursed vice? Yis, certes. Allas! it bynymeth from man his wit and his resoun and al his debonaire lif espritueel, that sholde kepen his soule.

Certes it bynymeth eek Goddes due lordshipe, and that is mannes soule and the love of his neigebores. It stryeveth eek alday agayn trouthe. It reveth hym the quiete of his herte and subverteth his soule.

Of ire comen thise stynkyng engendures; first, hate, that is oold wratthe; discord, thurgh which a man forsaketh his olde freend that he hath

lovede ful longe; and thanne cometh werre, and every manere of wrong that man dooth to his neighebores in body, or in catel. Of this cursed synne of ire cometh eek manslaughter, and understonde wel that homycide, that is manslaughter, is in diverse wise. Som manere of homycide is spiritueel, and som is bodily.

[565] Spiritueel manslaughter is in sixe thynges. First, by hate, as Seint John seith, 'He that hateth his brother is homycide.' Homycide is eek by bakbitynge; of whiche bakbiteres seith Salomon, that they han two swerdes with whiche they sleen hire neighebores; for soothly as wikke is to bynyme his good name, as his lyf. Homycide is eek in yevynge of wikked conseil by fraude, as for to yeven conseil to areysen wrongful custumes and taillages, of whiche seith Salomon: 'Leoun rorynge and bere hongry been like to the cruell lordshipes in withholdynge or abreggyng of the shepe (or the hyre), or of the wages of servauntz, or elles in usures or in withdrawynge of the almesse of poure folk.' For which the wise man seith, 'Fedeth hym that almost dyeth for hunger'; for soothly, but if thou feede hym, thou sleest hym. And alle these been deedly synnes. [570] Bodily manslaughter is whan thou sleest him with thy tonge in oother manere, as whan thou comandest to sleen a man, or elles yevest hym conseil to sleen a man.

Manslaughtre in dede is in foure maneres. That oon is by lawe, right as a justice dampneth hym that is coupable to the deeth; but lat the justice be war that he do it rightfully, and that he do it nat for delit to spille blood, but for kepyng of rightwisenesse. Another homycide is that is doon for necessitee, as whan o man sleeth another in his defendaunt, and that he ne may noon ootherwise escape from his owene deeth; but certainly, if he may escape withouten manslaughter of his adversarie and sleeth hym, he dooth synne, and he shal bere

penance as for deedly synne. Eek if a man, by caas or aventure, shete an arwe, or caste a stoon, with which he sleeth a man, he is homycide. [575] Eek if a womman by necligence overlyeth hire child in hir slepyng, it is homycide and deedly synne. Eek whan man destourbeth concepcioun of a child, and maketh a womman outhere bareyne by drynkyng venemouse herbes thurgh which she may nat conceyve, or sleeth a child by drynkes, or elles putteth certeine material thynges in hire secree places to slee the child, or elles dooth unkyndely synne by which man or womman shedeth hire nature, in manere or in place ther as a child may nat be conceived, or elles if a woman have conceived and hurt hirselfe, and sleeth the child, yet it is homycide. What seye we eek of women that mordren hir children for drede of worldly shame? Certes, an horrible homicide! Homycide is eek if a man approacheth to a womman by desir of lecherie, thurgh which the child is perished, or elles smyteth a womman wityngly, thurgh which she leseth hir child. Alle these been homycides and horrible deedly synnes.

[580] Yet comen ther of ire manye mo synnes, as wel in word, as in thoght and in dede, as he that arretteth upon God, or blameth God of thyng of which he is hymself gilty, or despiseth God, and alle his halwes, as doon these cursede hasardours in diverse contrees. This cursed synne doon they whan they feelen in hir hertes ful wikkedly of God and of his halwes; also whan they treten unreverently the sacrament of the auter,—thilke synne is so greet that unne the may it been releessed, but that the mercy of God passeth alle his werkes, it is so greet, and he so benigne.

Thanne comth of ire attrayngre, whan a man is sharply amonested in his shrifte to forleten his synne, thanne wole he be angry and answeren hokerly and angrily, and deffenden or excusen

575. by drynkes, E. adds wilfully.

his synne by unstedefastnesse of his flessch; or elles he dide it for to holde compaignye with his felawes; or elles he seith, the fend enticed hym; [585] or elles he dide it for his youthe; or elles his compleccioun is so corageous that he may nat forbere; or elles it is his destinee, as he seith, unto a certain age; or elles, he seith, it cometh hym of gentillesse of his auncestres; and semblable thynges. Alle this manere of folk so wrappen hem in hir synnes that they ne wol nat delivere hemself; for soothly no wight that excuseth hym wilfully of his synne may nat been delivered of his synne, til that he mekely biknoweth his synne.

After this thanne cometh sweryng, that is expres agayn the comandement of God; and this bifalleth ofte of anger and of ire. God seith, 'Thow shalt nat take the name of thy Lord God in veyn,' or in ydel. Also oure Lord Jhesu Crist seith, by the word of Seint Mathew, 'Ne wol ye nat swere in alle manere; neither by hevене, for it is Goddes trone; ne by erthe, for it is the bench of his feet; ne by Jerusalem, for it is the citee of a greet kyng; ne by thyn heed, for thou mayst nat make an heer whit ne blak; [590] but seyeth by youre word, "ye, ye," and "nay, nay"; and what that is moore it is of yvel,' seith Crist. For Cristes sake, ne swereth nat so synfully, in dismembrynge of Crist by soule, herte, bones, and body; for certes it semeth that ye thynke that the cursede Jewes ne dismembred nat ynough the precieuse persone of Crist, but ye dismembre hym moore. And if so be that the lawe compelle yow to swere, thanne rule yow after the lawe of God in youre sweryng, as seith Jeremye, 4° c°, 'Thou shalt kepe thre condicions; 'thou shalt swere in trouthe, in doom, and in rightwysnesse'; this is to seyn, thou shalt swere sooth; for every lesyng is agayns Crist, for Crist is verray trouthe.

And thynk wel this, that every greet swerere, nat compelled lawefully to swere, the wounde shal nat departe from his hous whil he uscth swich unleveful sweryng. Thou shalt sweren eek in doom, whan thou art constreyned by thy domesman to witnessen the trouthe. [595] Eek thow shalt nat swere for envye, ne for favour, ne for meede, but for rightwysnesse, and for declaracioun of it, to the worshippe of God, and helpyng of thyne evene Cristene. And therefore, every man that taketh Goddes name in ydel, or falsly swereth with his mouth, or elles taketh on hym the name of Crist, to be called a Cristene man, and lyveth agayns Cristes lyvyng and his techyng, alle they taken Goddes name in ydel.

Looke eek, what Seint Peter seith, *Actuum 4°, Non est aliud nomen sub celo,* etc.: 'Ther nys noon oother name,' seith Seint Peter, 'under hevene yeven to men, in which they mowe be saved'; that is to seyn, but the name of Jhesu Crist. Take kepe eek how that the name of Crist so precious is, as seith Seint Paul *ad Philipenses 2°, In nomine Jhesu,* etc.: that 'in the name of Jhesu every knee of hevencely creatures, or erthely, or of helle, sholden bowe'; for it is so heigh and so worshipful that the cursede fend in helle sholde tremblen to heeren it y-nemped. Thanne semeth it that men that sweren so horribly by his blessed name, that they despise hym moore booldely than dide the cursede Jewes, or elles the devel, that trembleth whan he heereth his name.

[600] Now certes, sith that sweryng, but if it be lawefully doon, is so heighly deffended, muche worse is forsweryng falsly, and yet nedeles.

What seye we eek of hem that deliten hem in sweryng and holden it a gentrie or a manly dede to swere grete othes? And what of hem that of verray usage ne cesse nat to swere grete othes, al be the cause nat worth a straw? Certes, it is horrible synne. Sweryng sodeynly, withoute avysement, is eek a synne.

590. *dismembryng*, i.e. the swearing by Christ's different members; cp. *Pardoner's Tale*, l. 474, 475.

But lat us go now to thilke horrible sweryng of adjuracioun and conjuracioun, as doon thise false enchauntours or nigromanciens, in bacyns ful of water, or in a bright swerd, in a cercle, or in a fir, or in a shulder-boon of a sheepe ! I kan nat seye but that they doon cursedly and damnably agayns Crist, and al the feith of hooly Chirche.

[605] What seye we of hem that bileeven in divynails, as by flight or by noyse of briddes, or of beestes, or by sort, by geomancie, by dremes, by chirkyng of dores, or crakyng of houses, by gnawynge of rattes, and swich manere wretchednesse ? Certes, al this thyng is deffended by God, and by al hooly Chirche ; for which they been acursed til they come to amendement, that on swich filthe setten hire bileeve. Charmes for woundes or maladie of men, or of beestes, if they taken any effect, it may be peraventure that God suffreth it, for folk sholden yeve the moore feith and reverence to his name.

Now wol I speken of lesynges, which generally is fals signyficacioun of word, in entente to deceyven his evene Cristene. Some lesyng is, of which ther comth noon avantage to no wight ; and som lesyng turneth to the ese and profit of o man, and to disese and damage of another man. [610] Another lesyng is for to saven his lyf or his catel. Another lesyng comth of delit for to lye, in which delit they wol forge a long tale and peynten it with alle circumstaunces, where al the ground of the tale is fals. Som lesyng comth for he wole sustene his word ; and som lesyng comth of recchelesnesse withouten avisement ; and semlable thynges.

Lat us now touche the vice of flaterynge, which ne comth nat gladly, but for drede, or for coveitise. Flaterye is generally wrongful preisyng. Flatereres been the develes norices, that norissen his children with milk of losengerie. Forsothe Salomon seith that flaterie is wors than detraccioun, for somtyme detraccion maketh an hauteyn man be the moore

humble, for he dredeth detraccion ; but certes, flaterye, that maketh a man to enhauncen his herte and his contenance. [615] Flatereres been the develes enchauntours, for they make a man to wene of hymself be lyk that he nys nat lyk ; they been lyk to Judas, that bitraysed [God, and thise flatereres bitraysen] a man to sellen hym to his enemy, that is to the devel. Flatereres been the develes chapelleyns that syngen ever *Placebo*. I rekene flaterie in the vices of ire, for ofte tyme if o man be wrooth with another, thanne wole he flaterer som wight to sustene hym in his querele.

Speke we now of swich cursyng as comth of irous herte. Malisoun generally may be seyde every maner power or harm. Swich cursyng bireveth man fro the regne of God, as seith Seint Paul. [620] And ofte tyme swich cursyng wrongfully retorneth agayn to hym that curseth, as a bryd that retorneth agayn to his owene nest. And over alle thyng men oghten eschewe to cursen hire children, and yeven to the devel hire engendrure, as ferforth as in hem is ; certes it is greet peril and greet synne.

Lat us thanne speken of chidyng and reproche, whiche been ful grete woundes in mannes herte, for they unsowen the semes of freendshipe in mannes herte. For certes, unnethes may a man pleynty been accorded with hym that hath hym openly revyled and repreved in disclaundre. This is a ful grisly synne, as Crist seith in the gospel. And taak kepe now, that he that repreveth his neighebor, outhere he repreveth hym by som harm of peyne that he hath on his body, as, 'mesel !' 'croked harlot !' or by som synne that he dooth. [625] Now if he repreveth hym by harm of peyne, thanne turneth the repreveth to Jhesu Crist, for peyne is sent by the rightwys sonde of God, and by his suffrance, be it meselrie, or mayme, or maladie. And if he repreveth hym uncharitably of synne, as 'thou

615. *I rekene flaterie*, etc., Chaucer's unhappy defence of the digression in the *Somme*.

dronkelewe harlot !' and so forth, thanne aperteneth that to the rejoysynge of the devel, that ever hath joye that men doon synne.

And certes chidyngge may nat come but out of a vileyns herte, for after the habundance of the herte speketh the mouth ful ofte. And ye shul understonde that. Looke by any wey whan any man shal chastise another, that he be war from chidyngge and reprevynge; for trewely, but he be war, he may ful lightly quyken the fir of angre, and of wratthe, which that he sholde quenche, and peraventure sleeth hym which that he myght chastise with benignitee. For as seith Salomon, 'The amyable tonge is the tree of lyf'; that is to seyn, of lyf espritueel, and soothly, a deslavec tonge sleeth the spirites of hym that repreveth and eek of hym that is reprevd.

[630] Loo, what seith Seint Augustyn, 'Ther is no thyng so lyk the develes child as he that ofte chideth.' Seint Paul seith eek, 'A servant of God bihoveth nat to chide.' And how that chidyngge be a vileyns thyng bitwixe alle manere folk, yet is it, certes, moost uncovenable bitwixe a man and his wyf; for there is never reste; and therefore seith Salomon, 'An hous that is uncovered in reyn and droppyngge and a chidyngge wyf been lyke.' A man that is in a droppyngge hous in manye places, though he eschewe the droppyngge in o place, it droppeth on hym in another place; so fareth it by a chydyngge wyf; but she chide hym in o place, she wol chide hym in another; and therefore, 'Bette is a morsel of breed with joye than an hous ful of delices with chidyngge,' seith Salomon. Seint Paul seith, 'O ye wommen, be ye subgetes to youre ousbondes, as bihoveth in God, and ye men loveth youre wyves.' *Ad Colossenses* 3°.

[635] Afterward speke we of scornynge, which is a wikked synne, and namely whan he scorneth a man for his goode verkes; for certes, swiche scorneres faren

lyk the foule tode that may nat endure to smelle the soote savour of the vyne whanne it florissmeth. These scorneres been partyng-felawes with the devel, for they han joye whan the devel wynneth, and sorwe whan he leseth; they been adversaries of Jhesu Crist, for they haten that he loveth, that is to seyn, salvacioun of soule.

Speke we now of wikked conseil, for he that wikked conseil yeveth is a traytour; he deceyveth hym that trusteth in hym, *ut Achitofel ad Absolonem*. But natheles yet is his wikked conseil first agayn hymself. [640] For, as seith the wise man, 'Every fals lyvyngge hath his propertee in hymself, that he that wole anoye another man, he anoyeth first hymself.' And men shul understonde that man shal nat taken his conseil of fals folk, ne of angry folk, or grevous folk that loven specially to muchel hir owene profit; ne to muche worldly folk; namely in conseilyngge of soules.

Now comth the synne of hem that sowen and maken discord amonges folk; which is a synne that Crist hateth outrely; and no wonder is; for he deyde for to make concord. And moore shame do they to Crist, than dide they that hym crucifiede; for God loveth bettre that freendshipe be amonges folk than he dide his owene body, the which that he yaf for unitee. Therefore been they likned to the devel, that ever been aboute to maken discord.

Now comth the synne of double tonge swiche as speken faire byform folk and wikkedly bihynde, or elles they maken semblant as though they speke of good entencion or elles in game and pley, and yet they speke of wikked entente.

[645] Now comth biwreyng of conseil, thurgh which a man is defamed; certes, unnethe may he restooore the damage.

Now comth manace, that is an open folye, for he that ofte manaceth, he threteth moore than he may perfourne ful ofte tyme.

Now cometh ydel wordes, that is with-

outen profit of hym that speketh tho wordes, and eek of hym that herkneth tho wordes. Or elles ydel wordes been tho that been nedelees, or withouten entente of natureel profit. And al be it that ydel wordes been somtyme venial synne, yet sholde men douten hem, for we shul yeve rekenynge of hem bifore God.

Now comth janglynge, that may nat been withoute synne. And as seith Salomon, it is a synne of apert folye, [650] and therefore a philosophre seyde, whan men axed hym how that men sholde plesse the peple, and he answerde, 'Do manye goode werkes and spek fewe jangles.'

After this comth the synne of japeres, that been the develes apes, for they maken folk to laughe at hire japerie as folk doon at the gawdes of an ape. Swich japes deffendeth Seint Paul. Looke, how that vertuouse wordes and hooly woordes conforten hem that travaillen in the service of Crist, right so conforten the vileyns wordes and knakkes of japeris hem that travaillen in the service of the devel. These been the synnes that comen of the tonge, that comen of ire, and of othere synnes mo.

*Sequitur remedium contra peccatum Ire*

The remedie agayns ire is a vertu that men clepen mansuetude, that is debonairetee, and eek another vertu that men callen pacience, or suffrance.

[655] Debonairetee withdraweth and refreyneth the stirynges and the moevynges of mannes corage in his herte, in swich manere that they ne skippe nat out by angre ne by ire.

Suffrance suffreth swetely alle the anoyances and the wronges that men doon to man outward. Seint Jerome seith thus of debonairetee, that it dooth noon harm to no wight, ne seith, ne for noon harm that men doon or seyn he ne eschawfeth nat agayns his resoun. This

650. that is debonairetee, Cam. that Jhon de Bonania clepith debonayretee.

vertu som tyme comth of nature, for, as seith the philosophre, 'A man is a quyk thyng, by nature debonaire and tretable to goodnesse'; but whan debonairetee is enforced of grace, thanne is it the moore worth.

Pacience, that is another remedie agayns ire, is a vertu that suffreth swetely every mannes goodnesse, and is nat wrooth for noon harm that is doon to hym. [660] The philosophre seith that pacience is thilke vertu that suffreth debonairely alle the outrages of adversitee and every wikked word. This vertu maketh a man lyk to God, and maketh hym Goddes owene deere child, as seith Crist; this vertu disconfiteth thyn enemy, and therefore seith the wise man, 'If thou wolt venquysse thyn enemy, lerne to suffre.' And thou shalt understonde that man suffreth foure manere of grevances in outward thynges; agayns the whiche foure he moot have foure manere of paciencies.

The firste grevance is of wikkede wordes; thilke suffrede Jhesu Crist withouten grucchyng, ful patiently, whan the Jewes despised and reprevd hym ful ofte. Suffre thou therefore patiently; for the wise man seith, 'If thou stryve with a fool, though the fool be wrooth or though he laughe, algate thou shalt have no reste.'

[665] That oother grevance outward is to have damage of thy catel. Ther-agayns suffred Crist ful patiently, when he was despoyled of al that he hadde in this lyf, and that nas but his clothes.

The thridde grevance is a man to have harm in his body. That suffred Crist ful patiently in al his passioun.

The fourthe grevance is in outrageous labour in werkes. Wherefore I seye that folk that maken hir servantz to travaillen to grevously, or out of tyme, as on haly dayes, soothly they do greet synne. Heer-agayns suffred Crist ful patiently and taughte us pacience, whan he baar upon his blisshed shulder the croys, upon which he sholde suffren despitous deeth.

Heere may men lerne to be pacient; for certes nocht oonly Cristen men been pacient for love of Jhesu Crist and for gerdoun of the blisful lyf that is perdurable, but certes the olde payens that never were Cristene, commendeden and useden the vertu of pacience.

[670] A philosophre upon a tyme, that wolde have beten his disciple for his grete trespas, for which he was greetly amoved, and broghte a yerde to scourge the child; and when this child saugh the yerde, he seyde to his maister, 'What thanke ye to do?' 'I wol bete thee,' quod the maister, 'for thy correccioun.' 'Forsothe,' quod the child; 'ye oghten first correcte youreself, that han lost al youre pacience for the gilt of a child.' 'Forsothe,' quod the maister, al wepynge, 'thow seyst sooth; have thow the yerde, my deere sone, and correcte me for myn inpacience.' Of pacience comth obedience, thurgh which a man is obedient to Crist and to alle hem to whiche he oghte to been obedient in Crist. [675] And understond wel that obedience is perfit whan that a man dooth gladly and hastily, with good herte, entierly, al that he sholde do. Obedience generally is to perfourme the doctrine of God and of his sovereyns, to whiche hym oghte to ben obeisaunt in alle rightwisnesse.

### *Sequitur de Accidia*

After the synne of envye and of ire, now wol I speken of the synne of accidie; for envye blyndeth the herte of man, and ire troubleth a man, and accidie naketh hym hevvy, thoughtful and wrawul. Envye and ire maken bitternesse a herte, which bitternesse is mooder of accidie and bynymeth hym the love of alle goodnesse. Thanne is accidie the ungewissh of troubled herte; and Seint Augustyn seith, it is anoy of goodnesse and joye of harm. Certes this is a dampnable synne, for it dooth wrong to Jhesu Crist, in as muche as it bynymeth the service that men oghte doon to Crist

with alle diligence, as seith Salomon. [680] But accidie dooth noswich diligence. He dooth alle thyng with anoy, and with wrawnesse, slaknesse, and excusacioun, and with ydelnesse, and unlust; for which the book seith, 'Accursed be he that dooth the service of God negligently.'

Thanne is accidie enemy to everich estaat of man; for certes the estaat of man is in thre maneres. Outher it is thestaat of innocence, as was thestaat of Adam biforn that he fil into synne; in which estaat he was holden to wirche, as in heriyng and adowryng of God. Another estaat is estaat of synful men, in which estaat men been holden to labour in preiynge to God for amendement of hire synnes, and that he wole graunte hem to arysen out of hir synnes. Another estaat is thestaat of grace, in which estaat he is holden to werkes of penitence; and certes to alle these thynges is accidie enemy and contrarie, for he loveth no bisynesse at al. [685] Now certes this foule sinne, accidie, is eek a ful greet enemy to the liflode of the body, for it ne hath no purveance agayn temporeel necessitee, for it forsleweth and forsluggeth, and destroyeth alle goodes temporeles by recchelesnesse.

The fourthe thyng is, that accidie is lyk to hem that been in the peyne of helle, by-cause of hir slouthe and of hire hevynesse; for they that been dampned been so bounde that they ne may neither wel do, ne wel thynke. Of accidie comth first, that a man is anoyed and encombred for to doon any goodnesse, and maketh that God hath abhominacion of swich accidie, as seith Seint John.

Now cometh slouthe, that wol nat suffre noon hardnesse ne no penaunce; for soothly, slouth is so tendre and so delicat, as seith Salomon, that he wol nat suffre noon hardnesse, ne penaunce, and therefore he shendeth al that he dooth. Agayns this roten-herted synne of accidie and slouthe sholde men exercise hemself to doon goode werkes, and manly and

685. *sinne, E swyn.*

vertuously cacchen corage wel to doon, thynkyng that oure Lord Jhesu Crist quiteth every good dede, be it never so lite. [690] Usage of labour is a greet thyng, for it maketh, as seith Seint Bernard, the laborer to have stronge armes, and harde synwes; and slouth maketh hem feble and tendre. Thanne comth drede to bigynne to werke anye goode werkes; for certes he that is enclnyed to synne, hym thynketh it is so greet an emprise for to undertake to doon werkes of goodnesse, and casteth in his herte that the circumstaunces of goodnesse been so grevous and so chargeant for to suffre, that he dar nat undertake to do werkes of goodesse, as seith Seint Gregorie.

Now comth wanhope, that is despeir of the mercy of God, that comth somtyme of to muche outrageous sorwe, and somtyme of to muche drede, ymaginyng that he hath doon so muche synne that it wol nat availen hym, though he wolde repenten hym and forsake synne; thurgh which despeir or drede he abaundoneth al his herte to every maner synne, as seith Seint Augustin. [695] Which dampnable synne, if that it continue unto his ende, it is cleped synnyng in the Hooly Goost. This horrible synne is so perilous, that he that is despeired, ther nys no felonye ne no synne that he douteth for to do, as sheweth wel by Judas.

Certes, aboven alle synnes thanne is this synne moost displesant to Crist and moost adversarie.

Soothly, he that despeireth hym is lyke the coward champioun recreant that seith 'creaunt' withoute nede. Alas! alas! nedeles is he recreant and nedeles despeired. Certes, the mercy of God is ever redy to the penitent, and is aboven alle his werkes. [700] Allas! kan a man nat bithynke hym on the gospel of Seint Luc xv., where as Crist seith that as wel shal ther be joye in hevене upon a synful man that dooth penitence, as upon nynety and nyne rightful men that never ne dede synne, ne neden no penitence.

Looke further in the same gospel, the joye and the feeste of the goode man that hadde lost his sone, whan his sone with repentaunce was retourned to his fader. Kan they nat remembren hem eek, that, as seith Seint Luc xxiii., how that the thief that was hanged bisyde Jhesu Crist seyde, 'Lord, remembre of me, whan thou comest into thy regne.' 'Forsothe,' seyde Crist, 'Iseye to thee, to day shaltow been with me in paradys.' Certes, ther is noon so horrible synne of man that it ne may in his lyf be destroyed by penitence, thurgh vertu of the passion and of the death of Crist. [705] Allas! what nedeth man thanne to been despeired, sith that his mercy so redy is and large? Axe and have.

Thanne cometh sompnolence, that is sloggy slombryng, which maketh a man be hevny and dul in body and in soule. And this synne comth of slouth. And certes, the tyme that by wey of resoun men sholde nat slepe, that is by the morwe, but if ther were cause resonable; for soothly the morwe tyde is moost covenable a man to sey his preyer, and for to thynken on God, and for to honour God, and to yeven almesse to the poure, that first cometh in the name of Crist. Lo, what seith Salomon? 'Whoso wolde by the morwe awaken and seke me, he shal fynde.' [710] Thanne cometh negligence or recchelesnesse, that rekketh of no thyng; and how that ignoraunce be mooder of alle harm, certes negligence is the norice. Negligence ne dooth no fors, whan he shal doon a thyng, wheither he do it weel or baddely.

Of the remedie of these two synnes, as seith the wise man, that he that dredeth God he spareth nat to doon that him oghte doon, and he that loveth God he wol doon diligence to plesse God by his werkes, and abaundone hymself, with a his myght, wel for to doon. Thanne comth ydelnesse that is the yate of alle harmes. An ydel man is lyk to a place that hath no walles; the develes may entre on every syde and sheten at hym at discovert



by temptacion on every syde. [715] This ydelnesse is the thurrok of alle wikked and vileyns thoghtes and of alle jangles, trufles, and of alle ordure. Certes, the hevene is yeven to hem that wol labouren, and nat to ydel folk. Eek David seith, that they ne been nat in the labour of men, ne they shul nat been whipped with men, that is to seyn in purgatorie; certes thanne semeth it they shul be tormented with the devel in helle, but if they doon penitence.

Thanne comth the synne that men clepen *tarditas*, as whan a man is to laterede or tariynge, er he wole turne to God; and certes that is a greet folie. He is lyk to hym that falleth in the dych, and wol nat arise. And this vice comth of a fals hope, that he thynketh that he shal lyve longe; but that hope failleth ful ofte.

[720] Thanne comth lachesse; that is he that whan he biginneth any good werk, anon he shal forleten it, and stynten, as doon they that han any wight to governe and ne taken of hym namoore kepe, anon as they fynden any contrarie or any any. Thise been the newe shepherdes that leten hir sheepe wityngly go renne to the wolf, that is in the breres, or do no fors of hir owene governaunce. Of this comth poverté and destruccioun, bothe of spirituel and temporeel thynges. Thanne comth a manere cooldnesse, that freseth al the herte of a man. Thanne comth undevoicioun, thurgh which a man is blent, as seith Seint Bernard, and hath swich langour in soule, that he may neither rede ne singe in hooly chirche, ne heere, ne thynke of no devocioun, ne travaille with his handes in no good werk, that it nys hym unsavory and al apalled. Thanne wexeth he slough and slombry, and soone wol be wrooth, and soone is enclined to hate and to envye. [725] Thanne comth the synne of worldly sorwe, swich as is cleped *tristicia*, that sleeth man, as Seint Paul seith. For certes, swich sorwe werketh to the deeth of the soule and of the body also, for

ther-of comth that a man is anyed of his owene lif; wherfore swich sorwe shorteth ful ofte the lif of man, er that his tyme be come by wey of kynde.

*Remedium contra peccatum Accidie*

Agayns this horrible synne of accidie, and the branches of the same, ther is a vertu that is called *fortitudo*, or strengthe; that is, an affeccoun thurgh which a man despiseth anyouse thynges. This vertu is so myghty and so vigorous that it dar withstonde myghtily, and wisely kepen hym self fro perils that been wikked, and wrastle agayn the assautes of the devel; [730] for it enhaunceth and enforceth the soule, right as accidie abateth it, and maketh it fieble; for this *fortitudo* may endure by long suffraunce the travailles that been covenable.

This vertu hath manye spesces, and the firste is cleped magnanimité, that is to seyn greet corage; for certes ther bihoveth greet corage agayns accidie lest that it ne swolwe the soule by the synne of sorwe, or destroye it by wanhope. This vertu maketh folk to undertake harde thynges and grevous thynges by hir owene wil, wisely and resonably. And for as muchel as the devel fighteth agayns a man moore by queyntise and by sleight than by strengthe, therefore men shal withstonden hym by wit and by resoun and by discrecioun.

Thanne arn ther the vertues of feith and hope in God, and in his seintes, to acheve and accomplice the goode werkes, in the whiche he purposeth fermely to continue. [735] Thanne comth seuretee, or sikernesse, and that is whan a man ne douteth no travaille in tyme comynge of the goode werkes that a man hath bigonne. Thanne comth magnificence, that is to seyn whan a man dooth and perfurmeth grete werkes of goodness; and that is the ende why that men sholde do goode werkes; for in the accomplissynge of grete goode werkes lith the grete gerdoun. Thanne is ther con-

staunce, that is stableness of corage; and this sholde been in herte by stedefast feith, and in mouth, and in berynge, and in chiere, and in dede. Eke ther been no speciale remedies agains accidie in diverse werkes, and in consideracioun of the peynes of helle, and of the joyes of hevene, and in trust of the grace of the Holy Goost, that wole yeve hym myght to perfourne his goode entente.

*Sequitur de Avaricia*

After accidie wol I speke of avarice and of covetise, of which synne seith Seint Paule that the roote of alle harmes is covetise. *Ad Thimotheum* vi. [740] For soothly, when the herte of a man is confounded in itself, and troubled, and that the soule hath lost the confort of God, thanne seketh he an ydel solas of worldly thynges.

Avarice, after the descripcion of Seint Augustyn, is likerousnesse in herte to have erthely thynges. Som oother folk seyn that avarice is for to purchacen manye erthely thynges, and no thyng yeve to hem that han nede. And understood that avarice ne stant nat oonly in lond ne catel, but somtyme in science and in glorie, and in every manere of outrageous thyng is avarice and covetise.

And the difference bitwixe avarice and covetise is this; covetise is for to coveite swiche thynges as thou hast nat, and avarice is for to withholde and kepe swiche thynges as thou hast withoute rightful nede. [745] Soothly this avarice is a synne that is ful dampnable, for al hooly writ curseth it, and speketh agayns that vice, for it dooth wrong to Jhesu Crist; for it bireveth hym the love that men to hym owen, and turneth it bakward agayns alle resoun, and maketh that the avaricious man hath moore hope in his catel than in Jhesu Crist, and dooth moore observance in keypyng of his tresor than he dooth to service of Jhesu Crist. And therefore seith Seint Paul, *ad Ephesios* v., that an avaricious man is the thraldom of ydolatrie.

What difference is betwixe an ydolastre and an avaricious man? but that any ydolastre peraventure ne hath but o mawmet or two and the avaricious man hath manye; for certes, every floryn in his cofre is his mawmet. [750] And certes, the synne of mawmettrie is the firste thyng that God deffended in the ten comaundmentz, as bereth witnessse *Exodi* capitulo xx. 'Thou shalt have no false goddes bifore me, ne thou shalt make to thee no grave thyng.' Thus is an avaricious man that loveth his tresor biforn God an ydolastre, thurgh this cursed synne of avarice.

Of covetise comen thise harde lordshipes thurgh whiche men been distreyned by taylages, custumes, and cariages, moore than hire duetee or resoun is; and eek they taken of hire bonde-men amercimentz, whiche myghten moore resonably ben cleped extorcions than amercimentz. Of whiche amercimentz and raunsonyng of bondemen somme lordes stywardes seyn that it is rightful, for as muche as a cheryl hath no temporeel thyng that it ne is his lordes, as they seyn; but certes thise lordshipes doon wrong that bireven hire bonde folk thynges that they never yave hem. *Augustinus de Civitate Dei*, libro ix. [755] Sooth is that the condicioun of thraldom and the firste cause of thraldom is for synne. *Genesis* ix.

Thus may ye seen that the gilt dis-serveth thraldom, but nat nature; wherfore thise lordes ne sholde nat muche glorifien hem in hir lordshipes, sith that by natureel condicioun they been nat lordes of thralles, but that thraldom comth first by the desert of synne. And forther-over ther as the lawe seith that temporeel goodes of boonde folk been the goodes of hir lordshipes, ye, that is for to understonde, the goodes of the emperour, to deffenden hem in hir right, but nat for to robben

750. the firste thyng. The 1st and 2nd comaundments were reckoned by the Roman Church as one, the 10th being divided.

hem ne reven hem. And therfore seith Seneca, 'Thy prudence sholde lyve benignely with thy thralles'; [76] thilke that thou clepest thy thralles been Goddes peple, for humble folk been Cristes freendes, they been contubernyal with the Lord.

Thynk eek that of swich seed as cherles spryngeth, of swich seed spryngen lordes. As wel may the cherl be saved as the lord; the same deeth that take the cherl, swich deeth taketh the lord; wherfore I rede, do right so with thy cherl as thou woldest that thy Lord dide with thee, if thou were in his plit. Every synful man is a cherl to synne. I rede thee, certes, that thou, lord, werke in swiche wise with thy cherles that they rather love thee than drede. I woot wel ther is degree above degree, as reson is, and skile it is that men do hir devoir ther as it is due; but certes, extorcions and despit of youre underlynges is dampnable.

[765] And forther-over understood wel that these conquerours, or tirauntz, maken ful ofte thralles of hem that been born of as roial blood as been they that hem conqueren. This name of thraldom was never erst kowth, til that Noe seyde that his sone Canaan sholde be thral to his bretheren for his synne. What seyde we thanne of hem that pilen and doon extorcions in hooly chirche? Certes, the swerd that men yeven first to a knyght, when he is newe dubbed, signifieth that he sholde deffenden hooly chirche, and nat robben it ne pilen it; and who so dooth is traitour to Crist. And, as seith Seint Augustyn, they been the develes wolves that stranglen the sheepe of Jhesu Crist, and doon worse than wolves; for, soothly, when the wolf hath ful his wombe he stynteth to strangle sheepe, but soothly, the pilours and destroyours of Goddes hooly chirche ne do nat so, for they ne stynte never to pile.

[770] Now, as I have seyde, sith so is

765. *thraldom, H<sup>2</sup> cherldom.*

that synne was first cause of thraldom, thanne is it thus, that thilke tyme that al this world was in synne, thanne was al this world in thraldom and subjeccioun; but certes, sith the tyme of grace cam, God ordeyned that som folk sholde be moore heigh in estaat and in degree, and som folk moore lough, and that everich sholde be served in his estaat and his degree; and therfore in somme contrees, ther they byen thralles, when they han turned hem to the feith, they maken hire thralles free out of thraldom. And therfore certes the lord oweth to his man that the man oweth to his lord. The pope calleth hymself servaunt of the servauntz of God; but for-as-muche as the estaat of hooly chirche ne myghte nat han be, ne the commune profit myghte nat han be kept, ne pees and reste in erthe, but if God hadde ordeyned that som men hadde hyer degree and som men lower, therfore was sovereyntee ordeyned to kepe and mayntene and deffenden hire underlynges or hire subgetz, in reson, as ferforth as it lith in hire power, and nat to destroyen hem ne confounde.

[775] Wherfore I seye, that thilke lordes that been lyk wolves that devouren the possessiouns or the catel of poure folk wrongfully, withouten mercy or mesure, they shul receyven, by the same mesure that they han mesured to poure folk, the mercy of Jhesu Crist, but if it be amended.

Now comth deceite bitwixe marchaunt and marchaunt. And thow shalt understonde that marchandise is in manye maneres; that oon is bodily, and that oother is goostly, that oon is honeste and levelful, and that oother is deshoneste and unlevelful. Of thilke bodily marchandise that is levelful and honeste is this, that there as God hath ordeyned that a regne or a contree is suffisaunt to hym-self, thanne is it honeste and levelful that of habundaunce of this contree that men helpe another contree that is moore nedy; and therfore ther moote been marchantz

to bryngen fro that o contree to that oother hire marchandises.

[780] That oother merchandise, that men haunten with fraude and trecherie and deceite, with lesynges and false othes, is cursed and dampnable.

Espirituel merchandise is proprely symonye, that is, ententif desir to byen thyng espirituel, that is thyng that aperteneith to the seintuarie of God, and to cure of the soule. This desir, if so be that a man do his diligence to parfournen it, al be it that his desir ne take noon effect, yet is it to hym a deedly synne, and if he be ordred he is irreguleer. Certes symonye is cleped of Simon Magus, that wolde han boght for temporeel catel the yifte that God hadde yeven by the Hooly Goost to Seint Peter and to the Apostles. And therefore understood that bothe he that selleth and he that beyeth thynges spirituels been cleped symonials, be it by catel, be it by procuryng, or by flesshly preyere of his freendes, flesshly freendes, or espirituel freendes. [785] Flesshly in two maneres; as by kynrede, or othere freendes; soothly, if they praye for hym that is nat worthy and able, it is symonye, if he take the benefice; and if he be worthy and able ther nys noon.

That oother manere is whan a man or womman preyen for folk to avauncen hem oonly for wikked flesshly affeccion that they have unto the persone, and that is foul symonye. But certes in service for which men yeven thynges spirituels unto hir servantz it moot be understonde that the service moot been honeste, and elles nat; and eek that it be withouten bargaynyng, and that the persone be able; for, as seith Seint Damasic, 'Alle the synnes of the world at regard of this synne ayn as thyng of noight, for it is the gretteste synne that may be, after the synne of Lucifer and Antecrist'; for by this synne God forleseth the chirche and the soule that he boghte with his precious blood by hem that yeven chirches to hem that

been nat digne, [790] for they putten in theves that stelen the soules of Jhesu Crist and destroyen his patrimoyne. By swiche undigne preestes and curates han lewed men the lasse reverence of the sacramentz of hooly chirche, and swiche yeveres of chirches putten out the children of Crist, and putten into the chirche the develes owene sone. They sellen the soules that lambes sholde kepen, to the wolf that strangleth hem; and therefore, shul they never han part of the pasture of lambes, that is the blisse of hevене.

Now comth hasardrie, with his apurtenaunces, as tables and rafes, of which comth deceite, false othes, chidynges, and alle ravynes, blasphemynge and reneyng of God, and hate of his neighebores, wast of goodes, mysspendynge of tyme, and somtyme manslaughter. Certes, hasardours ne mowe nat been withouten gret synne whil thay haunte that crafte. [795] Of avarice comen eek lesynges, thefte, fals witness, and false othes; and ye shul understonde that thise been grete synnes, and expres agayn the comaundementz of God, as I have seyde. Fals witness is in word and eek in dede. In word, as for to bireve thy neighebores goode name by thy fals witnessyng, or bireven hym his catel or his heritage by thy fals witnessyng, whan thou for ire, or for meede, or for envye, berest fals witness, or accusest hym, or excusest hym, by thy fals witness, or elles excusest thyself falsly. Ware yow questemongeres and notaries. Certes, for fals witnessyng was Susanna in ful gret sorwe and payne, and many another mo. The synne of thefte is eek expres agayns Goddes heeste, and in two maneres, corporeel and espirituel. Corporeel, as for to take thy neighebores catel agayn his wyl, be it by force or by sleighte, be it by met or by mesure, [800] by stelyng eek of false enditementz upon hym, and in borwyng of thy neighebores catel, in entent never to payen it agayn, and semblable thynges.

Espiritueel thefte is sacrilege, that is to seyn, hurtyng of hooly thynges, or of thynges sacred to Crist, in two maneres; by reson of the hooly place, as chirches or chirche-hawes, for which every vileyns synne that men doon in swiche places may be cleped sacrilege, or every violence in the semblable places. Also they that withdrawen falsly the rightes that longen to hooly chirche. And pleyntly and generally, sacrilege is to reven hooly thyng fro hooly place, or unhooly thyng out of hooly place, or hooly thyng out of unhooly place.

*Relevacio contra peccatum Avaricie*

Now shul ye understonde that the releevynge of avarice is misericorde and pitee largely taken. And men myghten axe why that misericorde and pitee is releevynge of avarice. [805] Certes, the avaricious man sheweth no pitee ne misericorde to the nedeful man, for he deliteth hym in the keypyng of his tresor and nat in the rescowyng ne releevynge of his evene Cristene; and therfore speke I first of misericorde.

Thanne is misericorde, as seith the philosophre, a vertu by which the corage of man is stired by the mysese of hym that is mysed; upon which misericorde folweth pitee in parfournynge of charitable werkes of misericorde. And certes, thise thynges moeven a man to misericorde of Jhesu Crist, that he yaf hymself for oure gilt, and suffred deeth for misericorde, and foryaf us oure originale synnes, and therby releessed us fro the peynes of helle, and amenused the peynes of purgatorie by penitence, and yeveth grace wel to do, and atte laste the blisse of hevene. [810] The spes of misericorde been, as for to lene and for to yeve, and to foryeven and releesse, and for to han pitee in herte, and compassioun of the meschief of his evene Cristene, and eek to chastise there as nede is.

Another manere of remedie agayns avarice is resonable largesse, but soothly

heere bihoveth the consideracioun of the grace of Jhesu Crist and of his temporeel goodes, and eek of the goodes perdurables that Crist yaf to us, and to han remembrance of the deeth that he shal receyve, he noot whanne, where, ne how; and eek that he shal forgon al that he hath, save oonly that he hath despended in goode werkes.

But, for as muche as som folk been unmesurable, men oughten eschue fool-largesse, that men clepen wast. Certes, he that is fool-large ne yeveth nat his catel, but he leseth his catel. Soothly what thyng that he yeveth for veyne glorie, as to mynstrals and to folk, for to beren his renoun in the world, he hath synne ther-of, and noon almesse. [815] Certes he leseth foule his good that ne seketh with the yifte of his good no thyng but synne. He is lyk to an hors that seketh rather to drynken drovy or trouble water, than for to drynken water of the clerke welle. And for as muchel as they yeven ther as they sholde nat yeven, to hem aperteneth thilke malisoun that Crist shal yeven at the day of doome to hem that shullen been dampned.

*Sequitur de Guld*

After avarice comth glotonye, which is expres eek agayn the comandement of God. Glotonye is unmesurable appetit to ete or to drynke, or elles to doon ynogh to the unmesurable appetit and desordeynee coveitise to eten or to drynke. This synne corrupted al this world, as is wel shewed in the synne of Adam and of Eve. Looke, eek, what seith Seint Paul of glotonye. [820] 'Manye,' seith Seint Paul, 'goon, of whiche I have ofte seyde yow, and now I seye it wepyng, that been the enemys of the croys of Crist, of whiche the ende is deeth, and of whiche hire wombe is hire God, and hire glorie in confusioun of hem that so devouren erthely thynges.' He that is usaunt to this synne of glotonye

820. devouren, H<sup>3</sup> saueren.

he ne may no synne withstonde; he moot been in servage of alle vices, for it is the develes hoord ther he hideth hym and resteth.

This synne hath manye spesces. The firste is dronkenesse, that is the horrible sepulture of mannes resoun, and therefore whan a man is dronken he hath lost his resoun, and this is deedly synne. But soothly, whan that a man is nat wont to strong drynke, and peraventure ne knoweth nat the strengthe of the drynke, or hath feblesse in his heed, or hath travailed, thurgh which he drynketh the moore, al be he sodeynly caught with drynke, it is no deedly synne, but venyal. The seconde spece of glotonye is, that the spirit of a man wexeth al trouble, for dronkenesse bireveth hym the discrecioun of his wit. [825] The thridde spece of glotonye is whan a man devoureth his mete, and hath no rightful manere of etynge. The fourth is, whan thurgh the grete habundaunce of his mete, the humours in his body been destempred. The fifthe is forgetelnesse by to muchel drynkyng, for which somtyme a man forgeteth er the morwe what he dide at even, or on the nyght biforn.

In oother manere been distinct the spesces of glotonye, after Seint Gregorie. The firste is for to ete biforn tyme to ete; the seconde is whan a man get hym to delicaat mete or drynke; the thridde is whan men taken to muche over mesure; the fourthe is curiositee with greet entente to maken and appaillen his mete; the fifthe is for to eten to gredily. [830] These been the fyve syngres of the develes hand, by whiche he draweth folk to synne.

#### *Remedium contra peccatum Gule*

Agayns glotonye is the remedie abstinence, as seith Galien; but that holde I nat meritorie, if he do it oonly for the heele of his body. Seint Augustyn wole that abstinence be doon for vertu and with pacience. 'Abstinence,' he seith,

'is litel worth, but if a man have good wil ther-to, and but it be enforced by pacience and by charitee, and that men doon it for Godes sake, and in hope to have the blisse of hevене.'

The felawes of abstinence been attemperance, that holdeth the meene in alle thynges; eek shame, that eschueth alle deshonestee; suffisance, that seketh no riche metes ne drynkes, ne dooth no fors of to outrageous apparailynge of mete; mesure also, that restreyneth by resoun the deslavee appetit of etynge; sobrenesse also, that restreyneth the outrage of drynke; [835] sparynge also, that restreyneth the delicaat ese to sitte longe at his mete and softely, wherfore som folk stonden, of hir owene wyl, to eten at the lasse leysur.

#### *Sequitur de Luxuria*

After glotonye thanne comth lecherie, for these two synnes been so ny cosyns, that ofte tyme they wol nat departe. God woot this synne is ful displeasunt thyng to God, for he seyde hymself, 'Do no lecherie'; and therefore he putte grete peynes agayns this synne in the olde lawe. If womman thral were taken in this synne, she sholde be beten with staves to the deeth; and if she were a gentil womman, she sholde be slayn with stones; and if she were a bisshoppes doghter, she sholde been brent, by Goddes comandement. Fortherover, by the synne of lecherie God dreynete al the world at the diluge, and after that he brente five citees with thonder leyt and sank hem into helle.

[840] Now lat us speke thanne of thilke stynkyng synne of lecherie that men clepe avowtrie of wedded folk; that is to seyn, if that oon of hem be wedded, or elles bothe. Seint John seith that avowtiers shullen been in helle in a stank brennyng of fyr and of brymston. In fyr for lecherie, in brymston for the stynk of hire ordure. Certes, the brekyng of this sacrament is an horrible thyng; it

was maked of God hymself in paradys, and confermed by Jhesu Crist, as witnesseth Seint Mathew in the gospel: 'A man shal lete fader and mooder and taken hym to his wif, and they shullen be two in o flessch.' This sacrament bitokneth the knyttyng togidre of Crist and of hooly chirche. And nat oonly that God forbad avowtrie in dede, but eek he comanded that thou sholdest nat coveite thy neighebores wyf. [845] In this heeste, seith Seint Augustyn, is forboden alle manere coveitise to doon lecherie. Lo, what seith Seint Mathew in the gospel; that who-so seeth a womman to coveitise of his lust, he hath doon lecherie with hire in his herte. Heere may ye seen that nat oonly the dede of this synne is forboden, but eek the desir to doon that synne.

This cursed synne anoyeth grevousliche hem that it haunten. And first to hire soule, for he obligeth it to synne and to peyne of deeth that is perdurable. Unto the body anoyeth it grevously also, for it dreyeth hym, and wasteth, and shenteth hym, and of his blood he maketh sacrifice to the feend of helle; it wasteth his catel and his substaunce. And certes if it be a foul thyng a man to waste his catel on wommen, yet is it a fouler thyng when that for swich ordure wommen dispenden upon men hir catel and substaunce. [850] This synne, as seith the prophete, bireveth man and womman hir goode fame, and al hire honour, and it is ful plesaunt to the devel; for ther-by wynneth he the mooste partie of this world; and, right as a marchant deliteth hym moost in chaffare that he hath moost advantage of, right so deliteth the fend in this ordure.

This is that oother hand of the devel with five fyngrs to cacche the peple to his vileynye. The firste fynger is the fool lookyng of the fool womman, and of the fool man, that sleeth right as the basilicok sleeth folk by the venym of his sighte; for the coveitise of eyen folweth the coveitise of the herte. The seconde fynger is the vileyns touchyng in wikked

manere; and therefore, seith Salomon that whoso toucheth and handleth a womman he fareth lyk hym that handleth the scorpioun that styngeth and sodeynly sleeth thurgh his envenymyng; as who-so toucheth warm pych, it shent his fyngrs. [855] The thridde is foule wordes, that fareth lyk fyr, that right anon brenneth the herte. The fourthe fynger is the kysyng; and trewely he were a greet fool that wolde kisse the mouth of a brennyng ovne, or of a fourneys. And moore fooles been they that kissen in vileynye, for that mouthis the mouth of helle; and namely these olde dotardesholours, yet wol they kisse, though they may nat do, and smatre hem. Certes, they been lyk to houndes, for an hound whan he comth by the roser, or by othere [bushes], though he may nat pisse, yet wole he heve up his leg and make a contenance to pisse. And for that many man weneth that he may nat synne, for no likerousnesse that he dooth with his wyf, certes, that opinioun is fals; God woot a man may sleen hymself with his owene knyf and make hymselfen dronken of his owene tonne. [860] Certes, be it wyf, be it child, or any worldly thyng that he loveth biforn God, it is his mawmet, and he is an ydolastre. Man sholde loven his wyf by discrecioun, patiently and atempely, and thanne is she as though it were his suster.

The fifthe fynger of the develes hand is the stynkyng dede of leccherie. Certes, the five fyngrs of glotonie the feend put in the wombe of a man, and with his five fyngrs of lecherie he gripeth hym by the reynes for to throwen hym into the fourneys of helle, ther as they shul han the fyr and the wormes that ever shul lasten, and wepyng and wailyng, sharpe hunger and thurst, and grymnesse of develes that shullen al to-trede hem, withouten respit and withouten ende.

[865] Of leccherie, as I seyde, sourden

855. *bushes*, Tyrwhitt's emendation for *beautes* of the MSS.

diverse speses, as fornicacioun that is bitwixe man and womman that been nat maried, and this is deedly synne and agayns nature. Al that is enemy and destruccioun to nature is agayns nature. *Parfay*, the resoun of a man telleth eek hym wel that it is deedly synne, for as muche as God forbad leccherie. And Seint Paul yeveth hem the regne, that nys dewe to no wight but to hem that doon deedly synne. Another synne of leccherie is to bireve a mayden of hir maydenhede, for he that so dooth, certes, he casteth a mayden out of the hyeste degree that is in this present lif, and bireveth hire thilke precious fruyt that the book clepeth the 'hundred fruyt.' I ne kan seye it noon oother weyes in Englishsh, but in Latyn it highte *Centesimus fructus*. [870] Certes, he that so dooth is cause of manye damages and vileynyes, mo than any man kan rekene, right as he somtyme is cause of alle damages that beestes don in the feeld that breketh the hegge or the closure, thurgh which he destroyeth that may nat been restored. For certes, namoore may maydenhede be restored than an arm that is smyten fro the body may retourne agayn to wexe. She may have mercy, this woot I wel, if she do penitence; but never shal it be that she nas corrupt.

And, al be it so that I have spoken somewhat of avowtrie, it is good to shewen mo perils that longen to avowtrie, for to eschue that foule synne. Avowtrie in Latyn is for to seyn, *approchyng* of oother mannes bed, thurgh which tho that whilom weren o flesh abawndone hir bodies to othere persones. [875] Of this synne, as seith the wise man, folwen manye harmes. First, brekyng of feith; and certes, in feith is the keye of Cristendom, and whan that feith is broken and lorn, soothly, Cristendom stant veyn and withouten fruyt. This synne is eek a thefte; for thefte generally is for to reve a wight his thyng agayns his wille. Certes this is the fouleste thefte that may be, whan a womman steleth hir

body from hir housbonde and yeveth it to hire holour to defoulen hire, and steleth hir soule fro Crist, and yeveth it to the devel. This is a fouler thefte than for to breke a chirche and stele the chalice, for these avowtiers breken the temple of God spiritually, and stelen the vessel of grace, that is the body and the soule, for which Crist shal destroyen hem, as seith Seint Paul.

[880] Soothly of this thefte douted Joseph, whan that his lordes wyf preyed hym of vileynye, whan he seyde, 'Lo, my lady, how my lord hath take to me under my warde al that he hath in this world, ne no thyng of his thynges is out of my power, but oonly ye, that been his wyf; and how sholde I thanne do this wikkednesse and synne so horrible agayns God, and agayns my lord? God it forbeede!' Allas! al to litel is swich trouthe now y-founde.

The thridde harm is the filthe thurgh which they breken the comandement of God and defoulen the auctour of matrimoyne, that is, Crist. For certes, in so muche as the sacrament of mariage is so noble and so digne, so muche is it gretter synne for to breken it; for God made mariage in paradys, in the estaat of innocence, to multiplie mankynde to the service of God; and therfore is the brekyng moore grevous; of which brekyng comen false heires ofte tyme, that wrongfully ocupien folkes heritages. And therfore wol Crist putte hem out of the regne of hevene, that is heritage to goode folk. [885] Of this brekyng comth eek ofte tyme that folk unwar wedden or synnen with hire owene kynrede, and namely thilke harlottes that haunten bordels of these fool wommen, that mowe be likned to a commune gonge, where as men purgen hire ordure.

What seye we eek of putours that lyven by the horrible synne of putrie, and constreyne wommen to yelden to hem a certeyn rente of hire bodily puterie,—ye, somtyme of his owene wyf, or his child, as doon this bawdes. Certes, these been



cursede synnes. Understood eek, that avowtrie is set gladly in the ten comandementz bitwixe thefte and manslaughtre, for it is the gretteste thefte that may be, for it is thefte of body and of soule; and it is lyk to homycide, for it kerveth atwo and breketh atwo hem that first were maked o flessch, and therefore by the olde lawe of God they sholde be slayn. But natheles, by the lawe of Jhesu Crist, that is lawe of pitee, whan he seyde to the womman that was founden in avowtrie, and sholde han been slayn with stones after the wyl of the Jewes, as was hir lawe, 'Go,' quod Jhesu Crist, 'and have namoore wyl to synne,' or wille namoore to do synne. [890] Soothly, the vengeance of avowtrie is awarded to the peynes of helle, but if so be that it be destourbed by penitence.

Yet been ther mo spes of this cursed synne, as whan that oon of hem is religious, or elles bothe, or of folk that been entred into ordre, as subdekne, or dekne or preest, or hospitaliers, and ever the hyer that he is in ordre the gretter is the synne. The thynges that gretly agreggen hire synne is the brekyng of hire avow of chastitee, whan they receyved the ordre. And forther-over, sooth is, that hooly ordre is chief of al the tresorie of God, and his especial signe and mark of chastitee, to shewe that they been joyned to chastitee, which that is moost precious lyf that is. And these ordred folk been specially tited to God, and of the special meignee of God, for which, whan they doon deedly synne, they been the special traytours of God and of his peple, for they lyven of the peple to preye for the peple, and while they been suche traytours her preyers availle not to the peple.

[895] Preestes been aungeles as by the dignitee of hir mysterye, but forsothe Seint Paul seith, that Sathanas transformeth hym in an aungel of light. Soothly, the preest that haunteth deedly synne, he may be likned to the aungel of derknesse transformed in the aungel of light; he semeth aungel of light, but forsothe he is

aungel of derknesse. Swiche preestes been the sones of Helie, as sheweth in the book of Kynge, that they weren the sones of Belial, that is the devel. 'Belial' is to seyn 'withouten juge,' and so faren they; hem thynketh they been free and han no juge, namoore than hath a free bole, that taketh which cow that hym liketh in the town. So faren they by wommen, for right as a free bole is ynough for al a toun, right so is a wikked preest corrupcion ynough for al a parisshe, or for al a contree.

[900] These preestes, as seith the book, ne konne nat the mysterie of preesthode to the peple, ne God ne knowe they nat; they ne holde hem nat apayd, as seith the book, of soden flessch that was to hem offred, but they tooke by force the flessch that is rawe. Certes, so these shrewes ne holden hem nat apayed of roasted flessch and sode flessch with which the peple fedden hem in greet reverence, but they wole have raw flessch of folkes wyves and hir doghtres. And certes, these wommen that consenten to hire harlotrie doon greet wrong to Crist and to hooly chirche and alle halwes, and to alle soules; for they bireven alle these hym that sholde worshipe Crist and hooly chirche, and preye for cristene soules. And therefore han swiche preestes, and hire lemmanes eek that consenten to hir lecherie, the malisoun of al the court cristiene, til they come to amendement.

The thridde spece of avowtrie is som tyme bitwixe a man and his wyf; and that is whan they take no reward in hire assemblynge but oonly to hire fleshly delit, as seith Seint Jerome; [905] and ne rekken of no thyng but that they been assembled. By-cause that they been maried al is good ynough, as thynketh to hem. But in swich folk hath the devel power, as seyde the aungel Raphael to Thobie, for in hire assemblynge they putten Jhesu Crist out of hire herte, and yeven hem-self to alle ordure.

The fourthe spece is the assemblee of hem that been of hire kynrede, or of hem

that been of oon affynytee, or elles with hem with whiche hir fadres or hir kynrede han deled in the synne of lecherie. This synne maketh hem lyk to houndes that taken no kepe to kynrede. And certes, parentele is in two maneres, outhr goostly or fleshly : goostly, as for to deelen with his godsibbes ; for, right so as he that engendreth a child is his fleshly fader, right so is his godfader his fader espritueel ; for which a womman may in no lasse synne assemblen with hire godsib than with hire owene fleshly brother.

[910] The fifthe spece is thilke abhomyneable synne of which that no man unnethe oghte speke ne write, nathelees it is openly rehersed in holy writ. This cursednesse doon men and wommen in diverse entente, and in diverse manere, but though that hooly writ speke of horrible synne, certes hooly writ may nat been defouled, namoore than the sonnet that shyneth on the mixen.

Another synne aperteneth to lecherie that comth in slepyng ; and this synne cometh ofte to hem that been maydenes, and eek to hem that been corrupt. And this synne men clepen polucioun, that comth in thre maneres. Somtyme of langwissynge of body, for the humours been to ranke and habundaunt in the body of man ; somtyme of infermetee, for the fieblesse of the vertu retentif, as phisik maketh menciou ; somtyme for surfeit of mete and drynke ; and somtyme of vileyns thoughtes that been enclosed in mannes mynde whan he gooth to slepe, which may nat been withoute synne ; for which men moste kepen hem wisely, or elles may men synnen ful greuously.

*Remedium contra peccatum Luxurie*

[915] Now comth the remedie agayns lecherie, and that is generally chastitee and continence, that restreyneth alle the desordeyne moevynges that comen of fleshly talentes. And ever the gretter merite shal he han that moost restreyneth

the wikkede eschawfynges of the ordure of this synne, and this is in two maneres ; that is to seyn, chastitee in mariage, and chastitee of widwehode. Now shaltow understonde that matrimoyne is lefful assemblynge of man and of womman, that receyven, by vertu of the sacrement, the boond thurgh which they may nat be departed in al hir lyf, that is to seyn, whil that they lyven bothe. This, as seith the book, is a ful greet sacrement ; God maketh it, as I have seyde, in paradys, and wolde hymself be born in mariage ; and, for to halwen mariage, he was at a weddyng, where as he turned water in to wyn, which was the firste miracle that he wroughte in erthe biforn his disciples.

[920] Trewe effect of mariage clenseth fornicacioun and replenyseth hooly chirche of good lynage, for that is the ende of mariage ; and it chaungeth deedly synne into venial synne bitwixe hem that been y-wedded, and maketh the hertes al oon of hem that been y-wedded, as wel as the bodies. This is verray mariage that was establissed by God, er that synne bigan, whan natureel lawe was in his right poynt in paradys, and it was ordeyned that o man sholde have but o womman, and o womman but o man, as seith Seint Augustyn, by manye resouns.

First, for mariage is figured bitwixe Crist and holy chirche ; and that oother is, for a man is heved of a womman,—algate by ordinance it sholde be so. For, if a womman hadde mo men than oon, thanne sholde she have moo hevedes than oon, and that were an horrible thyng biforn God ; and eek a womman ne myghte nat plesse to many folk at oones. And also ther ne sholde never be pees ne reste amonges hem, for everich wolde axen his owene thyng ; and forther-over no man ne sholde knowe his owene engendrure, ne who sholde have his heritage, and the womman sholde been the lasse biloved fro the tyme that she were conjoynt to many men.

[925] Now comth how that a man sholde bere hym with his wif; and namely in two thynges, that is to seyn, in suffraunce and reverence, as shewed Crist whan he made first womman. For he ne made hire nat of the heved of Adam, for she sholde nat clayme to greet lordshipe; for ther as the womman hath the maistrie she maketh to muche desray. Ther neden none ensamples of this, the experience of day by day oghte suffice. Also certes, God ne made nat womman of the foot of Adam, for she ne sholde nat been holden to lowe, for she kan nat patiently suffre. But God made womman of the ryb of Adam for womman sholde be felawe unto man. Man sholde bere hym to his wyf in feith, in trouthe, and in love, as seith Seint Paul, that a man sholde loven his wyf as Crist loved hooly chirche, that loved it so wel that he deyde for it; so sholde a man for his wyf, if it were nede.

[930] Now how that a womman sholde be subget to hire housbonde, that telleth Seint Peter. First, in obedience. And eek, as seith the decree, a womman that is wyf, as longe as she is a wyf, she hath noon auctoritee to swere, ne bere witness, withoute leve of hir housbonde, that is hire lord,—algate he sholde be so by resoun. She sholde eek serven hym in alle honestee, and been attemptree of hire array. I woot wel that they sholde setten hire entente to plesen hir housbondes, but nat by hire queyntise of array. Seint Jerome seith that wyves that been apparailled in silk and in precious purpre ne mowe nat clothen hem in Jhesu Crist. What seith Seint John eek in thys matere? Seint Gregorie eek seith that no wight seketh precious array, but oonly for veyne glorie to been honoured the moore biforn the peple.

[935] It is a greet folye, a womman to have a fair array outward and in hir-self outhward.

A wyf sholde eek be mesurable in ookinge, and in berynge, and in lawghynge, and discreet in all hire wordes and

hire dedes and aboven alle worldly thyng she sholde loven hire housbonde with al hire herte, and to hym be trewe of hir body. So sholde an housbonde eek be to his wyf, for, sith that al the body is the housbondes, so sholde hire herte been, or elles ther is bitwixe hem two, as in that, no parfit mariage.

Thanne shal men understonde that for thre thynges a man and his wyf fleshly mowen assemble. The firste is in entente of engendrure of children, to the service of God, for certes that is the cause final of matrimoyne. [940] Another cause is to yelden everich of hem to oother the dette of hire bodies, for neither of hem hath power over his owene body. The thridde is for to eschewe leccherye and vileynye. The ferthe is forsothe deedly synne. As to the firste, it is meritorie; the seconde also, for, as seith the decree, that she hath merite of chastitee that yeldeth to hire housbonde the dette of hir body, ye, though it be agayn hir likynge and the lust of hire herte. The thridde manere is venyal synne, and trewely scarsly may ther any of these be withoute venial synne, for the corrupcioun and for the delit. The fourthe manere is for to understonde if they assemble oonly for amorous love, and for noon of the foreseyde causes, but for to accomplice thilke brennyng delit, they rekke never how ofte, soothly it is deedly synne, and yet with sorwe somme folk wol peynen hem moore to doon than to hire appetit suffiseth.

The seconde manere of chastitee is for to been a clene wydewe and eschue the embracynges of man and desiren the embracyng of Jhesu Crist. [945] These been tho that han been wyves and han forgoon hire housbondes, and eek women that han doon leccherie and been releved by penitence. And certes, if that a wyf koude kepen hire al chaast, by licence of hir housbonde, so that she yeve never noon occasion that he aglite, it were to hire a greet merite. These

manere wommen that observen chastitee moste be clene in herte, as wele as in body and in thoughte, and mesurable in clothyng and in contenance, abstinent in etyng and drynkyng, in spekyng and in dede. They been the vessel, or the boyste of the blisshed Magdelene, that fulfilleth hooly chirche of good odour.

The thridde manere of chastitee is virginitee, and it bihoveth that she be hooly in herte, and clene of body; thanne is she spouse to Jhesu Crist, and she is the lyf of angeles. She is the preisynge of this world, and she is as thise martirs in egalitee. She hath in hire that tonge may nat telle, ne herte thynke. [950] Virginitee haar oure Lord Jhesu Crist, and virgine was hymselfe.

Another remedie agayns leccherie is specially to withdrawen swiche thynges as yeve occasion to thilke vileynye, as ese, etyng and drynkyng; for certes, whan the pot boyleth strongly the beste remedie is to withdrawe the fyr. Slepyng longe in greet quiete is eek a greet norice to leccherie.

Another remedie agayns leccherie is that a man or a womman eschue the compaignye of hem by whiche he douteth to be tempted, for al be it so that the dede is withstonden, yet is ther greet temptacioun. Soothly, a whit wal, although it ne brenne noght fully by stikynge of a candele, yet is the wal blak of the leyt. Ful ofte tyme [955] I rede, that no man truste in his owene perfeccioun, but he be stronger than Sampsoun, and hoolier than Danyel, and wiser than Salomon.

Now after that I have declared yow as I kan the sevene deedly synnes, and somme of hire braunches and hire remedies, soothly, if I koude, I wolde telle yow the ten comandementz; but so heigh a doctrine I lete to divines; natheles I hope to God they been touched in this trectice, everich of hem alle.

*Sequitur secunda pars Penitencie*

Now, for as muche as the seconde partie of penitence stant in confessioun of mouth, as I bigan in the firste chapitre, I seye, Seint Augustyn seith, 'Synne is every word and every dede, and al that men coveiten agayn the lawe of Jhesu Crist; and this is for to synne in herte, in mouth, and in dede, by thy five wittes, that been sighte, heryng, smellyng, tastynge or savourynge, and feelyng.'

[960] Now is it good to understonde the circumstaunces that agreggeth muchel every synne. Thow shalt considere what thow art that doost the synne; whether thou be male or femele, yong or oold, gentil or thral, free or servant, hool or syk, wedded or sengle, ordred or unordred, wys or fool, clerk or seculeer; if she be of thy kynrede, bodily or goostly, or noon; if any of thy kynrede have synned with hire or noon, and manye mo thinges.

Another circumstaunce is this, whether it be doon in fornicacioun, or in avowtrie, or noon, incest or noon, mayden or noon, in manere of homicide or noon, horrible grete synnes or smale, and how longe thou hast continued in synne. The thridde circumstaunce is the place ther thou hast do synne, whether in oother mennes hous or in thyn owene, in feeld or in chirche or in chirchehawe, in chirche dedicaat or noon; [965] for if the chirche be halwed, and man or womman spille his kynde in-with that place, by wey of synne or by wikked temptacioun, the chirche is entredited til it be reconciled by the bysshope; and the preest that dide swich a vileyne, to terme of al his lif he sholde namoore synge masse; and if he dide, he sholde doon deedly synne at every time that he so songe masse. The fourthe circumstaunce is, by whiche mediatours or by whiche messagers, as for enticement or for consentement to bere compaignye with felaweshipe,—for many a wrecche,

for to bere compaignye, wil go to the devel of helle,—wher-fore they that eggen or consenten to the synne been parteners of the synne and of the dampnacioun of the synnere.

The fifthe circumstance is, how manye tymes that he hath synned, if it be in his mynde, and how ofte that he hath falle; [970] for he that ofte falleth in synne he despiseth the mercy of God and encresseth hys synne, and is unkynde to Crist, and he wexeth the moore fieble to withstonde synne and synneth the moore lightly. And the latter ariseth, and is the moore eschew for to shryven hym, namely to hym that is his confessour; for which that folk whan they falle agayn in hir olde folies, outhen they forleten hir olde confessours al outrely, or elles they departen hir shrift in diverse places, but soothly swich departed shrift deserveth no mercy of God of his synnes. The sixte circumstaunce is, why that a man synneth, as by whiche temptacioun, and if hymself procure thilke temptacioun, or by the excitynge of oother folke; or if he synne with a womman by force, or by hire owene assent, or if the womman maugree hir hed hath been afforced or noon, this shal she telle; for covetise, or for poverté, and if it was hire procuryng or noon, and swiche manere harneys.

[975] The seventhe circumstance is, in what manere he hath doon his synne, or how that she hath suffred that folk han doon to hire, and the same shal the man telle pleyntly with alle circumstaunces, and wheither he hath synned with comune bordel wommen or noon, or doon his synne in hooly tymes or noon, in fastyng tymes or noon, or biforn his shrifte, or after his latter shrifte, and hath peraventure broken therefore his penance enjoyned; by whos helpe and whos conseil, by sorcerie or craft,—al moste be toold. Alle these thynges, after that they been grete or smale,

engreggen the conscience of man. And eek the preest, that is thy juge, may the bettre been avysed of his juggedment in yevyng of thy penance, and that is after thy contricioun. [980] For understond wel that after tyme that a man hath defouled his baptesme by synne, if he wole come to salvacioun, ther is noon other wey but by penitence, and shrifte, and satisfaccioun; and namely by the two, if ther be a confessour to which he may shryven hym, and the thridde, if he have lyf to parfournen it.

Thanne shal man looke and considere that if he wole maken a trewe and a profitable confessioun ther moste be foure condicions. First, it moot been in sorweful bitternesse of herte, as seyde the kyng Ezechiel to God, 'I wol remembre me alle the yeres of my lif in bitternesse of myn herte.' This condicioun of bitternesse hath fyve signes. The firste is, that confessioun moste be shamefast, nat for to covere ne hyden his synne, for he hath agilt his God and defouled his soule; [985] and ther-of seith Seint Augustyn, 'The herte travailleth for shame of his synne, and for he hath greet shamefastnesse he is digne to have greet mercy of God.' Swich was the confessioun of the pupican that wolde nat heven up his eyen to hevене, for he hadde offended God of hevене; for which shamefastnesse he hadde anon the mercy of God. And ther-of seith Seint Augustyn that swich shamefast folk been next foryevenesse and remissioun.

Another signe is humylitee in confessioun, of which seith Seint Peter, 'Humbleth yow under the myght of God.' The hond of God is myghty in confessioun, for ther-by God foryeveth thee thy synnes, for he allone hath the power. And this humylitee shal been in herte and in signe outward; for right as he hath humylitee to God in his herte; right so sholde he humble his body outward to the preest that sit in Goddes

965. *wil*, E. *shal*.970. *departed shrift*, cp. 1006-11.980. *Ezechiel*, *Hezekiah*.

place. [990] For which in no manere, sith that Crist is sovereyn and the preest meene and mediatur bitwixe Crist and the synnere, and the synnere is the laste by wey of resoun, thanne sholde nat the synnere sitte as heighe as his confessour, but knele biforn hym or at his feet, but if maladie destourbe it; for he shal nat taken kepe, who sit there, but in whos place that he sitteth. A man that hath trespased to a lord and comth for to axe mercy and maken his accord and set him doun anon by the lord, men wolde holden hym outrageous and nat worthy so soone for to have remissioun ne mercy.

The thridde signe is, how that thy shrift sholde be ful of teeris, if man may; and if man may nat wepe with his bodily eyen, lat hym wepe in herte. Swich was the confessioun of Seint Peter, for after that he hadde forsake Jhesu Crist he wente out and weepe ful bitterly. [995] The fourthe signe is, that he ne lette nat for shame to shewen his confessioun; swich was the confessioun of the Magdelene, that ne spared for no shame of hem that weren atte feeste for to go to oure Lord Jhesu Crist and biknowe to hym hire synnes. The fifte signe is, that a man or a womman be obeisant to receyven the penaunce that hym is enjoyned for his synnes, for certes Jhesu Crist for the giltes of a man was obedient to the deeth.

The seconde condicion of verry confession is that it be hastily doon; for certes, if a man hadde a deedly wounde, ever the lenger that he taried to warisshe hymself the moore wolde it corrupte and haste hym to his death, and eek the wounde wolde be the wors for to heele; and right so fareth synne that longe tyme is in a man unshewed.

[1000] Certes a man oghte hastily shewen his synnes for manye causes; as for drede of deeth that cometh ofte sodenly, and is in no certeyn what tyme it shal be, ne in what place; and eek the drecchyng of o synne draweth in another; and eek the lenger that he tarieth the ferther

he is fro Crist. And if he abide to his laste day scarsly may he shryven hym, or remembre hym of his synnes, or repenten hym for the grevous maladie of his deeth. And for as muche as he ne hath nat in his lyf herkned Jhesu Crist whanne he hath spoken, he shal crie to Jhesu Crist at his laste day and scarsly wol he herkne hym.

And understand that this condicioun moste han foure thynges. Thi shrift moste be purveyed bifore and avysed, for wikked haste dooth no profit; and that a man konne shryve hym of his synnes, be it of pride, or of envye, and so forth, of the spesces and circumstances; and that he have comprehended in hym mynde the nombre and the greetnesse of his synnes, and how longe that he hath leyn in synne; [1005] and eek that he be contrit of his synnes, and in stidefast purpos, by the grace of God, never eft to falle in synne; and eek that he drede and countrewaite hymself that he fle the occasiouns of synne to whiche he is enclnyed.

Also thou shalt shryve thee of alle thy synnes to o man, and nat a parcel to o man and a parcel to another; that is to understonde in entente to departe thy confessioun as for shame or drede, for it nys but stranglyng of thy soule. For certes Jhesu Crist is entierly al good; in hym nys noon inperfeccioun, and therefore outhere he foryeveth al parfitly, or never a deel. I seye nat that if thou be assigned to the penitauncer for certain synne that thou art bounde to shewen hym al the remenaunt of thy synnes of whiche thou hast be shryven to thy curaat, but if it like to thee of thyn humylitee; this is no departyng of shrifte. Ne I seye nat, ther as I speke of divisioun of confessioun, that if thou have licence for to shryve thee to a discreet and an honeste preest, where thee liketh, and by licence of thy curaat, that thou ne mayst wel shryve thee to him of alle thy synnes; [1010] but lat no blotte be bihynde, lat no synne been

untoold, as fer as thou hast remembrance. And when thou shalt be shryven to thy curaat telle hym eek alle the synnes that thou hast doon syn thou were last y-shryven; this is no wikked entente of divisoun of shrifte.

Also, the verray shrifte axeth certeine condicions. First, that thou shryve thee by thy free wil, noight constreyned, ne for shame of folk, ne for maladie, ne swiche thynges, for it is resoun that he that trespasseth by his free wyl, that by his free wyl he confesse his trespass; and that noon oother man telle his synne but he hymself; ne he shal nat nayte ne denye his synne, ne wratthe hym agayn the preest for his amonestynge to leve synne.

The seconde condicioun is, that thy shrift be laweful, that is to seyn that thou that shryvest thee, and eek the preest that hereth thy confessioun, been verrailly in the feith of hooly chirche, [1015] and that a man ne be nat despeired of the mercy of Jhesu Crist as Caym or Judas. And eek a man moot accusen hymself of his owene trespas, and nat another, but he shal blame and wyten hymself and his owene malice of his synne and noon oother; but natheles if that another man be occasioun or enticere of his synne, or the estaat of a persone be swich thurgh which his synne is agregged, or elles that he may nat pleynly shryven hym but he telle the persone with which he hath synned, thanne may he telle; so that his entente ne be nat to bakbite the persone, but oonly to declaren his confessioun.

Thou ne shalt nat eek make no lesynges in thy confessioun for humylitee, peradventure to seyn that thou hast doon synnes of whiche that thou were never guilty. [1020] For Seint Augustyn seith, 'If thou by cause of thyn humylitee makest esynges on thyself, though thou ne were nat in synne biforn, yet artow thanne in synne thurgh thy lesynges.' Thou most eek shewe thy synne by thyn owene propre mouth, but thou be woxe downb,

and nat by no lettre, for thou that hast doon the synne thou shalt have the shame therfore. Thou shalt nat eek peynte thy confessioun by faire subtile wordes, to covere the moore thy synne, for thanne bigilestow thyself and nat the preest; thou most tellen it pleynly, be it never so foul ne so horrible.

Thou shalt eek shryve thee to a preest that is discreet to conseille, and eek thou shalt nat shryve thee for veyne glorie, ne for ypocrisye, ne for no cause, but oonly for the doute of Jhesu Crist and the heele of thy soule. Thou shalt nat eek renne to the preest sodeynly to tellen hym lightly thy synne, as who so telleth a jape or a tale, but avysely, and with greet devocioun.

[1025] And, generally, shryve thee ofte. If thou ofte falle, ofte thou arise by confessioun, and though thou shryve thee often than ones of synne of which thou hast be shryven, it is the moore merite. And, as seith Seint Augustyn, thou shalt have the moore lightly relesyng and grace of God bothe of synne and of peyne. And certes, oones a yeere atte leeste wey is it laweful for to been housled, for certes, oones a yeere alle thynges re-novellen.

Now have I toolde you of verray confessioun, that is the seconde partie of penitence.

*Explicit secunda pars penitencie et sequitur tercia pars eiusdem*

The thridde partie of penitence is satisfaccioun and that stant moost generally in almesse, and in bodily peyne. [1030] Now been ther thre manere of almesses: contricioun of herte, where a man offreth hymself to God; another is to han pitee of defeaute of his neighbores; and the thridde is in veynging of good conseil and comfort, goostly and bodily, where men han nede, and namely in sustenance of mannes foode. And tak kepe that a man hath nede of these things generally, he hath nede of foode, he hath nede of

clothyng and herberwe, he hath nede of charitable conseil and visitynge in prisone and in maladie, and sepulture of his dede body. And if thow mayst nat visite the nedeful with thy persone, visite hym by thy message and by thy yiftes. These been generally almesses or werkes of charitee of hem that han temporeel riches and discrecioun in conseilynge. Of these werkes shaltow heren at the day of doome.

These almesses shaltow doon of thyne owene propre thynges, and hastily and prively if thow mayst; [1035] but natheles if thow mayst nat doon it prively, thow shalt nat forbere to doon almesse though men seen it, so that it be nat doon for thank of the world, but oonly for thank of Jhesu Crist; for, as witnesseth Seint Mathew, *capitulo* v., 'A citee may nat been hyd that is set on a montayne, ne men lighte nat a lanterne and put it under a busschel, but men sette it on a candlestikke to yeve light to the men in the hous; right so shal youre light lighten bifore men, that they may seen youre goode werkes and glorifie youre Fader that is in hevене.'

Now as to speken of bodily peyne; it stant in preyeres, in wakynges, in fastynges, in vertuose techinges of orisouns.

And ye shul understonde that orisouns or preyeres is for to seyn a pitous wyl of herte that redresseth it in God, and expresseth it by word outward to remoeven harmes, and to han thynges spiritueel and durable, and somtyme temporele thynges, of whiche orisouns, certes, in the orison of the *Pater noster* hath Jhesu Crist enclosed moost thynges.

[1040] Certes, it is privyleged of thre thynges in his dignytee, for which it is moore digne than any oother preyer: for that Jhesu Crist hymself maketh it; and it is short, for it sholde be koud the moore lightly, and for to withholden it the moore esily in herte, and helpen hym self the ofter with the orisoun, and for a man sholde be the lasse wery to seyen it, and for a man may nat excusen hym to

lerne it, it is so short and so esy; and for it comprehendeth in itself alle goode preyeres.

The expositioun of this hooly preyer that is so excellent and digne, I bitake to these maistres of theologie, save thus muchel wol I seyn, that whan thow prayest that God sholde foryeve thee thy giltes as thou foryevest hem that agilten to thee, be ful wel war that thow be nat out of charitee. This hooly orisoun amenuseth eek venyal synne, and therefore it aperteneth specially to penitence.

[1045] This preyer moste be trewely seyde, and in verray feith, and that men preye to God ordinatly and discreetly and devoutly, and alwey a man shal putten his wyl to be subget to the wille of God. This orisoun moste eek been seyde with greet humblesse and ful pure honesty, and nat to the anoyauce of any man or womman. It moste eek been continued with the werkes of charitee. It avayleth eek agayn the vices of the soule, for, as seith Seint Jerome, 'By fastyng been saved the vices of the flesh, and by preyer the vices of the soule.'

After this thou shalt understonde that bodily peyne stant in wakyng; for Jhesu Crist seith, 'Waketh and preyeth that ye ne entre in wikked temptacioun.'

[1050] Ye shul understanden also, that fastyng stant in thre thynges: in forberynge of bodily mete and drynke, and in forberynge of worldly jolitee, and in forberynge of deedly synne, this is to seyn, that a man shal kepen hym fro deedly synne with al his myght.

And thou shalt understanden eek that God ordeyned fastyng; and to fastyng apertenen four things: largenesse to poure folk, gladnesse of herte spiritueel, nat to been angry ne anoyed ne grucche for he fasteth, and also resonable houre for to ete by mesure, that is for to seyn, a man shal nat ete in untyme, ne sitte the lenger at his table to ete for he fasteth.

Thanne shaltow understonde that



bodily peyne stant in disciplyne or techynge by word and by writynge or in ensample; also in werynge of heyres, or of stamyn, or of haubergeons on hire naked flessch, for Cristes sake, and swiche manere penaunces. But war thee wel that swiche manere penaunces on thy flessch ne make thee nat or angry or anoyed of thy self; for better is to caste away thyn heyre, than for to caste away the swetnesse of Jhesu Crist. And therefore seith Seint Paul, 'Clothe yow, as they that been chosen of God, in herte, of misericorde, debonairetee, suffraunce,' and swiche manere of clothyng, of whiche Jhesu Crist is moore apayed than of heyres or haubergeons or hauberkes.

[1055] Thanne is discipline eek in knockynge of thy brest, in seourgyng with yerdes, in knelynges, in tribulacions, in suffryng paciently wronges that been doon to thee, and eek in pacient suffraunce of maladies, or lesynge of worldly catel, or of wyf, or of child, or other freendes.

Thanne shaltow understonde whiche thynges destourben penaunce; and this is in foure maneres; that is, drede, shame, hope, and wanhope, that is, desperacioun. And for to speke first of drede, for which he weneth that he may suffre no penaunce. Theragayns is remedie for to thynke that bodily penaunce is but short and litel, at regard of the peynes of helle, that is so cruel and so long that it lasteth withouten ende.

[1060] Now again, the shame that a man hath to shryven hym, and namely these ypcrites that wolden been holden so parfite that they han no nede to shryven hem. Agayns that shame sholde a man thynke that by wey of resoun that he that hath nat been shamed to doon foule thinges, certes hym oghte nat been ashamed to do faire thynges, and that is confessiouns. A man sholde eek thynke that God seeth and woot alle his thoghtes and allé his werkes; to hym

1050. *swetnesse, E<sup>2</sup> sikernesse.*

may no thyng been hyd ne covered. Man sholden eek remembren hem of the shame that is to come at the day of doome to hem that been nat penitent and shryven in this present lyf; for alle the creatures in erthe and in helle shullen seen apertly al that they hyden in this world.

[1065] Now for to speken of the hope of hem that been necligent and slowe to shryven hem; that stant in two maneres. That oon is that he hopeth for to lyve longe and for to purehacen muche richesse for his delit, and thanne he wol shryven hym, and as he seith, hym semeth thanne tymely ynough to come to shrifte. Another is surquidrie, that he hath in Cristes mercy. Agayns the firste vice, he shal thynke thatoure lif is in no sikernesse, and eek that alle the richesces in this world ben in aventure and passen as a shadwe on the wal; and, as seith Seint Gregorie, that it aperteneth to the grete rightwisnesse of God, that never shal the peyne stynte, of hem that never wolde withdrawen hem fro synne hir thanks, but ay continue in synne, for thilke perpetueel wil to do synne shul they han perpetueel peyne.

[1070] Wanhope is in two maneres: the firste wanhope is in the mercy of Crist; that oother is that they thynken that they ne myghte nat longe persevere in goodnesse. The firste wanhope comth of that he demeth that he hath synned so greetly, and so ofte, and so longe leyn in synne, that he shal nat be saved. Certes, agayns that cursed wanhope sholde he thynke that the passion of Jhesu Crist is moore strong for to unbynde than synne is strong for to bynde. Agayns the seconde wanhope he shal thynke that as ofte as he falleth he may arise agayn by penitence; and though he never so longe have leyn in synne, the mercy of Crist is alwey redy to receiven hym to mercy. Agayns the wanhope that he demeth that he sholde nat longe persevere in goodnesse, he shal thynke that the feblesse of

the devel may no thyng doon but if men wol suffren hym, [1075] and eek he shal han strengthe of the helpe of God, and of al hooly chirche, and of the proteccioun of aungels, if hym list.

Thanne shal men understonde what is the fruyt of penaunce; and, after the word of Jhesu Crist, it is the endeles blisse of hevene. Ther joye hath no contrariouste of wo, ne grevaunce; ther alle harmes been passed of this present lyf; ther as is the sikernes fro the peyne of helle; ther as is the blisful compaignye that rejoysen hem evermo everich of othes joye; ther as the body of man, that whilom was foul and derk, is moore cleer than the sonne; ther as the body, that whilom was syk, freele, and fieble, and mortal, is inmortal and so strong and so hool that ther may no thyng apeyren it; ther as ne is neither hunger, thurst, ne coold, but every soule replenyssed with the sighte of the parfit knowynge of God.

[1080] This blisful regne may men purchase by poverté espritueel, and the glorie by lowenesse, the plentee of joye by hunger and thurst, and the reste by travaille, and the lyf by deeth and mortificacioun of synne.

*Here taketh the Makere of this Book his Leve*

Now preye I to hem alle that herkne this litel tretys or rede, that if ther be any thyng in it that liketh hem, that ther-of they thanken oure Lord Jhesu Crist, of whom procedeth al wit and al goodnesse; and if ther be any thyng that displese hem, I preye hem also that they arrette it to the defaute of myn unkonnyng, and nat to my wyl, that wolde ful fayn have seyð bettre if I hadde had konnyng; for oure boke seith, 'Al that is writen is writen for oure doctrine,' and that is myn entente.

Wherfore I biseke yow mekely, for the mercy of God, that ye preye for me that Crist have mercy on me and foryeve me

my giltes, [1085] and namely of my translaciouns and enditynges of worldly vanitees the whiche I revoke in my Retracciouns; as is the book of Troylus; the book also of Fame; the book of the xxv Ladies; the book of the Duchesse; the book of Seint Valentynes day, of the Parlement of Briddes; the Tales of Canterbury,—thilke that sownen in to synne; the book of the Leoun; and many another book, if they were in my remembrance; and many a song and many a lecherous lay, that Crist, for his grete mercy, foryeve me the synne.

But of the translacioun of Boece *De Consolacione* and othere bookes of Legendes of Seintes, and omelies and moralitee, and devocioun, that thanke I oure Lord Jhesu Crist, and his blisful mooder and alle the Seintes of hevene, [1090] bisekyng hem that they from hennes forth unto my lyves ende sende me grace to biwayle my giltes and to studie to the salvacioun of my soule; and graunte me grace of verray penitence, confessioun and satisfaccioun, to doon in this present lyf, thurgh the benigne grace of hym that is Kyng of Kynges, and Preest over alle Preestes, that boghte us with the precious blood of his herte, so that I may be oon of hem at the day of doome that shulle be saved. *Qui cum Patre et Spiritu Sancto vivis et regnas Deus per omnia secula. Amen.*

*Heere is ended the book of the Tales of Canterbury, compiled by Geoffrey Chaucer, of whos soule Jhesu Crist have mercy. Amen.*

1085. *my Retracciouns*, apparently a formal document.

1086. *the book of the xxv Ladies*, the 'Legend of Good Women'; Lans. xv., H xxix.

1087. *the book of the Leoun*, lost—probably a translation from Machault.

1087. *another book*, H<sup>2</sup> *other bokes*.

1087. *remembrance*, H *mynde or remembrance*.

1088. *of Legendes of*, H *of consolacioun and of Legendes of lyves of*.

## EARLIER MINOR POEMS

### THE DETHE OF BLAUNCHE THE DUCHESS

I HAVE gret wonder, by this lyghte,  
How that I lyve, for day ne nyghte  
I may slepè wel neigh nocht ;  
I have so many an ydel thought,  
Purely for defaute of slepe,  
That, by my trouthe, I take no kepe  
Of no thyng how hit cometh or gooth,  
Ne me nis no thyng leef nor looth.

Al is y-lichè good to me,—  
Joye or sorwe, wherso hit be,— 10  
For I have felyng in no thyng,  
But as it were, a masèd thyng  
Always in poynt to falle a-doun ;  
For sorwful ymagynacioun  
Is always hoolly in my mynde.

And wel ye woot agaynès kynde  
Hit were to liven in this wyse,  
For Nature woldè nat suffyse  
To noon erthly créature  
Not long tymè to endure 20  
Withoute slepe, and been in sorwe ;  
And I ne may, no nyght ne morwe,  
Slepe ; and this melancolye  
And drede I havè for to dye,  
Defaute of slepe and hevynesse,  
Hath sleyn my spirit of quynesse  
That I have lost al lustihede.  
Suche fantasyes been in myn hede  
So I noot what is best to do.

But men myghte axè me why so 30  
I may not slepe, and what me is ?  
But nat héless, who askè this  
Leseth his asking trewely.  
My selven can not tellè why  
The sothe ; but trewely, as I gesse,

31-96. Tn. omits these lines ; F has them in a later hand.

I holdè hit ben a siknesse  
That I have suffred this eight yere,  
And yet my boote is never the nere ;  
For ther is phisicien but oon  
That may me hele ; but that is doon. 40  
Passe we over until eft ;  
That wil not be, moot nede be left ;  
Our first matere is good to kepe.

So whan I saw I might not slepe  
Til now late, this other nyght  
Upon my bedde I sat upryght  
And bad oon rechè me a book,  
A romaunce, and he hit me took 10  
To rede, and dryve the nyght away ;  
Fór me thoghte it bettere play 50  
Then playen either at chesse or tablès.

And in this book were writen fablès  
That clerkès hadde, in oldè tyme,  
And other poets, put in ryme  
To rede, and for to be in mynde  
Whyl men loved the lawe of kynde.  
This book ne spak but of such thynges  
Of quenès livès, and of kynges 20  
And many other thyngés smale.  
Amonge al this I fond a tale 60  
That me thoghte a wonder thyng.

This was the tale : There was a kyng  
That hightè Seys, and hadde a wyf,  
The bestè that mighte berè lyf ;  
And this quene hightè Alcyone.  
So hit befill, thereafter sone  
This kyng wolde wenden over see.  
To tellen shortly, whan that he 30  
Was in the see, thus in this wyse,  
Swich a tempest gan to ryse 70  
That brak hir mast and made it falle,  
And cleftè hir ship, and dreinte hem alle,  
That never was foundè, as it telles,  
Bórd ne man, ne nothyng elles.  
Right thus this kyng Seys loste his lyf.

Now for to speken of his wyf.  
 This lady, that was left at home,  
 Hath wonder that the king ne come  
 Home, for it was a longé terme.  
 Anon hir hertè bigan to erme,  
 And for that hir thoghte evermo  
 It was not wel,—he dweltè so.  
 She longèd so after the kyng,  
 That certes, it were a pitous thyng  
 To telle hir hertely sorwful lyf  
 Thát she had, this noble wyf ;  
 For him she lovèd alderbest !  
 Anon she sente bothe cest and west  
 To seke him, but they foundè nought.

' Alas,' quoth she, ' that I was wrought !  
 I make avowe to my god here,  
 But I mowe of my lordè here,  
 And wher my lord, my love, be deed,  
 Certes, I nylle never etè breed.'

Swich sorw this lady to hir took,  
 That trewely I, which made this book,  
 Had swich pitè and swich rowthe  
 To rede hir sorwe, that by my trowthe,  
 I ferde the worsè al the morwe  
 After, to thenken on hir sorwe.

So whan this lady coude heere no  
 word

That no man myghtè fynde hir lord,  
 Ful oft she swouned, and seyde, ' Alas !'  
 For sorwè ful neigh wood she was,  
 Ne she koude no reed but oon ;  
 But doun on knees she sat anoon  
 And wepte, that pitè was to here.

' A ! mercy ! sweté ladi dere !'  
 Quod she to Juno, hir goddessse ;  
 ' Helpe me out of this distresse,  
 And yeve me grace my lord to se  
 Sóone, or wite wher-so he be,  
 Or how he fareth, or in what wyse,  
 And I shal make yow sacrificyse,  
 And hoolly youres become I shal  
 With good wil, body, herte, and al ;  
 And but thow wilt this, ladi swete,  
 Send me grace to slepe, and mete  
 In my slepe som certeyn sweven,

80. *erme*, Ten Brink and Skeat's emendation of *jerne* of MSS.

82. *he dwelte*, Skeat's emendation of *her thought* of the MSS., repeated from l. 81.

87. All MSS. read *For him alas she*, etc.

91-94. All place these couplets in reverse order.

Wher-through that I may knowen even  
 Whether my lord be quyk or deed.' 121

With that word she heng doun the heed  
 And fil a-swown, as colde as ston.  
 Hir women caughte her up anon,  
 And broghten hir in bed al nakéd,  
 And she, forwepèd and forwakéd,  
 Was wery, and thus the dedè sleep  
 Fil on hir, or she tokè keep,  
 Through Juno that had herd hir bone,  
 That madè hir to slepè sone ;  
 For as she prayde, right so was don  
 In dede, for Juno right anon  
 Calledè thus hir messagere  
 To do hir erande, and he com nere.

Whan he was come, she bad him thus :  
 ' Go bet,' quod Juno, ' to Morpheus,—  
 Thou knowest him wel, the god of sleep,—  
 Now understond wel, and tak keep ;  
 Sey thus, on my halfe, that he

Go faste in-to the gretè se,

And bid him that, on allè thyng,  
 He take up Seys body the kyng,  
 That lyeth ful pale and no-thing rody.

Bid him crepe in-to the body  
 And doo hit goon to Alcyone  
 The quenè, ther she lyeth allone,  
 And shewe hir shortly—hit is no nay !—  
 How hit was dreynt this other day,  
 And doo the body speke right soo,  
 Right as hit was woned to doo  
 The whylès that hit was alyve.

Goo now faste, and hy the blyve !'

This messenger took leve and wente  
 Upon his wey, and never ne stente,  
 Til he com to the derke valeye  
 That stant betwixè rochès tweye,  
 Ther never yet grew corn ne gras,  
 Ne tre, ne no thyng that ought was,  
 Bést ne man, ne no wight elles,  
 Save ther were a fewè welles  
 Came rennyng fro the cliffes a-doun,  
 That made a deedly, slepyng soun,  
 And ronnen doun right by a cave  
 That was under a rokke y-grave  
 Amide the valey, wonder depe.

133. *messagere*, i.e. Iris.

136. *Go bet*, lit. go better, i.e. fast.

142. *He*, etc. ; F Tn. B. *That he*, etc.

158. *no thyng*. All read *nought*.

159. *no wight*. All read *nought*.

Ther this goddés laye and slepe,—  
Morpheus, and Eclympasteyre,  
That was the god of slepés heyre,  
That sleepe and dide noon other werk.

This cavé was also as derk 170  
As hellé pit over-al aboute.  
They had good leyser for to route,  
To envye who might slepé beste.  
Some henge hir chyn upon hir breste  
And slepte upright, hir heed y-hede,  
And some laye naked in hir bedde  
And slepé whyles the dayés laste.

This messager com fleying faste 178  
And cried, 'O, hoo! a-wak anon!'  
Hit was for nocht, ther herde him noon,  
'A-wak!' quod he, 'who is it lyth there!'  
And blew his horne right in hir ere,  
And cried, 'A-waketh!' wonder hye.  
This god of slepe, with his oon ÿe  
Cast up, axed, 'Who clepeth there?'  
'Hit am I,' quod this messagere,  
'Juno bad thou shuldest goon,'—  
And tofde him what he shuldé doon  
As I have tolde yow here-to-fore,  
Hit is no need reherse hit more; 190  
And went his wey whan he hadde sayd.

Anoon this god of slepe a-brayd  
Out of his slepe, and gan to goon,  
And dide as he hadde bede him doon;  
Took up the dreynté body sone  
And bar hit forth to Alcyone,  
His wyf the quene, ther-as she lay,  
Right even a quarter before day,  
And stood right at hir beddés feete,  
And calléd hir right as she heete 200  
By name, and seyde, 'My sweté wyf,  
Awak! let be your sorwful lyf!  
For in your sorwe ther lyth no reed;  
For certes, swete, I am but deed,  
Ye shul me never on lyve y-se,  
But, good swete herté, [for] that ye  
Burie my body, swich a tyde  
Ye mowe hit fynde the see besyde,  
(And far-wel, swete, my worldés blisse!)

167. *Eclympasteyre*. Meaning and derivation doubtful—represents perhaps *Icelon plastera* or *Icelon Phobetora*, cp. Ovid. *Mct.* xi. 640.

181. *who is*, etc. F omits *it*; Tn. inserts *that* after *it*; Th. *who lyeth*.

206. *for that*. All om. *for*; B om. *herte* also.

207. *swich a*. All read *for swich a*.

I prayé god your sorwé lisse; 210  
To litel whyl our blissé lasteth!'

With that hir eyen up she casteth  
And saw nocht. 'Allas!' quod she for  
sorwe,

And deyde within the thriddé morwe.  
But what she sayde more in that swow  
I may not tellé yow as now,  
Hit were to longé for to dwelle,  
My first matere I wil yow telle,  
Wherfor I havé told this thyng  
Of Alcyone and Seys the kyng. 220

For thus moche dar I sayé wel,  
I had be dolven everydel,  
And deed, right throug defaulte of sleepe,  
Gif I nadde red and také keepe  
Of this talé next befor;  
And I wol tellé yow wherfor;  
For I ne might, for bote ne bale,  
Slepe, or I hadde red this tale  
Of this dreynté Seys the kyng  
And of the goddés of slepyng. 230

Whan I hadde red this talé wel,  
And over-loked hit everydel,  
Me thoghté wonder if hit were so,  
For I hadde never herd speke, or tho,  
Of no goddés that koudé make  
Men to sleepe, ne for to wake;  
For I ne knewe never God but oon,  
And in my game I sayde anoon,—  
And yet me lyst right evel to pleye,—  
'Rather than that I shuldé deye 240  
Throug defaulte of slepyng thus  
I wolde yive thilké Morpheus  
Or his goddessé, dame Juno,  
Or som wight elles, I ne roghté who,  
To make me sleepe and have som reste,—  
I wil yive him the alder-beste  
Yift that ever he abood his lyve.  
And here on warde, right now, as blyve,  
If he wol make me slepe a lite,  
Of downe of puré dowvés white 250  
I wil yive him a fether-bed,  
Rayéd with golde, and right wel cled  
In fyn blak satyn *doutremere*,  
And many a pilwe, and every bere  
Of clothe of Reynes, to slepé softé;  
Him thar not nede to turnen ofte.

255. *Rennes*, in Brittany. Linen is still made there.

And I wol yive him al that fallès  
 To a chambre ; and al his hallès  
 I wol do peynte with purè golde,  
 And tapite hem ful many folde 260  
 Of oo sute : this shal he have  
 If I wiste wher were his cave,  
 If he kan make me sleepè sone,  
 As did the goddesse quene Alcyone ;  
 And thus this ilkè god, Morpheus,  
 May wyne of me mo feès thus  
 Than ever he wan ; and to Juno,  
 That is his goddesse, I shal so do,  
 I trowe, that she shal holde hir payd.

I hadde unneth that word y-sayd 270  
 Right thus as I have told it yow,  
 That sodeynly, I nistè how,  
 Swich a lust anon me took  
 To sleep, that right upon my book  
 I fil asleepe, and therwith even  
 Me mette so ynly swete a sweven,  
 So wonderful, that never yit  
 I trowè no man hadde the wit  
 To konnè wel my sweven rede. 280  
 No, not Joseph, with-outè drede,  
 Of Egipte, he that reddè so  
 The kyngès metyng, Pharao,  
 No more than koude the leste of us ;  
 Ne nat skarsly Macrobeus,  
 He that wroot al thavisoun  
 That he mette, kyng Scipioun,  
 The noble man, the Affrikan,—  
 Swichè mervayles, fortunèd than,—  
 I trowe, a-rede my dremès even. 289  
 Lo, thus hit was, this was my sweven.

- *The Dream*

Me thoughtè thus,—that hit was May,  
 And in the dawenyng I lay,  
 (Me mette thus,) in my bed al naked,  
 And lokèd forth, for I was wakèd  
 With smalè foulès a gret hepe,  
 That had affrayed me out of my slepe  
 Through noyse and swetnesse of her song.  
 And as me mette they sate a-mong  
 Upon my chambre roof wyth-oute  
 Upon the tyles over al a-boute, 300  
 And songen, everich in his wyse,

284. *Macrobius*, famous in the Middle Ages for his commentary on Cicero's *Somnium Scipionis*.

The mostè solempnè servyse  
 By note, that ever man, I trowe,  
 Hadde herd ; for som of hem songe lowe  
 Som hye, and al of oon acorde. 260  
 To tellè shortly, at oo worde,  
 Was never herd so swete a steven,—  
 But hit hadde be a thyng of heven,—  
 So mery a soun, so swete entunes,  
 That certes, for the toune of Tewnes, 310  
 I nolde but I hadde herd hem synge,  
 For al my chambre gan to ryng  
 Through syngyng of hir armonye.  
 For instrument nor melodye  
 Was nowher herd yet half so swete,  
 Nor of acordè half so mete ;  
 For ther was noon of hem that feynèd  
 To synge, for ech of hem him peynèd  
 To fynde out mery crafty notes ;  
 They ne sparèd not hir throtes. 320

And sooth to seyn my chambre was  
 Ful wel depeynted, and with glas  
 Were al the wyndowes wel y-glasèd  
 Ful clere, and nat an hole y-crasèd,  
 That to beholde hit was gret joye ;  
 For hoolly al the storie of Troye  
 Was in the glasyng y-wrought thus,  
 Of Ector, and of kyng Priamus ;  
 Of Achilles, and of Lamedon,  
 And eke of Medea and of Jasoun ; 330  
 Of Paris, Eleyne, and of Lavyne ;  
 And alle the walles with colours fyne  
 Were peynted, bothè text and glose,  
 And al the Romaunce of the Rose.

My wyndowes weren shet echon  
 And through the glas the sunnè shon  
 Upon my bed with bryghtè bemès,  
 With many gladè, gilden stremès ;  
 And eek the welken was so fair,—  
 Blew, bryght, clerè was the air, 340  
 And ful attempre forsothe hit was ;  
 For nother to cold nor hoot it nas,  
 Ne in al the welkene was a clowde.

And as I lay thus, wonder lowde  
 Me thoughte I herde an huntè blowe,  
 Tassaye his horn, and for to knowe  
 Whether hit were clere, or hors of soune.  
 And I herdegoyng, bothe up and doune ;

310. *Tewnes*, Tunis.

329. *of Lamedon*. All read *of kyngè Lamedon*, caught from line above.

Men, hors, houndes, and other thyng,  
 And al men speken of huntyng; <sup>350</sup>  
 How they wolde slee the hert with  
 strengthe,

And how the hert hadde upon lengthe  
 So moche embosed, I not now what.

Anoon right whan I herdé that  
 How that they wolde on huntyng goon,  
 I was right glad and up anoon,  
 Took my hors and forth I wente  
 Out of my chambre, I never stente  
 Til I com to the feld withoute.  
 Ther overtok I a gret route <sup>360</sup>  
 Of huntens and eek of foresters,  
 With many relayes and lymeres,  
 And hyed hem to the forest faste,  
 And I with hem. So at the laste  
 I askéd oon, ladde a lymere,  
 'Say, felow, who shal hunté here?'  
 Quod I; and he answerde ageyn,  
 'Sir, themperour Octovyen,'  
 Quod he, 'and is heer fasté by.'  
 'A goddes half, in good tyme!' quod I.  
 'Go we faste!' and gan to ryde. <sup>371</sup>  
 Whan we came to the forest syde  
 Every man dide right anoon  
 As to huntyng fil to doon.

The mayster-hunte anoon, foot-hoot,  
 With a gret horné blew three mot  
 At the uncouplyng of his houndés.  
 With-inne a whyl the hert y-founde is,  
 Y-halowed and rechaséd faste  
 Longé tymé; so at the laste <sup>380</sup>  
 This hert ruséd and stal away  
 Fro alle the houndes a prevy way.  
 The houndes had overshete hym alle,  
 And were on a defaute y-falle.  
 Therwyth the hunté wonder faste  
 Blew a 'forloyn' at the laste.

I was go walkéd fro my tree,  
 And as I wente ther cam by me  
 A whelp, that fawnd me as I stood,  
 That hadde y-folwed and koude no good.  
 Hit com and crepte to me as lowe <sup>391</sup>  
 Right as hit haddé me y-knowe,  
 Heeld doun his heed and joynd his erés,

<sup>368.</sup> *Octovyen*, a favourite character in the Carolingian romances. There is a M. Engl. metrical romance *Octavian Imperator*. He was an Emperor of Rome who married Floraunce, daughter of Dagabars (*i.e.* Dagobert), king of France.

And leyde al smothé doun his herés.  
 I wolde have kaught hit, and anoon  
 Hit fleddé, and was fro me goon;  
 And I him solwed, and hit forth wente  
 Doun by a floury grené wente  
 Ful thikke of gras, ful softe and sweete,  
 With flourés fele, faire under feete, <sup>400</sup>  
 And litel used, hit seméd thus;  
 For bothé Flora and Zephirus,  
 They two that maké flourés growe,  
 Had mad hir dwellyng ther, I trowe;  
 For hit was oon to be-holde,  
 As though the erthe envyé wolde  
 To be gayer than the heven,  
 To have mo flourés sithés seven  
 As in the welkné sterrés be.  
 Hit had forgete the povertee <sup>410</sup>  
 That wynter, through his coldé morwés,  
 Had made hit suffren, and his sorwés,  
 Al was for-geeten, and that was sené,  
 For al the wode was waxen grene;  
 Swetnesse of dewe hadde mad hit waxe.

Hit is no need eek for to axe  
 Wher ther were many grené grevés,  
 Or thikke of trees, so ful of levés;  
 And every tree stood by him-selve,  
 Fro other wel ten feet or twelve. <sup>420</sup>  
 So greté trees, so huge of strengthe,  
 Of fourty, or fifty fadme lengthe,  
 Clene withouté bough or stikke,  
 With croppés brode and eek as thikke,—  
 They weré nat an ynche a-sonder,—  
 That hit was shadwe over al under;  
 And many an hert and many an hynde  
 Was bothe before me and be-hynde.

Of founés, sourés, bukkés, doés,  
 Was ful the wode; and many roés, <sup>430</sup>  
 And many squirellés, that sete  
 Ful heigh upon the trees and ete,  
 And in hir maner madé festés.  
 Shortly, hit was so ful of bestés,  
 That though Argus, the noble countour,

<sup>408.</sup> *sithes seven*. The MSS. read *swiche seven*, which makes no sense. The reading suggested, 'seven times more flowers than there are stars in heaven,' agrees with the 'd'estre miex estelée' in the *Rom. de la Rose* (ll. 8465-8468), from which these lines are copied.

<sup>435.</sup> *Argus*, Argus the Arab mathematician, *A.* early in the 9th cent.; cp. *New Engl. Dict.* s.v. *Algorism*. Through his treatise on Algebra the Arabic or 'new' numerals became known in Europe.

Sete to rekene in his countour,  
 And rekene with his figures ten—  
 For by tho figures new al ken,  
 If they be crafty, rekene and noubre  
 And telle of every thinge the noubre,—  
 Yet sholde he fayle to rekene even 44†  
 The wondres me mette in my sweven.

But forth they romed right wonder faste  
 Doun the wode ; so at the laste  
 I was war of a man in blak,  
 That sat, and hadde y-turned his bak  
 To an ooke, an hugé tree.

‘Lord!’ thoghte I, ‘who may that  
 be ?

What ayleth hym to sitten here ?  
 Anoon right I wenté nere ; 450  
 Than fond I sitte even upright  
 A wonder wel-faryngé knyght,—  
 By the maner me thoughté so,—  
 Of good mochel, and right yong therto,  
 Of the age of four and twenty yeer,  
 Upon his berde but litel heer,  
 And he was clothéd al in blake.

I stalkéd even unto his bake,  
 And ther I stood as stille as ought,  
 That, sooth to saye, he saw me nought ;  
 For why he heng hys heed adoun, 46†  
 And with a deedly, sorwful soun  
 He made of ryme ten vers or twelve  
 Of a Complaynt to him-selve,  
 The mosté pitee, the mosté routhe,  
 That ever I herde ; for by my trouthe,  
 Hit was gret wonder that Nature  
 Myght suffren any creature  
 To have swich sorw, and be not deed.  
 Ful pitous, pale, and no-thing reed 470  
 He sayde a lay, a maner song,  
 Withouté note, withouté song ;  
 And was this, for ful wel I kan  
 Reherse hit—right thus hit began.—

*I have of sorwé so grete woon  
 That joyé gete I never noon,  
 Now that I see my lady bright,  
 Which I have loved with al my myght,  
 Is fro me deed and is a-noon.*

445. John of Gaunt, who was, however, twenty-nine when his wife died ; cp. l. 455.

479. Th. wrongly inserts *And thus in sorowé lefte me alone* after this line.

*Allas, Deeth, what ayleth thee 480  
 That thou noldest have taken me,  
 Whan thou toke my lady sweete  
 That was so fayr, so fresh, so fre,  
 So good, that men may wel se  
 Of al goodnesse she had no meete.*

Whan he hadde mad thus his com-  
 playnte,  
 His sorwful herté gan fasté faynte,  
 And his spirites wexen dede ;  
 The blood was fled for puré drede 489  
 Doun to his herté, to make hym warme ;  
 For wel hit feled the herte hadde harme ;  
 To wite eke why hit was a-drad  
 By kynde, and for to make hit glad ;  
 For hit is membre principal  
 Of the body ; and that made al  
 His hewé chaunge, and wexé grene,  
 And pale, for ther no blood was sene  
 In no maner lyme of his.

Anoon therwith whan I saw this,  
 He ferde thus evel ther he seet, 500  
 I went and stood right at his feet,  
 And gretté hym, but he spak noght,  
 But argued with his owné thoght  
 And in his wit disputéd faste,  
 Why and how his lyf myght laste,—  
 Hym thought his sorwés were so smerte  
 And lay so colde upon his herte ;  
 So, through his sorw and hevly thoght,  
 Made hym that he herde me noght  
 For he had wel-nygh lost his mynde 510  
 Thogh Pan, that men clepe god of  
 kynde,

Were for his sorwés never so wrooth.  
 But at the last, to sayn right sooth,  
 He was war of me how I stood  
 Before hym, and did of myn hood,  
 And hadde y-gret hym as I best coude.  
 Debonayrly, and no thing loude,  
 He sayde, ‘I prey the be not wrooth ;  
 I herde thee not, to seyn the sooth,  
 Ne I saw thee not, sir, trewély.’ 520

‘A ! goodé sir, no fors,’ quod I,  
 ‘I am right sory if I have ought  
 Destroubled yow out of your thought ;  
 For-yive me, if I have mis-take.’

‘Yis, thamendes is light to make,’

497. was. All read is.



Quod he, 'for ther lyth noon ther-to,  
Ther is no thyng missayd nor do.'

Lo ! how goodly spak this knyght,  
As hit hadde been a-nother wyght.  
He made hit nouthr tough ne queynte,  
And I saw that, and gan me aqueynte 531  
With hym, and fond hym so tretable,  
Right wonder skilful and reasonable,  
As me thoghte, for al his bale ;  
A-noon right I gan fynde a tale  
To hym, to loke wher I might ought  
Have more knowyng of his thought.

'Sir,' quod I, 'this game is doon ;  
I holdé that this hert be goon ;  
Thise huntés conne hym nowher see.' 540

'I do no fors therof,' quod he,  
'My thought is ther-on never a del.'  
'Bi our Lord !' quod I, 'I trowe yow  
wel,

Right so me thinketh bi your chere.  
But, sir, oo thyng, wol ye here ?  
Me thinketh in gret sorwe I yow see ;  
But certés, siré, if that ye  
Wolde ought discouré me your wo  
I wolde, as wis God helpe me so,  
Amende hit, if I can or may. 550  
Ye mowé preve hit bi assay,  
For, by my trouthe, to make yow hool,  
I wol do al my power hool ;  
And tellethe me of your sorwés smerte,  
Paraunter hit may ese your herte,  
That semeth ful seke under your side.'

With that he loked on me aside,  
As who sayth, 'Nay, that wol not be.'  
'Graunt mercy ! goodé frend,' quod he,  
'I thanke the that thou woldest so, 560  
But hit may never the rather be do.  
No man may my sorwé glade  
That maketh my hewe to falle and fadé,  
And hath myn understandyng lorn,  
That me is wo that I was born !  
May noht make my sorwés slyde,—  
Nought al the remedies of Ovyde ;  
Ne Orpheus, god of melodye ;  
Ne Dedalus, with his playés slye ;  
Ne hele me may no phisicien, 570  
Noht Ypocras, ne Galyen ;

560. *his playes slye*, his ingenious contrivances,  
i.e. his artificial wings.

571. *Ypocras*, Hippocrates.

Me is wo that I lyve hourés twelve,  
But who so wol assay hym-selve,  
Whether his herté can have pite  
Of any sorwe, lat hym see me,  
I, wrecche, that deeth hath mad al naked  
Of all the blisse that ever was makèd ;  
Y-worthé worste of allé wightes,—  
That hate my dayés and my nightes ;  
My lyf, my lustés, be me lothe 580  
For al welfare, and I be wrothe.  
The puré Deeth is so ful my fo  
That I wolde deye,—hit wol not so ;  
For whan I solwe hit, hit wol flee ;  
I wolde have hym, hit nyl nat me.  
This is my peyne wythouté reed,  
Always deyinge and be not deed,  
That Cesiphus, that lyth in helle,  
May not of moré sorwé telle ;  
And who-so wiste al, bi my trouthe, 590  
My sorwé, but he haddé routhe  
And pité of my sorwés smerte,  
That man hath a feendly herte ;  
For who so seeth me first on morwe  
May seyén he hath met with Sorwe,  
For I am Sorwe, and Sorwe is I.

'Allas ! and I wol telle the why ;  
My song is turnéd to pleynyng,  
And al my laughter to wepyng,  
My gladé thoghtes to hevynesse, 600  
In travaile is myn ydelnesse,  
And eek my reste ; my welle is wo,  
My good is harm, and ever mo  
In wrathe is turnéd my pleyng,  
And my delit in-to sorwyng.  
Myn hele is turned in-to seeknesse,  
In drede is al my sykernesse ;  
To derke is turnéd al my light,  
My wit is foly, my day is night,  
My love is hate, my sleep wakyng, 610  
My mirthe and melés is fastyng,  
My countenance is nycté,  
And al abaved wher-so I be.  
My pees, in pleydyng, and in werre.  
Allas ! how myghte I faré werre ?  
'My boldnesse is turnéd to shame,  
For fals Fortune hath pleyd a game  
Atte chess with me,—allas ! the while !

588. *Cesiphus*, Sisyphus.

598. *song*. All read *sorowe*, a contamination  
from l. 596.

The trayteresse fals, and ful of gyle,  
 That al behoteth, and no thyng halt, 620  
 She goth upright, and yet she halt,  
 That baggeth foule, and loketh faire,  
 The dispitousé debonaire!  
 That scorneth many a créature.  
 An ydole of fals portrayture  
 Is she, for she wol soné wrien.  
 She is the monstres heed y-wrien,  
 As filthé over y-strawed with flourés.  
 Hir mosté worship and hir flour is  
 To lyen, for that is hir nature; 630  
 With-outé feythe, lawe, or mesure,  
 She is fals; and ever laghyng  
 With oon eye, and that other wepyng.  
 That is brought up she set al doun;  
 I likne hir to the scorpioun,  
 That is a fals, flateryng beste,  
 For with his heed he maketh feste,  
 But, al amydd his flaterynge,  
 With his taylè he wol styng  
 And envenyme; and so wol she. 640  
 She is thenvousesé Charite,  
 That is ay fals, and semeth weel,  
 So turneth she hir falsé wheel  
 Abouté, for hit is no thyng stable,  
 Now by the firé, now at table;  
 For many oon hath she thus y-blent.  
 She is pley of enchantémént,  
 That semeth oon, and is not so.  
 The falsé thief! what hath she do,  
 Trowest thou? By our Lord, I wol thee  
 seye. 650  
 'Atte ches with me she gan to pleye;  
 With hir falsé draughtes dyvers  
 She stal on me, and took my fers;  
 And whan I saw my fers aweye,  
 Allas! I couthe no lenger pleye,  
 But seyde, "Far-wel, swete, y-wys!  
 And far-wel al that ever ther is!"  
 Ther-with Fortuné seyde, "Chek heer!"  
 And "Mate!" in the myd poynt of the  
 chekkere,  
 With a pouné erraunt, allas! 660  
 Ful craftier to pley she was  
 Than Athalus that made the game

651. *Atte*. All read *At the*.662. *Athalus*. The reputed inventor of Chess. According to Warton *Attalus Philometer*, King of Pergamus, is meant. This whole passage is imitated from the *Rom. de la Rose*, ll. 6644-6881.

First of the ches, so was his name.  
 But God wolde, I had oones or twyes  
 Y-coud and knowe the jeupardyes  
 That coude the Grek Pithagores,  
 I shulde have pleyde the bet at ches,  
 And kept my fers the bet ther-by.  
 'And thogh whereto? For trewely  
 I holde that wysh nat worth a stree! 670  
 Hit had be never the bet for me,  
 For Fortune can so many a wyle,  
 Ther be but fewe can hir begyle,  
 And eek she is the las to blame;  
 My-self I wolde have do the same,  
 Before God, hadde I been as she.  
 She oghte the more excuséd be  
 For this. I say yet more ther-to,—  
 Hadde I be God and myghte have do  
 My willè, whan my fers she caughte, 680  
 I wolde have drawe the samé draughte.  
 For, also wys God yive me reste!  
 I dar wel swere, she took the beste.  
 'But through that draughte I havé lorn  
 My blisse. Allas! that I was born,  
 For evermore I trowe trewely,  
 For al my wil, my lust hoolly  
 Is turned; but yet, what to doone?  
 Be our Lorde! hit is to deyé soone,  
 For no thyng I leve hit noght, 690  
 But lyve and deye right in this thoght.  
 For there nis planete in firmament  
 Ne in ayre, ne in erthe, noon element  
 That they ne yive me a yift echoon  
 Of wepyng, whan I am alloon.  
 For whan that I avise me wel,  
 And be-thenke me every-del,  
 How that ther lyth in rekenyng  
 In my sorwé for no thyng;  
 And how ther leveth no gladnesse 700  
 May gladdé me of my distresse,  
 And how I have lost suffiance,  
 And ther-to I have no plesance,  
 Than may I say I have right noght.  
 And whan al this falleth in my thoght,  
 Allas, than am I overcome!  
 For that is doon is not to come:  
 I have more sorwé than Tantale!'

665. *jeupardyes*, problems; O.F. *jeu parti*, a divided game.681. *the same draughte*, move at chess.

698, 699. In my account with sorrow there lies to my credit no amount at all.

And whan I herde hym telle this tale  
Thus pitously, as I yow telle, 710  
Unnethé myghte I lenger dwelle,  
Hit dide myn herté so mochê wo.

'A, good sir!' quod I, 'say not so!  
Have som pite on your nature,  
That forméd yow to creature,  
Remembre yow of Socrates,  
For he ne counted nat three strees  
Of noght that Fortune coudé do.'

'No,' quod he, 'I can not so.'  
'Why so, sir? yis, pardé!' quod I;  
'Ne say noght soo, for trewely, 721  
Thogh ye had lost the ferses twelve,

And ye for sorwe mordred your selve,  
Ye sholde be dampned in this cas  
Bi as good right as Medea was,  
That slow hir children for Jason;  
And Phyllis also for Demophon  
Heng hir-selfe, so weylaway!  
For he had broke his termé day  
To come to hir. Another rage 730  
Had Dydo, the quene eek of Cartage,

That slow hir self, for Eneas  
Was fals;—which a foole she was.  
And Ecquo died, for Narcisus  
Noldé nat love hir; and right thus  
Hath many another foly don.

And for Dalida dyed Sampson,  
That slow hym-self with a pilere,—  
But ther is no man a-lyvé here  
Wolde for a fers maké this wo!' 740

'Why so!' quod he, 'hyt ys nat so;  
Thou wost ful lytel what thou menest;  
I have lost moré than thow wenest.'

'Lo, sey, how that may be?' quod I;  
'Good sir, tel me al hoolly  
In that wyse, how, why, and wherfore,  
That ye have thus your blissé lore.'

'Blythly,' quod he; 'com sit adoun!  
I telle the upon a condicioun  
That thou shalt hoolly with al thy wit 750

720. *sir*. All read *good syr*, contamination with *quod* in line above.

722. *the ferses twelve*, i.e. 'all the pieces except the king, which could not be taken.' (Skeat.)

727. Phyllis committed suicide from fear that Demophon had forgotten her, and was changed into a tree. Demophon was a son of Theseus.

734. *Ecquo*, Echo. All these examples occur in the *Roman de la Rose*.

737. *Dalida*, Delilah.

Do thyn entent to herkene hit.'

'Yis, sir!'

'Swere thy trouthe ther-to.'

'Gladly.'

'Do than holde her-to.'

'I shal, right blythly, so God me save!  
Hoolly with al the wit I have  
Here yow as wel as I kan.'

'A Goddes half!' quod he, and began:  
'Sir,' quod he, 'sith first I kouthe  
Have any maner wit fro youthe,  
Or kyndely understandyng 760

To comprehend in any thyng  
What love was in myn owné wit,  
Dredeles I have ever yit

Be tributary and yiven rente  
To love, hoolly with goode entente,  
And through plesaunce become his thral  
With good wil, body, herte, and al.

Al this I putte in his servage,  
As to my lorde, and dide homage,  
And ful devoutly I prayde hym to, 770  
He shulde besette myn herté so,  
That hit plesancé to hym were,  
And worship to my lady dere.

'And this was longe, and many a  
year,

Or that myn herté was set owher,  
That I dide thus, and nysté why,  
I trowe, hit cam me kyndely.  
Peraunter I was therto most able,  
As a whyt wal or a table,  
For hit is redy to cacche and take 780  
Al that men wil therynné make,  
Whethir-so men wil portreye or peynte,  
Be the werkés never so queynte.

'And thilké tyme I ferde right so  
I was ablé to have lernéd tho,  
And to have kened as wel or better  
Paraunter other art or letter,  
But for love cam first in my thought,  
Therefore I forgat hit nought.

I chees love to my firsté craft, 790  
Therefore hit is with me laft.

For why? I took hit of so yong age  
That malice haddé my corage  
Nat that tyme turnéd to no thyng,  
Through to mochel knowlechyng.  
For that tyme Youthé, my maistresse,  
Governéd me in ydelnesse,

For hit was in my firsté youthe,  
 And tho ful litel good I couthe,  
 For al my werkés were flittinge 800  
 That tyme, and thoughtés varyinge,  
 Al were to me ylyché good,  
 That I knew tho, but thus hit stood.

‘Hit happed that I cam on a day  
 In-to a place ther that I say  
 Trewly the fayrest companye  
 Of ladyes, that ever man with ye  
 Had seen to-gedres in oo place.  
 Shal I clepe hyt hap, other grace  
 That broghte me ther? Nay, but  
 Fortune, 810

That is to lyen ful comune,—  
 The falsé trayteresse, pervers !  
 God wolde I coudé clepe hir wers !  
 For now she worcheth me ful wo,  
 And I wol tellé sone why so.

‘Among these ladies thus echoon,  
 Soth to seyén, I sawgh oon  
 That was lyk noon of the route,  
 For I dar swere, withouté doute,  
 That as the someres sonnè bryght 820  
 Is fairer, clerer, and hath more lyght  
 Than any other planete in heven,  
 The moné, or the sterrés seven ;  
 For al the worldé so had she

Surmounted hem alle of beaute,  
 Of maner, and of comlynesse,  
 Of stature, and of wel set gladnesse,  
 Of goodlihede, so wel be-seye,—  
 Shortly, what shal I more seye ?  
 By God, and by his halwés twelve, 830  
 Hit was my swete, ryght as hir-selve !  
 She had so stedfast countenance,  
 So noble port and meytenaunce.

And love, that had wel herd my bone,  
 Had espyéd me thus sone,  
 That she ful soné, in my thought,  
 As helpe me God, so was y-caught  
 So sodenly, that I ne took  
 No maner counseyl, but at hir look  
 And at myn herté ; for-why, hir yén 840  
 So gladly, I trow, myn herté syen,  
 That purely to myn owné thought  
 Seyde hit were beter serve hir for noght

798. John of Gaunt was married at nineteen.  
 828. *so.* All read *and so*, caught from the line  
 above.

830. By Christ and His twelve apostles.

Than with a-nother to be wel.  
 And it was sooth, for everydel  
 I wil a-noon right telle the why.

‘I saw hir daunce so comlily,  
 Carole and synge so swetely,  
 Laughe and pleye so womanly, 850  
 And loké so debonairly,  
 So goodly speke, and so friendly,  
 That certes, I trowe that ever-more  
 Nas seyén so blisful a tresore,  
 For every heer on hir hede,  
 Soth to seyén, it was not rede,  
 Ne nouthér yelw, ne broun it nas,  
 Me thoughté most lyk gold it was.

‘And whiche yén my lady hadde !  
 Debonair, goodé, glade, and sadde,  
 Symple, of goode mochel, noght to wyde,  
 Ther-to hir look nas not a-syde, 861  
 Ne overthwert, but beset so wel,

Hit drew and took up everydel  
 Alle that on hir gan be-holde.

Hir yén semed anon she wolde  
 Have mercy,—foolés wenden so,—  
 But hit was never the rather do.

Hit nas no countrefeted thyng,  
 Hit was hir owné pure lokingyng,  
 That the goddésé, dame Nature, 870  
 Had made hem opene by mesure,

And close ; for were she never so glad  
 Hir lokingyng was not foly sprad,  
 Ne wildély, thogh that she pleyde ;  
 But ever me thoughte hir yén seyde,

“ By God, my wrathe is al for-yive !”  
 ‘Therwith hir liste so wel to live,  
 That dulnesse was of hir a-drad.

She nas to sobre, ne to glad.  
 In allé thyngés more mesure 880  
 Had never, I trowé, creature.

But many oon with hir loke she herte,  
 And that sat hir ful lyte at herte,  
 For she knew no-thing of hir thought,  
 But whether she knew, or knew it noght,

Algate she ne roghte of hem a stree !  
 To gete hir love noo ner nas he  
 That woned at home, than he in Ynde,  
 The formest was alway behynde.

But goodé folke, over al other, 890  
 She loved as man may do his brother,  
 Of whiche love she was wonder large

In skilful places that beré charge.

'But which a visage had she ther-to !  
 Allas, myn herte is wonder wo  
 That I ne can discryven hit !  
 Me lakketh bothe English and wit  
 For to un-do hit at the fulle,  
 And eek my spirits be so dulle  
 So greet a thyng for to devyse. 900  
 I have no wit that can suffice  
 To comprehenden hir beauté,  
 But thus moche dar I seyn, that she  
 Was, rody, fresh, and lyvely hewed ;  
 And every day hir beauté newed ;  
 And negh hir face was alder-best ;  
 For certès, Nature had swich lest  
 To make that fair, that trewly she  
 Was hir cheef patron of beauté,  
 And cheef ensample of al hir werke, 910  
 And moustre ; for be hit never so derke,  
 Me thynketh I se hir ever-mo ;  
 And yet, more-over, thogh allè tho  
 That ever lyved were now a-lyve,  
 They ne sholde have foundè to diskryve  
 In al hir face a wikked signe ;  
 For hit was sad, symple, and benygne.  
 'And which a goodly, softè speche  
 Had that swete, my lyvès leche !  
 So friendly and so wel y-grounded, 920  
 Up al resoun so wel y-founded,  
 And so trettable to al gode,  
 That I dar swere wel by the rode,  
 Of eloquence was never founde  
 So swete a sownyngè facounde,  
 Ne trewer tonged, ne scornéd lasse,  
 Ne bet coude hele ; that by the masse  
 I durste swere, thogh the pope hit songe,  
 That ther was never yet through hir tonge  
 Man ne woman gretly harméd, 930  
 As for hir ther was al harm hyd ;  
 Ne lassè flateryng in hir worde,  
 That purèly hir symple recorde  
 Was founde as trewe as any bonde,  
 Or trouthe of any mannés honde.  
 Ne chyde she koudè never a del,  
 That knoweth al the world ful wel.

'But swich a fairnesse of a nekke  
 Had that swete, that boon nor brekke

904. All read *white*, *rody*, etc. Skeat omits *white*, for it spoils the point of l. 948 and the metre of this line.

915. All omit *They*, which is necessary to the syntax.

Nas ther non senè that mys-sat ; 940  
 Hit was smothe, streght, and purè flat,  
 Wyth-outen hole ; nor canel boon,  
 As be semyngè, had she noon.  
 Hir throte, as I have now memoire,  
 Seméd a round tour of yvoire,  
 Of good gretnesse, and noght to grete.

'And godè, fairè, White, she hete,—  
 That was my lady namè ryght,—  
 She was bothe faire and bryght,  
 She haddè not hir namè wrong. 950  
 Right fairè shuldrès, and body long,  
 She hadde, and armès, every lith  
 Fattyssh, flesshy, not greet therwith ;  
 Right whitè handes, and naylès rede,  
 Roundè brestes ; and of good brede  
 Hir hippès were, a streight flat bak.  
 I knew on hir non other lak,  
 That al hir lymmes nere pursewing,  
 In as fer as I had knowyng.

'Therto she coudè so wel pleye, 960  
 Whan that hir lystè, that I dar seye  
 That she was lyk to torchè bryght  
 That every man may take of light  
 Ynogh, and hit hath never the lesse.

'Of maner and of comlynesse,  
 Right so ferde my lady dere,  
 For every wyght of hir manere  
 Myght cacche ynogh, if that he wolde,  
 If he had yen hir to be-holde ;  
 For I dar swere wel if that she 970  
 Hadde among ten thousand be,  
 She woldè have be, at the leste,  
 A cheef mirour of al the feste,  
 Thogh they had stonden in a rowe,  
 To mennès yen that coude have knowe.  
 For wher-so men had pleyed or wakéd,  
 Me thoghte the felawship as naked  
 Withouten hir, that saw I ones,  
 As a coroune withoutè stones.  
 Trewly she was to myn yē 980  
 The soleyn fenix of Arabye,  
 For ther lyveth never but oon ;  
 Ne swich as she ne knew I noon.

'To speke of goodnesse ; trewly she

941. All read *white*, *smothe*, etc.; cp. l. 904 note. Skeat here omits *pure*.

942. All read *or*.

947. A reference to the name of the Duchess, viz. *Blaunche*.

958. All read *pure sewing*.

Hadde as moche debonairtè  
 As ever hadde Hester in the Bible,  
 And more, gif morè were possible.  
 And soth to seynè, therwyth-al  
 She had a wyt so general,  
 So hool enclenyd to allè gode, 990  
 That al hir wyt was set, by the rode,  
 With-oute malyce upon gladnesse ;  
 And ther-to I saw never yet a lesse  
 Harmful than she was in doying.  
 I sey nat that she ne had knowyng  
 Wát harm was, or ellès she  
 Had coud no good, so thynketh me.

‘And trewly, for to speke of trouthe,  
 But she hadde had, it hadde be routhe.  
 Therof she had so moche hir del, 1000  
 And I dar seyn, and swere hit wel,  
 That Trouthe hym-self, over al and al,  
 Had chose his maner principal  
 In hir, that was his restyng-place.  
 Ther-to she hadde the mostè grace  
 To have stedfast perseveraunce  
 An esy, atempre governaunce,  
 That ever I knew, or wystè yit,  
 So purè, suffraunt, was hir wyt.  
 And resoun gladly she understood ; 1010  
 Hit folowed wel she coudè good.  
 She usèd gladly to do wel :  
 These were hir maners everydel.

‘Therwith she lovèd so wel right,  
 She wrong do woldè to no wyght ;  
 Nò wyght myghte do hir no shame,  
 She loved so wel hir ownè name.  
 Hir luste to holde no wyght in honde,  
 Ne, be thou siker, she wolde not  
 fonde  
 To holdè no wyght in balaunce 1020  
 By half word, ne by countenaunce,  
 But if men wolde upon hir lye ;  
 Ne sende men in-to Walakye,  
 To Pruyse, and in-to Tartarye,  
 To Alysandre, ne in-to Turkye ;  
 And bidde hym faste, anon that he  
 Go hoodles in-to the dryè se,

986. *Hester*, Esther.1024. *Pruyse*, Prussia.1027. *the drye se*. According to Mr. Brae (Appendix to his ed. of Chaucer's *Astrolabe*, p. 101) this refers to the variable Lake Czirknitz, near Laibach, N.E. of Trieste, which is some-times dry.

And come hoom by the Carrenare ;  
 And seyè, “Sir, be now right ware  
 That I may of yow herè seyn 1030  
 Worship, or that ye come ageyn !”  
 She ne usèd no suche knakkès smale.  
 ‘But wherfor that I telle my tale ?  
 Right on this same, as I have seyde,  
 Was hoolly al my lovè leyde,  
 For certès, she was, that sweté wyf  
 My suffisauncè, my lust, my lyf,  
 Myn hap, myn hele, and al my blisse,  
 My worldes welfare, and my [goodè lisse,]  
 And I hoolly hirs, and everydel.’ 1040

‘By our Lord,’ quod I, ‘I trowe yow  
 wel !  
 Hardly, your love was wel beset,  
 I not how ye myghte have do bet.’  
 ‘Bet ? ne noight so wel !’ quod he.  
 ‘I trowe hit, sir,’ quod I, ‘parde !’  
 ‘Nay, leve hit wel !’

‘Sire, so do I ;  
 I leve yow wel, that trewely  
 Yow thoghtè that she was the beste,  
 And to be-holde the alderfayreste, 1049  
 Who so had loked hir with your eyen’—  
 ‘With myn ? nay, allè that hir seyden  
 Seyde, and sworn hyt was so.  
 And thogh they ne hadde, I woldè tho  
 Have lovèd best my lady fre,  
 Thogh I hadde had al the beautè  
 That ever hadde Alcipyades,  
 And al the strengthe of Ercules,  
 And therto hadde the worthynesse  
 Of Alysandre, and al the rychesse  
 That ever was in Babyloyne, 1060  
 In Cartage, or in Macedoyne,  
 Or in Rome, or in Nynyvè ;  
 And therto also as hardy be  
 As was Ector, so have I joye,  
 That Achilles slow at Troye,—  
 And ther-for was he slayn also  
 In a temple, for bothè two  
 Were slayn, he and Antylegyus,

1028. Mr. Brae suggests that this is the Gulf of Carnaro or Quarnaro in the Adriatic to which Dante refers; cp. *Inf.* ix. 113. It is within 40 miles of Lake Czirknitz.1039. *goode lisse*. All read *goddesse*. Skeat *lisse*.1056. *Alcipyades*, Alcibiades.1068. *Antylegyus*, Antilochus.

And so seyth Dares Frigijs,  
For lovè of Polixena,— 1070  
Or ben as wys as Mynerva,  
I wolde ever, withoutè drede,  
Have loved hir, for I mostè nede !

“ ‘Nede !’ nay, trewly, I gabbe  
now,—

Noght “nede,” and I wol tellè how,  
For of good wille myn herte it wolde,  
And eek to love hir I was holde,  
As for the faireste and the beste.

‘She was as good, so have I reste,  
As ever was Penelope of Grece, 1080  
Or as the noble wyf Lucrece,  
That was the beste,—he telleth thus  
The Romayn, Tytus Lyvyus,—  
She was as good, and no thyng lyke,  
Thogh hir stories be autentyke ;  
Algate she was as trewe as she.

‘But wherfor that I tellè the  
Whan I first my lady say ?  
I was right yong, soth to say,  
And ful greet need I hadde to lerne 1090  
Whan my hertè woldè yern  
To love, it was a greet emprise ;  
But as my wyt coude beste suffise,  
After my yongè, childly wyt,  
Withoute drede, I be-settè hit  
To love hir in my bestè wyse,  
To do hir worship, and the servise.  
That I coude tho, by my trouthe,  
Withoutè feynyng, outhur slouthe,  
For wonder fayn I wolde hir se. 1100

‘So mochel hit amended me,  
That whan I saw hir first a-morwe,  
I was warished of al my sorwe  
Of al day after, til hit were eve ;  
Me thoghtè no-tyng myghte me greve,  
Were my sorwès never so smerte ;  
And yet she syt so in myn herte,  
That by my trouthe, I noldè noght,  
For al this worlde, out of my thought  
Levè my lady ; no, trewely !’ 1110

1069. Dares Phrygius, the Trojan priest of Vulcan, in whose name the popular spurious history of Troy was written by a Roman after the fall of Rome. The reference here, however, is to the mediæval version of the story, written by Guido delle Colonne, which was based on Benoit de Sainte-Maure’s *Roman de Troie*.

1030. Possibly, as Skeat thinks, *the* has been omitted before *soth*, but cp. l. 1180.

‘Now, by my trouthe, sir,’ quod I,  
‘Me thynketh ye have such a chaunce,  
As shrift wythoutè répentance.’

“ ‘Répentance !’ nay, fy !’ quod he,  
‘Shulde I now repentè me  
To love ? nay, certès, than were I wel  
Wers than was Achitofel,  
Or Anthenor, so have I joye,  
The traytour that betraysèd Troye,  
Or the falsè Genellon, 1120  
He that purchased the treson  
Of Rowland and of Olyvere.

Nay, whil I am a-lyvè here  
I nyl foryete hir, never mo !’  
‘Now, goodè sirè,’ quod I tho,  
‘Ye han wel told me her-before,  
Hit is no need to reherse hit more  
How ye sawe hir first, and where ;  
But wolde ye telle me the manere  
To hir which was your firstè speche,—  
Therof I woldè yow be-seche,— 1131  
And how she knewè first your thought,  
Whether ye lovèd hir or noght,  
And telleth me eek what ye have lore,  
I herde yow tellè her-before.’

‘Ye,’ seyde he, ‘thou nost what  
thou menest ;  
I have lost more than thou wenest.’  
‘What los is that ?’ quod I tho ;  
‘Nyl she not love yow ? is hit so ?  
Or have ye oght doon amys, 1140  
That she hath left yow ? is it this ?  
For Goddès lovè, telle me al.’

‘Be-forè God,’ quod he, ‘and I shal.  
I sayè right as I have seyde,  
On hir was al my lovè leyde,  
And yet she nyste it never a del  
Noght longè tymè, leve it wel !  
For be right siker, I durstè noght,  
For al this worlde, tel hir my thought,  
Ne I wolde have wratthed hir trewely.  
For wostow why ? she was lady 1151  
Of the body,—she had the herte,  
And who hath that may not asterte.

‘But, for to kepe me fro ydelnesse,

1120. *Genellon*, one of Charlemagne’s officers, whose treachery caused the defeat at Roncevaux and the death of Roland.

1122. *Rowland and Oliver*, the two most celebrated of Charlemagne’s knights.

1146. All read *not never*.

Trewly I did my besynesse  
 To maké songes, as I best coude ;  
 And ofté tyme I song hem loude,  
 And madé songes thus a greet del,  
 Al thogh I coude not make so wel  
 Songés, ne knowé the art al 1160  
 As coudé Lamekes sone, Tubal,  
 That fond out first the art of songe ;—  
 For as his brothres hamers ronge  
 Upon his anvelt up and doun  
 Therof he took the firsté soun ;  
 But Grekés seyn Pictagoras,  
 That he the firsté fynder was  
 Of the art, *Aurora* telleth so ;  
 But therof no fors, of hem two.  
 Algatés, songés thus I made 1170  
 Of my felyng, myn herte to glade.  
 And lo ! this was the alther-firste,—  
 I not wher it were the werste.

*Lorde, hyt maketh myn herté lyght  
 Whan I thenke on that sweté wyght*

*That is so semely on to see ;*

*And wissehe to God it myght so bee*

*That she wolde holde me for hir knyght,  
 My lady that is so fair and bright !*

‘ Now have I told the, soth to saye,  
 My firsté song. Upon a daye 1181  
 I be-thoghté me what wo  
 And sorwé that I suffréd tho  
 For hir, and yet she wyste it nocht,  
 Ne telle hir durste I nat my thoght.  
 Allas ! thoghte I, I can no reed ;  
 And but I telle hir I nam but deed,  
 And if I telle hir, to seye right sooth,  
 I am a-dred she wol be wrooth.  
 Allas ! what shal I thanné do ? 1190

‘ In this debat I was so wo,  
 Me thoghte myn herté braste a-tweyn !  
 So at the lasté, soth to sayn,  
 I be-thoghte me that Nature  
 Ne forméd never in créature  
 So moché beauté, trewély,  
 And bounté, wyth-oute mercy.

1161. *Tubal*, an error for Jubal, ‘the father of all such as handle the harp and organ.’

1166. *Pictagoras*, Pythagoras.

1168. *Aurora*, a Latin metrical version of parts of the Bible allegorised by Petrus de Riga, Canon of Rheims, in the 12th century.

1172. *the alther-firste*. All omit *the*, but the *rime* proves the necessity of the demonstrative.

‘ In hope of that my tale I tolde  
 With sorwe, as that I never sholde  
 For nedés ; and, maugree my heed, 1200  
 I moste have told hir or be deed.  
 I not wel how that I began,  
 Ful evel rehersen hit I can,  
 And eek, as helpe me God, with-al  
 I trowe hit was in the dismal  
 That was the ten woundes of Egipte,  
 For many a word I over-skipte  
 In my tale, for puré fere  
 Lest my wordés mys-set were,  
 With sorwful herte, and woundés dede,  
 Softe, and quakyng for puré drede 1211  
 And shame, and styntyng in my tale  
 For ferdé, and myn hewe al pale,  
 Ful ofte I wex bothe pale and reed ;  
 Bowyng to hir, I heng the heed,  
 I durste nat onés loke hir on,  
 For wit, manere, and al was goon.  
 I seyde “ Mercy ! ” and no more.  
 Hit nas no game, hit sat me sore.

‘ So at the lasté, sooth to seyn, 1220  
 Whan that myn herte was come ageyn,  
 To tellé shortly al my speche,  
 With hool herte I gan hir beseche  
 That she wolde be my lady swete ;  
 And swor, and gan hir hertely hete  
 Ever to be stedfast and trewe,  
 And love hir alway freshly newe,  
 And never other lady have,  
 And al hir worship for to save  
 As I best coude,—I swor hir this,— 1230  
 “ For youres is al that ever ther is  
 For evermore, myn herté swete !  
 And never to false yow, but I mete,  
 I nyl, as wys God helpe me so ! ”

‘ And whan I hadde my tale y-do,  
 God wot she accounted nat a stree  
 Of al my tale, so thoghté me.  
 To tellé shortly, right as it is,  
 Trewly hir answeré hit was this ;  
 I can not now wel counterfete 1240  
 Hir wordés, but this was the grete  
 Of hir answeré : she saydè, “ Nay ! ”  
 Al-outerly. Allas ! that day  
 The sorwe I suffred and the wo,

1205. *dismal*, on an evil day ; Anglo-French *dis mal* (Lat. *dies mali*). The form of the word caused it to be used as an adjective later.



That trewly Cassandra, that so  
 Bewayléd the destruccioun  
 Of Troyè and of Ilioun,  
 Had never swich sorwe as I tho.  
 I durste no morè say ther-to  
 For purè fere, but stal away ; 1250  
 And thus I lyved ful many a day,  
 That trewely, I hadde no need,  
 Ferther than my beddès heed,  
 Never a day to sechè sorwe ;  
 I fond hit redy every morwe,  
 For why I loved hir in no gere.  
 'So hit befel another yere,  
 I thoughtè ones I woldè fonde  
 To do hir knowe and understonde  
 My wo ; and she wel understood 1260  
 That I ne wilned no thyng but good,  
 And worship, and to kepe hir name  
 Over allè thyng, and drede hir shame,  
 And was so besy hir to serve,  
 And pite were I shuldè sterve,  
 Sith that I wilned noon harm y-wys.  
 'So whan my lady knew al this,  
 My lady yaf me al hoonly  
 The noble yift of hir mercy,  
 Savyng hir worship by al weyes ; 1270  
 Dredles, I mene noon other weyes.  
 And therwith she yaf me a ryng,  
 I trowe hit was the firstè thyng ;  
 But if myn hertè was y-waxe  
 Glad, that is no need to axe !  
 As helpe me God, I was as blyve  
 Reyséd, as fro dethe to lyve,  
 Of al happès the alder-beste,  
 'he gladdest, and the moste at reste.  
 'or trewely that sweté wyght 1280  
 Vhan I hadde wrong and she the right,  
 he wolde alway so goodely  
 or-yeve me so debonairly !  
 alle my youthe, in allè chauce  
 he took me in hir governaunce.  
 'Therwith she was alway so trewe  
 ur joye was ever y-lichè newe,  
 ur hertès wern so even a payre  
 hat never nas that oon contraire  
 o that other, for no wo ; 1290  
 o sothe y-liche they suffred tho  
 o blysse, and eck oo sorwè bothe ;  
 61. *thyng*. All read *thynges*, unidiomatically.

Y-liche they were bothe gladde and wrothe,  
 Al was us oon withoutè were.  
 And thus we lyved ful many a yere  
 So wel, I can nat tellè how.'  
 'Sir,' quod I, 'wher is she now ?'  
 "Now !" quod he, and stynte anon.  
 Therwith he wex as deed as stoon  
 And seyde, 'Allas, that I was bore ! 1300  
 That was the los, that her-before  
 I toldè the that I hadde lorn ;  
 Bethenk how I seyde herbeforen ;  
 "Thow wast ful litel what thou menest ;  
 I have lost morè than thou wenest !"  
 God wot, allas ! right that was she !'  
 'Allas ! sir, how ? what may that be ?'  
 'She ys deed !'  
 'Nay !'  
 'Yis, by my trouthe !'  
 'Is that your los ? by God, hit is  
 routhe !'  
 And with that wordè right anon 1310  
 They gan to strake forth ; al was doon  
 For that tyme, the hert-huntyng.

With that me thoghtè that this kyng  
 Gán homwardès for to ryde,  
 Unto a place was ther besyde,  
 Which was from us but a lyte ;  
 A long castel with wallès white  
 Be Seynt Johan ! on a richè hil,  
 As me mette ; but thus hyt fil.  
 Ryght thus me mette, as I yow telle, 1320  
 That in the castell ther was a belle,  
 As hit hadde smyten hourès twelve.

Therewith I a-wook my selve  
 And fond me lying in my bed ;  
 And the book that I hadde red,  
 Of Alcyone and Seys the kyng,  
 And of the goddès of slepyng,  
 I fond it in myn honde ful even.  
 Thoghte I, 'This is so queynt a sweven,  
 That I wol, be processe of tyme, 1330  
 Fonde to putte this sweven in ryme  
 As I can best' ; and that anon.  
 This was my sweven ; now hit is doon !

1314. All read *Gan homward*, which seems to make the line too short.

1317. *A long castel*, presumably Windsor.

THE COMPLEYNT UNTO  
PITE

*Complainte of the Deathe of Pitie, in  
Stowe's hand.*

PITÈ that I have sought so yore ago  
With hertè sore and ful of besy peyne,  
That in this worlde was never wight so wo  
With-outè dethe; and if I shal not feyne,  
My purpos was to Pite to compleyne  
Upon the crueltee and tirannye  
Of Love, that for my trouthe doth me dye.

And when that I, by lengthe of certeyn  
yeres,  
Had evere in oon a tymè sought to speke,  
To Pite ran I, al bespreynt with teres, <sup>10</sup>  
To preyen hir on Crueltee me a wreke;  
But er I myght with any worde out-breke,  
Or tellen any of my peynès smerte,  
I fond hir deed and buried in an herte.

Adoun fel I when that I saugh the herse,  
Deed as a stoon, whyl that the swogh me  
laste;  
But up I roos with colour ful dyverse,  
And pitously on hir myn eyen I caste,  
And ner the corps I gan to presen faste,  
And for the soule I shoop me for to  
preye; <sup>20</sup>  
I nas but lorne, ther was no more to sey.

Thus am I slayn sith that Pitè is deed;  
Allas the day! that ever hit shulde falle!  
What maner man dar now holde up his  
heed?  
To whom shal any sorrowful hertè calle?  
Now Crueltee hath cast to sleen us alle,  
In ydel hope, folk redèlees of peyne,—  
Sith she is deed, to whom shul we compleyne?

But yet encreseth me this wonder newe, <sup>29</sup>  
That no wight woot that she is deed but I;  
So mony men as in her tyme hir knewe,  
And yet she dyèd not so soodeynly;  
For I have sought hir ever ful besily  
Sith I first haddè wit or mannès mynde;  
But she was deed er that I coude hir fynde.

21. *nas*. All read *was*.

Aboute hir herse ther stoden lustily,  
Withouten any wo, as thoughtè me,  
Bountee parfit, wel-armed and richèly,  
And fresshè Beautee, Lust and Jolitee,  
Assured Maner, Youthe and Honestee, <sup>40</sup>  
Wisdom, Estaat, and Dreed, and Govern-  
aunce,  
Confedred bothe by bonde and alliaunce.

A compleynte hadde I writen in myn  
hond,  
For to have put to Pite as a bille;  
But whan I al this companye ther fond,  
That rather wolden al my causè spille  
Than do me help, I held my pleyntè stille;  
For to tho folk, with-outen any faile,  
Withoutè Pite may no bille availe.

Then leve I al thise vertues, sauf Pitè, <sup>50</sup>  
Kepyng the corps, as ye have herd meseyn,  
Cofedred alle by bonde of Crueltee,  
And ben assented that I shal be sleyn.  
And I have put my Compleynte up ageyn;  
For to my foes my bille I dar not shewe,  
Theffect of which seith thus in wordès fewe.

*The Bille*

Humblest of herte, highest of reverence,  
Benygnè flour, coroune of vertues alle!  
Sheweth un-to your rial excellence  
Your servaunt, if I durstè me so calle, <sup>60</sup>  
His mortal harm in which he is y-falle;  
And nocht al only for his evel fare,  
But for your renoun, as he shal declare.

Hit stondesth thus, your contraire  
Crueltee  
Allyed is ageynst your regalye,  
Under colour of womanly Beautee,—  
For men ne shulde not knowe hir  
tirannye,—  
With Bountee, Gentilesse, and Curtesye,  
And hath depryved yow now of your place,  
That highte 'Beautee apertenant to  
Grace.' <sup>70</sup>

41. All omit *and* after *Estaat*; Ten Brink supplies it.

67. All omit *ne*, which Ten Brink supplies.

For kyndly, by your heritagé right,  
Ye been annexéd ever unto Bountee,  
And verrayly ye oughté do your myght  
To helpé Trouthe in his adversitee.  
Ye been also the coroune of Beautee,  
And certes, if ye wanten in thise tweyne  
The world is lore; thernis no more to seyne.

Eek what availeth Maner and Gentillesse  
Withouté you, benygné creature!  
Shal Crueltee be your governeresse? 80  
Allas! what herté may hit long endure?  
Wherfor but ye the rather také cure  
To breké that perilous alliaunce,  
Ye sleen hem that ben in your obeisaunce.

And further over, if ye suffre this,  
Your renoun is fordo than in a throwe;  
Ther shal no man wite wel what Pite is.  
Allas! that your renoun shoulde be so lowe;  
Ye be than fro your heritage y-throwe  
By Crueltee, that occupieth your place, 90  
And we despaired that seken to your grace.

Have mercy on me, thou serenous quene,  
That you have sought so tenderly and yore,  
Let som stream of your light on me be sene,  
That love and drede yow ever lenger the  
more;

For, sothly for to seyne, I bere the sore,  
And though I be not cunningg for to pleyne,  
For Goddés love, have mercy on my peyne!

My peyne is this, that what-so I desire, 99  
That have I not, ne no thing lyk therto;  
And ever set Desire myn herte on fire,  
Eek on that other syde where-so I go.  
What maner thinge that may encrese my wo  
That have I redy, unsoght, everywhere,  
Me ne lakketh but my deth, and than my  
bere.

What nedeth to shewé parcel of my  
peyne,  
Sith every wo that herté may be-thynke,  
suffre? And yet I dar not to you pleyne,  
For wel I woot, although I wake or wynke,  
I rekke not whether I flete or synke 110

92. *serenous*, Mr. Liddell's emendation for *crenens*, *heremus*, and *vertuose*, of the MSS.  
105. All omit *ne*.

But nathéles, my trouthe I shal sustene  
Unto my deth, and that shal wel be sene.

This is to seyne, I wol be yourés ever;  
Though ye me slee by Crueltee your fo,  
Algate my spirit shal never dissever  
Fro your servyse, for any peyne or wo!  
Sith ye be deed,—allas! that hit is so!—  
Thus for your deth I may wel wepe and  
pleyne

With herté sore, and ful of besy peyne!

*Here endeth the exclamacion of the Deth  
of Pyte.*

## CHAUCER'S A B C

*Incipit carmen secundum ordinem  
Litterarum alphabeti.*

**A**L myghty and al mercyable Queene,  
To whom that al this world fleeth for socour  
To have relees of sinne, of sorwe, and teene!  
Glorious Virgine, of allé flourés flour,  
To thee I flee confounded in errour.  
Help, and releeve, thou miht debonayre,  
Have mercy on my perilous langour!  
Venquissed me hath my cruel adversaire.

**B**ountee so fix hath in thyn herte his  
tente,  
That wel I wot, thou wolt my socour be;  
Thou canst not warne him that with good  
entente 11

Axeth thyn helpe, thyn herte is ay so free!  
Thou art largesse of pleyn felicitee,  
Haven of refute, of quiete, and of reste.  
Loo! how that theeves seven chasen mee!  
Help! Lady bryght, er that my ship to-  
breste!

**C**omfort is noon, but in you, Ladi deere!  
For loo, my sinne and my confusioun,  
Which oughten not in thy presence appeere,  
Han take on me a grevous accioun 20  
Of verrey right and desperacioun!  
And as bi right they mighten wel susteene  
That I were worthy my dampnacioun,  
Nere merci of you, blisful havené Queene!

**D**oute is ther noon, Queen of miseri-  
corde,  
That thou nart cause of grace and merci  
here;

God vouchéd-sauf thurgh thee with us to  
accorde.

For certès, Crystès blisful mooder dere,  
Were now the bowé bent in swich manere  
As it was first, of justice and of ire, <sup>30</sup>  
The rightful God nolde of no mercy here ;  
But thurgh thee han we grace as we desire.

**E**verhath myn hope of refut been in thee,  
For heer-biforn ful ofte in many a wyse  
Hast thou to misericorde receyvéd me ;  
But merci, Lady at the grete assyse,  
Whan weshul come bifore the hyc justyse !  
So litel fruit shal thanne in me be founde  
That, but thou er that day me wel chastyse,  
Of verrey right my werk wol me confounde.

**F**leeing, I flee for socour to thy tente <sup>41</sup>  
Me for to hide from tempest ful of dreede,  
Biseeching you that ye you not absente  
Though I be wikke; O helpyit at this neede!  
Al have I ben a beste in wille and deede,  
Yit, Lady, thou me clothé with thy grace.  
Thyn enemy and myn, Lady, tak heede,  
Un-to my deth in poynt is me to chace !

**G**lorious mayde and moder which that  
never <sup>49</sup>

Were bitter, neither in erthé nor in see,  
But ful of swetnesse and of merci ever,  
Help that my Fader be not wroth with me !  
Spek thou, for I ne dar not him y-see,  
So have I doon in erthe, allas the while !  
That certès, but if thou my socour be  
To stynk eterne he wol my gost exile !

**H**e vouchéd-sauf, tel him, as was his  
wille

Bicome a man to have our alliaunce,  
And with his precious blood he wrot the  
bille

Up-on the crois as general acquitaunce  
To every penitent in ful creauce. <sup>61</sup>  
And therfor, Lady bright, thou for us praye !  
Thanne shalt thou bothé stinte al his  
grevaunce,

And make our foo to failen of his praye.

**I**wot it wel thou wolt ben our socour,  
Thou art so ful of bountee in certeyn ;  
For whan a soulé falleth in error  
Thi pitee goth and haleth him ageyn.  
Thanne makest thou his pees with his  
sovereyn,

And bringest him out of the crooked strete.

Who-so thee loveth he shal not love in  
veyn : <sup>71</sup>

That shal he fynde as he the lyf shal letc.

**K**alenderès enlumynéd ben they  
That in this world ben lighted with thy  
name,

And who-so goth to yow the rihté wey,  
Him thar not drede in soulé to be lame.  
Now, Queen of comfort ! sith thou art  
that same

To whom I sché for my medicyne,  
Lat not myfoono more my wounde entame,  
Myn hele in-to thyn hand al I resigne. <sup>80</sup>

**L**ady, thi sorwé kan I not portreye  
Under the cros, ne his grevous penaunce,  
But for your bothés peynés I yow preye,  
Lat not our alder foo make his bobounce  
That he hath in his listés of mischaunce  
Cònvict that ye bothe have bought so dere.  
As I seide erst, thou ground of our  
substaunce

Continue on us thy pitous eyen clere.

**M**oises that saugh the bush with  
flaumés rede <sup>89</sup>

Brenninge, of whiché never a stikké brende,  
Wassigne of thyn unwemméd maidenhede ;  
Thou art the bush on which ther gan  
descende

The Holy Goost, the which that Moyses  
wende

Had ben a-fyr ; and this was in figure.  
Now, Lady, from the fyr thou us defende  
Which that in helle eternally shal dure.

**N**obleprincesse that never haddest pere !  
Certès, if any comfort in us be  
That cometh of thee, thou Cristès moder  
deere,

We han noon other melodye or glee <sup>100</sup>  
Us to rejoyse in our adversitee,  
Ne advócat noon that wol and dar so preye  
For us, and that for litel hire as ye,  
That helpen for an Ave Marie or tweye.

**O** verrey light of eyen that ben blynde !  
O verrey lust of labour and distresse !  
O tresorere of bountee to mankynde !  
Thee whom God ches to moder for  
humbleste !

From his ancille he madé thee maistress  
Of hevене and erthe, our bille up fo  
to bede. <sup>111</sup>

This world awaiteth ever on thy goodnesse,  
For thou ne failest never wight at nede.

Purpos I have sum tymé for to enquere  
Wherefore and why the Holy Gost the  
soughte,

Whan Gabriellés vois cam to thyn ere;  
He not to werre us swich a wunder  
wroughte,

But for to save us that he sithen boughte;  
Than needeth us no wepen us for to save,  
But oonly ther we did not as us oughte,—  
Do penitence, and merci axe and have. 120

Queen of comfort ! yit whan I me bi-  
thinke

That I agilt have bothé him and thee,  
And that my soule is wurthi for to sinke,  
Allas ! I caitif, whider may I flee ?  
Who shal un-to thi Sone my mené bee ?  
Who, but thy-self, that art of pitee welle ?  
Thou hast more reuthe on our adversitee  
Than in this world mighte any tungé telle.

Redressé me, moder, and me chastise,  
For certeynly my Fadres chastisyng 130  
That dar I nought abiden in no wise,  
So hidous is hys rightful rekenyng.  
Moder, of whom our merci gan to spryng,  
Beth ye my juge and eek my soulés leche,  
For ever in you is pitee haboundyng  
To eche that wol of pitee you biseche.

Soth is that God ne granteth no pitee  
With-outé thee; for God, of his goodnesse,  
Foryiveth noon, but it like un-to thee;  
He hath thee makéd vicaire and  
maistresse 140

Of al the world, and eek governeresse  
Of hevене, and he represseth his justise  
After thy wille, and therefore in witesse,  
He hath thee crounéd in so ryal wise.

Temple devout, ther God hath his  
wonyng  
Fro which these misbileved deprived  
been,

To you my soulé penitent I bryng.  
Resceyvè me,—I can no fertler flee.  
With thornés venymous, O hevéné Queen !  
For which the erthe acurséd was ful yore.  
I am so wounded as ye may wel seen 151  
That I am lost almost, it smert so sore.

Virgine, that art so noble of apparaile,  
And ledest us in-to the hyé tour

Of paradys, thou me wisse and counsaile  
How I may have thy grace and thy socour,  
Al have I ben in filthe and in errour.

Lady, un-to that court thou me ajourne  
That clepéd is thy bench, O freshé flour  
Ther as that merci evere shal sojourne. 160

Xristus, thi sone, that in this world  
alighte

Up-on the cros to suffre his passiou,  
Eek suffréd that Longiús his herté prihte,  
And made his herté blood to renne adoun,  
And al was this for my salvacioun,  
And I to hym am fals and eek unkynde,  
And yit he wol not my dampnacioun;  
This thanke I you, socour of al mankynde !

Ysaac was figure of his deth certeyn,  
That so fer forth his fader wolde obeye, 170  
That him ne rouhté no thing to be slayn;  
Right soo thy Sone lust as a lamb to deye.  
Now, Lady ful of mercy ! I you preye,  
Sithe he his mercy mesuréd so large,  
Be ye not skant, for alle we singe and seye  
That ye ben from vengeauncé ayoure targe.

Zacharie you clepeth the opené welle,  
To wasshé sinful soule out of his gilt;  
Therefore this lessoun ought I wel to telle,  
That nere thy tender herte we weren spilt.  
Now, Lady brihté, sith thou canst and wilt,  
Ben to the seed of Adam merciabele,  
So bring us to that palais that is bilt  
To penitents that ben to mercy able.

*Amen.*

*Explicit carmen.*

## THE COMPLEYNTE OF MARS

### *The Proem*

'GLADETH, ye foulés, of the morwé  
gray !

Lo, Venus, risen among you rowés rede !  
And flourés fressshe, honoureth ye this day;  
For when the sonne uprist, then wol ye  
sprede.

163. All read *And* at the beginning of this line, destroying the syntax of the stanza. It is clearly caught from the lines below. All read *pihte* for *prighte*, which is Skeat's suggestion; *pihte* does not mean 'pierced.'

2. *Venus*, the planet which sometimes rises in the morning.

But ye lovers, that lye in any drede,  
Fleëth, lest wikked tongés yow espye !  
Lo yond the sonne, the candel of jelosye !

‘Wyth terés blewe, and with a  
wounded herte,  
Taketh your leve; and with Seynt John  
to borwe, 9  
Apeseth somwhat of your sorwés smerte,  
Tyme cometh eft that cesé shal your  
sorwe;  
The gládé nyght is worth an hevye morwe !’  
(Seynt Valentyne ! a foul thus herde I synge  
Upon thy day, er sonnè gan up-sprynge.)

Yet sang this foul, ‘Irede yow alle a-  
wake,  
And ye that han not chosen in humblé wyse,  
With-out repentynge cheseth yow your  
make;  
And ye that han ful chosen as I devyse,  
Yet at the leste renoveleth your servyse;  
Confermeth hit perpetuely to dure, 20  
And paciently taketh your aventure.’

And for the worship of this highè feste,  
Yet wol I, in my briddés wisè, synge  
The sentence of the compleynt at the leste  
That woful Mars made atté departynge  
Fro fresshè Venus, in a morwenynge  
Whan Phebus, with his fry torchés rede,  
Ransakéd every lover in his drede.

Whilom the thridde hevenés lord above,  
As wel by hevenysh revolucioun 30  
As by desert, hath wonne Venus, his love,  
And she hath take him in subjeccioun,  
And as a maistresse taught him his lessoun,  
Commaundyng him that never, in her  
servyse,  
He nere so bold no lover to despyse.

For she forbad him jelosye at alle,  
And crueltee, and bost, and tyrannye;  
She made hym at hir lust so humble and  
talle,  
That when hir deyned caste on hym her ÿe,  
He took in pacience to lyve or dye; 40

And thus she brydeleth him in hir manere,  
With no-thing but with scourgyng of hir  
chere.

Who regneth now in blissè but Venus,  
That hath this worthy knyght in govern-  
aunce?

Who syngeth now but Mars, that serveth  
thus

The fairè Venus, causer of plesaunce?  
He bynt him to perpetual obeisaunce,  
And she bynt hir to loven him for ever,  
But so be that his trespas hit dissever.

Thus be they knyht, and regnen as in  
heven 50

Be lokyng most; til hit fil on a tyde  
That by her bothe assent was set a steven  
That Mars shal entre, as fast as he may  
glyde,

Into hir nextè paleys, and abyde,  
Walkyng his courstil she hadde him a-take;  
And he preyde hir to haste hir for his sake.

Then seyde he thus, ‘Myn hertés lady  
swete

Ye knowè wel my myschef in that place;  
For sikerly, til that I with yow mete,  
My lyf stant ther in aventure and grace, 60  
But when I se the beautee of your face,  
Ther nis no dreed of deth may domesmerete,  
For al your lust is esè to myn herte.’

She hath sogret compassion of hir knyght  
That dwelleth in solitudè til she come,—  
For hit stood so, that ilkè tyme, no wyght  
Counseyled hym, ne seyde to him wel-  
come,—

That nygh her wit for sorwe was overcome;  
Wherfore shespedde hir as faste in her weye  
Almost in oon day as he dide in tweye. 70

The gretè joye that was betwix hem two  
When they be met, ther may no tungè telle;  
Ther is no more, but unto bed they go;  
And thus in joye and blisse I let hem dwelle;  
This worthi Mars, that is of knyghthod  
welle,

62. *nis.* All read *is.*

70. The orbit of Venus is smaller than that of  
Mars, so her apparent motion is twice as great.

9. *Seynt John*, the apostle of truth.  
31. All read *his* except Harl., which omits  
the word.

The flour of fairnes lappeth in his armés,  
And Venus kisseth Mars, the god of armés.

Sojourned hath this Mars of which I rede  
In chambre amynd the paleys, prively,  
A certeyn tymé, til him fel adrede, 80  
Through Phebus, that was comen hastely  
Within the paleys gatés, sturdely,  
With torche in honde, of which the  
stremés bryghte  
On Venus chambre knockeden ful lighte.

The chambre ther as lay this fresshé  
quene  
Depeynted was with whité bolés grete,  
And by the light she knew, that shoon  
so shene,  
That Phebus cam to brenne hem with his  
hete ;  
This sely Venus, nygh dreynt in terés wete,  
Enbraceth Mars, and seyde, 'Alas, I dye !  
The torch is come that al this world wol  
wrie.' 91

Up sterté Mars, hym listé not to slepe,  
When he his lady herdé so compleyne,  
But for his nature was not for to wepe,  
Instede of terés, from his eyen tweyne  
The fry sparkés brosten out for payne ;  
And hente his hauberck, that lay hym besyde.  
Flee wolde he not, ne myghte him-selven  
hyde.

Hethroweth on his helm of hugé wyghte,  
And girt him with his swerde ; and in  
his honde 100  
His myghty spere, as he was wont to fighte  
He shaketh so that almost hit to-wonde.  
Ful hevye was he to walken over londe,  
He may not holde with Venus companye,  
But bad her fleen, lest Phebus hir espye.

O woful Mars ! alas ! what mayst thou  
seyn,  
That in the paleys of thy disturbaunce  
Art left behynde in peril to be sleyn ?  
And yet ther-to is double thy penaunce,  
For she that hath thyn herte in govern-  
aunce 110

86. *white boles*, the sign of Taurus, in which  
both Mars and Venus now are.

Is passéd halfe the stremés of thyn yēn ;  
That thou nere swift wel mayst thou wepe  
and crien.

Now fleeth Venus un-to Cylenius tour,  
With voidé cours, for fere of Phebus light,  
Alas ! and ther ne hath she no socour,  
For she ne fond ne saugh no maner wyght ;  
And eek as ther she had but litil myght ;  
Wher-for her-selven for to hyde and save,  
Within the gate she fledde in-to a cave.

Derk was this cave, and smokyng as  
the helle, 120  
Not but two pas within the gate hit stood ;  
A naturel day in derk I lete her dwelle.  
Now wol I speke of Mars, furious and wood.  
For sorwe he wolde have seen his herté  
blood ;  
Sith that he myghte don her no companye,  
He ne roghté not a mytè for to dye.

So feble he wex for hete and for his wo  
That nygh he swelt, he myghte unnethe  
endure,  
He passeth but oo steyre in dayés two,  
But nathéles for al his hevye armure,  
He foloweth hir that is his lyvés cure ; 131  
For whos departyng he toke gretter ire  
Thanné for al his brennyng in the fire.

After he walketh softely a pas,  
Compleynyng, that it pite was to here ;  
He seyde, 'O lady bryght, Venus ! alas !  
That ever so wyde a compas ys my spere !  
Alas ! when shal I mete yow, herté dere ?  
This twelfté day of April I endure,  
Through jelous Phebus, this mysaventure.'

Now God helpésely Venus, al a-lone ! 141  
But, as God wolde, hit happéd for to be  
That while that Venus weping made her  
mone

112. *Cylenius*, Mercury, born on Mt. Cyllene  
in Arcadia. The Tower of Cyllenum, *i.e.* man-  
sion of Mercury, is the sign Gemini into which  
Venus now passes.

119. *cave*, according to Skeat a translation of  
the technical Latin astrological term *puteus*.  
The *putei* in Gemini are the degrees numbered  
2, 12, 17, 26, 30. So Venus was now in the  
second degree of the sign.

139. On 12th April the sun entered Taurus.

Cylenius, ridyng in his chevauche  
 Fro Venus valance, myghte his paleys se,  
 And Venus he salueth, and maketh chere,  
 And her receyveth as his frend ful dere.

Mars dwelleth forth in his adversitè,  
 Compleynyng ever in on hir departyng,  
 And what his compleynt was, remem-  
 breth me, 150  
 And therfor in this lusty morwenyng,  
 As I best can, I wol it seyn and synge,  
 And after that I wol my levè take ;  
 And God yeve every wyght joye of his  
 make !

### THE COMPLEYNTE OF MARS

#### *The Proem*

The ordre of compleynt requireth skil-  
 fully,  
 That if a wyght shal pleynè pitously  
 Ther mot be causè wherfor that men pleyne ;  
 Or men may deme he pleyneth folily,  
 And causèles ; alas, that am not I !  
 Wherfor the ground and cause of al my  
 peyne, 160  
 So as my troublèd wit may hit ateyne,  
 I wol reherse ; not for to have redresse,  
 But to declare my ground of hevynesse.

#### I

The firstè tyme, alas ! that I was wroght,  
 And for certeyn effectès hider broght,  
 By him that lordeth ech intelligence,  
 I yaf my trewè servise and my thought,  
 For ever-more,—how dere I have it  
 boght !—  
 To hir, that is of so gret excellence  
 That what wyght that first sheweth his  
 presence 170  
 When she is wroth and taketh of hym no  
 cure,  
 He may not longe in joye of love endure.

145. *valance*, according to Skeat, is either the Fr. *fallance*, *faillance*, failure, and an exact translation of the Latin astrological term *detrimentum*, or it is *avalance*, a translation of the Latin *occusus*, an alternative expression for the same thing. The *detrimentum* is the sign of the Zodiac opposite the planet's mansion, and is here equivalent to Aries.

This is no feynèd mater that I telle ;  
 My lady is the verrey sours and welle  
 Of beaute, lust, fredom, and gentilnesse,  
 Of riche aray,—how derè men it selle !—  
 Of al disport in which men frendly dwelle,  
 Oflove and pley, and of benigne humblesse,  
 Of soune of instruments of al swetnesse,  
 And therto so wel fortunèd and thewèd  
 That through the world hir goodnesse is  
 y-shewed. 181

What wonder is then, thogh that I besette  
 Myservise on suche oon that may me knette  
 To wele or wo, sith hit lyth in her myght?  
 Therfor my herte for ever I to her hette,  
 Ne trewly for my dethe I shal not lette  
 To ben her trewest servaunt, and her  
 knyght.  
 I flater noght, that may wite every wyght,  
 For this day in hir servise shal I dye ;  
 But gracè be, I se hir never with yè. 190

#### II

To whom shal I then pleyne of my  
 distresse ?  
 Who may me helpe ? Who may my harm  
 redresse ?  
 Shal I compleyne unto my lady fre ?  
 Nay, certes ! for she hath such hevynesse  
 For fere, and eek for wo, that, as I gesse,  
 In litil tyme it wol her banè be.  
 But were she sauf, it were no fors of me !  
 Alas ! that ever lovers mote endure,  
 For love, so many a perilous aventure !

For thogh so be that lovers be as trewe  
 As any metal that is forgèd newe, 201  
 In many a cas hem tydeth oftè sorwe.  
 Somtyme hir ladies will not on hem rewe ;  
 Somtyme if that Ielosie hit knewe,  
 They myghten lightly leye hir heed to  
 borwe ;  
 Somtyme envyous folke with tungès horwe  
 Depraven hem ; alas ! Whom may they  
 plese ?  
 But he be fals, no lover hath his ese !

But what availeth suche a long sermoun  
 Of áventures of lovè up and down ? 210



I wol returne and speken of my peyne ;  
 The poynt is this of my destruccioun,—  
 My righté lady, my salvacyoun,  
 Is in affray, and not to whom to pleyne.  
 O herté swete ! O lady sovereyne !  
 For your disese wel oghte I swouned and  
 swelte,  
 Thogh I non other harm ne dredé felte.

## III

To what fyn made the God that sit so hye,  
 Be-nethen him love other companye,  
 And streyneth folk to love malgrè hir hede,  
 And then hir joye, for oght I can espye, <sup>221</sup>  
 Ne lasteth not the twynkelyng of an yē ;  
 And somme han never joye til they be dede.  
 What meneth this? what is this mystihede?  
 Wherto constreyneth he his folk so faste  
 Thyng to desyré, but it sholdé laste ?

And thogh he made a lover love a thyng,  
 And maketh it semé stedfast and duryng,  
 Yet putteth he in it such mysaventure  
 That resté nis ther noon in his yevyng ; <sup>230</sup>  
 And that is wonder that so just a kyng  
 Doth such hardnessé to his creature.  
 Thus, whether lové breke, or ellés dure,  
 Algatés he that hath with love to done  
 Hath offer wo then changéd is the mone.

Hit semeth he hath to lovers enmyte,  
 And lyk a fissher, as men alday may se,  
 Baiteth his angle-hook with som plesaunce,  
 Til mon ya fish is wood, til that he be <sup>239</sup>  
 Seséd ther-with ; and then at erst hath he  
 Al his desire, and ther-with almyschaunce ;  
 And thogh the lyné breke, he hath penaunce,  
 For with the hook he wounded is so sore  
 That he his wages hath for ever-more.

## IV

The broche of Thebés was of such a  
 kynde ;

<sup>245.</sup> *The broche of Thebes* or magic bracelet (cp. *Thebais* of Statius, Bk. ii.) was made by Vulcan for Harmonia, a daughter of Mars and Venus, in order to bring an evil fate on her and all later possessors of it.

So ful of rubies, and of stonés Inde,  
 That every wyght that sette on hit an yē,  
 He wende anon to worthe out of his  
 mynde,—

So sore the beauté wold his herté bynde,—  
 Til he hit hadde him thoghte he mostédye,  
 And whan that hit was his, then sholde  
 he drye <sup>251</sup>  
 Such wo for drede, ay while that he hit  
 hadde,  
 That welnygh for the fere he sholdé madde.

And whan hit was fro his possessioun  
 Then hadde he double wo and passioun,  
 For he so fair a tresor had forgo ;  
 But yet this broche, as in conclusioun,  
 Was not the cause of this confusioun ;  
 But he that wroghte hit enfortuned hit so  
 That every wyght that hadde hit sholde  
 have wo ; <sup>260</sup>  
 And therfor in the worcher was the vyce,  
 And in the covetour that was so nyce.

So fareth hit by lovers and by me ;  
 For thogh my lady have so gret beauté  
 That I was mad til I had gete hir grace,  
 She was not cause of myn adversité,  
 But he that wroghte hir, also mot I thee,  
 That putté such a beaute in hir face,  
 That madé me coveten and purchace <sup>269</sup>  
 Myn owné deth ; him wyte I that I dye,  
 And myn unwit that ever I clomb so hye.

## V

But to yow, hardy knyghtés of renoun,  
 Syn that ye be of my divisioun,—  
 Al be I not worth to so grete a name,  
 Yet seyn these clerckés I am your patroun,—  
 Ther-for ye oghte have som compassioun  
 Of my disese, and take hit noght a-game,  
 The proudest of yow may be mad ful tame.  
 Wherfor I prey yow of your gentillesse,  
 That ye compleyné for myn hevynesse. <sup>280</sup>

And ye, my ladies, that ben trewe and  
 stable,  
 By way of kynde, ye oghten to been able  
 To have pité of folk that been in peyne ;

<sup>246.</sup> *Inde* is an adjective ; cp. *Romaunt of the Rose*, l. 67.

Now have ye cause to clothé yow in sable ;  
 Sith that your empericé, the honorable,  
 Is desolat, wel oghté ye to pleyne ;  
 Nowsholde your holyterés falle and reyne.  
 Alas ! your honour and your emperice,  
 Nigh deed for drede, ne can hir not chevisé !

Compleyneth eek, ye lovers, al in-fere,  
 For hir that with unfeynéd humblé chere  
 Was ever redy to do yow socour ; <sup>292</sup>  
 Compleyneth hir that ever hath had yow  
 dere ;

Compleyneth beaute, fredom, and manere ;  
 Compleyneth hir that endeth your labour ;  
 Compleyneth thilke ensample of al honour,  
 That never didé but al gentillesse ;  
 Kytheth therfor on hir som kyndénesse !

### A COMPLEYNTE TO HIS LADY

#### I

THE longé nightes, whan every creature  
 Shulde have hir rest in somewhat, as by  
 kynde,  
 Or elles ne may hir lif nat long endure,  
 Hit falleth most into my woful mynde  
 How I so fer have broght myself behynde,  
 That, sauf the deeth, ther may no-thing  
 me lisse,  
 So desespairod I am from allé blisse.

This samé thoght me lasteth til the morwe  
 And from the morwé forth til hit be eve ;  
 Ther nedeth me no caré for to borwe, <sup>10</sup>  
 For bothe I have good leyser and good leve ;  
 Ther is no wyght that wol me wo bereve  
 To wepe y-nogh, and wailen al my fille ;  
 The soré spark of peyne now doth mespille.

#### II

This Love, that hath me set in swich  
 a place  
 That my desir wol never he fulfille,  
 For neither pitee, mercy, neither grace,

2, 3. Shirley, *theyre* for *hir*.  
 15-43. This passage is in *terza rima*, the first  
 example of the measure in English literature.  
 16. Shirley omits *he*.

Can I nat fynde ; and yit my sorrowful  
 herte,  
 For to be deed, I can hit nought arace ;  
 The more I love, the more she doth me  
 smerte. <sup>20</sup>  
 Through which I see, withouté remedye  
 That from the deeth I may no wyse  
 asterte ;

#### III

Now sothly, what she hight I wol reherse.  
 Hir name is Bountee, set in womanhede,  
 Sadnesse in youthe and Beautee  
 prydelees  
 And Plesaunce, under governaunce  
 and drede ;  
 Her surname is eek Fairé Rewthcéles,  
 The Wyse, y-knit un-to Good Adventure,  
 That, for I love hir, she sleeth me  
 giltélees. <sup>30</sup>  
 Hir love I best, and shal, whyl I may dure,  
 Bet than my-self an hundred thousand  
 deel,  
 Than al this worldes richesse or créature.  
 Now hath not Lové me bestowéd weel  
 To lové ther I never shal have part ?  
 Allas ! right thusis turnéd me the wheel,  
 Thus am I slayn with Lovés fryr dart.  
 I can but love hir best, my sweté fo ;  
 Love hath me taught no more of his art  
 But serve alwey, and stinté for no wo. <sup>40</sup>

#### IV

In my trewe and careful herte ther is  
 So moché wo, and [eek] so litel blis  
 That wo is me that ever I was bore ;

23. It is possible that another line to rime  
 with l. 22 is missing here.

24. Skeat thinks two lines have fallen out before  
 this, forming the opening to this section, but it is  
 more probable that l. 24, which is not necessary to  
 the sense, has been inserted. Shirley or his author-  
 ity has tried to reduce this passage of *terza rima*  
 to a series of eight-line stanzas. He divides at l.  
 23, l. 32, and l. 41 ; the last stanza, being hard to  
 amend, had to remain with nine lines.

39. This line seems to be a syllable short.  
 41. So Shirley, who first wrote *In my trewe  
 hert*, etc., and then corrected *hert* into *and*. The  
 line is probably corrupt. Ed. 1561 omits *and*.  
 42. Shirley omits *eek*, which Skeat supplies.

For al that thyng which I desyre I mys,  
 And al that ever I woldè not, y-wys,  
 That finde I redy to me evermore ;  
 And of al this I not to whom me pleyne.  
 Forshe that mightè me out of this bryng  
 Ne reccheth nought whether I wepe  
 or synge ; 49  
 So litel rewthe hath she upon my peyne.

Allas ! whan slepyng-tyme is, than I wake,  
 Whan I shulde daunce, for ferè than I  
 quake ;  
 This hevy lif I ledè for your sake  
 Thogh ye ther-of in no wyse hedè take,  
 My hertès lady, and hool my lyvès quene !  
 For trewly dorste I seye, as that I fele,  
 Me semeth that your sweté herte of stele  
 Is whettèd now ageynès me to kene.

My derè herte and best beloved fo,  
 Why liketh yow to do me al this wo, 60  
 What have I doon that greveth yow, or  
 sayd,  
 But for I serve and love yow and no mo ?  
 And whilst I lyve I wol ever do so ;  
 And therfor, swete, ne beth nat yvel  
 apayd.  
 For so good and so fair as ye be  
 Hit werè right gret wonder but ye hadde  
 Of allè servantes, bothe of goode and  
 badde ;  
 And leest worthy of alle hem, I am he.

But never-the-les, my rightè lady swete,  
 Thogh that I be unconnyng and unmete  
 To serve, as I coude best, ay your  
 hynesse. 71  
 Yit is ther fayner noon, that wolde I hete,  
 Than I, to do yow ese, or ellès bete  
 What so I wiste that were to your  
 [distresse] ;

44-46. Cp. *Parl. Foules*, ll. 90, 91, and *Compl. of Pite*, ll. 99-104.

47. Cp. *Anelida*, l. 237.

51. Shirley inserts *lo* before *than*.

51. This stanza is different in form from those that precede and follow it.

53. Shirley inserts *lo* after *lede*.

65. *fair* seems here to be dissyllabic as in A.S.

72. Shirley, *noon fayner*.

74. Shirley, *to yourre hynesse*, caught from l. 71. Skeat reads *to yow distresse*. Perhaps that was

And hadde I myght as good as I have wille  
 Than shulde ye fele wher it were so  
 or noon ;

For in this worldè lyvyng is ther noon  
 That fayner wolde your hertès wil fulfillè.

For bothe I love and eek drede yow so sore,  
 And algates moot, and have doon yow,  
 ful yore, 80

That bettrè loved is noon, ne never shal ;  
 And yit I wolde beseche yow of no more,  
 But leveth wel, and be not wrooth ther-fore,  
 And lat me serve yow forth ; lo, this is al !  
 For I am not so hardy, ne so wood,  
 For to desire that ye shulde lovè me ;  
 For wel I wot, allas ! that may nat be ;  
 I am so litel worthy, and ye so good.

For ye be oon the worthiest on-lyve  
 And I the most unlikely for to thryve ; 90  
 Yit for al this witeth ye right wele  
 That ye ne shul me from your servyce dryve  
 That I nil ay, with alle my wyttès fyve,  
 Serve yow trewly, what woso that I fele.  
 For I am set on yow in swich manere,  
 That, thogh ye never wil upon me rewe,  
 I moste yow love, and beè everas trewe  
 As any man can, or may, on-lyvè [here].

But the morè that I love yow, goodly free,  
 The lassè fynde I that ye loven me ; 100  
 Allas ! whan shal that hardè wyt amende ?  
 Wher is now al your wommanly pitee,  
 Your gentillesse and your debonairstee  
 Wil yeno-thing ther-of upon mespende ?  
 And so hool, swete, as I am yourès al,  
 And so gret wil as I have yow to serve,  
 Now, certès, and ye letè me thus sterve,  
 Yit have ye wonnè ther-on but a smal.

Fór at my knowyng, I do nought why,  
 And this I wol beseche yow hertely, 110

not in the original text and *wiste* was pronounced as a dissyllable.

91. Skeat inserts *now* before *witeth*, but the whole poem is experimental, and possibly this line is as Chaucer wrote it. Cp. ll. 39, 109, and 116. In all a heavy stress on the first syllable lends dramatic value to the line.

93. Shirley, *ne wil*.

98. *here* supplied by Skeat.

99. Shirley, *But the more*, etc. Skeat omits *But*.

That, ther ever ye fyndé, whil ye lyve,  
 A trewer servant to yow than am I,  
 Leveth thanne, and sleeth me hardély  
 And I my deeth to yow wol al foryive.  
 And if ye fynde no trewer verély  
 Will ye suffrè than that I thus spille,  
 And for no maner gilt but my good wille?  
 As good wer thanne untrewé as trewe to be.

But I, my lyf and deeth, to yow obeye,  
 And with right buxom herte hooly I preye  
 As is your mostè plesure, so doth by me;  
 Wel lever is me liken yow and dye <sup>122</sup>  
 Than for to anythynge or thynke or seye  
 That myghtè yow offende in any tyme.  
 And ther-for, swete, rewe on my peynés  
 smerte  
 And of your gracè granteth me som  
 drope;  
 For ellés may me laste ne blis, ne hope,  
 Ne dwellen in my troublè careful herte.

### THE COMPLEYNT OF FAIRE ANELIDA AND FALSE ARCITE

THOU fersè God of armès, Mars the rede,  
 That in the frosty contree calléd Trace,  
 Within thy grisly temple ful of drede,  
 Honourèd art, as patron of that place!  
 With thy Bellona, Pallas, ful of grace!  
 Be present, and my song contynue and gye.  
 At my begynnynge thus to the I crye.

For hit ful depe is sonken in my mynde,  
 With pitous herte, in Englysh for tendyte  
 This oldè storie, in Latyn which I fynde, <sup>10</sup>  
 Of quene Anelyda and fals Arcite,  
 That eldè, which that al can frete and  
 bite,—

111. Shirley, *whyles*.

115. Shirley, *no trewer so verrayly*. Ed. 1561  
*no trewer verely*, a false rime.

119-128. This stanza is only found in the Philipps  
 MS., and I take the text from Skeat. I am doubt-  
 ful of its authenticity.

1-70. These first ten stanzas are based on the  
*Teseide*, i. and ii.

1. *Mars the rede*, 'O Marte rubicondo,' *Tes*.  
 i. 3.  
 2. *Trace*, Thrace.

As hit hath fretèn mony a noble storie,—  
 Hath nygh devourèd out of our memòrie.

Be favorable eek, thou Polýmnyá,  
 On Párnaso that with thy sustrés glade,  
 By Elicon, not fer from Cirréa,  
 Syngest with vois memorial in the shade,  
 Under the laurer, which that may not fade,  
 And do that I my shippe to haven wyne.  
 First folwe I Stace, and after him Corynne.

#### [The Story]

When Thesèus, with werrès longe and  
 grete, <sup>22</sup>  
 The asprè folk of Cithe hadde overcome,  
 With laurer crounèd, in his char, gold bete,  
 Home to his contrè houses is y-come;  
 For which the peple, blisful al and somme,  
 So crydèn, that un-to the sterres hit wente,  
 And him to honouren dide al hir entente.

Beforn this duke, in signe of hy victòrie,  
 The trompès come, and in his baner large,  
 The ymàge of Mars; and in tokenyng of  
 glòrie, <sup>31</sup>  
 Men myghtè seen of tresor mony a charge,  
 Mony a bright helm, and mony a spere  
 and targe,  
 Mony a fresh knyght, and mony a blis-  
 ful route,  
 On hors, and fote, in al the felde aboute.

Ipolita, his wyf, the hardy quene  
 Of Cithia, that he conquerèd hadde,  
 With Emelye her yongè suster shene,

15. *Polymnia*, Πολυμνία, one of the nine  
 Muses.

16. *Parnaso*, Mount Parnassus.

17. *Elicon*, Mount Helicon in Bœotia, but  
 Chaucer seems to have confused it with the  
 Castalian spring. Cp. *H. of F.* l. 522, and  
*Troil.* iii. 1209.

17. *Cirrea*, Cirra, an ancient town near Delphi  
 at the foot of Parnassus.

21. *Stace*, Statius, whose *Thebaid* is the source  
 of some of the following stanzas.

21. *Corynne*, Corinnus, who is said to have  
 written an account of the Trojan war in Doric  
 Greek.

23. *Cithe*, Scythia.

24. Cp. *Kn. T.* 169, 121.

30, 31. Cp. *Ibid.* 117, 118.

36, 37. Cp. *Ibid.* 23, 24.

38. Cp. *Ibid.* 114.

Faire in a char of golde he with hym ladde,  
That al the ground aboute her char she  
spradde 40

With brightnesse of the beautee in her face,  
Fulfilled of largesse and of al grace.

With his tryumph, and laurer-crouned  
thus,

In al the floure of fortunés yevynge,  
Lete I this noble prince, this Thesëus,  
Toward Athénés in his wey ridynge,  
And founde I wol in shortly for to brynge  
The slyé wey of that I gan to write,  
Of quene Anélida and fals Arcite.

Mars, which that through his furious  
course of yre, 50

The oldé wrath of Juno to fulfille,  
Hath set the peplés hertés bothe on fire  
Of Thebes and Grece, eche other for to kille  
With bloody speres, ne restéd, never stille,  
But throng now her, now ther, among hem  
bothe,  
That everych other slough, so were they  
wrothe.

For when Amphiorax and Tydëus,  
Ipomedon, Parthonopec also  
Were dede, and slawen proud Campanëus,  
And when the wrecchéd Thebans bretheren  
two 60

Were slayn, and kyng Adrastus home a-go,  
So desolat stood Thebés and so bare,  
That no wyght coude remédie of his fare.

And when that oldé Creon gan espye  
How that the blood roial was brought adoun,  
He held the cite by his tyrannye,  
And dide the gentils of that regioun  
To ben his frendes, and wonnén in the toun.

50-70. Cp. *Teseide*, ii. st. 10-12.  
57. *Amphiorax*, Amphiararus, swallowed up by the earth at the siege of Thebes.

58. *Tydeus*, married a daughter of Adrastus.  
58. *Ipomedon*, Hippomedon, one of the 'Septem contra Thebas,' as also was *Parthonopec* (*Parthenopæus*), and *Campaneus* (*Capaneus*) who was struck with lightning by Jupiter.

59. Cx. *slayn and proud*; rest *slayn proud*.  
60. *i.e.* Eteocles and Polynices, who caused the war.

61. *Adrastus*, King of Argos, who assisted his son-in-law Polynices.

So, what for love of him, and what for awe,  
The noble folk wer to the toun y-drawe.

Among al these, Anélida the quene 71  
Of Ermony was in that toun duellynge,  
That fairer was then is the sonnè shene;  
Throughout the world so gan her namé  
sprynge,  
That her to seen had every wyght likýnge;  
For, as of trouthe, ther is noon her liche,  
Of al the women in this worldé riche.

Yong was this quene, of twenty yeer  
of elde,  
Of mydel stature, and of swich fairnesse,  
That Nature had a joye hir to behelde; 80  
And for to speken of her stidfastnesse,  
She passed hath Penelope and Lucesse,  
And shortly, yf she shal be comprehended,  
In her ne myghté nothing been amended.

This Theban knyght [Arcite] eek, soth  
to seyn,  
Was yonge, and ther-withal a lusty knyght,  
But he was double in love, and nothyng  
pleyn,  
And subtil in that crafte over any wyght,  
And with his cunnynge wan this lady bright:  
For so ferforth he can hir trouthe assure, 90  
That she him trust over any creature.

What shulde I seyn? She lovede  
Arcité so  
That when that he was absent any throwe,  
Anon hir thoghte hir herté brast a-two?  
For in hir sight to hir he bar him lowe,  
So that she wende have al his herte y-knowe;  
But he was fals, hit nas but feynéd chere,—  
As nedeth not to men such craft to lere!

But nathêles ful mychel besynesse  
Hadde he, er that he myghte his lady wynne,  
And swor he woldé dyén for distresse, 101  
Or from his wyt, he seyde, he woldé twynne.

72. *Ermony*, Armenia.  
76. So Lt.; the rest *is ther*; perhaps Chaucer wrote *nis ther*.

82. *Lucesse*, Lucretia.  
85. Skeat inserts *Arcite*.

91. Skeat reads *trust*; B Lt. F H D Cx. *trusted*; Ha. Tn. *trusteth*.

Alas the while! for hit was routhe and synne,  
That she upon his sorwés woldé rewe,  
But nothyng thenketh the fals as doth the  
trewe.

Hir fredom fond Arcite in swich manere,  
That al was his that she hath, moche or lyte;  
Ne to no créature ne made she chere,  
Ferther than that it lykède to Arcite;  
Ther was no lak with which he myghte  
hir wyte, 110  
She was so ferforth yeven him to plesse,  
That al that lykède him it dide hir ese.

Ther nas to hir no maner lettre y-sent  
That touchéd love, from eny maner wyght,  
That she ne shewed hit him er hit was  
brent;  
Sopleyn she was, and dide hir fullé myght,  
That she nyl hiden nothyng from her  
knyght,  
Lest he of any untrouth hir upbreyde;  
Withouté bode his hesté she obeyde. 119

And eek he made him jelous over here,  
That what that eny man hadde to hir seyde,  
Anoon he woldé preyèn hir to swere  
What was that word, or make him evel  
apaid;  
Then wendé she out of her wyt have brayde,  
But al this nas but sleight and flaterie;  
Withoutén love, he feynéd jealousye.

And al this took she so debonairly,  
That al his wylle, hir thoghte hit skilful  
thyng;  
And ever the lengers she loved him tenderly,  
And dide him honour as he were a kyng. 130  
Hir herte was to him wedded with a ring;  
So ferforth upon trouthe is hir entente,  
That wher he goth, hir herté with him wente.

When she shal etc, on him is so hir  
thoght,  
That wel unnethe of meté took she kepe;  
And whan that she was to her resté broght,  
On him she thoghte alwey til that she sleep;  
When he was absent, prevély she weep.  
Thus lyveth fair Anelida the quene, 139  
For fals Arcite, that dide her al this tene.

This fals Arcite, of his newfangelnesse,  
For she to him so lowly was and trewe,  
Took lessé deyntee for her stedfastnesse,  
And saw another lady, proud and newe,  
And right anon he cladde him in hir  
hewe,—  
Wot I not whether in whité, rede, or  
grene,—  
And falséd fair Anelida the quene.

But nathélesse, gret wonder was hit noon  
Thogh he were fals, for hit is kynde of man,  
Sith Lamek was, that is so longe agoon, 150  
To been in love as fals as ever he can;  
He was the firsté fader that began  
To lovén two, and was in bigamye.  
And he found tentés first, but if men lye.

This fals Arcité somewhat moste he feyne  
When he was fals, to covere his traitorye,  
Right as an hors, that can both bite and  
pleyne;  
For he bar hir on honde of trecherye,  
And swoor he coude her doublenesse espye,  
And al was falsnes that she to him mente;  
Thus swoor this theef, and forth his way  
he wente. 161

Alas! what herté myghte enduren hit,  
For routhe or wo, hir sorwé for to telle?  
Or what man hath the cunningg or the wyt?  
Or what man myghte within the chambre  
duelle,  
If I to him rehersen shal the helle  
That suffreth fair Anelida the quene  
For fals Arcite, that dide her al this tene?

She wepeth, wailleth, swouneth pitously,  
To groundé deed she falleth as a stoon;  
Al crampissheth hir lymés crokedly; 171  
She speketh as hir wyt were al agoon;  
Other colour then asshen hath she noon,  
Non other word she speketh moche or lyte  
But 'Mercy! cruel herté myn, Arcite!'

And thus endureth, til she was se  
mate

146. But not blue, the colour of constancy.

174. All read *speketh she*.

That she ne hath foot, on which she may  
sustene,  
But forth, languisshing evere in this estate,  
Of which Arcite hath nother routhe ne  
tene;

His herte is elléswher so newe and grene,  
That on hir wo ne deyneth him not to  
thinke, <sup>181</sup>  
Him rekketh never wher she flete or synke.

His newé lady holdeth him so narwé  
Up by the brydel, at the stavés ende,  
That every word he dradde hit as an arwé;  
Hir daunger made him bothé bowe and  
bende,  
And as hir listé, made him turne or wende;  
For she ne graunted him in her lyvyng  
No gracé, why that he hath lust to synge;

But drof him forth, unnethé liste hir  
knowe <sup>190</sup>  
That he was servaunt to her ladshippe;  
But lest that he wer proude, she helde  
him lowe.

Thus serveth he, withoutén fee or shipe  
She sent him now to londé, now to shippe,  
And for she yaf him daunger al his fille,  
Therfor she hadde him at her owné wille.

Ensampler of this, ye thrifty wymmen,  
alle,  
Take here of Anelida and fals Arcite,  
That for hir liste him 'deré herté' calle,  
And was so meke, therfor he loved hir lyte;  
The kynde of mannés herte is to delyte <sup>201</sup>  
In thyng that straunge is, also God me  
save!  
For what he may not gete, that wolde he  
have

Now turne we to Anelida ageyn,  
That pyneth day be day in languisshyng:  
But when she saw that hir ne gat no geyn,  
Upon a day, ful sorrowfully wepyng,  
She caste hir for to make a compleynyng;  
And with her owné hond shegan hit wryte,  
And sente it to her Theban knyght Arcite.

183. A metaphor borrowed from a horse lightly  
harnessed to the pole of a cart.

191. All read *unto*.

[*The Complaynt of Faire Anelyda upon  
Fals Arcyte*]

(*Proem*)

So thirleth with the poynt of remem-  
brance, <sup>211</sup>  
The swerd of sorwe, y-whet with fals  
plesaunce,

Myn herté bare of blis, and blak of hewe,  
That turned is to quakyng al my daunce,  
My sureté in a-whaped countenaunce,  
Sith hit availeth not for to ben trewe:  
For who-so trewest is, hit shall hir rewe  
That serveth love, and doth hir observaunce  
Alwey to oon, and chaungeth for no  
newe.

(*Strophe*)

I wot my-self as wel as any wyght, <sup>220</sup>  
For I loved oon with al my herte and myght,  
More then my-self an hundred thousand  
sithe,

And calléde him my hertés lyf, my knyght,  
And was al his, as fer as hit was right;  
And whan that he was glad, than was  
I blithe,

And his disesé was my deeth as swythe,  
And he ageyn his trouthe me haddé plight,  
For ever-more, his lady me to kythe.

Now is he fals, alas! and causéles,  
And of my wo he is so routhéles, <sup>230</sup>

That with a worde him list not onés deyne  
To bringe ageyn my sorrowful herte in pees,  
For he is caught up in another lees;

Right as him list, he laugheth at my  
peyne,

And I ne can myn herté not restreyne  
That I ne love him alwey nathéles,  
And of al this I noot to whom me pleyne.

And shal I pleyne (alas! the hardé  
stounde) <sup>238</sup>

Unto my foo, that yaf my herte a wounde,  
And yet desireth that myn harm be more?  
Nay, certés! ferther wol I never founde

Non other help my sorés for to sounde;  
My desteny hath shapen hit ful yore,  
I wil non other medecyne ne lore,

229. F B H *Allas now hath he left me  
causeles.*

I wil ben ay ther I was onés bounde ;  
That I have seid, be seid for evermore.

Alas ! wher is become your gentillesse ?  
Your wordés ful of plesaunce and hum-  
blesse ?

Your observaunces in soo low manere ?  
And your awayting, and your besynesse, <sup>250</sup>  
Upon me, that ye callèd your maistresse,  
Your sovereyn lady in this world here ?  
Alas ! and is ther now nother word ne  
chere,

Ye vouchesauf upon myn hevynesse ?  
Alas ! your love, I bye hit al to dere !

Now certès, sweté, thogh that ye  
Thus causèdes the cause be,  
Of my dedly adversité,  
Your manly resoun oghte it to respyte,  
To slee your frend, and namely me, <sup>260</sup>  
That never yet in no degré  
Offended yow, as wisly he,  
That al wot, out of wo my soulé quyte.

But for I was so pleyne, Arcite,  
In alle my werkés, muche and lite,  
And so besy yow to delyte,—  
Myn honour save,—meke, kynde, and fre,  
Therfor ye putte on me this wyte :  
And of me recchè not a myte,  
Thogh that the swerde of sorwé byte <sup>270</sup>  
My woful herté, through your cruelté.

My sweté foo, why do ye so, for shame ?  
And thenké ye that furtheréd be your  
name,

To love a-newe, and ben untrewé ? Nay !  
And putté you in sclaunder now and blame,  
And do to me adversitee and grame,  
That love you most—God, wel thou  
wost !—alway ?

And come ageyn, and be al pleyne som  
day,  
And then shal this, that hath be mys,  
be game,  
And al foryivé, whyl I lyvé may. <sup>280</sup>

264-266. F B Tn. H D Lt. Ff.—

But for I shewed you, Arcite,  
All that men wolde to me wryte,  
And was so besy, etc.

279. F B H And turne al this . . . to.

(*Antistrophe*)

Lo, herté myn, al this is for to seyn,  
As whether shal I preye or ellés pleyne ?  
Which is the way to doon yow to be  
trewe ?

For either mot I have yow in my cheyn,  
Or with the dethe ye mot departe ustweyn ;  
Ther ben non other mené weyés newe,  
For, God so wisly upon my soulé rewe,  
As verily ye sleen me with the peyn ;  
That may ye see unfeynéd of myn hewe.

For thus ferforth have I my deeth y-soght,  
My-self I mordre with my prevy thoght ; <sup>291</sup>  
For sorwe and routhe of your unkyndé-  
nesse,

I wepe, I wake, I faste ; al helpeth noght ;  
I weyvè joy that is to speke of oght,  
I voydè companye, I flee gladnesse ;  
Who may avaunte hir bet of hevynesse  
Then I ? And to this plyte have ye me  
brought,  
Withouté gilt,—me nedeth no witnesse.

And sholde I preye, and weyvè woman-  
hede ? <sup>299</sup>

Nay ! rather deeth, then do so cruel dede,  
And axè mercy, causèdes,—what nede ?  
And if I pleyne what lyf that I lede,  
Than wol ye laugh ; I know it out of drede ;  
And if I unto you myn othés bede  
For myn excuse, a scorn shal be my mede,  
Your chere floureth, but it wol not sede,  
Ful longe agoon I oghte have takè hede.

For thogh I haddè yow to-morwe ageyn,  
I myghte as wel holde Avèrill fro reyn,  
As holdè yow to makè yow stedfast. <sup>310</sup>  
Almyghty God, of truth the soverèign !  
Wher is the trouthe of man ? who hath it  
sleyn ?

Who that hem lovèth, shal hem fynde  
as fast

As in a tempest is a roten mast.  
Is that a tamè best, that is ay feyn  
To renne away, when he is leest agast ?

<sup>290.</sup> Harl. Cx. omit this stanza. All read  
*soght.*

<sup>303.</sup> F B Tn. Lt. Ff. H Yow reeketh not that ;  
D You rekke not that.



Now mercy, swete, if I mysseye !  
 Have I seyð oght amys, I preye ?  
 I noot, my wit is al awaye.  
 I fare as doth the songe of *Chauntepleure* ;  
 For now I pleyne, and now I pleye, 321  
 I am so maséd that I deye,  
 Arcite hath born awaye the keye  
 Of al my worlde, and my good aventure.

For in this worlde nys créature,  
 Walkynge, in more discomfiture,  
 Then I, ne morè sorwe endure ;  
 And if I slepe a furlong wey or tweye,  
 Than thinketh me, that your figure  
 Before me stant clad in assure, 330  
 To profren eft a newe assure,  
 For to be trewe, and mercy me to preye.

The longè nyght, this wonder sight I  
 drye,

And on the day for this afay I dye,  
 And of al this right noght, ywys, yerecche ;  
 Ne nevermo myn ÿen two be drye,  
 And to your routhe and to your trouthe  
 I crie !

But, welawaye ! to fer be they to fecche,  
 Thus holdeth me my destyne a wrecche,  
 But me to rede out of this drede, or gye,  
 Ne may my wit, so weyke is hit, not  
 stretche. 341

(Conclusion)

Then ende I thus, sith I may do no more, —  
 I yeve hit up for now and evermore ;  
 For I shal never eft puttén in balaunce  
 My sekernes, ne lerne of love the lore ;  
 But as the swan, I have herd seye ful yore,  
 Aycyns his deeth shal singén his penaunce,  
 So singe I here the destynny or chaunce,  
 How that Arcite, Anelida so sore  
 Had thirléd with the poynt of remem-  
 braunce. 350

[The Story continued]

Whan that Anelida, this woful quene,  
 Hath of her handé written in this wyse,

320. *Chauntepleure*, the name of a famous poem of the 13th century addressed to those who sing in this world but shall weep in the next.

331. F B H *To swere yet.*

351. This stanza is found only in Tn. D Fl. and Lt.

With facé deed, betwyxé pale and grene,  
 She fel a-swowe ; and sith she gan to rise,  
 And unto Mars avoweth sacrificé  
 Within the temple, with a sorrowful chere,  
 That shapen was, as ye shal after here.

THE PARLEMENT OF FOULES

*Here begynnyth the Parlement of Foulys*

*The Proem*

THE lyf so short, the craft so long to lerne,  
 Thassay so hard, so sharp the conquerynge,  
 The dredful joye, alwey that slit so yerne ;  
 Al this mene I be love, that my felyng  
 A-stonyeth with his wondyrful werkyng,  
 So sore y-wis, that whan I on hym thynke  
 Nat wot I wel wher that I flete or synke.

Foral be that I knowe not Love in dede,  
 Ne wot how that he quytteth folk hir hyre,  
 Yit happeth me ful ofte in bokés rede 10  
 Of his myraclés and his cruel yre ;  
 Ther rede I wel he wol be lord and syre,  
 I dar nat seyn, his strokés been so sore,  
 But God save swich a lord ! I seye no more.

Of usage, what for lust and what for lore,  
 On bokés rede I ofte, as I yow tolde.  
 But wherfor that I speke al this ? Not yore  
 Agon, it happéd me for to be-holde 18  
 Up-on a bok, was write with lettrés olde ;  
 And ther-upon, a certeyn thing to lerne,  
 The longè day ful faste I radde and yerne.

For out of oldé feldés, as men seith,  
 Cometh al this newé corn from yeer to  
 yere ;  
 And out of oldé bokes, in good feith,  
 Cometh al this newé science that men lere.  
 But now to purpos as of this matere, —  
 To redé forth it gan me so delyte,  
 That al the day me thoughté but a lyte.

This bok, of which I maké mencion,  
 Entitled was al thus as I schal telle, 30

357. Lt. Th. *may plainly.*

1. Hippocrates' first aphorism:—

ὁ βίος βραχύς, ἢ δὲ τέχνη μακρὴ.

'Tullyus, of the Dreem of Scipioun.'  
 Chapitrés it hadde sevene, of hevene and  
 helle  
 And erthe, and soulés that theynnédwelle,  
 Of whiche, as shortly as I can it trete,  
 Of his sentence I wol you seyn the grete.

First, telleth it, whan Scipioun was come  
 In Affrik, how he mettè Massynisse  
 That him for joye in armès hath y-nome.  
 Than telleth he hir speche, and al the  
 blisse 39  
 That was betwix hem til the day gan misse,  
 And how his auncestre, African so dere,  
 Gan in his slep that nyght to him appere.

Than telleth it, that from a sterry place,  
 How African hath him Cartagè shewéd,  
 And warnéd him be-fore of al his grace,  
 And seyð him, what man leréd other lewéd  
 That loveth comun profit, wel y-thewéd,  
 He shulde in-to a blisful placè wende,  
 Ther as joye is that last with-ouen ende.

Than axède he if folk that heer been  
 dede 50  
 Han lyf and dwellyng in another place.  
 And African seyde, 'Ye, withoutè drede,'  
 And that our present worldés lyvès space  
 Nis but a maner deth, what wey we trace,  
 And rightful folk shul gon after they dye  
 To hevene; and shewède him the Galaxye.

Than shewede he hym the litel erthe  
 that here is,—  
 At regard of the hevenés quantité,—  
 And after shewede he hym the nyné sperès,  
 And after that the melodye herde he 60  
 That cometh of thilkè sperès thryès three,  
 That welle is of musik and melodye  
 In this world heer, and cause of armonye.

31. Marcus Tullius Cicero, whose *Somnium Scipionis* was originally included in the *De Republica*, Bk. vi.

36. *Scipioun*, P. Cornelius Scipio Æmilianus Africanus Minor, who won the third Punic War. He went in 150 B.C. to meet Masinissa, King of Numidia, who had received many favours from 'his auncestre' Africanus Major.

61, 62. An allusion to the so-called 'harmony of the spheres' which arose from the supposed connection between the number of the planets and

Than bad he him, syn erthé was so lyte,  
 And ful of torment and of hardè grace,  
 That hene schulde him in the world delyte.  
 Thanne tolde he him in certeyn yerès space  
 That every sterre shulde come into his place  
 Ther it was first, and al shulde out of mynde  
 That in this world is don of al mankynde.

Than prayde him Scipioun to telle hym al  
 The weye to come in-to that hevenè blisse;  
 And he seyde, 'Know thy-self first  
 immortal,  
 And loke ay besily thow werche and wysse  
 To comoun profit, and thowshalt not mysse  
 To comèn swiftly to that placè dere  
 That ful of blysse is and of soulés clere.

'But brekers of the lawè, soth to seyn,  
 And lecherous folk, after that they be dede,  
 Shul whirle a-boutè the erthe alwey in  
 peyne, 80  
 Til many a world be passéd, out of drede,  
 And than, for-yeven alle hir wikked dede,  
 Thanshul they come in-to that blysfyl place,  
 To which to comèn God thee sende his  
 grace!'

The daygan failen, and the derké nyght,  
 That reveth bestès from hir besynesse,  
 Beraftè me my book for lakke of lyght,  
 And to my bed I gan me for to dresse,  
 Fulfuld of thought and besy hevynesse; 89  
 For bothe I haddè thyng which that I nolde,  
 And ek I ne haddè that thyng that I wolde.

But fynally, my spirit at the laste,  
 For-wery of my labour al the day,  
 Took rest, that madè me to slepè faste;  
 And in my sleep I mette, as that I lay,  
 How African right in the same aray  
 That Scipioun him saw before that tyde  
 Was come and stood right at my beddès  
 syde.

the number of musical notes in the scale. Cp. Shak. *M. of V.* v. 60.

80. *whirle a-boute*, 'volutantur,' Cicero. 85 f. Cp. *Inferno*, ii. 1-3.

Lo giorno se n' andava, e l' aer bruno  
 Toglieva gli animai, che sono in terra  
 Dalle fatiche loro.

90. Cp. Boethius, Bk. iii. pr. 3.

The wery hunter, slepyng in his bed,  
 Towode ayein his myndè goth anoon ; 100  
 The jugè dremeth how his plees ben sped ;  
 The carter dremeth how his carte is goon ;  
 The riche of gold ; the knyght fight with  
 his foon ;  
 The syké met he drynketh of the tonne ;  
 The lover met he hath his lady wonne.

Can I not seyn if that the causè were  
 For I haddè red of African befor,  
 That madè me to mete that he stood there,  
 But thus seyde he : 'Thou hast thee so  
 wel born  
 In lokyng of myn oldè book to-torn, 110  
 Of which Macrobie roghtè not a lyte,  
 That somdel of thy labour wolde I quyte.'

Cytherea, thou blisful lady swete,  
 That with thy fyrbrond dauntest whom  
 thee lest,  
 And madest me this sweven for to mete,  
 Be thou my helpe in this, for thow mayst  
 best  
 As wisly as I say the north-north-west,  
 Whan I began myn sweven for to wryte ;  
 So yif me myght to ryme it and endyte.

### The Story

This forseyd African me hente a-noon,  
 And forth-with him unto a gate me broghte  
 Right of a park, wallèd with grenè stoon ;  
 And over the gate with letrès large  
 y-wroghte  
 There werèn vers y-written, as me thoghte,  
 On eyther syde of ful gret difference,  
 Of which I shal now seyn the pleyen  
 sentence.

'Thurgh me men goon in-to that blisful  
 place  
 Of hertès hele and dedly woundès cure ;  
 Thurgh me men gon un-to the welle of  
 Grace

Ther grene and lusty May shal ever  
 endure ; 130  
 This is the way to al good aventure ;  
 Be glad, thow reder and thysorwe-of-caste.  
 Al open am I, pas in and sped the  
 faste !'

'Thurgh me men gon,' than spak that  
 other syde,  
 'Unto the mortal strokès of the spere  
 Of which Disdaynand Daunger is the gyde,  
 Ther never tre shal fruyt ne levès bere.  
 This stream you ledeth to the sorrowful were  
 Ther as the fish in prison is al drye ;  
 Theschewyng is only the remedye.' 140

Thise vers of gold and blak y-written  
 were,  
 The whiche I gan a-stonied to be-holde ;  
 For with that oon encresède ay my fere,  
 And with that other gan myn hertè bolde ;  
 That oon me hette, that other dide me  
 colde ;  
 No wit hadde I, for errour, for to chese  
 To entre or fleen, or me to save or lese.

Right as be-twixèn adamauntès two  
 Of even myght a pece of yrèn set, 149  
 That hath no myght to mevè to ne fro,—  
 For what that oon may hale that other let,—  
 Ferde I, that nystè whether me was best  
 To entre or leve, til African, my gyde,  
 Me hente, and shoof in at the gatès wyde.

And seyde, 'It stondesth written in thy  
 face  
 Thynerrour, though thou telle it not to me,  
 But dred thee not to come in-to this place,  
 For this wrytyng nis no thying ment bythee,  
 Ne by noon, but he Lovès servaunt be,  
 For thou of love hast lost thy tast, I gesse,  
 As seek man hath of swete and bitternesse.

'But nathèles, al-though that thou be  
 dulle, 163  
 Yit that thou canst not do, yit mayst thou se,  
 For many a man that may not stonde a  
 pulle,  
 It liketh him at wrastlyng for to be,  
 And demèn yit wher he do bet or he ;

99. Cp. Claudian, *In Sextum Consulatum Honorii Augusti Prefatio*, ll. 3-10.

109. Cp. *Inferno*, i. 83.

113. *Cytherea*, Venus.

117. A reference to the planet Venus. *say*, saw.

127. Cp. *Inferno*, iii. 1 ff.

And, if thou haddest cunnyng for tendite,  
I shal thee shewè mater of to write.'

With that my hond in his he took a-noon,  
Of which I comfort caughte, and wente  
in faste ; 170

But Lord ! so I was glad and wel begoon !  
For overal wher that I myn eyèn caste  
Were treës clad with leves that ay shal  
laste,

Eche in his kynde, of colour fresch and  
grene

As emeraude, that joye it was to sene.

The bildere ook and eek the hardy asshe ;  
The piler elm, the cofre unto careyne ;  
The boxtree piper ; holm to whippés lasshe ;  
The saylyng firr ; the cipres, deth to  
pleyne ;

The sheter ew ; the asp for shaftés pleyne ;  
The olyve of pees, and eek the drunken  
vyne ; 181

The victor palm, the laurer to devyne.

A garden saw I ful of blosmy bowès  
Up-on a river in a grenè mede,  
There as ther swetnesse evermorey-now is ;  
With flourés whitè, blewè, yelwe, and rede,  
And coldè wellè-stremès, no-thing dede,  
That swommen ful of smalè fischès lighte,  
With fynnès rede and scalès silver-brighte.

On every bough the briddès herde I  
synge, 190

With voys of aungel in her armonye ;  
Som besyede hem hir briddès forth to  
brynge.

The litel conyes to hir pley gunne hye ;  
And further al aboute I gan aspye  
The dredful roo, the buk the hert and  
hynde,

Squerels and bestés smale of gentil kynde.

169 f. Cp. *Inferno*, iii. 19.  
176 ff. Cp. *Faery Queene*, I. i. 8, 9. The above  
is based on *Teseide*, xi. 22-24, and *R. de ia R.*  
1338-1368.

177. *piler elm*, Spenser 'vine-prop elm.'  
178. *piper*, i.e. used for pipes or horns.  
180. *sheter ew*, because used for bows.  
182. *to devyne*, because used for divination.  
183-259. Cp. *Teseide*, vii. st. 51-60 ; also *Kingis  
Quair*, st. 31-33, 152, 153.

Of instruments of strengès in acord  
Herde I so pleye a ravissyhng swetnesse,  
That God, that maker is of al and Lord,  
Ne herdè never beter, as I gesse ; 200  
Therwith a wynd, unnethe it myghte be  
lesse,

Madc in the levès grene a noysè softe,  
Acordant to the foulès songe on-lofte.

The air of that place so attemprè was  
That never was grevaunce of hoot ne cold ;  
There wexeek every holsom spice and gras ;  
Ne no man may ther wexe seek ne old,  
Yit was ther joyè more a thousand fold  
Than man can telle ; ne never wolde it  
nyghte,  
But ay cleer day to any mannès sighte. 210

Under a tre beside a welle, I say  
Cupide our lord his arwès forge and file  
And at his fet his bowe al redy lay,  
And Wille his doghter temprède al this while  
The hedès in the welle ; and with hir wyle  
She couchède hem after as they shuldè  
serve,  
Som for to slee, and som to wounde and  
kerve.

Tho was I war of Plesaunce anon-right,  
And of Aray and Lust and Curtesye, 219  
And of the Craft that can and hath the  
myght

To doon be force a wyght to doon folye ;  
Disfigurat was she, I nyl not lye ;  
And by him-self, under an ok I gesse,  
Saw I Delyt that stood with Gentilesse.

I saw Beautè, withouten any atyr ;  
And Youthè, ful of game and Jolytè ;  
Fool-hardinesse, Flatery and Desyr,  
Messagerye and Mede and other three, —  
Hir namès shal not here be told for me, —  
And upon pilers grete of Jasper longe, 230  
I saw a temple of bras y-founded stronge.

Aboute the temple daunsèdèn alwey  
Wommen y-nowe, of whichè somme ther  
were  
Faire of hem-self, and somme of hem  
were gay ;

In kirtels, al disshevelé wente they  
there,—

That was hir office alwey, yeer be yere,—  
And on the temple of doves white and  
faire

Saw I sittinge many an hundred peire.

Be-fore the temple dore, ful soberly,  
Dame Pees sat with a curteyn in hir  
hond, 240

And hir besydè, wonder discretly,  
Dame Paciençé sittinge ther I fond  
With facè pale, up-on an hille of sond ;  
And aldernext within and eek with-oute,  
Beheste and Art, and of hir folk a route.

Within the temple, of syghès hote as  
fyr

I herde a swogh that gan abouté renne ;  
Whiche syghès were engendred with  
desyr

That maden every auter for to brenne  
Of newè flaume ; and wel espyed I  
thenne 250

That al the cause of sorwès that they  
drye

Com of the bitter goddesse Jelousye.

The god Priapus saw I as I wente  
Within the temple, in sovereyn placé  
stonde

In swich aray as whan the asse him  
shente,

With cry by nyght, and with his ceptre  
in honde.

Ful besily men gunne assaye and fonde  
Up-on his hede to sette, of sondry hewe  
Garlondès ful of freshè flourès newe. 259

And in a privee corner in desporte  
Fond I Venus and hir portère Richesse,  
That was ful noble and hauteyn of hir  
porte ;

Derk was that place, but afterward  
lightnesse

I saw a lyte, unnethe it myghte be lesse,  
And on a bed of golde she lay to reste  
Til that the hotè sonnè gan to weste.

255. Cp. Ovid, *Fasti*, i. 415.

260-280. Cp. *Teseide*, vii. st. 63-66.

Hir giltè herès with a golden thred  
Y-bounden were, untrusséd as she lay,  
And naked fro the breste unto the hed  
Men myghte hir seen ; and sothly for to  
say, 270

The remenaunt was wel keveréd to my  
pay,

Right with a subtil kerchef of Valence,  
Ther nas no thikker cloth of no defence.

The placé yaf a thousand savours swote,  
And Bachus, god of wyn, sat hir besyde,  
And Sereis next, that doth of hungri  
bote ;

And as I seyde, amyddès lay Cypride,  
To whom, on knees two yongè folkès cryde  
To ben hir help ; but thus I let hir lye,  
And ferther in the temple I gan espye 280

That, in dispit of Dianè the chaste,  
Ful many a bow y-broke heng on the wal,  
Of maydens swiche as gunne hir tymès  
waste

In hir servyse ; and peynted overal  
Ful many a story of which I touchè shal  
A fewe, as of Calyxte and Athalante,  
And many a mayde of which the name I  
wante :

Semyramus, Candace and Herculés,  
Biblis, Dido, Thisbé, and Piramus,  
Tristram, Isoude, Paris, and Achillés, 290  
Eleyne, Cleopatre, and Troilus,  
Silla, and eek the moder of Romulus,—

272. *Valence*, probably Valence near Lynos, where silk is still made. Boccaccio has 'Testa, tanta sottil.'

276. *Sereis*, Ceres.

277. *Cypride*, i.e. Venus, because of her worship in Cyprus.

281-294. Cp. *Teseide*, vii. st. 61, 62.

286. *Calixte*, daughter of Lycaon, King of Arcadia, and mother of Arcas, changed by Juno from jealousy into a she-bear, and raised to heaven by Jupiter as Ursa Major.

288. *Semyramus*, Semiramis, Queen of Assyria.

288. *Candace*, an Indian queen loved by Alexander the Great.

290. *Tristram*, *Isoude*, Tristram (or Tristan) and Ysolde (Ysolt) of French mediæval romance.

292. *Silla*, Scylla, daughter of Nisus, who for love of Minos cut off her father's hair, on which his life depended, and was turned into the bird Ciris.

292. *moder of Romulus*, Ilia or Rhea Silvia, daughter of Numitor.

Alle these were peynted on that other  
 syde,  
 And al hir love and in what plyt they  
 dyde.

Whan I was come ayen un-to the  
 place  
 That I of spak, that was so swote and  
 grene,  
 Forth welk I tho my-selven to solace.  
 Tho was I war wher that ther sat a  
 quene  
 That as of light the somer-sunnè shene  
 Passeth the sterre, right so over mesure 300  
 She fairer was than any creature.

And in a launde upon an hille of  
 flourès  
 Was set this noblé goddessé Nature.  
 Of braunchès were hir hallès and hir  
 bourès  
 Y-wrought after hir craft and hir mesure ;  
 Ne there nas foul that cometh of engen-  
 dre,  
 That they ne weré prest in hir presence,  
 To take hir doom and yeve hir audience.

For this was on Seynt Valentynès  
 day,  
 Whan every bryd cometh ther to chese  
 his make, 320  
 Of every kyndè that men thynké may ;  
 And that so huge a noysè gan they maké,  
 That crthe and eyr and tre and every  
 lake  
 So ful was, that unnethè was there space  
 For me to stonde, so ful was al the  
 place.

And right as Aleyn, in the Pleynt of  
 Kynde,  
 Devyseth Aray of aray and face,  
 In swich aray men myghtèn hir ther  
 fynde.  
 This noble empèressé, ful of grace,  
 Bad every foul to take his ownè place, 320

316. A reference to the *Planctus Naturæ* of Alanus de Insulis, or Alain Delille, a poet of the 12th century.

319. MSS. unanimous as to this line.

As they were wont alwey fro yeer to yere  
 Seynt Valentynès day to stonden there.

That is to seyn, the foulès of ravyne  
 Were hiest set, and than the foulès  
 smale,  
 That eten as hem nature wolde encline,  
 As worm or thyng, of whiche I telle no  
 tale ;  
 And water-foul sat lowest in the dale,  
 But foul that lyveth by seed sat on the  
 grene,  
 And that so fele that wonder was to sene.

There myghtè men the royal egle fynde,  
 That with his sharpè look persèth the  
 sonne ; 331  
 And other eglès of a lower kynde,  
 Of whiche that clerkès wel devysè kunne.  
 Ther was the tyraunt with his fethrès donne  
 And greye, I mene the goshawk that doth  
 pyne  
 To bryddès for his outrageous ravyne.

The gentil faucon that with his feet  
 distreyneth  
 The kyngès hond ; the hardy sperhawk  
 eke, 338  
 The quaylès foo ; the merlion that peyneth  
 Hym-self ful ofte the larkè for to seke ;  
 There was the douvè, with hir eyèn meke ;  
 The jalous swan, ayens his deth that  
 syngeth ;  
 The oule eke, that of deth the bodè  
 bryngeth ;

The crane the gèaunt, with his trompès  
 sounè ;  
 The theef the chough, and eek the  
 jangelyng pye ;  
 The scornynge jay ; the elès foo, the  
 heroune ;  
 The falsè lapwyng, ful of trecherye ;  
 The starè, that the counseyl can be-wrye ;  
 The tamè ruddok, and the coward kyte ;  
 The cok, that orloge is of thorpès lyte ;

342, 343. From Alanus ; cp. *Anglo-Latin Satirical Poets*, vol. ii. p. 74 (Record Series). Most of the natural history of this whole passage comes from him.

The sparwé, Venus sone ; the nyhtyn-  
gale, 351  
That clepeth forth the grené levés newe ;  
The swallow, mortrer of the flyés smale,  
That maken hony of flourés fresshe of  
hewe ;  
The wedded turtel, with hire herté trewe,  
The pecock, with his aungels fethrés  
bright ;  
The fesaunt, scorner of the cok by nyght ;

The waker goos ; the cuckow ever un-  
kynde ;  
The popynjay, ful of delicasye ; 359  
The draké, stroyer of his owné kynde ;  
The stork, the wreker of a vouterye ;  
The hoté cormeraunt of glotenye ;  
The raven wys ; the crow, with vois of care ;  
The throstel old ; the frosty feldéfare.

What shulde I seyn ? Of foulés every  
kynde  
That in this world han fethrés and stature,  
Men myghtén in that place assembled fynde  
Before the noble goddessé Nature.  
And everich of hem did his besy cure  
Benygnely to chese or for to take 370  
By hir acord his formel or his make.

But to the poynt,—Nature held on  
hir hond  
A formel egle, of shap the gentiléste  
That ever she a-mong hire werkés fond ;  
The moste benygné and the goodliéste ;  
In hir was every vertu at his reste  
So ferforth, that Nature hir-selfe hadde  
blisse  
To loke on hir and ofte hir bek to kisse.

Nature, the vicair of the almyghty  
Lord,  
That hoot, cold, hevye, light, and moist,  
and dreye 380  
Hath knyght, with evené noumbrés of a-cord,  
In esy vois began to speke and seye,  
'Foulés, tak hede of my sentence, I preye,

351. The sparrow was sacred to Venus.

361. Cp. Neckam, *Liber de Naturis Rerum*  
(Ed. Wright, lib. i. c. 64).

363. *with vois of care*, a mistranslation of  
Virgil, *Georg.* i. 388.

And, for your ese in furtheryng of your nede,  
As faste as I may speke I wol me speede.

'Ye know wel how seynt Valentynés day,  
By my statut and through my governaunce,  
Ye comen for to chese—and flee your  
way—

Your makés, as I prike yow with plesaunce ;  
But nathéles my rightful ordénaunce 390  
May I nat lete for al this world to wynne,  
That he that most is worthy shal begynne.

'The tercel egle, as that ye knowén wel,  
The foul royal, a-bove yow in degree,  
The wyse and worthy, secree, trewe as stel,  
The which I have y-formed, as ye may see,  
In every part as it best liketh me,—  
Hit nedeth not his shap yow to devyse,—  
He shal first chese and speken in his gyse.

'And after him by order shul ye chese,  
After your kyndé, everich as yow lyketh,  
And as your hap is shul ye wynne or lese ;  
But which of yow that lové most entrikeyth  
God sende him hir that sorest for him  
syketh.'

And therewithal the tercel gan she calle,  
And seyde, 'My sone, the choys is to  
thee falle.

'But nathéles, in this condicioun  
Mot be the choys of everich that is here,  
That she a-gree to his eleccioun,  
Who-so he be that shuldé be hir fere ; 410  
This our usage alwey from yeer to yeer,  
And who-so may at this tyme have his grace,  
In blisful tyme he com into this place.'

With hed enclynéd and with humblé  
chere

This royal tercel spak, and taried nought :  
'Un-to my sovereign lady, and nought  
my fere—

I chese, and chese with wille and herte  
and thought,

The formel on your hond, so wely-wrought,  
Whos I am al and ever wol hir serve, 419  
Do what hir list, to do me live or sterve.

411. *This*=this is. Cp. ll. 620, 649; also *K. T.*  
233 and 885.

'Besechyng hir of mercy and of grace,  
As she that is my lady sovereyne ;  
Or let me dye present in this place ;  
For certès, longe I may nat live in payne,  
For in myn herte is corven every veyne ;  
And havyng réward only to my trouthe,  
My derè herte have of my wo som routhe !

'And if that I to hir be founde untrewe,  
Disobeysaunt, or wilful negligent,  
Avauntour, or in proces love anewe, 430  
I preyre to yow this be my jugèment,  
That with these foulès be I al to-rent,  
That ilkè day that ever she me fynde  
To hir untrewe, or in my gilt unkynde.

'And, syn that noon loveth hir so wel as I,  
Al be she never of lovè me behette,  
Thanoughtè she be myn thourgh hir mercy,  
For other bond can I noon on hir knette ;  
Ne never for no wo ne shal I lette 439  
To serven hir, how fer so that she wende ;  
Say what yow list, my tale is at an ende.'

Right as the fresshè, redè rosè newe  
A-yen the somer sonnè coloured, is,  
Right so for shame al wexén gan the hewe  
Of this formel. Whan she herde al this,  
She neyther answerdè 'Wel,' ne seyde  
amys,  
So sore abasshed was she, til that Nature  
Seyde, 'Doughter, dred yow nought, I  
yow assure.'

Another tercel egle spak anoon,  
Of lower kynde, and seyde, 'That shal  
not be !' 450  
I love hir bet than ye do, by Seynt John !  
Or attè leste I love as wel as ye,  
And lenger have servèd hir in my degree ;  
And if she shulde have loved for long  
lovyng,  
To me allone hadde been the guerdonyng.

'I dar eek seyn, if she me fyndè fals,  
Unkynde, janglere, or rebel any wyse,  
Or jealous, do me hangen by the hals !  
And, but I berè me in hir servyse, 459  
As wel as that my wit can me suffyse,

Fro poynt to poynt hir honour for to save,  
Tak she my lif and al the good I have.'

The thridde tercel egle answerdè tho,  
'Now, sirs, ye seen the litel leysur here,  
For every foul cryeth out to ben a-go  
Forth with his make, or with his ladydere,  
And eek Nature hir-self ne wol not here,  
Fortaryng here, not half that I wolde seye,  
And but I speke I mot for sorwè deye.

'Of long servyse avaunte I me nothing  
But as possible is me to deye to-day 471  
For wo, as he that hath ben languysshynghyng  
Thise twenty winter, and wel happen may  
A man may servèn bet and more to pay  
In half a yer, although it were no more  
Than som man doth that hath servèd ful  
yore.

'I ne sey not this by me, for I ne can  
Don no servyse that may my lady plesè ;  
But I dar seyn I am hir trewest man, 479  
As to my dom, and feynest wolde hir ese ;  
At shortè wordès, til that deth me sese,  
I wol ben hirès, whether I wake or wynke,  
And trewe in al that hertè may bethynke.'

Of al my lyf syn that day I was born  
So gentil ple in love or other thyng  
Ne herdè never no man me befrom,  
Who-so that haddè leysur and cunning  
For to reherse hir chere and hir spekyng :  
And from the morwè gan this spechè laste  
Tildounward drow the sonnè wonder faste.

The noyse of foulès for to ben delyverèd  
So loudè rong, 'Have doon and let us  
wende !'  
That wel wende I the wode hadde al to-  
shyverèd.  
'Come of !' they cryde, 'allas, ye wil  
us shende !  
Whan shal your cursed pleyng have an  
ende ?  
How shulde a jugè eyther party leve  
For yee or nay, with-uten any preve ?'

The goos, the cokkow, and the doke  
also,

445. A short line, but so in all MSS. Perhaps  
*haddè herd* is the true reading.



So cryden, 'Kek, kek!' 'Kokkow!'  
 'Quek, quek!' hye, <sup>499</sup>  
 That thurgh myn eres the noysè wentè tho.  
 The goos seyde, 'Al this nys not worth  
 a flye!

But I can shape hereof a remedye,  
 And I wol sey my verdit faire and swythe,  
 For water-foul, who-so be wrooth or  
 blythe.'

'And I for worm-foul!' quod the fol  
 cokkow;

'And I wol of myn owne autoritè,  
 For comun sped take on the chargè now,—  
 For to delyvere us is gret charitè.'  
 'Ye may abyde a whilè yet, *pardè!*'  
 Seidè the turtill, 'if it be your wille <sup>510</sup>  
 A wight may speke, him were as fayr be  
 stille.'

'I am a seed-foul, oon the unworthieste,  
 That wot I wel, and litel of cunnyng,  
 But bet is that a wyghtès tongè reste,  
 Than entrèmetèn him of swiche doynge  
 Of which he neyther redè can, ne syngè;  
 And who-so doth, ful foule himselfacloyeth,  
 For office uncommytte oftè anoyeth.'

Naturè, which that alway hadde an ere  
 To murmur of the lewèdnes behynde, <sup>520</sup>  
 With facound voyse seyde, 'Hold your  
 tungès there!

And I shal sone, I hope, a conseyl fynde,  
 Yow to delyvere, and fro this noyse un-  
 bynde.

I juge, of every flok men shal oon calle  
 To seyn the verdit for yow foulès alle.'

Assentèd were to this conclusioun  
 The briddès alle; and foulès of ravynè  
 Han chosen first, by playn eleccioun,  
 The tercelet of the faucon, to diffyne <sup>529</sup>  
 Al hir sentence as him list to termyne;  
 And to Nature him gonnèn to presente,  
 And she accepteth him with glad entente.

The tercelet seidè then in this manèrè:  
 Ful hard were hit to prevèn by resoun  
 Who loveth best this gentil formel here,  
 For everich hath swich replicacioun

That noon by skillès may be brought a-  
 doun;

I can not se that arguments avayle;  
 Than semeth hit ther mustè be batayle.'

'Al redy!' quod these eglès tercels  
 tho. <sup>540</sup>

'Nay, sirs,' quod he, 'if that I dorste  
 it seye

Ye doon me wrong, myn tale is not y-do,  
 For sirs, ne taketh nought a-gref, I preye,  
 It may not gon, as ye wolde, in this weye;  
 Oure is the voys that han the charge in  
 honde,

And to the jugès dome ye moten stonde;

'And therfor, pes! I seye, as to my wit,  
 Me woldè thynke how that the worthieste  
 Of knyghthode, and lengest hath usèd hit,  
 Moste of estat, of blod the gentileste, <sup>550</sup>  
 Were sittingest for hir, if that hir leste,  
 And of these thre she wot hir-self, I trowe,  
 Which that he be, for hit is light to knowe.'

The water-foulès han her hedès leyd  
 Tokedre, and of a short avysèment,  
 Whan everich hadde his largè golee seyde,  
 They seyden sothly, al by oon assent,  
 How that the 'goos, with hir facoundè gent,  
 That so desyreth to pronounce our nede,  
 Shal telle our tale,' and preyden 'god hir  
 spede.' <sup>560</sup>

And for these water-foulès tho began  
 The goos to speke, and in hir kakelynge  
 She seyde, 'Pees! now tak keepeveryman,  
 And herkeneth which a resoun I shal  
 brynge;

My wit is sharp, I love no tarynge;  
 I seye, I rede him, though he were my  
 brother,

But she wol love him let him take another.'

'Lo here! a perfit resoun of a goos!'  
 Quod tho the sperhauke, 'never mot she  
 the!

Lo, sich it is to have a tungè loos! <sup>570</sup>  
 Now pardè, fool, yet were it bet for the  
 Han holde thy pes, than shewed thy  
 nyceté!

It lyth nat in his wit, nè in his wille,  
But sooth is seyde, "a fool can nocht be  
stille."

The laughter aroos of gentil foulés alle,  
And right a-noon the seed-foul chosen hadde  
The turtel trewe, and gunne hir to hem calle  
And preyden hir to seyn the sothè sadde  
Of this matere, and askéd what she radde.  
And she answerde, that pleynty hir entente  
She woldè shewe, and sothly what she  
mente. 581

'Nay, god forbede a lover shuldè  
chaunge!'  
The turtel seyde, and wex for shamè red;  
'Though that his lady ever more be  
straunge,  
Yet let him serven hir til he be deed.  
Forsothe I preysè nocht the goosès reed,  
For though she deyede I wol non other  
make,  
I wol ben hires til that the deth me take!'

'Wel bourdéd,' quod the dokè, 'by my  
hat!  
That men shul lovèn alwey, causéles, 590  
Who can a resoun fynde, or wit in that?  
Daunceth he mury that is myrthéles?  
Who shuldè recche of that is recchéles?  
Ye, kek!' yit seyde the gos, ful wel  
and fayre,  
'There been mo sterrès, god wot, than a  
payre!'

'Now fy, cherl!' quod the gentil tercèlet,  
'Out of the donghil com that word ful right,  
Thou canst not see what thyng is wel be-set;  
Thow farest by love as oulès doon by light,  
The day hem blent, but wel they sen by  
nyght; 600  
Thy kynde is of so lowe a wrechednesse,  
That what love is thow canst nat see ne  
gesse.'

Tho gan the cuckow put him forth in  
prees

574. Cp. 'A fool's bolt is soon shot,' *As You  
Like It*, v. 4, 67, and *Henry V.* iii. 7, 132.  
594. So Ha., except that it reads *Za queke*.

For foul that eteth worm, and seyde blythe,  
'So I,' quod he, 'may have my make in  
pees

I recché nat how longè that ye stryve;  
Lat ech of hem be soleyn al hir lyve;  
This is my reed, syn they may not acorde,  
This shortè lessoun nedeth not recorde.'

'Ye! have the glotoun fild y-nogh his  
paunche, 610  
Than are we wel,' seyde the merlioun;  
'Thow mordrer of the heysugge on the  
braunche  
That broghte thee forth! thou [rewthéles]  
glotoun!  
Live thou soleyn, wormès corrupcioun!  
For no fors is of lakke of thy nature!  
Go, lewèd be thou, while the world may  
dure!'

'Now pees,' quod Nature, 'I comaundè  
here!  
For I have herd al your opynyoun,  
And in effect yet be we never the nere;  
But fynally, this my conclusioun,— 620  
That she hir-self shal han the eleccioun  
Of whom hir list, who-so be wrooth or  
blythe,  
Him that she cheseth, he shal hir han as  
swythe;

'For syn it may not here discussèd be  
Who loveth hir best, as seyde the tercèlet,  
Than wol I don hir this favour, that she  
Shal han right him on whom hir herte is  
set,  
And he hir that his herte hath on hir knet,  
Thus juge I, Nature, for I may not lye  
To non estat, I have non othir ye. 630

'But as for conseyl for to chese a make,  
If I were Resoun, certès than wolde I  
Conseylè yow the royal tercel take,  
As seyde the tercèlet ful skylfully,  
As for the gentilest and most worthy  
Which I have wrought so wel to my  
plesaunce  
That to yow oughtè been a suffisaunce.'

613. Skeat's emendation for *reusful* of most  
MSS. Gg. *reusfulles*; P. *rowthfull*.

With dredful vois the formel hir  
answerde :

' Myn rightful lady, goddesse of Nature,  
Soth is that I am ever under your yerde,  
Like as is everich other creature, 64r  
And mot ben yourès whil my lyf may dure ;  
And therfor graunteth me my firstè bone,  
And myn entent I wolyowseyne right sone.'

' I graunte it yow,' quod she, and right  
a-non

This formel egle spak in this degre :  
' Almyghty quene, unto this yer be gon  
I askè réspit for to a-visè me,  
And after that to have my choys al fre ;  
This al and som that I wol speke and  
seye ;  
Ye gete no more al-though ye do me deye.

' I wol not servèn Venus ne Cupide,  
For sothe as yet, by no manèrè weye.'

' Now, syn it may non otherweys betyde,'  
Quod tho Nature, ' here is no more to  
seye ;

Than wolde I that these foulès were a-weye,  
Ech with his make, for taryng lenger  
here,'—

And seyde hem thus, as ye shul after here.

' To you speke I, ye tercelets,' quod  
Nature,

' Beth of good herte and serveth, alle thre ;  
A yeer nis nat so longè to endure, 66r  
And ech of yow peyne him in his degre  
For to do well ; for, God wot, quit is she  
Fro you this yeer ; what after so be-falle ;  
This entremès is dressèd for you alle.'

And whan this werk al broght was to  
an ende,

To every foulè Nature yaf his make  
Byeven acorde, and on hir wey they wende ;  
And, Lord, the blisse and joyè that they  
make !

For ech gan other in his wyngès take, 67o  
And with hir nekkès ech gan other wynde,  
Thankyngalwey the noble quene of kynde.

But first were chosen foulès for to synge,  
As, yeer be yeer, was alwey hir usance  
To synge a roundel at hir departyng,  
To don to Nature honour and plesance.  
The note, I trowe, y-makèd was in  
Fraunce ;

The wordès were swiche as ye may here  
fynde  
The nextè vers, as I now have in mynde.

' Now welcom, somer, with thy sonnè softe,  
That hast this wintrès weders over-  
shake 68r  
And driven a-wey the longè nyghtès blake ;

Seynt Valentyn, that art ful hy on lofte,  
Thus syngèn smalè foulès for thy sake

*Now welcom, somer, with thy sonnè  
softe,*

*That hast this wintrès weders over-  
shake.*

Wele han they causè for to gladèn ofte,  
Sith ech of hem recoverèd hath his make ;  
Ful blisful mowe they ben when they  
awake.

*Now welcom, somer, with thy sonnè  
softe, 69o*

*That hast this wintrès weders over-  
shake*

*And driven a-wey the longè nyghtès  
blake ;'*

And with the showtyng whan the song  
was do

That foulès madèn at hir flight away,  
I wook, and other bokès tok me to,  
To rede up-on ; and yet I rede alwey ;  
In hope y-wys to redè so sum day,  
That I shall metè somthyng for to fare  
The bet ; and thus to rede I nyl not spare.

675. *roundel*, also called *triolet* in its oldest form, a short poem in which the first line or lines recur in the middle and at the end.

676. All but Gg. om. second *to*.

685 f. These lines are not repeated either here or at l. 690 ff. in Gg. and Jo., the only MSS. which give the roundel. In Jo. the first three lines are wanting altogether.

## BOECE

INCIPIIT LIBER BOECII DE CONSOLA-  
CIONE PHILOSOPHIE

'*Carmina qui quondam studio florente  
peregi.*'—Metrum I

ALLAS ! I, wepynge, am constreynd to bygynnen vers of sorwful matere, that whilom in florysschyng studie made delitable ditees. For lo ! rendyng Muses of poetes enditen to me thynges to ben writen, and drery vers of wrecchidnesse weten my face with verray teres.

At the leeste, no drede ne myghte overcomen tho Muses, that thei ne were felawes, and folwyden my wey (that is to seyn, whan I was exiled). They that weren glorie of my youthe, whilom weleful and grene, conforten nowe the sorwful wyerdes of me, olde man. For eelde is comyn unwarly uppon me, hasted by the harmes that y have, and sorwe hath comandid his age to hen in me. [5] Heeris hore arn schad over-tymeliche up-on myn heved, and the slakke skyn trembleth of myn emptid body.

Thilke deth of men is weleful that ne comyth nought in yeeris that ben swete, but cometh to wrecches often yclepid. Allas ! allas ! with how deef an ere deth, cruwel, turneth away fro wrecches, and nayteth to closen wepyng eien. Whil fortune, unfeithful, favourede me with

For the relation of MSS. see Introduction.

Abbreviations—C<sub>1</sub>, Camb. Univ. Libr. li. i. 38; A<sub>2</sub>, Brit. Mus. Additional 16,165; H, Brit. Mus. Harleian 2421; Cx., Caxton's Ed.; B., Bodleian Libr., Bodley 797; C<sub>2</sub>, Camb. Univ. Libr. li. 3. 21; A<sub>1</sub>, Brit. Mus. Add. 10,340; Hn., the Hengwrt Fragment, MS. Peniarth 393; Com., the fragment of a commentary in Bodl. MS. Auct. F. 3. 5; Fr., Bibl. Nat. Fonds Franç. 1079, or French text in general; L, Bibl. Nat. Fonds Lat. 18,424 (French and Latin parallel text); Lat., Latin text of Obbarius, Jena 1843; Aq., the so-called Aquinas Commentary.

4. *wyerdes*, 'fata.'

lyghte goodes, the sorwful houre (that is to seyn, the deth) hadde almost dreynt myn heved. But now, for fortune cloudy hath chaunged hir deceyvable chere to me ward, myn unpietous lif draweth along unagreable duellynges in me. [10]

O ye, my frendes, what, or wher-to avaunted ye me to be weleful? For he that hath fallen stood nought in stedefast degre.

'*Hec dum mecum tacitus.*'—Prosa I

In the mene while that I, stille, recordede these thynges with my-self, and merkid my weply compleynte with office of poyntel, I sawe, stondyng aboven the heighte of myn heved, a womman of ful greet reverence by semblaunt, hir eien brennyng and cleer seyng over the comune myghte of men; with a lifly colour and with swich vigour and strengthe that it ne myghte nat ben emptid, al were it so that sche was ful of so greet age that men ne wolden not trowen in no manere that sche were of our elde. [15] The stature of hire was of a doutous judgement, for som-tyme sche constreynd and schronk hir-selven lik to the comune mesure of men, and som-tyme it semede that sche touchede hevene with the heighte of here heved; and whan sche hef hir heved heyere, sche percede the selve hevene so that the sighte of men lokyng was in ydel.

Hir clothes weren makid of right delye thredes and subtile craft, of perdurable matere, the whiche clothes sche hadde

10. *unpietous*, 'impia.' C<sub>1</sub> H Cx. A<sub>2</sub> omit *in me*.

11. *what* here, as often, is Chaucer's translation of 'quid,' 'why.'

18. Supply 'with' before *subtile*. In the Latin *the beaute* belongs to the next sentence, 'Quarum speciem,' etc.

woven with hir owene handes, as I knewe wel afir by hir-selve declarynge and schewyng to me the beaute. The whiche clothes a derknesse of a for-leten and despised elde hadde duskid and dirked, as it is wont to dirken besmokede ymages. In the nethereste hem or bordure of these clothes, men redded y-woven in a Grek-issch P (that signifieth the lif actif); [20] and aboven that lettre, in the heieste bordure, a Grekyssh T (that signifieth the lif contemplatif). And bytwixen these two lettres ther were seyn degrees nobly y-wrought in manere of ladders, by whiche degrees men myghten clymben fro the nethereste lettre to the uppereste.

Natheles handes of some men hadden korve that cloth by violence and by strengthe, and everich man of hem hadde boren away swiche peces as he myghte geten. And for sothe this forseide womman bar smale bokis in hir right hand, and in hir left hand sche bar a ceptre. And whan she saughe these poetical Muses aprochen aboute my bed and enditynge wordes to my wepynges, sche was a litil amoved, and glowede with cruel eighen. [25] 'Who,' quod sche, 'hath suffred aprochen to this sike man this comune strompettis of swich a place that men clepen the theatre; the whiche not oonly ne asswagen noght his sorwes with none remedies, but thei wolden fedyn and norysen hym with sweete venym. For sothe these ben tho that with thornes and prikkynges of talentes or affecciions, whiche that ne bien nothyng fructifyenge nor profitable, destroyen the corne plentyvous of fruytes of resoun. For thei holden hertes of men in usage, but thei delyvre noght folk fro maladye. But yif ye muses hadden with-drawn fro me with youre

flateries, any unkunnyng and unprofitable man as men ben wont to fynde comonly among the peple, I wolde wene suffre the lasse grevosly; [30] for-whi, in swych an unprofitable man, myne ententes weren nothyng endamaged. But ye with-drawn me this man, that hath ben norysed in the studies or scoles of Eleaticis and of Achademycis in Grece. But goth now rather away, ye mermaydenes, whiche that ben swete til it be at the laste, and suffreth this man to be-cured and heeled by myne muses (that is to seyn, by noteful sciences). And thus this companie of Muses, I-blamed, casten wrothly the chere downward to the erthe, and, schewing by rednesse hir schame, thei passeden sorwfully the thresschefolde. And I, of whom the sighte, ploungid in teeres, was dirked so that y ne myghte noght knowen what that womman was of so imperial auctorite, [35] I wax al abayssched and astoned, and caste my syghte down to the erthe, and bygan, stille, for to abide what sche wolde doon afirward. Tho com sche ner, and sette her down upon the uttereste corner of my bed; and sche, byholdyng my chere that was cast to the erthe hevy and grevous of wepyng, compleynede, with these wordis that I schal seyn, the perturbation of my thought.

*'Heu quam precipiti mersa profundo.'*

Metrum 2

'Allas how the thought of this man, dreynt in overthrowng depnesse, dulleth and for-leteth his propre clernesse, myntyng to gon in-to foreyne dirknesses as ofte as his anoyos bysynes waxeth withoute mesure, that is dryven with werldly wyndes. This man, that whilom was fre, to whom the hevене was opyn and knowen, and was wont to gon in hevenliche pathes, [40] and saughe the lyghtnesse of the rede sonne, and saughe the sterres of the coolde mone, and whiche sterre in hevене useth wandryng recourse

39. C<sub>2</sub> A<sub>1</sub> com. *dryven to and fro.*

20, 21. P, T, i.e. Πρακτικῆ, Θεωρητικῆ, referring to the two divisions of philosophy.

23. C<sub>1</sub> A<sub>2</sub> H read *or* for first *and*.

27. C<sub>1</sub> A<sub>2</sub> read *cornes*.

29. *plentyvous of fruytes*, 'uberem fructibus.'

29. 'Hominum mentes adsuefaciunt morbo, non liberant.' But Chaucer has mistranslated, 'Tiennent les pensees des hommes en costume et ne les delivrent pas de maladie.'

I-flyt by diverse speeris, this man, overcomere, hadde comprehendid al this by nombres (of acontynge in astronomye). And, over this, he was wont to seken the causes whennes the sounynge wyndes moeven and bysien the smothe watir of the see; and what spirit turneth the stable hevne; and why the sterre ariseth out of the rede est, to fallen in the westrene wawes; and what attempth the lusty houres of the firste somer sesoun, that highteth and apparaileth the erthe with rosene floures; [45] and who maketh that plentyvous autumpne in fulle yeris fletith with hevny grapes. And eek this man was wont to tellen the diverse causes of nature that weren yhidde. Allas! now lyth he emptid of lyght of his thought, and his nekke is pressyd with hevny cheynes, and bereth his chere enclnyed adoun for the grete weyghte, and is constryed to loken on the fool erthe!

‘*Set medicine inquit tempus.*’—Prosa 2

‘But tyme is now,’ quod sche, ‘of medicine more than of compleynte.’ Forsothe thanne sche, entendinge to me ward with al the lookynge of hir eien, seyde:—[50] ‘Art nat thou he,’ quod sche, ‘that whilom, norissched with my melk and fostred with mynemetes, were escaped and comyn in-to corage of a parfit man. Certes I yaf the swiche armures that, yif thou thi-selve ne haddest first cast hem a-wey, they schulden han defended the in sekernesse that mai nat ben overcomyn. Knowestow me nat? Why arttow stille? Is it for schame or for astonyng? It were me levere that it were for schame, but it semeth me that astonyng hath oppreside the.’ [55] And whan she say me nat oonly stille, but withouten office of tunge and al dowmbe, sche leyde hir hand softlyt uppon my breest, and seide:

42. *I-flyt by diverse speeris*, ‘flexa, i.e. mota, per varios orbis,’ refers to the ancient theory of direct and retrograde planetary motions; cp. *Astr.* II. concl. 35.

49. C<sub>1</sub> A<sub>2</sub> H C<sub>x</sub>. B A<sub>1</sub> read *foul erthe*; Lat. ‘stolidam terram’; Fr. ‘la fole terre.’

‘Here nys no peril,’ quod sche, ‘he is fallen in-to a litargye, whiche that is a comune seknesse to hertes that been desceyved. He hath a litil foryeten hym-selve, but certes he schal lightly remembre hymself, yif it so be that he hath knowen me or now; and that he may so doon, I will wipe a litil his eien that ben dirked by the cloude of mortal thynges.’ [60] These woordes seide sche, and with the lappe of hir garment, yplited in a frownce, sche dryede myn eien, that weren fulle of the wawes of my wepynges.

‘*Tunc me discussa.*’—Metrum 3

Thus, whan that nyght was discussed and chased a-wey, dirknesses forleten me, and to myn eien repeyred ayen hir firste strengthe. And ryght by ensaumple as the sonne is hydd whan the sterres ben clustred (that is to seyn, when sterres ben covered with cloudes) by a swyft wynd that hyghte Chorus, and that the firmament stant dirked with wete plowngy cloudes, and that the sterres nat aperen upon hevne, so that the nyght semeth sprad upon erthe: yif thanne the wynde that hyghte Boreas, I-sent out of the kaves of the cuntre of Trace, betith this nyght (that is to seyn, chaseth it a-wey), [65] and discovereth the closed day, thanne schyneth Phebus I-schaken with sodeyn light, and smyteth with his beemes in merveylngne eien.

‘*Haut aliter tristicie.*’—Prosa 3

Ryght so, and noon other wise, the cloudes of sorwe dissolved and door a-wey, I took hevne, and resceyved mynde to knowe the face of my fysycien, so that I sette myne eien on hir and fastned my lookynge. I byholde my noryce, Philosophie, in whoos houses

63. *sterres ben clustred*, literal rendering of ‘sidera glomerantur.’

68. *I took hevne*, Fr. ‘ie pris le ciel,’ a literal translation of ‘hausi cælum’ (‘I looked up).

hadde conversed and hauntyd fro my youthe; and I seide thus: 'O thou maystresse of alle vertues, descended from the sovereyne sete, whi arttow comen in-to this solitarie place of myn exil? Artow comen for thou art maad coupable with me of false blames?' [70] 'O!' quod sche, 'my nory, schulde I forsake the now, and schulde I nat parten with the, by comune travaile, the charge that thou hast suffred for envye of my name? Certes it nere nat levelful ne syttinge thyng to philosophie, to leten with-outen companye the weye of hym that is innocent. Schulde I thanne redowte my blame, and agrysen as though ther were by-fallen a newe thyng? For rowestow that philosophie be now alderferst assailed in periles by folk of wykkide maneris? Have I noght stryven with ul greet strif in olde tyme, byfor the age of my Plato, ayens the foolhardynesse of olye? [75] And eek, the same Plato yvyngge, his mayster Socrates deserved victorie of unryghtful deth in my presence. The heritage of the whiche Socrates (the heritage is to seyn, the doctryne of the whiche Socrates in his opinyoun of elicite, that I clepe welefulness) whan that the peple of Epycuriensand Stoyciens and many othre enforceden hem to gon vyssche everyche man for his part that is to seyn that everych of hem olde drawn to the deffense of his pinyoun the wordes of Socrates), they in partye of hir preye to-drowen me, ynyngge and debatyng ther ayens, and orven and to-rente my clothes that I hadde woven with myn handes; and with the cloutes that thei hadden arased it of my clothes, thei wenten a-wey enyngge that I hadde gon with hem very del. [80] In whiche Epycuriens and Stoyciens for as myche as ther semede me traces or steppes of myn abyte, the lie of men wenyngge tho Epycuryens and Stoyciens my familiers pervertede me thurw the errour of the wikkide or kunnyngge multitude of hem. (This is seyn, that, for they semeden philoso-

phres, thei weren pursued to the deth and slayn.) So yif thou ne hast noght knowen the exilyngge of Anaxogore, ne the enpoisonyngge of Socrates, ne the turmentes of Zeno, for they weren straungiers, yit myghtestow han knowen the Seneciens, and the Canyos, and the Soranas, of whiche folk the renoun is neyther over-oold ne unsollempne. [85] The whiche men no thyng elles broght hem to the deeth, but oonly for thei weren enformyd of myne maneris, and semyde moost unlyk to the studies of wykkid folk. And for-thi thou oughtest noght to wondren thoughte that I, in the bytterer see of this lif, be fordryven with tempestes blowyngge aboute. In the whiche this is my moste purpoos, that is to seyn to displesen to wikkide men. Of whiche schrewes al be the oost nevere so greet, it is to despise; for it nys nat governyd with no ledere (of resoun), but it is ravysched oonly by fleetyngge errour folyly and lightly; and yif they som-tyme, makyngge an oost ayens us, assayle us as strengere, our ledere draweth to-gidre his richesses in-to his tour, and they ben ententyf aboute sarpieris or sachelis, unprofitable for to taken. [90] But we that ben heighe above, syker fro alle tumolte and wood noyse, warnstoryd and enclosed in swiche a paleys whider as that chateryngge or anyoyngge folye ne may nat atayne, we scorne swyche ravyneres and henteres of fouleste thynges.

'*Quisquis composito.*'—Metrum 4

Who-so it be that is cleer of vertue, sad and wel ordynat of lyvyngge, that hath put under fote the proude weerdes and loketh, up-right, up-on either fortune, he may holden his chere undesconfited.

84. *Anaxogore*, like *Canyos* (and *Soranas*?) below, owes its form to the Latin text.

85. *the Seneciens*, etc., i.e. men like Seneca, Canius, and Soranus. *Seneciens* is probably due to Fr. 'Seneciens.'

92. *cleer of vertue*, 'serenus' glossed 'clarus virtute.'

The rage ne the manaces of the see, commoevyng or chasyng upward hete fro the botme, ne schal nat moeve that man. Ne the unstable mowntaigne that highte Visevus, that writhith out thurw his brokene chemeneyes smokyng fieres, ne the wey of thonder leit, that is wont to smyten hye toures, ne schal nat moeve that man. Whar-to thanne, o wrecches, drede ye tirauntes that ben wode and felenus withouten ony strengthe? [95] Hope aftir no thyng, ne drede nat; and so schaltow desarmen the ire of thilke unmyghty tiraunt. But who so that, qwakyng, dredeth or desireth thyng that nys noght stable of his ryght, that man that so dooth hath cast away his scheeld, and is remoeved from his place, and enlaceth hym in the cheyne with whiche he mai ben drawn.

‘*Sentis ne inquit.*’—Prosa 4

‘Felistow,’ quod sche, ‘thise thynges, and entren thei aughte in thy corage? Artow like an asse to the harpe? Why wepistow, why spillestow teiris? Yif thou abidest after helpe of thi leche, the byhoveth discovre thy wownde.’

Tho I, that hadde gaderyd strengthe in my corage, answeride and seide: ‘And nedeth it yit,’ quod I, ‘of rehersyng or of ammonicioun? [100] And scheweth it nat y-noghe by hym-selve the sharpnesse of fortune, that waxeth wood ayens me? Ne moeveth it nat the to seen the face or the manere of this place? Is this the librarye whiche that thou haddest chosen for a ryght certain sege to the in myn hous, there as thow disputedest ofte with me of the sciences of thynges touchyng dyvinyte and mankynde? Was thanne myn habit swiche as it is now? Was my face or my chere swyche as now whan I soghte with the

93. *hete*, ‘æstum,’ which means ‘surge’ here; cp. 255.

97. *his*, its. Chaucer follows L., ‘estables [et Fr.] de son droit,’ not Lat. ‘stabilis siveque iuris.’

98. *an asse to the harpe*, the Greek proverb ονος λύρας, through Lat. ‘asinus ad lyram.’

the secretis of nature, whan thow enformedest my maneris and the resoun of al my lif to the ensample of the ordre of hevене? Is noght this the gerdouns that I referre to the, to whom I have ben obeisaunt? [105]

Certes thou confermedest by the mouth of Plato this sentence, that is to seyne that comune thynges or comunalites weren blisful yif they that hadden studied al fully to wysdom governeden thilke thynges; or elles yif it so befille that the governours of comunalites studieden to geten wysdom. Thou seidest eek by the mouth of the same Plato that it was a necessarie cause wise men to taken and desire the governance of comune thynges, for that the governementz of cites, I-lefte in the handes of felonous turmentours citezeens, ne schulde noght bryngen in pestilence and destruccioun to good folk. And therefore I, folwyng thilke auctorite, desired to putten forth in execucion and in acte of comune administracioun thilke thynges that I hadde lernyd of the among my secre restyng-whiles. [110]

Thow and god, that putte the in the thoughtes of wise folk, ben knowyng with me that no thyng ne brought me to maistrie or dignyte but the comune studie of alle goodnesse. And therof cometh i that bytwixen wikkid folk and me hat ben grevous discordes, that ne myght nat ben releesed by preyeris; for thi liberte hath fredom of conscience, that the wraththe of more myghty folk hat alwey ben despised of me for savacioun of right. How ofte have I resisted an withstonden thilke man that highte Conigaste, that made alwey assawt ayens the prospere fortunes of pore feble folk! How ofte eek have I put of cast out hym Trygwille, provost of th kyngis hous, bothe of the wronges th

105. *Is noght this*, etc., ‘Hæccine præreferimus tibi?’

108. *wise men*, etc., gerundive idiom, ‘for wise,’ etc.

111. *ben knowyng*, etc., ‘mihî consciî,’ Fr. ‘consachables avecques moi.’

112. *for this*, etc., should be *and, for this*, etc.



he hadde bygunne to doon, and ek fully performed ! [115] How ofte have I covered and defended by the auctorite of me put ayens perils (that is to seyn, put myn auctorite in peril for) the wrecche pore folk, that the covetise of straungiers unpunyschid tormentyde alwey with myseses and grevances out of nombre !

Nevere man ne drow me yit fro right to wrong. Whan I say the fortunes and the riches of the peple of the provinces ben harmed or amaned outher be pryve rauynes or by comune tributes or cariages, as sory was I as they that suffriden the harm. (Glosa. Whan that Theoderic, the kyng of Gothes, in a dere yeer, hadde his germeeris ful of corn, and comandede that no man schulde byen no coorn til his corn were soold, and that at grevous dere prys, Boece with-stood that ordenaunce and overcome it, knowynge al this the kyng hym-selve.

[120] Coempcioun is to seyn comune chat or beyng to gidre, that were established up-on the peple by swiche a manere imposicioun, as whoso boughte a busschel corne, he most yve the kyng the fyfte part.) Textus. Whan it was in the sowre hungry tyme, ther was established or cryed grevous and unplittable coempcioun, that men sayen wel it chulde gretly tormenten and endamagen the provynce of Campayne, I took tryf ayens the provost of the pretorie for omune profit ; and, the kyng knowynge of it, overcom it, so that the coempcioun was nat axid ne took effect. Paulyn, conseiller of Rome, the riches of the whiche Paulyn the howndes of the paleys (that is to seyn the officeres) wolden han evoured by hope and covetyse, yit drowe hym out of the jowes of hem that apeden. And for as moche as the eyne of the accusacioun ajugid byforn schulde nocht sodeynli henten ne unyssche wrongfully Albyn, a conseiller

116. C<sub>1</sub> Cx. B C<sub>2</sub> read *tormentyden*.

119, 120 refer to what precedes, 121 to what follows.

of Rome, I putte me ayens the hates and indignacions of the accusour Cyprian. [125] Is it not thanne I-noghe sene, that I have purchaced grete discordes ayens my-self? But I oughte be the more assured ayens alle othere folk, that, for the love of rightwisnesse, I ne reservede nevere no thyng to my selve to hem ward of the kyngis halle, by whiche I were the more syker. But thurw the same accusours accusynge I am condemned. Of the nombre of whiche accusours, oon Basilius, that whilom was chased out of the kyngis servyse, is now compelled in accusynge of my name for nede of foreyne moneye. Also Opilion and Gaudencius han accused me, al be it so that the justise regal hadde whilom demed hem bothe to gon in-to exil for h<sup>t</sup> trecheries and frawdres withouten nombre, [130] to whiche juggement they nolden nat obeye, but defendeden hem by the sikernesse of holi houses (that is to seyn, fledden into seynte warie) ; and whan this was aperceyved to the kyng, he comandise that, but they voydide the cite of Ravenne by certeyn day assigned, that men scholde marken hem in the forheved with an hoot iren and chasen hem out of towne. Now what thyng semyth myghte ben likned to this cruete? For certes thilke same day was resecyved the accusynge of myn name by thilke same accusours. What may ben seyde her-to? Hath my studie and my kunnyng disserved thus? Or elles the forseyde dampnacioun of me —made that hem rightful accusours or no? Was nocht fortune aschamed of this? [135] Certes, al hadde nocht fortune ben aschamed that innocence was accused, yit oughte sche han hadde schame of the fylthe of myn accusours. But axestow in somme of what gylt I am

127. *to hem ward* is due to a mistranslation of 'vers' in 'vers ceus du paliz roial'; Lat. 'apud aulicos.'

129. *for nede*, etc., 'alieni æris necessitate.'

132. C<sub>2</sub> C<sub>1</sub> A<sub>2</sub> Cx. B *of the town*.

133. A<sub>2</sub> A<sub>1</sub> *seemeth the*; B *seemeth you*; *likned* should be 'added,' 'posse adstrui.' Chaucer has understood Fr. 'pareille,' p. part. of 'pareiller' (adstruere), as that of *pareiller*, 'to liken.'

accused? Men seyn that I wolde saven the companye of the senatours. And desirestow to heren in what manere? I am accused that I schulde han disturbed the accusour to beren lettres, by whiche he scholde han makid the senatours gylty ayens the kynges real maieste. O Maystresse, what demestow of this? Schal I forsake this blame, that y ne be no schame to the? Certes I have wolde it (that is to seyn the savacioun of the senat), ne schal I nevere letten to wilne it; and that I confesse and am aknowe; but the entente of the accusour to ben disturbed schal cese. [140] For shal I clepe it thanne a felonye or a synne, that I have desired the savacioun of the ordre of the senat? And certes yit hadde thilke same senat don by me thurw hir decretes and hir jugementes as thoughe it were a synne and a felonye (that is to seyn, to wilne the savacioun of hem). But folye, that lyeth alwey to hym-selve, may nocht change the merite of thynges, ne I trowe nat by the jugement of Socrates, that it were leveful to me to hide the sothe, ne assente to lesynges. But certes, how so evere it be of this, I putte it to gessen or prisn to the jugement of the and of wys folk. Of whiche thyng all the ordonaunce and the sothe, for as moche as folk that been to comen aftir our dayes schullen knowen it, I have put it in scripture and in remembraunce. [145] For touchyng the lettres falsly makid by whiche lettres I am accused to han hoped the fredom of Rome, what aperteneth me to speken ther-of? Of whiche lettres the fraude hadde ben schewed apertely, yif I hadde had liberte for to han used and ben at the confessioun of myn accusours, the whiche thyng in alle nedes hath greet strengthe. For what other fredom mai men hopen? Certes I wolde that som other fredom myghte ben hoped; I wolde thanne han answeyrd

140. *and that I confesse*, etc., should be *Shal I confesse?* 'Fatebimur?'

147. *in alle nedes*, 'omnibus negotiis,' 'en toutez besoingnes.' Chaucer read 'besoignes' (besognes) as *besoignes* (besoins).

by the wordys of a man that hyghte Canyus. For whan he was accused byfore Gaius Cesar, Germaines sone, that he was knowyng and consentyng of a coniuracioun ymakid ayens hym, this Canyus answeride thus: "Yif I hadde wyst it, thou haddest nocht wyst it." In whiche thyng sorwe hath nocht so dullid my wyt, that I pleyne oonly that schrewed folk apparailen felonyes ayens vertu; but I wondre gretly how that thei may performe thynges that thei han hoped for to doon. [150] For-why to wylne schrewydnesse—that cometh peraventure of our default; but it is lyk a monstre and a merveylye, how that, in the presente sight of god, may ben acheved and performed swiche thynges as every felonous man hath conceyved in his thought ayens innocentes. For whiche thyng oon of thy familiers nocht unskilfully axed thus: "Yif god is, whennes comen wikkyde thyngis? And yif god ne is, whennes comen gode thynges?" But al hadde it ben leveful that felonous folk, that now desiren the blood and the deeth of alle gode men and ek of al the senat, han wilnid to gon destroyen me, whom they han seyn alwey bataylen and defenden gode men and eek al the senat, yit hadde I nought disservyd of the faderes (that is to seyn, of the senatours) that they schulden wilne my destruccioun. Thow remembrest wel, as I gesse, that whan I wolde doon or seyn any thyng, thow thi-selve alwey present reuledest me. [155] Atte cite of Verone, whan that the kyng, gredy of comune slaughtre, caste hym to transporten up-on al the ordre of the senat the gilt of his real maieste, of whiche gilt that Albyn was accused, with how gret sykernesse of peril to me defended I al the senat. Thow woost wel that I sey sooth, ne ne awawntede me nevere in preysyng of my-selve. For alwey whan any wygh

153. *to gon destroyen*, 'perditum ire,' 'ale destruire.'

156. *the gilt*, etc., 'maiestatis crimen,' 'blasme de la royal maieste.'

resceyveh precious renoun in avautynge hym-selve of his werkes, he amenuseth the secre of his conscience. But now thou mayst wel seen to what eende I am comen for myn innocence; I resceyve peyne of fals felonye for guerdoun of verrai vertue. And what opene confessioun of felonye hadde evere juges so accordaunt in cruelte (that is to seyn, as myn accusynge hath) that either error of mannys wit, or elles condicion of fortune, that is uncerteyn to alle mortel folk, ne submyttede some of hem (that is to seyn, that it ne enclynede some juge to have pite or compassioun)? [160] For al-though I hadde ben accused that I wolde brenne holi houses and straungle preestis with wykkid sweerd, or that I hadde greythed deth to alle gode men, algates the sentence scholde han punnysshed me present, confessed or convict. But now I am remuwed fro the cite of Rome almost fyve hundred thowsand paas, I am withoute deffense dampnyd to proscricion und to the deth for the studie and bountes had I have doon to the senat. But O wel ben thei wurthy of meryte! (As who eith, nay.) Ther myghte nevere yit noon of hem ben convicte of swiche a plame as myn is. Of whiche trespas myne accusours sayen ful wel the dignete; he whiche dygnyte, for thei wolden werken it with medlynge of some felonye, they bare me on hande and lieden that hadde pollut and defouled my conscience with sacrilegie for covetise of ignyte. And certes thou thi-selve, that art plantued in me, chacedest out of the ege of my corage alle covetise of mortel thynges, ne sacrilege hadde no leve to han place in me byforn thyne eien. [165] For thou droppiddest every day in myn is and in my thought thilke comaundement of Pittagoras, that is to seyn men schal serven to god, and nocht to goddes.

157. *the secre*, etc., 'se probantis conscientiarum cretum (sc. pretium).' The same mistake occurs Fr.

164. For *lieden* H Cx. read *seyden*, B *seyden* corrected in same hand from *leyden*.

Ne it was nocht convenient ne no nede to taken help of the fouleste spirites—I, that thou hast ordeyned and set in swiche excellence, that thou makedest me lyk to god. And over this, the right clene secre chaumbre of myn hous (that is to seyn my wif), and the companye of myne honeste freendes, and my wyves fadir, as wel holi as worthy to ben reverenced thurw his owene dedes, defenden me fro alle suspeciou of swiche blame. But O malice! For they that accusen me taken of the, philosophie, feith of so greet blame, for they trowen that I have had affinyte to malefice or enchauntement, bycause that I am replenysshid and fulfild with thy techynges, and enformed of thi maneris. And thus it suffiseth nat oonly that thy reverence ne avayle me nat, but that thou of thy free wil rather be blemessched with myne offencioun. [170] But certes to the harmes that I have ther bytideth yit this encrees of harm, that the gessynge and the jugement of moche folk loken no thyng to the desertes of thynges, but oonly to the aventure of fortune; and jugen that oonly swiche thynges ben purveied of god, whiche that temporel wedefulnesse commendeth. (Glose. As thus: that yif a wyght have prosperite, he is a good man and worthy to han that prosperite; and who-so hath adversite, he is a wikkid man, and god hath forsake hym, and he is worthy to han that adversite. This is the opinyoun of some folk.) Textus. And ther-of cometh that good gessynge, first of alle thynges, forsaketh wrecches. Certes it greveth me to thynke ryght now the diverse sentences that the peple seith of me. [175] And thus moche I seie, that the laste charge of contrarious fortune is this:

167. For *was* C<sub>1</sub> A<sub>2</sub> H B read *is*; C<sub>2</sub> omits.

168. *the right clene*, etc., 'penetral innocens domus,' i.e. 'my unblemished private life.' Chaucer translates a gloss, 'uxor.'

170. *of thy free wil*, 'ultra,' i.e. 'for thy part'; but Fr. 'de ton gre.'

171. *bytideth*. Chaucer has read 'accedit' as 'accidit.'

that whan that eny blame is leid upon a caytif, men wenen that he hath desservyd that he suffreth. And I, that am put a-wey fro gode men, and despoyled of dignytes, and defouled of myn name by gessynge, have suffride torment for my gode dedes. Certes me semyth that I se the felonous covynes of wykkid men habounden in joye and in gladnesse; and I se that every lorel schapeth hym to fynde out newe fraudes for to accuse good folk; and I se that goode men ben overthrowen for drede of my peril, and every luxurious turmentour dar doon alle felonye unpunyschyd, and ben excited ther-to by yiftes; and innocentes ne ben noght oonly despoiled of sikernesse, but of defence; and ther-fore me lyst to crie to god in this manere: [180]

'*O stelliferi conditor orbis.*'—Metrum 5

'O thou makere of the wheel that bereth the sterres, whiche that art festnyd to thi perdurable chayer, and turnest the hevne with a ravyschyngwe sweighe, and constreynest the sterres to suffren thi lawe; so that the moone som-tyme, schynynge with hir fulle hornes metynge with alle the beemes of the sonne hir brothir, hideth the sterres that ben lasse, and som-tyme, whan the moone pale with hir derke hornes aprocheth the sonne, leeseth hir lyghtes; and that the eve sterre, Hesperus, whiche that in the first tyme of the nyght bryngeth forth hir colde arysynges, cometh eft ayen hir used cours, and is pale by the morwe at rysynge of the sonne, and is thanne clepid Lucyfer! Thow restreynest the day by schortere duellynge in the tyme of coold wynter, that maketh the leeves fall. Thow devydest the swyfte tydes of the nyght, whan the

181. *wheel*, etc., 'stelliferi orbis,' 'la roe qui porte les estoilles.'

181. *festnyd*, 'nexus' variant of Lat. text for *nixus*.

183. *cometh eft*, etc., *i.e.* returns in the opposite direction.

hote somer is comen. [185] Thy myghte attempred the variauntes sesouns of the yer, so that Zephirus, the debonere wynd, bryngeth ayen in the first somer sesoun the leeves that the wynd that hyghte Boreas hath reft away in autumpne (that is to seie, the laste ende of somer); and the seedes that the sterre that hyghte Aucturus saugh, ben waxen heye cornes whan the sterre Syrius eschafeth hem. Ther nys no thyng unbounde from his olde lawe, ne foreleth the werk of his propre estat. O governour, governynge alle thynges by certein ende, whi refusetow oonly to governe the werkes of men by duwe manere? Why suffrestow that slydynge fortune turneth so grete enterchaungynges of thynges; so that anoyous peyne, that scholde duweliche punysche felons, punyscheth innocentes? [190] And folk of wikkide maneres sitten in heie chayeres; and anoyng folk treden, and that unrightfully, on the nekkes of holi men; and vertue, cleer and schynynge naturely, is hidde in derke derknesses; and the rightful man bereth the blame and the peyne of the feloun; ne the for-sweryngwe, ne the fraude covered and kembd with a false colour, neanoieth nat to schrewes? The whiche schrewes, whan hem list to usen hir strengthe, they reioyssen hem to putten undir hem the sovereyne kynges, whiche the peple withowten nombre dreden. O thou, what so evere thou be that knyttest alle boondes of thynges, loke on this wrecchide erthes. We men, that ben noght a foul partie, but a fair partie of so greet a werk, we ben turmented in this see of fortune. Thow governour withdraughe and restreynest the ravyschyngwe flodes, and fastne and ferme these erthes stable with thilke boond by whiche thou governest the hevne that is so large.' [195]

186. C<sub>2</sub> A<sub>2</sub> H B *in the laste ende.*

187. For *saugh*, 'vidit,' Hn. reads *seugh*, Cx. *sewe*, B *sowyn*.

189. *slydynge fortune*, 'lubrica fortuna.'

'*Hec ubi continuato dolore delatraui.*'—

Prosa 5

Whan I hadde, with a contynuel sorwe, sobbyd or borken out these thynges, sche, with hir cheere pesible and no thyng amoeved with my compleyntes, seide thus: 'Whan I saugh the,' quod sche, 'sorwful and wepynge, I wiste anon that thou were a wrecche and exiled; but I wyste nevere how fer thyng exil was yif thy tale ne hadde schewid it me. But certes, al be thou fer fro thy cuntre, thou nart nat put out of it, but thou hast fayled of thi weye and gon a-mys. And yif thou hast levere for to wene that thou be put out of thy cuntre, thanne hastow put out thy-selve rather than any other wyght hath. For no wyght but thy-selve myghte nevere han doon that to the. [200] For yif thou remembre of what cuntre thou art born, it nys nat governed by emperoures, ne by gouvernement of multitude, as weren the cuntrees of hem of Athenes; but o lord and o kyng, and that is god, is lord of thi cuntre, whiche that reioisseth hym of the duellynge of his citezeens, and nat for to putten hem in exil; of the whiche lord it is a sovereyn fredom to ben governed by the byrdel of hym and obeye to his justice. Hastow foryeten thilke ryghte oolde lawe of thi citee, in the whiche cite it is ordeyned and establysschid, that what wyght that hath levere founden ther-in his sete or his hous than elles where, he may nat ben exiled by no ryght fro that place? For who-so that is contened in-with the palays and the clos of thilke cite, ther nys no drede that he mai deserve to ben exiled; but who that leteth the wil for to enhabyten there, he for-leteth also to deserve to ben citezen of thilke cite. [205] So that

106. *borken*, 'delatraui'; A<sub>1</sub> A<sub>2</sub> H Cx. read *broken*; B *spoken*.

201. *emperoures* is due to the Fr. trans. of 'imperio,' par empire ne par commandement.'

202. MSS. *that is lord* (B *he is lord*).

204. C<sub>1</sub> A<sub>2</sub> H Cx. A<sub>1</sub> Hn. omit *and the clos*.

I seie that the face of this place ne moeveth me nocht as mochel as thyn owene face, ne I ne axe nat rather the walles of thy librareye, apparayled and wrought with yvory and with glas, than after the sete of thi thought, in whiche I put nocht whilom bookes, but I putte that that maketh bokes wurthy of prys or precyous, that is to seyn the sentence of my bookes.

And certeynly of thy dessertes bystowed in comune good thou hast seyde soth, but after the multitude of thy gode dedes thou hast seyde fewe. And of the honestete or of the falsnesse of thynges that ben opposed ayens the, thou hast remembered thynges that ben knowen to alle folk. And of the felonies and fraudes of thyn accusours, it semeth the have touched it for sothe ryghtfully and schortly, al myghten the same thynges betere and more plentevously ben couth in the mouth of the peple that knoweth all this. [210] Thou hast eek blamed gretly and compleyned of the wrongful dede of the senat, and thou hast sorwyd for my blame, and thou hast wepen for the damage of thi renoun that is apayred; and thi laste sorwe eschaufede ayens fortune and compleyndest that guerdouns ne ben nat eveneliche yolden to the dessertes of folk. And in the lattre ende of thy wode muse, thou preydest that thilke pees that governeth the hevene schulde governe the erthe.

But for that many tribulacions of affeccions han assailed the, and sorwe and ire and wepynge to-drawen the diversely, as thou art now feble of thought, myghtyere remedies ne schullen nocht yit touchen the. For wyche we wol usen somdel lyghtere medicynes, so that thilke passious that ben waxen hard in swellynge by perturbacions flowyng in to thy thought, mowen waxen esy and softe to resceyven the

208. *dessertes*, etc., 'de tuis in commune bonum meritis.'

212. *compleyndest*, subject omitted as often; cp. 49, 'bereth.'

strengthe of a more myghty and more egre medicyne, by an esyere touchynge. [215]

'*Cum Phebi radiis grave Cancri sidus inestuat.*'—Metrum 6

Whan that the hevy sterre of the Cancre eschaufeth by the bemes of Phebus (that is to seyn, whan that Phebus the sonne is in the sygne of the Cancre), who-so yeveth thanne largely his seedes to the feeldes that refusen to reseceyven hem, lat hym gon, be-giled of trust that he hadde to his corn, to accornes of okes. Yif thou wolt gadere vyolletes, ne go thou nat to the purple wode whan the feeld, chirkyngge, agryseth of cold by the felnesse of the wind that hyghte Aquilon. Yif thou desirest or wolt usen grapes, ne seek thou nat with a glotonous hand to streyne and presse the stalkes of the vyne in the first somer sesoun; for Bachus, the god of wyn, hath rather yyven his yiftes to autumpne (the latter ende of somer). God tokneth and assigneth the tymes, ablyngge hem to hir propre office, ne he ne suffreth nat the stowndes whiche that hym-self hath devyded and constreyned to ben I-medled to-gidre. [220] And for-ty he that forleteth certain ordenaunce of doyngge by overthrowngge wey, he hath no glad issue or ende of his werkes.

'*Primum igitur paterisne me pauculis rogacionibus.*'—Prosa 6

First wiltow suffre me to touche and assaye the staat of thi thought by a fewe demandes, so that I may understande what be the manere of thi curacioun?

'Axe me,' quod I, 'at thi wille what thou wolt, and I schal answer.' Tho seyde sche thus: 'Whethir wenestow,' quod sche, 'that this world be governed by foolyssche happes and fortunows, or elles wenestow that ther be inne it ony gouvernement of resoun?'

216. *hevy sterre*, 'grave Cancri sidus.'

221. *by overthrowngge wey*, 'præcipiti via.

'Certes,' quod I, 'I ne trowe nat in no manere that so certeyn thyngesschulden be moeved by fortunows [folie]; [225] but I woot wel that god, makere and maister, is governour of his werk, ne nevere nas yit day that myghte putte me out of the sothnesse of that sentence.'

'So it is,' quod sche, 'for the same thyng songe thow a litil here by-forn, and by-wayledest and by-weptest, that only men weren put out of the cure of god; for of alle othere thynges thou ne doutedest the nat that they nere governed by resoun. But owgh I wondre gretly, certes, whi that thou art sik, syn that thou art put in so holsome a sentence: but lat us seken deppere; I coniecte that ther lakketh y not what. But sey me this: syn that thou ne doutest noght that this world be governed by god, with whiche governayles takestow heede that it is governed?'

'Unnethes,' quod I, 'knowe I the sentence of thy questioun, so that I ne may nat yit answeren to thy demandes.' [230]

'I nas nat desseyved,' quod sche, 'that ther ne faileth som-what, by whiche the maladye of perturbacion is crept in to thi thought, so as [thorw] the strengthe of the palsy chynyngge [and] open. But sey me this: remembrestow what is the ende of thynges, and whider that the entencion of alle kende tendeth?'

'I have herd tolde it som-tyme,' quod I, 'but drerynesse hath dulled my memorie.'

'Certes,' quod sche, 'thou wost wel whennes that alle thynges bien comen and proceded?'

'I woot wel,' quod I, and answerede that god is bygynnyngge of al. [235]

225. Instead of *folie* all MSS. read *fortune*. But Lat. 'fortuita temeritate' and Fr. 'fortunele folie' point to *folie* as the word Chaucer used.

228. *ough*, 'papaë.'

229. *y not what*, 'nescio quid'; L. 'ie ne sce quoi.'

231. *so as*, etc., 'velut hianti valli robore'; the MSS. omit *thorw* and read *is open* instead of *and open*. The correction, justified by the Lat. and Fr. versions, is necessary to the sense.

'And how may this be,' quod sche, 'that, syn thow knowest the bygynnyng of thynges, that thow ne knowest nat what is the eende of thynges? But swiche ben the customes of perturbaciouns, and this power they han, that they mai moeve a man from his place (that is to seyn, fro the stabelnesse and perfeccion of his knowynge); but certes, thei mai nat al arrace hym, ne aliene hym in al. But I wolde that thou woldest answer to this: Remembrestow that thow art a man?'

'Whi schulde I nat remembren that?' quod I.

'Maystow nocht telle me thanne,' quod sche, 'what thyng is a man?'

'Axestow me nat,' quod I, 'whethir that I be a resonable mortal beste? I woot wel, and I confesse wel that I am it.' [240]

'Wystestow nevere yit that thow were ony othir thyng?' quod sche.

'No,' quod I.

'Now woot I,' quod sche, 'other cause of thi maladye, and that ryght greet: thow hast left for-to knowen thy-selve what thou art. Thurw whiche I have playnly fownde the cause of thi maladye, or elles the entree of recoverynge of thyn hele. For-why, for thow art confunded with foryetyng of thi-self, for-thi sorwestow that thow art exiled fro thy propre goodes; and for thow ne woost what is the eende of thynges, for-thy demestow that felouns and wikkide men ben myghty and weleful; [245] and for thow hast foryeten by whiche govermentes the werld is governed, for-thy weenestow that these mutacions of fortunes fleten withouten governour. These ben grete causes, nocht onoly to maladye, but certes gret causes to deth. But I thanke the auctour and the makere of hele, that nature hath nat al forleten the.

243. *Thurw whiche*, etc., 'quare plenissime . . . inveni'; Fr. 'par quoy (for *pourquoi*) ie ai plainement (i.e. *pleinement*, mistaken by Chaucer for O.F. *plainement*, ouvertement) trouvee,' etc.

246. *fortunes*, 'fortunarum'; found only in C<sub>1</sub> Cx.; others *fortune*.

I have gret norysynge of thy hele, and that is, the sothe sentence of governance of the world, that thou by-levest that the governynge of it is nat subgit ne underput to the folye of these happes aventurous, but to the resoun of god. And ther-fore doute the nothing, for of this litel spark thine heet of lijf schal shine.

But for as moche as it is nat tyme yet of fastere remedies, and the nature of thoughtes deceyved is this, that, as ofte as they casten away sothe opynyouns, they clothen hem in false opynyouns, [250] of the whiche false opynyouns the derknesse of perturbacion waxeth up, that confowndeth the verray insyghte—that derknesse schal I assaie som-what to maken thynne and wayk by lyghte and meneliche remedies; so that, affir that the derknesse of desceyvynge desyrynges is doon away, thow mowe knowe the schynynge of verraye light.

'*Nubibus atris condita*.'—Metrum 7

The sterres, covred with blake cloudes, ne mowen yeten a-doun no lyght. Yif the truble wynd that hyghte Auster, turnynge and wallwynge the see, medleth the heete (that is to seyn, the boyl-ynge up fro the botme), the wawes, that whilom weren clere as glas and lyk to the fayre bryghte dayes, withstant anon the syghtes of men by the filthe and ordure that is resolved. [255] And the fleetynge stream, that royleth doun diversely fro heye montaynes, is areestid and resisted ofte tyme by the encountrynge of a stoon that is departed and fallen fro some roche. And for-thy; yif thou wolt loken and demen soth with cleer lyght, and hoolden the weye with a ryght path, weyve thow joie, dryf fro the drede, fleme thow hope, ne lat no sorwe aproche (that is to seyn, lat non of these passiouns overcomen the or blenden the). For

248. *noryssynge*, 'fomentum'; found only in Cx.; B *trust*; others *noryssynge*.

251. Before *that derknesse* all MSS. insert *and*.  
257. C<sub>2</sub> A<sub>1</sub> Hn. *these fourre passiouns*.

cloudy and derk is thilke thoght, and bownde with bridelis, where as thise thynges reigenen.'

## EXPLICIT LIBER PRIMUS

## INCIPIT LIBER SECUNDUS

'*Postea paulisper conticuit.*'—Prosa I

After this sche stynte a lytel; and after that sche hadde gadrede by atempre stillennesse myn attentiou (as who so myghte seyn thus: after thise thynges sche stynte a litil, and whan sche apercyved by atempre stillennesse that I was ententyf to herkne hire), sche bygan to speke on this wyse: 'If I,' quod sche, 'have undirstonden and knowen outrely the causes and the habyt of thy maladye, thow languyssest and art defeted for desir and talent of thi rather fortune. [260] Sche (that ilke Fortune) oonly, that is changed, as thow feynest, to the ward, hath perverted the cleernesse and the estat of thi corage. I understonde the fele folde colours and desceytes of thilke merveyulous monstre (Fortune) and how sche useth ful flaterynge famylarite with hem that sche enforceth to bygyle, so longe, til that sche confounde with unsuffrable sorwe hem that sche hath left in despeir unpurveid. And yif thou remembrest wel the kynde, the maneris, and the desserte of thilke fortune, thou shalt wel knowe that, as in hir, thow nevere ne haddest ne hast ylost any fair thyng. But, as I trowe, I schal nat greetly travaillen to don the remembren on thise thynges. [265] For thow were wont to hurtlen hir with manly woordes whan sche was blaundyssching and present, and pursuydest hir with sentences that weren drawn out of myn entre (that is to seyn, of myn enformacion).

264. *as in hir*, i.e. as far as she is concerned.

266. C<sub>2</sub> Hn. Cx. *hurtelyn and despyssen*; Lat. 'incessere'; Fr. 'assaillir.'

267. *entre*, cp. Aq., 'aditu id est de nostra informacione.' The received text has simply *adyto*.

But no sodeyn mutacioun ne bytideth nocht with-outen a manere chaungynge of corages; and so is it by-fallen that thou art a litil departed fro the pees of thi thought.

But now is tyme that thou drynke and a-taste some softe and delitable thynges, so that whanne thei ben entred with-ynne the, it mowen maken wey to strengere drynkes of medycines. Com now forth, therefore, the suasyoun of swetnesse rethorien, whiche that goht oonly the righte wey while sche forsaketh nat myn estatutes. And with Rethorice com forth Musice, a damoysele of our hous, that syngeth now lightere moedes or prolacions, now hevyere. [270] What eyleth the, man? What is it that hath cast the in-to moornynge and in-to wepyng? I trow that thou hast seyn some newe thyng and unkouth. Thou wenest that fortune be changed ayens the; but thow wenest wrong, yif thou that wene: alway tho ben hir maneres. Sche hath rather kept, as to the ward, hir propre stableness in the chaungynge of hir-self. Ryght swiche was sche whan sche flateryd the and desseyved the with unfeleful lykynge of false welefulness. Thou hast now knowen and ateynt the doutous or double visage of thilke blynde goddesse (Fortune). [275] Sche, that yit covereth and wympleth hir to other folk, hath schewyd hir every del to the. Yif thou approvest here and thynkest that sche is good, use hir maneris and pleyne the nat; and yif thou agrisest hir false trecherie, despise and cast away hir that pleyeth so harmfully. For sche, that is now cause of so mochel sorwe to the, scholde ben cause to the of pees and of joye. Sche hath forsaken the, forsothe, the whiche that nevere man mai ben siker that sche ne schal forsaken hym. (Glose. Butnathes some bookes han the texte thus: for-

270. *modes or prolacions*, 'modos'; but probably due to some gloss.

277. *use hir maneris*, 'utere moribus.'

280. *some bookes*, i.e. the French text.



sothe sche hath forsaken the, ne ther nys no man siker that sche hath nat forsake.) [280] Holdestow thanne thilke wefulnesse precious to the, that schal passen? And is present Fortune dere-worth to the, whiche that nys nat feithful for to duelle, and whan sche goth away that sche bryngeth a wyght in sorwe? For syn sche may nat ben with-holden at a manys wille, sche maketh hym a wrecche when sche departeth fro hym. What other thyng is flyttinge Fortune but a maner schewyng of wrecchidnesse that is to comen? Ne it suffiseth nat oonly to loken on thyng that is present byforn the eien of a man; but wisdom loketh and mesureth the ende of thynges. And the same chaungyng from oon in-to another (that is to seyn, fro adversite in-to prosperite), maketh that the manaces of Fortune ne ben nat for to dreden, ne the flaterynges of hir to ben desired. Thus, at the laste, it byhoveth the to suffren wyth evene wil in pacience al that is doon in-with the floor of Fortune (that is to seyn, in this world), syn thou hast oony put thy nekke undir the yok of hir. [285] For yif thou wilt writen a lawe of wendyng and of duellyng to Fortune, whiche that thou hast chosen frely to ben thi lady, artow nat wrongful in that, and makest Fortune wroth and aspre by thyn impacience? And yit thou mayst nat chaungen hir. Yif thou committest and be-takest thi seyles to the wynd, thou shalt ben shoven, nat thider that thou woldest, but whider that the wynd shouveth the. Yif thou castest thi seedes in feeldes, thou sholdest han in mynde that the yeres ben amonges outhere-while plentevous and outhere-while bareyne. Thou hast by-taken thiself to the governaunce of Fortune and for-thi it byhoveth the to ben obeisaunt to the maneris of thi lady. Enforcestow the to aresten or withholden the swyftnesse and the sweighe of hir turnyng wheel? O thou fool of alle mortel foolis! Yif Fortune bygan to duelle stable, she cessede thanne to ben Fortune. [290]

'*Hec cum superba.*'—Metrum 1

Whan Fortune with a proud ryght hand hath turned hir chaungyng stowndes, sche fareth lyke the maneris of the boylunge Eurippe. (Glosa. Eurippe is an arm of the see that ebbeth and floweth, and som-tyme the stream is on o side, and som-tyme on the tothir.) Textus. She cruel (Fortune) casteth adoun kynges that whilom weren y-dradd; and sche, deceyvable, enhaunceth up the humble chere of hym that is discourfited. Ne sche neither heereth, ne rekketh of wrecchide wepynges; and she is so hard that sche leygheth and scorneth the wepynges of hem, the whiche sche hath made wepe with hir free wille. Thus sche pleyeth, and thus sche proeveth hir strengthes, and scheweth a greet wonder to alle hir servauntes yif that a wyght is seyn weful and overthrowe in an houre. [295]

'*Vellem autem pauca.*'—Prosa 2

Certes I wolde pleten with the a fewe thynges, usyng the woordes of Fortune. Take hede now thy-selve, yif that sche asketh ryght: "O thou man, wherfore makestow me gylty by thyne every dayes pleynynges? What wrong have I don the? What godes have I byrest the that weren thyne? Stryf or plet with me byforn what juge that thou wolt of the possessioun of rychesses or of dignytees; and yif thou maist schewen me that ever any mortel man hath reseyyved ony of tho thynges to ben hise-in propre, thanne wil I graunte freely that thilke thynges weren thyne whiche that thou axest.

Whan that nature brought the fourth out of thi modir wombe, I reseyyved the nakid and nedy of alle thynges, and I norissched the with my richesses, and was redy and ententyf thurwe my favour

295. *in an houre, i.e.* in one hour.

296. *asketh ryght, 'ius postulet.'*

297. C<sub>1</sub> Cx. A<sub>2</sub> read *gyltyf*.

299. *ever* goes with *any*, 'cuiusquam.'

to sustene the [300]—and that maketh the now incipient ayens me; and I envyrounde the with al the habundaunce and schynynge of alle goodes that ben in my ryght. Now it liketh me to withdrawe myn hand. Thow hast had grace as he that hath used of foreyne goodes; thow hast no ryght to pleyne the, as though thou haddest outrelly forlorn alle thy thynges. Why pleynestow thanne? I have doon the no wrong. Richesses, honours, and swiche othere thinges ben of my right. My servautes knownen me for hir lady; they comen with me, and departen when I wende. I dar wel affermen hardely that, yif tho thynges of whiche thow pleynest that thou hast for-lorn [hem] hadden ben thyne, thow ne haddest nat lorn hem. Schal I thanne, oonly, be defended to usen my ryght? Certes it is leueful to the hevене to maken clere dayes, and after that to coveren the same dayes with dirke nyghtes. [305] The yeer hath eek leve to apparaylen the visage of the erthe, now with floures, and now with fruyt, and to confownden hem som-tyme with reynes and with coldes. The see hath eek his ryght to ben som-tyme calm and blaundysschyng with smothe watir, and som-tyme to ben horrible with wawes and with tempestes. But the covetise of men, that mai nat be stawnched,—schal it bynde me to ben stidfast, syn that stidfastnesse is uncouth to my maneris? Swiche is my strengthe, and this pley I pleye continuely. I torne the whirlynge wheel with the turnynge sercle; I am glad to chaungen the loweste to the heyeste, and the heyeste to the loweste. Worth up yif thow wolt, so it be by this lawe, that thow ne holde nat that I do the wrong, though thow descende a-down when the resoun of my pley axeth it. [310] [Wystestow nat thanne my maneris?] Wystemow nat how Cresus, kyng of Lydyens, of whiche kyng Cirus was ful

304. *hem*, supplied from Fr. B omits *of*, and for that *thou* *hast* reads to *have*.

311. *Wystemow*, etc. Supplied from Lat. and Fr.; probably omitted by Adam Scrivener.

sore agast a lytil byforn,—that this rewliche Cresus was caught of Cirus and lad to the fyer to ben brennd; but that a rayn descendede down fro hevene that rescowde hym. And is it out of thy mynde how that Paulus, consul of Rome, when he had taken the kyng of Percyens, weep pitously for the captivyte of the selve kyng. What other thyng by-waylen the crynges of tragedyes but oonly the dedes of fortune, that with unwar strook overturneth the realmes of greet nobleye? (Glose. Tragedye is to seyn a dite of a prosperite for a tyme, that endeth in wrecchidnesse.) Textus. [315] Leredest nat thow in Greek when thow were yong, that in the entre or in the seler of Juppiter ther ben cowched two tonnes; the toon is ful of good, and the tother is ful of harm. What ryght hastow to pleyne, yif thou hast taken more plentevously of the gode side (that is to seyn of my riches and prosperites)? And what ek yif y ne be nat al departed fro the? What eek yif my mutabilite yeveth the ryghtful cause of hope to han yit bettere thynges? Natheles dismaye the nat in thi thought; and thow that art put in the comune realme of alle, desire nat to lyven by thyn oonly propre ryght.

‘*Si quantas rapidis.*’—Metrum 2

Though Plente (that is, goddess of rychesses) hielde a-down with ful horn, and withdraweth nat hir hand, as many riches as the see torneth upward sandes when it is moeved with ravysshyng blastes, [320] or elles as manye rychesses as ther schynen bryghte sterres in hevene on the sterry nyghtes; yit for all that mankynde nolde nat cese to wepe wrecchide pleyntes. And al be it so that god reseceyeth gladly hir preiers,

313. *kyng of Percyens* (should be *kyng Perses*), ‘*regis Persi*’; but Fr. ‘*le roy de Perse*.’

316. *seler*, possibly a mistake for *selle*, ‘*limine*’; Fr. ‘*sueil*.’

319. *desire nat*, ‘*desideres vivere*’; but cp. variant in Notker, ‘*ne desideres v.*’

and yveth hem, as fool large, moche gold, and apparayleth covetuous folk with noble or cleer honours; yit semeth hem haven I-geeten no thyng, but alwey hir cruel ravynne, devourynge al that they han geten, scheweth othere gapynge (that is to seyn, gapyn and desiren yit after mo rychesses). What brydles myghte withholden to any certeyn ende the disordene covetise of men, whan evere the rather that it fletith in large yiftes, the more ay brenneth in hem the thirst of havynge? Certes he that qwakyng and dredful weneth hym-selven nedy, he ne lyveth never-mo ryche." [325]

'*Hiis igitur si pro se.*'—Prosa 3

Therefore, yif that fortune spake with the for hir-self in this manere, for-sothe thow ne haddest nocht what thou myghtest answer. And yif thow hast any thyng wher-with thow mayst rightfully defenden thi compleynthe, it behoveth the to schewen it, and I wol yve the space to tellen it.'

'Certeynly,' quod I thanne, 'thise ben faire thynges and enoynted with hony swetnesse of Rethorik and Musike; and oonly whil thei ben herd thei ben delicious, but to wrecches it is a deppere felyng of harm. (This is to seyn, that wrecches felen the harmes that thei suffren more grevously than the remedies or the delices of these wordes mowen gladen or conforten him.) So that, whanne thise thynges stynten for to soune in eris, the sorwe that is in-set greveth the thought.' [330]

'Right so it is,' quod sche. 'For hise ben yit none remedies of thy maladye, but they ben a maner norisschynge of thi sorwe, yit rebel ayen thi uracioun. For whan that tyme is, I chal moeve and adiust swiche thynges

that percen hem-selve depe. But natheles that thow schalt nocht wilne to leten thi-self a wrecche, hastow foryeten the nowmbre and the maner of thi welefulnesse? I holde me stille how that the sovereyn men of the city token the in cure and in keypyng, whan thow were orphelyn of fader and of modir, and were chose in affynite of prynces of the cite; and thow by-gonne rather to ben lef and deere than for to ben a neyghebour, the whiche thyng is the moste precyous kinde of any propinquyte or alliaunce that mai ben. [335] Who is it that ne seide tho that thow neere right weleful, with so gret a nobleye of thi fadres-in-lawe, and with the chastete of thy wyf, and with the oportunyte and noblesse of thyne masculyn children (that is to seyn, thy sones)? And over al this—me list to passen of comune thynges—how thow haddest in thy youthe dignytees that weren wernd to oolde men. But it deliteth me to comen now to the synguler uphepyng of thi welefulnesse. Yif any fruyt of mortel thynges mai han any weyghte or pris of welefulnesse, myghtestow evere forgeten, for any charge of harm that myghte byfalle, the remembrance of thilke day that thow seye thi two sones maked conseileris, and I-ladde to-gidre fro thyn hous under so gret assemble of senatours and under the blihtnesse of peple; [340] and whan thow saye hem set in the court in hir chayeres of dignytes? Thow, rethorien or pronouncere of kynges preysynges, deservedst glorie of wit and of eloquence when thow, syttinge bytwixen thi two sones conseylers, in the place that highte Circo, fulfildest the abydyng of the multitude of peple that was sprad abouten the with so large preysyng and laude as men syngen in victories. Tho yave

336. *neere*, C<sub>2</sub> *were*.

337. *fadres-in-lawe*, 'socerorum.'

337. *over al this*, etc., 'Prætereo (libet enim præterire communia) sumptas,' etc., misread as 'Præteera (libet præterire,' etc., so that *how* depends on *I holde me stille*) in 334.

340. *under*, 'sub frequentia,' etc.

343. MSS. *and fulfildest*.

323. *scheweth*, etc., 'pandit i.e. manifestatios hiatus.'

328. *it is*, i.e. there is. C<sub>2</sub> Hn. A<sub>1</sub> A<sub>2</sub> H omit

332. C<sub>2</sub> Hn. A<sub>1</sub> C<sub>1</sub> omit *and adiust*; B and use; Fr. 'aiusteraî.

thow woordes to Fortune, as I trowe, (that is to seyn, tho feddestow fortune with glosynges wordes and desceyvedest hir) whan sche accoyede the and noryside the as hir owne delices. Thow bare away of Fortune a yifte (that is to seye swich guerdoun) that sche nevere yaf to prive man. [345] Wiltow therfore leye a reknyng with Fortune? Sche hath now twynkled first upon the with a wikkid eye. If thow considere the nowmbre and the maner of thy blisses and of thy sorwes, thou mayst noght forsaken that thow nart yit blisful. For yif thou therfore wenest thi-self nat weleful, for thynges that tho semeden joyeful ben passed, ther nys nat why thow sholdest wene thi-self a wrecche; for thynges that semen now sory passen also. Artow now comen first, a sodeyn gest, into the schadowe or tabernacle of this lif? Or trowestow that any stedfastnesse be in mannes thynges, whan ofte a swyft hour dissolveth the same man (that is to seyn, whan the soule departeth fro the body). [350] For al though that selde is ther any feith that fortunes thynges wollen dwellen, yet natheles the laste day of a mannes lif is a maner deth to fortune, and also to thilke that hath dwelt. And therfore what wenestow thar rekke, yif thow forleete hir in deyng, or elles that sche (Fortune) forleete the in fleyng away?

‘*Cum primo polo.*’—Metrum 3

Whan Phebus (the sonne) bygynneth to spreden his clernesse with rosene chariettes, thanne the sterre, y-dymmed, paleth hir white cheeres by the flambes of the sonne that overcometh the sterre lyght. (This to seyn, whan the sonne is

344. *as hir owne delices*, ‘ut suas delicias’ (as her darling).

349. *schadowe or tabernacle*, ‘in . . . scenam’; Fr. ‘en la cortine et en l’ombre.’ But ‘tabernaculum’ and ‘umbra’ are common mediæval glosses of ‘scena.’

352. *thar rekke* (A *thar*, B *ther*, others *dar*). Perhaps read *the* before *thar*, cp. D 329, Boece 1001, i.e. What do you think you need care, etc.

rysen, the day-sterre waxeth pale, and leeseth hir lyght for the grete bryghtnesse of the sonne.) Whan the wode waxeth rody of rosene floures in the fyrst somer sesoun thurw the breeth of the wynd Zephirus that waxeth warm, yif the cloudy wynd Auster blowe felliche, than goth away the fairnesse of thornes. [355] Ofte the see is cleer and calm without moevyng flodes, and ofte the horrible wynd Aquylon moeveth boylunge tempestes, and overhelveth the see. Yif the forme of this world is so seeld stable, and yif it torneth by so manye entrechaungynges, wiltow thanne trusten in the tumblyng fortunes of men? Wiltow trowen on flyttinge goodes? It is certeyn and establisshed by lawe perdurable, that nothyng that is engendred nys stedfast ne stable.’

‘*Tum ego vera inquam.*’—Prosa 4

Thanne seide I thus: ‘O norice of alle vertues, thou seist ful sooth; ne I mai noght forsake the ryght swyfte cours of my prosperite (that is to seyn, that prosperite ne be comen to me wonder swyftli and sone); but this is a thyng that greetly smerteth me whan it remembreth me. [360] For in alle adversites of fortune the moost unseele kynde of contrarious fortune is to han ben weleful.’

‘But that thow,’ quod sche, ‘abyest thus the torment of thi false opynioun, that maistow nat ryghtfully blamen ne aretten to thynges. (As who seith, for thow hast yit manye habundances of thynges.) Textus. For al be it so that the ydel name of aventurous welefulness moeveth the now, it is leweful that thow rekne with me of how many grete thynges thow hast yit plente. And therfore yi that thilke thyng that thow haddest for moost precyous in al thy rychesse of fortune be kept to the yit by the grace of god unwemmed and undefouled, [365] maistow thanne pleyne ryghtfully upon

364. *grete*, found only in C<sub>2</sub> Hn.

the mescheef of fortune, syn thou hast yit thi beste thynges? Certes yit lyveth in good poynt thilke precyous honour of mankynde, Symacus, thi wyves fader, whiche that is a man maked al of sapience and of vertu, the whiche man thou woldest byen redyly with the pris of thyn owene lif. He bywayleth the wronges that men don to the, and nat for hym-self; for he lyveth in sikernesse of anye sentences put ayens hym. And yit lyveth thi wyf, that is a-tempre of wyt and passynge othere women in clenness of chastete; and, for I wol closen schortly hir bountes, sche is lyk to hir fadir. I telle the wel that sche lyveth, loth of this lyf, and kepeth to the oonly hir goost, and is al maat and overcomen by wepyng and sorwe for desir of the; [370] in the whiche thyng oonly I moot graunten that thi welefulness is amensued. What schal I seyn eek of thi two sones conseylours, of whiche, as of children of hir age, ther shyneth the liknesse of the wit of hir fadir or of hir eldefader! And syn the sovereyne cure of al mortal folk is to have hir owene lyves, O how weleful wertow, if thou knowe thy goodes! For it ben ther thynges dwelled to the ward that no man douteth that they ne be more derworthe to the than thyn owene lif. And for-thy drye thi teeris, for yit nys nat every fortune al hateful to the ward, ne over greet tempest hath at fallen upon the, [375] whan that thyne ances clyven faste, that neither volen suffren the counfort of this tyme present ne the hope of tyme comyng to assen ne to faylen.'

'And I preie,' quod I, 'that faste note thei halden; for, whiles that thei alden, how so ever that thynges been, shal wel fleetyng forth and escapyn: at thou mayst wel seen how grete comparailles and array that me lakketh, at ben passed away fro me.'

'I have somewhat avauaced and for

372. of whiche, i.e. in whom, 'es quix.'

373. ben dwelled, have remained; A<sub>1</sub> ben vellyng.

thred the,' quod sche, 'yif that thou anoye nat, ne forthynke nat of al thy fortune. (As who seith, I have som-what comforted the, so that thou tempeste the nat thus with al thy fortune, syn thou hast yit thy beste thynges.) [380] But I mai nat suffren thi delices, that pleynest so wepyng and angwysschous for that ther lakketh som-what to thy welefulness. For what man is so sad or of so parfite welefulness, that he ne stryveth or pleyneth on some halfe ayen the qualite of his estat? For-why ful anguysschous thing is the condicioun of mannes goodes; for eyther it cometh nat altogidre to a wyght, or elles it ne last nat perpetuel. For som man hath gret rychesse, but he is aschamed of his ungentil lynage; and som man is renomyd of noblesse of kynrede, but he is enclosed in so greet angwyssche of nede of thynges that hym were levere that he were unknowe; and som man haboundeth bothe in rychesse and noblesse, but yit he bewayleth his chaste lyf, for he ne hath no wyf; [385] and som man is wel and selyly y-mariet, but he hath no children, and norissheth his rychesses to the eyres of straunge folk; and som man is gladed with children, but he wepeth ful sory for the trespas of his sone or of his daughter. And for this ther ne accordeth no wyght lyghtly to the condicioun of his fortune; for alway to every man ther is in som-what that, unassayed, he woot nat, or elles he dredeth that he hath assaied. And adde this also, that every weleful man hath a ful delicaat feelyng; so that, but yif alle thynges byfalle at his owene wil, for he [is] inpacient or is nat used to have noon adversite, anon he is throwen adoun for every litil thyng. [390] And ful litel thynges ben tho that withdrawn the somme or the peffioun

381. *delices*, 'delicias tuas,' effeminacy; cp. 344.

384. *angwyssche of nede*, etc., 'angustia rei familiaris'; Fr. 'angoisse de povrete.'

389. *ther is in* (B *ther is in hym*, A *ther is in nest*), i.e. something is therein that, etc.

390. *is inpacient*, 'is' is found only in Cx. A<sub>2</sub>.

of blisfulnesse fro hem that been most fortunat. How manye men trowestow wolde demen hemself to ben almoste in hevене, yif thei myghten atayne to the leste partye of the remenaunt of thi fortune? This same place that thow clepest exil is contre to hem that enhabiten here, and forthi no-thing wrecchide but whan thou wenest it. (As who seith, thow thi-self, ne no wyght ellis, nis a wrecche but whanne he weneth hym self a wrech by reputacion of his corage.) And ayenward, alle fortune is blisful to a man by the aggreablete or by the egalyte of hym that suffreth it. [395] What man is that that is so weleful that nolde change his estat whan he hath lost pacience? The swetnesse of mannes welefulnesse is spraynd with many bitter-nesses; the whiche welefulnesse although it seme swete and joieful to hym that useth it, yit mai it nat ben withholden that it ne goth away whan it wole. Thanne is it wele seene how wrecchid is the blisfulnesse of mortel thynges, that neyther it dureth perpetuel with hem that every fortune resceyven agreablye or egaly, ne it deliteth nat in al to hem that ben angwyssous.

O ye mortel folk, what seeke ye thanne blisfulnesse out of your-self whiche that is put in your-self? Errour and folie confoundeth yow. I schal schewe the shortly the poynt of soverayn blisfulnesse. Is there any thyng more precyous to the than thi-self? [400] Thow wolt answeren, "nay." Thanne, yif it so be that thow art myghty over thyself (that is to seyn, by tranquillite of thi soule), than hastow thyng in thi powere that thow noldest nevere leesen, ne fortune may nat bynymen it the. And that thow mayst knowe that blisfulnesse ne mai nat standen in thynges that ben fortunous and temporel, now undirstond and gadere it togidre thus: yif blisfulnesse be the soverayn

393. *and forthi*, etc., should be *and forthi nothyng is wrecched*, etc. But some Latin texts read 'nihil miserum' for 'nihil est miserum.'

395. *by the aggreablete*, etc., according to the equanimity with which one takes it.

good of nature that lyveth by resoun, ne thilke thyng nys nat soverayn good that may ben taken away in any wise (for more worthy thyng and more dygne is thilke thyng that mai nat ben take away); than scheweth it wel that the unstableness of fortune may nat atayne to receyven verray blisfulnesse. [405] And yit more over, what man that this towmblyng welefulnesse ledeth, eyther he woot that it is chaungeable, or eller he woot it nat. And yif he woot it nat, what blisful fortune may ther ben in the blyndnesse of ignoraunce? And yif he woot that it is chaungeable, he mot alwey ben adrad that he ne lese that thyng that he ne douteth nat but that he may lese it (as who seith he mot bien alwey agast lest he lese that he woot wel he may lese it); for whiche the contynuel drede that he hath, ne suffreth hym nat to ben weleful, or elles yif he lese it, he weneth to ben despised and forleten. Certes eek that is a ful litel good that is born with evene herte whan it is lost (that is to seyn that men do no more force of the lost than of the havynge). [410] And for as moche as thow thi-self art he to whom it hath be schewed and proved by ful many demonstracyons, as I woot wele, that the soules of men ne mowen nat deyen in no wyse; and ek syn it is cleer and certeyne that fortunous welefulnesse endeth by the deth of the body; it mai nat be doutd that, yif that deth may take away blisfulnesse, that al the kynde of mortel thynges ne descendeth into wrecchidnesse by the ende of the deth. And syn we knowe wel that many a man hath sought the fruyt of blysfulesse, nat oonly with suffrynge of deeth, but eek with suffrynge of paynes and tormentes, how myghte thanne this present lif make men blisful, syn that whanne thilke selve lif is ended it ne maketh folk no wrechches? [415]

406. *ledeth*, 'vehit.'

410. *lost*, i.e. loss.

413. *al the kynde*, etc., mistranslation of 'omne mortalium genus.'

'*Quisquis volet perhennem cautus.*'—

Metrum 4

\* What maner man stable and war, that wol fownden hym a perdurable seete, and ne wol nocht ben cast down with the lowde blastes of the wynd Eurus, and wole despice the see manasyng with flodes; lat hym eschuwen to bilde on the cop of the mountaigne, or in the moyste sandes; for the felle wynd Auster tormenteth the cop of the mountaigne with alle hise strengthes, and the lause sandes refusen to beren the hevy weyghte. And for-thi, yif thou wolt fleen the perilous aventure (that is to seyn, of the world) have mynde certeynly to fycchen thin hous of a myrie site in a low stoon. For al-though the wynd troublunge the see thondre with overthrownges, thou, that art put in quiete and weleful by strengthe of thi palays, schalt leden a cler age, scornynge the woodnesses and the ires of the eyr. [420]

'*Set cum rationum iam in te.*'

Prosa 5

But for as mochel as the norisschynges of my resouns descenden now into the, I trowe it were tyme to usen a litel strengere medicynes. Now undirstand heere; al were it so that the yiftes of fortune ne were nocht brutel ne transitorie, what is ther in hem that mai be thyn in any tyme, or elles that it nys fowl, yif that it be considered and lookyd perfityly? Richesses ben they preciose by the nature of hem-self, or elles by the nature of the? What is most worth of rycheses? Is it nat gold or myght of moneye assembled? Certes thilke gold and thilke moneye schyneth and yeveth bettre renoun to hem that dispenden it than to thilke folk

419. *of a myrie site* (C<sub>1</sub> H B cite, A<sub>2</sub> cytee, Hn. Cx. sete) should follow *aventure*, 'sortem sedis incenae.'

420. *a cler age*, 'duces serenus ævum,' misread as 'duces serenum ævum.'

422. *Now undirstand heere*, mistranslation of *Or entens ici* (Lat. 'age').

that mokeren it; for avaryce maketh alwey mokereres to ben hated, and largesse maketh folk cleer of renoun. [425] For, syn that swiche thyng as is transferred fro o man to an othir ne may nat duellen with no man, certes thanne is thilke moneye precyous whan it is translated into other folk and stynteth to ben had by usage of large yvyng of hym that hath yeven it. And also yif al the moneye that is over-al in the world were gadryd to-ward o man, it scholde make alle othere men to be nedys as of that. And certes a voys al hool (that is to seyn with-outen amenusynge) fulfilleth to-gydre the herynge of moche folk. But certes your rycheses ne mowen nocht passen unto moche folk withouten amenusynge; and whan they ben apassed, nedes they maken hem pore that forgoon tho rycheses. O streyte and nedye clepe I this richesse, syn that many folk mai nat han it al, ne al mai nat comen to o man without pouert of alle othere folke. [430] And the schynynge of gemmes, that I clepe precyous stones, draweth it nat the eighen of folk to hem-ward (that is to seyn for the beautes)? But certes, yif ther were beaute or bountee in the schynynge of stones, thilke clernesse is of the stones hem-serve, and nat of men; for whiche I wondre gretly that men merveylen on swiche thynges. For-whi what thyng is it that, yif it wanteth moevynge and joynture of soule and body, that by right myghte semen a fair creature to hym that hath a soule of resoun? For al be it so that gemmes drawn to hem-self a litel of the laste beaute of the world thurw-the entente of hir creatour and thurw the distinccioun of hem-self, yit, for as mochel as thei ben put under your excellence, thei ne han nat deserved by no way that ye schulde merveylen on hem. [435] And the beaute of feeldes, deliteth it nat mochel unto you?

428. *a voys*, etc., 'vox quidem tota pariter multorum replet auditum.'

434. Chaucer means *moevynge of soule and joynture of body*. 'a fair creature,' etc., should be *fair to a creature that hath a soule and resoun*

*Boece.* 'Why schulde it nat deliten us, syn that it is a ryght fayr porcioun of the ryght fair werk (that is to seyn, of this worlde)? And right so ben we gladed som-tyme of the face of the see whan it is cleer; and also merveylen we on the hevenc, and on the sterres, and on the sonne, and on the moone.'

*Philosophie.* 'Aperteneth,' quod sche, 'any of thilke thynges to the? Why darstow glorifye the in the shynynge of any swiche thynges? Artow distyngwed and embelysed by the spryngynge floures of the first somer sesoun, or swelleth thi plente in fruites of somer? Whi artow ravyssched with idel joies? Why enbracest thow straunge goodes as they weren thyne? [440] Fortune schal nevere maken that swiche thynges ben thyne that nature of thynges hath maked foreyne fro the. Soth is that, withouten doute, the fruites of the erthe owen to be to the norrysynge of beestis; and yif thow wilt fulfillle thyn nede after that it suffiseth to nature, thanne is it no nede that thow seke aftir the superfluyte of fortune. For with ful fewe thynges and with ful litel thynges nature halt hir apayed; and yif thow wolt a-choken the fulfillynge of nature with superfluytees, certes thilke thynges that thow wolt thresten or powren in-to nature schulle ben unjoyeful to the, or elles anoyous. Wenestow eek that it be a fair thyng to schyne with diverse clothyng? [445] Of whiche clothyng yif the beaute be aggregable to loken upon, I wol merveylen on the nature of the matiere of thilke clothes, or elles on the werkman that wroughte hem. But also a long route of meyne, maketh that a blisful man? The whiche servantes yif thei ben vicyous of condyciouns, it is a gret charge and a destruccioun to the hous, and a gret enemy to the lord hym-self; and yif

445. *a-choken the fulfillynge*, 'urgere satietatem.'

446. *to the should be to her.*

447. *vicyous of condyciouns*, 'vitiosi moribus.'

448. *a gret enemy*, 'formet anemie,' 'vehementer inimica'; *enemy* is here adj.

they ben gode men, how schal straunge or foreyne goodnesse ben put in the nowmbre of thi richesnes? So that by alle these forseide thynges it es cleerly schewed, that nevere oon of thilke thynges that thou acountedest for thyne goodes nas nat thi good.

In the whiche thynges yif ther be no beaute to ben desired, why scholdestow ben sory yif thou leese hem, or whi scholdestow reioysen the for to holden hem? [450] For yif thei ben faire of hir owene kynde, what aperteneth that to the? For als so wel schulde they han ben fayre by hem-selve, though thei were departed fro alle thyne rychesses. For-why fair ne precyous were thei nat for that they comen among thi rychesses; but for that they semeden fair and precyous, therfore thou haddest levere rekne hem among thi rychesses. But what desires-tow of fortune with so greet a noyse and with so greet a fare? I trowe thou seeke to dryve a-wey nede with habundaunce of thynges, but certes it turneth to you al in the contrarie. For-why certes it nedeth of ful manye helpynges to kepyn the diversite of precious ostelementes; and sooth it is that of many thynges han they nede, that many thynges han; and ayenward of litel nedeth hem that mesureth hir fille after the nede of kynde, and nat after the outrage of covetyse. [455] Is it thanne so, that ye men ne han no propre good I-set in you, for whiche ye mooten seke outward your goodes in foreyne and subgit thynges? So is thanne the condicion of thynges turned up so down, that a man, that is a devyne beest be meryte of his resoun, thynketh that hym-self nys neyther fair ne noble but it be thurw possessioun of ostelementes that ne han no soules. And certes alle othere thynges ben apayed of hir owene beautes, but ye men that ben semblable to god by your resonable thought, desiren to apparailen your excellent kynde

456. *subgit*, 'sepositis,' probably misread as 'suppositis.'

458. *apayed of*, i.e. satisfied with.



of the loweste thynges; ne ye undir-standen nat how greet a wrong ye don to your creatour. For he wolde that mankynde were moost wurthy and noble of any othere erthly thynges, and ye thresten a-doun yowre dignytes bynethen the loweste thynges. [466] For yif that al the good of every thyng be more precyous than is thilke thyng whos that the good is, syn ye demen that the fowleste thynges ben your goodes, thanne submitten ye and putten your-selven undir the fouleste thynges by your estima-  
cioun; and certes this betydeth nat withouten your desert. For certes swiche is the condicioun of alle mankynde, that oonly whan it hath knowynge of it-self, thanne passeth it in noblesse alle othere thynges; and whan it forletith the knowynge of it-self thanne it is brought by-nethen alle beestes. For-whi alle othere lvyngge beestes han of kynde to knowe nat hem-self; but whan that men leeten the knowynge of hem-self, it cometh hem of vice. But how broode scheweth the error and the folie of yow men, that wenen that anythyng mai ben apparaild with straunge apparailementes! But forsothe that mai nat be don. [465] For yif a wyght schyneth with thynges that ben put to hym (as thus, yif thilke thynges schynen with whiche a man is aparayld), certes thilke thynges ben comended and preyed with whiche he is aparayld; but natheles, the thyng that is covered and wrapped under that duelleth in his felthe.

And I denye that thilke thyng be good that anyoeth hym that hath it. Gabbe I of this? Thow wolt sey "nay." Certes rychesses han anyoyed ful ofte hem that han tho rychesses, syn that every wikkid schrewe, and for his wikkidnesse is the

463. *han . . . to knowe*, 'ceteris animantibus natura est ignorare sese,' with 'natura' read as *bl. cometh hem*, 'leur vint'; cp. *Bk. of Du.*, 78.

470. *and for his wikkidnesse*, etc. (C<sub>1</sub> Hn. A<sub>2</sub> omit *is*, B of *his wikkidnesse is the more*, etc., *is for his wikkidnesse the more*, etc.), i.e. *ven* for his wickedness, etc.

more gredy aftir othir folkes rychesses wher so evere it be in any place, be it gold or precyous stones; and weneth hym oonly most worthy that hath hem. [470] Thow thanne, that so bysy dredest now the swerd and the spere, yif thou haddest entred in the path of this lif a voyde weyfarynge man, thanne woldestow synge by-for the theef. (As who seith, a pore man that bereth no rychesse on hym by the weie may boldely synge byforn theves, for he hath nat where-of to be robbed.) O precyous and ryght cleer is the blisfulnesse of mortel rychesses, that, whan thow hast geten it, thanne hastow lorn thi sikernesse!

'*Felix nimium prior etas.*'—Metrum 5

Blisful was the firste age of men. They heelden hem apayed with the metes that the trewe feeldes broughten forth. They ne destroyeden ne deseyvede nat hem-self with outrage. They weren wont lyghtly to slaken hir hungir at even with accornes of ookes. [475] They ne coude nat medle the yift of Bachus to the cleer hony (that is to seyn, they coude make no pyment or clarree), ne they coude nat medle the bryghte fleeses of the contre of Seryens with the venym of Tyrie (this is to seyn, thei coude nat deyen white fleeses of Syrien contre with the blood of a maner schelle-fyssche that men fynden in Tyrie, with whiche blood men deyen purple). They slepen holsome slepes uppon the gras, and dronken of the rennyngge watres, and layen undir the schadwes of the heye pyn trees. Ne no gest ne straunger ne karf yit the heye see with oores or with schipes; ne thei ne hadden seyn yit none newe stroondes to leden marchandise into diverse contrees. Tho weren the cruele clariouns ful hust and ful stille. Ne blood I-schad by egre hate ne hadde nat

474-484. Also translated in *The Former Age*.  
476. *fleeses of the*, etc., 'vellera serum' (cp. *Verg. Georg.* ii. 121), 'les toisons des Sirians,' i.e. silks of Syria. *venym of Tyrie*, 'Tyrio veneno' (cp. *Georg.* ii. 465).

deyed yit armures. [480] For wher-to or which woodnesse of enemys wolde first moeven armes, whan thei seyen cruele wowndes ne none medes be of blood I-shad. I wolde that our tymes sholde torne ayen to the oolde maneris! But the angysshous love of havynge brenneth in folk more cruely than the fyer of the mountaigne of Ethna that ay brenneth. Allas! what was he that first dalf up the gobbettes or the weyghtes of gold covered undir erthe and the precyous stones that wolden han be hydd? He dalf up precyous periles. (That is to seyn, that he that hem first up dalf, he dalf up a precyous peril for-why, for the precyousnesse of swich thyng hath many man ben in peril.)

'*Quid autem de dignitatibus.*'—Prosa 6

But what schal I seye of dignytes and of powers, the whiche ye men, that neither knowen verray dignyte ne verray powere, areysen hem as heyghe as the hevене? [485] The whiche dignytees and powyeres yif thei comen to any wikkid man, thei doon as greet damages and destruccions as doothe the flaumbe of the mountaigne Ethna whan the flaumbe walweth up, ne no deluge ne doth so cruele harmes. Certes the remembreth wel, as I trowe, that thilke dignyte that men clepyn the Imperie of consulers, the whiche that whilom was begynnynge of fredom, yowr eldren covcyteden to han don away that dignyte for the pride of the consulers. And ryght for the same pride yowr elders by-forn that tyme hadden doon away out of the cite of Rome the kynges name (that is to seyn, thei nolden han no lengere no kyng).

But now, if it so be that dignytees and poweris ben yven to gode men, the whiche thyng is ful selde, what aggreable thynges is ther in the dignytees or powyers but only the goodnesse of folk that usen hem? And therfore it is thus that honour ne cometh nat to vertu for

485. *doon* to 547, *preysynge*, missing from Hn.

cause of dignyte, but, ayenward, honour cometh to dygnite for cause of vertu. [490] But whiche is thilke your derworthe power that is so cleer and so requerable? O ye crthliche bestes considere ye nat over whiche thyng that it semeth that ye han power? Now yif thou saye a mows among othere mys that chalanged to hym-self ward ryght and power over alle othere mys, how Gret scorn woldestow han of it! (Glosa. So fareth it by men; the body hath power over the body.) For yif thou looke wel upon the body of a wyght, what thyng shaltow fynde more freele than is mankynde; the whiche men ful ofte ben slayn by bytyng of smale flyes, or elles with the entrynge of crepyng worms in-to the pryvetees of mannes body? [495] But wher schal men fynden any man that mai exercen or haunten any ryght up-on another man, but oonly on his body, or elles up-on thynges that ben lowere than the body, the whiche I clepe fortunous possessions? Maystow evere have any comaundement over a free corage? Maystowe remuwen fro the estat of his propre reste a thought that is clyvyng togidre in hym self by stedfast resoun? As whilom a tyraunt wende to confownde a fre-man of corage, and wende to constreyn hym by torment to maken hym discoveren and accusen folk that wisten of a coniuracioun (whiche I clepe a confederacye) that was cast ayens this tyraunt; but this freman boot of his owene tonge, and caste it in the visage of thilk wode tyraunt. So that the tormentes that this tyraunt wende to han makid matere of cruelte, this wise man makid it matere of vertu. [500] But what thyng is it that a man may doon to an other man, that he ne may resceyven the same thyng of other folk in hym-self?

491. *But whiche is, etc.*, 'mais quæ est, i.e. but what is, etc.

491. *over whiche thyng, etc.*, 'consideratis, quibus qui præsidere videamini.'

498. *As whilom*, 'cum' temporal; but probably Fr. 'comme' was misunderstood.

500. *tormentes . . . it*, 'les tormentes . . . If sages homs le (L. les) fist estre.'

(Or thus : what may a man don to folk, that folk ne may don hym the same?) I have herd told of Busyrides, that was wont to sleen his gestes that herberweden in his hous, and he was slayn hym-self of Ercoles that was his gest. Regulus hadde taken in bataile manye men of Affryke and cast hem in-to feteres, but sone ther after he most yve hise handes to ben bownde with the cheynes of hem that he hadde whilom overcomen. Wenestow thanne that he be myghty that hath no power to doon a thyng that othere ne mai doon in hym that he doth in othere? [505] And yit moreover, yif it so were that these dygnytes or poweris hadden any propre or naturel goodnesse in hem-self, nevere nolde they comen to schrewes. For contrarious thynges ne ben nat wont to ben I-felashed togydre. Nature refuseth that contrarious thynges ben I-joygned. And so, as I am in certeyn that ryght wykkyd folk han dignytees ofte tyme, thanne scheweth it wel that dignytees and poweres ne ben nat gode of hir owene kynde, syn that they suffren hem-selfe to cleven or joynen hem to schrewes. And certes the same thyng mai I most digneliche juggen and seyn of alle the yiftes of fortune that most plenteuously comen to schrewes. Of the whiche yiftes I trowe that it oughte ben considered, that no man douteth that he ne is strong in whom he seeth strengthe; [510] and in whom that swyftnesse is, sooth it is that he is swyft; also musyke maketh mucisyens, and phisyk maketh phisicyeens, and rethoryke, rethoriens. For-why the nature of every thyng maketh his proprete, ne it is nat entremedlyd with the effect of contrarious thynges, and of wil it chaseth out thynges that to it ben contrarie. But certes rychesse mai nat restreynen

502. *Busyrides*, rather 'Busirus,' as in B. 3293; but Aq. has 'Busirides.'

505. *Wenestow . . . othere*, nonsense, due either to mistranslation of 'de faire que' ('efficere ne'), or to text-corruption, a *thyng* belonging after 2nd to doon.

512. *of wil*, 'ultro, i.e. sponte'; C<sub>2</sub> A<sub>1</sub> as *of wil*, A<sub>2</sub> *oft times*, Cx. omits and . . . *contrarie*.

avarice unstaunchd; ne power ne maketh nat a man myghty over hym-selfe, whiche that vicyous lustes holden destreyned with cheynes that ne mowen nat ben unbownden. And dignytees that ben yyven to schrewe folk nat oonly ne maketh hem nat digne, but it scheweth rather al opynly that they ben unworthy and undigne. And whi is it thus? Certes for ye han joie to clepen thynges with false names, that beren hem al in the contrarie; the whiche names ben ful ofte reproved by the effect of the same thynges; [515] so that these ilke rychesses ne ougthen nat by ryghte to ben cleped rychesses, ne swyche power ne aughte nat ben clepyd power, ne swiche dignyte ne aughte nat ben clepyd dignyte. And at the laste, I may conclude the same thyng of alle the yyftes of fortune, in whiche ther nys no thyng to ben desired, ne that hath in hym-selfe naturel bownte, as it is ful wel yseene. For neither thei ne joygnen hem nat alwey to gode men, ne maken hem alwey gode to whom they been I-joyned.

'*Novimus quantas dedit.*'—Metrum 6

We han wel knowen how many grete harmes and destruccions weren I-doon by the emperour Nero. He leet brennen the cite of Rome, and made sleen the senatours; and he cruel whilom sloughe his brothir, and he was made moyst with the blood of his modir (that is to seyn, he leet sleen and slitten the body of his modir to seen wher he was conceyved); [520] and he lookede on every halve uppon hir cold deed-body, ne no teer ne wette hie face, but he was so hardherted that he myghte ben domesman or juge of hir dede beaute. And natheles yit governed this Nero by septre alle the peples that Phebus (the sonne) may seen,

514. *dignytees . . . it*, 'dignete (L. dignites) . . . fait elle (L. font elle)'; cp. 449.

514. *that beren hem* goes with *thynges*, i.e. which behave in just the opposite way.

519. *We han*, etc., 'nouimus.'

519. *made sleen*, 'fist ocire.'

comynge fro his uttreste arysynge til he hidde his bemes undir the wawes. (That is to seyn he governede al the peples by ceptre imperiale that the sonne goth aboute from est to west.) And ek this Nero governyde by ceptre all the peples that ben undir the colde sterres that highten the vij Tryones. (This is to seyn he governede alle the peples that ben under the partye of the north.) And eek Nero governede alle the peples that the vyolent wynd Nothus scorklith, and baketh the brennyng sandes by his drye heete (that is to seyn, al the peple in the south). [525] But yit ne myghte nat al his heie power torne the woodnesse of this wikkid Nero. Allas! it is grevous fortune as ofte as wikkid sweerd is joyned to cruel venym (that is to seyn, venymows cruelte to lordschipe).'

'*Tum ego scis inquam.*'—Rosa 7

Than seyde I thus: 'Thow woost wel thi-selve that the covetise of mortel thynges ne hadden nevere lordschipe of me, but I have wel desired matere of thynges to done (as who seith, I desirede to have matiere of governaunce over comunalites), for vertue stille sholde nat elden (that is to seyn that, list that, or he waxe oold, his vertu, that lay now ful stille, ne schulde nat perysshe unexercised in governaunce of comune, for whiche men myghten speken or wryten of his gode government).'

'For sothe,' quod sche, 'and that is a thyng that mai drawn to governaunce swiche hertes as ben worthy and noble of hir nature, [530] but natheles it may nat drawn or tollen swiche hertes as ben I-brought to the ful perfeccioun of vertue, that is to seyn, covetise of glorie and renoun to han wel adminystred the comune thynges, or doon gode desertes to profyt of the

528. *for*, i.e. that.

529. i.e. lest his virtue should perish, etc. For 2nd that C<sub>1</sub> reads *it*, Cx. A<sub>2</sub> omit.

comune. For see now and considere how litel and how voyde of alle prys is thylyk glorie. Certeyn thyng is, as thou hast learned by the demonstracioun of astronomye, that al the envyrounyng of the erthe aboute ne halt but the resoun of a prykke at regard of the gretnesse of hevene; that is to seyn that, yif ther were maked comparysoun of the erthe to the gretnesse of hevene, men wolde juggen in al that the erthe heelde no space. Of the whiche litel regioun of this world, the ferthe partye is enhabited with lyyvng beestes that we knowen, as thou hast thy-selve learned by Tholome that proveth it. [535] And yif thou haddest withdrawn and abated in thy thought fro thilke ferthe partie as moche space as the see and the mareys contene and overgoon, and as moche space as the regioun of drowghte overstretcheth (that is to seyn sandes and desertes), wel unnethe sholde ther duellen a ryght streyte place to the habitacioun of men. And ye thanne, that ben envyrouned and closed with-ynne the leeste prykke of thilke prykke, thynken ye to manyfesten or publisschen your renoun and doon your name for to be born forth? But your glorie that is so narwe and so streyt I-thrungen into so litel bowndes, how mochel conteneth it in largesse and in greet doynge? And also set this therto: that manye a nacioun, diverse of tonge and of maneris and ek of resoun of hir lyyvng, ben enhabited in the cloos of thilke lytel habitacle; [540] to the whiche nacyons, what for difficulte of weyes, and what for diversite of langages, and what for defaute of un-usage and entrecomunyng of marchandise, nat oonly the names of synguler men ne may nat stretchen, but eek the fame of citees ne may nat stretchen. At the laste,

533. *halt*, etc., i.e. is accounted but a point in comparison with, etc.

535. *Tholome*, i.e. Ptolemy.

541. *defaute of un-usage*, etc., mixture of 'insolentia, i.e. inconstuetudine (*unusage*) commercii' (*entrecomunyng*) and 'par faute de (*defaute of*) acoustumance de mercheandise' (*of marchandise*).

certes, in the tyme of Marcus Tulyus, as hym-selve writ in his book, that the renoun of the comune of Rome ne hadde nat nat yit passid ne clomben over the mountaigne that highte Caucasus; and yit was thilke tyme Rome wel waxen and greetly redouted of the Parthes, and eek of the othere folk enhabitunge aboute. Seestow nat thanne how streyte and how compressid is thilke glorie that ye travaillen aboute to schewe and to multeplye? [545] May thanne the glorie of a synguler Romeyn stretchen thider as the fame of the name of Rome may nat clymben ne passen? And ek seestow nat that the maneris of diverse folk and ek hir lawes ben discordaunt among hem-selve, so that thilke thyng that som men juggen worthy of preysynge, other folk juggen that it is worthy of torment? And therof comyth it that, though a man delyte hym in preysynge of his renoun, he ne mai nat in no wyse bryngen forthe ne spreden his name to many manere peples. And therefore every maner man aughte to ben apayed of his glorie, that is publysschid among his owene neyghbours; and thilke noble renoun schal ben restreyned withynne the boundes of o manere folk. But how many a man, that was ful noble in his tyme, hath the wrecchid and nedy foryetyng of writeris put out of mynde and doon away; [550] al be it so that, certes, thilke wrytynges profiten litel, the whiche wrytynges long and dirk eelde doth away, both hem and ek hir auctours! But yow men semeth to geten yow a perdurablete, whan ye thynken that in tyme comynge your fame schal lasten. But natheles yif thow wolt maken comparysoun to the endles spaces of eternyte, what thyng hastow by whiche thow nayst reioisen the of long lastynge of hi name? For yif ther were makyd comparysoun of the abydyng of a nomet to ten thowsand wynter, for as

mochel as bothe two spaces ben endyd, for yit hath the moment som porcioun of it, although it litel be. But natheles thilke selve nowmbre of yeeris, and eek as many yeris as ther-to mai be multiplyed, ne mai nat certes be comparysouned to the perdurablete that is endles; [555] for of thynges that han ende may ben makid comparysoun, but of thynges that ben withouten ende to thynges that han ende may be makid no comparysoun. And for-thi is it that, al-though renome, of as longe tyme as evere the list to thynken, were thought to the regard of eternyte, that is unstaunchable and infynyt, it ne sholde nat only semen litel, but pleynliche ryght noght. But ye men, certes, ne konne doon no thyng aryght, but yif it be byfore the audience of the peple and for idel rumours; and ye forsaken the grete worthynesse of concience and of vertu, and ye seeken yowr gerdouns of the smale wordes of straunge folk. Have now (here and undirstand) in the lyghtnesse of swiche pryde and veyne glorye how a man scornede festyvaly and myriely swich vanyte. [560] Whilom ther was a man that hadde assaiede with stryvyng wordes another man, the whiche, nat for usage of verray vertu but for proud veyn glorie, had taken upon hym falsly the name of a philosopre. This rather man that I spak of thoughte he wolde assaie where he thilke were a philosopre or no; that is to seyn, yif that he wolde han suffride lightly in pacience the wronges that weren doon unto hym. This feynede philosopre took pacience a litel while; and whan he hadde resceyved wordes of outrage, he, as in stryvyng ayen and reioysynge of hym-self, seide at the laste ryght thus: "undirstondistow nat that I am a philosopre?" The tother man

554. *bothe two*, A<sub>1</sub> Hn. Cx. *bothe tho*; C<sub>2</sub> *bothe the. for yit, i.e. yet.*

560. *Have now*, etc., 'Accipe' and 'Or recoit et entent.'

562. *where, i.e. whether.*

564. *took pacience*, 'il prist vn petit en soi (L omits) pacience.'

543. *that the renoun*, 'that' is often thus used efore a direct quotation.

552. *yow men*, etc. (Cx. A<sub>1</sub> *ye men semen*), *i.e. seems to you that*, etc.

answerede ayen ful bytyngely and seyde :  
 "I hadde wel undirstonden it yif thou  
 haddest holde thi tonge stille." But  
 what is it to thise noble worthy men?  
 —for, certes, of swych folk speke I that  
 seken glorie with vertue—What is it,  
 quod sche; 'what atteyneth fame to  
 swiche folk, whan the body is resclved by  
 the deeth at the laste? [565] For if it so  
 be that men dyen in all (that is to seyen,  
 body and soule), the whiche thing our  
 reson defendeth us to byleeven, thanne  
 is ther no glorie in no wyse; for what  
 schulde thilke glorie ben, whan he, of  
 whom thilke glorie is seyde to be, nys  
 ryght naught in no wise? And yif the  
 soule, whiche that hath in hym-self  
 science of gode werkes, unbownden  
 from the prysone of the erthe, weendeth  
 frely to the hevene, despiseth it nat  
 thanne al erthly ocupacioun; and, beyng  
 in hevene, reioyseth that it is exempt  
 fro alle erthly thynges? (As who seith,  
 thanne rekketh the soule of noon othir  
 thyng, ne of renoun of this world.) [570]

'*Quicumque solam mente.*'—Metrum 7

Who so that with overthrowng  
 thought oonly seketh glorie of fame,  
 and weneth that it be sovereyn good,  
 lat hym looke upon the brode schewyng  
 contrees of the hevene, and upon the  
 streyte sete of this erthe; and he shal  
 be asschamed of the encres of his name,  
 that mai nat fulfill the litel compas  
 of the erthe. O! what coveyten  
 proude folk to lyften up hir nekkes  
 on idel in the dedly yok of this world?  
 For al though that renoun y-sprad,  
 passyng to ferne peples, goth by  
 diverse tonges; and al-though that  
 greet houses or kynredes shynen  
 with cleer titles of honours; yit  
 natheles deth despiseth al heye  
 glorie of fame, and deth wrappeth  
 to gidre the heyghe heved and the  
 lowe, and maketh egal and evene  
 the heygheste to the loweste. [575]  
 Where wonen now the bones of trewe  
 Fabricius? What is now Brutus or

570. C<sub>2</sub> Hn. Cx. *rekketh the soule of no glorie  
 of renoun.* A<sub>1</sub> omits from *As who to this world.*

stierne Caton? The thynne fame yit  
 lastyng of here idel names is marked  
 with a fewe lettres. But al-thoughe  
 that we han knowen the fayre wordes  
 of the fames of hem, it is nat yvven  
 to knowen hem that ben dede and  
 consumpt. Liggeth thanne stille,  
 al outrelly unknowable, ne fame  
 maketh yow nat knowe. And yif ye  
 wene to lyve the longere for wynd  
 of yowr mortel name whan o cruel  
 day schal ravyssche yow, than is the  
 seconde deth duellyng unto yow.  
 (Glose. The first deeth he clepeth  
 here departyng of the body and the  
 soule, and the seconde deth he  
 clepeth as here the styntyng of the  
 renoun of fame.) [580]

'*Set ne me inexorable.*'—Prosa 8

'But for as mochel as thow schalt  
 nat wenen,' quod sche, 'that I bere  
 an untretable batayle ayens fortune,  
 yit somtyme it by-falleth that sche  
 desceyveth deserveth to han ryght  
 good thank of men. And that is  
 whan sche hir-self opneth, and whan  
 sche discovereth hir frownt and  
 scheweth hir maneris. Peraventure  
 yit undirstandestow nat that I schal  
 seie. It is a wonder that I desire to  
 telle, and for-thi unneth may I  
 unplyten my sentence with wordes.  
 For I deme that contrarious Fortune  
 profiteth more to men than Fortune  
 debonayre. For alwey, whan Fortune  
 semeth debonayre, thanne sche  
 lieth, falsly byhetyng the hope of  
 welefulnesse; but forsothe contraryous  
 Fortune is alwey sothfast, whan  
 sche scheweth hir-self unstable  
 thurw hir chaungyng. [585] The  
 amyable Fortune desceyveth folk;  
 the contrarie Fortune techeth.  
 The amyable Fortune byndeth  
 with the beaute of false goodes  
 the hertes of folk that usen hem;  
 the contrarye Fortune unbyndeth  
 hem by the knowyng of freel  
 welefulnesse. The amyable

578. *Liggeth thanne, etc., 'jacetis,'* read as imperative on account of Fr. 'Donques gesiez vous.'

581-614. A<sub>1</sub> omits, beginning again at II, met. 1

581. *bere . . . batayle, 'gerere bellum.'*

Fortune maystow seen al-vey wyndy and flowynge, and evere mysknowynge of hir-self; the contrarie Fortune is atempre and restreynd and wys thurw exercise of hir adversite. At the laste, amyable Fortune with hir flaterynge draweth myswandrynge men fro the sovereyne good; the contrarious Fortune ledeth ofte folk ayen to sothfast goodes, and haleth hem ayen as with an hook. Wenestow than that thow aughtest to lecten this a litel thyng, that this aspre and horrible Fortune hath discovered to the the thoughtes of thi trewe freendes. [590] For-why this ilke Fortune hath departed and uncovered to the bothe the certain visages and eek the doutes visages of thi felawes. Whan she departed away fro the, she took away hir freendes and lefte the thyne freendes. Now whanne thow were ryche and welful, as the semede, with how mochel woldestow han bought the fulle knowynge of thys (that is to seyn, the knowynge of thyne verray freendes)? Now pleyne the nat thanne of rychesse y-lorn, syn thow hast fownden the moste precyous kynde of rychesses, that is to seyn, thi verray freendes.

‘*Quod mundus stabili fide.*’—Metrum 8

That the world with stable feyth varieth accordable chaungynge; that the contrarious qualites of elementes holden among hemself allyaunce perdurable; [595] that Phebus, the sonne, with his goldene chariet bryngeth forth the rosene day; that the moone hath comaundement over the nyghtes, whiche nyghtes Esperus, the eve sterre, hath brought; that the see, gredy to flowen, constreyneth with a certain eende his floodes, so that it is nat lewful to strecche his brode termes or bowndes upon the erthes (that is to seyn, to coveren al the erthe)—al this accordaunce of thynges is bounde with love, that governeth erthe and see, and

588. *exercise*, ‘exercitatione,’ i.e. experience.

595. *varieth*, etc., ‘concordes variat vicies.’

597. *B gredy constreyneth to flowen.*

hath also comandement to the hevene. And yif this love slakede the bridelis, alle thynges that now loven hem to-gidres wolden make batayle contynuely, and stryven to fordo the fassoun of this world, the which they now leden in accordable feith by fayre moevynge. This love halt togidres peples joynd with an holy boond, and knytteth sacrement of mariages of chaste loves; and love enditeth lawes to trewe felawes. [600] O lewful were mankynde, yif thilke love that governeth hevene governede yowr corages.’

EXPLICIT LIBER SECUNDUS

INCIPIT LIBER TERTIUS

‘*Iam cantum illa.*’—Prosa I

By this sche hadde ended hir song, whan the swetnesse of here dite hadde thurw perced me, that was desyrous of herknyng, and I a-stoned hadde yit streyghte myn eres (that is to seyn, to herkne the bet what sche wolde seye). So that a litel herafter I seide thus: ‘O thow that art sovereyne confort of angwyssous corages, so thow hast remounted and norysshed me with the weyghte of thi sentences and with delyt of thy syngynge; so that I trowe nat now that I be unparygal to the strokes of Fortune (as who seith, I dar wel now suffren alle the assautes of Fortune and wel defende me fro hir). And tho remedies whiche that thou seydest her byforn that weren ryght scharpe, nat oonly that I ne am agrisen of hem now; but I, desiros of herynge, axe gretly to heren tho remedies.’ [605]

Thanne seyde sche thus: ‘That feeled

598. *hath comandement to*, ‘imperitans celo,’ ‘commandant au ciel.’

598. *loven hem to-gidres*, ‘s’entreament,’ i.e. love one another. *contynuely*, ‘continuo’; rather, ‘straightway.’

600. *B A<sub>2</sub> the sacr., Cx. marriage.*

605. *that weren* (C<sub>2</sub> A<sub>1</sub> om. *that*), omitted subject as in 629.

I ful wel,' quod sche, 'whan thow ententyf and stille ravyschedest my wordes, and I abood til that thou haddest swich habite of thi thought as thou hast now, or elles til that I my-self hadde maked to the the same habite, whiche that is a more verray thyng. And certes the remenant of thynges that ben yet to seie ben swiche, that first whan men tasten hem, they ben bytynge; but whan they ben resceyved with-ynne a wyght, thanne ben thei swete. But for thou seyst that thou art so desyrous to herkne hem, with how greet brennynge woldestow glowen, yif thou wigest whider I wol leden the!'

'Whider is that?' quod I.

'To thilke verraye welefulnesse,' quod sche, 'of whiche thyn herte dremeth; [610] but forasmoche as thi syghte is occupyed and destourbed by imagynacoun of erthly thynges, thow mayst nat yit seen thilke selve welefulnesse.'

'Do,' quod I, 'and schewe me what is thilke verray welefulnesse, I preie the, withoute taryinge.'

'That wol I gladly do,' quod sche, 'for the cause of the. But I wol first marken the by woordes, and I wol enforcen me to enforme the thilke false cause of blisfulnesse that thou more knowest; so that whanne thow hast fully byhoolden thilke false goodes and torned thin eighen to the tother syde, thow mowe knowe the cleernesse of verray blisfulnesse.'

'*Qui serere ingenuum.*'—Metrum I

'Who-so wole sowe a feld plentevous, let hym first delyvren it of thornes, and kerve asondir with his hook the bussches and the feern, so that the corn may comen hevly of eryl and of greynes.

606. *whiche that*, etc., 'quod est verius.'

612. *Do and schewe*, 'Fac . . . et demonstra,' 'Fai . . . et demonstre.'

613. *for the cause of the*, i.e. for thy sake.

613. *marken the*, 'je te senefierai'; the dative.

613. *that thou more*, etc., i.e. which thou art more familiar with.

[615] Hony is the more swete, if mouthes han first tasted savours that ben wykke. The sterres schynen more aggreablye whan the wynd Nothus leteth his plowngy blastes; and afir that Lucifer, the daysterre, hath chased away the dirke nyght, the day the fairere ledeth the rosene hors of the sonne. And ryght so thow, byhooldyng first the false goodes, bygyn to withdrawe thy nekke fro the yok of erthely affeccions; and afterward the verray goodes schullen entren into thy corage.'

'*Cum defixo paululum.*'—Prosa 2

Tho fastnade sche a litel the syghte of hir eyen, and withdrowghe hir ryght as it were into the streyte seete of here thought, and bigan to speke ryght thus: 'Alle the cures,' quod sche, 'of mortel folk, whiche that travailen hem in many manere studies, gon certes by diverse weyes; but natheles thei enforcen hem alle to comyn oonly to oon ende of blisfulnesse. [620] And blisfulnesse is swiche a good, that who-so that hath geten it, he ne may over that nothyng more desire. And this thyng forsothe is the soverayn good that conteneth in hym-self alle maner goodes; to the whiche goode if ther fayled any thyng, it myghte nat ben sovereyn good, for thanne wer ther som good out of thilke sovereyn good, that myghte ben desired. Now is it cleer and certeyne thanne, that blisfulnesse is a parfyt estat by the congregacioun of alle goodes; the whiche blisfulnesse, as I have seyde, alle mortel folk enforcen hem to geten by diverse weyes. For why the covetise of verray good is naturely I-plauntyd in the hertes of men, but the myswandrynge errour mysledeth hem into false goodes. [625] Of the whiche men, some of hem wenen that sovereyn good be to lyven with-oute nede of any thyng, and travaylen hem to be'

616. *mouthes han*, etc., 'si malus ora (mis construed as nom.) prius sapor edat.'

617. *hors*, horses.



habundaunt of rychesses. And some othere men demen that sovereyn good be for to be ryght digne of reverence, and enforchen hem to ben reverenced among hir neyghbours by the honours that thei han I-geten. And some folk ther ben that holden that ryght heye power be sovereyn good, and enforchen hem for to reignen or elles to joygnen hem to hem that reignen. And it semeth to some other folk, that noblesse of renoun be the sovereyn good, and hasten hem to geten hem gloryouse name by the artes of werre or of pees. And many folk mesuren and gessen that the sovereyne good be joye and gladnesse, and wenen that it be ryght blisful thyng to plowngen hem in voluptuous delyt. [630] And ther ben folk that entrechaungen the causes and the endes of thyse forseyde goodes, as they that desiren rychesses to han power and delites, or elles they desiren power for to have moneye or for cause of renoun. In these thynges and in swiche other thynges is torned al the entencioun of desyrynges and werkes of men; as thus: noblesse and favour of peple whiche that yveth to men, as it semeth hem, a maner cleernesse of renoun; and wyf and children, that men desiren for cause of delyt and myrnesse. But for-sothe freendes schulde nat ben rekned among the goodes of fortune, but of vertu, for it is a ful hooly maner thyng; alle these othere thynges for-sothe ben aken for cause of power or elles for cause of delyt. [635] Certes now am I edy to referren the goodes of the body o thise forseide thynges aboven; for it emeth that strengthe and gretnesse of body yven power and wrythynesse, and that beaute and swyftnesse yven oblesse and glorie of renoun; and heele of body semeth yven delyt. In alle these thynges it semeth oonly that blisfulnesse is desyred; for-why thilk thing that every man desireth moost over alle thynges

632. *is torned*, mistranslation of 'versatur'; so in Fr. 'est tournée.'

635. *freendes* '(genus) amicorum,' hence the below.

he demeth that it be the sovereyn good; but I have diffyned that blisfulnesse is the sovereyn good; for whiche every wyght demeth that thilke estat that he desireth over alle thynges, that it be blisfulnesse. Now hastow thanne byfor thyne eien almost al the purposede forme of the welefulnesse of mankynde; that is to seyn rychesses, honours, power, glorie, and delites. [640] The whiche delit oonly considered Epicurus, and juggid and establisseyde that delyt is the soverayn good, for as moche as alle othere thynges, as hym thoughte, byrefte away joye and myrthe from the herte. But I retourne ayen to the studies of men, of whiche men the corage alway reherceth and seketh the sovereyne good, al be it so that it be with a dyrkyd memorie; but he not by whiche path, ryght as a dronke man not nat by whiche path he may retourne hom to his hous. Semeth it thanne that folk foleyen and erren, that enforchen hem to have nede of no thyng? Certes ther nys noon other thyng that mai so wel performe blisfulnesse, as an estat plentevous of alle godes, that ne hath nede of noon other thyng, but that it is suffisant of hym-self un-to hym-self. [645] And foleyen swiche folk, thanne, that wenen that thilke thyng that is ryght good, that it be eek ryght worthy of honour and of reverence? Certes, nay. For that thyng nys neither foul ne worthy to ben despyed that wel neyghe al the entencioun of mortel folk travaylen for to geten it. And power, aughte nat that ek to ben rekned amonge goodes? What elles? For it nys nat to wene that thilke thyng that is most worthy of alle thynges be feble and withoute strengthe. And cleernesse of renoun, aughte that to ben despyed? Certes ther may no man for-

640. *purposede* (i.e. proposed) should precede *byfor thyne eien*: misreading of Aq. 'habes ante oculos propositam formam humane,' etc.

641. *byrefte away*, etc., should be broughte . . . to the herte; 'afferre' misread as 'auferre.'

642. *reherceth and seketh*, 'repetit'; *reherceth* is probably due to *studies*, 'studia' (which here means 'efforts').

sake, that alle thyng that is right excellent and noble, that it ne semeth to ben ryght cleer and renomede. For certes it nedeth nat to saie that blisfulnesse [ne] be angwyssous ne drery, ne subgit to grevaunces ne to sorwes; syn that in ryght lilete thynges folk seken to haven and to usen that may delyten hem. [650] Certes thise ben thise thynges that men wolen and desiren to geten, and for this cause desiren they rychesses, dignytes, reignes, glorie, and delices; for ther-by wenen they to han suffysaunce, honour, power, renoun, and gladnesse. Thanne is it good that men seken thus, by so manye diverse studies. In whiche desir it mai lyghtly be schewyd how greet is the strengthe of nature. For how so that men han diverse sentences and discordynge, algates men accorden alle in lovyng the eende of good.

*'Quantas rerum flectat.'*—Metrum 2

It likethe me to schewe by subtil soong, with slakke and delytable sown of strenges, how that Nature, myghty, enclyneth and flyteth the governementes of thynges; and by whiche lawes sche, purveiable, kepith the grete world; and how sche, byndynge, restreyneth alle thynges by a boond that may nat be unbownde. [655] Al be it so that the lyouns of the contre of Pene beren the fayre chaynes, and taken metes of the handes of folk that yeven it hem, and dreden hir stourdy maistres of whiche thei ben wont to suffre betynges; yif that hir horrible mouthes ben by-bled (that is to seyn, of beestes devoured), hir corage of tyme passed, that hath ben idel and rested, repeireth ayen, and thei roren grevously, and remembren on hir nature, and slaken hir nekkes from hir cheynes unbownde; and hir mayster fyrst, to-torn with bloody

654. *slakke and delytable, etc.*, 'lentis fidibus' and 'par sons delitables.' *slakke* is probably Adam's mistake for *wakke* or *waike* (i.e. soft), the usual gloss for *lentus*.

656. *Pene*, 'Pæni leones.'

tooth, assaieth the wode wratthes of hem (this to seyn thei freten hir maister). And the janglyng brid that syngeth on the heighe branches (that is to seyn, in the wode), and after is enclosed in a streyte cage, al though that the pleyng bysynes of men yeveth hem honyed drynkes and large metes with swete studyes, yit nathes yif thilke bryd skippyng out of hir streyte cage seith the agreeable schadwes of the wodes, sche defouleth with hir feet hir metes I-schad, and seketh mornynge oonly the wode, and twytereth desyrng the wode with hir swete voys. [660] The yerde of a tree, that is haled a-doun by myghty strengthe, boweth redily the crop adown; but yif the hand of hym that it benete leet it goon ageyn, anon the crop loketh upryght to hevене. The sonne, Phebus, that falleth at even in the westrene wawes, retorneth ayen eft sones his cart, by a pryve path, there as it is wont aryse. Alle thynges seken ayen to hir propre cours, and alle thynges reioysen hem of hir retornynge ayen to hir nature. Ne noon ordenaunce is by-taken to thynges, but that that hath joynd the endynge to the bygynnyng, and hath makid the cours of it-self stable (that it chaunge nat from his propre kynde).

*'Vos quoque terrena animalia.'*—

Prosa 3

Certes also ye men, that ben ertliche beestes, dremen alwey your bygynnyng, al though that it be with a thynne ymaginacioun; and by a maner thought, al be it nat clerly ne parfitely, ye loken from afer to thilke verray fyn of blisfulnesse. [665] And therefore naturel entencioun ledeth yow to thilke verray good, but many maner errours mystorneth yow ther fro. Considere now yif that by thilke thynges by whiche a man weneth

658. *assaieth*, 'imbuat.' Perhaps we should read *apaieth*.

659. *hem*. Cp. the similar transition to plu. in *Tales*, F 610 ff., where this passage is quoted.

659. *out of hir*, etc., to end of prose, missing in Hn. C<sub>2</sub>A<sub>1</sub>H Cx. *studye*.

to geten hym blisfulnesse, yif that he mai comen to thilk ende that he weneth to come by nature. For yif that moneye, or honours, or thise othere forseide thynges, brynge to men swiche a thyng that no good ne fayle hem ne semeth faile, certes thanne wol I graunte that they ben maked blisful by thilke thynges that thei han geten. But yif it so be that thilke thynges mowen nat performen that they byheten, and that there be defaute of manye goodis, scheweth it nat thanne clerly that false beaute of blysfulnesse is knownen and ataynt in thilke thynges. First and forward thow thi-self, that haddest haboundances of rycheses nat longe agoon, I aske yif that, in the habowndance of alle swiche rycheses, thow were nevere angwyssous ne sory in thy corage of any wrong or grevance that by-tydde the on any side?' [670]

'Certes,' quod I, 'it ne remembreth me nat that evere I was so fre of my thought that I ne was alwey in angwyse of som-what.'

'And was nat that,' quod sche, 'for that the lakkide somwhat that thow woldest nat han lakkid, or elles thou haddest that thow noldest nat han had?'

'Ryght so is it,' quod I.

'Than desiredest thow the presence of he toon and the absence of the tothir?'

'I graunte wel,' quod I.

'For-sothe,' quod sche, 'thanne nedeth her som-what that every man desireth?'

'Yee, ther nedeth,' quod I.

'Certes,' quod sche, 'and he that ath lak or nede of aught nys nat in very wey suffisant to hym-self?'

'No,' quod I. [675]

'And thow,' quod sche, 'in al the lente of thy richeses haddest thilke lke of suffisaunce?'

'What elles?' quod I.

'Thanne mai nat richeses maken at a man nys nedy, ne that he be ffsisaunt to hym-self; and yit that was

it that thei byhighten, as it semeth. And eek certes I trow that this be gretly to considere, that moneye ne hath nat in his owene kynde that it ne mai ben bynomen of hem that han it, maugre hem.'

'I byknowe it wel,' quod I.

'Whi sholdestow nat byknowen it,' quod sche, 'whan every day the strengere folk bynymen it fro the feblere, maugre hem? For whennes comen elles thise foreyne compleyntes or queeles of pledynges but for that men axen hir moneye that hath ben bynomen hem by force or by gyle, and alwey maugre hem?' [680]

'Right so is it,' quod I.

'Than,' quod sche, 'hath a man nede to seken hym foreyne help by whiche he may defenden his moneye?'

'Who mai seie nay?' quod I.

'Certes,' quod sche, 'and hym nedide noon help yif he ne hadde no moneye that he myghte leese.'

'That is douteles,' quod I.

'Than is this thyng torned into the contrarie,' quod sche; 'for rycheses, that men wenen scholde maken suffisaunce, they maken a man rather have nede of foreyne help. Whiche is the maner or the gyse,' quod sche, 'that rychesse mai dryve away nede? Riche folk, mai they neyther han hungir ne thurst? Thise riche men, may they fele no cold on hir lymes in wynter? But thow wolt answeren that ryche men han Inoghe wher-with thei mai staunchen hir hungir, and slaken hir thurst, and don away cold. [685] In this wise mai nede be confortid by richeses, but certes nede mai nat al outrely be doon away; for thoughe this nede that is alwey gapynge and gredy, be fulfilled with richeses and axe any thyng, yit duelleth

677. *byhighten*, i.e. promised.

680. *foreyne compleyntes*, etc., 'forenses querimonie' (i.e. public appeals) and 'complaintez de plaiz.'

686. *and axe any thyng* (Cx. H omit *axe*) should follow *gredy*; i.e. is always asking for something. *yit duelleth*, etc., i.e. the need of food, drink, etc., always remains to be filled.

670. C inserts *that*, Cx. H *the* after *aske*.

673. C<sub>1</sub> B H Cx. *desirest*.

thanne a nede that myghte be fulfild. I holde me stille and telle nat how that litel thyng suffiseth to nature; but certes to avarice Inowghe suffiseth nothyng. For syn that rychesse ne mai nat al doon away nede, but riches maken nede, what mai it thanne be that ye wenen that riches mowen yyven yow suffici-saunce?

'*Quamvis fluente dives.*'—Metrum 3

Al weere it so that a riche covetous man hadde a ryver or a goter fletynge al of gold, yit sholde it nevere staunchen his covetise; and thoughte he hadde his nekke charged with precyous stones of the rede see, and thoughte he do ere his feeldes plentevous with an hundred oxen, nevere ne schal his bytynge bysynesse forleeten hym whil he lyveth, ne the lyghte riches ne schal nat beren hym companye whan he is deed. [690]

'*Set dignitatibus.*'—Prosa 4

But dignytees, to whom thei ben comen, make they hym honourable and reverent? Han thei nat so gret strengthe that thei may putten vertus in the hertes of folk that usen the lordschipes of hem, or elles may they don away the vices? Certes thei ben nat wont to don away wikkidnesse, but thei ben wont rather to schewen wykkydnesse. And ther-of cometh it that y have right gret disdayn that dignytes ben yyven ofte to wikkide men. For which thyng Catullus clepid a consul of Rome that hyghte Nomyus "postum" or "boch" (as who seith, he clepid hym a congregacioun of vices in his brest, as a postum is ful of cor-

688. *what, i.e. why, 'quid.'*

689. C<sub>2</sub> A<sub>1</sub> Hn. omit *or a goter*. The 2nd clause is inaccurately translated and should be, following Fr.: *and hepede riches that yit sholde nevere, etc.*

690. *do ere, i.e. have his fields plowed.*

691. *Han thei nat, etc.*, 'Num vis ea est magistratibus,' should be *Han lordschipes nat, etc. . . of folk that usen hem*. For *nat*, cp. 105.

694. *Nomyus* (A<sub>1</sub> *vonnus*), Catullus (*Carm.* 52) alludes to Nonius Struma. Some Boethius MSS. read *Nomium*.

rupcioun), al were this Nomyus set in chayere of dygnite. Sestow nat thanne how grete vylenyge dignytes don to wikkide men? Certes unworthynesse of wikkide men schulde ben the lesse I-sene if thei neere renomede of none honours. [695] Certes thou thi-self ne myghtest nat ben broght, with as many perils as thou myghtest suffren, that thou woldest beren the magistrat with Decorat (that is to seyn, that for no peril that myghte byfallen the by offence of the kyng Theodorik, thou noldest nat be felawe in governaunce with Decorat), whan thou seye that he hadde wikkide corage of a likerous schrewe and of an accusour. Ne I ne mai nat for swiche honours juggen hem worthy of reverence that I deme and holde unworthy to han thilke same honours. Now yif thou seie a man that were fulfild of wysdom, certes thou ne myghtest nat deme that he were unworthy to the honour or elles to the wisdom of whiche he is fulfild?'

'No,' quod I.

'Certes dignytees,' quod sche, 'aperteignen properly to vertu, and vertu transporteth dignyte anon to thilke man to whiche sche hir-self is conioigned. [700] And for as moche as honours of peple ne mai nat maken folk digne of honour, it is wel seyn cleerly that thei ne han no propre beaute of dignyte. And yet men aughten taken more heede in this. For yif a wykkyd wyght be in so mochel the fowlere and the more out-cast that he is despysed of moost folk, so as dignyte ne mai nat maken schrewes worthy of no reverence, than maketh dignyte schrewes rather so much more despised than preyed, the whiche schrewes dignyte scheweth to moche folk; and forsothe nat unpunyssched (that is for to

696. *beren, 'gerere' (cp. 581); magistrat* (O.F. *magistrat*), 'magistratum'; *i.e. hold office.*

702. C<sub>1</sub> A<sub>2</sub> H Cx. B omit *wykkyd and the fowlere and and so much more*; C<sub>2</sub> A<sub>1</sub> Hn. omit *in before so mochel*; C<sub>2</sub> Hn. A<sub>2</sub> B place *the which . . . folk after reverence*; A<sub>1</sub> alters the passage. 702. *so as, i.e. since.*

seyne that schrewes revengen hem ayenward uppon dignytes), for thei yelden ayen to dignytees as greet gerdoun, whan they by-spotten and defoulen dignytes with hir vylenye. And for as mochel as thou mow knowe that thilke verray reverence ne mai nat comen by thise schadwy transitorie dignytes, undirstond now thus: [705] yif that a man hadde used and had manye maner dignytees of consules, and weere comen peraventure among straunge nacions, scholde thilke honour maken hym worshipful and redouted of straunge folk? Certes yif that honour of peple were a natureel yifte to dignytes, it ne myghte nevere cesen no where amonges no maner folk to don his office; right as fyre in every contre ne styteth nat to eschaufen and to ben hoot. But for as mochel as for to be holden honourable or reverent ne cometh nat to folk of hir propre strengthe of nature, but oonly of the false opynyoun of folk (that is to seyn, that weenen that dignytees maken folk digne of honour), anoon therefore, whan that thei comen there as folk ne knowen nat thilke dignytees, hir honours van-rysschen a-way, and that anoon. But that is amonges straunge folk, maystow seyn. Ne amonges hem ther thei weren born, ne duren nat thilke dignytes alwey? [710] Certes the dignyte of the provostrye of Rome was whilom a greet power; now nys it no thyng but an del name, and the rente of the senatorie greet charge. And yif a wyght whilom hadde the office to taken heede to the itayles of the peple, as of corn and there thynges, he was holden amonges rete; but what thyng is now more outast than thilke provostrye? And, as I have seyde a litel here byforn, that thilke thyng that hath no propre beute of hym-self resceyveth somtyme prys and

710. *were born*, i.e. spring. *ne duren nat*, 'Num,' etc.

711. *rente*, tax.

712. *grette*, great people.

713. *that* formally introduces the quoted statement as in 543.

schynynge, and som-tyme leeseth it, by the opynyoun of usaunces. Now yif that dignytes thanne ne mowen nat make folk digne of reverence, and if that dignytees waxen foule of hir wil by the filthe of schrewes, and yif dignytees leesen hir schynynge by chaungynge of tymes, and yif thei waxen fowle by estimacioun of peple, what is it that they han in hemself of beaute that oughte ben desired? [715] (As who seith noon.) Thanne ne mowen they yeven no beaute of dignyte to noone other.

'*Quamvis se Tirio.*'—Metrum 4

Al be it so that the proude Nero, with al his wode luxure, kembde hym and apparayled hym with faire purples of Tyrie and with white peerles, algates yit throf he haatful to alle folk (this is to seyn that, al was he byhated of alle folk, yit this wikkide Nero hadde gret lordschipe), and yaf whilom to the reverentes senatours the unworschipful seetis of dignytees. (Unworschipful seetes he clepeth here, for that Nero, that was so wikkide, yaf tho dignytees.) Who wolde thanne resonably wenen that blisfulnesse were in swiche honours as ben yvven by vicious schrewes? [720]

'*An vero regna.*'—Prosa 5

But regnes and familiarites of kynges, mai thei maken a man to ben myghti? How elles, whan hir blisfulnesse dureth perpetuely? But certes the olde age of tyme passed, and ek of present tyme now, is ful of ensamples how that kynges han chaungyd into wrecchidnesse out of hir welefulnesse. O, a noble thyng and a cleer thyng is power that is nat fownden myghty to kepe it-self! And yif that power of remes be auctour and makere of blisfulnesse, yif thilke power lakketh

713. *of usaunces*, 'utentium,' is possibly 'des usans' mistaken for 'des usances'; it should be 'of hem that usen hem.'

720. C<sub>1</sub> Hn. H to for by.

721. *How elles*, etc., glossed *yonice* in C<sub>1</sub>.

on any syde, amenuseth it nat thilke blisfulnesse and bryngeth in wrecchidnesse? But yit, al be it so that the remedies of mankynde strecchen brode, yit moot ther nede ben moche folk over whiche that every kyng ne hath no lordschipe ne comaundement. [725] And certes uppon thilke syde that power fayleth, whiche that maketh folk blisful, ryght on the same syde noun-power entreth undir-nethe, that maketh hem wrecches. In this manere thanne moten kynges han more porcioun of wrecchidnesse than of welefulnesse. A tyraunt, that was kyng of Sysile, that hadde assayed the peril of his estat, schewede by simylytude the dredes of remedies by gastnesse of a swerd that heng over the heved of his famyler. What thyng is thanne this power, that mai nat doun away the bytynges of bysynesse, ne eschewe the pryckes of drede? And certes yit wolde thei lyven in sykernesse, but they may nat, and yit they glorifien hem in hir power. [730] Holdestow thanne that thilke man be myghty, that thow seest that he wolde doon that he may nat doon? And holdestow thanne hym a myghti man, that hath envyrowned his sydes with men of armes or sergeantes, and dredeth more hem that he maketh agast thanne thei dredden hym, and that is put in the handes of hise servauntes for he scholde seme myghty? But of familiers or servantes of kynges, what scholde I telle the any thyng, syn that I my-self have schewyd the that rewmes hem-self ben ful of greet feblesse? The whiche famyleres certes the real power of kynges, in hool estat and in estaat abated, ful ofte throweth adoun. Nero constreynede Senek, his famyler and his mayster, to chesen on what deeth he wolde deye. [735] Antonyus comaundede that knyghtes slown with here swerdes Papylian, his famyler, whiche Papylian

726. noun-power, impotence.

733. familiers or servantes, Fr. 'famyleres,' and Lat. 'familiaribus' read as 'famularibus.'

736. Antonyus, mistake of some Latin texts for Antoninus, i.e. Caracalla.

that had ben long tyme ful myghty amonges hem of the court. And yet certes thei wolden bothe han renounced hir power; of whiche two Senek enforced hym to yeven to Nero his riches, and also to han gon into solitarie exil. But whan the grete weyghte (that is to seyn of lordes power or of fortune) draweth hem that schullen falle, neither of hem ne myghte don that he wolde. What thyng is thanne thilke powere, that though men han it, yit thei ben agast; and whanne thou woldest han it, thou nart nat siker; and yif thou woldest forleeten it, thow mayst nat eschuen it? But whethir swiche men ben freendes at nede, as ben conseyled by fortune and nat be vertu? [740] Certes swiche folk as weleful fortune maketh frendes, contraryous fortune maketh hem enemys. And what pestilence is more myghty for to anoye a wyght than a famyler enemy?

'*Qui se volet esse potentem.*'—Metrum 5

Who so wol ben myghti he moot daunten his cruel corages, ne putte nat his nekke, overcomen, undir the foule reynes of lecherie. For al be it so that thi lordschipe strecche so fer that the contre of Ynde quaketh at thy comaundementes or at thi lawes, and that the last ile in the see that highte Tyle be thral to the, yit yif thou maist nat putten away thi foule dirke desires, and dryven out fro the wrecchide compleyntes, certes it nys no power that thow hast. [745]

'*Gloria vero quam fallax.*'—Prosa 6

But glorie, how deceyvable and how foul is it ofte! For which thyng nat unskilfully a tragedien (that is to seyn a make of dytees that highten tragedies) cride and seide: "O glorie, glorie,"

738. hem that schullen, etc., 'ipsos casuros.'

739. Should be, *But whethir* (introducing simple direct question) *swiche freendes as ben conciled* ('conciat') *by fortune, and not by vertu, ben a help* ('auxilio' dat. not abl.)?

745. Tyle, Ultima Thule.

746. Cp. Euripides, *Androm.* 319.

quod he, "thow nart nothyng elles to thousandes of folk but a greet sweller of eres!" For manye han had ful greet renoun by the false opinyoun of the peple, and what thyng mai ben thought fouler than swiche preysynge? For thilke folk that ben preysed falsly, they mote nedes han schame of hire preysynges. And yif that folk han geten hem thonk or preysynge by here dissertes, what thyng hath thilke pris echid or encreded to the conscience of wise folk, that mesuren hir good, nat by the rumour of the peple, but by sothfastnesse of conscience? And yif it seme a fair thyng a man to han encreded and sprad his name, thanne folweth it that it is demed to be a foul hyng yif it ne be yspradde and encreded. [750] But, as I seide a litel here byforn, hat syn ther moot nedes ben many folk o whiche folk the renoun of a man ne mai nat comen, it byfalleth that he that how wenest be glorious and renommed emeth in the nexte partie of the erthes to ben withouten glorie and withouten renoun. And certes amonges these thynges ne trowe nat that the pris and the grace of the peple nys neyther worthi to ben remembred, ne cometh of wys jugement, ne is ferme perdurably.

But now of this name of gentilesse, what man is it that ne may wele seen how weyn and how flyttinge a thyng it is? For yif the name of gentilesse be referred to renoun and cleernesse of age, thanne is gentil name but a feyne thyng (that is to seyn to hem that gloryfien hem of hir lynage). [755] For it semeth that gentilesse be a maner preysynge that cometh of the dissertes auncestres; and yif preysynge make gentilesse, thanne mote they nedes ben util that ben preysed. For whiche thyng it folweth that yif thou ne have no gentilesse of thi-self (that is to seyn prysed cometh of thy deserte), foreyne gentes ne maketh the nat gentil. But

certes yif ther be ony good in gentilesse, I trowe it be al only this, that it semeth as that a maner necessite be imposed to gentil men for that thei ne schulde nat owtrayen or forlyven from the vertus of hir noble kynrede.

'*Omne hominum genus in terris.*'—  
Metrum 6

Alle the lynage of men that ben in erthe ben of semblable byrthe; on allone is fadir of thynges, on allone mynystreth alle thynges. He yaf to the sonne his bemes, he yaf to the moone hir hornes, he yaf the men to the erthe, he yaf the sterres to the hevene. [760] He encloseth with membres the soules that comen from his heye sete. Thanne comen alle mortel folk of noble seed. Why noysen ye or bosten of your eldres? For yif thow loke youre bygynnyng, and god your auctour and your makere, thanne nis ther none for-lyved wyght or on-gentil but if he norysche his corage un-to vices and foreleten his propre byrthe.

'*Quid autem de corporibus.*'—Prosa 7

But what schal I seye of delycles of body, of which delices the desirynges ben ful of anguyssch, and the fulfillynges of hem ben ful of penance? How grete seknesses and how grete sorwes unsuffrable, ryght as a maner fruyte of wykkidnesse, ben thilke delices wont to bryngen to the bodies of folk that usen hem! Of whiche delices I not what joie mai ben had of here moevyng, [765] but this woot I wel, that who-so-ever wol remembren hym of hise luxures, he schal wel undirstonden that the issues of delices ben sorweful and sorye. And yif thilke delices mowen maken folk blisful, thanne by the same cause moten these beestis ben clepid blisful, of whiche beestes al the entencioun hasteth to ful-

1. as I seide . . . that, cp. 713.

3. *I ne trowe nat*, etc., due to 'ne . . . em' in 'popularem gratiam ne commemorat: quidem dignam puto.'

758. *owtrayen* or *forlyven*, 'degenerent'; *owtrayen*, 'go to excess,' does not seem happy.

762. Hn. Cx. H B *yif ye loke*.

file here bodily jolyte. And the gladnesse of wyf and children were an honest thyng, but it hath ben seyde that it is overmochel ayens kynde that children han ben fownden tormentours to here fadris I not how manye; of whiche children how bytynge is every condicioun, it nedeth nat to tellen it the that hast or this tyme assayed it, and art yit now angwysshous. In this approve I the sentence of my disciple Euridippis, that seide that he that hath no children is weleful by infortune. [770]

'*Habet hoc voluptas.*'—Metrum 7

Every delit hath this, that it angwyscheth hem with prykkes that usen it. It resembleth to this flyenge flyes that we clepen ben; that, aftir that the be hath sched hise agreable honyes, he fleeth away, and styngeth the hertes of hem that ben y-smyte, with bytynge overlonge haldynge.

'*Nichil igitur dubium.*'—Prosa 8

Now is it no doute thanne that these weyes ne ben a maner mysledynge to blisfulnesse, ne that they ne mowen nat leden folk thider as thei byheten to leden hem. But with how grete harmes these forseide weyes ben enlaced, I schal schewe the shortly. For-why yif thou enforcest the to assemble moneye, thou must byreven hym his moneye that hath it; [775] and yif thou wolt schynen with dignytees, thou must bysechen and supplyen hem that yven the dignytees; and yif thou coveytest be honour to gon byfore othere folk, thou schalt defoule thi-self thurw humblesse of axynge.

767. *jolyte*, 'lasciviam,' variant for 'lacunam.'

768. *but it hath*, etc., 'sed nimis e (Aq. extra) natura dictum est, nescio quem filios invenisse tortores,' mistranslated. By omitting *that it is* we get a possible version.

770. H *Euripides*, cp. *Androm.* 394.

772. *bytynge*, etc., 'tenaci morsu.'

773. *to blisfulnesse* should follow *weyes*.

774. *shortly*, briefly.

Yif thou desirest power, thou schalt, be awaytes of thy subgetis, anoyously ben cast undir by manye periles. Axestow glorye? Thow shalt so bien distract by aspere thynges that thou schalt forgon sykernesse. And yif thou wolt leden thi lif in delycles, every wyght schal despysen the and for-leeten the, as thou that art thral to thyng that is right foul and brutyl (that is to seyn, servaunt to thi body). [780] Now is it thanne wel yseyn how litil and how brotel possessioun thei coveyten that putten the goodes of the body aboven hir owene resoun. For maystow surmounten these olifauntes in gretnesse or weighte of body? Or maistow ben strengere than the bole? Maystow ben swyftere than the tigre? Byhoold the spaces and the stablenesse and the swyft cours of the hevене, and stynt som-tyme to wondren on foule thynges. The whiche hevене certes nys nat rathere for these thynges to ben wondryd upon, than for the resoun by whiche it is governed. [785] But the schynynge of thi forme (that is to seyn, the beauty of thi body), how swyftly passynge is it and how transitorie!

Certes it is more flytynge than the mutabilite of floures of the somer sesoun. For so as Aristotle telleth, that if the men hadden eyghen of a beeste the highte lynx, so that the lokynge of folmyghte percen thurw the thynges that withstonden it, who-so lokide thanne the entrayles of the body of Alcibiades that was ful fair in the superface without it schulde seme ryght foul. And for-t yif thou semest fair, thy nature ne maketh nat that, but the deceyvaunce or feblesse of the eighen that loken. [790] But preise the goodes of the body mochil as evere the lyst, so that thou knowe algatis that, what-so it be (that is to seyn, of the godes of the body) which that thou wondrist uppon, mai be

778. *awaytes*, 'insidiis.'

778. *anoyously ben cast undir by*, 'obnox subjacebis' mistranslated.

787. *lynx*, *lynceis oculis*; but Fr. 'yeulz' lins. Aq. quotes Isidor, *de lince*.



deströid or dissolvid by the heete of a fevere of thre dayes. Of alle whiche forseide thynges y mai reducen this schortly in a somme : that thise worldly goodes, whiche that ne mowen nat yeven that they by-heeten, ne ben nat parfite by the congregacioun of alle goodis ; that they ne ben nat weyes ne pathes that bryngen men to blisfulnesse, ne maken men to ben blisful.

'*Heu que miseros tramite.*'—Metrum 8

Allas ! whiche folie and whiche ignorance mysledeth wandrynge wrecchis fro the path of verray good ! Certes ye ne seke no gold in grene trees, ne ye gadere nat precyous stones in the vynes, ne ye ne hiden nat yowr gynnes in heye mounaignes to kacchen fyssche of whiche ye nai maken riche festes. [795] And if yow liketh to hunt to roos, ye ne gon nat to the foordes of the watir that lighte Tyrene. And over this, men nowen wel the krikes and the cavernes of the see yhidde in the flodes, and nowen ek whiche watir is moost lentence of white peerlis, and knowen whiche watir haboundeth moost of reed urpre (that is to seyn, of a maner schelle fyssche with whiche men deien purpre), and knowen whiche strondes habounden moost of tendre fysches, or of scharpe schesches that hyghen echynnys. But ilk suffren hem-selve to ben so blynde, at hem ne reccheth nat to knowe here thilke goodes ben yhidd whiche at thei coveyten, but ploungen hem in the, and seken there thilke good that rmounteth the hevене that bereth the erris. What preyere mai I make, that digne to the nyce thoughtes of men? [800] But I preie that thei coveyten chesses and honours. So that, whanne thei han geten tho false goodes with

greet travaile, that ther-by they mowen knownen the verray goodes.

'*Hactenus mendacis formam.*'—Prosa 9

It suffiseth that I have schewyd hiderto the forme of fals wefulnessse, so that yif thou loke now cleerly, the ordre of myn entencioun requireth from hennes forth to schewe the verray wefulnessse.'

'For sothe,' quod I, 'I se wel now that suffisaunce may nat comen by rychesses, ne power by remes, ne reverence by dignites, ne gentillesse by glorie, ne joie be delices.'

'And hastow wel knownen the causes,' quod sche, 'whi it is?'

'Certes me semeth,' quod I, 'that y see hem ryght as thoughe it were thurw a litil clyfte, but me were levere to knowen hem more opynly of the.' [805]

'Certes,' quod sche, 'the resoun is al redy. For thilke thyng that symply is o thyng with outen ony devysyoun, the errour and folie of mankynde departeth and divideth it, and mysledeth it and transporteth from verray and parfit good to godes that ben false and imparfit. But seye me this. Wenestow that he that hath nede of power, that hym ne lakketh nothyng?'

'Nay,' quod I.

'Certes,' quod sche, 'thou seyst aryght ; for if it so be that ther is a thyng that in any partie be feblere of power, certes, as in that, it moot needes be nedey of foreyne help.'

'Ryght so is it,' quod I.

'Suffisaunce and power ben thanne of o kynde?' [810]

'So semeth it,' quod I.

'And demestow,' quod sche, 'that a thyng that is of this manere, that is to seyn suffisaunt and mighty, oughte ben despised, or ellis that it be right digne of reverence aboven alle thynges?'

801. *ther-by*, not in original.

802. *the verray wefulnessse*, *the* is the article.

806. *al redy*, 'promptissima.'

808. *Wenestow*, etc., rather *Wenestow that he that ne lakketh nothyng hath nede of power?*

96. *foordes*, 'Tyrrhena vada.'

97. *krikes*, inlets.

99. *What preyere*, etc., 'Quid imprecet,' but *uelle priere puis je faire*, etc.

99. *nyce*, foolish.

'Certes,' quod I, 'it nys no doute that it nys right worthy to ben reverenced.'

'Lat us,' quod sche, 'adden thanne reverence to suffisaunce and to power, so that we demen that these thre thynges be al o thyng?'

'Certes,' quod I, 'lat us adden it, yif we wiln graunten the sothe.' [815]

'What demestow thanne,' quod sche, 'is that a dirk thyng and nat noble that is suffisaunt, reverent, and myghty; or elles that it is ryght noble and ryght cleer by celebrete or renoun? Considere thanne,' quod sche, 'as we han grauntide her-by-fore, that he that ne hath nede of no thyng and is moost myghty and moost digne of honour, if hym nedeth any cleernesse of renoun, whiche clernesse he myght nat graunten of hym-self; so that for lak of thilke cleernesse he myghte seme the feblere on any side, or the more out-cast.' (Glose. This to seyn, nay; for who-so that is suffisaunt, myghty, and reverent, clernesse of renoun folweth of the forseide thynges, so that there ne be amonges hem no difference; he hath it al redy of his suffisaunce.)

'I mai nat,' quod I, 'denye it, but I moot granten, as it is, that this thyng be ryght celebrable by clernesse of renoun and noblesse.' [820]

'Thanne folweth it,' quod sche, 'that we adden clernesse of renoun to the thre forseide thynges, so that there ne be amonges hem no difference.'

'This is a consequence,' quod I.

'This thyng thanne,' quod sche, 'that ne hath nede of no foreyne thyng, and that may don alle thynges by hise strengthis, and that is noble and honourable, nys nat that a myry thyng and a joyful?'

'But whennes,' quod I, 'that any

817. *i.e.* Consider whether he who needs nothing and is myghty and honoured, needs fame. The *that* seems to be used as in 713.

821. *that we adden*, etc., 'ut claritudinem superioribus tribus nihil differre fateamur.' Chaucer's incorrect version is due to Fr.

822. C<sub>2</sub> A<sub>1</sub> omit *is* after *this*.

sorwe myghte comen to this thyng that is swiche, certes I mai nat thynke.'

'Thanne mote we graunten,' quod sche, 'that this thing be ful of gladnesse, if the forseide thynges ben sothe; [825] and certes also mote we graunten that suffisaunce, power, noblesse, reverence, and gladnesse be oonly diverse by names, but hir substaunce hath no diversite.'

'It moot nedly ben so,' quod I.

'Thilke thyng thanne,' quod sche, 'that is oon and symple in his nature, the wikkidnesse of men departeth it and divideth it; and whanne thei enforcen hem to gete partie of a thyng that ne hath no part, thei ne geten hem neyther thilke partie that is noon, ne the thyng al hool that thei ne desire nat.'

'In whiche manere?' quod I.

'Thilke man,' quod sche, 'that seketh richesse to fleen poverte, he ne travailleth hym nat for to geten power, for he hath lever to ben dirk and vyl; [830] and eek withdraweth from hym-self manye naturel delites, for he nolde leese the moneie that he hath assembled. But certes in this manere he ne geteth hym nat suffisaunce, that power forleteth, and that moleste prikketh, and that filthe maketh out-caste, and that dirknesse hideth. And certes he that desireth oonly power, he wasteth and scatereth rychesse and despyseth delices and eek honour that is withoute power, ne he ne preiset glorie no thyng. Certes thus seestow wel that manye thynges failen to hym for he hath som tyme defeaute of many necessites, and manye anguysshes byten hym; and whan he ne mai nat do the defautes away, he for-letith to be myghty, and that is the thyng that he moost desireth. [835] And ryght thus mai I make semblable resouns of honour and of glorie, and of delycles; for so every of these forseide things is the same that these othere thynges ben (that is to seyn, al oon thyng), who-so that

830. *dirk and vyl*, 'vilis obscurusque.'

832. *maketh out-caste*, 'abicit.'

835. C<sub>1</sub> A<sub>2</sub> H *the defautes*.

evere seketh to geten that oon of thise, and nat that othir, he ne geteth nat that he desireth.'

'What seystow thanne, yif that a man coveyte to geten alle thise thynges togidre?'

'Certes,' quod sche, 'I wolde seye, that he wolde geten hym sovereyn blisfulnesse; but that schal he nat fynde in tho thynges that I have schewed that ne mowen nat yeven that thei byheeten?'

'Certes no,' quod I. [840]

'Thanne,' quod sche, 'ne scholde men nat by no weye seken blisfulnesse in siche thynges as men wenen that they ne mowen yeven but o thyng sengly of al that men seken?'

'I graunte wel,' quod I, 'ne no sothere thyng ne may be seyde.'

'Now hastow thanne,' quod sche, 'the forme and the causes of false welefulnesse. Now torne and flytte the eighen of thi thought, for ther shaltow seen anon thilke verray blisfulnesse that I have be-hyght the.'

'Certes,' quod I, 'it is cler and opene, though it were to a blynd man; [845] and that schewedestow me ful wel a litel her byforn, whan thou enforcest the to schewe me the causes of the fals blisfulnesse. For, but if I be begiled, thanne is thilke the verray perfit blisfulnesse that perfitly maketh a man suffisaunt, myghty, honourable, noble, and ful of gladnesse. And for thou schalt wel knowe that I have wel undirtonden these thynges withynne myn herte, I knowe wel that thilke blisfulnesse that may verrayly yeven on of the orseyde thynges, syn thei ben alle oon—I knowe dowtelees that thilke thyng is the ful blyfulnesse.'

839. *What seystow?* 'Quid igitur?' inquam.' o also Fr. *yif that*, etc., is assigned to 'philosophy in Obbarius' text, but early MSS. and translations take it as Chaucer does.

840. *but that schal he nat*, etc., 'num . . . periet,' etc., cp. 691, 710. The subject of *ne wouen* is omitted. B.'s reading, *they for ne*, is probably a scribe's correction.

845. Some phrase like *to the othere part*, 'in lversum,' has probably dropped out after *sought*.

'O my nory,' quod sche, 'by this opynoun I seie thou art blisful, yif thou putte this therto that I schal seyn.'

'What is that?' quod I. [850]

*Philosophie*. 'Trowestow that ther be any thyng in this erthly, mortel, toublyngne thynges that may bryngne this estat?'

'Certes,' quod I, 'y trowe it nought; and thou hast schewyd me wel that over thilke good ther nys no thyng more to ben desired.'

'These thynges thanne,' quod sche, (that is to seyn, erthly suffisaunce, and powere, and swiche thynges) outhir thei semen lyknesse of verray good, or elles it semeth that thei yeve to mortel folk a maner of goodes that ne be nat perfyte. But thilke good that is verray and perfyte that mai thei nat yeven.' [855]

'I acorde me wel,' quod I.

'Thanne,' quod sche, 'for as moche as thou hast knowen whiche is thilke verray blisfulnesse, and eek whiche thilke thynges ben that lyen falsly blisfulnesse (that is to seyn, that be deceyte semen verray goodes), now byhoveth the to knowe whennes and where thou mowe seke thilke verray blisfulnesse.'

'Certes,' quod I, 'that desire I gretly and have abyden longe tyme to herkene it.'

'But for as moche,' quod sche, 'as it liketh to my disciple Plato, in his book of *In Thymeo*, that in ryght litel thynges men schulde byseche the help of god, [860] what juggestow that be now to done, so that we may deserve to fynde the seete of thilk sovereyn good?'

'Certes,' quod I, 'y deme that we schul clepe to the fadir of alle goodes, for withouten hym is ther no thyng founded aryght.'

'Thow seyst aryght,' quod sche, and bygan anon to syngen right thus:

851. *this, these*. *toublyngne*, 'caducis,' as in 357, 406.

856. *lyen*, counterfeit.

860. *In Thymeo*, rather in the *Timeus* (cp. *Tim.* 27 c.)

'*O quam perpetua.*'—Metrum 9

'O thou fadir, soowere and creatour of hevene and of erthes, that governest this world by perdurable resoun, that comaundest the tymes to gon from syn that age hadde bygynnyng; thow that duellest thi-selfe ay stedefast and stable, and yevest alle othere thynges to ben meved, [865] ne foreyne causes necesseden the nevere to compoune werk of floterynge matere, but oonly the forme of sovereyn good I-set with-in the withoute envye, that moevede the frely. Thow, that art althir-fayrest, berynge the faire world in thyn thought, formedest this world to the lyknesse semblable of that faire world in thy thought. Thou drawest alle thyng of thy sovereyn ensaumpler and comaundest that this world, parfytely ymakid, have frely and absolut hise parfyte parties. Thow byndest the elementis by nombres proporecionables, that the coolde thinges mowen accorde with the hote thinges, and the drye thinges with the moyste; that the fuyer, that is purest, fleigh nat over-heye, ne that the hevynesse drawe nat adoun over-lowe the erthes that ben ploungid in the wattris. [870] Thow knytttest togidere the mene soule of treble kynde moevyng alle thingis, and divydest it by membrys accordyng; and when it is thus divyded [and] it hath assembled a moevyng in-to two rowndes, it gooth to torne ayen to hym-self, and envyrouneth a ful deep thought and turneth the hevene by semblable ymage. Thow by evene lyke causes enhauncest the soules and the lasse lyves; and, ablyng

864. C<sub>2</sub> A<sub>1</sub> Hn. omit *soowere and*; H Cx. *sovereigne and*.

866. *frely*. Not in Latin or French.

868. *Thou drawest . . . ensaumpler*, precedes *Thow that art*, etc., in Latin and French. Perhaps displaced by an early scribe; if so, the reading of A<sub>1</sub>, and *commaundedest*, is correct.

869. *nombres proporecionables*, numerical proportions.

871. 'Quæ cum secta duos motum glomeravit in orbis, In semet reditura meat mentemque profundam circuit, et simili convertit imagine cælum.'

hem heye by lyghte waynes or cartes, thow sowest hem in-to hevене and in-to erthe. [875] And when thei ben convertyd to the by thi benygne lawe, thow makest hem retourne ayen to the by ayen-lydyng fyer. O fadir, yve thou to the thought to steven up in-to thi streyte seete; and graunte hym to enviroune the welle of good; and, the lyght I-founde, graunte hym to fyechen the elere syghtes of his corage in the; and skatere thou and to-breke the weyghtes and the cloudes of erthly hevynesse; and schyn thou by thi bryghtnesse, for thou art cleernesse, thow art pesible reste to debonayre folk; thow thi-self art bygynnyng, berere, ledere, path and terme; to looke on the, that is our ende. [880]

'*Quoniam igitur que sit.*'—Prosa 10

For as moche thanne as thow hast seyn which is the fourme of good that nys nat parfit, and whiche is the forme of good that is parfit, now trowe I that it were good to schewe in what this perfeccioun of blisfulnesse is set. And in this thing I trowe that we schulde first enquere for to witen, yf that any swich maner good as thilke good that thou hast dyffinysshed a litel here-byforn (that is to seyn sovereyn good) may be founde in the nature of thinges, for that veyn ymagynacioun of thought desceyve us nat, and put us out of the sothfastnesse of thilke thinge that is summytted to us. But it may nat be denyed that thilke good ne is, and that it nys ryght as the welle of alle goodes. For alle thing that is cleped inparfyt is proveid inparfyt by the amenusyng of perfeccioun or of thing that is parfit. [885] And herof cometh it that in every thing general, yf that me seen any thing that is inparfit, certes it thilke general ther moot ben som thing that is parfit. For yif so be that perfeccioun is don away, men may nat thinke ne sa

875. *heye*, to rise.

877. *envyroune*, 'lustrare' (to look upon), F 'airouner.'

fro whennes thilke thing is that is cleped inparfyt. For the nature of thinges ne took nat hir begynnyng of thinges amenused and inparfit, but it procedith of thinges that ben alle hole and absolut, and descendith so down into uttereste thinges and in-to thinges empty and withouten fruyt. But, as I have schewid a litel here byforn that yif ther be a blisfulnesse that be freel and veyn and inparfyt, ther may no man doute that ther nys som blisfulnesse that is sad, stedefast, and parfyt.'

'This is concluded,' quod I, 'feermely and soothfastly.' [89c]

'But considere also,' quod sche, 'in whom this blisfulnesse enhabiteth. The comune accordaunce and conceyt of the corages of men proveth and graunteth that god, prince of alle thinges, is good. For, so as no thyng mai ben thought betere than god, it mai nat ben doubted thanne that he that no thinge nys betere, that he nys good. Certes resoun scheweth that god is so good that it proeveth by verray force that parfyt good is in hym. For yif god nys swyche, he ne mai nat be prince of alle thinges; [895] for certes som-thing possessyng in it-self parfyt good schulde be more worthy than god, and it scholde semen that thilke were first and eldere than god. For we han schewyd apertely that alle thinges that ben parfyt ben first er thynges that ben inparfit; and for-thy, for as moche as that my resoun or my proces ne go nat away withouten an ende, we owe to graunte that the sovereyn god is right ful of sovereyn parfit good. And we han established that the sovereyne good is verray blisfulnesse. Thanne moot it nedis be that verray blisfulnesse is set in sovereyn god.' [900]

'This take I wel,' quod I, 'ne this ne mai nat be withseid in no manere.'

'But I preye the,' quod sche, 'see now how thou mayst proeven holily and

withoutte corrupcioun this that I have seid, that the sovereyn god is ryght ful of sovereyne good.'

'In whiche manere?' quod I.

'Wenestow aught,' quod sche, 'that the prince of alle thynges have I-take thilke sovereyne good any-wher out of hym-self, of whiche sovereyne good men proeveth that he is ful; ryght as thou myghtest thynken that god, that hath blisfulnesse in hym-self, and thilk blisfulnesse that is in hym, were divers in substaunce? [905] For yif thow wene that god have resseyved thilke good out of hym-self, thow mayst wene that he that yaf thilke good to god be more worth than is god. But I am beknowe and confesse, and that ryght dignely, that god is ryght worthy aboven alle thinges. And yif it so be that this good be in hym by nature, but that it is dyvers from him by wenyng resoun, syn we speke of god prynce of alle thynges,—feyne who so feyne mai—who was he that hath conioyned these divers thynges togidre? And eek at the laste se wel that a thing that is divers from any thing, that thilke thing nys nat that same thing fro whiche it is undirstonden to be diverse. Thanne folweth it that thilke thing that by his nature is divers from sovereyn good, that that thyng nys nat sovereyn good. [910] But certes it were a felenous cursydnese to thinken that of hym that no thing nys more worth. For alwey, of alle thinges, the nature of hem may nat ben betere thanne his begynnyng. For whiche I mai concluden by ryght verray resoun that thilke that is begynnyng of alle thinges, thilke same thing is sovereyn good in his substaunce.'

'Thow hast seyde ryghtfully,' quod I.

'But we han graunted,' quod sche, 'that the sovereyn good is blisfulnesse.'

'That is sooth,' quod I. [915]

904. Chaucer and one of French MSS. omit 'vel ita naturaliter habere.' Add, therefore, after *ful*; or *wenestow that he hath it naturally in himself*.

912. C<sub>1</sub> H Cx. A<sub>2</sub> *hir begynnyng*, and rightly, but probably a correction.

894. *that no thinge*, etc., i.e. to whom nothing is superior.

901. *takc*, 'accipio'; Fr. 'recoif.'

'Thanne,' quod sche, 'moten we nedes granten and confessen that thilke same sovereyn good be god?'

'Certes,' quod I, 'y ne may nat denye, ne withstonde the resouns purposed; and I se wel that it folweth by strengthe of the premisses.'

'Loke now,' quod sche, 'yif this be proevyd yet more fermely thus that there ne mowen not ben two sovereyn goodis that ben divers among hem-self. For certes the goodis that ben divers among hem-self, that oon is nat that that that othir is; thanne mowen neither of hem ben parfit, so as eyther of hem lakketh to othir. But that that nys nat parfit, men mai seen apertely that it nys not sovereyn. [920] The thinges thanne that ben sovereynly gode ne mowe by no weie be divers. But I have wel concluded that blisfulnesse and god ben the sovereyn good; for whiche it mote nedes be that sovereyne blisfulnesse is sovereyn devynite.'

'No thing,' quod I, 'nys more sothfaste than this, ne more ferme by resoun, ne a more worthy thing than god mai not ben concluded.'

'Upon these thynges thanne,' quod sche, 'ryght as these geometriens when they han schewed her proposicions ben wont to bryngen yn thinges that they clepen porismes or declaracions of forseide thinges, right so wol I yeve the here as a corolarie or a meede of coroune. For-why for as moche as by the getyng of blisfulnesse men ben makid blisful, and blisfulnesse is dyvinite, than is it manifest and opene that by the getyng of dyvinite men ben makid blisful. [925] Right as by the getyng of justice [men ben makid just], and be the getyng of sapience they ben makid wise, ryght so nedes by the semblable resoun, when they han geten dyvinite they ben makid goddesses. Thanne is every blisful man

918. *thus that*, i.e. from the fact that.

919. *neither*, often plural in Middle-English.

924. *as*, as it were.

924. *meede of coroune*, 'loier de coroune.'

926. *men . . . just*, MSS. omit; supplied from French.

god. But certes by nature ther nys but o god; but by the participacioun of dyvinite ther ne let ne distourbeth no thyng that ther ne ben many goddis.'

'This ys,' quod I, 'a fair thing and a precious, clepe it as thou wilt, be it corolerie, or porisme, or meede of coroune, or declarynges.'

'Certes,' quod sche, 'no thing nys fairere than is the thing that by resoun schulde ben addide to these forseide thinges.' [930]

'What thing?' quod I.

'So,' quod sche, 'as it semeth that blisfulnesse conteneth many thinges, it weere for to witen whether that alle these thinges maken or conioynen as a maner body of blisfulnesse by diversite of parties or membres, or elles yif any of alle these thinges ben swich that it accomplise by hymself the substauce of blisfulnesse, so that alle these othere thynges ben ferrid and brought to blisfulnesse (that is to seyn, as to the cheef of hem).'

'I wolde,' quod I, 'that thou madest me clerly to undirstonde what thou seist, and that thou recordidest me the forseide thinges.'

'Have I not jugged,' quod sche, 'that blisfulnesse is good?' [935]

'Ys for sothe,' quod I, 'and that sovereyn good.'

'Adde thanne,' quod sche, 'thilke good that is makid [of] blisfulnesse to alle these forseide thinges. For thilke same blisfulnesse that is demed to ben sovereyn suffisaunce, thilke selve is sovereyn power, sovereyn reverence, sovereyn clernesse or noblesse, and sovereyn delyt. What seistow thanne of all these thinges, that is to seyn, suffisaunce, power, and alle these othere thinges,—ben they thanne as membris of blisfulnesse, or ben they ferrid and brought to sovereyne good ryght as alle thinges that ben brought to the cheef of hem?'

'I undirstonde wel,' quod I, 'what

928. *let*, hindereth.

937. *of*, MSS. omit; supplied from French.

thou purposest to seke, but I desire for to herkne that thow schewe it me.' [940]

'Tak now thus the discrecioun of this questioun,' quod sche; 'yif alle these thynges,' quod sche, 'weren membris to felicite, thanne weren thei dyverse that on fro that othir. And swich is the nature of parties or of membres, that diverse membris compounen a body.'

'Certes,' quod I, 'it hath wel ben schewyd here byforn that alle these thynges ben al o thyng.'

'Thanne ben thei none membres,' quod sche, 'for elles it schulde seme that blisfulnesse were conioyned al of o membre allone; but that is a thing that mai not ben don.'

'This thing,' quod I, 'nys not doutous; but I abide to herknen the remenaunt of the question.' [945]

'This is opene and cler,' quod sche, 'that alle othere thynges ben referrid and brought to good. For therefore is suffisaunce requerid, for it is demyd to ben good; and for-ty is power requirid, for men trowen also that it be good; and this same thing mowen we thinken and coniecten of reverence, and of noblesse, and of delyt. Thanne is sovereyn good the somme and the cause of al that oughte ben desired; for-why thilke thing that with-holdeth no good in it selve, ne semblance of good, it mai not wel in no manere be desired ne requerid. [950] And the contrarie; for thoughe that thynges by here nature ne ben not gode, algates yif men wene that ben gode, yet ben thei desired as though that thei were verrayliche gode; and ther-fore is it that men oughte to wene by ryghte that bounte be the sovereyn fyn and the cause of alle the thynges that ben to requiren. But certes thilke that is cause for which men requiren any thing, it semeth that thilke same thing be moost desired. As thus: yf that a wyght wolde ryden for cause of hele, he ne desirthe not so mochel the

940. *that*, Fr. 'que' (how).

941. *Tak now*, 'accipe.'

942. *a body*, one body.

951. Hn. ends with '*yit ben they*.'

moevyng to ryden, as the effect of his hele. Now thanne, syn that alle thynges ben required for the grace of good, thei ne ben not desired of alle folk more than the same good. [955] But we han grauntide that blisfulnesse is that thing, for whiche that alle these othere thynges ben desired; thanne is it thus that certes onoly blysfulnesse is requered and desired. By whiche thing it scheweth cleerly that of good and of blisfulnesse is al on and the same substaunce.'

'I se nat,' quod I, 'wherfore that men myghten discorden in this.'

'And we han schewed that god and verray blisfulnesse is al o thing.'

'That is sooth,' quod I.

'Thanne mcwen we concluden sykerly, that the substaunce of god is set in thilke same good, and in noon other place. [960]

'*Nunc omnes pariter venite capti.*'—

Metrum 10

Cometh alle to gidre now, ye that ben ykaught and ybounde with wikkide cheynes by the desceyvable delyt of erthly thynges enhabitynge in yowr thought! Her schal ben the reste of your labours, her is the havene stable in pesible quiete; this allone is the open refut to wrechis. (Glose. This to seyn, that ye that ben combyrd and disseyvid with worldly affeccions, cometh now to this sovereyn good, that is god, that is refut to hem that wolen come to hym.) Textus. Alle the thynges that the ryver Tagus yyveth yow with his goldene gravelis, or elles alle the thynges that the ryver Herinus yeveth with his rede brinke, [965] or that Indus yyveth, that is next the hote partie of the world, that medleth the grene stones with the white, ne scholden not

954. *moevyng to ryden*, movement of riding.

955. *for the grace*, etc., 'gratia boni.'

961.  $C_2 \Delta_1$  *O cometh*.

965. *Herinus*, Hermus.

966. *grene stones* . . . *white*, glossed *smaragdus* (emeralds) and *margarites* (pearls) in  $C_1 C_2 A_2$ .

cleren the lookynge of your thought, but hiden rather your blynde corages withynne here derknesse. Al that liketh yow here, and exciteth and moeveth your thoughtes, the erthe hath noryssehid it in his lowe caves. But the schynynge by whiche the hevене is governed and whennes that it hath his strengthe, that eschueth the derke overthrowngye of the soule; and who so evere may knowen thilke light of blisfulnesse, he schal wel seyn that the white beemes of the sonne ne ben nat cleer.' [970]

'*Assencior inquam cuncta.*'—Prosa II

'I assente me,' quod I, 'for alle these things ben strongly bounden with ryght ferme resouns.'

'How mychel wiltow preysen it,' quod sche, 'yif that thow knowe what thilke good is?'

'I wol preyse it,' quod I, 'be pris withouten ende, yif it schal betyde me to knowe also to gedre god that is good.'

'Certes,' quod sche, 'that schal I do the be verray resoun, yif that tho thynges that I have concluded a litel here byforn duellen only in hir first grauntyngye.'

'Thei dwellen graunted to the,' quod I. (This to seyn as who seith, 'I graunte thi forside conclusyouns.') [975]

'Have I nat schewed the,' quod sche, 'that the thynges that ben required of many folk ne ben not verray goodis ne parfite; for thei ben divers that on fro that othir. And so as iche of hem is lakkyngye to othir, thei han no power to bryngen a good that is ful and absolut. But thanne at erste ben thei verraye good, whan thei ben gadred togidere alle in-to o forme and in-to oon werkyngye. So that thilke thing that is suffisaunce, thilke same be power, and reverence, and noblesse, and myrthe. And for sothe, but yif alle these thynges ben alle o same

thing, thei ne han not wherby that the mowen be put in the nombre of thynges that oughten ben required or desired.' [980]

'It is schewyd,' quod I, 'ne herof mai ther no man douten.'

'The thynges thanne,' quod sche, 'that ne ben none goodis whan thei ben diverse, and whanne thei bygynnen to ben al o thing, thanne ben thei goodes,—ne cometh it hem nat thanne by the getyngye of unyte that thei ben maked goodes?'

'So it semeth,' quod I.

'But alle thing that is good,' quod sche, 'grauntestow that it be good by the participacioun of good, or no?'

'I graunte it,' quod I.

'Thanne mustow graunten,' quod sche, 'by semblable resoun that oon and good be o same thing; [985] for of thynges of whiche that the effect nys nat naturely divers, nedes the substaunce moot be oo same thing.'

'I ne may nat denye it,' quod I.

'Hastow nat knowen wel,' quod sche, 'that alle thing that is hath so longe his duellyngye and his substaunce as longe as it is oon? But whanne it foreletith to be oon, it moot nedys deien and corumpen to gidres?'

'In whiche manere?' quod I.

'Ryght as in beestis,' quod sche, 'whanne the body and the soule ben conioyned in oon and dwellen to gidre, it is cleped a beeste; and whanne her unyte is destroyed be the disseverance the toon fro the tothir, thanne scheweth it wel that it is a deed thing, and that it nys no lengere no beeste. [990] And the body of a wyght, while it duelleth in oo fourme be coniunecion of membris, it is wel seyn that it is a figure of mankynde; and yif the parties of the body ben so devyded and disseverid the ton fro the tother that thei destroyen unite, the body foreletith to ben that it was befor. And who so wolde renne in the same

970. *overthrowngye*, 'ruinas.'

972. *preysen*, prize.

973. *also to gedre*, 'aussi ensemble,' at the same time.

983. *cometh it hem*, 'leur avient'; cp. 463.

988. *to gidres*, at once.

990. *no beeste*, a beast.

991. *figure of mankynde*, 'humaine figure.'



manere be alle thinges, he scholde seen that withouten doute every thing is in his substauce as longe as it is oon; and whanne it forletith to ben oon, it dyeth and peryssheth.'

'Whanne I considere,' quod I, 'many thinges, I se noon other.'

'Is ther any thing thanne,' quod sche, 'that, in as moche as it lyveth naturely, that forletith the talent or the appetyt of his beyng and desireth to come to deth and to corrupcioun?' [995]

'Yif I considere,' quod I, 'the beestes that han any maner nature of wyllynge and of nyllynge, I ne fynde no beeste, but if it be constreyned fro withoute-forth that forletith or despiseth the entencion to lyven and to duren; or that wole, his thanks, hasten hym to dyen. For every beest travaileth hym to defende and kepe the savacion of his lif, and eschueth deeth and destruccioun. But certes I doute me of herbes and of trees (that is to seyn, that I am in a doute of swiche thinges as herbes or trees), that ne han no felyng soules (ne no naturel werkynges servinge to appetites as beestes han), whether thei han appetyt to duellen and to duren.' [1000]

'Certes,' quod sche, 'ne therof thar the nat doute. Now looke upon these herbes and these trees. They wexen first in suche places as ben covenable to hem, in which places thei mowen nat some deye ne dryen, as longe as hir nature mai defenden hem. For some of hem waxen in feeldis, and some in mountaynes, and othere waxen in mareys, and othere cleven on roches, and some wexen plentyvous in soondes; and yif any wyght enforce hym to bere hem in-to other places, thei wexen drye. [1005] For nature yeveth to every thing that that is convenient to hym, and travailleth that they ne deie nat, as longe as thei han power to duellen and to lyven. What wiltow seyn of this, that thei drawen alle here norysschynges by here rootes, ryght as thei hadden here mouthes y-plounged withynne

997. *his thanks*, voluntarily.

the erthes, and sheden be hir maryes hir wode and hir bark? And what wyltow seyn of this, that thilke thing that is ryght softe, as the marie is, that it is alwy hyd in the seete al with-inne, and that it is defended fro withoute by the stedfastnesse of wode; and that the outreste bark is put ayens the distemperaunce of the hevене as a deffendour myghty to suffren harm? And thus certes maistow wel seen how greet is the diligence of nature; [1010] for alle thinges renovelē and publysschen hem with seed y-multiplied, ne ther nys no man that ne woot wel that they ne ben ryght as a foundement and edifice for to duren, nocht oonly for a tyme, but ryght as for to dure perdurably by generacion. And the thinges eek that men wenen ne haven none soules, ne desire thei nat iche of hem by semblable resoun to kepyn that that is his (that is to seyn, that is accordyng to hir nature in conservacioun of hir beyng and enduryng)? For wherfore ellis bereth lightnesse the flaumbes up, and the weyghte presseth the erthe adoun, but for as moche as thilke places and thilke moevynges ben covenable to everyche of hem? And for-sothe every thing kepeth thilke that is accordyng and propre to hym, ryght as thinges that ben contrarious and enemys corruppen hem. [1015] And yet the harde thinges, as stones, clyven and holden here parties togidre, ryght faste and harde, and defenden hem in withstondyng that thei ne departe nat lightly atwynne. And the thinges that ben softe and fletyng, as is watir and eyr, thei departen lightly and yeven place to hem that breken or divyden hem; but natheles they retorne sone ageyn into the same thinges fro whennes thei ben arraced; but fyer fleeth and

1007. *sheden*; perhaps *sheden* should be *spre-den*, 'espendent.'

1008. C<sub>2</sub> A<sub>2</sub> H Cx. *that is alwey*.

1010. *myghty*, etc., Aq. 'patiens mali, i.e. potens mala sustinere.'

1011. *renovelē* and *publysschen*, 'renouvelent' and 'propagentur.'

1012. C<sub>2</sub> *is hirs*, possibly right; cp. Fr. 'leur,' and pronouns of following gloss.

refuseth alle dyvisioun. I trete not now here of willeful moevynges of the soule that is knowyng, but of the naturel entencioun of thinges, as thus: [1020] ryght as we swolwen the mete that that we resseyven and ne thinke nat on it, and as we drawn our breeth in slepyng that we witen it nat while we slepyng. For certes in the beestis the love of hire lyvynges ne of hire beynges ne cometh not of the wilnynges of the soule, but of the bygynnynges of nature. For certes, thurw constryncyng causes, wil desireth and embraceth ful ofte tyme the deeth that nature dredeth. (That is to seyn as thus: that a man may be constreyned so, by som cause, that his wille desireth and taketh the deeth whiche that nature hateth and dredeth ful sore.) And somtyme we seen the contrarye, as thus: that the wil of a wyght distourbeth and constreyneth that that nature desireth and requirith alwey, that is to seyn the werk of generacioun, by whiche generacioun only duelleth and is susteyned the longe durablete of mortel thinges. [1025] And thus this charite and this love, that every thing hath to hym-self, ne cometh not of the moevyng of the soule, but of the entencioun of nature. For the purveaunce of god hath yeven to thinges that ben creat of hym this, that is a ful grete cause to lyven and to duren, for whiche they desiren naturely here lif as longe as evere thei mowen. For which thou mayst not drede be no manere that alle the thinges that ben any where, that thei ne requiren naturely the ferme stableness of perdurable duellynge, and eek the eschuyng of destruccioun.'

'Now confesse I wel,' quod I, 'that y see wel now certeynly withouten doutes the thinges that whilom semeden uncerteyn to me.'

'But,' quod sche, 'thilke thing that desireth to be and to duelle perdurably, he desireth to ben oon. [1030] For yif

that oon were destroyed certes beyngeschulde ther noon duellen to no wyght.'

'That is sooth,' quod I.

'Thanne,' quod sche, 'desiren alle thinges oon.'

'I assente,' quod I.

'And I have schewed,' quod sche, 'that thilke same oon is thilke that is good.'

'Ye forsothe,' quod I.

'Alle thinges thanne,' quod sche, 'requiren good; and thilke good thow mayst descryven ryght thus: good is thilk thing that every wyght desireth.' [1035]

'Ther ne may be thought,' quod I, 'no more verraye thing. For eyther alle thinges ben referrid and brought to noht, and floteren withouten gouverour, despoyled of oon as of hire propre heued; or elles, yif ther be any thing to whiche that alle thinges tenden and hyen to, that thing muste ben the sovereyn good of alle goodes.'

Thanne seide sche thus: 'O my nory,' quod sche, 'I have greet gladnesse of the, for thow hast fycched in thyn herte the myddel sothfastnesse, that is to seyn, the prykke. But this thing hath ben discoveryd to the in that thow seydest that thow wisteth not a litel her byform.'

'What was that?' quod I.

'That thou ne wistest noht,' quod sche, 'whiche was the ende of thinges. [1040] And certes that is the thyng that every wyght desireth; and for as mochel as we han gadrid and comprehendid that good is thilke thing that is desired of alle, thanne mote we nedys confessen that good is the fyn of alle thinges.

'*Quisquis profunda.*'—Metrum II

Whoso that seketh sooth by a deep thought, and coveyteth not to ben disseyvid by no mys-weyes, lat hym rollen

1036. oon, unity.

1037. the myddel sothfastnesse, 'mediæ veritatis notam.' The gloss is due to note in Aq.

1039. But this thing should be *But in this thing*, and in that should be *that that* to give sense of Latin and French.

1042. mis-weyes, bypaths.

1020. C<sub>2</sub> H A<sub>2</sub> B here now.

1025. by whiche, etc., i.e. by which the permanency of mortal things is maintained.

and trenden withynne hymself the lyght of his ynwarde sighte; and let hym gaderyn ayein, enclynynge in-to a compas, the longe moevynges of his thoughtes; and let hym techyn his corage that he hath enclosed and hid in his tresors, al that he compasseth or secheth fro withoute. And thanne thilke thing, that the blake cloude of errour whilom hadde y-covered, schal lighte more clerly than Phebus hymself ne schyneth. [1045] (Glosa. Who so wol seke the depe ground of soth in his thought, and wil nat ben disseyvid by false proposicions that gon amys from the trouthe, lat hym wel examine and rolle withynne hymself the nature and the propretes of the thing; and let him yet eft sones examine and rollen his thoughtes by good deliberacion or that he deme, and lat hym techyn his soule that it hath, by naturel principles kyndeliche yhyd with-ynne it-self, al the trouthe the whiche ymagineth to ben in thinges withoute. And thanne al the derknesse of his mysknowynge shall seen more evidently to the sighte of his undirstondynge than the sonne ne semeth to the sighte withoute-forth.) [1050] For certes the body, bryngynge the weighte of foryetynge, ne hath nat chased out of your thought al the cleernesse of your knowynge; for certeynly the seed of soth haldeth and clyveth within yowr corage, and it is a-waked and excited by the wynde and by the blastes of doctrine. For wherfore elles demen ye of your owene wil the ryghtes, whan ye ben axid, but if so were that the noryschmynges of resoun ne lyvede y-plounged in the depe of your herte? (This to seyn, how schulde men deme the sothe of any thing that wer axid, yif ther nere rote of sothfastnesse that were y-plounged and hyd in the naturel principles, the whiche sothfastnesse lyvede within the depnesse of the thought?) and if it so be that the Muse and the

doctrine of Plato syngeth soth, al that every wyght leerneth, he ne doth no thing elles thanne but recordeth, as men recorden thinges that ben foryeten.' [1055]

'*Tunc ego Platoni inquam.*'—Prosa 12

Thanne seide I thus: 'I accorde me gretly to Plato, for thou recordist and remembrest me these thinges yet the seconde tyme; that is to seye, first whan I loste my memorie be the contagious coniunccioun of the body with the soule, and eftsones aftirward, whan y lost it confounded by the charge and be the burdene of my sorwe.'

And thanne seide sche thus: 'Yif thou loke,' quod sche, 'first the thynges that thou hast graunted, it ne schal nat ben ryght fer that thou ne schalt remembren thilke thinges that thou seidest that thou nystist nat.'

'What thing?' quod I.

'By whiche government,' quod sche, 'that this world is governed.'

'Me remembreth it wel,' quod I; 'and I confesse wel that I ne wyste it nat. [1060] But al be it so that I see now from afer what thou purposist, algates I desire yit to herknen it of the more pleynty.'

'Thou ne wendest nat,' quod sche, 'a litel here byforn, that men schulde doute that this world nys governed by god.'

'Certes,' quod I, 'ne yet ne doute I it naught, ne I nyl nevere wene that it were to doute' (as who seith, 'but I woot wel that god gouverneth this world'); 'and I schal shortly answeren the be what resouns I am brought to this. This world,' quod I, 'of so manye and diverse and contraryous parties, ne myghte nevere han ben assembled in o forme, but yif ther ne were oon that conioyned so manye diverse thinges; [1065] and the same diversite of here

1058. *it ne schal nat*, etc., i.e. thou shalt not be far from remembering.

1064. *answeren*, 'exponam'; Fr. 'espondrai.' read as *respondrai*.

1050. *seen* (B has *be*) seems to mean 'appear'; Legend of G. W. 156, Gen. and Ex. 1923 (Morris).

natures, that so discorden the ton fro that other, most departen and unioynen the thinges that ben conioynid, yif ther ne were oon that contenyde that he hath conioynid and ybounden. Ne the certain ordre of nature schulde not brynge forth so ordene moevynges by places, by tymes, by doynges, by spaces, by qualites, yif ther ne were on, that were ay stedfaste duellynge, that ordeynide and disponyde these diversites of moevynges. And thilke thing, what-so-ever it be, by whiche that alle thinges ben y-maked and I-lad, y clepe hym "god," that is a word that is used to alle folk.' [1070]

Thanne seide sche: 'Syn thou feelist thus these thinges,' quod sche, 'I trowe that I have litel more to done that thou, myghty of wefulnessse, hool and sound, ne see eftsones thi contre.

'But let us loken the thinges that we han purposed here-byforn. 'Have I nat nombrid and seid,' quod sche, 'that suffisaunce is in blisfulnesse? and we han accorded that god is thilke same blisfulnesse?'

'Yis forsothe,' quod I.

'And that to governen this world,' quod sche, 'ne schal he nevere han nede of noon help fro with-oute? For elles, yif he hadde nede of any help, he ne schulde nat have no ful suffisaunce?' [1075]

'Yys thus it moot nedes be,' quod I.

'Thanne ordeyneth he be hym-self alone alle thinges?' quod sche.

'That may nocht ben denyed,' quod I.

'And I have schewyd that god is the same good?'

'It remembreth me wel,' quod I.

'Thanne ordeigneth he alle thinges by thilke good,' quod sche, 'syn he, whiche that we han accordid to ben good, governeth alle thinges by hym-self; and he is as a keye and a styre, by whiche

1067. *Ne the certain, etc.*, should be '*The ordre of nature ne schoulde not procede certainly and unfolden so ordene*,' etc.

1077. *the same good*, 'ipsum bonum,' 'biens meismes.'

1079. *keye* 'clavus' read as 'clavis,' or 'clos' as 'clef.'

that the edifice of this world is kept stable and withouten corruppyng?'

'I accorde me greetly,' quod I. 'And I aperceyvede a litil here byforn that thou woldest seyn thus, al be it so that it were by a thynne suspecioun.' [1080]

'I trowe it wel,' quod sche; 'for, as I trowe, thou ledist now more ententyfliche thyn eyen to loken the verray goodes. But natheles the thing that I schal telle the yet ne scheweth not lesse to loken.'

'What is that?' quod I.

'So as men trowen,' quod sche, 'and that ryghtfully, that god governeth alle thinges by the keye of his goodnesse, and alle these same thinges, as I have taught the, hasten hem by naturel entencioun to come to good, ther ne may no man douten that thei ne ben governed voluntarily, and that they ne converten hem of here owene wil to the wil of here ordeynour, as thei that ben accordyng and enclynnyng to here governour and here kyng.'

'It moot nedes be so,' quod I, 'for the reame ne schulde nat seme blisful yif ther were a yok of mysdrawynges in diverse parties, ne the savyng of obedient thynges ne scholde nat be.' [1085]

'Thanne is ther no thyng,' quod sche, 'that kepith his nature, that enforceth hym to gon ayen god.'

'No,' quod I.

'And yif that any thing enforcede hym to withstonde god, myghte it avayle at the laste ayens hym that we han graunted to ben almyghty be the ryght of blisfulnesse?'

'Certes,' quod I, 'al outrely it ne myghte nat avaylen hym.'

'Thanne is ther no thing,' quod sche, 'that either wole or mai with-stonden to this sovereyn good.'

'I trow nat,' quod I.

'Thanne is thilke the sovereyn good.'

1082. *scheweth, etc.*, is no less evident.

1085. *yif ther were, etc.*, i.e. if it were a restraining of the refractory elements and not a preserving of the harmonious ones.

quod sche, 'that alle thinges governeth strongly and ordeyneth hem softly?' [1090]

Thanne seide I thus: 'I delite me,' quod I, 'nat oonly in the eendes or in the somme of resouns that thou hast concluded and proved, but thilke woordes that thou usest deliten me moche more. So that, at the laste, foolis that somtyme reenden grete thinges oughten ben asschamid of hem-self.' (That is to seyn, that we foolis that reprehenden wikkidly the thinges that touchin godis governaunce, we aughten ben asschamid of our-self; as I, that seide that god refuseth oonly the werkis of men and ne entremittith nat of it.)

'Thow hast wel herd,' quod sche, 'the fables of the poetis, how the gcaunttis assaileden hevne with the goddis, but for-sothe the debonayre force of god disposide hem as it was worthy (that is to sey, destroyden the geauntes, as it was worthy.) [1095] But wiltow that we ioynen to-gidres thilke same resouns, for paraventure of swiche coniunccioun may sterten up som fair sparcle of soth?'

'Do,' quod I, 'as the list.'

'Wenestow,' quod sche, 'that god ne be almyghty?—No man is in doute of it?'

'Certes,' quod I, 'no wyght ne douteth it, yif he be in his mynde.'

'But he,' quod sche, 'that is almyghti—ther nys no thyng that he ne may?'

'That is sooth,' quod I.

'May god don evel?' quod sche.

'Nay for-sothe,' quod I.

'Thanne is evel no thing,' quod sche, 'syn that he ne may not don evel, that mai loon alle thinges.' [1100]

'Scornestow me,' quod I,—(or elles, Pleycestow or disseyvistow me,)—'that last so wovven me with thi resouns the tous of Didalus, so entrelaced that it is nable to ben unlaced—thow that other-

while entrist ther thow issist, and other while issest ther thow entrest? Ne fooldist thou nat to-gidre (by replicacioun of wordes) a manere wonderful cercle or enviroynunge of the simplicité devyne? For certes a litel here byforne, whanne thou bygunne at blisfulnesse, thou seidest that it is sovereyn good, and seidest that it is set in sovereyn god; and seidest that god hym-self is sovereyn good, and that good is the ful blisfulnesse; [1105] for whiche thou yave me as a covenable yifte, that is to seyn, that no wyght is blisful, but yif he be god also ther-with. And seidest eke that the forme of good is the substauce of god and of blisfulnesse; and seidest that thilke same oon is thilke same good that is required and desired of al the kynde of thinges. And thou provedest in disputyng that god governeth alle the thinges of the world by the governementis of bounte; and seidest that alle thinges wolen obeyen to hym; and seidest that the nature of yvel nys no thing. And these thinges schewedest thou, naught with noone resouns y-taken fro withouten, [1110] but by proeves in cercles and homliche knowen, the whiche proeves drawn to hem-self heer feyth and here accord everiche of hem of othir.'

Thanne seide sche thus: 'I ne scorne the nat, ne pleie, ne disceyve the; but I have schewed the the thing that is grettest over alle thinges, by the yifte of god that we whilome prayeden. For this is the forme of the devyne substauce, that is swiche that it ne slideth nat in-to uttreste foreyne thinges, ne ne resceyveth noone straunge thinges in hym; but ryght as Parmanydes seide in Greec of thilke devyne substauce—he seide thus: that thilke devyne substauce tornith the

1106. *as*, as it were.

1106. *covenable yifte*, probably misreading of 'coronable don' (correlarium).

1111. *proeves in cercles*, etc., 'insitis et domesticis probationibus'; *in cercles* is due to gloss on *insitis* in Aq., and *known* to Fr. 'conneus' (? *conseus*) translating 'domesticis.'

1115. *Parmanydes*, Parmenides.

1091. H Cx. A<sub>2</sub> *the resouns*; C<sub>1</sub> *the inserted* (er?).

1095. *with the goddis*, against the gods. Probably due to misreading 'ou les dieux' as 'aux ex.'

1101. *Didalus*, Dedalus.

world and the moevable cercle of thinges, while thilke devyne substance kepith itself withouten moevynge. [1115] (That is to seyn that it ne moeveth nevere mo, and yet it moeveth alle othere thinges.) But natheles, yif I have styred resouns that ben nat taken from withouten the compas of the thing of whiche we treten, but resouns that ben bystowyd withinne that compas, ther nys nat why that thou schuldest merveillen, sith thow hast lernyd by the sentence of Plato that nedes the wordis moot nedes be cosyne to the thinges of whiche thei speken.

*'Felix qui potuit.'*—Metrum 12

Blisful is that man that may seen the clere welle of good! Blisful is he that mai unbynden hym fro the boondes of the hevye erthe! The poete of Trace (Orpheus), that whilome hadde ryght greet sorwe for the deth of his wyf, aftir that he hadde makid by his weeply songes the wodes moevable to renne, [1120] and hadde makid the ryveris to stonden stille, and hadde makid the hertes and the hyndes to joynen dreedles here sydes to cruel lyouns (for to herknen his song), and hadde makid that the hare was nat agast of the hound, whiche was plesed by his song; so, whanne the moste ardaunt love of his wif brende the entrayles of his breest, ne the songes that hadden overcomen alle thinges ne mighten nat asswagen hir lord (Orpheus). He pleynid hym of the hevene goddis that weren cruel to hym. He wente hym to the houses of helle, and ther he tempride his blaundysschinge songes by resounynge strenges, [1125] and spak and song in wepyng al that evere he hadde resceyved and lavyd out of the noble welles of his modir (Callyope), the goddesse. And he song, with as mochel as he myghte of wepyng, and with as moche as love, that doublide his sorwe, myghte yeve hym and

teche hym, and he commoevde the helle, and requyred and bysoughte by swete preyere the lordes of soules in helle of relessynge (that is to seyn, to yelden hym his wyf). Cerberus, the porter of helle, with hise thre hevedes was caught and al abasschid for the newe song. And the thre goddesses, furiis and vengeresses of felonyes, that tormenten and agasten the soules by anoy, woxen sorweful and sory, and wepyn teeris for pite. Tho was nat the heved of Ixion y-tormented by the overthrowng wheel. [1130] And Tantalus, that was destroyed by the woodnesse of long thurst, despyseth the floodes to drynken. The foul that highte voltor, that etith the stomak or the gyser of Tycius, is so fulfid of his song that it nil eten ne tiren no more. At the laste the lord and juge of soules was moevyd to misericordes, and cryede: "We ben overcomen," quod he; "yeve we to Orpheus his wif to beren hym compaignye; he hath wel y-bought hire by his faire song and his ditee. [1135] But we wolen putten a lawe in this and covenaut in the yifte; that is to seyn that, til he be out of helle, yif he loke byhynde hym, that his wyf schal comen ageyn unto us." But what is he that may yeven a lawe to loverys? Love is a grettere lawe and a strengere to hymself (thanne any lawe that men mai yyven). Allas! whanne Orpheus and his wyf weren almost at the termes of the nyght (that is to seyn, at the laste boundes of helle), Orpheus lokede abakward on Erudyce his wif, and lost hire, and was deed. This fable apertenith to yow alle, who so evere desireth or seketh to lede his thought in-to the sovereyn day (that is to seyn, in-to cleernesse of sovereyn good). [1140] For who so that evere be so overcomen that he ficche his eien in-to the put of helle (that is to seyn, who so sette his thoughte in erthly thinges), al that evere he hath drawn of the noble good celestial h

1117. *styred*, 'agitavimus.'

1123. *ne the songes*, not even the songs.

1125. *lavyd*, 'puisie.'

1129. *by anoy*, rather *anoyous soules*, 'sontes.'

1136. *covenaut*, 'covenances.'

1137. *men mai yyven*, one may give.

1139. *and was deed*, and she was dead.

lesith it, whanne he looketh the helles (that is to seyn, in-to lowe thinges of the erth).<sup>142</sup>

## EXPLICIT LIBER TERCIUS

## INCIPIT LIBER QUARTUS

'*Hec cum philosophia dignitate vultus.*'—  
Prosa I

Whanne Philosophie hadde songen softly and delitably the forseide thinges keypyng the dignyte of hir cheere and the weyghte of hir wordes, I, thanne, that ne hadde nat al outrely foryeten the wepyng and the moornyng that was set in myn herte, for-brak the entencioun of hir that entendede yit to seyn some other thinges. 'O,' quod I, 'thou that art gyderesse of verry light, the thinges that thou hast seid me hidir-to ben to me so cleer and so schewyng by the devyne lookyng of hem, and by thy resouns, that they ne mowen nat ben overcomen. [1145] And thilke thinges that thou toldest me, al be it so that I hadde whilom foryeten hem for the sorwe of the wrong that hath ben don to me, yet natheles thei ne weren not al outrely unknown to me. But this same is namely . . . ryght grete cause of my sorwe: that o as the governour of thinges is good, if that the eveles mowen ben by any weyes, or elles yif that evelis passen withouten punysshynge. The whiche thing only how worthy it is to ben wondrid uppon, thou considerest it wel thi-selve erteynly. But yit to this thing ther is t another thing I-ioyned more to ben wondrid uppon: [1150] for felonye is aperisse, and floureth ful of riches, d vertu is nat al oonly withouten eedes, but it is cast undir and fortroden dir the feet of felonous folk, and it

abyeth the tormentes in stede of wikkide felouns. Of alle whiche thinges ther nys no wyght that may merveillen y-nowghe, ne compleyne that swiche thinges ben don in the reigne of god, that alle thinges woot and alle thinges may and ne wole nat but oonly gode thinges.'

Thanne seide sche thus: 'Certes,' quod sche, 'that were a greet merveille and abayssching withouten ende, and wel more horrible than alle monstres, yif it were as thou wenest; that is to seyn, that in the ryght ordene hous of so mochel a fadir and an ordeynour of meyne, that the vesselis that ben foule and vyl schulden ben honoured and heryed, and the precious vesselis schulden ben defouled and vyl. [1155] But it nys nat so. For yif the thinges that I have concludid a litel here byforn ben kept hoole and unaraced, thou schalt wel knowe by the auctorite of god, of the whos regne I speke, that certes the gode folk ben alway myghty and schrewes ben alway outcast and feble; ne the vices ben nevere mo with-outen peyne, ne the vertus ben nat withouten mede; and that blisfulneses comen alway to good folk, and infortune comith alway to wykkide folk. [1160] And thou schalt wel knowe manye thinges of this kynde, that schullen cesen thi pleyntis and strengthen the with stedfaste sadnesse. And for thou hast seyn the forme of the verry blisfulnesse by me that have whilom y-schewid it the, and thou hast knowen in whom blisfulnesse is y-set, alle thingis y-treted that I trowe ben necessarie to putten forth, I schal schewe the the weye that schal bryngen the ayen unto thyn hous; and I schal fycchen fetheris in thi thought, by whiche it mai areisen in heichte; so that, alle tribulacioun I-don away, thou, by my gyding and by my path and by my sledys, shalt mowen retourne hool and sownd in-to thi contree. [1165]

142. *helles*, 'inferos.'

145. C<sub>2</sub> Cx. A<sub>2</sub> *the resouns*.

148. *yif that . . . or yif that*, i.e. how that . . . or how that.

1151. *abyeth the tormentes*, 'supplicia luit.'

1161. *sadnesse*, firmness.

1164. *fetheris*, wings.

1165. *sledys*, 'vehiculis,' 'voiturez.'

'*Sunt etenim penne volucres michi.*'—  
Metrum I

'I have, for-thi, swifte fetheris that surmounten the heighte of the hevene. Whanne the swifte thoght hath clothid it-self in tho fetheris, it despiseth the hateful erthes, and surmounteth the rowndenesse of the gret ayr; and it seth the clowdes byhynde his bak, and passeth the heighte of the region of the fir, that eschaufeth by the swifte moevynge of the firmament, til that he aryseth hym in-to the houses that beren the sterres, and ioyneth his weies with the sonne, Phebus, and felawshipeth the weie of the olde colde Saturnus; and he, I-maked a knyght of the clere sterre (that is to seyn, whan the thought is makid godis knyght by the sekyng of cleer trouthe to comen to the verray knowleche of god) [1170]—and thilke soule renneth by cerle of the sterres in alle the places there as the schynnyng nyght is y-painted (that is to sey, the nyght that is cloudeles; for on nyghtes that ben cloudeles it semeth as the hevene were peynted with diverse ymages of sterres). And whan the thought hath don there I-noghe, he schal pressen and wenden on the bak of the swifte firmament, and he schal be makid parfit of the worschipful lyght of god. There halt the lord of kynges the septre of his myght and a-temprith the governementes of the world, [1175] and the schynnyng juge of thinges, stable in hym-self, governeth the swifte wayn (that is to seyn, the circular moevynge of the sonne). And yif thi wey ledeth the ayein so that thou be brought thider, thanne wiltow seye that that is the contre that thou requerest, of

1166. *for-thi*, C<sub>2</sub> A<sub>1</sub> *forsothe*.

1168. Ptolemy's system of the universe is here referred to.

1169. C<sub>1</sub> A<sub>2</sub> Cx. B H omit *hym*; A<sub>1</sub> *hir* (*soule* is represented by the feminine pronoun after 1168 in A<sub>1</sub>).

1170. C<sub>2</sub> A<sub>1</sub> read *that* for *whan* and omit *cleer*.

1174. *worschipful lyght*, A<sub>1</sub> *dredeful clerenesse*.

whiche thou ne haddest no mynde—"but now it remembreth me wel, here was I born, her wol I fastne my degree (here wol I duelle)." But yif the liketh thanne to looken on the derknesse of the erthe that thou hast forleten, thanne schaltow seen that these felouns tirantes, that the wrecchide peple dredeth now, schullen ben exiled fro thilke faire contre.'

'*Tum ego pape ut magna.*'—Prosa 2

Thanne seide I thus: 'Owh! I wondre me that thou byhetist me so grete thinges. [1180] Ne I ne doute nat that thou ne maist wel performe that thou behetist; but I preie the oonly this, that thou ne tarie nat to telle me thilke thinges that thou hast moevid.'

'First,' quod sche, 'thow most nedes knowen that good folk ben alwey strong and myghti, and the schrewes ben feble, and desert and naked of alle strengthes. And of these thinges certes everiche of hem is declared and schewed by othere. For so as good and yvel ben two contraries, yif so be that good be stedfast, thanne scheweth the feblesse of yvel a opynly; and if thow knowe clerly the freelnesse of yvel, the stedfastnesse of good is knowen. [1185] But for as moche as the fey of my sentence schal ben the more ferme and haboundant, I wil go by the to weye and by the tothir, and I wil conferme the thinges that ben proposed, now on this side and now on this side. Two thinges ther ben in which the effect of alle the dedes of mankynd standeth, that is to seyn, wil and power; and yif that oon of these two faileth, the nys nothing that may be doon. For yif that wille lakketh, ther nys no wyg that undirtaketh to done that he wol ne doon; and yif power faileth, the wil nys but in idel and stant for naught. [1190] And therof cometh it that yif thou see

1177. *fastne my degree*, 'sistam gradum.'

1181. *that thou*, etc.; *me* is the antecedent *that*.

1182. *naked*, 'desuney,' misread as 'desuney'



wyght that wolde geten that he mai not geten, thow maist nat douten that power ne failthe hym to have that he wolde.'

'This is open and cler,' quod I, 'ne it ne mai nat be denyed in no manere.'

'And yif thou se a wyght,' quod sche, 'that hath doon that he wolde doon, thow ne wil nat douten that he ne hath had power to doon it?'

'No,' quod I.

'And in that that every wyght may, in that men may holden hym myghti?' (As who seith, in so moche as man is myghty to doon a thing, in so mochel men halt hym myghti; and in that he ne mai, in that men demen hym to ben feble.) [1195]

'I confesse it wel,' quod I.

'Remembreth the,' quod sche, 'that I have gaderid and I-schewid by forseide resouns that al the entencioun of wil of mankynde, whiche that is lad by diverse studies, hasteth to comen to blisfulnesse.'

'It remembreth me wel,' quod I, 'that t hath ben schewed.'

'And recordeth the nat thanne,' quod sche, 'that blisfulnesse is thilke same good that men requiren? so that whanne nat blisfulnesse is required of alle, that good also is required and desired of alle?' [1200]

'It ne recordeth me noht,' quod I, 'for I have it gretly alwey fished in my emorie.'

'Alle folk thanne,' quod sche, 'good and eek badde, enforcen hem withoute fference of entencioun to comen to god.'

'This is a verray consequence,' quod I.

'And certein is,' quod sche, 'that by the getyng of good men ben y-makid de.'

'This is certein,' quod I.

'Thanne geten gode men that thei siren?'

'So semeth it,' quod I.

'But wikkide folk,' quod sche, 'yif

for. H Cx. omit *gretly* (not found in Latin French).

thei geten the good that thei desiren, thei ne mowe nat ben wikkid.' [1205]

'So is it,' quod I.

'Than so as the ton and the tothir,' quod sche, 'desiren good, and the gode folk geten good and not the wikkide folk, than is it no doute that the gode folk ne ben myghty and wikked folk ben feble.'

'Who so that evere,' quod I, 'douteth of this, he ne mai nat considere the nature of thinges ne the consequence of resouns.'

'And over this,' quod sche, 'if that ther ben two thinges that han o same purpos by kynde, and that oon of hem pursuweth and performeth thilke same thing by naturel office, and that oother mai nat doon thilke naturel office, but folweth, by other manere than is covenable to nature, hym that acomplisseth his purpos kyndely, [1210] and yit he ne acomplisseth nat his owene purpos—whether of these two demestow for more myghti?'

'Yif that I coniecte,' quod I, 'that thou wilt seie, algates yit I desire to herkne it more pleynly of the.'

'Thou nilt nat thanne denye,' quod sche, 'that the moevement of goyng nature in men by kynde?'

'No for sothe,' quod I.

'Ne thou doutest nat,' quod sche, 'that thilke naturel office of goyng ne be the office of feet?'

'I ne doute it nat,' quod I.

'Thanne,' quod sche, 'yif that a wight be myghti to moeve, and goth uppon hise feet, and another, to whom thilke naturel office of feet lakketh, enforceth hym to gone crepinge uppon his handes, whiche of these two oughte to ben holden the more myghty by right?' [1215]

'Knyt forth the remenaunt,' quod I, 'for no wight ne douteth that he that mai gon by naturel office of feet ne be more myghti than he that ne may nat.'

'But the sovercin good,' quod sche,

1206. *the ton*, etc., 'utrique,' 'li un et li autre.'

1207. *mai nat*, is not able.

1208. *han o same purpos*, have the same function to perform.

1212. *yif that*, although.

'that is evenliche purposed to the good folk and to badde, the gode folk seken it by naturel office of vertus, and the schrewes enforcen hem to getin it by diverse covetise of erthly thinges, whiche that nys noon naturel office to gete thilke same soverein good. Trowestow that it be any other wise?'

'Nai,' quod I, 'for the consequence is opene and schewynge of thinges that I have graunted, that nedes good folk moten be myghty, and schrewes feble and unmyghti.' [1220]

'Thou rennist aryght byforn me,' quod sche, 'and this is the jugement (that is to sein, I juge of the), ryght as thise leches ben wont to hopin of sike folk, whan thei aperceyven that nature is redressed and with-stondeth to the maladye. But for I se the now al redy to the undirstondynge, I schal schewe the more thikke and contynuel resouns. For loke now, how greetly scheweth the feblesse and infirmite of wikkid folk, that ne mowen nat comen to that hir naturel entencioun ledeth hem; and yit almost thilke naturel entencioun constreyneth hem. And what were to demen thanne of schrewes, yif thilk naturel help hadde forleten hem, the whiche naturel help of entencioun goth alwey byforn hem and is so gret that unnethe it mai ben overcome. [1225] Considere thanne how gret defaute of power and how gret feblesse ther is in wikkide felonous folke. (As who seith the grettere thing that is covyted and the desir nat accomplisshed, of the lasse myght is he that covyeth it and mai nat acomplisse; and for-thi philosophie seith thus be sovereyn good.) Ne schrewes requeren not lighte meedes ne veyne games, whiche thei ne mai nat

1220. *schewynge*, perhaps error for 'sewing.'

1221. *jugement*, 'jugemens' ('iudicium' read as 'iudicium').

1222. *redressed*, rather *addressed*, 'erecta.'

1224. *to that*, to that to which.

1225. C<sub>1</sub> A<sub>2</sub> H B omit *alwey*; C<sub>2</sub> *away*.

1227. *be sovereyn good*, in respect to the chief good.

1228. *games*, A<sub>1</sub> H *gaines*, 'præmia levia et ludicra, i.e. jocosa.'

folwen ne holden; but thei failen of thilke somme and of the heighte of thinges (that is to seyn sovereyn good). Ne these wrecches ne comen nat to the effect of sovereyn good, the whiche thei enforcen hem oonly to geten by nyghtes and dayes. [1230] In the getyng of whiche good the strength of good folk is ful wel yseene. For ryght so as thou myghtest demen hym myghty of goinge that goth on his feet til he myghte comen to thilke place for the whiche place ther laye no weie forthere to be gon, ryght so mostow nedes demen hym for ryght myghty, that geteth and atteyneth to the ende of alle thinges that ben to desire, by-yonde the whiche ende ther nys no thing to desire. Of the whiche power of good folk men mai conclude that the wikkide men semen to be bareyne and naked of alle strengthe. For whi forleten thei vertus and folwen vices? Nys it nat for that thei ne knowen nat the godes? But what thing is more feble and more caytif than is the blyndnesse of ignorance? [1235] Or elles thei knowen ful wel whiche thinges that thei oughten folwe, but lecherie and covetise overthroweth hem mys-torned. And certes so doth distemprance to feble men, that ne mowen nat wrastlen ayen the vices. Ne knowen thei nat thanne wel that thei forleten the good wilfully, and turnen hem wilfully to vices? And in this wise thei ne forleten nat oonly to ben myghti, but thei forleten al outrely in any wise for to been. For thei that forleten the comune fyn of alle thinges that ben, thei forleten also therewith-al for to been. [1240] And peraventure it scholde seme to som folk that this were a merveile to seien, that schrewes, whiche that contenen the more partie of men, ne ben nat ne han no beyng; but yit natheles it is so, and thus stant thi thing. For thei that ben schrewes denye nat that they ben schrewes, but denye, and seic simply and pleynly, that thei ne ben nat, ne han no beyng. Fo

1236. *mys-torned*, 'transversos,' 'les en de tourne.'

right als thou myghtest seyn of the careyne of a man, that it were a deed man, but thou ne myghtest nat symply callen it a man; so graunte I wel for-sothe that vicyous folk ben wikkid, but I ne may nat graunten absolutly and symply that thei ben. For thilke thing that with-holdeth ordre and kepeth nature, thilke thing is, and hath beinge; [1245] but what thing tha: faileth of that (that is to seyn, he that forleteth naturel ordre), he forleteth thilke beinge that is set in his nature. But thou wolt seyn that schrewes mowen. Certes, that ne denye I nat; but certes hir power ne descendeth nat of strengthe, but of feblesse. For thei mowen don wikkydnesses, the whiche thei ne myghten nat don yif thei myghten duellen in the forme and in the doynge of good folk. And thilke power scheweth ful evidently that they ne mowen ryght nat. For so as I have gadrid and proevid a litil byforn that evel is nawght, and so as schrewes mowen oonly but schrewednesses, this conclusion is al cler, that schrewes ne mowen ryght nat, ne han no power. [1250] And for as moche as thou undirstonde which is the strengthe of this power of schrewes, I have diffynysched a litil her-byforn that no thing is so myghti as sovereyn good?’

‘That is soth,’ quod I.

‘And thilke same sovereyn good may don noon yuel?’

‘Certes no,’ quod I.

‘Is ther any wyght thanne,’ quod sche, ‘that weneth that men mowen don alle thinges?’

‘No man,’ quod I, ‘but yif he be out of his wyt.’

‘But certes schrewes mowen don evel?’ quod sche.

‘Ye; wolde god,’ quod I, ‘that thei ne myghten don noon!’

‘Thanne,’ quod sche, ‘so as he that is myghty to doon oonly but goode thinges

mai doon alle thinges, and thei that ben myghti to doon yuele thinges ne mowen nat alle thinges, [1255] thanne is it open thing and manyfest that thei that mowen doon yuele ben of lasse power. And yit to proeve this conclusioun ther helpeth me this, that I have schewed here-byforn, that alle power is to be noumbred among thinges that men oughten requere; and I have schewed that alle thinges that oughten ben desired ben referred to good, ryght as to a maner heichte of hir nature. But for to mowen don yuel and felononye ne mai nat ben referrid to good. Thanne nys nat yuel of the nombre of thinges that oughten ben desired. But alle power aughte ben desired and required. [1260] Thanne is it open and cler that the power ne the mowynge of schrewes nis no power. And of alle thise thinges it scheweth wel that the gode folk ben certeinli myghty, and the schrewes douteles ben unmyghty. And it is cler and opene that thilke sentence of Plato is verray and soth, that seith that oonly wise men may doon that thei desiren, and schrewes mowen haunten that hem liketh, but that thei desiren (that is to seyn, to come to sovereyn good), thei ne han no power to accomplissen that. For schrewes don that hem lyst whan, by tho thinges in whiche thei deliten, thei wenen to ateynen to thilke good that thei desiren; but thei ne geten nat ne ateyne nat therto, for vices ne comen nat to blisfulnesse. [1265]

‘*Quos vides sedere celsos.*’—Metrum 2

Who so that the coverturis of hir veyn apparailles myghte strepen of thise proude kynges, that thow seest sitten an hye in here chayeres, gliterynge in schynyng purple, envyrownd with sorwful armures manasyng with cruel mowth, blowynge by woodnesse of herte,

1245. *with-holdeth*, retains.

1248. H Cx. A<sub>2</sub> B *wikkidnes*.

1249. H Cx. A<sub>2</sub> B A<sub>1</sub> *schrewedenes*.

1251. H Cx. A<sub>2</sub> B *understondis*.

1256. *yit*, moreover.

1261. *mowynge*, H Cx. A<sub>2</sub> A<sub>1</sub> *moeuyng*.

1267. *sorwful armures*, ‘tristis armis.’

1267. *blowynge*, panting.

he schulde seen thanne that thilke lordis berin withynne hir corages full streyte cheynes. For lecherye tormenteth hem on that o side with gredy venymes; and trowblable ire, that areyseth in hem the floodes of trowblynges, tormenteth upon that othir side hir thought; or sorwe halt hem wery and I-cawght, or slidyng and *desceyvyng* hope turmenteth hem. And therefore, syn thou seest on heved (that is to seyn, o tiraunt) beren so manye tyranyes, than doth thilke tyraunt nat that he desireth, [1270] syn he is cast down with so manye wikkide lordes (that is to seyn, with so manye vices that han so wikkidly lordschipes over hym).

‘*Videsne igitur quanto.*’—Prosa 3

Seestow nat thanne in how greet filthe these schrewes been I-wrapped, and with which clernesse these gode folk schynen? In this scheweth it wel that to good folk ne lakketh nevere mo hir meedes, ne schrewes ne lakken nevere mo turmentes, for of alle thinges that ben I-doon, thilke thing for which any thing is doon, it semeth as by ryght that thilke thing be the mede of that; as thus: yif a man renneth in the stadye (or in the forlonge) for the corone, thanne lith the mede in the coroune for which he renneth. [1275] And I have schewed that blisfulnesse is thilke same good for which that alle thinges ben doon; thanne is thilke same good purposed to the werkes of mankynde right as a comune mede, which mede ne may nat ben disseveryd fro good folk. For no wight as by ryght, fro thennesforth that hym lakketh goodnesse, ne schal ben cleped good. For whiche thing folk of gode maneres, hir medes ne forsaken hem never mo. For al be it so that schrewes waxen as wode as hem lyst aycyn good folk, yit natheles the coroune of wise men ne schal nat fallen ne faden; [1280] for foreyne schrewed-

nesse ne bynymeth nat fro the corages of good folk hir propre honour. But yif that any wyght reioysede hym of goodnesse that he hadde taken fro withoute (as who seith, yif any man hadde his goodnesse of any other man than of hymself), certes he that yaf hym thilke goodnesse, or elles som other wyght, myghte benymen it hym. But for as moche as to every wyght his owene propre bounte yeveth hym his mede, thanne at erste schal he failen of mede whan he forletith to ben good. And at the laste, so as alle medes ben requirid for men wenen that thei ben gode, who is he that nolde deme that he that is ryght myghti of good were partlees of the mede? And of what mede schal he ben gerdoned? Certes of ryght fair mede and ryght greet aboven alle medes. [1285] Remembre the of thilke noble corrolarie that I yaf the a litel here-byforn, and gadre it togidre in this manere: so as god hymself is blisfulnesse, thanne is it cler and certain that alle gode folk ben I-made blisful for thei ben gode; and thilke folk that ben blisful it accordeth and is covenable to ben goddes. Thanne is the mede of good folk swych that no day ne schal empeiren it, ne no wikkidnesse schal derke it, ne power of no wyght ne schal nat amenusen it, that is to seyn, to ben made goddes. And syn it is thus (that gode men ne failen nevere mo of hir mede), certes no wise man ne may doute of the undepartable peyne of schrewes (that is to seyn, that the peyne of schrewes ne departeth nat from hemself nevere mo). For so as good and yvel, and peyne and mede ben contrarie, it moot nedes ben that, ryght as we seen betyden in guerdoun of gode, that al so moot the peyne of yvel answer by the contrarie partie to schrewes. [1290] Now thanne so as bounte and pruesse ben the mede to good folk, also is schrewidnesse it-self

1268. *gredy venymes*, ‘avidis venenis.’  
1269. C<sub>1</sub> A<sub>2</sub> H Cx. B *flood*.  
1277. *werkes*, actions.

1281. C<sub>2</sub> *reioyse*, A<sub>1</sub> *reioyseth*.  
1284. A<sub>1</sub> *wolde deme*; cp. 336.  
1288. *that is to seyn*, etc., appositive to *mede*.  
1291. *also*, so.

torment to schrewes. Thanne who so that evere is entecchid or defowled with peyne, he ne douteth nat that he nys entecchid and defowled with yvel. Yif schrewes thanne wol preysen hem-self, may it seemen to hem that thei ben withouten parti of torment, syn thei ben swiche that the uttreste wikkidnesse (that is to seyn wikkide thewes, which that is the uttereste and the worst kynde of schrewednesse) ne defouleth ne enteccheth nat hem oonly, but enfeteth and envenymeth hem greetly? And also loke on schrewes, that ben the contrarie partie of gode men, how gret peyne felawshipith and folweth hem! [1295] For thou hast lerned a litil here-byforn that alle thing that is and hath beyng is oon, and thilke same oon is good: than is this the consequence, that it semeth that al that is and hath beyng, is good. (This is to seyn as who seith that beinge and unite and goodness is al oon.) And in this manere it folweth thanne that alle thing that fayleth to ben good, it stynteth for to be and for to han any beyng. Wherefore it is that schrewes stynten for to ben that thei weeren. But thilke othir forme of mankynde (that is to seyn the forme of the body withowte) scheweth it that these schrewes weren whilom men. [1300] Wherefore whan thei ben perverted and turned in-to malice certes thanne ave thei for-lorn the nature of mankynde. But so as oonly bownte and prowess may enhawnsen every man over othere men, than moot it nedes be that schrewes, whiche that schrewednesse hath cast out of the condicion of mankynde, ben put out of the merit and the dissert of men. Than betidith it that, yif thou seest a myght that be transformed in-to vices, how ne mayst nat wene that he be a man. For if he be ardaunt in avaryce, and that he be a ravynour by violence of

foreyne richesse, thou schalt seyn that he is lik to the wolf; and if he be felonows and withoute reste, and exercise his tonge to chidynges, thou schalt likne hym to the hownd; [1305] and if he be a pryve awaytour y-hid, and reioiseth hym to ravysseche be wiles, thou schalt seyn hym lik to the fox whelpes; and yif he be distempre, and quakith for ire, men schal wene that he bereth the corage of a lyoun; and yif he be dredful and fleyng, and dredith thinges that ne aughte nat to ben dredd, men schal holden hym lik to the hert; and yf he be slow, and astonyd, and lache, he lyveth as an asse; yif he be lyght and unstedfast of corage, and chaungith ay his studies, he is likned to briddes; and if he be ploungid in fowle and unclene luxuris, he is withholden in the foule delices of the fowle sowe. [1310] Than folweth it that he that forleteth bounte and prowess, he forletith to ben a man; syn he ne may nat passe in-to the condicion of god, he is torned in-to a beeste.

'*Vela Naricii ducis.*'—Metrum 3

Eurus, the wynd, aryved the sayles of Ulixes, duc of the cuntre of Narice, and his wandryng shippes by the see, into the ile ther-as Cerces, the faire goddess, dowhter of the sonne, duelleth, that medleth to hir newe gastes drynkes that ben touchid and makid with enchauntementes. And aftir that hir hand, myghti over the erbes, hadde changed hir gastes into diverse maneres, that oon of hem is coverid his face with forme of a boor; the tother is chaungid in-to a lyoun of the contre Marmoryke, and his nayles and his teth waxen, [1315] that oother of hem is newliche changed in-to a wolf, and howleth whan he wolde wepe; that

1292. *entecchid or defowled*, 'afficitur.'

1294. *ne defowleth*, etc., 'non afficit modo rum etiam vehementer inficit.' Chaucer has *afused afficit and inficit*.

1300. *othir*, 'reliqua,' i.e. the human form left them.

1304. *foreyne richesse*, another's goods.

1306. *wiles*, C<sub>2</sub> H *whiles*.

1306. *seyn hym lik*, pronounce him like.

1309. *astonyd*, 'stupidus.'

1309. *studies*, purposes.

1313. *drynkes*, etc., 'pocula tacta carmina;' and 'beuvages fez (facta?) par enchantemens.'

other goth debonayrely in the hows as a tigre of Inde. But al be it so that the godhede of Mercurie, that is cleped the bridde of Arcadye, hath had merci of the duc Ulixes, bysegid with diverse yevels, and hath unbownden hym fro the pestilence of his oostesse, algates the rowerys and the maryneres hadden by this I-drawen in-to hir mouthes and dronken the wikkide drynkes. Thei that weren woxen swyn, hadden by this I-changed hir mete of breed for to eten akkornes of ookes. Noon of hir lymes duelleth with hem hool, but thei han lost the voys and the body; [1320] oonly hir thought duelleth with hem stable, that wepeth and by-wayleth the monstuous chaungyng that thei suffren. O over lyght hand! (As who seith: 'O feble and light is the hand of Circes the enchaunteresse, that chaungith the bodyes of folk in-to beestes, to regard and to comparysoun of mutacioun that is makid by vices!') 'Ne the herbes of Circes ne ben nat myghty. For al be it so that thei mai chaungen the lymes of the body, algates yit thei may nat chaungen the hertes. For withinne is I-hidd the strengthe and the vygour of men, in the secre tour of hir hertes, (that is to seyn the strengthe of resoun); but thilke venym of vices to-drawen a man to hem more myghtly than the venym of Circes. For vices ben so cruel that they percen and thurw passen the corage withinne; [1325] and, though thei ne anoye nat the body, yit vices wooden to destroyen men by wounde of thought.'

'*Tum ego fateor inquam.*'—Prosa 4

Thanne seide I thus: 'I confesse and I am a-knowe it,' quod I, 'ne I ne se nat that men may seyn as by ryght that schrewes ne ben changed in-to beestes by the qualite of hir soules, al be it so

1317. *Mercurie, etc.*, Aq. 'sed licet numen, i.e. dietas arcadis, i.e. mercurii . . . qui dicitur ales quod,' etc. (*ales* read as *bridde*).

1327. *am a-knowe it*, acknowledge it.

1327. *as by ryght*, justly.

that thei kepin yit the forme of the body of mankynde; but I nolde nat of schrewes, of whiche the thought crwel woodeth alwey into destruccion of gode men, that it were levelful to hem to don that.'

'Certes,' quod sche, 'ne it is nat levelful to hem, as I schal wel schewen the in covenable place. But natheles, yif so were that thilke that men wenen ben levelful to schrewes were by-nomyn hem, so that they ne myghte nat anoyen or doon harm to gode men, certes a gret partie of the peyne to schrewes scholde ben alegged and releved. [1330] For al be it so that this ne seme nat credible thing peraventure to some folk, yit moot it nedes be that schrewes ben more wrecches and unsely, when thei mai doon and performe that thei coveyten, than yif that thei ne myghte nat accomplissen that thei coveiten. For yif it so be that it be wrecchidnesse to wilne to doon yvel, thanne is more wrecchidnesse to mowe don yvel, withoute whiche mowynge the wrecchid wil scholde langwisse withouten effect. Thanne syn that everiche of these things hath his wrecchidnesse (that is to seyn, wil to don yvel and power to don yvel), it moot nedes be that thei (schrewes) ben constreyned by thre unselynesses, that wolen, and mowen, and performen felonyes and schrewednesses.' [1335]

'I acorde me,' quod I; 'but I desire gretly that schrewes losten sone thilke unselynesses, that is to seyn, that schrewes weren despoyled of mowynge to don yvel.'

'So schollen thei,' quod sche, 'sonnere peraventure than thou woldest, or sonnere than they hem-selve wene. For ther nis no thing so late, in so schorte bowndes of this lif, that is long to abyde, nameliche

1335. *thre*, C<sub>2</sub> H Cx. *the*, A<sub>2</sub> *theyr*.

1335. *unselynesses*, B H Cx. A<sub>2</sub> *unselynesse*.

1336. B H Cx. *unselynesse*; *thilke* is Fr. 'ceste' ('hoc'), which refers to the last-named of the three misfortunes.

1337. *wene*. A<sub>1</sub> adds *to lakken mowynge to done yvel*, which is in Latin but not in French.

1338. *late*, slow moving.

1338. *to abyde*, gerundive, i.e. that one has long to wait for it.

to a corage immortal. Of whiche schrewes the grete hope and the heye compassynges of schrewednesses is ofte destroyed by a sodeyn ende, or thei ben war; and that thing establiseth to schrewes the ende of hir schrewednesses. [1340] For yf that schrewednesse makith wrecchis, than mot he nedes ben moost wrecchide that lengest is a schrewe. The whiche wikkide schrewes wolde I demen althermost unsely and kaytifs, yif that hir schrewednesse ne were fynissched at the leste weye by the owtreste deth; for yif I have concluded soth of the unselynesse of schrewednesse, thanne schewith it clerly that thilke wrecchidnesse is withouten ende the whiche is certein to ben perdurable.'

'Certes,' quod I, 'this conclusion is hard and wondirful to graunte; but I knowe wel that it accordeth moche to the things that I have grauntid herebiforn.'

'Thou hast,' quod sche, 'the ryght estimacion of this. [1345] But who so evere wene that it be an hard thing to accorde hym to a conclusioun, it is ryght that he schewe that some of the premysses ben false, or elles he mot schewe that the collacioun of proposicions is nat spedful to a necessarie conclusioun; and yif it ne be nat so, but that the premisses ben y-graunted, ther nys nat why he scholde blame the argument. For this thing that I schal telle the now ne schal nat seme lesse wondirful, but of the thingis that ben taken also it is necessarie.' (As who seith, it folweth of that which is purposed byforn.)

'What is that?' quod I.

'Certes,' quod sche, 'that is that this wikkid schrewes ben more blisful, or elles lasse wrecches, that abyen the tormentes that thei han desservid, than if no peyne of justice chastisede hem. [1350] Ne this ne seie I nat now for that any man myghte thinke that the maneris of schrewes ben coriged and chastised by vengeaunce and thei ben brought to the

1348. taken, 'sumpta.'

ryghte weye by the drede of the torment, ne for that they yeven to other folk ensauple to fleen fro vices; but I undirstonde yit in another manere that schrewes ben more unsely than thei ne ben nat punyssched, al be it so that ther ne be hadde no resoun or lawe of correccioun, ne noon ensauple of lokynge.'

'And what manere schal that be,' quod I, 'other than hath ben told herebyforn?'

'Have we nat thanne graunted,' quod sche, 'that good folk ben blisful and schrewes ben wrecches?'

'Yis,' quod I. [1355]

'Thanne,' quod sche, 'yif that any good were added to the wrecchidnesse of any wyght, nis he nat more blisful than he that ne hath no medlynge of good in his solitarie wrecchidnesse?'

'So semeth it,' quod I.

'And what seistow thanne,' quod sche, 'of thilke wrecche that lakketh alle goodes, (so that no good nys medlyd in his wrecchidnesse,) and yit over al his wikkidnesse, for which he is a wrecche, that ther be yit another yvel anexed and knynt to hym—schal nat men demen hym more unsely thanne thilke wrecche of whiche the unselynesse is relevid by the participacioun of som good?'

'Why sholde he nat?' quod I.

'Thanne certes,' quod sche, 'han schrewes, whan thei ben punyschid, somewhat of good anexid to hir wrecchidnesse, [1360] that is to seyn, the same peyne that thei suffren, which that is good by the resoun of justice; and whanne thilke same schrewes ascapen withouten torment, than han they somewhat more of yvel yit over the wikkidnesse that thei han don, that is to seyn, defaute of peyne, whiche defaute of peyne thou hast grauntid is yvel for the disserte of felonye?'

'I ne may nat denye it,' quod I.

'Moche more thanne,' quod sche, 'ben

1354. *ensauple of lokynge*, example for consideration. But perhaps read *lokyng of ensauple* as in Latin and French.

schrewes unsely whan thei ben wrongfully delivred fro peyne, thanne whan thei ben punyschid by ryghtful vengeaunce. But this is opene thing and cleer, that it is ryght that schrewes ben punyschid, and it is wikkidnesse and wrong that thei escapen unpunyschid.' [1365]

'Who myghte denye that?' quod I.

'But,' quod sche, 'may any man denye that al that is ryght nis good, and also the contrarie, that al that is wrong is wikke?'

'Certes,' quod I, 'thise thinges ben clere ynowe, and that we han concluded a lytel here-byforn. But I preye the that thow telle me, yif thow accordest to leten no torment to the soules aftir that the body is ended by the deeth?' (This is to seyn, 'Undirstondestow aught that soules han any torment aftir the deeth of the body?')

'Certes,' quod sche, 'ye, and that ryght greet. Of whiche soules,' quod sche, 'I trowe that some ben tormented by asprenesse of peyne, [1370] and some soules, I trowe, ben exercised by a purgynge mekenesse; but my conseil nys nat to determyne of thise peynes. But I have travailed and told yit hider-to for thou scholdest knowe the mowynge of schrewes, whiche mowynge the semeth to ben unworthy, nis no mowynge; and ek of schrewes, of whiche thou pleynedest that they ne were nat punyschid, that thow woldest seen that thei ne were nevere mo withouten the tormentes of hir wikkidnesse; and of the licence of mowynge to don yvel that thou preyedest that it myghte sone ben ended, and that thou woldest fayn lernen that it ne sholde nat longe endure; and that schrewes ben more unsely yif thei were of lengere duryng, and most unsely yif thei weren perdurable. [1375] And aftir this I have

schewyd the that more unsely ben schrewes whan thei escapen withouten hir ryghtful peyne, thanne whan thei ben punyschid by ryghtful veniaunce; and of this sentence folweth it that thanne ben schrewes constryed at the laste with most grevous torment, whan men wene that thei ne ben nat punyssched.'

'When I considere thi resouns,' quod I, 'I ne trowe nat that men seyn any thing more verrayly. And yif I turne ayein to the studies of men, who is he to whom it sholde seme, that he ne scholde nat oonly leven thise thinges, but ek gladly herkne hem?'

'Certes,' quod sche, 'so it is. [1380] But men may nat, for they have hir eien so wont to the derknesse of erthly thinges that they ne may nat lyften hem up to the light of cler sothfastnesse, but thei ben lyk to briddes of whiche the nyght lightneth hir lokyng and the day blendith hem. For whan men loke nat the ordre of thinges, but hir lustes and talentes, they wene that either the leve or the mowynge to don wikkidnesse, or elles the scapyng withouten peyne be welful. But considere the jugement of the perdurable lawe. For yif thou conferme thi corage to the beste thinges, thow ne hast noon nede of no juge to yeven the prys or mede; for thow hast joynd thyself to the most excellent thing. And yif thow have enclynd thi studies to the wikkide thinges, ne seek no foreyne wrekere out of thyself; for thow thyself hast thrist thyself in-to wikke thinges: [1385] ryght as thow myghtest loken by diverse tymes the fowle erthe and the hevene, and that alle othere thinges stynten fro withoute (so that thow nere neyther in hevene ne in erthe, ne saye no thyng more); thanne scholde it semen to the, as by oonly resoun of lokyng, that thow

1367. C<sub>1</sub> H Cx. omit a lytel.

1369. This is, C<sub>1</sub> A<sub>1</sub> This, Cx. That is.

1371. purgynge mekenesse, 'purgatoria clementia.'

1374. and that thow woldest, etc., should be that thow woldest lernen, etc. One of the French MSS. has the same mistake.

1382. C<sub>1</sub> H hir talentes.

1385. H Cx. A<sub>2</sub> B A<sub>1</sub> wikkid thinges.

1386. ryght as, just as if.

1386. and that, that serves to repeat the preceding particle.

1386. stynten, preterite.

1386. C<sub>1</sub> H Cx. A<sub>2</sub> A<sub>1</sub> omit nere . . . erthe.



were now in the sterres, and now in the erthe. But the peple ne lokith nat on these thinges. What thanne? Schal we thanne approchen us to hem that I have schewed that thei ben lyke to beestes? And what wyltow seyn of this: yif that a man hadde al forlorn his syghte, and hadde foryeten that he evere sawhe, and wende that no thing ne faylede hym of perfeccioun of mankynde; now we that myghten sen the same thinges—wolde we nat wene that he were blynd? [1390] Ne also ne accordith nat the peple to that I schal seyn, the whiche thing is sustenyd by as stronge foundementes of resouns, that is to seyn, that more unsely ben they that doon wrong to othere folk, than they that the wrong suffren.'

'I wolde here thilke same resouns,' quod I.

'Denyestow,' quod sche, 'that all schrewes ne ben worthy to han torment?'

'Nay,' quod I.

'But,' quod sche, 'I am certein by many resouns that schrewes ben unsely.'

'It accordeth,' quod I.

'Thanne ne dowtestow nat,' quod sche, 'that thilke folk that ben worthy of torment, that they ne ben wrecches?' [1395]

'It accordeth wel,' quod I.

'Yif thou were thanne I-set a juge or a knowere of thinges, whethir trowestow that men scholden tormenten, hym that hath don the wrong or elles hym that hath suffred the wrong?'

'I ne doute nat,' quod I, 'that I nolde doon suffisaunt satisfaccioun to hym that hadde suffrid the wrong, by the sorwe of hym that hadde doon the wrong.'

'Thanne semeth it,' quod sche, 'that the doere of wrong is more wrecche than he that hath suffride wrong?'

'That folweth it wel,' quod I.

'Than,' quod sche, 'by thise causes and by othere causes that ben enforced by the same roote, that filthe or synne be

1390. *wolde we nat*, 'num videntes eadem cæcos putaremus?' Chaucer follows the French in taking 'videntes' with 'putaremus.'

1398. *That folweth it wel*, 'ce s'ensuit bien.'

1399. *that filthe*, etc., in Latin and French

the propre nature of it maketh men wrecches; and it scheweth wel that the wrong that men doon nis nat the wrecchidnesse of hym that resceyveth the wrong, but wrecchidnesse of hym that dooth the wrong. [1400] But certes,' quod sche, 'thise oratours or advocattes don al the contrarie; for thei enforcen hem to com-moeve the juges to han pite of hem that han suffrid and receyved the thinges that ben grevous and aspre, and yit men scholden more ryghtfully han pite of hem that doon the grevances and the wronges: the whiche schrewes it were a more covenable thing that the accusours or advocattes, nat wrooth but pytous and debonayre, ledden the schrewes that han don wrong to the jugement, ryght as men leden syke folk to the leche, for that thei sholden seken out the maladyes of synne by torment. And by this covenant, eyther the entent of the deffendours or advocates sholde fayle and cesen in al, or elles, yif the office of advocates wolde betre profiten to men, it scholde be torned into the habyte of accusacioun. [1405] (That is to seyn thei scholden accuse schrewes, and nat excusen hem.) And eek the schrewes hem-self, yif it were lefevel to hem to seen at any clifte the vertu that thei han forleten, and sawen that they scholden putten adoun the filthes of hir vices by the tormentes of peynes, they ne aughten nat, ryght for the recompensacioun for to geten hem bounte and prowess whiche that thei han lost, demen ne holden that thilke peynes weren tormentes to hem; and eek thei wolden refuse the attendance of hir advocattes, and taken hem-self to hir juges and to hir accusours. For whiche it betyded that, as to the wise folk, ther nis no place y-leten to hate (that is to seyn that hate ne hath no place among wise men); for no wyght nil haten gode men, but yif he were over mochel a

depends on *roote* ('radice'). Omitting *and* before *it scheweth* the sense becomes clear.

1405. C<sub>1</sub> A<sub>2</sub> H Cx. B omit *deffendours* or and *sholde fayle and*.

fool, and for to haten schrewes it nis no resoun. [1410] For ryght so as langwissynge is maladye of body, ryght so ben vices and synne maladye of corage; and so as we ne deme nat that they that ben sike of hir body ben worthy to ben hated, but rather worthy of pite; wel more worthy nat to ben hated, but for to ben had in pite, ben thei of whiche the thoughtes ben constreyned by felonous wikkidnesse, that is more crwel than any langwissynge of body.

'*Quid tantos Iuvat.*'—Metrum 4

What deliteth yow to exciten so grete moevynges of hatredes, and to hasten and bysien the fatal disposicioun of your deth with your propre handes (that is to seyn, by batayles or contek)? For yif ye axen the deth, it hasteth hym of his owene wil, ne deth ne taryeth nat his swifte hors. [1415] And the men that the serpentis, and the lyoun, and the tigre, and the bere, and the boor, seken to sleen with hir teeth, yit thilke same men seken to sleen everiche of hem oothir with swerd. Lo, for hir maneres ben diverse and discordaunt, thei moeven unryghtful oostes and cruel batayles, and wilnen to perise by entrechaungynge of dartes I But the resoun of cruelte nis nat i-nowhe ryghtful. Wiltow thanne yelden a covenable gerdoun to the dissertes of men? Love ryghtfully good folk, and have pite on schrewes.'

'*Hic ego video inquam.*'—Prosa 5

'Thus se I wel,' quod I, 'eyther what blisfulnesse or elles what unselynesse is establisshid in the dissertes of gode men and of schrewes. [1420] But in this ilke fortune of peple I se somewhat of good and somewhat of yvel. For no wise man hath nat lever be exiled, pore and nedy

1414. *What*, why.

1414. *hasten and bysien*, 'haster' and 'solicitare.'

1415. *hors*, horses.

1416. *serpentes*, rather '*serpent*.'

1421. *fortune of peple*, 'fortuna populari.'

and nameles, thanne for to duellen in his cyte, and flouren of rychesse, and be redowtable by honour and strong of power. For in this wise more clerly and more witesfully is the office of wise men y-treted, whanne the blisfulnesse and the pouste of governours is, as it were, I-schadde among peples that ben neyghbors and subgites; syn that namely prisown, lawe, and thise othere tormentes of laweful peynes ben rather owed to felonous citezeins, for the whiche felones citezeens the peynes ben establisshid than for good folk.' [1425]

'Thanne I merveile me gretely,' quod I, 'why that the thinges ben so mys entrechaunged that tormentes of felonyes pressen and confounnen good folk, and schrewes ravyschen medes of vertu (and ben in honours and in gret estates). And I desire eek for to witen of the what semeth the to be the resoun of this so wrongful a confusioun; for I wolde wondre wel the lasse, yif I trowede that alle thise thinges weren medlede by fortunous hap. But now hepith and encreseth myn astonyenge god governour of thinges, that, so as god yeveth ofte tymes to gode men godes and myrthes, and to schrewes yvelis and aspre thinges, and yeveth ayeinward to good folk hardenesses, and to schrewes he graunteth hem hir wil and that they desiren—[1430] what difference thanne may ther be bytwixen that that god doth and the hap of fortune, yif men ne knowe nat the cause why that it is?'

'Ne it nis no merveile,' quod sche, 'thowh that men wenen that ther be somewhat foolissh and confus, whan the resoun of the ordre is unknowe. But although that thou ne knowe nat the cause of so gret a disposicioun, natheles for as moche as god the gode governour atempreth and governeth the world, ne doute the nat that alle thinges ne ben don a ryght.'

1424. *wise men*, rather *wisdom*, 'sapientia.'

1424. *subgites* not in Latin or French.

1429. *that, so as god*, etc., who, since he, etc.

'*Si quis Arcturi sidera.*'—Metrum 5

'Who so that ne knowe nat the sterres of Arctour, y-torned neygh to the sovereyne centre or poynt (that is to seyn y-torned neygh to the sovereyne pool of the firmament), and wot nat why the sterre Boetes passeth orgadredh his waynes, and drencheth his late flaumbes in the see, [1435] and whi that Boetes, the sterre, unfooldeth hise overswifte arsynges, thanne schal he wondryn of the lawe of the heye eyr; and eek yif that he knowe nat why that the hornes of the fulle mone waxen pale and infect by bowndes of the derk nyght, and how the mone derk and confus discovereth the sterres that sche hadde covered by hir clere vysage. The comune error moeveth folk, and maketh weery hir basyns of bras by thikke strokes. (That is to seyn, that ther is a maner peple that highte Coribandes, that wenen that whan the mone is in the eclips that it be enchanted, and therefore for-to rescowe the mone thei betyn hir basyns with thikke strokes.) Ne no man ne wondreth whanne the blastes of the wynd Chorus beten the strondes of the see by quakyng floodes; [1440] ne no man ne wondrith whan the weighte of the snowh, I-hardid by the cold, is resolvyd by the brennyng hete of Phebus, the sonne; for her seen men redily the causes. But the causes y-hidd (that is to seyn, in hevene) trowblen the brestes of men. The moevable peple is astoned of alle thinges that comen seelde and sodeynly in our age; but yif the trubly error of our ignoraunce departed fro us, so that we wisten the causes why that swiche thinges bytyden, certes thei scholde cesen to seme wondres.'

'*Ita est inquam.*'—Prosa 6

'Thus it is,' quod I. 'But so as thou hast yeven or byhyght me to unwrappen

1434. *sterres of Arctour*, 'Arcturi sidera,' i.e. Ursa Major.

1435. *passeth or gadredh*, 'legat'; *gadredh* is incorrect. Boetes apparently pass: s Ursa Major.

1438. *maketh*, they make (*folk* is singular).

1439. *Coribandes*, not in Latin; Fr. 'li coribant.'

the hidde causes of thinges, and to discover me the resouns covered with derknes, I preie the that thou devyse and juge me of this matere, and that thou do me to undirstonden it. For this miracle or this wonder trowbleth me ryght gretly.'

And thanne sche, a litel what smylinge, seide: [1445] 'Thou clepist me,' quod sche, 'to telle thing that is gretteste of alle thingis that mowen ben axed, and to the whiche questioun unnethes is ther aught I-nowgh to laven it. (As who seith, unnethes is ther suffisauntly any thing to answeren parfitly to thy questioun.) For the matere of it is swich, that whan o doute is determined and kut away, ther waxen othere doutes withoute nombre, ryght as the hevedes wexen of Idre (the serpent that Hercules slowh). Ne ther ne were no manere ne noon ende, but if that a wyght constreynede tho doutes by a ryght lifly and quyk fir of thought (that is to seyn, by vigour and strengthe of wit). For in this matere men weren wont to maken questiouns of the symplite of the purveaunce of god, and of the ordre of destyne, and of sodeyn hap, and of the knowyng and predestinacioun devyne, and of the liberte of fre wil; [1450] the whiche thinges thou thi-self aperceyvest wel of what weighte thei ben. But for as moche as the knowyng of these thinges is a maner porcioun of the medycyne to the, al be it so that I have litil tyme to doon it, yit natheles y wol enforcen me to schewe somewhat of it. But although the norysynges of dite of musyk deliteth the, thou most suffren and forberen a litel of thilke delit, whil that I weve to the resouns y-knyt by ordre.'

'As it liketh to the,' quod I, 'so do.'

Theo spak sche ryght as by an other bygynnyng, and seide thus: 'The engendryng of alle thinges,' quod sche, 'and alle the progressiouns of muable nature, and al that moeveth in any manere, taketh hise causes, his ordre, and his formes, of the stableness of the devyne thought. [1455] And thilke devyne thought

1453. *dite of musyk*, 'musici carminis.'

that is I-set and put in the tour (that is to seyn, in the heighte) of the simplicité of god, stablissith many maner gises to thinges that ben to done; the whiche manere whan that men looken it in thilke pure clenness of the devyne intelligence, it is y-cleped purveaunce; but whanne thilke manere is referred by men to thinges that it moeveth and disponyth, than of olde men it was clepyd destyne. The whiche thinges yif that any wyght loketh wel in his thought the strengthe of that oon and of that oother, he schal lyghtly mowen seen that these two thinges ben dyvers. For purveaunce is thilke devyne resoun that is established in the sovereyn prince of thinges, the whiche purveaunce disponith alle thinges; but destyne is the disposicion and ordenance clyvyng to moevable thinges, by the whiche disposicion the purveaunce knytteth alle thingis in hir ordres; [1460] for purveaunce enbraceth alle thinges to hepe, al-thoghe that thei ben diverse and although thei ben infinit. But destyne certes departeth and ordeyneth alle thinges singularly and devyded in moevynges, in places, in formes, in tymes. As thus: lat the unfoldyng of temporel ordenaunce, assembled and oonyd in the lokinge of the devyne thought, be cleped purveaunce; and thilke same assemblyng and oonyng, devyded and unfolden by tymes, lat that ben called destyne. And al be it so that these thinges ben diverse, yit natheles hangeth that oon of that oother; for-whi the ordre destynal procedith of the simplicité of purveaunce. [1465] For ryght as a werkman that aperceyveth in his thought the forme of the thing that he wol make, and moeveth the effect of the work, and ledith that he hadde lookid byforn in his thought symplely and presently, by temporel ordenaunce; certes ryght so god disponith in his purveaunce singularly and stablye the thinges that ben to doone; but he amyni-

streth in many maneris and in diverse tymes by destyne thilke same thinges that he hath disponyd. Thanne, whethir that destyne be exercised outhir by some devyne spirites, servantes to the devyne purveaunce, or elles by some soule, or elles by alle nature servyng to god, or elles by the celestial moevynges of sterres, or elles by vertu of aungelis, or elles by divers subtilite of develis, or elles by any of hem, or elles by hem alle; the destinal ordenaunce is y-woven and acomplissid. Certes it is openething that the purveaunce is an unmoevable and symple forme of thinges to doone; [1470] and the moevable bond and the temporel ordenaunce of thinges whiche that the devyne symplité of purveaunce hath ordeyned to doone, that is destyne. For whiche it is that alle thinges that ben put undir destyne ben certes subgites to purveaunce, to whiche purveaunce destyne itself is subgit and under. But some thinges ben put undir purveaunce, that sourmounten the ordenance of destyne; and tho ben thilke that stablye ben I-fyechid neygh to the first godhede. They surmounten the ordre of destynal moevablete. For ryght as cerklis that tornen aboute a same centre or aboute a poynt, thilke cerkle that is innerest or most withinne ioyneth to the symplesse of the myddle, [1475] and is, as it were, a centre or a poynt to that othere cerklis that tornen abouten hym; and thilke that is utterest, compased by a largere envyrownyng, is unfolden by largere spaces, in so moche as it is ferthest fro the myddel symplité of the poynt; and yif ther be any thing that knytteth and felawschipeth hym-self to thilke myddel poynt, it is constreyned in-to simplicité (that is to seyn, into unmoevablete), and it ceseth to ben schad and to fleten diversely. Ryght so, by semblable reson, thilke thing that departeth ferrest fro the first thought of god, it is unfolden and summittid to grettere bondes of destyne; and in so moche is the thing more fre and laus fro destyne, as it axeth and hooldeh hym neer to thilke centre of thingis (that

1458. *of olde men, i.e. by the ancients.*

1460. C<sub>1</sub> B A<sub>2</sub> H Cx. add *certes before destyne.*

1464. *be cleped, C<sub>2</sub> A<sub>1</sub> is.*

1467. *ledith . . . by temporel ordenaunce, through processes in time.*

is to seyn, god) ; [1480] and yif the thing clyveth to the stedfastnesse of the thought of god and be withoute moevynge, certes it surmounteth the necessite of destyne. Thanne ryght swich comparysoun as is of skillynge to undirstondyng, and of thing that ys engendrid to thing that is, and of tyme to eternite, and of the cercele to the centre ; ryght so is the ordre of moevable destyne to the stable synplicite of purveaunce. Thilke ordenaunce moveth the hevene and the sterres, and atemprith the elementes to-gidre amonges hem-self, and transformeth hem by entrechaungeable mutacioun. And thilke same ordre neweth ayein alle thinges growynge and fallynge adoun, by semblable progressions of sedes and of sexes (that is to seyn, mal and femele). [1485] And this ilke ordre constreyneth the fortunes and the dedes of men by a bond of causes nat able to ben unbownde ; the whiche destynal causes, whan thei passen out of the bygynnynges of the unmoevable purveaunce, it moot nedes be that thei ne be nat mutable. And thus ben the thinges ful wel I-governed yif that the synplicite luellynge in the devyne thoght scheweth forth the ordre of causes unable to ben bownd. And this ordre constreyneth by his propre stablete the moevable thingis, or elles thei scholden fleten folyly. For whiche it es that alle thingis semen to ben confus and trouble to us men, for we ne mowen nat considere thilke ordenaunce. [1490] Natheles the propre maner of every thing, dressynge hem to gode, isponith hem alle ; for ther nys no thing don for cause of yvel, ne thilk thing that doon by wikkid folk nys nat doon for yvel, the whiche schrewes, as I have shewed ful plentyvously, seken good, but wikkid errour mystorneth hem ; ne the ordre comynge fro the poynt of sovereyn good ne declyneth nat fro his bygynnynge.

1480. C<sub>1</sub> A<sub>2</sub> H Cx. to god.

1482. *skillynge*, 'ratiocinatio.'

1485. *sexes*, Fr. 'sexes,' 'fetnum' confused th *secus* (*sexus*).

1487. *whan thei fassen*, 'cum' causal conued as 'cum' temporal.

1492. *poynt*, centre.

But thou mayst seyn, "What unreste may hen a worse confusioun than that gode men han som tyme adversite and som tyme prosperite, and schrewes also han now thingis that they desiren and now thinges that thei haten?" Whethir men lyven now in swich holnesse of thought (as who seith, ben men now so wyse) that swiche folk as thei demen to ben gode folk or schrewes, that it moste nedes ben that folk ben swiche as thei wenen? But in this manere the domes of men discorden, that thilke men that som folk demen worthy of mede, other folk demen hem worthy of torment. [1495] But lat us graunten, I pose, that som man may wel demen or knowen the good folk and the badde ; may he thanne knowen and seen thilke innereste atempraunce of corages as it hath ben wont to ben seyde of bodyes? (As who seith, may a man speken and determinen of atempraunce in corages, as men were wont to demen or speken of complexions and atempraunces of bodies?) Ne it ne is nat an unlike miracle to hem that ne knowen it nat (as who seith, but it is lik a mervayle or miracle to hem that ne knowen it nat) whi that swete thinges ben covenable to some bodies that ben hole, and to some bodies bytterer thinges ben covenable ; [1500] and also why that some syk folk ben holpen with lyghte medicynes, and some folk ben holpen with sharpe medicynes. But natheles the leche, that knoweth the manere and the atempraunce of hele and of maladye, ne mervyleth of it no-thing. But what othir thing semeth hele of corages but bounte and prowess? And what othir thing semeth maladye of corages but vices? Who is elles keper of good or dryvere away of yvel but god, governour and lechere of thoughtes? The whiche god, whan he hath byholden from the hie tour of his purveaunce, he knoweth what

1493. *What unreste*, etc., 'Quæ, tu inquires, potest ulla iniquior confusio?' Chaucer began with Fr. 'Mais tu diras,' and then turned to Latin, construing 'inquires' as a noun.

1494. *Whethir men*, etc., do men, etc.

1499. *lik a mervayle*, rather a *lik mervayle*.

is covenable to every wight, and lenyth hem that he woot that is covenable to hem. [1505] Lo herof comyth and herof is don this noble miracle of the ordre destynal, whan god, that al knoweth, dooth swiche thing, of whiche thing unknowynge folk ben astonyd. But for to constreyn (as who seith, but for to comprehend and to telle) a fewe thingis of the devyne depnesse, the whiche that mannys resoun may undirstonde, thilke man that thou wenest to ben ryght just and ryght keypyng of equite, the contrarie of that semeth to the devyne purveance, that al woot. And Lucan, my famylier, telleth that the victorious cause likide to the goddes, and the cause overcomen likide to Catoun. Thanne what so evere thou mayst see that is doon in this world unhopid or unwened, certes it is the ryghte ordre of thinges; but as to thi wikkid opynioun, it is a confusioun. [1510] But I suppose that som man be so wel I-thewed that the devyne judgement and the judgement of mankynde accorden hem to gidre of hym; but he is so unstedfast of corage that, yif any adversite come to hym, he wol foreten peraventure to continue innocence, by the whiche he ne may nat withholden fortune. Thanne the wise dispensacion of god sparith hym, the whiche man adversite myghte enpyren; for that god wol nat suffren hym to travaile, to whom that travaile nis nat covenable. Another man is parfit in alle vertus, and is an holi man and neigh to god, so that the purveance of god wolde deme that it were a felonie that he were touched with any adversites; so that he wol nat suffre that swich a man be moeved with any bodily maladye. [1515] But so as seyde a philosophre, the more excellent by me,—he seyde in Grec that “vertues han edified the body of the holi man.” And ofte tyme it be-tydeth that the somme

1507. *to constreyn*, rather to *speke schortly of*.

1509. *Lucan*, v. *Pharsalia* i. 128.

1510. *but as to*, etc., rather *but to thi opinon it is a wikkid confusion*.

1512. *continue* should be *haunten* or *usen*, ‘colere’; Fr. ‘couthier’ read as *continuer*.

of thingis that ben to done is taken to governe to good folk, for that the malice haboundaunt of schrewes scholde ben abated. And god yeveth and departeth to other folk prosperites and adversites, I-meddled to hepe afir the qualite of hir corages, and remordith some folk by adversite, for thei ne scholden nat waxen proude by long welefulnesse; and other folk he suffreth to ben travailed with harde thinges, for that thei scholden confermen the vertues of corage by the usage and the exercitacioun of pacience. [1520] And other folk dreden more than thei oughten the whiche thei myghte wel beren, and thilke folk god ledeth in-to experience of hem-self by aspre and sorweful thingis. And many othir folk han bought honourable renoun of this world by the prys of glorious deth; and som men, that ne mowen nat ben overcomen by torment, han yeven ensample to other folk that vertu mai nat ben overcomen by adversites.

And of alle these thinges ther nis no doute that thei ne ben doon ryghtfully and ordeynly, to the profit of hem to whom we seen these thingis betyde. For certes, that adversite cometh somtyme to schrewes and somtyme that that they desiren, it comith of these forseide causes. [1525] And of sorweful thingis that betyden to schrewes certes no man ne wondreth; for alle men wenen that thei han wel desservid it, and that thei ben of wykkid meryt. Of whiche schrewes the torment som-tyme agasteth othere to don felonies, and som-tyme it amendeth hem that suffren the tormentes; and the prosperite that is yeven to schrewes scheweth a gret argument to good folk what thing thei scholde demen of thilke welefulnesse, the whiche prosperite men seen ofte serven to schrewes. In the whiche thing I trowe that god dispenseth. For peraventure the nature of som man is so overthrowng to yvel,

1517. *taken*, entrusted.

1526. *of wykkid meryt*, ‘male meritos,’ ‘de mauuaise merite.’

and so uncovenable, that the nedly poverte of his houshold myghte rather egren hym to don felonyes; and to the maladye of hym god putteth remedye to yeven hym rychesses. [1530] And som othir man byholdeth his conscience defouled with synnes, and makith comparysoun of his fortune and of hym-self, and dredith peraventure that his blisfulnesse, of whiche the usage is joyeful to hym, that the lesynge of thilke blisfulnesse ne be nat sorwful to hym; and therefore he wol change his maneris, and, for he dredith to lesen his fortune, he forelith his wikkidnesse. To other folke is welefulnesse I-yeven unworthely, the whiche overthroweth hem in-to destruccioun, that thei han disservid; and to som othir folk is yoven power to punyssh, for that it schal be cause of continuacioun and exercisyng to good folk, and cause of torment to schrewes. [1535] For so as ther nis noon alliaunce bytwix good folk and schrewes, ne schrewes ne mowen nat acorden among hem-self. And whi nat? For schrewes discorden of hem-self by hir vices, the whiche vices al to-reenden hir consciences, and doon ofte time thinges the whiche thingis, whan thei han doon hem, they demen that tho thinges ne scholden nat han ben doon. For whiche thing thilke sovereyne purveaunce hath makid ofte tyme fair myracle, so that schrewes han makid schrewes to ben gode men. For whan that some schrewes seen that they suffren wrongfully felonyes of othere schrewes, they wexen eschaufed in-to hate of hem that annoyed hem, and retornen to the fruyt of vertu, whan thei studien to ben unlyk o hem that thei han hated. Certis only this is the devyne myght to the whiche myghte yvelis ben thanne gode whan it useth the yvelis covenably and raweth out the effect of any good. [1540] (As who seith that yvel is good

1529. *uncovenable*, rather *outrageous*, 'inopportunity', probably read as *inopportunity*.

1535. *continuacioun*, 'couthurance' ('exercium'), read as *continuance*.

1537. H Cx. A<sub>1</sub> omit *fair* before *myracle*.

1539. *whan*, 'dum.'

1540. *any good*, 'aucun bien.'

only to the myghte of god, for the myght of god ordeyneth thilke yvel to good.)

For oon ordre enbraseth alle thinges, so that what wyght that departeth fro the resoun of thilke ordre which that is assigned to hym, algatis yit he slideth in-to an othir ordre; so that no thing is leweful to folye in the reame of the devyne purveaunce (as who seith, no thing nis withouten ordenaunce in the reame of the devyne purveaunce), syn that the ryght strong god governeth alle thinges in this world. For it nis nat leweful to man to comprehend by wit, ne unfolden by word, alle the subtil ordenaunces and disposicionis of the devyne entente. For oonly it owghte suffice to han lokid that god hym-self, makere of alle natures, ordeineth and dresseth alle thingis to gode; [1545] whil that he hasteth to withholden the thingis that he hath makid into his semblaunce (that is to seyn, for to withholden thingis in-to gode, for he hym-self is good), he chasith out alle yvel fro the boundes of his comynalite by the ordre of necessite destinable. For whiche it folweth that, yif thou loke the purveaunce ordeynynge the thinges that men wenen ben outraious or haboundaunt in erthis, thou ne schalt nat seen in no place no thing of yvel. But I se now that thou art charged with the weyghte of the questioun, and wery with lengthe of my resoun, and that thou abydest som swetnesse of songe. Tak thanne this drawght, and, whanne thou art wel reffressched and refect, thou schalt be more stedfast to stye in-to heyere questions or thinges. [1550]

'*Si vis celsi iura.*'—Metrum 6

Yif thou, wys, wilt demen in thi pure thought the ryghtes or the lawes of the heye thondrere (that is to seyn, of god), loke thou and byhoold the heightes of the sovereyn hevене. Ther kepyn the sterres, be ryghtful alliaunce of thinges,

1544. *man*, A<sub>1</sub> to *no man*; C<sub>1</sub> H Cx. A<sub>2</sub> B *men*.  
1550. *or thinges*, A<sub>2</sub> H of *thinges*; C<sub>2</sub> A<sub>1</sub> omit.

hir oolde pees. The sonne, I-moevid by his roly fyr, ne distorbeth nat the colde cerle of the mone. Ne the sterre yclepid the Bere, that enclyneth his ravyschyng coursis abowte the sovereyn heighte of the world—ne the same sterre Ursa nis nevere mo wasschen in the depe westrene see, ne coveyteth nat to deeyen his flaumbes in the see of the occian, although it see othere sterres I-plowngid in the see. And Hesperus the sterre bodith and telleth alwey the late nyghtes, and Lucyfer the sterre bryngeth ayein the clere day. [1555]

And thus maketh Love entre-changeable the perdurable courses; and thus is discordable bataile y-put out of the contre of the sterres. This accordaunce atempryth by evenelyke maneres the clementes, that the moiste thingis, stryvynge with the drye thingis, yeven place by stoundes; and that the colde thingis joynen hem by feyth to the hote thingis; and that the lyghte fyr ariseth in-to heighte, and the hevy erthes avalen by her weyghtes. By thise same causes the floury yer yeldeth swote smelles in the first somer sesoun warmynge; and the hote somer dryeth the cornes; and autumpne comith ayein hevy of apples; and the fletyng reyn by-deweth the wynter. This a-tempraunce noryscheth and bryngeth forth alle thinges that brethith lif in this world; [1560] and thilke same attempraunce, ravyschyng, hideth and bynymeth, and drencheth undir the laste deth, alle thinges I-born.

Among thise thinges sitteth the heye makere, kyng and lord, welle and bygynnyng, lawe and wys juge to don equite, and governeth and enclyneth the byrdles of thinges. And tho thinges that he stireth to gon by moevynge, he withdraweth and aresteth, and affermeth the moevable or wandryng thinges. For

1555. *bodith*, etc., 'seras nuntiat umbras.'

1556. *the perdurable*, C<sub>1</sub> H Cx. omit *the*; perhaps the original reading was *her*, Fr. 'leur.'

1560. *brethith*, A<sub>1</sub> *bredith*; C<sub>2</sub> A<sub>2</sub> Cx. *berith*.

1562. *Among thise thinges*, 'interea,' read as 'inter ea'; so also in French.

yif that he ne clepide nat ayein the ryght goynge of thinges, and yif that he ne constreynede hem nat eftsones into roundnesses enclyned, the thingis that ben now contynued by stable ordenaunce, thei scholden departen from hir welle (that is to seyn, from hir bygynnyng), and failen (that is to seyn, tornen into nocht). This is the comune love to alle thingis, and alle thinges axen to ben holden by the fyn of good. [1565] For elles ne myghten they nat lasten yif thei ne comen nat eftsones ayein, by love returned, to the cause that hath yeven hem beinge (that is to seyn, to god).

'*Iam ne igitur vides.*'—Prosa 7

Sestow nat thanne what thing folweth alle the thingis that I have seyde?'

'What thing?' quod I.

'Certes,' quod sche, 'al outrely that alle fortune is good.'

'And how may that be?' quod I.

'Now undirstand,' quod sche, 'so as al fortune, whethir so it be joyeful fortune or aspre fortune, is yeven eyther bycause of gerdonyng or elles of exercysing of good folk, or elles bycause to punyschen or elles chastisen schrewes; thanne is alle fortune good, the whiche fortune is certeyn that it be either ryghtful or elles profitable.' [1570]

'Forsothe this is a ful verray resoun,' quod I; 'and yif I considere the purvaunce and the destyne that thou taughtest me a litel here byforn, this sentence is sustenyd by stedfast resouns. But yif it like unto the, lat us nombren hem amonges thilke thingis, of whiche thow seydest a litel here byforn that thei ne were nat able to ben wened to the peple.'

'Why so?' quod sche.

1564. *roundnesses enclyned*, 'flexos orbes,' 'rondeces flechiez.'

1564. *that ben now contynued*, etc., 'Quæ nunc stabilis continet ordo'; 'continet' as *continuit* (or through Fr. 'contenez'), and 'ordo' as ablative through 'par ordenance estable.' A<sub>2</sub> *contenyed*, probably a correction.



'For that the comune word of men,' quod I, 'mysuseth this manere speche of fortune, and seyn ofte tymes that the fortune of som wyght is wikkid.'

'Woltow thanne,' quod sche, 'that I approche a litil to the wordis of the peple, so that it seme nat to hem that I be overmoche departed fro the usage of man-kynde?'

'As thou wilt,' quod I.

'Demestow nat,' quod sche, 'that alle thing that profiteth is good?' [1575]

'Yis,' quod I.

'And certes thilke thing that exerciseth or corrigith profitith?'

'I confesse it wel,' quod I.

'Thanne is it good,' quod sche.

'Whi nat?' quod I.

'But this is the fortune,' quod sche, 'of hem that eyther ben put in vertu and batayllen ayein aspre thingis, or elles of hem that eschuen and declynen fro vices and taken the weye of vertu.'

'This ne mai I nat denye,' quod I.

'But what seistow of the merye fortune that is yeven to good folk in guerdoun? Demeth aught the peple that it is wikkid?'

'Nay forsothe,' quod I; 'but thei demen, as it soth is, that it is ryght good.' [1580]

'And what seistow of that othir fortune,' quod sche, 'that, although it be aspre and restreyne the schrewes by ryghtful torment, weneth aught the peple that it be good?'

'Nay,' quod I, 'but the peple demeth that it is moost wrecchid of alle thingis that mai ben thought.'

'War now and loke wel,' quod sche, 'lest that we, in folwyng the opynioun of the peple, have confessid and concluded thing that is unable to be wened to the peple?'

'What is that?' quod I.

'Certes,' quod sche, 'it folweth or comith of thingis that ben graunted that alle fortune, what so evere it be, of hem that ben eyther in possessioun of vertu, or

1573. *seyn*, they say.

in the ences of vertu, or elles in the purchasyng of vertu, that thilke fortune is good; and that alle fortune is ryght wikkid to hem that duellen in schrewidnesse.' (As who seith: 'And thus weneth nat the peple.')

[1585] 'That is soth,' quod I, 'al be it so that no man dar confessen it ne by-knowen it.'

'Whi so?' quod sche; 'for ryght as the stronge man ne semeth nat to abaisen or disdaignen as ofte tyme as he herith the noyse of the bataile, ne also it ne semeth nat to the wise man to beren it grevously as ofte as he is lad into the stryf of fortune. For, bothe to the to man and eek to the tothir thilke difficulte is the matere, to the to man of ences of his glorious renoun, and to the tothir man to confermen his sapience (—that is to seyn the asprenesse of his estat). For therfore it is called "vertu," for that it sustenith and enforceth by hise strengthes that it nis nat overcomen by adversites. Ne certes thou, that art put in the ences or in the heyghte of vertu, ne hast nat comen to fleten with delices, and for to welken in bodily lust; [1590] thou sowest or plawntest a ful egre bataile in thy corage ayeins every fortune. For that the sorwful fortune ne confownde the nat, ne that the myrie fortune ne corruppe the nat, occupye the mene by stidefast strengthes. For al that evere is undir the mene, or elles al that overpasseth the mene, despyseth welefulness (as who seith, it is vycious), and ne hath no mede of his travaile. For it is set in your hand (as who seith, it lyth in your power) what fortune yow is levest (that is to seyn good or yvel). For alle fortune that semeth scharp or aspre, yif it ne exercise nat the good folk ne chastiseth the wikkide folk, it punysseth. [1595]

1587. *semeth*, 'debet' read as *debet*.

1590. *ences*, *heyghte*, 'provectu,' 'hautece.'

1591. *sowest or plawntest*, 'conseritis' (procellium).

1595. *yif it ne*, etc., should be *yif it ne exercise ne chastiseth, it punysseth*. The translation combines two variant readings of the Latin.

'*Bella bis quinis.*'—Metrum 7

The wrekerer Attrides (that is to seyn, Agamenon), that wrought and contynued the batailes by x yer, recovered and purgide in wrekyng, by the destruccioun of Troye, the loste chaumbris of mariage of his brothir. (That is to seyn that he, Agamenon, wan ayein Eleyne that was Menelaus wif his brothir.) In the mene while that thilke Agamenon desirede to yeven sayles to the Grykkysche naveye, and boughte ayein the wyndes by blood, he unclothide hym of pite of fadir; and the sory preest yeveth in sacrificyng the wrecchide kutynge of throte of the doughter. (That is to seyn that Agamenon leet kутten the throte of his doughter by the preest, to maken alliaunce with his goddes, and for to han wynd with whiche he myghte wenden to Troye.) [1600]

Ytakus (that is to seyn Ulixes) bywepete his felawes I-lorn, the whiche felawes fyerse Poliphemus, ligginge in his grete cave, had fretyn and dreynt in his empty wombe. But natheles Poliphemus, wood for his blynde visage, yald to Ulixes ioye by his sorrowful teres. (This is to seyn that Ulixes smoot out the eye of Poliphemus, that stood in his forheed, for whiche Ulixes hadde ioye whan he say Poliphemus wepyng and blynd.)

Hercules is celebrable for his harde travaile. He dawntide the proude Centauris (half hors, half man), and he byrafte the dispoilyng fro the cruel lyoun (that is to seyn, he slouhe the lyoun and rafte hym his skyn); he smot the briddes that hyghten Arpiis with certein arwes; [1605] he ravyschide applis fro the wakyng dragoun, and his hand was the more hevy for the goldene metal; he drowh Cerberus (the hound of

helle) by his treble cheyne; he, overcomer, as it is seyde, hath put an unmeke lord foddre to his crwel hors (this to seyn that Hercules slowh Diomedes, and made his hors to fretyn hym); and he, Hercules, slowh Idra the serpent, and brende the venym; and Acheleous the flod, defowled in his forheed, dreynthe his shamefast visage in his strondes (that is to seyn that Achaleous coude transfiguren hymself into diverse liknesse, and, as he faught with Hercules, at the laste he torned hym in-to a bole, and Hercules brak oon of his hornes, and he for shame hidde hym in his ryver); [1610] and he, Hercules, caste adoun Antheus the geaunt in the strondes of Libye; and Kacus apaysede the wratthes of Evander (this to seyn that Hercules slouh the monstre Kacus, and apayed with that deth the wratthe of Evander); and the bristiled boor markide with scomes the scholdres of Hercules, the whiche scholdres the heye cercle of hevене sholde thriste; and the laste of his labours was that he susteynede the hevене uppon his nekke unbowed; and he disservide eftsones the hevене to ben the pris of his laste travaile.

Goth now thanne, ye stronge men, ther as the heye wey of the greet ensaunple ledith yow. [1615] O nyce men! why nake ye your bakkes? (As who seith, "O ye slowe and delicat men! whi flee ye adversites, and ne fyghte nat ayeins hem by vertu, to wynnen the mede of the hevене?") For the erthe overcomen yeveth the sterres. (This to seyn that whan that erthly lust is overcomyn, a man is makid worthy to the hevене.)'

## EXPLICIT LIBER QUARTUS

## INCIPIE LIBER QUINTUS

'*Dixerat orationisque cursum.*'—Prosa 1

Sche hadde seyde, and tornede the cours of hir resoun to some othere thingis to

1613. *scomes*, flecks of foam, 'spumis.'

1618. *the cours*, C<sub>1</sub> C<sub>2</sub> *by cours*.

1618. *resoun*, 'orationis' read as *rationis*.

1596. *recovered*, etc., 'recouura' ('piavi'), and Latin gloss 'purgavit ulciscendo.'

1598. *pite of fadir*, 'pietatem paternam' (in gloss).

1598. *yeveth in sacrificyng*, etc., 'Fœderat natæ jugulum.'

1598. *kutynge of throte* is due to a note in Aq.

1601. *empty*, rather *grete*.

1604. *dispoilyng*, rather *spoil*.

ben treted and to ben Ispedd. Than seide I, 'Certes ryghtful is thin amonestyng and ful digne by auctorite. But that thou seydest whilom that the questioun of the devyne purveance is enlaced with many other questiouns, I undirstande wel and prove it by the same thing. But I axe yif that thou wenest that hap be anything in any weys; and yif thou wenest that hap be anything, what is it?' [1620]

Thanne quod sche, 'I haste me to yelden and assoilen to the the dette of my byheste, and to schewen and openen the wey, by whiche wey thou maist comen ayein to thi contre. But al be it so that the thingis whiche that thou axest ben ryght profitable to knowe, yit hen thei divers somwhat fro the path of my purpos; and it is to douten that thou ne be makid weery by mys-weyes, so that thou ne maist nat suffise to mesuren the ryghte weie.'

'Ne doute the ther-of no thing,' quod I; 'for for to knowen thilke thingis togidre, in the whiche thinges I delite me gretly,—that schal ben to me in stede of rest, syn it nis nat to douten of the thingis folwyng, whan every syde of thi disputesioun schal han ben stedfast to me by undoutous feyth.' [1625]

'Thanne,' seide sche, 'that manere wol I don the,' and bygan to speken ryght thus: 'Certes,' quod sche, 'yif any wyght diffynisse hap in this manere, that is to seyn that "hap is a bytydyng I-brought forth by foolissh moevyng and by no knyttyng of causes," I conferme that hap nis ryght naught in no wise; and I deme al outrelly that hap nis, ne duelleth but a voys (as who seith, but an idel word), withouten any significacioun of thing submitted to that voys. For

1618. *ful digne*, etc., 'dignissima auctoritate' misconstrued.

1619. *by the same thing*, rather *by the thing itself*, i.e. by experience.

1620. *in any weys*, at all.

1625. *knowen . . . togidre*, 'agnoscere' ends first clause, 'simul cum' begins the second one. Chaucer took 'agnoscere simul' together.

1628. *thing submitted*, 'rei subjectæ.'

what place myght ben left or duellyng to folie and to disordenaunce, syn that god ledeth and constreyneth alle thingis by ordre? For this sentence is verry and soth, that "no thing hath his beyng of naught," to the whiche sentence noon of these oolde folk ne withseide nevere; [1630] al be it so that they ne undirstoden ne meneden it nat by god prince and bygynerre of wirkyng, but thei casten as a maner foundement of subiect material (that is to seyn, of the nature of alle resouns). And yif that any thing is woxen or comen of no causes, thanne schal it seme that thilke thing is comen or woxen of nawght; but yif this ne mai nat ben don, thanne is nat possible that hap be any swich thing as I have diffynysschid a litel here byforn.'

'How schal it thanne be?' quod I. 'Nys ther thanne no thing that by right may ben clepid other hap or elles aventure of fortune; or is ther awght, al be it so that it is hidd fro the peple, to whiche thing these wordes ben covenable?'

'Myn Aristotles,' quod sche, 'in the book of his Phisic diffynysseth this thing by schort resoun, and nyghe to the sothe.'

'In whiche manere?' quod I. [1635]

'As ofte,' quod sche, 'as men don any thing for grace of any other thing, and an other thing than thilke thing that men entenden to don bytideth by some causes, it is clepid "hap." Ryght as a man dalf the erthe bycause of tylyng of the feld, and founde ther a gobet of gold bydolgen; thanne wenen folk that it is byfalle by fortunous bytydyng. But forsothe it nis nat of naught, for it hath his propre causes, of whiche causes the cours unforseynd and unwar semeth to han makid hap. For yif the tiliere of the feild ne dulve nat in the erthe, and yif the hidere of the gold ne hadde hyd the gold in thilke place, the gold ne hadde nat ben founde. These ben thanne the

1631. *by god*, in respect to god.

1631. *as*, as it were.

1635. *thing*, C<sub>2</sub> A<sub>1</sub> omit.

1639. *dulve*, pret. subj. of *delven*.

causes of the abregginge of fortuit hap, the whiche abreggyng of fortuit hap cometh of causes encontryng and flowyng togidre to hem-self, and nat by the entencioun of the doere. [1640] For neither the hidere of the gold ne the delvere of the feeld ne undirstoden nat that the gold sholde han ben founde; but, as I seide, it bytidde and ran togidre that he dalf there as that oothir had hid the gold. Now mai I thus diffynys-shen "hap": hap is an unwar betydinge of causes assembled in thingis that ben doon for som oothir thing; but thilke ordre, procedinge by an uneschuable byndinge to-gidre, whiche that descendeth fro the welle of purveaunce, that ordeyneth alle thingis in hir places and in hir tymes, makith that the causes rennen and assemblen togidre.

*'Rupis Achemenie.'*—Metrum 1

Tigris and Eufrates resolen and springen of o welle in the craggis of the roche of the contre of Achemenye, ther as the fleinge bataile fictheth hir dartes returned in the breestis of hem that folwen hem. [1645] And sone afir the same ryverys, Tigris and Eufrates, unioignen and departen hir watres. And if thei comen togidre, and ben assembled and clepid togidre into o course, thanne moten thilke thingis fleten togidre whiche that the watir of the entrechaungyng flood bryngeth. The schippes and the stokkes, araced with the flood, moten assemblen; and the watris I-medled wrappeth or emplieth many fortunel happes or maneris; the whiche wandryng happes natheles thilke enclynynge loweness of the erthe and the flowyng ordre of the slydinge watir governeth. Right so fortune, that

1639. *abregginge of fortuit hap*, 'fortuiti compendii' (accidental gain) glossed 'fortuiti eventus'; Fr. 'l'abregement du cas fortunel' with wrong meaning of *compendium*, which Chaucer follows.

1641. *undirstoden* (C<sub>2</sub> *undirstonden*, but probably a correction), 'intendit,' Fr. 'entendrent,' which Chaucer misunderstood.

1645. *the fleinge bataile*, etc., i.e. in Parthia.

semeth as it fletith with slakid or un-governed bridles, it suffreth bridelis (that is to seyn, to ben governed), and passeth by thilke lawe (that is to seyn, by the devyne ordenaunce).<sup>7</sup> [1650]

*'Animadverto inquam.'*—Prosa 2

'This undirstonde I wel,' quod I, 'and I accorde me that it is ryght as thou seist, but I axe yif ther be any liberte of fre wille in this ordre of causes that clyven thus togidre in hem-self. Or elles I wolde witen yif that the destinal cheyne con-strengthen the moevynges of the corages of men.'

'Yis,' quod sche, 'ther is liberte of fre wil. Ne ther ne was nevere no nature of resoun that it ne hadde liberte of fre wil. For every thing that may naturely usen resoun, it hath doom by whiche it discernith and demeth every thing; thanne knoweth it by it-self thinges that ben to fleen and thinges that ben to desiren. [1655] And thilke thing that any wight demeth to ben desired, that axeth or desireth he; and fleeth thilke thing that he troweth be to fleen. Wherfore in alle thingis that resoun is, in hem also is liberte of willyng and of nillyng. But I ne ordeyne nat (as who seith, I ne graunte nat) that this liberte be evenelyk in alle thinges. For-why in the sovereynes devynes substaunces (that is to seyn in spiritis) jugement is more cleer, and wil nat I-corrupted, and myght redy to speden thinges that ben desired. But the soules of men moten nedes be more fre whan thei loken hem in the speculacioun or lokinge of the devyne thought; [1660] and lasse fre whan thei slyden in-to the bodyes; and yit lasse fre whan thei ben gadrid to gidre and comprehended in erthli membres. But the laste servage is whan that thei ben yeven to vices and han I-falle fro the possessioun of hir propre resoun.

1650. *passeth*, moves along.

1660. *loken hem* (C<sub>1</sub> A<sub>2</sub> him), 'conservant,' Fr. 'se gardent' mistranslated.

For astir that thei han cast awcy hir eyghen fro the lyght of the sovereyn sothfastnesse to lowe thingis and derke, anon thei derken by the cloude of ignorance and ben troubled by felonous talentes; to the whiche talentes when thei approchen and assenten, thei hepen and encrecen the servage whiche thei han joyned to hem-self; and in this manere thei ben caytifs fro hir propre liberte. The whiche thingis natheles the lokinge of the devyne purveaunce seth, that alle thingis byholdeth and seeth fro eterne, and ordeyneth hem everiche in here merites as thei ben predestinat; and it is seid in Greke that "alle thinges he seeth and alle thinges he herith." [1665]

'*Puro clarum lumine.*'—Metrum 2

Homer with the hony mouth (that is to seyn, Homer with the swete ditees) singeth that the sonne is cler by pure light; natheles yit ne mai it nat, by the infirme light of his bemes, breken or percen the inward entrayles of the erthe or elles of the see. So ne seth nat god, makere of the grete world. To hym, that loketh alle thinges from an hey, ne withstondeth no thinges by hevynesse of erthe, ne the nyght ne withstondeth nat to hym by the blake cloudes. Thilke god seeth in o strok of thought alle thinges that ben, or weren, or schollen comen; and thilke god, for he loketh and seeth alle thingis alone, thou maist seyn that he is the verrai sonne.'

'*Tum ego en inquam.*'—Prosa 3

Thanne seide I, 'Now am I confowndide by a more hard doute than I was.'

'What doute is that?' quod sche, 'for certes I coniecte now by whiche thingis thou art trubled.' [1670]

'It semeth,' quod I, 'to repugnem and

1663. *talentes*, 'affectibus.'

1665. *in Greke*, Homer, *Il.* iii. 277; *Odys.* xii.

323.

1666. '*Puro clarum lumine Phæbum Meiliffu canit oris Homerus.*'

to contrarien gretly, that god knoweth byforn alle thinges and that ther is any fredom of liberte. For yif it so be that god loketh alle thinges byforn ne god ne mai nat ben deceyved in no manere, thanne moot it nedes ben that alle thinges betyden the whiche that the purveaunce of god hath seyn byforn to comen. For whiche, yif that god knoweth byforn nat oonly the werkes of men, but also hir conseilles and hir willes, thanne ne schal ther be no liberte of arbitre; ne certes ther ne may be noon other dede, ne no wil, but thilke whiche that the devyne purveaunce, that ne mai nat ben disseyved, hath felid byforn. [1675] For yif that thei myghten writhen away in othere manere than thei ben purveyed, thanne ne sholde ther be no stedefast prescience of thing to comen, but rather an uncerteyn opynioun; the whiche thing to trowen of god, I deme felonye and unleveful. Ne I ne proeve nat thilke same resoun (as who scith, I ne allowe nat, or I ne preyse nat, thilke same resoun) by whiche that som men wenen that thei mowe assoilen and unknyten the knotte of this questioun. For certes thei seyn that thing nis nat to comen for that the purveaunce of god hath seyn byforn that it is to comen, but rathir the contrarie; and that is this: that, for that the thing is to comen, that therefore ne mai it nat ben hidd fro the purveaunce of god; and in this manere this necessite slideth ayein into the contrarie partie: [1680] ne it ne byhoveth nat nedes that thinges betiden that ben I-purveied, but it byhoveth nedes that thinges that ben to comen ben I-purveied: but, as it were, y travailed (as who seith, that thilke answeere procedith ryght as though men travaileden or weren besy) to enqueren the whiche thing is cause of the whiche thing, as

1671 ff. Cp. *Troilus*, iv. 967-1078.

1677. *proeve*, wrong meaning of 'probo'; Fr. 'loer'; cp. Chaucer's gloss.

1681. *nedes*, necessarily.

1682. *y travailed*, MSS. *ytravailed* (H Cx. *travailed*), cp. *Troilus*, v. 1009; Fr. 'nous travaillons,' both incorrect translations of 'laboretur.' Cp. Chaucer's gloss.

whethir the prescience is cause of the necessite of thinges to comen, or elles that the necessite of thinges to comen is cause of the purveaunce. But I ne enforce me nat now to schewen it, that the bytydunge of thingis I-wyst byforn is necessarie, how so or in what manere that the ordre of causes hath it-self; although that it ne seme naught that the prescience bringe in necessite of bytydunge to thinges to comen. [1685] For certes yif that any wyght sitteth, it byhoveth by necessite that the opynioun be soth of hym that coniecteth that he sitteth; and ayeinward also is it of the contrarie: yif the opynioun be soth of any wyght for that he sitteth, it byhoveth by necessite that he sitte. Thanne is here necessite in the toon and in the tothir; for in the toon is necessite of syttynge, and certes in the tothir is necessite of soth. But therfore sitteth nat a wyght for that the opynioun of the sittynge is soth, but the opynioun is rather soth for that a wyght sitteth byforn. And thus, although that the cause of the soth cometh of that other side (as who seith, that although the cause of soth cometh of the sittynge, and nat of the trewe opynioun), algates yit is ther comune necessite in that oon and in that othir. [1690] Thus scheweth it that y may make semblable skiles of the purveaunce of god and of thingis to comen. For although that for that thingis ben to comen therfore ben thei purveid, and nat certes for thei be purveid therfore ne bytide thei nat; nathes byhoveth it by necessite that eyther the thinges to comen ben I-purveid of god, or elles that the thinges that ben I-purveid of god betyden. And this thing oonly suffiseth I-now to destroien the fredom of oure arbitre (that is to seyn, of our fre wil). But certes now scheweth it wel how fer fro the sothe and how up-so-down is this thing that

we seyn, that the betydyng of temporel thingis is cause of the eterne prescience. [1695] But for to wenen that god purveith the thinges to comen for thei ben to comen,—what oothir thing is it but for to wene that thilke thinges that bytiden whilom ben causes of thilke sovereign purveaunce that is in god? And her-to I adde yit this thing: that ryght as whanne that I woot that a thing is, it byhoveth by necessite that thilke selve thing be: and eek whan I have knowen that any thing schal betyden, so byhovith it by necessite that thilke same thing betide: so folweth it thanne that the betydyng of the thing that I wyste byforn ne may nat ben eschued. And at the laste, yif that any wyght wene a thing to ben oothir weyes than it is, it nis nat oonly unscience, but it is desceyvable opynioun ful divers and fer fro the sothe of science. Wherefore, yif any thing be so to comen that the betydyng of it ne be nat certein ne necessarie, who mai witen byforn that thilke thing is to comen? [1700] For ryght as science ne may nat ben medled with falsnesse (as who seith, that yif I woot a thing, it ne mai nat ben fals that I ne woot it), ryght so thilke thing that is conceyved by science may ben noon other weies than as it is conceyved. For that is the cause why that science wanteth lesynge (as who seith, why that wytyng ne resceyveth nat lesynge of that it woot); for it byhoveth by necessite that every thing be ryght as science comprehendeth it to be. What schal I thanne seyn? In whiche manere knoweth god byforn the thinges to comen, yif thei ne ben nat certein? For yif that he deme that thei ben to comen uneschewably, and so may be that it is possible that thei ne schollen nat comen, god is disseyved. [1705] But not oonly to trowe that god is disseyved, but for to speke it with mouthe, it is a felonous synne. But yif that god woot that ryght so as thinges ben to comen, so schollen they comen, so that

1684. *I ne enforce me nat* should be *I enforce me*. Ch. and Fr. translate 'non nitamur' a variant of 'nos nitamur'

1691. *skiles*, arguments.

1701. *that I ne woot it*. The 'ne' is due to the negative in the main clause.

he wite egaly (as who seith, indifferently) that thingis mowen ben doon or elles nat I-doon, what is thilke prescience that ne comprehendeth no certein thing ne stable? Or elles what difference is ther bytwix the prescience and thilke jape-worthi devynynge of Tyresie the divynour, that seide, "Al that I seie," quod he, "either it schal be or elles it schal nat be?" Or elles how mochel is worth the devyne prescience more than the opinioun of mankynde, yif so be that it demeth the thinges uncertayn, as men doon, of the whiche domes of men the betydinge is nat certein? But yif so be that noon uncertein thing ne mai ben in hym that is certein welle of alle thinges, than is the betydinge certein of thilke thingis whiche he hath wist byform fermely to comen. [1710] For whiche it folweth that the fredom of the conseiles and of the werkis of mankynde nis noon, syn that the thought of god, that seeth alle thinges withouten error of falsnesse, byndeth and constreyneth hem to a bytydunge by necessite. And yif this thing be oonys I-grauntid and reseveyed (this is to seyn, that ther nis no fre wil), thanne scheweth it wel how gret destruccioun and how gret damages ther folwen of thingis of mankynde. For in idel ben ther thanne purposed and byhyght medes to good folk, and peynes to badde folk, syn that no moevynge of fre corage voluntarie ne hath nat disservid hem (that is to seyn neither mede ne peyne). And it scholde seme thanne that thilke thing is alther-worst whiche that is now demed for alther-moost just and moost ryghtful, that is to seyn that schrewes ben punyschid or elles that good folk ben I-gerdoned. [1715] The whiche folk, syn that hir propre wil ne sent hem nat to the toon ne to that othir (that is to seyn neither to good ne to harm), but [ther] constreyneth hem certein necessite of thingis to comen; thanne ne schulle ther nevere be, ne nevere were,

1708. *Tyresie*, Tiresias; cp. 84.

1711. *nis noon*, 'est nulle', is no freedom.

1713. *purposed*, offered.

1716. *ther*, supplied from Fr.

vice ne vertu, but it scholde rather ben confusion of alle dissertes medlid withouten discrecioun. And yit ther folweth another inconvenient, of the whiche ther ne mai be thought no more felonous ne more wikke, and that is this: that, so as the ordre of thingis is I-led and cometh of the purveaunce of god, ne that no thing is lefevel to the conseiles of mankynde (as who seith that men han no power to don no thing ne wilne no thing), thanne folweth it that oure vices ben referid to the makere of alle good (as who seith, thanne folweth it that god oughte han the blame of our vices, syn he constreyneth us by necessite to doon vices). [1720]

Than nis ther no resoun to han hope in god, ne for to preien to god. For what scholde any wyght hopen to god, or why scholde he preien to god, syn that the ordenaunce of destyne, the whiche that mai nat ben enclyned, knytteth and streyneth alle thingis that men mai desiren? Thanne scholde ther be don away thilke oonly alliaunce bytwixen god and men, that is to seyn, to hopen and to preien. But by the pris of ryghtwisnesse and of verray mekenesse we disserven the gerdon of the devyne grace whiche that is inestimable (that is to seyn, that it is so greet that it ne mai nat ben ful I-preysed). And this is oonly the manere (that is to seyn, hope and preieris) for whiche it semeth that men mowen spekyn with god, and by resoun of supplicacion be conioyned to thilke cleernesse that nis nat aprochid no rather or that men byseken it and impetren it. [1725] And yif men ne wene nat that hope ne preieres ne han no strengthis by the necessite of thingis to comen I-reseveyed, what thing is ther thanne by whiche we mowen ben conioyned and clyven to thilke sovereyne

1717. *inconvenient*, 'desconvenue,' inconvenience.

1725. *only the manere . . . for whiche*, the only way . . . by which.

1725. *no rather or*, 'prius quoque,' which Chaucer has wrongly connected with 'inaccessæ luci,' should be *and rather or*, i.e. even before.

1726. *I-reseveyed*, conceded.

prince of thingis? For whiche it byhoveth by necessite that the lynage of mankynde, as thou songe a litel here byforn, be departed and unioyned from his welle, and failen of his bygynnyng (that is to seyn, god).

'*Quenam discors.*'—Metrum 3

What discordable cause hath to-rent and unioyned the byndyng or the alliuance of thingis (that is to seyn, the coniuncions of god and of man)? Whiche god hath establisschid so grete bataile bytwixen these two sothfast or verreie thinges (that is to seyn, bytwyxen the purveaunce of god and fre wil) that thei ben singuler and dyvided, ne that they ne wole nat ben medled ne couplid togidre. But ther nis no discord to the verray thinges, but thei clyven alwey certein to hem-self. [1730] But the thought of man, confownded and overthrowen by the derke membres of the body, ne mai nat be fyr of his derked lookyng (that is to seyn, by the vigour of his insyghte while the soule is in the body) knowen the thynne subtile knyntynges of thinges. But wherfore eschaufteth it so by so gret love to fynden thilke notes of soth I-covered? (That is to seyn, wherfore eschaufteth the thought of man by so gret desir to knowen thilke notificaciouns that ben I-hid undir the covertures of soth?) Woot it aught thilke thing that it angwisshous desireth to knowe? (As who seith, nay; for no man ne travaileth for to witen thingis that he wot. And therefore the texte seith thus:) [1735] But who travaileth to wite thingis I-knowe? And yif that he ne knoweth hem nat, what sekith thilke blynde thought? What is he that desireth any thyng of which he wot right nought?

1728. Chaucer's glosses here are derived mainly from Fr.

1730. *But ther nis*, etc., 'An nulla est,' etc. 'An' read as 'ac,' or perhaps gloss is Aq. 'An est nota solutionis.' Similarly, *But whanne*, etc. 1741.

(As who seith, who so desireth any thing, nedes somewhat he knoweth of it, or elles he coude nat desiren it.) Or who may folwen thinges that ne ben nat I-wist? And thoughe that he seke tho thingis, wher schal he fynde hem? What wyght that is al unkunnyng and ignoraunt may knowe the forme that is I-founde? [1740] But whanne the soule byholdeth and seeth the heye thought (that is to seyn, god), thanne knoweth it togidre the somme and the singularites (that is to seyn the principles and everyche by hym-self). But now, while the soule is hidd in the cloude and in the derknesse of the membres of the body, it ne hath nat al foryeten itself, but it withholdeth the somme of thinges and lesith the singularites. Thanne who so that sekith sothnesse, he nis in neyther nother habite, for he not nat al, ne he ne hath nat al foryeten; but yit hym remembreth the somme of thinges that he withholdeth, and axeth conseile, and retreteth deepliche thinges I-seyn by-forn (that is to seyn, the grete somme in his mynde). So that he mowe adden the parties that he hath foryeten to thilke that he hath withholden.' [1745]

'*Tum illa vetus inquit hec est.*'—Prosa 4

Than seide sche 'This is,' quod sche, 'the olde questioun of the purveaunce of god. And Marcus Tullius, whan he devyded the divynaciouns (that is to seyn, in his book that he wrot of dyvynaciouns) he moevede gretly this questioun; and thou thiself hast y-sought it mochel, and outrely, and longe. But yit ne hath it nat ben determined, ne I-sped fermely ne diligently of any of yow. And the cause of this derknesse and of this difficult is, for that the moevyng of the resoun of mankynde ne may nat moeven to (that is to seyn, applyn or joynen to) the simplicite of the devyne prescience; th

1743. *neyther nother*, neutro.'

1744. *retretith* (A<sub>1</sub> A<sub>2</sub> *tretith*), 'retraite,' 'tractans.'

1746. *devyded* ('distribuit'), C<sub>2</sub> H *devynede* Cx. *distribuyd* (from rubric?).



whiche simplicitie of the devyne prescience, yif that men myghte thinke in in any manere (that is to seyn, that yif men myghten thinke and comprehenden the thinges as god seeth hem), thanne ne scholde ther duelle outrely no doute. [1750] The whiche resoun and cause of difficulte I schal assaye at the last to schewe and to speden, whanne I have first I-spendid and answerd to the resouns by whiche thou art y-mooved. For I axe whi thou wenest that thilke resouns of hem that assoilen this questioun ne be nat speedful I-now ne sufficient; the whiche solucioun, or the whiche resoun, for that it demeth that the prescience nis nat cause of necessite to thinges to comen, than weneth it nat that fredom of wil be disturbed or y-let be prescience. For ne drawestow nat argumentes fro elles where of the necessite of thingis to comen (as who seith, any oothir wey than thus) but that thilke thinges that the prescience woot byforn ne mowen nat unbetyde? [1755] (That is to seyn, that thei moten betide.) But thanne, yif that prescience ne putteth no necessite to thingis to comen, as thou thi-self hast confessed it and byknowen a litel here byforn, what cause or what is it (as who seith, ther may no cause be) by whiche that the endes voluntarie of thinges myghten be constryned to certain bytydyng? For by grace of possessioun, so that thou mowe the betere undirstonde this that folweth, I pose that ther ne be no prescience. Thanne axe I, 'quod sche, 'in as moche as aperteneth to that, scholden thanne thingis that comen of fre wil ben constryned to bytiden by necessite?'

'Nay,' quod I.

'Thanne ayeinward,' quod sche, 'I suppose that ther be prescience, but that it ne putteth no necessite to thingis;

1751. *I-spendid*, etc., 'expendero' (I shall have considered), 'respondu.'

1755. *For ne drawestow nat*, etc., 'Num enim tu aliunde,' etc.

1757. *possessioun* (H Cx. *position*), 'positionis gratia' should be *position*; but Fr. 'possioun' (sic), L. 'position.'

thanne trowe I that thilke selve fredom of wil schal duellen al hool and absolut and unbounden. But thou wolt seyn that, al be it so that prescience nis nat cause of the necessite of tydyng to thingis to comen, algatis yit it is a sign that the thingis ben to bytyden by necessite. [1760] By this manere thanne, although the prescience ne hadde nevere I-ben, yit algate or at the leste wey it is certain thing that the endes and bytydinges of thingis to comen scholden ben necessarie. For every signe scheweth and signifieth oonly what the thing is, but it ne makith nat the thing that it signifieth. For whiche it byhoveth first to schewen that no thing ne bytideth that it ne betideth by necessite, so that it mai apiere that the prescience is signe of this necessite; or elles, yif ther nere no necessite, certes thilke prescience ne myghte nat ben signe of thinge that nis nat. But certes, it is now certain that the proeve of this, y-susteyned by stedfast resoun, ne schal nat ben lad ne proved by signes, ne by argumentes I-taken fro withoute, but by causes covenable and necessarie. [1765] But thou mayst seyn, "How may it be that the thingis ne bytyden nat that ben I-purveied to comen?" But certes ryght as we trowen that tho thingis whiche that purveaunce woot byforn to comen, ne ben nat to bytiden. But that ne scholde we nat demen; but rathir, although the thei schal betyden, yit ne have thei no necessite of hir kynde to betyden. And this maystow lyghtly aperceyven by this that I schal seyn. For we seen many thingis whan thei ben don byforn oure eyen, ryght as men seen the cartere worken in the tornyng and in atempyng or adressyng of hise cartes or chariottes. [1770] And by this manere (as who seith, maistow undirstonden) of alle othere werkmen. Is ther thanne any necessite (as who seith, in our look-

1765. *argumentis I-taken*, etc., 'petitis extrinsecus argumentis.'

1766. *But certes*, etc., the answer to the preceding question.

1770. *cartere*, *cartes*, charioteer, chariots.

yng) that constreynith or compelleth any of thilke thingis to ben don so?’

‘Nay,’ quod I, ‘for in idel and in veyn were al the effect of craft, yif that alle thingis weren moeved by constreynynge (that is to seyn, by constreynynge of our eyen or of our sighte).’

‘The thingis thanne,’ quod sche, ‘that, whan men doon hem, ne han no necessite that men doon hem, eek the same thingis, first er thei ben don, thei ben to comen withoute necessite. For-why ther ben some thingis to betyden, of whiche the eendes and the bytydynges of hem ben absolut and quit of alle necessite. [1775] For certes I ne trow nat that any man wolde seyn thus: that tho thingis that men don now, that thei ne weren to bytiden first or thei weren I-doon; and thilke same thinges, al-thoughe that men hadden I-wyst hem byforn, yit thei han fre bytydynges. For right as science of thingis present ne bryngith in no necessite to thingis that men doon, right so the prescience of thinges to comen ne bryngith in no necessite to thinges to bytiden. But thou maist seyn that of thilke same it is I-douted, as whethir that of thilke thingis that ne han noon issues and bytydynges necessarys, yif therof mai ben any prescience; for certes thei semen to discorden. For thou wenest, yif that thingis ben I-seyn byfore, that necessite folwith hem; [1780] and yif necessite faileth hem, thei ne myghten nat ben wist byforn, and that nothing may be comprehended by science but certein; and yif tho thinges that ne han no certein bytydingis ben I-purveied as certein, it scholde ben dirknese of opinioun, nat sothfastnesse of science. And thou wenest that it be dyvers fro the holnesse of science that any man schol deme a thing to ben otherwyse than it is it-self. And the cause of this errour is that of alle the thingis that every wyght hath I-knowe, thei wenen that tho thingis ben I-knowe al only by the strengthe and by the nature of the thinges that ben I-wyst or

1781. *but certein*, but certainty; cp. 1711, 1717.

I-knowe. And it is al the contrarye; for al that evere is I-knowe, it is rather comprehendid and knowen, nat afir his strengthe and his nature, but afir the faculte (that is to seyn, the power and the nature) of hem that knowen. [1785] And, for that this schal mowen schewen by a schort ensauple, the same rowndnesse of a body, otherweys the sighte of the eithe knoweth it, and otherweys the touchynge. The lookynge, by castynge of his bemys, waiteth and seeth fro afer al the body togidre, withoute moevynge of it-self; but the touchynge clyveth and conioyneth to the rounde body, and moeveth aboute the envyrounyng, and comprehendeth by parties the roundnesse. And the man hym-self, ootherweys wit byholdeth hym, and ootherweys ymaginacioun, and otherweyes resoun, and ootherweies intelligence. For the wit comprehendith withoute-forth the figure of the body of the man that is establisschid in the matere subgett; [1790] but the ymaginacioun comprehendith oonly the figure withoute the matere; resoun surmountith ymaginacioun and comprehendith by an universel lokinge the comune spece that is in the singuler peces; but the eithe of the intelligence is heyre, for it surmountith the envyrounyng of the universite, and loketh over that bi pure subtilte of thought thilke same symple forme of man that is perdurably in the devyne thought. In whiche this oughte gretly to ben considered, that the heyeste strengthe to comprehenden thinges embraseth and contienith the lowerestrength; but the lowerestrength ne ariseth nat in no manere to the heyere strength. For wit ne mai no thing comprehende out of matere ne the ymaginacioun loketh nat the universel spesces, ne resoun ne

1786. *schal mowen schewen*, may be made clear.

1789. *wit*, ‘sensus.’

1790. *ymaginacioun*, ‘imaginatio.’

1791. *resoun*, ‘ratio.’

1791. *spece*, ‘speciem.’

1792. *singuler peces*, ‘singularibus.’

1792. *eithe of the intelligence*, ‘intelligentiæ oculus.’

taketh nat the symple forme so as intelligence takith it; but intelligence, that lookith al aboven, whanne it hath comprehendeth the forme, it knoweth and demyth alle the thinges that ben undir that foorme. [1795] But sche knoweth hem in thilke manere in the whiche it comprehendeth thilke same symple forme that ne may nevere ben knowen to noon of that othere (that is to seyn, to none of the thre forseide strengthis of the soule). For it knoweth the universite of resoun, and the figure of ymaginacioun, and the sensible material conceived by wit; ne it ne useth nat nor of resoun ne of ymaginacioun ne of wit withoute-forth; but it byholdeth alle thingis, so as I schal seie, by a strook of thought formely withoute discours or collacioun. Certes resoun, whan it lokith any thing universel, it ne useth nat of ymaginacioun, nor of wit; and algates yit it comprehendith the thingis ymaginable and sensible. For resoun is she that diffynyscheth the universel of here conceyte ryght thus:—Man is a resonable two-foted beest. [1800] And howso that this knowynge is universel, yit is ther no wyght that ne wot wel that a man is a thing ymaginable and sensible; and this same considereth wel resoun; but that nis nat by ymaginacioun nor by wit, but it lookith it by resonable concepcioun. Also ymaginacioun, albeit so that it takith of wit the bygynnynges to seen and to formen the figures, algates althoughe that wit ne were nat present, yit it envyrowneth and comprehendith alle thingis sensible; nat by resoun sensible of demynge, but by resoun ymaginatyf. Seestow nat thanne that alle the thingis in knowynge usen more of hir faculte or of hir power than thei don of the faculte or power of thingis that ben I-knowe? Ne that nis nat wrong; for so as every judgement is the dede or the doying of hym that demeth, it byhoveth that every

wyght performe the werk and his entencioun, nat of foreyne power, but of his propre power. [1805]

'*Quondam porticus attulit.*'—Metrum 4

The porche (that is to seyn a gate of the toun of Athenis there as philosophris hadden hir congregacioun to desputen)—thilke porche broughte somtyme olde men, ful dirke in hir sentences (that is to seyn philosophris that hyghten Stoycenis), that wenden that ymages and sensibilities (that is to seyn, sensible ymaginaciouns or ellis ymaginaciouns of sensible thingis) weren enprietid in-to soules fro bodyes withoute-forth; (as who seith that thilke Stoycenis wenden that sowle had ben nakid of it-self, as a mirour or a clene parchemyn, so that alle figures most first comen fro thingis fro withoute in-to soules, and ben emprietid in-to soules); ryght as we ben wont somtyme by a swift poyntel to fycchen lettres emprietid in the smothnesse or in the pleynesse of the table of wex or in parchemyn that ne hath no figure ne note in it. (Glose. But now argueth Boece ayens that opynioun and seith thus:) [1810] But yif the thryvyng soule ne unpliteth no thing (that is to seyn, ne doth no thing) by his propre moevynges, but suffrith and lith subgit to the figures and to the notes of bodies withoute-forth, and yeldith ymages ydel and vein in the manere of a mirour, whennes thryveth thanne or whennes comith thilke knowynge in our soule, that discernith and byholdith alle thinges? And whennes is thilke strengthe that byholdeth the singular thinges? Or whennes is the strengthe that devydeth thinges I-knowe; and thilke strengthe that gadreth togidre the thingis devyded; and the strengthe that chesith his entreachanged wey? For somtyme it heveth up the heued (that is

1798. *formely*, 'formaliter.'

1803. *nat by resoun*, etc., mistranslation of 'non sensibilis sed imaginaria ratione (method) judicandi.'

1805. *the werk and his entencioun*, 'suam operam.'

1813. *his entreachanged wey*, 'alternumque legens iter.'

to seyn that it hevyth up the entencion to ryght heye thinges), and som tyme it descendith in-to ryght lowe thinges; and whan it retorneth in-to hym-self it reproveth and destroyeth the false thingis by the trewe thinges. [1815] Certes this strengthe is cause more efficient, and mochel more myghty to seen and to knowe thinges, than thilke cause that suffrieth and receyveth the notes and the figures impressid in manere of matere. Algatis the passion (that is to seyn the suffraunce or the wit) in the quyke body goth byforn, excitynge and moevynge the strengthes of the thought. Ryght so as whan that cleernesse smyteth the eyen and moeveth hem to seen, or ryght so as voys or soun hurteleth to the eres and commoeveth hem to herkne; than is the strengthe of the thought I-moevid and excited, and clepith forth to semblable moevyngis the speces that it halt withynne it-self, and addith tho speces to the notes and to the thinges withoute-forth, and medleth the ymagis of thinges withoute-forth to the foormes I-hidd withynne hym-self. [1820]

'*Quod si in corporibus sentiendis.*'—

Prosa 5

But what yif that in bodyes to ben feled (that is to seyn, in takynge of knowlechyng of bodily thinges), and albeit so that qualites of bodies that ben obiect fro withoute-forth moeven and entalente the instrumentes of the wittes, and albeit so that the passioun of the body (that is to seyn, the wit or the suffraunce) goth to-forn the strengthe of the wirkyng corage, the whiche passioun or suffraunce clepith forth the dede of the thought in hym-self and moeveth and exciteth in this mene-while the formes

1816. *in manere of matere.* Construe with *receyveth.*

1818. *hurteleth, C<sub>1</sub> A<sub>2</sub> hurteth, H Cx. hurleth.*

1821. *But what yif that, 'Quod si.'*

1821. *and albeit so that, 'quamvis'; and is a strengthening particle, i.e. even though; likewise in and if, 1825.*

that resten within-forth—and yif that in sensible bodies, as I have seid, our corage nis nat y-taught or emprinted by passioun to knowe these thinges, but demeth and knoweth of his owne strengthe the passioun or suffraunce subiect to the body, [1825] moche more than the thingis that ben absolut and quit fro alle talentes or affeccions of bodyes (as god or his aungelis) ne folwen nat in discernyng thinges obiect fro withoute-forth, but thei acomplissen and speden the dede of hir thought. By this resoun thanne ther comen many maner knowynges to dyverse and differynge substaunces. For the wit of the body, the whiche wit is naked and despoiled of alle oothre knowynges,—thilke wit cometh to beestis that ne mowen nat moeven hem-self her and ther, as oistres and muscles and oothir swich schelle fyssche of the sec, that clyven and ben norisschid to roches. But the ymaginacioun cometh to remuable bestis, that semen to han talent to fleen or to desiren any thing. But resoun is al oonly to the lynage of mankynde, ryght as intelligence is oonly the devyne nature. [1830] Of whiche it folweth that thilke knowynge is more worth than these oothre, syn it knoweth by his propre nature nat oonly his subget (as who seith, it ne knoweth nat al oonly that apertenith properly to his knowynge) but it knoweth the subiect of alle oothre knowynges. But how schal it thanne be, yif that wit and ymaginacioun stryven ayein resonyng, and seyn that, of thilke universel thinges that resoun wenith to seen, that it nis ryght naught? For wit and ymaginacioun seyn that that that is sensible or ymaginable, it ne mai nat ben universel. Thanne is either the jugement of resoun soth ne that ther nis no thing sensible; or elles, for that resoun woot wel that many thinges ben subiect to wit and to ymaginacioun, thanne is the

1825. *y-taught or emprinted, 'insignitur'; the rest of the phrase is from the Fr., hence the confusion.*

1826. *thinges* is object of *folwen.*

1833. *that that is, that what is.*

concepcioun of resoun veyn and fals, whiche that lokith and comprehendith that that is sensible and singuler as universel. [1835] And yif that resoun wolde answere ayein to thise two (that is to seyn, to wit and to ymaginacioun), and seyn, that sothly sche hir-selve (that is to seyn, resoun) lokith and comprehendith, by resoun of universalite, bothe that that is sensible and that that is ymaginable; and that thilke two (that is to seyn, wit and ymaginacioun) ne mowen nat stretchen ne enhaunsen hem-self to knowynge of universalite, for that the knowynge of hem ne mai exceden ne surmounten the bodily figures: certes of the knowynge of thinges, men oughten rather yeven credence to the more stidfast and to the more parfit judgement. In this manere stryvyng thanne we that han strengthe of resonynge and of ymagynynge and of wit (that is to seyn, by resoun and by ymagynacioun and by wit)—we scholde rathir praise the cause of resoun (as who seith, than the cause of wit and of ymaginacioun). [1840]

Semblable thing is it, that the resoun of mankynde ne weneth nat that the devyne intelligence byholdeth or knoweth thingis to comen, but ryght as the resoun of mankynde knoweth hem. For thou arguist and seist thus: that if it ne seme nat to men that some thingis han certeyn and necessarie betydynges, thei ne mowen nat ben wist byforn certainly to betyden, and thanne nis ther no prescience of thilke thinges; and yif we trowe that prescience be in thise thingis, thanne is ther nothing that it ne bytydeth by necessite. But certes yif we myghten han the judgement of the devyne thoght, as we ben parsoners of resoun, ryght so as we han demyd that it byhovith that ymaginacioun and wit ben bynethe resoun, ryght so wolde we demen that it were ryghtfull thing, that mannys resoun oughte to summytten it-self and to ben bynethe the levyne thoght. [1845] For whiche yif

that we mowen (as who seith that, if that we mowen, I conseile that) we enhaunse us in-to the heighte of thilke sovereign intelligence; for ther schal resoun wel seen that that it ne mai nat byholden in it-self. And certes that is this, in what manere the prescience of god seeth alle thinges certains and diffinyssched, although thei ne han no certein issues or bytydyngis; ne this nis noon opinioun, but it is rather the simplicite of the sovereign science, that nis nat enclosed nor I-schet withinne none boundes.

'*Quam variis figuris.*'—Metrum 5

The beestes passen by the erthes be ful diverse figures. For some of hem han hir bodyes straught, and crepyn in the dust, and drawn afir hem a traas or a furwe I-contynued (that is to sein, as naddres or snakes); [1850] and oothre beestis, by the wandryng lyghtnesse of hir wynges beten the wyndes, and overswymmen the spaces of the longe eir by moyst fleyng; and oothre bestes gladen hem self to diggen hir traas or hir steppys in the erthe with hir goinges or with hir feet, and to gon either by the grene feeldes, or elles to walken undir the wodes. And al be it so that thou seest that thei alle discorden by diverse foormes, algatis hir faces enclyned heveth hir dulle wittes. Only the lynage of man heveth heyst his heie heved, and stonidith light with his upryght body, and byholdeth the erthes undir hym. And, but yif thou, erthly man, waxest yvel out of thi wit, this figure amonesteth the, that axest the hevene with thi ryghte visage, and hast areised thi forheved to beren up an hye thi corage, [1855] so that thi thought ne be nat I-hevyed ne put lowe undir fote, syn that thi body is so heyghe areysed.

1849. This metre is very badly translated.

1850. *passen by*, 'passent . . . par,' 'permeant.'

1851. *by the wandryng*, etc., 'alarum levitas vaga.'

1852. *moyst fleyng*, 'liquido volatu.'

1853. *to walken undir*, etc., 'subire siluas.'

1836. The apodosis begins with *certes*, 1838.

1844. *parsoners of*, sharers in.

'*Quoniam igitur uti paulo ante.*'—Prosa 6

Therefore thanne, as I have schewed a litel herc byforne that alle thing that is I-wist nis nat knowen by his nature propre, but by the nature of hem that comprehenden it, lat us loke now, in as mochil as it is leveful to us (as who seith, lat us loke now as we mowen) whiche that the estat is of the devyne substance; so that we mowe cek knowen what his science is. The comunc jugement of alle creatures resonables thanne is this: that god is eterne. Lat us considere thanne what is eternite; for certes schal schewen us togidre the devyne nature and the devyne science. [1860] Eternite thanne is parfit possessioun and altogidre of lif interminable. And that schewethe more cleerly by the comparysoun or collacioun of temporel thinges. For alle thing that lyveth in tyme, it is present, and procedith fro preterites into futures (that is to seyn, fro tyme passed into tyme comynge), ne ther nis nothing established in tyme that mai enbrase togidre al the space of his lif. For certis yit ne hath it nat taken the tyme of tomorwe, and it hath lost that of ysterday. And certes in the lif of this dai ye ne lyve no more but right as in this moevable and transitorie moment. [1865] Thanne thilke thing that suffreth temporel condicioun, although that it nevere bygan to be, ne thoughe it nevere ne cese for to be, as Aristotile demed of the world, and althoghe that the lif of it be stretchid with infinite of tyme; yit algatis nis it nat swich thing that men mighten trowen by ryghte that it is eterne. For although that it comprehende and embrace the space of lif infinit, yit algatis ne enbraseth it nat the space of the lif altogidre; for it ne hath nat the futuris that ne ben nat yit, ne it ne hath no lengere the preterites that ben I-doon or I-passed. But thilke thing thanne that hath and comprehendith togidre al the

plente of the lif interminable, to whom ther ne faileth naught of the future, and to whom ther nis nocht of the preteryt escaped nor I-passed, thilke same is I-witnessed and I-provid by right to ben eterne; [1870] and yit it byhovith by necessite that thilke thing be alwey present to hym-self, and compotent (as who seith, alwey present to hým-selve, and so myghty that al be right at his plesauce), and that he have al present the infinite of the moevable tyme. Wherefore som men trowen wrongfully that, when thei heren that it semede to Plato that this world ne hadde nevere bygynnyng of tyme, ne that it nevere schal han failynge, thei wenen in this manere that this world be makid coeterne with his makere. (As who seith, thei wene that this world and god ben makid togidre eterne, and that is a wrongful wenyng.) For other thing is it to ben I-lad by lif interminable, as Plato grauntide to the world, and oothir is it to enbrace togidre al the presence of the lif intermyneable, the whiche thing it is cleer and manyfest that it is propre to the devyne thought. [1875] Ne it ne scholde nat semen to us that god is elders than thinges that ben I-maked by quantite of tyme, but rather by the proprete of his simple nature. For this ilke infinit moevyng of temporel thinges folweth this presentarie estat of the lif unmoevable; and, so as it ne mai nat contrefetin it, ne feynen it, ne be evene lik to it, for the immoevablete (that is to sein, that is in the eternite of god), it faileth and fallith into moevyng fro the simplicitie of the presence of god, and discreisith into the infinit quantite of future and of preterit. And so as it ne mai nat han togidre al the plente of the lif, algates yit for as moche as it ne ceseth nevere for to ben in som manere, it semyth somdel to us that it folwith and resembleth thilke thing that it ne mai nat atayne to, ne

1860. *nature* and *science* are the subjects of *schewen*.

1877. *folweth*, 'imitatur.'  
1878. *discreisith* (C<sub>2</sub> A<sub>1</sub> H Cx. A<sub>2</sub> B *discre-*  
*seth*), 'descaist.'

fulfillen; and byndeth it-self to som maner presence of this litle and swift moment, the whiche presence of this litle and swift moment, [1880] for that it bereth a maner ymage or liknesse of the ai duellynge presence of god, it grauntith to swich manere things as it betydith to, that it semeth hem that these things han I-ben and ben. And for that the presence of swiche litel moment ne mai nat duelle, therefore it ravysschide and took the infynit wey to tyme (that is to seyn, by successioun). And by this manere is it I-doon, for that it sholde contynue the lif in goinge, of the whiche lif it myght nat embrace the plente in duellinge. And for-thi yif we wollen putten worthi names to things and folwen Plato, lat us seyen thanne sothly that god is "eterne," and that the world is "perpetuel." Thanne, syn that every judgement knoweth and comprehendith by his owne nature things that ben subject unto hym, ther is sothly to god always an eterne and presentarie estat; [1885] and the science of hym that overpasseth alle temporel moevement duclleth in the simplicitie of his presence, and embraceth and considereth alle the infynit spaces of tymes preterites and futures, and lokith in his simple knowynge alle thingis of preterit ryght as thei weren I-doon presently ryght now. Yif thou wolt thanne thinken and avise the prescience by whiche it knoweth alle things, thou ne schalt naught demen it as prescience of things to comen, but thou schalt demen more ryghtfully that it is science of presence or of instaunce that nevere ne faileth. For whiche it nis nat y-cleped "previdence," but it sholde rathir ben clepid "purveaunce," that is established ful fer fro ryght lowe things, and byholdeth fro afer alle things, right as it were fro the heye heichte of things. [1890]

Why axestow thanne, or whi destolestow thanne, that thilke thingis ben doon by necessite whiche that ben y-seyn and knownen by the devyne sighte, syn

1838. *avise*, consider.

that forsothe men ne maken nat thilke thingis necessarie whiche that thei seen ben I-doon in hir sighte? For addith thi byholdynge any necessite to thilke thinges that thou byholdest present?

'Nay,' quod I.

*Philosophie.* 'Certes thanne, yif men myghte maken any digne comparysoun or collacioun of the presence devyne and of the presence of mankynde, ryght so as ye seen some thingis in this temporel present, ryght so seeth god alle thinges by his eterne present. [1895]

Wherefore this devyne presence ne chaungeth nat the nature ne the proprete of thinges, but byholdeth swiche thingis present to hymward as thei shollen betyde to yoward in tyme to comen. Ne it ne confowndeth nat the jugementes of thingis; but by o sight of his thought he knoweth the thinges to comen, as wol necessarie as nat necessarie. Ryght so as whan ye seen togidre a man walke on the erthe and the sonne arisen in the hevене, albeit so that ye seen and byholden the ton and the tothir togidre, yit natheles ye demen and discernen that the toon is voluntarie and the tother is necessarie. Ryght so thanne the devyne lookynge, byholdynge alle thinges undir hym, ne trowbleth nat the qualite of thinges that ben certainly present to hymward; but, as to the condicioun of tyme, forsothe thei ben futur. [1900] For which it folweth that this nis noon opynioun, but rathir a stidfast knowynge I-strengthid by soothnesse that, whan that god knoweth any thing to be, he ne unwot not that thilke thing wanteth necessite to be. (This is to sein that whan that god knoweth any thing to betide, he wot wel that it ne hath no necessite to betyde.) And yif thou seist here that thilke thing that god seeth to

1895. *presence* both times seems to be a mistake for *presente*; Lat. 'presentis,' Fr. 'present.'

1896. *presence* should be *prescience*, 'prænotio,' 'prescience.' In 1931 H reads *prescience* for *presence*, and similarly H Cx. in 1932 have *prescience* for *presence*.

1900. *trowbleth*, 'perturbat'; Fr. 'trouble,' L. 'destourbe.'

1902. *ne unwot not*, 'non nesciat.'

betide, it ne may nat unbytide (as who seith, it moot bytide), and thilke thing that ne mai nat unbytide, it mot bytiden by necessite, and that thou streyne me to this name of necessite, certes I wol we confessen and byknowen a thing of ful sad trouthe. But unnethe schal ther any wight mowe seen it or come therto, but yif that he be byholdere of the devyne thought. [1905] For I wol answeren the thus: that thilke thing that is futur, whan it is referred to the devyne knowynge than is it necesserie; but certis whan it is undirstonden in his owene kynde, men seen it outrely fre and absolut fro alle necessite.

For certes ther ben two maneris of necessites: that oon necessite is symple, as thus; that it byhovith by necessite that alle men ben mortal or dedly; anothir necessite is condicionel, as thus: yif thou wost that a man walketh, it byhovith by necessite that he walke. Thilke thing thanne that any wight hath I-knowe to be, it ne mai ben noon oothir weys thanne he knowith it to be. [1910] But this condicion draweth nat with hir thilke necessite simple; for certes this necessite condicionel—the propre nature of it ne makith it nat, but the adieccioun of the condicioun makith it. For no necessite ne constreyneth a man to gon that goth by his propre wil, al be it so that whan he goth that it is necessarie that he goth. Ryght on this same manere thanne, yif that the purveaunce of god seeth any thyng present, than moot thilke thing ben by necessite, althoghe that it ne have no necessite of his owne nature. But certes the futures that bytiden by fredom of arbitrie, god seth hem alle togidre presentes. These things thanne, yf thei ben referrid to the devyne sighte, than ben they makid necessarye by the condicioun of the devyne knowynge. [1915] But certes yif thilke thingis ben considered by hem-self, thei ben absolut of necessite,

1914. *presentes* (C<sub>2</sub> A<sub>9</sub> H B *present*); Lat. 'presentes,' Fr. 'presens.' Chaucer probably carried over the French adjective.

and ne forleten nat ne cesen nat of the liberte of hir owne nature. Thanne certes withoute doute alle the things shollen ben doon whiche that god woot byforn that thei ben to comen. But some of hem comen and bytiden of fre arbitrie or fre wil, that, al be it so that thei bytiden, yit algates ne lese thei nat hir propre nature in beinge; by the whiche first, or that thei weren I-don, thei hadden power noght to han bytyd.'

'What is this to seyn thanne,' quod I, 'that thinges ne ben nat necesserie by hir propre nature, so as thei comen in alle maneris in the liknesse of necessite by the condicioun of the devyne science?'

'This is the difference,' quod sche, 'that tho thinges that I purposide the a litel her byforn (that is to seyn, the sonne arysynge and the man walkynge), that ther whiles that thilke thinges ben I-doon, they ne myghte nat ben undoon; [1920] natheles that oon of hem, or it was I-doon, it byhovide by necessite that it was I-doon, but nat that oothir. Ryght so is it here, that the thinges that god hath present withoute doute thei shollen ben. But some of hem descendith of the nature of thinges (as the sonne arysynge); and some descendith of the power of the doeris (as the man walkynge). Thanne seide I no wrong that, yif that these thinges ben referred to the devyne knowynge, thanne ben thei necessarie; and yif thei ben considered by hem-self, than ben thei absolut fro the boond of necessite. Right so as alle thingis that apiereth or scheweth to the wittes, yif thou referre it to resoun, it is universel; and yif thou loke it or referre it to itself, than is it singular. But now yif thou seist thus: that, "If it be in my power to change my purpos, than schal I voiden the purveaunce of god, whan peraventure I schal han chaungid the thingis that he knoweth byforn," [1925] thanne schal I answeren the thus: "Certes thou maist wel chaungen

1919. C<sub>1</sub> B H Cx. omit *the* before *condicioun*.  
1924. *alle thingis*, 'tout'; perhaps therefore the 'it's (le') that follow.



thi purpos; but for as mochel as the present sothnesse of the devyne purveance byholdeth that thou maist chaunge thi purpos, and whethir thou wolt chaunge it or no, and whiderward that thou torne it, thou ne maist nat eschuen the devyne prescience, ryght as thou ne maist nat fleen the sighte of the present eye, althoghe that thou torne thiself by thi fre wil into diverse accions." But thou maist sein ayein: "How schal it thanne be—schal nat the devyne science ben changed by my disposicioun whan that I wol o thing now and now anothir; and thilke prescience—ne semeth it nat to entrechaunge stoundis of knowynge?" (As who seith, ne schal it nat seme to us that the devyne prescience entrechaungith hise diverse stoundes of knowynge, so that it knowe som-tyme o thyng, and somtyme the contrarie?) [1930]

'No,' quod I.

'No forsothe,' quod sche, 'for the devyne sighte renneth to-for, and seeth alle futures, and clepith hem ayen, and retorneth hem to the presence of his propre knowynge; ne he ne entrechaungith nat, so as thou wenest, the stoundes of foreknowynge, as now this, now that; but he ay duellynge cometh byfor, and enbraseth at o strook alle thi mutaciouns. And this presence to comprehend and to seen alle thingis—god ne hath nat taken it of the bytidynge of thinges to come, but of his propre symplicite. And herby is assoiled thilke thing that thou putttest a litel here byfor, that is to seyn,

1930. *stoundes*, 'vices.'

1933. *presence to comprehend*, etc., 'presence de . . . comprendre,' i.e. power to comprehend things in present time.

that it is unworthy thing to seyn that our futures yeven cause of the science of god. For certis this' strengthe of the devyne science, whiche that embraseth alle thinges by his presentarie knowynge, establissheth manere to alle thinges, and it ne oweth nawht to lattere thinges. [1935] And syn that these thinges ben thus (that is to seyn, syn that necessite nis nat in thinges by the devyne prescience), thanne is ther fredom of arbitre, that duelleth hool and unwemmed to mortal men; ne the lawes ne purposen nat wikkidly medes and peynes to the wyllynges of men, that ben unbownden and quyt of all necessite; and god, byholdere and forwytere of alle thingis, duelleth above, and the present. eternite of his sighte renneth alwey with the diverse qualite of our dedes, dispensynge and ordeynynge medes to gode men and tormentes to wikkide men. Ne in ydel ne in veyn ne ben ther put in god hope and preyeris, that ne mowen nat ben unspedful ne withouten effect whan they been ryghtful.

'Withstond thanne and eschue thou vices; worschepe and love thou vertues; areise thi corage to ryghtful hopes; yilde thou humble preieres an heyghe. [1940] Gret necessite of prowesse and vertu is encharged and comaunded to yow, yif ye nil nat dissimulen; syn that ye worken and don (that is to seyn, your dedes or your werkes) byfor the eyen of the juge that seeth and demeth alle thinges.'

EXPLICIT LIBER BOECII.

1935. *manere*, 'modum,' 'propre maniere'; rather bound.

1935. *lattere thinges*, 'posterioribus.'

## TROILOUS AND CRISEYDE

## BOOK I

THE doublé sorwe of Troilus to tellen,  
That was the king Priámus' sone of  
Troye,

In loving how his áventurés fellen  
Fro wo to wele, and after out of joye,  
My purpos is, or that I parté fro ye.—  
Thesiphoné, thou help me for t' endite  
Thise woful vers, that wepen as I write !

To thee clepe I, thou Goddesse of  
tornémnt, 8  
Thou cruel Furie, sorwing evere in peyne !  
Híelp me that am the sorwful instrument  
That helpeth lovers, as I can, to pleyne !  
For wel sit it, the sothé for to seyne,  
A woful wight to han a drery fere,  
And to a sorwful tale, a sory chere !

For I, that God of Lovés servants serve,  
Ne dar to Love for myn unlikliness  
Preyn for sped, al sholde I therfor sterve,  
So fer am I from his help in derknésse :  
But nathéles, if this may don gladnésse  
Unt' any lover and his cause availe, 20  
Have he my thank, and myn be this  
travaile !

But ye lovéres, that bathen in gladnésse,  
If any drope of pité in you be,  
Remembreth you on passéd heviness  
That ye han felt, and on th' adversité  
Of other folk ; and thenketh how that ye  
Han felt that Lové dorsté you displese,  
Or ye han wonne him with too gret an  
ese.

And preyéth for hem that ben in the cas  
Of Troilus, as ye may after here, 30  
That Love hem bringe in hevené to solás ;

For relations of MSS. and letters by which  
they are quoted, see Introduction.

6. *Thesiphoné*, Tisiphoné.

21. *he*, i. e. Love.

And ek for me preyéth to God so dere  
That I have might to shewe in som manére  
Swich peyne and wo as Lovés folk endure,  
In Troilus' unsely áventure.

And biddeth ek for hem that ben de-  
speyred  
In love, that neveré n'il recoveréd be,  
And ek for hem that falsly ben apeyred  
Thorough wikked tongés, be it he or she ;  
Thus biddeth God for his benignété 40  
So graunte hem soone out of this world  
to pace,  
That ben despeyred out of Lovés grace.

And biddeth ek for hem that ben at ese  
That God hem graunte ay good per-  
sévéraunce,  
And sende hem might hir ladies so to plesé  
That it to Love be worship and plesaunce.  
For so hope I my soulé best t'avaunce,  
To preye for hem that Lovés servants be,  
And write hir wo, and live in charité,

And for to have of hem compassioun 50  
As though I were hir owné brother dere.—  
Now herkneth with a good entencioun,  
For now wol I gon streight to my matére,  
In which ye may the doublé sorwes here  
Of Troilus in loving of Criseyde,  
And how that she forsook him or she  
deyde.

—It is wel wist how that the Grekés  
stronge

In armés with a thousand shippés wente  
To Troyewardés, and the cité longe

44. *a* In love, that God hem graunte per-  
severaunce.

45. *ladies*, *a* and others *loves*.

47. *t'avaunce*, J Cp. Cl. *avaunce*.

52. *herkneth*. Shows that *Troilus* was written  
for recitation. See l. 450 ; ii. 30, 1751 ; iii. 499,  
1332. But see later, v. 270.

Assegèden wel ten yer or they stente, 60  
And in diversè wise and oon entente  
The ravissing to wreken of Eleyne  
By Paris don, they wroughten al hir peyne.

Now fil it so, that in the town ther was  
Dwelling a lord of gret auctorité,  
A gret devyn that clepèd was Calcas,  
That in sciénce so expert was, that he  
Knew wel that Troyè sholde destroyed be  
By answer of his God, that hightè thus,  
Daun Phebus, or Appollo Delphicus. 70

So when that Calcas knew by calculinge,  
And ek by answer of this Appollo,  
That Grekès sholden swich a peplè bringe  
Thorough which that Troyè mostè be for-do,  
He caste anon out of the town to go ;  
For wel wiste he by sort that Troyè sholde  
Destroyed ben, ye, woldè who-so n'olde.

For-which for to departen softely  
Took purpos ful this fór-knowingè wise,  
And to the Grekès oost ful privily 80  
He stal anon ; and they in curteys wise  
Him deden bothè worship and servise,  
In trust that he hath konning hem to rede  
In every peril which that is to drede.

The noise up ros, whan it was first aspyed  
Thorough al the town, and generaly was  
spoken,  
That Calcas traytour fled was and allyed  
With hem of Grece ; and casten to ben  
wroken

On him that falsly hadde his feyth so  
broken,

And seyden he and al his kyn at onès 90  
Ben worthy for to brennen fel and bonès.

Now haddè Calcas left in this mischaunce,  
Al unwist of this false and wikked dede,  
His daughter, which that was in gret  
penaunce ;

60. *wel*, H<sub>4</sub> γ *nigh*.

71. *that*, *ay this*.

83. *a Hopyng in hym (good?) kunnyng hem to rede*. Boc. Da lui sperando sommo e buon consiglio.

85. *The noise up ros, a Gret rumour gan (was)*. Boc. Fu rumor grande.

87. γ insert *fals* after *traytour*.

93. *Al unwist, a Unknowing*.

For of her lif she was ful sore in drede  
As she that n'isté what was best to rede ;  
For bothe a widwè was she, and alone  
Of any friend, to whom she dorste her  
mone.

Criseydè was this lady name al right :  
As to my dom in al Troyès cité 100  
N'as non so fair ; for, passing every  
wight,

So angelik was hir natif beauté,  
That lik a thing immortal semèd she,  
As is an hevenishsh parfrit créature  
That down were sent in scorning of nature.

This lady, which that herde al-day at ere  
Her fadres shame, his falsnesse and tresouin,  
Wel nigh out of her wit for sorwe and fere,  
In widwes habit large of samyt broun,  
On knees she fil biforn Ectór a-doun 110  
With pitous vois, and tendrely wepinge  
His mercy bad, her-selven éxcusinge.

Now was this Ector pitous of nature,  
And saw that she was sorwfully bigon,  
And that she was so fair a créature ;  
Of his goodnesse he gladèd her anon,  
And seyde, ' Lat your fadres treson gon  
Forth with mischaunce ! And ye yourself  
in joye  
Dwellet with us whil you good list in  
Troye !

' And al th' honóur that men may don you  
have, 120  
As ferforth as your fader dwellèd here,  
Ye shul han, and your body shal men save  
As fer as I may aught enquire and here.'  
And she him thankèd with ful humble  
chere,

101. *passing, a over* (H<sub>4</sub> omits).

104. *is, ay doth*.

106. *herde al-day, γ and others al-day herde*.

109. *large, J G H<sub>5</sub> H<sub>3</sub> blak*.

111. *a With chere and voys ful pytous, and wepyng*. Boc. E lagrimosa . . . e con voce e con vista assai pietosa.

118. *Forth with mischaunce, a To sory hap*.

123. *and, γ and others or*.

124. *a thanked ofte in humble chere*. Boc.

Ella di questo li ringrazio assai  
E più volea.

And ofter wolde and it had ben his wille,  
And took her leve, and hom, and held  
her stille.

And in her hous sh' abood with swich  
meyné

As til her honour nedè was to holde,  
And whil she was dwellinge in that cité  
Kepte her estat, and bothe of yonge and  
olde

Ful wel beloved, and wel men of her  
tolde.

But whether that she children hadde or non,  
I rede it nat; therfor I lete it gon.

The thingés fellen as they don of werre  
Bytwixen hem of Troye and Grekés ofte;  
For som day boughten they of Troye it  
derre,

And eft the Grekés founden nothing softe  
The folk of Troye. And thus Fortune  
on-lofte,

And under eft, gan hem to wheelen bothe  
After her cours, ay whil they weren  
wrothe.

But how this town com to destruccioun  
Ne falleth naught to purpos me to telle,  
For it were here a long digressioun  
Fro my matére, and for you long to dwelle.  
But the Trojánés gestés, as they felle,  
In Omer, or in Dares, or in Dite,  
Who-so that can may rede hem as they  
write.

But though that Grekés hem of Troyé  
shetten,

And hir cité bysegèd al aboute,  
Hir olde usagé n'oldè they nat letten  
As for t' honoure hir Goddès ful devoute;

132. This may be due to Chaucer's mis-reading Boccaccio, who says 'she had no need to care for son or daughter.'

140. J and others *ay whil that they were wrothe*.  
143. *For it were here*, so  $\beta$ ; a *For-why it were*;  
 $\gamma$  *For it were*.

144. *for you long to dwelle*, so H<sub>2</sub> (see H.F. i. 252); rest var.

145. *Trojánés*, so P H<sub>2</sub> R; Cl. *Troiane*; rest *Troian*.

146. *Dares* and *Dite*, Dares and Dictys, supposed writers on the Trojan war.

151. a *goddess and to loute*.

But aldermost in honour, out of doute,  
They hadde a relik, heet Palladion,  
That was hir trust aboven everychon.

And so bifil whan comen was the time  
Of Apéril, when clothèd is the mede  
With newè grene, of lusty Ver the prime,  
And swotè smelling flourès white and rede,  
In sondry wises shewèd, as I rede,  
The folk of Troye hir observaunces olde,  
Palladionés festè for to holde.

And to the temple in al hir bestè wise  
In general ther wentè mony a wight  
To herknen of Palladion servise;  
And namèly so mony a lusty knight,  
So mony a lady fressh and mayden bright,  
Ful wel arayèd bothè meste and leste,  
Ye, bothè for the seson and the feste.

Among thise othrè folk was Criseydá  
In widwes habit blak; but nathèles,  
Right as our firstè lettre is now an A,  
In beauté first so stood she makèlés:  
Her goodly loking gladèd al the prees:  
N'as neverè seyn thing to ben prayssèd derre,  
Nor under cloudè blak so bright a sterre,

As was Criseyde, as folk seyde everychone  
That her behelden in her blakè wede.  
And yit she stood ful lowe and stille alone  
Behinden othrè folk in litel brede  
And nigh the dore, ay under shamès drede,  
Simple of atir and debonaire of chere,  
With ful assurèd loking and manére.

This Troilus, as he was wont to gide  
His yongè knightès, ladde hem up and doun  
In th'ilk largè temple on every side,  
Biholding ay the ladies of the toun,  
Now here, now there; for no devocioun

153. *Palladion*, the Palladium or sacred image of Pallas.

156. *Aperil*, a *Apparaille* (possibly intended as a pun. See iii. 353).

158. *smelling*, so a Cx. D; J and others *smellen*.  
Boc. *Riveste i prati d' erbette e di fiori*.

167. *Jo. the before meste and leste*; a *Ful we biseyn the meste, mene and leste*;  $\gamma$  *Ful we arayèd bothe moste, meyne and leste*.

174. *neverè seyn*, so a Cx. Ad. H<sub>3</sub>; J and others *neverè yet seyn*.

183. *This, a Daun*.

Hadde he to non, to revēn him his reste,  
But gan to preye and lakken whom him  
leste.

And in his walk ful faste he gan to wayten  
If knight or squier of his companye 191  
Gan for to sike or lete his yēn bayten  
On any woman that he coude espye :  
He woldē smile and holden it folye,  
And seye him thus, ' God wot, she slepeth  
softe  
For love of thee, whan thou tornest ful ofte !

' I have herd told, pardieux, of your livinge,  
Ye lovers, and your lewēd ōbservauncēs,  
And which a labour folk han in winninge  
Of love, and in the keping which dout-  
auncēs ; 200  
And whan your preye is lost, wo and pen-  
auncēs !

O verray foolēs, nyce and blynd ben ye !  
Ther n'is nat oon can war by other be !'

And with that word he gan caste up the  
browe  
Ascaunces, ' Lo ! is this nat wisly spoken ?'  
At which the God of Love gan loken rowe  
Right fordespit, and shop for to ben broken :  
He kidde anon his bowē n'as nat broken !  
For sodeinly he hitte him at the fulle ;  
And yit as proud a pecok can he pulle !

O blindē world ! O blinde entencioun ! 211  
How often falleth al th' effect contraire  
Of surquidrye and foul presumpcioun ;  
For caught is proud, and caught is de-  
bonaire !

This Troilus is clomben on the staire,  
And litel weneth that he mot descenden !  
But alday faileth thing that foolēs wenden !

As proudē Bayard ginneth for to skippe  
Out of the wey, so priketh him his corn,

195. *softe*, J Cx. G S *ful softe*.

198. *lewēd*, γ om.

202, 203. a reads :

O verrey folys ! may ye no thing see ?  
Kan non of yow y-war by other be ?

208, 209. a reads :

Yes, certein, Loves bowe was not y-broken !  
For, by myn heed, he . . .

215 *This, a Dawn*.

Til he a lasshe have of the longē whippe,  
Than thenketh he, ' Though I prounce al  
beforn 221

First in the trais, ful fat and newē shorn,  
Yit am I but an hors, and horses lawe  
I mot endure and with my ferēs drawe.'

So ferde it by this fierse and proudē knight :  
Though he a worthy kingēs sonē were,  
And wendē no thing haddē had swich might  
Ayein his wil, that sholde his hertē stere,  
Yit with a look his hertē wex a-ferē, 229  
That he that now was most in pride above  
Wex sodeinly most subget unto Love.

For-thy ensaumplē taketh of this man,  
Ye wisē, proude, and worthy folkēs alle,  
To scornen Love, which that so soonē can  
The freedom of your hertēs to him thralle !  
For evere it was, and evere it shal bifalle,  
That Love is he that allē thing may binde ;  
For may no man for-do the lawe of kinde.

That thiȝ be soth, hath provēd, and doth yit.  
For this, trowe I, ye knowen, alle or some :  
Men redennat that folk han gretter wit 241  
Than they that han ben most with love  
y-nome ;  
And strengest folk ben therwith overcome,  
The worthieste and grettest of degree :  
This was, and is, and yit men shal it see.

And trewēliche it sit wel to be so ;  
For alderwisest han therwith ben plesed,  
And they that have ben aldermost in wo,  
With love have ben confortēd most and  
esēd ;  
And ofte it hath the cruel herte apesēd, 250  
And worthy folk maad worthier of name,  
And causeth most to dredē vice and shame.

Now, sith it may nat goodly be withstonde,  
And is a thing so vertuou in kinde,  
Refuseth nat to Love for to be bonde,  
Sin, as him-selven list, he may you binde.  
The yerde is bet that bowen woland winde,

224. *with*, a *as*.

227. *swich*, R G H<sub>5</sub> S *swich a*.

229, 231. *wex*, so H<sub>4</sub> G D ; others *wax*.

237. *alle*, J and others *al*.

257. *a Betir is the wand*.

Than that that brest ; and therfor I you  
rede

To folwen Love, that you so wel can lede.

But for to tellen forth in special <sup>260</sup>  
As of this king's sone of which I tolde,  
And leten other thing collateral,  
Of him thinke I my talè forth to holde,  
Bothe of his joye and of his carès colde ;  
And al his werk as touching this matére,  
For I it gan, I wil ther-to refere.

Within the temple he wente him forth,  
pleyinge,

This Troilus, of every wight aboute ;  
On this lady, and now on that lokinge,  
Whe'r-so she were of towne or of withoute ;  
And upon cas bifil that thorough a route <sup>271</sup>  
His ye percéd, and so depe it wente,  
Til on Criseyde it smot, and ther it stente.

And sodeinly he wex ther-with astonéd,  
And gan her bet beholde in thrifty wise.  
'O mercy, God !' thoughte he, 'wher  
hastow wonéd,

That art so fair and goodly to devise ?'  
Ther-with his hertè gan to sprede and rise ;  
And softe he sikéd lest men mighte him  
here, <sup>279</sup>  
And caughte ayein his firstè pleying chere.

She n'as nat with the leste of her statúre ;  
But alle her limés so wel answeringe  
Werèn to wommanhode, that créatúre  
N'as neverè lassè mannissh in seminge ;  
And ek the purè wise of her movinge  
Shewédè wel that men mighte in her gesse  
Honour, estat, and wommanly noblesse.

To Troilus right wonder wel with-alle  
Gan for to like her moving and her chere,  
Which somdel deignous was ; for she let  
falle <sup>290</sup>

Her look a lite aside in swich manére

259. *β* Love ; *γ* him ; *α* Now folweth him.

261. G *γ* omit *As*.

263. *forth*, Cl. H<sub>1</sub> *for* ; S *forth for* ; G omits.

264. *joye*, J G Cl. *joyes*.

279. *he*, so *α* G ; *β* *γ* omit.

286. *α* *She shewed*.

288. *To*, so J H<sub>5</sub> *γ* ; rest *Tho*.

Aseaunces, 'What ! may I nat stonden  
here ?'

And after that her lokinge gan she lighte,  
That neverè thoughte him sen so good a  
sighte.

And of her look, in him ther gan to quiken  
So gret desir, and swich affeccion,  
That in his hertès botmè gan to stiken  
Of her his fixe and depe impressioun ;  
And, though he erst had pouréd up and  
doun, <sup>299</sup>

He was tho glad his hornès in to shrinke :  
Unnethès wiste he how to loke or winke !

Lo ! he, that leet him-selven so conníge,  
And scornéd hem that Lovès peynès dryèn,  
Was ful unwar that Love had his dwel-  
linge

Within the subtil stremès of her yèn,  
That sodeynly him thoughte he feltè dyen,  
Right with her look, the spirit of his herte.—  
Blesséd be Love, that can thus folk con-  
verte !

She, this in blak, liking to Troilus <sup>309</sup>  
Over allè thing, he stood for to beholde ;  
Ne his desir, ne wher-for he stood thus,  
He neither cherè madè, ne word tolde ;  
But, from a-fer his maner for to holde,  
On other thing som time his look he caste,  
And eft on her, whil that servisè laste.

And after this, nat fullich al a-whaped,  
Out of the temple al esiliche he wente,  
Repenting him that he had evere y-japed  
Of Lovès folk, lest fully the descente  
Of scorn fille on him-self ; but what he  
mente, <sup>320</sup>

Lest it were wist on any maner side,  
His wo he gan dissimulen and hide.

Whan he was fro the templè thus departed,  
He streight anon unto the paleys torneth,  
Right with her look thorough-shoten and  
thorough-darted,

Al feyneth he in lust that he sojorneth ;  
And al his chere and speche also he borneth,

307. *of*, *γ in*.

324. *α β the* (Boc.) ; Cx. *γ his*.

And ay of Lovés servants every while  
Himself to wrye, at hem he gan to smile,

And seyde, 'Lord! so ye live al in lest, 330  
Ye lovers! For the conningeste of yow  
That serveth most ententifliche and best,  
Him tit as often harm ther-of as prow:  
Your hire is quit ayein, ye, God wot now!  
Naught wel for wel, but scorn for good  
servise!

In feith your ordre is rulèd in good wise!

'In noun-certeyn ben alle your óbservaunces  
But it a fewé sely pointés be; 338  
Ne no thing asketh so grete áttendaunces  
As doth your lay, and that knowe allé ye.  
But that is nat the worsté, as mote I thé!  
But, tolde I you the worsté point, I leve,  
Al seyde I soth, ye wolden at me greve.

'But tak this: that ye lovers ofte eschue  
Or ellés don of good entencioun,  
Ful ofte thy lady wol it mis-construe,  
And deme it harm by her opinioun;  
And yit if she for other enchesoun  
Be wroth, than shaltow han a groin anon!  
Lord, wel is him that may ben of you oon!

But for al this, whan that he saw his time, 351  
He held his pees; non other boote him  
gainede;

For Love began his fetherés so to lime,  
That wel unnethe until his folk he fainede  
Thát othré bisy nedés him destrainede;  
For wo was him, that what to don he n'iste,  
But bad his folk to gon wher that hem liste.

And whan that he in chaumbré was allone,  
He down upon his beddés feet him sette;  
And first he gan to sike, and eft to grone, 360  
And thoughte ay so on her withouten lette,  
That, as he sat and wook, his spirit mette  
That he her saw in temple, and al the wise  
Right of her look; and gan it newe avise.

Thus gan he make a mirroure of his minde,  
In which he saw al hoolly her figuré,

338. *β fewe sely*; others *sely fewe*.

345. *Or elles don, a For good, or don.*

347. *by, so β*; others *in*.

363. *in, so α*; Cx. om. *in*; Rat; Cl. *α*; others *ind.*

And that he wel coude in his herté finde!  
It was to him a right good áventure  
To love swich oon; and if he dede his cure  
To serven her, yit mighte he falle in grace,  
Or ellés for oon of her servants pace. 371

Imaginingé that traváile nor grame  
Ne mighté for so goodly oon be lorn  
As she, ne him for his desir no shame,  
Al were it wist, but in pris and up-born  
Of allé lovers wel more than biforn,—  
Thus argumented he in his ginninge,  
Ful unaviséd of his wo comíng.

Thus took he purpos Lovés craft to suwe,  
And thoughte he woldé werken privély 380  
First for to hiden his desir in muwe  
From every wight y-born al outrély,  
But he mighte taught recoveréd ben ther-by;  
Remembring him, that love too wide y-  
blowe  
Yelt bittré fruit, though sweté seed be sowe.

And over al this, ful muchel more he  
thoughte,  
What for to speke, and what to holden  
inne;

And what to arten her to love he soughte,  
And on a song anon right to beginne, 389  
And gan loude on his sorwé for to winne;  
For with good hope he gan fullliche assente  
Criseydé for to love, and naught repente.

And of his song, not only the senténcé  
As writ myn auctour calléd Lollius,  
But pleynly, save our tongés difference,  
I dar wel seyn, in al that Troilus  
Seyde in his song, lo, every word right thus  
As I shal seyn! And, who-so list it here,  
Lo, next this vers he may it finden here.

381. *for to, so S H<sub>3</sub> Ad.*; others *to*.

386. *ful muchel, so H<sub>4</sub> R*; *γ yet muche(!)*;  
J and others *muchel*.

393. In Boccaccio Troilus merely gives way to singing in light-heartedness. Chaucer makes Troilus compose a song (ll. 400-420) which is a translation of Petrarch's 88th Sonnet.

393. *a And of this song, not only his sentence.*

394. *Lollius, i.e. Boccaccio* (see v. 1653). Why Chaucer always refers to Boccaccio as Lollius, is still a mystery.

399. *he, J ye.*

'If no love is, O God, what fele I so? 400  
And if love is, what thing and which  
is he ?

If love be good, from whennés com'th  
my wo ?

If it be wikke, a wonder thinketh me  
Whenne every torment and adversité  
That com'th of him may to me savory  
thinke ;

For aythurste I the more that ich it drinke.

'And if that at myn owné lust I brenne,  
From whennés com'th my wailing and my  
pleynthe ?

If harmagree me, wher-to pleynthe I thenne ?  
I n'ot, ne why unwery that I feynthe. 410  
O quiké deth ! O sweté harm so queynte !  
How may of thee in me swich quantité,  
But-if that I consenté that it be ?

'And if that I consente, I wrongfully  
Compleynthe, y-wis.—Thus posséd to and  
fro,

Al sterèles with-in a boot am I  
A-midde the see betwixen windés two  
That in contrárie stonden everé mo.  
Allas ! What is this wonder maladye ? 419  
For hete of cold, for cold of hete, I dye !'

And to the God of Love thus seyde he  
With pitous vois, 'O Lord, now yourés is  
My spirit which that oughté yourés be !  
You thanke I, Lord, that han me brought  
to this !

But whether goddesse or wommán, y-wis,  
She be, I n'ot, which that ye do me serve ;  
But as her man I wol ay live and sterve.

'Ye stonden in her yén mightily,  
As in a place unto your vertu digne,  
Wherforé, Lord, if my servise or I 430  
May liken you, so beth to me benigne ;  
For myn estat roiál here I resigne  
Into her hand, and with ful humblé chere  
Bicome her man, as to my lady dere.'

In him ne deynéd sparen blood roiál  
The fir of lové,—wher-fro God me blesse !

406. *ich it drinke*, so J Cx.  $\gamma$  ; a R G I *drinke*.

430. *Lord, S O lord* ; Cl. S<sub>2</sub> *my lord*.

436. *wher-fro*, J S Cl. *the wherfro* ; H<sub>5</sub> H<sub>1</sub> *ye wherfro*.

Ne him forbar in no degree for al  
His vertu or his excellent prowesse,  
But beth him as his thral lowe in destresse,  
And brende him so in sondry wise ay newe,  
That sixty time a day he lost his hewe. 441

So mochel day fro day his owné thought,  
For lust, to her gan quiken and encesse,  
That everich other charge he sette at  
nought ;

For-ty ful ofte, his hoté fir to cesse,  
To seen her goodly look he gan to presse ;  
For ther-by to ben eséd wel he wende.  
And ay the neer he was, the more he  
brende ;

For ay the neer, the fir the hotter is : 449  
This, trowe I, knoweth al this companyé.  
But were he fer or ner, I dar seye this,—  
By night or day for wisdom or folýe  
His herté, which that is his brestés yé,  
Was ay on her, that fairer was to sene  
Than everé was Eleyne or Polyxene.

Ek of the day ther passéd nought an houre  
That to him-self a thousand time he seyde,  
'Good goodly, whom to serven I laboure  
As I best can, now woldé God, Criseyde,  
Ye wolden on me rewe, or that I deyde ! 460  
My deré herte, allas, myn hele and hewe  
And lif is lost, but ye wol on me rewe !

Alle othré dredés weren from him fledde  
Both of th' assege and his savacioun,  
N' in his desir none othré sounés bredde  
But arguments to his conclusioun,  
That she on him wolde han compassioun,  
And he to ben her man, whil he may  
dure :

Lo, here his lif, and from the deth his  
cure !

442. *a  $\beta$  day fro day* (Boc. di giorno in giorno) ;  
 $\gamma$  *day by day*.

457. *That*. We should expect *But*.

458. *whom* (?), all *to whom* ; *to* (after *whom*),  
so D.

458. *laboure*, G A Cl. and *laboure*.

465. *his*, so a  $\beta$  H<sub>1</sub> ; G  $\gamma$  *him*.

465. *sounes*, so H<sub>4</sub> R and others ; J and others  
*fovenes*.

466. *his*, D H<sub>1</sub> Cl. *this*.

469. *his*, J and others *is*.



The sharpe shourés felle of armés preve 470  
That Ector or his othré brethren didnen,  
Ne made him only ther-for onés meve ;  
And yit washe, wher-somen wente or riden,  
Founde oon the beste and lengest time  
abiden

Ther peril was, and dide ek swich travaile  
In armés, that to thenke it was mervaile.

But for non hate he to the Grekés hadde,  
Ne also for the rescous of the toun,  
Ne made him thus in armés for to madde,  
But only, lo, for this conclusioun, 480  
To liken her the bet for his renoun :  
Fro day to day in armés so he spedde  
That alle the Grekés as the deth him dredde.

And fro this forth tho refte him Love his  
sleep,

And made his mete his foo ; and ek his sorwe  
Gan multiplyé, that, who-so took keep,  
It shewéd in his hewe on eve and morwe.  
Therefore a title he gan him for to borwe  
Of other siknesse, lest men of him wende  
That th' hoté fir of love so sore him  
brende ; 490

And seyde he hadde a fevere, and ferde amis.  
But how it was, certeyn, I can not seye,—  
If that his lady understood not this,  
Or feynéd her she n'iste,—oon of the  
tweye !

But wel rede I, that by no maner weye  
Ne seméd it as that she of him roughte,  
Or of his peyne, or what-so-evere he  
thoughte.

But thenné felté Troilus swich wo  
That he was wel nigh wood ; foray his drede  
Was this, that she som wight had lovéd so  
That nevere of him she wolde han taken  
hede. 501

471. *or*, R Cl. and (Boc.)

483. *a*  $\beta$  *alle the* (H<sub>4</sub> *alle*); G J  $\gamma$  *the*.

487. *a*  $\beta$  *on eve*;  $\gamma$  *bothe eve*.

490. S<sub>1</sub> D *so sore him brende*; Ad. *him for ende*; rest *him brende*.

496. *a*  $\beta$  *as that* (P H<sub>2</sub> *as*); G  $\gamma$  *that*.

498. *thenne* (?), all *tham(ne)*; Ad. *han*. Boc. *i quinci sentia Troilo tal dolore*. All except H<sub>2</sub> insert *this* before *Troilus*.

For that, him thoughte he felte his herté  
blede ;

Ne of his wo ne durste he not biginne  
To tellen her, for al this world to winne.

But, whan he hadde a spacé from his care,  
Thus to him-self ful ofte he gan to pleyne :  
He seyde, 'O fool, now artow in the snare,  
That whilom japedest at Lovés peyne !  
Now artow hent ! Now gnaw thyn owné  
cheyne !

Thou wereay wontech lovertó repretende 510  
Of thing, fro which thou canst thee not  
defende.

'What wol now every lover seyn of thee,  
If this be wist, but evere in thyn absence  
Laughen in scorn and seyn, "Lo, ther  
go'th he

That is the man of so gret sapience  
That held us lovers leest in reverence !  
Now, thankéd God, he may go in the  
daunce

Of hem that Love list feblély t'avaunce !"

'But, O thou woful Troilus, God wolde,  
Sith thou most loven thorough thy destiné,  
That thou biset were on swich oon that  
sholde 521

Knowe al thy wo, al lakkéd her pité !  
But al-so cold in love towárdés thee  
Thy lady is, as frost in winter moone ;  
And thou for-don, as snow in fir is soone.

'God wolde, I were arived in the port  
Of deth, to which my sorwé wol me lede !  
A, Lord, to me it were a gret confort !  
Than were I quit of languisshinge in  
drede !

For, be myn hiddé sorwé y-blowe on  
brede, 530

I shal bejapéd ben a thousand time  
More than that fool of whos folý men rime.

502. *a*  $\beta$  *For that*; J G *For that cause*;  $\gamma$  *For which*.

510.  $\beta$  *to repretende* (*repretende*); rest omit *to*.

515. *so*, J D *the*.

518. *feblély t'avaunce*; J and others *feibly for t'avaunce*.

530. *be* (Boc.); *by*, Cx, G S<sub>1</sub> Cl. Cp.

532. *that*, Cx, R *a*.

'But now, help, God! and ye, swete  
for whom  
I pleyne y-caught, ye, neverè wight so  
faste,  
O mercy, derè herte, and help me from  
The deth! For I, whil that my lif may  
laste,  
More than my lif wol love you to my laste.  
And with som frendly look gladdeth me,  
swete,  
Though neverè no thing more ye me  
bihete!'—

Thise wordès, and ful many another mo  
He spak, and callèd evere in his com-  
pleynte 541  
Her namè, for to tellen her his wo,  
Til nigh that he in saltè terès dreyste.  
Al was for naught: she herdè not his  
pleynte;  
And whan that he bethoughte on that  
folýe,  
A thousand fold his wo gan multiplye.

Bi-wailing in his chambrè thus alone,  
A frend of his, that callèd was Pandaré,  
Com onès in unwar, and herde him grone,  
And saw his frend in swich distresse and  
care: 550  
'Allas!' quod he, 'who causeth al this  
fare?  
O mercy, God! what unhap may this mene?  
I han now thussonè Grekès maad you lene?

'Or hastow som remors of conscience,  
And art now falle in som devocioun,  
And wailest for thy sinne and thyn offence,  
And hast for ferdè caught attricioun?  
God save hem that bi-segèd han our toun,  
That so can leye our jolité on presse, 559  
And bringe our lusty folk to holinesse!'

533. *ye*, J Cp. *the*.534. *ye*, J Cp. *the*.537. *my lif*, P *my lyf* (Boc. *Che t' ama più che la sua vita assai*); H<sub>2</sub> *my silf*; H<sub>4</sub> corrupt; J and others *my-self*.539. *no thing more*, γ *more thing*.540. *mo*, so a; others *to(o)*.546. *thousand*, H<sub>4</sub> *hundred* (Boc. in cento).559. *That so*, H<sub>2</sub> Cl. H<sub>1</sub> *And so*.559. *on presse*, a *in presse*.

These wordès seyde he for the nonès alle,  
That with swich thing he mighte him  
angry maken,  
And with an anger don his sorwè falle  
As for the time, and his coràge awaken;  
But wel wiste he, as for as tongès spaken,  
Ther n'as a man of gretter hardinesse  
Than he, ne more desirèd worthinesse.

'What cas,' quod Troilus, 'or what  
àventüre  
Hath guided thee to see my languisshinge  
That am refús of every créature? 570  
But for the love of God, at my preyinge  
Go henne away, for certès my deyinge  
Wol thee disese, and I mot nedès deye;  
Therfor go wey, there n'is no more to seye!

'But if thou wene I be thus sik for drede,  
It is not so; and therfor scorn me nought.  
Ther is another thing I take of hede  
Wel more than aught that Grekès han  
yit wrought,  
Which cause is of my deth for sorwe and  
thought.  
But though that I now telle it thee ne leste,  
Be thou naught wroth: I hide it for the  
beste.' 581

This Pandar that nigh malt for wo and  
routhe  
Ful oftè seyde, 'Allas! what may this be?  
Now frend,' quod he, 'if everè love or  
trouthè  
Hath been, or is, betwixen thee and me,  
Ne do thou neverè swich a cruelté  
To hidè fro thy frend so gret a care!  
Wostow not wel that it am I, Pandaré?

'I woldè parten with thee al thy peyne  
If it be so I do thee no comfórt, 590  
As it is frendès right, soth for to seyne,  
To entrèparten wo, as glad desport.

563. *his sorwe falle*, R S γ *his wo to falle*.566. *a man*, J *no man*.569. *my languisshinge*, J and others *me lan-  
guisshing*.576. *scorn me nought*, J and others *scorn(e)  
nought*.578. *or is*, J and others *or this*.589. *wolde*, so D S<sub>2</sub> Dg.; rest *wil, wol, wole  
wete*.

I have, and shal, for trewe or fals report,  
In wrong and right, y-loved thee al my  
live :  
Hyd not thy wo fro me, but tel it blive.'

Than gan this sorwful Troilus to sike,  
And seyde him thus : 'God leve it be  
my beste  
To telle it thee, for sith it may thee like  
Yit wol I telle it, though myn hertè breste :  
And wel wot I, thou mayst do me no reste.  
But lest thou deme I trustè not to thee,  
Now herknè, frend, for thus it stant with  
me.—

602

'Lo, Love, ayeins the whiche who-so de-  
fendeth

Himselven most, him altherlest availeth,  
With desespair so sorwfully m' offendeth,  
That streight unto the deth myn hertè  
saileth :

Ther-to desir so brenningly m' assaileth,  
That to be slayn it were a gretter joye 608  
To me than king of Grece ben and Troye !

'Suffiseth this, my fullè frend Pandaré,  
That I have seyde, for now wostow my wo.  
And for the love of God, my coldè care  
So hyd it wel ! I tolde it nevere to mo,  
For harmès mighten folwen, mo than  
two,

If it were wist.—But be thou in gladnesse,  
And let me sterve, unknowe, of my des-  
tresse !'

'How hast thou thus unkindely and longe  
Hid this fro me ? thou fool !' quod  
Pandarus.

'Paraunter thou mayst after swich oon  
longe,

That myn avys anon may helpen us.' 620

'This were a wonder thing !' quod Troilus.

602. *herkne*, J and others *herke*.

603. *Lo, Love* (?), all *Love*.

605. *sorwfully*, J and others *sorwful(l)*.

613. *I tolde*, Cl. *I telle*; H<sup>5</sup> and *telle*; J omits  
it after *tolde*.

613. H<sub>4</sub> *nevere to no mo*; Cx. *nevere no mo*;  
rest *nevere to mo*. (Read ? *nevere mo* or *nevere*  
*mo*. See l. 675, where G has *nevere to moo*.)

619. *mayst*, γ *mightest*.

'Thou coudest nevere in love thy-selven  
wisse :  
How devel mayst thou than bringè me to  
blisse !'

'Ye, Troilus, now herknè,' quod Pandaré,  
'Though I be nice ! It happeth often so  
That oon that exces doth ful yvelè fare,  
By good counseil can kepe his frend therfro.  
I have myselfen seyn a blind man go,  
Ther-as he fel that coude loken wyde :  
A fool may eek a wis-man oftè gyde. 630

'A wheston is no kerving instrument,  
But yit it maketh sharpè kerving toles ;  
And ther thou wost that I have aught  
miswent,  
Eschewe thou that, for swich thing to  
thee scole is :

Thus often wisè men ben war by foles.  
If thou so do, thy wit is wel bewared :  
By his contrarie is every thing declared.

'For how mighte everè swetnesse han  
ben knowe 638

To him that neverè tasted bitternesse ?  
Ne no man wot what gladnesse is, I trowe,  
That neverè was in sorwe or som destresse :  
Eek whyt by blak, by shame ek worthinesse,  
Ech set by other more for other semeth :  
Asmen may see, and so the wise it demeth.

'Sith thus of two contraries is o lore,  
And that I have in love so ofte assayed  
Grevaunces, m'oughtè connen wel the more  
Counseilen thee of that thou art amayed ;  
And ek thee n'oughtè not ben yvele apayed  
Though I desirè with thee for to bere 650  
Thyn hevycharge : it shal thee lessè dere.

623. *How devel mayst thou than*, so P H<sub>2</sub> Cx.;  
S<sub>1</sub> *devel than*; R *me than*; J and rest om. *than*;  
G H<sub>2</sub> *del(l)* for *devel*.

628. *myselven seyn*, γ insert *ek* before or after  
*seyn*.

640. *wot what gladnesse is*, so a β; R Cx. H<sub>3</sub>  
γ may be inly (R *veryly*) *glad*.

646. *And that I have* (?), P H<sub>2</sub> *That y have*;  
rest *I that have*.

647. *Grevaunces*, etc., P H<sub>2</sub> *me ought*; S<sub>2</sub> Dg.  
*I ought*; rest *ought(e)*. All except H<sub>2</sub> H<sub>4</sub> Cx. in-  
sert and before *wel*.

649. *And ek thee (ne) oughte not*, so β; a *And*  
*ek thou oughtest*; γ *Ek thee ne oughte not*.

' I wot wel that it fareth thus by me,  
As to thy brother Paris an herdese,  
Which that y-clepéd was Oénone,  
Wrot in a compleynt of her hevynesse :  
Ye saw the lettré that she wrot, I gesse ?'  
' Nay, neveré yit, y-wis,' quod Troilus.  
' Now,' quod Pandaré, ' herkneth, it  
was thus.— 658

" ' Phebus, that first fond art of medicine,"  
Quod she, " and coude in every wightés care  
Remédie and reed by herbès he knew fine,  
Yit to himself his conning was ful bare ;  
For Love hadde him so bounden in a snare,  
Al for the doughter of the King Amete,  
That al his craft ne coude his sorwes bete."

' Right so fare I, unhappily for me :  
I love oon best, and that me smerteth sore ;  
And yet paraunter can I reden thee, 668  
And not myself : reprevé me no moré !  
I have no cause, I wot wel, for to sore  
As doth a hauk that listeth for to pleye ;  
But to thyn help yit somewhat can I seye.

' And of oo thing right siker maystow be,  
That certain, for to dyen in the peyne,  
That I shal neveré mo discoveren thee ;  
Ne, by my trouthe, I kepé not restreyne  
Thee fro thy love, though that it were  
Eleyne  
That is thy brother wyf, if ich it wiste :  
Be what she be, and love her as thee liste !

' Therefore, as frend, fulliche in me assure,  
And tel me plat now what is th' enchesoun  
And final cause of wo that ye endure ; 682  
For douteth no thing, myn entencioun  
N' is not to you of reprehencioun  
To speke as now, for no wight may bireve  
A man to love, til that him list to leve.

' And witeth wel, that bothè two ben  
vices,—

654. *Oenone*, see Ovid, *Heroid.* v.

658. *Now*, P H<sub>2</sub> Cl. *No.*

661. *he, y she.*

681. *And tel me plat now*, P H<sub>2</sub> G γ om.

*nov.*

681. G Cl. *thyn enchesoun.*

682. *final*, G J H<sub>3</sub> γ *final*(ly).

Mistrusten alle, or ellés allé leve ;  
But wel I wot the mene of it no vice is,  
For for to tristen som wight is a preve 690  
Of trouthe, and for-thy wolde I fayn re-  
meve

Thy wronge conceyt, and do thee som  
wight triste  
Thy wo to telle ; and tel me, if thee liste.

' The wisé seyth, " Wo him that is allone,  
For, and he falle, he hath non help to rise" ;  
And sith thou hast a felaw, tel thy mone ;  
For this n' is not, certéyn, the nexté wise  
To winnen love, as techen us the wise,—  
To walwe and wepe as Niobè the quene ;  
Whos terés yit in marbel ben y-sene. 700

' Lat be thy weping and thy dresinesse,  
And lat us lissen wo with other speche,  
So may thy woful timé semé lesse.  
Delyté not in wo thy wo to seche,  
As don thise foolés that hir sorwes eche  
With sorwé, whan they have misaventure,  
And listé not to seche hem other cure.

' Men seyn, " To wrecche is consolacioun  
To have another felaw in his peyne."  
That oughté wel ben our opinioun, 710  
For, bothè thou and I, of Love we pleyne !  
So fut of sorwe am I, soth for to seyne,  
That certeynly no moré hardè grace  
May sitte on me, for-why ther is no space !

' If God wile, thou art not agast of me,  
Lest I wolde of thy lady thee bigile !  
Thou wost thy-self whom that I love, pardé,  
As I best can, gon sithen longè while.  
And sith thou wost I do it for no wile, 719  
And seyst I am he that thou trustest most,  
Tel me somewhat, sin al my wo thou wost.'

Yit Troilus for al this no woid seyde,  
But longe he lay as stille as he ded were,  
And after this with siking he abreyde,  
And to Pandarés vois he lente his ere,

690. *For for to*, so H<sub>4</sub> J G H<sub>1</sub> ; rest *For to*.

719. *wile*, so a γ ; J and others *gile*.

720. *seyst*, γ *sith(en)*.

725. *Pandares*, so P H<sub>2</sub> G R ; rest *Pandarus*.

725. *lente*, P H<sub>2</sub> G *bente* ; H<sub>4</sub> *laide*.

And up his ÿen caste he, that in fere  
Was Pandarus, lest that in frenésýc  
He sholdé falle, or ellés sooné dye ;

And cri'de 'A-wak' ful wonderliche and  
sharpe ;

'What! slombrestow as in a litargýe? 730  
Or artow lyk an assé to an harpe,  
That hereth soun, whan men the strengés  
plye,

But in his minde of that no melodýe  
May sinken, him to gladden, for that he  
So dul is of his bestialité?'

And with that Pandar of his wordés stente ;  
And Troilus yit him no word answérde,  
For-why to tellen was not his entente 738  
To nevere no man, for whom that he so ferde.  
For it is seyde, men maketh ofte a yerde  
With which the maker is himself y-beten  
In sundry maner, as thise wisé treten.

And naméliche in his counsél tellinge :  
That toucheth love, that oughté ben secré,  
For of himself it wol ynough out-springe,  
But-if that it the bet govérned be ;  
Eek sometime it is craft to semé flee  
For thing which in effect men hunté faste.—  
Al this gan Troilus in his herté caste. 749

But nathéles whan he had herd him crye  
'Awak!' he gan to siké wonder sore,  
And seyde, 'Frend, though that I stillé lye,  
I am not deef. Now pees, and cry no more,  
For I have herd thy wordés and thy lore ;  
But suffré me my mischief to biwailen,  
For thy provérbés may me naught availen !

'Nor other curé canst thou non for me :  
Eek I n'il not be curéd : I wol deye !  
What knowe I of the quené Niobe !  
Lat be thine olde ensaumþles, I thee  
preye !' 760

737. MSS. vary—some *word* for *thing*.

739. MSS. vary. H<sub>4</sub> R Cx. *Nevere to no man, for whom he so ferde; a<sup>2</sup>To no man, for-why that he so ferde* (read *nevere for no?*)

747. *it is craft*, so a Cx. H<sub>3</sub>; rest *it is a craft*.

748. *For thing, y Fro thing*. (See ii. 194, 868.)

749. *in his herte*, H<sub>4</sub> H<sub>2</sub> omit *his*.

753. *am*, J G *nam*.

757. *Nor*, J and others *For*.

'No!' quod tho Pandarus, 'Therefore I seye,  
Swich is delit of folés to biwepe  
Hir wo, but seken boté they ne kepe !

'Now knowe I, that ther reson in thee  
faileth !

But tel me, if I wisté what she were  
For whom that theeal this misaunter aileth,  
Dorstestow that I tolde her in her ere  
Thy wo, sith thou darst not thyself for fere,  
And her besoughte on thee to han som  
routhe?'

'Why, nay!' quod he, 'by God and by  
my trouthe !' 770

'What ! not as bisily,' quod Pandarus,  
'As though my owné lyf lay on this nede?'

'No, certés, brother!' quod this Troilus.  
'And why?'—'For that thou sholdest  
neveré spede.'

'Wost thou that wel?'—'Ye, that is out  
of drede !'

Quod Troilus. 'For al that evere ye conne,  
Shen'il to no swich wreccheas I ben wonne!'

Quod Pandarus, 'Allas ! what may this be,  
That thou despeyréd art thus causéles ?

What ! liveth not thy lady, bendisté? 780  
How wostow so that thou art gracéles ?  
Swich yvel is not alwey bootéles.

Why, put not impossiblé thus thy cure,  
Sith thing to come is ofte in aventure.

'I graunté wel that thou endurest wo  
As sharp as doth he, Ticius, in helle,  
Whos stomak foulés tiren everé mo  
That highthen voltourés, as bookés telle ;  
But I may not endure that thou dwelle  
In so unskilful an opinioun 790  
That of thy wo is no curacioun.

'But onés n'iltow, for thy coward herte  
And for thyn ire and folissh wilfulnessse,

761. *tho*, all omit except H<sub>4</sub> S  $\gamma^4$ .

764. *ther reson*, so H<sub>4</sub> G R J Cp. H<sub>1</sub>; rest omit *ther*.

767. *Dorstestow*, so G R Cl. H<sub>1</sub>; rest *dorst thou*.

767. *tolde her*, so H<sub>4</sub> G H<sub>5</sub> H<sub>3</sub>; P H<sub>2</sub> R Cx. *tolde it*; rest *tolde* (Cl. *telle*).

773. *No, certés, brother, a Why, no, pardé, sir*.

780. *bendisté*, so J Cp. H<sub>1</sub>; others *benedicité*.

786. *Ticius*, Tityus. Ovid, *Met.* iv. 456; Boethius iii. met. 12.

For wantrust, tellen of thy sorwes smerte,  
Ne to thyn ownè help do bisnesse  
As muche as speke a reson more or lesse,  
But li'st as he that list of no thing recche!  
What woman coude lovè swich a wrecche?

'What may she demen other of thy deth,  
If thou thus dye, and she n'ot why it is,  
But that for fere is yolden up thy breth,  
For Grekès han bisegéd us, y-wis? <sup>802</sup>  
Lord, which a thonk than shaltow han  
of this!

Thus wol she seyn, and al the toun at ones,  
'The wrecche is ded, the devil have his  
bones!'

'Thou mayst allone here wepe and crye  
and knele;

But love a woman that she wot it nought,  
And she wol quite it that thou shalt not  
fele,—

Unknowe, unkist, and lost, that is  
unsought.

What! many a man hath love ful dere  
y-bought, <sup>810</sup>

Ye, twenty winter, that his lady wiste,  
That neverè yit his lady mouth he kiste!

'What! sholde he therfor fallen in despair,  
Or be recreant for his ownè tene,  
Or slen himself, al be his lady fair?  
Nay, nay! but evere in oon be fressh  
and grene

To serve and love his derè hertès quene,  
And thenke it is a guerdon, her to serve,  
A thousand fold more than he can deserve!'

And of that word took hedè Troilus, <sup>820</sup>  
And thoughte anon what foly he was inne,  
And how that soth him seyde Pandarus,  
That for to slen himself mighte he not winne,  
But bothè don unmanhod and a sinne,  
And of his deth his lady naught to wite;  
For of his wo, God wot, she knew ful lite.

794. For, a And.

796. speke a reson, a speke o word (ye).

803. than, J and others omit.

808. it, γ omits.

811. Ye, so S; H<sub>4</sub> Ya; rest omit; P Ad. or  
(er) that; Cx. ne wiste; G not wiste.

820. And, γ omits.

And with that thought he gan ful sorè sike,  
And seyde, 'Allas! what is me best to do?'  
To whom Pandaré answerde, 'Yif thee like,  
The beste is that thou tellè me thy wo;  
And have my trouthe, but thou finde it so  
I be thy bote or that it be ful longe, <sup>832</sup>  
To peces do me drawe, and sithen hongè!'

'Ye, so seystow!' quod Troilus tho,  
'Allas!

But, God wot, it is naught the rather so!  
Ful hard were it to helpen in this cas;  
For wel finde I that Fortune is my fo,  
Ne alle the men that riden conne or go  
May of her cruel wheel the harm with-  
stonde;

For as her list, she pley'th with free and  
bonde.' <sup>840</sup>

Quod Pandarus, 'Than blamestow Fortúne  
For thou art wroth: ye, now at erst I see!  
Wostow not wel that Fortune is commúne  
To every maner wight in som degree?  
And yit thou hast this confort, lo, pardé!  
That as her joyès moten overgon,  
So mote her sorwes passen everychon.

'For if her wheel stinte any thing to torne,  
Than cessèd she Fortúne anon to be.  
Now, sith her wheel by no way may sojorne,  
What wostow, if her mutabilité <sup>851</sup>  
Right as thy-selven list wol don by thee,  
Or that she be not fer fro thyn helpinge?  
Paraunter thou hast causè for to singe!

'And therfor wostow what I thee  
beseche?

Lat be thy wo and torning to the grounde;  
For who-so list have heling of his leche,  
To him bihoveth first unwrye his wounde.  
To Cerberus in helle ay be I bounde,  
Al were it for my suster al thy sorwe, <sup>860</sup>  
By my wil she sholdè be thyn to-morwe!

830. thy wo, so a<sup>2</sup> J G H<sub>5</sub> A; γ and others al  
thy wo.

831. finde it, γ it finde.

834. seystow, γ thou seyst.

857. heling, G J Cl. helping.

858. unwrye, J γ unwre.

860. Al (?), all omit first Al; P H<sub>2</sub> corrupt.

861. sholdè be thyn, P inserts al before thyn:  
Jo. γ inserts al before be.

'Look up, I seye, and tel me what she is  
Anon, that I may gon aboute thy nede.  
Knowe ich her aught? For my love, tel  
me this!

Than wolde I hopen rather for to spede.  
Tho gan the veyne of Troilus to blede,  
For he was hit, and wex al red for shame.  
'A ha!' quod Pandar, 'here biginneth  
game!'

And with that word hegan him for to shake,  
And seyde, 'Thef, thou shalt her namé  
telle!' 870

But tho gan sely Troilus for to quake  
As though men sholde han led him into  
helle,

And seyde, 'Allas! of al my wo the welle,  
Than is my sweté fo calléd Criseyde!  
And wel nigh with the word for fere he  
deyde.

And whan that Pandar herde her namé  
nevene,

Lord! he was glad, and seyde, 'Frend  
so dere, 877

Now fare aright! for Jovés name in hevene,  
Love hath bi-set thee wel! Be of good chere!  
For of good namé, wisdom, and manére  
She hath y-nough, and ek of gentillesse.  
If she be fair, thou wost thyself, I gesse!

'N' I neveré saw a moré bountevous  
Of her estat, n' a gladder, ne of speche  
A frendlier, n' a moré gracious  
For to do wel, ne lasse had nede to seche  
What for to don; and al this bet to eche  
In honour to as fer as she may strecche,  
A kingés herté sem'th by heres a wrecche.

'And for-thy look of good confórt thou be;  
For certainly, the firsté point is this 891

865. rather, P H<sub>2</sub> H<sub>3</sub> Cl. H<sub>1</sub> the rather(e).

875. the word, H<sub>4</sub> R Cx. H<sub>1</sub> that word.

880. name, wisdom, R γ insert and before wisdom.

883. N' I nevere saw, so P H<sub>2</sub> Jo. H<sub>1</sub>; H<sup>4</sup> R Cx. D Ne nevere saw I; G H<sub>3</sub> Cp. Cl. Ne nevere saw.

884. n' a, Cl. ne a; Cp. na; G non; rest ne.

890-896. All MSS. except P H<sub>2</sub> H<sub>4</sub> (and Jo. in later band on margin) omit this stanza; Cx. omits it, but Th. has it.

Of noblé corage and wel ordeyné,—  
A man to have pes with himself, ywis.  
So oughtest thou; for nought but good it is  
To loven wel and in a worthy place:  
Thee oughté not to clepe it hap, but grace.

'And also thenk, and therwithgladdé thee,  
That sith thy lady vertuous is al,  
So folweth it that ther is som pité  
Amongés alle thise othre in general: 900  
And for-thy see that thou in special  
Requeré naught that is ayein her name,  
For vertu streccheth not himself to shame.

'But wel is me that everé I was born,  
That thou biset art in so good a place;  
For by my trouthe, in love I dorste han  
sworn

Thee sholdé nevere han tid thus fair a grace.  
And wostow why? For thou were wont  
to chace

At Love in scorn, and for despit him calle  
"Seint Idiot, lord of thise foolés alle." 910

'How often hastow maad thy nicé japes,  
And seyde, that "Lovés servants every-  
chone

Of nicété ben verray Goddés apés;  
And somé woldé monche hir mete allone  
Ligging-a-bedde and make hem for to grone;  
And som," thou seydest, "had a blanché  
fevere,

And preydest God he sholdé neveré kevere.

"And some of hem toke on hem for  
the cold

More than y-nough," so seydestow ful ofte;  
"And some han feynéd ofté time and  
told 920

How that they waken whan they slepen  
softé;

892. and wel ordeyné, so PH<sub>2</sub>; J Th. and wel ordeyne the; H<sub>4</sub> thou ordeyne the.

893. A man, J H<sub>4</sub> omit.

896. Thee, J H<sub>4</sub> Men.

904. that evere I was born, R that evere was I; G S Ad. Cp. H<sub>1</sub> that evere that I was born.

907. nevere han tid, G H<sub>5</sub> J nevere in love han tid.

907. thus fair, α R Cx. D Cl. so fair.

914. monche, so α; rest mucche, mucche, muche, meche.

And thus they wolde han brought himself  
a-lofte,  
But nathéles were under at the laste !”  
Thus seydestow, and japédest ful faste.

‘Yit seydestow that “for the moré part,  
These lovers woldé speke in general,  
And thoughten that it was a siker art  
For failing for t’ assayen overal !”  
Now may I jape of thee, if that I shal !  
But nathéles, though that I sholdé deye, 930  
That thou art non of tho, I dorsté seye.

‘Now beet thy brest, and sey to God of  
Love,  
“Thy gracé, Lord ! for now I me repente  
If I mis-spak, for now myself I love.”  
Thus sey with al thyn herte in good ente-  
tente !’

Quod Troilus, ‘A, Lord ! I me consente,  
And preye to thee my japés thou forgive,  
And I shal neverémoré whil I live.’

‘Thou seyst wel,’ quod Pandáre, ‘and  
now I hope

That thou the Goddés wraththe hast al  
apesed ; 940

And sithen thou hast wopen many a drope,  
And seyð such thing wherwith thy god  
is pleased,

Now woldé neveré God but thou were esed !  
And thenk wel, she of whom rist al thy wo,  
Her-after may thy confort ben also.

‘For th’ilké grounde that ber’th the wedés  
wikke

Ber’th eek these holsom herbés as ful ofte ;  
And next the foulé netlé, rough and thikke,  
The rosé waxeth sweté, smothe, and softe ;  
And next the valey is the hil o-lofte ; 950  
And next the derké night, the gladdé  
morwe ;

And also joye is next the fyn of sorwe.

924. *japedest*, P H<sub>2</sub> Cx. Ad. *ympedist* (*impedest*).

926. *lovers*, P H<sub>2</sub> *faitours*.

938. *whil I live*, a<sup>3</sup> *whil that I live*.

939. *Pandáre*, so a R Cx. D ; rest *Pandarus*.

947. *as ful ofte*, P H<sub>2</sub> and (for as) ; Cx. omit as.

948. *And next*, so S ; rest omit *And*.

949. *The rose waxeth swete*, a *The lilie waxeth whit(e)* ; J D  $\gamma$  insert *and* before *smothe*.

‘Now looké that a-tempré be thy bridel,  
And for the beste ay suffré to the tide,  
Or ellés al our labour is on ydel :  
He hasteth wel that wisly can abide.  
Be diligent, and trewe, and ay wel hide :  
Be lusty, free, persévere in thy servise,  
And al is wel, if thou werke in this wise.

‘But he that parted is in every place 960  
Is nowher hool, as written clerkés wise.  
What wonder is, though swich oon have  
no grace ?

Eek wostow how? It far’th of som servise,  
As plante a tree, or herbe, in sondry wise,  
And on the morwé pulle it up as blive !  
No wonder is, though it may neveré thrive.

‘And sith that God of Love hath thee  
bestowed

In placé digne un-to thy worthinesse,  
Stond fasté, for to good port hastow  
rowed !

And of thy-self for any hevinesse 970  
Hope alwey wel ; for, but-if drerinesse  
Or over-haste our bothé labour shende,  
I hope of this to maken a good ende.

‘And wostow why? I am the lesse a-fered  
Of this matéré with my necé trete,  
For this have I herd seyð of oldé lered :  
Was neveré man nor woman yit begete  
That was unapt to suffré lovés hete—  
Celestial, or ellés love of kinde.  
For-thysom grace I hope in her to finde. 980

‘And for to speke of her in special,  
Her beauté to bithenken and her youthe,  
It sit her naught to be celestial  
As yit, though that her listé bothe and  
couthe :

But trewely it sate her wel right nouthe  
A worthy knight to loven and cherice ;  
And, but she do, I holde it for a vice !

953. *Now looké that*, H<sub>2</sub> *Look that thou* ; Ph. *Look thou that* ; G *wel* (for *be*).

960. *parted*,  $\gamma$  *departed*.

962, 966. *What wonder is*, *No wonder is*, G *ist* (for *is*).

972. *bothe*, H<sub>4</sub> *botheres* ; D *bother* ; G Ad. *bothis*.

976. *of oldé lered*, so a<sup>3</sup> R ; Cx. *oft of lered* ;

H<sub>3</sub> and *lered* ; G *of leryd* ; rest *of wise lered*.

984. *though that*, J *yif that* ; R *as that* ; G *that*.



'Wherefore I am, and wol be, ay redy  
To peynè me to do you this servise ;  
For bothè you to plesè, this hope I, 990  
Hereafterward ; for ye be bothè wise,  
And conne it counseil kepe in swich a wise  
That no man shal the wiser of it be ;  
And so we may be gladed allè three.

'And, by my trouthe, I have right now  
of thee

A good conceit in my wit, as I gesse !  
And what it is, I wil now that thou see. —  
I thenkè, sith that Love of his goodnèsse  
Hath thee converted out of wikkednesse,  
That thou shalt be the bestè post, I leve, 1000  
Of al his lay, and most his foos ay greve.

'Ensamplè why, see now these gretè  
clerkes,

That erren aldermost ayein a lawe,  
And ben converted from hir wikked werkes  
Thorough grace of God that list hem to  
him drawe, —

Than arn they folk that han most God in  
awe,

And strengest feithèd ben, I understonde,  
And conne an errour alderbest with-  
stonde.'

Whan Troilus had herd Pandaré, assented  
To ben his helpein loving of Criseyde, 1010  
Wex off his wo, as who seith, untor-  
mented ;

But hotter wex his love ; and than heseyde  
With sobré chere, although his hertè  
pleyde : —

'Now blisful Venus help, or that I sterve,  
Of thee, Pandaré, I may som thank  
deserve !

But, derè frend, how shal my wo be lesse  
fil this be don ? And good, ek tel me this,

988. *Wherefore*, P H<sub>2</sub> G H<sub>3</sub> Cx. *Therefore*.

988. *be ay redy*, G H<sub>3</sub> Cx. *be al redy* ; P *alwey*  
*redy* ; H<sub>2</sub> *al day be redy*.

990. *this*, so P H<sub>2</sub> G J R H<sub>3</sub> D ; rest *thus*.

992. *conne it*, J *konne a*.

995. *And*, J *Now* ; Cl. *For*.

1001. *foos ay greve*, so R J S ; a<sup>3</sup> G H<sub>3</sub> Cx. D

*as (fois, foos) greve* ; γ (except D) *foos to greve*.

1003. *erren*, P H<sub>2</sub> G Cx. *are (arn)*.

1017. *And good, ek tel*, P H<sub>2</sub> *And eek now tel*.

How wiltow seyn of me and my destresse ?  
Lest she be wroth, this drede I most y-wis,  
Or n'il not here or trowèn how it is. 1020  
Al this drede I ; and ek for the manére  
Of thee, her eem, she n'il no swich thing  
here.'

Quod Pandarus, 'Thou hast a ful gret care  
Lest that the cherl may falle out of the  
mone !

Why, Lord ! I hate of thee thy nicè fare !  
Why, entrèmete of that thou hast to done !  
For Goddès love, I biddè thee a bone !  
So lat'm'alone, and it shal be thy beste !' —  
'Why, frend,' quod he, 'now do right  
as thee leste !' 1029

'But herkè, Pandar, oo word ; for I n'olde  
That thou in me wendest so gret folyé,  
That to my lady I desiren sholde  
That toucheth harm or any vilanye ;  
For dredèles me werè leverè dye  
Than she of me aught ellès understoode  
But that that mightè sounen in-to goode.'

Tho lough this Pandar, and anon  
answérde,

'And I thy borw, fy ! no wight doth but so !  
I roughtè naught though that she stood  
and herde 1039

How that thou seyst ! But far-wel, I wol go.  
A-dieu ! be glad ! God spede us bothè two !  
Yif me this labour and this bisnesse,  
And of myspeed be thyn al the swetnesse !'

Tho Troilus gan doun on knees to falle,  
And Pandar in his armès hentè faste,  
And seyde, 'Now, fy on the Grekès alle !  
Yit, pardè, God shal helpe us at the laste !  
And dredèles, if that my'lif may laste,  
And God to-forn, lo, some of hem shal  
smerte ; 1049

And yit m' athinketh, this avaunt m'  
asterte !

'Now, Pandarus, I can no morè seye  
But, thou wis, thou wost, thou mayst,  
thou art al !

1038. *fy!* G om. ; Jo. *for* ; R *whi*.

1043. *al the*, J γ *al that*.

1050. *this avaunt*, H<sub>3</sub> γ *that this avaunt*.

1051. *Now, Pandarus*, P H<sub>2</sub> γ *Now, Pandare*.

My lif, my deth, hool in thyn hond I leye!  
Help now!'—Quod he, 'Yis, by my  
trouthe I shal!'—

'God yelde thee, frend! And this in  
special,'

Quod Troilus, 'that thou me recomaunde  
Til her that may me to the deth comaunde!'

This Pandarus, tho désirous to serve  
His fullè frend, tho seyde in this manère;  
'Far-wel, and think I wil thy thank  
deserve! 1060

Have here my trouthe, and that thou  
shalt wel here!'

And wente his wey, thinking on this  
matère,

And how he best mighte her beseche of  
grace,

And finde a timè ther-to and a space.

For every wight that hath an hous to founde  
Ne renneth not the werk for to beginne  
With rakel hond; but he wol bide a  
stounde,

And sende his hertès line out fro withinne  
How alderfirst his purpos for to winne.

1058. *tho*, H<sub>4</sub> *ful*.

1059. *tho*, γ<sup>8</sup> *than*.

1064. *space*, J γ *place*.

1069. *How* (?), all omit (but necessary to the  
sense as well as metre?).

Al this tho Pandar in his hertè thoughte,  
And caste his werk ful wisly or he wroughte.

But Troilus lay tho no lenger doun, 1072  
But up anon up-on his stedè bay,  
And in the feld he pleydè the lioun.

Wo was that Greek that with him mette  
a-day!

And in the toun his maner tho forth ay  
So goodly was, and gat him so in grace  
That ech him lovede that lokéd on his face.

For he bicom the frendlieste wight, 1079  
The gentilleste and ek the mostè free,  
The thriftieste and oon the bestè knight,  
That in his timè was or mightè be.

Dede were his japès and his cruelté,  
His hyè port and his manère estraunge;  
And ech of tho gan for a vertu change.

Now let us stinte of Troilus a stounde,  
That fareth lik a man that hurt is sore  
And is somdel of aking of his wounde  
Y-lisséd wel, but heléd no del more.

And, as an esy pacient, the lore 1090  
Abit of him that go'th about his cure;  
And thus he drieth forth his aventure.

1070. *Al this tho*, so H<sub>4</sub>; rest omit *tho*.

1075. *a-day*, so J and others; rest *that day*.

1078. *on*, a H<sub>3</sub> Cx. *in*.

1092. *drieth*, P H<sub>2</sub> H<sub>5</sub> Cx. A S *driveth*.

## BOOK II

OUT of this blakè wawès for to saile,  
O wind, O wind, the weder ginneth clere:  
For in this see the boot hath swich  
travaile,

Of my conning that unnethe I it stere.  
This see clepe I the tempestous matère  
Of desespèyr that Troilus was inne;  
But now of hope the kalendès biginne.

O lady myn, that callèd art Cleó,  
Thou be my speed fro this forth, and my  
muse,

To rimè wel this book til I have do! 10

1. R omits ll. 1-49.

4. *conning*, J and others *com(m)ing*.

Me nedeth here non other art to use;  
For-why to every lover I m' excuse,  
That of no sentément I this endite,  
But out of Latin in my tonge it write.

Wherfore I n'il have neither thank n  
blame

Of al this werk, but preye you mekely  
Disblameth me if any word be lame;  
For as myn auctour seyde, so seye I.  
Ek though I speke of love unfeelingly,  
No wonder is; for it no thing of-new  
is,

A blind man can-not juggen wel in hewe.

21. *man*, J H<sub>5</sub> *wight*; H<sup>3</sup> *knight*.

Ye knowe ek, that in forme of speche is  
chaunge

Withinne a thousand yeer, and wordès tho  
That hadden pris, now wonder nice and  
straunge

Us thinketh hem; and yit they spake  
hem so,

And spedde as wel in love as men now do:  
Ek for to winnen love in sondry ages,  
In sondry londès sondry ben uságes.

And for-ty if it happe in any wise,  
That here be any lover in this place 30  
That herkneþ, as the story can devise  
How Troilus com til his lady grace,  
And thenketh, 'so n'olde I not love  
purcháce,'

Or wondreth on his speche or his doíng, e,  
I n'ot; but it is me no wonderíng.

For every wight which that to Romè went  
Halt not oo path, ne alwey oo manère;  
Ek in som lond were al the gamè shent,  
If that men ferde in love as men don  
here,

As thus,—in open doing or in chere, 40  
In visitíng, in forme, or seyde hir sawes:  
For-ty men seyn, ech contré hath his  
lawes.

Ek scarsly ben ther in this placè three  
That han in love seyð lik, and don in al,  
For to thy purpos this may líkè thee,  
And thee right nought, yit al is seyð or  
shal;

Ek some men grave in tree, some in ston  
wal,

As it bitit.—But, sin I have begonne,  
Myn auctour shal I folwen, if I conne. 49

—In May that moder is of monthès glade,  
That fresshè flourès, blewè, white, and  
rede,

Ben quike a-gayn, that winter dedè made,  
And ful of bawme is fletíng every mede:  
Whan Phebus doth his brightè bemès  
sprede

Right in the whitè Bole, it so betidde  
As I shal síng, on Mayès day the  
thridde,

That Pandarus, for al his wisè speche,  
Felte ek his part of lovès shotès kene,  
That, coude he nevere so wel of loving  
preche,

It made his hewe a-day ful oftè grene. 60  
So shoop it, that him fil that day a tene  
In love, for which in wo to bedde he  
wente,  
And made, or it was day, ful many a  
wente.

The swalwè Proigné, with a sorwful lay,  
Whan morwè com, gan make her way-  
mentíng

Why she forshapen was; and everè lay  
Pandare a-bedde, half in a slomberíng,  
Til she so nigh him made her cheteríng  
How Terèus gan forth his suster take, 69  
That with the noise of her he gan awake,

And gan to calle and dresse him up to rise,  
Remembríng him his erand was to doone  
From Troilus, and ek his grete emprise;  
And caste, and knew in good plit was  
the moone

To don viage, and took his wey ful soone  
Unto his neces paleys ther biside.—  
Now Janus, God of Entré, thou him gide!

Whan he was come unto his neces place,  
'Wher is my lady?' to her folk quod  
he;

And they him tolde, and he forth in gan  
pace, 80

And fond two othré ladies sete and she  
Withinne a pavèd parlour; and they three

22. *Ye*, J H<sub>5</sub> H<sub>3</sub> S Cx. *I*.

22. *that*, a<sup>3</sup> *this*.

29. a<sup>2</sup> insert stanza 7 before stanza 5.

35. *wonderíng*, so H<sub>3</sub> Cl.; a<sup>2</sup> *wondur thyng*;  
J and others *wondríng*.

37. *ne*, so a β; J H<sub>3</sub> nor; γ or.

39. *men*, so a β; Cx. γ *they*.

42. *seyn*, H<sub>4</sub> Cl. *seyth*.

47. *some men*, a<sup>2</sup> omit *men*.

51. *white*, J γ and *white*.

62. *in wo*, J for *wo*; a<sup>2</sup> *ful wo*.

64. *Proigné*. See *L.G.W.* vii.

69. *Terèus*, so H<sub>4</sub> R Cx.; a<sup>2</sup> *Thereus*; J  
*Tereux*; γ *Tireux*.

71. *dresse*, J *dressed*; a<sup>2</sup> *dressyn*.

71. *uf*, J γ; a β omit.

78. *neces*, J R Cx. H<sub>3</sub> *nece*.

Herden a mayden reden hem the geste  
Of al the sege of Thebès, whil hem leste.

Quod Pandarus, 'Madamé, God you see,  
With al your book and al the com-  
panyé !'—

'Ey, unclé, now welcómé y-wis !' quod she ;  
And up she ros, and by the hond in hyc  
She took him faste, and seydé, 'This  
night thrye—

89

To goodé mote it torne !—of you I mette.'  
And with that word she doun on bench  
him sette.

'Ye, necé, ye shal faré wel the bet,  
If God wile, al this yer !' quod Pandarus ;  
'But I am sory that I have you let  
To herken of your book ye preisen thus.  
For Goddés love, what seith it ? Tel it us !  
Is it of love ? O, som good ye me lere !'  
'Uncle !' quod she, 'your maistresse is  
not here !'

With that they gonnen laughe ; and tho  
she seyde,

99

'This rómaunce is of Thebès, that werede ;  
And we han herd how that King Laius  
deyde

Thorough Edippushissone, and al that dede ;  
And here we stinten at this lettres rede,  
How that the bisshop, as the book can telle,  
Amphiorax, fil thorough the grounde to  
helle.'

Quod Pandarus, 'Al this knowe I my-selve,  
And al th' assege of Thebès, and the care ;  
For herof ben ther makéd bookés twelve.  
But lat be this, and tel me how ye fare. 109  
Do wey your barbe, and shewe your face  
bare.

Do wey your book : ris up, and lat us  
daunce,

And lat us don to May som óbservaunce !'

83. *the geste*, a<sup>3</sup> *at the geste*.84. *Of al the sege* (?). All omit *al*.86. *your book*,  $\gamma$  *your fayre book*.87. *now*,  $\gamma$  *myn*.104. *How that*, so S Ad. ; rest omit *that*.105. *Amphiorax*, Amphiaras. See v. 1500 ;

A. and A. 57 ; C. T. D 741.

110. *barbe*, J G H<sub>5</sub> H<sub>3</sub> R Cx. *zwimpel*.

'Ey, God forbedé !' quod she, 'Be ye  
mad ?

Is that a widwes lif, so God you save ?  
By God, ye maken me right sore adrad !  
Ye ben so wilde, it semeth as ye rave !  
It saté me wel bet, ay in a cave

To bidde and rede on holy seintés lives !  
Lat maydens gon to daunce, and yongé  
wives !'

'As everé thrive I,' quod this Pandarus,  
'Yit coude I telle a thing to do you  
pleye !'—

121

'Now, uncle deré,' quod she, 'telle it us  
For Goddés love ! Is than the sege awaye ?  
I am of Grekés fer'd so that I deye !'—

'Nay, nay !' quod he, 'As everé mote I  
thrive,  
It is a thing wel bet than swiché five !'

'Ye, holy God !' quod she, 'What thing  
is that ?

What ! bet than swiché five ? Ey, nay,  
y-wis !

For al this world ne can I redé what  
It sholdé ben ! Som jape I trowe is this !  
And, but your-selven telle us what it is, 131  
My wit is for t'arede it al too lene ;  
As help me God, I n'ot not what ye  
mene !'—

'And I your borw, ne neveré shal for me  
This thing be told to you, so mote I thrive !'  
'And why so, uncle myn ? Why so ?'  
quod she.—

'By God,' quod he, 'that wol I telle as  
blive !

For prouder womman is ther non on-live,  
And ye it wiste, in al the town of Troye :  
I japé naught, so everé have I joye !' 140

115. *By God*, etc., a<sup>5</sup> (*i.e.* P H<sub>2</sub> G H<sub>5</sub> H<sub>4</sub>) *Ye maken me by Joves sore adrad*.116. *as*, R H<sub>3</sub> Cl. *that*.117. *in a*, J and others *in*.119. *maydens gon to*, a<sup>5</sup> *maydenes go dancc*.123. *the sege*,  $\gamma$  *th' assege*.124. *fer'd so*, so R Cx. ; *Jfered so* ;  $\gamma$  *so fer(e)d* ; others var.133. *n'ot not*, so H<sub>3</sub>  $\gamma$  ; a  $\beta$  om. *not*. G R insert *as* before *I*.134. *for me*, so a<sup>5</sup>  $\gamma$   $\beta$  ; J R Cx. H<sub>3</sub> S<sub>2</sub> Dg. *quod he*.140. *so*, H<sub>4</sub>  $\gamma$  *as*.

Tho gan she wondren morè than biforn  
A thousand fold, and down her yēn caste ;  
For neverè sith the time that she was born  
To knowè thing desirèd she so faste.  
And with a sik she seyde him at the laste,  
'Now, unclè min, I n'il you not displese,  
Nor axen more that may do you disese.'

So after this with many wordès glade,  
And frendly talès, and with mery chere,  
Of this and that they pley'de, and gonnen  
wade 150

In many an uncouth glad and deep matere,  
As frendès don, whan they be met i-ferè ;  
Til she gan axen him how Ector ferde,  
That was the townès wal and Grekès  
yerde.

'Ful wel, I thanke it God,' quod Pandarus,  
'Save in his arm he hath a litel wounde ;  
And ek his fresshè brother Troilus,  
The wisè worthy Ector the secounde,  
In whom that allè vertu list abounde,  
As allè trouthe and allè gentillesse, 160  
Wisdom, honouèr, fredom, and worthi-  
nessc.'

'In good feith, em,' quod she, 'that  
liketh me !

They faren wel, God save hem bothè two !  
For trewèliche I holde it gret deyntè,  
A Kingès sone in armès wel to do,  
And ben of good condiciouns therto ;  
For gret powér and moral vertu here  
Is selde y-seyn in o persónè i-ferè.'

'In good feith, that is soth,' quod  
Pandarus ;

'But, by my trouthe the king hath sonès  
tweye, 170

That is to mene, Ector and Troilus,  
That certeinly, though that I sholdè deye,  
They ben as voide of vices, dar I seye,

As any men that live under the sonne :  
Hir might is wide y-knowe, and what they  
conne.

'Of Ector nedeth no thing for to telle :  
In al this world ther n'is a bettrè knight  
Than he, that is of worthinessè welle ;  
And he wel morè vertu hath than might.  
This knoweth many a wis and worthy wight.  
The samè pris of Troilus I seye : 181  
God help me so, I knowe not swichè  
tweye !'—

'By God,' quod she, 'of Ector that issoth ;  
Of Troilus the samè thing trowe I,  
For dredèles men telleth that he doth  
In armès day by day so worthily,  
And ber'th him here at hom so gentilly  
To every wight, that allè pris hath he  
Of hem that me were levest preisèd be.'

'Ye seye right soth, y-wis !' quod  
Pandarus, 190

'For yesterday who-so had with him been,  
Mightè han wondred upon Troilus ;  
For neverè yit so thikke a swarm of been  
Ne fleigh, as Grekès for him gonnè fleen ;  
And thorough the feld in every wightès ere  
Ther n'as no cry but "Troilus is there !"

'Now here, now there he hunted hem so  
faste,

Ther n'as but Grekès blood and Troilus :  
Now him he hurte, and him al doun he  
caste : 199

Ay wher he wente, it was arrayèd thus :  
He was hir deth, and sheld and lif for us ;  
That, as that day, ther dorstè non with-  
stonde,

Whil that he held his blodyswerd in honde.

174. *live*, so J and others ; a<sup>2</sup> Cl. *liveth* ; others *liven* ; H<sub>4</sub> *lyven under sonne*.

176. *nedeth no thing*, so a<sup>2</sup> J Cx. H<sub>3</sub> ; H<sub>4</sub> G *nedith (it) no(ugh)t* ; γ *nedeth it no more*.

182. *God help me so, J so helpe me god ; G so god helpe me*.

185. *telleth*, so J etc. ; others *telle, tellen*.

188. *alle, J etc. al* ; Ph. G *al the* ; Cx. *overal*.

192. *Mighte, γ He mighte*.

194. *for him*, J Cp. and others ; rest *fro him* (see i. 748).

199. *him . . . him*, H<sub>5</sub> H<sub>3</sub> γ<sup>3</sup> *hem . . . hem*.

141. *more*, H<sub>4</sub> G *wel more*.

143. *time*, H<sub>4</sub> G *tid*.

143. *that*, R Cx. omit.

144. *thing*, a<sup>2</sup> Cx. *a thing*.

147. *Nor*, a<sup>2</sup> To ; R Cx. *Ne*.

166. *of good condiciouns* ; read (?) *good of condiciouns*.

170. *trouthe*, a<sup>2</sup> *heed*.

'Therto he is the frendliest<sup>e</sup> man  
Of gret estat, that evere I saw my live,  
And, wher him list, best felawship<sup>e</sup> can  
To swich as him think'th abl<sup>e</sup> for 'to  
thrive.'—

And with that word tho Pandarus, as blive,  
He took his leve and seyde, 'I wol go  
henne.'—

'Nay, blame have I, myn uncle,' quod  
she thenne. 210

'What aileth you to be thus wery sone,  
And nameliche of wommen? Wol ye so!  
Nay, sitteth down! By God, I have to done  
With you, to speke of wisdom, or ye go!  
And every wight that was about them tho,  
That herd<sup>e</sup> that, gan fer away to stonde,  
Whil they two hadde al that hem liste on  
honde.

Whan that her tale al brought was to an ende  
Of her estat and of her governaunce, 219  
Quod Pandarus, 'Now is it time I wende!  
But yit, I seye, arise and lat us daunce,  
And cast your widwes habit to mischaunce!  
What list you thus your-self to disfigure,  
Sithl you is tid so glad an aventure?'—

'A! wel bithought! For love of God,'  
quod she,

'Shal I not witen what ye mene of this?'—  
'No, this thing axeth leiser,' tho quod he,  
'And ek me wold<sup>e</sup> much<sup>e</sup> greve, y-wis,  
If I it tolde and ye it toke amis.  
Yit were it bet my tong<sup>e</sup> for to stille 230  
Than seye a soth that were ayeins your wille.

'For, nec<sup>e</sup>, by the Goddess<sup>e</sup> Minerve,  
And Jupiter that mak'th the thonder ringe,  
And by the blisful Venus that I serve,  
Ye ben the woman in this world livinge,  
Withouten paramours, to my witinge,

209. *I wol*, G Cx. H<sub>3</sub> D *he wolde*.

215. *tho*, so a J etc.; others *to, too, two*.

217. *al that hem liste*, J *al this matere*.

217. *on honde*,  $\gamma$  *in honde*.

220. *is it time*, so H<sub>2</sub> G H<sub>3</sub>; S<sub>1</sub> *time is that*;  
J  $\gamma$  *is time*. J D *to* (for *I*).

221. *I seye, arise*, J *ariseth*, *I seye*. J  $\gamma^b$  omit  
and.

224. *so glad*, so a  $\beta$ ;  $\gamma$  *thus faire*.

226. *not*, a<sup>b</sup> *now*.

That I best love and lothest am to greve;  
And that ye witen wel your-self, I leve.'

'Y-wis, myn uncle,' quod she, 'graunt  
mercy!

Your frendship have I founden evere yit;  
I am to no man holden trewely 241  
So muche as you, and have so litel quit;  
And with the grace of God, emforth my wit,  
As in my gilt I shal you nevere offende;  
And if I have or this, I wol amende!

'But, for the love of God, I you biseche,  
As ye ben he that I most love and triste,  
Lat be to me your fremd<sup>e</sup> maner speche,  
And sey to me your nec<sup>e</sup> what you liste.'—  
And with that word her uncle anon her kiste,  
And seyde, 'Gladly, lev<sup>e</sup> nec<sup>e</sup> dere! 251  
Tak it for gode that I shal seye you  
here!'—

With that she gan her yen down to caste;  
And Pandarus to cough<sup>e</sup> gan a lite,  
And seyde, 'Nece, alwey, lo! to the laste,  
How-so it be that some men hem delite  
With subtil art hir tal<sup>e</sup>s for t' endite,  
Yit for al that, in hir entencioun,  
Hir tale is al for som conclusioun.

'And sithen th'ende is every tal<sup>e</sup>s strengthe,  
And this matere is so bihovely, 261  
What sholde I peynte or drawen it on  
lengthe

To you that ben my frend so feithfully?'—  
And with that word he gan right inwardly  
Biholden her and loken on her face,  
And seyde, 'On swich a mirour gode  
grace!'—

Than thoughte he thus: 'If I my tale endite  
Aught harde, or make a proces any while,  
She shal no savour han therein but lite,  
And trowe I wolde her in my wil bigile;  
For tendr<sup>e</sup> witt<sup>e</sup>s wenen al be wile 271

239. *myn*, H<sub>3</sub>  $\gamma$  omit.

248. *fremde*, so A D only; J *friende*; others  
var. *frende*, *friendly*, etc.

252. *for gode*, so G H<sub>3</sub> etc.; J etc. *for good*.

253. *yen down to*, J R H<sub>3</sub> *look down for to*.

257. *for t' endite*, a etc. *to endite*.

Wher-as they can not pleynlich under-  
stonde :

For-thy her wit to serven wol I fonde.'—

And lokèd on her in a bisy wise ;  
And she was war that he biheld her so,  
And seyde, 'Lord ! so faste ye m' avise !  
Say ye me nevere or now ? What sey ye ?  
No ?'—

'Yis, yis !' quod he, 'and bet wol, or I go !  
But, by my trouthe, I thoughte now if ye  
Be fortunat, for now men shal it see. 280

'For t' every wight som goodly aventure  
Som time is shape, if he it can receiven ;  
And if that he wol take of it no cure  
Whan that it com' th, but wilfulliche it  
weiven,

Lo, neither ca ne fortune him deceiven,  
But right his ownè slouthe and wrecched-  
nesse :

And swich a wight is for to blame, I gesse !

'Good aventure, O belè nece, have ye  
Ful lightly founden, and ye conne it take !  
And, for the love of God and ek of me,  
Cache it anon, lest aventure slake ! 291  
What sholde I lenger proces of it make ?  
Yif me your hond ; for in this world is non,  
If that you list, a wight so wel bi-gon.

'And sith I speke of good intencioun,  
As I to you have told wel her-biforn,  
And love as wel your honour and renoun  
As créature in al this world y-born,  
By alle the oothès that I have you sworn,  
And ye be wroth therfóre, or wene I lye,  
Ne shal I neverè see you eft with ye ! 301

'Beth not agast, ne quaketh not ! Wher-  
to ?

Ne chaungeth naught for ferè so your hewe !  
For hardly the werste of this is do ;  
And though my tale as now be to you newe,  
Yit trist alwey ye shal me findè trewe ;  
And were it thing that me thoughte  
únsittfinge,

To you wolde I no swichè talès bringe.'—

286. *owne*,  $\gamma$  *verray*.

292. *of it*,  $a^2$  H<sub>4</sub> Cx. H<sub>3</sub> to you ; R om.

'Now, my goode em, for Goddès love I  
preye,' 309

Quod she, 'Com off, and tel me what it is !  
For bothe I am agast what ye wol seye,  
And ek me longeth it to wite, y-wis ;  
For whether it be wel or be amis,  
Seyon ! Latmenot in this ferè dwelle !'—  
'So wil I don : now herkneith ! I shal telle !

'Now, necè myn, the kingès derè sone,  
The goodè, wisè, worthy, freshe, and free,  
Which alwey for to do wel is his wone,  
The noble Troilus, so loveth thee, 319  
That, but ye helpe, it wil his banè be.  
Lo, here is al ! What sholde I morè seye ?  
Do what you list, to make him live or deye !

'But if ye lete him deyen, I wil sterve :  
Have here my trouthe, nece, In'il not lye,  
Al sholde I with this knif my throthè  
kerven !'—

With that the terès braste out of his yèn,  
And seyde,— 'If that ye don us bothè dyen  
Thus giltèles, than have ye fisshèd faire !  
What mendè ye, though that we bothe a-  
paire ? 329

'Allas ! he which that is my lord so dere,  
That trewe man, that noble gentil knight,  
That naught desireth but your frendly  
chere,

I see him deyen, ther he go' th up right  
And hasteth him with al his fullè might  
For to be slayn, if his fortune assente.  
Allas, that God you swich a beauté sente !

'If it be so that ye so cruel be 337  
That of his deth you listè not to recche,  
(That is so trewe and worthy as we see),  
No more than of a japer or a wrecche,—  
If ye beswich, your beauté may not strecche  
To make amendes of so cruél a dede !  
Avisèment is good bifore the nede !

309. *my*,  $\gamma^8$  omits.

329. *though*, J H<sub>1</sub> if.

331. *gentil*,  $a^5$  *worthy* ; Cx. omits.

335. *his fortune*, G H<sub>3</sub> Cl. *fortune wolde* ;

H<sub>5</sub> *his fortune wolle*.

338. *you*, J and others *ye*.

339. *we*, so a B ; G  $\gamma$  *ye*.

342. *a*, R H<sub>3</sub> omit.

'Wo worth the fairè gemmè vertules !  
 Wo worth that herbealso that doth no bote !  
 Wo worth that beauté that is routhèles !  
 Wo worth that wight that tret ech under-  
 fote !  
 And ye that ben of beauté crop and rote,  
 If therwithal in you ther be no routhe, <sup>349</sup>  
 Than is it harm ye liven by my trouthe !

'And also thenk wel that it is no gaude ;  
 For me were leverè thou and I and he  
 Were hangéd, than I sholdè be his baude,  
 As hye, as men mighte on us allè see !  
 I am thyn em : the shamè were to me  
 As wel as thee, if that I sholde assente  
 Thorough myn abet, that he thyn honour  
 shente.

'Now understond, for I you naught requere  
 To bindè you to him thorough no biheste,  
 But only that ye make him bettrè chere  
 Than ye han don or this, and morè feste,  
 So that his lif be savèd at the leste : <sup>362</sup>  
 This'al and som, and pleylnly our entente :  
 God help me so, I neverè other mente.

'Lo, this requeste is not but skile y-wis ;  
 Ne doute of reson, pardé, is ther non.  
 I sette the werstè : that ye dredè this,  
 Men woldè wondrensen him come and gon ;  
 And ther-ayeins answére I thus anon, <sup>369</sup>  
 That every wight, but he be fool of kinde,  
 Wol deme it love of frendship in his minde.

'What ! Who wil demen, though he see a  
 man  
 To temple go, that he th' imágès eteth ?  
 Think ek how wel and wisly that he can  
 Góvèrme him-self, that he no thing  
 forgeteth,  
 That wher he com'th he pris and thank  
 him geteth ;  
 And ek therto, he shal come here so selde,  
 What fors were it, though al the town  
 behelde ?

349. *If*, J Cl. *And*.

349. *ther*, J G *ne* ; a Cx. Cp. omit.

351. *that it is*, so J H<sub>2</sub> G H<sub>5</sub> S ; H<sub>1</sub> *that is* ;  
 rest (*that*) *this is*.

369. *And*, R only ; rest omit.

'Swich love of frendès regn'th in al this  
 toun ;  
 And wrye you in that mantel everè mo !  
 And, God so wis be my savacioun, <sup>381</sup>  
 As I have seyde, your best is to do so.  
 But, goodè nece, alwey to stinte his wo,  
 So lat your daunger sucred ben a lite,  
 That of his deth ye be not for to wite.'—

Criseydè, which that herde him in this wise,  
 Thoughte, 'I shal felen what he mene,  
 y-wis !'—

'Now, em,' quod she, 'what woldè ye  
 devise ?

What is your reed I sholdè don of this ?'—  
 'That is wel seyde !' quod he, 'Certein  
 best is, <sup>390</sup>

That ye him love ayein for his lovinge,  
 As love for love is skilful guerdoninge.

'Think ek how eldè wasteth every houre  
 In ech of you a party of beauté ;  
 And therfor, or that agè thee devoure,  
 Go love, for, old, ther wil no wight of thee !  
 Lat this provérbe a lore unto you be :  
 Too late y-war ! quod Beauté, whan it  
 paste :

And Eldè daunteth Daunger at the laste !

'The kingès fool is wont to cryèn loude,  
 Whan that him think'th a womman ber'th  
 her hye, <sup>401</sup>

“So longè mote ye live, and allè proude,  
 Til crowès feet be growe under your ye,  
 And sende you thanne a mirour in to pryè,  
 In which that ye may see your face a-  
 morwe !”

I biddè wisshè you no morè sorwe !'—

With this he stinte, and caste adoun the hed ;  
 And she began to breste a-wepe anon,

379. *in*, so P H<sub>2</sub> R Cx. S<sub>1</sub> ; G *thour* ; J etc.  
 omit. (See C. T. B 776.)

380. *wrye*, a<sup>2</sup> *covere* ; *y wrye*.

383. *goodè nece*, *alwey*, *γ<sup>8</sup> alwey*, *good(e) nece*.

384. *So*, a<sup>b</sup> omit.

385. *not for to*, a<sup>2</sup> *nothing to* ; Cx. H<sub>1</sub> Cl.  
*no(ugh)t to*.

387. *he*, H<sub>4</sub> G H<sub>3</sub> Cx. *ye*.

403. *de groue*, so J R *γ* ; a *β* *be waxe*.

406. *I*, *γ<sup>8</sup> Nece*, *I*.



And seyde, 'Allas, for wo ! Why n'ere  
I ded ? <sup>409</sup>

For of this world the feith is al a-gon !  
Allas ! What sholden straungè to me don,  
Whan he that for my bestè frend I wende,  
Ret me to love, and sholde it me defende ?

'Allas ! I wolde han trusted, doutèles,  
That if that I thorough my disáventure  
Had lovèd outhir him or Achillès,  
Ector, or any mannès créature,  
Ye n'olde han had no mercy ne mesure  
On me, but alwey had me in repreve ! <sup>419</sup>  
This falsè world, allas, who may it leve ?

'What ! Is this al the joye and al the feste ?  
Is this your red ? Is this my blisful cas ?  
Is this the verray mede of your biheste ?  
Is al this peynted proces seyd, allas,  
Right for this fyn ? O Lady myn, Pallas,  
Thou in this dredful cas for me purveye,  
For so astonèd am I that I deye !'

With that she gan ful sorrowfully to sike.—  
'A ! may it be no bet ?' quod Pandarus ;  
'By God I shal no more come here this  
wike,  
And God to-forn, that am mistrusted thus !  
I see wel that ye settè lite of us, <sup>432</sup>  
Or of our deth ! Allas, I woful wrecche !  
Mighte he yit live, of me were naught to  
recche !

'O cruel God, O díspitousè Marte !  
O Furies three of helle, on you I crye !  
So lat me nevere out of this hous departe,  
If that I mentè harm or vilanye !  
But sith I see my lord mot nedès dye,  
And I with him, here I me shrive, and seye  
That wikkedly ye don us bothè deye ! <sup>441</sup>

'But sith it liketh you that I be ded,  
By Neptunus, that God is of the see,  
Fro this forth shal I neverè etè bred  
Til I myn ownè hertè blood may see !  
For certein I wol deye as sone as he.'—  
And up he sterte, and on his wey he raughte,  
Til she agayn him by the lappè caughte.

432. *wel*,  $\gamma^8$  *ful wel*.

434. *were*, so J H<sub>4</sub> R Cx. H<sub>3</sub>; others *is*.

Criseyde, which that wel nigh starf for fere,  
So as she was the ferfullestè wight <sup>450</sup>  
That mightè be, and herde ek with her ere  
And saw the sorrowful ernest of the knight,  
And in his prayèr ek saw non unright,  
And for the harm that mighte ek fallè more,  
She gan to reweand drede her wonder sore,

And thoughtè thus : 'Unhappès fallen  
thikke

Alday for love, and in swich maner cas  
As men ben cruel in hemself and wikke ;  
And if this man slee here himself, allas,  
In my presènce, it n'il be no solàs ! <sup>460</sup>  
What men wolde of it deme I can not seye :  
It nedeth me ful sleighly for to pleye !'—

And with a sorrowful sik she seyde thrye,  
'A ! Lord ! What me is tid a sory chance !  
For myn estat l'ith in a jupartye,  
And ek myn emès lif is in baláunce !  
But nathèles with Goddès governaunce  
I shal so don, myn honour shal I kepe,  
And ek his lif !'—and stintè for to wepe.

'Of harmès two the lesse is for to chese :  
Yit have I leverè maken him good chere  
In honour, than myn emès lif to lese ! <sup>472</sup>  
Ye seyn, ye nothing ellès me requere ?'  
'No, wis,' quod he, 'myn ownè necè  
dere !'—

'Now wel !' quod she, 'and I wol do  
my peyne !

I shal myn herte ayein my lust constreyne,

'But that I n'il not holden him in honde ;  
Ne love a man ne can I naught, ne may  
Ayeins my wil ; but ellès wil I fonde, <sup>479</sup>  
Myn honour sauf, plese him fro day to day.  
Ther-to n'olde I not onès have seyde nay,  
But-that I drede as in my fantasye ;  
But, cessè cause, ay cesseth maladye !

454. *harm that mighte ek*,  $\alpha^3$  J *harm ek that might*.

457. *and*,  $\alpha^3$  R Cx. omit.

460. *nil*, so  $\alpha^3$  J; others *wil, wol*.

465. *lith in a*, so H<sub>2</sub> H<sub>4</sub> H<sub>3</sub> R; *lith in*, J P

G H<sub>5</sub> Cx.;  $\gamma$  *lith now in* (Cl. *now lith in*).

467. *Goddès*, H<sub>2</sub> H<sub>4</sub> H<sub>3</sub> H<sub>5</sub> D *gode* (*good*).

478, 479.  $\alpha^3$  read: *Ne love no (a) man, that can*

*no wight ne may Ayeins his wil*.

482. *drede*, Cp. *dredde*.

'But here I make a protestacioun,  
That in this proces if ye depper go,  
That certainly for no savacioun  
Of you, though that ye sterven bothè two,  
Though al the world on oo day be my fo,  
Ne shal I nevere of him han other routhe!'  
'I grantè wel,' quod Pandar, 'by my  
trouthe! 490

'But may I trustè wel to you,' quod he,  
'That of this thing that yehan hightme here  
Ye wol it holden trewely to me?'—  
'Ye, doutèles,' quod she, 'myn unclè  
dere!'—  
'Ne that I shal han cause in this matère,'  
Quod he, 'to pleyne, or ofter you to preche?'  
'Why, no, pardè! What nedeth more  
speche?'

Tho fillen they in othré talés glade,  
Til at the laste, 'O goodeem,' quod she tho,  
'For love of God which that us bothè  
made,  
Tel me how first ye wisten of his wo! 501  
Wot non of it but ye?'—He seyde,  
'No!'—  
'Can he wel speke of love?' quod she;  
'I preye,  
Tel me; for I the bet me shal purveye.'—

Tho Pandarus a litel gan to smile,  
And seyde, 'By my trouthe I shal you telle!  
This other day, not gon ful longè while,  
With-in the paleis gardin, by a welle,  
Gan he and I wel half a day to dwelle,  
Right for to speken of an ordinaunce 510  
How we the Grekès mighten disavaunce.

Sone after that bigonnè we to lepe,  
And casten with our dartès to and fro,  
Til at the laste he seyde he woldè slepe;  
And on the gres a-doun he leyde him tho;  
And I afer gan romen to and fro,

491. *to you*,  $\gamma^8$  *ther-to*.

493. *to*, so P H<sub>2</sub> H<sub>5</sub>; others *unto*.

500. *love of God*, H<sub>4</sub> *the love*; H<sub>3</sub> Cx.  $\gamma^8$  *his love*.

504. *me shal*, a<sup>3</sup> etc. *shal me*.

508. *With-in*,  $\gamma^8$  *In-with*.

516. *I afer*, so J R only; P H<sub>2</sub> yn a *ferè* (!); H<sub>4</sub> G H<sub>5</sub> etc. *after*;  $\gamma^8$  *ther-after*.

Til that I herde, as that I welk allone,  
How he bigan ful wofully to grone.

'Tho gan I stalke him softely behinde;  
And, sikerly the sothè for to seyne 520  
As I can clepe ayein now to my minde,  
Right thus to Love he gan him for to  
pleyne:

He seyde, "Lord, have routhe upon my  
peyne!  
Al have I ben rebel in myn entente,  
Now, mea culpa, Lord, I me repente!"

"O God, that at thy disposicioun  
Ledest the fyn, by justè púrveyaunce,  
Of every wight, my lowe confessioun 528  
Accepte ingré, and send meswich penaunce  
As liketh thee; but from desésperaunce,  
That may my gost departe away fro thee,  
Thou be my sheld, for thy benigneté!"

"For certès, Lord, so sore hath she me  
wounded,  
That stood in blak, with loking of heryen,  
That to myn hertès botme it is y-sounded,  
Thorough which I wot that I mot nedès dyen.  
This is the worste: I dar me not biwryen;  
And wel the hotter ben the gledès rede,  
That men hem wryen with asshen pale and  
dede." 539

'With that he smot his hed a-doun anon,  
And gan to muttre, I n'ot what trewely;  
And I with that gan stille away to gon,  
And leet ther-of as no-thing wist had I,  
And com ayein a-non, and stood him by,  
And seyde, "Awak, ye slepen al too longe!  
It semeth not that Lovè doth you longe,

"That slepen so that no man may you  
wake!  
Who say everè or this so dul a man?"  
"Ye, frend," quod he, "do ye your hedès  
ake

521. *now*, so J H<sub>4</sub> etc.; a<sup>4</sup> R Cx. A omit.

523. *routhe upon*, J R Cl. *routhe on*; H<sub>4</sub> G H<sub>5</sub>  
*mercy on* (of).

539. *wryen*; J H<sub>1</sub> *wren*.

548. *everè or this*, G or *this everè* (read ? *everè*  
*sey or*).

For love, and lat me liven as I can !” 550  
 But though that he for wo was pale and wan,  
 Yit made he tho as fressh a countenance  
 As though he sholde have led the newe  
 daunce !

‘ This passèd forth, til now this other day  
 It fil that I com roming al allone  
 Into his chaumbre, and fond how that he  
 lay  
 Upon his bed. But man so sorè grone  
 Ne herde I nevere. And what that was  
 his mone  
 Ne wiste I not ; for, as I was comfinge,  
 Al sodeynly he left his complayninge ; 560

‘ Of which I took som-what suspeciou ;  
 And ner I com and fond he weptè sore ;  
 And, God so wis be my savacioun,  
 As nevere of thing hadde I no routhè more ;  
 For neither with engine ne with no lore  
 Unnethès mighte I fro the deth him kepe,  
 That yit fele I myn hertè for him wepe.

‘ And God wot, neverè sith that I was born  
 Was I so besy no man for to preche, 569  
 Ne neverè was to wight so depe y-sworn,  
 Or he me tolde who mightè ben his leche !  
 But now to you rehersen al his speche,  
 Or alle his woful wordès for to soune,  
 Ne bid me naught, but ye wol see me  
 swoune !

‘ But for to save his lif, and ellès nought,  
 And to non harm of you, thus am I driven.  
 And for the love of God that us hath  
 wrought,  
 Swich chere him doth, that he and I may  
 liven !  
 Now have I plat to you myn hertè shriven ;  
 And sith ye wot that myn entente is clene,  
 Tak hede ther-of, for I non yvel mene. 581

‘ And right good thrift, I preye to God,  
 have ye,  
 That have swich oony-caught withoutè net !  
 And, be ye wis as ye be fair to see,

551. *wo*, J G *love*.568. *nevere sith that*, J R *that nevere sith*.579. *shriven*, J P I-*shriven*.

Wel in the ring than is the ruby set !  
 Ther werè neverè two so wel y-met !  
 When ye ben his al hool as he is youre,  
 Ther mighty God yit graunte us see that  
 heure !” — 588

‘ Nay, therof spak I not, aha !’ quod she,  
 ‘ As help me God, ye shenden every del !’  
 ‘ A ! mercy, derè nece !’ anon quod he,  
 ‘ What-so I spak, I mentè not but wel,  
 By Mars, the God that helmèd is of stel !  
 Now beth not wroth, my blood, my necè  
 dere !’  
 ‘ Now wel !’ quod she, ‘ foryeven be it  
 here !’

With this he took his leve and hom he  
 wente ;  
 And, Lord, so he was glad and wel bigon !  
 Crisycde aros, no lenger she ne stente,  
 But streight into her closet wente anon, 599  
 And sette her doun as stille as any ston,  
 And every word gan up and doun to winde  
 That he had seyde, as it com her to minde ;

And was somdel astonèd in her thought  
 Right for the newè cas. But whan that she  
 Was ful avisèd, tho fond she right nought  
 Of peril, why she oughte aferèd be ;  
 For man may love, of possibilité,  
 A womman, so his hertè may to-breste,  
 And she not love ayein, but-if her leste.

But as she sat allone and thoughtè thus,  
 Ascry aros at scarmuch al withoute, 611  
 And men cri’de in the strete, ‘ See, Troilus  
 Hath right now put to flight the Grekès  
 route !’

With that gan al her meynè for to shoute,  
 ‘ A ! Go we see ! Caste up the latis wide !  
 For thorough this strete he mot to paleys ride ;

588. *yit graunte us see*, so G H<sub>5</sub> R, etc. ; J Cp-  
*graunte us see* ; a<sup>3</sup> *us graunte to see*.591. *A*, y<sup>8</sup> *O*.597. *And*, a<sup>4</sup> *Ye* ; R Cx. H<sub>3</sub> *A*.597. *so*, a<sup>2</sup> y<sup>6</sup> omit ; G H<sub>5</sub> *how*.603. *was*, a<sup>5</sup> *wex*.606. *afered be*, a R Cx. *aferd to be*.611. *Ascry*, H<sub>4</sub> G *Th’ ascry*.615. *latis*, so H<sub>2</sub> only ; P H<sub>4</sub> G Cx. *zatis* ; J etc.  
*yates*.

'For other wey is fro the yatè non  
Of Dardanus, ther open is the cheyne !'  
With that com he and al his folk anon  
An esy pas, riding in routès tweyne, <sup>620</sup>  
Right as his happy day was, soth to seyne,  
For-which, men seith, may not distorbéd be  
That shal bitiden of necessité.

This Troilus sat on his bayè stede,  
Al arméd save his hed ful richèly ;  
And wounded was his hors, and gan to  
blede,

On which he rod a pas ful softèly.  
But swich a knightly sightè trewèly  
As was on him, was not withouten faile  
To loke on Mars, that God is of bataile !

So lik a man of armès and a knight <sup>631</sup>  
He was to sen, fulfil'd of heigh prowessse ;  
For bothe he hadde a body and a might  
To don that thing, as well as hardinesse ;  
And ek to sen him in his gere him dresse,  
So fressh, so yong, so weldy seméd he,  
It was an hevене upon him for to see !

His helm to-hewèn was in twenty places,  
That by a tissu heng his bak bihinde ;  
His sheld to-dasshéd was with swerdes and  
maces, <sup>640</sup>

In which men mightè many an arwè finde  
That thirléd haddè horn and nerf and rinde ;  
And ay the peplè cri'de, 'Here com'th  
our joye !

And next his brother, holder up of Troye !'

For which he wex a litel red for shame,  
Whan he the peple upon him herdè cryen,  
That to beholde it was a noblè game,  
How sobrelliche he castè doum his yèn.  
How sobrelliche he castè doum his yèn.  
Criseyde anon gan al his chere aspyen,  
And let so softe it in her hertè sinke <sup>650</sup>  
That to her-self she seyde, 'Who yaf me  
drinke ?'

617. *is*, J Cl. *is ther. fro, γ to.*

636. *weldy*, so a *γ*; β *worthy*.

640. *swerdes*, a<sup>2</sup> H<sub>3</sub> *swerd*.

642. *horn and*, a<sup>2</sup> *bothe*.

646. *he the peple*, etc., a<sup>5</sup> *he so herde the peple on him cryen*.

648. *doun*, a<sup>5</sup> R *adoun*.

649. *Criseyde anon*, so a<sup>2</sup> R; rest *Criseyde, Criseyda*.

650. *it*, J H<sub>4</sub> Ad. Cp. omit.

For of her ownè thought she wex al red,  
Remembring her right thus, 'Lo, this is he  
Which that myn unclè swer'th he mot be  
ded

But I on him have mercy and pitè ;  
And with that purè thought for-shaméd, she  
Gan in her hed to pulle, and that as faste,  
Whil he and al the peplè for-by paste ;

And gan to caste and rollen up and doum  
Within her thought his excellent prowessse,  
And his estat, and also his renoun, <sup>661</sup>  
His wit, his shap, and ek his gentillesse ;  
But most her favour was, for his distresse  
Was al for her, and thoughte it was a routhe  
To slenswichoon, if that he mentè trouthe.

Now mightè som envíous janglè thus :  
'This was a sodein love ! How mighte  
it be,

That she so lightly lovèd Troilus  
Right for the firstè sightè ?'—Ye, pardé !  
Now, who-so seith so, mote he neverè thé !  
For every thing a ginning hath it nede <sup>671</sup>  
Or al be wrought, withouten any drede.

For I seye not that she so sodeinly  
Yaf him her love, but that she gan encline  
To like him first ; and I have told you  
why ;

And after that, his manhod and his pine  
Made love within her hertè for to mine :  
For-which by proces and by good servise  
He gat her love, and in no sodein wise.

And also blisful Venus, wel arrayed, <sup>680</sup>  
Sat in her seventhè hous of hevènè tho,  
Disposéd wel, and with aspèctès payed,  
To helpen sely Troilus of his wo ;  
And, soth to seyn, she n'as not al a fo  
To Troilus in his nativité :  
God wot that wel the soner speddè he !

656. (?) MSS. var. ; a<sup>2</sup> *And for that thought pure ashamyd she* ; G J etc. *γ And with that thought (J word) for pure (a)shamed she*.

670. *seith*, J H<sub>3</sub> *seyde*.

671. *mote he nevere*, a<sup>5</sup> *nevere mote he*.

671. *a*, G R of.

677. *within*, R Cx. *in*.

677. *herte*, so a<sup>2</sup> Cx. H<sub>3</sub> S<sub>2</sub> Dg. ; R *inwardly* ; rest omit.

679. *gat*, a<sup>5</sup> *wan*.

Now lat us stinte of Troilus a throwe,  
That rideth forth ; and let us tornè faste  
Unto Criseyde, that heng her hed ful lowe,  
Ther-as she sat alone, and gan to caste 690  
Wher-onshe wolde apoynte her at the laste,  
If it so were her em ne woldè cesse  
For Troilus upon her for to presse.

And, Lord ! so she gan in her herte arguwe  
In this matère of which I have you told ;  
And what to don best were, and what  
t' eschuwe,

That plited she ful ofte in many fold :  
Now was her hertè warm, now was it cold ;  
And what she thoughtè som-what shal I  
write,  
As to myn auctour listeth for t' endite. 700

She thoughtè first that Troilus' persóne  
She knew by sighte, and ek his gentillesse ;  
And also thoughte, ' It werè not to done  
To graunte him love ; yit for his worthi-  
nesse

It were honóur, with pley and with  
gladnése,  
In honesté with swich a lord to dele,  
For myn estat, and also for his hele.

' Ek wel wot I my kingés sone is he,  
And sith he hath to see me swich delit,  
If I wolde outréliche his sightè flee, 710  
Paraunter he mighte have me in despit,  
Thorgh which I mightè stonde in worsè  
plit :

Now were I wis, me haté to purchase  
Withoutè nede, ther I may stonde in grace ?

' In every thing I wot ther li'th mesúre :  
For though a man forbedè dronkenesse,  
He naught forbet, that every créature  
Be drinkèles for alwey, as I gesse ;  
Ek sith I wot for me is his distresse,

694. *And*, J H<sub>4</sub> A.  
694. *so*, H<sub>4</sub> G *hovv*.  
694. *herte*, so a<sup>2</sup> J R H<sub>3</sub> S<sub>2</sub> Dg. ; rest *thought*.  
696. *t' eschuwe*, so a<sup>4</sup> Cx. S<sub>2</sub> Dg. ; rest *eschewe*.  
697. *many*, G H<sub>5</sub> R Cx. H<sub>3</sub> S *many a*.  
701. *first*, so a<sup>3</sup> J R ; G H<sub>5</sub> *ek this* ; Cx. H<sub>3</sub>  
wel.  
703. *And also thoughte*, etc., so H<sub>4</sub> J R ; a<sup>4</sup>  
*And seyde thus*, ' *Al were it not*, etc. ; Cx. H<sub>3</sub>  
wel *And thus she seyde*, ' *Al were it not*, etc.

I oughtè not for that thing him despise,  
If it be so, he men'th in goodè wise. 721

' And ek I knowe, of longè time agon,  
His thewès goode, and that he is not nice.  
N'avauntour, seith men, certeyn, he is  
non ;

Too wis is he to don so gret a vice ;  
Ne als I n'il him neverè so cherice  
That he may make avaunt by justè cause ;  
He shal me neverè binde in swich a clause.

' Now sette a cas, the hardest is, y-wis :  
Men mighten demen that he loveth me.  
What dishonour to myn estat is this ? 731  
May ich him lette of that ? Why nay,  
pardé !

I knowe also, and alday here and see,  
Men loven wommen al biside hir leve ;  
And whan hem list no morè, lat hem leve !

' Ek wot I wel he worthy is to have  
Of women in this world the thristieste,  
As ferforth as she may her honour save ;  
For out and out he is the worthieste, 739  
Save only Ector, which that is the beste ;  
And yit his lif li'th al now in my cure !  
But swich is love, and ek myn aventure !

' Ne me to love, a wonder is it nought ;  
For wel wot I myself, so God me spede,  
Al wolde I that no man wiste of my  
thought,

I am oon of the fairest out of drede  
And goodlieste, who-so taketh hede ;

720. *oughte*, so J H<sub>2</sub> H<sub>4</sub> R ; rest *n'oughte*.  
721. *If it be*, so J H<sub>4</sub> R ; rest *Sith it is*.  
726. *als*, J G H<sub>5</sub> *also*.  
734, 735. *al biside*, etc. a<sup>4</sup> (and Ad. altered) *al  
this toun aboute Be they the wers ? Why nay,  
withouten doute !* (Boc.)  
735. *leve*, so J H<sub>4</sub> H<sub>3</sub> R Cx. ; *γ bileve*. (See i.  
686.)  
736, 737. *Ek wot I*, etc., so J H<sub>4</sub> R ; rest *I  
thenke ek how he able is for to have, Of al this  
noble toun the thristieste* (γ<sup>5</sup> insert *ilke* before  
*noble*).  
738. *As ferforth as she may*, so J H<sub>4</sub> R ; a<sup>4</sup>  
*That womman is*, so she ; Cx. H<sub>3</sub> γ<sup>5</sup> *To beu his  
love, so she*.  
741. *li'th al now*, so J ; MSS. var. order.  
745. *no man*, γ<sup>5</sup> *noon*.  
746. *of*, a<sup>2</sup> Cx. H<sub>3</sub> γ<sup>4</sup> omit (read ? *That I am  
oon the fairest*).  
746. *out of*, a<sup>3</sup> Cx. *withouten*.

And so men seyn in al the town of Troye.  
What wonder is, though he of me have  
joye?

'I am myn ownè womman, wel at ese,  
I thanke it God, as after myn estat, 751  
Rightyong, and stondeuntey'd in lustylese,  
Withouten jalouysye or swich debat :  
Shal non housbóndé seyn to me "Chek-  
mat !"

For either they ben ful of jalouysye,  
Or maisterful, or loven novelrye.

'What shal I don? To what fyn live I  
thus?

Shal I not love, in cas if that me leste?  
What, pardé ! I am not religious !  
And though that I myn herté sette at reste  
Upon this knight that is the worthieste, 761  
And kepe alwey myn honour and my name,  
By allé right it may do me no shame !'

But right as whan the sonnè shineth brighte  
In March that chaungeth ofté time his face,  
And that a cloude is put with wind to flighte,  
Which oversprat the sonne as for a space,  
A cloudy thought gan thourgh her soulé  
pace,

That overspradde her brighté thoughtès  
alle,

So that for fere almóste she gan to falle.

That thought was this: 'Allas ! sith I am  
free, 771

Sholde I now love, and putte in jupartye  
My sikernesse, and thrallen libérté?

Allas ! how dorste I thenken that folýe ?  
May I not wel in other folk aspye

Hir dreadful joye, hir cónstreynt, and hir  
peyne?

Ther loveth non that she n'ath why to  
pleyne !

749. *is*, so J etc.; a<sup>3</sup> etc. *is it*; G *ist*.

751. *after*, J R *of*; Cx. *for*.

758. *if*, J *be*; a<sup>3</sup> omit.

759. *paridé*, J *y pardieux*.

759. *not*, H<sub>3</sub> Cx. *no*.

761. *Upon this knight*, J *unwist of him*.

768. *soule*, so J G *y*; a<sup>3</sup> R Cx. H<sub>3</sub> *herte*.

775. *in*, J *by*.

777. *why*, so G Ad. only; J *wex* (!); rest *wey*.  
(*Wey*, meaning *woe*, may be the correct reading.)

'For love is yit the mosté stormy lif,  
Right of himself, that everé was bigonne ;  
For everé som mistrust or nicé strif 780  
Ther is in love, som cloude is over that  
sonne ;

Therto we wrecched women nothing  
conne

Whan us is wo, but wepe, and sitte and  
thinke :

Our wreche is this, our ownè wo to drinke.

'Also these wikked tongès ben so prest  
To speke us harm, ek men ben sountrewe,  
That, right anon as cesséd is hir lest,  
So cesseth love, and forth to love a-newe !  
But harm y-don is don, who-so it rewe !  
For though these men for love hem first to-  
rende, 790

Ful sharp biginning breketh ofte at ende.

'How ofté time hath it y-knowén be,  
The tresoun that to wommen hath be do !  
To what fyn is swich love, I can not see,  
Or wher becom'th it whan it is a-go ;  
Ther is no wight that wot, I trowé so,  
Wher it becom'th : lo, no wight on it  
sporneth :

That erst was no thing, into nought it  
torneth.

'How bisy, if I love, ek moste I be  
To plesen hem that jangle of love and  
demen, 800

And coye hem, that they seyn non harm of  
me ;

For, though ther be no causé, yit hem semen  
Al be for harm that folk hir frendès quemen ;  
And who may stoppen every wikked tonge,  
Or soun of bellès whil that they be ronge?

And after that her thought began to clere,  
And seyde, 'He which that nothing under-  
taketh,

Nothing acheveth, be him loth or dere.'

781. *that*, G Cx. *the*.

783. *wepe and sitte*, a<sup>5</sup> Cx. *sitte (and) wepe*.

784. *to*, G R H<sub>3</sub> *we*.

792. *hath it y-knowen be*, so Cx. H<sub>3</sub> *y*; a<sup>5</sup> J R  
*may men rede and see*.

800. *demen*, so a; J and others *dremen*.

801. *that*, *y* omit.

808. *acheveth*, *y n'acheveth*.

And with another thought her herté  
quaketh ;

Than slepeth hope, and after drede  
awaketh ; 810

Nowhot, now cold ; but thus betwixé tweye  
She rist her up, and wente her for to pleye.

A-down the stayre anon right tho she wente  
Into the gardin, with her neces three ;

And upanddown theymaden manya wente,  
Flexippe and she, Tarbe and Antigone,

To pleyén, that it joyé was to see ;  
And other of her wommen, a gret route,

Her folwed in the gardin al aboute.

This yerd was large, and railéd alle th'  
aléyes, 820

Andshadwed wel with blosmy bowés grene ;  
Y-benchéd newe, andsondedalle the weyes,

In which she walketh arm in arm bitwene ;  
Til at the laste Antigoné the shene

Gan on a Trojan lay to singen clere,  
That it an hevené was her vois to here.

She seyde, 'O Love, to whom I have and  
shal

Ben humblé subgit, trewe in myn entente  
As I best can, to you, Lord, give ich al

For everé mo myn hertés lust to rente ! 830  
For neveré yit thy gracé no wight sente

So blisful cause as me, my lif to lede  
In allé joye and seurté, out of drede.

'Ye, blisful God, han me so wel biset  
In love, y-wis, that al that bereth lif

Imaginien ne coude how to be bet ;  
For, Lord, withouten jalousye or strif,

[I lovè oon which is most éntentif

To serven wel, unwery or unfeyned,  
That everé was, and leest with harm dis-  
teyned. 840

'As he that is the welle of worthinesse,  
Of trouthé ground, mirour of goodlihed,  
Of wit Apollo, ston of sikernesse,  
Of vertu rote, of lust findére and hed,  
Thorough which is allé sorwé fro'me ded,—  
Y-wis, I love him best, so doth he me :  
Now good thrift have he, wher-so that  
he be !

'Whom sholde I thanken but you, God  
of Love,

Of al this blisse, in which to bathe I ginne ?  
And thanked be ye, Lord, for that I love !

This is the righté lif that I am inne, 851  
To flemen allé maner vice and sinne !

This doth me so to vertu for t' entende,  
That day by day I in my wil amende.

'And who-so seith that for to love is vice,  
Or thraldom, though he fele in it distresse,

He outhér is envlous or right nice,  
Or is unmighty, for his shrewédnesse,

To love. Lo, swiché maner folk, I gesse,  
Defamen Love, as nothing of him knowe :

They speken, but they benten nevere his  
bowe ! 861

'What ! Is the sonnè wers of kindé right,  
Though that a man, for feblesse of his

yén,  
May not endure on it to see for bright ?

Or love the wers, though wrecches on it  
cryen ?

Nowele is worth, that mayno sorwé dryen ;  
And for-thy, who that hath a hed of verre,

For cast of stonés war him in the werre !

'But I with al myn herte and al my might,  
As I have seyde, wol love unto my laste 870

My deré herte, and al myn owné knight ;  
In which myn herté growén is so faste,

840. *disteyned*, so G R Cp. and others ; J and  
others *distreyned*.

843. *sikernesse*, J H<sub>4</sub> Cx. S H<sub>1</sub> Cl. *secrenesse*.

850. *ye*, a<sup>2</sup> J C<sup>2</sup> *thou*.

859. *Lo*, so J H<sub>4</sub> R ; rest *For*.

868. *For*, so J H<sub>4</sub> R D ; others *Fro*.

812. *wente her*, J G<sup>2</sup> *wente*.

813. *A-down*, J H<sub>4</sub> R *And down*.

814. *the*, J R *her* ; a<sup>2</sup> *a*.

815. *they*,  $\gamma^6$  *ther* ; H<sub>3</sub> *the*.

816. *and she*,  $\gamma^6$  *she*.

821. *blosmy*, H<sub>4</sub> Cx. H<sub>3</sub> *blosmed* (see *Rom*.  
*ose*, 108).

822. *Y-benchéd*, P R H<sub>5</sub>  $\gamma^6$  *And benchéd*.

825. *lay*, so a<sup>5</sup> J R ; Cx. H<sub>3</sub>  $\gamma^7$  *song*.

834. *Ye*, J Cx. and others *The*.

834. *han*, J Cx. *hath*.

835. *al*, H<sub>4</sub> H<sub>1</sub> *alle*.

835. *bereth*, P H<sub>4</sub> R *beryn*.

837. *or*, J *and*.

838. *which is most*, so a<sup>2</sup> J H<sub>5</sub> Cx. D Cl. ; G

H<sub>3</sub> S<sub>2</sub> *which that is most* ; H<sub>4</sub> A H<sub>1</sub> Cp  
*hich that most is*.

And his in me, that it shal everè laste :  
Al dredde I first to love him to biginne,  
Now wot I wel ther is no peril inne !'

And of her song right with that word she  
stente ;

And therwithal, 'Now, necé,' quod  
Criseyde,

'Who made this song now with so good  
entente ?'

Antigoné answérde anon and seyde,  
'Madame, y-wis, the goodlieste mayde  
Of gret estat in al the toun of Troye, 881  
And let her lif in most honour and joye.'

'For-sothé so it semeth by her song !'  
Quod tho Criseyde, and gan ther-with to  
site,

And seyde, 'Lord, is ther such blisse among  
These lovers, as they conné faire endite ?'  
'Ye, wis !' quod fresshe Antigoné the white,  
'For alle the folk that han or ben on-live  
Ne conné wel the blisse of love discrive.

'But wené ye that every wrecché wot 890  
The parfít blisse of lové ? Nay, y-wis !  
They wenen al be love, if oon be hot !  
Do wey, do wey, they wot no thing of this !  
Men mosten axe at seintés, if it is  
Aught fair in hevené, (why? for they  
can telle !)  
And axen fendes if it be foul in helle.'

Criseyde therto no-thing her answérde,  
But seyde, 'Y-wis, it wol be night as faste !'  
But every word which that she of her herde,  
She gan to prenten in her herté faste ; 900  
And ay gan love her lassé for t' agaste

874. *dredde*, J etc. *drede*.

878. *now with*, so J H<sub>4</sub> R H<sub>3</sub> γ (exc. Cl.);  
others *with*.

879. *answérde anon*, J *anon answerde*; G<sup>2</sup>  
omit *anon*.

884. *site* (?), all *sike*, *syke*. (Skeat's emendation  
is here adopted, to avoid the assonant rhyme.)

891. *Nay*, so a β; J γ *Why, nay*.

896. *axen*, J G<sup>2</sup> *axeth*.

896. *if it be*, so a β; J H<sub>3</sub> γ *is it*.

897. *therto no-thing her*, so a β (var. order, J  
*nothing therto her*); Cx. H<sub>3</sub> γ *unto that purpos*  
*nought* (S lyte).

901. *love*, J P omit; G *sche*.

Than it dide erst, and sinke in her herte,  
That she wex somewhat able to converte.

The dayés honour, and the hevenés ye,  
The nightés fo, (al this clepe I the sonne)  
Gan westren faste, and downward for to

wrye,  
As he that hadde his dayés cours y-ronne ;  
And whité thingés gan to waxen donne  
For lak of light, and sterrés for t' apere,  
That she and alle her folk in wente i-feré.

So when it likéd her to gon to reste, 911  
And voided werén tho that voiden oughte,  
She seyde that to slepen wel her leste :  
Her women sone unto her bed her broughte.  
Whan al was hust tho lay she stille and  
thoughte

Of al this thing ; the maner and the wise  
Reherse it nedeth nought, for ye ben wise !

A nightingale upon a cedré grene  
Under the chambré wal ther-as she lay,  
Ful loudé song ayein the moné shene, 920  
Paraunter, in his briddés wise, a lay  
Of lové which that made his herté gay ;  
Him herkned she so longe in good entente.  
That at the laste the dedé slep her hente.

And as she slep, anon right tho her metté  
How that an egle, fetheréd whit as bon,  
Under her brest his longé clawés sette,  
And out her herté rente, and that anon,  
And dide his herte into her brest to gon  
Of which she nought agroos, ne no-thing  
smerte ; 930  
And forth he fleigh, with herté left fo  
herte.

Now lat her slepe, and we our talés hold  
Of Troilus, that is to paleis riden

908. *gan to waxen*, so a β; Cx. H<sub>3</sub> γ *waxen*  
*dimme and*.

910. *in*, so J H<sub>5</sub> R H<sub>3</sub> γ; a<sup>3</sup> G Cx. *hom*.

912. *tho*, H<sub>4</sub> γ *they*.

914. *unto*, γ *til*.

922. *which that*, etc., so a β (a<sup>2</sup> *her* for *his*)  
Cx. H<sub>3</sub> γ *that made her herte fressh and gay*.

923. *Him*, so J H<sub>4</sub> R H<sub>5</sub>; a<sup>2</sup> *Her*; others *Tha*

924. *That*, a etc. *Til*.

928. *rente*, H<sub>5</sub> H<sub>3</sub> γ *he rente*.



Fro th' ilkè scarmuch of the whiche I tolde,  
And in his chambrè sit and hath abiden,  
Til two or three of his messâges yeden  
For Pandarus, and soughten him so faste,  
Til they him founde and broughte him at  
the laste.

This Pandarus com leping in at ones, 939  
And seyde thus, 'Who hath ben wel y-bete  
To-day, with swerdès and with slingè-  
stones,  
But Troilus, that hath caught him an hete !'  
And gan to jape, and seyde, 'Lord, ye  
swete !

But ris and lat us soupe and go to reste !'  
And he answèrdé, 'Do we as thee leste !'

With al the hastè goodly that they mighte,  
They spedde hem fro the soper and to bedde ;  
And every wight out at the dore him dighte,  
And wher him liste upon his wey him  
spedde :

But Troilus, that thoughte his hertè bledde  
For wo, til that he herdè som tidinge, 951  
Heseyde, 'Frend, shal I now wepe or singe ?'

Quod Pandarus, 'Bestille, and lat me slepe,  
And don thy hood ; thy nedès spedde be !  
And chees if thou wolt daunce, or singe,  
or lepe !

At shortè wordès, thou shalt truste in me !  
sirè, my necè wol don wel by thee  
and love thee best, by God and by my  
trouthe, 958  
But lak of pûrsuit make it in thy slouthe !

For thus ferforth have I thy werk bigonne  
ro day to day, til this day by the morwe  
er love of friendship have I to thee wonne,

934. *th' ilke (?)*, all *the*.

937. *so*,  $\gamma$  *ful*.

943. *ye*,  $a^2$   $\gamma^4$  *so ye*.

945. *answèrde*,  $H_3$   $\gamma^7$  *answerde him*.

947. *and to*, so  $J H_4 G^2 R Cx. H_3$ ;  $a^2$  *to her*;  
*unto*.

949. *him spedde*,  $\gamma^3$  *he spedde*.

950. *that*,  $\gamma^6$  omits.

953. *Be*, so  $J R Cx. H_3$ ; rest *Ly*.

955. *daunce, or singe*, so  $J Da^2$ ;  $R$  *daunce, singe*;

$G^2 Cx. H_3$  *singe, daunce*;  $\gamma$  *singe or daunce*.

956. *truste in*, so  $J$  etc.;  $a^3$  *trust to*;  $\gamma$  *troue*.

957. *Sire*,  $Cx. And$  (read? *And sir*).

960. *have I, J I have I (!)*;  $H_3$   $\gamma$  *I have*.

And therto hath she leyd her feith to borwe :  
Algate a foot is hameled of thy sorwe !'—  
What sholde I lenger sermoun of it holde ?  
As ye han herd bifore, al he him tolde.

But right as flourès, thorough the cold of night  
Y-closèd, stouping on hir stalkès lowe,  
Redressen hem ayein the sonnè bright, 969  
And spreden on hir kindè cours by rowe,  
Right so gan tho his  $\gamma$ en up to throwe  
This Troilus, and seyde, 'O Venus dere,  
Thy might, thy grace, y-heried be it here !

And to Pandàre he held up bothe his  
hondes,

And seyde, 'Lord, al thyn be that I have !  
For I am hool : al brosten be my bondes !  
A thousand Troyès who-so that me yave,  
Ech after other, God so wis me save,  
Ne mightè me so gladen ; lo, myn herte !  
It spredeth so for joye, it wol to-sterter !

'But, Lord, how shal I don ? How shal  
I liven ? 981

Whan shal I next my derè hertè see ?  
How shal this longè time away be driven,  
Til that thou be ayein at her fro me ?  
Thou mayst answe're, "Abid, abid !"  
But he

That hangeth by the nekkè, soth to seyne,  
In gret disese abideth for the peyne !'

'Al esily, now, for the love of Marte !'  
Quod Pandarus, 'for every thing hath  
time : 989

So longe abid, til that the night departe,  
For al so siker as thou li'st here by me,  
And God to-forn, I wol be ther at prime ;  
And for-thy, werk somewhat as I shal seyc,  
Or on som other wight this chargè leye !

'For, pardé, God wot, I have everè yit  
Ben redy thee to serve ; and to this night

963. *therto*,  $\gamma^6$  *also*.

965. *lenger*,  $J R$  *long(e)*.

967. *the*,  $J a^2 H_3$  omits.

967. *of*,  $G H_3$  omits ;  $D on$ .

968. *stouping*, so  $H_4$ ;  $a^2$  *stoupyyn* ;  $J$  and others  
*stoupen*.

977. *Troyes* (Boc.),  $\gamma^4$  *Troians*.

978. *so wis me*,  $J R$  *so my soule*.

Have I not feynéd, but emforth my wit  
Don al thy lust, and shal with al my might  
Do now as I shal seyn, and fare aright;  
And if thou n'ilt, wite al thy-self thy care!  
On me is nought along thynyvel fare! 1001

'I wot wel that thou wiser art than I  
A thousand fold; but if I were as thou,  
God help me so, as I wolde outrély  
Right of mynowné hond writherright now  
A lettre, in which I wolde her tellen how  
I ferde amis, and her biseche of routhe:  
Now help thy-self, and leve it not for  
slouthe!

'And I my-self shal therwith to her gon;  
And, whan thou wost that I am with her  
there, 1010  
Worth thou upon a courser right anon,  
Ye hardily, right in thy besté gere,  
And rid forth by the place, as nought ne  
were;

And thou shalt finde us, if I may, sittng  
At som windówe, into the strete lokíng.

'And, if thee list, than maystow us saluwe;  
And upon me mak thou thy countenance;  
But by thy lif be war that thou eschuwe  
To tarien ought! God shilde us fro mis-  
chance!

Rid forth thy wey, and hold thy govern-  
aunce! 1020

And weshalspeke of thee somewhat, I trowe,  
Whan thou art gon, to don thine crés glowe!

'Touching thy lettré, thou art wis y-nough:  
I wot thou n'ilt it dignéliche endite,  
As make it with these argumentés tough:

1005. *Right of*, J  $\gamma^6$  Of.

1005. *right now*, a<sup>2</sup> Cx. now.

1008. *not for slouthe*, a<sup>2</sup> R Cx. H<sub>3</sub> *for no slouthe*.

1009. *shal*,  $\gamma^6$  wol.

1010. *that*, so H<sub>5</sub> R Cx.  $\gamma^6$ ; rest omit.

1011. *Worth thou*, so a<sup>2</sup>  $\gamma^6$ ; H<sub>3</sub> *Lepe thou*; rest *Worth(e)*.

1017. *mak thou*, so H<sub>4</sub> H<sub>5</sub>  $\gamma^6$ ; H<sub>2</sub> R *thou make*; rest *make*.

1018. *that thou*, Cx. H<sub>3</sub>  $\gamma^6$  and *faste*.

1024. *dignéliche*, so a<sup>2</sup> H<sub>3</sub>  $\gamma$ ; J *clerkissly*; Cx. *clerkly*; H<sub>4</sub> *clergaly*; R *papally*; G<sup>2</sup> *dignéliche* *ne mystiliche* (read? *deynoustliche*).

1025. *As*, a<sup>2</sup> Or; H<sub>4</sub> *Ne*; G *As* to.

Ne scrivenly ne craftily thou write;  
Beblotte it with thy terés ek a lite;  
And if thou write a goodly word al softe,  
Though it be good, reherce it not too ofte!

'For though the besté harpoun upon live  
Woide on the besté sounéd joly harpe 1031  
That everé was, with alle his fingres five,  
Toucheayoo streng, or ay oo werblé harpe,  
Al were his nailés pointed neveresosharpe,  
It sholdé maken every wight to dulle  
To here his glee, and of his strokés fulle.

'Ne jompre ek no discordaunt thing i-feré,  
As thus, to usen termés of phisik  
In lovés termés: hold of thy matére 1039  
The forme alwey, and do that it be lik:  
For, if a peyntour woldé peynte a pik  
With asses feet, and hede it as an ape,  
It cordeth nought; so n'ere it but a jape!

This conseil likéd wel to Troilus;  
But as a dredful lover seyde he this:  
'Allas! my deré brother Pandarus,  
I am ashamed for to write, y-wis,  
Lest of myn innocence I seyde a-mis,  
Or that she n'olde it for despit receyve;  
Than were I ded, ther mighte it nothing  
weyve!' 1050

To that Pandaré answérdé, 'Yif thee lest,  
Do that I seye, and lat me therwith gon;  
For, by that Lord that forméd est and west,  
I hope of it to bringe answéré anon  
Right of her hond! And if that thou  
n'ilt non,

Lat ben! And sory mote he ben his live,  
Aycins thy lust that helpeth thee to thrive!

Quod Troilus, 'Depardieux, I assente!  
Sith that thee list, I wol arise and write

1026. *scrivenly*, so H<sub>5</sub> R Cx.; J H<sub>4</sub> *scriven isshli(che)*; others *scrivenissh*.

1026. *thou*, so J H<sub>4</sub> G<sup>2</sup> H<sub>3</sub>; R omits; Cx *it*; a<sup>2</sup>  $\gamma$  *thou it*.

1034. *Al were*, so R only; rest *Were*.

1042. *hede*, J *heuede*.

1044. *to*, J Cx. H<sub>5</sub> omit;  $\gamma^6$  *unto*.

1045. *dredful*, J *dred*.

1045. *seyde he*, so H<sub>4</sub> G<sup>2</sup>; R *seyde*; J a<sup>2</sup> H<sub>3</sub>  $\gamma$  *seyde*.

1055. *Right*,  $\gamma^6$  omit (see l. 1005).

And blisful God preye ich with good  
entente, 1060  
The viage and the lettre I shal endite,  
Sospedeit! Andthou, Mínerua, the white,  
Yif thou me wit my lettré to devise!<sup>1</sup>  
And sette him douyn and wrot right in this  
wise.

First, he gan her his righte lady calle,  
His hertés lif, his lust, his sorwes leche,  
His blisse, and ek these othrè termés allé  
That in swich cas ye lovers allé seche;  
And in ful humblé wise as in his speche  
He gan him recomaunde unto her grace:  
To telle al how, it axeth muchel space.

And after this ful lowly he her preyde 1072  
To be not wroth, though he of his folýe  
So hardy was to her to write; and seyde  
That love it made, or ellés moste he dye;  
And pitously gan mercy for to crye;  
And after that he seyde, and leigh ful loude,  
Him-self was litel worth, and lesse he  
coude;

And that she sholde han his conning ex-  
cused,  
That litel was; and ek he dredde her so;  
And his unworthinesse he ay acused; 1081  
And after that than gan he telle his wo;  
But that was infinit for ay and o;  
And how he wolde in trouthe alwey him  
holde;  
And his adieux he made, and gan it folde.

And with his salté terés gan he bathe  
The ruby in his signet, and it sette  
Upon the wax deliverliche and rathe;

1060. *with*, a<sup>2</sup> *in*.  
1065. *he gan*, a<sup>2</sup> *gan he*.  
1068. *ye*, so H<sub>4</sub> R G<sup>2</sup>; J *the*; a<sup>2</sup> *γ these*.  
1079. *And that she sholde*, Cx. S *And preyde her*; H<sub>5</sub> *Besechyng her*.  
1083. *infinit*, H<sub>2</sub> *infynyte* (later); H<sub>4</sub> *in/enit*; G *enfeyned*; H<sub>5</sub> *infynyth*; P (later) J Cx. *γ endeles*.  
1083. *for ay and o*, so H<sub>2</sub> (later) H<sub>4</sub> G<sup>2</sup> J R; P (later) Cx. *γ withouten ho*.  
1084. *how*, Cx. *γ seyde*.  
1085. *And his adieux he made*, etc., so R, and a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>2</sup> (*adew* and omitting *he*); H<sub>4</sub> *And thus an end made*, etc.; J Cx. *γ And redde it over and gan the lettre folde*.

Therwith a thousand timés, or he lette,  
He kisté tho the lettré that he shette,  
And seyde, 'Lettre, a blisful destiné 1091  
Thee shapen is: my lady shal thee see!'

This Pandar up therwith, and that be-time  
On morwe, and to his necés paleis sterte,  
And seidè, 'Slepè ye, and it is prime?'  
And gan to jape, and seidè thus: 'Myn  
herte,  
So fressh is it though lovè do it smerte,  
I may not slepen nevere a Mayés morwe!  
I have a joly wo, a lusty sorwe!' 1099

Criseydè, whan that she her unclè herde,  
With dredful herte, and désirous to here  
The cause of his comingé, thus answerde:  
'Now by your fey, myn unclè,' quod she,  
'dere,

What maner wind gideth you hider here?  
Tel us your joly wo and your penaunce!  
How ferforth be ye put in lovés daunce?'

'By God,' quod he, 'I hoppe alwey  
behinde!'

And she to laughe, as though her herté brest.  
Quod Pandarus, 'Loke alwey that ye finde  
Game in myn hood! But herkneþ if you  
lest.— 1110

Ther is right now come into toune a gest,  
A Grek espye, and telleth newé thingés,  
For-which come I to tellé you tidinges.

'Into the gardin go w', and ye shal here  
Al privèly of this a long sermoún.'—  
With that they wenten arm in arm i-fere  
Into the gardin fro the chaumbré douyn;

1091. *Lettre*, G omits; J R I *wis*.  
1093. *up therwith*, Cx. *γ took the lettre*.  
1095. Cx. *γ read*: *And faste he swor that it was passed prime*.  
1097. *is it*, J Cx. *γ it is*.  
1097. *though love do it*, Cx. *γ although it sore*.  
1104. *wind*, so a<sup>3</sup> R Cx.; others *windes*.  
1104. *you hider*, so a<sup>2</sup> only; others *you, now, now you, you now*.  
1108. *as though*, so a<sup>2</sup> H<sub>5</sub> R S; H<sub>4</sub> G and *thought(te)*; Cx. D *hir thought*; J Ad. *γ<sup>3</sup> it thought*; S<sub>2</sub> Dg. *yet if*.  
1109. *alwey that ye*, so J H<sub>4</sub> Cx. H<sub>5</sub> H<sub>3</sub> S; G R *that ye alwey*; a<sup>2</sup> *γ<sup>5</sup> alwey ye*.  
1113. *For-which*, J H<sub>4</sub> *For-why*; R *for-why*.  
1113. *come I*, Cx. *γ<sup>3</sup> I come*.  
1113. *tidinges*, R *γ<sup>6</sup> newe tidinges*.

And whan that he so fer was, that the soun  
Of that he spak ther no man heren mighte,  
Heseide her thus, and out the lettré plighte:

'Lo, he that is al hoolly yourés free 1121  
Him recomaundeth lowly to your grace,  
And sent to you this lettré here by me:  
Aviseth you on it whan ye han space,  
And of som goodly answer you purcháce,  
Or, help me God so, pleynty for to seyne,  
He may not longé liven for the peyne!'—

Ful dredfully the gan she stonden stille,  
And took it nought, butal her humblé chere  
Gan for to chaunge; and seidé, 'Serit ne  
bille, 1130

For love of God, that toucheth swich matére  
Ne bring me non; and also, unclé dere,  
To myn estat have more reward, I preye,  
Than to his lust! What sholde I moré  
seye?

'And loketh now if this be resonáble,  
And letteth not for favoure ne for slouthe  
To seyn a soth! Now were it covenáble  
To myn estat, by God and by your trouthe,  
To taken it, or to han of him routhe,  
In harming of my-self, or in repreve? 1140  
Ber it ayein, for Him that ye on leve!'—

This Pandarus gan on her for to stare,  
And seidé, 'Now is this the mosté wonder  
That evere I say! Lat be this nicé fare!  
To dethé mote I smiten be with thonder,  
If, for the cité which that stondest yonder,  
To you a lettré wolde I bringe or take,  
To harm of you! What list you thus to  
make? 1148

'But thus ye faren wel nigh alle and some,  
That he that most desیره you to serve,  
Of him ye recché leest wher he bicomé,

And whether that he live or ellés sterve'  
But, for al that that evere I may deserve,  
Refuse it not!' quod he, and hente her  
faste,

And in her bosom doun the lettré thraste,

And seide her, 'Cast it now away anon,  
That folk may sen and gauren on us  
tweye!'

Quod she, 'I can abide til they be gon!  
And gan to smile, and seide him, 'Em,  
I preye 1159

Swich answer as you list your-self purveye;  
For trewey I n'il no lettré write!—  
'No? than wol I,' quod he, 'so ye endite!'

Therwith she lough, and seidé, 'Go we  
dine!'

And he gan at him-self to japé faste,  
And seidé, 'Nece, I have so gret a pine  
For love, that everich other day I faste!  
And gan his besté japés forth to caste,  
And made her so to laughe at his folyé,  
That she for laughter wendé for to dye.

And whan that she was comén into halle,  
'Now em,' quod she, 'we wol go dine  
anon!' 1171

And gan some of her wommen for to calle,  
And streight into her chaumbré gan she  
gon;

But of her bisnessé this was oon  
Amongés othré thingés, out of drede,  
Ful privély this lettré for to rede.

Avised word by word in every line,  
And fond no lak, she thoughte he coude  
good,

And up it putte, and wente her in to dine;  
But Pandarus, that in a study stood, 1180  
Or he was war, she took him by the hood,

1115. *down the lettre*, etc., H<sub>4</sub> R Cx., and J S  
(*he thraste*), and a<sup>2</sup> (*caste*); G<sup>2</sup> γ<sup>1</sup> *the lettre dour*  
*he thraste* (Dg. *caste*).

1156. *Cast it now*, a<sup>5</sup> S; J *Cast it*; R *Cast it*  
*not*; Cx. *Cast it faste*; γ *Now cast it*.

1164. *he*, J R *Pandare*; G *Pandarus*. R at  
*himself gan iape faste*.

1172. *for to*, so J G; a<sup>2</sup> Cx. omit; H<sub>4</sub> H<sub>5</sub> in  
*to*; R *gan she*; γ<sup>8</sup> *to her*.

1174. *bisnesse*. Cp. *bisnesses*.

1181. *him*, D γ<sup>3</sup> omit; R *tho*.

1119. *Of that he spak*, a<sup>5</sup> *Of his wordes*. *ther*,  
so J S only; H<sub>3</sub> D Cp. etc. *spake* (for *spak*).

1119. *heren*, R *hit heren*.

1123. *sent to you*, so a<sup>2</sup> only; J etc. *sente you*;  
others *sent you*.

1125. *of*, a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>2</sup> omit.

1130. *Serit*, J Cx. *Script*.

1143. *moste*, γ *grettest*.

1148. *to*, G γ<sup>11</sup>.

And seidè, 'Ye were caught or that ye wiste!'

'I vouchè sauf!' quod he, 'Do what you liste!'

Tho wessen they, and sette hem doun, and ete;

And after noon ful sleighly Pandarus Gan drawe him to the window next the strete,

And seidè, 'Neece, who hath arayèd thus The yonder hous that stant afor-yein us?'

'Which hous?' quod she, and com for to biholde, 1189

And knew it wel, and whos it was him tolde;

And fillen forth in speche of thingés smale, And seten in the window bothè tweye.

Whan Pandarus saw time unto his tale, And say wel that hir folk were alle aweye, 'Now, necè myn, tel on!' quod he, 'I seye, How liketh you the lettrè that he wrot? Can he theron? For by my trouthe I n'ot!'

Therwith al rosy hewèd tho wex she, And gan to humme, and seidè, 'So I trowe!'—

'Aquite him wel, for Goddès love!' quod he. 1200

'My-self to-medès wol the lettrè sowe!'

And held his hondès up, and fel on knowe; 'Now, goodè Necè, be it nevere so lite, Yif me the labour it to sowe and plite.'

'Ye, for I can so writè,' quod she tho, And eek I n'ot what that I sholde him seye.'

Nay, necè,' quod Pandarè, 'sey not so! Yit at the lestè thanketh him, I preye,

Of his good-wil, and doth him not to deye! Now, for the love of me, my necè derè,

Refuseth not at this time my preyère!' 1211

1189. com, so a<sup>3</sup> Cx.; others gan.

1193. unto, H<sub>1</sub> on to; J G<sup>2</sup> Cl to.

1195. seye, R preye.

1196. he wrot, so a<sup>2</sup>; others ye wot(e).

1202. fel, γ sat.

1205. Ye, for I can so write, H<sub>2</sub> Ful feibly can

write. (The meaning of the text is not evident.)

1206. that, so P R only.

1206. him, Cx. γ<sup>8</sup> to him.

1209. and, J G<sup>2</sup> Cx. O.

1210. me, J G<sup>2</sup> god.

1211. time, J a<sup>3</sup> G tid(e).

'Depardieux,' quod she, 'God leve al be wel!

God help me so, this is the firstè lettre That evere I wrot, ye, al or any del!'

And int' a closet for t' avise her bettre She went alone, and gan her herte unfettre

Out of Disdeynès prison but a lite, And sette her doun, and gan a lettrè write;

Of which to telle in short is myn entente Th' effect, as fer as I can understonde.—

She thankèd him of al that he wel mente Towárdès her, but holden him in honde

She n'oldè nought, ne make her selven bonde 1223

In love; but as his suster him to plesè She wolde ay fain, to don his herte an ese.

She shette it, and to Pandar in gan gon Ther-as he sat and lokèd into strete,

And doun she sette her by him, on a ston Of jaspre, upon a quissshin gold y-bete,

And seide, 'As wisly help me God the grete, I neverè dide a thing with morè peyne

Than writen this, to which ye me constreyne!' 1232

And took it him.—He thankèd her, and seide,

'God wot, of thing ful oftè loth bigonne Com'th endè good! And necè myn,

Criseyde, That ye to him of hard now ben y-wonne,

Oughte he be glad, by God and yonder sonne,

For-why men seith, "Impressiounès lighte Ful lightly ben ay redy to the flighte." 1239

'But ye han pley'd the tirant ny too longe, And hard was it your hertè for to grave,

Now stint, that ye no lenger on it honge, (Al woldè ye the forme of daunger save),

But hasteth you to don him joyè have;

1215. int', a<sup>2</sup> in.

1217. Disdeynès, a<sup>3</sup> Cx. disaicyous.

1225. ay, γ<sup>7</sup> omit.

1227. into strete, so J Cp.; Cl. into a strete; R to the strete; a<sup>5</sup> etc. into the strete.

1229. gold, P H<sub>4</sub> with gold; H<sub>2</sub> R Cx. of gold.

1240. the, γ omit.

For trusteth wel too longe y-don hardnésse  
Causeth despit ful ofté for distresse.'—

And right as they declaméd this matére,  
Lo, Troilus, right at the stretés ende,  
Com riding with his tenthè some i-fere  
Al softly, and thiderward gan bende 1250  
Ther-as they sete, as was his way to wende  
To paleis-ward; and Pandar him espi'de,  
And seidè, 'Nece, y-see who com'th here  
ride !

'O flee not in (he seeth us, I suppose),  
Lest he may thinken that ye him eschuwe !'  
'Nay, nay !' quod she, and wex as red as  
rose.

With that he gan her humblély saluwe  
With dredful chere, and ofté his hewés  
muwe ;

And up his look debónerly he caste,  
And bekkéd on Pandaré, and forþ he paste.

God wot if he sat on his hors aright, 1261  
Or goodly was biscyn that ilké day !  
God wot whe'r he was lik a manly knight !  
What sholde I drecche, or telle of hisarray ?  
Criseyde, which that alle these thingès say,  
To telle in short, her likéd al in-fere,  
His person, his array, his look, his chere,

His goodly maner, and his gentillesse  
So wel, that neveré sith that she was born  
Ne haddè she swich routhe of his distresse ;  
And, how-so she hath hard ben her-biforn,  
To God hope I she hath now caught a  
thorn, 1272  
She shal not pulle it out this nexté wike !  
God send mo swichè thornés on to pike !

Pandaré, which that stood her fasté by,  
Felte iren hot, and he bigan to smite ;  
And seidè, 'Nece, I preye you hertély,  
Tel me that I shal axen you a lite :  
A womman that were of his deth to wite,

1247. *declamed*, a<sup>3</sup> etc. *declared*.  
1253. *y-see*, J R *se*; H<sub>4</sub> omits; G Cx. *lo*.  
1257. *humblély*, a<sup>2</sup> γ<sup>6</sup> *humblly to*.  
1258. *muwe*, a<sup>2</sup> G etc. *newe*.  
1270. *swich*, R *swich a*.  
1272. *I*, so R γ<sup>8</sup> only; rest omit. H<sub>5</sub> *Thorow*  
*good hope*.

Withoute his gilt, but for her lak of routhe,  
Were it wel don ?'—Quod she, 'Nay, by  
my trouthe !' 1281

'God help me so,' quod he, 'ye sey me  
soth !

Ye felen wel your-self that I not lye !  
Lo, yond he rit !'—'Ye,' quod she, 'so  
he doth.'—

'Wel,' quod Pandaré, 'as I have told you  
thrye,

Lat be your nicè shame and your folýe,  
And spek with him in esing of his herte !  
Lat nicété not do you bothé smerte !'

But theron was to heven and to done ! 1289  
'Consideréd allè thing it may not be.—  
And why for speche?—And it were ek  
too sone

To graunte him yit so gret a liberté.'  
For plainly her entente, as seidè she,  
Was for to love him unwist, if she mighte,  
And guerdone him with no-thing but with  
sighte.

But Pandarus thoughte, 'It shal not be so ;  
If that I may, this nice opinioun  
Shal not ben holden fully yerés two !'—  
What sholde I make of this a long sermoun ?  
He moste assente on that conclusioun 1300  
As for the time; and when that it was  
eve,  
And al was wel, he ros and took his leve.

And on his wey ful faste homward he  
spedde,  
And right forjoye he felte his herté daunce ;  
And Troilus he fond allone a-bedde,  
That lay, as don these lovers, in a traunce  
Bi-twixen hope and derk deséspérance ;  
But Pandarus, right at his in-cominge,  
He song, as who seith, 'Somwhat I thee  
bringe !'

1280. *lak of*, γ<sup>4</sup> *lakked*.  
1283. *not*, a<sup>3</sup> *ne*.  
1291. *speche*, γ<sup>9</sup> *shame*.  
1292. *yit*, so J G<sup>2</sup> Cx.; rest omit.  
1306. *these*, J *the*; G *ye*. (See l. 1068.)  
1309. *Somwhat I thee*, so R only; S<sub>1</sub> *Sum-*  
*what now I*; Th. *Lo, somewhat I*; rest *som-*  
*what I*.

And seyde, 'Who is in his bed so sone  
'Y-buried thus?'—'It am I, frend!' quod  
he. 1311

'Who? Troilus? Nay, help me so the  
mone.'

Quod Pandarus, 'thou shalt arise and see  
A charme that was right now sent to thee,  
The whichè can thee hele of thyn accesse  
So thou thy-self do forth thy businesse.'

'Ye, thorough the might of God!' quod  
Troilus.—

And Pandarus gan him the lettrè take,  
And seidè, 'Pardé, God hath holpen us!  
Have here a light, and look on al this  
blake!' 1320

Lord, oftè gan the hertè glade and quake  
Of Troilus, whil that he gan it rede,  
So as the wordès yave him hope and drede.

But finally he took al for the beste  
That she him wrot; forsomwhat he beheld  
On which he thoughte he mighte his  
hertè reste,

Al coverèd she the wordès under sheld.  
Thus to the morè worthy part he held,  
That, what for hopeand Pandarus' biheste,  
His grete wo foryede he at the leste. 1330

But, as we may alday our-selven see,  
Thorough morè wode or col, the morè fir,  
Right so, encresseth hope, of what it be,  
Therwith ful ofte encresseth ek desir:  
Or, as an ook com'th of a litel spir,  
So thorough this lettrè which that she him  
sente,

Encressen gan desir, of which he brente.

Wherefore I seye alway that day and night  
This Troilus gan to desiren more  
Than he dide erst, thorough hope, and  
dide his might 1340

1315. *thee hele*, so R only; others *helen thee*.  
1316. *So thou thy-self do forth*, so R only;  
a J Cx. *So that thou do forth(with)*;  $\gamma$  *If thou  
do forthwith al*.

1321. *Lord*, so a<sup>3</sup> J G<sup>2</sup>; R Cx.  $\gamma$ <sup>8</sup> *But*.

1323. *and*, a<sup>3</sup>  $\gamma$  or.

1326. *which he*, J  $\gamma$  *which him*.

1333. *encresseth*, so J G<sup>2</sup>; others *encres of*  
(read? *encresse*).

To pressen on, as by Pandarès lore,  
And writen to her of his sorwes sore:  
Fro day to day he let it not refreyde,  
That by Pandarèhesomwhat wrot orseyde;

• And dide also his othré óbservaunces  
That til a lover longeth in this cas;  
And, after-that his deestornéd on chaunces,  
So was he outhér glad or seide 'Allas!'  
And held, after his gestès, ay his pas;  
And after swiche answerès as he hadde,  
So were his dayès sory outhér gladde. 1351

But to Pandaré alwey was his recours;  
And pitously gan ay unto him pleyne,  
And him bisoughtè reed or som socours;  
And Pandarus, that say his wodè peyne,  
Wex wel ny ded for routhè, soth to seyne,  
And bisily with al his hertè caste  
Som of his wo to sleen, and that as faste;

And seyde, 'Lord, and frend, and brother  
dere, 1359

God wot that thy disesè doth me wo!  
But, wilt thou stinten of this woful chere,  
And by my trouthe, or it be dayès two,  
And God to-forn, yit shal I shape it so  
That thou shalt come into a certain place,  
Ther-as thou mayst thy-self preye her of  
grace.

'And certainly, I n'ot if thou it wost,  
But tho that ben expert in love it seye,  
It is oon of the thingès fortherèth most,  
A man to have a leiser for to preye, 1369  
And siker place his wo for to biwreye;  
Foringood herteit mot som routheimprese  
To here and see the giltles in distresse.

'Paraunter thenkestow "Though it be so  
That Kindè wolde hir don for to biginne

1341. *Pandarès*, J etc. *Pandarus*.  
1344. *he somwhat wrot*, so R S only; J *he  
som wrot*; a<sup>5</sup> Cx. *somwhat he wrot*;  $\gamma$ <sup>8</sup> *he wrot  
somwhat*.

1347. *his*,  $\gamma$ <sup>8</sup> *thise*.  
1353. *ay unto*, J Cx. S; H<sub>4</sub> G<sup>3</sup> etc. *ay to*; a<sup>2</sup>  
*alwey to*;  $\gamma$ <sup>4</sup> *ay til him to*.

1354. *or*, a<sup>5</sup> R Cx.; J omits;  $\gamma$  *and*.

1365. *preye her*,  $\gamma$  *her preye*.

1374. *wolde her don for*, so J H<sub>4</sub> R and Cx.  
(omit *her*); others var.

To han a maner routhe upon my wo,  
Seith Daunger, Nay, thou shalt me neverè  
winne !

So rewleth her her hertès gost withinne,  
That, though she bendè, yit she stant on  
rote :

What in effect is this unto my bote ?”

‘Think her-ayeins, whan that the sturdy  
ook, 1380

On which men hakketh ofè for the nones,  
Receivèd hath the happy falling strook,  
The gretè swigh doth it come al at ones,  
As don these rokkès or these milnè-stones;  
For swifter cours com’th thing that is of  
wightè,

Whan it descendeth, than don thingès  
lighte.

‘But reed that boweth down for every blast  
Ful lightly, cessè wind, it wol arise ;  
But so wil not an ook whan it is cast.—  
It nedeth me not longè thee forbise. 1390  
Men shal rejoysen of a gret emprise,  
Achevèd wel, and stant withouten doute,  
Al han men been the lenger ther-aboutè.

‘But, Troilus, now tel me, if thee lest,  
A thing which that I shal now axen thee :  
Which is thy brother that thoulovest beste,  
As in thy verray hertès privètè ?’ 1397  
‘Y-wis, my brother Deiphebus,’ quod he.—  
Quod Pandarus, ‘Or hourès twyès twelve,  
He shal thee ese, unwist of it him-selve.

‘Now lat m’alone, and werken as I may !’  
Quod he ; and to Deiphébus wente he tho,  
Which hadde his lord and gretè frend ben  
ay ;

Save Troilus no man he lovèd so.  
To telle in short, withouten wordès mo,

1376. *Nay*, J omits ; a<sup>2</sup> *than*.  
1383. *doth*, J G<sup>2</sup> *makith*.  
1383. *it*, G  $\gamma$  *it to*.  
1382. *come*, a<sup>2</sup> G Cx. *fallè*.  
1387. *But*, so a  $\beta$  ; H<sub>4</sub> *As* ;  $\gamma^5$  *And* ;  $\gamma^2$  *For*.  
1387. *for*, so J P H<sub>4</sub>  $\gamma$  ; H<sub>2</sub> G Cx. H<sub>3</sub> *with* ;  
R *fro*.  
1390. *longe thee*,  $\gamma$  *thee longe to*.  
1394. *now*, so  $\beta$  ; a<sup>2</sup> S A omit ;  $\gamma$  *yet* (H<sub>1</sub> *that*).  
1395. so J ; others var.  
1399. *Quod Pandarus*, R Cx.  $\gamma^9$  *Now quod*  
*Pandare*.

Quod Pandarus, ‘I preye you that ye be  
Frend to a causè which that toucheth me.’

‘Yis, pardè !’ quod Deiphébus, ‘wel thou  
wost,

In al that evere I may, and God to-fore,  
Al n’ere it but for man I lovè most, 1410  
My brother Troilus. But sey wherfóre  
It is ; for sith the day that I was bore  
I n’as, ne neverè mo to ben I thinke,  
Ayeins a thing that mightè thee for-thinke.’

Pandaré gan him thanke, and to him seyde,  
‘Lo, sire, I have a lady in this toun,  
That is my nece, and callèd is Criseyde,  
Which some men wolden don oppressioun,  
And wrongfully han her possessioun ; 1419  
Wherfore I of your lordship you biseche  
To ben our frend, withouten morè speche.’

Deiphébus him answärde, ‘O, is not this  
That thou spek’st of to me thus strangely  
Criseyda, my frend !’—He seidè, ‘Yis.’  
‘Than nedeth,’ quod Deiphébus, ‘hardily  
No more of this, for trusteth wel that I  
Wol ben her champioun with spere and  
yerde :

I roughtè not though alle hér foos it herde.

‘But tel me how—thou wost of this  
matère— 1429  
It mightè best availen !’—‘Now lat see !’  
Quod Pandarus, ‘If ye my lord so dere  
Wolden as now do this honouër to me  
And preyen her to-morwè, lo, that she  
Come unto you her pleintès to devise,  
Her adversaries wolde of it agrise.

‘And if I morè dorstè preye as now,  
And chargen you to han so gret travaille  
To han some of your brethren here with  
you

1412. *the*, P  $\gamma^7$  *that*.  
1423. *thus*, H<sub>4</sub> R Cx. Cl. *so*.  
1426. *of this*,  $\gamma^9$  *to speke*.  
1429. *how* *thou*, so J H<sub>4</sub> G<sup>2</sup> Ad. ; a<sup>2</sup> R Cx. *how*  
*for thou* ;  $\gamma$  *thou that*.  
1429. *of*, H<sub>4</sub> R Cx. omit ;  $\gamma$  *al*.  
1430. *It*, H<sub>4</sub> omits ; Cx. *I* ;  $\gamma^9$  *How I*.  
1430. *mightè*, R Cx. *mightè her*.  
1433. *And*, so J H<sub>4</sub> G<sup>2</sup> ; rest *To*.  
1436. *preye*, Cx.  $\gamma^6$  *preye you*.



That mighten in her causè bet availle, 1439  
Than wot I wel she mightè neverè faile  
For to ben holpen, what at your instaunce,  
What with her othré frendès governaunce.'

Deiphébus, which that comen was of kinde  
To alle honouér and bounté to consente,  
Answérde, 'Itshal bedon! And I can finde  
Yit gretter help to this, in myn entente!  
What wiltow seyn, if for Eleyne I sente  
To speke of this? I trowe it be the beste;  
For she may leden Paris as her leste. 1449

'Of Ector, which that is my lord, my brother,  
It nedeth nought to preye him frend to be;  
For I have herd him, oo time and ek other,  
Speke of Criseydè swich honouér, that he  
May seyn no bet; swich hap to him hath  
she,

It nedeth nought his helpès morè crave:  
Heshal be swich, right as we wol him have.

'Spek thou thy-self also to Troilus  
On my bihalve, and prey him with us  
dine.'— 1458

'Sire, al this shal be don!' quod Pandarus;  
And took his leve, and neverè gan to fine,  
But to his neces hous, as streight as line,  
He com; and fonde her fro the mete arise;  
And sette him doun, and spak right in this  
wise.—

He seide, 'O verray God, so have I ronnc!  
Lo, necè myn, see ye not how I swete?  
I n'ot wher ye the morè thank me connc!  
Be ye not war how falsè Poliphete  
Is now about est-sonès for to plete,  
And bringe on you advócacyès newe?'—  
'I? No!' quod she, and chaungèd al  
her hewe. 1470

'What? Is he more aboutè me to drecche  
And dome wrong? What shal I don, allas?

1439. *in*, Cx. omits;  $\gamma^8$  to.

1442. *governaunce*, a<sup>2</sup> Cx. R *sustenaunce*.

1447. *for Eleyne I*, so J H<sub>1</sub> Cx. S Ad. Du.;  
rest *I for Eleyne*.

1455. *more*, so J G<sup>2</sup>; H<sub>4</sub> *more to* (a<sup>2</sup> *us more*  
*help to*);  $\gamma$  *for to*.

1466. *wher*, P G<sup>2</sup> *wher*; J *whar*; others  
*whether*.

Yit of him-selven nothing wolde I recche,  
N'ere it for Antenor and Eneás,  
That ben his frendès in swich maner cas.  
But, for the love of God, myn unclè dere,  
No fors of that, lat him have al i-fere!

'Withouten that, I have y-nough for us.'—  
'Nay,' quod Pandaré, 'it shal no-thing be  
so;

For I have ben right now at Deiphebus,  
At Ector and mine othré lordès mo, 1481  
And shortly makéd ech of hem his fo;  
That by my thrift he shal it neverè winne,  
For aught he can, whan that so he biginne.'

And, as they casten what was best to done,  
Deiphébus, of his ownè curtesye,  
Com her to preye, in his proprè persóne,  
To holde him on the morwè companye  
At diner, which she n'oldè not denye,  
But goodly gan to his preyére obeye. 1490  
He thankèd her, and wente upon his weye.

Whan this was don, this Pandar up anon,  
To telle in short, and forth he gan to wende  
To Troilus, as stille as any ston;

And al this thing he tolde him word and  
ende,

And how that he Deiphébus gan to blende,  
And seide him, 'Now is time, if that thou  
conne,

To bere thee wel tomorwe, and al is wonne.

'Now spek, now prey, now pitously com-  
pleyne!

Let not for nicè shame, or drede, or  
slouthe! 1500

Som time a man mot telle his ownè peyne!  
Bileve it, and she shal han on thee routhe;  
Thou shalt be savèd by thy feith in trouthe!  
But wel wot I that thou art now in drede,  
And what it is I lye I can a-rede!

'Thou thinkest now, "How sholde I don  
al this?

1473. *him-selven* (?), all *him-self(e)*; J *him-self*  
*right*; G *himself yit*.

1473. *wolde*, Cp. H<sub>1</sub> *ne wolde*.

1482. *makéd*, so J Cp. etc.; others *mad(e)*.

1500. *Let*, a<sup>3</sup> R Cx. *Leve*.

1504. *that*, so J G<sup>2</sup> S H<sub>3</sub>; rest omit.

1504. *in*, H<sub>4</sub> a; H<sub>2</sub> R Cx. *in a*.

For by my cherés mosten folk espye  
That for her love is that I fare amis ; 1508  
Yit hadde I levere unwist for sorwédye."—  
Now think not so, for thou dost gret folýe ;  
For I right now have founden oo manére  
Of sleighté, for to coverén al thy chere .

'Thou shalt gon over night, and that as  
blive,

Unto Deiphébus' hous, as thee to pleye,  
Thy maladye away the bet to drive,  
For-why thou semest sik, soth for to seye.  
Sone after that, doun in thy bed thee leye,  
And sey thou mayst no lenger up endure,  
And ly right there, and byd thyn aventure.

'Sey that thy fevere is wont thee for to  
take 1520

The same time, and lasten til a-morwe ;  
And lat see now how wel thou canst it  
make,

For, pardé, sik is he that is in sorwe !  
Go now, farwel! and, Venus here to borwe,  
I hope, and thou this purpos holdé ferme,  
Thy gracé she shal fully ther conferme !'

Quod Troilus, 'Y-wis, thou nedéles  
Counseilest me that siklich I me feyne,  
For I am sik in earnest doutéles, 1529  
So that wel nigh I stervè for the peyne !'  
Quod Pandarus, 'Thou shalt the bettré  
pleyne,  
And hast the lassé nede to contrefete,  
For him men demen hot, that men seen  
swete !

'Lo, hold thee at thy tristé clos, and I  
Shal wel the deer unto thy bowè drive !'  
Ther-with he took his leve al softely.  
And Troilus to paleis wenté blive,  
So glad ne was he nevere in al his live ;  
And to Pandáres reed gan al assente, 1539  
And to Deiphébus' hous at night he wente.

1507. *cheres*, J *teres*; a<sup>3</sup> R Cx. *chere*.

1513. *as blive*, so a<sup>3</sup> Cx. S; J etc. *bylyve*; others *blyve*.

1517. *Sone*, a<sup>2</sup> Cl. *So*;  $\gamma$  *And*.

1526. *fully ther*, J R *thee fully ther*; G Cx. *thee fully*. Cx. *In* and G *Thyn* for *Thy*.

1532. *nede to*, H<sub>2</sub> H<sub>1</sub> *nede*.

1539. *Pandáres*, so H<sub>4</sub> G D; others *Pandarus*.

What nedeth you to tellen al the chere  
That Deiphebus unto his brother made,  
Or his accésse, or his sikly manére ;  
How men gan him with clothés for to lade  
Whan he was leyd; and how, men wolde  
him glade ?

But al for nought : he held forthay the wise  
That ye han herd Pandáre or this devise.

But certein is, or Troilus him leyde,  
Deiphébus had him preyed over night 1549  
To ben a frend and helping to Criseyde :  
God wot that he it graunted anon right,  
To ben her fullé frend with al his might :  
But swich a nedé was to preye him thenne,  
As for to bidde a wood man for to renne !

The morwen com, and neihengan the time  
Of mel-tid, that the fairé Queene Eleyne  
Shoop her to ben an heure after the prime  
With Deiphebus, to whom shen'oldé feyne ;  
But as his suster, homly, soth to seyne,  
She com to diner in her pleyne entente ;  
But God and Pandar wiste al what this  
mente. 1561

Com ek Criseyde, al innocent of this,  
Antigoné, her suster Tarbe also.—  
But flee we now prolixité best is,  
For love of God, and lat us fasté go  
Right to th' effect, withouten talés mo  
Why al this folk assembled in this place ;  
And lat us of hir saluínés pace ! 1568

Gret honour dide hem Deiphebus certéyne,  
And fedde hem wel withal that mighté like ;  
But everé-mo 'Allas !' was his refréyne,  
'My godé brother Troilus, the sike,  
Li'th yit !' And therwithal he gan to sike,  
And after that he peynéd him to glade  
Hem as he mighte, and cheré good he made.

1543. *sikly*, J etc. *siklich(e)*.  
1549. *had him preyed*, J G<sup>2</sup> H<sub>3</sub> *hadde (y) preyd*  
*him*.

1550. *a frend*, J G<sup>2</sup> *good frend*; S<sub>1</sub> *good lord*.

1551. *it*, J G<sup>2</sup> H<sub>3</sub> omit.

1553. *was*, so a<sup>4</sup>  $\gamma$ <sup>5</sup>; J S<sub>1</sub> *was it*; Cx. Ad. Du.  
*it was*; G *was for*; R *was that*.

1557. *Shoop*,  $\gamma$ <sup>3</sup> *Shapt(e)*

1561. *al*, a<sup>2</sup> R Cx. *non*.

1561. *this*, a<sup>2</sup> *it*.

1575. *he made*, a<sup>2</sup> R Cx. G *hem made*.

Compleynéd ek Eleyne of his siknése  
So feithfully, that pité was to here ;  
And every wight gan waxen for accesse  
A leche anon, and seide, ' In this manére  
Men curen folk.'—' This charme I wol  
thee lere.' 1580

But ther sat oon, al list her not to teche,  
That thoughté, ' Best coude I yit ben his  
leche !'

After compleynte, him gonnen they to  
preise,  
As folk don yit, whan som wight hath  
bigonne

To preise a man, and up with pris him reise  
A thousand fold yit hyér than the sonne :  
' He is, he can, that fewé lordés conne !'  
And Pandarus, of that they wolde afferme,  
He nought forgat hir praising to conferme.

Herde alwey this Criseyde wel y-nough,  
And every word gan for to notyfe ; 1591  
For which with sobré chere her herté lough ;  
For who is it that n'olde her glorifye  
To mowén swich a knight do live or dye ?  
But al passe I, lest ye too longé dwelle,  
For for oo fyn is al that evere I telle.

The timé com fro diner for to rise ;  
And as hem oughte arisen everychon,  
And gonne a while of this and that devise.  
But Pandarus brak al this speche anon,  
And seidé to Deiphébus, ' Wol ye gon,  
If it your willé be, as I you preyde, 1602  
To speke here of the nedés of Criseyde ?'

Eleyne, which that by the hond her held,  
Took first the tale, and seidé, ' Go we blive !'  
And goodly on Criseyde she biheld,

1577. *that pite, J it pite; Th. that it pite; G<sup>2</sup>  
a pite it.*

1585. *up, H<sub>4</sub> γ<sup>8</sup> omit.*

1587. *he can, J Cx. that can.*

1590. *alwey this, Cx. al this; γ<sup>8</sup> al this thing.*

1591. *for, J Cx. D Cl. omit.*

1593. *it that, so J G only; R Du. Dg. that that;*

*H<sub>2</sub> he that; rest that.*

1593. *n'olde, γ ne wolde.*

1594. *do, J a<sup>2</sup> to.*

1596. *For for, so β γ; a<sup>2</sup> For; J H<sub>4</sub> G<sup>2</sup> But for.*

1598. *arisen, a<sup>2</sup> Cx. they risen.*

1602. *If it, Cx. γ<sup>8</sup> If.*

And seidé, ' Jovés, lat him neveré thrive  
That doth you harm, and bring him some  
of live !

And yeve me sorwé, but he shal it rewe  
If that I may, and allé folk be trewe !' 1610

' Tel thou thy neces cas,' quod Deiphebus  
To Pandarus, ' forthou canst best it telle.'—  
' My lordés and my ladies, it stant thus :  
What sholde I lenger,' quod he, ' do you  
dwelle ?'—

He rong hem out a proces lik a belle  
Upon her fo, that highté Poliphete,  
So héynous, that men mighte on it speste.

Answerde of this ech wers of hem than other,  
And Poliphete they gonnen thus to warien,  
' An-hongéd be swich oon, were he my  
brother, 1620  
And so he shal, for it ne may not varien !'  
What sholde I lenger in this talé tarien ?  
Pleinlich, at onés, allé they her highten  
To ben her frend in al that evere they  
mighten.

Spak than Eleyne and seidé, ' Pandarus,  
Wot ought my lord my brother this matére,  
I mene Ectór ? Or wot it Troilus ?'  
He seidé, ' Ye ! But wol ye now me here ?  
Me thinketh this, sith Troilus is here, 1629  
It weré good, if that ye wolde assente,  
She tolde her-self him al this, or shewente.

' For he wol have the more her grief at herte  
By causé, lo, that she a lady is,  
And, by your leve, I wol but in right sterte  
And do you wite, and that anon y-wis,  
If that he slepe, or wile ought here of this.'  
And in he lep, and seide him in his ere,  
' God have thy soule ! Y-brought have  
I thy bere !'

1616. *Upon, J H<sub>4</sub> G<sup>2</sup> R Unto.*

1619. *gonnen, a<sup>3</sup> R Cx. gan.*

1621. *it, a<sup>3</sup> Cl. he.*

1623. *at ones alle, so a<sup>3</sup> only; rest a(lle) at ones.*

1624. *frend, so β; a<sup>2</sup> S frendes; γ<sup>8</sup> help(e).*

1629. *this, sith, so R Cx. H<sub>1</sub> etc.; a<sup>2</sup> sith that;*

*J Cp. Cl. etc. this, sith that.*

1630. *good, R right good.*

1634. *in right, so J G R etc.; H<sub>4</sub> Cx. in; a<sup>2</sup> Cl.*

*etc. right in.*

1637. *lep, γ lepte.*

To smilen gan of this tho Troilus,  
 And Pandarus withouten rekëninge 1640  
 Out wente anon t' Eleyne and Deiphebus,  
 And seide hem, 'So ther be no tarynge  
 Ne morë prees, he wol wel that ye bringe  
 Criseyde anon, my lady, that is here,  
 And as he may endure he wol her here.

'But wel ye wot the chaumbrë n'is but  
 . lite,

And fewë folk may lightly make it warm.  
 Now loketh ye, for I wol han no wite  
 To bringe in prees that mightë don him  
 harm

Or him disesen, for my bettrë arm !— 1650  
 Whe'r it be bet sh' abidë til eft-sones :  
 Now loketh ye that knowën what to done  
 is.

'I seye for me, best is, as I can knowe,  
 That no wight in ne wendë but ye tweye,  
 But it were I ; for I can in a throwe  
 Reherse her cas, unlik that she can seye ;  
 And after this she may him onës preye  
 To ben good lord in short, and take her  
 leve ; 1658  
 This may not muchel of his ese him reve.

'And ek, for she is straunge, he wol forbere  
 His esë, which that him thar not for you ;  
 Ek other thing, that toucheth not to here,  
 He wol you telle—I wot it wel—right  
 now,  
 That secret is and for the tounës prow.'  
 And they, that knowen no-thing of his  
 entente,  
 Withouten more to Troilus in wente.

1639. *gan of this*, so H<sub>4</sub> Cx. S ; others *of this gan*.

1644. *anon*, so R Cx. ; rest omit (*Criseyda*).  
 1645. *her here*, so R ; H<sub>2</sub> Cx. *yowhere* ; rest *here*  
 (*ye etc. enduren*).

1646. *n'is*, J *nys* ; rest *is*.  
 1651. *abide*, so J H<sub>4</sub> G<sup>2</sup> Cx. ; others *bide*.

1654. *ye*, J *we*.  
 1662. *to here*=to her.  
 1663. *you*, so a<sup>2</sup> J etc. ; H<sub>4</sub> R G *it* ;  $\gamma^5$  *me*.

1665. *knowen no-thing*, so J H<sub>4</sub> G<sup>2</sup> ; *knewe no-thing*, R S ; Ad. Du. *nothing knowe* ; *nothing knewe*, a<sup>2</sup> Cx.  $\gamma^6$ .

1665. *his*,  $\gamma$  *this*.  
 1666. *wente*, so H<sub>4</sub> Cx. R ; rest *they wente* (G  
*sche wente*).

Eleyne in al her goodly softë wise  
 Gan him salue, and wommanly to pleye,  
 And seide, 'Y-wis, ye mote algate arise !  
 Now, fairë brother, be al hool, I preye !'  
 And gan her arm right over his shulder  
 leye ; 1671  
 And him with al her wit to réconforte,  
 As she best coudë, she gan him desporte.

So after this quod she, 'We you biseke,  
 My derë brother Deiphebus and I,  
 For love of God—and so doth Pandar  
 eke—

To ben good lord and frend right hertely  
 Unto Criseyde, which that certainly 1678  
 Receiveth wrong, aswot wel here Pandare,  
 That can her cas wel bet than I declare.'

This Pandarus gan newe his tonge affile,  
 And al her cas reherse, and that anon.  
 Whan it was seid, sone after in a while,  
 Quod Troilus, 'As sone as I may gon,  
 I wol right fayn with al my might ben  
 oon,

Have God my trouthe, her causë to  
 sustene.'

'Now good thrift have ye !' quod Eleyne  
 the Qucene.

Quod Pandarus, 'And it your willë be,  
 That she may take her leve or that she  
 go—'

'O, ellës God forbedë,' tho quod he, 1690  
 'If that she vouchë-sauf for to do so !'  
 And with that word quod Troilus, 'Ye two,  
 Deiphëbus and my suster, leef and dere,  
 To you have I to speke of oo matëre,

'To ben avisëd of your reed the bettre';  
 And fond as hap was at his beddës heed

1669. *algate*,  $\gamma^8$  *alweyes*.  
 1673. *him*,  $\gamma$  *him to*.  
 1674. *So*, Cx. *Sone*.  
 1687. *Now*, so S only. (See l. 847.)  
 1687. *Eleyne*, J *Elena* ; H<sub>4</sub> *Helena* ; R *Heleyn*  
*tho*.

1688. *And*, J G<sup>2</sup> S *Yif*.  
 1690. *O*, a<sup>2</sup> G H<sub>3</sub> etc. *Or* ; H<sub>4</sub> R omit ; Cx. *Now*.  
 1690. *tho*, a<sup>3</sup> Cx. etc. *it tho*.  
 1691. *she*, J R *ye* ; G<sup>2</sup> *thou*.  
 1693. *leef*, H<sub>2</sub> *leve*.

The copy of a tretis and a lettre  
That Ector hadde him sent, to axen reed  
If swich a man was worthy to ben deed,  
Wot I not who : but in a grislich wise  
He preyed hem anon on it avise. 1701

Deiphébus gan this lettré to unfoldé  
In earnest gret ; so dide Eleyne the Queene ;  
And roming outward, faste it gan biholde,  
Dounward a steire, and in an herber grene  
This ilké thing they redden hem bitwene ;  
And largely the mountaunce of an houre  
They gonne on it to reden and to poure.

Now lat hem rede, and torné we anon  
To Pandarus, that gan ful fasté pryé 1710  
That al was wel ; and out he gan to gon  
Into the greté chaumbre, and that in hye,  
And seidé, ' God save al this companye !  
Com, necé myn, my lady Queene Eleyne  
Abideth you, and ek my lordés tweyne.

' Ris, tak with you your nece Antigone  
Or whom you list,—or no fors, hardily :  
The lassé pres, the bet.—Com forth with  
me ;

And loké that ye thonken humblély 1719  
Hem allé three ; and whan ye may goodly  
Your timé see, taketh of hem your leve,  
Lest we too longe his restés him bireve.'

Al innocent of Pandarus' entente,  
Quod tho Criseydé, ' Go we, uncle dere !'  
And arm in arm inward with him she wente,  
Aviséd wel her wordés and her chere ;  
And Pandarus in earnestful manére 1727  
Seide, ' Allé folk, for Goddés love I preye,  
Stinteth right here, and softély you pleye.

' Aviséth you what folk ben here withinne,  
And in what plit oon is, God him amende !'

1699. *was*, J *war* ; H<sub>4</sub> G *were*.  
1701. *anon on*, Cx. *bothe anon on* ; S *bothe on* ; J G<sup>2</sup> *faste on*.  
1705. *and in*, so J H<sub>4</sub> G<sup>2</sup> R ; Cx. *and into* ; rest *into*.  
1709. *mountaunce*, J etc. *mountenaunce*.  
1715. *lordes*, H<sub>4</sub> R *ladies* (!).  
1729. *you*, J H<sub>4</sub> G Cx. *ye*.

And inward, thus : ' Ful softély biginne,  
Nece, I conjure ; and heyly you defende,  
On His half which that soule us allé sende,  
And in the vertu of corounés tweyne,  
Sle not this man, that hath for you this  
peyne !

' Fy on the devil ! Think which oon he is,  
And in what plit he li'th ! Com off anon !  
Think al swich taried tidé, lost it is !  
That wol ye bothé seyn whan ye ben oon !  
Secoundély ther yit devineth non 1742  
Upon you two : com off now, if ye conne !  
Whil folk is blent, lo, al the time is wonne !

' In titeringe, in púrsuit, and delayes,  
The folk devine at wagging of a stre ;  
That, though ye wolde han, after, merie  
dayes,  
Than dar ye nought ; and why ? For  
she and she

Spak swicha word : thus lookéd he and he !  
Lest time I lose, I dar nought with you  
dele : 1749  
Com off therfóre, and bringeth him to hele !'

But now to you, ye lovers that ben here,  
Was Troilus not in a cankerdort,  
That lay, and mighté whispring of hem  
here,  
And thoughte, ' O Lord, right now  
renneth my sort,  
Fully to deye, or han anon confórt !'  
And was the firsté time he sholde her  
preye  
Of love : Omighty God, what shal he seye ?

1733. *Nece*, J H<sub>4</sub> G O *nece*.  
1734. *half which that*, so Cx. S etc. ; R H<sub>3</sub>  
*half that* ; J H<sub>4</sub> etc. *half that*.  
1735. *in the*, J H<sub>4</sub> etc. *in*.  
1739. *tidé, lost it is*, so a<sup>2</sup> and Cx. (omit *it*) ;  
J and others *tid(e)*, but *lost it (n)is*.  
1741. *Secoundely*, H<sub>4</sub> Cx. (And) *sikerty*.  
1744. *in*, so a<sup>3</sup> Cx. ; R *and in* ; J G *γ and*.  
1746. *That, γ And*.  
1749. *Lest*, so H<sub>2</sub> H<sub>3</sub> R ; J etc. *Las*.  
1752. *cankerdort*, so a<sup>3</sup> Cx. ; J etc. *cankedort*.  
1756. *And, H<sub>4</sub> And it*.  
1757. *O, a<sup>2</sup> J A*.

## BOOK III

O BLISFUL light, of which the bemesclere  
Adorneth al the thriddè hevené faire !  
O sonnès lief, O Jovès daughter dere,  
Plesaunce of love, O goodly debonaire,  
In gentil hertes ay redy to repaire !  
O verray cause of hele and of gladnesse,  
Y-heried be thy might and thy goodnessse !

In hevene and helle, in erthe and salté see  
Is felt thy might ; if that I wel discerne,  
As man, brid, best, fissh, herbe, and grené  
tree 10

Thee fele in timès with vapour eterne,  
God loveth, and to lovè wol not werne ;  
And in this world no livès créature,  
Withouten love, is worth, or may endure.

Ye Jovès first to th'ilke effectés glade,  
Thorough whiche that thingès liven alle  
and be,

Commoevened, and amorous him made  
On mortal thing ; and as you list ay ye  
Yeve him in love ese or adversité, 19  
And in a thousand formés down him sente  
For love in erthe, and whom you list he  
hente.

Ye fiersè Mars apaisen of his ire,  
And as you list ye maken hertès digne ;  
Algatès, hem that ye wol sette a-fire,  
They dredenshame, and vices they resigne ;  
Ye don hem curteis ben, fresshe and  
benigne ;  
And heighe or lowe, after a wight en-  
tendeth,  
The joyès that he hath your might him  
sendeth.

Ye holden regne and hous in unité ;  
Ye sothfast cause of frendship ben also ;  
Ye knowe al th'ilkè coveréd qualité 31

1. Romits ll. 1-49. This apostrophe to Venus,  
as planet and goddess of love, is adapted by  
Chaucer from a speech of Troilus in *Filostrato*.

5. ay; a<sup>3</sup> Cx. H<sub>3</sub> omit.

17. him (?) (Boc.), all hem.

28. him, H<sub>2</sub> Cx. hym; H<sub>4</sub> omits; Ph. hyl;  
rest it.

Of thingès which that folk on wondren  
so,  
Whan they can not construe how it may jo  
She loveth him, or why he loveth here,  
As why this fissh, and not that, com'th to  
were.

Ye folk a lawe han set in univèrs ;  
And this knowe I by hem that lovers be,  
That who-so striveth with you hath the  
wers.

Now, lady bright, for thy benignité,  
At reverence of hem that serven thee, 40  
Whos clerk I am, so techeth me devise  
Some joye of that is felt in thy servise.

Ye in my naked hertè sentément  
In-hiede, and do me shewe of thy swet-  
nesse !—

Caliopè, thy vois be now présent,  
For now is nede ! Sestow not my destresse,  
How I mot telle anon-right the gladnesse  
Of Troilus, to Venus heryinge ?  
To which gladnesse, who nede hath, God  
him bringe !

—Lay al this menè whilè Troilus 50  
Recording his lessoun in this manère :  
'Ma fey !' thoughte he, 'thus wol I seye  
and thus ;

Thus wol I pleyne unto my lady dere ;  
That word is good, and this shal be my  
chere ;

This n'il I not foryeten in no wise.  
God leve him werken as he can devise !

And, Lord, so that his hertè gan to quappe,  
Hering her come, and shortè for to sike !  
And Pandarus, that ledde her by the  
lappe,

Com neer, and gan in at the curtein pike,  
And seidè, 'God do bote on allè sike ! 61  
See who is here you comen to visite !  
Lo, here is she that is your deth to wite !'

49. gladnesse, y<sup>8</sup> omits.

53. 54. J H<sub>5</sub> invert; R omits l. 53.

58. shorte, J R Cx. sor(e).

Therwith it seméd as he wepte almost.  
 ‘Ha a!’ quod Troilus so reufully,  
 ‘Whe’r me be wo, O mighty God, thou  
 wost!

Who is al there? I see nought trewely.  
 ‘Sir,’ quod Criseyde, ‘it is Pandáre and I.’  
 ‘Ye, sweté herte? Allas, I may not rise  
 To knele and do you honour in som wise.’

And dresséd him upwárd; and she right  
 tho 71

Gan bothe her handéssofte upon him leye:  
 ‘O, for the love of God, do ye not so  
 To me!’ quod she, ‘ey! what is this to  
 seye?’

Sir, comen am I to you for causes tweye,—  
 First, you to thanke, and of your lordship  
 eke

Continuance I woldé you biseke.’

This Troilus, that herde his lady preye  
 Of lordship him, wex neither quik ne ded,  
 Ne mighte a word for shamé to it seye, 80  
 Although men sholdé smiten off his hed;  
 But, Lord, so he wex sodeinliché red,  
 And sire, his lesson that he wendé konne  
 To preyén her was thorough his wit y-ronne.

Criseyde al this aspi’dé wel y-nough,  
 For she was wis, and lovede him nevere the  
 lasse,

Al n’ere he malapert, or made it tough,  
 Or was too bold to singe a fool a masse.  
 But whan his shamégan somewhat to passe,  
 His wordés, as I may my rimés holde, 90  
 I wol you telle, as techen bokés olde.

In chaungéd vois right for his verray drede,  
 Which vois ek quook, and therto his manére  
 Goodly abayst, and now his hewés rede,  
 Now pale, unto Criseyde, his lady dere,  
 With look down-cast and humblé yolden  
 chere,—

66. *O mighty*, J Ph. R *almighty*.

80. *to it*, J R Cx. *to hir*.

83. *wende*; a<sup>2</sup> Cx. *wend had*.

84. *was*,  $\gamma^8$  *is*.

84. *wit*; a<sup>2</sup> Cx. *herte*.

90. *wordes*, so a<sup>3</sup> J Cx. S; G<sup>2</sup> R *werkes*;  $\gamma^8$   
*resons*.

91. *wol you*, Cp. H<sub>1</sub> Cl. *you wol*.

Lo, th’ alderfirsté word that him avertere’  
 Was, twyès, ‘Mercy, mercy, sweté herte!’

And stinte a while; and, whan he mighte  
 out-bringe, 99

The nexté word was, ‘God wot, for I have,  
 As ferforthliche as I have had konninge,  
 Ben yourés al, God so my soulé save,  
 And shal til that I, woful wight, be grave!  
 And though I dar ne can unto you pleyne,  
 Y-wis I suffrè not the lassé peyne.

‘Thus muche as now, O wommanliché wif,  
 I may out-bringe; and if this you displese,  
 That shal I wreke upon myn owné lif  
 Right sone I row, and do your herte an  
 ese,

If with my deth your wreththe I may  
 apese. 110

For, sithen ye han herd me somewhat seye,  
 Now recche I nevere howsoné that I deye.’

Therwith his manly sorwé to biholde  
 It mighte have maad an herte of stoon to  
 rewe;

And Pandar wep as he to water wolde,  
 And pokéd evere his necé newe and newe,  
 And seidé, ‘Wo bigon ben hertés trewe!  
 For love of God, mak of this thing an  
 ende,

Or slee us bothe at-onés or ye wende!’

‘Ey! what?’ quod she, ‘by God and by  
 my trouthe 120

I n’ot not what ye wilné that I seye.’—  
 ‘“Ey! what?”’ quod he, ‘that ye han  
 on him routhe,

For Goddés love; and doth him not to  
 deye.’—

‘Now thanné thus,’ quod she, ‘I wolde  
 him preye

To tellé me the fyn of his entente;  
 Yit wiste I neveré wel what that he  
 mente.’

101. *ferforth(liche)*, so a  $\beta$  S;  $\gamma^8$  *seithfully*.

104. *I*; a<sup>3</sup> R Cx. H<sub>3</sub> *I ne*.

110. *wreththe*, H<sub>2</sub> Cx. S  $\gamma^8$  *herte*. *I*, all  
 except a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>2</sup> S omit.

111. *For*,  $\gamma^4$  *But*.

119. *or ye*, H<sub>4</sub>  $\gamma^7$  *er (or) that ye*; H<sub>2</sub> J Cx. *or*  
*wc*.

'What that I mene, O sweté hertè dere?'  
 Quod Troilus. 'O goodly fresshé free!  
 That with the stremès of your yèn clere  
 Ye wolden frendly somtime on me see; 130  
 And thanne agreèn that I may ben he,  
 Withouten braunche of vice in any wise,  
 In trouthe alwey to don you my servise

'As to my lady right and chief resort,  
 With al my wit and al my diligence;  
 And I to han, right as you list, confórt,  
 Under your yerde, egal to myn offence,  
 As deth, if that I brekè your defence;  
 And that youdeignè me so muchehonoure,  
 Me to comanden aught in any houre; 140

'And I to ben your verray humblè trewe,  
 Secret, and in my peynès patient,  
 And everè mo desiren fresshly newe  
 To serve and ben y-like diligent,  
 And with good herte al hoolly your talent  
 Receiven wel, how sorè that me smerte,—  
 Lo, this mene I, myn ownè sweté herte.'

Quod Pandarus, 'Lo, here an hard  
 requeste,

And resonable a lady for to werne!  
 Now, necè myn, by natal Jovès feste, 150  
 Were I a god, ye shulden sterve as yerne,  
 That heren wel this man wol no thing  
 yerne

But your honouër, and sen him almost  
 sterve,  
 And ben so loth to suffren him you serve!'

With that she gan her yèn on him caste  
 Ful esily and ful debónerly,  
 Avising her, and hiede her not too faste  
 With nevere a word, but seide him  
 sobrelly,

'Myn honour sauf, I wol wel trewèly,  
 And in swich forme as he gan now devise,  
 Receiven him fullý to my servise, 161

130. *frendly somtime*, H<sub>4</sub> γ<sup>8</sup> *somtime frendly*.

136. *I*, γ<sup>5</sup> omits.

139. *you*, so a<sup>2</sup> J G R S; rest *ye*.

144. *y-like*, so a<sup>2</sup> Cx. H<sub>3</sub>; J and others *ay y-like*.

157. *hiede her*, so a<sup>2</sup> Cx.; others omit *her*.

158. *sobrelly*, γ<sup>8</sup> *softely*

160. *And*, J *But*.

100. *he*; J and others *ye*.

'Biseching him, for Goddès love, that he  
 Wolde, in honouër of trouthe and gentillesse,  
 As I wel mene, ek menè wel to me,  
 And myn honouër with wit and bisnesse  
 Ay kepe; and if I may don him glad-  
 nesse

From hennésforth, ywis I n'il not feyne.—  
 Now beth al hool, no lenger that ye pleyne.

'But nathèles this warne I you,' quod she,  
 'A kingès sone although ye be y-wis, 170  
 Ye shal no more have sovereynété  
 Of me in love than right in that cas is;  
 N' I n'il forbere, if that ye don amis,  
 To wraththè you, and, whil that ye me  
 serve,

Chericè you right after ye deserve.

'And shortly, derè herte and al my knight,  
 Beth glad, and draweth you to lustinesse;  
 And I shal trewèly with al my might  
 Your bittrè tornen al into swetnèsse;  
 If I be she that may do you gladnèsse, 180  
 For every wo ye shal recovere a blisse.'—  
 And him inarmès took, and gan him kisse.

Fil Pandarus on knees, and up his yèn  
 To hevenè threw, and held his hondès  
 hye:

'Inmortal God,' quod he, 'that mayst not  
 dyen,

Cupide I mene, of this mayst glorifye;  
 And Venus, thou mayst maken melodye;  
 Withouten hond, me semeth that in toune  
 For this mirácle I here ech bellè soune!

'But ho! no more as now of this matère,  
 For-why this folk wol comen up anon 191  
 That have the lettrè red: lo! I hem here.  
 But I conjuré thee Criseyde, and—oon  
 And two—thee Troilus, whan thou mayst  
 gon,

That at myn hous ye ben at my warninge,  
 For I ful wèl shal shapè your cominge;

'And eseth ther your hertès right y-nough;  
 And lat see which of you shal bere the belle

168. *lenger that ye*, a<sup>3</sup> R Cx.; J G γ *lenger ye ne*.

188. *in*, γ<sup>6</sup> *in the*.

189. *mirácle*, γ<sup>6</sup> *merveille*.



To speke of love !—and right therwith  
 he lough,—<sup>199</sup>  
 ‘For ther have ye a leiser for to telle.’—  
 Quod Troilus, ‘How longè shal I dwelle  
 Or this be don?’ Quod he, ‘Whan thou  
 mayst rise,  
 This thing shal be right as I thee devise.’

With that, Eleyne and also Deiphebus  
 Tho comen upwârd right at the stairès  
 ende ;  
 And Lord, so tho gan gronen Troilus,  
 His brother and his suster for to blende.  
 Quod Pandarus, ‘It time is that we wende :  
 Tak, necè myn, your leve at allè three,  
 And lat hem speke, and cometh forth  
 with me.’<sup>210</sup>

She took her leve at hem ful thriftily  
 As she wel coude ; and they her reverence  
 Unto the fullè didnen hardily,  
 And speken wonder wel in her absence  
 Of her, in preising of her excellence,  
 Hergovernaunce, her wit ; and her manére  
 Commendeden, it joyè was to here.

Now lat her wende unto her ownè place,  
 And tornè we to Troilus ayein,  
 That gan ful lightly of the lettrè pace<sup>220</sup>  
 That Deiphebus had in the gardin seyn ;  
 And of Eleyne and him he worldè feyn  
 Delivered ben, and seidè that him leste  
 To slepe, and after-talès to han reste.

Eleyne him kiste and took her levè blive ;  
 Deiphébus ek ; and hom wente every  
 wight ;  
 And Pandarus, as faste as he may drive,  
 To Troilus tho com, as linè right ;  
 And on a paillet al that gladdè night  
 By Troilus he lay, with blisful chere,<sup>230</sup>  
 To tale ; and wel was hem they were i-fere.

Whan every wight was voided but they two,  
 And alle the dorès weren faste y-shette—

199. and right, J H<sub>5</sub> γ a-right.  
 203. I thee, so R ; a<sup>2</sup> Cx. I ; H<sub>4</sub> thei ; J G  
 thou wilt ; H<sub>5</sub> I woll ; γ I you.  
 205. right at ; a<sup>2</sup> Cx. H<sub>3</sub> at.  
 206. tho, H<sub>5</sub> H<sub>3</sub> γ than(ne).  
 230. blisful, H<sub>3</sub> γ merie.

To telle in short withoutè wordès mo—  
 This Pandarus withouten any lette  
 Up-roos, and on his beddès side him sette,  
 And gan to speken in a sobré wise  
 To Troilus, as I shal you devise :<sup>238</sup>

‘Myn alderlevest lord and brother dere,  
 God wot, and thou, that it sat me so sore  
 When I thee saw so languisshing to-yere  
 For love, of which thy wo wex alway more ;  
 That I with al my might and al my lore  
 Have everè sithen don my bisnesse  
 To bringè thee to joye out of distresse,

‘And have it brought to swich plit as thou  
 wost,  
 So that thorgh me thou stondest now  
 in weye

To faren wel : I seye it for no bost,  
 And wostow why? For, shame it is to seye,  
 For thee have I bigonne a gamè pleye<sup>250</sup>  
 Which that I neverè don shal eft for other,  
 Although he were a thousand fold my  
 brother ;

‘That is to seyn, for thee am I becomen,  
 Betwixen game and earnest, swich a mene  
 As maken wommen unto men to comen :  
 Thou wost thy-selven what I worldè mene.  
 For thee have I my nece, of vices clene,  
 So fully maad thy gentilessè triste,<sup>258</sup>  
 That al shal ben right as thy-selven liste.

‘But God that al wot take I to witnèsse,  
 That nevere I this for coveitise wroughte,  
 But only for t’ abreggè that distresse  
 For which wel nigh thou deydest, as me  
 thoughte.

But, goodè brother, do now as thee oughte  
 For Goddès love, and keep her out of blame ;  
 Sith thou art wis, so save alway her name.

‘For wel thou wost the namè yit of here  
 Among the peple, as who seith, halwed is ;  
 For neverè was ther wight, I dar wel swere,

256. So a β ; γ *Alseye I nought, thou wost wel  
 what I mene.*

266. so save, J G<sup>2</sup> so kepe ; γ and save.

267. yet, γ as yet.

269. So J H<sub>4</sub> G<sup>2</sup> S Cx. ; a<sup>2</sup> R γ *For that man  
 is unborc.*

That everè wisté that she dide amis. 270  
But wo is me, that I, that cause al this,  
May thenken that she is my necé dere,  
And I her em and trattor ek i-fere !

‘And were it wist that I thorough myn engýn  
Had in my nece y-put this fantasye  
To don thy lust and hoolly to ben thyn,  
Why, al the peplè wolde upon it crye  
And seyn that I the worstè trecherye  
Dide in this cas that everè was bigonne,  
And she fordon, and thou right naught  
y-wonne ! 280

‘Wherfor, or I wol further gon a pas,  
Thee preye ich eft, although thou  
shuldest deye,

That priveté go with us in this cas :  
That is to seye, that thou us neverè wreye ;  
And be not wroth though I thee oftè preye  
To holden secré swich an heigh matére,  
For skilful is, thou wost wel, my prayére.

‘And think what wo ther hath betid or this  
For making of avauntés, as men rede,  
And what mischaunce in this world yit  
ther is, 290  
Fro day to day, right for that wikked dede ;  
For-which these wisè clerkès that ben dede  
Han everè thus provérbéd to us yonge,  
“The firstè vertu is to kepè tonge.”

‘And n’ere it that I wilne as now abregge  
Defusioun of speche, I coude almost  
A thousand oldè stories thee alegge  
Of wommen lost thorough fals and folis bost.  
Provérbès canst thyselve y-nowe and wost,  
Ayeins that vicè, for to ben a labbe 300  
Though men soth seide as often as they  
gabbe.

273. *trattor* (?), H<sub>1</sub> *tractor*; J and others *traitour*, *treteur*, etc. (Boc. *trattator*).

277. *peple wolde upon it*, so a<sup>2</sup> J R Cx.;  $\gamma$  *world upon it wolde*.

280. *fordon*, so a  $\beta$ ; H<sub>1</sub> *forlorn*; G  $\gamma$  *forlost*.  
282. So a  $\beta$ ; G  $\gamma$  *Yet eft I thee biseche and fully seye*.

293. J H<sub>4</sub> R Cx. *Han write or this, as men yit teche us yonge*.

294. *The*, so a<sup>2</sup> R Cx.; *That the*, H<sub>4</sub> H<sub>5</sub> H<sub>3</sub>; rest *That*.

301. *Though men soth seide*, so a  $\beta$ ;  $\gamma$  *Alseyde men soth*.

‘Oo tonge, allas, so often her-beforn  
Hath maad ful many a lady bright of hewe  
Seyn “weylawey the day that I was born !”  
And many a maydès sorwè for to newe ;  
And for the morè part al is untrewé  
That men of-yelpe, and it were brought  
to preve :  
Of kindè non avauntour is to leve.

‘Avauntour and a lier, al is on ; 309  
As thus : I pose a womman graunteth me  
Her love, and seith that other wol she non,  
And I am sworn to holden it secré,  
And after I go telle it two or three ;  
Y-wis, I am avauntour at the leste,  
And lier, for I breké my behesté.

‘Now lokè than if they ben aught to blame!  
Such maner folk,—what shal I clepe  
hem, what ?—

That hem avaunte of wommen, and by  
name,

That neverè yit behighte hem this ne  
that,  
Ne knewe hem morè than myn oldè hat !  
No wonder is, so god me sendè hele, 321  
Though wommen dreden with us men to  
dele !

‘I seye not this for no mistrust of you,  
Ne for no wis-man, but for folès nice,  
And for the harm that in the world is now  
As wel for foly ofte as for malíce ;  
For wel wot I in wisè folk that vice  
No womman drat, if she be wel avised ;  
For wisè ben by folès harm chastised.

‘But now to purpos. Levè brother dere,  
Have al this thing that I have seid in  
minde, 331  
And kep the clos, and be now of good  
chere,

For at thy day thou shalt me trewè finde.  
I shal thy proces sette in swich a kinde,  
And God to-for, that it shal thee suffise,  
For it shal ben right as thou wolt devise.

302. *Oo*, H<sub>4</sub> Cx. *For* (*oo* probably means *one*).

303. *Hath maad ful*, so a  $\beta$ ; G  $\gamma$  *Hastow maad* (omit *ful*).

304. *Seyn*, so R Cx. H<sub>5</sub> S<sub>2</sub> Dg.; rest *Seyd(e)*.

'For wel I wot thou menest wel, pardé ;  
Therefore I dar this fully undertake.  
Thou wost ek what thy lady graunted thee,  
And day is set the chartres up to make.  
Have now good night, I may no lenger  
wake ; 341  
And bid for me, sith thou art now in blisse,  
That God me sendé deth or soné lisse !'

Who mighté tellen half the joye or feste  
Which that the soule of Troilus tho felte,  
Hering th'effect of Pandarus' behesté ?  
His oldé wo that made his herté swelte  
Gan tho for joyé wasten and to-melte ;  
And al the richesse of his sikés sore 349  
At-onés fledde, he felte of hem no more.

But right so as thise holtés and thise hayis,  
That han in winter dedé ben and dreye,  
Revesten hem in grené whan that May is,  
Whan every lusty listeth best to pleye,  
Right in that selvé wisé, soth to seye,  
Wex sodeinly his herté ful of joye,  
That gladder was ther neveré man in Troye.

And gan his look on Pandarus up-caste  
Ful sobrelly and frendly for to see,  
And seidé, 'Frend, in Aperil the laste, 360  
As wel thou wost, if it remembré thee,  
How neigh the deth for wo thou foundé  
me,

And how thou didest al thy bisnesse  
To knowe of me the cause of my distresse.

'Thou wost how longe ich it forbar to seye  
To thee, that art the man that I best triste ;  
And peril non was it to thee biwreye,  
That wiste I wel : but tel me, if thee liste,  
Sith I so loth was that thy-self it wiste,  
How dorste I mo tellen of this matére, 370  
That quaké now, and no wight may us  
here ?

'But nathéles by that God I thee swere  
That as him list may al this world governe,  
And if I lye, Achilles with his spere

354. *listeth*, so  $\alpha\beta$ ;  $\gamma$  *liketh*.

355. *to*, R Cx.  $\gamma$  for *to*.

359. *for to*,  $\alpha^5$  H<sub>3</sub> Cx. *on(un) to*.

371. *wight*, J R Cx. *man*.

Myn herté cleve, al were my lif eterne  
As I am mortal, if I late or yerne  
Wolde it biwreye, or dorste, or sholde  
konne,  
For al the good that God made under  
sonne ; 378

'That rather dye I wolde, and détermine,  
As thinketh me, now stokkéd in prisoun,  
In wrecchednesse, in filthe, and in vermíne,  
Captif to cruel King Agámenoun :  
And this in alle the temples of this toun  
Upon the Goddés alle I wol thee swere  
To-morwé day, if that it lik'th thee here.

'And that thou hast so muche y-don for me  
That I ne may it neveré mo deserve,  
This knowe I wel, al mighte I now for  
thee  
A thousand timés on a morwé sterve. 389  
I can no more, but that I wol thee serve  
Right as thy sclavé, whider so thou wende,  
For everé-more unto my livés ende !

'But here with al myn herte I thee biseche  
That nevere in me thou demé swich folýe  
As I shalseyn : me thoughté by thy speche  
That this which thou me dost for com-  
panýe,  
I sholdé wene it were a bauderye.  
I am not wood, al if I lewéd be !  
It is not oon, that wot I wel, pardé ! 399

'But he that go'th for gold or for richesse  
On swich messágé, calle him as thee list ;  
And this that thou dost, calle it gentillesse,  
Compassioun, and felawship, and trist.  
Departé it so, for widé-wher is wist  
How that ther is diversité requered  
Bitwixen thingés like, as I have lered.

'And that thou knowe I thenké not ne  
wene  
That this servíse a shamé be or jape,  
I have my fairé suster Polixene, 409  
Cassandre, Eleyne, or any of the frape :  
Al be she nevere so faire or wel y-shape,

379. *That*, H<sub>4</sub> R Cx. *S But*.

399. *oon*, so J  $\alpha^2$  G<sup>2</sup>; rest *so*.

411. *Al*, so R; rest omit.

Tellé me which thou wilt of everychone  
To han for thyn, and lat me thanne allone !

‘ But sith thou hast y-don me this servise  
My lif to save, and for non hope of mede,  
So, for the love of God, this grete emprise  
Parforme it out, for now is mosté nede ;  
For heigh and lowe, withouten any drede,  
I wol alwey thine hestés allé kepe :  
Have now good night, and lat us bothé  
slepe.’ 420

Thus held him ech of other wel apayed,  
That al the world ne mighte it betamende ;  
And on the morwé, whan they were arayed,  
Ech to his owné nedés gan entende.  
But Troilus, though as the fir he brende  
For sharp desír of hope and of plesáunce,  
He not forgat his wisé governaunce,

But in himself with manhod gan restreyné  
Ech rakel dede and ech unbridled chere,  
That allé tho that livén, soth to seyne, 430  
Ne sholde han wist by word or by manére  
What that he mente, as touching this  
matére :

From every wight as fer as is the cloude  
He was, so wel dissimulen he coude.

And al this whilé that I you devise,  
This was his lif : with al his fullé might  
By day he was in Martés heigh servise,  
This is to seyn, in armés as a knight ;  
And for the moré part the longé night 439  
He lay and thoughté how he mighté serve  
His lady best, her thonk for to deserve.

I n’il not seyn that, though he lay ful softe,  
That in his thought he n’as somewhat  
diseded,

Ne that he tornéd on his pilwes ofte,  
And wolde of that he misséd han ben esed ;  
But in swich casmen ben not alwey plesed,

412. *me* ;  $\gamma$  omits.

427. *wise*, so a  $\beta$  ;  $\gamma$  *gode*.

433. *From every wight*, a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>2</sup> *From ech in that*.

435. *this*,  $\gamma$  *thé*.

439. *more*, a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>2</sup> R Cx. *moste*.

442. So J H<sub>4</sub> R S ; a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>2</sup>  $\gamma$  *N’il I not swere  
although*.

442. *ful*, so H<sub>1</sub> R ; rest omit.

445. *esed*, a<sup>2</sup> R  $\gamma$  *sesed*.

For aught I wot, no moré than was he :  
That can I deme of possibilité.

But certein is, to purpos for to go, 449  
This mené while, as writen is in geste,  
He saw his lady som-time ; and also  
She with him spak whan that she durste  
and leste ;  
And by hir bothe avis, as was the beste,  
Apointeden ful warly in this nede  
In every thing how they wolden procede.

But it was spoken in so short a wise,  
In swich await alwey, and in swich fere,  
Lest any wight devinen or devise  
Wolde on this thing, or to it leye an ere,  
That al this world so lief to hem ne were  
As Cupido wolde hem a spacé sende 461  
To maken of hir speche aright an ende.

But th’ilké litel that they spake or wroughte  
His wisé gost took ay of al swich hede,  
It seméd her he wisté what she thoughte  
Withouten word, so that it was no nede  
To bidde him aught to don, or aught  
forbede :

For which her thoughte that love, al  
come it late,  
Of allé joye had opned her the yate.

And, shortly of this proces for to pace, 470  
So wel his werk and wordés he bisette,  
That he so ful stood in his lady grace  
That twenty thousand timés or she lette  
She thonkéd God she everé with him  
mette,

So coude he him góvrne in swich servise  
That al the world ne mighte it bet devise.

For-why she fond him so discret in al,  
So secret, and of swich obéisaunce,  
That wel she felte he was to her a wal

450. *This mene while* ; a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>2</sup>  $\gamma$  *That in this  
while*.

452. *and*, J and others *or*.

455. *In every thing*, so J H<sub>4</sub> R ; a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>2</sup>  $\gamma$  *So  
as they dorste*.

459. *on this thing*, so J H<sub>4</sub> R S ; a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>2</sup> *in this  
speche* ;  $\gamma$  *of hem two*.

461. *As*, so J H<sub>1</sub> R ; a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>2</sup>  $\gamma$  *As that*.

461. *space*, so J a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>2</sup> H<sub>4</sub> ; R  $\gamma$  *grace*.

463. *her*, so J H<sub>4</sub> R ; a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>2</sup>  $\gamma$  *she*.

Of steel, and sheld from every dysplesauce,  
That to ben in his godé governaunce, 481  
So wis he was, she was no more afered,—  
I mene, as fer as oughté ben requered.

And Pandarus, to quike alwey this fir,  
Was evere y-liké prest and diligent ;  
To ese his frend was set al his desir ;  
He shof ay on ; he to and fro was sent ;  
He lettres bar whan Troilus was absént ;  
That neveré wight as in his frendés nede  
Ne bar him bet to don his frend to spede.

But now paraunter som man waiten wolde  
That every word or look, or sonde or chere  
Of Troilus that I rehersen sholde 493  
In al this while unto his lady dere :  
I trowe it were a long thing for to here,  
Or of what wight that stant in swich disjoint  
His wordés alle or every look to-point !

For-sothe I have not herd it don or this  
In storie non, ne no man here I wene !  
And though I wolde, I couldé not y-wis ;  
For ther was some epistel hem bitwene  
That wolde, as seith myn auctour, wel  
contene 502  
An hondred vers, of which him list not  
write ;

How sholde I than a line of it endite ?

But to the grete effect. Than seye I thus,  
That—standing in concord and in quiéte  
Thise ilké two, Criseyde and Troilus,  
As I have seid, and in this timé swete,  
Ave only ofté mighté they not mete,  
The leiser han hir speché to fulfelle,— 510  
That it bifel right as I shal you telle,

That Pandar, which that alwey dide his  
might

Wight for the fin that I shal speke of here,  
Is for to bringen to his hous som night  
Is fairé nece and Troilus i-feré,  
Ther-as at leiser al this heighe matére

484. *this*, so J H<sub>4</sub> R ; a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>2</sup> γ *the*.  
490. *to don his frend to spede*, so J H<sub>4</sub> R Cx. ;  
*vers than he withouten drede*.  
503. *An hondred vers*, so J H<sub>4</sub> R Cx. ; others  
*a half this book*.  
508. *seid*, so J H<sub>4</sub> R Cx. ; others *told*.

Touching hir love were at the fulle up-  
bounde,  
Had, as him thoughte, a timé to it founde.

For he with gret deliberacioun 519  
Had every thing that ther-to mighte availe  
Forncast and put in execucioun,  
And neither left for cost ne for travaile.  
Come if hem list, hem sholdé no thing  
faile ;

And for to ben in aught aspyèd there,  
That wiste he wel an impossiblè were.

And dredéles it cler was in the wind  
Of évery pye, of every letté-game.  
Thus al is wel ; for al this world is blind  
In this matéré, bothé wilde and tame !  
This timber is al redy up to frame : 530  
Us lakketh naught, but that we witen wolde  
A certein houre in which she comen sholde !

And Troilus, that al this púrveyaunce  
Knew at the fulle and waited on it ay,  
Had her-upon ek maad his ordinaunce,  
And founde his cause and ther-toal th'aray,  
That if that he were misséd night or day  
Ther-whil he was abouté this servise,  
That he was gon to don his sacrificse,

And moste at swich a temple alloné wake,  
Answéréd of Apollo for to be, 541  
And first to sen the holy laurer quake  
Or that Apollo spake out of the tree  
To telle him whan the Grekes sholden  
fleé,—

And for-thy lette him no man, God forbede,  
But preye Apollo that he wolde him spede !

Now is ther litel moré for to done ;  
But Pandar up, and (shortly for to seyne)

518. *as him thoughte*, so J H<sub>4</sub> R Cx. S ; others  
*out of doute*.

526. *And*, so Cx. S H<sub>3</sub> ; rest omit.

529. *wilde*, so J H<sub>4</sub> R Cx. S H<sub>3</sub> ; a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>2</sup> γ  
*frende*.

535. *his*, S H<sub>3</sub> γ *gret*.

537. *That if that*, γ *If that*.

543. *Apollo*, a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>2</sup> *the god (aught)*.

544. *whan the Grekes*, a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>2</sup> γ *next* ; whan  
*Grekes (var.)*

546. *that he wolde him spede*, so J H<sub>4</sub> R Cx. ;  
others *helen in this nede*.

Right sone upon the chaunging of the mone  
Whan lightles is the world a night or  
tweyne, 550  
And that the welken shop him for to reyne,  
He streight a-morwe unto his necé wente :  
Ye han wel herd the fin of his entente.

Whan he was come, he gan anon to pleye  
As he was wont, and at him-self to jape ;  
And finaliche he swor and gan her seye  
By this and that, she sholde him not escape,  
Ne make him lenger after her to gape,  
But certainly she mostè by her leve 559  
Come soupen in his hous with him at eve.

At which she lough, and gan her faste  
excusen,  
And seide, 'It raineth : lo, how sholde  
I gon ?'—

'Lat be,' quod he, 'ne stond not thus to  
musen :

This mot be don : ye shal be ther anon !'—  
So at the laste her-of they fille at oon,  
Or ellès, softe he swor her in her ere,  
He woldè neverè comèn ther she were.

And she a-gamè gan him for to roune,  
And axéd him if Troilus were there. 569  
He swor her, 'nay, for he was out of toune,'  
And seidè, 'Nece, I posè that he were,  
Thee thurftè neverè han the morè fere ;  
For, rather than mensholde him ther aspye,  
Me werè levere a thousand fold to dye.'

Not list myn auctour fully to declare  
What that she thoughtè whan he seidè so,  
That Troilus was out of toune y-fare,  
As if he seidè soth ther-of or no ;  
But that she graunted with him for to go  
Withoute await, sin he her that bisoughte,  
And as his nece obeyéd as her oughte.

But natheles yit gan she him biseche, 582  
Although with him to gon it was no fere,  
For to be war of goosissch peples speche

568. *And she a-game (?)*, J R Cx. *And she againe* (H<sub>4</sub> on game); a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>2</sup> γ *Sone after this she* (var.) See ll. 636, 648.

579, 580. So J H<sub>4</sub> R Cx. S; a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>2</sup> γ  
But that withoute await with him to go  
She graunted him . . .

That dremen thingès whiche that neverè  
were,  
And welavise him whom he broughtè there,  
And seide him, 'Em, sin I moste on  
you triste,  
Loke al be wel, for I do as you liste.'

He swor her this, bystokkès and bystones,  
And by the Goddès that in hevenè dwelle,  
Or ellès were him leverè, fel and bones, 591  
With Pluto King as depè ben in helle  
As Tantalus !—What sholde I longè telle ?  
Whan al was wel, he roos and took his leve ;  
And she to soper com, whan it was eve,

With ek a certain of her ownè men,  
And with her fairè nece Antigoné  
And other of her wommen nine or ten.  
But who was glad now ? Who, astrowèn ye,  
But Troilus, that stood and mighte it see 600  
Thorough-out a litel window in a stewe  
Ther he bi-shet til midnight was in mewe,

Unwist of every wight but of Pandaré ?  
But now to purpos. Whan that she was  
come

With allè joye and allè frendès fare,  
Her em anon in armès hath her nome,  
And after to the soper, alle and some,  
When timè was, ful softè they hem sette ;  
God wot, ther was no deyntè for to fette

And after soper gonnen they to rise 611  
At esè wel with hertès fresshe and glade  
And wel was him that coudè best devise  
To liken her, or that her laughen made.  
He song : she pleyde : he toldè tale o  
Wade.

But at the laste, as every thing hath ende  
She took her leve, and nedès woldè wende

588. *for I do*, so J H<sub>4</sub> R Cx; G<sup>2</sup> γ and (a<sup>2</sup>)  
*do now*.

589. *this*, so J R G<sup>2</sup>; Cx. *tho*; a<sup>2</sup> H<sub>4</sub> D om.  
γ *vis*.

596. *With ek (?)*, all *With*.

598. a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>2</sup> *And (of) her wommen wel (a) nine*  
*or ten*.

599. *was*, a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>2</sup> *is*.

602. *til*, H<sub>2</sub> *tul*; others *sin*.

604. *now to purpos*, so J H<sub>4</sub> R Cx. S; a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>2</sup>  
*to the point now*.

614. *tale of Wade*; see C. T. E 1424.

But O Fortúne, executrice of wierdes !  
 O Influences of thise hevenés hye !  
 Soth is, that under God ye ben our hierdes,  
 Though to us beestés ben the causes wrye !  
 This mene I now, for she gan homward  
 hye ; 621

But execut was al hiside her leve  
 The Goddés wil ; for which she mosté bleve.

The benté moné with her hornés pale,  
 Saturn, and Jove, in Cancro joinéd were,  
 That swich a reyn from hevené gan avale  
 That every maner womman that was there  
 Had of that smoky reyn a verray fere ;  
 At which Pandáre tho lough, and seidé  
 thenne, 629

‘ Now were it time a lady to gon henne !

‘ But, godé nece, if I mighte everé plese  
 You any thing, than preye ich you, ’ quod he,  
 ‘ To don myn herte as now so gret an ese  
 As for to dwelle hereal this night with me ;  
 For, necé, this’ your owné hous, pardé !  
 Now by my trouthe I seye it not a-game :  
 To wende as now, to me it were a shame.’

Criseydé, which that coude as muché good  
 As half a world, took hede of his preyére ;  
 And sin it ron and al was on a flood, 640  
 She thoughte, ‘ as good chep may I dwellen  
 here,

And graunte it gladly with a frendés chere  
 And have a thank, as grucche and than  
 abide,

For hom to gon, it may not wel bi-tide.’

‘ I wol, ’ quod she, ‘ myn unclie liefand dere ;  
 Sin that you list, it skile is to be so ;  
 I am right glad with you to dwellen here ;  
 I seidé but a-game, I woldé go.’— 648  
 ‘ Y-wis, graunt mercy, necé ! ’ quod he tho ;  
 ‘ Were it a-game or no, soth for to telle,  
 Now am I glad, sin that you list to dwelle.’

Thus al is wel. But tho began aright  
 The newé joye and al the feste agayn ;

But Pandarus, if goodly had he might,  
 He wolde han hyéd her to beddè fayn ;  
 And seidé, ‘ Lord, this is a hugé rayn !  
 This were a weder for to slepen inne !  
 And that I rede us soné to beginne ! 658

‘ And, necé, wot ye wher I shal you leye ?  
 For-that we shal not liggen fer asonder,  
 And for ye neither shullen, dar I seye,  
 Heré no noise of reynés nor of thonder,  
 By God, right in my lité closet yonder ;  
 And I wol in that outer hous allone  
 Ben wardein of your wommen everychone.

‘ And in this middel chaumbré that ye see  
 Shul alle your wommen slepen wel and  
 softe,

And al withinné shal your-selven be ;  
 And if ye liggen wel to-night come ofte,  
 And careth not what weder is a-lofte ! 670  
 The wynanon ; and whan so that you leste,  
 Than is it timé for to gon to reste.’

Ther n’is no moré ; but her-after sone,  
 The voidé dronke, and travers draweanon,  
 Gan every wight that haddé naught to done  
 More in the place out of the chaumbré gon.  
 And alwey in this mené while it ron,  
 And blew ther-with so wonderliché loudé,  
 That wel nigh no man herén other coude.

Tho Pandarus, herem, right as him oughte,  
 With wommen swiche as were her most  
 aboute, 681

Ful glad unto her beddés side her broughte,  
 And took his leve, and gan ful lowé loute,  
 And seide her, ‘ At this closet dore withoute,  
 Right overthwart, your wommen liggen  
 alle,

That whom you list of hem ye may her calle.’

So whan that she was in the closet leyd,  
 And alle her wommen forth by ordinaunce

662. Here no (?), all Here(n).

667. alle, so H<sub>5</sub> S Cx.; rest omit. (Read ?  
 Shullen; see l. 661.)

668. al withinne, so J H<sub>4</sub> R Cx. S; a<sup>2</sup> γ ther  
 I seyde; G<sup>2</sup> ther besyden.

672. So J H<sub>4</sub> R Cx. S H<sub>3</sub> (var.); a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>2</sup> γ<sup>7</sup> So  
 go we slepe. I trowe it be the beste (var.)

677. So J H<sub>4</sub> R Cx. S; a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>2</sup> γ<sup>8</sup> And evere mo  
 so sterneliche it ron.

623. The, γ<sup>5</sup> At the.

635. For, necé, this (is), so J H<sub>4</sub> R Cx. S; a<sup>2</sup>

;<sup>2</sup> γ For why this is.

636. Now, H<sub>3</sub> And; γ<sup>7</sup> For.

A-beddè werèn ther-as I have seyde, 689  
 Ther was no more to skippen ne to traunce,  
 But boden gon to beddè, with mischaunce,  
 If any man was stering any-where,  
 And lat hem slepen that a-beddè were.

But Pandarus, that wel coude ech a del  
 The oldè daunce, and every point ther-inne,  
 Whan that he saw that allè thing was wel,  
 He thoughte he wolde upon his werk  
 biginne,  
 And gan the stewè dore al softe unpinne ;  
 And stille as stoon, withouten lenger lette,  
 By Troilus adoun right he him sette. 700

And, shortly to the point right for to gon,  
 Of al this thing he tolde him word and  
 ende,  
 And seidè, 'Mak thee redy right anon,  
 For thou shalt into hevenè blissè wende !'  
 'Now, seintè Venus, thou me gracè sende,'  
 Quod Troilus, 'for neverè yit no nede  
 Hadde ich or now, ne halvendel the drede !'

Quod Pandarus, 'Ne dred thee nevere a del,  
 For it shal ben right as thou wolt desire :  
 So thrive I, this night shal I make it wel,  
 Or casten al the gruel in the fire !'— 711  
 'Yit, blisful Venus, this night thou m'  
 enspire,'

Quod Troilus, 'as wis as I thee serve,  
 And everè bet and bet shal til I sterve.

'And if ich hadde, O Venus ful of mirthe,  
 Aspèctès badde of Mars or of Saturne,  
 Or thou combust or let were in my birthe,  
 Thy fader prey al th'ilkè harm disturne  
 Of grace, and that I glad ayein may turne,  
 For love of him thou lovedest in the shawe,  
 Imene Adón, that with the boor was slawe.

'O Jove ek, for the love of faire Európe  
 The whiche in forme of bole away thou fette,  
 Now help ! O Mars, thou with thy bloody  
 cope,  
 For love of Cipris thou menaught ne lette !

692. *man*, so J H<sub>4</sub> Cx. a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>2</sup> ; R S  $\gamma^8$  *wight*.  
 696. *saw*, a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>2</sup> *wiste*.  
 725. *Cipris*, Venus ; see v. 208.

O Phebus, thenk whan Dane her-selven  
 shette  
 Under the barke, and laurer wex for drede ;  
 Yit for her love, O help now at this nede !

'Mercúrie, for the love of Hiersè eke, 729  
 For which Pallás was with Aglauros wroth,  
 Now help ! And ek Diane, I thee biseke  
 That this viágè be not to thee loth !  
 O fatal sustren, whiche, or any cloth  
 Me shapen was, my destinè me sponne,  
 So helpeth to this werk that is begonne !'—

Quod Pandarus, 'Thou wrecched mouses  
 herte !  
 Art thou agast so that she wol thee bite ?  
 Why, don this furrèd cloke upon thy sherte,  
 And folwè me, for I wol han the wite ! 739  
 But bid, and lat me gon biforn a lite.'—  
 And with that word he gan undo a trappe,  
 And Troilus he broughte in by the lappe.

The sternè wind so loudè gan to route  
 That no wight other noisè mightè here ;  
 And they that layèn at the dore withoute  
 Ful sikerly they slepten alle i-ferè ;  
 And Pandarus, with a ful sobrè chere,  
 Go'th to the dore anon withouten lette  
 Ther-as they laye, and softèliche it shette.

And, as he com ayeinward privèly, 758  
 His nece awook, and askèd, 'Who go'th  
 there ?'—

'My derè necè,' quod he, 'it am I !  
 Ne wondreth not, ne have of it no fere.'—  
 And ner he com, and seyde her in her ere,  
 'No word, for love of God, I you biseche !  
 Lat no wight rise and herèn of our  
 speche !'

'What ! which way be ye comèn, ben-  
 distè ?'  
 Quod she, 'and how thus unwist of hem  
 alle ?'—

726. *Dane*, Daphne ; see C.T. 2062-2064.  
 729. *Hiersè*, Herse, daughter of Cecrops, be-  
 loved by Mercury.  
 730. *Aglauros*, Herse's sister ; see Ovid, *Met*  
 ii. 708-832.  
 733. *fatal sustren*, the three Fates.  
 757. *ben-distè*, so J ; others *benedicitè*.  
 758. *thus*, R  $\gamma^8$  omit.



'Here at this lite trappè-dore,' quod he.—  
Quod tho Criseydè, 'Lat me som wight  
calle!'— 760

'Ey! God forbedè that it sholdè falle,'  
Quod Pandarus, 'that ye swich foly  
wroughte!

They mightè demen that they nevere er  
thoughte!

'It n'is not good a sleping hound to wake,  
Ne yeve a wight a causè to devine:  
Your wommen slepen alle, I undertake,  
So that for hem the hous men mightè mine,  
And slepen wollen til the sonnè shine!  
And whan my tale y-brought is to an ende,  
Unwist, right as I com, so wol I wende. 770

'Now, necè myn, ye shal wel understonde,'  
Quod he, 'so as ye wommen demen alle,  
That for to holden longe a man in honde  
And him her lief and derè hertè calle,  
And maken him an howve above a calle,  
I mene, as love another in this while,—  
She doth herself a shame and him a gile.

'Now, wher-by that I tellè you al this:  
Ye wot your-self as wel as any wight  
How that your love al fully graunted is 780  
To Troilus, the worthiestè knight  
Don of this world, and therto trouthe  
y-plaint,

That, but it were on him along, ye n'olde  
Him neverè falsen whil ye livèn sholde.

Nowstant it thus: that sin I froyou wente,  
his Troilus, right platly for to seyn,  
s thorough a goter by a privé wente  
nto my chaumbrè come in al this reyn,  
'nwist of every maner wight, certeyn,  
ave of myself, as wisly have I joye, 790  
nd by that feith I shal Priám of Troye!

And he is come in swich peyne and distresse  
hat, but he be al fully wood by this,  
e sodeinly mot falle into woodnèsse  
it-if God helpe. And causè why this is,—  
e seith him told is of a frend of his,

773. holden longe, so J H<sub>4</sub> R Cx. H<sub>3</sub>; others  
lde in love.

How that ye sholden love oon, hatte  
Horaste,  
For sorwe of which this night shal ben  
his laste!

Criseydè, which that al this wonder herde,  
Gan therwithal aboute her hertè colde, 800  
And with a sik she sodeinly answeerde,  
'Allas, I wen'dè, who-so talès tolde,  
My derè hertè woldè me not holde  
So lightly fals! Allas, conceitès wronge,  
What harm they don, for now live I too  
longe!

'Horaste! allas, and falsen Troilus!  
I knowe him not, God help me so!'  
quod she.

'Allas, what wikked spirit tolde him thus?  
Now certès, em, to-morwe, and I him see,  
I shal of that as ful excusen me 810  
As everè didè womman, if him like.'  
And with that word she gan ful sorè sike.

'O God!' quod she, 'so worldly selinesse,  
Which clerkès callen fals felicitè,  
Y-medled is with many a bitternesse!  
Ful anguissous than is, God wot,' quod  
she,

'Condicion of veyn prosperité!  
For either joyès comen not i-fere,  
Or ellès no wight hath hem alwey here.

'O brotel wele! O worldly joye un-  
stable! 820

With what wight so thou be or how thou  
pleye,

Either he wot that thou, joye, art muáble,  
Or wot it not; it mot be oon of tweye.  
Now, if he wot it not, how may he seye  
That he hath verray joye and selinesse,  
That is of ignoraunce ay in derknèsse?

'Now, if he wot that joye is transitorie,  
As every joye of worldly thing mot flee,

797. oon, G γ oon that.

800. therwithal, a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>2</sup> γ sodeinly.

801. sodeinly, a<sup>2</sup> (i<sup>2</sup> γ sorwfully.

810. of that, S γ therof.

813 836. Adapted from *Boethius* ii. prosa. 4.

820. O worldly, so J H<sub>4</sub> R Cx; a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>2</sup> γ of  
mannes.

Than every time he that hath in mémorie,  
The drede of lesing maketh him that he 830  
May in no parfit selinessé be ;  
And if to lese his joye he set a mite,  
Than semeth it that joye is worth ful lite.

‘Wherfor I wol define in this manére,  
That trewely, for aught I can espye,  
Ther is no verray wele in this world here.  
But O thou wikked serpent jalousyé !  
Thou misbelevéd envious folýe !  
Why hastow Troilus maad to me untriste,  
That neveré yit agilte him that I  
wiste?’— 840

Quod Pandarus, ‘Thus fallen is this cas—’  
‘Why! uncle myn,’ quod she, ‘who tolde  
him this?’

Why doth my deré herté thus, allas?’—  
‘Ye wot, ye necé myn,’ quod he, ‘what is.  
I hope al shal be wel that is amis,  
For ye may quenche al this if that you leste.  
And doth right so: I holde it for the  
beste.’—

‘So shal I don to-morwe, y-wis,’ quod she,  
‘And God to-forn, so that it shal suffise.’—  
‘To-morwe? allas, that were a fair!’  
quod he. 850

‘Nay, nay, it may not stonden in this wise;  
For, necé myn, thus writen clerkés wise,  
That peril is with drecching in y-drawe:  
Nay, such abodés ben not worth a hawe!’

‘Necé, allé thing hath time, I dar avowe;  
For whan a chaumbre a-fire is, or an halle,  
Wel more nede is, it sodeinly rescowe  
Than to dispute and axe amongés alle  
“How is this candel in the straw y-falle?”  
A! bendisté! for al among this fare 860  
The harm is don, and far-wel feldéfare!’

‘And, necé myn, ne take it not a-grief:  
If that ye suffre him al night in this wo,  
God help me so, ye had him neveré lief!  
That dar I seyn, now ther is but we two.  
But wel I wot that ye wol not do so;

Ye ben too wis to don so gret folýe  
To putte his lif al night in jupartýe.’—

‘Had ich him neveré lief? By God, I wene  
Ye haddé neveré thing so lief!’ quod  
she.— 870

‘Now, by my thrift,’ quod he, ‘that shal  
be sene!’

For, sin ye maken this ensaumple of me,  
If ich al night wolde him in sorwé see  
For al the tresour in the town of Troye,  
I biddé God I neveré mote have joye!’

‘Now, loké than, if ye that ben his love  
Shal putte his lif al night in jupartye  
For thing of naught, now by that God above  
Not only this delay com’th of folýe  
But of malíce, if that I shal not lye!’ 880  
What! platly, and ye suffre him in distresse.  
Ye neither wisdom don ne gentillesse!’

Quod tho Criseydé, ‘Wol ye don oo thing  
And ye therwith shal stinten his disese:  
Have here and bereth him this blewé ring  
For ther is no thing mighte him bettré plesse  
Save I my-self, ne more his herte apese  
And seye my deré herté, that his sorwe  
Is causeles: that shal he seen to-morwe!’—

‘A ring?’ quod he, ‘ye, haselwode  
shaken!’ 890

Ye, necé myn, that ring moste have a ste  
That mighté dedé men a-livé maken;  
And swich a ring trowe I that ye have now  
Discrecioun out of your hed is gon:  
That fele I now,’ quod he, ‘and that  
routhe.

O time y-lost! wel maystow corse  
slouthe!’

‘Wot ye not wel that noble and heigh corag  
Ne sorweth not ne stinteth ek for lite?  
But, if a fool were in a jalous rage,  
I n’oldé setten at his sorwe a mite, 900  
But feffe him with a fewé wordés white  
Another day whan that I mighte him finde  
But this thing stant al in another kinde

838. *envious*. J  $\gamma^4$  and *envious*.  
862. *ne*,  $a^2 G^2$  J omit.

882. *wisdom*,  $a^2 G^2 \gamma$  *bounte*.

889. *causeles*,  $a^2 G^2$  *medeles*.

889. *he seen*,  $a^2 G^2 \gamma$  *be sene* (*seyn*).

' This is so gentil and so tendre of herte  
That with the deth he wol his sorwes wreke ;  
For, trusteth wel, how soré that him  
smerte,

He wol to you no jalous wordés speke.  
And for-thy, nece, or ye his herté breke,  
So spek yourself to him of this matére ;  
For withoo word ye may his herté stere. 910

' Now have I told what peril he is inne ;  
And his cominge unwist is t' every wight ;  
And, pardé, harm may ther be non ne  
sinne ;

I wol my-self ben with you al this night.  
Ye knowe ek how it is your owné knight,  
And that by right ye moste upon him triste,  
And I al prest to fecche him whan you  
liste.'—

This accident so pitous was to here,  
And ek so lik a soth at primé face,  
And Troilus her knight to her so dere, 920  
His privé coming, and the siker place,  
That, though that she dide him as tho a  
grace,

Consideréd ailé thingés as they stode,  
No wonder is, sin she dide al for gode.

Criseyde answerde, ' As wisly God at reste  
ly soulé bringe, as me is for him wo !  
And em, y-wis, fayn wolde I don the beste,  
that ich haddé gracé to do so.

But whether that ye dwelle or for him go,  
I am, til God me bettre mindé sende, 930  
at Dulcarnon, right at my wittés ende.'—

Quod Pandarus, ' Ye, necé, wol ye here ?  
Dulcarnon calléd is " fleeminge of  
wrecches " :

semeth hard, for wrecches wol not lere  
or verray slouthe and othré wilful  
tecches :

his' seid by hem that ben not worth  
two fecches !

13. *And, γ Ne.*

31. *Dulcarnon* (from Arab. two-horned),  
allied to Euclid i. 47. Here in the general sense  
difficulty or perplexity.

33. *Fleeminge of wrecches*; a translation of  
*α miserorum*, or *Eleufuga*, applied to Euclid  
i. which Pandarus, perhaps purposely confuses  
with the 47th proposition.

But ye ben wis ; and this matére on  
honde  
N'is neither hard, ne skillful to with-  
stonde.'—

' Than, em,' quod she, ' doth her-of as  
you list !

But, or he come, I wol up first arise. 940  
And, for the love of God, sin al my trist  
Is on you two, and ye ben bothé wise,  
So werketh now in so discreet a wise  
That ich honouór may have, and he ples-  
áunce,

For I am here as in your governaunce.'

' That is wel seid,' quod he, ' my necé  
dere ;

Ther good thrift on that wisé gentil herté !  
But liggeth stille and taketh him right  
here ;

It nedeth not no ferther for him sterte.  
And ech of you ese othressorwes smerte 950  
For love of God ! And, Venus, I thee  
herie,

For some hope I we shul ben allé merie !'—

This Troilus ful sone on knees him sette  
Ful sobrély, right by her beddés hed,  
And in his besté wise his lady grette.

But, Lord, so she wex sodeinliché red !  
Ne, though men sholden smiten off her  
hed,

She coude not a word a-right out-bringe  
So sodeinly, for his sodéin cominge !

But Pandarus, that so wel coude fele 960  
In every thing, to pleye anon bigan,  
And seidé, ' Nece, see how this lord can  
knele

Now for your trouthe ! Y-see this gentil  
man !'

And with that word he for a quissshin ran,  
And seidé, ' Kneleth now whil that you  
leste !

Ther God your hertés bringé sone at  
reste !'—

Can I not seyn, for she bad him not rise,  
If sorwe it putte out of her rémembraunce,

937. *this matére, α<sup>2</sup> G<sup>2</sup> γ that we han.*

Or ellés that she took it in the wise  
Of duété as for his óbservaunce ; 970  
But wel wot I she dide him this plesáunce,  
That she him kiste, although she sightè  
scre,  
Ánd bad him sitte a-doun withouten more.

Quod Pandarus, ' Now wolye wel biginne!  
Now doth him sittè, godè necè dere,  
Upon your beddès side al ther withinne,  
That ech of you the bet may other  
here !'—

And with that word he drow him to the fere,  
And took a light, and fond his conte-  
naunce

As for to loke upon an old romaunce. 980

Criseydè, that was Troilus' lady right  
And cleer stood on a ground of sikernesse,  
Al thoughtè she her servaunt and her  
knight

Ne sholde of right non untrouthe in her  
gesse,

Yet nathèles, considerèd his distresse  
And that love is in cause of swich folýe,  
Thus to him spak she of his jealousy :

' Lo, hertè myn, as woldè th' excellence  
Of love, ayeins the whichè no man may  
Neoughte ek goodly maken résistence, 990  
And ek because I feltè wel and say  
Your gretè trouthe and servise every day,  
And that your herte al myn was, soth to  
seyne,

This drof me for to rewe upon your peyne.

' And your goodnése have I founde alwey  
yit,

Of which, my derè herte and al my knight,  
I thonke it you as fer as I have wit,  
Al can I not as muche as it were right ;  
And I emforth my conning and my might  
Have, and ay shal how sorè that me  
smerte, 1000

Ben to you trewe and hool with al myn  
herte ;

971. *wot*, so J H<sub>4</sub> R ; Cx. *rede* ; others *finde*.

972. *sightè*, so J ; others *siked*.

979. *fond*, H<sub>5</sub> Cx. *feynede*.

989. *whiche*, so H<sub>4</sub> R Cx. a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>2</sup> ; J  $\gamma$  *whiche that*.

' And dredèles that shal be founde at preve !  
But, hertè myn, what al this is to seyne—  
Shal wel be told, so that ye not you greve,  
Though I to you right on your-self com-  
pleyne ;

For ther-with mene I finally the peyne  
That halt your herte and myn in hevinesse  
Fully to slen, and every wrong redresse.

' My godè myn, n'ot I for-why ne how  
That jealousy, allas, that wikked wivere,  
So causèles is copen into you, 1011  
The harm of which I woldè fayn delivere.  
Allas, that he, al hool, or of him slivere,  
Sholde han his refut in so digne a place !  
Ther Jove him sone out of your herte arace !

' But O thou Jove, O auctour of nature !  
Is this an honour to thy deité,  
That folk ungitlif suffren here injúre,  
And who that giltif is, al quit go'th he ?  
O were it leveful for to pleyne on thee, 1020  
That undeservèd suffrest jealousy,  
Of that I wolde upon thee pleyne and crye !

' Ek al my wo is this, that folk now usen  
To seyn right thus, " Ye, jealousy is love,"  
And wolde a busschel venim al excusen  
For-that oo greyn of love is in it shove !  
But that wot heighè God that sit above,  
If it be liker love, or hate and grame !  
And after that it oughtè bere his name !

' But certein is, som maner jealousy 1030  
Is excusáble more than som, y-wis ;  
As whan cause is, and som swich fantasye  
With pietè so wel repressèd is  
That it unnethè doth or seith amis,  
But goodly drinketh up al his distresse :  
And that excuse I for the gentillesse.

' And som so ful of furie is and despit  
That it surmounteth his repressioun.  
But, hertè myn, ye ben not in that plit,

1011. *So*, so J H<sub>4</sub> R Cx ; others *Thus*.

1024. *Ye*, J and others *that*.

1026. *in*,  $\gamma$  on.

1028. *and grame*, so J H<sub>4</sub> ; others *or*.

1033. *pieté*, so J S Cp. H<sub>1</sub> only ; rest *pite*  
*pete*, etc.

That thanke I God; for-which your  
passioun 1040

I wol not calle it but illusioun  
Of hábundaunce of love and bisy cure,  
That doth your herté this disese endure;

'Of which I am right sory, but not wroth.  
But, for my devoir and your hertés reste,  
Whe'r so you list by ordal, or by oth,  
By sort, or in what wisé so you leste,  
For love of God, lat preve it for the beste!  
And if that I be giltif, do me deye!  
Allas, what mighte I moré don or seye?'—

With that a fewé brighté terés newe 1051  
Out of her yén fille, and thus she seyde,  
'Now God, thou wost in thought ne dede  
untrewe

To Troilus was neveré yit Criseyde!'—  
With that her hed down in the bed she  
leyde,  
And with the shete it wreigh, and sighté  
sore,  
And held her pees: not oo word spak she  
more.

But now help God to quenchenal this sorwe!  
So hope I that he shal, for he best may!  
For I have seyn of a ful misty morwe  
Folwen ful ofte a merie somer's day; 1061  
And after winter folweh grené May.  
Men sen alday, and reden ek in stories,  
That after sharpé shourés ben victóriés.

This Troilus whan he her wordés herde,  
(Have ye no care!) him listé not to slepe;  
For it thoughte him no strokés of a yerde  
To here or sen Criseyde his lady wepe,  
But wel he felte aboute his herté crepe,  
For every tere which that Criseyde asterte,  
The crampe of deth, to streyne him by  
the herte. 1071

And in his minde he gan the time acorse  
That evere he com ther, or that he was born;  
For now is wikké turnéd into worse,

1073. *evere*, so H<sub>3</sub> only.

1073. *or*, γ and.

1073. *that*, Cp. *that that*.

1073. *was*, H<sub>5</sub> *man was*,

And al the labour he hath don biforn  
He wen'de it lost: he thoughte he n'as  
but lorn.

'O Pandarus,' thoughte he, 'allas, thy wile  
Serveth of naught, so weylaway the  
while!'—

And therwithal he heng adoun the hed,  
And fil on knees, and sorwfulliche he  
sighte: 1080

What mighte he seyn? He felte he n'as  
but ded;

For wroth was she that sholde his sorwés  
lighte.

But nathéles, whan that he speken mighte,  
Than seide he thus, 'God wot that of  
this game,

Whan al is wist, than am I not to blame!'—

Therwith the sorwé so his herté shette  
That from his yén fil ther not a tere;  
And every spirit his vigour in-knette,  
So they astonéd and oppresséd were; 1089  
The feling of his sorwe, or of his fere,  
Or of aught ellés, fled was out of towne;  
And down he fil al sodeinliche a-swowne.

This was no litel sorwé for to see;  
But al was hust, for Pandar up as faste,  
'O necé, pes, or we be lost!' quod he,  
'Beth not agast!' But certein, at the laste,  
For this or that, he into bedde him caste,  
And seide, 'O thef, is this a mannés herte?'  
And off he rente al to his baré sherte.

And seidé, 'Necé, but ye helpe us now,  
Allas, your owné Troilus is lorn!' 1101  
'Y-wis, so wolde I, and I wisté how,  
Ful fayn!' quod she: 'Allas, that I  
was born!'—

'Ye, necé, wole ye pullén out the thorn  
That stiketh in his herté,' quod Pandaré,  
'Sey "al foryeve," and stint is al this  
fare!'—

'Ye, that to me,' quod she, 'ful leveré were  
Than al the good the sonne abouté go'th!  
And therwithal she swor him in his ere,

1094. *But*, J Cx. a<sup>2</sup> and others *For*.

1094. *for*, so H<sub>4</sub> G; Cx. a<sup>2</sup> *but*; J γ and,

'Y-wis, my deré herte, I am not wroth,  
Have here my trouthe!' and many  
another oth; 1111  
'Now spek to me, for it am I, Criseyde!'—  
But al for naught: yit mighte he not  
abreyde.

Therwith his pousand paumés of his hondes  
They gan to frote, and wete his temples  
tweyne;

And, to deliverén him fro bittré bondes,  
She ofte him kiste; and, shortly for to  
seyne, 1117

Him to revoke she dide al her peyne.  
And at the laste, he gan his breth to drawe,  
And of his swough sone after that adawe,

And gan bet minde and reson to him take;  
But wonder sore he was abayst, y-wis,  
And with a sik, when he gan bet awake,  
He seide, 'O mercy, God, what thing is  
this?'—

'Why do ye with your-selven thus amis?'  
Quod tho Criseyde, 'Is this a mannés game?  
'What, Troilus! wol ye do thus? For  
shame!'—

And therwithal her arm over him she leyde,  
And al foryaf, and ofté time him keste.  
He thonkéd her, and to herspak and seyde  
As fil to purpos for his hertés reste; 1131  
And she to that answérde him as her leste,  
And with her goodly wordés him disporte  
She gan, and ofte his sorwes to confórte.

Quod Pandarus, 'For aught I can espyen,  
I nor this candel serven here of nought;  
Light is not good for siké folkés yén!  
But for the love of God, sin ye be brought  
In thus good plit, lat now non hevly thought  
Ben hanging in the hertés of you tweye!'—  
And bar his candel to the chiméneye. 1141

Sone after this, though it no nedé were,  
Whan she swiche othés as her list devise

1115. *wete*, J H<sub>1</sub> R H<sub>2</sub> ck.  
1127. a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>2</sup> Wol Troilus do thus? *Allas, for  
shame!*

1136. *I nor this candel*, a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>2</sup> γ *This light  
nor I (var.)*

1141. *his, γ the.*

Had of him take, her thoughté tho no fere,  
Ne cause ek non to bidde him thennés rise.  
Yit lassé thing than othés may suffice  
In many a cas; for every wight, I gesse,  
That loveth wel, meneth but gentillesse!

But in effect she woldé wite anon 1149  
Of what man, and ek wher, and also why  
He jalous was, sin ther was causé non;  
And ek the signé that he took it by,  
This bad she him to telle her bisily,  
Or ellés, certein, she bar him on honde  
That this was don for malice, her to fonde.

Withouté moré, shortly for to seyne,  
He moste obeye unto his lady heste;  
And for the lassé harm he mosté feyne.  
He seide her, 'whan she was at swich  
a feste, 1159  
She mighte on him han lokéd at the leste—'  
N'ot I not what, at dere ynough a risshe,  
As he that nedés moste a causé fissue!

Criseyde answérdé, 'Swete, al were it so,  
What harm was that, sin I non yvel mene?  
For, by that God that wroughte us bothé  
two,

In allé thing is myn ententé clene!  
Swiche arguments ne ben not wortha bene!  
Wol ye the childissh jalous contrefete?  
Now were it worthy that ye were y-bete!'—

Tho Troilus gan sorwfully to sike; 1170  
Lest she be wroth, him thoughte his  
herté deyde;

And seide, 'Allas, upon my sorwés sike  
Have mercy, sweté herté myn, Criseyde!  
And if that in tho wordés that I seyde  
Be any wrong, I wol no more trespace;  
Do what you list, I am al in your grace!'—

Criseyde answérde, 'Of gilt misericorde!  
This is to seyn, that I foryeve al this. 1178  
And everé-mo on this night you recorde,  
And beth wel war ye do no more amis!'—  
'Nay, deré herté myn,' quod he, 'y-wis!'—

1148. *wel*, a<sup>2</sup> *wel and.*

1163. *Criseyde*, a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>2</sup> γ *And she.*

1168. *jalous*; J and others *jalousie.*

1177. *Criseyde*, a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>2</sup> γ *And she.*

'And now,' quod she, 'that I have don  
you smerte,  
Foryeve it me, myn owné sweté herte!'—

This Troilus, with blisse of that suppressed,  
Putte al in Goddès hond, as he that mente  
No thing but wel; and, sodeinly avised,  
He her in armès fastè to him hentè.

And Pandarus, with a ful good entente,  
Leyde him to slepe, and seyde, 'If ye  
ben wise,

'Swowneth not now lest moré folk  
arise!'—

1190

What mighte or may the sely larkè seye,  
Whan that the sperhauk hath it in his  
foot?—

I can no more, but of this ilkè tweye,  
To whom this talé sucré be or soot,  
Though that I tarie a yeer, som time I moot  
After myn auctour tellen hir gladnése  
As wel as I have told hir hevinesse.

Criseydè, which that felte her thus y-take,  
As writen clerkes in hir bokès olde, 1199  
Right as an aspen leef she gan to quake,  
Whan she him felte her in his armès folde.  
And Troilus, al hool of carès coldè,  
Gan thanken tho the brightè Goddès  
sevenè.—

Thussondry peynès bringen folk in hevene.

This Troilus in armès gan her streyne,  
And seide, 'O swete, as everè mote I gon,  
Tow be ye caught! Now is ther but  
we tweyne!

Tow yeldeth you, for other bote is non!'—  
'o that Criseyde answérè thus anon,  
N' had I or now, my sweté hertè dere,  
en yolde, y-wis I werè now not here!'—

, soth is seid, that helèd for to be 1212  
s of a fevere, or other gret siknése,  
en mostè drinke, as men may alday see,  
il bittrè drinke; and for to hangladnése,

Men drinken oftè peyne and gret distresse:  
I mene it here, as for this aventure  
That thourgh a peyne hath founden al  
his cure.

And now swetnéssè semeth morè swete  
That bitternesse assayèd was biforn; 1220  
For out of wo in blissè now they flete;  
Non swich they felten sin they werè born.  
Now is this bet than bothè two be lorn!  
For love of God, take every womman hede  
To werken thus, whan it com'th to the nede!

Criseyde, al quit from every drede and tene,  
As she that justè cause had him to triste,  
Made him swich feste, it joyè was to sene,  
Whan she his trouthe and clene ententè  
wiste;

1229

And as aboute a tree with many a twistè  
Bitrent and wryth the swotè wodèbinde,  
Gan ech of hem in armès other winde.

And as the newe abaysèd nightingale  
That stinteth first whan she biginneth singe,  
Whan that she hereth any herdè tale,  
Or in the hegges any wight sterfinge,  
And after siker doth her vois out-ringe;  
Right so Criseydè, whan her dredè stente,  
Opned her herte, and tolde al her entente.

And right as he that saw his deth y-shapen,  
And deyen moste, in aught that he may  
gesse,

1241

And sodeinly rescous doth him escapen,  
And from his deth is brought in sikernesse;  
For al this world, in swich présent glad-  
nése

Is Troilus, and hath his lady swete.—  
With worsè hap God lat us neverè mete!

Her armès smale, her streightè bak and  
softe,

Hersidès longè, fleshly, smothe, and white  
He gan to stroke, and good thrift bad ful  
ofte

Her snowissh throte, her brestes rounde  
and lite:

1250

202. *And, γ But.*203. *brighte, γ blisful.*211. *I were now not here, R Cx. H<sub>3</sub> H<sub>5</sub> I n'**l not now ben here.*214. *alday, a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>2</sup> γ oft(n).*1222. *sin, H<sub>1</sub> and others sin that.*1240. *saw, J seith; a<sup>2</sup> γ seth.*1241. *moste, a<sup>2</sup> G γ mot.*1245. *Is, a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>2</sup> γ Was.*

Thus in this hevене he gan him to delite,  
And therwithal a thousand time her kiste,  
That what to don for joye unnethe he  
wiste.

Than seide he thus, 'O Love, O Charité !  
Thy moder ek, Citherea the swete,  
After thy-self next heriéd be she,  
Venus mene I, the wel-willy planéte !  
And next you, Imenéus, I thee grete !  
For neverè man was to you Goddès holde  
As I, that ye han brought fro carès colde.

'Benigné Love, thou holy bond of thinges,  
Who-so wol grace, and list thee not hon-  
ouren, <sup>1262</sup>  
Lo, his desir wol flee withouten winges !  
For n'oldestow of bounté hem socouren  
That serven best and most alwéy labouren,  
Yit were al lost, that dar I wel seyn, certes,  
But-if thy gracé passéd our desertes.

'And, for thou me, that coude leest deserve  
Of hem that noubred ben unto thy grace,  
Hast holpen ther I likly was to sterve, <sup>1270</sup>  
And me bestowéd in so heigh a place  
That th' ilké boundés may no blissé pace,  
I can no more, but laude and reverence  
Be to thy bounté and thyn excellence !'—

And therwithal Criseyde anon he kiste,  
Of which, certain, she felté no disese !  
And thus seide he, 'Now woldé God I  
wiste,  
Myn herté swete, how I you mighté plese !  
What man,' quod he, 'was everé thus at ese  
As I on whom the fairest and the beste <sup>1280</sup>  
That evere I say, deyneth her herté reste ?

'Here may men see that mercy passeth  
right :  
Th' experience of this is felt in me,  
That am unworthy to you, lady bright.  
But, herté myn, of your benigneté  
So thinketh, though that I unworthy be,

1258. *Imenéus*, Hymen.

1268. *coude leest*, H<sub>5</sub> γ *lest coude*.

1283. *this*, a<sup>3</sup> G<sup>2</sup> γ *that*.

1284. *to you, lady bright*, a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>2</sup> γ *to so sweet  
a wight*.

Yit mot I nede amenden in som wise  
Right thourgh the vertu of your heighe  
servise.

'And for the love of God, my lady dere,  
Sin God hath wrought me for I shal you  
serve, <sup>1290</sup>  
As thus he wol how that ye ben my stere  
To do me live, if that you list, or sterve,  
So techeth me how that I may deserve  
Your thonk, so that I thourgh myn ignor-  
aunce  
Ne do no thing that be you displesaunce.

'For certés, fresshé wommanliché wif,  
This dar I seye, that trouthe and diligence,  
That shal ye finden in me al my lif ;  
N' I wol not, certein, breken your defence ;  
And if I do, présent or in absénce, <sup>1300</sup>  
For love of God lat slee me with the dede,  
If that it like unto your wommanhede !'

'Y-wis,' quod she, 'myn owné hertés list,  
My ground of ese, and al myn herté dere,  
Gramercy, for on that is al my trist !  
But lat us falle away fro this matére,  
For this suffiseth which that seyde is here ;  
And at oo word, withouten répentance,  
Welcome, my knight, my pees, my  
suffisaunce !'—

Of hir delit or joyés oon the leste <sup>1310</sup>  
Were impossiblè to my wit to seye ;  
But juggedh ye that han ben at the feste  
Of swich gladnése, if that hem listé pleye  
I can no more, but thus thise ilké tweye  
That night betwixen drede and sikernesse  
They felte in love the greté worthinesse.

O blisful night, of hem so longe y-sought  
How blithe unto hem bothè two thou were  
Why n'had I swich oon with my soul  
y-bought,  
Ye, or the leesté joyé that was there ? <sup>1320</sup>  
Away, thou foulé daunger and thou fere

1291. *how*, so H<sub>4</sub> H<sub>3</sub> ; J R Cx. omit.

1291. a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>2</sup> γ read (var.) *As thus I mene,*  
*wol ye ben my stere.*

1307. *this suffiseth which that* ; a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>2</sup> γ  
*suffiseth, this that.*



And lat hem in this hevené blissé dwelle,  
That is so heigh that no man can it telle !

But how al-though I can not tellen al  
As can myn auctour of his excellence,  
Yit have I seid, and God to-forn, and shal  
In every thing the gret of his sentence ;  
And if that I, at lovés reverence,  
Have anything in echéd for the beste,  
Doth therwithal right as your-selven leste.

For miné wordés, here and every part, 1331  
I speke hem alle under correccioun  
Of you, that feeling han in lovés art,  
And putte hem hool in your discrecioun  
T'encresse or maké diminucioun  
Of my langáge ; and that I you biseche.—  
But now to purpos of my rather speche.

Thise ilké two that ben in armés laft,  
So loth to hem asonder gon it were,  
That ech from other wen'dé ben biraft, 1340  
Or ellés, lo, this was hir mosté fere,  
Lest al this thing but nicé dremés were :  
For-which ful ofte ech of hem seide, 'O  
swete,  
Clippe ich you thus, or ellés ich it mete ?'

And Lord ! so he gan goodly on her see  
That nevere his look ne bleynté from her  
face,  
And seide, 'O deré herté, may it be  
That this be soth, that ye ben in this  
place ?'—

'Ye, herté myn, God thanke I of his grace !'  
Quod tho Criseyde, and therwithal him  
kiste, 1350  
That wher his spirit was, for joye he n'iste.

This Troilus ful ofte her yén two  
gan for to kisse, and seide, 'O yén clere,  
t weré ye that wroughten me this wo,  
Ye humblé nettés of my lady dere !

1323. *no man can it*, so J P H<sub>4</sub> R Cx. H<sub>3</sub> S ;  
*thers al ne can I*.

1324. J R Cx. H<sub>3</sub> S have the two following  
anzas (ll. 1324-1337) after l. 1414 ; H<sub>4</sub> has them  
in both places.

1324. *But how al-though*, P G γ *But soth is*,  
*iongh* ; S H<sub>5</sub> (var.)

1327. *the gret of*, P G γ *al hoolly*.

Though ther be mercy writen in your chere,  
God wot, the text ful hard is, soth, to finde !  
How coudé ye withouten bond me  
binde ?'—

Therwith he gan her faste in armés take,  
And wel a thousand timés gan he sike, 1360  
Not swiché sorwful sikés as men make  
For wo, or ellés whan that folk ben sike,  
But esy sikés, swiche as ben to like,  
That shewéd his affeccioun withinne ;  
Of swiché sikés coude he nothing blinne.

Sone after this they spake of sondry things  
As fil to purpos of hir áventure,  
And pleyng entrechaungeden hir ringes,  
Of which I can not tellen no scriptúre ;  
But wel I wot a broche of gold azure,  
In which a ruby set was lik an herte, 1371  
Criseyde him yaf, and stak it on his sherte.

Lord, trowén ye a coveitousé wrecche,  
That blameth love and halt of it despit,  
That of the pens that he can mokre and  
kecche

Was everé yit y-yeve him swich delit  
As is in love in oo point in som plit ?  
Nay, doutéles ! for al-so God me save,  
So parfit joyé may no nigard have !

They wol seye 'yis,' but, Lord, so that  
they lye, 1380

Tho bisy wrecchés, ful of wo and drede !  
They clepen love a woodnesse or folyé,  
But it shal falle hem as I shal you rede :  
They shal forgon the white and ek the  
rede,

And live in wo. Ther God yeve hem  
mischaunce,

And every lover in his trouthe avaunce !

As woldé God, thise wrecches that despise  
Servise of love hadde erés al-so longe  
As haddé Mida, ful of coveitise,  
And therto dronken hadde as hote and  
stronge 1390

1360. *thousand* (Boc.), P G γ *hundred*.

1365. *nothing*, so R ; H<sub>5</sub> A *nevere* ; J and  
others *not, nought*. H<sub>1</sub> (only) *bitynne* (for *blinne*).

1389. *Mida*, Midas. See C. T. D 951.

As Crassus dide for his affectés wronge,  
To techen hem that covetise is vice,  
And love is vertu, though men holde it  
nice !

Thise ilkè two of whiche that I you seye,  
Whan that hir hertés ful assuréd were,  
Tho gonné they to speken and to pleye,  
And ek rehersen how and whan and where  
They knewe hem first, and every wo and  
fere 1398

That passéd was ; but al that hevinesse,  
Y-thankéd God, was tornéd to gladrésse.

And everè mo, whan that hem fil to speke  
Of any wo of swich a time a-gon,  
With kissing al that talé sholdé breke,  
And fallen in a newé joye anon,  
And didn al hir might, sin they were oon,  
For to recoverén blisse and ben at ese,  
And passéd wo with joyé countrepese.

Reson wol not now that I speke of sleep,  
For it acordeth not to my matére :  
God wot, they toke of that fullitel keep ! 1410  
But lest this night that was to hem so dere  
Ne sholde in veyn escape in no manére,  
It was biset in joye and bisnesse  
Of al that souneth into gentillesse.

Whan that the cok, comúne astrologer,  
Gan on his brest to bete and after crowe,  
And Lucifer, the dayés messenger,  
Gan for to rise and out her stremés throwe,  
And estward roos, to him that coude it  
knowe,

Fortúna maior, that anon Criseyde 1420  
With herté soor to Troilus thus seyde :

‘Myn hertés lif, my trist, and my plesáunce,  
That I was born, allas ! what me is wo,

1391. *Crassus*, M. Crassus, the triumvir, sur-  
named *Dives*. When slain in battle (53 B.C.),  
molten gold was poured into his mouth, by order  
of Orodes, king of Parthia.

1392, 1393. *covetise*, etc., P G  $\gamma$  *they ben in  
the vice*, And lovers nought, al-though they holde  
hem nice.

1394. *whiche*,  $\gamma$  *whom*.

1402. *wo*,  $\gamma$  *thing*.

1408. *not now*, so S ; Cx. *I now* ; rest omit now.

1415. *Whan that*, so J R Cx. H<sub>3</sub> S (see note,  
l. 1324) ; others *But whan*.

That day of us mot maké dísseverance !  
For time it is to rise and hennés go,  
Or ellés I am lost for everémo !  
O night, allas, why n’iltow over us hove  
As longe as whan Almena lay by Jove ?

‘ O blaké night, as folk in bokés rede,  
That shapen art by God this world to  
hide 1430

At certain timés with thy blaké wede,  
That under that men mighte in reste abide,  
Wel oughten beestés pleyne and folk thee  
chide,

That ther-as day with labour wolde us  
breste,  
That thou thus fleest, and deynest us not  
reste !

‘ Thou dost, allas, too shortly thyn office,  
Thou rakel night ! Ther God, makére of  
kinde,

For thou so downward hastest of malíce,  
Thee corse, and to our hemisperé binde,  
That neverémo under the grounde thou  
winde ! 1440

For, thorough thy rakel hying out of Troye,  
Have I forgon thus hastily my joye !’—

This Troilus, that with tho wordés felte  
As thoughte him tho, for pietous distresse,  
The bloody terés from his herté melte,  
As he that neveré yit swich hevinesse  
Assayéd had out of so gret gladnesse,  
Gan therewithal Criseyde, his lady dere,  
In armés streyne, and seyde in this manére :

‘ O cruel day, accusour of the joye 1450  
That love and night han stole and faste  
y-wryen,

Acorséd be thy coming into Troye,  
For every bore hath oon of thy brighte  
yén !

Envious day, what list thee so t’espyn ?

1428. *Almena*, Alcmena, mother of Hercules  
by Jupiter.

1431. *blake*, a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>2</sup>  $\gamma$  *derke*.

1438-1441. a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>2</sup>  $\gamma$  read :

Thee for thyn haste and thyn unkinde vice

So faste ay to our hemisperé binde,

That nevere more under the grounde thou winde!

For now, for thou so hyest out of Troye,

What hastow lost? What sek'st thou in  
this place?

Ther God thy light so quenché for his grace!

'Allas, what han these lovers thee agilt,  
Despítous day? Thyn be the pine of helle!  
For many a lover hastow slayn, and wilt;  
Thy pouring in wol no-wher lete hem  
dwelle! 1460

What profrestow thy light here for to selle?  
Go selle it hem that smalé selés grave!  
We wol thee not! us nedeth no day have!'

And ek the sonnè, Titan, wolde he chide,  
And seide, 'O fool, wel may men thee  
despise,

That hast al night the Dawing by thy side  
And suffrest her so sone up fro thee rise,  
For to disesen lovers in this wise!

What! hold thy bed ther, thou, and ek  
thy Morwe!

I preye to God, so yeve you bothé  
sorwe! 1470

Therwith ful sore he sighte, and thus he  
seyde,

'My lady right, and of my wele and wo  
The verray rote, O goodly myn, Criseyde,  
And shal I rise? Allas, and shal I so?  
Now fele I that myn hertè mot a-two!  
For how sholde I my lif an hourè save,  
Sin that with you is al the joye ich have?

'What shal I don? For certès I n'ot how,  
Ne whan, allas, I may the timè see  
That in this plit I maybe eft with you! 1480  
And of my lif, God wot how that shal be!  
Sin that desir right now so streyneth me,  
That I am ded anon but I retorne,  
How sholde I longe, allas, fro you sojorne?

'But nathèles, myn ownè lady bright,  
Yit were it so that I wiste outrely

1455. *in*, so H<sub>4</sub> R Cx. H<sub>3</sub>; J and others omit.

1464. *wolde*, a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>2</sup> γ *gan*.

1466. *Dawing*, wife of Tithonus, whom Chaucer here confuses with Titan.

1473. *verray*, a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>2</sup> γ *welle and (of)*.

1474. *so*, Cl. D G go.

1477. *joye* (Boc.), so R H<sub>5</sub>; J and others *lif*.

1482. *streyneth* (Boc.), γ *biteth, bitleth, brenneth*.

1486. *Yit*, γ omit.

That I, your ownè servant and your knight,  
Were in your herte y-shet as fermely  
As ye in myn, (the whiche thing trewely  
Me leverè werè than these worldès  
tweyne), 1490

Yit sholde I bet enduren al my peyne.'—

To that Criseyde answerdè thus anon,  
And with a sik she seyde, 'O hertè dere,  
The game, y-wis, so ferforth now is gon,  
That erst shal Phebus fallen fro his spere,  
And everich eglè ben the dowvès fere,  
And every roche out of his placé stertere,  
Or Troilus out of Criseyde's hertè!

'Ye ben so depe in-with my herte y-grave,  
That, though I wolde it torne out of my  
thought, 1500

As wisly verray God my soulè save,  
To deyen in the peyne I couldè nought!  
And, for the love of God that us hath  
wrought,

Lat in your brayn non other fantasýe  
So crepè, that it causè me to dye!

'And that yeme wolde han as faste in minde  
As I have you, that wolde I you biseche;  
And if I wistè sothly that to finde,  
God mightè not a point my joyès eche!  
But hertè myn, withoutè morè speche, 1510  
Beth to me trewe, or ellès were it routhe;  
For I am thyn, by God and by my trouthe!

'Beth glad for-thý, and live in sikernesse;  
Thus seide I nevere or now, ne shal to mo!  
And if to you it were a gret gladnése  
To torne ayein sone after that ye go,  
As fayn wolde I as ye that it were so,  
As wisly God myn hertè bringe at reste!'  
— And him in armès took and oftè kiste.

Ayein his wil, sin it mot nedès be, 1520  
This Troilus up ros, and faste him cledde,  
And in his armès took his lady free  
An hundred time, and on his wey him  
spedde;

1487. *owne*, a<sup>2</sup> γ *humble*.

1488. *y-shet*, a<sup>2</sup> γ (γ-) *set*. (See l. 1549.)

1492. *thus*, a<sup>2</sup> γ *right*; G<sup>2</sup> and *that*.

1496. *dowvès*, J H<sub>4</sub> R Cx. H<sub>3</sub> *hawkes*.

1517. *that*, J γ omit.

And, with swich vois as though his herté  
bledde,  
He seidè, 'Far-wel, derè herté sweté !  
Ther God us grauntè sounde and sonè  
mete !'—

To which no word for sorwè she answérde,  
So sorè gan his parting her distreyne ;  
And Troilus unto his paleys ferde  
As wo-bigon asshe was, soth to seyne ; 1530  
So harde him wrong of sharp desir the  
peyne  
For to ben eft ther he was in plesaunce,  
That it may nevere out of his rémem-  
braunce.

Retornéd to his réal paleys sone,  
He softe into his bed gan for to slinke,  
To slepè longe as he was wont to done.  
But al for naught ; he may wel ligge and  
winke,  
But slep ne may ther in his herté sinke,  
Thinking how she, for whom desir him  
brende,  
A thousand fold was worth more than he  
wen'de. 1540

And in his thought gan up and down to  
winde  
Her wordès alle and every countenance,  
And fermèliche inpressen in his minde  
The lestè point that to him was plesaunce ;  
And verrayliche of th' ilkè rémembraunce  
Desir al newe him brende, and lust to brede  
Gan more than erst, and yit took he non  
hede.

Criseyde also, right in the selvè wise,  
Of Troilus gan in her herté shette  
His worthinesse, his lust, his dedès  
wise, 1550  
His gentillesse, and how she with him  
mette,  
Thankingè Love, he so wel her bisette ;  
Desiring eft to han her hertè dere  
In swich a plit, she dorstè make him chere.

1524. *vois as though, y wordes as.*

1525. *dere, H<sub>5</sub> y my dere.*

1542. *setwe, so J R H<sub>3</sub> Cx. ; rest same.*

1552. *he, S that he.*

Pandàre, a-morwè which that comen was  
Unto his nece and gan her fairè grete,  
Seide, 'Al this night so reynéd it, allas,  
That al my drede is that ye, necè swete,  
Han litel leiser had to slepe and mete :  
Al night,' quod he, 'hath reyn so don me  
wake, 1560  
That som of us for gode his hed may ake !'

And ner he com, and seide, 'How stant  
it now  
This brightè morwè? Nece, how can ye  
fare?'  
Criseyde answérdè, 'Nevere the bet for  
you,  
Fox that ye ben ! God yeve your hertè care !  
God help me so, ye causéd al this fare,  
Trowe I,' quod she, 'for al your wordès  
white !  
O, who-so seeth you knowèth you ful  
lite !'—

With that she gan her facè for to wrye  
Al with the shete, and wex for shamè  
red ; 1570  
And Pandarus gan under for to pryè,  
And seidè, 'Nece, if that I shal be ded,  
Have here a swerd, and smiteth off myn  
hed !'  
With that his arm al sodeinly he threste  
Under her nekke, and at the laste her keste.

I passe al that which nedeth not to seye.  
What ! God foryaf his deth, and she also  
Foryaf, and with her unclè gan to pleye,  
For other causè was ther non than so. 1579  
But of this thing right to th'effect to go,  
Whan timè was, hom til her hous she wente ;  
And Pandarus hath hoolly his entente.

Now tornè we ayein to Troilus,  
That restèles ful longe a-beddè lay,  
And privly sente after Pandarus  
To him to come in al the haste he may.  
He com anon, not onès seide he nay ;

1561. *his, so H<sub>3</sub> ; J hir ; H<sub>4</sub> R our. a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>2</sup> y*

*That some of us, I trowe, hir hedes ake !*

1563. *brighte, a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>2</sup> y merie.*

1570. *Al with (?), all with.*

1570. *red, so a<sup>2</sup> ; rest al red.*

1576. *nedeth, a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>2</sup> y chargeth.*

And Troilus ful sobrelîche he grette,  
And down upon his beddés side him sette.

This Troilus, with al th'affecciou<sup>n</sup> 1590  
Of frendés love, that herté may devise,  
To Pandarus on knowés fil adoun ;  
And, or that he wolde off the place arise,  
He gan him thonken in his besté wise  
A thousand time, and gan the day to blesse  
That he was born to bringe him fro dis-  
tresse.

And seide, 'O frend of frendés alder-  
beste

That everé was, the sothé for to telle,  
Thou hast in hevене y-brought my soule  
at reste

Fro Flegitoun, the fery flood of helle ; 1600  
That, though I mighte a thousand timés selle  
Upon a day my lif in thy servise,  
It mighté not a mote in that suffise.

Thesonné, which that al the world may see,  
Saw neveré yit, my lif that dar I leye,  
So inly fair and goodly as is she,  
Whos I am al and shal til that I deye ;  
And that I thus am hirés, dar I seye,  
That thonkéd be the heighé worthinesse  
Of Love, and ek thy kindé businesse ! 1610

Thus hastow me no litel thing y-yive,  
For which to thee obligéd be for ay  
My lif. And why? For thorough thy help  
I live,

Or ellés ded had I ben mony a day !'—  
And with that word down in his bed he lay ;  
And Pandarus ful sobrelîche him herde  
Fil al was seyde, and than he thus answerde :

'My deré frend, if I have don for thee  
In any cas, God wot, it is me lief ;  
And am as glad as man may of it be, 1620  
God help me so ! But tak it not a-grief :  
For love of God, be war of this mischief,

1595. *thousand*, a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>2</sup> γ *hundred* (γ *sithe* for *time*).

1595. *day to*, a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>2</sup> γ *time*.

1600. *Flegitoun*, Phlegethon.

1617. *thus*, γ *him*.

1622. *For love of God*, a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>2</sup> γ *That I shal seyn*.

That, ther-as now thou brought art in thy  
blisse,

That thou thy-self ne cause it not to misse.

'For of fortunés sharp adversité  
The worsté kinde of infortune is this :  
A man to han ben in prosperité,  
And it remembren whan it passéd is. 1628  
Thou'rt wis y-nough, for-thy do not amis :  
Be not too rakel, though thou sitté warme,  
For if thou be, certein, it wol thee harme.

'Thou art at ese, and hold thee wel ther-inne ;  
For also seur as red is every fir,  
As gret a craft is kepé wel as winne.  
Bridle alwey wel thy speche and thy desir,  
For worldly joye halt not but by a wir :  
That preveth wel, it brest alday so ofte ;  
For-thy nede is to werken with it softe !'—

Quod Troilus, 'I hope, and God to-forn,  
My deré frend, that I shal so me bere, 1640  
That in my gilt ther shal no thing be lorn,  
N'I wol not racle as for to greven here.  
It nedeth not this mater ofté stere ;  
For, wistestow myn herté wel, Pandaré,  
By God of this thou woldest litel care !'

Tho gan he telle him of his gladé night,  
And wher-offirst his herté dredde, and how ;  
And seidé, 'Frend, as I am trewé knight,  
And by that feith I shal to God and you,  
I hadde it neveré half so hote as now ;  
And ay the moré that desir me biteth 1651  
To love her best, the more it me deliteth.

'I n'ot myself not wisly what it is ;  
But now I fele a newé qualité,  
Ye, al another than I didé or this.'—  
Pandaré answerde, and seidé thus, that 'he  
That onés may in hevéné blissé be,  
He feleth other-weyés, dar I leye,  
Than th' ilké time he first herde of it seye.

This is oo word for al : this Troilus 1660  
Was neveré ful to speke of this matére,

1643. *this mater*, etc., a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>2</sup> (var.) *al day this thing to tere*.

1643. *stere*, so R Cx. II<sub>3</sub> (see iv. 1451) ; J and others *tere*.

1645. *By God*, a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>2</sup> γ *God wot*.

And for to preisen unto Pandarus  
The bounté of his righté lady dere,  
And Pandarus to thanke and maken chere.  
This tale ay was span-newé to biginne,  
Til that the night departed hem a-  
twinne.—

Sone after this, for-that Fortúne it wolde,  
Y-comén was the blisful timé sweté, 1668  
That Troilus was warnéd that he sholdé,  
Ther he was erst, Criseyde his lady mete ;  
For which he felte his herte in joyé flete,  
And feithfully gan alle the Goddés herie.  
And lat see now, if that he can be merie !

And holden was the forme and al the wise  
Of her cominge, and eek of his also,  
As it was erst, which nedeth not devise.  
But plainly to th'effect right for to go,  
In joye and seurté Pandarus hem two 1678  
A-beddè broughté, whan hem bothé leste ;  
And thus they ben in quiete and in reste.

Not nedeth it to you, sin they ben met,  
To axe at me if that they blithé were ;  
For if it erst was wel, tho was it bet  
A thousand fold : this nedeth not t'en-  
quere.

Agon was every sorwe and every fere ;  
And bothe, y-wis, they hadde, and so they  
wen'de,  
As muché joye as herté may comprende.

This n'is no litel thing of for to seye :  
This passeth every wit for to devise ; 1689  
For ech of hem gan othres lust obeye :  
Felicité, which that thise clerkès wise  
Commenden so, ne may not here suffise :  
This joyé may not writen be with inké :  
This passeth al that herté may bi-thinke !

But cruel day (so weylaway the stounde !)  
Gan for t'aproche as they by signés knewe,  
For which hem thoughté felen dethès  
wounde.

So wo was hem, that chaungen gan hir  
hewe ;

And day they gonnen to despise al newe,  
Calling it traitour, envious, and worse ; 1700  
And bitterly the dayès light they corse.

Quod Troilus, ' Allas, now am I war,  
That Pireis and the swifté stedès thre,  
Whiché that drawèn forth the sonnès char,  
Han gon som by-path in dispit of me :  
That makéth it so soné day to be ;  
And, for the sonne him hasteth thus to rise,  
Ne shal I neveré don him sacrificise !'

But nedès day departe hem mosté sone ;  
And whan hir speche y-don was and hir  
chere, 1710  
Theytwinneanonas they ben wont to done,  
And setten time of meting eft i-feré.  
And many a night they wroughte in this  
manére,  
And thus Fortúne a timé ledde in joye  
Criseyde and eek this kingès sone of Troye.

In suffisaunce, in blisse, and in singinges  
This Troilus gan al his lif to lede. 1717  
Hespendeth, jousteth, maketh festeyinges ;  
He yeveth frely ofte, and chaungeth wede,  
And held aboute him ay, withouten drede,  
A world of folk, as com him wel of kinde,  
The freshest and the beste he coudé finde ;

That swich a vois of him was, and a  
stevene,  
Throughout the world, of honour and  
largesse,

That it up-rong unto the yate of hevene.  
And, as in love, he was in swich gladnése.  
That in his herte he deméd, as I gesse,  
That ther n'is lover in this world at ese  
So wel as he ; and thus gan love him plese.

The goodlihedé or bounté which tha  
kinde 1730  
In any other lady hadde y-set  
Can not the mountaunce of a knott  
unbinde,  
About his herte, of al Criseydes net.

1703. *Pireis*, H<sub>3</sub> *Pireys*; H<sub>4</sub> Cx. *Pirers*; other  
*Pirus*, *Pirora*, etc. Piroeis, one of the  
four horses of the Chariot of the Sun; see Ovid  
*Met.* ii. 153.

1718. *festeyinges*, so S; others *festynges*  
*festeynynges*, etc.

1720. *ay*, withouten, a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>2</sup> *ay* alwey out of  
1723. *of him was*, *was of him*.

1730. *bounté*, so J G<sup>2</sup> A; rest *beaute*.

He was so narwe y-maskéd and y-knet,  
That it undon on any maner side,  
Thatn'il not ben, forought that may bitide !

And by the hond ful ofte he woldè take  
This Pandarus, and into gardin lede,  
And swich a feste and swich a proces  
make 1739

Him of Criseyde, and of her wommanhede,  
And of her beauté, that withouten drede  
It was an hevене his wordès for to here ;  
And than he woldè singe in this manère :

'Love, that of erthe and see hath  
gouvernaunce,

Love, that his hestès hath in hevènès hye,  
Love, which that with an holsom állaunce  
Halt peples joinéd as him list hem gye,  
Love, that enditeth lawe of companye,  
And couplès doth in vertu for to dwelle,  
Bind this acord that I have told and telle.

'That that the world, with feith which  
that is stable, 1751

Diverseth so his stoundès concordinge ;  
That elements that ben so discordable  
Holden a bond perpetuely duringe ;  
That Phebus mot his rosy dayforth bringe ;  
And that the mone hath lordship over  
the nightes :—

Al this doth Love, ay heried be his mightes !

'That that the see, that gredy is to flowen,  
Constreineth to a certain endè so 1759

His flodès, that so fierly they ne growen  
To drenchen erthe and al for everè-mo ;  
And if that Love aught lete his bridel go,  
Al that now lov'th asonder sholdè lepe,  
And lost were al, that Love halt now to-  
hepe.

'So woldè God, that auctour is of kinde,  
That with his bond Love of his vertu liste

1744. Troilus' Song of Love is taken from  
Boethius ii. metre 8. This song (1744-1771) is  
omitted in H<sub>2</sub>, and inserted later in P.

1746. which that, so J H<sub>4</sub> R ; H<sub>5</sub> that which ;  
rest that.

1748. enditeth, so J H<sub>4</sub> R G ; H<sub>5</sub> endith ; Cx.  
enduetth ; rest knetteth, kenneth, etc. (Boethius,  
dictat).

1754. Holden, J and others Holde in.  
1760. fierly, R Cx. H<sub>5</sub> Cl. D freshly.

To cerclen hertès alle, and fastè binde,  
That from his bond no wight the wey  
out wiste !

And hertès colde, hem wolde I that he twiste  
To make hem love, and that hem liste  
ay rewe 1770

On hertès sore, and kepe hem that ben  
trewe !'—

In allè nedès for the townès werre  
He was, and ay the firste in armès dight,  
And certainly, but-if that bokès erre,  
Save Ector, most y-drad of any wight ;  
And this encre of hardinesse and might  
Com him of love, his lady thank to winne,  
That alteréd his spirit so withinne.

In time of trewe, on hawking wolde he ride,  
Or ellès huntè boor, bere or lioun ; 1780  
The smalè bestès leet he gon beside.

And, whan that he com riding to the toun,  
Ful ofte his lady from her window down,  
As fressh as faucon comèn out of muwe,  
Ful redy was him goodly to saluwe.

And most of love and vertu was his speche,  
And in despit hadde allè wrecchednesse ;  
And doutèles, no nede was him biseche  
T'honouren hem that hadden worthinesse,  
And esen hem that werèn in distresse ;  
And glad was he, if any wight wel ferde  
That lover was, whan he it wiste or herde.

For, soth to seyn, he lost held every wight  
But-if he were in Lovès heigh servise,  
I menè folk that oughte it ben of right.  
And over al this, so wel coude he devise  
Of sentement, and in so uncouth wise  
Al his array, that every lover thoughte  
That al was wel, what-so he seide or  
wroughte.

And though that he be come of blood  
royal, 1800

Him liste of pride al no wight for to chace :  
Benigne he was to ech in general,  
For which he gat him thank in every place.  
Thus woldè Love, y-heried be his grace,

1782. to the, so a<sup>2</sup> Cx. ; H<sub>5</sub> into the ; A to ;  
J and others in to.

That pride, envye, and ire, and avarice  
He gan to flee, and everich other vice.

Thou Lady bright, the doughter to Dione,  
Thy blinde and winged sone eek, daun  
Cupide,

Ye sustren nine eek, that by Elicone  
In hil Parnaso listen for t'abide,— 1810  
That ye thus fer han deyned me to gide,

1805. *envye, and ire*, so J; a<sup>2</sup> R H<sub>3</sub> G<sup>2</sup> Cl.  
omit *and*; Cx. Cp. H *and ire, envye*.

I can no more but, sin that ye wol wende,  
Ye heried ben for ay, withouten ende!

Thorough you have I seid fully in my song  
Th'effect and joye of Troilus' servise,  
Al be that ther was som disese among,  
As to myn auctour listeth to devise.  
My thriddè book now ende ich in this  
wise;

And Troilus in lust and in quiete 1819  
Is with Criseyde, his ownè hertè swete.

## BOOK IV

BUT al too litel, weylawey the while,  
Lasteth such joye, y-thanked be Fortune,  
That semeth trewest whan she wil bigile  
And can to folès so her song entune  
That she hem hent and blent, traitour  
comune!

And whan a wight is from her wheel y-  
throwe,

Than laugheth she, and maketh him a  
mowe.

From Troilus she gan her brightè face  
Away to writhe, and took of him non  
hede, 9

But caste him clene out of his lady grace,  
And on hir wheel she sette up Diomede;  
For-which right now myn hertè ginneth  
blede,

And now my penne, allas, with which I  
write,  
Quaketh for drede of that I moste endite.

For how Criseyde Troilus forsook,  
Or at the leeste, how that she was un-  
kinde,

Mot hennès-forth ben mater of my book,  
As writen folk thorough which it is in  
minde.

Allas! that they sholde everè causè finde  
To speke her harm; and, if they on her  
lye, 20

Y-wis, hem-self sholde han the vilanye!

1. R omits ll. 1-28.  
7. a, a<sup>2</sup> H<sub>5</sub> γ *the*.

O ye Herfès, Nightès doughtren three,  
That endèles compleinen evere in peyne,  
Megera, Alete, and eek Thesiphone!  
Thou cruel Mars eek, fader to Quirine,  
This ilkè ferthè book me helpeth fine,  
So that the los of lif and love i-fere  
Of Troilus be fully shewèd here.

—Ligging in ost, as I have seid or this,  
The Grekès stronge aboutè Troyè toun, 30  
Bifel that, whan that Phebus shining is  
Upon the brest of Hercules' Lioun,  
That Ector with ful many a bold baroun  
Caste on a day with Grekès for to fighte  
As he was wont, to greve hem what he  
migte.

N'ot I how long or short it was bitwene  
This purpos and that day they issen  
mente;

But on a day wel armèd, brighte and  
shene,

With spere in honde and biggè bowès  
bente,

Ector and many a worthy wight out-  
wente; 40

And in the berd anon withouten lette  
Hir fo-men in the feld hem fastè mette.

22. *Herfès*; the Three Furies, Megæra, Alecto, and Tisiphone. (See i. 6.)

26. *This ilke ferthe*, a<sup>2</sup> *This ferthe*; H<sub>3</sub> *This fyfte and laste*; H<sub>4</sub> *This feerde and laste*.

29. *seid*, H<sub>4</sub> R Cx. H<sub>3</sub> *told*.

37. *issen*, so J; P *issu*; H<sub>2</sub> *thus*; others *fighten, fouhten*. (Boc. usci.)

39, 40. H<sub>5</sub> S γ transpose ll. 39, 40.



The longè day, with sperès sharpe y-  
grounde,  
With arwès, dartès, swerdès, maces felle,  
They fighte, and bringen hors and man to  
grounde,  
And with hir axes out the brainès quelle.  
But in the lastè shour, soth for to telle,  
The folk of Troye hem-selven somis-ledden  
That with the wors at night homward they  
fledden.

Atte whichè day was taken Antenore 50  
Maugré Polydamas or Monestéo,  
Santippè, Sarpedon, Polynestore,  
Polyte, or eek the Trojan daun Riphéo  
And othré lassè folk as Phebuséo ;  
So that for harm that day the folk of Troye  
Dredden to lese a gret part of hir joye.

But nathèles a trewè was ther take  
At gret requeste, and tho they gonnen  
trete  
Of prisoneres a chaungè for to make, 59  
And for the surplus yeven sommès grete.  
This thing anon was couth in every strete  
Bothe in th'assege, in towne, and every  
where,  
And with the firste it com to Calcas' ere.

When Calcas knew this tretis sholdè holde,  
In consistórie among the Grekès sone  
He gan in-thringè forth with lordès olde,  
And sette him ther-as he was wont to  
done ;

And with a chaungèd face hem bad a bone,  
For love of God to don that reverence  
To stintè noise and yeve him audience. 70

Than seide he thus, ' Lo, lordès mine, ich  
was

50. *Atte*, so H<sub>2</sub> A ; others *At*.

51. *Maugré Polydamas or* ; H<sub>3</sub> *Palidomas*  
and also (Boc.)

53. *or*, H<sub>3</sub> and (Boc.)

54. *And*, a<sup>2</sup> *Or*.

55. *So that for harm that day*, H<sub>3</sub> *For al*  
*Ector* ; *so that* (Boc.)

57, 58, 59. So J H<sub>4</sub> R Cx. S (var.) ; H<sub>3</sub> H<sub>5</sub> a<sup>2</sup> *γ*  
read (var.)

To (of) Priamus was yeve at his (gret, Grek, Grekes)  
requeste

A time of trewe, and tho they gonnen tretre

Hir prisoneres to chaungen, most and leste.

(Boc. Chiese Priamo triegua, e fugli data, etc.)

Trojan, as it is knowèn out of drede ;  
And, if that you remembre, I am Calcas  
That alderfirst yaf confort to your nede,  
And toldè wel how that ye sholden spede :  
For dredèles thourgh you shal in a stounde  
Ben Troye y-brent and beten doun to  
grounde.

' And in what forme and in what maner  
wise

This toun to shende, and al your list  
t'acheve, 79

Ye han or this wel herd me you devise :  
This knowè ye, my lordès, as I leve.  
And, for the Grekès werèn me so leve,  
I com my-self in my proprè persóne,  
To teche in this how you was best to done,

' Having unto my tresour ne my rente  
Right no resport, to réspect of your ese.  
Thus al my good I lefte, and to you wente,  
Wening in this, my lordès, you to plesse.  
But al this los ne doth me no disese :  
I vouchè-sauf, as wisly have I joye, 90  
For you to lese al that I have in Troye,

' Save of a doughter that I lefte, allas,  
Slepingat home, whan out of Troye I sterte.  
O sterne and cruel fader that ich was !  
How mighte I have in that so hardan herte?  
Allas, In'haddey-brought her in her sherte !  
Forsorwe of which I wil not live to morwe,  
But-if ye lordès rewe upon my sorwe.

' For, by that cause I say no time or now  
Her to delivere, ich holden have my pes ;  
But now or neverè, yif it likè yow, 101  
I may her have right sonè doutèles.  
O help and grace ! amongès al this pres  
Rewe on this oldè caitif-in distresse,  
Sin I thourgh you have al this hevynesse !

' Ye have now caught and fetred in prisóun  
Trojan y-nowe ; and if your willès be  
My child with oon may have redempcióun,

80. *me you*, *γ it me*.

87. *lefte*, so J H<sub>3</sub> Cx. A D ; others *leste*, *loste*  
(Boc. lasciai).

89. *this*, so J H<sub>3</sub> Cx. ; a<sup>2</sup> H<sub>5</sub> *my* ; others *that*.

93. *Troye*, a<sup>2</sup> H<sub>5</sub> *towne*.

101. *yif*, so J H<sub>3</sub> H<sub>4</sub> ; D Cp. Cl. *if that*.

Now for the love of God and of bounté,  
Oon of so fele, alas, so yeve him me ! 110  
What nede were it this prayèr for to werne,  
Sinyshal bothe han folk and tounas yerne?

‘On peril of my lif I shal not lye,  
Appollo hath me told it feithfully ;  
I have eek founde it by astronomye,  
By sort and by augúrie eek trewely,  
And dar wel seyn the time is fasté by  
That fir and flaumbe on al the toun shal  
sprede ;

And thus shal Troyé torne in asshen dede.

‘For, certain, Phebus and Neptúnus bothe  
That makeden the wallés of the toun 121  
Ben with the folk of Troye alwéy so wrothe,  
They wol eft bringe it to confusioun  
Right for despit of King Laméadoun :  
Bi-cause he n’oldé payén hem hir hire,  
The toun shal yit be set upon a fire.’

Telling his tale alwey, this oldé greye,  
Humble in his speche, and in his lokinge ke,  
The salté terés from his yen tweye  
Ful fasté ronnen down by either cheke. 130  
So longe he gan of socour hem biseke  
That, for to hele him of his sikés sore,  
They yave him Antenor withouten more.

But who was glad y-nough but Calcas tho !  
And of this thing ful sone his nedés leyde  
On hem that sholden for the tretis go,  
And hem for Antenor ful ofté preyde  
To bringen hom King Thoas and Criseyde :  
And whan Priám his savé gardé sente,  
Th’embassadours to Troyé streight they  
wente. 140

The cause y-told of hir cominge, the olde  
Priam, the king, ful sone in general  
Let her-upon his parlément to holde,  
Of which th’effect rehersen you I shal :

121. *makeden*, so J R  $\gamma$  (exc. A Cl.);  $a^2$  G<sup>2</sup> S *maden alle*; H<sub>3</sub> H<sub>4</sub> Cx. A Cl. *maden*.

123. *They wol eft*, so J H<sub>3</sub> H<sub>4</sub> R Cx.; others *That they wol*.

132. *sikés*, so J H<sub>3</sub> H<sub>4</sub> R Cx.; others *sorwes*.

137, 138. H<sub>3</sub> reads :

And hem ful ofte specyally preyde  
For Antenor to bringe home Criseide.

139. *save garde*,  $a^2$  G<sup>2</sup> *saf conduit hem*.

Th’embassadours ben answer’d for finál,  
Th’exchaunge of prisoneres and al this nede  
Hem liketh wel ; and forth in they procede.

This Troilus was present in the place,  
Whan axéd was for Antenor Criseyde ; 149  
For-which ful soné chaungen gan his face  
As he that with tho wordés wel neigh deyde,  
But nathéles he no word to it seyde ;  
Lest men sholde his affecciou espye,  
With mannés herte he gan his sorwé dryc.

And ful of anguiss and of grisly drede  
Abood what other lordés woldé seye ;  
And if they woldé graunte, as God forbede,  
Th’exchaunge of her, than thoughte he  
thingés tweye :

First how to save her honour, and what weye  
He mighté best th’eschaunge of her with-  
stonde ; 160  
Ful faste he caste howal this mighté stonde.

Lové made him al prest to don her bide,  
Or rather dyen than she sholdé go ;  
But Reson seide him on that other side,  
‘Withoute assent of her ne do not so,  
If thou debate it, lest she be thy fo,  
And seyn that thorough thy medling is  
y-blowe

Your bother love, ther it was erst unknowe.’

For-which he gan deliberén for the beste,  
That, though the lordés woldé that she  
wente, 170  
He woldé lete hem graunté what hem leste,  
And telle his lady first what that they mente ;  
And whan that she had seid him her entente,  
Therafter wolde he werken al-so blive,  
Theigh al the world ayein it woldé strive.

Ector which that right wel the Grekés herde,  
For Antenor how they wolde han Criseyde,  
Gan it withstonde and sobreliche answerde :

156. *other lordes wolde*,  $a^2$  G<sup>2</sup>  $\gamma$  *lordes wolde* (un)to it.

162. *made him*, so H<sub>3</sub> A; rest *him made* (read ? *Lo, Love* ; see i. 603).

163. *Or,  $\gamma$  And*.

166. *If thou debate (it) lest she*, so J H<sub>3</sub> H<sub>4</sub> R ;  $a^2$  G<sup>2</sup>  $\gamma$  *Lest for thy werk she wolde be*.

176. *right wel*, so Cx. S ; rest *wel*.

Sirès, she n'is no prisoner,' he seyde; 179  
I n'ot on you who that this charge leyde;  
But on my part ye may eft-sone hem telle,  
We usen here no wommen for to selle.'

The noise of peple up-stertè than at ones  
As breme as blase of straw y-set on fire;  
For Infortúne it woldè for the nones,  
They sholden hir confusioun desire.

Ector!' quod they, 'What gost may you  
enspire

This woman thus to shilde, and don us lese  
Daun Antenor—a wrong wey now ye  
chese— 189

That is so wis and eek so bold baroun?  
And we han nede of folk as men may se.  
He is eek oon the grettest of this toun!

) Ector, lat tho fantasýs he!  
) King Priam!' quod they, 'thus siggen  
we,

'hat al our vois is to forgon Criseyde.'  
and to deliverèn Antenor they preyde.

) Juvenal, lord, soth is thy sentence:  
'hat litel witen folk what is to yerne,  
'hat they ne finde in hir desir offence;  
'or cloude of errour letteth hem discernen  
What best is. And lo, here ensaumple as  
yerne! 201

'his folk desiren now deliverance  
of Antenor, that broughte hem to  
mischance;

'or he was after traitour to the toun  
of Troye. Alas, they quitte him out too  
rathe!

'nic world, lo, thy discrecioun!  
'riseydè which that neverè dide hem scathe  
hal now no lenger in her blissè bathe;  
'ut Antenor, he shal come hom to toune,  
'nd she shal out: thus seiden here and  
hounc. 210

'or-which deliverèd was by parlèment  
'or Antenor to yelden out Criseyde,  
'nd it pronouncèd by the president,

197. *soth*, *y trewe*.

200. *letteth hem*, so R; H<sub>3</sub> Cx. *let hem to*;  
hers *lat hem*, *ne lat hem*, *lat hem not*, etc.

Altheigh that Ector nay ful oftè preyde;  
That finaly, what wight that it withseyde,  
It was for naught: it mostè ben and sholde,  
For substance of the parlèment it wolde.

Departed out of parlèment echone,  
This Troilus withoutè wordes mo  
Into his chambrè spedde him faste, allone  
But-if it were a man of his or two, 221  
The whiche he bad out fastè for to go,  
Because he woldè slepen, as he seyde;  
And hastily upon his bed him leyde.

And as in winter levès ben biraft,  
Ech after other, til the tree be bare,  
So that ther n'is but bark and braunche  
y-lafte,  
Li'th Troilus biraft of ech welfare,  
Y-bounden in the blakè bark of care, 229  
Disposèd wood out of his wit to breyde,  
So sore him sat the chaunging of Criseyde.

He rist him up, and every dore he shette  
And window eek; and tho this sorwful  
man

Upon his beddès side adoun him sette,  
Ful lik a ded imágè pale and wan;  
And in his brest the hepèd wo began  
Outbreste, and he to werken in this wise  
In his woodnése, as I shal you devise.

Right as the wildè bolè ginneth springe  
Nowhere, now there, y-darted to the herte,  
And of his deth roreth in cómpleiníngè,  
Right so gan he aboute the chambrè sterte,  
Smiting his brest ay with his fistès smerte;  
His hed to walle, his body to the grounde  
Ful ofte heswapte, himselven to confounde.

His yèn two for pieté of herte,  
Out stremèden as swiftè wellès tweye;  
The heighè sobbès of his sorwes smerte  
His speche him raftè: unnethès mighte  
he seye, 249

239. *ginneth*, so G<sup>2</sup>; P H<sub>3</sub> *ginn'th to*; J and  
others *biginneth*.

244. *to walle*, so R; Cx. *to wallys*; J and  
others *to the walle*.

246. *pieté*, so J H<sub>2</sub> S; others *pite. pete*.

247. *Out stremèden as swiftè*, P G<sup>2</sup> *So wep(t)en  
that they semen*.

'O deth, allas! why n'ilt thou do me deye?  
A-corséd be that day which that Natúre  
Shoop me to be a livés créature!'

But after, whan the furie, and al this rage  
Which that his herté twiste and fasté  
threste,

By lengthe of timé somewhat gan aswage,  
Upon his bed he leide him down to reste.  
But tho bigonne his terés more out-breste,  
That wonder is the body may suffise  
To half this wo which that I you devise.

Than seide he thus: 'Fortúne, allas the  
while! 260

What have I don? What have I thus  
a-gilt?

How mightestow for routhé me bigile?  
Is ther no grace? And shal I thus be  
spilt?

Shal thus Criseyde away, for-that thou  
wilt?

Allas, how mayst thou in thyn herté finde  
To be to me thus cruel and unkinde?

'Have I thee not honouréd al my live,  
As thou wel wost, above the Goddés alle?  
Why wiltow me fro joyé thus deprive?

O Troilus, what may men now thee calle  
But wrecche of wrecches, out of honour  
falle 271

Into misérie, in which I wol biwaile  
Criseyde, allas, til that the breth me faile.

'Allas, Fortúne! if that my lif in joye  
Displeséd hadde unto thy foule envye,  
Why n'haddestow my fader king of Troye  
Biraft the lif, or don my brethren dye,  
Or slain myself that thus compleine and  
crye?

I, combré-world, that may of nothing serve,  
But alwey dye and neveré fully sterve!

'If that Criseyde alloné were me laft 281  
Nought roughte I whiderward thou woldest  
stere;

258. *wonder is*, P G<sup>2</sup> *wel unnethe* (Boc. appena).

280. *alwey*,  $\gamma$  *evere*.

282. *whiderward*,  $\gamma$  *whider*.

282. *woldest*, so H<sub>4</sub> R; J and others *woldest me*.

And her, allas, than hast thou me biraft!  
But everémo, lo, this is thy manére  
To reve a wight that most is to him dere,  
To preve in that thy gerful violence!  
Thus am I lost: ther helpeth no defence!

'O verry Lord, O Love! O God, allas!  
That knowest best myn herte and al my  
thought! 289

What shal my sorwful lif don in this cas?  
If I forgo that I so dere have bought?  
Sin ye Criseyde and me han fully brought  
Into your grace, and bothe our hertés  
seled,

How may ye suffre, allas, it be repeled?

'What shal I don? I shal, whil I may dure  
On live, in torment and in cruel peyne  
This infortune or this disaventure  
Allone as I was born, y-wis, compleyne  
Ne neveré wol I sen it shine or reyne;  
But ende I wol, as Edippe in derknésse.  
My sorwful lif, and deyen for distresse.

'O wery gost, that errest to and fro, 300  
Why n'iltow flen out of the wofulléste  
Body that everé mighte on groundé go?  
O soulé, lurking in this wo, unneste!  
Fle forth out of myn herte and lat  
breste,

And folwe alwey Criseyde thy lady dere  
Thy righté place is now no lenger here.

'O woful yén two, sin your disport  
Was al to seen Criseydes yén brighte, 301  
What shal ye don, but for my disconfor  
Stonden for naught and wepen out your  
sighte?

Sin she is queynt that wont was you  
lighte,

In veyn fro this forth have ich yén twey  
I-forméd, sin your vertu is awaye.

295.  $\gamma$  read: *What I may don, I shal, whil  
may dure*. Boc. *Che faro io . . . ? Io pia  
gerò . . .*

300, 301. P G<sup>2</sup> H<sub>3</sub> read:

Ne hevnes light (H<sub>3</sub> Ne see no light); and thus I  
derknesse

My woful (H<sub>3</sub> sorwful) lif wol enden for (H<sub>3</sub> in) distress

306. P G<sup>2</sup> read:

Fle forth anon, and do myn herte breste,

'O my Criseyde, O lady sovèreyne  
Of th' ilke woful soule that thus cryeth,  
Who shal now yevè confort to my peyne?  
Allas, no wight! But whan myn hertè  
dyeth, 319

My spirit which that so unto you hyeth  
Receive in gre, for that shal ay you serve!  
For-thy no fors is though the body sterve!

'O ye lovères that heighe upon the wheel  
Ben set of Fortune, in good áventure,  
God levè that ye finde ay love of steel,  
And longè mote your lif in joye endure!  
But whan ye comen by my sepulture,  
Remembreth that your felaw resteth there;  
For I lovede eek, though I unworthy were.

'O olde, inholsom and mislived man,—  
Calcas I menc,—allas, what aileth thee  
To ben a Grek, sin thou art born Troján?  
O Calcas, which that wilt my banè be,  
In cursed timè was thou born for me!  
As woldè blisful Jovè for his joye  
That I thee haddè wher I wolde in Troye!'

A thousand sikès hotter than the glede  
Out of his brest, ech after other, wente,  
Medled with pleintès newe his wo to fede,  
For which his woful terès neverè stente;  
340 And shortly so his peinès him to-rente,  
And wex so maat, that joyè nor penaunce  
He feleth non, but li'th forth in a traunce.

Pandàré, which that at the parlèment  
Had herd what every lord and burgessyde,  
And how ful graunted was by oon assent  
For Antenor to yelden so Criseyde,  
Gan wel neigh wood out of his wit to bryde;  
So that for wo he n'istè what he mente,  
But in a rees to Troilus he wente. 350

A certain knight, that for the timè kepte  
The chambrè dore, undide it him anon;  
And Pandar, that ful tendrelíchè wepte,  
Into his derké chambrè stille as ston  
Toward the bed gan softly to gon,

So cónfus that he n'iste what to seye:  
For verray wo his wit was neigh aweye.

And with his chere and loking al to-torn  
For sorwe of this, and with his armès folden,  
He stood this woful Troilus biforn, 360  
And on his pitous face he gan biholden;  
But, Lord, so oftè gan his hertè colden,  
Seing his frend in wo, whos hevinesse  
His hertè slough, as thoughte him, for  
distresse.

This woful wight, this Troilus, that felte  
His frend Pandàré y-comen him to see,  
Gan as the snow ayein the sonnè melte;  
For-which this sorwful Pandar, of pitè,  
Gan for to wepe as tendrelíche as he;  
And spechèles thus ben thise ilké tweye,  
That neither mighte oo word for sorwèsyde.

But at the laste this woful Troilus, 372  
Neigh ded for smert, gan bresten out to  
rore,

And with a sorwful noise he seidè thus,  
Among his sobbès and his sighès sore,  
'Lo, Pandar, I am ded, withoutè more!  
Hastow not herd at parlèment,' he seyde,  
'For Antenor how lost is my Criseyde?'

This Pandarus, ful ded and pale of hewe,  
Ful pitously answérde and seidè, 'Yis! 380  
As wisly were it fals as it is trewe  
That I have herd, and wot al how it is.  
O mercy, God, who wolde han trowèd this!  
Who wolde have wen'd that, in so litel a  
throwe,

Fortúne our joyè wolde han over-throwe!

'For in this world ther n'is no créature,  
As to my doom, that everè saw ruine  
Straunger than this, thorough cas or  
áventure.

But who may al eschewe or al devine?

357. *neigh*, P G<sup>2</sup> H<sub>3</sub> S Cx. *al*; A *now*; D om.  
358. *And*, P G<sup>2</sup> H<sub>3</sub> *But*.  
359. *For sorwe of this*, P G<sup>2</sup> N<sub>7</sub> *ded for wo*.  
(H<sub>3</sub> omits l. 359.)  
362. *But*, P G<sup>2</sup> H<sub>3</sub> *And*.  
373. *Neigh ded for smert*, P G<sup>2</sup> H<sub>3</sub> *For cruel*  
*herte* (G<sup>2</sup> *smert*).  
384. *litel*, R *lite*.

317. *th' ilke*, H<sub>3</sub> Cx. *that*;  $\gamma$  *this*.

318. *my*, so P G<sup>2</sup> H<sub>2</sub> A D; rest *the*, *thy*, *your*.

347. *yelden*, P G<sup>2</sup> H<sub>3</sub> *chaungen*.

Swich is the world! For-thy I thus define:  
Ne trust no wight to finden in fortune 391  
Ay propreté; her yiftés ben commune.

‘But tel me this, why thou art now so mad  
To sorwen thus. Why li’stow in this wise,  
Sin thy desir al hoolly hastow had,  
So that by right it oughte y-nough suffice?  
But I, that neveré felte in my servise  
A frendly chere or looking of an ye,  
Lat me thus wepe and wailen til I dye!

‘And over al this, as thou wel wost thy-  
selve,

This town is ful of ladies al aboute; 401  
And, to my doom, fairer than swiché twelve  
As evere she was, shal I finde in som route,  
Ye, oon or two, withouten any doute.  
For-thy be glad, myn owné deré brother!  
If she be lost, we shal recovere another!

‘What! God forbede alwey that ech  
plesáunce

In oo thing were, and in non other wight!  
If oon can singe, another can wel daunce;  
If this be goodly, that is glad and light;  
And this is fair, and that can good a-right.  
Ech for his vertu holden is for dere, 412  
Bothe heroner and faucon for rivére!

‘And ek, as writ Zanzis that was ful wis,  
“The newé love out-chaseth ofte the olde,”  
And upon newé cas li’th newe avis.  
Think ek thy lif to savén artow holde!  
Swich fir by proces mot of kindé colde;  
For sin it n’is but casuel plesáunce, 419  
Som cas shal putte it out of rémembraunce.

‘For al-so seur as day com’th after night,  
The newé love, labour or other wo,  
Or ellés seldé seing of a wight,  
Don olde affeccions alle over-go.  
And, for thy part, thou shalt han oon of tho  
T’abreggè with thy bittré peinés smerte:  
Absence of her shal drive her out of  
herte!’—

These wordés seide he for the nonés alle,  
To helpe his frend, lest he forsorwé deyde;

410. *that, y she.*

419. *n’is*, so H<sub>4</sub> R Cx.; J and others *is*.

For doutéles, to don his wo to falle, 430  
He roughtë not what unthrift that heseyde.  
But Troilus, that neigh for sorwé deyde,  
Took litel hede of al that evere he mente;  
Oon ere it herde, att’other out it wente.

But at the laste answérdeand seidé, ‘Frend,  
This lechecraft, or heléd thus to be,  
Were wel sittinge, if that I were a fend.  
To traysen her that trewe is unto me!  
I preye God, lat this conseil neveré thé;  
But do me rather sterve anon right here,  
Or I so do as thou me woldest lere! 441

‘She that I serve, y-wis, what-so thou seye,  
To whom myn herte enhabit is by right,  
Shal han me hoolly heres til that I deye.  
What! Pandarus, sin I have her bihight,  
I wol not ben untrewé for no wight;  
But as her man I wol ay live and sterve,  
And neveré other créature serve!

‘And ther thou seyst thou shalt as fairé finde  
As she, lat be, mak no comparisoun 450  
To créature y-forméd here by kinde!  
O levé Pandar, in conclusioun,  
I wol not ben of thyn opinioun  
Touching al this; for-thy, I thee biseche,  
So hold thy pees: thou sleest me with  
thy speche!

‘Thou biddest me I sholdé love another  
Al fresshly newe, and lat Criseyde go!  
It li’th not in my powér, levé brother;  
And though I mighte, I woldé not do so.  
But canstow pleyén raket, to and fro, 460  
Netle in, dokke out, now this, now that,  
Pandáre,  
Now foulé falle her for thy wo that care!

‘Thou farest ek by me, thou Pandarus,  
As he that, whan a man is wo-bigon,  
He com’th to him a pas and seith right thus,

434. *att’other*, so P H<sub>1</sub>; rest *at the other*, *at that other*, *at other*.

435. *laste*, so H<sub>4</sub> R H<sub>1</sub>; others *last(e) he*.

438. *her*, so J P G<sup>2</sup> H<sub>3</sub> A D Cl.; rest *a wight*.

445. *What*, so J P G<sup>2</sup> H<sub>3</sub>; rest *For*.

445. *her bihight*, so J P G<sup>2</sup> H<sub>3</sub>; rest *trouthe her hight (plight)*.

464. *man*, so a (= J P G<sup>2</sup> H<sub>3</sub>); rest *wight*.

“Think not on smert, and thou shalt  
felé non !”

Thou most me first transmuwén in a ston,  
And revé me my passiounés alle,  
Or thou so lightly do my wo to falle ! 469

‘The deth may wel out of my brest departe  
The lif, so longé may this sorwé mine ;  
But fro my soulé shal Criseydés darte  
Out neveré mo ; but doun with Proserpine,  
Whan I am ded, I wol go wone in pine ;  
And ther I wol eternaly compleyne  
This wo, and how that twinnéd be we  
tweyne !

‘Thou hast here maad an argument, for fyn,  
How that it sholde a lassé peiné be  
Criseydé to forgon, for she was myn,  
And livede in ese and in felicité ! 480  
Why gabbestow ? that seidest thus to me,  
That “him is wors that is fro wele y-throwe,  
Than he had erst non of that wele y-  
knowe !”

‘But sey me this : sin that thee think’t h  
so light

To chaungé so in love ay to and fro,  
Why hastow not don bisily thy might  
To chaungen her that doth thee al thy wo ?  
Why n’iltow lete her from thy herté go ?  
Why n’iltow love another lady swete,  
That may thyn herté setten in quiéte ? 490

‘If thou hast had in love ay yit mischaunce,  
And canst it not yit fro thyn herté drive,  
I, that have lived in lust and in plesáunce  
With her as muche as créature on-live,  
How sholde I that foryete, and that so blive ?  
O where hastow ben hid so longe in muwe,  
That canst so wel and formaly arguwe !

‘Nay, Pandarus, naught worth is al thy red ;  
But doutéles, for aught that may bifalle,

480. *livede*, G<sup>2</sup> R Cx. Cl. *live(n)*.

484. *sey me this*, so a ; rest *tel me now, tel me this*.

492. *yit fro*, so a (H<sub>3</sub> om. *yit*) ; rest *out of*.

493. *have lived* (?), H<sub>3</sub> *have had* ; G *havede* ; rest *lived(e)* (read ? *livede ay*, Boc.).

498. *Nay, Pandarus*, so a ; H<sub>2</sub> H<sub>4</sub> R Cx. S *Nay, nay, God wot* ; γ *Nay, God wot*.

499. So a ; rest read *For which, for what that were may bifalle*.

Withouten wordés mo, I wol be ded ! 500  
O deth, that ender art of sorwés alle,  
Com now, sin I so ofte after thee calle ;  
For sely is that deth, soth for to seyne,  
That, ofte y-cleped, com’t h and endeth  
peyne !

‘Wel wot I, whil my lif was in quiéte,  
Or deth me slowe I wolde han yiven hire ;  
But now his coming is to me so swete  
That in this world I no thing so desire.—  
O deth, sin with this sorwe I am on fire,  
Thou outhér do m’ anon in terés drenche,  
Or with thy coldé strok myn heté quenche !

‘Sin that thou sleest so fele in sondry wise  
Ayeins hir wil, unpreyéd, day and night,  
Do me at my requesté this servise : 514  
Deliveré now the world, than dostow right,  
Of me that am the wofullesté wight  
That everé was ; for time is that I sterve,  
Sin in this world of right naught may I  
serve !’—

This Troilus in terés gan distille,  
As licour out of alambic, ful faste ; 520  
And Pandarus gan holde his tongé stille,  
And to the grounde his yén doun he caste.  
But nathéles thus thoughte he at the laste,  
‘What, pardé, rather than my felaw deye,  
Yit shal I somewhat more unto him seye !’

And seidé, ‘Frend, sin thou hast swich  
distresse,  
And sin thee list myn arguments to blame,  
Why n’ilt thy-selven helpé to redresse,  
And with thy manhod letten al this grame ?  
To ravishe her ne canstow not ? for shame !  
And outhér lat her out of touné fare 531  
Or hold her stille, and lef this nicé care !

‘Artow in Troye, and hast non hardiment  
To take a womman which that loveth thee  
And wolde her-selven ben of thyn assent ?

506. *deth*, so a ; rest *thou*.

507. *his*, so a (H<sub>3</sub> omits) ; rest *thy*.

511. *hete*, so J H<sub>4</sub> R H<sub>1</sub> Cl. (Boc.) ; H<sub>2</sub> *herte hete* ; rest *herte*.

515. *than*, so a A D ; rest *so*.

530. *To*, so J H<sub>2</sub> D Cx. Cl. ; rest *Go*.

532. *this nice care*, Cx. γ *thy nice fare*.

Now is not this a nicé vanité ?  
Ris up anon, and lat thy weping be,  
And kith thou art a man ; for in this houre  
I wol be ded, or she shal bleven oure !'—

To this answerde him Troilus ful softe,  
And seidè, 'Pardé, levè brother dere, 547  
Al this have I my-selve y-thought ful ofte,  
And morè thing than thou devisest here.  
But why this thing is left, thou shalt wel  
here ;

And whan thou me hast yiven audience,  
Ther-after maystow telle al thy senténcé.

'First, sin thou wost this town hath al this  
werre

For ravissing of women so by might,  
It sholdè not be suffred me to erre, 549  
As it stant now, ne don so gret unright.  
I sholdè han also blame of every wight,  
My fadres graunt if that I so withstood,  
Sin she is chaungéd for the townès good.

'I have ek thought, so it were her assent,  
To axe her at my fader of his grace ;  
Than thenke I, this were her accusé-  
ment,

Sin wel I wot I may her not purcháce.  
For sin my fader in so heigh a place  
As parlément hath her eschaunge enseled  
He n'il for me his honour he repeled. 560

'Yit drede I most her hertè to perturbe  
With violence, if I do swich a game ;  
For, if I wolde it openly disturbe,  
It mostè be disclaudrè to her name,  
And me were leverè ded than her defame.  
As n'oldé God but-if I sholdè have  
Her honour leverè than my lif to save !

'Thus am I lost, for aught that I may see ;  
For certein is, sin that I am her knight,  
I have her honour leverè yit than me 570  
In every cas, as lover oughte of right.  
Thus am I with desir and reson twight :  
Desir for to disturben her me redeth,  
And reson n'il not, so myn hertè dredeth.'

560. honour, so a ; rest *lettre*.

571. In, J H<sub>3</sub> H<sub>5</sub> And in.

Thus weping that he coudè neverè cesse,  
He seide, 'Allas, how shal I, wrecchè,  
fare ?

For wel fele I alwéy my love encresse,  
And hope islasse and lasse alwéy, Pandaré ;  
Encressen ek the causes of my care ; 579  
So weylawey, why n'il myn hertè breste ?  
For-why in love is litel hertès reste !'—

Pandaré answerdè, 'Frend, thou mayst for  
me

Don as thee list. But hadde ich it so hote,  
And thyn estat, she sholdè go with me !  
Though al this town cri'de on this thing  
by note,

I n'olde sette at al the noise a grote !  
For whan men han wel cried, than lat  
hem rounè !

For wonder last but nine night nevere in  
tounè !

'Devinè not in reson ay so depe  
Nepreciously, but help thy-selve anon ! 590  
Bet is that other than thy-selvè wepe,  
And namély sin ye two ben al oon !  
Ris up, for by myn hed she shal not gon !  
And rather be a lite in blame y-founde  
Than sterve here as a gnat withouté  
wounde !

'It is no rape in my dom, ne no vice,  
Her to with-holden that thee loveth most.  
Pauraunter she may holden thee for nice  
To lete her go thus to the Grekès oost. 599  
Think ek Fortúne, as wel thy-selven wost,  
Helpeth an hardy man to his emprise,  
And fleeth fro wrecches for hir cowardise.

'And though thy lady wolde a lite her greve,  
Thou shalt thy pees ful wel her-after make ;

581. *For-why in love*, so J P G ; H<sub>3</sub> H<sub>5</sub> *For  
whil I live* ; rest read *For as in love ther is but  
litel reste*.

587. *lat hem rounè*, so a ; rest *wol they rounè*.

588. *For*, so a D ; Cl. A ; rest *Ek*.

590. *preciously*, so a ; R *preciently* ; Cx.  
*curiously* ; rest *curteysly*. (Boc. sottillmento.)

596. *rape in my dom*, so a ; rest *no shame  
(un)to you (thee)*.

597. *thee loveth*, J *thee lovest* ; others var.

601. *an*, so R Cx. S ; rest omit.

602. *fleeth fro*, so a Cx. ; rest *weyrèth*.



But as for me, certein, I can not leve  
That she wolde it as now for yvel take.  
Why sholdè thanne of-fér'd thyn hertè  
quake ?

Think how that Paris hath, that is thy  
brother,  
A love; and why shaltow not have another ?

' And Troilus, oo thing I dar thee swere :  
That if Criseyde, which that is thy lief, 611  
Now loveth thee as wel as thou dost here,  
God help me so, she n'il not take a-grief  
Theigh thou do bote anon in this mischief.  
And if she wilneth fro thee forth to passe,  
Than is she fals: so love her wel the lasse !

' For-ty tak herte, and think thus as a  
knight :

Thorough love is broken alday every lawe.  
Kith now somwhát thy corage and thy  
might,

Have mercy on thy-self for any awe. 620  
Lat not this wrecched wo thyn hertè gnawe,  
But manly set the world on sixe and sevene,  
And if thou deye a martir, go to hevене !

' I wol my-self ben with thee at this dede,  
Though ich and al my kin upon a stounde  
Shulle in a strete as doggès liggen dede,  
Thorough-girt with many a wide and blody  
wounde.

In every cas I wol a frend be found. 628  
And if thee list here sterven as a wrecche,  
Adieu, the devil have him that it recche !'—

This Troilus gan with the wordès quiken,  
And seidè, ' Frend, gramercy, ich assente.  
But certainly thou mayst not so me priken,  
Ne peynè non ne may me so tormente,  
That for no cas it is not myn entente,  
At shortè wordès, though I deyn sholde,  
To ravisshe her, but-if herselve it wolde.'

Pandare answérde, ' Of that be as be may !  
But tel me thanne, hastow her wil assayed,  
That sorwest thus ?' And he answérde,  
' Nay.'

640

630. *have*, so *a*; rest *spede*.630. *it*, *J* and others omit.638. So *a*; rest read 'Why so mene I,' quod

andar, 'al this day.'

' Wher-of artow,' quod Pandar, ' than  
amayed,

That n'ost not that she wol benyvele apayed  
To ravisshe her, sin thou hast not ben there,  
But any aungel tolde it in thyn ere ?

' For-ty ris up, as naught ne were, anon,  
And wassh thy face, and to the king thou  
wende,

Or he may wondren why thou art thus gon.  
Thou most with wisdom him and othré  
blende,

Or upon cas he may after thee sende 649  
Or thou be war. And, shortly, brother dere,  
Be glad, and lat me werke in this matére.

' For I shal shape it so, that sikerly  
Thou shalt this night, som time in som  
manére,

Come speken with thy lady prively ;  
And by her wordès ek and by her chere  
Thou shalt ful sone apárceive and wel here  
Al her entente, and of this cas the beste.  
And far now wel, for in this point I reste.'—

The swiftè Famè, which that falsè thinges  
Egál reporteth lik the thingès trewe, 660  
Was thorough-out Troye y-fled with prestè  
winges

Fro man to man, and made this tale al newe,  
How Calcas' doughter with her brightè  
hewe,

At parlément, withoutè wordès more,  
Y-graunted was in change of Antenore.

The whichè tale anon right as Criseyde  
Had herd, she, which that of her father  
roughte

As in this cas right naught, ne whan he  
deyde,

Ful bisily to Jupiter bisoughte  
Yeve him mischauncè that this tretis  
broughte ;

670

But, shortly, lest these tales sothè were,  
She dorste at no wight axen it for fere,

644. *But any aungel*, so *a*; rest *But if that Jove*.647. *why thou art thus*, so *a* (*G whedyr thou art thus*); rest *whider thou art*.657. *of*; *S y in*.

Asshe that hadde her herte and al her minde  
 On Troilus biset so wonder faste,  
 That al this world ne mighte her love  
 unbinde,  
 Ne Troilus out of her hertè caste,  
 She wol ben his, whil that her lif may laste :  
 And thus she brenneth bothe in love and  
 drede,  
 So that she n'isté what was best to rede.

But, as men sen in tounés al aboute, 680  
 That wommen usen frendés to visite,  
 So to Criseyde of wommen com a route  
 For pitous joye, and wen'den her delite,  
 And with hir talés, dere y-nough a mite,  
 These wommen whiche that in the cité  
 dwelle,  
 They sette hem down, and seide as I shal  
 telle.

Quod first that oon, 'I am glad, trewely,  
 Bicause of you that shal your fader see.'  
 Another seide, 'Y-wis, so n'am not I ;  
 For al too litel hath she with us be.' 690  
 The thridde answerde, 'I hope, y-wis,  
 that she  
 Shal bringen us the pees on every side ;  
 That, when she go'th, almighty God her  
 gide !'

The wordés and tho womanisshé things  
 She herdé right as though she thennés were,  
 For al this while her herte on other thing is,  
 Although the body sat among hem there ;  
 God wot her ádvertence is elléswhere,  
 For Troilus ful faste her soulé soughte : 699  
 Withouté word alwéy on him she thoughte.

These wommen, that so wen'den her to plese,  
 Abouté naught thus gonne hir talés spende :  
 Swich vanité ne can don her non esc,  
 As she that al this mené whilé brende  
 Of other passioun than that they wen'de,  
 So that she felte almost her herté dye  
 For wo, and wery of that companye.

691. *The thridde answerde*, so  $\alpha$ ; rest *Quod (tho) the thridde*.

696. *al this while*, so  $\alpha$ ; rest *God it wot*.

698. So  $\alpha$ ; rest *Her advertence* (R Cx. *audience*)  
*is alwey elleswhere*.

For-which no lenger mighté she restreyné  
 Her terés, so they gonnen up to welle,  
 That yaven signés of the bittré peyne 710  
 In which her spirit was and mosté dwelle,  
 Remembring her from hevене into which  
 helle  
 She fallen was, sin she forgo'th the sighte  
 Of Troilus ; and sorwfully she sighte.

And th' ilké foolés, sitting her aboute,  
 Wen'den that she so wepte and sightésore,  
 Bicausé that she sholdé from that route  
 Departe, and neveré pleyé with hem more.  
 And they that haddé knowén her of yore  
 Saye her so wepe, and thoughte it kindé-  
 nesse ; 720  
 And ech of hem wep ek for her distresse.

And bisily they gonnen her conforten  
 Of thing, God wot, on which she litel  
 thoughte,  
 And with hir wordés wen'den her disporten,  
 And to be glad they often her bisoughte.  
 But swich an esé therwith they her  
 wroughte,  
 Right as a man is eséd for to fele,  
 For ache of hed to clawen him on his hele !

But after al this nicé vanité  
 They toke hir leve, and hom they wenten  
 alle. 730

Criseyde, ful of sorwful pieté  
 Into the chaumbre up wente out of the halle,  
 And on her bed for dede she gan to falle,  
 In purpos neveré thennés for to rise ;  
 And thus she wroughte as I shal you devise.

The salté terés from her yén tweyne  
 Out-ronne as shour in Aperil ful swithe :  
 Her whité brest she bet, and for the peyne

708. ll. 708-714 are omitted in  $\gamma$  (=A D Cp. H<sub>1</sub> Cl. S<sub>2</sub>).

716. *so wepte*, so Cx. ; rest *wepete*.

731. *piete*, so S Cp. ; others *pitte*, *pete*, etc.

736.  $\alpha$  (J P G H<sub>2</sub>) have this stanza here (Boccaccio's order) ;  $\beta$  (H<sub>2</sub> H<sub>4</sub> R Cx.) and  $\gamma$  (S A D Cp. H<sub>1</sub> Cl. S<sub>2</sub>) have it after l. 756.

736.  $\beta$   $\gamma$  read :

Therwith the teres from hir yen two  
 Doun file . . .

737. *ful*, so G R ; Cx. *doth* ; rest omit. H  
*showes in Aprile swithe*.

738. *peyne*,  $\beta$   $\gamma$  wo.

After the deth she cri'de a thousand sithe,  
Sin he that wont her wo was for to lithe 740  
She mot forgon ; for which disaventure  
She held herself a fórlost créature.

Herounded heer, that sonnissch was of hewe  
She rente, and ek her fingres longe and  
smale

She wrong ful ofte, and bad God on her  
rewe

And with the deth do bote upon her bale.  
Her hewé, whilom bright that tho was pale,  
Bar witnessse of her wo and her constreynte ;  
And thus she spak, sobbing in her com-  
pleynte :

'Allas !' quod she, 'out of this regioun 750  
I, woful wrecche and infortunéd wight,  
And born in curséd constellacioun,  
Mot gon, and thus departen fro my knight !  
Wo worth that day, and namely that night,  
On which I saw him first with yen tweyne,  
That causeth me, and ich him, al this peyne !

'What shal he don ? Whatshal I don also ?  
How shal I live, if that I from him twinne ?  
O deré herte ek, that I lové so,  
Who shal that sorwé slee that ye ben  
inne ? 760

O Calcas fader, thyn be al this sinne !  
And curséd be that day which that Argive  
Me of her body bar to ben on-live !

'To what fin sholde I live and sorwé thus ?  
How sholde a fissh withouté water dure ?  
What is Criseydé worth from Troilus ?  
How sholde a plaunte or other créature  
Livén withoute his kindé noriture ?  
For-which ful ofte a by-word here I seye,  
That, "erthéles, mot grené soné deye." 770

'Ishal don thus : sin nother swerd ne darte  
Dar I non handlè for the cruelté,

754.  $\beta \gamma$  read :

Wo worth, allas, that ilke dayes light.

757.  $\beta \gamma$  read :

She seyde, 'How shal he don, and I also ?

762, 763.  $\beta \gamma$  read :

O moder myn, that cleped were Argyve,  
Wo worth that day that thou me bere on lyve.

770. *ertheles,  $\beta \gamma$  roteles.*

That ilké day I shal from you departe,  
If sorwe of that n'il not my bané be,  
Ther shal no mete or drinké come in me,  
Til I my soule out of my brest unshethe ;  
And thus myselfen wol I do to dethe.

'And Troilus, my clothés everychon  
Shal blaké ben, in tokening, herté swete,  
That I am as out of this world agon, 780  
That wont was you to holden in quiéte ;  
And of myn ordré, til that deth me mete,  
The óbservaunces evere in your absence  
Shal sorwé be, compleynte, and abstinence.

'Myn herte and ek the woful goost therinne  
Biquethe I, with your spirit to compleyne  
Eternaly, for they shul neveré twinne.  
For theigh in erthe y-twinné be we tweyne,  
Yit in the feld of pité, out of peyne,  
Ther Pluto regneth, shal we ben i-fere, 790  
As Orphéus with Euridíce, his fere.

'Thus herté myn, for Antenor, allas,  
I soné shal be yolden, as I wene !  
But how shal ye don in this woful cas ?  
How shal your tendré herté this sustene ?  
But herté myn, foryet this sorwe and tene,  
And me also ; for, sothly for to seye,  
So ye wel fare, I recché not to deye !'—

How mighte it evere al red ben or y-songe  
The pleynté that she made in her  
distresse ? 800

I n'ot ; but, as for me, my litel tonge,  
If I discrivé wolde her hevinesse,  
It sholdé make her sorwé semé lesse  
Than that it was, and childissly deface  
Her heighe compleynte ; and therfor ich  
it pace.

Pandaré,—which that sent fro Troilus  
Was to Criseyde, as ye han herd devise  
That for the beste it was accorded thus,  
And he ful glad to don him this servise,—

773. *I shal, so  $\alpha$  ;  $\beta$  I mot ;  $\gamma$  that I.*

783. *observaunces, so J only ; rest observance.*

790. *Ther Pluto regneth,  $\beta \gamma$  That hight(e)*

*Elysos.*

793. *yolden,  $\beta \gamma$  chaunged.*

799. *al red, so J H<sub>3</sub> only ; other ( $\gamma$ )-red. (Poc.*

*narrare a pieno.)*

Unto Criseyde, in a ful secré wise, 810  
 Ther-as she lay in torment and in rage,  
 Com her to telle al hoolly his message.

And fond that she herselven gan to trete  
 Ful pitously; for with her salté teres  
 Her brest, her face, y-bathéd was ful wete,  
 The mighty tresses of her sonniss heres,  
 Unbroiden, hanging al aboute her eres:  
 Which yaf him verray signal of martíre  
 Of deth, which that for wo she gan desire.

Whan she him saw, she gan for shame  
 anon 820

Her tery face atwixe her armés hide;  
 For which this Pandar is so wo-bigon  
 That in the chaumbre he mighte unnethé  
 abide,  
 As he that pité felte on every side;  
 For if Criseyde had erst compleynéd sore,  
 Tho gan she pleyne a thousand tímés more.

And in her aspré pleynté thus she seyde,  
 'Myn em, Pandaré, of joyés mo than two  
 Was causé causing first to me Criséyde,  
 That now transmued ben in cruel wo: 830  
 Whe'r shal I seyn to you welcómé or no,  
 That alderfirst me broughte into servise  
 Of love, allas, that endeth in swich wise?

'Endeth than love in wo? Ye, or men  
 lieth;

And every worldly joye, as thinketh me!  
 The ende of blisse, ay sorwe it occupieth!  
 And who-so troweth not that it so be,  
 Let him upon me, woful wrecche, y-see,  
 That my-self hate, and ay my burthe aorse,  
 Felng alwéy, fro wikke I go to worse! 840

'Who-so meseeth, he seeth sorwe al at ones,  
 And peyné, torment, pleynté, wo, dis-  
 tresse!

819. *for wo she, β γ her herte.*  
 820. *shame, so α: β γ sorwe.* (Boc. per ver-  
 gogna.)

823. *chaumbre, β γ hous.*  
 828, 829. *β γ read:*

Pandaré first of joyes mo than two  
 Was cause causing unto me, Criseyde.

835. *every worldly joye, β γ a(lle) worldly blisse.*  
 842. *And peyne (?) all Peyne.*

842. P G Cx. R Cl. and before *distresse.*

Out of my sorwful body harm ther non is,  
 As anguiss, langour, cruel bitternesse,  
 Anoy, smert, dredé, furie, and ek siknesse!  
 I trowe, y-wis, from hevené terés reyne  
 For pité of myn aspre and cruel peyne!—

'And thou, my suster, ful of disconfort,  
 Quod Pandarus, 'what thenkestow to do?  
 Whyn'hastow to thyselfensom resport? 850  
 Why wiltow thus thyselfe, allas, fordo?  
 Leve al this werk, and tak now hedé to  
 What I shal seyn, and herkne of good  
 entente

This that by me thy Troilus thee sente.'

Tornéd her tho Criseyde, a wo makinge  
 So gret that it a deth was for to see.

'Allas!' quod she, 'what wordés may ye  
 bringe?

What wil my deré herté seyn to me,  
 Which that I dredé neveré-mo to see?  
 Wil he han pleynte of terés or I wende? 860  
 I have y-nowe, if he ther-after sende!'

She was right swich to sen in her viságe  
 As is that wight that men on beré binde;  
 Her facé, lik of Paradis th'imáge,  
 Was al y-chaungéd in another kinde;  
 The pley, the laughter, men was wont to  
 finde

In her, and othré joyés everychone  
 Benfled; and thus forhemshe li'th allone.

Aboute her y'en two a purpré ring 869  
 Bitrent, in sothfast tokening of her peyne,  
 That to beholde it was a dedly thing;  
 For which Pandaré mighté not restreyne  
 The terés from his y'en for to reyne.  
 But nathéles, as he best mighte, he seyde  
 From Troilus these wordes to Criseyde:

'Lo, nece, I trowe wel ye han herd al how  
 The king with othré lordés for the beste  
 Hath maad th'eschaunge of Antenor and  
 you, 878

That cause is of this wo and this unreste.  
 But how this cas doth Troilus moleste,

867. *othre, α β ek her.*

868. *for hem she lith, α β lith (now) Criseyde.*

That may no worldly mannés tongéseye,—  
As he that shortly shapeth him to deye.

‘ For which we han so sorwed, he and I,  
That into litel bothe it hadde us slawe,  
But thorough my conseil this day finaly  
He somwhat hath fro weping him with-  
drawe ;

And semeth me that he desireth fawe  
With you to ben al night, for to devise  
Remédie in this, if ther were any wise.

‘ This’, short and pleyn, th’effect of my  
messáge, <sup>890</sup>  
And ek the beste as my wit can comprede ;  
For ye, that ben of torment in swich rage,  
May to no long prológe as now entende.  
And her-upon ye may answeére him sende ;  
And, for the love of God, my necé dere,  
So lef this wo or Troilus be here !’

‘ Gret is my wo,’ quod she, and sightésore,  
As she that feleth dedly sharp distresse ;  
‘ But yit to me his sorwe is muché more,  
That love him bet than he himself, I gesse.  
Allas ! for me hath he swich hevynesse ?  
Can he for me so pitously compleyne ?  
Now, wis, his sorwé doublethal mypeyne !’

‘ Grevous to me, God wot, is for to twinne,’  
Quod she, ‘ but yit it harder is to me  
To sen him in that wo that he is inne ;  
For wel I wot, it wil my bané be,  
And deye I wol in certein !’—Tho quod  
she,

‘ But bid him come, or deth, that thus  
me threteth,  
Drive out that goost which in myn herté  
betheth.’ <sup>910</sup>

Thise wordés seid, she on her armés two  
‘ il gruf, and gan to wepen pitously.—  
Quod Pandarus, ‘ Allas ! why do ye so,  
sin wel ye wot the time is fasté by

882.  $\gamma$  read :

For verray wo his wit is al aweye.  
(Boc.) Il qual del tutto in duol ne vuol morire.

891.  $\beta \gamma$  read :

As forforth as my wit can (may) comprehende.

903. Now, wis, his,  $\beta \gamma$  *Y-wis, this.*

That he shal come ? Aris up softcly,  
That he you not biwopen thus y-finde,  
But ye wol han him wood out of his minde !

‘ For wiste he that ye ferde in this manére,  
He wolde himselven slee ; and if I wen’de  
To han this fare, he sholdé not come here  
For al the good that Priam may dispende ;  
For to what fin he wolde anon pretende,  
That wot I wel ! And therfor yit I seye,  
Lat be this sorwe, or platly he wol deye !

‘ And shapeth you his sorwé for t’abregge  
And not encresse, O levé necé swete !  
Beth rather to him cause of flat than egge,  
And with som wisdom ye his sorwé bete.  
What helpeth it to wepen ful a strete, <sup>929</sup>  
Or though ye bothe in salté terés dreynthe ?  
Bet is a time of cure ay than of pleynte !

‘ I mené thus : whan ich him hider bringe,  
Sin ye ben wise and bothe of oon assent,  
So shapeth, how distorbé this goinge,  
Or come ayein sone after ye be went.  
Wommen ben wise of short avisément.  
And lat sen how your wit shal now availe ;  
And that that I can helpe, it shal not  
faile !’

‘ Go,’ quod Criseyde, ‘ and unclé, trewély,  
I shal don al my might, me to restreyne  
Fro weping in his sighte ; and bisily, <sup>941</sup>  
Him for to glade, I shal don al my peyne,  
And in my herté seken every veyne.  
If to this soor ther may be founden salve,  
It shal not lakké, certein, on myn halve !’

Go’th Pandarus, and Troilus he soughte,  
Til in a temple he fond him al allone,  
As he that of his lif no lenger roughte ;  
But to the pitous Goddés everychone  
Ful tendrely he prey’de and made his  
mone, <sup>950</sup>  
To don him sone out of this world to pace ;  
For wel he thoughte ther n’as non other  
grace.

947. *al allone*, so J H<sub>3</sub> Cx. S Cp. ; rest *allonc*.  
950-952. P H<sub>3</sub> read :

He faste made his compleynthe and his mone,  
Beseking hem to sende him other grace,  
Or fro this world to don him sone pace.

And, shortly, al the sothè for to seye,  
 He was so fallen in despair that day,  
 That outrély he shoop him for to deye ;  
 For right thus was his argument alwey :—  
 He seide ‘ I n’am but lorn, so weylawey !  
 For al that com’th, com’th by necessité :  
 Thus, to be lorn, it is my destiné !

‘ For certainly, this wot I wel,’ he seide,  
 ‘ That for-sight of divinè Púrveyaunce <sup>961</sup>  
 Hath seyn alwéy me to forgon Criseyde,  
 Sin God seeth every thing, out of doutaunce,  
 And hem disponeth thorough his ordinaunce,  
 In hir meritès sothly for to be,  
 As they shul comèn by predestiné.

‘ But natheles, allas, whom shal I leve ?  
 For ther ben gretè clerkès many oon,  
 That destiné thorough argumentès preve ;  
 And some men seyn that nedly ther is  
 noon, <sup>970</sup>  
 But that free chois is given us everychoon.  
 O, weylawey ! So sleighe arn clerkès  
 olde,  
 That I n’ot whos opinioun I may holde.

‘ For some men seyn, if God seeth al biforn,  
 (Ne God may not deceivéd ben, parde !)  
 Than mot it fallen, though men hadde it  
 sworn,  
 That Púrveyaunce hath seyn biforn to be.  
 Wherfor I seye that from eterne if he  
 Hath wist bifore our thought ek as our  
 dede, <sup>979</sup>  
 We han no free chois, as thise clerkès rede.

‘ For other thought nor other dede also  
 Mighte neverè be, but swich as Púrvey-  
 aunce,  
 Which may not ben deceivéd neverè mo,  
 Hath fel’d biforn withouten ignoraunce.  
 For, if ther mightè ben a variaunce  
 To writen out fro Goddès púrveyinge,  
 Ther n’ere no prescience of thing cominge,

953. H<sub>2</sub> and H<sub>4</sub> omit ll. 953-1085; P inserts them later. G omits ll. 953-1078. This passage (not in Boccaccio) is taken for the most part from *Boethius*, bk. v.

957. *I n’am*, J Cx. S D *I am*; P H<sub>2</sub> y *he n’as*.

957. *so*, so J R Cx. S D; P H<sub>2</sub> y omit.

984. *fel’d*, R Cx. *felt*; D *felte*.

‘ But it were rather an opinioun  
 Unstedfast, and no certein forseinge ;  
 And certès that were an abusioun, <sup>990</sup>  
 That God sholde han no parfit cleer witinge  
 More than we men that han doutous  
 weninge.

But swich an errour upon God to gesse  
 Were fals and foul, and wikked corsednesse.

‘ Ek this is an opinioun of some  
 That han hir top ful heighe and smothe  
 y-shore :

They seyn right thus, that thing is not to  
 come

For-that the Prescience hath seyn bifore  
 That it shal come ; but they seyn that,  
 therfore

That it shal come, therfore the Púrvey-  
 aunce <sup>1000</sup>

Wot it biforn withouten ignoraunce.

‘ And in this maner this necessité  
 Retorneth in his part contrarie ageyn.  
 For nedfully bihov’th it not to be  
 That th’ilké thingès fallen in certéyn  
 That ben purvey’d ; but needly, as they  
 seyn,

Bihoveth it that thingès whiche that falle,  
 That they in certein ben purveyéd alle.

‘ I mene as though I labour’d me in this,  
 T’enqueren which thing cause of which  
 thing be : <sup>1010</sup>

As whether that the prescience of God is  
 The certein cause of the necessité  
 Of thingès that to comèn ben, pardé ;  
 Or if necessité of thing cominge  
 Be causè certein of the púrveyinge.

‘ But now n’enforce I me not in shewingé  
 How th’ordre of causes stant. But wel  
 wot I

That it bihoveth, that the bifallingé  
 Of thingès wisté biforn certainly  
 Be necessarie, al seme it not therby <sup>1020</sup>  
 That prescience put fallinge necessaire  
 To thing to come, al falle it foule or faire.

989. *Unstedfast*, so J P Cx. D; rest *Uncertain*.

989. *certein*, so J P Cx. (D omit); rest *stedfast*.

' For if ther sit a man yond on a see,  
Than by necessité bihoveth it  
That certès thyn opinioun soth be,  
That wenest or coniectest that he sit ;  
And further over now ayeinward yit,  
Lo, right so is it of the part contrarie,  
As thus :—now herkné, for I wol not  
tarie.—

' I seye, that if th'opinioun of thee 1030  
Be soth for—that he sit, than seye I this,  
That he mot sitten by necessité,  
And thus necessité in either is.  
For in him nede of sitting is, y-wis,  
And in thee nede of soth ; and thus, for-  
sothe,  
Ther mot necessité ben in you bothe.

' But thou mayst seyn : the man sit not  
therfore  
That thyn opinioun of sitting soth is,  
But rather, for the man sit ther bifore,  
Therfor is thyn opinioun soth, y-wis. 1040  
And I seye, though the cause of soth of this  
Com'th of his sitting, yit necessité  
Is entrechaungéd bothe in him and thee.

' Thus in this samé wise, out of doutaunce,  
I may wel maken, as it semeth me,  
My resoninge of Goddès púrveyaunce  
And of the thingès that to comén be :  
By whíché resons men may wel y-see  
That th'ilké thingès that in erthé falle,  
That by necessité they comen alle. 1050

' For although that, for thing shal come,  
y-wis,  
Therefore is it purveyéd, certainly,  
Not that it cometh for it purvey'd is,—  
Yit nathéles bihov'th it nedfully  
That thing to come be purvey'd trewély :  
Or ellés, thingès that purveyéd be,  
That they bitiden by necessité.

' And this suffiseth right ynough, certeyn,  
For to destroye our free chois every del !  
But now is this abusioun, to seyn 1060

1030. *that*, Cx. omits.

1038. *of sitting*, so P only ; rest *of his sitting*.

1048. *resons*, all *reson*.

That falling of the thingès temporel  
Is cause of Goddès prescience éternel.  
Now trewély that is a fals sentéce,  
That thing to come shul cause his pre-  
science !

' What mighte I wene, and I had swich a  
thought,  
But that God púrvey'th thing that is to  
come  
For that it is to comé, and ellés nought ?  
So mighte I wene that thingès alle and  
some,  
That whilom ben bifalle and overcome,  
Ben cause of th'ilké sovereign Púrveyaunce  
That forwot al withouten ignoraunce ! 1071

' And over al this, yit seye I more therto :  
That, right as whan I wot ther is a thing,  
Y-wis that thing mot nedfully be so,—  
Ek right so, whan I wot a thing coming,  
So mot it come. And thus the bifalling  
Of thingès that ben wist biforn the tide,  
They mowe not ben eschuwéd on no  
side.'—

Thanseide he thus, ' Almighty Jove in trone,  
That wost of al this thing the sothfastnesse,  
Rewe on my sorwe, and do me deyen sone,  
Or bring Criseyde and me from this dis-  
tresse !'

And whil he was in al this hevinesse,  
Disputing with himself in this matére,  
Com Pandar in, and seide as ye may here.

' O mighty God, 'quod Pandarus, ' in trone !  
Ey ! who say evere a wis-man faren so ?  
Why, Troilus, what thenkestow to done ?  
Hastow swich list to ben thyn owné fo ?  
What, pardé, yit is not Criseyde ago ! 1090  
Why list thee so thyself fordon for drede,  
That in thyn hed thine yēn semen dede ?

' Hastow not livéd of thy lif biforn  
Withouten her, and ferd ful wel at ese ?  
Artow for her and for non other born ?

1064. *shul*, so R Cx. ; P *shal* ; J and others  
*shulde*, *sholde*.

1065. P omits ll. 1065-1071.

1093. *of thy lif*, so J (P H<sub>3</sub> *al thy lif* ; G *oftyn  
in thyn lif*) ; β γ *many a yer*.

Hath Kinde y-wrought thee only her to  
plesa?

Canstow not thenken thus in thy disese,  
That, on the dees right as thee fallen  
chaunces,

In love alsó ther come and gon plesaunces?

'And yit this is my wonder most of alle;  
Why thou thus sorwest, sin thou n'ost not  
yit,

Touching her going, how that it shal falle,  
Ne, if she can herself disturben it,  
Thou hast not yet assayèd al her wit.  
A man may al by-time his nekkè bede  
Whan it shal off, and sorwen at the nede!

'For-thy tak hedè what I shal thee seye:  
I have with her y-spoke and longe y-be,  
So as acorded was bitwixe us tweye;  
And everèmo me thinketh thus, that she  
Hath somwhat in her hertès priveté,  
Wher-with she can, if I shal right arede,  
Stinte al this thing of which thou art in  
drede.

'For-which my conseil is, whan it is night,  
Thou to her go and make of this an ende;  
And blisful Juno, thorough her gretè might,  
Shal, as I hope, her grace unto us sende.  
Myn hertè seith, "certein, she shal not  
wende";  
And for-thy put thyn herte a while in reste,  
And hold thy purpos, for it is the beste.'

This Troilus answérde, and sightè sore,  
'Thou sey'st right wel, and I wil don  
right so.'  
And what him list he seidè to him more.  
But whan that it was timè for to go,  
Ful privèly himself, withouten mo,  
Unto her com, as he was wont to done;  
And how they wroughte, I shal you tellen  
sone.

1097. *Canstow not thenken*, β γ *Lat be, and thenk right* (var.).

1099. *In love also*, β γ *Right so in love*.

1100. *my*, S γ a.

1113. *Stinte al this thing*, β γ *Disturbe al this*. (See l. 1103.)

1124. *But, so a β* (Boc.); S γ *And*.

Soth is, that whan they gonnen first to mete,  
So gan the sorwe hir hertès for to twiste,  
That neither of hem other mightè grete,  
But hem in armès hente and softè kiste;  
The lassè woful of hem bothè n'iste  
What for to don, ne mighte a word out-  
bringe,  
As I seide erst, for wo and for sobbinge.

The woful terès that they leten falle  
As bittrè weren, out of terès kinde,  
For peyne, as is ligne aloès or galle:  
So bittrè terès wep not thorough the rinde  
The woful Mirra, writen as I finde;  
That in this world ther n'is so hard an herte,  
That n'olde han rewèd on hir peynèsmerte.

But whan hir woful very goostès tweyne  
Retornèd ben ther-as hem oughtè dwelle,  
And that somwhat to weyken gan the peyne  
By lengthe of pleynte, and ebben gan the  
welle

Of bittrè terès, and the herte unswelle,  
With broken vois, al hoors for-shright,  
Criseyde

To Troilus thise ilkè wordès seyde:

'O Jove, I deye, and mercy I besече!  
Help, Troilus!'—And therwithal her face  
Upon his brest she leyde, and lostè speche,  
Her woful spirit from his proprè place,  
Right with the word, alwey o-point to pace.  
And thus she li'th with hewès pale and  
grene,  
That whilom fressh and fairest was to sene.

This Troilus, that on her gan biholde,  
Cleping her name,—and she layas for ded,  
Withoute answère, and felte her limès  
colde,  
Her yen throwen upward to her hed,—  
This sorwful man can now no maner red,

1133. *What for to don*, so a Cx.; β γ *Wher that he was*.

1138, 1139. β γ read:

So bittrè teres wep not, as I finde.

The woful Myrra through the bark and rinde.

1146. *bittrè* (?), H<sub>4</sub> *the*; H<sub>2</sub> om.; J and others *hir(e)*. (Boc. Gli occhi dolenti per gli aspri disiri.) See ll. 1136-1138 (Boc. Ch'amare fesser oltre lor natura).



But ofté time her coldé mouth he kiste :  
Whe'r him was wo, God and himself it  
wiste !

He rist him up, and long streight he her  
leyde ;

For signe of lif, for aught he can or may,  
Can he non finde in no cas on Criseyde,  
For which his song ful ofte is 'weylawaye !'  
And whan he saw that spechèles she lay,  
With sorrowful vois and herte of blisse al  
bare,

He seide how she was fro this world y-fare.

So after-that he longe had her compleyned,  
His hondés wrong, and seid that was to  
seye, 1171

And with his terés salte his brest bi-reyned,  
He gan the terés wipen off ful dreye,  
And pitously gan for the soule preye,  
And seidé, 'Lord, that set art in thy trone,  
Rewe ek on me, for I shal folwe her sone !'

She cold was, and withouten sentément  
For aught he wiste, and breth ne felte  
he non ;

And that was him a preignant argument  
That she was forth out of this world agon.  
And whan he saw ther was non other won,  
He gan her limés dresse in swich manére,  
As men don folk that shul ben laid on bere.

And after this, with sterne and cruel herte,  
Hisswerd anon out of the shethe hetwichte,  
Himself to sleen, howsoré that him smerte,  
So that his soule her soulé folwé mighte  
Ther-as the doom of Minos wolde it dighte ;  
Sin Love and cruel Fortune it ne wolde  
That in this world he lenger liven sholde.

Thanseide he thus, fulfil'd of heigh desdayn,  
O cruel Jove, and thou Fortune adverse,  
This'al and som : that falsly han ye slayn  
Criseyde, and sin ye can do me no werse,  
y on your might and werkés so diverse !  
Thus cowardly ye shal me neveré winne :  
Ther shal no deth me fro my lady twinne !

1167. *And*, β γ *But*.

1173. *ful*, so P H<sub>3</sub> β γ ; J H<sub>3</sub> G *and*.

1183. *folk*, β γ *hem* (*him*).

'For I this world, sin ye han slain her  
thus,

Wol lete, and folwe her spirit forth in hye :  
Shal neveré lover seyn that Troilus 1200  
Dar not for feré with his lady dye ;  
For, certein, I wol bere her companye.  
But sin ye n'il not suffre us liven here,  
Yit suffreth that our soulés ben i-fere !

'And thou cité, which that I leve in wo,  
And thou Priám, and brethren alle i-fere,  
And thou, my moder, far-wel, for I go !  
And Attropos, mak redy thou my here !  
And thou, Criseydé, sweté herté dere,  
Receivé now my spirit !'—wolde he seye,  
With swerd at herte, al redy for to deye,

But, as God wolde, of swough therwith  
she breyde, 1212

And gan to sike, and 'Troilus !' she cride,  
And he answeárdé, 'Herté myn, Criseyde,  
Livé ye yit?' and let his swerd down glide.  
'Ye, herté myn, y-thankéd be Cipride !'  
Quod she ; and therwithal she soré sighte,  
And he bigan conforté her as he mighte ;

Took her in armes two, and kiste her ofte,  
And her to glade he didé al his entente :  
For-which her goost, that flikeréd ay on  
lofte, 1221

Ayein into her herte al softé wente.  
So at the laste, as that her yé glente  
Aside, anon she gan his swerd espye,  
As it lay bare, and gan for feré crye,

And axéd him, why he it hadde out-drawe.  
And Troilus anon the causé tolde,  
And how himself therwith he wolde han  
slawe :

For which Criseyde upon him gan biholde,  
And gan him in her armés fasté folde, 1230

1199. *forth in hye*, β γ *love* or (*and*) *hye*.

1208. So P H<sub>3</sub> β γ ; J G read *Thou Attropos that is (G art) ful redy here (read ? for I go To Attropos that is ful redy here. Boc. ch'io me ne vo sotterra).*

1214. *Herte* ; β γ *Lady* (Boc. dolce mio disiro).

1218. *conforte*, β γ *to glade* (see l. 1220).  
Boc. La conforto.

1222. β γ read :

Into her woful herte ayein it wente.

1223. *So*, β γ *But*.

And seide, 'O mercy, God, lo, which a dede!

Allas! how neigh we werè bothè dede!

'Than if I n'haddè spoke, as gracè was,  
Ye wolde han slain yourself anon?' quod she.—

'Ye, doutèles!'—And she answèrde,  
'Allas!

For by that ilkè Lord that madè me,  
I n'olde a forlong wey on-live han be  
After your deth, to han ben crownèd quene  
Of al the lond the sonne on-shineth shene;

'But with this selven sword, which that here  
is, 1240  
My-selve I wolde han slawè!'—Quod she  
tho,

'But ho! for we han right ynough of this,  
And lat us rise and streight to beddè go,  
And therè lat us speken of our wo;  
For, by the mortar which that I see brenne,  
Knowe I ful wel that day is not fer henne.'

When they were in hir bed in armès folden,  
Nought was it lik the nightès her-biforn;  
For pitously ech other gan biholden,  
As they that hadde hir joyès allè lorn, 1250  
Seyng, 'allas, that everè they were born!'  
Til at the laste this woful wight, Criseyde,  
To Troilus thise ilkè wordès seide:

'Lo, hertè myn, wel wot ye this,' quod she,  
'That, if a wight alwèy his wo compleyne  
And seketh nought how holpen for to be,  
It n'is but foly and encrees of peyne.  
And sin that here assembled be we tweyne  
To findè bote of wo that we ben inne,  
It were al timè sonè to biginne. 1260

'I am a woman, as ful wel ye wot;  
And as I am avisèd sodeinly,  
So wol I telle it you whil it is hot.  
Me thinketh thus: that nouthè ye nor I  
Oughte half this wo to maken skilfully;

1241. *slawe*, so G R; rest *slain*.

1251.  $\beta \gamma$  read:

Biwailing ay the day that they were born.

1252. *woful*, so  $\alpha \beta S$ ;  $\gamma$  *sorrowful*.

For ther is art y-nough for to redresse  
That yit is mis, and sleen this hevinesse.

'Soth is, that wo the whiche that we ben  
inne,

For aught I wot, for nothing ellès is 1269  
But for the causè that we shullen twinne:  
Considerèd al, ther n'is no more amis.  
But what is thanne a rémedie unto this,  
But that we shape us sonè for to mete!  
This' al and som, my derè hertè swete!

'Now, that I shal wel bringen it aboute  
To come aycin sone after that I go,  
Therof am I no maner thing in doute.  
For, dredèles, withinne a wowke or two  
I shal ben here; and that it may be so,  
By allè right, and in a wordès fewe, 1280  
I shal you wel an hep of weyès shewe

'For-which In'il not maken long sermoún,  
For time y-lost may not recoverèd be;  
But I wol go right to conclusioun,  
And to the beste, in aught that I can see.  
And for the love of God, foryive it me  
If I speke aught ayeins your hertès reste,  
For trewely I speke it for the beste;

'Making alwey a protestacioun,  
That in effect this thing that I shal seye 1290  
N'is but to shewén you my mocioun,  
To finde unto our help the bestè weye.  
And taketh it non other wise, I preye;  
For finaly what-so ye me comaunde,  
That wol I don, for that is no demaunde.

'Now herkneth this: ye han wel under-  
stonde  
My going graunted is by parlément  
So serforth that it may not ben withstonde  
For al this world, as by my jugèment.  
And sin ther helpeth non avisèment 1300  
To letten it, lat it passe out of minde,  
And lat us shape a bettrè wey to finde.

1284. *right to conclusioun*,  $\beta \gamma$  to *my conclusioun*.

1288. *speke*, J *seye*; P *mene*.

1290. *in effect this thing*,  $\beta \gamma$  *now thise word whiche*.

1294. *finaly*, H<sub>3</sub>  $\beta \gamma$  *in effect*.

'Thesoth is this, that twinning of us tweyne  
Wol us disese and cruëliche anye,  
But him bihoveth somtime han a peyne,  
That serveth Love, if that he wol have joye.  
And sin I shal no ferther out of Troye  
Than I may ride ayein on half a morwe,  
It oughte lassé causen us to sorwe :

' So as I shal not so ben hid in muwe, 1310  
That day by day, myn owné herté dere,  
(Sin wel ye wot that it is now a truwe,)  
Ye shal ful wel al myn estat y-here.  
And, or that trewe is don, I shall ben here,  
And thus have ye bothe Antenor y-wonne  
And me also. Beth glad now, if ye conne,

' And think right thus : " Criseyde is now  
agon,  
But what ! she shal come hastily ayeyn ! " —  
' And whanne, allas ! ' — ' By God, lo, right  
anon,

Or dayès ten, that dar I saufly seyn ! 1320  
And thanne atte ersté shal ye ben so feyn  
That we shul everé-mo togederé dwelle,  
That al this world ne mighte our joyé telle.

' I see that often, ther-as we ben now,  
That for the beste, our conseil for to hide,  
Ye speken not with me, nor I with yow  
In fourtènight, ne see you go ne ride.  
Mowèn ye not ten dayès thanne abide  
For myn honour in swich an aventure ?  
Y-wis, ye mowèn ellés lite endure ! 1330

' Ye knowe ek how that al my kin is here,  
Only but-if that it myn fader be,  
And ek mine othrè thingès alle i-fere,  
And namély, my deré herté, ye,  
Whom that I n'oldé leven for to see  
Foral this world, as muche as it hathspace ;  
Or ellés see ich neveré Jovès face !

' Why ! trowè ye my fader in this wise  
Coveiteth so to see me, but for drede  
Lest in this town that folkés me despise 1340  
Bicause of him, for his unhappy dede ?  
What wot my fader what lif that I lede ?

1315. thus, β γ than(ne).

1328. Mowen (?) all May (see 1330).

1336. muche, H<sub>3</sub> brode; β γ wid(e).

For if he wiste in Troye how wel I fare,  
Us nedeth for my going naught to care.

' Ye sen that every day ek more and more  
Men trete of pees, and it supposéd is  
That men the quene Eleyne shal restore,  
And Grekés us restoren that is mis ;  
So, though ther n'eré confort non but this,  
That men purpósen peeson every side, 1350  
Ye may the bettre at ese of herte abide.

' For if that it be pees, myn herté dere,  
The nature of the pees mot nedés drive  
That men moste entrecómunen i-fere,  
And to and fro ek ride and go as blive,  
Alday as thikke as been flen from a hive,  
And every wight han liberté to bleve  
Wher-as him list the bet, withouten leve.

' And though so be that pees ther may be  
non,

Yit hider, though ther neveré pees ne were,  
I mosté come : for whider sholde I gon, 1360  
Or how mischauncé sholde I dwellen there  
Among tho men of armés evere in fere ?  
For which, so wisly God my soulé rede,  
I can not sen wherof ye sholden drede.

' Have here another wey, if it so be  
That al this thing ne may you not suffice.  
My fader, as ye knowèn wel, pardé,  
Is old, and elde is ful of covetise ; 1369  
And I right now have founden al the gise,  
Withouten net wherwith I shal him hente.  
And herkneth how, if that ye wol assente !

' Lo, Troilus, men seith that hard it is,  
The wolf ful and the wether hool to have ;  
This is to seyn, that men ful ofte, y-wis,  
Mot spenden part the remenaunt for to save.  
For ay with gold men may the herté grave  
Of him that set is upon covetise.  
And how I mene, I shal it you devise.

' The moeblé which that I have in this  
toun 1380

Unto my fader shal I take, and seye,  
That right for trust and for savacioun  
It sent is from a frend of his or tweye,  
The whiché frendés fervently him preye

To senden after more, and that in hye,  
Whil-that this town stant thus in jupartye;

'And that shal ben a hugé quantité,—  
Thus shal I seyn;—but lest it folk espi'de,  
This may be sent by no wight but by me.  
I shal ek shewén him, if pees bitide 1390  
What frendés that I have on every side  
Toward the court, to don the wrathé pace  
Of Priamus, and don him stonde in grace.

'So, what for oo thing and for other, swete,  
I shal him so enchaunten with my sawes,  
That right in hevене his soulé shal he  
mete!

For al Appollo, or his clerkes lawes  
Or calculinge availeth not three hawes!  
Desir of gold shal so his soulé blende, 1399  
That, as me list, I shal wel make an ende!

'And if he wolde aught by his sort it preve  
If that I lye, in certein I shal fonde  
Distorben him and plukke him by theleve  
Making his sort, or beren him on honde  
He hath not wel the Goddés understonde:  
For Goddes speke in amphibologies,  
And for a soth they tellen twenty lyes!

'Ek dredé fond first Goddés, I suppose,—  
Thusshal I seyn,—and ek hiscoward herte  
Made him amis the Goddés text to glose  
Whan he for-féréd out of Delphos sterte.  
And, but I make him soné to converte,  
And don my red withinne a day or tweye,  
I wol to you obligé me to deye!'

And trewéliche as writen wel I finde,  
That al this thing was seid of good entente,  
And that her herté trewé was and kinde  
Towardés him, and spak right as she mente,  
And that she starf for wo neigh, whan she  
wente, 1419

And was in purpos everé to ben trewe:  
Thus writen they that of her werkés knewe.

This Troilus with herte and erés spradde  
Herde al this thing devisen to and fro;

1396. *soule*, H<sub>4</sub> S D H<sub>1</sub> Cl. *soule is*.  
1409. *ek*, H<sub>3</sub> β γ *that*.  
1415. *as*, J D *is*.

And verrayliche him seméd that he hadde  
The selvé wit; but yit to lete her go  
His herté mis-foryaf him everé-mo.  
But finaly he gan his herté wreste  
To tristen her, and took it for the beste.

For which the greté furie of his penáunce  
Was queynt with hope; and therwith hem  
bitwene 1430

Bigan for joyé th'amoroussé daunce.  
And as the briddés, whan the sonne is shene,  
Deliten in hir song in levés grene,  
Right so the wordés that they spake i-fere  
Delited hem, and made hir hertés clere.

But nathéles the wending of Criseyde,  
For al this world, ne may out of his minde:  
For-which ful ofte he pitousliche her  
prey'de

That of her herte he mighte her trewé  
finde,

And seyde her,—'Certés, if ye ben un-  
kinde, 1440

And but ye come at day set into Troye,  
Ne shal I nevere have hele, honouír, ne  
joye.

'For al-so soth as sonne uprist a-morwe,  
And God! so wisly thou me, woful  
wrecche,

To resté bringe out of this cruel sorwe,  
I wil myselven slee if that ye drecche!  
But of my deth though litel be to recche,  
Yit, or that ye me causen so to smerte,  
Dwel rather here, myn owné dere herte!

'For trewély, myn owné lady dere, 1450  
Tho sleightés yit that I you heré stere  
Ful shaply ben to failen alle i-fere;  
And thus men seith, that "oon thenketh  
the here,

But al another thenketh his ledére!"  
Your sire is wis: and seid is, out of drede,  
"Men may the wise at-renne, and not  
at-rede!"

'It is ful hard to halten unespied  
Bifore a crepil, for he can the craft:  
Your fader is in sleighte as Argus yed. 1459

1449. *dere*, γ *swete*.

For, al be that his moeble is him biraft,  
His oldè sleighte is yit so with him laft,  
Ye shal not blende him for your womman-  
hede,  
Ne feyne aright : and that is al my drede.

' I n'ot if pees shal everè-mo bitide ;  
But, pees or no, for ernest ne for game,  
I wot, sin Calcas on the Grekès side  
Hath onès ben and lost so foule his name,  
He dar no more come here ayein for  
shame :

For-which that wey, for aught I can espye,  
To trusten on, n'is but a fantasye. 1470

' Ye shal eeksen, your fader shal you glose  
To ben a wif, and as he can wel preche,  
Hé shal som Grek so preyse and wel alose,  
That ravisschen he shal you with his speche,  
Or do you don by force as he shal teche ;  
And Troilus, of whom he n'il have routhe,  
Shal causèles so sterven in his trouthe !

' And over al this, your fader shal despise  
Us alle, and seyn this cité n'is but lorn,  
And that the segè neverè shal arise, 1480  
For-why the Grekès han it allè sworn  
Til we be slayn and doun our walles torn ;  
And thus he shal you with his wordès fere,  
That ay drede I that ye wol bleven there.

' Ye shal ek sen so many a lusty knight  
Among the Grekès, ful of worthinesse,  
And ech of hem with hertè, wit, and might  
To plesen you don al his businesse,  
That ye shul dullen of the rudènesse  
Of us-sely Trojanes, but-if routhe 1490  
Remordè you, or vertu of your trouthe.

' And this to me so grevous is to thinke  
That fro my brest it wol the soulè rende ;  
Ne, dredèles, in me ther can not sinke  
A good opinioun, if that ye wende ;  
For-why your fadres sleightè wol usshende :  
And if ye gon, as I have told you yore,  
So think I n'am but ded, withoutè more !

1490. *Trojanes* (?), all *Trojans* (read ? *As of us*  
*by Trojans*).

1493. *the, β γ my.*

' For-which, with humblè, trewe and  
pitous herte, 1499

A thousand timès mercy I you preye :  
So reweth on mine asprè peynès smerte,  
And doth somewhat as that I shal you seye,  
And lat us stele away bitwixe us tweye ;  
And think that foly is, whan man may  
chese,  
For accident his substaunce ay to lese.

' I menè thus : that sin we mowe or day  
Wel stele away and ben togedrè so,  
What wit were it to putten in assay,  
In cas ye sholden to your fader go,  
If that ye mighten come ayein or no ? 1510  
Thus mene I, that it were a gret folyé  
To putte that sikernesse in jupartye.

' And, vulgarly to speken of substaunce  
Of tresour, may we bothè with us lede  
Y-nough to live in honour and plesàunce,  
Til into timè that we shal be dede ;  
And thus we may eschewèn al this drede :  
For everich other wey ye can recorde,  
Myn herte, y-wis, may therwith not acorde.

' And hardily ne dredeth no povérté, 1520  
For I have kin and frendès ellèwhere  
That, though we comèn in our barè sherte,  
Us sholdè neither lakken gold ne gere,  
But ben honourèd whil we dwelten there :  
And go w' anon : for, as in myn entente,  
This is the beste, if that ye wol assente.'—

Criseyde him, with a sik, right in this wise  
Answérde, ' Y-wis, my derè hertè trewe,  
We may wel stele away, asye devise, 1529  
Or finden swiche unthrifty weyès newe ;  
But afterward ful sore it wol us rewe.  
And, help me God so at my mostè nede,  
As causèles ye suffren al this drede !

' For th'ilkè day that I for cherissinge,  
Or drede of fader, or for other wight,  
Or for estat, delit, or for weddinge  
Be fals to you, my Troilus, my knight,  
Saturnès daughter, Juno, thorough her  
might,

1527. *him, H<sub>3</sub> γ omit.*

1530. *Or, γ and.*

As wood as Athamantè do me dwelle  
Eternaliche in Stix, the put of helle ! 1540

' And this on every God celestial  
I swere it you, and ek on ech Goddésse,  
On every Nympe and Deité infernal,  
On Satyry and Fauny more and lesse,  
That halvè Goddés ben of wildernesse ;  
And Attropos my thred of lif to-breste  
If I be fals ! Now trowe me if you leste !

' And thou, Simoys, that as an arwè clere  
Thorough Troye ay rennest downward to  
the see, 1549

Ber wisse of this word that seid is here,  
That th'ilkè day that ich untrewè be  
To Troilus, myn ownè hertè free,  
That thou retornè backward to thy welle,  
And I with body and soulè sinke in helle !

' But that ye speke, away thus for to go  
And leten alle your frendès, God forbede  
For any womman that ye sholdè so !  
And namèly, sin Troye hath now swich  
nede

Of help. And ek of oo thing taketh hede :  
If this were wist, my lif laye in balaunce,  
And your honour : God shilde us fro  
mischaunce ! 1561

' And if so be, hereafter pees be take,—  
As alday happeth, after anger, game,—  
Why, Lord, the sorwe and wo ye wolden  
make,

That ye ne dorstè come ayein for shame !  
And, or that ye jupartèn so your name,  
Beth not too hastif in this hotè fare :  
For hastif man ne wanteth neverè care !

' What trowèn ye the peple ek al aboute  
Wolde of it seye ? It is ful light t'arede !  
They wolden seyn, and swere it out of  
doute, 1571

That love ne drof you not to do this  
dede,  
But lust voluptuous and coward drede :

1549. *ay rennest*, so J H<sub>3</sub> A D; *rennest* P G  
R Cx.; H<sub>2</sub> H<sub>4</sub> S Cp. H<sub>1</sub> Cl. S<sub>2</sub> *rennest ay*.

1562. *hereafter pees be take*, so P; rest that  
*pees hereafter take*.

Thus were al lost, y-wis, myn hertè dere,  
Your honour, which that shineth now so  
clere.

' And also thinketh on myn honestè  
That floureth yit : how foule I sholde it  
shende,  
And with what filthe it spotted sholdè be,  
If in this forme I sholdè with you wende.  
Ne though I livede unto the worldès ende,  
Mynamè sholde I nevere ayeinward winne :  
Thus were I lost, and that were routhe  
and sinne.

' And for-thy slee with reson al this hete!  
Men seyn "the suffrant overcom'th,"  
pardè;

Ek, "who-so wol han lief, he lief mot lete."  
Thus maketh vertu of necessité !  
Be pacient, and think that lord is he  
Of Fortune ay, that naught wol of her  
recche,  
And she ne daunteth no wight but a  
wrecche ! 1589

' And trusteth this : that certès, hertès wetè,  
Or Phebus' suster, Lúcina the shene,  
The Lioun passe out of this Ariete,  
I wil ben here, withouten any wene.  
I mene, as help me Juno, hevenès quene,  
The tenthè day, but-if that deth m'assaile,  
I wil you sen, withouten any faile.'—

' And now, so this be soth,' quod Troilus,  
I shal wel suffre unto the tenthè day,  
Sin that I see that nede it mot be thus.  
But for the love of God, if it be may, 1600  
So lat us stelen privéliche away !  
For evere in oon, as for to live in reste,  
Myn hertè seith that it wol be the beste.'—

' O mercy, God, what lif is this !' quod she.  
' Allas, ye slee me thus for verray tene !  
I see wel now that ye mistrusten me,  
For by your wordès it is wel y-sene !  
Now, for the love of Cynthea the shene,

1575. *shineth now*, so P H<sub>3</sub>; rest *now shineth*.  
1587. *Be pacient*, so P G H<sub>3</sub> R; J and others  
*By patience*.

Mistrust me not thus causèles, for routhe,  
Sin to be trewe I have you plight my  
trouthe ! 1610

' And thenketh wel, that somtime it is wit  
To spende a time, a time for to winne.  
Ne, pardé, lorn am I not fro you yit,  
Though that we ben a day or two a-twinne.  
Drif out the fantasyès you withinne,  
And trusteth me, and levethek yoursorwe,  
Or, her my trouthe, I wil not live til morwe !

' For if ye wiste how sore it doth mesmerte,  
Ye woldé cesse of this : for God, thou wost  
The puré spirit wepeth in myn herte 1620  
To sen you wepen that I lovè most,  
And that I mot gon to the Grekès ost !  
Ye, n'ere it that I wisté remedye  
To come ayein, right here I woldé dye !

' But, certès, I am not so nice a wight  
That I ne can imaginen a wey  
To com ayein that day that I have hight.  
For who may holde a thing that wol away?  
My fader nought, for al his queynté pley !  
And by my thrift, my wending out of  
Troye 1630  
Another day shal torne us al to joye !

' For-thy with al myn herte I you biseke,  
If that you list don aught for my preyére  
And for that love which that I love youeke,  
That, or that I departé fro you here,  
That of so good a confort and a chere  
I may you sen, that ye may bringe at reste  
Myn herté which that is o-point to breste.

' And over al this I preyeyou, ' quod she tho,  
' Myn owné hertès sothfast suffisaunce, 1640  
Sin I am thyn al hool, withouten mo,  
That whil that I am absent, no plesaunce  
Of other do me fro your rémembraunce ;  
' For I am evere a-gast, for-why men rede  
That "love is thing ay ful of bisy drede."

For in this world ther liveth lady non,  
f that ye were untrewé (as God defende!),  
That so bitrayséd were or wo-bigon  
As I, that allè trouthe in you entende.

And doutèles, if-that I other wen'de, 1650  
I n'ere but ded. And, or ye causé finde,  
For Goddès love, so beth me not un-  
kinde !'—

To this answérdé Troilus, and seyde,  
' Now God, to whom ther n'is no thought  
y-wrye,  
Me glade, as wis I nevere unto Criseyde,  
Sin th'ilké day I saw her first with ye,  
Was fals, ne neveré shal til that I dye !  
At shorté wordès, wel ye may me leve :  
I can no more, it shal be founde at  
preve !'— 1659

' Gramercy, goodè myn, y-wis !' quod she,  
' And blisful Venus, lat me neveré sterve  
Or I may stonde of plesaunce in degree  
To quite him wel, that so wel can deserve !  
And whil that God my wit wil me con-  
serve,  
I shal so don, so trewe I have you founde,  
That ay honour to me-ward shal rebounde!

' For trusteth wel, that your estat réal,  
Ne veyn delit, nor only worthinesse  
Of you in werre or torney marcial, 1669  
Ne pompe, array, nobléye, or ek richesse  
Ne madé me to rewe on your distresse,  
But moral vertu, grounded upon trouthe :  
That was the cause I first had on you  
routhe !

' Ek gentil herte and manhod that ye hadde,  
And that ye hadde, as me thoughte, in  
despit  
Evèry thing that sounéd into badde,  
As rudénesse and poepliss appetit,  
And that your reson bridleth you delit :  
This made, aboven every créature  
That I was youre, and shal whil I may  
dure. 1680

' And this may lengthe of yerès not fordo,  
Ne rémuable Fortune it deface.  
But Jupiter, that of his might may do  
The sorwful to be glad, so yive us grace,  
Or nightès ten, to meten in this place,

1654. *thought, by cause.*  
1682. *it, so S; rest om.*

So that it may your herte and myn  
suffise!

And far now wel, for time is that ye  
rise!—

But after - that they longe y - pleynéd  
hadde,

And ofté kist, and streite in armés folde,  
The day gan rise, and Troilus him  
cladde, 169<sup>o</sup>

And rewfully his lady gan biholde  
As he that felté dethés carés colde,

1688. *But, S γ And.*

And to her grace he gan him recomaunde.  
Whe'r him was wo, this holde I no de-  
maunde!

For mannés hed imaginen ne can,  
N'entendémént considere, or tongé telle  
The cruel peynés of this woful man,  
That passen every torment down in helle.  
For whan he saw that shenemighté dwelle,  
Which that his soule out of his herté rente,  
Withouté more out of the chaumbre he  
wente. 1701

1696. *or, so J H<sub>3</sub>; P β γ ne.*  
1697. *woful, γ sorrowful.*

## BOOK V

APROCHEN gan the fatal destiné  
That Jovés hath in disposicioun,  
And to you, angry Parcas, sustren three,  
Committeth to don execucioun:  
For which Criseyde moste out of the toun,  
And Troilus shal dwellen forth in pine  
Til Lachesis his thred no lenger twine.

The gold-ytresséd Phebus heighe on-lofte  
Thryés hadde allé, with his bemés shene,  
The snowés molte, and Zephirus as ofte 10  
Y-brought ayein the tendré levés grene,  
Sin that the sone of Ecuba the quene  
Bigan to love her first for whom his sorwe  
Was al, that she departé sholde a-morwe.

Ful redy was at primé Diomede,  
Criseyde unto the Grekéés ost to lede,  
Forsorwe of which she felte her herté blede,  
As she that n'isté what was best to rede.  
And trewély, as men in bokés rede, 19  
Men wisté neveré womman han the care,  
Ne was so loth out of a town to fare.

This Troilus, withouten reed or lore,  
As man that hath his joyés ek forlore,  
Was waiting on his lady everé more

3. *Parcas*, Fates.

7. *Lachesis*, one of the Fates.

8. *gold-ytressed* (?), all *gold(e)-tressed*.

9. *shene*, so H<sub>2</sub> H<sub>4</sub> R S; J P *clene*; Cx. H<sub>3</sub> γ *clere*.

As she that was the sothfast crop and more  
Of al his lust or joyés her-bifore.  
But Troilus! now far-wel al thy joye,  
For shaltow neveré sen her eft in Troye!

Soth is, that whil he bood in this manére,  
He gan his wo ful manly for to hide, 30  
That wel unnethe it sene was in his chere;  
But at the yaté ther she sholde out-ride,  
With certein folk he hovéd her t'abide,  
So wo-bigon, al wolde he naught him  
pleyne,  
That on his hors unnethe he sat for peyne.

For ire he quok, so gan his herté gnawe.  
Whan Diomede on horsé gan him dresse.  
And seide unto himself this ilké sawe,  
'Allas!' quod he, 'thus foul a wretched-  
nesse,  
Why suffre ich it? Why n'il ich it re-  
dresse?' 43

Were it not bet at onés for to dye  
Than everé more in langour thus to drye?

'Why n'il I make at onés riche and pore  
To have y-nough to do or-that she go?  
Why n'il I bringe al Troye upon a rore?  
Why n'il I sleen this Diomede also?  
Why n'il I rather with a man or two  
Stele her away? Why wol I this endure  
Why n'il I helpen to myn owné cure?'



But why he n'oldé don so fel a dede, 50  
That shal I seyn, and why him liste it spare :  
He hadde in herte alweyes a maner drede  
Lest that Criseyde, in rumour of this fare,  
Sholde han ben slayn : lo, this was al  
his care.

And ellès, certain, as I seidè yore,  
He hadde it don, withouten wordès more.

Criseydè, whan she redy was to ride,  
Ful sorwfully she sighte, and seide, 'Allas !'  
But forth she mot, for aught that may bitide :  
Ther n'is non other rémedie in this cas ;  
And forth she rit ful sorwfulliche a pas. 61  
What wonder is though that her sorè smerte,  
Whan she forgo'th her ownè derè herte ?

This Troilus, in wise of curteisye,  
With hauke on honde, and with a huge  
route

Of knightès, rod and dide her companye,  
Passing al the valéyè fer withoute ;  
And fether wolde han riden, out of doute,  
Ful fayn ; and wo was him to gon so sone :  
But torne he moste, and it was ek to done.

And right with that was Antenor y-come 71  
Out of the Grekès ost ; and every wight  
Was of it glad, and seide he was welcome.  
And Troilus, al n'ere his hertè light,  
He peynèd him with al his fullè might  
Him to with-holde of weping at the leste ;  
And Antenor he kiste, and madè feste.

And therwithal he moste his levè take,  
And caste his ye upon her pitously, 79  
And neer he rod, his causè for to make,  
To take her by the hond al sobrelly ;  
And, Lord, so she gan wepen tendrelly !  
And he ful softe and sleighly gan her seye,  
'Now hold your day, and do menot to deye !'

With that his courser tornèd he aboute  
With facè pale, and unto Diomedè  
No word he spak, ne non of al his route ;  
Of which the sone of Tydèus took hede,

As he that coudè morè than the crede 89  
In swich a craft, and by the reyne her hente ;  
And Troilus to Troye homwårde he wente.

This Diomedè that led her by the bridel,  
Whan that he saw the folk of Troye aweye,  
Thoughte, 'Al my labour shal not ben  
on ydel

If that I may, for somewhat shal I seye ;  
For at the worsteit may yit shorte our weye.  
I have herd seyð ek, timès twyès twelve,  
'He is a fool that wol foryete himselfe.'"

But nathèles thus thoughte he wel y-nough,  
That 'certeinliche I am aboutè nought 100  
If that I speke of love, or make it tough ;  
For douteles, if she have in her thought  
Him that I gesse, he may not ben y-brought  
So sone away ; but I shal finde a mene,  
That she not wite as yit shal, what I mene.'

This Diomedè, as he that coude his good,  
Whan timè was, gan fallen forth in speche  
Of this and that, and axèd why she stood  
In swich disese, and gan her ek biseche 109  
That if that he encessè mighte or eche  
With any thing her esè, that she sholde  
Comaunde it him, and seide he don it wolde.

For trewèliche he swor her, as a knight,  
That ther n'as thing with which he mighte  
her plese

That he n'il don his herte and al his might  
To don it, for to don her herte an ese ;  
And preyèd her, she wolde her sorwe  
apese,  
And seide, 'Y-wis, we Grekès can have  
joye

T'honourè you, as wel as folk of Troye.'

He seide ek thus, 'I wot you thinketh  
straunge,— 120

No wonder is, for it is to you newe,—  
Th'aqueyntaunce of thise Trojans for to  
change

For folk of Greccè, that ye neverè knewe.

60, 61. So  $\alpha \beta S$  ;  $H_3 \gamma$  transpose ll. 60, 61.

63. *dere*,  $\gamma$  *svete*. (See iv. 1449.)

67. *valéye* ; R *wallys* (read ? *The walles alle*).

*aleyè* is a mistranslation of Boc. *vallo*, 'rampart.'

88. *sone of Tydeus*, Diomedè.

107. *Whan time was*,  $\gamma$  *Whan this was don*.

115. *n'il*,  $H_4 R S \gamma$  *n'olde*.

122. *Trojans* ;  $H_2 H_4 D$  *Trojanes*.

122. *for to*, so G Cx. ; J and others *to*.

But woldé neveré God but-if as trewe  
A Grek ye sholde amonge us allé finde  
As any Trojan is, and ek as kinde.

‘And by the cause I swor you right lo now  
To be your frend, and helply to my might,  
And for-that more acqweyntaunce ek of  
yow 129

Have ich had than another straunger wight,  
So fro this forth, I preye you, day and night,  
Comaundeth me, how soré that me smerte,  
To don al that may like unto your herte ;

‘And that ye me wolde as your brother  
trete,  
And taketh not my frendship in despit ;  
And, though your sorwes ben for thingés  
grete,

N’ot I not why, but out of more respit  
Myn herte hath for t’amende it gret delit ;  
And if I may your harmés not redresse,  
I am right sory for your hevinesse. 140

‘For though ye Trojans with us Grekés  
wrothe

Han many a day ben, alwey yit, pardé,  
Oo God of love in soth we serven bothe.  
And, for the love of God, my lady free,  
Whom so ye hate, as beth not wroth with me ;  
For trewely ther can no wight you serve,  
That half so loth your wraththé wolde  
deserve.

‘And n’ere it that we ben so neigh the tente  
Of Calcas, which that sen us bothé may,  
I wolde of this you telleal myn entente ; 150  
But this’ enselé til another day.  
Yif me your hond : I am, and shal be ay,  
God help mé so, whil that my lif may dure,  
Your owne, aboven every créature !

‘Thus seide I nevere or now to womman  
born ;

For, God myn herte as wisly gladé so,  
I lovedé neveré womman her-biforn  
As paramours, ne neveré shal no mo ;  
And for the love of God beth not my fo,  
Al can I not to you, my lady dere, 160  
Compleyne a right, for I am yit to lere.

‘And wondreth not, myn owné lady bright,  
Though that I speke of love to you thus  
blive ;

For I have herd or this of mony a wight,  
Hath lovéd thing he neveré say his live :  
Nor I am not of powér for to strive  
Ayeins the God of Love, but him obeye  
I wol alwéy ; and mercy I you preye.

‘Ther ben so worthy knightés in this place,  
And ye so fair, that everich of them alle 170  
Wol peynen him to stonden in your grace ;  
But mighté me so fair a gracé falle,  
That ye me for your servant wolde calle,  
So lowly ne so trewely you serve  
N’il non of hem, as I shal, til I sterve.’—

Criseyde unto that purpos lite answerde ;  
As she that was with sorwe oppresséd so,  
That in effect she nought his talés herde  
But here and there, now here a word or two.  
Her thoughte hersorwful herté brasta-two ;  
For whan she gan her fader fer espye, 181  
Wel neigh down off her hors she gan to sye.

But nathéles she thankéd Diomede  
Of al his travaile and his goodé chere,  
And that him liste his frendship her to  
bede ;

And she accepteth it in good manére,  
And wol do fayn that is him lief and dere ;  
And trusten him she wolde, and wel she  
mighte,  
As seidé she. And from her hors sh’  
alighte. 189

Her fader hath her in his armés nome,  
And twenty time he kiste his daughter  
swete,  
And seide, ‘O deré daughter myn, wel-  
cómé !’

She seide ek, she was fayn with him to mete,  
And stood forth muwét, milde, and man-  
suète.—

But here I leve her with her fader dwelle,  
And forth I wol of Troilus you telle.

To Troye is come this woful Troilus  
In sorwe aboven allé sorwes smerte,

166. *Nor*, J H<sub>4</sub> H<sub>3</sub> ; S *γ* Ek ; rest *For*, *Nc*.

With felon look, and face dispitous. 199  
 Tho sodeinly down from his hors he sterte,  
 And thorough his paleis with a swollen herte  
 To chaumbré wente : of no wight took he  
 hede,  
 Ne non to him dar speke a word for drede.

And there his sorwes that he sparéd hadde  
 He yaf an issue large, and Deth he cri'de ;  
 And in his throwès frenètik and madde  
 He corseth Jove, Appollo, and ek Cupide,  
 He corseth Ceres, Bacus, and Cipride,  
 His burthe, himself, his fate, and ek natüre,  
 And, save his lady, every créature. 210

To bedde he go'th, and walweth there and  
 torneth

In furie, as doth he, Ixion, in helle ;  
 And in this wise he neigh til day sojorneth.  
 But tho bigan his herte a lite unswelle  
 Thorough terès, whiche that gonnen up to  
 welle ;

And pitously he cri'de upon Criseyde,  
 And to himselfright thus he spak and seyde :

' Where is myn owné lady, lief and dere ?  
 Where is her whitè brest ? Where is it,  
 where ? 219

Where 'ben her armès and her yén clere,  
 That yesternight this timè with me were ?  
 Now may I wepe allonè many a tere,  
 And graspe aboute I may ; but in this place,  
 Saving a pilwe, I findè naught t'enbrace.

' How shal I don ? Whan shal she come  
 ayeyn ?

I n'ot, allas ! Why let ich her to go ?  
 As woldè God, ich hadde as tho ben slayn !  
 O hertè myn, Criseyde ! O sweté fo !  
 O lady myn, that I love and no mo, 229  
 Fo whom for everè mo myn herte I dowe !  
 See how I deye, ye n'il me not rescowe !

Whoseeth you now, my rightè lodè-sterre ?  
 Vhosit right now or stant in your présence ?

221. *walweth*, so G H<sub>4</sub> Cx. ; J *whie leth* ;  
 thers *wey leth*.

222. *Ixion*. See *Æneid*, vi. 601.

223. *graspe*, H<sub>4</sub> A *gropè*.

224. *Saving*, so R ; rest *Save*.

Who can confor'ten now your hertès werre ?  
 Now I am gon, whom yeve ye audience ?  
 Who spek'th for me right now in myn  
 absénce ?

Allas, no wight : and that is al my care ;  
 For wel I wot, as yvele as I ye fare !

' How sholde I thusten dayès fulendure, 239  
 Whan I the firstè night have al this tene ?  
 How shal she don ek, sorwful créature ?  
 For tendrenesse how shal she ek sustene  
 Swich wo for me ? O pitous, pale, and grene  
 Shal ben your fressshè, wommanlichè face  
 For longing, or ye torne into this place !'

And whan he fil in any slombéringes,  
 Anon biginne he sholdè for to grone,  
 And dremen of the dredfullestè thinges  
 That mightè ben : as, mete he were allone  
 In place horriblé making ay his mone, 250  
 Or meten that he was amongès alle  
 His enemies and in hir hondès falle.

And therwithal his body sholdè sterte,  
 And with the stert al sodeinly awake,  
 And swich a tremour fele aboute his herte,  
 That of the fere his body sholdè quake ;  
 And therwithal he sholde a noisè make,  
 And seme as though he sholdè fallè depe  
 From heighe on-lofte : and than he woldè  
 wepe,

And rewèn on himself so pitously, 260  
 That wonder was to here his fantasye.  
 Another time he sholdè mightily  
 Confor'te himself, and seyn it was folýç  
 So causèles swich dredè for to drye ;  
 And eft biginne his asprè peynès newe,  
 That everý man mighte on his sorwes rewe.

Who coudè telle aright or ful discrive  
 His wo, his pleynte, his langour, and his  
 pine ?

Nought alle the men that han or ben on-live !  
 Thou, reder, mayst thyselfful wel devine 270  
 That swich a wo my wit can not define :

242. *ek*, R  $\gamma$  *this*.

245. *longing*, S  $\gamma$  *langour*.

265. *peynes*, so H<sub>2</sub> ; J and others *sorwes*.

270. *Thou, reder* ; see i. 52 (note). Chaucer  
 seems now to be writing for publication.

On ydel for to write it sholde I swinke,  
Whan that my wit is wery it to thinke !

On hevenè yit the sterrès were y-sene,  
Although ful pale y-woxen was the mone,  
And whiten gan the orisontè shene  
Al estward, as it wont is for to done,  
And Phebus with his rosy cartè sone  
Gan after that to dresse him up to fare,  
Whan Troilus hath sent after Pandaré. 280

This Pandar,—that of al the day biforn  
Ne mighte han comèn Troilus to see,  
Although he on his hed it hadde y-sworn,  
For with the king Priám alday was he,  
So that it lay not in his liberté  
No-wher to gon,—but on the morwe he  
wente

To Troilus, whan that he for him sente.

For in his herte he coudè wel devine  
That Troilus al night for sorwè wook ;  
And that he woldè telle him of his pine, 290  
This knew he wel y-nough, withoutè book !  
For-which to chaumbré streight the wey  
he took,

And Troilus tho sobrelieche he grette,  
And on the bed ful sone he gan him sette.

‘ My Pandarus,’ quod Troilus, ‘ the sorwe  
Which that I drye, I may not longe endure :  
I trowe I shal not liven til to-morwe ;  
For-which I wolde always, on aventure,  
To thee devisen of my sepulture  
The forme ; and of my moeblè thou  
dispone 300

Right as thee semeth best is for to done.

‘ But of the fir and flaumbè funeral  
In which my body brennen shal to gledi,  
And of the feste and pleyès palestral  
At my vigile, I preye thee, tak good hede  
That that be wel ; and offrè Mars mystede,  
My swerd, myn helm ; and, levè brother  
dere,  
My sheld to Pallas yif, that shineth clere.

‘ The poudre in which myn herte y-brend  
shal torne,

That preye I thee thou take, and ek  
conserve 310

It in a vessel, that men clep’th an urne,  
Of gold ; and to my lady that I serve,  
For love of whom thus pitousliche I sterve,  
So yive it her, and do me this plesauce  
To preye her kepe it for a rémembraunce.

‘ For wel I felè, by my maladye  
And by my dremès now and yore ago,  
Al certainly that I mot nedès dye :  
The owle eek, which that hight Escaphilo,  
Hath after me shrighit alle these nightès  
two. 320

And, God Mercúrie, of me now woful  
wrecche

The soulè gide, and, whan thee list, it  
fecche !’—

Pandaré answérde and seidè, ‘ Troilus,  
My derè frend, as I have told thee yore,  
That it is foly for to sorwen thus,  
And causèles, for-which I can no more ;  
But who-so wol not trowèn red ne lore,  
I can not sen in him no remedye  
But lete him worthen with his fantasye.

‘ But Troilus, I preye thee, tel me now 330  
If-that thou trowe, or this, that any wight  
Hath lovèd paramours as wel as thou ?  
Ye, God wot ! And ful many a worthy  
knight

Hath his lady forgon a fourtènight,  
And he not yit made halvendel the fare !  
What nede is thee to maken al this care ?

‘ Sin day by day thou mayst thy-selven see  
That from his love, or ellès from his wif,  
A man mot twinnen of necessité,  
Ye, though he love her as his ownè lif ; 340  
Yit n’il he with himself thus maken strif :  
For wel thou wost, my levè brother dere,  
That that alway frendès may not ben i-fere.

310. *ek*, so G ; J and others *it*.

311. *It in* (?), all *In*.

319. *Escaphilo*, Ascalaphus, whom Proserpine changed into an owl. See Ovid, *Met.* v. 539.

333. *ful*, so P R ; G *so* ; rest *fro* (A *for*).

334. *forgon*, so P R G ; Cx. *ben gon* ; A *got yee* ; rest *gon*.

'How don thise folk that seen hir lovès wedded

By frendès might, as it bitit ful ofte,  
And seen hem in hirspouses bed y-bedded?  
God wot, they take it wisly, faire, and softe,  
For-why good hope halt up hir herte on-lofte ;

And, for they can a time of sorwe endure,  
Astime hemhurt, a timèdoth hem cure ! 350

'So sholdestow endure and leten slide  
The time, and fondè to be glad and light !  
Ten dayès n'is so longè nought t'abide !  
And sin she thee to comen hath bihight,  
She n'il her hestè breken for no wight ;  
For dred thee nought that she n'il finden weye

To come ayein, my lif that dorste I lye !

'Thy swevenès ek and al swich fantasye  
Drif out, and lat hem faren to mischaunce ;  
For they procede of thy maléncolye, 360  
Thatdoth thee fele inslepeal this penaunce.  
A straw for allè swevenès signefiaunce !  
God help me so, I counte hem nought a bene !  
Ther wot no man aright what dremès mene !

'For prestès of the temple tellen this,  
That dremès ben the revelaciouns  
Of Goddès ; and as wel they telle, y-wis,  
That they ben infèrnals illusiouns ;  
And lechès seyn, that of complexiouns  
Proceden they, or fast, or glotonye ; 370  
Who wot in soth thus what they signéfyè ?

'Ek othré seyn that thorough impressiouns,  
As, if a wight hath faste a thing in minde,  
That therof comen swiche avisious ;  
And othré seyn, as they in bookès finde,  
That, after timès of the year, by kinde  
Men dreme, and that th'effect go'th by the mone :  
But lef no drem, for it is nought to done !

'Wel worth of dremès ay thise oldè wives,  
And trewèliche ekaugurie of thise foules 380  
For fere of which men wenen lese hir lives,

362. *signefiaunce*, so J G A ; rest *signifiaunce*.

As ravenès qualm, or shriking of thise oules !

To trowèn on it bothè fals and foul is :  
Allas, allas, so noble a créature  
As is a man shal dreden swich ordure !

'For-which withal myn herte I thee biseche,  
Unto thyself that al this thou foryive :  
And ris now up withoutè morè speche,  
And lat us caste how forth may best be drive  
This time, and ek how fresshly we may live 390  
Whan that she com'th, the whiche shal be right sone :  
God help me so, thy beste is thus to done.

'Ris, lat us speke of lusty lif in Troye  
That we han lad, and forth the timè drive,  
And eek of timè coming us rejoye,  
That bringen shal our blissè now so blive ;  
And langour of thise twyès dayès five  
We shal therwith so fóryete or oppresse,  
That wel unnethe it don shal us duresse.

'This town is ful of lordès al aboute, 400  
And trewès lasten al this menè while :  
Go we and pleye us in som lusty route  
To Sarpedoun, not hennès but a mile :  
And thus thou shalt the timè wel bigile,  
And drive it forth unto that blisful morwe  
That thou hersee, that causeis of thysorwe.

'Now ris, my derè brother Troilus :  
For certès, it non honour is to thee  
To wepe, and in thy bed to rouken thus ;  
For trewèliche of oo thing trustè me, 410  
If thou thus ligge a day or two or three,  
The folk wol seyn that thou for cowardise  
Thee feynest sik, and that thou darst not rise !'—

This Troilus ansérde, 'O brother dere,  
This knowèn folk that han y-suffred peyne,  
That, though he wepe and makè sorwful chere

398. *or*, so P R H<sub>4</sub> H<sub>3</sub> ; rest *our(e)*.

402. *and*, so R S ; rest omit.

403. *Sarpedoun*. See iv. 52.

409. *rouken*, so Cx. Th. ; J and others *iouken*.  
(See *Cant. Tales*, A 1308.)

412. *seyn*, S *y wene*. (Boc. *diria l' uom.*)

That feleth harm and smert in every veyne,  
No wonder is; and, though ich everè pleyne  
Or alwey wepe, I n'am no thing to blame,  
Sin I have lost the cause of al my game.

'But sin of finè force I mot arise, 421  
I shal arise as sone as evere I may;  
And God, to whom my herte I sacrificse,  
So sende us hastily the tenthè day!  
For was ther neverè fowl so fayn of May  
As I shal ben, whan that she com'th to  
Troye  
That cause is of my torment and my joye.

'But whider is thy red,' quod Troilus,  
'That we may pleye us best in al this toun?'  
'By God, my conseil is,' quod Pandarus,  
'To ride and pleye us with King  
Sarpedoun.' 431  
So longe of this they spaken up and doun,  
Til Troilus gan at the laste assente  
To rise, and forth to Sarpedoun they wente.

This Sarpedoun, as he that honorable  
Was evere his live, and ful of heigh largesse,  
With al that mighte y-servèd ben on table  
That deynté was, al coste it gret richesse,  
He fedde hem day by day; that swich  
noblesse, 439  
Asseyden bothe the meste and ek the leste,  
Was nevere or that day wist at any feste.

Nor in this world ther is non instrument  
Delicious through wind, or touche of corde,  
As fer as any wight hath everè went,  
That tongè telle or hertè may recorde,  
That at the feste it n'as wel herd acorde;  
N'of ladies ek so fair a companye  
On daunce, or tho, was neverè seyn with ye.

But what availeth this to Troilus, 449  
That for his sorwè nothing of it roughte?  
For evere in oon his hertè pietus  
Ful bisily Criseyde his lady soughte:  
On her was evere al that his hertè thoughte,

421. *sin of fine force*; var. *sith(en), fin, of fors* (read ? *sith in fin of fors*). Rawl. has two leaves wanting (ll. 421 560).

436. *largesse, S y prowessse.*

443. *of*, so P H<sub>2</sub> H<sub>4</sub> Cx. A Cp.; H<sub>3</sub> S H<sub>1</sub> S<sub>2</sub> on; J G D Cl. or.

Now this, now that, so faste imagininge,  
That glade, y-wis, can him no festeyinge.

These ladies ek that at the festè ben,  
Sin that he saw his lady was aweye,  
It was his sorwe upon hem for to sen,  
Or for to here on instrument so pleye: 459  
For she that of his hertè ber'th the keye  
Was absent, lo, this was his fantasye,  
That no wight sholdè maken melodye.

Nor ther n'as houre of al the day or night,  
Whan he was there-as no wight mighte  
him here,  
That he ne seide, 'O lufsom lady bright,  
How have ye faren sin that ye were here?  
Welcome, y-wis, myn ownè lady dere!'  
But weylawey, al this n'as but a mase:  
Fortune his howve intendeth bet to glase!

The lettres ek that she of oldè time 470  
Hadde him y-sent, he wolde allonè rede  
An hundred sithe a-twixen noon and  
prime,  
Refiguring her shap, her wommanhede,  
Withinne his herte, and every word or dede  
That passèd was. And thus he drof t'an  
ende  
The ferthè day; and thennés wolde he  
wende,

And seidè, 'Levè brother Pandarus,  
Intendestow that we shal herè bleve  
Til Sarpedoun wil forth congéyén us? 479  
Yit were it fairer that we toke our leve.  
For Goddès love, lat us now sone at eve  
Our levè take, and homward lat us torne,  
For trewèliche I n'il not thus sojorne!'

Pandàre answeárdè, 'Be we comen hider  
To fecchen fir, and rennen hom ayeyn?  
God help me so, I can not tellen whider  
We mightè gon, if I shal sothly seyn,  
Ther any wight is of us morè fayn  
Than Sarpedoun. And if we hennès hye  
Thus sodeinly, I holde it vilanye, 490

455. *festeyinge*, so J S only; rest *festeyng, festyng(e), festenyng(e)*. (See iii. 1718.)

476. *thennés wolde he*, so J P G H<sub>3</sub>; Cx. corrupt.; rest *seyde (S that) he wolde*.

478. *bleve*, so J S D Cp. H Cl.; rest *bileve*.

'Sin that we seiden that we woldè bleve  
With him a wowke; and now thus sodeinly  
The ferthè day to take of him our leve,  
He woldè wondren on it trewely.  
Lat us forth holde our purpos fermely,  
And sin that we bihighten him to bide,  
Hold forward now, and after lat us ride.'

Thus Pandarus with allè peyne and wo  
Made him to dwelle; and at the wikès  
ende,  
Of Sarpedoun they toke hir levè tho, <sup>500</sup>  
And on hir wey they speden hem to wende.  
Quod Troilus, 'Now Lord me gracè sende,  
That I may finden at myn hom-cominge  
Criseyde come!' and ther-with gan he  
singe.

'Ye, haselwodè!' thoughtè this Pandàre,  
And to himself ful softèliche he seyde,  
'God wot, refreyden may this hotè fare  
Or Calcas sendè Troilus Criseyde!' <sup>508</sup>  
But nathèles he japed thus, and pley'de,  
And swor, y-wis, his herte him wel bihighte  
She woldè come as sone as evere she mighte.

Whan they unto the paleis were y-comen  
Of Troilus, they down off horse alighte,  
And to the chaumbre hir wey than han  
they nomen;  
And into timè that it gan to nighte  
They gonnè speken of Criseyde the  
brihte;  
And after this, whan that hem bothè leste,  
They spede hem fro the soper unto reste.

On morwe, as sone as day bigan to clere,  
This Troilus gan of his slep t'abreyde, <sup>520</sup>  
And to Pandàre, his ownè brother dere,  
'For love of God,' ful pitousliche he seyde,  
'As go we sen the paleis of Criseyde:  
For sin we yit may han no morè feste,  
So lat us sen her paleis at the leste!'

495. *forth holde*, so Cx.; S  $\gamma$  *holde(n) forth*;  
rest *holde*.

496. *we*, so J G S A; H<sub>3</sub> *he*; rest *ye*.

509. *pley'de*, so H<sub>3</sub> H<sub>4</sub>; J and others *seyde*.

516. *gonne*, so J; rest omit.

521. *Pandare*; J G H<sub>3</sub> *Pandarus*.

523. *As*, Cl. *So*; J G P omit.

And therwithal, his meynè for to blende,  
A cause he fond in townè for to go,  
And to Criseyde's hous they gonnè wende.  
But, Lord, this sely Troilus was wo! <sup>529</sup>  
Him thoughte his sorwful hertè brasta-two;  
For, whan he saw her dorès sperèd alle,  
Wel nigh for sorwe adown he gan to falle.

Therwith whan he was war and gan  
biholde

How shet was every window of the place,  
As frost, him thoughte, his hertè gan to  
colde;

For-which with chaungèd dedlich palè face,  
Withouten word he forth-by gan to pace;  
And, as God wolde, he gan so fastè ride,  
That no wight of his contenance espi'de.

Than seide he thus: 'O paleis desolat,  
O hous, of houses whilom best y-hight,  
O paleis empty and disconsolat,  
O thou lanternè of which queynt is the  
light,

O paleis, whilom day that now art night,  
Wel oughtestow to falle, and I to dye,  
Sin she is went that wont was us to gye!

'O paleis, whilom crowne of houses alle,  
Enluminèd with sonne of allè blisse!

O ring, fro which the ruby is out-falle,  
O cause of wo, that cause hast been of  
lisse!

<sup>550</sup>  
Yit, sin I may no bet, fayn wolde I kisse  
Thy coldè dorès, dorste I for this route:  
And far-wel shrine, of which the seynt is  
oute!'

Ther-with he caste on Pandarus his ye,  
With chaungèd face, and pitous to bi-  
holde;

And, whan he mighte his time aright espye,  
Ay as he rod, to Pandarus he tolde  
His newè sorwe and ek his joyès olde  
So pitously, and with so ded an hewe,  
That every wight mighte on his sorwe  
rewe. <sup>560</sup>

Fro thennèsforth he rideth up and down,  
And everything com him to rémembraunce

550. *hast*, J G *hath*.

550. *lisse*, so J Cx. S Cp.; H<sub>2</sub> *hisse*; rest *blisse*.

As he rod for-by places of the town  
In which he whilom hadde al his ples-  
aunce.

'Lo, yonder saw I last my lady daunce !  
And in that templè with her yēn clere  
Me caughtè first my rightè lady dere !

'And yonder have ich herd ful lustily  
My derè hertè laughe ! And yonder pleye  
Saw I her onès ek ful bisily ! <sup>570</sup>  
And yonder onès to me gan she seye,  
"Now goodè sweté, love me wel, I  
preye !"

And yond so goodly gan she me biholde,  
That to the deth myn herte is to her holde !

'And at that corner in the yonder hous  
Herde I myn alderlevest lady dere  
So wommanly with vois melodious  
Singen so wel, so goodly and so clere,  
That in my soulè yit me think'th ich here  
The blisful soun ! And in that yonder  
place <sup>580</sup>  
My lady first me took unto her grace !'

Than thoughte he thus : 'O blisful Lord  
Cupide,  
Whan I the proces have in my mémorie,  
How thou me hast werréy'd on every  
side,  
Men mighte a book make of it, lik a  
storie !  
What nede is thee to seke on me victorie,  
Sin I am thyn, and hoolly at thy wille ?  
What joye hast thou thine ownè folk to  
spille ?

'Wel hastow, Lord, y-wroke on me thyn  
ire,  
Thou mighty God, and dredful for to  
greve ! <sup>590</sup>  
Now mercy, Lord ! Thou wost wel I desire  
Thy gracè most of allè lustès leve,  
And live and deye I wol in thy bileve :  
For which I n'axe in guerdon but oo bone,  
That thou Criseyde ayein me sendè sone.

565. S y read : *Lo, yonder* (Cl. *yende*) *saw I myn owne lady daunce.*

570. *bisily*, so P G H<sub>3</sub> R Cx. ; rest *blisfully*.

583. *my*, P H<sub>4</sub> Cx. S y omit.

'Distreyne her herte as fastè to retorne  
As thou dost myn to longen her to see :  
Than wot I wel that she n'il not sojorne.  
Now, blisful Lord, so cruel thou ne be  
Unto the blood of Troye, I preyè thee, <sup>600</sup>  
As Juno was unto the blood Thebáne,  
For which the folk of Thebès caughte hir  
bane !'

And after this he to the yatès wente  
Ther-as Criseyde out-rod a ful good pas ;  
And up and down ther made he many a  
wente,  
And to himself ful ofte he seide, 'Allas !  
From hennès rod my blis and my solás !  
As woldè blisful God now for his joye,  
I mighte her sen ayein come into Troye !

'And to the yonder hil I gan her gide, <sup>610</sup>  
Allas, and there I took of her my leve !  
And yond I saw her to her fader ride,  
For sorwe of which myn hertè wol to-cleve !  
And hider hom I com whan it was eve ;  
And here I dwelle out-cast from allè joye,  
And shal, til I may sen her eft in Troye !'

And of himself imaginèd he ofte  
To ben defet and pale, and waxen lesse  
Than he was wont ; and that men seiden  
softe,  
'What may it be ? Who can the sothè  
gesse, <sup>620</sup>  
Why Troilus hath al this hevinessè ?'  
And al this n'as but his malécolye,  
That he hadde of himself swich fantasye.

Another time imaginen he wolde  
That every wight that wentè by the weye  
Had of him routhe, and that they seyèn  
sholde,  
'I am right sory Troilus wol deye.' <sup>627</sup>  
And thus he drof a day yit forth or tweye  
As ye han herd : swich lif right gan he lede  
As he that stood bitwixen hope and drede.

For-which him likèd in his songès shewe  
Th'encheson of his wo as he best mighte,

598. *not*, J so (read ? *Than wot I wel she n'il not so sojorne*).

628. *yit*, J P G H<sub>3</sub> R H<sub>4</sub> omit.

629. *right*, J P G Cx. omit.



And make a song of wordés but a fewé,  
Somwhat his woful herté for to lighte ;  
And whan he was from every mannés  
sighté,

With softé vois he of his lady dere  
That absent was gan singe as ye may here :

‘ O sterre, of which I lost have al the  
light,

With herté soor wel oughte I to biwaile  
That everé derk in torment night by  
night, 640

Toward my deth with wind in stere I  
saile :

For-which the tenthé night if-that I faile  
The giding of thy bemés brighte an heure,  
My ship and me Caribdis wol devoure.’

This song whan he thus songen haddé, sone  
He fil ayein into his sikés olde ;

And every night, as he was wont to done,  
He stood the brighté moné to biholde,  
And al his sorwe he to the moné tolde,  
And seide, ‘ Y-wis, whan thou art hornéd  
newe, 650

I shal be glad, if al the world be trewe !

‘ I saw thy hornés oldé by the morwe  
Whan hennés rod my righté lady dere,  
That cause is of my torment and mysorwe :  
For-which, O brighté Lúcina the clere,  
For love of God, ren faste aboute thyspere !  
For, whan thy hornés newé ginné springe,  
Than shal she come that may my blisse  
bringe !’

The dayés more and lenger every night  
Than they ben wont to ben, him thoughté  
tho ; 660

And that the sonnè wente his cours unright  
By lenger wey than it was wont to go ;  
And seide, ‘ Y-wis, me dredeth everé mo  
The sonnés soné Pheton be on-live,  
And that his fader carte amis he drive.’

Upon the wallés faste ek wolde he walke,  
And on the Grekés oost he woldé see,

655. *Lúcina*, so Cx. Th.; J and others *La-  
hona*. See iv. 1591.

664. *Pheton*, Phaeton. See *H. F.* 942.

And to himself right thus he woldé talke,  
‘ Lo, yonder is myn owné lady free !  
Or ellés yonder ther the tentés be ! 670  
And thennés com’th this eir that is soswote,  
That in my soule I fele it doth me bote !

‘ And, hardily, this wind, that more and more  
Thus stoundémele encresseth in my face,  
Is of my lady’s depé sikés sore !

I preve it thus, for in non other space  
Of al this town, save only in this place,  
Fele I no wind that souneth so lik payne :  
It seith, “ Allas ! why twinnéd be we  
tweyne ? ”’

This longé time he driveth forth right thus,  
Til fully passéd was the ninthé night ; 681  
And ay biside him was this Pandarus,  
That bisily dide al his fullé might  
Him to confórte and make his herté light,  
Yiving him hope alwéy, the tenthé morwe  
That she shal come and stinten al his sorwe.

— Upon that other sidé was Criseyde,  
With women fewe, among the Grekés  
• stronge :

For-which ful ofte a day ‘ Allas !’ she seyde,  
‘ That I was born ! Wel may myn herté  
longe 690

After my deth, for now live I too longe !  
Allas, and I ne may it not amende,  
For now is wors than everé yit I wen’de !

‘ My fader n’il for no thing do me grace  
To gon ayein, for aught I can him quemen ;  
And, if so be that I my termé pace,  
My Troilus shal in his herté deme  
That I am fals ; and so it may wel seme :  
Thus shal I have unthank on every side.  
That I was born, so weylawey the tide ! 700

‘ And if that I me putte in jupartye  
To stele away by night, and it bifalle  
That I be caught, I shal be holde espye :  
Or ellés, lo, this drede I most of alle,  
If in the hondés of som wrecche I falle.  
I n’am but lost, al be myn herté trewe !  
Now mighty God, thou on mysorwé rewe !’

695. *ought*, J and others *naught*.

Ful pale y-waxen was her brightè face,  
 Her limès lene, as she that al the day  
 Stood whan she dorste, and lokèd on the  
 place 710  
 Ther she was born and ther she dwelt  
 had ay ;  
 And al the night wepinge, allas, she lay.  
 And thus despeirèd out of allè cure,  
 She ledde her lif, this woful créature.

Ful ofte a day she sighte ek for distresse,  
 And in herself she wente ay pórtreyinge  
 Of Troilus the gretè worthinesse,  
 And alle his goodly wordès récordinge  
 Sin first that day her love bigan to springe :  
 And thus she sette her woful herte a-fire 720  
 Thorough rémembraunce of that she gan  
 desire.

In al this world ther n'is so cruel herte  
 That her had herd compleynen in her  
 sorwe,  
 That n'olde han wepen for her peynès  
 smerte,  
 So tendrely she wep bothe eve and morwe :  
 Her nedèdè no terès for to borwe. •  
 And this was yet the worste of al her peyne,  
 Ther was no wight to whom she dorste  
 her pleyne.

Ful refully she lokèd upon Troye, 729  
 Biheld the tourès heighe and ek the halles :  
 'Allas!' quod she, 'the plesaunce and the  
 joye,  
 The whiche that now al tornèd into galle is,  
 Have ich had ofte withinne tho yonder  
 walles !  
 O Troilus, what dostow now?' she seyde :  
 'Lord, whether thou yit thenke upon  
 Criseyde !

'Allas, I n'hadde y-trowèd on your lore,  
 And went with you, as ye me redde or this !  
 Than hadde I now not sikèd half so sorc !  
 Who mighte have said that I had don amis  
 To stele away with swich oon as he is? 740  
 But al too latè com'th the letuárie  
 Whan men the cors unto the gravè carie !

725. *wep* (?), all *wepete*.

'Too late is now to speke of that matere:  
 Prudence, allas ! oon of thine y'en three  
 Me lakkèd alwey or-that I com here !  
 On timè passèd wel remembred me,  
 And present time ek coude ich wel y-see,  
 But futur time, or I was in the snare,  
 Coude I not see : that causeth now my care !

'But nathèles, bitidè what bitide, 750  
 I shal tomorwe at night, by est or west,  
 Out of this oost stele on som maner side,  
 And gon with Troilus wher-as him lest :  
 This purpos wol I holde, and this is best.  
 No fors of wikked tongès janglerye,  
 For evere on love han wrecches had envye !

'For who-so wol of every word take hede,  
 Or rulen him by every wightès wit,  
 Ne shal he neverè thriven, out of drede ;  
 For that that some men blamen everè yit,  
 Lo, other maner folk comenden it. 760  
 And as for me, for al swich variaunce,  
 Felicitè clepe I my suffisaunce !

'For-which, withouten any wordès mo,  
 To Troye I wol, as for conclusioun.'—  
 But God it wot, or fully monthès two,  
 She was ful fer fro that entencioun !  
 For bothè Troilus and Troyès toun  
 Shal knottèles throughout her hertè slide :  
 For she wol take a purpos for t'abide. 770

—This Diomede, of whom you telle I gan,  
 Go'th now, withinne himself ay arguinge:  
 Withal thesleighte and al that evere he can,  
 How he may best with shortest taryinge  
 Into his net Criseydes hertè bringe.  
 To this entente he coude neverè fine :  
 To fisshen her, he leyde out hook and line.

But nathèles wel in his herte he thoughtè,  
 That she n'as not withoute a love in Troye :  
 For neverè sithen he her thennès broughtè  
 Ne coude he sen her laughe and maker  
 joye. 780

He n'iste how best her hertè for t'acoye  
 But 'for t'assaye,' he seide, 'it nought ne  
 greveth,  
 For he that nought n'assayeth, naugh  
 n'acheveth !'

752. *on*, J and others *in*.

Yit seide he to himself upon a night,  
 'Now am I not a fool, that wot wel how  
 Her wo for love is of another wight;  
 And her-upon to gon assaye her now,  
 I may wel wite, it n'il not ben my prow.  
 For wisé folk in bokés it expresse, <sup>790</sup>  
 "Menshal not wowe a wight in hevinessse."

'But who-so mighté winnen swich a flour  
 From him for whom she morneth night  
 and day,

He mighté seyn he were a conquerour!  
 And right anon, as he that bold was ay,  
 Thoughte in his herté, 'Happe how happé  
 may,

Al sholde I deye, I wol her herté seche:  
 I shal no moré lesé but my speche!'

This Diomede, as bokés us declare,  
 Was in his nedés prest and corageus, <sup>800</sup>  
 With sterné vois and mighty limés square,  
 Hardy and testif, strong and chivalrus  
 Of dedés, lik his fader Tidéus;  
 And some men seyn he was of tongé large,  
 And heir he was of Calidoyne and Arge.

Criseydé mené was of her stature,  
 Therto of shap, of face, and ek of chere  
 Ther mighté be no fairer créature:  
 And ofté timé this was her manére  
 To gon y-tresséd with her herés clere <sup>810</sup>  
 Down by her coler at her bak bihinde,  
 Whiche with a thred of gold she wolde  
 binde:

And, save her browés joinéden i-fere,  
 Ther nas no lak in aught I can espyen.  
 But for to speken of her yen clere,  
 Lo, trewely, they writen that her syen,  
 That Paradys stood forméd in her yen;  
 And with her riché beauté everé more  
 Strof love in her ay, which of hem was  
 more. <sup>819</sup>

She sobré was, ek simple and wis withal,  
 The best y-norissshéd ek that mighté be,

<sup>799-840.</sup> Much of this passage seems to have been taken direct from Benoit de Sainte More, *Roman de Troie*. It is remarkable that in these six stanzas there should be six defective or doubtful lines.

<sup>802.</sup> *and testif*, so S; rest *testif*.

And goodlich of her speche in general,  
 And charitable, estatly, lusty, free:  
 Ne neveré mo ne lakkéd pieté  
 Her tendré herté, sliding of corage.  
 But trewely I can not telle her age.

And Troilus wel waxen was on highte,  
 And complet forméd by proporcioun  
 Sowel that kindeit nought amendémighte:  
 Yong, fressh, and strong, and hardy as  
 lioun, <sup>830</sup>

And trewe as steel in ech condicioun:  
 And oon the best entecchéd créature  
 That is, or shal, whil-that the world may  
 dure.

And certeinliche in storie it is y-founde  
 That Troilus was nevere unto no wight,  
 As in his time, in no degré secoúnde  
 In durring don that longeth to a knight.  
 Al mighte a geaunt passen him of might,  
 His herte ay with the firste and with the  
 beste <sup>839</sup>  
 Stood pargal to durre-don that him leste.

—But for to tellen forth of Diomede.  
 It fil that after, on the tenthé day  
 Sin that Criseyde out of the cité yede,  
 This Diomede, as fressh as braunche in  
 May,

Com to the tenté ther-as Calcas lay,  
 And feynéd him with Calcas han to done:  
 But what he mente, I shal you tellé sone.

Criseyde, at shorté wordés for to telle,  
 Welcoméd him, and down him by her sette;  
 And he was ethe y-nough to maken dwelle!  
 And after this, withouté longé lette <sup>851</sup>  
 The spices and the wyn men forth hem fette;

<sup>823.</sup> *And charitable* (?), all *Charitable*; P and (before *estatly*); H<sub>4</sub> G H<sub>3</sub> R Cx. A D H<sub>1</sub> Cl. and (before *free*); P R *estatly*; J etc. *esta(t)li(s)ch(e)*.  
<sup>824.</sup> *lakked piete* (?), all *lakked(e) her pite (pete)*. (See iii. 1033; iv. 246; v. 1598.)

<sup>825.</sup> *Her tendre herte* (?), G *tendyr herte*; P *Tendre hertis*; H<sub>3</sub> *Thendere hertede*; rest *Tendre herted*.

<sup>830.</sup> *And strong*, so S; rest *strong*.

<sup>831.</sup> *And trewe* (?), all *Trewe*.

<sup>832.</sup> *And oon the* (?), H<sub>1</sub> *Oon the*; rest *Oon of the*.

<sup>842.</sup> This line follows l. 770 in Boccaccio, who makes it the *fourth* day.

And forth they speke of this and that i-fere  
As frendès don, of which som shal ye here.

He gan first fallen of the werre in speche  
Bitwixe hem and the folk of Troyè toun ;  
And of th'assege he gan her ek biseche  
To telle him what was her opinioun.

Fro that demaunde he so descendeth doun  
To axen her, if that her straungè thoughte  
The Grekès gise, and werkès that they  
wroughte ; 861

And why her fader tarieth so longe  
To wedden her unto som worthy wight.—  
Criseyde, that was in her peynès stronge  
For love of Troilus, her ownè knight,  
As ferforth as she conning hadde or might  
Answérde him tho ; but, as of his entente,  
It semèd not she wistè what he mente.

But nathèles this ilkè Diomede  
Gan in himself assure, and thus he seyde :  
' If ich aright have taken of you hede, 871  
Me thinketh thus, O lady myn Criseyde,  
That, sin I first hond on your bridel leyde  
Whan ye out-come of Troyè by the morwe,  
Ne coude I neverè sen you but in sorwe.

' Can I not seyn what may the causè be,  
But-if for love of som Trojån it were ;  
The whiche right sorè wolde athinken me,  
That ye for any wight that dwelleth there  
Sholde everè spille a quarter of a tere, 880  
Or pitously yourselven so bigile :  
For dredèles it is not worth the while.

' The folk of Troye, as who seith, alle and  
some

In prison ben, as ye yourselven see ;  
Nor thennès shal not oon on-live come  
For al the gold atwixen sonne and sea :  
Trusteth right wel and understondeth me,  
Ther shal not oon to mercy gon on-live,  
Al were he lord of worldès twyès five !

' Swich wreche on hem for fecching of  
Eleyne 890  
Ther shal ben take or-that we hennès  
wende,

880. *Sholde evere* (?), all *Sholden*.  
887. *right wel*, so Cx. S ; rest *wel*.

That Manès, whiche that Goddès ben of  
peyne,

Shal benagast that Grekès wol hem shende,  
And menshul drede, unto the worldès ende,  
From hennèsforth to ravissshèn any quene,  
So cruel shal our wreche on hem be sene !

' And but-if Calcas lede us with ambáges,  
That is to seyn, with doublè wordès slye,  
Swichas men clepe a word with two viságes,  
Ye shal wel knowèn that I nought ne lye,  
And al this thing right sen it with your ye,  
And that anon, ye n'il not trowe how  
sone ! 902

Now taketh hedè, for it is to done !

' What ! Wenè ye your wisè fader wolde  
Have yeven Antenor for you anon,  
If he ne wistè that the cité sholde  
Destroyèd ben? Why, nay, so mote I gon !  
He knew ful wel ther shal not scapen oon  
That Trojan is, and for the gretè fere  
He durstè not ye dweltè lenger there. 910

' What wol ye morè, lufsom lady dere ?  
Lat Troye and Trojan fro your hertè pace !  
Drif out that bittrè hope, and mak good  
chere,

And clepe ayein the beautè of your face  
That ye with saltè terès so deface,  
For Troye is brought in swich a jupartye  
That it to save is now no remedye !

' And thenketh wel, yeshal in Grekès finde  
A morè parfit love, or it be night,  
Than any Trojan is, and morè kinde, 920  
And bet to serven you wol don his might ;  
And if ye vouchésauf, my lady bright,  
I wol ben he to serven you myselve,  
Ye, leverè than be king of Grecès twelve !'

And with that word he gan to waxen red,  
And in his speche a litel wight he quook,  
And caste aside a litel wight his hed,  
And stinte a while. And afterward he  
wook,

895. *ravissshen*, pronounce *rav'issshen*. (See  
*norissshed*, l. 821.)

903. *to*, so Cx. ; H<sub>4</sub> *now to* ; G *not to* ; J and  
others *for to*.

928. *he wook*, J and others *awook*.

And sobrelieche on her he threwhis look, <sup>929</sup>  
 And seide, 'I am, al be it you no joye,  
 'As gentil man as any wight in Troye.

'For if my fader Tydëus,' he seyde,  
 'Y-livèd hadde, ich haddè ben, or this,  
 Of Calidoyné and Arge a king, Criseyde !  
 And so hope I that I shal yit, ywis !  
 But he was slayn, allas, the more harm is,  
 Unhappily at Thebès al too rathe,  
 Polymites and many a man to scathe.

'But, herté myn, sin that I am your man, <sup>939</sup>  
 And ye the firste of whom I sechè grace  
 To servè you as hertly as I can,  
 And everè shal whil I to live have space,  
 So, or that I departe out of this place,  
 That ye me grauntè that I may tomorwe  
 At bettrè leiser tellè you my sorwe !'

What sholde I telle his wordès that he  
 seyde ?

He spak y-nough for oo day at the meste !  
 It preveth wel, he spak so that Criseyde  
 Graunted him on the morwe at his requeste  
 To have a spechè with her at the leste, <sup>950</sup>  
 So that he n'oldè speke of swich matere :  
 And thus to him she seide, as ye may here,

As she that hadde her herte on Troilus  
 So fastè, that ther may it non arace ;  
 And straungely she spak, and seidè thus :  
 'O Diomedè, I love that ilkè place  
 Ther I was born ; and Jovès for his grace  
 Deliverè it sone of al that doth it care !  
 God, for thy might, so leve it wel to fare !

'That Grekès wolde hir wraththe on Troyè  
 wreke 960  
 If that they mighte, I knowe it wel, y-wis :  
 But it shal not bifallen as ye speke,  
 And God to-forn ! And fether over this,  
 I wot my fader wis and redy is ;

<sup>938.</sup> *Polymites*, Polynices. (See ll. 1488, 1507,  
 and l. 1498 note.)

<sup>940.</sup> *ye the*, so Cx.; P *ye be*; H<sub>3</sub> *bethe the*;  
 rest *ben the*.

<sup>944.</sup> *That ye*, S *γ Ye wol*.

<sup>949.</sup> *him*, so Cx.; rest omit.

<sup>950.</sup> *To have a speche with her*, so Cx.; rest  
*for to spoken with him*.

And that he me hath bought, *as ye me*  
 tolde,  
 So dere, I am the more unto him holde.

'That Grekès ben of heigh condicioun  
 I wot ek wel ; but, certein, men shal finde  
 As worthy folk withinnè Troyè toun, <sup>969</sup>  
 As conning, and as parfit, and as kinde,  
 As ben bitwixen Orcadès and Inde ;  
 And that ye coudè wel your lady serve,  
 It trowe it wel, her thank for to deserve.

'But as to speke of love, y-wis,' she seyde,  
 'I hadde a lord, to whom I wedded was,  
 The whos myn herte al was til that he  
 deyde ;

And other love, as help me now Pallas,  
 Ther in myn hertè n'is, ne neverè was.  
 And that ye ben of noble and heigh kinrède,  
 I have wel herd it tellen, out of drede ; <sup>980</sup>

'And that doth me to han so gret a wonder,  
 That ye wol scornen any woman so !  
 Ek, God wot, love and I be fer asonder :  
 I am disposèd bet, so mote I go,  
 Unto my deth to pleyne and maken wo :  
 What I shal after don, can I not seye ;  
 But trewèliche, as yit, me list not pleye.

'Myn herte is now in tribulacioun,  
 And ye in armès bisy day by day : <sup>989</sup>  
 Herafter, whan ye wonnen han the toun,  
 Paraunter thannè so it happen may,  
 That whan I see that neverè yit I say,  
 Than wol I werkè that I neverè wroughte !  
 This word to you y-nough suffisen oughte.

'To-morweek wol I speken with you fayn,  
 So that ye touchen nought of this matere ;  
 And whan you list, ye may come here aye yn.  
 And, or yegon, thus muche I seye you here :  
 As help me Pallas with her herès clere, <sup>999</sup>  
 If that I sholde on any Grek han routhe,  
 It sholdè be yourselves, by my trouthe !

'I sey not therfor that I wol you love,  
 N'I sey not may ; but in conclusioun,  
 I menè wel, by God that sit above !'

<sup>992.</sup> *neverè yit I*, so Cx. P H<sup>4</sup> ; J *I neverè yit* ;  
 others *I neverè(er)*, etc.

And therwithal she caste her yen doun,  
 And gan to sike, and seide, 'O Troyè toun,  
 Yit bidde I God, in quiete and in reste  
 I may thee sen, or do myn hertè breste !'

But in effect, and shortly for to seye,  
 This Diomede al fresshly newe ayeyn 1010  
 Gan pressen on, and faste her mercy preye;  
 And after this, the sothè for to seyn,  
 Herglove he took, of which he was ful fayn:  
 And finally, whan it was waxen eve,  
 And al was wel, he roos and took his leve.

The brightè Venus folwed and ay taughte  
 The wey ther brodé Phebus doun alighte,  
 And Cynthea her char-hors over-raughte  
 To whirle out of the Leoun, if she mighte,  
 And Signifer his candels sheweth brighte,  
 Whan that Criseyde unto her restè wente  
 Inwith her fadres fairè brightè tente, 1022

Retorning in her soule ay up and doun  
 The wordès of this sodein Diomede,  
 His grete estat, and peril of the toun,  
 And that she was allone and haddè nede  
 Of frendès help. And thus bigan to brede  
 The causes why, the sothè for to telle,  
 That she took fully purpos for to dwelle.

The morwè com, and gostly for to speke  
 This Diomede is come unto Criseyde; 1031  
 And, shortly, lest that ye my talè breke,  
 So wel he for himselven spak and seyde,  
 That alle her sikès sore adoun he leyde;  
 And finally, the sothè for to seyne,  
 He refte her of the grete of al her peyne.

And after this the storie telleth us  
 That she him yaf the fairè bayè stede

1019. See Cressida's promise, iv. 1592, and v. 1190.

1020. *Signifer*, the Zodiac.

1021. *reste*, H<sub>3</sub> S  $\gamma$  *bed(de)*; H<sub>4</sub> *chambir*.

1028. *causes*, so J P G (Boc.); rest *cause*.

1030. *gostly*, as her spiritual adviser.

1037. The incidents in the two following stanzas seem to have been taken from Benoît, though the *Historia Troiana* of Guido delle Colonne may also have been consulted (see l. 1044). Chaucer (or his audience, see *Prologue to Legend of Good Women*) has evidently been dissatisfied with Boccaccio's account of Cressida's faithlessness. Cressida's complaint (ll. 1051 *seq.*) is probably Chaucer's own. Chaucer returns to Boccaccio at l. 1100.

The whiche he onès wan of Troilus; 1039  
 And eka broche—and that was litel nede!—  
 That Troilus' was, she yaf this Diomede;  
 And ek, the bet from sorwe him to releve,  
 She made him were a pencil of her sleve.

I finde ek in the stories ellèswere,  
 Whan thorough the body hurt was Diomede  
 Of Troilus, tho wep she many a tere,  
 Whan that she saw his widè woundès blede;  
 And that she took, to kepen him, good  
 hede;

And, for to hele him of his sorwès smerte,  
 Men seyn—I n'ot—that she yaf him her  
 herte. 1050

But trewely the storie telleth us,  
 Ther madè neverè woman morè wo  
 Than she, whan that she falsèd Troilus.  
 She seyde, 'Allas! for now is clene ago  
 My name of trouthe in love for everèmo!  
 For I have falsèd oon the gentileste  
 That everè was, and oon the worthieste !'

'Allas! of me, unto the worldès ende,  
 Shal neither ben y-written nor y-songe  
 No good word, for these bokès wol me  
 shende. 1060

O, rollèd shal I ben on many a tonge:  
 Throughout the world my bellè shal be  
 ronge:

And women most wol hatè me of alle!  
 Allas, that swich a cas me sholdè falle!

'They wol seyn, in as muche as in me is,  
 I have hem don dishonour, weylaway!  
 Al be I not the firste that dide amis,  
 What helpeth that, to don my blame away?  
 But, sin I see ther is no bettrè wey, 1069  
 And that too late is now for me to rewe,  
 To Diomede algate I wol be trewe.

'But Troilus, sin I no bettrè may,  
 And sin that thus departen ye and I,  
 Yet preye I God so give you right good day  
 As for the gentilestè, trewely,  
 That evere I say, to serven faithfully,  
 And best can ay his lady honour kepe.'  
 And with that word she brast anon to wepe.

1044. *the*, J and others omit.

1046. *wep*, so J G P; H<sub>4</sub> *wepè gan*; rest *wepete*.

'And certès, you ne haten shal I nevere,  
And frendès love, that shal ye han of me,  
And my good-word, al mighte I livèn evere!  
And trewèliche, I wolde sory be 1082  
For to sen you in any adversité:  
And giltèles, I wot wel, I you leve:  
But al shal passe!—And thus take I my  
leve.'

But trewely, how longe it was bitwene,  
That she forsook him for this Diomede,  
Ther n'is non auctour telleth it, I wene:  
Take every man now to his bokès hede,  
He shal no termè finden, out of drede;  
For though that he bigan to wowe her sone,  
Or he her wan, yit was ther more to done.

Ne me ne list this sely womman chide  
Further than thilkè storic wol devise:  
Her name, allas, publiss'héd is so wide,  
That for her gilt it oughte y-nough suffise:  
And if I mighte excuse her any wise,  
For she so sory was for her untrouthe,  
Y-wis, I wolde excuse her yit for routhe.

—This Troilus, as I bifore have told, 1100  
Thus driveth forth as wel as he hath might:  
But often was his hertè hoot and cold,  
And namely that ilkè ninthè night,  
Which on the morwè she had him bihight  
To come ayein: God wot, ful litel reste  
Hadde he that night: nothing to slepe  
him leste!

The laurer-crownéd Phebus with his hete  
Can, in his cours ay upward as he wente,  
To warme of th'estè see the wawès wete,  
And Nisus' daughter song with fressh  
entente, 1110

Whan Troilus his Pandar after sente,  
And on the wallès of the town they pleyde,  
To loke if they can sen aught of Criseyde.

Til it was noon they stoden for to see  
Whothat ther com; and every maner wight  
That com fro fer, they seiden it was she,  
Til that they couden knowèn him aright:  
Now was his hertè dul, now was it light;  
And thus bi-japéd, stonden for to stare  
Aboutè naught this Troilus and Pandare!

To Pandarus this Troilus tho seyde, 1121  
'For aught I wot, bifor noon sikerly  
Into this townne com'th not here Criseyde.  
She hath y-nough to donè, hardily,  
To winnen from her fader, so trowe I.  
Her oldè fader wol yit make her dine  
Or-that she go: God give his hertè pine!'

Pandare answerde, 'It may wel be, certein;  
And for-thy lat us dine, I thee biseche;  
And after noon than maystow come  
ayein.' 1130

And hom they gon, withouten more  
speche,  
And come ayein. But longè may they  
seche

Or-that they finden that they after cape:  
Fortúne hem bothè thenketh for to jape!

Quod Troilus, 'I see wel now that she  
Is taried with her oldè fader so,  
That, or she come, it wil neigh even be.  
Com forth, I wol unto the yatè go.  
These porters ben unconning everè mo,  
And I wol don hem holden up the yate  
As naught ne were, although she comè  
late.' 1141

The day go'th faste, and after that com'th  
eve,

And yit com nought to Troilus Criseyde.  
He loketh forth by haye, by tree, by greve,  
And fer his hed over the wal he leyde;  
And at the laste he tornéd him and seyde,  
'By God, I wot her mening now, Pandaré!  
Almost, y-wis, al newè was my care!

'Now doutèles this lady can her good!  
I wot she meneth riden prively, 1150

1123. *here*, J and others omit.

1125. *winnen*, J Cl. *twinnen*.

1144. *haye* (?), all *heg(g)es*, *heg(g)e*. (See iii.  
351.)

1081. *mighte*, J and others *sholde*.

1083. *any*, so H<sub>4</sub> Cx. S; rest omit.

1085. *But*, J H<sub>3</sub> Cl. *And*.

1094. *thilke* (?), Cl. *this*; rest *the*.

1095. *publiss'hed*, so H<sub>2</sub> Cx.; J and others *pub-*  
*sshed*.

1103. *ninthè*, J G H<sub>3</sub> *tenthe*.

1110. *Nisus' daughter*, Scylla, changed into a  
ark. See *L.G.W.* 1908.

And I comende her wisdom, by myn hood !  
 She n'il not maken peplé nicély  
 Gaure on her when she com'th ; but softély  
 By night into the town she thenketh ride.  
 And, deré brother, thenk not long t'abide ;

We have not ellés for to done, y-wis.—  
 And Pandarus, now wiltow trowen me ?  
 Have here my trouthe, I see her ! Yond  
 she is !

Heve up thine yen, man ! Maystow not  
 see ?' 1159

Pandáre answérdé, 'Nay, so mote I thee !  
 Al wrong, by God ! What seystow, man ?  
 Wher arte ?

That I see yond n'is but a faré-carte !'

'Allas, thou sey'st ful soth !' quod Troilus.  
 'But, hardily, it n'is not al for nought  
 That in myn herte I now rejoisè thus :  
 It is ayeins som good I have a thought.  
 N'ot I not how, but sin that I was wrought  
 Ne felte I swich a confort, soth to seye !  
 She com'th to-night, my lif that dorste I  
 leye !'

Pandáre answérdé, 'It may be, wel  
 y-nough !' 1170

And held with him of al that evere he leyde :  
 But in his herte he thoughte, and softé  
 lough,

And to himself ful sobrelieche he seyde :  
 'From hasel-wode ther joly Robin pleyde  
 Shal come al that that thou abidest here !  
 Ye, far-wel al the snow of ferné yere !'

The wardein of the yatés gan to calle  
 The folk whiche that withoute the yatés  
 were,

And bad hem driven in hir beestés alle,  
 Or al the night they mosten bleven there.  
 And fer withinne the night, with many a  
 tere, 1181

This Troilus gan homward for to ride,  
 For wel he seeth it helpeth nought t'abide.

1151. *And I* (?), all *I*. (Boc. ed ia 'I commendo.)  
 1163. *ful*, S  $\gamma$  (exc. A) *right*.  
 1168. *soth to seye*, S  $\gamma$  (exc. A) *dar I seye*.  
 1171. *leyde* (?), all *seyde*. (See ll. 1169, 1304.)  
 1174-1176. In Boccaccio, 'From Etna the poor  
 fellow expects a wind !'

1175. *that that*, so J P H<sub>1</sub> R Cl.; A *that at* ;  
 rest *that*.

But nathéles he gladded him in this :  
 Hethoughte he misaccounted hadde his day,  
 And seide, 'I understonden have amis ;  
 'For th'ilké night I last Criseyde say,  
 She seide, "I shal ben here, if that I may,  
 Or that the mone, O deré herté swete,  
 The Lioun passe out of this Ariete." 1190

'For-which she may yit holde al her  
 biheste.'—

And on the morwe unto the yate he wente,  
 And up and down, by weste and ek by este,  
 Upon the wallés made he many a wente,  
 But al for nought : his hope alwéy him  
 blente.

For-which at night, in sorwe and sikéssore,  
 He wente him hom, withouten any more.

His hope al clene out of his herté fledde,  
 He n'hath wheron now lenger for to honge.  
 But for the peyne him thoughte his herté  
 bledde, 1200

So were his throwés sharpe and wonder  
 stronge.

For, whan he saw that she abood solonge,  
 He n'isté what he jugen of it mighté,  
 Sin she hath broken that she him bihighte.

The thriddé, fèrthé, fifté, sixté day  
 After tho dayés ten of which I tolde,  
 Bitwixen hope and drede his herté lay,  
 Yit somewhat trusting on her hestés olde ;  
 But whan he saw she n'olde her termé holde,  
 He can now sen non other remedye 1210  
 But for to shape him soné for to dye.

Therwith the wikked spirit (God us blesse !)  
 Which that men clepeth wodé Jalouyse,  
 Gan in him crepe in al his hevynesse ;  
 For-which, because he woldé soné dye,  
 He n'et ne dronk for his maléncolye,  
 And ek from every companye he fledde :  
 This was the lif that al this time he ledde.

He so defet was, that no maner man  
 Unnethe him mighté knowé ; ther he  
 wente, 1220

So was he lene, and therto pale and wan

1190. *this*, J H<sub>2</sub> R *his* ; G *that*. (See iv. 1590.)  
 1213. *wode*, P H<sub>3</sub> D Cp. Cl. *the wode*.



And feblé, that he walketh by potente ;  
 And with his ire he thus himselven shente.  
 And who-so axéd him wherof him smerte,  
 He seide, his harm was al aboute his herte.

Priam ful ofte, and ek his moder dere,  
 His brethren and his sustren gonne him  
 freyne

Why he so sorwful was in all his chere,  
 And what thing was the cause of al his  
 peyne ;

But al for nought. He n'olde his causé  
 pleyne, 1230

But seide he felte a grevous maladye  
 Aboute his herte, and fayn he woldé dye.

So on a day he leyde him down to slepe :  
 And so bifil that in his slep him thoughte  
 That in a forest faste he welk to wepe  
 For love of her that him this peyné  
 wroughte ;

And, up and down as he the forest soughte,  
 Him mette, he say a boor with tuskés grete,  
 That slep ayein the brighté sonnés hete ;

And by this boor, faste in her armés  
 folde, 1240

Lay, kissing ay, his lady bright, Criseyde :  
 For sorwe of which, whan heit gan biholde,  
 And for despit, out of his slep he breyde,  
 And loude he cri'de on Pandarus, and  
 seyde,

' O Pandarus, now knowe I crop and rote !  
 I n'am but ded, ther n'is non other bote !

' My lady bright, Criseyde, hath me  
 bitrayed,

In whom I trusted most of any wight :  
 She elléswhere hath now her herte apayed :  
 The blisful Goddés through hirgreté might  
 Han in my drem y-shewéd it ful right ! 1251  
 Thus in my drem Criseyde I have  
 biholde,'—

And al this thing to Pandarus he tolde.

' O my Criseyde, allas ! what subilté,  
 What newé lust, what beauté, what sciénce,  
 What wraththe of justé cause han ye to me ?  
 What gilt of me, what fel experience

1240. her, H<sub>4</sub> Cl. his ; P H<sub>2</sub> H<sub>3</sub> Cx. omit.

Hath fro me reft, allas, thyn ádvertence ?  
 O trust ! O feith ! O depé ássuraunce !  
 Who hath me reft Criseyde, al my ples-  
 aunce ?

' Allas ! why let I you from hennés go, 1261  
 For which welneigh out of my wit I breyde ?  
 Who shal now trowe on any othés mo ?  
 God wot, I wen'de, O lady bright, Criseyde,  
 That every word was gospel that ye seyde !  
 But who may bet bigilé, yif him liste,  
 Than he on whom men weneth best to triste ?

' What shal I don, my Pandarus ? Allas !  
 I felé now so sharpe a newé peyne, 1269  
 Sin that ther li'th no remedie in this cas,  
 That bet were it I with mine hondés tweyne  
 Myselven slow, alwey than thus to pleyne ;  
 For through the deth my wo sholde have  
 an ende,  
 Ther every day with lif myself I shende.'

Pandáre answérde and seide, ' Allas the  
 while

' That I was born ! Have I not seid or this,  
 That dremés many a maner man bigile ?  
 And why ? For folk expounden hem amis !  
 How darstow seyn that fals thyladyis 1279  
 For any drem, right for thyn owné drede ?  
 Lat be this thought, thou canst no dremés  
 rede !

' Paraunter, ther thou dremest of this boor,  
 It may so ben that it may signéfyé,  
 Her fader, which that old is and ek hoor,  
 Ayein the sonn é li'th, o-point to dye,  
 And she for sorwé ginneth wepe and crye,  
 And kisseth him ther he li'th on the  
 grounde :  
 Thus sholdestow thy drem a-right ex-  
 pounce !'

' How mighte I thanné don,' quod Troilus,  
 ' To knowe of this, ye, were it never so  
 lite ?'— 1290

' Now seystow wisly !' quod this Pandarus,  
 ' My red is this : sin thou canst wel endite,

1259. read ? O depé feith ! O assuraunce !

1266. yif, so J G H<sub>4</sub> ; H<sub>3</sub> D if that ; others if.

1270. li'th, S γ is.

That hastily a lettrè thou her write,  
Thorough which thou shalt wel bringen it  
aboute,  
To knowe a soth ther thou art now in doute.

'And see now why! for this I dar wel seyn;  
That, if so is that she untrewè be,  
I can not trowèn she wol write ayeyn;  
And, if she writè, thou shalt sonè see  
As whether she hath any liberté <sup>1300</sup>  
To come ayein, or ellès in som clause,  
If she be let, she wol assigne a cause.

'Thou hast not writen hersin that she wente,  
Nor she to thee; and this I dorstè leye,  
Ther may swich causè ben in her entente,  
That hardily thou wolt thyselfen seye  
That her abood the beste is for you tweye.  
Now write her thanne, and thou shalt  
felè sone  
A soth of al: ther n'is no more to done.'

Acorded ben to this conclusioun, <sup>1310</sup>  
And that anon, thise ilkè lordès two;  
And hastily sit Troilus adoun,  
And rolleth in his hertè to and fro  
How he may best discriven her his wo.  
And to Criseyde, his ownè lady dere,  
He wrot right thus, and seide as ye shal  
here.—

'Right fressshè flour, whos I ben have and  
shal,  
Withouten part of ellèswhere servise,  
With hertè, body, lif, lust, thought, and al,  
I, woful wight, in every humblè wise <sup>1320</sup>  
That tongè telle or hertè may devise,  
As ofte as mater occupieth place,  
Me recomaunde unto your noblè grace.

'Liketh it you to witen, sweté herte,  
As ye wel knowe, how longè time agon  
That ye me leftè in asprè peynès smerte  
Whan that ye wente: of which yit botè non  
Have I non had, but everè wors bigon

<sup>1295.</sup> *ther thou art now*, J Cx. omit *now*; S y  
of *that* ( $H_3$  of *which*) *thou art*.

<sup>1298.</sup> *she*, so J R Cx. G  $H_3$ ; rest *that she*.

<sup>1299.</sup> *sonè*, J and others *ful sone*.

<sup>1316.</sup> *shal*, so J P R Cx. G  $H_4$ ; rest *may*.

<sup>1324.</sup> *it*, J and others omit.

Fro day to day am I, and so mot dwelle,  
Whil it you list, of wele and wo my welle!

'For-which to you, with dredful hertè  
trewe, <sup>1331</sup>  
I write, as he that sorwè drif'th to write,  
My wo that everich heure encresseth newe,  
Compleyning as I dar or can endite.  
And that defacèd is, that may ye wite  
The terès whiche that fro mine ÿen reyne,  
That wolden speke if that they coude, and  
pleyne.

'You first biseche I, that your ÿen clere,  
To loke on this, defoulèd ye not holde,  
And over al this, that ye, my lady dere, <sup>1340</sup>  
Wol vouchè-sauf this lettrè to biholde:  
And by the cause ek of my carès colde  
That sleeth my wit, if aught amis m'asterte,  
Foryive it me, myn ownè sweté herte!

'If any servant dorste or oughte of right  
Upon his lady pitously compleyne,  
Than wene I that ich oughtè ben that  
wight,  
Considerèd this, that ye thise monthès  
tweyne

Han taried, ther ye seyden, soth to seyne,  
But dayès ten ye n'olde in oost sojorne,—  
But in two monthès yit ye not retorne. <sup>1351</sup>

'But for as muche as me mot nedès like  
Al that you list, I dar not pleynè more;  
But humblèly, with sorwful sikès sike,  
You write ich mine unresty sorwes sore,  
Fro day to day desiring everè more  
To knowèn fully, if your wille it were,  
How ye han ferd and don whil ye be there;

'The whos welfare and hele ek God  
encresse <sup>1359</sup>  
In honour swich, that upward in degree  
It growe alwey, so that it neverè cesse.  
Right as your herte ay can, my lady free,  
Devise, I preye to God so mote it be,  
And grante it that ye sone upon me rewe  
As wisly as in al I am you trewe!

<sup>1335.</sup> *And that*, J *And that it* (read ? *And that*).

<sup>1365.</sup> *you*, J and others *to you*; Cx. *your*.

' And if you liketh knowen of the fare  
Of me, whos wo ther may no wit describe,  
I can no more, but, cheste of every care,  
At writing of this lettre I was on-live,  
Al redy out my woful gost to drive : 1370  
Which I delay, and holde him yit in honde  
Upon the sighte of mater of your sonde.

' Myn yen two, in veyn with whiche I see,  
Of sorwful terés salte arm waxen welles :  
My song, in pleynte of myn adversité :  
My good, in harm : myn ese ek waxen  
helle is :  
My joye, in wo : I can seye you nought  
elles,  
But turnéd is, for which my lif I warie,  
Evèrich joye or ese in his contrárie.

' Which with your coming hom ayein to  
Troye 1380  
Yemay redresse, and, more a thousand sithe  
Than ever ich hadde, encessen in me joye.  
For was ther neveré herté yit so blithe  
To han his lif as I shal ben, as swithe  
As I you see. And, though no maner  
routhe  
Commevé you, yit thenketh on your  
trouthe.

' And if so be my gilt hath deth deserved,  
Or if you list no more upon me see,  
In guerdon yit of that I have you served  
Biseche I you, myn hertés lady free, 1390  
That her-upon ye wolden writé me,  
For love of God, my righté lodé-sterre,  
That deth may make an ende upon my  
werre !

' If other cause aught doth you for to  
dwelle,  
That with your lettré ye me réconforte !  
For, though to me your absence is an helle,  
With pacience I wol my wo conporte,  
And with your lettre of hope I wol desporte.  
Now writeth, swete, and lat me thus not  
pleyne :  
With hope, or deth, delivereth me fro  
peyne ! 1400

' Y-wis, myn owné deré herté trewe,  
I wot that, whan ye next upon me see,  
So lost have I myn hele and ek myn hewe,  
Criseydé shal not conné knowén me.  
Y-wis, myn hertés day, my lady free,  
So thursteth ay myn herté to biholde  
Your beauté, that my lif unnethe I holde.

' I sey no more, al have I for to seye  
To you wel more than I tellen may. 1409  
But whether that ye do me live or deye,  
Yit preye I God so give you right good day !  
And far'th wel, goodly fairé fressshé may,  
As she that lif or deth me may comaunde !  
And to your trouthe ay I me recomaunde

' With helé swich that, but ye given me  
The samé hele, I shal non helé have !  
In you li'th, whan you list that it so be,  
The day on which me clothen shal my  
grave :  
In you my lif, in you might for to save  
Me from disese of allé peynés smerte ! 1420  
And far'th now wel, myn owné sweté  
herte !'

This lettré forth was sent unto Criseyde,  
Of which her answer in effect was this :  
Ful pitously she wrot ayein, and seyde,  
That al-so sone as that she mighte, y-wis,  
She woldé come, and mende al that was  
mis,  
And finaly—she wrot and seide him  
thanne—  
She woldé come, ye, but she n'istéwhanne.

But in her lettré made she swiché festes  
That wonder was, and swer'th she lov'th  
him best : 1430  
Of which he fond but botméles bihestes.  
But Troilus, thou mayst now, est or west,  
Pipe in an ivy leaf, if that thee lest !  
Thus go'th the world ! God shilde us  
fro mischaunce,  
And every wight that meneth trouthe  
avaunce !

Encessen gan the wo fro day to night  
Of Troilus, for taryng of Criseyde,

1367. *wit*, G Cl. and others *wight*; H<sub>4</sub> *man*.  
1393. *That*, Cx. *Or*; H<sub>2</sub> *The*; Cl. Cp. *Ther*.

1413. *she*, Cx. S γ *ye*.

And lessen gan his hope and ek his might ;  
 For which al down he in his bed him leyde.  
 He n'et, ne dronk, ne slep, ne no word  
 seyde, 1440  
 Imagininge ay that she was unkinde ;  
 For-which wel neigh he wex out of his  
 minde.

This drem, of which I told have ek biforn,  
 May nevere come out of his remembrance :  
 He thoughte ay wel he hadde his lady lorn,  
 And that that Jovés of his purveyaunce  
 Himshewéd hadde in slep the signefiaunce  
 Of her untrouthe and his disaventure,  
 And that this boor was shewed him in  
 figure. 1449

For-which he for Sibille his suster sente,  
 That calléd was Cassandre ek al aboute ;  
 And al his drem he tolde her or he stente,  
 And her bisoughte assoilen him the doute  
 Of th'ilké strongé boor with tuskés stoute ;  
 And finaly withinne a litel stounde  
 Cassandre him gan right thus his drem  
 expounde.

She gan first smile, and seide, 'O brother  
 dere,  
 If thou a soth of this desirest knowe,  
 Thou most a fewe of oldé stories here,  
 To purpos how that Fortune overthrowe  
 Hath lordés olde : thourgh which, withinne  
 a throwe, 1461  
 Thou wel this boor shal knowe, and of  
 what kinde  
 He comén is, as men in bokés finde.

'Diané, which that wroth was and in ire  
 For Grekés n'olden don her sacrificse,  
 N'encéns upon her auter sette a-fire,  
 She, for-that Grekés gonne her so despise,  
 Vengéd her in a wonder cruel wise ;

1440. *no word*, so H<sub>1</sub> R Cx. ; G *no word he ne*  
 (om. *ne slep*) ; H<sub>3</sub> *worde ne* ; rest *word(e)*.

1446. *that that*, so J P H<sub>1</sub> G Frag. ; rest *that*.

(See iii. 1751, 1758.)

1447. *signefiaunce*, so J A ; rest *signifaunce*.

1449. *this*, H<sub>3</sub> S y *the*.

1454. *th'ilke* (?), R *that* ; Cx. *this* ; A a ; rest  
*the*.

1457. The incidents in the following lines are  
 taken from Ovid and Statius. Chaucer returns  
 to Boccaccio at l. 1513.

1468. *Venged*, so H<sub>2</sub> only ; rest *Wrak*.

For with a boor as gret as oxe in stalle  
 She made up-frete hir corn and vinés alle.

'To slee this boor was al the contré reysed,  
 Amongés whiche ther com, this boor to  
 see, 1472  
 A mayde, oon of this world the best  
 y-preysed ;  
 And Meleagrè, lord of that contré,  
 He lovedé so this fressshé maydè free  
 That with his manhod, or he woldé stente,  
 This boor he slow, and her the hed he  
 sente :

'Of which, as oldé bokés tellen us,  
 Ther ros a kontek and a gret envyé.  
 And of this lord descended Tydéus 1480  
 By ligne, or ellés oldé bokés lye :  
 But how this Meleagrè gan to dye  
 Thórhgh his moder, wol I you not telle,  
 For al too long it weré for to dwelle.'

She tolde ek how Tydéus, or she stente,  
 Unto the strongé cité of Thebés  
 To cleymen kingdom of the cité wente  
 For his felawé, daun Polymites,  
 Of which the brother, daun Ethiocles,  
 Ful wrongfully of Thebés held the  
 strengthe : 1490  
 This toldé she by proces al by lengthe.

She tolde ek how Hemonides asterte,  
 Whan Tydéus slough fifty knightés stoute ;  
 She tolde ek alle the prophecies by herte,  
 And how the sevené kingés with hir route  
 Bisegédén the cité al aboute ;  
 And of the holy serpent, and the welle,  
 And of the Furies, al she gan him telle :

1473. *A mayde*, Atalanta.

1480. Tydeus was Meleager's brother. Chaucer's mistake may have been made on purpose ; or it may be due to *Filostrato* vii. stanza 27, where Troilus refers to Meleager as the ancestor of Diomedes.

1482. *gan to*, G *dude*.

1483. *Thórhgh his*, H<sub>2</sub> *Thurgh* ; G *Of hire*  
 R *Thurgh out*.

1483. *his moder*, Althæa.

1498. The following argument of the twelve books of Statius' *Thebais* is placed after this line in all the MSS. except H<sub>1</sub> and Rawl. :—

Associat profugum Tideo primus Polimitem ;  
 Tidea legatum docet insidiasque secundus ;  
 Tercius Hemonidem canit et vates latitantes ;

Of Archimoris' burying and the pleyes,  
And how Amphiorax fil thorough the  
grounde ; 1500

How Tydëus was slayn, lord of Argéyes :  
And how Ypomedon in litel stounde  
Was dreynt, and ded Parthonopé of  
wounde :

And also how Cappanéus the proude  
With thonder-dint was slayn, that cri'de  
loude.

She gan ek telle him how that either brother,  
Ethiocius and Polymite also,  
Yit at a scarmuche ech of hem slough  
other,

And of Argivés weping and hir wo :  
And how the town was brent she tolde ek  
tho ; 1510

And so descendeth down from gestés olde  
To Diomede : and thus she spak and tolde.

' This ilké boor bitokneth Diomede,  
Tydëus sone, that doun descended is  
Fro Meleagre, that made the boorto blede :  
And thy lady, wher-so she be, y-wis,  
This Diomede her herte hath, and she his.  
Wep if thou wolt, or lef ! For out of doute  
This Diomede is inne, and thou art oute ! '

' Thou seyst not soth,' quod he, ' thou  
sorceresse, 1520  
With al thy falsé gost of prophecye !  
Thou wenest ben a gret devineresse !  
Now seestow not this fool of fantasye  
That peyneth her on ladies for to lye !

*Quartus habet reges incennes prelia septem ;  
Mox furie Lenne quinto narratur et anguis ;  
Archimori bustum sexto ludique leguntur ;  
Dat Graios Thebes et vatem septimus umbris ;  
Octavo cecidit Tideus, spes, vita Pelasgis ;  
Ypomedon nono moritur cum Parthonopeo ;  
Fulmine percussus, decimo Capaneus superatur ;  
Undecimo sese perimunt per vulnera fratres ;  
Argiuam flentem narrat duodenus et ignem.*

1502-1504. J G read :

And how Ypomedon with bloody wonnde  
And ek Parthonopé in litel stounde  
Ben slayn, and how Cappaneus the proude

1503. *ded*, Cp. *dede* (read ? *deyde* *Parthonopeo*  
*of . . .*).

1508. *Yit at*, so A ; rest *At*.

1516. *wher-so*, Cl. *wher that* ; J and others  
*wher* (read ? *And thus thy lady, wher she be,*  
*y-wis*).

1524. *That peyneth* (?), all *Peyneth*.

Away !' quod he, ' Ther Jovés yive thee  
sorwe !

Thou shalt ben fals paraunter yit to-morwe !

' As wel thou mightest lyen on Alceste,  
That was of créaturés, but men lye,  
That everé weren, kindest and the beste :  
For whan her husband was in jupartye  
To dye himself but-if she woldé dye, 1531  
She ches for him to dye and gon to helle,  
And starf anon, as us the bokés telle !'

Cassandrè go'th : and he with cruel herte  
Foryat his wo for angré of her speche,  
And from his bed al sodeinly he sterte,  
As though al hool him haddé maad a leche.  
And day by day he gan enquere and seche  
A soth of this with al his fullé cure :  
And thus he drieth forth his aventure. 1540

—Fortúné, which that permutacioun  
Of thingés hath, as it is her committed  
By púrveyaunce and disposicioun  
Of heighé Jove, as regnés shal be flitted  
Fro folk to folk, or whan they shal be  
smitted,  
Gan pulle away the fetherés brighte of Troye  
Fro day to day, til they ben bare of joye.

Among al this, the fyn of the paródie  
Of Ector gan aprochen wonder blive : 1549  
The Faté wolde, his soulé sholde unbódie,  
And shapen hadde a mene it out to drive  
Ayeins which fate him helpeth not to strive ;  
But on a day to fighten gan he wende,  
At which, allas, he caughte his livés ende.

For which me thinketh every maner wight  
That haunteth armés oughté to biwaile  
The deth of him that was so noble a  
knight ;

For, as he drough a king by th'aventaile,  
Unwar of this, Achilles, thorough the maile  
And thorough the body gan him for to rive :  
And thus this worthy knight was brought  
of live. 1561

1527. *Alceste*, Alcestis. See l. 1778, and  
*L.G.W.* 432, etc.

1532. *for him to dye and gon*, J G to *dye* (G  
*deth*) and *ek to gon*.

1543. *By, S y Thorough*.

1558. This account of the death of Hector  
seems to have been taken from Benoit.

For whom, as oldé bokés tellen us,  
Was maad swich wo, that tonge it may not  
telle,

And namèly, the sorwe of Troilus,  
That next him was of worthinessè welle :  
And in this wo gan Troilus to dwelle,  
That, what for sorwe, and love, and for  
unreste,

Ful ofte a day he bad his hertè breste.

But nathèles, though he gan him despeire,  
And dredde ay that his lady was untrewé,  
Yit ay on her his hertè gan repèire ; 1571  
And as this lovers don, he soughte ay  
newe

To gete ayein Criseyde bright of hewe,  
And in his herte he wente her éxcusinge,  
That Calcas causéd al her taryinge.

And oftè time he was in purpos grete  
Himselven lik a pilgrim to disgise,  
To sen her ; but he may not contrefete  
To ben unknowe of folk that weren wise,  
Ne finde excuse aright that may suffise,  
If he among the Grekés knowèn were :  
For which he wep ful ofte, and many a  
tere. 1582

To her he wrot yit oftè time al newe  
Ful pitously,—he lefte it not forslothe,—  
Biseching her that, sin that he was trewe,  
That she wol come ayein and holde her  
trouthe :

For which Criseyde upon a day, for routhe  
(I take it so,) touching al this matére  
Wrot him ayein, and seide as ye may  
here.— 1589

‘ Cupidès sone, ensaumple of godlihede,  
O swerd of knighthod, sours of gentillesse !  
How mighte a wight, in torment and in  
drede

And helèles, you sende as yit gladnése ?  
I hertèles, I sik, I in distresse !  
Sin ye with me, nor I with you may dele,  
You neither sende ich hertè may ne hele !

1570. *dredde ay*, J P G H<sub>3</sub> *dred(d)ye*; H<sub>4</sub> *drede evere*.

1577. *disgise*, J H<sub>1</sub> Cl. *degise*.

1582. *and*, G H<sub>4</sub> Cl. omit.

1590. Cressida's letter is not in Boccaccio.

‘ Your lettres ful, the papir al y-pleynted,  
Conceyved hath myn hertès pieté : 1598  
I have ek seyn with terès al depeynted  
Your lettre, and how that ye requeren me  
To come ayein, which yit ne may not be ;  
But why, lest that this lettrè founden were,  
No mencion ne make I now for fere.

‘ Grevous to me, God wot, is your unreste,  
Your haste, and that the Goddès ordi-  
naunce,

It semeth not ye take it for the beste ;  
Nor other thing n'is in your rémem-  
braunce,

As thinketh me, but only your plesauce.  
But beth not wroth, and that I you biseche ;  
For that I tarie isal for wikked speche. 1610

‘ For I have herd wel morè than I wen'de,  
Touching us two how thingès han y-stonde,  
Which I shal with dissimulinge amende.  
And beth not wroth, I have ek understonde  
How ye ne don but holden me in honde.  
But now no fors : I can not in you gessé  
But allè trouthe and allè gentillesse.

‘ Comèn I wol ; but yit in swich disioynt  
I stonde as now, that what yer or what day  
That this shal be, that can I not a-poynt. 1620  
But in effect, I preye you as I may  
Of your good-word and of your frendship  
ay ;

For trowèly, whil-that my lif may dure,  
As for a frend ye may in me assure.

‘ Yet preye I you, on yvel ye ne take  
That it is short which that I to you write.  
I dar not, ther I am, wel lettres make,  
Ne neverè yit ne coude I wel endite.  
Ek gret effect men write in placé lite :  
Th'entente is al, and not the lettres space.  
And far'th now wel, God have you in his  
grace !'— 1633

This Troilus this lettrè thoughteal straung  
Whan he it saugh, and sorwfully he sighte

1598. *pieté*, so J S Cp.; R *privetee*; rest *pitè* *pete*.

1618. *disioynt*, J and others *disiointe*.

1620. *a-poynt*, J *poynite*; Cl. and others *af* *(p)oynte*. (See iii. 496, 497.)

Him thoughte it lik a kalendés of chaunge.  
 But finally he ful ne trowèn mighte  
 That she ne wolde him holden that she  
 highte ;  
 For with ful yvel wil list him to leve  
 That loveth wel, in swich cas, though him  
 greve !

But nathêles men seyn that at the laste,  
 For anything, men shal the sothê see ! 1640  
 And swich a cas bitidde, and that as faste,  
 That Troilus wel understood that she  
 N'as not so kinde as that her oughtê be ;  
 And finally he wot now, out of doute,  
 That al is lost that he hath ben aboute.

—Stood on a day in his malécolye  
 This Troilus, and in suspicioun  
 Of her for whom he wen'dê for to dye :  
 And so bifel that thorough-out Troyé toun,  
 As was the gise, y-born was up and doun 1650  
 A maner cote-armûre, as seith the storie,  
 Biforn Deiphêbe in signe of his victorie :

The whichê cote, as telleth Lollius,  
 Deiphêbe it hadde y-rent fro Diomedê  
 The samê day. And whan this Troilus  
 t saugh, he gan to taken of it hede,  
 Advising of the lengthe and of the brede  
 And al the werk. But, as he gan biholde,  
 Ful sodeinliche his hertê gan to colde,

as he that on the coler fond withinne 1660  
 A broche, that he Criseydê yaf that morwe  
 That she from Troyé mostê nedês twinne,  
 A rémembraunce of him and of his sorwe.  
 And she him leyde ayein her feith to borwe  
 To kepe it ay ! But now ful wel he wiste,  
 His lady n'as no lenger on to triste.

He go'th him hom, and gan ful sonê sende  
 or Pandarus ; and al this newê chaunce  
 And of this broche he tolde him, word and  
 ende,  
 ompleyning of her hertês variaunce, 1670  
 his longê love, his trouthe, and his  
 penaunce.

And after deth, withouten wordês more,  
 Al faste he cri'de, his reste him to restore.  
 1653. *Lollius*, Boccaccio. (See i. 394 note.)

Than spak he thus, 'O lady bright,  
 Criseyde,  
 Wher is your feith, and wher is your  
 biheste ?

Wher is your love ? Wher is your trouthe ?  
 he seyde ;

'Of Diomedê have ye now al this feste !  
 Allas ! I wolde han trowèd at the leste  
 That, sin ye n'olde in trouthê to me stonde,  
 That ye thus n'olde han holden me in  
 honde ! 1680

'Who shal now trowe on any oothês mo ?  
 Allas ! I n'oldê nevere han wen'd or this  
 That ye, Criseydê, coude han changêd so,  
 Ne, but I hadde agilt and don amis,  
 So cruel wen'de I not your herte, y-wis,  
 To slee me thus ! Allas, your name of  
 trouthe

Is now fordon : and that is al my routhe !

'Was ther non other broche you listê lete  
 To feffê with your newê love,' quod he, 1689  
 'But th'ilkê broche that I with terês wete  
 You yaf as for a rémembraunce of me ?  
 Non other cause, allas, ne hadden ye  
 But for despit, and ek for-that ye mente  
 Al outrelly to shewèn your entente !

'Thorough which I see that clene out of your  
 minde

Ye han me cast ! And I ne can ne may,  
 For al this world, within myn hertê finde  
 T'unloven you a quarter of a day !

In cursed time I born was, weylawey, 1699  
 That you, that don me al this wo endure,  
 Yit love I best of any créature !

'Now God,' quod he, 'me sendê yit the  
 grace.

That I may meten with this Diomedê !  
 And trewely, if I have might and space,  
 Yet shal I make, I hope, his sidês blede !  
 O God,' quod he, 'that oughtest taken hede  
 To furthren trouthe, and wrongês to punice,  
 Why n'iltow dona vengeaunce on this vice ?

'O Pandar, that in dremês for to triste  
 Me blamêd hast, and wont art ofte  
 upbreyde, 1710

1674. *bright*, H<sub>3</sub> S γ *myn* (Boc.)

Now maystow sen thyself, if that thee liste,  
How trewe is now thy necé bright,  
Criseyde !

In sondry formés, God it wot, he seyde,  
'The Goddés shewén bothé joye and tene  
In slep, and by my drem it is now sene.

'And certeinly, withouté moré speche,  
From hennésforth, as ferforth as I may,  
Myn owné deth in armés wol I seche :  
I recché not how soné be the day !  
But trewely Criseydé, sweté may, <sup>1720</sup>  
Whom I haveay with al my might y-served,  
That ye thus don, In'haveit not deserved !'

This Pandarus, that alle these thingés herde,  
And wisté wel he seide a soth of this,  
He not a word ayein to him answärde ;  
For sory of his frendés sorwe he is,  
And shaméd for his nece hath don amis ;  
And stant, astonéd of these causes tweye,  
As stille as ston : a word ne coude he seye.

But at the lasté thus he spak and seide : <sup>1730</sup>  
'My brother dere, I may do thee no more !  
What sholde I seye ? I hate, y-wis,  
Criseyde ;

And God wot, I wol hate her everémoré !  
And that thou me bisoughtest don of yore,  
Having unto myn honour ne my reste  
Right no reward, I dide al that thee leste.

'If I dide aught that mighté liken thee,  
It is me lief. And of this treson now,  
God wot that it a sorwe is unto me !  
And dredèles, for hertés ese of yow, <sup>1740</sup>  
Right fayn I wolde amende it, wiste I how.  
And fro this world, almighty God I preye,  
Delivere her sone ! I can nomoré seye !'—

Gret was the sorwe and pleynte of Troilus.  
But forth her cours Fortúneyan gan to holde :  
Criseydé lov'th the sone of Tydèus,  
And Troilus mot wepe in carés colde !  
Swich is this world ! Who-so it can biholde,  
In ech estat is litel hertés reste !  
God leve us for to take it for the beste ! <sup>1750</sup>

In many cruel bataille, out of drede,  
Of Troilus, this ilké noblé knight,

<sup>1731.</sup> do thee, J Cl. thee do.

As men may in these oldé bokés rede,  
Was sene his knighthod and his greté  
might.

And dredèles, his iré, day and night,  
Ful cruely the Grekés ay aboute,  
And alwey most this Diomedé he soughte.

And ofté time, I findé that they mette  
With bloody strokés and with wordés grete,  
Assaying how hir sperés werén whette ; <sup>1760</sup>  
And God it wot, with many a cruel hete  
Gan Troilus upon his helm to bete !  
But nathéles, Fortúne it nought ne wolde,  
Of othres hond that either deyé sholde.

—And if I hadde y-taken for to writen  
Thé armés of this ilké worthy man,  
Than wolde I of his bataillés enditen.  
But for-that I to writen first bigan  
Of his lovinge, I have seid as I can. <sup>1769</sup>  
His worthy dedés, who-so list hem here,  
Red Dares : he can telle hem alle i-fere.

Biseching every lady bright of hewe  
And every gentil woman, what she be,  
That, al be that Criseydé was untrewé,  
That for that gilt ye be not wroth with me,  
Ye may her gilt in othré bokés see !  
And gladlier I wol writé, yif you leste,  
Penelopéés trouthe and goode Alceste !

N' I sey not this al-only for these men ;  
But most for women that bitrayséd be <sup>1780</sup>  
Thorough falsé folk. God give hem sorwe  
amen !

That with hir greté wit and subtilité  
Bitraysé you ! And this comveveth me  
To speke ; and, in effect, you alle I preye  
Beth ware of men, and herkneht what  
seye !

—Go, litel book ! Go, litel myn tragédie  
Ther God thy maker yit, or-that he dye  
So sendé might to make in som comédie  
But, litel book, no making thou n'envy  
But subgit be to allé poesyé ! <sup>17</sup>

<sup>1761.</sup> many a, J and others many.  
<sup>1769.</sup> lovinge, so S ; rest love. (See l. 183)  
(Read ? As of his love . . . )  
<sup>1775.</sup> ye, R S y she.  
<sup>1776.</sup> othre, H<sub>2</sub> H<sub>1</sub> othres.



And kis the steppès wher-as thou seest pace  
Virgile, Ovide, Omér, Lucán, and Stace !

And, for ther is so gret diversité  
In Englissh and in writing of our tonge,  
So prey to God that non miswritè thee,  
Ne thee mismetrè for defaute of tonge !  
And, red wher-so thou be or ellès songe,  
That thou be understandè God biseche !—  
But yet to purpos of my rather speche.

—The wraththe, as I bigan you for to seye,  
Of Troilus the Grekès boughten dere; 1801  
For thousandès his hondès maden deye,  
As he that was withouten any pere  
save Ector in his time, as I can here.  
But weylaway, save only Goddès wille,  
Ful pitously him slough the fiersè Achille.

And whan that he was slayn in this manére  
His lightè goost ful blisfully is went  
Up to the holwnesse of the eightè spere,  
In convers leting everich element : 1810  
And ther he saugh with ful avisèment  
Th'erratik sterrès, herkning armonye  
With sounès fulle of hevenissh melodye.

And down from thennès faste he gan avise  
This litel spot of erthe that with the see  
Enbracèd is, and fully gan despise  
This wrecched world, and held al vanité  
To rèspect of the pleyne felicite  
That is in hevène above. And at the laste,  
Ther he was slayn his loking down he  
caste, 1820

And in himself he lough right at the wo  
Of hem that wepen for his deth so faste,

1791. *pace*, so P H<sub>4</sub> Cl. Th. only; rest *space*.  
1795. *prey to God*, so J P Cx.; others *prey I  
to God, prey I God, prey thy God*.

1798. *God biseche*, so J R A Cp. Cl.; others *God  
(thee) biseche*.

1806. *Ful pitously*, Cx. S γ *Dispitously*. (Boc.  
*niseramente*.)

1807. The following three stanzas are from the  
account of the death of Arcite in Boccaccio's  
*Deceside*. They are omitted in H<sub>2</sub> H<sub>4</sub>, and  
inserted later in P.

1809. *eighte, J viij*; others *seventhe*. (Boc.  
*er la concavita del cielo ottava*.)

1810. Boc. *Degli elementi i conuessi lasciando*.  
Possibly Chaucer uses *convers* here with the  
meaning of *convex*.)

And dampned al our werk, that folwen so  
The blindè lust the whiche that may not  
laste,

And sholden al our herte on hevène caste.  
And forth he wentè, shortly for to telle,  
Ther-as Mercúrie sorted him to dwelle.

Swich fyn hath tho this Troilus for love !  
Swich fyn hath al his gretè worthinesse !  
Swich fyn hath his estat réal above ! 1830  
Swich fyn his lust, swich fyn hath his  
noblesse !

Swich fyn, this falsè worldès brotelnesse !—  
And thus bigan his loving of Criseyde  
As I have told, and in this wise he deyde.

—O yongè fresshè folkès, he or she,  
In whiche ay love up-groweth with your  
age,

Repeireth hom fro worldly vanité !  
And of your herte up-casteth the visàge  
To th'ilkè God that after his imàge  
You made; and thinketh al n'is but a  
faire 1840  
This world, that passeth sone as flourès  
faire !

And loveth Him, the whiche that right  
for love

Upon a cros, our soulès for to beye,  
First starf, and roos, and sit in hevène  
above ;

For He n'il falsen no wight, dar I seye,  
That wol his herte al hoolly on him leye !  
And sin He best to love is, and most meke,  
What nedeth feynèd lovès for to seke ?

Lo here, of payens corsèd oldè rites !  
Lo here, what alle hir Goddès may  
availe ! 1850

Lo here, thisè wrecched worldès appetites !  
Lo here, the fyn and guerdon for travaile  
Of Jove, Appollo, of Mars, of swich  
rascaile !

Lo here, the forme of oldè clerkès speche  
In poetrye, if ye hir bokès seche !

1823. *folwen* (?), all *folweth*.

1824. *that, J D ne*; H<sub>3</sub> Cl. omit.

1831. *hath, H<sub>4</sub> omits*.

1832. *this* (?), H<sub>2</sub> *hath this*; H<sub>1</sub> *hath the*; J  
and others *hath*.

1836. *ay*, so J P H<sub>2</sub> H<sub>4</sub> H<sub>3</sub>; R Cx. S γ *that*.

1842. *the, J* and others omit.

—O moral Gowér, this book I directe  
To thee, and to thee, philosophical Strode,  
To vouchen-sauf, ther nede is, to correcte,  
Of your benignetés and zelés gode.—  
And to that sothfast Crist, that starf on  
rode, 1860

With al myn herte, of mercyever I preye,  
And to the Lord right thus I speke and  
seye :

Thou oon, and two, and three, eterne on-  
live,

That regnest ay in three and two and oon,  
Uncircumscrip, and al mayst circumscribe,  
Us from visíble and ívisible fooñ  
Defende! And to thy mercy, everichoon,  
So make us, Jesus, for thy mercy digne,  
For love of maydeand moder thyn benigne!

CHAUCER'S WORDS UNTO  
ADAM, HIS OWNE SCRY-  
VEYNE

ADAM SCRIVEYN, if ever it thee bifalle  
Boece or Troylus for to writen newe,  
Under thy long lokkes thou most have  
the scalle

But after my making thou write more  
trewe.

So ofte a daye I mot thy werk renewe,  
Hit to correcte and eek to rubbe and  
scrape;

And al is through thy negligence and  
rape.

THE HOUS OF FAME

FIRST BOOK

(*Proem*)

GOD turne us every dreem to gode!  
For hit is wonder, be the Rode,  
To my wyt, what causeth swevenes  
Either on morwés, or on evenes;  
And why theffect folwéth of somme,  
And of somme hit shal never come;  
Why that is an avisioun,  
And this a revelacioun;  
Why this a dreem, why that a sweven,  
And noght to every man liche even;  
10 Why this a fantom, why these oracles,  
I noot: but who-so of these miracles  
The causés knoweth bet then I,  
Devyne he; for I certeynly  
Ne can hem noght, ne never thynke  
To besily my wyt to swynke,  
To knowe of hir signifaunce

7. P *a visioun*; Cx. *that it is a visioun*; Th. *that it is*.

8. All insert *why*, caught from line above.

17. P Cx. Th. *significacions*.

The gendrés neither the distaunce  
Of tymés of hem, ne the causés,  
Or why this moré then that cause is;  
As if folkés complexiouns  
Make hem dreme of reflexiouns;  
Or ellés thus, as other sayn,  
For to greet febleness of her brayn,  
By abstinance, or by seeknesse,  
Prisoun, stewe or greet distresse;  
Or ellés by disordynaunce,  
Of naturel acustomaunce,  
That somme men ben to curious  
In studie, or melancolious;  
Or thus, so inly ful of drede,  
That no man may him boté rede;  
Or ellés that devocioun  
Of somme, and contemplacioun,  
Causeth swiché dremés ofte;

18. Cx. Th. *dystinctions*.

19. P Cx. Th. insert *the* before *tymes*.

20. F B *For why*. All read *this is*.

26. P *stoe*; Cx. Th. *stryf* for *stewe*.

32. F B *bote bede*.

Or that the cruel lyf unsofte  
 Which these ilkè lovers leden,  
 That hopen over moche or dreden,  
 That purely hir impressiouns  
 Causeth hem have visiouns ; 40  
 Or if that spirits have the myght  
 To makè folk to dreme a-nyght ;  
 Or if the soule, of propre kynde,  
 Be so parfit as men fynde,  
 That hit forwot that is to come,  
 And that hit warneth alle and somme  
 Of everiche of her adventures,  
 By avisiouns, or by figures,  
 But that our flesh ne hath no myght  
 To understonden hit aright, 50  
 For hit is warnèd to derklý ;  
 But why the cause is, nocht wot I.  
 Wel worthe, of this thyng, gretè clerkes,  
 That trete of that, and other werkes ;  
 For I of noon opinioun  
 Nil as now makè menciouun ;  
 But oonly that the holy rode  
 Furne us every dreem to gode ;  
 For never sith that I was born,  
 Ne no man ellès me beforun, 60  
 Mette, I trowè stedfastly,  
 So wonderful a dreem as I  
 The tenthè day [dide] of Decembre ;  
 The which, as I can now remembre,  
 wol yow tellèn every dele.

(The Invocation)

But at my gynnyng, trusteth wel,  
 wol make invocacioun,  
 Vith special devocioun  
 Into the god of slepe anoon, 70  
 hat dwelleth in a cave of stoon,  
 Upon a stream that cometh fro Lete,  
 hat is a flood of helle unswete,  
 esyde a folk men clepe Cymérie ;  
 here slepeth ay this god unmeric,

40. F B *hem avisiouns.*

63. Willert reads *dide* for *now* of the MSS. P  
 id. Cx. wrongly insert *dide* before *I* in l. 62,  
 iving caught it from its right place in l. 63.

64. F *yow* for *now*; Cx. omits *now*.

65. P Cx. omit this and next line.

69. *god of slepe*, Morpheus; cp. *Dethe of the  
 schesse*, l. 137, and *Metamorphoses*, xi. l. 592 ff.

71. *Lete*, Lethe.

73. *Cymérie*, Cimmeria.

With his slepy thousand sones,  
 That alway for to slepe hir wone is ;  
 That to this god, that I of rede,  
 Preye I, that he wol me spede,  
 My sweven for to telle aright, 80  
 If every dreem stonde in his myght ;  
 And he that mover is of al  
 That is and was, and ever shal,  
 So yive hem joyè that hit here,  
 Of alle that they dreme to-yere ;  
 And for to stonden alle in grace  
 Of hir loves, or in what place  
 That hem were levest for to stonde,  
 And shelde hem fro povérte and shonde,  
 And fro unhappe and ech disese,  
 And sende hem al that may hem plese, 90  
 That take hit wel and scorne hit nocht,  
 Ne hit mysdemen in her thoght,  
 Through malicious entencioun.  
 And who-so, through presumpcioun,  
 Or hate, or scorne, or through envye,  
 Dispit, or jape, or vilanýe,  
 Mysdeme hit, pray I Jesus God,  
 That (dreme he barfoot, dreme he shod),  
 That every harm, that any man 100  
 Hath had sith the world began,  
 Befalle him thérof, or he sterve,  
 And graunt he mote hit ful deserve,  
 Lo ! with swich a conclusioun,  
 As hadde of his avisioun  
 Cresus, that was kyng of Lyde,  
 That high upon a gebet dyde !  
 This prayer shal he have of me ;  
 I am no bet in charité.

Now herkneth, as I have yow seyde,  
 What that I mette or I abreyde. 110

(The Dream)

Of Decembrè the tenthè day,  
 Whan hit was nyght, to slepe I lay,  
 Right ther as I was wonte to done,  
 And fil on slepè wonder sone,  
 As he that wery was for-go  
 On pilgrymagè mylès two  
 To the córseynt Léonard,  
 To makè lythe of that was hard.  
 But as I sleep, me mette I was

105. *Crasus*, Cræsus, king of Lydia.

119. MSS. *slepè*. Cp. l. 438.

120 Withyn a temple y-mad of glas ;  
 In whiche ther weré mo ymáges  
 Of gold, stondynge in divers stages,  
 And mo riché tabernacles,  
 And with perré mo pynacles,  
 And mo curious portreytures,  
 And queynté maner of figúres  
 Of golde werke, then I sawgh ever.  
 But certeynly I nysté never  
 Wher that I was, but wel wyste I,  
 Hit was of Venus redély,  
 130 This temple ; for in portreyture,  
 I saw anoon right hir figure  
 Naked fletynge in a see.  
 And also on hir heed, pardé,  
 Hir rosé garlond white and reed,  
 And hir comb to kembe hir heed,  
 Hir dowvés, and daun Cupidó,  
 Hir blyndé sone, and Vulcanó,  
 That in his facé was ful broun.

But as I roméd up and down,  
 140 I fònd that on a walle ther was  
 Thus writen on a table of bras :  
 ‘ I wol now synge, gif that I can,  
 The armés, and also the man,  
 That first cam, through his destinee,  
 Fúgitif of Troy contree,  
 In Itáile, with ful moche pyne,  
 Unto the strondés of Lavyne.’  
 And tho began the story anoon,  
 As I shal tellé you echoon.

First saw I the destruccioun  
 150 Of Troyé through the Greek Synoun,  
 [That] with his falsé forswerynge,  
 And his chere and his lesynge  
 Made thè hors broght into Troye,  
 Through which Troyens loste al her joye.

And after this was grave, allas !  
 How Ilioun assailed was  
 And wonne, and kyng Priám y-slayn,  
 160 And Polites, his sone, certayne,  
 Dispitously of daun Pirrús.

135. P *Her roosgarland on her hede*, and om. next line; Cx. *Rose garlondes swellynge as a mede*, And also *fleyng about her hede*.

143. Cx. *wold . . . now and I*; F B say for *synge*.

148. *Lavyne*, Lavinium.

152. *Synoun*, Sinon; cp. *Æn.* ii. l. 195.

153. All omit *That*.

158. *Ilioun*, Ilium.

161. *Pirrús*, Pyrrhus.

And next that saw I how Venús,  
 Whan that she saw the castel brende,  
 Doun fro the hevene gan descende,  
 And bad hir sone Eneas flee ;  
 And how he fledde, and how that he  
 Escapéd was from al the pres,  
 And took his fader, Anchisés,  
 And bar him on his bakke away,  
 Crying, ‘ Allas, and welaway !’  
 170 The whiche Anchises in his honde  
 Bar the goddess of the londe,  
 Thilké that unbrendé were.

And I saw next in al this fere,  
 How Creusa, daun Eneas wyf,  
 Which that he lovèd as his lyf,  
 And hir yongé sone Iuló  
 And eek Ascanius alsó,  
 Fledden eek with drery chere,  
 That hit was pitee for to here ;  
 180 And in a forest as they wente,  
 At a turnynge of a wente,  
 How Creusa was y-lost, allas !  
 That deed,—ne wot I how—she was ;  
 How he hir soughte, and how hir  
 gost

Bad hym to flee the Greké ost,  
 And seyde, he moste into Itaile,  
 As was his destinee, sauns faille,  
 That hit was pitee for to here,  
 Whan hir spirit gan appere,  
 190 The wordés that to him she seyde,  
 And for to kepe hir sone him preyde.

Ther saw I graven eek how he,  
 His fader eek, and his meynce,  
 With his shippés gan to saile  
 Toward the contree of Itaile,  
 As streight as that they myghté go.

Ther saw I thee, cruel Juno,  
 That art daun Jupiterés wyf,  
 That hast y-hated, al thy lyf,  
 200 Al the Troyanyshé blood,  
 Renne and crye, as thou were wood,  
 On Eolus, the god of wyndes,  
 To blowen out of allé kyndes  
 So loudé that he shuldé drenche  
 Lord and lady, grome and wenche

177. *Iuló*, Iulus, the same person as Ascanius cp. *Æn.* i. l. 267.

184. All MSS. read *not* (= *ne wot*).

196. P omits this line.

198. P Cx. Th. insert *eek* before *thee*.

Of al the Troyan nacioun,  
Withoute any savacioun.

Ther saw I swich tempeste arise,  
That every herté myghte agrise, 210  
To see hit peynted on the walle.

Ther saw I graven eek withalle,  
Venus; how ye, my lady dere,  
Wepying with ful woful chere,  
Prayen Jupiter on hye  
To save and kepé that navye  
Of the Troyan Eneás,  
Sith that he hir soné was.

Ther saw I Jovés Venus kisse,  
And graunted of the tempest lisse. 220

Ther saw I how the tempest stente,  
And how with allé pyne he wente,  
And prevély took arryfrage  
In the contree of Cartage;  
And on the morwé, how that he  
And a knyght hight Achaté,  
Setten with Venus that day,  
Joyng in a queynt array,  
As she hadde ben an hunteresse,  
With wynd blowyng upon hir tresse;  
How Eneas gan him to pleyne, 231  
Vhan that he knew hir, of his  
peyne;

and how his shippés dreynté were,  
Or ellés lost, he nyste where;  
How she gan hym comforté tho,  
and bad hym to Cartagé go,  
and ther his folk he shuldé fynde,  
that in the see were left behynde.

And, shortly of this thyng to pace, 240  
he made Eneas so in grace  
of Dido, quene of that contré,  
that, shortly for to tellen, she  
seam his love, and lete him do  
l that wedding longeth to.  
That shulde I speké moré queynte,  
or peyné me my wordés peynte,  
or speke of love? hit wol not be;  
I can not of that faculté.

and eek to tellé the manere  
how that they first aqueyntéd were, 250

208. P of hem sauakon; Cx. Th. of her  
uacion.

226. Achaté, fidus Achates.

237. All read he shulde his folk.

244. F B That that for Al that.

250. F B acquyngeden in fere.

Hit were a longe proces to telle,  
And over long for you to dwelle.

Ther saw I grave, how Eneas  
Toldé Dido every cas,  
That him tidde upon the see.

And after gravé was, how she  
Made of him, shortly, at a word,  
Hir lyf, hir love, hir lust, hir lord;  
And dide him al the reverence,  
And leyde on him al the dispence, 260  
That any woman myghté do,  
Wényng hit hadde al be so,  
As he hir swoor; and hertly demedé  
That he was good, for he swiche semedé.

Allas, what harme doth apparence,  
Whan hit is fals in existence!  
For he to hir a traytour was;  
Wherfor she slow hir-self, allas!

Lo, how a woman doth amys, 270  
To love him that unknowen is!  
For, by Cryst, lo! thus it fareth;  
'Hit is not al gold that glareth.'  
For, al-so brouke I wel myn heed,  
Ther may be under goodliheed  
Keveréd many a shrewéd vyce;

Therfor be no wyght so nyce,  
To take a love only for chere,  
Or speche, or for frendly manere;  
For this shal every woman fynde,  
That som man of his puré kynde 280  
Wol shewen outward the faireste,  
Til he have caught that what him  
leste;

And thanné wol he causés fynde,  
And swerén how she is unkynde,  
Or fals, or prevy or double was.  
Al this seye I be Eneás  
And Dido, and hir nycé lest,  
That lovède al to sone a gest;  
Therfor I wol seye o proverbe,  
That 'he that fully knoweth therbe 290  
May sauffy leye hit to his yé';  
Withouté dreed, that is no lyé.

But let us speke of Eneás,  
How he betrayéd hir, allas!  
And lefte hir ful unkyndély.

254. P Tolde to.

263. F B Th. herby for hertly.

271. P For eny trust lo now; Cx. For every  
trust.

280-283. All omit except Th.

So whan she saw al-utterly,  
That he wolde hir of trouthe faile,  
And wendé fro hir to itaile,  
She gan to wringe hir hondés two.  
'Allas!' quod she, 'what me is wo! 300  
Allas! is every man thus trewe,  
That every yeer wolde have a newe,  
If hit so longé tymé dure?  
Or ellés three, peraventure?  
And thus, of oon he wolde have fame  
In magnyfying of his name;  
Another for frendship, seith he;  
And yet ther shal the thridde be,  
That shal be taken for delyt,  
Loo, or for syngular profit.' 310

In swiché wordés gan to pleyne  
Dido of hir greté peyne,  
As me metté redély;  
Non other atour alegge I.  
'Allas!' quod she, 'my sweté herte,  
Have pitee of my sorwés smerte,  
And slee me not! go noght away!  
'O woful Dido, welaway!'  
Quod she to hir selvé tho.

'O Eneás! what wil ye do! 320  
O, that your lové, ne your bonde,  
That ye han sworn with your right honde,  
Ne my cruel deeth,' quod she,  
'May holdé you still heer with me!  
O, haveth of my deeth pitee!  
Y-wys, my deré herté, ye  
Known ful wel that never yit,  
As fer-forth as I haddé wyt,  
Agilte [I] you in thoght ne dede.  
O men, have ye swich goodliheed 330  
In speche, and never a deel of trouthe?  
Allas, that ever haddé routhe  
Any woman on any man!  
Now see I wel, and tellé can,  
We wrecched wymmen conne noon art;  
For certeyn, for the moré parte,  
Thus we be servéd everichone.  
How soré that ye men conne grone,  
Anoon as we have you receyved,  
Certainly we ben deceyved; 340  
For, though your love laste a sesoun,  
Wayte upon the conclusioun,

305. F B *As thus.*329. All omit *I.*333. P Cx. Th. *a fals man.*

And eek how that ye détermynen,  
And for the moré part diffynen.

'O, welaway that I was born!  
For through you is my namé lorn,  
And myn actés red and songe  
Over al this londe, on every tonge.  
O wikké Famé! for ther nys  
Nothyng so swift, lo, as she is! 350  
O, sooth is, every thyng is wyst,  
Though hit be keveréd with the myst.  
Eek, thogh I myghte enduren ever,  
That I have doon rekever I never,  
That I ne shal be seyde, allas,  
Y-shaméd be through Eneás,  
And that I shal thus jugéd be,—  
"Lo, right as she hath doon, now she  
Wol do eftsonés, hardily."

Thus seyde the peple prevély.' 360  
But that is doon nis not to done;  
Al hir compleynt ne al hir mone,  
Certeyn avayleth hir not a stre.

And whan she wisté sothly he  
Was forth unto his shippés goon,  
She into hir chambre wente anoon,  
And calléd on hir suster Anne,  
And gan her to compleyné thanne;  
And seyde, that she causé was,  
That she first lovéde him, alas, 370  
And thus counselléd hir therto.  
But what! whan this was seyde and do,  
She roof hir-selvé to the herte,  
And deyde through the woundé smerte.  
But al the maner how she deyde,  
And al the wordés that she seyde,  
Who-so to knowe hit hath purpos,  
Rede Virgile in Eneïdos,  
Or the Epistle of Ovide,  
What that she wroot or that she dide;  
And neré hit to long tendyte, 380  
By God, I woldé hit here write.

But, welaway! the harm, the routhe,  
That hath betid for swich untrouthe,  
As men may ofte in bokés rede,

347. F B *your* for *myu*; F B insert *al* before *myu*.362. All read *But* before *Al*, caught from lit above; P *compleynynge ne hir*; Cx. Th. *hir*.370. All except Th. omit *him*; P Cx. *so first*, perhaps rightly.381. B P Cx. *neré it were*; F *nor hyt were*.

And al day seen hit yet in dede,  
That for to thenken hit a tene is.  
Lo, Demophon, duk of Athenis,  
How he forswor him ful falsly,  
And trayéd Phillis wikkedly, 390  
That kyngés doghter was of Trace,  
And falsly gan his termé pace ;  
And when she wyste that he was fals,  
She heng hir-selven by the hals,  
For he hadde do hir swich untrouthe ;  
Loo ! was not this a wo and routhe ?

Eek lo ! how fals and recchèles  
Was to Breseida Achillés,  
And Paris to Enoné ;  
And Jason to Isiphilé ; 400  
And eft Jason to Medéa ;  
Ercúles to Dyanirá ;  
For he lefte hir for Iólé,  
That made him cacche his deeth, pardé.

How fals eek was he, Theséus ;  
That, as the story telleth us,  
How he betrayéd Adriáne ;  
The devel be his soulés bane !  
For had he laughéd, had he loured, 410  
He mosté have ben al devoured,  
If Adriane ne haddé be.

And, for she hadde of him pitee,  
She made him fro the deeth escape,  
And he made hir a ful fals jape ;  
For after this, withyn a while,  
He lefte hir slepyng in an ile,  
Deserte alone, right in the se,  
And stal away, and leet hir be ;  
And took hir suster Phedra tho 420  
With him, and gan to shippé go.

And yet he haddé y-sworn to here,  
On al that ever he myghté swere,  
That so she savéde him his lyf,  
He wolde have take hir to his wyf,  
For she desiréde nothing ellés,  
In certeyn, as the book us tellés.

But to excusen Eneás  
Fulliche of his getré trespas,

388. *Demophon* and the other false lovers mentioned below are referred to in the *Heroides*, Epistles ii. iii. v. vi. ix. x. xi.

398. *Breseida*, Briseis.

400. *Isiphilé*, Hypsipyle ; cp. *L. of G. W.*

407. *Adriáne*, Ariadne.

428. Th. inserts *al* before *his* ; F B of *al his respas*.

The book seyth Mercurie, sauns faile,  
Bad him go into Itaile, 430  
And leve Auffrikés regioun,  
And Dido and hir fairé toun.

Tho saw I grave how to Itaile  
Daun Eneas is go to saile ;  
And how the tempest al began,  
And how he loste his sterésman,  
Which that the stere, or he took keep,  
Smot over bord, lo as he sleep.

And also saw I how Sibyle  
And Eneas, beside an yle, 440  
To hellé wentén, for to see  
His fader Anchises the free,  
How he ther fond Palinurus,  
And also Dido, and Deiphebús,  
And every torment eek in helle  
Saw he, which is long to telle.  
Which who-so willeth for to knowe,  
He mosté redé many a rowe  
On Virgile or on Claudian,  
Or Daunté, that hit tellé can. 450

Tho saw I grave al tharivaile  
That Eneas had in Itaile ;  
And with kyng Latyne his treté,  
And alle the bataillés that he  
Was at himself, and eek his knyghtés,  
Or he hadde al y-wonne his rightés ;  
And how he Turnus refté his lyf,  
And wan Lavyna to his wyf ;  
And al the marvelous signals  
Of the goddés celestials ; 460

How, mawgré Juno, Eneás  
For al hir sleighte and hir compas,  
Achevéde al his aventure ;  
For Jupiter took of him cure,

At the prayere of Venús, —  
The whiche I preye alway save us,  
And us ay of our sorwés lighte !

When I hadde seyén al this sighte  
In this noble temple thus,  
'A, Lord !' thoughte I, 'that madest us,  
Yet saw I never swich noblesse 471  
Of ymagés, ne swich richesse,

429. *The book*, i.e. *Æn.* iv. 252 ff.

446. P Cx. *whyche no tonge can telle*.

449. *Claudian*, Claudius Claudianus wrote *De Raptu Proserpine* in the 4th century.

450. *Daunté*, Dante in the *Inferno*.

453. *Latyne*, Latinus, king of the Rutuli.

458. *Lavyna*, Lavinia, daughter of Latinus.

As I saw gravén in this chirche ;  
 But not woot I who dide hem wirche,  
 Ne wher I am, ne in what contree.  
 But now wol I go out and see,  
 Right at the wyket, yif I can  
 See o-wher any steryng man,  
 That may me tellé wher I am.'  
 When I out of the dorés cam, 480  
 I faste abouté me behelde.  
 Then sawgh I but a largé feld,  
 As fer as ever I myghté see,  
 Withouten toun, or hous, or trec,  
 Or bush, or gras, or eréd lond ;  
 For al the feld nas but of sonde,  
 As smal as man may see yet lye  
 In the desert of Lybye ;  
 Ne no maner créature,

478. Th. *sterynge any.*

That is y-formed by nature, 490  
 Ne saw I me to rede or wysse.  
 'O Crist,' thoughte I, 'that art in blisse,  
 Fro fantom and illusioun  
 Me save !' and with devocioun  
 Myn yēn to the heven I caste.  
 Tho was I war lo! at the laste,  
 That faste be the sonne, as hȳe  
 As kenné myghte I with myn yē,  
 Me thoughte I saw an egle sore,  
 But that hit semedé mochē more 500  
 Then I hadde any egle seyn.  
 But, this as sooth as deeth certeyn,  
 Hit was of gold, and shoon so bright,  
 That never saw men swich a sight,  
 But-if the heven hadde y-wonne  
 Al newe of gold another sonne ;  
 So shoon the eglés fethrés brighte,  
 And somewhat dounward gan hit lighte.

## SECOND BOOK

(*Proem*)

Now herkneth every maner man,  
 That English understandé kan,  
 And listeth of my dreem to lere ;  
 For at the firsté shul ye here  
 So sely an avisyon,  
 That Isayé ne Scipioun,  
 Ne kyng Nabugodonosor,  
 Pharo, Turnús, ne Elcanor,  
 Ne metté swich a dreem as this.  
 Now fairé blisful, O Cipris, 10  
 So be my favour at this tyme !  
 And ye, me to endite and ryme  
 Helpeth, that on Parnaso dwelle,  
 By Elicon the cleré welle.

O Thought, that wroot al that I mette,

4. F B Th. *For now at erste shal.*
6. *Isaye*, Isaiah. *Scipioun*, cp. *P. of Foules*, l. 31 note.
7. *Nabugodonosor*, Nebuchadnezzar, a variant of the *Vulgate* spelling Nabuchodonosor.
8. *Pharo*, Pharaoh. *Elcanor*, perhaps Elkanah (*Vulgate* Elcana); cp. 1 Sam. i. 1.
10. *Cipris*, Venus; cp. *P. of Foules*, l. 277 note.
13. *Parnaso*, Parnassus.
14. *Elicon*; cp. *Anelida*, l. 17 note.
15. *Thought*; cp. *Inferno*, ii. 8:—

O mente, che scrivesti ciò ch'io vidi.

It here means memory.

And in the tresorie hit shette  
 Of my brayn ! now shal men se  
 If any vertu in thee be,  
 To tellén al my dreem aright ;  
 Now kythé thyn engyn and myght ! 23

(*The Dream*)

This egle of which I now have told,  
 That shoon with fethrés alle of gold,  
 Which that so hyé gan to sore,  
 I gan beholdé more and more, 10  
 To see her beautee and the wonder,  
 But never was ther dynt of thonder,—  
 Ne that thyng that men callé foudre,  
 That smyteth sone a tour to poudre,  
 And in his swifté comyng brende,—  
 That so swythé gan descende, 3  
 As this foul when hit behelde,  
 That I a-roume was in the felde ;  
 And with his grymmé pawés stronge,  
 Withyn his sharpé naylés longe,  
 Me, fleyngé, at a swappe he hente,  
 And with his sours a-geyn up wente,

20. P Th. insert *thy* before *myght*.
28. P Cx. Th. *smyte* for *smyeth*; F B *some* *lyme a toure of poudre*.
30. P Cx. Th. insert *dounward* after *gan*.



Me caryng in his clawes starke,  
 As lightly as I were a larke,  
 How high, I cannot tellè yow,  
 For I cam up, I nystè how. 40  
 For so astonyèd and a-sweved  
 Was every vertu in my heved,  
 What with his sours and with my drede,  
 That al my felyng gan to dede ;  
 For why hit was to greet affray.

Thus I long in his clevel lay,  
 Til at the laste he to me spak  
 In mannès vois, and seyde, 'Awak !  
 And be not so a-gaste, for shame !'  
 And calledè me tho by my name. 50  
 And for I sholde the bet abreyde,  
 Me mette, 'Awak,' to me he seyde,  
 Right in the samè vois and stevene,  
 That useth oon I coudè nevene ;  
 And with that vois, soth for to seyne,  
 My myndè cam to me ageyn  
 For hit was goodly seyde to me,  
 So nas hit never wont to be.

And herwithal I gan to stere,  
 And he me in his feet to bere, 60  
 Til that he felte that I hadde hete,  
 And felte eek tho myn hertè bete.  
 And tho gan he me to disporte,  
 And with wordès to comforte,  
 And saydè twyès, 'Seynte Marie !  
 Thou art noyous for to carie,  
 And nothyng nedith hit pardè  
 For, al-so wys God helpe me,  
 As thou noon harm shalt have of this ;  
 And this cas that betid thee is, 70  
 Is for thy lore and for thy prow,—  
 Let see ! darst thou yet lokè now ?  
 Be ful assurèd, boldèly,  
 I am thy frend.' And therwith I  
 Gan for to wondren in my mynde.

O God,' thoghte I, 'that madest  
 kynde,  
 what I noon other weyès dye ?  
 Vher Joves wol me stellifye,  
 or what thing may this signifye ?  
 neyther am Énok, ne Elyè, 80  
 ne Romulus, ne Ganymede,  
 what was y-bore up, as men rede,

To hevене with daun Jupiter,  
 And made the goddès botèler.'

Lo ! this was tho my fantasye !  
 But he that bar me gan espye  
 That I so thoghte, and seyde this :  
 'Thow demest of thy-self amys ;  
 For Jovès is not theraboutè,—  
 I dar wel putte thee out of doute,— 90  
 To make of thee as yit a sterre.  
 But er I bere thee mochè ferre,  
 I wol thee tellè what I am,  
 And whider thou shalt, and why I cam  
 To donè this, so that thou take  
 Good herte, and not for ferè quake.'  
 'Gladly,' quod I. 'Now wel,' quod he :—  
 'First, I, that in my feet have thee,  
 Of which thou haste a feer and wonder,  
 Am dwellyng with the god of thonder, 100  
 Which that men callèn Jupiter,  
 That dooth me flee ful oftè fer  
 To do al his comaundèment.  
 And for this cause he hath me sent  
 To thee : now herké, by thy trouthe !  
 Certeyn he hath of thee routhe,  
 That thou so longè trewèly  
 Hast servèd so ententifly  
 His blindè nevew Cupido,  
 And fair [dame] Venús also, 110  
 Withoutè guerdoun ever yit,  
 And neverthesse hast set thy wyt—  
 Although that in thy heed ful lyte is—  
 To makè bookès, songes, or dytees,  
 In ryme, or ellès in cadence,  
 As thou best canst in reverence  
 Of Love, and of his servants eke,  
 That have his servyse soght, and seke ;  
 And peynest thee to preyse his arte,  
 Although thou haddest never part ; 120  
 Wherfor, al-so God me blesse,  
 Jovès halt hit greet humblesse,  
 And vertu eek, that thou wolt make  
 A-nyght ful ofte thyn heed to ake,  
 In thy studie so thou writest,  
 And evermo of love enditest,  
 In honour of him and preisynges,  
 And in his folkès furtherynges,  
 And in hir matere al devyest,

49. Cx. Th. P *agast so* ; F B omit *so*.

80. *Enok*, Enoch.

80. *Elye*, Elias.

110. All omit *dame*. Skeat inserts *goddesse* after *Venus*.

113. All read *lytel*.

And noght him nor his folk despisest, 130  
 Although thou maist go in the daunce  
 Of hem that him list not avaunce.

‘Wherfor, as I seyde, y-wys,  
 Jupiter considereth wel this;  
 And also, beau sir, other thynges;  
 That is, that thou hast no tydynges  
 Of Lovés folk, if they be glade,  
 Ne of nothyng ellés that God made;  
 And noght only fro fer contree,  
 That ther no tydyng cometh to thee, 140

But of thy verray neyghébore  
 That dwellen almost at thy dores,  
 Thou herest neither that ne this;  
 For when thy labour doon al is,  
 And hast y-maad thy rekenynges,  
 In stede of reste and newé thynges,  
 Thou gost hoom to thy hous anoon,  
 And, also domb as any stoon,  
 Thou sittest at another boke,  
 Til fully daswéd is thy looke, 150  
 And lyvest thus as an herémte,  
 Although thyn abstynence is lyte.

‘And therfor Jovés, through his grace,  
 Wol that I bere thee to a place,  
 Which that hight the Hous of Fame,  
 To do thee som disport and game,  
 In som recompensacioun  
 Of labour and devocioun  
 That thou hast had, lo! causéles,  
 To Cupido the rechéles. 160

And thus this god, through his merite,  
 Wol with som maner thyng thee quyte,  
 So that thou wolt be of good chere.  
 For trusté wel that thou shalt here,  
 When we be comén ther I seye,  
 Mo wonder thyngés, dar I leye,  
 Of Lovés folké mo tidynges,  
 Both sothé sawés and lesynges;  
 And moo lovés newe begonne,  
 And longe y-servéd lovés wonne; 170  
 And mo lovés casuellý  
 That been betid, no man wot why,  
 But “as a blynd man stert an hare”;  
 And more jolytee and well-fare,  
 Whil that they fynden love of stele,  
 As thinketh hem, and over-al wele;  
 Mo discords, and mo jelousýes,  
 Mo murmurs, and mo novelryés,

134. F B omit *wel*.

And mo dissymulaciouns,  
 And feynéd reparaciouns; 180  
 And mo berdés in two houres—  
 Withouté rasour or sisoures—

Y-maad, then greynés be of sondes;  
 And eek mo holdýng in hondes,  
 And also mo renouelaunces  
 Of olde forletén aqueyntaunces;  
 Mo lové-dayés, and acordes,  
 Then on instruments ben cordes;  
 And eek of lovés mo eschaunges,  
 Than ever cornés were in graunges; 190  
 Unethé maistow trowen this?”  
 Quod he. ‘No, helpe me God so wys!’  
 Quod I. ‘No? why?’ quod he. ‘For hit  
 Were impossible to my wyt,  
 Though that Fame hadde al the pies  
 In al a realme, and al the spies,  
 How that yet she shulde here all this,  
 Or they espie hit.’ ‘O yis, yis!’  
 Quod he to me, ‘that can I preve  
 By resoun, worthy for to leve, 200  
 So that thou yeve thyn advertence  
 To understandé my sentence.

‘First shalt thou herén where she  
 dwelleth,

And so thyn owné book hit telleth,  
 Hir paleys stant, as I shal seye  
 Right even a-myddés of the weye,  
 Betwixen hevене, erthe, and see;  
 That whatsoever in al these three  
 Is spoken in privee or aperte, 210  
 The wey therto is so overte,  
 And stant eek in so juste a place,  
 That every soun mot to hit pace,  
 Or what so cometh fro any tonge,  
 Be hit rounéd, red, or songe,  
 Or spoke in suertee or in drede,  
 Certeyn hit mosté thider nede.

‘Now herké wel; for-why I wille  
 Tellen thee a propré skile,  
 And a worthy demonstracioun  
 In myn ymagynacioun. 22

‘Geffrey, thou wost right wel this,

182. P inserts *any* before *rasour*.  
 187. P Cx. Th. insert *no* before *acordes*, pe-  
 haps rightly.

192. Cx. Th. *So helpe*. P Cx. Th. *as for so*.

195. P Cx. Th. omit *that*.

219. F *worthe a*; B *worth a*. Perhaps *wor-*  
*a* is the true reading.

221. P Cx. Th. *wotest wel*.

That every kyndly thyng that is,  
 Hath a kyndly stede ther he  
 May best in hit conservéd be ;  
 Unto which place every thyng,  
 Through his kyndly enclynyng,  
 Moveth for to comèn to,  
 Whan that it is away therfro ;  
 As thus, lo, thou maist al day see  
 That any thing that hevye be, 230  
 As stoon or leed, or thyng of wighte,  
 And ber hit never so hye on highte,  
 Lat go thyn hand, hit falleth doun.  
 ‘ Right so seye I, by fire or soun,  
 Or smoke, or other thyngés lighte,  
 Alwey they seke upward on highte ;  
 Whil ech of hem is at his large,  
 Lyght thyng up, and dounward charge.  
 ‘ And for this causé mayst thou see,  
 That every ryver to the see 240  
 Enclynéd is to go by kynde.  
 And by these skillés, as I fynde,  
 Hath fish dwellyng in floode and see,  
 And treés eek on erthé be.  
 Thus every thyng by this resoun  
 Hath his propre mansioun,  
 To which hit seketh to repaire,  
 Ther as hit shuldé not paire.  
 Loo, this sentence is known couthe  
 Of every philosophrés mouthe, 250  
 As Aristotle and dan Platon,  
 And other clerkés many oon,  
 And to confirmé my resoun,  
 Thou wost wel this, that speche is soun,  
 Or ellés no man myghte hit here ;  
 Now herkne what I wol thee lere.  
 ‘ Soun is noght but eyr y-broken,  
 And every spechè that is spoken,  
 Lowde or pryvee, foul or fair,  
 n his substance is but air ; 260  
 ‘ Or as flaumbe is but lightéd smoke,  
 Right so soun is air y-broke.  
 But this may be in many wyse,  
 Of which I wil thee two devyse,  
 As soun that cometh of pipe or harpe.  
 ‘ Or whan a pipe is blowén sharpe,

The air is twyst with violence,  
 And rent : lo, this is my sentence ;  
 Eek, whan men harpé-stryngés smyte,  
 Whether hit be moche or lyte, 270  
 Lo, with the strook the air to-breketh ;  
 Right so hit breketh whan men speketh.  
 Thus wost thou wel what thyng is speche.  
 ‘ Now hennésforth I wol thee teche,  
 How every speche, or noise, or soun,  
 Through his multiplicacioun,  
 Thogh hit were pipéd of a mouse,  
 Moot nedés come to Famés House.  
 I preve hit thus—tak hedé now—  
 By experience ; for if that thou 280  
 Throwe in a water now a stoon,  
 Wel wost thou, hit wol make anoon  
 A litel roundel as a cercle,  
 Paraunter brood as a covercle ;  
 And right anoon thow shalt see weel,  
 That wheel wol cause another wheel,  
 And that the thridde, and so forth, brother,  
 Every cercle causyng other,  
 Broder than himselve was ;  
 And thus, fro roundel to compas, 290  
 Ech aboute other goyngé,  
 Causèth of othrés steryngé,  
 And multiplying evermo,  
 Til that hit be so fer y-go  
 That hit at bothé brynkés be.  
 Al-thogh thou mowe hit not y-see  
 Above, hit goth yet alway under,  
 Although thou thenke hit a gret wonder.  
 And who-so seith of trouthe I varie,  
 Bid him provén the contrarie. 300  
 And right thus every word, y-wys,  
 That loude or pryvee spoken is,  
 Moveth first an air aboute,  
 And of his movyng, out of doute,  
 Another air anoon is mevéd,  
 As I have of the water prevéd,  
 That every cercle causeth other.  
 Ryght so of air, my levé brother ;

284. P Cx. Th. insert *as* before *brood*.285. P Cx. omit this and the next three lines ;  
 F B Th. insert *cercle* after *wheel*, to which it was  
 originally a gloss.289. F B *Wyder than*.292. F B *Caused*.296. P Cx. Th. *see*.297. F B omit *alway*.303. P Cx. *in the air*.304. F B *this for his*.237, 238. Cx. Th. invert these lines. Cx. Th.  
 ight thynges up ; P *Light thynges upward ;*  
 B *upward for up*.254. P Cx. Th. omit *this*.260. P Cx. *an air*.262. P Cx. Th. *is soun*.

Everich air in other stereth  
 More and more, and speche up bereth 310  
 Or vois, or noise, or word, or soun,  
 Ay through multiplicacioun,  
 Til hit be atte House of Fame,—  
 Tak hit in earnest or in game.

‘Now have I told, if thou have mynde,  
 How speche or soun, of puré kynde  
 Enclynéd is upward to meve ;  
 This, mayst thou felé, wel I preve.

And that same place, y-wys,  
 That every thyng enclyned to is, 320  
 Hath his kyndeliché stede :  
 That sheweth hit, withoutén drede,  
 That kyndely the mansioun  
 Of every speche, of every soun,  
 Be hit either foul or fair,  
 Hath his kyndé place in air.

And syn that every thyng that is  
 Out of his kyndé place, y-wys,  
 Moveth thider for to go,  
 If hit a-weyè be therfro, 330

As I before have prevéd thee,  
 Hit seweth, every soun, pardee,  
 Moveth kyndely to pace  
 Al up into his kyndely place.

And this place of which I telle,  
 Ther as Famé list to dwelle,  
 Is set amyddés of these three,  
 Heven, erthe, and eek the see,  
 As most conservatif the soun.  
 Than is this the conclusioun, 340  
 That every speche of every man,  
 As I thee tellé first began,  
 Moveth up on high to pace  
 Kyndely to Famés place.

‘Tellé me this feithfully,  
 Have I not prevéd thus simply,  
 Withouten any subtilitee  
 Of speche, or gret prolixitee  
 Of termés of philosophýe,  
 Of figurés of poetrye, 350  
 Or colourés of rethorike ?  
 Pardee, hit oghté thee to lyke ;  
 For hard langage, and hard matére

309. F B omit *in*; Willert reads *another* for *in other*.

319. F *And that sum place stide*; B *And that som stide*; Th. *And that some stede*; P Cx. omit ll. 827-864. *stide* is a gloss on *place*, which has crept into the text. *some* should be *same*.

Is encombrous for to here  
 Atonés; wost thou not wel this ?  
 And I answerde and seyde, ‘Yis.’  
 ‘A ha !’ quod he, ‘lo, so I can,  
 Lewedly to a lewéd man  
 Speke, and shewe him swyché skiles,  
 That he may shake hem by the biles, 360  
 So palpable they shuldén be.

But tel me this now pray I thee,  
 How thinketh thee my conclusioun ?

[Quod he,] ‘A good persuasioun,’  
 Quod I, ‘hit is; and lyk to be  
 Right so as thou hast prevéd me.’  
 ‘By God,’ quod he, ‘and as I leve,  
 Thou shalt have yet, or hit be eve,  
 Of every word of this sentence

A prevé by experience ; 370  
 And with thyn erés herén wel  
 Top and tail, and everydel,  
 That every word that spokén is  
 Cometh into Famés House, y-wys,  
 As I have seyde; what wilt thou more ?

And with this word upper to sore  
 He gan, and seyde, ‘By Seynt Jame !  
 Now wil we spekén al of game.

‘How farest thou?’ quod he to me.  
 ‘Wel,’ quod I. ‘Now see,’ quod he, 380  
 ‘By thy trouthe, yond adoun,  
 Wher that thou knowest any toun,  
 Or hous, or any other thyng.

And whan thou hast of ought knowyng,  
 Loké that thou warné me,  
 And I anoon shal tellé thee  
 How fer thou art now therfro.’

And I adoun gan lokén tho,  
 And beheld feldés and playnes,  
 And now hilles, and now mountaynes, 390  
 Now valeys, and now forestes,  
 And now unethés greté bestes ;  
 Now ryvérés, now citees,  
 Now tounés, and now greté trees,  
 Now shippés seylynge in the see.

But thus sone in a while he  
 Was flowén fro the gróunde so hýe,  
 That al the world, as to myn ýe,  
 No more semedé than a prikke ;  
 Or elles was the air so thikke  
 That I ne myghté not discerné. 400

364. All omit *Quod he*; Skeat inserts.

387. P omits *fer*; F B Th. insert *that after fe*

With that he spak to me as yerne,  
And seyde: 'Seestow any token,  
Or ought that in the world is of spoken?'

I seyde, 'Nay.' 'No wonder nis,'  
Quod he, 'for half so high as this  
Nas Alexandre Macedo;  
Ne the kyng, dan Scipio,  
That saw in dreame, at poynt devys,  
Helle and erthe, and paradys; 410  
Ne eek the wrighte Dedalus,  
Ne his child, nyce Icarus,  
That fleigh so highe that the hete  
His wynges malt, and he fel wete  
In-myd the see, and ther he dreynte,  
For whom was maad a greet compleynte.

'Now turn upward,' quod he, 'thy  
face,

And behold this largé place,  
This eyr; but loké thou ne be  
Adrad of hem that thou shalt see; 420  
For in this regioun, certeyn  
Dwellet many a citezeyn,  
Of which that speketh dan Plato.  
These ben the eyrysh bestés, lo!'  
And tho saw I al that meynce,  
Bothé goon and also flee.

'Now,' quod he tho, 'cast up thyn yé;  
See yonder, lo, the Galaxýe,  
The which men clepe the Milky Wey,  
For hit is white: and somme, parfey 430  
Callen hit Watlyngé strete,  
That onés was brent wyth the hete,  
Whan the sonnés sone, the rede,  
That highté Pheton, woldé lede  
Algate his fader cart, and gye.  
The cart-hors gonné wel espye  
That he [ne] coude no governaunce,  
And gonné for to lepe and daunce,  
And berén him now up, now doun,  
Til that he saw the Scorpioun, 440  
Which that in heven a sign is yit.  
And he, for ferde, lost his wyt  
Of that, and lat the reynés goon  
Of his hors; and they anoon

403, 404. F B omit. P reads, l. 404, *Or ought thou knowest yonder doun; Th. this for the.*

408. *Scipio*, cp. *Parl. of Foules*, l. 31 note.

411. F B *wrecche Dedalus*.

416. F B *makéd moch compleynte*.

427. P Cx. Th. *Lo, quod he, cast*.

437. All omit *ne*.

Gonne up to mounte, and doun descende,  
Til bothe eyr and erthe brende;  
Til Jupiter, lo, atte laste  
Him slow, and fro the carté caste.  
Lo, is it not a greet myschaunce,  
To lete a fole han governaunce 450  
Of thynges that he can not demeyne?'  
And with this word, soth for to  
seyne,

He gan alwey upper to sore,  
And gladded me ay more and more,  
So feithfully to me spak he.

Tho gan I loken under me,  
And behelde the eyrysh bestes,  
Cloudés, mystés, and tempestes,  
Snowés, haylés, reynés, wyndes,  
And thengendryng in hir kyndes, 460  
Al the wey through which I cam;  
'O God,' quod I, 'that made Adam,  
Moche is thy myght and thy noblesse.'

And tho thoughte I upon Boëce,  
That writ 'A thought may flee so hye,  
With fetherés of Philosophie,  
To passen everich element;  
And whan he hath so fer y-went,  
Than may be seen, behynd his bak,  
Cloud, and al that I of spak.' 470

Tho gan I wexen in a were,  
And seyde, 'I woot wel I am here;  
But wher in body or in gost  
I noot y-wys; but God, thou wost!'  
For moré clere entendémé  
Nadde he me never yit y-sent.

And than thoughte I on Marcian,  
And eek on Anteaclaudian,  
That sooth was hir descripcioun  
Of al the hevenés regioun, 480  
As fer as that I saw the preve;  
Therfor I can hem now beleve.

With that this egle gan to crye:  
'Lat be,' quod he, 'thy fantasye;

449. F B *mochil*.

464. *Boece*, cp. Boethius, *De Consolatione Philosophiae*, bk. iv. met. i.

476. F B *Nas never; Th. Nas me never*.

477. *Marcian*, Martianus Mineus Felix Capella, the 8th book, l. 857, of whose *De Nuptiis inter Mercurium et Philologiam* is quoted by Copernicus in support of his system of astronomy; cp. also *March. Tale*, l. 1732 ff.

478. *Anteaclaudian*, 'Anticlaudianus', a Latin poem by Alanus de Insulis; cp. *P. of F.* l. 316.

480. P omits this line.

Wilt thou lere of sterrés aught ?  
 'Nay, certeynly,' quod I, 'right naught.'  
 'And why?' 'For I am now to old.'  
 'Ellés wolde I thee have told,'  
 Quod he, 'the sterrés namés, lo,  
 And al the hevenés signes ther to, 490  
 And which they been.' 'No fors,' quod  
 I.

'Yis, pardee,' quod he, 'wostow why?  
 For whan thou redest poetrye,  
 How goddés gonné stellifye  
 Brid, fish, beste, or him, or here,  
 As the Raven or eyther Bere,  
 Or Arionés harpè fyn,  
 Castor, Pollux, or Delphyn,  
 Or Atlantés doughtrés sevene,  
 How allé these are set in hevene; 500  
 For though thou have hem ofte on  
 honde,

Yet noston not wher that they stonde.'  
 'No fors,' quod I, 'hit is no nede,  
 As wel I leve, so God me spede,  
 Hem that write of this matere,  
 As though I knew hir places here;  
 An eke they shynen here so brighte  
 Hit shuldè shenden al my sighte,  
 To loke on hem.' 'That may wel be,'  
 Quod he. And so forth bar he me 510  
 A whil, and than he gan to crye,  
 That never herde I thyng so hyc,  
 'Now up the heed; for al is wel;  
 Seynt Julyan, lo, bon hostel!  
 See here the Hous of Famè, lo!  
 Maistow not herén that I do?'  
 'What?' quod I. 'The gretè soun,'  
 Quod he, 'that rumbleth up and doun  
 In Famés Hous, ful of tidynges,  
 Bothe of fair speche and chidynges, 520  
 And of fals and soth compounded.  
 Herkne wel; hit is not rouned.  
 Herestow not the gretè swogh?'  
 'Yis, pardee,' quod I, 'wel y-nogh.'  
 'And what soun is it lyk?' quod he.  
 'Peter! betyng of the see,'

496. *eyther Bere*, Ursa Major and Ursa Minor.

497. *Ariones harpe*, cp. *Fasti*, ii. 82.

498. *Delphyn*, the dolphin.

499. *Atlantes doughtrés*, the Pleiades.

514. *Seynt Julyan*. St. Julian, patron of hospitality; cp. *C.T.* Prol. I. 340.

520. P Cx. Th. *and of other thynges*.

Quod I, 'again the rochés holowe,  
 Whan tempest doth the shippés swalowe,  
 And lat a man stonde, out of doute,  
 A mylè thens, and here hit route. 530  
 Or ellés lyke the last humblynge  
 After the clappe of a thundrynge.  
 When Iovés hath the air y-bete;  
 But hit doth me for ferè swete.  
 'Nay, dred thee not therof,' quod he,  
 'Hit is nothyng wil beten thee,  
 Thou shalt non harm have trewely.'

And with this word bothe he and I  
 As nygh the place arryvèd were  
 As men may casten with a spere. 540  
 I nystè how, but in a strete  
 He settè me faire on my fete,  
 And seyde, 'Walkè forth a pas,  
 And tak thyn aventure or cas,  
 That thou shalt fynde in Famés place.'

'Now,' quod I, 'whil we han space  
 To speke, or that I go fro thee,  
 For the love of God, tel me,  
 In sooth, that wil I of thee lere,  
 If this noisè that I here 550  
 Be, as I have herd thee tellen,  
 Of folk that doun in erthè dwellen,  
 And cometh here in the samè wyse  
 As I thee herde or this devyse;  
 And that there lyvès body nys  
 In al that hous that yonder is,  
 That maketh al this loudè fare?'  
 'No,' quod he, 'by Seyntè Clare!  
 And, also wis God redè me,  
 But o thinge I wil warnè thee, 560  
 Of the which thou wolt have wonder.  
 Lo, to the House of Famè yonder,  
 Thou wost now how cometh every  
 speche,  
 Hit nedeth noght eft thee to teche.  
 But understond now right wel this,  
 Whan any speche y-comen is  
 Up to the paleys, anon-right  
 Hit wexeth lyk the samè wyght,  
 Which that the word in erthè spak,  
 Be he clothèd reed or blak; 570

536. Th. B *biten*; Cx. *greue*.

549. P Cx. Th. *I wil*.

552. P Cx. *forth for doun*.

558. *Seynte Clare*, a disciple of St. Francis, whose day is Aug. 12th.

And hath so verray his lyknesse, 571  
 That spak the word, that thou wilt gesse  
 That it the samé body be,  
 Man or woman, he or she.  
 And is not this a wonder thyng?'  
 'Yis,' quod I tho, 'by hevené kyng!'  
 576. P *hevenes.*

And with this worde, 'Farewel,' quod  
 he,  
 'And here I wol abyden thee,  
 And God of hevené sende thee grace,  
 Som good to lernén in this place.' 580  
 And I of him took leve anoon,  
 And gan forth to the paleys goon.

## THIRD BOOK

*(The Invocation)*

O GOD of science and of light,  
 Apollo, through thy greté myght,  
 This lytel lasté book thou gye!  
 Nat that I wilné, for maistrye  
 Here art poetical be shewed;  
 But, for the rym is light and lewed,  
 Yit make hit sumwhat agreable,  
 Thogh som vers faile in a sillable;  
 And that I do no diligence,  
 To shewé craft, but o sentence.\* 10  
 And if, divyné vertu, thou  
 Wilt helpé me to shewé now  
 That in myn hede y-markéd is,—  
 Lo, that is for to menén this,  
 The Hous of Fame for to descryve,—  
 Thou shalt see me go as blyve  
 Unto the nexté laure I see,  
 And kisse it, for hit is thy tree.  
 Now entreth in my breste anoon!

*(The Dream)*

Whan I was fro this egle goon, 20  
 I gan beholde upon this place.  
 And certein, or I ferther pace,  
 I wol yow al thys shap devyse  
 Of hous and site; and al the wyse  
 How I gan to this place aproche,  
 That stood upon so high a roche,  
 Hyer stant there noon in Spayne.  
 But up I clomb with allé payne,  
 And thogh to clymbe it grevedé me,  
 Yit I ententif was to see, 30  
 And for to pouren wonder lowe,  
 If I coude any weyès know

What maner stoon this rochè was;  
 For hit was lyk alynéd glas,  
 But that hit shoon ful moré clere;  
 But of what congeléd matere  
 Hit was, I nysté redély.  
 But at the laste espiéd I,  
 And found that hit was everydeel  
 A roche of yse, and not of steel. 40  
 Thoughte I, 'By Seynt Thomas of Kent!  
 This were a feble foundément,  
 To bidden on a placé hye;  
 He oughte him litel glorifye  
 That her-on bilt, so God me save!'  
 Tho saw I al the half y-grave  
 With famous folkès namès fele,  
 That hadde y-been in mochel wele,  
 And her famès wide y-blowe.  
 But wel unethès coude I knowe 50  
 Any lettrés for to rede  
 Hir namès by; for, out of drede,  
 They were almost of-thowéd so,  
 That of the lettrés oon or two  
 Were molte away of every name.  
 So unfamous was wexe hir fame;  
 But men seyn, 'What may ever laste?'  
 Tho gan I in myn herté caste,  
 That they were molte away with hete,  
 And not away with stormés bete. 60  
 For on that other syde I sey  
 Of this hill, that northward lay,  
 How hit was written full of names  
 Of folk that haddén greté fames  
 Of oldé tyme, and yit they were

34. P *alynde*; Cx. Th. *a lymed*; F B *a thyng of*. I read *alynéd* (=aligned, i.e. placed in lines).

35. P *shewen mor*; Cx. *shewed more*.

41. *Seynt Thomas*, Thomas à Becket.

53. P Cx. *ouerthowed*.

64. P *hedd a fer*; Cx. Th. *had afore*.

6. P Cx. *But the ryme that is so lewed.*

10. P Cx. omit o.

As freshe as men had write hem here  
 The selvè day right, or that houre  
 That I upon hem gan to poure.  
 But wel I wisté what hit made ;  
 Hit was conservèd with the shade, 70  
 Of a castel stood on hy,  
 Al the writynge that I sy ;  
 And stood eek on so cold a place,  
 That hetè myghte it not deface.

Tho gan I up the hill to goon,  
 And fond upon the coppe a woon,  
 That alle the men that ben on lyve  
 Ne han the cunnyng to descryve  
 The beautee of that ilke place,  
 Ne couldè casten no compace 80  
 Swich another for to make,  
 That myghte of beautee be his make ;  
 Ne so wonderliche y-wrought,  
 That hit astonyeth yit my thought,  
 And maketh al my wyt to swynke  
 On this castel for to thynke.  
 So that the gretè craft, beautee,  
 The caste, the curiositee  
 Ne can I not to yow devyse,  
 My wyt nè may me not suffise. 90

But nathèles al the substance  
 I have yit in my remembrance ;  
 For-why me thoughtè, by Seynt Geyle !  
 Al was of stone of beryle,  
 Bothe the castel and the tour,  
 And eek the halle, and every bour,  
 Wythouten pecès or ioynnges.  
 But many subtil compassynges,  
 Babèwynnès and pynacles,  
 Imageries and tabernacles, 100  
 I saw eek, and ful of wyndowes,  
 As flakè falle in gretè snowes.  
 And eek in ech of the pynacles  
 Werèn sondry habitacles,  
 In whichè stodèn al withoute—  
 Ful the castel, al aboute—  
 Of allè maner of mynstrales,

71. F B Th. invert the order of this and the next line. P Cx. Th. insert *that so* before *stood* ; B inserts *that*.

87. F B omit *craft* ; P Cx. Th. insert it wrongly in the next line.

99. F *Rabewyures* ; B *Rabewynnes* ; Cx. *As babewyures* ; Th. *As babewries* ; P *Babewurries*. Skeat rightly reads *Babewinnes* (O.F. *babuin*, L. Lat. *babewynus*, Mod. Engl. *baboon*) ; used of grotesque figures in architecture.

And gestiours, that tellèn tales  
 Bothe of weping and of game,  
 Of al that longeth unto Fame. 110

Ther herde I pleyèn on an harpe  
 That souned bothè wel and sharpe,  
 Orpheus ful craftèly,  
 And on his sydè fastè by  
 Sat the harper Orion  
 And Eacidès Chiron,  
 And other harpers many oon.  
 And the Bret Glascurioun,  
 And smalè harpers with her gleès,  
 Seten under hem in seès, 120  
 And gonne on hem upward to gape,  
 And countrefet hem as an ape,  
 Or as craft countrefeteth kynde.

Tho saw I stonden hem behynde,  
 A-fer fro hem, alle be herselfe,  
 Many thousand tymès twelve,  
 That madèn loudè menstralcyes  
 In cornémusè, and shalmyes,  
 And many other maner pipe,  
 That craftèly begunne to pipe, 130  
 Bothe in doucet and in rede,  
 That ben at festès with the brede,  
 And many floute and liltyng horne,  
 And pipès made of grenè corne,  
 As han thise litel herde-gromes,  
 That kepèn bestès in the bromes.

Ther saw I than dan Cytherus,  
 And of Athenes dan Proserus,  
 And Marcia that lost hir skyn,  
 Bothe in face, bodý, and chyn, 140

112. P Cx. Th. omit *bothe*.

113. P inserts *And*, Cx. Th. insert *Hym* before *Orpheus*. Perhaps the original copy read *Dan Orpheus*, and the first word had become illegible.

115. *Orion*, Arion ; cp. bk. ii. l. 497.

116. *Eacidès Chiron*, i.e. Achilles' Chiron ; Chiron, the centaur, was tutor to Achilles, son of Æacus ; cp. Ovid, *Ars Am.* i. 17, Æacidæ Chiron.

118. *Bret Glascurioun*, the British Glasgerion ; cp. Percy Folio MS. ed. Hales and Furnivall, i. 246.

128. *cornemuse*, a bagpipe. *shalmye*, a shawm, from Lat. 'calamus,' a reed.

137. F B invert this and the next line.

137. F B *Atiteris* for *dan Cytherus*, both perhaps corruptions for *dan Tityrus*.

138. F B *dan Pseustis* ; P *dan presentus*. All three readings are corrupt.

139. *Marcia*, Dante's Marsia (*Parad.* i. 13-27), i.e. Marsyas the male flute-player ; cp. *Metamorphoses*, vi. 382-400.



For that she wolde envýn lo !  
To pipen bet than Apolló.

There saw I famous, olde and yonge,  
Pipers of the Duché tonge,  
To lerné lové-dauncés, sprynges,  
Reyès, and these straungé thynges.

Tho saw I in another place,  
Stondén in a largé space  
Of hem that makén bloody soun,  
In trumpè, beme, and clarioun ; 150  
For in fight and blod-shedyng  
Is uséd gladly clarionyng.

Ther herde I trumpén Messenus,  
Of whom that speketh Virgilius.

Ther herde I Joab trumpe also,  
Theodomas, and other mo ;  
And al that uséde clarion,  
In Cataloigne and Aragon,  
That in hir tymé famous were  
To lerné, saw I trumpè there. 160

Ther saw I sit in other seés,  
Pleyinge upon othéré gleés,  
Whiché that I cannot nevene,  
Mo than sterrés been in hevене,  
Of whiche I nyl as now not ryme,  
For ese of yow, and losse of tyme :  
For tyme y-lost, this knowén ye,  
By no way may recoveréd be.

Ther saw I pleyén jogelours,  
Magiciens, and tregetours, 170  
And phitonesses, charmeresses,  
Oldé wycches, sorceresses,  
That use exorsisaciouns,  
And eek these fumyngaciouns ;  
And clerkés eek, which conné wel  
Al this magik naturel,

146. *Reyes*, round dances, from Dut. 'rey'; cp. Ger. 'Reihentanz', a circular dance.

150. *beme*, a horn, trumpet.

153. *Messenus*, Misenus, son of Æolus, trumpeter first to Hector and then to Æneas; cp. *Æn.* ii. 239 and vi. 162 ff.

155. *Joab*, cp. 2 Sam. ii. 28 ; xviii. 16 ; xx. 22.

156. *Theodomas*, Thiodamas, augur in succession to Amphiaras at the siege of Thebes ; cp. Statius, *Thebaid* viii. 343, and *March. Tale*, l. 720 ff.

162. F B *sondry* for *othere* ; Th. *other sondry*.

169. *jogelours* played, sang, danced, and performed tricks by sleight of hand.

170. *tregetours* performed more elaborate tricks equiring mechanical contrivances.

171. *phitonesses*, pythonesses ; cp. *Freres Tale*,

1510.

174. P omit this line.

That craftély don hir ententes,  
To make, in certeyn ascendentes,  
Imagés, lo, through swych magik,  
To make a man ben hool or syk. 180

Ther saw I thee quene Medeá,  
And Circés eek, and Calipsa ;  
Ther saw I Hermes Ballenus,  
Lymote, and eek Symon Magus.

Ther saw I, and knew hem by name,  
That by such art don men han fame.  
Ther saw I Colle tregetour  
Upon a table of sicamour  
Pleye an uncouth thyng to telle ;  
I saw him carien a wynd-melle 190  
Under a walsh-noté shale.

What shulde I maké lenger tale  
Of al the peple that I say,  
Fro hennés unto domésday ?

Whan I hadde al this folk beholde,  
And fond me lous, and nocht y-holde,  
And eft y-muséd longé while  
Upon these wallés of berile,  
That shoon ful lighter than a glas,  
And made wel moré than hit was, 200  
To semén, every thyng, y-wis,  
As kyndé thyng of Famés is ;  
I gan forth romen til I fond  
The castel-yate on my right hond,  
Which that so wel corvén was,  
That never swich another nas ;  
And yit it was by aventure  
Y-wrought, as often as by cure.

178. *ascendentes*. The ascendent is that point of the zodiac ascending above the horizon at a given time. It was a factor of great importance in calculating nativities.

181. *Medea*, the wife of Jason.

182. *Circés*, Circe ; cp. *Odyssey* x. *Calipsa*, Calypso ; cp. *Odyssey* i.

183. *Hermes Ballenus*. Belinous, the disciple of Hermes. Belinous discovered beneath a statue of Hermes a book explaining the secrets of the universe. *Hermes* is here in the possessive case.

184. *Lymote*, Elymas the sorcerer (Acts xiii. 8), according to Prof. Hale's. *Symon Magus* ; cp. Acts viii. 9.

187. *Colle tregetour*, Colle the juggler, a now unknown celebrity.

194. Cx. Th. *I could not telle tyl domesday*.

197. P *lengur a whyle*, perhaps rightly ; Cx. a *lenger whyle*.

201. P omits this line ; Cx. Th. also omit but insert the line *And thenne anon after this* after l. 202.

208. Cx. Th. *Ywrought by grete and subtyl cure*.

Hit nedeth nocht yow for to tellen,  
 To makè yow to lenger duellen, 210  
 Of this yatès florissynges,  
 Ne of compassès, ne of kervynges,  
 Ne how they hatte in masoneries,  
 As corbets, ful of ymageriès.  
 But, Lord ! so fair it was to shewe  
 For hit was al of gold behewe.  
 But in I wente, and that anoon ;  
 Ther mette I crying many oon,—  
 ‘ A largès, largès ! uphold wel !  
 God save the lady of this pel, 220  
 Our ownè gentil lady Fame,  
 And hem that wilne to have a name  
 Of us !’ Thus herde I crièn alle,  
 And fastè comèn out of halle,  
 And shokèn noblès and sterlynges.  
 And sommè crownèd were as kynges,  
 With crownès wrought ful of losenges ;  
 And many riban, and many frenges  
 Were on hir clothes trewely.

Tho attè laste aspyèd I 230  
 That pursèvauntès and heraudes,  
 That crien richè folkès laudes,  
 Hit weren alle ; and every man  
 Of hem, as I yow tellèn can,  
 Hadde on him throwèn a vesture,  
 Which that men clepe a cote-armure,  
 Enbrowdèd wonderlichè riche,  
 Al-though they nerè mote y-liche.  
 But nocht nyl I, so nocht I thryve,  
 Been aboutè to dyscryve 240  
 Al this armès that ther weren,  
 That they thus on hir cotès beren,  
 For hit to me were impossible ;  
 Men myghte make of hem a bible,  
 Twenty foot thikke, as I trowe.  
 For certeyn, who-so coude y-knowe  
 Myghte ther allè the armès seen,  
 Of famous folk that haddè been  
 In Auffrike, Europe, and Asye,  
 Sith first began the chevalrye. 250

Lo ! how shulde I now telle al this ?

213. P Cx. Th. *how the hackynge in.*  
 214. P Cx. Th. *and for ful of.*  
 219. F B Th. *holdè up* ; P Cx. Th. repeat a  
 before second *larges*.  
 227. P Cx. *full of lesynges.*  
 228. P *and moy thynges* ; Cx. *and many  
 thynges.*  
 250. P Cx. Th. *lo for began the.*

Ne of the halle eek what nede is  
 To tellèn yow that every wal  
 Of hit, and floor, and roof wyth al,  
 Was plated half a fotè thikke  
 Of gold, and that nas no thyng wikke,  
 But, for to prove in allè wyng,  
 As fyn as ducat of Venyse,  
 Of whiche to litel in my pouche is ?  
 And they were set as thikke of nouchis  
 Fulle of the fynest stonès faire, 261  
 That men rede in the Lapidaire,  
 As gresès growèn in a mede.  
 But hit were al to longe to rede  
 The namès ; and therfore I pace.

But in this rychè lusty place,  
 That Famès hallè callèd was,  
 Ful mochè prees of folke ther nas,  
 Ne croudyng, for to mochè prees.  
 But al on hye, upon a dees, 270  
 Sitte in a see imperial,  
 That maad was of a rubee al,  
 Which that a carbuncle is y-called,  
 I saw perpetually y-stalled,  
 A femynynè créature ;  
 That never formèd by nature  
 Nas swich another thyng y-seye.  
 For altherfirst, soth for to seye,  
 Me thoughtè that she was so lyte,  
 That the lengthe of a cubite 280  
 Was lenger than she semedè be ;  
 But thus sone in a whilè she  
 Hir-self tho wonderlichè streighte,  
 That with hir feet she therthè reighte,  
 And with hir heed she touchède hevene,  
 Ther as shyne the sterrès sevene.  
 And therto eek, as to my wyt,  
 I saw as gret a wonder yit,  
 Upon hir eyèn to beholde,  
 But certeyn I hem never tolde. 290

259. P Th. *to lite al in* ; Cx. *to lyte in* ; F *to  
 litel al.*

260. P Cx. *as owches.*

271. P Cx. *on for in.*

272. P omits *al* ; Cx. Th. *Ryal (royal)* for *al*.

277. P Cx. omit *Nas* ; Th. *Was*.

283. F B *This was gret marvaylle to me.*

284. F *Hir tho so wonderly streight* ; B *Hir  
 tho so wonderlich streight* ; P Cx. Th. *wonderly  
 for wonderliche.* The original of F B probably  
 read :—

This was gret marvaylle to me, she  
 Hir tho so wonderliche streighte,  
 which is perhaps the right reading.

For as fele eyèn haddè she,  
 As fetherès upon foulès be,  
 Or werèn on the bestès foure,  
 That goddès tronè gunne honoure,  
 As writ John in the Apocalips.  
 Hir heer that oundy was and crips,  
 As burnèd gold shoon for to see.  
 And sooth to tellèn also, she  
 Had also fele up-stondyng eres  
 And tonges, as on a best ben heres ; 300  
 And on hir feet wexen saw I  
 Partrichès wingès redèly.

But, lord ! the perrie and the richesse  
 I saw sitting on this godesse !  
 And, lord ! the hevenysh melodye,  
 Of songès ful of armony, e,  
 I herde aboute her trone y-songe,  
 That al the paleys-wallès rongè !  
 So song the myghty Musè, she  
 That clepèd is Caliopee, 310  
 And hir eightè sustrèn eek  
 That in her facè semèn meke ;  
 And evermo, eternally  
 They syngè of Fame as tho herde I :—  
 ‘ Herièd be thou and thy name,  
 Goddesse of renoun and of fame.’

Tho was I war, lo, attè laste,  
 As I myn eyèn gan up caste,  
 That this ilké noblè quene  
 On hir shuldrès gan sustene 320  
 Bothè tharmès, and the name  
 Of tho that haddè largè fame ;  
 Alexander, and Hercules  
 That with a shertè his lyf lees !  
 Thus fond I sitting this goddesse,  
 In nobley honour and richesse ;  
 Of which I stynte a whilè now,  
 Other thyng to tellèn yow.

Tho saw I stonde on either syde,  
 Streight doun to the dorès wyde, 330  
 Fro the dees many a pileer  
 Of metal, that shoon not ful cleer,  
 But though they nere of no rychesse,  
 Yet they were maad for greet noblesse,

297. P Cx. insert *as* before *for*; F B Th. *hit shoon to see*.

300. F B *as on bestes heres*.

321. F B P Cx. *Both (Boithe) armes*.

325. All read *And thus*.

329. P Cx. Th. *on thother*.

And in hem hy and greet sentence ;  
 And folk of dignè reverence,  
 Of whiche I wol yow tellè fonde,  
 Upon the piler saw I stonde.

Alderfirst, lo, ther I sigh,  
 Upon a piler stonde on high, 340  
 That was of lede and yren fyn,  
 Him of sectè Saturnyn,  
 The Ebräyk Josephus the olde,  
 That of Jewès gestès tolde ;  
 And bar upon his shuldrès hye,  
 The fame up of the Iewèrye.

And by him stoden other sevene,  
 Wyse and werthy for to nevene,  
 To helpen him bere up the charge,  
 Hit was so hevye and so large. 350

And for they writen of batailes,  
 As wel as of otherè mervayles,  
 Therfor was, lo, this pileer,  
 Of which that I yow telle heer,  
 Of lede and yren bothe, y-wys.  
 For yren Martès metal is,  
 Which that god is of bataile ;  
 And the leed, withouten faile,  
 Is, lo, the metal of Saturne,  
 That hath ful largè wheel to turne. 360  
 Tho stoden forth on every rowe  
 Of hem which that I couldè knowe,  
 Thogh I hem noght be ordè telle,  
 To makè yow to long to dwelle.

These, of whiche I gynnè rede,  
 There saw I stonden, out of drede :  
 Upon an yren piler strong,  
 That peyntèd was, al endèlong,  
 With tigrès blode in every place,  
 The Tholosan that hightè Stace, 370  
 That bar of Thebès up the name  
 Upon his shuldrès, and the fame

335. All omit *hy and*, which, however, Th. wrongly inserts in the next line; P and Cx. alter *hy and* in l. 336 into *gret and* by contamination with the previous line.

342. P omits this line; Cx. *Hym that wrote thactes dyuynè*.

347. P Cx. *ther stoden sevene*.

352. F B *as other olde mervayles*.

367. P omits this line; Cx. *a pyler hye and stronge*.

369. *tigrès blode*; cp. *Thebaid*, bk. vii. The killing of two lions by the besiegers caused a renewal of the siege.

370. *The Tholosan . . . Stace*. According to Dante, Statius was a native of Toulouse. He was born at Naples A.D. 61.

Also of cruel Achillés.  
 And by him stood, withouten lees,  
 Ful wonder hye on a pileer  
 Of yren, he, the greete Omere ;  
 And with him Dares and Tytus  
 Before, and eek he, Lollius,  
 And Guydo eek de Columpnis,  
 And English Gaufride eek, y-wys. 380  
 And ech of these, as have I joye,  
 Was besy for to bere up Troye.  
 So hevly was therof the fame,  
 That for to bere hit was no game.  
 But yit I gan ful wel espie,  
 Betwix hem was a litel envye.  
 Oon seyde that Omere madé lyes,  
 Feynyng in his poetries,  
 And was to Grekès favorable ;  
 Therfor held he hit but fable. 390

Tho saw I stonde on a pileer,  
 That was of tynnéd yren cleer,  
 Thát Latyn poete Virgile,  
 That hath boren up longé while  
 The fame of Pius Eneas.

And next him on a piler was,  
 Of coper, Venus clerk, Ovyde,  
 That hath y-sowen wonder wyde  
 The greté god of Love his fame.  
 And ther he bar up wel his name, 400  
 Upon this piler, also hye,  
 As I hit myghte see with myn ye :  
 For-why this halle of whiche I rede  
 Was woxe on highte, lengthe and brede,  
 Wel moré, by a thousand dele,  
 Than hit was erst, that saw I wel.

Thoo saw I on a piler by,  
 Of yren wrought ful sternely,

377. *Dares and Tytus*, Dares Phrygius and Dictys Cretensis, the reputed authors of two late histories of the Trojan War.

378. *Lollius*, probably a misunderstanding on Chaucer's part of Horace, *Epist.* i. 2:—

'Troiani belli scriptorem, maxime Lolli,  
 Dum tu declamas Kouæ, Preneste relegi.'

379. *Guydo . . . de Columpnis*, Guido delle Colonne, whose *Historia Troiana* (1287) is a translation of Benoit de Sainte-Maure's *Roman de Troie*. The M.E. *Geste Hystoriale* (E. E. T. S.) is a translation of the *Historia*.

380. *English Gaufride*, Geoffrey of Monmouth, author of the *Historia Britonum*.

387. So Th. ; F B omit *that* and read *was for made* ; Cx. P read *Other* for *Oon*.

394. F B *bore hath up longé* ; P Cx. Th. *hath bore up a longé*.

The greté poete, dan Lucan,  
 And on his shuldrés bar up than, 410  
 As highe as that I myghte see,  
 The fame of Julius, and Pompee.  
 And by him stodén alle these clerkes,  
 That write of Romés myghty werkes,  
 That if I wolde her namés telle,  
 Alle to longé moste I dwelle.

And next him on a piler stood,  
 Of soulfre, lyk as he were wood,  
 Dan Claudian, soth for to telle, 420  
 That bar up al the fame of helle,  
 Of Pluto, and of Proserpyne,  
 That quene is of the derké pyne.

What shulde I moré telle of this ?  
 The hallé was al ful, y-wys,  
 Of hem that writen oldé gestes,  
 As ben on treés rokés nestes ;  
 But it is a ful confus matere  
 Were al the gestés for to here,  
 That they of write, and how they highte.  
 But whil that I beheld this sighte, 430  
 I herde a noise aprochén blyve,  
 That ferde as been don in an hyve,  
 Ayenst her tyme of out-comyng ;  
 Right swiche a maner murmuryng,  
 For al the world hit semedé me.

Tho gan I loke aboute and see,  
 That ther com entryng into the halle,  
 A right greet company withalle,  
 And that of sondry regions,  
 Of allé kynnes condiciouns, 440  
 That dwelle in erthe under the mone,  
 Pore and riche. And also sone  
 As they were come into the halle,  
 They gonné down on kneés falle,  
 Before this ilké noble quene,  
 And seyde, 'Graunte us, lady shene,  
 Eche of us, of thy grace, a bone !'  
 And somme of hem she grauntéde sone,  
 And somme she wernedé wel and faire ;

409. *Lucan*, author of the *Pharsalia*, which describes the war between Cæsar and Pompey.

419. *Claudian* ; cp. *supra*, bk. i. l. 449 note.

427. P Cx. invert this and the next line.

433. F B *out-sfeyng*.

440. F *alle skynnes* ; B *all skynys* ; Cx. *alle kyns* ; Th. *al kyns*.

444. P. *They gonne wy on knees down falle* which is probably a corruption of the true reading ; perhaps *They gonne ny on knees down falle*. Cx. Th. *They gonne (gan) on knees down falle*.

And somme she grauntede the contraire 450  
 Of her axyng utterly.  
 But this I seye yow trewely,  
 What hir causè was, I nyste.  
 For of this folk ful wel I wyste,  
 They haddè good fame ech deservèd,  
 Although they were diversly servèd.  
 Right as hir suster, dame Fortune,  
 Is wont to servèn in comune.

Now herknè how she gan to paye  
 That gonne hir of hir gracè praye ; 460  
 And yit lo, al this companye  
 Seyden sooth, and noght a lye.

'Madame,' seyden they, 'we be  
 Folk that heer besechen thee,  
 That thou graunte us now good fame,  
 And let our werkès han that name.  
 In ful recompensacioun

Of goodè werkes, yive us renoun.'  
 'I werne hit yow,' quod she, anoon,  
 Ye gete of me good famè noon, 470  
 By god ! and therfor go your wey.'

'Allas,' quod they, 'and welaway !  
 Welle us what your cause may be.'

'For me list hit noght,' quod she,  
 No wyght shal speke of yow, y-wys,  
 Good ne harm, ne that ne this.'

And with that word she gan to calle  
 Her messenger that was in halle,  
 And bad that he shulde fastè goon, 480

'pon peyne to be blynde anoon,  
 Or Eolus, the god of wynde,

In Tracè ther ye shul him finde,  
 And bid him bringe his clarioun,

That is ful dyvers of his soun,  
 And hit is clepèd Clere Laude,

With which he wonte is to heraude  
 Them that me list y-preised be :

And also bid him how that he  
 Myngle his other clarioun,

That hightè Sclaundre in every toun, 490

451. P Cx. omit this and the next line.

453. P Cx. *What ther grace was ; Th. What  
 grace was.*

456. F B omit this line.

466. P Cx. Th. *good name.*

480. A line is left blank here in F B. The next  
 10 lines read :

Upon the peyn to be blynde,  
 For Eolus, the god of wynde.

42. P omits this line.

With which he wont is to diffame  
 Hem that me liste, and do hem shame.'

This messenger gan fastè goon,  
 And found wher in a cave of stoon,  
 In a contree that hightè Trace,  
 This Eolus, with hardè grace,  
 Held the wyndès in distresse,  
 And gan hem under him to presse,  
 That they gonne as berès rore,  
 He bond and pressède hem so sore. 500

This messenger gan fastè crie,  
 'Ris up,' quod he, 'and fastè hye,  
 Til thou at my lady be ;  
 And tak thy clarioun eek with thee,  
 And speed thee fast.' And he anon  
 Took to a man that hight Triton,  
 His clariouns to berè tho,  
 And leet a certeyn wynd to go,  
 And blew so hidously and hye,  
 That hit ne leftè not a skye 510  
 In al the welken longe and brood.

This Eolus no-wher abood,  
 Til he was come at Famès feet,  
 And eek the man that Triton heet ;  
 And ther he stood as still as stoon.  
 And her-withal ther com anoon

Another hugè companye  
 Of oldè folk and gunnè crie,

'Lady, graunte us now good fame  
 And lat our werkès han that name, 520

Now in honour of gentillesse,  
 And also God your soulè blesse !

For we han wel deservèd hit,  
 Therfor is right that we ben quyt.'

'As thryve I,' quod she, 'ye shal faile,  
 Good werkès shal yow noght availe

To have of me good fame as now.  
 But wite ye what ? I grauntè yow,

That ye shal have a shrewèd name,  
 And wikkèd loos and worsè fame, 530

Though ye good loos have wel deservèd.  
 Now go your wey, for ye be servèd ;

And thou, dan Eolus,' quod she,  
 'Tak forth thy trompe anon, let see,

503. So all the authorities.

505. F B *forth* for *fast*.

506. *Triton* ; cp. Ovid, *Met.* i. 333.

518. F B Th. *gode* for *olde*.

534. F B

Have doon, Eolus, let see,  
 Take forth thy trompe anon, quod she.

That is y-clepèd Sclaunder light,  
 And blow hir loos, that every wyght  
 Speke of hem harm and shrewèdnesse,  
 In stede of good and worthynesse.  
 For thou shalt trumpe al the contraire  
 Of that they han don wel and faire.' 540  
 'Alas,' thoughte I, 'what aventures  
 Han these sory creatures,  
 That they amongès al the pres,  
 Shulde thus be shamèd giltèles!  
 But what! hit mostè nedès be.'

What dide this Eolus, but he  
 Took out his blakkè trompe of bras,  
 That fouler than the devil was,  
 And gan this trompè for to blowe,  
 As al the world shulde overthrowe. 550  
 Throughouten every regioun  
 Wente this foulè trumpès soun,  
 As swift as pelet out of gonne,  
 Whan fyr is in the poudrè ronne.  
 And swiche a smokè gan out-wende,  
 Out of his foulè trumpès ende,  
 Blak, blo, grenysh, swartysh, reed,  
 As doth when that men meltè leed,  
 Lo, al on hye fro the tuél!  
 And therto oo thing saw I wel, 560  
 That the ferther that hit ran,  
 The gretter wexèn hit began,  
 As doth the ryver from a welle,  
 And hit stank as the pit of helle.  
 Allas, thus was her shame y-ronge,  
 And giltèlees, on every tonge.

Tho com the thriddè companye,  
 And gunne up to the dèes, hye,  
 And doun on knees they fille anon,  
 And seydè, they ben everychon 570  
 Folk that han ful trewèly  
 Deservèd famè rightfully,  
 And prayè that hit myghte be knowe,  
 Right as hit is, and forth y-blowe.  
 'I grauntè,' quod she, 'for me list  
 That now your godè werkes be wist;  
 And yit ye shul han better loos,

553. P Cx. Th. insert *a* before *pelet* and *gonne*.

554. P Cx. *fire is in to it ronne*.

558. P Cx. omit *that*; F B Th. *wher that*.

568. Cx. *on hye*; F B Th. *to hye*.

570. F B Th. *we for they*.

573. F B *praye yow it not be*; Cx. *prayd hyt myght*; Th. *prayde you it might*.

575. P Cx. Th. insert *now* before *me*.

Right in dispit of alle your foos,  
 Than worthy is; and that anoon:  
 Lat now,' quod she, 'thy trumpè goon,  
 Thou Eolus, that is so blak; 58  
 And out thyn other trompè tak  
 That hightè Laude, and blow it so  
 That through the world her fame go,  
 Al esèly and not to faste,  
 That hit be knowèn attè laste.'

'Ful gladly, lady myn,' he seyde;  
 And out his trompe of golde he brayde  
 Anon, and sette hit to his mouthe,  
 And blew it est, and west, and southe, 59  
 And north, as loude as any thunder,  
 That every wyght hath of hit wonder,  
 So brode hit ran or that hit stente.  
 And, certès, al the breeth that wente  
 Out of his trumpès mouthè smelde  
 As men a pot of bawmè helde  
 Among a basket ful of roses;  
 This favour dide he to her loses.

And right with this I gan aspye,  
 Ther com the ferthè companye,—  
 But certeyn they were wonder fewe,—  
 And gonnè stonden in a rewè,  
 And seydèn, 'Certès, lady brighte,  
 We han don wel wyth al our myghte,  
 But we ne kepèn have no fame.  
 Hid our werkès and our name,  
 For goddès love! for certès we  
 Han certeyn doon hit for bountee,  
 And for no maner other thyng.'  
 'I grauntè yow al your askyng,'  
 Quod she; 'let alle your werkes be dè'

With that aboute I clew myn heed,  
 And saw anoon the fiftè route  
 That to this lady gonnè loute,  
 And doun anoon on kneès falle;  
 And hir tho besoughtèn alle,  
 To hide hir goodè werkès eek,  
 And seyde, they yevèn noght a leek  
 For famè, ne for swich renoun;  
 For they for contemplacioun,

578. F B omit *Right*.

585. F B omit *Al*.

596. F B Th. *potte ful*; P Cx. *pitte ful*. F B  
 and Skeat omit *of*.

602. P Cx. Th. insert *to* before *stonden*.

612. P Cx. Th. *turned* for *clew*.

619. F B Th. *For no fame*. F B omit *a*.  
 P Cx. Th. omit second *for*.

And goddès lovè, hadde y-wrought,  
Ne of famè wolde they nought.

'What?' quod she, 'and be ye wood ?

And wenè ye for to do good,  
And for to have of that no fame?  
Have ye dispit to have my name?  
Nay, ye shul lyvén everychoon !  
Blow thy trompe and that anoon,'  
Quod she, 'thou Eolus, I hote,  
And ryng thise folkès werk by note, 630  
That al the world may of hit here.'

And he gan blowe hir loos so clere,  
In his golden clarioun,  
That through the world wentè the soun,  
And so kenely, and eek so softe,  
That hir fame was blowen a-lofte.

Tho com the sextè companye,  
And gan fastè to Famè crie.  
Right verrailly in this manere  
They seyden : 'Mercy, lady dere ! 640  
To tellè certeyn as hit is,

We han don neither that ne this,  
But ydel al our lyf hath be.  
But, nathèles, we preyè thee,  
That we may have so good a fame,  
And gret rethoun and knowén name,  
As they that han don noblè gestes,  
And achevèd alle hir lestes,

As wel of love as other thyng ;  
Al was us never broche ne ryng, 650  
Ne ellès nought from wymmen sent,  
Ne onès in hir herte y-ment,  
To make us only frendly chere,  
But myghtè teme us upon bere,  
Yit lat us to the peple seme  
Swiche as the world may of us deme  
That wymmen lovède us for wood.

Hit shal don us a mochè good,  
And to our herte as moche availe  
To countrepeise ese and travaile, 660

As we hadde wonne hit with labour ;  
For that is derè boght honour,  
At regard of our greet ese.  
And yit thou most us morè plese ;  
Let us be holden eek therto,  
Worthy, wyse, and gode also,  
And riche, and happy unto love.  
For Goddès love that sit above,  
Thogh we may not the body have  
Of wymmen, yit, so God me save ! 670  
Let men glewe on us the name ;  
Sufficeth that we han the fame.'

'I grauntè,' quod she, 'by my trouthe !  
Now, Eolus, withoutèn slouthe,  
Tak out thy trompe of gold,' quod she,  
'And blow as they have axèd me,  
That every man wene hem at ese,  
Thogh they gon in ful bad lese.'  
This Eolus gan hit so blowe,  
That through the world hit was y-knowe.

Tho com the seventh route anoon, 681  
And fel on kneès everychon,  
And seyde, 'Lady, graunte us sone  
The samè thyng, the samè bone,  
Thát thise nextè folke have doon.'

'Fy on yow,' quod she, 'everychoon !  
Ye masty swyn, ye ydel wrecchès,  
Ful of roten slowè tecchès !  
What? falsè thevès ! wher ye wolde  
Be famous good, and nothing nolde 690  
Deservè why, ne never thoughte  
Men rather yow to-hangen oughte ?  
For ye be lyk the slepy cat,  
That wolde have fish ; but wastow what ?  
He woldè no-thing wete his clowes.  
Yvel thrift come on your jowes,  
And on myn if I hit graunte,  
Or do yow favour yow to avaunte !  
Thou Eolus, thou kyng of Trace !  
Go, blow this folk a sory grace,' 700  
Quod she, 'anoon ; and wostow how

675. F B read *now let se for quod she.*

685. A loose construction. Cx. reads *That to thise next folk hast done*, which is perhaps right.

689-691. F B read :

What? false theves? or ye wolde  
Be famous good, and nothing nolde  
Deserve why, ne never ye roughte!  
Men rather yow to-hangen oughte!

693. F *swynt* for *slepy*; B *sweynte*, rightly according to Skeat.

699. *Trace*, Thrace.

621. P Cx. Th. *it wrought.*

623. P Cx. Th. omit *and.*

624. P Cx. Th. omit *for.*

630. All read *werkes*—the plural form caught from the preceding word—cp. *hit* in next line.

635. P Cx. Th. *kyndely* for *kenely*; F B *Also* or *And so.*

636. P omits this line; F B *But atte last allaste* *it was on lofte*; Cx. Th. *their* for *hir.*

645. F B *as good*; Th. *as good a.*

648. P Cx. *eshued alle her bestes*; Th. *acheued . . questes.*

As I shal tellè thee right now.  
 Sey, "Thise ben they that wolde honour  
 Have, and do noskynnés labour,  
 Ne do no good, and yit han laude ;  
 And that men wende that bele Isaude  
 Ne coud hem noght of lovè werne ;  
 And yit she that grynt at a querne  
 Is al to good to ese hir herte."

This Eolus anon up sterte, 710  
 And with his blakkè clarioun  
 He gan to blasen out a soun,  
 As loude as belweth wynde in helle.  
 And eek thérwith, sooth to telle,  
 This soun was [al] so ful of japes,  
 As ever mowés were in apes.  
 And that wente al the world aboute,  
 That every wyght gan on hem shoute,  
 And for to laugh as they were wode ;  
 Such gamè fonde they in hir hode. 720

Tho com another companye,  
 That had y-doon the trecherye,  
 The harme, the gretest wikkednesse,  
 That any hertè coudè gesse ;  
 And preyède hir to han goòd fame,  
 And that she nolde doon hem no shame,  
 But yeve hem loos and good renoun,  
 And do hit blowe in clarioun.  
 'Nay, wis !' quod she, 'hit were a vyce ;  
 Al be ther in me no justice, 730  
 Me [ne] list not do hit now,  
 Ne this nyl I not graunte yow.'

Tho com ther lepyng in a route,  
 And gan clappèn al aboute  
 Every man upon the croune,  
 That al the hallè gan to sowne,  
 And seyde, 'Lady, lefe and dere,  
 We ben swich folk as ye may here.  
 To tellèn al the tale aright,  
 We ben shrewés every wyght, 740  
 And han delyt in wikkednes,  
 As goode folk have in goodnes ;  
 And joyè to be knowèn shrewes,  
 And ful of vyce and wikkéd thewes ;

705. P *hem for han.*

706. *Isaude*, Ysolt, the lover of Tristram ; cp. *P. of F.* l. 290.

715. All omit *al*, which Skeat inserts. P reads *as*, which is a contraction of *also*.

723. All read *gret*, *grete*; Willert reads *greatest*.

731. All omit *ne*. Cx. Th. read *to do*.

732. P *The nys for Ne this*; Cx. *Ne I ne wyl*;  
 Th. *I nyl graunte it yow*.

Wherfor we preyen you, a-rowe,  
 That our fame be swich y-knowe,  
 In allè thyng right as hit is.'  
 'I graunte hit yow,' quod she, 'y-wys.  
 But what art thou that seyst this tale,  
 That werest on thy hose a pale, 750  
 And on thy tipet swiche a belle ?'  
 'Madamè,' quod he, 'sooth to telle,  
 I am that ilkè shrewe, y-wys,  
 That brende the temple of Isidis  
 In Athenès, lo, that citee.'

'And wherfor didest thou so?' quod she.  
 'By my troth,' quod he, 'madame,  
 I woldè fayn han had a fame,  
 As other folk hadde in the tounne,  
 Al-thogh they were of greet renoun 760  
 For hir vertu and hir thewes,  
 Thoughte I, as greet a fame han shrewes—  
 Though hit be noght—for shrewédnesse  
 As godè folk han for goodnesse ;  
 And sith I may not have that oon,  
 That other nyl I noght forgoon.  
 And for to gette of Famès hire,  
 The temple sette I al a-fire.

Now do our loos be blowèn swythe,  
 As wysly be thou ever blythe. 770  
 'Gladly,' quod she. 'Thou Eolus,  
 Herestow not what they prayen us ?'  
 'Madamè, yis, ful wel,' quod he,  
 'And I wil trompen hit, parde !'  
 And tok his blakke trumpè faste,  
 And gan to puffen and to blaste,  
 Til hit was at the worldès ende.

With that I gan aboutè wende,  
 For oon that stood right at my bak,  
 Me thoughtè goodly to me spak, 780  
 And seyde, 'Frend, what is thy name ?'  
 Artow come hider to han fame ?'  
 'Nay, for-sothè, frend !' quod I ;  
 'I cam noght hider, graunt mercy !  
 For no swich causè, by my heed !  
 Sufficeth me, as I were deed,  
 That no wyght have my name in honde.  
 I woot my-self best how I stonde,

753. P ends with this line.

754. *Isidis*, Isis. Chaucer refers to Herostatus, who set fire to the temple of Diana at Ephesus on the night of Alexander the Great's birth.

757. F B *thrift* for *troth*.

767. Cx. Th. *As for . . . a fame here*.



For what I drye or what I thynke,—  
 I wol my selven al hit drynke, 790  
 Certeyn for the morè part,  
 As ferforthe as I can myn art.  
 What doost thou here than? quod he.  
 Quod I, 'That wol I tellen the,  
 The causè why I stonde here.  
 Som newè tydyngs for to lere,  
 Som newè thyngès, I not what,  
 Tydyngès other this or that,  
 Of love, or swichè thingès glade.  
 For, certeynly, he that me made 800  
 To comen hider, seyde me  
 I shuldè bothè here and see,  
 In this placè, wonder thynges;  
 But these be no swiche tydynges  
 As I mentè.' 'No?' quod he.  
 And I answerdè, 'No, parde!  
 For wel I wüstè ever yit,  
 Sith that first I haddè wit,  
 That som folk han desirèd fame  
 Dyversèly, and loos and name; 810  
 But certeynly I nüstè how,  
 Ne where that Famè dwellde, er now;  
 And eek of hir descripcioun,  
 Ne also hir condicioun,  
 Ne the ordre of hir dom,  
 Jnto the tyme I hider com.'  
 '[Which] than, be lo, thise tidynges,  
 That [thee] now [thus] hider brynges,  
 That thou hast herd?' quod he to me;  
 But now, no fors; for wel I see 820  
 What thou desirest for to here.  
 Com forth, and stond no lenger here,  
 And I wol the, withoutèn drede,  
 A swich another placè lede,  
 her thou shalt herè many oon.'  
 Tho gan I forth with him to goon,

793. F omits *than* and inserts *But* before *What*.  
 797. All read *thing, thinge*; read with Skeat  
*ynge*.

805. F B I *mene of*; Th. I *ment of*.

807. All read *wote* for *wyste*.

816. Cx. Th. *Knewe I not tyl*.

817-819. All read:

Why than be, lo, these tydynges  
 That thou now hider brynges  
 That thou hast herd.

Skeat reads *Whiche* for *Why than* and inserts  
*us* in l. 818; Koch reads:

Which than be, lo! thise tydynges  
 That bringe thee hider, and thise thinges  
 That thou wilt here.

Out of the castel, soth to seye.  
 Tho saw I stonde in a valeye,  
 Under the castel, fastè by,  
 An hous, that *domus Dedali*, 830  
 That *Laboryntus* clepèd is,  
 Nas maad so wonderlich y-wys,  
 Ne half so queyntéliche y-wrought.  
 And evermo, so swyft as thought,  
 This queyntè hous aboutè wente,  
 That nevermo hit stillè stente.  
 And therout com so greet a noise,  
 That had hit stonden upon Oise,  
 Men myghte hit han herd esély 840  
 To Rome, I trowè sikerly  
 And the noise which that I herde,  
 For al the world right so hit ferde,  
 As doth the routyng of the stoon,  
 That from thengyn is leten goon.

And al this hous of whiche I rede  
 Was maad of twiggès, falwè, rede  
 And grene eek, and som werèn white,  
 Swiche as men to these cagès thwyte, 810  
 Or makèn of these panyers,  
 Or ellès hottès or dossers; 850  
 But for the swough and for the twyggès,  
 This house was also ful of gigges,  
 And also ful eek of chirkynges,  
 And of many other werkynges;  
 And eek this hous hath of entrees  
 As fele of leves as ben on trees  
 In somer, when they grenè been,  
 And on the roof men may yit seen  
 A thousand holès, and wel moo,  
 To leten wel the soun out go. 860

And eek by day in every tyde  
 Been al the dorès openèd wide,  
 And by nyght echoon unshette;  
 Ne porter ther is non to lette  
 No maner tydyngs in to pace;

830. *domus Dedali*, the labyrinth made by  
 Dædalus for Minos; cp. Ovid, *Met.* viii. 159 ff.

838. *Oise*, a northern tributary of the Seine.

839. F B Th. *Men*; Cx. *I*; probably the right  
 reading is *Me* (=one); Th. *myghte han herd hit*.

850. F B Cx. *hattes*; Th. *hutches*; Skeat  
 reads *hottes*.

851. F B Th. *That for But*.

854. So Cx. Th., but certainly wrongly; B  
 omits the line; F has only *As ful this lo*.

856. F B *yn* for *on*. B omits *as* before *ben*  
 and inserts it before *of*; Cx. *As many as leues*  
*ben of trees*; Th. *As many as leues ben on*  
*trees*.

Ne never reste is in that place,  
 That hit nys fild ful of tydynges,  
 Other loude, or in whisprynges,  
 And over alle the housès angles,  
 Is ful of rounynges and of jangles, 870  
 Of werres, of pees, of mariages,  
 Of reste, of labour of viages,  
 Of aboode, of deeth, of lyfe,  
 Of love, of hate, acorde, of stryfe,  
 Of loos, of lore, and of wynynges,  
 Of hele, of sekeness, of bilydnges,  
 Of fairè wyndès, of tempestes,  
 Of qwalme of folk, and eek of bestes ;  
 Of dyvers transmutaciouns,  
 Of estats and eek of regions ; 880  
 Of trust, of drede, of jelousye,  
 Of wyt, of wynynges, of folye ;  
 Of plentee, and of greet famyne,  
 Of chepe, of derth, and of ruyne ;  
 Of good or mys-governement,  
 Of fire, of dyvers accident.

And lo, this hous of whiche I write,  
 Siker be ye, hit nas not lyte ;  
 For hit was sixty myle of lengthe,  
 Al was the tymber of no strengthe ; 890  
 Yet hit was foundéd to endure  
 Whil that hit list to Aventure,—  
 That is the moder of tydynges,  
 As the see of welles and sprynges,—  
 And hit was shapèn lyk a cage.

‘ Certès,’ quod I, ‘ in al myn age,  
 Ne saw I swich a hous as this.’  
 And as I wondréde me, y-wys,  
 Upon this hous, tho war was I 900  
 How that myn egle, fastè by,  
 Was perchéd hie upon a stoon ;  
 And I gan streightè to hym goon,  
 And seyde thus : ‘ I preyè thee  
 That thou a whil abidè me  
 For Goddès love, and let me seen  
 What wondrés in that placè been ;  
 For yit paraunter I may lere

872. All *restes*.876. Cx. Th. *lesynges* for *bilydnges*, perhaps rightly.877. Cx. Th. *wether* and for *wyndes*.877. All *and eek of tempestes*, caught from line below.886. All *and of*.891. F B Th. *is* for *was*.899. Cx. *Upon the hous that was ful hie*.906. F B *this* for *that*.

Somme good therin, or sumwhat here  
 That leef me were, or that I wente.’

‘ Peter ! that is myn entente,’  
 Quod he to me ; ‘ therfor I dwelle,  
 But certeyn, oon thyng I thee telle,  
 That, but I bringè thee therinne,  
 Ne shalt thou never cunnè gynne  
 To come into hit, out of doute,  
 So faste hit whirlleth, lo, aboute.  
 But sith that Jovès, of his grace,  
 As I have seyde, wol thee solace  
 Fynally with thise thynges,  
 Unkouthè syghtès and tydynges,  
 To passè with thyn hevynesse,  
 Swiche routhe hath he thy distresse,—  
 That thou suffrest debonairly,  
 And wost thy-selven utterly,  
 Desperat of all maner blis,  
 Sith that Fortune hath maad a-mys  
 The swote of al thyn hertès reste  
 Languisshè and eek in poynnt to breste,—  
 That he through his myghty merite,  
 Wol do thee an ese, al be hit lyte,  
 And yaf expresse commaundement,  
 To whiche I am obedient,  
 To furthré thee with al my myght,  
 And wysse and techè thee aright,  
 Wher thou maist most tydyngès here ;  
 Thou shalt anoon heer many oon lere.’

With this worde he right anoon  
 Hentè me up bytwene his toon,  
 And at a wyndowe in me broghte,  
 That in this hous was, as me thoghte,—  
 And therwithal me thoghte hit stente,  
 And no-thing hit aboutè wente,—  
 And me sette in the flore adoun.  
 But which a congregacioun  
 Of folk, as I saw rome aboute,

908. F B *thereon*.910. Cx. Th. insert *now* after *that*.914. Cx. Th. *conne the gyn*.

919. So all authorities. The line is at least one syllable short.

925. F B *Disesperat of alle blis*.927. F *frot* ; B *foot* ; Cx. Th. *swote* ; K *fruit*.930. Cx. *the an* ; F *than* ; Th. B. *the*. C omits *Wol* and inserts *wyl* after *he* in line above.931. All insert *in* after *yaf*.936. F B *Shallow here anoon* ; Cx. Th. *o anoon*, perhaps rightly ; Skeat *anoon heer*.

938. F B omit this line.

940. Cx. *Whyche on*.944. Cx. *whyche a grete* ; Th. *suche a grete*.

Some within and some withoute,  
 Nas never seen, ne shal ben eft ;  
 That, certés, in the world nys left  
 So many forméd by Nature,  
 Ne deed so many a créature ; 950  
 That wel unethe in that place  
 Hadde I oon foot brede of space ;  
 And every wyght that I saw there  
 Rounéde everych in otherés ere  
 A newé tydyng prevély,  
 Or ellés tolde al openly  
 Right thus, and seyde, ' Nost not thou  
 That is betid, late or now ?'  
 ' Nó,' quod he, ' tél me what.'  
 And than he tolde him this and that, 960  
 And swoor therto that hit was sooth,—  
 ' Thus hath he sayd,' and ' Thus he dooth,'  
 ' Thus shal hit be,' ' Thus herde I seye,'  
 ' That shal be found,' ' That dare I leye.'  
 That al the folk that is a-lyve  
 Ne han the connyng to discryve  
 The thyngés that I herdé there,  
 What aloude, and what in ere.  
 But al the wonder-most was this :  
 Whan oon hadde herd a thyng y-wys, 970  
 He com forth to another wight,  
 And gan him tellén, anoon-right,  
 The samé that to him was told,  
 Or hit a forlong-way was old,  
 But gan somewhat for to eche  
 To this tidyng in his speche  
 More than ever hit spoken was.  
 And nat so sone departéd nas  
 Tho fro him, that he ne mette  
 With the thridde ; and, or he lette 980

946. F B omit this line, which is probably corrupt. Koch *Many a thousand in a route*.

956. Cx. Th. insert *it* before *tolde*.

958. Cx. Th. *to right novv*.

959. All *quod he* ; Willert *quod the other*.

963. All insert *and* before each *Thus* ; Cx. Th. *And thys (this) shall be*.

971. F B *come forth ryght to* ; Cx. *come forth unto* ; Th. *Came streyght to*. Probably *right* in the original of F B had the word *forth* written above it because of its recurrence in the next line, and it then crept into the text as well as *right*. This theory is supported by the reading of Th., which is an edited text.

973. P B Th. *that him was* ; Cx. *that was to him*.

976. F B Th. *this for his*.

977. F B *More than hit ever was*.

979. F B *That he fro . . . thoo*, etc.

Any stounde, he tolde him als ;  
 Were the tidyng sooth or fals,  
 Yit wolde he telle hit nathéless,  
 And evermo with more enrees  
 Than hit was erst. Thus north and southe  
 Went every [thyng] fro mouth to mouthe,  
 And that encresyng evermo,  
 As fire is wont to quykke and go  
 From a sparké spronge amys,  
 Til al a citee brent up is. 990

And whan that was ful up-spronge,  
 And woxén more on every tonge  
 Than ever hit was, [hit] went anoon  
 Up to a wyndowe out to goon  
 Or, but hit myghte out ther pace,  
 Hit gan out crepe at som crevace,  
 And fleigh forth fasté for the nones.

And somtyme saw I ther, at ones  
 A lesyng and a sad soth-sawe,  
 That gonne of aventurè drawe 1000  
 Out to a wyndowe for to pace ;  
 And, when they mettén in that place,  
 They were a-chekked bothé two,  
 And neither of hem myghte out go ;  
 For other so they gonné croude,  
 Til eche of hem gan crién loude,  
 ' Lat me go first !' ' Nay, but lat me !  
 And here I wol ensuren thee  
 Wyth the nones that thou wolst do so,  
 That I shal never fro thee go, 1010  
 But be thyn owné sworén brother !  
 We wil medle us eche with other,  
 That no man, be they never so wrothe,  
 Shal han that oon [of] two, but bothe  
 At onés, al beside his leve,  
 Come we a-morwé or on eve,  
 Be we cried or stille y-rounded.'  
 Thus saw I false and sooth compounded.  
 Togered flee for oo tidyngé.

Thus out at holés gonné wrynge 1020

986. F B *mouthe for thyng* ; Cx. Th. *tydyng* ; Skeat *word*.

991. F B *y-spronge*.

993. All read *and* for second *hit*.

999. Cx. *soth sayd sawe*, perhaps rightly.

1004. F B *most (must)*.

1005. Cx. omits l. 1005 to the end, but prints twelve spurious lines as conclusion.

1006. Th. *For eche other they gonne so*.

1009. Th. omits *the*.

1012. Th. *in* for *with*.

1014. F *han on two* ; B omits *of two* ; Th. *hané one two*.

Every tidyng streight to Fame ;  
 And she gan yevn eche his name,  
 After hir disposicioun,  
 And yaf hem eek duracioun,  
 Some to wexe and wanè sone,  
 As dooth the fairè whitè mone,  
 And leet hem gon. Ther myghte I seen  
 Wengèd wondrès fastè fleen,  
 Twenty thousand in a route,  
 As Eolus hem blew aboute. 1030

And, lord ! this hous in allè tymes  
 Was ful of shipmen and pilgrymes,  
 With scrippès bret-ful of lesynges,  
 Entrèmedléd with tidynges,  
 And eek alonè by hemselve.  
 O, many a thousand tymès twelve  
 Saw I eek of these pardoneres,  
 Curroures, and eek messangeres,  
 With boistès crammèd ful of lyes,  
 As ever vessel was with lyes. 1040  
 And as I alther-fastest wente  
 Aboute, and dide al myn entente,  
 Me for to pleye and for to lere,  
 And eek a tydyng for to here,  
 That I hadde herd of som contree  
 That shal not now be told for me ;  
 For hit no nede is, redèly ;  
 Folk can synge hit bet than I.  
 For al mot out, other late or rathe,  
 Allè the shevès in the lathe. 1050

I herde a gretè noise withalle  
 In a corner of the halle,  
 Ther men of lovè tydynges tolde,

1036. Th. omits *a*.  
 1039. Th. *boxes*, B *bowgys*.  
 1049. Th. omits *other*.  
 1050. Th. *rathe* for *lathe*.

And I gan thiderwarde beholde ;  
 For I saw rennyng every wyght,  
 As faste as that they haddèn myght ;  
 And everyche criede, 'What thing is that ?'  
 And som sayde, 'I not never what.'  
 And when they were alle on an hepe,  
 Tho behyndè gonne up lepe, 1060  
 And clamben up on other faste,  
 And up the nose and yèn caste,  
 And troden faste on otherès heles,  
 And stampe, as men doon after eles.

Attè laste I saw a man,  
 Which that I ne wot, ne kan,  
 But he semedè for to be  
 A man of greet auctoritè.

(*Unfinished*)

*Cx. Th. add the following spurious lines.*

[And therwithal I abraide  
 Out of my slepè, half afraide ; 1070  
 Remembring wel what I hadde seen,  
 And how hye and ferre I hadde been  
 In my goost ; and hadde gret wonder  
 Of that the god of thunder  
 Hadde let me knowe ; and began to writen  
 Lyk as ye have herd me endite.  
 Wherefor to studye and rede alway,  
 I purpose to do day by day.

Thus in dreaming and in game  
 Endeth this lytel book of Fame.] 1080

1062. Th. *the noyse on hyghen*.  
 1066. F B *nat ne kan* ; Th. *naught ne can*.  
 Skeat *nevene naught ne can*.  
 1069-71. Cx.

And wyth the noyse of them wo  
 Sodeynly awoke anon tho,  
 And remembryd, etc.

## THE LEGENDE OF GOOD WOMEN

## THE PROLOGUE

This prologue is extant in two different versions, an earlier and a later, between which there are many important variations (see Introduction). The portion in which most of these occur is here given in both forms, words and lines in the first version omitted or altered in the second being printed in italics.

## THE PROLOGUE

## FIRST VERSION

A THOUSENT *sythis* have I herd men telle,  
That there is joye in hevене and peyne in  
helle,  
And I acordé wel that it *be* so ;  
But, nathêles, *this* wit I wel also,  
That there ne is non *that dwellyth* in this  
cuntre  
That eythir hath in *helle or hevене* i-be,  
Ne may of it non othere weyis wytn  
But as he hath herd seyde, or founde it  
wrytn ;  
For by asay there may no man it preve.  
But *goddis* forbodé but men schuldé  
leve <sup>10</sup>  
Wel moré thyng than men han seyn with  
eye !  
Men schal nat wenyn everything a lye,  
*For that he say it nat of yore ago.*  
God wot *a* thyng is nevere the lessé *so*,  
Thow every wyght ne may it nat i-se.  
Bernard the monk ne say nat al pardee !  
Thanne motyn we to bokys that we fynde,  
Thourw whiche that oldé thyngis ben in  
mynde,  
And to the doctryne of these oldé wyse,  
Yevyn credence, in every skylful wyse ; <sup>20</sup>  
*And trowyn on* these olde aprovede storyis  
Of holynesse, of regnys, of victoryis,  
Of love, of hate, of othere sundery thyngis  
Of which I may nat maké réhersyngys.

1-49. Cp. B 1-49.

## THE PROLOGUE

## SECOND VERSION, B

A THOUSANDE tymés I have herd men  
telle,  
That there is joy in hevене, and peyne in  
helle,  
And I acordé wel that it is so ;  
But, nathêles, yet wot I wel also,  
That ther is noon dwellyng in this countree,  
That eythir hath in hevене or in helle y-be,  
Ne may of hit noon other weyés witen,  
But as he hath herd seyde, or founde it  
writen ;  
For by assay ther may no man it preve.  
But God forbedé but men shuldé leve <sup>10</sup>  
Wel moré thing than men han seen with eye!  
Men shal not wenen everything a lye  
But-if hymselfe it seeth, or ellés dooth ;  
For, God wot, thing is never the lassé  
sooth,  
Thogh every wight ne may it not y-see.  
Bernarde, the monke, ne saugh nat al,  
parde !  
Than moté we to bokés that we fynde,—  
Thurgh which that oldé thingés ben in  
mynde,—  
And to the doctrine of these oldé wyse,  
Yevé credence, in every skylful wise, <sup>20</sup>  
That tellen of these olde apprevéd stories,  
Of holynesse, of regnès, of victories,  
Of love, of hate, of other sondry thynges,  
Of whiche I may not maken rehersynges.

1. *men*, om. F<sup>3</sup>.  
2. *That*, om. F<sup>2</sup>.  
16. *Bernard*, glossed in G F<sup>4</sup>. 'Bernardus  
monachus (om. G) non vidit omnia.'

## FIRST VERSION

And if that oldè bokis weryn awey,  
I-loryn were of rémembrance the keye.  
Wel oughte us thanne *on oldè bokys leve*,  
There as *there is non othyr asay be preve* ;  
And as for me, thow that *myn wit be lite* ;  
On bokys for to rede I me delyte, 30  
And in myn herte have hem in reverence,  
And to hem yeve *swich lust and swich*  
*credence*

That ther is *wel onethè gamè non*  
That from myne bokys make[th]me to gon  
But it be *other upon* the halyday,  
*Or ellis, in the joly tyme* of May,  
Whan that I here the *smalè foulys synge*,  
And that the flouris gynnè for to sprynge,—  
Farwel myn *stodye, as lastynge that sesoun!*

Now have I *therto* this condycyoun, 40  
Thát of alle the flouris in the mede  
Thanne love I most these flourys white  
and rede,  
Swyche as men callè dayesyis in oure  
toun.

To hem have I *so gret affecioun*,  
As I seyde erst, whan comyn is the may,  
That in myn bed there dawith me no day  
That I ne am up and walkynge in the mede,  
To sen these flouris agen the sunne to-  
sprede,

Whan it upryseth be *the morwe schene*, 49  
*The longè day thus walkynge in the grene.*

*And whan the sunne begynnys for to weste,*  
*Thanne closeth it, and drawith it to reste,*  
*So sore it is a-ferid of the nyght,*  
*Til on the morwe that it is dayis lyght.*  
*This dayeseye, of allè flouris flour,*  
*Fulfyld of vertu and of alle honour,*  
*And evere i-likè fayr and frosh of hewe,*  
*As wel in wyntyre as in somyr newe,*  
*Fayn wolde I preysyn if I coude aright,*  
*But, wo is me! it lyth nat in myn myght*

51-59. Cp. B 60-67.

43. *our, F her.*

50-52, 57-60, 64-72. New lines.

## SECOND VERSION, B

And if that oldè bokès were awey,  
Y-lornè were of remembraunce the key.  
Wel ought us, thanne, honouren and beleve  
These bokès, ther we han noon other  
preve.

And as for me, though that I konne  
but lyte,

On bokès for to rede I me delyte, 30  
And to hem yive I feyth and ful credence,  
And in myn herte have hem in reverence  
So hertely, that ther is gamè noon  
That fro my bokès maketh me to goon,  
But it be seldom on the holyday,  
Save, certeynly, whan that the month  
of May

Is comen, and that I here the foulès synge,  
And that the flourès gynnyn for to  
sprynge,—

Farewel my boke, and my devocion !

Now have I thanne suche a condicion,  
Thát of alle the flourès in the mede, 41  
Than love I most thise flourès white and  
rede,

Suche as men callen daysyes in our toun.  
To hem have I so grete affecioun,  
As I seyde erst, whan comen is the May,  
That in my bed ther daweth me no day,  
That I nam up and walkyng in the mede,  
To sen this flour agein the sonnè sprede,  
Whan it uprysith erly by the morwe ;  
That blisful sightè softneth al mysorwe, 50  
So glad am I, whan that I have presence  
Of it, to doon it allè reverence,  
As she that is of allè flourès flour,  
Fulfillèd of al vertue and honour,  
And evere ilikè faire, and fresshe of hewe.  
And I love it, and evere ylikè newe,  
And ever shal, til that myn hertè dye ;  
Al swere I nat, of this I wol nat lye ;  
Ther lovèd no wight hotter in his lyve. 59

And, whan that it is eve, I rennè blyve,  
As sone as evere the sonnè gynneth weste,  
To sen this flour, how it wol go to reste,  
For fere of nyght, so hateth she derknesse !  
Hir chere is pleyntly sprad in the brightnesse  
Of the sonnè, for ther it wol unclose.

Allas, that I ne had Englyssh, ryme or  
prose,

Súffisant this flour to preyse aryght !

## FIRST VERSION

For wel I wot that *folk* han herebeforn 61  
Of makynge ropyn and lad away the corn,  
[And] I come aftyr, glenynge here and  
ther,

And am ful glad if I may fynde an er  
Of ony goodly word that *they* han laft.  
And if it happè me rehersen eft  
That *they* han in here froshè songis said,  
*I hope that they wele* nat benevele a-payde,  
*Sithe it is seyð in fortheryng* and honour  
*Of hem that eythir servyn* lef or flour; 70  
*For trustyth wel I ne have nat undyrtake*  
*As of the lef agayn the flour to make,*  
*Ne of the flour to make ageyn the lef,*  
No more than of the corn agen the shef;  
For as to me is lefere non, ne lothere,  
I am withholdè yit with never nothire;  
I not who servyth lef ne who the flour.  
*That nys nothyng the entent of myn*  
*labour;*

For this *werk* is al of anohtyr tunne 79  
Of oldè story, er swich *strif* was begunne.  
But wherfore that I spak to yeve credence  
To *bokys* olde and don hem reverence  
*Is for men schulde autoriteis* beleve,  
*There as there lyth non ohtyr asaybe* preve.  
*For myn entent is, or I fro you fare,*  
*The nakede tixt in Englis to declare*  
*Of manye a story, or ellis of manye a geste,*  
*As autours seyn—levyth hem if you leste.*

61-70. Cp. B 73-82.

71-80. Cp. B 188-196.

81-84. Cp. B 97-100.

72. *With the Leef or with the Flour.* This appears to be the earliest allusion to the dispute as to the merits of the Flower and the Leaf on which a follower of Chaucer afterwards wrote the Poem with that title.

83-96. New lines.

96. *in* (2), B<sup>2</sup> only; rest om.100. *they*, Trin.<sup>2</sup>; Arch. Seld. *man*; F om.; rest *men*.

101-120. New lines.

102. *al*, om. F.

## SECOND VERSION, B

But helpeth ye that han konnyng and  
myght,

Ye lovers, that kan make of sentement;  
In this case oghtè ye be diligent 70  
To forthren me somewhat in my labour,  
Whethir ye ben with the Leef or with  
the Flour;

For wel I wot, that ye han her-bifore  
Of makynge ropen, and lad away the corne;  
And I come after, glenyng here and there,  
And am ful glad if I may fynde an ere  
Of any goodly word that ye han left.  
And thogh it happen me rehersen eft  
That ye han in your fresshè songès sayede,  
Forbereth me, and beth not evele apayede,  
Syn that ye see I do it in the honour 81  
Of love, and eke in service of the flour  
Whom that I serve as I have witte or myght.  
She is the clerenesse and the verray lyght,  
That in this derkè worlde me wynt and  
ledyth,

The herte in-with my sorwful brest yow  
dredith,

And loveth so sore, that ye ben verrayly  
The maistresse of my witte, and nothing I.  
My worde, my werk, is knyht so in youre  
bond

That as an harpe obcieth to the hond, 90  
That maketh it sounè after his fyngerynge,  
Ryght so mowe ye oute of myn hertè bringe  
Swich vois, ryght as yow lyst, to laughe  
or pleyne;

Be ye my gide, and lady sovereyne.  
As to my ertely god, to yowe I calle,  
Bothe in this werke, and in my sorwès alle.

But wherfore that I spake to yive  
credence

To oldè stories, and doon hem reverence,  
And that men mosten morè thynge beleve  
Then they may seen at eye or ellès preve,  
That shal I seyn, whanne that I see my  
tyme— 101

I may nat al attonès speke in ryme.  
My besy gost, that thursteth alwey newe,  
To seen this flour so yong, so fresshe of  
hewe,

Constreynèd me with so gledy desire,  
That in myn herte I feelè yet the fire,  
That madè me to ryse er it wer day,

## FIRST VERSION

*Whan passed was almost the monyeth of  
May*

*And I hadde romed, at the somerys day, 90  
The grenè medewe, of which that I yow  
tolde,*

*Upon the froschè dayeseie to beholde,  
And that the sonne out of the south gan  
weste*

*And closede was the flour and gon to reste  
For derknesse of the nyht of which sche  
dradde,*

*Hom to myn hous, ful swiftly, I me spadde,  
And in a lytyl erber that I have,  
I-benchede newe with turvis, frosche i-  
grave,*

*I bad men schuldè me myn couchè make ;  
For deyntè of the newè somerys sake, 100  
I bad hem strowè flouris on my bed.  
Whan I was layd and hadde myn eyen hid  
I fel aslepe withinne an hour or two.*

*Me mette how I was in the medewe tho,  
And that I romede in that samè gyse,  
To sen that flour, as ye han herd devyse.  
Fayr was this medewe, as thoughte me,  
overal ;*

*With flouris sote enbroudit was it al,  
As for to speke of gomme, or erbe, or tre,  
Comparisoun may non i-makede be ; 110  
For it surmountede pleyntly alle odours.  
And of richè beutè allè flourys.*

*Forgeten hadde the erthe his pore estat  
Of wyntyr, that hym nakede made and  
mat,*

*And with his swerd of cold so sore hadde  
grevyd :*

*Now hadde the tempresonne al that relevyd,  
And clothede hym in grene al newe ageyn.  
The smalè foulis, of the seson fayn,  
That from the panter and the net ben  
skapid, 119*

*Upon the foulere, that hem made a-wapid*

89-107. Cp. B 100, 180-182, 197-212.  
108-137. Cp. B 119-151.

108. *this*, om. F.

111. *that*, om. F.

113. *the beste*, Taurus or the Bull.

114. *Agenores doghtre*, Europa.

124. *alle*, F. of.

143-144. New lines.

## SECOND VERSION, B

And this was now the firstè morwe of May,  
With dredful hert, and glad devocion

For to ben at the resurreccion 110  
Of this flour, whan that it shulde unclose

Agayne the sonne, that roos as redeas rose,  
That in the brest was of the beste, that day,  
That Agenorès doghtre ladde away.

And doun on knes anon-ryght I me sette,  
And as I koude, this fresshè flour I grette,  
Knelyng alwey, til it unclosèd was,

Upon the smalè, softè, swotè gras,  
That was with flourès swote enbrouded al,  
Of swich swetnesse, and swich odour  
over-al, 120

That for to speke of gomme, or herbe, or  
tree,

Comparisoun may noon y-makèd be ;  
For it surmounteth pleyntly alle odoures,  
And of richè beutè allè flourès.

Forgeten had the erthe his pore estate  
Of wyntyr, that him naked made and mate,  
And with his swerd of colde so sorè greved ;

Nowhath the atempresonneal that releved  
That naked was, and clad it new agayne.  
The smalè foulès, of the sesoun fayne, 130

That of the panter and the nette ben scaped,  
Upon the foweler, that hem made a-whaped  
In wynter, and distroyèd hadde hire  
broode,

In-his dispite hem hoghte it did hem goode  
To syngè of hym, and in hir songe dispise  
The foulè cherle, that, for his covейtise,  
Had hem betrayèd with his sophistrye.

This was hir songe, 'The foweler we  
deffye,

And al his crafte.' And sommè songen clere  
Layès of love, that joye it was to here, 140  
In worshipyngè and in preysing of hir  
make ;

And, for the newè blisful somers sake,  
Upon the braunchès ful of blosmès softè,  
In hire delyt, they turnèd hem ful ofte,

And songen, 'Blessèd be Seynt Valentyne !  
For on his day I chees you to be myne,  
Withouten répentying myne hertè swete !'

And therewithal hire bekès gonnen meete,  
Yeldyng honour and humble obeysaunces  
To love, and diden hire othere observaunces  
That longeth onto love, and to nature ; 151



## FIRST VERSION

In wyntyre, and destroyed hadde hire brood,  
In his dispit hem thoughte it dede hem  
good

To synge of hym, and in here song despise  
The foulè chert that, for his covetytse,  
Hadde hem betrayed with his sophistrye.  
This was here song 'The foulere we defye.'  
Some songyn *on the* [ ] *braunchis* clere  
[Layes] of love, that joye it was to here,  
In *worschepe* and in preysyng of hire make,  
And [for] the newè blysful somerys sake.  
[And] sungyn 'Blyssede be scynt Valentyn,  
[For] at his day I ches yow to be myn, 132  
Withoutè répentynge, myn hertè swete !'  
And therwithal here bekys gunnè mete,  
[Yeldyng] honour and humble obey-  
saunces,

*And after dedyn othere observauncys,  
Ryht* [longynge] onto love and to natures :  
*So eche of hem to cryaturys.*

*This song to herken I dede al myn entent,  
For why I mette I wistè what they ment.*

*Tyl at the laste a larkè song above, 141*

*'I se,' quod she, 'the myghty god of love.  
Lo, yond he comyth. I se his wyngis sprede.'*

*Tho gan I loken endèlong the mede  
And saw hym come and in his hond a quene  
Clothed in ryal abyte, al of grene.*

Lines 127-138 are very imperfect in the unique MS., which omits several words and reads *and that for that* in l. 128, *of for for* in l. 130, *That for And* in l. 131, *The honour and the humble* in l. 135. L. 138 seems hopeless.

144-166. Cp. B 211-234.

152-187. New lines.

164. *it*, Arch. Seld. *that*; F<sup>5</sup> *it nat*.

## SECOND VERSION, B

Construeth that as yow lyst, I do no cure.  
And tho that haddè don unkyndè-  
nesse,—

As doth the tydif, for newfangelnesse,—  
Besoghtè mercy of hir trespassynge,  
And humblèly songen hir répentynge,  
And sworn on the blomès to be trewe,  
So that hire makès wolde upon hem rewe,  
And at the lastè maden hir acorde. 159  
Al founde they Daunger for a tyme a lord,  
Yet Pitee, thurgh his strongègentil myght,  
Foryaf, and madè Mercy passen Ryght,  
Thurgh Innocence, and rulèd Curtesye.  
But I ne clepe it innocence folye,  
Ne fals pitee, for vertue is the mene ;  
As Ethike seith, in swich maner I mene.  
And thus thise fowelès, voide of al malice,  
Acordèden to love, and laften vice  
Of hate, and songen alle of oon acorde,  
'Welcome, Somer, oure governour and  
lorde.' 170

And Zepherus and Flora gentilly  
Yaf to the flourès, softe and tenderly,  
Hir swootè breth, and made hem for to  
sprede,

As god and goddesse of the floury mede.  
In whiche me thocht I myghtè, day by day,  
Dwellen alwey, the joly month of May,  
Withouten slepe, withouten mete or  
drynke.

Adoun ful softely I gan to synke,  
And lenynge on myn elbowe and my syde,  
The longè day I shoop me for to abide, 182  
For nothing ellis, and I shal nat lye,  
But for to loke upon the dayèsie,  
That men by resoun wel it callè may  
The dayèsie, or elles the ye of day,  
The emperice, and flourè of flourès alle.  
I pray to God that fairè mote she falle,  
And alle that loven flourès, for hire sake !  
But, nathèles, ne wene nat that I make  
In preysyng of the Flour agayn the Leef,  
No more than of the corne agayn the sheef ;  
For as to me nys lever noon, ne lother, 191  
I nam withholden yit with never nother.  
Ne I not who serveth Leef, ne who the  
Flour.

Wel browken they hir service or labour !  
For this thing is al of another tonne,

## FIRST VERSION

A frette of goold sche haddé next hyre heer  
 And upon that a whit corone sche beer,  
 With *manye flourys*, and I schal nat lye ;  
 For al the world ryght as the dayseye 150  
 I-corounede is with whitè levys lite,  
*Swiche* were the *flourys* of hire corone  
 white.

For of o perle fyn *and* oriental  
 Hyre whitè coroun was i-makyd al.  
 For which the whitè coroun above the grene  
 Mâde hire lyk a dayseye for to sene,  
 Considerede ek *the* fret of gold above.  
 I-clothèd was this myhty god of love  
 Of silk, i-broudede ful of grenè grevys.  
*A garlond on his hed* of rosè levys, 160  
*Stékid al with lylve flourys newe ;*  
*But of his face I can not seyn the hewe,*  
*For sekyrly* his facè schon so bryhte  
 That *with the glem astonedé was the syhte,*

149. *manye*, text *mane*, with the *n* added as a correction.

201. A new line.

211-212. F has these lines in reverse order, perhaps rightly.

217. *And*, Arch. Seld. *and if*.

229-231. New lines.

## SECOND VERSION, B

Of oldè storye, er swiche thinge was  
 begonne.

Whan that the sonne out of the south gan  
 weste,  
 And that this flour gan close, and goon to  
 reste,

For derknesse of the nyght, the which she  
 dredde,

Home to myn house full swiftly I me spedde  
 To goon to reste, and erly for to ryse, 201  
 To seen this flour to-sprede, as I devyse.

And in a litel herber that I have,  
 That benchèd was on turvès fressh y-grave,  
 I bad men sholdè me my couchè make ;  
 For deyntee of the newè someres sake,  
 I bad hem strawen flourès on my bed.

Whan I was leydè, and hadde myn eyen  
 hed,

I fel on slepe, in-with an houre or two.  
 Me mettè how I lay in the medewe tho, 210

To seen this flour that I love so and drede ;  
 And from a-fer come walkyng in the mede  
 The god of Love, and in his hand a quene,  
 And she was clad in real habite grene ;

A fret of gold she haddè next her heer,  
 And upon that a whitè crowne she beer,  
 With flourouns smalè, and I shal nat lye,  
 For al the worlde ryght as a dajseye  
 Y-corouned is with whitè levès lyte,  
 So were the flourouns of hire coroune  
 white ; 220

For of o perlè, fyne, óriental,  
 Hire whitè coroune was i-maked al,  
 For which the whitè coroune above the  
 grene

Mâde hire lyke a daysie for to sene,  
 Considered eke hir fret of golde above.

Y-clothèd was this mighty god of Love  
 In silke embrouded, ful of grenè greves,  
 In-with a fret of redè rosè leves,  
 The fresshest syn the worlde was first by-  
 gone.

His giltè here was coronwed with a sonne 230  
 In stede of golde, for hevynesse and wyghte ;  
 Therwith me thought his facè shon so  
 bryhte

That wel unnethès myght I him beholde ;  
 And in his hande me thought I saugh him  
 holde

## FIRST VERSION

*A furlongwey I myhte hym not beholde.*  
*But at the laste* in hande I saw hym holde  
 Two fry dartis, as the gleadys rede.  
 And aungellychhyse wengis *gan he* sprede.  
 And al-be that men seyn that bynd is he,  
 Algate me thoughte he myghte *uel i-see,*  
 For sternely on me he gan beholde, <sup>171</sup>  
 So that his lokynge doth myn herté colde.  
 And be the hond he held *the* noble quene,  
 Corouned with whit and clothede al in  
 grene,

So womanly, so benygne and so meke  
 That in this world, thow that men woldé  
 seke,

Hálf hire beuté schuldé men not fynde  
 In cryature that formede is be Kynde.  
 Hire namé was Alceste the *debonayre.*

I preyte to God that evere falle *sche* fayre, <sup>180</sup>  
 For ne haddé confort been of hire presence  
 I hadde be ded withoutyn ony defence,  
 For dred of Lovys wordys and his chere,  
 As, whan tyme is, hereaftyr ye schal here.  
 Byhynde this god of love, upon *this* grene,  
 I saw comynge of ladyis nyetene,  
 In ryal abyte, a ful esy pas,  
 Andaftyr hem come of wemen swich a tras,  
 That syn that God Adam [hadde] made  
 of erthe

The threddé part of *women*, ne the ferthe,  
 Ne wende I not by possibilite <sup>191</sup>  
 Haddyn evere in this [wydè] world i-be.  
 And trewe of love these wemen were echon.  
 Now whether was that a wondyr thyng,  
 or non,

That ryht anon as that they gunne espye  
 This flour whiche that I clepe the dayseye,  
 Ful sodeynly they styntyn alle atonys  
 And knelede adoun, as it were for the nonys.  
*And aftyr that they wentyn in cumpas,*  
*Daunsynge about this flour an esy pas,* <sup>200</sup>  
*And songyn, as it were in carole-wyse,*  
*This balade, whiche that I schal yow devyse.*

Hyd, Absalon, thyne gilté tressés clere,  
 Ester, ley thow thy meknesse al adoun,

167-178. Cp. B 235-246.  
 167. For *two fry* the MS. reads *tho fery*, and  
 in l. 172 both for *doth*.  
 179-108. Cp. B 276-295.  
 203-224. Cp. B 259-270.

## SECOND VERSION, B

Two fry darts, as the gledés rede,  
 And aungelyke his wyngés saugh I sprede.  
 And, al be that men seyn that bynd is he,  
 Algate me thoghté that he myghté se ;  
 For sternely on me he gan byholde, <sup>239</sup>  
 So that his lokynge doth myn herté colde.  
 And by the hande he heldethis noble quene,  
 Crownéd with white, and clothéd al in  
 grene,

So womanly, so benigne, and so meke,  
 That in this world, thogh that men woldé  
 seke,

Hálf hire beuté shulde men nat fynde  
 In créature that forméd is by Kynde.  
 And therfore may I seyn, as thynketh me,  
 This songe in preysyng of this lady fre.

Hyde, Absalon, thy gilté tresses clere ;  
 Ester, ley thou thymekenesse al adoun ; <sup>250</sup>  
 Hyde, Jonathas, al thy frendly manere ;  
 Penalopee, and Marcia Catoun,  
 Make of youre wifhode no comparysoun ;  
 Hyde ye youre beautés, Ysoude and  
 Eleyne ;

My lady comith, that al this may disteyne.

Thy fairé body lat it nat appere,  
 Lavyne ; and thou Lucesse of Romé toun,  
 And Polixene, that boghten love so dere,  
 And Cleopatre, with al thy passyoun,  
 Hyde ye your trouthe of love, and your  
 renoun, <sup>260</sup>  
 And thou, Tesbe, that hast of love suche  
 peyne ;

My lady comith, that al this may disteyne.

Hero, Dido, Laudómia, alle yfere,  
 And Phillis, hangyng for thy Demophon,  
 And Canace, espiéd by thy chere,  
 Ysiphile, betrayed with Jason,

245. *Half*, Arch. Seld. *Half of*.  
 247-248. New lines.  
 252. *Marcia Catoun*, Cato's daughter Marcia,  
 who would not marry a second time.  
 257. *Lavyne*, Lavinia, wife of Aeneas.  
 258. *Polixene*, Polyxena, daughter of Priam,  
 betrothed to Achilles.  
 263. *Laudomia*, Laodamia.  
 264. *Phillis*, see ll. 2394-2560.  
 265. *Canace*, cp. *Cant. Tales*, B 78.  
 266. *Ysiphile*, Hypsipyle, see ll. 1368-1577.

## FIRST VERSION

Hyde, Jonathas, al thy frendly manere ;  
 Penolope and Marcia Catoun,  
 Mak of youre wyfhod no comparisoun ;  
 Hyde ye youre beuteis, Ysoude and Elene :  
*Alceste is here that al that may destene.*

Thyn fayrè body lat it nat apeere, 210  
 Laveyne, and thow, Lucesse of Romè  
 town,  
 And Pollexene, that boughtè love so dere,  
 Ek Cleopatre with al thyn passiou, n,  
 Hïide ye youre trouth *in* love and youre  
 renoun ;  
 And thow Tynsbe, that hast *for* love swich  
 peyne ;  
*Alceste is here that al that may desteyne.*

Herro, Dido, Laodomya, alle in fere,  
 Ek Phillis hangynge for thyn Demophoun,  
 And Canace espied be thyn chere,  
 Ysiphile bytrayed with Jasoun, 220  
 Mak of youre trouthe *in* love no bost, ne  
 soun ;  
 Nor Ypermystre, or Adriane, *ne pleyne* ;  
*Alceste is here that al that may disteyne.*

Whan that this balade al i-songyn was,  
*Upon the softe and sotè grenè gras*  
 They settyn hem ful softèly adoun,  
*By ordere alle in cumpas, alle inveroun.*  
 Fyrst sat the god of love and *thanne* this  
 queene

With the whitè corone clad in grene,  
 And sithyn al the remenant by and by, 230  
 As they were of *degre*, ful curteysly ;  
 Ne nat a word was spokyn in that place  
 The mountenaunce of a furlongwey of  
 space.

*I lenynge fastè by, undyr a bente,*  
 Abod to knowè what this peple mente,  
 As stille as ony ston, til at the laste  
*The* god of love on me his eyè caste  
 And seyde 'Who *restith* there?' and I  
 answerde

Unto his axsynge, whan that *I hym* herde,  
 And seyde 'Sere, it am I,' and cam hym  
 nere 240

## SECOND VERSION, B

Maketh of your trouthe neythir boost ne  
 soun,  
 Nor Ypermystre, or Adriane, ye tweyne ;  
 My lady cometh, that al thys may dysteyne.

This balade may ful wel y-songen be,  
 As I have seyde erst, by my lady free ; 271  
 For certeynly al thise mowe nat suffise  
 To apperen wyth my lady in no wyse.  
 For as the sonnè wole the fire disteyne,  
 So passeth al my lady sovereyne,  
 That is so good, so faire, so debonayre,  
 I prey to God that ever falle hire faire.  
 For naddè comfort ben of hire presence,  
 I hadde ben dede, withouten any defence.  
 For drede of Lovès wordès, and his chere,  
 As, when tyme is, herafter ye shal here.

Behynde this god of Love upon the  
 grene 282  
 I saugh comyng of ladyès nynetene  
 In real habite, a ful esy paas ;  
 And after hem come of wymen swich a  
 traas,

That syn that God Adam hadde made of  
 erthe,  
 The thridde part of mankynde, or the ferthè,  
 Ne wende I nat by possibilitèe,  
 Had ever in this widè worlde y-bee ;  
 And trewe of love thise women were echon.

Now whether was that a wonder thing  
 or non, 291

That ryght anon, as that they gonne espye  
 Thys flour, which that I clepe the dayèsie,  
 Ful sodeynly they stynten al attones,  
 And knelède doune, as it were for the nones,  
 And songen with o vois, 'Heel and honour  
 To trouthe of womanhede, and to this flour  
 That bereth our alder pris in figuryngè !  
 Hire whitè corowne beryth the witness-  
 ynge ?'

And with that word, a-compas enviroon,  
 They setten hem ful softèly adoun, 301  
 First sat the god of Love, and syth his  
 queene

268. *Ypermystre*, Hypermnestra, see ll. 2562-2723.

268. *Adriane*, Ariadne, see ll. 1886-2225.

271. *by*, concerning.

271-275. New lines.

296-297. New lines.

## FIRST VERSION

And salewede hym. Quod he, 'What dost thou her

*In myn presence, and that so boldely?*

For it were better worthi, trewely,

A worm *to com in[to] myn syht* than thow.'<sup>257</sup>

'And why, sere?' quod I, 'and it lykē yow?'

'For thow,' quod he, 'art therto nothyng able,

*Myne servauntis been alle wyse and hon-  
ourable.*

Thow art myn mortal fo and me warreyest,

And of myne oldē servauntis thow

mysseyest,

And hynderyst hem with thy translacyoun,

And lettist folk *to han devocoun* 251

To servyn me, and haldist it folye

To *troste on me*: thow mayst it nat denye.

For in pleyn tixt, *it nedyth nat* to glose,

Thow hast translaid the Romauns of the

Rose

That is an eresye ageyns myn lawe,

And makyst wisē folk fro me withdrawe.

*And thynkist in thyn wit, that is ful cole,*

*That he nys but a verray propre fole* 259

*That lovyth paramours to harde and hote.*

*Wel wot I therby thow begynnyst dote,*

*As oldē folis, whan here spyrty faylyth*

*Thanne blame they folk and wete nat what*

*hem ealyth.*

*Hast thow nat mad in Englys ek the bok*

*How that Crisseydē Troylis forsok.*

*In schewyng how that wemen han don mis.*

*But nathēles answerē me now to this,*

*Why noldist thow as wel a seyde goodnes*

*Of wemen, as thow hast seyde wekedenes?*

*Was there no goodē matyr in thyn mynde,*

*Ne in alle thy bokys ne coudist thow nat*

*fynde* 271

*Sum story of wemen that were goode and*

*trewe;*

*Yis, God wot, sixty bokys, oldē and newe,*

*Hast thow thyself, alle ful of storyēs grete,*

*That bothe Romaynys and ek Grekis trete*

*Of sundery wemen, whiche lyf that they*

*ladde,*

*And evere an hunderede goode ageyn on*

*badde,—*

*This knowith God, and allē clerkis eke,*

265-266. Cp. B 332-333.

## SECOND VERSION, B

With the whitē corowne, clad in grene;

And sithen al the remenaunt by and by,

As they were of estaat, ful curteysly,

Ne nat a worde was spoken in the place,

The mountaunce of a furlong wey of  
space.

I, knelyng by this floure, in good entente

Abode, to knowen what this peple mente,

As stille as any ston; til at the laste 310

This god of Love on me his eighen caste,

And seyde, 'Who kneleth there?' And

I answerde

Unto his askyng, whan that I it herde,

And seyde, 'It am I,' and come him nere,

And salwed him. Quod he, 'What

dostow here,

So nygh myn ownē floure, so boldely?

It werē better worthy trewely

A worme to neghen ner my flour than

thow.'

'And why, sire,' quod I, 'and it lykē yow?'

'For thow,' quod he, 'art therto nothing

able. 320

It is my relyke, dignē and delytable,

And thow my foo, and al my folke werreyest,

And of myn oldē servauntis thow mysseyest,

And hynderest hem, with thy translacioun,

And lettist folke from hire devocioun

To servē me, and holdest it folye

To servē Love. Thou maist it nat denye,

For in pleyne text, withouten nede of glose,

Thou hast translated the Romaunce of the

Rose,

That is an heresy ayeins my lawe, 330

And makest wisē folke fro me withdrawe;

And of Cresyde thou hast seyde as the lystē,

That maketh men to wommen lassē triste,

That ben as trewe as ever was any steel?

Of thyn answerē avisē the ryght weel,

For thogh that thou reneyed hast my lay,

As other wrecches han doon many a day,

By Seyntē Venus, that my moder ys,

If that thou lyve, thou shalt repenten this

So cruelly, that it shal wele be sene.' 340

321. A new line.

330. This line clearly points to Chaucer having translated from the continuation of the *Roman de la Rose* by Jean de Meung as well as from the unfinished original by Guillaume Lorris.

335, 348-493. New lines.

## FIRST VERSION

*That usyn sweche materis for to seke.*  
*What seyth Valerys, Titus, or Claudyan,*  
*What seyth Jerome agayns Jovynyan, 281*  
*How clenè maydenys and how trewè wryvys,*  
*How stedefaste wedewys duryng alle here*  
*lyvys,*  
*Telleth Jerome, and that nat of a fewe*  
*But, I dar seyn, an hunderede on a rewè,*  
*That it is pitè for to rede, and routhe,*  
*The wo that they endure for here trouthe.*  
*For to hyre lovè werè they so trewe,*  
*That rather than they wole take a newe,*  
*They chosè to be ded in sundery wyse, 290*  
*And deidyn, as the story wele devyse.*  
*And some were brend and some were cut*  
*the hals,*  
*And some dreynt, for they woldyn not be*  
*fals ;*  
*For allè kepid they here maydynhed,*  
*Or ellis wedlok, or here wedewehed.*  
*And this thyng was nat kept for holynesse,*  
*But al for verray vertu and clennessè,*  
*And for men schulde set on hem no lak ;*  
*And yit they werè hethene, al the pak,*  
*That were so sore a-drad of allè schame. 300*  
*These oldè wemen keptè so here name,*  
*That in this world I trowe men shal nat*  
*fynde*  
*A man that coudè be so trewe and kynde*  
*As was the lestè woman in that tyde!*  
*What seyth also the epistelle of Ovyde*  
*Of trewè wryvys and of here labour ?*  
*What Vincent in his Estoryal Myroure ?*  
*Ek al the world of autourys maystow here,*  
*Cristene and hethene, trete of swich matere,*  
*It nedyth nat al day thus for to endite. 310*  
*But yit I seye what clyth the to wryte*  
*The draf of storyis and forgete the corn ?*  
*Be Seynt Venus, of whom that I was born,*  
*Althow [that] thow reney[ed] hast myn*  
*lay,*  
*As othere oldè folys manye a day,*  
*Thow shalt repente it, that it schal be sene.*  
*Thanne spak Alceste the worthyere queene,*  
*And seyde, 'God, ryght of youre curtesye*

<sup>307.</sup> Vincent de Beauvais, in his *Miroir Historial*.

313-322. Cp. B 338-347.

316. *that*, MS. *so that*.

## SECOND VERSION, B

Tho spake this lady, clothèd al i  
 greene, 34  
 And seyde, 'God, ryght of youre curtesye  
 Ye moten herken if he can repleye  
 Agayns al this that ye have to him meved  
 A god ne sholdè nat be thus agreved,

## FIRST VERSION

Ye motyn herken, if he can reply  
Ageyns *these poyntys* that ye han to hym  
mevid. 320

A god ne schuldè not thus been agrevyd,  
But of his deitee he schal be stable,  
And therto *ryghtful* and *ek* mercyable.

*He schal nat ryghtfully his yre wreke  
Or he have herd the tothyr partye speke.*

*Al ne is nat gospel that is to you pleynyd ;  
The god of love hereth many a tale i-feynyd.*

For in youre court is many a losengeour,  
And manye a queynte totolour acusour,  
That tabouryn in youre eres manye a *thyng*,  
*For hate or for jealous ymagynyng,* 331  
*And for to han with you sum dalyaunce.*  
Envye—I preyre to God yere hire mys-  
chaunce—

Is lavender in the *gretè* court alway ;  
For sche ne partyth, neythir nyght ne day,  
Out of the hous of Cesar—thus seyth  
Dante—

Whoso that goth, alwey sche *motè* wante.  
This man to you may *wrongly* ben acused,  
*There* as be ryght hym oughtè ben excusid.  
*Or ellis, sere,* for *that* this man is nyce, 340  
*He may translate a thyng in no malyce*  
*But for he usyth bokis for to make,*  
*And takyth non hede of what matere he*  
take,

*Therefore he wrot the Rose and ek Crisseyde  
Of innocence, and nystè what he seyde.*

Or hym was bodyn makè thilkè tweye  
Of sum persone, and durste itnot withseye ;  
*For he hath wretè manye a bok er this.*

He ne hath not don so grevously amys  
To translàtè that oldè clerkès wryte, 350  
As thow that he of malyce wolde endyte  
Despit of love, and hadde hymself  
*i-wrought.*

This schulde a ryghtwys lord han in his  
thought

And not ben lyk tyrauntis of Lumbardy  
That usyn *wilfulhed* and tyrannye.

For he that kyng or lord is naturel  
Hym oughtè nat be tyraunt and crewel,  
As is a fermour, to don the harm he can.

322. *deitee*, MS. *dede*.

328-343. Cp. B 352-361, 350-351, 362-365.

346 sqq. Cp. B 366 sqq.

## SECOND VERSION, B

But of hys deitee he shal be stable,  
And therto gracious and merciable.

And if ye nere a god that knowen alle,  
Thanne myght it be as I yow tellen shalle ;  
This man to yow may falsly ben accused,  
That as by right him oughtè ben excused ;  
For in youre courte ys many a losengeour,  
And many a queinte totelere acusour,  
That tabouren in youre erès many a soun,  
Ryght aftir hire ymagynacioun,  
To have youre daliance, and for envie.

These ben the causes, and I shal nat lye,  
Envie is lavender of the court alway ;  
For she ne parteth, neither nyght ne day,  
Out of the house of Cesar,—thus seith  
Dante ; 360

Whoso that goth, algate she wol nat  
wante.

And eke, parauntere, for this man is nyce,  
He myghtè doon it, gessyng no malice ;  
But for he useth thyngès for to make,  
Hym rekketh noght of what matere he  
take ;

Or him was boden maken thilkè tweye  
Of somme persone, and durste it nat  
withseye

Or him repenteth outrèly of thjs.  
He ne hath nat doon so grevously amys,  
To translàten that oldè clerkès wryten,  
As thogh that he of malice wolde enditen,  
Despite of Love, and had himselfe it  
wroght. 372

This sholde a ryghtwis lord have in his  
thoght,

And nat be lyke tirauntes of Lumbardy,  
That han no réward but at tyrannye.

For he that kyng or lorde is naturel,  
Hym oughtè nat be tyraunt ne crewel,  
As is a fermour, to doon the harme he kan ;

351. *That*, so that ; a better reading than the  
*Ther* of the earlier version.

354. *soun*, F *swoun*, wrongly.

357. A new line.

359. In the *Inferno*, xvii. 64-65, Invidia is called  
La meretrice, che mai dall' ospizio Di  
Cesare non torse gli occhi putti.

361. *wante*, be missing.

364. *But*, F B om.

358. A new line.

371. *As*, F<sup>3</sup> and Pepys *And*, wrongly.

374. *tirauntes of Lumbardy*, like the Visconti.

## FIRST VERSION

He mustè thynke it is his ligè man.  
*And that hym owith o verry duètee,* 360  
*Schewyn his peple pleyn benygnete*  
*And wel to heryn here excusacyouns,*  
*And here compleyntys and petyciouns,*  
*In duewè tymè, whan they schal it profre.*  
 This is the sentens of the philosophre :  
 A kyng to kepe hise lygis in justice,  
 Withouten doutè that is his offise,  
*And therto is a kyng ful depe i-sworn*  
*Ful manye an hunderede wyntyr here-*  
*be-forn,*  
*And for to kepe his lordys hir degre,* 370  
 As it is ryght and skylful that they be  
 Enhaunsèd and honourèd [and] most dere  
 For they ben half goddys in this worldè  
 here.  
*This schal be don bothè to pore [and]*  
*ryche, etc.*

[For the rest of the Prologue and the Legends the differences between this MS. and the rest are slight enough to be indicated in the notes.]

367. *Withouten*, MS. *which oughtyn*.

## SECOND VERSION, B

He mostè thinke it is his leegè man, 379  
 And is his tresour, and his gold in cofre.  
 This is the sentence of the philosophre :  
 A kyng to kepe his leegès in justice,  
 Withouten doutè that is his office.  
 Al wol he kepe his lordès hire degre,  
 As it is ryght and skilful that they bee  
 Enhauncèd and honourèd, and moste  
 dere,  
 For they ben half goddys in this worldè  
 here.—  
 Vit mote he doon bothe ryght, to poore and  
 ryche,  
 Al be that hire estaat be nat yliche,  
 And han of poorè folke compassoun ; 390  
 For lo, the gentil kynde of the lyoun !  
 For whan a flye offendith him or biteth,  
 He with his tayle away the flyè smyteth  
 Al esely ; for of his gentèrye  
 Hym deyneth nat to wreke hym on a flye,  
 As doth a curre, or elles another best.  
 ‘ In noble corage oughtè ben arest,  
 And weyen every thing by equitye,  
 And ever have réwarde to his owen  
 degre.  
 For, syr, it is no maistrye for a lorde 400  
 To dampne a man, without answerè of  
 worde,  
 And for a lorde, that is ful foule to use.  
 And if so be he may hym nat excuse,  
 But asketh mercy with a dredeful herte,  
 And profereth him, ryght in his bare  
 sherte,  
 To ben ryght at your owen jugèment,  
 Than oght a god, by short avysèment,  
 Consydre his owne honour, and hys trespass ;  
 For syth no cause of dethe lyeth in this  
 caas,  
 Yow oghte to ben the lyghter merciable. 410  
 Leteth youre ire, and beth sumwhat  
 trefable !  
 The man hath servèd yow of his kunnyng,  
 And furthréd wel youre lawe in his making.

380. A new line.

384. *kepe*, i.e. keep for ; Trin. MS. reads: *As well hys lordes to kepe theyr degre*.

400. *no maistrye*, no difficult matter.

403. *if*, F<sup>4</sup> and Pepys *it*.

404. *dredeful*, Gg (390) *sorweful*.

405. It was thus that, as late as 1429, Alexander, Lord of the Isles, presented himself to James I.



'Al be hit that he kan nat wel endite,  
 Yet hath he madè lewdè folke delyte  
 To servè you, in preysinge of your name.  
 He made the book that hight the Hous  
 of Fame,  
 And eke the Deeth of Blanché the  
 Duchesse,  
 And the Parlément of Foulès, as I gesse, 419  
 And al the Love of Palamoun and Arcite  
 Of Thebès, thogh the storrye ys knowen  
 lyte ;

And many an ymptè for your halydayes,  
 That highten balades, roundels, virelayes.

'And for to speke of other holynesse,  
 He hath in prosè translated Boece,  
 And made the Lyfe also of Seynt Cecile.  
 He made also, gon ys a gretè while,  
 Origenes upon the Maudeleyne.  
 Hym oughtè now to have the lessè peyne,  
 He hath made many a lay, and many a  
 thyngè. 430

'Now as ye be a god, and eke a kynge,  
 I youre Alcestè, whilom quene of Trace,  
 I askè yow this man, ryght of youre grace,  
 That ye him never hurte in al his lyve,  
 And he shal sweren to yow, and that as  
 blyve,

He shal no more agilten in this wyse,  
 But he shal maken, as ye wol devyse,  
 Of women trewe in lovyng al hire lyf,  
 Wher so ye wol, of mayden or of wyf,  
 And forthren yow as muche as he mysseyde,  
 Or in the Rose, or ellès in Creseyde.' 441

The god of Love answerede hire thus  
 anoon,

'Madame,' quod he, 'it is so long agoon

414. *wel*, Gg omits. Gg (400-403) adds two lines and presents the next couplet in a different form:

*Whil he was yong he kepte youre estat ;  
 I not wher he be now a renegat.  
 But wel I wot with that he can endyte  
 He hath makid lewede folk to delyte.*

421. *thogh the storrye ys knowen lyte*, cp. *Anelida*, ll. 13, 14.

424. *other holynesse*, the religion of the church as opposed to that of Cupid.

425. Gg (414, 415) adds the lines :

*And of the Wrechede Engendrynge of Mankynde,  
 As man may in pope Innocent i-fynde.*

426. *Lyfe of Seynt Cecile*, now the Second Nun's Story in *Cant. Tales*.

428. *Origenes*, a homily, De Maria Magdalene, wrongly attributed to Origen.

That I yow knewe so charitable and trewe,  
 That never yit, syn that the worldè was  
 newe,

To me ne founde I better noon than yee ;  
 If that I woldè savè my degree,  
 I may, ne wol, nat wernè your requeste ;  
 Al lyeth in yow,—dooth wyth hym what  
 yow liste.

I al foryeve withouten lenger space ; 450  
 For who-so yeveth a gifte, or doth a grace,  
 Do it bytyme, his thank is wel the more ;  
 And demeth ye what he shal do therefore.  
 Go, thankè now my lady here,' quod he.

I roos, and doun I sette me on my knee,  
 And seyde thus : 'Madame, the God above  
 Foryeldè yow that ye the god of Love  
 Han makèd me his wrathè to foryive,  
 And yeve me grace so longè for to lyve,  
 That I may knowè soothly what ye bee, 460  
 That han me holpe, and put me in this  
 degree.

But trewely I wende, as in this cas,  
 Naught have agilt, ne doon to Love trespas ;  
 For-why, a trewè man, withouten drede,  
 Hath nat to parten with a thevès dede ;  
 Ne a trewè lover oghtè me not blame,  
 Thogh that I spake a fals lovè somshame.  
 They oghtè rather with me for to holde,  
 For that I of Creseydè wroot or tolde,  
 Or of the Rose,—what-so myn auctour  
 mente,— 470

Algatè, God woot, it was myn entente  
 To forthren trouthe in love, and it cheryce,  
 And to ben war fro falsnesse and fro vice,  
 By swiche ensample ; this was my men-  
 yngè.'

And she answerde, 'Lat be thyn  
 arguynge,

For Love ne wol nat countrèpletèd be  
 In ryght ne wrong, and lernè that of me ;  
 Thow hast thy grace, and holde the ryght  
 therto.

Now wol I seyn what penance thow shalt do  
 For thy trespas, and understonde it here :

447. *I, F ye.*

450. *I, Gg (440) And.*

459. *yeve me*, om. F<sup>4</sup>.

461. *this*, Gg (451) *swich*.

466. *oghte me not*, MSS. *oght me not to*.

477. *that of*, Gg (467) *this at*.

478. *the*, i.e. *thee*.

Thou shalt while that thou lyvest, yere by  
yere 481

The mostè partye of thy tymè spende  
In makyng of a glorious Legende  
Of goodè wymmen, maydenès and wyves,  
That weren trew in lovyng al hire lyves;  
And telle of falsè men that hem bytraien,  
That al here lyf ne don nat but asayen  
How many women they may doon a shame,  
For in youre worlde that is now holde a  
game.

And thogh the lykè nat a lovee bee, 490  
Speke wel of love; this penance yive I the.  
And to the god of Love I shal so preye,  
That he shal charge his servantes, by any  
weye,

To forthren thee, and wel thy labour quyte:  
Go now thy weye, thys penaunce is but lyte.  
And when this book is made, yive it the  
quene,

On my byhalfe, at Eltham, or at Sheene.<sup>1</sup>  
The god of Love gan smyle, and than  
he sayde,

'Wostow,' quod he, 'wher this be wyf or  
mayde,

Or queene, or countesse, or of what degre,  
That hath so lytel penance yiven thee, 501  
That hast deservèd sorere for to smerte?  
But pite renneth soone in gentil herte:  
That maistow seen, she kytheth what  
she is.'

And I answerde, 'Nay, sire, so have I blys,  
Na more, but that I see wel she is good.'

'That is a trewè talè, by myn hood!'  
Quod Love, 'and that thou knowest wel,  
pardee,

If it be so that thou avisè the. 509  
Hastow nat in a book, lyth in thy cheste,  
The gretè goodnesse of the quene Alceste,  
That turnèd was into a dayèsye?  
She that for hire housbonde chees to dye,

487. Omitted in Fairfax, Tanner, and Bodley.  
490. *the lyke*, it pleases thee; Gg (480) *the  
lestyth*.

496, 497. New lines.  
497. *Eltham*. Part of the royal house, built in  
the thirteenth century, but enlarged by Edward  
IV., still remains.

497. *Sheene*, now Richmond. It was at the  
palace at Sheen that Anne of Bohemia died.

502. *sorere*, Bodl. and Tann. *sore*.

503. Cp. *Cant. Tales*, A 1761.

508. *that*, om. F<sup>4</sup>.

And eke to goon to helle, rather than he,  
And Ercules rescowèd hire, *parde*,  
And broght hir out of helle agayne to blys?<sup>2</sup>

And I answerd ageyn, and saydè, 'Yis,  
Now knowe I hire. And is this good  
Alceste,

The daysie, and myn owene hertès reste?  
Now fele I weel the goodnesse of this wyf,  
That both after hir deth, and in hire lyf, 521  
Hir gretè bountè doubleth hir renoun.

Wel hath she quyte me myn affeccion,  
That I have to hire flour the dayèsye.  
No wonder is thogh Jove hire stellyfyè,  
As telleth Agaton, for hire goodnesse,  
Hire whitè corowne berith of it witenesse;  
For also many vertues haddè shee,  
As smalè florouns in hire corowne bee.

'In rëmembraunce of hire and in honour  
Cibella made the daysye and the floure 531  
Y-crowned al with white, as men may see,  
And Marsyfto hire corowne reede, pardee,  
In stede of rubyès, sette among the white.'

Therwith this queene wex reed for shame  
a lyte,

Whanne she was preysèd so in hire presence.  
Thanne seyde Love, 'A ful grete negligence  
Was it to the, that ylkè tyme thou made,  
'Hyd, Absolon, thy tresses' in balade,  
That thou forgate hire in thy songe to sette,  
Syn that thou art so gretly in hire dette, 541  
And wost so wel that kalender ys she  
To any woman that wol lover be:  
For she taught al the crafte of fyne lovyng,  
And namèly of wyfhode the lyvyng,

521. *in*, Gg (509) *ek*.  
526. *Agaton*. Prof Hales has shown that the  
reference is to Plato's *Symposium* (in which the  
poet Agathon is one of the speakers), where the  
story of Alcestis is told.

528. *hadde*, so F<sup>4</sup> Pepsy, Arch. Seld.; Gg Trin<sup>2</sup>  
*hath*.

531. *Cibella*, Cybele.  
539-541, 543. New lines.  
537-542. The Gg text (ll. 525-534) reads:

Than seyde Love, 'A ful grete negligence  
Was it to the to write *onstedfastnesse*  
*Of women, sithe thou knowist here goodnesse*  
*By pef and ek by storyis hereby-forn.*  
*Lét be the chaf and writ wel of the corn.*  
*Why noldist thou han writyn of Alceste*  
*And latyn Criseide ben a-slepe and rest,*  
*For of Alceste schulde thy writyng be,*  
*Syn that thou wist that calandir is she*  
*Of goodnesse, for sche taughte of fyn lovyng.*

542. *so*, om. F<sup>4</sup>.

And al the boundés that she oghte kepe ;  
 Thy litel witte was thilké tyme aslepe.  
 But now I chargé the upon thy lyfe, 548  
 That in thy legendethou make of thys wyfe,  
 Whan thou hast other smaley-made before ;  
 And fare now wel, I chargé thee namore.  
 But er I go, thus muche I wol the telle,  
 Ne shal no trewé lover come in helle.  
 These other ladies sittynge here arowe  
 Ben in thy balade, if thou kanst hem knowe,  
 And in thy bookésallethou shalt hem fynde ;  
 Have hem in thy Legende now alle in  
 mynde,

I mene of hem that ben in thy knowyng.  
 For here ben twenty thousand moo sittynge  
 Thanne thou knowest, and ben good  
 wommen alle, 560

And treweof love for oght that may byfalle ;  
 Maké the metres of hem as the lest ;  
 Imot goon home, the sonnè draweth west,  
 To Paradys, with al this companye ;  
 And serve alwey the fressshé dayésye.  
 At Cleopatre I wole that thou begynne,  
 And so forthe, and my love so shalt thou  
 wynne ;

For lat see now what man that lover be,  
 Wol doon so stronge a peyne for love as she.  
 I wot wel that thou maist nat al it ryme,  
 That swiché lovers dide in hiré tyme ; 571  
 It were to long to reden and to here ;  
 Sufficeth me thou make in this manere,  
 That thou reherce of al hir lyfe the grete,  
 Áfter these olde auctours lysten trete.  
 For who-so shal so many a storye telle,  
 Sey shortly, or he shal to longé dwelle.'

And with that worde my bokés gan I  
 take,  
 And ryght thus on my legende gan I make.

*Incipit Legenda Cleopatrie, Martiris,  
 Egipti Regine.*

After the deth of Tholome the kyng, 580  
 That al Egipte hadde in his govornyng,

552-565. New lines.

552-565, 568-577, not in the Gg text.

560. *and ben*, Trin.<sup>2</sup> *and*; Arch. Seld. *that ben* ;  
 F<sup>4</sup> om.

575. *trete*, from Arch. Seld. ; F<sup>5</sup> *for to trete* ;  
 Trin.<sup>2</sup> *to trete*.

578. *my bokes*, etc., Gg of *sleep I gan awake*.

580. *Tholome*, Ptolemy, probably the elder of  
 the two sons of Ptolemy Auletes.

Regnéd hys queené Cleopataras ;  
 Til on a tyme befel ther swich a cas,  
 That out of Rome was sent a senatour,  
 For to conquéren regnès and honour  
 Unto the toun of Rome, as was usaunce,  
 To have the worlde at hir obeysaunce,  
 And sooth to seye, Antonius was his name.

So fil it, as Fortúne hym oght a shame,  
 Whanne he was fallen in prosperitee, 590  
 Rebel unto the toun of Rome is he.  
 And over al this, the suster of Cesar  
 He lafte hir falsly, er that she was war ;  
 And wold algatés han another wyf ;  
 For which he took with Rome and Cesar  
 straf.

Natheles, forsooth, this ylké senatour  
 Was a full worthy gentil werreyour,  
 And of his deeth it was ful gret damage.  
 But Love had brought this man in swich  
 a rage,

And him so narwé bounden in his laas,  
 Al for the love of Cleopataras, 601  
 That al the worlde he sette at no value ;  
 Him thoghte ther was nothing to him  
 so due

As Cleopataras for to love and serve ;  
 Him roghté nat in armés for to sterve  
 In the defence of hir and of hir ryght.

This noble queene ek lovedé so this  
 knyght,

Thurgh his desert and for his chivalrye ;  
 As certeynly, but-if that bookés lye,  
 He was of persone, and of gentillesse, 610  
 And of discrecion, and of hardynesse,  
 Worthy to any wight that lyven may ;  
 And she was faire as is the rose in May.  
 And, for to maken shortly is the beste,  
 She wax his wif, and hadde him as hir  
 leste.

The weddyng and the festé to devyse,  
 To me that have y-také swich emprise,  
 Of so many a storye for to make,  
 It were to longe, lest that I sholdé slake  
 Of thing that beryth more effecte and  
 charge ; 620

For men may overlade a shippe or barge.

592. *the suster of Cesar*. Octavia, sister of  
 Octavianus Cæsar, afterwards the Emperor  
 Augustus.

611. *of (2)*, om. Arch. Seld. and Trin.

614. *for*, om. F.

And forthy to effect than wol I skyppe,  
And al the remenaunt I wol letè slyppe.

Octavian, that woode was of this dede,  
Shoop him an ost on Antony to lede,  
Al outerly for his destruccioun,  
With stoutè Romaynes, crewel as lyoun ;  
To shippe they wente, and thus I let  
hem sayle. 628

Antonius, was war, and wol nat fayle  
To meten with thise Romaynes, if he may,  
Took eke his rede, and both upon a day,  
His wyf and he, and al his ost, forthe wente  
To shippe anon, no lenger they ne stente,  
And in the see hit happèd hem to mete.  
Up goth the trumpe, and for to shoute  
and shete,

And paynen hem to sette on with the sonne ;  
With grisly soune out goth the gretè gonne,  
And heterly they hurtelen al attones,  
And fro the top doun cometh the gretè  
stones. 639

In gooth the grapènel so ful of crokes,  
Amonge the ropès, and the sheryng hokes ;  
In with the polax preseth he and he ;  
Byhynde the maste begyneth he to fle,  
And out agayn, and dryveth hem over  
borde ;

He stynteth hem upon his sperès orde ;  
He rent the sayle with hokès lyke a sithe ;  
He bryngeth the cuppe, and biddeth hem  
be blithe ; 647

He poureth pesen upon the hacches slidre ;  
With pottès ful of lyme, they goon togidre ;  
And thus the longè day in fight they spende,  
Til al the last, as every thing hath ende,  
Antony is shent, and put hym to the flyghte ;  
And al his folke to-go, that best go myghte.

Fleeth ek the queene with al hir  
purple sayle,  
For strokès which that wente as thik as  
hayle ;

623. *lete*, Gg ; F<sup>5</sup> *let it*.

638. *heterly*, F<sup>4</sup> *hertely*.

642. *he* (2), Gg *sche*, as if the references were personal to Antony and Cleopatra!

644. *hem*, Trin., Pepys, and Add. ; rest *hym*.

645. *stynteth hem*, Trin. and Add. ; rest *styngeth hym*.

648. *pesen*, peas to make the decks slippery.

654. Chaucer here follows the 'regina cum aurea puppe veloce purpureo se in altum dedit' of Florus.

No wonder was she myght it nat endure.  
And whan that Antony saugh that áventure,  
'Allas,' quod he, 'the day that I was borne!  
My worshippe in this day thus have I lorne !'  
And for dispeyre out of his wytte he sterte,  
And roof hymself anon thurghout the herte,  
Er that he ferther went out of the place.  
His wyf, that koude of Cesar have no grace,  
To Egipte is fled, for drede and for dis-  
tresse.

But herkeneth ye that speken of  
kyndenesse.

Ye men that falsly sweren many an othe,  
That ye wol dye if that your love be wrothe,  
Here may ye seen of women which a trouthe.  
This woful Cleopatre hath made swich  
routhe, 669

That ther nys tongè noon that may it telle.  
But on the morowe she wol no lenger dwelle,  
But made hir subtil werkmen make a shryne  
Of al the rubees and the stonès fyne  
In al Egiptè that she koude espye ;  
And puttè ful the shryne of spicerye,  
And let the corps embawme ; and forth  
she fette

This dedè corps, and in the shryne it shette.  
And next the shryne a pitte than doth  
she grave,

And alle the serpentest that she myghtè have,  
She put hem in that grave, and thus she  
seyde : 680

'Now, love, to whom my sorweful herte  
obeyde

So ferforthely that fro that blysfyl houre  
That I yow swor to ben al frely youre,—  
I menè yow, Antonius, my knyght,—  
That never wakyng in the day or nyght  
Ye nere out of myn hertès rémembraunce,  
For wele or woo, for carole, or for daunce ;  
And in my self this covenaunt made I tho,  
That ryght swich as ye felten wele or wo,  
As ferforth as it in my powere lay, 690  
Unréprováble unto my wifhood ay,  
The samè wolde I felen, life or deethe ;  
And thilkè covenaunt, while me lasteth  
breathe,

I wol fulfille ; and that shal wel be seene,  
Was never unto hir love a trewer queene.'

662. Actium was fought in Sept. of 31 B.C. ; Antony killed himself the next year.

And wyth that worde, naked, with ful  
good herte,

Amonge the serpents in the pit she sterte ;  
And ther she chees to han hir buryinge.  
Anon the neddres gonne hir for to stynge,  
And she hir deeth receveth with good chere,  
For love of Antony that was hir so dere.  
And this is storial sooth, it is no fable. 702

Now er I fynde a man thus trewe and  
stable,

And wolde for love his deeth so frely take,  
I prey God latoure hedès nevere ake !

*Explicit Legenda Cleopatre, Martyris*

*Incipit Legende Tesba Babilon, Martiris*

At Babiloyne whilom fil it thus,—  
The whichè toun the queene Semyramus  
Leet dichen al about, and wallès make  
Ful hye, of hardè tilès wel y-bake : 709  
There werè dwellynge in this noble toun  
Two lordès, which that were of grete  
renoune,

And wonèden so neigh upon a grene,  
That ther nas but a stoon wal hem betwene,  
As ofte in grettè tounès is the wone.

And sooth to seyn, that o man had a sone,  
Of al that londe oon of the lustieste ;

That other had a doghtre, the faireste  
That esteward in the worlde was tho  
dwellynge. 718

The name of everychegan to others sprynge,  
By wommen that were neyghèbores aboute ;  
For in that contre yit, withouten doute,  
Máydens ben y-kept for jelousye  
Ful streytè, leste they diden somme folye.

This yongè man was clepèd Piramus,  
And Tesbe highte the maide,—Naso seith  
thus.

And thus by réporte was hir name y-shove,  
That as they wex in agè, wex hir love.

And certeyn, as by reson of hir age, 728  
Ther myghte have ben betwex hem  
mariage,

But that hir fadres nold it not assente,  
And both in love y-likè soore they brente,  
That noon of al hir frendès myghte it lette.

706-776. Missing in Pepys.

716. of, om. F<sup>3</sup>.

725. And, in Gg only.

But prevely somtymè yit they mette  
Bysleight, and spoken somme of hir desire,  
As wre the glede and hotter is the fire ;  
Forbeede a love, and it is ten so woode.

This wal, which that bitwixe hem bothè  
stooðe,

Was cloven a-two, right fro the toppè  
adoun,

Of oldè tyme, of his foundacioun. 739

But yit this clyftè was so narwe and lite  
It was nat seenè, deere ynogh a myte ;

But what is that that love kannat espye ?  
Ye lovers two, if that I shal nat lye,

Ye founden first this litel narwè clifte,  
And with a sounè as softe as any shryfte,

They leete hir wordès thurgh the cliftè pace,  
And tolden, while they stoden in the place,

Al hire compleynt of love, and al hire wo.  
At every tymè whan they dorstè so.

Upon the o syde of the walle stood he,  
And on that other sydè stood Tesbe, 751

The swootè soun of other to receyve.  
And thus here wardeyns woldè they  
disceyve,

And every day this walle they woldè threete,  
And wisshè to God that it were doun y-bete,

Thus wolde they seyn : 'Allas, thou  
wikked walle !

Thurgh thyn envýè thow us lettest alle !  
Why nyltow cleve, or fallen al a-two ?

Or at the leestè, but thow wouldest so,  
Yit woldestow but onès let us meete, 760

Or onès that we myghtè kysse sweete,  
Than were we covered of oure carès colde.

But nathèles, yit be we to thee holde,  
In as muche as thou suffrest for to goon

Our wordès thurgh thy lyme and eke thy  
stoon ;

Yet oghtè we with the ben wel apayede.' 7

And whan these idel wordès weren sayde,  
The coldè walle they wolden kysse of stoon,

And take hir leve, and forth they wolden  
goon.

And this was gladly in the evètyde, 770  
Or wonder erly, lest men it espyede.

And longè tyme they wroght in this manere,  
Til on a day, whan Phebus gan to clere—

741. deere ynogh a myte, ever so little.

747. they, Trin.<sup>2</sup>; rest that they.

770. And, F Alle.

Aurora with the stremés of hire hete  
 Had driéd uppe the dewe of herbés wete—  
 Unto this clyfte, as it was wont to be,  
 Come Piramus, and after come Tesbe.  
 And plighen trouthe fully in here faye,  
 That ilké samé nyght to steele awaye,  
 And to begile hire wardeyns everychone,  
 And forth out of the citee for to gone. 781  
 And, for the feeldés ben so broode and wide,  
 Fór to meete in o place at o tyde  
 They setté markes, hire metyng sholdé bee  
 Ther kyng Nynus was graven, under a  
 tree,—

For oldé payens, that ydóles heriede,  
 Useden tho in feeldés to ben beriede,—  
 And fasté by his gravé was a welle.  
 And, shortly of this talé for to telle, 789  
 This covenant was afferméd wonder faste,  
 And longe hem thoghté that the sonnè laste,  
 That it nere goon under the see adoun.

This Tesbe hath so greete affeccoun,  
 And so grete lykyng Piramus to see,  
 That whan she seigh hire tymé myghté bee,  
 At nyght she stale away ful prevèly,  
 With hire face y-wympled subtilly.  
 For al hire frendés, for to save hire trouthe,  
 She hath forsake; allas, and that is routhe,  
 That ever woman woldé be so trewe 800  
 To trusten man, but she the bet hym knewe!

And to the treeshegotha ful goode paas,  
 For love made hir so hardy in this caas;  
 And by the welle adoun she gan hir dresse.  
 Allas! than comith a wildé leonesse  
 Out of the woode, withouten more arreste,  
 With bloody mouth, of strangelyng of a  
 beste,

To drynken of the welle ther as she sat.  
 And whan that Tesbe had espyéd that,  
 She ryst hir up, with a ful drery herte, 810  
 And in a cave with dredful foot she sterte,  
 For by the mooneshe saugh it wel withalle.  
 And as she ranne, hir wympel leetshe falle,  
 And tooke noon hede, so sore she was  
 awhaped,  
 And eke so gladé that she was escaped;  
 And ther she sytte, and darketh wonder  
 stille.

785. *Nynus*, the mythical founder of Nineveh,  
 for whom Semiramis built a tomb.

815. *glade*, Trin. *glad of*.

Whan that this lyonesse hath dronke hire  
 file,  
 Aboute the wellé gan she for to wynde,  
 And ryght anon the wympil gan she fynde,  
 And with hir bloody mouth it al to-rente.  
 Whan this was don, no lenger she nestente,  
 But to the woode hir wey than hath she  
 nome. 822

And at the laste this Piramus is come,  
 But al to longe, allas, at home was hee!  
 The mooné shone, men myghté wel y-see,  
 And in his wey, as that he come ful faste,  
 Hise eyen to the grounde adoun he caste;  
 And in the sonde as he behelde adoun,  
 He seigh the steppés broode of a lyoun;  
 And in his herte he soodeynly agroos, 830  
 And pale he wex, therwith his heer aroos,  
 And nere he come, and founde the wympel  
 torne.

‘Allas,’ quod he, ‘the day that I was borne!  
 This o nyght wol us lovers bothé slee!  
 How shulde I axen mercy of Tesbee,  
 Whan I am he that have yow slayne, allas?  
 My byddyng hath i-slayn yow in this caas!  
 Allas, to bidde a woman goon by nyghte  
 In placé ther as peril fallen myghte!  
 And I so slowe! allas, I ne haddé be 840  
 Here in this place, a furlong wey or ye!  
 Now what lyon that be in this foreste,  
 My body mote he renten, or what beste  
 That wilde is, gnawen mote he now my  
 herte!’

And with that worde he to the wympel  
 sterte,  
 And kiste it ofte, and wepte on it ful sore;  
 And seyde, ‘Wympel, allas! ther nys no  
 more,  
 But thou shalt feeleas wel the blode of me,  
 As thou hast felt the bledyng of Tesbe.  
 And with that worde he smot hym to the  
 herte; 850

The blood out of the wounde as brode  
 sterte  
 As water, whan the conduyte broken is.  
 Now Tesbe, which that wisté nat of this,  
 But sytting in hire drede, she thoghté thus:  
 ‘If it so fallé that my Piramus  
 Be comen hider, and may me nat y-fynde,

852. *whan the conduyte broken is*. The meta-  
 phor is transferred from Ovid, *Met.* iv. 122-124.

He may me holden fals, and eke unkynde.  
And oute she comith, and after hym gan  
espian

Bóthé with hire herte and with hire eyen ;  
And thoghte, 'I wol him tellen of my  
drede, 860

Bothe of the lyonesse and al my dede.'  
And at the laste hire love than hath she  
founde,

Bétynge with his helis on the grounde,  
Al bloody; and therwithal abak she sterte,  
And lyke the wawés quappé gan hir herte,  
And pale as boxe she wax, and in a throwe  
Aviséd hir, and gan him wel to knowe,  
That it was Piramus, hire herté dere.

Who koudé writé which a dedely chere  
Hath Tesbe now? and how hire heere she  
rente? 870

And how she gan hir-selvé to turmente?  
And how she lyth and swowneth on the  
grounde?

And how she wepe of terés ful his wounde?  
How medleth she his blood with hir com-  
pleynte?

How with his blood hir-selven gan she  
peynte?

How clippeth she the dedé corps? alas!  
How doth this woful Tesbe in this cas?  
How kysseth she his frosty mouthe so  
colde?

'Who hath don this? and who hath ben  
so bolde 879

To sleen my leefé? O speké, Piramus!  
I am thy Tesbe, that thec calleth thus!  
And therwithal she lyfteth up his heed.

This woful man, that was nat fully  
deed,

Whan that he herde the name of Tesbe  
crien,

On hire he caste his hevye dedely eyen,  
And doun agayn, and yeldeth up the  
goste.

Tesbe rist uppe, withouten noyse or  
boste,

And saugh hir wympel and his empty  
shethe,

And eke his swerde, that him hath don  
to dethe.

866. *pale as boxe*, Ovid's 'oraque buxo Pallidi-  
ora gerens,' *Met.* iv. 134, 135.

Than spake she thus: 'Thy woful hande,'  
quod she, 890

'Is strong ynogh in swiche a werke to me;  
For love shal me yive strengthe and  
hardynesse,

To make my woundé large ynogh, I gesse.  
I wole the folowen ded, and I wol be  
Felawe and cause eke of thy deeth,' quod  
she.

'And thogh that nothing save the deth only  
Myghte the fro me departé trewely,  
Thou shal no more departé now fro me  
Than fro the deth, for I wol go with the.

'And now, ye wrecched jelouse fadrés  
oure, 900

Wé, that weren whilome children yourc,  
We prayen yow, withouten more envye,  
That in o grave i-fere we moten lye,  
Syn love hath broght us to this pitouse ende.  
And ryghtwis God to every lover sende,  
That loveth trewely, more prosperite  
Than ever haddé Piramus and Tesbe.  
And let no gentile woman hire assure,  
To putten hire in swiche an áventure.

But God forbedé but a woman kan 910  
Ben also trewe and lovyngé as a man,  
And for my parte I shal anon it kythe.'  
And with that worde his swerde she took  
as swithe,

That warme was of hire lovés blood, and  
hote,

And to the herté she hire-selven smote.  
And thus are Tesbe and Piramus ago.

Of trewé men I fyndé but fewe mo  
In al my bookés, save this Piramus,  
And therefore have I spoken of hym thus  
For it is deyntee to us men to fynde 920  
A man that kan in love be trewe and  
kynde.

Here may ye seen, what lover so he be,  
A woman dar and kan as wel as he.

#### *Explicit Legenda Tesbe*

890. *Thy*, Gg corrects to *Myn*; but perhaps a  
couplet has fallen out. Chaucer is translating  
*Metamorphoses*, iv. 147-149:

Tua te manus, Inquit, amorque  
Perdidit, infelix. Est et mihi fortis in unum  
Hoc manus: est et amor, etc.

898. F<sup>3</sup> *noo more now depart.*

903. *i-fere*, only in Trin. and Add.

904. F<sup>3</sup> *hath us broght.*

911. *also*, Add. only; Trin. *als*; rest *as*.

*Incipit Legenda Didonis, Martiris,  
Carthaginis Regine*

Glorie and honour, Virgile Mantuan,  
Be to thy name ! and I shal, as I kan,  
Folowe thy lanterne as thou goste byforn.  
How Eneas to Dido was forsworne—

In thyne Eneyde and Naso wol I take 928  
The tenour, and the grete effectès make.

Whan Troyè broght was to destruccion  
By Grekès sleight, and namely by Synon,  
Feynyng the hors offred unto Minerve,  
Thurgh which that many a Trojan mostè  
sterve,

And Ector had after his deeth appered,  
And fire so woode it myghtè nat ben stered,  
In al the noble tour of Ylion,  
That of the citee was the cheef dungeon ;  
And al the contree was so lowe y-broght,  
And Priamus, the kyng, fordoon and noght ;  
And Eneas was chargèd by Venus 940  
To fleen away, he tooke Ascanius,  
That was his sone, in his ryght hande  
and fledde,

And on his bakke he baar, and with him  
ledde,

His oldè fader, elepèd Anchises ;  
And by the wey his wyf Creusa he lees,  
And mochel sorowe hadde he in his mynde,  
Er that he koude his felawshippè fynde.  
But at the lastè, whan he hadde hem  
founde,

He made him redy in a certeyn stounde,  
And to the see ful faste he gan him hye, 950  
And sayleth forth with al his companye  
Towarde Ytayle, as wolde his destanee.  
But of his aventurès in the see  
Nys nat to purpos for to speke of here,  
For it acordeth nat to my matere.  
But as I seyde, of hym and of Dydo  
Shal be my tale, til that I have do.

So longe he sayllèd in the saltè see,  
Til in Lybye unneth arryvèd he,  
With schepis sevene and with no more  
navye, 960

928. *Naso*, Ovid in his *Heroides*, Ep. vii.

931. *Synon*, cp. *Æneid*, ii. 57-198.

934. *Ector*. Hector's ghost warned Æneas to  
flee from Troy, cp. *Æn.* ii. 270-277.

952. *his*, om. F<sup>5</sup>.

960, 961. Only in Gg and Pepys.

And glad was he to londè for to hye,  
So was he with the tempest al to-shake.  
And whan that he the havene had y-take,  
He had a knyghte was callèd Achates,  
And him of al his felawshippe he ches  
To goon with him, the contree for tospye.  
He toke with him na morè companye,  
But forth they goon, and lafte his shippès  
ride,

His fere and he, withouten any guye.

So longe he walketh in this wildernesse,  
Til at the last he mette an hunteresse ; 971  
A bowe in hande, and arwès haddè shee ;  
Hire clothès cuttid were unto the knee.

But she was yit the fairest creature  
That ever was y-formèd by nature ;  
And Eneas and Achates she grette,  
And thus she to hem spak whan she hem  
mette,

'Sawe ye,' quod she, 'as ye han walked  
wided,

Any of my sustren walkè yow besyde,  
With any wildè boor or other beste, 980  
That they han hunted to in this foreste,  
Y-tukkèd up, with arwès in hire cas ?'

'Nay soothly, lady !' quod this Eneas ;  
'But by thy beaute, as it thynketh me,  
Thou myghtest never erthely woman be.  
But Phebus suster artow, as I gesse.  
And if so be that thou be a goddesse,  
Have mercy on oure labour and oure wo.'

'I nam no goddesse soothely,' quod  
she tho ;

'For maydens walken in this contree  
here, 990

With arwès and with bowe, in this manere.  
This is the regne of Libie ther ye been,  
Of which that Dido lady is and queene.'  
And shortly tolde al the occasioun  
Why Dido come into that regioun,  
Of which as now me lusteth nat to ryme ;  
It nedeth nat, it nere but los of tyme.  
For this is al and somme ; it was Venus,  
His owene moder, that spake with him  
thus ;

971 sqq. Cp. *Æn.* i. 314-417.

973. *cuttid*, F<sup>2</sup> *knytte*. Virgil's 'nuda genu  
nodoque sinus collecta fluentis' might suggest  
either word.

982. *Y-tukkèd up*, etc., Virgil's 'succintam  
pharetra.'



And to Cartage she bad he sholde him  
dighte, 1000

And vanysshéd anon out of his sighte.  
I koudé folwe worde for worde Virgile,  
But it wolde lasten al to longé while.

This noble queene, that clepéd was  
Dido,

That whilom was the wife of Sitheo,  
That fairer was than is the bryghté sonne,  
This noblé toun of Cartage hath begonne;  
In which she regneth in so grete honoure,  
That she was holde of allé quenés floure,  
Of gentillesse, of fredome, of beautee,  
That wel was him that myght hir onés see.  
Of kyngés and of lordés so desired, 1012  
That al the worlde hire beaute hadde  
y-fired,

She stooode so wel in every wyghtés grace.

Whan Eneas was come unto that place,  
Unto the maistre temple of al the toun,  
Ther Dido was in hir devocioun,  
Ful privély his wey than hath he nome.  
Whan he was in the largé temple come,—  
I kannat seye if that hit be possible,—  
But Venus hadde him makéd invisible;  
Thus seith the booke, withouten any les.

And whan this Eneas and Achates  
Hadden in this temple ben over-alle,  
Than foundé they depeynted on a walle  
How Troy and al the londe destroyed  
was.

'Allas, that I was born!' quod Eneas.  
'Thurghout the worlde oure shame is  
kid so wide,

Now it is peynted upon every side.  
Wé, that weren in prosperitee, 1030  
Be now disclaudréd, and in swiche degre,  
No longer for to lyven I ne kepe.'  
And with that worde he braste out for to  
wepe

so tendirly that routhe it was to seene.  
This fresshé lady, of the citee queene,  
Stooode in the temple, in hire estat royalle,  
so richely, and eke so faire withalle,  
so yonge, so lusty, with hire eyen glade,  
That if that God, that hevene and erthé  
made,

1005. *Sitheo*, *Sichæus*.

1006. *is*, om. all but Gg and Add.

1030. *weren*, Trin. and Add. *were whilom*.

Wolde han a love, for beaute and  
goodnesse, 1040

And womanhode, and trouthe, and  
semlynesse.

Whom sholde he loven but this lady swete?  
Ther nys no woman to him halfe so mete.  
Fortune, that hath the worlde in  
gouvernaunce,

Hath sodeynly broght insonewe a chaunce,  
That never was ther yet so fremde a cas.  
For al the companye of Eneas,  
Which that he wende han loren in the see,  
Aryved is, nocht fer fro that citee. 1049  
For which the grettest of his lordés, some,  
By aventure ben to the citee come,  
Unto that samé temple, for to seke  
The queene, and of hire socour hir beseke;  
Swich rénowne was ther spronge of hir  
goodnesse.

And whan they haddé tolde al hire  
distresse,

And al hir tempest and hire hardé cas,  
Unto the queene apperéd Eneas,  
And openly beknew that it was he.  
Who haddé joyé thanne but his meynee,  
That hadden founde hire lord, hire  
gouvernour? 1060

The queené saugh they dide him swich  
honour,

And had herde ofte of Eneas er tho,  
And in hir herté she hadde routhe and wo,  
That ever swiche a noble man as hee  
Shal ben disherited in swiche degre.  
And saugh the man, that he was lyke a  
knyghte,

And suffisaunt of persone and of myghte,  
And lyke to ben a verray gentilman.  
And wel his wordés he besetté kan, 1069  
And hadde a noble visage for the nones,  
And forméd wel of brawnés and of bones;  
For after Venus hadde he swich fairenesse,  
That no man myghte be half so faire, I gesse,  
And wel a lorde he semede for to be.  
And for he was a straunger, somewhat she  
Lýkéd him the bette, as, God do bote,  
To somme folke often newé thinge isswote.

1046. *never was ther yet*, so Trin. and Thynne;  
Arch. Seld. *never yet was sene*; Add. om. *yet*;  
rest om. *ther*.

1074. *he*, so Gg Add. Pepys; rest *him*.

Anon hire herte hath pitee of his wo,  
And with that pitee, love come in also ;  
And thus for pitee and for gentillesse,  
Refresshéd mote he ben of his distresse.

She seyde, certés, that she sory was  
That he hath had swich peril and swiche  
cas ;

And in hire frendely speche, in this manere  
She to him spake, and seyde as ye may here.

' Be ye nat Venus' sone and Anchises' ?  
In good faythe, al the worshippe and encres  
That I may goodly doon yow, ye shal have :  
Youre shippés and youre meynee shal I  
save.'

And many a gentil worde she spake him to,  
And comaunded hire messagers to go  
The samé day, withouten any faylle, <sup>1092</sup>  
His shippés for to seke and hem vitaylle.  
Ful many a beeste she to the shippés sente,  
And with the wyne she gan hem to presente,  
And to hire royall paleys she hire spedde,  
And Eneas alway with hire she ledde.  
What nedeth yow the festé to discryve ?  
He never better at ese was in his lyve.  
Ful was the feste of deyntees and richesse,  
Of instruments, of songe, and of gladnesse,  
And many an amoureuse loking and devys.

This Eneas is comen to Paradys  
Out of the swolowe of helle ; and thus in joye  
Remembreth him of his estaat in Troye.  
To daunsyng chambres, ful of parements,  
Of riché beddés, and of ornaments,  
This Eneas is ladde after the meete.  
And with the queene when that he  
hadde secte <sup>1109</sup>

And spices parted, and the wyne agon,  
Unto his chambrés was he lad anon  
To take his ease, and for to have his reste  
With al his folke, to doon what so hem leste.

Thér nas coursere, wel y-bridléd, noon,  
Ne stedé for the justyng wel to goon,  
Ne largé palfrey, esy for the nones,  
Ne juwel fretted ful of riché stones,  
Ne sakkés ful of gold, of largé wyghte,  
Ne rubeé noon that shynédé by nyghte,

<sup>1099.</sup> Gg *He nevere at ese was betyr in al hese lyve.*

<sup>1107.</sup> ornaments, so Gg Trin. Add. ; F<sup>6</sup> *pave-ments.*

<sup>1119.</sup> *shynede*, Gg Trin. Pepys ; Add. *shone* ; F<sup>5</sup> *shineth.*

Ne gentil hawteyn fawkone heroneer,  
Ne hound for hert, or wildé boor or deer,  
Ne coupe of golde, with floryns newe  
y-bette, <sup>1122</sup>

That in the londe of Lybye may ben gette,  
That Dido ne hath hit Eneas i-sente ;  
And al is payéd, what that he hath spente.  
Thus gan this queene honoure hir gester  
talle,

As she that kan in fredome passen alle.

Eneas soothly eke, withouten les,  
Hath sent unto his shippe by Achates  
After his sone, and after ryché thynges,  
Both ceptre, clothés, brochés, and eke  
rynges ; <sup>1132</sup>

Somme for to were, and somme for to  
presente

To hire, that alle thise noble thinges  
him sente ;

And bad his sone how that he sholdé make  
The presentyng, and to the queene it take

Repeyréd is this Achates agayne,  
And Eneas ful blysfyl is and fayne,  
To seen his yongé sone Ascanius.

But nathéles our autour tellith us <sup>1133</sup>  
That Cupido, that is the god of love,  
At prayere of hys moder hye above,  
Haddé the liknesse of the childe y-take,  
This noble queen enamouréd to make  
On Eneas. But as of that scripture  
Be as be may, I make of it no cure.

But sooth is this, the queene hath made  
swich chere

Unto this childe that wonder is to here ;  
And of the present that his fader sente,  
She thankéd him ful ofte in goode intente

Thus is this queene in pleasaunce and  
in joye, <sup>1152</sup>

With al thise newé lusty folke of Troye.  
And of the dedés hath she more enqueré  
Of Eneas, and al the storie lered

<sup>1126.</sup> MSS. read *Thus kan* (Add. *ganne*) *the honourable queene hir gester* (Pepys, *giftes*) *callé* where *callé* is plainly a misreading of the complimentary epithet *talle*. This would make the verb *honoure* impossible, and so lead to the substitution of *honourable*. Another possible restoration would be *Thus yaf this noble queene hir giftes talle*. The reading *talle* is due to D<sup>1</sup> Heath.

<sup>1139.</sup> So Gg and Pepys ; F<sup>4</sup> *For to him yt was reported thus* ; other variants show that the line was corrupted.

Of Troye; and al the longé day they tweye  
Entendeden to speken and to pleye.  
Of which ther gan to breden swich a fire,  
That sely Dido hath now swich desire  
With Eneas, hir newé geste, to deele,  
That she hath loste hire hewe and eke  
hire heele.

Now to theffecte, now to the fruyt of al,  
Why I have tolde this storye, and tellen  
shal, 1161

Thus I bygynne: It fil upon a nyght,  
Whan that the moone upreyséd had hire  
lyght,

This noble queene unto hire resté wente.  
She siketh sore, and gan hire - selfe  
turmente;

She waketh, walwithe, maketh many a  
brayde,

As doon these lovers, as I have herde  
sayde;

And at the laste, unto hire suster Anne  
She made hir mone, and ryght thus  
spake she thanne. 1169

'Now, deré suster myn, what may it be  
That me agasteth in mydreme?' quod she.

'This ilké Trojane is so in my thoghte,  
For that me thinketh he is so wely-wroghte,

And eke so likly for to ben a man,  
And therwithal so mykel good he kan,

That al my love and lyf lyth in his cure.  
Have ye nat herde hym telle his áventure?

Now certes, Anne, gif that ye redé me,  
I woldé fayne to him y-wedded be; 1179

This is theffect; what sholde I moré seyn?  
In him lith alle, to doo me lyve or deyn.'

Hir suster Anne, as she that kouth  
hire goode,

Seyde as hire thought, and somdel it  
withstoode.

But herof was so longe a sermonyng,  
It were to longe to maké rehersyng.

But, finally, it may nat be withstonde:  
Lové woll love, for no wyght wol it wonde.

The dawényng upryst oute of the see;  
This amoureuse queené chargeth hire  
meynee

1155. So Gg; rest *For to speke and for to  
pleye.*

1163. *hire*, Gg *his*.

1174. *for*, om. F<sup>5</sup>.

1178. *rede*, Gg *rede it*.

The nettés dresse, and sperés brood and  
kene; 1190

An huntyng wol this lusty fresshé queene,  
So priketh hire this newé joly wo.

To hors is al hire lusty folke y-go;  
Unto the courte the houndés ben  
y-broughte,

And upon coursers, swyfte as any thoughte,  
Hir yongé knyghtés hoven al aboute,  
And of hir women eke an hugé route.

Upon a thikké palfrey, paper white, 1198  
With sadel rede, enbroudet with delyte,

Of golde the barrés up enboséd heighe,  
Sitte Dido, al in golde and perrey wreighe.

And she is faire as is the bryghté morwe,  
That heeleth seké folkes of nyghtés sorwe.

Upon a coursere, startlyng as the fire,—  
Men myghté turne him with a lytel wire,—

Sitte Eneas, like Phebus to devyse,  
So was he fressh arrayéd in his wyse.

The fomy bridel, with the bitte of golde,  
Governeth he, ryght as himselfe hathe  
wolde. 1209

And forth this noble queene, this lady, ride  
On huntyng, with this Trojan by hire syde.

The herde of hertés founden is anon,  
With 'Hay!' 'Go bet!' 'Prik thou!'

'Lat gon, lat gon!'  
'Why nyl the lyoun comen, or the bere,

That I myght hym onés meten with this  
spere?'

Thus seyn these yongé folke, and up they  
kylle

The wildé hertes, and han hem at here wille.  
Amonges al this, to romblen gan the  
hevene;

The thonder rored with a grisly stevene;  
Doun come the rayne, with haile and  
sleet, so faste, 1220

With hevenes fire, that it so sore agaste  
This noble quene, and also hire meynee,

That yche of hem was glad away to flee;  
And shortly, fro the tempest hire to save,

She fled hire-selfe into a lytel cave,  
And with hire wente this Eneas also.

I not with hem if ther went any mo;  
The auctour maketh of hit no mencion.

And here beganne the depe affeccion  
Betwix hem two; this was the firsté morwe

1195. *coursers*, F<sup>5</sup> *coursere*.

Of hire gladnesse, and gynnyng of hir  
sorwe. 1231

For there hath Eneas y-kneléd so,  
And tolde hir al his herte and al his wo,  
And sworne so depè to hire to be trewe  
For wele or wo, and chaungè for no newe,  
And, as a fals lover, so wel kan pleyne,  
That sely Dido rewéd on his peyne,  
And toke hym for housbonde, and became  
his wife

For evermor, while that hem lastè lyfe.  
And after this, whan that the tempest  
stente, 1240

With myrth, out as they comè, home they  
wente.

The wikked fame up ros, and that anon,  
How Eneas hath with the queene y-gon  
Into the cave, and deméd as hem liste.  
And whan the kyng that Yarbas hight  
hit wiste,

As he that had hire lovéd ever his lyfe,  
And wowed hire to have hire to hys wife,  
Swiche sorowe as he hath makéd, and  
swiche chere,

It is a rewthe and pitee for to here.  
But as in love alday it happeth so, 1250  
That oon shal lawghen at anotherès wo ;  
Now lawgheth Eneas, and is in joye,  
And more richès than ever was in Troye.

O sely woman, ful of innocence,  
Ful of pitee, of trouthe, and conscience,  
What makéd yow to men to trusten so ?  
Have ye suche rewthe upon hir feynéd wo,  
And han suche olde ensamples yow  
beforne ?

Se ye nat allè how they ben forsworne ?  
Where se ye oon that he ne hath lafte  
his leefè ? 1260

Or ben unkynde, or don hir some  
myscheefe ?

Or pilléd hir, or bosted of his dede ?  
Ye may as wel hit seen as ye may rede.  
Take hede now of this gretè gentilman,  
This Trojan, that so wel hire plesè kan,  
That feyneth him so trewe and obeysinge,  
So gentil, and so privy of his doynge ;  
And kan so wel doon al his obeysaunces,

1235. *chaunge*, Gg and Pepys *chaunge hire*.

1242. *The wikked fame*. Virgil's 'Fama, malum qua non aliud velocius ullum,' *Æn.* iv. 174.

And waytyn hir, at festès and at daunces,  
And whan she gooth to temple, and home  
ageyne, 1270

And fasten til he hath his lady seyne ;  
And beren in his devyses for hire sake  
Wot I not what ; and songès wolde he  
make,

Justen, and doon of armès many thynges,  
Sénd hire letrés, tokens, brochès, rynges.  
Now herkneht how he shal his lady serve.

Ther as he was in peril for to sterve  
For hunger and for myscheef in the see,  
And desolate, and fledde fro his contree, 1280  
And al his folke with tempesteal to-driven,  
She hath hir body and eke hir reamè yiven  
Into his hande, theras she myghte have  
bene 1282

Of other lande than of Cartage a queene,  
And lyved in joy ynogh ; what wolde ye  
more ?

This Eneas, that hath thus depey-swore,  
Is wery of his crafte within a throwe ;  
The hootè erneste is al overblowe.

And privly he doth his shippès dyghte,  
And shapeth him to steeleaway by nyghte.

This Dido hath suspesicion of this, 1290  
And thoughtè wel that hit was al amys ;  
For in his bedde he lyth a nyght and siketh,  
She asketh him anon what him mysliketh.

'Myderè hertè, which that I lovemoste,  
Certès,' quod he, 'thys nyght my fadrès  
goste

Hath in my slepe so sorè me turmentede,  
And eke Mercure his message hath pre-  
sentede,

That nedès to the conqueste of Ytayle  
My destany is soonè for to sayle,  
For whiche me thynketh brosten is myn  
herte.' 1300

Therwith his falsè teerès oute they sterte,  
And taketh hir within his armès two.

'Is that in ernest ?' quod she ; 'wol ye  
so ?

Have ye nat sworne to wifè me to take ?  
Allas, what woman wol ye of me make ?  
I am a gentil woman, and a queene ;  
Ye wol nat fro your wyfe thus foulè fleene !  
That I was borne, allas ! Whatshal I do ?'

1269. *And waytyn*, Gg only ; Trin.<sup>2</sup> *And plesyn* ; rest *To*.

To telle inshort, this noble queene Dido  
 She seketh halwës, and doth sacrificise ;  
 She kneleth, crieth, that routhe is to  
 devyse ; 1311  
 Conjureth him, and profereth him to be  
 His thral, his servant, in the lest degree.  
 She falleth him to foote, and swowneth  
 there,  
 Disshelvey with hire bryghte giltè here,  
 And seith, 'Have mercy ! let me with  
 yow ryde ;  
 These lordès, which that wonien me besyde,  
 Wol me destroien only for youre sake.  
 And so ye wole now me to wifè take,  
 As ye han sworn, than wol I yive yow leve  
 To sleen me with your swerd now soone  
 at eve ; 1321  
 For than shal I yet dien as youre wife.  
 I am with childe, and yive my childe his  
 lyfe !  
 Mércy, lorde, have pitee in youre thought !'  
 But al this thing awayleth hire ryght  
 nought,  
 For on a nyght sleping he let hir lye,  
 And staa away upon his companye,  
 And as a traytour forthe he gan to sayle  
 Towarde the largè contree of Itayle.  
 And thus he lefte Dido in wo and pyne,  
 And weddid there a lady highte Lavyne.  
 A cloth he lefte, and eke his swerde  
 stondynge, 1332  
 Whan he fro Dido staa in hire slepyng,  
 Righte at hir beddès hed : so gan he hye,  
 Whanne that he staa away to his navye.  
 Which cloth, whansely Didoganawake,  
 She hath it kyste ful oftè for hys sake ;  
 And seyde, 'O sweté cloth, while [Jove]  
 hit leste,  
 Fake now my soule, unbynde me of this  
 unreste ; 1339

1319. so, om. F<sup>5</sup>.1324. have, Gg *havyth*.1330. *And thus he lefte*, Trin.<sup>3</sup>; Gg, *Thus he  
ath lefte*; F<sup>4</sup> *And thus hath he lefte*.1338. Trin.<sup>3</sup> om. *swete*, but Chaucer is trans-  
 ating the 'Dulces exuviæ, dum fata deusque  
 inebant' of *Æn.* iv. 651, and, like 'dulces,' *swete*  
 ; emphatic. To mend the line I read *Jove* for  
*upiter* of MSS.1339. now, om. F<sup>5</sup>.1339. *unbynde me*, Virgil's 'accipite hanc  
 nimam meque his exsolvite curis'; Gg reads *and  
 ryngè it*.

I have fulfilled of fortune al the cours.<sup>7</sup>  
 And thus, allas, withouten his socours,  
 Twénty tyme swowned hath she thanne.  
 And whan that she unto hir suster Anne  
 Compleynéd had, of which I may not write,  
 So gretè routhe I have hit for to endite,  
 And had hir norcyce and hir sustren gon  
 To fechè fire, and other thinges anon,  
 And seyde that she woldè sacrificie,—  
 And whan she myght hir tymè wel espye,  
 Upon the fire of sacrifice she sterte, 1350  
 And with his swerde she roof hire to the  
 herte.  
 But, as myn auctour seythe, yit thus she  
 seyde,  
 Or she was hurte, beforme or she deide,  
 She wroot a letter anon, that thus biganne.  
 'Ryght so,' quod she, 'as that the whitè  
 swanne  
 Ayenst his deeth begynneth for to syngè,  
 Ryght so to yow I make my còmpleynynge,  
 Nat that I trowe to geten yow agayne,  
 For wel I woot that hit is al in vayne,  
 Syn that the goddys ben contrary to me.  
 But syn my name is loste thurgh yow,'  
 quod she, 1361  
 'I may wel leese a worde on yow, or letter,  
 Albeit I shal be never the better.  
 For thilkè wynde that blew your shipaway,  
 Thesamè wynde hath blowe away your fay.'  
 But who wol al this letter have in mynde,  
 Rede Ovyde, and in him he shal hit fynde.  
*Explicit Legenda Didonis, Martiris,  
 Cartagenis Regine*  
*Incipit Legenda Ysiphile et Medee,  
 Martiris*  
 Thou roote of falsè lovers, duke Jason !  
 Thou slye devourer, and confusyon  
 Of gentil women, gentil créatures ! 1370  
 Thou madest thy reclaynynge and thy lures  
 To ladies of thy staately aparauce,  
 And of thy wordès farséd with plesaunce,  
 1352. *myn auctour*, now Ovid (*Heroides*, vii.).  
 1360. *contrary*, F<sup>4</sup> *contrariously*.  
 1366. *who wol al*, so Pepys and Tan. ; Gg F<sup>2</sup>  
 Th. *whoso wol al*; Trin.<sup>2</sup> *who that wyll*; Ar.  
 Seld. *whoso wol*.  
 1367. Pepys MS. stops here.  
 1370. So F<sup>4</sup> and P ; Gg for first and Trin.<sup>3</sup> for  
 second *gentil* read *tendre*.

And of thy feynéd trouthe, and thy manere,  
With thyne obeysaunce and humble chere,  
And with thy countrefeted peyn and wo!  
Ther other falsen oon, thou falseste two!  
O, ofté swore thou that thou woldest deye  
For love, whan thou ne felteste maladeye,  
Save foule delyte, which that thou callest  
love! . . . 1380

If that I lyve, thy namé shal be shove  
In Englyssh, that thy sleighté shal be  
knowe;  
Have at the, Jason! now thyn horn is  
blowe!

But certés, it is bothé routhe and wo,  
That love with falsé lovers werketh so;  
For they shalle have wel better and gretter  
chere

Than he that hath a-boughte his love ful  
dere,

Or had in armés many a blody box.  
For ever as tender a capon eteth the fox,  
Though he be fals, and hath the foule  
betrayed, 1390

As shal the good man that therfor hath  
payed;

Al have he to the capon skille and ryghte,  
The falsé fox wil have his part at nyghte.  
On Jason this ensample is wel y-seene,  
By Isiphile and Médea the queene.

In Tessalye, as Guido telleth us,  
Ther was a kyng that highté Pelléus,  
That had a brother whiche that hight Eson;  
And whan for age he myghte unneethés gon,  
He yaf to Pelléus the govornyng 1400  
Of al his regne, and made him lorde and  
kyng.

Of whiche Eson this Jason geten was,  
That in his tyme in al that lande ther nas  
Nat suche a famouse knyghte of gentillesse,  
Of fredome, and of strengthe, and lusty-  
nesse.

After his fader deeth he bar him so,  
That ther nas noon that lysté ben his fo,

1387. *a-boughte*, F<sup>3</sup> *bought*. *his*, om. F<sup>4</sup>.

1391. *hath*, Gg only; rest om.

1392. *Al have he*, F<sup>2</sup> *Alle thof he have*.

1395. *Isiphile*, Hypsipile.

1396. *Guido*, i.e. Guido delle Colonne in his  
*Historia Trojana*; F<sup>4</sup> *Oryde*.

1397. *kyng*, F<sup>3</sup> *knyght*.

1405. *and of strengthe*, etc., all but Gg read of  
*strengthe and of lustynesse*.

But dide him al honóur and companye,  
Of which this Pelléus hath grete envye,  
Imagnynge that Jason myghté be 1410  
Enhauccéd so, and put in suche degree,  
With love of lordés of his regioun,  
That from his regne he may be put adoun.

And in his witte a-nyghte compasséd he  
How Jason myghté beste destroyéd be,  
Withouté sclauder of his compasséméte.  
And at the laste he tooke avyséméte,  
To senden him into some fer contre,  
There as this Jason may destroyéd be.  
This was his witte, al made he to Jasoun  
Grete chere of love and of affecioun, 1420  
For dredé lest his lordés hyt espyde.

So felle hyt, so as famé renneth wide,  
Ther was suche tidynge overal, and suche  
los,

That in an ile that calléd was Colcos,  
Beyonde Troyé, estwarde in the see,  
That ther a ram was that men myghté see  
That had a flees of gold; that shoon so  
bryghte,

That no-where was ther suche another  
sighte,

But hit was kept alway with a dragoun,—  
And many other mervels up and doun;  
And with two boles maked al of bras,  
That spitten fire; and muché thinge the  
was. 1430

But this was eke the talé, nathelees,  
That who-so woldé wynné thilké flees,  
He mosté both—or he hyt wynné myghte—  
With the bolés and the dragoun fyghte;  
And kyng Oetes lorde was of that ile.  
This Pelléus bethoughte upon this wile,  
That he his newewe Jason wolde enhorte  
To saylen to that londe, him to disporte  
And seyde, ‘Newewe, if hyt myghté be,  
That suché worshippe myghté fallé the,  
That thou this famous tresor myghte  
wynne,

And bryngyn hit my regyoun withinne,  
It were to me grette plesaunce and honóure  
Thanne were I holde to quyté thy labouré  
And al the cost I wol my-selfé make;

1413. *may*, Gg and Arch. Seld. *mighte*.

1418. *To*, F<sup>5</sup> *That to*.

1425. *Colcos*, Colchis.

1438. *Oetes*, Æetes.

And these what folke that thou wilt with  
the take. 1449

Let see nowe, darstow taken this viage?'

Jason was yonge, and lusty of corage,  
And undertooke to doon this ilke emprise.  
Anon Argus his shippès gan devyse.

With Jason wente the strongè Hercules,  
And many another that he with him ches.  
But who-so axeth who is with him gon,  
Lét him redè 'Argonauticon,'

For he wol telle a talè longe ynoughe.  
Philotetes anon the sayle up droughe,  
Whan that the wynde was good, and gan  
him hye 1460

Out of his contree callè Tessalye.  
So longe he saylèd in the saltè see,  
Til in the ile of Lemnon arryvèd he.  
Al be this not rehersed of Guydo,  
Yet seyth Ovyde in his Epistles so ;  
And of this ilè lady was, and queene,  
The fairè yonge Ysiphilè, the shene,  
That whilom Thoas doughter was, the  
kyngè.

Ysiphylè was goon in hire pleyngè,  
And romyngè on the clyvès by the see.  
Under a brake anon espiede she 1471  
Where that the shippe of Jason gan arryve.  
Of hire goodnesse adoun she sendeth blyve,  
O weten, if that any straungè wyghte  
With tempest thider were y-blowa-nyghte,  
Go doon hem socour, as was hir usaunce  
Go forthren every wyghte, and don  
plesaunce

Of very bountee, and of curteysie.  
This messagere adoun him gan to hye,  
And founde Jason and Ercules also,  
That in a cogge to londè were y-go, 1481  
Iem to refresshen, and to take the eyr.  
The morwènyng atempree was and fair,  
And in his wey this messenger hem mette ;  
Al cunningly these lordès two he grette,  
And didd his message, askyngè hem anon  
If they were broken, or ought wo-begon,

1449. *that*, all but Gg and Arch. Seld. om.

1453. *Argus*, the builder of the Argo.

1457. *rede*, Trin.<sup>3</sup> *go rede*.

1457. *Argonauticon*, i.e. the imitation of  
Dionysius Rhodius by Valerius Flaccus.

1459. *Philotetes*, Philoctetes.

1460. *that*, all but Gg and Trin.<sup>2</sup> om.

1463. *Lemnon*, Lemnos.

1472. *that . . . of*, F<sup>4</sup> *lay . . . that*.

Or haddè nede of lodesmen or vitayle ;  
For of socoure they shuldè no thinge fayle,  
For it was ontredly the quenès wille. 1490

Jason answerèd mekely and stille ;  
'My lady,' quod he, 'thanke I hertely  
Of hir goodnesse ; us nedeth trewely  
Nothing as now, but that we very be,  
And comè for to pley out of the see,  
Til that the wynde be better in oure weye.

This lady rometh by the clyffe to pleye  
With hire meynee, endèlongè the stronde,  
And syndeth this Jason and thysè other  
stonde 1499

In spekyngè of this thinge, as I yow tolde.

This Ercules and Jason gan beholde  
How that the queene it was, and faire hir  
grette,

Anonryght as they with this lady mette.  
And she tooke hede, and knew by hire  
manere,

By hire array, by wordès, and by chere,  
That hit were gentil men of grete degree.  
And to the castel with hir ledeth she  
These straungè folke, and doth hem grete  
honour ; 1508

And axeth hem of travaylle and labour  
That they han suffrèd in the saltè see ;  
So that withynne a day, or two or three,  
She knew by folke that in his shippès be,  
That hyt was Jason, full of renomee,  
And Ercules, that hadde the grete los,  
That soughten the áventurès of Colcos.  
And did hem honour morè than before,  
And with hem delèd ever lenger the more,  
For they ben worthy folke, withouten les.  
And, namely, she spake most with Ercules ;  
To him hir hertè bare, he shuldè be 1520  
Sad, wise, and trewe, of wordès avysee,  
Withouten any other affeccion  
Of love, or evyl ymaginacioun.

This Ercules hath so this Jason preyed,  
That to the sonne he hath hym up areysed,  
That halfe so trewe a man ther nas of love  
Under the cope of hevène, that is above ;  
And he was wyse, hardy, secrè, and ryche ;

1490. Fairfax, Tanner, and Bodley MSS. omit  
this line.

1512. *folke*, so Gg and Arch. Seld. ; F<sup>6</sup> *the  
folke or folkes*.

1523. *evyl*, all but Gg *any other*.

1525. *areysed*, all but Gg *reyseed*.

Of these thre poyntés there nas noon hym  
liche.

Of fredome passéd he, and lustihede, 1530

Allé tho that lyven, or ben dede.

Therto so grete a gentil-man was he,

And of Tessaie lykly kyng to be.

Ther nas no lakke, but that he was agaste

To love, and for to speke shaméfaste ;

He haddé lever himselfe to mordre and dye,

Than that men shulde a lover him espye.

'As wolde almychty God that I hadde yive

My bloode and flessch, so that I myghte lyve,

With the nonés that he hadde oughe-where

a wife 1540

For his estaat ! for suche a lusty lyfe

She sholdé ledé with this lusty knyghte !'

And all this was compasséd on the nyghte

Betwix him Jason, and this Ercules.

Of these two here was a shrewéde les,

To come to house upon an innocent !—

For, to bedote this queene was here assent.

This Jason is as coy as is a mayde ;

He loketh pitously, but noght he sayde,

But freely yaf he to hir counselleres 1550

Yiftés grete, and to hire officeres,

As God wolde that I leysur had and tyme,

By processe al his wowyng for to ryme !

But in this house if any fals lover be,

Ryght as himselfe now doth, ryght so

did he,

With feynynge, and with every sotil dede.

Ye gete no more of me, but ye wol rede

The original that telleth al the cas.

The somme is this, that Jason weddid was

Unto this queene, and toke of hire sub-

stance 1560

What-so him lysté unto his purveyaunce ;

And upon hir begat he children two,

And drough his saylle, and saugh hir

never mo.

A letter senté she to hym certeyn,

Which were to longe to written and to

seyn ;

1538. *almychty*, Arch. Seld. only ; probably the scribe's insertion to mend the line.

1540. *With the nones*, on condition.

1547. *assent*, F<sup>4</sup> and Ar. Seld. *intent*.

1554. *in this house*. The phrase points to the poem being read aloud, possibly at court.

1558. *The original*, Ovid, *Her.* Ep. vi., from which he translates closely in ll. 1564 *sg.*

1559. *somme*, F<sup>4</sup> *sothe* ; Ar. Seld. *text*.

And him repreveth of his grete untrouthe,  
And prayeth him on hir to have some  
routhe.

And of his children two, she sayede him  
this :

That they be lyke of allé thinge, y-wis,

To Jason, save they couthé nat begile. 1570

And prayede God, or hit were longé  
while,

That she that had his herte y-rafte hir fro

Most fynden him to hir untrewé also :

And that she mosté both hir children spille,

And allé tho that suffreth hym his wille.

And trewe to Jason was she al hir lyf,

And ever kept hir chaste, as for his wyf :

Ne never hadde she joyé at hir herte,

But dyéd for his love of sorwés smerte.

To Colcos comen is this duke Jasoun,

That is of love devouurer and dragoun, 1580

As mater appetith forme alway,

And from forme into forme it passen may :

Or as a welle that weré botomles,

Ryght so kan fals Jason have no pes,

For to desiren, thurgh his appetite,

To doon with gentil wymmen his delyte :

This is his luste, and his felicite.

Jason is romed forth to the cite,

That whylom clepéd was Jaconitos, 1590

That was the maister toun of al Colcos,

And hath y-tolde the cause of his comyng :

Unto Oetes, of that contree kyngé ;

Prayinge him that he moste doon his assay

To gete the flese of golde, if that he may :

Of which the kyngé assentith to his bone.

And doth him honour as hyt was to done.

So ferforth, that his doghtre and his eyre

Medea, which that was so wise and feyre

That feyrer saugh ther never man with ye.

He made hire doon to Jason companye :

At mete, and sitté by him in the hall. 1600

Now was Jason a semely man withalle :

And like a lorde, and had a grete renown

And of his loke as rial as a lyoun,

And goodly of his speche, and famulere,

And koude of love al crafte and arte

plener

1582. *mater*, F *nature*. Chaucer takes his philosophy from Guido.

1590. *Jaconitos* (F<sup>4</sup> *Jasonicos*), *Jaconites* is Colchis.

1597. *was*, F<sup>4</sup> *is*.



Withouté boke, with everyche observaunce.  
And as fortune hir oughte a foule mes-  
chaunce.

She wex enamouréd upon this man. 1610

'Jason,' quod she, 'for oght I se or kan,  
As of this thinge the whiche ye ben aboute,  
Ye, han your-selfe y-put in moché doute ;  
For who-so wol this aventure acheve,  
He may nat wele asterten, as I leve,  
Withouten dethe, but I his helpé be.

But nathélesse, hit is my wille,' quod she,  
'To furtheren yow, so that ye shal nat dye,  
But turné sounde home to youre Tessalye.'

'My ryghté lady,' quod thys Jason,  
'tho, 1620

That ye han of my dethe, or of my wo,  
Any rewarde, and doon me this honour,  
I wote wel that my myght, ne my labour,  
May not deserve hit in my lyvès day ;  
God thanké yow, ther I ne kan nor may.  
Youre man am I, and lowly yow beseche  
To ben my helpe, withouté moré speche ;  
But certés for my dethe shal I not spare.'

Tho gan this Médea to him declare  
The peril of this case, fro poynt to poynt  
Of his bataylé, and in what disjoynt 1631

He moté stonde ; of whiche no créature,  
Save only she, ne myght his lyfe assure.  
And shortely, to the poynt ryght for to go,  
They been accorded ful betwex hem two,  
That Jason shal hir wedde, as trewé knyght,  
And terme y-sette to comé soone at nyght  
Into hir chambre, and make there his  
othe

Jpon the goddys, that he for leve ne lothe  
Ne shulde hire never falsen, nyght ne day,  
To ben hir husbonde while he lyvè may,  
As she that from his dethe hym savéd there.

And here-upon at nyght they mete yfere,  
and doth his othe, and goth with hir to  
bedde, 1644

and on the morwé upwarde he him  
spedde,  
for she hath taught him how he shal not  
faile

he flese to wynne, and stynten his bataylé ;  
and savéd him his lyfe and his honour,

And gat a name ryght as a conquerour,  
Ryght thurgh the sleighte of hir en-  
chauntément. 1650

Now hath Jason the fleese, and home  
is went

With Médea, and tresourés ful grete  
woon ;

But unwiste of hir fader she is goon  
To Tessalye, with duke Jason hir leefe,  
That afterwarde hath broght hir to  
myschefe.

For as a traytour he is from hire go,  
And with hir lefté yongé children two,  
And falsly hath betrayéd hir, allas !  
And ever in love a chefe traytour he was ;  
And wedded yet the thridde wife anon,  
That was the doghtre of the kyngé Creon.

This is the mede of lovyngé and  
guerdoun, 1662

That Médea receyvéd of Jasoun  
Ryght for hir trouthe, and for hir kyndé-  
nesse,

That loved hym beter thane hir-selfe, I  
gesse ;

And left hir fadir and hire heritage.  
And of Jason this is the vassalage,  
That in his dayes nas never noon y-founde  
So fals a lover goyngé on the grounde.

And therefore in her letter thus she sayde,  
First of his falsnesse whan she hym up-  
brayde. 1671

'Why lykéde me thy yelow heere to see,  
More than the boundés of myn honeste ?  
Why lykéde me thy youthe and thy faire-  
nesse,

And of thy tonge the infinite gracious-  
nesse ?

O, haddest thou in thy conquest ded y-be,  
Ful mykel untrouthé had ther dyed with  
the !'

Wel kan Ovyde hir letter in verse endyte,  
Which were as now to longe for me to  
write.

*Explicit Legenda Ysiphile et Medee,  
Martirum*

1608. *with*, Gg and.  
1640. Add.<sub>2</sub> begins here.  
1643. Omitted in F<sup>3</sup>.

1659. *a chefe traytour*, Gg *a thef and tray-  
tour*; Trin. *a thyeif traytour*; Add.<sub>2</sub> *traytour  
and theffe*.  
1670. *in her letter*, Ovid, *Her. Ep. xii. 10. 11.*

*Incipit Legenda Lucrecie, Rome, Martiris*

Now mote I sayne the exilyngc of kynges  
Of Romè, for here horrible doynges ; 1681  
Of the lastè kyngc Tarquinius  
As sayth Ovyde, and Titus Lyvius.  
But for that causè telle I nat this story,  
But for to preyse, and drawn to memory  
The verray wife, the verray trewe Lucesse,  
That for hir wifehode, and hir stedfast-  
nesse,

Nat only that these payens hir comende,  
But he that y-clepèd is in oure legende 1689  
The grete Austyne hath grete compassyoun  
Of this Lucesse that starf at Romè toun.  
And in what wise I wol but shortly trete,  
And of this thyngc I touchè but the grete.

Whan Ardea besegèd was aboute  
With Romaynes, that ful sternè were and  
stoute,

Ful longè lay the sege, and lytel wroghte,  
So that they were halfe ydel, as hem  
thoghte.

And in his pley Tarquinius the yonge  
Gan for to jape, for he was lyghte of tonge,  
And saydè that hyt was an ydel lyfe, 1700  
No man dide ther no morè than his wife.  
'And lat us speke of wivès that is best ;  
Praise every man his ownè, as him lest,  
And with oure spechè let us ease oure herte.'

A knyght, that hightè Colatyne, up  
sterste,

And saydè thus : 'Nay, for hit is no nede  
To trowen on the worde, but on the dede.  
I have a wife,' quod he, 'that as I trowe  
Is holden good of al that ever hir knowe.  
Go we to Rome, to nyght, and we shul se.'  
Tarquinius answerde, 'That lyketh me.'

To Romè be they come, and faste  
hem dighte 1712

To Colatynès house, and down they lyghte,  
Tarquinius, and eke this Colatyne.

The housbonde knewe the estres wel  
and fyne,

And ful prevely into the house they goon,

1683. *Ovyde*, Ovid, *Fasti* ii. 685, 721-852.

1683. *Lyvius*, Livius, i. 57-58.

1684. *telle*, Gg *ne telle*.

1686. *trewe*, Gg only ; rest om.

1701. *no* (2), Gg only ; rest om.

1716. *ful*, Trin.<sup>2</sup> om.

For at the gatè porter was there noon :  
And at the chambre dorè they abyde.  
This noble wyfe sat by hir beddys syde  
Disshevele, for no malice she ne thoghte,  
And softè wolle saith our boke that  
she wroghte, 1721  
To kepen hir fro slouth and ydilnesse ;  
And bad hirservauntes doon hir besynesse ;  
And axeth hem, 'What tydynges heren ye ?  
How sayne men of the sege ? how  
shal it be ?

God wolde the wallès weren falle adoun !  
Myn housbonde is to longe out of this toun,  
For which the dredè doth me so to smerte ;  
Ryght as a swerde hyt styngeth to myn  
herte, 1729

Whan I tenke on thesege, or of that place.  
God savemy lorde, I pray him for his grace !'

And therwithal ful tendirly she wepe,  
And of hir werke she toke no morè kepe,  
But mekèly she let hire eyen falle,  
And thilkè semblant sat hir wel withalle.

And eke the teerès ful of honeste  
Embelysshèd hire wifely chastitee.  
Hire countenance is to her hertè digne,  
For they acordeden in dede and signe.

And with that worde hir husbonde  
Colatyne, 1740

Or she of him was ware, comestertyngynne,  
And saydè, 'Drede the noght, for  
I am here !'

And she anon up roos, with blysfyl chere,  
And kyssed hym, as of wyvès is the wone.

Tarquinius, this prowde kyngès sone,  
Conceyved hath hir beaute and hir chere,  
Hire yelow heer, hir shap, and hire manere,  
Hir hewe, hir wordès that she hath  
compleyned,

And by no craft hire beaute was not feyned ;  
And kaughtè to this lady suche desire,  
That in his hertè brent as any fire 1751

So wodely that his wittè was forgeten,  
For wel thoghte he she shuldè nat be geten.  
And ay the more that he was in dispaire,

1721. *our boke*, Thynne (wrongly) *Livi* ; Gg om. Perhaps Chaucer wrote *Ovyde* (cp. *Fasti* ii. 741-742).

1730. *the sege*, Trin.<sup>4</sup> ; F<sup>4</sup> *these, this* ; Gg corrupt.

1736. *honeste*, F<sup>2</sup> *hevyte* ; Tan. and Th. *hevy-nesse*. Ovid has 'iacrimæ cecidere pudicæ.'

1753. Gg *For he wote wel she wolde*.

The more he covetyth, and thocht hir faire ;  
His blyndé lust was al his covetyng.

On morwé, whan the brid began to syng,  
Unto the sege he cometh ful pryvely,  
And by himselvé he walketh sobrelly,  
The ymage of hir recordyng alwey newe :  
'Thus lay hir heer, and thus fressh  
was hir hewe ;' 1761

Thus sate, thus spake, thus spanne,  
this was hir chere ;

Thus faire she was, and thys was hir  
manere.'

Al this conceyte his herte hath new y-take,  
And as the see, with tempeste al to-shake,  
That after, whan the storme is al ago,  
Yet wol the watir quappe a day or two,  
Ryght so, thogh that hir formé were absent,  
The plesaunce of hir formé was present.

But nathéles, nat plesaunce, but delyte,  
Or an unwyghtful talent with dispite,—  
'For mawgree hir, she shal my lemman  
be :

Happe helpeth hardy man alway,' quod  
he,

'What endé that I make, hit shal be so !'  
And gyrt hym with his swerde, and  
gan to go,

And forth he rit til he to Rome is come,  
And al alone his way than hath he nome  
Unto the hous of Colatyne ful ryght.

Doun was the sonne, and day hath  
lost his lyght, 1779

And inne he come, unto a prevy halke,  
And in the nyght ful thefely gan he stalke,  
Whan every wyght was to his resté broght,  
Neno wyghte had of tresoun suche a thocht.  
Whether by wyndow, or by other gynne,  
With swerde y-drawe, shortly he cometh  
ynne

There as she lay, thys noble wyfe Lucesse,  
And as she woke, hir bed she felté presse.

'What best is that,' quod she, 'that  
weyeth thus ?'

'I am the kyngés sone, Tarquinius,'  
Quod he, 'but and thow crye, or  
noysé make, 1790

Or if thou any créature awake,  
3e thilké God that formede man on lyve,  
This swerd thurghout thyn herté shal  
I ryve.'

And therwithal unto hir throte he sterte,  
And sette the swerde al sharpe unto  
hir herte.

No worde she spake, she hath no  
myght therto ;

What shal she sayne? hir wytte is al ago!  
Ryght as a wolfe that fynt a lomb alone,  
To whom shal she compleyne or  
maké mone ?

What ! shal she fyghté with an hardy  
knyghte? 1800

Wel woté men a woman hath no myghte.  
What ! shal she crye, or how shal she asterte  
That hath hir by the throte, with swerde  
at herte ?

She axeth grace, and seyde al that she kan.  
'Ne wolt thou nat?' quod tho this  
cruelle man,

'As wisly Jupiter my soulé save,  
As I shal in the stable slee thy knave,  
And lay him in thy bed, and lowdé crye,  
That I the fynde in suche avowtrye ;  
And thus thou shalt be ded, and also lese  
Thy namé, for thou shalt non othir chese.'

Thise Romaynes wyfés loveden so  
hir name 1812

At thilké tyme, and dreden so the shame,  
That, what for fere of sklaundre, and  
drede of dethe,

She lost attonés bothé wytte and brethe ;  
And in a swowgh she lay, and woxe so ded,  
Men myghten smyten of hir arme or hed,  
She feleth nothinge, neither foule ne feyre.

Tarquinius, thou art a kyngés eyre, 1819  
And sholdest, as by lynage and by ryght,  
Doun as a lorde and as a verray knyght ;  
Why hastow doon dispite to chevalrye ?  
Why hastow doon thys lady vylanye ?  
Allas, of the thys was a vilenous dede !

But now to the purpose ; in the  
story I rede

Whan he was goon and this myschaunce  
is falle.

Thys lady sent aftir hir frendés alle,  
Fáder, moder, housbonde, alle y-fere,

1798. *fynt a lomb*, F<sup>4</sup> (many of whose bad  
readings are passed over) here have *feyneth a  
love!*

1805. *tho*, Trin. only ; Gg<sup>4</sup> *he*, rest om.

1815. *attones bothe* Gg only ; rest both *attones*.

1821. *verray*, Gg *worthi*.

And al dysshevelee with hir heerè clere,  
In habyte suche as wymmen usede tho  
Unto the buryinge of hir frendès go, 1831  
She sytte in hallè with a sorowful syghte.  
Hir frendès axen what hir aylen myghte,  
And who was dede, and she sytte  
aye wepyng.

A worde for shame ne may she forthe  
out brynge,

Ne upon hem she durstè nat beholde,  
But attè laste of Tarquyny she hem tolde  
This rewful case, and al thys thing horryble.

The wo to telle hyt were an impossible  
That she and al hir frendès made attones.  
Al haddè folkès hertys ben of stones, 1841  
Hyt myght have makèd hem upon hir rewe,  
Hire hertè was so wyfely and so trewe.  
She sayde that for hir gylt, ne for hir blame,  
Hir housbonde shulde nat have the  
foulè name,

That noldè she nat suffren by no wey.  
And they auswerdè alle upon hir fey,  
That they foryaf hyt hyr, for hyt was ryght;  
Hyt was no gilt; hit lay not in hir myght,  
And seyden hire ensamples many oon.  
But al for noght, for thus she seyde anoon:  
'Be as be may,' quod she, 'of foryifyng;  
I wol not have no foryift for nothinge.'  
But pryvely she kaughtè forth a knyfe,  
And therwithal she raftè hir-selfe hir lyfe;  
And as she felle adoun she kaste hire loke,  
And of hir clothès yet she hedè toke;  
For in hir fallynge yet she haddè care,  
Lest that hir fete or suchè thyngè lay bare,  
So wel she lovèdè clennessè, and eke  
trouthe! 1860

Of hir had al the toun of Romè routhe,  
And Brutus by hir chastè bloode hath sworn,  
That Tarquyn shulde y-banysshed be  
therfore,

And al his kynne; and let the peple calle,  
And openly the tale he tolde hem alle;  
And openly let cary her on a bere  
Thurgh al the toun, that men may  
see and here 1867

The horryblè dede of hir oppressyoun.  
Ne never was ther kynge in Romè toun  
Syn thilkè day; and she was holden there  
A seynt, and ever hir day y-halwèd dere,

1836-1907. Missing in Gg.

Asin hire lawe. And thus endeth Lucesse  
The noble wyfe, as Titus beryth wittnesse.

I telle hyt, for she was of love so trewe,  
Ne in hir wille she chaungèdè for no newe;  
And for the stable hertè, sadde and kynde,  
That in these wymmen men may al  
day fynde;

Ther as they kaste hire hertè, there  
it dwelleth.

For wel I wot that Criste himselfè telleth,  
That in Israel, as wyde as is the londe,  
Nat so grete feythe in al that londe  
he fonde, 1881

As in a woman; and this is no lye.  
And as for men, loketh which tyrannye  
They doon al day,—assay hem who-  
so lystè,  
The trewest is ful brotil for to triste.

*Explicit Legenda Lucrecie, Rome,  
Martiris*

*Incipit Legenda Adriane de Athenes*

Juge infernal Mynos, of Cretè king,  
Now cometh thy lotte, now comestow  
on the ryngè!

Nat only for thy sake writen is this story,  
But for to clepe ageyn unto memory 1889  
Of Theseus, the grete untrewè of love,  
For which the goddis of the heven above  
Ben wrothe, and wreche han takè for  
thy synne.

Be rede for shame! now I thy lyfe begynne.  
Mynos, that was the myghty kyngè  
of Crete,

That wan an hundred citees stronge  
and grete,

To scole hath sent his sone Androgeus  
To Athenes, of the which hyt happeth thus,  
That he was slayne, lernynge philosophie,  
Ryght in that citee, nat but for envye.

The grete Mynos, of the whiche I speke,  
His sonès dethe is comè for to wreke,—  
Alcathoë besegeth harde and longe; 1902  
But nathèles, the wallès be so stronge,

1872. *As in hire lawe, in their religion.*

1881. *Nat, Trin. 2; rest that.*

1881. *he, all but Add. he ne.*

1902. *Alcathoë, the name of the western  
acropolis of Megara.*

And Nysus, that was kynge of that citee,  
 So chyvalrous, that lytel dredeth he ;  
 Of Mynos or his oste toke he no cure.  
 Til, on a day, befel an aventure,  
 That Nisus doghtre stode upon the walle,  
 And of the segé sawe the maner alle. 1909  
 So happede hyt that at a skarmysshyng,  
 She caste hir hert upon Mynos the kynge,  
 For his beaute, and for his chevalerye,  
 So soré, that she wendé for to dye.

And, shortly of this processe for to pace,  
 She madé Mynos wynnen thilké place,  
 So that the citee was al at his wille,  
 To saven whom hym lyst, or ellés spille.  
 But wikkidly he quytt her kyndénesse,  
 And let hir drenche in sorowe and distresse,  
 Nere that the goddys had of hir pite ; 1920  
 But that tale were to longe as now for me.

Athénés wanne this kynge Mynos also,  
 As Alcatheo and other tounés mo ;  
 And this theeffect, that Mynos hath so dryven  
 Hem of Athénés, that they mote hym yiven  
 Fro yere to yere hir owene children dere  
 Fro to be slayne, as ye shal after here.

Thys Mynos hath a monstre, a wikked  
 beste,

That was so cruelle that, withoute areste,  
 Whan that a man was broght in his  
 presence, 1930

He woldehym etc; ther helpeth no defence.  
 And every thriddé yere, withouten doute,  
 They casten lotte, and as hyt came aboute  
 On ryche, on pore, he most his soné take,  
 And of his childe he mosté present make  
 To Mynos, to save him or to spille,  
 Or lat his best devoure him at his wille.

And this hath Mynos doon right in dyspite ;  
 To wreke his sone was sette all his delyte,  
 And maken hem of Athenés his thralle  
 Fro yere to yere, while that he lyven shalle ;  
 And home he saileth whan this toun is  
 wonne 1942

This wikked custome is so longe y-ronne,  
 Til that of Athenés kynge Egéus  
 Moste senden his owne soné Théséus,  
 Sith that the lotte is fallen hym upon,  
 To be devouréd, for grace is ther non.

1936. Trin.<sup>2</sup> botch this line by reading *unto* for  
*to* (1), Arch. Seld. by *for to* instead of *to* (2), Gg  
 has *To Theseus* for *To Mynos*.

And forth is lad thys woful yongé knyght  
 Unto the court of kynge Mynos full ryght,  
 And in a prison fetréd faste is he, 1950  
 Til thilké tyme he shulde y-freten be.

Wel maystow wepe, O woful Theseus,  
 That art a kyngéssone, and dampnéd thus !  
 Me thyngketh this, that thow were depe  
 y-holde

To whom that savéde the fro carés colde !  
 And now, if any woman helpé the,  
 Wel oughtestow hir servant for to be,  
 And ben hir trewé lover yere by yere !  
 But now to come agayn to my matere.  
 The tour, ther as this Theseus is throwe,  
 Doun in the bothome derke, and wonder  
 lowe, 1961

Was joynynge in the walle to a foreyne,  
 And hyt was longynge to the doghtren  
 tweyne

Of kyng Mynos, that in hire chambresgrete  
 Dwelten above, toward the maystré strete  
 Of Athenés, in joy and in solace.

Wot I not how, hyt happédé parcase,  
 As Theseus compleynéd hym by nyghte,  
 The kyngés doghter Adriane that hyghte,  
 And eke hir suster Phedra, herden alle  
 His compleynt, as they stoden on the walle,  
 And lokéden upon the bryghté mone ;  
 Hem listé nat to go to beddé sone. 1973  
 And of his wo they hadde compassyoun ;  
 A kyngés sone to be in swiche prisoun,  
 And be devouréd, thoughte hem grete  
 pitee.

Than Adriane spake to hir suster free,  
 And seyde, ' Phedra, levé suster dere,  
 This woful lordés sone may ye not here,  
 How pitously compleyneth he his kynne,  
 And eke his pore estate that he is ynne,  
 And giltéles ? now certés hit is routhe !  
 And if ye wol assenté, by my trouthe,  
 He shal be holpen, how so that we do.'

Phedra answerde, ' Y-wys, me is as wo  
 For him, as ever I was for any man ;

1949. *court*, F<sup>4</sup> *contree*.

1949. *ful ryght*, F<sup>4</sup> *ful of myght*.

1964. *kyng*, Arch. Seld. only, probably an  
 emendation. Here again Gg has *Theseus* for  
*Mynos*.

1966. *Athenes*, probably Chaucer's own slip ;  
 T<sup>2</sup> in *mochell myrthe*.

1973. *sone*, F<sup>4</sup> Trin.<sup>2</sup> *so sone*.

1986. Add. stops here.

And to his helpe the bestè rede I kan,  
Is, that we doon the gayler prively  
To come and speké with us hastely,  
And doon this woful man with him to come ;  
For if he may the monstre overcome, 1991  
Than were he quyte ; ther is noon other  
bote !

Lat us wel taste him at hys herte-rote,  
That if so be that he a wepne have,  
Wher that he dar, his lyfe to kepe or save,  
Fighten with this fende and him defende.  
For in the prison, ther he shal descende,  
Ye wote wel that the best is in a place  
That nys not derke, and hath roume and  
eke space

To welde an axe, or swerde, or staffe, or  
knyffe. 2000

So that, me thenketh, he shuldè save his  
lyffe ;

If that he be a man, he shal do so.

‘ And we shal make him ballés eke also  
Of wexe and towe, that, whan he gapeth  
faste,

Into the bestès throte he shal hem caste,  
Tosleke his hunger, and encombre his teeth.  
And ryght anon whan that Thesèus seeth  
The beste achokèd, he shal on hym lepe  
To sleen hym or they comen more to-hepe.  
This wepen shal the gayler, or that tyde,  
Ful prively within the prisoun hyde : 2011  
And for the house is crynkled to and fro,  
And hath so queyntè weyès for to go,  
For it is shapen as the mase is wrought,  
Therto have I a remedy in my thought,  
That by a clewe of twyne, as he hath gon,  
The samè way he may returne anon,  
Folwyng alway the threde, as he hath  
come.

And whan that he this beste hathe over-  
come, 2019

Thanne may he fleen a way out of this drede,  
And eke the gayler may he wyth him lede,  
And him avaunce at home in his contree,  
Syn that so grete a lordès sone is he.  
Thys is my rede, if that ye dar hyt take ;  
What shulde I lenger sermoun of hyt make ?

1995. So Gg ; F *wher that hys lyfe he dar kepe* ;  
rest vary.

1999. Gg *and hath bothe roum and space.*

2020. *drede, F<sup>4</sup> stede.*

2024. *ye, so Trin.<sup>2</sup> and Th. ; rest he.*

The gayler cometh, and with hym  
Theseus ;

Whan these thynghès ben acorded thus,  
Adoun sytte Theseus upon his knee, 2028  
‘ The ryghtè lady of my lyfe,’ quod he,  
‘ I sorwful man, y-dampned to the deth,  
Froyow, whiles that me lasteth lyf or breth,  
I wol not twynne afir this áventure.

But in youre servise thus I wol endure ;  
That asa wrecche unknowe I wol yow serve  
For evermore, til that myn hertè sterve.

Forsake I wol at home myn herytage,  
And, as I sayde, ben of youre courte a page,  
If that ye vouchésafe that in this place,  
Ye grauntè me to have so gret a grace,  
That I may have not but my mete and  
drinke ; 2040

And for my sustenaunce yet wol I swynke,  
Ryght as yow lystè ; that Mynos, ne no  
wyght,

Syn that he sawe me never with eyen syght,  
Ne no man ellès shal me konne espye,  
So slyly and so wel I shal me gye,  
And me so wel disfigure, and so lowe,  
That in this worlde ther shal no man me  
knowe,

To han my lyfe, and to have the presence  
Of yow, that doon to me this excellence.  
And to my fader shal I sendè here 2050  
This worthy man that is now your gaylere,  
And him to-guerdone that he shal wel bee  
Oon of the gretest men of my contree.  
And if I durstè sayne, my lady bryght,  
I am a kyngès sone and eke a knyght,  
As woldè God, if that hyt myghtè bee,  
Ye weren in my contree allè three,  
And I with yow, to bere yow companye.  
Than shulde ye seen if that I therof lye.

‘ And if I profe yow in lowe manere  
To ben youre page and serven yow ryght  
here, 2061

But I yow serve as lowly in that place,  
I prey to Mars to yevè me suche grace,  
That shamès deth on me ther motè falle,  
And dethe and poverte to my frendès alle,  
And that my spirite be nyghtè motè go  
After my dethe, and walkè to and fro,

2048. *to have the, so Add.2 ; F<sup>4</sup> to have ; Gg<sup>3</sup>  
for to have.*

2051. *now, only Gg.*

Thát I mote of traytoure have a name,  
 For which my spirite goth to do meshame !  
 And if I ever clayme other degre, <sup>2070</sup>  
 But of ye vouchésafe to yeve hyt me,  
 As I have seyde, of shamés deth I deye !  
 And mercy, lady ! I kan nat ellés seye.'

A semely knyght was Theseus to see,  
 And yongé, but of twenty yere and three.  
 But whoso hadde y-seen his contenance,  
 He wolde have wepte for routhe of his  
 penaunce ;

For which this Adriane in this manere  
 Answerde hym to his profre and to his chere.  
 'A kyngés sone, and eke a knyght,' quod  
 she, <sup>2080</sup>

'To ben my servant in so lowe degre,  
 God shelde hit, for the shame of wymmen  
 alle,

And lene me never suche a case befallé !  
 But sende yow grace and sleight of herte  
 also

Yow to defende and knyghtly sleen your fo!  
 And lene hereaftir that I may yow fynde  
 To me and to my suster here so kynde,  
 That I repenté not to yeve yow lyfé !

'Yet wer hyt better that I were your wife,  
 Syn that ye ben as gentil borne as I, <sup>2090</sup>  
 And have a realmé nat but fasté by,  
 Then that I suffrede yow giltles to sterve,  
 Or that I lete you as a pagé serve ;  
 Hyt is no profre, as unto youre kynrede.  
 But what is that man wol not do for drede ?  
 And to my suster, syn that hyt is so,  
 That she mote goon with me, if that I goo,  
 Or ellés suffre deth as wel as I,  
 That ye unto your sone, as trowély, <sup>2099</sup>  
 Doon hir be wedded at your home comynge.  
 This is the final ende of al this thyngé ;  
 Ye, swere hit here, upon al that may be  
 sworne !'

'Yee, lady myn,' quod he, 'or ellés torne  
 Mote I be with the Minotawre to morowe !  
 And have here-of myn herté-bloode to  
 borowe,  
 If that ye wol ! If I hadde knyfe or spere,  
 I wolde hit laten out, and theron swere,  
 For then at erst I wote ye wol me leve.

<sup>2092</sup>. *yow giltles*, F<sup>4</sup> *your gentillesse*.

<sup>2094</sup>. *no profre*, etc., i.e. no proffer suitable to  
 your birth ; F<sup>4</sup> *not profet*.

By Mars, that is the chefe of my beleve,  
 So that I myghté lyven, and nat fayle  
 To morowe for to achevé my batayle, <sup>2111</sup>  
 I noldé never fro this placé flee,  
 Til that ye shulde the verray prefé see.  
 For now, if that the sothe I shal yow saye,  
 I have y-lovéd yow ful many a daye,  
 Thogh ye ne wiste it nat, in my contree,  
 And aldermoste desiréd yow to see  
 Of any erthely lyvyng creature.

Upon my trouthe I swere, and yow assure,  
 These seven yere I have your servant bee.  
 Now have I yow, and also have ye mee,  
 My deré herte, of Athenés duchesse !'

This lady smyleth at his stedfastnesse,  
 And at his hertely wordys, and his chere,  
 And to hir suster sayde in this manere :

'Al softely now, suster myn,' quod she,  
 'Now be we duchesses, both I and ye,  
 And sykered to the regals of Athenes,  
 And both hereaftir lykly to be queenes,  
 And savéd fro his deth a kyngés sone,  
 As ever of gentil wymen is the wone <sup>2131</sup>  
 To save a gentilman, enforthe hir myght,  
 In honest cause, and namely in his ryght.  
 Me thinketh no wyght ought us here-of  
 blame,

Ne beren us therfore an evel name.'

And shortly of this matere for to make,  
 This Theseus of hir hath leve y-take,  
 And every poynt was performéd in dede,  
 As ye have in this covenant herd merede ;  
 His wepne, his clew, his thing that I  
 have sayde, <sup>2140</sup>

Was by the gayler in the house y-layde,  
 Ther as this Mynatour hath his dwellyng,  
 Ryght fasté by the dorre at his entryngé ;  
 And Theseus is ladde unto his deth ;  
 And forthe unto this Mynature he geth,  
 And by the techyngé of thys Adriane,  
 He overcome thys beste and was his bane,  
 And oute he cometh by the clewe agayne  
 Ful prively, when he thys beste hath  
 slayne ;

And by the gayler gotten hath a barge, <sup>2150</sup>  
 And of his wivés tresure gan it charge,  
 And tok his wif, and eke hir suster free,  
 And eke the gayler, and wyth hem alle  
 three

Is stole away out of the londe by nighte,

And to the contree of Ennopye hymdyghte,  
There as he had a frende of his knowynge.  
There festen they, there dauncen they  
and synge,

And in his armés hath thys Adriane,  
That of the beste hath kepte him from  
his bane. 2159

And gate him there a newé barge anoon,  
And of his countre-folke a ful grete woon,  
And taketh his leve, and homewardé  
sayleth hee ;

And in an yle, amydde the wildé see,  
There as ther dwelleth créaturé noon  
Save wildé bestes, and that ful many oon,  
He made his shippe a-londé for to sette,  
And in that ile halfe a day he lette,  
And sayde that on the londe hē moste  
him reste.

His maryners han don ryght as hym  
leste ;

And, for to tellé shortly in thys cas, 2170  
Whanne Adriane his wyfe aslepé was,  
For that hir suster fairer was than she,  
He taketh hir in his honde, and forth gooth  
he

To shyppe, and as a traytour stale his way,  
While that thys Adriane aslepé lay,  
And to his contree-wardé he sayleth  
blyve,—

A twenty deuel way the wynde him  
dryve !—

And fonde his fader drenchéd in the see.  
Me lyste no more to speke of hym, *pardee!*  
These falsé lovers, poyson be her bane !

But I wol turne ageyne to Adryane,  
That is with slepe for werynesse y-take ;  
Ful sorrowfully hir herté may awake. 2183  
Allas, for the myn herté hath pitee !  
Ryght in the dawényngé awaketh she,  
And gropeth in the bed, and fonde ryght  
nocht.

‘Allas,’ quod she, ‘that ever I was  
wroght :

I am betrayéd,’ and hir heer to-rente,  
And to the strondé barefote faste she wente,  
And cryede, ‘Theseus ! myn herté swete !

2155. *Ennopye*, ‘Ænopia, another name for Ægina’ (Skeat); Gilman suggests Enope in Messenia.

2184. *pitee*, Gg *now pitee*; Trin.<sup>2</sup> *gret pitee*.

2188. *hir heer*, Gg *al hire her*.

Where be ye, that I may not wyth yow  
mete? 2191

And myghté thus with bestes ben y-slayne.’  
The holowe roches answerde hir agayne.  
No man she sawe, and yet shynéde the  
mone,

And hye upon a rokke she wenté sone,  
And saw his bargé saylynge in the see.  
Colde waxe hir herte, and ryght thus  
saydè she :

‘Meker than ye fynde I the bestés  
wilde!’—

Hadde he not synné that hir thus be-  
gylde !—

She cried, ‘O turne agayne for routhe  
and synne, 2200

Thy bargé hath not al his meyny ynne.’  
Hir kerchefe on a pole up stykede she,  
Ascauncé that he shulde hyt wel y-see,  
And hym remembre that she was behynde,  
And turne agayne, and on the stronde  
hir fynde.

But al for nocht ; his wey he is i-noon,  
And doun she felle a-swowne upon a stoon ;  
And up she ryste, and kyssed in al hir care  
The steppés of his fete, there he hath fare,  
And to hir bedde ryght thus she speketh  
tho : 2210

‘Thow bedd,’ quoth she, ‘that hast  
receyvéd two,

Thow shalt answeré of two and not of oon,  
Where is thy gretter parte away i-noon?  
Allas, whershal I wreched wyght become?  
For though so be that shyp or boot here  
come,

Home to my contree dar I not for drede ;  
I kan my-selfé in this case not rede.’

What shulde I tellé more hir compleyn-  
ynge?

Hyt is so longe hyt were an hevvy thyngé.  
In hyr Epistol Naso telleth alle ; 2220

But shortly to the endé tel I shalle.  
The goddys have hir holpen for pitee,  
And in the sygne of Taurus men may see  
The stonés of hir corowne shyné clere ;  
I wol no moré speke of thys matere.

2215. *ship or boot*, Trin.; Arch. Seld. and Add.<sup>2</sup> *any lote*; Gg *boot here ne*; F<sup>4</sup> *bote noon here*. Ovid:

Finge, dari comitesque mihi, ventosque, ratemque.



But thus this falsè lover kan begyle  
His trewe love, the devel quyte hym his  
while !

*Explicit Legenda Adriane de Athenes*

*Incipit Legenda Philomene*

Thow yiver of the formès, that hast  
wrought

The fairè worlde, and bare hit in thy thought  
Eternally or thow thy werke beganne, 2230  
Why madest thow unto the sklaunder of  
manne,

Or—al be that hyt was not thy doynge,  
As for that fyne to makè suche a thyng,—  
Why suffrest thow that Terèus was bore,  
That is in love so fals and so forswore,  
That fro thys worlde up to the firstè hevene  
Corrumpeth, whan that folke his namè  
nevene ?

And as to me, so grisly was his dede,  
That whan that I this foulè story rede,  
Myn eyen wexen foule and sore also ; 2240  
Yet laste the venym of so longe ago,  
That it infecteth hym that wolde beholde  
The story of Terèus, of which I tolde.

Of Trasè was he lorde, and kynne to  
Marte,

The cruelle god that stante with bloody  
darte,

And wedded hadde he, with a blisful chere,  
King Pandyonès fairè doghter dere,  
That hyghtè Proygne, floure of hircontree ;  
Thogh Juno lyst nat at the festè bee,  
Ne Ymeneus, that god of weddyng is. 2250

But at the festè redy ben, y-wys,  
The Furies thre, with al hire mortel bronde,  
The owle al nyght about the balkès wonde,  
That prophete is of wo and of myschaunce.  
This revel, ful of songe, and ful of daunce,  
Lasteth a fourtényght or lytel lasse.

But shortly of this story for to passe,—  
For I am wery of hym for to telle,—  
Fyve yere his wyfe and he togedir dwelle ;  
Til on a day she gan so sorè longe 2260  
Toseen hir suster, that she saugh not longe,

2228. *yiver of the formes*, 'Deus dator formarum,' Bodley gloss.

2256. *Lasteth*, Arch. Seld. *Lestith* ; rest *Laste*.

That for desire she nystè what to seye,  
But to hir husbonde gan she for to preye  
For Goddys love, that she mostè onès gon  
Hir suster for to seen, and come anon.  
Or ellès, but she mostè to hyr wende,  
She preyde hym that he wolde afir hir  
sende.

And thys was day be day al hir prayere,  
With al humblesse of wyfehode, worde  
and chere. 2269

This Terèus let make his shippès yare,  
And into Grece hymselfe is forthe y-fare,  
Unto his fader in lawe, and gan hym preye,  
To vouchèsafe that for a moneth or tweye,  
That Philomene, his wyfès suster, myghte  
On Proigne his wyfe but onès have a syghte ;  
'And she shal come to yow agayne anon,  
Myselfe with hyr, I wil bothe come and  
gon,

And as myn hertès lyfe I wol hir kepe.'  
Thys oldè Pandèon, thys kynge, gan  
wepe

For tendernesse of hertè for to leve 2280  
His doghtre gon, and for to yive hir leve ;  
Of al thys worlde he lovede nothinge so ;  
But at the lastè leve hath she to go.

For Philomene with saltè terès eke  
Gan of hir fader gracè to beseke,  
To seen hir sustre that she loveth so,  
And hym embraceth with hir armès two.  
And ther-with-alle so yonge and faire was  
she, 2288

That whan that Terèus saugh hir beaute,  
And of array that ther nas noon hir lyche  
(And yet of beaute was she two so ryche),  
He caste his fiery hert upon hir so,  
That he wol have hir, how-so that hyt go,  
And with his wilès kneléd and so preyde,  
Til at the lastè Pandèon thus seyde :

'Now, sone,' quod he, 'that arte to  
me so dere,

I the betake my yongè doghtre here,  
That bereth the key of al myn hertès lyfe.  
And gretè wel my doghter and thy wyfe,  
And yeve hir leve sometymè for to pleye,  
That she may seen me onès or I deye.'  
And sothely he hath made him rychè feste,  
And to his folke, the moste and eke the leste,

2286. *she loveth*, F<sup>4</sup> *hir longeth*.

2291. *beaute*, F<sup>2</sup> *bounte*.

That with him come ; and yaf him yeftes  
 grete,  
 And him conveyeth thurgh the maistir strete  
 Of Athenés, and to the see him broghte,  
 And turneth home ; no malyce he ne  
 thoghte.

The ores pulleth forthe the vessel faste,  
 And into Trace arryveth at the laste ;  
 And up into a forest he hir ledde, <sup>2310</sup>  
 And to a cavé pryvely hym spedde,  
 And in this derké cavé, yif hir leste,  
 Or lesté noght, he bad hir for to reste ;  
 Of which hir hert agrose, and seyde thus :  
 'Where is my suster, brother Teréus ?'  
 And therewithal she wepté tendirly,  
 And quoke for feré, pale and pitously,  
 Ryghte as the lambe that of the wolfe is  
 byten,

Or as the colver that of the egle is smyten,  
 And is out of his clawés forthe escaped,  
 Yét hyt is aferded and whaped <sup>2321</sup>  
 Lest hit be hent eftsonés : so sate she.  
 But utterly hyt may none other be,  
 By forcé hath this traytour done a dede,  
 That he hath refte hir of hir maydenhede  
 Maugree hir hede, by strengthe and by  
 his myght.

Lo, here a dede of men, and that aryght !  
 She crieth 'Suster !' with ful loudé stevene,  
 And 'Fader dere !' and 'Helpe me,  
 God in hevене !'

Al helpeth nat. And yet this falsé thefe  
 Hath doon thys lady yet a more myschefe,  
 For ferdé lest she sholde his shamé crye,  
 And done hym openly a vilanye, <sup>2333</sup>  
 And with his swerde hire tonge of ker-  
 veth he,

And in a castel made hir for to be  
 Ful prively in prison evermore,  
 And kept hir to his usage and to his store,  
 So that she myghte hym nevermore asterte.

O sely Philomene, wo is in thyn herte !  
 God wreké the, and sendé the thy bone !  
 Now is hyt tyme I make an endé sone.

This Teréus is to his wyfe y-come,  
 And in his armes hath his wyfe y-none,

2329. and (2), om. F<sup>5</sup>.

2332. For ferde Gg<sup>3</sup> For fere.

2333. F<sup>3</sup> om. and insert the spurious line *Huge  
 ben thy sorwes and wonder smerte* after 2339.

And pitously he wepe, and shoke his hede,  
 And swore hire that he fonde hir  
 suster dede ;

For whiche the sely Proigne hath suche wo,  
 That nyghe hire sorwful herté brake a-two.  
 And thus in terés lat I Proigne dwelle,  
 And of hir suster forthe I wol yow telle.

This woful lady y-learnéd had in yowthe,  
 So that she werken and enbrowden  
 kowthe, <sup>2351</sup>

And weven in hire stole the radevore,  
 As hyt of wymmen hath ben y-wovéd yore.  
 And, shortly for to seyn, she hath hir fille  
 Of mete and drynke, and clothyng at  
 hire wille,

And kouthe eke rede and wel ynogh endyte,  
 But with a penné kouthe she nat write ;  
 But letteres kan she wevè to and fro.  
 So that by that the yere was al ago,  
 She haddé woven in a stames large, <sup>2360</sup>  
 How she was broght from Athenes  
 in a barge,

And in a cavé how that she was broght,  
 And al the thinge that Teréus hath wroght,  
 She wave hyt wel, and wrote the  
 story above,

How she was servéd for hir suster love.  
 And to a knave a ryng she yaf anoon,  
 And prayéd hym by signés for to goon  
 Unto the queene, and beren hir that clothe ;  
 And by signés swor hym many an othe,  
 She shulde hym yevé what she geten  
 myghte. <sup>2370</sup>

Thys knave anon unto the queene  
 hym dyghte,

And toke hit hir, and al the maner tolde.  
 And whanne that Proigne hath this  
 thing beholde,  
 No worde she spake, for sorwe and  
 eke for rage,

But feynéd hyr to goon on pilgrymage  
 To Bachus temple. And in a lytel stounde  
 Hire dombé suster syttyng hath she founde  
 Wépyng in the castel, hir-self allone.  
 Allas, the wo, the compleynt, and the  
 mone

2352. hire, F<sup>5</sup> om.

2353. ben y-wovéd, so Arch. Seld.; rest *be wovéd,  
 be wovéd.*

2369. signés, F<sup>4</sup> signe.

2369. hym, Gg only; Trin. she; rest om.

That Proigne upon hir dombè suster  
maketh ! 2380

In armès everych of hem other taketh ;  
And thus I lat hem in her sorwè dwelle.

The remenant is no chargè for to telle,  
For this is al and some,—thus was  
she served,

That never harm agyltè ne deservede  
Unto thys cruelle man, that shè of wyste.  
Ye may be war of men, yif that yow lyste.

For al be that he wol not for his shame  
Dóon as Tereus, to lese his name, 2389

Ne serve yow as a morderere or a knave,  
Ful lytel whilè shul ye trewe hym have,—  
That wol I seyne, al were he nowe  
my brother,—

But hit so be that he may have non other.

*Explicit Legenda Philomene*

*Incipit Legenda Phillis*

By preve, as wel as by auctorite,  
That wikked frute cometh of a wikked tree,  
That may ye fynde, if that hyt liketh yow.

But for thys ende I speké thys as now,  
To tellè yow of falsè Demophon.

In love a falsè herde I never non,  
But if hit were hys fader Theseus ; 2400

God, for his gracè, fro suche oon kepe us !  
Thus thesè wymen prayen that hit here ;  
Now to theffect turne I of my matere.

Distroyèd is of Troyè the citee ;  
This Demophon come saylyng in the see  
Towarde Athénès to his paleys large.

With hym come many a shippe and  
many a barge

Fúl of folke, of whiche ful many on  
Is wounded sore, and seke, and wo begon,  
And they han at a segè longe y-layne.

Byhynde him come a wynde and eke  
a rayne, 2411

That shofe so sore his saylle ne myghtè  
stonde,

Hym werè lever than al the worlde a-londe,  
So hunteth hym the tempest to and fro !  
So derke hyt was, he kouthè no-wher go,

2388. *his*, Gg only.

2400. *if*, F<sup>3</sup> om.

2408. *folke*, Gg *his folk*.

And with a wawè brosten was his stere.  
His shippe was rent so lowe, in suche  
manere,

That carpentere ne koude hit nat amende.

The see by nyght as any torchè brende  
For wode, and posseth hym now up now  
doun ; 2420

Til Neptune hath of hym compassyoun,  
And Thetis, Chorus, Triton, and they alle,  
And maden him upon a londe to falle,  
Wherof that Phillis lady was and quene,  
Lycurgus doghtre, fayrer on to sene

Thanis the floure ageyn the bryghtèsonne.  
Unneth is Demophon to londe  
y-wonne,

Wayke and eke wery, and his folke forpynd  
Of werynesse, and also enfamyned, 2429

And to the dethe he was almoste y-dreven.  
His wisè folke to counseyle han hymeven,  
To seken helpe and socour of the quene,  
And loken what his gracè myghtè bene,  
And maken in that londe some chevis-  
saunce,

To kepen hym fro wo and fro myschaunce.  
For seke he was, and almoste at the dethe ;  
Unnethè myght he speke, or drawè brethe ;  
And lyeth in Rhodopeya hym for to reste.

Whan he may walke, hym thought hit  
was the beste

Unto the court to seken for socoure. 2440  
Men knewe hym welle and diden hym  
honoure ;

For at Athénès duke and lorde was he,  
As Thesèus his fader hath y-be,  
That in his tymè was of grete renoun,

No man so grete in al his regioun ;  
And lyke his fader of face and of stature,  
And fals of love ; hyt came hym of nature,  
As doth the fox Renarde, the foxes sone ;  
Of kynde he koude his oldè fadrès wone

2420. *now up now down*, F<sup>4</sup> *up and down*.

2422. *Chorus*. So Thynne (the MSS. read *Thorus*), probably a misunderstanding of 'Et senior Glauci chorus' in *Æn.* v. 823-825, where Thetis, Triton 'and they all' ('exercitus omnis') are mentioned. See Skeat's note and Bech in *Anglia*, vol. v.

2435. *To*, F<sup>4</sup> *And*.

2438. *Rhodopeya*, a mountain in Thrace.

2440. *court*, F<sup>4</sup> *contree*.

2441. *diden*, so Gg (*dedyn*) ; F<sup>4</sup> *dyd* ; Trin.<sup>2</sup> *did him gret* ; Add.<sup>2</sup> *hym they dede*.

2442. *at*, Gg *of*.

Withouté lore, as kana draké swymme 2450  
Whan hit is kaught and caried to the  
brymme.

Thys honourable quené doth him chere,  
Hir lyketh wel his porte and his manere.  
But for I am agroteyd here beforne,  
To write of hem that ben in love forsworne  
And eke to hasté me in my Legende,  
Which to performé, God me gracé sende ;  
Therefore I passé shortly in thys wyse.

Ye have wel herde of Theséus devise,  
In the betraysyng of faire Adriane, 2460  
That of hir pitee kepte hym fro his bane.  
At shorté wordés, ryght so Demophon,  
The samé way, the samé path hath gon,  
That did his falsé fader Theséus.

For unto Phillis hath he sworen thus,  
To wedden hir, and hir his trouthe plyghte,  
And pikéd of hyr al the good he myghte,  
Whan he was hole and sounde, and had  
his reste,

And doth with Phillis what-so that him  
leste,

As wel kouthe I, gif that me lesté so, 2470  
Téllen al his doynges, to and fro.

He sayde unto his contree moste he  
sayle,

For ther he wolde hire weddyng apparaylle  
As fille to hir honour and his also,  
And openly he tok his levé tho,  
And to hir swore he woldé not sojourne,  
But in a moneth ageyn he wolde retourne.  
And in that londe let make his ordynance,  
As verray lorde, and toke the obeisaunce  
Wel and homely, and let his shippis dyghte,  
And home he gooth the nexté wey he  
myghte. 2481

For unto Phillis yet ne come he nocht,  
And that hath sheso harde and sore y-boght,  
Allas, that as the storyes us recorde,  
She was hir owné dethe ryght with a corde,  
Whanne that she segh that Demophon  
her trayede.

But to hym firste she wrote, and faste hym  
prayed

He woldé come and hir delyver of peyne,

2450. *devise*, F<sup>3</sup> *the nyse*; Thynne *the gyse*.

2460. *homely*, Tan. *humble*; Thynne *humbly*.

2480. *let*, Gg only; rest om.

2482. *For*, Trin. *But*.

As I rehersé shal oo worde or tweyne.  
Me lysté nat vouch-safe on him to swynke,  
Ne spend on hym a penné ful of ynke, 2491  
For fals in love was he, ryght as his syre ;  
The devel set hire soulés both a-fire !  
But of the letter of Phillis wol I wryte  
A worde or tweyne, althogh hit be but lyte.  
'Thyn hostesse,' quod she, 'O thou

Demophon,

Thy Phillis, which that is so wo begon,  
Of Rhodopey, upon yow mot compleyne,  
Over the termé sette betwix us tweyne,  
That ye ne holden forwarde, as ye seyde.  
Your anker, which ye in oure haven leyde,  
Hyght us that ye woldecomen out of doute,  
Or that the moné went onés aboute ;  
But tymés foure the mone hath hid hir face  
Syn thylké day ye wenté fro this place ;  
And fouré tymés lyghte the worlde ageyn.  
But for al that, yet I shal soothly seyn,  
Yet hath the streme of Sithon nat i-brought  
From Athenés the shippe ; yet cometh  
hit nocht.

And if that ye the termé rekné wolde, 2510  
As I or other trewé love sholde,  
I pleyne nat, God wot ! beforne my day.  
But al hir letter writen I ne may  
By ordre, for hit were to me a charge ;  
Hir letter was ryght longe, and therto large.  
But here and there in ryme I have hyt layde,  
There as me thoghté that she hath wel  
sayde.

She seyde, 'Thy sayllés cometh nat  
ageyn,

Ne to the worde there nys no fey certeyn ;  
But I wote why ye comé nat,' quod she ;  
'For I was of my love to yow so fre. 2521  
And of the goddys that ye han forswore,  
If hire vengeauncé fal on yow therfore,  
Ye be nat suffisaunt to bere the peyne.  
To muché trusted I, wel may I pleyne,  
Upon youre lynage and youre fairé tonge,  
And on youre terés falsély out-wronge.  
How kouthe ye wepé so be crafte ?' quod  
she ;

2491. *Ne spend*, F<sup>4</sup> *Dispenden*.

2496. *thou*, Trin. and Arch. Seld. only.

2508. *Sithon*, the name of the father of Phillis,  
the King of Thrace.

2511. *lovere*, F<sup>4</sup> *lovers*.

2523. *If*, F<sup>4</sup> *That*.

'Máy there suché teres i-feynede be ?  
Now certes gif ye wolde have in memorye,  
Hyt oughté be to yow but lytel glorie, 2531  
To have a sely maydé thus betrayed !  
To God,' quod she, 'prey I, and ofte  
have prayed,

That hyt be nowe the gretest prise of alle,  
And moste honour that ever yow shal  
befalle.

And when thynolde auncetres peynted be,  
In which men may her worthynessé se,  
Then pray I God, thow peynted be also,  
That folke may reden, for-by as they go,—

"Lo, this is he, that with his flaterye  
Betrayéd hath, and doon hir vilanye, 2541  
That was his trewé love in thoghte and  
dede."

But sothely of oo poynt yet may they  
rede,

That ye ben lyke youre fader, as in this ;  
For he begiléð Adriane, y-wis,  
With suche an arte, and suché soteltee,  
As thou thy-selven hast begiled me.

As in that poynt, althogh hit be nat feire,  
Thou folwest hym certeyn, and art his  
eyre.

But syn thus synfully ye me begile, 2550  
My body mote ye seen, within a while,  
Ryght in the havene of Athenés fletynge,  
Withouten sepulture and buryinge,  
Though ye ben harder then is any stone.'

And whan this letter was forthe sent  
anone,

and knew how brotel and how fals he was,  
he for dispeyre fordide hir-self, allas !  
uche sorowe hath she, forshe beset hireso!  
e war, ye wymmen, of youre sotile fo !  
yns yet this day men may ensample se,  
nd, as in love, trusteth no man but me.

*Explicit Legenda Phillis*

*Incipit Legenda Ypermystre*

In Grece whilom weren brethren two  
f which that oon was calléd Danao, 2563  
at many a sone hath of his body wonne,  
s suché falsé lovers ofté konne.

Among his sonés allé there was oon,  
at aldermoste he loved of everychon.

And whan this childe was borne, this Danao  
Shope hym a name, and calléd hym Lyno.

That other brother calléd was Egiste,  
That was in love as fals as ever hym lyste.  
And many a doghtre gat he in his lyfe ;  
Of which he gat upon his ryghté wife 2573  
A doughter dere, and did hir for to calle  
Ypermystra, yongest of hem alle.

The whiché childe, of hir natyvite,  
To allé goodé thewés borne was she,  
As lykédé to the goddes, or she was borne,  
That of the shefe she shuldé be the corne.

The Wirdes, that we clepen Destanye,  
Hath shapen hir, that she moste nedés be  
Pitousé, saddé, wise, and trewe as stele.  
And to this woman hyt acordeth wele ;  
For though that Venusyaf hir grete beaute,  
With Jupiter compounéd so was she,  
That consciencé, trouthe, and drede of  
shame,

And of hir wyfephode for to kepe hir name,  
This thoght hire was felicité as here.

And redé Mars was that tyme of the yere  
So feble, that his malice is him rafte ; 2590  
Represséd hath Venús his cruelle crafte ;  
And with Venús, and other oppressyoun  
Of houses, Mars his venym is adoun,  
That Ypermystra dare not handel a knyfe  
In malyce, thogh she shuldé lese hir lyfe.

But nathéles, as heven gan tho turne,  
To badde aspectes hath she of Saturne,  
That made hir for to dyen in prisoun,  
As I shal after maké mencion.

To Danao and Egistes also, 2600  
Al thogh so be that they were brethren  
two,

For thilké tyme nas sparéd no lynage,  
Hyt lyketh hem to maken mariage  
Betwixé Ypermestre and hym Lyno,  
And casten suche a day hyt shal be so,  
And ful acorded was hit wittirly.

The arrayiswroght, the tyme is fasté by,  
And thus Lyno hath of his fadres brother  
The doghter wedded, and eche of hem  
hath other.

2582. *and*, Trin.<sup>2</sup> only.

2592. *And with*, Gg<sup>4</sup> *That* (Thynne *And*)  
*what with*.

2593. *dyen*, MSS. *dy*, *dye*.

2599. *As*, F<sup>4</sup> *And*.

2601. *Al*, F<sup>5</sup> *And*.

The torches brennen, and the lampés  
bryghte, 2610

The sacrifices ben ful redy dyght,  
Thencence out of the firé reketh sote,  
The flour, the lefe, is rent up by the rote,  
To maken garlandes and coronés hye ;  
Ful is the place of sounde of mynstralcye,  
Of songés amoureuse of mariage,  
As thilké tymé was the pleyne usage.  
And this was in the paleys of Egiste,  
That in his house was lorde, ryght as hym  
lyste.

And thus that day they driven to an ende ;  
The frendés taken leve, and home they  
wende ; 2621

The nyght is comen, the bride shal go to  
bedde.

Egisté to his chambre fast hym spedde,  
And prively he let his doghter calle,  
Whanne that the hous was voyded of hem  
alle.

He lokéd on his doghter with glad chere,  
And to hir spak as ye shal after here.

‘ My ryghté doghtér, tresour of myn  
herte,

Syn firste that day that shapen was my  
sherte, 2629

Or by the fatale sustren hadde my dome,  
So ny myn herté never thinge me come  
As thou, myn Ypermystra, daughter dere !  
Take hedé what thy fader seyth the here,  
And werke after thy wiser ever mo.

For alderfirsté, doghter, I love the so  
That al the worlde to me nys half so lefe,  
Ne I noldé redé the to thy myschefe,  
For al the good under the coldé moone ;  
And what I meene, hyt shal be seyde  
ryght soone, 2639

With protestacioun, as seyn these wyse,  
That, but thou do as I shal the devyse,  
Thou shalt be ded,—by hym that al hath  
wrought !

At shorté wordés thou ne scapest nought  
Out of my paleys or that thou be dede,  
But thou consente and werke aftir my rede ;  
‘ Take this to the for ful conclusioun.’

<sup>2632.</sup> *myn*, Gg only ; ‘Trin.<sup>2</sup> have *my* before  
*doughter*.

<sup>2633.</sup> *what*, Gg *what* I.

<sup>2637.</sup> *I nolde*, F<sup>4</sup> *nolde* ; Trin. *wold* ; Add. 2  
*wolde* I.

This Ypermystra caste hir eyen doun,  
And quoke as doth the lefe of aspé grene ;  
Ded wex hir hewe, and lyke an ashe to sene ;  
And seyde, ‘ Lorde and fader, al youre wille,  
After my myght, God wote I shal fulfille,  
So hit to me be no confusioun.’ 2652

‘ I nyl,’ quod he, ‘ have noon excepcioun ;  
And out he kaughte a knyfe as rasour kene.  
‘ Hyde this,’ quod he, ‘ that hyt be not  
i-sene,

And whan thyn housbonde is to beddéd go,  
While that he slepeth kut his throte atwo ;  
For in my dremés hyt is warnéd me,  
How that my nevew shal my bané be,  
But which I not ; wherfore I wol be siker.  
Gif thou say nay, we two shal have a byker.  
As I have seyde, by him that I have sworne !

This Ypermystre hath nygh hire wytte  
forlorne, 2666

And, for to passen harmlesse of that place,  
She graunted hym ; ther was noon othe  
grace.

And therewithal a costrel taketh he  
And seyde, ‘ Hereof a draught, or two, or  
thre,

Yif hym to drynké, whan he gooth to reste  
And he shal slepe as longe as ever the leste.  
The narcotikes and opies ben so stronge ;  
And go thy way, lest that hym thynke to  
longe.’ 2671

Oute cometh the bride, and with ful  
sobre chere,

As is of maidenés ofté the manere,  
To chambre is broght with revel and wil  
songe.

And shortly, leste this talé be to longe,  
This Lyno and she beth i-broght to bedde  
And every wight out at the dore hyt  
spedde.

The nyght is wasted and he felle aslepe ;  
Ful tenderly begynneth she to wepe ;  
She riste hir up, and dredefully she quaketh  
As doth the braunché that Zepherus  
shaketh, 2681

<sup>2640.</sup> *an*, F<sup>4</sup> *as*.

<sup>2666.</sup> *he*, F<sup>4</sup> add *tho*, omitting *or thre* in ne  
line.

<sup>2676.</sup> Trin. mends this line by reading *beth so*  
for *beth*, but Trin. and Arch. Seld. have *Dane*  
for *Lino*, and this metre-saving slip may be  
Chaucer’s own.

And hussht were alle in Argone that citee.  
 As colde as eny froste now wexeth she,  
 For pite by the herte hir streyneth so,  
 And drede of dethe doth hir so mochê wo,  
 That thriês doun she fil in swich a were,  
 Sherysthir up and stakereth here and there,  
 And on hir handês fastê loketh she.  
 'Allas, and shal myn handês bloody be?  
 I am a mayde, and as by my nature, <sup>2690</sup>  
 And by my semblant, and by my vesture,  
 Myn handês ben nat shapen for a knyfe,  
 As for to revê no man for his lyfe!  
 What devel have I with the knyfe to do?  
 And shal I have my throtê korve a-two?  
 Than shal I blede, allas, and me be-shende!  
 And nedês-coste thys thing mot have an  
 ende;  
 Or he or I mot nedês lese oure lyfe.  
 Now certês, quod she, 'syn I am his wyfe,  
 And hathe my feythe, yet is hyt bet for me  
 For to be ded in wyfely honeste, <sup>2701</sup>  
 Than be a traytoure lyvyng in my shame.  
 Be as be may, for erneste or for game,  
 He shal awake and ryse and go his way  
 Out at this goter, or that hyt be day.'

And wepte ful tendirly upon his face,  
 And in hir armês gan hym to embrace,  
 And hym she roggeth and awaketh softe,  
 And at the wyndow lepe he fro the lofte,  
 Whan she hath warnêd hym and doon  
 hym bote. <sup>2710</sup>

This Lyno swyftê was and lyght of fote,  
 And from his wif he ranne a ful goode pas.  
 This sely womman ys so wayke, allas!  
 And helpes, so that er that she fer wente  
 Her crewel fader did her for to hente,  
 Allas! Lyno, why art thou so unkynde?  
 Why ne haddist thou remembered in thy  
 mynde  
 And taken hir and ledde hir forthe with  
 the?

For when she sawe that goon away was he,  
 And that she mightê not so fastê go, <sup>2720</sup>  
 Ne folowen hym she sat hir doun ryght tho,  
 Til she was caught and fettered in prysoun.  
 This tale is seyde for this conclusioun.

<sup>2712.</sup> *his wif he, F<sup>4</sup> hir.*

<sup>2723.</sup> At this point Chaucer, after showing many signs of tiredness, seems to have abandoned the *Legend* altogether.

## LATER MINOR POEMS

### TO ROSEMOUNDE

#### A BALADE

MADAME, ye ben of al beauté [the] shryne  
 As fer as cerclêd is the mappemounde,  
 For as the cristal glorious ye shyne  
 And lykê ruby ben your chekês rounde.  
 Therwith ye ben so mery and so jocounde  
 That at a revel whan that I see you daunce,  
 t is an oynement unto my wounde,  
 Though ye to me ne do no daliaunce.  
 For though I wepe of terês ful a tyne, <sup>9</sup>  
 et may that wo myn hertê nat confounde;  
 our seemly voys that ye so smal out-twyne  
 maketh my thought in joye and blis  
 habounde.

o curteisly I go, with lovê bounde,  
 hat to myself I sey, in my penaunce,

i. MS. Rowl. Poet. 163 omits *the*.  
 ii. MS. reads *semy*; and *synall* (i.e. *final*)  
*small*, according to Skeat.

Suffyseth me to love you Rosemounde,  
 Though ye to me ne do no daliaunce.

Nas never pyk walwêd in galauntyne  
 As I in love am walwêd and y-wounde,  
 For which ful ofte I of my-self dyvyne  
 That I am trewê Tristam the secounde, <sup>20</sup>  
 My love may not refreyd be nor afounde;  
 I brenne ay in an amorous plesaunce.  
 Do what you lyst, I wyl your thral be  
 founde

Though ye to me ne do no daliaunce.

TREGENTIL.

CHAUCER.

### THE FORMER AGE (ÆTAS PRIMA)

A BLISFUL lyf, a paisible and a swete  
 Ledden the peplês in the former age;

They helde hem paied of fruités that they  
ete,

Whiche that the feldés yave hem by usage,  
They ne weré nat for-pampred with out-  
rage.

Unknowén was the quern and eek the melle,  
They eten mast, hawés, and swych pounage,  
And dronken water of the coldé welle.

Yit nas the ground nat wounded with  
the plough,

But corn up-sprong, unsowe of mannés  
hond,

The which they gnodde and eete nat half  
y-nough ;

No man yit knew the forwés of his lond ;  
No man the fyr out of the flynt yit fonde ;  
Unkorven and ungrobbéd lay the vyne ;  
No man yit in the mortar spices grond  
To clarré, ne to sause of galentyne.

No mader welde, or wood no litéstre  
Neknew ; the flees was of his former hewe ;  
No flessch ne wyste offence of egge or spere ;  
No coyn ne knew man which was fals or  
trewe ;

No ship yit karf the wawés grene and blewe ;  
No marchaunt yit ne fette outlandissch ware ;  
No trompés for the werrés folk ne knewe,  
Netowrés heye and wallés rounde or square.

What sholde it han avayléd to werreye ?  
Ther lay no profit, ther was no richesse ;  
But curséd was the tyme, I dar wel seye,  
That men first dide hir swety besynesse  
To grobbe up metal lurkyng in darknesse,  
And in the ryverés fyrst gemmés soghte ;  
Allas ! than sprong up al the cursédnesse  
Of covetyse that fyrst our sorwé broughte !

These tyraunts putte hem gladly nat in  
pres

No wyldnesse ne no busshés for to wynne.  
Ther póverte is, as seith Diogenes,  
Ther as vitaille is eek so skars and thinne,  
That noght but mast or apples is ther-inne ;  
But ther as baggés been and fat vitaille  
Ther wol they gon and sparé for no synne  
With al hir ost the cyte forto asayle. 40

3. Both MSS. read *the fruites*.

34. It reads *places wyldnesse* ; Hh *place of wyldnesse*.

Yit were no paleis chaubrés, ne nor  
halles ;

In cavés and [in] wodés softe and swete,  
Slepten this blisséd folk withouté walles,  
On gras or leves in parfit joye and quiéte ;  
No down of fetherés, ne no bleché shete  
Was kid to hem, but in seurtee they slepte.  
Hir hertés were al oon withouté galles,  
Everich of hem his feith to other kepte.

Unforgéd was the hauberke and the  
plate ;

The lambish peple, voydéd of alle vyce, 50  
Haddén no fantasyé to debate,  
But ech of hem wolde other wel cheryce ;  
No pridé, non envye, non avaryce,  
No lord, no taylage by no tyranye,  
Humblesse, and pes, good feith, the  
emperice,

Yit was nat Jupiter the likerous,  
That first was fader of delicacye,  
Come in this world, ne Nembrot desyrous  
To reynen had nat maad his tourés hye. 60  
Allas ! allas ! now may men wepe and  
crye !

For in our dayés nis but covetyse,  
[And] dowblenesse, and tresoun, and  
envey,

Poysoun, manslaughtre, and mordre in  
sondry wyse.

## FORTUNE

### *Balades de visage sanz Peinture*

#### I.—LE PLEINTIF COUNTRE FORTUNE

THIS wrecchéd worldés transmucioun,  
As wele or wo, now povre and now honour  
Withouten ordre or wys discrecioun  
Governéd is by Fortunés errour ;  
But nathéles the lak of hir favour

42. Both omit *in* before *wodes*.

44. *quiéte* is slurred so as to be practically monosyllabic or dissyllabic if the final vowel pronounced. Cp. *B. of D.* l. 330 *Medea*.

56. This line is wanting in the MSS.

59. *Nembrot*, Nimrod.

63. Both omit first *And*.



Ne may not don me singen, though I dye.  
*'Jay tout perdu mon temps et mon labour':*  
 For fynally, Fortune, I thee defye.

Yit is me left the light of my resoun  
 To knowen frend fro fo in thy mirour. 10  
 So muche hath yit thy whirling up and doun  
 Y-taught me for to knowen in an hour.  
 But trewely, no force of thy reddour  
 To him that over him-self hath the maystrye  
 My suffisauncé shal be my socour :  
 For fynally, Fortune, I thee defye.

O Socrates, thou stedfast champioun,  
 The never mighté be thy tormentour ;  
 Thou never drested hir oppressioun  
 Ne in hir cheré founde thou no savour. 20  
 Thou knewe wel the deceit of hir colour  
 And that hir mosté worshiþe is to lye.  
 I know hir eek a fals dissimulour :  
 For fynally, Fortune, I thee defye !

II.—LA RESPOUNSE DE FORTUNE  
 AU PLEINTIF

Who man is wrecched, but him-self it wene  
 And he that hath him-self hath suffisaunce.  
 Why seystow than I am to thee so kene  
 That hast thy-self out of my governaunce?  
 Why thus : 'Graunt mercy of thyn habound-  
 aunce

That thou hast lent or this.' Why wol  
 thou stryve ? 30  
 That wostow yit how I thee wol avaunce ?  
 And eek thou hast thy besté frend alyve !

Have thee taught divisioun bi-twene  
 End of effect, and frend of countenaunce ;  
 See nedeth nat the galle of noon hyéne,  
 That cureth y'en derke fro hir penaunce ;  
 How seestow cleer, that were in ignoraunce.  
 I halt thyn ancre, and yit thou mayst  
 aryve

For bountee berth the keye of my sub-  
 stance : 39  
 And eek thou hast thy besté frend alyve !

1. All but Ii read *turnyng for whirling.*  
 2. All but Ii read *Thou shalt not stryve.*

How many have I refuséd to sustene  
 Sin I thee fostred have in thy plesaunce !  
 Woltow than make a statute on thy quene  
 That I shal been ay at thyn ordinaunce ?  
 Thou born art in my regne of variaunce,  
 Aboute the wheel with other most thou  
 dryve.

My lore is bet than wikke is thy grevaunce :  
 And eek thou hast thy besté frend alyve !

III.—LA RESPOUNSE DU PLEINTIF  
 COUNTRE FORTUNE

Thy lore I dampne, hit is adversitee.  
 My frend maystow nat reven, blynd  
 goddésse ! 50  
 That I thy frendés knowe, I thanke it thee.  
 Tak hem agayn, lat hem go lye on presse !  
 The negardye in keypyng hir richesse  
 Prenostik is thou wolt hir tour assayle ;  
 Wikke appetyt comth ay before seknesse :  
 In general, this reulé may nat fayle.

IV.—LA RESPOUNSE DE FORTUNE  
 COUNTRE LE PLEINTIF

Thou pinchest at my mutabilitee,  
 For I thee lente a drope of my richesse,  
 And now me lyketh to withdrawé me.  
 Why sholdestow my réaltee oppresse ? 60  
 The see may ebbe and flowen more or lesse ;  
 The welkne hath might to shyné, reyne  
 or hayle ;  
 Right so mot I kythen my brotelnesse :  
 In general, this reulé may nat fayle.

Lo, the execucion of the magestee  
 That al purveyeth of his rightwysnesse  
 That samé thyng 'Fortuné' clepen ye,  
 Ye blyndé bestés, ful of lewédnesse !  
 The hevене hath propretee of sikernesse ;  
 This world hath ever restéles travayle ; 70  
 Thy lasté day is ende of myn intresse :  
 In general, this reulé may nat fayle.

LENGVOY DE FORTUNE

Princes, I prey you of your gentillesse  
 Lat nat this man on me thus crye and  
 pleyne,

51. Ii to for it.

And I shal quyte you your bisynesse 75  
 At my requeste, as three of you or tweyne ;  
 And but you list releve him of his peyne,  
 Preyeth his besté frend, of his noblesse  
 That to som bettre estat he may atteyne.

TRUTH

BALADE DE BON CONSEYL

FLEE fro the prees, and dwelle with soth-  
 fastnesse  
 Suffice unto thy thyng though hit be smal ;  
 For hord hath hate and clymyng tikel-  
 nesse,  
 Prees hath envye, and welé blent overal ;  
 Savour no more than thee bihovè shal ;  
 Werk wel thy-self, that other folk canst  
 rede,  
 And trouthe shall deliver, it is no drede.

Tempest thee noght al crokéd to redresse  
 In trust of hir that turneth as a bal :  
 Greet resté stant in litel besynesse ; 10  
 An eek be war to sporne ageyn an al ;  
 Stryve noght, as doth the crokke with the  
 wal.

Daunté thy-self, that dauntest otherédede,  
 And trouthe shall deliver, it is no drede.

That thee is sent, receyve in buxumnesse,  
 The wrastling for this worlde axeth a fal.  
 Her nis non hoom, her nis but wildernesse.  
 Forth, pilgrim, forth ! Forth, beste, out  
 of thy stal,

Know thy contree, look up, thank God  
 of al ;

Hold the hye wey, and lat thy gost thee  
 lede, 20

And trouthe shall deliver, it is no drede.

ENVOY

Therefore, thou vache, leve thyn old  
 wrecchednesse

Unto the world ; leve now to be thral ;  
 Crye him mercy, that of his hy goodnesse

76. Only in li. The meaning is doubtful.  
 20. *Hold the hye wey*, Harl. F<sub>1</sub> F<sub>2</sub> L. Cx. T<sub>1</sub> T<sub>2</sub>  
*Seld. Weyve thy lust ; Kk Reull thi self.*  
 23. *world* is dissyllabic as in O.E.

Made thee of noght, and in especíal  
 Draw unto him, and pray in general  
 For thee, and eek for other, hevenlich  
 mede ;

And trouthe shall deliver, it is no drede.

*Explicit le bon conseil de G. Chaucer.*

GENTILESSE

MORAL BALADE OF CHAUCER

THE firsté stok and fader of gentilesse,—  
 What man that claymeth gentil for to be  
 Moste folwe his trace and alle his wittés  
 dresse

Vertu to sewe and vycés for to flee.  
 For unto vertu longeth dignitee,  
 And nought the revers, saufly dar I deme.  
 Al were he mytre, croune, or diademe.

This firsté stok was ful of rightwysnesse.  
 Trewe of his word, sobre, pitous and free.  
 Clene of his goste and lovéd besynesse, 10  
 Ageynst the vyce of slouthe, in honestee  
 And but his heir love vertu, as dide he  
 He nis nought gentil though he riché seme.  
 Al were he mitre, croune, or diademe.

Vycé may wel be heyr to old richesse,  
 But there may no man, as ye may we  
 see,

Bequethe his heyr his vertuous noblesse  
 That is appropred unto no degree,  
 But to the firsté Fader in magestee,  
 That maketh his heyr him that wol his  
 queme,

Al were he mytre, croune, or diademe.

LAK OF STEDFASTNESSE

BALADE

SOM tyme this world was so stedfast and  
 stable

That mannés word was obligacioun,  
 And now hit is so fals and deceivable  
 That word and deed, as in conclusioun,

1. A *The first fader and founder ; H fader  
 and fynder ; Harl. fader fynder.*  
 2. T H C Ha. *desireth ; Add. coueyteth.*

Ben no-thing oon, for turned up so doun  
Is al this world through mede and wilful-  
nesse  
That al is lost for lak of stedfastnesse.

What maketh this world to be so variable  
But lust that folk have in dissensioun?  
For now adayes a man is holde unable <sup>10</sup>  
But if he can, by som collusioun,  
Don his neighbour wrong or oppressioun.  
What causeth this, but wilful wrecched-  
nesse  
That al is lost, for lak of stedfastnesse?

Trouthe is put doun, resoun is holden fable,  
Vertu hath now no dominacioun,  
Pitee exyled, no wyght is merciåble.  
Through covetyse is blent discrecioun;  
The world hath mad a permutacioun  
Fro right to wrong, fro trouthe to fikel-  
nesse, <sup>20</sup>  
That al is lost, for lak of stedfastnesse.

LENVOY TO KING RICHARD

O prince, desire for to be honourable,  
Cherish thy folk and hate extorcioun!  
Suffre no thyng, that may be reprevable  
To thyn estat, don in thy regioun.  
Shew forth thy swerd of castigioun,  
Dred God, do law, love trouthe and  
worthynesse,  
And dryve thy folk ageyn to stedfastnesse.

*Explicit.*

LENVOY DE CHAUCER A  
SCOGAN

TO-BROKEN been the statutes hyc in  
hevene,  
hat cræt were eternally to dure,  
ith that I see the bryghte goddès sevene

5. Ct. F Harl. 7578 *Is no thing lyke*; Add. *r nothing like*.

10. Tr. Th. Ct. F Add. Harl. 7578 *For amonge*; Bann. *Among us now*.

17. Harl. 7578 Ct. F *man for wyght*.

28. Harl. 7578 Ct. F Tr. Th. *And wed*.

Mowe wepe and wayle, and passioun  
endure,  
As may in erthe a mortale créature.  
Allas! fro whennès may this thing pro-  
cede?  
Of whiche errour I deye almost for drede.

By worde eterne whilom was it y-shape,  
That fro the fiftè cercle, in no manère,  
Ne myghte a drope of terès doun eschape.  
But now so wepeth Venus in hir speri, <sup>11</sup>  
That with hir terès she wol drenche us  
here.  
Allas, Scogan! this is for thyn offence!  
Thou causeth this deluge of pestilence.

Häst thou not seyd in blaspheme of this  
goddès,  
Through pride, or through thy gretè  
rekelnesse,  
Swich thing as in the lawe of love forbode  
is?

That, for thy lady saw nat thy distresse,  
Therfor thou yave hir up at Michelmesse?  
Allas, Scogan! of oldè folk ne yonge, <sup>20</sup>  
Was never erst Scogan blaméd for his  
tonge.

Thou drowe in scorn Cupide eek to  
recorde  
Of thilkè rebel word that thou hast spoken,  
For which he wol no lenger be thy lord.  
And, Scogan, thogh his bowè be nat  
broken,  
He wol nat with his arwès been y-wroken  
On thee, ne me, ne noon of our figure;  
We shul of him have neyther hurte ne cure.

Now certès, frend, I drede of thyn  
unhappe,  
Leste for thy gilte the wreche of love  
procede <sup>30</sup>  
On alle hem that ben hore and rounde of  
shape,  
That ben so lykly folk in love to spede.  
Than shul we for our labour han no mede;  
But wel I wot, thou wilt answer and seye,  
'Loo, tholdè Grisellist to ryme and playe!'

4. *wepe and wayle*. Probably a reference to the heavy rains and floods of 1393.

Nay, Scogan, say not so, for I mexcuse,  
 God helpe me so ! in no ryme doutèlees,  
 Ne thynke I never of sleep to wake my  
 muse, 38  
 That rusteth in my shethè stille in pees ;  
 While I was yong I put hir forth in prees ;  
 But al shal passèn that men prose or ryme,  
 Take every man his turne as for histyme.

ENVOY

Scogan, that knelest at the stremès hede  
 Of grace, of alle honour, and worthy-  
 nesse !  
 In thende of which streme I am dul as  
 dede,  
 Forgete in solitarie wilderness ; v  
 Yet, Scogan, thenke on Tullius kyndè-  
 nesse ;  
 Mynnè thy frend ther it may fructifye,  
 Far-wel, and lok thou never eft love defye.

THE COMPLEYNT OF VENUS

I

THERE nys so hy comfort to my  
 plesaunce,  
 Whan that I am in any hevynesse,  
 As for to have leyser of remembraunce  
 Upon the manhod and the worthynesse,  
 Upon the trouth and on the stedfastnesse  
 Of him whos I am al, whil I may dure.  
 Ther oghtè blamè me no créature,  
 For every wyght preiseth his gentillesse.

In him is bountee, wysdom, govern-  
 aunce, 9  
 Wel more then any mannès wyt can gesse ;  
 For grace hath wold so ferforth him  
 avaunce,  
 That of knyghthode he is parfit richesse ;  
 Honour honoureth him for his noblesse ;  
 Therto so well hath formèd him Nature.  
 That I am his for ever, I him assure,  
 For every wyght preiseth his gentillesse.

And not-withstandyng al his suffisaunce  
 His gentil herte is of so greet humblesse

47. Tullius kyndenesse, a reference to M. Tullius Cicero's *De Amicitia*.

To me in word, in werk, in contenaunce,  
 And me to serve is al his besynesse, 20  
 That I am set in verrey sikirnesse.  
 Thus oghte I blessè wel myn aventure,  
 Sith that him list me serven and honoure,  
 For every wyght preiseth his gentillesse.

II

Now certès, Love, hit is right covènable,  
 That men ful derè bye the noble thyng,  
 As wake a-bedde, and fasten at the table,  
 Wepying to laughe and singe in com-  
 pleynyng,  
 And doun to castè visage and loking, 29  
 Often to chaungèn hewe and countenaunce,  
 Pleyne in slepyng, and dremèn at the  
 daunce,  
 Al the revers of any glad felyng.

Jalousyè be hangèd by a cable !  
 She wolde al knowè through her espyng.  
 Ther doth no wyght nothyng so resonable,  
 That al nys harm in her ymagynyng.  
 Thus dere abought is Love in his yevyng,  
 Which ofte he yiveth withoutèn ordyn-  
 aunce,  
 As sorw ynogh, and litel of plesaunce,  
 Al the revers of any glad felyng. 47

A litel tyme his yift is agrèable,  
 But ful encomberous is the usyng ;  
 For subtil jalousye, the deceyvable,  
 Ful often-tymè causeth destourbyng.  
 Thus be we ever in drede and sufferyng ;  
 In nouncerteyn we languisshe in penaunce,  
 And han ful often many an harde mys-  
 chaunce,  
 Al the revers of any glad felyng.

III

But certès, Love, I sey not in such wyse,  
 That for tescape out of your lace I mente,  
 For Isolonge have been in your servyse, 51  
 That for to lete of, wol I never assente.  
 No fors ! thogh jalousyè me tormente ;  
 Sufficeth me to see him when I may ;  
 And therfor certès to myn endyng-day,  
 To love him best, ne shal I never repente.

31. Granson *plaindre en dormant* ; MSS *pleye*.

And certès, Love, whan I me wel ayvise  
 On any estat that man may represente,  
 Then have ye makéd me, through your  
 franchise, 59  
 Chesè the beste that ever on erthè wente.  
 Now love wel, herte, and look thou never  
 stente,  
 And let the jelouse put it in assay,  
 That for no peynè wol I not sey nay ;  
 To love him best, ne shal I never repente.

Hertè, to thee hit oghte y-nogh suffyse  
 That Love so hy a gracè to thee sente  
 To chese the worthiest in allè wyse,  
 And most agrèable unto myn entente.  
 Sechè no ferther, neyther way ne wente,  
 Sith I have suffisaunce unto my pay,— 70  
 Thus wol I endè this compleynt or lay,  
 To love him beste ne shal I never repente.

LENVOY

Princess ! receyveth this Compleynt in  
 gree,  
 Unto your excellent benignitee,  
 Direct after my litel suffisaunce.  
 For eld, that in my spirit dulleth me,  
 Hath of endyting al the subtilte  
 Wel ny bereft out of my remembraunce ;  
 And eek to me hit is a greet penaunce,  
 Syth rym in English hath swich scarsitee, 81  
 To folwè word by word the curiositee  
 Of Graunson, flour of hem that make  
 in Fraunce !

LENVOY DE CHAUCER A  
 BUKTON

THE COUNSEL OF CHAUCER TOUCH-  
 ING MARIAGE, WHICH WAS SENT  
 TO BUKTON

MY maister Bukton, whan of Criste  
 our kyng  
 Was axéd, What is trouthe or sothfast-  
 nesse ?

82. Sir Oto de Graunson, a knight of Savoy,  
 received an annuity from Richard II. in 1393 for  
 services to the king.

He nat a word answerde to that axyng,  
 As who saith, 'No man is al trewe,' I  
 ggesse.

And therfor, thogh I hightè to expresse  
 The sorwe and wo that is in mariage,  
 I dar not wryte of hit no wikkednesse,  
 Lest I my-self falle eft in swich dotage.

I wol nat seyn how that hit is the  
 cheyne  
 Of Sathanas, on which he gnaweth  
 ever ; 10  
 But I dar seyn, were he out of his  
 peyne,  
 As by his wille he wolde be boundè  
 never.

But thilkè dotéd fool that eft hath lever  
 Y-cheynéd be than out of prison crepe,  
 God lete him never fro his wo dissever,  
 Ne no man him bewaylé thogh he wepe !

But yit, lest thou do worsè, tak a wyf ;  
 Bet is to wedde than brenne in worsè  
 wyse,  
 But thou shalt have sorwe on thy flessch,  
 thy lyf,  
 And ben thy wyvès thral, as seyn these  
 wyse, 20  
 And if that holy writ may nat suffyse,  
 Experience shal thee techè, so may happe,  
 That thee were lever to be take in Fryse  
 Than eft to falle of weddingyng in the trappe.

ENVOY

This litel writ, proverbès, or figure  
 I sendè you, tak kepe of hit, I rede :  
 Unwys is he that can no wele endure.  
 If thou be siker, put thee nat in drede.  
 The Wyf of Bathe I pray yow that ye  
 rede  
 Of this matèrè that we have on honde. 30  
 God grauntè you your lyf frely to lede  
 In fredom ; for ful hard is to be bonde.

*Explicit.*

23. *Fryse.* An expedition in which Englishmen  
 took part was launched against Friesland in 1396.  
 The Frieslanders refused to ransom their country-  
 men when captured, so no exchange was possible,  
 which gives force to Chaucer's line.

THE COMPLEYNT OF  
CHAUCER TO HIS PURSE

To you, my purse, and to noon other wyght  
 Compleyne I, for ye be my lady dere !  
 I am so sory now that ye been light ;  
 For, certès, but ye make me hevychere,  
 Me were as leef be leyd upon my bere,  
 For whiche unto your mercy thus I crye,—  
 Beth hevychere, or ellès mot I dye !

Now voucheth sauf this day, or hit be  
 nyght, 8

That I of you the blisful soun may here,  
 Or see your colour lyk the sonnè bright,  
 That of yelownesse haddè never pere.

Ye be my lyf ! ye be myn hertès stere !  
 Quene of comfort and of good companye !  
 Beth hevychere, or ellès mot I dye.

Now, purse, that be to me my lyvès light  
 And savèour, as doun in this worlde  
 here,

Out of this toun help me throug your  
 myght,

Syn that ye wole not been my tresorère ;  
 For I am shave as nye as is a frere. 19

19. *as is a*, Harl. 7333 P Add. Harl. 2251 *als  
 nyghe as any; Ff shave as ys any.*

But yet I pray unto your curtesye,  
 Beth hevychere, or ellès mot I dye !

## L'ENVOYE DE CHAUCER

O conquerour of Brutès Albioun,  
 Which that by lyne and free eleccioun  
 Ben verray kyng, this song to you I  
 sende,  
 And ye that mowen al myn harmamende,  
 Have mynde upon my supplicacioun !

## PROVERBE OF CHAUCER

## I

WHAT shul these clothes thus many-  
 folde,

Lo, this hotè somers day ?  
 After greet heet cometh colde ;  
 No man caste his pilche away.

## II

Of al this worlde the large compas  
 Hit wol not in myn armès tweyne ;  
 Whoso mochel wol embrace,  
 Litel therof he shal distreyne.

## DOUBTFUL MINOR POEMS

## MERCILES BEAUTE

## A TRIPLE ROUNDEL

## I

YOUR yēn two wol slee me sodenly ;  
 I may the beautee of hem not sustene,  
 So woundeth hit through-out my hertèkene.

And but your word wol helen hastily  
 My hertès woundè, while that hit is grene.

1. P reads *Yowre two yēn*, but cp. ll. 6 and 11.  
 3. *through-out*, *out* is in the margin.

Your yēn two wol slee me sodenly ;  
 I may the beautee of hem not sustene.

Upon my trouthe I sey you feithfully  
 That yē ben of my lyf and deeth the  
 quene ;  
 For with my deeth the trouthè shal be  
 sene. 10

Your yēn two wol slee me sodenly ;  
 I may the beautee of hem not sustene,  
 So woundeth it through-out my hertè  
 kene.

II

So hath your beautee fro your herté chaced  
Pitee, that me ne availeth not to pleyne ;  
For Daunger halt your mercy in his cheyne.

Giltles my deeth thus han ye me purcháced ;  
I sey you sooth, me nedeth not to feyne ;  
So hath your beautee fro your herté  
chaced 19  
Pitee, that me ne availeth not to pleyne.

Allas ! that nature hath in you compásseed  
So greet beautee, that no man may atteyne  
To mercy, though he stervè for the peyne.  
So hath your beautee fro your herté  
chaced  
Pitee, that me ne availeth not to pleyne ;  
For Daunger halt your mercy in his  
cheyne.

III

Sin I fro Love escapèd am so fat  
I never think to ben in his prison lene ;  
Sin I am free, I counte him not a bene.

He may answere, and seyè this or that ; 30  
I do no fors, I speke right as I mene.  
Sin I fro Love escapèd am so fat  
I never think to ben in his prison lene.

Love hath my namey-strike out of his sclat,  
And he is strike out of my bokés clene  
For evermo ; [ther] is non other mene.  
Sin I fro Love escapèd am so fat  
I never think to ben in his prison lene ;  
Sin I am free, I counte him not a bene.

*Explicit.*

BALADE

AGAINST WOMAN UNCONSTAN

MADAMÉ, for your newc-fangelnesse  
Many a servaunt have ye put out of grace.  
I take my leve of your unstedfastnesse,  
For wel I wot, whyl ye have livvès space,

36. P *this is* ; Skeat *ther is*.  
2. F Ct. Stowe's ed. *of your*.  
4. Ct. Stowe's ed. *to live haue* ; Harl. *lyne*  
*and space*.

Ye can not love ful half yeer in a place ;  
To newè thyng your lust is ay so kene ;  
In stede of blew, thus may ye were al  
grene.

Right as a mirour nothyng may enpresse  
But, lightly as it cometh, so mot it pace,  
So fareth your love, your werkès bereth  
witness. 10

Ther is no feith that may your herte  
embrace ;

But, as a wedercok, that turneth his face  
With every wynd, ye fare, and that is sene ;  
In stede of blew, thus may ye were al grene.

Ye might be shrynèd, for your brotelnesse,  
Bet than Dalyda, Creseide, or Candáce ;  
For ever in chaungyng stant your  
sikernesse,

That tache may no wyght fro your  
herte arace ;

If ye lese oon, ye can wel tweyn purchace ;  
Al light for somer, ye woot wel what I  
mene, 20

In stede of blew, thus may ye were al grene.

*Explicit.*

COMPLEYNT DAMOURS

I, WHICH that am the sorwfullestè man  
That in this world was ever yit lvyng  
And leest recoverer of him-selven can  
Beginne thus my deedly compleynyng  
On hir, that may to lif and deeth me  
brynge,

Which hath on me no mercy ne no  
rewthe

That love hir best, but sleeth me  
for my trewthe.

6. Ct. Harl. *ever so* ; Stowe's ed. (1561)  
omits *so*.

8. Ct. Harl. Stowe *that nothyng*.  
16. Ct. *bettir*, rest *better*. *Dalyda*, Delilah.  
*Creseide*, the heroine of Chaucer's *Troilus*.  
*Candace*, Queen Candace, who tricked Alex-  
ander.

17. *stant*, all *stondeth*.  
4. F B insert *right* before *thus*.

Can I nocht doon ne seye that may you  
lyke?

Ne, certes, now, allas! allas! the while!  
Your plesaunce is to laughen when I syke,  
And thus ye me from all my blisse exile.  
Ye han me cast in thilké spitous ile <sup>12</sup>  
Ther never man on lyve ne mighte asterte;  
This have I for I love you beste, swete  
herte!

Sooth is, that wel I woot, by lyklinesse,  
If that it were a thing possible to do  
For to acompte your beautee and good-  
nesse

I have no wonder thogh ye do me wo;  
Sith I, thunwortheist that may ride or go  
Durste ever thynken in so hy a place, <sup>20</sup>  
What wonder is, thogh ye do me no grace?

Allas! thus is my lif brought to an ende,  
My deeth, I see, is my conclusioun;  
I may wel singe 'in sory tyme I spende  
My lif'; that song may have confusioun!  
For mercy, pitee, and deep affeccioun,  
I sey for me, for al my deedly chere,  
Alle these diden, in that, me love you dere.

And in this wyse and in dispaire I lyve  
In lovè; nay, but in dispaire I dye! <sup>30</sup>  
Bút shal I thus you my deeth for-yive,  
That causèles doth me this sorwè drye?  
Ye, certès, I! For she of my folye  
Hath nought to done, although she  
do me serve;  
Hit is not with hir wil that I hir serve!

8. Harl. om. *doon*; F B *doon to seyn that you  
may like*.

9. So all MSS. *Ne* is the strong accented nega-  
tive.

14. F B om. *beste*.

16. Harl. om. *that*.

20. F *newer*; perhaps rightly.

22. F *myschefe*; B *myschef* for *my lif*.

24. F om. all after *tyme*.

25 ff. B reads:

that song is my confusioun!  
For mercy and pite and my salucioun,  
I sey for me, I have noun felte,  
All thes diden me in dispaire to melte.

F om. all after *song* in l. 25.

26. F om. *and* before *pitee* and all after second  
*and*.

27. F om. all after *me*.

28. F om. all after *diden*.

31. F *thane* for *thus*.

Than sithen I am of my sorwe the cause,  
And sith that I have this, withoute hir  
reed,

Than may I seyn, right shortly in a clause,  
It is no blame unto hir womanheed.

Though swich a wrecche as I be for hir  
deed; <sup>40</sup>

Yit alwey two thingès doon me dye,  
That is to seyn, hir beautee and myn yè.

So that algates she is the verray rote  
Of my disese, and of my dethe also;  
For with oon word she mightè be my bote,  
If that she vouchèd sauf for to do so.  
Bút than is hir gladnesse at my wo?  
It is hir wone plesaunce for to take,  
To seen hir servaunts dÿen for hir sake!

But certès, than is al my wonderyng— <sup>50</sup>  
Sithen she is the fayrest créature  
As to my dom that ever was lvyng,  
The benignest and beste eek that nature  
Hath wrought or shal, whyl that the  
world may dure,—  
Why that she leftè pitee so behynde?  
It was, y-wys, a greet default in kynde.

Yit is al this no lak to hir, pardee,  
But God ornature hem sore wolde I blame;  
For, though she shewe no pitee unto me,  
Sithen that she doth otherè men the same,  
I ne oughtè to despise my lady's game;  
It is hir pley to laugh when that mensyketh,  
And I assente, al that hir list and lyketh!

Yit wolde I, as I dar, with sorwful herte  
Biseche un-to your mekè womanhede  
That I now dorste my sharpè sorwèssmerte  
Shewè by worde that ye wolde onès rede

36. Harl. *sith* for *sithen*.

37. F B *sithen* for *sith* and om. *that*.

43. F B om. *the*.

44. B om. second *of*.

45. F B *a* for *oon*.

48. B ins. *to before plesaunce*.

49. B *servaunte*.

51. B *Sith*.

55. F B *all* for *so*.

57. F B om. *al*.

58. F B om. *sore*.

62. Harl. om. *hir*. F B om. *that*.

64. Harl. *Yeo* for *Yit*.

66. F B om. *now*. Harl. *shoures* for *sorwes*.



The compleynt of me, which fulsore I drede  
That I have seid here, through myn  
unconnyng,  
In any worde to your displesynge. 70

Lothest of anything that ever was loth  
Were me, as wysly God my soulé save !  
To seyn a thyng through which ye  
might be wroth ;  
And, to that day that I be leyd in grave,  
A trewer servaunt shulle ye never have ;  
And, though that I on you have pleynéd  
here,  
Foryiveth it me, myn owné herté dere !

Ever have I been, and shal, how-so I  
wende  
Outher to lyve or dye, your humble  
trewe ;  
Ye been to me my gynnyng and myn  
ende, 80  
Sonne of the sterre so bright and clere  
of hewe,

Alwey in oon to love you freshly newe,  
By God and by my trouthe, is myn entente ;  
To lyve or dye, I wol it never repente !

This compleynt on seynt Valentynés day,  
Whan every foughel chesén shal his make,  
To hir whos I am hool, and shal alwey,  
This woful song and this compleynt I  
make,

That never yit wolde me to mercy take ;  
And yit wol I evermore hir serve 90  
And love hir best, although she do me  
sterve.

*Explicit.*

68. Harl. *the which I fulle*, etc.

69. Harl. *unknowynge*. F B om. *here and myn*.

70. This line seems short unless *worde* is dissyllabic, which is improbable ; cp. ll. 31, 41, 47, 86, 90, which are short in all MSS.

71. F *Lothe* for *Lothest*.

77. Harl. *myn owne lady so dere*.

81. F B *ouer (ouyr) the sterre bright of hewe*.

82. Harl. *And I ay oon*.

83. F B ins. *this* before *is*.

86. If *foughel* (fowl) is not dissyllabic this is another nine-syllabled line. F *soule*, B *foule*.

87. F B om. *hool*.

91. F *though* for *although*.

## BALADE OF COMPLEYNTE

COMPLEYNE ne coude, ne mighte myn  
herté never  
My peynés halve, ne what torment I have,  
Though that I sholde in your presence  
ben ever,  
My hertés lady, as wisly he me save  
That bountee madé, beautee list to grave  
In your persone, and bad hem bothe in-fere  
Ever tawayte, and ay be wher ye were.

As wisly he gye alle my joyés here  
As I am youre, and to you sad and trewe,  
And ye, my lif and cause of my good chere  
And deeth also, whan ye my peynés newe,  
My worldés joye, whom I wol serve  
and sewe, 12  
My heven hool, and al my suffisaunce,  
Whom for to serve is set al my plesaunce.

Beseching yow in my most humble wyse  
Taccepte in worth this litel povré dyte  
And for my trouthe my service nat despyte,  
Myn observaunce eek have nat in despye,  
Ne yit to long to suffren in this plyte,  
I you beseche, myn hertés lady dere, 20  
Sith I you serve, and so will yeer by yere.

BALADE THAT CHAUCIER  
MADE

So hath myn herté caught in remembraunce  
Your beautee hool and stedfast govern-  
aunce,  
Your vertues allé and your hie noblesse,  
That you to serve is set al my plesaunce.  
So wel me liketh your womanly  
contenaunce,  
Your fressshé fetures and your comlynesse,  
That whiles I lyve, myn herte to his  
maistresse

16. MS. *fore*.

20. *dere*, MS. *here* by mistake.

3. MS. *al* for *alle*.

You hath wel chose in trewe perséveraunce  
Never to change for no maner distresse.

And sith [that] I shal do this observaunce  
Al my lif [long] withouten displeaunce,  
You for to serve with al my besynesse,  
And have me somewhat in your  
souvenaunce, 13

My woful herté suffreth greet duresse,  
And [hoveth humblély] with al sym-  
plesse ;  
My wyl I cónforme to your ordynaunce  
As you best list, my peynes for to redresse ;

Considryng eek how I hange in balaunce,  
In your servicé, swich lo ! is my chaunce,  
Abidyng grace whan that your gentilnesse,  
Of my grete wo listeth don alleggeaunce,

8. MS. *trive*.  
10. MS. om. *that*.  
11. MS. om. *long*.  
15. MS. *And how humbly*.

And wyth your piteemesom wyse avaunce,  
In ful rebatynge of myn hevynesse, 23  
And thyketh by resoun that womanly  
noblesse  
Shulde nat desirè for til do the outrance  
Ther as she fyndeth non unbuxomnesse.

## LENVOYE

Auctour of norture ! Lady of plesaunce !  
Soveraigne of beautee ! flour of woman-  
hede,  
Take ye non hede unto my ignoraunce,  
But this receyveth of your goodlihede,  
Thenkyng that I have caught in  
remembraunce,  
Your beautee hool, your stedfast  
governaunce.

24. Perhaps *And* should be *Me*, otherwise the construction of this stanza, like that of the preceding one, is very loose.

29. *Take ye* should probably be *Taketh*; cp. *receyveth* in next line.

## A TREATISE ON THE ASTROLABE

LYTE LOWYS my sone, I aperceyve wel  
by certeyne evidences thyn abilite to  
lerne sciences touching nombres and  
porporciouns ; and as wel considre I thy  
bisy praiser in special to lerne the Tretys  
of the Astrelabie. Than for as mochel  
as a filosofre saith, 'he wrappith him  
in his frende, that condescendith to the  
rightfull praiers of his frende,' therefore  
have I yeven the a suffisant Astrolabie as  
for oure oriente compownded after the  
latitude of Oxenforde ; upon which, by  
mediacioun of this litel tretys, I propose to  
teche the a certain nombre of conclusions  
perteynyng to the same instrument. I scie  
a certain of conclusions for thre causes.

B<sub>1</sub> M<sub>1</sub> B<sub>2</sub> have title *Brede and milke for children*.

2. R<sub>1</sub> A<sub>1</sub> add *the werkynge of* before a *suffisant*.

The first cause is this : truste wel that alle  
the conclusions that han be founde, or  
ellys possibly might be founde in so noble  
an instrument as is an Astrelabie ben  
unknowe parfityl to eny mortal man in  
this regioun, as I suppose. Another cause  
is this, that sothly in any tretis of the  
Astrelabie that I have seyn there besomme  
conclusions that wol not in alle thinges  
parformen her bihestes; and somme of hem  
ben to harde to thy tendir age of x yere to  
conceyve. [5]

This tretis, divided in 5 parties, wol I  
shewe the under full light reules and naked  
wordes in Englysshe, for Latyn canst thou

5. *and somme of hem*, etc., *i.e.* the third cause.  
5. *to thy*, etc., R<sub>1</sub> to *understonde and to conceyve to the tender age of ye*.

5. *naked*, simple; cp. Shak. *Two Gent.* II. iv. 142.

yit but small, my litel sone. But natheles suffise to the these trewe conclusions in Engllishe as wel as sufficith to these noble clerkes Grekes these same conclusions in Greke; and to Arabiens in Arabike, and to Iewes in Ebrewes, and to the Latyn folk in Latyn; whiche Latyn folke had hem first oute of othere dyverse langages, and writen hem in her owne tunge, that is to seyn in Latyn. And god woot that in alle these langages and in many moo han these conclusions ben suffisantly lerned and taught, and yit by diverse reules; right as diverse pathes leden diverse folke the right way to Rome. Now wol I preie mekely every discret persone that redith or herith this litel tretys to have my rude endityng for excused, and my superfluite of wordes, for two causes. The first cause is for that curiose endityng and harde sentence is ful hevly at onys for such a childe to lerne. And the secunde cause is this, that sothly me semith better to writen un-to a childe twyes a gode sentence, than he forgete it onys. [11]

And Lowys, yf so be that I shewe the in my light Engllishe as trewe conclusions touching this mater, and not oonly as trewe but as many and as subtile conclusiouns, as ben shewid in Latyn in eny commune tretys of the Astrelabie, konne me the more thanke. And preie god save the king, that is lorde of this language, and alle that him feithe berith and obeieith, everiche in his degre, the more and the lasse. But conside wel that I ne usurpe not to have founden this werke of my labour or of myn engyn. I nam but a lewde compiler of the labour of olde astrologiens, and have it translaticid in myn Engllishe oonly for thy doctrine. And with this swerde shal I sleen envie. [15]

*Prima pars.*—The firste partie of this tretys shal rehearse the figures and the membres of thyn Astrelabie by cause that thou shalt have the gretter knowing of thyn owne instrument.

*Secunda pars.*—The secunde partieshal techen the worken the verrey practik of

· 7. *sufficith.* We should expect *suffice*, cp. 13.

the forseide conclusiouns as ferforth and as narwe as may be shewed in so small an instrument portatif aboute. For wel woot every astrologien that smallest fracciouns ne wol not be shewid in so small an instrument as in subtile tables calced for a cause.

*Tertia pars.*—The thirde partie shal contene diverse tables of longitudes and latitudes of sterres fixe for the Astrelabie, and tables of the declinacions of the sonne, and tables of longitudes of citees and townes; and tables as well for the governaunce of a clokke, as forto fynde the altitude meridian; and many a-nothir notable conclusioun after the kalenders of the reverent clerkes, frere I. Somer and frere N. Lenne. [20]

*Quarta pars.*—The fourthe partie shal ben a Theorike to declare the moevyng of the celestiall bodies with the causes. The whiche fourthe partie in speciall shal shewen a table of the verrey moevyng of the mone from houre to houre every day and in every signe after thyn almenak. Upon whiche table ther foleweth a canoun suffisant to teche as wel the manere of the worchynge of the same conclusioun as to knowe in oure orizonte with whiche degre of the zodiak that the mone ariseth in any latitude, and the arisyng of any planete after his latitude fro the ecliptik lyne.

*Quinta pars.*—The fifthe partie shal ben an Introductorye, after the statutes of oure doctours, in whiche thou maist lerne a gret parte of the generall rewles of theorik in astrologie. In whiche fifthe partie shalt thou fynden tables of equaciouns of houses after the latitude of Oxenforde; and tables of dignitees of planetes, and othere notefull thinges, yf God wol vouche saaf and his Moder the Maide moo then I behete. [25]

## PART I

*Here begynneth the descripcioun of the Astralabie*

1. *Annulus.*—Thyn Astrolabie hath a ringe to putten on the thombe of thi right

18. *smallest*, B<sub>1</sub> B<sub>2</sub> *the smale*; A<sub>2</sub> R<sub>2</sub> *smale.*

25. Chaucer abandoned his task before he had finished Part II.

honde in taking the height of thinges. And take kepe, for from henes forthward I wol clepen the heighte of any thinge that is taken by the rewle 'the altitude' withoute moo wordes.

2. *Ansa*.—This ryngge renneth in a maner toret fast to the moder of thyn Astrelabie in so rowne a space that it distourbith not the instrument to hangen after his right centre.

3. *Mater*.—The Moder of thin Astrelabye is thickest plate perced with a large hool, that receiveth in hir wombe the thynne plates compowned for diverse clymates and thy reet shapen in manere of a nett or of a webbe of a loppe.

4. This moder is divided on the bakhalf with a lyne that cometh descending fro the ringe down to the netherist bordure. The whiche lyne, fro the forseide ringe unto the centre of the large hool amide, is clepid the Southe Lyne, or ellis the Lyne Meridional. And the remenaunt of this lyne down to the bordure is clepid the North Lyne, or ellis the Lyne of Midnyght. [32]

5. Overthwart this forseide longe lyne ther crossith him a nother lyne of the same lengthe from est to west. Of the whiche lyne, from a litel cros (+) in the bordure unto the centre of the large hool, is clepid the Est Lyne, or ellis the Lyne Orientale. And the remenaunt of this lyne, fro the forseide centre unto the bordure, is clepid the West Lyne, or ellis the Lyne Occidentale. Now hast thou here the foure quarters of thin Astrolabie divided after the foure principales plages or quarters of the firmament.

6. The est syde of thyn Astrolabie is clepid the right syde, and the west syde is clepid the lefte syde. Forgete not thys, litel Lowys. Putte the ryngge of thyn Astrolabie upon the thombe of thi right honde, and than wol his right side

30. In early editions and A<sub>2</sub> § 3 is preceded by a gloss on *mater*.

30. *thickest plate* (late MSS. *the thickest*, etc.), like *smallest fractions*, 18, seems to be a Latinism, and to mean 'very thick plate.'

35. *centre* is reading of R<sub>1</sub> R<sub>2</sub>; B<sub>1</sub> *hool*, A<sub>1</sub> B<sub>2</sub> Br. Edd. *oriental*, M<sub>1</sub> Dd<sub>1</sub> have +.

be toward thi lifte side, and his lefte side wol be toward thy right side. Take this rewle generall, as wel on the bak as on the wombe syde. Upon the ende of this est lyne, as I first seide, is marked a litel cros (+) where as evere moo generally is considerid the entring of the first degre in whiche the sonne ariseth. [40]

7. Fro this litel cros (+) up to the ende of the Lyne Meridional, under the ryngge, shalt thou fynden the bordure divided wit 90 degrees; and by that same proporcioun is every quarter of thin Astrolabie divided. Over the whiche degrees there ben nombres of Augrym that dividen thilke same degres fro 5 to 5, as shewith by longe strikes bitwene. Of whiche longe strikes the space bitwene contenith a myle wey, and every degre of the bordure conteneth 4 minutes, this to seien mynutes of an houre.

8. Under the compas of thilke degrees ben written the names of the Twelve Signes: as Aries, Taurus, Gemini, Cancer, Leo, Virgo, Libra, Scorpio, Sagittarius, Capricornus, Aquarius, Pisces. And the nombre of the degrees of thoo signes be written in augrym above, and with longe divisions fro 5 to 5, dyvidid fro tyme that the signe entrieth unto the last ende. [45] But understonde wel that these degres of signes ben everiche of hem considred of 60 mynutes, and every mynute of 60 secundes, and so furthe into smale fraccions infinite, as saith Alkabucius. And therefore knowe wel that a degre of the bordure contenith 4 minutes, and a degre of a signe conteneth 60 minutes, and have this in mynde.

9. Next this folewith the Cercle of the Daies, that ben figured in manere of degres that contenen in nombre 365, dyvidid also with longe strikes fro 5 to 5, and the nombre in augrym written under that cercle.

10. Next the cercle of the daies folewith the Cercle of the Names of the Monthes, that is to sayn Ianuarius, Februarius, Marcus, Aprilis, Maius, Iunius, Iulius, Augustus, September, October, November, December. The names of these monthes

43. *myle way*, 20 minutes; cp. *Tales*, A 3637, for temporal use of *furlong*.

were clepid somme for her propirtees and somme by statutes of lordes Arabiens, somme by othre lordes of Rome. [50] Eke of these monthes as liked to Iulius Cesar and to Cesar Augustus somme were compounded of diverse nombres of daies, as Iulie and August. Than hath Ianuarie 31 daies, Februarie 28, Marche 31, Aprill 30, May 31, Iunius 30, Iulius 31, Augustus 31, September 30, October 31, November 30, December 31. Natheles all though that Iulius Cesar toke 2 daies oute of Feverer and putte hem in his monthe of Iuyll, and Augustus Cesar clepid the monthe of August after his name and ordeined it of 31 daies, yit truste wel that the sonne dwellith therfore nevere the more nelasse in oon signe than in a-nother.

11. Than folewen the names of the Holy Daies in the Kalender, and next hem the letters of the A B C on whiche thei fallen.

12. Next the forseide cercele of the A B C, under the crosse lyne, is marked the Skale in manere of 2 squyres, or ellis in manere of laddres, that serveth by his 12 pointes and his dyvisiouns of ful many a subtile conclusion. Of this forseide skale for the crosse lyne unto the verrey angle is clepid Umbra Recta, or ellis Umbra Extensa, and he nethir partie is clepid Umbra Versa.

13. *Regula*.—Than hast thou a brode Reule, that hath on either ende a square plate perced wit certain holes, somme more and somme lasse, to receyve the stremes of the sonne by day, and eke by mediacioun of thin eye to knowe the altitude of sterres y night. [57]

14. *Axis*.—Than is there a large Pyn in manere of an extre, that goth thorough the hole that halt the tables of the clymates and the riet in the wombe of the moder.

*Equus*.—Thorough whiche pyn ther goth

50. were clepid, B<sub>1</sub> were clepid thus; A<sub>1</sub> R<sub>2</sub> consideryd; R<sub>1</sub> were yeven; Br. Edd. taken as names.

50. lordes Arabiens, R<sub>2</sub> A<sub>1</sub> (var.) clerkys; B<sub>2</sub> Arabiens; R<sub>1</sub> Br. Edd. Emperours.

53. The scribe of B<sub>1</sub> inserts Latin note showing correctness of Chaucer's statement.

56. Chaucer or first copyist has made mistake here, the name of the lower part being the Umbra cta, that of the upright one Umbra Versa.

a litel wegge, whiche that is clepid the Hors, that streynith all these parties to hepe. Thys forseide grete pyn in manere of an extre is ymagyned to be the Pool Artik in thyn Astralabie. [60]

15. *Secunda pars astrolabii: Venter*.—The wombe syde of thyn Astrelabie is also divided with a longe croys in 4 quarters from est to west, fro southe to northe, fro right syde to lefte side, as is the bak-side.

16. The bordure of whiche wombe side is divided fro the point of the est lyne unto the point of the southe lyne under the ringe in 90 degrees; and by that same proporcioun is every quarter divided, as is the bak side. That amountith 360 degrees. And understonde wel that degres of this bordure ben aunswering and consentrike to the degrees of the Equinoxiall, that is dividid in the same nombre as every othir cercele is in the high hevenc.

This same bordure is dividid also with 23 lettres capitals and a small crosse (+) above the south lyne, that shewith the 24 houres equals of the klokke. And, as I have seid, 5 of these degres maken a myle wey, and 3 mileweie maken an houre. And every degre of thys bordure contenith 4 minutes, and every minute 60 secundes. Now have I tolde the twyes. [65]

17. The plate under the riet is discribed with 3 cercles, of whiche the leest is clepid the Cercele of Cancre by cause that the heved of Cancre turnith evermo consentrik upon the same cercele. In this heved of Cancer is the grettist declinacioun northward of the sonne, and therfore is he clepid Solsticium of Somer; whiche declinacioun after Ptholome is 23 degrees and 50 minutes as wel in Cancer as in Capricorn. This signe of Cancer is clepid the Tropik of Somer of *Tropos*, that is to seien 'ageynward.' For than beginneth the sonne to passen from usward. [70]

67. 3 cercles, B<sub>1</sub> tropik cercles; M<sub>1</sub> Dd<sub>1</sub> 3 tropical cercles; R<sub>1</sub> 3 principal cercles.

67. Chaucer begins here to expand Messahala's *Descriptio*, with extracts from John de Sacrobosco's *Tractatus de Sphæra*.

The myddel cercle in wydnesse of these 3 is clepid the Cercele Equinoxiall, upon whiche turnith evermo the hevedes of Aries and Libra. And understonde wel that evermo thys Cercele Equinoxiall turnith iustly from verrey est to verrey west as I have shewed the in the speer solide. This same cercele is clepid also the Weyer of the day; for whan the sonne is in the hevedes of Aries and Libra, than ben the dayes and the nightes ylike of lengthe in all the worlde. And therefore ben these 2 signes called the Equinoxiiis. And alle that moeveth withinne the hevedes of these Aries and Libra, his moevyng is clepid Northward; and alle that moevith withoute these hevedes, his moevyng is clepid Southward, as fro the equinoxiall. Take kepe of these latitudes North and South, and forgeteit nat. [75] By this cercele equinoxiall ben considred the 24 houres of the klokke, for evermo the arisyng of 15 degrees of the equinoxiall makith an houre equal of the klokke. This equinoxiall is clepid the gurdel of the first moevyng, or ellis of the first moevable. And note that the first moevyng is clepid moevyng of the first moevable of the 8 speer, whiche moevyng is from est in-to west, and eft ageyn in-to est. Also it is clepid girdel of the first moevyng for it departith the first moevable, that is to seyn the spere, in two ilike partyes evne distantes fro the poles of this world.

The widest of these 3 principal cercles is clepid the Cercele of Capricorne by cause that the heved of Capricorne turnith evermo consentrik upon the same cercele. In the heved of this forseide Capricorne is the grettist declinacioun southward of the sonne, and therefore it is clepid the Solsticium of Wynter. This signe of Capricorne is also clepid the Tropic of

73. *Weyer*, 'equator'; *euenor*?

77. Cp. *Sacrobosco*: 'et dicitur cingulus primi motus unde sciendum quod primus motus dicitur motus primi mobilis, hoc est nonne spheræ cæli ultimi,' etc. So '8' must be error for '9.' Likewise 9 seems to be omitted before *sphere*, below; cp. *Sacrobosco*: 'Dicitur ergo cingulus primi motus quia cingit sive dividit primum mobile, scilicet spheram nonam,' etc.

Wynter, for than begynneth the sonne to come ageyn to usward. [82]

18. Upon this forseide plate ben compassed certeyn cercles that highten Almykanteras, of whiche somme of hem semen parfit cercles and somme semen inparfit. The centre that stondith amyddes the narwest cercele is clepid the Cenyth. And the netherist cercele, or the first cercele, is clepid the Orizonte, that is to seyn the cercele that divideth the two emysperies, that is the partie of the hevене above the erthe and the partie by-nethe. These almykanteras ben compowned by 2 and 2, all be it so that on diverse Astrelabies somme almykanteras ben divided by oon, and some by two, and some by thre, after the quantite of the Astrelabie. This forseide Cenyth is ymaged to ben the verrey point over the crowne of thin heved. And also this Cenyth is the verrey pool of the orizonte in every region. [88]

19. From this cenyth, as it semeth, there comen a maner croked strikes like to the clawes of a loppe, or elles like the werke of a wommans calle, in kervyng overtwart the almykanteras. And these same strikes or divisions ben clepid Azimutes, and thei dividen the orisounte of thin Astrelabie in 24 divisiouns. And these azymutes serven to knowe the costes of the firmament, and to othre conclusiouns, as forto knowe the cenyth of the sonne and of every sterre.

20. Next these azymutes under the cercele of Cancer ben there 12 divisiouns embelif muche like to the shap of the azimutes that shewen the spaces of the houres of planetes. [92]

21. *Aranea*.—The riet of thin Astrelabie with thy zodiak, shapen in maner of a net or of a lopwebbe after the old descripcioun, whiche thou maist turner up and doun as thiself liketh, contenith certein nombre of sterres fixes, with he longitudes and latitudes determinat, yf s be that the maker have not erred. The names of the sterres ben written in the margyn of the riet there as thei sitte, o

whiche sterres the smale point is clepid the centre. And understonde also that alle the sterres sitting with-in the Zodiak of thin Astrelabie ben clepid Sterres of the North, for thei arise by northe the est lyne. And all the remenaunt fixed oute of the zodiak ben clepid Sterres of the South. But I seie not that thei arisen alle by southe the est lyne; witnesse on Aldeberan and Algomeyse. [97] Generally understonde this rewle, that thilke sterres that ben clepid Sterres of the North arisen rather than the degre of her longitude, and alle the Sterres of the South arisen after the degre of her longitude—this is to seyn sterres fixed in thyn Astrelabie. The mesure of the longitude of sterres is taken in the Lyne Ecliptik of hevене, under whiche lyne whan that the sonne and the mone be lyne-right, or ellis in the superñicie of this lyne, than is the eclipse of the sonne or of the mone, as I shal declare and eke the cause why. But sothely the ecliptik lyne of thy zodiak is the utterist bordure of thy zodiak there the degrees be marked. [100]

Thy Zodiak of thin Astrelabie is shapen as a compas whiche that contenith a large brede as after the quantite of thyn Astrelabie, in ensauple that the zodiak in hevене is ymagyned to ben a superficie contenyng a latitude of 12 degrees, whereas alle the remenaunt of cercles in the hevене ben ymagyned verrey lynes withoute eny latitude. Amiddes this celestial zodiak is ymagined a lyne whiche that is clepid the Ecliptik Lyne, under whiche lyne is evermo the weye of the sonne. Thus ben there 6 degres of the zodiak on that oo syde of the lyne and 6 degres on that othir. This zodiak is divided in 12 principale divisious that departen the 12 signes, and, for the streitnesse of thin Astrolabie, than is every smal divisoun in

97. B<sub>1</sub> inserts *Menkar Algenze cor Leonis* after *Aldeberan* with marginal note saying that they are found on the Merton College Astrolabe.

100. Since only the north half of the Zodiak-band is represented on the Astrolabe.

105. Chaucer omits to say that each sign contains 30°.

a signe departed by two degrees and two, I mene degrees contenyng 60 mynutes. And this forseide hevenysse zodiak is clepid the Cercle of the Signes, or the Cercle of the Bestes, for 'zodia' in language of Greke sowneth 'bestes' in Latyn tunge. And in the zodiak ben the 12 signes that han names of bestes, or ellis for whan the sonne entrith into eny of the signes he takith the propirte of suche bestes, or ellis for that the sterres that ben ther fixed ben disposid in signes of bestes or shape like bestes, or elles whan the planetes ben under thilke signes thei causen us by her influence operaciouns and effectes like to the operaciouns of bestes. [108]

And understonde also that whan an hote planete cometh into an hote signe, than encresth his hete; and yf a planete be colde, than amenuith his coldnesse by cause of the hoot sygne. And by thys conclusioun maist thou take ensauple in alle the signes, be thei moist or drie, or moeble or fixe, reknyng the qualite of the planete as I first seide. And everiche of these 12 signes hath respecte to a certeyn parcel of the body of a man, and hath it in governaunce, as Aries hath thin heved, and Taurus thy nekke and thy throte, Gemini thin armeholes and thin armes, and so furthe as shal be shewid more pleyn in the 5 partie of this tretis.

This zodiak, whiche that is parte of the 8 speer, overkervith the equinoxial, and he overkervith him ageyn in evene parties; and that oo half declineth southward; and that othir northward, as plainly declarith the Tretys of the Speer.

22. *Labellum*.—Than hast thou a Label that is shapen like a reule, save that it is streight and hath no plates on either ende with holes. But with the smale point of the forseide label shalt thou calcule thin

113. *8 speer*, again a mistake for '9 speer'; cp. 77. The nine spheres are those of the moon, of the six planets, of the fixed stars, and of the zodiac and primum mobile. Chaucer places the zodiac in the 9th in *Tales*, F 1283.

113. i.e. John de Sacrobosco's *Tractatus de Sphæra*, ii. 'de zodiaco circulo,' whence Chaucer derives the foregoing description.

equaciouns in the bordure of thin Astralabie, as by thin Almury. [115]

23. *Denticulus*. — Thin Almury is clepid the Denticle of Capricorne or ellis the Calculer. This same almury sitt fixe in the heved of Capricorne, and it serveth of many a necessarie conclusioun in equacions of thinges as shal be shewid.

*Here endith the descripcioun of the Astrelabie and here begynne the conclusions of the Astrelabie.*

## PART II

### 1. *Conclusio. To fynde the degre in whiche the sonne is day by day, after his cours aboute*

Rekne and knowe whiche is the day of thy monthe, and ley thy rewle up that same day, and than wol the verrey poynt of thy rewle sitten in the bordure upon the degre of thy sonne.

Ensample as thus:—The yeer of oure lord 1391, the 12 day of Marche at midday, I wolde knowe the degre of the sonne. I soughte in the bakhalf of myn Astrelabie and fonde the Cercle of the Daies, the whiche I knowe by the names of the monthes writen under the same cercle. Tho leyde I my reule over this forseide day, and fonde the point of my reule in the bordure upon the firste degre of Aries, a litel with-in the degre. And thus knowe I this conclusioun. [121]

A-nothir day I wolde knowen the degre of my sonne, and this was at midday in the 13 day of December. I fonde the day of the monthe in manere as I seide; tho leide I my rewle upon this forside 13 day, and fonde the point of my rewle in the bordure upon the firste degre of Capricorne alite with-in the degre. And than had I of this conclusioun the ful experience.

118. *uf*, B<sub>1</sub> A<sub>1</sub> A<sub>2</sub> R<sub>2</sub> Br. Edd. *upon*; B<sub>2</sub> *of*.

119. Probably the date at which Chaucer was writing.

120. *knowe*, A<sub>2</sub> B<sub>2</sub> Br. Edd. *knew*.

121. *knowe*, B<sub>2</sub> R<sub>2</sub> Br. Edd. *knew*.

### 2. *Conclusio. To knowe the altitude of the sonne or of othre celestial bodies*

Putte the ryng of thyn Astrelabie upon thy right thombe, and turne thi lifte syde ageyn the light of the sonne; and remewe thy rewle up and doun til that the stremes of the sonne shine thorgh bothe holes of thi rewle. Loke than how many degrees thy rule is araised fro the litel crois upon thin est lyne, and take there the altitude of thy sonne. And in this same wise maist thou knowe by night the altitude of the mone or of brighte sterres. [127]

This chapitre is so generall evere in oon that there nedith no more declaracioun; but forgete it not.

### 3. *Conclusio. To knowe every tyme of the day by light of the sonne; and every tyme of the nyght by the sterres fixe; and eke to knowe by nyght or by day the degre of eny signe that ascendith on the est orisonte, that is clepid commonly the ascendent, or ellis horoscopum*

Take the altitude of the sonne whan the list, as I have seide, and sette the degre of the sonne, in caas that it be before the myddel of the day, amonge thyn almykanteras on the est syde of thin Astrelabie; and if it be after the myddel of the day, sette the degre of thy sonne upon the west syde. Take this manere of setting for a general rule, ones for evere. And whan thou hast sette the degre of thy sonne upon as many almykanteras of height as was the altitude of the sonne taken by thy rule, ley over thi label upon the degre of the sonne; and than wol the point of thi labelle sitte in the bordure upon the verrey tyde of the day. [132]

Ensample as thus:—The yere of oure lord 1391, the 12 day of Marche, I wolde knowe the tyde of the day. I toke the altitude of my sonne, and fonde that it was 25 degrees and 30 of minutes of height in

128. In A<sub>2</sub> Add. 2302 Br. Edd. a spurious conclusio is inserted here.

134. *of minutes*, B<sub>1</sub> B<sub>2</sub> R<sub>2</sub> Br. Edd. omit *of*; perhaps an imitation of *triginta minutorum*.



the bordure on the bak side. Tho turned I myn Astrelabye, and by cause that it was beforne mydday, I turned my riet and sette the degre of the sonne, that is to seyn the first degre of Aries, on the right side of myn Astrelabye upon 25 degrees and 30 mynutes of height among myn almykanteras. Tho leide I my label upon the degre of my sonne, and fonde the point of my label in the bordure upon a capitale lettre that is clepid an X. Tho rekned I alle the capitale lettres fro the lyne of mydnight unto this forseide lettre X, and fonde that it was 9 of the klokke of the day. Tho loked I down upon the est orizonte, and fonde there the 20 degre of Geminis ascendyng, whiche that I toke for myn ascendent. And in this wise had I the experience for evermo in whiche manere I shulde knowe the tyde of the day and eke myn ascendent. [139]

Tho wolde I wite the same nyght folewyng the houre of the nyght, and wroughte in this wise:—Among an heepe of sterres fixe it liked me for to take the altitude of the faire white sterre that is clepid Alhabor, and fonde hir sityng on the west side of the lyne of midday, 12 degrees of heichte taken by my rewle on the bak side. Tho sette I the centre of this Alhabor upon 12 degrees among myn almykanteras upon the west side, by cause that she was founde on the west side. Tho leyde I my label over the degre of the sonne, that was discendid under the west orisounte, and rekned all the lettres capitals fro the lyne of midday unto the point of my label in the bordure, and fonde that it was passed 9 of the klokke the space of 10 degrees. Tho lokid I down upon myn est orisounte, and fonde ther 10 degrees of Scorpius

138. *down upon*, A<sub>1</sub> A<sub>2</sub> B<sub>2</sub> R<sub>2</sub> on.

138. *Geminis*, so in MSS.

141. *12 degrees*, R<sub>1</sub> (whose numerals are not trustworthy) Dd<sub>1</sub> (corrected later) A<sub>2</sub> Edd. 18 degrees; similarly in 142, except that 18 added later in R<sub>1</sub>.

143. *9 of the klokke*, Dd<sub>1</sub> reads 8; R<sub>1</sub> 5; A<sub>2</sub> B<sub>2</sub> R<sub>2</sub> Edd. 7.

143. *10 degrees*, Dd<sub>1</sub> R<sub>1</sub> read 2; A<sub>2</sub> B<sub>2</sub> R<sub>2</sub> Edd. 11.

144. *10 degrees of Scorpius*, Dd<sub>1</sub> 23 degrees of

ascendyng, whom I toke for myn ascendent. And thus lerned I to knowe onys for evere in whiche manere I shuld come to the houre of the nyght, and to myn ascendent, as verrely as may be taken by so smal an instrument. [145]

But natheles this rule in generall wol I warne the for evere:—Ne make the nevere bolde to have take a just ascendent by thin Astrelabie, or elles to have sette justly a klokke, whan eny celestial body by whiche that thou wenyest governe thilke thinges be nigh the southe lyne. For truste wel whan the sonne is nygh the meridional lyne, the degre of the sonne renneth so longe consentrike upon the almykanteras that sothly thou shalt erre fro the just ascendent. The same conclusion sey I by the centre of eny sterre fixe by nyght. And, more over, by experience I wote wel that, in our orisounte, from xi of the klokke unto oon of the klokke in taking of a iust ascendent in a portatif Astrelabie it is harde to knowe—I mene from xi of the klokke before the houre of noon til oon of the klokke next folewyng. [150]

#### 4. *A special declaracioun of the Ascendent*

The Ascendent sothly, as wel in alle Nativites as in questions and eleccions of tymes, is a thinge which that these Astrologiens gretly observen. Wherefore me semeth convenyent, syth that I speke of the Ascendent, to make of it special declaracioun.

The Ascendent, sothly to take it at the largest, is thilke degre that ascendith at eny of these forseide tymes upon the est orisounte. And therefore, yf that eny planete ascende at thatt same tyme in thilke forseide degre, than hath he no latitude fro the ecliptik lyne, but he is than in the degre of the ecliptik whiche that is the degre of his longitude. Men sayn that planete is *In Horoscopo*.

*Libra*; R<sub>1</sub> R<sub>2</sub> Edd. 20 degrees of *Libra*; R<sub>2</sub> 12 degrees of *Libra*; M<sub>1</sub> 10 degrees of *Taurus*.

154. *degre*, M<sub>1</sub> Dd<sub>1</sub> *latitude*; Dd<sub>2</sub> R<sub>1</sub> *same degre*; B<sub>2</sub> R<sub>2</sub> *orizonte*; corr. of R<sub>1</sub> (var.) A<sub>2</sub> *latitude oryzont*.

154. *degre . . . degre*, MSS. except B<sub>1</sub> omit.

But sothly the House of Ascendent, that is to seyn the first hous or the est angle, is a thinge more brode and large. For, after the statutes of Astrologiens, what celestial body that is 5 degrees above thilke degre that ascendith, or with inne that nombre, that is to seyn near the degree that ascendith, yit rekne they thilke planete in the ascendent. [156] And what planete that is under thilke degre that ascendith the space of 15 degrees, yit seyn thei that thilke planete is 'like to him that is the Hous of the Ascendent.' But sothly, if he passe the boundes of these forseide spaces, above or byneth, thei seyn that the planete is 'fallyng fro the ascendent.' Yit saien these Astrologiens that the ascendent and eke the lorde of the ascendent may be shapen forto be fortunat or infortunat. As thus:—A 'fortunat ascendent' clepen they whan that no wicked planete, as Saturne or Mars or elles the Tayle of the Dragoun, is in the house of the ascendent, ne that no wicked planete have noon aspect of enemyte upon the ascendent. But thei wol caste that thei have a fortunat planete in hir ascendent, and yit in his felicite; and than say thei that it is wel. [161]

Further over thei seyn that the infortuning of an ascendent is the contrarie of these forseide thinges. The Lord of the Ascendent sey thei that he is fortunat whan he is in gode place fro the ascendent, as in an angle, or in a succident where as he is in hys dignite and comfortid with frendly aspectes of planetes and wel resceyved; and eke that he may seen the ascendent; and that he be not retrograd, ne combust, ne joyned with no shrewe in the same signe; ne that he be not in his descencioun, ne joyned with no planete in his descencioun, ne have upon him noon aspect infortunat; and than sey thei that he is well. [165]

Natheles these ben observaunces of judicial matere and rytes of payens in which my spirit hath no feith, ne knowing of her

157. 15 should be 25. Probably Chaucer's mistake. Brae cites Ptolemy, iii. 10, 'viginti quinque.'

*horoscopum*. For they seyn that every signe is departid in thre evene parties by 10 degrees, and thilke porcioun they clepe a face. And al though that a planete have a latitude fro the ecliptic, yit sey somme folke, so that the planete arise in that same signe with eny degre of the forseide face in which his longitude is rekned, that yit is the planete *in horoscopo*, be it in nativyte or in eleccion etc. [168]

5. *Conclusio*. To knowe the verrey equacion of the degre of the sonne yf so be that it falle bitwene thyn almykanteras

For as muche as the almykanteras in thin Astrelabie ben compowned by two and two, where as somme almykanteras in sondry astrelabies be compowned by 1 and 1, or elles by 3 and 3, it is necessarie to thy lernyng to teche the first to knowe and worke with thin owne instrument. Wherefore whan that the degre of thi sonne fallith bytwixe 2 almykanteras, or ellis yf thin almykanteras ben graven with over gret a poynt of a compas (for bothe these thinges may causen error as wel in knowing of the tide of the day, as of the verrey ascendent), thou must worken in this wise:—[170]

Sette the degre of thy sonne upon the hyer almykanteras of bothe, and wayte wel where as thin almyry touchith the bordure and sette there a prikke of ynke. Sett down agayn the degre of the sunne upon the nether almykanteras of bothe, and sett there another prikke. Remeve than thin almyry in the bordure evene amiddes bothe prickes, and this wol lede justly the degre of thi sonne to sitte atwixe bothe almykanteras in his right place. Ley than thy label over the degre of thi sonne, and fynde in the bordure the verrey tyde of the day, or of the night. And as verrailly shalt thou fynde upon thin est orisonte thin ascendent. [174]

168. *eleccion*, i.e. election of times.

169. *by 3 and 3*, B<sub>1</sub> R<sub>2</sub> Dd<sub>1</sub> *by 2 and 2*; R<sub>1</sub> *by 2 and 1*; A<sub>2</sub> Br. *by 2*.

170. *of thi sonne*, B<sub>1</sub> B<sub>2</sub> Br. Th. *of the sonne*. *thy* and *the* are often thus confused.

173. *betwixe*, R<sub>1</sub> A<sub>2</sub> R<sub>2</sub> Br. *betwene*; B<sub>1</sub> *atwixe*.

6. *To knowe the sprynge of the dawenyng and the ende of the evenyng the whiche ben called the two crepuscules*

Sette the nadir of thy sonne upon 18 degrees of height amonge thyn almykanteras on the west side; and ley thy label on the degre of thy sonne, and than shal the point of thy label shewen the sprynge of the day. Also set the nader of thy sonne upon 18 degrees of height among thin almykanteras on the est side, and ley over thy label upon the degre of the sonne, and with the point of thy label fynde in the bordure the ende of the evenyng, that is verrey nyght.

The nader of the sonne is thilke degre that is opposyt to the degre of the sonne in the 7 signe. As thus:—every degre of Aries by ordir is nadir to every degre of Libra by ordre, and Taurus to Scorpioun, Gemini to Sagittarie, Cancer to Capricorn, Leo to Aquarie, Virgo to Pisces. And yif eny degre in thy zodiak be derke, his nadir shal declare hym. [179]

7. *Conclusio. To knowe the Arch of the Day, that some folke callen the Day Artificial, fro sonne arisyng tyl it go to reste*

Sette the degre of thi sonne upon thin est orisonte, and ley thy label on the degre of the sonne and at the point of thy label in the bordure sette a pricke. Turne than thy riet aboute tyl the degre of the sonne sitte upon the west orisonte, and ley thy label upon the same degre of the sonne, and at the poynnt of thy label sette there a nother pricke. Rekne than the quantite of tyme in the bordure bitwixe bothe prickes, and take there thyn arch of the day. The remenaunt of the bordure under the orisonte is the arch of the nyght. Thus maist thou rekne bothe arches or every porcioun of whether that the liketh. And by this manere of worching maist thou se how longe that eny sterre fixe dwelleth

180. Rubric. *go to reste*, A<sub>2</sub> Br. *goth down*. The former is Chaucer's usual expression; cp. *Tales*, A 30, A 1779.

above the erthe, fro tyme that he risith til he go to rest. But the day natural, that is to seyn 24 houres, is the revolucioun of the equinoxial with as muche partie of the zodiak as the sonne of his propre moeving passith in the mene while. [185]

8. *Conclusio. To turne the houres in-euales in houres equales*

Knowe the nombre of the degrees in the houres in-euales, and depart hem by 15, and take there thin houres equales.

9. *Conclusio. To knowe the quantite of the day vulgar, that is to seyn fro sprynge of the day unto verrey nyght*

Knowe the quantite of thy crepuscules, as I have taught in the chapitre before, and adde hem to the arch of thy day artificial, and take there the space of alle the hool day vulgar unto verrey nyght. The same manere maist thou worche to knowe the quantite of the vulgar nyght. [188]

10. *Conclusio. To knowe the quantite of houres in-euales by day*

Understonde wel that these houres in-euales ben clepid houres of planetes. And understonde wel that som tyme ben thei lenger by day than by night, and som tyme the contrarie. But understonde wel that evermo generally the houre inequal of the day with the houre inequal of the night contenen 30 degrees of the bordure, whiche bordure is evermo answeyng to the degrees of the equinoxial. Wherefore departe the arch of the day artificial in 12, and take there the quantite of the houre inequal by day. And if thou abate the quantite of the houre inequal by day out of 30, than shal the remenaunt that levith parforme the houre inequal by nyght. [193]

184. *fro tyme*, A<sub>2</sub> B<sub>2</sub> R<sub>2</sub> Br. *fro the tyme*.

188. *Knowe the*, R<sub>1</sub> A<sub>2</sub> *Knowe thou the*.

190. *And understonde*, B<sub>1</sub> *This understonde*; B<sub>2</sub> omits *And*.

191. *contenen*, A<sub>2</sub> R<sub>2</sub> Br. *contenyth*.

193. 30, R<sub>1</sub> A<sub>2</sub> B<sub>2</sub> R<sub>2</sub> Br. Th. 360 degrees.

11. *Conclusio. To knowe the quantite of houres equales*

The quantite of houres equales, that is to seyn the houres of the clokke, ben departid by 15 degrees al redy in the bordure of thin Astrelaby as wel by night as by day, generally foreveve. What nedith more declaracioun?

Wherfore whan the list to knowe how many houres of the clokke ben passed, or eny part of eny of these houres that ben passed, or ellis how many houres or parties of houres ben to come fro suche a tyme to suche a tyme by day or by night, knowe the degre of thy sonne, and ley thy label on it. Turne thy ryet aboute joyntly with thy label, and with the poynt of it rekne in the bordure fro the sonne arise unto that same place there thou desirist, by day as by nyght. This conclusioun wol I declare in the last chapitre of the 4 Partie of this tretys so openly that there shal lakke no worde that nedith to the declaracioun. [198]

12. *Conclusio. Special Declaracioun of the houres of planetes*

Understonde wel that evermo, fro the arisyng of the sonne til it go to rest, the nadir of the sonne shal shewe the houre of the planete, and fro that tyme forward al the night til the sonne arise; than shal the verrey degre of the sonne shewe the houre of the planete.

Ensamble as thus:—The xiiij day of Marche fyl upon a Saturday, peraventure, and atte risyng of the sonne I fonde the secunde degre of Aries sittyng upon myn est orisonte, al be it that it was but litel. Than fonde I the 2 degre of Libra, nadir of my sonne, descending on my west orisonte, upon whiche west orisonte every day generally atte sonne arist enrith the houre of every planete, after whiche planete the

198. Cp. 'Quarta pars' in Chaucer's *Introd.*

199. The 'Houres of Planetes' is a matter of astrology, depending on the fact that each planet belonged to a particular day of the week.

200. The 13th of March fell on a Saturday in 1389 and in 1395.

200. *atte risyng*, M<sub>1</sub> Dd<sub>1</sub> B<sub>2</sub> R<sub>2</sub> Br. *atte the arisyng*.

day berth his name, and endith in the next strike of the planete under the forseide west orisonte. And evere as the sonne clymbith upper and upper, so goth his nadir downer and downer, teching by suche strikes the houres of planetes by ordir as they sitten in the hevене. The firste houre inequal of every Saturday is to Saturne, and the seconde to Iupiter, the thirde to Mars, the fourthe to the sonne, the fite to Venus, the sixte to Mercurius, the seventh to the mone. And then ageyn the 8 is to Saturne, the 9 to Jupiter, the 10 to Mars, the 11 to the sonne, the 12 to Venus. And now is my sonne gon to reste as for that Saturday. Than shewith the verrey degre of the sonne the houre of Mercurie entring under my west orisonte at eve; and next him succedith the mone, and so furthe by ordir, planete after planete in houre after houre, all the nyght longe til the sonne arise. Now risith the sonne that Sunday by the morwe, and the nadir of the sonne upon the west orisonte shewith me the entring of the houre of the forseide sonne. And in this manere succedith planete under planete fro Saturne unto the mone, and fro the mone up ageyn to Saturne, houre after houre generally. And thus knowe I this conclusioun. [209]

13. *Conclusio. To knowe the altitude of the sonne in myddes of the day that is clepid the Altitude Meridian*

Sette the degre of the sonne upon the lyne meridional, and rekne how many degrees of almykanteras ben bitwyxe thin est orisonte and the degre of thy sonne, and take there thin altitude meridian, this to seyn the highest of the sonne as for that day. So maist thou knowe in the same lyne the heighest cours that eny sterre fixe

205. *the 8*, B<sub>1</sub> B<sub>2</sub> 8 *houre*.

205. And so with any other day, the series beginning with the planet whose name accords with the day; e.g. Monday, to the moon; Wednesday, to Mercury; Friday, to Venus, etc.

207. *til the sonne*, B<sub>2</sub> R<sub>2</sub> *to the sonne*.

208. *that Sunday*, R<sub>1</sub> Br. *the Sunday*; A<sub>2</sub> at *Sunday*; R<sub>2</sub> on *Sunday*.

210. Conclusions 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18 follow conclusion 21 in MSS. of group  $\gamma$ ; cp. *Introd.*

210. *this to seyn*, A<sub>2</sub> R<sub>2</sub> Br. Th. *that ys to seyn*.

clymbeth by night. This is to seyn that whan eny sterre fixe is passid the lyne meridional, than begynneth it to descende; and so doth the sonne. [211]

14. *Conclusio. To knowe the degre of the sonne by thy ryet for a maner curiosite*

Seke besily with thy rule the highest of the sonne in mydde of the day. Turne than thin Astrelabie, and with a pricke of ynke marke the nombre of that same altitude in the lyne meridional; turne than thy ryet aboute tyl thou fynde a degre of thy zodiak accordyng with the pricke, this is to seyn, sitting on the pricke. And in soth thou shalt finde but 2 degrees in al the zodiak of that condicioun; and yit thilke 2 degrees ben in diverse signes. Than maist thou lightly, by the sesoun of the yere, knowe the signe in whiche that is the sonne. [215]

15. *Conclusio. To knowe whiche day is like to whiche day as of lengthe*

Loke whiche degrees ben ylike fer fro the hevedes of Cancer and Capricorne, and loke when the sonne is in eny of thilke degrees; than ben the dayes ylike of lengthe. This is to seyn that as longe is that day in that nonthe, as was suche a day in suche a nonthe; there varieth but litel.

Also, yf thou take 2 dayes naturales in the yere ylike fer fro either pointes of the quinoxial in the opposyt parties, than as longe is the day artificiall of that oon day is the night of that othir, and the ontrarie. [218]

6. *Conclusio. This chapitre is a maner Declaracioun to Conclusiouns that folowen*

Understonde wel that thy zodiak is dearted in two halfe circles, as fro the heved of Capricorne unto the heved of Cancer, and geynard fro the heved of Cancer unto the heved of Capricorne. The heved of Capricorne is the lowest point whereas the sonne is oth in wynter, and the heved of Cancer is

216. A<sub>2</sub> B<sub>2</sub> Edd. have slightly different rubric.

the heighest point in whiche the sonne goth in somer. And therfore understonde wel that eny two degrees that ben ylike fer fro eny of these two hevedes, truste wel that thilke two degrees ben of ilike declinacioun, be it southward or northward, and the daies of hem ben ilike of lengthe and the nyghtes also, and the shadowes ilyke, and the altitudes ylike atte midday for evere. [222]

17. *Conclusio. To knowe the verrey degre of eny maner sterre, straunge or unstraunge, after his longitude; though he be indetermyne in thin Astralabye, sothly to the trout he thus he shal be knowe*

Take the altitude of this sterre whan he is on the est syde of the lyne meridional, as neigh as thou mayst gesse; and take an ascendent anon right by som manere sterre fixe whiche that thou knowist; and forgete not the altitude of the firste sterre ne thyn ascendent. And whan that this is done, aspye diligently whan this same firste sterre passith eny thying the south westward; and cacche him anon right in the same nombre of altitude on the west syde of this lyne meridional, as he was kaught on the est syde; and take a newe ascendent anon right by som manere sterre fixe whiche that thou knowist, and forgete not this secunde ascendent. And whan that this is done, rekne than how many degrees ben bitwix the first ascendent and the secunde ascendent; and rekne wel the myddel degre bitwene bothe ascendentes, and settethilke myddel degre upon thyn est orizonte; and wayte than what degre that sitte upon the lyne meridional, and take there the verrey degre of the ecliptik in whiche the sterre stondith for the tyme. For in the ecliptik is the longitude of a celestial body rekned, evne fro the heved of Aries unto the ende of Pisces; and his latitude is rekned after

223. Rubric. longitude, A<sub>2</sub> Br. Th. latitude.

225. passith eny thying, etc., i.e. passes west of the meridional line.

225. cacche, M<sub>1</sub> Dd<sub>1</sub> hath; A<sub>2</sub> Br. take; B<sub>2</sub> sett.

228. wayte than, A<sub>2</sub> R<sub>2</sub> Br. Th. than loke.

the quantite of his declynacioun north or south toward the polys of this world. [229]

As thus is:—yif it be of the sonne or of eny fixesterre, rekne hys latitude or his declinacioun fro the equinoxial cercle; and if it be of a planete, rekne than the quantite of his latitude fro the ecliptik lyne, al be it so that fro the equinoxial may the declinacioun or the latitude of eny body celestial be rekned after the site north or south and after the quantite of his declinatioun. And right so may the latitude or the declinacioun of eny body celestial, save oonly of the sonne, after hys site north or south and after the quantite of his declinacioun, be rekned fro the ecliptik lyne, fro which lyne alle planetes som tyme declinen north or south save oonly the forseide sonne. [233]

18. *Conclusio. To knowe the degrees of longitudes of fixe sterres after that they be determynat in thin Astrelabye, yf so be that thei be trefwey sette*

Sette the centre of the sterre upon the lyne meridional, and take kepe of thy zodiak and loke what degre of eny signe that sitte upon the same lyne meridional at that same tyme, and take there the degre in which the sterre stondith; and with that same degre cometh that same sterre unto that same lyne fro the orisonte. [235]

19. *Conclusio. To knowe wit whiche degre of the zodiak eny sterre fixe in thin Astrelabye arisith upon the est orisonte al though his dwellyng be in a nother signe*

Sette the centre of the sterre upon the est orisonte, and loke what degre of eny signe that sitt upon the same orisonte at that same tyme. And understonde wel that

231. the site, R<sub>2</sub> Br. Th. the syght; B<sub>1</sub> site; A<sub>2</sub> B<sub>2</sub> that it syttheth.

232. site, A<sub>2</sub> sytting; R<sub>2</sub> syght.

234. centre, i.e. the point of the tongue representing it in the Astrolabe.

235. that same degre, R<sub>1</sub> A<sub>2</sub> R<sub>2</sub> Br. Th. the same degre; and frequently the same for that same in late MSS.

236. Rubric. his dwellyng, R<sub>2</sub> his orisonte; Br. Th. the orizonte.

with that same degre arisith that same sterre. [236]

And thys merveyulous arisyng with a straunge degre in a nother signe is by cause that the latitude of the sterre fixe is either north or south fro the equinoxial. But sothly the latitudes of planetes be commonly rekned fro the ecliptyk by cause that noon of hem declyneth but fewe degrees out fro the brede of the zodiak. And take gode kepe of this chapitre of arisyng of celestial bodies; for truste wel that neythe mone ne sterre, as in our embelif orisonte arisith with that same degre of his longitude save in oo cas, and that is when they have no latitude fro the ecliptik lyne. But natheles som tyme is everiche of these planetes under the same lyne. [240]

20. *Conclusio. To knowe the declinacioun of eny degre in the zodiak fro the equinoxial cercle*

Sette the degre of eny signe upon the lyne meridional, and rekne hys altitude in the almykanteras fro the est orisonte up to the same degre sette in the forseide lyne, and sette there a prik; turne up than thy riet and sette the heved of Aries or Libra in the same meridional lyne, and sette there a nother prik. And whan that this is done, considere the altitudes of hem bothe; for sothly the difference of thilke altitudes is the declinacioun of thilke degre fro the equinoxial. And yf it so be that thilke degre be northward fro the equinoxial than is his declinacyoun north; yif it be southward, than is it south.

21. *Conclusio. To knowe fro what latitude in eny regioun the almykanteras of eny table ben compowned*

Rekne how many degrees of almykanteras in the meridional lyne ben fro the cercle equinoxial unto the cenyth, or elles from the pool artyk unto the north orisonte, and for so gret a latitude, or for so smal a latitude, is the table compowned. [245]

245. Rubric. eny, A<sub>2</sub> R<sub>2</sub> Th. my; Br. thy.

22. *Conclusio. To know in special the latitude of oure countre, I mene after the latitude of Oxenford, and the height of oure pool*

Understonde wel that as fer is the heved of Aries or Libra in the equinoxial fro oure orisonte as is the cenyth fro the pool artik ; and as high is the pool artik fro the orisonte as the equinoxial is fer fro the cenyth. I prove it thus by the latitude of Oxenford : understonde wel that the height of oure pool artik fro oure north orisonte is 51 degrees and 50 mynutes ; than is the cenyth fro oure pool artik 38 degrees and 10 mynutes ; than is the equinoxial from oure cenyth 51 degrees and 50 mynutes ; than is oure south orisonte from oure equinoxial 38 degrees and 10 mynutes. Understonde wel this rekenyng. Also forgete not that the cenyth is 90 degrees of height from oure orisonte, and oure equinoxiall is 90 degrees from oure pool artik. Also this shorte rule is soth, that the latitude of eny place in a regioun is the distaunce fro the cenyth into the equinoxial. [251]

23. *Conclusio. To prove evidently the latitude of eny place in a regioun by the prove of the height of the pool artik in that same place*

In some wynters nyght whan the firmament is clere and thikke sterred, wayte a yme til that eny sterre fixe sitte lyne right perpendiculer over the pool artik, and clepe that sterre A ; and wayte another sterre that sitte lyne right under A, and under the pool, and clepe that sterre F. And understonde wel that F is not considrid but oonly to declare that A sitte evene over the pool. Take than anoon right the altitude of A from the orisonte, and forgete it not ; lete A and F goo fare wel tyl ageynst the awenyng a gret while, and come than ageyn, and abide til that A is evene under the pool, and under F ; for sothly than wol

F sitte over the pool, and A wol sitte under the pool. Take than eftesony the altitude of A from the orisonte, and notes wel his secunde altitude as hys first altitude. And whan that this is doon, rekene how many degrees that the first altitude of A exceedith his secunde altitude, and take half thilke porcioun that is exceedid and adde it to his secunde altitude, and take there the elevacioun of thy pool, and eke the latitude of thy regioun ; for these two ben of oo nombre, this is to seyn as many degrees as thy pool is elevate, so muche is the latitude of the regioun. [258]

Ensample as thus :—peraventure the altitude of A in the evenyng is 56 degrees of height ; than wol his secunde altitude or the dawenyng be 48 degrees, that is 8 degrees lasse than 56 that was his first altitude att even. Take than the half of 8 and adde it to 48 that was is secunde altitude, and than hast thou 52. Now hast thou the height of thy pool and the latitude of the regioun. But understonde wel that to prove this conclusioun and many a nother faire conclusioun, thou must have a plomet hangyng on a lyne, heygther than thin heved, ona perche ; and thilke lyne must hange evene perpendiculer bytwix the pool and thin eye ; and than shalt thou seen yf A sitte evene over the pool, and over F atte evene ; and also yf F sitte evene over the pool and over A or day. [262]

24. *Conclusio. Another conclusioun to prove the height of the pool artik fro the orisonte*

Take eny sterre fixe that never discendith under the orisonte in thilke regioun, and conside his heighest altitude and his lowist altitude fro the orisonte, and make a nombre of bothe these altitudes ; take than and abate half that nombre, and take

259. In this example MSS. of group  $\beta$  have a different set of observations, viz. 62 for the evening altitude, and 21 for that taken in the morning, giving as a result a latitude about that of Rome.

260. 52 degrees, roughly the latitude of Oxford ; cp. 270.

263. make a nombre, i.e. add them together.

246. Rubric. oure countre, M<sub>1</sub> the countre ; B<sub>2</sub> Br. Th. oure centur ; MS. in St. John's Coll. Camb. (Skeat) nostri centri.

251. place, M<sub>1</sub> A<sub>2</sub> B<sub>2</sub> R<sub>1</sub> R<sub>2</sub> Edd. planete.

there the elevacioun of the pool artik in that same regioun.

25. *Conclusio. Another conclusioun to prove the latitude of the regioun*

Understonde wel that the latitude of eny place in a regioun is verrelly the space bytwex the cenyth of hem that dwellen there and the equinoxial cercele north or south, takyng the mesure in the meridional lyne, as shewith in the almykanteras of thin Astrelabye. And thilke space is as much as the pool artik is high in that same place fro the orisonte. And than is the depressioun of the pool antartik, that is to seyn than is the pool antartike, bynethe the orisonte the same quantite of space neither more ne lasse. [266]

Than if thou desire to knowe this latitude of the regioun, take the altitude of the sonne in the myddel of the day, whan the sonne is in the hevedes of Aries or of Libra; for than moeveth the sonne in the lyne equinoxial; and abate the nombre of that same sonnes altitude oute of 90 degrees, and than is the remenaunt of the nombre that levethe the latitude of that regioun. As thus:—I suppose that the sonne is thilke day at noon 38 degrees of height; abate than 38 oute of 90; so levethe there 52; than is 52 degrees the latitude. I say not this but for ensample; for wel I wot the latitude of Oxenford is certeyn minutes lasse as thou might preve. [270]

Now yf so be that the semeth to longe atarieng to abide til that the sonne be in the hevedes of Aries or of Libra, than wayte whan the sonne is in eny othir degre of the zodiak and considre the degre of his declinacioun fro the equinoxial lyne; and if it so be that the sonnes declinacioun be northward fro the equinoxial, abate than fro the sonnes altitude at none the nombre

269.  $B_1 A_2 B_2$  add *and 25 minutes* after *degrees*, and read *so levethe there 51 degrees and 50 minutes* ( $B_2 15$ ,  $A_2 51$ ), that is ( $A_2 B_2$  omit) the latitude, an evident attempt to make the problem yield the latitude of Oxford exactly.

270. *as thou might preve*,  $A_1 A_2 R_1 R_2 Dd_2$  Br. Th. omit;  $M_1 B_1$  omit *as*;  $M_1$  adds *the*;  $B_1$  adds *the same*.

of his declinacioun, and than haster the height of the hevedes of Aries and Libra. [272]

As thus:—My sonne is peraventur in the first degre of Leoun, 58 degrees and 10 minutes of height at none, and his declinacioun is almost 20 degrees northward fro the equinoxial; abate than thilke 20 degrees of declinacioun oute of the altitude at none; than levethe there 38 degree and odde minutes. Lo there the hevedes of Aries or Libra and thin equinoxial in the regioun. Also if so be that the sonne declinacioun be southward fro the equinoxial, adde than thilke declinacioun to the altitude of the sonne at noon, and take there the hevedes of Aries and Libra and thin equinoxial; abate than the height of the equinoxial oute of 90 degrees; than levethe there the distance of the pool of that regioun fro the equinoxial. Or elles if the list, take the highest altitude fro the equinoxial of eny sterre fixe that thou knowist, and take the netherest elongacioun (lengthing) fro the same equinoxial lyne, and worke in the manere forscid. [277]

26. *Conclusio. Declaracioun of the Ascensioun of signes*

The excellence of the Spere Solide amonges othir noble conclusiouns, shewith manyfest the diverse ascenciouns of signes in diverse places, as wel in the right cercele as in the embelif cercele. These auctours writen that thilke signe is clepid of right ascensioun with whiche more parte of the cercele equinoxial and lasse part of the zodiak ascendith; and thilke signe ascendith embelif with whiche lasse part of the equinoxial and more part of the zodiak ascendith. Ferther-over, they seyn that

\* 273. There are two sets of readings for this problem, viz. that of the text found in  $B_1$  (except that it reads 17 for 10)  $M_1 Dd_1$ , and 10 degrees of Leo almost 56 of height at noon . . . declinacioun . . . 18 . . . ; abate . . . 18 than levethe 38, found in MSS. of group  $\beta$  ( $A_2$  and  $B_2$  showing contamination with  $B_1$ ).

278. *Spere Solide*, i.e. the chapter 'De ascensionibus et descensionibus signorum rectis et obliquis' of John de Sacra Bosco's *De Sphæra*, which Chaucer draws on for this conclusion.



in thilke cuntrey where as the senith of hem hat dwellen there is in the equinoxial lyne, and her orisonte passing by the two poles of this world, thilke folke han this right cercle and the right orisonte; and evermore the arch of the day and the arch of the night is there ilike longe; and the sonne wies everyere passing thorgh the cenith of her heed, and two someres and two rynters in a yere han these forseide peple. And the almykanteras in her Astrelabyes en streight as a lyne, so as it shewith in the figure. [284]

The utilite to knowe the ascensions of signes in the right cercle is this:—Truste wel that by mediacion of thilke ascensions these astrologiens, by her tables and her instruments, knowen verreily the ascension of every degre and minute in all the zodiak in the embelif cercle as shal be shewed. And *nota* that this forseide right orisonte, that is clepid *Orison Rectum*, dividith the equinoxial in to right angles; and the embelif orisonte, where as the pole is enhaunced up on the orisonte, overkervith the equinoxial in embilif angles as shewith in the figure. [286]

7. *Conclusio.* *This is the conclusioun to knowe the ascensions of signes in the right cercle, that is circulus directus*

Sette the heved of what signe the lyst knowe his ascendyng in the right cercle upon the lyne meridional, and wayte where yn almyry touchith the bordure, and sette there a prikke; turne than thy riet estward til that the ende of the forseide signe sitte upon the meridional lyne and tesonys wayte where thin almyry touchith the bordure, and sette there a nother pricke. Rekene than the nombre of degres in the bordure bitwix both prikkes, and take the ascension of the signe in the right

cercle. And thus maist thou werke with every porcioun of thy zodiak. [289]

28. *Conclusio.* *To knowe the ascensions of signes in the embelif cercle in every regioun, I mene, in circulo obliquo*

Sette the heved of the signe whiche as the list to knowe his ascension upon the est orisonte, and wayte where thin almyry touchith the bordure, and there sette a prikke. Turne than thy riet upward til that the ende of the same signe sitte upon the est orisonte, and wayte este sonys where as thin almyry touchith the bordure, and sette there a nother prikke. Rekene than the nombre of degres in the bordur bitwix bothe prikkes and take there the ascension of the signe in the embelif cercle. And understonde wel that alle the signes in thy zodiak, fro the heved of Aries unto the ende of Virgo, ben clepid Signes of the North fro the equinoxial. And these signes arisen bitwix the verrey est and the verrey northe in oure orisonte generally for evere. [294] And alle the signes fro the heved of Libra unto the ende of Pisces ben clepid Signes of the South fro the equinoxial; and these signes arisen evermore bitwix the verrey est and the verrey south in oure orisonte. Also every signe bitwix the heved of Capricorne unto the ende of Geminis arisith on oure orisonte in lasse than 2 houres equales. And these same signes fro the heved of Capricorne unto the ende of Geminis ben cleped Tortuose Signes, or Croked Signes, for thei arise embelyf on oure orisonte. And these croked signes ben obedient to the signes that ben of right ascension. The signes of right ascension ben fro the heved of Cancer unto the [end] of Sagittarie; and these signes arisen more upright, and thei ben called eke Sovereyn Signes and everiche of hem arisith in more space than in 2 houres. Of whiche signes Gemini obieth to Cancer, and Taurus to

299. unto the end of Sagittarie. B<sub>2</sub> is the only MSS. that has reading in text. Others heved for end.

286. *overkervith*, A<sub>2</sub> B<sub>2</sub> (var.) *overkevereth*; 1d. *overcomith*.

287. *his ascendyng*, A<sub>1</sub> A<sub>2</sub> B<sub>2</sub> R<sub>2</sub> Br. *the ascendyng*.

287. *and sette ther a prikke*. Following this to end of conclusion B<sub>1</sub> has a different version, no traces of which are found in other MSS.

Leo, Aries to Virgo, Pisces to Libra, Aquarius to Scorpioun, and Capricorne to Sagittarie. And thus evermore 2 signes that ben ilike fer fro the heved of Capricorne obeyen everiche of hem til othir. [301]

29. *Conclusio. To knowe iustly the 4 quarters of the worlde, as Est, West, North, and South*

Take the altitude of thy sonne whan the list, and note wel the quarter of the worlde in which the sonne is for the tyme by the azymutes. Turne than thin Astrelabie, and sette the degre of the sonne in the almykanteras of his altitude on thilke syde that the sonne stant, as is the manere in takyng of houres, and ley thy label on the degre of the sonne; and rekene how many degrees of the bordure ben bitwexe the lyne meridional and the point of thy label, and note wel that nombre; turne than ageyn thin Astrelabie, and sette the point of thy gret rule there thou takist thin altitudes upon as many degrees in his bordure fro his meridional as was the point of thy label fro the lyne meridional on the wombe side. Take than thin Astrelabie with bothe hondes sadly and slyly, and lat the sonne shyne thorough bothe holes of thy rule, and slyly in thilke shynyng lat thin Astrelabie kouche adoun evene upon a smothe grounde, and than wol the verrey lyne meridional of thin Astrelabie lye evene south, and the est lyne wol lye est, and the west lyne west, and the northe lyne north, so that thou wirke softly and avysely in the kouching. And thus hast thou the 4 quarters of the firmament. [308]

30. *Conclusio. To knowe the altitude of planetes fro the weye of the sonne whethir so they be north or south fro the forseide weye*

Loke whan that a planete is in the lyne meridional, yf that hir altitude be of the

301. *til other, B<sub>1</sub> A<sub>2</sub> B<sub>2</sub> R<sub>2</sub> Edd. to other.*

same height that is the degre of the sonne for that day, and than is the planete in the verrey wey of the sonne and hath no latitude. And if the altitude of the planete be heigher than the degre of the sonne than is the planete north fro the wey of the sonne suche a quantite of latitude as shewith by thin almykanteras. And if the altitude of the planete be lasse than the degre of the sonne, than is the planete south fro the wey of the sonne suche a quantite of latitude as shewith by thin almykanteras. This is to seyn fro the wey where as the sonne went thilke day but not fro the wey of the sonne in every place of the zodiak. [312]

31. *Conclusio. To knowe the Cenyth of the arising of the sonne, this is to seyn the partie of the orisonte in which that the sonne arisith*

Thou must first considere that the sonne arisith not alwey verrey est, but somtyme by northe the est and somtyme by south the est. Sothly the sonne arisith never moo verrey est in oure orisonte, but he be in the heved of Aries or Libra. Now is thin orisonte departed in 24 parties by thin azimutes in significacioun of 24 parties of the world; al be it so that shipmen rekene thilke parties in 32. Than is there no more but wayte in whiche azimutz that thy sonne enirth at his arisyng, and take there the cenith of the arisyng of the sonne. [316]

The manere of the divisioun of thin Astrelabie is this, I mene as in this cas:— First it is divided in 4 plages principall with the lyne that goth from est to west, and than with a nother lyne that goth fro south to north; than is it divided in smale parties of azymutz, as est, and est by south,

309. Chaucer in 312 explains *wey of the sonne* to mean the sun's apparent path on any given day.

312. After *zodiak* group  $\beta$  adds *for on the morowe wyl the sonne be on another degre.*

313. Rubric. *Cenyth, azimuth.*

314. *newere moo, A<sub>1</sub> B<sub>2</sub> evermore.*

315. As in the mariner's compass.

where as is the first azymute above the est lyne; and so furthe fro partie to partie til that thou come ageyn un to the est lyne. Thus maist thou understonde also the cenyth of eny sterre in whiche partie he riseth. [319]

32. *Conclusio. To knowe in whiche partie of the firmament is the conjuncyoun*

Consider the tyme of the conjuncyoun by the kalender, as thus:—Loke hou many houres thilke conjuncyoun is fro the mid-day of the day precedent, as shewith by the canoun of thy kalender. Reke than thilke nombre of houres in the bordure of thin Astrelabie, as thou art wont to do in knowyng of the houres of the day or of the nyght, and ley thy label over the degre of the sonne, and than wol the point of thy label sitte upon the houre of the conjuncyoun. Loke than in whiche azymute the degre of thy sonne sittith, and in that partie of the firmament is the conjuncyoun. [322]

33. *Conclusio. To knowe the cenyth of the altitude of the sonne*

This is no more to seyn but eny tyme of the day take the altitude of the sonne, and by the azymut in whiche he stondith maist thou seen in whiche partie of the firmament he is. And the same wise maist thou seen by night of eny sterre, whether the sterre sitte est or west, or north or southe, or eny partie bitwene, after the name of the azimute in whiche he sterre stondith. [324]

34. *Conclusio. To knowe sothly the degre of the longitude of the mone, or of eny planete that hath no latitude for the tyme fro the ecliptik lyne*

Take the altitude of the mone, and ekne thy altitude up amonge thyn almykanteras on whiche syde that the mone

318. *above the est lyne.* Because the points of the compass were reversed on the Astrolabe.

323. *eny tyme, M<sub>2</sub> R<sub>2</sub> on tyme.*

325. *altitude of the mone, A<sub>2</sub> B<sub>2</sub> latitude of the mone.*

standith, and sette there a prikke. Take than anon right upon the mones syde the altitude of any sterre fixe whiche that thou knowist, and sett his centre upon his altitude amonge thyn almykanteras there the sterre is founde. Wayte than whiche degre of the zodiak touchith the prykke of the altitude of the mone, and take there the degre in whiche the mone stondith. This conclusioun is verrey sothe, yf the sterres in thin Astrelabie stonden after the trouthe. Comoun tretes of the Astrelabie ne maken non excepcioun whether the mone have latitude or noon, ne on wheyther syde of the mone the altitude of the sterre fixe be taken.

And *nota* that yf the mone shewe himself by light of day, than maist thou wyrke this same conclusioun by the sonne, as wel as by the fixe sterre. [330]

35. *Conclusio. This is the wyrkyng of the conclusioun to knowe yf that eny planete be directe or retrograde*

Take the altitude of any sterre that is clepid a planete, and note it wel; and take eke anon the altitude of any sterre fixe that thou knowist, and note it wel also. Come than ageyn the thridde or the ferthe nyght next folewing, for than shalt thou perceyve wel the moeving of a planete, whether so he moeve forward or bakward. Awayte wel than whan that thy sterre fixe is in the same altitude that she was whan thou toke hir firste altitude. And take than eft sones the altitude of the forseide planete and note it wel; for truste wel yf so be that the planete be on the right syde of the meridional lyne, so that his secunde altitude be lasse than hys first altitude was, than is the planete directe; and yf he be on the west syde in that condicioun, than is he retrograde. And yf so be that this planete be upon the est side whan his altitude is taken, so that his secunde altitude be more than his first altitude, than is he retrograde. And if he be on the west syde, than is he direct. But the contrarie of these parties is of

the cours of the mone ; for certis the mone moeveth the contrarie from othre planetes as in hir epicle, but in noon othir manere. [337]

36. *Conclusio. The conclusioun of equacions of houses after the Astrelabie*

Sette the begynnynge of the degre that ascendith upon the ende of the 8 houre inequal, than wol the begynnynge of the 2 hous sitte upon the lyne of mydnight. Remove than the degre that ascendith, and sette him on the ende of the 10 houre inequal, and than wol the begynnynge of the 3 hous sitte up on the mydnight lyne. Bringe up ageyn the same degre that ascended first, and sette him upon the est orisonte, and than wol the begynnynge of the 4 hous sitte upon the lyne of mydnight. Take than the nader of the degre that first ascendid, and sette him in the ende of the 2 houre inequal ; and than wol the begynnynge of the 5 hous sitte upon the lyne of mydnight. Sette than the nader of the ascendent in the ende of the 4 houre inequal, and than wol the begynnynge of the 6 hous sitte on the mydnight lyne. The begynnynge of the 7 hous is nader of the ascendent, and the begynnynge of the 8 hous is nader of the 2 hous, and the begynnynge of the 9 hous is nader of the 3, and the begynnynge of the 10 hous is nader of the 4, and the begynnynge of the 11 hous is nader of the 5, and the begynnynge of the 12 hous is nader of the 6. [343]

37. *Conclusio. Another maner of equacions of houses by the Astrelabie*

Take thin ascendent, and than hast thou thy 4 angles ; for wel thou hast that

337. *certis*, R<sub>1</sub> *sothly* ; M<sub>1</sub> Dd<sub>1</sub> *he settes* ; A<sub>2</sub> omits.

338. After conclusion 35 the MSS. vary. The text represents MSS. B<sub>1</sub> M<sub>1</sub> Dd<sub>1</sub> R<sub>1</sub>. R<sub>2</sub> ends with conclusion 35, E<sub>2</sub> with 36. Of the other MSS. some insert a number of spurious conclusions between 35 and 36 ; others place them after conclusion 40. The evidence that these are spurious is found in the fact that (a) they occur only in late MSS., and (b) are in a style quite different from Chaucer's.

the opposite of thin ascendent, that is to seyn, the begynnynge of the 7 hous, sitt upon the west orisonte, and the begynnynge of the 10 hous sitt upon the lyne meridional, and his opposyt upon the lyne of mydnight. Than ley thy label over the degre that ascendith, and rekne fro the point of thy label alle the degrees in the bordure tyl thou come to the meridional lyne ; and departe alle thilke degrees in 3 evene parties, and take there the evene equacions of 3 houses ; for ley thy label over everiche of these 3 parties, and than maist thou se by [ther] thy label lith in the zodiak, the begynnynge of everiche of these same houses fro the ascendent ; that is to seyn the begynnynge of the 12 hous next above thin ascendent, the begynnynge of the 11 hous, and than the 10 upon the meridional lyne, as I first seide. The same wise wirke thou fro the ascendent down to the lyne of mydnyght, and thus hast thou othre 3 houses ; that is to seyn, the begynnynge of the 2, and the 3, and the 4 hous. Than is the nader of these 3 houses the begynnynge of the 3 houses that folewen. [350]

38. *Conclusio. To fynde the lyne meridional to dwelle fixe in eny certeyn place*

Take a rounde plate of metal, for werpyng the brodder the better ; and make there upon a just compas a lite with in the bordure. And ley this rounde plate upon an evene grounde, or on an evene ston, or on an evene stok fixe in the grounde ; and ley it evene by a level. And in the centre of the compas styke an evene pyn, or a wyre, upright, the smaller the better ; sette thy pyn by a plom-rule evene upright, and lete thy pyn be no lenger than a quarter of the dyametre of thy compas, fro the centre a-middes. And wayte bisely about 10 or 11 of the klokke, whan the sonne shineth, whan the shadewe of the pyn entrieth any thyng with in the cercle

348. *same*, M<sub>2</sub> 12 ; R<sub>1</sub> 3.

351. *a just compas*, an exact circle.

353. *the centre a-middes*, R<sub>1</sub> *the pyn*.

of thy compas an heer mele; and marke there a pricke with inke. Abide than stille waityng on the sonne til after I of the klokke, til that the shadwe of the wyre, or of the pyn, passe any thing oute of the cercle of the compas, be it nevere so lyte, and sette there another pricke of ynke. Take than a compas, and mesure evene the myddel bitwexe bothe prickes, and sette there a prikke. Take me than a rule and drawe a strike evene a-lyne, fro the pyn unto the middel prikke; and take there thi lyne meridional for evermore as in that same place. And yif thou drawe a crosse lyne over-thwart the compas justly over the lyne meridional, than hast thou est and west and south, and par consequens, the opposite of the southe lyne is the northe. [358]

39. *Conclusio. The Description of the meridional lyne, of longitudes and latitudes of Citees and Townes, as wel as of Climates*

Thys lyne meridional is but a manere descripcioun, or lyne ymaged, that passith upon the poles of this world and by the cenyth of oure heved. And it is cleped the lyne meridional, for in what place that any man ys at any tyme of the yere, whan that the sonne, by mevyng of the firmament, cometh to his verrey meridian place, than is it verrey mydday, hat we clepen oure none, as to thilke nan. And therefore is it cleped the lyne of mydday.

And *nota* that evermore of any 2 cytes or 2 townes, of which that oo town pprochith neer the est than doth that thir town, truste wel that thilke townes an diverse meridians. [362]

*Nota* also that the arch of the equinoxial hat is contened or bownded bitwixe the meridians is clepid the longitude of the

359. From this point B<sub>1</sub> is copied from a MS. like M<sub>1</sub> Dd<sub>1</sub>. The readings of all three are very poor; so that for the remaining conclusions the text is that of B<sub>1</sub> collated with R<sub>1</sub>.

359. Conclusio 39 is taken largely from Sacrosco.

toun. And yf so be that two townes have ilike meridian or oon meridian, than is the distaunce of hem both ilike fer fro the est, and the contrarie; and in this manere thei change not her meridian. But sothly thei chaungen her almykanteras, for the enhaunsyng of the pool and the distance of the sonne. [365]

The longitude of a climat is a lyne ymaged fro est to west ilike distant fro the equinoxiall. And the latitude of a climat may be cleped the space of the crthe fro the begynnyng of the first clymat unto the verrey ende of the same clymat evene direct ageyns the pool artyke. Thus sayn somme auctours; and somme of hem sayn that yf men clepe the latitude of a cuntry the arch meridian that is contened or intercept bitwixi the cenyth and the equinoxial, than say they that the distance fro the equinoxial unto the ende of a climat evene ageynst the pool artik is the latitude of a clymat forsoothe. [368]

40. *Conclusio. To knowe with whiche degre of the zodiak that any planete ascendith on the orisonte, whether so that his latitude be north or south*

Knowe by thin almenak the degre of the ecliptik of any signe in whiche that the planete is rekned forto be, and that is clepid the degre of his longitude. And knowe also the degre of his latitude fro the ecliptik north or southe. And by these ensamples folewyng in special maist thou wirke forsothe in every signe of the zodiak:— [371]

The degre of the longitude peraventure of Venus or of a nother planete was 6 of Capricorne, and the latitude of hir was northward 4 degrees fro the ecliptik lyne. Than toke I a subtil compas, and clepid that oo point of my compas A, and that other point F. Than toke I the point of

366. *evene direct*, etc., 'versus polum articum.'

371. Dd<sub>1</sub> has different set of figures (in R<sub>1</sub> the figures have not been filled in), giving longitude 6 and latitude 2. In M<sub>1</sub> not all figures filled in.

372. 6 of Capricorne, B<sub>1</sub> 1 degre of Capricorne; R<sub>1</sub> of Capricorne (in R<sub>1</sub> the figures have not been filled in); M<sub>1</sub> planete.

A and sette it in the ecliptik lyne in my zodiak in the degre of the longitude of Venus, that is to seyn, in the 1 degre of Capricorne; and than sette I the point of F upward in the same signe by cause that latitude was north upon the latitude of Venus, that is to seyn, in the 4 degre fro the heved of Capricorne; and thus have 4 degrees bitwixe my two prickes. Than leide I down softly my compas, and sette the degre of the longitude upon the orisonte; tho toke I and waxed my label in manere of a peire tables to receyve distinctly the prickes of my compas. [376] Tho toke I thys forseide label, and leyde it fixe over the degre of my longitude; tho toke I up my compas and sette the point of A in the waxe on my label, as evene as I koude gesse, over the ecliptik lyne in the ende of the longitude, and sette the point of F endelonge in my label upon the space of the latitude, inward and over the zodiak, that is to seyn northward fro the ecliptik. Than leide I doun my compas, and loked wel in the wey upon the prickes of A and of F; tho turned I my ryet til that the pricke of F satt upon the orisonte; than sawe I wel that the body of Venus in hir latitude of degrees septentrionals ascendid in the ende of the 8 degre fro the heved of Capricorne.

And *nota* that in this manere maist thou wirke with any latitude septentrional in alle signes. But sothly the latitude meridional of a planete in Capricorne ne may not be take by cause of the litel space bitwixe the ecliptyk and the bordure of the Astrelabie; but sothely in all othre signes it may. [382]

375. 4 degrees, Dd<sub>1</sub> 2 degrees.  
381. 8 degre fro, Dd<sub>1</sub> 6 degre in.

2 pars hujus conclusio

Also the degre peraventure of Iupiter, or of a nother planete, was in the first degre of Piscis in longitude, and his latitude was 2 degrees meridional; tho toke I the point of A and sette it in the first degre of Piscis on the ecliptike; and than sette I the point of F downward in the same signe by cause that the latitude was south 2 degres, that is to seyn, fro the heved of Piscis; and thus have 2 degres bitwixe bothe prikkes. Than sette I the degre of the longitude upon the orisonte; tho toke I my label, and leide it fixe upon the degre of the longitude; tho sette I the point of A on my label evene over the ecliptik lyne in the ende of the degre of the longitude, and sette the point of F endelonge in my label the space of 2 degres of the latitude outward fro the zodiak (this isto seyn southward fro the ecliptik toward the bordure), and turned my riet til that the pricke of F saat upon the orisonte. Than say I wel that the body of Iupiter in his latitude of 2 degres meridional ascendid with 8 degres of Piscis *in horoscopo*. And in this manere maist thou wirke with any latitude meridional, as I first seide, save in Capricorne. And yf thou wilt pleye this crafte with the arisyng of the mone, loke thou rekne wel hir cours houre by houre, for she ne dwellith not in a degre of his longitude but litel while, as thow wel knowist. But natheles yf thou rekne hir verrey moevyng by thy tables houre after houre— [391]

(Left unfinished.)

383. 2 degrees, Dd<sub>1</sub> 3 degrees. Similarly in  
384, 386, 388 (M<sub>1</sub> agrees with B<sub>1</sub>).  
388. 8 degres, Dd<sub>1</sub> 14 degrees; M<sub>1</sub> 6 degrees.

## THE ROMAUNT OF THE ROSE

MANY men sayn that in sweveninges  
 Ther nys but fables and lesynges ;  
 But men may some swevenes sene  
 Whiche hardely that false ne bene,  
 But afterwarde ben apparaunt.  
 This maye I drawé to warraunt  
 An authour that hight Macrobes,  
 That halte nat dremés false ne lees,  
 But undothe us the avysiou  
 That whilom metté kyng Cipiou. 10  
 And who-so saith, or weneth it be  
 A jape, or ellés nycete,  
 To wene that dremés after falle,  
 Lette who so lyste a fole me calle.  
 For this trowe I, and say for me,  
 That dremés signifauncé be  
 Of good and harme to many wightes,  
 That dremen in her slepe a nyghtes  
 Ful many thyngés covertly,  
 That fallen after al openly. 20  
 Within my twenty yere of age,  
 Whan that Love taketh his cariage  
 Of yongé folke, I wenté soone  
 To bedde, as I was wont to done,  
 And faste I slepte ; and in slepyng  
 Me metté suche a swevenyng  
 That lykéd me wonder wele.  
 But in that sweven is never a dele  
 That it nys afterwarde befallé,  
 Ryght as this dreame wol tel us alle. 30  
 Nowe this dreme wol I ryme a-right  
 To make your hertés gaye and lyght,  
 For Love it prayeth and also  
 Commaundeth me that it be so.  
 And if there any aské me,  
 Whether that it be he or she,

Howe [wil I] this booke whiche is here  
 Shal hatté, that I rede you here ;  
 It is the Romance of the Rose,  
 In whiche al the Arte of Love I close. 40

The mater fayre is of to make :  
 God graunt me in gree that she it take  
 For whom that it begonnen is !  
 And that is she that hath y-wis  
 So mochel pris, and therto she  
 So worthy is biloved to be  
 That she wel ought of pris and ryght  
 Be clepéd Rose of every wight.

That it was May me thoughté tho—  
 It is .V. yere or more ago— 50  
 That it was May thus dreméd me,  
 In tyme of love and jolite,  
 That al thing gynneth waxen gay.  
 For ther is neither busk nor hay  
 In May that it nyl shrouded bene,  
 And it with newé levés wrene. 20  
 These wodés eek recoveren grene  
 That drie in wynter ben to sene.  
 And the erthé wexith proude withalle  
 For swoté dewes that on it falle, 60  
 And [al] the pore estat forgette  
 In which that wynter had it sette.  
 And than bycometh the ground so proude,  
 That it wole have a newé shroude,  
 And makith so queynt his robe and faire  
 That it hath hewes an hundred payre,  
 Of gras and flouris, ynde and pers,  
 And many hewés ful dyvers.  
 That is the robe I mene, y-wis, 69  
 Through whiche the ground to preisen is.

The byrdés that han lefte her song  
 While thei suffridé cold so strong,  
 In wedres gryl and derk to sight,

1. For vv. 1-44 Thynne's edition is sole authority.

4. *that false, ? to falseen ben, 'mensongier.'*

7. *Macrobes, cp. De the of Blaunche, l. 284, ote.*

12. *Th. els.*

22. *cariage (Th. corage), i.e. toll, 'paage.'*

37. *wil I, supplied from Fr. 'ge voil.'*

61. *al, supplied by Skeat ; but perhaps pourre.*

66. *hath, MSS. had.*

71. *MS., which is imperfect in vv. 69-72, . . . en.*

72. *Th. han suffred.*

Ben in May, for the sonnè bright,  
 So glade that they shewe in syngyng,  
 That in her hertis is sich lykynge,  
 That they mote syngen and be light.  
 Than doth the nyghtyngale hir myght  
 To makè noyse and syngen blythe ;  
 Thán is blisful many sithe 80  
 The chelaundre and [the] papyngay.  
 Than yongè folk entenden ay  
 Forto ben gay and amorous.  
 The tyme is than so saverous,  
 Hard is the hert that loveth nought  
 In May, whan al this mirth is wrought ;  
 Whan he may on these braunches here  
 The smalè briddès syngen clere  
 Her blesful swetè song pitous.  
 And in this sesoun delytous, 90  
 Whan love affraieth allè thing,  
 Me thoughte a-nyght, in my sleping  
 Right in my bed, ful redily  
 That it was by the morowe erly,  
 And up I roos, and gan me clothe.  
 Anoon I wisse myn hondis bothe.  
 A sylvre nedle forth y droughe  
 Out of an aguler queynt ynoughe,  
 And gan this nedlè threde anon ;  
 For out of toun me list to gon 100  
 The song of briddès forto here,  
 That in thise buskès syngen clere.  
 And in the swete seson that lefe is,  
 With a threde bastyng my slevis,  
 Alone I wente in my playyng,  
 The smalè foulès song harknyng,  
 That peynèd hem ful many peyre  
 To syng on bowès bloméd feyre.  
 Iolyf and gay, ful of gladnesse,  
 Toward a ryver gan I me dresse, 110  
 That I herd rennè fastè by,  
 For fairer playyng non saugh I  
 Than playen me by that ryvere.  
 For from an hill that stood ther nere,  
 Cam doun the streme ful stif and bold ;  
 Cleer was the water and as cold

76. Th. *herte*.81. *chelaundre*, a kind of lark.84. *saverous*, Fr. 'saverous,' G *saverous*.91. *affraieth*, arouses; cp. *B. of D.* 296.103. As in Thynne; MS. *And in* [erasure] *swete seson that swete* over erasure] *is*. The Fr. is 'En icelle saison novele,' which makes one suspect that *And in that sesoun that newe is* was the original form of the line.

As any welle is, soth to seyne.  
 And somdele lasse it was than Seyne,  
 But it was strayghter, wel away ;  
 And never saugh I, er that day, 120  
 The watir that so wel lykèd me,  
 And wondir glad was I to se  
 That lusty place and that ryvere,  
 And with that watir that ran so clere  
 My face I wysshe. Tho saugh I well  
 The botmè pavèd everydell  
 With gravel ful of stonès shene.  
 The medewe softè, swote, and grene,  
 Béet right on the watir syde.  
 Ful clere was than the morowtyde, 130  
 And ful attempre, out of drede.  
 Tho gan I walkè thorough the mede,  
 Dounward ay in my pleiyng  
 The ryver sydè costeyng.  
 And whan I had a whilè goon,  
 I saugh a gardyn right anoon,  
 Ful long and brood, and euerydell  
 Enclosèd was, and wallèd well  
 With highè wallès enbataillèd, 140  
 Portraied without and wel entaillèd  
 With many richè portraitures.  
 And bothe the ymagès and peyntures  
 Gan I biholdè bysily ;  
 And I wole telle you redyly  
 Of thilk ymagès the semblaunce,  
 As fer as I have remembraunce.  
 Amyddè saugh I HATÉ stonde,  
 That for hir wrathè, yre, and onde  
 Seme to ben a meveresse,  
 An angry wight, a chideresse ; 150  
 And ful of gyle and felle corage  
 By semblaunt was that ilk ymage.  
 And she was no thyng wel arraied,  
 But lyk a wode womman afraied.  
 Y-frounced foule was hir visage  
 And grennyng for dispitous rage ;  
 Hir nosè snorted up for tene.  
 Ful hidous was she forto sene,  
 Ful foule and rusty was she this ;

119. *strayghter*, 'espandue.'142. G *the peyntures*.146. G in *remembraunce*.149. *meveresse*, MSS. *mynoresse*; Fr. 'moveresse,' fem. of *mouveau*, 'a troublesome fellow' (Cotgr.).

159. A similar repetition of subject in v. 880.



Hir heed y-wriþen was, y-wis, 160  
 Ful grymly with a greet towayle.  
 An ymage of another entayle  
 A lyft half was hir fasté by ;  
 Hir name above hir heed saugh I,  
 And she was callèd FELONYE.  
 Another ymagé, that VILANYE  
 Y-clepid was, saugh I and fonde  
 Upon the wal on hir right honde.  
 Vilany was lyk somdel  
 That other ymage, and, trustith wel, 170  
 She semede a wikked créature.  
 By countenance in portrayture  
 She seméd be ful dispitous,  
 And eek ful proude and outrageous.  
 Wel coude he peynte, I undirtake,  
 That sich ymagé coude make.  
 Ful foule and cherlysshe seméd she,  
 And eek vylayneus forto be,  
 And litel coude of norriture  
 To worshiþe any créature. 180  
 And next was peynted COVEITISE,  
 That eggith folk in many gise  
 To take and yeve right nought ageyne,  
 And gret tresouris up to leyne.  
 And that is she that for usure  
 Leneth to many a créature,  
 The lassé for the more wyunnyng,  
 So coveteise is her brennyng.  
 And that is she for penyes fele,  
 That techith forto robbe and stele 190  
 These thevès and these smale harlotes ;  
 And that is routh, for by her throtes  
 Ful many oon hangith at the laste.  
 She makith folk compasse and caste  
 To taken other folkis thyng  
 Through robberie or myscounting.  
 And that is she that makith trechoures  
 And she makith falsé pleadoures,  
 That, with hir termès and hir domes,  
 Doon maydens, children, and eek gromes  
 Ier heritagé to forgo. 201  
 Ful croked were hir hondis two,  
 For covetise is evere wode  
 To gripen other folkis gode ;

166. Another ymage, etc. ; cp. 162, 170, 207.

179. MSS. *noriture*.

185. G omits *she*.

188. *coreteise*, Th. *covetous*.

196. *myscounting*, 'mesconter,' Kaluza's

pendation for *myscoueiting* of MSS.

Coveitise for hir wyunnyng  
 Ful leef hath other mennès thing.  
 Another ymage set saugh I  
 Next Coveitise fasté by,  
 And she was clepid AVARICE.  
 Ful foule in peyntyng was that vice, 210  
 Ful fade and caytif was she eek,  
 And also grene as ony leek.  
 So yvel hewed was hir colour  
 Hir semed to have lyved in langour ;  
 She was lyk thyng for hungre deed,  
 That ladde hir lyf only by breed  
 Kneden with eisel strong and egre ;  
 And therto she was lene and megre.  
 And she was clad ful porély  
 Al in an old torn courtépy, 220  
 As she were al with doggis torne ;  
 And both bihynde and eke biforne  
 Clóuted was she beggarly.  
 A mantyl henge hir fasté by,  
 Upon a perché weike and small ;  
 A burnet cote henge therwith-all,  
 Furréd with no menyvere  
 But with a furré rough of here,  
 Of lambé skynnès hevy and blake ;  
 It was ful old I undirtake, 230  
 For Avarice to clothe hir well  
 Ne hastith hir neveradell.  
 For certeynly it were hir loth  
 To weren ofte that ilké cloth ;  
 And if it were forweréd she  
 Wolde have ful gret necessite  
 Of clothyng, er she bought hir newe,  
 Al were it bad of woll and hewe.  
 This Avarice hilde in hir hande  
 A purs that henge [doun] by a bande, 240  
 And that she hidde and bonde so  
 strong,  
 Men must abyde wondir long,  
 Out of that purs er ther come ought ;  
 For that ne cometh not in hir thought.  
 It was not, certein, hir entent  
 That fro that purs a peny went.  
 And by that ymage nygh ynough

208. MSS. *fasté by*, also in 224, and frequently.

211. MSS. *sad*, but Fr. 'megre' ; cp. 311, where it translates *megre*.

212. *also*, just as.

220. Th. omits *old* ; Fr. 'vies et desrumpue.'

240. Perhaps *henge*.

Was peynted ENVYE, that never lough,  
 Nor never wel in hir herte ferde,  
 But if she outhur saugh or herde 250  
 Som gret myschaunce, or gret disese.  
 Nô thyng may so moch hir plese  
 As myschef and mysaventure ;  
 Or whan she seeth discomfiture  
 Upon ony worthy man falle,  
 That likith hir wel with alle.  
 She is ful glade in hir corage,  
 If she se any grete lynage  
 Be brought to nought in shamful wise.  
 And if a man in honour rise, 260  
 Or by his witte or by his prowess,  
 Of that hath she gret hevynesse.  
 For trustith wel she goth nygh wode,  
 Whan any chaungé happith gode.  
 Envie is of such crueltee  
 That feith ne trouth[é] holdith she  
 To freend ne felawé, bad or good.  
 Ne she hath kynne noon of hir blood,  
 That she nys ful her enemye ;  
 She nolde, I dar seyn hardelye, 270  
 Hir owné fadir ferdé well.  
 And sore abieth she everydell  
 Hir malice and hir male talent,  
 For she is in so gret turment  
 And hath such [wo] whan folk doth good,  
 That nygh she meltith for pure wood ;  
 Hir herté kervyth and so brekith,  
 That god the puple wel a-wrekeith.  
 Envie, i-wis, shal nevere lette  
 Som blame upon the folk to sette ; 280  
 I trowe that if Envie, i-wis,  
 Knewe the besté man that is  
 On this side, or biyonde the see,  
 Yit somewhat lakken hym wolde she ;  
 And if he were so hende and wis,  
 That she ne myght al abate his pris,  
 Yit wolde she blame his worthynesse,  
 Or by hir wordis make it lesse.  
 I saugh Envie in that peyntyng  
 Hádde a wondirful lokyng, 290  
 For she ne lokidé but awrie,

248. Kaluza reads *peyntie* to avoid slurring *envye*, but *peynted* is the form in ll. 301, 349, 450, 807, 935.

256. MSS. *Than*, but Fr. 'Ice.' If anything is to be added to the verse, it should be *to se* after *wel*: Fr. 'a veoir.'

266. *ne*, MSS. omit.

275. *wo*, supplied from Fr.

Or overthart all baggyngly.  
 And she hadde a foule usage,  
 She myght loke in no visage  
 Of man or womman forth-right pleyn,  
 But shette hir one eye for disdeyn ;  
 So for Envié brenné she,  
 Whan she myght any man y-se  
 That faire or worthi were, or wise,  
 Or ellés stode in folkis pryse. 300  
 SORWÉ was peynted next Envié  
 Upon that wall of masonrye,  
 But wel was seyn in hir colour  
 That she hadde lyvéd in langour ;  
 Hir seméde to havé the jaunyce.  
 Nought half so pale was Avarice,  
 Nor no thyng lyk [as] of lenesse ;  
 For sorowé, thought, and gret distresse,  
 That she hadde suffred day and nyght,  
 Made hir ful yolwe and no thyng bright.  
 Ful fadé, pale, and megre also. 311  
 Was never wight yit half so wo  
 As that hir seméde forto be,  
 Nor so fulfilled of ire as she.  
 I trowe that no wight myght hir please,  
 Nor do that thyng that myght hir ease ;  
 Nor she ne wolde hir sorowé slake  
 Nor comfort noon unto hir take,  
 So depé was hir wo bigonnen  
 And eek hir hert in angre ronnen. 320  
 A sorowful thyng wel seméd she,  
 Nor she hadde no thyng slowé be  
 Forto forcracchen al hir face,  
 And forto rent in many place  
 Hir clothis, and forto tere hir swire,  
 As she that was fulfilled of ire.  
 And al to-torn lay eek hir here  
 Aboute hir shuldris here and there,  
 As she that hadde it al to-rent  
 For angre, and for maltalent. 330  
 And eek I telle you certeynly  
 How that she wepe ful tendirly.  
 In worlde nys wyght so harde of herte  
 That had [he] sene her sorowes smerte,  
 That nolde have had of hir pyte,

292. *baggyngly*, 'borgnoiant' (Cotgr. 'to loure'); cp. *B. of D.* v. 623.

296. *one eye*, MS. *eien*; Fr. 'un œil.'

298. *y-se*, MSS. *se*; cp. 1401.

305. Either omit *to*, or read *to have* as two syllables.

325. *swire*, throat; nothing in Fr. corresponding.

So wo begone a thyng was she.  
 She al to-dasht her-selfe for woo,  
 And smote togyder her hondés two.  
 To sorowe was she ful ententyfe  
 That woful rechélesse caytyfe ; 340  
 Her roughté lytel of playing  
 Or of clypping, or [of] kissing ;  
 For who so sorouful is in herte,  
 Him lusté not to play ne sterthe,  
 Ne for to dauncen, ne to synge,  
 Ne may his herte in temper bringe,  
 To maké joye on even or morowe,  
 For joy is contrarie unto sorowe.

ELDE was paynted after this,  
 That shorter was a foote, i-wys, 350  
 Than she was wonte in her yonghede.  
 Unneth her selfe she mighté fede ;  
 So feble and eke so olde was she  
 That faded was al her beaute.  
 Ful salowe was waxen her colour ;  
 Her heed for hore was whyte as flour,  
 I-wys great qualme ne were it none,  
 Ne synne, al though her lyfe were gone ;  
 Al woxen was her body unwelde,  
 And drie and dwynéd al for elde. 360  
 A foule forwelké thyng was she,  
 That whylome rounde and softe had be ;  
 Her eerés shoken faste withall,  
 As from her heed they woldé fall ;  
 Her facé frouncéd and forpynded,  
 And bothe her hondés lorne, fordwyned.  
 So olde she was that she ne went  
 A foote, but it were by potent.

The tyme that passeth nyght and daye,  
 And restélesse travayleth aye, 370  
 And steleth from us so prively,  
 That to us semeth so sykerly  
 That it in one poynt dwelleth ever ;  
 And certes it ne resteth never,  
 But gothe so faste, and passeth aye,  
 That there nys man that thynké may  
 That tyme that nowe present is ;  
 But sketh at these clerkés this.  
 For [or] men thynke it redily  
 That hre tymés ben y-passed by. 380  
 That tyme that may not sojourne,

But goth and may never retourne,  
 As watir that doun renneth ay,  
 But never drope retourné may.  
 Ther may no thing as tyme endure,  
 Metall nor erthely créature ;  
 For allé thing it frette and shall.  
 The tyme eke that chaungith all,  
 And all doth waxe and fostred be,  
 And allé thing distroioeth he ; 390  
 The tyme that eldith our auncessours,  
 And eldith kynges and emperours,  
 And that us alle shal overcomen  
 Er that deth us shal have nomen ;  
 The tyme, that hath al in welde  
 To elden folk, had maad hir elde  
 So yny, that to my witing,  
 She myght[é] helpe hir silf no thing,  
 But turned ageyn unto childhede.  
 She had no thing hir silf to lede, 400  
 Ne witte ne pithé in hir holde  
 More than a child of two yeer olde.  
 But nathéles I trowe that she  
 Was faire sumtyme, and fresh to se,  
 Whan she was in hir rightful age ;  
 But she was past al that passage,  
 And was a doted thing bicomen.  
 A furréd cope on had she nomen,  
 Wel had she clad hir silf and warme,  
 For colde myght ellés don hir harme. 410  
 These oldé folk have alwey colde,  
 Her kynde is sich whan they ben  
 olde.

Another thing was don there write,  
 That seméde lyk an ipocrite,  
 And it was clepid POOPE HOLY.  
 That ilk is she that pryvely  
 Ne spareth never a wikked dede  
 Whan men of hir taken noon hede.  
 And maketh hir outward precious  
 With palé visage and pitous, 420  
 And semeth a simple créature.  
 But ther nys no mysaventure  
 That she ne thenkith in hir corage.  
 Ful lyk to hir was that ymage,  
 That makid was lyk hir semblance.  
 She was ful symple of countenance  
 And she was clothéd and eke shod  
 As she were, for the love of god,

348. Perhaps read *contraire*; cp. 991.

368. *by potent*, with a crutch.

380. *i.e.* three moments are gone while one is thinking about it.

401. *in hir holde*, in her possession.

413. *don there write*, 'empres (apres ?) escrit.

Yolden to relygioun,  
 Sich semède hir devocioun. 430  
 A sauter helde she faste in honde,  
 And bisily she gan to fonde  
 To makè many a feynt priere  
 To god, and to his seyntis dere.  
 Ne she was gay, ne fresh, ne jolyf,  
 But semede to be ful ententyf  
 To gode werkis and to faire,  
 And therto she had on an haire ;  
 Ne certis she was fatt no thing,  
 But semed wery for fasting ; 440  
 Of colour pale and deed was she.  
 From hir the gate ay wernéd be  
 Of Paradys, that blisful place.  
 For sich folk maketh lene her face,  
 As Crist seith in his Evangile,  
 To geté prys in toun a while ;  
 And for a litel glorie veigne  
 They lesen god and ek his reigne.  
 And alderlast of everychon  
 Was peynted POVERT al aloon, 450  
 That not a peny hadde in holde,  
 All though she hir clothis solde,  
 And though she shulde an hongéd be ;  
 For nakid as a worme was she,  
 And if the wedir stormy were,  
 For colde she shulde have dyéd there.  
 She nadde on but a streit olde sak,  
 And many a cloute on it ther stak ;  
 This was hir cote and hir mantell,  
 No more was there, never a dell, 460  
 To clothe hir with, I undirtake ;  
 Grete leyser haddè she to quake.  
 And she was putt, that I of talke,  
 Fer fro these other, up in an halke ;  
 There lurkéd and there couréd she.  
 For pover thing, where so it be,  
 Is shamefast and dispiséd ay ;  
 Acurséd may wel be that day  
 That povere man conceyvéd is,  
 For god wote al to selde, i-wys, 470  
 Is ony povere man wel fedde

437. *to faire*, 'bonnes ovres faire'; 'faire' carelessly misread?

438. *haire*, O.F. 'haire', a sleeveless shirt of hair worn as a penance.

442. *gate*, perhaps plural.

444. *facc*, 'vis'; MSS. *grace*.

451. *holde*, G *wolde*; but cp. 395.

454. *nakid as a worme*, 'nue comme vers'; cp. *Tales*, E 880.

Or wel araiéd or [wel] cledde,  
 Or welbilovéd in sich wise  
 In honour that he may arise.  
 Alle these thingis well avised,  
 As I have you er this devysed,  
 With gold and asure over all  
 Depeynted were upon the wall.  
 Square was the wall and high sumdell.  
 Enclosed and barred well, 480  
 In stede of hegge, was that gardyne ;  
 Come nevere shepherdè therynne.  
 Into that gardyn wel y-wrought  
 Who so that me coude have brought  
 By laddre, or ellés by degre,  
 It woldè wel have likéd me,  
 For sich solace, sich joie and play  
 I trowe that nevere man ne say,  
 As was in that place delytous.  
 The gardeyn was not daungerous 490  
 To herberwe briddés many oon,  
 So riche a yerde was nevere noon  
 Of briddés songe and braunches grene ;  
 Therynne were briddés mo I wene  
 Than ben in all the rewme of Fraunce.  
 Ful blisful was the accordaunce  
 Of swete and pitous songe thei made ;  
 For all this world it owghtè glade.  
 And I my-silf so mery ferde,  
 Whan I her blisful songés herde, 500  
 That for an hundreth pounde nolde I,  
 If that the passage opunly  
 Haddè be unto me free,  
 That I nolde entren forto se  
 Thassemble—god kepe it fro care—  
 Of briddis whiche therynnè ware.  
 That songen thorough her mery throtes  
 Dauncis of love and mery notes.  
 Whan I thus herdè foulés synge,  
 I felle fast in a weymentyng, 510  
 By which art, or by what engyne,  
 I myght come into that gardyne.  
 But way I couthe fyndè noon  
 Into that gardyne for to goon.  
 Ne nougth wist I if that ther were

472. MSS. omit *wel*.

480. The verse has apparently but three accents

492. MSS. *yerde*.

501. MSS. *wolde*; i.e. I wouldn't take a hundred pounds not to enter.

505. Prof. Skeat changes *god kepe it fro care* to *god it kepe and were* on account of the un-Chaucerian rhyme.

Eýther hole or placé where,  
 Bý which I myght have entre.  
 Ne ther was noon to teché me,  
 For I was al aloone i-wys,  
 For-wo and angwishis of this. 520  
 Til atté last bithought I me,  
 That by no weye ne myght it be  
 That ther nas laddre, or wey to passe,  
 Or hole, into so faire a place.  
 Tho gan I go a full grete pas,  
 Envyrnyng evene in compas  
 The closing of the squarè wall,  
 Tyl that I fonde a wicket small,  
 So shett that I ne myght in gon,  
 And other entre was ther noon. 530  
 Uppon this dore I gan to smyte  
 That was [so] fetys and so lite,  
 For other weye coude I not seke.  
 Ful long I shof, and knockide eke,  
 And stood ful long and oft herknyng,  
 If that I herde ony wight comyng,  
 Til that dore of thilk entre  
 A mayden curteys openyde me.  
 Hir heer was as yelowe of hewe  
 As ony basyn scourèd newe, 540  
 Hir flesh [as] tendre as is a chike,  
 With benté browis smothe and slyke ;  
 And by mesure largé were  
 The openyng of hir yèn clere ;  
 Hir nose of good proporcioun,  
 Hir yèn grey as is a faucoun ;  
 With sweté breth and wel savoured,  
 Hir facé white and wel coloured,  
 With litel mouth and rounde to see ;  
 A clové chynne eke haddé she, 550  
 Hir nekké was of good fasoun,  
 In lengthe and gretnesse by resoun,  
 Withoute blyné, scabbe, or royne ;  
 Fro Iersalem unto Burgoyne  
 Ther nys a fairer nekke, i-wys,  
 To fele how smothe and softe it is.  
 Hir throte also white of hewe  
 As snowe on braunché snowéd newe.  
 Of body ful wel wrought was she,  
 Men neded not in no cuntre 560

A fairer body forto seke.  
 And of fyn orfrays hadde she eke  
 A chapélet so semly oon  
 Ne weréde never mayde upon.  
 And faire above that chapélet  
 A rosé gerland had she sett.  
 She hadde [in honde] a gay mirroure,  
 And with a riché gold tresour  
 Hir heed was tresséd, queyntély. 570  
 Hir slevés sewid fetously,  
 And forto kepe hir hondis faire  
 Of glovés white she had a paire.  
 And she hadde on a cote of grene  
 Of cloth of Gaunt, withouten wene.  
 Wel semyde by hir apparayle  
 She was not wont to gret travayle ;  
 For whan she kempte was fetisly,  
 And wel arayed and richély,  
 Thanne had she don al hir journe.  
 For merye and wel bigoon was she, 580  
 She laddé a lusty lyf in May ;  
 She hadde no thought by nyght ne day  
 Of no thyng, but it were oonly  
 To graythe hir wel and uncouthly.  
 Whan that this dore hadde opened me  
 This may[dé] semely forto see,  
 I thanked hir as I best myght,  
 And axide hir how that she hight,  
 And what she was I axide eke.  
 And she to me was nought unmeke, 590  
 Ne of hir answer daungerous,  
 But faire answeride, and seidé thus :—  
 ‘ Lo, sir, my name is YDELNESSE ;  
 So clepé men me, more and lesse ;  
 Ful myghty and ful riche am I,  
 And that of oon thyng namély,  
 For I entendé to no thyng,  
 But to my joye, and my pleyyng,  
 And forto kembe and tressé me.  
 Aqueynted am I and pryve 600  
 With Myrthé, lord of this gardyne,  
 That fro the landé Alexandryne  
 Madé the treés hidre be fette

564. *non*, adverb ; cp. 1085, *Tales*, D 568.

567. MSS. omit *in honde* ; ‘ en sa main.’

574. *Gaunt*, Ghent.

579. *journe*, day’s work.

593. Cp. *Tales*, G 1-7, A 1940.

602. MSS. of *Alex*.

603. *be fette*, perhaps omit *be* ; cp. 607, 609, where the infinitives are passive, Fr. ‘ fist . . . faire,’ ‘ fist portraire.’

516. Perhaps read *there* for *where*.

520. *For-wo*, very weary ; but perhaps mistake for *ful wo*.

535. *and oft* (Th. *al*, G *and of*) *herknyng*, ‘ par maintes fois escoutai.’

557. *also*, as. Perhaps read *was also*.

That in this gardyne ben y-sette.  
 And whan the trees were woxen on hight,  
 This wall, that stant heere in thi sight,  
 Dide Myrthe enclosen al aboute.  
 And these ymages al withoute  
 He dide hem bothe entaile and peynte,  
 That neithir ben jolyf ne queynte, 610  
 But they ben ful of sorowe and woo,  
 As thou hast seen a while agoo.  
 And oft tyme hym to solace  
 Sir Myrthé cometh into this place,  
 And eke with hym cometh his meynce,  
 That lyven in lust and jolite.  
 And now is Myrthe therynne to here  
 The briddis, how they syngen cleare,  
 The mavys and the nyghtyngale,  
 And other joly briddis smale. 620  
 And thus he walketh to solace  
 Hym and his folk, for swetter place  
 To pleyen ynne he may not fynde,  
 Al though he sought oon in-tyl Ynde.  
 The alther-fairest folk to see  
 That in this world may foundé be  
 Hath Mirthé with hym in his route,  
 That folowen hym always aboute.  
 Whan Ydelnesse had tolde al this,  
 And I hadde herkned wel y-wys, 630  
 Thanne seide I to dame Ydelnesse :  
 'Now also wisly god me blesse,  
 Sith Myrthe that is so faire and fre  
 Is in this yerde with his meyne,  
 Fro thilk assemble, if I may,  
 Shal no man werné me to-day,  
 That I this nyght ne mote it see.  
 For wel wene I there with hym be  
 A faire and joly companye,  
 Fulfilléd of all curtesie.' 640  
 And forth, withouté wordis mo,  
 In at the wicket went I tho,  
 That Ydelnesse hadde opened me,  
 Into that gardyne faire to see.  
 And whan I was inne i-wys,  
 Myn herté was ful glad of this.  
 For wel wende I ful sikerly  
 Have ben in Paradys erthly ;  
 So faire it was that, trusteth wel,  
 It semede a place espirituel.  
 For certys, as at my devys,  
 Ther is no place in Paradys

645. Perhaps insert *ther* before *inne*.

So good inne forto dwelle or be,  
 As in that gardyne, thoughté me.  
 For there was many a bridde syngyng  
 Thorough-out the yerde al thringyng.  
 In many places were nyghtyngales,  
 Alpés, fynchés, and wodéwales,  
 That in her sweté song deliten.  
 In thilké places as they habiten, 660  
 There myght[e] men see many flokkes  
 Of turtles and [of] laverokkes.  
 Chalaundres felé sawe I there,  
 That wery, nygh forsongen were.  
 And thrustles, terins, and mavys,  
 That songen forto wyne hem prys,  
 And eke to sormounte in hir songe  
 That otheré briddés hem amonge.  
 By noté madé faire servyse  
 These briddés that I you devise ; 670  
 They songe her songe as faire and wele  
 As angels don espirituel.  
 And, trusteth wel, than I hem herde,  
 Ful lustily and wel I ferde,  
 For never yitt sich melodye  
 Was herd of man that myghté dye.  
 Sich sweté song was hem amonge,  
 That me thought it no briddis songe,  
 But it was wondir lyk to be  
 Song of mermaydens of the see, 680  
 That, for her syngyng is so clere,  
 Though we mermaydens clepe hem here  
 In English as is oure usaunce,  
 Men clepé hem sereyns in Fraunce.  
 Ententif weren forto synge  
 These briddis, that nought unkunnyng  
 Were of her craft and apprentys,  
 But of song sotil and wys.  
 And certis, whan I herde her songe,  
 And sawe the grené place amonge, 690  
 In herte I wexe so wondir gay,  
 That I was never erst er that day  
 So jolyf, nor so wel bigoo,  
 Ne merye in herte, as I was thoo.  
 And than wist I and sawe ful well,  
 That Ydelnesse me servéd well,  
 That me putte in sich jolite.

658. *Alpes*, bullfinches. *wodewales*, orioles (?).668. *That othere* (MSS. *other*) can be used with plural nouns; cp. 991.673. *than* (Th. *whan*, G. *that*), *whan*.680. Chaucer calls them *mermaids* in *Boece* 32, where the French version has *seraines*.

Hir freend wel ought I forto be  
 Sith she the dore of that gardyne  
 Hadde openéd, and me leten inne. 700  
 From hennés forth how that I wroughte,  
 I shal you tellen as me thoughte.  
 First wherof Myrthé servéd there,  
 And eke what folk there with hym  
 were,

Withouté fable I wole discryve ;  
 And of that gardyne eke as blyve  
 I wole you tellen afir this  
 The fairé fasoun all y-wys,  
 That wel y-wrought was for the nones.  
 I may not telle you all at ones, 710  
 But as I may and can, I shall  
 By ordre tellen you it all.

Ful faire servise, and eke ful swete,  
 These briddis maden, as they sete ;  
 Layés of love ful wel sownyng,  
 They songen in their jargonyng ;  
 Summe high and summe eke lowé songe  
 Upon the braunches grene y-spronge.

The swetnesse of her melodye  
 Made al myn herte in reverye. 720

And whan that I hadde herde, I trowe,  
 These briddis syngyng on a rowe,  
 Than myght I not withholdé me  
 That I ne wente inne forto see  
 Sir Myrthé ; for my desiryng  
 Was hym to seen, over allé thyng ;  
 His countenance and his manere,  
 That sighté was to me ful dere.

Tho wente I forth on my right honde  
 Down by a lytel path I fonde, 730  
 Of mentés full and fenell grene.

And fasté by, withouté wene,  
 Sir Myrthe I fonde, and right anoon  
 Unto sir Myrthé gan I goon,  
 There as he was, hym to solace.

And with hym in that lusty place  
 So faire folk and so fresh had he,  
 That whan I sawe I wondred me  
 Fro whennés siché folk myght come,  
 So faire they weren all and some, 740  
 For they were lyk, as to my sighte,  
 To angels that ben fethered brighte.

This folk, of which I telle you soo,  
 Upon a karole wenten thoo.

742. *fethered brighte*, with bright wings.

744. *karole*, a ring-dance to song.

A lady karolede hem, that hyght  
 GLADNESSE, [the] blisfull and the light.  
 Wel coude she syngé and lustyly ;  
 Noon half so wel and semely,  
 Couthe make in song sich refreyngyngé.  
 It sat hir wondir wel to syngé ; 750  
 Hir voice ful clere was and ful swete,  
 She was nought rudé ne unmete,  
 But couthe ynow of sich doyng  
 As longeth unto karolyng.

For she was wont in every place  
 To syngen first, folk to solace,  
 For syngyng moost she gaf hir to,  
 No craft had she so leef to do.  
 Tho myghtist thou karoles sene,  
 And folk daunce and mery bene, 760  
 And maké many a faire tournyng  
 Upon the grené gras springyng.

There myghtist thou see these flowtours,  
 Mynstrales, and eke jogélours,  
 That wel to syngé dide her peyne ;  
 Somme songé songés of Loreyne,  
 For in Loreyn her notés bee  
 Full swetter than in this contre.

Thère was many a tymbester,  
 And saillouris that I dar wel swere, 770  
 Coutuhe her craft ful parfitly ;  
 The tymbres up ful sotilly,  
 They caste and hente full ofte,  
 Upon a fynger faire and softe,  
 That they [ne] failide never mo.

Ful fetys damysellés two,  
 Ryght yonge and full of semelyhede,  
 In kirtles and noon other wede  
 And fairé tresséd every tresse,  
 Hadde Myrthé doon, for his noblesse, 780

Amydde the karole forto daunce.  
 But herof lieth no remembraunce  
 How that they dauncéd queyntély ;  
 That oon wolde come all pryvyly  
 Agayn that other, and whan they were  
 To-gidre almost, they threwe yfere  
 Her mouthis so that through her play  
 It seméd as they kiste away.

749. MSS. *And couthe*.

768. *this contre*, Orleans.

770. *saillouris*, dancers.

771. *that* possibly belongs before *couthe* in next verse ; Fr. 'Qui moult savoient.'

773. *They casten and [hem] hente ful ofte* ; but perhaps a 3-beat line, cp. 480, 801.

To dauncen well koude they the gise,  
 What shulde I more to you devyse ; 790  
 Ne bode I never thennes go,  
 Whiles that I sawe hem dauncèd so.

Upon the karoll wonder faste  
 I gan biholde, til attè laste  
 A lady gan me forto espie ;  
 And she was clepèd CURTESIE  
 The worshipfull, the debonaire,  
 I pray to god evere falle hir faire.  
 Ful curteisly she callède me,  
 'What do ye there, Beau ser?' quod she,  
 'Come [here], and if it lykè yow 801  
 To dauncen, dauncith with us now.'

And I withoutè taryng  
 Wénte into the karolyng.  
 I was abasshèd never a dell,  
 But it to me likèd right well  
 That Curtesie me clepèd so,  
 And bad me on the dauncèd go.  
 For if I haddè durst, certeyn  
 I wolde have karolèd right fayn, 810  
 As man that was to dauncèd blithe.  
 Thanne gan I loken oftè sithe  
 The shape, the bodies, and the cheres,  
 The countenance, and the maneres  
 Of all the folk that dauncèd there ;  
 And I shal tell [you] what they were.

Ful faire was Myrthe, ful longeand high,  
 A fairer man I nevere sigh ;  
 As rounde as appille was his face,  
 Ful rody and white in every place. 820  
 Fetys he was and wel beseye,  
 With metely mouth and yèn greye,  
 His nose by mesure wrought ful right.  
 Crispe was his heer, and eek ful bright,  
 Hise shuldris of a largè brede,  
 And smalish in the girdilstede.  
 He semèd lyke a portreiture,  
 So noble he was of his stature,  
 So faire, so joly and so fetys,  
 With lymès wrought at poynt devys, 830  
 Delyver, smert, and of grete myght ;  
 Ne sawe thou nevere man so lyght.  
 Of berde unnethe hadde he no thyng,  
 For it was in the firstè spryng.

791. *bode*, mistake for *bede*, or *bad*; cp. 808.

The same Fr. is differently rendered at 1854.

801. *here*, MSS. omit; Fr. 'ça venez.'

806. Sk. *it me likede*.

811. MSS. *right blithe*.

Ful yonge he was, and mery of thought ;  
 And in samette with briddis wrought,  
 And with gold beten ful fetysly,  
 His body was clad ful richely.  
 Wrought was his robe in straungè gise  
 And al to-slytered for queyntise 840  
 In many a placè lowe and hie ;  
 And shode he was with grete maistrie,  
 With shoon decopèd and with laas.  
 By druéry and by solas,  
 His leef a rosyn chapèlet  
 Hadde made and on his heed it set.

And witè ye who was his leef?  
 Dame Gladnesse there was hym so leef,  
 That syngith so wel with glad courage,  
 That from she was .XII. yeer of age, 850  
 She of hir lovè graunt hym made.  
 Sir Mirthe hir by the fynger hadde  
 Dáunsyng, and she hym also ;  
 Grete lovè was atwixe hem two.  
 Bothe were they faire and bright of hewe  
 She semède lyke a rosè newe  
 Of colour, and hir flesh so tendre  
 That with a brerè smale and slendre  
 Men myght it cleve, I dar wel seyn ; 860  
 Hir forheed frouncèles, al pleyn ;  
 Bent were hir [brownè] browis two,  
 Hir yèn greye and glad also,  
 That laugheden ay in hir semblaunt  
 First or the mouth, by covaunaunt.  
 I not what of hir nose descryve,  
 So faire hath no womman alyve.  
 Hir heer was yelowe, and clere shynyng,  
 I wot no lady so likyng.  
 Of orfrays fresh was hir gerland ;  
 I, which seyen have a thousand, 870  
 Saugh never y-wys no gerlond yitt,  
 So wel y-wrought of silk as it.  
 And in an overgilt samit  
 Cladde she was, by grete delit,  
 Of which hir leef a robè werede ;  
 The myrier she in hir hertè ferede.

And next hir wente, in hir other side,  
 The GOD OF LOVE, that can devyde  
 Love, and as hym likith it be,  
 But he can cherles daunten, he, 880

861. *browne*, supplied from Fr.

865. MSS. insert *wot* before *not* and *I sha-*  
 before *descryve*.

873. *samit*, robe of samite.



And maken folkis pridè fallen,  
 And he can wel these lordis thrallen,  
 And ladyes putt at lowe degre,  
 Whan he may hem to proudè see.  
 This God of Love of his fasoun  
 Was lyke no knavè, ne quystroun.  
 His beaute gretly was to preyse,  
 But of his robè to devise  
 I drede encombred forto be ;  
 For nought y-clad in silk was he, 890  
 But all in floures and in flourettes,  
 I-paynted all with amorettes.  
 And with losengès, and scochounns,  
 With briddès, lybardes, and lyouns,  
 And other beestis wrought ful well,  
 His garnèment was everydell  
 Y-portreid, and wrought with floures,  
 By dyvers medlyng of coloures.  
 Floures there were of many gise,  
 Y-sett by compas in assise ; 900  
 Ther lakkide no flour to my dome,  
 Ne nought so mych as flour of brome,  
 Ne violete, ne eke pervynke,  
 Ne flour noon that man can on thynke ;  
 And many a rosè-leef ful longe,  
 Was entermelled ther amonge,  
 And also on his heed was sette  
 Of roses reed a chapèlett.  
 But nyghtyngales, a full grete route  
 That flyen over his heed aboute, 910  
 The leeves felden as they flyen ;  
 And he was all with briddès wryen,  
 With popynjay, with nyghtyngale,  
 With chalaundre, and with wodèwale,  
 With fynche, with lark, and with arch-  
 aungell,  
 He semede as he were an aungell,  
 That doun were comen fro hevене  
 clere.  
 Love hadde with hym a bachelere,  
 That he made alleweyes with hym be ;  
 SWETE LOKYNG clepèd was he. 920  
 This bachelere stode biholdyng  
 The daunce ; and in his honde holdyng

886. *quystroun* (O.F. *coistron*), scullion.

892. Found only in Th.

892. *with amorettes*, 'by amorous girls'; cp.

755. 'With' in this sense is common in Middle English; cp. *Troilus*, iv. 80.

915. *archaungell*; Fr. 'mesanges,' which otgrave defines as titmouse.

Turkè bowès two had he.  
 That oon of hem was of a tree  
 That bereth a fruyt of savour wykke,  
 Ful crokid was that foulè stikke ;  
 And knotty here and there also,  
 And blak as bery, or ony slo.  
 That other bowe was of a plante  
 Withouten wem, I dar warante, 930  
 Ful evene, and by proporcioun  
 Treitys and long, of good fasoun ;  
 And it was peynted wel and thwyten,  
 And over al diapred and writen  
 With ladyes and with bacheleris,  
 Full lyghtsom and glad of cheris.  
 These bowès two helde Swete-lokyng,  
 That semède lyk no gadelyng,  
 And ten brode arowis hilde he there,  
 Of which .V. in his righthond were ; 940  
 But they were shaven well and dight,  
 Nokkèd and fetherèd aright,  
 And all they were with gold bygoon,  
 And strongè poynted everychoon,  
 And sharpè forto kerven well.  
 But iren was ther noon, ne steell,  
 For al was golde, men myght it see,  
 Out-take the fetherès and the tree.  
 The swiftest of these arowis fyve  
 Out of a bowè forto dryve, 950  
 And bestè fetherèd for to flee,  
 And fairest eke, was clepid Beaute ;  
 That other arowe that hurteth lesse  
 Was clepid, as I trowe, Symplesse ;  
 The thriddè clepèd was Fraunchise  
 That fetherèd was in noble wise,  
 With valour and with curtesye ;  
 The fourthe was cleped Compaignye,  
 That hevye forto shoten ys ;  
 But who so shetith right y-wys, 960  
 May therwith doon grete harme and wo.  
 The fiftè of these, and laste also,  
 Faire-Semblaunt men that arowe calle,  
 The leestè grevous of hem alle,  
 Yit can it make a ful grete wounde.  
 But he may hope his soris sounde,  
 That hurt is with that arowe y-wys ;  
 His wo the bette bistowèd is,

923. *Turke bowes*, etc. MSS. add *full wel devysed* (not in Fr.) after *two*. Cp. *Tales*, A 2895, where 'Turkeis.'

932. MSS. *ful good*; Fr. 'de bone façon.'

For he may sonner have gladnesse ;  
 His langour oughte be the lesse. 970  
 Five arowis were of other gise,  
 That ben ful foulè to devyse,  
 For shaft and ende, soth forto telle,  
 Were also blak as fende in helle.  
 The first of hem is callèd Pride,  
 That other arowe next hym biside,  
 It was [y-]clepèd Vylanye.  
 That arowe was al with felonye  
 Envenymed, and with spitous blame.  
 The thridde of hem was clepèd Shame,  
 The fourthè Wanhope clepèd is, 981  
 The fiftè Newè-thought, y-wys.  
 These arowis that I speke of heere  
 Were allè fyve on oon maneere,  
 And allè were they resemblable.  
 To hem was wel sitting and able,  
 The foulè croked bowe hidous  
 That knotty was, and al roynous ;  
 That bowè semède wel to shete  
 These arowis fyve, that ben unmete 990  
 And contrarye to that other fyve.  
 But though I tellè not as blyve  
 Of her power, ne of her myght,  
 Herafter shal I tellen right  
 The soothe, and eke signyfiaunce ;  
 As fer as I have remembraunce  
 All shal be seid, I undirtake,  
 Er of this book an ende I make.

Now come I to my tale ageyn.  
 But aldirfirst I wole you seyn 1000  
 The fasoun and the countenaunces  
 Of all the folk that on the daunce is.  
 The God of Love, jolyf and lyght,  
 Ladde on his honde a lady bright,  
 Of high prys and of grete degre ;  
 This lady callèd was Beaute,  
 As an arowe of which I tolde,  
 Ful wel [y-]thewèd was she holde ;  
 Ne she was derk, ne broun, but bright,  
 And clere as [is] the monè lyght, 1010  
 Ageyn whom all the sterrès semen  
 But smalè candels, as we demen.  
 Hir flesh was tendre as dewe of flour,  
 Hir chere was symple as byrde in bour,  
 As whyte as lylie or rose in rys ;

978. MSS. read *as for al*, 'toute.'991. Perhaps read *contraire*; cp. 348.1014. *byrde*, bride.

Hir facè gentyll and tretys,  
 Fetys she was, and smale to se ;  
 No wyntred browis haddè she,  
 Ne poppèd hir, for it nedèd nought 1019  
 To wyndre hir, or to peynte hir ought.  
 Hir tresses yelowè, and longè straughten,  
 Unto hir helys doun they raughten ;  
 Hir nose, hir mouth, and eyhe, and cheke  
 Wel wrought, and all the remenaunt eke.  
 A ful grete savour and a swote  
 Me toucheth in myn hertè rote,  
 As helpe me god, whan I remembre  
 Of the fasoun of every membre.  
 In world is noon so faire a wight ;  
 For yonge she was, and hewèd bright,  
 Sore plesaunt, and fetys with all, 1037  
 Gente, and in hir myddill small.  
 Bisidè Beaute yede richesse,  
 An high lady of gret noblesse,  
 And gret of prys in every place ;  
 But who so durste to hir trespase,  
 Or til hir folk, in word or dede,  
 He were full hardy, out of drede.  
 For bothe she helpe and hyndre may ;  
 And that is nought of yisterday, 1040  
 That richè folk have full gret myght  
 To helpe, and eke to greve a wyght.  
 The leste and grettest of valour  
 Diden Rychesse ful gret honour,  
 And besy weren hir to serve,  
 For that they wolde hir love deserve.  
 They cleped hir 'Lady,' grete and small ;  
 This widè world hir dredith all,  
 This world is all in hir daungere.  
 Hir court hath many a losengere, 1050  
 And many a traytour envious,  
 That ben ful besy and curyous  
 Forto dispreisen and to blame

1018. *wyntred*, 'guignie,' not elsewhere found in English unless in '*winrede bruyes*,' O.E. Homilies (Morris) ii. 213, where the meaning seems to be 'ogling glances' as here. Sk. changes to *wyndred* as in 1020.1019. *popped*, defined by Coles (1713) 'dress fine.' v. Dyce's *Skelton* ii. 239, where *poppe folde* is quoted.1020. *wyndre*, to trim (the hair), Coles, cp. 1018.1026. *toucheth*, Kaluza's emendation for *though* of the MSS.1037. MSS. *werk*, 'par fais ou par dis.'1043. MSS. *beste* for *leste*, 'li greignor et li menor.'

That best deserven love and name.  
 Bifore the folk, hem to bigilen,  
 These losengeris hem preyse, and smylen,  
 And thus the world with word anynten;  
 And aftirward they prille, and poynten  
 The folk right to the baré boon,  
 Bihynde her bak when they ben goon,  
 And foule abate the folkis prys. 1061  
 Ful many a worthy man, y-wys  
 An hundrid, havé do to dye  
 These losengers thorough flaterye ;  
 And maké folk ful straungé be  
 There hem oughté be pryve.  
 Wel yvel mote they thryve and thee,  
 And yvel arryvéd mote they be,  
 These losengers ful of envye ;  
 No good man loveth her companye. 1070  
 Richesse a robe of purpur on hadde,  
 Ne trowe not that I lye or madde,  
 For in this world is noon hir lyche,  
 Ne by a thousand deel so riche,  
 Ne noon so faire ; for it ful well  
 With orfrays leyd was everydeell  
 And portraied in the ribanynges  
 Of dukés stories, and of kynges,  
 And with a bend of gold tasseled,  
 And knoppis fyne of gold ameled. 1080  
 Aboute hir nekke of gentyl entayle  
 Was shete the riché chevesaile,  
 In which ther was full gret plente  
 Of stones clere and bright to see.  
 Rychesse a girdell hadde upon,  
 The bokele of it was of a stoon,  
 Of vertu gret and mochel of myght ;  
 For who so bare the stoon so bright,  
 Of venym durst hym no thing doute,  
 While he the stoon hadde hym aboute.  
 That stoon was gretly forto love, 1091  
 And, tyl a riché mannys byhove,  
 Worth all the gold in Rome and Frise.  
 The mourdaunt wrought in noble wise

1058. *prille* (Th. *prill*, G. *prile*), Fr. 'poignant,' may be right (cp. sb. *prill*, a top), and mean *piquette*. But probably the scribe's mistake for *prill*, pierce; cp. 5556, where *depe* for *dothe*.

1065. *And make*, Th. *And maketh*; G *have maad*, 'car il tout,' etc.

1068. *arryved*, G *achyved*.

1089. *durst*, need. The forms of *durren* and *harf* were confused in Middle English; cp. 1324, 360.

1094. *mourdaunt*, the pendant of the girdle.

Was of a stoon full precious,  
 That was so fyne and vertuous  
 That hole a man it koudé make  
 Of palasie, and [of] tothe ake.  
 And yit the stoon hadde such a grace  
 That he was siker in every place, 1100  
 All thilké day not blynde to bene,  
 That fastyng myght that stoon [have] seene.  
 The barres were of gold ful fyne  
 Upon a tyssu of satyne,  
 Full hevy, gret, and no thyng lyght,  
 In everiche was a besaunt-wight.  
 Upon the tresses of Richesse  
 Was sette a cercle, for noblesse,  
 Of brend gold that full lyghté shoon,  
 So faire trowe I was never noon. 1110  
 But she were kunnyng for the nonys,  
 That koude devysé alle the stonys,  
 That in that cercle shewen clere.  
 It is a wondir thing to here,  
 For no man koudé preyse or gesse  
 Of hem the valewe or richesse.  
 Rubyes there were, saphires, jagounces,  
 And emeraudes more than two ounces.  
 But all byfore ful stolly  
 A fyn charboncle sette saugh I ; 1120  
 The stoon so clere was and so bright,  
 That also soone as it was nyght,  
 Men myght [è] seen to go for nede  
 A myle or two in lengthe and brede.  
 Sich lyght sprang oute of the stone,  
 That Richesse wondir brighté shone,  
 Bóthe hir heed and all hir face,  
 And eke aboute hir al the place.

Dame Richesse on hir honde gan lede  
 A yong man full of semelyhede, 1130  
 That she best loved of ony thing.  
 His lust was mych in housholding,  
 In clothyng was he ful fetys,  
 And loved to have well hors of prys ;  
 He wende to have reproved be  
 Of theft or moordre, if that he  
 Hadde in his stable ony hakeney.  
 And therefore he desired ay

1102. *have*, supplied from Fr., 'l'avoit veüe.'

1106. *besaunt*, a gold coin worth about a half-sovereign.

1117. *jagounces*, cp. 'There is a stone whiche called is jagouance. . . . Cytryne of colour, lyke garnettes of entayle.' Lydgate's *Minor Poems*, p. 188.

To be aqueynted with Richesse,  
 For all his purpos, as I gesse, 1140  
 Was forto makè gret dispense  
 Withoutè wernyng or diffense;  
 And Richesse myght it wel sustene  
 And hir dispencè well mayntene,  
 And hym alwey sich plentè sende  
 Of gold and silver forto spende  
 Withoutè lakking or daunger,  
 As it were poured in a garner.

And after on the dauncè wente  
 LARGESSE, that sette al hir entente 1150  
 Forto be honourable and free.  
 Of Alexandres kyn was she;  
 Hir mostè joyè was y-wys  
 Whan that she yaf, and seide, 'Have  
 this.'

Not Avarice, the foule caytyf,  
 Was half to gripe so ententyf,  
 As Largesse is to yeve and spende;  
 And god ynough alwey hir sende,  
 So that the more she yaf away  
 The more y-wys she hadde alwey. 1160

Gret loos hath Largesse and gret pris,  
 For bothè wyse folk and unwys  
 Were hooly to hir baundon brought,  
 So wel with yiftès hath she wrought.  
 And if she hadde an enemy,  
 I trowe that she coude tristely  
 Make hym full soone hir freend to be,  
 So large of yift and free was she.  
 Therefore she stode in love and grace  
 Of riche and pover in every place. 1170  
 A full gret fool is he y-wys  
 That bothè riche and nygart is;  
 A lord may have no maner vice  
 That greveth more than avarice;  
 For nygart never with strengthe of  
 honde

May wynnè gret lordship or londe;  
 For freendis all to fewe hath he  
 To doon his will perfourmèd be.  
 And who so wole have freendis heere,  
 He may not holde his tresour deere. 1180  
 For by ensample I tellè this,  
 Right as an adamaund y-wys  
 Can drawn to hym sotylly  
 The yren that is leid therby,

1158. *sende*, sent.1166. *tristely*, Th. *craftely*.

So drawth folkès hertis y-wis  
 Silver and gold that yeven is.  
 Largesse hadde on a robè fresh  
 Of richè purpur Sarsynesh.  
 Wel fourmèd was hir face and cleere,  
 And opened hadde she hir colere; 1190  
 For she right there hadde in present  
 Unto a lady maad present  
 Of a gold brochè, ful wel wrought.  
 And certys it myssatte hir nought,  
 For thorough hirmsokkè wrought with silk  
 The flesh was seen as white as mylk.  
 Largesse, that worthy was and wys,  
 Hilde by the honde a knyght of prys,  
 Was sibbe to Artour of Britaigne,  
 And that was he that bare the ensaigne  
 Of worship, and the gounfanoun. 1200  
 And yit he is of sich renoun  
 That men of hym seye fairè thynges  
 Byforè barouns, erles, and kynges.  
 This knyght was comen all newly  
 Fro [a] tourneyng fastè by.

Ther hadde he don gret chyvalrie  
 Through his vertu and his maistrie,  
 And for the love of his lemman  
 He caste down many a doughty man. 1210  
 And next hym daunced dame FRAUNCHISE,  
 Arayed in full noblè gyse.  
 She was not broune ne dunne of hewe,  
 But white as snowe y-fallen newe.  
 Hir nose was wrought at poynt devys,  
 For it was gentyl and tretys,  
 With eyen gladde and browès bente,  
 Hir here down to hir helis wente;  
 And she was symple as dowve on tree.  
 Ful debonaire of herte was she; 1220  
 Sñe durst neither seyn ne do  
 Bút that that hir longèd to.

And if a man were in distresse,  
 And for hir love in hevynesse  
 Hir herte wolde have full gret pite,  
 She was so amiable and free.  
 For were a man for hir bistadde,  
 She woldè ben right sore adradde  
 That she dide over gret outrage;  
 But she hym holpe his harme to aswage.

1185. *hertis*, as in v. 76, is to be read as one syllable.1188. MSS. *Sarlynysch*.1199. *i.e.* Who was sib, etc.1206. MSS. omit *a*; Fr. 'd'un torneioient.'

Hir thought it ell a vylanye. 1231  
 And she hadde on a sukkenye  
 That not of hempe ne heerdis was ;  
 So fair was noon in all Arras.  
 Lord, it was ridled fetysly !  
 Ther nas nat a poynt trewely  
 That it nas in his right assise.  
 Full wel y-clothed was Fraunchise,  
 For ther is no cloth sittith bet  
 On damysell than doth roket ; 1240  
 A womman wel more fetys is  
 (n roket than in cote y-wis.  
 The whytè roket, rylded faire,  
 Bitokeneth that full debonaire  
 And sweté was she that it bere.  
 Bì hir daunced a bachelere ;  
 I can not telle you what he hight,  
 But faire he was and of good hight,  
 All hadde he be, I sey no more,  
 The lordis sone of Wyndésore. 1250  
 And next that dauncéd CURTESYE,  
 That preiséd was of lowe and hye,  
 For neither proude ne foole was she.  
 She forto dauncé calléd me,  
 I pray god yeve hir right good grace !  
 Vhanne I come first into the place,  
 He was not nycé ne outrageous,  
 But wys and ware and vertuous ;  
 Of faire speche and of faire answee,  
 Was never wight mysseid of here, 1260  
 For she bar rancour to no wight.  
 Her broune she was and therto bright  
 Of face, of body avenaunt ;  
 She wot no lady so plesaunt.  
 They were worthy forto bene  
 An emperesse or crowned quene.  
 And by hir wente a knyght dauncyng,  
 That worthy was and wel spekyng,  
 And ful wel koude he don honour.  
 The knyght was faire and styf in stour,  
 And in armure a semely man, 1271  
 And welbiloved of his lemman.  
 Faire IDILNESSÉ thanne saugh I,  
 That alway was me fasté by ;  
 For hir have I withouté fayle

Told yow the shap and apparayle.  
 For, as I seide, loo that was she  
 That dide to me so gret bounte,  
 That she the gate of the gardyn  
 Undide and lete me passen in. 1280  
 And after dauncéd, as I gesse,  
 YOUTHE fulfilled of lustynesse,  
 That nas not yit XII yeer of age,  
 With herté wyld and thought volage.  
 Nycé she was, but she ne mente  
 Noon harme ne slight in hir entente,  
 But oonly lust and jolyte ;  
 For yongé folk wele witen ye  
 Have lytel thought but on her play.  
 Hir lemman was beside alway 1290  
 In sich a gise that he hir kyste  
 At allé tymés that hym lyste ;  
 That all the dauncé myght it see,  
 They make no force of pryvete ;  
 For who spake of hem yvel or well,  
 They were ashaméd neveradell,  
 But men myght seen hem kissé there,  
 As it two yongé dowves were.  
 For yong was thilké bachelere,  
 Of beaute wot I noon his pere, 1300  
 And he was right of sich an age  
 As Youthe his leef, and sich corage.  
 The lusty folk that dauncéd there,  
 And also other that with hem were,  
 That weren all of her mcyne,  
 Ful hendé folk and wys and free  
 And folk of faire port trewely  
 They weren allé comunly.  
 Whanne I hadde seen the countenaunces  
 Of hem that ladden thus these daunces,  
 Thanne hadde I will to gon and see 1311  
 The gardyne that so lykéd me,  
 And loken on these fairé loreres,  
 On pyntrees, cedres, and olmeris.  
 The daunces thanne y-ended were,  
 For many of hem that dauncéd there  
 Were with her lovés went away,  
 Undir the trees to have her play.  
 A lord, they lyvèd lustyly !  
 A gret fool were he sikirly 1320

1232. *sukkenye*, 'sorquanie,' a canvas jacket, or gaberdine (Cotgr.).

1236. *a poynt*, one point.

1250. *i.e.* Edward I. the son of Henry III. of England.

1265. *were* (G omits); Kaluza reads *wel was*.

1282. *Youthe* (MSS. *And she*), proposed by Ten Brink.

1308. *They*, MSS. *There*.

1314. *olmeris* (G *olliueris* ?), elms. 'Moriers' was perhaps read as *ormiers*; but *olyveris* in v. 1381 translates 'oliviers.'

That nolde his thankés such lyf lede.  
 For this dar I seyn oute of drede,  
 That who so myghte so wel fare,  
 For better lyf durst hym not care ;  
 For ther nys so good paradys  
 As to have a love at his devys.  
 Oute of that placé wente I thoo,  
 And in that gardyn gan I goo,  
 Pleyng alonge full meryly.  
 The God of Love full hastily 1330  
 Unto hym Sweté-Lokyng clepte.  
 No lenger wolde he that he kepte  
 His bowe of gold, that shoon so bright ;  
 He bad hym bend it anoon ryght.  
 And he full sooné sette an-ende,  
 And at a braid he gan it bende ;  
 And toke hym of his arowes fyve,  
 Full sharp and redy forto dryve.

Now god that sittith in mageste,  
 Fro deedly woundes he kepé me, 1340  
 If so be that he hadde me shette !  
 For if I with his arowe mette,  
 It hadde me grevéd sore y-wys.  
 But I, that no thyng wist of this,  
 Wente up and doun full many away,  
 And he me folwed faste alwey ;  
 But no where wolde I resté me,  
 Till I hadde in all the gardyn be.

The gardyn was by mesuryng  
 Right evene and square ; in compassing  
 It was as long as it was large. 1351  
 Of fruyt hadde every tree his charge,  
 But it were any hidous tree,  
 Of which ther weré two or thre.  
 There were, and that wote I full well,  
 Of pome garnettys a full gret dell,  
 That is a fruyt full well to lyke,  
 Namely to folk whanne they ben sike.  
 And trees there were of gret foisoun  
 That baren nottes in her sesoun 1360  
 Such as men noté myggès calle,  
 That swote of savour ben withalle ;  
 And almandérés gret plente,

1321. *his thankes*, willingly.1326. *his* is often indefinite in Middle English.1336. *at a braid*, immediately.1341. Skeat reads *wol* for *hadde*; Fr. 'Se il fait tant que a moi traie.' Perhaps join with the next line by reading *Or* for *For* in 1342.1363. *almanderes*, MSS. *almandres*, Fr. 'alemandiers.'

Fygés, and many a daté tree,  
 There wexen, if men haddé nede,  
 Thorough the gardyn in length and brede.  
 Ther was eke wexyng many a spice,  
 As clowe-gelofre, and lycorice,  
 Gyngevre, and greyn de Paradys,  
 Canell, and setéwale of prys, 1370  
 And many a spicé delitable  
 To eten whan men rise fro table.  
 And many homly trees ther were  
 That peches, coynes, and apples beere,  
 Médlers, plowmes, perys chesteynis,  
 Cherys, of which many oon fayne is,  
 Nótes, aleys, and bolas,  
 That forto seen it was solas ;  
 With many high lorer and pyn  
 Was renged clene all that gardyn, 1380  
 With cipres and with olyveris,  
 Of which that nygh no plente heere is.  
 There were elmés grete and stronge,  
 Maples, asshe, oke, aspé, planes longe,  
 Fyne ew, popler, and lyndes faire,  
 And other trees full many a payre—  
 What shulde I tel you more of it ?  
 There were so many treés yit,  
 That I shulde al encombred be  
 Er I had rekened every tree. 1390

These trees were sette, that I devyse.  
 One from another in assyse  
 Fyve fadome or sixe, I trowé so ;  
 But they were hye and great also,  
 And for to kepe out wel the sonne,  
 The croppés were so thicke y-ronne,  
 And every branche in other knette,  
 And ful of grené leves sette,  
 That sonnè myght there none discende.  
 Lest [it] the tender grasses shende. 1400  
 There myght men does and roes y-se,  
 And of squyrels ful great plente  
 From bowe to bowe alwey lepyngé ;  
 Connés there were also playngé,  
 That comyn out of her clapers,  
 Of sondrie colours and maners,  
 And maden many a tourneiyng  
 Upon the fresshé grasse spryngyng.

In places sawe I wellés there  
 In whiché there no froggés were, 1410  
 And fayre in shadowe was every welle.  
 But I ne can the nombre telle

1411. *shadowe*, perhaps read *shade*.

Of stremys smal, that by devyse  
Myrthe had done come through condyse ;  
Of whiche the water in rennyng  
Gan make a noysé ful lykyng.

About the brinkès of these welles  
And by the stremès over al elles  
Sprange up the grasse, as thicke y-set  
And softe as any veluet, 1420

On whiche men myght his lemman ley  
As on a fetherbed to pley,  
For the erthè was ful softe and swete.  
Through moisture of the wellè wete  
Spronge up the soté grenè gras  
As fayre, as thicke, as myster was.  
But moche amended it the place  
That therthè was of suche a grace  
That it of flourès hath plente,  
That bothe in somer and wynter be. 1430

There sprange the vyolet al newe,  
And fresshe pervynké riche of hewe,  
And floures yelow, white, and rede,  
Suche plente grewe there never in mede.  
Ful gaye was al the grounde, and queynt  
And poudred, as men had it peynt  
With many a fresshe and sondrie floure,  
That casten up ful good savour.

I wol nat longe holde you in fable  
Of al this garden delectable, 1440  
I mote my tongé stynten nede ;  
For I ne maye withouten drede  
Naught tellen you the beaute al,  
Ne halfe the bounte there with al.

I went on right honde and on lefte  
about the place ; it was nat lefte  
Tyl I had al the garden [in] bene,  
In the esters that men myghtè sene.  
And thus while I wente in my playe  
The God of Love me folowed aye, 1450  
Myght as an hunter can abyde  
The best, tyl he seèth his tyde  
To shoten at good messe to the dere,  
Whan that hym nedeth go no nere.

And so befyl I rested me  
esydes a wel under a tree,  
Whiche tree in Fraunce men cal a pyne ;

1420. *veluet*, trisyllabic.

1426. *myster*, need ; cp. vv. 6519, 6581, 7324.

1429. *hath* ; cp. 1652 for a similar change of use.

1436. *poudred*, 'piolee.'

1447. Cp. v. 1348.

But sithe the tyme of kyng Pepyne,  
Ne grewe there tree in mannès syght  
So fayre, ne so wel woxe in hight, 1460  
In al that yarde so high was none.

And springyng in a marble stone  
Had nature set, the sothe to telle,  
Under that pynè tree a welle ;  
And on the border al withoute  
Was written in the stone aboute  
Letters smal, that sayden thus :  
'Here starfe the fayré Narcisus.'

Narcisus was a bachelere 1469  
That Love had caught in his daungere,  
And in his nette gan hym so strayne,  
And dyd him so to wepe and playne,  
That nede him must his lyfe forgo.  
For a fayre lady that hight Echo  
Him loved over any créature,  
And gan for hym suche payne endure,  
That on a tymè she him tolde  
Thát, if he her loven nolde,  
That her behovéd nedès dye,  
There laye none other remedye. 1480

But nathèlesse for his beaute  
So feirs and dangerous was he  
That he nolde grauntè hir askyng,  
For wepyng ne for faire praiyng,  
And whanne she herd hym wernè soo,  
She hadde in hertè so gret woo,  
And took it in so gret dispite,  
That she withoutè more respite  
Was deed anon. But er she deied  
Full pitously to god she preied, 1490  
That proudè-hertid Narcisus,  
That was in love so dangerous,  
Myght on a day be hampred so  
For love, and ben so hoot for woo,  
That never he myght to joye atteyne,  
Than he shulde feele in every veyne  
What sorowe trewè lovers maken  
That ben so velaynesly forsaken.  
This prayer was but resonable,  
Therefore god helde it ferme and stable.  
For Narcisus, shortly to telle, 1501  
By aventure come to that welle,  
To resten hym in that shadowyng  
A day whanne he come fro huntyng.

1470. *daungere*, dominion.

1473. *nede*, adverbial.

1496. *Than*, when.

This Narcisus hadde suffred paynes  
 For rennyng alday in the playnes,  
 And was for thirst in grete distresse  
 Of heet, and of his werynesse  
 That hadde his breth almost bynomen.  
 Whanne he was to that welle y-comen,  
 That shadowid was with braunches grene,  
 He thoughte of thilké water shene 1512  
 To drynke, and fresshe hym wel withalle;  
 And doun on knees he gan to falle,  
 And forth his heed and necke out-straught  
 To drynken of that welle a draught.  
 And in the water anoon was sene  
 His nose, his mouth, his yén shene,  
 And he therof was all abasshed;  
 His owné shadowe had hym bytrasshed,  
 For well wende he the formé see 1521  
 Óf a child of gret beaute.  
 Well kouthé Love hym wreké thoo  
 Of daunger and of pride also,  
 That Narcisus somtyme hym beere.  
 He quytte hym well his guerdoun there;  
 For he musede so in the welle  
 That, shortly all the sothe to telle,  
 He lovede his owné shadowe soo,  
 That atté laste he starf for woo. 1530  
 For whanne he saugh that he his wille  
 Myght in no maner way fulfille,  
 And that he was so fasté caught  
 That he hym kouthé comforte nought,  
 He loste his witte right in that place,  
 And deyde withynne a lytel space.  
 And thus his warisoun he took  
 Fro the lady that he forsook.  
 Ladies I preye ensample takith,  
 Ye that ageyns youre love mistakith; 1540  
 For if her deth be yow to wite,  
 God kan ful well youre whilé quyte.  
 Whanne that this lettre of which I telle  
 Hadde taught me that it was the welle  
 Of Narcisus in his beaute,  
 I gan anoon withdrawé me,  
 Whanne it felle in my remembraunce  
 That hym bitiddé such myschaunce.

1537. *warisoun*, 'guerredon' (confused with *guerison*?), reward.

1538. *Fro*, MSS. *For*, 'de la meschine.'

1540. *love*, 'amis,' perhaps read *loves*; but cp. v. 1965.

1541. *to wite*, gerundive, i.e. is to be imputed to you.

1543. *lettre*, writing.

But at the lasté thanne thought I  
 That scathéles full sykerly 1550  
 I myght unto the wellé goo—  
 Wherof shulde I abaisshen soo?  
 Unto the welle than went I me,  
 And doun I loutede forto see  
 The cleré water in the stoon,  
 And eke the gravell which that shoon  
 Down in the botme as silver fyn.  
 For of the well this is the fyn,  
 In world is noon so clere of hewe.  
 The water is evere fresh and newe 1560  
 That welmeth up with wawis bright  
 The mountance of two fynger hight.  
 Abouten it is gras spryngyng  
 For moiste so thikke and wel likyng,  
 That it ne may in wynter dye  
 No more than may the see be drye.

Downe at the botmé sette sawe I  
 Two cristall stonys craftély  
 In thilké freshe and fairé welle. 1570  
 But o thing sothly dar I telle  
 That ye wole holde a gret mervayle  
 Whanne it is tolde, withouten fayle.  
 For whanne the sonnè clere in sight  
 Cast in that welle his bemys bright,  
 And that the heete descendid is,  
 Thanne taketh the cristall stoon y-wis  
 Agayn the sonne an hundrid hewis,  
 Blewe, yelowé, and rede that fresh and  
 newe is.

Yitt hath the merveilous cristall  
 Such strengthé, that the place overall, 1580  
 Bothe flour, and tree, and leves grene,  
 And all the yerde in it is seene.  
 And forto don you to undirstonde,  
 To make ensample wole I fonde.  
 Ryght as a myrroure openly  
 Shewith allé thing that stont therby,  
 As well the colour as the figure,  
 Withouten ony coverture;  
 Right so the cristall stoon shynyng,  
 Withouten ony disseyvyng, 1590  
 The estrees of the yerde accusith,  
 To hym that in the water musith.  
 For evere in which half that ye be

1578. *rede that fresh and newe is*, 'vermeil.'

1581. *flour*, MSS. *foule*; Fr. 'flors.'

1586. *stont*, MSS. *stondith*; read *Shew'th all thing*, etc.

1591. *estrees* (MSS. *entrees*), 'l'estre.'



Ye may well half the gardyne se ;  
 And if he turne, he may right well  
 Sene the remenaunt everydell.  
 For ther is noon so litil thyng  
 So hidde ne closid with shitting,  
 That it ne is sene as though it were  
 Peýntid in the cristall there. 1600  
 This is the mirrou perilous,  
 In which the proudè Narcisus  
 Sawe all his facè faire and bright ;  
 That made hym swithe to lie upright.  
 For who so loketh in that mirrou,  
 Ther may no thyng ben his socour,  
 That he ne shall there sene some thyng  
 That shal hym lede into lovyng.  
 Full many worthy man hath it  
 Y-blent, for folk of grettist wit 1610  
 Ben soonè caught heere and awayted ;  
 Withouten respite ben they baited.  
 Heere comth to folk of newè rage,  
 Heere chaunghith many wight corage ;  
 Heere lith no rede ne witte therto,  
 For Venus sone, daun Cupido,  
 Hath sowen there of love the seed,  
 That help ne lith there noon, ne rede,  
 So cerclith it the welle aboute.  
 His gynnès hath he sett withoute, 1620  
 Ryght forto cacche in his panter  
 These damoyseles and bachelers.  
 Love will noon other briddè cacche  
 Though he sette either nette or lacche.  
 And for the seed that heere was sowen  
 This welle is clepid, as well is knowen,  
 The Welle of Love of verray right,  
 Of which ther hath ful many a wight  
 Spòke in bookis dyversely.  
 But they shull never so verily 1630  
 Descripcioun of the wellè heere,  
 Ne eke the sothe of this matere,  
 As ye shull, whanne I have un  
 The craft that hir bilongith to.  
 Allway me likèd forto dwelle  
 To sene the cristall in the welle,

That shewide me full openly  
 A thousand thingès fastè by.  
 But I may say in sory houre  
 Stode I to loken or to poure, 1640  
 For sithen [have] I sorè siked ;  
 That mirrou hath me now entriked.  
 But hadde I first knowen in my wit  
 The vertue and [the] strengthe of it,  
 I noldè not have mused there ;  
 Mé had bette bene ellis where,  
 For in the snare I fell anoon  
 That hath bitresshèd many oon.  
 In thilkè mirrou sawe I tho,  
 Among a thousand thingès mo, 1650  
 A roser chargid full of rosis,  
 That with an hegge aboute enclos is.  
 Tho had I sich lust and envie,  
 That for Parys, ne for Pavie,  
 Nolde I have left to goon and see  
 There grettist hepe of roses be.  
 Whanne I was with this ragè hent,  
 That caught hath many a man and shent,  
 Toward the roser gan I go.  
 And whanne I was not fer therfro, 1660  
 The savour of the roses swote  
 Me smote right to the hertè rote,  
 As I hadde all enbawmèd be.  
 And if I ne hadde endouted me  
 To have ben hatid or assailed,  
 My thankis wolde I not have failed  
 To pulle a rose of all that route  
 To beren in myn honde aboute,  
 And smellen to it where I wente ;  
 But ever I dredde me to repente, 1670  
 And leste it grevede or forthought  
 The lord that thilkè gardyn wrought.  
 Of roses ther were gretè wone,  
 So fairè waxè never in rone.  
 Of knoppes clos some sawe I there,  
 And some wel beter woxen were ;  
 And some ther ben of other moysoun,  
 That drowè nygh to her sesoun,  
 And spedde hem fastè forto sprede.  
 I lovè well sich roses rede, 1680

1595. *he* is the indefinite pronoun, *i.e.* 'one' ;  
 p. note to v. 1540.

1604. *i.e.* to lie dead ; cp. *Tales*, D 768.

1608. MSS. *laughyng*.

1610. Perhaps we should read *I' - bleint*,  
 received ; Fr. 'mis en rage.'

1613. *of neue*, anew.

1621. *panter*, cp. *Leg. of G. W.* 131.

1641. MSS. *sighide*, cp. *Parl. of F.* 404.

1666. *My thankis* (G *Me thankis*), for my  
 part.

1666. MSS. *wole*.

1673. *wone*, abundance, seems to be plural ;  
 cp. Zupitza's *Guy of Warwick*, 10329.

1674. *rone* seems to be a northern word mean-  
 ing 'bush.' Fr. 'sous ciaux.'

For brodé roses and open also  
 Ben passéd in a day or two,  
 But knoppés wille [al] freshé be  
 Two dayés atté leest or thre.  
 The knoppés gretly liked me,  
 For fairer may ther no man se.  
 Whó-so myght have oon of all,  
 It ought hym ben full lief withall ;  
 Might I gerlond of heni geten,  
 For no richesse I wolde it leten. 1690  
 Among the knoppes I chese oon  
 So faire, that of the remenaunt noon  
 Ne preise I half so well as it,  
 Whanne I avise it in my wit.  
 For it so well was enlumýned  
 With colour reed, [and] as well fyned  
 As nature couthe it maké faire ;  
 And it hath levés wel fouré paire,  
 That kynde hath sett thorough his knowyng  
 Aboute the redé roses spryngyng. 1700  
 The stalké was as rishé right,  
 And theron stode the knoppe upright,  
 That it ne bowide upon no side.  
 The swoté smellé spronge so wide,  
 That it dide all the place aboute.  
 Whanne I haddesmelled the savour swote,  
 No will hadde I fro thens yit goo ;  
 Bot somdell neer it wente I thoo  
 To take it, but myn hond for drede  
 Ne dorste I to the rosé bede 1710  
 For thesteles sharpe of many maneeres,  
 Netles, thornes, and hokede breres ;  
 For myché they distourbled me,  
 That sore I dradde to harméd be.

The God of Love with bowé bent,  
 That all day sette hadde his talent  
 To pursuen and to spien me,  
 Was standyng by a figé tree.  
 And whanne he sawé how that I  
 Hadde chosen so ententifly 1720  
 The bothoun more unto my paie

1683. MSS. omit *al*; Fr. 'tuit frois.'

1705. *aboute*, Fr. 'replenist.' Skeat and Kaluza think that the Chaucerian part of the translation ends here; but it is possible that the absence of rhyme is due to a later alteration of a rhyme like *swete*, vb., with *swete*, adj.; or *replete* with *swete* (*replete*, vb., is given in Levin's rhyme-list).

1713. For, Skeat reads *Ful*, Kaluza *Over*, but no change is necessary.

1714. *That* (MSS. *For*), Fr. 'Que.'

1721. From this point 'botoun', hitherto translated by *knoppe*, is rendered *bothoun* (= 'button')

Than any other that I say,  
 He toke an arowe full sharply whette,  
 And in his bowe whanne it was sette,  
 He streight up to his eré drough  
 The strongé bowe, that was so tough,  
 And shette att me so wondir smerte,  
 That thorough myn ye unto myn herte  
 The takel smote, and depe it wente.  
 And therwith-all such colde me hente, 1730  
 That, under clothés warme and softe,  
 Sithen that day I have chevered ofte.  
 Whanne I was hurt thus, in [a] stounde  
 I felle doun platte unto the grounde ;  
 Myn herté failed and feynted ay,  
 And longé tyme a-swoone I lay.  
 But whanne I come out of swounyng,  
 And haddé witt and my felyng,  
 I was all maate, and wende full well  
 Of bloode have loren a full gret dell. 1740  
 But certes the arowe that in me stode  
 Of me ne drewe no drope of blode,  
 For why I founde my wounde all drewe.  
 Thanne toke I with myn hondis twee  
 The arowe, and ful fast out it plight,  
 And in the pullyng sore I sight ;  
 So at the last the shaft of tree  
 I drough out with the fethers thre  
 But yet the hokede heed y-wis,  
 The which that Beaute callid is, 1750  
 Gan so depe in myn herté pace  
 That I it myghté nought arace ;  
 But in myn herté still it stode.  
 Al bledde I not a drope of blode.  
 I was bothe anguyssous and trouble  
 For the perill that I sawe double.  
 I nysté what to seye or do,  
 Ne gete a leche my woundis to ;  
 For neithir thorough gras ne rote  
 Ne hadde I helpe of hope ne bote. 1760  
 But to the bothoun evermo  
 Myn herté drewe, for all my wo ;  
 My thought was in noon other thing,  
 For hadde it ben in my kepyng,  
 It wolde have brought my lyf agayn.

in the curious form *bothoun*. Kaluza sees in this the evidence of a new translator. If so, the new part probably begins at v. 1715. After this the translation becomes more diffuse, the rhymes have a northern colouring, and the verses more frequently begin with an accented syllable.

1733. *in a stounde*. 'tantost.'

1750. *that*, MSS. *it*.

For certis evenly, I dar wel seyn,  
 The sight oonly and the savour  
 Alleggèd mych of my langour.  
 Thanne gan I forto drawè me  
 Toward the bothon faire to se. 1770  
 And Love hadde gete hym in this throwe  
 Another arowe into his bowe,  
 And forto shetè gan hym dresse ;  
 The arowis namè was Symplesse.  
 And whanne that Love gan nyghe me mere,  
 He drowe it up withouten were,  
 And shette at me with all his myght ;  
 So that this arowe anon right  
 Thourhout [myn] eigh, as it was founde,  
 Into myn herte hath maad a wounde. 1780  
 Thanne I anon dide al my crafte,  
 Fórtó drawn out the shafte ;  
 And therwith-all I sighede este,  
 But in myn herte the heed was lefte,  
 Which ay encreside my desire,  
 Unto the bothon drawè nere.  
 And evermo that me was woo,  
 The more desir hadde I to goo  
 Unto the roser, where that grewe  
 The freysshe bothun so bright of hewe.  
 Bétir me were to have laten be, 1791  
 But it bihovede nedè me  
 To done right as myn hertè badde,  
 For evere the body must be ladde  
 Aftir the herte, in wele and woo ;  
 Of force togidre they must goo.  
 But never this archer woldè feyne  
 To shete at me with all his peyne.  
 And forto make me to hym mete,  
 The thridde arowe he gan to shete, 1800  
 Whanne best his tyme he myght espie,  
 The which was named Curtesie.  
 Into myn herte it dide avale.  
 A-swoone I fell bothe deed and pale,  
 Long tyme I lay and stirèd nought,  
 Till I abraide out of my thought.  
 And faste thanne I avysede me

1766. *evenly*, equally ; cp. v. 5280. There is no *certes* in Fr.

1776. *withouten were*, Fr. 'sans menacier,' without warning.

1791. *laten*, let.

1794-5-6. Seems to be a quotation ; not in Fr. ; cp. vv. 2034 ff.

1797, 1798. *feyne*, *peyne* (Thyn. *fyne*, *pyne*). Either an assonance or *fyne*, *peue* ; cp. vv. 1785, 1786, *desire*, *nere*.

To drawè out the shafte of tree ;  
 But evere the heed was left bihynde,  
 For ought I couthè pulle or wynde. 1810  
 So sore it stikid whanne I was hit,  
 That by no craft I myght it fit.  
 But anguyssous and full of thought  
 I felt sich woo my wounde ay wrought,  
 That somoned me alway to goo  
 Toward the rose, that plesede me soo.  
 But I ne durste in no manere,  
 Bicause the archer was so nere ;  
 'For evermore gladly,' as I rede,  
 'Brent child of fier hath mychè drede.'  
 And certis yit, for al my peyne, 1821  
 Though that I sigh yit arwis reyne,  
 And groundè quarels sharpe of steele,  
 Ne for no payne that I myght feele,  
 Yit myght I not my-silf witholde  
 The fairè roser to biholde.  
 For Love me yaf sich hardèment  
 Forto fulfille his comaundement,  
 Upon my fete I rose up thanne,  
 Féble as a forwoundid man, 1830  
 And forth to gon [my] myght I sette,  
 And for the archer nolde I lette.  
 Toward the roser fast I drowe,  
 But thornès sharpe mo than ynowe  
 Ther were, and also thistéles thikke  
 And brerès brymmè forto prikke,  
 That I ne myghtè getè grace  
 The rowè thornès forto passe,  
 To sene the roses fresshe of hewe.  
 I must abide, though it me rewe, 1840  
 The hegge aboute so thikkè was,  
 That closide the roses in compas.  
 But o thing lykèd me right wele ;  
 I was so nygh I myghtè fele  
 Of the bothon the swote odour,  
 And also se the fresshe colour.  
 And that right gretly likèd me,  
 That I so neer myght it se.  
 Sich joie anon therof hadde I,  
 That I forgate my maladie ; 1850  
 To sene I haddè siche delit,

1814. MSS. *lefte* ; Skeat proposed *felte*.

1842. *closide* is but one syllable.

1848. *neer*, either an adverbial form *nere*, from O.E. *neor* with adv. *-e*, or a scribe's mistake for *nerwe* ; Skeat reads *it myght*.

1851. Skeat's emendation, *it hadde I*, is perhaps right.

Of sorwe and angre I was al quyte,  
 And of my woundes that I hadde thore.  
 For no thing liken me myght more  
 Than dwellen by the roser ay,  
 And thennés never to passe away.  
 But whanne a while I hadde be thare,  
 The god of Love, which alto-share  
 Myn herté with his arwis kene,  
 Cast hym to yeve me woundis grene.  
 He shette at me full hastily 1861  
 An arwe naméd Company,  
 The whiché takell is full able  
 To make these ladies merciabe.  
 Thanne I anon gan chaungen hewe  
 For grevaunce of my woundé newe,  
 That I agayn fell in swounyng,  
 And sighéde sore in compleynyng.  
 Soore I compleynéd that my sore  
 On me gan greven more and more. 1870  
 I hadde noon hope of allegeaunce ;  
 So nygh I drowe to desperaunce,  
 I roughté [ne] of deth ne lyf.  
 Wheder that Love wolde me dryf,  
 Yf me a martir wolde he make,  
 I myght his power nought forsake.  
 And while for anger thus I woke,  
 The God of Love an arowe toke ;  
 Ful sharpe it was and [ful] pugnaunt.  
 And it was callid Faire Semblaunt, 1880  
 The which in no wise wole consente,  
 That ony lover hym repente  
 To serve his love with herte and all  
 For ony perill that may bifall.  
 But though this arwe was kené grounde,  
 As ony rasour that is founde  
 To kutte and kervé, at the poynt  
 The God of Love it hadde anynt  
 With a precious oynement,  
 Somdell to yeve alleggément 1890  
 Upon the woundés that he hadde  
 Through the body in my herte made,  
 To helpe her sorés and to cure,  
 And that they may the bette endure.  
 But yit this arwe, withouté more,  
 Made in myn herte a largé sore,

1853, 1854. *thore, more*, northern rhyme ;  
 perhaps *thare, mare* ; cp. 1857.

1873. MSS. *rought of deth ne of lyf*.

1874. *Wheder*, whither.

1892. As in Thynne. G *That he hadde the  
 body hole made* written later over blank line.

That in full grete peyne I abode.  
 But ay the oynement wente abroadé,  
 Thourgh-oute my woundés large and wide  
 It spredde aboute in every side. 1900  
 Through whos vertu and whos myght  
 Myn herté joyfull was and light ;  
 I hadde ben deed and alto-shent  
 But for the precious oynement.  
 The shaft I drowe out of the arwe,  
 Roukyng for wo right wondir narwe,  
 Bút the heed, which made me smerte,  
 Léfte bihyndé in myn herte  
 With other foure, I dar wel say,  
 That never wole be take away. 1910  
 Bút the oynement halpe me wele ;  
 And yit sich sorwé dide I fele  
 Thát al day I chaungéd hewe  
 Óf my woundés fresshe and newe.  
 As men myght se in my visage,  
 The arwis were so full of rage,  
 So variaunt of diversitee,  
 That men in everiche myght se  
 Bothe gret anoy, and eke swetnesse  
 And joicé meynt with bittirnesse. 1920  
 Now were they esy, now were they wode,  
 In hem I felte bothe harme and goode ;  
 Now sore without alleggément,  
 Now softyng with the oynément ;  
 It softed heere and prikked there,  
 Thus ese and anger to-gidre were.  
 The God of Love delyverly  
 Come lepande to me hastily,  
 And seidé to me in gret rape,  
 ‘ Yelde thee, for thou may not escape,  
 May no defence availe thee heere ; 1930  
 Therefore I rede make no daungere,  
 If thou wolt yelde thee hastely.  
 Thou shalt [the] rather have mercy.  
 He is a foole in sikernesse,  
 That with daunger or stoutnesse  
 Rebelligh there that he schulde plesé ;  
 In sich folye is litel ese.  
 Be meke where thou must nedis bowe,  
 To stryve ageyn is nought thi prowé ;  
 Cóme at oones and have y-doo, 1940  
 Fór I wole that it be soo.  
 Thanne yelde thee heere debonairly.’

1925. MSS. *softede . . . prikkith*. *Softed*,  
 became less violent.

1940. *nought thi prowé*, not to thy advantage.

And I answerid ful hombly :  
 ' Glády sir at youre bidding  
 I wole me yelde in allé thyng ;  
 To youre servýse I wole me take,  
 For god defende that I shulde make  
 Ageyn youre bidding résistance,  
 I wole not don so grete offence. 1950  
 For if I dide, it were no skile ;  
 Ye may do with me what ye wile,  
 Save or spille and also sloo.  
 Fro you in no wise may I goo,  
 My lyf, my deth is in youre honde,  
 I may not laste out of youre bonde ;  
 Pleyn at youre lyst I yeldé me,  
 Hopying in herte that sumtyme ye  
 Comfort and esé shall me sende,  
 Or ellis shortly, this is the eende, 1960  
 Withouten helthe I mote ay dure,  
 But if ye take me to youre cure.  
 Comfort or helthe how shuld I have,  
 Sith ye me hurt, but ye me save ?  
 The helthe of lové mot be founde  
 Where as they token firste her wounde.  
 And if ye lyst of me to make  
 Youré prisoner, I wole it take  
 Of herte and willfully at gree ;  
 Hoolly and pleyn y yeldé me, 1970  
 Withouté feynyng or feyntise,  
 To be governed by youre emprise.  
 Of you I heré so mych pris,  
 I wole ben hool at youre devis  
 Forto fulfillé youre lykyng,  
 And repenté for no thyng,  
 Hopying to have yit in some tide  
 The mercy of that I abide.'  
 And with that covenant yelde I me,  
 Anoon down knelyng upon my kne, 1980  
 Proferyng forto kisse his feete.  
 But for no thyng he wolde me lete,  
 And seide, ' I love thee bothe and preise,  
 Sens that thyn answer doth me ese,  
 For thou answerid so curteisly.  
 For now I wote wel uttirly

That thou art gentyll by thi speche ;  
 For, though a man fer woldé seche,  
 He shulde not fynden in certeyn  
 No sich answer of no vileyn, 1990  
 For sich a word ne myghté nought  
 Issé out of a vilayns thought.  
 Thou shalt not lesen of thi speche,  
 For [to] thy helpyng wole I eche,  
 And eke encresen that I may.  
 But first I wole that thou obaye  
 Fúilly for thyn avauntage,  
 Anoon to do me heere homage ;  
 And sithé kisse thou shalt my mouthe,  
 Which to no vilayn was never couthe  
 Forto aproche it ne forto touche. 2001  
 For sauff of cherlis I ne vouche  
 That they shall never neigh it nere ;  
 For curteis and of faire manere,  
 Well taught and full of gentillesse,  
 He musté ben that shal me kysse ;  
 And also of full high fraunchise,  
 That shal atteyne to that emprise.  
 And first of o thing warne I thee.  
 That peyne and gret adversite 2010  
 He mote endure, and eke travaile,  
 That shal me serve withouté faile.  
 But ther ageyns thee to comforte,  
 And with thi servise to desporte,  
 Thou mayst full glad and joyfull be  
 So good a maister to have as me,  
 And lord of so high renoun.  
 I bere of love the gonfenoun,  
 Of curtesie the banere.  
 For I am of the silf manere, 2020  
 Géntil, curteys, meke, and fre,  
 That who ever ententyf be  
 Mé to honouré, douté, and serve,  
 Néde is that he hym observe  
 Fro trespase and fro vilanye,  
 And hym governe in curtesie  
 With will and with entencioun.  
 For whanne he first in my prisoun  
 Is caught, thanne must he uttirly  
 Fro thennes forth full bisily 2030

1960. *this is*, pronounce 'this.'

1965. Cp. note to 1540.

1976. Fr. 'Ge ne m'en puis de riens doloir.'

Perhaps *Me repente*.

1978. MSS. *Mercy*; but Fr. 'la merci que entens.'

1983. Fr. 'moult.' So probably *moché* instead of *bothé*.

2016. Read *l'have*.

2024. *Nede is*, MSS. *And also*. 'Dedans lui ne puet demorer Vilonnie ne mesprison Ne nule mauvese aprison.' 'Aprison,' instruction, seems to have been confused with 'aprisonner,' 'to make prisoner,' hence vv. 2028-2032, to which there is nothing corresponding in Fr.

Caste hym gentyll forto bee  
 If he desiré helpe of me.<sup>2038</sup>  
 Anoon withoute more delay,  
 Withouten daunger or affray,  
 I bicomé his man anoon,  
 And gave hym thankés many a oon,  
 And knelide down with hondis joynt,  
 And made it in my port full quoint.  
 The joye wente to myn herté rote, <sup>2039</sup>  
 Whanne I hadde kissed his mouth soswote;  
 I hadde sich myrthe and sich likyng  
 It curéd me of langwishing.  
 He askide of me thanne hostages.  
 'I have,' he seide, 'taken fele homages  
 Of oon and other, where I have bene  
 Disceyved ofte withouten wene.  
 These felouns full of falsite  
 Have many sithes biguyléd me,  
 And through falshede her lust achieved,  
 Wherof I repente and am agreved. <sup>2050</sup>  
 And I hem gete in my daungere,  
 Her falskede shull they bie full dere!  
 But for I love thee, I seie thee pleyn,  
 I wole of thee be more certeyn.  
 For thee so sore I wole now bynde,  
 That thou away ne shalt not wynde  
 Forto denyen the covenauent  
 Or don that is not avenaunt.  
 That thou were fals it were gret reuthe,  
 Sith thou semest so full of treuthe.' <sup>2060</sup>  
 'Sire, if thee lyst to undirstande,  
 I mérveile the askingy this demande.  
 For why or wherfore shuldé ye  
 Ostáges, or borwis aske of me,  
 Or ony other sikirnesse,  
 Sith ye wote in sothfastnesse  
 That ye have me suspriséd so,  
 And hole myn herté taken me fro,  
 That it wole do for me no thing  
 But if it be at youre biddingyng; <sup>2070</sup>  
 Myn herte is youre and myn right nought  
 As it bihoveth in dede and thought,  
 Rédy in all to worche youre will,  
 Whether so turne to good or ill.  
 So sore it lustith you to plesé,  
 No man therof may you desese.

2038. *it in, (?) in it, i.e. in doing it.*2051. *And, if.*2051. *in my daungere*; cp. v. 1470.2074. *Whether, monosyllable 'wher'*; cp. 2128.

Ye have theron sette sich justice,  
 That it is werreid in many wise.  
 And if ye doute it nolde obeye,  
 Ye may therof do make a keye, <sup>2080</sup>  
 And holde it with you for ostage.'  
 'Now certis this is noon outrage,'  
 Quod Love, 'and fully I acorde;  
 For of the body he is full lord  
 That hath the herte in his tresour;  
 Outrage it were to asken more.'  
 Thanne of his awmener he drough  
 A litell keye, fetys ynowgh,  
 Which was of gold polisséd clere; <sup>2081</sup>  
 And seide to me, 'With this keye heere  
 Thyn herte to me now wole I shette;  
 For all my jowell, loke and knette,  
 I bynde undir this litel keye,  
 That no wight may carie aweye.  
 This keye is full of gret poste.'  
 With which anoon he touchide me  
 Under the side full softly,  
 That he myn herté sodeynly  
 Without anoyé haddé spered, <sup>2090</sup>  
 That yit right nought it hath me dered.  
 Whanne he hadde don his will al oute,  
 And I hadde putte hym out of doute,  
 'Sire,' I seide, 'I have right gret wille  
 Youré lust and plesance to fulfille.  
 Loke ye my servise take atte gree  
 By thilké feith ye owe to me.  
 I seye nought for recreaundise,  
 For I nought doute of youre servise,  
 But the servaunt traveileth in wayne,  
 That forto serven doth his payne <sup>2110</sup>  
 Unto that lord which in no wise  
 Kan hym no thank for his servyse.'  
 Lóvé seide, 'Dismaie thee nought,  
 Syn thou for sokour hast me sought;  
 In thank thi servise wole I take  
 And high of gre I wole thee make,  
 If wikkidnesse ne hyndre thee;  
 But as I hope it shal nought be,  
 To worshiþe no wight by aventure  
 May come, but if he peyne endure; <sup>2120</sup>  
 Abide and suffre thy distresse  
 That hurtith now; it shal be lesse.

2077. *justice, punishment.*2078. *werreid, persecuted*; cp. vv. 3251, 6264, 6926.

2084, 2085. Cp. vv. 1794 ff.

2116. MSS. *degre.*

I wote my silf what may thee save,  
 What medicyne thou woldist have ;  
 And if thi trouthe to me thou kepe,  
 I shal unto thyn helpyng eke,  
 To cure thy woundes and make hem clene,  
 Where so they be olde or grene ;  
 Thou shalt be holpen at wordis fewe.  
 For certeynly thou shalt well shewe 2130  
 Where that thou servest with good wille  
 Forto accomplysshyn and fulfill  
 My comaundementis day and nyght  
 Whiche I to lovers yeve of right.  
 ' Ah Sire, for goddis love,' seide I,  
 ' Er ye passe hens ententyfly,  
 Your comaundementis to me ye say,  
 And I shall kepe hem if I may.  
 For hem to kepen is all my thought.  
 And if so be I wote hem nought, 2140  
 Thanne may I [erre] unwityngly.  
 Wherefore I pray you entierly,  
 With all myn herté me to lere,  
 That I trespassse in no manere.'  
 The God of Love thanne chargide me,  
 Anoon as ye shall here and see,  
 Worde by worde by right emprise,  
 So as the Romance shall devise.  
 The maister lesith his tyme to lere  
 Whanne the disciple wole not here ; 2150  
 It is but veyn on hym to swynke  
 That on his lernyng wole not thynke.  
 Who so luste love, late hym entende,  
 For now the Romance bigynneth to  
 amende ;

Now is good to here in fay  
 If ony be that can it say,  
 And poynte it as the resoun is.  
 Set forth [an] other gate ywys,  
 It shall nought well in allé thyng  
 Be brought to good undirstondyng. 2160  
 For a reder that poyntith ille  
 A good sentence may ofté spille.  
 The book is good at the cendyng  
 Máad of newe and lusty thyng.

2141. *erre* (MSS. omit), 'issir de la voie' (Urry's emendation).

2149-2152. Should come after 2144 if we follow Fr. original.

2154. *bigynneth to amende*. If the reading of the text is retained it must be *gynnith l'amende*. As Fr. is 'des or amende,' perhaps we should read *wole amende*.

For who so wole the eendyng here,  
 The crafte of love he shall mowe lere,  
 If that ye wole so long abide  
 Tyl I this Romance may unhide,  
 And undò the signifiace  
 Óf this dreme into Romance. 2170  
 The sothfastnesse that now is hidde  
 Without coverture shall be kidde,  
 Whanne I undon have this dremyng,  
 Wherynne no word is of lesyng.

' Vylanye at the bigynnyng  
 I wole,' sayde Love, 'over alle thyng  
 Thou levè, if thou wolt nought be  
 Fals and trespassse ageyns me.  
 I curse and blamé generaly  
 All hem that loven vilanye. 2180  
 For vilanye makith vilayn,  
 And by his dedis a cherle is seyn.  
 These vilayns arn withouten pitee,  
 Fréndshipe, love, and all bounte.  
 I nyl resseyve unto my servise  
 Hem that ben vilayns of emprise.  
 But undirstonde in thyn entent  
 That this is not myn entendement,  
 To clepe no wight in noo ages  
 Oonly gentill for his lynages. 2190

But who so [that] is vertuous,  
 And in his port nought outrageous,  
 Whanne sich oon thou seest thee biforn,  
 Thóugh he be not gentill born,  
 Thou maist well seyn this is in soth,  
 That he is gentil by cause he doth  
 As longeth to a gentilman,  
 Of hym noon other deme I can.  
 For certeynly withouten drede  
 A cherle is deméd by his dede 2200  
 Of hie or lowe, as ye may see,  
 Or of what kynrede that he bee.  
 Ne say nought, for noon yvel wille,  
 Thyng that is to holden stille ;  
 It is no worshippe to mysseye,  
 Thou maist ensample take of Keye,  
 That was somtyme, for mysseyyng,  
 Háted bothe of olde and ying.  
 As fer as Gaweyn the worthy  
 Was preiséd for his curtesie, 2210  
 Kay was hated, for he was fell,

2185-2202. Not in Fr. It bears some resemblance to *Cant. Tales*, D 1109.

2188. *this is*, read *this*.

Of word dispitous and cruell.  
 Wherefore be wise and aqueyntable,  
 Goodly of word and resonable,  
 Bothe to lesse and eke to mare,  
 And whanne thou comest there men are,  
 Loke that thou have in custome ay  
 First to salue hym, if thou may ;  
 And if it fall that of hem somme  
 Salue thee first, be not domme, 2220  
 But quyte hym curteisly anon,  
 Without abidyng, er they goon.  
 For no thyng eke thy tunge applye  
 To speke wordis of rebaudrye ;  
 To vilayne speche in no degre  
 Late never thi lippe unbounden be,  
 For I nought holde hym, in good feith,  
 Curteys that foulé wordis seith.  
 And allé wymmen serve and preise,  
 And to thy power her honour reise ; 2230  
 And if that ony myssaiere  
 Dispise wymmen, that thou maist here,  
 Blame hym and bidde hym holde hym stille.  
 And set thy myght, and all thy wille,  
 Wymmen and ladies forto please,  
 And to do thyng that may hem ese,  
 That they ever speke good of thee ;  
 For so thou maist best praised be.  
 Loke for pride thou kepe thee wele,  
 For thou maist bothe perceyve and fele,  
 That pride is bothe foly and synne. 2241  
 And he that pride hath hym withynne,  
 Ne may his herté in no wise  
 Meken ne souplen to servyse.  
 For pride is founde in every part  
 Contrarie unto lovés art,  
 And he that loveth trew[é]ly  
 Shulde hym contené jolily  
 Withouté pride in sondry wise,  
 And hym disgysen in queyntise ; 2250  
 For queynte array withouté drede  
 Is no thyng proude, who takith hede ;  
 For fresh array, as men may sec,  
 Withouté pride may ofté be.  
 Mayntene thy silf afir thi rent,  
 Of robe and eke of garnément ;  
 For many sithé faire clothyng  
 A man amendith in mych thyng.  
 And loke alwey that they be shape,  
 What garnément that thou shalt make,

2230. *to thy power*, according to thy power.

Of hym that kan [hem] besté do 2261  
 With all that perteyneth therto.  
 Poyntis and slevés be well sittande,  
 Right and strenght on the hande ;  
 Of shone and bootés newe and faire,  
 Loke at the leest thou have a paire,  
 And that they sitte so fetisly,  
 That thesè ruyde may uttirly  
 Merveyle, sith that they sitte so pleyn,  
 How they come on or off ageyn. 2270  
 Were streitè gloveés with awmere  
 Of silk, and alwey with good chere  
 Thou yeve, if thou have [gret] richesse ;  
 And if thou have nought, spende the lesse.  
 Alwey be mery, if thou may,  
 But wasté not thi good alway.  
 Have hatte of floures as fresh as May,  
 Chapelett of roses of Wissunday ;  
 For sich array ne costneth but lite.  
 Thyn hondis wasshe, thy teeth make white,  
 And lete no filthe upon thee be ; 2281  
 Thy nailés blak if thou maist see,  
 Voide it away delyverly ;  
 And kembe thyn heed right jolily.  
 Farce not thi visage in no wise,  
 For that of love is not themprise,  
 For love doth haten, as I fynde,  
 A beaute that cometh not of kynde.  
 Alwey in herte, I redé thee,  
 Glád and mery forto be ; 2291  
 And be as joyfull as thou can,  
 Love hath no joye of sorowful man.  
 That yvell is full of curtesie  
 That lowith in his maladie.  
 For ever of love the sikénesse  
 Is meynde with swete and bitternesse.  
 The sore of love is merveilous,  
 For now [is] the lovér joyous,  
 Now can he pleyne, now can he grone,  
 Now can he syngen, now maken mone ;  
 To day he pleyneth for hevynesse, 2301  
 To morowe he pleyeth for jolynesse.  
 The lyf of love is full contrarie,  
 Which stounde-mele can ofté varie.

2271. *awmere*, same as *awmener*, v. 2087 above.

2273. MSS. omit *gret* ; Fr. 'grant richesse.'

2285. *Farce*, paint ; variant form of *farde*.

2293. *That yvell*, that sick man.

2294. MSS. *knowith*, but Fr. 'L'en en rit (Kal).'

2302. *pleyeth*, MSS. *pleyneth*.



Bút if thou canst mirthis make,  
 That men in gre wole gladly take,  
 Do it goodly, I comaunde thee.  
 For men schulde, where so evere they be,  
 Do thing that [to] hem sitting is ;  
 For therof cometh good loos and pris.  
 Where-of that thou be vertuuous 2311  
 Ne be not straunge ne daungerous,  
 For if that thou good ridere be,  
 Prike gladly that men may [the] se.  
 In armés also, if thou konne,  
 Pursue tyl thou a name hast wonne.  
 And if thi voice be faire and clere  
 Thóu shalt make [no] gret daungere  
 Whánne to syngre they goodly prey,  
 It is thi worship fortobeye. 2320  
 Also to you it longith ay  
 To harpe and gitterne, daunce and play ;  
 For if he can wel foote and daunce,  
 It may hym greetly do auaunce.  
 Among eke, for thy lady sake.  
 Songes and complayntes [se] that thou  
 make,  
 For that wole meven in her herte,  
 Whanne they reden of thy smerte.  
 Loke that no man for scarce thee holde,  
 For that may greve thee many folde ;  
 Resoun wole that a lover be 2331  
 In his yiftes more large and fre  
 Than cherles that kan naught of lovyng.  
 For who therof can ony thyng,  
 He shall be leef ay forto yeve,  
 In lovés lore who so wolde leve.  
 For he that through a sodeyn sight,  
 Or for a kyssyng, anoon right  
 Raff hoolc his herte in will and thought,  
 And to hym silf kepith right nought,  
 Aftir swich gift is good resoun 2341  
 He yeve his good [al] in abandoun.  
 Now wole I shortly heere reherce  
 Of that I have seid in verce

2311. *vertuuous*, skilled.2323. *he*, indefinite.2323. *foote*. Kal. suggests *flout* because *foot* (*altare*) is a later word.2325. *Among*, *i.e.* from time to time.2333. MSS. *ben not*. See next verse.2336. MSS. *londes*.2341. *swich gift*, Kal. for *this swiffi it of* ISS. Perhaps *After so riche gift*, Fr. 'Après riche don.'2342. MSS. omit *al*. Fr. 'tout a bandon.'

Al the sentence by and by,  
 In wordis fewe compendiously,  
 That thou the bet mayst on hem thynke,  
 Whether so it be thou wake or wynke.  
 For the wordis litel greve  
 A man to kepe, whanne it is breve. 2350  
 Who so with love wole goon or ride,  
 He mote be curteis and voide of pride,  
 Méry, and full of jolite,  
 And of largesse aloséd be.  
 Firste I joyne thee heere in penaunce  
 That evere, withouté répentance,  
 Thou sette thy thought in thy lovyng  
 To laste withouté répyntyng,  
 And thenke upon thi myrthis swete,  
 That shall folowe aftir, whan ye mete.  
 And for thou trewe to love shalt be, 2361  
 I wole, and comaundé thee  
 That in oo place thou sette all hoole  
 Thyn herte, withouté halfen doole  
 Of trecherie and sikernesse ;  
 For I lovede nevere doublenese.  
 To many his herte that wole departe,  
 Everiche shal have but litel parte ;  
 But of hym drede I me right nought  
 That in oo placé settith his thought. 2370  
 Therefore in oo place it sette,  
 And lat it nevere thennys flette.  
 For if thou yevest it in lenyng,  
 I holde it but a wrecchid thyng.  
 Therefore yeve it hoole and quyte,  
 And thou shalt have the more merite ;  
 If it be lent, than aftir soone  
 The bounte and the thank is doone,  
 Bút in love fre yeven thing  
 Requyrith a gret guerdonyng. 2380  
 Yeve it in yift al quyte fully,  
 And make thi yifte debonairly,  
 For men that yifte holde more dere  
 That yeven [is] with gladsome chere.  
 That yifte nought to preisen is  
 That man yeveth maugre his.  
 Whanne thou hast yeven thyn herte, as I  
 Have seid [to] thee heere openly,  
 Thanne aventurés shall thee fall

2349. *wordis*, perhaps read *word is*, 'la parole.'2355. *joyne*, enjoin. MSS. *that heere*, but Fr. 't'enjoing en penitence.'2365. *Of trecherie*, etc. (MSS. *For trecherie*), *i.e.* half treacherous, half faithful.2386. *maugre his*, in spite of himself.

Which harde and hevy ben with-all. 2390  
 For ofte, whan thou bithenkist thee  
 Of thy lovyng, where so thou be,  
 Fro folk thou must departe in hie,  
 That noon perceyve thi maladie.  
 But hyde thyne harme thou must alone,  
 And go forthe sole, and make thy mone.  
 Thou shalte no whyle be in o state,  
 But whylom colde and whilom hate,  
 Nowe reed as rose, now yelow and fade.  
 Suche sorowe I trowe thou never hade ;  
 Côtidien, ne quarteyne, 2401  
 It is nat so ful of peyne.  
 For often tymés it shal fal  
 In love, among thy paynés al,  
 That thou thy selfe al holy  
 Foryeten shalte so utterly,  
 That many tymés thou shalte be  
 Stýl as an ymage of tree,  
 Domme as a stone, without steryng  
 Of fote or honde, without spekyng. 2410  
 Thian, soone after al thy payne,  
 To memorye shalte thou come agayne,  
 A man abasshéd wonder sore,  
 And after syghen more and more.  
 For wytte thou wele, withouten wene,  
 In suche astate ful ofte have bene,  
 • That have the yvel of love assayde,  
 Whérthrough thou arte so dismayde.  
 After a thought shal take the so,  
 That thy love is to ferre the fro ; 2420  
 Thoushaltesaye "God ! What may this be  
 That I ne maye my lady se ?  
 Myne herte alone is to her go,  
 And I abyde al sole in wo,  
 Departed fro myne owné thought,  
 And with myne eyen se right nought.  
 Alas ! myne eyen send I ne may  
 My careful herté to convey !  
 Myne hertés gydé but they be,  
 I prayse nothyng what ever they se. 2430  
 Shul they abydè than ? nay,  
 But gone visyte without delay,  
 Thát myne herte desyret h so.  
 For certainly, but if they go,  
 A foole my selfe I maye wel holde,

2395-2442. Thynne is the only authority here, the MS. lacking a leaf.

2416. Subject omitted as in 2367.

2427. Th. *sene* for *send*; Fr. 'enovier.'

2432. Th. *gone and visyten*.

Whan I ne se what myne hert wolde.  
 Wherefore I wol gone her to sene,  
 For eased shal I never bene,  
 Bût I have some tokenyng."

Thangost thou forthe without dwellyng.  
 But ofte thou faylest of thy desyre, 2441  
 Er thou mayst come her any nere,  
 And wastest in vayn thi passage.  
 Thanne fallest thou in a newé rage ;  
 For want of sight, thou gynnest morne,  
 And homewarde pensyf thou dost retorne.  
 In greet myscheef thanne shalt thou bee,  
 For thanne agayne shall come to thee  
 Sighes and pleyntes with newé woo,  
 Thát no yecchyng prikketh soo. 2450  
 Who wote it nought, he may go lere  
 Of hem that biën love so dere.  
 No thyng thyn herte appesen may  
 That ofte thou wole goon and assay,  
 If thou maist seen by aventure  
 Thi lyvès joy, thine hertis cure.  
 So that bi gracé if thou myght  
 Atteyne of hire to have a sight,  
 Thanne shalt thou done noon other dede,  
 But with that sight thyne eyen fede. 2463  
 That fairé fresh whanne thou maist see,  
 Thyne herté shall so ravysshed be,  
 That nevere thou woldest, thi thankis, let  
 Ne rémove forto see that swete.  
 The more thou seest, in sothfastnesse,  
 The more thou covetest of that swetnesse ;  
 The more thine herté brenneth in fier,  
 The more thine herte is in desire.  
 For who considreth everydeell,  
 It may be likned wondir well 2474  
 The peyne of love unto a fere.  
 For evermore thou neighest nere,  
 Thou or whoo so that it bee,  
 For verray sothe I tell it thee,  
 The hatter evere shall thou brenne,  
 As experiencé shall thee kenne.  
 Wkere so comest in ony coost,  
 Who is next fuyre he brenneth moost.  
 And yitt forsothe for all thine hete,  
 Though thou for lovè swelte and swete,  
 Ne for no thyng thou felen may, 2481  
 Thou shalt not willen to passen away.

2463. *thi thankis*, willingly.

2477. Supply *thou*.

2478. *next*, nearest.

And though thou go, yitt must thee nede  
 Thenke allé day on hir fairhede,  
 Whom thou biheelde with so good wille,  
 And holde thi silf biguyléd ille  
 That thou ne haddest noon hardément  
 To shewe hir ought of thyne entent.  
 Thyn herte full sore thou wolt dispise,  
 And eke reprove of cowardise, 2490  
 That thou, so dulle in every thing,  
 Were domme for drede withoute spekyng.  
 Thou shalt eke thenke thou didest folye,  
 That thou were hir so fasté bye,  
 And durst not aunte thee to say  
 Sóm thyng er thou cam away.  
 Fór thou haddist nomore wonne,  
 To speke of hir whanne thou bigonne,  
 But yitt she woldé, for thy sake,  
 In armés goodly thee have take, 2500  
 It shulde have be more worth to thee  
 Thán of tresour gret plente.  
 Thus shalt thou morneandeke compleyne,  
 And gete enchesoun to goone ageyne  
 Unto the walke, or to the place  
 Where thou biheelde hir fleshly face.  
 And never, for fals suscepcioun,  
 Thou woldest fynde occasioun  
 Fórto gone unto hire hous.  
 Só art thou thanne desirous 2510  
 A sight of hir forto have,  
 If thou thine honour myghtist save,  
 Or ony erande myghtist make,  
 Thider for thi lovés sake  
 Full fayn thou woldist, but for drede  
 Thou gost not, lest that men take hede.  
 Wherefore I red [the] in thi goyng  
 And also in thyne ageyn comyng,  
 Thou be well ware that men ne wite ;  
 Feyne thee other cause than itte 2520  
 To go that weye or fasté bye ;  
 To helé wel is no folye.  
 And if so be it happé thee,  
 That thou thi lové there maist see,  
 In siker wise thou hir salewe,  
 Wherewith thi colour wole transmewe,  
 And eke thy blode shal alto quake,  
 Thyne hewe eke chaungen for hir sake ;

2497. The French suggests that we should supply *though* before *thou* and read *that for yitt* in v. 2499.

2517. Cp. *I rede the* in v. 2856.

2522. *hele*, conceal.

But word and witte with chere full pale  
 Shull wante [the] forto tell thy tale. 2530  
 And if thou maist so fer forth wynne,  
 That thou [thi] resoun dorst bigynne,  
 And woldist seyn thre thingis or mo,  
 Thou shalt full scarsly seyn the two.  
 Though thou bithenke thee never so well,  
 Thou shalt foryeté yit somdell,  
 But if thou dele with trecherie ;  
 For fals lovers mowe all folye  
 Seyn what hem lust withouten drede,  
 They be so double in her falshede ; 2540  
 For they in herte kunne thenke a thyng,  
 And seyn another in her spekyng.  
 And whanne thi speche is eendid all,  
 Ryght thus to thee it shall byfall,  
 If ony word thanne come to mynde  
 That thou to seye hast left bihynde.  
 Thanne thou shalt brenne in gret martire,  
 For thou shalt brenne as ony fiere,  
 This is the stryf and eke the affray,  
 And the batell that lastith ay ; 2550  
 This bargeyn eende may never take,  
 But if that she thi pees will make.  
 And whanne the nyght is comen anoon,  
 A thousande angres shall come uppon.  
 To bedde as fast thou wolt thee dight,  
 Where thou shalt have but smal delite ;  
 For whanne thou wenest forto slepe  
 So full of peyné shalt thou crepe,  
 Sterte in thi bedde aboute full wide,  
 And turne full ofte on every side, 2560  
 Now downward groff and now upright,  
 And walowe in woo the longé nyght ;  
 Thine armys shalt thou sprede abrede  
 As man in werre were forwerede.  
 Thanne shall thee come a remembraunce  
 Óf hir shappe and hir semblance,  
 Whereto none other may be pere.  
 And wite thou wel withouté were,  
 That thee shal [seme] somtyme that nyght  
 That thou hast hir, that is so bright, 2570  
 Naked bitwene thyne armés there,  
 All sothfastnesse as though it were.  
 Thou shalt make castels thanne in Spayne  
 And dreme of joye, all but in vayne,  
 And thee deliten of right nought,

2530. Fr. 'Parole te faudra.'

2551. *bargeyn*, strife; Kaluza changes to *batoil*.

2564. Fr. 'Com fait homs qui a mal a dens.'

While thou so slomrest in that thought,  
That is so swete and delitable ;  
The which in soth[é] nys but fable,  
For it ne shall no whilé laste.  
Thanne shalt thou sighe and wepé faste  
And say, " Dere god, what thing is  
this? 258r

My dreame is turned all amys,  
Which was full swete and apparent ;  
But now I wake, it is al shent !  
How yede this mery thought away !  
Twenty tymes upon a day  
I wolde this thought wolde come ageyne,  
For it aleggith well my peyne ;  
It makith me full of joyfull thought.

It sleth me that it lastith noght 259o  
A lord, why nyl ye me socoure  
Fro joye? I trowe that I langoure ;  
The deth I wolde me shuldé sloo  
While I lye in hir armés twoo.

Myne harme is harde, withouten wene,  
My gret unease full ofte I meene.  
But woldé love do so I myght  
Have fully joye of hir so bright,  
My peyne were quytté me rychely.

Allas, to grete a thing aske I ! 260o  
Hit is but foly and wrong wenyng  
To aske so outrageous a thyng ;  
And who so askith folily,  
He mote be warned hastily.

And I ne wote what I may say,  
I am so fer out of the way.  
For I wolde have full gret likyng  
And full gret joye of lassé thing ;  
For wolde she of hir gentylnesse  
Withouté more me oonys kysse, 261o  
It were to me a grete guerdoun,  
Relees of all my passioun.

But it is harde to come therto,  
All is but folye that I do ;  
So high I have myne herté sette  
Whére I may no comfort gette ;  
I not where I seye well or nought,  
But this I wote wel in my thought,  
That it were better of hir alloone,  
Fórtó stynte my woo and moone, 262o

2585. *How*, MSS. *Now*.

2592. *Fro joye*, MSS. *The joye*, which Skeat retains, construing as object of *langour*; but 'langour' is not used in this sense

2617. MSS. *wote not*.

A loke on me I-caste goodly,  
Than forto have al utterly  
Of an other all hoole the pley.  
A lord, where I shall byde the day  
That evere she shall my lady be?  
He is full cured that may hir see.

A god, whanne shal the dawnyng springe?  
To lye thus is an angry thyng ;  
I have no joye thus heere to lye  
Whanne that my love is not me bye. 263o

A man to lye hath gret disese,  
Which may not slepe ne reste in ese.  
I wolde it dawed and were now day,  
And that the nyght were went away ;  
For were it day I wolde uprise.

A slowé sonne, shewe thine enprise !  
Spede thee to sprede thy beemys bright,  
And chace the derknesse of the nyght,  
To putte away the stoundés stronge,  
Whiche in me lasten all to longe !" 264o

The nyght shalt thou conténé soo  
Withouté rest, in peyne and woo.

If evere thou knewe of love distresse,  
Thou shalt mowe lerne in that sicknesse.  
And thus enduryng shalt thou lye,  
And ryse on morwé up erly

Out of thy bedde, and harneyse thee,  
Er evere dawnyng thou maist see.  
All pryvyly thanne shall thou goon,  
What weder it be, thi silf alloon, 265o  
For reyne or hayle, for snowe, for slete,  
Thider she dwellith that is so swete.

The which may fall a-slepé be,  
And thenkith but lytel upon thee.

Thanne shalt thou goon ful foule a-feerd  
Loke if the gaté be unspéred,  
And waite without in woo and peyne,  
Full yvel acoolde, in wynde and reyne.  
Thanne shal thou go the dore bifore,  
If thou maist fyndé ony score, 266o  
Or hoole, or reefft what evere it were.  
Thanne shalt thou stoupe, and lay to ere,

2621. MSS. *on hir I-caste*. Skeat proposed the reading in the text; ? read *of hir*.

2624. *where*, whether; introducing a direct question.

2628. *lye*, MSS. *liggen*, but cp. rhymes in vv. 2629, 2630; 2645, 2646.

2631. *to lye*, i.e. in lying down.

2641. *contene*, continue; but Fr. 'te contendras' may have been rendered *contende*.

2650. *weder*, MSS. *whider*, Skeat's correction.

If they withynne a-slepé be—  
 I mene all save the lady free.  
 Whom wakyng if thou maist asprie,  
 Go putte thi-silf in jupartie,  
 To aské grace, and thee bimene,  
 That she may wite withouté wene  
 That thou [a-]nyght no rest hast hadde,  
 So sore for hir thou were bystadde ; 2670  
 Wommen wel ought pité to take  
 Of hem that sorwen for her sake.  
 And loke, for love of that relyke,  
 That thou thenke noon other lyke ;  
 For whanne thou hast so gret annoy,  
 Shall kysse thee er thou go away,  
 And holde that in full gret deynthe.  
 And for that noman shal thee see  
 Bifore the hous, ne in the way,  
 Loke thou be goonc ageyn er day. 2680  
 Such comyng and such goyng,  
 Such hevynesse and such wakyng  
 Makith lovers, withouten wene,  
 Under her clothés pale and lene.  
 For love leveth colour ne cleernesse,  
 Who loveth trewe hath no fatnesse ;  
 Thou shalt wel by thy-silf [y-]see  
 That thou must nedis assaied be ;  
 For men that shape hem other weye  
 Falsly her ladyes to bitraye, 2690  
 It is no wonder though they be fatt,  
 With falsé othes her loves they gatt.  
 For oft I see suche losengours  
 Fátter than abbatis or priours.  
 Yit with o thing I thee charge,  
 That is to seye that thou be large  
 Unto the mayde that hir doith serve,  
 So best hir thanke thou shalt deserve.  
 Yéve hir yiftes, and gete hir grace,  
 For so thou may thank purchase, 2700  
 That she thee worthy holde and free,  
 Thi lady, and all that may thee see.  
 Also hir servauntes worshiþe ay,  
 And please as mych as thou may ;  
 Grete good through hem may come to thee

2669. *a-nyght*, MSS. *nyght*.

2673. 'Por l'amor du haut seintueire'; cp. he similar use of *relyk* in v. 2907.

2676. The Fr. directs the lover to kiss the door before leaving; so Kaluza reads *wham* for *whan* in verse above, and suggests *Thou kisse the dore er thou go away* for v. 2676.

2704. Read *mychel*, or insert *ever* before *may*.

Bi-cause with hir they ben pryve ;  
 They shal hir telle hoe they thee fande  
 Curteis, and wys, and well doande,  
 And she shall preisé well the mare.  
 Loke oute of londe thou be not fare, 2710  
 And if such cause thou have that thee  
 Bihoveth to gone out of contree,  
 Leve hoole thin herté in hostage,  
 Till thou ageyn make thi passage.  
 Thenke longe to see the sweté thyng,  
 That hath thine herte in hir kepyng.  
 Now have I tolde thee in what wise  
 A loveþe shall do me servise ;  
 Dó it thanne if thou wolt have  
 The meedé that thou aftir crave.' 2720  
 Whanne Love all this hadde boden me,  
 I seide hym, 'Sire, how may it be  
 That lovers may in such manere  
 Endure the peyne ye have seid heere ?  
 I merveyle me wonder faste  
 How ony man may lyve or laste  
 In such peyne and [in] such brennyng ;  
 In sorwe and thought, and such sighing,  
 Aye unreléséd woo to make,  
 Whether so it be they slepe or wake, 2730  
 In such annoy contynuely,  
 As helpe me god, this merveille I  
 How man, but he were maad of stele,  
 Myght lyve a monthe such peynes to fele.'  
 The God of Love thanne seid me,  
 'Freend, by the feith I owe to thee,  
 May no man have good but he it bye ;  
 A man loveth more tendirly  
 The thyng that he hath bought most  
 dere.  
 For wite thou well, withouten were, 2740  
 In thanke that thyng is taken more  
 For which a man hath suffred sore.  
 Certis no wo ne may atteyne  
 Unto the sore of lovés peyne ;  
 Noon yvel therto ne may amounthe,  
 Nomoré than a man [may] counte  
 The drops that of the water be.  
 For drye as well the greeté see  
 Thou myghtist, as the harmés telle  
 Óf hem that with lové dwelle 2750  
 In servysé ; for peyne hem sleeth,  
 And yet ech man wolde fle the deeth.

2709. Perhaps insert *thee* before *well*.

2752. *yet*, 'toutes voies,' MSS. *that*.

And trowe thei shulde nevere escape,  
 Nerè that hope couthe hem make  
 Glád, as man in prisoun sett,  
 And may not geten forto etc  
 But barly breed and watir pure,  
 And lyeth in vermyne and in ordure ;  
 With all this yitt can he lyve,  
 Good hope such comfort hath hym yive,  
 Which maketh wene that he shall be 276r  
 Delyvered and come to liberté.  
 In fortune is [his] full trust,  
 Thóugh he lye in strawe or dust ;  
 In hopee is all his susteynyng.  
 And so for lovers in her wenyng,  
 Whiche Love hath shitte in his prisoun,  
 Good hope is her salvacioun.  
 Good hope how sorè that they smerte  
 Yeveth hem bothè will and herte 277o  
 To profre her body to martire ;  
 For hope so sore doith hem desire  
 To suffre ech harme that men devise  
 For joye that aftirward shall aryse.  
 Hope in desire hathe victorie,  
 In hope of love is all the glorie,  
 For hope is all that love may yive ;  
 Nere hope ther shulde no lover lyve.  
 Blessid be hope, which with desire  
 Avaunceth lovers in such manere ! 278o  
 Good hope is curteis forto please,  
 To kepe lovers from all disese ;  
 Hope kepith his bonde, and wole abide  
 For ony perill that may betyde ;  
 For hope to lovers, as most cheef,  
 Doth hem endure all myscheef ;  
 Hope is her helpe whanne myster is.

And I shall yeve thee eke I-wys  
 Three other thingis, that gret solas  
 Doith to hem that be in my las. 279o  
 The firstè good that may be founde  
 To hem that in my lace be bounde  
 Is SWETÈ THOUGHT, forto recorde  
 Thíng wherwith thou canst accorde  
 Best in thyne herte, where she be.

2753. *And trowe*, i.e. I trowe; cp. vv. 2756, 2758.

2775. *hathe*, MSS. *cacche*; 'Esperance par soffrir vaint.' Skeat amends to *cacche*, taking *hope* as imperative.

2783. *bonde*, MSS. *londe*,

Iceste te garantira,  
 Ne ja de toi ne partira.

Thenkyng in absence is good to thee.  
 Whanne ony lover doth compleyne,  
 And lyveth in distresse and in peyne,  
 Thanne Swetè-Thought shal comeas blyv  
 Away his angre forto dryve. 28o  
 It makith lovèrs to have remembrance,  
 Of comfort and of high plesaunce,  
 That hope hath hight hym forto wynne.  
 For Thought anon thanne shall bygygne  
 As ferre, god wote, as he can fynde,  
 To make a mirroure of his mynde ;  
 Forto biholde he wole not lette.  
 Hir persone he shall afore hym sette,  
 Hir laughing eyen, persaunt and clere,  
 Hir shappe, hir fourme, hir goodly chere  
 Hir mouth, that is so gracious, 281r  
 So swete and eke so saverous ;  
 Of all hir fetures he shall take heede,  
 His eyen with all hir lymès fede.  
 Thus Swetè-Thenkyng shall aswage  
 The peyne of lovers and her rage.  
 Thi joye shall double withoutè gesse  
 Whanne thou thenkist on hir semlynesse  
 Or of hir laughing, or of hir chere  
 That to thee made thi lady dere. 282  
 This comfort wole I that thou take ;  
 And if the next thou wolt forsake,  
 Which is not lessè saverous,  
 Thou shuldist ben to daungerous.

The secounde shal be SWETÈ-SPECH  
 That hath to many oon be leche  
 To bringe hem out of woo and were,  
 And holpè many a bachilere,  
 And many a lady sent socoure,  
 Thát have lovèd paramour, 283  
 Thróughspekyng whanne they myght heer  
 Of hir lovers, to hem so dere.  
 To hem it voidith all her smerte,  
 The which is closèd in her herte ;  
 In herte it makith hem glad and light,  
 Speche, whanne they mowe have [no] sight  
 And therefore now it cometh to mynde  
 In oldè dawès, as I fynde,  
 That clerkis writen that hir knewe ;  
 Ther was a lady, fresh of hewe, 284  
 Which of hir lovè made a songe,

2796. Kal. reads *Thought* for *Thenkyng*; but cp. v. 2815.

2808. *he shall*; cp. note to v. 2945.

2809. *eyen*, one syllable; cp. vv. 2913, 2814.

2824. MSS. *shulddest not*, 'seroies.'

On hym forto remembre amonge,  
 (n which she seyde: "Whanne that I here  
 Speken of hym that is so dere,  
 To me it voidith allé smerte.  
 I-wys, he sittith so nere myne herte  
 To speke of hym at eve or morwe  
 It cureth me of all my sorwe.  
 To me is noon so high plesauce  
 As of his persone dalyaunce." 2850  
 She wist full well that Swete-Spekyng  
 Comfortith in full mychê thyng.  
 Hir love she hadde full well assaid,  
 Of him she was full well apaid;  
 To speke of hym hir joye was sett.  
 Therefore I rede thee that thou gett  
 A felowe that can well concele,  
 And kepe thi counsell, and well hele,  
 To whom go shewe hoolly thine herte,  
 Bothe well and woo, joye and smerte;  
 To gete comfort to hym thou goo, 2861  
 And pryvly bitwene yow two  
 Yee shall speke of that goodly thyng,  
 That hath thyne herte in hir kepyng.  
 Of hir beaute, and hir semblaunce,  
 And of hir goodly countenance;  
 Of all thi state, thou shalt hym seye,  
 And aske hym counsell how thou may  
 Do ony thyng that may hir plese;  
 For it to thee shall do gret ese, 2870  
 That he may wite thou trust hym soo,  
 Bothe of thi wele and of thi woo.  
 And if his herte to love be sett,  
 His companye is myche the bett,  
 Or resoun wole he shewe to thee  
 All uttirly his pryvyte,  
 And what she is he loveth so.  
 To thee pleynly he shall undo,  
 Withouté drede of ony shame,  
 Bothe tell hir renoun and hir name. 2880  
 Whanne shall he forther, ferre and nere,  
 And namely to thi lady derc.  
 A sykter wise yee every other  
 Shall helpen, as his owne brother,  
 A trouthe withouté doublenesse,  
 And kepen cloos in sikernes;e;  
 For it is noble thing in fay  
 To have a man thou darst say  
 By pryvê counsell every deell; 2889

2881. Then shall he go further, etc.

2888. (?) Supply *that* before *thou*.

For that wole comforte thee right well,  
 And thou shalt holde thee well apayed,  
 Whanne such a freend thou hast assayed.

The thriddê good of gret comforte,  
 That yeveth to lovers moste disporte,  
 Comyth of sight and of biholding,  
 That clepid is SWETÊ-LOKYNĠ.  
 The which may [thee] noon esê do  
 Whanne thou art fer thy lady fro.  
 Wherefore thou prese alwey to be  
 In placê where thou maist hir see. 2900  
 For it is thyng most amerous,  
 Most delytable and saverous,  
 Forto a-swage a mannês sorowe,  
 To sene his lady by the morwe.  
 For it is a full noble thing,  
 Whanne thyne eyen have metyng  
 With that relike precious  
 Whereof they be so désirous.  
 But al day after, soth it is,  
 They have no drede to faren amyse; 2910  
 They dreden neither wynde ne reyne,  
 Né noon other maner peyne.  
 For whanne thyne eyen were thus in blisse,  
 Yit of hir curtesie, y-wysse,  
 Alloone they can not have her joye,  
 But to the herte they [it] convoye;  
 Parte of her blisse to hym they sende,  
 Of all this harme to make an ende.  
 The eye is a good messangere,  
 Which can to the herte in such manere  
 Tidyngis sendê, that hath sene 2921  
 To voide hym of his peynês clene.  
 Whereof the herte rejoiseth soo,  
 That a gret partye of his woo  
 Is voided, and putte away to flight,  
 Right as the derknesse of the nyght  
 Is chased with clerenesse of the mone,  
 Right so is al his woo full soone  
 Devoided clene, whanne that the sight  
 Biholden may that freshê wight 2930  
 That the herte desireth soo,  
 That al his derknesse is agoo.  
 For thanne the herte is all at ese,  
 Whanne the eyensene that may hem plese.

2902. MSS. *savorous*, 'savorous.'2917. *they*, MSS. *thou*.2920. The verse is made smoother by placing *can* after the first word of the next line.2925. *voided*, (?) *void*.2934. *the eyen*, 'li oel,' MSS. *they*.

Now have I declared thee all oute  
 Of that thou were in drede and doute,  
 For I have tolde thee feithfully  
 What thee may curen utterly.  
 And allé lovers that wole be  
 Feithfull and full of stabilite, 2940  
 Good hope alwey kepe bi thi side,  
 And Sweté-Thought, make eke abide ;  
 Sweté-Lokyng and Sweté-Speche.  
 Of all thyne harmes thei shall be leche :  
 Of every thou shalt have gret plesaunce,  
 If thou canst bidè in suffraunce,  
 And servè wel withoute feyntise ;  
 Thou shalt be quyte of thyne emprise  
 With more guerdoun, if that thou lyve,  
 But at this tyme this I thee yive.' 2950  
 The God of Love, whanne al the day  
 Had taught me as ye have herd say,  
 And enfourmed compendiously,  
 He vanyshide away all sodeynly ;  
 And I alloonè lefte all soole,  
 So full of compleynt and of doole,  
 For I sawe no man there me by.  
 My woundes me grevèd wondirly ;  
 Me forto curen no thyng I knewe  
 Sáve the bothon bright of hewe, 2960  
 Wheron was sett hoolly my thought.  
 Of other comfort knewe I nought,  
 But it were thurgh the God of Love.  
 I knewe not elles to my bihove  
 That myght me ease or comfort gete,  
 But if he wolde hym entermete.  
 The roser was withoutè doute  
 Clòsed with an haye withoute,  
 As ye toforn have herd me seyne.  
 And fast I bisiede, and wolde fayne 2970  
 Have passed the hay, if [that] I myght  
 Have geten ynne by ony slight  
 Unto the bothon so faire to see.  
 But evere I draddè blamed to be,  
 If men wolde have suspeccioun  
 That I wolde of entencioun  
 I have stole the roses that there were ;

2945. *Of every*, i.e. from each of them. Kaluza omits *gret*, but two unaccented syllables, one of which is *shall*, are not uncommon in the poem ; cp. vv. 2808, 2813.

2950. *at*, 'des ore,' MSS. *all*.

2953. *enfourmed*. Perhaps supply *me* before *enfourmed*.

2954. *away* does not seem to belong to the verse.

2968. *haye*, MSS. *hegge* ; but cp. v. 3007.

Therefore to entre I was in fere.  
 But at the last, as I bithought,  
 Whether I shulde passe or nought, 2980  
 I sawe come with a glad chere  
 To me a lusty bachelere,  
 Of good stature and of good hight ;  
 And BIALACOIL forsothe he hight,  
 Sónè he was to Curtesie.  
 And he me grauntide full gladly  
 The passage of the outter hay,  
 And séidè ' Sir, how that yee may  
 Pásse, if [that] youre willè be  
 The freshè roser forto see, 2990  
 And yee the sweté savour fele,  
 Yóu warrantè may [I] right welc.  
 So thou thee kepè fro folye,  
 Shall no man do thee vylanye ;  
 If I may helpè you in ought,  
 I shall not feynè, dredethi nought,  
 For I am bounde to youre servise,  
 Fully devoide of feyntise.'  
 Thanne unto Bialacoil saide I :  
 ' I thanke you, sir, full hertely 3000  
 And youre biheestè take at gre,  
 That ye so goodly profer me.  
 To you it cometh of gret franchise  
 That ye me profer youre servise.'  
 Thanne aftir, full delyverly,  
 Thorough the breres anon wente I,  
 Wherof encombred was the hay.  
 I was wel plesed, the soth to say,  
 To se the bothon faire and swote  
 So freshè spronge out of the rote. 3010  
 And Bialacoil me servèd well  
 Whanne I so nygh me myghtè fele  
 Of the bothon the swete odour  
 And so lusty hewed of colour.  
 But thanne a cherle (foule hym bityde)  
 Biside the roses gan hym hyde,  
 To kepe the roses of that roser  
 Of whom the namè was DAUNGER.  
 This cherle was hid there in the greves,  
 Kovered with gras and with leves, 3020  
 To spie and take whom that he fonde  
 Unto that Roser putte an honde.  
 He was not soole, for ther was moo ;

2988. *how*, (?) *now* ; cp. v. 2585.

2992. MSS. *Youre warrantè*, and omit *I* ; 'G vous i puis bien garantir.'

2998. Possibly *devoided* ; but cp. v. 3723.

3001. *biheest*, with inorganic *-e* as in Chaucer.



For with hym weré other twoo  
 Of wikkid maners and yvel fame.  
 That oon was clepid by his name  
 WYKKED-TONGE (god yeve hym sorwe !),  
 For neither at evé ne at morwe  
 He can of no man good [ne] speke ;  
 On many a just man doth he wreke. 3030  
 Ther was a womman eke that hight  
 SHÁME, that, who can reken right,  
 Tréspace was hir fadir name,  
 Hir moder Resoun ; and thus was Shame  
 Brought of these ilké twoo.  
 And yitt hadde Trespasse never adoo  
 With Resoun, ne never ley hir bye  
 He was so hidous and so ugly,  
 I mené this that Trespas hight ;  
 But resoun conceyved of a sight 3040  
 Shame, of that I spake aforne.  
 And whanne that Shame was thus [y-]  
     borne,  
 It was ordeynéd that CHASTITE  
 Shulde of the Roser lady be,  
 Which of the bothons more and lasse  
 With sondre folk assailéd was,  
 That she ne wisté what to doo.  
 For Venus hir assailith soo,  
 That nyght and day from hir she stale  
 Bothons and roses over-all. 3050  
 To Resoun thanne praieth Chastite,  
 Whom Venus hath flemed over the see,  
 That she hir daughter wolde hir lene,  
 To kepe the Roser fresh and grene.  
 Anoon Resoun to Chastite  
 s fully assented that it be,  
 And grauntide hir at hir request  
 That Shame, by cause she is honest,  
 Shall keper of the roser be.  
 And thus to kepe it ther were three, 3060  
 That noon shulde hardy be ne bolde,  
 Wére he yong or were he olde,  
 Ageyn hir will away to bere  
 Bothons ne roses that ther were.  
 I hadde wel spedde, hadde I not bene  
 Awayted with these three and sene.  
 For Bialacoil, that was so faire,  
 So gracious and debonaire,  
 Quytt hym to me full curteislye,

3038. 'Si hidous et si ley'; it would seem, therefore, as if second *so* belonged in text, and should not be omitted as Kaluza suggests.

And me to pleasé, bade that I 3070  
 Shulde drawe me to the bothon nere ;  
 Prese in to touché the rosere  
 Which bare the roses, he yaf me leve ;  
 This graunte ne myght but lytel greve.  
 And for he sawe it liked me,  
 Ryght nygh the bothon pullede he  
 A leef all grene and yaff me that ;  
 The whiche full nygh the bothon sat,  
 I made [me] of that leef full queynte.  
 And whanne I felte I was aqueynte 3080  
 With Bialacoil, and so pryve,  
 I wende all at my will hadde be.  
 Thanne waxe I hardy forto telle  
 To Bialacoil how me bifelle  
 Of love, that toke and wounded me ;  
 And seidé : ' Sir, so mote I thee,  
 I may no joye have in no wise  
 Uppon no sidé, but it rise.  
 For sithens, if I shall not feyne,  
 In herte I have hadde so gret peynce, 3090  
 So gret annoy and such affray,  
 That I ne wote what I shall say,  
 I drede youre wrathé to deserve.  
 Lever me were that knyvés kerve  
 My body shulde in pecys small,  
 Than any weyes it shuldé fall  
 That ye wrattéd shulde ben with me.'  
 ' Sey boldély thi will,' quod he,  
 ' I nyl be wroth, if that I may, 3099  
 For nought that thou shalt to me say.'  
 Thanne seide I, ' Ser, not you displeasé  
 To knowen of myn gret unnese,  
 In which oonly love hath me brought.  
 For peynés gret, disese, and thought,  
 Fro day to day he doth me drye—  
 Supposeth not, sir, that I lye.  
 In me fyve woundés dide he make,  
 The soore of whiche shall nevere slake ;  
 But ye the Bothon graunté me  
 Which is moost passaunt of beaute, 3110  
 My lyf, my deth, and my martire,  
 And tresour, that I moost desire.'  
 Thanne Bialacoil, affrayéd all,  
 Seydé, ' Sir, it may not fall—  
 That ye desire, it may not arise.  
 What ! Wolde ye shende me in this wise ?

3096. *any weyes*, MSS. *in any wise* (Kaluza).  
 3115. *arise*, cp. 3088 ; perhaps originally *arive*,  
 with assonance.

A mochel foolé thanne I were,  
 If I suffride you away to bere  
 The fresh bothoun so faire of sight.  
 For it were neither skile ne right, 3120  
 Of the roser ye broke the rynde,  
 Or take the rose afor his kynde ;  
 Ye are not curteys to aské it.  
 Late it still on the roser sitt,  
 And growe til it amended be  
 And parfytly come to beaute ;  
 I nolde not that it pulléd were  
 Fró the roser that it bere,  
 To me it is so leef and deere.' 3129  
 With that sterte oute anon Daungere,  
 Out of the place were he was hidde ;  
 His malice in his chere was kidde.  
 Full grete he was and blak of hewe,  
 Stúrdy and hidous, who so hym knewe,  
 Like sharp urchouns his here was growe ;  
 His eyes reed as the fyré glowe,  
 His nosé frounced, full kirkéd stode.  
 He come criande as he were woode,  
 And seide : ' Bialacoil, telle me why  
 Thou bryngest hider so booldely 3140  
 Hym that [is] so nygh the roser !  
 Thou worchist in a wrong manner ;  
 He thenkith to dishonoure thee.  
 Thou art wel worthy to have maugree,  
 To late hym of the roser wite ;  
 Who serveth feloun is yvel quitte.  
 Thou woldist have doon gret bounte,  
 And he with shame wolde quyté thee.  
 Fle hennés, Felowe ! I rede thee goo,  
 It wanteth litel I wole thee sloo ; 3150  
 For Bialacoil ne knewe thee nought,  
 Whanne thee to serve he sette his thought ;  
 For thou wolt shame hym, if thou myght,  
 Bóthe ageyns resoun and right.  
 I wole no more in thee affye,  
 That comest so slyghly for tresphe ;  
 Fór it preveth wonder well  
 Thy sleight and tresoun every deell.'  
 I durst no more there make abode

3118. The verse would be smoother without *avey*; cp. note to v. 2954.

3136. Only in Thynne, which reads *reed sparklingly*; 's'ot les iex rouges comme feus.'

3137 *kirked*, 'froncie,' translated in v. 7259 'frouncen.' Morris suggested *kroked*, which Skeat thinks likely.

3150. *I*, Th. *he*; Gl. *it*; Fr. 'ge.'

Fór the cherl, he was so wode ; 316  
 So gan he threté and manace,  
 And thurgh the haye he dide me chace.  
 For fear of hym I tremblyde and quoke,  
 So cherlishly his heed it shoke ;  
 And seide, if eft he myght me take  
 I shulde not from his hondis scape.  
 Thanne Bialacoil is fledde and mate,  
 And I, all soole, disconsolate,  
 Was left aloone in peyne and thought.  
 For shame to deth I was nygh brought.  
 Thanne thought I on myn high foly, 317  
 How that my body utterly  
 Was yeve to peyne and to martire ;  
 And therto hadde I so gret ire,  
 That I ne durst the hayé passe.  
 There was noon hope, there was no grace  
 I trowe nevere man wiste of peyne,  
 But he were laced in lovés cheyne ;  
 Ne no man [not], and sooth it is,  
 But if he love, what anger is. 318  
 Love holdith his heest to me right wele,  
 Whanne peyne he seide I shuldé fele.  
 Noon herte may thenke, ne tungé seyne:  
 A quarter of my woo and peyne ;  
 I myght not with the anger laste.  
 Myn herte in poynt was forto brast,  
 Whanne I thought on the rose, that soo  
 Was thurgh Daunger cast me froo.  
 A longe while stode I in that state, 319  
 Til that me saugh so madde and mate  
 The lady of the highe ward,  
 Which from hir tour lokide thiderward.  
 RESOUN men clepé that lady,  
 Which from hir tour delyverly,  
 Come doun to me withouté more.  
 But she was neither yong ne hoore,  
 Ne high ne lowe, ne fat ne lene,  
 But best as it were in a mene.  
 Hir eyen twoo were cleer and light  
 As any candell that brenneth bright; 320  
 And in hir heed she hadde a crowne.  
 Hir semede wel an high persouné ;  
 For rounde enviroon hir crownet  
 Was full of riché stonys frett.  
 Hir goodly semblaunt by devys  
 I trowe were maad in Paradys ;  
 For nature hadde nevere such a grace  
 To forge a werk of such compace.

3175. MSS. *hayes*, 'la haie.'

For certeyn, but if the letter lye,  
 Góð hym-silf, that is so high, 3210  
 Máde hir afir his ymage,  
 And yaff hir sith sich avauntage,  
 That she hath myght and seignorie  
 To kepè men from all folye.  
 Who so wole trowe hir lore,  
 Ne may offenden nevermore.

And while I stode thus derk and pale,  
 Resoun bigan to me hir tale.

She seide : ' Al hayle, my sweté freende !  
 Foly and childhoode wole thee sheende,  
 Which the have putt in gret affray ; 3221  
 Thou hast bought deere the tyme of May,  
 That made thyn herte mery to be.

In yvell tyme thou wentist to see  
 The gardyne, wherof Idilnesse  
 Báre the keye and was maistresse,  
 Whánne thou yedest in the daunce  
 With hir, and haddest aqueyntaunce.

Hir aqueyntaunce is perilous,  
 First softe and afir noious ; 3230  
 She hath [thee] trashed withouté wene.

The God of Love hadde the not sene,  
 Ne hadde Idilnessè thee conveyed  
 In the verger, where Myrthe hym played.  
 If foly have supprised thee,  
 Do so that it recovered be,

And be wel ware to take nomore,  
 Counsel that greveth afir sore.  
 He is wise that wole hym-silf chastise ;  
 And though a yong man in ony wise

Trespase amonge and do foly, 3241  
 Late hym not tarye, but hastily  
 Late hym amende what so be mys.

And eke I counseile thee I-wys  
 The God of Love hoolly foryete,  
 That hath thee in sich peynè sette,  
 And thee in herte tourmented soo.

I can not sene how thou maist goo  
 Other weyès to garisoun ;  
 For Daunger that is so feloun 3250  
 Felly purposith thee to werreye,  
 Which is ful cruel, the soth to seye.

And yitt of Daunger cometh no blame  
 In réwarde of my doughter Shame,  
 Which hath the roses in her warde,  
 As she that may be no musarde.

3228. MSS. *hadde*.3240. MSS. *in ony wise*; cp. note to v. 3096.

And WIKKED-TUNGE is with these two,  
 That suffrith no man thider goo.

For er a thing be, do he shall,  
 Where that he cometh over-all, 3260  
 In fourty places, if it be sought,  
 Seye thyng that nevere was don ne wrought ;  
 So moche tresoun is in his male,  
 Of falsnesse forto seyne a tale.

Thou delest with angry folk y-wis ;  
 Whérfore to thee bettir is  
 Fróm these folk away to fare,  
 For they wole make thee lyve in care.  
 This is the yvell that love they calle,  
 Wherynne ther is but foly alle ; 3270  
 For love is foly everydell.

Who loveth in no wise may do well,  
 Ne sette his thought on no good werk.  
 His scole he lesith, if he be clerk ;  
 Of other craft eke if he be,

He shal not thryve therynne, for he  
 In love shal have more passioun  
 Than monké, hermyte, or chanoun.  
 The peyne is hard out of mesure,  
 The joye may eke no while endure ; 3280  
 Afd in the possessioun,

Is mych tribulacioun.  
 The joye it is so short lastyng,  
 And but in happe is the getyng.  
 For I see there many in travail  
 That attè lastè foulè fayle.

I was no thyng thi counseler  
 Whanne thou were maad the omager  
 Of God of Love to hastily.  
 Ther was no wisdom, but foly ; 3290  
 Thyne herte was joly but not sage,  
 Whanne thou were brought in sich a rage,  
 To yeldè thee so redily.

And to leve of his gret maistrie,  
 I rede thee Love away to dryve,  
 That makith thee recche not of thi lyve.  
 The foly more fro day to day  
 Shal growe, but thou it putte away.  
 Take with thy teeth the bridel faste 3299  
 To daunte thyne herte, and eke thee caste,  
 If that thou maist gete thee defence,  
 Forto redresse thi first offence.

Who so his herte alwey wole leve  
 Shal fynde amonge that shal hym greve.  
 Whanne I hir herd thus me chastise,

3274. MSS. *a clerk*; Fr. 's'il est clers.

I answerd in ful angry wise ;  
 I prayed hir ceessen of hir speche,  
 Outher to chastise me or teche,  
 To biddè me my thought refreyne, 3309  
 Which Love hath caught in his demeyne.  
 'What ! Wene ye Lovè wole consente,  
 That me assailith with bowè bente,  
 To drawe myne herte out of his honde,  
 Which is so qwikly in his bonde ?  
 That ye counseyle may nevere be ;  
 For whanne he firste arestide me,  
 He took myne herte so hoole hym tille,  
 That it is no thyng at my wille.  
 He taught it so hym forto obey,  
 That he it sparrède with a key. 3320  
 I pray yow late me be all stille,  
 For ye may well, if that ye wille,  
 Youre wordis waste in idilnesse.  
 For utterly, withouten gesse,  
 All that ye seyn is but in veyne.  
 Me were lever dye in the peyne,  
 Than Lovè to-me-ward shulde arette  
 Falsheed, or tresoun on me sette.  
 I wole me getè prys or blame  
 And Lovè trewe to save my name ; 3330  
 Who that me chastith I hym hate.'  
 With that word Resoun wente hir gate,  
 Whanne she saugh for no sermonyng  
 She myght me fro my foly brynge.  
 Thanne dismaïèd I, lefte all sool,  
 Forwery, forwandred, as a fool,  
 For I ne knewe no chevisaunce.  
 Thanne fell into my remembraunce  
 How Lovè bade me to purveye  
 A felowe, to whom I myght seye 3340  
 My counsell and my pryvete,  
 For that shulde moche availè me.  
 With that bithought I me that I  
 Hádde a felowe fastè by  
 Tréwe and siker, curteys and hende ;  
 And he was called by name a FREENDE,  
 A trewer felowe was no wher noon.  
 In haste to hym I wente anoon,  
 And to hym all my woo I tolde,  
 Fro hym right nought I wold witholde.  
 I tolde him all withoutè were, 3351  
 And made my comyleynt on Daungere,  
 How forto see he was hidous,

3319. *taught*, MSS. *thought*.  
 3331. MSS. *chastiseth*.

And to-me-ward contrarious ;  
 The whichè, thurgh his cruelte  
 Was in poynt to have meynèd me.  
 With Bialacoil whanne he me sey  
 Withynne the gardeyn walke and pley,  
 Fro me he made hym forto go ;  
 And I, bilefte aloone in woo, 3360  
 I durst no lenger with hym speke,  
 For Daunger seide he wolde be wreke,  
 Whanne that he sawè how I wente  
 The freshè bothon forto hente,  
 If I were hardy to come near  
 Bitwene the hay and the Roser.

This freend, whanne he wiste of my  
 thought,

He discomforted me right nought,  
 But seïd, 'Felowe, be not so madde,  
 Ne so abaysshèd, nor bystadde ; 3370  
 My silf I knowe full well Daungere,  
 And how he is feers of his cheere  
 At primè temps love to manace.  
 Ful ofte I have ben in his caas ;  
 A feloun firste though that he be,  
 Aftir thou shalt hym souple se.  
 Of longè passed I knewe hym well ;  
 Ungoodly first though men hym feele,  
 He wole meke aftir in his beryng  
 Been, for service and obeysyng. 3380  
 I shal thee telle what thou shalt doo :  
 Mekely I rede thou go hym to,  
 Of hertè pray hym specialy  
 Of thy trespace to have mercy,  
 And hotè well, [hym] here to plesse,  
 That thou shalt nevermore hym dis-  
 plesse.

Who can best serve of flaterie,  
 Shall please Daunger most uttirly.'  
 My freend hath seïd to me so wel,  
 That he me esid hath somdell, 3390  
 And eke allegged of my torment.  
 For thurgh hym had I hardèment  
 Agayn to Daunger forto go,  
 To preve if I myght meke hym soo.  
 To Daunger came I all ashamed,  
 The which aforn me hadde y-blamed,  
 Desiryng forto pese my woo.

3379. *meke*, MSS. *make*, 'amoloier'.  
 3383. *Of herte*; cp. 3902.  
 3385. *w-ll hym*, Skeat's emendation for *hym*  
*well* of MSS. (?) *his ire to pese* (*pese* aphetic form  
 of *appese*); cp. v. 3397.

But over hegge durst I not goo,  
 For he forbode me the passage.  
 I fonde hym cruel in his rage 3400  
 And in his honde a gret burdoun.  
 To hym I knelide lowe a-down,  
 Ful meke of port and symple of chere,  
 And seide, 'Sir, I am comen heere  
 Oonly to aske of you mercy ;  
 It greveth me full gretly  
 That evere my lyf I wratthéd you.  
 But forto amenden I am come now,  
 With all my myght, bothe loude and stille,  
 To doon right at youre owné wille. 3410  
 For Lové made me forto doo  
 That I have trespassed hidirto,  
 Fro whom I ne may withdrawemyne herte.  
 Yit shall never for joy ne smerte,  
 What so bifallé, good or ille,  
 Offendé more ageyn youre wille ;  
 Lever I have endure disese,  
 Than do that you shuldé displese.  
 I you require and pray that ye  
 Of me have mercy and pitee 3420  
 To stynte your ire that greveth soo.  
 That I wole swere for ever mo  
 To be redressid at youre likyng,  
 If I trespasse in ony thyng.  
 Save that I pray thee graunté me  
 A thyng that may not warnéd be :  
 That I may lové all oonly,  
 Noon other thyng of you aske I.  
 I shall doon ellés well I-wys,  
 If of youre grace ye graunte me this ; 3430  
 And ye may not letten me,  
 For wel wot ye that love is free,  
 And I shall loven sithen that I wille,  
 Who evere like it, well or ille.  
 And yit ne wold I for all Fraunce  
 Do thyng to do you displesaunce.'  
 Thanne Daunger fille in his entent  
 Forto foryeve his male talent ;  
 But all his wratthe yit atté laste

3398. *hegge*, probably mistake for *haye*.

3406. *It greveth*, MSS. *That greveth*.

3407. *evere my lyf*, read (?) *ever in my lyf*.

3422. *That*, (?) *And*; Fr. 'et.'

3429. *elles*, Th. *all*. Bell: *I shal don at your wil twys*, which aptly gives sense of original.

3437. *fille in his entent*, (?) failed.

Moult trovai Dangier dur et lent,  
 De pardonner son maitalent.

keat interprets 'condescended,' but has *fall* uch a meaning?

He hath relese, I preyde so faste. 3440  
 Shortly he seidé, 'Thy request  
 Is not to mochel dishonest,  
 Né I wole not werne it thee ;  
 For yit no thyng engreveth me.  
 For though thou love thus evermore,  
 To me is neither softe ne soore.  
 Love where the list, what recchith me,  
 So [thou] fer fro my roses be?  
 Trust not on me for noon assay,  
 If ony tyme thou passe the hay.' 3450  
 Thus hath he graunted my praier.  
 Thanne wente I forth withouten were  
 Unto my freend, and tolde hym all,  
 Which was right joyfull of my tale.  
 He seide, 'Now goth wel thyn affaire,  
 He shall to thee be debonaire ;  
 Though he aforn was dispitous,  
 He shall heere aftir be gracious.  
 If he were touchid on somme good veyne,  
 He shuld yit rewen on thi peyne. 3460  
 Suffre I rede, and no boost make,  
 Till thou at good mes maist hym take.  
 By sufferaunce and wordis softe  
 A man may overcomé ofte  
 Hym that aforn he hadde in drede,  
 In bookis sothly as I rede.'  
 Thus hath my freend with gret comfort  
 Avaunced me with high disport,  
 Which wolde me good as mych as I.  
 And thanne anon full sodeynly 3470  
 I toke my leve, and streight I wente  
 Unto the hay, for gret talent  
 I hadde to sene the fresh bothoun  
 Wherynne lay my salvacioun.  
 And Daunger toke kepe, if that I  
 Kepe hym covenaut trewely.  
 So sore I dradde his manasyng  
 I durst not breké his biddyng  
 For lest that I were of hym shent  
 I brake not his comaundément, 3480  
 For to purchase his good wille.  
 It was [nat] forto come ther-tille,  
 His mercy was to ferre bihynde ;  
 I wepte for I ne myght it fynde.  
 I compleynéd and sighed sore,

3450. MSS. *I ony tyme to passe*, 'se tu james passes la haie.'

3482. *nat*, MSS. omit. Morris, etc. supply *hard*.

And langwisschéd evermore,  
 Fór I durst not over goo  
 Unto the rose I loved soo.  
 Thurgh my demenyng outerly  
 [Thanne he had knowlege certanly,] 3490  
 That Love me ladde in sich a wise  
 That in me ther was no feyntise,  
 Falsheed, ne no trecherie.  
 And yit he full of vylanye,  
 Of disdeyne, and cruelte,  
 Ofí me ne wolde have pite  
 His cruel will forto refreyne,  
 Though I wepe alwey and me compleyne.  
 And while I was in this torment,  
 Were come of gracé, by god sent, 3500  
 Ffaunchise and with hir Pite.  
 Fulfill the bothen of bounte,  
 They go to Daunger anoon-right,  
 To forther me with all her myght,  
 And helpé in worde and in dede;  
 For well they saugh that it was nede.  
 First of hir gracé dame Fraunchise  
 Hath taken [word] of this emprise;  
 She seide, 'Daunger, gret wrong ye do  
 To worche this man so myché woo, 3510  
 Or pynten hym so angerly;  
 It is to you gret villanye.  
 I can not see [ne] why ne how  
 That he hath trespassed ageyn you,  
 Save that he loveth; wherfore ye shulde  
 The more in cherete of hym holde.  
 The force of love makith hym do this;  
 Who wolde hym blame, he dide amys.  
 He leseth more than ye may do;  
 His peyne is harde, ye may see lo, 3520  
 And Love in no wise wolde consente  
 That he have power to repente.  
 For though that quyk ye wolde hym sloo,  
 Fro love his herté may not goo.  
 Now, sweté Sir, is it youre ese  
 Hym forto angre or disese?  
 Alas, what may it you avauce

3489. MSS. *Thurgh out my demyng outerly That he had . . .* (Gl. omits) *Thanne love me ladde*, etc.; Fr. 'Tant fis qu'il a certainement Veü a mon contenment Qu'Amors,' etc.

3502. *the bothen*, i.e. both, full of kindness, visit Daunger immediately. MSS. *the bothom*, which Skeat refers to the rosebud; Fr. 'car l'une a l'autre me vodroit.'

3505. (?) Omit *in* before *dede*.

3522. *he*, MSS. *ye*, a common scribal error.

To done to hym so gret grevaunce?  
 What worship is it agayn hym take,  
 Or on youre man a werré make, 3530  
 Sith he so lowly every wise  
 Is redy, as ye lust devise?  
 If Love hath caught hym in his lace  
 You for tobeye in every caas,  
 And ben youre suget at youre will,  
 Shuld ye therfore willen hym ill?  
 Ye shulde hym sparé more all oute  
 Than hym that is bothe proude and stoute.  
 Curtesie wole that ye socour  
 Hem that ben meke undir youre cure. 3540  
 His herte is hard that wole not meke,  
 Whanne men of mekenesse hym biseke.'  
 'That is certeyn,' seide Pite,  
 'We se ofte that humilite  
 Bothe ire and also felonye  
 Venquysssteth, and also malencolye.  
 To stondé forth in such duresse,  
 This cruelte and wikkidnesse.  
 Wherfore I pray you, Sir Daungere,  
 Forto mayntene no lenger heere 3550  
 Such cruel werre agayn youre man,  
 As hoolly youres as ever he can;  
 Nor that ye worchen no more woo  
 On this caytif that langwissstith soo,  
 Which wole no more to you trespasse,  
 But putte hym hoolly in youre grace.  
 His offense ne was but lite;  
 The god of Love it was to wite,  
 That he youre thrall so gretly is;  
 And if ye harme hym, ye done amys. 3560  
 For he hath hadde full hard penaunce,  
 Sith that ye refte hym thaqueyntaunce  
 Of Bialacoil, his mosté joye,  
 Which alle hise peynés myght acoye.  
 He was biforn anoyed sore,  
 But thanne ye doubled hem well more.  
 For he of blis hath ben full bare,  
 Sith Bialacoil was fro hym fare.  
 Love hath to hym do gret distresse,  
 He hath no nede of more duresse; 3570  
 Voideth from hym youre ire, I rede,  
 Ye may not wynten in this dede.  
 Makith Bialacoil repeire ageyn,

3546. *Venquysssteth*, two syllables; cp. 3554-

3548. *This*, This is.

3554. *On*, MSS. *Upon*.

3566. *hem*, MSS. *hym*, 'ses anuis.'

And haveth pite upon his peyne ;  
 For Fraunchise wole and I, Pite,  
 That mercyful to hym ye be.  
 And sith that she and I accorde  
 Have upon hym misericorde,  
 For I you pray and eke moneste  
 Nought to refusen oure requeste. 3580  
 For he is hard and fell of thought,  
 That for us two wole do right nought.'

Daunger ne myght no more endure,  
 He mekede hym unto mesure.  
 'I wole in no wise,' seith Daungere,  
 'Denye that ye have asked heere,  
 It were to gret uncurtesie ;  
 I wole he have the companye  
 Of Bialacoil, as ye devise ;  
 I wole hym letté in no wise.' 3590  
 To Bialacoil thanne wente in hye  
 Fraunchise, and seide full curteislye :  
 'Ye have to longé be deignous  
 Unto this lover and daungerous,  
 Fro him to withdrawe your presence,  
 Whiche hath do to him great offence,  
 That ye not wolde upon him se ;  
 Wherefore a sorouful man is he.  
 Shape ye to paye him, and to please,  
 Of my love if ye wol have ease ; 3600  
 Fulfyl his wyl, sith that ye knowe  
 Daunger is daunted and brought lowe  
 Through helpe of me and of Pyte ;  
 You dare no more aferdè be.'

'I shal do right as ye wyl,'  
 Saith Bialacoil, 'for it is skyl,  
 Sith Daunger wol that it so be.'  
 Than Fraunchise hath him sent to me  
 Bialacoil at the begynnyng,  
 Valued me in his commyng ; 3610  
 No straungénesse was in him sene,  
 No more than he ne had wrathed bene.  
 As fayre semblaunt than shewed he me,  
 And goodly, as aforne dyd he.  
 And by the honde withouté doute,  
 Within the haye right al aboute  
 Hé ladde me with right good chere,  
 Al envyron the vergere  
 That Daunger hadde me chased fro.  
 Nowe have I leave over al to go, 3620

3596-3600. From Thynne; two leaves of  
 Glasgow MS. missing.

3604. *dare*, cp. note to v. 1089.

Nowe am I rayсед at my devyse  
 Fro hellé unto paradise.  
 Thus Bialacoil of gentylnesse,  
 With al his payne and besynesse,  
 Hath shewed me onely of grace  
 The estres of the swoté place.  
 I sawe the Rose whan I was nygh  
 Was greater woxen and more high,  
 Fresshe, roddy, and fayre of hewe,  
 Of coloure veer yliche newe. 3630  
 And whan I hadde it longé sene,  
 I sawe that through the leves grene  
 The Rosé spredde to spaunysshinge,  
 To sene it was a goodly thyng.  
 But it ne was so sprede on brede  
 That men within myght knowe the sede ;  
 For it covert was and close  
 Bothe with the leves and with the rose.  
 The stalke was even and grene upright,  
 It was theron a goodly syght, 3640  
 And wel the better, withouté wene,  
 For the seed was nat [y-]sene.  
 Ful fayre it spraddé (God it blesse),  
 For suche another, as I gesse,  
 Aforne ne was, ne more vermayle.  
 I was abawéd for marveyle,  
 For ever the fayer that it was,  
 The more I am bounde in Lovés laas.  
 Longe I abode there, sothe to saye,  
 Tyl Bialacoil I ganne to praye, 3650  
 Whan that I sawe him, in no wyse  
 To me warnen his servyce,  
 That he me woldé graunt a thyng,  
 Whiche to remembre is wel syttyng.  
 This is to sayne, that of his grace  
 He wolde me yeve leysar and space,  
 To me that was so desyrus  
 To have a kyssynge precious  
 Of the goodly fresshé Rose,  
 That so swetely smelleth in my nose. 3660  
 'For if it you displeaséd nought  
 I woldé gladly, as I have sought,  
 Háve a cosse therof freely  
 Of your yeste ; for certainly  
 I wol none have, but by your leve,  
 So lothe me were you for to greve.'  
 He saydè, 'Frende, so god me spede,

3622. Th. *hell*.

3656. (?) Omit *me* and read *wolde*.

3667. Th. *said*.

Of Chastite I have suche drede,  
 Thou shuldest nat warnéd be for me ;  
 But I dare nat for Chastyte. 3670  
 Agayne her dare I nat mysdo,  
 For alway byddeth she me so  
 To yeve no lover leave to kysse.  
 For who therto maye wyunne y-wisse,  
 He of the surplus of the praye  
 May lyve in hoope to gette some daye.  
 For who so kyssynge maye attayne  
 Of loves payne hath, soth to sayne,  
 The best and [the] most avenaunt,  
 And earnest of the remenaunt.' 3680

Of his answe're I sighed sore ;  
 I durst assaye him tho no more,  
 I hadde suche drede to greve him aye.  
 A man shulde nat to moche assaye  
 To chafe hys frende out of measure,  
 Nor putte his lyfe in aventure.  
 For no man at the firste stroke  
 Ne maye nat fellé downe an oke,  
 Nor of the reysyns have the wyne,  
 Tyl grapes be ripe, and wel afyne 3690  
 Be sore empressid, I you ensure,  
 And drawn out of the pressure.  
 But I forpeynéd wonder stronge,  
 Thlough that I aboode right longe  
 Aftir the kis in peyne and woo,  
 Sith I to kis desiréd soo ;  
 Till that, rewyng on my distresse,  
 Th'er come Venus the goddesse,  
 Which ay werreyeth Chastite,  
 Came of hir grace to socoure me, 3700  
 Whos myght is knowé ferre and wide ;  
 For she is modir of Cupide,  
 The god of love, blynde as stoon,  
 That helpith lovers many oon.  
 This lady brought in hir right honde  
 Of brennyng fyre a blasynge bronde,  
 Wherof the flawme and hooté fire  
 Hath many a lady in desire  
 Of lovè brought, and sorè hette,  
 And in hir servise her hertes sette. 3710  
 This lady was of good entaile,  
 Right wondirfull of apparayle ;

3674. Th. *wynnen*.3688. Th. *fel*.3690. Skeat omits *be*, but unnecessarily.3698. Skeat reads *to me for come*.3700. *Came*, p. part. ? If so, *Come*.3710. *hertes*, MSS. *herte is*.

Bi hir atyre so bright and shene  
 Men myght perceyvè well and sene  
 She was not of religioun.  
 Nor I nell makè menciuon  
 Nor of robe nor of tresour,  
 Of broche nor of hir riche attour,  
 Ne of hir girdill aboute hir side,  
 For that I nyll not longe abide. 3720  
 But knowith wel that certeynly  
 She was araiéd richèly ;  
 Devoyde of pruyde certeyn she was.  
 To Bialacoil she wente apas,  
 And to hym, shortly in a clause,  
 She seidè, ' Sir, what is the cause  
 Ye ben of port so daungerous  
 Unto this lover and deynous,  
 To graunte hym nothyng but a kisse.  
 To werne it hym ye done amysse, 3730  
 Sith well ye woté how that he  
 Is loves servaunt, as ye may see,  
 And hath beaute, wher-through is  
 Worthy of love to have the blis.  
 How he is semely, biholde and see  
 How he is faire, how he is free,  
 How he is swoote and debonaire,  
 Of agé yonge, lusty and faire.  
 Ther is no lady so hawteyne,  
 Duchesse ne countesse, ne chasteleyne,  
 That I nolde holde hir ungoodly 3740  
 Forto refuse hym outterly.  
 His breth is also good and swete,  
 And eke his lippis rody, and mete  
 Only to pleyen and to kisse ;  
 Graunte hym a kis of gentilnyssse.  
 His teth arn also white and clene.  
 Me thenkith [it] wrong, withouten wene,  
 If ye now werne hym, trustith me,  
 To graunté that a kis have he. 3750  
 The lasse to helpe hym that ye haste,  
 The moré tymé shul ye waste.'  
 Whanne the flawme of the verry bronde,  
 That Venus brought in hir right honde,  
 Hadde Bialacoil with heté smete,  
 Anoon he badé me withouten lette,  
 Grauntede to me the Rosè kisse.  
 Thanne of my peyne I gan to lusse,  
 And to the Rose anoon wente I,  
 And kisside it full feithfully. 3760

3718. *nor*, MSS. *neither*.3751. *to helpe*, MSS. *ye helpe*.



Thar no man aske if I was blithe  
 Whanne the savour soft and lythe  
 Stroke to myn herte withoute more,  
 And me alleggèd of my sore,  
 So was I full of joye and blisse.  
 It is faire sich a flour to kisse ;  
 It was so swoote and saverous.  
 I myght not be so angwisshous,  
 That I [ne] mote glad and joly he,  
 Whanne that I remembre me. 3770  
 Yit ever among, sothly to seyne,  
 I suffre noye and mochè peyne.  
 The see may never be so stille,  
 That with a litel wynde it nylle  
 Overwhelme and turne also,  
 As it were woode in wavis goo.  
 Aftir the calme, the trouble soone  
 Mote folowe, and change as the moone.  
 Right so farith Love, that selde in oon  
 Holdith his anker : for right anoon, 3780  
 Whanne they in ese wene beste to lyve,  
 They ben with tempest all fordryve.  
 Who serveth love can telle of woo ;  
 The stoundemele joie mote overgoo ;  
 Now he hurteth and now he cureth,  
 For selde in oo poynt love endureth.  
 Now is it right me to procede  
 How Shame gan medle, and takè hede,  
 Thurgh whom fele angres I have hadde.  
 And how the strongè wall was maad, 3790  
 And the castell of brede and lengthe,  
 That God of Love wanne with his  
 strengthe.  
 All this in Romance will I sette,  
 And for no thyng ne will I lette,  
 So that it lykyng to hir be  
 That is the flour of beaute.  
 For she may best my labour quyte,  
 That I for hir love shal endite.  
 Wikkid-Tunge, that the covyne  
 Of every lover can devyne 3800  
 Worste, and addith more somdell  
 (For wikkid tunge seith never well),  
 To-me-ward bare he right gret hate,  
 Espying me erly and late,

Till he hath sene the gretè chere  
 Of Bialacoil and me I-feere.  
 He myghtè not his tunge withstonde  
 Worse to reportè than he fonde,  
 He was so full of cursèd rage ;  
 It satte hym well of his lynage, 3810  
 For hym an Irish womman bare.  
 His tunge was fylèd sharpe and square,  
 Póign[i]jaunt, and right keryng,  
 And wonder bitter in spekyng.  
 For whanne that he me gan espie,  
 He swoore, affermyng sikirlye,  
 Bitwenè Bialacoil and me  
 Was yvel aquayntance and pryve.  
 He spake therof so folilye,  
 That he awakide Ielousye, 3820  
 Which all afrayed in his risyng,  
 Whanne that he herd [him] janglyng,  
 He ran anoon as he were woode  
 To Bialacoil there that he stode ;  
 Which haddè lever in this caas  
 Have ben at Reynes or Amyas.  
 For foot-hoot in his felonye,  
 To hym thus seidè Ielousie :  
 ' Why hast thou ben so negligent  
 To kepen, whanne I was absent, 3830  
 This verger hereof left in thi wardè.  
 To me thou haddist no rewarde,  
 To truste, to thy confusioun,  
 Iym thus, to whom suspeccioun  
 I have right gret, for it is nede ;  
 It is well shewèd by the dede.  
 Grete faute in thee now have I founde ;  
 By God, anoon thou shalt be bounde,  
 And fastè loken in a tour,  
 Withoutè refuyt or socour. 3840  
 For Shame to longe hath be thee froo ;  
 Over soone she was agoo.  
 Whanne thou hast lost bothe drede and  
 feere,  
 It semede wel she was not heere.  
 Shé was bisy in no wyse  
 To kepè thee and [to] chastise,  
 And forto helpen Chastite  
 To kepe the roser, as thenkith me.  
 For thanne this boy knave so booldely  
 Ne shuldè not have be hardy, 3850

3773 ff. Cp. *Boece*, 253 ff.3774. *nylle*, MSS. *wille*.3775. *Overwhelme*, (?) *Overwhelve*.3779. *selde*, MSS. *yelde* (through *zelde*).3786. *selde*, MSS. *elde*.3796. *beaute*, three syllables, as in v. 3733.3805. *grete chere*, kindly welcome.3826. *Reynes*, Rennes in Brittany; Fr. 'a Estampes.' *Amyas* corresponds to Fr. 'a Miaus.'

[Ne] in this verger hadde such game,  
 Which now me turneth to gret shame.  
 Bialacoil nyst what to sey ;  
 Full fayn he wolde have fled away,  
 For feere han hiddé, nere that he  
 All sodeynly toke hym with me.  
 And whanne I saugh he haddé soo,  
 This Ielousié, take us twoo,  
 I was a-stoned, and knewe no rede,  
 But fledde away for verrey drede. 3860  
 Thanne Shame cam forth full sympley.  
 She wende have trespaced full gretly,  
 Humble of hir port, and made it symple,  
 Weryng a vayle in stede of wymple,  
 As nonnys don in her abbey.  
 By cause hir herte was in affray,  
 She gan to speke withynne a throwe  
 To Ielousie right wonder lowe.  
 First of his gracé she bysoughte  
 And seidé, 'Sire, ne leveth noughte 3870  
 Wikkid-Tunge, that false espie,  
 Which is so glad to feyne and lye.  
 He hath you maad, thurgh flateryng,  
 On Bialacoil a fals lesyng ;  
 His falsnesse is not now a-newe,  
 It is to long that he hym knewe ;  
 This is not the firsté day,  
 For Wikkid-Tunge hath custome ay  
 Yóngé folkis to bewreye,  
 And falsé lesynges on hem leye. 3880  
 Yit nevertheles I see amonge  
 Thát the loigne it is so longe  
 Of Bialacoil, hertis to lure  
 In Loves servyse forto endure,  
 Drawing such folk hym too,  
 That he hath no thyng with to doo.  
 But in sothnesse I trowé nought  
 That Bialacoil hadde ever in thought  
 To do trespase or vylonye.  
 But for his modir Curtesie 3890  
 Háth taught hym ever to be  
 Good of aqueyntance and pryve.  
 For he loveth noon hevynesse,  
 But mirthe, and pley, and all gladnesse ;  
 He hateth all trechours,  
 Sóley n folk and envyou[r]s ;

3861. MSS. *simply*.3880. MSS. *lye*.

3885. This verse, like 3895, has but three accented syllables.

Fór ye witen how that he  
 Wole ever glad and joyfull be,  
 Hónestly with folk to pleye.  
 I have be negligent in good feye 3900  
 To chastise hym ; therfore now I,  
 Of herte I crye you heere mercy  
 That I have been so recheles  
 To tamen hym, withouten lees.  
 Of my foly I me repente.  
 Now wole I hoole sette myn entente  
 To kepé, bothé low[d]e and stille,  
 Biálacoil to do youre wille.  
 'Sháme, shame,' seyde Ielousie,  
 'To be bytrashed gret drede have I ; 3910  
 Léccherie hath clombe so hye,  
 That almost bleréd is myn ye :  
 No wonder is if that drede have I ;  
 Over all regnyth Lecchery,  
 Whós myght growith nyght and day  
 Bóthe in cloistre and in abbey ;  
 Chástite is werried over all,  
 Therefore I wole with siker wall  
 Close bothé roses and roser.  
 I have to longe in this maner 3920  
 Left hem unclosid wilfully ;  
 Wherefore I am right inwardly  
 Sorowfull, and repenté me.  
 But now they shal no lenger be  
 Unclosid, and yit I dredé sore  
 I shall repenté ferthermore ;  
 Fór the game goth all amys,  
 Couंसell I must newe y-wys.  
 I have to longé trusted thee,  
 But now it shal no lenger be ; 3930  
 For he may best in every cost  
 Disceyve that men tristen most.  
 I see wel that I am nygh shent,  
 But if I sette my full entent  
 Rémedyé to purveye.  
 Thérfore close I shall the weye,  
 Fro hem that wole the Rose espie,  
 And come to wayte me vilonye.  
 Fór in good feith and in trouthe,  
 I wole not letté for no slouthe, 3940  
 To lyve the more in sikirnesse,  
 To make anoon a fort[e]resse,  
 Tenclose the roses of good savour.

3942. *To*, MSS. *Do*.3943. *Tenclose* (i.e. to enclose), MSS. *Thanne close*, 'qui . . . clorra entor.'

In myddis shall I make a tour,  
 To putte Bialacoil in prisoun ;  
 For evere I drede me of tresoun.  
 I trowe I shal hym kepé soo  
 That he shal have no myght to goo  
 Aboute, to maké compagne  
 To hem that thanke of vylanye ; 3950  
 Ne to no such as hath ben heere  
 Aforn, and founde in hym good chere ;  
 Which han assailéd hym to shende,  
 And with her trowandysse to blynde.  
 A foole is eythé to bigyle ;  
 But, may I lyve a litel while,  
 He shal forthenke his fair semblaunt.'

And with that word came DREDEavaunt,  
 Which was abassed and in gret fere.  
 Whanne he wiste Ielousie was there, 3960  
 He was for drede in sich affray,  
 Thát not a word durst he say,  
 But quakyng stode full still aloon,  
 Til Ielousie his weye was gone,  
 Save Shamé, that him not forsoké.  
 Bothe Drede and she ful soré quoke,  
 Than atté lasté Drede abreyde,  
 And to his cosyn Shamé seide :  
 'Shame,' he seide, 'in sothfastnesse,  
 To me it is gret hevynesse 3970  
 Thát the noyse so ferre is go,  
 And the sclandre of us twoo ;  
 But sithe that it is byfall,  
 Vé may it not ageyn call  
 Whanne onys sprongen is a fame.  
 For many a yeer withouten blame  
 Vé han ben, and many a day ;  
 For many an Aprill and many a May  
 Vé han passéd not [a-]shamed,  
 Till Ielousié hath us blamed 3980  
 Of mystrust and suspicioun,  
 Ausesles, withoute enchesoun.  
 So we to Daunger hastily,  
 And late us shewe hym openly  
 That he hath not aright [y-]wrought,  
 Whanne that he setté nought his thought  
 To kepé better the purposse.  
 In his doying he is not wise ;  
 Vé hath to us do gret wronge,  
 Thát hath suffred now so longe 3990  
 Bialacoil to have his wille,

3967. *Than*, MSS. *That*.3974. Skeat supplies *do* before *call*.

Áll his lustés to fulfille.  
 He must amende it utterly,  
 Or ellys shall he vilaynesly  
 Exiled be out of this londe ;  
 For he the werre may not withstonde  
 Of Ielousié, nor the greef,  
 Sith Bialacoil is at myscheef.'  
 To Daunger, Shame and Drede anoon  
 The righté weye ben goon. 4000  
 The cherle thei founden hem aforn  
 Liggyng undir an hawéthorn ;  
 Undir his heed no pilowe was,  
 But in the stede a trusse of gras.  
 He slombred, and a nappe he toke,  
 Tyll Shamé pitously hym shoke,  
 And grete manace on hym gan make.  
 'Why slepist thou, whanne thou shulde  
 wake?'

Quod Shame. 'Thou doist us vylanye ;  
 Who tristith thee, he doth folye, 4010  
 To kepé thesore or bothouns  
 Whanne thei ben faire in her sesouns.  
 Thóu art woxe to familiere,  
 Whére thou shulde be straunge of chere,  
 Stoute of thi porte, redy to greve.  
 Thou doist gret folye forto leve  
 Bialacoil here inne to calle  
 The yonder man, to shende us alle.  
 Though that thou slepé, we may here  
 Of Ielousie gret noysé heere. 4020  
 Art thou now late? Rise up an high,  
 And stoppe sone, and delyverly,  
 All the gappis of the hay ;  
 Dó no favour, I thee pray.  
 It fallith no thyng to thy name  
 To make faire semblaunt, where thou  
 maist blame.  
 Yf Bialacoil be sweete and free,  
 Doggéd and fell thou shuldist be,  
 Froward and outerageous y-wis.  
 A cherl chaungeth that curtéis is. 4030  
 This have I herd ofte in seiying,  
 "Thát man may, for no daunting,  
 Máke a sperhauke of a bosarde."  
 Alle men wole holde thee for musarde

3994. *vilaynesly*, stress on second syllable as in v. 178 (*elys*, one syllable as usual).

3998. 'Sele l'acueilloit en haine'; possibly misread as 'Se belacueil l'ait en haine.'

4021. 'Esties vous ore couchies?'

4026. *where*, as extra syllable after *cæsura*.

That debonair have founden thee.  
 It sittith thee nought curteis to be,  
 To do men plesaunce or servise ;  
 In thee it is recreaundise.  
 Léte thi werkis fer and nere  
 Be like thi name, which is Daungere.'  
 Thanne, all abawid in shewing, 4041  
 Anoon spake Drede right thus seiying,  
 And seide, 'Daungere, I dredé me  
 Thát thou ne wolt bisy be  
 To kepé that thou hast to kepe ;  
 Whannethoushuldíst wakethouartaslepe.  
 Thou shalt be grevéd certeynly,  
 If the aspié Ielousie,  
 Or if he fyndé thee to blame.  
 He hath to day assailéd Shame 4050  
 And chased away, with gret manace,  
 Bialacoil oute of this place,  
 And swereth shortly that he shall  
 Enclose hym in a sturdy wall ;  
 And all is for thi wikkidnesse,  
 For that thee failéth straungénesse.  
 Thyne herte I trowe be failed all.  
 Thou shalt repente in speciall,  
 If Ielousié the sooth knewe ;  
 Thou shalt forthenke and soré rewe.' 4060  
 With that the cherl hisclubbegansshake,  
 Frounyng his eyen gan to make,  
 And hidous chere ; as man in rage  
 For ire he brente in his visage.  
 Whanne that [he] herd hym blaméd soo,  
 He seide, 'Oute of my witte I goo ;  
 To be discomfyt I have gret wronge.  
 Certis I have now lyved to longe,  
 Sith I may not this rosér kepe.  
 All quykke I wolde be dolven deepe 4070  
 If ony man shal more repeire  
 Into this gardyne, for foule or faire.  
 Myne herte for ire goth a-feré  
 That I lete ony entre heere.  
 I have do folie, now I see ;  
 But now it shall amended bee.  
 Who settith foot heere ony more,  
 Truly he shall repente it sore,  
 For no man moo into this place  
 Of me to entre shal have grace. 4080  
 Lever I hadde with swerdis tweyne  
 Thurghoute myne herte in every veyne  
 Perced to be with many a wounde,

4069. *rosér*, MSS. *closer*.

Thanne slouthé shulde in me be founde.  
 From hennés forth, by nyght or day,  
 I shall defende it, if I may,  
 Withouten ony excepcioun  
 Of ech maner condicioun.  
 And if I it eny man graunte,  
 Holdeth me for recreaunte.' 409  
 Thanne Daunger on his feet gan stonde  
 And hente a burdoun in his honde.  
 Wroth in his ire, ne lefte he nought  
 But thurgh the verger he hath sought ;  
 If he myght fyndé hole or trace,  
 Where-thurgh that me mote forth by pace  
 Or ony gappe, he dide it close,  
 That no man myghté touche a rose.  
 Of the rosér all aboute  
 He shitteth every man withoute. 410  
 Thus day by day Daunger is wers,  
 More wonderfull, and more dyvers,  
 And feller eke than evere he was.  
 For hym full ofte I syngé 'allas,'  
 For I ne may nought, thurgh his ire,  
 Recoveré that I moost desire.  
 Myne herte, allas, wole brest a-twoo,  
 For Bialacoil I wratthéd soo ;  
 For certeynly in every membre  
 I quaké whanne I me remembre 411  
 Of the bothon which I wolde  
 Full ofte a day sene and biholde.  
 And whanne I thenke upon the kisse,  
 And how mych joye and blisse  
 I haddé thurgh the savour swete,  
 For wante of it I grone and grete.  
 Me thenkith I fele yit in my nose  
 The sweté savour of the rose.  
 And now I woot that I mote goo  
 So fer the freshé flourés froo, 412  
 To me full welcome were the deth.  
 Absens therof allas me sleeth.  
 For whilom with this Rose, allas,  
 I touchéd nosé, mouth, and face ;  
 But now the deth I must abide.  
 But love consente another tyde  
 That onys I touché may and kisse,  
 I trowe my peyne shall never lisse.  
 Theron is all myn covetise,  
 Which brent myn herte in many wise.  
 Now shal repaire agayn sighinge, 413  
 Long wacche on nyghtis, and no slepinge,

4096. *me*, one.

Thought in wisshing, torment and woo,  
 With many a turnyng to and froo.  
 That half my peyne I can not telle,  
 For I am fallen into helle  
 From paradys, and wel the more  
 My turment greveth more and more.  
 Anoieth now the bittirnesse,  
 That I to forn have felt swetnesse. 4140  
 And Wikkid-Tunge thurgh his falshede  
 Causeth all my woo and drede.  
 On me he leieth a pitous charge,  
 Bi-cause his tungé was to large.

Now it is tyme shortly that I  
 Telle you som-thing of Ielousie,  
 That was in gret suspeciou.  
 Aboute hym lefte he no masoun,  
 That stoon coude leyé, ne querrou; 4150  
 He hirede hem to make a tour.  
 And first, the roses forto kepe,  
 Aboute hem made he a diché deepe,  
 Right wondir large, and also broode.  
 Upon the whiché also stode  
 Of squaréd stoon a sturdy wall,  
 Which on a cragge was founded all.  
 And right grete thikkenesse eke it bare  
 Abouten it was founded square,  
 An hundred fademe on every side.  
 It was aliché longe and wide; 4160  
 Lest ony tyme it were assayled,  
 Ful wel aboute it was batayled,  
 And rounde environ eke were sette  
 Ful many a riche and faire tourette.  
 At every corner of this wall  
 Was sette a tour full pryncipall,  
 And everich hadde, withouté fable,  
 A porté-colys defensable  
 To kepe of enemyes, and to greve  
 That there her forcé woldé preve. 4170  
 And eke amyddé this purprise  
 Was maad a tour of gret maistrise;  
 A fairer saugh no man with sight,  
 Large, and wide, and of gret myght.  
 They dreddé noon assaut  
 Of gynné, gunné, nor skaffaut.

The temprure of the mortere  
 Was maad of lycour wonder dere,  
 Of quykké lyme, persant and egre,  
 The which was tempred with vynegre.  
 The stoon was hard of ademan, 4181  
 Wherof they made the foundémēt.  
 The tour was rounde, maad in compas;  
 In all this world no riccher was,  
 Ne better ordeigned therwith-all.  
 Aboute the tour was maad a wall,  
 So that bitwixt that and the tour  
 Rosers were sette of swete savour  
 With many roses that thei bere.  
 And eke withynne the castell were 4190  
 Spryngoldes, gunnes, bows and archers,  
 And eke aboven atté corners  
 Men seyn over the wallé stonde  
 Grete engynés, who were nygh honde.  
 And in the kernels heere and there  
 Of Arblasters grete plente were;  
 Noon armure myght her stroke withstonde,  
 It were foly to prece to honde.  
 Withoute the diche were lystés maade  
 With wall batayléd large and brade, 4200  
 For men and hors shulde not atteyne  
 To neighe the dyche over the pleyne.  
 Thus Ielousie hath environ  
 Sétte aboute his garnysoun,  
 With wallés rounde and diché depe,  
 Oonly the roser forto kepe.  
 And Daunger bere erly and late  
 The keyés of the utter gate,  
 The whiché openeth toward the eest.  
 And he hadde with hym atté leest 4210  
 Thrityr servauntes, echon by name.  
 That other gaté kepté Shame,  
 Which openedé, as it was couth,  
 Toward the part[i]e of the south.  
 Sergeauntes assignéd were hir too  
 Ful many, hir willé forto doo.  
 Thanne Dredé hadde in hir baillie  
 The keyyng of the Conestablerye,  
 Toward the north I undirstonde,  
 That openyde upon the lyfté honde. 4220  
 The which for no thyng may be sure  
 Bút if she do bisy cure,  
 Érly on morowe and also late,  
 Strongly to shette and barre the gate.  
 Of every thing that she may see  
 Drede is aferd, wher so she be;

4152. Possibly *he* is to be omitted. For *diche* p. 4205.

4160. *aliche*, MSS. *all liche*, (?) *all aliche*.

4166. *tour*, 'portaus'; (?) *port* or some such word.

4172. *maistrise*, Fr. 'maistrise,' does not seem to be an English word.

For with a puff of litell wynde  
Drede is a-stonyed in hir mynde.  
Therefore for stelyng of the Rose  
I rede hir nought the yate unclose ; 4230  
A foulis flight wole make hir flee,  
And eke a shadowe if she it see.

Thanne Wikked-Tunge, full of envye,  
With soudiours of Normandye,  
As he that causeth all the bate,  
Was keper of the fourthè gate.  
And also to the tother three  
He wente full oftè forto see.  
Whanne his lotte was to wake anyght,  
His instrumentis wolde he dight 4240  
Förto blowe and makè sowne  
(Oftè thanne he hath enchesoun)  
And walken oft upon the wall,  
Corners and wikettis over all  
Full narwè serchen and espie.  
Though he nought fonde, yit wole he  
lye

Discordaunt ever fro armonye,  
And distonèd from melodie.  
Controve he wolde, and foulè fayle  
With hornèpipes of Cornèwaile ; 4250  
In floytès made he discordaunce.  
And in his musyk with myschaunce,  
He woldè seyn with notès newe  
Thát he fonde no womman trewe,  
Ne that he saugh never in his lyf  
Unto hir husbonde a trewe wyf ;  
Ne noon so ful of honeste,  
That she nyl laughe and mery be  
Whanne that she hereth, or may espie,  
A man speken of leccherie. 4260  
Evériche of hem hath somme vice ;  
Oon is dishonest, another is nyce ;  
If oon be full of vylanye,  
Another hath a likerous ighe ;  
If oon be full of wantonnesse,  
Another is a chideresse.

Thus Wikked Tunge (god yeve hem  
shame)

4249. *fayle*, make mistakes ; but it may be an error for *fall* (rhyming with Cornwall), in which case the meaning is to make mistakes in counterpoint.

4250. *with hornepipes*, etc., 'as estives de Cornaille.'

4254 ff. This seems to be the part of the Romaunce that Chaucer refers to in *L. of G. W.* 431.

4264. *ighe*, a form of *ye*.

Can putt hem everychone in blame  
Withoute desert, and causèles.  
He lièth, though they ben giltyes. 4270  
I have pite to sene the sorwe  
Thát waketh bothe eve and morwe,  
To Innocentis doith such grevaunce.  
I pray god yeve hym evel chaunce,  
Thát he ever so bisie is  
Óf ony womman to seyn amys.  
Eke Ielousiè God confounde,  
Thát hath maad a tour so rounde,  
And made aboute a garisoun 4280  
To sette Bealacoil in prisoun,  
The which is shette there in the tour  
Ful longe to holdè there sojour,  
There forto lyven in penaunce.  
And forto do hym more grevaunce  
Ther hath ordeynèd Ielousie  
An oldè vekkè forto espie  
The maner of his governaunce.  
The whichè devel in hir enfaunce  
Hadde lerned of lovès arte,  
And of his pleyès toke hir parte. 4290  
She was expert in his servise,  
She knewe eche wrenche and every  
gise

Of love, and every wile ;  
It was [the] harder hir to gile.  
Of Bealacoil she toke ay hede,  
That evere he lyveth in woo and drede.  
He kepte hym koy and eye pryve,  
Lést in hym she haddè see  
Óny foly countenaunce ;  
For she knewe all the oldè daunce. 4300  
And aftir this, whanne Ielousie  
Hadde Bealacoil in his baillie,  
And shette hym up that was so fre ;  
For seure of hym he woldè be.  
He trusteth sore in his castell,  
The strongè werk hym liketh well.  
He draddè not that no glotouns  
Shulde stele his roses or bothouns.  
The roses weren assured all,  
Defenced with the strongè wall. 4310  
Now Ielousie full well may be  
Of drede devoide in liberte,

4272. MSS. *walketh* ; cp. v. 2682 and note thereto.

4285. *Ther*, MSS. *Which*.

4291. *expert*, MSS. *except*, which even in sense of 'acceptable' is not very clear.

Whether that he slepe or wake,  
 For his roses may noon be take.  
 But I allas now morné shall  
 Bi-cause I was withoute the wall.  
 Full moché doole and moone I made.  
 Who haddé wist what woo I hadde,  
 I trowe he wolde have had pite.  
 Lóve to deere hadde soolde to me 4320  
 The good, that of his love hadde I.  
 I wente a bought it all queyntly,  
 But now, thurgh doublyng of my peyne,  
 I see he wolde it selle ageyne,  
 And me a newé bargeyn leere,  
 The which all-oute the more is deere ;  
 For the solace that I have lorn,  
 Thanne I hadde it never aform.  
 Certayn I am ful like in deede 4329  
 To hym that caste in erthe his seede,  
 And hath joie of the newé spryng,  
 Whanne it greneth in the gynnyng,  
 And is also faire and fresh of flour,  
 Lusty to seen, swoote of odour.  
 But er he it in shevés shere,  
 May falle a weder that shal it dere,  
 And makén it to fade and falle,  
 The stalke, the greyne, and floures  
 alle,  
 That to the tylyer is fordone  
 The hopé that he hadde to soone. 4340  
 I drede certeyn that so fare I ;  
 For hope and travaile sikerlye  
 Ben me byraft all with a storme ;  
 The floure nel seeden of my corne.  
 For Love hath so avauncéd me  
 Whanne I bigan my pryvite  
 To Bialacoil all forto telle,  
 Whom I ne fonde froward ne felle,  
 But toke a gree all hool my play.  
 But Love is of so hard assay, 4350  
 That all at oonyes he revéd me,  
 Whanne I wente best aboven have be.  
 It is of love as of fortune,  
 That chaungeth ofte, and nyl contune ;

4313. We get the best rhythm by reading *wher* and stressing *For* in the next line. *roses* is often us followed by an unaccented syllable; cp. 8. 4314.

4322. MSS. *I wente aboute*. The correction is Caluza's (except that he reads *wende* for *wente*, p. v. 4352), and is justified by the Fr. original.

4339. MSS. *tilyers*.

4352. MSS. *abouen to*.

Which whilom wole on folkes smyle,  
 And glowmbe on hem another while ;  
 Now freend, now foo, shaltow hir feele.  
 For [in] a twynklyng, turne hir wheele,  
 Shé can writhe hir heed away ;  
 This is the concours of hir pley. 4360  
 She canne arisé that doth morne,  
 And whirle adown, and over turne.  
 Who sittith hieghst, but as hir lust ?  
 A foole is he that wole hir trust.  
 For it is I that am come down  
 Thurgh change and revolucioin.  
 Sith Bealacoil mote fro me twynne,  
 Shette in the prisoun yonde withynne,  
 His absence at myn herte I fele.  
 For all my joye and all myne hele 4370  
 Wás in hym and in the rose,  
 That but yon walle, which hym doth close,  
 Ópene that I may hym see,  
 Love nyl not that I curéd be  
 Óf the peynes that I endure,  
 Nor of my cruel aventure.  
 A, Bialacoil, myn owné deere,  
 Though thou be now a prisoner,  
 Kepe atté leste thyne herte to me,  
 And suffre not that it daunted be ; 4380  
 Ne late not Ielousie in his rage  
 Putten thine herte in no servage.  
 Al though he chastice thee withoute,  
 And make thy body unto hym loute,  
 Have herte as hard as dyamaunt,  
 Stédéfast, and nought pliaunt ;  
 In prisoun though thi body be,  
 At largé kepe thyne herté free.  
 A trewé herté wole not plie,  
 For no manace that it may drye. 4390  
 If Ielousié doth thee payne,  
 Quyte hym his whilé thus agayne  
 To venge thee atté leest in thought,  
 If other way thou mai[e]st nought ;  
 And in this wisé sotilly  
 Wórche and wynné the maistrie.  
 But yit I am in gret affray  
 Lést thou do not as I say ;  
 I drede thou canst me gret maugre  
 That thou enprisoned art for me. 4400  
 But that [is] not for my trespas,

4355. MSS. *folk*.

4357. *shaltow*, MSS. *shalt*.

4372. *walle*, MSS. *wole*.

For thurgh me never discovred was  
 That thyng that oughte be secree.  
 Wel more anye is in me  
 Than is in thee of this myschaunce,  
 For I endure more harde penaunce  
 Than ony [man] can seyn or thynke ;  
 That for the sorwe almost I synke.  
 Whanne I remembre me of my woo,  
 Full nygh out of my witt I goo. 4410  
 Inward myn herte I feelè blede ;  
 For comfortles the deth I drede.  
 Owe I not wel to have distresse  
 Whanne falsè thurgh hir wikkednesse  
 And traitours, that arn envyous,  
 To noyen me be so curious ?  
 A, Bialacoil, full wel I see  
 That they hem shape to disceyve thee,  
 To make thee buxom to her lawe,  
 And with her cordè thee to drawe 4420  
 Where so hem lust, right at her wille ;  
 I drede they have thee brought thertille.  
 Withoutè comfort thought me sleeth,  
 This game wole brynge me to my deeth ;  
 For if youre good[è] wille I leese,  
 I mote be deed, I may not chese ;  
 And if that thou foryetè me,  
 Myne herte shal nevere in likyng be,  
 Nor elles where fyndè solace,  
 If I be putt out of youre gráce, 4430  
 As it shal never been, I hope.  
 Thanne shulde I fallen in wanhope.  
 Allas—in wanhope ? nay pardee,  
 For I wole never dispeired be.  
 If hope me failè, thanne am I  
 Ungracious and unworthy.  
 In hope I wole comforted be,  
 For Love, whanne he bitaught hir me,  
 Seidè that Hope, where so I goo,  
 Shulde ay be reles to my woo. 4440  
 But what and she my baalis beete,  
 And be to me curteis and sweete ?  
 Shè is in no thyng full certeyne.  
 Lovers she putt in full gret payne,  
 And makith hem with woo to deele ;  
 Hir faire biheeste disceyveth feelè.  
 For she wole byhote sikirly,  
 And failen aftir outrely.  
 A, that is a full noyous thyng !

4403. MSS. *Yit.*4441. *what and*, what though.

For many a lover in lovyng 445  
 Hangeth upon hir, and trusteth fast,  
 Whiche leese her travel at the last.  
 Of thyng to comen she woot righ  
 nought ;  
 Therefore if it be wysely sought,  
 Hir counseill foly is to take.  
 For many tymes whanne she wole make  
 A full good silogisme, I drede  
 That aftirward ther shal in deede  
 Folwe an evell conclusioun.  
 This putte me in confusioun ; 446  
 For many tymes I have it seen  
 That many have bigyled been  
 For trust that they have sette in hope,  
 Which felle hem aftirward a-slope.  
 But nevertheles yit gladly she wolde  
 That he, that wole hym with hir holde,  
 Hadde allè tymes his purpos clere,  
 Withoute deceyte or ony were ;  
 That she desireth sikirly.  
 Whanne I hir blamed, I dide foly. 447  
 But what avayleth hir good wille ?  
 Whanne she ne may staunche my stound  
 ille,  
 That helpith litel that she may doo,  
 Outake biheest unto my woo.  
 And heestè certeyn, in no wise  
 Withoutè yift is not to prise.  
 Whanne heest and deede a-sundry varie  
 They doon a gret contrarie.  
 Thus am I possèd up and down  
 With dool, thought, and confusioun ; 448  
 Of my disese ther is no noubre.  
 Daunger and Shamè me encumbre,  
 Drede also, and Ielousie,  
 And Wikked-Tunge full of envie,  
 Of whiche the sharpe and cruel ire  
 Full ofte me putte in gret martire.  
 They han my joyè fully lette,  
 Sith Bialacoil they have bishette  
 Fro me in prisoun wikkidly,  
 Whóm I love so entierly 449  
 Thát it wole my banè bee  
 But I the sonner may hym see.  
 And yit more over, wurst of all,

4457. *silogisme*, read 'silogim.'4467. *his*, MSS. *her*.4472. *stounde*, perhaps read *wounde*.4492. *The sonner may hym see*, for syntax  
cp. 4515.



Ther is sette to kepe (foule hir bifall !)  
 A rympled vekke, ferre ronne in age,  
 Frownyng and yelowe in hir visage,  
 Which in a-wayte lyth day and nyght,  
 That noon of hym may have a sight.  
 Now mote my sorwe enforcéd be ;  
 Full soth it is that Love yaf me 4500  
 Three wonder yiftés, of his grace,  
 Whiche I have lorn now in this place,  
 Sith they ne may, without drede,  
 Helpen but lytel, who taketh heede.  
 For here availeth no Sweté-Thought,  
 And Sweeté-Spechē helpith right nought ;  
 The thridde was called Sweté-Lokyng,  
 That now is lorn without lesyng.  
 Ziftes were faire, but not forthy  
 They helpéd me but symplély 4510  
 But Bialacoil looséd be,  
 To gon at large and to be free.  
 For hym my lyf lyth all in doute,  
 But if he come the rather oute.  
 Allas, I trowe it wole not bene !  
 For how shult I evermore hym sene ?  
 He may not oute, and that is wronge,  
 By cause the tour is so stronge.  
 How shulde he oute ? By whos prowesse,  
 Oute of so stronge a forteresse ? 4520  
 By me certeyn it nyl be doo ;  
 God woot I have no witte therto.  
 But wel I woot I was in rage,  
 Whonne I to Lové dide homage.  
 Who was the cause, in sothfastnesse,  
 Out hir-silf Dame Idelnesse,  
 Which me conveicd, thurgh my priaiere,  
 To entre into that faire verger ?  
 He was to blame me to leve,  
 He which now doth me sooré greve.  
 A foolis word is nought to trowe, 4531  
 He worth an appel forto love.  
 Ten shulde hym snybbé bittirly  
 For t pryemé temps of his foly.

4494. *Ther is*, one syllable.4498. *hym*, MSS. *hem*.4511. *But*, unless. (?) Add *all* after *Bialacoil*.4527. *my*, MSS. *faire* from line below ; 'ma  
oier.'4532. *love*, MSS. *love*, but *love*, 'to value,' is  
a regular word in this connection. Medial *v*  
and *w* were sometimes rhymed together in northern  
diale.; cp. note to v. 104. The scribe of Gl.  
105 sometimes as *v* ; cp. *wode*, v. 4709, where  
S. *wode*, Th. *voide*.

I was a fool and she me leevde,  
 Thurgh whom I am right nought releved ;  
 She accomlisshid all my wille,  
 That now me greveth wondir ille.  
 Resoun me seidé what shuld'e falle.  
 A fool my silf I may wel calle 4540  
 That love asyde I hadde not leyde,  
 And trowed that damé Resoun seide.  
 Resoun hadde bothé skile and ryght,  
 Whanne she me blamed with all hir  
 myght

To medle of love that hath me shent ;  
 But certeyn now I wole repente.  
 And shulde I repente ? Nay, parde,  
 A fals traitour thanne shulde I be.  
 The develes engynnes wolde me take,  
 If I my lorde woldé forsake, 4550  
 Or Bialacoil falsly bitraye.  
 Shulde I at myscheef hate hym ? Nay,  
 Sith he now for his curtesie  
 Is in prisoun of Ielousie.  
 Curtesie certeyn dide he me,  
 So mych that may not yolden be,  
 Whanne he the hay passen me lete  
 To kisse the Rosé faire and swete ;  
 Shulde I therfore cunne hym mawgre ?  
 Nay, certeynly, it shal not be ; 4560  
 For Love shall nevere, yif God wille,  
 Here of me, thurgh word or wille,  
 Offence or complaynt more or lesse,  
 Neither of Hope nor Idilnesse.  
 For certis it were wrong that I  
 Hated hem for her curtesie.  
 Ther is not ellys but suffre and thynke,  
 And waken whanne I shuldé wynke ;  
 Abide in hope til Love, thurgh chaunce,  
 Sende me socour or allegeaunce, 4570  
 Expectant ay till I may mete  
 To geten mercy of that swete.

Whilom I thanke how love to me  
 Seide he woldé take att gree  
 My servise, if unpacience  
 Causéd me to done offence.  
 He seide, 'In thank I shal it take,  
 And high maister eke thee make,  
 If wikkednesse ne reve it thee ; 4579  
 But, sonc, I trowe that shall not be.'  
 These were his wordis by and by ;  
 It semede he lovede me trewely.  
 Now is ther not but serve hym wele,

If that I thenke his thanke to fele ;  
 My good, myne harme lyth hool in me.  
 In love may no defauté be,  
 For trewe Love ne failide never man ;  
 Sothly the faute mote nedys than,  
 As god forbede, be founde in me.  
 And how it cometh, I can not see ; 4590  
 Now late it goon as it may goo,  
 Whether Love wole socoure me or sloo ;  
 He may do hool on me his wille ;  
 I am so soré bounde hym tille,  
 From his servise I may not fleen ;  
 For lyf and deth, withouten wene,  
 Is in his hande, I may not chese,  
 He may me doo bothe wyne and leese.  
 And sith so sore he doth me greve,  
 Yit if my lust he wolde achieve 4600  
 To Bialacoil goodly to be,  
 I yeve no force what felle on me.  
 For though I dye as I mote nede,  
 I praye Love of his goodlyhede  
 To Bialacoil do gentylnesse,  
 For whom I lyve in such distresse,  
 That I mote deyen for penaunce.  
 But first withouté repentaunce,  
 I wole me confesse in good entent,  
 And make in haste my testament, 4610  
 As lovers doon that feelen smerte.  
 To Bialacoil leve I myne herte  
 All hool withouté departyng,  
 Or doublenesse of repentyng.  
 Thus as I madé my passage  
 In compleynt, and in cruel rage,  
 And I not where to fynde a leche  
 That couthe unto myne helpyng eche,  
 Sodeynly agayn comen doun  
 Out of hir tour I saugh Resoun, 4620  
 Discrete, and wis, and full plesaunt,  
 And of hir porte full avenaunt.  
 The righté weye she tooke to me,  
 Which stode in gret perplexite,  
 That was posséd in every side,  
 That I nyst where I myght abide ;  
 Till she demurely sad of chere,  
 Seide to me, as she come nere,  
 ' Myne owné frend, art thou yit greved ?  
 How is this quarell yit achieved 4630  
 Of Lovés side ? Anoon me telle.  
 Hast thou not yit of Love thi fille ?

4592. *Whether, read Where.*

Art thou not wery of thy servise  
 That the hath in siché wise ?  
 What joye hast thou in thy lovyng ?  
 Is it swete or bitter thyng ?  
 Canst thou yit chesé, late me see,  
 What best thi socour myght be ?  
 Thou servest a full noble lorde,  
 That maketh thee thrall for thi rewarde,  
 Which ay renewith thi turment, 4640  
 With foly so he hath thee blent.  
 Thou fell in mycheef thilké day  
 Whanne thou didist, the sothe to say,  
 Ôbeysaunce and eke homage.  
 Thou wroughtest no-thing as the sage,  
 Whanne thou bicam his liegé man ;  
 Thou didist a gret foly than,  
 Thou wistest not what fell therto,  
 With what lord thou haddist to do ; 4650  
 If thou haddist hym wel knowe,  
 Thou haddist nought be brought so lowe.  
 For if thou wistest what it were,  
 Thou noldist serve hym half a yeer,  
 Not a weke nor half a day,  
 Ne yit an hour withoute delay,  
 Ne never ha lovede paramours.  
 His lordshipp is so full of shoures,  
 Knowest hym ought ?'

*L'Amaunt.* 'Ye, Dame, parde.'

*Raisoun.* 'Nay, nay.'

*L'Amaunt.* 'Yis, I.'

*Raisoun.* 'Wherof? late se.'

*L'Amaunt.* 'Of that he seidé I shulde be  
 Glád to have sich lord as he, 4660  
 And maister of sich seignorie.'

*Raisoun.* 'Knowist hym no more ?'

*L'Amaunt.* 'Nay, certis, I'

Save that he yaf me rewles there,  
 And wente his wey, I nysté where,  
 And I aboode bounde in balaunce.'

*Raisoun.* 'Lo, there a noble conisaunce  
 But I wille that thou knowe hym now,  
 Gynnyng and eendé, sith that thou 4670  
 Art so anguissous and mate,  
 Disfigured oute of a-state ;  
 Ther may no wrecche have more of woo  
 Ne caytyfe noon enduren soo.  
 It were to every man sitting  
 Of his lord have knowleching ;  
 For if thou knewe hym oute of doute,

4634. Insert some word like *harméd* after *hath*

Lightly thou shulde escapen oute  
Of the prisoun that marreth thee.'

*L'Amaunt.* 'Ye, Damé, sith my lord  
is he, 4680

And I his man maad with myn honde,  
I woldé right fayne undirstonde  
To knowen of what kynde he be,  
If ony wolde enformé me.'

*Raisoun.* 'I wolde,' seidé Resoun,  
'thee lere

Sith thou to lerne hast sich desire,  
And shewé thee withouten fable,  
A thyng that is not demonstrable.  
Thou shalt [wite] withouten science,  
And knowe withouten experience, 4690  
The thyng that may not knowen be,  
Ne wist ne shewid in no degre.

Thou maist the sothe of it not witen,  
Thóugh in thee it weré writen.

Thou shalt not knowe therof more,  
While thou art reuled by his lore.  
But unto hym that love wole fleé  
The knotté may unclosed bee,  
Which hath to thee, as it is founde,  
So long be knette and not unbounde.  
Now sette wel thyne entencioun, 4701  
To here of love discipcioun.

Love it is an hatefull pees,  
A free acquitaunce withoute relees,  
A truthe frette full of falsheede ;  
A sikernesse all sette in drede,  
In hertis a dispeiryng hope,  
And full of hope it is wanhope ;  
Wise woodnesse and wode resoun,  
A sweté perell in to droune, 4710  
An hevy birthen lyght to bere ;  
A wikked wawe alway to ware,  
It is Karibdous perilous ;  
Disagreable and gracious ;  
It is discordaunce that can accorde,

4687. *withouten*, perhaps dissyllabic.

4693, 4694. These obscure lines not in Fr. : perhaps we should connect v. 4693 with v. 4592 (reading *now witen* for *not witen*), and v. 4694 with v. 4695.

4705. MSS. *And thurgh the*. The correction is Tyrwhitt's.

4705. *frette full* ; cp. *Leg. of G. W.* 1117.

4709. Cp. note to v. 4532.

4712. 'A dangerous sea always to be avoided, It is Charybdis perilous.' The MS. reading *away to were* (nothing in Fr. corresponding) does not make good sense.

And accordaunce to discorde ;  
It is kunnyng withoute science,  
Wisdomé withouté sapience,  
Witte withouté discrecioun,  
Havoire withoute possessioun ; 4720  
It is sike hele and hool sekensse,  
A thrust drownéd in dronknesse ;  
An helthé full of maladie,  
And charite full of envie ;  
An hunger full of habundaunce,  
And a gredy suffisaunce ;  
Delite right ful of hevynesse,  
And drierihed full of gladnesse ;  
Bitter swetnesse and swete errour,  
Right evell savoured good savour ; 4730  
Syn[né] that pardoun hath withynne,  
And pardoun spotted oute with synne ;  
A peyne also it is joious,  
And felonyé right pitous ;  
Also pley that selde is stable,  
And stedefast [stat] right mevable.  
A strengthe weykéd to stonde upright,  
And feblenessé full of myght ;  
Witte unaviséd, sage folie,  
And joié full of turmentrie ; 4740  
A laughter it is, weping ay,  
Reste that traveyleth nyght and day ;  
Also a sweté helle it is,  
And a soroufull paradys ;  
A plesaunt gayl and esy prisoun,  
And, full of froste, [a] somer sesoun,  
Pryme temps full of frostés white,  
And May devoide of al delite ;  
With seer branches blossoms ungrene,  
And newe fruyt fillid with wynter tene.  
It is a slowe may not forbere 4751  
Ragges ribaned with gold to were ;  
For also well wole love be sette  
Under ragges as riche rochette,  
And eke as wel by amourettes  
In mournyng blak, as bright burnettes.

4722. MSS. *A trust . . . and dronknesse*.

4723. MSS. *And helth*.

4725. MSS. *And anger*.

4728. *drierihed*, MSS. *drieried*.

4732. *oute with*, MSS. *withoute*.

4751. C'est taigne qui riens refuse  
Les porpres et les buriaus use.

The word *taigne* (moth) of the Fr. is probably a mistake for *caigne* (cp. Hatzfeld-Darmesteter s. v. *cagne*). At least that seems to be the word here translated *slowe*, 'a vagabond.'

For noon is of so mochel pris,  
 Ne no man founden [is] so wys,  
 Ne noon so high is of parage,  
 Ne no man founde of witt so sage, 4760  
 No man so hardy, ne so wight,  
 Ne no man of so mychel myght,  
 Noon so fulfilld of bounte,  
 That he with love [ne] may daunted be.  
 All the world holdith this wey,  
 Lóve makith all to goon myswey,  
 But it be they of yvel lyf  
 Whom Genius cursith man and wyf,  
 That wrongly werke agecyn nature.  
 Noon such I love, ne have no cure 4770  
 Of sich as lovés servautes bene,  
 And wole not by my counsel flene.  
 For I ne preisè that lovyng,  
 Wherthurgh men at the laste eendyng  
 Shall calle hem wrecchis full of woo,  
 Love greveth hem and shendith soo.  
 But if thou wolt wel love eschewe  
 Forto escape out of his mewe,  
 And make al hool thi sorwe to slake,  
 No bettir counsel maist thou take 4780  
 Than thynke to fleen wel I-wis.  
 May nought helpe elles; for wite thou this:  
 It thou fle it, it shal flee thee;  
 Folowe it, and folowen shal it thee.'

Whanne I hadde herde all Resoun  
 seyne,

Which haddè spilt hir speche in veyne,  
 'Dáme,' seide I, 'I dar wel sey,  
 Of this avaunt me wel I may,  
 That from youre scole so devyaunt  
 I am, that never the more avaunt 4790  
 Right nought am I thurgh youre doctrine.  
 I dulle under youre discipline,  
 I wote no more than wist [I] ever;  
 To me so contrarie and so fer  
 Is every thing that ye me lere,  
 And yit I can it all by *par cuer*,  
 Myne herte foryetith therof right nought,  
 It is so writen in my thought;  
 And depè greven it is so tendir  
 That all by herte I can it rendre, 4800  
 And rede it over comunely;  
 But to my-silf lewedist am I.  
 But sith ye love discreven so,  
 And lak and preisè it bothè woo,

4764. Cp. similar mistake in v. 3774.

Defyneth it into this letter  
 That I may thenke on it the better;  
 For I herde never diffyne it ere,  
 And wilfully I wolde it lere.'

*Raisoun.* 'If love be serchéd wel and  
 sought,

It is a syknesse of the thought, 4810  
 Annexed and knet bitwixè tweyne  
 Which male and female with oo cheyne  
 So frely byndith that they nyll twynne,  
 Whether so therof they leese or wyne.  
 The rootè springith thurgh hoothe brennyng  
 Into disordinat desiryng  
 Fórtó kissen and embrace,  
 And at her lust them to solace;  
 Of other thyng love recclith nought  
 But setteth her herte and all her thought,  
 Móre for delectacioun 4820  
 Than ony procreacioun  
 Of other fruyt by engendrure;  
 (Which love to god is not plesure),  
 For of her body fruyt to gete  
 They yeve no forcé, they are so sette  
 Upon delite to pley in-feere.  
 And somme have also this manere,  
 To feynen hem for lovè seke.  
 Sich love I preisè not at a leke, 4830  
 For paramours they do but feyne,  
 To lovè truly they disdeyne;  
 They falsen ladies traitoursly,  
 And swerne hem othes utterly,  
 With many a lesyng and many a fable,  
 And all they fynden deceyvable;  
 And whanne they han her lust [y]geten,  
 The hootè ernes they al foryeten.  
 Wymmen the harme they bien full sore,  
 But men this thenken evermore; 4840  
 That lasse harme is, so mote I the,  
 Deceyve them than deceyved be;  
 And namèly where they ne may  
 Fynde none other menè wey.  
 For I wote wel, in sothfastnesse,  
 What wight doth now his bisynesse  
 With ony womman forto dele  
 For ony lust that he may fele,  
 But if it be for engendrure,  
 He doth trespassse, I you ensure. 4850

4807. MSS. *diffyned heere.*

4814. *Whether for wher.*

4824. *plesure*, MSS. *plesyng.*

or he shulde setten all his wille  
 to geten a likly thyng hym tille,  
 and to sustenê, if he myght,  
 and kepê forth, by kyndes right,  
 his ownê lyknesse and semblable.  
 or because all is corumpable,  
 and failê shulde successioun,  
 se were ther generacioun  
 pure sectis strenê forto save, 4859  
 Whanne fader or moder arn in grave,  
 for children shulde, whanne they ben  
 deede,

Full diligent ben in her steede  
 to use that werke on such a wise,  
 that oon may thurgh another rise.  
 Therefore sette Kynde therynne delite ;  
 or men therynne shulde hem delite,  
 and of that deedê be not erke,  
 but oftê sithês haunt that werke.  
 or noon wolde drawe therof a draught,  
 se were delite which hath hym kaught. 4871  
 she hath sotillêd Dame Nature ;  
 or noon goth right, I thee ensure,  
 she hath entent hool ne parfit,  
 or her desir is for delyte ;  
 she which for tenê crece, and eke  
 she pley of love for-oftê seke,  
 and thrall hem silf they be so nyce  
 into the prince of every vyce ;  
 or of ech synne it is the rote  
 of unfulfull lust, though it be sote, 4880  
 and of all yvell the racyne,  
 as Tullius can determyne  
 which in his tymê was full sage,)  
 in a boke he made OF AGE,  
 where that more he preyseth eelde,  
 though he be croked and unweelde,  
 and more of commendacioun  
 than youthe in his discipcioun,  
 or youthê sette bothe man and wyf 4890  
 in all perell of soule and lyf,  
 and perell is, but men have grace,  
 the perell of youghth[ê] forto pace  
 withoute ony deth or distresse,  
 is so full of wyldênnesse.

4871. Thus hath sotilled (MSS. This had  
 filled, etc.), 'soutiva,' i.e. thus hath Nature  
 fully reasoned.

4875. for tene crece (MSS. fortened crece) ;  
 crece, i.e. increase.

4892. Skeat and Kaluza read *tyme* for *perell*.

So ofte it doth shame or damage  
 To hym, or to his lynage.  
 It ledith man now up, now down,  
 In mochel dissolucioun,  
 And makith hym love yvell companye,  
 And lede his lyf disrewilye, 4900  
 And halt hym payed with noon estate.  
 Withynne hym-silf is such debate,  
 He chaungith purpos and entente  
 And yalte [him] into somme covente,  
 To lyven aftir her emprise,  
 And lesith fredom and fraunchise,  
 That nature in hym haddê sette.  
 The which ageyne he may not gette,  
 If he there make his mansioun,  
 For to abide professioun. 4910  
 Though for a tyme his herte absente,  
 It may not fayle, he shal repente,  
 And eke abidê thilkê day  
 To leve his abite and gone his way ;  
 And lesith his worship and his name,  
 And dar not come ageyn for shame,  
 But al his lyf he doth so morne,  
 By cause he dar not hom retourne.  
 Fredom of kynde so lost hath he,  
 That never may recured be, 4920  
 But that if God hym grauntê grace  
 That he may, er he hennês pace,  
 Conteyne undir obedience  
 Thurgh the vertu of pacience.  
 For youthe sett man in all folye,  
 In unthrift and [in] ribaudie,  
 In leccherie and in outrage,  
 So ofte it chaungith of corage.  
 Youthe gynneth oftê sich bargeyne  
 That may not eendê withouten peyne.  
 In gret perell is sett youthede, 4931  
 Delite so doth his bridil leede.  
 Delite thus hangith, drede thee nought,  
 Bothe mannys body and his thought  
 Oonly thurgh youth, [his] chamberere,  
 That to done yvell is custommere,  
 And of nought elles taketh hede  
 But oonly folkês forto lede  
 Into disporte and wyldênnesse,  
 So [she] is frowarde from sadnesse. 4940  
 But Eeldê drawith hem therfro,

4933. MSS. this for thus, 'ainsinc.'

4933. drede thee nought, i.e. you may be sure.

4940. Omitted subject.

Who wote it nought, he may wel goo  
 And moo of hem that now arn olde,  
 That whilom youthhed hadde in holde,  
 Which yit remembre of tendir age,  
 How it hem brought in many a rage,  
 And many a foly therynne wrought.  
 But now that Eelde hath hem thourgh  
 sought,

They repente hem of her folye,  
 That youthe hem putte in jupardye, 4950  
 In perell, and in myché woo,  
 And made hem ofte amys to do,  
 And suen yvell companye,  
 Riot and avouterie.

But Eeldè can ageyn restreyne  
 From sich foly, and refreyne  
 And sette men by her ordinaunce  
 In good reule and in governaunce.  
 But yvell she spendiþ hir servise  
 For no man wole hir love ne preise, 4960  
 She is hated, this wote I welle,  
 Hir acqueyntaunce wolde noman fele  
 Ne han of Eldè companye,  
 Men hate to be of hir alye ;  
 For noman wolde bicomen olde  
 Ne dye, whanne he is yong and bolde.  
 And Eelde merveilith right gretlye,  
 Whanne thei remembre hem inwardly,  
 Of many a perelous emprise, 4969  
 Whiche that they wrought in sondry wise,  
 How evere they myght, withouté blame,  
 Escape away withouté shame.  
 In youthè withouté damage  
 Or reproof of her lynage,  
 Losse of membre, shedyng of blode,  
 Perell of deth, or losse of good.  
 Woste thou nought where Youthe abit,  
 That men so preisen in her witt ?  
 With Delite she halt sojour,  
 For bothe they dwellen in oo tour. 4980  
 As longe as Youthe is in sesoun  
 They dwellen in oon mansioun.  
 Delite of Youthe wole have servise  
 To do what so he wole devise ;  
 And Youthe is redy evermore  
 Forto obey for smerte of sore

4943. *moo*, 'demant,' either verb meaning *to ask* or *mistake* for some such word. Cp. v. 5290 and note.

4944. *youthled*, MSS. *youthle*.

4960. MSS. *neither*; cp. v. 3718.

Unto Delite, and hym to yive  
 Hir servise while that she may lyve.  
 Where Elde abit I wole thee telle  
 Shórtly, and no whilé dwelle, 499  
 For thidir byhoveth thee to goo.  
 If deth in youthe [hath] thee not sloo,  
 Of this journey thou maist not faile.  
 With hir Labour and Travaile  
 Lógged ben, with Sorwe and Woo  
 That never out of hir court goo.  
 Peyne and Distresse, Syknesse and Ire  
 And Malencoly, that angry sire,  
 Ben of hir paleys senatours ; 499  
 Gronyng and Grucchyng hir herbejours  
 The day and nyght hir to turment,  
 With cruell deth they hir present ;  
 And tellen hir, erliche and late,  
 That Deth stont arméd at hir gate.  
 Thanne brynge they to her remembraunce  
 The foly dedis of hir infaunce,  
 Whiche causen hir to mourne in woo  
 That Youthe hath hir bigiléd so,  
 Which sodeynly away is hasted.  
 She wepeth the tyme that she hath wastid  
 Compleynyng of the preterit 500  
 And the present, that not abit,  
 And of hir oldè vanite ;  
 That, but aforin hir she may see  
 In the future somme socour,  
 To leggen hir of hir dolour,  
 To graunte hir tyme of répentance,  
 Fór her synnes to do penaunce,  
 And at the laste so hir governe  
 To wynne the joy that is eterne, 500  
 Fro which go bakward Youthe her mad  
 In vanite to droune and wade,—  
 For present tyme abidith nought,  
 It is more swift than any thought,  
 So litel while it doth endure  
 That ther nys compté ne mesure.  
 But how that evere the gamé go  
 Who list to have joie and mirth also  
 Of Lovè, be it he or she

5004. MSS. *stondith*.

5022. The conclusion seems to have been forged by the translator; Fr.

'Et qu'ele a sa vie perdue  
 Se du futur n'est securue,' etc.

So supply after 5022 :

Al her lyf she hath forlorn.

5028. *have* (MSS. *love*), read *l'have*.

High or lowé, who it be, 5030  
 In fruyt they shuldé hem delyte ;  
 Her part they may not ellés quyte,  
 To save hem-silf in honeste.  
 And yit full many one I se  
 Of wymmen, sothly forto seyne,  
 Thát desire and woldé fayne  
 The pley of love, they be so wilde,  
 And not coveite to go with childe.  
 And if with child they be perchaunce,  
 They wole it holde a gret myschaunce ;  
 But what-som-ever woo they fele, 5041  
 They wole not pleyné but concele,  
 But if it be ony fool or nyce  
 In whom that Shame hath no justice.  
 For to delyte echone they drawe,  
 That haunte this werke bothe high and  
 lawe,  
 Sáve sich that arn worth right nought  
 Thát for money wole be bought.  
 Such love I preisé in no wise,  
 Whanne it is goven for coveitise. 5050  
 I preise no womman though she be wood  
 That yeveth hir-silf for ony good.  
 Fór litel shulde a man telle,  
 Of hir that wole hir body selle,  
 Bé she maydé, be she wyf,  
 That quyk wole selle hir, bi hir lif.  
 How faire chere that evere she make  
 He is a wrecche, I undirtake,  
 That loved such one, for swete or soure,  
 Though she hym calle hir paramoure,  
 And laugheth on hym, and makith hym  
 feeste ; 5061  
 Fór certeynly no such beeste  
 Tó be loved is not worthy,  
 Or bere the name of druerie.  
 Noon shulde hir please, but he were  
 woode,  
 That wole dispoile hym of his goode.  
 Yit nevertheles I wole not sey  
 That she for solace and for pley  
 Ne may a jewel or other thyng  
 Táke of her lovés fre yevyng ; 5070  
 But that she aske it in no wise,  
 For drede of shame of coveitise.  
 And she of hirs may hym certeyn  
 Withouté sclandre yeven ageyn,

5051. MSS. *though so be wood*; (?) read *to be good*. 'Mes ja certes n'iert fame bone.'

And joyne her hertes to-gidre so  
 In love, and take and yeve also.  
 Trówe not that I wolde hem twynne  
 Whanne in her love ther is no synne ;  
 I wole that they to-gedre go,  
 And don al that they han ado, 5080  
 As curteis shulde and debonaire,  
 And in her love beren hem faire,  
 Withouté vice, bothe he and she,  
 So that alwey in honeste  
 Fro foly love they kepe hem clere,  
 That brenneth hertis with his fere,  
 And that her love in ony wise  
 Bé devoide of coveitise.  
 Góod love shulde engendrid be  
 Of trewé herte, just and secre, 5090  
 And not of such as sette her thought  
 To have her lust, and ellis nought.  
 So are they caught in lovés lace,  
 Truly for bodily solace.  
 Fleshly delite is so present  
 With thee, that sette all thyne entent,  
 Withouté more (what shulde I glose?)  
 Fórto gete and have the Rose,  
 Which makith [thee] so mate and woode,  
 That thou desirest noon other goode. 5100  
 But thou art not an inche the nerre,  
 But evere abidist in sorwe and werre,  
 As in thi facé it is sene ;  
 It makith thee bothe pale and lene ;  
 Thy myght, thi vertu goth away.  
 A sory geste, in goode fay,  
 Thou herberest then in thyne inne,  
 The God of Love whanne thou let inne.  
 Wherefore I rede thou shette hym oute,  
 Or he shall greve thee, oute of doute ;  
 For to thi profit it wole turne, 5111  
 If he nomore with thee sojourne.  
 In gret myscheef and sorwe sonken  
 Ben hertis that of love arn dronken,  
 As thou peraunter knowen shall  
 Whanne thou hast lost thi tyme all,  
 And spent thy youth in ydilnesse  
 In waste and wofull lustynesse.  
 If thou maist lyve the tyme to se  
 Of love forto delyvered be, 5120

5085. *they*, MSS. *to*.

5107. *then*, MS. *hem*; Th. omits.

5116. *thi tyme*, 'ton tens,' MSS. *the tyme*.

5117. *thy youth*, '1a jonesce,' MSS. *by thought*.

Thy tyme thou shalt biwepé sore,  
 The whiché never thou maist restore,  
 For tymé lost, as men may see,  
 For no thyng may recured be.  
 And if thou scape yit atté laste  
 Fro Lové that hath thee so faste  
 Kñytt and bounden in his lace,  
 Certeyn I holde it but a grace.  
 For many oon, as it is seyne,  
 Have lost and spent also in veyne 5130  
 In his servise, withoute socour,  
 Body and soule, good and richesse,  
 Witte and strengthe and eke resourse,  
 Of which they hadde never redresse.'

Thus taught and prechéd hath resoun,  
 But Lové spilté hir sermoun,  
 That was so ymped in my thought,  
 That hir doctrine I sette at nought.  
 And yitt ne seide she never a dele  
 That I ne undirstode it wele, 5140  
 Word by word the mater all;  
 But unto love I was so thrall,  
 Which callith over-all his pray,  
 He chasith so my thought al day,  
 And halt myne herte undir his sele,  
 As trust and trew as ony stele.  
 Só that no devocioun  
 Né hadde I in the sermoun  
 Of dame Resoun, ne of hir rede.  
 It toke no sojour in myne hede, 5150  
 For all yede oute at [that] oon ere,  
 That in that other she dide lere;  
 Fully on me she lost hir lore.  
 Hir speche me grevéd wondir sore.

Than unto hir for ire I seide,  
 For anger as I dide abraide:  
 'Dame, and is it youre wille algate  
 That I not love, but that I hate  
 Allé men, as ye me teche?  
 For if I do aftir youre speche, 5160  
 Sith that ye seyne love is not good,  
 Thanne must I nedis say with mood,  
 If I it leve, in hatrede ay  
 To lyven, and voidé love away  
 From me, [and be] a synfull wrecche,

5144. *al day*, MSS. *ay*; cp. v. 5174.5145. *halt*, MSS. *holdith*.5162. *say*, an aphetic form of *assay*, to attempt.5164. MSS. omit *To*.

5165. The bracketed words (Skeat's readings) seem necessary to the sense.

Hated of all that [love that] tecche;  
 I may not go noon other gate,  
 For other must I love or hate.  
 And if I haté men of newe  
 More than love, it wole me rewe, 5170  
 As by youre preching semeth me,  
 For Love no thing ne preisith thee.  
 Ye yeve good counsel sikirly,  
 That prechith me al day that I  
 Shúlde not lovés lore alowe,  
 He were a foole wolde you not trowe.  
 In speche also ye han me taught  
 Another love that knowen is naught,  
 Which I have herd you not repreve,  
 To love ech other. By youre leve, 5180  
 If ye wolde diffyne it me,  
 I wolde gladly here to se,  
 Átte the leest, if I may lere,  
 Of sondry lovés the manere.'

*Raisoun*. 'Cértis freend a fool art thou  
 Whan that thou no thyng wolt allowe,  
 Thát I for thi profit say.  
 Yit wole I sey thee more in fay,  
 For I am redy at the leste  
 To accomplisshe thi requeste. 5190  
 But I not where it wole avayle,  
 In veyn perauntre I shal travayle.  
 Lóve ther is in sondry wise,  
 As I shal thee heere devise.  
 For somme love leful is and good;  
 I mene not that which makith thee wood,  
 And bringith thee in many a fitte  
 And ravysshith fro thee al thi witte,  
 It is so merveilleuse and queynte;  
 With such love be no more aqueynte.

Love of freendship also ther is, 5201  
 Which makith no man done amys,  
 Of willé knytt bitwixé two,  
 That wole not breke for wele ne woo;  
 Which long is likly to contune  
 Whanne wille and goodis ben in comune;  
 Grounded by goddis ordinaunce,  
 Hoole withouté discordaunce;  
 With hem holdyng comunte  
 Of all her goode in charite; 5210  
 That ther be noon excepcioun  
 Thurgh chaungyng of entencioun;  
 That ech helpe other at her neede,

5172. *preisith thee*, 'Tout me vaille Amors un denier.'



And wisely hele bothe word and dede ;  
 Trewe of menyng, devoide of slouthe,  
 For witt is nought withouté trouthe,  
 So that the ton dar all his thought,  
 Seyn to his freend and sparé nought  
 As to hym silf, withoute dredyng  
 To be discovered by wreying. 5220  
 For glad is that conjunccioun  
 Whanne ther is noon susspecioun,  
 [Ne lak in hem] whom they wolde  
 prove,

That trewe and parfit weren in love.  
 For no man may be amyable,  
 But if he be so ferme and stable  
 That fortune change hym not, ne blynde ;  
 But that his freend all-way hym fynde,  
 Bothe pore and riche, in oon estate.  
 For if his freend, thurgh ony gate, 5230  
 Wole compleyne of his poverté,  
 He shulde not bide so long til he  
 Óf his helpyng hym requere ;  
 For goode dedé done thurgh praiere  
 Is sold and bought to deere, I-wys,  
 To hert that of grete valour is.  
 For hert fulfilled of gentilnesse  
 Can yvel demenè his distresse,  
 And man, that worthy is of name,  
 To asken often hath gret shame. 5240  
 A good man brenneth in his thought  
 For shamé, whanne he axeth ought.  
 He hath gret thought, and dredeth ay  
 For his disese, whanne he shal pray  
 His freend, lest that he warnéd be,  
 Til that he preve his stabilte.  
 But whanne that he hath founden oon,  
 That trusty is and trewe as stone,  
 And [hath] assaiad hym at alle,  
 And founde hym stedefast as a walle 5250  
 And of his freendship be certeyne,  
 He shal hym shewe bothe joye and  
 peyne,

And all that [he] dar thyneke or sey,  
 Withouté shame, as he wel may.  
 For how shulde he a-shaméd be  
 Of sich one as I toldé thee ?  
 For whanne he woot his secre thought,

5223. *Tiex mors (mœurs) avoir doivent et seulent  
 Qui parfetement amer veulent.*

The bracketed words were supplied by Professor  
 Skeat.

The thridde shal knowe therof right  
 nought ;

For tweyne of noumbre is bet than thre  
 In every counsell and secre. 5260  
 Repreve he dredeth never a deele  
 Who that bisett his wordis wele.  
 For every wise man, out of drede,  
 Can kepe his tunge til he se nede ;  
 And foolés can not holde her tunge—  
 “ A foolés belle is sooné runge.”  
 Yit shal a trewé freend do more,  
 To helpe his felowe of his sore,  
 And socoure hym, whanne he hath neede,  
 In all that he may done in deede ; 5270  
 And gladder [be] that he hym plesith,  
 Thán his felowe, that he esith.  
 And if he do not his requeste,  
 He shal as mochel hym moleste  
 Ás his felow, for that he  
 May not fulfille his volunte  
 Fúilly, as he hath requered.  
 If bothe the hertis Love hath fered,  
 Jóy and woo they shull departe  
 And take evenly ech his parte ; 5280  
 Half his anoy he shal have ay,  
 And comfort [him] what that he may ;  
 And of his blissé parte shal he,  
 If lovè wel departed be.

And whilom of this nyte  
 Spake Tulus in a ditee,  
 Man shuldé maken his requeste  
 Unto his freend that is honeste,  
 And he goodly shulde it fulfille,  
 But if the more were out of skile ; 5290  
 And other wise not graunte therto,  
 Except oonly in causes twoo ;  
 If men his freend to deth wolde drive,  
 Late hym be bisy to save his lyve ;  
 Also if men wolen hym assayle  
 Of his wurship to make hym faille,  
 And hyndren hym of his renoun ;

5274. *He.* Perhaps read *That* or *It*, as a reflexive verb *molest* is unusual.

5282. *comfort him* (MSS. omit *him*), ‘le confortte.’

5284. *wel* (MSS. *wole*), ‘a droit.’

5287. *Man* (MSS. *And*) *shulde*, one should, ‘devons.’

5290. MSS. *But it. more* is either a subst. meaning *request*, or a similar mistake to that in v. 4943.

5292. *causes* (MSS. *cause*), cases.

Late hym, with full entencioun,  
 His dever done in eche degre  
 Thát his freend ne shaméd be, 5300  
 In this two causes with his myght,  
 Taking no kepe to skile nor right  
 As ferre as love may hym excuse ;  
 This ough t no man to refuse.  
 This love, that I have tolde to thee,  
 Is no thing contrarie to me ;  
 This wole I that thou folowe wele,  
 And leve the tother everydele ;  
 This love to vertu all entendith,  
 The tothir foolés blent and shendith. 5310

Another love also there is,  
 That is contrarie unto this ;  
 Which desire is so constreynd  
 Thát [it] is but willè feyned.  
 Away fro trouthe it doth so varie,  
 That to good love it is contrarie,  
 Fór it maymeth in many wise  
 Siké hertis with coveitise.  
 All in wynnyng and in profit  
 Sich love settith his delite. 5320  
 This love so hangeth in balaunce,  
 That if it lese his hope perchance  
 Of lucre that he is sett upon,  
 Ít wole faile and quenche anoon.  
 For no man may be amerous,  
 Ne in his lyvvyng vertuous,  
 Bút he lovè more in moode  
 Men for him-silf than for her goode.  
 For love that profit doth abide  
 Is fals, and bit not in no tyde 5330  
 [This] lovè cometh of Dame Fortune,  
 That litel whilè wole contune ;  
 For it shal chaungen wonder soone,  
 And take Eclips ; right as the moone  
 Whanne he is from us lett  
 Thurgh erthé, that bitwixe is sett  
 The sonne and hir, as it may falle,  
 Be it in partie or in all.  
 The shadowe maketh her bemys merke,  
 And hir hornes to shewe derke 5340  
 That part where she hath lost hir lyght  
 Of Phebus fully, and the sight ;  
 Til, whanne the shadowe is overpaste,

5301. MSS. *caas*.5327. Perhaps insert *if* after *But*.5342. Such displacements as this of *and* were common in 15th century verse.

She is enlumyned ageyn as faste  
 Thurgh the brightnesse of the sonnè bernes  
 That yeveth to hir ageyne hir lemes.  
 That love is right of sich nature,  
 Now is faire, and now obscure,  
 Now bright, now clipsi of manere,  
 And whilom dymme, and whilom clere.  
 As soone as poverte gynneth take, 5350  
 With mantel and [with] wedis blake  
 Hidith of love the light away,  
 That into nyght it turneth day ;  
 It may not see richessè shyne,  
 Till the blakè shadowes fyne.  
 For whanne richessè shyneth bright  
 Love recovereth ageyn his light,  
 And whanne it failith, he wole flit ;  
 And as she groweth, so groweth it. 5360  
 Of this love here what I sey :  
 The richè men are lovèd ay,  
 And namely tho that sparand bene,  
 That wole not wasshe her hertes clene  
 Of the filthe, nor of the vice  
 Of gredy brennyng avarice.  
 The riche man full fonnèd is y-wys,  
 That weneth that he lovèd is ;  
 If that his herte it undirstode,  
 It is not he, it is his goode ; 5370  
 He may wel witen in his thought  
 His good is lovèd and he right nought.  
 For if he be a nygard eke,  
 Men wole not sette by hym a leke,  
 But haten hym, this is the sothe.  
 Lo, what profit his catell doth ?  
 Of every man that may hym see,  
 It geteth hym nought but enmyte.  
 But he amende hym of that vice,  
 And knowe hym silf, he is not wys. 5380  
 Certys he shulde ay freendly be,  
 To gete him love also ben free,  
 Or ellis he is not wise ne sage,  
 Nomore than is a gote ramage.

That he not loveth his dede proveth,  
 Whan he his richesse so wel loveth  
 That he wole hide it ay and spare,  
 His porè freendis sene forfare  
 To kepen alway his purpose,

5351. *take*, 'l'afuble.'5353. *Hidith*. Skeat reads *It hit*, and perhaps rightly.5379. *hym*, MSS. *hymself*.5389. *alway*, MSS. *ay*; cp. v. 5144.

Til for drede his yen close,  
 And til a wikked deth hym take.  
 Hym hadde lever a-sondre shake  
 And late hise lymes a-sondre ryve,  
 Than leve his richesse in his lyve ;  
 He thenkith parte it with no man.  
 Certayn no love is in hym than ;  
 How shuldé love withynne hym be,  
 Whanne in his herte is no pite ?  
 That he trespasseth wel I wat,  
 For ech man knowith his estate. 5400  
 For wel hym ought to be reprovéd  
 That loveth nought, ne is not loved.  
 But sen we arn to fortune comen,  
 And hath oure sermoun of hir nomen,  
 A wondir will y telle thee nowé ;  
 Thou herdist never sich oon I trowe.  
 I note where thou me leven shall,  
 Though sothfastnesse it be at all.  
 As it is writen and is soth,  
 That unto men more profit doth 5410  
 The froward fortune and contraire,  
 Thán the swote and debonaire ;  
 And if thee thynke it is doutable  
 It is thurgh argument provable ;  
 Fór the debonaire and softe  
 Fálsith and bigilith ofte.  
 For lyche a moder she can cherishe,  
 And mylken [hem] as doth a norys ;  
 And of hir goodé to hem deles,  
 And yeveth hem parte of her joweles,  
 With grete richesse and dignite ; 5421  
 And hem she hoteth stabilite  
 In a state that is not stable,  
 But chaungynge ay and variable ;  
 And fedith hym with glorie veyne,  
 In worldly blissé noncerteyne.  
 Whanne she hem settith on hir whele  
 Thanne wené they to be right wele,  
 And in so stable state withall  
 That never they wené forto falle. 5430  
 And whanne they sette so highé be,  
 They wene to have in certeynte

Of hertly freendis so grete noubre  
 That no thyng myght her state encombre.  
 They trust hem so on every side,  
 Wenying with hem they wolde abide  
 In every perell and myschaunce,  
 Withouté chaunge or variaunce  
 Bóthe of catell and of goode.  
 And also forto spende her bloode, 5440  
 And all her membris forto spille,  
 Oonly to fulfile her wille.  
 They naken it hole in many wise,  
 And hoten hem her full servise,  
 How soré that it do hem smerte,  
 Into her naked sherte.  
 Herte and all so hole they yive,  
 For the tyme that they may lyve.  
 Só that with her flaterie,  
 They maken foolis glorifie 5450  
 Of her wordis spekyng,  
 And han ther-of a rejoyssyng,  
 And trowe hem as the Evangile :  
 And it is all falsheede and gile,  
 As they shal aftirwardé se  
 Whanne they arn falle in poverté,  
 And ben of good and catell bare ;  
 Thanneshulde they sene who freendis ware.  
 For of an hundred certeynly,  
 Nor of a thousande full scarsly, 5460  
 Ne shal they fynde unnethis oon  
 Whanne poverté is comen upon.  
 For this Fortune that I of telle  
 With men whanne hir lust to dwelle,  
 Makith hem to leese her conisaunce,  
 And norishith hem in ignoraunce.

But froward Fortune and perverse,  
 Whanne high estatis she doth reverse,  
 And maketh hem to tumble doune  
 Óf hir whele, with sodeyn tourne, 5470  
 And from her richesse doth hem fle,  
 And plongeth hem in poverté,  
 As a stepmoder envyous  
 And leieth a plastre dolorous  
 Unto her hertis wounded egre,  
 Which is not tempered with vynegre

5393. MSS. *late all.*5399. MSS. *wel I wot.*5401. *For,* (?) read *Full*, 'moult.'5405. Cp. *Boece*, 583 ff.5408. *at all* (MSS. *it all*), altogether.5419. *deles*, (?) *dele* infinitive construed with *can* and rhyming with *joweles*; cp. v. 2092. If so, read *yve* in v. 5420.5426. *In*, MSS. *And*, Fr. 'en.'5433. *so*, MSS. *to*, Fr. 'tant.'5452. *ther-of*, MSS. *cheer of*, (Kaluza).5463. *this*, MSS. *thus*, 'ceste.'5470. *Of*, off.5473. The *And* of next verse seems to belong before *As*, else v. 5474 precedes v. 5473.Et lor assiet comme marastre  
 Au cuer un dolereus emplastre.

But with poverte and indigence—  
 Forto shewe by experience  
 That she is Fortune verelye,  
 In whom no man shulde affye, 5480  
 Nor in hir yeftis have fiancée,  
 She is so full of variaunce.  
 Thus kan she maken high and lowe,  
 Whanne they from richesse arn [y-]throwe,  
 Fully to knowen without were  
 Freend of affect and freend of chere ;  
 And which in love were trewe and stable,  
 And whiche also were variable,  
 After Fortune her goddesse,  
 In poverte outhur in richesse. 5490  
 For all she yeveth here, out of drede,  
 Unhappe bereveth it in dede ;  
 For in-fortune late not oon  
 Of freendis, whanne Fortune is gone—  
 I mene tho freendis that wole fle  
 Anoon, as entreth poverte ;  
 And yit they wole not leve hem so,  
 But in ech placé where they go,  
 They calle hem “wrecché,” scorne, and  
 blame,  
 And of her myshappe hem diffame. 5500  
 And namely siche as in richesse  
 Pretendid most of stablenesse,  
 Whanne that they sawe hym sette on lofte,  
 And were of hym socouréd ofte,  
 And most hólpe in all her neede ;  
 But now they take no maner heede,  
 But seyn in voice of flaterie,  
 That now apperith her solye  
 Over-all where so they fare,  
 And syngé “Go fare-wel, feldefare.” 5510  
 All suché freendis I beshrewe,  
 For of trewe ther be to fewe.  
 But sothfast freendis, what so bitide,  
 In every fortune wolen abide ;  
 Thei han her hertis in suche noblesse  
 That they nyl love for no richesse,  
 Nor for that fortune may hem sende

5486. *affect*, see *New English Dictionary*, s.v.  
 5486. Cp. Chaucer's *Fortune*, v. 34, and *Boece*,  
 590 ff.

5491. *she*, MSS. *that*; ‘Car ceus que beneurte  
 donne.’

5493. *late*, (?) *leveth*, ‘remain.’

5493. *oon* is subject of *late*, ‘remains.’

5502. MSS. *pretendith*.

5510. *Go fare-wel*, etc., v. *New English Dict.*  
 under *Farewell*.

Thei wolen hem socoure and defende,  
 And change for softe ne for sore ;  
 For who is freend loveth evermore. 5  
 Though men draweswerde his freend to  
 He may not hewe her love a-two,  
 But in case that I shall sey ;  
 For pride and ire lese it he may,  
 And for reprove by nycete,  
 And discovering of privitye ;  
 With tonge woundyng as feloun,  
 Thurgh venomous detraccioun.  
 Frende in this case wole gone his way  
 For no thyng greve hym more ne may  
 And for nought ellis wole he fle, 5  
 If that he love in stabilite.  
 And certeyn he is wel bigone,  
 Among a thousand that fyndith oon ;  
 For ther may be no richesse  
 Ageyns friendship of worthynesse ;  
 For it ne may so high atteigne  
 As may the valoure, soth to seyne,  
 Of hym that loveth trew and well.  
 Friendship is more than is catell, 5  
 For freend in court ay better is,  
 Than peny in purs certis.  
 And Fortune myshappying,  
 Whanne upon men she is fallyng  
 Thurgh mysturnyng of hir chaunce,  
 And casteth hem oute of balaunce,  
 She makith thurgh hir adversite  
 Mén full clerly forto se  
 Hym that is freend in existence,  
 From hym that is by apparence. 5  
 For yn-fortune makith anoon,  
 To knowe thy freendis fro thy foon,  
 By experience right as it is.  
 The which is more to praise y-wis,  
 Than is myche richesse and tresour.  
 For more dothe profit and valour  
 Poverte and such adversite  
 Bi fer than doth prosperite ;  
 For the toon yeveth conysaunce,  
 And the tother ignoraunce.

And thus in poverte is in dede  
 Tróuthe declared fro falsheed,  
 For feynté freendis it wole declare,  
 And trewe also what wey they fare.

5519. *And. Ne* with semicolon after *sen*  
 would make better sense.

5544. *fallyng*, MS. *fablyng*, ‘cheans.’

For whanne he was in his richesse,  
 These freendis ful of doublenesse  
 Offrid hym in many wise  
 Hért, and body, and servise ;  
 What wolde he thanne hayove to lia bought  
 To knowen openly her thought, 5570  
 That he now hath so clerly seen ?  
 The lasse bigiled he shulde have bene,  
 And he hadde thanne perceyved it ;  
 But richesse nold not late hym witte.  
 Vel more avauntage doth hym thanne,  
 With that it makith hym a wise man,  
 The gret myscheef that he receyveth,  
 Than doth richesse that hym deceyveth.  
 Richesse riché ne makith nought  
 Lym that on tresour sette his thought,  
 Or richesse stonte in suffisaunce 5581  
 And no-thing in habundaunce ;  
 Or suffisaunce all oonly  
 Makith men to lyvé richély.  
 For he that at myches tweyne,  
 He valued [is] in his demeine,  
 Ryveth more at ese, and more is riche,  
 Than doth he that is chiche,  
 And in his berne hath, soth to seyn,  
 A hundred mowis of whete greyne, 5590  
 Though he be chapman or marchaunte,  
 And have of golde many [a] besaunte.  
 Or in the getyng he hath such woo,  
 And in the keypyng drede also,  
 And sette evermore his bisynesse  
 Forto enrese, and not to lesse,  
 Forto aument and multiplie.  
 And though on hepis that lye hym bye  
 It never shal maké his richesse  
 Seth unto his gredynesse. 5600  
 At the povere that recchith nought,  
 Heve of his lyflode, in his thought,  
 Which that he getith with his travaile,

He dredith nought that it shall faile,  
 Though he have lytel worldis goode,  
 Mete, and drynke, and esy foode,  
 Upon his travel and lyvyng,  
 And also suffisaunt clothyng.  
 Or if in syknesse that he fall,  
 And lothé mete and drynke withall, 5610  
 Though he have not his mete to bye  
 He shal bithynke hym hastily  
 To putte hym oute of all daunger,  
 That he of mete hath no myster ;  
 Or that he may with lytel eke  
 Be founden, while that he is seke ;  
 Or that men shull hym berne in haste,  
 To lyvé til his syknesse be paste,  
 To somme maysondewe biside ; 5619  
 Or he caste nought what shal hym bitide—  
 He thenkith nought that evere he shall  
 Into ony sykénéssé fall.  
 And though it falle, as it may be,  
 That all be-tymé spare shall he  
 As mochel, as shal to hym suffice  
 While he is sike in ony wise,  
 He doth [that] for that he wole be  
 Cóntente with his poverte,  
 Withouté nede of ony man.  
 So myche in litel have he can, 5630  
 He is apaiud with his fortune ;  
 And for he nyl be impourte  
 Unto no wight, ne honerous,  
 Nor of her goodés coveitous,  
 Therefore he spareth, it may wel bene,  
 His pore estate forto sustene.  
 Or if hym lust not forto spare,  
 But suffriith forth as not ne ware,  
 Atte last it hapneth as it may  
 Right unto his lasté day, 5640  
 And taketh the world as it wolde be ;  
 For evere in herté thenkith he,  
 The sonner that [the] deth hym slo,  
 To paradys the sonner go  
 He shal, there forto lyve in blisse,

569. *yove*, MSS. *yow*, p. pt. of *yive*. Read *ya* as one word. The thought is borrowed from Boethius; see Chaucer's *Boece*, 590.

573. *And*, if.

577. *receyveth*, MSS. *perceyveth*, 'recoit.'

585. *at*, MSS. *hath*. 'Car tex n'a pas voillant niches.'

586. *Ne valued is*, MSS. *Ne value*; cp. v. 56.

590. *mowis*, MSS. *mavis*, 'muis.'

598. *that*, i.e. the gold; (?) read *they*, referring to *besauntes*.

599. He shall never make his riches satisfy (with) his greed.

5617. *berne* for *beren*; cp. *myxnes*, v. 6496.

5620. *Or* supplied from Fr. 'ou.'

5638, 5639. Fr.

Ainsi viengnent li froit et li chaut  
 En la fin qui morir le face;

so perhaps read :

But suffriith frost as hot ne ware,  
 He lat it hapne as it may.

5641. MSS. *take*.

Where that he shal noo good misse ;  
 Thider he hopith God shal hym sende,  
 Aftir his wrecchid lyves ende.  
 Pictagoras hym silf rehersed  
 In a book, that the Golden Verses 5650  
 Is clepid for the nobilite  
 Of the honourable ditee,  
 That whanne thou goste thy body fro,  
 Fre in the eir thou shalt up go,  
 And leven al humanite,  
 And purely lyve in deite.  
 He is a foole withouten were  
 That trowith have his Countre heere ;  
 In erthè is not oure Countre— 5659  
 That may these clerkis seyn, and see  
 In Boice of Consolacioun,  
 Where it is makéd menciou  
 Of oure countre pleyn at the yē  
 By teching of Philosophie ;  
 Where lewid men myght lere witte,  
 Who so that wolde translaten it.  
 If he be sich that can wel lyve  
 Aftir his rentè may hym yive,  
 And not desireth more to have,  
 Than may fro povertè hym save. 5670  
 A wise man seide, as we may seen,  
 Is no man wrecche but he it wene,  
 Be he kyng, knyght, or ribaude ;  
 And many a ribaude is mery and baude  
 That swynkith and berith bothe day and  
 nyght  
 Many a burthen of gret myght,  
 The whichè doth hym lasse offense  
 Fór he suffrith in pacience.  
 They laugh and dauncé, trippe and synge,  
 And ley not up for her lyvyng, 5680  
 But in the taverne all dispendith  
 The wyunnyng that God hem sendith.  
 Thanne goth he fardeles forto bere,  
 With as good chere as he dide ere ;  
 To swynke and traveile he not feynith,  
 For for to robben he disdeynith ;  
 But right anon aftir his swynke

5650. (?) Omit *the*; there is no article in the Fr. The book referred to is the *Aurea Carmina*, extant in the Middle Ages as a work of Pythagoras.

5653. *That*, MSS. *Thanne*.

5661. *of Consolacioun*, 'de Consolacione.' Jehan de Meung refers to I, pr. v.

5663. MSS. *eye*.

5672. MSS. *wrecched*; cp. *Boece*, 394.

He goth to taverne forto drynke.  
 All these ar riche in abundaunce,  
 That can thus havè suffisaunce 569  
 Wel more than can an usurere,  
 As God wel knowith, withoute were.  
 For an usurer, so God me se,  
 Shal nevere for richesse richè be,  
 But evermore pore and indigent,  
 Scarce and gredy in his entent.

For soth it is, whom it displese,  
 Ther may no marchaunt lyve at ese.  
 His herte in sich a werre is sett,  
 That it quyk brenneth more to gete, 570  
 Ne never shal enough have geten,  
 Though he have gold in gerneris yeten.  
 Forto be nedý he dredith sore,  
 Wherefore to geten more and more  
 He sette his herte and his desire.  
 So hote he brennyth in the fire,  
 Of coveteise, that makith hym woode  
 To purchase other mennès goode.  
 He undirfongith a gret peyne  
 That undirtakith to drynke up Seyne ;  
 For the more he drynkiþ ay 57  
 The more he leveth, the soth to say.  
 Thús is thurst of fals getyng,  
 Thát laste ever in covetyng,  
 Ánd the angwisshe and distresse,  
 With the fire of gredynesse.  
 She fightith with hym ay and stryvetþ,  
 That his herte a-sondre ryveth ;  
 Such gredynessè hym assaylith,  
 That whanne he most hath, most he failith  
 Phisiciens and advocates 57  
 Góne right by the samè yates ;  
 They selle her science for wyunnyng,  
 And haunte her crafte for gret getyng.  
 Her wyunnyng is of such swetnesse,  
 That if a man falle in sikennesse,  
 They are full glad for ther encesse ;  
 For by her wille, withouté lees,  
 Everichè man shuldè be seke, 57  
 And though they die, they sette not a lek.  
 After, whanne they the gold have take  
 Full litel care for hem they make ;  
 They wolde that forty were seke atonys

5701. *enough have*, MSS. *though he have* (Kaluzá).

5706. Cp. *Boece*, 325.

5713. Kaluzá reads *This* for *Thus*.

Ye ii hundred in flesh and bonys,  
 And yit ii thousand, as I gesse,  
 Forto encrecen her richesse.  
 They wole not worchen in no wise,  
 Bút for lucre and coveitise.  
 For Fysic gynneth first by 'Fy'  
 (The Phisicien also sothely);  
 And sithen it goth fro "Fy" to "Sy,"  
 To truste on hem [it] is foly,  
 For they nyl, in no maner gre,  
 Dó right nought for charite.

Eke in the samè secte ar sette  
 All tho that prechen forto gete  
 Wórshipes, honour, and richesse.  
 Her hertis arm in grete distresse,  
 That folk [ne] lyve not hollyly.  
 But aboven all specialy  
 Sich as prechen [in] veynglorie,  
 And toward god have no memorie,  
 But forth as ypocrités trace,  
 And to her soulés deth purchace  
 An outward shewing holynesse,  
 Though they be full of cursidnesse,  
 Not liche to the apostles twelve.  
 They deceyve other and hem selve ;  
 Bigiléd is the giler thanne,  
 For prechyng of a curséd man  
 Though [it] to other may profite,  
 Hymself it vailleth not a myte.  
 For ofte goode predicacioun  
 Cómeth of evel entencioun.  
 To hym not vailith his preching,  
 All helpe he other with his teching.  
 For where they good ensaumple take,  
 There is he with veynglorie shake.  
 But late us leven these prechoures,  
 And speke of hem that in her toures  
 Hepe up her gold, and fasté shette,  
 And sore theron her herté sette.  
 They neither lovè God ne drede,  
 They kepè more than it is nede,  
 And in her baggès sore it bynde ;

5739-5742. The key of the pun is found in v. 742: 'Physyc' goes from 'fying' = trusting, to syng' = sighing and groaning. The joke was probably an old one in our author's time, for: depends for its fullest point on the earlier form of 'sien,' viz. 'sicen,' still used by Chaucer, and by the translator of the 'A' part of the romaunt (cp. v. 1641).

5755. An, MSS. And.

5762. MSS. *availeth*; cp. v. 5765.

Out of the sonne, and of the wynde,  
 They putte up more than nedè ware.  
 Whanne they seen pore folk forfare,  
 For hunger die, and for cold quake,  
 God can wel vengeaunce therof take. 5780  
 Thre gret myschevès hem assailith,  
 And thus in gadring ay travaylith :  
 With mychel peyne they wyne richesse,  
 And drede hem holdith in distresse  
 To kepè that they gadre faste,  
 With sorwe they leve it at the laste ;  
 With sorwe they bothè dye and lyve  
 That unto richesse her hertis yive.  
 And in defaute of love it is,  
 As it shewith ful wel I-wys ; 5790  
 For if this gredy, the sothe to seyn,  
 Loveden and were loved ageyn,  
 And goodè Love regned over-all,  
 Such wikkidnesse ne shuldè fall.  
 But he shulde yeve, that most good hadde,  
 To hem that weren in nede bistadde ;  
 And lyve withoutè false usure,  
 For charite, full clene and pure.  
 If they hem yevè to goodnesse,  
 Defending hem from ydelnesse, 5800  
 In all this world thanne pover noon  
 We shuldè fynde, I trowe not oon.  
 But chaungéd is this world unstable,  
 For love is over-all vendable ;  
 We se that no man loveth nowe,  
 Bút for wynnyn and for prowè.  
 And love is thrallèd in savtage,  
 Whanne it is sold for avauntage ;  
 Yit women wole her bodyes selle—  
 Suche soules goth to the devel of helle.

Whanne Love hadde told hem his entent,

5801. *power*, MSS. *fore*; cp. v. 6489.

5811. The translation is here interrupted, ll. 5137-10694 of the French (*Michel*, i. p. 171, l. 5876—p. 355, l. 11443; *Marieau*, ii. p. 70, l. 5397—iii. p. 48, l. 11060) not having been translated. The following is a synopsis (abridged from Bell's Chaucer) of the missing portion:—Reason shows the vanity of natural love and the caprice of Fortune, and exhorts l'Amant to fix his heart on Charity. L'Amant maintains his loyalty to the God of Love, and Reason leaves him. He then consults l'Ami, who advises him to approach Bel-Acueil's prison by a road called Trop-Donner, constructed by Largesse. L'Ami then gives l'Amant directions as to how he is to conduct himself towards his mistress and his wife, and leaves him to pursue his adventure. L'Amant

The baronage to counce! went ; 5812  
 In many sentences they fille,  
 And dyversly they seide hir wille.  
 But aftir discordy they accorded,  
 And her accord to Love recorded :  
 'Sir,' seiden they, 'we ben atone  
 Bi evene accordé of everichone,  
 Outaké Richesse al oonly,  
 That sworne hath ful hauteynly, 5820  
 That she the castell nyl not assaile,  
 Ne smyte a stroke in this bataile  
 With darte ne macé, spere ne knyf,  
 For man that spekith or berith the lyf,  
 And blameth youre emprise, I-wys,  
 And from oure hoost departed is,  
 Atte lest wey as in this plyte,  
 So hath she this man in dispite.  
 For, she seith, he ne loved hir never,  
 And therefore she wole hate hym evere.  
 For he wole gadre no tresoure, 5831  
 He hath hir wrath for evermore ;  
 He agylte hir never in other caas,  
 Lo, heere all hoolly his trespas.  
 She seith wel that this other day  
 He axide hir leve to gone the way  
 That is clepid "To-moche-veyng,"  
 And spak full faire in his praiyng.  
 But whanne he praide hir, pore was he,  
 Therefore she warned hym the entre ; 5840  
 Ne yit is he not thryven so  
 That he hath geten a peny or two,  
 That qutly is his owne, in holde.  
 Thus hath Richesse us all[è] tolde ;  
 And whanne Richesse us this recorded,  
 Withouten hir we ben accorded.  
 And we fynde in oure accordaunce  
 That False-Semblant and Abstaunce,  
 With all the folk of her bataille,  
 Shull at the hyndre gate assaile, 5850  
 That Wikkid-Tunge hath in keypyng  
 With his Normans full of janglyng ;  
 And with hem Curtesie and Largesse,  
 That shull shewe her hardynesse  
 To the oldé wyf, that kepte so harde  
 Fair-Welcomyng withynne her warde ;

approaches the castle, but Richesse bars his entrance. The God of Love comes to his assistance, first convoking a council of his barons. Here the English begins again.

5856. *Fair-Welcomyng*, hitherto called *Bial-acoil*.

Thanne shal Delite and Wel-Heelynge  
 Fónde Shame adowne to brynge,  
 With all her oost early and late  
 They shull assaillen that ilké gate ; 5860  
 Agaynes Drede shall Hardynesse  
 Assaile, and also Sikernesse  
 With all the folk of her ledyng,  
 That never wist what was fleying ;  
 Fraunchise shall fight and eke Pite  
 With Daunger, full of Cruelte ;  
 Thus is youre hoost ordeyned wle.  
 Doune shall the castell every-dele,  
 If everiché do his entent,  
 Só that Venus be present, 5870  
 Youre modir full of vesselage  
 That can ynough of such usage.  
 Withouten hir may no wight spede  
 This werk, neithir for word ne deede ;  
 Therefore is good ye for hir sende,  
 For thurgh hir may this werk amende.'  
 'Lordynges, my modir, the goddesse,  
 That is my lady and my maistresse,  
 Nis not [at] all at my willyng,  
 Ne doth not all my desiryng ; 5880  
 Yit can she some tyme done labour,  
 Whanne that hir lust, in my socour,  
 As my nede is forto a-cheve.  
 But now I thanke hir not to geve ;  
 My modir is she, and of childhede,  
 I bothé worshipe hir and drede.  
 For who that dredith sire ne dame,  
 Shal it abyge in body or name.  
 And netheles yit kunné we  
 Sende aftir hir if nedé be ; 5890  
 And were she nygh she comen wolde,  
 I trowe that no thyng myght hir holde.  
 Mi modir is of gret prowess,  
 She hath tan many a forteresse,  
 That cost hath many a pounde, er this,  
 There I nas not present y-wis ;  
 And yit men seide it was my dede.  
 But I come never in that stede,  
 Ne me ne likith, so mote I the, 5899  
 That suche toures ben take withoute me,  
 For why me thenkith that in no wise  
 It may bene clepid but marchandise.

5883. *As my nede is*. Kaluza reads *Al my nedis*, and perhaps rightly ; 'mes besoignes,' 'affairs,' read as 'mes besoignes ('needs'). Cp. similar translation in *Boece*, 147.

5886. MSS. *eke drede*.



Go bye a courser, blak or white,  
 And pay therfore, than art thou quyte ;  
 The marchaunt owith thee right nought,  
 Né thou hym, whanne thou it bought.  
 I wole not sellyng clepé "yevyng,"  
 For sellyng axeth no guerdonyng,  
 Here lith no thank ne no merite ;  
 That oon goth from that other al quyte.  
 But this sellyng is not semblable ; 5911  
 For whanne his hors is in the stable,  
 He may it selle ageyn, parde,  
 And wynnen on it, such happe may be ;  
 All may the man not leese I-wys,  
 For at the leest the skynne is his.  
 Or ellis if it so bitide  
 That he wole kepe his hors to ride,  
 Yit is he lord ay of his hors.  
 But thilké chaffare is wel wors, 5920  
 There Venus entremetith ought.  
 For who-so such chaffare hath bought,  
 He shal not worchen so wisely,  
 That he ne shal leese al outerly  
 Bóthe his money and his chaffare.  
 But the seller of the ware  
 The prys and profit havé shall,  
 Certeyn the biér shal leese all.  
 For he ne can so dere it bye  
 To have lordship and full maistrie, 5930  
 Ne have power to maké lettyng  
 Neithir for yift ne for prechyng,  
 That of his chaffare, maugre his,  
 Another shal have asmoche, I-wis,  
 If he wole yeve as myche as he,  
 Of what contrey so that he be ;  
 Or for right nought, so happé may,  
 If he can flater hir to hir pay.  
 Bén thanne siché marchauntz wise ?  
 Nó but fooles in every wise, 5940  
 Whanne they bye sich thyng wilfully  
 There as they leese her good fully.  
 But nathéles this dar I say,  
 My modir is not wont to pay,  
 For she is neither so fool ne nyce  
 To entremete hir of sich vyce.  
 But trusteth wel he shal pay all,  
 That répent of his bargeyn shall,

5915. *All* is object of *leese*.5931. *make lettyng*, i.e. put hindrance in his way.5942. *fully*, MSS. *follyly*, 'ou tant perdent.'5947. MSS. *trust*.

Whanne poverte putte hym in distresse,  
 All were he scoler to Richesse, 5950  
 That is for me in gret yernyng  
 Whanne she assentith to my willyng.  
 But [by] my modir seint Venus,  
 And by hir fader Saturnus,  
 That hir engendride by his lyf  
 (But not upon his weddid wyf)—  
 Yit wole I more unto you swere  
 To make this thyng the sikerere :—  
 Now by that feith and that leaute  
 That I owe to all my britheren fre, 5960  
 Of which ther nys wight undir heven  
 That kan her fadris names neven,  
 So dyverse and so many ther be,  
 That with my modir have be prive ;  
 Yit wolde I swere for sikirnesse,  
 The pole of helle to my witnesse,  
 Now drynke I not this yeere clarre,  
 If that I lye or forsworne be !  
 (For of the goddes the usage is,  
 That who so hym forswereth amys 5970  
 Shal that yeer drynké no clarre.)  
 Now have I sworne ynough pardee,  
 If I forswere me, thanne am I lorne—  
 But I wole never be forsworne.  
 Syth Richesse hath me failed heere,  
 She shal abyte that trespas dere,  
 Atté leest wey but hir arme  
 With sword, or sparth or [with] gysarme.  
 For certis sith she loveth not me  
 Fro thilké tyme that she may se 5980  
 The castell and the tour to-shake,  
 In sory tyme she shal awake.  
 If I may grype a riché man,  
 I shal so pulle hym, if I can,  
 That he shal in a fewé stoundes  
 Lese all his markis and his poundis ;  
 I shal hym make his pens outsylngé,  
 Bút they in his gerner sprynge.  
 Oure maydens shal eke pluk hym so,  
 That hym shal neden fetheres mo, 5990  
 And make hym selle his londe to spende,  
 But he the bet kunne hym defende.  
 Pore men han maad her lord of me ;

5958. *sikerere*, MSS. *seuerer*, (Kaluza's emendation) based on vv. 6147, 7308.5959. *leaute*, MSS. *beaute*. The same error occurs in v. 6006.5976. *dere*, MSS. *ful dere*, 'chiers.'

5988. 'S'il ne li sourdent en greniers.'

Al though they not so myghty be  
 That they may fede me in delite,  
 I wole not have hem in despite ;  
 No good man hateth hem as I gesse.  
 For chynche and feloun is richesse ;  
 That so can chase hym and dispise,  
 And hem defoule in sondry wise. 6000  
 They loven full bet, so God me  
 spede,

Than doth the richè chynchy gnede ;  
 And ben in goode feith morè stable,  
 And trewer and more serviable.  
 And therfore it suffisith me  
 Her goodè herte and her leaute.  
 They han on me sette all her thought,  
 And therfore I forgete hem nought ;  
 I wolde hem bringe in grete noblesse,  
 If that I were god of richesse, 6010  
 As I am god of love sothely,  
 Sich routhe upon her pleynnt have I.  
 Therfore I must his socour be  
 That peyneth hym to serven me,  
 For if he deide for love of this,  
 Thanne semeth in me no love ther is.'

'Sir,' seide they, 'soth is every deel  
 That ye reherce, and we wote wel  
 Thilke oth to holde is resonable.  
 For it is good and covenable 6020  
 That ye on richè men han sworne ;  
 For, Sir, this wote we wel biforne :  
 If Richè men done you homage,  
 That is, as foolés done, outrage.  
 But ye shall not forsworen be,  
 Ne lette, therefore, to drynke clarre  
 Or pyment makid fresh and newe.  
 Ladies shall hem such pepir brewen,  
 If that they fall into her laas, 6029  
 That that they for woo mowe seyn, "Allas !"  
 Ladyes shullen evere so curteis be,  
 That they shal quyte youre oth all  
 free.

Ne sekith never othir vicaire,  
 For they shal speke with hem so faire,  
 That ye shal holde you paid full wele,  
 Though ye you medle never a dele.  
 Late ladies worchè with her thynghis  
 They shal hem telle so fele tidynghes,  
 And move hem eke so many requestis,  
 Bi flateri, that not honest is ; 6040

6002. MSS. *grede* for *gnede*.

And therto yeve hym such thankynghes,  
 What with kissing, and with talkynghes,  
 That certis, if they trowèd be,  
 Shal never leve hem londe ne fee,  
 That it nyl as the moeble fare  
 Of which they first delyverid are.  
 Now may ye telle us all youre wille,  
 And we youre heestès shal fulfille.

But Fals-Semblaunt dar not for drede  
 Of you, Sir, medle hym of this dede ;  
 For he seith that ye ben his foo, 6050  
 He note if ye wole worche hym woo.  
 Wherefore we pray you alle, Beausire,  
 That ye forgyve hym now your Ire,  
 And that he may dwelle as your man  
 With Abstinence, his dere lemman.  
 Thisoure accord andoure wille nowe.'  
 'Parfay,' seide Love, 'I graunte it yowe  
 I wole wel holde hym for my man, 6055  
 Now late hym come.' And he forth ran  
 'Fals-Semblant,' quod Love, 'in this wis  
 I take thee heere to my servise,  
 That thououre freendis helpe away,  
 And hyndreth hem neithir nyght ne day  
 But do thy myght hem to releve ;  
 And eke oure enemyes that thou greve ;  
 Thyne be this myght, I graunte it thee,  
 My Kyng of Harlotes shalt thou be,  
 We wole that thou have such honour.  
 Certeyne thou art a fals traitour, 6060  
 And eke a thief ; sith thou were borne,  
 A thousand tyme thou art forsworne ;  
 But nethèles inoure heryng,  
 To putteoure folk out of douting  
 I bidde thee teche hem, wostowe howe,  
 Bi somme general signè nowe,  
 In what place thou shalt founden be,  
 If that men had myster of thee,  
 And how men shal thee best espye ;  
 For thee to knowe is gret maistrie. 6065  
 Tèlle in what place is thyn haunting.'  
 'Sir, I have felè dyverse wonyng,  
 That I kepe not rehersed be ;  
 So that ye wolde respiten me.

6041, 6042. *thankynghes*, 'coles'; Kaluza suggests *thwakynges*. Similarly *talkynghes* does not seem happy for 'acoles'; (?) read *wakynges*, c. vv. 2682, 4272.

6057. *This*, this is.

6068. *Kyng of Harlotes*, 'rois des ribauds,' i. provost-marshal.

For if that I tellè you the sothe,  
 may have harme and shamè bothe ;  
 If that my felowes wisten it,  
 My talis shulden me be quytt,  
 For certeyne they wolde hatè me  
 If ever I knewe her cruelte. 6090  
 For they wolde overall holde hem stille  
 Of trouthe that is ageyne her wille ;  
 Suche tales kepen they not here.  
 Myght eftsoone bye it full deere,  
 If I seide of hem any thing  
 That ought displesith to her heryng.  
 For what word that hem prikketh orbiteth,  
 In that word noon of hem deliteth,  
 Al were it gospel the Evangile,  
 That wolde reprove hem of her gile. 6100  
 For they are cruel and hauteyne,  
 And this thyng wote I well certeyne ;  
 If I speke ought to peire her loos,  
 Your court shal not so well be cloos  
 That they ne shall wite it attè last.  
 Of good men am I nought agast,  
 For they wole taken on hem no thyng,  
 Whanne that they knowe al my menyng.  
 But he that wole it on hym take,  
 He wole hym-silf suspecious make 6110  
 That he his lyf let covertly,  
 In gile and in Iprocrisie  
 That me engendred and yaf fostryng.  
 They made a full good endryng,  
 Quod Love, 'for who so sothly telle,  
 They engendred the Devel of Helle.  
 But nedely, how so evere it be,'  
 Quod Love, 'I wole and chargè thee  
 To telle anon thy wonyng places, 6119  
 Heryng ech wight that in this place is,  
 And what lyf that thou lyvest also ;  
 Hide it no lenger now—Wherto ?  
 Thou most discovere all thi wurchyng,  
 For thou servest, and of what thyng,  
 Though that thou shulddest for thisothe-sawe  
 Ben alto beten and to-drawe.  
 And yit art thou not wont pardec.  
 But natheles though thou beten be,  
 Thou shalt not be the first that so  
 Háth for sothsawe suffred woo.' 6130  
 'Sir, sith that it may liken you,  
 Though that I shulde be slayne right now,  
 I shal done youre comaundément,

6111. *let, leads.*

For therto have I gret talent.  
 Withouten wordis mo right thanne  
 Fals-Semblant his sermon biganne,  
 And seide hem thus in audience :  
 ' Barouns, take heede of my sentence :  
 That wight that list to have knowing  
 Of Fals-Semblant, full of flatering, 6140  
 He must in worldly folk hym seke,  
 And certes in the cloistres eke,  
 I wone no where but in hem twey ;  
 But not lyk even, soth to sey.  
 Shortly, I wole herberwe me  
 There I hope best to holstred be ;  
 And certeynly sikereest hidyng,  
 Is undir methè humblest clothing.  
 Religious folk ben full covert,  
 Seculer folk ben more apert. 6150  
 But natheles I wole not blame  
 Religious folk, ne hem diffame ;  
 In what habit that ever they go,  
 Religious unble and trewe also,  
 Wole I not blame, ne dispise,  
 But I nyl love it in no wise—  
 I mene of false religious,  
 That stoutè ben and malicious,  
 That wolen in an abit goo,  
 And setten not her herte therto. 6160  
 Religious folk ben al pitous,  
 Thou shalt not seen oon dispitous ;  
 They loven no pridè, ne no strif,  
 But humbely they wole lede her lyf.  
 With which folk wole I never be,  
 And if I dwelle, I feyne me.  
 I may wel in her abit go,  
 But me were lever my nekke a-two  
 Than lete a purpose that I take,  
 What covenaut that ever I make. 6170  
 I dwelle with hem that proudè be,  
 And full of wiles and subtilte,  
 That worship of this world coveiten,  
 And grete nedes kunnen espleiten,  
 And gone and gadren gret pitaunces,  
 And purchase hem the acqeyntaunces  
 Of men that myghty lyf may leden,  
 And feyne hem pore, and hem silf feden  
 With godè morcels delicious,

6146. MSS. *kulstred.*

6172. MSS. *subtilite.*

6174. MSS. *grete nede*, 'les grans besoignes'  
 cp. note to 5883.

And drinken good wyne precious, 6180  
 And preche us povert and distresse,  
 And fisshen hem silf gret richesse  
 With wily nettis that they cast ;  
 It wole come foule out at the last.  
 They ben fro clene religioun went,  
 They make the world an argument,  
 That [hath] a foule conclusion :

“ I have a robe of religioun,  
 Thanne am I all religious.”  
 This argument is all roignous, 6190  
 It is not worth a croked brere ;  
 Abit ne makith neithir monk ne frere,  
 But clene lyf and devocioun  
 Makith godè men of religioun.  
 Néthèles ther kan noon answere,  
 How high that evere his heed he shere  
 With rasour whetted never so kene,  
 That Gile in braunches kut thrittene ;  
 Ther can no wight distincte it so,  
 That he dare sey a word therto. 6200

But what herberwe that ever I take  
 Or what Semblant that evere I make,  
 I mene but gile, and folowe that.  
 For right no mo than Gibbe oure cat,  
 That awaiteth myce and rattes to kyllen,  
 Ne entende I but to bigilen.  
 Ne no wight may by my clothing  
 Wite with what folk is my dwellyng,  
 Ne by my wordis yit, parde,  
 So softe and so plesaunt they be. 6210  
 Biholde the dedis that I do,  
 But thou be blynde thou oughtest so.  
 For varie her wordis fro her deede,  
 They thanke on gile without dreede,  
 What maner clothing that they were  
 Or what estate that evere they bere  
 Lered or lewdè, lord or lady,  
 Knyght, squyèr, burgeis, or bayly.’

Right thus while Fals - Semblant  
 sermoneth  
 Eftsones Love hym aresoneth, 6220  
 And brake his tale in his spekyng,  
 As though he had hym tolde lesyng,

6197. MSS. *rasoun* for *rasour*.

6198. *That* has *noon* for its antecedent, and the allusion is to the twelve monks and prior who made up a convent.

6204. *Gibbe*, i.e. ‘Gib,’ a common English name for a cat.

6205. Only in Th., but found in Fr.

6206. *G bigilyng*.

And seide, ‘ What Devel is that I here?  
 What folk hast thou us nempned heere?  
 Máy men syndè religioun  
 In worldly habitacioun?’

‘ Ye, Sir, it folowith not that they  
 Shulde lede a wikked lyf, parfey,  
 Ne not therfore her soulès leese,  
 That hem to worldly clothès chese ; 6230  
 For certis it were gret pitee.

Men may in seculer clothès see  
 Florishen hooly religioun.  
 Full many a seynt in feeld and toune,  
 With many a virgine glorious,  
 Devoute and full religious  
 Han deied, that comyn cloth ay been,  
 Yit seyntès nevere the lesse they weren.

I cowdè reken you many a ten, 6230  
 Ye wel nygh [al] these hooly wynnmen,  
 That men in chirchis herie and seke,  
 Bothe maydens and these wyves eke,  
 That baren full many a faire child heere,  
 Wered alwey clothis seculere,  
 And in the samè dieden they,  
 That seyntes weren, and ben alwey.

The xi. thousand maydens deere,  
 That beren in heven her ciergis clere,  
 Of whiche men rede in chirche and syngè,  
 Were take in seculer clothing, 6240  
 Whanne they recseyvèd martirdome,  
 And wonnen hevene unto her home.  
 Good hertè makith the goodè thought,  
 The clothing yeveth ne reveth nought ;  
 The goodè thought and the worching  
 That makith the religioun flowyng—  
 Ther lyth the goode religioun,  
 Afir the right entenciuon.

Whoso took a wether’s skynne,  
 And wrapped a gredy wolf therynne 6250  
 For he shulde go with lambis whyte,  
 Wenest thou not he wolde hem bite?  
 Yis, neverthelasse, as he were woode,  
 He wolde hem wery and drinke ther  
 bloode,

And wel the rather hem disceyve ;  
 For sith they cowdè not perceyve  
 His tretet and his cruelte,  
 They wolde hym folowe al wolde he fle.  
 If ther be wolves of sich hewe

6243. Perhaps omit *full*.

6264. MSS. *the bloode*, ‘lor sanc.’

Amonges these apostlis newe, 6270  
Thou, Hooly Chirche, thou maist be  
wailed,

Sith that thy Citee is assayled  
Thourgh knyghtis of thyn owné table.  
God wote thi lordship is doutable,  
If thei enforce [hem] it to wynne,  
That shulde defende it fro withynne.  
Who myght defense ayens hem make ?  
Withouté stroke it mote be take  
Of trepeget, or mangonel,  
Without displaing of pensel. 6280

And if God ny<sup>l</sup> done it socour,  
But lat [it] renne in this colour,  
Thou most thyn heestis laten be ;  
Thanne is ther nought but yeldé thee,  
Or yeve hem tribute doutélees,  
And holde it of hem to have pees.  
But gretter harme bitideth thee  
That they al maister of it be.  
Wel konne they scorné thee withal ;  
By dayé stuffen they the wall, 6290  
And al the nyght they mynen there.  
Nay, thou planten most elles where  
Thyn ympés, if thou wolt fruyt have ;  
Abide not there thi-silf to save.

But now pees ! Heere I turne ageyne,  
I wole nomore of this thing seyne,  
If I may passen me herby.  
I myghté maken you wery ;  
But I wole heten you al-way  
To helpe youre freendis, what I may, 6300  
Só they wollen my company ;  
For they be shent al outerly,  
But if so fallé that I be  
Ófte with hem and they with me.  
And eke my lemman mote they serve,  
Or they shull not my love deserve.

Forsothe I am a fals traitour,  
God jugged me for a thief trichour ;  
Forsworne I am, but wel nygh none  
Wote of my gile til it be done. 6310  
Thurgh me hath many oon deth  
resseyved,

That my tregret nevere aperceyved ;  
And yit resseyveth, and shal resseyve,

6281. 'Et se d'eus (misread as *deus*) ne la vues  
rescorre.'

6290. MSS. *day*. Skeat supplies *wel* before  
*stuffen*.

That my falsnesse shal nevere aperceyve.  
But who so doth, if he wise be,  
Hym is right good be war of me.  
But so sligh is the deceyvyng  
That to hard is the aperceyvyng.  
For Protheus, that cowde hym change,  
In every shap homely and straunge, 6320  
Cowde nevere sich gilé ne tresoune  
As I. For I come never in toune,  
Thére as I myght knowen be ;  
Though men me bothe myght here and see,  
Full wel I can my clothis change,  
Take oon and make another straunge.  
Now am I knyght, now chastéleyne,  
Now prelat, and now chapéleyne,  
Now prest, now clerk, and now forstere ;  
Now am I maister, now scolere, 6330  
Now monke, now chanoun, now baily ;  
What ever myster man am I,  
Now am I prince, now am I page,  
And kan by herte every langage ;  
Somúme tyme am I hore and olde,  
Now am I yonge, [and] stoute, and holde ;  
Now am I Robert, now Robyn,  
Now Frere Menour, now Iacobyn.  
And with me folwith my loteby,  
To done me solas and company, 6340  
That hight Dame Abstynencé-Streyned.  
In many a queynte array feyned,  
Ryght as it cometh to hir lykyng,  
I fulfille al hir desiryng ;  
Somtyme a wommans cloth take I,  
Now am I maydé, now lady ;  
Somtyme I am religious,  
Now lyk an anker in an hous ;  
Somtyme am I Prioressse,  
And now a nonne, and now Abbesse ; 6350  
And go thurgh allé regions,

6314. *shal* often thus makes an extra unac-  
cented syllable.

6317, 6318. Supplied by Kaluza from Fr.  
MSS. have *aperceyvyng* for *deceyvyng* in 6317,  
and G leaves blank space for 6318, which appears  
in Th. as *That al to late cometh knowyng*.

6337. *Robert*, i.e. gentleman.

6337. *Robyn*, i.e. clown.

6338. *Frere Menour*, i.e. Franciscan.

6338. *Iacobyn*, i.e. Dominican.

6341. MSS. and *reyned* for *streyned*.

6344. *To fulfille*, with comma after *streyned*  
and full stop after *desiryng*, would better trans-  
late Fr.

6346. MSS. *a mayde*.

Sekyng all religiouns.

But to what ordre that I am sworne,  
I take the strawe, and lete the corne  
To joly folk I enhabite ;  
I axe nomore but her abite.

What wole ye more? In every wise,  
Right as me lyst, I me disgise ;  
Wel can I wre me undir wede,  
Unlyk is my word to my dede. 6360

[I] make into my trappis falle,  
Thurgh my pryveleges, alle  
That ben in Cristendome alyve,  
I may assoile and I may shryve  
(That no prelat may letté me)  
All folk where evere thei foundé be ;  
I note no prelate may done so,  
But it the pope be, and no mo,  
That madé thilk establissing.

Now is not this a propre thing? 6370  
But where my sleight is aperceyved,  
Of hem I am nomore resecyved,  
As I was wont ; and wostow why?  
For I dide hem a tregetrie.  
But therof yeve I lytel tale ;

I have the silver and the male.  
So have I prechid, and eke shriven,  
So have I take, so have me yiven  
Thurgh her foly husbonde and wyf,  
That I lede right a joly lyf, 6380  
Thurgh symplesse of the prelacye ;  
They knowe not al my tregetrie.  
But for asmoche as man and wyf  
Shulde shewe her paroch-prest her lyf  
Onys a yeer, as seith the book,

6354. *lete*, MSS. *bete*; cp. 5544, 5950, 6006.

6355. The Fr. texts vary here. The verse should run: *To blynde folk ther I enhabite*, and be taken with v. 6356. *Ioly* is perhaps a mistake for *sely*, translating 'por gens avugler' misread as 'por gens avugles.'

6359. *wre*, MSS. *were*; Skeat and Kaluza *bere*; 'Moult sont en moi müé li vers.'

6365. *That*, 'ce.'

6371. *where*, MSS. *were*.

6371. *sleight is*, MSS. *sleightis*. Other editions retain reading of MSS. See next note.

6372. Missing from MSS.; here supplied from Fr.:

Mes mes trais ont aperceüs  
Si n'en sui mes si receüs.

Bell :

I shulde ne lenger ben received.

Morris :

Ne shulde I more ben receyved.

But the statement in Fr. is not conditional.

6375. MSS. *a titel tale*; cp. v. 6346.

Er ony wight his housel took,  
Thanne have I pryvylegis large  
That may of mychê thing discharge.  
For he may seie right thus, parde :—  
" Sir Preest, in shrift I telle it thee, 6390  
That he to whom that I am shryven  
Hath me assoiléd, and me yiven  
For penaunce sothly for my synne  
Which that I fonde me gilty ynne ;  
Ne I ne have nevere entencioun,  
To makè double confessioun,  
Ne reherce este my shrift to thee ;  
O shrift is right ynough to me.  
This oughtè thee sufficè wele,  
Ne be not rebel never a dele, 6400  
For certis, though thou haddist it sworn,  
I wote no prest ne prelat borne  
That may to shrift este me constreyne.  
And if they done, I wole me pleyne,  
For I wote where to pleyne wele.  
Thou shalt not streynè me a dele  
Ne enforcè me, ne not me trouble  
To makè my confessioun double.  
Ne I have none affecciou,  
To have double absolucioun. 6410  
The firste is right ynough to me,  
This latter assoilyng quyte I thee.  
I am unbounde—What! Maist thoufynde  
More of my synnes me to unbynde !  
For he that myght hath in his honde  
Of all my synnès me unbonde,  
And if thou wolt me thus constreyne  
That me mote nedis on thee pleyne,  
There shall no juggle imperial  
Ne bisshop, ne official, 6420  
Done jugèment on me ; for I  
Shal gone and pleyne me openly  
Unto my shriftfadir newe,  
That hightè not Frere Wolf untrewè !  
And he shal chevys hym for me,  
For I trowe he can hampre thee.  
But lord ! he wolde be wrooth withall,  
If men hym woldè Frere Wolf call ;  
For he wolde have no pacience,  
But done al cruel vengeance ; 6430  
He wolde his myght done at the leest  
No thing spare, for goddis heest.  
And god so wys be my socour,  
But thou yeve me my Savyour  
At Ester, whanne it likith me,

Withouté presyng more on thee,  
 wole forth and to hym gone,  
 and he shal housel me anoon,  
 for I am out of thi grucching ;  
 kepe not dele with thee no thing." 6440  
 Thus may he shryve hym that forsaketh  
 his paroch prest, and to me takith ;  
 and if the prest wole hym refuse,  
 am full redy hym to accuse,  
 and hym punysshé and hampre so  
 that he his chirché shal forgo.  
 but who so hath in his felyng  
 the consequence of such shryvyng,  
 shal sene that prest may never have myght  
 to knowe the conscience a-right 6450  
 Of hym that is undir his cure.  
 and this ageyns Holy Scripture,  
 that biddith every heerde honeste  
 have verry knowing of his beeste.  
 but poré folk that gone by strete,  
 that have no gold, ne sommés grete,  
 hem wolde I lete to her prelates ;  
 or lete her prestis knowe her states.  
 forto me right nought yevé they.'  
 'And why?'

'It is for they ne may.

They ben so bare I take no kepe, 6461  
 but I wole have the fatté sheepe ;  
 at parish prestis have the lene,  
 yeve not of her harme a bene,  
 and if that prelates grucché it,  
 that oughten wroth be in her witt  
 to leese her fatté beestes so,  
 shal yeve hem a stroke or two  
 that they shal leesen with [her] force  
 the bothe her mytre and her croce. 6470  
 Thus jape I hem, and have do longe,  
 my pryveleges ben so stronge.'  
 Fals - Semblaunt wolde have stynted  
 heere,  
 but Love ne made hym no such cheere  
 that he was wery of his sawe,  
 but forto make hym glad and fawé

6436. *presyng*, pressing.

6440. *i.e.* I don't care to deal with you in my way.

6452. *this*, this is.

6466. MSS. *woth*.

6469. *her*, Skeat *the*, Kaluza suggests *by seint*

*oce*, referring to *Tales*, D 483. Fr. :

Que lever ferai tex boces

Qu'il en perdront mitres et croces.

He seide : 'Telle on more specialy,  
 How that thou servest untrewly ;  
 Telle forth, and shame thee never a dele,  
 For as thyn abit shewith wele 6480  
 Thou semest an hooly heremyte.'  
 'Sothe is, but I am an ypocrite.'  
 'Thou goste and prechest poverte.'  
 'Ye sir but richesse hath pouste.'  
 'Thou prechest abstinence also.'  
 'Sir, I wole fillen, so mote I go,  
 My paunche of good mete and [good]  
 wyne,

As shulde a maister of dyvyne ;  
 For how that I me pover feyne,  
 Yit all[è] pore folk I disdeyne. 6490  
 I Lové bettir thacqueyntaunce  
 Ten tymé of the Kyng of Fraunce,  
 Than of a pore man of mylde mode,  
 Though that his soule be also gode.  
 For whanne I see beggers quakyng  
 Naked on myxnes al styngkyng  
 For hungre crie, and eke for care,  
 I entremete not of her fare.  
 They ben so pore and ful of pyne, 6499  
 They myght not oonys yeve me a dyne,  
 For they have no thing but her lyf ;  
 What shulde he yeve that likketh his  
 knyf?

It is but foly to entremete,  
 To seke in houndés nest fat mete.  
 Lete bere hem to the spitel anoon,  
 But for me comfort gete they noon.

Bút a riché sike usurere  
 Wolde I visite and drawé nere ;  
 Hym wole I comferte and reheté,  
 For I hope of his gold to gete. 6510  
 And if that wikkid deth hym have,  
 I wole go with hym to his grave ;  
 And if ther ony reprove me  
 Why that I lete the pore be,  
 Wóstow how I mot a-scape?

6481. *semest*, MSS. *seruest*.

6482. *an*, MSS. *but an*.

6492. *Ten tymé*, Fr. 'cent mil tans.'

6493. Skeat omits *a*. Kaluza *mylde*, which seems better ; cp. Fr. 'Que d'un povre par nostre Dame' ; *pover*, too, is more frequent than *pore* in the poem.

6500. Kaluza and Skeat omit *a*.

6507. *usurere* seems to be dissyllabic here, like *seculer* in v. 6267.

6515. *mot*, MSS. *not*.

I sey and swerè hym ful rape  
 That richè men han morè tecches,  
 Of synnè than han porè wrecches,  
 And han of counsel more mister,  
 And therefore I wole drawe hem ner.  
 But as grete hurt, it may so be, 6521  
 Hath soule in right grete povertè  
 As soule in grete richesse, forsothe,  
 Al be it that they hurten bothe ;  
 For richesse and mendicitees  
 Ben clepid ii. extremytees ;  
 The mene is clepèd suffisaunce,  
 Ther lyth of vertu the aboundaunce.  
 For Salamon, full wel I wote,  
 In his Parablis us wrote, 6530  
 As it is knowe to many a wight,  
 In his thrittene chapitre right :  
 " God thou me kepe, for thi pouste,  
 Fro richesse and mendicite ;  
 For if a richè man hym dresse,  
 To thanke to myche on [his] richesse,  
 His herte on that so fer is sett,  
 That he his créatour foryett ;  
 And hym that begging wole ay greve,  
 How shulde I bi his word hym leve ?  
 Unnethe [is] that he nys a mycher 6541  
 Forsworne or ellis God is lyer."  
 Thus seith Salamones sawes.  
 Ne we fynde written in no lawis  
 And namely in oure Cristen lay  
 (Whoso seith, " Ye," I dar sey, " Nay,")  
 That Crist ne his apostlis dere,  
 While that they walkide in erthè heere,  
 Were never seen her bred beggyng ;  
 For they nolde beggen for no thing. 6550  
 And right thus was men wont to teche,  
 And in this wisè wolde it preche  
 The maistres of divinite  
 Somtyme in Parys the citee.  
 And if men wolde ther-geyn appose  
 The nakid text and lete the glose,  
 It myghtè soone assoiled be.

6522. MSS. *a soule*.6532. *thrittene*, it should be thirtieth (Prov. xxx. 8, 9), 'trentiesne.'6536. *his richesse*, 'sa richesse.'6539. *begging*, MSS. *beggith* (corrected by Kaluza).6539. *wole greve*, 'mendicité guerroie.'6542. *God is*, MSS. *goddis*. Cp. 6541.6543. *Salamones*, MSS. *Salamon* (Kaluza).6551. *men*, one.

For men may wel the sothè see,  
 That, parde, they myght aske a thing  
 Pléynly forth without begging ; 657  
 For they were Goddis herdis deere,  
 And cure of soulès hadden heere.  
 They noldè no thing begge her fode ;  
 For aftir Crist was done on rode  
 With ther propre hondis they wrought,  
 And with travel, and ellis nought,  
 They wonnen all her sustenaunce,  
 And lyveden forth in her penaunce,  
 And the remenaunt yaf away  
 To other porè folkis alwey. 657  
 They neither bilden tour ne halle,  
 But ley in houses smale with-alle.  
 A myghty man that can and may,  
 Shulde with his honde and body alway,  
 Wynne hym his fode in laboring,  
 If he ne have rent or sich a thing,  
 Al though he be religious,  
 And god to serven curious.  
 Thus mote he done, or do trespas,  
 But if it be in certeyn cas, 658  
 That I can reherce if myster be  
 Right wel, whanne the tyme I se.  
 Seke the book of seynt Austyne,  
 Be it in papir or perchemyne,  
 There as he writ of these worchynges ;  
 Thou shalt seen that noon excusynges  
 A parfit man ne shuldè seke  
 Bi wordis, ne bi dedis eke,  
 Al though he be religious  
 And god to serven curious, 659  
 That he ne shal, so mote I go,  
 With propre hondis and body also,  
 Gète his fode in laboring,  
 If he ne have proprete of thing.  
 Yit shulde he selle all his substaunce  
 And with his swynk have sustenaunce,  
 If he be parfit in bounte ;  
 Thus han tho bookès toldè me.  
 For he that wole gone ydilly  
 And usith it ay besily 6600  
 To haunten other mennès table,  
 He is a trechour ful of fable,

6568. *penaunce*, 'en patience, so perhaps, as Kaluza suggests, read *pacience*.6581. Perhaps omit *That*.6592. Kaluza reads *honde*, citing v. 6574 ; but cp. v. 6565.6600. *besily*, MSS. *desily*.



fe he ne may by gode resoun  
 Excuse hym by his orisoun ;  
 For men bihoveth in somme gise  
 Blynne somtyme in Goddis servise  
 To gone and purchasen her nede.  
 Ten mote eten, that is no drede,  
 And slepe, and eke do other thing ;  
 To longè may they leve praiyng ; 6610  
 To may they eke her praier blynne,  
 While that they werke her mete to wynne.  
 Seynt Austyn wole therto accorde  
 In thilkè book that I recorde.  
 Justinian eke, that madè lawes,  
 Hath thus forboden, by old dawes.  
 No man up peynè to be dede,  
 Fightly of body, to begge his brede,  
 If he may swynke it forto gete ;  
 Men shulde hym rather mayme or bete,  
 Or done of hym aperte justice, 6621  
 Than suffren hym in such malice.  
 They done not wel, so mote I go,  
 That taken such almessè so,  
 But if they have somme pryvelege,  
 That of the peyne hem wole allege.  
 But how that is, can I not see,  
 But if the prince disseyved be.  
 Ne I ne wene not sikerly  
 That they may have it rightfully. 6630  
 But I wole not determine  
 Of prynces power, ne defyne,  
 Ne by my word comrende, I-wys,  
 If it so ferre may strecche in this ;  
 Wole not entremete a dele.  
 But I trowe that the book seith wele,  
 Who that takith almessis that be  
 Dèwe to folk, that men may se  
 Lámè, feble, wery and bare,  
 Póre or in such maner care, 6640  
 That konnè wynne hem never mo,  
 For they have no power therto,  
 He etith his ownè dampnyng,  
 But if he lye that made al thing.  
 And if ye such a trauant fynde,  
 Chastise hym wel, if ye be kynde.  
 But they wolde hatè you percas,  
 And if ye fillen in her laas,

6606. *Blynne*, MSS. *Ben*. Skeat and Kaluza read *somtyme leven*.

6615. *Justinian*, cod. Justin. xi. 25. *De mendicantiibus validis* (Bell).

They wolde eftsoonys do you scathe,  
 If that they myghtè, late or rathe. 6650  
 For they be not full pacient,  
 That han the world thus foulè blent.  
 And witeth wel, that [though] God bad  
 The good-man selle al that he had,  
 And folowe hym, and to pore it yive,  
 He wolde not therfore that he lyve  
 To serven hym in mendience,  
 For it was nevere his sentence.  
 But he bad wirken whanne that neede is,  
 And folwe hym in goodè dedis. 6660  
 Seynt Poule, that loved al Hooly Chirche,  
 He bade thapostles forto wirche,  
 And wynnen her lyfode in that wise,  
 And hem defended trauandise ;  
 And seide, "Wirketh with youre honden" ;  
 Thus shulde the thing be undirstonden.  
 He nolde, I-wys, have bidde hem begging,  
 Ne sellen gospel ne prechyng,  
 Lest they berafte, with her askyng,  
 Folk of her catel or of her thing. 6670  
 For in this world is many a man  
 That yeveth his good for he ne can  
 Werne it for shame, or ellis he  
 Wolde of the asker delyvered be ;  
 And for he hym encombrith so,  
 He yeveth hym good to late hym go.  
 But it can hem no thyng profit  
 They lese the yift and the meryte.  
 The goodè folk that Poule to preched  
 Profred hym oftè, whan he hem teched,  
 Somme of her good in charite. 6681  
 But therfore right no thing toke he,  
 But of his hondwerk wolde he gete  
 Clothes to wyne hym, and his mete.'  
 'Telle me thanne how a man may lyven,  
 That al his good to pore hath yiven,  
 And wole but oonly bidde his bedis,  
 And nevere with hondes labour his nede is.  
 May he do so ?'

'Ye sir.'

'And how ?'

6653. *though*, supplied by Kaluza; but *ther* (=where) would come closer to Fr. 'la au Diex comande.'

6654. *The good-man*, Fr. 'prodons.'

6677. *hem*, MSS. *hym*, Fr. 'lor prouffite.'

6638. Found only in Thynne, but according nearly enough with Fr. *nede is*, Th. *nedis*; *labour* in sense of 'to labour for' is not otherwise known in M.E.

Sir, I wole gladly tellé yow. 6690  
 Seynt Austyn seith a man may be  
 In houses that han proprete,  
 As Templers, and Hospitealers,  
 And as these Chanouns Regulers,  
 Or Whité monkés or these Blake—  
 I wole no mo ensamplis make—  
 And take therof his sustenyng,  
 For therynne lyth no begging ;  
 But other wey[é]s not, y-wys,  
 Yif Austyn gabbith not of this. 6700  
 And yit full many a monke laboreth,  
 That God in hooly chirche honoureth ;  
 For whanne her swynkyng is agone,  
 They rede and syng in chirche anone.  
 And for ther hath ben gret discorde,  
 As many a wight may bere recorde,  
 Upon the estate of mendience,  
 I wole shortly, in youre presence,  
 Telle how a man may begge at nede,  
 That hath not wherwith hym to fede.  
 Maugre this felones jangelyngis, 6711  
 For sothfastnesse wole none hidyngis ;  
 And yit percas I may abey,  
 That I to yow sothly thus sey.

Lo heere the caas especial :  
 If a man be so bestial,  
 That he of no craft hath science,  
 And nought desireth ignorence,  
 Thanne may he go a-begging yerne,  
 Til he somme maner crafte kan lerne ;  
 Thurgh which withouté trauandyng 6721  
 He may in trouthe have his lvyng.  
 Or if he may done no labour  
 For elde, or sykenesse, or langour,  
 Or for his tendre age also,  
 Thanne may he yit a-begging go.  
 Or if he have peraventure,  
 Thurgh usage of his norriture,  
 Lyved over deliciously,  
 Thanne oughen good folk comunly 6730  
 Han of his myscheef somme pitee,  
 And suffren hym also that he  
 May gone aboute and begge his breed,  
 That he be not for hungur deed.  
 Or if he have of craft kunnyng,

6700. *Yif*, MSS. *Yit*, 'Se.'6707. MSS. *mendicence*.6711. MSS. *his felones*, Fr. 'Maugre les felon-  
esses jangles,' *i.e.* these felonous janglings.

And strengthe also, and desiryng  
 Tó wirken as he had what  
 But he fynde neithir this ne that,  
 Thanne may he beggè, til that he  
 Have geten his necessite. 6740  
 Or if his wynnynge be so lite  
 That his labour wole not acqyute  
 Sufficiently al his lvyng,  
 Yit may he go his breed begging ;  
 Fro dore to dore he may go trace,  
 Til he the remenaunt may purchase.  
 Or if a man wolde undirtake  
 Ony emprisé forto make  
 In the rescous of oure lay,  
 And it defenden as he may, 6750  
 Be it with armès or lettrure  
 Or other covenable cure,  
 If it be so he pore be,  
 Thanne may he beggè til that he  
 May fynde in trouthe forto swynke,  
 And gete hym clothè, mete and drynke.  
 Swynke he with hondis corporell  
 And not with hondis esprituell.  
 In al this caas and in semblables, 6760  
 If that ther ben mo resonables,  
 He may begge as I telle you heere,  
 And ellis nought in no manere ;  
 As William Seynt Amour wolde preche,  
 And oftè wolde dispute and teche,  
 Of this mater all openly  
 At Parys full solempnely.  
 And, also god my soule blesse,  
 As he had in this stedfastnesse  
 The accorde of the universite  
 And of the puple, as semeth me, 6770  
 No good man oughte it to refuse,  
 Ne ought hym therof to excuse.  
 Be wrothe or blithè who-so be,  
 For I wole speke and telle it thee,  
 Al shulde I dye, and be putt down  
 As was seynt Poule in derke prisoun,  
 Or be exiled in this caas  
 With wrong, as maister William was,  
 That my moder, Ypocrysie,  
 Bánysshéd for hir gret envye. 6780

6749. *i.e.* in the defence of our religion.6759. *this*, plural.6763. William Seynt Amour, a doctor of the  
Sorbonne who wrote a book against friars in  
the 13th century.6769. *Th'accord of th'universite*.

My modir flemed hym, Seynt Amour :  
 The noble didè such labour  
 To susteyne evere the loyalte,  
 That he to moche agiltè me ;  
 He made a book, and lete it write  
 Wheryn hys lyfe he dyd al write,  
 And wolde ich reneyed begging,  
 And lyvèd by my traveylyng,  
 If I ne had rent ne other goode.  
 What ! Wenèd he that I were woode ? 6790  
 For labour myght me never plese,  
 I have more wille to bene at ese,  
 And have wel lever, soth to sey,  
 Bifore the puple patre and prey ;  
 And wrie me in my foxerie  
 Under a cope of papelardie.  
 Quod Love, 'What devel is this that I heere ?  
 What wordis tellest thou me heere ?'

'What, Sir ?'

'Falsnesse that apert is ;  
 Thanne dredist thou not god ?'

'No certis ;

For selde in grete thing shal he spede  
 In this worldè, that god wole drede. 6802  
 For folk that hem to vertu yvven,  
 And truly on her ownè lyven,  
 And hem in goodnesse ay contene,  
 On hem is lytel thrift y-sene.  
 Sùch folk drinken gret mysese ;  
 Thát lyf may me never plese.  
 But se what gold han usurers  
 And silver eke in [her] garners, 6810  
 Taylagiers and these monyours,  
 Bailifs, bedels, provost countours  
 These lyven wel nygh by ravyne.  
 The smalè puple hem mote enclyne,  
 And they as wolvès wole hem eten.  
 Upon the porè folk they geten  
 Full moche of that they spende or kepe.  
 Nis none of hem that he nyl strepe,  
 And wrine hem silf wel attè fulle ;  
 Withoutè scaldyng they hem pulle. 6820  
 The stronge the feble overgoth,  
 But I, that were my symple cloth,

Robbe bothè robbèd and robbours,  
 And gilè gilèd and gilours.  
 By my tregat, I gadre and threste  
 The gret tresour into my cheste,  
 That lyth with me so fastè bounde.  
 Myn highè paleys do I founde,  
 And my delitès I fulfille  
 With wyne at feestès at my wille 6830  
 And tables full of entremees.  
 I wole no lyf but ese and pees,  
 And wynnè gold to spende also.  
 For whanne the gretè bagge is go,  
 It cometh right with my japes.  
 Make I not wel tumble myn apes ?  
 To wynnen is alway myn entent,  
 My purchace is bettir than my rent ;  
 For though I shuldè beten be,  
 Over-al I entremetè me ; 6840  
 Withoutè me may no wight dure.  
 I walkè soulès forto cure,  
 Of al the worldè cure have I  
 In brede and lengthè. Bold[è]ly  
 I wole bothe preche and eke counceilen ;  
 With hondis wille I not traveilen,  
 For of the Pope I have the bull,  
 I ne holde not my wittès dull.  
 I wole not stynten in my lyve  
 These emperouris forto shryve, 6850  
 Or kyngis, dukis, lordis grete ;  
 But porè folk al quyte I lete,  
 I love no such shryvyng, parde ;  
 But it for other causè be,  
 I rekkè not of porè men—  
 Her astate is not worth an hen ;  
 Where fyndest thou a swynker of labour  
 Have me unto his confessour ?  
 But emperesses and duchesses,  
 These queenes, and eke countesses, 6860  
 These abbessis, and eke bygyns,  
 These gretè ladyes palasyns,  
 These joly knyghtis and baillyves,  
 These nonnes, and these burgeis wyves  
 That richè ben and eke plesyng,  
 And thisè maidens welfaryng,  
 Wher so they clad or naked be,  
 Uncounceiled goth ther noon fro me.

6786. As in Th. and Fr. ; G in late hand,  
*Of thyngis that he beste myghte.*

6802. MSS. *world*, but as in v. 6843 the metre  
 requires two syllables.

6810. MSS. omit *her*, 'lor greniers.'

6819. *wrine*, (?) *wrcen*. The scribe frequently  
 confuses *i* and *e*.

6823, 6824. MSS. *robbyng, giling*.

6838. Cp. *Tales*, D 145.

6850. MSS. *emperours*.

6862. *ladyes palasyns*, i.e. court ladies.

And for her soulès savete  
 At lord and lady and her meyne 6870  
 I axe, whanne thei hem to me shryve,  
 The proprete of al her lyve,  
 And make hem trowe, bothe meest and  
 leest,

Hir paroch prest nys but a beest  
 Ayens me and my companye,  
 That shrewis ben as gret as I.  
 Fro whiche I wole not hide in holde  
 No pryvete that me is tolde,  
 That I, by word or signe y-wis,  
 [Nyl] make hem knowè what it is. 6880  
 And they wolen also tellen me,  
 They hele fro me no pryvete,  
 And forto make yow hem perceyven,  
 That usen folk thus to disceyven,  
 I wole you seyn withouten drede  
 What men may in the gospel rede  
 Of seynt Mathew, the gospelere,  
 That seith as I shal you sey heere :

“ Uppon the chaire of Moyses  
 (Thus is it gloséd doutèles : 6890  
 That is the Oldé Testament,  
 For ther-by is the chairé ment)  
 Sitte Scribes and Pharisen  
 (That is to seyn, the cursid men  
 Whiche that we ypocritis calle).  
 Doth that they preche, I rede you alle,  
 But doth not as they don a dele ;  
 That ben not wery to seye wele,  
 But to do wel no will have they.  
 And they wolde bynde on folk al-wey, 6900  
 Thát ben to be giléd able,  
 Búrdons that ben importable.  
 On folkés shuldris thinges they couchen,  
 That they nyl with her fyngris touchen.”

‘ And why wole they not touche it ? ’

‘ Why,

For hem ne lyst not sikirly,  
 For saddé burdons that men taken,  
 Make folkes shuldris aken.  
 And if they do ought that good be,  
 That is for folk it shuldé se. 6910  
 Her bordurs larger maken they,  
 And make her hemmes wide alwey,  
 And loven setés at the table,

6880. *Nyl*, MSS. *Wole*.

6887. Matt. xxiii. 1-8.

6911. MSS. *burdons*, ‘philateres.’

The firste and mosté honourable,  
 And forto han the firste chaiseris  
 In synagogis to hem full deere is,  
 And willen that folk hem loute and grete,  
 Whanne that they passen thurgh the strete,  
 And wolen be cleped “ Maister ” also.  
 But they ne shulde not willen so, 6920  
 The gospel is ther-ageyns, I gesse,  
 That shewith wel her wikkidnesse.

Another custome usé we  
 Of hem that wole ayens us be ;  
 We hate hym deedly everichoné,  
 And we wole werrey hym as oon ;  
 Hym that oon hatith hate we alle,  
 And congete how to done hym falle.  
 And if we seen hym wynne honour,  
 Richesse, or preis, thurgh his valour, 6930  
 Provendé, rent, or dignyte,  
 Full fast y-wys compassen we  
 Bi what ladder he is clomben so ;  
 And forto maken hym doun to go  
 With traisoun we wole hym defame,  
 And done hym leese his goodé name.  
 Thus from his ladder we hym take,  
 And thus his freendis foes we make.  
 But word ne wité shal he noon,  
 Till all hise freendis ben his foon. 6940  
 For if we dide it openly  
 We myght have blamé redily ;  
 For hadde he wist of oure malice,  
 He hadde hym kept, but he were nyce.

Another is this, that if so falle  
 That ther be oon amonge us alle  
 That doth a good turne out of drede,  
 We seyn it is oure alder deede.  
 Ye sikerly though he it feyned,  
 Or that hym list, or that hym deyned 6950  
 A man thurgh hym avaucéd be,  
 Therof all parseners be we,  
 And tellen folk where so we go,  
 That man thurgh us is sprongen so.  
 And forto have of men preysyng,  
 We purchace thurgh oure flateryng  
 Of riché men of gret pouste  
 Lettres to witnessse oure bounte,  
 So that man weneth that may us see  
 That allé vertu in us be. 6960  
 And al-wey poré we us feyne ;

6926. *as oon*, ‘par accort,’ ? *at oon*..

6950. *hym deyned*, he vouchsafed.

But how so that we begge or pleyne,  
 We ben the folk without lesyng  
 That all thing have without havyng.  
 Thus be we dred of the puple y-wis.  
 And gladly my purpos is this :  
 I delé with no wight but he  
 Have gold and tresour gret plente ;  
 Her acqueynāuncè wel love I,  
 This is moche my desire shortly. 6970  
 I entremete me of brokages,  
 I maké pees and mariages,  
 I am gladly executour,  
 And many tymès procuratour ;  
 I am sontymè messenger  
 (That fallith not to my myster),  
 And many tymes I make enquestes—  
 For me that office not honest is.  
 To dele with other mennes thing,  
 That is to me a gret lykyng. 6980  
 And if that ye have ought to do  
 In place that I repeirè to,  
 I shal it speden thurgh my witt,  
 As soone as ye have told me it.  
 So that ye servè me to pay,  
 My servyse shal be youre alway ;  
 But who-so wole chastisè me,  
 Anoon my lovè lost hath he.  
 For I love no man in no gise  
 That wole me reprove or chastise ; 6990  
 But I wolde al folk undirtake,  
 And of no wight no teching take ;  
 For I that other folk chastie,  
 Wole not be taught fro my folie.  
 I love noon hermitagè more ;  
 All desertès, and holtès hore,  
 And gretè wodès everichon,  
 I lete hem to the Baptist Iohn.  
 I quethe hym quyte, and hym relese  
 Of Egipt all the wildirnesse. 7000  
 To ferre were alle my mansions  
 Fro al citees and goodè tounes ;  
 My paleis and myn hous make I  
 There men may renne ynne openly ;  
 And sey that I the world forsake,  
 But al amydde I bilde and mak

6970. 'Ce sont auques tuit mi desir.'  
 6974. MSS. a *procuratour*. We have seen  
 that the scribe frequently inserts a in such  
 ases.

6998. *i.e.* the reputed founder of asceticism.

7002. G omits *al*.

My hous, and swimme and pley therynne,  
 Bet than a fish doth with his fynne.  
 Of Antecristes men am I,  
 Of whiche that Crist seith openly, 7010  
 They have abit of hoolynesse,  
 And lyven in such wikkednesse.  
 Oútward lambren semen we,  
 Full of goodnesse and of pitee,  
 And inward we withouten fable  
 Ben gredy wolvès ravysable.  
 We enviroune bothe londe and se,  
 With all the worldè werrien we ;  
 We wole ordeyne of allè thing,  
 Of folkis good and her lyvyng. 7020  
 If ther he castel or citee  
 Wherynne that ony bourgerons be,  
 Al though that they of Milayne were  
 (For therof ben they blamèd there) ;  
 Or if a wight out of mesure  
 Wolde lene his gold and take usure,  
 For that he is so coveitous ;  
 Or if he be to leccherous,  
 Or these that hauntè symonye,  
 Or provost full of trecherie, 7030  
 Or prelat lyvyng jolily,  
 Or prest that halt his quene hym by,  
 Or oldè horis hostilers,  
 Or other bawdes or bordillers,  
 Or ellès blamed of ony vice  
 Of whiche men shulden done justice :  
 Bi all the seyntès that me pray,  
 But they defende them with lamprey,  
 With luce, with elys, with samons,  
 With tendre gees, and with capons, 7040  
 With tartès, or with chesis fat,  
 With deyntè flawns brode and flat,  
 With caleweis, or with pullaylle,  
 With conynges, or with fyne vitaille,  
 That we undir our clothès wide  
 Maken thourgh oure golet glide,  
 Or but he wole do come in haste  
 Roo-venysoun bake in paste,  
 Whether so that he loure or groyne,

7007. *swimme*, G *swimme* ; cp. *Tales*, D 1926.  
 7021 ff. The conclusion to these conditions  
 is found in v. 7049 ff.

7022. *bourgerons* (G *begger*), 'bogre,' sodom-  
 ites.

7029. Skeat reads *these* or for *these that*,  
 following 'lerres ou' ; but this may have been  
 misread (?) 'lesses au,' etc.

7041. MSS. *cheffis*.

He shal have of a corde a loigne 7050  
With whiche men shal hym bynde and  
lede

To brenne hym for his synful deede,  
That men shull here hym crie and rore,  
A mylë-wey aboute and more ;  
Or ellis he shal in prisoun dye,  
But if he wole his frendship bye,  
Or smerten that that he hath do  
More than his gilt amounteth to.

But and he couthé thurgh his sleight  
Do maken up a tour of height, — 7060  
Nought rought I whethir of stone, or tree,  
Or erthe or turvés though it be,  
Though it were of no voundé stone  
Wrought with squyre and scantilone,  
So that the tour were stufféd well  
With allé richesse temporell—

And thanne that he wolde updresse  
Engyns bothé more and lesse,  
To cast at us by every side  
To bere his goodé namé wide, 7070  
Such flightés [as] I shal yow nevene,  
Barellés of wyne by sixe or sevene  
Or gold in sakkis gret plente,  
He shuldé soone delyvered be.

And if he have noon sich pitaunces,  
Late hym study in equipolences,  
And laté lyes and fallaces,  
If that he wolde deserve oure graces ;  
Or we shal bere hym such witnessse  
Of synne and of his wrecchidnesse, 7080  
And done his loos so widé renne,  
That al- quyk we shulden hym brenne,  
Or ellis yeve hym suche penaunce  
That is wel wors than the pitaunce.

For thou shalt never for no thing  
Kon knowen a-right by her clothing  
The traitours full of trecherie,  
But thou her werkis can a-spie.  
And ne hadde the good keypyng be  
Whilom of the universite 7090  
That kepeth the key of Cristendome  
We had bene turmented, al and some.

7056. *his frendship bye*, i.e. pay for his relief ;  
Skeat changes *his* to *our*.

7057. *that that*, (?) for *that*.

7063. *vounde*, Skeat reads *founde* ; Fr. 'de quel  
pierre.' Cole's *Dictionary* glosses *vound* *stone*,  
'free-stone,' with query 'found or foundation.'

7092. As in Th. ; G *Of al that here axe juste  
their dome*, in late hand over blank space.

Suche ben the stynkyng prophetis ;  
Nys none of hem that good prophete is  
For they thurgh wikked entencioun,  
The yeer of the Incarnacioun  
A thousand and two hundred yeer,  
Fyve and fifty, ferther ne ner,  
Broughten a book with sory grace  
To yeven ensample in comune place, 7100  
That seidé thus though it were fable :  
"This is the Gospel Perdurable,  
That fro the Holy Goost is sent."—  
Wel were it worthi to bene brent !

Entitled was in such manere  
This book, of which I tellé heree  
Ther nas no wight in all Parys  
Biforne Oure Lady at parvys  
That he ne mighté bye the book  
To copy, if hym talent toke. 7110  
Ther myght he se by gret tresoun  
Full many fals comparisoun :—  
"As moche as thurgh his greté myght,  
Be it of heté or of lyght,  
The sonnè sourmounteth the mone,  
That troublé is and chaungith soone,  
And the noté kernell the shell—  
(I scorné not, that I yow tell)—  
Right so, withouten ony gile,  
Sourmounteth this noble Evangile 7120  
The word of ony evangelist."  
And to her tite they token Crist.  
And many such comparisoun  
Of which I make no mencion,  
Mighté men in that book fynde  
Who so coude of hem have mynde.

The Universite, that tho was a-slepe,  
Gan forto braide and taken kepe,  
And at the noys the heed upcast,  
Ne never sithen slept it fast ; 7130  
But up it stert, and armés toke

7098. *ferther ne ner* (G *ferther neuer*), 'n'e  
hons vivans qui m'en demente,' i.e. neither  
earlier nor later.

7099. *a book*, the *Evangelium Eternum*.  
Skeat refers to Southey's *Book of the Church*,  
ch. xi.

7104. MSS. *worth*.

7109. G omits ; Th. *That they ne mighte to  
booke by*.

7110. Th. inserts before 7110 *The sentem  
pleased hem well truly*, and adds after i  
*Of the Evangelistes book*. Fr. contains onl  
G's single line.

7115. G (*same* for *sonne*).

7116. MSS. *troublere*, 'trouble.'

Ayens this false horrible boke,  
 Al redy bateil for to make,  
 And to the juge the book to take.  
 But they that broughten the boke there  
 Tent it anoon away for fere ;  
 They noldè shewè more a dele  
 But thenne it kept, and kepen will,  
 'Til such a tyme that they may see  
 That they so strongè woxen be, 7140  
 That no wyght may hem wel withstonde.  
 For by that book they durst not stonde.  
 Away they gonne it forto bere,  
 For they ne durstè not answeere  
 By exposicioun ne glose  
 To that that clerkis wole appose  
 Ayens the cursednesse y-wys  
 That in that booke writen is.  
 Now wote I not, ne I can not see  
 What maner eende that there shal be 7150  
 Of al this [bokes] that they hyde ;  
 But yit algate they shal abide  
 'Til that they may it bet defende,  
 This trowe I best wole be her ende.  
 Thus Antecrist abiden we,  
 For we ben alle of his meyne ;  
 And what man that wole not be so,  
 Right soone he shal his lyf forgo.  
 We wole a puple upon hym areyse,  
 And thurgh oure gilè done hym seise,  
 And hym on sharpè speris ryve, 7161  
 For other weyes brynge hym fro lyve,  
 But if that he wole folowe y-wis  
 That in oure booke writen is.  
 Thus mych wole oure book signifie,  
 That whilè Petre hath maistrise,  
 May never Iohn shewe well his myght.  
 Now have I you declarèd right  
 The menyng of the bark and rynde,  
 That makith the entenciouns blynde ; 7170  
 But now at erst I wole bigynne,  
 To expownè you the pith withynne :—  
 And the seculers comprehende,  
 That Cristes lawè wole defende,  
 And shulde it kepen and mayntenen  
 Yenyès hem that all sustenen,

7151. MSS. omit *bokes*, 'cis livres.'

7172. One or two verses have been lost corresponding to 'Par Pierre voil le Pape entendre.'

7173. *the seculers*, (?) read *clerkes seculers*, *clerks seculiers*.

And falsly to the puple techen.  
 That Iohn bitokeneth hem that prechen  
 That ther nys lawè covenable  
 But thilkè Gospel Perdurable, 7180  
 That for the Holygost was sent  
 To turnè folk that ben myswent.  
 The strengthe of Iohn, they undirstonde  
 The grace in whiche they seie they stonde,  
 That doth the synfull folk converte  
 And hem to Iesus Crist reverte.  
 Full many another orriblite  
 May men in that booke se,  
 That ben comaunden doutèles  
 Ayens the lawe of Rome expres ; 7190  
 And all with Antecrist they holden,  
 As men may in the book biholden.  
 And thanne comaunden they to sleen  
 Alle tho that with Petre been ;  
 But they shal nevere have that myght,  
 And God to-forne for strif to fight,  
 That they ne shal enowè fynde,  
 That Petres lawè shal have in mynde,  
 And evere holde, and so mayntene ;  
 That at the last it shal be sene 7200  
 That they shal allè come therto  
 For ought that they can speke or do.  
 And thilkè lawè shal not stonde  
 That they by Iohn have undirstonde,  
 But, maugre hem, it shal adowne,  
 And bene brought to confusioun.

But I wole stynt of this matere,  
 For it is wonder longe to here.  
 But hadde that ilkè book endured,  
 Of better estate I were ensured ; 7210  
 And freendis have I yit pardee  
 That han me sett in gret degre.  
 Of all this world is Emperour  
 Gylè my fadir, the trechour,  
 And Emperis my moder is,  
 Maugre the Holygost y-wis.  
 Oure myghty lynage and oure rowte  
 Regneth in every regne aboute.  
 And well is worthy we [maystres] be ;  
 For all this world governè we, 7220  
 And can the folk so wel disceyve,  
 That noon oure gilè can perceyve ;  
 And though they done, they dar not sey,

7178. *that*, MSS. *to*.

7197. *enowe*, MSS. *ynough*.

7219. *maistres*, MSS. *mynstres*.

The sothè dar no wight bywray.  
 But he in Cristis wrath hym ledith  
 That more than Crist my brither endredith.  
 He nys no full good champioun  
 That dredith such simulacioun,  
 Nor that for peynè wole refusen  
 Us to correctè and accusen. 7230  
 He wole not entremete by right,  
 Ne have God in his eyè-sight;  
 And therefore God shal hym punyce.  
 But me ne rekketh of no vice,  
 Sithen men us loven comunably,  
 And holden us for so worthy,  
 That we may folk repreve echoon,  
 And we nyl have repref of noon.  
 Whom shulden folk worshipen so  
 But us, that stynten never mo 7240  
 To patren while that folk may us see,  
 Though it not so bihynde hem be.  
 And where is morè wode folye  
 Than to enhauncè chyvalrie,  
 And lovè noble men and gay,  
 That joly clothis weren alway?  
 If they be sich folk as they semen,  
 So clene as men her clothis demen,  
 And that her wordis folowe her dede,  
 It is gret pitè, out of drede, 7250  
 For they wole be noon yprocritis!  
 Of hem me thynketh [it] gret spite is;  
 I can not love hem on no side.  
 But beggers with these hodès wide,  
 With sleigh and palè faces lene,  
 And greyè clothis not full clene,  
 But fretted full of tatarwagges,  
 And highè shoès knopped with dagges,  
 That frouncen lyke a quailè-pipe,  
 Or botis revelyng as a gype; 7260  
 To such folk as I you dyvyse  
 Shulde princes and these lordis wise  
 Take all her londis and her thingis,  
 Bothe werre and pees in governyngis;  
 To such folk shulde a prince hym yive,  
 That wolde his lyf in honour lyve.  
 And if they be not as they seme,  
 That serven thus the world to queme,  
 There wolde I dwellè to disceyve  
 The folk, for they shal not perceyve. 7270  
 But I ne speke in no such wise

7268. *serven*, (?) *semen*; but 'emblem.'  
 7270. G To for The.

That men shulde humble abit dispise,  
 So that no pride ther-undir be.  
 No man shulde hate, as thynkith me,  
 The porè man in sich clothyng.  
 But God ne preisith hym no thing  
 That seith he hath the world forsake,  
 And hath to worldly glorie hym take,  
 And wole of siche delices use.  
 Who may that begger wel excuse, 7280  
 That papelard that hym yeldith so,  
 And wole to worldly esè go,  
 And seith that he the world hath lefte,  
 And gredily it grypeth efte?  
 He is the hounde, shame is to seyn.  
 That to his castyng goth ageyn.  
 But unto you dar I not lye;  
 But myght I felen or asprie  
 That ye perceyvèd it no thyng,  
 Ye shuldè have a stark lesyng 7290  
 Right in youre honde thus, to bigynne,  
 I nolde it lettè for no synne.'

The god lough at the wondir tho,  
 And every wight gan laugh also,  
 And seide:—'Lo heere a man, a right  
 Forto be trusty to every wight!'

'Falssemblant,' quod Love, 'sey  
 me,

Sith I thus have advauncèd thee  
 That in my court is thi dwellyng,  
 And of ribawdis shalt be my kyng, 7300  
 Wolt thou wel holden my forwardis?  
 'Yhe, sir, from hennes forewardis;  
 Hadde never youre fadir heere biforne  
 Servaunt so trewe, sith he was borne.'

'That is ageynès all nature.'  
 'Sir, putte you in that aventure;  
 For though ye borowes take of me,  
 The sikerer shal ye never be  
 For ostages, ne sikirnese,  
 Or chartres, forto bere witness 7310  
 I take youre sif to recorde heere,  
 That men ne may, in no manere,  
 Teren the wolf out of his hide,  
 Til he be flayen bak and side.  
 Though men hym bete and al defile.  
 What! Wene ye that I wole bigile?  
 For I am clothèd mekèly,  
 Ther-undir is all my trechery;  
 Myn hertè chaungith never the mo  
 7314. *flayen*, MSS. *slayn*, 'escorchies.'



or noon abit in which I go. 7320  
 hough I have chere of symplenesse,  
 am not wery of shrewidnesse.  
 yn lemman Streyneth-Abstynence,  
 lath myster of my purveaunce;  
 he hadde ful longe ago be deede,  
 ere my councel and my rede;  
 ete hir allone and you and me.  
 And Love answerde: 'I trustè thee  
 ithoutè borowe for I wole noon.'  
 And Falssemblant, the thief, anoon  
 yght in that ilkè samè place, 7331  
 hat hadde of tresoun al his face  
 yght black withynne and white withoute,  
 hankyth hym, gan on his knees loute.  
 Thanne was thernought but 'Every man  
 ow to assaut that sailen can,'  
 uod Love, 'and that full hardyly!'  
 hanne arméd they hem comunly  
 f sich armour as to hem felle. 7339  
 Thanne the were arméd fers and felle,  
 hey wente hem forth all in a route,  
 nd set the castel al aboute.  
 hey will nought away for no drede,  
 ill it so be that they ben dede,  
 r till they have the castel take.  
 nd fourè batels they gan make,  
 nd parted hem in foure anoon,  
 nd toke her way and forth they gone,  
 he fourè gatès forto assaile,  
 f whiche the keepers wole not faile. 7350  
 or they ben neithir sike ne dede,  
 ut hardy folk and stronge in dede.  
 Now wole I seyn the countynaunce  
 f Falssemblant and Abstynance,  
 hat ben to Wikkid-Tongè went.  
 ut first they heelde her parlement  
 hether it to donè were  
 o maken hem be knownen there,  
 r elles walken forth disgisid.  
 ut at the lastè they devysed 7360  
 hat they wolde gone in tapinage,  
 s it were in a pilgrimage,  
 yke good and hooly folk unfeyned.  
 nd Damè Abstynencè-Streyned  
 oke on a robe of kamelyne,  
 nd gan hir graithe as a Bygynne.  
 largè coverechief of threde  
 he wrappéd all aboute hir heede;  
 ut she forgate not hir sawter;

A peire of bedis eke she bere 7370  
 Upon a lace all of white threde,  
 On which that she hir bedès bede.  
 But she ne bought hem never a dele,  
 For they were geven her I wote wele,  
 God wote, of a full hooly frere,  
 That seide he was hir fadir dere  
 To whom she haddè after went  
 Than ony frere of his covent.  
 And he visited hir also,  
 And many a sermoun seide hir to; 7380  
 He noldè lette for man on lyve  
 That he ne wolde hir oftè shryve,  
 And with so great devocion  
 They madè her confession,  
 That they had oftè, for the nones,  
 Two heedes in one hooode at ones.  
 Of fayre shappe I devyse her the,  
 But pale of face somtyme was she;  
 That falsè traytouse untrewé,  
 Was lyke that salowe horse of hewe, 7390  
 That in the Apocalips is shewed,  
 That signifyeth tho folke beshrewed,  
 That ben al ful of trecherye  
 And palè through hypocrisyé.  
 For on that horse no colour is,  
 But onely deed and pale y-wis,  
 Of suche a colour enlangoured  
 Was Abstynence i-wys coloured;  
 Of her estate she her repented,  
 As her visagé represented. 7400  
 She had a burdowne al of Theste,  
 That Gyle had yeve her of his yeste;  
 And a skryppe of Faynte Distresse,  
 That ful was of elengènesse.  
 And forthe she walkéd sobrelly;  
 And False Semblant saynt *je vous dié*,  
 Had, as it were for suche mistere,  
 Done on the copè of a frere.  
 With cherè symple and ful pytous,  
 Hys lokyng was not disdeynous 7410  
 Ne proude, but meke and ful pesyble.  
 About his neck he bare a byble,  
 And squierly forthè gan he gon;

7385-7576 are lost from G.

7387. Th. *devysed*.7392. Th. *to*; cp. note to 7270.7406. *saynt* is generally taken for *ccint*, 'girdled'; but no such Eng. adj. is known. Fr. is 'qui bien se ratorne.' ? read *saynt*, i.e. pale.7407. MSS. *And for Had*.

And, for to rest his lymmes upon,  
 He had of Treson a potent ;  
 As he were feble his way he went.  
 But in his sleve he gan to thring  
 A rasour sharpe, and wel bytyng,  
 That was forgéd in a forge, <sup>7419</sup>  
 Whiche that men clepen Coupé-gorge.  
 So longé forthe her waye they nomen,  
 Tyl they to Wicked-Tongé comen.  
 That at his gaté was syttyng,  
 And sawe folke in the way passyng.  
 The pylgrymes sawe he fasté by,  
 That beren hem ful mekely,  
 And humbly they with him mette,  
 Dame Abstynence first him grette,  
 And sythe him False-Semblant salued,  
 And he hem ; but he not remeued <sup>7430</sup>  
 For he ne dredde hem not a dele.  
 For whan he sawe her faces wele,  
 Alway in herté hem thought so,  
 He shuldé knowe hem bothé two ;  
 For wel he knewe Dame Abstynance,  
 But he ne knewe not Constreynance.  
 He knewe nat that she was constrayned,  
 Ne of her thevés lyfe [y-]fayned,  
 But wende she come of wyl al free ;  
 But she come in another degree ; <sup>7440</sup>  
 And if of good wyl she beganne  
 That wyl was fayléd her [as] thanne.  
 And False-Semblant had he sayne also,  
 But he knewe nat that he was false.  
 Yet false was he, but his falsnesse  
 Ne coude he nat espye nor gesse ;  
 For Semblant was so slyé wrought,  
 That Falsnesse he ne espyed nought.

But haddest thou knowen hym beforne  
 Thou woldest on a boke have sworne, <sup>7450</sup>  
 Whan thou him saugh in thylke araye,  
 That he that whilome was so gaye,  
 And of the dauncé joly Robyn,  
 Was tho become a Iacobyne.  
 But sothely what so menne hym calle,  
 Freres Prechours bene good menne alle,  
 Her order wickedly they beren,  
 Suche myn[é]strelles if they weren.

So bene Augustyns and Cordyleres  
 And Carmés, and eke Sackéd freeres <sup>7460</sup>  
 And allé frerés, shodde and bare,

7442. MSS. omit *as*.7459. *Augustyns*, read *Austins*.

(Though some of hem ben gret and square  
 Ful hooly men, as I hem deme.  
 Everyche of hem wolde good man seme  
 But shalte thou never of apparence  
 Séne conclude good consequence  
 In none argument y-wis  
 If existens al fayled is.  
 For menne maye fynde alwaye sophyme  
 The consequence to envenyme, <sup>747</sup>  
 Who so that hath hadde the subtelte  
 The double sentence for to se.

Whan the pylgrymes comen were  
 To Wicked-Tonge that dwelled there,  
 Her harneys nygh hem was algate ;  
 By Wicked-Tonge adowne they sate,  
 That badde hem nere him for to come  
 And of tidyngés telle him some,  
 And sayd hem : ' What case maketh you  
 To come in-to this placé nowe ?' <sup>748</sup>

' Sir,' sayd Strayned-Abstynance,  
 ' We, for to dryé our penaunce  
 With hertés pytous and devoute  
 Are comen, as pylgrimes gon aboute ;  
 Wel nygh on fote alway we go ;  
 Ful dousty ben our heeles two.  
 And thus bothé we ben sent  
 Throughout this worlde that is miswent,  
 To yeve ensample, and preche also.  
 To fysshyn synful menne we go, <sup>749</sup>  
 For other fysshynge, ne fysshé we.  
 And, sir, for that charyte,  
 As we be wonte, herborowe we crave  
 Your lyfe to amendé, Christ it save,  
 And so it shulde you nat displese,  
 We wolden, if it were your ese,  
 A shorte sermon unto you sayne.'

And Wjcked-Tonge answered agayne :  
 ' The house,' quod he, ' such as ye se  
 Shal nat be warnéd you for me, <sup>750</sup>  
 Say what you lyst, and I wol here.'

' Graunt mercy, sweté sir, dere,'  
 Quod alderfirst Dame Abstynence,  
 And thus began she her sentence :

' Sir, the firste vertue centayne,  
 The greatest, and moste soverayne  
 That may be founde in any man  
 For havynge or for wytte he can,  
 That is his tongé to refrayne.  
 Therto ought every wight him payne,

7486. Th. *doughty*.

For it is better styllé be 7511  
 Than for to speken harme, parde ;  
 And he that herkeneth it gladly,  
 He is no good man sykerly.  
 And, sir, aboven al other synne,  
 In that arte thou moste glyty inne.  
 Thou spake a jape not long a-go  
 (And, sir, that was ryght yvel do)  
 Of a yonge man, that here repayred  
 And never yet this place apayred. 7520  
 Thou saydest he awayted nothyng  
 But to disceyve Fayre-Welcomyng.  
 Ye saydè nothyng sothe of that ;  
 But, sir, ye lye, I tel you plat ;  
 He ne cometh no more, ne gothe, parde !  
 I trowe ye shal him never se.  
 Fayre-Welcomyng in prison is,  
 That ofte hath played with you er this  
 The fayrest gamés that he coude,  
 Withoutè fylthè, styl or loude ; 7530  
 Nowe dare he nat him selfe solace.  
 Ye han also the manne do chace,  
 That he dare neyther come ne go ;  
 What meveth you to hate him so ;  
 But properly your wicked thought,  
 That many a false lesyng hath thought,  
 That meveth your foole eloquence,  
 That jangleth ever in audyence,  
 And on the folke areyseth blame,  
 And doth hem dishonour and shame, 7540  
 For thyng.e.that maye have no prevyng  
 But lykelynesse, and contryvyng ?  
 For I dare sayne that reason demeth,  
 It is nat al sothe thyng.e.that semeth ;  
 And it is synnè to controve  
 Thyng.e.that is to reprove ;  
 This wote ye wele ; and, sir, therfore  
 Ye arne to blamè [wel] the more.  
 And nathelesse he recketh lyte  
 He yeveth nat nowe therof a myte, 7550  
 For if he thoughtè harme, parfaye,  
 He woldè come and gone al daye ;  
 He coudè himselfe nat abstene.  
 Nowe cometh he nat, and that is sene,  
 For he ne taketh of it no cure,  
 But if it be through aventure,  
 And lasse than other folke, algate.  
 And thou her watchest at the gate,  
 With speare in thyne arest alwaye ;

7531. Th. she nat her selfe.

There musè, musarde, al the daye. 7560  
 Thou wakest night and day for thought ;  
 I-wis thy traveyle is for nought.  
 And Ielousye, withouten fayle,  
 Shal never quyte the thy traveyle.  
 And skathe is that Fayre-Welcomyng  
 Withoutèn any trespassyng,  
 Shal wrongfully in prison be,  
 There wepeth and languyssheth he.  
 And though thou never yet, y-wis,  
 Agyltest manne no more but this,— 7570  
 Take nat a grefe,—it were worthy  
 To putte the out of this bayly,  
 And afterwards in prison lye,  
 And fetre the, tyl that thou dye.  
 For thou shalt for this synnè dwelle  
 Right in the devels ers of helle,  
 But if that thou repentè thee.  
 ‘Mafay, thou liest falsly !’ quod he.  
 ‘What? welcome with myschauncè nowe !  
 Have I therfore herberd yowe 7580  
 To seye me shame, and eke reprove  
 With sory happe, to youre bihove ?  
 Am I to day youre herbegere ?  
 Go herber yow elies-where than heere,  
 That han a lyer callèd me !  
 Two tregetours art thou and he,  
 That in myn hous do me this shame,  
 And for my sothe-saugh ye me blame.  
 Is this the sermoun that ye make ?  
 To all the develles I me take, 7590  
 Or elles, God, thou me confounde !  
 But er men diden this castel founde,  
 It passith not ten daies or twelve  
 But it was tolde right to my selve,  
 And as they seide, right so tolde I :  
 He kyst the Rosè pryvyly !  
 Thus seide I now and have seid yore ;  
 I not where he dide ony more.  
 Why shulde men sey me such a thyng  
 If it haddè bene gabbyng ? 7600  
 Ryght so seide I and wol seye yit ;  
 I trowe I liéd not of it.  
 And with my bemès I wole blowe  
 To allè neighboris a-rowe,  
 How he hath bothè comen and gone.  
 Tho spake Falssemblant right anone :  
 ‘All is not gospel, oute of doute,  
 That men seyn in the towne aboute ;

7603. bemes, ‘besuines,’ trumpets.

Ley no deaf ere to my spekyng :  
 I swere yow, sir, it is gabbyng ; 7610  
 I trowe ye wote wel certeynly,  
 That no man loveth hym tenderly  
 That seith hym harme, if he wote it,  
 All be he never so pore of wit.  
 And soth is also sikerly  
 (This knowe ye, sir, as wel as I)  
 That lovers gladly wole visiten  
 The places there her loves habiten.  
 This man yow loveth and eke honoureth,  
 This man to servè you laboureth, 7620  
 And clepith you "his freend so deere,"  
 And this man makith you good chere,  
 And every-where that [he] you meteth  
 He yow saloweth and he you greteth.  
 He preseth not so ofte that ye  
 Ought of his come encombred be ;  
 Ther presen other folk on yow  
 Füll ofter than he doth now.  
 And if his herte hym streynéd so,  
 Unto the Rosé forto go, 7630  
 Ye shulde hym sene so ofstè nede,  
 That ye shulde take hym with the dede.  
 He cowde his comyng not forbere  
 Though he hym thrilléd with a spere ;  
 It nere not thanne as it is now.  
 But trustith wel, I swere it yow,  
 That it is clene out of his thought ;  
 Sir, certis he ne thenkith it nought,  
 No more ne doth Faire-Welcomyng,  
 That sore abieth al this thing. 7640  
 And if they were of oon assent,  
 Full sooné were the Rosé hent,  
 The maugre youres woldé be.  
 And, sir, of o thing herkeneth me :  
 Sith ye this man that loveth yow  
 Han seid such harme and shamé now,  
 Witeth wel if he gesséd it,  
 Ye may wel demen in youre wit  
 He nolde no thyng love you so,  
 Ne callen you his freende also ; 7650  
 But nyght and day he wolde wake  
 The castell to destroie and take,  
 If it were soth as ye devise ;  
 Or some man in some maner wise,  
 Might it warne hym everydele,

7612. *hym*, etc., indefinite pronouns.

Or by hymself perceyven wele.  
 For sith he myght not come and gone  
 As he was whilom wont to done,  
 He myght it soné wite and see.  
 But now all other wise doth he. 7660  
 Thanne have, [ye] sir, al outerly  
 Deserved helle, and Iolyly  
 The deth of hellè doutéles,  
 That thrallen folk so giltéles.'

Fals Semblant proveth so this thing,  
 Thát he can noon answeyng,  
 And seth alwey such apparaunce,  
 That nygh he fel in repentaunce  
 And seidè hym :—' Sir, it may wel be,  
 Semblant, a good man semen ye ; 7670  
 And, Abstynence, full wise ye seme ;  
 Of o talent you bothe I deme.  
 What counceil wole ye to me yeven ?'  
 ' Ryght heere anoon thou shalt be shryven,  
 And sey thy synne withouté more ;  
 Of this shalt thou repenté sore.  
 For I am prest, and have pouste  
 To shryve folk of most dignyte  
 That ben, as wide as world may dure,  
 Of all this world I have the cure, 7680  
 And that hadde never yit persoun,  
 Ne vicarie of no maner toun.  
 And, God wote, I have of thee  
 A thousand tymé more pitee  
 Than hath thi preest parochial,  
 Though he thy freend be special.  
 I have avauntage in o wise  
 That youre prelati ben not so wise,  
 Ne half so lettred as am I.  
 I am licenced boldély 7690  
 To redé in Divinite  
 And to confessèn, out of drede.  
 If ye wol you now confesse,  
 And leve your sinnés more and lesse  
 Withoute abood, knele down anon,  
 And you shal have absolucion.'

7660. MSS. *quote* for *doth*.

7662. *Iolyly* is generally interpreted to be a strengthening adverb equivalent to 'bien' of Fr. ; but that is translated by *douteles*. Such a use of 'jollyly' is difficult to explain. ? *fully*.

7691. G ends here with

To reden in Divinite  
 And longe have red.

The French original goes on 9483 verses further.

## GLOSSARY

WORDS still in use, with substantially the same meaning, are not included in this Glossary, which is intended for working purposes and not as a concordance. In most cases, to help identification, one reference is given to each word, for each of its obsolete meanings; but in a few words of common occurrence, transferred to this Glossary from that in the Eversley Edition of the *Canterbury Tales*, these references are omitted. In the references the letters A-I denote the various sections of the *Canterbury Tales*, An. *Anelida and Arcite*, As. the *Treatise on the Astrolabe*, Bl. the *Dethe of Blanche*, Bo. the *Boece*, HF the *Hous of Fame*, L the *Legende of Good W'omen*, PF the *Parlement of Foules*, R the *Romaunt of the Rose*, T *Troilus and Criseyde*. In the case of the *Hous of Fame* and *Troilus*, the index figures give the number of the book in which the line quoted occurs, thus T<sup>2</sup> 357 denotes *Troilus*, Bk. ii. l. 357. The letters *i* and *y* being often used interchangeably in manuscripts, most *y*-forms are arranged in the order of *i*.

**A**, *card. num.* one. T<sup>4</sup> 1407  
**A**, *interj.* ah. A 1078, R 2627  
**A**, *prep.* on, in. A 3516, A 854  
**A**, *v.* have. R 4322  
**Abaysed**, **Abayssched**, **Abayst**, *p.p.* abashed. T<sup>3</sup> 1233, Bo. 36, E 317  
**Abaved**, **Abawed**, *p.p.* abashed, confounded. Bl. 613, R 3646  
**Abegge**, *v.* atone for. A 3938  
**Abet**, *sb.* instigation. T<sup>2</sup> 357  
**Abit**, *abideth*. G 1175  
**Abite**, *sb.* habit, dress. R 4914  
**Able**, *adj.* fit, apt. A 167  
**Abyngge**, *p. pres.* giving power to. Bo. 220  
**Abiucions**, *sb.* washings. G 856  
**Abood**, *sb.* abiding, delay, A 965; **Abodes**, *pl.* T<sup>3</sup> 854  
**Aboughte**, *pret.* of **Abye**. A 2303  
**Aboven**, *adv.* uppermost in luck. R 4352  
**Abrayde**. See **Abreyde**  
**Abregge**, *v.* abridge. A 2999  
**Abreyde**, *v.* awake, start. T<sup>3</sup> 1113, A 2999 (*p.p.*)  
**Abroche**, *v.* broach. D 177  
**Abusious**, *sb.* an abuse, scandal. T<sup>4</sup> 990, 1060  
**Abye**, *v.* pay for. C 765, Bo. 1350  
**Accesse**, *sb.* fever-fit. T<sup>2</sup> 1543  
**Accident**, *sb.* occurrence, T<sup>3</sup> 918; changing attribute, E 607  
**Accidle**, *sb.* moral sloth. I 677  
**Accordant**, *adj.* agreeable to. A 37  
**Accorden**. See **Acorde**  
**Accusement**, *sb.* accusation. T<sup>4</sup> 556  
**Achaat**, *sb.* buying. A 571  
**Achatours**, *sb.* buyers. A 568  
**Achekked**, *p.p.* checked. HF<sup>3</sup> 1003  
**Achoken**, *v.* suffocate, Bo. 443; **Achoked**, *p.p.* choked, L 2008  
**Aclofeth**, *pres.* lames, hinders. PF 517  
**Acontyngge**, *sb.* reckoning. Bo. 41  
**Acorde**, *pres.* agree. L 3

**Acorded**, *pret.* suited. A 243  
**Acorse**, *v.* accurse. T<sup>3</sup> 1072  
**Acoye**, *v.* caress, appease. T<sup>5</sup> 782, R 3564  
**Adamant**, **Adamaund**, *sb.* ironstone, A 1990; magnet, R 1182  
**Adawe**, *v.* awake, T<sup>3</sup> 1120; **Adawed**, *p.p.* E 2400  
**Adrad**, *p.p.* afraid. A 605  
**Advertence**, *sb.* attention. G 467  
**Advocacyes**, *sb. pl.* pleas. T<sup>2</sup> 1469  
**Aferd**, *p.p.* afraid. A 628  
**Affeccloun**, *sb.* desire. A 1158, L 1522  
**Affetes**, *sb. pl.* desires. T<sup>3</sup> 1391  
**Affye**, *v.* trust. R 3155  
**Affile**, *v.* polish. A 712  
**Affraye**, *v.* affright. E 455  
**Afyne**, *adv.* finally. R 3690  
**Aforne**, *adv.* before. R 3614  
**Afor-yein**, *prep.* opposite. T<sup>2</sup> 1188  
**Afounde**, *v.* perish. *Rosemounde* 21  
**After-tales**, *adv.* afterwards. T<sup>3</sup> 224  
**Agayn**, **Agayns**, *prep.* toward, against, in the presence of. B 391, A 1509, C 743  
**Agaynward**, *adv.* back. B 441  
**A-game**, *adv.* in sport. T<sup>3</sup> 568  
**Agaste**, *v.* terrify. T<sup>2</sup> 901  
**Aggededen**, *p.p.* aggravated. B 2205  
**Aggroggeth**, *v. pres.* aggravates. B 2475  
**Agilten**, *v.* offend. L 435  
**Agon**, **Agon**, *p.p.* departed, E 1764; past, C 246  
**Agree**, *v.* please. T<sup>1</sup> 409  
**Agrief**, *adv.* sorrowfully. B 4083  
**Agryse**, *v.* be horrified, shudder at. B 614, D 1649  
**Agroos**, **Agrose**, *pret.* of **Agryse**. L 830, 2314  
**Agroteyd**, *p.p.* surfeited. L 2454  
**Aguler**, *sb.* needle-case. R 98  
**Alel**, *sb.* grandfather. A 2477  
**Ajourn**, *v.* adjourn. *ABC* 158  
**Aketoun**, *sb.* quilted tunic. B 2050

- Aknowe**, *v.* acknowledge. Bo. 140  
**Al**, *adj.* all, A 2959; **Al and som**, the whole, everybody, A 2761, 3136  
**Al**, *adv.* wholly, A 2968; **Al**, *conj.* although, L 1392  
**Al**, *sb.* awl. *Truth* 11  
**Alambic**, *sb.* alembic. T<sup>4</sup> 520  
**Alauntz**, *sb.* boarhounds. A 2148  
**Alayes**, *sb.* alloys. E 1167  
**Al-day**, *adv.* continually. B 1702  
**Alder-**, *prefix*, of all; **Oure alder**, of us all, R 6948  
**Alonge**, *adj.* wretched. B 1412  
**Alestake**, *sb.* pole bearing alebouse sign. A 667  
**Aleye**, *sb.* alley. B 1758  
**Aleys**, *sb. pl.* fruit of the wild service tree. R 1377  
**Algate**, *adv.* always, A 571; any way, A 3962  
**Algates**, *adv.* any way. T<sup>3</sup> 24  
**Aliene**, *v.* alienate. Bo. 237  
**Alyned**, *p. p.* placed in lines. HF<sup>3</sup> 34 (*emend.*)  
**Alkamystre**, *sb.* alchemist. G 1204  
**Allo**, *dat. sing.* (Bl. 1284) and *nom. plur.* (Bl. 1051) of **Al**  
**Allege**, *v.* (1) allege, E 1658; quote (*pres.*) HF<sup>1</sup> 314; (2) alleviate (alegghith), R 2588  
**Aller**, *gen. plur.* of **Al**. A 823  
**All-oute**, *adv.* entirely. R 4326  
**Allowe**, *v. pres.* approve. F 676  
**Almanderes**, *sb. pl.* almond-trees. R 1363  
**Almesse**, *sb.* alms. B 168  
**Almycanteras**, *sb. pl.* circles or parallels of altitude. As. i. § 18  
**Almury**, *sb.* the pointer of an astrolabe. As. i. § 22  
**Along on**, *prep.* owing to. T<sup>2</sup> 1001  
**Alose**, *v.* praise, T<sup>4</sup> 1473; **Alosed**, *p. p.* R 2354  
**Alpes**, *sb. pl.* bullfinches. R 658  
**Als**, *adv.* as. A 170  
**Alsua**, *adv.* also. A 4085  
**Alther**, *prefix*, of all  
**Altitude**, *sb.* the elevation of a star, etc., above the horizon. As. i. §§ 1, 13  
**Al to**, *intensive prefix*, e.g. **Alto-share**, *pret.* cut in pieces. R 1858  
**Always**, *adv.* at all events. T<sup>5</sup> 298  
**Amadriades**, *sb. pl.* hamadryads. A 2928  
**Amalgamyng**, *sb.* the compounding of quicksilver with some other metal. G 771  
**Amanuced**, *p. p.* diminished. Bo. 118  
**Amayed**, *p. p.* dismayed. T<sup>4</sup> 641  
**Ambages**, *sb. pl.* duplicities. T<sup>5</sup> 897  
**Ambes as**, both aces, double ace. B 124  
**Amblere**, *sb.* easy-paced horse. A 469  
**Ameled**, *p. p.* enamelled. R 1080  
**Amenuse**, *v.* diminish, I 358; depreciate, I 496  
**Amenusyng**, *sb.* diminution. Bo. 428  
**Amercimentz**, *sb. pl.* fines. I 752  
**Ameved**, *pret.* changed; **Amoeved**, *p. p.* disturbed. Bo. 25  
**Amyddes**, *prep.* in the midst of. A 2009  
**Amynistreth**, *pres.* administers. Bo. 1467  
**Amoeved**. See **Ameved**  
**Amonesten**, *v.* warn, admonish. I 76  
**Amorettes**, *sb. pl.* amorous girls. R 892, 4755  
**Amphibologies**, *sb. pl.* equivocations. T<sup>4</sup> 1406  
**An**, *prep.* in, on. Bo. 1668  
**Ancille**, *sb.* handmaid. *ABC* 109  
**Anclee**, *sb.* ankle. A 1660  
**Ancre**, *sb.* anchor. *Fortune* 38  
**And**, *conj.* if. L 1790  
**Angerly**, *adv.* grievously. R 3511  
**Angres**, *sb. pl.* griefs. R 2554  
**Angry**, *adj.* grievous. R 2628  
**Angysshous**, **Angwysous**, *adj.* anxious. Bo. 482, 603  
**Antientised**, *p. p.* annihilated. B 2435  
**Anker**, *sb.* (1) anchor, R 3780; (2) anchoress, R 6348  
**Anlaas**, *sb.* dagger. A 357  
**Annueleer**, *sb.* priest singing anniversary masses. G 1012  
**Anon-right**, *adv.* forthwith. L 115  
**Anoyouse**, *adj. pl.* troublesome. I 728  
**Antiphoner**, *sb.* book of anthems. B 1709  
**Anvelt**, *sb.* anvil. Bl. 1164  
**Aornement**, *sb.* adornment. I 432  
**Apayed**, *p. p.* pleased, contented. L 766, T<sup>1</sup> 649  
**Apaisn**, *pres. pl.* appease. T<sup>3</sup> 22  
**Appaled**. See **Appalled**  
**Apparaunce**, *sb.* appearance. L 1372  
**Appased**, *p. p.* passed away. Bo. 429  
**Apeyren**, *v.* impair, depreciate. I 1078, A 3147  
**Apert**, *adj.* open, frank. D 1114  
**Apertenant**, *adj.* belonging to. *Pite* 70  
**Apertenen**, *v.* belong to. I 410  
**Apertly**, *adv.* openly, clearly. I 294  
**Apiked**, *p. p.* trimmed. A 365  
**A-poynt**, *adv.* exactly. T<sup>5</sup> 1620  
**Apoinde**, *reflex v.* make up one's mind. T<sup>2</sup> 691  
**Appalled**, *p. p.* made pale or feeble. F 365, B 1292  
**Apparaille**, *sb.* apparel. *ABC* 153  
**Apparallements**, *sb. pl.* garments. Bo. 465  
**Apparailien**, *v.* prepare. B 2530  
**Appetite**, *sb.* desire, lust. A 1680, L 1586  
**Appetiteth**, *pres. s.* seeks. L 1582  
**Apposed**, *pret.* examined. G 363  
**Approved**, *p. p.* approved, confirmed. E 1349, L 21  
**Appropried**, *p. p.* appropriated, peculiar to. *Genitilisse* 18  
**Approwours**, *sb. pl.* informers. D 1343  
**Aqueyntaunce**, *sb.* acquaintance. A 245  
**Aqueynte**, *v.* acquaint. Bl. 531  
**Arace**, *v.* tear away, F 1393; **Arased**, *tor.* Bo. 80  
**Arbitre**, *sb.* choice. Bo. 1674  
**Arblasters**, *sb. pl.* crossbowmen. R 4196  
**Archaugell**, *sb.* titmouse. R 915  
**Ardaunt**, *adj.* ardent, burning. Bo. 1394  
**Arede**, *v.* interpret. Bl. 289  
**Aresoneth**, *pres.* controverts. R 6220  
**Arrest**, *sb.* See **Arrest**  
**Arette**, *v.* account, attribute, A 726, R 3327  
**Aretted**, A 2729  
**Arewe**, *adv.* in a row. D 1254  
**Argoille**, *sb.* crude tartar made from crust of wine. G 813  
**Argumentz**, *sb. pl.* angles on which tabulated quantities depend in astronomy. F 1277  
**Aryght**, *adv.* exactly. A 267  
**Arist**, *pres.* ariseth. B 265  
**Arist**, *sb.* arising. As. ii. § 12 [200]  
**Aryve**, *sb.* disembarkation. A 60 (*var.*)  
**Aryved**, *p. p.* sent to land. Bo. 1312  
**Armee**, *sb.* expedition. A 60 (*Ellesmere*)  
**Armypotent**, *adj.* mighty in arms. A 2441  
**Armonyak**, *adj.* Armenian; ammoniac. G 790  
**Armonyne**, *sb.* harmony. PF 63  
**Arn**, *pres. pl.* are. T<sup>4</sup> 972

**A-roume**, *adv.* at large. HF<sup>2</sup> 33  
**A-rowe**, *adv.* in a row. L 554  
**Arrest**, *sb.* socket of a spear. A 2602  
**Arreste**, *sb.* restraint, delay. L 307, 896  
**Arryfrage**, *sb.* disembarking. HF<sup>1</sup> 223  
**Arsmetrik**, *sb.* arithmetic. A 1898  
**Arten**, *v.* constrain. T<sup>1</sup> 388  
**Artyk**, *adj.* arctic. As. i. § 14  
**Artow**, *art* thou. A 1141  
**Arwes**, *sb. pl.* arrows. A 107  
**Ascapen**, *pres. pl.* escape. Bo. 1361  
**Ascaunce**, *adv.* as though, forsooth. G 838  
**Ascendent**, *sb.* planetary influence. A 417; *see*  
 As. ii. § 4 [151-165]  
**Ascry**, *sb.* shout. T<sup>2</sup> 611  
**Ashen**, *sb. pl.* ashes. A 1364  
**Aslake**, *v.* abate, A 3553; **Aslaked**, A 1760  
**Aslope**, *adv.* aside, crossly. R 4464  
**Aspe**, *sb.* aspen tree. A 2921, PF 180  
**Aspectes**, *sb. pl.* planetary relations. T<sup>2</sup> 682  
**Aspyen**, *v.* espy. T<sup>2</sup> 649  
**Assre**, *adj.* rough, bitter. An. 23, Bo. 590  
**Assrenesse**, *sb.* bitterness. Bo. 1370  
**Assautes**, *sb. pl.* assaults. I 729  
**Assay**, *sb.* experiment. L 9  
**Assaye**, *v.* assay, try. Bl. 346  
**Assaged**, *p. p.* besieged. A 881  
**Assent**, *sb.* agreement, plot. C 758, L 1547  
**Assente**, *v.* agree to. A 374  
**Asseth**, *adv.* enough; **Make asseth**, satisfy,  
 R 5600  
**Asshy**, *adj.* sprinkled with ashes. A 2883  
**Assize**, *sb.* assize. A 314  
**Assollen**, *v.* absolve, C 939; discharge, Bo.  
 1621; resolve, Bo. 1677  
**Assollyng**, *sb.* absolution. A 661  
**Assure**, *sb.* assurance. An. 331  
**Astate**, *sb.* estate. R 6856  
**Asterie**, *v.* start away, escape, A 1595; **A-**  
**stert**, **Asterted**, *p. p.* A 1592, B 437  
**Astonyed**, *p. p.* astonished. HF<sup>2</sup> 41, A 2361  
**Astonynge**, *sb.* astonishment. Bo. 55  
**A-stored**, *p. p.* stored, provided. A 609  
**Astromye**, *sb.* astronomy. A 3451  
**Asure**, *sb.* blue. An. 330  
**A-sweved**, *p. p.* dazed. HF<sup>2</sup> 41  
**At-after**, *prep.* after. E 437  
**Atake**, *v.* overtake. G 556  
**Atanes**, *adv.* at once. A 4074  
**Atazir**, *sb.* adverse planetary influence. B 305  
**Ateyne**, *v.* attain, *Mars* 161; **Ateynt**, *p. p.*  
 attained, comprehended, Bo. 275  
**Atompraunce**, *sb.* temperament. Bo. 1496  
**Atempre**, *adj.* temperate. L 128, 1483; B 2177  
**Athinken**, *v.* vex. T<sup>5</sup> 878  
**Atyr**, *sb.* attire. I 430, T<sup>1</sup> 181  
**Aton**, *adv.* together. E 437  
**Atones**, **Attones**, *adv.* at once. I. 102  
**At-rede**, *v.* outwit, surpass in advice. A 2449  
**At-renne**, *v.* outrun. A 2449  
**Attamed**, *p. p.* broached. B 4008  
**Atte**, at the. A 125, R 4192  
**Attempre**. *See* **Atempre**  
**Atthamaunt**, *sb.* adamant. A 1305  
**Attour**, *sb.* attire. R 3718  
**Attricioun**, *sb.* contrition. T<sup>1</sup> 557  
**Attry**, *adj.* venomous. I 583  
**Atwixe**, **Atwixen**, *adv.* between. As. ii. § 5  
 [173], T<sup>5</sup> 886  
**Atwynne**, *adv.* apart. A 3589

**Auctoritee**, *sb.* authority, especially of an es-  
 teemed writer. R 2394  
**Auctour**, *sb.* author. L 470  
**Augrym**, *sb.* arithmetical notation, As. i. § 8;  
**Augrym stones**, arithmetical counters, A 3210  
**Aument**, *v.* augment. R 5597  
**Augelyke**, *adv.* angel-like. L 236  
**Auntred**, *pret.* adventured. A 4205  
**Auntrous**, *adj.* adventurous. A 2099  
**Autentyke**, *adj.* authentic. Bl. 1085  
**Auter**, *sb.* altar. A 1905  
**Avale**, *v.* fall, T<sup>3</sup> 626; doff, A 3122; descend,  
 Bo. 1558  
**Avaunce**, *v.* profit. A 246  
**Avaunt**, *adv.* forward. R 4790  
**Avaunt**, *sb.* boast, bold statement. T<sup>3</sup> 289, A  
 227  
**Avauntour**, *sb.* boaster. B 4107  
**Avenaunt**, *adj.* comely, suitable. R 1263, 3679  
**Aventaille**, *sb.* helmet's front. E 1204  
**Aventourous**, *adj.* accidental. Bo. 248  
**Adventure**, *sb.* adventure, chance. A 1160, 844  
**Avys**, *sb.* deliberation. A 786, T<sup>3</sup> 453  
**Avyse**, *pres.* observe, look to. E 1988  
**Avyusement**, *sb.* deliberation. T<sup>4</sup> 936  
**Avisioun**, *sb.* vision. Bl. 285  
**Avowtrie**, *sb.* adultery. B 2220  
**Await**, *sb.* watch, H 149; delay, T<sup>3</sup> 580;  
**Awaytes**, ambushes, strategies, Bo. 778  
**Awaytour**, *sb.* one who lies in wait. Bo. 1306  
**Awen**, *adj.* own. A 4239  
**Awmenere**, **Awmere**, *sb.* alms-bag. R 2087,  
 2271  
**Awreke**, *v.* avenge, *Pite* 11; **Awroken**, *p. p.*  
 A 3752  
**Axe**, *pres.* ask. A 1739  
**Axyng**, *sb.* asking, question. A 1826, Bl. 33  
**Ay**, *adv.* always. A 63  
**Ayels**, *prep.* against. L 330  
**Ayeynward**, *adv.* on the other hand. T<sup>4</sup> 1027  
**Azimutes**, *sb. pl.* divisions of an astrolabe. As.  
 i. § 19  
**Ba**, *imperat.* kiss. A 3709  
**Baar**, *pret.* bare. A 1180  
**Babewynnes**, *sb. pl.* (baboons) grotesques. HF<sup>3</sup>  
 99  
**Bachelrye**, *sb.* the bachelors. E 270  
**Baggeth**, *pres.* squints. Bl. 622  
**Bagglyngly**, *adv.* squintingly. R. 292  
**Baille**, *sb.* jurisdiction, R. 4217; **Baily**, bailiff,  
 R 6331  
**Baiten**, *v.* feed. B 466, T<sup>1</sup> 193  
**Bak**, *sb.* backcloth. G 881 (*var.*)  
**Balace**, *sb.*; **In balace**, at hazard, in un-  
 certainty. G 611, R 4667  
**Bale**, *sb.* harm. Bl. 534  
**Balkes**, *sb. pl.* beams. A 3626  
**Balled**, *adj.* bald. A 198  
**Banes**, *sb. pl.* bones. A 4073  
**Bar**, *pret.* bare; **Bar on honde**, accused, T<sup>3</sup> 1154,  
 An. 158  
**Barbe**, *sb.* a kind of veil. T<sup>2</sup> 110  
**Barbour**, *sb.* barber-surgeon. A 2025  
**Barbre**, *adj.* barbarous. A 281  
**Barayne**, *adj.* barren. A 1244  
**Barel**, *sb.* barrel. B 3083  
**Bargeyn**, *sb.* strife. R 2551  
**Barm**, *sb.* bosom. F 631  
**Barm-clooth**, *sb.* apron. A 3236

- Barres**, *sb. pl.* cross-stripes. A 329, R 1103  
**Barrynge**, *sb.* cross-stripping. I 417  
**Basilcock**, *sb.* basilisk. I 853  
**Battailed**, *p. p.* battlemented, indented. B 4050  
**Batailles**, *sb. pl.* battle. A 61  
**Bate**, *sb.* strife. R 4235  
**Bathe**, *adj.* both. A 4087  
**Bauderie**, *sb.* gaiety. A 1926  
**Baudy**, *adj.* dirty. G 635  
**Baundon**, *sb.* control. R 1163  
**Bawdryk**, *sb.* baldrick, belt. A 116  
**Bayme**, *sb.* balm. T<sup>2</sup> 53, HF<sup>3</sup> 596  
**Bayard**, *sb.* proverbial name for a horse. G 1413  
**Be-**. See also **Bl**  
**Be**, *prep.* by. Bl. 1330  
**Beautee**, *sb.* beauty. A 1926  
**Bechen**, *adj.* made of beech. G 1160  
**Bede**, *Beede*, *v.* offer. T<sup>2</sup> 185, G 1065  
**Bedes**, *sb. pl.* beads. A 159  
**Bedrede**, *adj.* bedridden. E 1292  
**Beele**, *adj.* good, fine. B 1599  
**Been**, *v.* to be. A 140; *pres. pl.* B 122  
**Been**, *sb. pl.* bees. F 205  
**Beere**, *sb.* beer. B 1815  
**Beet**, *pret.* touched. R 129  
**Beete**, *v.* kindle. A 2253  
**Beete**, *v.* mend. A 3927  
**Beggistere**, *s.* (beggar woman) beggar. A 242  
**Behotheth**, *pres.* promises. Bl. 620  
**Bekked**, *pret.* nodded. T<sup>2</sup> 1260  
**Beknew**, *pret.* confessed. L 1058  
**Bele**, *adj.* fair. T<sup>2</sup> 288  
**Belweth**, *pres.* bellows. HF<sup>3</sup> 703  
**Bely**, *sb.* bellows. I 353  
**Bely-naked**, *adj.* stark naked. E 1326  
**Beme**, *sb.* trumpet. B 4588  
**Bend**, *sb.* strap. R 1079  
**Bendynge**, *sb.* slant-stripping. I 417  
**Benedicite**, **Benediste**, bless ye. B 1170, T<sup>1</sup> 780  
**Bente**, *sb. dat.* grassy slope. A 1081  
**Be-nymen**, *v.* take away. Bo. 1282  
**Berd**, *sb.* beard, A 332; **Make a berd**, outwit, A 4096; so **Berdes**, deceits, HF<sup>2</sup> 181  
**Bere**, *sb.* (1) bear, A 1640; (2) beer, *Pite* 105; (3) pillow-case, Bl. 254; pillow, T<sup>2</sup> 1638  
**Bere**, *v.* bear, carry. B 3564  
**Bere on hond**, accuse falsely, D 393; cheat into believing, D 232  
**Bere thurgh**, pierce. A 2256  
**Berynge**, *sb.* behaviour. B 2022  
**Berme**, *sb.* yeast. G 813  
**Berne**, *sb. dat.* barn. A 3258  
**Besaunt-wight**, weighing a bezant. R 1106  
**Beseye**, *p. p.* beseen. Bl. 828  
**Best**, *sb.* beast. A 1976  
**Bet**, *adj. comp.* better, B 311; *adv.* A 242; **Go bet**, go quickly, L 1213  
**Beta**. See **Beete**  
**Beth**, *pres.* be, are. A 178  
**Betten**, *p. p.* kindled. G 518  
**Beye**, *v.* buy. G 637  
**Bibbed**, *p. p.* drunk. A 4162  
**Bi-bledde**, *p. p.* bloodied. A 2002  
**Bicched**, *p. p.* cursed. C 656  
**Bi-clappe**, *v.* clap down, trap. G 9  
**Bidaffed**, *p. p.* fooled. E 1191  
**Biddyng**, *sb.* praying. G 140  
**Bien**, *pres. pl.* buy. R 2452  
**Bier**, *sb.* buyer. R 5928  
**Bygyns**, *sb. pl.* béguines. R 6861  
**Bygoon**, *p. p.* begone, clothed. R 943  
**Biheste**, *sb.* promise. B 41  
**Bihete**, **Bihote**, *v.* promise. A 1854  
**Bihight**, *p. p.* promised  
**Byhove**, *sb.* profit. R 1092  
**Bihovely**, *adj.* advantageous. T<sup>2</sup> 261  
**Bijaped**, *p. p.* tricked. A 1585  
**Biknowe**, *v.* confess. A 1556  
**Bildere**, *sb.* for *adj.* builder. PF 176  
**Biles**, *sb. pl.* beaks. HF<sup>2</sup> 360  
**Bileve**, *sb.* belief, creed. A 3456  
**Bille**, *sb.* petition. C 166  
**Bimene**, *v.* bemoan. R 2667  
**Bynymeth**, *pres.* takes away from. I 335  
**Blsekcn**, *pres. pl.* beseech. A 918  
**Bisemare**, *sb.* abusiveness. A 3965  
**Bisette**, *pret.* employed. A 279  
**Blseye**, *p. p.* beseen; **Yuele** (richely) **biseye**, of an ill (rich) appearance. E 965, 984  
**Bl-shet**, *p. p.* shut up. T<sup>3</sup> 602  
**Bismotered**, *p. p.* soiled. A 76  
**Bistad**, *p. p.* bestead. B 649  
**Bit**, biddeth. A 187  
**Bitake**, *pres.* commend to. A 3750  
**Biteche**, *pres.* commit to. B 2114  
**Bitymes**, *adv.* betimes, speedily. G 1006  
**Bitit**, betideth. T<sup>2</sup> 48  
**Bitore**, *sb.* bittern. D 972  
**Bitraysed**, **Bitreshed**, *p. p.* betrayed. B 3570, R 1648  
**Bitrent**, *pres.* clasps, encircles. T<sup>3</sup> 1231, T<sup>4</sup> 870  
**Biwreye**, *v.* betray. A 2229  
**Blakeberyed**, **goon a**, go blackberrying, go where they will. C 406  
**Blaked**, *p. p.* blackened. B 3321  
**Blanche**, *adj.* white. T<sup>1</sup> 916  
**Blankmanger**, *sb.* blanc-mange. A 367  
**Blasen**, *v.* blare. HF<sup>3</sup> 712  
**Bleyne**, *sb.* blain. R 553  
**Bleynte**, *pret.* bleached. A 1078  
**Blemessched**, *p. p.* injured. Bo. 170  
**Blendith**, *pres.* blinds. Bo. 1381  
**Blere**, *v.* blind. A 4049  
**Blove**, *v.* remain. T<sup>3</sup> 623  
**Blynye**, *v.* cease. G 1171, R 6611  
**Blyve**, *adv.* quickly. A 2697  
**Blo**, *adj.* blue. HF<sup>3</sup> 557  
**Blosmes**, *sb. pl.* blossoms. L 143  
**Blowynge**, *p. pres.* panting. Bo. 1267  
**Bobounce**, *sb.* boast. D 569  
**Boch**, *sb.* swelling. Bo. 693  
**Bocher**, *sb.* butcher. A 2025  
**Bode**, *sb.* delay. An. 119  
**Boden**, *p. p.* bidden. L 366  
**Boes**, *pres.* it behoves. A 4027  
**Boydakin**, *sb.* bodkin, dagger. B 3892  
**Boyste**, *sb.* box. C 307  
**Boystous**, *adj.* rough. H 211  
**Bokeler**, *sb.* buckler. A 112, 3266  
**Boket**, *sb.* bucket. A 1533  
**Bolas**, *sb.* bullace. R 1387  
**Boles**, *sb. pl.* bulls. A 2139  
**Bon**, *adj.* good. HF<sup>2</sup> 514  
**Bone**, *sb.* prayer. Bl. 834  
**Boole**, *sb.* astringent earth. G 790  
**Boon**, *sb.* bone. A 1177  
**Boor**, *sb.* boar. A 2070  
**Boos**, *sb.* boss. A 3266  
**Boost**, **Boste**, *sb.* talk, outcry. A 4001, L 887



**Boot**, *pret.* bit. B 3791  
**Boot**, *sb.* boat. E 1424  
**Boote**, *sb.* remedy. A 424  
**Boras**, *sb.* borax. A 630  
**Bord**, *sb.* (1) a table, A 52; (2) ship's side, A 3585  
**Bordels**, *sb. pl.* brothels. I 885  
**Bordillers**, *sb. pl.* keepers of brothels. R 7034  
**Borel**, *Burel*, *adj.* coarse, common. B 3145, D 1872, F 716  
**Borken**, *pret.* barked. Bo. 196  
**Borneth**, *pres.* burnishes. T<sup>1</sup> 327  
**Borwe**, *sb.* pledge, surety. A 1622, B 2995  
**Bosarde**, *sb.* buzzard. R 4033  
**Boste**. *See* Boost  
**Botē**, (1) remedy; (2) boat. *See* Boot  
**Botel**, *sb.* bottle. H 141  
**Boteler**, *sb.* butler. HF<sup>2</sup> 84  
**Bother**, *gen.* of both. T<sup>4</sup> 168  
**Bothon**, *sb.* bud. R 2960  
**Botme**, *sb.* bottom. G 1321  
**Botoun**, *sb.* bud. R 1721  
**Bouk**, *sb.* body. A 2746  
**Boun**. *See* Bown  
**Bountee**, *sb.* goodness. B 1656  
**Bourde**, *pres.* jest, C 778; **Bourded**, *p.p.* jested, PF 589  
**Bourde**, *sb. dat.* jest. H 81  
**Boures**, *sb. gen.* bedchamber. A 3677  
**Bourgerons**, *sb. pl.* sodomites. R 7022  
**Bowes**, *sb. pl.* boughs. A 1642  
**Bown**, *adj.* ready. F 1503  
**Bracer**, *sb.* arm-guard. A 111  
**Brade**, *adj.* broad. R 4200  
**Bragot**, *sb.* ale and mead. A 3261  
**Brayd**, *p.p.* started. An. 124  
**Brayde**, *sb.* restless turn, I. 1166; **At a braid**, immediately, R 1366  
**Brak**, *pret.* broke  
**Brast**, *pret.* burst  
**Brat**, *sb.* cloak. G 811  
**Bratful**, *adj.* *See* Bretful  
**Brawn**, *sb.* muscle, A 546; *pl.* A 2135  
**Brede**, *sb.* roast meat. HF<sup>3</sup> 132  
**Brede**, *sb.* breadth. A 3811  
**Breyde**, *v.* start, awake. A 4283  
**Breke**, *v.* break. A 551  
**Brekke**, *sb.* flaw. Bl. 939  
**Breme**, *adj.* fierce, T<sup>4</sup> 184; *adv.* A 1699  
**Bren**, *sb.* bran. A 4053  
**Brennen**, *v.* burn, B 111; *p.p.* brent, brend, R 1109  
**Brennyng**, *sb.* burning. A 996  
**Breres**, *sb. pl.* briars. R 3006  
**Bresten**, *v.* burst. A 1980  
**Bretful**, **Bratful**, *adj.* full to the brim. A 687, 2164  
**Breve**, *adj.* brief. R 2350  
**Brybe**, *v.* steal, cheat. A 4417, D 1378  
**Briberyes**, *sb. pl.* rascalities. A 1367  
**Bryd**, *sb.* bird. A 3805  
**Bryge**, *sb.* quarrel. B 2870  
**Brihte**, *adj.* bright. ABC 181  
**Brike**, *sb.* trap. B 3580  
**Brocage**, *sb.* brokery; jobbery. A 3375  
**Broche**, *sb.* brooch. Mars 245  
**Brode**, *adj.* broad. A 739  
**Broyded**, *p.p.* braided. A 1049  
**Brokkyng**, *p. pres.* warbling. A 3377  
**Bromes**, *sb. pl.* broom bushes. HF<sup>3</sup> 136

**Brondes**, *sb. pl.* brands, torches. A 2338  
**Brood**, *adj.* broad. A 549  
**Brotel**, **Brutel**, *adj.* brittle, unstable. L 1885, 2556, Bo. 421  
**Brouke**, *v.* enjoy, use. B 4490, L 194  
**Browdyng**, *sb.* embroidery. A 2498  
**Browken**. *See* Brouke  
**Brustles**, *sb. pl.* bristles. A 556  
**Brutel**. *See* Brotel  
**Bukke**, *sb.* buck; **Blow the bukkes horn**, have trouble for nothing. A 3387  
**Bulte**, *v.* sift. B 4430  
**Bulte**, *pret.* built. A 1548  
**Burdons**, *sb. pl.* burdens. R 6908  
**Burdoun**, *sb.* (1) bass, A 673; (2) cudgel, R 3401  
**Burel**. *See* Borel  
**Burned**, *p.p.* burnished. A 1983  
**Burnet**, *adj.* of brown material, R 226; **Burnettes**, *pl.* dresses of brown, R 4756  
**Busk**, *sb.* bush. A 2013, R 54  
**But-if**, *conj.* unless. A 351  
**Buxom**, *adj.* obedient. B 1432  
**By**, *prep.* concerning. L 271  
**By and by**, *adv.* side by side, in order. A 1011, L 304  
**Byle**, *sb.* beak. B 4051  
**Bynt**, *bindeth*. Mars 47  
**Bytrashed**, *p.p.* betrayed. R 3910  
**Caas**. *See* Cas  
**Caytyves**, *sb. pl.* wretches. A 924  
**Calcening**, *sb.* calcination. G 771  
**Calculinge**, *sb.* reckoning. T<sup>1</sup> 71  
**Caleweis**, *sb. pl.* pears. R 7043  
**Caluler**, *sb.* the pointer of an astrolabe  
**Calie**, *sb.* head-dress. D 1018, T<sup>3</sup> 775; *cp.* Howve  
**Cam**, *pret.* came. A 547  
**Camaille**, *sb.* camel. E 1196  
**Camuse**, *adj.* flat. A 3934  
**Canel-boon**, *sb.* collar-bone. Bl. 942  
**Canell**, *sb.* cinnamon. R 1370  
**Canevas**, *sb.* canvas  
**Canker-dort**, *sb.* state of suffering. T<sup>2</sup> 1752  
**Cantel**, *sb.* portion. A 3008  
**Cape**, *pres. pl.* gape. T<sup>3</sup> 1133  
**Capitayn**, *sb.* captain. B 3741  
**Capul**, *sb.* palfrey. A 4088  
**Cardynacle**, *sb.* heart-disease. C 313  
**Careyne**, *sb.* carcass, B 3814; corpse, A 2013  
**Carf**, *pret.* carved. A 100  
**Carriage**, *sb.* toll, tax. R 21, I 752, Bo. 118  
**Carl**, *sb.* churl. A 545  
**Carmes**, *sb. pl.* Carmelites. R 7460  
**Carpe**, *v.* chatter. A 194  
**Carryk**, *sb.* ship of burden. D 1688  
**Cas**, *sb.* case, quiver. A 2080  
**Cas**, *sb.* case, fortune, A 1411; chance, A 844; **Caas**, *pl.* law-cases, A 323  
**Caste**, *pret.* devised, B 406; reckoned, A 2172  
**Castes**, *sb. pl.* contrivances. A 2468  
**Catel**, *sb.* chattels. A 373  
**Celebrable**, *adj.* famous. Bo. 820  
**Celle**, *sb.* (1) cellar, A 3822; (2) religious house, A 172; (3) brain, B 3162  
**Cenyth**, *sb.* zenith. As. i. § 18  
**Ceptrē**, *sb.* sceptre. B 3563  
**Cered**, *p.p.* sealed. G 808  
**Cerial ook**, *sb.* holm oak. A 2290

- Certeyn**, (1) *adv.* certainly; (2) *sb.* a certain quantity, G 776; (3) **In certeyn**, certainly, T<sup>4</sup> 908
- Ceruce**, *sb.* white lead. A 630
- Cetewale**, *sb.* valerian. A 3207
- Ceynt**, *sb.* girdle. A 3235
- Chaar**, *sb.* car. A 2138
- Chaffare**, *sb.* merchandise, B 1475; business, E 2438
- Chalaundre**, **Chelaundre**, *sb.* sort of lark. R 914, 81
- Chalons**, *sb.* coverlets from Chalons. A 4140
- Chamberere**, *sb.* maid-servant. E 819
- Champartie**, *sb.* partnership. A 1949
- Chanoun**, *sb.* canon. G 720
- Chaped**, *p.p.* capped. A 366
- Chapeleynne**, *sb.* nun who said minor offices. A 164
- Chapmanhode**, *sb.* business. B 143
- Chapmen**, *sb. pl.* merchants. B 136
- Charboole**, *sb.* carbuncle. B 2061
- Charge**, *sb.* harm, A 2287; load, An. 32
- Chargeant**, *adj.* burdensome. B 2430
- Chartres**, *sb. pl.* agreements. T<sup>3</sup> 340
- Chasted**, *p.p.* chastised. F 491
- Chasteleynne**, *sb.* chatelaine. R 3740
- Chasteynne**, *sb.* chestnut. A 1921
- Chauterrie**, *sb.* endowment for singing masses for the dead. A 510
- Cheere**, *sb.* manner, A 139; countenance, A 913
- Cheese**, *imper. vt.* choose. A 1595
- Cheeste**, *sb.* strife. I 556
- Cheeve**, *v.* succeed. G 1225
- Chek**, *interj.* check. Bl. 658
- Chekere**, *sb.* chess-board. Bl. 659
- Chelaundre**. See **Chalaundre**
- Chepe**, *sb.* purchase, bargain, cheapness. HF<sup>3</sup> 884
- Cherete**, *sb.* dearthness. R 3516
- Cheste**, *sb.* coffin. E 29
- Chevered**, *p.p.* shivered. R 1732
- Chevesalle**, *sb.* collar. R 1032
- Chevyse**, *v.* procure. *Mars* 290, R 6425
- Chevyssaunce**, *sb.* borrowing. B 1519, A 281
- Chiche**, *adj.* parsimonious. R 5589
- Chideresse**, **Chidestere**, *sb.* scold. R 4266, F 1535
- Chiertee**, *sb.* affection, F 881; dearthness, B 1526
- Chike**, *sb.* chick. R 541
- Chiknes**, *sb. pl.* chickens. A 380
- Chilyndre**, *sb.* pocket sundial. B 1396
- Chymbe**, *v.* chime. A 3896
- Chyngerie**, *sb.* parsimony. B 2790
- Chinyng**, *p. pres.* splitting. Bo. 231
- Chiroche**, *sb.* church. A 460
- Chirche-hawes**, *sb. pl.* churchyards. I 801
- Chirketh**, *pres.* twitters. D 1804
- Chirkyng**, *sb.* murmuring. A 2004
- Chit**, *chideth*. G 921
- Chiteren**, *pres.* chatter. G 1397
- Chivachie**, *sb.* expedition. A 86
- Choyes**, *sb.* choice. B 2273
- Ciergis**, *sb. pl.* tapers. R 6248
- Ciser**, *sb.* cider. B 3245
- Citole**, *sb.* stringed instrument of music. A 1959
- Citrinaoloun**, *sb.* turning citron colour. G 816
- Clapers**, *sb. pl.* burrows. R 1405
- Clappe**, *pres.* babble. G 965
- Clappen**, *v.* (1) beat, HF<sup>3</sup> 734; (2) clatter, babble, G 965, E 1200
- Clappyng**, *sb.* chatter. E 999
- Claree**, *sb.* spiced wine. A 1471
- Clawe**, *v.* rub, scratch. A 4326, D 940
- Cleped**, *p.p.* called. A 121
- Clergeoun**, *sb.* chorister. B 1693
- Clergial**, *adj.* clerkly. G 752
- Clerk**, *sb.* scholar. A 285
- Clew**, *pret.* clawed, rubbed. HF<sup>3</sup> 612
- Clifte**, *sb.* cranny. Bo. 1406
- Clyket**, *sb.* latch-key. E 2046
- Clippeth**, *pres.* hugs. E 2413
- Clips**, *adj.* eclipsed, obscure. R 5349
- Clyven**, *pres. pl.* cleaves. Bo. 376
- Clyves**, *sb. pl.* cliffs. L 1470
- Clyvyng**, *p. pres.* cleaving. Bo. 1460
- Cloyster**, *sb.* monk. A 259
- Clom**, *inf.* hush. A 3638
- Clos**, **Cloos**, *adj.* secret. T<sup>2</sup> 1534, R 6104
- Clos**, *sb.* a pen, enclosure. B 4550, Bo. 205
- Closer**, *sb.* enclosure. R 4069
- Cloteleef**, *sb.* burdock-leaf. G 571
- Clothered**, *p.p.* clotted. A 2745
- Clowes**, *sb. pl.* claws. HF<sup>3</sup> 696
- Cod**, *sb.* bag. C 534
- Cofedred**, *p.p.* confederated. *Pite* 52
- Cogge**, *sb.* small boat. L 1481
- Collions**, *sb. pl.* testicles. C 952
- Cokenay**, *sb.* milksop. A 4208
- Cokewold**, *sb.* cuckold. A 3152
- Cokkow**, *sb.* cuckoo. A 1930
- Col-blak**, *adj.* coal-black. A 2142
- Colde**, *v.* grow cold. B 879, L 240
- Colered**, *p.p.* collared. A 2152
- Col-fox**, *sb.* brant-fox. B 4405
- Collaoloun**, *sb.* conference, E 325; comparison. Bo. 1862
- Collect**, *sb.* table of planetary motions. F 1275
- Colours**, *sb. pl.* ornaments of style. F 39
- Colpons**, *sb. pl.* shreds. A 679
- Columbyn**, *adj.* dove-like. E 2141
- Colver**, *sb.* dove. L 2319
- Combre-world**, *sb.* useles creature. T<sup>4</sup> 279
- Combust**, *p.p.* burnt up. T<sup>3</sup> 717, As. ii. § 4 [164]
- Come**, *sb.* coming. R 7626
- Commoeveden**, *pret. pl.* influenced. T<sup>3</sup> 17
- Commune**, *sb.* the commons. E 70
- Compassement**, *sb.* contrivance. L 1416
- Composicoun**, *sb.* agreement. A 2651
- Compotent**, *adj.* almighty. Bo. 1871
- Compownd**, *p.p.* composed. As. ii. § 5
- Comprehended**, *p.p.* summed up. An. 83
- Comunte**, *sb.* community. R 5209
- Comyn**, *sb.* cummin. B 2045
- Concours**, *sb.* course. R 4350
- Condicoun**, *sb.* temperament. L 40
- Conestablero**, *sb.* constable's jurisdiction. R 4218
- Confedred**, *p.p.* confederated. *Pite* 42
- Confus**, *adj.* confused. A 2230
- Congeyen**, *v.* dismiss. T<sup>5</sup> 479
- Conyey**, *sb. pl.* rabbits. PF 193
- Coninges**, *sb. pl.* conies. R 7044
- Conisaunce**, *sb.* acquaintance, R 4668; knowledge, R 5465, 5559
- Conjecta**, **Conjecte**, *v.* conjecture. Bo. 228, R 6928
- Conne**, *v.* can be able, know
- Connes**, *sb. pl.* conies, rabbits. R 1404
- Conporte**, *v.* bear. T<sup>5</sup> 1397
- Consistorie**, *sb.* judgment-seat. C 162

**Contek**, *sb.* strife, A 2003; **Contekes**, *pl.* dissensions, B 4122  
**Contrive**, *v.* contrive. R 7545  
**Contubernyal**, *sb.* fellow-soldier. I 760  
**Contune**, *v.* continue. R 5205  
**Convenably**, *adv.* suitably. B 2420  
**Convoyen**, *v.* convey. E 55  
**Cope**, *sb. dat. top.* A 554  
**Cope**, *sb.* cape. A 260  
**Coppe**, *sb. dat. cup.* A 134  
**Corageous**, *adj.* ardent. I 585  
**Corages**, *sb. pl.* hearts. A 11  
**Corbets**, *sb. pl.* architectural ornaments. HF<sup>3</sup> 214  
**Cornemuse**, *sb.* bagpipe. HF<sup>3</sup> 128  
**Corniculer**, *sb.* adjutant. G 369  
**Corrumpable**, *adj.* corruptible. A 3010  
**Corruppen**, *v.* rot, Bo. 987; **Corrupted**, *p. p.* corrupted, I 819  
**Cors**, *sb.* body, corpse. B 2098, A 3429  
**Corseint**, *sb.* holy body, relic. HF<sup>1</sup> 117  
**Cosynage**, *sb.* kinship. B 1226  
**Cosse**, *sb.* kiss. R 3663  
**Cost**, *s.* coast, place. R 3931  
**Costage**, *sb.* expense. B 1235  
**Costelyng**, *p. pres.* coasting, skirting. R 134  
**Costrel**, *sb.* bottle. L 2666  
**Cote**, *sb. dat. dungeon.* A 2457  
**Couched**, *p. p.* laid, A 2933; *inlaid*, A 2161  
**Couchen**, *v.* lay. G 1152, R 6903  
**Coude**, *pret.* knew. A 327  
**Counter-talle**, *sb.* counter-tally. E 1190  
**Countour**, *sb.* auditor. A 359  
**Countrepeise**, *v.* balance. HF<sup>3</sup> 660  
**Countre-pleted**, *p. p.* controverted. L 476  
**Countrewayte**, *v.* watch against. B 2505, I 100  
**Coupable**, *adj.* guilty. Bo. 70  
**Coured**, *pret.* covered. R 465  
**Courtepy**, *sb.* cape. A 290  
**Couth**, *p. p.* plain, evident. R 4213  
**Couthe**, *adv.* patently. HF<sup>2</sup> 249  
**Covenable**, *adj.* suitable. I 80  
**Covent**, *sb.* convent of monks. B 1827  
**Coverchiefs**, *sb. pl.* kerchiefs. A 453  
**Covercle**, *sb.* lid of a cup. HF<sup>2</sup> 284  
**Covered**, *p. p.* recovered. L 762  
**Covyne**, *sb.* craft, intriguing. R 3799, A 604  
**Coye**, *v.* quiet. T<sup>2</sup> 801  
**Coynes**, *sb. pl.* quinces. R 1374  
**Cracchyng**, *sb.* scratching. A 2834  
**Craketh**, *pres.* sings hoarsely. E 1850  
**Crampissheth**, *pres.* cramps. An. 171  
**Creauce**, *sb.* belief, R 340; *debt*, ABC 61  
**Creauce**, *v.* get credit, B 1479; *creanced*, *p. p.* raised on credit, B 1556  
**Crece**, *sb.* increase. R 4875  
**Crekes**, *sb. pl.* devices. A 4051  
**Crepil**, *sb.* cripple. T<sup>4</sup> 1458  
**Cryke**, *sb.* creek. \* A 409  
**Crips**, *arf.* crisp, curly. HF<sup>3</sup> 206  
**Cristophere**, *sb.* image of St. Christopher worn as an amulet. A 115  
**Croce**, *sb.* cross, crozier. R 6470  
**Crois**, *sb.* cross. ABC 60, A 699  
**Crop**, *sb.* top, summit. T<sup>5</sup> 25, A 1533  
**Cropen**, *p. p.* crept. A 4259  
**Crossolet**, *sb.* crucible, G 1117; **Crosletz**, *pl.* G 793  
**Crouche**, *pres.* sign with the cross. A 3479  
**Crowke**, *sb.* crock. A 4158

**Crownet**, *sb.* coronet. R 3203  
**Crulle**, *adj. pl.* curly. A 81  
**Cucurbites**, *sb. pl.* flasks for distilling. G 794  
**Culpe**, *sb.* guilt. I 336  
**Cure**, *sb.* care, keeping. Bo. 227  
**Curiositee**, *sb.* fastidiousness. I 829  
**Currouns**, *sb. pl.* runners. HF<sup>3</sup> 1038  
**Customere**, *adj.* accustomed. R 4936  
**Cut**, *sb.* lot. A 835  
**Daf**, *sb.* fool. A 4208  
**Daggyng**, *sb.* slitting. I 418  
**Dagoun**, *sb.* fragment. D 1751  
**Dayerye**, *sb.* dairy. A 597  
**Dayesie**, *sb.* daisy. L 182  
**Dallaunce**, *sb.* pleasantry. A 211  
**Dampned**, *p. p.* condemned. A 1175  
**Dan**, *sb.* See **Daun**  
**Dare**, *v.* daze. D 1294  
**Darketh**, *pres.* hides. L 816  
**Darreyne**, *v.* contest. A 1609  
**Daswed**, *p. p.* dazed. HF<sup>2</sup> 151  
**Daun**, *sb.* lord, sir. A 1379, B 3982  
**Daunce**, *sb.* dance, game. A 476  
**Daunger**, *sb.* influence, dominion. A 663, R 1470  
**Daungerous**, *adj.* difficult, hard to please. A 517, B 2129  
**Daunten**, *v.* subdue. Bo. 743  
**Dawes**, *sb. pl.* days. F 1180, R 2838  
**Daweth**, *pres.* dawns. A 1676  
**Dawing**, *sb.* dawn. T<sup>3</sup> 1466  
**Debate**, *v.* do battle, oppose. B 2058, T<sup>4</sup> 166  
**Debonaire**, *sb.* meekness. Bl. 985  
**Debonerly**, *adv.* gently. T<sup>2</sup> 1259  
**Decoped**, *p. p.* slit. R 843  
**Ded**, *p. p.* dead. A 942  
**Dedyuyt**, *sb.* delight. A 2177  
**Deed**, *p. p.* dead. See **Ded**  
**Deef**, *adj.* deaf. A 446  
**Deel**, *sb.* part, whit. A 415  
**Deemen**, *v.* judge. B 3045  
**Deer**, *sb.* wild animals  
**Deere**, *adv.* dearly. A 3100  
**Deerelyng**, *sb.* darling. A 3793  
**Deerne**, *adj.* secret. A 3200  
**Dees**, *sb. pl.* dice. T<sup>2</sup> 1347  
**Defaute**, *sb.* default, defect. Bl. 5, I 182  
**Defende**, *v.* (1) *imper.* defend, ABC 95; (2) *Defendeth*, forbids, B 2945; *p. p.* forbidden, B 475  
**Defet**, *p. p.* enfeebled. T<sup>5</sup> 618  
**Defeted**, *p. p.* defeated. Bo. 261  
**Defusioun**, *sb.* diffuseness. T<sup>3</sup> 296  
**Degise**, *adj.* fashionable. I 417  
**Degree**, *sb.* rank, A 1168; *pl.* steps, A 1890  
**Deydest**, *pret.* didst die. T<sup>3</sup> 263  
**Deye**, *sb.* dairy-woman. B 4036  
**Deyned**, *pret.* deigned  
**Deynous**, *adj.* bumptious. A 3941  
**Deys**, *sb.* dais. A 370  
**Del**, *sb.* part, whit  
**Delyces**, *sb. pl.* delights. C 547  
**Delit**, *sb.* pleasure. A 335  
**Delyvere**, *adj.* active. A 84  
**Delyverly**, *adv.* adroitly. B 4606  
**Delivernesse**, *sb.* agility. I 452  
**Demo**, *v.* judge, P 2219; **Demeth**, *imper.* A 1353  
**Demeyne**, (1) *sb.* dominion, B 3855; (2) *v.* govern, HF<sup>2</sup> 451

- Demene**, *v.* endure. R 5238  
**Departé**, *v.* distinguish, T<sup>3</sup> 404; *pres. subj.* separate, A 1134; **Departed**, *p.p.* A 1621  
**Depeynted**, *p.p.* depicted. A 2031  
**Depper**, *adv. comp.* more deeply. B 630  
**Dere**, *v.* harm. F 240, A 1822  
**Dereworth, Derworth**, *adj.* precious. Bo. 281, 491  
**Derke**, *sb. dat.* darkness. Bl. 608  
**Derre**, *adv. comp.* more dearly. A 1448  
**Descensories**, *sb. pl.* vessels for extracting oil. G 792  
**Desclaundre**, *v.* slander. G 993  
**Descryve**, *v.* describe. *See* Discryve  
**Desese**, *v.* dispossess. R 2076  
**Desespaired**, *p.p.* despaired. *Comp. to his Lady* 7  
**Deslavee**, *adj.* unbridled. I 629  
**Desordeynse**, *adj.* inordinate. I 818  
**Desordinat**, *adj.* disorderly. I 415  
**Despense**, *sb.* expenditure. A 1928  
**Despitous**, *adj.* scornful. A 516  
**Desray**, *sb.* disarray, confusion. I 927  
**Destynal**, *adj.* fated. Bo. 1465  
**Destreynne, Distreynne**, *v.* vex, constrain, grasp. F 820, A 1455, 1816, Bo. 513, PF 337  
**Determine**, *v.* come to an end. T<sup>3</sup> 379  
**Devyant**, *adj.* divergent. R 4789  
**Devoided**, *p.p.* banished. R 2929  
**Devoir**, *sb.* duty. I 764  
**Dextrer**, *sb.* steed. B 2103  
**Dyapred**, *p.p.* diapered. A 2158  
**Dych**, *sb.* ditch. I 718  
**Diffense**, *sb.* prohibition. R 1142  
**Dight**, *p.p.* dressed. A 1041  
**Digne**, *adj.* worthy, A 141; haughty, repellent, A 517, 3964; **Digneleich**, *adv.* haughtily, T<sup>2</sup> 1024  
**Dilatacioun**, *sb.* enlargement. B 232  
**Disavaunce**, *v.* hinder. T<sup>2</sup> 511  
**Disaventure**, *sb.* mischance. T<sup>4</sup> 741  
**Discheveles**, *adj.* with hair loose. A 683  
**Disclaundred**, *p.p.* slandered. L 1031  
**Discorden**, *pres. pl.* disagree. Bo. 1495  
**Discreven, Discryven, Diskryve**, *v.* describe. R 4803, I 533, Bl. 915  
**Discure**, *v.* reveal. Bl. 548  
**Disfigurat**, *adj.* deformed. PF 222  
**Disjoynt**, *sb.* dilemma, disadvantage, danger. B 1601, A 2962, L 1631  
**Dismal**, *sb.* evil day. Bl. 1205  
**Dispence**, *sb.* expenditure. R 1144  
**Dispitouse**, *adj.* spiteful. Pl. 623  
**Dispone**, *imper.* dispose. T<sup>5</sup> 300  
**Disponyth**, *pres.* disposes. Bo. 1457  
**Disrewillye**, *adv.* irregularly. R 4900  
**Dissert**, *sb.* deserving. Bo. 1302  
**Diserved**, *p.p.* deserved. A 1716  
**Disteyne**, *v.* stain, obscure. L 255  
**Distincte**, *v.* distinguish. R 6199  
**Distingwed**, *p.p.* distinguished. Bo. 439  
**Distoned**, *p.p.* put out of tune. R 4248  
**Distreynne**. *See* Destreynne  
**Disturne**, *v.* turn aside. T<sup>3</sup> 718  
**Dite**, *sb.* song, poem, story. Bo. 1453, 602, 315  
**Divinistre**, *sb.* diviner. A 2811  
**Divynalles**, *sb. pl.* divinations. I 605  
**Divisioun**, *sb.* difference. A 1780  
**Doande**, *p. pres.* doing. R 2708  
**Doke**, *sb.* duck, A 3576; *pl.* B 4580  
**Doked**, *p.p.* cropped. A 590  
**Dolven**, *p.p.* buried. Bl. 222  
**Dom**, *sb.* judgment. PF 480  
**Domme**, *adj.* dumb. R 2220  
**Donne**, *adj.* dun. T<sup>2</sup> 908, PF 334  
**Doole**, *sb.* portion. R 2364  
**Doole**, *sb.* dolefulness. R 2956  
**Doom**, *sb.* judgment. C 257  
**Dormant**, *adj.* (of a table) fixed. A 353  
**Douoet**, *sb.* a kind of flute. HF<sup>3</sup> 132  
**Doutencles**, *adv.* doubtless  
**Doutes**, *adj. pl.* dubious. Bo. 591  
**Doutous**, *adj.* deceitful. Bo. 275  
**Dowe**, *pres. s.* bestow. T<sup>5</sup> 230  
**Dradde**, *pret.* feared  
**Draf**, *sb.* dregs, refuse. I 35, A 4207  
**Drasty**, *adj.* worthless. B 2113  
**Drat**, dreadeth. T<sup>3</sup> 328  
**Draughte**, *sb.* move at chess. Bl. 681  
**Drawe**, *v.* move at chess. Bl. 681  
**Dreched**, *p.p.* harassed. B 4077  
**Drechyng**, *sb.* delaying. I 1000, T<sup>3</sup> 853  
**Dredeles**, *adv.* undoubtedly. Bl. 763  
**Dredful, Dredeful**, *adj.* (1) timorous, PF 10  
**A 1479**; (2) terrible, B 3558  
**Dreinte**, *pret.* drowned, Bl. 72; was drowned B 923  
**Dreynt**, *p.p.* drowned. A 3520  
**Drenchen**, *v.* drown. B 455  
**Drenchyng**, *sb.* drowning. A 2456  
**Drerihed**, *sb.* dreariness. R 4728  
**Dresse**, *v.* make ready. B 1100  
**Drye**, *v.* endure, suffer. *Mars* 251, T<sup>5</sup> 42, 3105  
**Dryve**, *p.p.* driven. F 1230  
**Drugges**, *sb. pl.* drugs. A 426  
**Dronkelewe**, *adj.* tipsy. C 495  
**Droppynge**, *p. pres.* dripping. I 633  
**Drough**, *pret.* drew. B 1710, F 965, T<sup>3</sup> 978  
**Drovy**, *adj.* turbid. I 816  
**Druery**, *sb.* love, affection. R 844, 5063  
**Drugge**, *v.* drudge. A 1416  
**Duc**, *sb.* duke. A 860  
**Dulcarnon**, *sb.* perplexity. *See* note, T<sup>3</sup> 931  
**Dulle**, *pres.* grow dull. R 4792  
**Dulve**, *pret.* dug. Bo. 1639  
**Dure**, *v.* endure, abide, live. E 166, A 123  
*Comp. to his Lady* 31  
**Durre-don**, dare do. T<sup>5</sup> 840  
**Durring-don**, *sb.* daring. T<sup>5</sup> 837  
**Duweliche**, *adv.* duly. Bo. 190  
**Dwale**, *sb.* sleeping draught. A 4161  
**Dwyned**, *p.p.* dwindled. R 360  
**Ech**, *adj.* each. A 39  
**Eche**, *v.* eke, increase. T<sup>1</sup> 705, T<sup>5</sup> 110  
**Eched, Echid**, *p.p.* increased. T<sup>3</sup> 1329, Bo. 7  
**Echynnys**, *sb. pl.* sea-urchins. Bo. 798  
**Echon**, each one  
**Eek**, *adv.* also. A 41  
**Eem, Em**, *sb.* uncle. T<sup>1</sup> 1022, T<sup>2</sup> 162  
**Eft**, *adv.* again. A 1669  
**Eft-sones**, *adv.* soon again. T<sup>2</sup> 1468  
**Egal**, *adj.* equal. T<sup>3</sup> 137, Bo. 575  
**Egalitee, Egalyte**, *sb.* equality, equanimity. 949, B. 395  
**Egaly**, *adv.* equably. Bo. 398  
**EGge**, *sb.* edge. T<sup>4</sup> 927, *Former Age* 19  
**Eggement**, *sb.* incitement. B 842  
**Egre**, *adj.* sharp, bitter. Bo. 215, I 117, R 547

**Egremoyne**, *sb.* agrimony. G 800  
**Egren**, *v.* excite. Bo. 1530  
**Eyleth**, *pres. s.* ails. A 1081  
**Elr**, *sb.* air. A 1246  
**Eyre**, *sb.* heir. L 2549  
**Eyrysh**, *adj.* aerial. HF<sup>2</sup> 424  
**Elsel**, *sb.* vinegar. R 217  
**Eythe**, *adj.* easy. R 3955  
**Ek**, *adv.* also. T<sup>5</sup> 1510  
**Eldefather**, *sb.* grandfather. Bo. 372  
**Elden**, *v.* grow old. Bo. 528  
**Elongenesse**, *sb.* wretchedness. R 7494  
**Ell**, *adv.* else. R 1231, 2964  
**Ellebor**, *sb.* hellebore. B 4154  
**Elles**, *adv.* else. C 315  
**Elvyshe**, *adj.* elf-like, abstracted. G 842  
**Em**, *sb.* uncle. T<sup>2</sup> 162  
**Embawme**, *v.* embalm. L 676  
**Embellif**, *adj.* oblique. As. i. § 20  
**Embelysed**, *p.p.* embellished. Bo. 439  
**Embossed**, *p.p.* sheltered in the woods. Bl. 353  
**Embrouded**, *p.p.* embroidered. A 89  
**Emeraude**, *sb.* emerald. PF 175  
**Emforth**, *prep.* to the extent of, according to. T<sup>2</sup> 243, 997, A 2235  
**Emysperies**, *sb. pl.* hemispheres. As. i. § 18  
**Empeyre**, *pres.* impair. E 2198  
**Empelreden**, *pret. pl.* made worse. B 2205  
**Emplastre**, *pres. pl.* plaster over, 'whitewash.' E 2297  
**Emplith**, *pres. pl.* unfold. Bo. 1648  
**Emprise**, *sb.* enterprise. G 605, Bl. 1092  
**Empte**, *adj.* empty. G 741  
**Encens**, *sb.* incense. A 2938  
**Encensoun**, *sb.* occasion. B 2780  
**Encombrous**, *adj.* burdensome. HF<sup>2</sup> 354  
**Encrees**, *sb.* increase. A 2184  
**Encreesceden**, *pret.* enlarged on. B 2466  
**Encressen**, *pres. pl.* increase. A 1338  
**Endelong**, *adv.* lengthways. A 1991  
**Endentyng**, *sb.* scalloping. I 417  
**Endyte**, *v.* write, compose. A 95, L 2356  
**Enforcest thee**, *pres.* endeavourest. Bo. 775  
**Engyn**, *sb.* (1) wit, contrivance, G 339, T<sup>3</sup> 274; (2) military machine, R 4194  
**Engyned**, *p.p.* racked. B 4250  
**Engrogen**, *pres. pl.* weigh upon. I 978  
**Engreth**, *pres.* grieves. R 3444  
**Enhabite**, *pres.* dwell. R 6355  
**Enhaunced**, *p.p.* elevated. As. ii. § 26  
**Enlacceth**, *pres.* entangles, Bo. 97; **Enlaced**, *p.p.* Bo. 774  
**Enlumyned**, *p.p.* illuminated. ABC 73  
**Enlutyn**, *sb.* plastering with clay. G 766  
**Enoynt**, *p.p.* anointed. A 199  
**Enseled**, *p.p.* sealed up, confirmed. T<sup>5</sup> 151, T<sup>4</sup> 559  
**Entalle**, *v.* carve, R 619, 3711; **Entailed**, *p.p.* R 140  
**Entayle**, *sb.* shape, R 162; cutting, jagging, R 1081  
**Entame**, *v.* begin. ABC 79  
**Entecched**, *p.p.* endowed with (good) qualities, T<sup>5</sup> 832; infected, Bo. 1292  
**Entende**, *pres. s.* perceive. T<sup>4</sup> 1649  
**Entermete**, *v.* interpose. R 2966  
**Entre**, *sb.* entry. Bo. 266, 316  
**Entrechaungynges**, *sb. pl.* interchanges. Bo. 357  
**Entrecomunen**, *v.* communicate. T<sup>4</sup> 1354

**Entredited**, *p.p.* under an interdict. I 905  
**Entremedled**, *p.p.* intermingled. Bo. 512  
**Entremes**, *sb.* entremet, a between-course. PF 665  
**Entremete**, *v.* interpose, interfere. D 834, B 2730, Bo. 1194, R 2966  
**Entriketh**, *pres.* entangles. PF 403  
**Entunes**, *sb. pl.* intonings. Bl. 309  
**Envenyme**, *v.* poison. Bl. 640  
**Enviroun**, *adv.* round about. R 4203  
**Envyned**, *p.p.* supplied with wine. A 342  
**Envoluped**, *p.p.* enveloped. C 942  
**Equipolences**, *sb. pl.* equivalents. R 7076  
**Er**, *adv. conj. prep.* before  
**Erceoken**, *sb.* archdeacon. A 655  
**Ere**, *sb.* ear; **Erys**, *pl.* A 556  
**Ere**, *v.* plough, A 886; **Ered**, *p.p.* HF<sup>1</sup> 485  
**Erke**, *adj.* irked, weary. R 4867  
**Erme**, *v.* grieve. Bl. 80, C 312  
**Ernes**, *sb.* earnestness. R 4838  
**Ernestful**, *adj.* serious. E 1175  
**Erraunt**, *adj.* wandering. Bl. 660  
**Ers**, *sb.* arse. A 3734  
**Eschaufede**, *pret.* chafed. Bo. 211  
**Eschaufeth**, *pres.* grows warm. Bo. 216  
**Eschaunges**, *sb. pl.* exchanges. HF<sup>2</sup> 189  
**Eschew**, **Eschu**, *adj.* unwilling. I 971, E 1812  
**Esed**, *p.p.* entertained. A 29  
**Esoyne**, *sb.* excuse for absence. I 164  
**Espletten**, *v.* perform. R 6174  
**Estat**, *sb.* state. A 926  
**Estatlich**, *adj.* stately. A 140  
**Estatutes**, *sb. pl.* statutes. Bo. 269  
**Estres**, *sb. pl.* inner parts of a house. A 1971, 4295, L 1715  
**Ethe**, *adj.* easy. T<sup>5</sup> 850  
**Evene**, *adj.* average. A 82  
**Everich**, *pron.* each. A 371  
**Everychon**, each one. A 31  
**Everydel**, every whit. A 368  
**Ew**, *sb.* yew-tree. A 2923, PF 180  
**Exces**, *sb.* excess, extravagance. T<sup>1</sup> 626  
**Expans**, *adj.* separate. F 1275  
**Extre**, *sb.* axle. As. i. § 14  
**Ey**, *sb.* egg. B 4035

**Facound**, *sb.* eloquence. C 59, Bl. 925  
**Facound**, *adj.* eloquent. PF 520  
**Fader**, *sb.* (*gen.*) father's. R 781  
**Fadme**, *sb.* fathom. A 2916, Bl. 422  
**Fayle**, *v.* make mistakes. R 4249  
**Fair**, *adj.*; **A fair**, a good one, A 165, T<sup>3</sup> 850  
**Faire**, *adv.* fairly. A 94  
**Fairy**, *sb.* fairyland. E 95  
**Faldyn**, *sb.* coarse cloth. A 391  
**Fallaces**, *sb. pl.* fallacies. R 7077  
**Falle**, *v.* happen  
**Falsen**, *v.* falsify. A 3175  
**Falwe**, *adj.* brown, yellow. HF<sup>3</sup> 246  
**Falwes**, *sb. pl.* fallows. D 656  
**Famulier**, *adj.* familiar. A 215  
**Fan**, *sb.* quintain. H 42  
**Fantastik**, *adj.* imaginative. A 1376  
**Fantome**, *sb.* fantasy. B 1037  
**Farce**, *imperat.* paint. R 2285  
**Fardeles**, *sb. pl.* burdens. R 5683  
**Fare**, *sb.* fuss, disturbance. A 3999, T<sup>3</sup> 860  
**Fare**, *v.* go, speed, behave  
**Fare**, *p.p.* gone. F 1546  
**Fare-carte**, *sb.* cart. T<sup>5</sup> 1162

- Farsed**, *p. p.* stuffed. A 233  
**Fasoun**, *sb.* fashion. R 708  
**Faucon**, *sb.* falcon. F 411  
**Fauconers**, *sb. pl.* falconers. F 1196  
**Fawe**, *adj.* fain, R 6477; *adv.* T<sup>4</sup> 887  
**Fay**, *sb.* faith. L 778, R 2887  
**Fecchos**, *sb. pl.* vetches. T<sup>3</sup> 936  
**Fefeld**, *sb.* field. A 1522  
**Feendly**, *adj.* fiendish. Bl. 593  
**Fawe**, *v.* fee, present. T<sup>3</sup> 901  
**Feffed in**, *p. p.* invested with. E 1698  
**Feirs**, *adj.* fierce. R 1482  
**Feyne**, *v.* feign. A 735  
**Feyntise**, *sb.* feigning. R 2947, 2998  
**Fel**, *adj.* fierce. B 2019  
**Fel**, *sb.* skin. T<sup>1</sup> 91  
**Felawe**, *sb.* fellow. A 1525  
**Feldefare**, *sb.* field-fare. PF 364, T<sup>3</sup> 861  
**Fele**, *adj.* many. E 917, Bo. 262, R 189  
**Felle**, *adj. pl.* cruel. T<sup>1</sup> 470  
**Felliche**, **Folly**, *adv.* cruelly. Bo. 355, R 3251  
**Felnesse**, *sb.* fierceness. Bo. 217  
**Femenye**, *sb.* womankind. A 866  
**Femininitee**, *sb.* womanhood, feminine appearance. B 360  
**Fend**, *sb.* fiend. I 584  
**Fenix**, *sb.* phoenix. Bl. 981  
**Fer**, *adj.* and *adv.* far  
**Ferde**, *sb. dat.* fear. Bl. 981, T<sup>1</sup> 557, L 2332  
**Ferde**, *pret.* fared, behaved. A 1372, 3606  
**Fere**, *sb.* fellow, companion, L 969; **in fere**, **I-fere**, together  
**Ferforth**, *adv.* far forward; **So ferforth**, **So ferforthly**, to such an extent. B 372, A 960  
**Ferfullest**, *adj. sup.* most timorous. T<sup>2</sup> 450  
**Ferly**, *adj.* wonderful. A 4173  
**Fermacies**, *sb. pl.* pharmacies, medicines. A 2713  
**Fermerer**, *sb.* keeper of the infirmary. D 1859  
**Fermour**, *sb.* farmer, contractor. L 378  
**Fern**, *adv.* of long time. F 255  
**Ferne**, *adj. pl.* ancient, A 14; **Ferne yere**, past years, T<sup>5</sup> 1176  
**Ferre**, *adv. co. p.* farther. A 47  
**Ferreste**, *adj. super.* farthest. A 494  
**Fers**, *sb.* piece at chess. Bl. 653  
**Ferthe**, *card. num.* fourth. B 823  
**Ferther**, *adv.* further. A 36  
**Ferthyng**, *sb.* morsel. A 134  
**Fesaunt**, *sb.* pheasant. PF 357  
**Fest**, *sb.* fist. C 802  
**Feste**, *sb.* feast, festival. A 906  
**Festelynge**, *p. pres.* feasting. F 345  
**Festyvally**, *adv.* joyously. Bo. 560  
**Festne**, *v.* fasten. A 195  
**Fet**, *pret.* fetched. A 819  
**Fetys**, *adj.* neat, graceful. A 157, C 478  
**Fetisly**, *adv.* neatly, skillfully. A 273, A 124  
**Fiance**, *sb.* confidence. R 5481  
**Fycchen**, *v.* fix. Bo. 419  
**Fil**, *pret.* fell. A 1034, Bl. 275  
**Fille**, *v.* fell, cut down. A 1702  
**Fyn**, *sb.* end. B 424, Mars 218  
**Finaliche**, *adv.* finally. T<sup>3</sup> 556  
**Fine**, *v.* finish, cease, stop. T<sup>4</sup> 26, T<sup>5</sup> 776, T<sup>2</sup> 1460.  
**Fynt**, *findeth*  
**Fir**, *sb.* fire. A 1502, 1246  
**Fisycien**, *sb.* physician. Bo. 66  
**Fit**, *sb.* stave, canto. B 2078  
**Fithelle**, *sb.* fiddle. A 296  
**Flayne**, *p. p.* flayed. I 425  
**Flaumes**, *sb. pl.* flames. ABC 89  
**Fleometh**, *pres.* chases away. H 182  
**Fleen**, *sb. pl.* fleas. H 17  
**Fleön**, *v.* flee. ABC 148  
**Fleete**, *pres. s.* float. A 2397  
**Fleigh**, *pret.* flew. T<sup>2</sup> 104  
**Flemed**, *pret.* exiled, R 3052; *p. p.* exiled fugitive, G 58  
**Flemen**, *v.* put to flight. T<sup>2</sup> 852  
**Flemere**, *sb.* banisher. B 460  
**Fleteth**, *pres. s.* floateth. B 901  
**Fletyng**, *p. pres.* floating. A 1956  
**Flex**, *sb.* flax. A 676  
**Flo**, *sb.* dart. H 264  
**Flokmeele**, *adv.* in a crowd. E 86  
**Floteren**, *pres. pl.* flutter, are tossed about. Bo. 1037  
**Flotery**, *adj.* dishevelled. A 2883  
**Flourouns**, *sb. pl.* flower-ornaments. L 217  
**Floute**, *sb.* flute. HF<sup>3</sup> 133  
**Floytyng**, *p. pres.* fluting. A 91  
**Fneseth**, *pres. s.* snorts. H 62  
**Foynen**, *pres. pl.* thrust. A 1654  
**Foysoun**, *sb.* increase. A 3167  
**Foleyen**, *v.* act foolishly. Bo. 644  
**Poly**, *adv.* foolishly. Bl. 873  
**Polye**, *adj.* foolish. L 164  
**Folly**, *adv.* foolishly. Mars 158, R 2603  
**Fonde**, *v.* try, prove. B 347, T<sup>3</sup> 1155  
**Fonge**, *v.* take. B 377  
**Fonne**, *sb.* fool. A 4089  
**Fonned**, *p. p.* fooled. R 5367  
**Foore**, *sb.* course. D 1935  
**Foot-hoot**, *adv.* in haste. B 438  
**For**, *as an intensive prefix.* **For-blak**, A 2144  
**For-dronk**, **For-dry**, **For-old**, A 2142; **For-pampered**, *Former Age* 5, etc.; very black, very drunk, very dry, very old, very pampered, etc.  
**For**, *conj.* because. T<sup>1</sup> 802  
**For**, *prep.* in fear of, T<sup>1</sup> 748, T<sup>2</sup> 194, 868; against T<sup>1</sup> 928  
**For al**, notwithstanding. T<sup>4</sup> 55 note  
**Forbede**, **Forboide**, *pres. subj.* forbid. L 10  
**Forbise**, *v.* exemplify. T<sup>2</sup> 1390  
**For-brak**, *pret.* interrupted. Bo. 1143  
**Forby**, *adv.* by, past. A 175  
**For-cracchen**, *v.* scratch. R 323  
**For-do**, *v.* destroy. T<sup>1</sup> 238  
**For-do**, **For-done**, *p. p.* destroyed, ruined. T<sup>1</sup> 74, R 4339  
**For-drede**, *sb.* fear. B 2383  
**For-dryve**, *p. p.* driven astray. A 3782  
**For-dwyned**, *p. p.* wasted. R 366  
**Foreyn**, *sb.* outer room. L 1962  
**Foreyne**, *adj.* foreign, external, public. Bo. 680, 755  
**For-fare**, *v.* fare ill. R 5778  
**Forhead**, **Forheved**, *sb.* forehead. G 580, Bo. 132  
**Forlete**, *v.* resign, forgo, forsake, B 1848, C 864, I 720; **Forleten**, *p. p.* forsaken, HF<sup>2</sup> 186  
**Forloyn**, *sb.* note on horn recalling hounds when at fault. Bl. 386  
**Forlyved**, *p. p.* decrepit. Bo. 763  
**Forlyvon**, *v.* degenerate. Bo. 758  
**Forme**, *adj.* first. B 2290  
**Formel**, *sb.* any hen-bird of prey. PF 371  
**Formest**, *adj.* foremost. Bl. 889

- Forncast**, *p.p.* planned. I 448  
**Forneys**, *sb.* furnace. A 559  
**For-pyned**, *p.p.* tormented. A 205  
**Fors**, *sb.* force; **No fors**, no matter. B 285  
**For-shapen**, *p.p.* misshapen. T<sup>2</sup> 66  
**For-shright**, *p.p.* tired with shrieking. T<sup>4</sup> 1147  
**For-sleweth**, *pres.* is over-slothful. I 685  
**For-slewthen**, *v.* over-tarry. B 4286  
**For-sluggeth**, *pres.* is over-sluggish. I 685  
**For-songen**, *p.p.* exhausted with singing. R 664  
**Forster**, *sb.* forester. A 120  
**For-straught**, *p.p.* exhausted. B 1295  
**For-thenke**, **For-thinke**, *v.* repent. R 3957, T<sup>2</sup> 1414  
**For-thy**, *adv.* therefore. Bo. 375  
**Forthren**, *v.* further, help. A 1137  
**Forth-right**, *adv.* directly. E 1503  
**Fortunen**, *v.* presage. A 417  
**Fortunous**, *adj.* fortuitous. Bo. 224  
**For-waked**, *p.p.* tired with watching. B 596, Bl. 126  
**Forwardred**, *p.p.* tired with wandering. R 3336  
**Forward**, *sb.* agreement. A 33  
**Forwelked**, *p.p.* withered. R 361  
**For-weped**, *p.p.* exhausted with weeping. Bl. 126  
**For-wered**, *p.p.* worn out. R 235  
**Forwes**, *sb. pl.* furrows. *Former Age* 12  
**For-why**, *conj.* because. T<sup>2</sup> 12  
**Forwytyng**, *sb.* foreknowledge. B 4433  
**Forwot**, *pret.* foreknew. HF<sup>1</sup> 45  
**Foryaf**, *pret.* forgave, respited. T<sup>3</sup> 1577  
**Foryede**, *pret.* forwent, desisted from. T<sup>2</sup> 1330  
**Foryelde**, *v.* repay. E 831  
**Foryete**, *v.* forget. Bl. 1124  
**Foryive**, *pres.* forgive. B 1615  
**Fother**, *sb.* cartload. A 530  
**Foudre**, *sb.* lightning. HF<sup>1</sup> 335  
**Foules**, *sb. pl.* fowls, birds. PF 203  
**Founde**. *See* **Fonde**.  
**Foundred**, *pret.* fell. A 2687  
**Founes**, *sb. pl.* fawns. Bl. 429  
**Frayneth**, *pres. s.* asks. B 1790  
**Frakenes**, *sb. pl.* freckles. A 2169  
**Frape**, *sb.* company. T<sup>3</sup> 410  
**Freel**, *adj.* frail. Bo. 889  
**Freeten**, *pres. pl.* eat. A 2068  
**Freyned**, *pret.* prayed. B 3020  
**Freletee**, *sb.* frailty. I 449  
**Fremde**, *adj.* foreign. F 429  
**Fret**, *sb.* ornament. L 215  
**Frote**, *v.* eat, B 3294; *p.p.* eaten, B 475  
**Froteth**, *pres. s.* rubs. A 3747  
**Frounce**, *sb.* wrinkle. Bo. 61  
**Frounced**, *p.p.* wrinkled. R 365, 3137  
**Frounceles**, *adj.* unwrinkled. R 850  
**Frutesteres**, *sb. pl.* fruit-women. C 478  
**Fumetero**, *sb.* the herb fumitory. B 4153  
**Fumositee**, *sb.* headiness, vapouriness. C 567, F 358  
**Furial**, *adj.* raging. F 448  
**Furlong-vey**, short space. L 841  
**Further-over**, *adv.* furthermore. T<sup>4</sup> 1027  
**Gabbe**, *v.* talk idly, gossip. A 3510, Bl. 1074, T<sup>3</sup> 301  
**Gadelyng**, *sb.* vagabond. R 938  
**Gadrede**, *pret.* gathered. A 824  
**Gayl**, *sb.* gaol. R 4745  
**Gayler**, *sb.* gaoler. A 1064  
**Gaillard**, **Gaylard**, *adj.* gay, merry. A 4367, 3336  
**Gayneth**, *pres. s.* availeth. A 1787  
**Gaitrys herys**, *sb. pl.* berries of the dog-wood tree. B 4155  
**Galauntyne**, **Galentyne**, *sb.* a kind of sauce. *Rosam.* 17, *Former Age* 16  
**Galaxye**, *sb.* the Milky Way. PF 56  
**Gale**, *v.* cry out. D 832  
**Galyngale**, *sb.* sweet cypress root. A 381  
**Galoche**, *sb.* patten, high shoe. F 555  
**Galpyng**, *adj.* gaping. F 350  
**Galwes**, *sb. pl.* gallows. B 3941  
**Gan**, *pret.* began, did, used to. A 301  
**Ganeth**, *pres. s.* yawns.  
**Gargat**, *sb.* throat. B 4525  
**Garisoun**, *v.* cure. R 3249  
**Garnisoun**, *sb.* garrison. B 2215  
**Gas**, goes. A 4037  
**Gastnes**, *sb.* terror. Bo. 728  
**Gat-tothed**, *adj.* goat-toothed, lascivious. A 468  
**Gauded**, *p.p.* dyed. A 159  
**Gauren**, *v.* gaze. A 3827  
**Gaureth**, *pres. s.* stares. B 3559  
**Gawdes**, *sb. pl.* toys, fineries. I 651  
**Geaunt**, *sb.* giant. B 1997  
**Geere**, **Gere**, *sb.* (1) clothing, accoutrement, A 365, 1016; (2) behaviour, manners. A 1372, 1531  
**Geery**, *adj.* changeable. A 1536  
**Geestes**, *sb. pl.* stories. F 211  
**Geyn**, *sb.* gain. An. 206  
**Geledehalle**, *sb.* guild-hall. A 370  
**Gent**, *adj.* gentle, courteous. B 1925, PF 558  
**Gentrie**, *sb.* gentle birth, nobility. I 452  
**Geomancie**, *sb.* divination by figures made on the earth. I 605  
**Gerdon**, **Gerdoun**, *sb.* reward; **For alle gerdons**, at all costs. B 2240  
**Gerdoned**, *p.p.* rewarded. B 2460  
**Gere**, *sb.* *See* **Geere**  
**Gere**, *sb.* changeableness. Bl. 1256  
**Gereful**, *adj.* changeable. A 1538, T<sup>4</sup> 286  
**Gesse**, *pres. s.* guess. A 82  
**Geste**, *sb.* guest, stranger. L 1158  
**Geste**, *sb.* romance, story. B 2123, T<sup>3</sup> 450  
**Gestlours**, *sb. pl.* reciters. HF<sup>3</sup> 108  
**Get**, *sb.* contrivance. G 1277  
**Gye**, *v.* guide. A 1950, E 75, An. 6  
**Gif**, *conj.* if. Bl. 224  
**Gigges**, *sb. pl.* fiddles. HF<sup>3</sup> 852  
**Giggyng**, *p. pres.* strapping. A 2504  
**Gilteles**, *adj.* guiltless. B 1062  
**Gyn**, **Gynne**, *sb.* engine, contrivance. F 128, R 4176  
**Gynne**, *v.* begin  
**Gypon**, *sb.* short vest. A 75  
**Gipser**, *sb.* pouch. A 357  
**Girden**, *v.* strike. B 3736  
**Girles**, *sb. pl.* youths. A 664  
**Gysarme**, *sb.* halberd. R 5978  
**Gise**, *sb.* fashion. A 663  
**Gyser**, *sb.* gizzard. Bo. 1132  
**Gyte**, *sb.* some part of a woman's dress, A 3954; *pl.* D 559  
**Glader**, *sb.* one who makes glad. A 2223  
**Glareth**, *pres. s.* shines. HF<sup>1</sup> 272  
**Glase**, *v.* glaze. T<sup>5</sup> 469. *See* **Howve**

- Gledy**, *adj.* fiery. L 105  
**Gleyre**, *sb.* white of egg. G 806  
**Glente**, *pret.* glanced. T<sup>4</sup> 1223  
**Glewe**, *v.* glue, fasten. HF<sup>3</sup> 671  
**Glymsyng**, *sb.* glimmering. E 2383  
**Glood**, *pret.* glided. F 393  
**Glose**, *sb.* gloss, comment. L 328, Bl. 333  
**Glose**, *v.* flatter, B 3330; expound, B 1180  
**Glowmbe**, *v.* frown. R 3456  
**Gnodde**, *pret.* rubbed, crushed. *Former Age* 11  
**Gnof**, *sb.* churl. A 3188  
**Gobet**, *sb.* shred. A 696  
**Godsibbes**, *sb. pl.* godparents. I 908  
**Goldiees**, *adj.* without gold. B 1480  
**Golee**, *sb.* mouthful. PF 556  
**Gollardeys**, *sb.* ribald. A 560  
**Gonfenou**, **Gounfanou**, *sb.* pennon, banner. R 2018, 1201  
**Gonge**, *sb.* privy. I 885  
**Gonne**, *pret.* began, A 1658; **Gonnen**, *pl.* L 148  
**Good**, *sb.* goods, property. A 581  
**Gooldes**, *sb. pl.* marigolds. A 1929  
**Goore**, *sb.* gusset, A 3237; **Under my goore**, at my side, B 1979  
**Goosish**, *adj.* foolish. T<sup>3</sup> 584  
**Goost**, **Gost**, *sb.* spirit. A 2768, T<sup>4</sup> 187  
**Goter**, *sb.* gutter. Bo. 689, T<sup>3</sup> 787, L 2705  
**Governeresse**, *sb. fem.* governess. Pite 80  
**Grayn**, *sb.* dye. B 1917  
**Grame**, *sb.* harm, anger. G 1403, An. 276, T<sup>3</sup> 1028  
**Grange**, *sb.* farm, granary, A 3668; **Graunges**, *pl.* B 1256, HF<sup>2</sup> 190  
**Graspe**, *v.* grope. T<sup>5</sup> 223  
**Graunt**, *sb.* decree. A 1306  
**Graven**, *p. p.* buried. L 785  
**Gre**, **Grée**, (1) pleasure, favour, E 1151; (2) superiority, pre-eminence, A 2733  
**Grehoundes**, *sb. pl.* greyhounds. A 191  
**Greithen**, *v.* prepare, make ready, A 4309; *pres.* *pl.* B 3784  
**Greythed**, *p. p.* prepared. Bo. 161  
**Grenehede**, *sb.* immaturity. B 163  
**Gres**, *sb.* grass, T<sup>2</sup> 515; **Gresses**, *pl.* grasses, HF<sup>3</sup> 263  
**Grete**, *sb.*; **The grete**, the sum, Bl. 1241  
**Grete See**, *sb.* the Mediterranean. A 59, R 2748  
**Greve**, *sb.* grove, B 4013; *pl.* A 1495  
**Greven**, *p. p.* graven, engraved. R 4799  
**Grifphon**, *sb.* griffin. A 2133  
**Gryl**, *adj.* rough. R 73  
**Grynt**, grindeth. HF<sup>3</sup> 708  
**Grynte**, *pret.* gnashed. D 2161  
**Grys**, *adj.* grey. G 559  
**Grys**, *sb.* grey fur. A 194  
**Grislich**, *adj.* grisly. T<sup>2</sup> 1700  
**Groff**, *adv.* prone, face downwards. R 2561  
**Groynyng**, *sb.* groaning. A 2460  
**Gromes**, *sb. pl.* men. R 200  
**Grope**, *v.* probe, try. A 644, D 1817  
**Grucchen**, *pres. pl.* grumble. A 3058  
**Gruf**, *adv.* prone, face downwards. A 949, B 1865  
**Gunne**, *pret. pl.* began. PF 257  
**Ha**, *v.* have. R 4657  
**Haaf**, *pret.* heaved. A 3470  
**Habergeon**, *sb.* coat of mail. A 76  
**Habitacle**, *sb.* habitation. Bo. 540  
**Hacches**, *sb. pl.* hatches. L 648  
**Haaf**, **Haaf**, *pret.* heaved. A 2428, 3470  
**Hay**, *sb.* hedge, R 2987; **Hayis**, *pl.* T<sup>3</sup> 351  
**Haynselyns**, *sb. pl.* smocks. I 422  
**Haire**, *sb.* hair-shirt. G 133, R 438  
**Haleth**, *pres. s.* draws. ABC 68  
**Halfe**, *sb.*; **On my halfe**, on my part, Bl. 139  
**Halke**, *sb.* corner. L 1780  
**Hals**, *sb.* neck. B 73  
**Halse**, *pres. s.* conjure. B 1835  
**Halt**, *pres. s.* (1) holdeth, performs. B 721, Bl. 620; (2) haltheth, limps, Bl. 621  
**Halten**, *v.* limp. T<sup>4</sup> 1457  
**Halvendel**, *adv.* half. T<sup>3</sup> 707  
**Halwed**, *p. p.* accounted holy. T<sup>3</sup> 268  
**Halwes**, *sb. pl.* saints, shrines. Bl. 830, A 14, D 657  
**Halydayes**, *sb. pl.* holidays, festivals. L 422  
**Hameled**, *p. p.* mutilated, cut off. T<sup>2</sup> 964  
**Hande-brede**, *sb.* hand-breadth. A 3811  
**Hard**, *adj.*; **Of hard**, with difficulty, T<sup>2</sup> 1236  
**Hardement**, *sb.* hardihood. R 3392  
**Hardily**, *adv.* surely. A 116  
**Harlot**, *sb.* rascal. A 647, D 1754  
**Harneys**, *sb.* armour. A 1006  
**Harnised**, *p. p.* equipped. A 114  
**Harre**, *sb.* hinge. A 550  
**Harwed**, *p. p.* harrowed, devastated. A 3512, D 2107  
**Hasardrye**, *sb.* gambling. C 590  
**Hasel-wodes**, *sb. pl.* hazel-woods (haselwodes shaken), 'Queen Anne is dead.' T<sup>3</sup> 890, T<sup>2</sup> 1174  
**Hatte**, *v.* be called. R 38, T<sup>3</sup> 798  
**Hatter**, *adv.* more hotly. R 2475  
**Haubergeon**, *sb.* hauberk. A 2119  
**Haunt**, *sb.* practice. A 447  
**Haunten**, *pres. pl.* practise. I 780  
**Hauteyn**, *adj.* haughty. C 330  
**Havoire**, *v.* to have. R 4720  
**Hawe**, *sb.* hedge. C 855  
**Hawebake**, *sb.* baked haws, *i. e.* poor stuff. B 95  
**Hawteyn**, *adj.* haughty, high-flying. R 3739, L 1120  
**Hed**, *p. p.* hidden. L 208  
**Hede**, *v.* put a head on. T<sup>2</sup> 1042  
**Heels**, *sb.* health. B 1540  
**Heeng**, *pret.* hung. A 676  
**Heer**, *sb.* hair. A 589  
**Heerde**, *sb.* herdsman. R 6453  
**Heer-mele**, *sb.* hair's-breadth. As. ii. § 38  
**Heete**, *pres. subj.* promise. A 2398  
**Heete**, *pret.* was named. Bl. 200  
**Hey**, *sb.* hedge. H 14  
**Heye**, *v.* rise. Bo. 875  
**Heyly**, *adv.* highly, urgently. T<sup>2</sup> 1733  
**Heyne**, *sb.* villain. G 1319  
**Heyre**, *sb.* heir. Bl. 168  
**Heyres**, *sb. pl.* hair-shirts. I 105  
**Heyssagen**, *sb.* hedge-sparrow. PF 612  
**Heythen**, *adv.* hence. A 4033  
**Hele**, *sb.* *See Heele*  
**Hele**, *v.* hide, conceal. B 2275, D 950  
**Heled**, *p. p.* hidden. B 4245  
**Heleles**, *adj.* without health. T<sup>5</sup> 1593  
**Helply**, *adj.* helpful. T<sup>5</sup> 128  
**Hende**, *adj.* prompt, polite, gracious. D 1286, 628, A 3199  
**Heng**, *pret.* hung. Bl. 122  
**Henne**, *adv.* hence. A 2356  
**Hennesforth**, *adv.* henceforth. T<sup>3</sup> 167



**Hente**, *pret.* seized. B 4525  
**Henteres**, *sb. pl.* seizers. Bo. 91  
**Hepe**, *sb.* hip. B 1937  
**Heraudes**, *sb. pl.* heralds. A 2672  
**Herbelours**, *sb. pl.* receivers of guests. R 5000  
**Herber**, *sb.* arbour. L 203  
**Herbergage**, *sb.* lodging. A 4329, B 147  
**Herbergeours**, *sb. pl.* harbingers. B 997  
**Her-biforn**, *adv.* herebefore. L 73  
**Herd**, *p. p.* haired. A 2518  
**Herde**, *sb.* herdsman. T<sup>3</sup> 1235  
**Herde-gromes**, *sb. pl.* herdsmen. HF<sup>3</sup> 136  
**Herdesse**, *sb. fem.* herdsman. T<sup>1</sup> 653  
**Herdis**, *sb.* refuse of flax. R 1233  
**Here and hounne**, one and all(?). T<sup>4</sup> 210  
**Herieth**, *pres. s.* praises. B 1808; **Heryest**,  
 praised. B 3419; **Heryed**, *p. p.* praised, B  
 872; **Herynge**, *p. pres.* praising, B 1649  
**Herys**, *sb. pl.* hairs. A 555  
**Herne**, *sb.* corner. F 1121  
**Heroner**, *sb.* heron-killer. T<sup>4</sup> 413, L 1120  
**Heronsewes**, *sb. pl.* young herons. F 68  
**Hert**, *sb.* hart. A 1689  
**Herte**, *pret.* hurt. Bl. 882  
**Herte**, *sb.* heart. A 954  
**Hertely**, *adj.* heartfelt. Bl. 85  
**Herte-spon**, *sb.* breast-bone. A 2606  
**Hete**, *pret.* was called. Bl. 947  
**Heterly**, *adv.* fiercely. L 638  
**Hethyng**, *sb.* mockery. A 4110  
**Heve**, *v.* heave. A 550  
**Hevedes**, *sb. pl.* heads. B 2032  
**Hevenysh**, *adj.* heavenly. Mars 30  
**Hevenysshy**, *adv.* celestially. A 1055  
**Hewe**, *sb.* colour. An. 147  
**Hewe**, *sb.* domestic servant. E 1785  
**Hy**, *v.* hasten. F 291; **Hy**, *imperat.* Bl. 152  
**Hyene**, *sb.* hyena. Fortune 35  
**Hierde**, *sb.* herdsman, A 603; **Hierdes**, *pl.*  
 T<sup>3</sup> 619  
**Hight**, *p. p.* promised. A 2472  
**Highte**, *sb.*; **On highte**, aloud. A 1724  
**Highteth**, *pres. s.* adorns. Bo. 45  
**Hyne**, *sb.* servant. A 603, C 688  
**Hir**, (1) her, *pers. pron.* B 624; (2) her, *poss.*  
*pron.* B 625; (3) their, *poss. pron.* A 365; (4)  
 of them, *gen. pers. pron.* A 586  
**Hit**, *pron. it.* Bl. 18  
**Hit**, *hideth.* F 512  
**Hoker**, *sb.* mockery. A 3965  
**Hokerly**, *adv.* scornfully. I 584  
**Holour**, *sb.* lecher. D 524  
**Holsom**, *adj.* wholesome. PF 206  
**Honerous**, *adj.* onerous, burdensome. R 5633  
**Honestee**, *sb.* purity. G 89  
**Hoodles**, *adj.* without hood. Bl. 1027  
**Hool**, *adj.* whole. G 111, Bl. 552  
**Hoold**, *sb.* a stronghold. B 507  
**Hooly**, *adv.* wholly. A 599, Bl. 15  
**Hoors**, *adj.* hoarse. T<sup>4</sup> 1147  
**Hoot**, *adj.* hot. A 420  
**Hoppesteres**, *sb. pl.* dancers. A 2017  
**Hord**, *sb.* hoard, plenty. Truth 3  
**Hors**, **Hoors**, *adj.* hoarse. Bl. 347, T<sup>4</sup> 1147  
**Horwe**, *adj.* filthy. Mars 206  
**Hostiler**, *sb.* innkeeper. A 241  
**Hot**, *v.* promise, R 3385; **Hoten**, be called,  
 D 144  
**Hottes**, *sb. pl.* baskets. HF<sup>3</sup> 850  
**Houndfyssch**, *sb.* shark. E 1825

**Hoours**, *sb. pl.* (astrological) hours. A 416  
**Housel**, *sb.* the Eucharist. R 6386  
**Housled**, *p. p.* having received the Eucharist.  
 I 1027  
**Hoved**, *pret.* waited, T<sup>5</sup> 33; **Hoveth**, *pres.*  
*Balade that C. made 15 (emend.)*  
**How**, *adv.* however. R 6489  
**Howwe**, *sb.* cap, 'sette his howwe,' A 3911;  
 'make him an howwe above a calle,' T<sup>3</sup> 775;  
 'glase his howwe,' T<sup>5</sup> 469, all phrases for 'to  
 befool.' See also **Cappe**  
**Hulstred**, *p. p.* concealed. R 6146  
**Humblesse**, *sb.* humility. B 1660  
**Hunte**, *sb.* hunter, A 1678; **Huntes**, *pl.* Bl. 540  
**Hurtlen**, *v.* attack. Bo. 266  
**Hust**, *p. p.* hushed. A 2981, T<sup>3</sup> 1094  
**Hwed**, *p. p.* hued, coloured. R 3014

I, y-, prefix of past participles

**Ich**, *pron. I.* T<sup>3</sup> 282  
**Ich**, *adj.* each. Bo. 1812  
**I-fycchid**, *p. p.* fixed. Bo. 1473  
**Ik**, *pron. I.* A 3867  
**Il-hayl**, *il-luck* to you. A 4089  
**Ilke**, *adj.* same  
**Imperie**, *sb.* imperium, official dignity. Bo. 487  
**Impetrun**, *pres. pl.* obtain. Bo. 1725  
**Importable**, **Importable**, *adj.* unbearable. B  
 3792, E 1144  
**In**, *sb.* inn. B 1632  
**Infaunce**, *sb.* infancy. R 5006  
**Infect**, *p. p.* invalidated. A 320  
**Infortunat**, *adj.* unfortunate. B 302  
**In-hielde**, *pres. pl.* infuse. T<sup>3</sup> 44  
**Injure**, *sb.* injury. T<sup>3</sup> 1018  
**In-knette**, *pret.* confined. T<sup>3</sup> 1088  
**Inned**, *p. p.* housed. A 2192  
**In-set**, *p. p.* implanted. Bo. 330  
**In-thringe**, *v.* press in. T<sup>4</sup> 66  
**Intresse**, *sb.* interest. Truth 71  
**In-with**, *prep.* within  
**Irou**, *adj.* passionate. D 2086  
**I-shaad**, *p. p.* shed. Bo. 481  
**Isse**, *v.* issue. R 1992  
**I-thrungen**, *p. p.* pressed. Bo. 538

**Jagounces**, *sb. pl.* jacinths. R 1117  
**Jakke of Dover**. See note, A 4347  
**Jambeux**, *sb. pl.* leggings. B 2065  
**Jane**, *sb.* small Genoese coin. B 1925, E 999  
**Janglere**, *sb.* prater. A 560  
**Janglynge**, *sb.* chattering, talking idly. I 649  
**Jape**, *sb.* trick, jest. B 1629  
**Japeres**, *sb. pl.* jesters. I 651  
**Jape-worthil**, *adj.* burlesque. Bo. 1707  
**Jaunyce**, *sb.* jaundice. R 305  
**Jet**, *sb.* fashion. A 682  
**Jeupardyes**, *sb. pl.* problems. Bl. 665  
**Jewerye**, *sb.* Jews' quarter. B 1679  
**Jo**, *v.* come about. T<sup>3</sup> 33  
**Jogelours**, *sb. pl.* jugglers. HF<sup>3</sup> 169  
**Joynant**, *adj.* adjoining. A 1060  
**Joyne**, *v.* enjoin. R 2355  
**Jolitee**, *sb.* jolliness. A 680  
**Jompre**, *imp. s.* jumble. T<sup>2</sup> 1037  
**Jouken**, *v.* repose. T<sup>5</sup> 409 (note)  
**Journe**, *sb.* day's work. R 579  
**Jowes**, *sb. pl.* jaws. HF<sup>3</sup> 696  
**Jubbe**, *sb.* jug. A 3628  
**Juge**, *sb.* judge. A 1712

- Jupartie**, *sb.* jeopardy. F 1495, R 2666  
**Jurdones**, *sb. pl.* chamber-pots. C 305  
**Justice**, *sb.* punishment. R 2077  
**Juwise, Juysel**, *sb.* judgment. A 1739, B 795
- Kaynard**, *sb.* coward. D 235  
**Kalenderes**, *sb. pl.* calendars in illuminated prayer-books. ABC 70  
**Kalendes**, *sb. pl.* calends, the first or beginning. T<sup>3</sup> 1634  
**Kamelyne**, *sb.* camel's hair. R 7365  
**Kamuse**, *adj.* flat-nosed. A 3974  
**Kan**, *v.* know, be able. A 371  
**Karole**, *sb.* singing dance. R 744  
**Kecche**, *v.* catch. T<sup>3</sup> 1375  
**Kechyl**, *sb.* cake. D 1747  
**Keen**, *sb.* kine. B 4021  
**Keepe**, *sb.* heed. A 503  
**Kempe**, *adj.* shaggy. A 2134  
**Kenned**, *p. p.* known. Bl. 786  
**Kepe**, *v.* care, reckon. A 2238, 1593  
**Kepte**, *pret.* observed. A 415  
**Kernois**, *sb. pl.* R 4197  
**Kers**, *sb.* curse. A 3756  
**Kervere**, *sb.* carver. A 1899  
**Kesse**, *v.* kiss. E 1057  
**Keverre**, *v.* recover. T<sup>1</sup> 917  
**Keverred**, *p. p.* covered. PF 271, HF<sup>1</sup> 275  
**Kid**, *p. p.* known. L 1028, E 1943  
**Kidde**, *pret.* showed. T<sup>1</sup> 208  
**Kiked**, *pret.* peeped. A 3445  
**Kymelyn**, *sb.* brewing-tub. A 3518  
**Kynde**, *sb.* nature. A 2451  
**Kirked**, *p. p.* See note, R 3167  
**Kithe**, *v.* show, B 636; **Kytheth**, *pres.* L 504  
**Kitte**, *pret.* cut. B 600  
**Knarre**, *sb.* knot. A 549  
**Knarry**, *aij.* gnarled. A 1977  
**Knave**, *sb.* boy, servant. A 3431  
**Knopped**, *p. p.* knobbed. R 7258  
**Knoppes**, *sb. pl.* buds. R 1675  
**Knottes**, *adj.* like an unknotted string. T<sup>3</sup> 769  
**Knowe**, *sb.* knee, T<sup>2</sup> 1202; **Knowes**, *pl.* B 1719  
**Konnyng**, *sb.* ability. B 1099  
**Koude**, *pret.* knew. A 110  
**Kowthe**, *p. p.* renowned. A 14
- Laas**, *sb.* cord, snare. A 392, 1817  
**Labbe**, *sb.* tell-tale, blabber. A 3509, T<sup>3</sup> 300  
**Label**, *sb.* a kind of ruler. As. i. § 22  
**Lacche**, *sb.* snare. R 1624  
**Lace**, *sb.* net. R 2792  
**Lacerte**, *sb.* muscle. A 2753  
**Lache**, *adj.* lazy. Bo. 1309  
**Lachesse**, *sb.* negligence. I 720  
**Lad**, *p. p.* led. A 2620  
**Ladde**, *pret.* took. B 1524  
**Lafte**, *pret.* left, ceased. A 492  
**Laghyng**, *p. p.* laughing. Bl. 632  
**Lay**, *sb.* creed. F 18  
**Layneres**, *sb. pl.* straps. A 2504  
**Lake**, *sb.* linen cloth. B 2048  
**Lakken**, *v.* depreciate. T<sup>1</sup> 189  
**Lambish**, *adj.* lamblike. Former Age 50  
**Lambren**, *sb. pl.* lambs. R 7013  
**Lampe**, *sb.* a thin plate. G 764  
**Lapidaire**, *sb.* treatise on precious stones. HF<sup>3</sup> 262  
**Lappe**, *sb.* lap, border. G 12
- Large**, *adj.* liberal, extravagant. B 3489, 1621  
**Las**, *adv. comp.* less. Bl. 674  
**Las, Laas**, *sb.* snare. A 1951, 1817  
**Last**, *pres.* lasteth, reaches. E 266  
**Last**, *sb.* load. B 1628  
**Late**, *adv.* lately. A 690  
**Laten**, *v.* let. L 3007  
**Laterede**, *adj.* slow. I 718  
**Lathe**, *sb.* stable, barn. A 4088, HF<sup>3</sup> 1050  
**Latis**, *sb.* lattice. T<sup>2</sup> 615  
**Latoun**, *sb.* brass. A 699, B 2067  
**Laudes**, *sb. pl.* (1) the service said between midnight and 6 A.M.; (2) praises. HF<sup>3</sup> 232  
**Launcegay**, *sb.* kind of lance. B 1942  
**Launde**, *sb.* clearing in the wood. A 1691, PF 302  
**Laurer**, *sb.* laurel. A 1027  
**Laus**, *adj.* loose, A 4064; **Lause**, *pl.* Bo. 417  
**Laven**, *v.* exhaust. Bo. 1446  
**Lavendere**, *sb.* washerwoman. L 358  
**Lavyd**, *p. p.* poured out, drawn. Bo. 1127  
**Lawe**, *adj.* low. R 5046  
**Lazar**, *sb.* leper. A 242  
**Leche**, *sb.* physician. R 2944  
**Leden**, *sb.* language. F 435  
**Leed**, *sb.* leaden vessel. A 202  
**Leef**, *adj.* dear. Bl. 8  
**Leef**, *sb.* leaf. E 1211  
**Leefful**, *adj.* lawful. I 41  
**Leefsel**, *sb.* bower. I 411  
**Leepe**, *pret.* leapt. A 2687  
**Leere, Lere**, *v.* learn, teach. B 181, 630  
**Leere**, *sb.* skin. B 2047  
**Lees**, *sb.* net, leash. G 19, I 387  
**Lees**, *pret.* lost. L 945  
**Lees**, *adj.* false. R 8  
**Leet**, *pret.* (1) let, A 175; (2) caused, B 1810; (3) left, A 508  
**Leewe**, *pres. s.* believe. G 213  
**Leewe**, *adj.* dear. G 257  
**Leif**, *imper.* leave. T<sup>4</sup> 866  
**Lefte**, *pret.* delayed. R 4093  
**Legge**, *v.* (1) lay, A 3937; (2) relieve, R 5016  
**Ley**, *v.* wager, assert. T<sup>3</sup> 1658  
**Leygheth**, *pres.* laughs. Bo. 294  
**Leigh**, *pret.* lied. T<sup>2</sup> 1077  
**Leyser**, *sb.* leisure. Bl. 172  
**Leyt**, *sb.* flame, lightning. I 839, Bo. 94  
**Leke**, *sb.* leek. R 4830  
**Lemaille**, *sb.* filing, thin plate. G 1162  
**Lemes**, *sb. pl.* (1) gleams, flashes, B 4120, R 5346; (2) limbs, A 3886  
**Lemman**, *sb.* sweetheart. A 3278  
**Lendes**, *sb. pl.* loins. A 3237  
**Lene**, *v.* lend. A 611  
**Lenger**, *adv. comp.* longer  
**Leoun**, *sb.* lion. B 3106  
**Lepande**, *p. pres.* leaping. R 1928  
**Lere, Leere**, *v.* teach, learn. B 630, 181  
**Les**, *sb.* lie. L 1022  
**Lese**, *v.* lose; **Leseth**, B 19  
**Lesyng**, *sb.* lie. G 479  
**Lest**, *sb.* pleasure. A 132, Bl. 907  
**Leste**, *pret.* it pleased. A 750  
**Lette**, *sb.* hindrance, delay. T<sup>3</sup> 235  
**Letten**, *v.* (1) hinder, A 889, B 2116; (2) forgo, A 1317, B 4274  
**Lette-game**, *sb.* spoil-sport. T<sup>3</sup> 527  
**Letterure, Lettruro**, *sb.* literature. G 846, B 3486

**Letuarie**, *sb.* electuary, remedy, C 307, T<sup>5</sup> 741;  
**Letuaries**, *pl.* A 426  
**Leve**, *sb.* permission. T<sup>3</sup> 622  
**Leveful**, *adj.* lawful. A 3912  
**Leven**, *v.* believe. B 1181  
**Levere**, *adj. comp.* pleasanter to. A 293  
**Levesel**, *sb.* leafy bower. A 4061  
**Lewed**, *adj.* ignorant. A 502  
**Lewednesse**, *sb.* stupidity. A 502  
**Lyard**, *adj.* grey. D 1563  
**Lybardes**, *sb. pl.* leopards. R 874  
**Libel**, *sb.* bill of complaint. D 1595  
**Lyche-wake**, *sb.* corpse-watch. A 2958  
**Lief**, *sb.* darling. B 3084  
**Liflode**, *sb.* livelihood. I 685, R 5602  
**Lifty**, *adv.* lively, life-like. A 2087  
**Liggen**, *pres. pl.* lie. A 2205  
**Lyghter**, *adv.* more lightly. L 410  
**Ligne-aloes**, *sb.* aloes-wood. T<sup>4</sup> 1137  
**Liken**, *v.* please. T<sup>1</sup> 431  
**Likerous**, *adj.* lustful. C 540  
**Liltyng**, *p. pres.* playing a lilt. HF<sup>3</sup> 133  
**Lymaille**, *sb.* filings. G 853  
**Lymeres**, *sb. pl.* hounds in leash. Bl. 362  
**Lymerod**, *sb.* lime-twig. B 3754  
**Lymytour**, *sb.* licensed beggar. A 209  
**Lynde**, *sb.* lime-tree. A 2922, E 1211  
**Lipsed**, *pret.* lisped. A 264  
**Lisse**, *sb.* relief, comfort. Bl. 1039, F 1238  
**Lisse**, *v.* relieve, Bl. 210; **Lissed**, *p. p.* F 1170  
**Lyst**, *sb.* edge. D 634  
**Listow**, *liest* thou. H 276  
**Lytarge**, *sb.* white lead. A 629, G 775  
**Litarge**, *sb.* lethargy. Bo. 57, T<sup>1</sup> 730  
**Lyte**, *adj.* little, B 2153; **A lite**, a little, B 713  
**Litester**, *sb.* dyer. *Former Age* 17  
**Lith**, *pres.* lies. A 1795  
**Lith**, *sb.* limb. B 4065, Bl. 952  
**Lythe**, *adj.* smooth, easy. HF<sup>1</sup> 118, R 3762  
**Lithe**, *v.* soften. T<sup>4</sup> 740  
**Litherly**, *adv.* badly. A 3299  
**Lyves**, *adj.* living. A 2395  
**Lixt**, *liest*. D 1618  
**Lodemenage**, *sb.* pilotage. A 403  
**Lodesmen**, *sb. pl.* pilots. L 1488  
**Loigne**, *sb.* tether. R 3882  
**Longes**, *sb. pl.* lungs. A 2752  
**Longeth**, *pres.* belongs to. G 716  
**Loodesterre**, *sb.* loadstar. A 2059  
**Loone**, *sb.* loan. D 1861  
**Loos**, *sb.* report, fame, praise. HF<sup>3</sup> 530, B 3035  
**Looth**, *adj.* hateful to. A 486  
**Loppe**, *sb.* spider. As. i. § 19  
**Lopwebbe**, *sb.* spider's web. As. i. § 21  
**Lore**, *p. p.* lost. Bl. 1134  
**Loral**, *sb.* rascal. D 273, Bo. 178  
**Los**, *sb.* praise, fame. L 1424, 1514  
**Losengeour**, *sb.* flatterer. B 4516, L 352  
**Losengerie**, *sb.* flattery, false praise. I 613  
**Losenges**, *sb. pl.* lozenges. HF<sup>3</sup> 227  
**Loteby**, *sb.* paramour. R 6339  
**Lotyng**, *p. pres.* lurking. G 186  
**Lough**, *adj.* low. A 817  
**Lovedays**, *sb. pl.* days for settling disputes. A 258  
**Love-drury**, *sb.* courtship. B 2085  
**Lous**, *adj.* at large. HF<sup>3</sup> 196  
**Loute**, *v.* bow, T<sup>3</sup> 683; **Loutede**, *pret.* R 1554  
**Loweke**, *sb.* fellow-rascal. A 4415

**Lowteth**, *pres. s.* bows. B 2375  
**Lufsom**, *adj.* lovable. T<sup>5</sup> 465  
**Lunarie**, *sb.* moonwort. G 800  
**Lust**, *sb.* pleasure. A 192, T<sup>1</sup> 326  
**M'**, before a verb beginning with a vowel, *pers. pron. me.*  
**Maad**, *p. p.* made. A 394  
**Maat**, *adj.* dejected, discomfited. A 955, B 935  
**Madde**, *v.* go mad. *Mars* 253  
**May**, *sb.* maiden. B 851  
**Maydenhede**, *sb.* virginity. B 30  
**Mayme**, *sb.* maiming. I 625  
**Maysondewe**, *sb.* hospital. R 5619  
**Maystow**, *v.* go mad. A 1918  
**Maistre**, *sb.* master; *adj.* chief. L 1016  
**Maystre**, chief; **Maystre-strete**, **Maister-toun**. L 1965, 1591  
**Maistrye**, *sb.* mastery. L 400  
**Make**, *sb.* husband, mate, match. D 85, B 1982, A 2556  
**Maked**, *pret.* made. A 1907  
**Makeles**, *adj.* matchless. T<sup>1</sup> 172  
**Makeyng**, *sb.* poetry. L 74  
**Malapert**, *adj.* impudent. T<sup>3</sup> 87  
**Male**, *sb.* wallet. C 920  
**Malefice**, *sb.* evil-doing. Bo. 169  
**Malgre**, *prep.* in spite of. *Mars* 220  
**Malt**, *pret.* melted. HF<sup>2</sup> 414  
**Mal-talent**, *sb.* ill-will. R 330  
**Manace**, *sb.* menace. A 2003  
**Manasyng**, *p. pres.* menacing. Bo. 416  
**Maner**, *sb.* manor. Bl. 1003  
**Maner**, **Manere**, *sb.* manner. *Pite* 24, L 251  
**Manye**, *sb.* mania. A 1374  
**Mansuete**, *adj.* gentle. T<sup>5</sup> 194  
**Mappemounde**, *sb. mappa mundi*, map of the world. *Rescmonnde* 2  
**Marc**, *sb.* thirteen shillings and fourpence. G 1026  
**Marcial**, *adj.* martial. T<sup>4</sup> 1669  
**Mare**, *adv. comp.* more. R 2709  
**Mareys**, *sb.* marsh. D 970, Bo. 536  
**Mary**, *sb.* marrow. C 542, Bo. 1008  
**Marybones**, *sb. pl.* marrow-bones. A 380  
**Market-betere**, *sb.* bully at fairs. A 3936  
**Markys**, *sb.* marquis. E 786  
**Markysesse**, *sb.* marchioness. E 283  
**Martire**, *sb.* torment. T<sup>4</sup> 818  
**Mased**, *p. p.* dazed. Bl. 12  
**Mast**, *sb.* acorns. *Former Age* 6  
**Masty**, *adj.* acorn-eating. HF<sup>3</sup> 687  
**Mate**, *adj.* depressed, discomfited. L 126, R 3167  
**Matere**, *sb.* matter, subject. Bl. 43  
**Maugree**, *prep.* despite. A 1169  
**Maugree**, *sb.* ill-will, R 3144; **Can maugree**, owe a grudge, R 4399, 4559  
**Maumetrie**, *sb.* Mohanimedism, idolatry. B 236  
**Maunciple**, *sb.* purveyor. A 510  
**Mawmet**, *sb.* idol. I 749  
**Mazelyn**, *sb.* maple-bowl. B 2042  
**Mede**, **Meede**, (1) reward, bribe, A 3380; (2) mead, a drink, B 2042; (3) meadow, A 89  
**Medlee**, *adj.* of mixed stuff. A 328  
**Medleth**, *pres.* mingles, mixes. L 874, Bo. 1313  
**Medyng**, *sb.* mixture. Bo. 1356  
**Meede**, *sb.* See **Mede**  
**Meene**, *pres.* bemoan. R 2596  
**Meeth**, *sb.* mead, a drink. A 2279

- Meignee**, *sb.* household. I 894  
**Meygned**, *p.p.* maimed. R 3356  
**Meynee**, *sb.* retinue, household. A 1258  
**Meynt**, *p.p.* mingled. R 1920  
**Meyntenaunce**, *sb.* demeanour. Bl. 833  
**Mekede**, *pret.* meekened. R 3584  
**Mel-tid**, *sb.* meal-time. T<sup>2</sup> 1556  
**Melle**, *sb.* mill. A 3923  
**Memoire, Memorie**, *sb.* memory, commemoration. Bl. 944, A 1906  
**Mencion**, *sb.* mention. B 54  
**Mendience**, *sb.* mendicancy. R 6657  
**Mendynantz**, *sb. pl.* begging friars. D 1906  
**Mene**, *pres.* mean, intend. A 2063, 2216  
**Mene**, *adj.* middle, of middle size. T<sup>5</sup> 806  
**Meneliche**, *adj.* moderate. Bo. 251  
**Mentes**, *sb. pl.* mint. R 731  
**Merciable**, *adj.* merciful. L 348  
**Mere**, *sb.* mare. A 541  
**Merke**, *adj.* dark. R 5339  
**Merlion**, *sb.* merlin-hawk. PF 339  
**Mervalle**, *sb.* marvel. E 1186  
**Mes, Messe**, *sb.*; **At good mes**, at advantage, R 3462, 1453  
**Meschief**, *sb.* mischief; **At meschief**, in danger, A 2551  
**Mesel**, *sb.* leper. I 624  
**Message**, *sb.* messenger. B 144  
**Messager**, *sb.* messenger. Bl. 133  
**Messe**, *sb.* mass. B 1413  
**Meste**, *adj. pl.* most; **The meste**, the most important, T<sup>5</sup> 440  
**Mester**, *sb.* occupation. A 1340  
**Mesurable**, *adj.* moderate. F 362  
**Mesure**, *sb.* moderation. E 622  
**Met**, *pres.* dreams. PF 104  
**Met**, *sb.* measure. I 799  
**Mete**, *pres. sub.* dream. Bl. 1233  
**Mette**, *pret.* dreamt. B 4084, L 210  
**Meve**, *v.* move  
**Meveresse**, *sb. fem.* agitator. R 149  
**Mewe**, *sb.* cage, coop. F 643, T<sup>3</sup> 602  
**Myches**, *sb. pl.* small loaves. R 5585  
**Mych**, *adj.* much. R 2704  
**Mycher**, *sb.* thief. R 6541  
**Mihti**, *adj.* mighty. ABC 6  
**Mile-wey, Milewey**, *sb.* 5 degrees of angular measurement, the third part of an hour. As. i. § 16  
**Milne-stones**, *sb. pl.* mill-stones. T<sup>2</sup> 1384  
**Mynour**, *sb.* miner. A 2465  
**Myntyng**, *p. pres.* meaning. Bo. 38  
**Mirre**, *sb.* myrrh. A 2938  
**Mys**, *sb. pl.* mice. B 492  
**Misaccounted**, *p.p.* misreckoned. T<sup>5</sup> 1185  
**Misbelieved**, *p.p.* as *sb.* unbelievers. ABC 146  
**Mysboden**, *p.p.* abused, harmed. A 909  
**Mysdeparteth**, *pres. s.* divides unfairly. B 107  
**Misericorde**, *sb.* mercy. ABC 35  
**Mysese**, *sb.* discomfort. I 177  
**Mis-foryaf**, *pret.* sorely misgave. T<sup>4</sup> 1426  
**Myslay**, *pret.* lay awry. A 3647  
**Misliued**, *p.p.* ill-behaved. T<sup>4</sup> 330  
**Mismetre**, *pres. sub.* scan wrongly. T<sup>5</sup> 1796  
**Missatte**, *pret.* suited ill. R 1194  
**Myseyest**, *pres. s.* speakest ill of. L 323  
**Myster**, *sb.* (1) craft, A 613; (2) need, R 1426, 6078; **What mystiers men**, what manner of men, A 1710  
**Mystihede**, *sb.* mystery. Mars 224  
**Mystorned**, *p.p.* turned aside. Bo. 1236  
**Miswey**, *adv.* astray. R 4766  
**Mysweyes**, *sb. pl.* by-paths, wrong roads. Bo. 1623  
**Miswent**, *pret.* erred. T<sup>1</sup> 633  
**Myxnes**, *sb. pl.* middens, dunghoops. R 6496  
**Mo, Moo**, *adj.* more, others. A 1715, E 1039  
**Moche, Mochel**. See **Muche, Muchel**  
**Moder**, *sb.* mother, ABC 49; the large plate in an astrolabe, As. i. § 2  
**Moebie**, *adj.* moveable. As. i. § 21  
**Mooble**, *sb.* furniture, T<sup>4</sup> 1380; **Moebles**, *sb. pl.* moveables, chattels, E 1314  
**Moyoun**, *sb.* crop. R 1677  
**Mokeren**, *pres. pl.* heap up. Bo. 425  
**Mokereres**, *sb. pl.* heapers up, hoarders. Bo. 425  
**Mokre**, *v.* heap up. T<sup>3</sup> 1375  
**Molte**, *pret.* melted. T<sup>5</sup> 10  
**Mone**, *sb.* moon  
**Moneste**, *pres. s.* admonish. R 3579  
**Montaunce**, *sb.* value, amount. A 1570, C 863  
**Monyours**, *sb. pl.* money-changers. R 6811  
**Mood**, *sb.* anger. R 5162  
**Moote**, *pres.* must, may. A 735  
**Mordre**, *sb.* murder. B 4211  
**More**, *sb.* root. T<sup>5</sup> 25  
**Mormal**, *sb.* gangrene. A 386  
**Morter**, *sb.* night-light. T<sup>4</sup> 1245  
**Mortifye**, *v.* transmute. G 1126  
**Mortrer**, *sb.* murderer. PF 353  
**Mortreux**, *sb.* a kind of stew. A 384  
**Morwe**, *sb.* morrow, morning. A 331  
**Morwenyng**, *sb.* morning. A 1062  
**Mosel**, *sb.* muzzle. A 2151  
**Moste**, *pres.* must  
**Mote**, *pres.* must, may  
**Mote**, *sb.* speck. T<sup>3</sup> 1603  
**Motteleye**, *sb.* motley. A 271  
**Mountaunce**, *sb.* amount. R 1562  
**Mourdaunt**, *sb.* pendant of a girdle. R 1094  
**Moustre**, *sb.* show-piece. Bl. 911  
**Mowes**, *sb. pl.* grimaces. R 5590, HF<sup>3</sup> 716  
**Mowynge**, *sb.* ability. Bo. 1372  
**Mowled**, *p.p.* grown mouldy. A 3870  
**Mowlen**, *v.* moulder. B 32  
**Muable**, *adj.* fleeting. T<sup>3</sup> 822, Bo. 1455  
**Muche and lite**, great and small. A 494  
**Muchel**, *adj.* much. A 132  
**Mullok**, *sb.* refuse. A 3873  
**Murierly**, *adv. comp.* more merrily. A 714  
**Musarde**, *sb.* dreamer. R 3256, 4034, 7560  
**Muttre**, *v.* mutter. T<sup>2</sup> 541  
**Muwe**, *sb.* mew, cage. A 349, T<sup>3</sup> 1784  
**Muwe**, *v.* change. T<sup>2</sup> 1258  
**Muwet**, *adj.* mute. T<sup>5</sup> 194  
**N<sup>r</sup>**, before a vowel, = **Ne**, not  
**Na**, *adj.* no. A 4026  
**Nadde, Ne hadde**, had not. L 278  
**Nadde**, *sb.* adder. E 1786  
**Nadir**, *sb.* the point of the heavens diametrically opposite to the zenith. As. ii. § 5  
**Nadstow**, hadst thou not. A 4088  
**Na fors**, no matter. A 4176  
**Nayles**, *sb. pl.* nails. A 2141  
**Nayte**, *v.* say no to, deny. I 1013  
**Nake**, *pres. pl.* bare. Bo. 1616  
**Nakers**, *sb. pl.* drums. A 2511  
**Nale, Atte nale**, at the ale-house. D 1349

**Nam, Ne am, am not.** A 1122  
**Nam, pret. took.** G 1297  
**Namely, adv. especially.** B 1233  
**Na mo, no more.** A 1589  
**Nart, Ne art, art not.** ABC 26, G 497  
**Narwe, adj. narrow, close.** E 1988  
**Nas, Ne was, was not.** A 1649, 2105  
**Nat, adv. not.** A 1145, 4087  
**Nath, Ne hath, hath not**  
**Nathelees, adv. nevertheless.** E 377  
**Natureel, Naturel, adj. natural, by birth** A 415, L 375  
**Ne, adv. not, nor.** A 923, 1649  
**Neddes, sb. pl. adders.** L 699  
**Nede, sb. need.** B 4643  
**Nedelees, adv. needlessly.** E 621  
**Nedely, adv. of necessity.** B 4435  
**Nedescost, adv. of necessity.** A 1477  
**Neen, adj. none, no.** A 4185  
**Neet, sb. cattle.** A 597  
**Negardye, sb. niggardy.** Truth 53  
**Neghen, v. draw near.** L 318  
**Neigh, adv. nigh, near.** Bl. 104  
**Nel, Ne wil, will not.** R 4344  
**Nempnen, name, B 507; Nempned, pret.** E 609  
**Ner, adj. nearer.** Bl. 887  
**Nere, Ne were, were not.** B 547  
**Nevene, v. name.** G 821  
**Neveradeel, not a whit.** C 670  
**Newe, adv. newly.** A 4239  
**Newed, pret. renewed itself.** Bl. 905  
**Nexte, adj. sup. nearest.** B 807  
**Nyce, adj. foolish.** B 1088  
**Nyfls, sb. pl. trifles.** D 1760  
**Nyghtertale, sb. night-time.** A 97  
**Nigromanciens, sb. pl. magicians.** I 603  
**Nil, Ne will, will not.** T<sup>1</sup> 1020  
**Nillynge, sb. refusing.** Bo. 1656  
**Nyn, Ne in, nor in.** E 2088  
**Nys, Ne is, is not.** A 1677  
**Nyste, Ne wiste, knew not.** B 384  
**Noble, sb. coin worth 6s. 8d.** A 3256  
**Nobleye, sb. nobility.** E 828  
**No fors, no matter.** B 285  
**Noye, v. harm.** R 3772  
**Noxious, adj. harmful.** R 3231  
**Nolde, Ne wolde, would not.** A 1024  
**Nome, p. p. taken.** L 822  
**Non, adj. none**  
**Nones, For the nones, for the occasion.** A 545  
**Nonne, sb. nun.** A 118  
**Noon, adj. none.** A 773  
**Noot, pres. Ne woot, know not.** A 1340, Bl. 29  
**Noote, sb. note, music.** B 1711  
**Norice, sb. nurse.** E 561  
**Nortelrie, sb. good manners.** A 3967  
**Nory, sb. foster-child.** Bo. 850  
**Nosethirles, sb. pl. nostrils.** A 557  
**Noskinnes, adj. no kind of.** HF<sup>3</sup> 704  
**Nost, Ne wost, knowest not**  
**Note, sb. need, business.** A 4068  
**Noteful, adj. useful.** Bo. 33  
**Notemygges, sb. pl. nutmegs.** R 1362  
**Not-head, sb. close-cropped head.** A 109  
**Nother, Ne other, nor other**  
**Nouncerteyn, sb. uncertainty.** Venus 46  
**Noun-power, sb. impotence.** Bo. 726  
**Noutner, adj. neither.** Bl. 530  
**Novelrie, sb. novelty.** F 619  
**Nowches, sb. pl. jewels.** E 382

**Nowthe, adv. now.** A 462

**O, num. one.** A 2725, G 335, R 6398  
**Obeissaunce, sb. obedience.** A 2974  
**Observaunce, sb. respect, ceremony.** A 1045  
**Observe, v. respect, countenance.** B 1821  
**Octogamye, marrying eight times.** D 33  
**Of, adv. off.** A 782  
**Of-caste, imper. cast off.** PF 132  
**Offended, p. p. hurt.** A 909  
**Offensioun, sb. opposition.** A 2416  
**Offic, sb. secular employment.** A 292  
**Of-thowed, p. p. thawed.** HF<sup>3</sup> 53  
**Oynement, sb. ointment.** A 631  
**Oynons, sb. pl. onions.** A 634  
**Oystre, sb. oyster.** A 182  
**Olifautes, sb. pl. elephants.** Bo. 782  
**Olmeris, sb. pl. elms.** R 1314  
**O-loft, adv. aloft.** T<sup>1</sup> 950  
**Omager, sb. one who does homage, vassal.** R 3288  
**On, prep. on, in, at**  
**Onde, sb. malice.** R 148  
**Ones, adv. once.** A 1836  
**Onloft, adv. aloft.** E 229  
**Oo, num. one**  
**Ook, sb. oak.** A 1702, 2921  
**Oon, num. one.** A 2069  
**Ooned, p. p. united.** Bo. 1463  
**Oones, adv. once**  
**Ooning, sb. unifying.** Bo. 1464  
**Only, adv. only.** H 143  
**Oore, sb. compassion.** A 3726  
**Oost, sb. host, army.** L 626, Bo. 88  
**Openers, sb. pl. medlars.** A 3871  
**Open-headed, p. p. bareheaded.** D 645  
**Opie, sb. opium.** A 1472  
**O-point, at point, ready.** T<sup>4</sup> 1638  
**Ordal, sb. ordeal.** T<sup>3</sup> 1046  
**Orde, sb. dat. point.** L 645  
**Ordeyne, adj. ordered.** T<sup>1</sup> 892  
**Ordeynly, adv. in order.** Bo. 1524  
**Ordred, p. p. ordained.** I 782  
**Orfrays, sb. gold embroidery.** R 1076  
**Orisonte, sb. horizon.** T<sup>5</sup> 276  
**Orloge, sb. sundial, clock.** PF 530, B 4044  
**Orphelyn, sb. orphan.** Bo. 334  
**Ost, sb. host, army.** Former Age 40  
**Ostelementes, sb. pl. utensils, furniture.** Bo. 455  
**Other, conj. either, or**  
**Ouche, sb. jewel.** D 743  
**Oules, sb. pl. awls.** D 1730  
**Oultrage, sb. excess.** Bo. 455  
**Ounces, sb. pl. small pieces.** A 677  
**Ounded, adj. wavy.** T<sup>4</sup> 743  
**Outen, v. publish, display.** E 2438, G 834  
**Out-hees, sb. hue and cry.** A 2012  
**Outher, conj. either, or.** A 1485, 1593  
**Outlandish, adj. foreign.** Former Age 22  
**Outrage, sb. excess.** Former Age 5  
**Outreye, v. pass beyond control.** E 643  
**Outrely, adv. utterly.** C 849  
**Out-taken, prep. except.** B 277  
**Over-al, prep. above, besides**  
**Over-al, adv. everywhere, generally.** A 547, 1664  
**Overeste, adj. sup. uppermost.** A 270  
**Overkervith, pres. intersects.** As. i. § 21  
**Overlad, p. p. overborne.** B 3101  
**Overslope, sb. upper garment.** G 633

- Oversprat**, *pres.* overspreadeth. T<sup>2</sup> 767  
**Overt**, *adj.* open. HF<sup>2</sup> 210  
**Overthrowyng**, *adj.* hasty, biassed. Bo. 1530  
**Overthwart**, *adv.* across. A 1991, T<sup>3</sup> 685  
**Overwhelveth**, *pres.* agitates. Bo. 356  
**Owen**, *v.* ought  
**Owgh**, *interj.* alas. Bo. 228  
**O-wher**, *adv.* anywhere. A 653  
**Owndryng**, *sb.* waving. I 417  
**Owtrayon**, **Outreue**, *v.* act outrageously, pass beyond control. Bo. 758, E 643  
**Paas**, *sb.* pace, especially walking-pace. A 2897, G 575  
**Pace**, *v.* pass. A 175  
**Paye**, *v.* content. R 3599  
**Payde**, *p. p.* pleased  
**Payen**, *adj.* pagan. A 2370  
**Payans**, *sb. pl.* pagans. L 786  
**Pallet**, *sb.* pallet. T<sup>3</sup> 229  
**Palasie**, *sb.* palsy. R 1098  
**Paleys**, *sb.* palace. A 2199  
**Palestral**, *adj.* athletic. T<sup>5</sup> 304  
**Palyng**, *sb.* the making a perpendicular stripe. I 417  
**Palys**, *sb. pl.* pales, palisade. Bo. 231  
**Pan**, *sb.* brain-pan, skull. A 1165  
**Panade**, *sb.* knife. A 3929  
**Pandemayne**, *sb.* fine bread. B 1915  
**Panyers**, *sb. pl.* panniers. HF<sup>3</sup> 849  
**Panter**, *sb.* snare. L 131  
**Papeer**, *sb.* pepper. G 762  
**Papejay**, *sb.* parrot, popinjay. B 1957, B 1559  
**Papelard**, *sb.* deceiver. R 7281  
**Papelardie**, *sb.* deceit. R 6796  
**Paper**, *sb.* indenture. A 4404  
**Parage**, *sb.* dignity, high-priest. D 250, 1120, R 4759  
**Paramentz**, **Parentz**, *sb. pl.* rich array. A 2501, F 269  
**Paramour**, *sb.* sweet-heart. D 454  
**Paramours**, *adv.* passionately. T<sup>5</sup> 158  
**Paraventure**, **Paraunter**, *adv.* peradventure. B 190, L 362  
**Parcel**, *sb.* part. *Pite* 106  
**Pardee**, *par Dieu*. B 1977  
**Paregal**, *adj.* equal. T<sup>5</sup> 840  
**Parentz**. See **Paramentz**  
**Parentele**, *sb.* relationship. I 908  
**Parfay**, *par foi*. B 110  
**Parfit**, *adj.* perfect. A 72  
**Parfourned**, *p. p.* consummated. B 1646  
**Parfournest**, *pres.* accomlishest. B 1797  
**Parishshens**, *sb. pl.* parishioners. A 482  
**Paritory**, *sb.* pellitory. G 581  
**Parlement**, *sb.* parliament, deliberation. A 1306  
**Paroch prest**, *sb.* parish priest. R 6384  
**Parodie**, *sb.* period. T<sup>5</sup> 1548  
**Parseners**, *sb. pl.* partners. R 6952  
**Parten**, *v.* take part, share. L 465  
**Partie**, *sb.* partisan. A 2657  
**Partyng-felawes**, *sb. pl.* partners. I 637  
**Parvys**, *sb.* church-porch. A 310  
**Pas**, *sb.* See **Paas**  
**Passant**, *adj.* surpassing. A 2107  
**Passen**, *v.* surpass. L 162  
**Patre**, **Patron**, *v.* patter, chatter. R 6794, 7241  
**Paumes**, *sb. pl.* palms. T<sup>3</sup> 1114  
**Pax**, *sb.* a painted tablet kissed during the celebration of mass. I 407  
**Pecunyal**, *adj.* pecuniary. D 1314  
**Pees**, *sb.* peace. A 1671  
**Peyned**, *pret.* pained, troubled. A 139  
**Peytre**, *sb.* breast-piece. G 564  
**Pei**, *sb.* castle. HF<sup>3</sup> 220  
**Pelet**, *sb.* shot. HF<sup>3</sup> 553  
**Penant**, *sb.* penitent. B 3124  
**Pencol**, **Pensel**, *sb.* small banner. T<sup>5</sup> 1043, R 6282  
**Penyble**, *adj.* painstaking. B 3490  
**Penner**, *sb.* pen-case. E 1879  
**Pennoun**, *sb.* pennant, banner. A 978  
**Pens**, *sb. pl.* pence. C 402  
**Peple**, *sb.* people. A 995  
**Percas**, *adv.* perchance. R 6647  
**Percely**, *sb.* parsley. A 4350  
**Perchemyne**, *sb.* parchment. R 6584  
**Perdurable**, *adj.* lasting. I 75  
**Perdurablete**, *sb.* immortality. Bo. 552  
**Peregryn**, *adj.* pilgrim. F 428  
**Perletonette**, *sb.* pear-tree. A 3248  
**Perfit**, *adj.* perfect. A 1271  
**Perissed**, *p. p.* destroyed. I 579  
**Perree**, *sb.* precious stones, jewellery. A 2936, B 3495, D 344  
**Pers**, *adj.* blue. A 439  
**Persaunt**, *adj.* piercing. R 2809  
**Person**, **Persoun**, (1) person, A 2725; (2) parson, A 478  
**Perturben**, *pres. pl.* disturb. A 906  
**Pervynke**, *sb.* periwinkle. R 903  
**Pese**, *v.* appease. R 3397  
**Pesene**, *sb. pl.* peas. L 648  
**Pesible**, *adj.* peaceful. Bo. 169  
**Philosophere**, *sb.* philosopher, esp. an alchemist. A 297  
**Phitonesses**, *sb. pl.* diviners, witches. HF<sup>3</sup> 171  
**Pye**, *sb.* magpie, chatterer. T<sup>3</sup> 527  
**Piggensye**, *sb.* pig's eye, a term of endearment. A 3268  
**Pighte**, *pret.* pitched. A 2689  
**Pike**, *v.* (1) peep, T<sup>3</sup> 60; (2) pick; **Pyketh**, *pres.* picks over, smartens, E 2011; (3) **Pike** on, prick against, T<sup>2</sup> 1274  
**Piked**, *pret.* stole. L 2467  
**Pykepurs**, *sb.* pick-pocket. A 1998  
**Pykerel**, *sb.* young pike. E 1419  
**Pilche**, *sb.* fur coat. *Proverbs* 4  
**Piled**, *adj.* plucked, scanty, bald. A 67, 3935, 4306  
**Pilere**, *sb.* pillow. Bl. 738  
**Pilled**, *p. p.* plundered. L 1262  
**Pilours**, *sb. pl.* plunderers. A 1007  
**Pilwe**, *sb.* pillow. Bl. 284  
**Pilwe-beer**, *sb.* pillow-case. A 694  
**Pyment**, *sb.* spiced wine. A 3378, Bo. 476, R 6027  
**Pynchen**, *v.* cavil at, A 326; **Pynchest**, *Fortune* 57  
**Pyne**, *sb.* pain, torture. T<sup>2</sup> 676, A 1746  
**Pyn-trees**, *sb. pl.* pine-trees. Bo. 477  
**Piper**, *adj.* used for pipes or horns. PF 178  
**Pyrrie**, *sb.* pear-tree. E 2217  
**Pissemyre**, *sb.* ant. D 1325  
**Pistel**, *sb.* epistle, story. D 1021  
**Pitaunce**, *sb.* portion of food. A 224  
**Place**, *sb.* chief house. B 1910  
**Plages**, *sb. pl.* coasts, quarters. B 543, As. i. § 5  
**Playes**, *sb. pl.* devices. Bl. 569

lat, *adj.* flat. B 3947  
 latly, *adv.* flatly. T<sup>3</sup> 786  
 leye, *v.* play, jest. A 1127  
 leyn, *adj.* (1) full, A 315; (2) plain, frank, L 328, An. 278  
 leyn, Playn, *adv.* (1) fully, A 327; (2) plainly, B 219  
 leyne, *v.* complain. D 1313  
 leyng, *p. pres.* arguing. PF 495  
 leylich, *adv.* plainly. T<sup>2</sup> 272  
 lesaunce, *sb.* pleasure. L 1446  
 lete, Pleten, *v.* plead. T<sup>2</sup> 1468, Bo. 296  
 lye, *v.* bend. E 1169, R 4389  
 lyght, *p. p.* plucked, D 790; *plighte, pret.* pulled, B 15  
 lit, *sb.* plight. T<sup>2</sup> 712  
 lite, *v.* fold. T<sup>2</sup> 1204  
 lowngy, *adj.* moist, Bo. 64, 616  
 loeplysh, *adj.* vulgar. T<sup>4</sup> 1677  
 lolleys, *adj.* Apulian. F 195  
 loynaunt, *adj.* pungent. A 352  
 loynt, *sb.*; In good poynt, in good condition, A 200; At poynt devys, carefully, A 3689  
 loyntel, *sb.* pencil, stylus. D 1742, Bo. 1810  
 loko, *sb.* pocket, bag. A 3780  
 lokettes, *sb. pl.* bags. G 808  
 lolyve, *sb.* pulley. F 184  
 lome-garnettys, *sb. pl.* pomegranates. R 1356  
 lomel, *sb.* crown, top. A 2689  
 lomely, *adj.* dappled. A 616  
 lool, *sb.* pole. Bo. 1435, As. i. § 14  
 lopelote, *sb.* puppet. A 3254  
 lopet, *sb.* poppet, doll. B 1891  
 lopped, *pret.* bedizened. R 1019  
 loppere, *sb.* dagger. A 3931  
 loraille, *sb.* poor folk. A 247  
 lorismes, *sb. pl.* corollaries. Bo. 924  
 lortatif, *adj.* portable. As. [17]  
 lortecolys, *sb.* portcullis. R 4168  
 lorthors, *sb.* breviary. B 1321  
 lortretour, *sb.* artist. A 1899  
 lose, *sb.* a cold. A 4152  
 lose, *pres. s.* put the case, suppose. A 1162, T<sup>3</sup> 310  
 lossessioners, *sb. pl.* members of endowed orders. D 1772  
 losseth, *pres. s.* pushes, L 2420; Possed, Posshed, *p. p.* pushed, driven, T<sup>4</sup> 415, R 4625  
 lostum, *sb.* abscess. Bo. 694  
 lotente, *sb.* staff. D 1776, T<sup>3</sup> 1222, R 368  
 lotestat, *sb.* potentate. • D 2007  
 loutremarchant, *sb.* flavouring powder. A 381  
 lounage, *sb.* food for pigs. Former Age 7  
 lounne, *sb.* pawn in chess. Bl. 660  
 louped, *pret.* blown. H 90  
 lourely, *adv.* poorly. A 1412  
 lous, *sb.* pulse. T<sup>3</sup> 1114  
 loustre, *sb.* power. Bo. 1423, R 6424  
 lownsonyng, *sb.* puncturing. I 418  
 lrece, *v.* press. R 4198  
 lredicacioun, *sb.* preaching. B 1176  
 lrees, *sb.* press, crowd. B 393, 865  
 lreest, *sb.* priest. B 4010  
 lreeve, *v.* stand testing. G 645  
 lreferre, *pres. subj.* surpass. D 96  
 lreye, *pres. s.* pray. B 3995  
 lreyneth, *pres. s.* preens. E 2011  
 lreysse, *v.* praise. L 67  
 lrenostik, *adj.* prophetic. Fortune 54  
 lrenten, *v.* imprint. T<sup>2</sup> 900

lres, *sb.* crowd. T<sup>2</sup> 1718  
 lresse, lresen, *v.* press, R 2899, Pite 19; lresyng, *p. pres.* R 6437  
 lrest, *adj.* ready. T<sup>2</sup> 785, T<sup>3</sup> 485  
 lretende, *v.* intend. T<sup>4</sup> 922  
 lreterit, *adj.* past. R 5011  
 lreve, *sb.* proof. T<sup>1</sup> 470, 690  
 lreve, *v.* prove. L 9  
 lrydeles, *adj.* without pride. Complaynte to his Lady 25  
 lryghte, *pret.* pricked. F 418  
 lryhte, *pret.* pierced. ABC 163  
 lrykasour, *sb.* hard rider. A 189  
 lryketh, *pres. s.* spurs. A 1043  
 lrykyng, *sb.* spurring. A 191  
 lrykke, *sb.* point, centre. Bo. 1030  
 lrylle. See note, R 1058  
 lryme, *sb.* the time between 6 and 9 A.M. B 1278, 4387  
 lryme, At lryme face, *primâ facie*, at first glance  
 lrymerole, *sb.* primrose. A 3268  
 lryrs, *sb.* value, estimation. A 67, B 2285  
 lryvæ, *adj.* secret. D 1136  
 lryvely, *adv.* secretly. A 1443  
 lrylacionis, *sb. pl.* preludes. Bo. 270  
 lrylle, *pres. pl.* prowl. G 1412  
 lryppre, *adj.* proper, own. T<sup>2</sup> 1487  
 lrypprete, *sb.* property. T<sup>4</sup> 392  
 lryrow, *sb.* profit. B 1598, T<sup>2</sup> 1664  
 lryruesse, *sb.* prowess. Bo. 1291  
 lryulle, *v.* pluck, A 652; Pulled, *p. p.* A 177  
 lryurchace, *v.* obtain. T<sup>4</sup> 557  
 lryurchas, *sb.* earnings. A 256  
 lryurchasyng, *sb.* prosecuting. A 320  
 lryurchasour, *sb.* prosecutor. A 319  
 lryure, *adj.* mere, very. A 1279  
 lryured, *p. p.* refined. F 1560  
 lryurple, *adj.* purple. L 654  
 lryursewing, *adj.* following, in accordance with. Bl. 958  
 lryurtreye, *v.* draw. A 96  
 lryurveiable, *adj.* providential. Bo. 655  
 lryurveilaunce, *sb.* providence. A 1252  
 lryurveye, *v.* provide. E 191  
 lryut, *pres.* putteth. L 652  
 lryut, *sb.* pit. I 170  
 lryutours, *sb. pl.* whoremongers. I 886  
 lryuaad, *adj.* evil. A 4357  
 lryuakke, *sb.* hoarseness. A 4152  
 lryualm, *sb.* disease, A 2014; death-note, T<sup>5</sup> 382  
 lryuappe, *v.* flutter. T<sup>3</sup> 57  
 lryuæerne, *sb.* mill. B 3264  
 lryueynte, *pl. adj.* quaint. A 1531  
 lryueynte, *sb.* pudendum muliebre. A 3276  
 lryueynte, *pret.* was quenched. A 2334  
 lryueyntise, *sb.* elegance, I 932; contrivance, I 733  
 lryuelle, *v.* kill. B 4580  
 lryuemen, *v.* please. T<sup>5</sup> 695; *pres. pl.* T<sup>2</sup> 803  
 lryuerne, *sb.* mill. HF<sup>3</sup> 708  
 lryuerrou, *sb.* quarryman. R 4149  
 lryuestemongers, *sb. pl.* holders of inquests. I 797  
 lryuesthe, *pres. s.* say, cry. R 6999  
 lryuyke, *adj. pl.* alive. A 1015  
 lryuyked, *pret.* revived. A 2335  
 lryuyknesse, *sb.* liveliness. Bl. 26  
 lryuybyle, *sb.* a part sung a fifth above the air. A 3332

- Quyrbolily**, *sb.* leather boiled and hardened. B 2065
- Quisshin**, *sb.* cushion. T<sup>2</sup> 1229
- Quystron**, *sb.* scullion. R 886
- Quite**, *v.* pay, redeem, satisfy. A 770, 1032, B 354
- Quitly**, *adv.* freely. A 1792
- Quod**, *pret.* said. B 1644
- Quoint**, *adj.* quaint. R 2038
- Quoak**, *pret.* quaked. A 1576
- Raa**, *sb.* roe. A 4086
- Racyne**, *sb.* root. R 4881
- Rad**, *p.p.* read, A 2595; **Radde**, *pret.* PF 21
- Radevore**, *sb.* tapestry (?). L 2352
- Raffe**, *pret.* rest. L 1855
- Rayed**, *p.p.* striped. Bl. 252
- Rakel**, *adj.* hasty. T<sup>3</sup> 429, H 278
- Rakelnesse**, **Rekelnesse**, *sb.* hastiness. H 283, Scogan 16
- Rake-stele**, *sb.* rake-handle. D 949
- Rakle**, *v.* be rash. T<sup>3</sup> 1642
- Ramage**, *adj.* wild. R 5384
- Rammysh**, *adj.* ram-like. G 887
- Rape**, *sb.* haste, *Adam* 7; *adv.* hastily, R 6516
- Rape and renne**, rob and plunder. G 1422
- Rather**, *adv. comp.* earlier, sooner. Bo. 260, B 2265
- Raughte**, *pret.* reached. A 136
- Ravyne**, *sb.* rapine, Bo. 323; **Ravynes**, *pl.* I 793
- Ravyners**, *sb. pl.* plunderers, Bo. 91; **Ravynour**, Bo. 1304
- Ravysable**, *adj.* ravenous. R 7006
- Real**, *adj.* royal. B 4366
- Realtee**, *sb.* royalty. *Fortune* 60
- Reawme**, *sb.* realm. B 797
- Rebekke**, *sb.* abusive term for an old woman. D 1573
- Recche**, *pres. subj.* expound. B 4086
- Recchelees**, *adj.* careless. A 179
- Rechased**, *p.p.* chased back. Bl. 379
- Reche**, *v.* reach. Bl. 47
- Recorde**, *pres. s.* confirm. A 1745
- Recourses**, *sb. pl.* retrogressions. Bo. 41
- Recreaundise**, *sb.* cowardice. B 4038
- Recured**, *p.p.* recovered. R 4920
- Reddour**, *sb.* violence. *Fortune* 13
- Rede**, *sb.* reed-pipe. HF<sup>3</sup> 131
- Rede**, **Reed**, *sb.* counsel. Bl. 203
- Redelees**, *adj.* deviceless. *Pite* 27
- Redoutynge**, *sb.* glorifying. A 2050
- Redowte**, *v.* respect. Bo. 73
- Reed**, *adj.* red. B 1301
- Reed**, **Rede**, *sb.* counsel. A 1216
- Reenden**, *pres. pl.* rend, destroy. Bo. 1092
- Rees**, *sb.* race; **In a rees**, hastily. T<sup>4</sup> 350
- Refect**, *p.p.* refreshed. Bo. 1550
- Refreyden**, *v.* cool, T<sup>5</sup> 507; **Refreyded**, **Refreyd**, *p.p.* frozen, cool, I 341, *Rosemounde* 21
- Refut**, *sb.* refuge. B 852, *ABC* 14
- Regalye**, *sb.* majesty. *Pite* 65
- Regals**, *sb. pl.* royal privileges. L 2128
- Regne**, *sb.* kingdom. A 1638
- Reyes**, *sb. pl.* round dances. HF<sup>3</sup> 146
- Reighte**, *pret.* reached. HF<sup>3</sup> 284
- Reysed**, *p.p.* (1) raised, Bl. 1277; (2) raided, A 54
- Rekelnesse**, *sb.* hastiness. *Scogan* 16
- Reken**, **Rekne**, *v.* reckon, recount. B 110, A 1933
- Relees**, *sb.* release, *ABC* 3; **Out of relees**, ceaselessly, G 46
- Relente**, *v.* melt. G 1278
- Remes**, *sb. pl.* realms. B 4326, Bo. 723
- Remowed**, *p.p.* removed. F 181
- Remorde**, *pres. subj.* cause remorse, T<sup>4</sup> 149
- Remordith**, vexes, Bo. 1519
- Remounted**, *p.p.* caused to rise again. Bo. 60
- Remuable**, *adj.* changeable. T<sup>4</sup> 1682
- Ren**, *sb.* run. A 4079
- Renably**, *adv.* eloquently. D 1509
- Reneyen**, *v.* deny, B 3751; **Reneyed**, *p.p.* B 3
- Renges**, *sb. pl.* ranks. A 2594
- Renomee**, *sb.* renown. D 1159, L 1513
- Renovelaunces**, *sb. pl.* renewals. HF<sup>2</sup> 185
- Renovellen**, *pres. pl.* renew. I 1027
- Rent**, rendeth. L 646
- Rente**, *sb.* income. B 4017
- Replicacioun**, *sb.* reply. A 1846, PF 536
- Reprende**, *v.* reprehend, blame. T<sup>1</sup> 510
- Requerable**, *adj.* desirable. Bo. 491
- Resalgar**, *sb.* rat's-bane. G 814
- Rescous**, **Rescous**, *sb.* rescue. T<sup>1</sup> 478, A 2643
- Rescowe**, *v.* rescue. T<sup>3</sup> 857
- Rese**, *v.* shake. A 1986
- Resons**, *sb. pl.* opinions. A 274
- Resport**, *v.* regard. T<sup>4</sup> 850
- Resteless**, *adj.* restless. C 728
- Rethor**, *sb.* rhetorician. B 4397
- Rethorien**, *sb.* rhetorician. Bo. 341
- Retorninge**, *part. pres.* turning over. T<sup>5</sup> 1023
- Retraccounes**, *sb. pl.* recantations. I 1085
- Revelous**, *adj.* sportive. B 1194
- Revers**, *sb.* reverse. B 416
- Revesten**, *pres. pl.* clothe anew. T<sup>3</sup> 353
- Revoken**, *v.* call back, restore. T<sup>3</sup> 1118
- Reward**, *sb.* regard. B 2445
- Rewe**, *sb.* row. A 2866
- Rewel boon**, *sb.* smooth bone, ivory (?). B 230
- Rewliche**, *adj.* pitiable. Bo. 312
- Rewme**, *sb.* realm. R 495
- Rial**, *adj.* royal. *Pite* 59
- Ribibe**, *sb.* old woman. D 1377
- Ribible**, **Rubible**, *sb.* fiddle. A 4396, 3331
- Richesse**, *sb.* riches. B 107
- Ridynge**, *sb.* a jousting or procession. A 4377
- Ridled**, *p.p.* pleated. R 1235
- Riet**, *sb.* the net or perforated plate revolving within the 'mother' of an Astrolabe. As. i. 8
- Righte**, *adj.* direct. B 556
- Rightful**, *adj.* righteous. *ABC* 31
- Rihts**, *adj.* right. *ABC* 75
- Rympled**, *p.p.* wrinkled. R 4494
- Rys**, *sb.* twig. A 3324
- Rishe**, **Rissho**, *sb.* rush. R 1701, T<sup>3</sup> 1161
- Rist**, riseth. B 864, L 810
- Rit**, rideth. A 974
- Roche**, *sb.* rock. HF<sup>3</sup> 40
- Rochette**, *sb.* rochet, linen vest. R 4754
- Rode**, *sb.* ruddiness. B 1917
- Rode**, *sb.* rood, cross. HF<sup>1</sup> 57
- Roggeth**, *pres. s.* shakes. L 2708
- Roghte**, *pret.* recked. E 685
- Rolgnous**, *adj.* rotten. R 6190
- Royleth**, *pres. s.* rolls. Bo. 256
- Royns**, *sb.* itch. R 553
- Roynous**, *adj.* scabby, rough. R 988
- Roket**, *sb.* rochet, linen vest. R 1242
- Rombel**. See **Rumbel**
- Rommer**, *adj. comp.* roomier. A 4145
- Ron**, *pret.* rained. T<sup>3</sup> 640
- Rone**. See note, R 1673



onne, *pres. pl.* ran. B 4578  
 ood, *pret.* rode. A 966  
 oof, *pret.* clave. HF<sup>1</sup> 373  
 ootes, *sb. pl.* astrological roots. F 1276  
 open, *p. p.* reaped. L 74  
 ore, *sb.* uproar. T<sup>3</sup> 45  
 osane, *adj.* rosy. Bo. 353  
 oser, *sb.* rose-tree. R 1651, 3059  
 osyn, *adj.* made of roses. R 845  
 ote, *sb.* a small harp. A 236  
 oughte, *pret.* recked. T<sup>1</sup> 496  
 ouken, *v.* cover, huddle, T<sup>3</sup> 409; Rouketh, *pres. s.* A 1308  
 ouncey, *sb.* hack. A 390  
 oundel, *sb.* circlet. HF<sup>2</sup> 283  
 ounynges, *sb. pl.* whisperings. HF<sup>3</sup> 370  
 oute, *sb.* assembly. B 776  
 oute, *v.* assemble together. B 540  
 outheth, *pres. s.* snores. A 3647  
 outhethe, *sb.* pity. A 914  
 outhyng, *sb.* rumbling. HF<sup>3</sup> 843  
 ove, *sb.* roof. A 8337  
 owe, *adj. pl.* rough. R 1838  
 owe, *adv.* roughly. G 861, T<sup>1</sup> 206  
 owe, *sb.* row, line, HF<sup>1</sup> 448; Rowes, *pl.* rays, beams, Mars 2  
 owne, *pres. pl.* whisper. D 241  
 owtyng, *sb.* snoring. A 4166  
 tubible, *sb.* kind of fiddle. A 3331  
 ruddok, *sb.* robin. PF 349  
 ruggy, *adj.* unkempt. A 2883  
 rumbel, *sb.* moaning wind, A 1979; rumour, E 997  
 sachelis, *sb. pl.* satchels, bags. Bo. 90  
 sad, *adj.* steadfast. E 220  
 Sadly, *adv.* firmly, seriously, steadfastly. A 2602, B 1266, 743  
 say, *pret.* saw. B 809, Bl. 1088  
 say, *v.* assay. R 5162  
 sailleuris, *sb. pl.* dancers. R 770  
 sale, *sb.* soul. A 4187  
 salute, *v.* salute, B 1723; Salued, *pret.* R 3610; Salewed, *p. p.* F 1310  
 salwes, *sb. pl.* willows. D 655  
 samyt, *sb.* samite. T<sup>1</sup> 109  
 sangwyn, *adj.* red. A 439  
 sarge, *sb.* serge. A 2568  
 sarpleris, *sb. pl.* sacks. Bo. 90  
 sarsynish, *adj.* made of Saracen cloth, soft silk. R 1188  
 sat, *pret.* fitted, suited, L 1735; Sate, *subj.* would befit, T<sup>2</sup> 117  
 sauf, *adj.* safe. G 950  
 sauter, *sb.* psalter. R 431  
 sautrie, *sb.* psalter, small harp. A 296  
 savacoun, *sb.* salvation. E 1677  
 save, *adj.* safe. An. 267  
 save, *sb.* sage. A 2713  
 save-garde, *sb.* safe-conduct. T<sup>4</sup> 139  
 savorous, *adj.* pleasant, toothsome. R 84, 2812  
 savete, *sb.* safety. R 6869  
 sawcfeem, *adj.* pimpled. A 625  
 sawe, *sb.* saying. G 691  
 scaled, *adj.* scabby. A 627  
 scalle, *sb.* scab. Adam 3  
 scantilone, *sb.* mason's rule. R 7064  
 scarmuch, *sb.* skirmish. T<sup>2</sup> 611  
 scathe, *sb.* harm, misfortune. A 446  
 schad, *p. p.* scattered. Bo. 1478

Schrewes, *sb. pl.* rascals. Bo. 1365  
 Sclat, *sb.* slate. *Merciles Beante* 24  
 Sclaundre, *sb.* slander, scandal. E 722  
 Sclendre, *adj.* slender. A 587  
 Scochouns, *sb. pl.* escutcheons. R 893  
 Scole, *sb.* school. B 1685  
 Scoleye, *v.* attend school. A 302  
 Scoomes, *sb. pl.* foamings. Bo. 1612  
 Scorklith, *pres. s.* scorches. Bo. 525  
 Scripture, *sb.* inscription. T<sup>3</sup> 1369  
 Scrit, *sb.* writing. T<sup>2</sup> 1130  
 Scrivenisshly, *adv.* like a scribe. T<sup>2</sup> 1026  
 Seche, *v.* seek. A 784  
 Secree, *adj.* secret. B 4105  
 See, *sb.* sea. Bl. 67  
 See, *sb.* seat. T<sup>4</sup> 1023  
 Seeke, *adj.* sick. A 18  
 Seel, *sb.* happiness. A 4239  
 Seeli, *adv.* seldom. B 2340, Bo. 1442  
 Seele, *sb.* seal. B 882  
 Sege, *sb.* seat. Bo. 102  
 Seigh, Sey, *pret.* saw. A 192, T<sup>2</sup> 277  
 Seyl, *sb.* sail. A 696  
 Seyn, *p. p.* seen. B 624  
 Seyn, *pres. pl.* say. B 622  
 Seynd, *p. p.* singled. B 4035  
 Seintuarie, Seyntwarie, *sb.* sanctuary. I 781, Bo. 131  
 Seistow, sayest thou. D 292  
 Selde, *adv.* seldom. A 1539, T<sup>4</sup> 423  
 Sely, *adj.* innocent, simple, good, A 3404, B 682, 1702; strange, HF<sup>2</sup> 5  
 Selyly, *adv.* happily. Bo. 386  
 Sellesse, *sb.* happiness. T<sup>3</sup> 825  
 Selve, *adj.* self-same. A 2584  
 Semblable, *adj.* like. I 408  
 Semblant, *sb.* appearance. L 1736, R 3205  
 Semelyhede, *sb.* goodness. R 1130  
 Semycope, *sb.* short cloak. A 262  
 Semysoun, *sb.* low noise. A 3697  
 Sencer, *sb.* censor. A 3340  
 Sendal, *sb.* fine silk. A 440  
 Senith, *sb.* zenith. As. ii. § 26  
 Sent, *pres.* sendeth. T<sup>2</sup> 1123  
 Sentence, *sb.* meaning, purport. A 306, C 157  
 Septemtrioun, *sb.* the north. B 3657  
 Serenous, *adj.* serene. *Pite* 92 (*emend.*)  
 Sereyns, *sb. pl.* sirens. R 684  
 Servage, *sb.* servitude. A 1946  
 Servaunt, *sb.* lover. A 1814  
 Sasons, *sb. pl.* seasons. A 347  
 Sete, *v.* were seated. T<sup>2</sup> 81  
 Setewale, *sb.* valerian. R 1370  
 Sette . . . cappe, befool. A 586  
 Seur, *adv.* surely. T<sup>3</sup> 1633  
 Seurte, *sb.* surety. A 1604  
 Sewed, pursued. B 4527  
 Sewes, *sb. pl.* dishes. F 67  
 Shal, *pres. s.* owe. T<sup>3</sup> 791  
 Shale, *sb.* shell. HF<sup>3</sup> 191  
 Shalmys, *sb. pl.* shawms. HF<sup>3</sup> 128  
 Shaltow, shalt thou  
 Shapen, *pres. pl.* prepare. A 772  
 Shaply, *adv.* likely. T<sup>4</sup> 1452  
 Shawe, *sb.* grove. A 4367, T<sup>3</sup> 720  
 Sheeldes, *sb. pl.* French crowns. A 278  
 Sheene, *adj.* beautiful. A 166  
 Sheete, *v.* shoot. A 3928  
 Shende, harm, A 4410; Shendeth, confounds  
 B 28

- Shendshipe**, *sb.* ignominy. I 273  
**Shent**, *p.p.* scolded, discomfited, spoilt. B 1731,  
 A 2754, I. 652, R 2584  
**Shepne**, *sb. pl.* sheep-folds. A 2000  
**Sherte**, *sb.* shirt. A 1566  
**Shet**, *p.p.* shut. A 2597  
**Sheter**, *sb.* as *adj.* shooter. PF 180  
**Shette**, *pret.* shut. T<sup>3</sup> 1086  
**Shilde**, *subj. pres. s.*; **God shilde**, God forbid,  
 A 3427, B 1356  
**Shynes**, *sb. pl.* shins. A 1279  
**Shipnes**, *sb. pl.* stables. D 871  
**Shiten**, *p.p.* befouled. A 504  
**Shode**, *sb.* parting of the hair. A 2007  
**Shof**, *pret.* showed. T<sup>3</sup> 487, R 533  
**Sholde**, *sb.* shoulder. D 348  
**Shonde**, *sb.* harm. B 2098  
**Shoof**, *pret.* showed. PF 154  
**Shoop**, *pret.* shaped, determined. *Pite* 20, B  
 1244  
**Shotwyndowe**, *sb.* window with a bolt. A 3358  
**Shour**, *sb.* onslaught, T<sup>4</sup> 47; **Shoures**, *pl.* T<sup>3</sup>  
 1064  
**Shrewednesse**, *sb.* rascality. B 2721  
**Shrewes**, *sb. pl.* rascals. C 835  
**Shryfte**, *sb.* confession. L 745  
**Shrighte**, *pret.* shrieked. A 2817  
**Shuldres**, *sb. pl.* shoulders. A 6787  
**Sy**, *pret.* saw, HF<sup>3</sup> 72; **Sye**, *pret. pl.* E 1804  
**Syb**, *adj.* related, akin. B 2565, R 1199  
**Sikarly**, *adv.* certainly. A 137  
**Sye**, *v.* sink. T<sup>3</sup> 182  
**Syen**, **Sye**, *pret. pl.* saw. G 110, E 1804  
**Siggen**, *pres. pl.* say. T<sup>4</sup> 194  
**Sigte**, *pret.* sighed. B 1035  
**Sik**, *sb.* sigh. T<sup>4</sup> 1527  
**Sike**, *v.* sigh. A 1540  
**Sike**, *adj.* sick. A 245  
**Sikernesse**, *sb.* security, surety. B 425, R 7309  
**Siklich**, *adj.* sickly. T<sup>2</sup> 1528  
**Syn**, *conj.* since. A 601  
**Synguler**, *adj.* particular. I 300  
**Synwes**, *sb. pl.* sinews. I 685  
**Sys-aas**, six and ace. B 3851  
**Sisoures**, *sb. pl.* scissors. HF<sup>2</sup> 182  
**Sit**, *pres. s.* sitteth, sits, A 1599, Bl. 1107; fits,  
 B 1353  
**Sith**, **Sithen**, *conj. and adv.* since. A 930,  
 1521  
**Sithe**, *sb.* scythe. L 646  
**Sithe**, *sb. pl.* times. B 733  
**Sittande**, *pres. part.* fitting. R 2263  
**Sittyngest**, *adj. sup.* most fitting. PF 551  
**Skaffaut**, *sb.* scaffold. R 4176  
**Skale**, *sb.* scale, circle under cross-line of Astro-  
 lab. As. i. § 12  
**Skye**, *sb.* cloud. HF<sup>3</sup> 510  
**Skylatoun**, *sb.* fine cloth. B 1924  
**Skiles**, *sb. pl.* reasons. F 205  
**Skilful**, *adj.* reasonable. Bl. 533  
**Skilfully**, *adv.* reasonably. G 320  
**Skryppe**, *sb.* scrip. R 7493  
**Slawe**, **Slawen**, *p.p.* slain. A 943, An. 59  
**Sle**, *imper.* slay thou. A 1740  
**Sledys**, *sb. pl.* sledges, carriages. Bo. 1165  
**Slee**, *v.* slay. A 661  
**Sleep**, *pret.* slept. A 93, Bl. 169  
**Sleere**, *sb.* slayer. A 2005  
**Sleighe**, *adj.* sly, clever. T<sup>4</sup> 972  
**Slider**, *adj.* slippery. A 1264  
**Slye**, *adj. pl.* clever. Bl. 569  
**Slyk**, *adj.* sleek. D 351  
**Slyk**, *adj.* such. A 4130  
**Slyly**, *adv.* cleverly. A 1444  
**Slit**, *pres. s.* slideth. G 682, PF 3  
**Slivere**, *sb.* sliver, part. T<sup>3</sup> 1013  
**Slomrest**, *pres. s.* slumberest. R 2576  
**Slow**, **Slough**, *pret.* slew. B 984, Bl. 738, A 984  
 An. 56  
**Slowe**, *sb.* moth. R 4751  
**Smerte**, *adv.* smartly. A 149  
**Smete**, *p.p.* smitten. R 3735  
**Smyt**, *pres. s.* smiteth. E 122  
**Smoterlich**, *adj.* smutty. A 3963  
**Snewed**, *pret.* snowed, abounded. A 345  
**Snybben**, *v.* reprove, A 523; **Snybbed**, *p.p.*  
 4401  
**Socour**, *sb.* succour. A 918  
**Sodeynliche**, *adv.* suddenly. A 1575  
**Sojourn**, *sb.* sojourn. R 5151  
**Sokene**, *sb.* tolls. A 3987  
**Sokyngly**, *adv.* suckingly, gently. B 2765  
**Solaas**, *sb.* solace. A 798  
**Soleyn**, *adj.* solitary. PF 607, R 3896  
**Solempne**, *adj.* solemn, famous. A 209  
**Somdel**, *adv.* somewhat. A 174  
**Some**, *num. pron.* one; **Tenthe some**, ten in  
 all, T<sup>2</sup> 1249; **Al and som**, one and all  
**Somer**, *sb.* summer. A 394  
**Somne**, *v.* summon. D 1377  
**Somonour**, *sb.* summoner of offenders to the  
 church courts. A 623  
**Sond**, **Soond**, *sb.* sand. PF 243, B 4457  
**Sonde**, *sb.* sending, message, messenger. B 1409,  
 760, 388  
**Sone**, *adv.* soon  
**Sone**, *sb.* son. A 2061  
**Sonne**, *sb.* sun. A 7  
**Sonnish**, *adj.* sunny. T<sup>4</sup> 743  
**Soole**, *adj.* solitary, alone. R 2955, 3023  
**Soond**, *sb.* sand. B 4457  
**Soot**, *adj. pl.* sweet. A 1  
**Sope**, *sb.* sop. A 334  
**Soper**, *sb.* supper. A 799  
**Sophyme**, *sb.* problem, E 5; **Sophymes**, *pl.*  
 sophistries, F 554  
**Sort**, *sb.* lot, fate, oracle. A 844, T<sup>1</sup> 76  
**Sorwe**, *sb.* sorrow. ABC 3  
**Sorrowful**, *adj.* sorrowful. *Pite* 25  
**Sory**, *adj.* sad, luckless. A 2004  
**Sothsawe**, **Sothesaugh**, *sb.* true tale. HF<sup>2</sup>  
 999, R 6130, 7588  
**Sotil**, *adj.* subtle. L 1556  
**Soudiours**, *sb. pl.* soldiers. R 4234  
**Soughe**, *sb.* sow. I 156  
**Soulfre**, *sb.* sulphur. HF<sup>3</sup> 418  
**Soun**, *sb.* sound. Bl. 1165  
**Sourden**, *pres. pl.* rise from. I 448  
**Soures**, *sb. pl.* bucks. Bl. 429  
**Sours**, *sb.* rising, ascent. D 1938, HF<sup>2</sup> 36  
**Soutere**, *sb.* cobbler. A 3904  
**Soutil**, *adj.* thin, subtle. A 2030, 2049  
**Sowdan**, *sb.* Sultan. B 177  
**Sowdanesse**, *sb.* Sultaness. B 358  
**Sowded**, *p.p.* attached, devoted. B 1769  
**Sowe**, *v.* sew, fasten. T<sup>2</sup> 1201  
**Sowke**, *v.* suck. A 4157  
**Sowne**, *v.* sound, play. A 565  
**Sowned**, *pret.* tended to, B 3348; **Sownynge**,  
*pres. part.* A 275

- Space**, *sb.* spare time, opportunity. A 35, T<sup>2</sup> 505  
**Spak**, *pret.* spoke. A 304  
**Span-newe**, *adj.* newly spun, fresh. T<sup>3</sup> 1665  
**Sparand**, *part. pres.* sparing. R 5363  
**Sparrede**, *pret.* locked. R 3320  
**Sparth**, *sb.* halberd. A 2520, R 5978  
**Spaunysshinge**, *sb.* blooming. R 3633  
**Spece**, *sb.* species, kind, class. Bo. 1791, I 407  
**Specuacioun**, *sb.* contemplation. Bo. 1660  
**Speere**, *sb.* sphere. F 1280  
**Spelle**, *sb. dat.* recital. B 2083  
**Spence**, *sb.* buttery. D 1931  
**Spered**, *p. p.* shut. R 2008  
**Speres**, *sb. pl.* spheres. PF 59  
**Sperhawk**, *sb.* sparrow-hawk. T<sup>3</sup> 1192, R 4033  
**Spete**, *v.* spit. T<sup>2</sup> 1617  
**Spille**, *v.* die, perish, destroy, B 285, A 3278,  
*Pite* 46; **Spilt**, *p. p.* killed, B 857  
**Spitously**, *adv.* angrily. A 3476  
**Spores**, *sb. pl.* spurs. A 473  
**Sporneth**, *pres. s.* tramples, T<sup>2</sup> 797; **Sporned**,  
*pret.* stumbled, A 4280  
**Spousaille**, *sb.* marriage. E 115  
**Sprad**, *p. p.* spread, scattered. Bl. 873  
**Spraynd**, **Spreynd**, *p. p.* mingled. Bo. 397,  
 B 422  
**Spryngoides**, *sb. pl.* stone-hurlers. R 4191  
**Squames**, *sb. pl.* scales. G 759  
**Squamous**, *adj.* squeamish. A 3337  
**Squyre**, *sb.* measuring-square, R 7064; **Squyres**,  
*pl. As. i.* § 12  
**Stadye**, *sb.* race-course. Bo. 1275  
**Stak**, *pret.* stuck. T<sup>3</sup> 1372  
**Stal**, *pret.* stole. Bl. 652, 1250  
**Stamyn**, **Stames**, *sb.* linsey-woolsey, coarse  
 cloth. I 1052, L 2360  
**Stank**, *sb.* pool. I 841  
**Stant**, *pres. s.* standeth. B 1704  
**Stape**, **Stapen**, *p. p.* advanced. B 4011, E 1514  
**Stare**, *sb.* starling. PF 348  
**Starf**, *pret.* died. A 933  
**Starke**, *adj. pl.* strong, stiff. B 3560  
**Steere**, *sb.* steersman. B 448  
**Steerelees**, *adj.* without rudder. B 439  
**Steyen**, *v.* ascend. Bo. 877  
**Steyre**, *sb.* stair. Mars 129, T<sup>2</sup> 1705  
**Stel**, **Stele**, *sb.* steel. T<sup>2</sup> 593, HF<sup>2</sup> 175  
**Stele**, *sb.* handle. A 3785  
**Stellifye**, *v.* turn into a star. L 525  
**Stemed**, *pret.* shone. A 202  
**Stenten**, *v.* cease, A 903; **Stente**, *pret.* Bl.  
 154  
**Stepe**, *adj.* bright. A 201  
**Steppes**, *sb. pl.* tracks. Bo. 80  
**Stere**, *sb.* steersman, guide, HF<sup>1</sup> 437, T<sup>3</sup> 1291;  
 rudder, T<sup>3</sup> 641  
**Stere**, *v.* steer, guide. T<sup>3</sup> 910  
**Stere**, *v.* stir, HF<sup>2</sup> 59; discuss, T<sup>4</sup> 1451; **Steryng**,  
*pres. part.* moving, HF<sup>2</sup> 59  
**Stared**, *p. p.* controlled, L 935  
**Sterlynges**, *sb. pl.* sterling pennies, C 907, HF<sup>3</sup>  
 225  
**Sterres**, *sb. pl.* stars. A 208  
**Sterte**, *pret.* started, L 1301; alighted, A 952  
**Sterve**, *pres. sub.* die. A 1144  
**Stevens**, *sb.* voice, A 2562; appointment, Mars  
 47, A 1524  
**Stewe**, *sb.* closet. T<sup>3</sup> 601  
**Stiborne**, *adj.* stubborn. D 456  
**Stye**, *v.* climb. Bo. 1550  
**Styere**, *sb.* rudder. Bo. 1078  
**Stiked**, *pret.* pierced. B 3807  
**Stillatorie**, *sb.* vessel for distilling. G 580  
**Stynt**, *pres. s.* stinteth, ceases. A 2421  
**Stirte**, *pret.* started. A 1579  
**Styth**, *sb.* anvil. A 2026  
**Styves**, *sb. pl.* stews, brothels. D 1332  
**Styward**, *sb.* steward. B 914  
**Stoke**, *v.* stab. A 2546  
**Stokked**, *p. p.* set in the stocks. T<sup>3</sup> 380  
**Stonde**, *v.* stand. A 745  
**Stoon**, *sb.* stone. A 774  
**Stoor**, *sb.* farm-stock. A 598  
**Stoore**, *adj.* stubborn. E 2367  
**Storial**, *adj.* historical. L 702  
**Stot**, *sb.* cob. A 615  
**Stounde**, *sb.* while, time, B 1021; **Stoundes**, *pl.*  
 Bo. 220  
**Stoundemele**, *adv.* momentarily. T<sup>5</sup> 674, R 2304  
**Stour**, *sb.* conflict. R 1270  
**Strake**, *v.* run. Bl. 1311  
**Straughte**, *pret.* stretched. A 2916  
**Streche**, *v.* stretch. An. 341, T<sup>1</sup> 888  
**Stree**, *sb.* straw. A 2918, Bl. 670  
**Streen**, **Strene**, *sb.* race, lineage. E 157, R  
 4859  
**Streit**, *adj.* narrow. A 174  
**Stremes**, *sb. pl.* beams. Bl. 338  
**Strene**, *sb.* lineage. R 4859  
**Strenges**, *sb. pl.* strings. PF 98, T<sup>1</sup> 732  
**Strike**, *sb.* hank, A 676; **Strikes**, *pl.* strokes,  
*As. i.* § 19  
**Stroof**, *pret.* strove. A 1038  
**Strouted**, *pret.* spread. A 3315  
**Stubbes**, *sb. pl.* stumps. A 1978  
**Studies**, *sb. pl.* desires, purposes. Bo. 659,  
 1309  
**Stuwe**, *sb.* stew, fish-pond. A 350  
**Submitted to**, *p. p.* subsumed under. Bo. 1628  
**Succident**, *sb.* subordinate house in astrology.  
*As. ii.* § 3  
**Sucred**, *p. p.* sugared. T<sup>2</sup> 384  
**Suffisaunce**, *sb.* sufficiency. Bl. 1037  
**Suffraunt**, *adj.* patient. Bl. 1009  
**Sugot**, *sb.* subject. R 3535  
**Sukkenye**, *sb.* gaberdine. R 1232  
**Surement**, *sb.* surety, pledge. F 1534  
**Surquidrie**, *sb.* arrogance, over-confidence. I  
 405, 1067  
**Sursanure**, *sb.* surface-healed wound. F 1113  
**Sustren**, *sb. pl.* sisters. A 1019  
**Suwe**, *v.* follow. T<sup>1</sup> 379  
**Swa**, *adv.* so. A 4040  
**Swal**, *pret.* swelled. B 1750  
**Swalwe**, *sb.* swallow. T<sup>2</sup> 64  
**Swappe**, **Swape**, *v.* strike. E 586, G 366  
**Swappo**, *sb.* stroke. HF<sup>2</sup> 35  
**Sweigh**, *sb.* sway, movement. B 296  
**Swelte**, *pret.* fainted. E 1776, T<sup>3</sup> 347  
**Swelwe**, *pres. sub.* swallow, E 1188; **Swelweth**,  
*pres. ind. s.* swallows, B 2805  
**Swerd**, *sb.* sword. A 2546  
**Swete**, *v.* sweat. G 579  
**Swevene**, *sb.* dream. B 4086  
**Swich**, *adj.* such. D 281  
**Swynk**, *sb.* toil. A 188  
**Swynke**, *v.* toil. A 186  
**Swynkere**, *sb.* labourer. A 531  
**Swire**, *sb.* throat. R 325  
**Swythe**, *adv.* quickly. C 796, An. 226

- Swyye**, *v.* have sexual intercourse with. A 4178  
**Swogh**, *sb.* swoon, *Pite* 16; groan, A 3619  
**Swolowe**, *sb.* gullet, gulf. L 1104  
**Swoot**, *sb.* sweat. G 578  
**Swough**, *sb.* sougling wind. A 1979  
**T<sup>1</sup>**, before a verb beginning with a vowel, to; a few instances given below  
**Taa**, *v.* take. A 4129  
**Taas**, *sb.* heap. A 1005  
**Tabard**, *sb.* short coat for a herald, A 20; for a labourer, A 541  
**Tabyde**, to abide. B 797  
**Tables**, *sb. pl.* backgammon. F 900  
**Tabouren**, *pres. pl.* drum. L 354  
**Tache**, *sb.* quality. *Balade* 20  
**Taffata**, *sb.* fine silk. A 440  
**Taffraye**, to affray, frighten. E 455  
**Taylagers**, *sb. pl.* tax-gatherers. R 6811  
**Tayllages**, *sb. pl.* taxes. I 567  
**Taille**, *sb.* a tally, credit. A 570  
**Takel**, *sb.* tackle. A 106  
**Tale**, *sb.* speech. Bl. 535  
**Tale**, **Talen**, *v.* talk, tell stories. T<sup>3</sup> 231, A 772  
**Talent**, *sb.* desire. B 1137, Bo. 260  
**Talyghte**, to alight  
**Talyng**, *sb.* story-telling. B 1624  
**Talle**, *adj.* compliant, seemly, manly. *Mars* 38, L 1127 (emend. for 'calle')  
**Tallege**, to allege  
**Tamen**, *v.* make trial of. R 3904  
**Tamende**, to amend  
**Tan**, *p. p.* taken. R 5894  
**Tapes**, *sb. pl.* ribands. A 3241  
**Tapinage**, *sb.* hiding; **In tapinage**, incognito. R 7361  
**Tapycer**, *sb.* tapestry maker. A 362  
**Tapite**, *sb.* carpet. Bl. 260  
**Tappestere**, *sb.* harmaid, tapster. A 241  
**Targe**, *sb.* shield. *ABC* 176  
**Tarraye**, to array. E 961  
**Tassaye**, to assay. E 454  
**Tassalle**, to assail  
**Tatarwagges**, *sb. pl.* tatters. R 7257  
**Tavyse**, to advise. B 1426  
**Tecches**, *sb. pl.* ill qualities. T<sup>3</sup> 935, HF<sup>3</sup> 688, R 6517  
**Teche**, *v.* teach. A 308  
**Teene**, *sb.* sorrow. *ABC* 3  
**Teyne**, *sb.* thin plate of metal. G 1225  
**Tembrace**, to embrace. B 1891  
**Teme**, *v.* bring forth. HF<sup>3</sup> 654  
**Temple**, *sb.* inn of court. A 567  
**Temprure**, *sb.* tempering. R 4177  
**Temps**, *sb.* tense. G 875  
**Ten**, **Ten so woode**, ten times as mad. L 733  
**Tendyte**, to endite  
**Tendure**, to endure. E 756  
**Tene**, *sb.* sorrow. T<sup>1</sup> 814  
**Tenqueren**, to enquire  
**Tentify**, *adv.* attentively. E 334  
**Tercol**, *adj.* male (of birds of prey). PF 393  
**Tercelet**, *sb.* male falcon. F 504  
**Tery**, *adj.* tearful. T<sup>4</sup> 821  
**Terins**, *sb.* tarins. R 665  
**Terme**, *sb.*; **In terme**, **In termes**, precisely, C 311, A 323  
**Termyne**, *v.* determine. PF 530  
**Terred**, *p. p.* stripped. G 1171  
**Tespye**, to espy  
**Testeres**, *sb. pl.* headpieces. A 2499  
**Testes**, *sb. pl.* vessels for testing metals. G 818  
**Testif**, *adj.* headstrong. A 4004  
**Texpouden**, to expound  
**Textueel**, *adj.* verbally accurate. I 57  
**Th<sup>1</sup>**, before substantives beginning with a vowel, the; a few instances are given below  
**Thakked**, *p. p.* stroked. A 3304  
**Thankes**, *sb. pl.*; **Hir thankes**, **His thankes**, willingly, A 1626, 2107  
**Thanne**, *conj.* and *adv.* then  
**Thar**, *pres. s.* it behoves. A 4320  
**That**, *conj.* when. T<sup>2</sup> 910  
**That**, introducing an optative clause. T<sup>5</sup> 944  
**Thavy**, the advice. A 3076  
**The**, *pron. acc.* thee  
**Thedam**, *sb.* prosperity; **Yvel thedam**, ill-luck, B 1595  
**Thee**, **Theen**, *v.* thrive. B 4622, C 309  
**Theech**, **Theek**, *subj. pres.* thrive I. C 947, A 3864  
**Theffect**, the effect  
**Theigh**, *conj.* though. T<sup>4</sup> 175  
**Their**, the air. D 1939  
**Thenche**, *v.* think. A 3253  
**Thencrese**, the increase. A 275  
**Thennes**, *adv.* thence  
**Theorik**, *sb.* theory. As. ii. pref.  
**Ther**, *adv.* there, where. A 2809, T<sup>2</sup> 618  
**Ther**, introducing an optative clause. T<sup>3</sup> 947, 1015, 1437  
**Ther-geyn**, there against. R 6555  
**Therthe**, the earth  
**Thestat**, the estate, rank  
**Thewed**, *p. p.* endowed with virtues. *Mars* 180  
**Thewes**, *sb. pl.* good qualities. E 1542  
**Thider**, *adv.* thither  
**Thilke**, that same. A 182  
**Thyng**, *sb.*; **Make a thyng**, draw up a document; **Thynges**, *pl.* prayers, acts of devotion, business, A 2293, B 1281, 4280  
**Thinke**, *v.* seem. T<sup>1</sup> 405  
**Thirled**, *p. p.* pierced. A 2710  
**This**, **Thise**, *dem. pl.* these. Bl. 166  
**This**, this is. T<sup>2</sup> 363  
**Tho**, *adv.* then. Bl. 1053  
**Tho**, these  
**Tholed**, *p. p.* suffered. D 1546  
**Thoo**, *adv.* then. L 787  
**Thought**, *sb.* anxiety. R 308  
**Thraste**, *pret.* thrust. T<sup>2</sup> 1155  
**Threpe**, *pres. pl.* call. G 826  
**Threste**, *v.* thrust, A 2612; **Thresten**, *pres. pl.* Bo. 460  
**Thretyng**, *sb.* threatening. G 698  
**Thridde**, *num.* third  
**Thrye**, *num. adv.* thrice. T<sup>2</sup> 89  
**Thringe**, *v.* thrust. T<sup>4</sup> 66  
**Thritten**, *card. num.* thirteen. D 2259  
**Throf**, *pret.* thrived. Bo. 717  
**Thrope**, *sb.* hamlet. I 12  
**Throte-bolle**, *sb.* wind-pipe. A 4273  
**Throwe**, *sb.* short space of time. B 953, E 459, *Pite* 86  
**Throwes**, *sb. pl.* throes. T<sup>5</sup> 206, 1201  
**Thrust**, *sb.* thrust. R 4722  
**Thurfte**, *pret.* needed. T<sup>3</sup> 572  
**Thurgh-girt**, *p. p.* pierced. A 1010  
**Thurrok**, *sb.* hold of a ship, sink. I 363, 715

- Thwyte**, *pres.* whittle, HF<sup>3</sup> 848; **Thwyten**, *p.p.* R 933  
**Thwifel**, *sb.* short knife. A 3933  
**Tyden**, *v.* betide. B 337  
**Tydf**, *sb.* small bird; **Tidyves**, *pl.* F 648  
**Tikel**, *adj.* frail. A 3428  
**Tikelnesse**, *sb.* instability. *Truth* 3  
**Til**, *prep.* to. A 180  
**Tylers**, *sb. pl.* tillers. R 4339  
**Tylyng**, *sb.* tilling. Bo. 1637  
**Tymbres**, *sb. pl.* timbrels. R 772  
**Typet**, *sb.* hood. A 233  
**Tire**, *v.* feed on, Bo. 1132; **Tiren**, *pres. pl.* T<sup>1</sup> 787  
**Tit**, *pres. s.* betides. T<sup>1</sup> 333  
**Titerynge**, *sb.* hesitating. T<sup>2</sup> 1744  
**Title**, *sb.* pretext. T<sup>1</sup> 488  
**Titled**, *p.p.* devoted. I 894  
**To**, **The to**, that one. Bo. 1587  
**To**, *intensive prefix*; a few instances are given below  
**To-breste**, *pres. pl.* break in pieces. A 2611  
**Tode**, *sb.* toad. I 636  
**To-form**, *prep.* before. T<sup>3</sup> 335  
**Toft**, *sb.* tuft. A 555  
**Toght**, *adj.* taut. D 2267  
**To-hepe**, *adv.* together, at close quarters. Bo. 1461, L 2008  
**To-vere**, *adv.* this year. T<sup>3</sup> 241  
**Tolde**, *pret.* accounted. B 3676  
**Toles**, *sb. pl.* tools. T<sup>1</sup> 632  
**Tollen**, *v.* take toll. A 562  
**Tollen**, *v.* allure. Bo. 531  
**Tolletanes**, *adj. pl.* of Toledo. F 1273  
**Tombesteres**, *sb. pl.* female tumblers. C 477  
**To-medes**, *as reward*. T<sup>2</sup> 1201  
**Ton**, **The ton**, that one. Bo. 1066, R 5217  
**Tonge**, *sb.* tongue. B 1666  
**Tonne**, *sb.* tun, cask. E 215  
**Too**, *sb.* toe, A 2726; **Toon**, *pl.* B 4052  
**Toord**, *sb.* excrement. C 955  
**Tope**, *sb.* crown of head. A 590  
**To-point**, *adv.* point by point, exactly. T<sup>3</sup> 497, T<sup>5</sup> 1620  
**To-race**, *subj. pr.* tear in pieces. E 572  
**To-rente**, *pret.* rent in pieces. C 709  
**Torney**, *sb.* tournament. T<sup>4</sup> 1669  
**To-slytered**, *p.p.* slashed. R 840  
**To-tar**, *pret.* lacerated. B 3801  
**Totelere**, *sb.* tattler. L 353  
**Toty**, *adj.* dizzy. A 4253  
**To-tore**, *p.p.* torn. G 635  
**Touret**, *sb.* turret. A 1909  
**Tourettes**, *sb. pl.* round holes. A 2152  
**Toute**, *sb.* backside. A 3812  
**Toverbyde**, *to outlive*. D 1260  
**Towayle**, *sb.* towel. R 161  
**To-wonde**, *pret.* went to pieces. *Mars* 102  
**Traas**, *sb.* train. L 285  
**Trace**, *sb.* track. *Gentillesse* 3  
**Trad**, *pret.* trod, *sens. ob.* B 4368  
**Trayed**, *pret.* betrayed. HF<sup>1</sup> 300  
**Trays**, *sb. pl.* traces. A 2139, T<sup>1</sup> 222  
**Traylorie**, *sb.* treachery. An. 156  
**Transmuwen**, *v.* transmute. T<sup>4</sup> 467  
**Trappures**, *sb. pl.* trappings. A 2499  
**Trattor**, *sb.* go-between, pimp. T<sup>3</sup> 273  
**Traunce**, *v.* tramp. T<sup>3</sup> 600  
**Trave**, *sb.* frame for unruly horses. A 3282  
**Travers**, *sb.* curtain, screen. E 1817, T<sup>3</sup> 674  
**Trechour**, *sb.* traitor. R 6602  
**Tredehowel**, *sb.* treader of fowls, *sens. ob.* E 3135  
**Treget**, *sb.* deceit. R 6267  
**Tregetour**, *sb.* juggler, HF<sup>3</sup> 167; **Tregetoures**, *pl.* F 1141  
**Trenden**, *v.* roll. Bo. 1043  
**Trental**, *sb.* series of masses for the dead. D 1717  
**Trepeget**, *sb.* engine for casting stones. R 6279  
**Tresour**, *sb.* treason. L 1783  
**Tresour**, *sb.* head-dress. R 568  
**Tretable**, *adj.* tractable, communicative. L 411, Bl. 532  
**Trete**, *sb.* treaty. A 1288  
**Tretys**, *adj.* well-made. A 152  
**Tretis**, *sb.* treatise, document. T<sup>2</sup> 1697  
**Trewe**, *adj.* true. A 531  
**Trewe**, *sb.* truce. T<sup>3</sup> 1779  
**Trewe-love**, *sb.* condiment to sweeten breath. A 3692  
**Triacle**, *sb.* balm, panacea. B 479, C 314  
**Trice**, *v.* pull. B 3715  
**Trichour**, *sb.* traitor. R 6308  
**Trille**, *v.* turn, twist. F 316  
**Trype**, *sb.* morsel. D 1747  
**Trist**, *sb.* trust. T<sup>3</sup> 403, I 473  
**Triste**, *sb.* tryst. T<sup>2</sup> 1534  
**Tristed**, *p.p.* trusted. R 3929  
**Trone**, *sb.* throne. A 2529  
**Trouble**, *adj.* troubled. *Comp. to his Lady* 128  
**Trowandyse**, **Truandise**, *sb.* vagrancy. R 3954, 6604  
**Trowblable**, *adj.* troublesome. Bo. 1268  
**Truaundyng**, *sb.* vagrancy. R 6721  
**Trubly**, *adj.* troublous. Bo. 1443  
**Trufes**, *sb. pl.* trifles. I 715  
**Trye**, *adj.* choice. B 2046  
**Tuel**, *sb.* pipe, tube. HF<sup>3</sup> 559  
**Tulle**, *v.* lure. A 4134  
**Turmentrie**, *sb.* torture. R 4740  
**Tweyfold**, *adj.* folded in two. G 566  
**Twight**, *p.p.* twitched, pulled, D 1563; **Twighte**, *pret.* T<sup>4</sup> 1185  
**Twynne**, *v.* sunder, B 517; *pres. subj.* depart, A 835  
**Twiste**, *sb.* branch. E 2349  
**Umble**, *adj.* humble. R 6155  
**Unaraced**, *p.p.* untorn. Bo. 1156  
**Unconning**, *adj.* stupid. T<sup>5</sup> 1130  
**Uncouth**, *adj.* strange, rare. HF<sup>3</sup> 189  
**Uncoverable**, *adj.* unsuitable. I 431  
**Undergrowe**, *p.p.* undergrown. A 156  
**Undermeles**, *sb. pl.* morning meal-time. D 875  
**Undernome**, *p.p.* blamed, I 401; **Undernoon**, *pret.* perceived, G 243  
**Underpight**, *pret.* stuffed. B 789  
**Underspore**, *v.* lever up. A 3465  
**Undertake**, *pres. s.* assert. A 289  
**Undigne**, *adj.* unworthy. E 359  
**Undirforgeth**, *pres. s.* undertakes. R 5709  
**Undo**, *v.* unravel. Bl. 808  
**Undren**, *sb.* morning, the time between 9 a.m. and noon. B 4412, E 260  
**Unesohuable**, *adj.* inevitable. Bo. 1643  
**Unespyed**, *p.p.* undiscovered. T<sup>4</sup> 1457  
**Unfeestlich**, *adj.* unfeative, worn. F 366  
**Ungiltif**, *adj.* innocent. T<sup>3</sup> 1018  
**Ungrobbed**, *p.p.* undigged. *Former Age* 14

- Unhappes, *sb. pl.* mishaps. T<sup>2</sup> 456  
 Unheele, *sb.* misfortune. C 116  
 Unkynde, *adj.* unnatural. B 88  
 Unkynedly, *adv.* unnaturally. C 485  
 Unkonnyngye, *sb.* ignorance. I 1082  
 Unkorven, *p. p.* unpruned. *Former Age* 14  
 Unkouth, *adj.* rare. A 2497  
 Unlefull, *adj.* unlawful. Bo. 274, R 4880  
 Unneste, *imper.* quit thy nest. T<sup>4</sup> 305  
 Unnethe, *Unnetthes*, *adv.* hardly. B 1050, 1675  
 Unparygal, *adj.* unequal. Bo. 603  
 Unplitable, *adj.* perilous. Bo. 122  
 Unplyten, *v.* unfold. Bo. 583  
 Unresty, *adj.* restless. T<sup>5</sup> 1355  
 Unsad, *adj.* inconstant. E 995  
 Unselly, *adj.* unhappy. A 4210, Bo. 361  
 Unsel, *adj.* unappointed. A 1524  
 Unsittinge, *adj.* unbefitting. T<sup>2</sup> 307  
 Unspere, *p. p.* unlocked. R 2656  
 Unthank, *sb.* ingratitude, little thank. T<sup>5</sup> 699  
 Unwar, *adj.* unawares. F 1356  
 Unweelde, *adj.* impotent. A 3886  
 Unwemmed, *adj.* undefiled, pure. B 924, ABC 91  
 Unwist, *adj.* ignorant. T<sup>1</sup> 93  
 Unwit, *sb.* folly. *Mars* 271  
 Unwrye, *v.* uncover. T<sup>1</sup> 858  
 Unyolden, *adj.* without yielding. A 2642  
 Up, *pres. p.* upon. Bl. 921  
 Up-bounde, *p. p.* bound up. T<sup>3</sup> 517  
 Up-frete, *v.* eat up. T<sup>5</sup> 1470  
 Uprighte, *adv.* full length, whether standing or lying. A 4194  
 Upriste, *sb.* rising. A 1051  
 Up-so-doun, *adv.* topsy-turvy. Bo. 1695  
 Up-swal, *pret.* swelled up. B 1750  
 Urchouns, *sb. pl.* hedgehogs. R 3135  
 Utter, *adj.* outer. R 4208  
  
 Vache, *sb.* cow. *Truth* 22  
 Vallith, Valeth, *pres.* avails. R 5765, 5762  
 Vallance, *sb.* failure. *Mars* 145 (*see note*)  
 Vane, *sb.* weather-vane. E 996  
 Vanytee, *sb.* folly. A 3835  
 Vassalage, Vassellage, *sb.* prowess, good service. L 1667, A 3054  
 Vavasour, *sb.* landholder. A 360  
 Vekke, *sb.* old woman. R 4286  
 Vendable, *adj.* saleable. R 5804  
 Venerie, *sb.* hunting. A 166, 2308  
 Veniaunce, *sb.* vengeance. Bo. 1375  
 Venym, *sb.* poison. A 2751  
 Venymous, *adj.* poisonous. ABC 149  
 Ventusinge, *sb.* cupping. A 2747  
 Ver, *sb.* spring. T<sup>1</sup> 157  
 Verdit, *sb.* verdict. A 787  
 Verger, *sb.* orchard. R 3234, 3618  
 Verye, *imper.* guard (?). A 3485  
 Verytrot, *sb.* quick-trot. A 3770  
 Vermayle, *adj.* red. R 3645  
 Vernage, *sb.* white wine. B 1261  
 Vernycle, *sb.* St. Veronica cloth. A 685  
 Verrysshed, *pret.* varnished. A 4149  
 Verray, Verrele, *adj.* genuine, true. I 1012, Bo. 1729  
 Verrayment, *adv.* truly. B 1903  
 Verre, *sb.* glass. T<sup>2</sup> 867  
 Vertuous, *adj.* skilled. R 2311  
 Vesselage, *sb.* prowess. R 5871  
  
 Veze, *sb.* rush of wind. A 1985  
 Viage, *sb.* voyage, journey. A 723  
 Vigillies, *sb. pl.* wakes. A 377  
 Vileynye, *sb.* anything unbecoming a gentleman. A 70  
 Virytrate, *sb.* hag. D 1582  
 Vitaille, *sb.* victuals. A 248  
 Vitremyte, *sb.* woman's cap. B 3562  
 Voldé, *sb.* sleeping cup. T<sup>3</sup> 674  
 Voyde, *adj.* empty, penniless. Bo. 471  
 Volage, *adj.* giddy. H 239  
 Voltor, *sb.* vulture. Bo. 1132  
 Volunte, *sb.* will. R 5276  
 Voluper, *sb.* cap. A 3241  
 Vounde, *adj.* *See note*, R 7063  
  
 Waget, *sb.* blue cloth. A 3321  
 Wayfereres, *sb. pl.* confectioners. C 479  
 Wayke, *adj.* weak. A 887, B 1671  
 Waymentyngye, *sb.* lamentation. A 902, 1921  
 Wayted, *pret.* watched. A 571  
 Walsh-note, *sb.* walnut. HF<sup>3</sup> 191  
 Walwe, *v.* wallow. T<sup>1</sup> 699  
 Walwyngye, *pres. part.* wallowing. A 3616  
 Wan, *pret.* won. A 442  
 Wanges, *sb. pl.* cheek-teeth, A 4030; Wang tooth, B 3234  
 Wannhope, *sb.* despair. A 1249  
 Wanye, *v.* wane. A 2078  
 Wanten, *pres. p.* are lacking. *Pite* 76  
 Wantrust, *adj.* distrustful. H 281  
 War, *adj.* wary, aware. A 309, 896  
 Warde, *sb.* guardianship. Bl. 248  
 Wardecors, *sb.* bodyguard. D 359  
 Warderere, look out behind! A 4101  
 Wardright, *sb.* guardianship. Bo. 492  
 Wardrobe, *sb.* privy. B 1762  
 Ware, *imp.* beware that. B 4146  
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 Warice, *v.* heal. C 906  
 Warlen, Warye, *v.* curse. T<sup>2</sup> 1619, B 372  
 Warisoun, *sb.* reward. R 1537  
 Warisshe, *v.* recover, B 2170; Warisshe, *p. p.* cured, F 1138, Bl. 1103  
 Warisshyng, *sb.* healing. B 2205  
 Warly, *adv.* warily. T<sup>3</sup> 454  
 Warne, *v.* repulse. ABC 11  
 Warnestooore, *sb.* garrison. B 2485  
 Wast, *sb.* waste. B 1609  
 Wastel-breed, *sb.* cake of fine flour. A 147  
 Wawes, *sb. pl.* waves. A 1958  
 Webbe, *sb.* weaver. A 362  
 Wedde, *sb. dat.* pledge. A 1218  
 Wedde, *sb.* clothing. A 1006  
 Weder, *sb.* weather, D 2253; Wedres, *pl.* R 73  
 Weeply, *adj.* tearful. Bo. 1120  
 Weerdes, *sb. pl.* fates. Bo. 92  
 Weex, *pret.* waxed. B 563  
 Wegge, *sb.* wedge. As. i. § 14  
 Weyeth, *pres. s.* weighs. A 1781  
 Weyked, *p. p.* weakened. R 4737  
 Weylawey, *interj.* alas. Bl. 718  
 Weymentyng, *sb.* lamentation. R 510  
 Weyven, *v.* depart from, E 1483; Weyve, *imper.* abandon, Bo. 257  
 Weldé, *sb.* a plant. *Former Age* 17  
 Weldé, *v.* rule. D 271  
 Weldy, *adj.* powerful. T<sup>2</sup> 636  
 Wele, *sb.* well-being. A 895  
 Welk, *pret.* walked. T<sup>5</sup> 1235

GLOSSARY

Welken, *v.* wither. Bo. 1590  
 Welkne, *sb.* welkin. *Fortune* 62  
 Welmeth, *pres. s.* wells. R 1561  
 Welte, *pret.* ruled. B 3200  
 Wel-willy, *adj.* benevolent. T<sup>3</sup> 1257  
 Wem, *sb.* spot, harm. F 121  
 Wemmelees, *adj.* spotless. G 47  
 Wende, *pret. subj.* thought. T<sup>4</sup> 1650  
 Wene, *sb.* doubt. R 574  
 Wente, *sb.* turn, passage. T<sup>2</sup> 815, T<sup>3</sup> 787  
 Wepene, Wepne, *sb.* weapon. A 1591, 1601  
 Werble, *sb.* song. T<sup>2</sup> 1033  
 Were, *sb.* doubt, L 2686, Bl. 1294; danger, R 2827  
 Were, *v.* guard. A 2550  
 Were, *v.* weir, pool. T<sup>3</sup> 35, PF 138  
 Werne, *v.* turn away, refuse. L 448, T<sup>4</sup> 111, HF<sup>3</sup> 469  
 Werre, *adv.* worse. Bl. 615  
 Werre, *sb.* war. A 1671  
 Werre, *v.* make war on. *ABC* 116  
 Werreye, *v.* make war on, persecute, A 1484, R 6926; Werreleth, *pres. s.* battles against, I 401; Werreid, *p.p.* persecuted, R 2078  
 Wert, *sb.* wart. A 555  
 Weash, *pret.* washed  
 Weste, *v.* turn westward. L 61  
 Weten, *v.* know. L 1474  
 Wetheres, *sb. pl.* weathers. A 3542  
 Wex, *sb.* wax. G 1268  
 Wex, *pret.* waxed, increased, A 1362; Wexyng, *pres. part.* A 2077  
 What, *inter.* why. A 184  
 Wheelkes, *sb. pl.* pimples. A 632  
 Wher, (1) where, A 1351; (2) whether, A 1101  
 Wheston, *sb.* whetstone. T<sup>1</sup> 631  
 Whiche, *pron.* of what kind. A 40, 2675  
 Whiel, *sb.* wheel. T<sup>1</sup> 839  
 Whielen, *v.* wheel. T<sup>1</sup> 139  
 Whyle, *sb.* time. A 3329  
 Whippelre, the cornel-tree. A 2923  
 Wyde-where, *adv.* widely. B 136, T<sup>3</sup> 404  
 Wierdes, Wirdes, *sb. pl.* fates. T<sup>3</sup> 617, L 2580  
 Wight, *adj.* strong, swift, brave. A 4086, B 3457  
 Wighte, *sb.* weight, A 2145, T<sup>2</sup> 1385; A lite wight, a little while, A 4283  
 Wyke, *sb.* week. B 1461  
 Wikke, *adj. pl.* evil. B 118  
 Wilne, *v.* will, desire, I 517; Wilned, *pret.* willed, Bl. 1261  
 Wiltou, wilt thou  
 Wylugh, *sb.* willow. A 2922  
 Wymful, *sb.* wimple. A 151  
 Wyn ape. H 44. See note  
 Wyndas, *sb.* windlass. F 184  
 Wyndre, *v.* trim. R 1020  
 Wynyng, *adj.* lively. A 3263  
 Wynt, *pres. s.* windeth, turns. L 85  
 Wirdes, *sb. pl.* Fates. L 2580  
 Wyz, *adv.* certainly, surely. A 2786, T<sup>2</sup> 887  
 Wise, *sb.* fashion. A 2370  
 Wisly, *adv.* surely. B 1061  
 Wisse, *v.* guide, D 1415, T<sup>1</sup> 622; *imp. ABC* 155  
 Wisse, *pret.* washed. R 96  
 Wyt, *p.p.* known. HF<sup>1</sup> 351  
 Wyte, *imper.* blame, A 3140; Wite at, impute, G 621  
 Witen, *pres. pl.* know. A 1794  
 Withholden, *v.* restrain, B 1512; Withholdeth,

*pres.* retains, Bo. 1245; Withholde, retained, B 2200  
 Withouten, *prep.* besides. A 461  
 Withseye, *pres. subj.* contradict, abjure, G 447; Withseyn, A 1140  
 Wityng, *s. b.* knowledge. A 1611  
 Wivers, *sb.* viper. T<sup>3</sup> 1010  
 Wlatom, *adj.* loathsome. B 4243  
 Wodewales, *sb. pl.* orioles. R 658  
 Wol, *pres. s.* will. A 723  
 Wolde, *pret.* would. A 954  
 Wolle, *sb.* wool. C 910  
 Woltou, wilt thou. A 1544  
 Wombe, *sb.* belly. I 769  
 Won, *sb.* hope. T<sup>4</sup> 1181  
 Wonde, *v.* turn aside, change. L 1187  
 Wonde, *pret.* dwelt. L 2253  
 Wonder, *adj.* wondrous. B 1045  
 Wondermost, *adj. sup.* most wonderful. HF<sup>3</sup> 969  
 Wone, *sb.* custom, wont. A 335, B 1694  
 Wone, *sb.* plenty. R 1673  
 Woned, *p.p.* accustomed. Bl. 150  
 Wonger, *sb.* pillow. B 2102  
 Wonyng, *sb.* living, dwelling. A 388, 606  
 Wonned, *pret.* dwelt. B 4406  
 Wood, *adj.* mad. A 184  
 Wood, *sb.* blue dye. *Former Age* 17  
 Woodeth, *pres. s.* is distraught, rages. G 467, Bo. 1328  
 Woody, *adv.* madly. A 1301  
 Woodnesse, *sb.* madness. C 496  
 Woon, *sb.* place, dwelling. B 1991, HF<sup>3</sup> 76  
 Woot, *pres. s.* know, A 1813; *pret.* knew, A 1525  
 Wopen, *p.p.* wept. T<sup>1</sup> 941  
 Word, *sb.* for Ord, beginning. T<sup>3</sup> 702  
 Wortes, *sb. pl.* vegetables. B 4411  
 Worthen, *v.* fare; Lete him worthen, let him alone, T<sup>5</sup> 320; Worth, *imperat.* Bo. 310  
 Worthy, *adj.* brave. B 2107  
 Wost, knowest  
 Wowe, *v.* woo. T<sup>5</sup> 791  
 Wowke, *sb.* week. A 1539  
 Wraw, *adj.* indignant. H 46  
 Wrawful, *adj.* perverse. I 677  
 Wre, Wren, Wrene, *v.* cover. L 735, R 6359, T<sup>2</sup> 539, R 56  
 Wreche, *sb.* vengeance, punishment. B 3403, T<sup>2</sup> 784  
 Wreighe, *p.p.* covered, L 1201; *pret.* T<sup>3</sup> 2056  
 Wreye, *sub. pres.* betray. A 3507  
 Wreyng, *sb.* betrayal. R 5220  
 Wrekers, *sb.* avenger. Bo. 1385  
 Wrenche, *sb.* deceit, R 4292; Wrenches, *pl.* G 1081  
 Wreththe, *sb.* wrath. T<sup>3</sup> 110  
 Wrye, *p.p.* hidden. T<sup>3</sup> 620  
 Wrye, Wryen, *v.* turn, twist, T<sup>2</sup> 906, H 262, Bl. 626; Wryed, *p.p.* twisted, A 3283  
 Wryne, *v.* cover. R 6683, 6819  
 Wryth, *pres. s.* winds. T<sup>3</sup> 1231  
 Writhen, *v.* turn. Bo. 1676  
 Wroken, *p.p.* avenged. T<sup>1</sup> 88  
 Wroteth, *pres.* digs with the snout. I 157

Y-, *prefix to past participles*; a few instances are given below

Yaf, *pret.* gave. A 227  
 Yalte, *pret.* yielded; Yalte him, betook himself, R 4904

GLOSSARY

- Yare**, *adj.* ready. L 2270  
**Y-bet**, *p.p.* beaten. D 1285  
**Y-bets**, stamped, illuminated. A 979  
**Y-blent**, *p.p.* blended. A 3808  
**Y-bleynt**, *p.p.* blenched, started aside. A 3753  
**Y-brent**, *p.p.* burnt. A 946  
**Y-clenched**, *p.p.* clamped. A 1991  
**Y-corve**, *p.p.* cut. A 2013  
**Y-crased**, *p.p.* broken. Bl. 324  
**Ydel**, *adj.* idle; **In ydel**, in vain  
**Ydolastre**, *sb.* idolater. I 749  
**Ye**, *adv.* yea, yes. B 1841  
**Yecchyng**, *sb.* itching. R 2450  
**Yed**, *p.p.* eyed. T<sup>4</sup> 1459  
**Yeddynge**, *sb. pl.* proverbial sayings. A 257  
**Yede**, *pret.* went, G 1141; **Yeden**, *pl.* T<sup>2</sup> 936  
**Yelpe**, *v.* boast. A 2238  
**Yelw**, *adj.* yellow. Bl. 856  
**Yerde**, *sb.* rod, stick. T<sup>2</sup> 154, A 149, T<sup>2</sup> 1427, A 1387  
**Yerne**, *adv.* readily, eagerly, quickly. C 398, D 993, PF 21, T<sup>3</sup> 376  
**Yerne**, *adj.* brisk. A 3257  
**Yeten**, *v.* get. Bo. 253  
**Yexeth**, *pres. s.* hiccups. A 4151  
**Y-feere**, *adv.* together. B 394  
**Y-frounced**, *p.p.* wrinkled. R 155  
**Y-go**, *p.p.* gone. A 286  
**Y-grave**, *p.p.* dug. L 204  
**Y-hede**, *p.p.* hid. Bl. 175  
**Y-hent**, *p.p.* seized. C 868  
**Y-herd**, *p.p.* haired. A 3737  
**Yif**, *conj.* if. T<sup>2</sup> 1063  
**Y-korven**, *p.p.* cut. B 1801  
**Y-lad**, *p.p.* lead, carted. A 530  
**Y-lik**, *adv.* alike. A 592  
**Y-mages**, *sb. pl.* astrological figures  
**Y-meynd**, *p.p.* mingled. A 2170  
**Y-mel**, *prep.* among. A 4172  
**Ymped**, *p.p.* grafted. R 5137  
**Ympes**, *sb. pl.* grafts, shoots, saplings. R 6293, B 3146  
**Ympne**, *sb.* hymn. L 422  
**Ynde**, *sb.* indigo. R 67  
**Ynly**, *adv.* inwardly. Bl. 276  
**Y-nome**, *p.p.* taken. T<sup>1</sup> 242, L 2343  
**Yolden**, *p.p.* yielded. A 3052, Bo. 211  
**Yolled**, *pret. pl.* yelled. B 4579  
**Youlyng**, *sb.* yelling. A 1278  
**Yow**, you. B 4610  
**Y-piked**, *p.p.* picked out. G 941  
**Y-plited**, *p.p.* pleated. Bo. 61  
**Y-preved**, *p.p.* proved. A 483  
**Y-purfiled**, *p.p.* trimmed. A 193  
**Y-reke**, *p.p.* spread about. A 3882  
**Ys**, *sb.* ice. HF<sup>3</sup> 40  
**Y-shete**, *p.p.* shut. B 560  
**Y-shore**, *p.p.* shorn, shaven. T<sup>4</sup> 996  
**Y-spreynd**, *p.p.* sprinkled. A 2169  
**Y-stalled**, *p.p.* throned. HF<sup>3</sup> 274  
**Y-stikked**, *p.p.* stabbed. F 1476  
**Y-strawed**, *p.p.* strewed. Bl. 628  
**Yvele**, *adv.* ill. B 1897  
**Yvy leaf**, *sb.*; **Pipen in an yvy leaf**, 'go whistle,' A 1838  
**Yvoire**, *sb.* ivory. Bl. 945  
**Y-wis**, *adv.* certainly. A 3277  
**Y-worth**, *p.p.* become. Bl. 578  
**Y-wrien**, **Y-wrye**, *p.p.* veiled, hid. Bl. 627, A 2904, T<sup>4</sup> 1654  
**Y-writhen**, *p.p.* wrapped. R 160

THE END



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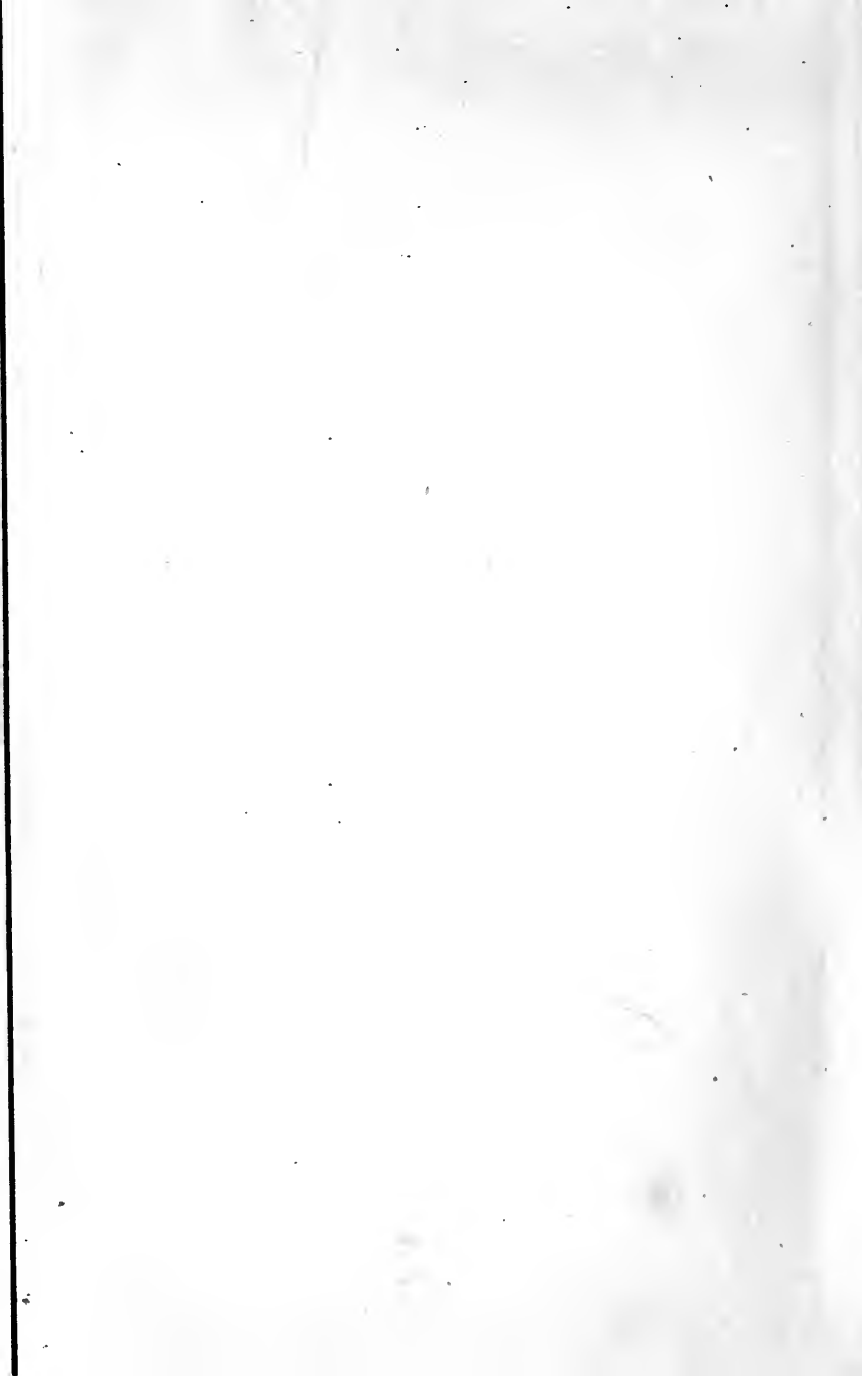
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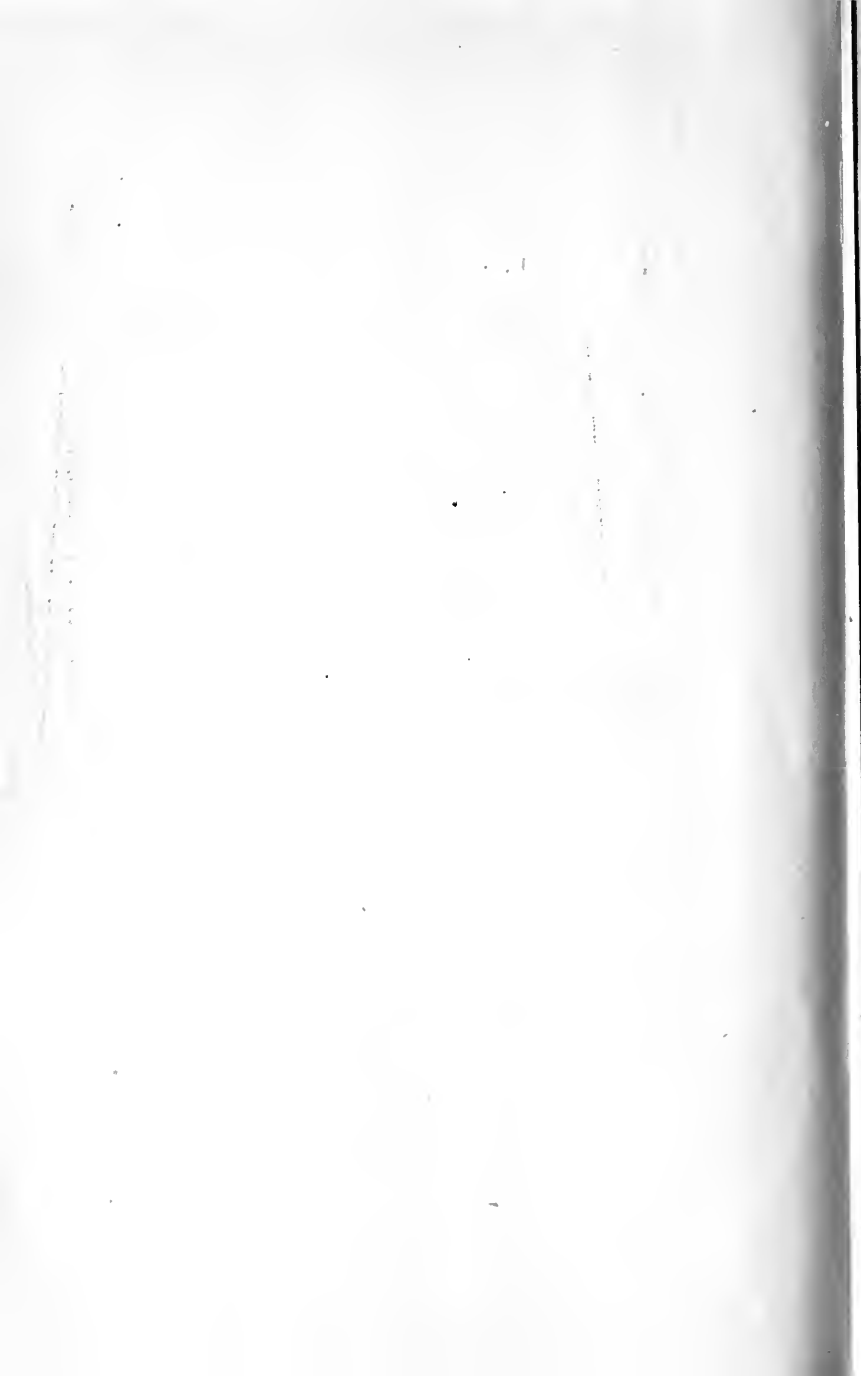
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