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CHAUCER'S POETICAL WORKS



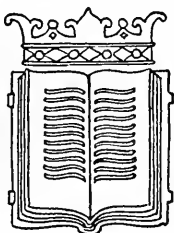


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POEMS OF
GEOFFREY CHAUCER



NEW YORK
THOMAS Y. CROWELL & CO.

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THE COMPLETE WORKS

OF

GEOFFREY CHAUCER

WITH AN INTRODUCTION

BY

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established, and seems to have been established early. All the references to him by his contemporaries and immediate successors bear witness to his universally recognized position as the greatest of English poets, though we are not left by him to doubt that he had even then met detractors. Still the general feeling of the men of his time is expressed by his disciple Occleve, who terms him —

“The firstè finder¹ of our fair language.”

Yet not a single incident of his life has come down to us from the men who admired his personality, who enrolled themselves as his disciples, and who celebrated his praises. With the exception of a few slight references to himself in his writings, all the knowledge we possess of the events of his career is due to the mention made of him in official documents of various kinds and of different degrees of importance. In these it is taken for granted that whenever Geoffrey Chaucer is spoken of, it is the poet who is meant, and not another person of the same name. The assumption almost approaches absolute certainty; it does not quite attain to it. In those days it is clear that there were numerous Chaucers. Still, no one has yet risen to dispute his being the very person spoken of in these official papers. From these documents we discover that Chaucer, besides being a poet, was also a man of affairs. He was a soldier, a negotiator, a diplomatist. He was early employed in the personal service of the king. He held various positions in the civil service. It was a consequence that his name should appear frequently in the records. It is upon them, and the references to him in documents covering transactions in which he bore a part, that the story of his life, so far as it exists for us at all, has been mainly built. It was by them also that the series of fictitious events, which for so long a time did duty as the biography of the poet, had their impossibility as well as their absurdity exposed.

The exact date of Chaucer's birth we do not know. The most that can be said is that it must have been somewhere in the early years of the reign of Edward III. (1327-77). The place of his birth was in all probability London. His father, John Chaucer, was a vintner of that city, and there is evidence to indicate that he was to some extent connected with the court. In a deed dated June 19, 1380, the poet released his right to his father's former house, which is described as being in Thames Street. The spot, however unsuitable for a dwelling-place now, was then in the very heart of urban life, and in that very neighborhood it is reasonable to suppose that Chaucer's earliest years were spent.

The first positive information we have, however, about the poet himself, belongs to 1356. In that year we find him attached to the household of Lionel, Duke of Clarence, the third son of Edward III. He is there in the service of the wife of that prince, but in what position we do not know. It may have been that of a page. He naturally was in attendance upon his mistress during her various journeyings; but most of her time was passed at her residence in Hatfield, Yorkshire. Chaucer next appears as having joined the army of Edward III. in his last invasion of France. This expedition was undertaken in the autumn of 1359, and continued until the peace of Bretigny, concluded in May, 1360. During this campaign he was captured somewhere and somehow — we have no knowledge beyond the bare fact. It took place,

¹ Poet.

however, before the 1st of March, 1360; for on that date the records show that the King personally contributed sixteen pounds toward his ransom.

From the last-mentioned date Chaucer drops entirely out of our knowledge till June, 1367, when he is mentioned as one of the valets of the King's chamber. In the document stating this fact he is granted a pension — the first of several he received — for services already rendered or to be rendered. It is a natural inference from the language employed, that during these years of which no record exists he was in some situation about the person of Edward III. After this time his name occurs with considerable frequency in the rolls, often connected with duties to which he was assigned. His services were varied; in some instances certainly they were of importance. From 1370 to 1380 he was sent several times abroad to share in the conduct of negotiations. These missions led him to Flanders, to France, and to Italy. The subjects were diverse. One of the negotiations in which he was concerned was in reference to the selection of an English port for a Genoese commercial establishment; another was concerning the marriage of the young monarch of England with the daughter of the King of France. It is on his first journey to Italy of which we have any record — the mission of 1372-73 to Genoa and Florence — that everybody hopes and some succeed in having an undoubting belief that Chaucer visited Petrarch at Padua, and there heard from him the story of Griselda, which the Clerk of Oxford in "The Canterbury Tales" states that he learned from the Italian poet. Faith in this meeting has been rendered more difficult to accept, however, by the recently discovered fact that Chaucer was absent on this mission less than six months, instead of the eleven months with which he previously had been credited.

But Chaucer's activity was not confined to foreign missions or to diplomacy; he was as constantly employed in the civil service. In 1374 he was made controller of the great customs — that is, of wool, skins, and leather — of the port of London. In 1382 he received also the post at the same port of controller of the petty customs, that is, of wines, candles, and other articles. The regulations of this office required him to write the records with his own hand; and it is this to which Chaucer is supposed to refer in the statement he makes about his official duties in "The House of Fame." In this poem the messenger of Jupiter tells him that though he has done so much in the service of the God of Love, yet he has never received for it any compensation. He then goes on to add the following lines, which give a graphic picture of the poet and of his studious life: —

“ Wherfor, as I seyde, y-wis,
 Iupiter considereth this,
 And also, beau sir, other thinges;
 That is, that thou hast no tydinges
 Of Loves folk, if they be glade,
 Ne of noight elles that god made;
 And noight only fro fer contree
 That ther no tyding comth to thee,
 But of thy verray neyghebores,
 That dwellen almost at thy dores,
 Thou herest neither that ne this;
 For whan thy labour doon al is,

And hast y-maad thy rekeninges,
 In stede of reste and newe thinges,
 Thou gost hoom to thy hous anoon;
 And, also domb as any stoon,
 Thou sittest at another boke,
 Til fully daswed is thy loke,
 And livest thus as an hermyte,
 Although thyn abstinence is lyte.'"

The Hous of Fame, ll. 641-660.

In 1386 Chaucer was elected to Parliament as knight of the shire for the county of Kent. In that same year he lost or gave up both his positions in the customs. The cause we do not know. It may have been due to mismanagement on his own part; it is far more likely that he fell a victim to one of the fierce factional disputes that were going on during the minority of Richard II. At any rate, from this time, he disappears for two years from our knowledge. But in 1389 he is mentioned as having been appointed clerk of the King's works at Westminster and various other places; in 1390 clerk of the works for St. George's chapel at Windsor. Both of these positions he held until the middle of 1391. In this last year he was made one of the commissioners to repair the roadway along the Thames, and at about the same time was appointed forster of North Petherton Park in Somerset, a post which he held till his death. After 1386 he seems at times to have been in pecuniary difficulties. To what cause they were owing, or how severe they were, it is the emptiest of speculations to form any conjectures in the obscurity that envelops this portion of his life. Whatever may have been his situation, on the accession of Henry IV. in September, 1399, his fortunes revived. The father of that monarch was John of Gaunt, the fourth son of Edward III. That nobleman had pretty certainly been from the outset the patron of Chaucer; it is possible — as the evidence fails on one side, it cannot be regarded as proved — that by his marriage with Katharine Swynford he became the poet's brother-in-law. Whatever may have been the relationship, if any at all, it is a fact that one of the very first things the new king did was to confer upon Chaucer an additional pension. But the poet did not live long to enjoy the favor of the monarch. On the 24th of December, 1399, he leased for fifty-three years, or during the term of his life, a tenement in the garden of St. Mary's Chapel, Westminster. But after the 5th of June, 1400, his name appears no longer on any rolls. There is accordingly no reason to question the accuracy of the inscription on his tombstone which represents him as having died October 25, 1400. He was buried in Westminster Abbey. He was the first, and still remains perhaps the greatest, of the English poets whose bones have there found their last resting-place.

This comprises all the facts of importance we know of Chaucer's life. Before leaving this branch of the subject, however, it may be well to say that many fuller details about his career can be found in all older accounts of the poet, and in spite of the repeated exposure of their falsity still crop up occasionally in modern books of reference. Some are objectionable only upon the ground of being untrue. Of these are such statements as that he was born in 1328; that he was a student of Oxford, to which Cambridge is sometimes added; that he was created poet-laureate; and that he was knighted. But others are objectionable not only on the ground of being false,

but of being slanderous besides. Of these the most offensive is the widely circulated and circumstantial story that he was concerned in the conflict that went on in 1382 between the city of London and the court in regard to the election of John of Northampton to the mayoralty; that in consequence of his participation in this contest he was compelled to seek refuge in the island of Zealand; that there he remained for some time, but on his return to England was arrested and thrown into the Tower; and that after having been imprisoned for two or three years, he was released at last on the condition of betraying his associates, which he accordingly did. All these details are fictitious. They were made up from inferences drawn from obscure passages in a prose work entitled "The Testament of Love." This was once attributed to the poet, but is now known not to have been written by him. Even had it been his, the statements derived from it and applied to the life of the poet would have been entirely unwarranted, as they come into constant conflict with the official records. Not being his, this piece of spurious biography has the additional discredit of constituting an unnecessary libel upon his character.

From Chaucer the man, and the man of affairs, we proceed now to the consideration of Chaucer the writer. He has left behind a body of verse consisting of more than thirty-two thousand lines, and a smaller but still far from inconsiderable quantity of prose. The latter consists mainly if not wholly of translations—one a version of that favorite work of the Middle Ages, the treatise of Boethius on the "Consolation of Philosophy"; another the tale of Melibeus in "The Canterbury Tales," which is taken directly from the French; thirdly, "The Persones Tale," derived probably from the same quarter, though its original has not as yet been discovered with certainty; and, fourthly, an unfinished treatise on the Astrolabe, undertaken for the instruction of his son Lewis. The prose of any literature always lags behind, and sometimes centuries behind, its poetry. It is therefore not surprising to find Chaucer displaying in the former comparatively little of the peculiar excellence which distinguishes his verse. In the latter but little room is found for hostile criticism. In the more than thirty thousand lines of which it is composed there occur, of course, inferior passages, and some positively weak; but taking it all in all, there is but little in it, considered as a whole, which the lover of literature as literature finds it advisable or necessary to skip. As Southey remarked, Chaucer, with the exception of Shakespeare, is the most various of all English authors. He appeals to the most diversified tastes. He wrote love poems, religious poems, allegorical poems, occasional poems, tales of common life, tales of chivalry. His range is so wide that any limited selection from his works can at best give but an inadequate idea of the variety and extent of his powers.

The canon of Chaucer's writings has now been settled with a reasonable degree of certainty. For a long time the fashion existed of imputing to him the composition of any English poem of the century following his death, which was floating about without having attached to it the name of any author. The consequence is that the older editions contain a mass of matter which it would have been distinctly discreditable for any one to have produced, let alone a great poet. This has now been gradually dropped, much to the advantage of Chaucer's reputation, though modern scholarship also refuses to admit the production by him of two or three pieces, such as "The Court of Love," "The Flower and the Leaf," "The Cuckoo and the Nightingale," none of which was unworthy of his powers. It is possible, indeed, that the poet himself may

have had some dread of being saddled with the responsibility of having produced pieces which he did not care to father. It is certainly suggestive that he himself took the pains on one occasion to furnish what it seems must have been at the time a fairly complete list of his writings. In the prologue to "The Legend of Good Women" he gave an idea of the work which up to that period he had accomplished. The God of Love, in the interview which is there described as having taken place, inveighs against the poet for having driven men away from the service due to his deity, by the character of what he had written. He says: —

"Thou mayst hit nat denye;
For in pleyn text, with-outen nede of glose,
Thou hast translated the Romaunce of the Rose,
That is an heresyse ageyns my lawe,
And makest wyse folk fro me withdrawe.
And of Criseyde thou hast seyde as thee liste,
That maketh men to wommen lasse triste,
That ben as trewe as ever was any steel."

The Legend of Good Women, ll. 327-334.

Against this charge the queen Alcestis is represented as interposing to the god a defence of the poet, in which occurs the following account of Chaucer's writings: —

"Al be hit that he can nat well endyte,
Yet hath he maked lewed folk delyte
To serve you, in preysing of your name,
He made the book that hight the Hous of Fame,
And eek the Deeth of Blaunche the Duchesse,
And the Parlement of Foules, as I gesse,
And al the love of Palamon and Arcyte
Of Thebes, thogh the story is knowen lyte;
And many an ympne for your halydayes,
That highten Balades, Roundels, Vireclayes;
And, for to speke of other holynesse,
He hath in prose translated Boëce,
And mad the Lyf also of seynt Cecyle;
He made also, goon sithen a greet whyl,
Origenes upon the Maudeleyne;
Him oghte now to have the lesse peyne;
He hath mad many a lay and many a thing."

The Legend of Good Women, ll. 414-430.

This prologue is generally conceded to have been written between 1382 and 1385. Though it does not profess to furnish a complete list of Chaucer's writings, it can fairly be assumed that it included all which he then regarded as of importance, either on account of their merit or their length. If so, the titles given above would embrace the productions of what may be called the first half of his literary career. In fact, his disciple Lydgate leads us to believe that "Troilus and Criseyde" was a comparatively early production, though it may have undergone, and probably did undergo, revision before assuming its present form. "The Legend of Good Women" — in distinction from its prologue — would naturally occupy the time of the poet

early
Lct

during the opening period of what is here termed the second half of his literary career. The prologue is the only portion of it, however, that is of distinctly high merit. The work was never completed, and Chaucer pretty certainly came soon to the conclusion that it was not worth completing. It was in the taste of the times; but it did not take him long to perceive that an extended work, dealing exclusively with the sorrows of particular individuals, was as untrue to art as it was to life. It fell under the ban of that criticism which in "The Canterbury Tales" he puts into the mouth of the Knight, who interrupts the doleful recital of the tragical tales told by the Monk with these words: —

"'Ho!' quod the knight, 'good sir, namore of this,
That ye han seyde is right y-nough, y-wis,
And mochel more; for litel hevynesse
Is right y-nough to mochel folk, I gesse.
I seye for me, it is a greet disese
Wher-as men han ben in greet welthe and ese,
To heren of hir sodeyn fal, allas!
And the contrarie is Ioie and greet solas,
As whan a man hath been in povre estaat,
And clymbeth up, and wexeth fortunat,
And ther abydeth in prosperitee,
Swich thing is gladsom, as it thinketh me,
And of swich thing were goodly for to telle.'"

The Canterbury Tales, B, ll. 3957-3969.

Accordingly, from the composition of pieces of the one-sided and unsatisfactory character of those contained in "The Legend of Good Women," Chaucer turned to the preparation of his great work, "The Canterbury Tales." This gave him the fullest opportunity to display all his powers, and must have constituted the main literary occupation of his later life.

It will be noticed that two of the works mentioned in the prologue to "The Legend of Good Women" are translations, and are so avowed. One is of "The Romaunt of the Rose," and the other of the philosophical treatise of Boethius. In regard to the version of the former, which has come down, it is sufficient to say that there was not long ago a disposition to deny the genuineness of all of it. This now contents itself with denying the genuineness of part of it. The question cannot be considered here; it is enough to say that in the opinion of the present writer, while the subject is attended with certain difficulties, the evidence is very strongly in favor of Chaucer's composition of the whole. But setting aside discussion of this point, there can scarcely be any doubt that Chaucer began his career as a translator. At the period he flourished he could hardly have done otherwise. It was an almost inevitable method of procedure on the part of a man who found neither writers nor writings in his own tongue worthy of imitation, and who could not fail to be struck not merely by the excellence of the Latin classic poets, but also by the superior culture of the Continent. In the course of his literary development he would naturally pass from direct translation to adaptation. To the latter practice he assuredly resorted often. He took the work of the foreign author as a basis, discarded what he did not need or care for, and added as little or as much as suited his own convenience. In this way the

5704 lines of the "Filostrato" of Boccaccio became 8246 in the "Troilus and Criseyde" of Chaucer; but even of the 5704 of the Italian poet, 2974 were not used by the English poet at all, and the 2730 that were used underwent considerable compression. In a similar way he composes "The Knightes Tale," probably the most perfect narrative poem in our tongue. It was based upon the "Theseide" of Boccaccio. But the latter has 9896 lines, while the former comprises but 2250, and of these 2250 fully two-thirds are entirely independent of the Italian poem.

With such free treatment of his material, Chaucer's next step would be to direct composition, independent of any sources, save in that general way in which every author is under obligation to what has been previously produced. This finds its crowning achievement in "The Canterbury Tales," though several earlier pieces—such as "The Hous of Fame," "The Parlement of Foules," and the prologue to "The Legend of Good Women"—attest that long before he had shown his ability to produce work essentially original. But though in his literary development Chaucer worked himself out of this exact reproduction of his models, through a partial working over of them till he finally attained complete independence, the habit of a translator clung to him to the very end. Even after he had fully justified his claim to being a great original poet, passages occur in his writings which are nothing but the reproduction of passages found in some foreign poem in Latin, or French, or Italian, the three languages with which he was conversant. His translation of them was due to the fact that they had struck his fancy; his insertion of them into his own work was to please others with what had previously pleased himself. Numerous passages of this kind have been pointed out; and doubtless there are others which remain to be pointed out.

There is another important thing to be marked in the history of Chaucer's development. Not only was poetic material lacking in the tongue at the time of his appearance, but also poetic form. The measures in use, while not inadequate for literary expression, were incapable of embodying it in its highest flights. Consequently, what Chaucer did not find, he had either to borrow or to invent. He did both. In the lines which have been quoted he speaks of the "balades, roundels, and virelayes," which he had composed. These were all favorite poetical forms in that Continental country with whose literature Chaucer was mainly conversant. There can be little question that he tried all manner of verse which the ingenuity of the poets of northern France had devised. As many of his shorter pieces have very certainly disappeared, his success in these various attempts cannot be asserted with positiveness. Still, what have survived show that he was a great literary artist as well as a great poet. His feats of rhyming, in particular in a tongue so little fitted for it as is ours, can be seen in his unfinished poem of "Anelida and Arcite," in "The Compleynt of Venus," and in the envoy which follows "The Clerkes Tale." In this last piece, though there are thirty-six lines, the rhymes are only three; and two of these belong to fifteen lines respectively.

But far more important than such attempts, which prove interest in versification rather than great poetic achievement, are the two measures which he introduced into our tongue. The first was the seven-line stanza. The rhyming lines in it are respectively the first and third; the second, fourth, and fifth; and the sixth and seventh. At a later period this was frequently called "rhyme royal," because the "Kings

Quair" was written in it. For fully two centuries it was one of the most popular measures in English poetry. Since the sixteenth century, however, it has been but little employed. Far different has been the fate of the line of ten syllables, or rather of five accents. On account of its frequent use in "The Canterbury Tales" it was called for a long period, "riding rhyme"; but it now bears the title of "heroic verse." As employed by Chaucer, it varies in slight particulars from the way it is now generally used. With him the couplet character was never made prominent. The sense was not apt to end at the second line, but constantly tended to run over into the line following. There was also frequently with him an unaccented eleventh syllable; and this, though not unknown to modern verse, is not common. Still, the difference between the early and the later form are mere differences of detail, and of comparatively unimportant detail. The introduction of this measure into English may be considered Chaucer's greatest achievement in the matter of versification. The heroic verse may have existed in the tongue before he himself used it. If so, it lurked unseen and unimportant. He was the first to employ it on a grand scale, if not to employ it at all, and to develop its capabilities. Much the largest proportion of his greatest work is written in that measure. Yet in spite of his example, it found for two centuries comparatively few imitators. It was not till the end of the sixteenth century that the measure started on a new course of life, and entered upon the great part it has since played in English versification.

The most important of what are sometimes called the minor works of Chaucer are "The Parlement of Foules," "The Hous of Fame," "Troilus and Criseyde," and "The Legend of Good Women." These are all favorable examples of his genius. But however good they may be in particular portions and in particular respects, in general excellence they yield place unquestionably to "The Canterbury Tales." It seems to have been very clearly the intention of the poet to embody in this crowning achievement of his literary life everything in the shape of a story he had already composed or was purposing to compose. Two of the pieces, the story of "Palemon and Arcite," and the "Life of St. Cecilia," as we know from the words of his already quoted, had appeared long before. The plan of the work itself was most happily conceived; and in spite of most painstaking efforts to find an original for it or suggestion of it somewhere else, there seems no sufficient reason for doubting that the poet himself was equal to the task of having devised it. No one can certainly question the felicity with which the framework for embodying the tales was constructed. All ranks and classes of society are brought together in the company of pilgrims who assemble at the Tabard Inn at Southwark to ride to the shrine of the saint at Canterbury. The military class is represented by the Knight, belonging to the highest order of the nobility, his son the Squire, and his retainer the Yeoman; the church by the Abbot, the Friar, the Parson, the Prioress with her attendant Nun, and the three accompanying Priests, and less distinctly by the Scholar, the Clerk of Oxford, and by the Pardoner and the Summoner. For the other professions are the Doctor of Physic and the Serjeant of Law; for the middle-class landholders, the Franklin; and for the various crafts and occupations, the Haberdasher, the Carpenter, the Weaver, the Dyer, the Upholsterer, the Cook, the Ploughman, the Sailor, the Reeve, the Manciple, and (joining the party in the course of the pilgrimage) the assistant of the alchemist, who is called the Canon's Yeoman. Into the mouths of these various personages were to be put tales befitting

their character and condition. Consequently, there was ample space for stories of chivalry, of religion, of love, of magic, and in truth of every aspect of social life in all its highest and lowest manifestations. Between the tales themselves were connecting links, in which the poet had the opportunity to give an account of the incidents that took place on the pilgrimage, the critical opinions expressed by the hearers of what had been told, and the disputes and quarrels that went on between various members of the party. So far as this portion of his plan was finished, these connecting links furnish some of the most striking passages in the work. In one of them—the prologue to “The Tale of the Wyf of Bath”—the genius of the poet reaches along certain lines its highest development; while the general prologue describing the various personages of the party, though not containing the highest poetry of the work as poetry, is the most acute, discriminating, and brilliant picture of men and manners that can be found in our literature.

Such was the plan of the work. It was laid out on an extensive scale, perhaps on too extensive a scale ever to have been completed. Certain it is that it was very far from ever reaching even remotely that result. According to the scheme set forth in the prologue, the work when finished should have included over one hundred and twenty tales. It actually comprises but twenty-four. Even of these, two are incomplete: “The Cokes Tale,” which is little more than begun, and the romantic Eastern “Squieres Tale,” which, in Milton’s words, is “left half told.” To those that are finished, the connecting links have not been supplied in many cases. Accordingly, the work exists not as a perfect whole, but in eight or nine fragmentary parts, each complete in itself, but lacking a close connection with the others, though all are bound together by the unity of a common central interest. The value of what has been done makes doubly keen the regret that so much has been left undone. Politics, religion, literature, manners, are all touched upon in this wide-embracing view, which still never misses what is really essential; and added to this is a skill of portrayal by which the actors, whether narrating the tales, or themselves forming the heroes of the narration, fairly live and breathe before our eyes. Had the work been completed on the scale upon which it was begun, we should have had a picture of life and opinion in the fourteenth century more vivid and exact than has been drawn of any century before or since.

A common impression prevails that Chaucer is a very difficult author to read or understand. Nothing could be much farther from the truth. The belief is due, as has been remarked previously, to the unfamiliar orthography more than to any other one thing. It is strange; it looks uncouth, and therefore is deemed hard. But all difficulties arising from this source disappear after very brief study. On the other hand, Chaucer’s style, like that of all early writers of genius, is characterized by perfect simplicity and by consequent clearness of expression. There are very few sentences over which the reader who understands the words has to linger long in order to understand the meaning. Of course, like every early author, his language presents certain difficulties of its own. There are found in it words which have now gone out of use, and words which while still in use have changed their signification. But familiarity with all of these is a mere matter of detail and can be acquired with comparative ease.

Somewhat more serious difficulties belong to the grammar and to the metre. It

THE ROMAUNT OF THE ROSE.

FRAGMENT A.

MANY men seyn that in sweveninges
 Ther nis but fables and lesinges;
 But men may somme swevenes seen,
 Which hardely ne false been,
 But afterward ben apparaunte. 5
 This may I drawe to waraunte
 An authour, that hight Macrobes,
 That halt not dremes false ne lees,
 But undoth us the avisioun
 That whylom mette king Cipiou. 10
 And who-so sayth, or weneth it be
 A Iape, or elles [a] nycetee
 To wene that dremes after falle,
 Let who-so liste a fool me calle.
 For this trowe I, and say for me, 15
 That dremes signifiunce be
 Of good and harme to many wightes,
 That dremen in her slepe a-nightes
 Ful many thinges covertly,
 That fallen after al openly. 20
 Within my twenty yere of age,
 Whan that Love taketh his corage
 Of yonge folk, I wente sone
 To bedde, as I was wont to done,
 And fast I sleep; and in sleping, 25
 Me mette swiche a swevening,
 That lykede me wonders wel;
 But in that sweven is never a del
 That it nis afterward befallē,
 Right as this dreem wol telle us alle. 30
 Now this dreem wol I ryme aright,
 To make your hertes gaye and light;
 For Love it prayeth, and also
 Commaundeth me that it be so
 And if ther any aske me, 35
 Whether that it be he or she,
 How [that] this book [the] which is here
 Shal hote, that I rede you here;

It is the Romance of the Rose,
 In which al the art of love I close. 40
 The mater fair is of to make;
 God graunte in gree that she it take
 For whom that it begonnen is!
 And that is she that hath, y-wis,
 So mochel prys; and ther-to she 45
 So worthy is biloved be,
 That she wel oughte, of prys and right,
 Be cleped Rose of every wight.
 That it was May me thoughte tho,
 It is fyve yere or more ago; 50
 That it was May, thus dremed me,
 In tyme of love and Iolitee,
 That al thing ginneth waxen gay,
 For ther is neither busk nor hay
 In May, that it nil shrouded been, 55
 And it with newe leves wreen.
 These wodes eek recoveren grene,
 That drye in winter been to sene;
 And the erthe wexeth proud withalle, 60
 For swote dewes that on it falle,
 And [al] the pore estat forget
 In which that winter hadde it set,
 And than bicometh the ground so proud
 That it wol have a newe shroud,
 And maketh so queynt his robe and fayr 66
 That it hath hewes an hundred payr
 Of gras and floures, inde and pers,
 And many hewes ful dyvers:
 That is the robe I mene, y-wis,
 Through which the ground to preisen is.
 The briddes, that han left hir song, 71
 Why! they han suffred cold so strong
 In wedres grille, and derk to sighte,
 Ben in May, for the sonne brighte,
 So glade, that they shewe in singing, 75
 That in hir herte is swich lyking,
 That they mote singen and be light.
 Than doth the nightingale hir might

To make noyse, and singen blythe.		Tho gan I walke through the mede,	
Than is blisful, many a sythe,	80	Dounward ay in my pleyng,	
The chelaundre and the papingay.		The river-syde costeyng.	
Than yonge folk entenden ay		And when I had a whyle goon,	135
F'or to ben gay and amorous,		I saugh a GARDIN right anoon,	
The tyme is than so savorous.		Ful long and brood, and everydel	
Hard is his herte that loveth nought	85	Enclos it was, and walled wel,	
In May, whan al this mirth is wrought;		With hye walles enbatailled,	
Whan he may on these braunches here		Portrayed without, and wel entailed	140
The smale briddes singen clere		With many riche portraitures;	
Hir blisful swete song pitous;		And bothe images and peyntures	
And in this sesoun deleytous,	90	Gan I biholde bisily.	
Whan love affrayeth alle thing,		And I wol telle you, redily,	
Me thoughte a-night, in my sleping,		Of thilke images the semblaunce,	145
Right in my bed, ful redily,		As fer as I have remembraunce.	
That it was by the morowe erly,		A-midde saugh I HATE stonde,	
And up I roos, and gan me clothe;	95	That for hir wrathe, ire, and onde,	
Anoon I wissch myn hondes bothe;		Semed to been a moveresse,	
A sylvre nedle forth I drogh		An angry wight, a chideresse;	150
Out of an aguiler queynt y-nogh,		And ful of gyle, and fel corage,	
And gan this nedle threde anon;		By semblaunt was that ilke image.	
For out of toun me list to gon	100	And she was no-thing wel arrayed,	
The sowne of briddes for to here,		But lyk a wood womman afrayed;	
That on thise bushes singen clere.		Y-frounced foule was hir visage,	155
And in the swete sesoun that leef is,		And grenning for dispitous rage;	
With a threde basting my slevis,		Hir nose snorted up for tene.	
Aloon I wente in my playing,	105	Ful hidous was she for to sene,	
The smale foules song harking;		Ful foul and rusty was she, this.	
That peyned hem ful many a payre		Hir heed y-writen was, y-wis,	160
To singe on bowes blosmed fayre.		Ful grimly with a greet towayle.	
Iolif and gay, ful of gladnesse,		An image of another entayle,	
Toward a river I gan me dresse,	110	A lift half, was hir faste by;	
That I herde renne faste by;		Hir name above hir heed saugh I,	
For fairer playing non saugh I		And she was called FELONYE.	165
Than playen me by that riveer,		Another image, that VILANYE	
For from an hille that stood ther neer		Y-cleped was, saugh I and fond	
Cam doun the stream ful stif and bold.		Upon the walle on hir right hond.	
Cleer was the water, and as cold	116	Vilanye was lyk somdel	
As any welle is, sooth to seyne;		That other image; and, trusteth wel,	170
And somdel lasse it was than Seine,		She semed a wikked creature.	
But it was straighter wel away.		By countenance, in portrayture,	
And never saugh I, er that day,	120	She semed be ful despitous,	
The water that so wel lyked me;		And eek ful proud and outrageous.	
And wonder glad was I to see		Wel coude he peynte, I undertake,	175
That lusty place, and that riveer;		That swiche image coude make.	
And with that water that ran so cleer		Ful foul and cherlish semed she,	
My face I wissch. Tho saugh I wel	125	And eek vilaynous for to be,	
The botme paved everydel		And litel coude of norture,	
With gravel, ful of stones shene.		To worshiþe any creature.	180
The medewe softe, swote, and grene,		And next was peynted COVEITYSE,	
Beet right on the water-syde.		That eggeth folk, in many gyse,	
Ful cleer was than the morow-tyde,	130	To take and yeve right nought ageyn,	
And ful attrepre, out of drede.		And grete tresours up to leyn.	

And that is she that for usure	185	Of clothing, er she boughte hir newe,
Leneth to many a creature		Al were it bad of wolle and hewe.
The lasse for the more winning,		This Avarice held in hir hande
So covcitous is her brenning.		A purs, that heng [doun] by a bande; 240
And that is she, for penyces fele,		And that she hidde and bond so stronge,
That techeth for to robbe and stele	190	Men must abyde wonder longe
These theves, and these smale harlotes;		Out of that purs er ther come ought,
And that is routhe, for by hir throtes		For that ne cometh not in hir thought;
Ful many oon haugeth at the laste.		It was not, certein, hir entente 245
She maketh folk compasse and caste		That fro that purs a peny wente.
To taken other folkes thing,	195	And by that image, nygh y-nough,
Through robberie, or miscounting.		Was peynt ENVYE, that never lough,
And that is she that maketh trechoures;		Nor never wel in herte ferde
And she [that] maketh false pledoures,		But-if she outhr saugh or herde 250
That with hir termes and hir domes		Som greet mischaunce, or greet disese.
Doon maydens, children, and eek	200	No-thing may so moch hir plese
gromes	200	As mischef and misaventure;
Hir heritage to forgo.		Or whan she seeth discomfiture
Ful croked were hir hondes two;		Upon any worthy man falle, 255
For Coveityse is ever wood		Than lyketh hir [ful] wel withalle.
To grypen other folkes good.		She is ful glad in hir corage,
Coveityse, for hir winning,	205	If she see any greet linage
Ful leef hath other mennes thing.		Be brought to nought in shameful wyse.
Another image set saugh I		And if a man in honour ryse, 260
Next Coveityse faste by,		Or by his witte, or by prowesse,
And she was cleyed AVARICE.		Of that hath she gret hevynesse;
Ful foul in peynting was that vice; 210		For, trusteth wel, she goth nigh wood
Ful sad and caytif was she eek,		Whan any chaunce happeth good.
And al-so grene as any leek.		Envye is of swich crueltee, 265
So yvel hewed was hir colour,		That feith ne trouthe holdeth she
Hir semed have lived in langour.		To freend ne felawe, bad or good.
She was lyk thing for hungre deed, 215		Ne she hath kin noon of hir blood,
That ladde hir lyf only by breed		That she nis ful hir enemy;
Kueden with cisel strong and egre;		She nolde, I dar seyn hardely, 270
And therto she was lene and megre.		Hir owne fader ferde wel.
And she was clad ful povrely,		And sore abyeth she everydel
Al in an old torn courtepy, 220		Hir malice, and hir maltaient :
As she were al with dogges torn;		For she is in so greet turment
And bothe bihinde and eek biforn		And hath such [wo], whan folk doth
Clouted was she beggarly.		good, 275
A mantel heng hir faste by,		That nigh she melteth for pure wood;
Upon a perche, weyke and smalle; 225		Hir herte kerveth and to-breketh
A burnet cote heng therwithalle,		That god the peple wel awreketh.
Furred with no menivere,		Envye, y-wis, shal never lette
But with a furre rough of here,		Som blame upon the folk to sette. 280
Of lambe-skinnes hevy and blake;		I trowe that if Envye, y-wis,
It was ful old, I undertake. 230		Knewe the beste man that is
For Avarice to clothe hir wel		On this syde or biyond the see,
Ne hasteth hir, never a del;		Yit somwhat lakken him wolde she.
For certynly it were hir loth		And if he were so hende and wys, 285
To weren ofte that ilke cloth;		That she ne mighte al abate his prys,
And if it were forwered, she 235		Yit wolde she blame his worthynesse,
Wolde have ful greet necessitee		Or by hir wordes make it lesse.

<p>I saugh Envye, in that peyntyng, Hadde a wonderful loking; 290 For she ne loked bot awry, Or overthwart, al baggingly. And she hadde [eek] a foul usage; She mighte loke in no visage Of man or womman forth-right pleyn, 295 But shette oon yē for disdeyn; So for envye brenned she Whan she mighte any man [y]-see, That fair, or worthy were, or wys, Or elles stood in folkes prys. 300 SOROWE was peynted next Envye Upon that walle of masonrye. But wel was seen in hir colour That she hadde lived in langour; Hir semed have the Iaunyce. 305 Nought half so pale was Avaryce, Nor no-thing lyk, [as] of lenesse; For sorowe, thought, and greet distresse, That she hadde suffred day and night Made hir ful yelwe, and no-thing bright, Ful fade, pale, and megre also. 311 Was never wight yit half so wo As that hir semed for to be, Nor so fulfilled of ire as she. 314 I trowe that no wight mighte hir plesse, Nor do that thing that mighte hir ese; Nor she ne wolde hir sorowe slake, Nor comfort noon unto hir take; So depe was hir wo bigonnen, And eek hir herte in angre ronnen, 320 A sorowful thing wel semed she. Nor she hadde no-thing slowe be For to forcrachen al hir face, And for to rende in many place Hir clothes, and for to tere hir swire, 325 As she that was fulfilled of ire; And al to-torn lay eek hir here Aboute hir shuldres, here and there, As she that hadde it al to-rent For angre and for maltalent. 330 And eek I telle you certeinly How that she weep ful tenderly. In world nis wight so hard of herte That hadde seen hir sorowes smerte, That nolde have had of hir pitee, 335 So wo-bigoon a thing was she. She al to-dasshte hir-self for wo, And smoot togider her handes two. To sorwe was she ful ententyf, That woful reccheles caityf; 340 Hir roughte litel of pleyng,</p>	<p>Or of clipping or [of] kissing; For who-so sorweful is in herte Him liste not to pleye ne sorte, Nor for to daunsen, ne to singe, 345 Ne may his herte in temper bringe To make Ioye on even or morowe; For Ioye is contraire unto sorowe. ELDE was peynted after this, That shorter was a foot, ywis, 350 Than she was wont in her youghede. Unnethe hir-self she mighte fede; So feble and eek so old was she That faded was al hir beautee. Ful salowe was waxen hir colour, 355 Hir heed for-hoor was, whyt as flour. Y-wis, gret qualm ne were it noon, Ne sinne, although hir lyf were gon. Al woxen was hir body unwelde, And drye, and dwyned al for elde. 360 A foul forwelked thing was she That whylom round and softe had be. Hir eres shoken fast withalle, As from her heed they wolde falle. Hir face frounced and forpyned, 365 And bothe hir hondes lorn, fordwyned. So old she was that she ne wente A foot, bot it were by potente. The TYME, that passeth night and day, And resteles travayleth ay, 370 And steleth from us so prively, That to us seemeth sikerly That it in oon point dwelleth ever, And certes, it ne resteth never, But goth so faste, and passeth ay, 375 That ther nis man that thinke may What tyme that now present is: Asketh at these clerkes this; For [er] men thinke it redily, Three tymes been y-passed by. 380 The tyme, that may not soiourne, But goth, and never may retourne, As water that doun renneth ay, But never drope retourne may; Ther may no-thing as tyme endure, 385 Metal, nor erthely creature; For alle thing it fret and shal: The tyme eek, that chaungeth al, And al doth waxe and fostred be, And alle thing distroyeth he: 390 The tyme, that eldeth our auncessours And eldeth kinges and emperours, And that us alle shal overcomen Er that deeth us shal have nomen:</p>
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<p>The tyme, that hath al in welde 395 To elden folk, had maad hir elde So inly, that, to my witing, She mighte helpe hir-self no-thing, But turned ageyn unto childhede; She had no-thing hir-self to lede, 400 Ne wit ne pith in[with] hir holde More than a child of two yeer olde. But natheles, I trowe that she Was fair sumtyme, and fresh to see, Whan she was in hir rightful age: 405 But she was past al that passage And was a doted thing bicomem. A furred cope on had she nomen; Wel had she clad hir-self and warm, For cold mighte elles doon hir harm. These olde folk have alwey colde, 411 Hir kinde is swiche, whan they ben olde. Another thing was doon ther write, That semede lyk an ipocrite, And it was cleped POPE-HOLY. 415 That ilke is she that prively Ne spareth never a wikked dede, Whan men of hir taken non hede; And maketh hir outward precious, With pale visage and pitous, 420 And semeth a simple creature; But ther nis no misaventure That she ne thinketh in hir corage. Ful lyk to hir was that image, That maked was lyk hir semblaunce. 425 She was ful simple of countenance, And she was clothed and eek shod, As she were, for the love of god, Yolden to religioun, Swich semed hir devocioun. 430 A sauter held she faste in honde, And bisily she gan to fonde To make many a feynt prayere To god, and to his seyntes dere. Ne she was gay, fresh, ne Iolyf, 435 But semed be ful ententyf To gode werkes, and to faire, And therto she had on an haire. Ne certes, she was fat no-thing, But semed wery for fasting; 440 Of colour pale and deed was she. From hir the gate [shal] werned be Of paradys, that blisful place; For swich folk maketh lene hir face, As Crist seith in his evangyle, 445 To gete hem prys in toun a whyle; And for a litel glorie veine</p>	<p>They lesen god and eek his reine. And alderlast of everichoon, Was peynted POVERT al aloon, 450 That not a peny hadde in wolde, Al-though [that] she hir clothes solde, And though she shulde anhoned be; For naked as a worm was she. And if the weder stormy were, 455 For colde she shulde have deyed there. She naddo on but a streit old sak, And many a clout on it ther stak; This was hir cote and hir mantel, No more was there, never a del, 460 To clothe her with; I undertake, Gret leyser hadde she to quake. And she was put, that I of talke, Fer fro these other, up in an halke; There lurked and there coured she, 465 For povre thing, wher-so it be, Is shamfast, and despysed ay. Acursed may wel be that day, That povre man conceived is; For god wot, al to selde, y-wis, 470 Is any povre man wel fed, Or wel arayed or y-cled, Or wel biloved, in swich wyse In honour that he may aryse. Alle these thinges, wel avysed, 475 As I have you er this devysed, With gold and asure over alle Depeynted were upon the walle. Squar was the wal, and high somdel; Enclosed, and y-barred wel, 480 In stede of hegge, was that gardin; Com never shepherde therin. Into that gardyn, wel [y-]wrought, Who-so that me coude have brought, By laddre, or elles by degree, 485 It wolde wel have lyked me. For swich solace, swich Ioye, and play, I trowe that never man ne say, As in that place delitous. The gardin was not daungerous 490 To herberwe briddes many oon. So riche a yerd was never noon Of briddes songe, and branches grene. Therin were briddes mo, I wene, Than been in alle the rowme of Fraunce. Ful blisful was the accordaunce 496 Of swete and pitous songe they made, For al this world it outhte glade. And I my-self so mery ferde, Whan I hir blisful songes herde, 500</p>
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- That for an hundred pound nolde I, —
 If that the passage openly
 Hadde been unto me free —
 That I nolde entren for to see
 Thassemblee, god [it kepe and were!] —
 Of bridles, whiche therinne were, 506
 That songen, through hir mery throtes,
 Daunces of love, and mery notes.
 Whan I thus herde foules singe,
 I fel faste in a weymentinge, 510
 By which art, or by what engyn
 I mighte come in that gardyn;
 But way I couthe finde noon
 Into that gardin for to goon.
 Ne nought wiste I if that ther were 515
 Eyther hole or place [o]-where,
 By which I mighte have entree;
 Ne ther was noon to teche me;
 For I was al aloon, y-wis,
 Ful wo and anguissous of this. 520
 Til atte laste bithoughte I me,
 That by no weye ne mighte it be;
 That ther nas laddre or wey to passe,
 Or hole, into so fair a place.
 Tho gan I go a ful gret pas 525
 Envyroning even in compas
 The closing of the square wal,
 Til that I fond a wicket smal
 So shet, that I ne mighte in goon,
 And other entree was ther noon. 530
 Upon this dore I gan to smyte,
 That was [so] fetyes and so lyte;
 For other wey coude I not seke.
 Ful long I shoof, and knocked eke,
 And stood ful long and of[t] herkning 536
 If that I herde a wight coming;
 Til that the dore of thilke entree
 A mayden curteys opened me.
 Hir heer was as yelowe of hewe
 As any basin scoured newe. 540
 Hir flesh [as] tendre as is a chike,
 With bente browes, smothe and slike;
 And by mesure large were
 The opening of hir yën clere.
 Hir nose of good proporcioun, 545
 Hir yën greye as a faucoun,
 With swete breeth and wel savoured.
 Hir face whyt and wel coloured,
 With litel mouth, and round to see;
 A clove chin eek hadde she. 550
 Hir nekke was of good fasoun
 In lengthe and gretnesse, by resoun,
 Withoute bleyne, scabbe, or roync.
- Fro Ierusalem unto Burgoyne
 Ther nis a fairer nekke, y-wis, 555
 To fele how smothe and softe it is.
 Hir throte, al-so whyt of hewe
 As snow on braunche snowed newe.
 Of body ful wel wrought was she 560
 Men neded not, in no cuntree,
 A fairer body for to seke.
 And of fyn orfrays had she eke
 A chapelet: so semly oon
 Ne wered never mayde upon; . . .
 And faire above that chapelet 565
 A rose gerland had she set.
 She hadde [in honde] a gay mirour,
 And with a riche gold tressour
 Hir heed was tressed queyntely;
 Hir sleeves sewed fetisly. 570
 And for to kepe hir hondes faire
 Of gloves whyte she hadde a paire.
 And she hadde on a cote of grene
 Of cloth of Gaunt; withouten wene,
 Wel semed by hir apparayle 575
 She was not wont to greet travayle.
 For whan she kempt was fetisly,
 And wel arayed and richely,
 Thanne had she doon al hir Iournee;
 For mery and wel bigoon was she. 580
 She ladde a lusty lyf in May,
 She hadde no thought, by night ne
 day,
 Of no-thing, but it were oonly
 To graythe hir wel and uncouthly.
 Whan that this dore hadde opened 585
 me
 This mayden, semely for to see,
 I thanked hir as I best mighte,
 And axede hir how that she highte,
 And what she was, I axede eke.
 And she to me was nought unmeke, 590
 Ne of hir answer daungerous,
 But faire answerde, and seide thus: —
 ‘Lo, sir, my name is YDELNESSE;
 So clepe men me, more and lesse.
 Ful mighty and ful riche am I, 595
 And that of oon thing, namely;
 For I entende to no-thing
 But to my Ioye, and my pleying,
 And for to kembe and tresse me.
 Aqueynted am I, and privee 600
 With Mirthe, lord of this gardyn,
 That for the lande of Alexandryn
 Made the trees be hider fet,
 That in this gardin been y-set.

And whan the trees were woxen on
 highte, 605
 This wal, that stant here in thy sighte,
 Dide Mirthe enclosen al aboute;
 And these images, al withoute,
 He dide hem bothe entaile and peynte,
 That neither ben Iolyf ne queynte, 610
 But they ben ful of sorowe and wo,
 As thou hast seen a while ago.
 'And ofte tyme, him to solace,
 Sir Mirthe cometh into this place,
 And eek with him cometh his meynce,
 That liven in lust and Iolitee. 616
 And now is Mirthe therin, to here
 The briddes, how they singen clere,
 The mavis and the nightingale,
 And other Ioly briddes smale. 620
 And thus he walketh to solace
 Him and his folk; for swetter place
 To pleyen in he may not finde,
 Although he soughte oon in-til Inde.
 The alther-fairest folk to see 625
 That in this world may founde be
 Hath Mirthe with him in his route,
 That folowen him alwayes aboute.'
 When Ydelnesse had told al this,
 And I hadde herkned wel, y-wis, 630
 Than seide I to dame Ydelnesse,
 'Now al-so wisly god me blesse,
 Sith Mirthe, that is so fair and free,
 Is in this yerde with his meynce,
 Fro thilke assemblee, if I may, 635
 Shal no man werne me to-day,
 That I this night ne mote it see.
 For, wel wene I, ther with him be
 A fair and Ioly companye
 Fulfilled of alle curtesye.' 640
 And forth, withoute wordes mo,
 In at the wiket wente I tho,
 That Ydelnesse hadde opened me,
 Into that gardin fair to see.
 And whan I was [ther]in, y-wis, 645
 Myn herte was ful glad of this.
 For wel wende I ful sikerly
 Have been in paradys erth[e]ly;
 So fair it was, that, trusteth wel,
 It semed a place espirituel . 650
 For certes, as at my devys,
 Ther is no place in paradys
 So good in for to dwelle or be
 As in that GARDIN, thoughte me;
 For there was many a brid singing, 655
 Throughout the yerde al thringing.

In many places were nightingales,
 Alpes, finches, and wodewales,
 That in her swete song delysten
 In thilke place as they habytten. 660
 Ther mighte men see many flokkes
 Of turtles and [of] laverokkes,
 Chalaundres fele saw I there,
 That wery, nigh forsongen were.
 And thrustles, terins, and mavys, 665
 That songen for to winne hem prys,
 And eek to sormounte in hir song
 These other briddes hem among.
 By note made fair servyse
 These briddes, that I you devyse; 670
 They songe hir song as faire and wel
 As angels doon espirituel.
 And, trusteth wel, whan I hem herde,
 Full lustily and wel I ferde;
 For never yit swich melodye 675
 Was herd of man that mighte dye.
 Swich swete song was hem among,
 That me thoughte it no briddes song,
 But it was wonder lyk to be
 Song of mermaidens of the see; 680
 That, for her singing is so clere,
 Though we mermaidens clepe hem here
 In English, as in our usauce,
 Men clepen hem sereyns in Fraunce.
 Ententif weren for to singe 685
 These briddes, that nought unknunge
 Were of hir craft, and apprentys,
 But of [hir] song sotyl and wys.
 And certes, whan I herde hir song,
 And saw the grene place among, 690
 In herte I wex so wonder gay,
 That I was never erst, er that day,
 So Iolyf, nor so wel bigo,
 Ne mery in herte, as I was tho.
 And than wiste I, and saw ful wel, 695
 That Ydelnesse me served wel,
 That me putte in swich Iolitee.
 Hir freend wel oughte I for to be,
 Sith she the dore of that gardyn
 Hadde opened, and me leten in. 700
 From hennesforth how that I wroughte,
 I shal you tellen, as me thoughte.
 First, whereof Mirthe served there,
 And eek what folk ther with him were,
 Withoute fable I wol descryve. 705
 And of that gardin eek as blyve
 I wol you tellen after this.
 The faire fasoun al, y-wis,
 That wel [y-]wrought was for the nones,

- I may not telle you al at ones : 710
 But as I may and can, I shal
 By ordre tellen you it al.
 Ful fair servyse and eek ful swete
 These briddes maden as they sete.
 Layes of love, ful wel sowning; 715
 They songen in hir Iargoning;
 Summe highe and summe eek lowe songe
 Upon the braunches grene y-spronge.
 The sweetnesse of hir melodye
 Made al myn herte in reverdye. 720
 And whan that I hadde herd, I trowe,
 These briddes singing on a rowe,
 Than mighte I not withholde me
 That I ne wente in for to see
 Sir Mirthe; for my desiring 725
 Was him to seen, over alle thing,
 His countenance and his manere :
 That sighte was to me ful dere.
 Tho wente I forth on my right hond
 Doun by a litle path I fond 730
 Of mentes ful, and fenel grene;
 And faste by, withoute wene,
 SIR MIRTHE I fond; and right anon
 Unto sir Mirthe gan I goon,
 Ther-as he was, him to solace. 735
 And with him, in that lusty place,
 So fair folk and so fresh hadde he,
 That whan I saw, I wondred me
 Fro whennes swich folk mighte come,
 So faire they weren, alle and some; 740
 For they were lyk, as to my sighte,
 To angels, that ben fethered brighte.
 This folk, of which I telle you so,
 Upon a carole wenten tho.
 A lady caroled hem, that highte 745
 GLADNES, [the] blisful and the lighte;
 Wel coude she singe and lustily,
 Non half so wel and semely,
 And make in song swich refraininge,
 It sat hir wonder wel to singe. 750
 Hir vois ful cleer was and ful swete.
 Hir vois ful cleer was and ful swete.
 Hir vois ful cleer was and ful swete.
 But couthe y-now of swich doing
 As longeth unto caroling :
 For she was wont in every place 755
 To singen first, folk to solace;
 For singing most she gaf hir to;
 No craft had she so leef to do.
 Tho mightest thou caroles seen,
 And folk [ther] daunce and mery been,
 And make many a fair tounring 761
 Upon the grenc gras springing.
- Ther mightest thou see these floutours,
 Minstrales, and eek Iogelours,
 That wel to singe dide hir peyne. 765
 Somme songe songes of Loreyne;
 For in Loreyne hir notes be
 Ful swetter than in this contree.
 Ther was many a timbestere,
 And saylours, that I dar wel swere 770
 Couthe hir craft ful parfitly.
 The timbres up ful sotilly
 They caste, and henten [hem] ful ofte
 Upon a finger faire and softe,
 That they [ne] fayled never-mo. 775
 Ful fetis damiselles two,
 Right yonge, and fulle of semlihed,
 In kirtles, and non other wede,
 And faire tressed every tresse,
 Hadde Mirthe doon, for his noblesse,
 Amidde the carole for to daunce; 781
 But her-of lyth no remembrance,
 How that they daunced queyntely.
 That oon wolde come al prively
 Agayn that other: and whan they were
 Togidre almost, they threwe y-fere 786
 Hir mouthes so, that through hir play
 It semed as they kiste alway;
 To dauncen wel coude they the gyse;
 What shulde I more to you devyse? 790
 Ne bede I never thennes go,
 Whyles that I saw hem daunce so.
 Upon the carole wonder faste
 I gan biholde; til atte laste
 A lady gan me for to espye, 795
 And she was cleped CURTESYE,
 The worshipful, the debonaire;
 I pray god ever falle hir faire!
 Ful curteisly she called me,
 'What do ye there, beau sire?' quod 800
 she,
 'Come [neer], and if it lyke yow
 To dauncen, daunceth with us now.'
 And I, withoute taryng,
 Wente into the caroling.
 I was abassed never a del, 805
 But it me lykede right wel
 That Curtesye me cleped so,
 And bad-me on the daunce go.
 For if I hadde durst, certeyn
 I wolde have caroled right fayn, 810
 As man that was to daunce blythe.
 Than gan I loken ofte sythe
 The shap, the bodies, and the cheres,
 The countenance and the maneres

Of alle the folk that daunced there,	815	I wot no lady so lyking.	
And I shal telle what they were.		Of orfrays fresh was hir gerland;	
Ful fair was Mirthe, ful long and high;		I, whiche seen have a thousand,	870
A fairer man I never sigh.		Saugh never, y-wis, no gerlond yit,	
As round as appel was his face,		So wel [y]-wrought of silk as it.	
Ful rody and whyt in every place.	820	And in an over-gilt samyt	
Fetys he was and wel beseye,		Clad she was, by gret delyt,	
With metely mouth and yën greye;		Of which hir leef a robe werde,	875
His nose by mesure wrought ful right;		The myrier she in herte ferde.	
Crisp was his heer, and eek ful bright.		And next hir wente, on hir other syde,	
His shuldres of a large brede,	825	The god of Love, that can devyde	
And smalish in the girdilstede.		Love, as him lyketh it [to] be.	
He semed lyk a portreiture,		But he can cherles daunten, he,	880
So noble he was of his stature,		And maken folkes pryde fallen.	
So fair, so loly, and so fetys,		And he can wel these lordes thrallen,	
With limes wrought at poynt devys,	830	And ladies putte at lowe degree,	
Deliver, smert, and of gret might;		Whan he may hem to proude see.	
Ne sawe thou never man so light.		This God of Love of his fasoun	885
Of berde unnethe hadde he no-thing,		Was lyk no knave, ne quistroun;	
For it was in the firste spring.		His beautee gretly was to pryse.	
Ful yong he was, and mery of thought,		But of his robe to devyse	
And in samyt, with briddes wrought,	836	I drede encombred for to be.	
And with gold beten fetisly,		For nought y-clad in silk was he,	890
His body was clad ful richely.		But al in floures and flourettes,	
Wrought was his robe in straunge gyse,		Y-painted al with amorettes;	
And al to-slitered for queyntyse	840	And with losenges and scouchouns,	
In many a place, lowe and hye.		With briddes, libardes, and lyouns,	
And shod he was with gret maistrye,		And other beestes wrought ful wel.	895
With shoon decoped, and with laas.		His garnement was everydel	
By druerye, and by solas,		Y-portreyed and y-wrought with floures,	
His leef a rosen chapelet	845	By dyvers medling of coloures.	
Had maad, and on his heed it set.		Floures ther were of many gyse	
And wite ye who was his leef?		Y-set by compas in assyse;	900
Dame GLADNES ther was him so leef,		Ther lakked no flour, to my dome,	
That singeth so wel with glad corage,		Ne nought so muche as flour of brome,	
That from she was twelve yeer of age,		Ne violete, ne eek pervenke,	
She of hir love graunt him made.	851	Ne flour non, that man can on thenke,	
Sir Mirthe hir by the finger hadde		And many a rose-leef ful long	905
[In] daunsing, and she him also;		Was entermedled ther-among :	
Gret love was atwixe hem two.		And also on his heed was set	
Bothe were they faire and brighte of hewe;		Of roses rede a chapelet.	
She semede lyk a rose newe	856	But nightingales, a ful gret route,	
Of colour, and hir flesh so tendre,		That flyen over his heed aboute,	910
That with a brere smale and slendre		The leves felden as they flyen;	
Men mighte it cleve, I dar wel sayn.		And he was al with briddes wryen,	
Hir forheed, frounceles al playn.	860	With popiniay, with nightingale,	
Bente were hir browes two,		With chalaundre, and with wodewale,	
Hir yën greye, and gladd also,		With finch, with lark, and with archaun-	
That laughede ay in hir semblaunt,		gel.	915
First or the mouth, by covenant.		He semede as he were an aungel	
I not what of hir nose descryve;	865	That doun were comen for hevene clere.	
So fair hath no womman alyve. . . .		Love hadde with him a bachelere,	
Hir heer was yelowe, and cleer shyning,		That he made alweyes with him be;	

- SWETE-LOKING cleped was he. 920
 This bachelere stood biholding
 The daunce, and in his honde holding
 Turke bowes two hadde he.
 That oon of hem was of a tree
 That bereth a fruyt of savour wikke; 925
 Ful croked was that foule stikke,
 And knotty here and there also,
 And blak as berry, or any slo.
 That other bowe was of a plante
 Withoute wem, I dar warante, 930
 Ful even, and by proporcioun
 Tretys and long, of good fasoun.
 And it was peynted wel and thwiten,
 And over-al diapred and writen
 With ladies and with bacheleres, 935
 Ful lightsom and [ful] glad of cheres.
 These bowes two held Swete-Loking,
 That semed lyk no gadeling.
 And ten brode arowes held he there,
 Of which five in his right hond were. 940
 But they were shaven wel and dight,
 Nokked and fethered a-right;
 And al they were with gold bigoon,
 And strong poynted everichoon,
 And sharpe for to kerven weel. 945
 But iren was ther noon ne steel;
 For al was gold, men mighte it see,
 Out-take the fetheres and the tree.
 The swiftest of these arowes fyve
 Out of a bowe for to dryve, 950
 And best [y]-fethered for to fleo,
 And fairest eek, was cleped BEAUTEE.
 That other arowe, that hurteth lesse,
 Was cleped, as I trowe, SIMPLESSE.
 The thridde cleped was FRAUNCHYSE, 955
 That fethered was, in noble wyse,
 With valour and with curtesye.
 The fourthe was cleped COMPANYE,
 That hevy for to sheten is;
 But who-so sheteth right, y-wis, 960
 May therwith doon gret harm and wo.
 The fife of these, and laste also,
 FAIR-SEMBLAUNT men that arowe calle
 The leeste grevous of hem alle;
 Yit can it make a ful gret wounde, 965
 But he may hope his sores sounde,
 That hurt is with that arowe, y-wis;
 His wo the bet bistowed is.
 For he may soner have gladnesse,
 His langour oughte be the lesse. 970
 Fyve arowes were of other gyse,
 That been ful foule to devyse;
- For shaft and ende, sooth to telle,
 Were al-so blak as feend in helle.
 The first of hem is called PRYDE; 975
 That other arowe next him bisyde,
 It was [y]-cleped VILANYE;
 That arowe was as with felonye
 Envenimed, and with spitous blame.
 The thridde of hem was cleped SHAME.
 The fourthe, WANHOPE cleped is, 981
 The fife, the NEWE-THOUGHT, y-wis.
 These arowes that I speke of here,
 Were alle fyve of oon manere,
 And alle were they resemblable. 985
 To hem was wel sitting and able
 The foule croked bowe hidous,
 That knotty was, and al roynous.
 That bowe semede wel to shete
 These arowes fyve, that been unmete, 990
 Contrarie to that other fyve.
 But though I telle not as blyve
 Of hir power, ne of hir might,
 Her-after shal I tellen right
 The sothe, and eek signifiunce, 995
 As fer as I have remembrance:
 Al shal be seid, I undertake,
 Er of this boke an ende I make.
 Now come I to my tale ageyn.
 But alderfirst, I wol you seyn 1000
 The fasoun and the countenaunces
 Of al the folk that on the daunce is.
 The God of Love, Iolyf and light,
 Ladde on his honde a lady bright,
 Of high prys, and of greet degree. 1005
 This lady called was BEAUTEE,
 [As was] an arowe, of which I tolde.
 Ful wel [y]-thewed was she holde;
 Ne she was derk ne broun, but bright,
 And cleer as [is] the mone-light, 1010
 Ageyn whom alle the sterres semen
 But smale candels, as we demen.
 Hir flesh was tendre as dewe of flour,
 Hir chere was simple as byrde in bour;
 As whyt as lillie or rose in rys 1015
 Hir face, gentil and tretys.
 Fetys she was, and smal to see;
 No windred browes hadde she,
 Ne popped hir, for it neded nought
 To windre hir, or to peynte hir ough. 1020
 Hir tresses yelowe and longe straughten,
 Unto hir heles doun they raughten:
 Hir nose, hir mouth, and eye and chcke
 Wel wrought, and al the remenaunt eke.
 A ful gret savour and a swote 1025

Me thinketh in myn herte rote,
 As helpe me god, whan I remembre
 Of the fasoun of every membre!
 In world is noon so fair a wight;
 For yong she was, and hewed bright, 1030
 [Wys], plesant, and fetys withalle,
 Gente, and in hir middel smalle.
 Bisyde Beaute yede RICHESSE,
 An high lady of greet noblesse,
 And greet of prys in every place. 1035
 But who-so durste to hir trespace,
 Or til hir folk, in worde or dede,
 He were ful hardy, out of drede;
 For bothe she helpe and hindre may:
 And that is nought of ysterday 1040
 That riche folk have ful gret might
 To helpe, and eek to greve a wight.
 The beste and grettest of valour
 Diden Richesse ful gret honour,
 And besy weren hir to serve; 1045
 For that they wolde hir love deserve,
 They cleped hir 'Lady,' grete and smalle;
 This wyde world hir dredeth alle;
 This world is al in hir daungere.
 Hir court hath many a losengere, 1050
 And many a traytour envious,
 That been ful besy and curious
 For to dispreisen, and to blame
 That best deserven love and name.
 Bifore the folk, hem to bigylen, 1055
 These losengeres hem preyse, and
 smylen,
 And thus the world with word anoynten;
 But afterward they [prikke] and poynten
 The folk right to the bare boon,
 Bihinde her bak whan they ben goon, 1060
 And foule abate the folkes prys.
 Ful many a worthy man and wys,
 An hundred, have [they] don to dye,
 These losengeres, through flaterye;
 And maketh folk ful straunge be, 1065
 Ther-as hem oughthe be prive.
 Wel yvel mote they thryve and thee,
 And yvel aryved mote they be,
 These losengeres, ful of envye!
 No good man loveth hir companye. 1070
 Richesse a robe of purple on hadde,
 Ne trowe not that I lye or madde;
 For in this world is noon itliche,
 Ne by a thousand deel so riche,
 Ne noon so fair; for it ful wel 1075
 With orfrays leyd was everydel,
 And portrayed in the ribaninges

Of dukes stories, and of kinges.
 And with a bend of gold tasseled,
 And knoppes fyne of gold ameled. 1080
 Aboute hir nekke of gentil enteile
 Was shet the riche chevesaile,
 In which ther was ful gret plentee
 Of stones clere and bright to see.
 Rychesse a girdel hadde upon, 1085
 The bokel of it was of a stoon
 Of vertu greet, and mochel of might;
 For who-so bar the stoon so bright,
 Of venim [thurte] him no-thing doute,
 While he the stoon hadde him aboute.
 That stoon was greetly for to love, 1091
 And til a riche mannes bihove
 Worth al the gold in Rome and Fryse.
 The mourdant, wrought in noble wyse,
 Was of a stoon ful precious, 1095
 That was so fyn and vertuuous,
 That hool a man it coude make
 Of palasye, and of tooth-ake.
 And yit the stoon hadde suche a grace,
 That he was siker in every place, 1100
 Al thilke day, not blind to been,
 That fasting mighte that stoon seen.
 The barres were of gold ful fyne,
 Upon a tissu of satyne,
 Ful hevye, greet, and no-thing light, 1105
 In everich was a besaunt-wight.
 Upon the tresses of Richesse
 Was set a cercle, for noblesse,
 Of brennd gold, that ful lighte shoon;
 So fair, trowe I, was never noon. 1110
 But he were cunning, for the nones,
 That coude devyzen alle the stones
 That in that cercle shewen clere;
 It is a wonder thing to here.
 For no man coude preyse or gesse 1115
 Of hem the valewe or richesse.
 Rubyes there were, saphyres, iagounces,
 And emeraudes, more than two ounces.
 But al bifore, ful sotilly,
 A fyn carboucle set saugh I. 1120
 The stoon so cleer was and so bright,
 That, al-so sone as it was night,
 Men mighte seen to go, for nede,
 A myle or two, in lengthe and brede.
 Swich light [tho] sprang out of the stoon,
 That Richesse wonder brighte shoon,
 Bothe hir heed, and al hir face, 1127
 And eke aboute hir al the place.
 Dame Richesse on hir hond gan lede
 A yong man ful of semelihede, 1130

That she best loved of any thing;
 His lust was much in housholding.
 In clothing was he full fetys,
 And loved well have hors of prys.
 He wende to have reproved be 1135
 Of thefte or mordre, if that he
 Hadde in his stable an hakeney.
 And therefore he desyred ay
 To be enaqueted with Richesse;
 For al his purpos, as I gesse, 1140
 Was for to make greet dispense,
 Without werning or defence.
 And Richesse mighte it well sustene,
 And hir dispenses wel mayntene,
 And him alway swich plentee sende 1145
 Of gold and silver for to spende
 Without lakking or daungere,
 As it were poured in a garnere.
 And after on the daunce wente
 LARGESSE, that sette al hir entente 1150
 For to be honourable and free;
 Of Alexandres kin was she;
 Hir moste loye was, y-wis,
 Whan that she yaf, and seide 'have this.'
 Not Avarice, the foule caytyf, 1155
 Was half to grype so ententyf,
 As Largesse is to yeve and spende.
 And god y-nough alway hir sende,
 So that the more she yaf away,
 The more, y-wis, she hadde alway. 1160
 Gret loos hath Largesse, and gret prys;
 For bothe wys folk and unwys
 Were hoolly to hir baundon brought,
 So wel with yiftes hath she wrought.
 And if she hadde an enemy, 1165
 I trowe, that she coude craftily
 Make him full sone hir freend to be,
 So large of yift and free was she;
 Therefore she stood in love and grace
 Of riche and povre in every place. 1170
 A ful gret fool is he, y-wis,
 That bothe riche and nigard is.
 A lord may have no maner vice
 That greveth more than avarice.
 For nigard never with strengthe of hond
 May winne him greet lordship or lond. 1177
 For freendes al to feve hath he
 To doon his wil perfourmed be.
 And who-so wol have freendes here,
 He may not holde his tresour dere. 1180
 For by ensample I telle this,
 Right as an adamaunt, y-wis,
 Can drawn to him sotilly

The yren, that is leyd therby,
 So draweth folkes hertes, y-wis, 1185
 Silver and gold that yeven is.
 Largesse hadde on a robe fresshe
 Of riche purpur Sarsinesse.
 Wel fourmed was hir face and clere,
 And opened had she hir colere; 1190
 For she right there hadde in present
 Unto a lady maad present
 Of a gold broche, ful wel wrought.
 And certes, it missat hir nought;
 For through hir smokke, wrought with silk,
 The flesh was seen, as whyt as milk. 1196
 Largesse, that worthy was and wys,
 Held by the honde a knight of prys,
 Was sib to Arthour of Bretaigne.
 And that was he that bar the enseigne
 Of worship, and the gonfanoun. 1201
 And yit he is of swich renoun,
 That men of him seye faire thinges
 Bifore barouns, erles, and kinges.
 This knight was comen al newly 1205
 Fro tourneyng faste by;
 Ther hadde he doon gret chivalrye
 Through his vertu and his maistrye;
 And for the love of his lemman
 [Had] cast down many a doughty man.
 And next him daunced dame FRAUN-
 CHYSE, 1211
 Arrayed in ful noble gyse.
 She was not broun ne dun of hewe,
 But whyt as snowe y-fallen newe.
 Hir nose was wrought at poynt devys,
 For it was gentil and tretys; 1216
 With eyen gladde, and browes bente;
 Hir heer down to hir heles wente.
 And she was simple as dowve on tree,
 Ful debonaire of herte was she. 1220
 She durste never seyn ne do
 But that [thing] that hir longed to.
 And if a man were in distresse,
 And for hir love in hevinesse,
 Hir herte wolde have ful greet pitee, 1225
 She was so amiable and free.
 For were a man for hir bistad,
 She wolde ben right sore adrad
 That she dide over greet outrage,
 But she him holpe his harm to aswage;
 Hir thoughte it elles a vilanye. 1231
 And she hadde on a sukkenye,
 That not of hempen herdes was;
 So fair was noon in alle Arras.
 Lord, it was rideled fetysly! 1235

Ther nas nat oo poynt, trewely,
 That it nas in his right assye.
 Ful wel y-clothed was Fraunchyse ;
 For ther is no cloth sitteth bet
 On damiselle, than doth roket. 1240
 A womman wel more fetys is
 In roket than in cote, y-wis.
 The whyte roket, ridede faire,
 Bitokened, that ful debonaire
 And swete was she that it bere. 1245
 By hir daunced a bachelere ;
 I can not telle you what he highte,
 But fair he was, and of good highte,
 Al hadde he be, I sey no more,
 The lordes sone of Windesore. 1250
 And next that daunced CURTESYE,
 That preised was of lowe and hye,
 For neither proud ne fool was she.
 She for to daunce called me,
 (I pray god yeve hir right good grace !)
 Whan I com first into the place. 1256
 She was not nyce, ne outrageous,
 But wys and war, and vertuous,
 Of faire speche, and faire answeze ;
 Was never wight misseid of here ; 1260
 She bar no rancour to no wight.
 Cleer broun she was, and therto bright
 Of face, of body avenaunt ;
 I wot no lady so plesaunt.
 She were worthy for to bene 1265
 An emperesse or crowned quene.
 And by hir wente a knight dauncing
 That worthy was and wel speking,
 And ful wel coude he doon honour.
 The knight was fair and stif in stour, 1270
 And in armure a semely man,
 And wel biloved of his lemman.
 Fair YDELNESSE than saugh I,
 That alway was me faste by.
 Of hir have I, withouten fayle, 1275
 Told yow the shap and apparayle
 For (as I seide) lo, that was she
 That dide me so greet bountee,
 That she the gate of the gardin
 Undide, and leet me passen in. 1280
 And after daunced, as I gesse,
 [YOUTHE], fulfild of lustynesse,
 That nas not yit twelve yeer of age,
 With herte wilde, and thought volage ;
 Nyce she was, but she ne mente 1285
 Noon harm ne slight in hir entente,
 But only lust and lolitee.
 For yonge folk, wel witen ye,

Have litel thought but on hir play.
 Hir lemman was bisyde alway, 1290
 In swich a gyse, that he hir kiste
 At alle tymes that him liste,
 That al the daunce mighte it see ;
 They make no force of privetee ;
 For who spak of hem yvel or wel, 1295
 They were ashamed never-a-del,
 But men mighte seen hem kisse there,
 As it two yonge doves were.
 For yonge was thilke bachelere,
 Of beaute wot I noon his pere ; 1300
 And he was right of swich an age
 As Youthe his leef, and swich corage.
 The lusty folk thus daunced there,
 And also other that with hem were,
 That weren alle of hir meynce ; 1305
 Ful ~~hende~~ folk, and wys, and free,
 And folk of fair port, trewely,
 Ther weren alle comunly.
 Whan I hadde seen the countenaunces
 Of hem that ladden thus these daunces,
 Than hadde I wil to goon and see 1311
 The gardin that so lyked me,
 And loken on these faire loreris,
 On pyn-trees, cedres, and oliveris.
 The daunces than y-ended were ; 1315
 For many of hem that daunced there
 Were with hir loves went away
 Under the trees to have hir pley.
 A, lord ! they lived lustily !
 A gret fool were he, sikerly, *surely* 1320
 That nolde, his thankes, swich lyf lede !
 For this dar I seyn, out of drede,
 That who-so mighte so wel fare,
 For better lyf [thurte] him not care ;
 For ther nis so good paradys 1325
 As have a love at his devys.
 Out of that place wente I tho,
 And in that gardin gan I go,
 Pleying along ful merily.
 The God of Love ful hastely 1330
 Unto him Swete-Loking clepte,
 No lenger wolde he that he kepte
 His bowe of golde, that shoon so bright.
 He [bad] him [bende it] anon-right ;
 And he ful sone [it]sette on ende, 1335
 And at a braid he gan it bende,
 And took him of his arowes fyve,
 Ful sharpe and redy for to dryve.
 Now god that sit in magestee
 Fro deedly woundes kepe me, cc.
 If so be that he [wol] me shete ;

decent /
gracious

For if I with his arowe mete,
 It [wol me greven] sore, y-wis!
 But I. that no-thing wiste of this,
 Wente up and down ful many a wey,
 And he me folwed faste alway; 1346
 But no-wher wolde I reste me,
 Til I hadde al the [yerde in] be.
 The gardin was, by mesuring,
 Right even and squar 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 were two or three.
 Ther were, and that wot I ful wel, 1355
 Of pomgarnettes a ful gret del;
 That is a fruyt ful wel to lyke,
 Namely to folk whan they ben syke.
 And trees ther were, greet foison, *abundance*
 That baren notes in hir sesoun, 1360
 Such as men notemigges calle,
 That swote of savour been withalle.
 And alemandres greet plentee,
 Figes, and many a date-tree
 Ther weren, if men hadde nede, 1365
 Through the gardin in length and brede.
 Ther was eek waxing many a spyce,
 As clow-gelofre, and licoryce,
 Gingere, and greyn de paradys,
 Canelle, and setewale of prys, 1370
 And many a spyce delitable,
 To eten whan men ryse fro table.
 And many hoomly trees ther were,
 That peches, coynes, and apples bere,
 Medlers, ploumes, peres, chesteynes,
 Cheryse, of whiche many on fayn is, 1376
 Notes, aleys, and bolas, *etc.*
 That for to seen it was solas;
 With many high lorer and pyn
 Was renged elene al that gardyn; 1380
 With cipres, and with oliveres,
 Of which that nigh no plente here is.
 Ther were elmes grete and stronge,
 Maples, ashe, ook, asp, planes longe,
 Fyn ew, popler, and lindes faire, 1385
 And other trees ful many a payre.
 What sholde I telle you more of it?
 Ther were so many treës yit,
 That I sholde al encombred be
 Er I had rekened every tree. 1390
 These trees were set, that I devyse,
 He - from another, in assyse,
 For by some or sixe, I trowe so,
 Right as were hye and grete also:
 Can drawe

And for to kepe out wel the sonne, 1395
 The croppes were so thikke y-ronne,
 And every braunch in other knet, *etc.*
 And ful of grene leves set,
 That sonne mighte noon descende,
 Lest [it] the tendre grasses shende. 1400
 Ther mighte men does and roes y-see,
 And of squireles ful greet plentee,
 From bough to bough alwey leping.
 Conies ther were also playing,
 That comen out of hir claperes *bur* 1405
 Of sondry colours and maneres,
 And maden many a turneyng
 Upon the fresshe gras springing.
 In places saw I welles there,
 In whiche ther no frogges were, 1410
 And faire in shadwe was every welle;
 But I ne can the nombre telle
 Of stremes smale, that by devys
 Mirthe had don come through condys,
 Of which the water, in renning, 1415
 Gan make a noyse ful lykng.
 About the brinkes of these welles,
 And by the stremes over-al elles
 Sprang up the gras, as thikke y-set
 And softe as any veluët, 1420
 On which men mighte his lemman leye,
 As on a fetherbed, to pleye,
 For therthe was ful softe and swete.
 Through moisture of the welle wete
 Sprang up the sote grene gras, 1425
 As fair, as thikke, as mister was.
 But muche amended it the place,
 That therthe was of swich a grace
 That it of floures had plente,
 That both in somer and winter be. 1430
 Ther sprang the violete al newe,
 And fresshe pervinke, riche of hewe,
 And floures yelowe, whyte, and rede;
 Swich plentee grew ther never in mede.
 Ful gay was al the ground, and queynt,
 And poudred, as men had it peynt, 1436
 With many a fresh and sondry flour,
 That casten up ful good savour.
 I wol not longe holde you in fable
 Of al this gardin delitable. 1440
 I moot my tonge stinten nede,
 For I ne may, withouten drede,
 Naught tellen you the beautee al,
 Ne half the bountee therewithal.
 I wente on right honde and on left
 Aboute the place; it was not left, 1446
 Til I hadde al the [yerde in] been,

In the estres that men mighte seen.
 And thus whyle I wente in my pley,
 The God of Love me folowed ay, 1450
 Right as an hunter can abyde
 The beste, til he seeth his tyde
 To shete, at good mes, to the dere,
 Whan that him nedeth go no nere.
 And so befel, I rested me 1455
 Besyde a welle, under a tree,
 Which tree in Fraunce men calle a
 pyn.
 But, sith the tyme of king Pepyn,
 Ne grew ther tree in mannes sighte
 So fair, ne so wel woxe in lighte; 1460
 In al that yerde so high was noon.
 And springing in a marble-stoon
 Had nature set, the sothe to telle,
 Under that pyn-tree a welle.
 And on the border, al withoute, 1465
 Was writen, in the stone aboute,
 Lettres spale, that seyden thus,
 'Here starr the faire Narcisus.'
 NARCISUS was a bachelere,
 That Love had caught in his daungere,
 And in his net gan him so streyne, 1471
 And dide him so to wepe and pleyne,
 That nede him muste his lyf forgo.
 For a fair lady, hight Echo,
 Him loved over any creature, 1475
 And gan for him swich payne endure,
 That on a tyme she him tolde,
 That, if he hir loven nolde,
 That hir behoved nedes dye,
 Ther lay non other remedye. 1480
 But natheles, for his beautee,
 So fiers and daungerous was he,
 That he nolde graunten hir asking,
 For weping, ne for fair praying.
 And whan she herde him werne hir so,
 She hadde in herte so gret wo, 1486
 And took it in so gret dyspyt,
 That she, withoute more respyt,
 Was deed anon. But, er she deyde,
 Ful pitously to god she preyde, 1490
 That proude-herted Narcisus,
 That was in love so daungerous,
 Mighte on a day ben hampred so
 For love, and been so hoot for wo,
 That never he mighte Ioye atteyne; 1495
 Than shulde he fele in every veyne
 What sorowe trewe lovers maken,
 That been so vilaynsly forsaken.
 This prajer was but resonable,

Therfor god held it ferme and stable:
 For Narcisus, shortly to telle, 1501
 By aventure com to that welle
 To reste him in that shadowing
 A day, whan he com fro hunting.
 This Narcisus had suffred paynes 1505
 For renning alday in the playnes,
 And was for thurst in gret distresse
 Of hete, and of his werinesse
 That hadde his breeth almost binomen. *hear table*
 Whan he was to that welle y-comen, *sway*
 That shadwed was with branches
 grene, 1511
 He thoughte of thilke water shene
 To drinke and fresshe him wel withalle;
 And doun on knees he gan to falle,
 And forth his heed and nekke out-
 straughte 1515
 To drinken of that welle a draughte.
 And in the water anon was sene
 His nose, his mouth, his yē shene,
 And he ther-of was al abasshed;
 His owne shadowe had him bitrashed. *retroyed*
 For wel wende he the forme see 1521
 Of a child of gret beautee.
 Wel couthe Love him wreke tho
 Of daunger and of pryde also,
 That Narcisus somtyme him bere. 1525
 He quitte him wel his guerdon there;
 For he so musede in the welle,
 That, shortly al the sothe to telle,
 He lovede his owne shadowe so,
 That atte laste he starf for wo. 1530
 For whan he saugh that he his wille
 Mighte in no maner wey fulfille,
 And that he was so faste caught
 That he him couthe comfort naught,
 He loste his wit right in that place, 1535
 And deyde within a litel space.
 And thus his warisoun he took
 For the lady that he forsook.
 Ladies, I preye ensample taketh,
 Ye that aye this your love mistaketh: 1540
 For if hir deeth be yow to wyte,
 God can ful wel your whyle quyte.
 Whan that this lettre, of whiche I
 telle,
 Had taught me that it was the welle
 Of Narcisus in his beautee, 1545
 I gan anon withdrawe me,
 Whan it fel in my remembrance,
 That him bitidde swich mischaunce.
 But at the laste than thoughte I,

- That scatheles, ful sikerly, 1550
 I mighte unto THE WELLE go.
 Wherof shulde I abasshen so?
 Unto the welle than wente I me,
 And down I louted for to see
 The clere water in the stoon, 1555
 And eek the gravel, which that shoon
 Down in the botme, as silver fyn;
 For of the welle, this is the fyn,
 In world is noon so cleer of hewe.
 The water is ever fresh and newe 1560
 That welmeth up with wawes brighte
 The mounceance of two finger highte.
 Abouten it is gras springing,
 For moiste so thikke and wel lykyn,
 That it ne may in winter dye, 1565
 No more than may the see be drye.
 Down at the botme set saw I
 Two cristal stones craftely
 In thilke fresshe and faire welle.
 But o thing soothly dar I telle, 1570
 That ye wol holde a greet mervayle
 Whan it is told, withouten fayle.
 For whan the sonne, cleer in sighte,
 Cast in that welle his bemes brighte,
 And that the heet descended is, 1575
 Than taketh the cristal stoon, y-wis,
 Agayn the sonne an hundred hewes,
 Blewe, yellowe, and rede, that fresh and
 newe is.
 Yit hath the merveulous cristal 1579
 Swich strengthe, that the place overal,
 Bothe fowl and tree, and leves grene,
 And al the yerd in it is sene.
 And for to doon you understonde,
 To make ensample wol I fonde; 1585
 Right as a mirour openly
 Sheweth al thing that stant therby,
 As wel the colour as the figure,
 Withouten any coverture;
 Right so the cristal stoon, shying,
 Withouten any disceyving, 1590
 The estres of the yerde accuseth
 To him that in the water museth;
 For ever, in which half that he be,
 He may wel half the gardin see;
 And if he turne, he may right wel 1595
 Seen the remenaunt every del.
 For ther is noon so litel thing
 So hid, ne closed with shitting,
 That it ne is sene, as though it were
 Peynted in the cristal there. 1600
 This is the mirour perilous,
- In which the proude Narcisus
 Saw al his face fair and bright,
 That made him sith to lye upright.
 For who-so loke in that mirour, 1605
 Ther may no-thing ben his socour
 That he ne shal ther seen som thing
 That shal him lede into [loving].
 Full many a worthy man hath it
 Y-blent; for folk of grettest wit 1610
 Ben some caught here and awayed;
 Withouten respyt been they bayted.
 Heer comth to folk of-newe rage,
 Heer chaungeth many wight corage;
 Heer lyth no reed ne wit therto; 1615
 For Venus sone, daun Cupido,
 Hath sowen there of love the seed,
 That help me lyth ther noon, ne reed,
 So cerleth it the welle aboute.
 His ginnes hath he set withoute 1620
 Right for to cacche in his panteres
 These damoyseles and bacheleres.
 Love wil noon other bridde cacche,
 Though he sette either net or cacche.
 And for the seed that heer was sowen,
 This welle is cleped, as wel is knowen,
 The Welle of Love, of verray right,
 Of which ther hath ful many a wight
 Spoke in bokes dyversely.
 But they shulle never so verily 1630
 Descripcioun of the welle here,
 Ne eek the sothe of this matere,
 As ye shulle, whan I have undo
 The craft that hir bilongeth to.
 Alway me lyked for to dwelle, 1635
 To seen the cristal in the welle,
 That shewed me ful openly
 A thousand thinges faste by.
 But I may saye, in sory houre
 Stood I to loken or to poure; 1640
 For sithen [have] I sore syked,
 That mirour hath me now entryked.
 But hadde I first knowen in my wit
 The vertue and [the] strengthe of it,
 I nolde not have mused there; 1645
 Me hadde bet ben elles-where;
 For in the snare I fel anon,
 That hath bitraissed many oon.
 In thilke mirour saw I tho,
 Among a thousand thinges mo, 1650
 A ROSE charged ful of roses,
 That with an hegge aboute enclos is.
 Tho had I swich lust and envye,
 That, for Parys ne for Payve,

Nolle I have left to goon and see 1655
 Ther grettest hepe of roses be.
 Whan I was with this rage hent,
 That caught hath many a man and
 shent,
 Toward the roser gan I go.
 And whan I was not fer thierfro, 1660
 The savour of the roses swote
 Me smoot right to the herte rote,
 As I hadde al embawmed [be.]
 And if I ne hadde endouted me
 To have ben hated or assailed, 1665
 My thanks, wolde I not have failed
 To pulle a rose of al that route
 To beren in myn honde aboute,
 And smellen to it wher I wente;
 But ever I dredde me to repente, 1670
 And lest it greved or for-thoughte
 The lord that thilke gardyn wroughte.
 Of roses were ther gret woon,
 So faire wexe never in roon.
 Of knoppes clos, some saw I there, 1675
 And some wel beter woxen were;
 And some ther been of other moysoun,
 That drowe nigh to hir sesoun,
 And spedde hem faste for to sprede;
 I love wel swiche roses rede; 1680
 For brode roses, and open also,
 Ben passed in a day or two;
 But knoppes wilen fresshe be
 Two dayes atte leest, or three.
 The knoppes gretly lyked me, 1685
 For fairer may ther no man see.
 Who-so mighte haven oon of alle,
 It oughte him been ful leef withalle.
 Mighte I [a] gerlond of hem geten,
 For no richesse I wolde it leten. 1690
 Among THE KNOPPES I chees oon
 So fair, that of the remenaunt noon
 Ne preyse I half so wel as it,
 Whan I avyse it in my wit.
 For it so wel was enlummyed 1695
 With colour reed, as wel [y]-fyned
 As nature couthe it make faire.
 And it had leves wel foure paire,
 That Kinde had set through his know-
 ing
 Aboute the rede rose springing. 1700
 The stalke was as risshe right,
 And theron stood the knoppe upright,
 That it ne bowed upon no syde.
 The swote smelle sprong so wyde
 That it dide al the place aboute — 1705

FRAGMENT B.

Whan I had smelled the savour swote,
 No wille hadde I fro thens yit go,
 But somdel neer it wente I tho,
 To take it; but myn hond, for drede,
 Ne dorste I to the rose bede, *ff* 1710
 For thistels sharpe, of many maneres,
 Netles, thornes, and hoked breres;
 [Ful] muche they distourbled me,
 For sore I dradde to harmed be.
 The God of Love, with bowe bent,
 That al day set hadde his talent 1716
 To pursuen and to spyen me,
 Was stonding by a fige-tree.
 And whan he sawe how that I
 Had choson so ententifly 1720
 The bōtoun, more unto my pay
 Than any other that I say,
 He took an arowe ful sharply whet,
 And in his bowe whan it was set,
 He streight up to his ere drough 1725
 The stronge bowe, that was so tough,
 And shet at me so wonder smerte,
 That through myn eye unto myn herte
 The takel smoot, and depe it wente, 1729
 And ther-with-al such cold me hente, *fook*
 That, under clothes warme and softe,
 Sith that day I have chevered ofte.
 Whan I was hurt thus in [that]
 stounde,
 I fel doun plat unto the grounde.
 Myn herte failed and feynted ay, 1735
 And long tyme [ther] a-swone I lay.
 But whan I com out of swoning,
 And hadde wit, and my feling,
 I was al *maat*, and wende ful wel
 Of blood have loren a full gret del. 1740
 But certes, the arowe that in me stood
 Of me ne drew no drope of blood,
 For-why I found my wounde al dreye.
 Than took I with myn handis tweye
 The arowe, and ful fast out it plight,
 And in the pulling sore I sight. 1746
 So at the last the shaft of tree
 I drough out, with the fetthers three.
 But yet the hoked heed, y-wis,
 The whiche Beautee callid is, 1750
 Gan so depe in myn herte passe,
 That I it mighte nought arace;
 But in myn herte stille it stood,
 Al bledde I not a drope of blood.
 I was bothe angnissous and trouble 1755

For the peril that I saw double;
 I niste what to seye or do,
 Ne gete a leche my woundis to;
 For neithir thurgh gras ne rote,
 Ne hadde I help of hope ne bote. 1760
 But to the botoun ever-mo
 Myn herte drew; for al my wo,
 My thought was in non other thing.
 For hadde it been in my keping,
 It wolde have brought my lyf agayn.
 For certainly, I dar wel seyn, 1766
 The sight only, and the savour,
 Allegged muche of my langour.
 Than gan I for to drawe me
 Toward the botoun fair to see; 1770
 And Love hadde gete him, in [a] throwe,
 Another arowe into his bowe,
 And for to shete gan him dresse;
 The arowis name was Simplese.
 And whan that Love gan nyghe me nere,
 He drow it up, withouten were, 1776
 And shet at me with al his might,
 So that this arowe anon-right
 Thourghout [myn] eigh, as it was founde,
 Into myn herte hath maad a wounde.
 Thanne I anon dide al my crafte 1781
 For to drawn out the shafte,
 And ther-with-al I sighed eft.
 But in myn herte the heed was left,
 Which ay encesid my desyre, 1785
 Unto the botoun drawe nere;
 And ever, mo that me was wo,
 The more desyr hadde I to go
 Unto the roser, where that grew
 The fresshe botoun so bright of hewe.
 Betir me were have leten be; 1791
 But it bihoved nedes me
 To don right as myn herte bad.
 For ever the body must be lad
 Aftir the herte; in wele and wo, 1795
 Of force togidre they must go.
 But never this archer wolde fyne
 To shete at me with alle his pyne,
 And for to make me to him mete. 1799
 The thridde arowe he gan to shete,
 Whan best his tyme he mighte espye,
 The which was named Curtesye;
 Into myn herte it dide avale.
 A-swone I fel, bothe deed and pale;
 Long tyme I lay, and stired nought, 1805
 Til I abraid out of my thought.
 And faste than I avysed me
 To drawn out the shafte of tree;

But ever the heed was left bihinde
 For ought I couthe pulle or winde. 1810
 So sore it stikid whan I was hit,
 That by no craft I might it flit;
 But anguissous and ful of thought,
 I felte such wo, my wounde ay wrought,
 That somened me alway to go 1815
 Toward the rose, that plesed me so;
 But I ne durste in no manere,
 Bicause the archer was so nere.
 For evermore gladly, as I rede,
 Brent child of fyr hath muche drede. 1820
 And, certis yit, for al my peyne,
 Though that I sigh yit arwis reyne,
 And grounde quarels sharpe of stele,
 Ne for no payne that I might fele,
 Yit might I not my-silf withholde 1825
 The faire roser to biholde;
 For Love me yaf sich hardement
 For to fulfillle his comaundement.
 Upon my feet I roos up than
 Feble, as a forwoundid man; 1830
 And forth to gon [my] might I sette,
 And for the archer nolde I lette.
 Toward the roser fast I drow;
 But thornes sharpe mo than y-now
 Ther were, and also thistels thikke, 1835
 And breres, brimme for to prikke,
 That I ne mighte gete grace
 The rowe thornes for to passe,
 To sene the roses fresshe of hewe.
 I must abide, though it me rewe, 1840
 The hegge aboute so thikke was,
 That closid the roses in compas.
 But o thing lyked me right wele
 I was so nygh, I mighte fele
 Of the botoun the swote odour, 1845
 And also see the fresshe colour;
 And that right gretly lyked me,
 That I so neer it mighte see.
 Sich Ioye anon thereof hadde I,
 That I forgat my malady. 1850
 To sene [it] hadde I sich delyt,
 Of sorwe and anger I was al quit,
 And of my woundes that I had thar;
 For no-thing lyken me might mar
 Than dwellen by the roser ay, 1855
 And thennes never to passe away.
 But whan a whyle I had be thar,
 The God of Love, which al to-shar
 Myn herte with his arwis kene,
 Caste him to yeve me woundis grene.
 He shet at me ful hastily 1861

An arwe named Company,
 The whiche takel is ful able
 To make these ladies merciabe.
 Than I anoon gan chaungen hewe 1865
 For grevaunce of my wounde newe,
 That I agayn fel in swoning,
 And sighed sore in compleyning.
 Sore I compleyned that my sore
 On me gan greven more and more. 1870
 I had non hope of allegeaunce;
 So nigh I drow to desperaunce,
 I rought of dethe ne of lyf,
 Wither that love wolde me dryf.
 If me a martir wolde he make, 1875
 I might his power nought forsake.
 And whyl for anger thus I wook,
 The God of Love an arowe took;
 Ful sharp it was and [ful] pugnaunt,
 And it was callid Fair-Semblaunt, 1880
 The which in no wys wol consente,
 That any lover him repente
 To serve his love with herte and alle,
 For any peril that may bifalle.
 But though this arwe was kene grounde
 As any rasour that is founde, 1886
 To cutte and kerve, at the poynt,
 The God of Love it hadde anoynt
 With a precious oynement,
 Somdel to yeve allegement 1890
 Upon the woundes that he had
 Through the body in my herte maad,
 To helpe hir sores, and to cure,
 And that they may the bet endure.
 But yit this arwe, withoute more, 1895
 Made in myn herte a large sore,
 That in ful gret payne I abood.
 But ay the oynement wente abroad;
 Throughout my woundes large and wyde
 It spredde aboute in every syde; 1900
 Through whos vertu and whos might
 Myn herte Ioyful was and light.
 I had ben deed and al to-shent
 But for the precious oynement.
 The shaft I drow out of the arwe, 1905
 Roking for wo right wondir narwe;
 But the heed, which made me smerte,
 Lefte bihinde in myn herte
 With other foure, I dar wel say,
 That never wol be take away; 1910
 But the oynement halp me wel.
 And yit sich sorwe dide I fele,
 That al-day I chaunged hewe,
 Of my woundes fresshe and newe,
 As men might see in my visage. 1915
 The arwis were so fulle of rage,
 So variaunt of diversitee,
 That men in everich mighte see
 Bothe gret anoy and eek swetnesse,
 And Ioye meynt with bittirnesse. 1920
 Now were they esy, now were they wood,
 In hem I felte bothe harm and good;
 Now sore without allegement,
 Now softening with oynement;
 It softned here, and prikked there, 1925
 Thus ese and anger togider were.
 The God of Love deliverly
 Com lepard to me hastily,
 And seide to me, in gret rape, 1929
 'Yeld thee, for thou may not escape!
 May no defence availe thee here;
 Therefore I rede mak no daungere.
 If thou wolt yelde thee hastily,
 Thou shalt [the] rather have mercy.
 He is a fool in sikernesse, 1935
 That with daunger or stoutnesse
 Rebelligh ther that he shulde plesse;
 In such folye is litel ese.
 Be meek, wher thou must nedis bowe;
 To stryve ageyn is nought thy prow.
 Come at ones, and have y-do, 1941
 For I wol that it be so.
 Than yeld thee here debonairly.'
 And I answerid ful humbly,
 'Gladly, sir; at your bidding, 1945
 I wol me yelde in alle thing.
 To your servyse I wol me take;
 For god defende that I shulde make
 Ageyn your bidding resistence;
 I wol not doon so gret 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 wyse may I go.
 My lyf, my deth, is in your honde, 1955
 I may not laste out of your bonde.
 Pleyn at your list I yelde me,
 Hoping in herte, that sumtyme ye
 Comfort and ese shulle me sende;
 Or ellis shortly, this is the ende, 1960
 Withouten helthe I moot ay dure,
 But-if ye take me to your cure.
 Comfort or helthe how shuld I have,
 Sith ye me hurte, but ye me save? 1964
 The helthe of lovers moot be founde
 Wher-as they token firste hir wounde.
 And if ye list of me to make

- Your prisoner, I wol it take
Of herte and wil, fully at gree.
Hoolly and pleyn I yelde me, 1970
Withoute feyning or feyntyse,
To be governed by your emprise.
Of you I here so much prys,
I wol ben hool at your devys
For to fulfill your lyking 1975
And repente for no-thing,
Hoping to have yit in som tyde
Mercy, of that [that] I abyde.
And with that covenant yeld I me,
Anoon doum kneling upon my knee,
Profering for to kisse his feet; 1981
But for no-thing he wolde me lete,
And seide, 'I love thee bothe and preyse,
Sen that thyn answer doth me ese,
For thou answerid so curteisly. 1985
For now I wot wel uttirly,
That thou art gentil, by thy speche.
For though a man fer wolde seche,
He shulde not finden, in certeyn,
No sich answer of no vileyn; 1990
For sich a word ne mighte nought
Isse out of a vilayns thought.
Thou shalt not lesen of thy speche,
For [to] thy helping wol I eche,
And eek encesen that I may. 1995
But first I wol that thou obey
Fully, for thyn avauntage,
Anon to do me here homage.
And sithen kisse thou shalt my mouth,
Which to no vilayn was never couth
For to aproche it, ne for to touche; 2001
For sauf of cherlis I ne vouche
That they shulle never neigh it nere.
For curteys, and of fair manere,
Wel taught, and ful of gentilnesse 2005
He muste ben, that shal me kisse,
And also of ful high fraunchyse,
That shal atteyne to that emprise.
'And first of o thing warne I thee,
That payne and gret adversitee 2010
He mot endure, and eek travaile,
That shal me serve, withoute faile.
But ther-ageyns, thee to comforte,
And with thy servise to desporte,
Thou mayst ful glad and Ioyful be 2015
So good a maister to have as me,
And lord of so high renoun.
I bere of Love the gonfanoun, *Diurnal*
Of Curtesye the banere;
For I am of the silf manere, 2020
- Gentil, curteys, meek and free;
That who[so] ever ententif be
Me to honoure, doute, and serve,
And also that he him observe
Fro trespas and fro vilanye, 2025
And him governe in curtesye
With wil and with entencioun;
For whan he first in my prisoun
Is caught, than muste he uttirly,
Fro thennes-forth ful bisily, 2030
Caste him gentil for to be,
If he desyre helpe of me.
Anoon withouten more delay,
Withouten daunger or affray,
I bicom his man anoon, 2035
And gave him thankes many a oon,
And kneled doum with hondis Ioynt,
And made it in my port ful queynt;
The Ioye wente to myn herte rote.
Whan I had kissed his mouth so swote,
I had sich mirthe and sich lyking, 2041
It cured me of languissing.
He askid of me than hostages:—
'I have,' he seide, 'taken fele homages
Of oon and other, where I have ben
Disceyved ofte, withouten wene. 2046
These felouns, fulle of falsitee,
I have many sythes bigyled me,
And through falskede hir lust acheved,
Whereof I repente and am agreved.
And I hem gete in my daungere, 2051
Hir falshed shulle they bye ful dere.
But for I love thee, I seye thee pleyn,
I wol of thee be more certeyn;
For thee so sore I wol now binde, 2055
That thou away ne shalt not winde
For to denyen the covenant,
Or doon that is not avenaunt. *irrely*
That thou were fals it were gret reuthe,
Sith thou semest so ful of treuthe.' 2060
'Sire, if thee list to undirstande,
I merveile thee asking this demande.
For-why or wherefore shulde ye
Ostages or borwis' aske of me,
Or any other sikirnesse, 2065
Sith ye wote, in sothfastnesse,
That ye have me surprysed so,
And hool myn herte taken me fro,
That it wol do for me no-thing
But-if it be at your bidding? — 2070
Myn herte is oth, and myn right nought,
As it bihoveth, in dede and thought,
Redy in alle to worche your wille,

Whether so [it] turne to good or ille.
 So sore it lustith you to plesse, 2075
 No man therof may you disseise.
 Ye have theron set sich Iustise,
 That it is ^{were} ~~were~~ in many wise. ^{were}
 And if ye doute it nolde obeye, ^{were}
 Ye may therof do make a keye, 2080
 And hoble it with you for ostage.
 'Now certis, this is noon outrage,
 Quoth Love, 'and fully I accord;
 For of the body he is ful lord
 That hath the herte in his tresor; 2085
 Outrage it were to asken more.'
 Than of his aumener he drough
 A litel keye, fetys y-nough,
 Which was of gold polissed clere, 2089
 And seide to me, 'With this keye here
 Thyn herte to me now wol I shette;
 For al my Iowellis ~~like~~ and knette ^{like}
 I binde under this litel keye,
 That no wight may carye aweye;
 This keye is ful of gret poeste.' 2095
 With which anon he touchid me
 Undir the syde ful softly,
 That he myn herte sodelyn
 Without [al] any had spered,
 That yit right nought it hath me dered.
 When he had doon his wil al-out, 2101
 And I had put him out of dout,
 'Sire,' I seide, 'I have right gret wille
 Your lust and plesaunce to fulfillle.
 Loke ye my servise take at gree, ^{from will} 2105
 By thilke feith ye owe to me.
 I seye nought for recreaundyse,
 For I nought doute of your servyse.
 But the servaunt traiveleth in wayne,
 That for to serven doth his payne 2110
 Unto that lord, which in no wyse
 Can him no thank for his servyse.'
 Love seide, 'Dismaye thee nought,
 Sin thou for sucour hast me sought,
 In thank thy servise wol I take, 2115
 And high of degree I wol thee make,
 If wikkidnesse ne hindre thee;
 But, as I hope, it shal nought be.
 To worship no wight by aventure
 May come, but-if he peyne endure. 2120
 Abyde and suffre thy distresse;
 That hurtith now, it shal be lesse;
 I wot my-silf what may thee save,
 What medicyne thou woldist have.
 And if thy trouthe to me thou kepe, 2125
 I shal unto thyn helping eke,

To cure thy woundes and make hem
 clene,
 Wher-so they be olde or grene;
 Thou shalt be holpen, at wordis fewe.
 For certeynly thou shalt wel shewe 2130
 Wher that thou servest with good wille,
 For to complisshen and fulfillle
 My comaundementis, day and night,
 Whiche I to lovers yeve of right.'
 'Ah, sire, for goddis love,' seide I,
 'Er ye passe hens, ententifly 2136
 Your comaundementis to me ye say,
 And I shal kepe hem, if I may;
 For hem to kepen is al my thought.
 And if so be I wot hem nought, 2140
 Than may I [sinne] unwittingly.
 Wherfore I pray you entereyly,
 With al myn herte, me to lere, ^{teach}
 That I trespasse in no manere.'
 The god of love than chargid me 2145
 Anoon, as ye shal here and see,
 Word by word, by right emprise,
 So as the Romance shal devyse.
 The maister lesith his tyme to lere,
 When the disciple wol not here 2150
 It is but veyn on him to swinke,
 That on his lerning wol not thinke.
 Who-so lust love, let him entende,
 For now the Romance ginneth amende.
 Now is good to here, in fay, 2155
 If any be that can it say,
 And poynte it as the resoun is
 Set; for other-gate, y-wis,
 It shal nought wel in alle thing
 Be brought to good undirstonding: 2160
 For a reder that poyntith ille
 A good sentence may ofte spille.
 The book is good at the ending,
 Maad of newe and lusty thing;
 For who-so wol the ending here, 2165
 The crafte of love he shal now lere,
 If that he wol so long abyde,
 Til I this Romance may unhyde,
 And undo the signifaunce
 Of this dreme into Romaunce. 2170
 The sothfastnesse that now is hid,
 Without coverture shal be kid,
 When I undon have this dreming,
 Wherin no word is of lesing.
 'Vilany, at the beginning, 2175
 I wol,' sayd Love, 'over alle thing,
 Thou leve, if thou wolt [not] be
 Fals, and trespasse ageynes me.

- I curse and blame generally
 Alle hem that loven vilany; 2180
 For vilany makith vilayn,
 And by his dedis a cherle is seyn.
 Thise vilayns arn without pitee,
 Frenshipe, love, and al bounte.
 I nil receyve to my servyse 2185
 Hem that ben vilayns of emprise.
 'But undirstonde in thyn entent,
 That this is not myn entendement, *peraphra*
 To clepe no wight in no ages
 Only gentil for his linages. 2190
 But who-so [that] is vertuous,
 And in his port nought outrageous,
 Whan sich oon thou seest thee biforn,
 Though he be not gentil born,
 Thou mayst wel seyn, this is a soth, 2195
 That he is gentil, because he doth
 As longeth to a gentilman;
 Of hem non other deme I can.
 For certeynly, withouten drede,
 A cherl is demed by his dede, 2200
 Of hye or lowe, as ye may see,
 Or of what kinrede that he be.
 Ne say nought, for noon yvel wille,
 Thing that is to holden stille;
 It is no worship to misseye. 2205
 Thou mayst ensample take of Keye,
 That was somtyme, for misseying,
 Hated bothe of old and ying;
 As fer as Gaweyn, the worthy,
 Was preyed for his curtesy, 2210
 Keye was hated, for he was fel,
 Of word dispitous and cruel.
 Wherefore be wyse and aqueyntable,
 Goodly of word, and resonable
 Bothe to lesse and eek to mar. 2215
 And whan thou comest ther men ar,
 Loke that thou have in custom ay
 First to salve hem, if thou may:
 And if it falle, that of hem som
 Salve thee first, be not dom, 2220
 But quyte him curteisly anon
 Without abiding, er they goon.
 'For no-thing eek thy tunge applye
 To speke wordis of ribaudye. *peraphra*
 To vilayn speche in no degree 2225
 Lat never thy lippe unbounden be.
 For I nought holde him, in good feith,
 Curteys, that foule wordis seith.
 And alle wimmen serve and preyse,
 And to thy power hir honour reyse. 2230
 And if that any missayere
- Dispyse wimmen, that thou mayst here,
 Blame him, and bidde him holde him
 stille.
 And set thy might and al thy wille
 Wimmen and ladies for to plesse, 2235
 And to do thing that may hem ese,
 That they ever speke good of thee,
 For so thou mayst best preyed be.
 'Loke fro pryde thou kepe thee wele;
 For thou mayst bothe perceyve and
 fele, 2240
 That pryde is bothe foly and sinne;
 And he that pryde hath, him withinne,
 Ne may his herte, in no wyse,
 Meken ne souplen to servyse.
 For pryde is founde, in every part, 2245
 Contrarie unto Loves art.
 And he that loveth trewely
 Shoulde him contene Iolily,
 Withouten pryde in sondry wyse,
 And him disgysen in queyntyse. 2250
 For queynt array, withouten drede,
 Is no-thing proud, who takith hede;
 For fresh array, as men may see,
 Withouten pryde may ofte be.
 'Mayntene thy-silf aftir thy rent, 2255
 Of robe and eek of garnement;
 For many sythe fair clothing
 A man amendith in mich thing.
 And loke alwey that they be shape,
 What garnement that thou shalt make,
 Of him that can [hem] beste do, 2261
 With all that perteyneth therto.
 Poyntis and sleeves be wel sittand,
 Right and streight upon the hand.
 Of shoon and botes, newe and faire, 2265
 Loke at the leest thou have a paire;
 And that they sitte so fetisly,
 That these rude may uttirly
 Merveyle, sith that they sitte so pleyn,
 How they come on or of ageyn. 2270
 Were streite gloves, with aumenere
 Of silk; and alwey with good chere
 Thou yeve, if thou have richesse;
 And if thou have nought, spend the lesse.
 Alwey be mery, if thou may, 2275
 But waste not thy good alway.
 Have hat of floures fresh as May,
 Chapelet of roses of Whitsunday;
 For sich array ne cost but lyte.
 Thyn hondis wasshe, thy teeth make
 whyte, 2280
 And let no filthe upon thee be.

Thy nailes blak if thou mayst see,
 Voide it away deliverly,
 And kembe thyu heed right Iolily.
 [Fard] not thy visage in no wyse, 2285
 For that of love is not thempryse;
 For love doth haten, as I finde,
 A beaute that cometh not of kinde.
 Alwey in herte I rede thee
 Glad and mery for to be, 2290
 And be as loyful as thou can;
 Love hath no loye of sorowful man.
 That yvel is ful of curtesye
 That [lauhwith] in his maladye;
 For ever of love the siknesse 2295
 Is meynd^{with} with swete and bitternesse.
 The sore of love is merveilous;
 For now the lover [is] loyous,
 Now can he pleyne, now can he grone,
 Now can he singen, now maken mone.
 To-day he pleyneth for hevinesse, 2301
 To-morowe he pleyeth for Iolynesse.
 The lyf of love is full contrarie,
 Which stonde[n]feld can ofte varie.
 But if thou canst [som] mirthis make, 2305
 That men in gree wole gladly take,
 Do it goodly, I comaunde thee;
 For men sholde, wher-so-ever they be,
 Do thing that hem [best] sitting is,
 For therof cometh good loos and pris.
 Wher-of that thou be vertuous, 2311
 Ne be not straunge ne daungerous.
 For if that thou good rider be,
 Prike gladly, that men may se.
 In armes also if thou conne, 2315
 Pursue, til thou a name hast wonne.
 And if thy voice be fair and clere,
 Thou shalt maken no gret daungere
 Whan to singe they goodly prey;e;
 It is thy worship for to obeye. 2320
 Also to you it longith ay
 To harpe and giterne, daunce and play;
 For if he can wel foote and daunce,
 It may him gretly do avaunce.
 Among eek, for thy lady sake, 2325
 Songes and complayntes that thou make;
 For that wol meve [hem] in hir herte,
 Whan they reden of thy smerte.
 Loke that no man for scarce thee holde,
 For that may greve thee manyfolde.
 Resoun wol that a lover be 2331
 In his yiftes more large and free
 Than cherles that been not of loving.
 For who ther-of can any thing,

He shal be leef ay for to yeve, 2335
 In [Loves] lore who so wolde leve;
 For he that, through a soodeyn sight,
 Or for a kissing, anon-right
 Yaf hool his herte in wille and thought,
 And to him-silf kepith right nought, 2340
 Aftir [swich yift], is good resoun,
 He yeve his good in abandoun.
 'Now wol I shortly here reherce,
 Of that [that] I have seid in verse,
 Al the sentence by and by, 2345
 In wordis fewe compendiously,
 That thou the bet mayst on hem thinke,
 Whether-so it be thou wake or winke;
 For [that] the wordis litel greve
 A man to kepe, whanne it is breve. 2350
 'Who-so with Love wol goon or ryde
 He mot be curteys, and void of pryde,
 Mery and fulle of Iolite,
 And of largesse abused be.
 'First I Ioynе thee, here in penaunce,
 That ever, withoute repentaunce, 2356
 Thou set thy thought in thy loving,
 To laste withoute repenting;
 And thanke upon thy mirthis swete,
 That shal folowe aftir whan ye mete. 2360
 'And for thou trewe to love shalt be,
 I wol, and [eek] comaunde thee,
 That in oo place thou sette, al hool,
 Thyn herte, withouten halfen dool, ^{partic}
 For trecherie, [in] sikernes;e, 2365
 For I lovede never doublenesse.
 To many his herte that wol depart,
 Everiche shal have but litel part.
 But of him drede I me right nought,
 That in oo place settith his thought.
 Therfore in oo place it sette, 2371
 And lat it never thennes flette.
 For if thou yevest it in lening, ^{lendyng}
 I holde it but a wrecchid thing:
 Therfore yeve it hool and quyte, 2375
 And thou shalt have the more merite.
 If it be lent, than aftir soon,
 The bountee and the thank is doon;
 But, in love, free yeven thing
 Requyrith a gret guerdoning. ^{rewe} 2380
 Yeve it in yift al quit fully,
 And make thy yift debonairly;
 For men that yift [wol] holde more dere
 That yeven is with gladsome chere.
 That yift nought to preisen is 2385
 That man yeveth, maugre his.
 Whan thou hast yeven thyn herte, as I

Have seid thee here [al] openly,
 Than adventures shulle thee falle, 2389
 Which harde and hevy been withalle.
 For oft whan thou bihenkist thee
 Of thy loving, wher-so thou be,
 Fro folk thou must depart in hy,
 That noon perceyve thy malady, 2394
 But hyde thyn harm thou must alone,
 And go forth sole, and make thy mone.
 Thou shalt no whyl be in oo stat,
 But whylom cold and whylom hat;
 Now reed as rose, now yelowe and fade.
 Such sorowe, I trowe, thou never hade;
 Cotidien, ne [yit] quarteyne, 2401
 It is nat so ful of peyne.
 For ofte tymes it shal falle
 In love, among thy peynes alle,
 That thou thy-self, al hoolly, 2405
 Foryeten shalt so utterly,
 That many tymes thou shalt be
 Stille as an image of tree,
 Dom as a stoon, without stering
 Of foot or hond, without speking. 2410
 Than, sone after al thy peyne,
 To memorie shalt thou come ageyn,
 As man abasshed wondre sore,
 And after sighen more and more.
 For wit thou wel, withouten weue, 2415
 In swich astat ful oft have been
 That have the yvel of love assayd,
 Wher-through thou art so dismayd.
 'After, a thought shal take thee so,
 That thy love is to fer thee fro: 2420
 Thou shalt say, "God, what may this be,
 That I ne may my lady see?
 Myne herte aloun is to her go,
 And I abyde al sole in wo,
 Departed fro myn owne thought, 2425
 And with myne eyen see right nought.
 "Alas, myn eyen sende I ne may,
 My careful herte to convey!
 Myn hertes gyde but they be,
 I praise no-thing what ever they see.
 Shul they abyde thanne? nay; 2431
 But goon visyte without delay
 That myn herte desyareth so.
 For certeynly, but-if they go,
 A fool my-self I may wel holde, 2435
 Whan I ne see what myn herte wolde.
 Wherfore I wol gon her to seen,
 Or esed shal I never been,
 But I have som tokening."
 Then gost thou forth without dwelling;

But ofte thou faylest of thy desyre, 2441
 Er thou mayst come hir any nere,
 And wastest in vayn thy passage.
 Than fallest thou in a newe rage;
 For want of sight thou ginnest morne,
 And homward pensif dost retorne. 2446
 In greet mischeef than shalt thou be,
 For than agayn shal come to thee
 Sighes and pleyntes, with newe wo,
 That no icching prikketh so. 2450
 Who wot it nought, he may go lere *learn*
 Of hem that byen love so dere.
 'No-thing thyn herte appesen may,
 That oft thou wolt goon and assay,
 If thou mayst seen, by aventure, 2455
 Thy lyves Ioy, thyn hertis cure;
 So that, by grace if thou might
 Atteyne of hir to have a sight,
 Than shalt thou doon non other dede
 But with that sight thyn eyen fede. 2460
 That faire fresh whan thou mayst see,
 Thyn herte shal so ravished be,
 That never thou woldest, thy thankis,
 lete,
 Ne remove, for to see that swete. 2464
 The more thou seest in sothfastnesse, *truth*
 The more thou covetest of that swet-
 nesse;
 The more thyn herte brenneth in fyr,
 The more thyn herte is in desyr.
 For who considreth every del,
 It may be lykned wondir wel, 2470
 The peyne of love, unto a fere;
 For ever [the] more thou neighst nere
 Thought, or who-so that it be,
 For verray sothe I telle it thee,
 The hatter ever shal thou brenne, 2475
 As experience shal thee kenne.
 Wher-so [thou] comest in any cost,
 Who is next fyr, he brenneth most.
 And yit forsothe, for al thyn hete,
 Though thou for love swelte and swete,
 Ne for no-thing thou felen may 2481
 Thou shalt not willen to passe away.
 And though thou go, yet must thee nede
 Thenke al-day on hir fairhede,
 Whom thou bihelde with so good wille;
 And holde thysilf bigyled ille, 2486
 That thou ne haddest non hardement
 To shewe hir ought of thyn entent.
 Thyn herte ful sore thou wolt dispyse,
 And eek repreve of cowardyse, 2490
 That thou, so dulle in every thing,

Were dom for drede, without speking.
 Thou shalt eek thenke thou didest foly,
 That thou were hir so faste by,
 And durst not aughte thee to say 2495
 Som-thing, er thou cam away;
 For thou haddist no more wonne,
 To speke of hir whan thou bigonne:
 But yif she wolde, for thy sake,
 In armes goodly thee have take, 2500
 It shulde have be more worth to thee
 Than of tresour greet plentee.

'Thus shalt thou morne and eek compleyn,
 And gete ^{cheches} ^{to} goon ageyn
 Unto thy walk, or to thy place, 2505
 Where thou biheld hir fleschly face.
 And never, for fals suscepcioun,
 Thou woldest finde occasioun
 For to gon unto hir hous.
 So art thou thanne desirous 2510
 A sight of hir for to have,
 If thou thine honour mightest save,
 Or any erand mightist make
 Thider, for thy loves sake; 2514
 Ful fayn thou woldist, but for drede
 Thou gost not, lest that men take hede.
 Wherefore I rede, in thy going,
 And also in thyn ageyn-coming,
 Thou be wel war that men ne wit;
 Feyne thee other cause than it 2520
 To go that weye, or faste by;
 To hele wel is no folye.
 And if so be it happe thee
 That thou thy love ther mayst see,
 In siker wyse thou hir salewe, 2525
 Wherwith thy colour wol transmewe,
 And eke thy blood shal al to-quake,
 Thyn hewe eek chaungen for hir sake.
 But word and wit, with chere ful pale,
 Shul wante for to telle thy tale. 2530
 And if thou mayst so far-forth winne,
 That thou [thy] resoun durst biginne,
 And woldis seyn three thingis or mo,
 Thou shalt ful scarsly seyn the two.
 Though thou bithenke thee never so wel,
 Thou shalt foryete yit somdel, 2536
 But-if thou dele with trecherye.
 For fals lovers mowe al folye
 Seyn, what hem lust, withouten drede,
 They be so double in hir falshede; 2540
 For they in herte kunne thenke a thing
 And seyn another, in hir speking,
 And whan thy speche is endid al,

Right thus to thee it shal bifal;
 If any word than come to minde, 2545
 That thou to seye hast left bihinde,
 Than thou shalt brenne in greet martyr;
 For thou shalt brenne as any fyr.
 This is the stryf and eke the affray,
 And the batail that lastith ay. 2550
 This bargeyn ende may never take,
 But-if that she thy pees wil make.

'And whan the night is comen, anon
 A thousand angres shal come upon, 2554
 To bedde as fast thou wolt thee dight,
 Where thou shalt have but smal delyt;
 For whan thou wenest for to slepe,
 So ful of peyne shalt thou crepe,
 Sterte in thy bedde aboute ful wyde,
 And turne ful ofte on every syde; 2560
 Now downward groffe, and now upright,
 And walowe in wo the longe night,
 Thyne armis shalt thou sprede abrede,
 As man in werre were forwerreyd.
 Than shal thee come a remembraunce
 Of hir shape and hir semblaunce,
 Wherto non other may be pere.
 And wife thou wel, withoute were, ^{about}
 That thee shal [seme], somtyme that
 night,

That thou hast hir, that is so bright, 2570
 Naked bitwene thyn armes there,
 Al sothfastnesse as though it were.
 Thou shalt make castels than in Spayne,
 And dreme of Ioye, al but in vayne,
 And thee delyten of right nought, 2575
 Why! thou so slomrest in that thought,
 That is so swete and delitable,
 The which, in soth, nis but a fable,
 For it ne shal no whyle laste. 2579
 Than shalt thou sighe and wepe faste,
 And say, "Dere god, what thing is this?
 My dreme is turned al amis,
 Which was ful swete and apparent,
 But now I wake, it is al shent!
 Now yede this mery thought away! 2585
 Twenty tymes upon a day
 I wolde this thought wolde come ageyn,
 For it alleggith wel my peyn.
 It makith me ful of Ioyful thought,
 It sleeth me, that it lastith nought. 2590
 A, lord! why nil ye me soucore,
 The Ioye, I trowe, that I langoure?
 The deth I wolde me shulde slo
 Why! I lye in hir armes two.
 Myn harm is hard, withouten wene, 2595

My greet unese ful ofte I mene.
 But wolde Love do so I might
 Have fully Ioye of hir so bright,
 My peyne were quit me richely.
 Allas, to greet a thing aske I! 2600
 It is but foly, and wrong wening,
 To aske so outrageous a thing.
 And who-so askith folily,
 He moot be warned hastily;
 And I ne wot what I may say, 2605
 I am so fer out of the way;
 For I wolde have ful gret lykynge
 And ful gret Ioye of lasse thing.
 For wolde she, of hir gentilnesse,
 Withouten more, me onis kesse, 2610
 It were to me a greet guerdoun,
 Relees of al my passioun.
 But it is hard to come therto;
 Al is but foly that I do,
 So high I have myn herte set, 2615
 Where I may no comfort get.
 I noot wher I sey wel or nought;
 But this I wot wel in my thought,
 That it were bet of hir aloon,
 For to stint my wo and moon, 2620
 A loke on [me] y-cast goodly,
 [Than] for to have, al utterly,
 Of another al hool the play.
 A! lord! wher I shal byde the day
 That ever she shal my lady be? 2625
 He is ful cured that may hir see.
 A! god! whan shal the dawning spring?
 To ly thus is an angry thing;
 I have ne Ioye thus here to ly
 Whan that my love is not me by. 2630
 A man to lyen hath gret disese,
 Which may not slepe ne reste in ese.
 I wolde it dawed, and were now day,
 And that the night were went away;
 For were it day, I wolde upryse. 2635
 A! slow sonne, shew thyn enpryse!
 Speed thee to sprede thy bemis bright,
 And chace the derknesse of the night,
 To putte away the stoundes stronge,
 Which in me lasten al to longe." 2640
 'The night shalt thou contene so,
 Withoute rest, in peyne and wo;
 If ever thou knewe of love distresse,
 Thou shalt mowe lerne in that siknesse.
 And thus enduring shalt thou ly, 2645
 And ryse on morwe up erly
 Out of thy bedde, and harness thee
 Er ever dawning thou mayst see.

Al privily than shal thou goon,
 What [weder] it be, thy-silf aloon, 2650
 For reyn, or hayl, for snow, for slete,
 Thider she dwellith that is so swete,
 The which may falle aslepe be,
 And thenkith but litel upon thee.
 Than shalt thou goon, ful foule aferd;
 Loke if the gate be unsperd, 2656
 And waite without in wo and peyn,
 Ful yvel a-cold in winde and reyn.
 Than shal thou go the dore bifore,
 If thou maist fynde any score, 2660
 Or hole, or rest, what ever it were;
 Than shalt thou stoupe, and lay to ere,
 If they within a-slepe be;
 I mene, alle save thy lady free.
 Whom waking if thou mayst aspye, 2665
 Go put thy-silf in Iupartye,
 To aske grace, and thee bimene,
 That she may wite, withouten wene,
 That thou [a]night no rest hast had,
 So sore for hir thou were bistad. 2670
 Wommen wel ought pitie to take
 Of hem that sorwen for hir sake.
 And loke, for love of that relyke,
 That thou thenke non other lyke,
 For [whom] thou hast so greet annoy,
 Shall kisse thee er thou go away, 2676
 And hold that in ful gret deyntee.
 And, for that no man shal thee see
 Bifore the hous, ne in the way,
 Loke thou be goon ageyn er day. 2680
 Suche coming, and such going,
 Such hevynesse, and such walking,
 Makith lovers, withouten wene,
 Under hir clothes pale and lene,
 For Love leveth colour ne cleernesse;
 Who loveth trewe hath no fatnesse. 2686
 Thou shalt wel by thy-selfe see
 That thou must nedis assayed be.
 For men that shape hem other way
 Falsly hir ladies to bitray, 2690
 It is no wonder though they be fat;
 With false othes hir loves they gat;
 For oft I see suche losengeours
 Fatter than abbatis or priours.
 'Yet with o thing I thee charge, 2695
 That is to seye, that thou be large
 Unto the mayd that hir doth serve,
 So best hir thank thou shalt deserve.
 Yeve hir yfites, and get hir grace, 2699
 For so thou may [hir] thank purchase,
 That she thee worthy holde and free,

Thy lady, and alle that may thee see.
 Also hir servauntes worshiye ay,
 And plesse as muche as thou may;
 Gret good through hem may come to
 thee, 2705
 Bicause with hir they been prive.
 They shal hir telle how they thee fand
 Curteis and wys, and wel doand,
 And she shal preyse [thee] wel the
 mare. 2709
 Loke out of londe thou be not fare;
 And if such cause thou have, that thee
 Bihoveth to gone out of contree,
 Leve hool thyn herte in hostage,
 Til thou ageyn make thy passage.
 Think long to see the swete thing 2715
 That hath thyn herte in hir keeping.
 ' Now have I told thee, in what wyse
 A lover shal do me serveye.
 Do it than, if thou wolt have
 The herte that thou aftir crave.' 2720
 Whan Love al this had boden me,
 I seide him : — ' Sire, how may it be
 That lovers may in such manere
 Endure the peyne ye have seid here?
 I merveyle me wonder faste, 2725
 How any man may live or laste
 In such peyne, and such brenning,
 In sorwe and thought, and such sighing,
 Ay unrelased wo to make,
 Whether so it be they slepe or wake.
 In such annoy continually, 2731
 As helpe me god, this merveile I,
 How man, but he were maad of steele,
 Might live a month, such peynes to fele.'
 The God of Love than seide me, 2735
 ' Frend, by the feith I owe to thee,
 May no man have good, but he it by.
 A man loveth more tendirly
 The thing that he hath bought most dere.
 For wite thou wel, withouten were, 2740
 In thank that thing is taken more,
 For which a man hath suffred sore.
 Certis, no wo ne may atteyne
 Unto the sore of love's peyne.
 Non yvel therto ne may amounte, 2745
 No more than a man [may] counte
 The drops that of the water be.
 For drye as wel the grete see
 Thou mightist, as the harmes telle
 Of hem that with Love dwelle 2750
 In servyse; for peyne hem sleeth,
 And that ech man wolde flee the deeth,

And trowe they shulde never escape,
 Nere that hope couthe hem make
 Glad as man in prison set, 2755
 And may not geten for to et
 But barly-breed, and watir pure,
 And lyeth in vermin and in ordure;
 With alle this, yit can he live, 2759
 Good hope such comfort hath him yive,
 Which maketh wene that he shal be
 Delivered and come to liberte;
 In fortune is [his] fulle trust.
 Though he lye in strawe or dust,
 In hope is al his susteyning. 2765
 And so for lovers, in hir wening,
 Whiche Love hath shit in his prison;
 Good-Hope is hir salvacioun.
 Good-Hope, how sore that they smerte,
 Yeveth hem bothe wille and herte 2770
 To profre hir body to martyre;
 For Hope so sore doth hem desyre
 To suffre ech harm that men devyse,
 For Ioye that aftir shal aryse.
 ' Hope, in desire [to] cacche victorie;
 In Hope, of love is al the glorie. 2776
 For Hope is al that love may yive;
 Nere Hope, ther shulde no lover live.
 Blessid be Hope, which with desyre
 Avaunceth lovers in such manere. 2780
 Good-Hope is curteis for to please,
 To kepe lovers from al disese.
 Hope kepith his lond, and wol abyde,
 For any peril that may betyde;
 For Hope to lovers, as most cheef, 2785
 Doth hem enduren al mischeef;
 Hope is her help, whan mister is.
 And I shal yeve thee eek, y-wis,
 Three other thingis, that greet solas
 Doth to hem that be in my las. *Sp. 2790-2*
 ' The firste good that may be founde,
 To hem that in my lace be bounde,
 Is Swete-Thought, for to recorde
 Thing wherwith thou canst accorde
 Best in thyn herte, wher she be; 2795
 Thought in absence is good to thee.
 Whan any lover doth compleyne,
 And liveth in distresse and peyne,
 Than Swete-Thought shal come, as blyve,
 Away his angre for to dryve. 2800
 It makith lovers have remembraunce
 Of comfort, and of high plesaunce,
 That Hope hath hight him for to winne.
 For Thought anon then shal biginne,
 As for, god wot, as he can finde, 2805

To make a mirroure of his minde;
 For to biholde he wol not lette.
 Hir person he shal afore him sette,
 Hir laughing eyen, persauant and clere,
 Hir shape, hir fourme, hir goodly chere,
 Hir mouth that is so gracious, 2811
 So swete, and eek so saverous;
 Of alle hir fetures he shal take heede,
 His eyen with alle hir limes fede.

‘Thus Swete-Thenking shal aswage
 The peyne of lovers, and hir rage. 2816
 Thy Ioye shal double, withoute gesse,
 When thou thenkist on hir semliness,
 Or of hir laughing, or of hir chere,
 That to thee made thy lady dere. 2820
 This comfort wol I that thou take;
 And if the next thou wolt forsake
 Which is not lesse saverous,
 Thou shuldist been to daungerous. 2824

‘The secoude shal be Swete-Speche,
 That hath to many oon be leche,
 To bringe hem out of wo and were,
 And helpe many a bachilere;
 And many a lady sent socoure,
 That have loved par-amour, 2830
 Through speking, when they mighten
 here

Of hir lovers, to hem so dere.
 To [hem] it voidith al hir smerte,
 The which is closed in hir herte. 2834

In herte it makith hem glad and light,
 Speche, when they mowe have sight.
 And therefore now it cometh to minde,
 In olde dawes, as I finde,
 That clerkis writen that hir knewe,

Ther was a lady fresh of hewe, 2840
 Which of hir love made a song
 On him for to remembre among,
 In which she seide, “Whan that I here

Speken of him that is so dere,
 To me it voidith al [my] smerte, 2845
 Y-wis, he sit so nere myn herte.

To speke of him, at eve or morwe,
 It cureth me of al my sorwe.
 To me is noon so high pleasaunce
 As of his persone daliaunce.” 2850

She wist ful wel that Swete-Speking
 Comfortith in ful muche thing,
 Hir love she had ful wel assayed,
 Of him she was ful wel apayed;

To speke of him hir Ioye was set. 2855
 Therefore I rede thee that thou get
 A felowe that can wel concele

And kepe thy counsel, and wel hele,
 To whom go shewe hoolly thyn herte,
 Bothe wele and wo, Ioye and smerte:
 To gete comfort to him thou go, 2861

And privily, bitween yow two,
 Ye shal speke of that goodly thing,
 That hath thyn herte in hir keeping;
 Of hir beaute and hir semblaunce, 2865
 And of hir goodly countenance.

Of al thy state thou shalt him sey,
 And aske him conseil how thou may
 Do any thing that may hir plesse;

For it to thee shal do gret ese, 2870
 That he may wite thou trust him so,
 Bothe of thy wele and of thy wo.

And if his herte to love be set,
 His compagne is muche the bet,
 For resoun wol, he shewe to thee 2875
 Al uttirly his privite;

And what she is he loveth so,
 To thee pleyntyly he shal undo,
 Withoute drede of any shame,
 Bothe telle hir renoun and hir name. 2880

Than shal he forther, ferre and nere,
 And namely to thy lady dere,
 In siker wyse; ye, every other
 Shal helpen as his owne brother,

In trouthe withoute doublenesse, 2885
 And kepen cloos in sikernesse.
 For it is noble thing, in fay,

To have a man thou darst say
 Thy prive counsel every del;

For that wol comfort thee right wel, 2890
 And thou shalt holde thee wel apayed,
 Whan such a freend thou hast assayed.

‘The thridde good of greet comfort
 That yeveth to lovers most disport,
 Comith of sight and biholding, 2895

That clepid is Swete-Loking,
 The whiche may noon ese do,
 Whan thou art fer thy lady fro;

Wherfore thou prese alwey to be
 In place, where thou mayst hir se. 2900
 For it is thing most amerous,
 Most delitable and saverous,

For to aswage a mannes sorowe,
 To sene his lady by the morowe.
 For it is a ful noble thing 2905

Whan thyn eyen have meting
 With that relyke precious,
 Wherof they be so desirous.

But al day after, soth it is,
 They have no drede to faren amis, 2910

five

They dreden neither wind ne reyn,
 Ne [yit] non other maner-peyn.
 For whan thyn eyen were thus in blis,
 Yit of hir curtesye, y-wis,
 Aloon they can not have hir Ioye, 2915
 But to the herte they [it] conveye;
 Part of hir blis to him [they] sende,
 Of al this harm to make an ende.

The eye is a good messangere,
 Which can to the herte in such manere
 Tidyngis sende, that [he] hath seen, 2921
 To voide him of his peynes cleen.

Wherof the herte reioyseth so
 That a gret party of his wo
 Is voided, and put away to flight. 2925

Right as the derknesse of the night
 Is chased with clerenesse of the mone,
 Right so is al his wo ful sone

Devoided clen, whan that the sight
 Biholden may that fresshe wight 2930

That the herte desyreth so,
 That al his derknesse is ago;
 For than the herte is al at ese,
 Whan they seen that [that] may hem
 please.

'Now have I thee declared aloud, 2935
 Of that thou were in drede and dout;

For I have told thee feithfully
 What thee may curen utterly,
 And alle lovers that wole be
 Feithful, and ful of stabilite. 2940

Good-Hope alwey kepe by thy syde,
 And Swete-Thought make eek abyde,
 Swete-Loking and Swete-Speche;
 Of alle thyn harmes they shal be leche.

Of every thou shalt have greet plesaunce;
 If thou canst byde in sufferaunce, 2946
 And serve wel without feyntyse,

Thou shalt be quit of thyn emprise,
 With more guerdoun, if that thou live;
 But al this tyme this I thee give.' 2950

'The God of Love whan al the day
 Had taught me, as ye have herd say,
 And enfurmed compendiously,
 He vanished away al sodeynly,

And I alone lefte, al sole, 2955
 So ful of compleynt and of dole,
 For I saw no man ther me by.

My woundes me greved wondirly;
 Me for to curen no-thing I knew,
 Save the botoun bright of hew, 2960

Wheron was set hoolly my thought;
 Of other comfort knew I nought,

But it were through the God of Love;
 I knew nat elles to my bihove
 That might me ese or comfort gete, 2965
 But-if he wolde him entermete. *interpose*

The roser was, withoute doute,
 Closed with an hegge withoute,
 As ye to-forn have herd me seyn;
 And fast I bisied, and wolde fayn 2970

Have passed the haye, if I might
 Have geten in by any slight
 Unto the botoun so fair to see.

But ever I dradde blamed to be,
 If men wolde have suspeccioun 2975
 That I wolde of entencioun

Have stole the roses that ther were;
 Therfore to entre I was in fere.
 But at the last, as I bithought

Whether I sholde passe or nought, 2980
 I saw come with a gladde chere
 To me, a lusty bachelere,

Of good stature, and of good hight,
 And Bialacoil forsothe he hight.
 Sone he was to Curtesy, 2985

And he me graunted ful gladly
 The passage of the outer hay,
 And seide: — 'Sir, how that ye may

Passe, if [it] your wille be, 2990
 The fresshe roser for to see,
 And ye the swete savour fele.

Your warrant may [I be] right wele;
 So thou thee kepe fro folye,
 Shal no man do the vilanye.

If I may helpe you in ought, 2995
 I shal not feyne, dredeth nought;
 For I am bounde to your servyse,
 Fully devoide of feyntyse.'

Than unto Bialacoil saide I,
 'I thank you, sir, ful hertely, 3000
 And your biheest [I] take at gree, *premise*

That ye so goodly prefer me;
 To you it cometh of greet fraunchyse,
 That ye me prefer your servyse.'

Than aftir, ful deliverly, 3005
 Through the breres anon wente I,
 Whereof encombred was the hay.

I was wel plesed, the soth to say,
 To see the botoun fair and swote,
 So fresshe spronge out of the rote. 3010

And Bialacoil me served well,
 Whan I so nygh me mighte fele
 Of the botoun the swete odour,

And so lusty hewed of colour.
 But than a chér! (foule him bityde!)

Bisyde the roses gan him hyde, 3016
 To kepe the roses of that roser,
 Of whom the name was Daunger.
 This cheryl was hid there in the greves,
 Covered with grasse and with leves, 3020
 To spye and take whom that he fond
 Unto that roser putte an hond.
 He was not sole, for ther was mo ;
 For with him were other two
 Of wikkid maners, and yvel fame. 3025
 That oon was clepid, by his name,
 Wikkid-Tonge, god yeve him sorwe !
 For neither at eve, ne at morwe,
 He can of no man [no] good speke ;
 On many a lust man doth he wreke. 3030
 Ther was a womman eek, that hight
 Shame, that, who can reken right,
 Trespas was hir fadir name,
 Hir moder Resoun ; and thus was Shame
 [On lyve] brought of these ilk two. 3035
 And yit had Trespas never ado
 With Resoun, ne never ley hir by,
 He was so hidous and ugly,
 I mene, this that Trespas hight ;
 But Resoun conceyeth, of a sight, 3040
 Shame, of that I spak afor.
 And whan that Shame was thus born,
 It was ordeyned, that Chastitee
 Shulde of the roser lady be,
 Which, of the botouns more and las,
 With sondry folk assailed was, 3046
 That she ne wiste what to do.
 For Venus hir assailith so,
 That night and day from hir she stal
 Botouns and roses over-al. 3050
 To Resoun than prayeth Chastitee,
 Whom Venus flemed over the see,
 That she hir daughter wolde hir lene,
 To kepe the roser fresh and grene.
 Anoon Resoun to Chastitee 3055
 Is fully assented that it be,
 And grauntid hir, at hir request,
 That Shame, bicause she is honest,
 Shal keper of the roser be.
 And thus to kepe it ther were three,
 That noon shulde hardly be ne bold 3061
 (Were he yong, or were he old)
 Ageyn hir wille away to bere
 Botouns ne roses, that ther were.
 I had wel sped, had I not been 3065
 Awayed with these three, and seen.
 For Bialacoil, that was so fair,
 So gracious and debonair,

Quitte him to me ful curteisly,
 And, me to plesse, bad that I 3070
 Shuld draw me to the botoun nere ;
 Prese in, to touche the roser
 Which bar the roses, he yaf me leve ;
 This graunt ne might but litel greve.
 And for he saw it lyked me, 3075
 Right nygh the botoun pullede he
 A leef al grene, and yaf me that,
 The which ful nygh the botoun sat ;
 I made [me] of that leef ful queynt.
 And whan I felte I was aqueynt 3080
 With Bialacoil, and so prive,
 I wende al at my wille had be.
 Than wex I hardly for to tel
 To Bialacoil how me bifel
 Of Love, that took and wounded me,
 And seide : ' Sir, so mote I thee, 3086
 I may no Ioye have in no wyse,
 Upon no syde, but it ryse ;
 For sithe (if I shal not feyne)
 In herte I have had so gret peyne, 3090
 So gret annoy, and such affray,
 That I ne wot what I shal say ;
 I drede your wrath to disseve.
 Lever me were, that knyves kerve
 My body shulde in pecis smalle, 3095
 Than in any wyse it shulde falle
 That ye wratthed shulde been with me.'
 ' Sey boldely thy wille,' quod he,
 ' I nil be wroth, if that I may, 3099
 For nought that thou shalt to me say.'
 Thanne seide I, ' Sir, not you displese
 To knowen of my greet unese,
 In which only love hath me brought ;
 For peynes greet, disese and thought,
 Fro day to day he doth me drye ; 3105
 Supposeth not, sir, that I lye.
 In me fyve woundes dide he make,
 The sore of whiche shal never slake
 But ye the botoun graunte me,
 Which is most passaunt of beautee, 3110
 My lyf, my deth, and my martyre,
 And tresour that I most desyre.'
 Than Bialacoil, affrayed all,
 Seyde, ' Sir, it may not fall ;
 That ye desire, it may not ryse. 3115
 What ? wolde ye shende me in this wyse ?
 A mochel foole than I were,
 If I suffrid you away to bere *hwl*
 The fresh botoun, so fair of sight.
 For it were neither skile ne right 3120
 Of the roser ye broke the rind,

Or take the rose afor his kind ;
 Ye ar not courteys to aske it.
 Lat it stil on the roser sit,
 And growe til it amended be, 3125
 And parfitly come to beaute.
 I nolde not that it pulled wer
 Fro the roser that it ber,
 To me it is so leef and dere.'

With that sterte out anon Daungere,
 Out of the place where he was hid. 3131

His malice in his chere was kid ; ^{rew}
 Ful greet he was, and blak of hewe,
 Sturdy and hidous, who-so him knewe ;
 Like sharp urchouns his here was growe,
 His eyes rede as the fire-glow ; 3136
 His nose frounced, ful kirked stood,

He com criand as he were wood,
 And seide, ' Bialacoil, tell me why
 Thou bringest hider so boldly 3140

Him that so nygh [is] the roser ?
 Thou worchist in a wrong maner ;
 He thenkith to dishonour thee, ^{||}
 Thou art wel worthy to have maugree
 To late him of the roser wit ; 3145

Who serveth a feloun is yvel quit.
 Thou woldist have doon greet bountee,
 And he with shame wolde quyte thee.
 Flee hennes, felowe ! I rede thee go !
 It wanteth litel I wol thee slo ; 3150

For Bialacoil ne knew thee nought,
 When thee to serve he sette his thought ;
 For thou wolt shame him, if thou might,
 Bothe ageyn resoun and right.

I wol no more in thee affye, ^{||} 3155
 That comest so slyghly for tespye ;
 For it preveth wonder wel,
 Thy slight and tresoun every del.'

I durst no more ther make abode,
 For the cherl, he was so wode ; 3160

So gan he threten and manace,
 And thurgh the haye he did me chace.
 For feer of him I tremblid and quook,
 So cherlishly his heed he shook ;
 And seide, if eft he might me take, 3165
 I shulde not from his hondis scape.

Than Bialacoil is fled and mate,
 And I al sole, disconsolate,
 Was left aloon in peyne and thought ;
 For shame, to deth I was nygh brought.
 Than thought I on myn high foly, 3171
 How that my body, utterly,
 Was yeve to peyne and to martyre ;
 And therto hadde I so gret yre,

That I ne durst the haye passe ; 3175
 There was non hope, there was no grace.

I trowe never man wiste of peyne,
 But he were laced in Loves cheyne ;
 Ne no man [wot], and sooth it is,
 But-if he love, what anger is. 3180

Love holdith his heest to me right wele,
 Whan peyne he seide I shulde fele.
 Non herte may thenke, ne tunge seyne,
 A quarter of my wo and peyne.

I might not with the anger laste ; 3185
 Myn herte in poynt was for to braste,
 Whan I thought on the rose, that so
 Was through Daunger cast me froo.

A long whyl stood I in that state,
 Til that me saugh so mad and mate 3190
 The lady of the highe ward,
 Which from hir tour lokid thiderward.

Resoun men clepe that lady,
 Which from hir tour deliverly
 Come doun to me withouten more. 3195

But she was neither yong, ne hore,
 Ne high ne low, ne fat ne lene,
 But best, as it were in a mene.
 Hir eyen two were cleer and light

As any candel that brenneth bright ; 3200
 And on hir heed she hadde a crown.
 Hir semede wel an high persoun ;
 For rounde enviroin, hir crownet

Was ful of riche stonis fret.
 Hir goodly semblaunt, by devys, 3205
 I trowe were maad in paradys ;
 Nature had never such a grace,

To forge a werk of such compace.
 For certeyn, but the letter lye,
 God him-silf, that is so high, 3210
 Made hir aftir his image,

And yaf hir sith sich avauntage,
 That she hath might and seignorye
 To kepe men from al folye ;
 Who-so wole trowe hir lore, 3215
 Ne may offenden nevermore.

And whyl I stood thus derk and pale,
 Resoun bigan to me hir tale ;
 She seide : ' Al hayl, my swete frend !
 Foly and childhood wol thee shend, 3220

Which thee have put in greet affray ;
 Thou hast bought dere the tyme of May,
 That made thyn herte mery to be.

In yvel tyme thou wentist to see
 The gardin, wherof Ydilnesse 3225
 Bar the keye, and was maistresse
 Whan thou yedest in the daunce

With hir, and haddest aqueyntaunce;
 Hir aqueyntaunce is perilous,
 First softe, and aftir[ward] noyous; 3230
 She hath [thee] trashed, withoute ween;
 The God of Love had thee not seen,
 Ne hadde Ydillnesse thee conveyed
 In the verger where Mirthe him played.
 If Foly have surprised thee, 3235
 Do so that it recovered be;
 And be wel war to take no more
 Counsel, that greveth aftir sore;
 He is wys that wol himsif chastyse.
 And though a young man in any wyse
 Trespace among, and do foly, 3241
 Lat him not tarye, but hastily
 Lat him amende what so be mis.
 And eek I counseile thee, y-wis,
 The God of Love hoolly foryet, 3245
 That hath thee in sich peyne set,
 And thee in herte tormented so.
 I can nat seen how thou mayst go
 Other weyes to garisoun; *care*
 For Daunger, that is so feloun, *fer* 3250
 Felly purposith thee to werrey,
 Which is ful cruel, the soth to sey.
 'And yit of Daunger cometh no blame,
 In reward of my daughter Shame,
 Which hath the roses in hir warde, 3255
 As she that may be no musarde. *the wener*
 And Wikked-Tunge is with these two,
 That suffriþ no man thider go;
 For er a thing be do, he shal,
 Where that he cometh, over-al, 3260
 In fourty places, if it be sought.
 Seye thing that never was doon ne
 wrought;
 So moche tresoun is in his male,
 Of falsnesse for to [feyne] a tale.
 Thou delest with angry folk, y-wis; 3265
 Wherfor to thee [it] bettir is
 From these folk away to fare,
 For they wol make thee live in care.
 This is the yvel that Love they calle,
 Wherin ther is but foly alle, 3270
 For love is foly everydel;
 Who loveth, in no wyse may do wel,
 Ne sette his thought on no good werk.
 His seole he lesith, if he be clerik;
 Of other craft eek if he be, 3275
 He shal not thryve therin; for he
 In love shal have more passoun
 Than monke, hermyte, or chanoun.
 The peyne is hard, out of mesure,

The Loye may eek no whyl endure; 3280
 And in the possessioun
 Is muche tribulacioun;
 The Loye it is so short-lasting,
 And but in happe is the geting;
 For I see ther many in travaille, 3285
 That atte laste foule fayle.
 I was no-thing thy counselor,
 When thou were maad the homager
 Of God of Love to hastily;
 Ther was no wisdom, but foly. 3290
 Thyn herte was loly, but not sage,
 When thou were brought in sich a rage,
 To yelde thee so redily,
 And to Love, of his gret maistry.
 'I rede thee Loye away to dryve, 3295
 That makith thee recche not of thy lyve.
 The foly more fro day to day
 Shal growe, but thou it putte away.
 Take with thy teeth the bridel faste,
 To daunte thyn herte; and eek thee 3300
 caste,
 If that thou mayst, to gete defence
 For to redresse thy first offence.
 Who-so his herte alwey wol leve,
 Shal finde among that shal him greve.'
 When I hir herd thus me chastyse,
 I answerd in ful angry wyse. 3306
 I prayed hir cessen of hir speche,
 Outher to chastyse me or teche,
 To bidde me my thought refreyne,
 Which Love hath caught in his de-
 meyne:— 3310
 'What? wene ye Love wol consent,
 That me assailith with bowe bent,
 To draw myn herte out of his honde.
 Which is so quikly in his bonde?
 That ye counsayle, may never be; 3315
 For whan he first arested me,
 He took myn herte so hool him til,
 That it is no-thing at my wil;
 He [taughte] it so him for to obey,
 That he it sparred with a key. 3320
 I pray yow lat me be al stille.
 For ye may wel, if that ye wille,
 Your wordis waste in idilnesse;
 For utterly, withouten gesse,
 Al that ye seyn is but in veyne. 3325
 Me were lever dye in the peyne,
 Than Love to me-ward shulde arette
 Falsheed, or tresoun on me sette.
 I wol me gete prys or blame,
 And love trewe, to save my name; 3330

Who me chastysith, I him hate.
 With that word Resoun wente hir gate,
 Whan she saugh for no sermoning
 She might me fro my foly bring.
 Than dismayed, I lefte all sool, 3335
 Forwery, forwardres as a fool,
 For I ne knew no chevisaunce. *by the way,*
 Than fel into my remembraunce,
 How Love bade me to purveye
 A felowe, to whom I mighte seye 3340
 My counsel and my pryvete,
 For that shulde muche availe me.
 With that bithought I me, that I
 Hadde a felowe faste by,
 Trewe and siker, curteys, and hend, 3345
 And he was called by name a Freend;
 A trewer felowe was no-wher noon.
 In haste to him I wente anon,
 And to him al my wo I tolde,
 Fro him right nought I wold withholde.
 I tolde him al withoute were, 3351
 And made my compleynt on Daungere,
 How for to see he was hidous,
 And to-me-ward contrarious;
 The whiche through his cruelte 3355
 Was in poynt to have meyned me;
 With Bialacoil whan he me sey
 Within the gardyn walke and pley,
 Fro me he made him for to go,
 And I bilefte aloon in wo; 3360
 I durst no lenger with him speke,
 For Daunger seide he wolde be wreke,
 Whan that he sawe how I wente
 The fresshe botoun for to hente,
 If I were hardy to come near 3365
 Bitwene the hay and the roser.
 This Freend, whan he wiste of my
 thought,
 He discomforted me right nought,
 But seide, 'Felowe, be not so mad,
 Ne so abaysshed nor bistad. 3370
 My-silf I knowe ful wel Daungere,
 And how he is feers of his chere,
 At prime temps, Love to manace;
 Ful ofte I have ben in his caas.
 A feloun first though that he be, 3375
 Aftir thou shalt him souple see.
 Of long passed I knew him wele;
 Ungoodly first though men him fele,
 He wol meek aftir, in his bering,
 Been, for service and obeysshing. 3380
 I shal thee telle what thou shalt do:—
 Mekely I rede thou go him to,

Of herte pray him specialy
 Of thy trespace to have mercy, 3384
 And hôte him wel, [him] here to plesse,
 That thou shalt nevermore him displese.
 Who can best serve of flattery,
 Shal plesse Daunger most uttirly.
 My Freend hath seid to me so wel,
 That he me esid hath somdel, 3390
 And eek allegged of my torment;
 For through him had I hardement
 Agayn to Daunger for to go,
 To preve if I might meke him so.
 To Daunger cam I, al ashamed, 3395
 The which aforne me hadde blamed,
 Desyring for to pese my wo;
 But over hegge durst I not go,
 For he forbad me the passage.
 I fond him cruel in his rage, 3400
 And in his hond a gret burdoun.
 To him I knelid lowe adoun,
 Ful meke of port, and simple of chere,
 And seide, 'Sir, I am comen here
 Only to aske of you mercy. 3405
 That greveth me, [sir], ful gretly
 That ever my lyf I wratthed you,
 But for to amende I am come now,
 With al my might, bothe loude and stille,
 To doon right at your owne wille; 3410
 For Love made me for to do
 That I have trespassed hidirto;
 Fro whom I ne may withdrawe myn
 herte;
 Yit shal I never, for Ioy ne smerte,
 What so bifalle, good or ille, 3415
 Offende more ageyn your wille.
 Lever I have endure disese
 Than do that shulde you displese.
 'I you require and pray, that ye
 Of me have mercy and pitee, 3420
 To stinte your yre that greveth so,
 That I wol swere for evermo
 To be redressid at your lyking,
 If I trespasse in any thing;
 Save that I pray thee graunte me 3425
 A thing that may nat warned be,
 That I may love, al only;
 Non other thing of you aske I.
 I shal doon elles wel, y-wis,
 If of your grace ye graunte me this. 3430
 And ye [ne] may not letten me,
 For wel wot ye that love is free,
 And I shall loven, [sith] that I wil,
 Who-ever lyke it wel or il;

And yit ne wold I for al Fraunce, 3435
Do thing to do you displeaunce.'

Than Daunger til in his entent
For to foryeve his maltalent;
But all his wratthe yit at laste
He hath relesed, I preyde so faste: 3440
Shortly he seide, 'Thy request
Is not to mochel dishonest;
Ne I wol not werne it thee,
For yit no-thing engreveth me.
For though thou love thus evermore,
To me is neither softe ne sore. 3446
Love wher the list; what rechith me,
So [thou] fer fro my roses be?
Trust not on me, for noon assay,
In any tyme to passe the hay.' 3450
Thus hath he graunted my prayere.

Than wente I forth, withouten were,
Unto my Freend, and tolde him al,
Which was right Ioyful of my tale.
He seide, 'Now goth wel thyn affaire
He shal to thee be debonaire. 3456
Though he aforn was dispitous,
He shal heerastir be gracious.
If he were touchid on som good veyne,
He shuld yit reven on thy payne. 3460
Suffre, I rede, and no boost make,
Til thou at good mes mayst him take.
By suffraunce, and [by] wordis softe,
A man may overcomen ofte
Him that aforn he hadde in drede, 3465
In bookis sothly as I red.'

Thus hath my Freend with gret com-
fort
Avanued me with high disport,
Which wolde me good as mich as I.
And thanne anoon ful sodehyly 3470
I took my leve, and streight I went
Unto the hay; for gret talent
I had to seen the fresh botoun,
Wherin lay my salvacioun;
And Daunger took kepe, if that I 3475
Kepe him covaunant trewly.
So sore I dradde his manasing,
I durst not breke[n] his bidding;
For, lest that I were of him shent,
I brak not his comaundement, 3480
For to purchase his good wil.
It was [hard] for to come ther-til,
His mercy was to fer bihinde;
I wepte, for I ne might it finde.
I compleyned and sighed sore, 3485
And languished evermore,

For I durst not over go
Unto the rose I loved so.
Thurghout my deming outerly,
[Than] had he knowlege certainly, 3490
[That] Love me ladde in sich a wyse,
That in me ther was no feyntyse,
Falsheed, ne no trecherye.
And yit he, ful of vilanye,
Of disdeyne, and cruelte, 3495
On me ne wolde have pite,
His cruel wil for to refreyne,
Though I wepe alway, and compleyne.

And while I was in this torment,
Were come of grace, by god sent, 3500
Fraunchyse, and with hir Pite
Fulfilde the botoun of bountee.
They go to Daunger anon-right
To forther me with all hir might,
And helpe in worde and in dede, 3505
For wel they saugh that it was nede.
First, of hir grace, dame Fraunchyse
Hath taken [word] of this emprise:
She seide, 'Daunger, gret wrong ye do
To worche this man so muche wo, 3510
Or pynten him so angerly;
It is to you gret vilany.

I can not see why, ne how,
That he hath trespassed ageyn you,
Save that he loveth; wherefore ye shulde
The more in cherete of him holde. 3516
The force of love makith him do this;
Who wolde him blame he dide amis?
He leseth more than ye may do;
His payne is hard, ye may see, lo! 3520
And Love in no wyse wolde consente
That [he] have power to repente;
For though that quik ye wolde him sloo,
Fro Love his herte may not go.
Now, swete sir, is it your ese 3525
Him for to angre or disese?
Allas, what may it you avauce
To doon to him so greet grevaunce?
What worship is it agayn him take,
Or on your man a werre make, 3530
Sith he so lowly every wyse
Is reddy, as ye lust devyse?
If Love hath caught him in his lace,
You for tobeye in every caas,
And been your suget at your wille, 3535
Shulde ye therfore willen him ille?
Ye shulde him spare more, al-out,
Than him that is bothe proud and stout.
Curtesye wol that ye socour 3539

Hem that ben meke undir your cure.
 His herte is hard, that wole not meke,
 Whan men of mekenesse him biseke.
 'That is certeyn,' seide Pite;
 'We see ofte that humilitee
 Bothe ire, and also felonye 3545
 Venquisseth, and also melancolye;
 To stonde forth in such duresse,
 This crueltee and wikkednesse.
 Wherfore I pray you, sir Daungere,
 For to mayntene no lenger here 3550
 Such cruel werre agayn your man,
 As hoolly youre as ever he can;
 Nor that ye worchen no more wo
 On this caytif that languisshith so,
 Which wol no more to you trespasse, 3555
 But put him hoolly in your grace.
 His offense ne was but lyte;
 The God of Love it was to wyte,
 That he your thral so gretly is,
 And if ye harm him, ye doon amis; 3560
 For he hath had full hard penaunce,
 Sith that ye refte him thaqueyntaunce
 Of Bialacoil, his moste loye,
 Which alle his peynes might acoye. *apost*
 He was biforn ayoied sore, 3565
 But than ye doubled him wel more;
 For he of blis hath ben ful bare,
 Sith Bialacoil was fro him fare.
 Love hath to him do greet distresse,
 He hath no nede of more duresse. 3570
 Voideth from him your ire, I rede;
 Ye may not winnen in this dede.
 Makith Bialacoil repeire ageyn,
 And haveth pite upon his peyn;
 For Fraunchise wol, and I, Pite, 3575
 That merciful to him ye be;
 And sith that she and I accorde,
 Have upon him misericorde;
 For I you pray, and eek moneste, *can't read*
 Nought to refusen our requeste; 3580
 For he is hard and fel of thought,
 That for us two wol do right nought.'
 Daunger ne might no more endure,
 He meked him unto mesure.
 'I wol in no wyse,' seith Daungere,
 'Denye that ye have asked here; 3586
 It were to greet uncurtesye.
 I wol ye have the companye
 Of Bialacoil, as ye devyse;
 I wol him letten in no wyse.' 3590
 To Bialacoil than wente in hy
 Fraunchyse, and seide full curteisly: —

'Ye have to longe be deignous
 Unto this lover, and daungerous,
 Fro him to withdrawe your presence, 3595
 Which hath do to him grete offence,
 That ye not wolde upon him see;
 Wherfore a sorowful man is he.
 Shape ye to paye him, and to please,
 Of my love if ye wol have ese. 3600
 Fulfil his wil, sith that ye knowe
 Daunger is daunted and brought lowe
 Thurgh help of me and of Pite;
 You [thar] no more afered be.'
 'I shal do right as ye wil,' 3605
 Saith Bialacoil, 'for it is skil,
 Sith Daunger wol that it so be.'
 Than Fraunchise hath him sent to me.
 Bialacoil at the beginning
 Salued me in his coming. 3610
 No straungenes was in him seen,
 No more than he ne had wrathed been.
 As faire semblaunt than shewed he me,
 And goodly, as afor did he;
 And by the honde, withouten doute, 3615
 Within the hays, right al aboute
 He ladde me, with right good chere,
 Al environ the vergere, *the word*
 That Daunger had me chased fro.
 Now have I leve over-al to go; 3620
 Now am I raised, at my devys,
 Fro helle unto paradys.
 Thus Bialacoil, of gentilnesse,
 With alle his peyne and besinesse,
 Hath shewed me, only of grace, 3625
 The estres of the swote place.
 I saw the rose, whan I was nigh,
 Was gretter woxen, and more high,
 Fresh, rody, and fair of hewe,
 Of colour ever yliche newe. 3630
 And whan I had it longe seen,
 I saugh that through the leves grene
 The rose spredde to spanishing;
 To sene it was a goodly thing.
 But it ne was so spred on brede, 3635
 That men within might knowe the sede;
 For it covert was and [en]close
 Bothe with the leves and with the rose.
 The stalk was even and grene upright,
 It was theron a goodly sight; 3640
 And wel the better, withouten wene,
 For the seed was not [y]-sene.
 Ful faire it sprakde, [god it blesse!]
 For suche another, as I gesse,
 Afor ne was, ne more vermayle 3645

I was abawed for merveyle,
 For ever, the fairer that it was,
 The more I am bounden in Loves laas.
 Longe I abood there, soth to saye,
 Til Bialacoil I gan to praye, 3650
 Whan that I saw him in no wyse
 To me warnen his servyse,
 That he me wolde graunte a thing,
 Which to remembre is wel sitting;
 This is to sayne, that of his grace 3655
 He wolde me yeve leyser and space
 To me that was so desirous
 To have a kissing precious
 Of the goodly freshe rose,
 That swetely smelleth in my nose; 3660
 'For if it you displeas nought,
 I wolde gladly, as I have sought,
 Have a cos therof freely
 Of your yeft; for certainly
 I wol non have but by your leve, 3665
 So loth me were you for to greve.'
 He sayde, 'Frend, so god me spede,
 Of Chastite I have suche drede,
 Thou shuldest not warned be for me,
 But I dar not, for Chastite. 3670
 Agayn hir dar I not misdo,
 For alwey biddeth she me so
 To yeve no lover leve to kisse;
 For who therto may winnen, y-wis,
 He of the surplus of the pray 3675
 May live in hope to get som day.
 For who so kissing may attayne,
 Of loves peyne hath, soth to sayne,
 The beste and most avenaunt, *with de*
 And earnest of the remenaunt.' 3680
 Of his answer I syghed sore;
 I durst assaye him tho no more,
 I had such drede to greve him ay.
 A man shulde not to muche assaye
 To chafe his frend out of mesure, 3685
 Nor put his lyf in aventure;
 For no man at the firste stroke
 Ne may nat felle down an oke;
 Nor of the reisis have the wyne,
 Til grapes rype and wel afyne 3690
 Be sore embressid, I you ensure,
 And drawn out of the pressure.
 But I, forpeyned wonder stronge,
 [Thought] that I abood right longe
 Aftir the kis, in peyne and wo, 3695
 Sith I to kis desyred so:
 Til that, [rewing] on my distresse,
 Ther [to me] Venus the goddesse,
 Which ay werreyeth Chastite,
 Came of hir grace, to socoure me, 3700
 Whos might is knowe for and wyde,
 For she is modir of Cupyde,
 The God of Love, blinde as stoon,
 That helpith lovers many oon.
 This lady brought in hir right hond 3705
 Of brenning fyr a blasing brond; *with*
 Wherof the flawme and hote fyr
 Hath many a lady in desyr
 Of love brought, and sore het,
 And in hir servise hir hertes set. 3710
 This lady was of good entayle,
 Right wonderful of apparayle;
 By hir atyre so bright and shene,
 Men might perceyve wel, and seen,
 She was not of religioun. 3715
 Nor I nil make mencion
 Nor of [hir] robe, nor of tresour,
 Of broche, [nor] of hir rich attour;
 Ne of hir girdil aboute hir syde,
 For that I nil not long abyde. 3720
 But knowith wel, that certeynly
 She was arayed richely.
 Devoyd of pryde certeyn she was;
 To Bialacoil she wente a pas,
 And to him shortly, in a clause, 3725
 She seide: 'Sir, what is the cause
 Ye been of port so daungerous
 Unto this lover, and denyous,
 To graunte him no-thing but a kis?
 To werne it him ye doon amis; 3730
 Sith wel ye wote, how that he
 Is Loves servaunt, as ye may see,
 And hath beaute, wher-through [he] is
 Worthy of love to have the blis.
 How he is semely, biholde and see, 3735
 How he is fair, how he is free,
 How he is swote and debonaire,
 Of age yong, lusty, and fair.
 Ther is no lady so hauteyne,
 Duchesse, countesse, ne chasteleyne,
 That I nolde holde hir ungoddly 3741
 For to refuse him outerly.
 His breeth is also good and swete,
 And eke his lippis rody, and mete
 Only to pleyen, and to kisse. 3745
 Graunte him a kis, of gentillesse!
 His teeth are also whyte and clene;
 Me thinkith wrong, withouten wene,
 If ye now werne him, trustith me,
 To graunte that a kis have he; 3750
 The lasse [to] helpe him that ye haste,

The more tyme shul ye waste.
 Whan the flawme of the verry brond,
 That Venus brought in hir right bond,
 Had Bialacoil with hete smete, 3755
 Anoon he had, withouten lette,
 Graunte to me the rose kisse.
 Than of my peyne I gan to lisse,
 And to the rose anoon wente I,
 And kissid it ful feithfully. 3760
 That no man aske if I was blythe,
 Whan the savour soft and lythe
 Strook to myn herte withoute more,
 And me alegged of my sore,
 So was I ful of Ioye and blisse. 3765
 It is fair sich a flour to kisse,
 It was so swote and saverous.
 I might not be so anguissous,
 That I mote glad and Ioly be,
 Whan that I remembre me. 3770
 Yit ever among, sothly to seyn,
 I suffre ^{hoye} and moche peyn.
 The see may never be so stil,
 That with a litel wind it [nil]
 Overwhelme and turne also, 3775
 As it were wood, in ^{wa}wis go.
 Aftir the calm the trouble sone
 Mot folowe, and chaunge as the mone.
 Right so farith Love, that selde in oon
 Holdith his anker; for right anoon 3780
 Whan they in ese wene best to live,
 They been with tempest al fordrive.
 Who serveth Love, can telle of wo;
 The stoundemele Ioye mot overgo.
 Now he hurteth, and now he cureth, 3785
 For selde in oo poynt Love endureth.
 Now is it right me to procede,
 How Shame gan medle and take hede,
 Thurgh whom felle angres I have had;
 And how the stronge wal was maad,
 And the castell of brede and lengthe,
 That God of Love wan with his strengthe.
 Al this in romance wil I sette,
 And for no-thing ne wil I lette,
 So that it lyking to hir be, 3795
 That is the flour of beauty;
 For she may best my labour quyte,
 That I for hir love shal endyte.
 Wikkid-Tunge, that the covyne ^wtt
 Of every lover can devyne 3800
 Worst, and addith more somdel,
 (For Wikkid-Tunge seith never wel),
 To me-ward bar he right gret hate,
 Espying me erly and late,

Til he bath seen the grete chere 3805
 Of Bialacoil and me y-fere.
 He mighte not his tunge withstonde
 Worse to reporte than he fonde,
 He was so ful of cursed rage;
 He sat him wel of his linage, 3810
 For him an Irish womman bar.
 His tunge was fylde sharp, and squar,
 Poignaunt and right kerving,
 And wonder bitter in speking.
 For whan that he me gan espie, 3815
 He swoor, afferming sikirly,
 Bitwene Bialacoil and me
 Was yvel aquayntaunce and privee.
 He spak therof so folily,
 That he awakid Ielousy; 3820
 Which, al afrayed in his rysing,
 Whan that he herde [him] langling,
 He ran anoon, as he were wood,
 To Bialacoil ther that he stood;
 Which hadde lever in this caas 3825
 Have been at Reynes or Amyas
 For foot-hoot, in his felonye
 To him thus seide Ielousye: —
 ‘Why hast thou been so negligent,
 To kepen, whan I was absent, 3830
 This verger here left in thy ward?
 To me thou haddist no reward,
 To truste (to thy confusoun)
 Him thus, to whom suspeccioun
 I have right greet, for it is nede; 3835
 It is wel shewed by the dede.
 Greet faute in thee now have I founde;
 By god, anoon thou shalt be bounde,
 And faste loken in a tour,
 Withoute refuyt or socour. 3840
 For Shame to long hath be thee fro;
 Over sone she was agoo.
 Whan thou hast lost bothe drede and
 fere,
 It semed wel she was not here.
 She was [not] bisy, in no wyse, 3845
 To kepe thee and [to] chastyse,
 And for to helpen Chastitee
 To kepe the roser, as thinkith me.
 For than this boy-knave so boldly
 Ne sholde not have be hardy, 3850
 [Ne] in this verger had such game,
 Which now me turneth to gret shame.’
 Bialacoil nist what to sey;
 Ful fayn he wolde have fled away,
 For fere han hid, nere that he 3855
 Al sodeynly took him with me.

And whan I saugh he hadde so,
This Ielousye, take us two,
I was astoned, and knew no rede,
But fledde away for verrey drede. 3860

Than Shame cam forth ful simply;
She wende have trespeded ful gretly;
Humble of hir port, and made it simple,
Wering a vayle in stede of wimple,
As nonnis doon in hir abbey. 3865

Bicause hir herte was in affray,
She gan to speke, within a throwe,
To Ielousye, right wonder lowe.
First of his grace she bisought,
And seide: — ‘Sire, ne leventh nought
Wikkid-Tunge, that fals espye, 3871

Which is so glad to feyne and lye.
He hath you maad, thurgh flatering,
On Bialacoil a fals lesing.

His falsnesse is not now anew, 3875
It is to long that he him knew.

This is not the firste day;
For Wikkid-Tunge hath custom ay
Yongé folkis to bewreie,
And false lesinges on hem leye. 3880

‘Yit nevertheles I see among,
That the loigne it is so longe
Of Bialacoil, hertis to lure,
In Loves servise for to endure,
Drawing suche folk him to, 3885

That he had no-thing with to do;
But in sothnesse I trowe nought,
That Bialacoil hadde ever in thought
To do trespace or vilanye;
But, for his modir Curtesye 3890

Hath taught him ever [for] to be
Good of aqueyntaunce and privee;
For he loveth non hevinesse,
But mirthe and pley, and al gladnesse;

He hateth alle [trecherous], 3895
Soleyn folk and envious;

For [wel] ye witen how that he
Wol ever glad and Ioyful be
Honestly with folk to pley.

I have be negligent, in good fey, 3900
To chastise him; therefore now I

Of herte crye you here mercy,
That I have been so recheles
To tamen him, withouten lees.

Of my foly I me repente; 3905
Now wol I hool sette myn entente
To kepe, bothe [loude] and stille,
Bialacoil to do your wille.’

‘Shame, Shame,’ seyde Ielousy,

‘To be bitrashed gret drede have I.
Lecherye hath clombe so hye, 3911
That almost blered is myn ye;

No wonder is, if that drede have I.
Over-al regnith Lechery,
Whos might [yit] growth nigh and day.
Bothe in cloistre and in abbey 3916
Chastite is werreyed over-al.

Therefore I wol with siker wal
Close bothe roses and roser.
I have to longe in this maner 3920
Left hem unclousid wilfully;

Wherfore I am right inwardly
Sorrowful and repente me.
But now they shal no lenger be
Unclousid; and yit I drede sore, 3925

I shal repente ferthermore,
For the game goth al amis.
Counsel I [not take] newe, y-wis.

I have to longe 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 ful entent
Remedye to purveye. 3935

Therefore close I shal the weye
Fro hem that wol the rose espye,
And come to wayte me vilanye,
For, in good feith and in trouthe,

I wol not lette, for no slouthe, 3940
To live the more in sikirnesse,

[To] make anoon a forteresse,
[To] enclose] the roses of good savour.
In middis shal I make a tour
To putte Bialacoil in prisoun, 3945

For ever I drede me of tresoun.
I trowe I shal kepe him so,
That he shal have no might to go
Aboute to make companye

To hem that thenke of vilanye; 3950
Ne to no such as hath ben here

Afor, and founde in him good chere,
Which han assailed him to shende,
And with hir trowandysse to blende.

A fool is cyth [for] to bigyle; — 3955
But may I lyve a litel while,

He shal forthenke his fair semblaunt.’
And with that word cam Drede avaunt,
Which was abashed, and in gret fere,
Whan he wiste Ielousye was there. 3960

He was for drede in such affray,
That not a word durste he say,

But quaking stood ful stille aloon,
 Til Ielousye his wey was goon,
 Save Shame, that him not forsook; 3965
 Bothe Drede and she ful sore quook;
 [Til] that at laste Drede abreyde,
 And to his cosin Shame seyde :
 ' Shame, ' he seide, ' in sothfastnesse,
 To me it is gret hevinessse, 3970
 That the noyse so fer is go,
 And the sclaudre of us two.
 But sith that it is [so] bifalle,
 We may it not ageyn [do] calle,
 Whan onis sprongen is a fame. 3975
 For many a yeer withouten blame
 We han been, and many a day;
 For many an April and many a May
 We han [y]-passed, not [a]shamed,
 Til Ielousye hath us blamed 3980
 Of mistrust and suspicioun
 Causeles, withouten enchesoun.
 Go we to Daunger hastily,
 And late us shewe him openly, 3984
 That he hath not aright [y]-wrought,
 Whan that he sette nought his thought
 To kepe better the purpryse ;
 In his doing he is not wyse.
 He hath to us [y]-do gret wrong,
 That hath suffred now so long 3990
 Bialacoil to have his wille,
 Alle his lustes to fulfille.
 He must amende it utterly,
 Or ellis shal he vilaynly
 Exyled be out of this londe ; 3995
 For he the werre may not withstonde
 Of Ielousye, nor the greef,
 Sith Bialacoil is at mischeef.'

To Daunger, Shame and Drede anoon
 The righte wey ben [bothe a]-goon,
 The chert they founden hem afor 4001
 Ligging undir an hawethorn.
 Undir his heed no pilowe was,
 But in the stede a trusse of gras.
 He slombred, and a nappe he took, 4005
 Til Shame pitously him shook,
 And greet manace on him gan make.
 ' Why slepist thou whan thou shulde
 wake?'

Quod Shame ; ' thou dost us vilanye !
 Who tristith thee, he doth folye, 4010
 To kepe roses or botouns,
 Whan they ben faire in hir sesouns.
 Thou art woxe to familiere
 Where thou shulde be straunge of chere,

Stout of thy port, redy to greve. 4015
 Thou dost gret foly for to leve
 Bialacoil here-in, to calle
 The yonder man to shenden us alle.
 Though that thou slepe, we may here
 Of Ielousie gret noyse here. 4020
 Art thou now late ? ryse up [in hy],
 And stoppe sone and deliverly
 Alle the gappis of the hay ;
 Do no favour, I thee pray.
 It fallith no-thing to thy name 4025
 Make fair semblaunt, where thou maist
 blame.

' If Bialacoil be swete and free,
 Dogged and fel thou shulddest be ;
 Froward and outrageous, y-wis ;
 A chert chaungeth that curteis is. 4030
 This have I herd ofte in seying,
 That man [ne] may, for no daunting,
 Make a sperhauke of a bosarde. *musarde*
 Alle men wole holde thee for musarde,
 That debonair have founden thee ; 4035
 It sit thee nought curteis to be ;
 To do men plesaunce or servyse,
 In thee it is recreaundyse.
 Let thy werkis, fer and nere,
 Be lyke thy name, which is Daungere.'

Than, al abawid in shewing, 4041
 Anoon spak Dreed, right thus seying,
 And seide, ' Daunger, I drede me
 That thou ne wolt [not] bisy be
 To kepe that thou hast to kepe ; 4045
 Whan thou shulddest wake, thou art
 aslepe.
 Thou shalt be greved certeynly,
 If thee aspye Ielousy,
 Or if he finde thee in blame.
 He hath to-day assailed Shame, 4050
 And chased away, with gret manace,
 Bialacoil out of this place,
 And swereth shortly that he shal
 Enclose him in a sturdy wal ;
 And al is for thy wikkednesse, 4055
 For that thee failleth straungenesse.
 Thyn herte, I trowe, be failed al ;
 Thou shalt repente in special,
 If Ielousye the sothe knewe ; 4059
 Thou shalt forthenke, and sore rew.'

With that the chert his clubbe gan
 shake,
 Frowning his eyen gan to make,
 And hidous chere ; as man in rage,
 For ire he brente in his visage.

Whan that he herde him blamed so, 4065
 He seide, 'Out of my wit I go;
 To be discomfit I have gret wrong.
 Certis, I have now lived to long,
 Sith I may not this closer kepe;
 Al quik I wolde be dolven depe, 4070
 If any man shal more repaire
 Into this garden, for foule or faire.
 Myn herte for ire goth a-ferre,
 That I lete any entre here.
 I have do foly, now I see, 4075
 But now it shal amended bee.
 Who settith foot here any more,
 Truly, he shal repente it sore;
 For no man mo into this place
 Of me to entre shal have grace. 4080
 Lever I hadde, with swerdis tweyne
 Thurgh-out myn herte, in every veyne
 Perced to be, with many a wounde,
 Than slouthe shulde in me be founde.
 From hennesforth, by night or day, 4085
 I shal defende it, if I may,
 Withouten any excepcioun
 Of ech maner condicioun;
 And if I any man it graunte,
 Holdeth me for recreaunte.' 4090
 Than 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 might finde hole or trace, 4095
 Wher-thurgh that men mot forth-by
 pace,
 Or any gappe, he dide it close,
 That no man mighte touche a rose
 Of the roser al aboute;
 He shitteth every man withoute. 4100
 Thus day by day Daunger is wers,
 More wondirful and more divers,
 And feller eek than ever he was;
 For him ful oft I singe 'allas!'
 For I ne may nought, thurgh his ire, 4105
 Recover that I most desire.
 Myn herte, allas, wol brest a-two,
 For Bialacoil I wratthed so.
 For certeynly, in every membre
 I quake, whan I me remembre 4110
 Of the botoun, which [that] I wolde
 Fulle ofte a day seen and biholde.
 And whan I thanke upon the kisse,
 And how muche Ioye and blisse
 I hadde thurgh the savour swete, 4115
 For wante of it I grone and grete.

Me thinkith I fele yit in my nose
 The swete savour of the rose.
 And now I woot that I mot go
 So fer the fresshe floures fro, 4120
 To me ful welcome were the deeth;
 Absens theroof, allas, me sleeth!
 For whylom with this rose, allas,
 I touched nose, mouth, and face;
 But now the deeth I must abyde. 4125
 But Love consente, another tyde,
 That onis I touche may and kisse,
 I trowe my peyne shal never lisse.
 Theron is al my covcittyse,
 Which brent myn herte in many wyse.
 Now shal repaire agayn sighinge, 4131
 Long wacche on nightis, and no slepinge;
 Thought in wissing, torment, and wo,
 With many a turning to and fro,
 That half my peyne I can not telle. 4135
 For I am fallen into helle
 From paradys and welthe, the more
 My turment greveth; more and more
 Anoyeth now the bittirnesse,
 That I toforn have felt swetnesse. 4140
 And Wikkid-Tunge, thurgh his falshede,
 Causeth al my wo and drede.
 On me he leyeth a pitous charge,
 Bicause his tunge was to large.
 Now it is tyme, shortly that I 4145
 Telle you som-thing of Ielousy,
 That was in gret suspeciou.
 Aboute him lefte he no masoun,
 That stoon coude leye, ne querrou; ^{zma. 114}
 He hired hem to make a tour. 4150
 And first, the roses for to kepe,
 Aboute hem made he a diche depe,
 Right wondir large, and also brood;
 Upon the whiche also stood
 Of squared stoon a sturdy wal, 4155
 Which on a cragge was founded al,
 And right gret thikkenesse eek it bar.
 Abouten, it was founded squar,
 An hundred fadome on every syde,
 It was al liche longe and wyde. 4160
 Lest any tyme it were assayled,
 Ful wel aboute it was batayled;
 And rounde envirooun eek were set
 Ful many a riche and fair touret.
 At every corner of this wal 4165
 Was set a tour ful principal;
 And everich hadde, withoute fable,
 A porte-colys defensible
 To kepe of enemies, and to greve,

- That there hir force wolde preve. 4170
 And eek amidde this purpryse
 Was maad a tour of gret maistrye;
 A fairer saugh no man with sight,
 Large and wyde, and of gret might.
 They [ne] dredded noon assaut 4175
 Of ginne, gunne, nor skaffaut.
 [For] the temprure of the mortere
 Was maad of licour wonder dere;
 Of quikke lyme persant and egre, 4179
 The which was tempered with vinegre.
 The stoon was hard [as] adamant,
 Wherof they made the foundement.
 The tour was rounde, maad in compas;
 In al this world no richer was,
 Ne better ordeigned therwithal. 4185
 Aboute the tour was maad a wal,
 So that, bitwixt that and the tour,
 Rosers were set of swete savour,
 With many roses that they bere.
 And eek within the castel were 4190
 Springoldes, gunnes, bows, archers;
 And eek above, atte corners,
 Men seyn over the walle stonde
 Grete engynes, [whiche] were nigh
 honde;
 And in the kernels, here and there, 4195
 Of arblastis gret plentee were.
 Noon armure might hir stroke with-
 stonde,
 It were foly to p^{re}ce to honde. 4198
 Without the diche were listes made,
 With walles batayled large and brade,
 For men and hors shulde not attayne
 To neigh the diche over the pleyne.
 Thus Ielousye hath enviroun
 Set aboute his garnisoun 4204
 With walles rounde, and diche depe,
 Only the roser for to kepe.
 And Daunger [eek], erly and late
 The keyes kepte of the utter gate,
 The which openeth toward the cest.
 And he hadde with him atte leest 4210
 Thrity servauntes, echon by name.
 That other gate kepte Shame,
 Which openede, as it was couth,
 Toward the parte of the south.
 Sergeauntes assigned were hir to 4215
 Ful many, hir wille for to do.
 Than Drede hadde in hir bayllye
 The keping of the conestabliere,
 Toward the north, I undirstonde,
 That opened upon the left honde, 4220

The which for out of you may be sure, 30
 But-if she do [har] be cure
 Erly on morowe and also late,
 Strongly to shette and barre the gate.
 Of every thing that she may see 4225
 Drede is aferd, wher-so she be;
 For with a puff of litel winde
 Drede is astonied in hir minde.
 Therefore, for steling of the rose,
 I rede hir nought the yate unclose. 4230
 A foulis flight wol make hir flece,
 And eek a shadowe, if she it see.
 Thanne Wikked-Tunge, ful of envye,
 With soudiours of Normandy,
 As he that causeth al the bate, 4235
 Was keper of the fourthe gate,
 And also to the tother three
 He went ful ofte, for to see.
 Whan his lot was to wake a-night,
 His instrumentis wolde he dight, 4240
 For to blowe and make soun,
 Ofter than he hath enchesoun;
 And walken oft upon the wal,
 Corners and wikettis over-al
 Ful narwe serchen and espye; 4245
 Though he nought fond, yit wolde he lye.
 Discordaunt ever fro armonye,
 And distoned from melodye,
 Controve he wolde, and foule fayle,
 With hornpyes of Cornewayle. 4250
 In floytes made he discordaunce,
 And in his musik, with mischaunce,
 He wolde seyn, with notes newe,
 That he [ne] fond no womman trewe,
 Ne that he saugh never, in his lyf, 4255
 Unto hir husbonde a trewe wyf;
 Ne noon so ful of honeste,
 That she nil laughe and mery be
 Whan that she hereth, or may espye,
 A man speken of lecherye. 4260
 Everich of hem hath somme vyce;
 Oon is dishonest, another is nyce;
 If oon be ful of vilanye,
 Another hath a likerous ye; *lecherous*
 If oon be ful of wantonnesse, 4265
 Another is a chideresse.
 Thus Wikked-Tunge (god yeve him
 shame!)
 Can putte hem everichone in blame
 Withoute desert and causeles;
 He lyeth, though they been gilltes. 4270
 I have pite to seen the sorwe,
 That waketh bothe eve and morwe,

conestable's
 jurisdiction

- W¹ To innocents ^{of} hie him blame grevaunce;
 I pray god yeve ^{of} my wit I of chaunce,
 That he ever so busy is 4275
 Of any womman to seyn amis!
 Eek Ielousye god confounde,
 That hath [y]-maad a tour so rounde,
 And made aboute a garisoun
 To sette Bialacoil in prisoun; 4280
 The which is shet there in the tour,
 Ful longe to holde there soiour, ^{sojourn}
 There for to liven in penaunce.
 And for to do him more grevaunce,
 [Ther] hath ordeyned Ielousye 4285
 An olde ^{wylde} for to espye
 The maner of his governaunce;
 The whiche devel, in hir enfaunce,
 Had lerned [muche] of Loves art,
 And of his pleyes took hir part; 4290
 She was [expert] in his servyse.
 She knew ech wrenche and every gyse
 Of love, and every [loveres] wyle,
 It was [the] harder hir to gyle.
 Of Bialacoil she took ay hede, 4295
 That ever he liveth in wo and drede.
 He kepte him coy and eek privee,
 Lest in him she hadde see
 Any foly countenaunce,
 For she knew al the olde daunce. 4300
 And aftir this, whan Ielousye
 Had Bialacoil in his bailye,
 And shette him up that was so frece,
 For seure of him he wolde be,
 He trusteth sore in his castel; 4305
 The stronge werk him lyketh wel.
 He dradde nat that no glotouns
 Shulde stele his roses or botouns.
 The roses weren assured alle,
 Defenced with the stronge walle. 4310
 Now Ielousye ful wel may be
 Of drede devoid, in libertee,
 Whether that he slepe or wake;
 For of his roses may noon be take.
 But I, allas, now morne shal; 4315
 Bicause I was without the wal,
 Ful moche dole and mone I made.
 Who hadde wist what wo I hadde,
 I trowe he wolde have had pitee.
 Love to deere had sold to me 4320
 The good that of his love hadde I.
 I [wende a bought] it al queyntly;
 But now, thurgh doubling of my peyn,
 I see he wolde it selle ageyn,
 And me a newe bargeyn lere, 4325
- The which al-out the more is dere,
 For the solace that I have lorn,
 Than I hadde it never aforne.
 Certayn I am ful lyk, indeed,
 To him that cast in erthe his seed; 4330
 And hath Ioie of the newe spring,
 Whan it greneth in the ginning,
 And is also fair and fresh of flour,
 Lusty to seen, swote of odour;
 But er he it in sheves shere, 4335
 May falle a weder that shal it dere,
 And maken it to fade and falle,
 The stalk, the greyn, and floures alle;
 That to the tilier is fordone
 The hope that he hadde to sone. 4340
 I drede, certeyn, that so fare I;
 For hope and travaile sikerly
 Ben me biraft al with a storm;
 The floure nil seden of my corn.
 For Love hath so avauced me, 4345
 Whan I bigan my privitee
 To Bialacoil al for to telle,
 Whom I ne fond froward ne felle, ^{as wel}
 But took a-gree al hool my play.
 But Love is of so hard assay, ^{stole} 4350
 That al at onis he reved me,
 Whan I wend best aboven have be.
 It is of Love, as of Fortune,
 That chaungeth ofte, and nil contune;
 Which whylom wol on folke smyle, 4355
 And gloumbe on hem another wyle;
 Now freend, now foo, [thou] shalt hir
 fele,
 For [in] a twinkling tourneth hir wheel.
 She can wrythe hir heed away,
 This is the concours of hir pley; 4360
 She can areyse that doth morne,
 And whirle adown, and overturne
 Who sittith heighest, [al] as hir list;
 A fool is he that wol hir trist.
 For it [am] I that am com doun 4365
 Thurgh change and revolucioun!
 Sith Bialacoil mot fro me twinne, ^{separate}
 Shet in the prisoun yond withinne,
 His absence at myn herte I fele;
 For al my Ioye and al myn hele 4370
 Was in him and in the rose,
 That but yon [wal], which him doth
 close,
 Open, that I may him see,
 Love nil not that I cured be
 Of the peynes that I endure, 4375
 Nor of my cruel aventure,

A, Bialacoil, myn owne dere!
 Though thou be now a prisonere,
 Kepe atte leste thyn herte to me,
 And suffice not that it daunted be; 4380
 Ne lat not Ielousye, in his rage,
 Putten thyn herte in no servage.
 Although he chastice thee withoute,
 And make thy body unto him loute,
 Have herte as hard as dyamaunt, 4385
 Stedefast, and nought pliaunt;
 In prisoun though thy body be,
 At large kepe thyn herte free.
 A trewe herte wol not plye
 For no manace that it may drye. 4390
 If Ielousye doth thee payne,
 Qyute him his whyle thus agayne,
 To venge thee, atte leest in thought,
 If other way thou mayest nought;
 And in this wyse sotilly ^{subtilly} 4395
 Worche, and winne the maistry.
 But yit I am in gret affray
 Lest thou do not as I say;
 I drede thou canst me greet maugree,
 That thou emprisoned art for me; 4400
 But that [is] not for my trespas,
 For thurgh me never discovered was
 Yit thing that oughte be secree.
 Wel more anoy [ther] is in me,
 Than is in thee, of this mischaunce; 4405
 For I endure more hard penaunce
 Than any [man] can seyn or thinke,
 That for the sorwe almost I sinke.
 When I remembre me of my wo,
 Ful nygh out of my wit I go. 4410
 Inward myn herte I fele blede,
 For comfortles the deeth I drede.
 Ow I not wel to have distresse,
 When false, thurgh hir wikkednesse,
 And traitours, that arn envyous, 4415
 To noyen me be so coragious?
 A, Bialacoil! ful wel I see,
 That they hem shape to disceyve thee,
 To make thee buxom to hir lawe,
 And with hir corde thee to drawe 4420
 Wher-so hem lust, right at hir wil;
 I drede they have thee brought thertily
 Withoute comfort, thought me sleeth.
 This game wol bringe me to my deeth.
 For if your gode wille I lese, 4425
 I mote be deed; I may not chese.
 And if that thou foryete me,
 Myn herte shal never in lyking be;
 Nor elles-where finde solace,

If I be put out of your grace, 4430
 As it shal never been, I hope;
 Than shulde I fallen in wanhope.

[Here, at l. 4070 of the French text,
 ends the work of G. de Lorris; and
 begins the work of Jean de Meun.]

Allas, in wanhope? — nay, pardee!
 For I wol never dispeired be.
 If Hope me faile, than am I 4435
 Ungracious and unworthy;
 In Hope I wol comforted be,
 For Love, whan he bitaught hir me,
 Seide, that Hope, wher-so I go,
 Shulde ay be relees to my wo. 4440
 But what and she my ^{canis} bete,
 And be to me curteis and swete?
 She is in no-thing ful certeyn.
 Lovers she put in ful gret peyn,
 And makith hem with wo to dele. 4445
 Hir fair biheest disceyveth fele,
 For she wol birote, sikirly,
 And failen aftir outrely.
 A! that is a ful noyous thing!
 For many a lover, in loving, 4450
 Hangeth upon hir, and trusteth fast,
 Whiche lese hir travel at the last.
 Of thing to comen she woot right nought;
 Therefore, if it be wysly sought,
 Hir counseille, foly is to take. 4455
 For many tymes, whan she wol make
 A ful good silogisme, I drede
 That aftirward ther shal in dede
 Folwe an evel conclusioun;
 This put me in confusioun. 4460
 For many tymes I have it seen,
 That many have bigyled been,
 For trust that they have set in Hope,
 Which fel hem aftirward a-slope. 4464
 But natheles yit, gladly she wolde,
 That he, that wol him with hir holde,
 Hadde alle tymes [his] purpos clere,
 Withoute deceyte, or any were.
 That she desireth sikirly;
 Whan I hir blamed, I did foly. 4470
 But what awayleth hir good wille,
 Whan she ne may staunche my stounde
 ille?
 That helpith litel, that she may do,
 Outake biheest unto my wo.
 And heeste certeyn, in no wyse, 4475
 Withoute yift, is not to pryse.

Whan heest and deed a-sundir varie,
 They doon [me have] a gret contrarie.
 Thus an I possed up and down
 With dool, thought, and confusioun;
 Of my disece ther is no noubre. 4481
 Daunger and Shame me encumbre,
 Drede also, and Ielousye,
 And Wikked-Tunge, ful of envye,
 Of whiche the sharpe and cruel ire 4485
 Ful oft me put in gret martire.
 They han my Ioye fully let,
 Sith Bialacoil they have bishet
 Fro me in prisoun wikkidly,
 Whom I love so entierly, 4490
 That it wol my bane be,
 But I the soner may him see.
 And yit moreover, wurst of alle,
 Ther is set to kepe, foule hir bifalle!
 A rimpeld vekke, fer ronne in age, 4495
 Frowning and yelowe in hir visage,
 Which in awayte lyth day and night,
 That noon of hem may have a sight.
 Now moot my sorwe enforced be;
 Ful soth it is, that Love yaf me 4500
 Three wonder yiftes of his grace,
 Which I have lorn now in this place,
 Sith they ne may, withoute drede,
 Helpen but litel, who taketh hede. 4504
 For here availeth no Swete-Thought,
 And Swete-Speche helpith right nought.
 The thridde was called Swete-Loking,
 That now is lorn, without lesing.
 [The] yiftes were fair, but not forthy
 They helpe me but simply, 4510
 But Bialacoil [may] loosed be,
 To gon at large and to be free.
 For him my lyf lyth al in dout,
 But-if he come the rather out.
 Allas! I trowe it wol not been! 4515
 For how shuld I evermore him seen?
 He may not out, and that is wrong,
 Bicause the tour is so strong.
 How shulde he out? by whos prowesse,
 Out of so strong a forteresse? 4520
 By me, certeyn, it nil be do;
 God woot, I have no wit therto!
 But wel I woot I was in rage,
 Whan I to Love dide homage.
 Who was in cause, in sothfastnesse, 4525
 But hir-silf, dame Idelnesse,
 Which me conveyed, thurgh fair prayere,
 To entre into that fair vergere?
 She was to blame me to leve,

The which now doth me sore greve. 4530
 A foolis word is nought to trowe,
 Ne worth an appel for to lowe;
 Men shulde him snibbe bittirly,
 At pryne temps of his foly.
 I was a fool, and she me leved, 4535
 Thurgh whom I am right nought releved.
 She accomplished al my wil,
 That now me greveth wondir il.
 Resoun me seide what shulde falle.
 A fool my-silf I may wel calle, 4540
 That love asyde I had not leyde,
 And trowed that dame Resoun seyde.
 Resoun had bothe skile and right,
 Whan she me blamed, with al hir might,
 To medle of love, that hath me shent;
 But certeyn now I wol repent. 4546
 'And shulde I repent?' Nay parde!
 A fals traitour than shulde I be.
 The develles engins wolde me take,
 If I my [lorde] wolde forsake, 4550
 Or Bialacoil falsly bitraye.
 Shulde I at mischeef hate him? nay,
 Sith he now, for his curtesye,
 Is in prisoun of Ielousye.
 Curtesye certeyn dide he me, 4555
 So muche, it may not yolden be,
 Whan he the hay passen me lete,
 To kisse the rose, faire and swete;
 Shulde I therfore kunne him maugree?
 Nay, certeynly, it shal not be; 4560
 For Love shal never, [if god wil],
 Here of me, thurgh word or wil,
 Offence or complaynt, more or lesse,
 Neither of Hope nor Idilnesse;
 For certis, it were wrong that I 4565
 Hated hem for hir curtesye.
 Ther is not ellis, but suffre and thinke,
 And waken whan I shulde winke;
 Abyde in hope, til Love, thurgh chaunce,
 Sende me socour or allegeaunce, 4570
 Expectant ay til I may mete
 To geten mercy of that swete.
 'Whylom I thinke how Love to me
 Seyde he wolde taken atte gree
 My servise, if unpacience 4575
 Caused me to doon offence.
 He seyde, "In thank I shal it take,
 And high maister eek thee make,
 If wikkednesse ne reve it thee;
 But sone, I trowe, that shal not be."
 These were his wordis by and by; 4581
 It semed he loved me trewly.

Now is ther not but serve him wele,
 If that I thinke his thank to fele.
 My good, myn harm, lyth hool in me;
 In Love may no defaute be; 4586
 For trewe Love ne failid never man.
 Sothly, the faute mot nedlis than
 (As God forbede!) be founde in me,
 And how it cometh, I can not see. 4590
 Now lat it goon as it may go;
 Whether Love wol socoure me or slo,
 He may do hool on me his wil.
 I am so sore bounde him til,
 From his servyse I may not fleen; 4595
 For lyf and deth, withouten wene,
 Is in his hand; I may not chese;
 He may me do bothe winne and lese.
 And sith so sore he doth me greve,
 Yit, if my lust he wolde acheve 4600
 To Bialacoil goodly to be,
 I yeve no force what felle on me.
 For though I dye, as I mot nede,
 I praye Love, of his goodlihede,
 To Bialacoil do gentilnesse, 4605
 For whom I live in such distresse,
 That I mote deyen for penaunce.
 But first, withoute repentaunce,
 I wol me confesse in good entent,
 And make in haste my testament, 4610
 As lovers doon that felen smerte: —
 To Bialacoil leve I myn herte
 Al hool, withoute departing,
 Or doublenesse of repenting.'

COMENT RAISON VIENT A
 L'AMANT.

Thus as I made my passage 4615
 In compleynt, and in cruel rage,
 And I not wher to finde a leche
 That couthe unto myn helping eche,
 Sodeynly agayn comen doun
 Out of hir tour I saugh Resoun, 4620
 Discrete and wys, and ful plesaunt,
 And of hir porte ful avenaunt.
 The righte way she took to me,
 Which stood in greet perplexite,
 That was possed in every side, 4625
 That I nist where I might abyde,
 Til she, demurely sad of chere,
 Seide to me as she com nere: —
 'Myn owne freend, art thou yit greved?
 How is this quarel yit acheved 4630
 Of Loves syde? Anoon me telle;

Hast thou not yit of love thy fille?
 Art thou not wery of thy servyse
 That thee hath [pyned] in sich wyse?
 What loye hast thou in thy loving?
 Is it swete or bitter thing? 4636
 Canst thou yit chese, lat me see,
 What best thy socour mighte be?
 'Thou servest a ful noble lord,
 That maketh thee thral for thy reward,
 Which ay renewith thy turment, 4641
 With foly so he hath thee blent.
 Thou felle in mischeef thilke day,
 Whan thou didest, the sothe to say,
 Obeysaunce and eek homage; 4645
 Thou wroughtest no-thing as the sage.
 Whan thou bicam his liege man,
 Thou didist a gret foly than;
 Thou wistest not what fel therto,
 With what lord thou haddist to do. 4650
 If thou haddist him wel knowe,
 Thou haddist nought be brought so lowe;
 For if thou wistest what it were,
 Thou noldist serve him half a yeer,
 Not a weke, nor half a day, 4655
 Ne yit an hour withoute delay,
 Ne never [han] loved paramours,
 His lordship is so ful of shoures.
 Knowest him ought?'

L'Amaunt. 'Ye, dame, parde!'

Raisoun. 'Nay, nay.'

L'Amaunt. 'Yes, I.'

Raisoun. 'Whereof, lat see?' 4660

L'Amaunt. 'Of that he seyde I
 shulde be

Glad to have sich lord as he,
 And maister of sich seignory.'

Raisoun. 'Knowist him no more?'

L'Amaunt. 'Nay, certis, I,

Save that he yaf me rewles there, 4665

And wente his way, I niste where,
 And I abood bounde in balaunce.'

Raisoun. 'Lo, there a noble con-
 saunce!

But I wil that thou knowe him now
 Ginning and ende, sith that thou 4670

Art so anguissous and mate,

Disfigured out of astate;

Ther may no wrecche have more of wo,
 Ne caitif noon enduren so.

It were to every man sitting 4675

Of his lord have knowleching.

For if thou knewe him, out of dout,

Lightly thou shulde escapen out

Of the prison that marreth thee.
L'Amaunt. 'Ye, dame! sith my lord
 is he, 4680
 And I his man, maad with myn honde,
 I wolde right fayn undirstonde
 To knowen of what kinde he be,
 If any wolde enforme me.'
Raisoun. 'I wolde,' seid Resoun,
 'thee here, 4685
 Sith thou to lerne hast sich desire,
 And shewe thee, withouten fable,
 A thing that is not demonstrable.
 Thou shalt [here lerne] without science,
 And knowe, withoute experience, 4690
 The thing that may not knowen be,
 Ne wist ne shewid in no degree.
 Thou mayst the sothe of it not witen,
 Though in thee it were witen.
 Thou shalt not knowe therof more 4695
 Whyle thou art reuled by his lore;
 But unto him that love wol flee,
 The knotte may unclosed be,
 Which hath to thee, as it is founde,
 So long be knet and not unbounde. 4700
 Now sette wel thyn entencioun,
 To here of love discrepcioun.
 'Love, it is an hateful pees,
 A free acquaintance, without reles,
 [A trouthe], fret full of falshede, 4705
 A sikernesse, al set in drede;
 In herte is a dispeiring hope,
 And fulle of hope, it is wanhope;
 Wyse woodnesse, and wood resoun,
 A swete peril, in to droune, 4710
 An hevvy birthen, light to bere,
 A wilked wave awey to were.
 It is Caribdis perilous,
 Disagreable and gracious.
 It is discordaunce that can accorde,
 And accordaunce to discorde. 4716
 It is cunning withoute science,
 Wisdom withoute sapience,
 Wit withoute discrecioun,
 Havoir, withoute possessioun. 4720
 It is sike hele and hool siknesse,
 A thrust drowned [in] dronkenesse,
 An helthe ful of maladye,
 And charitee ful of envye,
 An [hunger] ful of habundaunce, 4725
 And a greuly suffisaunce;
 Delyt right ful of hevinessse,
 And drehed ful of gladnesse;
 Bitter swetnesse and swete errour,

Right evel savoured good savour; 4730
 Sinne that pardoun hath withinne,
 And pardoun spotted without [with]
 sinne;
 A peyne also it is, Joyous,
 And felonye right pitous;
 Also pley that selde is stable, 4735
 And stedefast [stat], right mevable;
 A strengthe, weyked to stonde upright,
 And feblenesse, ful of might;
 Wit unavysed, sage folye,
 And Joye ful of turmentrye; 4740
 A laughter it is, weping ay,
 Rest, that traveyleth night and day;
 Also a swete helle it is,
 And a sorowful Paradys;
 A plesaunt gayl and esy prisoun, 4745
 And, ful of froste, somer sesoun;
 Pryme temps, ful of frostes whyte,
 And May, devoide of al delyte,
 With seer braunches, blossoms ungrene;
 And newe fruyt, fillid with winter tene.
 It is a slowe, may not forbere 4751
 Ragges, ribaned with gold, to were;
 For al-so wel wol love be set
 Under ragges as riche rochet;
 And eek as wel be amourettes 4755
 In mourning blak, as bright burnettes.
 For noon is of so mochel prys,
 Ne no man founden [is] so wys,
 Ne noon so high is of parage,
 Ne no man founde of wit so sage, 4760
 No man so hardy ne so wight,
 Ne no man of so mochel might,
 Noon so fulfilled of bounte,
 [But] he with love may daunted be.
 Al the world holdith this way; 4765
 Love makith alle to goon miswey,
 But it be they of yvel lyf,
 Whom Genius cursith, man and wyf,
 That wrongly werke ageyn nature.
 Noon suche I love, ne have no cure 4770
 Of suche as Loves servaunts be,
 And wol not by my counsel flee.
 For I ne preyse that loving,
 Wher-thurgh man, at the laste ending,
 Shal calle hem wreechis fulle of wo, 4775
 Love greveth hem and shendith so.
 But if thou wolt wel Love eschewe,
 For to escape out of his mewe,
 And make al hool thy sorwe to slake,
 No bettir counsel mayst thou take, 4780
 Than thinke to flee wel, y-wis;

May nought helpe elles; for wite thou
this: —

If thou flee it, it shal flee thee;
Folowe it, and folowen shal it thee.'

L'Amaunt. When I hadde herd al
Resoun seyn, 4785

Which hadde spilt hir speche in veyn:
'Dame,' seyde I, 'I dar wel sey

Of this avaut me wel I may
That from your scole so deviaunt

I am, that never the more avaut 4790
Right nought am I, thurgh your doc-

tryne;
I dulle under your disciplyne;

I wot no more than [I] wist [er],
To me so contrarie and so fer

Is every thing that ye me lere; 4795
And yit I can it al parcuere.

Myn herte foryetith therof right nought,
It is so writen in my thought;

And depe graven it is so tendir
That al 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 lakke and preise it, bothe two,

Defyneth it into this letter, 4805
That I may thanke on it the better;

For I herde never [diffyne it ere],
And fullyllly I wolde it lere.'

Raisoun. 'If love be serched wel and
sought,

It is a sykenesse of the thought 4810
Annexed and knet bitwixe tweyne,

[Which] male and female, with oo
cheyne,

So frely byndith, that they nil twinne,
Whether so therof they lese or winne.

The roote springith, thurgh hoot bren-
ning, 4815

Into disordinat desiring
For to kissen and embrace,

And at her lust them to solace.
Of other thing love recchith nought,

But setteth hir herte and al hir thought
More for delectacioun 4821

Than any procreacioun
Of other fruyt by engendring;

Which love to god is not plesing;
For of hir body fruyt to get 4825

They yeve no force, they are so set
Upon delyt, to play in-fere.

And somme have also this manere,

To feynen hem for love seke;
Sich love I preise not at a leke. 4830

For paramours they do but feyne;
To love truly they disdeyne.

They falsen ladies traitoursly,
And sweren hem othes utterly,

With many a lesing, and many a fable,
And al they finden deceyvable. 4836

And, when they her lust han geten,
The hoothe ernes they al foryeten.

Wimmen, the harm they byen ful sore;
But men this thenken evermore, 4840

That lasse harm is, so mote I thee,
Disceyve them, than disceyved be;

And namely, wher they ne may
Finde non other mene wey.

For I wot wel, in sothfastnesse, 4845
That [who] doth now his bisynesse

With any womman for to dele,
For any lust that he may fele,

But-if it be for engendrure,
He doth trespasse, I you ensure. 4850

For he shulde setten al his wil
To geten a likly thing him til,

And to sustene[n], if he might,
And kepe forth, by kinds right,

His owne lyknesse and semblable, 4855
For bicause al is corumpable,

And faile shulde successioun,
Ne were ther generacioun

Our sectis strene for to save.
Whan fader or moder arn in grave, 4860

Hir children shulde, whan they ben
deede,

Ful diligent ben, in hir steede,
To use that werke on such a wyse,

That oon may thurgh another ryse.
Therefore set Kinde them delyt, 4865

For men therin shulde hem delyte,
And of that dede be not erke,

But ofte sythes haunt that werke.
For noon wolde drawe therof a draught

Ne were delyt, which hath him caught.
This hadde sotil dame Nature; 4871

For noon goth right, I thee ensure,
Ne hath entent hool ne parfyt;

For hir desir is for delyt,
The which fortene crece and eke 4875

The pley of love for-ofte seke,
And thralle hem-silf, they be so nyce,

Unto the prince of every vyce.
For of ech sinne it is the rote,

Unleffulle lust, though it be sote, 4880

And of al yvel the racyne,
 As Tullius can determyne,
 Which in his tyme was ful sage,
 In a boke he made of Age,
 Wher that more he preyseth Elde, 4885
 Though he be croked and unwelde,
 And more of commendacioun,
 Than Youthe in his discripcioun.
 For Youthe set bothe man and wyf
 In al perel of soule and lyf; 4890
 And perel is, but men have grace,
 The [tyme] of youthe for to pace,
 Withoute any deth or distresse;
 It is so ful of wildenesse;
 So ofte it doth shame or damage 4895
 To him or to his linage.
 It ledith man now up, now down,
 In mochel dissolucioun,
 And makith him love yvel company,
 And lede his lyf disrewlily, 4900
 And halt him payed with noon estate.
 Within him-silf is such debate,
 He chaungith purpos and entent,
 And yalt [him] into som covent, 4905
 To liven aftir her empryse,
 And lesith fredom and fraunchyse,
 That Nature in him hadde set,
 The which ageyn he may not get,
 If he there make his mansioun
 For to abyde professioun. 4910
 Through for a tyme his herte absente,
 It may not fayle, he shal repente,
 And eke abyde thilke day
 To leve his abit, and goon his way,
 And lesith his worship and his name,
 And dar not come ageyn for shame; 4916
 But al his lyf he doth so mourne,
 Bicause he dar not boon retourne.
 Fredom of kinde so lost hath he
 That never may recured be, 4920
 But-if that god him graunte grace
 That he may, er he hennes pace,
 Conteyne undir obedience
 Thurgh the vertu of pacience.
 For Youthe set man in al folye, 4925
 In unthrift and in ribaude,
 In leccherye, and in outrage,
 So ofte it chaungith of corage.
 Youthe ginneth ofte sich bargeyn,
 That may not ende withouten peyn. 4930
 In gret perel is set youth-hede,
 Delyt so doth his bridil lede.
 Delyt thus hangith, drede thee nought,
 Bothe mannis body and his thought,
 Only thurgh Youthe, his chamberere, 4935
 That to don yvel is customere,
 And of nought elles taketh hede
 But only folkes for to lede
 Into disporte and wilkenesse,
 So is [she] froward from sadnesse. 4940
 ' But Elde drawith hem therfro;
 Who wot it nought, he may wel go
 [Demand] of hem that now arn olde,
 That whylom Youthe hadde in holde,
 Which yit remembre of tendir age, 4945
 How it hem brought in many a rage,
 And many a foly therin wrought.
 But now that Elde hath hem thurgh-
 sought,
 They repente hem of her folye,
 That Youthe hem putte in Iupardye, 4950
 In perel and in muche wo,
 And made hem ofte amis to do,
 And suen yvel companye,
 Riot and avouterye.
 ' But Elde [can] ageyn restreyne 4955
 From suche foly, and refreyne,
 And set men, by hir ordinaunce,
 In good reule and in governaunce.
 But yvel she spendith hir servyse,
 For no man wol hir love, ne pryse; 4960
 She is hated, this wot I wele.
 Hir acqeyntaunce wolde no man fele,
 Ne han of Elde companye,
 Men hate to be of hir alye.
 For no man wolde bicomem olde, 4965
 Ne dye, whan he is yong and bolde.
 And Elde merveillith right gretly,
 When they remembre hem inwardly
 Of many a perelous empryse,
 Whiche that they wrought in sondry
 wyse, 4970
 How ever they might, withoute blame,
 Escape away withoute shame,
 In youthe, withoute[n] damage
 Or reproof of her linage,
 Losse of membre, sheding of blode, 4975
 Perel of deth, or losse of good.
 ' Wost thou nought where Youthe abit,
 That men so preisen in her wit?
 With Delyt she halt soiour,
 For bothe they dwellen in oo tour. 4980
 As longe as Youthe is in sesoun,
 They dwellen in oon mansioun.
 Delyt of Youthe wol have servyse
 To do what so he wol devyse;

And Youthe is redy evermore	4985	Of wimmen, sothly for to seyne,	5035
For to obey, for smerte of sore,		That [ay] desire and wolde fayne	
Unto Delyt, and him to yive		The pley of love, they be so wilde,	
Hir servise, whyl that she may live.		And not coveite to go with childe.	
‘Where Elde abit, I wol thee telle		And if with childe they be perchaunce,	
Shortly, and no whyle dwelle,	4990	They wole it holde a gret mischaunce;	
For thider bihoveth thee to go.		But what-som-ever wo they fele,	5041
If Deth in youthe thee not slo,		They wol not pleyne, but concele;	
Of this journey thou maist not faile.		But-if it be any fool or nyce,	
With hir Labour and Travaile		In whom that shame hath no Justyce.	
Logged been, with Sorwe and Wo,	4995	For to delyt echon they drawe,	5045
That never out of hir courte go.		That haunte this werk, bothe high and	
Peyne and Distresse, Syknesse and Ire,		lawe,	
And Malencoly, that angry sire,		Save sich that ar[e]n worth right nought,	
Ben of hir paleys senatours;		That for money wol be bought.	
Groning and Grucching, hir herber-		Such love I preise in no wyse,	
geours,	5000	When it is given for covetise.	5050
The day and night, hir to turment,		I preise no womman, though [she] be	
With cruel Deth they hir present,		wood,	
And tellen hir, erliche and late,		That yeveth hir-silf for any good.	
That Deth stant armed at hir gate.		For litel shulde a man telle	
Than bringe they to hir remembraunce		Of hir, that wol hir body selle,	
The foly dedis of hir infauce,	5006	Be she mayde, be she wyf,	5055
Which causen hir to mourne in wo		That quik wol selle hir, by hir lyf.	
That Youthe hath hir bigiled so,		How faire chere that ever she make,	
Which sodeynly away is hasted.		He is a wrecche, I undirtake,	
She wepeth the tyme that she	hath	That loveth such one, for swete or sour,	
wasted,	5010	Though she him calle hir paramour,	5060
Compleyning of the preterit,		And laugheth on him, and makith him	
And the present, that not abit,		feeste.	
And of hir olde vanitee,		For certeynly no suche [a] beeste	
That, but aforin hir she may see		To be loved is not worthy,	
In the future som socour,	5015	Or bere the name of druery,	
To leggen hir of hir dolour,		Noon shulde hir please, but he were	
To graunt hir tyme of repentaunce,		wood,	5065
For hir sinnes to do penaunce,		That wol dispoile him of his good.	
And at the laste so hir governe		Yit nevertheles, I wol not sey	
To winne the Ioy that is eterne,	5020	[But] she, for solace and for pley,	
Fro which go bakward Youthe [hir]		May a Jewel or other thing	
made,		Take of her loves free yeving;	5070
In vanitee to droune and wade.		But that she aske it in no wyse,	
For present tyme abidith nought,		For drede of shame of covetise.	
It is more swift than any thought;		And she of hirs may him, certeyn,	
So litel whyle it doth endure	5025	Withoute sclaundre, yeven ageyn,	
That ther nis compte ne mesure.		And ioyne her hertes togidre so	5075
‘But how that ever the game go,		In love, and take and yeve also.	
Who list [have] loye and mirth also		Trowe not that I wolde hem twinne,	
Of love, be it he or she,		Whan in her love ther is no sinne;	
High or lowe, who[so] it be,	5030	I wol that they togedre go,	
In fruyt they shulde hem delyte;		And doon al that they han ado,	5080
Her part they may not elles quyte,		As curteis shulde and debonaire,	
To save hem-silf in honestee.		And in her love beren hem faire,	
And yit ful many oon I see		Withoute vyce, bothe he and she;	

So that alwey, in honestee,
 Fro foly love [they] kepe hem clere
 That brenneth hertis with his fere; 5086
 And that her love, in any wyse,
 Be devoid of covetyse.
 Good love shulde engendrid be
 Of trewe herte, iust, and secrete, 5090
 And not of such as sette her thought
 To have her lust, and ellis nought,
 So are they caught in Loves lace,
 Truly, for bodily solace.
 Fleshly delyt is so present 5095
 With thee, that sette al thyn entent,
 Withoute more (what shulde I glose?)
 For to gete and have the Rose;
 Which makith thee so mate and wood
 That thou desirest noon other good. 5100
 But thou art not an inche the nerre,
 But ever abydest in sorwe and werre,
 As in thy face it is sene;
 It makith thee bothe pale and lene;
 Thy might, thy vertu goth way. 5105
 A sory gest, in goode fay,
 Thou [herberedest than] in thyn inne,
 The God of Love whan thou let inne!
 Wherefore I rede, thou shette him out,
 Or he shal greve thee, out of doute;
 For to thy profit it wol turne, 5111
 If he nomore with thee sojourne.
 In gret mischeef and sorwe sonken
 Ben hertis, that of love arn dronken,
 As thou peraventure knowen shal, 5115
 Whan thou hast lost [thy] tyme al,
 And spent [thy youthe] in ydilnesse,
 In waste, and woful lustinesse;
 If thou maist live the tyme to see
 Of love for to delivered be, 5120
 Thy tyme thou shalt biwepe sore
 The whiche never thou maist restore.
 (For tyme lost, as men may see,
 For no-thing may recured be).
 And if thou scape yit, atte laste, 5125
 Fro Love, that hath thee so faste
 Knit and bounden in his lace,
 Certeyn, I holde it but a grace.
 For many oon, as it is seyn,
 Have lost, and spent also in veyn, 5130
 In his servyse, withoute socour,
 Body and soule, good, and tresour,
 Wit, and strengthe, and eek richesse,
 Of which they hadde never redresse.
 Thus taught and preched hath Resoun,
 But Love spilte hir sermoun, 5136

That was so impid in my thought,
 That hir doctrine I sette at nought.
 And yit ne seide she never a dele,
 That I ne understode it wele, 5140
 Word by word, the mater al.
 But unto Love I was so thral,
 Which callith over-al his pray,
 He chasith so my thought [alway],
 And holdith myn herte undir his sele,
 As trust and trew as any stele; 5146
 So that no devocioun
 Ne hadde I in the sermoun
 Of dame Resoun, ne of hir rede;
 It toke no soiour in myn hede. 5150
 For alle yede out at oon ere
 That in that other she dide lere;
 Fully on me she lost hir lore,
 Hir speche me greved wondir sore.
 [Than] unto hir for ire I seide, 5155
 For anger, as I dide abraide:
 'Dame, and is it your wille algate,
 That I not love, but that I hate
 Alle men, as ye me teche?
 For if I do aftir your speche, 5160
 Sith that ye seyn love is not good,
 Than must I nedis say with mood,
 If I it leve, in hatrede ay
 Liven, and voide love away 5164
 From me, [and been] a sinful wrecche,
 Hated of all that [love that] tecche.
 I may not go noon other gate,
 For either must I love or hate.
 And if I hate men of-newe
 More than love, it wol me rewe, 5170
 As by your preching semeth me,
 For Love no-thing ne preisith thee.
 Ye yeve good conseil, sikirly,
 That prechith me al-day, that I
 Shulde not Loves lore allowe; 5175
 He were a fool, 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 your leve, 5180
 If ye wolde diffyne it me,
 I wolde gladly here, to see,
 At the leest, if I may lere
 Of sondry loves the manere.' 5184
Raison. 'Certis, freend, a fool art thou
 Whan that thou no-thing wolt allowe
 That I [thee] for thy profit say.
 Yit wol I sey thee more, in fay;
 For I am redy, at the leste,

To accomplissh thy requeste, 5190
 But I not wher it wol avayle;
 In veyne, perautre, I shal travayle.
 Love ther is in sondry wyse,
 As I shal thee here devyse.
 For som love leful is and good; 5195
 I mene not that which makith thee wood,
 And bringith thee in many a fit,
 And ravissith fro thee al thy wit,
 It is so merveilous and queynt; 5199
 With such love be no more aqueynt.

COMMENT RAISONN DIFFINIST
 AMISTIE.

'Love of Frendshipe also ther is,
 Which makith no man doon amis,
 Of wille knit bitwixe two,
 That wol not breke for wele ne wo;
 Which long is lykly to contune, 5205
 Whan wille and goodis ben in comune;
 Grounded by goddis ordinaunce,
 Hool, withoute discordaunce;
 With hem holding comutee
 Of al her goode in charitee, 5210
 That ther be noon excepcioun
 Thurgh chaunging of entencioun;
 That ech helpe other at hir neede,
 And wysly hele bothe word and dede;
 Trewe of mening, devoid of slouthe,
 For wit is nought withoute trouthe; 5216
 So that the ton dar al his thought
 Seyn to his frend, and spare nought,
 As to him-silf, without dreding
 To be discovered by wreying. 5220
 For glad is that coniuncioun,
 Whan ther is noon suspecioun
 [Ne lak in hem], whom they wolde
 prove
 That trew and parfyt weren in love.
 For no man may be amiable, 5225
 But-if he be so ferme and stable,
 That fortune change him not ne blinde,
 But that his freend alwey him finde,
 Bothe pore and riche, in oon [e]state.
 For if his freend, thurgh any gate, 5230
 Wol compleyne of his poverttee,
 He shulde not byde so long, til he
 Of his helping him requere;
 For good deed, done [but] thurgh
 prayere,
 Is sold, and bought to dere, y-wis, 5235
 To hert that of gret valour is.

For hert fulfilled of gentillesse
 Can yvel demene his distresse.
 And man that worthy is of name
 To asken often hath gret shame. 5240
 A good man brenneth in his thought
 For shame, whan he axeth ought.
 He hath gret thought, and dredith ay
 For his disese, whan he shal pray
 His freend, lest that he warned be, 5245
 Til that he preve his stabiltee.
 But whan that he hath founden oon
 That trusty is and trew as stone,
 And [hath] assayed him at al,
 And found him stedefast as a wal, 5250
 And of his freendshipe be certeyne,
 He shal him shewe bothe Ioye and peyne,
 And al that [he] dar thinke or sey,
 Withoute shame, as he wel may.
 For how shulde he ashamed be 5255
 Of sich oon as I tolde thee?
 For whan he woot his secree thought,
 The thridde shal knowe ther-of right
 nought;
 For tweyn in nombre is bet than three
 In every counsel and secree. 5260
 Repreve he dredeth never a del,
 Who that biset his wordis wel;
 For every wys man, out of drede,
 Can kepe his tunge til he see nede;
 And fooles can not holde hir tunge;
 A foolles belle is sone runge. 5266
 Yit shal a trewe freend do more
 To helpe his felowe of his sore,
 And socoure him, whan he hath nede,
 In al that he may doon in dede; 5270
 And gladder [be] that he him plesith
 Than [is] his felowe that he esith.
 And if he do not his requeste,
 He shal as mochel him moleste
 As his felow, for that he 5275
 May not fulfille his voluntee
 [As] fully as he hath required.
 If bothe the hertis Love hath fered,
 Joy and wo they shul depart,
 And take evenly ech his part. 5280
 Half his anoy he shal have ay,
 And comfort [him] what that he may;
 And of his blisse parte shal he,
 If love wol departed be.
 'And whilom of this [amitee] 5285
 Spak Tullius in a ditee;
 ["A man] shulde maken his request
 Unto his freend, that is honest;

And he goodly shulde it fulfille,
 But it the more were out of skile, 5290
 And otherwise not graunt therto,
 Except only in [cases] two:
 If men his freend to deth wolde dryve,
 Lat him be bisy to save his lyve.
 Also if men wolen him assayle, 5295
 Of his wurship to make him faile,
 And hindren him of his renoun,
 Lat him, with ful entencioun,
 His dever doon in ech degree
 That his freend ne shamed be, 5300
 In this two [cases] with his might,
 Taking no kepe to skile nor right,
 As ferre as love may him excuse;
 This oughte no man to refuse."
 This love that I have told to thee 5305
 Is no-thing contrarie to me;
 This wol I that thou folowe wel,
 And leve the tother everydel.
 This love to vertu al attendith,
 The tothir foolles blent and shendith.
 'Another love also there is, 311
 That is contrarie unto this,
 Which desyre is so constreyned
 That [it] is but wille feyned;
 Away fro trouthe it doth so varie, 5315
 That to good love it is contrarie;
 For it maymeth, in many wyse,
 Syke hertis with covetise;
 Al in winning and in profyt
 Sich love settith his delyt. 5320
 This love so hangeth in balaunce
 That, if it lese his hope, perchaunce,
 Of lucre, that he is set upon,
 It wol faile, and quenche anon;
 For no man may be amorous, 5325
 Ne in his living vertuous,
 But-[if] he love more, in mood,
 Men for hem-silf than for hir good.
 For love that profyt doth abyde
 Is fals, and bit not in no tyde. 5330
 [This] love cometh of dame Fortune,
 That litel whyle wol contune;
 For it shal chaungen wonder sone,
 And take eclips right as the mone,
 Whan she is from us [y]-let 5335
 Thurgh erthe, that bitwix is set
 The sonne and hir, as it may falle,
 Be it in party, or in alle;
 The shadowe maketh her bemis merke,
 And hir hornes to shewe derke, 5340
 That part where she hath lost hir lyght

Of Phebus fully, and the sight;
 Til, whan the shadowe is overpast,
 She is enlumined ageyn as faste,
 Thurgh brightnesse of the sonne bemes
 That yeveth to hir ageyn hir lemes. 5346
 That love is right of sich nature;
 Now is [it] fair, and now obscure,
 Now bright, now clipys of manere,
 And whylom dim, and whylom clere.
 As sone as Poverte ginneth take, 5351
 With mantel and [with] wcdis blake
 [It] hidith of Love the light away,
 That into night it turneth day;
 It may not see Richesse shyne 5355
 Til the blakke shadowes fyne.
 For, whan Richesse shyneth bright,
 Love recovereth ageyn his light;
 And whan it failith, he wol flit,
 And as she [groweth, so groweth] it.
 'Of this love, here what I sey: — 5361
 The riche men are loved ay,
 And namely tho that sparand bene,
 That wol not wasshe hir hertes clene
 Of the filthe, nor of the vyce 5365
 Of gredy brenning avaryce.
 The riche man ful fond is, y-wis,
 That weneth that he loved is.
 If that his herte it undirstood,
 It is not he, it is his good; 5370
 He may wel witen in his thought,
 His good is loved, and he right nought.
 For if he be a nigard eke,
 Men wole not sette by him a leke,
 But haten him; this is the soth. 5375
 Lo, what profit his catel doth!
 Of every man that may him see,
 It geteth him nought but enmittee.
 But he amende him of that vyce,
 And knowe him-silf, he is not wys. 5380
 'Certis, he shulde ay freendly be,
 To gete him love also ben free,
 Or ellis he is not wyse ne sage
 No more than is a gote ramage.
 That he not loveth, his dede proveth,
 Whan he his richesse so wel loveth, 5386
 That he wol hyde it ay and spare,
 His pore freendis seen forfare;
 To kepe [it ay is] his purpose,
 Til for drede his eyen close, 5390
 And til a wikked deth him take;
 Him hadde lever asondre shake,
 And late his limes asondre ryve,
 Than leve his richesse in his lyve.

He thinkith parte it with no man; 5395
 Certayn, no love is in him than.
 How shulde love within him be,
 Whan in his herte is no pite?
 That he trespasseth, wel I wat,
 For ech man knowith his estat; 5400
 For wel him oughte be reprovod
 That loveth nought, ne is not loved.
 'But sith we arn to Fortune comen,
 And [han] our sermoun of hir nomen,
 A wondir wil I telle thee now, 5405
 Thou herlist never siche oon, I trow.
 I not wher thou me leven shal,
 Though sothfastnesse it be [in] al,
 As it is writen, and is sooth,
 That unto men more profit doth 5410
 The froward Fortune and contraire,
 Than the swote and debonaire:
 And if thee thinke it is doutable,
 It is thurgh argument provable.
 For the debonaire and softe 5415
 Falsith and bigylth ofte;
 For liche a moder she can cherishe
 And milken as doth a norys;
 And of hir goode to hem deles,
 And yeveth hem part of her loweles,
 With grete richesse and dignitee; 5421
 And hem she hoteth stabilitee
 In a state that is not stable,
 But chaunging ay and variable;
 And fedith hem with glorie veyne, 5425
 And worldly blisse noncerteyne.
 Whan she hem settith on hir whele,
 Than wene they to be right wele,
 And in so stable state withalle,
 That never they wene for to falle. 5430
 And whan they set so highe be,
 They wene to have in certeintee
 Of hertly frendis [so] gret noumbre,
 That no-thing mighte her stat encom-
 bre;
 They truste hem so on every syde, 5435
 Wening with hem they wolde abyde
 In every perel and mischaunce,
 Withoute change or variaunce,
 Bothe of catel and of good;
 And also for to spende hir blood 5440
 And alle hir membris for to spille,
 Only to fulfille hir wille.
 They maken it hole in many wyse,
 And hoten hem hir ful servyse,
 How sore that it do hem smerte, 5445
 Into hir very naked sherte!

Herte and al, so hole they yeve,
 For the tyme that they may live,
 So that, with her flaterye,
 They maken foolis glorifye 5450
 Of hir wordis [gret] speaking,
 And han [there]-of a reioysing,
 And trowe hem as the Evangyle;
 And it is al falsheed and gyle,
 As they shal afterwarde see, 5455
 Whan they arn falle in poverttee,
 And been of good and catel bare;
 Than shulde they seen who freendis
 ware.
 For of an hundred, certeynly,
 Nor of a thousand ful scarsly, 5460
 Ne shal they fynde unnethis oon,
 Whan poverttee is comen upon.
 For [this] Fortune that I of telle,
 With men whan hir lust to dwelle,
 Makith hem to lese hir conisaunce, 5465
 And nourishith hem in ignoraunce.
 'But froward Fortune and perverse,
 Whan high estatis she doth reverse,
 And maketh hem to tumble doun
 Of hir whele, with sodeyn toun, 5470
 And from hir richesse doth hem flee,
 And plongeth hem in poverttee,
 As a stepmoder envyous,
 And leyeth a plastre dolorous
 Unto her hertis, wounded egre, 5475
 Which is not tempered with vinegre,
 But with povertte and indigence,
 For to shewe, by experience,
 That she is Fortune verely
 In whom no man shulde affy, 5480
 Nor in hir yestis have fiancée,
 She is so ful of variaunce.
 Thus can she maken high and lowe,
 Whan they from richesse ar[e]n throwe,
 Fully to knowen, withouten were, 5485
 Freend of effect, and freend of chere;
 And which in love weren trew and stable,
 And whiche also weren variable,
 After Fortune, hir goddessse,
 In povertte, outhur in richesse; 5490
 For al [she] yeveth, out of drede,
 Unhappe bereveth it in dede;
 For Infortune lat not oon
 Of freendis, whan Fortune is goon;
 I mene tho freendis that wol flee 5495
 Anoon as entreth poverttee.
 And yit they wol not leve hem so,
 But in ech place where they go

- They calle hem "wrecche," scorne and blame,
 And of hir mishappe hem diffame, 5500
 And, namely, siche as in richesse
 Pretendith most of stableness,
 Whan that they sawe him set onlofte,
 And weren of him socoured ofte,
 And most y-holpe in al hir nede: 5505
 But now they take no maner hede,
 But seyn, in voice of flaterye,
 That now apperith hir folye,
 Over-al where-so they fare,
 And singe, "Go, farewell feldefare." 5510
 Alle suche freendis I beshrewe,
 For of [the] trewe ther be to fewe;
 But sothfast freendis, what so bityde,
 In every fortune wolen abyde;
 They han hir hertis in suche noblesse
 That they nil love for no richesse; 5516
 Nor, for that Fortune may hem sende,
 They wolen hem socoure and defende;
 And chaunge for softe ne for sore,
 For who is freend, loveth evermore. 5520
 Though men drawe swerd his freend to slo,
 He may not hewe hir love a-two.
 But, in [the] case that I shal sey,
 For pride and ire lese it he may,
 And for reprove by nyecete, 5525
 And discovering of privitee,
 With tonge wounding, as feloun,
 Thurgh venemous detraccioun.
 Frend in this case wol gon his way,
 For no-thing greve him more ne may;
 And for nought ellis wol he flee, 5531
 If that he love in stabilitee.
 And certeyn, he is wel bigoon
 Among a thousand that fyndith oon.
 For ther may be no richesse, 5535
 Ageyns frendship, of worthinesse;
 For it ne may so high atteigne
 As may the valoure, sooth to seyne,
 Of him that loveth trew and wel;
 Frendship is more than is catel. 5540
 For freend in court ay better is
 Than peny in [his] purs, certis;
 And Fortune, mishapping,
 Whan upon men she is [falling],
 Thurgh misturning of hir chaunce, 5545
 And casteth hem oute of balaunce,
 She makith, thurgh hir adversitee,
 Men ful cleerly for to see
 Him that is freend in existence
- From him that is by apparence. 5550
 For Infortune makith anon
 To knowe thy freendis fro thy foon,
 By experience, right as it is;
 The which is more to preyse, y-wis,
 Than [is] miche richesse and tresour;
 For more [doth] profit and valour 5556
 Poverte, and such adversitee,
 Bifore than doth prosperitee;
 For the toon yeveth conisaunce,
 And the tother ignoraunce. 5560
 'And thus in poverte is in dede:
 Trouthe declared fro falsehede;
 For feynte freendis it wol declare,
 And trewe also, what wey they fare.
 For whan he was in his richesse, 5565
 These freendis, ful of doublenesse,
 Offrid him in many wyse
 Hert and body, and serveye.
 What wolde he than ha [yeve] to ha
 bought
 To knowen openly her thought, 5570
 That he now hath so clerly seen?
 The lasse bigyled he sholde have been
 And he hadde than perceyved it,
 But richesse nold not late him wit.
 Wel more avauntage doth him than, 5575
 Sith that it makith him a wys man,
 The greet mischeef that he [receyvet],
 Than doth richesse that him deceyvet.
 Richesse riche ne makith nought
 Him that on tresour set his thought;
 For richesse stont in suffisaunce 5581
 And no-thing in habundaunce;
 For suffisaunce al-only
 Makith men to live richely.
 For he that hath [but] miche tweyne,
 Ne [more] value in his demeigne, 5586
 Liveth more at ese, and more is riche,
 Than doth he that is [so] chiche,
 And in his bern hath, soth to seyne, 5589
 An hundred [muwis] of whete greyn,
 Though he be chapman or marchaunt,
 And have of golde many besaunt.
 For in the geting he hath such wo,
 And in the keping drede also,
 And set evermore his bisynesse 5595
 For to encrease, and not to lesse,
 For to augment and multiply.
 And though on hepis [it] lye him by,
 Yit never shal make his richesse
 Asseth unto his gredinesse. 5600
 But the povre that recchith nought,

Save of his lyfode, in his thought,
 Which that he getith with his travaile,
 He dredliþ nought that it shal faille,
 Though he have lytel worldis good, 5605
 Mete and drinke, and esy food,
 Upon his travel and living,
 And also suffisaunt clothing.
 Or if in syknesse that he falle,
 And lothe mete and drink withalle, 5610
 Though he have nought, his mete to by,
 He shal biþinke him hastely,
 To putte him out of al daunger,
 That he of mete hath no mister;
 Or that he may with litel eke 5615
 Be founden, whyl that he is seke;
 Or that men shul him bere in hast,
 To live, til his syknesse be past,
 To somme maysondewe bisyde; 5619
 He cast nought what shal him bityde.
 He thinkith nought that ever he shal
 Into any syknesse falle.

‘And though it falle, as it may be,
 That al betyme spare shal he
 As mochel as shal to him suffice, 5625
 Whyl he is syke in any wyse,
 He doth [it], for that he wol be
 Content with his poverttee
 Withoute nede of any man.
 So miche in litel have he can, 5630
 He is apayed with his fortune;
 And for he nil be importune
 Unto no wight, ne onerous,
 Nor of hir goodes covetous;
 Therefore he spareth, it may wel been,
 His pore estat for to sustene. 5636

‘Or if him lust not for to spare,
 But suffriþ forth, as nought ne ware,
 Atte last it happeth, as it may,
 Right unto his laste day, 5640
 And taketh the world as it wolde be;
 For ever in herte thenkith he,
 The soner that [the] deeth him slo,
 To paradys the soner go
 He shal, there for to live in blisse, 5645
 Where that he shal no good misse.
 Thider he hopith god shal him sende
 Aftir his wrecchid lyves ende.
 Pictagoras himsilf rehersed,
 In a book that the Golden Verses 5650
 Is clepid, for the nobilitee
 Of the honourable ditee: —
 “Than, whan thou gost thy body fro,
 Free in the eir thou shalt up go,

And leven al humanitee, 5655
 And purely live in ditee.” —
 He is a fool, withouten were,
 That trowith have his coudre here.
 “In erthe is not our coudre,”
 That may these clerkis seyn and see
 In Boece of Consolacioun, 5661
 Where it is maked menciou
 Of our coudre pleyn at the eye,
 By teching of philosophye,
 Where lewid men might lere wit, 5665
 Who-so that wolde translaten it.
 If he be sich that can wel live
 Aftir his rente may him yive,
 And not desyretþ more to have,
 That may fro poverttee him save: 5670
 A wys man seile, as we may seen,
 Is no man wrecched, but he it wene,
 Be he king, knight, or ribaud.
 And many a ribaud is mery and baud,
 That swinkith, and berith, bothe day and
 night, 5675

Many a burthen of gret might,
 The whiche doth him lasse offense,
 For he suffriþ in pacience.
 They laugh and daunce, trippe and singe,
 And ley not up for her living, 5680
 But in the tavern al dispendith
 The winning that god hem sendith.
 Than goth he, fardels for to bere,
 With as good chere as he dide ere;
 To swinke and traivele he not feynith,
 For for to robben he disdeynith; 5686
 But right anoon, aftir his swinke,
 He goth to tavern for to drinke.
 Alle these ar riche in abundaunce,
 That can thus have suffisaunce 5690
 Wel more than can an usurere,
 As god wel knowith, withoute were.
 For an usurer, so god me see,
 Shal never for richesse riche be,
 But evermore pore and indigent, 5695
 Scarce, and gredy in his entent.

‘For soth it is, whom it displese,
 Ther may no marchaunt live at ese,
 His herte in sich a were is set,
 That it quik brenneth [more] to get, 5700
 Ne never shal [enough have] geten;
 Though he have gold in geners yeten,
 For to be nedy he dredith sore.
 Wherefore to geten more and more
 He set his herte and his desire; 5705
 So hote he brennith in the fire

- Of covetise, that makith him wood
 To purchase other mennes good.
 He undirfongith a gret peyne,
 That undirtakith to drinke up Seyne; 5710
 For the more he drinkith, ay
 The more he leveth, the soth to say.
 [This is the] thirst of fals geting,
 That last ever in coveiting,
 And the anguisshe and distresse 5715
 With the fire of gredinesse.
 She fighteth with him ay, and stryveth,
 That his herte asondre ryveth;
 Such gredinesse him assaylith,
 That whan he most hath, most he
 faylith. 5720
 ‘Phisiciens and advocates
 Gon right by the same yates;
 They selle hir science for winning,
 And haunte hir crafte for gret geting.
 Hir winning is of such swetnesse, 5725
 That if a man falle in sikenesse,
 They are ful glad, for hir encesse;
 For by hir wille, withoute lees,
 Everiche man shulde be seke,
 And though they dye, they set not a
 leke. 5730
 After, whan they the gold have take,
 Ful litel care for hem they make.
 They wolde that fourty were seke at
 onis,
 Ye, two hundred, in flesh and bonis,
 And yit two thousand, as I gesse, 5735
 For to encresen her richesse.
 They wol not worchen, in no wyse,
 But for lucre and covetiyse;
 For fysyk ginneth first by *fy*,
 The fysycien also sothely; 5740
 And sithen it goth fro *fy* to *sy*;
 To truste on hem, it is foly;
 For they nil, in no maner gree,
 Do right nought for charitee.
 ‘Eke in the same secte are set 5745
 Alle tho that prechen for to get
 Worshipes, honour, and richesse.
 Her hertis arm in gret distresse,
 That folk [ne] live not holly.
 But aboven al, specially, 5750
 Sich as prechen [for] veynglorie,
 And toward god have no memorie,
 But forth as ypocrites trace,
 And to her soules deth purchase,
 And outward [shewen] holynesse, 5755
 Though they be fulle of cursidnesse.
- Notliche to the apostles twelve,
 They deceyve other and hem-selve;
 Bigyled is the gyler than.
 For preching of a cursed man, 5760
 Though [it] to other may profyete,
 Himsilf availeth not a myte;
 For oft good predicacioun
 Cometh of evel entencioun.
 To him not vailith his preching, 5765
 Al helpe he other with his teching;
 For where they good ensample take,
 There is he with veynglorie shake.
 ‘But lat us leven these prechoures,
 And speke of hem that in her toures 5770
 Hepe up her gold, and faste shette,
 And sore theron her herte sette.
 They neither love god, ne drede;
 They kepe more than it is nede,
 And in her bagges sore it binde, 5775
 Out of the sonne, and of the winde;
 They putte up more than nede ware,
 Whan they seen pore folk forfare,
 For hunger dye, and for cold quake;
 God can wel vengeaunce therof take.
 [Thre] gret mischeves hem assailith,
 And thus in gadring ay travaylith;
 With moche peyne they winne richesse;
 And drede hem holdith in distresse,
 To kepe that they gadre faste; 5785
 With sorwe they leve it at the laste;
 With sorwe they bothe dye and live,
 That to richesse her hertis yive,
 And in defaute of love it is,
 As it shewith ful wel, y-wis. 5790
 For if these gredy, the sothe to seyn,
 Loveden, and were loved ageyn,
 And good love regned over-alle,
 Such wikkidnesse ne shulde falle;
 But he shulde yeve that most good
 had 5795
 To hem that weren in nede bistad,
 And live withoute fals usure,
 For charitee ful clene and pure.
 If they hem yeve to goodnesse,
 Defending hem from ydelnesse, 5800
 In al this world than pore noon
 We shulde finde, I trowe, not oon.
 But chaunged is this world unstable;
 For love is over-al vendable.
 We see that no man loveth now 5805
 But for winning and for prow;
 And love is thralled in servage
 Whan it is sold for avauntage;

Yit wommen wol hir bodies selle; 5809
 Suche soules goth to the devel of helle.'

[Here ends l. 5170 of the F. text. A
 great gap follows. The next line an-
 swers to l. 10717 of the same.]

FRAGMENT C.

Whan Love had told hem his entente,
 The baronage to counsel wente;
 In many sentences they fille,
 And dyversly they seide hir wille:
 But affir discord they accorded, 5815
 And hir accord to Love recorded.
 'Sir,' seiden they, 'we been at oon,
 By even accord of everichoon,
 Out-take Richesse al only,
 That sworn hath ful hauteynly, 5820
 That she the castel nil assaile,
 Ne snyte a stroke in this bataile,
 With dart, ne mace, spere, ne knyf,
 For man that speketh or bereth the lyf,
 And blameth your empryse, y-wis, 5825
 And from our hoost departed is,
 (At leeste wey, as in this plyte,)
 So hath she this man in dispyte;
 For she seith he ne loved hir never,
 And therfor she wol hate him ever. 5830
 For he wol gadre no tresore,
 He hath hir wrath for evermore.
 He agilte hir never in other caas,
 Lo, here al hoolly his trespas!
 She seith wel, that this other day 5835
 He asked hir leve to goon the way
 That is clepid To-moche-Yeving,
 And spak ful faire in his praying;
 But whan he prayde hir, pore was he,
 Therefore she warned him the entree. 5840
 Ne yit is he not thriven so
 That he hath geten a peny or two,
 That quilty is his owne in hold.
 Thus hath Richesse us alle told;
 And whan Richesse us this recorded,
 Withouten hir we been accorded. 5846
 'And we finde in our accordaunce,
 That False-Semblant and Abstinaunce,
 With alle the folk of hir bataile,
 Shulle at the hinder gate assaile, 5850
 That Wikkid-Tunge hath in keping,
 With his Normans, fulle of langling.
 And with hem Curtesie and Largesse,

That shulle shewe hir hardinesse
 To the olde wyf that [kepeth] so harde
 Fair-Welcoming within her warde. 5856
 Than shal Delyte and Wel-Helinge
 Fonde Shame adoun to bringe;
 With al hir hoost, erly and late,
 They shulle assaillen [thilke] gate. 5860
 Agaynes Drede shal Hardinesse
 Assaile, and also Sikernesse,
 With al the folk of hir leding,
 That never wist what was fleing.
 'Fraunchyse shal fighte, and eek Pitee,
 With Daunger ful of crueltee. 5866
 This is your hoost ordeyned wel;
 Doun shal the castel every del,
 If everiche do his entente,
 So that Venus be presente, 5870
 Your modir, ful of vassalage,
 That can y-nough of such usage;
 Withouten hir may no wight spede
 This werk, neither for word ne dede.
 Therfore is good ye for hir sende, 5875
 For thurgh hir may this werk amende.'

Amour. 'Lordinges, my modir, the
 goddesse,
 That is my lady, and my maistresse,
 Nis not [at] al at my willing,
 Ne doth not al at my desyring. 5880
 Yit can she som-tyme doon labour,
 Whan that hir lust, in my socour,
 [Al my nedis] for to acheve,
 But now I thanke hir not to greve.
 My modir is she, and of childhede 5885
 I bothe worshipe hir, and eek drede;
 For who that dredith sire ne dame
 Shal it abyte in body or name.
 And, natheles, yit cunne we
 Sende aftir hir, if nede be; 5890
 And were she nigh, she comen wolde,
 I trowe that no-thing might hir holde.
 'My modir is of greet prowesse;
 She hath tan many a forteresse,
 That cost hath many a pound er this,
 Ther I nas not present, y-wis; 5896
 And yit men seide it was my dede;
 But I come never in that stede;
 Ne me ne lykith, so mote I thee,
 Such toures take withoute me. 5900
 For-why me thenketh that, in no wyse,
 It may been cleped but marchandise.
 'Go bye a courser, blak or whyte,
 And pay therfor; than art thou quyte.
 The marchaunt oweth thee right nought,

Ne thou him, whan thou [hast] it bought.
 I wol not selling clepe yeving,
 For selling axeth no guerdoning;
 Here lyth no thank, ne no meryte,
 That oon goth from that other al quyte.
 But this selling is not semblable; 5911
 For, whan his hors is in the stable,
 He may it selle ageyn, pardee,
 And winne on it, such hap may be;
 Al may the man not lese, y-wis, 5915
 For at the leest the skin is his.
 Or elles, if it so bityde
 That he wol kepe his hors to ryde,
 Yit is he lord ay of his hors.
 But thilke chaffare is wel wors, 5920
 There Venus entremeteth nought;
 For who-so such chaffare hath bought,
 He shal not worchon so wysly,
 That he ne shal lese al outerly
 Bothe his money and his chaffare; 5925
 But the seller of the ware
 The prys and profit have shal.
 Certeyn, the byer shal lese al;
 For he ne can so dere it bye
 To have lordship and ful maistrye, 5930
 Ne have power to make letting
 Neither for yift ne for preching,
 That of his chaffare, maugre his,
 Another shal have as moche, y-wis,
 If he wol yeve as moche as he, 5935
 Of what contrey so that he be;
 Or for right nought, so happe may,
 If he can flater hir to hir pay.
 Ben than suche marchaunts wyse?
 No, but fooles in every wyse, 5940
 Whan they bye such thing wilfully,
 Ther-as they lese her good [fully].
 But natheles, this dar I saye,
 My modir is not wont to paye,
 For she is neither so fool ne nyce, 5945
 To entremete hir of sich vyce.
 But truste wel, he shal paye al,
 That repente of his bargeyn shal,
 Whan Poverte put him in distresse,
 Al were he scoler to Richesse, 5950
 That is for me in gret yerning,
 Whan she assenteth to my willing.
 But, [by] my modir seint Venus,
 And by hir fader Saturnus,
 That hir engendrid by his lyf, 5955
 But not upon his weddid wyf!
 Yit wol I more unto you swere,
 To make this thing the seurere;

Now by that feith, and that leautee
 I owe to alle my brethren free, 5960
 Of which ther nis wight under heven
 That can her fadris names neven,
 So dyvers and so many ther be
 That with my modir have be privee!
 Yit wolde I swere, for sikirnesse, 5965
 If I forswere me, than am I lorn,
 The pole of helle to my witenesse,
 Now drinke I not this yeer clarree,
 If that I lye, or forsworn be!
 (For of the goddes the usage is,
 That who-so him forswereth amis, 5970
 Shal that yeer drinke no clarree).
 Now have I sworn y-nough, pardee;
 If I forswere me, than am I lorn,
 But I wol never be forsworn.
 Sith Richesse hath me failed here, 5975
 She shal abyte that trespas dere,
 At leeste wey, but [she] hir arme
 With swerd, or sparth, or gisarme.
 For certes, sith she loveth not me,
 Fro thilke tyme that she may see 5980
 The castel and the tour to-shake,
 In sory tyme she shal awake.
 If I may grype a riche man,
 I shal so pulle him, if I can,
 That he shal, in a fewe stoundes, 5985
 Lese alle his markes and his poundes.
 I shal make him his pens outslinge,
 But-[if] they in his gerner springe;
 Our maydens shal eek plukke him so,
 That him shal nedden fetheres mo, 5990
 And make him selle his lond to spende,
 But he the bet kunne him defende.
 Pore men han maad hir lord of me;
 Although they not so mighty be,
 That they may fede me in delyt, 5995
 I wol not have hem in despyt.
 No good man hateth hem, as I gesse,
 For chinche and feloun is Richesse,
 That so can chase hem and dispyse,
 And hem defoule in sundry wyse. 6000
 They loven ful bet, so god me spede,
 Than doth the riche, chinchy grede,
 And been, in good feith, more stable
 And trewer, and more serviable;
 And therefore it suffysith me 6005
 Hir good herte, and hir leautee.
 They han on me set al hir thought,
 And therefore I forgete hem nought.
 I wolde hem bringe in greet noblesse,
 If that I were god of Richesse, 6010
 As I am god of Love, sotbly,

Such routhe upon hir pleynt have I.
 Therefore I must his socour be,
 That peyneth him to serven me;
 For if he deyde for love of this, 6015
 Than semeth in me no love ther is.
 'Sir,' seide they, 'sooth is, every del,
 That ye reherce, and we wot wel
 Thilk oth to holde is resonable;
 For it is good and covenable, 6020
 That ye on riche men han sworn.
 For, sir, this wot we wel biforn;
 If riche men doon you homage,
 That is as fools doon outrage;
 But ye shul not forsworen be, 6025
 Ne let therfore to drinke clarree,
 Or piment maked fresh and newe.
 Ladies shulle hem such pepir brewe,
 If that they falle into hir laas,
 That they for wo mowe seyn "Allas!"
 Ladies shuln ever so curteis be, 6031
 That they shal quyte your oth al free.
 Ne seketh never other vicaire,
 For they shall speke with hem so faire
 That ye shal holde you payed ful wel,
 Though ye you medle never a del. 6036
 Lat ladies worche with hir thinges,
 They shal hem telle so fele tydinges,
 And moeve hem eke so many requestis
 By flattery, that not honest is, 6040
 And therto yeve hem such thankinges,
 What with kissing, and with talkinges,
 That certes, if they trowed be,
 Shal never leve hem lond ne fee
 That it nil as the moeble fare, 6045
 Of which they first delivered are.
 Now may ye telle us al your wille,
 And we your hestes shal fulfille.
 'But Fals-Semblant dar not, for drede
 Of you, sir, medle him of this dede, 6050
 For he seith that ye been his fo;
 He not, if ye wol worche him wo.
 Wherefore we pray you alle, beausire,
 That ye forgive him now your ire,
 And that he may dwelle, as your man,
 With Abstynence, his dere lemman; 6056
 This our accord and our wil now.'
 'Parfay,' seide Love, 'I graunte it
 yow:
 I wol wel holde him for my man;
 Now lat him come:' and he forth ran.
 'Fals-Semblant,' quod Love, 'in this
 wyse 6061
 I take thee here to my servyse,

That thou our freendis helpe alway,
 And hindre hem neithir night ne day,
 But do thy might hem to releve, 6065
 And eek our enemies that thou greve.
 Thyn be this might, I graunt it thee,
 My king of harlotes shalt thou be;
 We wol that thou have such honour.
 Certeyn, thou art a fals traitour, 6070
 And eek a thief; sith thou were born,
 A thousand tyme thou art forsworn.
 But, natheles, in our hering,
 To putte our folk out of douting,
 I bid thee teche hem, wostow how? 6075
 By somme general signe now,
 In what place thou shalt founden be,
 If that men had mister of thee;
 And how men shal thee best espye,
 For thee to knowe is greet maistrye;
 Tel in what place is thyn haunting.' 6081
F. Sem. 'Sir, I have fele dyvers won-
 ing,
 That I kepe not rehersed be,
 So that ye wolde respyten me.
 For if that I telle you the sothe, 6085
 I may have harm and shame bothe.
 If that my felowes wisten it,
 My tales shulden me be quit;
 For certeyn, they wolde hate me,
 If ever I knewe hir cruelte; 6090
 For they wolde over-al holde hem stille
 Of trouthe that is ageyn hir wille;
 Suche tales kepen they not here.
 I might eftson bye it ful dere,
 If I seide of hem any thing, 6095
 That ought displeseth to hir hering.
 For what word that hem prikke or byteth,
 In that word noon of hem delyteth,
 Al were it gospel, the evangyle,
 That wolde reprove hem of hir gyle, 6100
 For they are cruel and hauteyn.
 And this thing wot I wel, certeyn,
 If I speke ought to peire hir loos,
 Your court shal not so wel be cloos,
 That they ne shal wite it atte last. 6105
 Of good men am I nought agast,
 For they wol taken on hem no-thing,
 Whan that they knowe al my mening;
 But he that wol it on him take,
 He wol himself suspescious make, 6110
 That he his lyf let covertly,
 In Gyle and in Ipocrisy,
 That me engendred and yaf fostring.'
 'They made a ful good engendring.'

Quod Love, 'for who-so soothly telle,
 They engendred the devel of helle! 6116
 'But nedely, how-so-ever it be,'
 Quod Love, 'I wol and charge thee,
 To telle anon thy woning-places,
 Hering ech wight that in this place is;
 And what lyf that thou livest also, 6121
 Hyde it no lenger now; wherto?
 Thou most discover al thy wurching,
 How thou servest, and of what thing,
 Though that thou shuldest for thy soth-
 sawe 6125
 Ben al to-beten and to-drawe;
 And yit art thou not wont, pardee.
 But natheles, though thou beten be,
 Thou shalt not be the first, that so
 Hath for soth-sawe suffred wo.' 6130
F. Sem. 'Sir, sith that it may lyken
 you,
 Though that I shulde be slayn right now,
 I shal don your comaundement,
 For therto have I gret talent.'
 Withouten wordes mo, right than,
 Fals-Semblant his sermon bigan, 6136
 And seide hem thus in audience:—
 'Barouns, tak hede of my sentence!
 That wight that list to have knowing
 Of Fals-Semblant, ful of flatering, 6140
 He must in worldly folk him seke,
 And, certes, in the cloistres eke;
 I wone no-where but in hem tweye;
 But not lyk even, sooth to seye;
 Shortly, I wol herberwe me 6145
 There I hope best to hulstred be;
 And certeynly, sikerest hyding
 Is undirneith humblest clothing.
 'Religious folk ben ful covert;
 Seculer folk ben more appert. 6150
 But natheles, I wol not blame
 Religious folk, ne hem diffame,
 In what habit that ever they go:
 Religious humble, and trewe also,
 Wol I not blame, ne dispyse, 6155
 But I nil love it, in no wyse.
 I mene of fals religious,
 That stoute ben, and malicious;
 That wolen in an abit go,
 And setten not hir herte therto. 6160
 'Religious folk ben al pitous;
 Thou shalt not seen oon dispitous.
 They loven no pryde, ne no stryf,
 But humbly they wol lede hir lyf;
 With swich folk wol I never be. 6165

And if I dwelle, I feyne me
 I may wel in her abit go;
 But me were lever my nekke atwo,
 Than lete a purpose that I take,
 What covenaunt that ever I make. 6170
 I dwelle with hem that proude be,
 And fulle of wyles and subtelte;
 That worship of this world coveyten,
 And grete nedes kunne espleyten; 6174
 And goon and gadren greet pitaunces,
 And purchase hem the acqueyntaunces
 Of men that mighty lyf may leden;
 And feyne hem pore, and hem-self feden
 With gode morcels delicious,
 And drinken good wyn precious, 6180
 And preche us povert and distresse,
 And fisshen hem-self greet richesse
 With wyly nettis that they caste:
 It wol come foul out at the laste.
 They ben fro clene religioun went; 6185
 They make the world an argument
 That hath a foul conclusioun.
 "I have a robe of religioun,
 Than am I al religious:"
 This argument is al roignous; 6190
 It is not worth a croked brere;
 Habit ne maketh monk ne frere,
 But clene lyf and devocioun
 Maketh gode men of religioun.
 Nathelesse, ther can noon answer, 6195
 How high that ever his heed he shere
 With rasour whetted never so kene,
 That Gyle in braunches cut thrittene;
 Ther can no wight distincte it so,
 That he dar sey a word therto. 6200
 'But what herberwe that ever I take,
 Or what semblant that ever I make,
 I mene but gyle, and folowe that;
 For right no mo than Gibbe our cat
 [Fro myce and rattes went his wyle], 6205
 Ne entende I [not] but to begyle;
 Ne no wight may, by my clothing,
 Wite with what folk is my dwelling;
 Ne by my wordis yet, pardee,
 So softe and so plesaunt they be. 6210
 Bihold the dedis that I do;
 But thou be blind, thou oughtest so;
 For, varie hir wordis fro hir dede,
 They thenke on gyle, withouten drede,
 What maner clothing that they were, 6215
 Or what estat that ever they bere,
 Lered or lewd, lord or lady,
 Knight, squier, burgeis, or bayly.'

Right thus whyl Fals-Semblant ser-
moneth,
Eftsones Love him aresoneth, 6220
And brak his tale in the speking
As though he had him told lesing;
And seide: 'What, devel, is that I here?
What folk hast thou us nempned here?
May men find religioun 6225
In worldly habitacioun?'
F. Sem. 'Ye, sir; it foloweth not
that they
Shulde lede a wikked lyf, parfey,
Ne not therfore her soules lese,
That hem to worldly clothes chese; 6230
For, certis, it were gret pitee.
Men may in secular clothes see
Florissshen holy religioun.
Ful many a seynt in feeld and toun,
With many a virgin glorious, 6235
Devout, and ful religious,
Had deyed, that comun clothe ay beren,
Yit seyntes never-the-les they weren.
I coude reken you many a ten; 6239
Ye, wel nigh alle these holy wimmen,
That men in chirchis herie and seke,
Bothe maydens, and these wyves eke,
That baren many a fair child here,
Wered alwey clothis seculere,
And in the same dyden they, 6245
That seyntes weren, and been alwey.
The eleven thousand maydens dere,
That beren in heven hir ciergis clere,
Of which men rede in chirche, and singe,
Were take in secular clothing, 6250
When they resseyved martirdom,
And wonden heven unto her hoom.
Good herte makith the gode thought;
The clothing yeveth ne reveth nought.
The gode thought and the worching, 6255
That maketh religioun flowring,
Ther lyth the good religioun
Aftir the right entencion.
'Who-so toke a wethers skin,
And wrapped a gredy wolf therein, 6260
For he shulde go with lambis whyte,
Whenest thou not he wolde hem byte?
Yis! never-the-las, as he were wood,
He wolde hem wery, and drinke the
blood;
And wel the rather hem disceyve, 6265
For, sith they coude not perceyve
His treget and his crueltee,
They wolde him folowe, al wolde he flee.

'If ther be wolves of sich hewe
Amonges these apostlis newe, 6270
Thou, holy chirche, thou mayst be wayled!
Sith that thy citee is assayed
Though knightis of thyn owne table,
God wot thy lordship is doutable!
If they enforce [hem] it to winne, 6275
That shulde defende it fro withinne,
Who might defence ayens hem make?
Withouten stroke it mot be take
Of trepeteg or mangonel;
Without displaying of pensel. 6280
And if god nil don it socour,
But lat [hem] renne in this colour,
Thou moost thyn heestis laten be.
Than is ther nought, but yelde thee,
Or yeve hem tribute, doutelees, 6285
And holde it of hem to have pees:
But gretter harm bytde thee,
That they al maister of it be.
Wel conne they scorne thee withal;
By day stuffen they the wal, 6290
And al the night they mynen there.
Nay, thou most planten elleswhere
Thyn impes, if thou wolt fruyt have;
Abyd not there thy-self to save.
'But now pees! here I turne ageyn;
I wol no more of this thing seyn, 6296
If I may passen me herby;
I mighte maken you wery.
But I wol heten you alway
To helpe your freendis what I may, 6300
So they wollen my company;
For they be shent al-outerly
But-if so falle, that I be
Oft with hem, and they with me.
And eek my lemman mot they serve, 6305
Or they shal not my love deserve.
Forsothe, I am a fals traitour;
God iugged me for a theef trichour;
Forsworn I am, but wel nygh non
Wot of my gyle, til it be don. 6310
'Though me hath many oon deth
resseyved,
That my treget never aperceyved;
And yit resseyveth, and shal resseyve,
That my falsnesse never aperceyve:
But who-so doth, if he wys be, 6315
Him is right good be war of me.
But so sligh is the [deceyving
That to hard is the] aperceyving.
For Protheus, that coude him change
In every shap, hoomly and straunge, 6320

Coude never sich gyle ne tresoun
 As I; for I com never in toun
 Ther-as I mighte knowen be,
 Though men me bothe might here and
 see.
 Ful wel I can my clothis change, 6325
 Take oon, and make another straunge.
 Now am I knight, now chasteleyn;
 Now prelat, and now chapeleyn;
 Now prest, now clerk, and now forstere;
 Now am I maister, now scolere; 6330
 Now monk, now chanoun, now baily;
 What-ever mister man am I.
 Now am I prince, now am I page,
 And can by herte every langage.
 Som-tyme am I hoor and old; 6335
 Now am I yong, [and] stout, and bold;
 Now am I Robert, now Robyn;
 Now frere Menour, now Iacobyn;
 And with me folweth my loteby,
 To don me solas and company, 6340
 That hight dame Abstinence-Streynd,
 In many a queynt array [y]-feyned.
 Right as it cometh to hir lyking,
 I fulfille al hir desiring.
 Somtyme a wommans cloth take I; 6345
 Now am I mayde, now lady.
 Somtyme I am religious;
 Now lyk an anker in an hous.
 Somtyme am I prioresse,
 And now a nonne, and now abbesse;
 And go thurgh alle regiouns, 6351
 Seking alle religiouns.
 But to what ordre that I am sworn,
 I take the strawe, and lete the corn;
 To [blynde] folk [ther] I enhabite, 6355
 I axe no-more but hir abite.
 What wol ye more? in every wyse,
 Right as me list, I me disgyse.
 Wel can I bere me under weed;
 Unlyk is my word to my deed. 6360
 Thus make I in my trappis falle,
 Thurgh my pryvileges, alle
 That ben in Cristendom alyve.
 I may assoile, and I may shryve,
 That no prelat may lette me, 6365
 Al folk, wher-ever they fonde be:
 I noot no prelat may don so,
 But it the pope be, and no mo,
 That made thilk establishing.
 Now is not this a propre thing? 6370
 But, were my sleightis aperceyved,
 [Ne shukle I more been receyved]

As I was wont; and wostow why?
 For I dide hem a tregetry;
 But therof yeve I litel tale, 6375
 I have the silver and the male;
 So have I preched and eek shriven,
 So have I take, so have [me] yiven,
 Thurgh hir foly, husband and wyf,
 That I lede right a Ioly lyf, 6380
 Thurgh simplese of the prelacye;
 They know not al my tregetrye.
 'But for as moche as man and wyf
 Shuld shewe hir paroché-prest hir lyf
 Ones a yeer, as seith the book, 6385
 Er any wight his housel took,
 Than have I pryvilegis large,
 That may of moche thing discharge;
 For he may seye right thus, pardee: —
 "Sir Preest, in shrift I telle it thee, 6390
 That he, to whom that I am shriven,
 Hath me assoiled, and me yiven
 Penaunce soothly, for my sinne,
 Which that I fond me gilty inne;
 Ne I ne have never entencioun 6395
 To make double confessioun,
 Ne reherce eft my shrift to thee;
 O shrift is right y-nough to me.
 This oughte thee suffice wel,
 Ne be not rebel never-a-del; 6400
 For certis, though thou haddest it sworn,
 I wot no prest ne prelat born
 That may to shrift*eft me constreyne.
 And if they don, I wol me pleyne;
 For I wot where to pleyne wel. 6405
 Thou shalt not streyne me a del,
 Ne enforce me, ne [yit] me trouble,
 To make my confessioun double.
 Ne I have none affecciou
 To have double absolucioun. 6410
 The firste is right y-nough to me;
 This latter assoiling quyte I thee.
 I am unbounde; what mayst thou finde
 More of my sinnes me to unbinde?
 For he, that might hath in his hond,
 Of alle my sinnes me unbond. 6415
 And if thou wolt me thus constreyne,
 That me mot nedis on thee pleyne,
 There shal no Iugge imperial,
 Ne bisshop, ne official, 6420
 Don Iugement on me; for I
 Shal gon and pleyne me openly
 Unto my shrift-fadir newe,
 (That hight not Frere Wolf untrew!)
 And he shal chevis him for me, 6425

For I trowe he can hampre thee.
 But, lord! he wolde be wrooth withalle,
 If men him wolde Frere Wolf calle!
 For he wolde have no pacience,
 But don al cruel vengeance! 6430
 He wolde his might don at the leest,
 [Ne] no-thing spare for goddis heest.
 And, god so wis be my socour,
 But thou yeve me my Saviour
 At Ester, whan it lyketh me, 6435
 Withoute presing more on thee,
 I wol forth, and to him goon,
 And he shal housel me anoon,
 For I am out of thy grucching; 6439
 I kepe not dele with thee no-thing.'
 Thus may he shryve him, that forsaketh
 His parochē-prest, and to me taketh.
 And if the prest wol him refuse,
 I am ful redy him to accuse,
 And him punisse and hampre so, 6445
 That he his chirche shal forgo.
 'But who-so hath in his feling
 The consequence of such shryving,
 Shal seen that prest may never have
 might
 To knowe the conscience aright 6450
 Of him that is under his cure.
 And this ageyns holy scripture,
 That biddeth every herde honeste
 Have very knowing of his beste.
 But pore folk that goon by strete, 6455
 That have no gold, ne sommes grete,
 Hem wolde I lete to her prelates,
 Or lete hir prestis knowe hir states,
 For to me right nought yeve they.'
Amour. 'And why is it?'
F. Sem. 'For they ne may. 6460
 They ben so bare, I take no keep;
 But I wol have the fatte sheep; —
 Lat parish prestis have the lene,
 I yeve not of hir harm a bene!
 And if that prelatis grucchen it, 6465
 That oughten wroth be in hir wit,
 To lese her fatte bestes so,
 I shal yeve hem a stroke or two,
 That they shal lesen with [the] force,
 Ye, bothe hir mytre and hir croce. 6470
 Thus lape I hem, and have do longe,
 My priveleges been so stronge.'
 Fals-Semblant wolde have stinted here,
 But Love ne made him no such chere
 That he was wery of his sawe; 6475
 But for to make him glad and fawe,

He seide: — 'Tel on more specialy,
 How that thou servest untrewly.
 Tel forth, and shame thee never a del;
 For as thyn abit shewith wel, 6480
 Thou [seme]st] an holy heremyte.'
F. Sem. 'Soth is, but I am an ypo-
 cryte.'
Amour. 'Thou gost and prechest pov-
 ertee?'
F. Sem. 'Ye, sir; but richesse hath
 poustee.'
Amour. 'Thou prechest abstinence
 also?' 6485
F. Sem. 'Sir, I wol fillen, so mote
 I go,
 My paunche of gode mete and wyne,
 As shulde a maister of divyne;
 For how that I me pover feyne,
 Yit alle pore folk I disdeyne. 6490
 'I love bet the acqueyntaunce
 Ten tymes, of the king of Fraunce,
 Than of pore man of mylde mode,
 Though that his soule be also gode.
 For whan I see beggers quaking, 6495
 Naked on mixens al stinking,
 For hungre crye, and eek for care,
 I entremete not of hir fare.
 They been so pore, and ful of pyne,
 They might not ones yeve me dyne,
 For they have no-thing but hir lyf; 6501
 What shulde he yeve that likketh his
 knyf?
 It is but foly to entremete,
 To seke in houndes nest fat mete.
 Let bere hem to the spitel anoon, 6505
 But, for me, comfort gete they noon.
 But a riche sike usurere
 Wolde I visyte and drawe nere;
 Him wol I comforte and rehetē,
 For I hope of his gold to gete. 6510
 And if that wikked deth him have,
 I wol go with him to his grave.
 And if ther any reprove me,
 Why that I lete the pore be,
 Wostow how I [mot] ascape? 6515
 I sey, and swerē him ful rape,
 That riche men han more tecches
 Of sinne, than han pore wrecches,
 And han of counseil more mister;
 And therefore I wol drawe hem ner.
 But as gret hurt, it may so be, 6521
 Hath soule in right gret poverte,
 As soul in gret richesse, forsothe,

<p>Al-be-it that they hurten bothe. For richesse and mendicitees 6525 Ben cleped two extremitees; The mene is cleped suffisance, Ther lyth of veped the aboundance. For Salamon, ful wel I woot, In his Parables us wroot, 6530 As it is knowe of many a wight, In his [thrittethe] chapitre right: "God, thou me kepe, for thy poustee, Fro richesse and mendicitee; For if a riche man him dresse 6535 To thanke to moche on [his] richesse, His herte on that so fer is set, That he his creatour foryet; And him, that [begging] wol ay greve, How shulde I by his word him leve? Unnethe that he nis a micher, 6541 Forsworn, or elles [god is] lyer." Thus seith Salamonnes sawes; Ne we finde writen in no lawes, And namely in our Cristen lay — 6545 (Who seith "ye," I dar sey "nay")— That Crist, ne his apostlis dere, Whyl that they walkede in erthe here, Were never seen her bred begging, For they nolde beggen for no-thing. 6550 And right thus were men wont to teche; And in this wyse wolde it preche The maistres of divinitee Somtyme in Paris the citee. 'And if men wolde ther-geyn appose The naked text, and lete the glose, 6556 It mighte sone assoiled be; For men may wel the sothe see, That, parde, they mighte axe a thing Pleyndly forth, without begging. 6560 For they weren goddis herdis dere, And cure of soules hadden here, They nolde no-thing begge hir fode; For aftir Crist was don on rode, With [hir] propre hondis they wrought, And with travel, and elles nought, 6566 They wonden al hir sustenance, And livened forth in hir penaunce, And the remenaunt [yewe] away To other pore folk alwey. 6570 They neither bilden tour ne halle, But [leye] in houses smale with alle. A mighty man, that can and may, Shulde with his honde and body alway Winne him his food in laboring, 6575 If he ne have rent or sich a thing,</p>	<p>Although he be religious, And God to serven curious. Thus mote he don, or do trespas, But-if it be in certeyn cas, 6580 That I can reherce, if mister be, Right wel, whan the tyme I see. 'Seke the book of Seynt Austin, Be it in paper or perchemin, 6584 There-as he writ of these worchinges, Thou shalt seen that non excusinges, A parfit man ne shulde seke By wordis, ne by dedis eke, Although he be religious, And god to serven curious, 6590 That he ne shal, so mote I go, With propre hondis and body also, Gete his food in laboring, If he ne have propretee of thing. 6594 Yit shulde he selle al his substaunce, And with his swink have sustenance, If he be parfit in bountee. Thus han tho bookes tolde me : For he that wol gon ydilly, And useth it ay besily 6600 To haunten other mennes table, He is a trechour, ful of fable; Ne he ne may, by gode resoun, Excuse him by his orisoun. For men bihoveth, in som gyse, 6605 Som-tyme [leven] goddes servyse To gon and purchasen her nede. Men mote eten, that is no drede, And slepe, and eek do other thing; So longe may they leve praying. 6610 So may they eek hir prayer blinne, While that they werke, hir mete to winne. Seynt Austin wol therto accorde, In thilke book that I recorde. Justinian eek, that made lawes, 6615 Hath thus forboden, by olde dawes, "No man, up payne to be deed, Mighty of body, to begge his breed, If he may swinke, it for to gête; Men shulde him rather mayme or bete, Or doon of him apert Iustice, 6621 Than suffren him in such malice." They don not wel, so mote I go, That taken such almesse so, But if they have som privelege, 6625 That of the peyne hem wol allege. But how that is, can I not see, But-if the prince disseyved be; Ne I ne wene not, sikerly,</p>
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That they may have it rightfully. 6630
 But I wol not determyne
 Of princes power, ne defyne,
 Ne by my word comprende, y-wis,
 If it so fer may strecche in this.
 I wol not entremete a del; 6635
 But I trowe that the book seith wel,
 Who that taketh almesses, that be
 Dewe to folk that men may see
 Lame, feble, wery, and bare,
 Pore, or in such maner care, 6640
 (That conne winne hem nevermo,
 For they have no power therto),
 He eteth his owne dampning,
 But-if he lye, that made al thing.
 And if ye such a trauant finde, 6645
 Chastise him wel, if ye be kinde.
 But they wolde hate you, percas,
 And, if ye fillen in hir laas,
 They wolde eftsones do you scathe,
 If that they mighte, late or rathe; 6650
 For they be not ful pacient,
 That han the world thus foule blent.
 And witeth wel, [wher] that god bad
 The good man selle al that he had,
 And folowe him, and to pore it yive,
 He wolde not therefore that he live 6656
 To serven him in mendience,
 For it was never his sentence;
 But he bad wirken whan that nede is,
 And folwe him in goode dedis. 6660
 Seynt Poule, that loved al holy chirche
 He bade thapostles to wirche,
 And winnen hir lyfode in that wyse,
 And hem defended trauandyse, 6664
 And seide, "Wirketh with your honden;"
 Thus shulde the thing be undirstonden.
 He nolde, y-wis, bidde hem begging,
 Ne sellen gospel, ne preching,
 Lest they berafte, with hir asking,
 Folk of hir catel or of hir thing. 6670
 For in this world is many a man
 That yeveth his good, for he ne can
 Werne it for shame, or elles he
 Wolde of the asker delivered be;
 And, for he him encombreth so, 6675
 He yeveth him good to late him go:
 But it can him no-thing profyte,
 They lese the yift and the meryte.
 The goode folk, that Poule to preched,
 Profred him ofte, whan he hem teched,
 Som of hir good in charite; 6681
 But theroof right no-thing took he;

But of his hondwerk wolde he gete
 Clothes to wryen him, and his mete.
Amour. 'Tel me than how a man may
 liven, 6685
 That al his good to pore hath yiven,
 And wol but only bidde his bedis,
 And never with honde labour his nedis:
 May he do so?'
F. Sem. 'Ye, sir.'
Amour. 'And how?'
F. Sem. 'Sir, I wol gladly telle yow:—
 Seynt Austin seith, a man may be 6691
 In houses that han propretee,
 As templers and hospiteler,
 And as these chanouns regulers,
 Or whyte monkes, or these blake — 6695
 (I wole no mo ensamplis make)—
 And take theroof his sustening,
 For therinne lyth no begging;
 But other-weyes not, y-wis,
 [If] Austin gabbeth not of this. 6700
 And yit ful many a monk labourerth,
 That god in holy chirche honoureth,
 For whan hir swinking is agoon,
 They rede and singe in chirche anoon.
 'And for ther hath ben greet discord,
 As many a wight may bere record, 6706
 Upon the estate of mendience,
 I wol shortly, in your presence,
 Telle how a man may begge at nede,
 That hath not wherwith him to fede,
 Maugre his felones langelinges, 6711
 For sothfastnesse wol non hidinges;
 And yit, percas, I may abey,
 That I to yow sothly thus sey.
 'Lo, here the caas especial: 6715
 If a man be so bestial
 That he of no craft hath science,
 And nought desyreth ignorence,
 Than may he go a-begging yerne,
 Til he som maner craft can lerne, 6720
 Thurgh which, withoute trauanding,
 He may in trouthe have his living.
 Or if he may don no labour,
 For elde, or syknesse, or langour,
 Or for his tendre age also, 6725
 Than may he yit a-begging go.
 'Or if he have, peraventure,
 Thurgh usage of his noriture,
 Lived over deliciously,
 Than oughten good folk comunly 6730
 Han of his mischeef som pitee,
 And suffren him also, that he

- May gon aboute and begge his breed,
 That he be not for hungur deed.
 Or if he have of craft cunning, 6735
 And strengthe also, and desiring
 To wirken, as he hadde what,
 But he finde neither this ne that,
 Than may he begge, til that he
 Have geten his necessitee. 6740
 'Or if his winning be so lyte,
 That his labour wol not acypte
 Sufficiently al his living,
 Yit may he go his breed begging;
 Fro dore to dore he may go trace, 6745
 Til he the remenaunt may purchace.
 Or if a man wolde undirtake
 Any emprise for to make,
 In the rescous of our lay,
 And it defenden as he may, 6750
 Be it with armes or lettrure,
 Or other covenable cure,
 If it be so he pore be,
 Than may he begge, til that he
 May finde in trouthe for to swinke, 6755
 And gete him clothes, mete, and drinke.
 Swinke he with hondis corporel,
 And not with hondis espirituel.
 'In al thise caas, and in semblables,
 If that ther ben mo resonables, 6760
 He may begge, as I telle you here,
 And elles nought, in no manere;
 As William Seynt Amour wolde preche,
 And ofte wolde dispute and teche
 Of this matere alle openly 6765
 At Paris ful solempnely.
 And al-so god my soule blesse,
 As he had, in this stedfastnesse,
 The accord of the universitee,
 And of the puple, as semeth me. 6770
 'No good man oughte it to refuse,
 Ne oughte him therof to excuse,
 Be wrooth or blythe who-so be;
 For I wol speke, and telle it thee, 6775
 Al shulde I dye, and be put down;
 As was seynt Poul, in derk prisoun;
 Or be exiled in this caas
 With wrong, as maister William was,
 That my moder Ypocrisye
 Banished for hir greet envye. 6780
 'My moder flemed him, Seynt Amour:
 This noble dide such labour
 To susteyne ever the loyaltee,
 That he to moche agilte me.
 He made a book, and leet it wryte, 6785
- Wherin his lyf he dide al wryte,
 And wolde ich reneyed begging,
 And lived by my traveyling,
 If I ne had rent ne other good.
 What? wened he that I were wood?
 For labour might me never plesse, 6791
 I have more wil to been at ese;
 And have wel lever, sooth to sey,
 Bifore the puple patre and prey,
 And wrye me in my foxerye 6795
 Under a cope of papelardye.'
 Quod Love, 'What devel is this I here?
 What wordis tellest thou me here?'
F. Sem. 'What, sir?'
Amour. 'Falsnesse, that apert is;
 Than dredist thou not god?'
F. Sem. 'No, certis: 6800
 For selde in greet thing shal he spede
 In this world, that god wol drede.
 For folk that hem to vertu yiven,
 And truly on her owne liven,
 And hem in goodnesse ay contene, 6805
 On hem is litel thrift y-sene;
 Such folk drinken gret misese;
 That lyf [ne] may me never plesse.
 But see what gold han usurers,
 And silver eek in [hir] garners, 6810
 Taylagiers, and these monyours,
 Bailifs, bedels, provost, countours;
 These liven wel nygh by ravyne;
 The smale puple hem mote enclyne,
 And they as wolves wol hem eten. 6815
 Upon the pore folk they geten
 Ful moche of that they spende or kepe;
 Nis none of hem that he nil strepe,
 And wryen him-self wel atte fulle;
 Withoute scalding they hem pulle. 6820
 The stronge the feble overgoth;
 But I, that were my simple cloth,
 Robbe bothe robbed and robbours,
 And gyle gyled and gylours.
 By my treget, I gadre and threste 6825
 The greet tresour into my cheste,
 That lyth with me so faste bounde.
 Myn highe paleys do I founde,
 And my delytes I fulfille
 With wyne at feestes at my wille, 6830
 And tables fulle of entremees;
 I wol no lyf, but ese and pees,
 And winne gold to spende also.
 For whan the grete bagge is go,
 It cometh right with my lapes. 6835
 Make I not wel tumble myn apes?

To winne is alwey myn entent;
 My purchas is better than my rent;
 For though I shulde beten be,
 Over-al I entremete me; 6840
 Withoute me may no wight dure.
 I walke soules for to cure.
 Of al the worlde cure have I
 In brede and lengthe; boldely
 I wol bothe preche and eek counceilen;
 With hondis wille I not traveilen, 6846
 For of the pope I have the bulle;
 I ne holde not my wittes dulle.
 I wol not stinten, in my lyve,
 These emperouris for to shryve, 6850
 Or kyngis, dukis, and lordis grete;
 But pore folk al quyte I lete.
 I love no such shryving, pardee,
 But it for other cause be.
 I rekke not of pore men, 6855
 Hir astate is not worth an hen.
 Where fyndest thou a swinker of labour
 Have me unto his confessor?
 But emperesses, and duchesses,
 Thise quenes, and eek [thise] countesses,
 Thise abbesses, and eek Bigyns, 6861
 These grete ladyes palasyns,
 These loly knightes, and baillyves,
 Thise nonnes, and thise burgeis wyves,
 That riche been, and eek plesing, 6865
 And thise maidens welfaring,
 Wher-so they clad or naked be,
 Uncounceiled goth ther noon fro me.
 And, for her soules savetee,
 At lord and lady, and hir meynee, 6870
 I axe, whan they hem to me shryve,
 The propretee of al hir lyve,
 And make hem trowe, bothe meest and
 leest,
 Hir paroch-prest nis but a beest
 Ayens me and my company, 6875
 That shrewis been as greet as I;
 For whiche I wol not hyde in hold
 No privetee that me is told,
 That I by word or signe, y-wis,
 [Nil] make hem knowe what it is, 6880
 And they wolen also tellen me;
 They hele fro me no privetee.
 And for to make yow hem perceyven,
 That usen folk thus to disceyven,
 I wol you seyn, withouten drede, 6885
 What men may in the gospel rede
 Of Seynt Mathew, the gospelere,
 That seith, as I shal you sey here.

'Upon the chaire of Moyses —
 Thus is it glosed, douteles: 6890
 That is the olde testament,
 For therby is the chaire ment —
 Sitte Scribes and Pharisen; —
 That is to seyn, the cursid men
 Whiche that we ypocritis calle — 6895
 Doth that they preche, I rede you alle,
 But doth not as they don a del,
 That been not wery to seye wel,
 But to do wel, no wille have they;
 And they wolde binde on folk alwey,
 That ben to [be] begyled able, 6901
 Burdens that ben importable;
 On folkes shuldres thinges they couchen
 That they nil with her fingres touchen.
Amour. 'And why wol they not touche
 it?'
F. Sem. 'Why? 6905
 For hem ne list not, sikirly;
 For sadde burdens that men taken
 Make folkes shuldres aken.
 And if they do ought that good be,
 That is for folk it shulde see: 6910
 Her burdens larger maken they,
 And make hir hemmes wyde alwey,
 And loven setes at the table,
 The firste and most honourable;
 And for to han the first chaieris 6915
 In synagoges, to hem ful dere is;
 And willen that folk hem loute and grete,
 Whan 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 sheweth wel hir wikkidnesse.
 'Another custom use we: —
 Of hem that wol ayens us be,
 We hate hem deedly everichoon, 6925
 And we wol werrey hem, as oon.
 Him that oon hatith, hate we alle,
 And coniecte how to doon him falle.
 And if we seen him winne honour,
 Richesse or preys, thurgh his valour, 6930
 Provende, rent, or dignitee,
 Ful fast, y-wis, compassen we
 By what ladder he is clomben so;
 And for to maken him down to go,
 With traisoun we wole him defame, 6935
 And doon him lese his gode name
 Thus from his ladder we him take,
 And thus his freendis foes we make;
 But word ne wite shal he noon.

- Til alle his freendis been his foon. 6940
 For if we dide it openly,
 We might have blame redily;
 For hadde he wist of our malyce,
 He hadde him kept, but he were nyce.
 'Another is this, that, if so falle 6945
 That ther be oon among us alle
 That doth a good turn, out of drede,
 We seyn it is our adler dede.
 Ye sikerly, though he it feyned,
 Or that him list, or that him deynd 6950
 A man thurgh him avauenced;
 Therof alle parceners be we,
 And tellen folk, wher-so we go,
 That man thurgh us is sprongen so.
 And for to have of men preysing, 6955
 We purchace, thurgh our flatering,
 Of riche men, of gret poustee,
 Lettres to witnesse our bountee;
 So that man weneth, that may us see.
 That alle vertu in us be. 6960
 And alwey pore we us feyne;
 But how so that we begge or pleyne,
 We hen the folk, without lesing,
 That al thing have without having.
 Thus be we dred of the puple, y-wis. 6965
 And gladly my purpos is this: —
 I dele with no wight, but he
 Have gold and tresour gret plentee;
 Hir acqueyntaunce wel love I;
 This is moche my desyr, shortly. 6970
 I entremete me of brocages,
 I make pees and mariages,
 I am gladly executour,
 And many tymes procuratour;
 I am somtyme messenger; 6975
 That falleth not to my mister.
 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 lyking. 6980
 And if that ye have ought to do
 In place that I repire to,
 I shal it speden thurgh my wit,
 As sone as ye have told me it.
 So that ye serve me to pay, 6985
 My servyse shal be your alway.
 But who-so wol chastyse me,
 Anoon my love lost hath he;
 For I love no man in no gyse,
 That wol me repreve or chastyse; 6990
 But I wolde al folk undirtake,
 And of no wight no teching take;
- For I, that other folk chastye,
 Wol not be taught fro my folye.
 'I love noon hermitage more; 6995
 All desertes, and holtes hore,
 And grete wodes everichoon,
 I lete hem to the Baptist Joha.
 I quethe him quyte, and him relesse
 Of Egypt al the wildirnesse; 7000
 To fer were alle my mansiouns
 Fro alle citees and goode tounes.
 My paleis and myn hous make I
 There men may renne in openly,
 And sey that I the world forsake. 7005
 But al amidde I bilde and make
 My hous, and swimme and pley therinne
 Bet than a fish doth with his finne.
 'Of Antecristes men am I,
 Of whiche that Crist seith openly, 7010
 They have abit of holinesse,
 And liven in such wikkednesse.
 Outward, lambren semen we,
 Fulle of goodnesse and of pitee,
 And inward we, withouten fable, 7015
 Ben gredy wolves ravisable.
 We envroune bothe londe and see;
 With al the world werreyen we;
 We wol ordeyne of alle thing,
 Of folkes good, and her living. 7020
 'If ther be castel or citee
 Wherin that any bougerons be,
 Although that they of Milayne were,
 For ther-of ben they blamed there:
 Or if a wight, out of mesure, 7025
 Wolde lene his gold, and take usure,
 For that he is so covetous:
 Or if he be to leccherous,
 Or [theft, or] haunte simonye;
 Or provost, ful of trecherye, 7030
 Or prelat, living Iolily.
 Or prest that halt his quene him by;
 Or olde hores hostilers,
 Or other bawdes or bordillers,
 Or elles blamed of any vyce, 7035
 Of whiche men shulden doon Iustyce:
 By alle the seyntes that we pray,
 But they defende hem with lamprey,
 With luce, with elis, with samous,
 With tendre gees, and with capons, 7040
 With tartes, or with ches fat,
 With deynte flawnes, brode and flat,
 With caleweys, or with pullaille,
 With coninges, or with fyn vitaille,
 That we, undir our clothes wyde, 7045

Maken thurgh our golet glyde :
Or but he wol do come in haste
Roo-venisoun, [y]-bake in paste :
Whether so that he loure or groine,
He shall have of a corde a loigne. 7050
With whiche men shal him binde and
lede,

To brenne him for his sinful dede,
That men shulle here him crye and rore
A myle-wey aboute and more.
Or elles he shal in prisoun dye, 7055
But-if he wol [our] frendship bye,
Or smerten that that he hath do,
More than his gilt amounteth to.
But, and he couthe thurgh his sleight
Do maken up a tour of height, 7060
Nought roughte I whether of stone or
tree,

Or erthe, or turves though it be,
Though it were of no vounde stone,
Wrought with squyre and scantilone,
So that the tour were stuffed wel 7065
With alle richesse temporel;
And thanne, that he wolde updresse
Engyns, bothe more and lesse,
To caste at us, by every syde —
To bere his goode name wyde — 7070
Such sleightes [as] I shal yow nevene,
Barelles of wyne, by sixe or sevene,
Or gold in sakkis gret plente,
He shulde some delivered be.
And if he have noon sich pitaunces, 7075
Late him study in equipolences,
And lete lyes and fallaces,
If that he wolde deserve our graces;
Or we shal bere him such witness
Of sinne, and of his wrecchidnesse, 7080
And doon his loos so wyde renne,
That al quik we shulde him brenne,
Or elles yeve him suche penaunce,
That is wel wors than the pitaunce.

“For thou shalt never, for no-thing,
Con knowne aright by her clothing 7086
The traitours fulle of trecherye,
But thou her werkis can aspye.
And ne hadde the good keeping be
Whylom of the universitee, 7090
That kepeth the key of Cristendome,
[They] had been turmented, alle and
some.

Suche been the stinking [fals] prophetis;
Nis non of hem, that good prophete is;
For they, thurgh wikked entencioun,

The yeer of the incarnacioun 7096
A thousand and two hundred yeer,
Fyve and fifty, ferther ne ner,
Broughten a book, with sory grace,
To yeven ensample in comune place,
That seide thus, though it were fable: —
“This is the Gospel Perdurable,
That fro the Holy Goost is sent.”
Wel were it worth to ben [y]-brent.
Entitled was in such manere 7105
This book, of which I telle here.
Ther nas no wight in al Parys,
Bifrom Our Lady, at parvys,
That [he] ne mighte bye the book,
To copy, if him talent took. 7110

Ther might he see, by gret tresoun,
Ful many fals comparisoun: —
“As moche as, thurgh his grete might,
Be it of hete, or of light,
The sunne sourmounteth the mone, 7115
That troubler is, and chaungeth sone,
And the note-kernel the shelle —
(I scorne nat that I yow telle) —
Right so, withouten any gyle,
Sourmounteth this noble Evangyle 7120
The word of any evangelist.”
And to her title they token Christ;
And many such comparisoun,
Of which I make no mencioniun,
Might men in that boke finde, 7125
Who-so coude of hem have minde.

“The universitee, that tho was aslepe,
Can for to braide, and taken kepe;
And at the noys the heed up-caste,
Ne never sithen slepte it faste, 7130
But up it sterte, and armes took
Ayens this fals horrible book,
Al redy bateil for to make,
And to the Iuge the book to take.
But they that broughten the book there
Hente it anon away, for fere; 7136
They nolde shewe it more a del,
But thenne it kepte, and kepen wil,
Til such a tyme that they may see
That they so stronge woxen be, 7140
That no wight may hem wel withstonde;
For by that book they durst not stonde.
Away they gonne it for to bere,
For they ne durste not answeere
By exposicioun ne glose 7145
To that that clerkis wole appose
Ayens the curse-dnesse, y-wis,
That in that boke writen is.

Now wot I not, ne I can not see
 What maner ende that there shal be
 Of al this [boke] that they hyde; 7151
 But yit algate they shal abyde
 Til that they may it bet defende;
 This trowe I best, wol be hir ende.
 'Thus Antecrist abyden we, 7155
 For we ben alle of his meynee;
 And what man that wol not be so,
 Right sone he shal his lyf forgo.
 We wol a puple on him areyse,
 And thurgh our gyle doon him seise,
 And him on sharpe speris ryve, 7161
 Or other-weyes bringe him fro lyve,
 But-if that he wol folowe, y-wis,
 That in our boke writen is.
 Thus moche wol our book signyfe, 7165
 That whyl [that] Peter hath maistrye,
 May never Iohan shewe wel his might.
 'Now have I you declared right
 The mening of the bark and rinde
 That makith the entenciouns blinde.
 But now at erst I wol biginne 7171
 To expowne you the pith withinne:—
 [And first, by Peter, as I wene,
 The Pope himself we wolden mene],
 And [cek] the seculers comprehende,
 That Cristes lawe wol defende, 7176
 And shulde it kepen and mayntenen
 Ayeines hem that al sustenen,
 And falsly to the puple techen.
 [And] Iohan bitokeneth hem [that]
 prechen, 7180
 That ther nis lawe covenable
 But thilke Gospel Perdurable,
 That fro the Holy Gost was sent
 To turne folk that been miswent.
 The strengthe of Iohan they undirstonde
 The grace in which, they seye, they
 stonde, 7186
 That doth the sinful folk converte,
 And hem to Iesus Crist reverte.
 'Ful many another horriblete
 May men in that boke see, 7190
 That ben comaunded, douteles,
 Ayens the lawe of Rome expres;
 And alle with Antecrist they holden,
 As men may in the book biholden.
 And than comaunden they to sleen 7195
 Alle tho that with Peter been;
 But they shal nevere have that might,
 And, god to for, for stryf to fight,
 That they ne shal y-nough [men] finde

That Peters lawe shal have in minde,
 And ever holde, and so mayntenc, 7201
 That at the last it shal be sene
 That they shal alle come therto,
 For ought that they can speke or do.
 And thilke lawe shal not stonde, 7205
 That they by Iohan have undirstonde;
 But, maugre hem, it shal adoun,
 And been brought to confusioun.
 But I wol stinte of this matere,
 For it is wonger long to here; 7210
 But hadde that ilke book endured,
 Of better estate I were ensured;
 And freendis have I yit, pardee,
 That han me set in greet degrec.
 'Of all this world is emperour 7215
 Gyle my fader, the trechour,
 And emperesse my moder is,
 Maugre the Holy Gost, y-wis.
 Our mighty linage and our route
 Regneth in every regne aboute; 7220
 And wel is worth we [maistres] be,
 For al this world governe we,
 And can the folk so wel disceyve,
 That noon our gyle can perceyve;
 And though they doon, they dar not
 saye; 7225
 The sothe dar no wight biwreye.
 But he in Cristis wrath him ledeth,
 That more than Crist my bretheren
 dredeth.
 He nis no ful good champioun,
 That dredith such simulacioun, 7230
 Nor that for peyne wole refusen
 Us to correcten and accusen.
 He wol not entremete by right,
 Ne have god in his eye-sight,
 And therefore god shal him punyee; 7235
 But me ne rekketh of no vyce,
 Sithen men us loven comunably,
 And holden us for so worthy,
 That we may folk repreve echoon,
 And we nil have prepf of noon. 7240
 Whom shulden folk worshipen so
 But us, that stinten never mo
 To patren whyl that folk us see,
 Though it not so bihinde hem be?
 'And where is more wood folye, 7245
 Than to enhance chivalrye,
 And love noble men and gay,
 That Ioly clothis weren alway?
 If they be sich folk as they semen,
 So clene, as men her clothis demen, 7250

And that her wordis folowe her dede,
 It is gret pite, out of drede,
 For they wol be noon ypocrite!
 Of hem, me thinketh [it] gret spite is;
 I can not love hem on no syde. 7255
 But Beggars with these hodes wyde,
 With sleighe and pale faces leue,
 And greye clothis not ful clene,
 But fretted ful of tatarwagges,
 And highe shoes, knopped with dagges,
 That frouncen lyke a quaille-pype, 7261
 Or botes riveling as a gype;
 To such folk as I you devyse
 Shuld princes and these lordes wyse
 Take alle her londes and her thinges, 7265
 Bothe werre and pees, in governinges;
 To such folk shulde a prince him yive,
 That wolde his lyf in honour live.
 And if they be not as they seime,
 That serven thus the world to queme,
 There wolde I dwelle, to disceyve 7271
 The folk, for they shal not perceyve.

'But I ne speke in no such wyse,
 That men shulde humble abit dyspise,
 So that no pryde ther-under be. 7275
 No man shulde hate, as thinketh me,
 The pore man in sich clothing.
 But god ne preiset him no-thing,
 That seith he hath the world forsake,
 And hath to worldly glorie him take, 7280
 And wol of siche delycles use;
 Who may that Begger wel excuse?
 That papelard, that him yeldeth so,
 And wol to worldly ese go,
 And seith that he the world hath left,
 And gredily it grypeth eft, 7286
 He is the hound, shame is to seyn,
 That to his casting goth ageyn.
 'But unto you dar I not lye:
 But mighte I felen or aspye, 7290
 That ye perceyved it no-thing,
 Ye shulden have a stark lesing
 Right in your hond thus, to biginne,
 I nolde it lette for no sinne.'

The god lough at the wonder tho, 7295
 And every wight gan laughe also,
 And seide: — 'Lo here a man aright
 For to be trusty to every wight!'

'Fals Semblant,' quod Love, 'sey to
 me,
 Sith I thus have avauanced thee, 7300
 That in my court is thy dwelling,
 And of ribaudes shalt be my king,

Wolt thou wel holden my forwardis?'

F. Sem. 'Ye, sir, from hennes fore-
 wardis; 7304

I hadde never your fader herebiforn
 Servant so trewe, sith he was born.'

Amour. 'That is ayeines al nature.'

F. Sem. 'Sir, put you in that aventure;

For though ye borowes take of me,
 The sikerer shal ye never be 7310

For ostages, ne sikirnesse,
 Or chartres, for to here witnessse.

I take your-self to record here,
 That men ne may, in no manere, 7315

Teren the wolf out of his hyde,
 Til he be [flayn], bak and syde,

Though men him bete and al defyle;
 What? wenc ye that I wole bigyle?

For I am clothed mekely,
 Ther-under is al my trechery; 7320

Myn herte chaungeth never the mo
 For noon abit, in which I go.

Though I have chere of simplenesse,
 I am not wery of shrewednesse.

My lemman, Streyned-Abstinence, 7325
 Hath mister of my purveaunce;

She hadde ful longe ago be deed,
 Nere my counsel and my reed;

Lete hir allone, and you and me.' 7329

And Love answerde, 'I truste thee
 Withoute borowe, for I wol noon.'

And Fals-Semblant, the thief, anon,
 Right in that ilke same place,

That hadde of tresoun al his face 7334
 Right blak withinne, and whyt withoute,

Thanketh him, gan on his knees loute.
 Than was ther nought, but 'Every

man
 Now to assaut, that sailen can,'
 Quod Love, 'and that ful hardily.'

Than armed they hem comunly 7340
 Of sich armour as to hem fel.

Whan they were armed, fers and fel,
 They wente hem forth, alle in a route,

And set the castel al aboute;
 They wil nought away, for no drede,

Til it so be that they ben dede, 7346
 Or til they have the castel take.

And foure batels they gan make,
 And parted hem in foure anon,

And toke her way, and forth they goon,
 The foure gates for to assaile, 7351

Of whiche the kepers wol not faile;
 For they ben neither syke ne dede,

But hardy folk, and stronge in dede.

Now wole I seyn the countenance

Of Fals-Semblant, and Abstinence,

That ben to Wikkid-Tonge went.

But first they helde her parlement,

Whether it to done were

To maken hem be knowen there, 7360

Or elles walken forth disgyssed.

But at the laste they devysed,

That they wold goon in tapinage,

As it were in a pilgrimage, 7365

Lyk good and holy folk unfeyned.

And Dame Abstinence-Streynd

Took on a robe of camelyne,

And gan hir graithe as a Begyne.

A large coverchief of threde 7370

She wrapped al aboute hir hede,

But she forgat not hir sautere;

A peire of bedis eek she bere

Upon a lace, al of whyt threde, 7374

On which that she hir bedes bede;

But she ne boughte hem never a del,

For they were geven her, I wot wel,

God wot, of a ful holy frere,

That seide he was hir fader dere,

To whom she hadde offer went 7380

Than any frere of his covent.

And he visyted hir also,

And many a sermoun seide hir to;

He nolde lette, for man on lyve,

That he ne wolde hir ofte shryve. 7385

And with so gret devocion

They maden her confession,

That they had ofte, for the nones,

Two hedes in one hood at ones.

Of fair shape I devyse her thee,

But pale of face somtyme was she; 7390

That false traitouesse untrew

Was lyk that salowe hors of hewe,

That in the Apocalips is shewed,

That signyfyeth tho folk beshrewed, 7395

That been al ful of trecherye,

And pale, thurgh hypocrisye;

For on that hors no colour is,

But only deed and pale, y-wis.

Of suche a colour enlangoured 7400

Was Abstinence, y-wis, coloured;

Of her estat she her repented,

As her visage represented.

She had a burdoun al of Thefte,

That Gyle had yeve her of his yefte; 7405

And a scrippe of Fainte Distresse,

That ful was of elengnesse,

And forth she walked sobrelly:

And False-Semblant saynt, *ie vous die*,

[Had], as it were for such mistere,

Don on the cope of a frere, 7410

With chere simple, and ful pitous;

His looking was not disdeinous,

Ne proud, but meke and ful pesible.

About his nekke he bar a bible,

And squierly forth gan he gon; 7415

And, for to reste his limmes upon,

He had of Treson a potente;

As he were feble, his way he wente.

But in his sleve he gan to thringe

A rasour sharp, and wel bytinge, 7420

That was forged in a forge,

Which that men clepen Coupegorge.

So longe forth hir way they nomen,

Til they to Wicked-Tonge comen,

That at his gate was sitting, 7425

And saw folk in the way passing.

The pilgrimes saw he faste by,

That beren hem fel mekely,

And humbly they with him mette.

Dame Abstinence first him grette, 7430

And sith him False-Semblant salued,

And he hem; but he not remued,

For he ne dredde hem not a-del.

For when he saw hir faces wel,

Alway in herte him thoughte so, 7435

He shulde knowe hem bothe two;

For wel he knew Dame Abstinence,

But he ne knew not Constreynance.

He knew nat that she was constrayned,

Ne of her theves lyfe feyned, 7440

But wende she com of wil al free;

But she com in another degree;

And if of good wil she began,

That wil was failed her [as] than.

And Fals-Semblant had he seyn als,

But he knew nat that he was fals. 7446

Yet fals was he, but his falsnesse

Ne coude he not espye, nor gesse;

For semblant was so slye wrought,

That falsnesse he ne espyed nought. 7450

But haddest thou knowen him befor,

Thou woldest on a boke have sworn,

Whan thou him saugh in thilke aray

That he, that whylom was so gay,

And of the daunce Ioly Robin, 7455

Was tho become a Iacobin.

But sothely, what so men him calle,

Freres Prechours been good men alle;

Hir order wickedly they beren,

Suche minstrelles if [that] they weren.
So been Augustins and Cordileres, 7461
And Carnes, and eek Sakked Freres,
And alle freres, shodde and bare,
(Though some of hem ben grete and
square)

Ful holy men, as I hem deme; 7465
Everjich of hem wolde good man seme.
But shalt thou never of apparence
Seen conclude good consequence
In none argument, y-wis,
If existence al failed is. 7470

For men may finde alway sophyme
The consequence to envynyme,
Who-so that hath the subteltee
The double sentence for to see. 7474

Whan the pilgrymes commen were
To Wicked-Tonge, that dwelled there,
Hir harneis nigh hem was algate;
By Wicked-Tonge adoun they saye,
That bad hem ner him for to come,
And of tydings telle him, some, 7480
And sayde hem: — 'What cas maketh
yow

To come into this place now?'
'Sir,' seyde Strained-Abstinaunce,
'We, for to drye our penaunce,
With hertes pitous and devoute, 7485
Are commen, as pilgrimes gon aboute;
Wel nigh on fote alway we go;
Ful dusty been our heles two;
And thus bothe we ben sent
Thurghout this world that is miswent,
To yeve ensample, and preche also. 7491
To fissen sinful men we go,
For other fissing ne fisse we.

And, sir, for that charitee,
As we be wont, herberwe we crave, 7495
Your lyf to amende; Crist it save!
And, so it shulde you nat displese,
We wolden, if it were your ese,
A short sermoun unto you seyn.' 7499

And Wikked-Tonge answerde ageyn,
'The hous,' quod he, 'such as ye see,
Shal nat be warned you for me,
Sey what you list, and I wol here.'
'Graunt mercy, swete sire dere!'
Quod alderfirst Dame Abstinence, 7505
And thus began she hir sentence:

Const. Abstinence. 'Sir, the first vertue,
certeyn,

The gretest, and most sovereyn
That may be founde in any man,

For having, or for wit he can, 7510
That is, his tonge to refreyne;
Therto ought every wight him peyne.
For it is better stille be

Than for to speken harm, pardee!
And he that herkeneth it gladly, 7515
He is no good man, sikerly.

And, sir, aboven al other sinne,
In that art thou most gilty inne.
Thou spake a lape not long ago,
(And, sir, that was right yvel do) 7520

Of a yong man that here repaired,
And never yet this place apaired.
Thou seydest he awaited nothing
But to disceyve Fair-Welcoming.

Ye seyde nothing sooth of that; 7525
But, sir, ye lye; I tell you plat;
He ne cometh no more, ne goth, pardee!
I trow ye shal him never see.

Fair-Welcoming in prison is,
That ofte hath pleyed with you, er this,
The fairest games that he coude, 7531
Withoute filthe, stille or loude;

Now dar [he] nat [him]self solace.
Ye han also the man do chace,
That he dar neither come ne go. 7535
What meveth you to hate him so

But properly your wikked thought,
That many a fals lesing hath thought?
That meveth your foole eloquence,
That iangleth ever in audience, 7540

And on the folk areyseth blame,
And doth hem dishonour and shame,
For thing that may have no preving,
But lyklinesse, and contriving.

For I dar seyn, that Reson demeth, 7545
It is not al sooth thing that semeth,
And it is sinne to controve

Thing that is [for] to reprove;
This wot ye wel; and, sir, therefore
Ye arn to blame [wel] the more. 7550
And, nathelesse, he rekketh lyte;

He yeveth nat now thereof a myte;
For if he thoughte harm, parfay,
He wolde come and gon al day;
He coude him-selfe nat abstene. 7555

Now 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 folk, algate.

And thou here watchest at the gate, 7560
With spere in thyne arest alway;
There muse, musard, al the day.

Thou wakest night and day for thought;
 Y-wis, thy travel is for nought.
 And Ielousye, withouten faile, 7565
 Shal never quite thee thy travaile.
 And scathe is, that Fair-Welcoming,
 Withouten any trespassing,
 Shal wrongfully in prison be,
 Ther wepeth and languissheth he. 7570
 And though thou never yet, y-wis,
 Agiltest man no more but this,
 (Fak not a-greef) it were worthy
 To putte thee out of this baily,
 And afterward in prison lye, 7575
 And fetre thee til that thou dye;
 For thou shalt for this sinne dwelle
 Right in the devils ers of helle,
 But-if that thou repente thee. 7579
 'Ma fay, thou lyst falsly!' quod he.
 'What? welcome with mischaunce
 now!
 Have I therfore herbered you
 To seye me shame, and eek reprove?
 With sory happe, to your bihove,
 Am I to-day your herbergere! 7585
 Go, herber you elleswhere than here,
 That han a lyer called me!
 Two tregetours art thou and he,
 That in myn hous do me this shame,
 And for my soth-sawe ye me blame.
 Is this the sermoun that ye make? 7591
 To alle the develles I me take,
 Or elles, god, thou me confounde!
 But er men diden this castel founde,
 It passeth not ten dayes or twelve, 7595
 But it was told right to my-selve,
 And as they seide, right so tolde I,
 He kiste the Rose privily!
 Thus seide I now, and have seid yore;
 I not wher he dide any more. 7600
 Why shulde men sey me such a thing,
 If it hadde been gabbing?
 Right so seide I, and wol seye yit;
 I trowe, I lyed not of it;
 And with my bemes I wol blowe 7605
 To alle neighboris a-rowe,
 How he hath bothe comen and gon.
 The spak Fals-Semblant right anon,
 'Al is not gospel, out of doute,
 That men seyn in the tounne aboute;
 Ley no deaf ere to my speking; 7611
 I swere yow, sir, it is gabbing!
 I trowe ye wot wel certeynly,
 That no man loveth him tenderly

That seith him harm, if he wot it, 7615
 Al be he never so pore of wit.
 And sooth is also sikerly,
 (This knowe ye, sir, as wel as I),
 That lovers gladly wol visyten
 The places ther hir loves habytten. 7620
 This man you loveth and eek honoureth;
 This man to serve you laboureth;
 And clepeth you his freend so dere,
 And this man maketh you good chere,
 And every-wher that [he] you meteth,
 He you saleweth, and he you greteth.
 He preseth not so ofte, that ye
 Ought of his come encombred be;
 Ther presen other folk on yow
 Ful offer than [that] he doth now. 7630
 And if his herte him streyned so
 Unto the Rose for to go,
 Ye shulde him seen so ofte nede,
 That ye shulde take him with the dede.
 He coude his coming not forbere, 7635
 Though ye him thrilled with a spere;
 It nere not thanne as it is now.
 But trusteth wel, I swere it yow,
 That it is cleue out of his thought.
 Sir, certes, he ne thenketh it nought;
 No more ne doth Fair-Welcoming, 7641
 That sore abyeth al this thing.
 And if they were of oon assent,
 Ful sone were the Rose hent;
 The maugre youres wolde be. 7645
 And sir, of o thing herkeneth me:—
 Sith ye this man, that loveth yow,
 Han seid such harm and shame now,
 Witeth wel, if he gessed it,
 Ye may wel demen in your wit, 7650
 He nolde no-thing love you so,
 Ne callen you his freend also,
 But night and day he [wolde] wake,
 The castel to destroye and take,
 If it were sooth as ye devyse; 7655
 Or som man in som maner wyse
 Might it warne him everydel
 Or by him-self perceyven wel;
 For sith he might not come and gon
 As he was whylom wont to don, 7660
 He might it sone wite and see;
 But now al other-wyse [doth] he.
 Than have [ye], sir, al-outerly
 Deserved helle, and Iolyly
 The dethe of helle, douteles, 7665
 That thrallen folk so gilteles.
 Fals-Semblant proveth so this thing

That he can noon answering,
 And seeth alwey such apparaunce,
 That nygh he fel in repentaunce, 7670
 And seide him: — ‘Sir, it may wel be.
 Semblant, a good man semen ye;
 And, Abstinence, ful wyse ye seme;
 Of o talent you bothe I deme. 7674
 What counceil wole ye to me yeven?’

F. Sem. ‘Right here anon thou shalt
 be shriven,

And sey thy sinne withoute more;
 Of this shalt thou repente sore;
 For I am preest, and have poustee
 To shryve folk of most dignitee 7680
 That been, as wyde as world may dure.
 Of al this world I have the cure,

And that had never yit persoun,
 No vicarie of no maner toun.
 And, god wot, I have of thee 7685
 A thousand tymes more pitce
 Than hath thy preest parochial,
 Though he thy freend be special.
 I have avauntage, in o wyse,
 That your prelates ben not so wyse 7690
 Ne half so lettred as am I.
 I am licenced boldely
 In divinitee to rede,
 And to confessen, out of drede.
 If ye wol you now confesse, 7695
 And leve your sinnes more and lesse,
 Without abood, knele down anon,
 And you shal have absolucion.’ 7698

Explicit.

THE MINOR POEMS.

I. AN A. B. C.

Incipit carmen secundum ordinem literarum Alphabeti.

ALMIGHTY and al merciable quene,
To whom that al this world fleeth for
socour,
To have relees of sinne, sorwe and tene,
Glorious virgine, of alle floures flour,
To thee I flee, confounded in errour! 5
Help and releve, thou mighty debonaire,
Have mercy on my perilous langour!
Venquished me hath my cruel adversaire.

Bountee so fix hath in thyn herte his tente,
That wel I wot thou wolt my socour be, 10
Thou canst not warne him that, with good
entente,
Axeth thyn help. Thyn herte is ay so
free,
Thou art largesse of pleyn felicitee,
Haven of refut, of quiete and of reste.
Lo, how that theves seven chasen me! 15
Help, lady bright, er that my ship to-
breste!

Comfort is noon, but in yow, lady dere
For lo, my sinne and my confusioun,
Which oughten not in thy presence
appere,
Han take on me a grevous accioun 20
Of verrey right and desperacioun;
And, as by right, they mighten wel sus-
tene
That I were worthy my dampnacioun,
Nere mercy of you, blisful hevene quene.

Doute is ther noon, thou queen of miseri-
corde, 25
That thou nart cause of grace and mercy
here;

God vouched sauf thurgh thee with us
tacorde.

For certes, Cristes blisful moder dere,
Were now the bowe bent in swich manere,
As it was first, of lustice and of yre, 30
The rightful God nolde of no mercy here;
But thurgh thee han we grace, as we de-
syre.

Ever hath myn hope of refut been in thee,
For heer-biforn ful ofte, in many a wyse,
Hast thou to misericorde receyved me.
But mercy, lady, at the grete assyse, 36
When we shul come bifore the hye Ius-
tysse!

So litel fruit shal thanne in me be founde,
That, but thou er that day me wel chas-
tysse,
Of verrey right my werk me wol con-
founde. 40

Fleeing, I flee for socour to thy tente
Me for to hyde from tempest ful of drede,
Biseching you that ye you not absente,
Though I be wikke. O help yit at this
nede! 44

Al have I been a beste in wille and dede,
Yit, lady, thou me clothe with thy grace.
Thyn enemy and myn — lady, tak hede,
Un-to my deth in poynt is me to chace.

Glorious mayde and moder, which that
never 49
Were bitter, neither in erthe nor in see,
But ful of swetenesse and of mercy 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 ther-whyle!
That certes, but-if thou my socour be, 55
To stink eterne he wol my gost exyle.

He vouched sauf, tel him, as was his wille,

Bicome a man, to have our alliaunce,
And with his precious blood he wroot the bille

Up-on the crois, as general acquitaunce,
To every penitent in ful creauunce; 61
And therfor, lady bright, thou for us praye.

Than shalt thou bothe stinte al his grev-
aunce,
And make our foo to failen of his praye.

I wot it wel, thou wolt ben our socour, 65
Thou art so ful of bountee, in certeyn.
For, when a soule falleth in errour,
Thy pitee goth and haleth him ayeyn.
Than makest thou his pees with his sov-
ereyn,

And bringest him out of the crooked
strete. 70

Who-so thee loveth he shal not love in
veyn,
That shal he finde, as he the lyf shal lette.

Kalenderes enlumined ben they
That in this world ben lighted with thy
name,

And who-so goth to you the righte wey, 75
Him thar not drede in soule to be lame.
Now, queen of comfort, sith thou art that
same

To whom I seche for my medicyne,
Lat not my foo no more my wounde en-
tame,
Myn hele in-to thyn hand al I resigne. So

Lady, thy sorwe can I not portreye
Under the eros, ne his grevous penaunce.
But, for your bothes peynes, I you preye,
Lat not our alder foo make his bobaunce,
That he hath in his listes of mischaunce 85
Convict that ye bothe have bought so dere.
As I seide erst, thou ground of our sub-
staunce.

Continue on us thy pitous eyen clere!

Moises, that saugh the bush with flaumes
rede

Brenninge, of which ther never a stikke
brende, 90

Was signe of thyn unwemmed maiden-
hede.

Thou art the bush on which ther gan
descende

The Holy Gost, the which that Moises
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. 96

Noble princesse, that never haddest pere,
Certes, if any comfort in us be,
That cometh of thee, thou Cristes moder
dere,

We han non other melodye or glee 100
Us to reioyse in our adversitee,
Ne advocat noon that wol and dar so
preye

For us, and that for litel hyre as ye,
That helpen for an Ave-Marie or tweye.

O verrey light of eyen that ben blinde,
O verrey lust of labour and distresse,
O tresorere of bountee to mankinde,
Thee whom God chees to moder for hum-
blesse!

From his ancille he made thee mais-
tresse

Of hevene and erthe, our bille up for to
bede. 110

This world awaiteth ever on thy good-
nesse,

For thou ne failest never wight at nede.

Purpos I have sum tyme for tenquere,
Wherefore and why the Holy Gost thee
soughte, 114

Whan Gabrielles vois cam to thyn ere.
He not to werre us swich a wonder
wroughte,

But for to save us that he sithen boughte.
Than nedeth us no wepen us for to save,
But only ther we did not, as us oughte,
Do penitence, and mercy axe and have.

Queen of comfort, yit when I me bi-
thinke

That I agilt have bothe, him and thee,
And that my soule is worthy for to sinke,
Allas, I, caitif, whider may I flee? 124
Who shal un-to thy sone my mene be?

Who, but thy-self, that art of pitee
welle?

Thou hast more reuthe on our adversitee
Than in this world mighte any tunge telle.

Redresse me, moder, and me chastyse,
For, certeynly, my fadres chastisinge 130
That dar I nought abyden in no wyse:
So hidous is his rightful rekeninge.

Moder, of whom our mercy gan to
springe,

Beth ye my Iuge and eek my soules leche;
For ever in you is pitee haboundinge
To ech that wol of pitee you biseche.

Soth is, that God ne graunteth no pitee
With-oute thee; for God, of his good-
nesse,

Forgyveth noon, but it lyke un-to thee.
He hath thee maked vicaire and mais-
tresse 140

Of al the world, and eek governesse
Of hevене, and he represseth his Iustyse
After thy wille, and therefore in wissesse
He hath thee crowned in so ryal wise.

Temple devout, ther god hath his won-
inge, 145

Fro which these misbileved pryed been,
To you my soule penitent I bringe.

Receyve me! I can no ferther flee!
With thornes venomous, O hevене queen,
For which the erthe acursed 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 hie tour
Of Paradys, thou me wisse and counsaile,
How I may have thy grace and thy
souce; 156

Al have I been in filthe and in errour.

Lady, un-to that court thou me aiourne
That cleped is thy bench, O fresshe flour!
Ther-as that mercy ever shal sojourne. 160

Xristus, thy sone, that in this world
alighte,

Up-on the cros to suffre his passioun,
And eek, that Longius his herte pighte,
And made his herte blood to renne adoun;
And al was this for my salvacioun; 165
And I to him am fals and eek unkinde,
And yit he wol not my dampnacioun —
This thanke I you, socour of al mankinde.

Ysaac was figure of his deeth, certeyn,
That so fer-fort^b his fader wolde obeye
That him ne roughte no-thing to be
slayn;

Right so thy sone list, as a lamb, to deye.
Now lady, ful of mercy, I you preye,
Sith he his mercy mesured so large,
Be ye not skant; for alle we singe and
seye 175

That ye ben from vengeaunce ay our
targe.

Zacharie you clepeth the open welle
To washe sinful soule out of his gilt.
Therefore this lessoun oughte I wel to
telle

That, nere thy tender herte, we weren
spilt. 180

Now lady brighte, sith thou canst and wilt
Ben to the seed of Adam merciabie,
So bring us to that palais that is bilt
To penitents that ben to mercy able.

Amen.

Explicit carmen.

II. THE COMPLEYNTE UNTO PITE.

PITE, that I have sought so yore ago,
With herte sore, and ful of besy peyne,
That in this world was never wight so wo
With-oute dethe; and, if I shal not feyne
My purpos was, to Pite to compleyne 5
Upon the crueltee and tyranny
Of Love, that for my trouthe doth me dye.

And when that I, by lengthe of certeyn
yeres,

Had ever in oon a tyme sought to speke,
To Pite ran I, al bespreynt with teres, 10
To preyen hir on Crueltee me awreke.
But, er I might with any worde out-breke,
Or tellen any of my peynes smerte,
I fond hir deed, and buried in an herte.

Adoun I fel, when that I saugh the herse,
Deed as a stoon, whyl that the swogh me
laste; 16

But up I roos, with colour ful diverse,
 And pitously on hir myn yën caste,
 And ner the corps I gan to presen faste,
 And for the soule I shoop me for to
 preye; 20
 I nas but lorn; ther nas no more to seye.

Thus am I slayn, sith that Pite is deed;
 Allas! that day! that ever hit shulde
 falle!

What maner man dar now holde up his
 heed? 24
 To whom shal any sorrowful herte calle?
 Now Crueltee hath cast to sleen us alle,
 In ydel hope, folk redelees of peyne—
 Sith she is deed—to whom shul we
 compleyne?

But yet encreseth me this wonder newe,
 That no wight woot that she is deed,
 but I; 30
 So many men as in hir tyme hir knewe,
 And yet she dyed not so soleynty;
 For I have sought hir ever ful besily
 Sith first I hadde wit or mannes mynde;
 But she was .deed, er that I coude hir
 fynde. 35

Aboute hir herse ther stoden lustily,
 Withouten any wo, as thoughte me,
 Bountee parfyt, wel armed and richely,
 And fresshe Beautee, Lust, and Iolitee,
 Assured Maner, Youthe, and Honestee,
 Wisdom, Estaat, [and] Dreed, and Gov-
 ernance, 41
 Confredred bothe by bonde and alliaunce.

A compleynt hadde I, writen, in myn
 hond,
 For to have put to Pite as a bille, 44
 But whan I al this companye ther fond,
 That rather wolden al my cause spille
 Than do me help, I held my pleynthe
 stille;
 For to that folk, withouten any faile,
 Withoute Pite may no bille availe.

Then leve I al thise virtues, sauf Pite, 50
 Keping the corps, as ye have herd me
 seyn,
 Confredred alle by bonde of Crueltee,
 And been assented that I shal be sleyn.
 And I have put my compleynt up ageyn;

For to my foos my bille I dar not shewe,
 Theffect of which seith thus, in wordes
 fewe:— 56

The Bille

¶ ‘Humblest of herte, byest of reverence,
 Benigne flour, coroune of vertues alle,
 Sheweth unto your rial excellence
 Your servaunt, if I durste me so calle, 60
 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 65
 Under colour of womanly Beautee.
 For men [ne] shuld not knowe hir
 tirannye,
 With Bountee, Gentillesse, and Curtesye,
 And hath depyved you now of your place
 That hight “Beautee, apertenant to
 Grace.” 70

‘For kyndly, by your heritage right,
 Ye been annexed ever unto Bountee;
 And verrayly ye oughte do your might
 To helpe Trouthe in his adversitee.
 Ye been also the coroune of Beautee; 75
 And certes, if ye wanten in thise tweyne,
 The world is lore; ther nis no more to
 seyne.

¶ ‘Eek what availeth Maner and Gentil-
 esse
 Withoute you, benigne creature?
 Shal Crueltee be your governeresse? 80
 Allas! what herte may hit longe endure?
 Wherfor, but ye the rather take cure
 To breke that perilous alliaunce,
 Ye sleen hem that ben in your obei-
 saunce.

‘And further over, if ye suffre this, 85
 Your renoun is fordo than in a throwe;
 Ther shal no man wite wel what Pite is.
 Allas! that your renoun shuld be so
 lowe!
 Ye be than fro your heritage y-throwe 89
 By Crueltee, that occupieth your place;
 And we despeired, that seken to your
 grace.

'Have mercy on me, thou Herenus
 quene,
 That you have sought so tenderly and
 yore;
 Let som stream of your light on me be
 sene
 That love and drede you, ay lenger the
 more. 95
 For, sothly for to seyne, I bere the sore,
 And, though I be not cunning for to
 pleyne,
 For goddes 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;
 Eck on that other syde, wher-so I go,
 What maner thing that may encrese wo
 That have I redy, unsoght, everywhere;

Here endeth the exclamacion of the Deth of Pyte.

Me [ne] lakketh but my deth, and than
 my bere. 105

'What nedeth to shewe parcel of my
 peyne?
 Sith every wo that herte may bethinke
 I suffre, and yet I dar not to you pleyne;
 For wel I woot, al-though I wake or
 winke, 109
 Ye rekke not whether I flete or sinke.
 But natheles, my trouthe I shal sustene
 Unto my deth, and that shal wel be sene.

'This is to seyne, I wol be youres ever;
 Though ye me slee by Cruelte, your fo,
 Algate my spirit shal never dissever 115
 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 herte sore and ful of besy peyne.'

III. THE BOOK OF THE DUCHESSE.

The Proem.

I HAVE gret wonder, by this lighte,
 How that I live, for day ^{the} nighte
 I may nat slepe wel nigh nocht; ^{nothing}
 I have so many an ydel thought
 Purely for defaulte of slepe, 5
 That, by my trouthe, I take kepe
 Of no-thing, how hit cometh or goth,
 Ne me nis no-thing lef nor loth.
 Al is y-liche good to me — ^{took}
 loye or sorowe, wherso hit be — 10
 For I have feling in no-thing, ^{sentiment}
 But, as it were, a mased thing, ^{kind}
 Always in point to falle a-down;
 For [sory] imaginacioun
 Is alway hoolly in my minde. 15
 And wel ye wite, agaynes kinde
 Hit were to liven in this wyse; ^{reason}
 For nature wolde nat suffyse
 To noon erthly creature
 Not longe tyme to endure 20
 Withoute slepe, and been in sorwe;
 And I ne may, ne night ne morwe,
 Slepe; and thus melancolye,

And dreed I have for to dye,
 Defaute of slepe, and hevynesse 25
 Hath sleyn my spirit of quiknesse,
 That I have lost al lustedede. ^{cheerfulness}
 Suche fantasies ben in myn hede ^{vigour}
 So I not what is best to do.
 But men mighte axe me, why so 30
 I may not slepe, and what me is?
 But natheles, who aske this
 Leseth his asking trewely.
 My-selven can not telle why
 The sooth; but trewely, as I gesse, 35
 I holdë hit be a siknesse
 That I have suffred this eight yere,
 And yet my bofe ^{is} never the nere;
 For ther is phisicien but oon,
 That may me hele; but that is doon. 40
 Passe we over until eft; ^{again}
 That wil not be, moor nede be left;
 Our first matere is good to kepe.
 So when I saw I might not slepe,
 Til now late, this other night, 45
 Upon my bedde I sat upright,
 And had oon ^{book} me a book,
 A romaunce, and he hit me took

To rede and dryve the night away;
 For me thoghte it better play 50
 Then playen either at chesse or tables.
 And in this boke were writen fables
 That clerkes hadde, in olde tyme,
 And other poets, put in ryme
 To rede, and for to be in minde 55
 Why men loved the lawe of kinde.
 This boke ne spak but of such thinges,
 Of queens lyves, and of kinges,
 And many othere thinges smale.
 Amonge al this I fond a tale 60
 That me thoughte a wonder thing.
 This was the tale: Ther was a king
 That highte Seys, and hadde a wyf,
 The beste that mighte bere lyf;
 And this queene highte Alcyone. 65
 So hit befel, therafter sone,
 This king wolde wenden over see.
 To tellen shortly, whan that he
 Was in the see, thus in this wyse,
 Soche a tempest gan to ryse 70
 That brak hir mast, and made it falle,
 And clefte hir ship, and dreinte hem alle,
 That never was founden, as it telles,
 Bord ne man, ne nothing elles.
 Right thus this king Seys loste his lyf. 75
 Now for to speken of his wyf:—
 This lady, that was left at home,
 Hath wonder, that the king ne come
 Hoom, for hit was a longe terme.
 Anon her herte gan to erme; *just* 80
 And for that hir thoughte evermo
 Hit was not wel [he dwelte] so,
 She longed so after the king
 That certes, hit were a pitous thing
 To telle hir hertely sorwful lyf 85
 That hadde, alas! this noble wyf;
 For him she loved alderbest. *best of all*
 Anon she sente bothe eest and west
 To seke him, but they founde nought.
 'Alas!' quoth she, 'that I was wrought!
 And wher my lord, my love, be deed? 91
 Certes, I nil never ete breed,
 I make a-vowe to my god here,
 But I move *move* of my lorde here!
 Such sorwe this lady to her took 95
 That trewely I, which made this boke,
 Had swich pite and swich rowthe *partly*
 To rede hir sorwe, that, by my trowthe,
 I ferde the worse al the morwe *more*
 After, to thenken on her sorwe. 100
 So whan [she] coude here no word

That no man mighte fynde hir lord,
 Ful oft she swouned, and seide 'alas!'
 For sorwe ful nigh ~~woful~~ she was,
 Ne she coude no reed but oon; 105
 But down on knees she sat anon,
 And weep, that pite was to here.
 'A! mercy! swete lady dere!'
 Quod she to *(Luno)*, hir goddess; *Luno*
 'Help me out of this distresse, 110
 And yeve me grace my lord to see
 Sone, or wite wher-so he be,
 Or how he fareth, or in what wyse,
 And I shal make you sacrifise,
 And holly youres become I shal 115
 With good wil, body, herte, and al;
 And but thou wilt this, lady swete,
 Send me grace to slepe, and mete
 In my slepe som certeyn sweven, *dream*
 Wher-through that I may knowen even
 Whether my lord be quik or deed.' 121
 With that word she heng down the heed,
 And fil a-swoun as cold as ston;
 Hir women caughte her up anon,
 And broghten hir in bed *al naked*, 125 *weeping*
 And she, *forweped and forwaked*, *the weary through*
 Was wery, and thus the dede sleep *was thing*
 Fil on her, or she toke keep,
 Through Iuno, that had herd hir bone, *prayer*
 That made hir [for] to slepe sone; 130 *request*
 For as she prayde, so was don,
 In dede; for Iuno, right anon,
 Called thus her messagere
 To do her erande, and he com nere.
 Whan he was comé, she bad him thus:
 'Go bet,' quod Iuno, 'to Morpheus, 136
 Thou knowest him wel, the god of sleep;
 Now understand wel, and tak keep. *to be sete*
 Sey thus on my halfe, that he
 Go faste into the grete see, 140
 And bid him that, on alle thing,
 He take up Seys body the king,
 That lyth ful pale and no-thing rody.
 Bid him crepe into the body,
 And do it goon to Alcyone 145
 The queene, ther she lyth alone,
 And shewe hir shortly, hit is no nay,
 How hit was *dreyn* this other day; *in a ched*
 And do the body speke so
 Right as hit was wont to do, 150
 The whyles that hit was on lyve.
 Go now faste, and hy thee blyve!' *quickly*
 This messenger took leve and wente
 Upon his wey, and never ne stente *at night*
delayed

- Til he com to the derke valeye 155
 That stant bytwene roches tweye,
 Ther never yet grew corn ne gras,
 Ne tree, ne nothing that ought was,
 Beste, ne man, ne nothing elles, 160
 Save ther were a fewe welles
 Came renning fro the clifles adoun,
 That made a deedly sleping soun,
 And ronnen doun right by a cave
 That was under a rokke y-grave *was out* 165
 Amid the valey, wonder depe.
 Ther these goddes laye and slepe,
 Morpheus, and Eclympasteyre,
 That was the god of slespes heyre,
 That slepe and did non other werk.
- This cave was also as derk 170
 As helle pit over-al aboute ;
 They had good leysen for to route *in cave*
 To envye, who might slepe beste ;
 Some henge hir chin upon hir breste
 And slepe upright, hir heed in hed, 175
 And some laye naked in hir bed,
 And slepe whyles the dayes laste.
- This messenger com flying faste,
 And cryed, 'O ho ! awak anon !' 179
 Hit was for noght ; ther herde him non.
 'Awak !' quod he, 'who is, lyth there ?'
 And blew his horn right in hir ere,
 And cryed 'awaketh !' wonder hye. *eye*
 This god of slepe, with his oon ye
 Cast up, axed, 'who clepeth there ?' 185
 'Hit am I,' quod this messagere ;
 'Iuno bad thou shuldest goon' —
 And tolde him what he shulde doon
 As I have told yow here-tofore ;
 Hit is no need reherse hit more ; 190
 And wente his wey, whan he had sayd.
- Anon this god of slepe a-brayde *awoke*
 Out of his slepe, and gan to goon,
 And did as he had bede him doon ;
 Took up the dreynthe body sone, 195
 And bar hit forth to Aleyone,
 His wyf the queene, ther-as she lay,
 Right even a quarter before day,
 And stood right at hir beddes fete,
 And called hir, right as she hete, 200
 By name, and seyde, 'my swete wyf,
 Awak ! let be your sorwful lyf !
 For in your sorwe ther lyth no reed ;
 For certes, swete, I nam but deed ;
 Ye shul me never on lyve y-see. 205
 But good swete herte, [look] that ye
 Bury my body, [at whiche] a tyde
- Ye mowe hit finde the see besyde ;
 And far-wel, swete, my worldes blisse !
 I praye god your sorwe lisse ; *may* 210
 To litel whyl our blisse lasteth !
 With that hir eyen up she casteth,
 And saw noght ; '[A] !' quod she, 'for
 sorwe !'
 And deyed within the thriddle morwe.
 But what she sayde more in that swow *sig*
 I may not telle yow as now, 216
 Hit were to longe for to dwelle ;
 My first matere I wil yow telle,
 Wherfor I have told this thing
 Of Alcione and Seys the king. 220
- For thus moche dar I saye wel,
 I had be down everydel, *and rely*
 And deed, right through defaute of sleep,
 If I had red and taken keep
 Of this tale next before : 225
 And I wol telle yow wherfore ;
 For I ne might, for bote ne bale, *gode nor*
 Slepe, or I had red this tale *for : ill*
 Of this dreynthe Seys the king,
 And of the goddes of sleping, 230
 Whan I had red this tale wel,
 And over-loked hit everydel,
 Me thoughte wonder if hit were so ;
 For I had never herd speke, or tho,
 Of no goddes that coude make 235
 Men [for] to slepe, ne for to wake ;
 For I ne knew never god but oon.
 And in my game I sayde anoon — *anon*
 And yet me list right evel to pleye —
 'Rather then that I shulde deye 240
 Through defaute of sleping thus,
 I wolde yive thilke Morpheus,
 Or his goddesse, dame Iuno, *well*
 Or som wight elles, I ne roghte who —
 To make me slepe and have som reste —
 I wil yive him the alder-beste 246
 Yift that ever, he aboot his lyve,
 And here on warde, right now, as blyve ;
 If he wol make me slepe a lyte, *a little*
 Of downe of pure dowwes whyte 250
 I wil yive him a fether-bed,
 Rayed with golde, and right wel cled
 In fyn blak satin doutremere, *foreign*
 And many a pilow, and every bere
 Of clothe of Reynes, to slepe softe ; 255
 Him thar not nede to turnen ofte.
 And I wol yive him al that falles
 To a chambre ; and al his halles
 I wol do peynthe with pure golde,

it am
only a
dead man

it was in
me mind to

And tapite hem ful many folde 260
 Of oo suite; this shal he have,
 If I wiste wher were his cave,
 If he can make me slepe sone,
 As did the goddesse Alcione.
 And thus this ilke god, Morpheus, 265
 May winne of me mo fees thus
 Than ever he wan; and to Iuno,
 That is his goddesse, I shal so do,
 I trow that she shal holde her payd. ^{think hers} 270
 I hadde tinneth that word y-sayd
 Right thus as I have told hit yow,
 That sodeynly, I miste how,
 Swich a lust anon me took
 To slepe, that right upon my book
 I fil aslepe, and therwith even 275
 Me mette so inly swete a sweven,
 So wonderful, that never yit
 I trowe no man hadde the wit
 To conne wel my sweven rede; ^{advise} 280
 No, not Ioseph, withoute drede,
 Of Egipte, he that rede so
 The kinges meting Pharao,
 No more than coude the leste of us;
 Ne nat scarsly Macrobeus,
 (He that wroot al thavisoun 285
 That he mette, king Scipioun,
 The noble man, the Affrican —
 Swiche mervayles fortunéd than)
 I trowe, a-rede my dremes even.
 Lo, thus hit was, this was my sweven. 290

The Dream.

ME thoughte thus: — that hit was May,
 And in the dawning ther I lay,
 Me mette thus, in my bed al naked: —
 [I] loked forth, for I was waked
 With smale foules a gret hepe, 295
 That had affrayed me out of slepe
 Through noyse and swetnesse of hir
 song; ^{deaned}
 And, as me mette, they sate among,
 Upon my chambre-roof withoute,
 Upon the tyles, al a-boute, 300
 And songen, everich in his wyse,
 The moste solempne servyse
 By note, that ever man, I trowe,
 Had herd; for som of hem song lowe,
 Som hie, and al of oon acorde, 305
 To telle shortly, at oo worde,
 Was never y-herd so swete a steven;
 But hit had be a thing of heven; —

So mery a soun, so swete entunes,
 That certes, for the touné of Tewnes, 310
 I nolde but I had herd hem singe,
 For al my chambre gan to ringe
 Through singing of hir armonye.
 For instrument nor melodye
 Was nowher herd yet half so swete, 315
 Nor of acorde half so mete; ^{parting}
 For ther was noon of hem that feyned
 To singe, for ech of hem him peyned
 To finde out mery crafty notes;
 They ne spared not hir throtes. 320
 And, sooth to seyn, my chambre was
 Ful wel depeynted, and with glas
 Were al the windows wel y-glased,
 Ful clere, and nat an hole y-crased, ^{cracked} 325
 That to beholde hit was gret loye.
 For hoolly al the storie of Troye
 Was in the glasing y-wrought thus,
 Of Ector and king Priamus,
 Of Achilles and Lamedon, 330
 Of Medea and of Iason,
 Of Paris, Eleyne, and Lavyne.
 And alle the walles with colours fyne
 Were peynted, bothe text and glose, ^{common}
 [Of] al the Romaunce of the Rose.
 My windowes weren shet echon, 335
 And through the glas the sunne shon
 Upon my bed with bryghte bemes,
 With many glatte gilden stremes;
 And eek the welken was so fair,
 Blew, bryght, clere was the air, 340
 And ful atempre, for sothe, hit was;
 For nother cold nor hoot hit nas,
 Ne in al the welken was a cloude.
 And as I lay thus, wonder loude
 Me thoughte I herde an hunte blowe 345
 Tassaye his horn, and for to knowe
 Whether hit were clere or hors of soune.
 I herde goinge, up and doune,
 Men, hors, houndes, and other thing;
 And al men spoken of hunting, 350
 How they wolde slee the hert with
 strengthe,
 And how the hert had, upon lengthe,
 So moche embosed, I not now what.
 Anon-right, when I herde that,
 How that they wolde on hunting goon,
 I was right glad, and up anon; 356
 [I] took my hors, and forth I wente
 Out of my chambre; I never stente ^{stopped}
 Til I com to the feld withoute.
 Ther overtook I a gret route 360

assembly

Of huntens and eek of foresteres,
 With many rclayes and lymeres,
 And hyed hem to the forest faste
 And I with hem; — so at the laste
 I asked oon, ladder a lymere: — 365
 ‘Say, felow, who shal huntun here’
 Quod I; and he answerde ageyn,
 ‘Sir, themperour Octovien,’
 Quod he, ‘and is heer faste by.’
 ‘A goddes halfe, in good tyme,’ quod I,
 ‘Go we faste!’ and gan to ryde. 371
 Whan we came to the forest-syde,
 Every man dide, right anoon,
 As to hunting fil to doon.
 The mayster-hunte anoon, fof-hoot,
 With a gret horne blew three moot 375
 At the uncoupling of his houndes.
 Within a whyl the hert [y]-founde is,
 Y-halowed, and rechased faste
 Longe tyme; and at the laste, 380
 This hert rused and stal away
 Fro alle the houndes a prevy way.
 The houndes had overshote hem alle,
 And were on a defaute y-falle.
 Therwith the hunte wonder faste 385
 Blew a forloyn at the laste.
 I was go walked fro my tree,
 And as I wente, ther cam by me
 A whelp, that fauned me as I stood,
 That hadde y-folowed, and coude no good.
 Hit com and creep to me as lowe, 391
 Right as hit hadde me y-knowe,
 Hild down his heed and loyned his eres,
 And leyde al smothe down his heres.
 I wolde han caught hit, and anoon 395
 Hit fledde, and was fro me goon;
 And I him folwed, and hit forth wente
 Doun by a floury grene wente book path
 Ful thikke of gras, ful softe and swete,
 With floures felde, saife under fete, 400
 And litel used, hit seemed thus;
 For bothe Flora and Zephirus,
 They two that make floures growe,
 Had mad hir dwelling ther, I trowe;
 For hit was, on to beholde, 405
 As thogh the erthe envye wolde
 To be gayer than the heven,
 To have mo floures, swiche seven
 As in the welken sterres be.
 Hit had forgete the poverttee 410
 That winter, through his colde morwes,
 Had mad hit suffren, and his sorwes;
 Al was forgotten, and that was sene.

For al the wode was waxen grene,
 Swetnesse of dewe had mad it waxe. 415
 If it is no need eek for to axe
 Wher ther were many grene greves,
 Or thikke of trees, so ful of leves;
 And every tree stood by him-selve
 Fro other wel ten foot or twelve. 420
 So grete trees, so huge of strengthe,
 Of forty or fifty fadme lengthe,
 Clene withoute bough or stikke,
 With crospe brode, and eek as thikke —
 They were nat an inche a-sonder — 425
 That hit was shadwe over-al under;
 And man an hert and many an hinde
 Was both before me and bihinde.
 Of founes, soures, bakkes, doës
 Was ful the wode, and many roës, 430
 And many squirelles that sete
 Ful hye upon the trees, and ete,
 And in hir maner made festes.
 Shortly, hit was so ful of bestes,
 That thogh Argus, the noble countour,
 Sete to rekene in his countour, 436
 And rekened with his figures ten —
 For by tho figures mowe al ken,
 If they be crafty, rekene and noumbre,
 And telle of every thing the noumbre —
 Yet shulde he fayle to rekene even 441
 The wondres, me mette in my sweven
 But forth they romed wonder faste
 Doun the wode; so at the laste
 I was war of a man in blak, 445
 That sat and had y-turned his bak
 To an oke, an huge tree.
 ‘Lord,’ thoughte I, ‘who may that be?’
 What ayleth him to sitten here?
 Anoon-right I wente nere; 450
 Than fond I sitte even upright
 A wonder wel-faringe knight —
 By the maner me thoughte so —
 Of good moche, and yong therto,
 Of the age of four and twenty yeer. 455
 Upon his berde but litel heer,
 And he was clothed al in blakke.
 I stalked even unto his bakke,
 And ther I stood as stille as ought,
 That, sooth to saye, he saw me nought,
 For-why he heng his heed adoune. 461
 And with a deedly sorwful soun
 He made of ryme ten vers or twelve,
 Of a compleynt to him-selve,
 The moste pite, the moste rowthe, 465
 That ever I herde; for, by my trowthe,

Hit was gret wonder that naty-
 Might suffren any creature
 To have swich sorwe, and le-
 Ful pitous, pale, and nothing
 He sayde a lay, a maner song,
 Withoute note, withoute song,
 And hit was this; for wel I can
 Reherse hit; right thus hit began. —

¶ 'I have of sorwe so gret woon,
 That loye gete I never noon,

Now that I see my lady bright,
 Which I have loved with al my might,
 Is fro me dede, and is a-goon. 479

¶ Allas, [o] deeth! what ayleth thee,
 That thou nbldest have taken me, 482

When that thou toke my lady swete?
 That was so fayr, so fresh, so free,
 So good, that men may wel [y]-see 485

Of al goodnesse she had no mete! —
 When he had mad thus his complaynte,
 His sorowful herte gan faste faynte,
 And his spirites waxen dede;

The blood was fled, for pure drede, 490
 Down to his herte, to make him warm —
 For wel hit feled the herte had harm —

To wite eek why hit was a-drad
 By kinde, and for to make hit glad;

For hit is membre principal 495
 Of the body; and that made al
 His hewe change and waxe grene

And pale, for no blood [was] sene
 In no maner lime of his.

Anon therwith when I saw this, 500
 He ferde thus evel ther he sete,
 I wente and stood right at his fete,
 And grette him, but he spak noght,
 But argued with his owne thought,
 And in his witte disputed faste 505

Why and how his lyf might laste;
 Him thoughte his sorwes were so smerte
 And lay so colde upon his herte;

So, through his sorwe and hevly thought,
 Made him that he ne herde me noght; 510

For he had wel nigh lost his minde,
 Thogh Pan, that men clepe god of kinde,
 Were for his sorwes never so wrooth.

But at the laste, to sayn right sooth,
 He was war of me, how I stood 515

Before him, and dide of my hood,
 And [grette] him, as I best coude.
 Debonairly, and no-thing loude,
 He sayde, 'I prey thee, be not wrooth,
 I herde thee not, to sayn the sooth, 520

Ne I saw thee not, sir, trevely.'

'A! goode 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.' 525
 'Yis, thamendes is light to make,'
 Quod he, 'for ther lyth adon ther-to;

Ther is no-thing missayd nor do.'

Lo! how goodly spak this knight,
 As it had been another wight;

He made it nouthr tough ne queynte. 530
 And I saw that, and gan me aqeynte
 With him, and fond him so trefable,

Right wonder skilful and resonable,
 As me thoughte, for al his bale. 535

Anoon-right I gan finde a tale
 To him, to loke when I might ought
 Have more knowing of his thought.

'Sir,' quod I, 'this game is doon;
 I holde that this hert be goon; 540

Thise huntres conne him nowher see.'
 'I do no fors therof,' quod he,
 'My thought is ther-on never a del.'

'By our lord,' quod I, 'I-trow yow wel,
 Right so me thinketh by your chere. 545

But, sir, oo thing wol ye here?
 Me thinketh, in gret sorwe I yow see;

But certes, [good] sir, yif that ye
 Wolde ought discure me your wo,
 I wolde, as wis god helpe me so, 550

Amende hit, yif I can or may;
 Ye move preve hit by assay. 555

For, by my trouthe, to make yow hool,
 I wol do al my power hool;

And telleth me of your sorwes smerte,
 Paraventure hit may ese your herte, 556

That semeth ful seke under your syde.'

With that he lokod on me asyde,
 As who sayth, 'nay, that wol not be.'

'Graunt mercy, goode frend,' quod he,
 'I thanke thee that thou woldest so, 561

But hit may never the rather be do.
 No man may my sorwe glade,

That maketh my hewe to falle and fade,
 And hath myn understanding lorn, 565

That me is wo that I was born!
 May noght make my sorwes slyde,

Nought the remedies of Ovyde;
 Ne Orpheus, god of melodye,
 Ne Dedalus, with playes slye; 570

Ne hele me may phisicien,
 Nought Ypocras, ne Galien;

Me is wo that I live houres twelve;

- But who so wol assaye him-selve
Whether his herte can have pite 575
Of any sorwe, lat him see me.
I wrecche, that deeth hath mad al naked
Of alle blisse that was ever maked,
Y-worthe worste of alle wightes,
That hate my dayes and my nightes;
My lyf, my lustes be me lothe, 581
For al welfare and I be wrothe.
The pure deeth is so my fo,
[Thogh] I wolde deye, hit wolde not so;
For whan I folwe hit, hit wolde fle; 585
I wolde have [hit], hit nil not me.
This is my peyne withoute reed, *for which*
Alway deyng, and be not deed, *withoute*
That Sesiphus, that lyth in helle, *was*
May not of more sorwe telle. 590
And who so wiste al, by my trouthe,
My sorwe, but he hadde routhe
And pite of my sorwes smerte,
That man hath a feendly herte.
For who so seeth me first on morwe 595
May seyn, he hath [y]-met with sorwe;
For I am sorwe and sorwe is I.
‘Allas! and I wol telle the why;
My [song] is turned to pleyning,
And al my laughter to weping, 600
My glade thoghtes to hevynesse,
In travaile is myn ydelnesse, *in bewyng*
And eek my reste; my wele is wo.
My good is harm, and ever-mo
In wrathe is turned my pleyng, 605
And my delyt in-to sorwing.
Myn hele is turned into seeknesse,
In drede is al my sikernesse. *Secrecy*
To derke is turned al my light,
My wit is foly, my day is night, 610
My love is hate, my sleep waking,
My mirthe and meles is fasting,
My countenance is nycete,
And al abated wher-so I be, *wee*
My pees, in pleyng and in werre; 615
Allas! how mighte I fare werre?
‘My boldnesse is turned to shame,
For fals Fortune hath pleyd a game *quill*
Atte ches with me, allas! the whye! *hand*
The traytesse fals and ful of gyle, 620
That al behoteth and no-thing halt,
She goth upryght and yet she halt,
That baggeth foule and loketh faire,
The dyspitousē debonaire,
That scorneth many a creature! 625
An ydole of fals portraiture
- Is she, *is* she wil some wryen; *turn aside*
She is the dinstres heed y-wryen,
As filth no ner-strawed with floures;
Hir moste worship and hir [flour is] 630
To lyen, for that is hir nature;
Withoute feyth, lawe, or mesure
She is fals; and ever laughinge
With oon eye, and that other wepinge.
That is brought up, she set al doun. 635
I lykne hir to the scorioun,
That is a fals flatering beste;
For with his hede he maketh feste,
But al amid his flateringe
With his tayle he wol stinge, 640
And envenyme; and so wol she.
She is thennyous charite
That is ay fals, and semeth welle,
So turneth she hir false whele
Aboute, for it is no-thing stable, 645
Now by the fyre, now at table;
Ful many oon hath she thus y-blent. *blinded*
She is pley of enchaument, *deceivd*
That semeth oon and is nat so,
The false theef! what hath she do, 650
Trowest thou? by our lord, I wol thee
seye.
Atte ches with me she gan to pleye;
With hir false draughtes divers
She stal on me, and took my fers. *quill*
And whan I saw my fers aweye, 655
Alas! I couthe no lenger pleye,
But seyde, “farwel, swete, y-wis,
And farwel al that ever ther is!”
Therwith Fortune seyde, “chek here!”
And “mate!”, in mid pointe of the
chekkere *hour* 660
With a poune erraunt, allas!
Ful craftier to pley she was
Than Athalus, that made the game
First of the ches; so was his name.
But god wolde I had ones or twyes 665
Y-koud and knowe the Ieopardyes
That coude the Grek Pithagores!
I shulde have pleyd the bet at ches,
And kept my fers the bet therby;
And thogh wherto? for trewely
I hold that wish nat worth a stree! *1670*
Hit had be never the bet for me. *stir*
For Fortune can so many a wyle, *wile*
Ther be but fewe can hir begyle,
And eek she is the las to blame, 675
My-self I wolde have do the same,
Before god, hadde I been as she;

inspiteful

She oghte the more excused be.
 For this I say yet more therto,
 Hadde I be god and mighte have do
 My wille, whan my fers she caughte, 681
 I wolde have drawe the same draughte.
 For, also ~~wis~~ god give me reste,
 I dar wel swere she took the beste!

'But through that draughte I have
 lorn 685

My blisse; allas! that I was born!
 For evermore, I trowe trewly,
 For al my wil, my lust hoolly
 Is turned; but yet, what to done?
 By our lord, hit is to deye sone; 690
 For no-thing I [ne] leve it noght,
 But live and deye right in this thought.
 Ther nis planete in firmament,
 Ne in air, ne in erthe, noon element,
 That they ne yive me a yift echoon 695

Of weping, whan I ~~any~~ lorn
 For whan that I avyse me wel,
 And bethenke me every-del,
 How that ther lyth in rekening,
 In my sorwe, for no-thing; 700

And how ther leveth no gladnesse
 May gladde me of my distresse,
 And how I have lost suffisance, *complete*
 And therto I have no plesance,
 Than may I say, I have right noght. 705
 And whan al this falleth in my thought,
 Allas! than am I overcome!
 For that is doon is not to come!
 I have more sorowe than Tantale.'

And whan I herde him telle this tale
 Thus pitously, as I yow telle, 711
 Unnethe mighte I lenger dwelle, *know*
 Hit dide myn herte so moche wo.

'A! good sir!' quod I, 'say not so!
 Have som pite on your nature 715

That formed yow to creature.
 Remembre yow of Socrates;
 For he ne counted nat three strees
 Of noght that Fortune coude do.'

'No,' quod he, 'I can not so.' 720

'Why so? good sir! parde!' quod I; 721

'Ne say noght so, for trewely, *of Di.*
 Thogh ye had lost the ferses twelve,
 And ye for sorwe mordred your-selfe,

Ye sholde be dampned in this cas 725
 By as good right as Medea was,
 That slow hir children for Jason;
 And Phyllis als for Demophon
 Heng hir-self, so weylaway!

For he had broke his terme-day *apparent*
 To come to hir. Another rage
 Had Dydo, quene eek of Cartage,
 That slow hir-self, for Eneas

Was faw; [a!] whiche a fool she was!
 And Ecquo dyed for Narcisus 735
 Nolde nat love hir; and right thus
 Hath many another foly don.

And for Dalida dyed Sampson,
 That slow him-self with a pilere.
 But ther is [noon] a-lyve here 740

Wolde for a fers make this wo! *match*
 'Why so?' quod he; 'hit is nat so;

Thou wost ful litel what thou menest;
 I have lost more than thou wenest.' *think est*

'Lo, [sir,] how may that be?' quod I;
 'Good sir, tel me al hoolly 746

In what wyse, how, why, and wherefore
 That ye have thus your blisse lore.'

'Blythly,' quod he, 'com sit adoun;
 I telle thee up condicoun 750

That thou hoolly, with al thy wit,
 Do thy 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, 755
 Hoolly, with al the witte I have,
 Here yow, as wel as I can.'

'A goddes half!' quod he, and began:
 'Sir,' quod he, 'sith first I couthe 760

I have any maner wil fro youthe,
 Or kyndely understanding

To comprehende, in any thing,
 What loye was, in myn owne wit,
 Drettes, I have ever yit

Be tributary, and yiven rente 765
 To love hoolly with goode entente,
 And through plesauce become his thral,

With good wil, body, herte, and al.
 Al this I putte in his servage,

As to my lorde, and dide homage; 770
 And ful devoutly prayde him to,
 He shulde besette myn herte so,

That it plesauce to him were,
 And worship to my lady dere.

'And this was longe, and many a yeer
 Or that myn herte was set o-wher, 776

That I did thus, and niste why;
 I trowe hit cam me kindly.

Paraunte I was therto most able
 As a whyt wal or a table; 780

For hit is redy to cacche and take
 Al that men wil therin make,

Right
willingly
all your chess pieces

- Wher-so men wol portreye or peynte,
 Be the werkes never so queynte.
 ' And thilke tyme I ferde so 785
 I was able to have lerned tho,
 And to have coud as wel or better,
 Paraunter, other art or letter.
 But for love cam first in my thought,
 Therfore I forgot it nought. 790
 I chees love to my firste craft,
 Therfor hit is with me [y]-laft.
 Forwhy I took hit of so yong age,
 That malice hadde my corage
 Nat that tyme turned to no-thing 795
 Through to mochel knowleching.
 For that tyme youthe, my maistresse,
 Governed me in ydelnesse;
 For hit was in my firste youthe,
 And tho ful litel good I couthe; *know 800*
 For al my werkes were flittinge, *flittingly*
 And al my thoughtes varyinge; *lytelly*
 Al were to me y-liche good, *so liche*
 That I knew tho; but thus hit stood.
 ' Hit happed that I cam on a day 805
 Into a place, ther I saw,
 Trewly, the fayrest companye
 Of ladies, that ever man with ye *with a more*
 Had seen togedres in oo place. *chance*
 Shal I clepe hit hap other grace 810
 That broghte me ther? nay, but Fortune,
 That is to lyen ful comune, *accus. to 782*
 The false trayteresse, pervers,
 God wolde I coude clepe hir wers!
 For now she woreneth me ful wo, 815
 And I wol telle sone why so.
 ' Among thise ladies thus echoon,
 Soth to seyn, I saw [ther] oon
 That was lyk noon of [al] the route;
 For I dar swere, withoute doute, 820
 That as the someres sonne bright
 Is fairer, clerer, and hath more light
 Than any planete, [is] in heven,
 The mone, or the sterres seven,
 For al the world, so had she 825
 Surmounted hem alle of beaute,
 Of maner and of comlinessse,
 Of stature and wel set gladnesse,
 Of goodlihede so wel beseye *well*
 Shortly, what shal I more seye? *Pro. sig.*
 By god, and by his hertes twelve, 830
 It was my swete, right as hir-selve!
 She had so stedfast countenance,
 So noble port and meyntenance.
 And Love, that had herd my bone, 835
- Had espyed me thus sone,
 That she ful sone, in my thought,
 As helpe me god, so was y-caught
 So sodenly, that I ne took
 No maner [reed] but at hir look 840
 And at myn herte; for-why hir eyen
 So gladly, I trow, myn herte seyen,
 That purely tho myn owne thocht
 Seyde hit were [bet] serve hir for nought
 Than with another to be wel. 845
 And hit was sooth, for, everydel,
 I wil anoon-right telle thee why.
 ' I saw hir dance so comlyly,
 Carole and singe so swetely,
 Laughe and pleye so womanly, 850
 And loke so debonairly,
 So goodly speke and so frendly,
 That certes, I trow, that evermore
 Nas seyn so blisful a tresore.
 For every heer [up]on hir hede, 855
 Soth to seyn, hit was not rede,
 Ne nouthur yelw, ne broun hit nas;
 Me thoghte, most lyk gold hit was.
 And whiche eyen my lady hadde!
 Debonair, goodde, glade, and sadde, 860
 Simple, of good mochel, nought to wyde;
 Therto hir look nas not a-syde,
 Ne overthwete, but beset so wel,
 Hit drew and took up, everydel,
 Alle that on hir gan beholde. 865
 Hir eyen semed anoon she wolde
 Have mercy; fooles wenden so;
 But hit was never the rather do.
 Hit nas no countrefeted thing,
 It was hir owne pure loking, 870
 That the goddessse, dame Nature,
 Had made hem opene by mesure,
 And close; for, were she never so glad,
 Hir loking was not foly sprad,
 Ne wildly, thogh that she pleyde; 875
 But ever, me thoghte, hir eyen seyde,
 " By god, my wrathe is al for-yive!"
 ' Therwith hir hste so wel to live,
 That dulnesse was of hir a-drad. *lytelly*
 She nas to sobre ne to glad; 880
 In alle thinges more mesure
 Had never, I trowe, creature.
 But many oon with hir loke she herte,
 And that sat hir ful lyte at herte,
 For she knew no-thing of hir thocht; 885
 But whether she knew or knew hit nought,
 Algate she ne roghte of hem a stree!
 To gete hir love no ner nas he

At any rate

That wofed at home, than he in Inde;
The foremost was always behinde. 890
But goode folk, over al other,
She loved as man may do his brother;
Of whiche love she was wonder large,
In skilful places that bere charge.

'Which a visage had she ther-to! 895

Allas! myn herte is wonder wo
That I ne can discryven hit!
Me lakketh bothe English and wit
For to undo hit at the fulle;
And eek my spirits be so dulle 900

So greet a thing for to devyse.
I have no wit that can sylfyse
To comprehenden hir beaute;

But thus moche dar I seyn, that she
Was rody, fresh, and lyvely hewed; 905

And every day hir beaute newed.
And negh hir face was alder-best;

For certes, Nature had swich lest
To make that fair, that trewye she

Was hir cheef patron of beautee, 910
And cheef ensample of al hir werke.

And moustre; for, be hit never so derke,
Me thinketh I see hir ever-mo.

And yet more-over, thogh alle tho
That ever lived were now a-lyve, 915

[They] ne sholde have founde to discryve

In al hir face a wikked signe;
For hit was sad, simple, and benigne.

'And which a goodly softe speche
Had that swete, my lyves leche! 920

So frendly, and so wel y-grounded,
Up al resoun so wel y-founded,

And so tretable to alle gode,
That I dar swere by the rode, 925

Of eloquence was never founde
So swete a sowninge facounde,

Ne trewer tonged, ne scorned lasse,
Ne bet coude hele; that, by the masse

I durste swere, thogh the pope hit songe,
That ther was never through hir tonge

Man ne woman gretly harmed; 931
As for hir, [ther] was al harm hid;

Ne lasse flatering in hir worde,
That purely, hir simple recorde

Was founde as trewe as any bonde, 935
Or trouthe of any mannes honde.

Ne chyde she coude never a del,
That knoweth al the world ful wel.

'But swich a fairnesse of a nekke
Had that swete, that boon nor brekke

Nas ther non sene, that mis-sat. 941
Hit was whyt, smothe, streght, and flat,

Withouten hole; [and] canel-boon,
As by seming, had she noon.

Hir throte, as I have now memoire, 945
Semed a round tour of yvoire,

Of good gretnesse, and noht to grete.
'And gode faire WHYTE she hete,

That was my lady name right.
She was bothe fair and bright, 950

She hadde not hir name wrong.
Right faire shuldres, and body long

She hadde, and armes, every lith
Fattish, flesshy, not greet therwith;

Right whyte handes, and nayles rede,
Rounde brestes; and of good brede 956

Hir hippes were, a right flat bak.
I knew on hir non other was

That al hir limmes neyth so,
In as fer as I had knowen two. 960

'Therto she coude so ade
Whan that hir liste, that to glade,

That she was lyk to torcl alther-fer
That every man may takere the

Ynogh, and hit hath myn owne lesse. 965
'Of maner and of countnesse

Right so ferde my lady dere;
For every wight of hir manere

Might cacche ynogh, if that he wolde,
If he had eyen hir to beholde. 970

For I dar sweren, if that she
Had among ten thousand be,

She wolde have be, at the leste,
A cheef mirour of al the feste,

Thogh they had stonden in a rowe, 975
To mennes eyen that coude have knowe.

For wher-so men had pleyd or waked,
Me thoghte the felawship as naked

Withouten hir, that saw I ones,
As a coroune withoute stones. 980

Trewely she was, to myn yē,
The soleyne tenix of Arabye,

For ther liveth never but oon;
Ne swich as she ne knew I noon.

'To speke of goodnesse; trewely she
Had as moche debonaire 986

As ever had Hester in the bible,
And more, if more were possible.

And, soth to seyne, therwith-al
She had a wit so general, 990

So hool enclyned to alle gode,
That al hir wit was set, by the rode,

Withoute malice, upon gladnesse;

Therto I saw never yet a lesse
Harmful, than she was in doing. 995
I sey nat that she ne had knowing
What was harm; or elles she
Had coud no good, so thinketh me.

'And trewly, for to speke of trouthe,
But she had had, hit had be routhe. 1000
Therof she had so moche hir del — ^{with}

And I dar sey and swere hit wel — ^{comple}
That Trouthe him-self, over al and al,
Had chose his maner principal
In hir, that was his resting-place. 1005

Ther-to she hadde the moste grace,
To have stedfast perseverance,
And esy, atempre governaunce,
That ever I knew or wiste yit;
So pure suffraunt ^{as} hir wit. 1010

And re-^{at} litel gone understood,
Hit folow werkes s^{he} coude good.
She us^{ny} th^{ought} to do wel;
These to me y^{an}ners every-del.

'The new tho; loved so wel right, 1015
She wrapped th^{is}de to no wight;
No wight^e, ther to hir no shame,
She loved so rest co-^{owne} name.

Hir luste to holde no wight in honde;
Ne, be thou siker, she koude ^{fonde} 1020
To holde no wight in balaunce,
By half word ne by countenaunce,

But-if men wolde upon hir lye; ^{uncon}
Ne sende men in-to Walakye,
To Pruyse and in-to Tartarye, 1025

To Alisaundre, ne in-to Turkye,
An bidde him faste, anoon that he
Go hoodles to the drye see,

And come hoom by the Carrenare;
And seye, "Sir, be now right ware 1030
That I may of yow here sey
Worship, or that ye come ageyn!"

She ne used no suche knakkes smale.
'But wherfor that I telle my tale?
Right on this same, as I have seyde, 1035

Was hoolly al my love leyde;
For certes, she was, that swete wyf,
My suffisaunce, my lust, my lyf,
Myn hap, myn hele, and al my blisse,
My worldes welfare and my [lisse]. 1040

And I hirs hoolly, everydel.' ^{th^{ere}}
'By our lord,' quod I, 'I trowe yow
wel!

Hardely, your love was wel beset, ^{bestow}
I not how ye mighte have do bet.' 1044
'Bet? ne no wight so wel!' quod he.

'I trowe hit, sir,' quod I, 'parde!
'Nay, leve hit wel!' 'Sir, so do I;
I leve yow wel, that trewly
Yow thoghte, that she was the beste,
And to beholde the alderfaireste, 1050
Who so had loked with your eyen.'

'With myn? nay, alle that hir seyden
Seyde, and sworn hit was so.
And thogh they ne hadde, I wolde tho
I have loved best my lady fre, 1055

Thogh I had had al the beautee
That ever had Alcipyades,
And al the strengthe of Hercules,
And therto had the worthinesse

Of Alisaundre, and al the richesse 1060
That ever was in Babiloyne,
In Cartage, or in Macedoyne,
Or in Rome, or in Ninive;

And therto al-so hardy be
As was Ector, so have I Ioye, 1065
That Achilles slow at Troye —
And therfor was he slayn also

In a temple, for bothe two
Were slayn, he and Antilogus,
And so seyth Dares Frigius,
For love of [hir] Polixena — 1070

Or ben as wys as Minerva,
I wolde ever, withoute drede,
Have loved hir, for I moste nede! ^{as speak}

"Nede!" nay, I gabbe now, 1075
Noght "nede," and I wol telle how,
For of good wille myn herte hit wolde,
And eek to love hir I was holde! ^{as speak}

As for the fairest and the beste.
'She was as good, so have I reste,
As ever was Penelope of Grece, 1081
Or as the noble wyf Lucrece,

That was the beste — he telleth thus,
The Romain Tytus Livius —
She was as good, and no-thing lyke,
Thogh hir stories be autentyke; 1086
Algate she was as trewe as she.

'But wherfor that I telle thee
Whan I first my lady sey? 1089
I was right yong, [the] sooth to sey,
And ful gret need I hadde to lerne;

Whan my herte wolde yerne
To love, it was a greet emprise.
But as my wit coude best suffyse,
After myyonge chidly wit, 1095

Withoute drede, I besette hit
To love hir in my beste wyse,
To do hir worship and servyse

That I tho coude, by my trouthe,
 Withoute feynyn outhur slouth; 1100
 For wonder fayn I wolde hir see.
 So mochel hit amended me,
 That, when I saw hir first a-morwe,
 I was warished of al my sorwe
 Of al day after, til hit were eve; 1105
 Me thoghte no-thing mighte me greve,
 Were my sorwes never so smerte.
 And yit she sit so in myn herte,
 That, by my trouthe, I nolde noght,
 For al this worlde, out of my thought 1110
 Leve my lady; no, trewly!"

'Now, by my trouthe, sir,' quod I,
 'Me thinketh ye have such a chaunce
 As shrift withoute repentance.'
 'Repentance! nay fy,' quod he; 1115
 'Shulde I now repente me
 To love? nay, certes, than were I wel
 Wers than was Achitofel,
 Or Anthenor, so have I loye,
 The traytour that betrayed Troye, 1120
 Or the false Genelon,
 He that purchased the treson
 Of Rowland and of Oliver.
 Nay, whyl I am a-lyve here
 I nil foryete hir never-mo.' 1125

'Now, goode sir,' quod I [right] tho,
 'Ye han wel told me her-before.
 It is no need reherse hit more
 How ye sawe hir first, and where;
 But wolde ye telle me the manere, 1130
 To hir which was your firste speche —
 Therof I wolde yow be-seche —
 And how she knewe first your thought,
 Whether ye loved hir or noght,
 And telleth me eek what ye have lore;
 I herde yow telle her-before.' 1136

'Ye,' seyde he, 'thou nost what thou
 menest;
 I have lost more than thou wenest.'
 'What los is that, [sir]?' quod I tho;
 'Nil she not love yow? is hit so?' 1140
 Or have ye oght [y-]doon amis,
 That she hath left yow? is hit this?
 For goddes love, tel me al.'
 'Before god,' quod he, 'and I shal.
 I save right as I have seyde, 1145
 On hir was al my love leyde;
 And yet she niste hit never a del
 Noght longe tyme, leve hit wel.
 For be right siker, I durste noght 1149
 For al this worlde telle hir my thought,

Ne I wolde have wratted hir. trewly.
 For wostow why? she was lady
 Of the body; she had the herte,
 And who hath that, may not asterte. *scap*
 'But, for to kepe me fro ydelnesse,
 Trewly I did my besinesse 1156
 To make songes, as I best coude,
 And ofte tyme I song hem loude;
 And made songes a gret del,
 Al-thogh I coude not make so wel 1160
 Songes, ne knowe the art al,
 As coude Launckes sone Tubal,
 That fond out first the art of songe;
 For, as his brothers hamers ronge
 Upon his anvelt up and down, 1165
 Therof he took the firste soun;
 But Grekes seyn, Pictagoras,
 That he the firste funder was
 Of the art; Aurora telleth so,
 But therof no fors, of hem two. 1170
 Algates songes thus I made
 Of my feling, myn herte to glade;
 And lo! this was [the] alther-firste, *first*
 I not wher [that] hit were the werste. —
 ¶ "Lord, hit maketh myn herte light,
 Whan I thenke on that swete wight 1176
 That is so semely on to see;
 And wisse to god hit might so be,
 That she wolde holde me for hir knight.
 My lady, that is so fair and bright!" —
 'Now have I told thee, sooth to saye,
 My firste song. Upon a daye
 I bethoghte me what wo
 And sorwe that I suffred tho
 For hir, and yet she wiste hit noght, 1185
 Ne telle hir durste I nat my thought.
 "Allas!" thoghte I, "I can no reed;
 And, but I telle hir, I nam but deed, *del am*
 And if I telle hir, to seye sooth, *only a*
 I am a-dred she wol be wrooth; 1190
 Allas! what shal I thanne do?"
 'In this debat I was so wo,
 Me thoghte myn herte braste a-tweyn!
 So atte laste, soth to scyn,
 I me bethoghte that nature 1195
 Ne formed never in creature
 So moche beaute, trewely,
 And bounte, withouten mercy.
 'In hope of that, my tale I tolde
 With sorwe, as that I never sholde, 1200
 For nedes; and, maugree my heed,
 I moste have told hir or be deed.
 I not wel how that I began,

know not

- Ful evel rehersen hit I can;
 And eek, as helpe me god with-al, 1205
 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 pure fere
 Lest my wordes mis-set were. 1210
 With sorweful herte, and woundes dede,
 Softe and quaking for pure drede
 And shame, and stinping in my tale
 For ferde, and myn hewe al pale,
 Ful ofte I wex bothe pale and reed; 1215
 Bowing to hir, I heng the heed;
 I durste nat ones loke hir on,
 For wit, manere, and al was gon.
 I seyde "mercy!" and no more;
 Hit nas no game, hit sat me sore. 1220
 'So atte laste, sooth to seyn,
 Whan that myn herte was come ageyn,
 To telle shortly al my speche,
 With hool herte I gan hir beseche
 That she wolde be my lady swete; 1225
 And swor, and gan hir hertely hete
 Ever to be stedfast and trewe,
 And love hir alwey freshly newe,
 And never other lady have,
 And al hir worship for to save 1230
 As I best coude; I swor hir this —
 "For youres is al that ever ther is
 For evermore, myn herte swete!
 And never false yow, but I mete,
 I nil, as wis god helpe me so!" 1235
 'And whan I had my tale y-do,
 God wot, she accounted nat a stree
 Of al my tale, so thoughte me.
 To telle shortly as hit is,
 Trewly hir answeere, hit was this; 1240
 I can not now wel counterfete
 Hir wordes, but this was the grete
 Of hir answeere; she sayde, "nay"
 Al-outerly. Allas! that day
 The sorwe I suffred, and the wo! 1245
 That trewly Cassandra, that so
 Bewayled the destruccioun
 Of Troye and of Ilioun,
 Had never swich sorwe as I tho. 1250
 I durste no more say therto
 For pure fere, but stal away;
 And thus I lived ful many a day:
 That trewely, I hadde no need
 Ferther than my beddes heed
 Never a day to seche sorwe; 1255
 I fond hit redy every morwe,
 For-why I loved hir in no gere.
 'So hit befel, another yere,
 I thoughte ones I wolde fonde
 To do hir knowe and understonde 1260
 My wo; and she wel understood
 That I ne wiled thing but good,
 And worship, and to kepe hir name
 Over al thing, and drede hir shame,
 And was so besy hir to serve; — 1265
 And pite were I shulde sterve,
 Sith that I wiled noon harm, y-wis.
 So whan my lady knew al this,
 My lady yaf me al hoolly
 The noble yift of hir mercy, 1270
 Saving hir worship, by al weyes;
 Dredles, I mene noon other weyes.
 And therwith she yaf me a ring;
 I trowe hit was the firste thing;
 But if myn herte was y-waxe 1275
 Glad, that is no need to axe!
 As helpe me god, I was as blyve,
 Reysed, as fro dethe to lyve,
 Of alle happes the alder-beste,
 The gladdest and the moste at reste. 1280
 For trewely, that swete wight,
 Whan I had wrong and she the right,
 She wolde alwey so goodely
 For-yeve me so debonairly.
 In alle my youthe, in alle chaunce, 1285
 She took me in hir governaunce.
 'Therwith she was alwey so trewe,
 Our Ioye was ever y-liche newe;
 Our hertes wern so even a payre,
 That never nas that oon contrayre 1290
 To that other, for no wo.
 For sothe, y-liche they suffred tho
 Oo blisse and eek oo sorwe bothe;
 Y-liche they were bothe gladdes and
 wrothe;
 Al was us oon, withoute were. 1295
 And thus we lived ful many a yere
 So wel, I can nat telle how.'
 'Sir,' quod I, 'wher is she now?'
 'Now!' quod he, and stinte anon. 1299
 Therwith he wex as deed as stoon,
 And seyde, "allas! that I was bore!
 That was the los, that her-before
 I tolde thee, that I had lorn.
 Bethenk how I seyde her-beforn, 1304
 "Thou wost ful litel what thou menest;
 I have lost more than thou wenest" —
 God wot, allas! right that was she!
 'Allas! sir, how? what may that be?'

'She is deed!' 'Nay!' 'Yis, by my
trouthe!' 1309

'Is that your los? by god, hit is routhe!'
And with that worde, right anoon,
They gan to strake forth; al was doon,
For that tyme, the hert-hunting.

With that, me thoghte, that this king
Gan [quikly] hoomward for to ryde 1315
Unto a place ther besyde,

Which was from us but a lyte, *little*
A long castel with walles whyte,
By seynt Iohan! on a riche hil,
As me mette; but thus it fil. 1320

Right thus me mette, as I yow telle,

That in the castel was a belle,
As hit had smiten houres twelve. —

Therwith I awook my-selve,
And fond me lying in my bed; 1325
And the book that I had red,
Of Alycye and Seys the king,
And of the goddes of sleping,
I fond it in my honde ful even.

Thoghte I, 'this is so queynt a sweven,
That I wol, by processe of tyme, 1331
Fonde to putte this sweven in ryme
As I can best'; and that anoon. —

This was my sweven; now hit is doon.

Explicit the Boke of the Duchesse.

IV. THE COMPLEYNT OF MARS.

The Proem.

'GLADETH, ye foules, of the morow gray,
Lo! Venus risen among yon rowes rede!
And floures fresshe, honoureth ye this
day;

For when the sonne uprist, then wol ye
sprede.

But ye lovers, that lye in any drede, 5
Fleeth, lest wikked tonges yow espye;
Lo! yond the sonne, the candel of Iel-
osye!

With teres blewe, and with a wounded
herte

Taketh your leve; and, with seynt Iohn
to borow,

Apeseth somewhat of your sorowes
smerte, 10

Tyme cometh eft, that cese shal your
sorow;

The glade night is worth an hevvy
morow!' —

(Seynt Valentyne! a foul thus herde I
singe

Upon thy day, er sonne gan up-
springe).—

Yet sang this foul—'I rede yow al
a-wake, 15

And ye, that han not chosen in humble
wyse,

Without repenting cheseth yow your
make.

And ye, that han ful chosen as I devyse,
Yet at the leste renoveleth your servyse:
Confermeth it perpetuely to dure, 20
And paciently taketh your aventure.

And for the worship of this hye feste,
Yet wol I, in my briddes wyse, singe
The sentence of the compleynt, at the
leste, 24

That woful Mars made atte departinge
Fro fresshe Venus in a morweninge,
Whan Phebus, with his fyry torches
rede,
Ransaked every lover in his drede.

The Story.

¶ Whylom the thridde hevenes lord
above,

As wel by hevenish revolucion 30
As by desert, hath wonne Venus his love,
And she hath take him in subieccioun,
And as a maistrisse taught him his les-
soun,

Comaunding him that never, in hir
servyse,

He nere so hold no lover to despise. 35

For she forbad him Ielosye at alle,
And cruelte, and bost, and tyrannye;

She made him at hir lust so humble and
talle,
That when hir deynd caste on him her yë,
He took in pacience to live or dye; 40
And thus she brydeleth him in hir
manere,
With no-thing but with scourging of hir
chere.

Who regneth now in blisse but Venus,
That hath this worthy knight in gover-
nance?

Who singeth now but Mars, that serveth
thus 45

The faire 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 knit, and regnen as in
heven 50

By loking most; til hit fil, on a tyde,
That by hir bothe assent was set a
steven,

That Mars shal entre, as faste as he may
glyde,

Into hir nexte paleys, to abyde,
Walking his cours til she had him
a-take, 55

And he preyde hir to haste hir for his
sake.

Then seyde he thus — "myn hertes lady
swete,

Ye knowe wel my mischef in that place;
For sikerly, til that I with yow mete, 59
My lyf stant ther in aventure and grace;
But when I see the beaute of your face,
Ther is no dreed of deth may do me
smerte,

For al your lust is ese to myn herte."

She hath so gret compassion of hir
knight, 64

That dwelleth in solitude til she come;
For hit stood so, that ilke tyme, no
wight

Counseyled him, ne seyde to him wel-
come,

That nigh hir wit for wo was overcome;
Wherfore she spedde hir as faste in hir
weye, 69

Almost in oon day, as he didde in tweye,

The grete loye that was betwix hem two,
Whan they be met, ther may no tunge
telle

Ther is no more, but unto bed they go,
And thus in loye and blisse I lete hem
dwelle;

This worthy Mars, that is of knighthod
welle, 75

The flour of fairnes lappeth in his armes,
And Venus kisseth Mars, the god of
armes.

Soiourned hath this Mars, of which I
rede,

In chambre amid the paleys prively
A certeyn tyme, til him fel a drede, 80

Through Phebus, that was comen hastely
Within the paleys-yates sturdely,
With torche in honde, of which the
stremes brighte

On Venus chambre knockeden ful lighte.

The chambre, ther as lay this fresshe
quene, 85

Depeynted was with whyte boles grete,
And by the light she knew, that shoon
so shene,

That Phebus cam to brenne hem with his
hete;

This sely Venus, dreynt in teres wete, 89
Enbraceth Mars, and seyde, "alas! I dye!
The torch is come, that al this world wol
wrye."

Up sterte Mars, him liste not to slepe,
Whan he his lady herde so compleyne;

But, for his nature was not for to wepe,
In stede of teres, fro his eyen tweyne 95
The fryr sparkes brosten out for peyne;
And hente his hauberk, that lay him
besyde;

Flee wolde he not, ne mighte him-selven
hyde.

He throweth on his helm of huge wighte,
And girt him with his swerde; and in
his honde 100

His mighty spere, as he was wont to
fichte,

He shaketh so that almost it to-wonde;
Ful hevye he was to walken over londe;

He may not holde with Venus companye,
But bad hir flee, lest Phebus hir espye.

O woful Mars! alas! what mayst thou
seyn, 106

That in the paleys of thy disturbaunce
Art left behinde, in peril to be sleyn?
And yet ther-to is double thy penaunce;
For she, that hath thyn herte in govern-
naunce, 110

Is passed halfe the stremes of thyn yēn;
That thou nere swift, wel mayst thou
wepe and cryen.

Now fleeth Venus un-to Cylenius tour,
With voide cours, for fere of Phebus light.
Alas! and ther ne hath she no socour, 115
For she ne foud ne saw no maner wight;
And eek as ther she had but litil might;
Wher-for, hir-selven for to hyde and save,
Within the gate she fledde into a cave.

Derk was this cave, and smoking as the
helle, 120
Not but two pas within the gate hit stood;
A naturel day in derk I lete hir dwelle.
Now wol I speke of Mars, furious and
wood;

For sorow he wolde have seen his herte
blood;
Sith that he mighte hir don no companye,
He ne roghte not a myte for to dye. 126

So feble he wex, for hete and for his wo,
That nigh he swelt, he mighte unnethe
endure;

He passeth but oo steyre in dayes two,
But ner the les, for al his hevye armure,
He foloweth hir that is his lyves cure; 131
For whos departing he took gretter yre
Thanne for al his brenning in the fyre.

After he walketh softly a pas, 134
Compleyning, that hit pite was to here.
He seyde, "O lady bright, Venus! alas!
That ever so wyde a compass is my spere!
Alas! whan shal I mete yow, herte dere,
This twelfte day of April I endure, 139
Through Ielous Phebus, this misaventure."

Now god helpe sely Venus allone!
But, as god wolde, hit happed for to be,
That, whyl that Venus weping made hir
mone,

Cylenius, ryding in his chevauchè, 144
Fro Venus valance mighte his paleys see,

And Venus he salueth, and maketh chere,
And hir receyveth as his frend ful dere.

Mars dwelleth forth in his adversite,
Compleyning ever on hir departinge;
And what his compleynt was, remembreth
me; 150
And therefore, in this lusty morweninge,
As I best can, I wol hit seyn and singe,
And after that I wol my leve take;
And God yeve every wight Ioye of his
make!

THE COMPLEYNT OF MARS.

The Proem of the Compleynt.

¶ The ordre of compleynt requireth skil-
fully, 155
That if a wight shal pleyne pitously,
There mot be cause wherfor that men
pleyne;
Or men may deme he pleyneith folily
And causeles; alas! that am not I!
Wherfor the ground and cause of al
my peyne, 160
So as my troubled wit may hit aytene,
I wol reherse; not for to have redresse,
But to declare my ground of hevnesse.

Devotion.

¶ The firste tyme, alas! that I was wrought,
And for certeyn effectes hider brought
By him that lordeth ech intelligence,
I yaf my trewe servise and my thought,
For evermore — how dere I have hit
bought! —
To hir, that is of so gret excellence,
That what wight that first sheweth
his presence, 170
When she is wroth and taketh of him
no cure,
He may not longe in Ioye of love en-
dure.

This is no feyned mater that I telle;
My lady is the verrey sours and welle
Of beaute, lust, fredom, and gentil-
nesse, 175
Of riche aray — how dere men hit
selle! —
Of al disport in which men frendly
dwelle,

Of love and pley, and of benigne
 humblesse,
 Of sounes of instruments of al swet-
 nesse;
 And therto so wel fortunèd and
 thewed, 180
 That through the world hir goodnesse
 is y-shewed.

What wonder is then, thogh that I be-
 sette
 My servise on suche oon, that may me
 knette
 To wele or wo, sith hit lyth in hir
 might?
 Therfor my herte for ever I to hir
 hette; 185
 Ne trewly, for my dethe, I shal not
 lette

To ben hir trewest servaunt and hir
 knight.
 I flater noght, that may wite every
 wight;
 For this day in hir servise shal I dye;
 But grace be, I see hir never with yē.

A Lady in fear and woe.

¶ To whom shal I than pleyne of my dis-
 tresse? 191
 Who may me helpe, who may my harm
 redresse?
 Shal I compleyne unto my lady free?
 Nay, certes! for she hath such hev-
 nesse,
 For fere and eek for wo, that, as I
 gesse, 195
 In litil tyme hit wol hir bane be.
 But were she sauf, hit wer 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 forged newe, 201
 In many a cas hem tydeth ofte sorowe.
 Somtyme hir ladies will not on hem
 rewe,
 Somtyme, yif that Ielositye hit knewe,
 They mighten lightly leye hir heed
 to borowe; 205
 Somtyme envyous folk with tunges
 horowe

Depraven hem; alas! whom may they
 plese?
 But he be fals, no lover hath his ese.

But what availeth suche a long ser-
 moun
 Of adventures of love, up and down? 210
 I wol returne and speken of my
 peyne;
 The point is this of my destruccioun,
 My righte lady, my salvacioun,
 Is in affray, and not to whom to
 pleyne.

O herte swete, O lady sovereyne! 215
 For your disese, wel oghte I swoune
 and swelte,
 Thogh I non other harm ne drede
 felte.

Instability of Happiness.

¶ To what fyn made the god that sit so
 hye,
 Benethen him, love other companye,
 And streyneth folk to love, malgre
 hir hede? 220
 And then hir Ioye, for oght I can espye,
 Ne lasteth not the twinkeling of an yē,
 And somme han never Ioye til they
 be dede.
 What menith this? what is this mis-
 tihede?
 Wherto constreyneth he his folk so
 faste 225
 Thing to desyre, but hit shulde laste?

And thogh he made a lover love a
 thing,
 And maketh hit seme stedfast and dur-
 ing,
 Yet puttith he in hit such misaven-
 ture, 229
 That reste nis ther noon in his yeving.
 And that is wonder, that so Iust a king
 Doth such hardnesse to his creature.
 Thus, whether love breke or elles
 dure,
 Algates he that hath with love to done
 Hath ofter wo then changed is the
 mone. 235

¶ It semeth he hath to lovers enmite,
 And lyk a fisser, as men alday may see,

Baiteth his angle-hook with som
 plesaunce,
 Til mony a fish is wood til that he be
 Sersed ther-with; and then at erst hath
 he 240
 Al his desyr, and ther-with al mis-
 chaunce;
 And thogh the lynes breke, he hath
 penaunce;
 For with the hoke he wounded is so
 sore,
 That he his wages hath for ever-more.

The Brooch of Thebes.

¶ The broche of Thebes was of suche a
 kinde, 245
 So ful of rubies and of stones Inde,
 That every wight, that sette on hit
 an yē,
 He wende anon to worthe out of his
 minde;
 So sore the beaute wolde his herte
 binde,
 Til he hit hadde, him thoghte he
 moste dye; 250
 And whan that hit was his, than
 shulde he drye
 Such wo for drede, ay whyl that he hit
 hadde,
 That welnigh for the fere he shulde
 madde.

And whan hit was fro his possessioun,
 Than had he double wo and passioun
 For he so fair a tresor had forgo; 256
 But yet this broche, as in conclusioun,
 Was not the cause of this confusioun;
 But he that wroghte hit enfortuned
 hit so,
 That every wight that had hit shuld
 have wo; 260
 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 beaute,
 That I was mad til I had gete hir
 grace, 265
 She was not cause of myn adversite,
 But he that wroghte hir, also mot I
 thee,
 That putte suche a beaute in hir face,

That made me to covete and purchace
 Myn owne deth; him wyte I that I
 dye, 270
 And myn unwit, that ever I clomb so
 hye.

An Appeal for Sympathy.

¶ But to yow, hardy knightes of renoun,
 Sin that ye be of my divisioun,
 Al be I not worthy to so grete a
 name,
 Yet, seyn these clerkes, I am your pa-
 toun; 275
 Ther-for ye oghte have som compas-
 sioun
 Of my dise, and and take it nocht
 a-game.
 The proudest of yow may be mad ful
 tame;
 Wherfor I prey yow, of your gentilesse,
 That ye compleyne for myn hevinesse.

And ye, my ladies, that ben trewe and
 stable, 281
 By way of kinde, ye oghten to be able
 To have pite of folk that be in
 peyne:
 Now have ye cause to clothe yow in
 sable;
 Sith that your emperice, the honorable,
 Is desolat, wel oghte ye to pleyne;
 Now shuld your holy teres falle and
 reyne.
 Alas! your honour and your emperice,
 Nigh deed for drede, ne can hir not
 chevisse.

Compleyneth eek, ye lovers, al in-fere,
 For hir that, with unfeyned humble
 chere, 291
 Was ever redy to do yow socour;
 Compleyneth hir that ever hath had
 yow dere;
 Compleyneth beaute, fredom, and man-
 ere;
 Compleyneth hir that endeth your
 labour; 295
 Compleyneth thilke ensample of al
 honour,
 That never dide but al gentilesse;
 Kytheth therfor on hir som kinde-
 nesse.'

V. THE PARLEMENT OF FOULES.

The Proem.

THE lyf so short, the craft so long to
lerne,

Thassay so hard, so sharp the conquering,
The dredful Ioy, that alwey slit so yerne,
Al this mene I by love, that my feling 4
Astonyeth with his wonderful worching
So sore y-wis, that whan I on him thinke,
Nat wot I wel wher that I wake or
winke.

For al be that I knowe not love in dede,
Ne wot how that he quytteth folk hir
hyre, 9

Yet happeth me ful ofte in bokes rede
Of his miracles, and his cruel yre;
Ther rede I wel he wol be lord and
syre,

I dar not seyn, his strokes been so sore,
But God save swich a lord! I can no
more.

Of usage, what for luste what for lore, 15
On bokes rede I ofte, as I yow tolde.
But wherfor that I speke al this? not
yore

Agon, hit happed me for to beholde
Upon a boke, was write with lettres olde;
And ther-upon, a certeyn thing to lerne,
The longe day ful faste I radde and
yerne. 21

For out of olde felde, as men seith,
Cometh al this newe corn fro yeer to
yere;

And out of olde bokes, in good feith,
Cometh al this newe science that men
lere. 25

But now to purpos as of this matere —
To rede forth hit gan me so delyte,
That al the day me thoughte but a lyte.

This book of which I make menciuon,
Entitled was al thus, as I shal telle, 30
'Tullius of the dreame of Scipioun';

Chapitres seven hit hadde, of hevene and
helle,

And erthe, and soules that therinne
dwelle,

Of whiche, as shortly as I can hit trete,
Of his sentence I wol you seyn the
grete. 35

First telleth hit, whan Scipioun was come
In Afrik, how he mette Massinisse,
That him for Ioye in armes hath y nome.
Than telleth [hit] hir speche and al the
blisse

That was betwix hem, til the day gan
misse; 40

And how his auncestre, African so dere,
Gan in his slepe that night to him ap-
pere.

Than telleth hit that, fro a sterry place,
How African hath him Cartage shewed,
And warned him before of al his grace,
And seyde him, what man, lered other
lewed, 46

That loveth comun profit, wel y-thewed,
He shal unto a blisful place wende,
Ther as Ioye is that last withouten ende.

Than asked he, if folk that heer be dede
Have lyf and dwelling in another place;
And African seyde, 'ye, withoute drede,'
And that our present worldes lyves space
Nis but a maner deth, what wey we trace,
And rightful folk shal go, after they
dye, 55

To heven; and shewed him the galaxye.

Than shewed he him the litel erthe, that
heer is,

At regard of the hevenges quantite;
And after shewed he him the nyne speres,
And after that the melodye herde 60
That cometh of thilke speres thryes three,
That welle is of musyke and melodye
In this world heer, and cause of armonye.

Than bad he him, sin erthe was so lyte,
And ful of torment and of harde grace,
That he ne shulde him in the world
delyte. 66

Than tolde he him, in certeyn yeres
space,

That every sterre shulde come into his
place

Ther hit was first; and al shulde out of
minde
That in this worlde is don of al man-
kinde. 70

Than prayde him Scipioun to telle him al
The wey to come un-to that hevene
blisse;

And he seyde, 'know thy-self first im-
mortal,

And loke ay besily thou werke and wisse
To comun profit, and thou shalt nat
misse 75

To comen swiftly to that place dere,
That ful of blisse is and of soules clere.

But brekers of the lawe, soth to seyne,
And lecherous folk, after that they be dede,
Shul -alwey whirle aboute therthe in
peyne, 80

Til many a world be passed, out of drede,
And than, for-yeven alle hir wikked dede,
Than shul they come unto that blisful
place,

To which to comen god thee sende his
grace!'—

The day gan failen, and the derke night,
That reveth bestes from hir besinesse, 86
Berafte me my book for lakke of light,
And to my bedde I gan me for to dresse,
Fulfid of thought and besy hevinesse;
For bothe I hadde thing which that I
nolde, 90
And eek I ne hadde that thing that I
wolde.

But fynally my spirit, at the laste,
For-wery of my labour al the day,
Took rest, that made me to slepe faste,
And in my slepe I mette, as I lay, 95
How African, right in that selve aray
That Scipioun him saw before that tyde,
Was comen, and stood right at my beddes
syde.

The wery hunter, slepinge in his bed, 99
To wode ayein his minde goth anoon;
The Iuge dremeth how his plees ben
sped;

The carter dremeth how his cartes goon;
The riche, of gold; the knight fight with
his foon,

The seke met he drinketh of the tonne;
The lover met he hath his lady wonne.

Can I nat seyng if that the cause were 106
For I had red of African befor,
That made me to mete that he stood
there;

But thus seyde he, 'thou hast thee so
wel born

In loking of myn olde book to-torn, 110
Of which Macrobie roghte nat a lyte,
That somdel of thy labour wolde I
quyte!'—

Citherea! thou blisful lady swete,
That with thy fyr-brand dauntest whom
thee lest, 114
And madest me this sweven for to mete,
Be thou my help in this, for thou mayst
best;

As wisly as I saw thee north-north-west,
When I began my sweven for to wryte,
So yif me might to ryme hit and endyte!

The Story.

This forseid African me hente anoon, 120
And forth with him unto a gate broghte
Right of a parke, walled with grene
stoon;
And over the gate, with lettres large
y-wroghte,
Ther weren vers y-writen, as me thoghte,
On eyther halfe, of ful gret difference,
Of which I shal yow sey the pleyn sen-
tence. 126

'Thorgh me men goon in-to that blisful
place
Of hertes hele and dedly woundes cure;
Thorgh me men goon unto the welle of
Grace,
Ther grene and lusty May shal ever en-
dure; 130
This is the wey to al good aventure;
Be glad, thou reder, and thy sorwe of-
caste,
Al open am I; passe in, and hy thee
faste!'

'Thorgh me men goon,' than spak that
other syde, 134
'Unto the mortal strokes of the spere,

Of which Disdayn and Daunger is the
 gyde,
 Ther tree shal never fruyt ne leves bere.
 This streem you ledeth to the sorrowful
 were,
 Ther as the fish in prison is al drye;
 Theschewing is only the remedye.' 140

Thise vers of gold and blak y-written
 were,
 The whiche I gan a stounde to beholde,
 For with that oon encreased ay my fere,
 And with that other gan myn herte
 bolde;
 That oon me hette, that other did me
 colde, 145
 No wit had I, for errour, for to chese,
 To entre or flee, or me to save or lese.

Right as, betwixen adamauntes two
 Of even might, a pece of iren y-set, 149
 That hath no might to meve to ne fro—
 For what that on may hale, that other
 let—
 Ferde I, that niste whether me was bet,
 To entre or leve, til African my gyde
 Me hente, and shoof in at the gates
 wyde,

And seyde, 'hit stondeth written in thy
 face, 155
 Thyn errour, though thou telle it not to
 me;
 But dred thee nat to come in-to this
 place,
 For this wryting is no-thing ment by
 thee,
 Ne by noon, but he Loves servant be;
 For thou of love hast lost thy tast, I
 gesse, 160
 As seek man hath of swete and bitter-
 nesse.

But natheles, al-though that thou be
 dulle,
 Yit that thou canst not do, yit mayst
 thou see;
 For many a man that may not stonde a
 pulle, 164
 Yit lyketh him at the wrastling for to be,
 And demeth yit wher he do bet or he;
 And if thou haddest cunning for tendyte,
 I shal thee shewen mater of to wryte.'

With that my hound in his he took anoone,
 Of which I comfort caughte, and wente
 in faste; 170
 But lord! so I was glad and wel begoon!
 For over-al, wher that I myn eyen caste,
 Were treës clad with leves that ay shal
 laste,
 Eche in his kinde, of colour fresh and
 grene
 As emeraude, that Ioye was to sene. 175

The bilder ook, and eek the hardy asshe;
 The piler elm, the cofre unto careyne;
 The boxtree piper; holm to whippes
 lasshe;
 The sayling firr; the cipres, deth to
 pleyne;
 The sheter ew, the asp for shaftes 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 bowes,
 Upon a river, in a grene mede,
 Ther as that swetnesse evermore y-now
 is, 185
 With floures whyte, blewe, yelow, and
 rede;
 And colde welle-stremes, no-thing dede,
 That swommen ful of smale fisshes lighte,
 With finnes rede and scales silver-
 brighte.

On every bough the briddes herde I
 singe, 190
 With voys of aungel in hir armonye,
 Som besyed hem hir briddes forth to
 bringe;
 The litel conyes to hir pley gunne hye,
 And further al aboute I gan espye
 The dredful roo, the buk, the hert and
 hinde, 195
 Squerels, and bestes smale of gentil
 kinde.

Of instruments of strenges in acord
 Herde I so pleye a ravissing swetnesse,
 That god, that maker is of al and lord,
 Ne herde never better, as I gesse; 200
 Therwith a wind, unnethe hit might be
 lesse,
 Made in the leves grene a noise softe
 Acordant to the foules songe on-lofte.

The air of that place so attempre was
 That never was grevaunce of hoot ne
 cold; 205
 Ther wex eek every holsom spyce and
 gras,
 Ne no man may ther wexe seek ne old;
 Yet was ther loye more a thousand fold
 Then man can telle; ne never wolde it
 nighte,
 But ay clear day to any mannes sighte.

Under a tree, besyde a welle, I say 211
 Cypde our lord his arwes forge and fyle;
 And at his fete his bowe al redy lay,
 And wel his doghter tempred al the wyle
 The hedes in the welle, and with hir wyle
 She couched hem after as they shulde
 serve, 216
 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;
 And of the Craft that can and hath the
 might 220
 To doon by force a wight to do folye —
 Disfigurat was she, I nil not lye;
 And by him-self, under an oke, I gesse,
 Sawe I Delyt, that stood with Gentil-
 nesse.

I saw Beautee, withouten any atyr, 225
 And Youthe, ful of game and Iolyte,
 Fool-hardinesse, Flatery, and Desyr,
 Messagerye, and Mede, and other three —
 Hir names shul noght here be told for
 me — 229
 And upon pilers grete of Iasper longe
 I saw a temple of bras y-founded stronge.

Aboute the temple daunceden alway
 Women y-nowe, of whiche somme ther
 were
 Faire of hem-self, and somme of hem
 were gay;
 In kirtels, al disshevele, wente they
 there — 235
 That was hir office alwey, yeer by yere —
 And on the temple, of doves whyte and
 faire
 Saw I sittinge many a hundred paire.

Before the temple-dore ful soberly

Dame Pees sat, with a curteyn in hir
 hond; 240
 And hir besyde, wonder discretly,
 Dame Pacience sitting ther I fond
 With face pale, upon an hille of sond;
 And aller-next, within and eek with-oute,
 Behest and Art, and of hir folke a route.

Within the temple, of syghes hote as fyr
 I herde a swogh that gan aboute renne;
 Which syghes were engendred with
 desyr,
 That maden every auter for to brenne
 Of newe flaume; and wel aspyed I
 thenne 250
 That al the cause of sorwes that they
 drye
 Com of the bitter goddesse Ialouslye.

The god Priapus saw I, as I wente,
 Within the temple, in soverayn place
 stonde,
 In swich aray as whan the asse him
 shente 255
 With crye by night, and with his ceptre
 in honde;
 Ful besily men gunne assaye and fonde
 Upon his hede to sette, of sondry hewe,
 Garlondes ful of fresshe floures newe.

And in a privee corner, in disporte, 260
 Fond I Venus and hir porter Richesse,
 That was ful noble and hauteyn of hir
 porte;
 Derk was that place, but afterward light-
 nesse
 I saw a lyte, unnethe hit might be lesse,
 And on a bed of golde she lay to reste,
 Til that the hote sonne gan to weste. 266

Hir gilte heres with a golden threde
 Y-bounden were, untressed as she lay,
 And naked for the breste unto the hede
 Men might hir see; and, sothly for to
 say, 270
 The remenant wel kevered to my pay
 Right with a subtil kerchef of Valence,
 Ther was no thikker cloth of no defence.

The place yaf a thousand savours swote,
 And Bachus, god of wyn, sat hir besyde,
 And Ceres next, that doth of hunger
 bote; 276

And, as I seide, amiddes lay Cipryde,
To whom on knees two yonge folkes
cryde

To ben hir help; but thus I leet hir lye,
And fether in the temple I gan espye

That, in dispyte of Diane the chaste, 281
Ful many a bowe y-broke heng on the
wal

Of maydens, suche as gunne hir tymes
waste

In hir serveyse; and peynted over al
Of many a story, of which I touche shal
A fewe, as of Calixte and Athalaunte, 286
And many a mayde, of which the name
I wante;

Semyramus, Candace, and Ercules,
Biblis, Dido, Tisbe and Piramus,
Tristram, Isoude, Paris, and Achilles, 290
Eleyne, Cleopatre, and Troilus,
Silla, and eek the moder of Romulus —
Alle these were peynted on that other
syde,
And al hir love, and in what plyte they
dyde.

Whan I was come ayen into the place
That I of spak, that was so swote and
grene, 295
Forth welk I tho, my-selven to solace.
Tho was I war wher that ther sat a quene
That, as of light the somer-sonne shene
Passeth the sterre, right so over mesure
She fairer was than any creature. 301

And in a launde, upon an hille of floures,
Was set this noble goddessse Nature;
Of braunches were hir halles and hir
boures,
Y-wrought after hir craft and hir mesure;
Ne ther nas foul that cometh of engen-
drure, 306
That they ne were prest in hir presence,
To take hir doom and yeve hir audience.

For this was on seynt Valentynes day,
Whan every foul cometh ther to chese
his make, 310
Of every kinde, that men thanke may;
And that so huge a noyse gan they make,
That erthe and see, and tree, and every
lake

So ful was, that unnethe was ther space
For me to stonde, so ful was al the place.

And right as Aleyn, in the Pleynt of
Kinde,
Devyseth Nature of aray and face,
In swich aray men mighten hir ther
finde.

This noble emperesse, ful of grace, 319
Bad every foul to take his owne place,
As they were wont alwey fro yeer to yeer,
Seynt Valentynes day to stonden there.

That is to sey, the foules of ravyne
Were hyst set; and than the foules
smale,

That eten as hem nature wolde enclyne,
As worm, or thing of whiche I telle no
tale; 326

But water-foul sat lowest in the dale;
And foul that liveth by seed sat on the
grene,

And that so fele, that wonder was to
sene.

Ther mighte men the royal egle finde,
That with his sharpe look perceht the
sonne; 331

And other egles of a lower kinde,
Of which that clerkes wel devysen conne.
Ther was the tyraunt with his fethres
donne

And greye, I mene the goshawk, that
doth pyne 335
To briddes for his outrageous ravyne.

The gentil faucon, that with his feet dis-
treyneth

The kinges hond; the hardy sperhawk
eke,

The quayles foo; the merlion that
peyneth

Him-self ful ofte, the larke for to seke;
Ther was the douve, with hir eyen meke;
The Ialous swan, ayens his deth that
singeth;

The oule eek, that of dethe the bode
bringeth;

The crane the geaunt, with his trompes
soune;

The theef, the chogh; and eek the Iang-
ling pye; 345

The scorning Iay; the eles foo, the heroune;

The false lapwing, ful of trecherye;
The stare, that the counseyl can bewrye;
The tame ruddok; and the coward kyte;

The cok, that orloge is of thorpes lyte;

The sparrow, Venus sone; the nightingale, 351

That clepeth forth the fresshe leves newe;
The swallow, mordrer of the flyës smale
That maken hony of floures fresshe of hewe;

The wedded turtel, with hir herte trewe;
The pekok, with his aungels fethres brighte; 356

The fesaunt, scorner of the cok by nighte;

The waker goos; the cuckow ever unkinde;

The popiniay, ful of delicasye;
The drake, stroyer of his owne kinde; 360

The stork, the wreker of avouterye;
The hote corneraunt of glotonye;
The ravenwys, the crow with vois of care;

The throstel olde; the frosty feldefare.

What shulde I seyn? of foules every kinde 365

That in this worlde han fethres and stature,

Men mighten in that place assembled finde

Before the noble goddessse Nature.

And everich of hem did his besy cure
Benignely to chese or for to take, 370
By hir acord, his formel or his make.

But to the poynt — Nature held on hir honde

A formel egle, of shap the gentileste
That ever she among hir werkes fonde,
The most benigne and the goodlieste;
In hir was every vertu at his reste,
So ferforth, that Nature hir-self had blisse

To loke on hir, and ofte hir bek to kisse.

Nature, the vicaire of thalmyghty lorde,
That hoot, cold, hevye, light, [and] moist
and dreye 380

Hath knit by even noumbre of acorde,
In esy vois began to speke and seye,
'Foules, tak hede of my sentence, I preye,
And, for your ese, in furthering of your nede,
As faste as I may speke, I wol me spede.

Ye know wel how, seynt Valentynes day, 386

By my statut and through my governaunce,

Ye come for to chese — and flee your way —

Your makes, as I prik yow with plesaunce.
But natheles, my rightful ordenaunce 390
May I not lete, for al this world to winne,
That he that most is worthy shal beginne.

The tercel egle, as that ye knowen wel,
The foul royal above yow in degree,

The wyse and worthy, secree, trewe as stel, 395

The which I formed have, as ye may see,
In every part as hit best lyketh me,
Hit nedeth noght his shap yow to devyse,
He shal first chese and speken in his gyse.

And after him, by order shul ye chese, 400
After your kinde, everich as yow lyketh,

And, as your hap is, shul ye winne or lese;

But which of yow that love most entryketh,

God sende him hir that sorest for him syketh.'

And therwith-al the tercel gan she calle,
And seyde, 'my sone, the choys is to thee falle.

But natheles, in this condicioun
Mot be the choys of everich that is here,

That she agree to his eleccioun,
Who-so he be that shulde been hir fere;

This is our usage alwey, fro yeer to yeer;

And who so may at this time have his grace,

In blisful tyme he com in-to this place.'

With hed enclnyed and with ful humble chere

This royal tercel spak and taried nought;
'Unto my sovereyn lady, and noght my fere, 416

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,
Do what hir list, to do me live or sterve.

Beseching hir of mercy and of grace, 421
As she that is my lady sovereyne;
Or let me dye present in this place.
For certes, long may I not live in peyne;
For in myn herte is corven every veyne;
Having reward only to my trouthe, 426
My dere herte, have on my wo som
routhe.

And if that I to hir be founde untrewē,
Disobeysaunt, or wilful negligent,
Avauntour, or in proces love a newe, 430
I pray to you this be my Iugement,
That with these foules I be al to-rent,
That ilke day that ever she me finde
To hir untrewē, or in my gilte unkinde.

And sin that noon loveth hir so wel as I,
Al be she never of love me behette, 436
Than oghte she be myn thourgh hir
mercy,
For other bond can I noon on hir knette.
For never, for no wo, ne shal I lette
To serven hir, how fer so that she wende;
Sey what yow list, my tale is at an ende.'

Right as the fresshe, rede rose newe 442
Ayen the somer-sonne coloured is,
Right so for shame al wexen gan the
hewe
Of this formel, whan she herde al this;
She neyther answerde 'wel,' ne seyde
amis,
So sore abashed was she, til that Nature
Seyde, 'doghter, drede yow nocht, I yow
assure.'

Another tercel egle spak anoon
Of lower kinde, and seyde, 'that shal not
be; 450
I love hir bet than ye do, by seynt Iohn,
Or atte leste I love hir as wel as ye;
And lenger have served hir, in my de-
gree,
And if she shulde have loved for long
loving,
To me allone had been the guerdoning.

I dar eek seye, if she me finde fals, 456
Unkinde, Iangler, or rebel any wyse,
Or Ialous, do me hongen by the hals!
And but I bere me in hir servyse
As wel as that my wit can me suffyse, 460
Fro poynt to poynt, hir honour for to
save,
Tak she my lyf, and al the good I have.'

The thridde tercel egle answerde tho,
'Now, sirs, ye seen the litel leyser here;
For every foul cryeth out to been a-go 465
Forth with his make, or with his lady
dere;
And eek Nature hir-self ne wol nought
here,
For taryng here, nocht half that I wolde
seye;
And but I speke, I mot for sorwe deye.

Of long servyse avaunte I me no-thing,
But as possible is me to dye to-day 471
For wo, as he that hath ben languissh-
ing
Thise twenty winter, and wel happen
may
A man may serven bet and more to pay
In half a yere, al-though hit were no
more, 475
Than som man doth that hath served ful
yore.

I ne say not this by me, for I ne can
Do no servyse that may my lady plese;
But I dar seyn, I am hir trewest man
As to my dome, and feynest wolde hir
ese; 480
At shorte wordes, til that deth me sese,
I wol ben hires, whether I wake or
winke,
And trewe in al that herte may bethinke.'

Of al my lyf, sin that day I was born,
So gentil plee in love or other thing 485
Ne herde never no man me beforn,
Who-[so] that hadde leyser and cun-
ning
For to reherse hir chere and hir spek-
ing;
And from the morwe gan this speche
laste
Til dounward drow the sonne wonder
faste. 490

The noyse of foules for to ben delivered
So loude rong, 'have doon and let us
wende!'

That wel wende I the wode had al to-
shivered.

'Come of!' they cryde, 'allas! ye wil us
shende!

Whan shal your cursed pleding have an
ende? 495

How shulde a Iuge cyther party leve,
For yee or nay, with-ouen any preve?'

The goos, the cokkow, and the doke also
So cryden 'kek, kek!' 'kukkow!' 'quek,
quek!' hye,

That thorgh myn eres the noyse wente
tho. 500

The goos seyde, 'al this nis not worth
a flye!

But I can shape hereof a remedye,
And I wol sey my verdict faire and swythe
For water-foul, who-so be wrooth or
blythe.'

'And I for worm-foul,' seyde the fool
kukkow, 505

'For I wol, of myn owne auctoritè,
For comune spede, take the charge
now,

For to delivere us is gret charitè.'
'Ye may abyde a while yet, parde!'
Seide the turtel, 'if hit be your wille 510
A wight may speke, him were as good
be stille.

I am a seed-foul, oon the unworthieste,
That wot I wel, and litel of kunninge;
But bet is that a wightes tonge reste 514

Than entremeten him of such doinge
Of which he neyther rede can nor singe.
And who-so doth, ful foule himself acloy-
eth,

For office uncommitted ofte anoyeth.'

Nature, which that alway had an ere 519
To murmour of the lewednes behinde,
With facound voys seyde, 'hold your
tonges there!

And I shal sone, I hope, a counseyl finde
You to delivere, and fro this noyse un-
binde;

I Iuge, of every folk men shal oon calle
To seyn the verdict for you foules alle.'

Assented were to this conclusioun 526

The briddes alle; and foules of ravyne
Han chosen first, by pleyn eleccioun,
The tercelet of the faucon, to diflyne
Al hir sentence, and as him list, termyne;
And to Nature him gonnen to presente,
And she accepteth him with glad entente.

The tercelet seide than in this manere:
'Ful hard were hit to preve hit by re-
soun

Who loveth best this gentil formel here;
For everich hath swich replicacioun, 536
That noon by skilles may be broght
a-doun;

I can not seen that arguments avayle;
Than semeth hit ther moste be batayle.'

'Al redy!' quod these egles tercels tho.
'Nay, sirs!' quod he, 'if that I dorste it
seye, 541

Ye doon me wrong, my tale is not y-do!
For sirs, ne taketh noght a-gref, I preye,
It may noght gon, as ye wolde, in this
weye;

Oure is the voys that han the charge in
honde, 545
And to the Iuges dome ye moten stonde;

And therfor pees! I seye, as to my wit,
Me wolde thinke how that the worthieste
Of knighthode, and lengest hath used hit,
Moste of estat, of blode the gentileste,
Were sittingest for hir, if that hir leste;
And of these three she wot hir-self, I
trowe,
Which that he be, for hit is light to
knowe.'

The water-foules han her hedes leyd
Togeder, and of short avyusement, 555
Whan everich had his large golee seyde,
They seyden sothly, al by oon assent,
How that 'the goos, with hir facounde
gent,

That so desyreth to pronounce our nede,
Shal telle our tale,' and preyde 'god hir
spede.' 560

And for these water-foules tho began
The goos to speke, and in hir cakelinge
She seyde, 'pees! now tak kepe every
man,

And herkeneth which a reson I shal
bringe;
My wit is sharp, I love no tarynge; 565
I seye, I rede him, though he were my
brother,
But she wol love him, lat him love an-
other!'

'Lo here! a parfit reson of a goos!'
Quod the sperhawk; 'never mot she thee!
Lo, swich hit is to have a tonge loos! 570
Now parde, fool, yet were hit bet for thee
Have holde thy pees, than shewed thy
nycte!
Hit lyth not in his wit nor in his wille,
But sooth is seyd, "a fool can nought be
stille."

The laughter aroos of gentil foules alle,
And right anon the seed-foul chosen
hadde 576
The turtel trewe, and gunne hir to hem
calle,
And preyden hir to seye the sothe sadde
Of this matere, and asked what she radde;
And she answerde, that pleynly hir en-
tente 580
She wolde shewe, and sothly what she
mente.

'Nay, god forbede a lover shulde
chaunge!'
The turtel seyde, and wex for shame al
reed;
'Thogh that his lady ever-more be
straunge,
Yet let him serve hir ever, til he be deed;
For sothe, I preyse nought the gooses
reed; 586
For thogh she deyed, I wolde non other
make,
I wol ben hires, til that the deth me take.'

'Wel bourded!' quod the doke, 'by my
hat!
That men shulde alwey loven, causeles,
Who can a reson finde or wit in that?
Daunceth he mury that is mirtheles?
Who shulde recche of that is reccheles?
Ye, quek!' yit quod the doke, ful wel
and faire,
'There been mo sterres, god wot, than
a paire!' 595

'Now fy, cherl!' quod the gentil tercelet,
'Out of the dunghil com that word ful
right,
Thou canst nought see which thing is wel
be-set:
Thou forest by love as oules doon by
light,
The day hem blent, ful wel they see by
night; 600
Thy kind is of so lowe a wrechednesse,
That what love is, thou canst nat see ne
gesse.'

Tho gan the cuckow putte him forth in
pees
For foul that eteth worm, and seide
blyve,
'So I,' quod he, 'may have my make in
pees, 605
I recche not how longe that ye stryve;
Lat ech of hem be soleyn al hir lyve,
This is my reed, sin they may not acorde;
This shorte lesson nedeth nought recorde.'

'Ye! have the glotoun fild ynogh his
pauche, 610
Than are we wel!' seyde the merlioun;
'Thou mordrer of the heysugge on the
braunche
That broghte thee forth, thou [rewthe-
lees] glotoun!
Live thou soleyn, wormes corrupcioun!
For no fors is of lakke of thy nature; 615
Go, lewed be thou, whyl the world may
dure!'

'Now pees,' quod Nature, 'I comaunde
here;
For I have herd al your opinioun,
And in effect yet be we never the nere;
But fynally, this is my conclusioun, 620
That she hir-self shal han the eleccioun
Of whom hir list, who-so be wrooth or
blythe,
Him that she cheest, he shal hir have as
swythe.

For sith hit may not here discussed be
Who loveth hir best, as seide the tercelet,
Than wol I doon hir this favour, that
she 626
Shal have right him on whom hir herte
is set,

And he hir that his herte hath on hir knet.
This luge I, Nature, for I may not lyë;
To noon estat I have non other yë. 630

But as for counseyl for to chese a make,
If hit were reson, certes, than wolde I
Counseyle yow the royal tercel take,
As seide the tercelet ful skilfully,
As for the gentlest and most worthy, 635
Which I have wrought so wel to my
plesaunce;
That to yow oghte been a suffisaunce.'

With dredful vois the formel hir answerde,
'My rightful lady, goddesse of Nature,
Soth is that I am ever under your yerde,
Lyk as is everiche other creature, 641
And moot be youres whyl my lyf may dure;
And therfor graunteth me my firste bone,
And myn entente I wol yow sey right
sone.'

'I graunte it you,' quod she; and right
anoon 645
This formel egle spak in this degree,
'Almighty quene, unto this yeer be doon
I aske respit for to avysen me.
And after that to have my choys al free;
This al and som, that I wolde speke and
seye; 650
Ye gete no more, al-though ye do me
deye.

I wol nocht serven Venus ne Cupyde
For sothe as yet, by no manere wey.'
'Now sin it may non other wyse betyde,'
Quod tho Nature 'here is no more to
sey; 655
Than wolde I that these foules were
a-wey
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
three; 660
A yeer is not so longe to endure,
And ech of yow peyne him, in his degree,
For to do wel; for, god wot, quit is she

Fro yow this yeer; what after so befallè,
This entremes is dressed for you alle.' 665

And whan this werk al broght was to an
ende,
To every foule Nature yaf his make
By even acorde, and on hir wey they
wende.
A! lord! the blisse and Ioye that they
make! 669
For ech of hem gan other in winges take,
And with hir nekkes ech gan other winde,
Thanking alwey the noble goddesse of
kinde.

But first were chosen foules for to singe,
As yeer by yeer was alwey hir usaunce
To singe a roundel at hir departinge, 675
To do Nature honour and plesaunce.
The note, I trowe, maked was in Fraunce;
The wordes wer swich as ye may heer
finde,
The nexte vers, as I now have in minde.

Qui bien aime a tard oublie.

'Now welcom somer, with thy sonne
softe, 680
That hast this wintres weders over-shake,
And driven away the longe nightes blake!

Seynt Valentyn, that art ful hy on-lofte; —
Thus singen smale foules for thy sake —
*Now welcom somer, with thy sonne softe,
That hast this wintres weders over-shake.*

Wel han they cause for to gladen ofte,
Sith ech of hem recovered hath his make;
Ful blisful may they singen whan they
wake;
*Now welcom somer, with thy sonne softe,
That hast this wintres weders over-shake,
And driven away the longe nightes blake.'*

And with the showing, whan hir song
was do,
That foules maden at hir flight a-way,
I wook, and other bokes took me to 695
To rede upon, and yet I rede alway;
I hope, y-wis, to rede so som day
That I shal mete som thing for to fare
The bet; and thus to rede I nil not spare.

Explicit tractatus de congregacione Volucrum die sancti Valentini.

VI. A COMPLEINT TO HIS LADY.

I. (*In seven-line stanzas.*)

THE longe night, whan every creature
 Shulde have hir rest in somewhat, as by
 kinde,
 Or elles ne may hir lyf nat long endure,
 Hit falleth most in-to my woful minde
 How I so fer have broght my-self
 behinde, 5
 That, sauf the deeth, ther may no-thing
 me lisse,
 So desespai red I am from alle blisse.

This same thoght me lasteth til the
 morwe,
 And from the morwe forth til hit be
 eve;
 Ther nedeth me no care for to porwe, 10
 For bothe I have good leyser and good
 leve;
 Ther is no wight that wol me wo
 bereve
 To wepe y-nogh, and wailen al my fille ;
 The sore spark of peyne doth me spille.

II. (*In Terza Rima ; imperfect.*)

[The sore spark of peyne doth me
 spille ;] 15
 This Love hath [eek] me set in swich
 a place
 That my desyr [he] never wol ful-
 fille ;
 For neither pitee, mercy, neither grace
 Can I nat finde ; and [fro] my sorw-
 ful herte,
 For to be deed, I can hit nat arace. 20
 The more I love, the more she doth me
 smerte ;
 Through which I see, with-oute reme-
 dye,
 That from the deeth I may no wyse
 asterte ;
 [For this day in hir servise shal I dye].

III. (*In Terza Rima ; imperfect.*)

[Thus am I slain, with sorwes ful dy-
 verse ;] 25

Ful longe agoon I oghte have taken
 hede].
 Now sothly, what she hight I wol
 reherse ;
 Hir name is Bountee, set in womanhede,
 Sadnesse in youthe, and Beautee pry-
 deeles,
 And Plesaunce, under governaunce
 and drede ; 30
 Hir surname eek is Faire Rewtheeles,
 The Wyse, y-knit un-to Good Aventure,
 That, for I love hir, sleeth me gileteles.
 Hir love I best, and shal, whyl I may
 dure,
 Bet than my-self an hundred thousand
 deel, 35
 Than al this worldes richesse or crea-
 ture.
 Now hath nat Lovē me bestowed weel
 To lovē, ther I never shal have part ?
 Allas ! right thus is turned me the
 wheel,
 Thus am I slayn with loves fyry dart. 40
 I can but love hir best, my swete fo ;
 Love hath me taught no more of his
 art
 But serve alwey, and stinte for no wo.

IV. (*In ten-line stanzas.*)

[With]-in my trewe careful herte ther is
 So moche wo, and [eek] so litel blis, 45
 That wo is me that ever I was bore ;
 For al that thing which I desyre I mis,
 And al that ever I wolde nat, I-wis,
 That finde I redy to me evermore ; 49
 And of al this I not to whom me pleyne.
 For she that mighte me out of this
 bringe
 Ne reccheth nat whether I wepe or
 singe ;
 So litel rewthe hath she upon my peyne.
 Allas ! whan sleping-time is, than I wake,
 Whan I shulde daunce, for fere than I
 quake ; 55
 [Yow rekketh never wher I flete or
 sinke ;]
 This hevyl yf I lede for your sake,

Though ye ther-of in no wyse hede take,
 [For on my wo yow deyneth not to
 thinke.]

My hertes lady, and hool my lyves
 quene! 60

For trewly dorste I seye, as that I fele,
 Me semeth that your swete herte of
 stele

Is whetted now ageynes me to kene.

My dere herte, and best beloved fo,
 Why lyketh yow to do me al this wo, 65

What have I doon that greveth yow,
 or sayd,

But for I serve and love yow and no mo?
 And whylst I live, I wol do ever so;

And therfor, swete, ne beth nat evil
 apayd. 69

For so good and so fair as [that] ye be,
 Hit were [a] right gret wonder but ye
 hadde

Of alle servants, bothe goode and
 badde;

And leest worthy of alle hem, I am he.

But never-the-les, my righte lady swete,
 Though that I be unconning and unmete

To serve as I best coude ay your
 hynesse, 76

Yit is ther fayner noon, that wolde I
 hete,

Than I, to do yow ese, or elles bete
 What-so I wiste were to [yow dis-
 tresse].

And hadde I might as good as I have
 wille, 80

Than shulde ye fele wher it wer so or
 noon;

For in this worlde living is ther noon
 That fayner wolde your hertes wil fulfillle.

For bothe I love, and eek dreed yow so
 sore,

And algates moot, and have doon yow,
 ful yore, 85

That bet loved is noon, ne never shal;
 And yit I wolde beseche yow of no more

But leveth wel, and be nat wrooth ther-
 fore,

And lat me serve yow forth; lo! this
 is al.

For I am nat so hardy ne so wood 90
 For to desire that ye shulde love 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 unlykly for to thryve; 95

Yit, for al this, [now] witeth ye right
 wele,

That ye ne shul me from your service
 dryve

That I nil ay, with alle my wittes fyve,
 Serve yow trewly, what wo so that I
 fele.

For I am set on yow in swich manere 100
 That, though ye never wil upon me
 rewe,

I moste yow love, and ever been as
 trewe

As any can or may on-lyve [here].

The more that I love yow, goodly free,
 The lasse fynde I that ye loven me; 105

Allas! whan shal that harde wit
 amende?

Wher is now al your wommanly pitee,
 Your gentillesse and your debonairstee,

Wil ye no thing ther-of upon me
 spende? 109

And so hool, swete, as I am youre al,
 And so gret wil as I have yow to serve,

Now, certes, and ye lete me thus sterve,
 Yit have ye wonne ther-on but a smal.

For, at my knowing, I do no-thing why,
 And this I wol beseche yow hertely, 115

That, ther ever ye finde, whyl ye live,
 A trewer servant to yow than am I,

Leveth [me] thanne, and sleeth me
 hardely,

And I my deeth to you wol al forgive.
 And if ye finde no trewer [man than me],

[Why] will ye suffre than that I thus
 spille, 121

And for no maner gilt but my good
 wille?

As good wer thanne untrewre as trewe
 to be.

But I, my lyf and deeth, to yow obeye,
 And with right buxom herte hoolly I

preye, 125
 As [is] your moste plesure, so doth
 by me;

Wel lever is me lyken yow and deye

Than for to any thing or thinke or seye
That mighte yow offende in any tyme.
And therfor, swete, rewe on my peynes
smerte, 130

And of your grace granteth me som
drope;
For elles may me laste ne blis ne hope,
Ne dwellen in my trouble careful herte.

VII. ANELIDA AND ARCITE.

THE COMPLEYNT OF FEIRE ANELIDA AND
FALS ARCITE.

Proem.

THOU ferse god of armes, Mars the rede,
That in the frosty country called Trace,
Within thy grisly temple ful of drede
Honoured art, as patroun of that place!
With thy Bellona, Pallas, ful of grace, 5
Be present, and my song continue and
gye;
At my beginning thus to thee I crye.

For hit ful depe is sonken in my minde,
With pitous herte in English for tendyte
This olde storie, in Latin which I finde,
Of quene Anelida and fals Arcite, 11
That elde, which that al can frete and
byte,
As hit hath freten mony a noble storie,
Hath nigh devoured out of our memorie.

Be favorable eek, thou Polymnia, 15
On Parnaso that, with thy susters glade,
By Elicon, not fer from Cirrea,
Singest with vois memorial in the shade,
Under the laurer which that may not fade,
And do that I my ship to haven winne;
First folow I Stace, and after him Corinne.

The Story.

Iamque domos patrias, &c.; Statii The-
bais, xii. 519.

Whan Theseus, with werres longe and
grete,
The aspre folk of Cithe had over-come,
With laurer crowned, in his char gold-
bete,
Hoom to his contre-houses is y-come; —
For which the peple blisful. al and somme,
So cryden, that unto the sterres hit wente,
And him to honouren dide al hir en-
tente; —

Before this duk, in signe of hy victorie,
The trompes come, and in his baner
large 30
The image of Mars; and, in token of
glorie,
Men mighten seen of tresor many a
charge,
Many a bright helm, and many a spere
and targe,
Many a fresh knight, and many a blisful
route, 34
On hors, on fote, in al the felde aboute.

Ipolita his wyf, the hardy quene
Of Cithia, that he conquered hadde,
With Emelye, hir yonge suster shene,
Faire in a char of golde he with him
ladde,
That al the ground aboute hir char she
spradde 40
With brightnesse of the beautee in hir
face,
Fulfilde of largesse and of alle grace.

With his triumpe and laurer-crowned
thus,
In al the floure of fortunes yevinge,
Lete I this noble prince Theseus 45
Toward Athenes in his wey rydinge,
And founde I wol in shortly for to bringe
The slye wey of that I gan to wryte,
Of quene Anelida and fals Arcite.

Mars, which that through his furious
course of yre, 50
The olde wrath of Iuno to fulfille,
Hath set the peples hertes bothe on fyre
Of Thebes and Grece, everich other to
kille
With bloody speres, ne rested never stille,
But throng now her, now ther, among
hem bothe, 55
That everich other slough, so wer they
wrothe.

For whan Amphiorax and Tydeus,
 Ipomedon, Parthonopee also
 Were dede, and slayn [was] proud Cam-
 paneus,
 And whan the wrecches Thebans, breth-
 eren two, 60
 Were slayn, and kñg Adrastus hoom
 a-go,
 So desolat stood Thebes and so bare,
 That no wight coude remedie of his care.

And whan the olde Creon gan espye
 How that the blood roial was broght
 adoun, 65
 He held the cite by his tyrannye,
 And did the gentils of that regioun
 To ben his frendes, and dwellen in the
 toun.

So what for love of him, and what for awe,
 The noble folk wer to the toune y-drawe.

Among al these, Anelida the quene 71
 Of Ermony was in that toun dwellinge,
 That fairer was then is the sonne shene;
 Through-out the world so gan hir name
 springe, 74

That hir to seen had every wight lykinge;
 For, as of trouthe, is ther noon hir liche,
 Of al the women in this worlde riche.

Yong was this quene, of twenty yeer of
 elde,

Of midel stature, and of swich fairnesse,
 That nature had a loye hir to behelde;
 And for to speken of hir stedfastnesse, 81
 She passed hath Penelope and Lucesse,
 And shortly, if she shal be comprehended,
 In hir ne mighte no-thing been amended.

This Theban knight [Arcite] eek, sooth
 to seyn, 85

Was yong, and ther-with-al a lusty knight,
 But he was double in love and no-thing
 pleyn,

And subtil in that crafte over any wight,
 And with his cunning wan this lady
 bright; 89

For so ferforth he gan hir trouthe assure,
 That she him [trust] over any creature.

What shuld I seyn? she loved Arcite so,
 That, whan that he was absent any throwe,
 Anon hir thoghte hir herte brast a-two;

For in hir sight to hir he bar him lowe,
 So that she wende have al his herte
 y-knowe; 96

But he was fals; it nas but feyned chere,
 As nedeth not to men such craft to lere.

But never-the-les ful mikel besinesse 99
 Had he, er that he mighte his lady winne,
 And swoor he wolde dyen for distresse,
 Or from his wit he seyde he wolde twinne.
 Alas, the whyle! for hit was routhe and
 sinne,

That she upon his sorowes wolde rewe,
 But no-thing thenketh the fals as doth
 the trewe. 105

Hir fredom fond Arcite in swich manere,
 That al was his that she hath, moche or
 lyte,

Ne to no creature made she chere
 Ferther than that hit lyked to Arcite;
 Ther was no lak with which he mighte
 hir wyte, 110

She was so ferforth yeven him to plesse,
 That al that lyked him, hit did hir ese.

Ther nas to hir no maner lettre y-sent
 That touched love, from any maner wight,
 That she ne shewed hit him, er hit was
 brent; 115

So pleyn she was, and did hir fulle might,
 That she nil hyden nothing from hir
 knight,

Lest he of any untrouthe hir upbreyde;
 Withouten bode his heste she obeyde.

And eek he made him Ielous over here,
 That, what that any man had to hir seyde,
 Anoon he wolde preyen hir to swere
 What was that word, or make him evel
 apayd;

Than wende she out of hir wit have
 brayd;

But al this nas but sleight and flaterye,
 Withouten love he feyned Ielositye. 126

And al this took she so debonerly,
 That al his wille, hir thoghte hit skilful
 thing,

And ever the lenger loved him tenderly,
 And did him honour as he were a king.
 Hir herte was wedded to him with a ring;
 So ferforth upon trouthe is hir entente,

That wher he goth, hir herte with him wente.

Whan she shal ete, on him is so hir thought,
That wel unnethe of mete took she keep;
And whan that she was to hir reste broght, 136

On him she thoghte alwey til that she sleep;

Whan he was absent, prevely she weep;
Thus liveth fair Anelida the quene 139
For fals Arcite, that did hir al this tene.

This fals Arcite, of his new-fangelnesse,
For she to him so lowly was and trewe,
Took lesse deyntee for hir stedfastnesse,
And saw another lady, proud and newe,
And right anon he cladde him in hir hewe — 145

Wot I not whether in whyte, rede, or grene —
And falsed fair Anelida the quene.

But never-the-les, gret wonder was hit noon

Thogh he wer fals, for hit is kinde of man, 149

Sith Lamek was, that is so longe agoon,
To been in love as fals as ever he can;
He was the firste fader that began
To loven two, and was in bigamye;
And he found tentes first, but-if men lye.

This fals Arcite sumwhat moste he feyne,
Whan he wex fals, to covere his traitorye,
Right as an hors, that can both byte and pleyne; 157

For he bar hir on honde of trecherye,
And swoor he coude hir doublenesse espye,

And al was falsnes that she to him mente;
Thus swoor this theef, and forth his way he wente. 161

Alas! what herte might endure hit,
For routhe or wo, hir sorow for to telle?
Or what man hath the cunning or the wit?

Or what man might with-in the chambre dwelle, 165

If I to him reheresen shal the helle,
That suffreth fair Anelida the quene
For fals Arcite, that did hir al this tene?

She wepeth, wailleth, swowneth pitously,
To grounde deed she falleth as a stoon;
Al crampissheth hir limes cokedly, 171
She speketh as hir wit were al agoon;
Other colour then asshen hath she noon,
Noon other word she speketh moche or lyte,
But 'mercy, cruel herte myn, Arcite!' 175

And thus endureth, til that she was so mate

That she ne hath foot on which she may sustene;

But forth languisshing ever in this estate,
Of which Arcite hath nother routhe ne tene;

Hir herte was elles-where, newe and grene, 180

That on hir wo ne deyneth him not to thinke,

Him rekketh never wher she flete or sinke.

His newe lady holdeth him so narowe
Up by the brydel, at the staves ende,

That every word, he dradde hit as an arowe; 185

Hir daunger made him bothe bowe and bende,

And as hir liste, made him turne or wende;

For she ne graunted him in hir livinge
No grace, why that he hath lust to singe;

But drof him forth, unnethe liste hir knowe 190

That he was servaunt to hir ladyshippe,
But lest that he wer proude, she held him lowe;

Thus serveth he, withouten fee or shipe,
She sent him now to londe, now to shippe; 194

And for she yaf him daunger al his fille,
Therfor she had him at hir owne wille.

Ensamble of this, ye thrifty wimmen alle,
Take here Anelida and fals Arcite,
That for hir liste him 'dere herte' calle,
And was so meek, therfor he loved hir lyte; 200

The kinde of mannes herte is to delyte
In thing that straunge is, also god me save!

For what he may not gete, that wolde he
have.

Now turne we to Anelida ageyn, 204
That pyneth day by day in languissing;
But whan she saw that hir ne gat no geyn,
Upon a day, ful sorowfully weping,
She caste hir for to make a compleyning,
And with hir owne honde she gan hit
wryte; 209
And sente hit to hir Theban knight Arcite.

THE COMPLEYNT OF ANELIDA THE
QUENE UPON FALS ARCITE.

Proem.

So thirleth with the poynt of remem-
braunce,
The sword of sorowe, y-whet with fals
plesaunce,
Myn herte, bare of blis and blak of
hewe,
That turned is in quaking al my
daunce,
My suretee in a-whaped counte-
naunce; 215
Sith hit availeth not for to ben
trewe;
For who-so trewest is, hit shal hir
reve,
That serveth love and doth hir observ-
aunce
Alwey to oon, and chaungeth for
no newe.

(Strophe.)

1. I wot my-self as wel as any wight;
For I loved oon with al my herte and
might 221
More then my-self, an hundred
thousand sythe,
And called him my hertes lyf, my
knight,
And was al his, as fer as hit was
right;
And whan that he was glad, than
was I blythe, 225
And his disese was my deeth as
swythe;
And he ayein his trouthe me had
pight
For ever-more, his lady me to kythe.

2. Now is he fals, alas! and causeles,
And of my wo he is so routheles, 230
That with a worde him list not ones
deyne
To bring ayein my sorowful herte in
pees,
For he is caught up in a-nother lecs.
Right as him list, he laugheth at
my peyne,
And I ne can myn herte not re-
streyne, 235
That I ne love him alwey, never-the-
les;
And of al this I not to whom me
pleyne.
3. And shal I pleyne — alas! the harde
stounde —
Un-to my foo that yaf my herte a
wounde,
And yet desyreth that myn harm be
more? 240
Nay, certes! ferther wol I never
founde
Non other help, my sores for to
sounde.
My destinee hath shapen it ful yore;
I wil non other medecyne ne lore;
I wil ben ay ther I was ones bounde,
That I have seid, be seid for ever-
more! 246
4. Alas! wher is become your gentil-
esse!
Your wordes fulle of plesaunce and
humblesse?
Your observaunces in so low man-
ere,
And your awayting and your businesse
Upon me, that ye calden your mais-
tresse, 251
Your sovereyn lady in this worlde
here?
Alas! and is ther nother word ne
chere
Ye vouchesauf upon myn hevinesse?
Alas! your love, I bye hit al to
dere. 255
5. Now certes, swete, thogh that ye
Thus causeles the cause be
Of my dedly adversitee,
Your manly reson oghte it to respyte

To slee your frend, and namely me,
That never yet in no degree 261
Offended yow, as wisly he,
That al wot, out of wo my soule quyte!

¶ But for I shewed yow, Arcite,
Al that men wolde to me wryte, 265
And was so besy, yow to delyte —
My honour save — mcke, kinde, and
free,
Therfor ye putte on me the wyte,
And of me recche not a myte, 269
Thogh that the swerd of sorow byte
My woful herte through your crueltee.

6. My swete foo, why do ye so, for
shame?
And thenke ye that furthered be
your name,
To love a newe, and been un-
trewe? nay!
And putte yow in sclander now
and blame, 275
And do to me adversitee and
grame,
That love yow most, god, wel
thou wost! alway?
Yet turn ayeyn, and be al pleyn
som day,
And than shal this that now is mis
be game,
And al for-yive, whyl that I live
may. 280

(*Antistrophe.*)

1. Lo! herte myn, al this is for to seyne,
As whether shal I preye or elles
pleyne?
Whiche is the way to doon yow to
be trewe?
For either mot I have yow in my
cheyne,
Or with the dethe ye mot departe us
tweyne; 285
Ther ben non other mene weyes
newe;
For god so wisly on my soule rewe,
As verily ye sleen me with the peyne;
That may ye see unfeyned of myn
hewe.
2. For thus ferforth have I my deth
[y]-soght, 290

My-self I mordre with my prevy
thoght;
For sorow and routhe of your un-
kindnesse
I wepe, I wake, I faste; al helpeth
noght;
I weyve loy that is to speke of oght,
I voyde companye, I flee gladnesse;
Who may avaunte hir bet of hevi-
nesse 296
Then I? and to this plyte have ye me
brought,
Withoute gilt; me nedeth no wit-
nesse.

3. And sholde I preye, and weyve
womanhede?
Nay! rather deth then do so foul a
dede, 300
And axe mercy gilteles! what nede?
And if I pleyne what lyf that I lede,
Yow rekketh not; that know I, out
of drede;
And if I unto yow myn othes bede
For myn excuse, a scorn shal be my
mede; 305
Your chere floureth, but hit wol not
sede;
Ful longe agoon I oghte have take
hede.
4. For thogh I hadde yow to-morow
ageyn,
I might as wel holde Averill fro reyn,
As holde yow, to make yow sted-
fast. 310
Almighty god, of trouthe sovereyn,
Wher is the trouthe of man? who
hath hit sleyn?
Who that hem loveth shal hem
fynde as fast
As in a tempest is a roten mast.
Is that a tame best that is ay feyn 315
To renne away, when he is leest
agast?
5. Now mercy, swete, if I misseye,
Have I seyd oght amis, I preye?
I not; my wit is al aweye.
I fare as doth the song of *Chaunte-
pleure.* 320
For now I pleyne, and now I
pleye,

I am so mased that I deye,
Arcite hath born away the keye
Of al my worlde, and my good
aventure!

¶ For in this worlde nis creature 325
Wakinge, in more discomfiture
Then I, ne more sorow endure;
And if I slepe a furlong-wey or tweye,
Than thinketh me, that your figure
Before me stant, clad in asure, 330
To profren eft a newe assure
For to be trewe, and mercy me to
preye.

6. The longe night this wonder sight
I drye,
And on the day for this afray I
dye, 334
And of al this right noght, y-wis,
ye recche.
Ne never mo myn yën two be
drye,
And to your routhe and to your
trouthe I crye.
But welawey! to fer be they
to fecche;
Thus holdeth me my destinee
a wrecche.
But me to rede out of this drede
or gye 340

Ne may my wit, so weyk is hit,
not strecche.

Conclusion.

Than ende I thus, sith I may do no
more,
I yeve hit up for now and ever-more;
For I shal never eft putten in bal-
aunce 344
My sekernes, ne lerne of love the lore.
But as the swan, I have herd seyde
ful yore,
Ayeins his deth shal singe in his
penaunce,
So singe I here my destiny or
chaunce,
How that Arcite Anclida so sore
Hath thirled with the poynt of
remembraunce! 350

The story continued.

Whan that Anclida this woful quene
Hath of hir hande written in this wyse,
With face deed, betwixe pale and grene,
She fel a-swowe; and sith she gan to
ryse,
And unto Mars avoweth sacrificyse 355
With-in the temple, with a sorowful chere,
That shapen was as ye shal after here.

(Unfinished.)

VIII. CHAUCERS WORDES UNTO ADAM, HIS OWNE
SCRIVEYN.

ADAM scriveyn, if ever it thee bifalle
Boece or Troilus to wryten newe,
Under thy lokkes thou most have the
scalle,
But after my making thou wryte trewe.

So ofte a daye I mot thy werk renew, 5
Hit to correcte and eek to rubbe and
scrape;
And al is through thy negligence and
rape.

IX. THE FORMER AGE.

A BLISFUL lyf, a paisible and a swete
Ledden the peples in the former age;
They helde hem payed of fruites, that
they ete,

Which that the feldes yave hem by
usage;
They ne were nat forpampred with out-
rage; 5

Unknowen was the quern and eek the melle;
They eten mast, hawes, and swich pounage,
And dronken water of the colde welle.

Yit nas the ground nat wounded with the plough,
But corn up-sprong, unsowe of mannes hond,
The which they gniden, and eete nat half y-nough.

No man yit knew the forwes of his lond;
No man the fyr out of the flint yit fond;
Un-korven and un-grobbled lay the vyne;
No man yit in the mortar spyces grond
To clarre, ne to sause of galantyne.

No mader, welde, or wood no listere
Ne knew; the flees was of his former hewe;

No flesh ne wiste offence of egge or spere;
No coyn ne knew man which was fals or trewe;

No ship yit karf the wawes grene and blewe;

No marchaunt yit ne fette outlandish ware;

No trompes for the werres folk ne knewe,
No toures heye, and walles rounde or square.

What sholde it han avayled to werreye?
Ther lay no profit, ther was no richesse,
But cursed was the tyme, I dar wel seye,
That men first dide hir swety bysnesse
To grobbe up metal, lurkinge in darknesse,

And in the riveres first gemmes soghte.
Allas! than sprong up al the cursednesse
Of covetyse, that first our sorwe broghte!

Thise tyraunts putte hem gladly nat in pres,

No wildnesse, ne no busshes for to winne
Ther poverte is, as seith Diogenes,
Ther as vitaile is eck so skars and thinne
That nocht but mast or apples is ther-inne.
But, ther as bagges been and fat vitaile,
Ther wol they gon, and spare for no sinne
With al hir ost the cite for tassaile.

Yit were no paleis-chaumbres, ne non halles;

In caves and [in] wodes softe and swete
Slepten this blissed folk with-oute walles,
On gras or leves in parfit quiete.
No doun of fetheres, ne no bleched shete
Was kid to hem, but in seurtee they slepte;
Hir hertes were al oon, with-oute galles,
Everich of hem his feith to other kepte.

Unforged was the hauberk and the plate;
The lambish peple, voyd of alle vyce,
Hadden no fantasye to debate,

But ech of hem wolde other wel cheryce;
No pryde, non envye, non avaryce,
No lord, no taylage by no tyrannye;

Humbleesse and pees, good feith, the emperice,
[Fulfilled erthe of olde curtesye.]

Yit was not Iupiter the likerous,
That first was fader of delicacye,
Come in this world; ne Nembrot, desirous

To reynen, had nat maad his toures hye.
Allas, allas! now may men wepe and crye!
For in our dayes nis but covetyse
[And] doublenesse, and tresoun and envye,

Poysoun, manslauhtré, and mordre in sondry wyse.

Finit Etas prima. Chaucers.

X. FORTUNE.

†Balades de visage sanz peinture.

I. LE PLEINTIF COUNTRE FORTUNE.

THIS wrecched worldes transmutacioun,
As wele or wo, now povre and now honour,
With-outen ordre or wys discrecioun

Governed is by Fortunes errour;
But natheles, the lak of hir favour
Ne may nat 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 suffisaunce shal be my socour: 15
For fynally, Fortune, I thee defye!

O Socrates, thou stedfast champioun,
She never mighte be thy tormentour;
Thou never dreddest hir oppressioun,
Ne in hir chere founde thou no savour. 20
Thou knewe wel deceit of hir colour,
And that hir moste worshippe is to lye.
I knowe hir eek a fals dissimulour:
For fynally, Fortune, I thee defye!

II. LA RESPONSE DE FORTUNE AU
PLEINTIF.

No man is wrecched, but him-self hit
wene, 25
And he that hath him-self hath suffi-
saunce.

Why seystow thanne I am to thee so kene,
That hast thy-self out of my governaunce?
Sey thus: 'Graunt mercy of thyn habound-
aunce

That thou hast lent or this.' Why wolt
thou stryve? 30

What wostow yit, how I thee wol avaunce?
And eek thou hast thy beste frend alyve!

I have thee taught divisioun bi-twene
Frend of effect, and frend of counte-
naunce; 34

Thee nedeth nat the galle of noon hyene,
That cureth eyen derke fro hir penaunce;
Now seestow cleer, that were in igno-
raunce.

Yit halt thyn ancre, and yit thou mayst
arryve

Ther bountee berth the keye of my
substaunce:

And eek thou hast thy beste frend alyve.

How many have I refused to sustene, 41
Sin I thee fostred have in thy plesaunce!
Woltow than make a statut 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. 46

My lore is bet than wikke is thy grevaunce,
And eek thou hast thy beste frend alyve.

III. LA RESPONSE DU PLEINTIF
COUNTRE FORTUNE.

Thy lore I dampne, hit is adversitee.
My frend maystow nat reven, blind god-
desse! 50

That I thy frendes knowe, I thanke hit
thee.

Tak hem agayn, lat hem go lye on presse!
The negardye in keping hir richesse
Prenostik is thou wolt hir tour assayle;
Wikke appetyt comth ay before sek-
nesse: 55

In general, this reule may nat fayle.

*La respounse de Fortune coudre le
Pleitif.*

Thou pinchest at my mutabilitee,
For I thee lente a drop of my richesse,
And now me lyketh to with-drawe me.
Why sholdestow my realtee oppresse? 60
The see may ebbe and flowen more or
lesse;

The welkne hath might to shyne, reyne,
or hayle;

Right so mot I kythen my brotelnesse.
In general, this reule may nat fayle.

Lo, thexecucion of the magestee 65
That al purveyeth of his rightwisnesse,
That same thing 'Fortune' clepen ye,
Ye blinde bestes, full of lewednesse!

The hevne hath propretec of sikernessee,
This world hath ever resteles travayle;

Thy laste day is ende of myn intresse: 71
In general, this reule may nat fayle.

LENVOY DE FORTUNE.

Princes, I prey you of your gentillesse,
Lat nat this man on me thus crye and
pleyne,

And I shall quyte you your businesse 75
At my requeste, as three of you or tweyne;

And, but you list releve him of his peyne,
Preyeth his beste frend, of his noblesse,

That to som beter estat he may atteyne.

Explicit.

XI. MERCILES BEAUTE: A TRIPLE ROUNDEL.

I. CAPTIVITY.

YOUR yēn two wol slee me sodenly,
I may the beautè of hem not sustene,
So woundeth hit through-out my herte
kene.

And but your word wol helen hastily
My hertes wounde, whyl that hit is
grene, 5
*Your yēn two wol slee me sodenly,
I may the beautè of hem not sustene.*

Upon my trouthe I sey yow feithfully,
That ye ben of my lyf and deeth the
quene;
For with my deeth the trouthe shal be
sene. 10

*Your yēn two wol slee me sodenly,
I may the beautè of hem not sustene,
So woundeth hit through-out my herte
kene.*

II. REJECTION.

So hath your beautè fro your herte
chaced
Pitee, that me ne availeth not to pleyne;
For Daunger halt your mercy in his
cheyne. 16

Giltles my deeth thus han ye me pur-
chaced;
I sey yow sooth, me nedeth not to
feyne;

*So hath your beautè fro your herte
chaced
Pitee, that me ne availeth not to pleyne.*

Allas! that nature hath in yow com-
passed 21
So greet beautè, that no man may
atteyne
To mercy, though he sterve for the
peyne.
*So hath your beautè fro your herte
chaced
Pitee, that me ne availeth not to pleyne;
For Daunger halt your mercy in his
cheyne.* 26

III. ESCAPE.

Sin I fro Love escaped am so fat,
I never think to ben in his prison lene;
Sin I am free, I counte him not a bene.

He may answer, and seye this or that;
I do no fors, I speke right as I mene. 31
*Sin I fro Love escaped am so fat,
I never think to ben in his prison lene.*

Love hath my name y-strike out of his
scat,
And he is strike out of my bokes clene 35
For ever-mo; [ther] is non other mene.
*Sin I fro Love escaped am so fat,
I never think to ben in his prison lene;
Sin I am free, I counte him not a
bene.*

Explicit.

XII. TO ROSEMOUNDE. A BALADE.

MADAME, ye ben of al beautè shryne
As fer as cerclèd is the mappemounde;
For as the cristal glorious ye shyne,
And lyke ruby ben your chekes rounde.
Therwith ye ben so mery and so iocounde,
That at a revel whan that I see you
daunce, 6
It is an oynement unto my wounde,
Thogh ye to me ne do no daliaunce.

For thogh I wepe of teres ful a tyne,
Yet may that wo myn herte nat con-
founde; 10
Your seemly voys that ye so smal out-
twyne
Maketh my thought in Ioye and blis ha-
bounde.
So curteisly I go, with lovè bounde,
That to my-self I sey, in my penaunce,

Suffyseth me to love you, Rosemounde,
Though ye to me ne do no daliaunce. 16

Nas never pyk walwed in galauntynce
As I in love am walwed and y-wounde;
For which ful ofte I of my-self divyne

Tregentil.

That I am trewe Tristam the secounde, 20
My love may not refreyd be nor afounde;
I brenne ay in an amorous plesaunce.

Do what you list, I wil your thral be
founde,

Though ye to me ne do no daliaunce.

Chaucer.

XIII. TRUTH.

BALADE DE BON CONSEYL.

FLEE fro the prees, and dwelle with soth-
fastnesse,

Suffyce unto thy good, though hit be
smal;

For hord hath hate, and climbing tikel-
nesse,

Prees hath envye, and wele blent overal;

Savour no more than thee bihove shal; 5
Werk wel thy-self, that other folk canst
rede;

And trouthe shal deliver, hit is no drede.

Tempest thee noght al croked to re-
dresse,

In trust of hir that turneth as a bal:

Gret reste stant in litel besinesse; 10

And eek be war to sporne ageyn an al;

Stryve noght, as doth the crokke with
the wal.

Daunte thy-self, that dauntest others
dede;

And trouthe shal deliver, hit is no drede.

Explicit Le bon counseill de G. Chaucer.

That thee is sent, receyve in buxun-
nesse, 15

The wrastling for this worlde axeth a fal.
Her nis non hoom, her nis but wilder-
nesse:

Forth, pilgrim, forth! Forth, beste, out
of thy stal!

Know thy contree, look up, thank God
of al;

Ihold the hye wey, and lat thy gost thee
lede: 20

Aud trouthe shal deliver, hit is no drede.

ENVOY.

Therefore, thou vache, leve thyn old
wrecchednesse

Unto the worlde; leve now to be thral;

Crye him mercy, that of his by goodnesse

Made thee of noght, and in especial 25

Draw unto him, and pray in general

For thee, and eek for other, hevenlich
mede;

And trouthe shal deliver, hit is no drede.

XIV. GENTILESSE.

MORAL BALADE OF CHAUCER.

THE firste stok, fader of gentilesse —

What man that claymeth gentil for to be,
Must folowe his trace, and alle his wittes

dresse

Vertu to sewe, and vyces for to flec.

For unto vertu longeth dignitee, 5

And noght the revers, saully dar I deme,

Al were he mytre, croune, or diademe.

This firste stok was ful of rightwisnesse.

Trewe of his word, sobre, pitous, and
free,

Clene of his goste, and loved besinesse, 10

Ageinst the vyce of slouth, in honestee;

And, but his heir love vertu, as dide he,

He is noght gentil, thogh he riche seme,

Al were he mytre, croune, or diademe.

Vyce may wel be heir to old richesse: 15

But ther may no man, as men may wel
see,
Bequethe his heir his vertuous noblesse;
That is appropred unto no degree,

But to the firste fader in magestee,
That maketh him his heir, that can him
queine, 20
Al were he mytre, croune, or diademe.

XV. LAK OF STEDFASTNESSE.

BALADE.

SOM tyme this world was so stedfast and
stable
That mannes word was obligacioun,
And now hit is so fals and deceivable,
That word and deed, as in conclusioun,
Ben no-thing lyk, for turned up so down 5
Is al this world for 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?
Among us now a man is holde unable, 10
But-if he can, by som collusioun,
Don his neighbour wrong or oppres-
sioun.
What causeth this, but wilful wrecched-
nesse,
That al is lost, for lak of stedfastnesse?

Trouthe is put down, resoun is holden
fable; 15
Vertu hath now no dominacioun,
Pitee exyled, no man is merciable.
Through covetyse is blent discrecioun;
The world hath mad a permutacioun
Fro right to wrong, fro trouthe to fikel-
nesse, 20
That al is lost, for lak of stedfastnesse.

LENVOY TO KING RICHARD.

O prince, desyre to be honourable,
Cherish thy folk and hate extorcioun!
Suffre no thing, that may be reprevable
To thyn estat, don in thy regioun. 25
Shew forth thy swerd of castigacioun,
Dred God, do law, love trouthe and
worthinesse,
And wed thy folk agein to stedfast-
nesse.

Explicit.

XVI. LENVOY DE CHAUCER A SCOGAN.

TO-BROKEN been the status hye in hevene
That creat were eternally to dure,
Sith that I see the brighte goddes sevene
Mow wepe and wayle, and passioun en-
dure,
As may in erthe a mortal creature. 5
Allas, fro whennes may this thing procede?
Of whiche errour I deye almost for drede.

By worde eterne whylom was hit shape
That fro the fife cercele, in no manere,
Ne mighte a drope of teres doun escape. 10
But now so wepeth Venus in hir spere,
That with hir teres she wol drenche us
here.
Allas, Scogan! this is for thyn offence!
Thou causest this deluge of pestilence.

Hast thou not seyde, in blasphemie of this
goddes, 15
Through pryde, or through thy grete
rakelnesse,
Swich thing as in the lawe of love forbode
is?
That, for thy lady saw nat thy distresse,
Therfor thou yave hir up at Michel-
messe!
Allas, Scogan! of olde folk ne yonge 20
Was never erst Scogan blamed for his
tonge!
Thou drowe in scorn Cupyde eek to re-
cord
Of tilke rebel word that thou hast
spoken,

For which he wol no lenger be thy lord.
 And, Scogan, thogh his bowe be nat
 broken, 25
 He wol nat with his arwes been y-wroken
 On thee, ne me, ne noon of our figure;
 We shul of him have neyther hurt ne cure.

Now certes, frend, I drede of thyn un-
 happe,
 Lest for thy gilt the wreche of Love pro-
 cede 30
 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 answeere and
 seye: 34
 'Lo! olde Grisel list to ryme and pleye!'

Nay, Scogan, sey not so, for I mexcuse,

God help me so! in no rym, doutelees,
 Ne thinke I never of slepe wak my muse,
 That rusteth in my shethe stille in pees.
 Why! I was yong, I putte hir forth in
 prees, 40
 But al shal passe that men prose or ryme;
 Take every man his turn, as for his tyme.

ENVOY.

Scogan, that knelest at the stremes heed
 Of grace, of alle honour and worthinesse,
 In thende of which streme I am dul as
 deed, 45
 Forgete in solitarie wildernesse;
 Yet, Scogan, thenke on Tullius kinde-
 nesse,
 Minne thy frend, ther it may fructifye!
 Far-wel, and lok thou never eft Love de-
 fy!

XVII. LENVOY DE CHAUCER A BUKTON.

THE COUNSEL OF CHAUCER TOUCHING
 MARIAGE, WHICH WAS SENT TO
 BUKTON.

MY maister Bukton, whan of Criste our
 kinge
 Was axed, what is trouthe or sothfast-
 nesse,
 He nat a word answerde to that axinge,
 As who saith: 'no man is al trewe,' I
 gesse.
 And therfor, thogh I highte to expresse 5
 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 bounde never.
 But thilke doted fool that eft hath lever
 Y-cheyned be than out of prisoun crepe,
 God lete him never fro his wo dissever, 15
 Ne no man him bewayle, though he wepe.

But yit, lest thou do worse, tak a wyf;
 Bet is to wedde, than brenne in worse
 wyse.
 But thou shalt have sorwe on thy flesh,
 thy lyf,
 And been thy wyves thral, as seyn these
 wyse, 20
 And if that holy writ may nat suffyse,
 Experience shal thee teche, so may
 happe,
 That thee were lever to be take in Fryse
 Than eft to falle of wedding in the trappe.

ENVOY.

This litel writ, proverbes, or figure 25
 I sende 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 you that ye
 rede
 Of this matere that we have on honde. 30
 God graunte you your lyf frely to lede
 In fredom; for ful hard is to be bonde.

Explicit.

XVIII. THE COMPLEYNT OF VENUS.

I. (THE LOVER'S WORTHINESS.)

THER nis so by comfort to my plesaunce,
 When that I am in any hevinesse,
 As for to have leyser of remembraunce
 Upon the manhod and the worthinesse,
 Upon the trouthe, and on the stedfast-
 nesse 5
 Of him whos I am al, whyl I may dure;
 Ther oghte blame me no creature,
 For every wight preiseth his gentillesse.

In him is bountee, wisdom, governaunce
 Wel more then any mannes wit can
 gesse; 10
 For grace hath wold so ferforth him
 avaunce
 That of knighthode he is parfit richesse.
 Honour honoureth him for his noblesse;
 Therto so wel hath formed him Nature,
 That I am his for ever, I him assure, 15
 For every wight preiseth his gentillesse.

And not-withstanding al his suffisaunce,
 His gentil herte is of so greet humblesse
 To me in worde, in werke, in contaunce,
 And me to serve is al his businesse, 20
 That I am set in verrey sikernesse.
 Thus oghte I blesse wel myn aventure,
 Sith that him list me serven and honoure;
 For every wight preiseth his gentillesse.

II. (DISQUIETUDE CAUSED BY JEALOUSY.)

Now certes, Love, hit is right coven-
 able 25
 That men ful dere bye thy noble thing,
 As wake a-bedde, and fasten at the
 table,
 Weping to laughe, and singe in compleyn-
 ing,
 And doun to caste visage and loking,
 Often to chaungen hewe and conta-
 naunce, 30
 Pleyne in sleping, and dremen at the
 daunce,
 Al the revers of any glad feling.

Ialouslye be hangid by a cable!
 She wolde al knowe through hir espyng;

Ther doth no wight no-thing so reason-
 able, 35
 That al nis harm in hir imagening.
 Thus dere about is love in yeving,
 Which ofte he yiveth with-uten ordi-
 naunce,
 As sorow ynogh, and litel of plesaunce,
 Al the revers of any glad feling. 40

A litel tyme his yift is agreable,
 But ful encomberous is the using;
 For sotel Ialouslye, the deceyvable,
 Ful often-tyme causeth destourbing.
 Thus be ye ever in drede and suffering,
 In noucerteyn we languisshe in pen-
 naunce, 46
 And han ful often many an hard mes-
 chaunce,
 Al the revers of any glad feling.

III. (SATISFACTION IN CONSTANCY.)

But certes, Love, I sey nat in such wyse
 That for tescape out of your lace I
 mente; 50
 For I so longe have been in your servyse
 That for to lete of wol I never assente;
 No force thogh Ialouslye me tormente;
 Suffyceth me to see him whan I may,
 And therefore certes, to myn ending-day
 To love him best ne shal I never re-
 pente. 56

And certes, Love, whan I me wel avyse
 On any estat that man may represente,
 Than have ye maked me, through your
 franchyse,
 Chese the best that ever on erthe wente.
 Now love wel, herte, and look thou never
 stente; 61
 And let the Ielous putte hit in assay
 That, for no peyne wol I nat sey nay;
 To love him best ne shal I never repente.

Herte, to thee hit oghte y-nogh suffyse,
 That Love so hy a grace to thee sente,
 To chese the worthiest in alle wyse
 And most agreable unto myn entente.
 Seche no farther, neyther wey ne wente,
 Sith I have suffisaunce unto my pay. 70

Thus wol I ende this compleynt or lay;
To love him best ne shal I never repente.

LENVOY.

Princess, receyveth this compleynt in gree,
Unto your excellent benigittee
Direct after my litel suffisaunce. 75
For eld, that in my spirit dulleth me,

Hath of endyting al the soteltee
Wel ny bereft out of my remem-
braunce;
And eek to me hit is a greet pen-
aunce, 79
Sith rym in English hath swich scarsitee,
To folowe word by word the curiositee
Of Graunson, flour of hem that make
in Fraunce.

XIX. THE COMPLEINT OF CHAUCER TO HIS EMPTY PURSE.

To you, my purse, and to non other wight
Compleyne I, for ye be my lady dere!
I am so sory, now that ye be light;
For certes, but ye make me hevychere,
Me were as leef be leyd up-on my bere; 5
For whiche un-to your mercy thus I crye:
Beth hevychere, or elles mot I dye!

Now voucheth sauf this day, or hit be
night,
That I of you the blisful soun may here,
Or see your colour lyk the sonne bright,
That of yelownesse hadde never pere. 11
Ye be my lyf, ye be myn hertes stere,
Quene of comfort and of good companye:
Beth hevychere, or elles mot I dye! 14

Now purs, that be to me my lyves light,
And saveour, as down in this worlde here,
Out of this tounne help me through your
might,
Sin that ye wole nat been my tresorere;
For I am shave as nye as any frere.
But yit I pray un-to your curtesye: 20
Beth hevychere, or elles mot I dye!

LENVOY DE CHAUCER.

O conquerour of Brutes Albioun!
Whiche that by lyne and free eleccioun
Ben verray king, this song to you I sende;
And ye, that mowen al our harm amende,
Have made up-on my supplicacioun! 26

XX. PROVERBS.

PROVERBE OF CHAUCER.

I.

WHAT shul these clothes many-fold,
Lo! this hote somers day? —
After greet heet cometh cold;
No man caste his pilche away.

II.

Of al this world the wyde compas 5
Hit wol not in myn armes tweyne. —
Who-so mochel wol embrace
Litel therof he shal distreine.

[The following Poems are also probably genuine; but lack external evidence.]

XXI. AGAINST WOMEN UNCONSTANT.

BALADE.

MADAME, for your newe-fangelnesse,
 Many a servaunt have ye put out of
 grace,
 I take my leve of your unstedfastnesse,
 For wel I wot, whyl ye have lyses
 space,
 Ye can not love ful half yeer in a place;
 To newe thing your lust is ever kene; 6
 In stede of blew, thus may ye were al
 grene.

Right as a mirour nothing may enpresse,
 But, lightly as it cometh, so mot it pace,
 So fareth your love, your werkes bereth
 witnesse. 10
 Ther is no feith that may your herte
 embrace;

But, as a wedercok, that turneth his face
 With every wind, ye fare, and that is
 sene;
 In stede of blew, thus may ye were al
 grene.

Ye might be shryned, for your brotel-
 nesse, 15
 Bet than Dalyda, Creseide or Candace;
 For ever in chaunging stant your siker-
 nesse,
 That tache may no wight fro your herte
 arace;
 If ye lese oon, ye can wel tweyn pur-
 chace;
 Al light for somer, ye woot wel what I
 mene, 20
 In stede of blew, thus may ye were al
 grene.

Explicit.

XXII. AN AMOROUS COMPLEINT. (COMPLEINT DAMOURS.)

AN AMOROUS COMPLEINT, MADE AT WINDSOR.

I, WHICH that am the sorwefulleste man
 That in this world was ever yit livinge,
 And leest recoverer of him-selven can,
 Beginne thus my deedly compleininge
 On hir, that may to lyf and deeth me
 bringe, 5
 Which hath on me no mercy ne no
 rewthe
 That love hir best, but sleeth me for my
 trewthe.

Can I nocht doon ne seye that may yow
 lyke,
 [For] certes, now, allas! allas! the
 whyle!
 Your plesaunce is to laughen whan I
 syke, 10
 And thus ye me from al my blisse exyle.
 Ye han me cast in thilke spitous yle

Ther never man on lyve mighte asterte;
 This have I for I lovè you, swete herte!

Sooth is, that wel I woot, by lyklinesse,
 If that it were thing possible to do 16
 Tacompte youre beutee and goodnesse,
 I have no wonder thogh ye do me wo;
 Sith I, thunworthiest that may ryde or go,
 Durste ever thinke in so hy a place, 20
 What wonder is, thogh ye do me no
 grace?

Allas! thus is my lyf brought to an ende,
 My deeth, I see, is my conclusioun;
 I may wel singe, 'in sory tyme I spende
 My lyf;' that song may have confusioun!
 For mercy, pitee, and deep affecioun, 26
 I sey for me, for al my deedly chere,
 Alle these diden, in that, me love yow dere.

And in this wyse and in dispayre I live
 In lovè; nay, but in dispayre I dye! 30

But shal I thus [to] yow my deeth for-
give,

That causeles doth me this sorow drye?

Ye, certes, I! For she of my folye

Hath nought to done, although she do
me sterve; 34

Hit is nat with hir wil that I hir serve!

Than sith I am of my sorowe the cause
And sith that I have this, withoute hir
reel,

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; 40

[And] yet alwey two thinges doon me
dyë,

That is to seyn, hir beutee and myn yë.

So that, algates, she is the verray rote

Of my disese, and of my dethe also;

For with oon word she mighte be my
bote, 45

If that she vouched sauf for to do so.

But [why] than is hir gladnesse at my
wo?

It is hir wone pleasaunce for to take,
To seen hir servaunts dyen for hir sake!

But certes, than is al my wonderinge, 50

Sithen she is the fayrest creature

As to my dome, that ever was livinge,

The benignest and beste eek that nature
Hath wrought or shal, whyl that the
world may dure,

Why that she lefte pite so behinde? 55

It was, y-wis, a greet defaute in kinde.

Yit is al this no lak to hir, pardee,

But god or nature sore wolde I blame;

For, though she shewe no pite unto me,
Sithen that she doth othere men the

same, 60

I ne oughte to despysse my ladies game;

It is hir pley to laughen whan men
syketh,

And I assente, al that hir list and
lyketh!

Yit wolde I, as I dar, with sorweful
herte

Biseche un-to your meke womanhede 65

That I now dorste my sharpe sorwes
smerte

Shewe by worde, that ye wolde ones rede
The pleynte of me, the which ful sore
drede

That I have seid here, through myn
unconninge,

In any worde to your displeinge. 70

Lothest of anything that ever was loth

Were me, as wisly god my soule save!

To seyn a thing 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 yow have pleynd
here, 76

Forgiveth it me, myn owne lady dere!

Ever have I been, and shal, how-so I
wende,

Outher to live or dye, your humble trewe;
Ye been to me my ginning and myn
ende, 80

Sonne of the sterre bright and clere of
hewe,

Alwey in oon to love yow freshly newe,

By god and by my trouthe, is myn
entente;

To live or dye, I wol it never repente!

This compleynt on seint Valentynes day,
Whan every foul [ther] chesen shal his
make, 86

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 [for] evermore her serve
And love hir best, although she do me
sterve. 91

Explicit.

XXIII. A BALADE OF COMPLEYNT.

COMPLEYNE ne coude, ne might myn
 herte never
 My peynes halve, ne what torment I
 have,
 Though that I sholde in your presence
 ben ever,
 My hertes lady, as wisly he me save
 That bountee made, and beutee list to
 grave 5
 In your persone, and bad hem bothe
 in-fere
 Ever tawayte, and ay be wher ye were.

As wisly he gye alle my loyes here
 As I am yores, and to yow sad and
 trewe

And ye, my lyf and cause of my good
 chere, 10
 And deeth also, whan ye my peynes newe,
 My worldes loye, whom I wol serve and
 sewe,
 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 povre dyte, 16
 And for my trouthe my service nat
 despyse,
 Myn observaunce eek have nat in despyte,
 Ne yit to long to suffren in this plyte, 20
 I yow besech, myn hertes lady dere, 20
 Sith I yow serve, and so wil yeer by yere.

XXIV. WOMANLY NOBLESSE.

BALADE THAT CHAUCIER MADE.

So hath my herte caught in r membraunce
 Your beaut  hool, and stedfast gover-
 naunce,
 Your vertues all , and your hy noblesse,
 That you to serve is set al my plesaunce;
 So wel me lykth your womanly conte-
 naunce, 5
 Your fresshe fetures and your comli-
 nesse,
 That, whyl I live, my herte to his
 maistresse,
 You hath ful chose, in trew pers ver-
 aunce,
 Never to change, for no maner dis-
 tresse.

And sith I [you] shal do this obser-
 vance 10
 Al my lyf, withouten displesaunce,
 You for to serve with al my besinesse,
 [Taketh me, lady, in your obeisaunce,]
 And have me somewhat in your souve-
 naunce.
 My woful herte suffreth greet duresse;
 And [loke] how humbl[er]ly, with al
 simplesse, 16

My wil I c nforme to your ordenaunce,
 As you best list, my peynes to redresse.

Considring eek how I hange in balance
 In your servys ; swich, lo! is my
 chaunce, 20
 Abyding grace, whan that your gentil-
 nesse
 Of my gret wo list doon allegeaunce,
 And with your pit  me som wyse avaunce,
 In ful rebating of my hevinesse;
 And thinkth, by reson, wommanly
 noblesse 25
 Shuld nat desyre for to doon outrage
 Ther-as she findeth noon unbuxum-
 nesse.

LENVOYE.

Auctour of norture, lady of plesaunce,
 Sovereine of beaut , flour of womman-
 hede, 29
 Take ye mon hede unto myn ignoraunce,
 But this receyveth of your goodlihede,
 Thinking that I have caught in r mem-
 braunce
 Your beaut  hool, your stedfast gover-
 naunce.

XXV. COMPLAINT TO MY MORTAL FOE.

Al. hoolly youres, withouten otheres
part!

Wherefore? y-wis, that I ne can ne
may

My service chaungen; thus of al suche
art

The lerninge I desyre for ever and
ay.

And evermore, whyl that I live may, 5
In trouthe I wol your servante stille
abyde,

Although my wo eneresè day by day,
Til that to me be come the dethes tyde.

Saint Valentyne! to you I rénovele

My woful lyf, as I can, compleyn-
inge; 10

But, as me thinketh, to you a quarele
Right greet I have, whan I, remem-
beringe

Bitwene, how kinde, ayeins the yeres
springe,

Upon your day, doth ech foul chese his
make;

And you list not in swich comfórt me
bringe, 15

That to her grace my lady shulde me
take.

Wherfor unto you, Cupide, I besече,
Furth with Venús, noble lusty god-
desse,

Sith ye may best my sorowe lesse and
eche;

And I, your man, oppressed with dis-
tresse, 20

Can not crye 'help!' but to your gen-
tilnesse:

So voucheth sauf, sith I, your man, wol
dye,

My ladies herte in pitè folde and
presse,

That of my peyne I finde remedye.

To your conning, my hertes right prin-
cesse, 25

My mortal fo, whiche I best love and
serve,

I recommaunde my boistous lewednesse.
And, for I can not altherbest deserve

Your grace, I preye, as he that wol nat
swerve,

That I may fare the better for my trouthe;
Sith I am youres, til deth my herte

kerve, 31

On me, your man, now mercy have and
routhe.

XXVI. COMPLAINT TO MY LODE-STERRE.

Of gretter cause may no wight him com-
pleyne

Than I; for love hath set me in swich
caas

That lasse Ioye and more encrees of
peyne

Ne hath no man; wherfore I crye
'allas!'

A thousand tyme, whan I have tyme
and space. 5

For she, that is my verray sorowes
grounde,

Wol with her grace no wyse my sorowes
sounde.

And that, shulde be my sorowes hertes
leche,

Is me ageins, and maketh me swich
werre,

That shortly, [in] al maner thought and
speche, 10

Whether it be that I be nigh or ferre,
I misse the grace of you, my lode-
sterre,

Which causeth me on you thus for to
crye;

And al is it for lakke of remedye.

My soverain Ioye thus is my mortal fo: 15
She that shulde causen al my lustnesse,
List in no wyse of my sorowes saye 'ho!'

But let me thus darraine, in hevynesse,
With woful thoughtes and my grete
distresse,

The which she might right wele, [at]
 every tyde, 20
 If that her liste, out of my herte gyde.

But it is so, that her list, in no wyse,
 Have pitè on my woful besinesse;
 And I ne can do no maner servyse
 That may me torne out of my hev-
 nesse; 25
 So woldè god, that she now wolde
 impresse
 Right in her herte my trouthe and eek
 good wille;
 And let me not, for lakke of mercy, spille.

Now wele I woot why thus I smerte
 sore;
 For couthe I wele, as othere folkes,
 feyne, 30
 Than neded me to live in peyne no more,
 But, whan I were from you, unteye my
 reyne,

And, for the tyme, drawe in another
 cheyne.

But woldè god that alle swich were
 y-knowe,

And duely punished of hye and lowe. 35

Swich lyf defye I, bothe in thoughte and
 worde,

For yet me were wel lever for to sterve
 Than in my herte for to make an horde

Of any falshood; for, til deth to-kerve
 My herte and body, shal I never swerve

From you, that best may be my final cure,
 But, at your liste, abyde myn aventure;

And preye to you, noble seint Valentyne,
 My ladies herte that ye wolde embrace,

And make her pitè to me more enclyne
 That I may stonden in her noble grace

In hasty time, whyl I have lyves space:
 For yit wiste I never noon, of my lyve,

So litel hony in so fayre hyve. 49

BOETHIUS DE CONSOLATIONE PHILOSOPHIE.

BOOK I.

METRE I.

*Carmina qui quondam studio flo-
rente peregi.*

ALLAS! I, weping, am constrained
to biginnen vers of sorowful matere,
that whylom in florisching studie
made delitable ditees. For lo! ren-
5 dinge Muses of poetes endyten to
me thinges to be writen; and drey
vers of wrecchednesse weten my face
with verray teres. At the leeste,
no drede ne mighte overcomen tho
10 Muses, that they ne weren felawes,
and folweden my wey, *that is to
seyn, whan I was exyled*; they that
weren glorie of my youthe, whylom
weleful and grene, comforten now
15 the sorowful werdes of me, olde man.
For elde is comen unwarly upon me,
hasted by the harmes that I have,
and sorow hath comaunded his age
to be in me. Heres hore ben shad
20 overtymeliche upon myn heved, and
the slake skin trembleth upon myn
empted body. Tilke deeth of men
is weleful that ne cometh not in
yeres that ben swete, but cometh
25 to wrecches, often y-cleped.

Allas! allas! with how deaf an
ere deeth, cruel, torneth away fro
wrecches, and naiteth to closen
wepinge eyen! Why! Fortune, un-
30 feithful, favored me with lighte
goodes, the sorowful houre, *that is
to seyn, the deeth*, hadde almost
dreynt myn heved. But now, for
Fortune cloudy hath chaunged hir
35 deceyvable chere to me-ward, myn

unpitous lyf draweth a-long unagre-
able dwellinges *in me*. O ye, my
frendes, what or wherto avautede
ye me to ben weleful? for he that
hath fallen stood nat in stedefast de- 40
gree.

PROSE I.

*Hec dum mecum tacitus ipse repu-
tarem.*

Why! that I stille recordede thise
thinges with my-self, and markede
my weeply complaynte with office of
pointel, I saw, stondinge aboven the
heighte of myn heved, a woman of 5
ful greet reverence by semblaunt, hir
eyen brenninge and cleer-seinge over
the comune might of men; with a
lyfly colour, and with swich vigour
and strengthe that it ne mighte nat 10
ben emptied; al were it so that she
was ful of so greet age, that men ne
wolde nat trowen, in no manere, that
she were of oure elde. The stature
of hir was of a doutous Iugement; 15
for som-tyme she constreinde and
shronk hir-selven lyk to the comune
mesure of men, and sum-tyme it
semede that she touchede the hevene
with the heighte of hir heved; and 20
whan she heef hir heved lyer, she
percede the selve hevene, so that
the sighte of men looking was in
ydel. Hir clothes weren maked of
right delye thredes and subtil crafte, 25
of perdurable matere; the whiche
clothes she hadde woven with hir
owene hondes, as I knew wel after

by hir-self, declaring and shewing
30 to me the beautee; the whiche
clothes a derknesse of a forleten and
dispysed elde hadde dusked and
derked, as it is wont to derken bi-
smokede images.

35 In the nethereste hem or bordure
of these clothes men reddden, y-woven
in, a Grekissh P, *that signifyeth the*
lyf Actif; and aboven that lettre, in
the heyeste bordure, a Grekissh T,
40 *that signifyeth the lyf Contemplatif*.
And bi-twixen these two lettres ther
weren seyn degrees, nobly y-wrought
in manere of laddres; by whiche de-
grees men mighten climben fro the
45 nethereste lettre to the uppereste.
Natheles, handes of some men hadde
corven that cloth by violence and by
strengthe; and everiche man of hem
hadde born away swiche peces as he
50 mighte geten. And forsothe, this
forseide woman bar smale bokes in
hir right hand, and in hir left hand
she bar a ceptre.

And whan she say these poetical
55 Muses aprochen aboute my bed, and
endytinge wordes to my wepinges,
she was a litel amoved, and glowede
with cruel eye. 'Who,' quod she,
'hath suffred aprochen to this syke
60 man these comune strompetes of swich
a place that men clepen the thea-
tre? The whiche nat only ne
asswagen nat hise sorwes with none
remedies, but they wolden feden and
65 norisshen hem with swete venim.
Forsothe, these ben tho that with
thornes and prykkings of talents or
affecciouns, whiche that ne ben no-
thing fructefyng nor profitable,
70 destroyen the corn plentevous of
frutes of resoun; for they holden
the hertes of men in usage, but they
ne delivere nat folk fro maladye. But
if ye Muses hadden withdrawn fro
75 me, with your flateryes, any uncun-
ninge and unprofitable man, as men
ben wont to finde comunly amonges
the poeple, I wolde wene suffre the
lasse greuously; for-why, in swiche an
80 unprofitable man, myn ententes ne
weren no-thing endamaged. But ye

withdrawen me this man, that hath
be norisshed in the studies or scoles
of Eleaticis and of Achademicis *in*
Grece. But goth now rather away, 85
ye mermaidenes, whiche that ben
swete til it be at the laste, and suf-
fretth this man to be cured and heled
by myne Muses, *that is to seyn, by*
noteful sciences. 90

And thus this companye of Muses
y-blamed casten wrothly the chere
dounward to the erthe; and, shewing
by reednesse hir shame, they passeden
sorowfully the threshfold. 95

And I, of whom the sighte,
plounged in teres, was derked so
that I ne mighte not knowen what
that womman was, of so imperial
auctoritee, I wex al abaisshed and 100
astoned, and caste my sighte doun
to the erthe, and bigan stille for to
abyde what she wolde don afterward.
Tho com she ner, and sette hir doun
up-on the uttereste corner of my bed; 105
and she, biholdinge my chere, that
was cast to the erthe, hevyn and grev-
ous of wepinge, compleined, with
these wordes that I shal seyn, the
perturbacioun of my thought. 110

METRE II.

Heu quam precipiti mersa profundo.

'Allas! how the thought of man,
dreint in over-throwinge deepnesse,
dulleth, and forleteth his propre cleer-
nesse, mintinge to goon in-to foreine
derknesses, as ofte as his anoyous 5
business wexeth with-oute mesure,
that is driven to and fro with
worldly windes! This man, that
whylom was free, to whom the hevne
was open and knowen, and was wont 10
to goon in heveneliche pathes, and
saugh the lightnesse of the rede
sonne, and saugh the sterres of the
colde mone, and whiche sterre in
hevne useth wandering recourses, 15
y-flit by diverse speres—this man,
overcomer, hadde comprehended al
this by noumber *of accountinge in as-
tronomye*. And over this, he was
wont to seken the causes whennes 20

the souning windes moeven and
 bisien the smothe water of the see;
 and what spirit torneth the stable
 hevenc; and why the sterre aryseth
 25 out of the rede cest, to fallen in the
 westrene wawes; and what atempreth
 the lusty houres of the firste somer
 sesoun, that highteth and apparileth
 the erthe with rosene flowres; and
 30 who maketh that plentevouse au-
 tompne, in fulle yeres, fleteth with
 hevny grapes. And eek this man was
 wont to telle the dyverse causes of
 nature that weren y-hidde. Allas!
 35 now lyeth he emptied of light of
 his thought; and his nekke is pressed
 with hevny cheynes; and bereth his
 chere enclnyed adoun for the grete
 weighte, and is constrained to looken
 40 on the fool erthe!

PROSE II.

Set medicine, iniquit, tempus est.

But tyme is now,' quod she, 'of
 medicine more than of compleinte.'
 Forsothe than she, entendinge to
 me-ward with alle the lookinge of hir
 5 eyen, seide: — 'Art nat thou he,'
 quod she, 'that whylom y-norissed
 with my milk, and fostered with myne
 metes, were escaped and comen to
 corage of a parfit man? Certes, I
 10 yaf thee swiche armures that, yif thou
 thy-self ne haddest first cast hem
 a-wey, they shulden han defended thee
 in sikernesse that may nat ben over-
 comen. Knowest thou me nat?
 15 Why art thou stille? Is it for shame
 or for astoninge? It were me lever
 that it were for shame; but it semeth
 me that astoninge hath oppressed
 thee.' And whan she say me nat
 20 only stille, but with-uten office of
 tunge and al dumb, she leide hir
 hand softly upon my brest, and
 seide: 'Here nis no peril,' quod she;
 'he is fallen into a litargie, whiche
 25 that is a comune sykene to hertes
 that ben deceived. He hath a litel
 foryeten him-self, but certes he shal
 lightly remembren him-self, yif so be
 that he hath knowen me or now;

and that he may so don, I wil wypen 30
 a litel his eyen, that ben derked by
 the cloude of mortal thinges.' These
 wordes seide she, and with the lappe
 of hir garment, y-plyted in a frounce,
 she dryede myn eyen, that weren 35
 fulle of the wawes of my wepinges.

METRE III.

*Tunc me discussa liquerunt nocte
 tenebre.*

Thus, whan that night was dis-
 cussed and chased a-wey, derknesses
 forlesten me, and to myn eyen re-
 peirede ayein hir firste strengthe.
 And, right by ensauple as the sonne 5
 is hid whan the sterres ben clusted
 (that is to seyn, whan sterres ben
 covered with cloudes) by a swifte
 winde that highte Chorus, and that
 the firmament stant derked by wete 10
 ploungy cloudes, and that the sterres
 nat apperen up-on hevenc, so that
 the night semeth sprad up-on erthe:
 yif thanne the wind that highte Bo-
 rias, y-sent out of the caves of the 15
 contree of Trace, beteth this night
 (that is to seyn, chaseth it a-wey), and
 discovereth the closed day: than
 shyneth Phebus y-shaken with sodein
 light, and smyteth with his bemes in 20
 merveling eyen.

PROSE III.

*Haud aliter tristitie nebulis dis-
 solutis.*

Right so, and non other wyse, the
 cloudes of sorwe dissolved and don
 a-wey, I took hevenc, and receivede
 minde to knowen the face of my
 fysicien; so that I sette myn eyen on 5
 hir, and fastnede my lookinge. I
 beholde my norice Philosophie, in
 whos houses I hadde conversed and
 haunted fro my youthe; and I seide
 thus. 'O thou maistresse of alle 10
 vertues, descended from the soverain
 sete, why artow comen in-to this soli-
 tarye place of myn exil? Artow comen
 for thou art maked coupable with me
 of false blames?' 15

'O,' quod she, 'my norry, sholde
 I forsaken thee now, and sholde I
 nat parten with thee, by comune
 20 traivale, the charge that thou hast
 suffred for envie of my name? Certes,
 it nere not leveful ne sittinge thing
 to Philosophic, to leten with-outen
 companye the wey of him that is
 25 innocent. Sholde I thanne redoute
 my blame, and agrysen as though ther
 were bifallen a newe thing? *quasi
 diceret, non.* For trowestow that
 Philosophic be now alderfirst assailed
 30 in perils by folk of wikkede maneres?
 Have I nat striven with ful greet
 stryf, in olde tyme, bifore the age of
 my Plato, aycines the foolhardinesse
 of folye? And eek, the same Plato
 35 livinge, his maister Socrates deservede
 victorie of unrightful deeth in my
 presence. The heritage of which
 Socrates — *the heritage is to seyn the
 doctrine of the whiche Socrates in his
 opinioun of Felicitee, that I clepe*
 40 *welfulnesse* — whan that the poeple
 of Epicuriens and Stoiciens and many
 othere enforceden hem to go ravisshe
 everich man for his part — *that is to
 seyn, that everich of hem wolde drawen*
 45 *to the defence of his opinioun the wordes
 of Socrates* — they, as in partie of hir
 preye, to-drowen me, crynge and de-
 batinge ther-aycins, and corven and
 to-renten my clothes that I hadde
 50 woven with myn handes; and with
 tho cloutes that they hadden araced
 out of my clothes they wenten away,
 weninge that I hadde gon with hem
 everydel.
 55 In whiche *Epicuriens and Stoi-
 ciens*, for as moche as ther semede
 some traces or steppes of myn habite,
 the folye of men, weninge tho *Epi-
 curiens and Stoiciens* my famuleres,
 60 perverted (*sc. persequendo*) some
 through the errour of the wikkede
 or uncunning multitude of hem.
*This is to seyn that, for they semede
 philosophres, they weren pursued to*
 65 *the deeth and slayn.* So yif thou hast
 nat knowen the exilinge of Anax-
 ogore, ne the enpoysonge of Soc-
 rates, ne the tourments of Zeno, for

they weren straungeres: yit might-
 estow han knowen the Seneciens 70
 and the Canios and the Sorans, of
 whiche folk the renoun is neither
 over-olde ne unsolempne. The
 whiche men, no-thing elles ne 75
 broughte hem to the deeth but only
 for they weren enfourmed of myne
 maneres, and semeden most unlyke
 to the studies of wikkede folk. And
 forthy thou oughtest nat to wondren 80
 though that I, in the bittre see of
 this lyf, be fordriven with tempestes
 blowinge aboute, in the whiche tem-
 pestes this is my most purpos, *that*
 85 *is to seyn*, to displesen to wikkede
 men. Of whiche shrewes, al be the
 ost never so greet, it is to dispysse;
 for it nis governed with no leder of
 resoun, but it is ravissed only by
 fletinge errour folyly and lightly.
 And if they som-tyme, makinge an ost 90
 aycins us, assaile us as strengier, our
 leder draweth to-gidere hise richesses
 in-to his tour, and they ben ententif
 aboute sarpulers or sachels unprofit-
 able for to taken. But we that ben 95
 heye aboven, siker for alle tumulte
 and wode noise, warnestored and en-
 closed in swich a palis, whider as that
 chateringe or anyoinge folye ne
 may nat attayne, we scorne swiche 100
 ravineres and henteres of fouleste
 thinges.

METRE IV.

Quisquis composito serenus euo.

Who-so it be that is cleer of vertu,
 sad, and wel ordinat of livinge, that
 hath put under foot the proude
 werdes and looketh upright up-on
 either fortune, he may holde his 5
 chere undiscomfited. The rage ne
 the manaces of the see, commoev-
 inge or chasinge upward hete from
 the botme, ne shal not moeve that
 man; ne the unstable mountaigne 10
 that highte Vesevus, that wrytheth
 out through his brokene chiminees
 smokinge fyres. Ne the wey of thon-
 der leit, that is wont to smyten heye
 15 toures, ne shal nat moeve that man.

Wher-to thanne, o wrecches, drede
 ye tirauntes that ben wode and felo-
 nous with-oute any strengthe? Ho-
 pe after no-thing, ne drede nat; and so
 20 shaltow desarmen the ire of thilke
 unmighty tiraunt. But who-so that,
 quakinge, dredeth or desireth thing
 that nis nat stable of his right, that
 man that so doth hath cast away his
 25 sheld and is removed from his place,
 and enlaceth him in the cheyne with
 the which he may ben drawn.

PROSE IV.

Sentisne, inquit, hec.

'Felestow,' quod she, 'thise thinges,
 and entren they aught in thy corage?
 Artow lyke an asse to the harpe?
 Why wepestow, why spillestow teres?
 5 Yif thou abydest after help of thy
 leche, thee bihoveth discovere thy
 wounde.'

Tho I, that hadde gadered strengthe
 in my corage, answerede and seide:
 10 'And nedeth it yit,' quod I, 'of re-
 hersinge or of amonicioun; and shew-
 eth it nat y-nough by him-self the
 sharpnesse of Fortune, that wexeth
 wood ayeins me? Ne moeveth it nat
 15 thee to seen the face or the manere
 of this place (*i. prisoun*)? Is this
 the librarie whiche that thou haddest
 chosen for a right certain sete to thee
 20 ofte with me of the sciences of thinges
 touchinge divinitee and touchinge
 mankinde? Was thanne myn habite
 swich as it is now? Was than my
 face or my chere swiche as now
 25 (*quasi diceret, non*), whan I soughte
 with thee secrets of nature, whan thou
 enformedest my maneres and the
 resoun of alle my lyf to the ensauple
 of the ordre of hevене? Is nat this
 30 the guerdoun that I referre to thee,
 to whom I have be obeisaunt? Certes,
 thou confermedest, by the mouth of
 Plato, this sentence, *that is to seyn*,
 that comune thinges or comunalitees
 35 weren blisful, yif they that hadden
 studied al fully to wisdom governeden

thilke thinges, or elles yif it so bifille
 that the governoures of comunalitees
 studieden to geten wisdom.

Thou seidest eek, by the mouth of 40
 the same Plato, that it was a neces-
 sarie cause, wyse men to taken and
 desire the governaunce of comune
 thinges, for that the governements of
 citees, y-left in the handes of felonous 45
 tormentours citizenes, ne sholde nat
 bringe in pestilence and destruccioun
 to gode folk. And therfor I, folwing
 thilke auctoritee (*sc. Platonis*), de- 50
 sired to putten forth in execucioun
 and in acte of comune administracioun
 thilke thinges that I hadde lerned of
 thee among my secree resting-whyles.
 Thou, and god that putte thee in the
 thoughtes of wyse folk, ben knowinge 55
 with me, that no-thing ne broughte
 me to maistrie or dignitee, but the
 comune studie of alle goodnesse. And
 ther-of comth it that bi-twixen wikked
 folk and me han ben grevous discordes, 60
 that ne mighten ben relesed by
 preyeres; for this libertee hath the free-
 dom of conscience, that the wratthe
 of more mighty folk hath alwey ben
 despysed of me for savacioun of 65
 right.

How ofte have I resisted and with-
 stonde thilke man that highte Coni-
 gaste, that made alwey assautes ayeins
 the prospre fortunes of pore feble 70
 folk? How ofte eek have I put of or
 cast out him, Trigwille, provost of
 the kinges hous, bothe of the wronges
 that he hadde bigunne to don, and
 eek fully performed? How ofte have 75
 I covered and defended by the aucto-
 ritee of me, put ayeins perils — *that is*
to seyn, put myn auctoritee in peril
for — the wrecched pore folk, that
 the covetyse of straungeres unpun- 80
 ished tourmenteden alwey with mis-
 eyses and grevaunces out of noumbre?
 Never man ne drow me yit fro right
 to wronge. Whan I say the fortunes
 and the richesnes of the poeple of the 85
 provinces ben harmed or amenused,
 outhr by privee ravynes or by comune
 tributes or cariages, as sory was I as
 they that suffreden the harm.

90 **Glossa.** *Whan that Theodoric, the king of Gothes, in a dere yere, hadde hise gernerres ful of corn, and comaundede that no man ne sholde hyen no corn til his corn were sold,*
 95 *and that at a grevous dere prys, Boece withstood that ordinaunce, and overcom it, knowinge al this the king himself.*

Textus. Whan it was in the soure
 100 hungry tyme, ther was established or cryed grevous and inplitable co-empcioun, that men sayen wel it sholde greetly turmenten and endamagen al the province of Campaigne, I
 105 took stryf ayeins the provost of the pretorie for comune profit. And, the king knowinge of it, I overcom it, so that the coempcioun ne was not axed ne took effect.

110 [**Glossa.**] *Coempcioun, that is to seyn, comune achat or bying to-gidere, that were established up-on the poeple by swiche a manere imposicioun, as who-so boughte a busshel corn, he moste*
 115 *yeve the king the fyste part.*

[**Textus.**] Paulin, a counsellor of Rome, the richesses of the whiche Paulin the houndes of the palays, *that is to seyn, the officeres,* wolden han
 120 devoured by hope and covetise, yit drow I him out of the Iowes (*sc. faucibus*) of hem that gapeden. And for as moche as the peyne of the acusacioun aiuged biforn ne sholde
 125 nat soleinly henten ne punisshen wrongfully Albin, a counsellor of Rome, I putte me ayeins the hates and indignaciouns of the accusor Ciprian. Is it nat thanne y-nough
 130 y-seyn, that I have purchased grete discordes ayeins my-self? But I oughte be the more assured ayeins alle othre folk (*s. Romayns*), that for the love of rightwinesse I ne reserved
 135 never no-thing to my-self to hemward of the kinges halle, *sc. officers,* by the whiche I were the more siker. But thorough tho same accusors accusinge, I am condempned. Of the noumbir
 140 of the whiche accusors oon Basilius, that whylom was chased out of the kinges service, is now compelled in

accusinge of my name, for nede of foreine moneye. Also Opilion and Gaudencius han accused me, al be it 145 so that the Iustice regal hadde whylom demed hem bothe to go in-to exil for hir trecheryes and fraudes withoute noumbir. To whiche Iugement they nolden nat obeye, but defendeden hem 150 by the sikernesse of holy houses, *that is to seyn, fledden into seintuaries;* and whan this was aperceived to the king, he comaundede, that but they voidede the citee of Ravenne by cer- 155 tein day assigned, that men sholde merken hem on the forheved with an hoot yren and chasen hem out of the toune. Now what thing, semeth thee, mighte ben lykned to this crueltee? 160 For certes, thilke same day was received the accusinge of my name by thilke same accusors. What may ben seid her-to? (*quasi diceret, nichil*). Hath my studie and my cunninge 165 deserved thus; or elles the foreseide dampnacioun of me, made that hem rightful accusors or no? (*quasi diceret, non*). Was not Fortune ashamed of this? Certes, al hadde 170 nat Fortune ben ashamed that innocence was accused, yit oughte she han had shame of the filthe of myne accusors.

But, axestow in somme, of what 175 gilt I am accused, men seyn that I wolde save the companye of the senators. And desirest thou to heren in what manere? I am accused that I sholde han destourbed the accusor 180 to beren lettres, by whiche he sholde han makid the senators gilty ayeins the kinges real maiestee. O maistresse, what demestow of this? Shal I forsake this blame, that I ne be no 185 shame to thee? (*quasi diceret, non*). Certes, I have wold it, *that is to seyn, the savacioun of the senat,* ne I shal never leten to wilne it, and that I confesse and am aknowe; but the en- 190 tente of the accusor to be destourbed shal cese. For shal I clepe it thanne a felonie or a sinne that I have desired the savacioun of the ordre of the senat? (*quasi diceret, dubito quid*). 195

And certes yit hadde thilke same
 senat don by me, thorough hir decrets
 and hir Iugements, as though it were
 a sinne or a felonie; *that is to seyn,*
 200 *to wilne the savacioun of hem (sc.*
senatus). But folye, that lyeth alwey
 to him-self, may not change the
 merite of thinges. Ne I trowe nat,
 by the Iugement of Socrates, that it
 205 were leweful to me to hyde the sothe,
 ne assente to lesinges. But certes,
 how so ever it be of this, I putte it to
 gessen or preisen to the Iugement of
 thee and of wyse folk. Of whiche
 210 thing al the ordinaunce and the sothe,
 for as moche as folk that ben to comen
 after our dayes shullen knowen it, I
 have put it in scripture and in remem-
 brance. For touching the lettres
 215 falsly maked, by whiche lettres I am
 accused to han hoped the fredom of
 Rome, what aperteneth me to speke
 ther-of? Of whiche lettres the fraude
 hadde ben shewed apertly, yif I hadde
 220 had libertee for to han used and ben
 at the confessioun of myne accusours,
 the whiche thing in alle nedes hath
 greet strengthe. For what other
 fredom may men hopen? Certes, I
 225 wolde that som other fredom mighte
 ben hoped. I wolde thanne han
 answered by the wordes of a man that
 highte Canius; for whan he was ac-
 cused by Gaius Cesar, Germcynes
 230 sone, that he (*Canius*) was knowinge
 and consenting of a coniuracioun
 y-maked ayeins him (*sc. Gaius*), this
 Canius answerede thus: "Yif I hadde
 wist it, thou haddest nat wist it."
 235 In which thing sorwe hath nat so
 dulle my wit, that I pleyne only
 that shrewede folk aparailen felonies
 ayeins vertu; but I wondre greetly
 how that they may performe thinges
 240 that they hadde hoped for to don.
 For-why, to wilne shrewednesse, that
 comth peraventure of oure defaute;
 but it is lyk a monstre and a mer-
 vaille, how that, in the present sighte
 245 of god, may ben ached and per-
 formed swiche thinges as every fel-
 onous man hath conceived in his
 thought ayeins innocents. For which

thing oon of thy famileres nat unskil-
 fully axed thus: "Yif god is, whennes 250
 comen wikkede thinges? And yif god
 ne is, whennes comen gode thinges?"
 But al hadde it ben leweful that
 felonous folk, that now desiren the
 blood and the deeth of alle gode men 255
 and eek of alle the senat, han wilned
 to gon destroyen me, whom they han
 seyen alwey batailen and defenden
 gode men and eek al the senat, yit
 had I nat deserved of the faderes, 260
that is to seyn, of the senatoures, that
 they sholden wilne my destruccioun.

Thou remembrest wel, as I gesse,
 that whan I wolde doon or seyen any
 thing, thou thyself, alwey present, 265
 rewledest me. At the city of Verone,
 whan that the king, gredy of com-
 mune slaughter, caste him to trans-
 porten up al the ordre of the senat
 the gilt of his real maistee, of the 270
 whiche gilt that Albin was accused,
 with how gret sikernes of peril to
 me defendede I al the senat! Thou
 wost wel that I seye sooth, ne I ne
 avauntede me never in preysinge of 275
 my-self. For alwey, whan any wight
 receiveth precious renoun in avaunt-
 inge him-self of his werkes, he amen-
 useth the secree of his conscience.
 But now thou mayst wel seen to what 280
 ende I am comen for myne inno-
 cence; I receive peyne of fals felonye
 for guerdon of verray vertu. And
 what open confessioun of felonye
 hadde ever Iuges so cordaunt in 285
 crueltee, *that is to seyn, as myn accus-
 inge hath,* that either errour of mannes
 wit or elles condicioun of Fortune,
 that is uncertein to alle mortal folk,
 ne submittede some of hem, *that 290
 is to seyn, that it ne enclynede som
 Iuge to han pitee or compassioun?*
 For al-though I hadde ben accused
 that I wolde brenne holy houses,
 and strangle preestes with wikkede 295
 swerde, or that I hadde greythed
 deeth to al gode men, algates the
 sentence sholde han punished me,
 present, confessed, or convict. But
 now I am remewed fro the citee of 300
 Rome almost fyve hundred thousand

pas, I am with-out defence dampned
 for proscricioun and to the deeth, for
 the studie and bountees that I have
 305 doon to the senat. But O, wel ben they
 worthy of merite (*as who seith, nay*),
 ther mighte never yit non of hem be
 convict of swiche a blame as myne
 is! Of whiche trespas, myne accusours
 310 sayen ful wel the dignitee; the whiche
 dignitee, for they wolden derken it
 with medeling of som felonye, they
 baren me on hand, and lyeden, that
 I hadde polut and defouled my con-
 315 science with sacrilege, for coveitise
 of dignitee. And certes, thou thy-
 self, that are plaunted in me, chacedest
 out of the sege of my corage al cove-
 eitise of mortal thinges; ne sacrilege
 320 hadle no leve to han a place in me
 biforn thyne eyen. For thou drop-
 pedest every day in myne eres and in
 my thought thilke comaundement
 of Pictagoras, *that is to seyn*, men
 325 shal serve to godde, *and not to goddes*.
 Ne it was nat convenient, *ne no nede*,
 to taken help of the foulest spiritis;
 I, that thou hast ordeined and set in
 swiche excellence that thou makedest
 330 me lyk to god. And over this, the
 right clene secree chaumbre of myne
 hous, *that is to seyn, my wif*, and the
 companie of myn honest freendes,
 and my wyves fader, as wel holy as
 335 worthy to ben reverenced thourgh
 his owne dedes, defenden me from
 alle suspecious of swich blame. But
 O malice! For they that accusen
 me taken of thee, *Philosophie*, feith
 340 of so gret blame! For they trowen
 that I have had affinitee to malefice
 or *enchauement*, by-cause that I
 am replenished and fulfilled with
 thy techinges, and enformed of thy
 345 maneres. And thus it suffiseth not
 only, that thy reverence ne availe me
 not, but-yif that thou, of thy free
 wille, rather be blemished with myn
 offencioun. But certes, to the harmes
 350 that I have, ther bitydeth yit this
 encrees of harm, that the gessinge
 and the Iugement of moche folk ne
 looken no-thing to the desertes of
 thinges, but only to the aventure of

fortune; and iugen that only swiche
 thinges ben purveyed of god, whiche
 that temporel welefulnesse com-
 mendeth.

*Glose. As thus: that, yif a wight
 have prosperitee, he is a good man 360
 and worthy to han that prosperitee;
 and who-so hath adversitee, he is a
 wikked man, and god hath forsake
 him, and he is worthy to han that
 adversitee. This is the opinioun of 365
 some folk.*

And ther-of comth that good ges-
 singe, first of alle thing, forsaketh
 wrecches: certes, it greveth me to
 thinke right now the dyverse sen-
 370 tences that the poeple seith of me.
 And thus moche I seye, that the laste
 charge of contrarious fortune is this:
 that, whan that any blame is leyd upon
 a caitif, men wenen that he hath de-
 375 served that he suffreth. And I, that
 am put away for gode men, and
 despoiled of dignitees, and defouled
 of my name by gessinge, have suffred
 torment for my gode dedes. Certes, 380
 me semeth that I see the felonous
 covines of wikked men habouden in
 Ioye and in gladnesse. And I see
 that every lorel shapeth him to finde
 out newe fraudes for to accuse gode 385
 folk. And I see that gode men beth
 overthrowen for drede of my peril;
 and every luxurious tourmentour dar
 doon alle felonye unpunished and
 ben excited therto by yiftes; and 390
 innocents ne ben not only despoiled
 of sikernesse but of defence; and
 therefore me list to cryen *to god* in this
 wyse: —

METRE V.

O stelliferi conditor orbis.

O thou maker of the whele that
 bereth the sterres, which that art
 y-fastned to thy perdurable chayer,
 and tornest the hevене with a rav-
 5 ishing swigh, and constreinet the
 sterres to suffren thy lawe; so that
 the mone som-tyme shynig with hir
 ful hornes, meting with alle the bemes
 of the sonne hir brother, hydeth the

10 sterres that ben lesse; and somtyme,
 whan the mone, pale with hir derke
 hornes, approacheth the sonne, leseth
 hir lightes; and that the eve-sterre
 Hesperus, whiche that in the firste
 15 tyme of the night bringeth forth hir
 colde arysinges, cometh eft ayein hir
 used cours, and is pale *by the morwe*
 at the rysing of the sonne, and is
 thanne cleped Lucifer. Thou re-
 20 streinest the day by shorter dwelling,
 in the tyme of colde winter that
 maketh the leves to falle. Thou
 dividest the swifte tydes of the night,
 whan the hote somer is comen. Thy
 25 might atempreth the variaunts ses-
 sons of the yere; so that Zephirus
 the deboneir wind bringeth ayein, *in*
the first somer sesoun, the leves that
 the wind that highte Boreas hath reft
 30 awey *in autumpne, that is to seyn, in*
the laste ende of somer; and the sedes
 that the sterre that highte Arcturus
 saw, ben waxen heye cornes whan the
 sterre Sirius eschaufeth hem. Ther
 35 nis no-thing unbounde from his olde
 lawe, ne foreteth the werke of his
 propre estat.

O thou governour, governinge alle
 thinges by certein ende, why refuses-
 40 tow only to governe the werkes of
 men by dewe manere? Why suffrest
 thou that slydinge fortune torneth
 so grete entrechaunginges of thinges,
 so that anyous peyne, that sholde
 45 dewely punissh felouns, punissheth
 innocents? And folk of wikkede
 maneres sitten in heye chayres, and
 anyoinge folk treden, and that un-
 rightlyfully, on the nekkes of holy
 50 men? And vertu clershyninge nat-
 urelly is hid in derke derkenesses,
 and the rightful man bereth the
 blame and the peyne of the feloun.
 Ne forsweringe ne the fraude, cover-
 55 ed and kembd with a fals colour,
 ne anyoeth nat to shrewes; the
 whiche shrewes, whan hem list to
 usen hir strengthe, they reioysen hem
 to putten under hem the sovereyne
 60 kinges, whiche that poeple with-
 outen noumbre dreden.

O thou, what so ever thou be that

knittest alle bondes of thinges, loke
 on thise wrecchede erthes; we men
 that ben nat a foule party, but a fayr 65
 party of so grete a werk, we ben tor-
 mented in this see of fortune. Thou
 governour, withdraw and restreyn
 the ravishinge flodes, and fastne and
 ferme thise erthes stable with thilke 70
 bonde, with whiche thou governest
 the hevene that is so large.'

PROSE V.

Hic ubi continuato dolore delatraui.

Whan I hadde, with a continual
 sorwe, sobbed or borken out thise
 thinges, she with hir chere pesible,
 and no-thing amoeved with my compleintes,
 seide thus: 'Whan I say 5
 thee,' quod she, 'sorweful and wep-
 inge, I wiste anon that thou were a
 wrecche and exiled; but I wiste never
 how fer thyne exile was, yif thy tale
 ne hadde shewed it to me. But cer- 10
 tes, al be thou fer fro thy contree,
 thou nart nat put out of it; but thou
 hast failed of thy weye and gon amis.
 And yif thou hast lever for to wene
 that thou be put out of thy contree, 15
 than hast thou put out thy-self rather
 than any other wight hath. For no
 wight but thy-self ne mighte never
 han don that to thee. For yif thou
 remembre of what contree thou art 20
 born, it nis nat governed by emper-
 ours, ne by governement of multi-
 tude, as weren the contrees of hem of
 Athenes; but oo lord and oo king,
 and that is god, that is lord of thy 25
 contree, whiche that reioyseth him of
 the dwelling of hise citezenes, and
 nat for to putte hem in exile; of the
 whiche lorde it is a soverayne freedom
 to be governed by the brydel of him 30
 and obeye to his Iustice. Hastow
 foryeten thilke right olde lawe of thy
 citee, in the whiche citee it is orde-
 ined and establisshed, that for what
 wight that hath lever founden ther-in 35
 his sete or his hous than elles-wher,
 he may nat be exiled by no right from
 that place? For who-so that is con-
 tened in-with the palis and the clos

40 of thilke citee, ther nis no drede that
 he may deserve to ben exiled. But
 who-so that leteth the wil for to enhab-
 ite there, he forleteth also to deserve
 to ben citezein of thilke citee. So
 45 that I sey, that the face of this place
 ne moveth me nat so mochel as thyne
 owne face. Ne I axe nat rather the
 walles of thy librarie, aparayled and
 wrought with yvory and with glas,
 50 than after the sete of thy thought.
 In whiche I putte nat whylom bokes,
 but I putte that that maketh bokes
 worthy of prys or precious, that is to
 seyn, the sentence of my bokes. And
 55 certainly of thy desertes, bistowed in
 comune good, thou hast seid sooth,
 but after the multitude of thy gode
 dedes, thou hast seid fewe; and of
 the honestee or of the falsnesse of
 60 thinges that ben aposed ayeins thee,
 thou hast remembered thinges that ben
 knowen to alle folk. And of the fel-
 onyes and fraudes of thyne accusours,
 it semeth thee have y-touched it for-
 65 sothe rightfully and shortly, al mighten
 tho same thinges betere and more
 plentivously ben couth in the mouthe
 of the peple that knoweth al this.

Thou hast eek blamed gretly and
 70 compleined of the wrongful dede of
 the senat. And thou hast sorwed for
 my blame, and thou hast wopen for
 the damage of thy renoun that is
 apayred; and thy laste sorwe eschauf-
 75 ede ayeins fortune, and compleinest
 that guerdouns ne ben nat evenliche
 yolden to the desertes of folk. And
 in the latere ende of thy wode Muse,
 thou preyedest that thilke pees that
 80 governeth the hevene sholde governe
 the erthe. But for that manye tribu-
 laciouns of affecciouns han assailed
 thee, and sorwe and ire and wepinge
 to-drawn thee dyversely; as thou art
 85 now feble of thought, mightier reme-
 dies ne shullen nat yit touchen thee,
 for whiche we wol usen somdel lighter
 medicines: so that thilke passious
 that ben woxen harde in swellinge,
 90 by perturbaciouns flowing in-to thy
 thought, mowen wexen esy and softe,
 to receiven the strengthe of a more

mighty and more egre medicine, by
 an esier touchinge.

METRE VI.

*Cum Phebi radiis graue
 Cancri sidus inestuat.*

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 signe of the
Cancre, who-so yeveth thanne largely 5
 hise sedes to the feldes that refusen to
 receiven hem, lat him gon, bigyled of
 trust that he hadde to his corn, to
 acorns of okes. Yif thou wolt gadre 10
 violettes, ne go thou not to the pur-
 pur wode whan the feld, chirkinge,
 agryseth of colde by the felnesse of
 the winde that highte Aquilon. Yif
 thou desirest or wolt usen grapes, ne 15
 seke thou nat, with a glotonous hond,
 to streyne and presse the stalkes of
 the vine in the ferst somer sesoun;
 for Bachus, the god of wyne, hath
 rather yeven hise yiftes to autumpne,
the later ende of somer. 20

God tokneth and assigneth the
 tymes, ablinge hem to hir propres
 offices; ne he ne suffreth nat the
 stoundes whiche that him-self hath
 devyded and constreyned to ben 25
 y-medled to-gidere. And forthy he
 that forleteth certein ordinaunce of
 doinge by overthrowinge wey, he ne
 hath no glade issue or ende of his
 werkes. 30

PROSE VI.

*Primum igitur paterisne me pau-
 culis rogacionibus.*

'First woltow suffre me to touche
 and assaye the estat of thy thought
 by a fewe demaundes, so that I may
 understonde what be the manere of
 thy curacioun?' 5

'Axe me,' quod I, 'at thy wille,
 what thou wolt, and I shal answer.'

Tho seide she thus: 'Whether
 wenestow,' quod she, 'that this world
 be governed by foolish happes and 10
 fortunous, or elles that ther be in it
 any government of resoun?'

'Certes,' quod I, 'I ne trowe nat in no manere, that so certein thinges
15 sholde be moeved by fortunous fortune; but I wot wel that god, maker and mayster, is governour of his werk. Ne never nas yit day that mighte putte me out of the sothnesse of that sentence.'

'So is it,' quod she; 'for the same thing songe thou a litel her-biforn, and biweydelest and biweptest, that only men weren put out of the cure
25 of god. For of alle other thinges thou ne doutedest nat that they nere governed by resoun. But ow! (*i. pape!*) I wondre gretly, certes why that thou art syk, sin that thou art put
30 in so holson a sentence. But lat us seken depper; I coniecte that ther lakketh I not nere what. But sey me this: sin that thou ne doutest nat that this world be governed by god, with
35 whiche gouveinales takestow hede that it is governed?'

'Unnethe,' quod I, 'knowe I the sentence of thy questioun; so that I ne may nat yit answeren to thy de
40 maundes.'

'I nas nat deceived,' quod she, 'that ther ne failleth somewhat, by whiche the maladye of thy perturbation is crept into thy thought, so as
45 the strengthe of the palis chyning is open. But sey me this: remembrest thou what is the ende of thinges, and whider that the entencion of alle kinde tendeth?'

50 'I have herd it told som-tyme,' quod I; 'but drerinesse hath dulled my memorie.'

'Certes,' quod she, 'thou wost wel whennes that alle thinges ben comen
55 and procedeth?'

'I wot wel,' quod I, and answered, that 'god is beginning of al.'

'And how may this be,' quod she, 'that, sin thou knowest the beginning
60 of thinges, that thou ne knowest nat what is the ende of thinges? But swiche ben the customes of perturbationis, and this power they han, that they may moeve a man out of
65 his place, *that is to seyn, fro the stable-*

nes and perfeccioun of his knowinge; but, certes, they may nat al arace him, ne aliene him in al. But I wolde that thou woldest answer to this: remembrestow that thou art a man?' 70

'Why sholde I nat remembre that?' quod I.

'Maystow nat telle me thanne,' quod she, 'what thing is a man?'

'Axestow me nat,' quod I, 'whether 75 that I be a resonable mortal beest? I woot wel, and I confesse wel that I am it.'

'Wistestow never yit that thou were any other thing?' quod she. 80

'No,' quod I.

'Now woot I,' quod she, 'other cause of thy maladye, and that right grete. Thou hast left for to knowen thy-self, what thou art; thorough 85 whiche I have pleyly founden the cause of thy maladye, or elles the entree of recoveringe of thyn hele. For-why, for thou art confounded with foryeting of thy-self, for-ty sorwestow that thou art exiled of thy
90 propre goodes. And for thou ne wost what is the ende of thinges, for-ty demestow that felonous and wikked men ben mighty and weleful. 95

And for thou hast foryeten by whiche gouveinements the world is governed, for-ty wenestow that these mutacionis of fortune fleten with-oute governour. These ben grete causes 100 not only to maladye, but, certes, grete causes to deeth. But I thanke the auctor and the maker of hele, that nature hath not al forleten thee. I have grete norissinghes of thyn hele, 105 and that is, the sothe sentence of gouveinace of the world; that thou bilevest that the governinge of it nis nat subiect ne underput to the folie of these happes aventurous, but to 110 the resoun of god. And ther-for doute thee no-thing; for of this litel spark thyn hete of lyf shal shyne.

But for as moche as it is nat tyme yit of faster remedies, and the nature 115 of thoughtes deceived is this, that as ofte as they casten away sothe opinionis, they clothen hem in false

opiniouns, of which false opiniouns
 120 the derkenesse of perturbacioun wex-
 eth up, that confoundeth the verray
 insighte: and that derkenesse shal I
 assaye som-what to maken thinne
 125 remedies; so that, after that the derke-
 nesse of deceivinge desiringes is don
 away, thou mowe knowe the shyninge
 of verray light.

METRE VII.

Nubibus atris.

The sterres, covered with blake
 cloudes, ne mowen yeten a-doun no
 light. Yif the trouble wind that
 hight Auster, turning and walwinge
 5 the see, medleth the hete, *that is to*
seyn, the boyling up from the botme;

Explicit liber primus.

the wawes, that whylom weren clere
 as glas and lyke to the faire clere
 dayes, withstande anon the sightes
 of men by the filthe and ordure that
 10 is resolved. And the fletinge stream,
 that royleth doun dyversly fro heye
 mountaignes, is arested and resisted
 ofte tyme by the encountringe of a
 stoon that is departed and fallen from
 15 som roche.

And for-thy, yif thou wolt loken
 and demen sooth with cleer light, and
 holden the wey with a right path,
 weyve thou Ioye, dryf fro thee drede,
 20 fleme thou hope, ne lat no sorwe
 aprouche; *that is to seyn, lat non of*
these four passiouns over-comen thee
or blende thee. For cloudy and derke
 is thilke thought, and bounde with bry-
 25 dles, where-as these things regnen.'

BOOK II.

* PROSE I.

Postea paulisper conticuit.

After this she stinte a litel; and,
 after that she hadde gadered by
 atempre stillenesse myn attentcioun,
 she seide thus: (*As who mighte seyn*
 5 *thus: After these things she stinte a*
litel; and whan she aperceived by
atempre stillenesse that I was ententif
to herkene hir, she bigan to speke in
this wyse): 'Yif I,' quod she, 'have
 10 *understonden and knowen outrely*
the causes and the habit of thy mala-
dye, thou languisest and art defeted
for desyr and talent of thy rather for-
tune. She, that ilke Fortune only,
 15 *that is chaunged, as thou feynest, to*
three-ward, hath perverted the cleer-
nesse and the estat of thy corage. I
understonde the fele-folde colours and
deceites of thilke merveilous monstre
 20 *Fortune, and how she useth ful flat-*
eringe familiaritee with hem that she
enforceth to bigyle; so longe, til that
she confounde with unsufferable sorwe
 hem that she hath left in despeyr un-
 25 purveyed. And yif thou remembrest

wel the kinde, the maneres, and the
 desert of thilke Fortune, thou shalt
 wel knowe that, as in hir, thou never
 ne haddest ne hast y-lost any fair thing.
 But, as I trowe, I shal nat gretly
 30 trauailen to do thee remembren on these
 thinges. For thou were wont to hur-
 telen and despysen hir, with manly
 wordes, whan she was blaundissinge
 and present, and pursewedest hir with
 35 sentences that were drawn out of
 myn entree, *that is to seyn, out of myn*
informacioun. But no sodein muta-
 cioun ne bitydeh nat with-oute a
 manere chaunginge of corages; and
 40 so is it befallen that thou art a litel
 departed fro the pees of thy thought.

But now is tyme that thou drinke
 and ataste some softe and delitable
 thinges; so that, whan they ben entred
 45 with-in thee, it mowe maken wey
 to strengere drinks of medicynes.
 Com now forth therfore the suasioun
 of swetenesse rethorion, whiche that
 goth only the right wey, whyl she for-
 50 saketh nat myne estatuts. And with
 Rhetorice com forth Musice, a dami-
 sel of our hous, that singeth now

lighter moedes or prolaciouns, now
55 hevyer. What eyeth thee, man?

What is it that hath cast thee in-to
morninge and in-to wepinge? I
trowe that thou hast seyn som newe
thing and uncouth. Thou wenest
60 that Fortune be chaunged ayein thee;
but thou wenest wrong, yif thou that
wene. Alwey tho ben hir maneres;
she hath rather kept, as to thee-ward,
hir propre stablesse in the chaung-
65 inge of hir-self. Right swich was she
whan she flatered thee, and deceived
thee with unlevful lykinges of fals
welefulnesse. Thou hast now known
and ataynt the doutous or double vis-
70 age of thilke blinde goddesse Fortune.

She, that yit covereth hir and wimpleth
hir to other folk, hath shewed
hir every-del to thee. Yif thou
aprovest hir and thenkest that she is
75 good, use hir maneres and pleyne
thee nat. And yif thou agrysest hir
false trecherye, despyse and cast away
hir that pleyeth so harmfully; for
she, that is now cause of so muche
80 sorwe to thee, sholde ben cause to
thee of pees and of Ioye. She hath
forsaken thee, forsothe; the whiche
that never man may ben siker that
she ne shal forsake him.

85 **Glose.** *But natheles, some bokes
han the text thus:* For sothe, she hath
forsaken thee, ne ther nis no man
siker that she ne hath nat forsaken.

Holdestow than thilke welefulnesse
90 precious to thee that shal passen?
And is present Fortune dereworthe
to thee, which that nis nat feithful
for to dwelle; and, whan she goth
away, that she bringeth a wight in
95 sorwe? For sin she may nat ben
withholden at a mannes wille, she
maketh him a wrecche whan she de-
parteth fro him. What other thing
is flittinge Fortune but a maner
100 shewinge of wrecchednesse that is to
comen? Ne it ne suffyseth nat only
to loken on thinge that is present
bifore the eyen of a man. But wis-
dom loketh and amesureth the ende
105 of thinges; and the same chaunginge
from oon in-to an-other, *that is to*

*seyn, from adversitee in-to prosperi-
tee, maketh that the maneres of For-
tune ne ben nat for to dreden, ne the
flateringes of hir to ben desired. Thus, 110
at the laste, it bihoveth thee to
suffren with evene wille in pacience
al that is don in-with the floor of
Fortune, that is to seyn, in this world,
sin thou hast ones put thy nekke 115
under the yok of hir. For yif thou
wolt wryten a lawe of wendinge and
of dwellinge to Fortune, whiche that
thou hast chosen frely to ben thy
lady, artow nat wrongful in that, and 120
makest Fortune wroth and aspere by
thyn impatience, and yit thou mayst
nat change hir?*

Yif thou committest and bitakest
thy sailes to the winde, thou shalt 125
be shoven, not thider that thou
woldest, but whider that the wind
shoveth thee. Yif thou castest thy
sedes in-to the felde, thou sholdest
han in minde that the yeres ben, 130
amonges, other-whyle plentevous and
other-whyle bareyne. Thou hast bi-
taken thy-self to the governaunce of
Fortune, and for-thy it bihoveth thee
to ben obeisaunt to the maneres of 135
thy lady. Enforcest thou thee to
aresten or withholden the swiftnesse
and the sweigh of hir turninge whele?
O thou fool of alle mortal fooles, if
Fortune bigan to dwelle stable, she 140
cesede thanne to ben Fortune!

METRE I.

*Hec cum superba uerterit uices
dextra.*

Whan Fortune with a proud right
hand hath torned hir chaunginge
stoundes, she fareth lyk the maneres
of the boilinge Eurype. **Glosa.**
*Eurype is an arm of the see that 5
ebbeth and stoweth; and som-tyme
the streem is on o syde, and som-tyme
on the other. Text.* She, cruel For-
tune, casteth adoun kinges that
whylom weren y-drad; and she, de- 10
ceivable, enhaunseth up the humble
chere of him that is discomfited. Ne
she neither hereth ne rekketh of

wrecchede wepinges; and she is so
 15 hard that she laugheth and scorneth
 the wepinges of hem, the whiche she
 hath makid wepe with hir free wille.
 Thus she pleyeth, and thus she
 proeveth hir strengthes; and sheweth
 20 a greet wonder to alle hir servautes,
 yif that a wight is seyn weleful, and
 overthrowe in an houre.

PROSE II.

Vellem autem pauca tecum.

Certes, I wolde pleten with thee a
 fewe thinges, usinge the wordes of
 Fortune; tak hede now thy-self, yif
 that she axeth right. "O thou man,
 5 wherfore makest thou me guilty by
 thyne every-dayes pleyninges? What
 wrong have I don thee? What
 goodes have I bireft thee that weren
 thyne? Stryf or plete with me, bi-
 10 fore what Luge that thou wolt, of
 the possessioun of riches or of digni-
 tees. And yif thou mayst shewen me
 that ever any mortal man hath re-
 ceived any of tho thinges to ben hise
 15 in propre, than wol I graunte frely
 that alle thilke thinges weren thyne
 whiche that thou axest. Whan that
 nature broughte thee forth out of thy
 moder wombe, I receyved thee naked
 20 and nedey of alle thinges, and I
 norisshe thee with my riches,
 and was redy and ententif through
 my favour to susteyne thee; and that
 maketh thee now impacient ayeins
 25 me; and I envrounde thee with alle
 the aboundance and shyninge of alle
 goodes that ben in my right. Now it
 lyketh me to with-drawn my hand;
 thou hast had grace as he that hath
 30 used of foreine goodes: thou hast no
 right to pleyne thee, as though thou
 haddest outrelly for-lorn alle thy
 thinges. Why pleynest thou thanne?
 I have done thee no wrong. Rich-
 35 esses, honours, and swiche other
 thinges ben of my right. My ser-
 vautes knowen me for hir lady;
 they comen with me, and departen
 whan I wende. I dar wel affermen
 40 hardily, that yif tho thinges, of which

thou pleynest that thou hast forlorn,
 hadde ben thyne, thou ne haddest
 not lorn hem. Shal I thanne only
 ben defended to usen my right?

Certes, it is lefevel to the hevene 45
 to make clere dayes, and, after that,
 to coveren tho same dayes with derke
 nightes. The yeer hath eek leve to
 apparailen the visage of the erthe,
 now with floures and now with fruit, 50
 and to confounden hem som-tyme
 with reynes and with coldes. The
 see hath eek his right to ben som-
 tyme calme and blaudishing with
 smothe water, and som-tyme to ben 55
 horrible with waves and with tem-
 pestes. But the covetise of men,
 that may nat ben stanchid, shal it
 binde me to ben stedefast, sin that
 stedefastnesse is uncouth to my man- 60
 neres? Swich is my strengthe, and
 this pley I pleye continually. I torne
 the whirlinge wheel with the turning
 cercle; I am glad to chaungen the
 lowest to the heyest, and the heyest 65
 to the lowest. Worth up, if thou
 wolt, so it be by this lawe, that thou
 ne holde nat that I do thee wronge
 thogh thou descende adoun, whan the
 resoun of my pley axeth it. 70

Wistest thou nat how Cresus, the
 king of Lydiens, of whiche king Cyrus
 was ful sore agast a litel biforn, that
 this rewliche Cresus was caught of
 Cyrus and lad to the fyr to ben brent, 75
 but that a rayn descendede doum fro
 hevene that rescowede him? And is
 it out of thy minde how that Paulus,
 consul of Rome, whan he hadde
 taken the king of Perciens, weep 80
 pitously for the captivitee of the self
 kinge? What other thing biwailen
 the crynges of tragedies but only the
 dedes of Fortune, that with an unwar
 stroke overtorneth realmes of grete 85
 nobley? *Glose. Tragedie is to seyn,
 a dittee of a prosperitee for a tyme,
 that endeth in wrecchednesse.*

Lernedest nat thou in *Greke*, whan
 thou were yonge, that in the entree, 90
 or in the celere, of Iupiter, ther ben
 couched two tonnes; that on is ful of
 good, that other is ful of harm? What

right hast thou to pleyne, yif thou hast
 95 taken more plenteuously of the goode
 syde, *that is to seyn, of my riches*
and prosperites; and what eek if I
 ne be nat al departed from thee? What
 eek yif my mutabilitee yiveth thee
 100 rightful cause of hope to han yit
 beter thinges? Natheles dismaye
 thee nat in thy thought; and thou
 that art put in the comune realme
 of alle, ne desyre nat to liven by thyn
 105 only propre right.

METRE II.

Si quantas rapidis flatibus ineivus.

Though Plentee, *that is goddesse of*
richesses, hielde adoun with ful horn,
 and withdraweth nat hir hand, as
 many riches as the see torneth
 5 upward sandes whan it is moeved
 with ravissinghe blastes, or elles as
 many riches as ther shynen brighte
 sterres on hevenc on the sterry nightes;
 yit, for al that, mankinde nolde not
 10 cese to wepe wrecchede pleyntes.
 And al be it so that god receyveth
 gladly hir prayers, and yiveth them
 (as fool-large) moche gold, and apa-
 railleth covetous men with noble or
 15 clere honours: yit semeth hem haven
 y-geten no-thing, but alwey hir cruel
 ravynne, devouringe al that they han
 geten, sheweth other gapinges; *that*
is to seyn, gapen and desyren yit after
 20 *mo riches*. What brydles mighten
 withholden, to any certain ende, the
 desordenee covetise of men, whan,
 ever the rather that it fleteth in large
 yiftes, the more ay brenneth in hem
 25 the thirst of havinge? Certes he
 that, quakinge and dredful, weneth
 him-selven nedey, he ne liveth never-
 more riche."

PROSE III.

Hiis igitur si pro se tecum Fortuna loqueretur.

Therfor, yif that Fortune spake with
 thee for hir-self in this manere, for-
 sothe thou ne haddest nat what thou
 mightest answer. And, if thou hast

any-thing wherwith thou mayest
 5 rightfully defenden thy compleint,
 it behoveth thee to shewen it; and
 I wol yeven thee space to tellen it.'

'Certeynly,' quod I thanne, 'thise
 beth faire thinges, and enointed with
 10 hony swetenesse of rethorike and
 musike; and only whyl they ben
 herd they ben delicious. But to
 wrecches is a depper felinge of harm;
this is to seyn, that wrecches felen the
harmes that they suffren more gre-
viously than the remedies or the delites
of thise wordes morwen gladen or com-
forten hem; so that, whan thise
 thinges stinten for to soune in eres,
 20 the sorwe that is inset greveth the
 thought.'

'Right so is it,' quod she. 'For
 thise ne ben yit none remedies of thy
 maladye; but they ben a maner nor-
 25 rissinghes of thy sorwe, yit rebel ayein
 thy curacioun. For whan that tyme
 is, I shal moeve swiche thinges that
 percen hem-self depe. But natheles,
 that thou shalt not wilne to leten thy-
 self a wrecche, hast thou foryeten the
 30 number and the manere of thy wele-
 fulnesse? I holde me stille, how that
 the soverayne men of the citee token
 thee in cure and kepinge, whan thou
 35 were orphelin of fader and moder,
 and were chosen in affinitee of
 princes of the citee; and thou bigunne
 rather to be leef and dere than forto
 ben a neighbour; the whiche thing
 40 is the most precious kinde of any
 propinquitee or alyaunce that may
 ben. Who is it that ne seide tho
 that thou were right weleful, with so
 grete a nobleye of thy fadres-in-lawe,
 45 and with the chastitee of thy wyf, and
 with the opportunitie and noblesse
 of thy masculin children, *that is to*
seyn, thy sones? And over al this—
 50 me list to passen the comune
 thinges—how thou haddest in thy
 youthe dignitees that weren werned
 to olde men. But it delyteth me
 to comen now to the singuler uphe-
 55 pinge of thy welefulnesse. Yif any
 fruit of mortal thinges may han any
 weichte or prys of welefulnesse,

mightest thou ever foryeten, for any charge of harm that mighte bifalle, 60 the remembraunce of thilke day that thou saye thy two sones maked conscileres, and y-lad on-gedere fro thyn house under so greet assemblee of senatoures and under the blythenesse 65 of poeple; and whan thou saye hem set in the court in here chayeres of dignitees? Thou, rethorien or pronouncere of kinges preysinges, deservedest glorie of wit and of eloquence, 70 whan thou, sittinge bitwene thy two sones, conseileres, in the place that highte Circo, fulfuldest the abydinge of the multitude of poeple that was sprad abouten thee, with so large 75 preysinge and laude, as men singen in victories. Tho yave thou wordes to Fortune, as I trowe, *that is to seyn, tho feffedest thou Fortune with glosinge wordes and deceiuedest hir*, whan she 80 acoyede thee and norisshede thee as hir owne delycles. Thou here away of Fortune a yifte, *that is to seyn, swiche guardoun*, that she never yaf to privee man. Wilt thou therfor 85 leye a rekeninge with Fortune? She hath now twinkled first upon thee with a wikkede eye. Yif thou considere the noumbre and the manere of thy blisses and of thy sorves, thou 90 mayst nat forsaken that thou art yit blisful. For if thou therfor wenest thy-self nat weful, for thinges that tho semeden ioyful ben passed, ther nis nat why thou sholdest wene 95 thy-self a wrecche; for thinges that semen now sorye passen also.

Art thou now comen first, a sodein gest, in-to the shadwe or tabernacle of this lyf; or trowest thou that any 100 stedefastnesse be in mannes thinges, whan ofte a swift houre dissolveth the same man; *that is to seyn, whan the soule departeth fro the body?* For, al-though that selde is ther any feith 105 that fortunous thinges wolen dwellen, yit natheles the laste day of a mannes lyf is a manere deeth to Fortune, and also to thilke that hath dwelt. And therfor, what, wenestow, thar [thee] 110 recche, yif thou forlete hir in dey-

inge, or elles that she, *Fortune*, forlete thee in fleeinge away?

METRE III.

Cum polo Phebus roseis quadrigis.

Whan Phebus, the sonne, bigineth to spreden his cleernesse with rosene chariettes, thanne the sterre, y-dimmed, paleth hir whyte cheres, 5 by the flambes of the sonne that overcometh the sterre-light. *This is to seyn, whan the sonne is risen, the dey-sterre wexeth pale, and leseth hir light for the grete brightnesse of the sonne.* 10

Whan the wode wexeth rody of rosene floures, in the first somer sesoun, thorough the brethe of the winde Zephirus that wexeth warm, yif the cloudy wind Auster blowe 15 felleche, than goth away the fairenesse of thornes.

Ofte the see is cleer and calm withoute moevinge flodes; and ofte the horrible wind Aquilon moeveth 20 boilinge tempestes and over-whelveth the see.

Yif the forme of this worlde is so selde stable, and yif it turneth by so many entrechaunginges, wolt thou 25 thanne trusten in the tomblinge fortunes of men? Wolt thou trowen on flittinge goodes? It is certain and establisshed by lawe perdurable, that no-thing that is engendred nis 30 stedefast ne stable.'

PROSE IV.

Tunc ego, uera, inquam, commemoras.

Thanne seide I thus: 'O notice of alle vertues, thou seist ful sooth; ne I ne may nat forsake the right swifte cours of my prosperitee; *that is to seyn, that prosperitee ne be comen to me wonder swiftly and sone.* But this is a thing that greetly smerteth me whan it remembreth me. For in alle adversitee of fortune, the most unsely kinde of contrarious 10 fortune is to han ben weful.'

'But that thou,' quod she, 'abyest thus the torment of thy false opinion, that mayst thou nat rightfully
15 blamen ne aretten to thinges: *as who seith, for thou hast yit many haboundances of thinges.*

Text. For al be it so that the ydel name of aventurous weleful-
20 nesse moeveth thee now, it is leveful that thou rekne with me of how many grete thinges thou hast yit plentee. And therfor, yif that thilke thing that thou haddest for most
25 precious in al thy richesse of fortune be kept to thee yit, by the grace of god, unwemmed and undefouled, mayst thou thanne pleyne rightfully upon the meschef of Fortune, sin
30 thou hast yit thy beste thinges? Certes, yit liveth in good point thilke precious honour of mankinde, Symacus, thy wyves fader, which that is a man naked alle of sapience and of
35 vertu; the whiche man thou woldest byen redely with the prys of thyn owne lyf. He biwayleth the wronges that men don to thee, and nat for him-self; for he liveth in sikernesse
40 of any sentences put ayeins him. And yit liveth thy wyf, that is atempre of wit, and passinge other wimmen in clenness of chastetee; and for I wol closen shortly hir boun-
45 tees, she is lyk to hir fader. I telle thee wel, that she liveth looth of this lyf, and kepeth to thee only hir goost; and is al maat and over-
50 desyr of thee, in the whiche thing only I moot graunten that thy welefulnesse is amenused. What shal I seyn eek of thy two sones, conseilours, of whiche, as of children of hir
55 age, ther shyneth the lyknesse of the wit of hir fader or of hir elder fader? And sin the sovereyn cure of alle mortel folk is to saven hir owen lyves, O how weleful art thou, yif
60 thou knowe thy goodes! For yit ben ther thinges dwelled to thee-ward, that no man douteth that they ne ben more dereworthe to thee than thyn owen lyf. And for-thy drye

thy teres, for yit nis nat everich 65
fortune al hateful to thee-ward, ne over greet tempest hath nat yit fallen upon thee, whan that thyn ances eleven faste, that neither wolen suffren the counfort of this tyme present
70 ne the hope of tyme cominge to passen ne to faylen.'

'And I preye,' quod I, 'that faste moten they halden; for whyles that they halden, how-so-ever that thinges
75 ben, I shal wel fleten forth and escapen; but thou mayst wel seen how grete aparayles and aray that me lakketh, that ben passed away fro me.'

'I have som-what avauused and 80
forthered thee,' quod she, 'yif that thou anye nat or forthinke nat of al thy fortune: *as who seith, I have som-what comforted thee, so that thou
85 tempest thee nat thus with al thy fortune, sin thou hast yit thy beste thinges.* But I may nat suffren thy delices, that pleynest so wepinge and anguissou, for that ther lakketh som-what to thy welefulnesse. For what man is so
90 sad or of so parfit welefulnesse, that he ne stryveth and pleyne on som halve ayen the qualitee of his estat? For-why ful anguissou thing is the condicioun of mannes goodes; for
95 either it cometh nat al-togider to a wight, or elles it last nat perpetuel. For sum man hath grete richesces, but he is ashamed of his ungentel linage; and som is renowned of noblesse
100 of kinrede, but he is enclosed in so grete anguisshe of nede of thinges, that him were lever that he were unknowe. And som man haboundeth both in richesse and noblesse, but yit
105 he bewaileth his chaste lyf, for he ne hath no wyf. And som man is wel and selily y-mariad, but he hath no children, and norissheth his richesces to the eyres of strange folkes. And
110 som man is gladed with children, but he wepeth ful sory for the trespass of his sone or of his daughter. And for this ther ne acordeth no wight lightly to the condicioun of his fortune; for
115 alwey to every man ther is in som-what that, unassayed, he ne wot nat;

or elles he dredeth that he hath
 assayed. And adde this also, that
 120 every weleful man hath a ful delicat
 felinge; so that, but-yif alle thinges
 bifalle at his owne wil, for he is im-
 pacient, or is nat used to han non
 adversitee, anon he is thrown adoun
 125 for every litel thing. And ful litel
 thinges ben tho that withdrawen the
 somme or the perfeccioun of blisful-
 nesse fro hem that ben most fortunat.
 How many men, trowest thou, wolden
 130 demen hem-self to ben almost in
 hevne, yif they mighten atayne to
 the leest party of the remnaunt of
 thy fortune? This same place that
 thou clepest exil, is contree to hem
 135 that enhabiten heer, and forthy noth-
 ing [is] wrecched but whan thou
 wenest it: *as who seith, thou thy-self,*
ne no wight elles, nis a wrecche, but
whan he weneth him-self a wrecche
 140 *by reputacioun of his corage.* And
 ayeinward, alle fortune is blisful to a
 man by the agreabletee or by the
 egalitee of him that suffreth it.

What man is that, that is so wele-
 145 ful, that nolde changen his estat whan
 he hath lost pacience? The swetnesse
 of mannes welefulnessse is sprayned
 with many biternesses; the whiche
 welefulnessse, al-though it seme swete
 150 and ioyful to hem that useth it, yit
 may it nat ben with-holden that it ne
 goth away whan it wole. Thanne is
 it wel sene, how wrecched is the blis-
 fulnesse of mortal thinges, that neither
 155 it dureth perpetuel with hem that every
 fortune receiven agreablyly or egaly,
 ne it delyteth nat in al to hem that
 ben anguissous. O ye mortal folk,
 what seke ye thanne blisfulnessse out
 160 of your-self, whiche that is put in
 your-self? Error and folye con-
 foundeth yow.

I shal shewe thee shortly the poynt
 of sovereyne blisfulnessse. Is ther any-
 165 thing more precious to thee than thy-
 self? Thou wolt answer, "nay."
 Thanne, yif it so be that thou art
 mighty over thy-self, *that is to seyn,*
by tranquillitee of thy soule, than hast
 170 thou thing in thy power that thou

noldest never lesen, ne Fortune ne
 may nat beneme it thee. And that
 thou mayst knowe that blisfulnessse
 ne may nat standen in thinges that
 ben fortunous and temporel, now 175
 understonde and gader it to-gidere
 thus: Yif blisfulnessse be the sovereyn
 good of nature that liveth by resoun,
 ne thilke thing nis nat sovereyn good
 that may be taken away in any wyse, 180
 (for more worthy thing and more
 digne is thilke thing that may nat
 ben taken away); than sheweth it
 wel, that the unstablenessse of fortune
 may nat atayne to receiven verry 185
 blisfulnessse. And yit more-over:
 what man that this toumbling wele-
 fulnesse ledeth, either he woot that
 it is changeable, or elles he woot it
 nat. And yif he woot it nat, what 190
 blisful fortune may ther be in the
 blindnesse of ignorance? And yif he
 woot that it is changeable, he moot
 alwey ben adrad that he ne lese that
 thing that he ne doubteth nat but 195
 that he may lesen it; *as who seith, he*
mot ben alwey agast, lest he lese that
he wot wel he may lese it. For which,
 the continuel dreded that he hath ne
 suffreth him nat to ben weleful. Or 200
 yif he lese it, he weneth to be dispysed
 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 fors of the lost 205
than of the havinge. And for as moche
 as thou thy-self art he, to whom it
 hath been shewed and proved by ful
 manye demonstraciouns, as I wot wel,
 that the sowles of men ne mowe nat 210
 deyen in no wyse; and eek sin it is
 cleer and certain, that fortunous wele-
 fulnesse endeth by the deeth of the
 body; it may nat ben doutid that,
 yif that deeth may take away blis- 215
 fulnesse, that alle the kinde of mortal
 thinges ne descendeth in-to wrecched-
 nesse by the ende of the deeth. And
 sin we knowen wel, that many a man
 hath sought the fruit of blisfulnessse 220
 nat only with suffringe of deeth, but
 eek with suffringe of peynes and tor-
 mentes; how mighte than this present

lyf maken men blisful, sin that, whan
22; thilke selve lyf is ended, it ne maketh
folk no wrecches?

METRE IV.

*Quisquis uolet perennem Cautus
ponere sedem.*

What maner man, stable and war,
that wole founden him a perdurable
sete, and ne wole nat ben cast down
with the loude blastes of the wind
5 Eurus; and wole despise the see,
manasinge with flodes; lat him es-
chewen to bilde on the cop of the
mountaigne or in the moiste sandes.
For the felle wind Auster tormenteth
10 the cop of the mountaigne with all
his strengthes; and the lause sandes
refusen to beren the hevy wighte.

And forthy, if thou wolt fleen the
perilous aventure, *that is to seyn, of*
15 *the worlde*; have minde certainly to
fischen thyn hous of a merye site in
a lowe stoon. For al-though the
wind, troubling the see, thondre with
over-throwinges, thou that art put in
20 quiete, and weleful by strengthe of
thy palis, shalt leden a cleer age,
scorninge the woodnesses and the
ires of the eyr.

PROSE V.

Set cum rationum iam in te.

But for as moche as the norisshinges
of my resouns descenden now in-to
thee, I trowe it were tyme to usen a
litel strenger medicynes. Now under-
5 stond heer, al were it so that the yiftes
of Fortune ne were nat brutel ne
transitorie, what is ther in hem that
may be thyn in any tyme, or elles
that it nis foul, yif that it be con-
10 sidered and loked perfily? Richesses,
ben they precious by the nature of
hem-self, or elles by the nature of
thee? What is most worth of rich-
esses? Is it nat gold or might of
15 moneye assembled? Certes, thilke
gold and thilke moneye shyneth and
yeveth betere renoun to hem that
descenden it thanne to thilke folk

that mokeren it; for avarice maketh
alwey mokereres to ben hated, and
largesse maketh folk cleer of renoun.
20 For sin that swich thing as is trans-
ferred fram o man to another ne may
nat dwellen with no man; certes,
thanne is thilke moneye precious
25 whan it is translated into other folk
and stenteth to ben had, by usage of
large yevinge of *him that hath yeven*
it. And also: yif that al the moneye
that is over-al in the worlde were
30 gadered toward o man, it sholde
maken alle other men to ben nedý as
of that. And certes a voys al hool,
that is to seyn, with-oute amenusinge,
fulfilleth to-gidere the hering of moche
35 folk; but certes, youre richesses ne
mowen nat passen in-to moche folke
with-oute amenusinge. And whan
they ben apassed, nedes they maken
hem pore that for-gon the richesses.
40

O! streite and nedý clepe I this
richesse, sin that many folk ne may
nat han it al, ne al may it nat comen
to o man with-outen povertee of alle
other folk! And the shyninge of
45 gemmes, *that I clepe precious stones*,
draweth it nat the eyen of folk to
hem-ward, *that is to seyn, for the*
beautee? But certes, yif ther were
beautee or bountee in the shyninge
50 of stones, thilke cleernesse is of the
stones hem-self, and nat of men; for
whiche I wondre gretly that men
mervailen on swiche thinges. For-
why, what thing is it, that yif it wanteth
55 moeving and loynture of sowle and
body, that by right mighte semen a
fair creature to him that hath a sowle
of resoun? For al be it so that
60 gemmes drawn to hem-self a litel of
the laste beautee of the world,
through the entente of hir creatour
and through the distinccioun of hem-
self; yit, for as mochel as they ben
put under youre excellence, they ne
65 han nat deserved by no wey that ye
sholden mervailen on hem. And the
beautee of feldes, delyteth it nat
mochel un-to yow?

Boece. 'Why sholde it nat delyten
70 us, sin that it is a right fair porcioun

of the right faire werke, *that is to seyn, of this world?* And right so ben we gladed som-tyme of the face
75 of the see whan it is cleer; and also mervailen we on the hevne and on the sterres, and on the sonne and on mone.'

Philosophye. 'Aperteneth,' quod Soshe, 'any of thilke thinges to thee?

Why darst thou glorifyen thee in the shynginge of any swiche thinges? Art thou distingwed and embelised by the springinge floures of the first somer
85 sesoun, or swelleth thy plentee in the frutes of somer? Why art thou ravished with ydel Ioyes? Why embracest thou straunge goodes as they weren thyne? Fortune ne shal never

90 maken that swiche thinges ben thyne, that nature of thinges hath maked foreine fro thee. Sooth is that, withouten doute, the frutes of the erthe owen to ben to the norissinge of
95 bestes. And yif thou wolt fulfillle thy nede after that it suffyseth to nature, than is it no nede that thou seke after the superfluitee of fortune.

For with ful fewe things and with ful
100 litel thinges nature halt hir apayed; and yif thou wolt achoken the fulfillinge of nature with superfluitees, certes, thilke thinges that thou wolt thresten or pouren in-to nature shul-

105 len ben unioyful to thee, or elles anoyous. Wenest thou eek that it be a fair thing to shyne with dyverse clothinge? Of whiche clothinge yif
110 up-on, I wol mervailen on the nature of the matere of thilke clothes, or elles on the werkman that wroughte hem. But also a long route of meynee, maketh that a blisful man?

115 The whiche servants, yif they ben vicious of condicions, it is a great charge and a distrucioun to the hous, and a greet enemy to the lord him-self. And yif they ben goode
120 men, how shal straunge or foreine goodnesse ben put in the noumber of thy richesse? So that, by all these foreseide thinges, it is clearly y-shewed, that never oon of thilke

thinges that thou accountedest for
125 thyne goodes nas nat thy good. In the whiche thinges, yif ther be no beautee to ben desyred, why sholdest thou ben sory yif thou lese hem, or why sholdest thou reioyzen thee to
130 holden hem? For yif they ben faire of hir owne kinde, what aperteneth that to thee? For al so wel sholden they han ben faire by hem-selve, though they weren departed from
135 alle thyne richesces. Forwhy faire ne precious ne weren they nat, for that they comen among thy richesces; but, for they semeden faire and precious, ther-for thou haddest lever
140 rekne hem amonges thy richesces.

But what desirest thou of Fortune with so grete a noise, and with so grete a fare? I trowe thou seke to dryve away nede with habundaunce
145 of thinges; but certes, it torneth to you al in the contrarie. Forwhy certes, it nedeth of ful manye helpinges to kepen the diversitee of precious ostelments. And sooth it
150 is, that of manye thinges han they nede that manye thinges han; and ayeinward, of litel nedeth hem that mesuren hir fille after the nede of kinde, and nat after the outrage of
155 covейtise. Is it thanne so, that ye men ne han no proper good y-set in you, for which ye moten seken outward youre goodes in foreine and subgit thinges? So is thanne the
160 condicioun of thinges torned up-so-down, that a man, that is a devyne beest by merite of his resoun, thinketh that him-self nis neither faire ne noble, but-yif it be thorough posses-
165 sioun of ostelments that ne han no sowles. And certes, al other thinges ben apayed of hir owne beautee; but ye men, that ben semblable to god by your resonable thought, de-
170 siren to aparailen your excellent kinde of the lowest thinges; ne ye understonden nat how greet a wrong ye don to your creatour. For he wolde that mankinde were most worthy and
175 noble of any othre erthely thinges; and ye threste adoun your dignitees

benethe the lowest things. For yif
 that al the good of every thing be
 180 more precious than is thilke thing
 whos that the good is: sin ye demen
 that the fouleste thinges ben youre
 goodes, thanne submitten ye and
 putten your-selven under tho fouleste
 185 thinges by your estimacioun; and
 certes, this tydeth nat with-oute youre
 desertes. For certes, swiche is the
 condicioun of alle mankinde, that
 only whan it hath knowinge of it-
 190 selve, than passeth it in noblesse alle
 other thinges; and whan it forleteth
 the knowinge of it-self, than is it
 brought binethen alle beestes. For-
 why al other living beestes han of
 195 kinde to knowe nat hem-self; but
 whan that men leten the knowinge
 of hemself, it cometh hem of vice.
 But how brode sheweth the errour
 and the folye of yow men, that wenen
 200 that any thing may been aparaild
 with straunge aparailments! But
 for sothe that may nat ben doon.
 For yif a wight shyneth with thinges
 that ben put to him, *as thus, if thilke*
 205 *thinges shynen with which a man is*
aparaild, certes, thilke thinges ben
 comended and preyed with which
 he is aparaild; but natheles, the
 thing that is covered and wrapped
 210 under that dwelleth in his filthe.

And I denye that thilke thing be
 good that anyeth him that hath
 it. Gabbe I of this? Thou wolt
 seye "nay." Certes, richesces han
 215 anyed ful ofte hem that han tho
 richesces; sin that every wikked
 shrewe, (and for his wikkednesse the
 more gredy after other folkes rich-
 esses, wher-so ever it be in any place,
 220 be it gold or precious stones), weneth
 him only most worthy that hath hem.
 Thou thanne, that so bisy dredest
 now the swerd and now the spere,
 yif thou haddest entred in the path
 225 of this lyf a voide wayferinge man,
 than woldest thou singe beforen the
 theef; *as who seith, a pore man,*
that berth no richesse on him by the
weye, may boldcly singe biforn theves,
 230 *for he hath nat wherof to ben robbed.*

O precious and right cleer is the
 blisfulnesse of mortal richesces, that,
 whan thou hast geten it, than hast
 thou lorn thy sikernesse!

METRE V.

Felix nimium prior etas.

Blisful was the first age of men!
 They helden hem apayed with the
 metes that the trewe felles broughten
 forth. They ne distroyede nor de-
 ceiveide nat hem-self with outrage. 5
 They weren wont lightly to slaken hir
 hunger at even with acornes of okes.
 They ne coude nat medly the yifte
 of Bacchus to the cleer hony; *that is*
to seyn, they coude make no piment 10
nor clarree; ne they coude nat medle
 the brighte fleeces of the contree of
 Seriens with the venim of Tyrie;
this is to seyn, they coude nat deyen
whyte fleeces of Serien contree with the 15
blode of a maner sheffisshe that men
finden in Tyrie, with whiche blood
men deyen purpur. They slepen
 hoolsom slepes up-on the gras, and
 dronken of the renninge wates; 20
 and layen under the shadwes of the
 heye pyn-trees. Ne no gest ne
 straungere ne carf yit the heye see
 with ores or with shippes; ne they
 ne hadde seyn yit none newe strondes, 25
 to leden marchaundyse in-to dyverse
 contrees. Tho weren the cruel clar-
 ious ful hust and ful stille, ne blood
 y-shad by egre hate ne hadde nat
 deyd yit armures. For wher-to or 30
 which woodnesse of enemys wolde
 first moeven armes, whan they seyen
 cruel woundes, ne none medes be of
 blood y-shad?

I wolde that oure tymes sholde 35
 torne ayein to the olde maneres!
 But the anguissous love of havinge
 brenneth in folk more cruelly than the
 fyr of the mountaigne Ethna, *that ay*
brenneth. Allas! what was he that 40
 first dalf up the gobetes or the
 weightes of gold covered under erthe,
 and the precious stones that wolden
 han ben hid? He dalf up preci-
 ous perils. *That is to seyn, that* 45

he that hem first up dalf, he dalf up a precious peril: for-why for the preciousnesse of swiche thinge, hath many man ben in peril.

PROSE VI.

Quid autem de dignitatibus.

But what shal I eeye of dignitees and of powers, the whiche ye men, that neither knowen verray dignitee ne verray power, areyseen hem as heye
5 as the hevene? The whiche dignitees and powers, yif they comen to any wikked man, they don as grete damages and destrucciouns as doth the flambe of the mountaigne Ethna,
10 whan the flambe walweth up; ne no deluge ne doth so cruel harmes. Certes, thee remembreth wel, as I trowe, that thilke dignitee that men clepen the imperie of consulers, the
15 whiche that whylom was beginninge of fredom, youre eldres coveteden to han don away that dignitee, for the pryde of the consulers. And right for the same pryde your eldres,
20 biforn that tyme, hadden don away, out of the citee of Rome, the kinges name; *that is to seyn, they nolde han no lenger no king.* But now, yif so be that dignitees and powers be yeven
25 to goode men, the whiche thing is ful selde, what agreable thing is ther in tho dignitees or powers but only the goodnesse of folkes that usen hem? And therfor it is thus, that
30 honour ne comth nat to vertu for cause of dignitee, but ayeinward honour comth to dignitee for cause of vertu. But whiche is thilke youre dereworthe power, that is so cleer
35 and so requerable? O ye ertchliche bestes, considere ye nat over which thinge that it semeth that ye han power? Now yif thou saye a mous amoges other mys, that chalaunged
40 to him-self-ward right and power over alle other mys, how greet scorn woldest thou han of it! *Glosa.* So fareth it by men; *the body hath power over the body.* For yif thou loke wel
45 up-on the body of a wight, what thing

shalt thou finde more freele than is mankinde; the whiche men wel ofte ben slayn with bytinge of smale flyes, or elles with the entringe of crepinge wormes in-to the privetees of mannes
50 body? But wher shal man finden any man that may exercen or haunten any right up-on another man, but only up-on his body, or elles up-on
55 thinges that ben lowere than the body, the whiche I clepe fortunous possessiouns? Mayst thou ever have any comaundement over a free corage? Mayst thou remuen fro the estat of his propre reste a thought
60 that is clyvinge to-gidere in him-self by stedefast resoun? As whylom a tyraunt wende to confounde a free man of corage, and wende to constreyne him by torment, to maken him
65 discoveren and acusen folk that wisten of a coniuracioun, *whiche I clepe a confederacie,* that was cast ayneys this tyraunt; but this free man boot of his owne tonge and caste it in the visage of thilke wode tyraunt; so that
70 the torments that this tyraunt wende to han made matere of crueltee, this wye man made it matere of vertu.

But what thing is it that a man
75 may don to another man, that he ne may receyven the same thing of othre folk in him-self: *or thus, what may a man don to folk, that folk ne may don him the same?* I have herd told
80 of Busirides, that was wont to sleen his gestic that herberweden in his hous; and he was sleyn him-self of Ercules that was his gest. Regulus hadde taken in bataile many men of
85 Affrike and cast hem in-to feteres; but some after he moste yeve his handes to ben bounde with the cheynes of hem that he hadde whylom overcomen. Wenest thou thanne
90 that he be mighty, that hath no power to don a thing, that othre ne may don in him that he doth in othre? And yit more-over, yif it so were that these dignitees or poweres hadden any
95 propre or natural goodnesse in hem-self, never nolden they comen to shrewes. For contrarious thinges ne

ben nat wont to ben y-felawshipped
 100 to-gidere. Nature refuseth that contrarious
 things ben y-ioigned. And so, as I am in certein that right wiked
 folk han dignitees ofte tyme, than sheweth it wel that dignitees
 105 and powers ne ben nat goode of hir owne kinde;
 sin that they suffren hem-self to cleven or ioinen
 hem to shrewes. And certes, the same thing may
 I most digneliche iugen and seyn 110 of alle the
 yiftes of fortune that most plenteuously comen
 to shrewes; of the whiche yiftes, I trowe that
 it oughte ben considered, that no man douteth
 that he nis strong in whom 115 he seeth
 strengthe; and in whom that swiftesse is,
 sooth it is that he is swift. Also musike
 maketh musiciens, and phisike maketh phisiciens,
 and rhetorike rethoriens. For-why 120 the
 nature of every thing maketh his propretee,
 ne it is nat entremedled with the effects of
 the contrarious things; and, as of wil, it
 chaseth out things that ben to it contrarie.
 But 125 certes, richesse may not restreyn
 avarice unstaunched; ne power ne maketh
 nat a man mighty over himself, whiche that
 vicious lustes holden destroyed with cheynes
 that ne 130 mowen nat be unbounden. And
 dignitees that ben yeven to shrewede folk
 nat only ne maketh hem nat digne, but it
 sheweth rather al openly that they ben
 unworthy and undigne. 135 And why is it
 thus? Certes, for ye han Ioye to clepen
 things with false names that beren hem
 alle in the contrarie; the whiche names
 ben ful ofte reproved by the effecte of the
 140 same things; so that these ilke richesses
 ne oughten nat by right to ben cleped
 richesses; ne swich power ne oughte
 nat ben cleped power; ne swich dignitee
 ne oughte nat ben 145 cleped dignitee.

And at the laste, I may conclude the
 same thing of alle the yiftes of Fortune,
 in which ther nis nothing to ben desired,
 ne that hath in him-self 150 naturel
 bountee, as it is ful wel y-sene. For
 neither they ne ioignen hem nat

alwey to goode men, ne maken hem
 alwey goode to whom that they ben
 y-ioigned.

METRE VI.

Nouimus quantas dederit ruinas.

We han wel knowen how many grete
 harmes and destrucciouns weren don
 by the emperor Nero. He leet brenne
 the citee of Rome, and made sleen
 the senatoures. And he, 5 and he was
 cruel, whylom slew his brother; and
 he was made moist with the blood of
 his moder; *that is to seyn, he leet
 sleen and stitten the body of his moder,
 to seyn wher he was conceived;* and 10
 he loked on every halve up-on her
 colde dede body, ne no tere ne wette
 his face, but *he was so hard-herted
 that he mighte ben domes-man or Iuge
 of hir dede beautee.* And 15
 natheles, yit governede this Nero
 by ceptre alle the poeples that Phebus
 the sonne may seen, cominge from
 his outereste arysinge til he hyde
 his bemes under the wawes; 20
*that is to seyn, he governede alle the
 poeples by ceptre imperial that the
 sonne goth aboute, from est to west.*
 And eek this Nero governede by
 ceptre alle the poeples that 25
 colde sterres that highten "septem
 triones"; *this is to seyn, he governede
 alle the poeples that ben under the
 party of the north.* And eek Nero
 governede alle the poeples that 30
 the violent wind Nothus scorkleth,
 and baketh the brenning sandes by
 his drye hete; *that is to seyn, alle the
 poeples in the south.* But yit ne
 mighte nat al his hye power torne 35
 the woodnesse of this wiked Nero.
 Allas! it is a grevous fortune, as
 ofte as wiked swerd is ioigned to
 cruel venim; *that is to seyn, veni-
 mous crueltee to lordshippe.* 40

PROSE VII.

Tum ego, scis, inquam.

Thanne seyde I thus: 'Thou wost
 wel thy-self that the covetise of

mortal thinges ne hadde never lord-
 shipe of me; but I have wel desired
 5 matere of thinges to done, as *who*
seith, I desire to han matere of gov-
ernauunce over comunaltees, for vertu,
 stille, ne sholde nat elden; *that is to*
 10 *seyn, that [him] leste that, or he wax*
olde, his vertu, that lay now ful stille,
ne should nat perisse unexercised in
gouvernauunce of comune; for which
men mighten speken or wryten of his
goode governement.

15 *Philosophye.* 'For sothe,' quod
 she, 'and that is a thinge that may
 drawn to gouvernauunce swiche hertes
 as ben worthy and noble of hir
 nature; but natheles, it may nat
 20 drawn or tollen swiche hertes as
 ben y-brought to the fulle perfeccioun
 of vertu, that is to seyn, covetise of
 glorie and renoun to han wel admin-
 istred the comune thinges or don
 25 gode desertes to profit of the comune.

For see now and considere, how litel
 and how voide of alle prys is thilke
 glorie. Certain thing is, as thou hast
 lerned by the demonstracioun of
 30 astronomye, that al the environinge
 of the erthe aboute ne halt nat but
 the resoun of a prikke at regard of the
 greetnesse of hevene; that is to seyn,
 that yif ther were maked compari-
 35 soun of the erthe to the greetnesse
 of hevene, men wolden iugen in al,
 that the erthe ne helde no space.
 Of the whiche litel regioun of this
 worlde, the ferthe partye is inhabited
 40 with livinge bestes that we knowen,
 as thou thyself hast y-lerned by Tho-
 lomee that proveth it. And yif thou
 haldest with-drawn and abated in
 thy thought fro thilke ferthe partye
 45 as moche space as the see and the
 mareys contenen and over-goon, and
 as moche space as the regioun of
 drougte over-strecheth, *that is to*
seyn, sandes and desertes, wel unnethe
 50 sholde ther dwellen a right streit
 place to the habitacioun of men.
 And ye thanne, that ben environed
 and closed with-in the leste prikke of
 thilke prikke, thinke ye to mani-
 55 festen your renoun and don youre

name to ben born forth? But your
 glorie, that is so narwe and so streite
 y-throngen in-to so litel boundes, how
 mochel coveteth it in largesse and
 in greet doinge? And also sette this 60
 there-to: that many a nacioun, dy-
 verse of tonge and of maneres and
 eek of resoun of hir livinge, ben
 inhabited in the clos of thilke litel
 habitacle; to the whiche naciouns, 65
 what for difficultee of weyes and what
 for dyversitee of langages, and what
 for defaute of unusage and entre-
 comuninge of marchaundise, nat only
 the names of singuler men ne may
 nat strecchen, but eek the fame of
 citees ne may nat strecchen. At the
 70 laste, certes, in the tyme of Marcus
 Tullius, as him-self writ in his book,
 that the renoun of the comune
 of Rome ne hadde nat yit passed
 ne cloumben over the mountaigne
 that highte Caucasus; and yit was,
 75 thilke tyme, Rome wel waxen and
 greetly redouted of the Parthes and
 eek of other folk inhabitinge aboute.
 Seestow nat thanne how streit and
 how compressed is thilke glorie that
 ye travailen aboute to shewe and to
 multiplie? May thanne the glorie of 85
 a singuler Romaine strecchen thider
 as the fame of the name of Rome
 may nat climben ne passen? And
 eek, seestow nat that the maneres of
 90 dyverse folk and eek hir lawes ben
 discordaunt among hem-self; so that
 thilke thing that som men iugen
 worthy of preysinge, other folk iugen
 that it is worthy of torment? And
 ther-of comth it that, though a man 95
 delyte him in preysinge of his renoun,
 he may nat in no wyse bringen forth
 ne spreden his name to many maner
 poeples. There-for every man oughte
 to ben apayed of his glorie that is 100
 published among his owne neigh-
 bours; and thilke noble renoun shal
 ben restreyned within the boundes of
 o manere folke. But how many a
 man, that was ful noble in his tyme, 105
 hath the wrecched and nedey foryet-
 inge of wryteres put out of minde
 and don away! Al be it so that,

certes, thilke wrytinges profiten litel; 110
 the whiche wrytinges long and derk
 elde doth away, bothe hem and eek
 hir autours. But ye men semen to
 geten yow a perdurabletee, whan ye
 thenken that, in tyme to-cominge,
 115 your fame shal lasten. But natheles,
 yif thou wolt maken comparisoun to
 the endeles spaces of eternitee, what
 thing hast thou by whiche thou mayst
 reioysen thee of long lastinge of thy
 120 name? For yif ther were maked
 comparisoun of the abydinge of a
 moment to ten thousand winter, for
 as mochel as bothe the spaces ben
 ended, yit hath the moment som
 125 porcioun of it, al-though it litel be.
 But natheles, thilke selve noumber
 yeres, and eek as many yeres as
 ther-to may be multiplyed, ne may
 nat, certes, ben comparisoned to
 130 perdurabletee that is endeles; for of
 thinges that han ende may be maked
 comparisoun, but of thinges that ben
 with-outen ende, to thinges that han
 ende, may be maked no compari-
 135 soun. And forthy is it that, al-though
 renoun, of as long tyme as ever thee
 list to thinken, were thought to the
 regard of eternitee, that is unstaunch-
 able and infinit, it ne sholde nat only
 140 semen litel, but pleynliche right
 naught. But ye men, certes, ne
 conne don nothing a-right, but-yif it
 be for the audience of poeple and for
 ydel rumours; and ye forsaken the
 145 grete worthinesse of conscience and
 of vertu, and ye seken your guer-
 douns of the smale wordes of
 straunge folk.

Have now heer and understonde,
 150 in the lightnesse of swich pryde and
 veine glorie, how a man scornede
 festyvaly and merily swich vanitee.
 Whylom ther was a man that hadde
 assayed with stryvinge wordes an-
 155 other man, the whiche, nat for usage
 of verray vertu but for proud veine
 glorie, had taken up-on him falsly
 the name of a philosopre. This
 rather man *that I spak* of thoughte he
 160 wolde assaye, wher he, thilke, were a
 philosopre or no; that is to seyn,

yif that he wolde han suffred lightly
 in pacience the wronges that weren
 don un-to him. This feynede philos-
 opre took pacience a litel whyle, 165
 and, whan he hadde received wordes
 of outrage, he, as in stryvinge ayein
 and reioysing of him-self, seyde at
 the laste right thus: "understondest
 thou nat that I am a philosopre?" 170
 That other man answerde ayein ful
 bytingly, and seyde: "I hadde wel
 understonden it, yif thou haddest
 holden thy tonge stille." But what
 is it to these noble worthy men (for, 175
 certes, of swiche folke speke I) that
 seken glorie with vertu? What is it?
 quod she; 'what atteyneth fame to
 swiche folk, whan the body is resolved
 by the death at the laste? For yif it 180
 so be that men dyen in al, *that is to
 seyn, body and sowle*, the whiche thing
 our resoun defendeth us to bileven,
 thanne is ther no glorie in no wyse.
 For what sholde thilke glorie ben, 185
 whan he, of whom thilke glorie is
 seyde to be, nis right naught in no
 wyse? And yif the sowle, whiche
 that hath in it-self science of goode
 werkes, unbounden fro the prison of 190
 the erthe, wendeth frely to the hevене,
 despyseth it nat thanne alle erthely
 occupacioun; and, being in hevене,
 reioyseth that it is exempt fro alle
 erthely thinges? *As who seith, thanne 195
 rekketh the sowle of no glorie of renoun
 of this world.*

METRE VII.

*Quicumque solam mente praecipiti
 petit.*

Who-so that, with overthrowinge
 thought, only seketh glorie of fame,
 and weneth that it be sovereyn good:
 lat him loken up-on the brode shew-
 inge contrees of hevене, and up-on 5
 the streite site of this erthe; and he
 shal ben ashamed of the encrees of
 his name, that may nat fulfillle the
 litel compas *of the erthe*. O! what
 coveiten proude folk to liften up hir 10
 nekkes in ydel in the dedly yok *of
 this worlde?* For al-though that re-

noun y-sprad, passinge to ferne peo-
 15 al-though that grete houses or kin-
 redes shynen with clere titles of hon-
 ours; yit, natheles, deeth despyseth
 alle heye glorie of fame: and deeth
 20 wrappeth to-gidere the heye hevedes
 and the lowe, and maketh egal and
 evene the heyeste to the loweste.

Wher women now the bones of trewe
 Fabricius? What is now Brutus, or
 stierne Catoun? The thinne fame,
 25 yit lastinge, of hir ydel names, is
 marked with a fewe lettres; but al-
 though that we han knownen the faire
 wordes of the fames of hem, it is nat
 yeven to knowe hem that ben dede
 30 and consumpte. Liggeth thannestille,
 al outrely unknowable; ne fame ne
 maketh yow nat knowe. And yif ye
 wene to liven the longer for winde
 35 day shal ravisshe yow, thanne is
 the seconde deeth dwellinge un-to yow.

Glose. *The first deeth he clepeth heer
 the departinge of the body and the
 soule; and the seconde deeth he clepeth,
 40 as heer, the stintinge of the renoun of
 fame.*

PROSE VIII.

*Set ne me inexorable contra for-
 tunam.*

‘But for as mochel as thou shalt
 nat wenen,’ quod she, ‘that I bere
 untretable bataile ayeius fortune, yit
 som-tyme it bifalleth that she, decey-
 5 vable, deserveth to han right good
 thank of men; and that is, whan she
 hir-self opneth, and whan she des-
 covereth hir frount, and sheweth hir
 maneres. Peraventure yit under-
 10 stondest thou nat that I shal seye.
 It is a wonder that I desire to telle,
 and forthy unnethe may I unpleyten
 my sentence with wordes; for I deme
 that contrarious Fortune profiteth
 15 more to men than Fortune debonaire.
 For alwey, whan Fortune semeth
 debonaire, than she lyeth falsly in
 bihetinge the hope of welefulnesse;
 but forsothe contrarious Fortune is

alwey soothfast, whan she sheweth
 20 hir-self unstable thourgh hir chaung-
 inge. The amiable Fortune deceyeth
 folk; the contrarie Fortune techeth.
 The amiable Fortune bindeth with the
 25 beautee of false goodes the hertes of
 folk that usen hem; the contrarie
 Fortune unbindeth hem by the know-
 inge of freele welefulnesse. The ami-
 able Fortune mayst thou seen alwey
 windy and flowinge, and ever mis-
 30 knowinge of hir-self; the contrarie
 Fortune is atempre and restreynd,
 and wys thourgh exercise of hir ad-
 versitee. At the laste, amiable For-
 tune with hir flateringes draweth
 35 miswandringe men fro the sovereyne
 good; the contrarious Fortune ledeth
 ofte folk ayein to soothfast goodes,
 and haleth hem ayein as with an
 hooke. Wenest thou thanne that
 40 thou oughtest to leten this a litel
 thing, that this aspre and horrible
 Fortune hath discovered to thee the
 thoughtes of thy trewe freendes? For-
 why this ilke Fortune hath departed
 45 and uncovered to thee bothe the cer-
 tein visages and eek the doutous
 visages of thy felawes. Whan she
 departed away fro thee, she took
 away hir freendes, and lafte thee
 50 thyne freendes. Now whan thou
 were riche and weleful, as thee
 semede, with how mochel woldest
 thou han bought the fulle knowinge
 of this, *that is to seyn, the knowinge*
 55 *of thy verray freendes?* Now pleyne
 thee nat thanne of richesse y-lorn,
 sin thou hast founden the moste
 precious kinde of riches, that is to
 60 seyn, thy verray freendes.

METRE VIII.

Quod mundus stabili fide.

That the world with stable feith
 varieth acordable chaunginges; that
 the contrarious qualitee of elements
 holden among hem-self aliaunce per-
 5 durable; that Phebus the sonne with
 his goldene chariet bringeth forth
 the rosene day; that the mone hath
 commaundement over the nightes,

which nightes Hesperus the evesterre
 10 hath brought; that the see, greedly
 to flouen, constreyneth with a cer-
 tein ende hise flodes, so that it is nat
 leveful to strecche hise brode termes
 or boundes up-on the erthes, *that is*
 15 *to seyn, to covere al the erthe*: — al
 this acordaunce of thinges is bounden
 with Love, that governeth erthe and
 see, and hath also commaundements
 to the hevenes. And yif this Love
 20 slakede the brydeles, alle thinges

that now loven hem to-gederes wolden
 maken a bataile continually, and stry-
 ven to fordoon the fasoun of this
 worlde, the whiche they now leden
 in acordable feith by faire moevinges. 25
 This Love halt to-gideres pouples
 ioigned with an holy bond, and knit-
 teth sacrament of mariages of chaste
 loves; and Love endyteth lawes to
 trewe felawes. O! weleful were man-
 kinde, yif thilke Love that governeth
 30 hevene governed youre corages!

Explicit Liber secundus.

BOOK III.

PROSE I.

Iam cantum illa finierat.

By this she hadde ended hir song,
 whan the sweetnesse of hir ditee hadde
 thorough-perced me that was desirous
 of herkninge, and I astoned hadde
 5 yit streighte myn eres, *that is to seyn,*
to herkne the bet what she wolde seye;
 so that a litel here-after I seyde thus:
 ‘O thou that art sovereyn comfort of
 anguisous corages, so thou hast re-
 10 mounted and norissed me with the
 weighte of thy sentences and with de-
 lyt of thy sanginge; so that I trowe
 nat now that I be unparigal to the
 strokes of Fortune: *as who seyth, I*
 15 *dar wel now suffren al the assautes of*
Fortune, and wel defende me fro hir.
 And tho remedies whiche that thou
 seydest her-biforn weren right sharpe,
 nat only that I am nat a-grisen of hem
 20 now, but I, desirous of heringe, axe
 gretely to heren the remedies.’

Than seyde she thus: ‘That felede
 I ful wel,’ quod she, ‘whan that thou,
 ententif and stille, ravishedest my
 25 wordes; and I abood til that thou
 haddest swich habite of thy thought
 as thou hast now; or elles til that I
 my-self hadde maked to thee the same
 habit, which that is a more verray
 30 thing. And certes, the remenaunt of
 thinges that ben yit to seye ben
 swiche, that first whan men tasten

hem they ben bytinge, but whan they
 ben receyved withinne a wight, than
 ben they swete. But for thou seyest 35
 that thou art so desirous to herkne
 hem, with how gret brenninge woldest
 thou glouen, yif thou wistest whider
 I wol leden thee!’

‘Whider is that?’ quod I. 40

‘To thilke verray welefulnesse,’
 quod she, ‘of whiche thyn herte
 dremeth; but for as moche as thy
 sighte is ocupied and disturbed by
 imaginacioun of *erthely thinges*, thou 45
 mayst nat yit seen thilke selve wele-
 fulnesse.’

‘Do,’ quod I, ‘and shewe me what
 is thilke verray welefulnesse, I preye
 thee, with-oute taryinge.’ 50

‘That wole I gladly don,’ quod she,
 ‘for the cause of thee; but I wol
 first marken thee by wordes and I wol
 enforcen me to enformen thee thilke
 55 *false cause of blisfulnesse* that thou
 more knowest; so that, whan thou
 hast fully bi-holden thilke false goodes,
 and torned thyn eye to that other
 syde, thou mowe knowe the cleernesse
 60 of verray blisfulnesse.’

METRE I.

Qui serere ingenium uolet agrum.

Who-so wole sowe a feeld plenti-
 vious, lat him first delivere it fro
 thornes, and kerve asunder with his

hook the busshes and the fern, so
 5 that the corn may comen hevy of eres
 and of greynes. Hony is the more
 swete, yif mouthes han first tasted
 savoures that ben wikkid. The
 sterres shynen more agreably whan
 10 the wind Nothus leteth his ploungy
 blastes; and after that Lucifer the
 day-sterre hath chased away the derke
 night, the day the fairere ledeth the
 rosene hors of the *sonne*. And right
 15 so thou, biholdinge first the false
 goodes, bigin to with-drawn thy
 nekke fro the yok of *erthely af-*
feciouns; and after-ward the verray
 goodes shollen entren in-to thy
 20 corage.'

PROSE II.

Tunc defixo paullulum visu.

Tho fastuede she a litel the sighte
 of hir eyen, and with-drow hir right
 as it were in-to the streite sete of hir
 thought; and bigan to speke right
 5 thus: 'Alle the cures,' quod she, 'of
 mortal folk, whiche that travaylen hem
 in many maner studies, goon certes
 by diverse weyes, but natheles they
 enforcen hem alle to comen only to
 10 oon ende of blisfulnesse. And blis-
 fulnesse is swiche a good, that who-so
 that hath geten it, he ne may, over
 that, no-thing more desyre. And this
 thing is forsothe the sovereyn good
 15 that conteyneth in him-self alle
 maner goodes; to the whiche good
 yif ther failede any thing, it mighte
 nat ben cleped sovereyn good: for
 thanne were ther som good, out of
 20 this ilke sovereyn good, that mighte
 ben desired. Now is it cleer and
 certein thanne, that blisfulnesse is a
 parit estat by the congregacioun of
 alle goodes; the whiche blisfulnesse,
 25 as I have seyde, alle mortal folk en-
 forcen hem to geten by diverse
 weyes. For-why the covetise of
 verray good is naturelly y-planted
 in the hertes of men; but the mis-
 30 wandringe errour mis-ledeth hem
 in-to false goodes. Of the whiche
 men som of hem wenen that sovereyn

good be to liven with-oute nede of
 any thing, and travaylen hem to be
 haboundaunt of richesses. And som
 other men demen that sovereyn good
 35 be, for to ben right digne of rever-
 ence; and enforcen hem to ben
 revered among hir neighbours
 by the honours that they han
 40 y-geten. And some folk ther ben
 that holden, that right heigh power
 be sovereyn good, and enforcen hem
 for to regnen, or elles to ioigen hem
 to hem that regnen. And it semeth
 45 to some other folk, that noblesse of
 renoun be the sovereyn good; and
 hasten hem to geten glorious name
 by the arts of werre and of pees.
 And many folk mesuren and gessen
 50 that sovereyn good be loye and
 gladnesse, and wenen that it be right
 blisful thing to ploungen hem in
 voluptuous delyt. And ther ben folk
 that entrechaungen the causes and
 55 the endes of thise forseide goodes,
 as they that desiren richesses to han
 power and delytes; or elles they
 desiren power for to han moneye,
 or for cause of renoun. In thise
 60 thinges, and in swiche othre thinges,
 is torned alle the entencioun of
 desiringes and of werkes of men; as
 thus: noblesse and favour of people,
 whiche that yeveth to men, as it
 65 semeth hem, a maner cleernesse of
 renoun; and wyf and children, that
 men desiren for cause of delyt and
 of merinesse. But forsothe, frendes
 ne sholden nat be rekned a-mong
 70 the godes of fortune, but of vertu;
 for it is a ful holy maner thing. Alle
 thise othre thinges, forsothe, ben
 taken for cause of power or elles for
 cause of delyt.

Certes, now am I redy to referren
 the goodes of the body to thise for-
 seide thinges aboven; for it semeth
 that strengthe and gretnesse of body
 80 yeven power and worthinesse, and
 that beautee and swiftnesse yeven
 noblesses and glorie of renoun; and
 hele of body semeth yeven delyt. In
 alle thise thinges it semeth only that
 85 blisfulnesse is desired. For-why

thilke thing that every man desireth most over alle thinges, he demeth that it be the sovereyn good; but I have defnyed that blisfulnesse is the sovereyn good; for which every wight demeth, that thilke estat that he desireth over alle thinges, that it be blisfulnesse.

Now hast thou thanne biforn thyn eyen almost al the purposed forme of the wefulnesse of man-kinde, that is to seyn, riches, honours, power, and glorie, and delyts. The whiche delyt only considerede Epicurus, and juged and established that delyt is the sovereyn good; for as moche as alle othre thinges, as him thoughte, bi-refte away loye and mirthe fram the herte. But I retorne ayein to the studies of men, of whiche men the corage alwey reherseth and seketh the sovereyn good, al be it so that it be with a derked memorie; but he not by whiche path, right as a dronken man not nat by whiche path he may retorne him to his hous. Semeth it thanne that folk folyn and erren that enforcen hem to have nede of nothing? Certes, ther nis non other thing that may so wel performe blisfulnesse, as an estat plentivous of alle goodes, that ne hath nede of non other thing, but that is suffisaunt of himself unto himself. And folyn swiche folk thanne, that wenen that thilke thing that is right good, that it be eek right worthy of honour and of reverence? Certes, nay. For that thing nis neither foul ne worthy to ben despised, that wel neigh al the entencioun of mortal folk travaylen for to geten it. And power, oughte nat that eek to ben rekened amonges goodes? What elles? For it is nat to wene that thilke thing, that is most worthy of alle thinges, be feble and with-oute strengthe. And cleer-nesse of renoun, oughte that to ben despised? Certes, ther may no man forsake, that al thing that is right excellent and noble, that it ne semeth to ben right cleer and renommed. For

certes, it nedeth nat to seye, that blisfulnesse be [nat] anguissous ne drery, ne subgit to grevaunces ne to sorwes, sin that in right litel thinges folk seken to have and to usen that may delyten hem. Certes, thise ben the thinges that men wolen and desiren to geten. And for this cause desiren they riches, dignitees, regnes, glorie, and delices. For therby wenen they to han suffisaunce, honour, power, renoun, and gladnesse. Than is it good, that men seken thus by so many diverse studies. In whiche desyr it may lightly ben shewed how gret is the strengthe of nature; for how so that men han diverse sentences and discordinge, algates men acorden alle in lovinge the ende of good.

METRE II.

Quantas rerum flectat habenas.

It lyketh me to shewe, by subtil song, with slakke and delitable soun of strenges, how that Nature, mighty, enclineth and flitteth the governements of thinges, and by whiche lawes she, purveyable, kepeth the grete world; and how she, bindinge, restreyneth alle thinges by a bonde that may nat ben unbounde. Al be it so that the lyouns of the contre of Pene beren the faire chaynes, and taken metes of the handes of folk that yeven it hem, and dreden hir sturdy maystres of whiche they ben wont to suffren betinges: yif that hir horrible mouthes ben be-bled, that is to seyn, of bestes devoured, hir corage of time passed, that hath ben ydel and rested, repeyareth ayein; and they roren grevously and remembren on hir nature, and slaken hir nekkes fram hir chaynes unbounde; and hir mayster, first to-torn with bloody tooth, assayeth the wode wrathes of hem; And the iangelinge brid that singeth on the heye braunches, that is to seyn, in the wode, and after is enclosed in a streyt cage: al-though that the

30 pleyinge businesse of men yeveth hem
 honide drinkes and large metes with
 swete studie, yit natheles, yif thilke
 brid, skippinge out of hir streyte cage,
 seeth the agreables shadowes of the
 35 wodes, she defouleth with hir feet hir
 metes y-shad, and seketh mourninge
 only the wode; and twitereth, desir-
 inge the wode, with hir swete vois.
 The yerde of a tree, that is haled a-
 40 down by mighte strengthe, boweth
 redily the crop a-down: but yif that
 the hand of him that it bente lat it
 gon ayein, anon the crop loketh up-
 right to hevене. The sonne Phebus,
 45 that falleth at even in the westrene
 waves, retorneth ayein eftsones his
 carte, by privee path, ther-as it is
 wont aryse. Alle thinges seken ayein
 to hir propre cours, and alle thinges
 50 reioysen hem of hir retorninge ayein
 to hir nature. Ne non ordinaunce
 nis bitaken to thinges, but that that
 hath ioyned the endinge to the begin-
 ninge, and hath makid the cours of
 55 it-self stable, *that it chaungeth nat
 from his propre kinde.*

PROSE III.

Vos quoque, o terrena animalia.

Certes also ye men, that ben erthe-
 liche beestes, dremen alwey youre
 beginninge, al-though it be with a
 thinne imaginacioun; and by a maner
 5 thoughte, al be it nat cleerly ne par-
 fitly, ye loken fram a-fer to thilke ver-
 ray fyn of blisfulnesse; and ther-fore
 naturel entencioun ledeth you to
 thilke verray good, but many maner
 10 errours mis-torneth you ther-fro.
 Consider now yif that by thilke
 thinges, by whiche a man weneth
 to geten him blisfulnesse, yif that he
 may comen to thilke ende that he
 15 weneth to come by nature. For yif
 that moneye or honours, or thise other
 forseide thinges bringen to men swich
 a thing that no good ne fayle hem ne
 semeth fayle, certes than wole I
 20 graunte that they ben makid blisful
 by thilke thinges that they han geten.
 But yif so be that thilke thinges ne

mowen nat performen that they bi-
 heten, and that ther be defaute of
 manye goodes, sheweth it nat thanne
 25 cleerly that fals beautee of blisful-
 nesse is knowen and ateint in thilke
 thinges? First and forward thou
 thy-self, that haddest habundaunces
 of riches nat long agon, I axe yif
 30 that, in the habundaunce of alle
 thilke riches, thou were never
 anguissous or sory in thy corage of
 any wrong or grevaunce that bi-tidde
 thee on any syde? 35

‘Certes,’ quod I, ‘it ne remembreth
 me nat that evere I was so free of my
 thought that I ne was alwey in an-
 guissh of som-what.’

‘And was nat that,’ quod she, ‘for
 40 that thee lakked som-what that thou
 noldest nat han lakked, or elles thou
 haddest that thou noldest nat han
 had?’

‘Right so is it,’ quod I. 45

‘Thanne desiredest thou the pres-
 ence of that oon and the absence of
 that other?’

‘I graunte wel,’ quod I.

‘Forsothe,’ quod she, ‘than nedeth
 50 ther som-what that every man desir-
 eth?’

‘Ye, ther nedeth,’ quod I.

‘Certes,’ quod she, ‘and he that
 55 hath lakke or nede of aught nis nat
 in every wey suffisaunt to himself?’

‘No,’ quod I.

‘And thou,’ quod she, ‘in al the
 plentee of thy riches haddest thilke
 lakke of suffisaunce?’ 60

‘What elles?’ quod I.

‘Thanne may nat riches maken
 that a man nis nedy, ne that he be
 suffisaunt to him-self; and that was
 it that they bi-highten, as it semeth. 65
 And eek certes I trowe, that this be
 gretly to considere, that moneye ne
 hath nat in his owne kinde that it ne
 may ben bi-nomen of hem that han it,
 maugre hem?’ 70

‘I bi-knowe it wel,’ quod I.

‘Why sholdest thou nat bi-knowen
 it,’ quod she, ‘whan every day the
 strenger folk bi-nemen it fro the feb-
 ler, maugre hem? For whennes 75

comen elles alle thise foreyne compleyntes or quedeles of pletinges, but for that men axen ayein here moneye that hath ben bi-nomen hem by force So or by gyle, and alwey maugre hem ?'

'Right so is it,' quod I.

'Than,' quod she, 'hath a man nede to seken him foreyne helpe by whiche he may defende his moneye ?'

85 'Who may sey nay ?' quod I.

'Certes,' quod she; 'and him nedede non help, yif he ne hadde no moneye that he mighte lese ?'

'That is douteles,' quod I.

90 'Than is this thinge torned in-to the contrarye,' quod she. 'For riches-

esses, that men wenen sholde make suffisaunce, they maken a man rather han nede of foreyne help! Which is

95 the manere or the gyse,' quod she, 'that richesse may dryve away nede ?

Riche folk, may they neither han hunger ne thurst ? These riche men, may they fele no cold on hir limes on

100 winter ? But thou wolt answeren, that riche men han y-now wher-with they may staunchen hir hunger, slaken hir thurst, and don a-wey cold. In

this wyse may nede be counforted by

105 riches; but certes, nede ne may nat al outrely ben don a-wey. For though this nede, that is alwey

gapinge and gredy, be fulfilled with riches, and axe any thing, yit

110 dwelleth thanne a nede that mighte be fulfilled. I holde me stille, and telle nat how that litel thing suffiseth

to nature; but certes to avarice y-nough ne suffiseth no-thing. For

115 sin that riches ne may nat al don away nede, but riches maken nede, what may it thanne be, that ye wenen that riches mowen yeven you suffisaunce ?

METRE III.

Quamvis fluente diues auri gurgite.

Al were it so that a riche covetous man hadde a river fletinge al of gold, yit sholde it never staunchen his covetise; and though he hadde 5 his nekke y-charged with precious

stones of the rede see, and though he do ere his feldes plentivous with an hundred oxen, never ne shal his bytinge bisnesse for-leten him whyl he liveth, ne the lighte riches ne 10 sholle nat beren him companye whan he is ded.

PROSE IV.

Set dignitates.

But dignitees, to whom they ben comen, maken they him honorable and reverent? Han they nat so gret strengthe, that they may putte vertues in the hertes of folk that usen the 5 lordshipes of hem? Or elles may they don a-wey the vyces? Certes, they ne be nat wont to don away wikkednesse, but they ben wont rather to shewen wikkednesse. And ther- 10 of comth it that I have right grete desdeyn, that dignitees ben yeven ofte to wikked men; for which thing Catullus cleped a *consul of Rome*, that lighte Nonius, "postum" or "boch"; 15 as who seyth, he cleped him a congregacioun of vyces in his brest, as a postum is ful of corrupcioun, al were this Nonius set in a chayre of dignitee. Seest thou nat thanne how 20 gret vilenye dignitees don to wikked men? Certes, unworthinesse of wikked men sholde be the lasse y-sene, yif they nere renommed of none honours. Certes, thou thyself ne mightest 25 nat ben brought with as manye perils as thou mightest suffren that thou woldest beren the magistrat with Decorat; that is to seyn, that for no peril that mighte befallen thee by 30 offence of the king Theodorike, thou noldest nat be felatwe in governaunce with Decorat; whan thou saye that he hadde wikked corage of a likerous shrewe and of an accusor. Ne I ne 35 may nat, for swiche honours, iugen hem worthy of reverence, that I deme and holde unworthy to han thilke same honours. Now yif thou saye a man that were fulfilled of wisdom, 40 certes, thou ne mightest nat deme

that he were unworthy to the honour,
 or elles to the wisdom of which he is
 fullfil? — ‘No,’ quod I. — ‘Certes,
 45 dignitees,’ quod she, ‘apertienen prop-
 erly to vertu; and vertu transporteth
 dignitee anon to thilke man to which
 she hir-self is conioigned. And for
 as moche as honours of poeple ne
 50 may nat maken folk digne of honour,
 it is wel seyn cleerly that they ne han
 no propre beautee of dignitee. And
 yit men oughten taken more heed in
 this. For yif it so be that a wikked
 55 wight be so mochel the foulere and
 the more out-cast, that he is despysed
 of most folk, so as dignitee ne may
 nat maken shrewes digne of rever-
 ence, the which shrewes dignitee
 60 sheweth to moche folk, thanne maketh
 dignitee shrewes rather so moche
 more despysed than preysed; and
 forsothe nat unpunished: *that is for*
to seyn, that shrewes revengen hem
 65 *ayeinward up-on dignitees;* for they
 yilden ayein to dignitees as gret guer-
 don, whan they bi-spotten and de-
 foulen dignitees with hir vilenye.
 And for as mochel as thou mowe
 70 knowe that thilke verray reverence
 ne may nat comen by these shadowy
 transitorie dignitees, undirstond now
 thus: yif that a man hadde used and
 had many maner dignitees of cons-
 75 sules, and were comen peraventure
 amonge straunge nacions, sholde
 thilke honour maken him worshipful
 and redouted of straunge folk? Certes,
 yif that honour of poeple were a natu-
 80 rel yift to dignitees, it ne mighte
 never cesen nowher amonges no
 maner folk to don his office, right as
 fyr in every contree ne stinteth nat to
 eschaufen and to ben hoot. But for
 85 as moche as for to ben holden hon-
 ourable or reverent ne cometh nat to
 folk of hir propre strengthe of nature,
 but only of the false opinioun of folk,
that is to seyn, that wenen that digni-
 90 *tees maken folk digne of honour;* anon
 therefore whan that they comen ther-
 as folk ne knowen nat thilke digni-
 tees, hir honours vanisschen away,
 and that anon. But that is amonges

straunge folk, mayst thou seyn; but 95
 amonges hem ther they weren born,
 ne duren nat thilke dignitees alwey?
 Certes, the dignitee of the provostrie
 of Rome was whylom a gret power;
 now is it nothing but an ydel name, 100
 and the rente of the senatorie a gret
 charge. And yif a wight whylom
 hadde the office to taken hede to the
 vitailles of the poeple, as of corn and
 other thinges, he was holden amonges 105
 grete; but what thing is now more
 out-cast thanne thilke provostrie?
 And, as I have seyde a litel her-bifore,
 that thilke thing that hath no propre
 beautee of him-self receiveth som- 110
 tyme prys and shyninge, and som-
 tyme leseth it by the opinioun of
 usaunces. Now yif that dignitees
 thanne ne mowen nat maken folk
 digne of reverence, and yif that dig- 115
 nitees wexen foule of hir wille by the
 filthe of shrewes, and yif that digni-
 tees lesen hir shyninge by chaunginge
 of tymes, and yif they wexen foule by
 estimacioun of poeple: what is it that 120
 they han in hem-self of beautee that
 oughte ben desired? *as who seyth*
non; thanne ne mowen they yeven
 no beautee of dignitee to non other.

METRE IV.

Quamvis se, Tyrio superbus ostro.

Al be it so that the proude Nero,
 with alle his wode luxurie, kembde
 him and aparailede him with faire
 purpres of Tirie, and with whyte
 perles, algates yit throf he hateful 5
 alle folk: *this is to seyn, that al was*
he behated of alle folk. Yit this
 wikked Nero hadde gret lordship,
 and yaf whylom to the reverents sen-
 atours the unworshipful setes of dig- 10
 nitees. *Unworshipful setes he clepeth*
here, for that Nero, that was so wikked,
yaf tho dignitees. Who-so wolde
 thanne resonably wenen, that blisful-
 nesse were in swiche honours as ben 15
 yeven by vicious shrewes?

PROSE V.

An vero regna regumque familiaritas.

But regnes and familiaritees of
 kinges, may they maken a man to ben
 mighty? How elles, when hir blisful-
 nesse dureth perpetuely? But certes,
 5 the olde age of tyme passed, and eek
 of present tyme now, is ful of ensaum-
 ples how that kinges ben chaunged
 in-to wrecchednesse out of hir wele-
 fulnesse. O! a noble thing and a
 10 cleer thing is power, that is nat
 founden mighty to kepen it-self!
 And yif that power of reaumes be
 auctour and maker of blisfulnesse,
 yif thilke power lakketh on any syde,
 15 amenuseth it nat thilke blisfulnesse
 and bringeth in wrecchednesse? But
 yit, al be it so that the reaumes of
 mankinde strecchen brode, yit mot
 ther nede ben moche folk, over
 20 whiche that every king ne hath no
 lordshipe ne comaundement. And
 certes, up-on thilke syde that power
 faileth, which that maketh folk blis-
 ful, right on that same syde noun-
 25 power entreth under-nethe, that
 maketh hem wrecches; in this man-
 ere thanne moten kinges han more
 porcioun of wrecchednesse than of
 welefulnesse. A tyraunt, *that was*
 30 *king of Sisile*, that hadde assayed the
 peril of his estat, shewede by simili-
 tude the dredes of reaumes by gast-
 nesse of a swerd that heng over the
 heved of *his familier*. What thing
 35 is thanne this power, that may nat
 don away the bytinges of bisnesse,
 ne eschewe the prikkes of drede?
 And certes, yit wolden they liven in
 sikernesse, but they may nat; and
 40 yit they glorifye hem in hir power.
 Holdest thou thanne that thilke man
 be mighty, that thou seest that he
 wolde don that he may nat don?
 And holdest thou thanne him a
 45 mighty man, that hath envirowne-
 ded his sydes with men of armes or seri-
 aunts, and dredeth more hem than he
 maketh agast than they dreden him,
 and that is put in the handes of his

servaunts for he sholde seme mighty? 50
 But of familieres or servaunts of
 kinges what sholde I telle thee any-
 thing, sin that I myself have shewed
 thee that reaumes hem-self ben ful of
 gret feblesse? The whiche familieres, 55
 certes, the ryal power of kinges, in
 hool estat and in estat abated, ful
 ofte throweth adown. Nero com-
 streynede Senek, his familier and his
 mayster, to chesen on what deeth he 60
 wolde deyen. Antonius comaunded
 that knightes slown with hir swerdes
 Papinian *his familier*, which Papinian
 hadde ben longe tyme ful mighty
 amonges hem of the court. And yit, 65
 certes, they wolden bothe han re-
 nounced hir power; of whiche two
 Senek enforcede him to yeven to
 Nero his riches, and also to han
 gon in-to solitarie exil. But when the 70
 grete weighte, *that is to seyn, of lordes*
power or of fortune, draweth hem
 that shullen falle, neither of hem ne
 mighte do that he wolde. What
 thing is thanne thilke power, that 75
 though men han it, yit they ben
 agast; and whanne thou woldest han
 it, thou nart nat siker; and yif thou
 woldest forleten it, thou mayst nat
 eschuen it? But whether swiche 80
 men ben frendes at nede, as ben con-
 seyled by fortune and nat by vertu?
 Certes, swiche folk as weleful fortune
 maketh frendes, contrarious fortune
 maketh hem enemys. And what 85
 pestilence is more mighty for to
 anoye a wight than a familier enemy?

METRE V.

Qui se uolet esse potentem.

Who-so wol be mighty, he mot
 daunten his cruel corage, ne putte nat
 his nekke, overcomen, under the foule
 reynes of lecherye. For al-be-it so
 that thy lordshipe strecche so fer, that 5
 the contree of Inde quaketh at thy
 comaundements or at thy lawes, and
 that the last *ile in the see, that hight*
Tyle, be thral to thee, yit, yif thou 10
 mayst nat putten away thy foule

derke desyrs, and dryven out fro thee wrecched complaintes, certes, it nis no power that thou hast.

PROSE VI.

Gloria uero quam fallax saepe.

But glorie, how deceivable and how foul is it ofte! For which thing nat unskilfully a tragedien, *that is to seyn, a maker of ditees that highten tragedies*, cryde and seide: "O glorie, glorie," quod he, "thou art nothing elles to thousandes of folkes but a greet sweller of eres!" For manye han had ful greet renoun by the false
 10 opinioun of the poeple, and what thing may ben thought fouler than swiche preysinge? For thilke folk that ben preysed falsly, they moten nedes han shame of hir preysinges.
 15 And yif that folk han geten hem thonk or preysinge by hir desertes, what thing hath thilke prys eched or encesed to the conscience of wyse folk, that mesuren hir good, nat by
 20 the rumour of the poeple, but by the soothfastnesse of conscience? And yif it seme a fair thing, a man to han encesed and spred his name, than folweth it that it is demed to ben a
 25 foul thing, yif it ne be y-sprad and encesed. But, as I seyde a litel herbiforn that, sin ther mot nedes ben many folk, to whiche folk the renoun of a man ne may nat comen, it befall-
 30 eth that he, that thou wenest be glorious and renommed, semeth in the nexte partie of the erthes to ben withoute glorie and with-oute renoun.

And certes, amonges thise thinges
 35 I ne trowe nat that the prys and grace of the poeple nis neither worthy to ben remembred, ne cometh of wyse Iugement, ne is ferme perdurably. But now, of this name of gentillesse,
 40 what man is it that ne may wel seen how veyn and how flittinge a thing it is? For yif the name of gentillesse be referred to renoun and cleernesse of linage, thanne is gentil name but a
 45 foreine thing, *that is to seyn, to hem that glorifyen hem of hir linage*. For

it semeth that gentillesse be a maner preysinge that comth of the deserte of ancestres. And yif preysinge maketh gentillesse, thanne moten they nedes
 50 be gentil that ben preysed. For which thing it folweth, that yif thou ne have no gentillesse of thy-self, *that is to seyn, preyse that comth of thy deserte*, foreine gentillesse ne maketh
 55 thee nat gentil. But certes, yif ther be any good in gentillesse, I trowe it be al-only this, that it semeth as that a maner necessitee be imposed to gentil men, for that they ne sholden
 60 nat outrayen or forliven fro the virtues of hir noble kinrede.

METRE VI.

Omne hominum genus in terris.

Al the linage of men that ben in erthe ben of semblable birthe. On allone is fader of thinges. On allone ministreth alle thinges. He yaf to the sonne hise bemes; he yaf to the mone hir hornes. He yaf the men to the erthe; he yaf the sterres to the hevene. He encloseth with membres the soules that comen fro his hye sete. Thanne comen alle mortal folk
 10 of noble sede; why noisen ye or bosten of youre eldres? For yif thou loke your biginninge, and god your auctor and your maker, thanne nis ther no forlived wight, but-yif he
 15 norisshe his corage un-to vyces, and forlete his propre burthe.

PROSE VII.

Quid autem de corporis uoluptatibus.

But what shal I seye of delices of body, of whiche delices the desiringes ben ful of anguisshe, and the fulfillinges of hem ben ful of penaunce? How greet syknesse and how grete sorwes
 5 unsufferable, right as a maner fruit of wikkednesse, ben thilke delices wont to bringen to the bodies of folk that usen him! Of whiche delices I not
 10 what Ioye may ben had of hir moevinge. But this wot I wel, that who-so-ever wole remembren him of hise

luxures, he shal wel understonde that
 the issues of delices ben sorrowful and
 15 sorye. And yif thilke delices mowen
 maken folk blisful, than by the same
 cause moten thise bestes ben cleped
 blisful; of whiche bestes al the en-
 tencioun hasteth to fulfillle hir bodily
 20 Iolitee. And the gladnesse of wyf
 and children were an honest thing,
 but it hath ben seyde that it is over
 muchel ayeins kinde, that children
 han ben founden tormentours to hir
 25 fadres, I not how manye : of whiche
 children how bytinge is every condi-
 cioun, it nedeth nat to tellen it thee,
 that hast or this tyme assayed it, and
 art yit now anguissous. In this ap-
 30 prove I the sentence of my disciple
 Euripidis, that seyde, that " he that
 hath no children is weleful by in-
 fortune."

METRE VII.

Habet omnis hoc uoluptas.

Every delyt hath this, that it an-
 guisseth hem with prikkes that usen
 it. It resembleth to thise flyinge flyes
 that we clepen been, that, after that
 5 he hath shad hise agreable honies, he
 fleeth away, and stingeth the hertes,
 of hem that ben y-smite, with bytinge
 overlonge holdinge.

PROSE VIII.

Nihil igitur dubium est.

Now is it no doute thanne that
 thise weyes ne ben a maner misled-
 ings to blisfulnesse, ne that they ne
 mowe nat leden folk thider as they
 5 bilhete to leden hem. But with how
 grete harmes thise forseyde weyes
 ben enlaced, I shal shewe thee shortly.
 For-why yif thou enforceest thee to
 asamble moneye, thou most bireven
 10 him his moneye that hath it. And
 yif thou wolt shynen with dignitees,
 thou most bisechen and supplien hem
 that yeven the dignitees. And yif
 thou covitest by honour to gon bi-
 15 forn other folk, thou shalt defoule
 thy-self thourgh humblesse of axinge.

Yif thou desirest power, thou shalt by
 awaytes of thy subgits anoyously ben
 cast under manye periles. Axest thou
 glorie? Thou shalt ben so destrat by
 20 aspre thinges that thou shalt forgoon
 sikernesse. And yif thou wolt leden
 thy lyf in delices, every wight shal
 despisen thee and forleten thee, as
 thou that art thral to thing that is
 25 right foul and brotel; that is to seyn,
 servaunt to thy body. Now is it
 thanne wel seen, how litel and how
 brotel possessioun they coveiten, that
 putten the goodes of the body aboven
 30 hir owne resoun. For mayst thou
 sormounten thise olifaunts in gret-
 nesse or weight of body? Or mayst
 thou ben stronger than the bole?
 Mayst thou ben swifter than the tygre?
 35 Bihold the spaces and the stablenesse
 and the swifte cours of the hevене,
 and stint som-tyme to wondren on
 foule thinges; the which hevене, cer-
 tes, nis nat rather for thise thinges to
 40 ben wondred up-on, than for the re-
 soun by which it is governed. But
 the shyning of thy forme, *that is to
 seyn, the beautee of thy body*, how
 swiftly passinge is it, and how transi-
 45 toric; certes, it is more flittinge than
 the mutabilitee of flowers of the somer-
 seoun. For so Aristotle telleth, that
 yif that men hadden eyen of a beest
 that highte lynx, so that the lokinge
 50 of folk mighte percen thourgh the
 thinges that with-stonden it, who-so
 loked thanne in the entrailes of the
 body of Alcibiades, that was ful fayr
 in the superfice with-oute, it shold
 55 seme right foul. And forty, yif thou
 semest fayr, thy nature maketh nat
 that, but the desceivaunce of the
 feblesse of the eyen that loken. But
 preyse the goodes of the body as
 60 mochel as ever thee list; so that thou
 knowe algates that, what-so it be, *that
 is to seyn, of the goodes of thy body*,
 which that thou wondrest up-on, may
 ben destroyed or dissolved by the
 65 hete of a fevere of three dayes. Of
 alle whiche forseyde thinges I may
 reducen this shortly in a somme, that
 thise worldly goodes, whiche that ne

70 mowen nat yeven that they bileten,
ne ben nat parfit by the congrega-
cioun of alle goodes; that they ne ben
nat weyes ne pathes that bringen men
to blisfulnesse, ne maken men to ben
75 blisful.

METRE VIII.

Eheu! quae miseros tramite devios.

Allas! which folye and which
ignoraunce misledeth wandringe
wrecches fro the path of verray
goode!
5 Certes, ye ne seken no gold in
grene trees, ne ye ne gaderen nat
precious stones in the vynes, ne ye ne
hyden nat your ginnes in the hye
mountaignes to cacchen fish of
10 whiche ye may maken riche festes.
And yif yow lyketh to hunte to roes,
ye ne gon nat to the fordes of the
water that highte Tyrene. And
over this, men knowen wel the crykes
15 and the cavernes of the see y-hid in
the flodes, and knowen eek which
water is most plentivous of whyte
perles, and knowen which water
haboundeth most of rede purple, *that*
20 *is to seyn, of a maner shelle-fish with*
whiche men dyen purple; and knowen
which strondes habounden most with
tendre fisshes, or of sharpe fisshes that
highten echines. But folk suffren
25 hem-self to ben so blinde, that hem
ne reccheth nat to knowe where thilke
goodes ben y-hid whiche that they
coveiten, but ploungen hem in erthe
and seken there thilke good that sor-
30 mounteth the hevene that bereth the
sterres. What preyere may I maken
that be digne to the nyce thoughtes
of men? But I preye that they cov-
eiten richesse and honours, so that,
35 when they han geten tho false goodes
with greet travaile, that ther-by they
mowe knowen the verray goodes.

PROSE IX.

Hactenus mendacis formam.

It suffyseth that I have shewed
hider-to the forme of false weleful-

nesse, so that, yif thou loke now
cleerly, the order of myn entencioun
requireth from hennes-forth to shewen
thee the verray welefulnesse. 5

‘For sothe,’ quod I, ‘I see wel now
that suffisaunce may nat comen by
richesses, ne power by reames, ne
reverence by dignitees, ne gentillesse 10
by glorie, ne loye by delices.’

‘And hast thou wel knowen the
causes,’ quod she, ‘why it is?’

‘Certes, me semeth,’ quod I, ‘that
I see hem right as though it were 15
thorough a litel clifte; but me were
levere knowen hem more openly of
thee.’

‘Certes,’ quod she, ‘the resoun is
al redy. For thilke thing that sim- 20
ply is o thing, with-ouen any devisi-
oun, the error and folye of man-
kinde departeth and devydeh it, and
misledeth it and transporteth from
verray and parfit good to goodes that 25
ben false and unparfit. But sey me
this. Wenest thou that he, that hath
nede of power, that him ne lakketh
no-thing?’

‘Nay,’ quod I. 30

‘Certes,’ quod she, ‘thou seyst
a-right. For yif so be that ther is a
thing, that in any partye be febler of
power, certes, as in that, it mot nedes
ben nedy of foreine help.’ 35

‘Right so is it,’ quod I.

‘Suffisaunce and power ben thanne
of o kinde?’

‘So semeth it,’ quod I.

‘And demest thou,’ quod she, ‘that 40
a thing that is of this manere, *that is*
to seyn, suffisaunt and mighty, oughte
ben despysed, or elles that it be right
digne of reverence aboven alle
things?’ 45

‘Certes,’ quod I, ‘it nis no doute,
that it is right worthy to ben rever-
enced.’

‘Lat us,’ quod she, ‘adden thanne
reverence to suffisaunce and to power, 50
so that we demen that these three
things ben al o thing.’

‘Certes,’ quod I, ‘lat us adden it,
yif we wolen graunten the sothe.’

‘What demest thou thanne?’ quod 55

she; 'is that a derk thing and nat noble, *that is suffisaunt, reverent, and mighty*, or elles that it is right noble and right cleer by celebritee of renoun? Consider thanne,' quod she, 'as we hath graunted her-bifore, that he that ne hath nede of no-thing, and is most mighty and most digne of honour, yif him nedeth any cleernesse of renoun, which cleernesse he might nat graunten of him-self, so that, for lakke of thilke cleernesse, he mighte seme the febelor on any syde or the more out-cast?' **Glose.** *This is to seyn, nay; for who-so that is suffisaunt, mighty, and reverent, cleernesse of renoun foloweth of the forseide things; he hath it al redy of his suffisaunce.*

75 *Boece.* 'I may nat,' quod I, 'denye it; but I mot graunte as it is, that this thing be right celebrable by cleernesse of renoun and noblesse.'

80 'Thanne folweth it,' quod she, 'that we adden cleernesse of renoun to the three forseide things, so that ther ne be amonges hem no difference?'

'This is a consequence,' quod I.

85 'This thing thanne,' quod she, 'that ne hath nede of no foreine thing, and that may don alle thinges by hise strengthes, and that is noble and honourable, nis nat that a mery thing and a loyful?'

90 'But whennes,' quod I, 'that any sorwe mighte comen to this thing that is swiche, certes, I may nat thinke.'

'Thanne moten we graunte,' quod 95 she, 'that this thing be ful of gladnesse, yif the forseide thinges ben sothe; and certes, also mote we graunten that suffisaunce, power, noblesse, reverence, and gladnesse 100 ben only dyverse by names, but hir substance hath no diversitee.'

'It mot needly been so,' quod I.

105 'Thilke thing thanne,' quod she, 'that is oon and simple in his nature, the wikkednesse of men departeth it and deydeth it; and whan they enforcen hem to geten partye of a thing that ne hath no part, they ne. geten

hem neither thilke partye that nis non, ne the thing al hool that they 110 ne desire nat.'

'In which manere?' quod I.

'Thilke man,' quod she, 'that secheth riches to fleeen poverttee, he ne travaileth him nat for to gete 115 power; for he hath levere ben derk and vyl; and eek withdraweth from him-self many naturel delys, for he nolde lese the moneye that he hath assembled. But certes, in this man- 120 ere he ne geteth him nat suffisaunce that power forleteth, and that molcstie prikketh, and that filthe maketh out-cast, and that derkenesse hydeth. And certes, he that desireth only 125 power, he wasteth and scatereth richesse, and despyseth delys, and eek honour that is with-oute power, ne he ne preyseth glorie no-thing. Certes, thus seest thou wel, that manye 130 thinges faylen to him; for he hath som-tyme defaute of many necessitees, and many anguissches byten him; and whan he ne may nat don tho defautes a-wey, he forleteth to ben 135 mighty, and that is the thing that he most desireth. And right thus may I maken semblable resouns of honours, and of glorie, and of delys. For so as every of these forseide 140 thinges is the same that these other thinges ben, *that is to seyn, al oon thing*, who-so that ever seketh to geten that oon of these, and nat that other, he ne geteth nat that he de- 145 sireth.'

Boece. 'What seyst thou thanne, yif that a man coveiteth to geten alle these thinges to-gider?'

Philosophie. 'Certes,' quod she, 'I 150 wolde seye, that he wolde geten him sovrecyn blisfulnesse; but that shal he nat finde in tho thinges that I have shewed, that he mowen nat yeven that they beheten.' 155

'Certes, no,' quod I.

'Thanne,' quod she, 'ne sholden men nat by no wey seken blisfulnesse in swiche thinges as men wene that they ne mowen yeven but o thing 160 senglely of alle that men seken.'

'I graunte wel,' quod I; 'ne no
sother thing ne may ben sayd.'

165 'Now hast thou thanne,' quod she,
'the forme and the causes of false
welefulnesse. Now torne and flitte
the eyen of thy thought; for ther
shalt thou sen anon thilke verray blis-
fulnesse that I have bihight thee.'

170 'Certes,' quod I, 'it is cleer and
open, thogh it were to a blinde man;
and that shewedest thou me ful wel
a litel her-biforn, whan thou enforced-
est thee to shewe me the causes of the

175 false blisfulnesse. For but-yif I be
bigyled, thanne is thilke the verray
blisfulnesse parfit, that parfitly mak-
eth a man suffisaunt, mighty, honour-
able, noble, and ful of gladnesse.

180 And, for thou shalt wel knowe that I
have wel understonden these things
with-in my herte, I knowe wel that
thilke blisfulnesse, that may verrayly
yeven oon of the forseide things, sin
185 they ben al oon, I knowe, douteles,
that thilke thing is the fulle blisful-
nesse.'

Philosophie. 'O my norie,' quod
she, 'by this opinioun I seye that
190 thou art blisful, yif thou putte this
ther-to that I shal seyn.'

'What is that?' quod I.

'Trowest thou that ther be any
thing in thise erthely mortal toun-
195 bling things that may bringen this
estat?'

'Certes,' quod I, 'I trowe it naught;
and thou hast shewed me wel that
over thilke good ther nis no-thing
200 more to ben desired.'

'These things thanne,' quod she,
'that is to sey, *erthely suffisaunce and*
power and swiche things, either they
semen lyknesses of verray good, or
205 elles it semeth that they yeve to mor-
tal folk a maner of goodes that ne ben
nat parfit; but thilke good that is
verray and parfit, that may they nat
yeven.'

210 'I acorde me wel,' quod I.

'Thanne,' quod she, 'for as mochel
as thou hast knowen which is thilke
verray blisfulnesse, and eek whiche
thilke things ben that lyen falsly

blisfulnesse, *that is to seyn, that by de-* 215
ceite semen verray goodes, now behov-
eth thee to knowe whennes and where
thou mowe seke thilke verray blisful-
nesse.'

'Certes,' quod I, 'that desire I 220
greetly, and have abiden longe tyme
to herknen it.'

'But for as moche,' quod she, 'as
it lyketh to my disciple Plato, in his
book of "in Timeo," that in right 225
litel things men sholden bisechen
the help of god, what iugest thou that
be now to done, so that we may de-
serve to finde the sete of thilke verray
good?'

'Certes,' quod I, 'I deme that we 230
shollen clepen the fader of alle
goodes; for with-uten him nis ther
no-thing founden a-right.'

'Thou seyst a-right,' quod she; 235
and bigan anon to singen right
thus:—

METRE IX.

*O qui perpetua mundum ratione
gubernas.*

'O thou fader, creator of hevene
and of erthes, that governest this
world by perdurable resoun, that
comaundet the tymes to gon from
sin that age hadde beginninge; thou 5
that dwellest thy-self ay stedefast and
stable, and yevest alle othere things
to ben moeved; ne foreine causes
necesseden thee never to compoun-
werk of floterige matere, but only 10
the forme of sovereign good y-set
with-in thee with-oute envye, *that*
moevde thee freely. Thou that art
alder-fayrest, beringe the faire world
in thy thought, formedest this world 15
to the lyknesse semblable of that faire
world in thy thought. Thou drawest
al thing of thy sovereign ensaumpler,
and comaundet that this world, par-
fitliche y-made, have freely and 20
absolut his parfit parties. Thou
bindest the elements by nombres pro-
porcionables, that the colde things
mowen acorden with the hote
things, and the drye things with 25

the moiste thinges; that the fyr, that is purest, ne flee nat over hye, ne that the hevynesse ne drawe nat adoun over-lowe the earthes that
 30 ben plounged in the wateres. Thou knittest to-gider the mene sowle of treble kinde, moevinge alle thinges, and devydest it by membres acord-
 35 inge; and when it is thus devyded, it hath assembled a moevinge in-to two roundes; it goth to torne ayein to him-self, and environneth a ful deep thought, and torneth the hev-
 40 evne-lyke causes enhanest the sowles and the lasse lyves, and, ablinge hem heye by lighte cartes, thou sowest hem in-to hevene and in-to erthe; and when they ben converted to thee
 45 by thy benigne lawe, thou makest hem retorne ayein to thee by ayein-leding fyr.

O fader, yive thou to the thought to styen up in-to thy streite sete, and
 50 graunte him to envroune the welle of good; and, the lighte y-founde, graunte him to fichen the clere sightes of his corage in thee. And scater thou and to-breke thou the
 55 weightes and the cloudes of erthely hevynesse, and shyne thou by thy brightnesse. For thou art cleernesse; thou art peysible reste to debonaire folk; thou thy-self art biginninge,
 60 berer, leder, path, and terme; to loke on thee, that is our ende.

PROSE X.

Quoniam igitur quae sit imperfecti.

For as moche thanne as thou hast seyn, which is the forme of good that nis nat parfit, and which is the forme of good that is parfit, now trowe I that
 5 it were good to shewe in what this perfeccioun of blisfulnesse is set. And in this thing, I trowe that we sholden first enquire for to witen, yif that any swiche maner good as thilke good
 10 that thou hast diffinished a litel heer-biforn, *that is to seyn, sovereyn good*, may ben founde in the nature of thinges; for that veyn imagina-

cioun of thought ne deceyve us nat, and putte us out of the sothfastnesse
 15 of thilke thing that is summited unto us. But it may nat ben denyed that thilke good ne is, and that it nis right as welle of alle goodes. For
 20 al thing that is cleped inparfit is proved inparfit by the amensunge of perfeccioun or of thing that is parfit. And ther-of comth it, that in every thing general, yif that men
 25 sen any-thing that is inparfit, certes, in thilke general ther mot ben something that is parfit; for yif so be that perfeccioun is don away, men may
 30 nat thinke ne seye fro whennes thilke thing is that is cleped inparfit. For the nature of thinges ne took nat hir
 35 beginninge of thinges amened and inparfit, but it procedeth of thinges that ben al hoole and absolut, and descendeth so down in-to outterest
 40 thinges, and in-to thinges empty and with-outen frut. But, as I have y-shewed a litel her-biforn, that yif ther be a blisfulnesse that be freele and veyn and inparfit, ther may no man
 45 doute that ther nis som blisfulnesse that is sad, stedefast, and parfit.'

Boece. 'This is concluded,' quod I, 'fermely and sothfastly.'

Philosophie. 'But considere also,'
 50 quod she, 'in wham this blisfulnesse enhabiteth. The comune acordaunce and conceite of the corages of men proeveth and graunteth, that god, prince of alle thinges, is good. For
 55 so as nothing ne may ben thought better than god, it may nat ben douted thanne that he, that nothing nis better, that he nis good. Certes, resoun sheweth that god is so good, that it proveth by verray force that parfit
 60 good is in him. For yif god ne is swich, he ne may nat ben prince of alle thinges; for certes som-thing possessing in it-self parfit good, sholde
 65 ben more worthy than god, and it sholde semen that thilke thing were first, and elder than god. For we han shewed apertly that alle thinges that ben parfit ben first or thinges
 that ben unparfit; and for-thy, for as

moche as that my resoun or my proces
ne go nat a-wey with-oute an ende,
we owen to graunten that the sover-
70 ein god is right ful of sovereign parfit
good. And we han established that
the sovereign good is verray blisful-
nesse: thanne mot it nedes be, that
verray blisfulnesse is set in sovereign
75 god.'

'This take I wel,' quod I, 'ne this
ne may nat ben withseid in no
manere.'

'But I preye,' quod she, 'see now
80 how thou mayst proeven, holily and
with-oute corrupcioun, this that I have
seyd, that the sovereign god is right
ful of sovereign good.'

'In which manere?' quod I.

85 'Wenest thou aught,' quod she,
'that this prince of alle thinges have
y-take thilke sovereign good any-wher
out of him-self, of which sovereign good
men proveth that he is ful, right as
90 thou mightest thinke that god, that
hath blisfulnesse in him-self, and
thilke blisfulnesse that is in him,
weren dyvers in substance? For yif
thou wene that god have received
95 thilke good out of him-self, thou
mayst wene that he that yaf thilke
good to god be more worthy than is
god. But I am bi-knownen and con-
fesse, and that right dignely, that god
100 is right worthy aboven alle thinges;
and, yif so be that this good be in him
by nature, but that it is dyvers fro
him by weninge resoun, sin we speke
of god prince of alle thinges: feigne
105 who-so feigne may, who was he that
hath conioigned these dyverse thinges
to-gider? And eek, at the laste, see
wel that a thing that is dyvers from
any thing, that thilke thing nis nat
110 that same thing fro which it is under-
stonden to ben dyvers. Thanne fol-
weth it, that thilke thing that by his
nature is dyvers fro sovereign good,
that that thing nis nat sovereign good;
115 but certes, that were a felonous cor-
sednesse to thinke that of him that
nothing nis more worth. For alwey,
of alle thinges, the nature of hem ne
may nat ben better than his begin-

ning; for which I may concluden, 120
by right verray resoun, that thilke
that is biginning of alle thinges, thilke
same thing is sovereign good in his
substance.'

Boece. 'Thou hast seyde rightfully,' 125
quod I.

Philosophie. 'But we han graunted,'
quod she, 'that the sovereign good is
blisfulnesse.'

'And that is sooth,' quod I. 130

'Thanne, quod she, 'moten we
nedes graunten and confessen that
thilke same sovereign good be god.'

'Certes,' quod I, 'I ne may nat
denye ne withstonde the resouns pur- 135
posed; and I see wel that it folweth
by strengthe of the premisses.'

'Loke now,' quod she, 'yif this be
proved yit more fermely thus: that
ther ne mowen nat ben two sover- 140
ein goodes that ben dyverse amonge
hem-self. For certes, the goodes
that ben dyverse amonges hem-self,
that oon nis nat that that other is;
thanne ne [may] neither of hem ben 145
parfit, so as either of hem lakketh to
other. But that that nis nat parfit,
men may seen apertly that it nis nat
soverein. The thinges, thanne, that
ben sovereignly goode, ne mowen by 150
no wey ben dyverse. But I have wel
concluded that blisfulnesse and god
ben the sovereign good; for whiche
it mot nedes ben, that sovereign blis-
fulnesse is sovereign divinitee.' 155

'Nothing,' quod I, 'nis more sooth-
fast than this, ne more ferme by re-
soun; ne a more worthy thing than
god may nat ben concluded.'

'Up-on these thinges thanne,' quod 160
she, 'right as these geometriens, when
they han shewed hir proposiciouns,
ben wont to bringen in thinges that
they clepen porismes, or *declaraciouns*
of forseide thinges, right so wole I yeve 165
thee heer as a corollarie, or a *made of*
coroune. For-why, for as moche as
by the getinge of blisfulnesse men
ben maked blisful, and blisfulnesse is
divinitee: thanne is it manifest and 170
open, that by the getinge of divinitee
men ben maked blisful. Right as by

the getinge of iustice [they ben maked iust], and by the getinge of sapience
 175 they ben maked wyse: right so, nedes, by the semblable resoun, whan they han geten divinitee, they ben maked goddes. Thanne is every blisful man god; but certes, by nature,
 180 ther nis but o god; but, by the participacioun of divinitee, ther ne let ne desturbeth nothing that ther ne ben manye goddes.'

'This is,' quod I, 'a fair thing and a
 185 precious, clepe it as thou wolt; be it porisme or corollarie,' or *mede of coroune or declaringes*.

'Certes,' quod she, 'nothing nis fayrer than is the thing that by re-
 190 soun sholde ben added to thise forseide thinges.'

'What thing?' quod I.

'So,' quod she, 'as it semeth that blisfulnesse conteneth many thinges,
 195 it were for to witen whether that alle thise thinges maken or conioignen as a maner body of blisfulnesse, by diversitee of parties or of membres; or elles, yif that any of alle thilke thinges
 200 be swich that it accomplishe by himself the substaunce of blisfulnesse, so that alle thise othre thinges ben referred and brought to blisfulnesse,'
that is to seyn, as to the chief of hem.

205 'I wolde,' quod I, 'that thou makdest me cleerly to understonde what thou seyst, and that thou recordedest me the forseide thinges.'

'Have I nat iuged,' quod she, 'that
 210 blisfulnesse is good?'

'Yis, forsothe,' quod I; 'and that sovereign good.'

'Adde thanne,' quod she, 'thilke good, *that is maked blisfulnesse*, to
 215 alle the forseide thinges; for thilke same blisfulnesse that is demed to ben sovereign suffisaunce, thilke selve is sovereign power, sovereign reverence, sovereign cleerlesse or noblesse, and sovereign delyt. **Conclusio.** What seyst thou
 220 thanne of alle thise thinges, that is to seyn, suffisaunce, power, and thise othre thinges; ben they thanne as membres of blisfulnesse, or ben they referred
 225 and brought to sovereign good, right

as alle thinges that ben brought to the chief of hem?'

'I understonde wel;' quod I, 'what thou purposost to seke; but I desire for to herkne that thou shewe it me.' 230

'Tak now thus the discrecioun of this questioun,' quod she. 'Yif alle thise thinges,' quod she, 'weren membres to felicitee, than weren they dyverse that oon from that other; and 235 swich is the nature of parties or of membres, that dyverse membres comounen a body.'

'Certes,' quod I, 'it hath wel ben shewed heer-biforn, that alle thise 240 thinges ben alle o thing.'

'Thanne ben they none membres,' quod she; 'for elles it sholde seme that blisfulnesse were conioigned al of on membre allone; but that is a thing 245 that may nat be don.'

'This thing,' quod I, 'nis nat doutous; but I abyde to herknen the remanant of thy questioun.'

'This is open and cleer,' quod she, 250 'that alle othre thinges ben referred and brought to good. For therefore is suffisaunce requered, for it is demed to ben good; and forthy is power requered, for men trowen also that it be 255 good; and this same thing mowen we thinken and coniecten of reverence, and of noblesse, and of delyt. Thanne is sovereign good the somme and the cause of al that aughte ben desired; 260 for-why thilke thing that with-holdeth no good in it-self, ne semblaunce of good, it ne may nat wel in no manere be desired ne requered. And the contrarie: for thogh that thinges by 265 hir nature ne ben nat goode, algates, yif men wene that ben goode, yit ben they desired as thogh that they weren verrayliche goode. And therfor is it that men oughten to wene by right, 270 that bountee be the sovereign fyn, and the cause of alle the thinges that ben to requeren. But certes, thilke that is cause for which men requeren any thing, it semeth that thilke same 275 thing be most desired. As thus: yif that a wight wolde ryden for cause of hele, he ne desireth nat so mochel the

moevinge to ryden, as the effect of
 280 his hele. Now thanne, sin that alle
 thinges ben requered for the grace of
 good, they ne ben nat desired of alle
 folk more thanne the same good.
 But we han graunted that blisfulnesse
 285 is that thing, for whiche that alle these
 othre thinges ben desired; thanne is
 it thus: that, certes, only blisfulnesse
 is requered and desired. By whiche
 thing it sheweth clearly, that of good
 290 and of blisfulnesse is al oon and the
 same substance.'

'I see nat,' quod I, 'wherfore that
 men mighten discorden in this.'

'And we han shewed that god and
 295 verray blisfulnesse is al oo thing.'

'That is sooth,' quod I.

'Thanne mowen we conclude sik-
 erly, that the substaunce of god is set
 300 place.

METRE X.

Huc omnes pariter uenite capti.

O cometh alle to-gider now, ye that
 ben y-caught and y-bounde with wik-
 kedede cheynes, by the deceivable delyt
 of erthely thinges enhabitinge in your
 5 thought! Heer shal ben the reste of
 your labours, heer is the havene sta-
 ble in peysible quiete; this allone is
 the open refut to wrecches. **Glosa.**
 10 *This is to seyn, that ye that ben com-
 bred and deceived with worldely affec-
 ciouns, cometh now to this sovereign
 good, that is god, that is refut to hem
 that wolen comen to him.* **Textus.**
 Alle the thinges that the river Tagus
 15 yeveth yow with his goldene gravailes,
 or elles alle the thinges that the river
 Hermus yeveth with his rede brinke,
 or that Indus yeveth, that is next the
 hote party of the world, that medleth
 20 the grene stones with the whyte, ne
 sholde nat cleeren the lookinge of
 your thought, but hyden rather your
 blinde corages with-in hir derknesse.
 Al that lyketh yow heer, and excyeth
 25 and moeveth your thoughtes, the
 erthe hath norissed it in hise lowe
 caves. But the shyninge, by whiche

the hevene is governed and whennes
 he hath his strengthe, that eschucheth
 the derke overthrowinge of the sowle;
 and who-so may knowen thilke light
 30 of blisfulnesse, he shal wel seyn, that
 the whyte bemes of the sonne ne ben
 nat cleer.'

PROSE XI.

Assentior, inquam.

Boece. 'I assente me,' quod I;
 'for alle these thinges ben strongly
 bounden with right ferme resouns.'

Philosophie. 'How mochel wilt
 thou preysen it,' quod she, 'yif that
 thou knowe what thilke good is?' 5

'I wol preyse it,' quod I, 'by prys
 with-ouen ende, yif it shal bityde me
 to knowe also to-gider god that is
 good.'

'Certes,' quod she, 'that shal I do
 thee by verray resoun, yif that tho
 thinges that I have concluded a litel
 her-biforn dwellen only in hir first
 granting.'

'They dwellen graunted to thee,'
 quod I; *this is to seyn, as who seith:*
I graunte thy forseide conclusiouns.

'Have I nat shewed thee,' quod
 she, 'that the thinges that ben re-
 20 quered of many folkes ne ben nat
 verray goodes ne parfite, for they ben
 dyverse that oon fro that othre; and
 so as ech of hem is lakkinge to other,
 they ne han no power to bringen a
 25 good that is ful and absolut? But
 thanne at erst ben they verray good,
 whanne they ben gadered to-gider alle
 in-to o forme and in-to oon wirkinge,
 so that thilke thing that is suffisaunce,
 30 thilke same be power, and reverence,
 and noblesse, and mirthe; and for-
 sothe, but-yif alle these thinges ben
 alle oon same thing, they ne han nat
 wherby that they mowen ben put in
 35 the number of thinges that oughten
 ben requered or desired.'

'It is shewed,' quod I; 'ne her-of
 may ther no man douten.'

'The thinges thanne,' quod she, 40
 'that ne ben no goodes whanne they
 ben dyverse, and whan they begin-

nen to ben alle oon thing thanne ben
they goodes, ne comth it hem nat
45 thanne by the getinge of unitee, that
they ben makid goodes?'

'So it semeth,' quod I.

'But al thing that is good,' quod
she, 'grauntest thou that it be good
50 by the participacioun of good, or no?'

'I graunte it,' quod I.

'Thanne most thou graunten,'
quod she, 'by semblable resoun, that
oon and good be oo same thing.
55 For of thinges, of whiche that the
effect nis nat naturelly diverse, nedes
the substance mot be oo same
thing.'

'I ne may nat denye that,' quod I.

60 'Hast thou nat knowen wel,' quod
she, 'that al thing that is hath so
longe his dwellinge and his sub-
stance as longe as it is oon; but
whan it forleteth to ben oon, it mot
65 nedes dyen and corumpe-to-gider?'

'In which manere?' quod I.

'Right as in bestes,' quod she,
'whan the sowle and the body ben
conioigned in oon and dwellen to-
70 gider, it is cleped a beest. And
whan hir unitee is destroyed by the
disseverance of that oon from that
other, than sheweth it wel that it is a
ded thing, and that it nis no lenger
75 no beest. And the body of a wight,
whyl it dwelleth in oo forme by con-
iuncccion of membres, it is wel seyn
that it is a figure of man-kinde.
And yif the parties of the body ben
80 so devyded and dissevered, *that oon
fro that other*, that they destroyen
unitee, the body forleteth to ben that
it was biforn. And, who-so wolde
renne in the same manere by alle
85 thinges, he sholde seen that, with-
oute doute, every thing is in his sub-
stance as longe as it is oon; and
whan it forleteth to ben oon, it dyeth
and perissbeth.'

90 'Whan I considere,' quod I,
'manye thinges, I see non other.'

'Is ther any-thing thanne,' quod
she, 'that, in as moche as it liveth
naturelly, that forleteth the talent or
95 appetyt of his beinge, and desireth

to come to deeth and to corrup-
cioun?'

'Yif I considere,' quod I, 'the
beestes that han any maner nature
of wilninge and of nillinge, I nee 100
finde no beest, but-yif it be con-
strained fro with-oute forth, that
forleteth or despyseth the entencioun
to liven and to duren, or that wole,
his thankes, hasten him to dyen. 105
For every beest travailleth him to
deffende and kepe the savacioun of
his lyf, and eschueth deeth and de-
struccioun.'

But certes, I doute me of herbes 110
and of trees, *that is to seyn, that I am
in a doute of swiche thinges as herbes
or trees, that ne han no felinge
sowles, ne no naturel wirkinges serv-
inge to appetytes as bestes han, whether* 115
*they han appetyt to dwellen and to
duren.'*

'Certes,' quod she, 'ne ther-of thar
thee nat doute. Now loke up-on these
herbes and these trees; they waxen first 120
in swiche places as ben covenable to
hem, in whiche places they ne mowen
nat sone dyen ne dryen, as longe
as hir nature may defenden hem.
For som of hem waxen in feeldes, 125
and som in mountaignes, and othere
waxen in mareys, and othere eleven
on roches, and somme waxen plenti-
vous in sondes; and yif that any
wight enforce him to beren hem in-to 130
othre places, they waxen drye. For
nature yeveth to every thing that
is convenient to him, and travailleth
that they ne dye nat, as longe as they
han power to dwellen and to liven. 135
What woltow seyn of this, that they
drawen alle hir norissinges by hir
rotes, right as they hadden hir
mouthes y-plounged with-in the
erthes, and sheden by hir maryes hir 140
wode and hir bark? And what woltow
seyn of this, that thilke thing
that is right softe, as the marye is,
that is alwey hid in the sete, al with-
inne, and that is defended fro with- 145
oute by the stedefastnesse of wode;
and that the uttereste bark is put
aycins the destemperaunce of the

hevene, as a defendour mighty to
 150 suffren harm? And thus, certes,
 maystow wel seem how greet is the
 diligence of nature; for alle thinges
 renovelcn and puplissen hem with
 seed y-multiplied; ne ther nis no
 155 man that ne wot wel that they ne ben
 right as a foundement and edifice,
 for to duren nat only for a tyme, but
 right as for to duren perdurably by
 generacioun. And the thinges eek
 160 that men wenen ne haven none
 sowles, ne desire they nat ech of
 hem by semblable rescoun to kepen
 that is hirs, *that is to seyn, that is*
acordinge to hir nature in conserva-
 165 *cioun of hir beinge and enduringe?*
 For wher-for elles bereth lightnesse
 the flaumes up, and the weighte
 presseth the erthe a-down, but for as
 moche as thilke places and thilke
 170 moevinges ben covenantable to everich
 of hem? And forsothe every thing
 kepeth thilke that is acordinge and
 propre to him, right as thinges that
 ben contraries and enemys corompen
 175 hem. And yit the harde thinges, as
 stones, elyven and holden hir parties
 to-gider right faste and harde, and
 defenden hem in withstandinge that
 they ne departe nat lightly a-twinne.
 180 And the thinges that ben softe and
 fletinge, as is water and eyr, they
 departen lightly, and yeven place to
 hem that breken or devyden hem;
 but natheles, they retornen sone ayein
 185 in-to the same thinges fro whennes
 they ben arraced. But fyr fleeth
 and refuseth al devisioun. Ne I ne
 trete nat heer now of wilful moevinges
 of the sowle that is knowinge, but of
 190 the naturel entencioun of thinges,
 as thus: right as we swolve the
 mete that we receiven and ne thinke
 nat on it, and as we drawn our
 breeth in slepinge that we wite it nat
 195 whyle we slepen. For certes, in the
 beestes, the love of hir livinges ne of
 hir beinges ne comth nat of the wil-
 ninges of the sowle, but of the bigin-
 ninges of nature. For certes, thorough
 200 constreininge causes, wil desireth
 and embraceth ful ofte tyme the

deeth that nature dredeth; *that is to*
seyn as thus: that a man may ben
constreyned so, by som cause, that his
wil desireth and taketh the deeth 205
whiche that nature hateth and dredeth
ful sore. And somtyme we seeth the
 contrarye, as thus: that the wil of a
 wight destorbeth and constreyneth
 that that nature desireth and requer- 210
 eth al-wey, *that is to seyn,* the werk
 of generacioun, by the whiche gener-
 acioun only dwelleth and is sus-
 tened the long durabletee of mortal
 thinges. 215

And thus this charitee and this
 love, that every thing hath to him-
 self, ne comth nat of the moevinge
 of the sowle, but of the entencioun of
 nature. For the purviaunce of god 220
 hath yeven to thinges that ben creat
 of him this, that is a ful gret cause to
 liven and to duren; for which they
 desiren naturely hir lyf as longe as
 ever they mowen. For which thou 225
 mayst nat drede, by no manere, that
 alle the thinges that ben anywhere,
 that they ne requeren naturely the
 ferme stablenesse of perdurable
 dwellinge, and eek the eschuinge of 230
 destruccioun.

Boece. 'Now confesse I wel,'
 quod I, 'that I see now wel certainly,
 with-oute doutes, the thinges that
 whylom semeden uncertain to me.' 235

'But,' quod she, 'thilke thing that
 desireth to be and to dwellen perdur-
 ably, he desireth to ben oon; for yif
 that that oon were destroyed, certes,
 beinge ne shulde ther non dwellen to 240
 no wight.'

'That is sooth,' quod I.

'Thanne,' quod she, 'desiren alle
 thinges oon?'

'I assente,' quod I. 245

'And I have shewed,' quod she,
 'that thilke same oon is thilke that is
 good?'

'Ye, for sothe,' quod I.

'Alle thinges thanne,' quod she, 250
 'requiren good; and thilke good
 thanne mayst thou descriven right
 thus: good is thilke thing that every
 wight desireth.'

255 'Ther ne may be thought,' quod I,
 'no more verray thing. For either
 alle thinges ben referred and brought
 to nought, and floteren with-oute
 governour, despoiled of oon as of hir
 260 propre heved; or elles, yif ther be
 any thing to which that alle thinges
 tenden and hyen, that thing moste
 ben the soverain good of alle goodes.'

Thanne seyde she thus: 'O my
 265 nory,' quod she, 'I have gret glad-
 nesse of thee; for thou hast fished
 in thyn herte the middel soothfast-
 nesse, *that is to seyn*, the prikke; but
 this thing hath ben discovered to
 270 thee, in that thou seydest that thou
 wistest nat a litel her-biforn.'

'What was that?' quod I.

'That thou ne wistest nat,' quod
 she, 'which was the ende of thinges;
 275 and certes, that is the thing that every
 wight desireth; and for as mochel as
 we han gadered and comprehended
 that good is thilke thing that is de-
 sired of alle, thanne moten we nedes
 280 confessen, that good is the fyn of alle
 thinges.'

METRE XI.

*Quisquis profunda mente uestigat
 uerum.*

Who-so that seketh sooth by a deep
 thought, and coveiteth nat to ben de-
 ceived by no mis-weyes, lat him rollen
 and trenden with-inne him-self the
 5 light of his inward sighte; and lat
 him gadere ayein, enclynge in-to a
 compas, the longe moevinges of *his
 thoughtes*; and lat him techen his
 corage that he hath enclosed and hid
 10 in his tresors, al that he compasseth
 or seketh fro with-oute. And thanne
 thilke thinge, that the blake cloude
 of errour whylom hadde y-covered,
 shal lighten more cleerly thanne Phe-
 15 bus him-self ne shyneth.

Glosa. *Who-so wole seken the deep
 grounde of sooth in his thought, and
 wol nat be deceived by false proposi-
 20 tionis that goon amis fro the trouthe,
 lat him wel examine and rolle with-
 inne him-self the nature and the pro-*

*pretees of the thing; and lat him yit
 eftsones examine and rollen his
 thoughtes by good deliberacioun, or that
 he deme; and lat him techen his sowle* 25
*that it hath, by natural principles
 kindeliche y-hid with-in it-self, alle
 the trouthe the whiche he imagineth to
 ben in thinges with-oute. And thanne
 alle the derknesse of his misknowinge* 30
*shal seme more evidently to sighte of
 his understandinge thanne the sonne
 ne semeth to sighte with-oute-forth.*

For certes the body, bringinge the
 weighte of foryetinge, ne hath nat 35
 chased out of your thoughte al the
 cleernesse of *your knowinge*; for cer-
 tainly the seed of sooth haldeth and
 clyveth with-in your corage, and it is
 awaked and excyted by the winde and
 40 by the blastes of doctrine. For wher-
 for elles demen ye of your owne wil
 the rightes, whan ye ben axed, but-
 yif so were that the norisshinge of
resoun ne livede y-plunged in the
 45 depthe of your herte? *this is to seyn*,
*how sholden men demen the sooth of any
 thing that were axed, yif ther were a
 rote of soothfastnesse that were y-*
plunged and hid in naturel princi- 50
*ples, the whiche soothfastnesse lived
 with-in the deepnesse of the thought.*
 And yif so be that the Muse and the
 doctrine of Plato singeth sooth, al
 that every wight lerneth, he ne doth 55
 no-thing elles thanne but recordeth,
 as men recorden thinges that ben
 foryeten.'

PROSE XII.

Tum ego, Platoni, inquam.

Thanne seide I thus: 'I acorde me
 gretly to Plato, for thou remembrest
 and recordest me thise thinges yit the
 secoude tyme; *that is to seyn*, first
 whan I loste my memorie by the con- 5
 tagious coniuncioun of the body with
 the sowle; and eftsones afterward,
 whan I loste it, confounded by the
 charge and by the burdene of my
 sorwe.' 10

And thanne seide she thus: 'yif
 thou loke,' quod she, 'first the thinges

that thou hast graunted, it ne shal nat
 be right fer that thou ne shalt re-
 15 memben thilke thing that thou
 seydest that thou nistest nat.'

'What thing?' quod I.

'By whiche governement,' quod
 she, 'that this world is governed.'

20 'Me remembreth it wel,' quod I;
 'and I confesse wel that I ne wiste it
 naught. But al-be-it so that I see
 now from a-fer what thou purposest,
 algates, I desire yit to herkene it of
 25 thee more pleynly.'

'Thou ne wendest nat,' quod she,
 'a litel her-biforn, that men sholden
 doute that this world nis governed
 by god.'

30 'Certes,' quod I, 'ne yit ne doute
 I it naught, ne I nel never wene that
 it were to doute; *as who seith, but I
 wot wel that god governeth this world;*
 and I shal shortly answeren thee by
 35 what resouns I am brought to this.

This world,' quod I, 'of so manye
 dyverse and contrariou parties, ne
 mighte never han ben assembled in o
 forme, but-yif ther nere oon that con-
 40 ioignede so manye dyverse thinges;
 and the same dyversitee of hir na-
 tures, that so discorden that oon fro
 that other, moste departen and un-
 ioignen the thinges that ben con-
 45 ioigned, yif ther ne were oon that
 contenede that he hath conioined and
 y-bounde. Ne the certain ordre of
 nature ne sholde nat bringe forth so
 ordenee moevinges, by places, by
 50 tymes, by doinges, by spaces, by qualitees,
 yif ther ne were oon that were
 ay stedefast dwellinge, that ordey-
 nede and disponede these dyversitees
 of moevinges. And thilke thing,
 55 what-so-ever it be, by which that alle
 thinges ben y-maked and y-lad, I
 clepe him "god"; that is a word
 that is used to alle folk.'

'I hanne seyde she: 'sin thou felest
 60 thus these thinges,' quod she, 'I trowe
 that I have litel more to done that
 thou, mighty of welefulnesse, hool
 and sounde, ne see cftsones thy con-
 tree. But lat us loken the thinges
 65 that we han purposed her-biforn.

Have I nat noumbred and seyde,
 quod she, 'that suffisaunce is in blis-
 fulnesse, and we han acorded that
 god is thilke same blisfulnesse?'

'Yis, forsothe,' quod I.

'And that, to governe this world,'
 70 quod she, 'ne shal he never han nede
 of non help fro with-oute? For elles,
 yif he hadde nede of any help, he ne
 sholde nat have no ful suffisaunce?'

'Yis, thus it mot nedes be,' quod I.

'Thanne ordeineth he by him-self
 al-one alle thinges?' quod she.

'That may nat be denyed,' quod
 I.

'And I have shewed that god is
 the same good?'

'It remembreth me wel,' quod I.

'Thanne ordeineth he alle thinges
 by thilke good,' quod she; 'sin he,
 85 which that we han acorded to be
 good, governeth alle thinges by him-
 self; and he is as a keye and a stere
 by which that the edifice of this world
 is y-kept stable and with-oute cor-
 90 oumpinge.'

'I acorde me greetly,' quod I; 'and
 I apercevede a litel her-biforn that
 thou woldest seye thus; al-be-it so
 that it were by a thinne suspeciou.' 95

'I trowe it wel,' quod she; 'for,
 as I trowe, thou ledest now more
 ententifly thyne eyen to loken the
 verray goodes. But nathees the
 thing that I shal telle thee yit ne 100
 sheweth nat lasse to loken.'

'What is that?' quod I.

'So as men trowen,' quod she, 'and
 that rightfully, that god governeth
 alle thinges by the keye of his good-
 105 nesse, and alle these same thinges, as
 I have taught thee, hasten hem by
 naturel entenciuon to comen to good:
 ther may no man doute that they
 ne be governed voluntarily, and that 110
 they ne converten hem of hir owne
 wil to the wil of hir ordenour, as they
 that ben acordinge and enclyninge
 to hir governour and hir king.'

'It mot nedes be so,' quod I; 'for 115
 the reame ne sholde nat semen blis-
 ful yif ther were a yok of misdraw-
 inges in dyverse parties; ne the

savinge of obedient thinges ne sholde
120 nat be.'

'Thanne is ther nothing,' quod she,
'that kepeth his nature, that enforceth
him to goon ayein god?'

'No,' quod I.

125 'And yif that any-thing enforcede
him to with-stonde god, mighte it
availen at the laste aycins him, that
we han graunted to ben almighty by
the right of blisfulnesse?'

130 'Certes,' quod I, 'al-outrely it ne
mighte nat availen him.'

'Thanne is ther no-thing,' quod
she, 'that either wole or may with-
stonden to this soverein good?'

135 'I trowe nat,' quod I.

'Thanne is thilke the soverein
good,' quod she, 'that alle thinges
governeth strongly, and ordeyneth
hem softly.'

140 Thanne seyde I thus: 'I delyte
me,' quod I, 'nat only in the endes
or in the somme of the resouns that
thou hast concluded and proeved,
but thilke wordes that thou usest de-

145 lyten me moche more; so, at the
laste, foolles that sumtyme renden
grete thinges oughten ben ashamed
of hem-self; *that is to seyn, that we
fooles that reprehenden wikkedly the*
150 *things that touchen goddes govern-*
ance, we oughten ben ashamed of
our-self: as I, that seyde that god re-
fuseth only the werkes of men, and ne
entremeteth nat of hem.'

155 'Thou hast wel herd,' quod she,
'the fables of the poetes, how the
giaunts assaileden the hevene *with*
the goddes; but forsothe, the debonair
force of god deposede hem, as it was
160 worthy; *that is to seyn, destroyede the*
giaunts, as it was worthy. But wilt
thou that we ioignen to-gider thilke
same resouns? For peraventure, of
swich coniuncioun may sterten up
165 som fair sparkle of sooth.'

'Do,' quod I, 'as thee liste.'

'Wenest thou,' quod she, 'that god
ne be almighty? No man is in doute
of it.'

170 'Certes,' quod I, 'no wight ne
douteth it, yif he be in his minde.'

'But he,' quod she, 'that is almighty,
ther nis nothing that he ne may?'

'That is sooth,' quod I.

'May god don yvel?' quod she. 175

'Nay, forsothe,' quod I.

'Thanne is yvel nothing,' quod
she, 'sin that he ne may nat don yvel
that may don alle thinges.'

'Scornest thou me?' quod I; *or* 180
elles pleyest thou or deceivest thou me,

that hast so woven me with thy re-
souns the hous of Dedalus, so entre-
laced that it is unable to be unlaced;
thou that other-whyle entrest ther 185

thou issest, and other-whyle issest
ther thou entrest, ne foldest thou nat

to-gider, *by replicacioun of wordes*, a
maner wonderful cercle or environ-

inge of the simplicitee devyne? For 190
certes, a litel her-biforn, when thou
bigunne at blisfulnesse, thou seydest

that it is soverein good; and seydest
that it is set in soverein god; and

seydest that god him-self is soverein 195
good; and that god is the fulle blis-
fulnesse; for which thou yave me as

a covenable yift, *that is to seyn*, that
no wight nis blisful but-yif he be god

also ther-with. And seidest eek, that 200
the forme of good is the substance
of god and of blisfulnesse; and

seidest, that thilke same oon is thilke
same good, that is requered and de-

sired of alle the kinde of thinges. 205
And thou proevedest, in disputinge,

that god governeth all the thinges of
the world by the governements of

bountee, *and seydest*, that alle thinges
wolen obeyen to him; and *seydest*, 210

that the nature of yvel nis no-thing.
And these thinges ne shewedest thou

nat with none resouns y-taken fro
with-oute, but by proeves *in cercles*

and hoornlich knowen; the whiche 215
proeves drawn to hem-self hir feith
and hir acord, everich of hem of

other.'

Thanne seyde she thus: 'I ne
scorne thee nat, *ne pleye, ne deceive* 220

thee; but I have shewed thee the
thing that is grettest over alle thinges

by the yift of god, that we whylom
preyeden. For this is the forme of

225 the devyne substauce, that is swich
 that it ne slydeleth nat in-to outterest
 foreine thinges, ne ne receiveth no
 straunge thinges in him; but right as
 Parmenides seyde in *Greek* of thilke
 230 devyne substauce; he seyde thus:
 that "thilke devyne substauce torn-
 eth the world and the moevable cercle
 of thinges, whyl thilke devyne sub-
 stance kepeth it-self with-oute moev-
 235 inge;" *that is to seyn, that it ne
 moeveth never-mo, and yit it moeveth
 alle othre thinges.* But natheles, yif
 I have stired resouns that ne ben nat
 taken fro with-oute the compas of
 240 thing of which we treten, but resouns
 that ben bistowed with-in that compas,
 ther nis nat why that thou shold-
 est merveilen; sin thou hast lerned
 by the sentence of Plato, that "nedes
 245 the wordes moten be cosines to the
 thinges of which they speken."

METRE XII.

Felix, qui potuit boni.

Blisful is that man that may seen
 the clere welle of good; blisful is he
 that may unbinden him fro the bondes
 of the hevye erthe. The poete of
 5 Trace, *Orpheus*, that whylom hadde
 right greet sorwe for the deeth of his
 wyf, after that he hadde maked, by
 his weeply songes, the wodes, moev-
 able, to rennen; and hadde maked
 10 the riveres to stonden stille; and
 hadde maked the herthes and the
 hindes to ioignen, dredeles, hir sydes
 to cruel lyouns, *for to herkenen his
 songe*; and hadde maked that the
 15 hare was nat agast of the hounde,
 which that was plesed by his songe:
 so, whan the moste ardaunt love of
 his wif brende the entrailes of his
 brest, ne the songes that hadden over-
 20 comen alle thinges ne mighten nat
 asswagen hir lord *Orpheus*, he pley-
 nede him of the hevene goddes that
 weren cruel to him; he wente him to
 the houses of helle. And there he
 25 temprede hise blaundisshinge songes
 by resowninge strenges, and spak and
 song in wepinge al that ever he hadde

received and laved out of the noble
 welles of his moder *Calliope* the
 goddessse; and he song with as
 mochel as he mighte of wepinge, and
 30 with as moche as love, that doublede
 his sorwe, mighte yeve him and techen
 him; and he commoevede the helle,
 and requerede and bisoughte by swete
 preyer the lordes of sowles in helle,
 of relesinge; *that is to seyn, to yilden
 him his wyf.*

Cerberus, the porter of helle, with
 his three hevedes, was caught and al
 abayst for the newe song; and the
 three goddesses, *Furies*, and venger-
 esses of felonies, that tormenten and
 agasten the sowles by anoy, woxen
 sorwful and sory, and wepen teres for
 45 pitee. Tho ne was nat the heved of
 Ixion y-tormented by the overthrow-
 inge wheel; and Tantalus, that was
 destroyed by the woodnesse of longe
 thirst, despyseth the fodes to drinke;
 50 the fowl that highte voltor, that eteth
 the stomak or the giser of Tityus, is
 so fulfild of his song that it nil eten
 ne tyren no more. At the laste the
 lord and Iuge of sowles was moeved
 to misericordes and cryde, "we ben
 55 overcomen," quod he; "yive we to
 Orpheus his wyf to bere him compa-
 ny; he hath wel y-bought hir by
 his song and his ditee; but we wol
 putte a lawe in this, and covenant
 in the yifte: *that is to seyn*, that, til
 he be out of helle, yif he loke behinde
 him, that his wyf shal comen ayein
 unto us."

But what is he that may yive a
 lawe to loveres? Love is a gretter
 lawe and a strengre to him-self than
 any lawe that men may yeven.
 70 Allas! whan Orpheus and his wyf
 weren almost at the termes of the
 night, *that is to seyn, at the laste
 boundes of helle*, Orpheus lokede
 abakward on Eurydice his wyf, and
 loste hir, and was deed.

This fable aperteineth to yow alle,
 who-so-ever desireth or seketh to
 lede his thought in-to the sovereign
 day, *that is to seyn, to cleernesse of
 sovereign good.* For who-so that ever
 80

be so over-comen that he ficche his
 eyen into the putte of helle, *that is*
to seyn, who-so sette his thoughtes in
erthely thinges, al that ever he hath

Explicit Liber tercius.

drawen of the noble good celestial, 85
 he leseth it whan he loketh the
 helles,' *that is to seyn, in-to love*
thinges of the erthe.

BOOK IV.

PROSE I.

Hec cum Philosophia, dignitate uul-
tus.

Whan Philosofy hadde songen
 softly and delitably the forseide
 thinges, kepinge the dignitee of hir
 chere and the weighte of hir wordes,
 5 I thanne, that ne hadde nat al-outerly
 foryeten the wepinge and the mourn-
 inge that was set in myn herte, for-
 brak the entenciou of hir that
 entendede yit to seyn some othre
 10 thinges. 'O,' quod I, 'thou that art
 gyderesse of verrey light; the thinges
 that thou hast seid me hider-to ben
 so clere to me and so shewing by
 the devyne lookinge of hem, and by
 15 thy resouns, that they ne mowen ben
 overcomen. And thilke thinges that
 thou toldest me, al-be-it so that I
 hadde whylom foryeten hem, for the
 sorwe of the wrong that hath ben
 20 don to me, yit natheles they ne
 weren nat al-outruly unknowen to
 me. But this same is, namely, a
 right greet cause of my sorwe, so as
 the governour of thinges is good, yif
 25 that yveles mowen ben by any weyes;
 or elles yif that yveles passen with-
 oute punisshinge. The whiche thing
 only, how worthy it is to ben won-
 dred up-on, thou considerest it wel
 30 thy-self certainly. But yit to this thing
 ther is yit another thing y-ioigned,
 more to ben wondred up-on. For
 felonye is emperesse, and floureth *ful*
of riches; and vertu nis nat al-only
 35 with-oute medes, but it is cast under
 and fortroden under the feet of felon-
 ous folk; and it abyeth the torments
 in stede of wikkede felounes. Of
 alle whiche thinges ther nis no wight

that may merveylen y-nough, ne
 compleine, that swiche thinges ben 40
 doon in the regne of gode, that alle
 thinges woot and alle thinges may,
 and newole nat but only gode
 thinges.'

Thanne seyde she thus: 'Certes,' 45
 quod she, 'that were a greet mer-
 veyle, and an embasshinge with-outen
 ende, and wel more horrible than
 alle monstres, yif it were as thou 50
 wenest; *that is to seyn*, that in the
 right ordenee hous of so mochel a
 fader and an ordenour of meynee,
 that the vesseles that ben foule and
 vyle sholden ben honoured and 55
 heried, and the precious vesseles
 sholden ben defouled and vyle; but
 it nis nat so. For yif tho thinges
 that I have concluded a litel her-
 biforn ben kept hole and unraced, 60
 thou shalt wel knowe by the autor-
 itee of god, of the whos regne I
 speke, that certes the gode folk ben
 alwey mighty, and shrewes ben alwey
 out-cast and feble; ne the vyces ne 65
 ben never-mo with-oute payne, ne
 the vertues ne ben nat with-oute
 mede; and that blisfulneses comen
 alwey to goode folk, and infortune
 comth alwey to wikked folk. 70
 And thou shalt wel knowe many thinges
 of this kinde, that shollen cesen thy
 pleintes, and strengthen thee with
 stedefast sadnesse. And for thou
 hast seyn the forme of the verray 75
 blisfulnesse by me, that have whylom
 shewed it thee, and thou hast knowen
 in whom blisfulnesse is y-set, alle
 thinges y-treted that I trowe ben nec-
 essarie to putten forth, I shal shewe 80
 thee the wey that shal bringen thee
 ayein un-to thyn hous. And I shal

ficchen fetheres in thy thought, by
whiche it may arysen in heighte, so
85 that, alle tribulacioun y-don away,
thou, by my gydinge and by my path
and by my sledes, shalt mowe retorne
hool and sound in-to thy trete.

METRE I.

Sunt etenim pennae volucres mihi.

I have, forsothe, swifte fetheres
that surmounten the heighte of
hevene. Whan the swifte thought
hath clothed it-self in tho fetheres, it
5 despyseth the hateful erthes, and
surmounteth the roundnesse of the
grete ayr; and it seeth the cloudes
behinde his bak; and passeth the
heighte of the region of the fyr, that
10 eschaufeth by the swifte moevinge of
the firmament, til that he areyseth
him in-to the houses that beren the
sterres, and ioyneth his weyes with
the sonne Phebus, and felawshipeth
15 the wey of the olde colde Saturnus;
and he y-made a knight of the clere
sterre; *that is to seyn, that the thought
is maked goddes knight by the sekinge
of trouthe to comen to the verray
20 knowleche of god.* And thilke thocht
renneth by the cercele of the sterres,
in alle places ther-as the shyninge
night is peinted; *that is to seyn, the
night that is cloudeles; for on nightes
25 that ben cloudeles it semeth as the
hevene were peinted with dyverse
images of sterres.* And whanne he
hath y-doon ther y-nough, he shal
forleten the laste hevene, and he
30 shal pressen and wenden on the bak
of the swifte firmament, and he shal
ben maked parfit of the worshipful
light of God. Ther halt the lord of
kinges the ceptre of his might, and
35 atempreth the governements of the
world, and the shyninge Iuge of
things, stable in him-self, governeth
the swifte cart or wayn, *that is to
seyn, the circular moevinge of the
40 sonne.* And yif thy wey ledeth thee
ayein so that thou be brought thider,
thanne wolt thou seye now that that
is the contree that thou requerest,

of which thou ne haddest no minde:
“but now it remembreth me wel, 45
heer was I born, heer wol I fastne
my degree, heer wole I dwelle.” But
yif thee lyketh thanne to loken on
the derknesse of the erthe that thou
hast forleten, thanne shalt thou see 50
that these felonous tyraunts, that the
wrecchede peple dredeth, now shollen
ben exyled fro thilke fayre contree.’

PROSE II.

Tum ego, Papae, inquam.

Than seyde I thus: ‘owh! I won-
dre me that thou bihetest me so grete
things; ne I ne doute nat that thou
ne mayst wel performe that thou
bihetest. But I preye thee only this, 5
that thou ne tarye nat to telle me
thilke things that thou hast moeved.’
‘First,’ quod she, ‘thou most nedes
knowen, that goode folk ben alwey
stronge and mighty, and the shrewes 10
ben feble and desert and naked of
alle strengthes. And of these things,
certes, everich of hem is declared and
shewed by other. For so as good and
yvel ben two contraries, yif so be that 15
good be stedefast, than sheweth the
feblesse of yvel al openly; and yif
thou knowe clearly the frelenesse of
yvel, the stedefastnesse of good is
knowen. But for as moche as the 20
fey of my sentence shal be the more
ferme and haboundaunt, I will gon
by that oo wey and by that other;
and I wole conferme the things that
ben purposed, now on this syde and 25
now on that syde. Two things ther
ben in whiche the effect of alle the
dedes of mankinde standeth, that is
to seyn, wil and power; and yif that
oon of these two fayleth, ther nis 30
nothing that may be don. For yif
that wil lakketh, ther nis no wight
that undertaketh to don that he wol
nat don; and yif power fayleth, the
wil nis but in ydel and stant for 35
naught. And ther-of cometh it, that
yif thou see a wight that wolde geten
that he may nat geten, thou mayst

nat douten that power ne fayleth him
40 to haven that he wolde.'

'This is open and cleer,' quod I;
'ne it may nat ben denyed in no
manere.'

'And yif thou see a wight,' quod
45 she, 'that hath doon that he wolde
doon, thou wilt nat douten that he ne
hath had power to don it?'

'No,' quod I.

'And in that that every wight may,
50 in that men may holden him mighty;
*as who seyth, in so moche as man is
mighty to don a thing, in so mochel
men halt him mighty;* and in that
that he ne may, in that men demen
55 him to be feble.'

'I confesse it wel,' quod I.

'Remembreth thee,' quod she, 'that
I have gadered and shewed by for-
seyde resouns that al the entencioun
60 of the wil of mankinde, which that is
lad by dyverse studies, hasteth to
comen to blisfulnesse?'

'It remembreth me wel,' quod I,
'that it hath ben shewed.'

'And recordeth thee nat thanne,'
quod she, 'that blisfulnesse is thilke
same good that men requeren; so
that, whan that blisfulnesse is re-
quired of alle, that good also is re-
70 quered and desired of alle?'

'It ne recordeth me nat,' quod I;
'for I have it gretly alwey ficched in
my memorie.'

'Alle folk thanne,' quod she,
75 'goode and eek badde, enforecen
hem with-out difference of enten-
cioun to comen to good?'

'This is a verray consequence,'
quod I.

'And certein is,' quod she, 'that
by the getinge of good ben men
y-maked goode?'

'This is certein,' quod I.

'Thanne geten goode men that
85 they desiren?'

'So semeth it,' quod I.

'But wikkede folk,' quod she, 'yif
they geten the good that they desiren,
they ne mowe nat be wikkede?'

90 'So is it,' quod I.

'Thanne, so as that oon and that

other,' quod she, 'desiren good; and
the goode folk geten good, and nat
the wikkede folk; thanne nis it no doute
that the goode folk ne ben mighty 95
and the wikkede folk ben feble?'

'Who-so that ever,' quod I, 'dout-
eth of this, he ne may nat considere
the nature of thinges ne the conse-
quence of resouns.'

100 And over this quod she, 'yif that
ther be two thinges that han oo same
purpose by kinde, and that oon of
hem pursueth and parfurmeth thilke
same thing by naturel office, and that 105
other ne may nat doon thilke naturel
office, but folweth, by other manere
thanne is convenable to nature, him
that acomplisheth his purpos kindly,
and yet he ne acomplisheth nat his 110
owne purpos: whether of these two
demestow for more mighty?'

'Yif that I coniecte,' quod I, 'that
thou wolt seye, algates yit I desire to
herkne it more pleynly of thee.'

115 'Thou wilt nat thanne deneye,'
quod she, 'that the moevement of
goinge nis in men by kinde?'

'No, forsothe,' quod I.

120 'Ne thou ne doutest nat,' quod she,
'that thilke naturel office of goinge
ne be the office of feet?'

'I ne doute it nat,' quod I.

'Thanne,' quod she, 'yif that a
wight be mighty to moeve and goth 125
upon his feet, and another, to whom
thilke naturel office of feet lakketh,
enforceth him to gon crepinge up-on
his handes: whiche of these two
oughte to ben holden the more mighty 130
by right?'

'Knit forth the remenaunt,' quod
I; 'for no wight ne douteth that he
that may gon by naturel office of feet
ne be more mighty than he that ne 135
may nat.'

'But the soverein good,' quod she,
'that is eveneliche purposed to the
gode folk and to badde, the gode folk
seken it by naturel office of vertues, 140
and the shrewes enforecen hem to
geten it by dyverse coveityse of *erthely
thinges*, which that nis no naturel
office to geten thilke same soverein

145 good. Trowestow that it may be any other wyse?’

‘Nay,’ quod I; ‘for the consequence is open and shewing of thinges that I have graunted; that nedes gode folk moten ben mighty, and shrewes feeble and unmyghty.’

‘Thou rennest a-right biforn me,’ quod she, ‘and this is the Iugement; *that is to seyn, I iuge of thee right as* these leches ben wont to hopen of *syke folk, whan they aperceyven* that nature is redressed and withstondeth to the maladye. But, for I see thee now al redy to the understandinge, I shal shewe thee more thikke and continuell resouns. For loke now how gretly sheweth the feblesse and infirmittee of wikkede folk, that ne mowen nat comen to that hir naturel entencioun ledeth hem, and yit almost thilke naturel entencioun constreinet hem. And what were to demen thanne of shrewes, yif thilke naturel help halde forleten hem, the which naturel help of intencioun goth away biforn hem, and is so greet that unnethe it may ben overcome? Consider thanne how greet defeaute of power and how greet feblesse ther is in wikkede felonous folk; as who seyth, *the gretter thing that is coveted and the desire nat acomplisshe, of the lasse might is he that coveteth it and may nat acomplisshe.* And *forthy Philosophie seyth thus by sovereign good:* Ne shrewes ne requeren nat lighte medes ne veyne games, whiche they ne may folwen ne holden; but they failen of thilke somme and of the heichte of thinges, *that is to seyn, sovereign good;* ne thise wrecches ne comen nat to the effect of *soverein good,* the which they enforcen hem only to geten, by nightes and by dayes; in the getinge of which good the strengthe of good folk is ful wel y-sene. For right so as thou mightest demen him mighty of goinge, that gooth on his feet til he mighte come to thilke place, fro the whiche place ther ne laye no wey farther to ben gon; right so most thou nedes demen

him for right mighty, that geteth and ateyneth to the ende of alle thinges that ben to desire, biyonde the whiche ende ther nis nothing to desire. Of the which *power of good folk* men may conclude, that the wikked men semen to be bareine and naked of alle strengthe. For why forleten they vertues and folwen vyces? Nis it nat for that they ne knowen nat the goodes? But what thing is more feble and more caitif thanne is the blindnesse of ignoraunce? Or elles they knowen ful wel whiche thinges that they oughten folwe, but lecherye and covetysse overthroweth hem mistorned; and certes, so doth distemperaunce to feble men, that ne mowen nat wrastlen ayeins the vyces. Ne knowen they nat thanne wel that they forleten the good wilfully, and tornen hem wilfully to vyces? And in this wyse they ne forleten nat only to ben mighty, but they forleten outrightly in any wyse for to ben. For they that forleten the comune syn of alle thinges that ben, they forleten also ther-with-al for to ben.

And per-aventure it sholde semen to som folk that this were a merveile to seyen: that shrewes, whiche that contienen the more partye of men, ne ben nat ne han no beinge; but natheles, it is so, and thus stant this thing. For they that ben shrewes, I deneye nat that they ben shrewes; but I deneye, and seye simply and pleynly, that they ne ben nat, ne han no beinge. For right as thou mightest seyen of the carayne of a man, that it were a deed man, but thou ne mightest nat simply callen it a man; so graunte I wel forsothe, that vicious folk ben wikked, but I ne may nat graunten absolutly and simply that they ben. For thilke thing that with-holdeth ordre and kepeth nature, thilke thing is and hath beinge; but what thing that faileth of that, *that is to seyn, that he forleteth naturel ordre,* he forleteth thilke thing that is set in his nature. But thou wolt seyn, that shrewes mowen. Certes, that ne de-

neye I nat; but certes, hir power ne descendeth nat of strengthe, but of feblesse. For they mowen don wikkednesses; the whiche they ne mighte
 255 nat don, yif they mighten dwellen in the forme and in the doinge of good folk. And thilke power sheweth ful evidently that they ne mowen right naught. For so as I have gadered
 260 and proeved a litel her-biforn, that yvel is naught; and so as shrewes mowen only but shrewednesses, this conclusioun is al cleer, that shrewes ne mowen right naught, ne han no
 265 power.

And for as moche as thou understonde which is the strengthe of this power of shrewes, I have defynished a litel her-biforn, that nothing is so
 270 mighty as soverein good.
 'That is sooth,' quod I.

'And thilke same soverein good may don non yvel?'

'Certes, no,' quod I.

275 'Is ther any wight thanne,' quod she, 'that weneth that men mowen doon alle thinges?'

'No man,' quod I, 'but-yif he be out of his witte.'

280 'But, certes, shrewes mowen don yvel,' quod she.

'Ye, wolde god,' quod I, 'that they mighten don non!'

'Thanne,' quod she, 'so as he that
 285 is mighty to doon only but goode thinges may don alle thinges; and they that ben mighty to don yvele thinges ne mowen nat alle thinges: thanne is it open thing and manifest,
 290 that they that mowen don yvel ben of lasse power. And yit, *to proeve this conclusioun*, ther helpeth me this, that I have y-shewed her-biforn, that alle power is to be nombred among
 295 thinges that men oughten requere. And I have shewed that alle thinges, that oughten ben desired, ben referred to good, right as to a maner heighte of hir nature. But for to mowen don
 300 yvel and felonye ne may nat ben referred to good. Thanne nis nat yvel of the nombir of thinges that oughte ben desired. But alle power oughte

ben desired and required. Than is it open and cleer that the power ne
 305 the mowinge of shrewes nis no power; and of alle thise thinges it sheweth wel, that the goode folke ben certeinly mighty, and the shrewes douteles ben unmighty. And it is cleer
 310 and open that thilke opinioun of Plato is verray and sooth, that seith, that only wyse men may doon that they desiren; and shrewes mowen haunten that hem lyketh, but that
 315 they desiren, *that is to seyn, to comen to sovereyn good*, they ne han no power to acomplissen that. For shrewes don that hem list, whan, by tho thinges in which they delysten,
 320 they wenen to ateine to thilke good that they desiren; but they ne geten ne ateynen nat ther-to, for yvces ne comen nat to blisfulnesse.

METRE II.

Quos uides sedere celsos.

Who-so that the covertoures of hir veyne aparailles mighte strepen of thise proude kinges, that thou seest sitten on heigh in hir chaires glitteringe in shynunge purple, enviroined
 5 with sorful armures, manasinge with cruel mouth, blowinge by woodnesse of herte, he shulde seen thanne that thilke lordes beren with-inne hir corages ful streite cheines. For lecherye tormenteth hem in that oon syde with
 10 gredy venims; and troublable ire, that araiseth in him the flodes of *troublinges*, tormenteth up-on that other syde hir thought; or sorwe halt hem
 15 wery and y-caught; or slydinge and deceyvinge hope tormenteth hem. And therefore, sen thou seest oon heed, *that is to seyn, oon tyraunt*,
 20 heren so manye tyrannyes, thanne ne doth thilke tyraunt nat that he desir-eth, sin he is cast down with so manye wikkede lordes; *that is to seyn, with so manye yvces, that han so wikkedly lordshipes over him.*
 25

PROSE III.

Videsne igitur quanto in coeno.

Seestow nat thanne in how grete
 filthe these shrewes ben y-wrapped,
 and with which cleernesse these good
 folk shynen? In this sheweth it wel,
 5 that to goode folk ne lakketh never-
 mo hir medes, ne shrewes lakken
 never-mo torments. For of alle
 thinges that ben y-doon, thilke thing,
 for which any-thing is don, it semeth
 10 as by right that thilke thing be the
 mede of that; as thus: yif a man
 renneth in the stadie, *or in the forlong*,
 for the corone, thanne lyth the mede
 in the corone for which he renneth.
 15 And I have shewed that blisfulnesse
 is thilke same good for which that
 alle thinges ben doon. Thanne is
 thilke same good purposed to the
 workes of mankinde right as a com-
 20 une mede; which mede ne may ben
 dissevered fro good folk. For no
 wight as by right, fro thennes-forth
 that him lakketh goodnesse, ne shal
 ben cleped good. For which thing,
 25 folke of goode maneres, hir medes
 ne forsaken hem never-mo. For al-
 be-it so that shrewes wexen as wode
 as hem list *ayeins goode folk*, yit
 never-the-lesse the corone of wyse
 30 men shal nat fallen ne faden. For
 foreine shrewednesse ne binimeth
 nat fro the corages of goode folk hir
 propre honour. But yif that any
 wight reioyse him of goodnesse that
 35 he hadde take fro with-oute (*as who
 seith, yif that any wight hadde his
 goodnesse of any other man than of
 him-self*), certes, he that yaf him
 thilke goodnesse, or elles som other
 40 wight, mighte binime it him. But for
 as moche as to every wight his owne
 propre bountee yeveth him his mede,
 thanne at erst shal be failen of mede
 whan he forleteth to ben good. And
 45 at the laste, so as alle medes ben
 requered for men wenen that they
 ben goode, who is he that wolde
 deme, that he that is right mighty of
 good were part-les of mede? And
 50 of what mede shal he be guerdoned?

Certes, of right faire mede and right
 grete aboven all medes. Remembre
 thee of thilke noble corolarie that I
 yaf thee a litel her-biforn; and gader it
 to-gider in this manere: — so as good
 him-self is blisfulnesse, thanne is it
 55 cleer and certain, that alle good folk
 ben made blisful for they ben goode;
 and thilke folk that ben blisful, it
 acordeth and is covenable to ben
 60 goddes. Thanne is the mede of
 goode folk swich that no day shal
 enpeiren it, ne no wikkednesse ne
 shal derken it, ne power of no wight
 ne shal nat amenusen it, *that is to*
 65 *seyn*, to ben made goddes.

And sin it is thus, *that goode men
 ne failen never-mo of hir mede*,
 certes, no wys man ne may doute of
 undepartable peyne of the shrewes;
 70 *that is to seyn, that the peyne of
 shrewes ne departeth nat from hem-
 self never-mo*. For so as goode and
 yvel, and peyne and medes ben con-
 trarye, it mot nedes ben, that right as
 75 we seen bityden in guerdoun of
 goode, that also mot the peyne of
 yvel answey, by the contrarye party,
 to shrewes. Now thanne, so as
 bountee and prowess ben the mede
 80 to goode folk, al-so is shrewednesse
 it-self torment to shrewes. Thanne,
 who-so that ever is entecched and
 defouled with peyne, he ne douteth
 85 nat, that he is entecched and defouled
 with yvel. Yif shrewes thanne wolen
 preysen hem-self, may it semen to
 hem that they ben with-ouren party
 of torment, sin they ben swiche that
 the uttereste wikkednesse (*that is to*
 90 *seyn, wikkede thewes, which that is
 the uttereste and the worste kinde of
 shrewednesse*) ne defouleth ne entec-
 cheth nat hem only, but infecteth
 and envenimeth hem gretly? And
 95 also look on shrewes, that ben the
 contrarie party of goode men, how
 greet peyne felawshipeth and folweth
 hem! For thou hast lerned a litel
 her-biforn, that al thing that is and
 100 hath beinge is oon, and thilke same
 oon is good; thanne is this the con-
 sequence, that is semeth wel, that al

that is and hath beinge is good; *this*
 105 *is to seyn, as who seyth, that beinge*
and untee and goodnesse is al oon.
 And in this manere it folweth thanne,
 that al thing that faileth to ben good,
 it stinteth for to be and for to han
 110 any beinge; wherefore it is, that
 shrewes stinten for to ben that they
 weren. But thilke other forme of
 mankinde, that is to seyn, the forme
 of the body with-oute, sheweth yit
 115 that thise shrewes weren whylom
 men; wher-for, when they ben per-
 verted and torned in-to malice, certes,
 than han they forlorn the nature of
 mankinde. But so as only bountee
 120 and prowesse may enhaunsen every
 man over other men; thanne mot it
 nedes be that shrewes, which that
 shrewednesse hath cast out of the
 condicioun of mankinde, ben put
 125 under the merite and the desert of
 men. Thanne bitydeth it, that yif
 thou seest a wight that be transformed
 into vyces, thou ne mayst nat wene
 that he be a man.
 130 For yif he be ardaunt in avaryce,
 and that he be a ravinour by violence
 of foreine richesse, thou shalt seyn
 that he is lyke to the wolf. And yif
 he be felonous and with-oute reste,
 135 and exercyse his tonge to chydinges,
 thou shalt lykne him to the hound.
 And yif he be a prevey awaitour y-hid,
 and reioyseth him to ravisse by wyles,
 thou shalt seyn him lyke to the fox-
 140 whelpes. And yif he be distempere
 and quaketh for ire, men shal wene
 that he bereth the corage of a lyoun.
 And yif he be dredful and flinge,
 and dredeth thinges that ne oughten
 145 nat to ben dred, men shal holden
 him lyk to the hert. And yif he be
 slow and astoned and lache, he liveth
 as an asse. And yif he be light and
 unstedefast of corage, and chaungeth
 150 ay his studies, he is lykned to briddes.
 And if he be plounged in foule and
 unclene luxuries, he is with-holden in
 the foule delceyes of the foule sowe.
 Thanne folweth it, that he that for-
 155 leteth bountee and prowesse, he for-
 leteth to ben a man; sin he may nat

passen in-to the condicioun of god,
 he is torned in-to a beest.

METRE III.

Vela Neritii dulcis.

Eurus *the wind* aryvede the sailes
 of *Ulixes*, duk of the contree of Nar-
 ice, and his wandringe shippes by the
 see, in-to the ile ther-as *Circes*, the
 faire goddess, daughter of the sonne, 5
 dwelleth; that medleth to hir newe
 gestes drinks that ben touched and
 maked with enchauntements. And
 after that hir hand, mighty over the
 herbes, hadde chaunged hir gestes 10
 in-to dyverse maneres; that oon of
 hem, is covered his face with forme
 of a boor; that other is chaunged
 in-to a lyoun of the contree of Mar-
 morike, and his nayles and his teeth 15
 wexen; that other of hem is newe-
 liche chaunged in-to a wolf, and howl-
 eth when he wolde wepe; that other
 goth debonairely in the hous as a tygre
 of Inde. 20

But al-be-it so that the godhed of
Mercurie, that is *cleped* the brid of
 Arcadie, hath had mercy of the duke
Ulixes, biseged with dyverse yveles,
 and hath unbounden him fro the pesti- 25
 lence of his ostesse, algates the row-
 eres and the marineres hadden by
 this y-drawn in-to hir mouthes and
 dronken the wikkede drinks. They
 that weren woxen swyn hadden by 30
 this y-chaunged hir mete of breed,
 for to eten akornes of okes. Non of
 hir limes ne dwelleth with hem hole,
 but they han lost the voice and the
 body; only hir thought dwelleth with 35
 hem stable, that wepeth and biweil-
 eth the monstuous chauninge that
 they suffer. O overlight hand (*as*
who seyth, O! feble and light is the
hand of Circes the enchaunteresse, 40
that chaungeth the bodyes of folkes
in-to bestes, to regard and to compari-
soun of mutacioun that is maked by
vyces); ne the herbes of Circes ne
 ben nat mighty. For al-be-it so that 45
 they may chaungen the limes of the
 body, algates yit they may nat chaunge

the hertes; for with-inne is y-hid the strengthe and vigor of men, in the
 50 secrete tour of *hir hertes*; that is to *seyn*, the strengthe of resoun. But thilke venims of *vices* to-drawen a man to hem more mightily than the *venim of Circes*; for vices ben so
 55 cruel that they percen and thorough-passen the corage with-inne; and, thogh they ne anoye nat the body, yit vices wooden to *destroye men* by wounde of thought.'

PROSE IV.

Tum ego, Fateor, inquam.

Than seyde I thus: 'I confesse and am a-knowe it,' quod I; 'ne I ne sec nat that men may sayn, as by right, that shrewes ne ben chaunged in-to
 5 bestes by the qualtee of hir soules, al-be-it so that they kepen yit the forme of the body of mankinde. But
 ' I nolde nat of shrewes, of which the thought cruel woodeth al-wey in-to
 10 destruccioun of goode men, that it were leueful to hem to don that.'

'Certes,' quod she, 'ne is nis nat leueful to hem, as I shal wel shewe thee in covenable place; but natheles,
 15 yif so were that thilke that men wenen be leueful to shrewes were binomen hem, so that they ne mighte nat anoyen or doon harm to goode men, certes, a greet partye of the peyne to shrewes
 20 sholde ben allegged and releued. For al-be-it so that this ne seme nat credible thing, per-aventure, to some folk, yit moot it nedes be, that shrewes
 25 ben more wrecches and unsely when they may doon and performe that they coveiten, than yif they mighte nat complisshen that they coveiten. For
 yif so be that it be wrecchednesse to wilne to don yvel, than is more wrec-
 30 chednesse to mowen don yvel; with-oute whiche mowinge the wrecched wil sholde languishe with-oute effect. Than, sin that everiche of these
 35 things hath his wrecchednesse, that is to *seyn*, wil to don yvel and mowinge to don yvel, it moot nedes be that they ben constreyned by three unseli-

nesses, that wolen and mowen and per-formen felonies and shrewednesses.'

'I acorde me,' quod I; 'but I desire gretly that shrewes losten sone thilke unselinesse, that is to *seyn*, that shrewes wren despoyled of mowinge to don yvel.'

'So shullen they,' quod she, 'soner, 45 per-aventure, than thou woldest; or soner than they hem-self wene to lakken mowinge to don yvel. For ther nis no-thing so late in so shorte boundes of this lyf, that is long to
 50 abyde, nameliche, to a corage immortal; of whiche shrewes the grete hope, and the hye compassinges of shrewednesses, is ofte destroyed by a sodeyn ende, or they ben war; and
 55 that thing estabeth to shrewes the ende of hir shrewednesse. For yif that shrewednesse maketh wrecches, than mot he nedes ben most wrecched that lengest is a shrew; the whiche
 60 wikked shrewes wolde I demen aldermost unsely and caitifs, yif that hir shrewednesse ne were finisshed, at the leste wey, by the outtereste death. For yif I have concluded sooth of
 65 the unselinesse of shrewednesse, than sheweth it cleerly that thilke wrecchednesse is with-outen ende, the whiche is certain to ben perdurable.'

'Certes,' quod I, 'this conclusioun 70 is hard and wonderful to graunte; but I knowe wel that it acordeth moche to the things that I have graunted her-biforn.'

'Thou hast,' quod she, 'the right 75 estimacioun of this; but who-so-ever wene that it be a hard thing to acorde him to a conclusioun, it is right that he shewe that some of the premisses ben false; or elles he moot shewe
 80 that the collacioun of proposiciouns nis nat speedful to a necessarie conclusioun. And yif it be nat so, but that the premisses ben y-graunted, ther is not why he sholde blame the
 85 argument.'

For this thing that I shal telle thee now ne shal nat seme lasse wonder-
 ful; but of the things that ben taken also it is necessarie; as who 90

seyth, it foloweth of that which that is purposed biforn.

'What is that?' quod I.

'Certes,' quod she, 'that is, that 95 these wikked shrewes ben more blisful, or elles lasse wrecches, that abyen the torments that they han deserved, than yif no peyne of Iustice ne chastyse hem. Ne this ne seye I nat 100 now, for that any man mighte thenke, that the maners of shrewes ben coriged and chastysed by veniaunce, and that they ben brought to the right wey by the drede of the tor- 105 ment, ne for that they yeven to other folk ensauple to fleen fro vyces; but I understande yit in another manere, that shrewes ben more unsely when they ne ben nat punisshed, al- 110 be-it so that ther ne be had no resoun or lawe of correccioun, ne non ensauple of lokinge.'

'And what manere shal that ben,' quod I, 'other than hath be told her- 115 biforn?'

'Have we nat thanne graunted,' quod she, 'that goode folk ben blisful, and shrewes ben wrecches?'

'Yis,' quod I.

120 'Thanne,' quod she, 'yif that any good were added to the wretchednesse of any wight, nis he nat more weleful than he that ne hath no medlinge of good in his solitarie wrec- 125 chednesse?'

'So semeth it,' quod I.

'And what seystow thanne,' quod she, 'of thilke wrecche that lakketh alle goodes, so that no good nis med- 130 led in his wretchednesse, and yit, over al his wikkednesse for which he is a wrecche, that ther be yit another yvel anexed and knit to him, shal nat men demen him more unsely than thilke 135 wrecche of whiche the unseliness is releved by the participacioun of som good?'

'Why sholde he nat?' quod I.

140 'Thanne, certes,' quod she, 'han shrewes, when they ben punisshed, som-what of good anexed to hir wrecchednesse, that is to seyn, the same peyne that they suffren, which

that is good by the resoun of Iustice; and when thilke same shrewes as- 145 capen with-oute torment, than han they som-what more of yvel yit over the wikkednesse that they han don, that is to seyn, defaute of peyne; which defaute of peyne, thou hast 150 graunted, is yvel for the deserte of felonye.' 'I ne may nat denye it,' quod I. 'Moche more thanne,' quod she, 'ben shrewes unsely, when they ben wrongfully delivered fro 155 peyne, than when they ben punisshed by rightful veniaunce. But this is open thing and cleer, that it is right that shrewes ben punisshed, and it is wikkednesse and wrong that they 160 escapen unpunished.'

'Who mighte denye that?' quod I.

'But,' quod she, 'may any man denye that al that is right nis good; and also the contrarie, that al that is 165 wrong is wikke?'

'Certes,' quod I, 'these things ben clere y-nough; and that we han concluded a litel her-biforn. But I praye thee that thou telle me, yif thou acord- 170 est to leten no torment to sowles, after that the body is ended by the deeth;' *this is to seyn, understandestow aught that sowles han any torment after the deeth of the body?* 175

'Certes,' quod she, 'ye; and that right greet; of which sowles,' quod she, 'I trowe that some ben tormented by asprenesse of peyne; and some sowles, I trowe, ben exercised 180 by a purginge mekenesse. But my conseil nis nat to determinye of these peynes. But I have travailed and told yit hiderto, for thou sholdest knowe that the mowinge of shrewes, 185 which mowinge thee semeth to ben unworthy, nis no mowinge: and eek of shrewes, of which thou pleinedest that they ne were nat punisshed, that thou woldest seen that they ne weren 190 never-mo with-ouden the torments of hir wikkednesse: and of the licence of the mowinge to don yvel, that thou preydest that it mighte some ben ended, and that thou woldest fayn 195 lernen that it ne sholde nat longe

dure: and that shrewes ben more
 unsely yif they were of lenger dur-
 inge, and most unsely yif they weren
 200 perdurable. And after this, I have
 shewed thee that more unsely ben
 shrewes, whan they escapen with-
 oute hir rightful peyne, than whan
 they ben punisshed by rightful ven-
 205 iauce. And of this sentence folweth
 it, that thanne ben shrewes con-
 streined at the laste with most gre-
 vous torment, whan men wene that
 they ne be nat punisshed.'

210 'Whan I consider thy resouns,'
 quod I, 'I ne trowe nat that men
 seyn any-thing more verayly. And
 yif I torne ayein to the studies of
 men, who is he to whom it sholde
 215 seme that he ne sholde nat only leven
 these things, but eek gladly herkne
 hem?'

'Certes,' quod she, 'so it is; but
 men may nat. For they han hir eyen
 220 so wont to the derknesse of *erthely*
things, that they ne may nat liften
 hem up to the light of cleer sothfast-
 nesse; but they ben lyke to bridde,
 of which the night lightneth hir lok-
 225 inge, and the day blindeth hem.
 For whan men loken nat the ordre
 of things, but hir lustes and talents,
 they wene that either the leve or the
 mowinge to don wikkednesse, or elles
 230 the scapinge with-oute peyne, be
 weleful. But consider the Iugement
 of the perdurable lawe. For yif thou
 conferme thy corage to the beste
 things, thou ne hast no nede of no
 235 Iuge to yeven thee prys or mede;
 for thou hast ioyned thy-self to the
 most excellent thing. And yif thou
 have enclyned thy studies to the
 wikked things, ne seek no foreyne
 240 wreker out of thy-self; for thou thy-
 self hast thrist thy-self in-to wikke
 things: right as thou mightest loken
 by diverse tymes the foule erthe and
 the hevenc, and that alle other things
 245 stinten fro with-oute, *so that thou nere*
neither in hevenc ne in erthe, ne saye
no-thing more; than it sholde semen
 to thee, as by only resoun of lokinge,
 that thou were now in the sterres and

now in the erthe. But the poeple ne 250
 loketh nat on these things. What
 thanne? Shal we thanne aprochen
 us to hem that I have shewed that
 they ben lyk to bestes? And what
 woltow seyn of this: yif that a man 255
 hadde al forlorn his sighte and hadde
 foryeten that he ever saugh, and
 wende that no-thing ne faylede him
 of perfeccioun of mankinde, now we
 that mighten seen the same things, 260
 wolde we nat wene that he were
 blinde? Ne also ne acordeth nat the
 poeple to that I shal seyn, the which
 thing is sustened by a stronge founde-
 ment of resouns, *that is to seyn*, that 265
 more unsely ben they that don wrong
 to othere folk than they that the wrong
 suffren.'

'I wolde heren thilke same re-
 souns,' quod I. 270

'Denyestow,' quod she, 'that alle
 shrewes ne ben worthy to han tor-
 ment?'

'Nay,' quod I.

'But,' quod she, 'I am certain, by 275
 many resouns, that shrewes ben
 unsely.'

'It acordeth,' quod I.

'Thanne ne doutestow nat,' quod
 she, 'that thilke folk that ben worthy 280
 of torment, that they ne ben wrec-
 ches?'

'It acordeth wel,' quod I.

'Yif thou were thanne,' quod she,
 'y-set a Iuge or a knower of things, 285
 whether, trowestow, that men sholden
 tormenten him that hath don the
 wrong, or elles him that hath suffred
 the wrong?'

'I ne doute nat,' quod I, 'that I 290
 nolde don suffisaunt satisfaccioun to
 him that hadde suffred the wrong by
 the sorwe of him that hadde don the
 wrong.'

'Thanne semeth it,' quod she, 'that 295
 the doere of wrong is more wrecche
 than he that suffred wrong?'

'That folweth wel,' quod I.

'Than,' quod she, 'by these causes
 and by othere causes that ben enforced 300
 by the same rote, filthe or sinne, by
 the propre nature of it, maketh men

wrecches; and it sheweth wel, that
 305 the wrong that men don nis nat the
 wrecchednesse of him that receyvethe
 the wrong, but the wrecchednesse of
 him that doth the wrong. But certes,
 quod she, 'thise oratours or advocats
 don al the contrarye; for they en-
 310 forcen hem to commoeve the Iuges
 to han pitee of hem that han suffred
 and receyved the thinges that ben
 grevous and aspre, and yit men
 sholden more rightfully han pitee of
 315 hem that don the grevaunces and
 the wronges; the whiche shrewes, it
 were a more covenable thing, that
 the accusours or advocats, nat wroth
 but pitous and debonair, ledde tho
 320 shrewes that han don wrong to the
 Iugement, right as men leden syke
 folk to the leche, for that they sholde
 seken out the maladyes of sinne by
 torment. And by this covaunant,
 325 either the entente of deffendours or
 advocats sholde faylen and esen in
 al, or elles, yif the office of advocats
 wolde better profiten to men, it sholde
 ben torned in-to the habite of accusa-
 330 cioun; *that is to seyn, they sholden
 accuse shrewes, and nat excuse hem.*
 And eek the shrewes hem-self, yif hit
 were levelful to hem to seen at any
 clifte the vertu that they han foreten,
 335 and sawen that they sholden putten
 adoun the filthes of hir vyces, by the
 torments of peynes, they ne oughte
 nat, right for the recompensacioun
 for to geten hem bountee and prow-
 340 esse which that they han lost, demen
 ne holden that thilke peynes weren
 torments to hem; and eek they
 wolden refuse the attendaunce of hir
 advocats, and taken hem-self to hir
 345 Iuges and to hir accusors. For which
 it bitydeth that, as to the wyse folk,
 ther nis no place y-leten to hate;
*that is to seyn, that ne hate hath no
 place amonges wyse men.* For no
 350 wight nil haten goode men, but-yif
 he were over-mochel a fool; and for
 to haten shrewes, it nis no resoun.
 For right so as languissinge is mala-
 dye of body, right so ben vyces and
 355 sinne maladye of corage. And so as

we ne deme nat, that they that ben syke
 of hir body ben worthy to ben hated,
 but rather worthy of pitee: wel more
 worthy, nat to ben hated, but for to
 ben had in pitee, ben they of whiche
 360 the thoughtes ben constrained by
 felonous wikkednesse, that is more
 cruel than any languissinge of body.

METRE IV.

Quid tantos iuvat excitare motus.

What delyteth you to exeyten so
 grete moevinges of *hateredes*, and to
 hasten and bisien the fatal disposi-
 cioun of your deeth with your propre
 handes? *that is to seyn, by batailes or*
 5 *by contek.* For yif ye axen the deeth,
 it hasteth him of his owne wil; ne
 deeth ne tarieth nat his swifte hors.
 And the men that the serpent and
 the lyoun and the tygre and the bere
 10 and the boor seken to sleen with
 hir teeth, yit thilke same men seken
 to sleen everich of hem other with
 swerd. Lo! for hir maneres ben dy-
 verse and descordaunt, they moeven
 15 unrightful ostes and cruel batailes,
 and wilnen to perisshe by entrechaung-
 inge of dartes. But the resoun of
 crueltee nis nat y-nough rightful.

Wiltow thanne yelden a cova-
 20 ble guerdon to the desertes of men?
 Love rightfully goode folk, and have
 pitee on shrewes.'

PROSE V.

Hic ego uideo inquam.

'Thus see I wel,' quod I, 'either
 what blisfulnesse or elles what unseli-
 nesse is establishid in the desertes
 of goode men and of shrewes. But
 in this ilke fortune of poeple I see
 5 somewhat of good and somewhat
 of yvel. For no wyse man hath
 lever ben exyled, poore and nely,
 and nameles, than for to dwellen
 in his citee and flouren of rich-
 10 esses, and be redoutable by honour,
 and strong of power. For in this
 wyse more cleerly and more witness-
 fully is the office of wyse men y-tretd.

15 when the blisfulnesse and the poustee
of governours is, as it were, y-shad
amonges poeples that be neighbours
and subgits: sin that, namely, pris-
oun, lawe, and these othre tormentes
20 of laweful peynes ben rather owed
to felonous citezeins, for the whiche
felonous citezeins tho peynes ben
established, *than for good folk*.
Thanne I meruaile me greetly, quod
25 I, 'why that the thinges ben so mis
entrechaunged, that tormentes of fel-
onyes pressen and confounden goode
folk, and shrewes ravisschen medes of
vertu, *and ben in honours and in*
30 *gret estats*. And I desyre eek for to
witen of thee, what semeth thee to
ben the resoun of this so wrongful a
conclusioun? For I wolde wondre
wel the lasse, yif I trowede that al
35 these thinges weren medded by for-
tunous happe; but now hepeth and
encreseth myn astonyinge god, gov-
ernour of thinges,* that, so as god
yevech ofte tymes to gode men godes
40 and mirthes, and to shrewes yevels
and aspre thinges: and yevech ayein-
ward to gode folk hardneses, and to
shrewes he graunteth hem hir wil
and that they desyren: what differ-
45 ence thanne may ther be bitwixen
that that god doth, and the happe of
fortune, yif men ne knowe nat the
cause why that it is?'

'Ne it nis no meruaile,' quod she,
50 'though that men wenen that ther be
somewhat folissch and confuse, whan
the resoun of the ordre is unknowe.
But al-though that thou ne knowe nat
the cause of so greet a disposicioun,
55 natheles, for as moche as god, the
gode governour, atempreth and gov-
erneth the world, ne doute thee nat
that alle thinges ben doon a-right.

METRE V.

Si quis Arcturi sidera nescit.

Who-so that ne knowe nat the
sterres of Arcture, y-torned neigh to
the soverein ctree or point, *that is*
to seyn, y-torned neigh to the soverein
5 *pool of the firmament*, and wot nat

why *the sterre* Bootes passeth or gad-
ereth his weynes, and drencheth his
late flambes in the see, and why that
Botes *the sterre* unfoldeth his over-
swifte arysinges, thanne shal he won- 10
dren of the lawe of the heye eyr.

And eek, yif that he ne knowe nat
why that the hornes of the fulle mone
wexen pale and infect by the boundes
of the derke night; and *how* the mone, 15
derk and confuse, discovereth the
sters that she hadde y-covered by
hir clere visage. The comune errour
moeveth folk, and maketh very hir
basins of bras by thikke strokes; *that* 20
is to seyn, that ther is a maner of
poepel that highte Coribantes, that
wenen that, whan the mone is in the
eclipse, that it be enchaunted; and
therfore, for to rescowe the mone, 25
they beten hir basins with thikke
strokes.

Ne no man ne wondreth whan the
blastes of the wind Chorus beten the
strondes of the see by quakinge flodes; 30
ne no man ne wondreth whan the
weighte of the snowe, y-harded by
the colde, is resolved by the brenninge
hete of Phebus the sonne; for heer
seen men redely the causes. 35

But the causes y-hid, *that is to seyn,*
in hevene, troublen the brestes of men;
the moevable poeple is astoned of alle
thinges that comen selde and sodeinly 40
in our age. But yif the troublly errour
of our ignoraunce departede fro us,
so that we wisten the causes why that
swiche thinges bi-tyden, certes, they
sholden cese to seme wondres.'

PROSE VI.

Ita est, inquam.

'Thus is it,' quod I. 'But so as
thou hast yeven or bi-hight me to un-
wrappen the hid causes of things, and
to discovere me the resouns covered
with derknesses, I prey thee that thou 5
devyse and iuge me of this matere,
and that thou do me to understonden
it; for this miracle or this wonder
troubleth me right greetly.'

And thanne she, a litel what smyl- 10

inge, seyde: 'thou clepest me,' quod she, 'to telle thing that is grettest of alle thinges that mowen ben axed, and to the whiche questioun unnethes is
 15 ther aught y-nough to laven it; *as who seyth, unnethes is ther suffisawntly anything to ansuere partlyly to thy questioun.* For the matere of it is swich, that whan o doute is determined
 20 and cut away, ther wexen other doutes with-oute number; right as the hevedes wexen of Ydre, *the serpent that Hercules slowh.* Ne ther ne were no manere ne non ende, but-yif that
 25 a wight constreinede tho doutes by a right lyfly and quik fyr of thought; *that is to seyn, by vigour and strengthe of wil.* For in this manere men weren wont to maken questions of the
 30 simplicitee of the purviaunce of god, and of the order of destinee, and of sodein happe, and of the knowinge and predestinacioun divyne, and of the libertee of free wille; the whiche
 35 thinges thou thy-self aperceyvest wel, of what weight they ben. But for as mochel as the knowinge of these thinges is a maner porcioun of the medicine of thee, al-be-it so that I
 40 have litel tyme to don it, yit natheles I wol enforen me to shewe somewhat of it. But al-though the norissinges of ditee of musike delyteth thee, thou most suffren and forberen a litel of
 45 thilke delyte, whyle that I weve to thee resouns y-knit by odre.'

'As it lyketh to thee,' quod I, 'so do.' Tho spak she right as by another biginninge, and seyde thus.
 50 'The engendringe of alle thinges,' quod she, 'and alle the progressioun of muable nature, and al that moeveth in any manere, taketh his causes, his ordre, and his formes, of the sta-
 55 bleness of the divyne thoght; and thilke divyne thoght, that is y-set and put in the tour, *that is to seyn, in the heighte,* of the simplicitee of god, stablisseth many maner gyses to
 60 thinges that ben to done; the whiche maner, whan that men loken it in thilke pure clenness of the divyne intelligence, it is y-cleped purviaunce;

but whan thilke maner is referred by men to thinges that it moveth and
 65 disponeth, thanne of olde men it was cleped destinee. The whiche thinges, yif that any wight loketh wel in his thought the strengthe of that oon
 and of that other, he shal lightly
 70 mowen seen, that these two thinges ben dyverse. For purviaunce is thilke divyne reson that is established in the sovercin prince of thinges; the whiche purviaunce disponeth alle
 75 thinges. But destinee is the disposicioun and ordinaunce clyvinge to moevable thinges, by the whiche disposicioun the purviaunce knitteth alle
 thinges in hir ordres; for purviaunce
 80 embraceth alle thinges to-hepe, al-though that they ben dyverse, and al-though they ben infinite; but destinee departeth and ordeineth alle thinges
 singularly, and divyded in moevings,
 85 in places, in formes, in tymes, as thus: lat the unfoldinge of temporel ordinaunce, assembled and ooned in the lokinge of the divyne thought, be
 cleped purviaunce; and thilke same
 90 assemblinge and ooninge, divyded and unfolden by tymes, lat that ben called destinee. And al-be-it so that
 these thinges ben dyverse, yit natheles
 95 hangeth that oon on that other; for why the order destinal procedeth of the simplicitee of purviaunce. For right
 as a werkman, that aperceyvet in his thought the forme of the thing that he
 100 wol make, and moeveth the effect of the werk, and ledeth that he hadde loked biforn in his thought simply and presently, by temporel ordinaunce:
 certes, right so god disponeth in his purviaunce, singularly and stably, the
 105 thinges that ben to done, but he aministreth in many maneres and in dyverse tymes, by destinee, thilke same
 thinges that he hath disponded.

Thanne, whether that destinee be
 110 exercysed outhur by some divyne spirits, servaunts to the divyne purviaunce, or elles by som sowle, or elles by alle nature servinge to god,
 or elles by the celestial moevings of
 115 sterres, or elles by the vertu of angeles,

or elles by the dyverse subtilitee of
 develes, or elles by any of hem, or
 elles by hem alle, the destinal ordi-
 120 nance is y-woven and acomplished.
 Certes, it is open thing, that the pur-
 viaunce is an unmoevable and simple
 forme of thinges to done; and the
 moveable bond and the temporel or-
 125 dinaunce of thinges, whiche that the
 divyne simplicitee of purviaunce
 hath ordeyned to done, that is desti-
 nee. For which it is, that alle thinges
 that ben put under destinee ben,
 130 certes, subgits to purviaunce, to
 whiche purviaunce destinee itself is
 subgit and under. But some thinges
 ben put under purviaunce, that sur-
 mounten the ordinaunce of destinee;
 135 and tho ben thilke that stably ben
 y-ficched negh to the firste godhed:
 they surmounten the ordre of destinal
 moevabletee. For right as of cercles
 that tornen a-boute a same centre or
 140 a-boute a poynt, thilke cercle that is
 innerest or most with-inne ioyneth to
 the simplesse of the middel, and is, as
 it were, a centre or a poynt to that
 other cercles that tornen a-bouten
 145 him; and thilke that is outterest,
 compassed by larger envyrninge, is
 unfolden by larger spaces, in so moche
 as it is furthest fro the middel sim-
 plicitee of the poynt; and yif ther be
 150 any-thing that knitteth and felaw-
 shippeth him-self to thilke middel
 poynt, it is constrained in-to sim-
 plicitee, *that is to seyn, in-to unmoeva-
 bletee*, and it ceseth to be shad and
 155 to fleten dyversely: right so, by sem-
 blable resoun, thilke thing that de-
 parteth furthest fro the first thought of
 god, it is unfolden and submitted to
 gretter bondes of destinee: and in so
 160 moche is the thing more free and laus
 fro destinee, as it axeth and holdeh
 him ner to thilke centre of thinges,
that is to seyn, god. And yif the
 thing clyveth to the stedefastnesse of
 165 the thought of god, and be with-oute
 moevinge, certes, it sormounteth the
 necessitee of destinee. Thanne right
 swich comparisoun as it is of skilinge
 to understandinge, and of thing that

is engendred to thing that is, and of
 170 tyme to eternitee, and of the cercle to
 the centre, right so is the ordre of
 moevable destinee to the stable sim-
 plicitee of purviaunce.

Thilke ordinaunce moeveth the 175
 hevene and the sterres, and atempreth
 the elements to-gider amonges hem-
 self, and transformeth hem by entre-
 changeable mutacioun; and thilke
 same ordre neweth ayein alle thinges 180
 growinge and fallinge a-down, by
 semblable progressions of sedes and
 of sexes, *that is to seyn, male and
 femelle*. And this ilke ordre con-
 streineth the fortunes and the dedes 185
 of men by a bond of causes, nat able
 to ben unbounde; the whiche desti-
 nal causes, whan they passen out fro
 the bigginings of the unmoevable
 purviaunce, it mot nedes be that they 190
 ne be nat mutable. And thus ben the
 thinges ful wel y-governed, yif that
 the simplicitee dwellinge in the divyne
 thoght sheweth forth the ordre of
 causes, unable to ben y-bowed; and 195
 this ordre constreineth by his propre
 stabletee the moevable thinges, or
 elles they sholden fleten folily. For
 which it is, that alle thinges semen to
 ben confus and trouble to us men, for 200
 we ne mowen nat considere thilke
 ordinaunce; natheles, the propre
 maner of every thinge, dressinge
 hem to goode, disponeth hem alle.

For ther nis no-thing don for cause 205
 of yvel; ne thilke thing that is don
 by wikkede folk *nis nat don for yvel*.
 The whiche shrewes, as I have shewed
 ful plentivously, seken good, but wik-
 ked errour mistorneth hem, ne the 210
 ordre cominge fro the poynt of sov-
 errein good ne declyneth nat fro his
 biggininge. But thou mayst seyn,
 what unreste may ben a worse confu-
 sion than that gode men han som- 215
 tyme adversitee and somtyme pros-
 peritee, and shrewes also now han
 thinges that they desiren, and now
 thinges that they haten? Whether
 men liven now in swich hoolnesse 220
 of thoght, *(as who seyth, ben men
 now so wyse)*, that swiche folk as they

demen to ben gode folk or shrewes, that it moste nedes ben that folk ben swiche as they wenen? But in this manere the domes of men discorden, that thilke men that some folk demen worthy of mede, other folk demen hem worthy of torment. But lat us graunte, I pose that som man may wel demen or knowen the gode folk and the badde; may he thanne knowen and seen thilke innereste atempraunce of corages, as it hath ben wont to be seyde of bodies; *as who seyth, may a man speken and determinen of atempraunces in corages, as men were wont to demen or speken of complexiouns and atempraunces of bodies?* Ne it ne is nat an unlyk miracle, to hem that ne knowen it nat, (*as who seyth, but it is lyke a merveil or a miracle to hem that ne knowen it nat*), why that swete thinges ben covenable to some bodies that ben hole, and to some bodies bitere thinges ben covenable; and also, why that some syke folk ben holpen with lighte 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 merveilith of it no-thing. But what other thing semeth hele of corages but bountee and prowesse? And what other thing semeth maladye of corages but vyces? Who is elles kepere of good or dryer away of yvel, but god, governour and lecher of thoughtes? The whiche god, whan he hath biholden from the heye tour of his purveance, he knoweth what is covenable to every wight, and leneth hem that he wot that is covenable to hem. Lo, her-of comth and her-of is don this noble miracle of the ordre destinal, whan god, that al knoweth, doth swiche thing, of which thing that unknowinge folk ben astoned. But for to constreine, *as who seyth, but for to comprehendre and telle a fewe thinges of the divyne deepnesse, the whiche that mannes resoun may understonde, thilke man that thou*

wenest to ben right Iuste and right kepinge of equitee, the contrarie of that semeth to the divyne purveance, that al wot. And Lucan, my familer, telleth that "the victorious cause lykede to the goddes, and the cause overcomen lykede to Catoun." Thanne, what-so-ever thou mayst seen that is don in this werld unhoped or unwened, certes, it is the right ordre of thinges; but, as to thy wikkede opinioun, it is a confusioun. But I suppose that som man be so wel y-thewed, that the divyne Iugement and the Iugement of mankind acorden hem to-gider of him; but he is so unstedefast of corage, that, yif any adversitee come to him, he wol forleten, par-aventure, to continue innocence, by the whiche he ne may nat with-holden fortune. Thanne the wyse dispensacioun of god spareth him, the whiche man adversitee mighte enpeyren; for that god wol nat suffren him to travaile, to whom that travaile nis nat covenable. Another man is parfit in alle vertues, and is an holy man, and negh to god, so that the purveance of god wolde demen, that it were a felonye that he were touched with any adversitees; so that he wol nat suffre that swich a man be moeved with any bodily maladye. But so as seyde a philosopre, the more excellent by me: *he seyde in Grek*, that "vertues han edified the body of the holy man." And ofte tyme it bitydeth, that the somme of thinges that ben to done is taken to governe to gode folk, for that the malice haboundaunt of shrewes sholde ben abated. And god yeveth and departeth to othre folk prosperitees and adversitees y-medled to-hepe, after the qualitee of hir corages, and remordeth som folk *by adversitee*, for they ne sholde nat wexen proude by longe welefulnesse. And other folk he suffreth to ben travailed with harde thinges, for that they sholden confermen the vertues of corage by the usage and excreitacioun of pacience. And other fold dreden more than

they oughten [that] whiche they
 330 mighten wel beren; and somme dis-
 pyse that they mowe nat beren; and
 thilke folk god ledeth in-to experi-
 ence of himself by aspre and sorful
 things. And many othre folk han
 335 bought honourable renou of this
 world by the prys of glorious deeth.
 And som men, that ne mowen nat
 ben overcomen by torments, have
 yeven ensauple to othre folk, that
 340 vertu may nat ben overcomen by
 adversitees; and of alle things ther
 nis no doute, that they ne ben don
 rightfully and ordenely, to the profit
 of hem to whom we seen these things
 345 bityde. For certes, that adversitee
 comth somtyme to shrewes, and som-
 tyme that that they desiren, it comth
 of these forseide causes. And of
 sorful things *that bityden to shrewes*,
 350 certes, no man ne wondreth; for alle
 men wenen that they han wel de-
 served it, and that they ben of wik-
 kede merite; of whiche shrewes the
 torment somtyme agasteth othre
 355 don felonyes, and somtyme it amend-
 eth hem that suffren the torments.
 And the prosperitee *that is yeven to
 shrewes* sheweth a greet argument to
 gode folk, what thing they sholde
 360 demen of thilke welefulnesse, the
 whiche prosperitee men seen ofte
 serven to shrewes. In the which
 thing I trowe that god dispenseth;
 for, per-aventure, the nature of som
 365 man is so overthrowinge *to yvel*, and
 so uncovenable, that the nedy pov-
 erte of his houshold mighte rather
 egren him to don felonyes. And to
 the maladye of him god putteth
 370 remedie, to yeven him riches.
 And som other man biholdeth his
 conscience defouled with sinnes, and
 maketh comparisoun of his fortune
 and of him-self; and dredeth, per-
 375 aventure, that his blisfulnesse, of
 which the usage is Ioyeful to him,
 that the lesinge of thilke blisfulnesse
 ne be nat sorful to him; and ther-
 for he wol change his maneres, and,
 380 for he dredeth to lese his fortune, he
 forleteth his wickednesse. To othre

folk is welefulnesse y-yeven unworth-
 ily, the whiche overthroweth hem in-
 to distruccioun that they han deserved.
 And to som othre folk is yeven 385
 power to punisshen, for that it shal
 be cause of *continuacioun and* exer-
 cysinge to gode folk and cause of
 torment to shrewes. For so as ther
 nis non alyauce by-twixe gode folk 390
 and shrewes, ne shrewes ne mowen
 nat acorden amonges hem-self. And
 why nat? For shrewes discorden of
 hem-self by hir vyces, the whiche
 vyces al to-renden hir consciences; 395
 and don ofte tyme things, the whiche
 things, whan they han don hem,
 they demen that tho things ne
 sholden nat han ben don. For which
 thing thilke soverein purveaunce hath 400
 maketh ofte tyme fair miracle; so that
 shrewes han maketh shrewes to ben
 gode men. For whan that som
 shrewes seen that they suffren wrong-
 fully felonyes of othre shrewes, they 405
 wexen eschaufed in-to hate of hem
 that anoyeden hem, and retornen to
 the frut of vertu, whan they studien
 to ben unlyk to hem that they han
 hated. Certes, only this is the divyne 410
 might, to the whiche might yveles
 ben thanne gode, whan it useth tho
 yveles covenably, and draweth out the
 effect of any gode; *as who seyth, that
 yvel is good only to the might of god,* 415
*for the might of god ordeyneth thilke
 yvel to good.*

For oon ordre embraseth alle
 things, so that what wight that de-
 parteth fro the resoun of thilke ordre 420
 which that is assigned to him, algates
 yit he slydeth in-to another ordre, so
 that no-thing nis lefevel to folye in
 the reame of the divyne purviaunce;
as who seyth, nothing nis with-outen 425
*ordinaunce in the reame of the divyne
 purviaunce*; sin that the right stronge
 god governeth alle things in this
 world. For it nis nat lefevel to man
 to comprehend by wit, ne unfolden 430
 by word, alle the subtil ordinaunces
 and disposiciouns of the divyne en-
 tente. For only it oughte suffice to
 han loked, that god him-self, maker

435 of alle natures, ordeineth and dresseth
 alle thinges to gode; whyl that he
 hasteth to with-holden the thiages
 that he hath maked in-to his sem-
 blance, *that is to seyn, for to with-*
 440 *holden thinges in-to good, for he*
him-self is good, he chaseth out al
 yvel fro the boundes of his comunali-
 tee by the ordre of necessitee destina-
 ble. For which it folweth, that yif
 445 thou loke the purviaunce ordeininge
 the thinges that men wenen ben out-
 rageous or haboundant in erthes,
 thou ne shalt nat seen in no place
 no-thing of yvel. But I see now that
 450 thou art charged with the weichte of
 the questioun, and wery with the
 lengthe of my resoun; and that thou
 abydest som sweetnesse of songe.
 Tak thanne this draught; and whan
 455 thou art wel refreshed and relect,
 thou shal be more stedefast to stye
 in-to heyere questiouns.

METRE VI.

Si uis celsi iura tonantis.

If thou, wys, wilt demen in thy
 pure thought the rightes or the lawes
 of the heye thonderer, *that is to*
seyn, of god, loke thou and bihold
 5 the heightes of the soverein hevене.
 There kepen the sterres, by rightful
 alliaunce of thinges, hir olde pees.
 The sonne, y-moeved by his rody fyr,
 ne disturbeth nat the colde cercle of
 10 the mone. Ne the sterre y-cleped
 "the Bere," that enclyneth his rav-
 isshinge courses abouten the soverein
 heighte of the worlde, ne the same
 stere Ursa nis never-mo wasshen in
 15 the depe westrene see, ne coveteth
 nat to deyen his flaumbes in the see
 of the occian, al-though he see othere
 sterres y-plounged in the see. And
 Hesperus *the sterre* bodeth and telleth
 20 alwey the late nightes; and Lucifer
the sterre bringeth ayein the clere
 day.

And thus maketh Love entre-
 changeable the perdurable courses;
 25 and thus is discordable bataile y-put
 out of the contree of the sterres.

O

This acordaunce atempreth by evene-
 lyk maneres the elements, that the
 moiste thinges, stryvinge with the
 drye thinges, yeven place by stoundes; 30
 and the colde thinges ioynen hem by
 feyth to the hote thinges; and that
 the lighte fyr aryseth in-to heighte;
 and the hevyr erthes avalen by hir
 weightes. By thise same causes the 35
 floury yeer yildeth swote smelles in
 the firste somer-sesoun warminge; and
 the hote somer dryeth the cornes;
 and autumpne comth ayein, hevyr of
 apples; and the fletinge reyn bide- 40
 weth the winter. This atempraunce
 norissheth and bringeth forth al
 thing that bretheth lyf in this world;
 and thilke same atempraunce, rav-
 isshinge, hydeth and binimeth, and 45
 drencheth under the laste deeth, alle
 thinges y-born.

Amonges thise thinges sitteth the
 heye maker, king and lord, welle and
 biginninge, lawe and wys luge, to 50
 don equitee; and governeth and en-
 clyneth the brydles of thinges. And
 tho thinges that he stereth to gon by
 moevinge, he withdraweth and arest-
 eth; and aftermeth the moevable or 55
 wandringe thinges. For yif that he
 ne clepede ayein the right goinge of
 thinges, and yif that he ne con-
 streinede hem nat eft-sones in-to
 roundnesses enclynede, the thinges 60
 that ben now continued by stable
 ordinaunce, they sholden departen
 from hir welle, *that is to seyn, from*
hir biginninge, and faylen, *that is to*
seyn, torne in-to nought. 65

This is the comune Love to alle
 thinges; and alle thinges axen to ben
 holden by the fyn of good. For elles
 ne mighten they nat lasten, yif they
 ne come nat eft-sones ayein, by Love 70
 returned, to the cause that hath yeven
 hem beinge, *that is to seyn, to god.*

PROSE VII.

Iamne igitur uides.

Seestow nat thanne what thing fol-
 weth alle the thinges that I have seyed?
 Boece. 'What thing?' quod I.

'Certes,' quod she, 'al-outrely, that
5 alle fortune is good.'

'And how may that be?' quod I.

'Now understand,' quod she, 'so
as alle fortune, whether so it be Ioye-
ful fortune or aspre fortune, is yeven
10 either by cause of guerdoning or elles
of exercysing of good folk, or elles by
cause to punisshen or elles chastysen
shrewes; thanne is alle fortune good,
the whiche fortune is certain that it
15 be either rightful or elles profitable.'

'Forsothe, this is a ful verray resoun,'
quod I; 'and yif I consider the pur-
viuance and the destinee that thou
taughtest me a litel her-biforn,
20 this sentence is sustened by stedefast
resouns. But yif it lyke unto thee,
lat us noumbren hem amonges thilke
thinges, of whiche thou seydest a
litel her-biforn, that they ne were nat
25 able to ben wened to the poeple.'

'Why so?' quod she.

'For that the comune word of
men,' quod I, 'misuseth this *maner*
speche of fortune, and seyn ofte tymes
30 that the fortune of som wight is
wikkede.'

'Wiltow thanne,' quod she, 'that I
aproche a litel to the wordes of the
poeple, so that it seme nat to hem
35 that I be overmoche departed as fro
the usage of mankinde?'

'As thou wolt,' quod I.

'Demestow nat,' quod she, 'that
al thing that profiteth is good?'

40 'Yis,' quod I.

'And certes, thilke thing that ex-
ercyseth or corigeth, profiteth?'

'I confesse it wel,' quod I.

'Thanne is it good?' quod she.

45 'Why nat?' quod I.

'But this is the fortune,' quod she,
'of hem that either ben put in vertu
and batailen ayeins aspre thinges, or
elles of hem that eschuen and de-
50 clynen fro vyces and taken the wey
of vertu.'

'This ne may I nat denye,' quod I.

'But what seystow of the mery
fortune that is yeven to good folk in
55 guerdoun? Demeth aught the poeple
that it is wikked?'

'Nay, forsothe,' quod I; 'but they
demen, as it sooth is, that it is right
good.'

'And what seystow of that other
60 fortune,' quod she, 'that, al-though
that it be aspre, and restraineth the
shrewes by rightful torment, weneth
aught the poeple that it be good?'

'Nay,' quod I, 'but the poeple 65
demeth that it is most wrecched of
alle thinges that may ben thought.'

'War now, and loke wel,' quod she,
'lest that we, in folwinge the opin-
ioun of the poeple, have confessed 70
and concluded thing that is unable
to be wened to the poeple.'

'What is that?' quod I.

'Certes,' quod she, 'it folweth or
comth of thinges that ben graunted, 75
that alle fortune, what-so-ever it be,
of hem that ben either in possessioun
of vertu, or in the eneres of vertu, or
elles in the purchasinge of vertu, that
thilke fortune is good; and that alle 80
fortune is right wikkede to hem that
dwellen in shrewednesse;' as *who*
seyth, and thus weneth nat the poeple.

'That is sooth,' quod I, 'al-be-it so
that no man dar confesse it ne bi-
85 knoven it.'

'Why so?' quod she; 'for right
as the stronge man ne semeth nat to
abaissen or disdaignen as ofte tyme
as he hereth the noise of the bataile, 90
ne also it ne semeth nat, to the wyse
man, to beren it greuously, as ofte as
he is lad in-to the stryf of fortune.
For bothe to that oon man and eek
to that other thilke difficultee is the 95
mater; to that oon man, of eneres
of his glorious renoun, and to that
other man, to conforme his sapience,
that is to seyn, to the asprenesse of
his estat. For therfore is it called 100
"vertu," for that it susteneth and
enforseth, by hise strengthes, that it
nis nat overcomen by adversitees.
Ne certes, thou that art put in the
eneres or in the heighte of vertu, ne 105
hast nat comen to fleten with delices,
and for to welken in bodily luste;
thou sowest or plauntest a ful egre
bataile *in thy corage* ayeins every

110 fortune: for that the sorrowful fortune
 ne confounde thee nat, ne that the
 merye fortune ne corumpeth thee nat,
 occupye the mene by stedefast
 strengthes. For al that ever is under
 115 the mene, or elles al that overpasseth
 the mene, despyseth wefulnesse (*as
 who seyth, it is vicious*), and ne hath
 no mede of his travaile. For it is set
 in your hand (*as who seyth, it lyth
 120 in your power*) what fortune yow is
 levest, *that is to seyn, good or yvel*.
 For alle fortune that semeth sharp or
 aspre, yif it ne exercyse nat *the gode
 folk* ne chastyseth *the wikked folk*, it
 125 punissheth.

METRE VII.

Bella bis quinis operatus annis.

The wreker Attrides, *that is to seyn,
 Agamenon*, that wroughte and con-
 tinuede the batailes by ten yeer, re-
 covered and purgede *in wrekinge*, by
 5 the destruccioun of Troye, the loste
 chaumbres of mariage of his brother;
*this is to seyn, that he, Agamenon,
 wan ayein Eleyne, that was Mene-
 laus wyf his brother*. In the mene
 10 whyle that thilke *Agamenon* desirede
 to yeven sayles to the Grekissh
 navye, and boughte ayein the windes
 by blood, he unclothede him of pitee
 of fader; and the sory preest yiveth
 15 in sacrificyng the wrecched cuttinge
 of throte of the daughter; *that is to
 seyn, that Agamenon let cuten the
 throte of his daughter by the preest,
 to maken allyaunce with his goddesses,
 20 and for to han winde with whiche he
 mighte wenden to Troye*.

Itacus, *that is to seyn Ulixes*,
 biwepete his felawes y-lorn, the
 whiche felawes the ferse Poliphemus,
 25 ligginge in his grete cave, hadde
 frenen and dreynt in his empty
 wombe. But natheles Poliphemus,
 wood for his blinde visage, yald to
 Ulixes Ioye by his sorrowful teres;
 30 *this is to seyn, that Ulixes smoot out*

*the eye of Poliphemus that stood in
 his forehed, for which Ulixes hadde
 Ioye, whan he say Poliphemus wep-
 inge and blinde.*

Hercules is celebrable for his 35
 harde travailes; he dauntede the
 proude Centaures, *half hors, half
 man*; and he birafte the dispoylinge
 fro the cruel Ioun, *that is to seyn, he
 slowh the Ioun and rafte him his
 40 skin*. He smoot the briddes that
 highten Arpyes with certein arwes.
 He ravisschede apples fro the wakinge
 dragoun, and his hand was the more
 hevy for the goldene metal. He 45
 drow Cerberus, *the hound of helle*, by
 his treble cheyne. He, overcomer, as
 it is seyde, hath put an unmeke lord
 foddre to his cruel hors; *this is to
 seyn, that Hercules slowh Diomedes,
 50 and made his hors to frenen him*. And
 he, Hercules, slowh Ydra *the serpent*,
 and brende the venim. And Achelous
 the flood, defouled in his forhed,
 dreynete his shamefast visage in his 55
 strondes; *this is to seyn, that Achelous
 coude transfigure him-self in-to dy-
 verse lyknesses; and, as he faught
 with Hercules, at the laste he torne
 him in-to a bole; and Hercules brak
 60 of oon of his hornes, and he, for
 shame, hidde him in his river*. And
 he, Hercules, caste adoun Antheus
 the gyaunt in the strondes of Libie;
 and Cacus apaysede the wratthes of 65
 Evander; *this is to seyn, that Hercu-
 les slowh the monstre Cacus, and
 apaysede with that deeth the wratthe
 of Evander*. And the bristled boor
 markede with scomes the shuldres of 70
 Hercules, the whiche shuldres the
 heye cerle of hevене sholde thriste.
 And the laste of his labours was, that
 he sustened the hevене up-on his
 nekke unbowed; and he deservede 75
 eft-somes the hevене, to ben the prys
 of his laste travaile.

Goth now thanne, ye stronge men,
 ther-as the heye wey of the grete
 ensaunple ledeth yow. O nyce men, 80
 why make ye youre bakkes? *As
 who seyth: O ye slowe and delivert
 men, why flee ye adversites, and ne*

fighten nat ayeins hem by vertu, to
85 winnen the mede of the hevene? For
the erthe, overcommen, yeveth the

sterres'; this is to seyn, that, whan
that erthely lust is overcomen, a man
is makid worthy to the hevene.

BOOK V.

PROSE I.

Dixerat, orationisque cursum.

She hadde seyde, and torned the
cours of hir resoun to some othere
things to ben treted and to ben
y-sped. Thanne seyde I, 'Certes,
15 rightful is thyn amonestinge and ful
digne by auctoritee. But that thou
seidest whylom, that the questioun
of the divyne purviaunce is enlaced
with many other questiouns, I under-
10 stonde wel and provee it by the same
thing. But I axe yif that thou wenest
that hap be any thing, in any weys;
and, yif thou wenest that hap be
anything, what is it?'

15 Thanne quod she, 'I haste me to
yilden and assoilen to thee the dette
of my bihest, and to shewen and
openen the wey, by which wey thou
mayst come ayein to thy contree.
20 But al-be-it so that the thinges which
that thou axest ben right profitable
to knowe, yit ben they diverse som-
what fro the path of my purpos; and
it is to douten that thou ne be makid
25 wery by mis-weyes, so that thou ne
mayst nat suffyce to mesuren the
right wey.'

'Ne doute thee ther-of nothing,'
quod I. 'For, for to knowen thilke
30 thinges to-gedere, in the whiche
thinges I delyte me greetly, that shal
ben to me in stede of reste; sin it is
nat to douten of the thinges folwinge,
whan every syde of thy disputacioun
35 shal han be stedefast to me by un-
doutous feith.'

Thanne seyde she, 'That manere
wol I don thee'; and bigan to speken
right thus. 'Certes,' quod she, 'yif
40 any wight diffinishe hap in this
manere, that is to seyn, that "hap is
bitydinge y-brought forth by foolish
moevinge and by no knettinge of

causes," I conferme that hap nis right
naught in no wyse; and I deme al-
45 outrely that hap nis, ne dwelleth but
a voice, as who seith, but an ydel
word, with-outen any significacioun
of thing submitted to that vois. For
what place mighte ben left, or dwell-
50 inge, to folye and to disordenaunce,
sin that god ledeth and constraineth
alle thinges by ordre? For this sen-
tence is verray and sooth, that "noth-
ing ne hath his beinge of naught";
55 to the whiche sentence none of these
olde folk ne withseyde never; al-be-
it so that they ne understoden ne
meneden it naught by god, prince
and beginner of werkinge, but they
60 casten [it] as a manere foundement
of subiect material, that is to seyn,
of the nature of alle resoun. And
yif that any thing is woxen or comen
of no causes, than shal it seme that
65 thilke thing is comen or woxen of
naught; but yif this ne may nat ben
don, thanne is it nat possible, that
hap be any swich thing as I have
diffinissed a litel heer-biforn.'

'How shal it thanne be?' quod I.
'Nis ther thanne no-thing that by
right may be cleped either "hap" or
elles "aventure of fortune"; or is
75 ther aught, al-be-it so that it is hid
fro the peple, to which these wordes
ben covenable?'

'Myn Aristotulis,' quod she, 'in
the book of his Phisik, diffinissheth
this thing by short resoun, and neigh
80 to the sothe.'

'In which manere?' quod I.

'As ofte,' quod she, 'as men doon
any thing for grace of any other
thing, and an-other thing than thilke
85 thing that men entenden to don
bitydeth by some causes, it is cleped
"hap." Right as a man dalfe the
erthe by cause of tilyng of the feeld,

90 and founde ther a gobet of gold
 bidolven, thanne wenen folk that it is
 bifalle by fortunous bitydinge. But,
 for sothe, it nis nat of naught, for it
 hath his propre causes; of whiche
 95 causes the cours unforesyn and unwar
 semeth to han maked hap. For yif
 the tilyere of the feld ne dolve nat in
 the erthe, and yif the hyder of the
 gold ne hadde hid the gold in thilke
 100 place, the gold ne hadde nat been
 founde. This ben thanne the causes
 of the abregginge of fortuit hap, the
 which abregginge of fortuit hap comth
 of causes encountringe and flowinge
 105 to-gidere to hem-self, and nat by the
 entencioun of the doer. For neither
 the hyder of the gold ne the delver
 of the feeld ne understoden nat that
 the gold sholde han ben founde; but,
 110 as I sayde, it bitidde and ran to-
 gidere that he dalf ther-as that other
 hadde hid the gold. Now may I
 thus diffinishe "hap." Hap is an
 unwar bitydinge of causes assembled
 115 in thinges that ben don for som other
 thing. But thilke ordre, procedinge
 by an uneschuable bindinge to-gidere,
 which that descendeth from the welle
 of purviaunce that ordeineth alle
 120 thinges in hir places and in hir tymes,
 maketh that the causes rennen and
 assemblen to-gidere.

METRE I.

*Rupis Achemenie scopulis, ubi uersa
 sequentum.*

Tigris and Eufrates resolgen and
 springen of oo welle, in the cragges
 of the roche of the contree of Ache-
 menie, ther-as the fleinge bataile
 5 flicheth hir dartes, returned in the
 brestes of hem that folwen hem.
 And sone after tho same riveres,
 Tigris and Eufrates, unioinen and
 departen hir wateres. And yif they
 10 comen to-gideres, and ben assembled
 and cleped to-gidere into o cours,
 thanne moten thilke thinges fleten
 to-gidere which that the water of the
 entrechaunginge flood bringeth. The

shippes and the stokkes arraced with 15
 the flood moten assemblen; and
 the wateres y-medled wrappeth or
 implyeth many fortunel happes or
 maneres; the whiche wandringe
 happes, natheles, thilke declyninge 20
 lownesse of the crthe and the flow-
 inge ordre of the slydinge water gov-
 erneth. Right so Fortune, that
 semeth as that it fleteth with slaked
 or ungovernede brydles, it suffereth 25
 brydles, *that is to seyn, to be governed,*
 and passeth by thilke lawe, *that is to
 seyn, by thilke diuine ordenaunce.'*

PROSE II.

Animaduerto, inquam.

'This understonde I wel,' quod I,
 'and I acorde wel that it is right as
 thou seyst. But I axe yif ther be any
 libertee of free wil in this ordre of
 causes that clyven thus to-gidere 5
 in hem-self; or elles I wolde witen yif
 that the destinal cheyne constreinet
 eth the movinges of the corages of
 men?'

'Yis,' quod she; 'ther is libertee 10
 of free wil. Ne ther ne was nevere
 no nature of resoun that it ne hadde
 libertee of free wil. For every thing
 that may naturely usen resoun, it
 bath doom by which it decerneth 15
 and demeth every thing; thanne
 knoweth it, by it-self, thinges that
 ben to fleen and thinges that ben to
 desiren. And thilke thing that any
 wight demeth to ben desired, that 20
 axeth or desireth he; and fleeth
 thilke thing that he troweth ben to
 fleen. Wherefore in alle thinges that
 resoun is, in hem also is libertee of
 willinge and of nillinge. But I ne 25
 ordeyne nat, *as who seyth, I ne
 graunte nat,* that this libertee be
 evenc-lyk in alle thinges. Forwhy
 in the sovercines devynes substaunces,
that is to seyn, in spirits, Iugement is 30
 more cleer, and wil nat y-corumped,
 and might redy to speden thinges
 that ben desired. But the soules of
 men moten nedes be more free whan

35 they loken hem in the speculacioun
or lokinge of the devyne thought, and
lasse free whan they slyden in-to the
bodies; and yit lasse free whan they
ben gadered to-gidere and compre-
40 hended in erthely membres. But the
laste servage is whan that they ben
yeven to vyces, and hany-falle from the
possessioun of hir propre resoun. For
after that they han cast away hir eyen
45 fro the light of the sovereyn soothfast-
nesse to lowe thinges and derke, anon
they derken by the cloude of igno-
rance and ben troubled by felonous
talents; to the whiche talents whan
50 they aprochen and asenten, they hepen
and encreasen the servage which they
han ioyned to hem-self; and in this
manere they ben caitifs fro hir propre
libertee. The whiche thinges, nathe-
55 lesse, the lokinge of the devyne
purviaunce seeth, that alle thinges
biholdeth and seeth fro eterne, and
ordeineth hem everich in hir merites
as they ben predestinat: *and it is*
60 *seyd in Greek, that* "alle thinges he
seeth and alle thinges he hereth."

METRE II.

Puro clarum lumine Phebun.

Homer with the hony mouth, *that*
is to seyn, Homer with the swete
ditees, singeth, that the sonne is cleer
by pure light; natheles yit ne may it
5 nat, by the infirme light of his bemes,
breken or percen the inwarde en-
trailes of the erthe, or elles of the
see. So ne seeth nat *god*, maker of
the grete world: to him, that loketh
10 alle thinges from an heigh, ne with-
stondeth nat no thinges by heviness
of erthe; ne the night ne withstond-
eth nat to him by the blake cloudes.
Thilke god seeth, in oo strok of
15 thought, alle thinges that ben, or
wren, or sholle comen; and *thilke*
god, for he loketh and seeth alle
thinges alone, thou mayst seyn that
he is the verray sonne.'

PROSE III.

Tum ego, en, inquam.

Thanne seyde I, 'now am I con-
founded by a more hard doute than I
was.'

'What doute is that?' quod she.
'For certes, I coniecte now by whiche
5 thinges thou art troubled.'

'It semeth,' quod I, 'to repugnen
and to contrarien greetly, that god
knoweth biforn alle thinges, and that
ther is any freedom of libertee. For
10 yif so be that god loketh alle thinges
biforn, ne god ne may nat ben des-
seived in no manere, than mot it nedes
been, that alle thinges bityden the
whiche that the purviaunce of god
15 hath seyn biforn to comen. For which,
yif that god knoweth biforn nat only
the werkes of men, but also hir con-
seiles and hir willes, thanne ne shal
ther be no libertee of arbitre; ne,
20 certes, ther ne may be noon other
dede, ne no wil, but thilke which that
the divyne purviaunce, that may nat
ben desseived, hath feled biforn. For
yif that they mighten wrythen away
25 in othre manere than they ben pur-
veyed, than sholde ther be no stede-
fast prescience of thing to comen, but
rather an uncertein opinioun; the
whiche thing to trowen of god, I deme
30 it felonye and unleveful. Ne I ne
proeve nat thilke same resoun, *as who*
seyth, I ne alove nat, or I ne preyse
nat, thilke same resoun, by which that
som men wenen that they mowen as-
35 soilen and unknitten the knotte of
this questioun. For, certes, they seyn
that thing nis nat to comen for that
the purviaunce of god hath seyn it
biforn that is to comen, but rather the
40 contrarye, *and that is this*: that, for
that the thing is to comen, therefore
ne may it nat ben hid fro the pur-
viaunce of god; and in this manere
this necessitee slydeth ayein in-to the
45 contrarye partye: ne it ne bihoveth
nat, nedes, that thinges bityden that
ben purveyed, but it bihoveth, nedes,
that thinges that ben to comen ben
y-porveyed: but as it were y-travailed,
50

as who seyth, that thilke answeere procedeth right as thogh men travaileden, or weren bisy to enqueren, the whiche thing is cause of the whiche thing:—
 55 as, whether the prescience is cause of the necessitee of thinges to comen, or elles that the necessitee of thinges to comen is cause of the purviaunce. But I ne enforce me nat now to
 60 shewen it, that the bytydinge of thinges y-wist biforn is necessarie, how so or in what manere that the ordre of causes hath it-self; al-thogh that it ne seme nat that the prescience bringe in
 65 necessitee of bytydinge to thinges to comen. For certes, yif that any wight sitteth, it bihoveth by necessitee that the opinioun be sooth of him that coniecteth that he sitteth; and ayein-
 70 ward also is it of the contrarye: yif the opinioun be sooth of any wight for that he sitteth, it bihoveth by necessitee that he sitte. Thanne is heer necessitee in that oon and in that
 75 other: for in that oon is necessitee of sittinge, and, certes, in that other is necessitee of sooth. But therefore ne sitteth nat a wight, for that the opinioun of the sittinge is sooth; but
 80 the opinioun is rather sooth, for that a wight sitteth biforn. And thus, al-thogh that the cause of the sooth cometh of that other syde (*as who seyth, that al-thogh the cause of sooth*
 85 *comth of the sitting, and nat of the trewe opinioun*), algates yit is ther comune necessitee in that oon and in that other. Thus sheweth it, that I
 90 purviaunce of god and of thinges to comen. For althogh that, for that thinges ben to comen, ther-fore ben they purveyed, nat, certes, for that they ben purveyed, ther-fore ne bytde
 95 they nat. Yit natheles, bihoveth it by necessitee, that either the thinges to comen ben y-purveyed of god, or elles that the thinges that ben purveyed of god bytden. And this thing
 100 only suffiseth y-nough to destroyen the freedom of oure arbitre, *that is to seyn, of oure free wil.* But now, certes, *sheweth it wel, how fer fro the*

sothe and how up-so-doun is this thing that we seyn, that the bytydinge of 105
temporel thinges is cause of the eterne prescience. But for to wenen that god purvyeth the thinges to
 comen for they ben to comen, what other thing is it but for to wene that 110
 thilke thinges that bitidden whylom ben causes of thilke sovereign purviaunce *that is in god?* And her-to *I*
adde yit this thing: that, right as whan that I wot that a thing is, it bihoveth 115
 by necessitee that thilke selve thing be; and eek, whan I have knowe that any thing shal bytden, so byhoveth it by necessitee that thilke thing
 bytde:—so folweth it thanne, that 120
 the bytydinge of the thing y-wist biforn ne may nat ben eschued. And at the laste, yif that any wight wene a thing
 to ben other weyes thanne it is, it is nat only unscience, but it is deceivable 125
 opinioun ful diverse and fer fro the sothe of science. Wherefore, yif any thing be so to comen, that the bytydinge of hit ne be nat certain ne necessarie, who may weten biforn that 130
 thilke thing is to comen? For right as science ne may nat ben medled with falsnesse (*as who seyth, that yif*
I wot a thing, it ne may nat be false that I ne wot it), right so thilke thing 135
 that is conceived by science ne may nat ben non other weys than as it is conceived. For that is the cause why
 that science wanteth lesing (*as who seyth, why that witinge ne receiveth 140*
nat lesinge of that it wot); for it bihoveth, by necessitee, that every thing be right as science comprehendeth it
 to be. What shal I thanne seyn? In whiche manere knoweth god biforn 145
 the thinges to comen, yif they ne be nat certain? For yif that he deme that they ben to comen uneschewably, and so may be that it is possible that they ne shollen nat comen, god is de- 150
 ceived. But nat only to trowen that god is deceived, but for to speke it with mouth, it is a felonous sinne. But yif that god wot that, right so as
 thinges ben *to comen*, so shullen they 155
 comen—so that he wite egaly, *as*

who seyth, indifferently, that thinges
 mowen ben doon or elles nat y-doon
 — what is thilke prescience that ne
 160 comprehendeth no certein thing ne
 stable? Or elles what difference is
 ther bitwixe the prescience and thilke
 Iape-worthy divynge of Tiresie the
 divynour, *that seyde*: “Al that I
 165 seye,” quod he, “either it shal be, or
 elles it ne shal nat be?” Or elles
 how mochel is worth the devyne pre-
 science more than the opinioun of
 170 mankinde, yif so be that it demeth
 the thinges uncertein, as men doon;
 of the whiche domes of men the
 bytydinge nis nat certein? But yif so
 be that non uncertein thing ne may
 175 ben in him that is right certein welle
 of alle thinges, thanne is the byty-
 dinge certein of thilke thinges whiche
 he hath wist biforn fermely to comen.
 For which it folweth, that the freedom
 of the conseiles and of the werkes of
 180 mankind nis non, sin that the thought
 of god, that seeth alle thinges with-
 out errour of falsnesse, bindeth and
 constreinet hem to a bytydinge *by*
necessitee. And yif this thing be ones
 185 y-graunted and received, *that is to*
seyn, that ther nis no free wille, than
 sheweth it wel, how greet destruc-
 cioun and how grete damages ther
 folwen of thinges of mankinde. For
 190 in ydel ben ther thanne purposed and
 bihight medes to gode folk, and
 peynes to badde folk, sin that no
 moevinge of free corage voluntarie
 ne hath nat deserved hem, *that is to*
 195 *seyn, neither mede ne peyne*: and it
 sholde seme thanne, that thilke thing
 is alderworst, which that is now demed
 for aldermost iust and most rightful,
that is to seyn, that shrewes ben pun-
 200 isshed, or elles that gode folk ben
 y-gerdoned: the whiche folk, sin that
 hir propre wil ne sent hem nat to that
 oon ne to that other, *that is to seyn,*
neither to gode ne to harm, but con-
 205 streinet hem certein necessitee of
 thinges to comen: thanne ne shollen
 ther nevere ben, ne nevere weren,
 vyce ne vertu, but it sholde rather ben

confusioun of alle desertes medled
 with-outen discrecioun. And yit *ther* 210
folweth an-other inconvenient, of the
 whiche ther ne may ben thought no
 more felonous ne more wikke; and
that is this: that, so as the ordre of
 thinges is y-led and comth of the 215
 purviaunce of god, ne that no-thing
 nis leveful to the conseiles of man-
 kinde (*as who seyth, that men han no*
power to doon no-thing, ne wilne no-
thing), than folweth it, that oure 220
 vyces ben referred to the maker of
 alle good (*as who seyth, than folweth*
it, that god oughte han the blame of
oure vyces, sin he constreinet us by
necessitee to doon vyces). Thanne is 225
 ther no resoun to hopen *in god*, ne for
 to preyen *to god*: for what sholde any
 wight hopen *to god*, or why sholde he
 preyen *to god*, sin that the ordonaunce
 of destinee, which that ne may nat 230
 ben inclyned, knitteth and streineth
 alle thinges that men may desiren?
 Thanne sholde ther be doon away
 thilke only allyaunce bitwixen god
 and men, that is to seyn, to hopen 235
 and to preyen. But by the prys of
 rightwisnesse and of verray meke-
 nesse we deserwen the gerdoun of the
 divyne grace, which that is inestima-
 ble, *that is to seyn, that it is so greet,*
that it ne may nat ben ful y-preysed.
 And this is only the manere, *that is to*
seyn, hope and preyeres, for which it
 semeth that men mowen speke with
 god, and by resoun of supplicacioun 245
 be conioined to thilke cleernesse, that
 nis nat aproched no rather or that
 men beseken it and impetren it. And
 yif men wene nat that hope ne pre-
 yeres ne han no strengthes, by the ne- 250
 cessitee of thinges to comen y-received,
 what thing is ther thanne by whiche
 we mowen ben conioined and clyven
 to thilke sovereign prince of thinges?
 For which it bihoveth, by necessitee, 255
 that the linage of mankinde, as thou
 songe a litel her-biforn, be departed
 and unioined from his welle, and
 failen of his *beginninge, that is to*
seyn, god. 260

METRE III.

Quenam discors federa rerum.

What discordable cause hath to-
rent and unioined the bindinge, or
the *alliaunce*, of thinges, *that is to*
seyn, the coniunction of god and
5 *man*? Whiche god hath established
so greet bataile bitwixen these two
soothfast or verray thinges, *that is to*
seyn, bitwixen the purviaunce of god
and free wil, that they ben singular
10 and devyded, ne that they ne wolen
nat be medeled ne coupled to-gidere?
But ther nis no discord to the verray
thinges, but they clyven, certein, al-
wey to hem-self. But the thought
15 of man, confounded and overthrown
by the dirke membres of the body,
ne may nat, by fyr of his derked
looking, *that is to seyn, by the vigour*
of his insighte, whyl the soule is in the
20 *body*, knowe the thinne subtil knit-
tings of thinges. But wherfore en-
chaufeth it so, by so greet love, to
finden thilke notes of sooth y-cov-
ered; *that is to seyn, wherfore en-*
25 *chaufeth the thought of man by so greet*
desyr to knowen thilke notificacions
that ben y-hid under the covertoures
of sooth? Wot it aught thilke thing
that it, anguissous, desireth to knowe?
30 *As who seith, nay; for no man trav-*
aileth for to witen thinges that he wot.
And therefore the texte seith thus:
but who travaileth to witen thinges
y-knowe? And yif that he ne know-
35 eth hem nat, what seketh thilke
blinde thought? What is he that
desireth any thing of which he
wot right naught? *As who seith,*
who so desireth any thing, nedes,
40 *somwhat he knoweth of it; or elles,*
he ne coude nat desire it. Or who
may folwen thinges that ne ben nat
y-wist? *And thogh that he seke tho*
thinges, wher shal he finde hem?
45 What wight, that is al unconninge
and ignoraunt, may knowen the forme
that is y-founde? But whan the
soule biholdeth and seeth the heye
thought, *that is to seyn, god*, than
50 knoweth it to-gidere the somme and

the singularitees, *that is to seyn, the*
principles and everich by him-self.

But now, whyl the soule is hid in
the cloude and in the derkenesse of
the membres of the body, it ne hath 55
nat al for-yeten it-self, but it with-
holdeth the somme of thinges, and
leseth the singularitees. Thanne,
who-so that seeketh soothnesse, he
nis in neither nother habite; for he 60
noot nat al, ne he ne hath nat al
for-yeten: but yit him remembreth
the somme of thinges that he with-
holdeth, and axeth conseil, and re-
treteth deepliche thinges y-seyn 65
biforn, *that is to seyn, the grette somme*
in his minde: so that he mowe
adden the parties that he hath for-
yeten to thilke that he hath with-
holden. 70

PROSE IV.

Tum illa: Vetus, inquit, hec est.

Thanne seide she: 'this is,' quod
she, 'the olde question of the pur-
viaunce of god; and Marcus Tullius,
whan he devyded the divynaciouns,
5 *that is to seyn, in his book that he*
wroot of divynaciouns, he moevede
gretly this questioun; and thou thy-
self has y-sought it mochel, and out-
rely, and longe; but yit ne hath it
10 nat ben determined ne y-sped fermely
and diligently of any of yow. And
the cause of this derkenesse and of
this difficultee is, for that the moev-
inge of the resoun of mankinde ne
may nat moeven to (*that is to seyn,* 15
applyen or ioinen to) the simplicitee
of the devyne prescience; the whiche
simplicitee of the devyne prescience,
yif that men mighten thinken it in
any maner, *that is to seyn, that yif* 20
men mighten thinken and compre-
henden the thinges as god seeth hem,
thanne ne sholde ther dwellen outrely
no doute: the whiche *resoun and*
cause of difficultee I shal assaye at the 25
laste to shewe and to speden, whan I
have first y-spended and answered
to the resouns by which thou art
y-moeved. For I axe why thou

30 wenest that thilke resouns of hem
that assoulen this questioun ne ben nat
speedful y-nough ne sufficient: the
whiche *solucioun*, or the *whiche resoun*,
for that it demeth that the prescience
35 nis nat cause of necessitee to thinges
to comen, than ne weneth it nat that
freedom of wil be destorbed or y-let
by prescience. For ne drawestow
nat arguments from elles-where of
40 the necessitee of thinges to-comen
(*as who seith, any other wey than
thus*) but that thilke thinges that the
prescience wot biforn ne mowen nat
unbityde? *That is to seyn, that*
45 *they moten bityde*. But thanne, yif
that prescience ne putteth no neces-
sitee to thinges to comen, as thou
thy-self hast confessed it and bi-
knownen a litel her-biforn, what cause
50 or what is it (*as who seith, ther may
no cause be*) by which that the endes
voluntarie of thinges mighten be con-
strained to certain bitydinge? For
by grace of positioun, so that thou
55 mowe the betere understonde this
that folweth, I pose, *per impossible*,
that ther be no prescience. Thanne
axe I, quod she, 'in as mochel as
apertieneth to that, sholden thanne
60 thinges that comen of free wil ben
constrained to bityden by necessitee?'
Boece. 'Nay,' quod I.

'Thanne ayeinward,' quod she, 'I
suppose that ther be prescience, but
65 that it ne putteth no necessitee to
thinges; thanne trowe I, that thilke
selve freedom of wil shal dwellen al
hool and absolut and unbounden.
But thou wolt seyn that, al-be-it so
70 that prescience nis nat cause of the
necessitee of bitydinge to thinges to
comen, algates yit it is a signe that
the thinges ben to bityden by neces-
sitee. By this manere thanne, al-
75 thogh the prescience ne hadde never
y-ben, yit *algate or at the leeste weye*
it is certain thing, that the endes and
bitydinges of thinges to comen
sholden ben necessarie. For every
80 signe sheweth and signifyeth only
what the thing is, but it ne maketh
nat the thing that it signifyeth. For

which it bihoveth first to shewen,
that no-thing ne bitydeth that it ne
bitydeth by necessitee, so that it may 85
appere that the prescience is signe
of this necessitee; or elles, yif ther
nere no necessitee; certes, thilke
prescience ne mighte nat be signe
of thing that nis nat. But certes, it 90
is now certain that the proeve of this,
y-sustened by stidefast resoun, ne
shal nat ben lad ne proeved by signes
ne by arguments y-taken fro with-
oute, but by causes covenable and 95
necessarie. But *thou mayst seyn*, how
may it be that the thinges ne bityden
nat that ben y-purveyed to comen?
But, certes, right as we trowen that
tho thinges which that the purviance 100
wot biforn to comen ne ben nat to
bityden; but that ne sholden we nat
demen; but rather, al-though that they
shal bityden, yit ne have they no ne-
cessitee of hir kinde to bityden. And 105
this maystow lightly aperceiven by
this that I shal seyn. For we seen
many thinges whan they ben don bi-
forn oure eyen, right as men seen the
cartere worken in the torninge or 110
atempringe or adressinge of hise
cartes or charietes. And by this
manere (*as who seith, maystow under-
stoude*) of alle other *workmen*. Is
ther thanne any necessitee, *as who* 115
seith, in oure lokinge, that constraineth
or compelleth any of thilke thinges
to ben don so?

Boece. 'Nay,' quod I; 'for in ydel
and in veyn were al the effect of 120
craft, yif that alle thinges weren
moeved by constraininge; *that is to
seyn, by constraininge of oure eyen or
of oure sight*.

Philosophie. 'The thinges thanne,' 125
quod she, 'that, whan men doon hem,
ne han no necessitee that men doon
hem, eek tho same thinges, first or they
ben doon, they ben to comen with-oute
necessitee. For-why ther ben somme 130
thinges to bityden, of which the endes
and the bitydinges of hem ben abso-
lut and quit of alle necessitee. For
certes, I ne trowe nat that any man
wolde seyn this: that tho thinges 135

that men doon now, that they ne weren to bityden first or they weren y-doon; and thilke same thinges, al-though that men had y-wist hem
 140 biforn, yit they han free bitydinges. For right as science of thinges present ne bringeth in no necessitee to thinges that men doon, right so the prescience of thinges to comen ne
 145 bringeth in no necessitee to thinges to bityden. But thou mayst seyn, that of thilke same it is y-douted, as whether that of thilke thinges that ne han non issues and bitydinges necessaries, yif ther-of may ben any
 150 prescience; for certes, they semen to discorden. For thou weneest that, yif that thinges ben y-seyn biforn, that necessitee folweth hem; and yif necessitee failleth hem, they ne mighten
 155 nat ben wist biforn, and that no-thing ne may ben comprehended by science but certein; and yif tho thinges that ne han no certein bitydinges ben purveyed as certein, it sholde ben dirk-
 160 nesse of opinioun, nat sootlifastnesse of science. And thou weneest that it be diverse for the hoolnesse of science that any man sholde deme a
 165 thing to ben other-weys thanne it is it-self. And the cause of this erreure is, that of alle the thinges that every wight hath y-knowe, they wenen that tho thinges been y-knowe al-oonly
 170 by the strengthe and by the nature of the thinges that ben y-wist or y-knowe; and it is al the contrarie. For al that ever is y-knowe, it is rather comprehended and knowen, nat after
 175 his strengthe and his nature, but after the facultee, *that is to seyn, the power and the nature*, of hem that knowen. And, for that this thing shal mowen shewen by a short ensaunple: the
 180 same roundnesse of a body, other-weys the sighte of the eye knoweth it, and other-weys the touchinge. The lokinge, by castinge of his bemes, waiteth and seeth from afer al the
 185 body to-gidere, with-oute moevinge of it-self; but the touchinge clyveth and conioineth to the rounde body, and moeveth aboute the environinge,

and comprehendeth by parties the roundnesse. And the man him-self, 190 other-weys wit biholdeth him, and other-weys imaginacioun, and other-weys resoun, and other-weys intelligence. For the wit comprehendeth withoute-forth the figure of the body 195 of the man that is established in the matere subiect; but the imaginacioun comprehendeth only the figure withoute the matere. Resoun surmounteth imaginacioun, and comprehend- 200 eth by universal lokinge the comune spece that is in the singular peces. But the eye of intelligence is heyre; for it surmounteth the environinge of the universitee, and looketh, over 205 that, by pure subtilitee of thoght, thilke same simple forme of man that is *perdurably in the diryne thoght*. In whiche this oughte greatly to ben considered, that the heyste strengthe 210 to comprhenden thinges enbraseth and contieneth the lower strengthe; but the lower strengthe ne aryseth nat in no manere to heyre strengthe. For wit ne may no-thing compre- 215 hende out of matere, ne the imaginacioun ne loketh nat the universels speces, ne resoun taketh nat the simple forme *so as intelligence taketh it*; but intelligence, that looketh al 220 aboven, whan it hath comprehended the forme, it knoweth and demeth alle the thinges that ben under that forme. But *she knoweth hem* in thilke manere in the whiche it comprehend- 225 eth thilke same simple forme that ne may never ben knowen to none of that other; *that is to seyn, to none of the three forseide thinges of the soule*. For it knoweth the universitee 230 of resoun, and the figure of the imaginacioun, and the sensible material *conceived by wit*; ne it ne useth nat nor of resoun ne of imaginacioun ne of wit withoute-forth; but it biholdeth 235 alle thinges, so as I shal seye, by a strok of thoght formely, *withoute discours or collacioun*. Certes resoun, whan it looketh any-thing universel, it ne useth nat of imaginacioun, nor of 240 witte, and algates yit it comprehend-

eth the thinges imaginabile and sensible; for resoun is she that diffinisseth the universel of hir conseyte
 245 right thus: — man is a resonable twofoted beest. And how so that this knowinge is universel, yet nis ther no wight that ne woot wel that a man is a thing imaginabile and sensible; and
 250 this same considereth wel resoun; but that nis nat by imaginacioun nor by wit, but it looketh it by a resonable concepcioun. Also imaginacioun, al-be-it so that it taketh of wit the
 255 beginninges to seen and to formen the figures, algates, al-though that wit ne were nat present, yit it environeth and comprehendeth alle thinges sensible; nat by resoun sensible of deminge, but by resoun imaginatif. Seestow nat thanne that alle the thinges, in knowinge, usen more of hir facultee or of hir power than *they doon of the facultee or power* of thinges that ben
 260 y-knowe? Ne that nis nat wrong; for so as every Iugement is the dede or doinge of him that demeth, it bihoveth that every wight performe the werk and his entencioun, nat of forceine power, but of his propre power.
 270

METRE IV.

Quondam porticus attulit.

The Porche, *that is to seyn, a gate of the town of Athenes ther-as philosophres hadden hir congregacioun to desputen*, thilke Porche broughte
 5 som-tyme olde men, ful derke in hir sentences, *that is to seyn, philosophres that highten Stoiciens*, that wenden that images and sensibilittees, *that is to seyn, sensible imaginaciouns or elles*
 10 *imaginaciouns of sensible thinges*, weren empreinted in-to sowles fro bodies withoute-forth; *as who seith, that thilke Stoiciens wenden that the sowle hadde ben naked of it-self, as a*
 15 *mirour or a clene parchemin, so that alle figures mosten first comen fro thinges fro withoute-forth in-to sowles, and ben empreinted in-to sowles.*
Text: right as we ben wont som-tyme, 20 by a swifte pointel, to fiechen lettres

empreinted in the smothernesse or in the plainnesse of the table of wax or in *parchemin* that ne hath no figure ne note in it. **Glose.** *But now argueth Boece ayeins that opinioun, and seith*
 25 *thus:* But yif the thryvinge sowle ne unpleyeth no-thing, *that is to seyn, ne doth nothing*, by his propre moevinges, but suffreth and lyth subgit to tho figures and to tho notes of bodies with-
 30 oute forth, and yildeth images ydel and veyn in the manere of a mirour, whennes thryveth thanne or whennes comth thilke knowinge in our sowle, that discerneth and biholdeth alle
 35 thinges? And whennes is thilke strengthe that biholdeth the singular thinges; or whennes is the strengthe that devydeh thinges y-knowe; and thilke strengthe that gadereth to-
 40 gidere the thinges devyded; and the strengthe that cheseth his entre-changed wey? For som-tyme it heveth up the heved, *that is to seyn, that it heveth up the entencioun to*
 45 *right heye thinges;* and som-tyme it descendeth in-to right lowe thinges. And whan it retorneth in-to him-self, it reproeveth and destroyeth the false thinges by the trewe thinges. Certes
 50 this strengthe is cause more efficient, and mochel more mighty *to seen and to knowe thinges*, than thilke cause that suffreth and receiveth the notes and the figures impressed in maner
 55 of matere. Algates the passioun, *that is to seyn, the suffraunce or the wit*, in the quike body, goth biforn, exciting and moevinge the strengthes of the thought. Right so as whan that
 60 cleernesse smyteth the eyen and *moeveth hem to seen*, or right so as vois or soun hurteleth to the eres and *commoeveth hem to herkne*, than is the strengthe of the thought y-mooved
 65 and excited, and clepeth forth, to semblable moevinges, the spesces that it halt with-inne it-self; and addeth tho spesces to the notes and to the thinges withoute-forth, and medleth
 70 the images of thinges withoute-forth to tho formes y-hidde with-inne him-self.

PROSE V.

Quod si in corporibus sentiendis.

But what yif that in bodies to ben feled, *that is to seyn, in the takinge of knowelechinge of bodily thinges*, and al-be-it so that the qualitees of bodies, 5 that ben obiecte fro withoute-forth, moeven and entalente the instruments of the wittes; and al-be-it so that the passioun of the body, *that is to seyn, the wit or the suffraunce*, 10 goth to-form the strengthe of the workinge corage, the which passioun or suffraunce clepeth forth the dede of the thocht in himself, and moeveth and exciteth in this mene whyle the 15 formes that resten withinne-forth; and yif that, in sensible bodies, as I have seyde, our corage nis nat y-taught or empreinted by passioun to *knowe these thinges*, but demeth and know- 20 eth, of his owne strengthe, the passioun or suffraunce subject to the body: moche more thanne tho thinges that ben absolut and quite fro alle talents or affeccions of bodies, *as god* 25 *or his aungeles*, ne folwen nat in discerninge thinges obiect fro withoute-forth, but they accomplisshen and speden the dede of hir thocht. By this resoun thanne ther comen many 30 maner knowinges to dyverse and differinge substauces. For the wit of the body, the whiche wit is naked and despoiled of alle other knowinges, thilke wit comth to beestes that 35 ne mowen nat moeven hem-self her and ther, *as oystres and muscules, and other swiche shelle-fish of the see*, that clyven and ben norisshed to roches. But the imaginacioun comth to remu- 40 able beestes, that semen to han talent to fleen or to desiren any thing. But resoun is al-only to the linage of mankinde, right as intelligence is only [to] the devyne nature: of which it 45 folweth, that thilke knowinge is more worth than thise othere, sin it knoweth by his propre nature nat only his subject, *as who seith, it ne knoweth nat al-only that apertieneth properly* 50 *to his knowinge*, but it knoweth the

subjects of alle other knowinges. But how shal it thanne be, yif that wit and imaginacioun stryven ayein resoninge, and seyn, that of thilke universel thing that resoun weneth to 55 seen, that it nis right naught? *For wit and imaginacioun seyn that that, that is sensible or imaginable, it ne may nat be universel. Thanne is either the Iugement of resoun sooth,* 60 *ne that ther nis nothing sensible; or elles, for that resoun wot wel that many thinges ben subject to wit and to imaginacioun, thanne is the concepcioun of resoun veyn and false,* 65 *which that loketh and comprehendeth that that is sensible and singuler as universel. And yif that resoun wolde answeren ayein to thise two, that is to seyn, to witte and to imaginacioun,* 70 *and seyn, that soothly she hir-self, that is to seyn, resoun, loketh and comprehendeth, by resoun of universalitee, bothe that that is sensible and that that is imaginable; and that* 75 *thilke two, that is to seyn, wit and imaginacioun, ne mowen nat strecchen ne enhansen hem-self to the knowinge of universalitee, for that the knowinge of hem ne may* 80 *exceden ne surmounte the bodily figures: certes, of the knowinge of thinges, men oughten rather yeven credence to the more stedefast and to the more parfite Iugement. In this* 85 *maner stryvinge thanne, we that han strengthe of resoninge and of imagin- inge and of wit, that is to seyn, by resoun and by imaginacioun and by wit, we sholde rather preyse the cause* 90 *of resoun; as who seith, than the cause of wit and of imaginacioun.*

Semblable thing is it, that the resoun of mankinde ne weneth nat that the devyne intelligence bi-holdeth 95 or knoweth thinges to comen, but right as the resoun of mankinde knoweth hem. For thou arguest and seyst thus: that yif it ne seme nat to men that some thinges han certein 100 and necessarie bitydinges, they ne mowen nat bea wist biforn certainly to bityden. And thanne nis ther no

prescience of thilke thinges; and yif
 105 we trowe that prescience be in these
 thinges, thanne is ther no-thing that
 it ne bitydeth by necessitee. But
 certes, yif we mighten han the Iuge-
 ment of the devyne thought, as we ben
 110 parsoneres of resoun, right so as we
 han demed that it behoveth that im-
 aginacioun and wit be binethe resoun,
 right so wolde we demen that it were
 rightful thing, that mannes resoun
 115 oughte to submitten it-self and to ben
 binethe the divyne thought. For which,
 yif that we mowen, *as who seith, that,
 yif that we mowen, I counseyle, that*
 we enhance us in-to the heighte of
 120 thilke sovereyn intelligence; for ther
 shal resoun wel seen that, that it ne
 may nat biholden in it-self. And
 certes that is this, in what maner the
 prescience of god seeth alle thinges
 125 certein and diffinisshed, al-thogh they
 ne han no certein issues or bitydinges;
 ne this is non opinioun, but it is
 rather the simplicitee of the sovereyn
 science, that nis nat enclosed nor
 130 y-shet within none boundes.

METRE V.

*Quam variis terris animalia per-
 meant figuris.*

The beestes passen by the erthes
 by ful diverse figures. For som of
 hem han hir bodies straught and
 crepen in the dust, and drawen after
 5 hem a tras or a foruh y-continued;
that is to seyn, as nadres or snakes.
 And other beestes, by the wandringe
 lightnesse of hir winges, beten the
 windes, and over-swimmen the spaces
 10 of the longe eyr by moist fleecinge.
 And other beestes gladen hem-self to
 diggen hir tras or hir steppes in the
 erthe with hir goings or with hir feet,
 and to goon either by the grene
 15 felde, or elles to walken under the
 wodes. And al-be-it so that thou
 seest that they alle discorden by
 diverse formes, algates hir faces, en-
 clinde, heveth hir dulle wittes.
 20 Only the linage of man heveth hey-
 este his heye heved, and stondeth

light with his up-right body, and
 biholdeth the erthes under him. And,
 but-yif thou, erthely man, wexest
 yvel out of thy wit, this figure 25
 amonesteth thee, that akest the hevene
 with thy righte visage, and hast
 areysed thy fore-heved, to beren up
 a-heigh thy corage; so that thy
 thought ne be nat y-hevied ne put
 30 lowe under fote, sin that thy body is
 so heye areysed.

PROSE VI.

Quoniam igitur, uti paullo ante.

Therfor thanne, as I have shewed
 a litel her-biforn, that al thing that is
 y-wist nis nat knownen by his nature
 propre, but by the nature of hem that
 comprehend it, lat us loke now, in
 5 as mochel as it is leveful to us, *as who
 seith, lat us loke now as we mowen,*
 which that the estat is of the devyne
 substaunce; so that we mowen eek
 knownen what his science is. The
 10 commune Iugement of alle creatures
 resonables thanne is this: that god
 is eterne. Lat us considere thanne
 what is eternitte; for certes that shal
 shewen us to-gidere the devyne nature
 15 and the devyne science.

Eternitee, thanne, is parfit posses-
 sioun and al-togidere of lyf intermin-
 able; and that sheweth more cleerly
 20 by the comparisoun or the collacioun
 of temporel thinges. For al thing
 that liveth in tyme it is present, and
 procedeth fro preterits in-to futures,
*that is to seyn, fro tyme passed in-to
 tyme cominge;* ne ther nis no-thing 25
 establissed in tyme that may en-
 bracen to-gider al the space of his lyf.
 For certes, yit ne hath it taken the
 tyme of to-morwe, and it hath lost
 the tyme of yisterday. And certes, in 30
 the lyf of this day, ye ne liven no
 more but right as in the moveable
 and transitorie moment. Thanne
 thilke thing that suffreth temporel
 condicioun, al-thogh that it never 35
 bigan to be, ne though it never cese
 for to be, as Aristotle demed of the
 world, and al-thogh that the lyf of

it be strecched with infinitee of tyme,
 40 yit algates nis it no swich thing that
 men mighten trowen by right that it
 is eterne. For al-thogh that it com-
 prehende and embrace the space of
 lyf infinit, yit algates ne embraceth it
 45 nat the space of the lyf al-togider;
 for it ne hath nat the futures that ne
 hen nat yit, *ne it ne hath no lenger
 the preterits that ben y-doon or
 y-passed.* But thilke thing thanne,
 50 that hath and comprehendeth to-
 gider al the plentee of the lyf inter-
 minable, to whom ther ne failleth
 naught of the future, and to whom
 ther nis naught of the preterit
 55 escaped nor y-passed, thilke same is
 y-witnessed and y-proeved by right
 to be eterne. And it bihoveth by
 necessitee that thilke thing be al-vey
 present to him-self, and compotent;
 60 *as who seith, al-vey present to him-
 self, and so mighty that al be right at
 his pleasance;* and that he have al
 present the infinitee of the moevable
 tyme. Wher-for som men trowen
 65 wrongfully that, whan they heren
 that it semede to Plato that this
 world ne hadde never beginninge of
 tyme, ne that it never shal han fail-
 inge, they wenen in this maner that
 70 this world be makid coeterne with
 his maker; *as who seith, they wene
 that this world and god ben makid
 togider eterne, and that is a wrongful
 weninge.* For other thing is it to
 75 ben y-lad by lyf interminable, as
 Plato graunted to the world, and
 other thing is it to embrace to-gider
 al the present of the lyf interminable,
 the whiche thing it is cleer and man-
 80 ifest that it is propre to the devyne
 thought.

Ne it ne sholde nat semen to us,
 that god is elder thanne thinges that
 ben y-makid by quantitee of tyme,
 85 but rather by the propretee of his
 simple nature. For this ilke infinit
 moevinge of temporel thinges folweth
 this presentarie estat of lyf unmoev-
 able; and so as it ne may nat coun-
 90 trefeten it ne feyren it ne be even-
 lyke to it for the inmoevabletee, *that*

*is to seyn, that is in the eternitee of
 god, it failleth and falleth in-to moev-
 inge fro the simplicitee of the pres-
 ence of god, and disencreseth in-to* 95
*the infinit quantitee of future and of
 preterit: and so as it ne may nat han
 to-gider al the plentee of the lyf,
 algates yit, for as moche as it ne
 ceseth never for to ben in som maner,* 100
*it semeth som-del to us, that it folweth
 and resembleth thilke thing that it ne
 may nat atayne to ne fulfillen, and
 bindeth it-self to som maner presence
 of this litel and swifte moment: the* 105
*which presence of this litel and swifte
 moment, for that it bereth a maner
 image or lyknesse of the ay-dwellinge
 presence of god, it graunteth, to
 swiche maner thinges as it bitydeth* 110
*to, that it semeth hem as these thinges
 han y-ben, and ben.*

And, for that *the presence of swich
 litel moment* ne may nat dwelle, ther-
 for it ravished and took the infinit 115
 wey of tyme, *that is to seyn, by suc-
 cessioun;* and by this maner is it
 y-doon, for that it sholde continue
 the lyf in goinge, of the whiche lyf it
 ne mighte nat embrace the plentee in 120
 dwellinge. And for-thy, yif we wol-
 len putten worthy names to thinges,
 and folwen Plato, lat us seye thanne
 soothly, that god is eterne, and the
 world is perpetuel. Thanne, sin that 125
 every Iugement knoweth and com-
 prehendeth by his owne nature
 thinges that ben subiect un-to him,
 ther is soothly to god, al-weys, an
 eterne and presentarie estat; and 130
 the science of him, that over-passeth al
 temporel moevement, dwelleth in the
 simplicitee of his presence, and em-
 braceth and considereth alle the infinit
 spaces of tymes, preterits and futures, 135
 and loketh, in his simple knowinge,
 alle thinges *of preterit* right as they
 weren y-doon presently right now.
 Yif thou wolt thanne thenken and
 avyse the prescencie, by which it 140
 knoweth alle thinges, thou ne shal
 nat demen it as prescencie of thinges
 to comen, but thou shalt demen it
 more rightly that it is science of

145 presence or of instance, that never
ne failleth. For which it nis nat
y-cleped "previdence," but it sholde
rather ben cleped "purviaunce," that
is established ful fro right lowe
150 thinges, and biholdeth from a-fer
alle thinges, right as it were fro the
heye heichte of thinges.

Why axestow thanne, or why des-
putestow thanne, that thilke thinges
155 ben doon by necessitee whiche that
ben y-seyn and knowen by the devyne
sighte, sin that, forsothe, men ne
maken nat thilke thinges necessarie
which that they seen ben y-doon in
160 hir sighte? For addeth thy bihold-
inge any necessitee to thilke thinges
that thou biholdest presente?'

'Nay,' quod I.

Philosophie. 'Certes, thanne, if
165 men mighte maken any digne com-
parisoun or collacioun of the presence
devyne and of the presence of man-
kinde, right so as ye seen some
thinges in this temporel present,
170 right so seeth god alle thinges by his
eterne present. Wherefore this dev-
vyne sciencie ne chaungeth nat the
nature ne the propretee of thinges,
but biholdeth swiche thinges present
175 to him-ward as they shullen bityde
to yow-ward in tyme to comen. Ne it
confoundeth nat the Iugement of
thinges; but by o sighte of his
thought, he knoweth the thinges to
180 comen, as wel necessarie as nat nec-
essarie. Right so as whan ye seen
to-gider a man walken on the erthe
and the sonne arysen in the hevenc,
al-be-it so that ye seen and biholden
185 that oon and that other to-gider, yit
natheles ye demen and discernen that
that oon is voluntarie and that other
necessarie. Right so thanne the dev-
vyne lookinge, biholdinge alle thinges
190 under him, ne troubleth nat the qual-
itee of thinges that ben certainly pre-
sent to him-ward; but, as to the con-
dicioun of tyme, forsothe, they ben
195 this nis noon opinioun, but rather a
stedefast knowinge, y-strengthened by
soothnesse, that, whanne that god

knoweth anything to be, he ne unwot
nat that thilke thing wanteth neces-
sityte to be; *this is to seyn, that, whan* 200
that god knoweth any thing to bityde, he
wot wel that it ne hath no necessitee
to bityde.

And yif thou seyst heer, that thilke
thing that god seeth to bityde, it ne 205
may nat unbityde (*as who seith, it mot*
bityde), and thilke thing that ne may
nat unbityde it mot bityde by neces-
sityte, and that thou streyne me by
this name of necessitee: certes, I wol 210
wel confessen and biknowe a thing
of ful sad trouthe, but unnethe shal
ther any wight mowe *seen it or* come
ther-to, but-yif that he be biholder
of the devyne thoght. For I wol 215
answeren thee thus: that thilke
thing that is future, whan it is referred
to the devyne knowinge, thanne is it
necessarie; but certes, whan it is un-
derstonen in his owne kinde, men 220
seen it is outrely free, and absolut
fro alle necessitee.

For certes, ther ben two maneres
of necessitee. That oon necessitee
is simple, as thus: that it bihoveth 225
by necessitee, that alle men be mortal
or deedly. Another necessitee is
conditionel, as thus: yif thou wost
that a man walketh, it bihoveth by
necessitee that he walke. Thilke 230
thing thanne that any wight hath
y-knowe to be, it ne may ben non
other weyes thanne he knoweth it to
be. But this condicioun ne draweth
nat with hir thilke necessitee simple. 235
For certes, this necessitee *conditionel*,
the propre nature of it ne maketh it
nat, but the adieccioun of the condi-
cioun *maketh it.* For no necessitee
ne constreyneth a man to gon, that 240
goth by his propre wil; al-be-it so
that, whan he goth, that it is neces-
sarie that he goth. Right on this
same maner thanne, yif that the
purviaunce of god seeth any thing 245
present, than mot thilke thing ben by
necessitee, al-thogh that it ne have
no necessitee of his owne nature. But
certes, the futures that bityden by free-
dom of arbitre, god seeth hem alle to- 250

gider present. These things thanne, yif they ben referred to the devyne sighte, thanne ben they maked necessarie by the condicioun of the devyne knowinge. But certes, yif thilke things be considered by hem-self, they ben absolut of *necessitee*, and ne forleten nat ne esen nat of the libertee of hir owne nature. Thanne, certes, with-oute doute, alle the things shollen ben doon which that god wot biforn that they ben to comen. But som of hem comen and bityden of free arbitre *or of free wille*, that, al-be-it so that they bityden, yit algates ne lese they nat hir propre nature in beinge; by the which first, or that they weren y-doon, they hadden power nat to han bitid.'

270 *Boece*. 'What is this to seyn thanne,' quod I, 'that things ne ben nat necessarie *by hir propre nature*, so as they comen in alle maneres in the lyknesse of necessitee by the condicioun of the devyne science?'

Philosophie. 'This is the difference,' quod she; 'that tho things that I purposede thee a litel heer-biforn, that is to seyn, the sonne arysinge and the man walkinge, that, ther-whyles that thilke things ben y-doon, they ne mighte nat ben undoon; natheles, that oon of hem, or it was y-doon, it bihoved by necessitee that it was y-doon, but nat that other. Right so *is it here*, that the things that god hath present, with-oute doute they shollen ben. But som of hem descendeth of the nature of things, *as the sonne arysinge*; and som descendeth of the power of the doeres, *as the man walkinge*. Thanne seide I no wrong, that yif these things ben referred to the devyne knowinge, thanne ben they necessarie; and yif they ben considered by hem-self, thanne ben they absolut fro the bond of necessitee. Right so as alle things that apereth or sheweth to the wittes, yif thou referre it to resoun, it is universel; and yif thou referre it or loke it to it-self, than is it singuler. But now,

P

yif thou seyst thus, that yif it be in my power to chaunge my purpos, than shal I voide the purviaunce of god, whan that, peravoung, I shal han chaunged the things that he knoweth biforn, thanne shal I answer thee thus. Certes, thou mayst wel chaunge thy purpos; but, for as mochel as the present soothnesse of the devyne parviaunce biholdeth that thou mayst chaunge thy purpos, and whether thou wolt chaunge it or no, and whiderward that thou torne it, thou ne mayst nat eschuen the devyne prescience; right as thou ne mayst nat fleen the sighte of the presente eye, al-though that thou torne thyself by thy free wil in-to dyverse acciouns. But thou mayst seyn ayein: "How shal it thanne be? Shal nat the devyne science be chaunged by my disposicioun, whan that I wol thing now, and now another? And thilke prescience, ne semeth it nat to entrechaunge stoundes of knowinge;" *as who seith, ne shal it nat seme to us, that the devyne prescience entrechaungeth hise dyverse stoundes of knowinge, so that it knowe sum-tyme o thing and sum-tyme the contrarie of that thing?*

'No, forsothe,' quod I.

335

Philosophie. 'For the devyne sighte renneth to-forn and seeth alle futures, and clepeth hem ayein, and retorneth hem to the presence of his propre knowinge; ne he ne entrechaungeth nat, so as thou wenest, the stoundes of forknowinge, as now this, now that; but he ay-dwellinge comth biforn, and embraceth at o strook alle thy mutaciouns. And this presence to comprehendend and to seen alle things, god ne hath nat taken it of the bitydinge of things to come, but of his propre simplicitee. And her-by is assoiled thilke thing that thou puttest a litel her-biforn, *that is to seyn*, that it is unworthy thing to seyn, that our futures yeven cause of the science of god. For certes, this strengthe of the devyne science, which that embraceth alle things by his present-

arie knowinge, establissheth maner to alle thinges, and it ne oweth naught to latter thinges; and sin that these
 360 thinges ben thus, *that is to seyn, sin that necessitee nis nat in thinges by the deuyne prescience*, than is ther freedom of arbitre, that dwelleth hool and unwemmed to mortal men. Ne
 365 the lawes ne purposen nat wikkedly medes and peynes to the willinges of men that ben unbounden and quite of alle necessitee. And god, biholder and for-witer of alle thinges, dwelleth
 370 above; and the present eternitee of his sighte renneth alwey with the dyverse qualitee of oure dedes, despensing and ordeyninge medes to goode men, and torments to wikked

men. Ne in ydel ne in veyn ne ben 375 ther nat put in god hope and preyeres, that ne mowen nat ben unspeedful ne with-oute effect, whan they ben rightful.

Withstond thanne and eschue thou 380 vyees; worshippe and love thou virtues; areys thy corage to rightful hopes; yilde thou humble preyeres a-heigh. Gret necessitee of prowesse and vertu is encharged and com- 385 maunded to yow, yif ye nil nat dissimulen; sin that ye worken and doon, *that is to seyn, your dedes or your workes*, biforn the eyen of the luge that seeth *and demeth alle* 390 thinges. *To whom be glorye and worshippe by infinit tymes.* AMEN.

*Troilus = one of the
Fates; somewhat
incident to events.*

TROILUS AND CRISEYDE.

BOOK I.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>1. THE double sorwe of Troilus to tellen,
That was the king Priamus sone of
Troye,
In lovinge, how his aventures fellen
Fro wo to wele, and after out of Ioye,
My purpos is, er that I parte fro ye. 5
Thesiphone, thou help me for ten-
dyte
Thise woful vers, that wepen as I
wryte!</p> <p>2. To thee clepe I, thou goddesse of tor-
ment,
Thou cruel Furie, sorwing ever in
peyne;
Help me, that am the sorwful instru-
ment 10
That helpeth lovers, as I can, to
pleyne!
For wel sit it, the sothe for to seyne,
A woful wight to han a dreary fere,
And, to a sorwful tale, a sory chere.</p> <p>3. For I, that god of Loves servaunts
serve, 15
Ne dar to Love, for myn unlyknesse,
Preyen for speed, al sholde I therfor
sterve,
So fer am I fro his help in derknesse;
But nathelees, if this may doon glad-
nesse
To any lover, and his cause ayvale, 20
Have he my thank, and myn be this
travayle!</p> <p>4. But ye lovers, that bathen in glad-
nesse,
If any drope of pitee in yow be,
Remembreth yow on passed heviness
That ye han felt, and on the adversitee</p> | <p>Of othere folk, and thenketh how that
ye 20
Han felt that Love dorste yow dis-
plese;
Or ye han wonne him with to greet an
ese.</p> <p>5. And preyeth for hem that ben in the cas
Of Troilus, as ye may after here, 30
That love hem bringe in hevene to
solas, 35
And eek for me preyeth to god so dere,
That I have might to shewe, in som
manere,
Swich peyne and wo as Loves folk en-
dure,
In Troilus unseley aventure. 35</p> <p>6. And biddeth eek for hem that been
despeyred
In love, that never nil recovered be,
And eek for hem that falsly been
apeyred
Thorough wikked tonges, be it he or
she;
Thus biddeth god, for his benignitee,
To graunte hem sone out of this world
to pace, 41
That been despeyred out of Loves
grace.</p> <p>7. And biddeth eek for hem that been
at ese,
That god hem graunte ay good per-
severance,
And sende hem might hir ladies so to
plese, 45
That it to Love be worship and ple-
saunce.
For so hope I my soule best avaunce,</p> |
|---|---|

- To preye for hem that Loves ser-
vaunts be,
And wryte hir wo, and live in char-
itee.
8. And for to have of hem compassioun
As though I were hir owene brother
dere. 51
Now herkeneth with a gode enten-
cioun,
For now wol I gon streight to my
matere,
In whiche ye may the double sorwes
here
Of Troilus, in loving of Criseyde, 55
And how that she forsook him er she
deyde.
9. It is wel wist, how that the Grekes
stronge
In armes with a thousand shippes
wente
To Troyewardes, and the citee longe
Assegeden neigh ten yeer er they
stente, 60
And, in diverse wyse and oon ente-
tente,
The ravissing to wreden of Eleyne,
By Paris doon, they wroughten al hir
peyne.
10. Now fil it so, that in the toun ther
was
Dwellinge a lord of greet auctoritee,
-A gret devyn that cleped was Cal-
kas, 66
That in science so expert was, that
he
Knew wel that Troyesholde destroyed
be,
By answeere of his god, that highte
thus,
Daun Phebus or Apollo Delphicus.
11. So whan this Calkas knew by cal-
culinge, 71
And eek by answeere of this Appollo,
That Grekes sholden swich a peple
bringe,
Thorgh which that Troye moste
been for-do,
He caste anon out of the toun to
go; 75
- For wel wiste he, by sort, that Troye
sholde
Destroyed been, ye, wolde who-so
nolde.
12. For which, for to departen softlye
Took purpos ful this forknowinge
wyse,
And to the Grekes ost ful prively so
He stal anon; and they, in curteys
wyse,
Him deden bothe worship and ser-
vyse,
In trust that he hath conning hem to
rede
In every peril which that is to drede.
13. The noyse up roos, whan it was first
aspyed, 85
Thorgh al the toun, and generally
was spoken,
That Calkas traytor fled was, and
allyed
With hem of Grece; and casten to
ben wroken
On him that falsly hadde his feith so
broken;
And seyden, he and al his kin at
ones 90
Ben worthy for to brennen, fel and
bones.
14. Now hadde Calkas left, in this mes-
chaunce,
Al unwist of this false and wikked
dede,
His doughter, which that was in gret
penaunce,
For of hir lyf she was ful sore in
drede, 95
As she that niste what was best to
rede;
For bothe a widowe was she, and
allone
Of any freend, to whom she dorste
hir mone.
15. Criseyde was this lady name a-right;
As to my dome, in al Troyes citee
Nas noon so fair, for passing every
wight 101
So aungellyk was hir natyf beautee,
That lyk a thing inmortal semed she,

- As doth an hevenish parfit creature,
That doon were sent in scorning of
nature. 105
16. This lady, which that al-day herde
at ere
Hir fadres shame, his falsnesse and
tresoun,
Wel nigh out of hir wit for sorwe and
fere,
In widewes habit large of samit
broun,
On knees she fil biforn Ector a-doun;
With pitous voys, and tendrely wep-
inge, 111
Hhis mercy bad, hir-selven excusinge.
17. Now was this Ector pitous of nature,
And saw that she was sorrowfully
bigoon, 114
And that she was so fair a creature;
Of his goodness he gladed hir anon,
And seyde, 'lat your fadres treson
goon
Forth with mischaunce, and ye your-
self, in Ioye,
Dwellet with us, whyl you good list,
in Troye.
18. And al thonour that men may doon
yow have, 120
As ferforth as your fader dwelled
here,
Ye shul han, and your body shal
men save,
As fer as I may ought enquere or
here.'
And she him thonked with ful hum-
ble chere,
And offer wolde, and it hadde ben
his wille, 125
And took hir leve, and hoom, and
held hir stille.
19. And in hir hous she abood with
swich meynee
As to hir honour nede was to holde;
And whyl she was dwellinge in that
citee,
Kepte hir estat, and bothe of yonge
and olde 130
Ful wel beloved, and wel men of
hir tolde.
- But whether that she children hadde
or noon,
I rede it nought; therfore I lete it
goon.
20. The thinges fellen, as they doon of
werre,
Bitwixen hem of Troye and Grekes
ofte; 135
For som day boughten they of Troye
it derre,
And eft the Grekes founden no thing
softe
The folk of Troye; and thus fortune
on-lofte,
And under eft, gan hem to wheelen
bothe
After hir cours, ay whyl they were
wrothe. 140
21. But how this toun com to destruc-
cioun
Ne falleth nought to purpos me to
telle;
For it were here a long digressioun
Fro my matere, and yow to longe
dwelle.
But the Troyane gestes, as they
felle, 145
In Omer, or in Dares, or in Dyte,
Who-so that can, may rede hem as
they wryte.
22. But though that Grekes hem of Troye
shetten,
And hir citee bisegeal a-boute,
Hir olde usage wolde they not
letten, 150
As for to honoure hir goddes ful
devoute;
But aldermost in honour, out of
doute,
They hadde a relik hight Palladion,
That was hir trist a-boven everichon.
23. And so bifel, whan comen was the
tyme 155
Of Aperil, whan clothed is the mede
With newe grene, of lusty Ver the
pryme,
And swote smellen floures whyte and
rede,
In sondry wyses shewed, as I rede,

- The folk of Troye hir observaunces
 olde, 160
 Palladiones feste for to holde.
24. And to the temple, in al hir beste
 wyse,
 In general, ther wente many a wight,
 To herkennen of Palladion the servyse;
 And namely, so many a lusty knight,
 So many a lady fresh and mayden
 bright, 166
 Ful wel arayed, bothe moste and
 leste,
 Ye, bothe for the seson and the feste.
25. Among thise othere folk was Criseyda,
 In widewes habite blak; but nathe-
 lees, 170
 Right as our firste lettre is now an A,
 In beautee first so stood she, makelees;
 Hir godly looking gladede al the
 prees.
 Nas never seyn thing to ben preyed
 derre,
 Nor under cloude blak so bright a
 sterre 175
26. As was Criseyde, as folk seyde
 everichoon
 That hir bihelden in hir blake wede;
 And yet she stood ful lowe and stille
 alloon,
 Bihinden othere folk, in litel brede,
 And neigh the dore, ay under shames
 drede, 180
 Simple of a-tyr, and debonaire of
 chere,
 With ful assured loking and manere.
27. This Troilus, as he was wont to gyde
 His yonge knightes, ladde hem up
 and down 184
 In thilke large temple on every syde,
 Biholding ay the ladyes of the toun,
 Now here, now there, for no devo-
 cioun
 Hadde he to noon, to reven him his
 reste,
 But gan to preyse and lakken whom
 him leste.
28. And in his walk ful fast he gan to
 wayten 190
- If knight or squyer of his companye
 Gan for to syke, or lete his eyen
 bayten
 On any woman that he coude aspye;
 He wolde smyle, and holden it folye,
 And seye him thus, 'god wot, she
 slepeth softe 195
 For love of thee, whan thou tornest
 ful ofte!
29. 'I have herd told, pardieux, of your
 livinge,
 Ye lovers, and your lewede obser-
 vaunces,
 And which a labour folk han in
 winninge
 Of love, and, in the keping, which
 doutaunces; 200
 And whan your preye is lost, wo and
 penaunces;
 O verrey foles! nyce and blinde be ye;
 Ther nis not oon can war by other be.'
30. And with that word he gan caste up
 the browe,
 Ascaunces, 'lo! is this nought wysly
 spoken?' 205
 At which the god of love gan loken
 rowe
 Right for despyt, and shoop for to
 ben wroken;
 He kidde anon his bowe nas not
 broken;
 For sodeynly he hit him at the fulle;
 And yet as proud a pekok can he
 pulle. 210
31. O blinde world, O blinde enten-
 cioun!
 How ofte falleth al theffect contraire
 Of surquidrye and foul presumpcioun;
 For caught is proud, and caught is
 debonaire.
 This Troilus is clomben on the staire,
 And litel weneth that he moot des-
 cenden. 216
 But alday fayleth thing that fooles
 wenden.
32. As proude Bayard ginneth for to
 skippe
 Out of the wey, so priketh him his
 corn,

- Til he a lash have of the longe
whippe, 220
Than thenketh he, 'though I prounce
al biforn
First in the trays, ful fat and newe
shorn,
Yet am I but an hors, and horses
lawe
I moot endure, and with my feres
drawe.'
33. So ferde it by this fers and proude
knight; 225
Though he a worthy kinges sone
were,
And wende no-thing hadde had
swiche might
Ayens his wil that sholde his herte
stere,
Yet with a look his herte wex a-
fere,
That he, that now was most in pryde
above, 230
Wex sodeynly most subget un-to love.
34. For-thy ensample taketh of this
man,
Ye wyse, proude, and worthy folkes
alle,
To scornen Love, which that so sone
can
The freedom of your hertes to him
thralle; 235
For ever it was, and ever it shal
bifalle,
That Love is he that alle thing may
binde;
For may no man for-do the lawe of
kinde.
35. That this be sooth, hath preved and
doth yit;
For this trowe I ye knowen, alle or
some, 240
Men reden not that folk han gretter
wit
Than they that han he most with
love y-nome;
And strengest folk ben therwith
overcome,
The worthiest and grettest of degree;
This was, and is, and yet men shal
it see. 245
36. And trewelich it sit wel to be so;
For alderwysest han ther-with ben
plesed;
And they that han ben aldermost in
wo;
With love han ben conforted most
and esed;
And ofte it hath the cruel herte
apeded, 250
And worthy folk maad worthier of
name,
And causeth most to dreden vyce
and shame.
37. Now sith it may not goodly be with-
stonde,
And is a thing so vertuous in kinde,
Refuseth not to Love for to be bonde,
Sin, as him-selven list, he may yow
binde. 256
The yerde is bet that bowen wole
and winde
Than that that brest; and therfor I
yow rede
To folwen him that so wel can yow
lede.
38. But for to tellen forth in special 260
As of this kinges sone of which I
tolde,
And leten other thing collateral,
Of him thenke I my tale for to holde,
Bothe of his Loye, and of his cares
colde;
And al his werk, as touching this
mater, 265
For I it gan, I wil ther-to refere.
39. With-inne the temple he wente him
forth pleyng, 270
This Troilus, of every wight aboute,
On this lady and now on that lok-
inge,
Wher-so she were of toun, or of
with-oute: 270
And up-on cas bifel, that thourgh a
route
His eye perced, and so depe it wente,
Til on Criseyde it smoot, and ther it
stente.
40. And sodeynly he wex ther-with
astoned,

- And gan hire bet biholde in thrifty
wyse : 275
'O mercy, god!' thoughte he, 'wher
hastow woned,
That art so fair and goodly to de-
vyse?'
Ther-with his herte gan to sprede
and ryse,
And softe sighed, lest men mighte
him here,
And caughte a-yein his firste pleyng
chere. 280
41. She nas not with the leste of hir
stature,
But alle hir limes so wel answeringe
Weren to womanhode, that creature
Was never lasse mannish in seminge.
And eek the pure wyse of here
meninge 285
Shewed wel, that men might in her
gesse
Honour, estat, and wommanly no-
blesse.
42. To Troilus right wonder wel with-
alle
Gan for to lyke hir mening and hir
chere,
Which somdel deynous was, for she
leet falle 290
Hir look a lite a-side, in swich
manere,
Ascaunces, 'what! may I not
stonden here?'
And after that hir loking gan she
lighte,
That never thoughte him seen so
good a sighte.
43. And of hir look in him ther gan to
quiken 295
So greet desir, and swich affeccioun
That in his hertes botme gan to
stiken
Of hir his fixe and depe impres-
sioun :
And though he erst hadde poured
up and down,
He was tho glad his hornes in to
shrinke; 300
Unnethes wiste he how to loke or
winke.
44. Lo, he that leet him-selven so kon-
ninge,
And scorned hem that loves peynes
dryen,
Was ful unwar that love hadde his
dwelling
With-inne the subtile stremes of hir
yē; 305
That sodeynly him thoughte he felte
dyen,
Right with hir look, the spirit in
his herte;
Blessed be love, that thus can folk
converte!
45. She, this in blak, lykinge to Troilus,
Over alle thing he stood for to
biholde; 310
Ne his desir, ne wherfor he stood
thus,
He neither chere made, ne worde
tolde;
But from a-fer, his maner for to
holde,
On other thing his look som-tyme
he ceste,
And eft on hir, whyl that servyse
laste. 315
46. And after this, not fulliche al
awhaped, *conveys*
Out of the temple al esiliche he
wente,
Repentinge him that he hadde ever
y-iaped
Of loves folk, lest fully the descente
Of scorn fille on him-self; but, what
he mente, 320
Lest it were wist on any maner
syde,
His wo he gan dissimulen and
hyde.
47. Whan he was fro the temple thus
departed,
He streyght anon un-to his paleys
torneth,
Right with hir look thurgh-shoten
and thurgh-darted, 325
Al feyneth he in lust that he soiorn-
eth;
And al his chere and speche also he
borneth;

- And ay, of loves servants every whyle,
Him-self to wrye, at hem he gan to
smyle.
48. And seyde, 'lord, so ye live al in
lest, 330
Ye loveres! for the conningest of
yow,
That serveth most ententifich and
best, *استغنى*
Him tit as often harm ther-of as
prow;
Your hyre is quit ayein, ye, god wot
how!
Nought wel for wel, but scorn for
good servyse; 335
In feith, your ordre is ruled in good
wyse!
49. In noun-certeyn ben alle your ob-
servaunces,
But it a sely fewe poyntes be;
Ne no-thing asketh so grete attend-
aunces
As doth your lay, and that knowe
alle ye; 340
But that is not the worste, as mote
I thee;
But, tolde I yow the worste poynt, I
leve,
Al seyde I sooth, ye wolden at me
greve!
50. But tak this, that ye loveres ofte
eschuwe,
Or elles doon of good entencioun,
Ful ofte thy lady wole it miscon-
strue, 346
And deme it harm in hir opinioun;
And yet if she, for other enchesoun,
Be wrooth, than shalt thou han a
groyn anoon:
Lord! wel is him that may be of yow
oon!' 350
51. But for al this, whan that he say his
tyme,
He held his pees, non other bote
him gayned;
For love bigan his fetheres so to
lyme,
That wel unneth un-to his folk he
feyned
- That othere besye nedes him de-
strayned;
For wo was him, that what to doon
he niste, 355
But bad his folk to goon wher that
hem liste.
52. And whan that he in chaumbre was
alone,
He doun up-on his beddes feet him
sette,
And first he gan to syke, and eft to
grone, 360
And thoughte ay on hir so, with-
outen lette,
That, as he sat and wook, his spirit
mette *استغنى*
That he hir saw a temple, and al the
wyse
Right of hir loke, and gan it newe
avyse.
53. Thus gan he make a mirour of his
minde, 365
In which he saugh al hoolly hir
figure;
And that he wel coude in his herte
finde,
It was to him a right good aven-
ture
To love swich oon, and if he dide
his cure
To serven hir, yet mighte he falle in
grace, 370
Or elles, for oon of hir servaunts
pace.
54. Imagininge that travaille nor grame
Ne mighte, for so goodly oon, be lorn
As she, ne him for his desir ne
shame,
Al were it wist, but in prys and up-
born 375
Of alle lovers wel more than biforn;
Thus argumented he in his ginninge,
Ful unavysed of his wo cominge.
55. Thus took he purpos loves craft to
suwe,
And thoughte he wolde werken
prively, 380
First, to hyden his desir in muwe
From every wight y-born, al-outrely,

- But he mighte ought recovered be
therby;
Remembering him, that love to wyde
y-blowe
Yelt bitter fruyt, though swete seed
be sowe. 385
56. And over al this, yet muchel more
he thoughte
What for to speke, and what to
holden inne,
And what to arten hir to love he
soughte,
And on a song anoon-right to
biginne,
And gan loude on his sorwe for to
winne; 390
For with good hope he gan fully
assente
Criseyde for to love, and nought
repente.
57. And of his song nought only the
sentence,
As writ myn autour called Lollius,
But pleynty, save our tonges differ-
ence, 395
I dar wel sayn, 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.
- CANTUS TROILI.
58. 'If no love is, O god, what fele I so?
And if love is, what thing and whiche
is he? 401
If love be good, from whennes comth
my wo?
If it be wikke, a wonder thinketh me,
Whenne every torment and adversitee
That cometh of him, may to me savory
thinke; 405
For ay thurst I, the more that I it
drinke.
59. And if that at myn owene lust I
brenne,
Fro whennes cometh my wailing
and my pleynte?
If harme agree me, wher-to pleyne I
thenne?
- I noot, ne why unwery that I feynte.
O quike death, o swete harm so
queynte, 411
How may of thee in me swich
quantitee,
But-if that I consente that it be?
60. And if that I consente, I wrongfully
Compleyne, y-wis; thus possed to
and fro, 415
Al sterelees with-inne a boot am I
A-mid the see, by-twixen windes
two,
That in contrarie stonden ever-mo.
Allas! what is this wonder maladye?
For hete of cold, for cold of hete,
I dye.' 420
61. And to the god of love thus seyde he
With pitous voys, 'O lord, now
yours is
My spirit, which that oughte yours
be.
Yow thanke I, lord, that han me
brought to this;
But whether goddesse or womman,
y-wis, 425
She be, I noot, which that ye do me
serve;
But as hir man I wole ay live and
sterve.
62. Ye stonden in hire eyen mightily,
As in a place un-to your vertu digne;
Wherfore, lord, if my servyse or I 430
May lyke yow, so beth to me be-
nigne;
For myn estat royal here I resigne
In-to hir hond, and with ful humble
chere
Bicome hir man, as to my lady dere.'
63. In him ne deynd sparen blood royal
The fyr of love, wher-fro god me
blesse, 436
Ne him forbar in no degree, for al
His vertu or his excellent prowessse;
But held him as his thral lowe in
distresse,
And brende him so in sondry wyse
ay newe, 440
That sixty tyme a day he loste his
hewe.

64. So muche, day by day, his owene
 thought,
 For lust to hir gan quiken and
 encrese,
 That every other charge he sette at
 nought;
 For-ty ful ofte, his hote fyr to cese,
 To seen hir goodly look he gan to
 prese; 446
 For ther-by to ben esed wel he wende,
 And ay the ner he was, the more he
 brende.
65. For ay the ner the fyr, the hotter is,
 This, trowe I, knoweth al this com-
 panye. 450
 But were he fer or neer, I dar seye
 this,
 By night or day, for wysdom or folye,
 His herte, which that is his brestes yē,
 Was ay on hir, that fairer was to sene
 Than ever was Eleyne or Polixene.
66. Eek of the day ther passed nought
 an houre 456
 That to him-self a thousand tyme he
 seyde,
 'Good goodly, to whom serve I and
 laboure,
 As I best can, now wolde god,
 Criseyde,
 Ye wolden on me rewe er that I
 deyde! 460
 My dere herte, allas! myn hele and
 hewe
 And lyf is lost, but ye wole on me
 rewe.'
67. Alle othere dredes weren from him
 fledde,
 Bothe of the assege and his savacioun;
 Ne in him desyr noon othere fownes
 bredde 465
 But arguments to this conclusioun,
 That she on him wolde han com-
 passioun,
 And he to be hir man, whyl he may
 dure;
 Lo, here his lyf, and from the deeth
 his cure!
68. The sharpe shoures felle of armes
 preve, 470
- That Ector or his othere bretheren
 didden,
 Ne made him only ther-for ones
 meve;
 And yet was he, wher-so men wente
 or riden,
 Founde oon the best, and lengest
 tyme abiden
 Ther peril was, and dide eek such
 travayle 475
 In armes, that to thenke it was
 mervayle.
69. But for non hate he to the Grekes
 hadde,
 Ne also for the rescous of the toun,
 Ne made him thus in armes for to
 madde,
 But only, lo, for this conclusioun, 480
 To lyken hir the bet for his renoun;
 Fro day to day in armes so he spedde,
 That alle the Grekes as the deeth
 him dredde.
70. And fro this forth tho refte him love
 his sleep,
 And made his mete, his foo; and
 eek his sorwe 485
 Gan multiplie, that, who-so toke
 keep,
 It shewed in his hewe, bothe eve and
 morwe;
 Therfor a title he gan him for to borwe
 Of other syknesse, lest of him men
 wende
 That the hote fyr of love him brende.
71. And seyde, he hadde a fever and
 ferde amis; 491
 But how it was, certayn, can I not
 seye,
 If that his lady understood not this,
 Or feyned hir she niste, oon of the
 tweye;
 But wel I rede that, by no maner
 weye, 495
 Ne semed it [as] that she of him
 roughte,
 Nor of his peyne, or what-so-ever he
 thoughte.
72. But than fel to this Troylus such
 wo,

- That he was wel neigh wood; for ay
his drede
Was this, that she som wight had
loved so, 500
That never of him she wolde have
taken hede;
For whiche him thoughte he felte his
herte blede.
Ne of his wo ne dorste he not
biginne
To tellen it, for al this world to
winne.
73. But whanne he hadde a space fro
his care, 505
Thus to him-self ful ofte he gan to
pleyne;
He sayde, 'O fool, now art thou in
the snare,
That whilom Iapedest at loves peyne;
Now artow hent, now gnaw thyn
owene cheyne; *شكر*
Thou were ay wont eche lovere re-
prehende 510
Of thing for which thou canst thee
nat defende.
74. What wole now every lover seyn of
thee,
If this be wist, but ever in thyn ab-
sence
Laughen in scorn, and seyn, "lo,
ther gooth he, 514
That is the man of so gret sapience,
That held us loveres leest in rever-
ence!
Now, thonked be god, he may goon
in the daunce
Of hem that Love list febly for to
avaunce!
75. But, O thou woful Troilus, god wolde,
Sin thou most loven thurgh thy
destinee, 520
That thou beset were on swich oon
that sholde
Knowe al thy wo, al lakkede hir
pitee:
But al so cold in love, towards
thee,
Thy lady is, as frost in winter mone,
And thou fordoon, as snow in fyr is
sone." 525
76. God wolde I were aryved in the port
Of deeth, to which my sorwe wil me
lede!
A, lord, to me it were a greet com-
fort;
Then were I quit of languisshing in
drede.
For by myn hidde sorwe y-blowe on
brede 530
I shal bi-Iaped been a thousand tyme
More than that fool of whos folye
men ryme.
77. But now help god, and ye, swete, for
whom
I pleyne, y-caught, ye, never wight
so faste!
O mercy, dere herte, and help me
from 535
The deeth, for I, whyl that my lyf
may laste,
More than my-self wol love yow to
my laste.
And with som freendly look gladeh
me, swete,
Though never more thing ye me bi-
hete!'
78. This wordes and ful manye an-other
to 540
He spak, and called ever in his com-
pleynte
Hir name, for to tellen hir his wo,
Til neigh that he in salte teres
dreynte.
Al was for nought, she herde nought
his pleynte;
And whan that he bithoughte on
that folye, 545
A thousand fold his wo gan multiplye.
79. Bi-wayling in his chambre thus al-
lone,
A freend of his, that called was Pan-
dare,
Com ones in unwar, and herde him
grone,
And sey his freend in swich dis-
tresse and care: 550
'Allas!' quod he, 'who causeth al
this fare?
O mercy, god! what unhap may this
mene?'

- Han now thus sone Grekes maad
yow lene?
80. Or hastow som remors of conscience,
And art now falle in som devocioun,
And waylest for thy sijnne and thyn
offence, 556
And hast for ferde caught attricioun?
God save hem that bi-seged han our
toun,
And so can leye our Iolyte on presse,
And bring our lusty folk to holi-
nesse!' 560
81. These wordes seyde he for the nones
alle,
That with swich thing he mighte
him angry maken,
And with an angre don his sorwe
falle,
As for the tyme, and his corage
awaken;
But wel he wiste, as fer as tonges
spaken, 565
Ther nas a man of gretter hardnesse
Than he, ne more desired worthi-
nesse.
82. 'What cas,' quod Troilus, 'or what
aventure
Hath gyded thee to see my languish-
inge,
That am refus of every creature? 570
But for the love of god, at my prey-
inge,
Go henne a-way, for certes, my dey-
inge
Wol thee disece, and I mot nedes
deye;
Ther-for go wey, ther is no more to
seye.
83. But if thou wene I be thus syk for
drede, 575
It is not so, and ther-for scorne
nought;
Ther is a-nother thing I take of hede
Wel more than ought the Grekes
han y-wrought,
Which cause is of my deeth, for
sorwe and thought.
But though that I now telle thee it
ne leste, 580
- Bie thou nought wrooth, I hyde it for
the beste.'
84. This Pandare, that neigh malt for wo
and routhe,
Ful often seyde, 'allas! what may
this be?
Now freend,' quod he, 'if ever love
or trouthe
Hath been, or is, bi-twixen thee and
me, 585
Ne do thou never swiche a crucltee
To hyde fro thy freend so greet a care;
Wostow nought wel that it am I,
Pandare?
85. I wole parten with thee al thy
peyne,
If it be so I do thee no comfort, 590
As it is freendes right, sooth for to
seyne,
To entreparten wo, as glad desport.
I have, and shal, for trewe or fals
report,
In wrong and right y-loved thee al
my lyve;
Hyd not thy wo fro me, but telle it
blyve.' 595
86. Than gan this sorwful Troilus to syke,
And seyde him thus, 'god leve it be
my beste
To telle it thee; for, sith it may thee
lyke,
Yet wole I telle it, though myn herte
breste;
And wel wot I thou mayst do me no
reste. 600
But lest thow deme I truste not to
thee,
Now herkne, freend, for thus it stant
with me.
87. Love, a-yains the which who-so de-
fendeth
Him-selven most, him alder-lest
awayleth,
With desespere so sorwfully me of-
fendeth, 605
That streyght un-to the deeth myn
herte sayleth.
Ther-to desyr so brenningly me as-
sayleth,

- That to ben slayn it were a gretter
Ioye
To me than king of Grece been and
Troye!
88. Suffiseth this, my fulle freend Pan-
dare, 610
That I have seyde, for now wostow
my wo;
And for the love of god, my colde
care
So hyd it wel, I telle it never to mo;
For harmes mighte folwen, mo than
two,
If it were wist; but be thou in glad-
nesse, 615
And lat me sterve, unknowe, of my
distresse.'
89. 'How hastow thus unkindely and
longe
Hid this fro me, thou fool?' quod
Pandarus;
'Paraunter thou might afterswich oon
longe,
That myn avys anoon may helpen us.'
'This were a wonder thing,' quod
Troilus, 621
'Thou coudest never in love thy-
selven wisse;
How devel maystow bringen me to
blisse?'
90. 'Ye, Troilus, now herke,' quod Pan-
dare,
'Though I be nyce; it happeth
ofte so, 625
That oon that exces doth ful yvele
fare
By good counseyl can kepe his freend
ther-fro.
I have my-self eek seyn a blind man go
Ther-as he fel that coude loke wyde;
A fool may eek a wys man ofte gyde.
91. A whetston is no kerving instru-
ment, 631
And yet it maketh sharpe kerving-
tolis.
And ther thou woost that I have
ought miswent,
Eschewe thou that, for swich thing
to thee scole is; 634
- Thus ofte wyse men ben war by folis.
If thou do so, thy wit is wel biwared;
By his contrarie is every thing de-
clared.
92. For how might ever sweetness have
be knowe
To him that never tasted bitterness?
Ne no man may be inly glad, I trowe,
That never was in sorwe or som dis-
tresse; 641
Eek whyt by blak, by shame eek
worthinesse,
Ech set by other, more for other
semeth;
As men may see; and so the wyse
it deemeth.
93. Sith thus of two contraries is a
lore, 645
I, that have in love so ofte assayed
Grevauces, oughte conne, and wel
the more
Counsayllen thee of that thou art
amayed.
Eek thee ne oughte nat ben yvel
apayed,
Though I desyre with thee for to
bere 650
Thyn hevvy charge; it shal the lasse
dere.
94. I woot wel that it fareth thus by me
As to thy brother Parys an herdesse,
Which that y-cleped was Oënone,
Wrot in a compleynt of hir hevi-
nesse: 655
Ye say the lettre that she wroot, y
gesse?'
'Nay, never yet, I-wis,' quod Troilus.
'Now,' quod Pandare, 'herkneþ; it
was thus. —
95. "Phebus, that first found art of medi-
cynne,"
Quod she, "and coude in every
wightes care 660
Remede and reed, by herbes he
knew fyne,
Yet to him-self his conninge was ful
bare;
For love hadde him so bounden in a
snare,

- Al for the doughter of the kinge
Admete,
That al his craft ne coude his sorwe
bete." — 665
96. Right so fare I, unhappily for me;
I love oon best, and that me smerteth
sorwe;
And yet, paraunter, can I rede thee,
And not my-self; reprove me no
more.
I have no cause, I woot wel, for to
sorwe 670
As doth an hawk that listeth for to
pleye,
But to thyn help yet somewhat can I
seye.
97. And of o thing right siker maystow
be,
That certayn, for to deyen in the
peyne,
That I shal never-mo discoveren
thee; 675
Ne, by my trouthe, I kepe nat re-
streyne
Thee fro thy love, thogh that it were
Eleyne
That is thy brotheres wyf, if ich it
wiste;
Be what she be, and love hir as thee
liste.
98. Therefore, as freend fullich in me
assure, 680
And tel me plat what is thyn en-
chesoun, ~~besoun~~
And final cause of wo that ye endure;
For douteth no-thing, myn enten-
cioun
Nis nought to yow of reprehencioun,
To speke as now, for no wight may
bireve 685
A man to love, til that him list to
leve.
99. And w ith wel, that bothe two ben
vyces,
Mistrusten alle, or elles alle leve;
But wel I woot, the mene of it no
vyce is,
For for to trusten sum wight is a
preve 690
- Of trouthe, and for-ty wolde I fayn
reneve
Thy wrong conceyte, and do thee
som wight triste,
Thy wo to telle; and tel me, if thee
liste.
100. The wyse seyth, "wo him that is
allone,
For, and he falle, he hath noon help
to ryse;" 695
And sith thou hast a felawe, tel thy
mone;
For this nis not, certeyn, the nexte
wyse
To winnen love, as techen us the
wyse,
To walwe and wepe as Niobe the
quene,
Whos teres yet in marbel been
y-sene. 700
101. Lat be thy weping and thy dreri-
nesse,
And lat us lissen wo with other
speche;
So may thy woful tyme seme lesse.
Delyte not in wo thy wo to seche,
As doon these foles that hir sorwes
eche 705
With sorwe, whan they han misaven-
ture,
And listen nought to seche hem
other cure.
102. Men seyn, "to wrecche is consolacioun
To have an-other felawe in his
peyne;"
That oughte wel ben our opinioun,
For, bothe thou and I, of love we
pleyne; 711
So ful of sorwe am I, soth for to
seyne,
That certeynly no more harde grace
May sitte on me, for-why ther is no
space.
103. If god wole thou art not agast of
me, 715
Lest I wolde of thy lady thee bigyle,
Thow wost thy-self whom that I love,
pardee,

- As I best can, gon sithen longe wyle,
 And sith thou wost I do it for no
 wyle,
 And sith I am he that thou tristest
 most, 720
 Tel me sumwhat, sin al my wo thou
 wost.'
104. Yet Troilus, for al this, no word
 seyde,
 But longe he lay as stille as he ded
 were;
 And after this with sykinge he
 abreyde,
 And to Pandarus voys he lente his
 ere, 725
 And up his eyen caste he, that in
 fere
 Was Pandarus, lest that in frenesye
 He sholde falle, or elles sone dye :
105. And cryde 'awake' ful wonderly
 and sharpe;
 'What? slombrestow as in a lyt-
 argye? 730
 Or artow lyk an asse to the harpe,
 That hereth soun, whan men the
 strenges plye,
 But in his minde of that no melodye
 May sinken, him to glade, for that he
 So dul is of his bestialtee?' 735
106. And with that Pandare of his wordes
 stente;
 But Troilus yet him no word an-
 swerde,
 For-why to telle nas not his entente
 To never no man, for whom that he
 so ferde.
 For it is seyde, 'man maketh ofte a
 yerde 740
 With which the maker is him-self
 y-beten
 In sondry maner,' as this wyse
 treten,
107. And namely, in his counseyl tellinge
 That toucheth love that oughte be
 secree;
 For of him-self it wolde y-nough
 out-springe, 745
 But-if that it the bet governed be.
 Eek som-tyme it is craft to seme flee
- Fro thing which in effect men hunte
 faste;
 Al this gan Troilus in his herte
 caste.
108. But nathelees, whan he had herd
 him crye 750
 'Awake!' he gan to syke wonder
 sore,
 And seyde, 'freend, though that I
 stille lye,
 I am not deef; now pees, and cry
 no more;
 For I have herd thy wordes and
 thy lore;
 But suffre me my mischef to bi-
 wayle, 755
 For thy proverbes may me nought
 awayle.
109. Nor other cure canstow noon for
 me.
 Eek I nil not be cured, I wol deye;
 What knowe I of the quene Niobe?
 Lat be thyne olde ensaumple, I thee
 preye.' 760
 'No,' quod tho Pandarus, 'therefore
 I seye,
 Swich is delyt of foles to biwepe
 Hir wo, but seken bote they ne
 kepe.
110. Now knowe I that ther reson in
 thee fayleth.
 But tel me, if I wiste what she
 were 765
 For whom that thee al this misaunter
 ayleth?
 Dorstestow that I tolde hir in hir
 ere
 Thy wo, sith thou darst not thy-self
 for fere,
 And hir bisoughte on thee to han
 som routhe?'
 'Why, nay,' quod he, 'by god and
 by my trouthe!' 770
111. 'What? not as bisily,' quod Pan-
 darus,
 'As though myn owene lyf lay on
 this nede?'
 'No, certes, brother,' quod this
 Troilus.

- ‘And why?’ — ‘For that thou
sholdest never spede,’
‘Wostow that wel?’ — ‘Ye, that is
out of drede,’ 775
Quod Troilus, ‘for al that ever ye
conne,
She nil to noon swich wrecche as I
be wonne.’
112. Quod Pandarus, ‘allas! what may
this be,
That thou despyred art thus cause-
lees?
What? liveth not thy lady? *bene-
dicite!* 780
How wostow so that thou art
gracelees?
Swich yvel is not alwey botelees.
Why, put not impossible thus thy
cure,
Sin thing to come is ofte in avent-
ture.
113. I graunte wel that thou endurest
wo 785
As sharp as doth he, Ticius, in
helle,
Whos stomak foules tyren ever-mo
That highte volturis, as bokes telle.
But I may not endure that thou
dwelle
In so unskilful an opinioun 790
That of thy wo is no curacioun.
114. But ones niltow, for thy coward
herte,
And for thyn ire and folish wilful-
nesse,
For wantrust, tellen of thy sorwes
smerte,
Ne to thyn owene help do bisi-
nesse 795
As mucche as speke a resoun more
or lesse,
But lyst as he that list of no-thing
recche.
What womman coude love swich a
wrecche?
115. What may she demen other of thy
deeth,
If thou thus deye, and she not why
it is, 800
- But that for fere is yolden up thy
breeth,
For Grekes han biseged us, y-wis?
Lord, which a thank than shaltow
han of this!
Thus wol she seyn, and al the toun
at ones,
“The wrecche is deed, the devel
have his bones!” 805
116. Thou mayst allone here wepe and
crye and knele;
But, love a woman that she woot it
nought,
And she wol quyte that thou shalt
not fele;
Unknowe, unkist, and lost that is
un-sought.
What! many a man hath love ful
dere y-bought 810
Twenty winter that his lady wiste,
That never yet his lady mouth he
kiste.
117. What? shulde he therfor fallen in
despeyr,
Or be recreaunt for his owene
tene,
Or sleen him-self, al be his lady
fayr? 815
Nay, nay, but ever in oon be fresh
and grene
To serve and love his dere hertes
quene,
And thenke it is a guerdoun hir to
serve
A thousand-fold more than he can
deserve.’
118. And of that word took hede Troi-
lus, 820
And thoughte anon what folye he
was inne,
And how that sooth him seyde
Pandarus,
That for to sleen him-self mighte
he not winne,
But bothe doon unmanhod and a
sinne,
And of his deeth his lady nought
to wyte; 825
For of his wo, god woot, she knew
ful lyte.

119. And with that thought he gan ful
sore syke,
And seyde, 'allas! what is me best
to do?'
To whom Pandare answerde, 'if
thee lyke,
The best is that thou telle me thy
wo; 830
And have my trouthe, but thou it
finde so,
I be thy bote, or that it be ful
longe,
To peces do me drawe, and sithen
honge!'
120. 'Ye, so thou seyst,' quod Troilus
tho, 'allas!
But, god wot, it is not the rather
so; 835
Ful hard were it to helpen in this
cas,
For wel finde I that Fortune is my
fo,
Ne alle the men that ryden conne
or go *walk*
May of hir cruel wheel the harm
withstonde;
For, as hir list, she pleyeth with
free and bonde.' 840
121. Quod Pandarus, 'than blamestow
Fortune
For thou art wrooth, ye, now at erst
I see;
Wostow nat wel that Fortune is
commune
To every maner wight in som de-
gree?
And yet thou hast this comfort, lo,
pardee! 845
That, as hir Ioyes moten over-goon,
So mote hir sorwes passen everich-
oon.
122. For if hir wheel stinte any-thing to
turne,
Than cessed she Fortune anoon to
be:
Now, sith hir wheel by no wey may
soiorne, 850
What wostow if hir mutabilitee
Right as thy-selven list, wol doon
by thee,
- Or that she be not fer fro thyn
helpinge?
Paraunter, thou hast cause for to
sing!
123. And therfor wostow what I thee
beseche? 855
Lat be thy wo and turning to the
grounde;
For who-so list have helping of
his leche,
To him bihoveth first unwrye his
wounde.
To Cerberus in helle ay be I bounde,
Were it for my suster, al thy sorwe,
By my wil, she sholde al be thyn
to-morwe. 861
124. Loke up, I seye, and tel me what
she is
Anoon, that I may goon aboute thy
nede;
Knowe ich hir ought? for my love,
tel me this;
Than wolde I hopen rather for to
spede.' 865
Tho gan the veyne of Troilus to
blede,
For he was hit, and wex al reed for
shame;
'A ha!' quod Pandare, 'here bigin-
neth game!'
125. And with that word he gan him
for to shake,
And seyde, 'theef, thou shalt hir
name telle.' 870
But tho gan sely Troilus for to
quake
As tho men sholde han lad him in-
to helle,
And seyde, 'allas! of al my wo the
welle,
Than is my swete fo called Criseyde!'
And wel nigh with the word for
fere he deyde. 875
126. And whan that Pandare herde hir
name nevene,
Lord, he was glad, and seyde,
'freend so dere,
Now fare a-right, for Loves name
in hevене,

- Love hath biset thee wel, be of
good chere;
For of good name and wysdom and
manere 880
She hath y-nough, and eek of
gentillesse;
If she be fayr, thow wost thy-self,
I gesse.
127. Ne I never saw a more bounteous
Of hir estat, ne a gladder, ne of
speche
A freendlier, ne a more gracious 885
For to do wel, ne lasse hadde nede
to seche
What for to doon; and al this bet
to eche,
In honour, to as fer as she may
strecche,
A kinges herte semeth by hires a
wrecche.
128. And for-thy loke of good comfort
thou be; 890
For certainly, the firste poynt is
this
Of noble corage and wel ordeynè,
A man to have pees with him-self,
y-wis;
So oughtest thou, for nought but
good it is
To loven wel, and in a worthy
place; 895
Thee oughte not to clepe it hap,
but grace.
129. And also thenk, and ther-with glade
thee,
That sith thy lady vertuous is al,
So folweth it that ther is som
pitee
Amonges alle thise othere in
general; 900
And for-thy see that thou, in special,
Requere nought that is ayein hir
name;
For vertu streccheth not him-self to
shame.
130. But wel is me that ever I was
born,
That thou biset art in so good a
place; 905
- For by my trouthe, in love I dorste
have sworn,
Thee sholde never han tid thus fayr
a grace;
And wostow why? for thou were
wont to chace
At love in scorn, and for despyt
him calle
"Seynt Idiot, lord of these foles
alle." 910
131. How often hastow maad thy nyce
Iapes,
And seyð, that loves servants
everichone
Of nyceete ben verray goddes apes;
And some wolde monche hir mete
alone,
Ligging a-bedde, and make hem for
to grone; 915
And som, thou seydest, hadde a
blanche fevere,
And preydest god he sholde never
kevere!
132. And som of hem toke on hem, for
the colde,
More than y-nough, so seydestow
ful ofte;
And some han feyned ofte tyme,
and tolde 920
How that they wake, whan they
slepen softe;
And thus they wolde han brought
hem-self a-lofte,
And natheles were under at the
laste;
Thus seydestow, and Iapedest ful
faste.
133. Yet seydestow, that, for the more
part, 925
These loveres wolden speke in
general,
And thoughten that it was a siker
art,
For fayling, for to assayen over-all.
Now may I iape of thee, if that I
shal!
But natheles, though that I sholde
deye, 930
That thou art noon of tho, that
dorste I seye.

134. Now beest thy brest, and sey to god
of love,
"Thy grace, lord! for now I me
repente
If I mis spak, for now my-self I
love:"
Thus sey with al thyn herte in good
entente, 935
Quod Troilus, 'a! lord! I me con-
sente,
And pray to thee my Iapes thou
foryive,
And I shal never-more whyl I live.
135. 'Thow seyst wel,' quod Pandare,
'and now I hope
That thou the goddess wraththe hast
al apesed; 940
And sithen thou hast wepen many
a drope,
And seyde swich thing wher-with
thy god is plesed,
Now wolde never god but thou
were esed;
And think wel, she of whom rist al
thy wo
Here-after may thy comfort been
al-so. 945
136. For thilke ground, that bereth the
weddes wikke,
Bereth eek thise holsom herbes, as
ful ofte
Next the foule netle, rough and
thikke,
The rose waxeth swote and smothe
and softe;
And next the valey is the hil
a-lofte; 950
And next the derke night the glade
morwe;
And also Ioye is next the fyn of
sorwe.
137. Now loke that atempre be thy
brydel,
And, for the beste, ay suffre to the
tyde,
Or elles al our labour is on ydel;
He hasteth wel that wysly can
abyde; 956
Be diligent, and trewe, and ay wel
hyde.
- Be lusty, free, persevere in thy
servyse,
And al is wel, if thou werke in this
wyse.
138. But he that parted is in every
place 960
Is no-wher hool, as writen clerkes
wyse;
What wonder is, though swich oon
have no grace?
Eek wostow how it fareth of som
servyse?
As plaunte a tre or herbe, in sondry
wyse,
And on the morwe pulle it up as
blyve, 965
No wonder is, though it may never
thryve.
139. And sith that god of love hath thee
bistowed
In place digne un-to thy worthi-
nesse,
Stond faste, for to good port hastow
rowed;
And of thy-self, for any hevynesse,
Hope alwey wel; for, but-if dreri-
nesse 971
Or over-haste our bothe labour
shende,
I hope of this to maken a good
ende.
140. And wostow why I am the lasse
a-fered
Of this matere with my nece trete?
For this have I herd seyde of wyse
y-lered, 976
"Was never man ne woman yet
bigete
That was unapt to suffren loves
hete
Celestial, or elles love of kinde;"
For-thy som grace I hope in hir to
finde. 980
141. And for to speke of hir in special,
Hir beautee to bithinken and hir
youth,
It sit hir nought to be celestial
As yet, though that hir liste bothe
and couthe;

- But trewely, it sete hir wel right
 nouthe 985
 A worthy knight to loven and
 cheryce,
 And but she do, I holde it for a
 vyce.
142. Wherefore I am, and wol be, ay redy
 To peyne me to do yow this servyse;
 For bothe yow to plesse thus hope I
 Her-afterward; for ye beth bothe
 wyse, 991
 And conne it counseyl kepe in
 swich a wyse,
 That no man shal the wyser of it be;
 And so we may be gladed alle three.
143. And, by my trouthe, I have right
 now of thee 995
 A good conceyt in my wit, as I
 gesse,
 And what it is, I wol now that thou
 see.
 I thenke, sith that love, of his
 goodnesse,
 Hath thee converted out of wikked-
 nesse,
 That thou shalt be the beste post, I
 leve, 1000
 Of al his lay, and most his foos to-
 greve.
144. Ensample why, see now these wyse
 clerkes,
 That erren aldermost a-yein a
 lawe,
 And ben converted from hir wikked
 werkes
 Thorough grace of god, that list hem
 to him drawe, 1005
 Than arn they folk that han most
 god in awe,
 And strengest-feythed been, I un-
 derstonde,
 And conne an errour alder-best
 withstonde.'
145. Whan Troilus had herd Pandare
 assented
 To been his help in loving of Cri-
 scyde, 1010
 Wex of his wo, as who seyth, un-
 tormented,
- But hotter wex his love, and thus
 he seyde,
 With sobre chere, al-though his
 herte pleyde,
 'Now blisful Venus helpe, er that
 I sterve,
 Of thee, Pandare, I may som thank
 deserve. 1015
146. But, dere frend, how shal myn wo
 ben lesse
 Til this be doon? and goode, eek
 tel me this,
 How wiltow seyne of me and my
 destresse?
 Lest she be wrooth, this drede I
 most, y-wis,
 Or nil not here or trowen how
 it is. 1020
 Al this drede I, and eek for the
 manere
 Of thee, hir eem, she nil no swich
 thing here.'
147. Quod Pandarus, 'thou hast a ful
 gret care
 Lest that the cherl may falle out of
 the moner!
 Why, lord! I hate of thee thy nyce
 fare! 1025
 Why, entremete of that thou hast
 to done!
 For goddes love, I bidde thee a
 bone, *born*
 So lat me alone, and it shal be thy
 beste.' —
 'Why, freend,' quod he, 'now do
 right as thee leste.
148. But herke, Pandare, o word, for I
 nolde 1030
 That thou in me wendest, so greet
 folye,
 That to my lady I desiren sholde
 That toucheth harm or any vilenye;
 For dredelees, me were lever dye
 Than she of me ought elles under-
 stode 1035
 But that, that mighte sounen in-to
 gode.'
149. Tho lough this Pandare, and anon
 answerde,

- 'And I thy borw? fy! no wight
 dooth but so;
 I roughte nought though that she
 stode and herde
 How that thou seyst; but fare-wel,
 I wol go. 1040
 A-dieu! be glad! god spede us
 bothe two!
 Yif me this labour and this besin-
 nesse,
 And of my speed be thyn al that
 sweetnesste.'
150. Tho Troilus gan doun on knees to
 falle,
 And Pandare in his armes hente
 faste, 1045
 And seyde, 'now, fy on the Grekes
 alle!
 Yet, pardee, god shal helpe us at
 the laste;
 And dredelees, if that my lyf may
 laste,
 And god to-forn, lo, som of hem
 shal smerte;
 And yet me athinketh that this
 -avaunt me asterte! 1050
151. Now, Pandare, I can no more
 seye,
 But thou wys, thou wost, thou
 mayst, thou art al!
 My lyf, my deeth, hool in thyn
 honde I leye;
 Help now,' quod he. 'Yis, by my
 trouthe, I shal.'
 'God yelde thee, freend, and this in
 special,' 1055
 Quod Troilus, 'that thou me reco-
 maunde
 To hir that to the deeth me may
 comaunde.'
152. This Pandarus tho, desirous to
 serve
 His fulle freend, than seyde in this
 manere,
 'Far-wel, and thenk I wol thy thank
 deserve; 1060
 Have here my trouthe, and that
 thou shalt wel here.'—
 And wente his wey, thinking on
 this matere,
- And how he best mighte hir be-
 seche of grace,
 And finde a tyme ther-to, and a
 place.
153. For every wight that hath an hous
 to founde 1065
 Ne renneth nought the werk for to
 biginne
 With rakel hond, but he wol byde
 a stounde, 1070
 And sende his hertes lyne out fro
 with-inne
 Alderfirst his purpos for to winne.
 Al this Pandare in his herte
 thouhgte, 1070
 And caste his werk ful wysly, or he
 wroughte.
154. But Troilus lay tho no lenger doun,
 But up anon up-on his stede
 bay,
 And in the feld he pleyde tho
 leoun;
 Wo was that Greek that with him
 mette that day. 1075
 And in the toun his maner tho
 forth ay
 So goodly was, and gat him so in
 grace,
 That ech him lovede that loked on
 his face.
155. For he bicom the frendlyeste
 wight,
 The gentileste, and eek the moste
 free, 1080
 The thristieste and oon the beste
 knight,
 That in his tyme was, or mighte be.
 Dede were his lapes and his cruel-
 tee,
 His heighe port and his manere
 estraunge,
 And ech of tho gan for a vertu
 change. 1085
156. Now lat us stinte of Troilus a
 stounde,
 That fareth lyk a man that hurt is
 sore,
 And is somdel of akinge of his
 wounde

Y-lissed wel, but heled no del
more :
And, as an esy pacient, the
lore 1090

Abit of him that gooth aboute his
cure ;
And thus he dryveth forth his avent-
ture.

Explicit Liber Primus.

BOOK II.

INCIPIT PROHEMIUM SECUNDI LIBRI.

1. OUT of these blake wawes for to sayle,
O wind, O wind, the weder ginneth
clere ;
For in this see the boot hath swich
trayayle,
Of my conning that unnethe I it stere :
This see clepe I the tempestous
materre 5
Of desespeyr that Troilus was inne :
But now of hope the calendes biginne.
2. O lady myn, that called art Cleo,
Thou be my speed fro this forth, and
my muse, 9
To ryme wel this book, til I have do ;
Me nedeth here noon other art to use.
For-why to every lovere I me excuse,
That of no sentement I this endyte,
But out of Latin in my tonge it wryte.
3. Wherefore I nil have neither thank ne
blame 15
Of al this werk, but pray yow mekely,
Disblameth me, if any word be lame,
For as myn auctor seyde, so seye I.
Eek though I speke of love unfe-
lingly,
No wonder is, for it no-thing of newe
is ; 20
A blind man can nat Iuggen wel in
hewis. *huss*
4. Ye knowe eek, that in forme of speche
is change
With-inne a thousand yeer, and wordes
tho
That hadden prys, now wonder nyce
and straunge
Us thinketh hem ; and yet they spake
hem so, 25

- And spedde as wel in love as men now
do ;
Eek for to winne love in sondry ages,
In sondry londes, sondry ben usages.
5. And for-thy if it happe in any wyse,
That here be any lovere in this
place 30
That herkeneth, as the story wol
devyse,
How Troilus com to his lady grace,
And thenketh, so nolde I nat love
purchase,
Or wondreth on his speche and his
doinge,
I noot ; but it is me no wonderinge ;
 6. For every wight which that to Rome
went, 36
Halt nat o path, or alwey o manere ;
Eek in some lond were al the gamen
shent,
If that they ferde in love as men don
here,
As thus, in open doing or in chere, 40
In visitinge, in forme, or seyde hir
sawes ;
For-thy men seyn, ech contree hath
his lawes.
 7. Eek scarsly been ther in this place
three
That han in love seyde lyk and doon in
al ;
For to thy purpos this may lyken thee,
And the right nought, yet al is seyde
or shal ; 46
Eek som men grave in tree, som in
stoon wal,
As it bitit ; but sin I have begonne,
Myn auctor shal I folwen, if I conne.
- Explicit prohemium Secundi Libri.*

INCIPIT LIBER SECUNDUS.

8. In May, that moder is of monthes
glade, 50
That fresshe floures, blewe, and
whyte, and rede,
Ben quike agayn, that winter dede
made,
And ful of bawme is fleting every
mede;
Whan Phebus doth his brighte bemes
sprede
Right in the whyte Bole, it so bitidde
As I shal singe, on Mayes day the
thridde, 56
9. That Pandarus, for al his wyse
speche,
Felte eek his part of loves shottes
kene,
That, coude he never so wel of lov-
ing preche,
It made his hewe a-day ful ofte grene;
So shoop it, that him fil that day a
tene 61
In love, for which in wo to bedde he
wente,
And made, er it was day, ful many a
wente.
10. The swalwe Proignè, with a sorwful
lay,
Whan morwe com, gan make hir
weymentinge, 65
Why she forshapen was; and ever lay
Pandare a-bedde, half in a slomer-
inge,
Til she so neigh him made hir chit-
eringe
How Tereus gan forth hir suster take,
That with the noyse of hir he gan
a-wake; 70
11. And gan to calle, and dresse him up
to ryse,
Remembringe him his erand was to
done
From Troilus, and eek his greet em-
pryse;
And caste and knew in good plyt
was the mone
To doon viage, and took his wey ful
sone 75
- Un-to his neces paleys ther bi-syde;
Now Ianus, god of entree, thou him
gyde!
12. Whan he was come un-to his neces
place,
'Wher is my lady?' to hir folk seyde
he;
And they him tolde; and he forth in
gan pace, 80
And fond, two othere ladyes sete and
she
With-inne a paved parlour; and they
three
Herden a mayden reden hem the
geste
Of the Sege of Thebes, whyl hem
leste.
13. Quod Pandarus, 'ma dame, god yow
see, 85
With al your book and al the com-
panye!'
'Ey, uncle myn, welcome y-wis,' quod
she,
And up she roos, and by the hond in
hye
She took him faste, and seyde, 'this
night thrye,
To goode mote it turne, of yow I
mette!' *dream* 90
And with that word she down on
bench him sette.
14. 'Ye, nece, ye shal fare wel the bet,
If god wole, al this yeer,' quod Pan-
darus;
'But I am sory that I have yow let
To herknen of your book ye preysen
thus; 95
For goddes 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!'
15. With that they gonnen laughe, and
tho she seyde,
'This romaunce is of Thebes, that
we rede; 100
And we han herd how that king
Laius deyde

- Thurgh Edippus his sone, and al that dede;
 And here we stenten at these lettres rede,
 How the bisshop, as the book can telle,
 Amphiorax, fil thurgh the ground to helle.' 105
16. Quod Pandarus, 'al this knowe I my-selve,
 And al the assege of Thebes and the care;
 For her-of been ther maked bokes twelve: —
 But lat be this, and tel me how ye fare;
 Do wey your barbe, and shew your face bare; 110
 Do wey your book, rys up, and lat us daunce,
 And lat us don to May som observ-
 aunce.'
17. 'A! god forbede!' quod she, 'be ye mad?
 Is that a widewes lyf, so god you save?
 By god, ye maken me right sore a-drad, 115
 Ye ben so wilde, it semeth as ye rave!
 It sete me wel bet ay in a cave
 To bidde, and rede on holy seyntes lyves:
 Lat maydens gon to daunce, and yonge wyves.'
18. 'As ever thryve I,' quod this Pandarus, 120
 'Yet coude I telle a thing to doon you pleye.'
 'Now uncle dere,' quod she, 'tel it us
 For goddes love; is than the assege aweye?
 I am of Grekes so ferd that I deye.'
 'Nay, nay,' quod he, 'as ever mote I thryve! 125
 It is a thing wel bet than swiche fyve.'
19. 'Ye, holy god!' quod she, 'what thing is that?
 What? bet than swiche fyve? ey, nay, y-wis!
- For al this world ne can I reden what
 It sholde been; som Iape, I trowe, is this; 130
 And but your-selven telle us what it is,
 My wit is for to arede it al to lene;
 As help me god, I moot nat what ye mene.'
20. 'And I your borow, ne never shal, for me,
 This thing be told to yow, as mote I thryve!' 135
 'And why so, uncle myn? why so?' quod she.
 'By god,' quod he, 'that wole I telle as blyve;
 For prouder womman were ther noon on-lyve,
 And ye it wiste, in al the toun of Troye;
 I iape nought, as ever have I Ioye!'
21. Tho gan she wondren more than biforn 141
 A thousand fold, and doun hir eyen caste;
 For never, sith the tyme that she was born,
 To knowe thing desired she so faste;
 And with a syk she seyde him at the laste, 145
 'Now, uncle myn, I nil yow nought displese,
 Nor axen more, that may do yow disese.'
22. So after this, with many wordes glade,
 And frendly tales, and with mery chere,
 Of this and that they pleyde, and gunnen wade 150
 In many an unkouth glad and deep matere,
 As freendes doon, whan they ben met y-ferre;
 Til she gan axen him how Ector ferde,
 That was the tounes wal and Grekes yerde.

23. 'Ful wel, I thanke it god,' quod
Pandarus, 155
'Save in his arm he hath a litel
wounde;
And eek his fresshe brother Troi-
lus,
The wyse worthy Ector the se-
counde,
In whom that every vertu list
abounde,
As alle trouthe and alle gentilless,
Wysdom, honour, fredom, and
worthinesse.' 161
24. 'In good feith, eem,' quod she, 'that
lyketh me;
They faren wel, god save hem bothe
two!
For trewely I holde it greet deyntee
A kinges sone in armes wel to do,
And been of good condiciouns
ther-to; 166
For greet power and moral vertu
here
Is selde y-seye in o persone y-fere.'
25. 'In good feith, that is sooth,' quod
Pandarus;
'But, by my trouthe, the king hath
sones tweye, 170
That is to mene, Ector and Troilus,
That certainly, though that I sholde
deye,
They been as voyde of vyces, dar I
seye,
As any men that liveth under the
sonne,
Hir might is wyde y-knowe, and
what they conne. 175
26. Of Ector nedeth it nought for to
telle;
In al this world ther nis a bettre
knight
Than he, that is of worthinesse
welle;
And he wel more vertu hath than
might.
This knoweth many a wys and
worthy wight. 180
The same prys of Troilus I seye,
God help me so, I knowe not swiche
tweye.'
27. 'By god,' quod she, 'of Ector that
is sooth;
Of Troilus the same thing trowe I;
For dredelees, men tellen that he
dooth 185
In armes day by day so worthily,
And bereth him here at hoom so
gentilly
To every wight, that al the prys hath
he
Of hem that me were levest preysed
be.'
28. 'Ye sey right sooth, y-wis,' quod
Pandarus; 190
'For yesterday, who-so hadde with
him been,
He might have wondred up-on
Troilus;
For never yet so thikke a swarm of
been
Ne fleigh, as Grekes fro him gonne
fleen;
And thorgh the feld, in every
wightes ere, 195
Ther nas no cry but "Troilus is
there!"
29. Now here, now there, he hunted
hem so faste,
Ther nas but Grekes blood; and
Troilus,
Now hem he hurte, and hem alle
doun he caste;
Aywhere he wente it was arayed thus:
He was hir deeth, and sheld and lyf
for us; 201
That as that day ther dorste noon
with-stonde,
Whyl that he held his blody swerd
in honde.
30. Therto he is the freendlieste man
Of grete estat, that ever I saw my
lyve; 205
And wher him list, best felawshipe
can
To suche as him thinketh able for
to thryve.'
And with that word tho Pandarus,
as blyve,
He took his leve, and seyde, 'I wol
go henne:'

- 'Nay, blame have I, myn uncle,
quod she thenne. 210
31. 'What eyleth yow to be thus wery
sone,
And namelich of women? wol ye
so?
Nay, sitteth down; by god, I have
to done
With yow, to speke of wisdom er
ye go.'
And every wight that was a-boute
hem tho, 215
That herde that, gan fer a-way to
stonde,
Why! they two hadde al that hem
liste in honde.
32. Whan that hir tale al brought was
to an ende
Of hire estat and of hir governaunce,
Quod Pandarus, 'now is it tyme I
wende; 220
But yet, I seye, aryseth, lat us
daunce,
And cast your widwes habit to mis-
chaunce:
What list yow thus your-self to dis-
figure,
Sith yow is tid thus fair an aven-
ture?'
33. 'A! wel bithought! for love of god,'
quod she, 225
'Shal I not witen what ye mene of
this?'
'No, this thing axeth layser,' tho
quod he,
'And eek me wolde muche greve,
y-wis,
If I it tolde, and ye it toke amis.
Yet were it bet my tonge for to
stille 230
Than seye a sooth that were ayeins
your wille.
34. For, nece, by the goddesse Minerve,
And Iuppiter, that maketh the
thonder ringe,
And by the blisful Venus that I serve,
Ye been the womman in this world
livinge, 235
With-oute paramours, to my witinge,
- That I best love, and lothest am to
greve,
And that ye witen wel your-self, I
leve.'
35. 'Y-wis, myn uncle,' quod she, 'grant
mercy;
Your frendship have I founden ever
yit; 240
I am to no man holden trewely
So muche as yow, and have so litel
quit;
And, with the grace of god, emforth
my wit,
As in my gilt I shal you never
offende;
And if I have er this, I wol amende.
36. But, for the love of god, I yow
beseche, 246
As ye ben he that I most love and
triste,
Lat be to me your fremde maner
speche,
And sey to me, your nece, what yow
liste: 250
And with that word hir uncle anon
hir kiste, 250
And seyde, 'gladly, leve nece dere,
Tak it for good that I shal seye yow
here.'
37. With that she gan hir eyen doun to
caste,
And Pandarus to coghe gan a lyte,
And seyde, 'nece, alwey, lo! to the
laste, 255
How-so it be that som men hem
delyte
With subtil art hir tales for to en-
dlyte,
Yet for al that, in hir entencioun,
Hir tale is al for som conclusioun.
38. And sithen thende is every tales
strengthe, 260
And this matere is so bihovely,
What sholde I peynte or drawn it
on lengthe
To yow, that been my freend so feith-
fully?'
And with that word he gan right
inwardly

- Biholden hir, and loken on hir face,
And seyde, 'on suche a mirour goode
grace!' 266
39. Than thoughte he thus, 'if I my tale
endyte
Ought hard, or make a proces any
whyle,
She shal no savour han ther-in but
lyte,
And trowe I wolde hir in my wil
bigyle. 270
For tendre wittes wenen al be wyle
Ther-as they can nat pleynly under-
stonde;
For-ty hir wit to serven wol I
fonde'—
40. And loked on hir in a besy wyse,
And she was war that he byheld hir
so, 275
And seyde, 'lord! so faste ye me
avyse!
Sey ye me never er now? what sey
ye, no?'
'Yes, yes,' quod he, 'and bet wole
er I go;
But, by my trouthe, I thoughte now
if ye 279
Be fortunat, for now men shal it see.
41. For to every wight som goodly avent-
ture
Som tyme is shape, if he it can
receyven;
And if that he wol tak of it no cure,
Whan that it cometh, but wilfully it
weyven,
Lo, neither cas nor fortune him
deceyven, 285
But right his verry slouthe and
wrecchednesse;
And swich a wight is for to blame, I
gesse.
42. Good aventure, O bele nece, have ye
Ful lightly founden, and ye conne it
take;
And, for the love of god, and eek of
me, 290
Cacche it anon, lest aventure slake.
What sholde I lenger proces of it
make?
- Yif me your hond, for in this world
is noon,
If that you list, a wight so wel begoon.
43. And sith I speke of good entencioun,
As I to yow have told wel here-
biforn, 296
And love as wel your honour and
renoun
As creature in al this world y-born;
By alle the othes that I have yow
sworn,
And ye be wrooth therefore, or wene
I lye, 300
Ne shal I never seen yow eft with yē.
44. Beth nought agast, ne quaketh nat;
wher-to?
Ne chaungeth nat for fere so your
hewe;
For hardely, the werste of this is do;
And though my tale as now be to
yow newe, 305
Yet trist alwey, ye shal me finde
trewe;
And were it thing that me thoughte
unsittinge,
To yow nolde I no swiche tales
bringe.'
45. 'Now, my good eem, for goddes love,
I preye,'
Quod she, 'com of, and tel me what
it is; 310
For bothe I am agast what ye wol
seye,
And eek me longeth it to wite, y-wis.
For whether it be wel or be amis,
Sey on, lat me not in this fere
dwelle:'
'So wol I doon, now herkneth, I shal
telle: 315
46. Now, nece myn, the kinges dere
sone,
The goode, wyse, worthy, fresshe,
and free,
Which alwey for to do wel is his
wone,
The noble Troilus, so loveth thee,
That, bot ye helpe, it wol his bane be.
Lo, here is al, what sholde I more
seye? 321

- Doth what yow list, to make him
live or deye.
47. But if ye lete him deye, I wol sterve;
I have her my trouthe, nece, I nil
not lyen;
Al sholde I with this knyf my throte
kerve' — 325
With that the teres braste out of his
yēn,
And seyde, 'if that ye doon us bothe
dycn,
Thus giltelees, than have ye fisshed
faire;
What mende ye, though that we
bothe apeyre? *impaired suffer*
48. Allas! he which that is my lord so
dere, 330
That trewe man, that noble gentil
knight,
That nought desireth but your
freendly chere,
I see him deye, ther he goth up-
right,
And hasteth him, with al his fulle
might,
For to be slayn, if fortune wol as-
sente; 335
Allas! that god yow swich a beautee
sente!
49. If it be so that ye so cruel be,
That of his deeth yow liste nought
to recche,
That is so trewe and worthy, as ye
see,
No more than of a Iapere or a
wrecche, 340
If ye be swich, your beautee may
not stretche
To make amendes of so cruel a
dede;
Avysement is good bifore the nede.
50. Wo worth the faire gemme ver-
tulees!
Wo worth that herbe also that dooth
no bote! 345
Wo worth that beautee that is
routheles!
Wo worth that wight that tret ech
under fote!
- And ye, that been of beautee crop
and rote,
If therwith-al in you ther be no
routhe,
Than is it harm ye liven, by my
trouthe! 350
51. And also think wel, that this is no
gaude;
For me were lever, thou and I and
he
Were hanged, than I sholde been
his baude,
As heyghe, as men mighte on us alle
y-see:
I am thyn eem, the shame were to
me, 355
As wel as thee, if that I sholde
assente,
Thorough myn abet, that he thyn
honour shente.
52. Now understand, for I yow nought
requere,
To binde yow to him thorough no
beheste,
But only that ye make him bettre
chere 360
Than ye han doon er this, and more
feste,
So that his lyf be saved, at the
leste:
This al and som, and playnly our
entente;
God helpe me so, I never other
mente.
53. Lo, this request is not but skile,
y-wis, 365
Ne doute of reson, pardee, is ther
noon.
I sette the worste that ye dredden
this,
Men wolden wondren seen him come
or goon:
Ther-ayeins answer I thus a-noon,
That every wight, but he be fool of
kinde, 370
Wol deme it love of freendship in
his minde.
54. What? who wol deme, though he
see a man

- To temple go, that he the images
eteth?
- Think eek how wel and wysly that
he can
- Governe him-self, that he no-thing
foryeteth, 375
- That, wher he cometh, he prys and
thank him geteth;
- And eek ther-to, he shal come here
so selde,
- What fors were it though al the
toun behelde?
55. Swich love of freendes regneth al
this toun;
- f. wist*
هسته
And wrye yow in that mantel
ever-mo; 380
- And, god so wis be my savacioun,
As I have seyde, your beste is to
do so.
- But alwey, goode nece, to stinte his
wo,
- سپید*
So lat your daunger sucred ben a
lyte,
- That of his deeth ye be nought for
to wyte.' 385
56. Criseyde, which that herde him in
this wyse,
Thoughte, 'I shal fele what he
meneth, y-wis.'
- 'Now, eem,' quod she, 'what wolde
ye devyse,
- What is your reed I sholde doon of
this?'
- 'That is wel seyde,' quod he, 'certayn,
best is 390
- That ye him love ayein for his lov-
inge,
- As love for love is skilful guerdon-
inge.
57. Think eek, how elde wasteth every
houre
- In eche of yow a party of beautee;
And therefore, er that age thee de-
voure, 395
- Go love, for, olde, ther wol no wight
of thee.
- Lat this proverbe a lore un-to yow
be;
- "To late y-war, quod Beautee, whan
it paste;"
- And elde daunteth daunger at the
laste.
58. The kinges fool is woned to cryen
loude, 400
- Whan that him thinketh a womman
bereth hir hye,
- "So longe mote ye live, and alle
proude,
- Til crowes feet be growe under your
yē,
- And sende yow thanne a mirour in
to pryē
- In whiche ye may see your face
a-morwe!" 405
- Nece, I bidde wisse yow no more
sorwe.'
59. With this he stente, and caste adoun
the heed,
- And she bigan to breste a-wepe
anoon.
- And seyde, 'allas, for wo! why nere
I deed?
- For of this world the feith is al
agoon! 410
- Allas! what sholden straunge to me
doon,
- When he, that for my beste freend
I wende,
- Ret me to love, and sholde it me
defende?
60. Allas! I wolde han trusted, doute-
lees,
- That if that I, thurgh my disaven-
ture, 415
- Had loved other him or Achilles,
Ector, or any mannes creature,
- Ye nolde han had no mercy ne
mesure
- On me, but alwey had me in repreve;
This false world, allas! who may it
leve? 420
61. What? is this al the Ioye and al the
feste?
- Is this your reed, is this my blisful
cas?
- Is this the verray mede of your be-
heste?
- Is al this peynted proces seyde,
allas!

- Right for this fyn? O lady myn,
Pallas! 425
Thou in this dredful cas for me
purveye;
For so astonied am I that I deye!
62. With that she gan ful sorwfully to
syke;
'A! may it be no bet?' quod Pan-
darus;
'By god, I shal no-more com here
this wyke, *وفا*! 430
And god to-for, that am mistrusted
thus;
I see ful wel that ye sette lyte of us,
Or of our death! Allas! I woful
wrecche!
Mighte he yet live, of me is nought
to recche.
63. O cruel god, O dispitouse Marte, 435
O Furies three of helle, on yow I
crye!
'So lat me never out of this hous
departe,
If that I mente harm or vilanye!
But sith I see my lord mot nedes dye,
And I with him, here I me shryve,
and seye 440
That wikkedly ye doon us bothe
deye.
64. But sith it lyketh yow that I be deed,
By Neptunus, that god is of the see,
Fro this forth shal I never eten breed
Til I myn owene herte blood may
see; 445
For certayn, I wole deye as sone as
he'—
And up he sterte, and on his wey he
raughte,
Til she agayn him by the lappe
caughte.
65. Criseyde, which that wel neigh starf
for fere, 449
So as she was the ferfulleste wight
That mighte be, and herde eek with
hir ere,
And saw the sorwful earnest of the
knight,
And in his preyere eek saw noon
unright,
- And for the harm that mighte eek
fallen more,
She gan to rewe, and dradde hir
wonder sore; 455
66. And thoughte thus, 'unhappes fallen
thikke
Alday for love, and in swich maner
cas,
As men ben cruel in hem-self and
wikke;
And if this man slee here him-self,
allas! 459
In my presence, it wol be no solas.
What men wokle of hit deme I can
nat seye;
It nedeth me ful sleily for to pleye.'
67. And with a sorwful syk she seyde
thrye,
'A! lord! what me is tid a sory
chance! 464
For myn estat now lyth in Iupartye,
And eek myn emes lyf lyth in bal-
aunce;
But nathelees, with goddes govern-
aunce,
I shal so doon, myn honour shal I
kepe,
And eek his lyf;' and stinte for to
wepe.
68. 'Of harmes two, the lesse is for to
chese; 470
Yet have I lever maken him good
chere
In honour, than myn emes lyf to
lese;
Ye seyn, ye no-thing elles me re-
quere?'
'No, wis,' quod he, 'myn owene
nece dere.'
'Now wel,' quod she, 'and I wol
doon my payne; 475
I shal myn herte ayeins my lust
constreine,
69. But that I nil not holden him in
honde,
Ne love a man, ne can I not, ne may
Ayeins my wil; but elles wol I fonde,
Myn honour sauf, please him fro day
to day; 480

- Ther-to nolde I nought ones have
seyd nay,
But that I dredde, as in my fantasye;
But cesse cause, ay cesseth maladye.
70. And here I make a protestacioun,
That in this proces if ye depper go,
That certaynly, for no savacioun 486
Of yow, though that ye sterve bothe
two,
Though al the world on o day be
my fo,
Ne shal I never on him han other
routhe.' —
'I graunte wel,' quod Pandare, 'by
my trouthe. 490
71. But may I truste wel ther-to,' quod he,
That, of this thing that ye han hight
me here,
Ye wol it holden trewly un-to me?'
'Ye, douteless,' quod she, 'myn
uncle dere.'
'Ne that I shal han cause in this
matere,' 495
Quod he, 'to pleyne, or after yow to
preche?'
'Why, no, pardee; what nedeth
more speche?'
72. Tho fillen they in othere tales glade,
Til at the laste, 'O good eem,' quod
she tho,
'For love of god, which that us bothe
made, 500
Tel me how first ye wisten of his wo:
Wot noon of hit but ye?' He seyde,
'no.'
'Can he wel speke of love?' quod
she, 'I preye,
Tel me, for I the bet me shal pur-
veye.'
73. Tho Pandarus a litel gan to smyle,
And seyde, 'by my trouthe, I shal
yow telle. 506
This other day, nought gon ful longe
whyle,
In-with the paleys-gardyn, by a welle,
Can he and I wel half a day to dwelle,
Right for to speken of an ordonaunce,
How we the Grekes mighte disa-
vaunce. 511
74. Sone after that bigonne we to lepe,
And casten with our dartes to and
fro,
Til at the laste he seyde, he wolde
slepe,
And on the gres a-doun he leyde
him tho; 515
And I after gan rome to and fro
Til that I herde, as that I welk allone,
How he bigan ful wofully to grone.
75. Tho gan I stalke him softely bihinde,
And sikerly, the sothe for to seyne,
As I can clepe ayein now to my
minde, 521
Right thus to Love he gan him for
to pleyne;
He seyde, "lord! have routhe up-on
my peyne,
Al have I been rebel in myn entente;
Now, *mea culpa*, lord! I me repente.
76. O god, that at thy disposicioun 526
Ledest the fyn, by Iuste purveyaunce,
Of every wight, my lowe confessioun
Accepte in gree, and send me swich
penaunce
As lyketh thee, but from desper-
aunce, 530
That may my goost departe away fro
thee,
Thou be my sheld, for thy benign-
nitee.
77. For certes, lord, so sore hath she
me wounded
That stod in blak, with loking of
hir yën,
That to myn hertes botme it is
y-sounded. 535
Thorough which I woot that I not
nedes dyen;
This is the worste, I dar me not
bi-wryen;
And wel the hotter been the gledes
rede,
That men hem wryen with asshen
pale and dede."
78. With that he smoot his heed adoun
anoon, 540
And gan to motre, I noot what,
trewely.

- And I with that gan stille away to
goon,
And leet ther-of as no-thing wist
hadde I,
And come ayein anoon and stood
him by,
And seyde, "a-wake, ye slepen al
to longe; 545
It semeth nat that love dooth yow
longe.
79. That slepen so that no man may
yow wake.
Who sey ever or this so dul a man?"
"Ye, freend," quod he, "do ye your
hedes ake 549
For love, and lat me liven as I can."
But though that he for wo was pale
and wan,
Yet made he tho as fresh a conte-
nauunce,
As though he shulde have led the
newe daunce.
80. This passed forth, til now, this other
day, 554
It fel that I com roming al allone
Into his chaumbre, and fond how
that he lay
Up-on his bed; but man so sore grone
Ne herde I never, and what that
was his mone,
Ne wiste I nought; for, as I was
cominge,
Al sodeynly he lefte his compleyn-
inge.
81. Of which I took somewhat susce-
picioun, 561
And neer I com, and fond he wepte
sore;
And god so wis be my savacioun,
As never of thing hadde I no routhe
more.
For neither with engyn, ne with no
lore, 565
Unethes mighte I fro the deeth him
kepe;
That yet fele I myn herte for him
wepe.
82. And god wot, never, sith that I was
born,
- Was I so bisy no man for to preche,
Ne never was to wight so depe
y-sworn, 570
Or he me tolde who mighte been
his leche.
But now to yow rehersen al his
speche,
Or alle his woful wordes for to
soune,
Ne bid me not, but ye wol see me
sowne.
83. But for to save his lyf, and elles
nought, 575
And to non harm of yow, thus am I
driven;
And for the love of god that us hath
wrought,
Swich chere him dooth, that he and
I may liven.
Now have I plat to yow myn herte
schriven;
And sin ye woot that myn entente is
clene, 580
Tak hede ther-of, for I non yvel
mene.
84. And right good thrift, I pray to god,
have ye,
That han swich oon y-caught with-
oute net;
And be ye wys, as ye ben fair to see,
Wel in the ring than is the ruby set.
Ther were never two so wel y-met,
Whan ye ben his al hool, as he is
youre:
Ther mighty god yet graunte us see
that heure!
85. 'Nay, therof spak I not, a, ha!'
quod she,
'As helpe me god, ye shenden every
deel!' 590
'O mercy, dere nece,' anoon quod
he,
'What-so I spak, I mente nought
but weel,
By Mars the god, that helmed is of
steel;
Now beth nought wrooth, my blood,
my nece dere.'
'Now wel,' quod she, 'foryeven be
it here!' 595

86. With this he took his leve, and
 hoom he wente;
 And lord, how he was glad and wel
 bigoon!
 Criseyde aroos, no lenger she ne
 stente,
 But straught in-to hir closet wente
 anoon,
 And sette here doun as stille as any
 stoon, 600
 And every word gan up and doun
 to winde,
 That he hadde seyde, as it com hir to
 minde;
87. And wex somdel astonied in hir
 thought,
 Right for the newe cas; but whan
 that she
 Was ful avysed, tho fond she right
 nought 605
 Of peril, why she oughte afered
 be.
 For man may love, of possibilitee,
 A womman so, his herte may to-
 breste,
 And she nought love ayein, but-if
 hir leste.
88. But as she sat allone and thoughte
 thus, 610
 Thascry aroos at skarmish al with-
 oute,
 And men cryde in the strete, 'see,
 Troilus
 Hath right now put to flight the
 Grekes route!'
 With that gan al hir meynee for to
 shoute,
 'A! go we see, caste up the latis
 wyde; 615
 For thurgh this strete he moot to
 palays ryde;
89. For other wey is fro the yate noon
 Of Dardanus, ther open is the
 cheyne.'
 With that com he and al his folk
 anoon
 An esy pas rydinge, in routes
 tweyne, 620
 Right as his happy day was, sooth
 to seyne,
- For which, men say, may nought
 disturbed be
 That shal bityden of necessitee.
90. This Troilus sat on his haye stede,
 Al armed, save his heed, ful richely,
 And wounded was his hors, and gan
 to blede, 626
 On whiche he rood a pas, ful softly;
 But swich a knightly sighte, trewely,
 As was on him, was nought, with-
 outen faille,
 To loke on Mars, that god is of
 batayle. 630
91. So lyk a man of armes and a knight
 He was to seen, fulfild of heigh
 prowesse;
 For bothe he hadde a body and a
 might
 To doon that thing, as wel as hardi-
 nesse;
 And eek to seen him in his gere
 him dresse, 635
 So fresh, so yong, so weldy semed
 he,
 It was an heven up-on him for to
 see.
92. His helm to-hewen was in twenty
 places,
 That by a tissew heng, his bak bi-
 hinde,
 His sheld to-dasshed was with
 swerdes and maces, 640
 In which men mighte many an arwe
 finde
 That thirled hadde horn and nerf
 and rinde;
 And ay the peple cryde, 'here
 cometh our loye,
 And, next his brother, holdere up of
 Troye!'
93. For which he wex a litel reed for
 shame, 645
 Whan he the peple up-on him herde
 cryen,
 That to biholde it was a noble
 game,
 How sobrelieche he caste doun his
 yēn.
 Cryseyda gan al his chere aspyen,

- And leet so softe it in hir herte
sinke, 650
That to hir-self she seyde, 'who yaf
me drinke?' *to the* 655
94. For of hir owene thought she wex
al reed,
Remembringe hir right thus, 'lo,
this is he
Which that myn uncle swereth he
moot be deed,
But I on him have mercy and
pitee;' 655
And with that thought, for pure
a-shamed, she
Gan in hir heed to pulle, and that
as faste,
Why! he and al the peple for-by
paste,
95. And gan to caste and rollen up and
doun
With-inne hir thought his excellent
prowesse, 660
And his estat and also his renoun,
His wit, his shap, and cek his gen-
tillesse;
But most hir favour was, for his dis-
tresse
Was al for hir, and thoughte it was
a routhe
To sleen swich oon, if that he mente
trouthe. 665
96. Now mighte som envyouus Iangle
thus,
'This was a sodeyn love, how mighte
it be
That she so lightly lovede Troilus
Right for the firste sighte; ye, par-
dee?'
Now who-so seyth so, mote he never
thee! *pardee* 670
For every thing, a ginning, hath it
nede
Er al be wrought, with-ouen any
drede.
97. For I sey nought that she so sodeynly
Yaf him hir love, but that she gan
enlyne
To lyke him first, and I have told
yow why; 675
- And after that, his manhod and his
pyne
Made love with-inne hir for to
myne,
For which, by proces and by good
servyse,
He gat hir love, and in no sodeyn
wyse.
98. And also blisful Venus, wel arayed,
Sat in hir seventh hous of hevене
tho, 681
Disposed wel, and with aspectes
payed, *in a mynne*
To helpen sely Troilus of his wo.
And, sooth to seyn, she nas nat al
a fo
To Troilus in his nativitee; 685
God woot that wel the soner spedde
he.
99. Now lat us stinte of Troilus a
throwe,
That rydeth forth, and lat us tourne
faste
Un-to Criseyde, that heng hir heed
ful lowe,
Ther-as she sat allone, and gan to
caste 690
Wher-on she wolde apoynte hir at
the laste,
If it so were hir eem ne wolde
cesse,
For Troilus, up-on hir for to
presse.
100. And, lord! so she gan in hir
thought argue
In this matere of which I have yow
told, 695
And what to doon best were, and
what eschue,
That plyted she ful ofte in many
fold.
Now was hir herte warm, now was
it cold,
And what she thoughte somewhat
shal I wryte,
As to myn auctor listeth for to
endyte. 700
101. She thoughte wel, that Troilus
persone

- She knew by sighte and eek his
gentillesse,
And thus she seyde, 'al were it
nought to done,
To graunte him love, yet, for his
worthinesse,
It were honour, with pley and with
gladnesse, 705
In honestee, with swich a lord to
dele,
For myne estat, and also for his
hede.
102. Eek, wel wot I my kinges sone is
he;
And sith he hath to see me swich
delyt,
If I wolde utterly his sighte
flee, 710
Paraunter he mighte have me in
dispyt,
Thurgh which I mighte stonde in
worse plyt;
Now were I wys, me hate to
purchase,
With-onten nede, ther I may stonde
in grace?
103. In every thing, I woot ther lyth
mesure. 715
For though a man forbede dronk-
nesse,
He nought for-bet that every
creature
Be drinkeles for alwey, as I
gesse;
Eek sith I woot for me is his dis-
tresse,
I ne oughte not for that thing him
despyse, 720
Sith it is so, he meneth in good
wyse.
104. And eek I knowe, of longe tyme
agoon,
His thewes goode, and that he is
not nyce.
Ne avauntour, seyth men, certein,
is he noon; 724
To wys is he to do so gret a vyce;
Ne als I nel him never so cheryce,
That he may make avaunt, by luste
cause;
- He shal me never binde in swiche
a clause.
105. Now set a cas, the hardest is,
y-wis,
Men mighten deme that he loveth
me: 730
What dishonour were it un-to me,
this?
May I him lette of that? why nay,
pardee!
I knowe also, and alday here and
see,
Men loven women al this toun
aboute;
Be they the wers? why, nay, with-
outen doute. 735
106. I think eek how he able is for to
have
Of all this noble toun the thriftieste,
To been his love, so she hir honour
save;
For out and out he is the worthieste,
Save only Ector, which that is the
beste. 740
And yet his lyf al lyth now in my
cure,
But swich is love, and eek myn
aventure.
107. Ne me to love, a wonder is it
nought;
For wel wot I my-self, so god me
spede.
Al wolde I that noon wistē of this
thought, 745
I am oon the fayreste, out of drede,
And goodlieste, who-so taketh
hede;
And so men seyn in al the toun of
Troye.
What wonder is it though he of me
have loye? 749
108. I am myn owene woman, wel at ese,
I thank it god, as after myn estat;
Right yonge, and stonde unteyd in
luste lese,
With-onten lalousye or swich
debat;
Shal noon housbonde seyn to me
"chekmat!"

- For either they ben ful of
 Ialousye, 755
 Or maisterful, or loven novelrye.
109. What shal I doon? to what fyn
 live I thus?
 Shal I nat loven, in cas if that me
 leste?
 What, *par dieux!* I am nought
 religious!
 And though that I myn herte sette
 at reste 760
 Upon this knight, that is the
 worthieste,
 And kepe alwey myn honour and
 my name,
 By alle right, it may do me no
 shame.'
110. But right as whan the sonne shyneth
 brighte,
 In March, that chaungeth ofte
 tyme his face, 765
 And that a cloud is put with wind
 to flighte
 Which over-sprat the sonne as
 for a space,
 A cloudy thought gan thorough hir
 soule pace,
 That over-spradde hir brighte
 thoughtes alle,
 So that for fere almost she gan
 to falle. 770
111. That thought was this, 'Allas! sin
 I am free,
 Sholde I now love, and putte in
 Iupartye
 My sikernesse, and thrallen liber-
 tee?
 Allas! how dorste I thenken that
 folye?
 May I nought wel in other folk
 aspye 775
 Hir dredful Ioye, hir constreynt,
 and hir peyne?
 Ther loveth noon, that she nath
 why to pleyne.
112. For love is yet the moste stormy
 lyf,
 Right of him-self, that ever was
 bigonne;
- For ever som mistrust, or nyce
 stryf, 780
 Ther is in love, som cloud is over
 the sonne:
 Ther-to we wreeched wommen no-
 thing conne,
 Whan us is wo, but wepe and sitte
 and thinke;
 Our wreche is this, our owene wo
 to drinke.
113. Also these wikked tonges been so
 prest 785
 To speke us harm, eek men be
 so untrewed,
 That, right anon as cessed is hir
 lest,
 So cesseth love, and forth to love
 a newe:
 But harm y-doon, is doon, who-so
 it rewe.
 For though these men for love
 hem first to-rende, 790
 Ful sharp biginning breketh ofte
 at ende.
114. How ofte tyme hath it y-knowen
 be,
 The treson, that to womman hath
 be do?
 To what fyn is swich love, I can
 nat see,
 Or wher bigomth it, whan it is
 ago; 795
 Ther is no wight that woot, I trowe
 so,
 Wher it bycomth; lo, no wight on
 it sporneth;
 That erst was no-thing, in-to nought
 it torneth.
115. How bisy, if I love, eek moste I
 be
 To plesen hem that Iangle of love,
 and demen, 800
 And coye hem, that they sey non
 harm of me?
 For though ther be no cause, yet
 hem semen
 Al be for harm that folk hir freendes
 quemen; *rethron*
 And who may stoppen every wikked
 tonge,

- Or soun of belles whyl that they
be ronge?' 805
116. And after that, hir thought bigan
to clere,
And seyde, 'he which that no-thing
under-taketh,
No-thing ne acheveth, be him looth
or dere.'
And with an other thought hir
herte quaketh;
Than slepeth hope, and after dreed
awaketh; 810
Now hoot, now cold; but thus,
bi-twixen tweye,
She rist hir up, and went hir for
to pleye.
117. Adoun the steyre anoon-right tho
she wente
In-to the gardin, with her neces
three,
And up and doun ther made many
a wente, 815
Flexippe, she, Tharbe, and Antig-
one,
To pleyen, that it Ioye was to see;
And other of hir wommen, a gret
route,
Hir folwede in the gardin al aboute.
118. This yerd was large, and rayled
alle the aleyes, 820
And shadwed wel with blosmy
bowes grene,
And benched newe, and sonded
alle the weyes,
In which she walketh arm in arm
bi-twene;
Til at the laste Antigone the shene
Gan on a Troian song to singe
clere 825
That it an heven was hir voys to
here. —
119. She seyde, 'O love, to whom I have
and shal
Ben humble subgit, trewe in myn
entente,
As I best can, to yow, lord, yeve
ich al
For ever-more, myn hertes lust to
rente. 830
- For never yet thy grace no wight
sente
So blisful cause as me, my lyf to
lede
In alle Ioye and seurtee, out of
drede. *deult*
120. Ye, blisful god, han me so wel
beset
In love, y-wis, that al that bereth
lyf 835
Imaginen ne cowde how to ben
bet;
For, lord, with-outen Ialousye or
stryf,
I love oon which that is most
ententyf
To serven wel, unwery or unfeyned,
That ever was, and leest with harm
distreyned. 840
121. As he that is the welle of worthi-
nesse,
Of trouthe ground, mirour of good-
liheed,
Of wit Appollo, stoon of siker-
nesse,
Of vertu rote, of lust findere and
heed,
Thurgh which is alle sorwe fro me
deed, 845
Y-wis, I love him best, so doth he
me;
Now good thrift have he, wher-so
that he be!
122. Whom sholde I thanke but yow,
god of love,
Of al this blisse, in which to bathe
I ginne?
And thanked be ye, lord, for that
I love! 850
This is the righte lyf that I am
inne,
To flemen alle manere vyce and
sinne:
This doth me so to vertu for to
entende.
That day by day I in my wil
amende.
123. And who-so seyth that for to love
is vyce, 855

- Or thraldom, though he fele in it
distressse,
He outhir is envyous, or right
nyce,
Or is unmyghty, for his shrewed-
nesse,
To loven; for swich maner folk,
I gesse,
Defamen love, as no-thing of him
knowe; 860
They speken, but they bente never
his bowe.
124. What is the sonne wers, of kinde
righte,
Though that a man, for feblesse of
his yën,
May nought endure on it to see
for brighte?
Or love the wers, though wrecches
on it cryen? 865
No wele is worth, that may no
sorwe dryen.
And for-thy, who that hath an
heed of verre, *handwritten*
Fro cast of stones war him in the
werre!
125. But I with al myn herte and al my
might,
As I have seyde, wol love, un-to my
laste, 870
My dere herte, and al myn owene
knight,
In which myn herte growen is so
faste,
And his in me, that it shal ever
laste.
Al dredde I first to love him to
biginne,
Now woot I wel, ther is no peril
inne.' 875
126. And of hir song right with that
word she stente,
And therwith-al, 'now, nece,' quod
Criseyde,
'Who made this song with so good
entente?'
Antigone answerde anon, and
seyde,
'Ma dame, y-wis, the goodlieste
mayde 880
- Of grete estat in al the toun of
Troye;
And let hir lyf in most honour and
loye.'
127. 'Forsothe, so it semeth by hir
song,'
Quod tho Criseyde, and gan ther-
with to syke,
And seyde, 'lord, is there swich
blisse among 885
These lovers, as they conne faire
endyte?'
'Ye, wis,' quod fresh Antigone the
whyte,
'For alle the folk that han or been
on lyve
Ne conne wel the blisse of love
discryve.
128. But wene ye that every wrecche
woot 890
The parfit blisse of love? why, nay,
y-wis;
They wenen al be love, if oon be
hoot;
Do wey, do wey, they woot no-
thing of this!
Men mosten axe at seyntes if it is
Aught fair in hevене; why? for
they conne telle; 895
And axen fendes, is it foul in
helle.'
129. Criseyde un-to that purpos nought
answerde,
But seyde, 'y-wis, it wol be night
as faste.'
But every word which that she of
hir herde,
She gan to prenten in hir herte
faste; 900
And ay gan love hir lasse for to
agaste
Than it dide erst, and sinken in
hir herte,
That she wex somewhat able to
converte.
130. The dayes honour, and the hevenes
yë,
The nightes fo, al this clepe I the
sonne, 905

- Gan westren faste, and downward
for to wrye,
As he that hadde his dayes cours
y-ronne;
And whyte thinges wexen dimme
and donne
For lak of light, and sterres for to
appere,
That she and al hir folk in wente
y-ferre. 910
131. So whan it lyked hir to goon to
reste,
And voyded weren they that voy-
den oughte,
She seyde, that to slepe wel hir
leste.
Hir wommen sone til hir bed hir
broughte.
Whan al was hust, than lay she
stille, and thoughte 915
Of al this thing the manere and
the wyse.
Reherce it nedeth nought, for ye
ben wyse.
132. A nightingale, upon a cedre
grene,
Under the chambre-wal ther as
she lay,
Ful loude sang ayein the mone
shene, 920
Paraunter, in his briddes wyse, a
lay
Of love, that made hir herte fresh
and gay.
That herked she so longe in good
entente,
Til at the laste the dede sleep hir
hente.
133. And, as she sleep, anoon-right tho
hir mette. 925
How that an egle, fethered whyt
as boon, *and*
Under hir brest his longe clawes
sette,
And out hir herte he rente, and
that a-noon,
And dide his herte in-to hir brest
to goon,
Of which she nought agroos ne no-
thing smerte, 930
- And forth he fleigh, with herte left
for herte.
134. Now lat hir slepe, and we our tales
holde
Of Troilus, that is to paleys riden,
Fro the scarmuch, of the whiche I
tolde,
And in his chambre sit, and hath
abiden 935
Til two or three of his messages
yeden
For Pandarus, and soughten him
ful faste,
Til they him founde, and broughte
him at the laste.
135. This Pandarus com leping in at
ones
And seide thus, 'who hath ben
wel y-bete 940
To-day with swerdes, and with
slinge-stones,
But Troilus, that hath caught him
an hete?'
And gan to lape, and seyde, 'lord,
so ye swete!
But rys, and lat us soupe and go
to reste;'
And he answerde him, 'do we as
thee leste.' 945
136. With al the haste goodly that they
mighte,
They spedde hem fro the souper
un-to bedde;
And every wight out at the dore
him dighte,
And wher him list upon his wey
he spedde;
But Troilus, that thoughte his herte
bledde 950
For wo, til that he herde som tyd-
inge,
He seyde, 'freend, shal I now wepe
or singe?'
137. Quod Pandarus, 'ly stille, and lat
me slepe,
And don thyn hood, thy nedes
spedde be;
And chese, if thou wolt singe or
daunce or lepe; 955

*sewen
fethered*

*answer
now*

- At shorte wordes, thou shalt trowe
me. —
Sire, my nece wol do wel by
thee,
And love thee best, by god and by
my trouthe,
But lak of pursuit make it in thy
slouthe.
138. For thus ferforth I have thy work
bigonne, 960
Fro day to day, til this day, by the
morwe,
Hir love of frendship have I to
thee wonne,
And also hath she leyd hir feyth to
borwe.
Algate a foot is hameled of thy
sorwe.' *cut off*
What sholde I lenger sermon of it
holde? 965
As ye han herd bifore, al he him
tolde.
139. But right as floures, thorough the
colde of night
Y-closed, stoupen on hir stalkes
love,
Redressen hem a-yein the sonne
bright,
And spreden on hir kinde cours
by rowe; 970
Right so gan tho his eyen up to
throwe
This Troilus, and seyde, 'O Venus
dere,
Thy might, thy grace, y-heried be
it here!'
140. And to Pandare he held up bothe
his bondes,
And seyde, 'lord, al thyn be that I
have; 975
For I am hool, al brosten been my
bondes;
A thousand Troians who so that
me yave,
Eche after other, god so wis me
save,
Ne mighte me so gladen; lo,
myn herte,
It spredeth so for Ioye, it wol to-
sterte! 980
141. But lord, how shal I doon, how
shal I liven?
Whan shal I next my dere herte
see?
How shal this longe tyme a-wey
be driven,
Til that thou be ayein at hir fro
me?
Thou mayst answer, "a-byd, a-
byd," but he 985
That hangeth by the nekke, sooth
to seyne,
In grete disese abydeeth for the
peyne.'
142. 'Al esily, now, for the love of
Marte,'
Quod Pandarus, 'for every thing
hath tyme;
So longe abyd til that the night
departe; 990
For al so siker as thou lyst here
by me,
And god toforn, I wol be there at
pryme,
And for thy werk somewhat as I
shal seye,
Or on som other wight this charge
leye.
143. For pardec, god wot, I have ever
yt 995
Ben redy thee to serve, and to this
night
Have I nought fayned, but emforth
my wit
Don al thy lust, and shal with al
my might.
Do now as I shal seye, and fare
a-right;
And if thou nilt, wyte al thy-self
thy care, 1000
On me is nought along thyn yvel
fare.
144. I woot wel that thou wyser art
than I
A thousand fold, but if I were as
thou,
God helpe me so, as I wolde out-
rely,
Right of myn owene hond, wryte
hir right now 1005

- A lettre, in which I wolde hir
tellen how
I ferde amis, and hir beseche of
routhe ;
Now help thy-self, and leve it not
for slouthe.
145. And I my-self shal ther-with to hir
goon ;
And whan thou wost that I am
with hir there, 1010
Worth thou up-on a courser right
anoon,
Ye, hardily, right in thy beste gere,
And ryd forth by the place, as
nought ne were,
And thou shalt finde us, if I may,
sittinge
At som windowe, in-to the strete
lokinge. 1015
146. And if thee list, than maystow us
saluwe,
And up-on me makē thy conte-
naunce ;
But, by thy lyf, be war and faste
eschuwe
To tarien ought, god shilde us fro
mischaunce !
Ryd forth thy wey, and hold thy
gouvernaunce ; 1020
And we shal speke of thee som-
what, I trowe,
Whan thou art goon, to do thyne
eres glowe !
147. Touching thy lettre, thou art wys
y-nough,
I woot thou nilt it digneliche
endyte ;
As make it with these argumentes
tough ; 1025
Ne scrivenish or craftily thou it
wryte ;
Behlotte it with thy teres eek a
lyte ;
And if thou wryte a goodly word
al softē,
Though it be good, reherce it not
to ofte.
148. For though the beste harpour upon
lyve 1030
- Wolde on the beste souned Ioly
harpe .
That ever was, with alle his fingres
fyve,
Touche ay o streng, or ay o werbul
harpe,
Were his nayles poynted never so
sharpe,
It shulde maken every wight to
dulle, 1035
To here is glee, and of his strokes
fulle.
149. Ne Iompre eek no discordaunt
thing y-ferē,
As thus, to usen termes of phisyk ;
In loves termes, hold of thy ma-
tere
The forme alwey, and do that it be
lyk ; 1040
For if a peyntour wolde peynte a
pyk
With asses feet, and hede it as an
ape,
It cordeth nought ; so nere it but
a Iape.'
150. This counseyl lyked wel to Troilus ;
But, as a dreedful lover, he scyde
this : — 1045
'Allas, my dere brother Pandarus,
I am ashamed for to wryte, y-wis,
Lest of myn innocence I seyde
a-mis,
Or that she nolde it for despyt
receyve ;
Thanne were I deed, there mighte
it no-thing weyve.' 1050
151. To that Pandare answerde, 'if thee
lest,
Do that I seye, and lat me ther-
with goon ;
For by that lord that formed est
and west,
I hope of it to bringe answerē
anoon,
Right of hir hond, and if that thou
nilt noon, 1055
Lat be ; and sory mote he been
his lyve,
Ayeins thy lust that helpeth thee
to thryve.'

152. Quod Troilus, '*Depardieux*, I as-
sente;
Sin that thee list, I will aryse and
wryte;
And blisful god preye ich, with
good entente, 1060
The vyage, and the lettre I shal
endyte,
So spede it; and thou, Minerva,
the whyte,
Yif thou me wit my lettre to de-
vyse:'
And sette him down, and wroot
right in this wyse. —
153. First he gan hir his righte lady
calle, 1065
His hertes lyf, his lust, his sorwes
leche,
His blisse, and eek this othere
termes alle,
That in swich cas these loveres alle
seche;
And in ful humble wyse, as in his
speche,
He gan him recomaunde un-to hir
grace; 1070
To telle al how, it axeth muchel
space.
154. And after this, ful lowly he hir
prayde
To be nought wrooth, though he,
of his folye,
So hardy was to hir to wryte, and
seyde,
That love it made, or elles moste
he dye, 1075
And pitously gan mercy for to
crye;
And after that he seyde, and ley
ful loude,
Him-self was litel worth, and lesse
he coude;
155. And that she sholde han his con-
ning excused,
That litel was, and eek he dredde
hir so, 1080
And his unworthinesse he ay
acused;
And after that, than gan he telle
his wo;
- But that was endeles, with-outen
ho;
And seyde, he wolde in trouthe
alwey him hold; —
And radde it over, and gan the
lettre folde. 1085
156. And with his salte teres gan he
bathe
The ruby in his signet, and it
sette
Upon the wex deliverliche and
rathe;
Ther-with a thousand tymes, er he
lette,
He kiste tho the lettre that he
shette, 1090
And seyde, 'lettre, a blisful des-
tence
Thee shapen is, my lady shal thee
see.'
157. This Pandare took the lettre, and
that by tyme
A-morwe, and to his neeces paleys
sterete,
And faste he swoor, that it was
passed pryme, 1095
And gan to lape, and seyde, 'y-wis,
myn herte,
So fresh it is, al-though it sore
smerte,
I may not slepe never a Mayes
morwe;
I have a Ioly wo, a lusty sorwe.'
158. Criseyde, whan that she hir uncle
herde, 1100
With dreedful herte, and desirous
to here
The cause of his cominge, thus
answerde,
'Now by your feyth, myn uncle,'
quod she, 'dere,
What maner windes gydeth yow
now here?
Tel us your Ioly wo and your
penaunce, 1105
How ferforth be ye put in loves
daunce.'
159. 'By god,' quod he, 'I hoppe alwey
bihinde!'

- And she to-laugh, it thoughte hir
herte breste.
Quod Pandarus, 'loke alwey that ye
finde
Game in myn hood, but herkneþ,
if yow leste; 1110
Ther is right now come in-to toune
a geste,
A Grek espye, and telleth newe
þinges,
For which come I to telle yow
tydinges.
160. Into the gardin go we, and we shal
here,
Al prevely, of this a long ser-
moun.' 1115
With that they wenten arm in arm
y-fere
In-to the gardin from the chaumbre
doun.
And whan that he so fer was that
the soun
Of that he speke, no man here
michte,
He seyde hir thus, and out the
lettre plighte, 1120
161. 'Lo, he that is al hoolly youre
free
Him recomaundeth lowly to your
grace,
And sent to you this lettre here by
me;
Avyseth you on it, whan ye han
space,
And of som goodly answeere yow
purchase; 1125
Or, helpe me god, so pleynly for to
seyne,
He may not longe liven for his
peyne.'
162. Ful dredfully tho gan she stonde
stille,
And took it nought, but al hir
humble chere
Gan for to change, and seyde,
'scrit ne bille, 1130
For love of god, that toucheth swich
matere,
Ne bring me noon; and also, uncle
dere,
- To myn estat have more reward, I
preye,
Than to his lust; what sholde I
more seyde?
163. And loketh now if this be reson-
able, 1135
And letteth nought, for favour ne
for slouthe,
To seyn a sooth; now were it
covenable
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 re-
preve? 1140
Ber it a-yein, for him that ye on
leve!'
164. This Pandarus gan on hir for to
stare,
And seyde, 'now is this the grettest
wonder
That ever I sey! lat be this nyce
fare!
To deethe mote I smiten be with
thonder, 1145
If, for the citee which that stondeþ
yonder,
Wolde I a lettre un-to yow bringe
or take
To harm of yow; what list yow
thus it make?
165. But thus ye faren, well neigh alle
and some,
That he that most desireth yow to
serve, 1150
Of him ye recche leest wher he
bicometh,
And whether that he live or elles
sterve.
But for al that that ever I may
deserve,
Refuse it nought,' quod he, and
hente hir faste,
And in hir bosom the lettre doun
he thraste, 1155
166. And seyde hir, 'now cast it away
anoon,
That folk may seen and gauren on
us tweye.'

- Quod she, 'I can abyde til they be
goon,'
And gan to smyle, and seyde him,
'eem, I preye,
Swich answeere as yow list your-self
purveye, 1160
For trewely I nil no lettre wryte.'
'No? than wol I,' quod he, 'so ye
endyte.'
167. Therwith she lough, and seyde, 'go
we dyne.'
And he gan at him-self to iape faste,
And seyde, 'nece, I have so greet a
pyne 1165
For love, that every other day I
faste' —
And gan his beste Iapes forth to
caste;
And made hir so to laughe at his
folye,
That she for laughter wende for to
dye.
168. And whan that she was comen in-to
halle, 1170
'Now, eem,' quod she, 'we wol go
dyne anoon;
And gan some of hir women to hir
calle,
And streyght in-to hir chaumbre
gan she goon;
But of hir businesses, this was oon
A-monges othere thinges, out of
drede, 1175
Ful prively this lettre for to rede;
169. Avysed word by word in every lyne,
And fond no lak, she thoughte he
coude good;
And up it putte and went hir in to
dyne.
And Pandarus, that in a study
stood, 1180
Er he was war, she took him by the
hood,
And seyde, 'ye were caught er that
ye wiste;'
'I vouche sauf,' quod he, 'do what
yow liste.'
170. Tho wessen they, and sette hem
doun and ete;
- And after noon ful sleyly Pan-
darus 1185
Gan drawe him to the window next
the strete,
And seyde, 'nece, who hath arayed
thus
The yonder hous, that stant afor-
weyn us?'
'Which hous?' quod she, and gan
for to biholde,
And knew it wel, and whos it was
him tolde, 1190
171. And fillen forth in speche of thinges
smale,
And seten in the window bothe
tweye.
Whan Pandarus saw tyme un-to his
tale,
And saw well that hir folk were alle
aweye,
'Now, nece myn, tel on,' quod he,
'I seye, 1195
How lyketh yow the lettre that ye
woot?
Can he ther-on? for, by my trouthe,
I noot.'
172. Therwith al rosy hewed tho wex
she,
And gan to humme, and seyde, 'so
I trowe.'
'Aqyte him wel, for goddes love,'
quod he; 1200
'My-self to medes wol the lettre
sowe,'
And held his hondes up, and sat on
knowe,
'Now, goode nece, be it never so
lyte,
Yif me the labour, it to sowe and
plyte.'
173. 'Ye, for I can so wryte,' quod she
tho; 1205
'And eek I noot what I sholde to
him seye.'
'Nay, nece,' quod Pandare, 'sey
not so;
Yet at the leste thanketh him, I
preye,
Of his good wil, and doth him not
to deye.

- Now for the love of me, my nece
dere, 1210
Refuseth not at this tyme my
preyere.'
174. 'Depar-dieux,' quod she, 'god leve
al be wel!
God helpe me so, this is the firste
lettre
That ever I wroot, ye, al or any
del.'
And in-to a closet, for to avyse hir
bette, 1215
She wente allone, and gan hir
herte unfette
Out of disdaynes prison but a lyte;
And sette hir down, and gan a
lettre wryte,
175. Of which to telle in short is myn
entente
Theffect, as fer 'as I can under-
stonde:— 1220
She thonked him of al that he wel
mente
Towardes hir, but holden him in
honde
She nolde nought ne make hir-
selven bonde
In love, but as his suster, him to
plese,
She wolde fayn, to doon his herte
an ese. 1225
176. She shette it, and to Pandarus gan
goon,
There as he sat and loked in-to
strete,
And down she sette hir by him on
a stoon
Of Iaspere, up-on a quishshin gold
y-bete,
And seyde, 'as wisly helpe me god
the grete, 1230
I never dide a thing with more
peyne
Than wryte this, to which ye me
constreyne;'
177. And took it him: he thonked hir
and seyde,
'God woot, of thing ful ofte looth
bigonne
- Cometh ende good; and nece myn,
Criseyde, 1235
That ye to him of hard now ben
y-wonne
Oughte he be glad, by god and
yonder sonne!
For-why men seyth, "impressiounes
lighte
Ful lightly been ay redy to the
flighte,"
178. But ye han pleyed tyraunt neigh
to longe, 1240
And hard was it your herte for to
grave;
Now stint, that ye no longer on it
honge,
Al wolde ye the forme of daunger
save.
But hasteth yow to doon him Ioye
have;
For trusteth wel, to longe y-doon
hardnesse 1245
Causeth despyt ful often, for dis-
tresse.'
179. And right as they declamed this
matere,
Lo, Troilus, right at the stretes
ende,
Com ryding with his tenthe some
y-fere,
Al softely, and thiderward gan
bende 1250
Ther-as they sete, as was his way
to wende
To paleys-ward; and Pandare him
aspyde,
And seyde, 'nece, y-see who cometh
here ryde!
180. O flee not in, he seeth us, I sup-
pose;
Lest he may thinke that ye him
eschuwe.' 1255
'Nay, nay,' quod she, and wex as
reed as rose.
With that he gan hir humbly to
saluwe,
With dredful chere, and ofte his
hewes muwe;
And up his look debonairly he
caste,

*mylde
power to
herte
wende*

- And bekked on Pandare, and forth
he paste. 1260
181. God woot if he sat on his hors
a-right,
Or goodly was beseyn, that ilke
day!
God woot wher he was lyk a manly
knight!
What sholde I drecche, or telle of
his aray?
Criseyde, which that alle these
thinges say, 1265
To telle in short, hir lyked al
y-fere,
His persone, his aray, his look, his
chere,
182. His goodly manere and his gen-
tillesse,
So wel, that never, sith that she
was born,
Ne hadde she swich routhe of his
distresse; 1270
And how-so she hath hard ben
her-biforn,
To god hope I, she hath now
caught a thorn.
She shal not pulle it out this nexte
wyke;
God sende mo swich thornes on to
pyke!
183. Pandare, which that stood hir faste
by, 1275
Felte iren hoot, and he bigan to
smyte,
And seyde, 'nece, I pray yow
hertely,
Tel me that I shal axen yow a lyte.
A womman, that were of his deeth
to wyte,
With-uten his gilt, but for hir
lakked routhe, 1280
Were it wel doon?' Quod she,
'nay, by my trouthe!'
184. 'God helpe me so,' quod he, 'ye
sey me sooth.
Ye felen wel your-self that I not
lye;
Lo, yond he rit!' Quod she, 'ye,
so he dooth.'
- 'Wel,' quod Pandare, 'as I have
told yow thrye, 1285
Lat be your nyce shame and your
folye,
And spek with him in esing of his
herte;
Lat nycetee not do yow bothe
smerte.'
185. But ther-on was to heven and to
done;
Considered al thing, it may not
be; 1290
And why, for shame; and it were
eek to sone
To graunten him so greet a lib-
ertee.
'For playnly hir entente,' as seyde
she,
'Was for to love him unwist, if she
myghte,
And guerdon him with no-thing
but with sighte.' 1295
186. But Pandarus thoughte, 'it shal
not be so,
If that I may; this nyce opin-
ioun
Shal not be holden fully yeres
two.'
What sholde I make of this a long
sermoun?
He moste assente on that con-
clusioun 1300
As for the tyme; and whan that
it was eve,
And al was wel, he roos and took
his leve.
187. And on his wey ful faste homward
he spedde,
And right for Ioye he felte his
herte daunce;
And Troilus he fond alone a-
bedde, 1305
That lay as dooth these loveres,
in a traunce,
Bitwixen hope and derk desper-
aunce.
But Pandarus, right at his in-com-
inge,
He song, as who seyth, 'lo! sum-
what I bringe.'

188. And seyde, 'who is in his bed so
 sone 1310
 Y-buried thus?' 'It am I, freend,'
 quod he.
 'Who, Troilus? nay helpe me so
 the mone,'
 Quod Pandarus, 'thou shalt aryse
 and see
 A charme that was sent right now
 to thee,
 The which can helen thee of thyn
 accesse, 1315
 If thou do forth-with al thy besin-
 nesse.'
189. 'Ye, through the might of god!'
 quod Troilus.
 And Pandarus gan him the lettre
 take,
 And seyde, 'pardee, god hath
 holpen us;
 Have here a light, and loke on al
 this blake.' 1320
 But ofte gan the herte glade and
 quake
 Of Troilus, whyl that he gan it
 rede,
 So as the wordes yave him hope
 or drede.
190. But fynally, he took al for the
 beste
 That she him wroot, for sumwhat
 he biheld 1325
 On which, him thoughte, he mighte
 his herte reste,
 Al covered she the wordes under
 sheld.
 Thus to the more worthy part he
 held,
 That, what for hope and Pandarus
 biheste,
 His grete wo for-yede he at the
 leste. 1330
191. But as we may alday our-selven
 see,
 Through more wode or col, the
 more fyr;
 Right so encrees of hope, of what
 it be,
 Therwith ful ofte encreseth eek
 desyr;
- Or, as an ook cometh of a litel
 spyr, 1335
 So through this lettre, which that
 she him sente,
 Encrees gan desyr, of which he
 brente.
192. Wherefore I seye alwey, that day
 and night
 This Troilus gan to desiren more
 Than he dide erst, thurgh hope,
 and dide his might 1340
 To pressen on, as by Pandarus lore,
 And wryten to hir of his sorwes
 sore
 Fro day to day; he leet it not
 refreyde,
 That by Pandare he wroot som-
 what or seyde;
193. And dide also his othere observ-
 aunces 1345
 That to a lovere longeth in this
 cas;
 And, after that these dees turnede
 on chaunces,
 So was he outhur glad or seyde
 'allas!'
 And held after his gestes ay his
 pas;
 And aftir swiche answeres as he
 hadde, 1350
 So were his dayes sory outhur
 glade.
194. But to Pandare alwey was his
 recours,
 And pitously gan ay til him to
 pleyne.
 And him bisoughte of rede and
 som socours;
 And Pandarus, that sey his wode
 peyne, 1355
 Wex wel neigh deed for routhe,
 sooth to seyne,
 And bisily with al his herte caste
 Som of his wo to sleen, and that
 as faste;
195. And seyde, 'lord, and freend, and
 brother dere,
 God woot that thy disese dooth me
 wo. 1360

- But woltow stinten al this woful
chere,
And, by my trouthe, or it be dayes
two,
And god to-for, yet shal I shape
it so,
That thou shalt come in-to a certayn
place,
Ther-as thou mayst thy-self hir
preye of grace. 1365
196. And certainly, I noot if thou it
wost,
But tho that been expert in love it
seye,
It is oon of the thinges that further-
eth most,
A man to have a leyser for to
preye,
And siker place his wo for to
biweye; 1370
For in good herte it moot som
routhe impresse,
To here and see the giltles in
distresse.
197. Paraunter thenkestow: though it
be so
That kinde wolde doon hir to
biginne
To han a maner routhe up-on my
wo, 1375
Seyth Daunger, "Nay, thou shalt
me never winne;
So reuleth hir hir hertes goost with-
inne,
That, though she bende, yet she
stant on rote;
What in effect is this un-to my
bote?"
198. Think here-ayeins, whan that the
sturdy ook, 1380
On which men hakketh ofte, for the
nones,
Receyved hath the happy falling
strook,
The grete sweigh doth it come al
at ones
As doon these rokkes or these
milne-stones.
For swifter cours cometh thing that
is of wighte, 1385
- Whan it descendeth, than don
thinges lighte.
199. And reed that boweth down for
every blast,
Ful lightly, cesse wind, it wol
aryse;
But so nil not an ook whan it is
cast;
It nedeth me nought thee longe
to forbyse. 1390
Men shal reioysen of a greet
empryse
Acheved wel, and stant with-ouen
doute,
Al han men been the lenger ther-
aboute.
200. But, Troilus, yet tel me, if thee lest,
A thing now which that I shal
axen thee; 1395
Which is thy brother that thou
lovest best
As in thy verray hertes privetec?'
'Y-wis, my brother Deiphebus,'
quod he.
'Now,' quod Pandare, 'er houres
twyes twelve,
He shal thee ese, unwist of it
him-selve. 1400
201. Now lat me allone, and werken as
I may,'
Quod he; and to Deiphebus wente
he tho
Which hadde his lord and grete
freend ben ay;
Save Troilus, no man he lovede so.
To telle in short, with-ouen wordes
mo, 1405
Quod Pandarus, 'I pray yow that
ye be
Freend to a cause which that
toucheth me.'
202. 'Yis, pardee,' quod Deiphebus,
'wel thow wost,
In al that ever I may, and god
to-fore,
Al nere it but for man I love
most, 1410
My brother Troilus; but sey wher-
fore

- It is; for sith that day that I was
bore,
I nas, ne never-mo to been I
thinke,
Ayeins a thing that mighte thee
for-thinke.'
203. Pandare gan him thonke, and to
him seyde, 1415
'Lo, sire, I have a lady in this toun,
That is my nece, and called is
Criseyde,
Which som men wolden doon op-
pressioun,
And wrongfully have hir posses-
sioun:
Wherfor I of your lordship yow
biseche 1420
To been our freend, with-oute more
speche.'
204. Deiphebus him answerde, 'O, is
not this,
That thou spekest of to me thus
straungely,
Crisëyda, my freend?' He seyde,
'Yis.'
'Than nedeth,' quod Deiphebus
hardely, 1425
Na-more to speke, for trusteth wel,
that I
Wol be hir champioun with spore
and yerde;
I roughte nought though alle hir
foos it herd.
205. But tel me, thou that woost al
this matere,
How I might best awaylen? now
lat see.' 1430
Quod Pandarus, 'if ye, my lord so
dere,
Wolden as now don this honour to
me,
To prayen hir to-morwe, lo, that
she
Come un-to yow hir pleyntes to
devyse,
Hir adversaries wolde of hit
agryse. 1435
206. And if I more dorste preye as
now,
- And chargen yow to have so greet
travayle,
To han som of your bretheren
here with yow,
That mighten to hir cause bet
awayle,
Than, woot I wel, she mighte never
fayle 1440
For to be holpen, what at your
instaunce,
What with hir other freendes gov-
ernaunce.'
207. Deiphebus, which that comen was,
of kinde,
To al honour and bountee to
consente,
Answerde, 'it shal be doon; and
I can finde 1445
Yet getter help to this in myn
entente.
What wolt thou seyn, if I for
Eleyne sente
To speke of this? I trowe it be the
beste;
For she may leden Paris as hir leste.
208. Of Ector, which that is my lord,
my brother, 1450
It nedeth naught to preye him
freend to be;
For I have herd him, o tyme and
eek other,
Speke of Criseyde swich honour,
that he
May seyn no bet, swich hap to
him hath she.
It nedeth nought his helps for to
crave; 1455
He shal be swich, right as we wole
have.
209. Spek thou thy-self also to Troilus
On my bihalve, and pray him with
us dyne.'
'Sirs, al this shal be doon,' quod
Pandarus;
And took his leve, and never gan
to fyne, 1460
But to his neces hous, as streight as
lyne,
He com; and fond hir fro the mete
aryse;

- And sette him down, and spak
right in this wyse.
210. He seyde, 'O veray god, so have
I ronne!
Lo, nece myn, see ye nought how
I swete? 1465
I noot whether ye the more thank
me conne.
Be ye nought war how that fals
Poliphete
Is now aboute eft-sones for to plete,
And bringe on yow advocacyës
newe?'
'I? no,' quod she, and chaunged
al hir hewe. 1470
211. 'What is he more aboute, me to
drecche
And doon me wrong? what shal I
do, allas?
Yet of him-self no-thing ne wolde
I recche,
Nere it for Antenor and Eneas,
That been his freendes in swich
maner cas; 1475
But, for the love of god, myu uncle
dere,
No fors of that, lat him have al
y-fere;
212. With-uten that, I have ynough for
us.'
'Nay,' quod Pandare, 'it shal no-
thing be so.
For I have been right now at
Deiphebus, 1480
And Ector, and myne othere lordes
mo,
And shortly maked eche of hem
his fo;
That, by my thrift, he shal it never
winne
For ought he can, whan that so he
biginne.'
213. And as they casten what was best
to done, 1485
Deiphebus, of his owene curtasye,
Com hir to preye, in his propre
persone,
To holde him on the morwe
companye
- At diner, which she nolde not
denye,
But goodly gan to his preyere
obeye. 1490
He thought hir, and wente up-on
his weye.
214. Whanne this was doon, this Pan-
dare up a-noon,
To telle in short, and forth gan for
to wende
To Troilus, as stille as any stoon,
And al this thing he tolde him,
word and ende; 1495
And how that he Deiphebus gan
to blende;
And seyde him, 'now is tyme, if
that thou conne,
To bere thee wel to-morwe, and al
is wonne.
215. Now spek, now prey, now pitously
compleyne;
Lat not for nyce shame, or drede,
or slouth; 1500
Som-tyme a man mot telle his
owene peyne;
Bileve it, and she shal han on thee
routhe;
Thou shalt be saved by thy feyth, ✓
in trouthe.
But wel wot I, thou art now in a
drede;
And what it is, I leye, I can
arede. 1505
216. Thow thinkest now, "how sholde
I doon al this?
For by my cheres mosten folk
aspye,
That for hir love is that I fare
a-mis;
Yet hadde I lever unwist for sorwe
dye."
Now think not so, for thou dost
greet folye. 1510
For right now have I founden o
manere
Of sleighte, for to coveren al thy
chere.
217. Thow shalt gon over night, and
that as blyve,

- Un-to Deiphebus hous, as thee to
 pleye,
 Thy maladye a-wey the bet to
 dryve, 1515
 For-why thou semest syk, soth for
 to seye.
 Some after that, doun in thy bed
 thee leye,
 And sey, thow mayst no lenger up
 endure,
 And lye right there, and byde thyn
 aventure.
218. Sey that thy fever is wont thee for
 to take 1520
 The same tyme, and lasten til
 a-morwe;
 And lat see now how wel thou
 canst it make,
 For, par-dee, syk is he that is in
 sorwe.
 Go now, farewel! and, Venus here
 to borwe,
 I hope, and thou this purpos holde
 ferme, 1525
 Thy grace she shal fully ther con-
 ferme.'
219. Quod Troilus, 'y-wis, thou nedelees
 Counseylest me, that sykliche I me
 feyne!
 For I am syk in ernest, doutelees,
 So that wel neigh I sterve for the
 peyne.' 1530
 Quod Pandarus, 'thou shalt the
 better pleyne,
 And hast the lasse nede to coun-
 trefete;
 For him men demen hoot that men
 seen swete.
220. Lo, holde thee at thy triste cloos,
 and I 1534
 Shal wel the deer un-to thy bowe
 dryve.' 1535
 Therwith he took his leve al softlye,
 And Troilus to paleys wente blyve.
 So glad ne was he never in al his
 lyve;
 And to Pandarus reed gan al
 assente,
 And to Deiphebus hous at night he
 wente. 1540
221. What nedeth yow to tellen al the
 chere
 That Deiphebus un-to his brother
 made,
 Or his accesse, or his syklych
 manere,
 How men gan him with clothes
 for to lade,
 Whan he was leyd, and how men
 wolde him glade? 1545
 But al for nought, he held forth ay
 the wyse
 That ye han herd Pandare er this
 devyse.
222. But certeyn is, er Troilus him
 leyde,
 Deiphebus had him prayed, over
 night,
 To been a freend and helping to
 Criseyde. 1550
 God woot, that he it grauntede
 anon-right,
 To been hir fulle freend with al his
 might.
 But swich a nede was to preye him
 thenne,
 As for to bidde a wood man for
 to renne.
223. The morwen com, and neighen gan
 the tyme 1555
 Of meel-tyd, that the faire quene
 Eleyne
 Shoop hir to been, an houre after
 the pryme,
 With Deiphebus, to whom she
 nolde feyne;
 But as his suster, hoomly, sooth to
 seyne,
 She com to diner in hir playn
 entente. 1560
 But god and Pandare wiste al what
 this mente.
224. Come eek Criseyde, al innocent of
 this,
 Antigone, hir sister Tarbe also;
 But flee we now prolixitee best is,
 For love of god, and lat us faste
 go 1565
 Right to the effect, with-oute tales
 mo,

- Why al this folk assembled in this
place;
And lat us of hir saluinges pace.
225. Gret honour dide hem Deiphebus,
certeyn,
And fedde hem wel with al that
michte lyke. 1570
But ever-more, 'allas!' was his
refreyn,
'My goode brother Troilus, the
syke,
Lyth yet'—and therwith-al he gan
to syke;
And after that, he peyned him to
glade
Hem as he mighte, and chere good
he made. 1575
226. Compleyned eek Eleyne of his
syknesse
So feithfully, that pitee was to here,
And every wight gan waxen for
accesse
A leche anon, and seyde, 'in this
manere
Men curen folk; this charme I wol
yow lere.' 1580
But there sat oon, al list hir nought
to teche,
That thoughte, best coude I yet
been his leche. *Doctor*
227. After compleynt, him gonnen they
to preyse,
As folk don yet, whan som wight
hath bigonne
To preyse a man, and up with prys
him reyse 1585
A thousand fold yet hyer than the
sonne:—
'He is, he can, that fewe lordes
conne.'
And Pandarus, of that they wolde
afferme,
He not for-gat hir preysing to con-
ferme.
228. Herde al this thing Criseyde wel
y-nough, 1590
And every word gan for to notifye;
For which with sobre chere hir
herte lough;
- For who is that ne wolde hir
glorifye,
To mowens wich a knight don live
or dye?
But al passe I, lest ye to longe
dwelle; 1595
For for o fyn is al that ever I telle.
229. The tyme com, fro diner for to ryse,
And, as hem oughte, arisen every-
choon,
And gonne a while of this and that
devyse.
But Pandarus brak al this speche
anon, 1600
And seyde to Deiphebus, 'wole ye
goon,
If yourè wille be, as I yow preyde,
To speke here of the nedes of
Criseyde?'
230. Eleyne, which that by the hond hir
held,
Took first the tale, and seyde, 'go
we blyve;' 1605
And goodly on Criseyde she bi-
held,
And seyde, 'Ioves lat him never
thryve,
That dooth yow harm, and bringe
him sone of lyve
And yeve me sorwe, but he shal
it rewe,
If that I may, and alle folk be
trewe.' 1610
231. 'Tel thou thy neces cas,' quod
Deiphebus
To Pandarus, 'for thou canst best
it telle.'—
'My lordes and my ladyes, it stant
thus;
What sholde I lenger,' quod he,
'do yow dwelle?'
He rong hem out a proces lyk a
belle, 1615
Up-on hir fo, that highte Poli-
phete,
So hēynous, that men mighte on
it spete.
232. Answerde of this ech worse of
hem than other,

- And Poliphete they gonnen thus to
warien, ^{writ}
'An-honged be swich oon, were he
my brother; 1620
And so he shal, for it ne may not
varien.'
What sholde I lenger in this tale
tarien?
Pleyonly, alle at ones, they hir
highten,
To been hir helpe in al that ever
they migheten.
233. Spak than Eleyne, and seyde,
'Pandarus, 1625
Woot ought my lord, my brother,
this matere,
I mene, Ector? or woot it Troilus?'
He seyde, 'ye, but wole ye now me
here?
Me thinketh this, sith Troilus is
here,
It were good, if that ye wolde
assente, 1630
She tolde hir-self him al this, er
she wente.
234. For he wole have the more hir
grief at herte,
By cause, lo, that she a lady is;
And, by your leve, I wol but right
in sterte,
And do yow wite, and that anoon,
y-wis, 1635
If that he slepe, or wole ought
here of this.'
And in he lepte, and seyde him in
his ere,
'God have thy soule, y-brought
have I thy here!'
235. To smylen of this gan tho Troilus,
And Pandarus, with-oute reken-
inge, 1640
Out wente anoon to Eleyne and
Deiphebus,
And seyde hem, 'so there be no
taryinge,
Ne more pres, he wol wel that ye
bringe
Crisëyda, my lady, that is here;
And as he may endure, he wole
here. 1645
236. But wel ye woot, the chaumbre is
but lyte,
And fewe folk may lightly make it
warm;
Now loketh ye, (for I wol have no
wyte,
To bringe in prees that mighte
doon him harm
Or him disesen, for my better
arm,) 1650
Wher it be bet she byde til eft-
sones;
Now loketh ye, that knowen what
to doon is.
237. I sey for me, best is, as I can
knowe,
That no wight in ne wente but ye
tweye,
But it were I, for I can, in a
throwe, 1655
Reherce hir cas, unlyk that she
can seye;
And after this, she may him ones
preye
To ben good lord, in short, and
take hir leve;
This may not muchel of his ese
him reve.
238. And eek, for she is straunge, he
wol forbere 1660
His ese, which that him thar nought
for yow;
Eek other thing, toucheth not to
here,
He wol me telle, I woot it wel right
now,
That secret is, and for the tounes
prow.'
And they, that no-thing knewe of
this entente, 1665
With-oute more, to Troilus in they
wente.
239. Eleyne in al hir goodly softe
wyse,
Gan him saluwe, and womanly to
pleye,
And seyde, 'ywis, ye moste alweyes
arise!
Now fayre brother, beth al hool, I
preye!' 1670

- And gan hir arm right over his
 sholder leye,
 And him with al hir wit to recom-
 forte;
 As she best coude, she gan him to
 disporte.
240. So after this quod she, 'we yow
 biseke,
 My dere brother, Deiphēbus, and I,
 For love of god, and so doth Pan-
 dare eke, 1676
 To been good lord and freend,
 right hertely,
 Un-to Criseyde, which that cer-
 teinly
 Receyveth wrong, as woot wel here
 Pandare,
 That can hir cas wel bet than I de-
 clare.' 1680
241. This Pandarus gan newe his tunge
 affyle,
 And al hir cas reherce, and that
 anoon;
 Whan it was seyde, sone after, in a
 whyle,
 Quod Troilus, 'as sone as I may
 goon,
 I wol right fayn with al my might
 ben oon, 1685
 Have god my trouthe, hir cause to
 sustene.'
 'Good thrift have ye,' quod Eleyne
 the quene.
242. Quod Pandarus, 'and it your wille
 be,
 That she may take hir leve, er that
 she go?'
 'Or elles god for-bede,' tho quod
 he, 1690
 'If that she vouche sauf for to do
 so.'
 And with that word quod Troilus,
 'ye two,
 Deiphēbus, and my suster leef and
 dere,
 To yow have I to speke of o
 matere,
243. To been avysed by your reed the
 bettre': — 1695
- And fond, as hap was, at his
 beddes heed,
 The copie of a tretis and a lettre,
 That Ector hadde him sent to axen
 reed,
 If swich a man was worthy to ben
 deed,
 Woot I nought who; but in a
 grisly wyse 1700
 He preyede hem anoon on it avyse.
244. Deiphēbus gan this lettre to un-
 folde
 In earnest greet; so dide Eleyne
 the quene;
 And rominge outward, fast it gan
 biholde,
 Downward a steyre, in-to an her-
 ber grene. 1705
 This ilke thing they reddē hem
 bi-twene;
 And largely, the mountaunce of an
 houre,
 They gonne on it to reden and to
 poure.
245. Now lat hem rede, and turne we
 anoon
 To Pandarus, that gan ful faste
 prve 1710
 That al was wel, and out he gan to
 goon
 In-to the grete chambre, and that
 in hye,
 And seyde, 'god save al this com-
 panye!
 Com, nece myn; my lady quene
 Eleyne
 Abydeth yow, and eek my lordes
 tweyne. 1715
246. Rys, take with yow your nece
 Antigone,
 Or whom yow list, or no fors,
 hardly;
 The lasse prees, the bet; com
 forth with me,
 And loke that ye thonke hum-
 blyly
 Hem alle three, and, whan ye may
 goodly 1720
 Your tyme y-see, taketh of hem
 your leve,

- Lest we to longe his restes him
bireve.'
247. Al innocent of Pandarus entente,
Quod tho Criseyde, 'go we, uncle
dere';
And arm in arm inward with him
she wente, 1725
Avysed wel hir wordes and hir
chere;
And Pandarus, in earnestful manere,
Seyde, 'alle folk, for goddes love,
I preye,
Stinteth right here, and softly yow
pleye.
248. Aviseth yow what folk ben here
with-inne, 1730
And in what plyt oon is, god him
amende!
And inward thus ful softly bi-
ginne;
Nece, I coniure and heighly yow
defende,
On his half, which that sowle us
alle sende,
And in the vertue of corounes
tweyne, 1735
Slee nought this man, that hath for
yow this peyne!
249. Fy on the devel! think which oon
he is,
And in what plyt he lyth; com of
anoon;
Think al swich taried tyd, but lost
it nis!
- That wol ye bothe seyn, whan ye
ben oon. 1740
Secoundelich, ther yet devyneth
noon
Up-on yow two; com of now, if ye
conne;
Whyl folk is blent, lo, al the tyme
is wonne!
250. In titering, and pursuite, and de-
layes,
The folk devyne at wagginge of a
stree; 1745
And though ye wolde han after
merye dayes,
Than dar ye nought, and why? for
she, and she
Spak swich a word; thus loked he,
and he;
Lest tyme I loste, I dar not with
yow dele;
Com of therfore, and bringeth him
to hele.' 1750
251. But now to yow, ye lovers that ben
here,
Was Troilus nought in a cankedort,
That lay, and mighte whispringe
of hem here,
And thoughte, 'O lord, right now
renneth my sort
Fully to dye, or han anoon com-
fort'; 1755
And was the firste tyme he shulde
hir preye
Of love; O mighty god, what shal
he seye?

Explicit Secundus Liber.

BOOK III.

INCIPIT PROHEMIUM TERCII LIBRI.

1. O BLISFUL light, of whiche the bemes
clere
Adorneth al the thridde hevne faire!
O sonnes leef, O Ioves daughter dere,
Plesaunce of love, O goodly debonaire
In gentil hertes ay redy to repaire! 5
O verray cause of hele and of glad-
nesse,
- Y-heried be thy might and thy good-
nesse!
2. In hevne and helle, in erthe and
salte see
Is felt thy might, if that I wel des-
cerne;
As man, brid, best, fish, herbe and
grene tree 10
Thee fele in tynnes with vapour eterne.

- God loveth, and to love wol nought
werne;
And in this world no lyves creature,
With-oute love, is worth, or may
endure.
3. Ye Ioves first to thilke effectes
glade, 15
Thorough which that thinges liven
alle and be,
Comeveden, and amorous him made
On mortal thing, and as yow list, ay
ye
Yeve him in love ese or adversitee;
And in a thousand formes down him
sente 20
For love in erthe, and whom yow
liste, he hente.
4. Ye fiers Mars apeysen of his ire,
And, as yow list, ye maken hertes
digne;
Algates, hem that ye wol sette a-fyre,
They dreden shame, and vices they
resigne; 25
Ye do hem corteys be, fresshe and
benigne,
And hye or lowe, after a wight en-
tendeth;
The Ioyes that he hath, your might
him sendeth.
5. Ye holden regne and hous in unitee;
Ye soothfast cause of frendship been
also; 30
Ye knowe al thilke covered qualitee
Of thinges which that folk on won-
dren so,
Whan they can not construe how it
may io,
She loveth him, or why he loveth
here;
As why this fish, and nought that,
cometh to were. 35
6. Ye folk a lawe han set in universe,
And this knowe I by hem that lovers
be,
That who-so stryveth with yow hath
the werse:
Now, lady bright, for thy benignitee,
At reverence of hem that serven
thee, 40
- Whos clerk I am, so teeth me
devyse
Som loye of that is felt in thyservyse.
7. Ye in my naked herte sentement
Inhelde, and do me shewe of thy
swetnesse.—
Caliope, thy vois be now present, 45
For now is nede; sestow not my
destresse,
How I mot telle anon-right the glad-
nesse
Of Troilus, to Venus herynge?
To which gladnes, who nede hath,
god him bringe!
- Explicit prohemium Tercii Libri.*
- INCIPIIT LIBER TERCIVS.
8. Lay al this mene whyle Troilus, 50
Recordinge his lessoun in this man-
ere,
'Ma fey!' thought he, 'thus wole I
seye and thus;
Thus wole I pleyne un-to my lady
dere;
That word is good, and this shal be
my chere;
This nil I not foryeten in no wyse.' 55
God leve him werken as he gan
devyse.
9. And lord, so that his herte gan to
quappe,
Heringe hir come, and shorte for to
syke!
And Pandarus, that ladde hir by the
lappe,
Com ner, and gan in at the curtin
pyke, 60
Andseyde, 'god do bote on alle syke!
See, who is here yow comen to
visyte;
Lo, here is she that is your deeth
to wyte.'
10. Ther-with it semed as he wepte
almost;
'A ha,' quod Troilus so rewfully, 65
'Wher me be wo, O mighty god,
thou wost!
Who is al there? I see nought
trewely.'

- 'Sire,' quod Criseyde, 'it is Pandare
and I.'
- 'Ye, swete herte? allas, I may
nought ryse
To knele, and do yow honour in
som wyse.' 70
11. And dressede him upward, and she
right tho
Gan bothe here hondes softe upon
him eye,
'O, for the love of god, do ye not
so
To me,' quod she, 'ey! what is this
to seye?
Sire, come am I to yow for causes
tweye; 75
First, yow to thonke, and of your
lordshipe eke
Continuance I wolde yow biseke.'
12. This Troilus, that herde his lady
preye
Of lordship him, wex neither quik
ne deed,
Ne mighte a word for shame to it
seye, 80
Al-though men sholde smyten of
his heed.
But lord, so he wex sodeinliche
~~reed~~,
And sire, his lesson, that he wende
conne,
To preyen hir, is thurgh his wit
y-ronne.
13. Cryseyde al this aspyede wel y-
nough, 85
For she was wys, and lovede him
never-the-lasse,
Al nere he ~~malapert~~, or made it
tough,
Or was to bold, to singe a fool a
masse. - *not a feather*
But whan his shame gan somewhat
to passe,
His resons, as I may my rymes
holde, 90
I yow wol telle, as techen bokes
olde.
14. In chaunged vois, right for his verrey
drede,
- Which vois eek quook, and ther-to
his manere
Goodly abayst, and now his hewes
rede,
Now pale, un-to Criseyde, his lady
dere, 95
With look doun cast and humble
yolden chere,
Lo, the alderfirste word that him
asterte
Was, twyes, 'mercy, mercy, swete
herte!'
15. And stinte a whyl, and whan he
mighte out-bringe,
The nexte word was, 'god wot, for
I have, 100
As feythfully as I have had kon-
ninge,
Ben youre, also god my sowle
save;
And shal, til that I, woful wight, be
grave.
And though I dar ne can un-to yow
pleyne,
Y-wis, I suffre nought the lasse
peyne. 105
16. Thus muche as now, O womman-
liche wyf,
I may out-bringe, and if this yow
displese,
That shal I wreke upon myn owne
lyf
Right sone, I trowe, and doon your
herte an ese,
If with my deeth your herte I may
apese. 110
But sin that ye han herd me som-
what seye,
Now recche I never how sone that I
deye.'
17. Ther-with his manly sorwe to bi-
holde,
It mighte han maad an herte of stoon
to rewe;
And Pandare weep as he to watre
wolde, 115
And poked ever his nece newe and
newe,
And seyde, 'wo bigon ben hertes
trewe!

- For love of god make of this thing
an ende,
Or slee us bothe at ones, er that ye
wende.'
18. 'I? what?' quod she, 'by god and
by my trouthe, 120
I noot nought what ye wilne that I
seye.'
'I? what?' quod he, 'that ye han
on him routhe,
For goddes love, and doth him
nought to deye.'
'Now thanne thus,' quod she, 'I
wolde him preye
To telle me the fyn of his en-
tente; 125
Yet wiste I never wel what that he
mente.'
19. 'What that I mene, O swete herte
dere?'
Quod Troilus, 'O goodly fresshe
free!
That, with the stremes of your eyen
clere,
Ye wolde som-tyme frendly on me
see, 130
And thanne agreën that I may ben
he,
With-oute braunche of vyce in any
wyse,
In trouthe alwey to doon yow my
servyse
20. As to my lady right and chief
resort,
With al my wit and al my dili-
gence, 135
And I to han, right as yow list, com-
fort,
Under your yerde, egal to myn
offence,
As death, if that I breke your de-
fence;
And that ye deigne me so muche
honoure,
Me to comaunden ought in any
houre. 140
21. And I to ben your verray humble
trewe,
Secret, and in my paynes pacient,
- And ever-mo desire freshly newe,
To serven, and been y-lyke ay dili-
gent,
And, with good herte, al holly your
talent 145
Receyven wel, how sore that me
smerte,
Lo, this mene I, myn owne swete
herte.'
22. Quod Pandarus, 'lo, here an hard
request,
And resonable, a lady for to werne!
Now, nece myn, by natal loves
fest, 150
Were I a god, ye sholde sterve as
yerne,
That heren wel, this man wol no-
thing yerne
But your honour, and seen him
almost sterve,
And been so looth to suffren him
yow serve.'
23. With that she gan hir eyen on him
caste 155
Ful esily, and ful debonairly,
Avysing hir, and hyed not to faste
With never a word, but seyde him
softely,
'Myn honour sauf, I wol wel
trewely,
And in swich forme as he can now
devyse, 160
Receyven him fully to my servyse,
24. Biseching him, for goddes love,
that he
Wolde, in honour of trouthe and
gentillesse,
As I wel mene, eek mene wel to
me,
And myn honour, with wit and
besinesse, 165
Ay kepe; and if I may don him
gladnesse,
From hennes-forth, y-wis, I nil not
feyne:
Now beeth al hool, no lenger ye ne
pleyne.
25. But nathelees, this warne I yow.'
quod she,

- 'A kinges sone al-though ye be,
y-wis, 170
Ye shul na-more have soverainetee
Of me in love, than right in that
cas is;
Ne I nil forbere, if that ye doon
a-mis,
To wrathen yow; and whyl that ye
me serve,
Cherycen yow right after ye de-
serve. 175
26. And shortly, derē herte and al my
knight,
Beth glad, and draweth yow to lusti-
nesse,
And I shal trewely, with al my
might,
Your bittre tornen al in-to swetnesse;
If I be she that may yow do glad-
nesse, 180
For every wo ye shal recovere a
blisse';
And him in armes took, and gan
him kisse.
27. Fil Pandarus on knees, and up his
yēn
To hevене threw, and held his
hondes hye,
'Immortal god!' quod he, 'that
mayst nought dyen, 185
Cupide I mene, of this mayst glo-
rifye;
And Venus, thou mayst make
melodye;
With-uten hond, me semeth that in
towne,
For this merveyle, I here ech belle
sowne.
28. But ho! no more as now of this
materē, 190
For-why this folk wol comen up
anoon,
That han the lettre red; lo, I hem
here.
But I coniure thee, Criseyde, and
oon,
And two, thou Troilus, whan thou
mayst goon,
That at myn hous ye been at my
warninge, 195
- For I ful wel shal shape your
cominge;
29. And eseth ther your heites right
y-nough;
And lat see which of yow shal bere
the belle
To speke of love a-right!' ther-with
he lough,
'For ther have ye a layser for to
telle.' 200
Quod Troilus, 'how longe shal I
dwelle
Er this be doon?' Quod he, 'whan
thou mayst ryse,
This thing shal be right as I yow
devyseye.'
30. With that Eleyne and also Dei-
phebus
Tho comen upward, right at the
steyres ende; 205
And lord, so than gan grone Troilus,
His brother and his suster for to
blende.
Quod Pandarus, 'it tyme is that we
wende;
Tak, nece myn, your leve at alle
three,
And lat hem speke, and cometh
forth with me.' 210
31. She took hir leve at hem ful thriftily,
As she wel coude, and they hir
reverence
Un-to the fulle diden hardely,
And speken wonder wel, in hir ab-
sence,
Of hir, in preysing of hir excel-
lence, 215
Hir governaunce, hir wit; and hir
manere
Commendeden, it Ioye was to here.
32. Now lat hir wende un-to hir owne
place,
And torne we to Troilus a-yein,
That gan ful lightly of the lettre
passe, 220
That Deiphebus hadde in the gardin
seyen.
And of Eleyne and him he wolde
fayn

- Delivered been, and seyde, that him
leste
To slepe, and after tales have reste.
33. Eleyne him kiste, and took hir leve
blyve, 225
Deiphibus eek, and hoom wente
every wight;
And Pandarus as faste as he may
dryve,
To Troilus tho com, as lyne right;
And on a paillet, al that glade night,
By Troilus he lay, with mery
chere, 230
To tale; and wel was hem they
were y-fere.
34. Whan every wight was voided but
they two,
And alle the dores were faste
y-shette,
To telle in short, with-oute wordes
mo,
This Pandarus, with-uten any
lette, 235
Up roos, and on his beddes syde
him sette,
And gan to speken in a sobre wyse
To Troilus, as I shal yow devyse.
35. 'Myn alderlevest lord, and brother
dere,
God woot, and thou, that it sat me
so sore, 240
When I thee saw so languishing
to-yere,
For love, of which thy wo wex alwey
more;
That I, with al my might and al my
lore,
Have ever sithen doon my bisnesse
To bringe thee to loye out of dis-
tresse; 245
36. And have it brought to swich plyt
as thou wost,
So that, thourgh me, thow stondest
now in weye
To fare wel, I seye it for no bost,
And wostow why? for shame it is to
seye,
For thee have I bigonne a gamen
pleye 250
- Which that I never doon shal eft
for other,
Al-though he were a thousand fold
my brother.
37. That is to seye, for thee am I
bicomem,
Bitwixen game and earnest, swich a
mene
As maken wommen un-to men to
comen; 255
Al sey I nought, thou wost wel what
I mene.
For thee have I my nece, of vyces
clene,
So fully maad thy gentilesse triste,
That al shal been right as thy-selve
liste.
38. But god, that al wot, take I to
witnessse, 260
That never I this for coveityse
wroughte,
But only for to abregge that dis-
tresse,
For which wel nygh thou deydest,
as me thoughte.
But gode brother, do now as thee
oughte,
For goddes love, and keep hir out
of blame, 265
Sin thou art wys, and save alwey hir
name.
39. For wel thou wost, the name as yet
of here
Among the peple, as who seyth,
halwy halwed is;
For that man is unbore, I dar wel
swere,
That ever wiste that she dide
amis. 270
But wo is me, that I, that cause al
this,
May thenken that she is my nece
dere,
And I hir eem, and traytor eek
y-fere!
40. And were it wist that I, through
myn engyn,
Hadde in my nece y-put this fan-
tasye, 275

- To do thy lust, and hoolly to be
thyn,
Why, al the world up-on it wolde
crye,
And seye, that I the worste
trecherye
Dide in this cas, that ever was
bigonne,
And she for-lost, and thou right
nought y-wonne. 280
41. Wher-fore, er I wol ferther goon a
pas,
Yet eft I thee biseche and fully seye,
That privetee go with us in this cas,
That is to seye, that thou us never
wreye;
And be nought wrooth, though I
thee ofte preye 285
To holden secree swich an heigh
matere;
For skilful is, thow wost wel, my
preyere.
42. And think what wo ther hath bitid
er this,
For makinge of avauntes, as men
rede;
And what mischaunce in this world
yet ther is, 290
Fro day to day, right for that wikked
dede;
For which these wyse clerkes that
ben dede
Han ever yet proverbed to us yonge,
That "firste vertu is to kepe tonge."
43. And, nere it that I wilne as now
tabregge 295
Diffusioun of speche, I coude almost
A thousand olde stories thee alegge
Of wommen lost, thorough fals and
foles bost;
Proverbes canst thy-self y-nowe, and
wost,
Ayeins that vyce, for to been a
labbe, 300
Al seyde men sooth as often as they
gabbe.
44. O tonge, allas! so often here-biforn
Hastow made many a lady bright
of hewe
- Seyd, "welaway! the day that I was
born!"
And many a maydes sorwes for to
newe; 305
And, for the more part, al is un-
trewe
That men of yelp, and it were
brought to preve;
Of kinde non avauntour is to leve.
45. Avauntour and a lyere, al is on;
As thus: I pose, a womman graunte
me 310
Hir love, and seyth that other wol
she non,
And I am sworn to holden it secree,
And after I go telle it two or three;
Y-wis, I am avauntour at the leste,
And lyere, for I breke my bi-
heste. 315
46. Now loke thanne, if they be nought
to blame,
Swich maner folk; what shal I clepe
hem, what,
That hem avaunte of wommen, and
by name,
That never yet bihighte hem this ne
that,
Ne knewe hem more than myn olde
hat? 320
No wonder is, so god me sende hele,
Though wommen drede with us men
to dele.
47. I sey not this for no mistrust of
yow,
Ne for no wys man, but for foles
nyce,
And for the harm that in the world
is now, 325
As wel for foly ofte as for malyce;
For wel wot I, in wyse folk, that
vyce
No womman drat, if she be wel
avyсед;
For wyse ben by foles harm chas-
tysed.
48. But now to purpos; leve brother
dere, 330
Have al this thing that I have seyde
in minde,

- And keep thee clos, and be now of
good chere,
For at thy day thou shalt me trewe
finde,
I shal thy proces sette in swich a
kinde,
And god to-forn, that it shall thee
suffyse, 335
For it shal been right as thou wolt
devyse.
49. For wel I woot, thou menest wel,
parde;
Therefore I dar this fully undertake.
Thou wost eek what thy lady
graunted thee,
And day is set, the chartres up to
make. 340
Have now good night, I may no
lenger wake;
And bid for me, sin thou art now in
blisse,
That god me sende deeth or sone
lisse.'
50. Who mighte telle half the Ioye or
feste
Which that the sowle of Troilus tho
felte, 345
Heringe theeffect of Pandarus bi-
heste?
His olde wo, that made his herte
swelte,
Gan tho for Ioye wasten and to-
melte,
And al the richesse of his sykes
sore
At ones fledde, he felte of hem no
more. 350
51. But right so as these holtes and
these hayes,
That han in winter dede been and
dreye,
Revesten hem in grene, whan that
May is,
Whan every lusty lyketh best to
pleye:
Right in that selve wyse, sooth to
seye, 355
Wex sodeynliche his herte ful of Ioye,
That gladder was ther never man
in Troye.
52. And gan his look on Pandarus up
caste
Ful sobrelly, and frendly for to see,
And seyde, 'freend, in Aprille the
laste, 360
As wel thou wost, if it remembre
thee,
How neigh the deeth for wo thou
founde me;
And how thou didest al thy bisnesse
To knowe of me the cause of my
distresse.
53. Thou wost how longe I it for-bar
to seye 365
To thee, that art the man that I
best triste;
And peril was it noon to thee by-
wreye,
That wiste I wel; but tel me, if thee
liste,
Sith I so looth was that thy-self
it wiste,
How dorste I mo tellen of this
matere, 370
That quake now, and no wight may
us here?
54. But natheles, by that god I thee
swere,
That, as him list, may al this world
governe,
And, if I lye, Achilles with his
spere
Myn herte cleve, al were my lyf
eterne, 375
As I am mortal, if I late or yerne
Wolde it biwreye, or dorste, or sholde
conne,
For al the good that god made
under sonne;
55. That rather deye I wolde, and
determyne,
As thinketh me, now stokked in
presoun. 380
In wrecchednesse, in filthe, and in
vermyne,
Caytif to cruel king Agamenoun;
And this, in alle the temples of this
toun,
Upon the goddes alle, I wol thee
swere.

- To-morwe day, if that thee lyketh
here. 385
56. And that thou hast so muche y-doon
for me,
That I ne may it never-more de-
serve,
This knowe I wel, al mighte I now
for thee
A thousand tymes on a morwen
sterve,
I can no more, but that I wol thee
serve 390
Right as thy sclave, whider-so thou
wende,
For ever-more, un-to my lyves ende!
57. But here, with al myn herte, I thee
biseche,
That never in me thou deme swich
folye
As I shal seyn; me thoughte, by
thy speche, 395
That this, which thou me dost for
companye,
I sholde wene it were a bauderye;
I am nought wood, al-if I lewed be;
It is nought so, that woot I wel,
pardee.
58. But he that goth, for gold or for
richesse, 400
On swich message, calle him what
thee list;
And this that thou dost, calle it
gentillesse,
Compassioun, and felawship, and
trist;
Departe it so, for wyde-where is
wist
How that there is dyversitee re-
quired 405
Bitwixen thingus lyke, as I have
lered.
59. And, that thou knowe I thenke
nought ne wene
That this servyse a shame be or
Iape,
I have my faire suster Polixene,
Cassandre, Eleyne, or any of the
fraye; 410
Be she never so faire or wel y-shape,
- Tel me, which thou wilt of everich-
one,
To han for thyn, and lat me thanne
allone.
60. But sin that thou hast don me this
servyse,
My lyf to save, and for noon hope
of mede, 415
So, for the love of god, this grete
empryse
Parforme it out; for now is moste
nede.
For high and low, with-outen any
drede,
I wol alwey thyne hestes alle kepe;
Have now good night, and lat us
bothe slepe.' 420
61. Thus held him ech with other wel
apayed,
That al the world ne mighte it bet
amende;
And, on the morwe, whan they
were arayed,
Ech to his owene nedes gan en-
tende.
But Troilus, though as the fyr he
brende 425
For sharp desyr of hope and of
plesaunce,
He not for-gat his gode governaunce.
62. But in him-self with manhod gan
restreyne
Ech rakel dede and ech unbrydled
chere,
That alle tho that liven, sooth to
seyne, 430
Ne sholde han wist, by word or by
manere,
What that he mente, as touching
this matere.
From every wight as fer as is the
cloude
He was, so wel dissimulen he coude.
63. And al the whyl which that I yow
devyse, 435
This was his lyf; with al his fulle
might,
By day he was in Martes high ser-
vyse,

- This is to seyn, in armes as a knight;
 And for the more part, the longe night
 He lay, and thoughte how that he mighte serve 440
 His lady best, hir thank for to deserve.
64. Nil I nought swerë, al-though he lay softe,
 That in his thought he nas sumwhat disesed,
 Ne that he tornede on his pilwes ofte,
 And wolde of that him missed han ben sesed; 445
 But in swich cas man is nought alwey plesed,
 For ought I wot, no more than was he;
 That can I deme of possibilitee.
65. But certeyn is, to purpos for to go,
 That in this whyle, as writen is in geste, 450
 He say his lady som-tyme; and also She with him spak, whan that she dorste or leste,
 And by hir bothe avys, as was the beste,
 Apoynteden ful warly in this nede,
 So as they dorste, how they wolde procede. 455
66. But it was spoken in so short a wyse,
 In swich awayt alwey, and in swich fere,
 Lest any wyght divynen or devyse Wolde of hem two, or to it leye an ere,
 That al this world so leef to hem ne were 460
 As that Cupido wolde hem grace sende
 To maken of hir speche aright an ende.
67. But thilke litel that they speke or wroughte,
 His wyse goost took ay of al swich hede,
- It semed hir, he wiste what she thoughte 465
 With-outen word, so that it was no nede
 To bidde him ought to done, or ought for-bede;
 For which she thoughte that love, al come it late,
 Of alle loye hadde opned hir the yate.
68. And shortly of this proces for to pace, 470
 So wel his werk and wordes he bisette,
 That he so ful stood in his lady grace,
 That twenty thousand tymes, or she lette,
 She thonked god she ever with him mette;
 So coude he him governe in swich servyse, 475
 That al the world ne mighte it bet devyse.
69. For-why she fond him so discreet in al,
 So secret, and of swich obëisaunce,
 That wel she felte he was to hir a wal
 Of steel, and sheld from every displeasaunce; 480
 That, to ben in his gode governaunce,
 So wys he was, she was no more afered,
 I mene, as fer as oughte ben required.
70. And Pandarus, to quike alwey the fyr,
 Was ever y-lyke prest and diligent; 485
 To ese his frend was set al his desyr.
 He shof ay on, he to and fro was sent;
 He lettres bar whan Troilus was absent.
 That never man, as in his freendes nede,
 Ne bar him bet than he, with-outen drede. 490

71. But now, paraunter, som man wayten
wolde
That every worde, or sonde, or look,
or chere
Of Troilus that I rehersen sholde,
In al this whyle, un-to his lady
dere;
I trowe it were a long thing for to
here; 495
Or of what wight that stant in swich
disioynte,
His wordes alle, or every look, to
poynte.
72. For sothe, I have not herd it doon
er this,
In storye noon, ne no man here, I
wene;
And though I wolde I coude not,
y-wis; 500
For ther was som epistel hem bi-
twene.
That wolde, as seyth myn auctor,
wel contene
Neigh half this book, of which him
list not wryte;
How sholde I thanne a lyne of it
endyte?
73. But to the grete effect: than sey I
thus, 505
That standing in concord and in
quiete
Thise ilke two, Criseyde and Troi-
lus,
As I have told, and in this tyme
swete,
Save only often mighte they not
mete,
Ne layser have hir speches to ful-
felle, 510
That it befel right as I shal yow
telle,
74. That Pandarus, that ever dide his
might
Right for the fyn that I shal speke
of here,
As for to bringe to his hous som
night
His faire nece, and Troilus y-fere,
Wher-as at leyser al this heigh
matere, 516
- Touching hir love, were at the fulle
up-bounde,
Hadde out of doute a tyme to it
founde.
75. For he with greet deliberacioun
Hadde every thing that her-to
mighte avayle 520
Forn-cast, and put in execucioun,
And neither laft for cost ne for
travayle;
Come if hem lest, hem sholde no-
thing fayle;
And for to been in ought espyed
there,
That, wiste he wel, an impossible
were. 525
76. Dredelees, it cleer was in the wind
Of every pye and every lette-game;
Now al is wel, for al the world is
blind
In this matere, bothe fremed and
tame.
This timber is al redy up to
frame; 530
Us lakketh nought but that we
witen wolde
A certein houre, in whiche she
comen sholde.
77. And Troilus, that al this purvey-
aunce
Knew at the fulle, and waytede on
it ay,
Hadde here-up-on eek mad gret
ordenaunce, 535
And founde his cause, and ther-to
his aray,
If that he were missed, night or
day,
Ther-whyle he was aboute this
servyse,
That he was goon to doon his
sacrifyse,
78. And moste at swich a temple alone
wake, 540
Answered of Appollo for to be;
And first, to seen the holy laurer
quake,
Er that Apollo spak out of the
tree,

- To telle him next whan Grekes
sholden flee,
And forthy lette him no man, god
forbede, 545
But preye Apollo helpen in this
nede.
79. Now is ther litel more for to done,
But Pandare up, and shortly for to
seyne,
Right sone upon the chaunging of
the mone,
Whan lightles is the world a night
or tweyue, 550
And that the welken shoop him for
misalowe
atom to reyne,
He streight a-morwe un-to his nece
wente;
Ye han wel herd the fyn of his en-
tente.
80. Whan he was come, he gan anoon
to pleye
As he was wont, and of him-self to
Iape; 555
And fynally, he swor and gan hir
seye,
By this and that, she sholde him
not escape,
Ne lenger doon him after hir to
gape;
But certeynly she moste, by hir leve,
Come soupen in his hous with him
at eve. 560
81. At whiche she *laugh* lough, and gan hir
faste excuse,
And seyde, 'it rayneth; lo, how
sholde I goon?'
'Lat be,' quod he, 'ne stond not
thus to muse;
This moot be doon, ye shal be ther
anoon.'
So at the laste her-of they felle at
oon, *agreed* 565
Or elles, softe he swor hir in hir
ere,
He nolde never come ther she were.
82. Sone after this, to him she gan to
rowne, *whisper*
And asked him if Troilus were
there?
- He swor hir, 'nay, for he was out
of towne,' 570
And seyde, 'nece, I pose that he
were,
Yow thurfte never have the more
fere.
For rather then men mighte him
ther aspye,
Me were lever a thousand-fold to
dye.'
83. Nought list myn auctor fully to
declare 575
What that she thoughte whan he
seyde so,
That Troilus was out of town y-fare,
As if he seyde ther-of sooth or no;
But that, with-oute awayt, with him
to go,
She graunted him, sith he hir that
bisoughte, 580
And, as his nece, obeyed as hir
oughte.
84. But nathelees, yet gan she him
biseche,
Al-though with him to goon it was
no fere,
For to be war of goosish peples
speche,
That dreinen things whiche that
never were, 585
And wel avyse him whom he
broughte there;
And seyde him, 'eem, sin I mot on
yow triste,
Loke al be wel, and do now as yow
liste.'
85. He swor hir, 'yis, by stokkes and
by stones,
And by the goddes that in hevene
dwelle, 590
Or elles were him lever, soule and
bones,
With Pluto king as depe been in
helle
As Tantalus!' What sholde I more
telle?
Whan al was wel, he roos and took
his leve,
And she to souper com, whan it was
eve, 595

86. With a certayn of hir owene men,
And with hir faire nece Antigone,
And othere of hir women nyne or
ten;
But who was glad now, who, as
trowe ye,
But Troilus, that stood and mighte
it see 600
Thurgh-out a litel windowe in a
stewe,
Ther he bishet, sin midnight, was
in mewe,
87. Unwist of every wight but of Pan-
dare?
But to the poynt; now whan she
was y-come
With alle Ioye, and alle frendes
fare, 605
Hir eem anoon in armes hath hir
nome,
And after to the souper, alle and
some,
Whan tyme was, ful softe they hem
sette;
God wot, ther was no deyntee for to
fette.
88. And after souper gonnen they to
ryse, 610
At ese wel, with hertes fresshe and
glade,
And wel was him that coude best
devyse
To lyken hir, or that hir laughen
made.
He song; she pleyde; he tolde tale
of Wade.
But at the laste, as every thing hath
ende, 615
She took hir leve, and nedes wolde
wende.
89. But O, Fortung, executrice of
wierdes, *fates*
O influences of these hevenes hye!
Soth is, that, under god, ye ben our
hierdes, *shepherds*
Though to us bestes been the causes
wrye. *Siddon* 620
This mene I now, for she gan hoom-
ward hye,
But execut was al bisyde hir leve,
- At the goddes wil; for which she
moste bleve.
90. The bente mone with hir hornes
pale, *this partic. comb. happens*
Saturne, and Iove, in Cancro ioyned
were, *they were 700 of 625*
That swich a rayn from hevenc^e gan
avale,
That every maner womman that was
there
Hadde of that smoky reyn a verray
fere;
At which Pandare tho lough, and
seyde thenne,
'Now were it tyme a lady to go
henne! 630
91. But goode nece, if I mighte ever
plese
Yow any-thing, than prey I yow,
quod he,
'To doon myn herte as now so greet
an ese
As for to dwelle here al this night
with me,
For-why this is your owene hous,
pardee. 635
For, by my trouthe, I sey it nought
a-game,
To wende as now, it were to me a
shame.'
92. Criseyde, whiche that coude as
muche good
As half a world, tok hede of his
preyere;
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 frendes
chere,
And have a thank, as grucche and
thanne abyde;
For hoom to go on it may nought wel
bityde.
93. 'I wol,' quod she, 'myn uncle leef
and dere, 645
Sin that yow list, it skile is to be so;
I am right glad with yow to dwellen
here;

- I seyde but a-game, I wolde go.
 'Y-wis, graunt mercy, nece!' quod
 he tho;
 'Were it a game or no, soth for to
 telle, 650
 Now am I glad, sin that yow list to
 dwelle.'
94. Thus al is wel; but tho bigan aright
 The newe loye, and al the fest
 agayn;
 But Pandarus, if goodly hadde he
 might,
 He wolde han hyed hir to bedde
 fayn, 655
 And seye, 'lord, this is an huge
 rayn!
 This were a weder for to slepen inne;
 And that I rede us sone to biginne.
95. And nece, woot ye wher I wol yow
 leye,
 For that we shul not ligen fer
 asonder, 660
 And for ye neither shullen, dar I
 seye,
 Hern noise of reynes nor of thonder?
 By god, right in my lyte closet
 yonder.
 And I wol in that outer hous allone
 Be wardeyn of your wommen everi-
 chone 665
96. And in this middel chaumbre that
 ye see
 Shul youre wommen slepen wel and
 softe;
 And ther I seyde shal your-selve be;
 And if ye ligen wel to-night, com
 ofte,
 And careth not what weder is on-
 lofte. 670
 The wyn anon, and whan so that
 yow leste,
 So go we slepe, I trowe it be the
 beste.'
97. Ther nis no more, but here-after
 sone,
 The voydè dronke, and travers drawe
 anon,
 Gan every wight, that hadde nought
 to done 675
- More in that place, out of the
 chaumber gon.
 And ever-mo so sternelich it
 ron,
 And blew ther-with so wonderliche
 loude,
 That wel neigh no man heren other
 coude.
98. Tho Pandarus, hir eem, right as him
 oughte, 680
 With women swiche as were hir
 most aboute,
 Ful glad un-to hir beddes syde hir
 broughte,
 And toke his leve, and gan ful lowe
 lonte,
 And seyde, 'here at this closet-dore
 with-oute,
 Right over-thwart, your wommen
 ligen alle, 685
 That, whom yow liste of hem, ye
 may here calle.'
99. So whan that she was in the closet
 leyd,
 And alle hir wommen forth by
 ordenaunce
 A-bedde weren, ther as I have
 seyde,
 There was no more to skippen nor
 to traunce, 690
 But boden go to bedde, with mis-
 chaunce,
 If any wight was steringe any-
 where,
 And late hem slepe that a-bedde
 were.
100. But Pandarus, that wel coude eche
 a del
 The olde daunce, and every poynt
 ther-inne, 695
 Whan that he sey that alle thiug
 was wel,
 He thoughte he wolde up-on his
 werk biginne,
 And gan the stewe-dore al softe
 un-pinne,
 And stille as stoon, with-ouren
 lenger lette,
 By Troilus a-doun right he him
 sette. 700

101. And, shortly to the poynt right for
to gon,
Of al this werk he tolde him word
and ende,
And seyde, 'make thee redy right
anon,
For thou shalt in-to hevене blisse
wende.'
'Now blisful Venus, thou me grace
sende,' 705
Quod Troilus, 'for never yet no
nede
Hadde I er now, ne halvendel the
drede.'
102. Quod Pandarus, 'ne drede thee
never a del,
For it shal been right as thou wilt
desyre;
So thryve I, this night shal I make
it wel, 710
Or casten al the gruwel in the
fyre.'
'Yit blisful Venus, this night thou
me enspyre,
Quod Troilus, 'as wis as I thee
serve,
And ever bet and bet shal, til I
sterve.'
103. And if I hadde, O Venus ful of
murthe, 715
Aspectes badde of Mars or of
Saturne,
Or thou combust or let were in my
birthe,
Thy fader prey al thilke harm dis-
turne
Of grace, and that I glad ayein
may turne,
For love of him thou lovedest in
the shawe, 720
I mene Adoon, that with the boor
was slawe.
104. O Iove eek, for the love of faire
Europe,
The whiche in forme of bole away
thou fette;
Now help, O Mars, thou with thy
bloody cope,
For love of Cipris, thou me nought
ne lette; 725
- O Phebus, think whan Dane hir-
selven shette
Under the bark, and laurer wex for
drede,
Yet for hir love, O help now at this
nede!
105. Mercurie, for the love of Hiersè
eke,
For which Pallas was with Aglauros
wrooth, 730
Now help, and eek Diane, I thee
biseke,
That this viage be not to thee
looth.
O fatal sustren, which, er any clooth
Me shapen was, my destenè me
sponne,
So helpeth to this werk that is bi-
gonne!' 735
106. Quod Pandarus, 'thou wrecched
mouses herte,
Art thou agast so that she wol thee
byte?
Why, don this furred cloke up-on
thy sherte,
And folowe me, for I wol han the
wyte;
But byd, and lat me go bifore a
lyte.' 740
And with that word he gan un-do
a trappe,
And Troilus he broughte in by the
lappe.
107. The sterne wind so loude gan to
route
That no wight other noyse mighte
here;
And they that layen at the dore
with-oute, 745
Ful sykerly they slepten alle
y-fere;
And Pandarus, with a ful sobre
chere,
Goth to the dore anon with-uten
lette,
Ther-as they laye, and softlyt it
shette.
108. And as he com ayeinward priv-
ely, 750

- His nece awook, and asked 'who
goth there?'
'My dere nece,' quod he, 'it
am I;
Ne wondreth not, ne have of it no
fere;'
And ner he com, and seyde hir in
hir ere,
'No word, for love of god I yow
biseche; 755
Lat no wight ryse and heren of
our speche.'
109. 'What! which wey be ye comen,
benedicite?
Quod she, 'and how thus unwist of
hem alle?'
'Here at this secre trappe-dore,'
quod he.
Quod tho Criseyde, 'lat me som
wight calle.' 760
'Ey! god forbede that it sholde
falle,'
Quod Pandarus, 'that ye swich
foly wroughte!
They mighte deme thing they
never er thoughte!
110. It is nought good a sleping hound
to wake,
Ne yeve a wight a cause to de-
vyne; 765
Your wommen slepen alle, I un-
der-take,
So that, for hem, the hous men
mighte myne;
And slepen wolen til the sonne
shyne.
And when my tale al brought is to
an ende,
Unwist, right as I com, so wol I
wende. 770
111. Now nece myn, ye shul wel under-
stonde,
Quod he, 'so as ye wommen de-
men alle,
That for to holde in love a man
in honde,
And him hir "leef" and "dere
herte" calle,
And maken him an howve above
a calle, 775
- I mene, as love an other in this
whyle,
She doth hir-self a shame, and him
a gyle.
112. Now wherby that I telle yow al
this?
Ye woot your-self, as wel as any
wight,
How that your love al fully
graunted is 780
To Troilus, the worthieste knight,
Oon of this world, and ther-to
trouthe plyght,
That, but it were on him along, ye
nolde
Him never falsen, whyl ye liven
sholde.
113. Now stant it thus, that sith I fro
yow wente, 785
This Troilus, right platly for to
seyn,
Is thurgh a goter, by a privè
wente,
In-to my chaumbre come in al
this reyn,
Unwist of every maner wight,
certeyn,
Save of my-self, as wisly have I
loye, 790
And by that feith I shal Pryam of
Troye!
114. And he is come in swich peyne
and distresse
That, but he be al fully wood by
this,
He sodeynly mot falle in-to wod-
nesse,
But-if god helpe; and cause why
this is, 795
He seyth him told is, of a freend
of his,
How that ye sholde love oon that
hatte Horaste,
For sorwe of which this night shalt
been his laste.'
115. Criseyde, which that al this won-
der herde,
Gan sodeynly aboute hir herte
colde, 800

- And with a syk she sorwfully
 answerde,
 'Allas! I wende, who-so tales
 tolde,
 My dere herte wolde me not holde
 So lightly fals! allas! conceytes
 wronge,
 What harm they doon, for now
 live I to longe! 805
116. Horaste! allas! and falsen Troilus?
 I knowe him not, god helpe me
 so,' quod she;
 'Allas! what wikked spirit tolde
 him thus?
 Now certes, een, to-morwe, and I
 him see,
 I shall ther-of as ful excusen me
 As ever dide womman, if him
 lyke;' 811
 And with that word she gan ful
 sore syke.
117. 'O god!' quod she, 'so worldly
 selinesse,
 Which clerkes callen fals felicitee,
 Y-medled is with many a bitter-
 nesse! 815
 Ful anguissous than is, god woot,'
 quod she,
 'Condicion of veyn prosperitee;
 For either Ioyes comen nought
 y-fere,
 Or elles no wight hath hem alwey
 here.
118. O brotel wele of mannes Ioye
 unstable! 820
 With what wight so thou be, or
 how thou pleye,
 Either he woot that thou, Ioye, art
 muable,
 Or woot it not, it moot ben oon of
 tweye;
 Now if he woot it not, how may he
 seye
 That he hath verray Ioye and
 selinesse, 825
 That is of ignoraunce ay in derk-
 nesse?
119. Now if he woot that Ioye is transi-
 torie,
- As every Ioye of worldly thing mot
 flee,
 Than every tyme he that hath in
 memorie,
 The drede of lesing maketh him
 that he 830
 May in no parfit selinesse be.
 And if to lese his Ioye he set a
 myte,
 Than semeth it that Ioye is worth
 ful lyte.
120. Wherefore I wol deffyne in this
 matere,
 That trewely, for ought I can
 espye, 835
 Ther is no verray wele in this
 world here.
 But O, thou wikked serpent
 Jalousye,
 Thou misbeveled and envious
 folye,
 Why hastow Troilus me mad un-
 triste,
 That never yet agilte him, that I
 wiste?' 840
121. Quod Pandarus, 'thus fallen is this
 cas.'
 'Why, uncle myn,' quod she, 'who
 tolde him this?
 Why doth my dere herte thus,
 allas?'
 'Ye woot, ye nece myn,' quod he,
 'what is;
 I hope al shal be wel that is amis.
 For ye may quenche al this, if that
 yow leste, 846
 And doth right so, for I holde it
 the beste.'
122. 'So shal I do to-morwe, y-wis,'
 quod she,
 'And god to-forn, so that it shal
 suffyse.'
 'To-morwe? allas, that were a
 fayr,' quod he, 850
 'Nay, nay, it may not stonden in
 this wyse;
 For, nece myn, thus wryten clerkes
 wyse,
 That peril is with drecching in
 y-drawe;

- Nay, swich abodes been nought
worth an hawe.
123. Nece, al thing hath tyme, I dar
avowe; 855
For whan a chaumber a-fyr is, or
an halle,
Wel more nede is, it sodeynly res-
cove
Than to dispute, and axe amonges
alle
How is this candele in the straw
y-falle?
A! *benedicite!* for al among that
fare 860
The harm is doon, and fare-wel
feldefare!
124. And, nece myn, ne take it not
a-greef,
If that ye suffre him al night in this
wo,
God help me so, ye hadde him
never leef,
That dar I seyn, now there is but
we two; 865
But wel I woot, that ye wol not do
so;
Ye been to wys to do so gret folye,
To putte his lyf al night in
Iupartye.'
125. 'Hadde I him never leef? By god,
I wene
Ye hadde never thing so leef,' quod
she. 870
'Now by my thrift,' quod he, 'that
shal be sene;
For, sin ye make this ensample of
me,
If I al night wolde him in sorwe
see
For al the tresour in the toun of
Troye,
I bidde god, I never mote have
Ioye! 875
126. Now loke thanne, if ye, that been
his love,
Shul putte al night his lyf in
Iupartye
For thing of nought! Now, by
that god above,
- Nought only this delay comth of
folye,
But of malyce, if that I shal nought
lye. 880
What, platly, and ye suffre him in
distresse,
Ye neither bountee doon ne gen-
tilesse!'
127. Quod tho Criseyde, 'wole ye doon
o thing,
And ye therwith shal stinte al his
disee;
Have here, and bereth him this
blewe ring, 885
For ther is no-thing mighte him
bette plesse,
Save I my-self, ne more his herte
apese;
And sey my dere herte, that his
sorwe
Is causeles, that shal be seen to-
morwe.'
128. 'A ring?' quod he, 'ye, hasel-wodes
shaken! 890
Ye, nece myn, that ring moste han
a stoon
That mighte dede men alyve
maken;
And swich a ring, trowe I that ye
have noon.
Discrecioun out of your heed is
goon;
That fele I now,' quod he, 'and
that is routhe; 895
O tyme y-lost, wel maystow cursen
slouthe!'
129. Wot ye not wel that noble and
heigh corage
Ne sorweth not, ne stinteth eek for
lyte?
But if a fool were in a Ialous
rage,
I nolde setten at his sorwe a
myte, 900
But fesse him with a fewe wordes
whyte
Another day, whan that I mighte
him finde:
But this thing stont al in another
kinde.

130. This is so gentil and so tendre of
herte,
That with his deeth he wol his
sorwes wreke; 905
For trusteth wel, how sore that him
smerte,
He wol to yow no Ialouse wordes
speke.
And for-thy, nece, er that his herte
breke,
So spek your-self to him of this
matere;
For with o word ye may his herte
stere. 910
131. Now have I told what peril he is
inne,
And his coming unwist is to every
wight;
Ne, pardee, harm may ther be noon
ne sinne;
I wol my-self be with yow al this
night.
Ye knowe eek how it is your owne
knight, 915
And that, by right, ye moste upon
him triste,
And I al prest to fecche him whan
yow liste.'
132. This accident so pitous was to here,
And eek so lyk a sooth, at pryme
face,
And Troilus hir knight to hir so
dere, 920
His privè coming, and the siker
place,
That, though that she dide him as
thanne a grace,
Considered alle thinges as they
stode,
No wonder is, sin she dide al for
gode.
133. Cryseyde answerde, 'as wisly god
at reste 925
My sowle bringe, as me is for him
wo!
And eem, y-wis, fayn wolde I doon
the beste,
If that I hadde grace to do so.
But whether that ye dwelle or for
him go,
- I am, til god me better minde
sende, 930
At dulcarnon, right at my wittes
ende.'
134. Quod Pandarus, 'ye, nece, wol ye
here?
Dulcarnon called is "fleminge of
wrecches";
It semeth hard, for wrecches wol
not lere
For verray slouthe or othere wilful
tecches; 935
This seyde by hem that be not worth
two fecches.
But ye ben wys, and that we han
on honde
Nis neither hard, ne skilful to with-
stonde.'
135. 'Thanne, eem,' quod she, 'doth
her-of as yow list;
But er he come I wil up first aryse;
And, for the love of god, sin al my
trist 941
Is on yow two, and ye ben bothe
wyse,
So wurcheth now in so discreet a
wyse,
That I honour may have, and he
plesaunce;
For I am here al in your govern-
aunce.' 945
136. 'That is wel seyde,' quod he, 'my
nece dere,
Ther good thrift on that wyse gentil
herte!
But liggeth stille, and taketh him
right here,
It nedeth not no ferther for him
sterte;
And ech of yow ese others sorwes
smerte, 950
For love of god; and, Venus, I
thee herie;
For some hope I we shulle ben alle
merie.'
137. This Troilus ful sone on knees him
sette
Ful sobroly, right by hir beddes
heed,

- And in his beste wyse his lady
grette; 955
But lord, so she wex sodeynliche
reed!
Ne, though men sholden smyten of
hir heed,
She coude nought a word a-right
out-bringe
So sodeynly, for his sodeyn com-
inge.
138. But Pandarus, that so wel coude
fele 960
In every thing, to pleye anoon
bigan,
And seyde, 'nece, see how this lord
can knele!
Now, for your trouthe, seeth this
gentil man!'
And with that word he for a quis-
shen ran,
And seyde, 'kneleth now, whyl
that yow leste, 965
Ther god your hertes bringe sone
at reste!'
139. Can I not seyn, for she bad him
not ryse,
If sorwe it putte out of hir remem-
braunce,
Or elles if she toke it in the wyse
Of du'tee, as for his observaunce;
But wel finde I she dide him this
pleasaunce, 971
That she him kiste, al-though she
syked sore;
And bad him sitte a-doun with-
outen more.
140. Quod Pandarus, 'now wol ye wel
biginne;
Now doth him sitte, gode nece
dere, 975
Upon your beddes syde al there
with-inne,
That ech of yow the bet may other
here.'
And with that word he drow him to
the fere,
And took a light, and fond his con-
taunce
As for to loke up-on an old ro-
maunce. 980
141. Criseyde, that was Troilus lady
right,
And cleer stood on a ground of
sikernesse,
Al thoughte she, hir servaunt and
hir knight
Ne sholde of right non untrouthe
in hir gesse,
Yet nathelees, considered his dis-
tresse, 985
And that love is in cause of swich
folye,
Thus to him spak she of his
Ielousy:
142. 'Lo, herte myn, as wolde the ex-
cellence
Of love, ayeins the which that no
man may,
Ne oughte eek goodly maken re-
sistence; 990
And eek because I felte wel and
say
Your grete trouthe, and servyse
every day;
And that your herte al myn was,
sooth to seyne,
This droof me for to rewe up-on
your payne.
143. And your goodnesse have I founde
alwey yit, 995
Of whiche, my dere herte and al
my knight,
I thonke it yow, as fer as I have
wit,
Al can I nought as muche as it
were right;
And I, enforth my conninge and
my might,
Have and ay shal, how sore that
me smerte, 1000
Ben to yow trewe and hool, with
al myn herte;
144. And dredelees, that shal be founde
at preve. —
But, herte myn, what al this is to
seyne
Shal wel be told, so that ye nought
yow greve,
Though I to yow right on your-
self compleyne. 1005

- For ther-with mene I fynally the
 peyne,
 That halt your herte and myn in
 hevynesse,
 Fully to sleen and every wrong re-
 dresse.
145. My goode, myn, not I for-why ne
 how
 That Ialouslye, allas! that wikked
 wivere, 1010
 Thus causelees is copen in-to yow;
 The harm of which I wolde fayn
 delivere!
 Allas! that he, al hool, or of him
 slivere,
 Shuld have his refut in so digne a
 place,
 Ther love him some out of your
 herte arace! 1015
146. But O, thou Iove, O auctor of
 nature,
 Is this an honour to thy deitee,
 That folk ungiltif suffren here iniure,
 And who that giltif is, al quit goth
 he?
 O were it leful for to pleyne on
 thee, 1020
 That undeserved suffrest Ialouslye,
 And that I wolde up-on thee pleyne
 and crye!
147. Eek al my wo is this, that folk
 now usen
 To seyn right thus, "ye, Ialouslye
 is love!"
 And wolde a busshel venim al ex-
 cusen, 1025
 For that o greyn of love is on it
 shove!
 But that wot heighe god that sit
 above,
 If it be lyker love, or hate, or
 grame;
 And after that, it oughte bere his
 name. 1029
148. But certeyn is, som maner Ialouslye
 Is excusable more than som, y-wis.
 As whan cause is, and som swich
 fantasye
 With pietce so wel repressed is,
- That it unnethe dooth or seyth
 amis,
 But goodly drinketh up al his dis-
 tresse; 1035
 And that excuse I, for the gen-
 tilesse.
149. And som so ful of furie is and
 despyt,
 That it sourmounteth his repres-
 sioun;
 But herte myn, ye be not in that
 plyt,
 That thanke I god, for whiche your
 passioun 1040
 I wol not calle it but illusioun,
 Of habundaunce of love and bisy
 cure,
 That dooth your herte this dise-
 endure.
150. Of which I am right sorry, but not
 wrooth;
 But, for my devoir and your hertes
 reste, 1045
 Wher-so yow list, by ordal or by
 ooth,
 By sort, or in what wyse so yow
 leste,
 For love of god, lat preve it for the
 beste!
 And if that I be giltif, do me
 deye,
 Allas! what mighte I more doon
 or seye?' 1050
151. With that a fewe brighte teres newe
 Out of hir eyen fille, and thus she
 seyde,
 'Now god, thou wost, in thought
 ne dede untrewē
 To Troilus was never yet Criseyde.'
 With that hir heed down in the
 bed she leyde, 1055
 And with the shete it wreigh, and
 syghed sore,
 And held hir pees; not o word
 spak she more.
152. But now help god to quenchen al
 this sorwe,
 So hope I that he shal, for he best
 may;

- For I have seyn, of a ful misty
morwe 1060
Folwen ful ofte a mery someres
day;
And after winter folweth grene
May.
Men seen alday, and reden eek in
stories,
That after sharpe shoures been
victories.
153. This Troilus, whan he hir wordes
herde, 1065
Have ye no care, him liste not to
slepe;
For it thoughte him no strokes of
a yerde
To here or seen Criseyde his lady
wepe;
But wel he felte aboute his herte
crepe,
For every teer which that Criseyde
asterte, 1070
The crampe of deeth, to streyne
him by the herte.
154. And in his minde he gan the tyme
a curse
That he cam therë, and that he
was born;
For now is wikke y-turned in-to
worse,
And al that labour he hath doon
biforn, 1075
He wende it lost, he thoughte he
nas but lorn.
'O Pandarus,' thoughte he, 'allas!
thy wyle
Serveth of nought, so weylawey the
wyle!'
155. And therewithal he heng a-doun
the heed,
And fil on knees, and sorwfully he
sighte; 1080
What mighte he seyn? he felte he
nas but deed,
For wrooth was she that shulde his
sorwes lighte.
But nathelees, whan that he spoken
mighte,
Than seyde he thus, 'god woot,
that of this game,
- Whan al is wist, than am I not to
blame!' 1085
156. Ther-with the sorwe so his herte
shette,
That from his eyen fil ther not a
tere,
And every spirit his vigour in-
knette,
So they astoned and oppressed
were.
The feling of his sorwe, or of his
fere, 1090
Or of ought elles, fled was out of
towne;
And doun he fel al sodeynly
a-sowne.
157. This was no litel sorwe for to
see;
But al was hust, and Pandare up as
faste,
'O nece, pees, or we be lost,' quod
he, 1095
'Beth nought agast;' but certeyn,
at the laste,
For this or that, he in-to bedde
him caste,
And seyde, 'O theef, is this a
mannes herte?'
And of he rente al to his bare
sherte;
158. And seyde, 'nece, but ye helpe us
now, 1100
Allas, your owne Troilus is lorn!'
'Y-wis, so wolde I, and I wiste
how,
Ful fayn,' quod she; 'allas! that I
was born!'
'Ye, nece, wol ye pullen out the
thorn
That stiketh in his herte?' quod
Pandare; 1105
'Sey "al foryeve," and stint is al
this fare!'
159. 'Ye, that to me,' quod she, 'ful
lever were
Than al the good the sonne aboute
gooth';
And therwith-al she swoor him in
his ere,

- Y-wis, my dere herte, I am nought
wrooth, 1110
Have here my trouthe and many
another ooth;
Now speek to me, for it am I,
Cryseyde!’
But al for nought; yet mighte he
not a-breyde. ak
160. Therwith his pous and pawmes of
his hondes
They gan to frote, and wete his
temples tweyne, 1115
And, to deliveren him from bitter
bondes,
She ofte him kiste; and, shortly
for to seyne,
Him to revoked she dide al hir
peyne.
And at the laste, he gan his breeth
to drawe,
And of his swough sone after that
adawe, 1120
161. And gan bet minde and reson to
him take,
But wonder sore he was abayst,
y-wis.
And with a syk, when he gan bet
a-wake,
He seyde, ‘O mercy, god, what
thing is this?’
‘Why do ye with your-selven thus
amis?’ 1125
Quod tho Criseyde, ‘is this a
mannes game?’
What, Troilus! wol ye do thus, for
shame?’
162. And therwith-al hir arm over him
she leyde,
And al foryaf, and ofte tyme him
keste.
He thonked hir, and to hir spak,
and seyde 1130
As fil to purpos for his herte
reste.
And she to that answerde him as
hir leste;
And with hir goodly wordes him
disporte
She gan, and ofte his sorwes to
comforte.
163. Quod Pandarus, ‘for ought I can
espyen, 1135
This light nor I ne serven here of
nought;
Light is not good for syke folkes
yën.
But for the love of god, sin ye be
brought
In thus good plyt, lat now non
hevly thought
Ben hanginge in the hertes of yow
tweye:’ 1140
And bar the candele to the chim-
eneye.
164. Sone after this, though it no nede
were,
Whan she swich othes as hir list
devyse
Hadde of him take, hir thoughte
tho no fere,
Ne cause eek non, to bidde him
thennes ryse. 1145
Yet lesse thing than othes may
suffyse
In many a cas; for every wight, I
gesse,
That loveth wel meneth but gen-
tilesse.
165. But in effect she wolde wite anoon
Of what man, and eek where, and
also why 1150
He Ielous was, sin ther was cause
noon;
And eek the signe, that he took it
by,
She bad him that to telle hir bisily,
Or elles, certeyn, she bar him on
honde,
That this was doon of malis, hir to
fonde. 1155
166. With-ouen more, shortly for to
seyne,
He moste obeye un-to his lady
heste;
And for the lasse harm, he moste
feyne.
He seyde hir, whan she was at
swiche a feste
She mighte on him han looked at
the leste; 1160

- Not I not what, al dere y-nough a
risshe,
As he that nedes moste a cause
fisshe.
167. And she answerde, 'swete, al were
it so,
What harm was that, sin I non yvel
mene?
For, by that god that boughte us
bothe two, 1165
In alle thinge is myn entente clene.
Swich arguments ne been not worth
a bene;
Wol ye the childish Ialous contrefete?
Now were it worthy that ye were
y-bete.'
168. Tho Troilus gan sorrowfully to
syke, 1170
Lest she be wrooth, him thoughte
his herte deyde;
And seyde, 'allas! upon my sorwes
syke
I have mercy, swete herte myn,
Cryseyde!
And if that, in tho wordes that I
seyde,
Be any wrong, I wol no more tres-
pace; -1175
Do what yow list, I am al in your
grace.'
169. And she answerde, 'of gilt miseri-
corde!
That is to seyn, that I foryeve al
this;
And ever-more on this night yow
recorde,
And beth wel war ye do no more
amis.' 1180
'Nay, dere herte myn,' quod he,
'y-wis.'
'And now,' quod she, 'that I have
do yow smerte,
Foryeve it me, myn owene swete
herte.'
170. This Troilus, with blisse of that
supprysed,
Put al in goddes hond, as he that
mente 1185
- No-thing but wel; and, sodehynly
avyssed,
He hir in armes faste to him hente.
And Pandarus, with a ful good
entente,
Leyde him to slepe, and seyde, 'if
ye ben wyse,
Swoneth not now, lest more folk
aryse.' 1190
171. What mighte or may the sely larke
seye,
Whan that the sparhawk hath it in
his foot?
I can no more, but of this ilke
tweye,
To whom this tale sucre be or
soot,
Though that I tarie a yeer, som-
tyme I moot, 1195
After myn auctor, tellen hir glad-
nesse,
As wel as I have told hir hevynesse.
172. Criseyde, which that felte hir thus
y-take,
As writen clerkes in hir bokes olde,
Right as an aspes leef she gan to
quake, 1200
Whan she him felte hir in his
armes folde.
But Troilus, al hool of cares colde,
Gan thanken tho the blisful god-
des sevne;
Thus sondry peynes bringen folk
to hevene.
173. This Troilus in armes gan hir
streyne. 1205
And seyde, 'O swete, as ever mote
I goon,
Now be ye caught, now is ther
but we tweyne;
Now yeldeth yow, for other boot is
noon.'
To that Criseyde answerde thus
anoon,
'Ne hadde I er now, my swete herte
dere, 1210
Ben yolde, y-wis I were now not
here!'
174. O! sooth is seyde, that heled for to be

- As of a fevre or othere greet syk-
nesse,
Men moste drinke, as men may
often see,
Ful bittre drink; and for to han
gladnesse, 1215
Men drinken often peyne and
greet distresse;
I mene it here, as for this aven-
ture,
That though a peyne hath founden
al his cure.
175. And now swetnesse semeth more
swete,
That bitternesse assayed was bi-
forn; 1220
For out of wo in blisse now they
flete.
Non swich they felten, sith they
were born;
Now is this bet, than bothe two be
lorne!
For love of god, take every wom-
man hede
To werken thus, if it comth to the
nede. 1225
176. Criseyde, al quit from every drede
and tene,
As she that iuste cause hadde him
to triste,
Made him swich feste, it Ioye was
to sene,
Whan she his trouthe and clene
entente wiste.
And as aboute a tree, with many a
twiste, 1230
Bitrent and wryth the sote wode-
binde,
Gan eche of hem in armes other
winde.
177. And as the newe abaysshed night-
ingale,
That stinteth first whan she bigin-
neth singe,
Whan that she hereth any herde
tale, 1235
Or in the hegges any wight ster-
inge,
And after siker dooth hir voys out-
ringe;
- Right so Criseyde, whan hir drede
stente,
Opned hir herte, and tolde him
hir entente.
178. And right as he that seeth his
deeth y-shapen, 1240
And deye moot, in ought that he
may gesse,
And sodeynly rescous doth him
escapen,
And from his deeth is brought in
sikernesse,
For al this world, in swich present
gladnesse
Was Troilus, and hath his lady
swete; 1245
With worse hap god lat us never
mete!
179. Hir armes smale, hir streyghte bak
and softe,
Hir sydes longe, fleshy, smothe,
and whyte
He gan to stroke, and good thrift
bad ful ofte
Hir snowish throte, hir brestes
rounde and lyte; 1250
Thus in this hevne he gan him to
deleyte,
And ther-with-al a thousand tyme
hir kiste;
That, what to done, for Ioye un-
nethe he wiste.
180. Than seyde he thus, 'O, Love, O,
Charitee,
Thy moder eek, Citherea the
swete, 1255
After thy-self next heried be she,
Venus mene I, the wel-willy
planete;
And next that, Imenēus, I thee
grete;
For never man was to yow goddes
holde
As I, which ye han brought fro
cares colde. 1260
181. Benigne Love, thou holy bond of
things,
Who-so wol grace, and list thee
nought honouren,

- Lo, his desyr wol flee with-outen
winges.
For, noldestow of bountee hem
socouren
That serven best and moost alwey
labouren, 1265
Yet were al lost, that dar I wel
seyn, certes,
But-if thy grace passed our desertes.
182. And for thou me, that coude leest
deserve
Of hem that nombred been un-to
thy grace,
Hast holpen, ther I lykly was to
sterve, 1270
And me bistowed in so heygh a
place
That thilke boundes may no blisse
pace,
I can no more, but laude and re-
verence
Be to thy bounte and thyn excel-
lence!'
183. And therwith-al Criseyde anon he
kiste, 1275
Of which, certeyn, she felte no dis-
ese.
And thus seyde he, 'now wolde
god I wiste,
Myn herte swete, how I yow mighte
plese!
What man,' quod he, 'was ever
thus at ese
As I, on whiche the faireste and
the beste 1280
That ever I say, deyneth hir herte
reste.
184. Here may men seen that mercy
passeth right;
The experience of that is felt in
me,
That am unworthy to so swete a
wight.
But herte myn, of your benignitee,
So thinketh, though that I un-
worthy be, 1286
Yet mot I nede amenden in som
wyse,
Right thourgh the vertu of your
heyghe servyse.
185. And for the love of god, my lady
dere,
Sin god hath wrought me for I shal
yow serve, 1290
As thus I mene, that ye wol be my
stere,
To do me live, if that yow liste, or
sterve,
So techeth me how that I may de-
serve
Your thank, so that I, thurgh myn
ignoraunce,
Ne do no-thing that yow be dis-
pleasaunce. 1295
186. For certes, fresshe wommanliche
wyf,
This dar I seye, that trouthe and
diligence,
That shal ye finden in me al my lyf,
Ne I wol not, certeyn, breken your
defence;
And if I do, present or in absence,
For love of god, lat slee me with
the dede, 1301
If that it lyke un-to your woman-
hede.'
187. 'Y-wis,' quod she, 'myn owne
herthes list,
My ground of ese, and al myn herte
dere,
Graunt merey, for on that is al my
trist; 1305
But late us falle away fro this
matere;
For it suffyseth, this that seyde is
here.
And at o word, with-outen repent-
aunce,
Wel-come, my knight, my pees, my
suffisaunce!' 1309
188. Of hir delyt, or Ioyes oon the leste
Were impossible to my wit to seye;
But iuggeth, ye that han ben at
the feste
Of swich gladnesse, if that hem
liste pleye!
I can no more, but thus this ilke
tweye
That night, be-twixen dreed and
sikernesse, 1315

- Felten in love the grete worthi-
nesse.
189. O blisful night, of hem so longe
y-sought,
How blithe un-to hem bothe two
thou were!
Why ne hadde I swich on with my
soule y-bought,
Ye, or the leeste Ioye that was
there? 1320
A-wey, thou foule daunger and
thou fere,
And lat hem in this hevene blisse
dwelle,
That is so heygh, that al ne can I
telle!
190. But sooth is, though I can not
tellen al,
As can myn auctor, of his excel-
lence, 1325
Yet have I seyde, and, god to-forn,
I shal
In every thing al hoolly his sen-
tence.
And if that I, at loves reverence,
Have any word in eched for the
beste,
Doth therwith-al right as your-
selven leste. 1330
191. For myne wordes, here and every
part,
I speke hem alle under correccioun
Of yow, that feling han in loves art,
And putte it al in your discrecioun
To encrese or maken diminucioun
Of my langage, and that I yow bi-
seche; 1336
But now to purpos of my rather
speche.
192. Thise ilke two, that ben in armes laft,
So looth to hem a-sonder goon it
were,
That ech from other wende been
biraft, 1340
Or elles, lo, this was hir moste fere,
That al this thing but nyce dremes
were;
For which ful ofte ech of hem
seyde, 'O swete,
- Clippe ich yow thus, or elles I it
mete?'
193. And, lord! so he gan goodly on hir
see, 1345
That never his look ne bleynte from
hir face,
And seyde, 'O dere herte, may it
be
That it be sooth, that ye ben in
this place?'
'Ye, herte myn, god thank I of his
grace!'
Quod tho Criseyde, and therwith-al
him kiste, 1350
That where his spirit was, for Ioye
he niste.
194. This Troilus ful ofte hir eyen two
Gan for to kisse, and seyde, 'O
eyen clere,
It were ye that wroughte me swich
wo,
Ye humble nettes of my lady dere!
Though ther be mercy written in
your chere, 1356
God wot, the text ful hard is, sooth,
to finde,
How coude ye with-ouen bond me
binde?'
195. Therwith he gan hir faste in armes
take,
And wel an hundred tymes, gan he
syke, 1360
Nought swiche sorwful sykes as
men make
For wo, or elles whan that folk ben
syke,
But esy sykes, swiche as been to
lyke,
That shewed his affeccioun with-
inne;
Of swiche sykes coude he nought
bilinne. 1365
196. Sone after this they speke of sondry
things,
As fil to purpos of this aventure,
And pleyngre entrechaungeden hir
ringes,
Of which I can nought tellen no
scripture;

- But wel I woot a broche, gold and
asure, 1370
In whiche a ruby set was lyk an
herte,
Criseyde him yaf, and stak it on
his sherte.
197. Lord! trowe ye, a coveitous, a
wrecche,
That blameth love and holt of it
despyt,
That, of tho pens that he can mokre
and kecche, 1375
Was ever yet y-yeve him swich
delyt,
As is in love, in oo poynt, in som
plyt?
Nay, doutelees, for also god me save,
So parfyt Ioye may no nigard have!
198. They wol sey 'yis,' but lord! so
that they lye, 1380
Tho bisy wrecches, ful of wo and
drede!
They callen love a woodnesse or
folye,
But it shal falle hem as I shal yow
rede;
They shul forgo the whyte and
eke the rede,
And live in wo, ther god yeve hem
mischaunce, 1385
And every lover in his troutlic
avaunce!
199. As wolde god, tho wrecches, that
dispyse
Seryyse of love, hadde eres al-so
longe
As hadde Myda, ful of coveityse;
And ther-to dronken hadde as hoot
and stronge 1390
As Crassus dide for his affectis
wronge,
To techen hem that they ben in
the vyce,
And loveres nought, al-though they
holde hem nyce!
200. Thise ilke two, of whom that I yow
seye,
Whan that hir hertes wel assured
were 1395
- Tho gonne they to speken and to
pleye,
And eek rehercen how, and whanne,
and where,
They knewe hem first, and every
wo and fere
That passed was; but al swich
hevinesse,
I thanke it god, was tourned to
gladnesse. 1400
201. And ever-mo, whan that hem fel
to speke
Of any thing of swich a tyme
agoon,
With kissing al that tale sholde
breke,
And fallen in a newe Ioye anoon,
And diden al hir might, sin they
were oon, 1405
For to recoveren blisse and been at
ese,
And passed wo with Ioye countre-
poyse.
202. Reson wil not that I speke of
sleep,
For it accordeth nought to my
matere;
God woot, they toke of that ful
litel keep, 1410
But lest this night, that was to hem
so dere,
Ne sholde in veyn escape in no
manere,
It was biset in Ioye and bisi-
nesse
Of al that souneth in-to gentil-
nesse.
203. But whan the cok, comune astrol-
oger, 1415
Gan on his brest to bete, and after
crowe,
And Lucifer, the dayes messenger,
Gan for to ryse, and out hir bemes
throwe;
And estward roos, to him that
coude it knowe,
Fortuna maior, [than] anoon
Criseyde, 1420
With herte sore, to Troilus thus
seyde:—

204. 'Myn hertes lyf, my trist and my
plesauce,
That I was born, allas! what me is
wo,
That day of us mot make dessever-
aunce!
For tyme it is to ryse, and hennes
go, 1425
Or elles I am lost for evermo!
O night, allas! why niltow over us
hove,
As longe as whanne Almena lay by
Iove?
205. O blake night, as folk in bokes
rede,
That shapen art by god this world
to hyde 1430
At certeyn tymes with thy derke
wede,
That under that men mighte in reste
abyde,
Wel oughte bestes pleyne, and folk
thee chyde,
That there-as day with labour wolde
us breste,
That thou thus fleest, and deynest
us nought reste! 1435
206. Thou dost, allas! to shortly thyn
offyce,
Thou rakel night, ther god, makere
of kinde,
Thee, for thyn hast and thyn un-
kinde vyce,
So faste ay to our hemi-spere binde,
That never-more under the ground
thou winde! 1440
For now, for thou so hyst out of
Troye,
Have I forgon thus hastily my
Ioye!'
207. This Troilus, that with the wordes
felte,
As thoughte him tho, for pietous
distresse,
The boly teres from his herte
melte, 1445
As he that never yet swich hevi-
nesse
Assayed hadde, out of so greet
gladnesse,
- Gan therwith-al Criseyde his lady
dere
In armes streyne, and seyde in this
manere:—
208. 'O cruel day, accusour of the Ioye
That night and love han stole and
faste y-wryen, 1451
A-cursed be thy coming in-to
Troye,
For every bore hath oon of thy
bright yën!
Envyous day, what list thee so to
spyen?
What hastow lost, why sekestow
this place, 1455
Ther god thy lyght so quenche, for
his grace?
209. Allas! what han thise lovers thee
agilt,
Dispitous day? thyn be the pyne
of helle!
For many a love-re hastow shent,
and wilt;
Thy pouring in wol no-wher lete
hem dwelle. 1460
What proferestow thy light here for
to selle?
Go selle it hem that smale seles
graven,
We wol thee nought, us nedeth no
day haven.'
210. And eek the sonne Tytan gan he
chyde,
And seyde, 'O fool, wel may men
thee dispyse. 1465
That hast the Dawing al night by
thy syde,
And suffrest hir so sone up fro thee
ryse,
For to disesen lovers in this
wyse.
What! hold your bed ther, thou,
and eek thy Morwe!
I bidde god, so yeve yow bothe
sorwe!' 1470
211. Therwith ful sore he sighte, and
thus he seyde,
'My lady right, and of my wele or
wo

- The welle and rote, O goodly myn,
Criseyde,
And shal I ryse, allas! and shal I
go?
Now fele I that myn herte moot
a-two! 1475
For how sholde I my lyf an houre
save,
Sin that with yow is al the lyf I
have?
212. What shal I doon, for certes, I not
how,
Ne whanne, allas! I shal the tyme
see,
That in this plyt I may be eft with
yow; 1480
And of my lyf, god woot, how
that shal be,
Sin that desyr right now so byteth
me,
That I am deed anon, but I re-
tourne.
How sholde I longe, allas! fro yow
soiourne?
213. But nathelees, myn owene lady
bright, 1485
Yit were it so that I wiste ou-
trely,
That I, your humble servaunt and
your knight,
Were in your herte set so fermely
As ye in myn, the which thing,
trewely,
Me lever were than these worldes
tweyne, 1490
Yet sholde I bet enduren al my
peyne.'
214. To that Cryseyde answerde right
anon,
And with a syk she seyde, 'O herte
dere,
The game, y-wis, so ferforth now is
goon,
That first shal Phebus falle fro his
spere, 1495
And every egle been the dowves
fere,
And every roche out of his place
sterste,
Er Troilus out of Criseydes herte!
215. Ye be so depe in-with myn herte
grave,
That, though I wolde it turne out
of my thought, 1500
As wisly verray god my soule save,
To dyen in the peyne, I coude
nought!
And, for the love of god that us
hath wrought,
Lat in your brayn non other fan-
tasye
So crepe, that it cause me to dye!
216. And that ye me wolde han as faste
in minde 1506
As I have yow, that wolde I yow
bi-seche;
And, if I wiste soothly that to finde,
God mighte not a poynt my loyes
eche!
But, herte myn, with-oute more
speche, 1510
Beth to me trewe, or elles were it
routhe;
For I am thyn, by god and by my
trouthe!
217. Beth glad for-thy, and live in sik-
erness;e;
Thus seyde I never er this, ne shal
to mo;
And if to yow it were a gret glad-
nesse 1515
To turne ayein, soone after that ye
go,
As fayn wolde I as ye, it were so,
As wisly god myn herte bringe at
reste!
And him in armes took, and ofte
keste.
218. Agayns his wil, sin it mot nedes
be, 1520
This Troilus up roos, and faste him
cledde,
And in his armes took his lady
free
An hundred tyme, and on his wey
him spedde,
And with swich wordes as his herte
bledde,
He seyde, 'farewel, my dere herte
swete, 1525

- Ther god us graunte sounde and
 sone to mete!'
 219. To which no word for sorwe she
 answerde,
 So sore gan his parting hir de-
 streyne;
 And Troilus un-to his palays ferde.
 As woo bigon as she was, sooth to
 seyne; 1530
 So hard him wrong of sharp desyr
 the peyne
 For to ben eft there he was in ples-
 aunce,
 That it may never out of his remem-
 braunce.
220. Retorned to his real palais, sone
 He softe in-to his bed gan for to
 slinke, 1535
 To slepe longe, as he was wont to
 done,
 But al for nought; he may wel
 ligge and winke,
 But sleep ne may ther in his herte
 sinke;
 Thinkinge how she, for whom de-
 syr him brende,
 A thousand-fold was worth more
 than he wende. 1540
221. And in his thought gan up and
 doun to winde
 Hir wordes alle, and every conte-
 naunce,
 And fermely impressen in his
 minde
 The leste poynt that to him was
 plesaunce;
 And verrayliche, of thilke remem-
 braunce, 1545
 Desyr al newe him brende, and lust
 to brede
 Gan more than erst, and yet took
 he none hede.
222. Criseyde also, right in the same
 wyse,
 Of Troilus gan in hir herte shette
 His worthinesse, his lust, his dedes
 wyse, 1550
 His gentillesse, and how she with
 him mette,
- Thinkinge love he so wel hir bi-
 sette;
 Desyryng eft to have hir herte dere
 In swich a plyt, she dorste make
 him chere.
223. Pandare, a-morwe which that co-
 men was 1555
 Un-to his nece, and gan hir fayre
 grete,
 Seyde, 'al this night so reyned
 it, allas!
 That al my drede is that ye, nece
 swete,
 Han litel layser had to slepe and
 mete;
 Al night,' quod he, 'hath reyn so
 do me wake, 1560
 That som of us, I trowe, hir hedes
 ake.'
224. And ner he com, and seyde, 'how
 stont it now
 This mery morwe, nece, how can
 ye fare?'
 Criseyde answerde, 'never the bet
 for yow,
 Fox that ye been, god yeve your
 herte care! 1565
 God helpe me so, ye caused al
 this fare,
 Trow I,' quod she, 'for alle your
 wordes whyte;
 O! who-so seeth yow knoweth yow
 ful lyte!'
225. With that she gan hir face for to
 wrye
 With the shete, and wex for shame
 al reed; 1570
 And Pandarus gan under for to
 pryde,
 And seyde, 'nece, if that I shal ben
 deed,
 Have here a swerd, and smyteth
 of myn heed.'
 With that his arm al sodeynly he
 thriste
 Under hir nekke, and at the laste
 hir kiste. 1575
226. I passe al that which chargeth
 nought to seye,

- What! God foryaf his deeth, and
 she al-so
 Foryaf, and with hir uncle gan to
 pleye,
 For other cause was ther noon
 than so.
 But of this thing right to the effect
 to go, 1580
 Whan tyme was, hom til hir hous
 she wente,
 And Pandarus hath fully his en-
 tente.
227. Now torne we ayein to Troilus,
 That resteles ful longe a-bedde
 lay,
 And prevely sente after Panda-
 rus, 1585
 To him to come in al the haste he
 may.
 He com anoon, nought ones seyde
 he 'nay,'
 And Troilus ful soberly he grette,
 And down upon his beddes syde
 him sette.
228. This Troilus, with al the affec-
 cion 1590
 Of frendes love that herte may
 devyse,
 To Pandarus on kneës fil adoun,
 And er that he wolde of the place
 aryse,
 He gan him thonken in his beste
 wyse ;
 A hondred sythe he gan the tyme
 blesse, 1595
 That he was born to bringe him
 fro distresse.
229. He seyde, 'O frend, of frendes the
 alderbeste
 That ever was, the sothe for to
 telle,
 Thou hast in hevene y-brought my
 soule at reste
 Fro Flegiton, the fery flood of
 helle ; 1600
 That, though I mighte a thousand
 tymes selle,
 Upon a day, my lyf in thy servyse,
 It mighte nought a mote in that
 suffyse.
230. The sonne, which that al the world
 may see,
 Saw never yet, my lyf, that dar I
 leye, 1605
 So inly fair and goodly as is
 she,
 Whos I am al, and shal, til that I
 deye ;
 And, that I thus am hires, dar I
 seye,
 That thanked be the heighe worth-
 inesse
 Of love, and eek thy kinde bisi-
 nesse. 1610
231. Thus hastow me no litel thing
 y-yive,
 Fo which to thee obliged be for
 ay
 My lyf, and why? for thorough
 thyn help I live;
 For elles deed hadde I be many
 a day.'
 And with that word down in his
 bed he lay, 1615
 And Pandarus ful sobrelly him
 herde
 Til al was seyde, and thanne he
 him auswerde :
232. 'My dere frend, if I have doon for
 thee
 In any cas, god wot, it is me
 leef;
 And am as glad as man may of
 it be, 1620
 God help me so ; but tak now not
 a-greef
 That I shal seyn, be war of this
 myscheef,
 That, there-as thou now brought
 art in-to blisse,
 That thou thy-self ne cause it
 nought to misse.
233. For of fortunes sharp adversi-
 tee 1625
 The worst kinde of infortune is
 this,
 A man to have ben in prosperi-
 tee,
 And it remembren, when it passed
 is.

- Thou art wys y-nough, for-thy do
nought amis ;
Be not to rakel, though thou sitte
warne, 1630
For if thou be, certeyn, it wol thee
harne.
234. Thou art at ese, and holde thee
wel ther-inne.
For also seur as reed is every fyr,
As greet a craft is kepe wel as
winne ;
Brydle alwey wel thy speche and
thy desyr. 1635
For worldly Ioye halt not but by a
wyr ;
That preveth wel, it brest alday so
ofte ;
For-thy nede is to werke with it
softe.'
235. Quod Troilus, 'I hope, and god to-
form,
My dere frend, that I shal so me
bere, 1640
That in my gilt ther shal no thing
be lorn,
Ne I nil not rakel as for to greven
here ;
It nedeth not this matere ofte
tere ;
For wistestow myn herte wel Pan-
dare,
God woot, of this thou woldest
litel care.' 1645
236. Tho gan he telle him of his glade
night.
And wher-of first his herte dredde,
and how,
And seyde, 'freend, as I am trewe
knight,
And by that feyth I shal to god
and yow,
I hadde it never half so hote as
now ; 1650
And ay the more that desyr me
byteth
To love hir best, the more it me
delyteth.
237. I noot my-self not wisly what it is ;
But now I fele a newe qualitee,
- Ye, al another than I dide er
this.' 1655
Pandare answerde, and seyde thus,
that he
That ones may in hevене blisse
be,
He feleth other weyes, dar I
leye,
Than thilke tyme he first herde of
it seye.
238. This is o word for al ; this Troi-
lus 1660
Was never ful, to speke of this
matere,
And for to preysen un-to Pandarus
The bountee of his righte lady
dere,
And Pandarus to thanke and
maken chere.
This tale ay was span-newe to
biginne 1665
Til that the night departed hem
a-twinne.
239. Sone after this, for that fortune it
wolde,
I-comen was the blisful tyme swete,
That Troilus was warned that he
sholde,
Ther he was erst, Criseyde his lady
mete ; 1670
For which he felte his herte in Ioye
flete ;
And feythfully gan alle the goddes
herie ;
And lat see now if that he can be
merie.
240. And holden was the forme and al
the wyse,
Of hir cominge, and eek of his
also, 1675
As it was erst, which nedeth
nought devyse.
But playnly to the effect right for
to go,
In Ioye and seurte Pandarus hem
two
A-bedde broughte, whan hem
bothe leste,
And thus they ben in quiete and
in reste. 1680

241. Nought nedeth it to yow, sin they
 ben met,
 To aske at me if that they blythe
 were;
 For if it erst was wel, tho was it
 bet
 A thousand-fold, this nedeth not
 enquere.
 A-gon was every sorwe and every
 fere; 1685
 And bothe, y-wis, they hadde, and
 so they wende,
 As muche Ioye as herte may com-
 prende.
242. This is no litel thing of for to
 seye,
 This passeth every wit for to de-
 vyse;
 For eche of hem gan otheres lust
 obeye; 1690
 Felicitee, which that these clerkes
 wyse
 Commenden so, ne may not here
 suffyse.
 This Ioye may not writen been
 with inke,
 This passeth al that herte may
 bithinke.
243. But cruel day, so wel-away the
 stounde! 1695
 Gan for to aproche, as they by
 signes knewe,
 For whiche hem thoughte felen
 dethes wounde;
 So wo was hem, that changen gan
 hir hewe,
 And day they gonnen to dispyse al
 newe,
 Calling it traytour, envyous, and
 worse, 1700
 And bitterly the dayes light they
 curse.
244. Quod Troilus, 'allas! now am I
 war
 That Pirous and tho swifte stedes
 three,
 Whiche that drawn forth the
 sonnes char,
 Han goon som by-path in despyt
 of me; 1705
- That maketh it so sone day to be;
 And, for the sonne him hasteth
 thus to ryse,
 Ne shal I never doon him sacri-
 fyse!'
245. But nedes day departe moste hem
 sone,
 And whanne hir speche doon was
 and hir chere, 1710
 They twinne anon as they were
 wont to done,
 And setten tyme of meting eft
 y-fere;
 And many a night they wroughte
 in this manere.
 And thus Fortune a tyme ladde in
 Ioye
 Criseyde, and eek this kinges sone
 of Troye. 1715
246. In suffisaunce, in blisse, and in
 singinges,
 This Troilus gan al his lyf to lede;
 He spendeth, Iusteth, maketh fes-
 teyinges;
 He yeveth frely ofte, and chaungeth
 wede,
 And held aboute him alwey, out of
 drede, 1720
 A world of folk, as cam him wel of
 kinde,
 The fresshest and the beste he
 coude fynde;
247. That swich a voys was of hym and
 a stevene
 Thorough-out the world, of honour
 and largesse,
 That it up rong un-to the yate of
 hevене. 1725
 And, as in love, he was in swich
 gladnesse,
 That in his herte he demede, as I
 gesse,
 That there nis love in this world
 at ese
 So wel as he, and thus gan love
 him plese.
248. The godlihed and beautee which
 that kinde 1730
 In any other lady hadde y-set

- Can not the mountaunce of a knot
unbinde,
A-boute his herte, of al Criseydes
net.
He was so narwe y-masked and
y-knet,
That it undon on any manere syde,
That nil not been, for ought that
may betyde. 1736
249. And by the hond ful ofte he wolde
take
This Pandarus, and in-to gardin
lede,
And swich a feste and swich a
proces make
Him of Criseyde, and of hir
womanhede, 1740
And of hir beautee, that, with-
outen drede,
It was an hevene his wordes for to
here;
And thanne he wolde singe in this
manere.
250. 'Love, that of erthe and see hath
gouvernaunce,
Love, that his hestes hath in hevene
hye, 1745
Love, that with an holsom alli-
aunce
Halt peples ioyned, as him list
hem gye,
Love, that knetteth lawe of com-
panye,
And couples doth in vertu for to
dwelle,
Bind this acord, that I have told
and telle; 1750
251. That that the world with feyth,
which that is stable,
Dyverseth so his stoundes concord-
inge,
That elements that been so dis-
cordable
Holden a bond perpetuely duringe,
That Phebus mote his rosy day
forth bringe, 1755
And that the mone hath lordship
over the nightes,
Al this doth Love; ay heried be
his mightes!
252. That that the see, that gredy is to
flowen,
Constreyneth to a certeyn ende so
His fodes, that so fersly they ne
growen 1760
To drenchen erthe and al for
ever-mo;
And if that Love ought lete his
brydel go,
Al that now loveth a-sonder sholde
lepe,
And lost were al, that Love halt
now to-hepe.
253. So wolde god, that auctor is of
kinde, 1765
That, with his bond, Love of his
vertu liste
To cerclen hertes alle, and faste
binde,
That from his bond no wight the
wey out wiste.
And hertes colde, hem wolde I that
he twiste
To make hem love, and that hem
leste ay rewe 1770
On hertes sore, and kepe hem that
ben trewe.'
254. In alle nedes, for the tounes
werre,
He was, and ay the firste in armes
dight;
And certeynly, but-if that bokes
erre,
Save Ector, most y-drad of any
wight; 1775
And this encrees of hardinesse and
might
Cam him of love, his ladies thank
to winne,
That altered his spirit so with-inne.
255. In tyme of trewe, on haukinge
wolde he ryde,
Or elles huntun boor, bere, or
lyoun; 1780
The smale bestes leet he gon bi-
syde.
And whan that he com rydinge
in-to toun,
Ful ofte his lady, from hir window
doun,

- As fresh as faucon comen out of
muwe,
Ful redy was, him goodly to saluwe.
256. And most of love and vertu was his
speche, 1786
And in despyt hadde alle wrecched-
nesse;
And doutelees, no nede was him
biseche
To honouren hem that hadde
worthynesse,
And esen hem that weren in dis-
tresse. 1790
And glad was he if any wight wel
ferde,
That lover was, whan he it wiste
or herde.
257. For sooth to seyn, he lost held
every wight
But-if he were in loves heigh ser-
vyse,
I mene folk that oughte it been of
right. 1795
And over al this, so wel coude he
devyse
Of sentement, and in so unkouth
wyse
Al his array, that every lover
thoughte,
That al was wel, what-so he seyde
or wroughte.
258. And though that he be come of
blood royal, 1800
Him liste of pryde at no wight for
to chase;
- Benigne he was to ech in general,
For which he gat him thank in
every place.
Thus wolde Love, y-heried be his
grace,
That Pryde, Envye, Ire, and Ava-
ryce 1805
He gan to flee, and every other
vyce.
259. Thou lady bright, the doughter to
Dione,
Thy blinde and winged sone eek,
daun Cupyde;
Ye sustren nyne eek, that by Eli-
cone 1809
In hil Parnaso listen for to abyde,
That ye thus fer han deyned me to
gyde,
I can no more, but sin that ye wol
wende,
Ye heried been for ay, with-outen
ende!
260. Thourgh yow have I seyde fully in
my song
Theffect and Ioye of Troilus ser-
vyse, 1815
Al be that ther was som disese
among,
As to myn auctor listeth to de-
vyse.
My thridde book now ende ich in
this wyse;
And Troilus in luste and in
quite
Is with Criseyde, his owne herte
swete. 1820

Explicit Liber Tercius.

BOOK IV.

[PROHEMIUM.]

1. BUT al to litel, weylawey the whyle,
Lasteth swich Ioye, y-thonked be
Fortune!
That semeth trewest, whan she wol
bygyle,
And can to foles so hir song en-
tune,
- That she hem hent and blent, tray-
tour comune; 5
And whan a wight is from hir wheel
y-throwe,
Than laugheth she, and maketh him
the mowe.
2. From Troilus she gan hir brighte
face

- Away to wrythe, and took of him non
hede,
But caste him clene oute of his lady
grace, 10
And on hir wheel she sette up Dio-
mede;
For which right now myn herte gin-
neth blede,
And now my penne, allas! with which
I wryte,
Quaketh for drede of that I moot en-
dyte.
3. For how Criseyde Troilus forsook, 15
Or at the leste, how that she was un-
kinde,
Mot hennes-forth ben matere of my
book,
As wryten folk thorough which it is in
minde.
Allas! that they shulde ever cause
finde
To speke hir harm; and if they on hir
lye, 20
Y-wis, hem-self sholde han the vil-
anye.
4. O ye Herines, Nightes doughtren
three,
That endelees compleynen ever in
pyne,
Megera, Alete, and eek Thesiphone;
Thou cruel Mars eek, fader to Quir-
yne, 25
This ilke ferthe book me helpeth
fyne,
So that the los of lyf and love y-fere
Of Troilus be fully shewed here.
Explicit [Prohemium.]
- INCIPIT QUARTUS LIBER.
5. LIGGINGE in ost, as I have seyde er
this,
The Grekes stronge, aboute Troye
toun, 30
Bifel that, whan that Phebus shyning
is
Up-on the brest of Hercules Lyoun,
That Ector, with ful many a bold
baroun,
Caste on a day with Grekes for to
fichte,
- As he was wont to greve hem what
he mighte. 35
6. Not I how longe or short it was bi-
twene
This purpos and that day they fighte
mente;
But on a day wel armed, bright and
shene,
Ector, and many a worthy wight out
wente,
With spere in hond and bigge bowes
bente; 40
And in the berd, with-oute lenger
lette,
Hir fomen in the feld anoon hem
mette.
7. The longe day, with speres sharpe
y-grounde,
With arwes, dartes, swerdes, maces
felle,
They fighte and bringen hors and
man to grounde, 45
And with hir axes out the braynes
quelle.
But in the laste shour, sooth for to
telle,
The folk of Troye hem-selven so mis-
ledden,
That with the worse at night hom-
ward they fledden.
8. At whiche day was taken Ante-
nor, 50
Maugre Polydamas or Monesteo,
Santippe, Sarpedon, Polynestor,
Polyte, or eek the Troian daun Ri-
pheo,
And othere lasse folk, as Phebuseo.
So that, for harm, that day the folk
of Troye 55
Dredde to lese a greet part of hir
Ioye.
9. Of Pryamus was yeve, at Greek re-
queste,
A tyme of trewe, and tho they gonnen
trete,
Hir prisoneres to chaungen, moste and
leste,
And for the surplus yeven sommes
grete. 60

- This thing anon was couth in every
strete,
Bothe in thassege, in toune, and
every-where,
And with the firste it cam to Calkas
ere.
10. Whan Calkas knew this tretis sholde
holde,
In consistorie, among the Grekes,
sone 65
He gan in thringe forth, with lordes
olde,
And sette him there-as he was wont
to done;
And with a chaunged face hem bad
a bone,
For love of god, to don that rever-
ence,
To stinte noyse, and yeve him audi-
ence. 70
11. Thanne seyde he thus, 'lo! lordes
myne, I was
Troian, as it is knowen out of
drede;
And if that yow remembre, I am
Calkas,
That alderfirst yaf comfort to your
nede,
And tolde wel how that ye sholden
spede. 75
For dredelees, thorough yow, shal, in
a stounde,
Ben Troye y-brend, and beten down
to grounde.
12. And in what forme, or in what
maner wyse
This town to slende, and al your
lust to acheve,
Ye han er this wel herd it me de-
vyse; 80
This knowe ye, my lordes, as I leve.
And for the Grekes weren me so
leve,
I com my-self in my propre per-
sonne,
To teche in this how yow was best
to done;
13. Havinge un-to my tresour ne my
rente 85
- Right no resport, to respect of your
ese.
Thus al my good I loste and to yow
wente,
Wening in this you, lordes, for to
plese.
But al that los ne doth me no dis-
ese.
I vouche-sauf, as wisly have I
Ioye, 90
For you to lese al that I have in
Troye,
14. Save of a doughter, that I lafte,
allas!
Slepinge at hoom, whanne out of
Troye I stertere.
O sterne, O cruel fader that I was!
How mighte I have in that so hard
an herte? 95
Allas! I ne hadde y-brought hir
in hir sherte!
For sorwe of which I wol not live
to morwe,
But-if ye lordes rewe up-on my
sorwe.
15. For, by that cause I say no tyme er
now
Hir to delivere, I holden have my
pees; 100
But now or never, if that it lyke
yow,
I may hir have right sone, doute-
lees.
O help and grace! amonges al this
prees,
Rewe on this olde caitif in destresse,
Sin I through yow have al this hevi-
nesse! 105
16. Ye have now caught and fettered in
prisoun
Troins y-nowe; and if your willes
be,
My child with oon may have re-
dempcioun.
Now for the love of god and of
bountee,
Oon of so fele, allas! so yeve him
me. 110
What nede were it this preyere for
to werne,

- Sin ye shul bothe han folk and toun
as yerne?
17. On peril of my lyf, I shal not lye,
Appollo hath me told it feithfully;
I have eek founde it by astron-
omye, 115
By sort, and by augurie eek trewely,
And dar wel seye, the tyme is faste
by,
That fyr and flaumbe on al the toun
shal sprede;
And thus shal Troye turne in asshen
dede.
18. For certeyn, Phebus and Neptunus
bothe, 120
That makeden the walles of the toun,
Ben with the folk of Troye alwey so
wrothe,
That thei wol bringe it to confu-
sioun,
Right in despyt of king Lameadoun.
By-cause he nolde payen hem hir
hyre, 125
The toun of Troye shal ben set on-
fyre.'
19. Telling his tale alwey, this olde
greye,
Humble in speche, and in his lok-
inge eke,
The salte teres from his eyen tweye
Ful faste ronnen down by eyther
cheke. 130
So longe he gan of socour hem by-
seke
That, for to hele him of his sorwes
sore,
They yave him Antenor, with-oute
more.
20. But who was glad y-nough but Cal-
kas tho?
And of this thing ful sone his nedes
leyde 135
On hem that sholden for the tretis
go,
And hem for Antenor ful ofte preyde
To bringen hoom king Toas and
Criseyde;
And whan Pryam his save-garde
sente,
- Thembassadours to Troye streyght
they wente. 140
21. The cause y-told of hir cominge, the
olde
Pryam the king ful sone in general
Let here-upon his parlement to
holde,
Of which the effect rehersen yow I
shal.
Thembassadours ben answered for
fynal, 145
Theschaunge of prisoners and al
this nede
Hem lyketh wel, and forth in they
procede.
22. This Troilus was present in the
place,
Whan axed was for Antenor Cris-
eyde,
For which ful sone chaungen gan
his face, 150
As he that with tho wordes wel neigh
deyde.
But nathelees, he no word to it
seyde,
Lest men sholde his affeccioun
espye;
With mannes herte he gan his
sorwes drye.
23. And ful of anguish and of grisly
drede 155
Abood what lordes wolde un-to it
seye;
And if they wolde graunte, as god
forbede,
Theschaunge of hir, than thoughte
he thinges tweye,
First, how to save hir honour, and
what weye
He mighte best theschaunge of hir
withstonde; 160
Ful faste he caste how al this mighte
stonde.
24. Love him made al prest to doon hir
byde,
And rather dye than she sholde
go;
But resoun seyde him, on that other
syde,

- 'With-out assent of hir ne do not
so, 165
Lest for thy werk she wolde be thy
fo,
And seyn, that thorough thy medling
is y-blowe
Your bother love, there it was erst
unknowe.'
25. For which he gan deliberen, for the
beste,
That though the lordes wolde that
she wente, 170
He wolde late hem graunte what
hem leste,
And telle his lady first what that
they mente.
And whan that she had seyde him
hir entente,
Ther-after wolde he werken also
blyve,
Though al the world ayein it wolde
stryve. 175
26. Ector, which that wel the Grekes
herde,
For Antenor how they wolde han
Criseyde,
Gan it withstonde, and sobrelly an-
swerde:—
'Sires, she nis no prisoner,' he
seyde;
'I noot on yow who that this charge
leyde, 180
But, on my part, ye may eft-sone
him telle,
We usen here no wommen for to
selle.'
27. The noyse of peple up-stirte thanne
at ones,
As brewe as blase of straw y-set on
fyre;
For infortune it wolde, for the
nones, 185
They sholden hir confusioun de-
syre.
'Ector,' quod they, 'what goost may
yow enspyre,
This womman thus to shilde and
doon us lese
Daun Antenor?— a wrong wey now
ye chese—
28. That is so wys, and eek so bold
baroun, 190
And we han nede of folk, as men
may see;
He is eek oon, the grettest of this
toun;
O Ector, lat tho fantasyes be!
O king Pryam,' quod they, 'thus
seggen we,
That al our voys is to for-gon Criseyde;' 195
And to deliveren Antenor they
preyde.
29. O Iuvenal, lord! trewe is thy sen-
tence,
That litel witen folk what is to
yerne
That they ne finde in hir desyr
offence;
For cloud of errour lat hem not
descerne 200
What best is; and lo, here ensample
as yerne.
This folk desiren now deliveraunce
Of Antenor, that broughte hem to
mischaunce!
30. For he was after traytoure to the toun
Of Troye; allas! they quitte him out
to rathe; 205
O nyce world, lo thy discrecioun!
Criseyde, which that never dide
hem skathe,
Shal now no lenger in hir blisse
bathe;
But Antenor, he shal com hoom to
toun,
And she shal out; thus seyden here
and howne. 210
31. For which delibered was by par-
lement,
For Antenor to yelden up Criseyde,
And it pronounced by the presi-
dent,
Al-theigh that Ector 'nay' ful ofte
preyde.
And fynally, what wight that it
with-seyde, 215
It was for nought, it moste been,
and sholde;

- For substance of the parlement it wolde.
32. Departed out of parlement echone,
This Troilus, with-oute wordes mo,
Un-to his chaumbre spedde him
faste alone, 220
But-if it were a man of his or two,
The whiche he bad out faste for
to go,
By-cause he wolde slepen, as he
seyde,
And hastely up-on his bed him
leyde.
33. And as in winter leves been bi-
raft, 225
Eche after other, til the tree be
bare,
So that ther nis but bark and
braunche y-laft,
Lyth Troilus, biraft of ech wel-
fare,
Y-bounden in the blake bark of
care,
Disposed wood out of his wit to
breyde, 230
So sore him sat the chaunginge of
Criseyde.
34. He rist him up, and every dore he
shette
And windowe eek, and tho this
sorweful man
Up-on his beddes syde a-doun him
sette,
Ful lyk a deed image pale and
wan; 235
And in his brest the heped wo
bigan
Out-breste, and he to werken in
this wyse
In his woodnesse, as I shal yow
devyse.
35. Right as the wilde bole biginneth
springe
Now here, now there, y-darted to
the herte, 240
And of his deeth roreth in com-
pleyninge,
Right so gan he aboute the chaum-
bre sterte,
- Smyting his brest ay with his festes
smerte;
His heed to the wal, his body to
the grounde
Ful ofte he swapte, him-selven to
confounde. 245
36. His eyen two, for pitee of his
herte,
Out stremeden as swifte welles
tweye;
The heighe sobbes of his sorwes
smerte
His speche him rafte, unnethes
michte he seye,
'O deeth, allas! why niltow do me
deye? 250
A-cursed be the day which that
nature
Shoop me to ben a lyves creature!'
37. But after, whan the furie and the
rage
Which that his herte twiste and
faste threste,
By lengthe of tyme somewhat gan
asswage, 255
Up-on his bed he leyde him doun
to reste;
But tho bigonne his teres more
out-breste,
That wonder is, the body may
suffyse
To half this wo, which that I yow
devyse.
38. Than seyde he thus, 'Fortune!
allas the whyle! 260
What have I doon, what have I
thus a-gilt?
How mightestow for reuthe me
bigyle?
Is ther no grace, and shal I thus
be spilt?
Shal thus Criseyde awey, for that
thou wilt?
Allas! how maystow in thyn herte
finde 265
To been to me thus cruel and un-
kinde?
39. Have I thee nought honoured al
my lyve,

- As thou wel wost, above the goddes alle?
 Why wiltow me fro Ioye thus depyve?
 O Troilus, what may men now thee calle 270
 But wrecche of wrecches, out of honour falle
 In-to miserie, in which I wol biwayle
 Criseyde, allas! til that the breeth me fayle?
40. Allas, Fortune! if that my lyf in Ioye
 Displeyd hadde un-to thy foule envye, 275
 Why ne haddestow my fader, king of Troye,
 By-raft the lyf, or doon my bretheren dye,
 Or slayn my-self, that thus compleyne and crye,
 I, combre-world, that may of nothing serve,
 But ever dye, and never fully sterve? 280
41. If that Criseyde allone were me laft,
 Nought roughete I whider thou woldest me stere;
 And hir, allas! than hastow me biraft.
 But ever-more, lo! this is thy manere,
 To reve a wight that most is to him dere, 285
 To preve in that thy gerful violence.
 Thus am I lost, ther helpeth no defence!
42. O verray lord of love, O god, allas!
 That knowest best myn herte and al my thought,
 What shal my sorful lyf don in this cas 290
 If I for-go that I so dere have bought?
 Sin ye Criseyde and me han fully brought
- In-to your grace, and bothe our hertes seled,
 How may ye suffre, allas! it be repeled?
43. What I may doon, I shal, whyl I may dure 295
 On lyve in torment and in cruel peyne,
 This infortune or this disaventure,
 Allone as I was born, y-wis, compleyne;
 Ne never wil I seen it shyne or reyne;
 But ende I wil, as Edippe, in derkenesse 300
 My sorful lyf, and dyen in distresse.
44. O very goost, that errest to and fro,
 Why niltow fleen out of the wofulleste
 Body, that ever mighte on grounde go?
 O soule, lurking in this wo, un-neste, 305
 Flee forth out of myn herte, and lat it breste,
 And folwe alwey Criseyde, thy lady dere;
 Thy righte place is now no lenger here!
45. O wofulle eyen two, sin your disport
 Was al to seen Criseydes eyen brighte, 310
 What shal ye doon but, for my discomfort,
 Stonden for nought, and wepen out your sighte?
 Sin she is queynt, that wont was yow to lighte,
 In veyn fro-this-forth have I eyen tweye
 Y-formed, sin your vertue is a-weye.
46. O my Criseyde, O lady sovereyne
 Of thilke woful soule that thus cryeth,
 Who shal now yeven comfourt to my peyne?

- Allas, no wight; but when myn
 herte dyeth,
 My spirit, which that so un-to yow
 hyeth, 320
 Receyve in gree, for that shal ay
 yow serve;
 For-thy no fors is, though the body
 sterve.
47. O ye loveres, that heighe upon the
 wheel
 Ben set of Fortune, in good avent-
 ure,
 God leve that ye finde ay love of
 steel, 325
 And longe mot your lyf in Ioye
 endure!
 But whan ye comen by my sepul-
 ture,
 Remembreth that your felawe rest-
 eth there;
 For I lovede eek, though I un-
 worthy were.
48. O olde unholson and mislyved
 man, 330
 Calkas I mene, allas! what eyeth
 thee
 To been a Greek, sin thou art born
 Troian?
 O Calkas, which that wilt my bane
 be,
 In cursed tyme was thou born for
 me!
 As wolde blisful Iove, for his
 Ioye, 335
 That I thee hadde, where I wolde,
 in Troye!'
49. A thousand sykes, hottere than the
 glede,
 Out of his brest ech after other
 wente,
 Medled with pleyntes newe, his wo
 to fede,
 For which his woful teres never
 stente; 340
 And shortly, so his peynes him to-
 rente,
 And wex so mat, that Ioye nor
 penaunce
 He feleth noon, but lyth forth in a
 traunce.
50. Pandare, which that in the parle-
 ment
 Hadde herd what every lord and
 burgeys seyde, 345
 And how ful graunted was, by oon
 assent,
 For Antenor to yelden so Criseyde,
 Gan wel neigh wood out of his wit
 to breyde,
 So that, for wo, he niste what he
 mente;
 But in a rees to Troilus he wente.
51. A certeyn knight, that for the tyme
 kepte 351
 The chaumbre-dore, un-dide it him
 anon;
 And Pandare, that ful tendreliche
 wepte,
 In-to the derke chaumbre, as stille
 as stoon,
 Toward the bed gan softly to goon,
 So confus, that he niste what to
 seye; 356
 For verray wo his wit was neigh
 aweye.
52. And with his chere and loking al
 to-torn,
 For sorwe of this, and with his armes
 folden,
 He stood this woful Troilus biforn,
 And on his pitous face he gan bi-
 holden; 361
 But lord, so often gan his herte
 colden,
 Seing his freend in wo, whos hevi-
 nesse
 His herte slow, as thoughte him, for
 distresse.
53. This woful wight, this Troilus, that
 felte 365
 His freend Pandare y-comen him to
 see,
 Gan as the snow ayein the sonne
 melte,
 For which this sorwful Pandare, of
 pitee,
 Gan for to wepe as tendreliche as
 he;
 And specheles thus been thise ilke
 tweye, 370

- That neyther mighte o word for
sorwe seye.
54. But at the laste this woful Troilus,
Ney deed for smert, gan bresten out
to rore,
And with a sorwful noyse he seyde
thus,
Among his sobbes and his sykes
sore, 375
'Lo! Pandare, I am deed, with-
outen more.
Hastow nought herd at parlement,
he seyde,
'For Antenor how lost is my Cris-
eyle?'
55. This Pandarus, ful deed and pale of
hewe,
Ful pitously answerde and seyde,
'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 have
trowed this?
Who wolde have wend that, in so
litle a throwe,
Fortune our loye wolde han over-
throwe? 385
56. For in this world ther is no creature,
As to my doom, that ever saw ruyne
Straungere than this, thorough cas or
aventure.
But who may al eschewe or al
devyne?
Swich is this world; for-thy I thus
defyne, 390
Ne trust no wight to finden in For-
tune
Ay proprete; hir yeftes been
comune.
57. But tel me this, why thou art now
so mad
To sorwen thus? Why lystow in
this wyse,
Sin thy desyr al holly hastow had,
So that, by right, it oughte y-now
suffyse? 396
But I, that never felte in my servyse
A frendly chere or loking of an yē,
- Lat me thus wepe and wayle, til I
dye.
58. And over al this, as thou wel wost
thy-selve, 400
This town is ful of ladies al aboute;
And, to my doom, fairer than swiche
twelve
As ever she was, shal I finde, in som
route,
Ye, oon or two, with-outen any
doute.
For-thy be glad, myn owene dere
brother, 405
If she be lost, we shul recovere
another.
59. What, god for-bede alwey that ech
plesauce
In o thing were, and in non other
wight!
If oon can singe, another can wel
daunce;
If this be goodly, she is glad and
light; 410
And this is fayr, and that can good
a-right.
Ech for his vertu holden is for
dere,
Bothe heroner and faucon for rivere.
60. And eek, as writ Zanzis, that was ful
wys,
"The newe love out chaceth ofte
the olde;" 415
And up-on newe cas lyth newe avys.
Think eek, thy-self to saven artow
holde;
Swich fyr, by proces, shal of kinde
colde.
For sin it is but casuel plesauce,
Som cas shal putte it out of remem-
braunce. 420
61. For al-so seur as day cometh after
night,
The newe love, labour or other wo,
Or elles selde seinge of a wight,
Don olde affeccious alle over-go.
And, for thy part, thou shalt have
oon of tho 425
To abrigge with thy bittre peynes
smerte;

- Absence of hir shal dryve hir out of herte.'
62. Thise wordes seyde he for the nones alle,
To helpe his freend, lest he for sorwe deyde.
For doutelees, to doon his wo to falle, 430
He roughte not what unthrift that he seyde.
But Troilus, that neigh for sorwe deyde,
Tok litel hede of al that ever he mente;
Oon ere it herde, at the other out it wente:—
63. But at the laste answerde and seyde,
'freend, 435
This lechecraft, or heled thus to be,
Were wel sitting, if that I were a feend,
To traysen hir that trewe is unto me!
I pray god, lat this consayl never y-thee;
But do me rather sterve anon-right here 440
Er I thus do as thou me woldest lere.
64. She that I serve, y-wis, what so thou seye,
To whom myn herte enhabit is by right,
Shal han me holly hires til that I deye.
For, Pandarus, sin I have trouthe hir hight, 445
I wol not been untrewre for no wight;
But as hir man I wol ay live and sterve,
And never other creature serve.
65. And ther thou seyst, thou shalt as faire finde
As she, lat be, make no comparisoun 450
To creature y-formed here by kinde.
O leve Pandare, in conclusioun,
I wol not be of thyn opinioun,
Touching al this; for whiche I thee biseche,
- So hold thy pees; thou sleest me with thy speche. 455
66. Thow biddest me I sholde love an-other
Al freshly newe, and lat Criseyde go!
It lyth not in my power, leve brother.
And though I mighte, I wolde not do so.
But canstow pleyen raket, to and fro, 460
Netle in, dokke out, now this, now that, Pandare?
Now foule falle hir, for thy wo that care!
67. Thow farest eek by me, thou Pandarus,
As he, that whan a wight is wo bigoon,
He cometh to him a pas, and seyth right thus, 465
"Thenk not on smert, and thou shalt fele noon."
Thou most me first transmuwen in a stoon,
And reve me my passiounes alle,
Er thou so lightly do my wo to falle.
68. The deeth may wel out of my brest departe 470
The lyf, so longe may this sorwe myne;
But fro my soule shal Criseydes darte
Out never-mo; but doun with Proserpyne,
Whan I am deed, I wol go wone in pyne;
And ther I wol eternally compleyne
My woe, and how that twinned be we tweyne. 576
69. Thow hast here maad an argument, for fyn,
How that it sholde lasse peyne be Criseyde to for-goon, for she was myn,
And live in ese and in felictee. 480
Why gabbestow, that seydest thus to me
That "him is wors that is fro wele y-throwe,

- Than he hadde erst non of that wele
y-knowe?"
70. But tel me now, sin that thee
thinketh so light
To chaungen so in love, ay to and
fro, 485
Why hastow not don bisily thy might
To chaungen hir that doth thee al
thy wo?
Why niltow lete hir fro thyn herte
go?
Why niltow love an-other lady
swete,
That may thyn herte setten in
quite? 490
71. If thou hast had in love ay yet mis-
chaunce,
And canst it not out of thyn herte
dryve,
I, that livede in lust and in ples-
aunce
With hir as muche as creature on-
lyve,
How sholde I that foryete, and that
so blyve? 495
O where hastow ben hid so longe in
muwe,
That canst so wel and formely ar-
guwe?
72. Nay, nay, god wot, nought worth is
al thy reed,
For which, for what that ever may
bifalle,
With-ouen wordes mo, I wol be
deed. 500
O deeth, that endere art of sorwes
alle,
Com now, sin I so ofte after thee
calle,
For sely is that deeth, soth for to
seyne,
That, ofte y-cleped, cometh and end-
eth peyne.
73. Wel wot I, whyl my lyf was in
quite, 505
Er thou me siowe, I wolde have
yeven hyre;
But now thy cominge is to me so
swete,
- That in this world I no-thing so de-
syre.
O deeth, sin with this sorwe I am
a-fyre,
Thou outhur do me anon in teres
drenche, 510
Or with thy colde strook myn herte
quenche!
74. Sin that thou sleest so fele in sondry
wyse
Ayens hir wil, unpreyed, day and
night,
Do me, at my requeste, this scervyse,
Delivere now the world, so dostow
right, 515
Of me, that am the wofulleste wight
That ever was; for tyme is that I
sterve,
Sin in this world of right nought
may I serve.'
75. This Troilus in teres gan distille,
As licour out of alamyk ful faste;
And Pandarus gan holde his tunge
stille, 521
And to the ground his eyen down he
caste.
But natheles, thus thoughte he at
the laste,
'What, parde, rather than my felawe
deye,
Yet shal I som-what more un-to him
seye:' 525
76. And seyde, 'freend, sin thou hast
swich distresse,
And sin thee list myn arguments to
blame,
Why nilt thy-selven helpen doon re-
dresse,
And with thy manhod letten al this
grame?
Go ravisshe hir ne canstow not for
shame! 530
And outhur lat hir out of toune fare,
Or hold hir stille, and leve thy nyce
fare.
77. Artow in Troye, and hast non hardi-
ment
To take a womman which that lov-
eth thee,

- And wolde hir-selven been of thyn
assent? 535
Now is not this a nyce vanitee?
Kys up anoon, and lat this weping
be,
And kyth thou art a man, for in this
houre
I wil be deed, or she shal bleven
oure.'
78. To this answerde him Troilus ful
softe, 540
And seyde, 'parde, leve brother
dere,
Al this have I my-self yet thought
ful ofte,
And more thing than thou devyest
here.
But why this thing is laft, thou shalt
wel here;
And whan thou me hast yeve an
audience, 545
Ther-after mayst thou telle al thy sen-
tence.
79. First, sin thou wost this toun hath al
this werre
For ravissing of wommen so by
might,
It sholde not be suffred me to erre,
As it stant now, ne doon so gret un-
right. 550
I sholde han also blame of every
wight,
My fadres graunt if that I so with-
stode,
Sin she is chaunged for the tounes
goode.
80. I have eek thought, so it were hir
assent,
To aske hir at my fader, of his grace;
Than thenke I, this were hir accuse-
ment, 556
Sin wel I woot I may hir not pur-
chace.
For sin my fader, in so heigh a place
As parlement, hath hir eschaunge
enseled,
He nil for me his lettre be repeled.
81. Yet drede I most hir herte to per-
tourbe 561
- With violence, if I do swich a game;
For if I wolde it openly distourbe,
It moste been disclaundre to hir
name.
And me were lever deed than hir de-
fame, 565
As nolde god but-if I sholde have
Hir honour lever than my lyf to
save!
82. Thus am I lost, for ought that I can
see;
For certeyn is, sin that I am hir
knight,
I moste hir honour levere han than
me 570
In every cas, as love re oughte of
right.
Thus am I with desyr and reson
twight;
Desyr for to distourben hir me red-
eth,
And reson nil not, so myn herte
dredeth.'
83. Thus wepinge that he coude never
cesse, 575
He seyde, 'allas! how shal I,
wrecche, fare?
For wel fele I alwey my love en-
cresse,
And hope is lasse and lasse alwey,
Pandare!
Encressen eek the causes of my
care;
So wel-a-wey, why nil myn herte
breste? 580
For, as in love, ther is but litel
reste.'
84. Pandare answerde, 'freend, thou
mayst, for me,
Don as thee list; but hadde ich it
so hote,
And thyn estat, she sholde go with
me;
Though al this toun cryede on this
thing by note, 585
I nolde sette at al that noyse a grote.
For when men han wel cryed, than
wol they roun;e;
A wonder last but nyne night never
in toun.

85. Devyne not in reson ay so depe
 Ne curteysly, but help thy-self
 anon; 590
 Bet is that othere than thy-selven
 wepe,
 And namely, sin ye two been al oon.
 Kys up, for by myn heed, she shal
 not goon;
 And rather be in blame a lyte
 y-founde
 Than sterve here as a gnat, with-
 oute wounde. 595
86. It is no shame un-to yow, ne no vyce
 Hir to with-holden, that ye loveth
 most.
 Paraunter, she mighte holden thee
 for nyce
 To lete hir go thus to the Grekes
 ost.
 Think eek Fortune, as wel thy-selven
 wost, 600
 Helpeth hardy man to his empryse,
 And weyveth wrecches, for hir
 cowardyse.
87. And though thy lady wolde a litel
 hir greve,
 Thou shalt thy pees ful wel here-
 after make,
 But as for me, certayn, I can not
 leve 605
 That she wolde it as now for yvel
 take.
 Why sholde than for ferd thyn herte
 quake?
 Think eek how Paris hath, that is
 thy brother,
 A love; and why shaltow not have
 another?
88. And Troilus, o thing I dar thee
 swere, 610
 That if Criseyde, whiche that is thy
 leef,
 Now loveth thee as wel as thou dost
 here,
 God helpe me so, she nil not take
 a-greef,
 Though thou do bote a-noon in this
 mischeef.
 And if she wilneth fro thee for to
 passe, 615
- Thanne is she fals; so love hir wel
 the lasse.
89. For-ty tak herte, and thenk, right
 as a knight,
 Though love is broken alday every
 lawe.
 Kyth now sumwhat thy corage and
 thy might,
 Have mercy on thy-self, for any
 awe. 620
 Lat not this wrecched wo thin herte
 gnawe,
 But manly set the world on sixe and
 sevene;
 And, if thou deye a martir, go to
 hevene.
90. I wol my-self be with thee at this
 dede,
 Though ich and al my kin, up-on a
 stounde, 625
 Shulle in a strete as dogges ligen
 dede,
 Though-girt with many a wyd and
 bloody wounde.
 In every cas I wol a freend be founde.
 And if thee list here sterven as a
 wrecche,
 A-dieu, the devel spede him that it
 recche! 630
91. This Troilus gan with tho wordes
 quiken,
 And seyde, 'freend, graunt mercy,
 ich assente;
 But certaynly thou mayst not me so
 priken,
 Ne peyne noon ne may me so tor-
 mente,
 That, for no cas, it is not myn
 entente, 635
 At shorte wordes, though I dyen
 sholde,
 To ravishe hir, but-if hir-self it
 wolde.'
92. 'Why, so mene I,' quod Pandarus,
 'al this day.
 But tel me than, hastow hir wel
 assayed,
 That sorwest thus?' And he an-
 swerde, 'nay.' 640

- 'Wher-of artow,' quod Pandare,
 'than a-mayed,
 That nost not that she wol ben yvel
 apayed
 To ravishe hir, sin thou hast not
 ben there,
 But-if that Iove tolde it in thyn ere?
93. For-thy rys up, as nought ne were,
 anoon, 645
 And wash thy face, and to the king
 thou wende,
 Or he may wondren whider thou art
 goon.
 Thou most with wisdom him and
 othere blende;
 Or, up-on cas, he may after thee
 sende
 Er thou be war; and shortly, brother
 dere, 650
 Be glad, and lat me werke in this
 matere.
94. For I shal shape it so, that sikerly
 Thou shalt this night som tyme, in
 som manere,
 Com speke with thy lady prevely,
 And by hir wordes eek, and by hir
 chere, 655
 Thou shalt ful sone aparceyve and
 wel here
 Al hir entente, and in this cas the
 beste;
 And fare now wel, for in this point
 I reste.'
95. The swifte Fame, whiche that false
 thinges
 Egal reporteth lyk the thinges
 trewe, 660
 Was thorough-out Troye y-fled with
 preste winges
 Fro man to man, and made this tale
 al newe,
 How Calkas doughter, with hir
 brighte hewe,
 At parlement, with-oute wordes
 more,
 I-graunted was in change of Ante-
 nore. 665
96. The whiche tale anoon-right as
 Criseyde
- Had herd, she which that of hir
 fader roughte,
 As in this cas, right nought, ne
 whanne he deyde,
 Ful bisily to Iuppiter bisoughte
 Yeve him mischaunce that this tretis
 broughte. 670
 But shortly, lest thise tales sothe
 were,
 She dorste at no wight asken it, for
 fere.
97. As she that hadde hir herte and al
 hir minde
 On Troilus y-set so wonder faste,
 That al this world ne mighte hir love
 unbinde, 675
 Ne Troilus out of hir herte caste;
 She wol ben his, whyl that hir lyf
 may laste.
 And thus she brenneth bothe in love
 and drede,
 So that she niste what was best to
 rede.
98. But as men seen in toune, and al
 aboute, 680
 That women usen frendes to visyte,
 So to Criseyde of women com a
 route
 For pitous Ioye, and wenden hir
 delyte;
 And with hir tales, dere y-nough a
 myte,
 These wommen, whiche that in the
 cite dwelle, 685
 They sette hem down, and seyde as
 I shal telle.
99. Quod first that oon, 'I am glad,
 trewely,
 By-cause of yow, that shal your fader
 see.'
 A-nother seyde, 'y-wis, so nam
 not I;
 For al to litel hath she with us
 be.' 690
 Quod tho the thridde, 'I hope, y-wis,
 that she
 Shal bringen us the pees on every
 syde,
 That, whan she gooth, almighty god
 hir gyde!'

100. Tho wordes and tho wommannisshethinges,
 She herde hem right as though she thennes were; 695
 For, god it wot, hir herte on other thing is,
 Although the body sat among hem there.
 Hir advertence is alwey elleswhere;
 For Troilus ful faste hir soule soughte;
 With-outen word, alwey on him she thoughte. 700
101. Thise wommen, that thus wenden hir to plesse,
 Aboute nought gonne alle hir tales spende;
 Swich vanitee ne can don hir non ese,
 As she that, al this mene whyle, brende
 Of other passioun than that they wende, 705
 So that she felte almost hir herte deye
 For wo, and wery of that companye.
102. For which no lenger mighte she restreyne
 Hir teres, so they gonnen up to welle,
 That yeven signes of the bitter peyne 710
 In whiche hir spirit was, and moste dwelle;
 Remembring hir, fro heven unto which helle
 She fallen was, sith she forgoth the sighte
 Of Troilus, and sorowfully she sighte.
103. And thilke foles sittinge hir aboute 715
 Wenden, that she wepte and syked sore
 By-cause that she sholde out of that route
 Departe, and never pleye with hem more.
- And they that hadde y-knowen hir of yore
 Seye hir so wepe, and thoughte it kindnesse, 720
 And eche of hem wepte eek for hir distresse;
104. And bisily they gonnen hir conforten
 Of thing, god wot, on which she litel thoughte;
 And with hir tales wenden hir disporten,
 And to be glad they often hir bisoughte, 725
 But swich an ese ther-with they hir wroughte
 Right as a man is esed for to fele,
 For ache of heed, to clawen him on his hele!
105. But after al this nyce vanitee
 They took hir leve, and hoom they wenten alle. 730
 Criseyde, ful of sorweful pitee,
 In-to hir chaumbre up wente out of the halle,
 And on hir bed she gan for deed to falle,
 In purpos never thennes for to ryse;
 And thus she wroughte, as I shal yow devyse. 735
106. Hir ounded heer, that sonnish was of hewe,
 She rente, and eek hir fingres longe and smale
 She wrong ful ofte, and bad god on hir rewe,
 And with the deeth to doon bote on hir bale.
 Hir hewe, whylom bright, that tho was pale, 740
 Bar witness of hir wo and hir constreynte;
 And thus she spak, sobbinge, in hir compleynte :
107. 'Alas!' quod she, 'out of this regioun
 I, woful wrecche and infortuned wight,

- And born in corsed constella-
cioun, 745
Mot goon, and thus departen fro
my knight;
Wo worth, allas! that ilke dayes
light
On which I saw him first with eyen
tweyne,
That causeth me, and I him, al this
peyne!'
108. Therwith the teres from hir eyen
two 750
Doun fille, as shour in Aperill, ful
swythe;
Hir whyte brest she bet, and for
the wo
After the deeth she cryed a thou-
sand sythe,
Sin he that wont hir wo was for to
lythe,
She mot for-goon; for which dis-
aventure 755
She held hir-self a forlost creature.
109. She seyde, 'how shal he doon, and
I also?
How sholde I live, if that I from
him twinne?
O dere herte eek, that I love so,
Who shal that sorwe sleen that ye
ben inne? 760
O Calkas, fader, thyn be al this
sinne!
O moder myn, that cleped were
Argyve,
Wo worth that day that thou me
bere on lyve!
110. To what fyn sholde I live and
sorwen thus?
How sholde a fish with-oute water
dure? 765
What is Criseyde worth, from
Troilus?
How sholde a plaunte or lyves
creature
Live, with-oute his kinde nori-
ture?
For which ful oft a by-word here I
seye,
That, "rotelees, mot grene sone
deye." 770
111. I shal don thus, sin neither swerd
ne darte
Dar I non handle, for the crueltee,
That ilke day that I from yow de-
part,
If sorwe of that nil not my bane
be,
Than shal no mete or drinke come
in me 775
Til I my soule out of my breste
unshethe;
And thus my-selven wol I do to
dethe.
112. And, Troilus, my clothes everi-
choon
Shul blake been, in tokeninge,
herte swete,
That I am as out of this world
agoon, 780
That wont was yow to setten in
quite;
And of myn ordre, ay til deeth me
mete,
The observaunce ever, in your ab-
sence,
Shal sorwe been, compleynte, and
abstinence.
113. Myn herte and eek the woful goost
ther-inne 785
Biquethe I, with your spirit to
compleyne
Eternally, for they shul never
twinne.
For though in erthe y-twinned be
we tweyne,
Yet in the feld of pitee, out of
peyne,
That hight Elysos, shul we been
y-ferre, 790
As Orpheus and Erudice his fere.
114. Thus herte myn, for Antenor, allas!
I sone shal be changed, as I wene.
But how shul ye don in this sorwful
cas,
How shal your tendre herte this
sustene? 795
But herte myn, for-yet this sorwe
and tene,
And me also; for, soothly for to
seye,

- So ye wel fare, I recche not to deye.'
115. How mighte it ever y-red ben or y-songe,
The pleynte that she made in hir distresse? 800
I noot; but, as for me, my litel tonge,
If I discreven wolde hir hevinesse,
It sholde make hir sorwe seme lesse
Than that it was, and childishly deface
Hir heigh compleynte, and therefore I it pace. 805
116. Pandare, which that sent from Troilus
Was to Criseyde, as ye han herd devyse,
That for the beste it was accorded thus,
And he ful glad to doon him that servyse,
Un-to Criseyde, in a ful secree wyse, 810
Ther-as she lay in torment and in rage,
Com hir to telle al hoolly his message.
117. And fond that she hir-selven gan to trete
Ful pitously; for with hir salte teres
Hir brest, hir face y-bathed was ful wete; 815
The mighty tresses of hir sonnish heres,
Unbroyden, hangen al aboute hir eres;
Which yaf him verray signal of martyre
Of death, which that hir herte gan desyre.
118. Whan she him saw, she gan for sorwe anoon 820
Hir tery face a-twixe hir armes hyde,
For which this Pandare is so wo bi-goon,
- That in the hous he mighte unnethe abyde,
As he that pitee felte on every syde.
For if Criseyde hadde erst compleyned sore, 825
Tho gan she pleyne a thousand tymes more.
119. And in hir aspre pleynte than she seyde,
'Pandare first of Ioyes mo than two
Was cause causinge un-to me, Criseyde,
That now transmued been in cruel wo. 830
Wher shal I seye to yow "wel come" or no,
That alderfirst me broughte in-to servyse
Of love, allas! that endeth in swich wyse?
120. Endeth than love in wo? Ye, or men lyeth!
And alle worldly blisse, as thinketh me, 835
The ende of blisse ay sorwe it occupyeth;
And who-so troweth: not that it so be,
Lat him upon me, woful wrecche, y-see,
That my-self hate, and ay my birthe acorse,
Felling alwey, fro wikke I go to worse. 840
121. Who-so me seeth, he seeth sorwe al at ones,
Peyne, torment, pleynte, wo, distresse.
Out of my woful body harm ther noon is,
As anguish, langour, cruel bitternesse,
A-noy, smert, drede, fury, and eek siknesse. 845
I trowe, y-wis, from hevene teres reyne,
For pitee of myn aspre and cruel peyne!'

122. 'And thou, my suster, ful of dis-
comfort,'
Quod Pandarus, 'what thenkestow
to do?
Why ne hastow to thy-selven som
resport, 850
Why woltow thus thy-selve, allas,
for-do?
Leef al this werk and tak now hede
to
That I shal seyn, and herkne, of
good entente,
This, which by me thy Troilus thee
sente.'
123. Torned hir tho Criseyde, a wo mak-
inge 855
So greet that it a death was for to
see:—
'Allas!' quod she, 'what wordes
may ye bringe?
What wol my dere herte seyn to me,
Which that I drede never-mo to
see?
Wol he have pleynte or teres, er I
wende? 860
I have y-nowe, if he ther-after
sende!'
124. She was right swich to seen in hir
visage
As is that wight that men on bere
binde;
Hir face, lyk of Paradys the image,
Was al y-chaunged in another
kinde. 865
The pleye, the laughtre men was
wont to finde
In hir, and eek hir Ioyes ever-
ychone,
Ben fled, and thus lyth now Cri-
seyde allone.
125. *Criseyde* Aboute hir eyen two a purple ring
Bi-trent, in sothfast tokninge of
hir peyne, 870
That to biholde it was a dedly thing,
For which Pandare mighte not
restreyne
The teres from his eyen for to
reyne.
But nathelees, as he best mighte, he
seyde
- From Troilus these wordes to Cri-
seyde. 875
126. 'Lo, rece, I trowe ye han herd al
how
The king, with othere lordes, for
the beste,
Hath mad eschaunge of Antenor
and yow,
That cause is of this sorwe and this
unreste.
But how this cas doth Troilus mo-
leste, 880
That may non erthely mannes tonge
seye;
For verray wo his wit is al aweye.
127. For which we han so sorwed, he
and I,
That in-to litel bothe it hadde us
slawe;
But thurgh my conseil this day,
fynally, 885
He somewhat is fro weping now
with-drawe.
And semeth me that he desyreth
fawe
With yow to been al night, for to
devyse
Remede in this, if ther were any
wyse.
128. This, short and pleyne, theeffect of
my message, 890
As ferforth as my wit can compre-
hende.
For ye, that been of torment in
swich rage,
May to no long prologe as now
entende;
And her-upon ye may answer him
sende.
And, for the love of god, my nece
dere, 895
So leef this wo er Troilus be
here.'
129. 'Gret is my wo,' quod she, and
sighte sore,
As she that feleth dedly sharp dis-
tresse;
'But yet to me his sorwe is muchel
more,

- That love him bet than he him-self,
I gesse. 900
Allas! for me hath he swich hev-
nesse?
Can he for me so pitously com-
pleyne?
Y-wis, this sorwe doubleth al my
peyne.
130. Grevous to me, god wot, is for to
twinne,
Quod she, 'but yet it hardere is to
me 905
To seen that sorwe which that he
is inne;
For wel wot I, it wol my bane be;
And deye I wol in certayn,' tho
quod she;
'But bidde him come, er deeth,
that thus me threteth,
Dryve out that goost, which in myn
herte beteth.' 910
131. These wordes seyde, she on hir
arnes two
Fil gruf, and gan to wepe pitously.
Quod Pandarus, 'allas! why do ye
so,
Syn wel ye wot the tyme is faste by,
That he shal come? Arys up
hastely, 915
That he yow nat biwopen thus ne
finde,
But ye wol han him wood out of
his minde!
132. For wiste he that ye ferde in this
manere,
He wolde him-selve slee; and if I
wende
To han this fare, he sholde not
come here 920
For al the good that Pryam may
despende.
For to what fyn he wolde anon
pretende,
That knowe I wel; and for-thy yet
I seye,
So leef this sorwe, or platly he wol
deye.
133. And shapeth yow his sorwe for to
abregge, 925
- And nought encesse, leve nece
swete;
Beth rather to him cause of flat
than egge, *edg (iswrd)*
And with som wysdom ye his
sorwes bete.
What helpeth it to wepen ful a
strete,
Or though ye bothe in salte teres
dreynte? 930
Bet is a tyme of cure ay than of
pleynte.
134. I mene thus; whan I him hider
bringe,
Sin ye ben wyse, and bothe of oon
assent,
So shapeth how distourbe your
goinge,
Or come ayen, sone after ye be
went. 935
Wommen ben wyse in short avyse-
ment;
And lat sen how your wit shal now
avayle;
And what that I may helpe, it shal
not fayle.'
135. 'Go,' quod Criseyde, 'and uncle,
trewely,
I shal don al my might, me to
restreyne 940
From weping in his sight, and
bisily,
Him for to glade, I shal don al my
peyne,
And in myn herte seken every
veyne;
If to this soor ther may be founden
salve,
It shal not lakken, certain, on myn
halve.' 945
136. Goth Pandarus, and Troilus he
soughte,
Til in a temple he fond him
allone,
As he that of his lyf no lenger
roughte;
But to the pitouse goddes ever-
ichone
Ful tendrely he preyde, and made
his mone, 950

- To doon him some out of this world
to pace;
For wel he thought ther was non
other grace.
137. And shortly, al the sothe for to
seye,
He was so fallen in despeyr that
day,
That outrely he shoop him for to
deye. 955
For right thus was his argument
alwey:
He seyde, he nas but loren, way-
lawey!
'For al that comth, comth by
necessitee;
Thus to be lorn, it is my destinee.
138. For certaynly, this wot I wel,' he
seyde, 960
'That for-sight of divyne purvey-
aunce
Hath seyn alwey me to for-gon
Criseyde,
Sin god seeth every thing, out of
doutaunce,
And hem desponeth, thourgh his
ordenaunce,
In hir merytes sothly for to be, 965
As they shul comen by predestinee.
139. But nathelees, allas! whom shal I
leve?
For ther ben grete clerkes many
oon,
That destinee thourgh argumentes
preve;
And som men seyn that nedely
ther is noon; 970
But that free choise is yeven us
everichoon.
O, welaway! so sleye arn clerkes
oldie,
That I not whos opinion I may
holde.
140. For som men seyn, if god seth al
biforn,
Ne god may not deceyved ben,
pardee, 975
Than moot it fallen, though men
hadde it sworn,
- That purveyaunce hath seyn bifore
to be.
Wherfor I seye, that from eterne if
he
Hath wist biforn our thought eek
as our dede,
We have no free choise, as these
clerkes rede. 980
141. For other thought nor other dede
also
Might never be, but swich as pur-
veyaunce,
Which may not ben deceyved
never-mo,
Hath feled biforn, with-ouren igno-
raunce.
For if ther mighte been a variaunce
To wrythen out fro goddes pur-
veyinge, 986
Ther nere no prescience of thing
cominge;
142. But it were rather an opinioun
Uncerteyn, and no stedfast for-
seinge;
And certes, that were an abusioun,
That god shuld han no parfit cleer
witinge 991
More than we men that han dout-
ous weninge.
But swich an errour up-on god to
gesse
Were fals and foul, and wikked
coursednesse.
143. Eek this is an opinioun of somme
That han hir top ful heighe and
smothe y-shore; 996
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, therefore the
purveyaunce 1000
Wot it biforn with-ouren igno-
raunce;
144. And in this manere this necessitee
Retorneth in his part contrarie
agayn.

- For needfully bihoveth it not to
be
That thilke thinges fallen in cer-
tayne 1005
That ben purveyed; but nedely,
as they seyn,
Bihoveth it that thinges, whiche
that falle,
That they in certayne ben purveyed
alle.
145. I mene as though I laboured me
in this,
To enqueren which thing cause of
which thing be; 1010
As whether that the prescience of
god is
The certayne cause of the necessitee
Of thinges that to comen been,
pardee;
Or if necessitee of thing cominge
Be cause certeyn of the purvey-
inge. 1015
146. But now ne enforce I me nat in
shewing
How the ordre of causes stant;
but wel wot I,
That it bihoveth that the bifallinge
Of thinges wist biforen certeynly
Be necessarie, al seme it not ther-
by 1020
That prescience put falling neces-
saire
To ~~thing~~ to come, al falle it foule
or faire.
147. For if ther sit a man yond on a
see,
Than by necessitee ^{seit} bihoveth it
That, certes, thyn opinioun soth
be, 1025
That wenest or coniectest that he
sit;
And ferther-over now ayenward
yit,
Lo, right so it is of the part con-
trarie,
As thus; (now herkne, for I wol
not tarie):
148. I seye, that if the opinioun of
thee 1030
- Be sooth, for that he sit, than seye
I this,
That he mot sitten by necessitee;
And thus necessitee in either is.
For in him nede of sitting is, y-wis,
And in thee nede of sooth; and
thus, forsothe, 1035
Ther moot necessitee ben in yow
bothe.
149. But thou mayst seyn, the man sit
not therfore,
That thyn opinion of sitting soth
is;
But rather, for the man sit ther
bifore,
Therfore is thyn opinion sooth,
y-wis. 1040
And I seye, though the cause of
sooth of this
Comth of his sitting, yet necessitee
Is entrechaunged, bothe in him
and thee.
150. Thus on this same wyse, out of
doutaunce,
I may wel maken, as it semeth
me, 1045
My resoninge of goddes purvey-
aunce,
And of the thinges that to comen
be;
By whiche reson men may wel
y-see,
That thilke thinges that in erthe
falle,
That by necessitee they comen
alle. 1050
151. For al-though that, for thing shal
come, y-wis,
Therfore is it purveyed, certaynly,
Nat that it comth for it purveyed
is:
Yet nathelees, bihoveth it ned-
fully,
That thing to come be purveyed,
trewely; 1055
Or elles, thinges that purveyed be,
That they bityden by necessitee.
152. And this suffyseth right y-now,
certeyn,

- For to destroye our free chois
every del.—
But now is this abusion to
scyn, 1060
That fallinge of the thinges tem-
porel
Is cause of goddes prescience
eternel.
Now trewely, that is a fals sen-
tence,
That thing to come sholde cause
his prescience.
153. What mighte I wene, and I hadde
swich a thought, 1065
But that god purveyth thing that
is to come
For that it is to come, and elles
nought?
So mighte I wene that thinges alle
and some,
That whylom been bifalle and
over-come,
Ben cause of thilke sovereyn pur-
veyaunce, 1070
That for-wot al with-outen igno-
raunce.
154. And over al this, yet seye I more
herto,
That right as when I woot ther is
a thing,
Y-wis, that thing mot nedefully be
so;
Eek right so, whan I woot a thing
coming, 1075
So mot it come; and thus the
bifalling
Of thinges that ben wist bifore the
tyde,
They mowe not been eschewed on
no syde.'
155. Than seyde he thus, 'almighty
love in trone,
That wost of al this thing the
soothfastnesse, 1080
Rewe on my sorwe, or do me deye
sone,
Or bring Criseyde and me fro this
distresse.'
And whyl he was in al this hevi-
nesse,
- Disputinge with him-self in this
matere.
Com Pandare in, and seyde as ye
may here. 1085
156. 'O mighty god,' quod Pandarus,
'in trone,
Ey! who seigh ever a wys man
faren so?
Why, Troilus, what thenkestow to
done?
Hastow swich lust to been thyn
owene fo?
What, parde, yet is not Criseyde
a-go! 1090
Why lust thee so thy-self for-doon
for drede,
That in thyn heed thyn eyen semen
dede?
157. Hastow not lived many a yeer
biforn
With-outen hir, and ferd ful wel at
ese?
Artow for hir and for non other
born? 1095
Hath kinde thee wroughte al-only
hir to plesse?
Lat be, and think right thus in thy
disece.
That, in the dees right as ther fallen
chaunces,
Right so in love, ther come and
goon plesaunces.
158. And yet this is a wonder most of
alle, 1100
Why thou thus sorwest, sin thou
nost not yit,
Touching hir goinge, how that it
shal falle
Ne if she can hir-self disturben it.
Thou hast not yet assayed al hir
wit.
A man may al by tyme his nekke
bede 1105
Whan it shal of, and sorwen at the
nede.
159. For-thy take hede of that that I
shal seye;
I have with hir y-spoke and longe
y-be,

- So as accorded was bitwix us
tweye.
And ever-mo me thinketh thus,
that she 1110
Hath som-what in hir hertes pre-
vetee,
Wher-with she can, if I shal right
arede,
Distorbe al this, of which thou art
in drede.
160. For which my counseil is, when it
is night,
Thou to hir go, and make of this
an ende; 1115
And blisful Iuno, thourgh hir grete
mighte,
Shal, as I hope, hir grace un-to us
sende.
Myn herte seyth, "certeyn, she
shal not wende;"
And for-thy put thyn herte a whyle
in rest;
And hold this purpos, for it is the
beste.' 1120
161. This Troilus answerde, and sighte
sore,
'Thou seyst right wel, and I wil do
right so;
And what him liste, he seyde un-to
it more.
And whan that it was tyme for
to go,
Ful prevely him-self, with-outen
mo, 1125
Un-to hir com, as he was wont to
done;
And how they wroughte, I shal yow
telle sone.
162. Soth is, that whan they gonne first
to mete,
So gan the peyne hir hertes for to
twiste,
That neither of hem other mighte
grete, 1130
But hem in armes toke and after
kiste.
The lasse wofulle of hem bothe
niste
Wher that he was, ne mighte o
word out-bringe,
- As I seyde erst, for wo and for sob-
binge.
163. Tho woful teres that they leten
falle 1135
As bittre weren, out of teres kinde,
For peyne, as is ligne aloës or galle.
So bittre teres weep nought, as I
finde,
The woful Myrra through the bark
and rinde.
That in this world ther nis so hard
an herte, 1140
That nolde han rewed on hir
peynes smerte.
164. But whan hir woful very gostes
tweyne
Retorned been ther-as hem oughte
dwelle,
And that som-what to wayken gan
the peyne
By lengthe of pleynte, and ebben
gan the welle 1145
Of hire teres, and the herte un-
swelle,
With broken voys, al hoors for-
shright, Criseyde
To Troilus thise ilke wordes seyde :
165. 'O Iove, I deye, and mercy I
beseche!
Help, Troilus!' and ther-with-al
hir face 1150
Upon his brest she leyde, and loste
speche;
Hir woful spirit from his propre
place,
Right with the word, alwey up
poynt to pace.
And thus she lyth with hewes pale
and grene,
That whylom fresh and fairest was
to sene. 1155
166. This Troilus, that on hir gan
biholde,
Clepinge hir name, (and she lay as
for deed,
With-oute answeere, and felte hir
limes colde,
Hir eyen thrown upward to hir
heed),

- This sorrowful man can now noon
 other reed, 1160
 But ofte tyme hir colde mouth he
 kiste;
 Wher him was wo, god and him-
 self it wiste!
167. He rist him up, and long streight
 he hir leyde;
 For signe of lyf, for ought he can
 or may,
 Can he noon finde in no-thing on
 Criseyde, 1165
 For which his song ful ofte is
 'weylaway!'
 But whan he saugh that specheles
 she lay,
 With sorrowful voys, and herte of
 blisse al bare,
 He seyde how she was fro this
 world y-fare!
168. So after that he longe hadde hir
 compleyned, 1170
 His hondes wrong, and seyde that
 was to seye,
 And with his teres salte hir brest
 bireyned,
 He gan tho teris wypen of ful dreye,
 And pitously gan for the soule
 preye,
 And seyde, 'O lord, that set art in
 thy trone, 1175
 Rewe eek on me, for I shal folwe
 hir sone!'
169. She cold was and with-outen sente-
 ment,
 For aught he woot, for breeth ne
 felte he noon;
 And this was him a preignant argu-
 ment
 That she was forth out of this
 world agoon; 1180
 And whan he seigh ther was non
 other woon,
 He gan hir limes dresse in swich
 manere
 As men don hem that shul be leyd
 on bere.
170. And after this, with sterne and
 cruel herte,
- His swerd a-noon out of his shethe
 he twichte, 1185
 Him-self to sleen, how sore that
 him smerte,
 So that his sowle hir sowle folwen
 mighte,
 Ther-as the doom of Mynos wolde
 it dighte;
 Sin love and cruel Fortune it ne
 wolde,
 That in this world he lenger liven
 sholde. 1190
171. Thanne seyde he thus, fulfilled of
 heigh desdayn,
 'O cruel love, and thou, Fortune
 adverse,
 This al and som, that falsly have ye
 slayn
 Criseyde, and sin ye may do me no
 werse,
 Fy on your might and werkes so
 diverse! 1195
 Thus cowardly ye shul me never
 winne;
 Ther shal no deeth me fro my lady
 twinne.
172. For I this world, sin ye han slayn
 hir thus,
 Wol lete, and folowe hir spirit lowe
 or hye; 1199
 Shal never lover seyn that Troilus
 Dar not, for fere, with his lady dye;
 For certeyn, I wol bere hir com-
 panye.
 But sin ye wol not suffre us liven
 here,
 Yet suffreth that our soules ben
 y-fere.
173. And thou, citee, whiche that I
 leve in wo, 1205
 And thou, Pryam, and bretheren
 al y-fere,
 And thou, my moder, farewell! for
 I go;
 And Attropos, make redy thou my
 bere!
 And thou, Criseyde, o swete herte
 dere,
 Receyve now my spirit!' wolde he
 seye, 1210

- With swerd at herte, al redy for to deye.
174. But as god wolde, of swough ther-
with she abreyde,
And gan to syke, and 'Troilus'
she cryde;
And he answerde, 'lady myn
Criseyde,
Live ye yet?' and leet his swerd
doun glyde. 1215
'Ye, herte myn, that thanked be
Cupyde!'
Quod she, and ther-with-al she
sore sighte;
And he bigan to glade hir as he
mighte;
175. Took hir in armes two, and kiste
hir ofte,
And hir to glade he dide al his
entente; 1220
For which hir goost, that flickered
ay on-lofte,
In-to hir woful herte ayein it wente.
But at the laste, as that hir eyen
glente
A-syde, anoon she gan his swerd
aspye,
As it lay bare, and gan for fere
crye, 1225
176. And asked him, why he it hadde
out-drawe?
And Troilus anoon the cause hir
tolde,
And how himself ther-with he
wolde have slawe.
For which Criseyde up-on him gan
biholde,
And gan him in hir armes faste
folde, 1230
And seyde, 'O mercy, god, lo,
which a dede!
Allas! how neigh we were bothe
dede!
177. Thanne if I ne hadde spoken, as
grace was,
Ye wolde han slayn your-self
anoon?' quod she.
'Ye, douteless;' and she answerde,
'allas! 1235
- For, by that ilke lord that made
me,
I nolde a forlong wey on-lyve han
be,
After your deeth, to han be
crowned quene
Of al the lond the sonne on shyn-
eth shene.
178. But with this selve swerd, which
that here is, 1240
My-selve I wolde have slayn!'
— quod she tho;
'But ho, for we han right y-now
of this,
And late us ryse and streight to
bedde go,
And therē lat vs speken of our wo.
For, by the morter which that I
see brenne, 1245
Knowe I ful wel that day is not
fer henne.'
179. Whan they were in hir bedde, in
armes folde,
Nought was it lyk tho nightes
here-biforn;
For pitously ech other gan biholde,
As they that hadden al hir blisse
y-lorn, 1250
Biwaylinge ay the day that they
were born.
Til at the last this sorwful wight
Criseyde
To Troilus these ilke wordes
seyde:—
180. 'Lo, herte myn, wel wot ye this,'
quod she,
'That if a wight alwey his wo com-
pleyne, 1255
And seketh nought how holpen
for to be,
It nis but folye and encrees of
peyne;
And sin that here assembled be
we tweyne
To finde bote of wo that we ben
inne,
It were al tyme sone to biginne.
181. I am a womman, as ful wel ye
woot, 1261

- And as I am avysed sodeynly,
So wol I telle yow, whyl it is hoot.
Me thinketh thus, that neither ye
nor I
Oughte half this wo to make skil-
fully. 1265
For there is art y-now for to re-
dresse
That yet is mis, and sleen this
hevynesse.
182. Sooth is, the wo, the whiche that
we ben inne,
For ought I woot, for no-thing
elles is
But for the cause that we sholden
twinne. 1270
Considered al, ther nis no-more
amis.
But what is thanne a remede un-to
this,
But that we shape us sone for to
mete?
This al and som, my dere herte
swete.
183. Now that I shal wel bringen it
aboute 1275
To come ayein, sone after that I go,
Ther-of am I no maner thing in
doute.
For dredeles, with-inne a wouke
or two,
I shal ben here; and, that it may
be so
By alle right, and in a wordes
fewe, 1280
I shal yow wel an heap of weyes
shewe.
184. For which I wol not make long
sermoun,
For tyme y-lost may not recovered
be;
But I wol gon to my conclusioun,
And to the beste, in ought that I
can see. 1285
And, for the love of god, for-yeve it
me
If I speke ought ayein your hertes
reste;
For trewely, I speke it for the
beste;
185. Making alwey a protestacioun,
That now these wordes, whiche
that I shal seye, 1290
Nis but to shewe yow my mocioun,
To finde un-to our helpe the beste
weye;
And taketh it non other wyse, I
preye.
For in effect what-so ye me co-
maunde,
That wol I doon, for that is no de-
maunde. 1295
186. Now herkeneth this, ye han wel
understonde
My goinge graunted is by parle-
ment
So ferforth, that it may not be
with-stonde
For al this world, as by my Iuge-
ment.
And sin ther helpeth noon avyse-
ment 1300
To letten it, lat it passe out of
minde;
And lat us shape a better wey to
finde.
187. The sothe is, that the twinninge of
us tweyne
Wol us disese and cruelliche
anoye.
But him bihoveth som-tyme han a
peyne, 1305
That serveth love, if that he wol
have loye.
And sin I shal no ferthere out of
Troye
Than I may ryde ayein on half a
morwe,
It oughte lasse causen us to sorwe.
188. So as I shal not so ben hid in
muwe, 1310
That day by day, myn owene herte
dere,
Sin wel ye woot that it is now a
truwe,
Ye shul ful wel al myn estat y-here.
And er that truwe is doon, I shal
ben here,
And thanne have ye bothe Antenor
y-wonne 1315

- And me also; beth glad now, if
ye conne;
189. And thenk right thus, "Criseyde
is now agoon,
But what! she shal come hastely
ayeyn;"
And whanne, allas? by god, lo,
right anoon,
Er dayes ten, this dar I sauflly
seyn. 1320
And thanne at erste shul we been
so fayn,
So as we shulle to-gederes ever
dwelle,
That al this world ne mighte our
blisse telle.
190. I see that ofte, ther-as we ben
now,
That for the beste, our conseil for
to hyde, 1325
Ye speke not with me, nor I with
yow
In fourtenight; ne see yow go ne
ryde.
May ye not ten dayes thanne
abyde,
For myn honour, in swich an
aventure?
Y-wis, ye mowen elles lite endure!
191. Ye knowe eek how that al my kin
is here, 1331
But-if that onliche it my fader be;
And eek myn othere thinges alle
y-ferc,
And nameliche, my dere herte, ye,
Whom that I nolde leven for to see
For al this world, as wyd as it hath
space; 1336
Or elles, see ich never Ioves face!
192. Why trowe ye my fader in this
wyse
Coveiteth so to see me, but for
drede
Lest in this toun that folkes me
dispyse 1340
By-cause of him, for his unhappy
dede?
What woot my fader what lyf that
I lede?
- For if he wiste in Troye how wel I
fare,
Us neded for my wending nought
to care.
193. Ye seen that every day eek, more
and more, 1345
Men trete of pees; and it supposed
is,
That men the quene Eleyne shal
restore,
And Grekes us restore that is mis.
So though ther nere comfort noon
but this,
That men purposen pees on every
syde, 1350
Ye may the bettre at ese of herte
abyde.
194. For if that it be pees, myn herte
dere,
The nature of the pees mot nedes
dryve
That men moste entrecomunen
y-ferc,
And to and fro eek ryde and gon
as blyve 1355
Alday as thikke as been fien from
an hyve;
And every wight han libertee to
bleve ~~men~~
Wher-as him list the bet, with-
outen leve.
195. And though so be that pees ther
may be noon,
Yet hider, though ther never pees
ne were, 1360
I moste come; for whider sholde I
goon,
Or how mischaunce sholde I dwelle
there
Among tho men of armes ever in
fere?
For which, as wisly god my soule
rede,
I can not seen wher-of ye sholden
drede. 1365
196. I have here another wey, if it so be
That al this thing ne may yow not
suffyse.
My fader, as ye knowen wel, pardee,

- Is old, and elde is ful of coveityse.
 And I right now have founden al
 the gyse, 1370
 With-oute net, wher-with I shal
 him hente;
 And herkeneth how, if that ye wole
 assente.
197. Lo, Troilus, men seyn that hard it is
 The wolf ful, and the wether hool
 to have;
 This is to seyn, that men ful ofte,
 y-wis, 1375
 Mot spenden part, the remenaunt
 for to save.
 For ay with gold men may the
 herte grave
 Of him that set is up-on coveityse;
 And how I mene, I shal it yow
 devyse.
198. The moeble which that I have in
 this toun 1380
 Un-to my fader shal I take, and
 seye,
 That right for trust and for sava-
 cioun
 It sent is from a freend of his or
 tweye,
 The whiche freendes ferventliche
 him preye
 To senden after more, and that in
 hye, 1385
 Whyl that this toun stant thus in
 Iupartye.
199. And that shal been an huge quan-
 titee,
 Thus shal I seyn, but, lest it folk
 aspyde,
 This may be sent by no wight but
 by me;
 I shal eek shewen him, if pees
 bityde, 1390
 What frendes that ich have on every
 syde
 Toward the court, to doon the
 wrathe pace
 Of Priamus, and doon him stonde
 in grace.
200. So, what for o thing and for other,
 swete,
- I shal him so enchaunten with my
 sawes, 1395
 That right in hevене his sowle is,
 shal he mete!
 For al Appollo, or his clerkes lawes,
 Or calculinge avayleth nought three
 hawes;
 Desyr of gold shal so his sowle
 blende,
 That, as me lyst, I shal wel make
 an ende. 1400
201. And if he wolde ought by his sort
 it preve
 If that I lye, in certayn I shal
 fonde
 Distorben him, and plukke him by
 the sleve,
 Making his sort, and beren him
 on honde,
 He hath not wel the goddes under-
 stonde. 1405
 For goddes speken in amphibolo-
 gyes, *Equivalents*
 And, for a sooth, they tellen twenty
 lyes.
202. Eek drede fond first goddes, I
 suppose,
 Thus shal I seyn, and that his
 cowarde herte
 Made him amis the goddes text to
 glose, 1410
 Whan he for ferde out of his Del-
 phos sterte.
 And but I make him sone to con-
 verte,
 And doon my reed with-inne a day
 or tweye,
 I wol to yow oblige me to deye.'
203. And troweliche, as writen wel I
 finde, 1415
 That al this thing was seyde of good
 entente;
 And that hir herte trewe was and
 kinde
 Towardes him, and spak right as
 she mente,
 And that she starf for wo neigh,
 whan she wente,
 And was in purpos ever to be
 trewe; 1420

- Thus writen they that of hir werkes
knewe.
204. This Troilus, with herte and eres
spradde,
Herde al this thing devysen to and
fro;
And verraylich him semed that he
hadde
The selve wit; but yet to lete hir
go 1425
His herte misforyaf him ever-mo.
But fynally, he gan his herte wreste
To trusten hir, and took it for the
beste.
205. For which the grete furie of his
penaunce
Was queynt with hope, and ther-
with hem bitwene 1430
Bigan for Ioye the amorous
daunce.
And as the briddes, whan the sonne
is shene,
Delyten in hir song in leves grene,
Right so the wordes that they spake
y-fere
Delyted hem, and made hir hertes
clere. 1435
206. But natheles, the wending of Cri-
seyde,
For al this world, may nought out
of his minde;
For which ful ofte he pitously hir
preyde,
That of hir heste he might hir
trewe finde.
And seyde hir, 'certes, if ye be
unkinde, 1440
And but ye come at day set in-to
Troye,
Ne shal I never have hele, honour,
ne Ioye.
207. For al-so sooth as sonne up-rist on
morwe,
And, god! so wisly thou me, woful
wrecche,
To reste bringe out of this cruel
sorwe, 1445
I wol my-selven slee if that ye
drecche.
- But of my deeth though litel be to
recche,
Yet, er that ye me cause so to
smerte,
Dwel rather here, myn owene swete
herte!
208. For trewely, myn owene lady dere,
Tho sleightes yet that I have herd
yow stere *lyly* 1451
Ful shaply been to failen alle
y-fere.
For thus men seyn, "that oon
thinketh the bere,
But al another thinketh his
ledere."
Your sire is wys, and seyde is, out
of drede, 1455
"Men may the wyse at-renne, and
not at-rede."
209. It is ful hard to halten unespyed
Bifore a crepul, for he can the
craft;
Your fader is in sleighte as Argus
yëd;
For al be that his moeble is him
biraft, 1460
His olde sleighte is yet so with
him laft,
Ye shal not blende him for your
womanhede,
Ne feyne a-right, and that is al my
drede.
210. I noot if pees shal ever-mo bityde;
But, pees or no, for earnest ne for
game, 1465
I woot, sin Calkas on the Grekes
syde
Hath ones been, and lost so foule
his name,
He dar no more come here ayein
for shame;
For which that weye, for ought I
can espye,
To trusten on, nis but a fan-
tasye, 1470
211. Ye shal eek seen, your fader shal
yow glose
To been a wyf, and as he can wel
preche,

- He shal som Grek so preyse and
wel alose,
That ravisschen he shal yow with
his speche,
Or do yow doon by force as he
shal teche. 1475
And Troilus, of whom ye nil han
routhe,
Shal causeles so sterven in his
trouthe!
212. And over al this, your fader shal
despuse
Us alle, and seyn this citee nis but
lorne;
And that thassege never shal
aryse, 1480
For-why the Grekes han it alle
sworn
Til we be slayn, and doun our
walles torn.
And thus he shal you with his
wordes fere,
That ay drede I, that ye wol bleve
there.
213. Ye shul eek seen so many a lusty
knight 1485
A-mong the Grekes, ful of worthi-
nesse,
And eche of hem with herte, wit,
and might
To plesen yow don al his besi-
nesse,
That ye shul dullen of the rude-
nesse
Of us sely Troianes, but-if
routhe 1490
Remorde yow, or vertue of your
trouthe.
214. And this to me so grevous is to
thinke,
That fro my brest it wol my soule
rende;
Ne dredeles, in me ther may not
sinke
A good opinioun, if that ye
wende; 1495
For-why your faderes sleighte wol
us shende.
And if ye goon, as I have told yow
yore,
- So think I nam but deed, with-
oute more.
215. For which, with humble, trewe,
and pitous herte,
A thousand tymes mercy I yow
preye; 1500
So reweth on myn aspre peynes
smerte,
And doth somewhat, as that I shal
yow seye,
And lat us stele away bitwixe us
tweye;
And think that folye is, whan man
may chese,
For accident his substaunce ay to
lese. 1505
216. I mene this, that sin we mowe er
day
Wel stele away, and been to-gider
so,
What wit were it to putten in
assay,
In cas ye sholden to your fader go,
If that ye mighte come ayein or
no? 1510
Thus mene I, that it were a gret
folye
To putte that sikernesse in Iu-
partye.
217. And vulgarly to speken of sub-
staunce
Of tresour, may we bothe with us
lede
Y-nough to live in honour and
plesaunce, 1515
Til in-to tyme that we shul ben
dede;
And thus we may eschewen al this
drede.
For everich other wey ye can
reorde,
Myn herte, y-wis, may not ther-
with acorde.
218. And hardily, ne dredeth no pov-
erte, 1520
For I have kin and freendes elles-
where
That, though we comen in our
bare sherte,

- Us sholde neither lakke gold ne
 gere,
 But been honoured whyl we dwelt-
 en there.
 And go we anoon, for, as in myn
 entente, 1525
 This is the beste, if that ye wole
 assente.'
219. Criseyde, with a syk, right in this
 wyse
 Answerde, 'y-wis, my dere herte
 trewe,
 We may wel stele away, as ye
 devyse,
 And finde swiche unthrifty weyes
 newe; 1530
 But afterward, ful sore it wol us
 rewe.
 And help me god so at my moste
 nede
 As causeles ye suffren al this
 drede!
220. For thilke day that I for cherissh-
 inge
 Or drede of fader, or of other
 wight, 1535
 Or for estat, delyt, or for wed-
 dinge
 Be fals to yow, my Troilus, my
 knight,
 Saturnes doughter, Iuno, thorough
 hir might,
 As wood as Athamante do me
 dwelle
 Eternaly in Stix, the put of
 helle! 1540
221. And this on every god celes-
 tial
 I swere it yow, and eek on eche
 goddesse,
 On every Nymphe and deite in-
 fernal,
 On Satiry and Fauny more and
 lesse,
 That halve goddes been of wilder-
 nesse; 1545
 And Atropos my threed of lyf to-
 breste
 If I be fals; now trowe me if thow
 leste!
222. And thou, Simoys, that as an arwe
 clere
 Thorough Troye rennest ay down-
 ward to the see,
 Ber witnesse of this word that seyde
 is here, 1550
 That thilke day that ich untrewed be
 To Troilus, myn owene herte free,
 That thou retorne bakwarde to thy
 welle,
 And I with body and soule sinke
 in helle!
223. But that ye speke, away thus for to
 go 1555
 And leten alle your freendes, god
 for-bede,
 For any womman, that ye sholden
 so,
 And namely, sin Troye hath now
 swich nede
 Of help; and eek of o thing taketh
 hede,
 If this were wist, my lif laye in
 balaunce, 1560
 And your honour; god shilde us
 fro mischaunce!
224. And if so be that pees her-after
 take,
 As alday happeth, after anger,
 game,
 Why, lord! the sorwe and wo ye
 wolden make,
 That ye ne dorste come ayein for
 shame! 1565
 And er that ye Iuparten so your
 name,
 Beth nought to hasty in this hote
 fare;
 For hasty man ne wanteth never
 care.
225. What trowe ye the peple eek al
 aboute
 Wolde of it seye? It is ful light to
 arede. 1570
 They wolden seye, and swere it,
 out of doute,
 That love ne droof yow nought to
 doon this dede,
 But lust voluptuous and coward
 drede.

- Thus were al lost, y-wis, myn herte
dere,
Your honour, which that now shyn-
eth so clere. 1575
226. And also thenketh on myn hon-
estee,
That floureth yet, how foule I
sholde it shende,
And with what filthe it spotted
sholde be,
If in this forme I sholde with yow
wende.
Ne though I livede un-to the
worldes ende, 1580
My name sholde I never ayeinward
winne;
Thus were I lost, and that were
routhe and sinne.
227. And for-ty slee with reson al this
hete;
Men seyn, "the suffraunt over-
cometh," pardee;
Eek "who-so wol han leef, he leef
mot lete;" 1585
Thus maketh vertue of necessitee
By pacience, and think that lord
is he
Of fortune ay, that nought wol of
hir recche;
And she ne daunteth no wight but
a wrecche.
228. And trusteth this, that certes, herte
swete, 1590
Er Phebus suster, Lucina the shene,
The Leoun passe out of this Ariete,
I wol ben here, with-uten any
wene.
I mene, as helpe me Iuno, hevenes
quene,
The tenthe day, but-if that deeth
me assayle, 1595
I wol yow seen, with-uten any
fayle.'
229. 'And now, so this be sooth,' quod
Troilus,
'I shal wel suffre un-to the tenthe
day,
Sin that I see that nede it moot be
thus.
- But, for the love of god, if it be
may, 1600
So lat us stele prively away;
For ever in oon, as for to live in
reste,
Myn herte seyth that it wol been
the beste.'
230. 'O mercy, god, what lyf is this?'
quod she;
'Allas, ye slee me thus for verray
tene! 1605
I see wel now that ye mistrusten
me;
For by your wordes it is wel y-sene.
Now, for the love of Cynthia the
shene,
Mistrust me not thus causeles, for
routhe;
Sin to be trewe I have yow plight
my trouthe. 1610
231. And thenketh wel, that som tyme
it is wit
To spende a tyme, a tyme for to
winne;
Ne, pardee, lorn am I nought fro
yow yit,
Though that we been a day or two
a-twinne.
Dryf out the fantasyes yow with-
inne; 1615
And trusteth me, and leveth eek
your sorwe,
Or here my trouthe, I wol not live
til morwe.
232. For if ye wiste how sore it doth me
smerte,
Ye wolde cesse of this; for god,
thou wost,
The pure spirit wepeth in myn
herte, 1620
To see yow wepen that I love
most,
And that I moot gon to the Grekes
ost.
Ye, nere it that I wiste remedye
To come ayein, right here I wolde
dye!
233. But certes, I am not so nyce a
wight 1625

- That I ne can imaginen a way
To come ayein that day that I have
hight.
For who may holde thing that wol
a-way?
My fader nought, for al his queynte
pley.
And by my thrift, my wending out
of Troye 1630
Another day shal torne us alle to
Ioye.
234. For-thy, with al myn herte I yow
beseke,
If that yow list don ought for my
preyere,
And for the love which that I love
yow eke,
That er that I departe fro yow
here, 1635
That of so good a comfort and a
chere
I may you seen, that ye may bringe
at reste
Myn herte, which that is at point
to breste.
235. And over al this, I pray yow,' quod
she tho,
'Myn owene hertes sooth fast suffi-
saunce, 1640
Sin I am thyn al hool, with-outen
mo,
That whyl that I am absent, no
plesaunce
Of othere do me fro your remem-
braunce.
For I am ever a-gast, for-why men
rede,
That "love is thing ay ful of bisy
drede." 1645
236. For in this world ther liveth lady
noon,
If that ye were untrewre, as god
defende!
That so betrayed were or wo bigoon
As I, that alle trouthe in yow
entende.
And douteles, if that ich other
wende, 1650
I nere but deed; and er ye cause
finde,
- For goddes love, so beth me not
unkinde.'
237. To this answerde Troilus and seyde,
'Now god, to whom ther nis no
cause y-wrye,
Me glade, as wis I never un-to Cri-
seyde, 1655
Sin thilke day I saw hir first with
yē,
Was fals, ne never shal til that I
dye.
At shorte wordes, wel ye may me
leve;
I can no more, it shal be founde at
preve.'
238. 'Graunt mercy, goode myn, y-wis,'
quod she, 1660
'And blisful Venus lat me never
sterve
Er I may stonde of plesaunce in
degree
To quyte him wel, that so wel can
deserve;
And whyl that god my wit wol me
conserve,
I shal so doon, so trewe I have yow
founde, 1665
That ay honour to me-ward shal
rebounde.
239. For trusteth wel, that your estat
royal
Ne veyn delyt, nor only worthi-
nesse
Of yow in werre, or torney marcial
Ne pompe, array, noblely, or eek
richesse, 1670
Ne made me to rewre on your dis-
tresse;
But moral vertue, grounded upon
trouthe,
That was the cause I first hadde on
yow routhe!
240. Eek gentil herte and manhod that
ye hadde,
And that ye hadde, as me thoughte,
in despyt 1675
Every thing that souned in-to
badde,
As rudenesse and poeplish appetyt;

Nelson

- And that your reson brydled your
delyt,
This made, aboven every creature,
That I was your, and shal, whyl I
may dure. 1680
241. And this may lengthe of yeres not
for-do,
Ne remuable fortune deface;
But Iuppiter, that of his might may
do
The sorful to be glad, so yeve us
grace,
Er nightes ten, to meten in this
place, 1685
So that it may your herte and myn
suffyse;
And fareth now wel, for tyme is that
ye ryse.'
242. And after that they longe y-pleyned
hadde,
And ofte y-kist and streite in armes
folde,
- The day gan ryse, and Troilus him
cladde, 1690
And rewfulliche his lady gan bi-
holde,
As he that felte dethes cares colde.
And to hir grace he gan him reco-
maunde;
Wher him was wo, this holde I no
demaunde.
243. For mannes heed imaginen ne
can, 1695
Ne entendement considere, ne
tonge telle
The cruel peynes of this sorful
man,
That passen every torment down in
helle.
For whan he saugh that she ne
myghte dwelle,
Which that his soule out of his
herte rente, 1700
With-outen more, out of the chaum-
bre he wente.

Explicit Liber Quartus.

BOOK V.

INCIPIE LIBER QUINTUS.

1. APROCHEN gan the fatal destinee
That loves hath in disposicioun,
And to yow, angry Parcas, sustren
three,
Committeth, to don execucioun;
For which Criseyde moste out of the
toun, 5
And Troilus shal dwelle forth in
pyne
Til Lachesis his threed no lenger
twyne. —
2. THE golden-tressed Phebus heighe
on-lofte
Thryës hadde alle with his bemes
shene
The snowes molte, and Zephirus as
ofte 10
Y-brought ayein the tendre leves
grene,
- Sin that the sone of Ecuba the quene
Bigan to love hir first, for whom his
sorwe
Was al, that she departe sholde
a-morwe.
3. Ful redy was at pryme Dyomede, 15
Criseyde un-to the Grekes ost to
lede,
For sorwe of which she felte hir
herte blede,
As she that niste what was best to
rede.
And trewely, as men in bokes rede,
Men wiste never womman han the
care, 20
Ne was so looth out of a toun to
fare.
4. This Troilus, with-outen reed or lore,
As man that hath his Ioyes eek for-
lore,

Was waytinge on his lady ever-
more
As she that was the soothfast crop
and more 25
Of al his lust, or Ioyes here-tofore.
But Troilus, now farewell al thy Ioye,
For shaltow never seen hir eft in
Troye!

5. Soth is, that whyl he bood in this
manere,
He gan his wo ful manly for to
hyde, *scenell* 30
That wel unneth e it seen was in his
chere;
But at the yate ther she sholde oute
ryde
With certeyn folk, he hoved hir
tabyde,
So wo bigoon, al wolde he nought
him pleyne,
That on his hors unneth e he sat for
peyne. 35
6. For ire he quook, so gan his herte
gnawe,
Whan Diomed e on horse gan him
dresse,
And seyde un-to him-self this ilke
sawe,
'Allas,' quod he, 'thus foul a wrecch-
ednesse
Why suffre ich it, why nil ich it re-
dresse? 40
Were it not bet at ones for to dye
Than ever-more in langour thus to
drye?
7. Why nil I make at ones riche and
pore
To have y-nough to done, er that she
go?
42 Why nil I bringe al Troye upon a
rore? 45
Why nil I sleen this Diomed e also?
Why nil I rather with a man or two
Stele hir a-way? Why wol I this
endure?
Why nil I helpen to myn owene
cure?'
8. But why he nolde doon so fel a
dede, 50

That shal I seyn, and why him liste
it spare:
He hadde in herte alwey a maner
drede,
Lest that Criseyde, in rumour of this
fare,
Sholde han ben slayn; lo, this was
al his care.
And elles, certeyn, as I seyde yore, 55
He hadde it doon, with-outen wordes
more.

9. Criseyde, whan she redy was to ryde,
Ful sorwfully she sighte, and seyde
'allas!'
But forth she moot, for ought that
may bityde,
And forth she rit ful sorwfully a
pas. 60
Ther nis non other remedie in this
cas.
What wonder is though that hir sore
smerte,
Whan she forgoth hir owene swete
herte?
10. This Troilus, in wyse of curteisye,
With hauke on hond, and with an
huge route 65
Of knights, rood and dide hir com-
panye,
Passinge al the valey fer with-out e.
And fether wolde han riden, out
of doute,
Ful fayn, and wo was him to goon
so some;
But torne he moste, and it was eek
to done. 70
11. And right with that was Antenor
y-come
Out of the Grekes ost, and every
wight
Was of it glad, and seyde he was
wel-come.
And Troilus, al nere his herte
light,
He peyned him with al his fulle
might 75
Him to with-holde of wepinge at
the leste,
And Antenor he kiste, and made
feste.

12. And ther-with-al he moste his leve
take,
And caste his eye upon hir pitously,
And neer he rood, his cause for to
make, 80
To take hir by the honde al sobrely.
And lord! so she gan wepen ten-
dredly!
And he ful softe and sleighly gan
hir seye,
'Now hold your day, and dooth me
not to deye.'
13. With that his coursér torned he
a-boute 85
With face pale, and un-to Diomede
No word he spak, ne noon of al
his route;
Of which the sone of Tydeus took
hede,
As he that coude more than the
crede
In swich a craft, and by the reyne
hir hente; 90
And Troilus to Troye homwarde he
wente.
14. This Diomede, that ladde hir by
the brydel,
Whan that he saw the folk of Troye
awaye,
Thoughte, 'al my labour shal not
been on ydel,
If that I may, for somewhat shal I
seye. 95
For at the worste it may yet shorte
our weye.
I have herd seyde, eek tymes twyës
twelve,
'He is a fool that wol for-yete him-
selve.'"
15. But natheles this thoughte he wel
ynough,
'That certaynly I am aboute nought
If that I speke of love, or make it
tough; 101
For douteles, if she have in hir
thought
Him that I gesse, he may not been
y-brought
So sone awaye; but I shal finde a
mene,
- That she not wite as yet shal what
I mene.' 105
16. This Diomede, as he that coude his
good,
Whan this was doon, gan fallen
forth in speche
Of this and that, and asked why
she stood
In swich disese, and gan hir eek
biseche,
That if that he encrease mighte or
eche 110
With any thing hir ese, that she
sholde
Comaunde it him, and seyde he
doon it wolde.
17. For trewely he swoor hir, as a
knight,
That ther nas thing with whiche he
mighte hir plese,
That he nolde doon his peyne and
al his might 115
To doon it, for to doon hir herte
an ese.
And preyede hir, she wolde hir
sorwe apese,
And seyde, 'y-wis, we Grekes con
have Ioye
To honouren yow, as wel as folk of
Troye.'
18. He seyde eek thus, 'I woot, yow
thinketh straunge, 120
No wonder is, for it is to yow newe,
Thaqueintaunce of these Troianes to
chaunge,
For folk of Grece, that ye never
knewe.
But wolde never god but-if as trewe
A Greek ye shulde among us alle
finde 125
As any Troian is, and eek as kinde.
19. And by the cause I swoor yow right,
lo, now,
To been your freend, and helply, to
my might,
And for that more acqueintaunce
eek of yow
Have ich had than another straunger
wight, 130

- So fro this forth I pray yow, day and
night,
Comaundeth me, how sore that me
smerte,
To doon al that may lyke un-to your
herte;
20. And that ye me wolde as your
brother trete,
And taketh not my frendship in
despyt; 135
And though your sorwes be for
thinges grete,
Noot I not why, but out of more
respyt,
Myn herte hath for to amende it
greet delyt.
And if I may your harmes not re-
dresse, 139
I am right sory for your hevynesse.
21. And though ye Troians with us
Grekes wrothe
Haa many a day be, alwey yet,
pardee,
O god of love in sooth we serven
bothe.
And, for the love of god, my lady
free, *melde*
Whom so ye hate, as beth not wroth
with me. 145
For trewely, ther can no wight yow
serve,
That half so looth your wraththe
wolde deserve.
22. And nere it that we been so neigh
the tente
Of Calkas, which that seen us bothe
may,
I wolde of this yow telle al myn
entente; 150
But this enseed til another day.
Yeve me your hond, I am, and shal
ben ay,
God help me so, whyl that my lyf
may dure,
Your owene aboven every creature.
23. Thus seyde I never er now to
womman born; 155
For god myn herte as wisly glade so,
I lovede never womman here-biforn
- As paramours, ne never shal no mo.
And, for the love of god, beth not
my fo;
Al can I not to yow, my lady dere,
Compleyne aright, for I am yet to
here. 161
24. And wondreth not, myn owene lady
bright,
Though that I speke of love to you
thus blyve;
For I have herd or this of many a
wight,
Hath loved thing he never saugh
his lyve. 165
Eek I am not of power for to stryve
Ayens the god of love, but him obeye
I wol alwey, and mercy I yow prey.
25. Ther been so worthy knightes in this
place
And ye so fair, that everich of hem
alle 170
Wol peynen him to stonden in your
grace.
But mighte me so fair a grace falle,
That ye me for your servaunt wolde
calle,
So lowly ne so trewely you serve
Nil noon of hem, as I shal, til I
sterve.' 175
26. Criseide un-to that purpos lyte
answerde,
As she that was with sorwe op-
pressed so
That, in effect, she nought his tales
herde,
But here and there, now here a word
or two.
Hir thoughte hir sorwful herte brast
a-two. 180
For whan she gan hir fader fer
aspye,
Wel neigh doun of hir hors she gan
to sye.
27. But natheles she thonked Diomed
Of al his travaile, and his goode
chere,
And that him liste his frendship hir
to bede; 185
And she accepteth it in good manere,

- And wolde do fayn that is him leef
and dere ;
And trusten him she wolde, and wel
she mighte,
As seyde she, and from hir hors she
alighte.
28. Hir fader hath hir in his armes
none, 190
And tweyntye tyme he kiste his
doughter swete,
And seyde, 'O dere doughter myn,
wel-come !'
She seyde eek, she was fayn with
him to mete,
And stood forth mewet, mildē, and
mansuete. *g. 200*
But here I leve hir with hir fader
dwelle, 195
And forth I wol of Troilus yow telle.
29. *here* To Troye is come this woful Troilus,
In sorwe aboven alle sorwes smerte,
With felon look, and face dispiteus.
Tho soeinly doun from his hors he
sterste, 200
And thorough his paleys, with a
swollen herte,
To chambre he wente ; of no-thing
took he hede,
Ne noon to him dar speke a word
for drede.
30. And there his sorwes that he spared
hadde
He yaf an issue large, and 'deeth !'
he cryde ; 205
And in his throwes frenetyk and
madde
He cursed Iove, Appollo, and eek
Cupyde,
He cursed Ceres, Bacus, and Cipryde,
His burthe, him-self, his fate, and
eek nature,
And, save his lady, every creature.
31. To bedde he goth, and weyleth there
and torneth 211
In furie, as dooth he, Ixion, in helle,
And in this wyse he neigh til day
soiorneth.
But tho bigan his herte a lyte un-
swelle
- Thorough teres which that gonnen up
to welle ; 215
And pitously he cryde up-on Cri-
seyde,
And to him-self right thus he spak,
and seyde : —
32. 'Wher is myn owene lady lief and
dere,
Wher is hir whyte brest, wher is it,
where ?
Wher ben hir armes and hir eye
clere, 220
That yesternight this tyme with me
were ?
Now may I wepe allone many a tere,
And graspe aboute I may, but in this
place,
Save a pilowe, I finde nought ten-
brace.
33. How shal I do ? Whan shal she
com ayeyn ? 225
I noot, allas ! why leet ich hir to go ?
As wolde god, ich hadde as tho be
sleyn ?
O herte myn, Criseyde, O swete fo !
O lady myn, that I love and no mo !
To whom for ever-mo myn herte I
dowe ; 230
See how I deye, ye nil me not
rescowe !
34. Who seeth yow now, my righte lode-
sterre ?
Who sit right now or stant in your
presence ?
Who can conforten now your hertes
werre ?
Now I am gon, whom yeve ye
audience ? 235
Who speketh for me right now in
myn absence ?
Allas, no wight ; and that is al my
care ;
For wel wot I, as yvel as I ye fare.
35. How shulde I thus ten dayes ful en-
dure,
Whan I the firste night have al this
tene ? 240
How shal she doon eek, sorwful
creature ?

- For tendernesse, how shal she this
sustene,
Swich wo for me? O pitous, pale,
and grene
Shal been your fresshe wommanliche
face
For langour, er ye torne un-to this
place.' 245
36. And whan he fil in any slomer-
inges,
Anoon biginne he sholde for to
grone,
And dremen of the dredfulleste
thinges
That mighte been; as, mete he
were allone
In place horrible, makinge ay his
mone, 250
Or meten that he was amonges alle
His enemyes, and in hir hondes
falle.
37. And ther-with-al his body sholde
sterte,
And with the stert al sodeinliche
awake,
And swich a tremour fele aboute
his herte, 255
That of the feer his body sholde
quake;
And there-with-al he sholde a noyse
make,
And seme as though he sholde falle
depe
From heighe a-lofte; and than he
wolde wepe,
38. And rewen on him-self so pit-
ously, 260
That wonder was to here his fan-
tasye.
Another tyme he sholde mightly
Conforte him-self, and seyn it was
folye,
So causeles swich drede for to drye,
And eft biginne his aspre sorwes
newe, 265
That every man mighte on his
sorwes rewe.
39. Who coude telle aright or ful dis-
cryve
- His wo, his pleynte, his langour,
and his pyne?
Nought al the men that han or
been on-lyve.
Thou, redere, mayst thy-self ful wel
devyne 270
That swich a wo my wit can not
defyne.
On ydel for to wryte it sholde I
swinke,
Whan that my wit is wery it to
thinke.
40. On hevене yet the sterres were
sene,
Al-though ful pale y-waxen was the
mone; 275
And whyten gan the orisonte
shene
Al estward, as it woned is to done.
And Phebus with his rosy carte
sone
Gan after that to dresse him up to
fare,
Whan Troilus hath sent after Pan-
dare. 280
41. This Pandare, that of al the day
biforn
Ne mighte have comen Troilus to
see,
Al-though he on his heed it hadde
y-sworn,
For with the king Pryam alday was
he,
So that it lay not in his libertee 285
No-wher to gon, but on the morwe
he wente
To Troilus, whan that he for him
sente.
42. For in his herte he coude wel de-
vyne,
That Troilus al night for sorwe
wook;
And that he wolde telle him of his
pyne, 290
This knew he wel y-nough, with-
oute book.
For which to chaumbre streight the
wey he took,
And Troilus tho sobreliche he
grette,

- And on the bed ful sone he gan
him sette.
43. 'My Pandarus,' quod Troilus, 'the
sorwe 295
Which that I drye, I may not longe
endure.
I trowe I shal not liven til to-
morwe;
For whiche I wolde alwey, on
aventure,
To thee devysen of my sepulture
The forme, and of my moeble thou
dispone 300
Right as thee semeth best is for to
done.
44. But of the fyr and flaumbe funeral
In whiche my body brenne shal to
gled, *be galed*
And of the feste and pleyes pal-
estral *allew*
At my vigile, I pray thee take good
hede 305
That al be wel; and offre Mars my
stede,
My swerd, myn helm, and, leve
brother dere,
My sheld to Pallas yef, that shyneth
clere.
45. The poudre in which myn herte
y-brend shal torne,
That preye I thee thou take and it
conserve 310
In a vessel, that men clepeth an
urne,
Of gold, and to my lady that I
serve,
For love of whom thus pitously I
sterve,
So yeve it hir, and do me this
pleasaunce,
To preye hir kepe it for a remem-
braunce. 315
46. For wel I fele, by my maladye,
And by my dremes now and yore
ago,
Al certeinly, that I mot nedes dye.
The owle eek, which that hight
Ascaphilo,
Hath after me shrighit alle these
nighthes two. 320
- And, god Mercurie! of me now,
woful wrecche,
The soule gyde, and, whan thee list,
it fecche!
47. Pandare answerde, and seyde,
'Troilus,
My dere freend, as I have told thee
yore,
That it is folye for to sorwen
thus, 325
And causeles, for whiche I can
no-more.
But who-so wol not trowen reed ne
lore,
I can not seen in him no remedye,
But lete him worthen with his fan-
tasye.
48. But Troilus, I pray thee tel me
now, 330
If that thou trowe, er this, that any
wight
Hath loved paramours as wel as
thou?
Ye, god wot, and fro many a worthy
knight
Hath his lady goon a fourtenight,
And he not yet made halvendel the
fare. 335
What nede is thee to maken al this
care?
49. Sin day by day thou mayst thy-
selven see
That from his love, or elles from
his wyf,
A man mot twinnen of necessitee,
Ye, though he love hir as his owene
lyf; 340
Yet nil he with him-self thus
maken stryf.
For wel thow wost, my leve brother
dere,
That alwey freendes may nought
been y-ferre.
50. How doon this folk that seen hir
loves wedded
By freendes might, as it bi-tit ful
ofte, 345
And seen hem in hir spouses bed
y-bedded?

- God woot, they take it wysly, faire
and softe.
For why good hope halt up hir
herte on-lofte,
And for they can a tyme of sorwe
endure;
As tyme hem hurt, a tyme doth
hem cure. 350
51. So sholdestow endure, and late
slyde
The tyme, and fonde to ben glad
and light.
Ten dayes nis so longe not tabyde.
And sin she thee to comen hath
bihight,
She nil hir hestes breken for no
wight. 355
For dred thee not that she nil
finden weye
To come ayein, my lyf that dorste
I leye.
52. Thy swevenes eek and al swich fan-
tasye
Dryf out, and lat hem faren to
mischaunce;
For they procede of thy malen-
colye, 360
That doth thee fele in sleep al this
penaunce,
A straw for alle swevenes signifi-
aunce!
God helpe me so, I counte hem not
a bene,
Ther woot no man aright what
dremes mene.
53. For prestes of the temple tellen
this, 365
That dremes been the revelaciouns
Of goddes, and as wel they telle,
y-wis,
That they ben infernals illusiouns;
And leches seyn, that of complex-
iouns
Proceden they, or fast, or gлот-
onye. 370
Who woot in sooth thus what they
signifye?
54. Eek othere seyn that thorough im-
pressiouns,
- As if a wight hath faste a thing in
minde,
That ther-of cometh swiche avi-
siouns;
And othere seyn, as they in bokes
finde, 375
That, after tymes of the yeer by
kinde,
Men dreme, and that theeffect goth
by the mone;
But leve no drem, for it is nought
to done.
55. Wel worth of dremes ay thise olde
wyves,
And treweliche eek augurie of thise
foules; 380
For fere of which men wenen lese
her lyves,
As ravens qualm, or shryking of
thise oules.
To trowen on it bothe fals and foul
is.
Allas, allas, so noble a creature
As is a man, shal drede swich
ordure! 385
56. For which with al myn herte I thee
beseche,
Un-to thy-self that al this thou for-
yive;
And rys up now with-oute more
speche,
And lat us caste how forth may best
be drive
This tyme, and eek how freshly we
may live 390
Whan that she cometh, the which
shal be right sone;
God help me so, the beste is thus to
done.
57. Rys, lat us speke of lusty lyf in
Troye
That we han lad, and forth the tyme
dryve;
And eek of tyme cominge us reioye,
That bringen shal our blisse now so
blyve; 396
And langour of these twyës dayes
fyve
We shal ther-with so foryete or
opresse,

*infer
rumors*

- That wel unnethe it doon shal us
dresse.
58. This toun is ful of lordes al aboute,
And trewes lasten al this mene
whyle. 401
Go we pleye us in som lusty route
To Sarpedon, not hennes but a myle.
And thus thou shalt the tyme wel
bigyle,
And dryve it forth un-to that blisful
morwe, 405
That thou hir see, that cause is of
thy sorwe.
59. Now rys, my dere brother Troilus;
For certes, it noon honour is to thee
To wepe, and in thy bed to iouken
thus.
For trewely, of o thing trust to me,
If thou thus ligge a day, or two, or
three, 411
The folk wol wene that thou, for
cowardyse,
Thee feynest syk, and that thou
darst not ryse.'
60. This Troilus answerde, 'O brother
dere,
This knowen folk that han y-suffred
peyne, 415
That though he wepe and make
sorrowful chere,
That feleth harm and smert in every
veyne,
No wonder is; and though I ever
pleyne,
Or alwey wepe, I am no-thing to
blame,
Sin I have lost the cause of al my
game. 420
61. But sin of fyne force I moot aryse,
I shal aryse, as sone as ever I may;
And god, to whom myn herte I
sacrifyse,
So sende us hastely the tenthe day!
For was ther never fowl so fayn of
May, 425
As I shal been, whan that she
cometh in Troye,
That cause is of my torment and my
loye.
62. But whider is thy reed,' quod Troilus,
'That we may pleye us best in al this
toun?'
By god, my conseil is,' quod Pan-
darus, 430
'To ryde and pleye us with king
Sarpedoun.'
So longe of this they speken up and
doun,
Til Troilus gan at the laste assente
To ryse, and forth to Sarpedoun
they wente.
63. This Sarpedoun, as he that honour-
able 435
Was ever his lyve, and ful of heigh
provesse,
With al that mighte y-served been
on table,
That deyntee was, al coste it greet
richesse,
He fedde hem day by day, that
swich noblesse,
As seyden bothe the moste and eek
the leste, 440
Was never er that day wist at any
feste.
64. Nor in this world ther is non instru-
ment
Delicious, through wind, or touche,
or corde,
As fer as any wight hath ever y-went,
That tonge telle or herte may re-
corde, 445
That at that feste it nas wel herd
acorde;
Ne of ladies eek so fayr a com-
panye
On daunce, er tho, was never y-seyn
with yẽ.
65. But what avayleth this to Troilus,
That for his sorwe no-thing of it
roughte? 450
For ever in oon his herte piõtous
Ful bisily Criseyde his lady soughte.
On hir was ever al that his herte
thoughte.
Now this, now that, so faste imagin-
inge,
That glade, y-wis, can him no festey-
inge. 455

66. These ladies eek that at this feste
been,
Sin that he saw his lady was a-weye,
It was his sorwe upon hem for to
seen,
Or for to here on instrumentz so
pleye.
For she, that of his herte berth the
keye, 460
Was absent, lo, this was his fan-
tasye,
That no wight sholde make melodye.
67. Nor ther nas houre in al the day or
night,
Whan he was ther-as no wight
michte him here,
That he ne seyde, 'O lufsom lady
bright, 465
How have ye faren, sin that ye were
here?
Wel-come, y-wis, myn owene lady
dere,
But welaway, al this nas but a mase;
Fortune his howve entended bet to
glase. *copy*
68. The lettres eek, that she of olde
tyme 470
Haddē him y-sent, he wolde allone
rede,
An hundred sythe, a-twixen noon
and pryme;
Refiguringe hir shap, hir woman-
hede,
With-inne his herte, and every word
and dede
That passed was, and thus he droof
to an ende 475
The ferthe day, and seyde, he wolde
wende.
69. And seyde, 'leve brother Pandarus,
Intendestow that we shul herē bleve
Til Sarpedoun wol forth congeyen
us?
Yet were it fairer that we toke our
leve. 480
For goddes love, lat us now sone at
eve
Our leve take, and homward lat us
torne;
For trewely, I nil not thus soiorne.'
70. Pandare answerde, 'be we comen
hider
To fecchen fyr, and rennen hoom
ayeyn? 485
God helpe me so, I can not tellen
whider
We mighten goon, if I shal soothly
seyn,
Ther any wight is of us more fayn
Than Sarpedoun; and if we hennes
hye
Thus soideinly, I holde it vilanye,
71. Sin that we seyden that we wolde
bleve, *with* 491
With him a wouke; and now, thus
soideinly,
The ferthe day to take of him our
leve,
He wolde wondren on it, trewely!
Lat us holde forth our purpos
fermely; 495
And sin that ye bihighten him to
byde,
Hold forward now, and after lat us
ryde.'
72. Thus Pandarus, with alle peyne and
wo,
Made him to dwelle; and at the
woukes ende,
Of Sarpedoun they toke hir leve
tho, 500
And on hir wey they spedden hem
to wende.
Quod Troilus, 'now god me grace
sende,
That I may finden, at myn hom-
cominge,
Criseyde comen!' and ther-with
gan he singe.
73. 'Ye, hasel-wode!' thoughte this
Pandare, 505
And to him-self ful softely he
seyde, *with*
'God woot, refreyden may this hote
fare
Er Calkas sende Troilus Criseyde!'
But natheles, he laped thus, and
seyde,
And swor, y-wis, his herte him wel
bihighte, 510

- She wolde come as sone as ever
she mighte.
74. Whan they un-to the paleys were
y-comen
Of Troilus, they doun of hors
alighte,
And to the chambre hir wey than
han they nomen.
And in-to tyme that it gan to
nighte, 515
They spaken of Criseyde the
brighte.
And after this, whan that hem bothe
leste,
They spedde hem fro the soper un-
to reste.
75. On morwe, as sone as day bigan to
clere,
This Troilus gan of his sleep tab-
reyde, 520
And to Pandare, his owene brother
dere,
'For love of god,' ful pitously he
seyde,
'As go we seen the paleys of Cri-
seyde;
For sin we yet may have namore
feste,
So lat us seen hir paleys at the
leste.' 525
76. And ther-with-al, his meyne for to
blende,
A cause he fond in toune for to go,
And to Criseydes hous they gommen
wende.
But lord! this sely Troilus was
wo!
Him thoughte his sorweful herte
braste a-two. 530
For whan he saugh hir dores sperred
alle,
Wel neigh for sorwe a-doun he gan
to falle.
77. Therwith whan he was war and gan
biholde
How shet was every windowe of the
place,
As frost, him thoughte, his herte
gan to colde; 535
- For which with chaunged deedlich
pale face,
With-ouen word, he forth bigan to
pace;
And, as god wolde, he gan so faste
ryde,
That no wight of his contenance
aspyde.
78. Than seyde he thus, 'O paleys des-
olat, 540
O hous, of houses whylom best
y-high,
O paleys empty and disconsolat,
O thou lanterne, of which queynt
is the light,
O paleys, whylom day, that now
art night,
Wel oughtestow to falle, and I to
dye, 545
Sin she is went that wont was us to
gye!
79. O paleys, whylom croune of houses
alle,
Enlumined with sonne of alle
blisse!
O ring, fro which the ruby is out-
falle,
O cause of wo, that cause hast been
of lisse! ~~the, sone~~ 550
Yet, sin I may no bet, fayn wolde
I kisse
Thy colde dores, dorste I for this
route;
And fare-wel shryne, of which the
seynt is oute!'
80. Ther-with he caste on Pandarus his yē
With chaunged face, and pitous to
biholde; 555
And whan he mighte his tyme
aright aspye,
Ay as he rood, to Pandarus he tolde
His newe sorwe, and eek his loyes
olde,
So pitously and with so dede an
hewe,
That every wight mighte on his
sorwe rewe. 560
81. Fro thennesforth he rydeth up and
doun,

- And every thing com him to remembrance
 As he rood forth by places of the town
 In whiche he whylom hadde al his plesaunce.
 'Lo, yond saugh I myn owene lady daunce; 565
 And in that temple, with hir eyen clere,
 Me caughte first my righte lady dere.
82. And yonder have I herd ful lustily
 My dere herte laughe, and yonder pleye
 Saugh I hir ones eek ful blisfully. 570
 And yonder ones to me gan she seye,
 "Now goode swete, love me wel, I preye."
 And yond so goodly gan she me biholde,
 That to the deeth myn herte is to hir holde.
83. And at that corner, in the yonder hous, 575
 Herde I myn alderlevest lady dere
 So wommanly, with voys melodious,
 Singen so wel, so goodly, and so clere,
 That in my soule yet me thinketh I here
 The blisful soun; and, in that yonder place, 580
 My lady first me took un-to hir grace.'
84. Thannc thoughte he thus, 'O blisful lord Cupyde,
 Whanne I the proces have in my memorie,
 How thou me hast werreyed on every syde,
 Men mighte a book make of it, lyk a storie. 585
 What nede is thee to scke on me victorie,
 Sin I am thyn, and hoolly at thy wille?
- What loye hastow thyn owene folk to spille?
85. Wel hastow, lord, y-wroke on me thyn ire,
 Thou mighty god, and dredful for to greve! 590
 Now mercy, lord, thou wast wel I desire
 Thy grace most, of alle lustes leve.
 And live and deye I wol in thy bileve;
 For which I naxe in guerdon but a bone,
 That thou Criseyde aycin me sende sone. 595
86. Distreyne hir herte as faste to retorne
 As thou dost myn to longen hir to see;
 Than woot I wel, that she nil not soiorne.
 Now, blisful lord, so cruel thou ne be
 Un-to the blood of Troye, I preye thee, 600
 As Iuno was un-to the blood Thebane,
 For which the folk of Thebes caughte hir bane.'
87. And after this he to the yates wente
 Ther-as Criseyde out-rood a ful good paas,
 And up and down ther made he many a wente, 605
 And to him-self ful ofte he seyde 'allas!
 From hennes rood my blisse and my solas!
 As wolde blisful god now, for his loye,
 I mighte hir seen ayein come in-to Troye.
88. And to the yonder hille I gan hir gyde, 610
 Allas! and there I took of hir my leve!
 And yond I saugh hir to hir fader ryde,

- For sorwe of which myn herte shal
to-eleve.
And hider boom I com when it
was eve;
And here I dwelle out-cast from
alle Ioye, 615
And shal, til I may seen hir eft in
Troye.'
89. And of him-self imagined he ofte
To ben defet, and pale, and waxen
lesse
Than he was wont, and that men
seyde softe,
'What may it be? who can the
sothe gesse 620
Why Troilus hath al this hevi-
nesse?'
And al this nas but his malencolye,
That he hadde of him-self swich
fantasye.
90. Another tyme imaginen he wolde
That every wight that wente by the
weye 625
Had of him routhe, and that they
seyen sholde,
'I am right sory Troilus wol deye.'
And thus he droof a day yet forth or
tweye.
As ye have herd, swich lyf right gan
he lede,
As he that stood bitwixen hope and
drede. 630
91. For which him lyked in his songes
shewe
Thencheson of his wo, as he best
mighte,
And make a song of wordes but a
fewe,
Somwhat his woful herte for to
lighte.
And when he was from every mannes
sighte, 635
With softe voys he, of his lady dere,
That was absent, gan singe as ye
may here.
92. 'O sterre, of which I lost have al the
light,
With herte soor wel oughte I to be-
wayle,
- That ever derk in torment, night by
night, 640
Toward my deeth with wind in stere
I sayle;
For which the tenthe night if that I
fayle
The gyding of thy bemes brighte an
houre,
My ship and me Caribdis wol de-
voure.'
93. This song when he thus songen
hadde, sone 645
He fil ayein in-to his sykes olde;
And every night, as was his wone to
done,
He stood the brighte mone to be-
holde,
And al his sorwe he to the mone
tolde;
And seyde, 'y-wis, when thou art
horned newe, 650
I shal be glad, if al the world be
trewe!
94. I saugh thyn hornes olde eek by the
morwe,
Whan hennes rood my righte lady
dere,
That cause is of my torment and my
sorwe;
For whiche, O brighte Lucina the
clere, 655
For love of god, ren faste aboute thy
spere!
For when thyn hornes newe ginne
springe,
Than shal she come, that may my
blisse bringe!'
95. The day is more, and lenger every
night,
Than they be wont to be, him
thoughte tho; 660
And that the sonne wente his course
unright
By lenger wey than it was wont to go;
And seyde, 'y-wis, me dredeth ever-
mo,
The sonnes sone, Pheton, be on-
lyve,
And that his fadres cart amis he
dryve.' 665

96. Upon the walles faste eek wolde he walke,
 And on the Grekes ost he wolde see,
 And to him-self right thus he wolde talke,
 'Lo, yonder is myn owene lady free,
 Or elles yonder, ther tho tentes be!
 And thennes comth this eyr, that is so sote, 671
 That in my soule I fele it doth me bote.
97. And hardely this wind, that more and more
 Thus stoundemele encreseth in my face,
 Is of my ladyes depe sykes sore. 675
 I preve it thus, for in non othere place
 Of al this toun, save onliche in this space,
 Fele I no wind that soundeth so lyk peyne;
 It seyth, "allas! why twinned be we tweyne?"
98. This longe tyme he dryveth forth right thus, 680
 Til fully passed was the nynthe night;
 And ay bi-syde him was this Pandarus,
 That bisily dide alle his fulle might
 Him to comferte, and make his herte light;
 Yevinge him hope alwey, the tenthe morwe 685
 That she shal come, and stinten al his sorwe.
99. Up-on that other syde eek was Criseyde,
 With wommen fewe, among the Grekes stronge;
 For which ful ofte a day 'allas!' she seyde,
 'That I was born! Wel may myn herte longe 690
 After my deeth; for now live I to longe!
 Allas! and I ne may it not amende;
 For now is wors than ever yet I wende.
100. My fader nil for no-thing do me grace
 To goon ayein, for nought I can him queme; 695
 And if so be that I my terme passe,
 My Troilus shal in his herte deme
 That I am fals, and so it may wel seme.
 Thus shal I have unthank on every syde;
 That I was born, so weylaway the tyde! 700
101. And if that I me putte in Iupartye,
 To stele away by nighte, and it bifalle
 That I be caught, I shal be holde a spye;
 Or elles, lo, this drede I most of alle,
 If in the hondes of som wrecche I falle, 705
 I am but lost, al be myn herte trewe;
 Now mighty god, thou on my sorwe rewe!
102. Ful pale y-waxen was hir brighte face,
 Hir limes lene, as she that al the day
 Stood whan she dorste, and loked on the place 710
 Ther she was born, and ther she dwelt hadde ay.
 And al the night wepinge, allas! she lay.
 And thus despeired, out of alle cure,
 She ladde hir lyf, this woful creature.
103. Ful ofte a day she sighte eek for destesse, 715
 And in hir-self she wente ay portrayinge
 Of Troilus the grete worthinesse,
 And alle his goodly wordes recordinge
 Sin first that day hir love bigan to springe.
 And thus she sette hir woful herte a-fyre 720

- Thorough remembrance of that she
gan desyre.
104. In al this world ther nis so cruel
herthe
That hir hadde herd compleynen in
hir sorwe,
That nolde han wopen for hir
peynes smerte,
So tendrely she weep, bothe eve
and morwe. 725
Hir nedede no teres for to borwe.
And this was yet the worste of al
hir peyne,
Ther was no wight to whom she
dorste hir pleyne.
105. Ful rewfully she loked up-on Troye,
Biheld the toures heighe and eek
the halles; 730
'Allas!' quod she, 'the plesaunce
and the Ioye
The whiche that now al torned
in-to galle is,
Have I had ofte with-inne yonder
walles!
O Troilus, what dostow now,' she
seyde;
'Lord! whether yet thou thenke
up-on Criseyde? 735
106. Allas! I ne hadde trowed on your
lore,
And went with yow, as ye me radde
er this!
Thanne hadde I now not syked half
so sore.
Who mighte have seyde, that I had
doon a-mis
To stele away with swich on as he
is? 740
But al to late cometh the letuarie,
Whan men the cors un-to the grave
carie.
107. To late is now to speke of this
matere;
Prudence, allas! oon of thyn eyen
three
Me lakked alwey, er that I cam
here; 745
On tyme y-passed, wel remembred
me;
- And present tyme eek coude I wel
y-sec.
But futur tyme, er I was in the
snare,
Coude I not seen; that causeth
now my care.
108. But natheles, bityde what bityde,
I shal to-morwe at night, by est or
weste, 751
Out of this ost stele on som maner
syde,
And go with Troilus wher-as him
leste.
This purpos wol I holde, and this
is beste.
No fors of wikked tonges Janglerye,
For ever on love han wrecches had
envye. 756
109. For who-so wole of every word take
hede,
Or rewlen him by every wightes
wit,
Ne shal he never thryven, out of
drede.
For that that som men blamen
ever yit, 760
Lo, other maner folk commenden
it.
And as for me, for al swich vari-
aunce,
Felicitee slepe I may suffisaunce.
110. For which, with-uten any wordes
mo,
To Troye I wol, as for conclusioun.
But god it wot, er fully monthes
two, 766
She was ful fer fro that enten-
cioun.
For bothe Troilus and Troye toun
Shal knotteles through-out hir herte
slyde;
For she wol take a purpos for
tabyde. 770
111. This Diomede, of whom yow telle
I gan,
Goth now, with-inne him-self ay
arguinge
With al the sleighte and al that
ever he can,

- How he may best, with shortest
taryinge,
In-to his net Criseydes herte bringe.
To this entente he coude never
fyne; 776
To fisshen hir, he leyde out hook
and lynce.
112. But natheles, wel in his herte he
thoughte,
That she nas nat with-oute a love
in Troye.
For never, sithen he hir thennes
broughte, 780
Ne coude he seen her laughe or
make Ioye.
He niste how best hir herte for
tacoie.
'But for to assaye,' he seyde, 'it
nought ne greveth;
For he that nought nassayeth,
nought nacheveth.'
113. Yet seide he to him-self upon a
night, 785
'Now am I not a fool, that woot
wel how
Hir wo for love is of another wight,
And here-up-on to goon assaye hir
now?
I may wel wite, it nil not been my
prow.
For wyse folk in bokes it expresse,
'Men shal not wowe a wight in
hevynesse.' 791
114. But who-so mighte winnen swich a
flour
From him, for whom she morneth
night and day,
He mighte seyn, he were a con-
queour.
And right anoon, as he that bold
was ay, 795
Thoughte in his herte, 'happe, how
happe may,
Al sholde I deye, I wole hir herte
seche;
I shal no more lesen but my
speche.'
115. This Diomedes, as bokes us de-
clare,
Was in his nedes prest and cor-
ageous; 800
With sterne voys and mighty limes
square,
Hardy, testif, strong, and cheval-
rous
Of dedes, lyk his fader Tideus.
And som men seyn, he was of tunge
large;
And heir he was of Calidoine and
Arge. 805
116. Criseyde mene was of hir stature,
Ther-to of shap, of face, and eek
of chere,
Ther mighte been no fairer crea-
ture.
And ofte tyme this was hir manere,
To gon y-tressed with hir heres
clere 810
Doun by hir coler at hir bak bi-
hinde,
Which with a threde of gold she
wolde binde.
117. And, save hir browes ioyneden
y-fere,
Ther nas no lak, in ought I can
espyen;
But for to speken of hir eyen
clere, 815
Lo, trewely, they writen that hir
syeu,
That Paradys stood formed in hir
yēn.
And with hir riche beautee ever-
more
Strof love in hir, ay which of hem
was more.
118. She sobre was, eek simple, and
wys with-al, 820
The beste y-norissed eek that
mighte be,
And goodly of hir speche in
general,
Charitable, estatliche, lusty, and
free;
Ne never-mo ne lakkede hir pitee;
Tendre-herted, slydinge of cor-
age; 825
But trewely, I can not telle hir
age.
- Chitton*

119. And Troilus wel waxen was in
highte,
And complet formed by propor-
cioun
So wel, that kinde it not amenden
mighte;
Yong, fresshe, strong, and hardy
as lyoun; 830
Trewe as steel in ech condicioun;
On of the beste enteched creature,
That is, or shal, whyl that the
world may dure.
120. And certainly in storie it is
y-founde,
That Troilus was never un-to no
wight, 835
As in his tyme, in no degree
secounde
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
Stod paregal, to durre don that
him leste. *clere do* 840
121. But for to tellen forth of Dio-
mede:—
It fil that after, on the tenthe
day,
Sin that Criseyde out of the citee
yede,
This Diomedede, as fresshe as
braunche in May,
Com to the tente ther-as Calkas
lay, 845
And feyned him with Calkas han
to done;
But what he mente, I shal yow
telle sone.
122. Criseyde, at shorte wordes for to
telle,
Welcomed him, and doun by hir
him sette;
And he was ethe y-nough to
maken dwelle. 850
And after this, with-uten longe
lette,
The spyces and the wyn men forth
hem fette;
- And forth they speke of this and
that y-ferde,
As freendes doon, of which som
shal ye here.
123. He gan first fallen of the werre in
speche 855
Bitwixe hem and the folk of Troye
toun;
And of thassege he gan hir cek
byseche,
To telle him what was hir opin-
ioun.
Fro that demaunde he so descend-
eth doun
To asken hir, if that hir straunge
thoughte 860
The Grekes gyse, and werkes that
they wroughte?
124. And why hir fader tarieth so
longe
To wedden hir un-to som worthy
wight?
Criseyde, that was in hir peynes
stronge
For love of Troilus, hir owene
knight, 865
As fer-forth as she conning hadde
or might,
Answerde him tho; but, as of his
entente,
It semed not she wiste what he
mente.
125. But natheles, this ilke Diomedede
Gan in him-self assure, and thus
he seyde, 870
'If ich aright have taken of yow
hede,
Me thinketh thus, O lady myn,
Criseyde,
That sin I first hond on your
brydel leyde,
Whan ye out come of Troye by the
morwe,
Ne coude I never seen yow but in
sorwe. 875
126. Can I not seyn what may the cause
be
But-if for love of som Troyan it
were,

- The which right sore wolde
athinken me
That ye, for any wight that
dwelleth there, 879
Sholden spille a quarter of a tere,
Or pitously your-selven so bigyle;
For dredelees, it is nought worth
the whyle.
127. The folk of Troye, as who seyth,
alle and some
In preson been, as ye your-selven
see;
For thennes shal not oon on-lyve
come 885
For al the gold bitwixen sonne and
see.
Trusteth wel, and understondeth
me,
Ther shal not oon to mercy goon
on-lyve,
Al were he lord of worldes twyës
fyve!
128. Swich wreche on hem, for fecching
of Eleyne, 890
Ther shal be take, er that we
hennes wende,
That Manes, which that goddes
ben of peyne,
Shal been agast that Grekes wol
hem shende. *is shende*
And men shul drede, un-to the
worldes ende,
From hennes-forth to ravisshe any
quene, 895
So cruel shal our wreche on hem
be sene.
129. And but-if Calkas lede us with
ambages,
That is to seyn, with double
wordes slye,
Swich as men clepe a "word with
two visages,"
Ye shul wel knowen that I nought
ne lye, 900
And al this thing right seen it with
your yë,
And that anon; ye nil not trowe
how sone;
Now taketh heed, for it is for to
done.
130. What wene ye your wyse fader
wolde
Han yeven Antenor for yow
anoon, 905
If he ne wiste that the citee
sholde
Destroyed been? Why, nay, so
mote I goon!
He knew ful wel ther shal not
scapen oon
That Troye is; and for the grete
fere,
He dorste not, ye dwelte lenger
there. 910
131. What wole ye more, lufsom lady
dere?
Lat Troye and Troyan fro your
herte pace!
Dryf out that bittre hope, and
make good chere,
And clepe ayein the beautee of
your face,
That ye with salte teres so
deface. 915
For Troye is brought in swich a
Iupartye,
That, it to save, is now no remedye.
132. And thenketh wel, ye shal in
Grekes finde
A more parfit love, er it be night,
Than any Troyan is, and more
kinde, 920
And bet to serven yow wol doon
his might.
And if ye vouche sauf, my lady
bright,
I wol ben he to serven yow my-
selve,
Ye, lever than be lord of Greces
twelve!
133. And with that word he gan to
waxen reed, 925
And in his speche a litel wight he
quook,
And caste a-syde a litel wight his
heed,
And stinte a whyle; and after-
ward awook,
And sobrelieche on hir he threw
his look,

- And seyde, 'I am, al be it yow no
 Ioye, 930
 As gentil man as any wight in
 Troye.
134. 'For if my fader Tydeus,' he seyde,
 'Y-lived hadde, I hadde been, er
 this,
 Of Calidoine and Arge a king,
 Criseyde!
 And so hope I that I shal yet,
 y-wis. 935
 But he was slayn, allas! the more
 harm is,
 Unhappily at Thebes al to rathe,
 Polymites and many a man to
 scathe.
135. But herte myn, sin that I am your
 man,
 And been the ferste of whom I
 seche grace, 940
 To serven you as hertely as I can,
 And ever shal, whyl I to live have
 space,
 So, er that I departe out of this
 place,
 Ye wol me graunte, that I may to-
 morwe,
 At bettre leyser, telle yow my
 sorwe.' 945
136. What shold I telle his wordes that
 he seyde?
 He spak y-now, for o day at the
 meste;
 It preveth wel, he spak so that
 Criseyde
 Graunted, on the morwe, at his
 requeste,
 For to speken with him at the
 leste, 950
 So that he nolde speke of swich
 matere;
 And thus to him she seyde, as ye
 may here:
137. As she that hadde hir herte on
 Troilus
 So faste, that ther may it noon
 arace;
 And straungely she spak, and
 seyde thus: 955
- 'O Diomedes, I love that ilke place
 Ther I was born; and Ioves, for
 his grace,
 Deliver it some of al that doth it
 care!
 God, for thy might, so leve it wel
 to fare!
138. That Grekes wolde hir wraththe
 on Troye wreke, 960
 If that they mighte, I knowe it
 wel, y-wis.
 But it shal not bifallen as ye speke;
 And god to-for, and ferther over
 this,
 I wot my fader wys and redy is;
 And that he me hath bought, as
 ye me tolde, 965
 So dere, I am the more un-to him
 holde.
139. That Grekes been of heigh con-
 dicioun,
 I woot eek wel; but certein, men
 shal finde
 As worthy folk with-inne Troye
 toun,
 As conning, and as parfit and as
 kinde, 970
 As been bitwixen Orcades and
 Inde.
 And that ye coude wel your lady
 serve,
 I trowe eek wel, hir thank for to
 deserve.
140. But as to speke of love, y-wis,' she
 seyde,
 'I hadde a lord, to whom I wed-
 ded was, 975
 The whos myn herte al was, til
 that he deyde;
 And other love, as helpe me now
 Pallas,
 Ther in myn herte nis, ne never
 was.
 And that ye been of noble and
 heigh kinrede,
 I have wel herd it tellen, out of
 drede. 980
141. And that doth me to han so gret a
 wonder,

- That ye wol scornen any womman
so.
Eek, god wot, love and I be fer
a-sonder;
I am disposed bet, so mote I go,
Un-to my deeth, to pleyne and
maken wo. 985
What I shal after doon, I can not
seye;
But trewely, as yet me list not
pleye.
142. Myn herte is now in tribulacioun,
And ye in armes bisy, day by
day.
Here-after, whan ye wonnen han
the toun, 990
Paraunter, thanne so it happen
may,
That whan I see that I never er
say,
Than wole I werke that I never
wroughte!
This word to yow y-nough suffysen
oughte.
143. To-morwe eek wol I speke with
yow fayn, 995
So that ye touchen nought of this
matere.
And whan yow list, ye may come
here ayeyn;
And, er ye gon, thus muche I seye
yow here:
As helpe me Pallas with hir heres
clere,
If that I sholde of any Greek han
routhe, 1000
It sholde be your-selven, by my
trouthe!
144. I sey not therfore that I wol yow
love,
Ne I sey not nay, but in conclu-
sioun,
I mene wel, by god that sit
above: '—
And ther-with-al she caste hir
eyen down, 1005
And gan to syke, and seyde, 'O
Troye toun,
Yet bidde I god, in quiete and in
reste
- I may yow seen, or do myn herte
breste.'
145. But in effect, and shortly for to
seye,
This Diomede al freshly newe
ayeyn 1010
Gan pressen on, and faste hir
mercy preye;
And after this, the sothe for to seyn,
Hir glove he took, of which he was
ful fayn.
And fynally, whan it was waxen
eve,
And al was wel, he roos and took
his leve. 1015
146. The brighte Venus folwede and
ay taughte
The wey, ther brode Phebus doun
alighte;
And Cynthea hir char-hors over-
raughte
To whirle out of the Lyon, if she
mighte;
And Signifer his candeles shewed
brighte, 1020
Whan that Criseyde un-to hir
bedde wente
In-with hir fadres faire brighte
tente.
147. Retorning in hir soule ay up and
doun
The wordes of this sodein Dio-
mede,
His greet estat, and peril of the
toun, 1025
And that she was allone and
hadde nede
Of freendes help; and thus bigan
to brede
The cause why, the sothe for to
telle,
That she tok fully purpos for to
dwelle.
148. The morwe com, and goostly for
to speke, 1030
This Diomede is come un-to
Criseyde,
And shortly, lest that ye my tale
breke,

- So wel he for him-selve spak and
seyde,
That alle hir sykes sore adoun he
leyde.
And fynally, the sothe for to
seyne, 1035
He refte hir of the grete of al hir
peyne.
149. And after this the story telleth us,
That she him yaf the faire baye
stede,
The which he ones wan of Troilus;
And eek a broche (and that was
litel nede) 1040
That Troilus was, she yaf this
Diomede.
And eek, the bet from sorwe him
to releve,
She made him were a pencil of
hir sleve.
150. I finde eek in the stories elles-
where,
Whan through the body hurt was
Diomede 1045
Of Troilus, tho weep she many a
tere,
Whan that she saugh his wyde
woundes blede;
And that she took to kepen him
good hede,
And for to hele him of his sorwes
smerte.
Men seyn, I not, that she yaf him
hir herte. 1050
151. But trewely, the story telleth us,
Ther made never womman more
wo
Than she, whan that she falsed
Troilus.
She seyde, 'allas! for now is clene
a-go
My name of trouthe in love, for
ever-mo! 1055
For I have falsed oon, the gentil-
este
That ever was, and oon the
wortheieste!
152. Allas, of me, un-to the worldes
ende,
- Shal neither been y-writen nor
y-songe
No good word, for these bokes
wol me shende. 1060
O, rolled shal I been on many a
tonge;
Through-out the world my belle
shal be ronge;
And wommen most wol hate me of
alle.
Allas, that swich a cas me sholde
falle!
153. They wol seyn, in as muche as in
me is, 1065
I have hem don dishonour, weyl-
away!
Al be I not the firste that dide
amis,
What helpeth that to do my blame
away?
But sin I see there is no better way,
And that to late is now for me to
rewe, 1070
To Diomede algate I wol be trewe.
154. But Troilus, sin I no better may,
And sin that thus departen ye and I,
Yet preye I god, so yeve yow right
good day
As for the gentileste, trewely, 1075
That ever I say, to serven feith-
fully,
And best can ay his lady honour
kepe:—
And with that word she brast anon
to wepe.
155. 'And certes, yow ne haten shal I
never,
And freendes love, that shal ye han
of me, 1080
And my good word, al mighte I
liven ever.
And, trewely, I wolde sory be
For to seen yow in adversitee.
And giltelees, I woot wel, I yow
leve;
But al shal passe; and thus take I
my leve.' 1085
156. But trewely, how longe it was
bitwene,

- That she for-sook him for this
Diomede,
Ther is non auctor telleth it, I wene.
Take every man now to his bokes
hede;
He shal no terme finden, out of
drede. 1090
For though that he bigan to wowe
hir sone,
Er he hir wan, yet was ther more
to done.
157. Ne me ne list this sely womman
chyle
Ferther than the story wol devyse.
Hir name, alas! is publissed so
wyde, 1095
That for hir gilt it oughte y-now
suffyse.
And if I mighte excuse hir any
wyse,
For she so sory was for hir un-
trouthe,
Y-wis, I wolde excuse hir yet for
routhe.
158. This Troilus, as I biforn have told,
Thus dryveth forth, as wel as he
hath might. 1101
But often was his herte hoot and
cold,
And namely, that ilke nynthe night,
Which on the morwe she hadde
him byhight
To come ayein: god wot, ful litel
reste 1105
Hadde he that night; no-thing to
slepe him leste.
159. The laurer-crowned Phebus, with
his hete,
Gan, in his course ay upward as he
wente,
To warnen of the est see the wawes
wete;
And Nisus doughter song with fresh
entente, 1110
Whan Troilus his Pandare after
sente;
And on the walles of the toun they
pleyde,
To loke if they can seen ought of
Criseyde.
160. Til it was noon, they stoden for to
see
Who that ther come; and every
maner wight, 1115
That cam fro fer, they seyden it
was she,
Til that they coude knowen him
a-right.
Now was his herte dul, now was it
light;
And thus by-iaped stonden for to
stare
Aboute nought, this Troilus and
Pandare. 1120
161. To Pandarus this Troilus tho seyde,
'For ought I wot, bi-for noon,
sikerly,
In-to this toun ne comth nought
here Criseyde.
She hath y-now to done, hardily,
To winnen from hir fader, so trowe
I; 1125
Hir olde fader wol yet make hir
dyne
Er that she go; god yeve his herte
pyne!'
162. Pandare answerde, 'it may wel be,
certeyn;
And for-ty lat us dyne, I thee bi-
seche;
And after noon than mayst thou
come ayeyn.' 1130
And hoom they go, with-oute more
speche;
And comen ayein, but longe may
they seche
Er that they finde that they after
cape;
Fortune hem bothe thenketh for to
Iape.
163. Quod Troilus, 'I see wel now, that
she 1135
Is taried with hir olde fader so,
That er she come, it wol neigh even
be.
Com forth, I wol un-to the yate go.
These portours been unkonninge
ever-mo;
And I wol doon hem holden up
the yate 1140

- As nought ne were, al-though she
come late.'
164. The day goth faste, and after that
comth eve,
And yet com nought to Troilus
Criseyde.
He loketh forth by hegge, by tree,
by greve,
And fer his heed over the wal he
leyde. 1145
And at the laste he torned him, and
seyde,
'By god, I woot hir mening now,
Pandare!
Al-most, y-wis, al newe was my care.
165. Now douteles, this lady can hir
good;
I woot, she meneth ryden prively.
I comende hir wysdom, by myn
hood! 1151
She wol not maken peple nycely
Gaure on hir, whan she comth; but
softely
By nighte in-to the toun she thenk-
eth ryde.
And, dere brother, think not longe
to abyde. 1155
166. We han nought elles for to don,
y-wis.
And Pandarus, now woltow trowen
me?
Have here my trouthe, I see hir!
yond she is.
Heve up thyn eyen, man! maystow
not see?'
Pandare answerde, 'nay, so mote I
thee! 1160
Al wrong, by god; what seystow,
man, wher art?
That I see yond nis but a fare-cart.'
167. 'Allas, thou seist right sooth,' quod
Troilus;
'But hardely, it is not al for nought
That in myn herte I now reioyse
thus. 1165
It is ayein som good I have a
thought.
Noot I not how, but sin that I was
wrought,
- Ne felte I swich a confort, dar I
seye;
She comth to-night, my lyf, that
dorste I leye!'
168. Pandare answerde, 'it may be wel,
y-nough'; 1170
And held with him of al that ever
he seyde;
But in his herte he thoughte, and
softe lough,
And to him-self ful sobrelly he
seyde:
'From hasel-wode, ther Ioly Robin
pleyde,
Shal come al that that thou abydest
here; 1175
Ye, fare-wel al the snow of ferne
yere!'
169. The wardein of the yates gan to
calle
The folk which that with-oute the
yates were,
And bad hem dryven in hir bestes
alle,
Or al the night they moste bleven
there. 1180
And fer with-in the night, with
many a tere,
This Troilus gan hoomward for to
ryde;
For wel he seeth it helpeth nought
tabyde.
170. But natheles, he gladded him in
this;
He thoughte he misaccounted hadde
his day, 1185
And seyde, 'I understonde have
al a-mis.
For thilke night I last Criseyde say,
She seyde, "I shal ben here, if
that I may,
Er that the mone, O dere herte
swete!
The Lyon passe, out of this
Ariete." 1190
171. For which she may yet holde al
hir biheste.'
And on the morwe un-to the yate
he wente,

- And up and down, by west and
eek by este,
Up-on the walles made he many
a wente.
But al for nought; his hope alwey
him blente; 1195
For which at night, in sorwe and
sykes sore
He wente him hoom, with-ouren
any more.
172. This hope al clene out of his herte
fledde,
He nath wher-on now lenger for
to hongre;
But for the peyne him thoughte
his herte bledde, 1200
So were his throwes sharpe and
wonder stronge.
For when he saugh that she abood
so longe,
He niste what he iuggen of it
mighte.
Sin she hath broken that she him
bihighte.
173. The thridde, ferthe, fife, sixte
day 1205
After tho dayes ten, of which I
tolde,
Bitwixen hope and drede his herte
lay,
Yet som-what trustinge on hir
hestes olde.
But whan he saugh she nolde hir
terme holde,
He can now seen non other
remedye, 1210
But for to shape him sone for to
dye.
174. Ther-with the wikked spirit, god
us blesse,
Which that men clepeth wode
Ialousye,
Gan in him crepe, in al this hevi-
nesse;
For which, by-cause he wolde sone
dye, 1215
He ne eet ne dronk, for his mal-
encolye,
And eek from every companye he
fedde;
- This was the lyf that al the tyme
he ledde.
175. He so defet was, that no maner man
Unnethe mighte him knowe ther
he wente; 1220
So was he lene, and ther-to pale
and wan,
And feble, that he walketh by
potente;
And with his ire he thus him-
selven shente.
And who-so axed him wher-of
him smerte,
He seyde, his harm was al aboute
his herte. 1225
176. Pryam ful ofte, and eek his moder
dere,
His bretheren and his sustren
gonne him freyne
Why he so sorwful was in al his
chere,
And what thing was the cause of
al his peyne?
But al for nought; he nolde his
cause pleyne, 1230
But seyde, he felte a grevous
maladye
A-boute his herte, and fayn he
wolde dye.
177. So on a day he leyde him doun
to slepe,
And so bifel that in his sleep him
thoughte,
That in a forest faste he welk to
wepe 1235
For love of hir that him these
peynes wroughte;
And up and doun as he the forest
soughte,
He mette he saugh a boor with
tuskes grete,
That sleep ayein the bryghte
sonnes hete.
178. And by this boor, faste in his
arnes folde, 1240
Lay kissing ay his lady bryght
Criseyde:
For sorwe of which, whan he it
gan biholde,

- And for despyt, out of his slepe he
breyde,
And loude he cryde on Pandarus,
and seyde,
'O Pandarus, now knowe I crop
and rote! 1245
I nam but deed, ther nis non other
bote!
179. My lady bright Criseyde hath me
bitrayed,
In whom I trusted most of any
wight,
She elles-where hath now hir herte
apayed;
The blisful goddes, through hir
grete might, 1250
I an in my dreem y-shewed it ful
right.
Thus in my dreem Criseyde I have
biholde'—
And al this thing to Pandarus he
tolde.
180. 'O my Criseyde, allas! what sub-
tiltee,
What newe lust, what beautee,
what science, 1255
What wratthe of iuste cause have
ye to me?
What gilt of me, what fel experi-
ence
Hath fro me raft, allas! thyn ad-
vertence?
O trust, O feyth, O depe asëur-
aunce,
Who hath me reft Criseyde, al my
plesaunce? 1260
181. Allas! why leet I you from hennes
go,
For which wel neigh out of my
wit I breyde?
Who shal now trowe on any othes
mo?
God wot I wende, O lady bright,
Criseyde,
That every word was gospel that
ye seyde! 1265
But who may bet bigylen, if him
liste,
Than he on whom men weneth
best to triste?
182. What shal I doon, my Pandarus,
allas!
I fele now so sharpe a newe peyne,
Sin that ther is no remedie in this
cas, 1270
That bet were it I with myn
hondes tweyne
My-selven slow, than alwey thus
to pleyne.
For through my deeth my wo
sholde han an ende,
Ther every day with lyf my-self I
shende.'
183. Pandare answerde and seyde,
'allas the whyle 1275
That I was born; have I not seyde
er this,
That dremes many a maner man
bigyle?
And why? for folk expounden hem
a-mis.
How darstow seyn that fals thy
lady is,
For any dreem, right for thyn
owene drede? 1280
Lat be this thought, thou canst no
dremes rede.
184. Paraunter, ther thou dremest of
this boor,
It may so be that it may signifye
Hir fader, which that old is and
eek hoor,
Ayein the sonne lyth, on poynt to
dye, 1285
And she for sorwe ginneth wepe
and crye,
And kisseth him, ther he lyth on
the grounde;
Thus shuldestow thy dreem a-right
expounde.'
185. 'How mighte I thanne do?' quod
Troilus,
'To knowe of this, ye, were it
never so lyte?' 1290
'Now seystow wysly,' quod this
Pandarus,
'My reed is this, sin thou canst
wel endyte,
That hastely a lettre thou hir
wryte,

- Thorough which thou shalt wel
 bringen it aboute,
 To knowe a sooth of that thou art
 in doute. 1295
186. And see now why; for this I dar
 wel seyn,
 That if so is that she untrewed be,
 I can not trowe that she wol wryte
 ayein.
 And if she wryte, thou shalt ful
 sone see,
 As whether she hath any lib-
 ertee 1300
 To come ayein, or elles in som
 clause,
 If she be let, she wol assigne a
 cause.
187. Thou hast not writen hir sin that
 she wente,
 Nor she to thee, and this I dorste
 leye,
 Ther may swich cause been in hir
 entente, 1305
 That hardely thou wolt thy-selven
 seye,
 That hir a-bood the beste is for
 yow tweye.
 Now wryte hir thanne, and thou
 shalt fele sone
 A sothe of al; ther is no more to
 done.'
188. Acorded been to this conclu-
 sion, 1310
 And that anon, these ilke lordes
 two;
 And hastely sit Troilus adoun,
 And rolleth in his herte to and fro,
 How he may best discryven hir his
 wo.
 And to Criseyde, his owene lady
 dere, 1315
 He wroot right thus, and seyde as
 ye may here.
189. ' Right freshe flour, whos I have
 been and shal,
 With-outhe part of elles-where
 servyse,
 With herte, body, lyf, lust, thought,
 and al;
- I, woful wight, in every humble
 wyse 1320
 That tonge telle or herte may
 devyse,
 As ofte as matere occupyeth
 place,
 Me recomaunde un-to your noble
 grace.
190. Lyketh it yow to witen, swete
 herte,
 As ye wel knowe how longe tyme
 agoon 1325
 That ye me lafte in aspre peynes
 smerte,
 Whan that ye wente, of which yet
 bote noon
 Have I non had, but ever wers
 bigoon
 Fro day to day am I, and so mot
 dwelle,
 While it yow list, of wele and wo
 my welle! 1330
191. For which to yow, with dredful
 herte trewe,
 I wryte, as he that sorwe dryfth to
 wryte,
 My wo, that every houre encreseth
 newe,
 Complynyng as I dar or can
 endyte.
 And that defaced is, that may ye
 wyte 1335
 The teres, which that fro myn eyen
 reyne,
 That wolde speke, if that they
 coude, and pleyne.
192. Yow first biseche I, that your eyen
 clere
 To look on this defouled ye not
 holde;
 And over al this, that ye, my lady
 dere, 1340
 Wol vouche-sauf this lettre to bi-
 holde.
 And by the cause eek of my cares
 colde,
 That sleeth my wit, if ought amis
 me asterte,
 For-yeve it me, myn owene swete
 herte.

193. If any servant dorste or oughte of
right 1345
Up-on his lady pitously com-
pleyne,
Than wene I, that ich oughte be
that wight,
Considered this, that ye these
monthes tweyne
Han taried, ther ye seyden, sooth
to seyne,
But dayes ten ye nolde in ost
soiourne, 1350
But in two monthes yet ye not
retourne.
194. But for-as-muche as me mot nedes
lyke
Al that yow list, I dar not pleyne
more,
But humbely with sorful sykes
syke;
Yow wryte ich myn unresty sorwes
sore, 1355
Fro day to day desyryng ever-
more
To knowen fully, if your wil it
were,
How ye han ferd and doon, whyl
ye be there.
195. The whos wel-fare and hele eek
god encesse
In honour swich, that upward in
degree 1360
It growe alwey, so that it never
cesse;
Right as your herte ay can, my lady
free,
Devye, I prey to god so mote it
be.
And graunte it that ye sone up-on
me rewe
As wisely as in al I am yow
trewe. 1365
196. And if yow lyketh knowen of the
fare
Of me, whos wo ther may no
wight discryve,
I can no more but, cheste of every
care,
At wrytinge of this lettre I was on-
lyve,
- Al redy out my woful gost to
dryve; 1370
Which I delaye, and holde him yet
in honde,
Upon the sight of matere of your
sonde.
197. Myn eyen two, in veyn with which
I see,
Of sorweful teres salte arn waxen
welles;
My song, in pleynte of myn ad-
versitee; 1375
My good, in harm; myn ese eek
waxen helle is.
My loye, in wo; I can sey yow
nought elles,
But turned is, for which my lyf
I warie,
Everich loye or ese in his con-
trarie.
198. Which with your cominge hoom
ayein to Troye 1380
Ye may redresse, and, more a
thousand sythe
Than ever ich hadde, encessen
in me loye.
For was ther never herte yet so
blythe
To han his lyf, as I shal been as
swythe
As I yow see; and, though no
maner routhe 1385
Commeve yow, yet thinketh on
your trouthe.
199. And if so be my gilt hath deeth
deserved,
Or if you list no more up-on me see,
In guerdon yet of that I have you
served,
Biseche I yow, myn hertes lady
free, 1390
That here-upon ye wolden wryte
me,
For love of god, my righte lode-
sterre,
Ther deeth may make an ende of
al my werre.
200. If other cause aught doth vow for
to dwelle,

- That with your lettre ye me re-
comforte; 1395
For though to me your absence is
an helle,
With pacience I wol my wo com-
porte.
And with your lettre of hope I
wol desporte.
Now wryteth, swete, and lat me
thus not pleyne;
With hope, or deeth, delivereth me
fro peyne. 1400
201. Y-wis, myn owene dere herte
trewe,
I woot that, whan ye next up-on
me see,
So lost have I myn hele and eek
myn hewe,
Criseyde shal nought conne knowe
me!
Y-wis, myn hertes day, my lady
free, 1405
So thursteth ay myn herte to bi-
holde
Your beautee, that my lyf unnethe
I holde.
202. I sey no more, al have I for to
seye
To you wel more than I telle
may;
But whether that ye do me live or
deye, 1410
Yet pray I god, so yeve yow right
good day.
And fareth well, goodly fayre
fresshe may,
As ye that lyf or deeth me may
comaunde;
And to your trouthe ay I me re-
comaunde
203. With hele swich that, but ye yeven
me 1415
The same hele, I shal noon hele
have.
In you lyth, whan yow list that it
so be,
The day in which me clothen shal
my grave.
In yow my lyf, in yow might for to
save
- Me from disese of alle peynes
smerter; 1420
And fare now wel, myn owene
swete herte!
LE VOSTRE T.'
204. This lettre forth was sent un-to
Criseyde,
Of which hir answeere in effect was
this;
Ful pitously she wroot ayein, and
seyde,
That al-so sone as that she might
y-wis, 1425
She wolke come, and mende al
that was mis.
And fynally she wroot and seyde
him thanne,
She wolde come, ye, but she niste
whanne.
205. But in hir lettre made she swich
festes,
That wonder was, and swereth she
loveth him best,
Of which he fond but botmelees
bihestes. 1431
But Troilus, thou mayst now, est
or west,
Pype in an ivy leef, if that thee
lest;
Thus gooth the world; god shilde
us fro mischaunce,
And every wight that meneth
trouthe avaunce! 1435
206. Encreesen gan the wo fro day to
night
Of Troilus, for tarynge of Cri-
seyde;
And lessen gan his hope and eek
his might,
For which al doun he in his bed
him leyde;
He ne eet, ne dronk, ne sleep, ne
word he seyde, 1440
Imaginge ay that she was un-
kinde;
For which wel neigh he wex out of
his minde.
207. This dreem, of which I told have
eek biforn,

- May never come out of his remembrance;
 He thoughte ay wel he hadde his lady lorn, 1445
 And that Ioves, of his purveyaunce,
 Him shewed hadde in sleep the signifaunce
 Of hir untrouthe and his disaventure,
 And that the boor was shewed him in figure.
208. For which he for Sibille his suster sente, 1450
 That called was Cassandre eek al aboute ;
 And al his dreem he tolde hir er he stente,
 And hir bisoughte assoilen him the doute
 Of the stronge boor, with tuskas stoute ;
 And fynally, with-inne a litel stounde, 1455
 Cassandre him gan right thus his dreem expounde.
209. She gan first smyle, and seyde, 'O brother dere,
 If thou a sooth of this desyrest knowe,
 Thou most a fewe of olde stories here,
 To purpos, how that fortune overthrowe 1460
 Hath lordes olde; through which, with-inne a throwe,
 Thou wel this boor shalt knowe, and of what kinde
 He comen is, as men in bokes finde.
210. Diane, which that wrooth was and in ire
 For Grekes nolde doon hir sacrifice, 1465
 Ne encens up-on hir auter sette a-fyre,
 She, for that Grekes gonne hir so dispyse,
 Wrak hir in a wonder cruel wyse.
 For with a boor as greet as oxe in stalle
- She made up frete hir corn and vynes alle. 1470
211. To slee this boor was al the contree reysed,
 A-monges which ther com, this boor to see,
 A mayde, oon of this world the best y-preysed;
 And Meleagre, lord of that contree,
 He lovede so this fresshe mayden free 1475
 That with his manhod, er he wolde stente,
 This boor he slow, and hir the heed he sente;
212. Of which, as olde bokes tellen us,
 Ther roos a contek and a greet envye; 1479
 And of this lord descended Tydeus By ligne, or elles olde bokes lye;
 But how this Meleagre gan to dye Thorough his moder, wol I yow not telle,
 For al to long it were for to dwelle.'

[Argument of the 12 Books of Statius' Thebais.]

Associat profugum Tideo primus Polimitem ;
Tidea legatum docet insidiasque secundus ;
Tercius Hemoniden canit et vates latitantes ;
Quartus habet reges ineuntes prelia septem ; 4
Mox furie Lenne quinto narratur et anguis ;
Archimori bustum sexto ludique leguntur ;
Dat Graios Thebes et vatem septimus umbris ;
Octauo cecidit Tideus, spes, vita Pelasgis ; 8
Ypomedon nono moritur cum Parthonopeo ;
Fulmine percussus, decimo Capaneus superatur ;

- Vndecimo sese perimunt per vul-
nera fratres;
*Argiuam flentem narrat duodenus
et ignem.* 12
213. She tolde eek how Tydeus, er she
stente, 1485
Un-to the stronge citee of Thebes,
To cleyne kingdom of the citee,
wente,
For his felawe, daun Polymites,
Of which the brother, daun Ethyo-
cles,
Ful wrongfully of Thebes held the
strengthe; 1490
This tolde she by proces, al by
lengthe.
214. She tolde eek how Hemonides
asterte,
Whan Tydeus slough fifty knightes
stoute.
She told eek al the prophesyes by
herte,
And how that sevene kinges, with
hir route, 1495
Bisegeden the citee al aboute;
And of the holy serpent, and the
welle,
And of the furies, al she gan him
telle.
215. Of Archimoris buryinge and the
pleyes,
And how Amphiorax fil through
the grounde, 1500
How Tydeus was slayn, lord of
Argeyes,
And how Ypomedoun in litel
stounde
Was dreynt, and deed Parthonope
of wounde;
And also how Cappaneus the
proude
With thunder-dint was slayn, that
cryde loude. 1505
216. She gan eek telle him how that
either brother,
Ethyocles and Polimyte also,
At a scarmyche, eche of hem
slough other,
And of Argyves wepinge and hir wo;
- And how the town was brent she
tolde eek tho. 1510
And so descendeth doun from
gestes olde
To Diomede, and thus she spak
and tolde.
217. 'This ilke boor bitokneth Diomede,
Tydeus sone, that doun descended
is
Fro Meleagre, that made the boor
to blede. 1515
And thy lady, wher-so she be,
y-wis,
This Diomede hir herte hath, and
she his.
Weep if thou wolt, or leef; for,
out of doute,
This Diomede is inne, and thou
art oute.'
218. 'Thou seyst nat sooth,' quod he,
'thou sorceresse, 1520
With al thy false goost of prophe-
syc!
Thou wenest been a greet devyn-
eresse;
Now seestow not this fool of fan-
tasye
Peyneth hir on ladyes for to lye?
Away,' quod he, 'ther loves yeve
thee sorwe! 1525
Thou shalt be fals, paraunter, yet
to-morwe!
219. As wel thou mightest lyen on
Alceste,
That was of creatures, but men lye,
That ever weren, kindest and the
beste.
For whanne hir housbonde was in
Iupartye 1530
To dye him-self, but-if she wolde
dye,
She chees for him to dye and go to
helle,
And starf anon, as us the bokes
telle.'
220. Cassandre goth, and he with cruel
herte
For-yat his wo, for angre of hir
speche; 1535

- And from his bed al sodeinly he
sterre,
As though al hool him hadde y-mad
a leche.
And day by day he gan enquere
and seche
A sooth of this, with al his fulle
cure;
And thus he dryeth forth his avent-
ture. 1540
221. Fortune, whiche that permuta-
cioun
Of thinges hath, as it is hir com-
mitted
Through purveyaunce and disposi-
cioun
Of heighe Iove, as regnes shal ben
flitted
Fro folk in folk, or when they shal
ben smitted, 1545
Gan pulle away the fetheres brighte
of Troye
Fro day to day, til they ben bare of
loye.
222. Among al this, the fyn of the par-
odie
Of Ector gan approchen wonder
blyve;
The fate wolde his soule sholde
unbodie, 1550
And shapen hadde a mene it out
to dryve;
Ayeins which fate him helpeth not
to stryve;
But on a day to fighten gan he
wende,
At which, alas! he caughte his
lyves ende.
223. For which me thinketh every
maner wight 1555
That haunteth armes oughte to
biwayle
The deeth of him that was so noble
a knight;
For as he drough a king by thaven-
tayle,
Unwar of this, Achilles through the
mayle
And through the body gan him for
to ryve; 1560
- And thus this worthy knight was
brought of lyve.
224. For whom, as olde bokes tellen us,
Was mad swich wo, that tonge it
may not telle;
And namely, the sorwe of Troilus,
That next him was of worthinesse
welle. 1565
And in this wo gan Troilus to
dwelle,
That, what for sorwe, and love, and
for unreste,
Ful ofte a day he bad his herte
breste.
225. But natheles, though he gan him
dispeyre,
And dradde ay that his lady was
untrewe, 1570
Yet ay on hir his herte gan repeyre.
And as these loveres doon, he
soughte ay newe
To gete ayein Criseyde, bright of
hewe.
And in his herte he wente hir
excusinge,
That Calkas causede al hir tarynge.
226. And ofte tyme he was in purpos
grete 1576
Him-selven lyk a pilgrim to disgyse,
To seen hir; but he may not con-
trefete
To been unknowen of folk that
weren wyse,
Ne finde excuse aright that may
suffyse, 1580
If he among the Grekes knowen
were;
For which he weep ful ofte many
a tere.
227. To hir he wroot yet ofte tyme al
newe
Ful pitously, he lefte it nought for
slouthe,
Biseching hir that, sin that he was
trewe, 1585
She wolde come ayein and holde
hir trouthe.
For which Criseyde up-on a day,
for routh,

- I take it so, touchinge al this
 matere,
 Wrot him ayein, and seyde as ye
 may here.
228. 'Cupydes sone, ensample of goodli-
 hede, 1590
 O swerd of knightthod, sours of
 gentillesse!
 How mighte a wight in torment
 and in drede
 And heleeles, yow sende as yet
 gladnesse?
 I hertelees, I syke, I in distresse;
 Sin ye with me, nor I with yow
 may dele, 1595
 Yow neither sende ich herte may
 nor hele.
229. Your lettres ful, the papir al
 y-pleynted,
 Conseyved hath myn hertes pië-
 tee;
 I have eek seyn with teres al de-
 peynted
 Your lettre, and how that ye re-
 queren me 1600
 To come ayein, which yet ne may
 not be.
 But why, lest that this lettre founden
 were,
 No mencioune make I now, for
 fere.
230. Grevous to me, god woot, is your
 unreste,
 Your haste, and that, the goddes
 ordenaunce, 1605
 It semeth not ye take it for the
 beste.
 Nor other thing nis in your re-
 membraunce,
 As thinketh me, but only your
 plesaunce.
 But beth not wrooth, and that I
 yow biseche;
 For that I tarie, is al for wikked
 speche. 1610
231. For I have herd wel more than I
 wende,
 Touchinge us two, how thinges han
 y-stonde;
- Which I shal with dissimulinge
 amende.
 And beth nought wrooth, I have
 eek understonde,
 How ye ne doon but holden me in
 honde. 1615
 But now no fors, I can not in yow
 gesse
 But alle trouthe and alle gentillesse.
232. Comen I wol, but yet in swich
 disioynte
 I stonde as now, that what yeer or
 what day
 That this shal be, that can I not
 apoynte. 1620
 But in effect, I prey yow, as I
 may,
 Of your good word and of your
 friendship ay.
 For trewely, whyle that my lyf may
 dure,
 As for a freend, ye may in me
 assure.
233. Yet preye I yow on yvel ye ne
 take, 1625
 That it is short which that I to yow
 wryte;
 I dar not, ther I am, wel lettres
 make,
 Ne never yet ne coude I wel
 endyte.
 Eek greet effect men wryte in
 place lyte.
 Thentente is al, and nought the
 lettres space; 1630
 And fareth now wel, god have you
 in his grace!
 LA VOSTRE C.'
234. This Troilus this lettre thoughte al
 straunge,
 Whan he it saugh, and sorwefully
 he sighte;
 Him thoughte it lyk a kalendes of
 change; *confuse*
 But fynally, he ful ne trowen
 mighte 1635
 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.
235. But natheles, men seyn that, at the
laste,
For any thing, men shal the sothe
see; 1640
And swich a cas bitidde, and that
as faste,
That Troilus wel understood that
she
Nas not so kinde as that hir
oughte be.
And finally, he woot now, out of
doute,
That al is lost that he hath been
aboute. 1645
236. Stood on a day in his malencolye
This Troilus, and in suspecioun
Of hir for whom he wende for to
dye.
And so bifel, that through-out
Troye toun,
As was the gyse, y-bore was up
and down 1650
A maner cote-armure, as seyth the
storie,
Biforn Deiphebe, in signe of his
victorie,
237. The whiche cote, as telleth Lol-
lius,
Deiphebe it hadde y-rent from
Diomedes
The same day; and whan this
Troilus 1655
It saugh, he gan to taken of it
hede,
Avysing of the lengthe and of the
brede,
And al the werk; but as he gan
biholde,
Ful sodeinly his herte gan to colde,
238. As he that on the coler fond
with-inne 1660
A broche, that he Criseyde yaf that
morwe
That she from Troye moste nedes
twinne,
In remembraunce of him and of
his sorwe;
- And she him leyde ayein hir feyth
to borwe
To kepe it ay; but now, ful wel he
wiste, 1665
His lady nas no lenger on to triste.
239. He gooth him hoom, and gan ful
sone sende
For Pandarus; and al this newe
chaunce,
And of this broche, he tolde him
word and ende,
Compleyninge of hir hertes vari-
aunce, 1670
His longe love, his trouthe, and
his penaunce;
And after deeth, with-ouen wordes
more,
Ful faste he cryde, his reste him to
restore.
240. Than spak he thus, O lady myn
Criseyde,
Wher is your feyth, and wher is
your biheste? 1675
Wher is your love, wher is your
trouthe,' he seyde;
'Of Diomedes have ye now al this
feste!
Allas, I wolde have trowed at the
leste,
That, sin ye nolde in trouthe to me
stonde.
That ye thus nolde han holden me
in honde! 1680
241. Who shal now trowe on any othes
mo?
Allas, I never wolde han wend, er
this,
That ye, Criseyde, coude han
chaunged so;
Ne, but I hadde a-gilt and doon
amis,
So cruel wende I not your herte,
y-wis, 1685
To slee me thus; allas, your name
of trouthe
Is now for-doon, and that is al my
routhe.
242. Was ther non other broche yow
liste lete

- To fesse with your newe love,' quod
he,
'But thilke broche that I, with
teres wete, 1690
Yow yaf, as for a remembraunce of
me?
Non other cause, allas, ne hadde ye
But for despyt, and eek for that ye
mente
Al-outrely to shewen your entente!
243. Through which I see that cleue
out of your minde 1695
Ye han me cast, and I ne can nor
may,
For al this world, with-in myn herte
finde
To unloven yow a quarter of a day!
In cursed tyme I born was, weyla-
way!
That ye, that doon me al this wo
endure, 1700
Yet love I best of any creature.
244. Now god,' quod he, 'me sende yet
the grace
That I may meten with this
Diomedé!
And trewely, if I have might and
space,
Yet shal I make, I hope, his sydes
blede. 1705
O god,' quod he, 'that oughtest
taken hede
To fortheren trouthe, and wronges
to punyce,
Why niltow doon a vengeance on
this vyce?
245. O Pandare, that in dremes for to
triste
Me blamed hast, and wont art ofte
up-brede, 1710
Now maystow see thy-selve, if that
thee liste,
How trewe is now thy nece, bright
Criseyde!
In sondry formes, god it woot,' he
seyde,
'The goddess shewen bothe Ioye
and tene
In slepe, and by my dreme it is
now sene. 1715
246. And certaynly, with-oute more
speche,
From hennes-forth, as ferforth as I
may,
Myn owene death in armes wol I
seche;
I recche not how sone be the
day!
But trewely, Criseyde, swete may,
Whom I have ay with al my might
y-served, 1721
That ye thus doon, I have it nought
deserved.'
247. This Pandarus, that alle these
things herde,
And wiste wel he seyde a sooth of
this,
He nought a word ayein to him
answerde; 1725
For sory of his frendes sorwe he is,
And shamed, for his nece hath
doon a-mis;
And stant, astoned of these causes
tweye,
As stille as stoon; a word ne coude
he seye.
248. But at the laste thus he spak, and
seyde, 1730
'My brother dere, I may thee do
no-more.
What shulde I seyn? I hate, y-wis,
Criseyde!
And god wot, I wol hate hir ever-
more!
And that thou me bisoughtest doon
of yore,
Havinge un-to myn honour ne my
reste 1735
Right no reward, I dide al that
thee leste.
249. If I dide ought that mighte lyken
thee,
It is me leef; and of this treson
now,
God woot, that it a sorwe is un-to
me!
And dredelees, for hertes ese of
yow, 1740
Right fayn wolde I amende it,
wiste I how.

- And fro this world, almighty god I
preye,
Delivere hir sone; I can no-more
seye.'
250. Gret was the sorwe and pleynt of
Troilus;
But forth hir cours fortune ay gan
to holde. 1745
Criseyde loveth the sone of Tydeus,
And Troilus mot wepe in cares
colde.
Swich is this world; who-so it can
biholde,
In eche estat is litel hertes reste;
God leve us for to take it for the
beste! 1750
251. In many cruel batayle, out of drede,
Of Troilus, this ilke noble knight,
As men may in these olde bokes
rede,
Was sene his knighthod and his
grete might.
And dredelees, his ire, day and
night, 1755
Ful cruelly the Grekes ay aboughte;
And alway most this Diomed he
soughte.
252. And ofte tyme, I finde that they
mette
With bloody strokes and with wordes
grete,
Assayinge how hir speres weren
whette; 1760
And god it woot, with many a cruel
hete
Gan Troilus upon his helm to-bete.
But natheles, fortune it nought ne
wolde,
Of others hond that either deyen
sholde. —
253. And if I hadde y-taken for to
wryte 1765
The armes of this ilke worthy man,
Than wolde I of his batailles
endyte.
But for that I to wryte first bigan
Of his love, I have seyde as that I can.
His worthy dedes, who-so list hem
here, 1770
- Reed Dares, he can telle hem alle
y-fere.
254. Bisechinge every lady bright of
hewe,
And every gentil womman, what
she be,
That al be that Criseyde was un-
trewe,
That for that gilt she be not wrooth
with me. 1775
Ye may hir gilt in othere bokes see;
And gladlier I wol wryten, if yow
leste,
Penelopeës, trouthe and good Al-
ceste.
255. Ne I sey not this al-only for these
men,
But most for wommen that bitraysed
be 1780
Through false folk; god yeve hem
sorwe, amen!
That with hir grete wit and subtil-
tee
Bitrayse yow! and this comveveth
me
To speke, and in effect yow alle I
preye,
Beth war of men, and herkeneth
what I seye! — 1785
256. Go, litel book, go litel myn trege-
die,
Ther god thy maker yet, er that he
dye,
So sende might to make in som
comedie!
But litel book, no making thou
nenvyte,
But subgit be to alle poesye; 1790
And kis the steppes, wher-as thou
seest pace
Virgile, Ovyde, Omer, Lucan, and
Stace.
257. And for ther is so greet diversitee
In English and in wryting of our
tonge,
So preye I god that noon miswryte
thee, 1795
Ne thee mismetre for defaute of
tonge.

- And red wher-so thou be, or elles
 songe,
 That thou be understonde I god
 beseche!
 But yet to purpos of my rather
 speche.—
258. The wratthe, as I began yow for
 to seye, 1800
 Of Troilus, the Grekes boughten
 dere;
 For thousandes his hondes maden
 deye,
 As he that was with-uten any
 pere,
 Save Ector, in his tyme, as I can
 here.
 But weylaway, save only goddes
 wille, 1805
 Dispitously him slough the fiers
 Achille.
259. And whan that he was slayn in this
 manere,
 His lighte goost ful blisfully is
 went
 Up to the holownesse of the seventh
 spere,
 In convers letinge every element;
 And ther he saugh, with ful avyse-
 ment, 1811
 The erratik sterres, herkeninge
 armonye
 With sownes fulle of hevenish
 melodye.
260. And down from thennes faste he
 gan avyse
 This litel spot of erthe, that with
 the see 1815
 Enbraced is, and fully gan despyse
 This wrecched world, and held al
 vanitee
 To respect of the pleyn felicitee
 That is in hevене above; and at
 the laste,
 Ther he was slayn, his loking down
 he caste; 1820
261. And in him-self he lough right at
 the wo
 Of hem that wepten for his deeth
 so faste;
- And dampned al our werk that fol-
 weth so
 The blinde lust, the which that may
 not laste,
 And sholden al our herte on hevене
 caste. 1825
 And forth he wente, shortly for to
 telle,
 Ther as Mercurie sorted him to
 dwelle. —
262. Swich fyn hath, lo, this Troilus for
 love,
 Swich fyn hath al his grete worthi-
 nesse;
 Swich fyn hath his estat real
 above, 1830
 Swich fyn his lust, swich fyn hath
 his noblesse;
 Swich fyn hath false worldes brotel-
 nesse.
 And thus bigan his loveinge of
 Criseyde,
 As I have told, and in this wyse he
 deyde.
263. O yonge fresshe folkes, he or she,
 In which that love up groweth with
 your age, 1836
 Repeyreth hoom from worldly vani-
 tee,
 And of your herte up-casteth the
 visage
 To thilke god that after his image
 Yow made, and thinketh al nis but
 a fayre 1840
 This world, that passeth sone as
 floures fayre.
264. And loveth him, the which that
 right for love
 Upon a cros, our soules for to
 beye,
 First starf, and roos, and sit in
 hevене a-bove;
 For he nil falsen no wight, dar I
 seye, 1845
 That wol his herte al hoolly on him
 leye.
 And sin he best to love is, and most
 meke,
 What nedeth feyned loves for to
 seke?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>265. Lo here, of Payens corsed olde
rytes,
Lo here, what alle hir goddes may
availe; 1850
Lo here, these wrecched worldes
appetytes;
Lo here, the fyn and guerdon for
travaille
Of Iove, Appollo, of Mars, of swich
rascaille!
Lo here, the forme of olde clerkes
speche
In poetrye, if ye hir bokes seche. —</p> <p>266. O moral Gower, this book I di-
recte 1856
To thee, and to the philosophical
Strode,
To vouchen sauf, ther nede is, to
corecte,
Of your benignitees and zeles gode.</p> | <p>And to that sothfast Crist, that starf
on rode, 1860
With al myn herte of mercy ever I
preye;
And to the lord right thus I speke
and seye:</p> <p>267. Thou oon, and two, and three,
eterne on-lyve,
That regnest ay in three and two
and oon,
Uncircumscrip, and al mayst cir-
cumscryve, 1865
Us from visible and invisible
foon
Defende; and to thy mercy, everi-
choon,
So make us, Iesus, for thy grace
digne,
For love of mayde and moder thyn
benigne! Amen.</p> |
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Explicit Liber Troili et Criseydis.

THE HOUS OF FAME.

BOOK I.

<p>GOD turne us every drem to gode! For hit is wonder, by the rode, To my wit, what causeth swevenes Either on morwes, or on evenes; And why theeffect folweth of somme, 5 And of somme hit shal never come; Why that is an avisoun, And this a revelacioun; Why this a drem, why that a sweven, And nat to every man liche even; 10 Why this a fantom, these oracles, I noot; but who-so of these miracles The causes knoweth bet than I, Devyne he; for I certainly Ne can hem noght, ne never thinke 15 To besily my wit to swinke, <i>to be over</i> To knowe of hir signifiauce The gēnes, neither the distaunce Of tymes of hem, ne the causes For-why this more than that cause is; 20 As if folkes complexiouns <i>temperaments</i> Make hem dreme of reflexiouns; Or elles thus, as other sayn, For to greet feblenesse of brayn, By abstynce, or by seeknesse, 25 Prison, stewe, or greet distresse; Or elles by disordinaunce <i>irregularity</i> Of naturel acustomaunce, <i>of stound</i> That som man is to curious In studie, or melancolious, 30 Or thus, so inly ful of drede, That no man may him bote bede; Or elles, that devocioun <i>rel. of offe</i> Of somme, and contemplacioun Causeth swiche dremes ofte; 35 Or that the cruel lyf unsofte Which these ilke lovers leden That hopen over muche or dreden, That purely hir impressiouns Causeth hem avisouns; 40</p>	<p>Or if that spirits have the might To make folk to dreme a-night Or if the soule, of propre kinde, <i>nature</i> Be so partit, as men finde, <i>judge</i> That hit forgot that is to come, 45 And that hit warneth alle and somme Of everiche of hir aventures By avisouns, or by figures, But that our flesh ne hath no might To understanden hit aright, 50 For hit is warned to derkly; — But why the cause is, noght wot I. Wel worthe, of this thing, grete clerkes, That trete of this and other werkes; For I of noon opinioun 55 Nil as now make mencion, But only that the holy rode Turne us every drem to gode! For never, sith that I was born, Ne no man elles, me biforn, 60 Mette, I trowe stedfastly, So wonderful a drem as I The tenthe day [dide] of Decembre, The which, as I can now remembre, I wol yow tellen every del. 65</p>
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THE INVOCATION.

But at my ginning, trusteth wel,
 I wol make invocacioun,
 With special devocioun,
 Unto the god of slepe anoon,
 That dwelleth in a cave of stoon 70
 Upon a strem that comth fro Lete,
 That is a flood of helle unswete; *-bitter*
 Besyde a folk men clepe Cimerie,
 Ther slepeth ay this god unmerie *useless*
 With his slepy thousand sones 75
 That alway for to slepe hir wone is —
 And to this god, that I of rede,

tail

Preye I, that he wol me spede ^{by his praye}
 My sweven for to telle aright,
 If every dreem stonde in his might. 80
 And he, that mover is of al
 That is and was, and ever shal,
 So yive hem loye that hit here
 Of alle that they dreme to-yere, ^{this year}
 And for to stonden alle in grace 85
 Of hir loves, or in what place
 That hem wer levest for to stonde, ^{same}
 And shelde hem fro povert and shonde,
 And fro unhappe and ech disese,
 And sende hem al that may hem plesse, 90
 That take hit wel, and scorne hit noght,
 Ne hit misdeing in her thought
 Through malicious entencioun.
 And who-so, through presumpcioun,
 Or hate or scorne, or through envye, 95
 Dispyt, or lape, or wilanye, ^{wickednes}
 Misleme hit, preye I Iesus god
 That (dreme he barfoot, dreme he shod),
 That every harm that any man
 Hath had, sith [that] the world began,
 Befalle him therof, or he sterve, 101
 And graunte he mote hit ful deserve,
 Lo! with swich a conclusioun
 As had of his avisioun
 Cresus, that was king of Lyde, 105
 That high upon a gebet dyde!
 This prayer shal he have of me;
 I am no bet in charite!

Now herkneth, as I have you seyde,
 What that I mette, or I abreyde. 110

we awake
 THE DREAM.

Of Decembre the tenthe day,
 Whan hit was night, to slepe I lay
 Right ther as I was wont to done,
 And fil on slepe wonder sone,
 As he that wery was for-go 115
 On pilgrimage myles two
 To the coteynth Leonard,
 To make lythe of that was hard.
 But as I sleep, me mette I was
 Within a temple y-mad of glas; 120
 In whiche ther were mo images
 Of gold, stondinge in sondry stages,
 And mo riche tabernacles,
 And with perre mo pinacles, 125
 And mo curious portreytures,
 And queynte maner of figures
 Of olde werke, then I saw ever.

For certeynly, I niste never
 Wher that I was, but wel wiste I,
 Hit was of Venus redely, 130
 The temple; for, in portreyture,
 I saw anoon-right hir figure
 Naked fletinge in a see.
 And also on hir heed, parde, ^{pretty}
 Hir rose-garlond whyt and reed, 135
 And hir comb to kembe hir heed,
 Hir dowves, and daun Cupido,
 Hir blinde sone, and Vulcano,
 That in his face was ful broun.
 But as I romed up and down, 140
 I fond that on a wal ther was
 Thus writen, on a table of bras:
 'I wol now singe, if that I can,
 The armes, and al-so the man,
 That first cam, through his destinee, 145
 Fugitif of Troye contree,
 In Itaile, with ful moche pyne,
 Unto the strondes of Lavyne.'
 And tho began the story anoon, ^{then anon}
 As I shal telle yow echoon. ^{you will} 150

First saw I the destruccioun
 Of Troye, through the Greek Sinoun,
 [That] with his false forsweringe,
 And his chere and his lesinge
 Made the hors broght into Troye, 155
 Thorgh which Troyens loste al hir loye.
 And after this was grave, alas!
 How Ilioun assailed was
 And wonne, and king Priam y-slayn,
 And Polites his sone, certayn, 160
 Dispitously, of dan Pirrus. ⁵¹

And next that saw I how Venus,
 Whan that she saw the castel brende, ^{burning}
 Down fro the hevene gan descende,
 And bad hir sone Eneas fle; 165
 And how he fledde, and how that he
 Escaped was from al the pres, ^{pres}
 And took his fader, Anchises,
 And bar him on his bakke away,
 Cryng, 'Allas, and welaway!' 170
 The whiche Anchises in his honde
 Bar the goddes of the londe, ^{howe the the the the}
 Tilke that unbrende were. ^{sons of the the the}

And I saw next, in alle this fere,
 How Creusa, daun Eneas wyf, 175
 Which that he lovede as his lyf,
 And hir yonge sone Iulo,
 And eek Ascanius also,
 Fledden eek with dreery chere, ^{heavy looks}
 That hit was pitee for to here; 180

And in a forest, as they wente,
At a turninge of a wente,
How Creusa was y-lost, alas!
That deed, [but] noot I how, she was;
How he hir soughte, and how hir
gost 185

Bad him to flee the Grekes ost, *was*
And seyde, he moste unto Itaile,
As was his destince, sauns faille;
That hit was pitee for to here,
Whan hir spirit gan appere, 190

The wordes that she to him seyde,
And for to kepe hir sone him preyde
Ther saw I graven eek how he, *she prayd*
His fader eek, and his meynce, *him*
With his shippes gan to sayle, *newsherd*
Toward the contree of Itaile, 195

As streight as that they mighte go.
Ther saw I thee, cruel Iuno,
That art daun Iupiteres wyf,
That hast y-hated, al thy lyf, 200
Al the Troyannishe blood,

Renne and crye, as thou were wood, *new*
On Eolus, the god of windes,
To blown out, of alle kindes,
So loude, that he shulde drenched *down*
Lord and lady, grome and wenche 205

Of al the Troyan nacioun,
Withoute any savacioun.

Ther saw I swich tempeste aryse, *shuld*
That every herte mighte agryse, 210
To see hit pynted on the walle.

Ther saw I graven eek withalle, *countenanci*
Venus, how ye, my lady dere,
Wepinge with ful woful chere, 215
Prayen Iupiter an hye

To save and kepe that navye
Of the Troyan Eneas,
Sith that he hir sone was.

Ther saw I Loves Venus kisse,
And graunted of the tempest lisse. 220
Ther saw I how the tempest stente,
And how with alle pyne he wente, *still*
And prevely took arrivage

In the contree of Cartage;
And on the morwe, how that he 225
And a knight, hight Achatee,
Metten with Venus that day,
Goinge in a queynt array, *was as gause*

As she had ben an hunteresse,
With wind blowinge upon hir treste; 230
How Eneas gan him to pleyne,
Whan that he knew hir, of his peyne;

And how his shippes dreynte were
Or elles lost, he niste where;
How she gan him comforte tho, 235
And bad him to Cartage go,
And ther he shuldë his folk finde,
That in the see were left behinde.

And, shortly of this thing to pace,
She made Eneas so in grace 240
Of Dido, quene of that contree,
That, shortly for to tellen, she
Becam his love, and leet him do

That that wedding longeth to. *fully*
What shulde I speke more queynte, 245
Or peyne me my wordes peynte,
To speke of love? hit wol not be;
I can not of that facultee. *al know is meny*

And eek to telle the manere *cert*
How they aqeynteden in-ferre, 250
Hit were a long proces to telle,
And over long for yow to dwelle.

Ther saw I grave, how Eneas
Tolde Dido every cas, *thence*
That him was tid upon the see, *him* 255

And after grave was, how she
Made of him, shortly, at oo word,
Iiir lyf, hir love, hir lust, hir lord;
And dide him al the reverence,
And leyde on him al the dispence, 260

That any woman mighte do,
Weninge hit had al be so, *Belong*
As he hir swoor; and her-by demed
That he was good, for he swich semed.

Allas! what harm doth apparence, 265
Whan hit is fals in existence!
For he to hir a traitour was;
Wherfor she slow hir-self, alas!

Lo, how a woman doth amis,
To love him that unknowen is! 270
For, by Crist, lo! thus hit fareth;
'Hit is not al gold, that glareth.'

For, al-so brouke I wel myn heed, *? For on m*
Ther may be under goodliheed *1.12*
Kevered many a shrewed vyce; 275
Therfor be no wight so nyce,
To take a love only for chere, *aspect*

For speche, or for frondly manere;
For this shal every woman finde
That som man, of his pure kinde, 280
Wol shewen outward the faireste,
Til he have caught that what him leste; *de s. 1.12*

And thanne wol he causes finde,
And swere how that she is unkinde,
Or fals, or prey, or double was. 285

Al this seye I by Eneas
 And Dido, and hir nyce lest, ^{fresh}
 That lovede al to sone a gest; ^{revelation}
 Therfor I wol seye a proverbe,
 That 'he that fully knoweth therbe 290
 May saufly lye hit to his yē';
 Withoute draged, this is no lye.
 But let us speke of Eneas,
 How he betrayed hir, allas!
 And lefte hir ful unkindely. 295
 So when she saw al-utterly,
 ← That he wolde hir of trouthe faile,
 And wende fro hir to Itaile,
 She gan to wringe hir hondes two.
 'Allas!' quod she, 'what me is wo!
 Allas! is every man thus trewe, 301
 That every yere wolde have a newe,
 If hit so longe tyme dure,
 Or elles three, peraventure?
 As thus: of oon he wolde have fame 305
 In magnifying of his name; ^{rep}
 Another for frendship, seith he;
 And yet ther shal the thridde be,
 That shal be taken for delyt
 Lo, or for singular profyt.' 310
 In swiche wordes gan to pleyne
 Dido of hir grete payne,
 As me mette redely; ^{cite}
 Non other auctour alegge I.
 'Allas!' quod she, 'my swete herte, 315
 Have pitee on my sorwes smerte,
 And seee me not! go noight away!
 O woful Dido, wel away!
 Quod she to hir-selve tho.
 'O Eneas! what wil ye do? 320
 O, that your love, ne your bonde,
 That ye han sworn with your right honde,
 Ne my cruel death,' quod she,
 'May holde yow still heer with me!
 O, haveth of my deeth pitee! 325
 O-wis, my dere herte, ye
 Knowen ful wel that never yit,
 As fer-forth as I hadde wit,
 Agilte [I] yow in thoght ne deed.
 O, have ye men swich goodliheed 330
 In speche, and never a deel of trouthe?
 Allas, that ever hadde routhe
 Any woman on any man!
 Now see I wel, and telle can,
 We wrecched wimmen conne non art;
 For certeyn, for the more part, 336
 Thus we be served everichone.
 How sore that ye men conne grone,

Anoon as we have yow receyved!
 Certainly we ben deceeyved; 340
 For, though your love laste a sesoun,
 Wayte upon the conclusioun,
 And eek how that ye determynen,
 And for the more part diffynen. ^{ye will end}
 'O, welaway that I was born! 345
 For through yow is my name lorn,
 And alle myn actes red and songe
 Over al this lond, on every tonge.
 O wikke Fame! for ther nis
 Nothing so swift, lo, as she is! 350
 O, sooth is, every thing is wist,
 Though hit be kevered with the mist.
 Eek, thogh I mighte duren ever,
 That I have doon, rekever I never,
 That I ne shal be seyde, allas,
 Y-shamed be through Eneas, ^{wehched}
 And that I shal thus luge be —
 "Lo, right as she hath doon, now she
 Wol do eftsones, hardily."
 Thus seyth the peple prevely. —
 But that is doon, nis not to done; ^{yet too}
 Al hir compleynt ne al hir mone,
 Certeyn, availeth hir not a stre.
 And when she wiste sothly he
 Was forth unto his shippes goon, 365
 She in hir chambre wente anoon,
 And called on hir suster Anne,
 And gan hir to compleyne thane;
 And seyde, that she cause was
 That she first lovede [Eneas], 370
 And thus counselled hir therto.
 But what! when this was seyde and do,
 She roo^{gh} hir-selve to the herte,
 And deyde through the wounde smerte.
 But al the maner how she deyde, 375
 And al the wordes that she seyde,
 Who-so to knowe hit hath purpos,
 Reed Virgile in Eneidos
 Or the Epistle of Ovyde, <sup>wive she wroch
er. 347. 36
wec.</sup>
 What that she wroth or that she dyde;
 And nere hit to long to endyte, 381
 By god, I woldē hit here wryte.
 But, welaway! the harm, the routhe,
 That hath betid for swich untrouthe,
 As men may ofte in bokes rede, 385
 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 trayed Phillis wikkedly, 390
 That kinges doghter was of Trace,

I
 know no
 subitely

And falsly gan his terme pace; ^{farred out his appoyntment}
 And when she wiste that he was fals,
 She heng hir-self right by the hals, ^{beck}
 For he had do hir swich untrouthe; 395
 Lo! was not this a wo and routhe?

Eek lo! how fals and reccheles
 Was to ^{Paris} Achilles, ^{Briseida}
 And ^{Paris} Paridēnone;
 And Iason to he ^{gyle} gyle; 400
 And eft Iason as the ^{gyle} gyle;
 And Ercules to ^{gyle} gyle;
 For he lefte hir for Iöle,
 That made him cacche his deeth, ^{for Dione} parde.

How fals eek was he, Theseus; 405
 That, as the story telleth us,
 How he betrayed Adriane;
 The devel be his soules bane!
 For had he laughed, had he loured,
 He mostē have be al devoured, 410
 If Adriane ne had y-be!

And, for she had of him pitee,
 She made him fro the dethe escape,
 And he made hir a ful fals Iape; ^{trike}

For after this, within a whyle 415
 He lefte hir slepinge in an yle,
 Deserte alone, right in the see,
 And stal away, and leet hir be;
 And took hir suster Phedra tho
 With him, and gan to shippe go. 420
 And yet he had y-sworn to here,
 On al that ever he might swere,
 That, so she saved him his lyf,
 He wolde have take hir to his wyf;
 For she desired nothing elles, 425
 In certein, as the book us telles.

But to excusen Eneas
 Fulllike of al his greet trespas,
 The book seyth, Mercurie, sauns faile,
 Bad him go into Itaile, 430
 And leve Auffrykes regioun,
 And Dido and hir faire toun.

Tho saw I grave, how to Itaile
 Daun Eneas is go to saile;
 And how the tempest al began, 435
 And how he loste his steresman,
 Which that the stere, or he took keep,
 Smot over-bord, lo! as he sleep.

And also saw I how Sibyle
 And Eneas, besyde an yle, 440
 To helle wente, for to see
 His fader, Anchises the free.
 How he ther fond Palinurus,
 And Dido, and eek Deiphibus;

And every tourment eek in helle 445
 Saw he, which is long to telle.
 Which who-so willeth for to knowe,
 He moste rede many a rowe
 On Virgile or on Claudian,
 Or Daunte, that hit telle can. 450

Tho saw I grave al tharivaile ^{the arrival}
 That Eneas had in Itaile;
 And with king Latine his trectec,
 And alle the batailles that he
 Was at him-self, and eek his knyghtes
 Or he had al y-wonne his rightes; 456

And how he Turnus reffe his lyf,
 And wan Lavyna to his wyf; ^{Turnus' lyfe}
 And al the marvelous signals
 Of the goddess celestials; 460
 How, maugre Iuno, Eneas, .

For al hir sighte and hir compas, ^{arts & fet}
 Acheved al his aventure;
 For Iupiter took of him cure
 At the prayere of Venus; 465
 The whiche I preye alway save us,
 And us ay of our sorwes lighte!

Whan I had seyen al this sighte
 In this noble temple thus,
 'A, Lord!' thoughte I, 'that madest
 us, 470

Yet saw I never swich noblesse
 Of images, ne swich richesse,
 As I saw geven in this chirche;
 But not woot I who dide hem wirche, ^{wright}
 Ne wher I am, ne in what contree. 475

But now wol I go out and see,
 Right at the wiket, if I can
 See o-wher stering any man,
 That may me telle wher I am.'

When I out at the dores cam, 480
 I faste aboute me beheld.
 Then saw I but a large feld,
 As fer as that I mighte see,
 Withouten toun, or hous, or tree,
 Or bush, or gras, or ^{tree} lond; 485

For al the feld nas but of sond
 As smal as man may see yet lye ^{hit}
 In the desert of Libye;

Ne I no maner creature,
 That is y-formed by nature, 490
 Ne saw, me [for] to rede or wisse. ^{instruct me}

'O Crist,' thoughte I, 'that art in blisse, ^{or aye}
 Fro fantom and illusion
 Me save!' and with devocioun
 Myn yēn to the heven I caste. 495

Tho was I war, lo! at the laste,

That faste by the sonne, as hyë
 As kenne mighte I with myn yë,
 Me thoughte I saw an egle sore,
 But that hit semed moche more
 Then I had any egle seyn.
 But this as sooth as deeth, certeyn,

500

Explicit liber primus.

Hit was of golde, and shoon so brighte,
 That never saw men such a sighte,
 But-if the heven hadde y-wonne
 Al newe of golde another sonne;
 So shoon the egles fethers brighte,
 And somewhat downward gan hit lighte.

505

BOOK II.

INCIPIIT LIBER SECUNDUS.

Proem.

Now herkneþ, every maner man
 That English understonde can,
 And listeth of my dreem to lere;
 For now at erste shul ye here
 So selly an avisioun,
 That Isaye, ne Scipioun,
 Ne king Nabugodonosor,
 Pharo, Furnus, ne Elcanor,
 Ne mette swich a dreem as this!
 Now faire blisful, O Cipris,
 So be my favour at this tyme!
 And ye, me to endyte and ryme
 Helpeth, that on Parnaso dwelle
 By Elicon the clere welle.

510

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O Thought, that wroot al that I mette,
 And in the tresorie hit shette
 Of my brayn! now shal men see
 If any vertu in thee be,
 To tellen al my dreem aright;
 Now kythe thyn engyn and might!

525

THE DREAM.

This egle, of which I have yow told,
 That shoon with fethres as of gold,
 Which that so hyë gan to sore,
 I gan beholde more and more,
 To see hir beautee and the wonder;
 But never was ther dint of thonder,
 Ne that thing that men calle foudre,
 That smoot somtyme a tour to poudre,
 And in his swifte coming brende,
 That so swythe gan descende,
 As this foul, whan hit behelde
 That I a-roume was in the felde;
 And with his grimme pawes stronge,
 Within his sharpe nayles longe,

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Me, fleinge, at a swappe he hente,
 And with his sours agayn up wente,
 Me carynge in his clawes starke
 As lightly as I were a larke,
 How high, I can not telle yow,
 For I cam up, I niste how.
 For so astonied and a-sweved
 Was every vertu in my heved,
 What with his sours and with my drede,
 That al my feling gan to dede;
 For-why hit was to greet affray.

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Thus I longe in his clawes lay,
 Til at the laste he to me spak
 In mannes vois, and seyde, 'Awak!
 And be not so a-gast, for shame!'
 And called me tho by my name.
 And, for I sholde the bet abreyde —
 Me mette — 'Awak,' to me he seyde,
 Right in the same vois and stevens
 That useth oon I coude nevene;
 And with that vois, soþ for to sayn,
 My minde cam to me agayn;
 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,
 Til that he felte that I had hete,
 And felte eek tho myn herte bete.
 And tho gan he me to disporté,
 And with wordes to comforte,
 And sayde twyës, 'Seynte Marie!
 Thou art noyous for to carie,
 And nothing nedeth hit, parde!

570

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580

For al-so wis god helpe me
 As thou non harm shalt have of this;
 And this cas, that betid thee is,
 Is for thy lore and for thy prow; —
 Let see! darst thou yet loke now?
 Be ful assured, boldely,
 I am thy frend.' And therwith I
 Gan for to wondren in my minde.

'O god,' thoughte I, 'that madest kinde,
 Shal I non other weyes dye? 585
 Wher Loves wol me stellifye,
 Or what thing may this signifye?
 I neither am Enok, ne Elye,
 Ne Romulus, ne Ganymede
 That was y-bore up, as men rede, 590
 To hevене with dan Iupiter,
 And maad the goddes boteler.'
 Lo! this was tho my fantasye!
 But he that bar me gan espye
 That I so thoghte, and seyde this:— 595
 'Thou demest of thy-self amis;
 For Ioves is not ther-about —
 I dar wel putte thee out of doute —
 To make of thee as yet a sterre,
 But er I bere thee moche ferre, 600
 I wol thee telle what I am,
 And whider thou shalt, and why I cam
 To done this, so that thou take
 Good herte, and not for fere quake.'
 'Gladly,' quod I. 'Now wel,' quod
 he: — 605
 'First I, that in my feet have thee,
 Of which thou hast a feer and wonder,
 Am dwelling with the god of thonder,
 Which that men callen Iupiter,
 That dooth me flee ful ofte fer 610
 To do al his comaundement.
 And for this cause he hath me sent
 To thee: now herke, by thy trouthe!
 Certeyn, he hath of thee routhe,
 That thou so longe trewely 615
 Hast served so ententifly
 His blinde newew Cupido,
 And fair Venus [goddesse] also,
 Withoute guerdoun ever yit,
 And nevertheles hast set thy wit — 620
 Although that in thy hede ful lyte is —
 To make bokes, songes, dytees,
 In ryme, or elles in cadence,
 As thou best canst, in reverence
 Of Love, and of his servants eke, 625
 That have his servise soght, and seke;
 And peynest thee to pryse his art,
 Although thou haddest never part;
 Wherfor, al-so god me blesse,
 Loves halt hit greet humblesse 630
 And vertu eek, that thou wolt make
 A-night ful ofte thyn heed to ake,
 In thy studie so thou wrytest,
 And ever-mo of love endytest,
 In honour of him and preysinges, 635

And in his folkes furtheringes,
 And in hir matere al devyseyt,
 And noight him nor his folk despysest,
 Although thou mayst go in the daunce
 Of hem that him list not avauce. 640
 'Wherfor, as I seyde, y-wis,
 Iupiter considereth this,
 And also, beau sir, other thinges;
 That is, that thou hast no tydinges
 Of Loves folk, if they be glade, 645
 Ne of noight elles that god made;
 And noight only fro fer contree
 That ther no tyding comth to thee,
 But of thy verray neyghbores,
 That dwellen almost at thy dores, 650
 Thou herest neither that ne this;
 For whan thy labour doon al is,
 And hast y-maad thy rekeninges,
 In stede of reste and newe thinges,
 Thou gost hoom to thy hous anon; 655
 And, also domb as any stoon,
 Thou sittest at another boke,
 Til fully dawsed is thy loke,
 And livest thus as an hermyte,
 Although thyn abstynence is lyte. 660
 'And therfor Ioves, through his grace,
 Wol that I bere thee to a place,
 Which that hight THE HOUSE OF FAME,
 To do thee som disport and game,
 In som recompensacioun 665
 Of labour and devocioun
 That thou hast had, lo! causeles,
 To Cupido, the reccheles!
 And thus this god, thorgh his meryte,
 Wol with som maner thing thee quyte,
 So that thou wolt be of good chere. 671
 For truste wel, that thou shalt here,
 When we be comen ther I seye,
 Mo wonder thinges, dar I leye,
 Of Loves folke mo tydinges, 675
 Bothe soth-saves and lesinges;
 And mo loves newe begonne,
 And longe y-served loves wonne,
 And mo loves casuelly
 That been betid, no man wot why, 680
 But as a blind man stert an hare;
 And more lolytee and fare,
 Why! that they finde love of stele,
 As thinketh hem, and over-al wele;
 Mo discords, and mo felousyes, 685
 Mo murmurs, and mo novelryes,
 And mo dissimulaciouns,
 And feyned reparaciouns;

And mo berdes in two houres
 Withoute rasour or sisoures 690
 Y-maad, than greynes be of sondes;
 And eke mo holdinge in bondes,
 And also mo renouelaunces
 Of olde forleten aqueyntaunces;
 Mo love-dayes and acordes 695
 Then on instruments ben cordes;
 And eke of loves mo eschaurges
 Than ever cornes were in graunges;
 Unethe maistow trowen this? —
 Quod he. 'No, helpe me god so wis!' —
 Quod I. 'No? why?' quod he. 'For
 hit 701
 Were impossible, to my wit,
 Though that Fame hadde al the pyes
 In al a realme, and al the spyes,
 How that yet she shulde here al this, 705
 Or they espye hit.' 'O yis, yis!'
 Quod he to me, 'that can I preve
 By resoun, worthy for to leve,
 So that thou yeve thyn aduertence
 To understonde my sentence. 710
 'First shalt thou heren wher she
 dwelleth,
 And so thyn owne book hit telleth;
 Hir paleys stant, as I shal seye,
 Right even in middes of the weye
 Betwixen hevene, erthe, and see; 715
 That, what-so-ever in al these three
 Is spoken, in privee or aperte,
 The wey therto is so overte,
 And stant eek in so iuste a place,
 That every soun mot to hit pace, 720
 Or what so comth fro any tonge,
 Be hit rounded, red, or songe,
 Or spoke in seurtee or drede,
 Certein, hit moste thider nede.
 'Now herkne wel; for-why I wille
 Tellen thee a propre skile, 726
 And worthy demonstracioun
 In myn imagynacioun.
 'Geffrey, thou wost right wel this,
 That every kindly thing that is, 730
 Hath a kindly stede ther he
 May best in hit conserved be;
 Unto which place every thing,
 Through his kindly enclyning,
 Moveth for to come to, 735
 Whan that hit is away therfro;
 As thus; lo, thou mayst al day see
 That any thing that hevye be,
 As stoon or leed, or thing of wighte,
 And ber hit never so hye on highte, 740
 Lat go thyn hand, hit falleth down.
 'Right so seye I by fyre or soun,
 Or smoke, or other thinges lighte,
 Alwey they seke upward on highte;
 Whyl ech of hem is at his large, 745
 Light thing up, and downward charge.
 'And for this cause mayst thou see,
 That every river to the see
 Enclyned is to go, by kinde.
 And by these skilles, as I finde, 750
 Hath fish dwellinge in floode and see,
 And treës eek in erthe be.
 Thus every thing, by this resoun,
 Hath his propre mansioun,
 To which hit seketh to repaire, 755
 As ther hit shulde not apaire.
 Lo, this sentence is knowen couthe
 Of every philosophres mouthe,
 As Aristotle and dan Platon,
 And other clerkes many oon; 760
 And to confirme my resoun,
 Thou wost wel this, that speche is soun,
 Or elles no man mighte hit here;
 Now herkne what I wol thee lere.
 'Soun is noght but air y-broken, 765
 And every speche that is spoken,
 Loud or privee, foul or fair,
 In his substauce is but air;
 For as flaumbe is but lighted smoke,
 Right so soun is air y-broke. 770
 But this may be in many wyse,
 Of which I wil thee two devyse,
 As soun that comth of pype or harpe.
 For whan a pype is blowen sharpe,
 The air is twist with violence, 775
 And rent; lo, this is my sentence;
 Eek, whan men harpe-strings smyte,
 Whether hit be moche or lyte,
 Lo, with the strook the air to-breketh;
 Right so hit breketh whan men speketh.
 Thus wost thou wel what thing is speche.
 'Now hennesforth I wol thee teche,
 How every speche, or noise, or soun,
 Through his multiplicacioun,
 Though hit were pyped of a mouse, 785
 Moot nede come to Fames House.
 I preve hit thus — tak hede now —
 By experience; for if that thou
 Throwe on water now a stoon,
 Wel wost thou, hit wol make anon 790
 A litel roundel as a cercle,
 Paraventure brood as a covercle;

And right anon thou shalt see weel, That wheel wol cause another wheel, And that the thridde, and so forth, brother, 795	Is set amidles of these three, 845 Heven, erthe, and eek the see, As most conservatif the soun, Than is this the conclusioun, That every speche of every man, As I thee telle first began, 850 Moveth up on high to pace Kindely to Fames place.
Every cercle causing other, Wyder than himselve was; And thus, fro roundel to compas, Ech aboute other goinge, Caused of othres steringe, 800	'Telle me this feithfully, Have I not preved thus simply, Withouten any subtiltee 855 Of speche, or gret prolixitee Of termes of filosofyhe, Of figures of poetrye, Or colours of rethoryke? Pardee, hit oghte thee to lyke; 860 For hard langage and hard matere Is encombrous for to herd At ones; wost thou not wel this?'
Al-thogh thou mowe hit not y-see Above, hit goth yet alway under, 805 Although thou thenke hit a gret wonder. And who-so seith of trouthe I varie, Bid him proven the contrarie. And right thus every word, y-wis, That loude or privee spoken is, 810	And I answerede, and seyde, 'Yis.' 'A ha!' quod he, 'lo, so I can 865 Lewedly to a lewed man Speke, and shewe him swiche skiles, That he may shake hem by the biles, So palpable they shulden be. But tel me this, now pray I thee, 870 How thinkth thee my conclusioun?' [Quod he]. 'A good persuasioun,' Quod I, 'hit is; and lyk to be Right so as thou hast preved me.' 'By god,' quod he, 'and as I leve, 875 Thou shalt have yit, or hit be eve, Of every word of this sentence A preve, by experience; And with thy neres heren wel Top and tail, and everydel, 880 That every word that spoken is Comth into Fames Hous, y-wis, As I have seyde; what wilt thou more?' And with this word upper to sore He gan, and seyde, 'By Seynt Iame! 885 Now wil we speken al of game.'— 'How farrest thou?' quod he to me. 'Wel,' quod I. 'Now see,' quod he, 'By thy trouthe, yond adoun, Wher that thou knowest any toun, 890 Or hous, or any other thing. And whan thou hast of ought knowing, Loke that thou warne me, And I anon shal telle thee How fer that thou art now therfro.' 895 And I adoun gan loken tho, And beheld felde and plaines,
And multiplying ever-mo, Til that hit be so fer y-go That hit at bothe brinckes be. Al-thogh thou mowe hit not y-see Above, hit goth yet alway under, 805 Although thou thenke hit a gret wonder. And who-so seith of trouthe I varie, Bid him proven the contrarie. And right thus every word, y-wis, That loude or privee spoken is, 810	
Moveth first an air aboute, And of this moving, out of doute, Another air anon is meved, As I have of the water preved, That every cercle causeth other. 815 Right so of air, my leve brother; Everich air in other stereth More and more, and speche up bereth, Or vois, or noise, or word, or soun, Ay through multiplicacioun, 820 Til hit be atte House of Fame; — Tak hit in earnest or in game. 'Now have I told, if thou have minde, How speche or soun, of pure kinde, Enclyned is upward to meve; 825 This, mayst thou fele, wel I preve. And that [the mansioun], y-wis, That every thing enclyned to is. Hath his kindeliche stede: That sheweth hit, withouten drede, 830 That kindly the mansioun Of every speche, of every soun, Be hit either foul or fair, Hath his kinde place in air. And sin that every thing, that is 835 Out of his kinde place, y-wis, Moveth thider for to go If hit a-weye be therfro, As I before have preved thee, Hit seweth, every soun, pardee, 840 Moveth kindely to pace Al up into his kindly place. And this place of which I telle, Ther as Fame list to dwelle,	

And now hilles, and now mountaines,
 Now valeys, and now forestes,
 And now, uncthes, grete bestes; 900
 Now riveres, now citees,
 Now townes, and now grete trees,
 Now shippes sailing in the see.
 But thus sone in a whyle he
 Was flowen fro the grounde so hyë. 905
 That al the world, as to myn yë,
 No more semed than a prikke;
 Or elles was the air so thikke
 That I ne mighte not discerne.
 With that he spak to me as yerne, 910
 And seyde: 'Seestow any [toun]
 Or ought thou knowest yonder doun?
 I seyde, 'Nay.' 'No wonder nis,'
 Quod he, 'for half so high as this
 Nas Alexander Macedo; 915
 Ne the king, dan Scipio,
 That saw in dreme, at point devys,
 Helle and erthe, and paradys;
 Ne eek the wrecche Dedalus,
 Ne his child, nyce Icarus, 920
 That fleigh so highe that the hete
 His winges malt, and he fel wete
 In-mid the see, and ther he dreynete,
 For whom was makid moch compleynte.
 'Now turn upward,' quod he, 'thy face,
 And behold this large place, 926
 This air; but loke thou ne be
 Adrad of hem that thou shalt see;
 For in this regioun, certain,
 Dwelleth many a citezein, 930
 Of which that speketh dan Plato.
 These ben the eyrish bestes, lo!'
 And so saw I al that meynce
 Bothe goon and also flee.
 'Now,' quod he tho, 'cast up thyn yë;
 See yonder, lo, the Galaxyë, 936
 Which men clepeth the Milky Wey,
 For hit is whyt: and somme, parfey,
 Callen hit Watlinge Strete:
 That ones was y-brent with hete, 940
 Whan the sonnes sone, the rede,
 That highte Pheton, wolde lede
 Algate his fader cart, and gye.
 The cart-hors gonne wel espye
 That he ne coude no governaunce, 945
 And gonne for to lepe and launce,
 And beren him now up, now doun,
 Til that he saw the Scorpioun,
 Which that in heven a signe is yit.
 And he, for ferde, loste his wit, 950

Of that, and leet the reynes goon
 Of his hors; and they anon
 Gonne up to mounte, and doun descende
 Til bothe the eyr and erthe brende;
 Til Iupiter, lo, atte laste 955
 Him slow, and fro the carte caste.
 Lo, is it not a greet mischaunce,
 To lete a fole han governaunce
 Of thing that he can not demeine?'
 And with this word, soth for to seyne,
 He gan alway upper to sore, 961
 And gladded me ay more and more,
 So feithfully to me spak he.
 Tho gan I loken under me,
 And leheld the eyrish bestes, 965
 Cloudes, mistes, and tempestes,
 Snowes, hailes, reines, windes,
 And thengending in hir kindes,
 And al the wey through whiche I cam;
 'O god,' quod I, 'that made Adam, 970
 Moche is thy might and thy noblesse!'
 And tho thoughte I upon Boëce,
 That writ, 'a thought may flee so hyë,
 With fetheres of Philosophye,
 To passen everich element; 975
 And whan he hath so fer y-went,
 Than may be seen, behind his bak,
 Cloud, and al that I of spak.'
 Tho gan I wexen in a were,
 And seyde, 'I woot wel I am here; 980
 But wher in body or in gost
 I noot, y-wis; but god, thou worst!'
 For more cleer ententement
 Nadde he me never yit y-sent.
 And than thoughte I on Marcian, 985
 And eek on Anteclaudian,
 That sooth was hir descripcioun
 Of al the hevenes regioun,
 As fer as that I saw the preve;
 Therfor I can hem now beleve. 990
 With that this egle gan to crye:
 'Lat be,' quod he, 'thy fantasye;
 Wilt thou lere of sterres aught?'
 'Nay, certainly,' quod I, 'right naught;
 And why? for I am now to old.' 995
 'Elles I wolde thee have told,'
 Quod he, 'the sterres names, lo,
 And al the hevenes signes to,
 And which they been.' 'No fors,' quod I.
 'Yis, pardee,' quod he; 'wostow why?
 For whan thou redest poetrye, 1001
 How goddes gonne stellifye
 Brid, fish, beste, or him or here,

As the Raven, or either Bere,
Or Ariones harpe fyn, 1005
Castor, Pollux, or Delphyn,
Or Atlantes doughtres sevene,
How alle these arn set in hevene;
For though thou have hem ofte on
honde,
Yet noston not wher that they stonde.
'No fors,' quod I, 'hit is no nede; 1011
I leve as wel, so god me spede,
Hem that wryte of this matere,
As though I knew hir places here;
And eek they shynen here so brighte,
Hit shulde shenden al my sighte, 1016
To loke on hem.' 'That may wel be,'
Quod he. And so forth bar he me
A whyl, and than he gan to crye,
That never herde I thing so hye, 1020
'Now up the heed; for al is wel;
Seynt Iulyan, lo, bon hostel!
See here the Hous of Fame, lo!
Maistow not heren that I do?'
'What?' quod I. 'The grete soun,' 1025
Quod he, 'that rumbleth up and doun
In Fames Hous, ful of tydinges,
Bothe of fair speche and chydinges,
And of fals and soth compounded.
Her kne wel; hit is not rouned. 1030
Herestow not the grete swogh?'
'Yis, pardee,' quod I, 'wel y-nogh.'
'And what soun is it lyk?' quod he.
'Peter! lyk beting of the see,'
Quod I, 'again the roches holowe, 1035
Whan tempest doth the shippes swalowe;
And lat a man stonde, out of doute,
A myle thens, and here hit route;
Or elles lyk the last humblinge
After the clappe of a thundringe, 1040
When Ioves hath the air y-bete;
But hit doth me for fere swete.'
'Nay, dred thee not thereof,' quod he,
'Hit is nothing wil byten thee;
Thou shalt non harm have, trewely.' 1045
And with this word bothe he and I
As nigh the place arryved were

As men may casten with a spere.
I nistē how, but in a strete
He sette me faire on my fete, 1050
And seyde, 'Walke forth a pas,
And tak thyn aventure or cas,
That thou shalt finde in Fames place.'
'Now,' quod I, 'whyl we han space
To speke, or that I go fro thee, 1055
For the love of god, tel me,
In sooth, that wil I of thee lere,
If this noise that I here
Be, as I have herd thee tellen,
Of folk that doun in erthe wellen, 1060
And comth here in the same wyse
As I thee herde or this devyse;
And that ther lyves body nis
In al that hous that yonder is,
That maketh al this loude fare?' 1065
'No,' quod he, 'by Seynte Clare,
And also wis god rede me!
But o thinge I wil warne thee
Of the which thou wolt have wonder.
Lo, to the House of Fame yonder 1070
Thou wost how cometh every speche,
Hit nedeth nought thee eft to teche.
But understand now right wel this;
Whan any speche y-comen is
Up to the paleys, anon-right 1075
Hit wexeth lyk the same wight,
Which that the word in erthe spak,
Be hit clothed reed or blak;
And hath so verray his lyknesse
That spak the word, that thou wilt
gesse 1080
That hit the same body be,
Man or woman, he or she.
And is not this a wonder thing?'
'Yis,' quod I tho, 'by hevene king!'
And with this worde, 'Farwel,' quod
he, 1085
'And here I wol abyden thee;
And god of hevene sende thee grace,
Som good to lerne in this place.'
And I of him took leve anon,
And gan forth to the paleys goon. 1090

Explicit liber secundus.

BOOK III.

INCIPIIT LIBER TERCIVS.

Invocation.

O GOD of science and of light,
 Apollo, through thy grete might,
 This litel laste book thou gye! ^{g. u. u. l. e. r. e. l. e. d. e. t.}
 Nat that I wilne, for maistrye,
 Here art poetical be shewed; 1095
 But, for the rym is light and lewed,
 Yit make hit sumwhat agreable,
 Though som vers faile in a sillable;
 And that I do no diligençe
 To shewe craft, but o sentençe. 1100
 And if, divyne vertu, thou
 Wilt helpe me to shewe now
 That in myn hede y-marked is —
 Lo, that is for to menen this,
 The Hous of Fame to descryve — 1105
 Thou shalt see me go, as blyve,
 Unto the nexte laure I see,
 And kisse hit, for hit is thy tree;
 Now entreth in my breste anoon! —

THE DREAM.

Whan I was fro this egle goon, 1110
 I gan beholde upon this place,
 And certain, or I ferther pace,
 I wol yow al the shap devyse
 Of hous and site; and al the wyse
 How I gan to this place aproche 1115
 That stood upon so high a roche,
 Hyer stant ther noon in Spaine.
 But up I clomb with alle paine,
 And though to climbe hit greved me,
 Yit I ententif was to see, 1120
 And for to pouren wonder lowe,
 If I coude any weyes knowe
 What maner stoon this roche was;
 For hit was lyk a thing of glas,
 But that hit shoon ful more clere; 1125
 But of what congeled matere
 Hit was, I niste redely.
 But at the laste espyed I,
 And found that hit was, every deel
 A roche of yse, and not of steel. 1130
 Thoughte I, 'By Seynt Thomas of Kent!
 This were a feble foundement

To bidden on a place hie;
 He oughte him litel glorifye
 That her-on bilt, god so me save!' 1135
 Tho saw I al the half y-grave
 With famous folkes names fele,
 That had y-been in mochel wele,
 And hir fames wyde y-blowe.
 But wel unethes coude I knowe 1140
 Any lettres for to rede
 Hir names by; for, out of drede,
 They were almost of-thowed so,
 That of the lettres oon or two
 Was molte away of every name 1145
 So unfamous was wexe hir fame;
 But men seyn, 'What may ever laste?'
 Tho gan I in myn herte caste,
 That they were molte away with hete,
 And not away with stormes bete. 1150
 For on that other syde I sey
 Of this hill, that northward lay,
 How hit was writen ful of names
 Of folk that hadden grete fames
 Of olde tyme, and yit they were 1155
 As fresshe as men had writen hem there
 The selve day right, or that houre
 That I upon hem gan to poure.
 But wel I wiste what hit made;
 Hit was conserved with the shade —
 Al this wrytinge that I sy — 1161
 Of a castel, that stood on hy,
 And stood eek on so cold a place,
 That hete mighte hit not deface.
 Tho gan I up the hille to goon, 1165
 And fond upon the coppe a woon,
 That alle the men that ben on lyve
 Ne han the cunning to descryve
 The beautee of that ilke place,
 Ne coude casten no compace 1170
 Swiche another for to make,
 That mighte of beautee be his make,
 Ne [be] so wonderliche y-wrought;
 That hit astonieth yit my thought,
 And maketh al my wit to swinke 1175
 On this castel to bethinke.
 So that the grete craft, beautee,
 The cast, the curiositee
 Ne can I not to yow devyse,
 My wit ne may me not suffyse. 1180
 But natheles al the substance

- I have yit in my remembrance;
 For-why me thoughte, by Seynt Gyle!
 Al was of stone of beryle, 1185
 Bothe castel and the tour,
 And eek the halle, and every bour,
 Withouten peces or Ioininges.
 But many subtil compassinges,
 Babewinnes and pinacles, 1190
 Imageries and tabernacles,
 I saw; and ful eek of windowes,
 As flakes falle in grete snowes,
 And eek in ech of the pinacles
 Weren sondry habitacles, 1195
 In whiche stoden, al withoute —
 Ful the castel, al aboute —
 Of alle maner of minstrales,
 And gestiours, that tellen tales
 Bothe of weping and of game, 1200
 Of al that lengthe unto Fame.
 Ther herde I pleyen on an harpe
 That souned bothe wel and sharpe,
 Orpheus ful craftely,
 And on his syde, faste by, 1205
 Sat the harper Orion,
 And Eacides Chiron,
 And other harpers many oon,
 And the Bret Glascurion;
 Ar^d smale harpers with her gleës 1210
 Se h under hem in seës,
 A gonne on hem upward to gape,
 I countrefete hem as an ape,
 is craft countrefeteth kinde, 1215
 ho saugh I stonden hem behinde,
 or fro hem, al by hemselve,
 by thousand tymes twelve,
 It maden loude menstralcyes
 ornemuse and shalmyes,
 U many other maner pype, 1220
 T craftely begunne pype
 the in doucet and in rede,
 hat ben at festes with the brede;
 And many floute and liltng-horne,
 And pypes made of grene corne, 1225
 As han thise litel herde-gromes,
 That kepen bestes in the bromes.
 Ther saugh I than Atiteris,
 And of Athenes dan Pseustis,
 And Marcia that lost her skin, 1230
 Bothe in face, body, and chin,
 For that she wolde envyen, lo!
 To pypen bet then Apollo.
 Ther saugh I famous, olde and yonge,
 Pypers of the Duche tonge,
 To lerne love-daunces, springes, 1235
 Reyes, and these straunge thinges.
 Tho saugh I in another place
 Stonden in a large space,
 Of hem that maken bloody soun 1240
 In trumpe, beme, and clarioun;
 For in hight and blood-sheding
 Is used gladly clarioning.
 Ther herde I trumpen Messenus,
 Of whom that speketh Virgilius.
 Ther herde I loab trumpe also, 1245
 Theodomas, and other mo;
 And alle that used clarion
 In Cataloigne and Aragon,
 That in hir tyme famous were
 To lerne, saugh I trumpe there. 1250
 Ther saugh I sitte in other seës,
 Pleying upon sondry gleës,
 Whiche that I cannot nevene,
 Mo then sterres been in hevene,
 Of whiche I nil as now not ryme, 1255
 For ese of yow, and losse of tyme:
 For tyme y-lost, this knownen ye,
 By no way may recovered be.
 Ther saugh I pleyen Iogelours, 1260
 Magiciens and tregetours,
 And phitonesses, charmeresses,
 Olde wicches, sorceresses,
 That use exorsisaciouns,
 And eek thise fumigaciouns;
 And clerkes eek, which conne wel 1265
 Al this magyke naturel,
 That craftely don hir ententes,
 To make, in certeyn ascendentes,
 Images, lo, through which magyk 1270
 To make a man ben hool or syk.
 Ther saugh I thee, queen Medea,
 And Circes eke, and Calipsa;
 Ther saugh I Hermes Ballenus,
 Lymote, and eek Simon Magus.
 Ther saugh I, and knew hem by 1275
 name,
 That by such art don men han fame.
 Ther saugh I Colle tregetour
 Upon a table of sicamour
 Pleye an uncouth thing to telle;
 I saugh him carien a wind-melle 1280
 Under a walsh-note shale.
 What shuld I make lenger tale
 Of al the peple that I say,
 Fro hennes in-to domesday?
 Whan I had al this folk beholde, 1285
 And fond me lous, and nought y-holde.

And eft y-mused longe whyle
 Upon these walles of beryle,
 That shoon ful lighter than a glas,
 And made wel more than hit was 1290
 To semen, every thing, y-wis,
 As kinde thing of fames is;
 I gan forth roimen til I fond
 The castel-yate on my right hond,
 Which that so wel corven was 1295
 That never swich another nas;
 And yit hit was by aventure
 Y-wrought, as often as by cure.
occupatio Hit nedeth noight yow for to tellen,
 To make yow to longe dwellen, 1300
 Of this yates florissinges,
 Ne of compasses, ne of kervinges,
 Ne how they hatte in masoneries,
 As, corbets fulle of inageries.
 But, lord! so fair hit was to shewe, 1305
 For hit was al with gold behewe.
 But in I wente, and that anon;
 Ther mette I crying many oon, —
 'A larges, larges, hold up wel!
 God save the lady of this pel, 1310
 Our owne gentil lady Fame,
 And hem that wilnen to have name
 Of us!' Thus herde I cryen alle,
 And faste comen out of halle,
 And shoken nobles and sterlinges. 1315
 And somme crowned were as kinges,
 With crounes wrought ful of losenges;
 And many riban, and many frenges
 Were on hir clothes trewely.
 Tho atte laste aspyed I 1320
 That pursevauntes and heraudes,
 That cryen riche folkes laudes,
 Hit weren alle; and every man
 Of hem, as I yow tellen can,
 Had on him thrown a vesture, 1325
 Which that men clepe a cote-armure,
 Enbrowded wonderliche riche,
 Al-though they nere nought y-liche.
 But noight nil I, so mote I thryve,
 Been aboute to discryve 1330
 Al these armes that ther weren,
 That they thus on hir cotes beren,
 For hit to me were impossible;
 Men mighte make of hem a bible
 Twenty foot thikke, as I trowe. 1335
 For certeyn, who-so coude y-knowe
 Mighte ther alle the armes seen
 Of famous folk that han y-been
 In Aufstrike, Europe, and Asye,

Sith first began the chevalrye. 1340
 Lo! how shulde I now telle al this?
 Ne of the halle eek what ned is
 To tellen yow, that every wal
 Of hit, and floor, and roof and al
 Was plated half a fote thikke 1345
 Of gold, and that nas no-thing wikke,
 But, for to prove in alle wyse,
 As fyn as ducat in Venyse,
 Of whiche to lyte al in my pouche is?
 And they wer set as thikke of nouchis
 Fulle of the fynest stones faire, 1350
 That men rede in the Lapidaire,
 As greses growen in a mede;
 But hit were al to longe to rede
 The names; and therfore I pace. 1355
 But in this riche lusty place,
 That Fames halle called was,
 Ful moche prees of folk ther nas,
 Ne crouding, for to mochil prees.
 But al on hye, above a dees, 1360
 Sitte in a see imperial,
 That maad was of a rubee al,
 Which that a carbuncle is y-called,
 I saugh, perpetually y-stalled,
 A femynye creature; 1365
 That never formed by nature
 Nas swich another thing y-seye.
 For altherfirst, soth for to seye,
 Me thoughte that she was so lyte,
 That the lengthe of a cubyte 1370
 Was lenger than she semed be;
 But thus sone, in a whyle, she
 Hir tho so wonderliche streighte,
 That with hir feet she therthe reighte
 And with hir heed she touched heve
 Ther as shynen sterres sevene.
 And ther-to eek, as to my wit,
 I saugh a gretter wonder yit,
 Upon hir eye to beholde; 1375
 But certeyn I hem never tolde;
 For as fele eyen hadde she
 As fetheres upon foules be,
 Or weren on the bestes foure,
 That goddes trone gunne honoure,
 As Iohn writ in thapocalips. 1385
 Hir heer, that oundy was and crips,
 As burned gold hit shoon to see.
 And sooth to tellen, also she
 Had also fele up-standing eres
 And tongues, as on bestes heris; 1390
 And on hir feet wexen saugh I
 Partriches wings redely.

But, lord! the perrie and the richesse
 I saugh sitting on this goddessse!
 And, lord! the hevenish melodye 1395
 Of songes, ful of armonye,
 I herde aboute her trone y-songe,
 That al the paleys-walles ronge!
 So song the mighty Muse, she
 That cleped is Caliopee, 1400
 And hir eighte sustren eke,
 That in hir face semen meke;
 And evermo, eternally,
 They songe of Fame, as tho herde I: —
 'Heried be thou and thy name, 1405
 Goddessse of renoun and of fame!'
 Tho was I war, lo, atte laste,
 As I myn eyen gan up caste,
 That this ilke noble quene
 On hir shuldres gan sustene 1410
 Bothe tharmes and the name
 Of tho that hadde large fame;
 Alexander, and Hercules
 That with a sherte his lyf lees!
 Thus fond I sitting this goddessse, 1415
 In nobley, honour, and richesse;
 Of which I stinte a wyle now,
 Other thing to tellen yow.
 Tho saugh I stonde on either syde,
 Streight down to the dores wide, 1420
 Fro the dees, many a pileer
 Of metal, that shoon not ful cleer;
 Bat though they nere of no richesse,
 Yet they were maad for greet noblesse,
 And in hem greet [and hy] sentence;
 And folk of digne reverence, 1426
 Of whiche I wol yow telle fonde,
 Upon the piler saugh I stonde.
 Alderfirst, lo, ther I sigh,
 Upon a piler stonde on high, 1430
 That was of lede and yren fyn,
 Him of secte Saturnyn,
 The Ebrayk Iosephus, the olde,
 at of lewes gastes tolde;
 and bar upon his shuldres hye 1435
 the fame up of the Iewerye.
 and by him stoden other sevene,
 wise and worthy for to nevene,
 o helpen him bere up the charge,
 fit was so hevy and so large. 1440
 and for they writen of batailes,
 As wel as other olde mervailles,
 Therfor was, lo, this pileer,
 Of which that I yow telle heer,
 of lede and yren bothe, y-wis. 1445

For yren Martes metal is,
 Which that god is of bataille;
 And the leed, withouten faille,
 Is, lo, the metal of Saturne,
 That hath ful large wheel to turne. 1450
 Tho stoden forth, on every rowe,
 Of hem which that I coude knowe,
 Though I hem noght by ordre telle,
 To make yow to long to dwelle.
 These, of whiche I ginne rede, 1455
 Ther saugh I stonden, out of drede:
 Upon an yren piler strong,
 That peynted was, al endelong,
 With tygres blode in every place,
 The Tholosan that highte Stace, 1460
 That bar of Thebes up the fame
 Upon his shuldres, and the name
 Also of cruel Achilles.
 And by him stood, withouten lees,
 Ful wonder hye on a pileer 1465
 Of yren, he, the greet Omeer;
 And with him Dares and Tytus
 Before, and eek he, Lollius,
 And Guido eek de Columpnis,
 And English Gaufride eek, y-wis; 1470
 And ech of these, as have I Joye,
 Was besy for to bere up Troye.
 So hevy ther-of was the fame,
 That for to bere hit was no game.
 But yit I gan ful wel espye, 1475
 Betwix hem was a litel envye.
 Oon seyde, Omere made lyes,
 Feyninge in his poetrys,
 And was to Grekes favorable;
 Therfor held he hit but fable. 1480
 Tho saugh I stonde on a pileer,
 That was of tinned yren cleer,
 That Latin poete, [dan] Virgyle,
 That bore hath up a longe wyle
 The fame of Pius Eneas. 1485
 And next him on a piler was,
 Of coper, Venus clerk, Ovyde,
 That hath y-sowen wonder wyde
 The grete god of Loves name.
 And ther he bar up wel his fame, 1490
 Upon this piler, also hye
 As I might see hit with myn yē:
 For-why this halle, of whiche I rede
 Was woxe on highte, lengthe and brede,
 Wel more, by a thousand del, 1495
 Than hit was erst, that saugh I wel.
 Tho saugh I, on a piler by,
 Of yren wrought ful sternely,

The grete poete, daun Lucan,
 And on his shuldres bar up than, 1500
 As highe as that I mighte see,
 The fame of Iulius and Pompee.
 And by him stoden alle these clerkes,
 That writen of Romes mighty werkes,
 That, if I wolde hir names telle, 1505
 Al to longe moste I dwelle.

And next him on a piler stood
 Of soulfre, lyk as he were wood,
 Dan Claudian, the soth to telle,
 That bar up al the fame of helle, 1510
 Of Pluto, and of Proserpyne,
 That quene is of the derke pyne.

What shulde I more telle of this?
 The halle was al ful, y-wis,
 Of hem that writen olde gestes, 1515
 As ben on treës rokes nestes;
 But hit a ful confus matere
 Were al the gestes for to here,
 That they of wyte, and how they highte.
 But why! that I beheld this sighte, 1520
 I herde a noise aprochen blyve,
 That ferde as been don in an hyve,
 Agen her tyme of out-fleyinge;
 Right swiche a maner murmuringe,
 For al the world, hit semed me. 1525

Tho gan I loke aboute and see,
 That ther com entring in the halle
 A right gret company with-alle,
 And that of sondry regiouns,
 Of alleskinnes condiciouns, 1530
 That dwelle in erthe under the mone,
 Pore and ryche. And also sone
 As they were come into the halle,
 They gonne down on kneës falle
 Before this ilke noble quene, 1535

And seyde, 'Graunte us, lady shene,
 Ech of us, of thy grace, a bone!'
 And somme of hem she graunted sone,
 And somme she werned wel and faire;
 And somme she graunted the contraire
 Of hir axing utterly. 1541

But thus I seye yow trowely,
 What hir cause was, I niste.
 For this folk, ful wel I wiste,
 They hadde good fame ech deserved,
 Although they were diversly served; 1546
 Right as hir suster, dame Fortune,
 Is wont to serven in comune.

Now herkne how she gan to paye
 That gonne hir of hir grace praye; 1550
 And yit, lo, al this companye

Seyden sooth, and noght a lye.

'Madame,' seyden they, 'we be
 Folk that heer besechen thee, 1554
 That thou graunte us now good fame,
 And lete our werkes han that name;
 In ful recompensacioun
 Of good werk, give us good renoun.'

'I werne yow hit,' quod she anoon,
 'Ye gete of me good fame noon, 1560
 By god! and therfor go your wey.'

'Alas,' quod they, 'and welaway!
 Telle us, what may your cause be?'

'For me list hit noght,' quod she;
 'No wight shal speke of yow, y-wis, 1565
 Good ne harm, ne that ne this.'

And with that word she gan to calle
 Hir messenger, that was in halle,
 And bad that he shulde faste goon,
 Up peyne to be blind anoon, 1570
 For Eolus, the god of winde; —

'In Trace ther ye shul him finde,
 And bid him bringe his clarioun,
 That is ful dyvers of his soun,
 And hit is cleped Clere Laude, 1575

With which he wont is to heraude
 Hem that me list y-preised be:
 And also bid him how that he
 Bringe his other clarioun,

That highte Sclaundre in every toun,
 With which he wont is to diffame 1581
 Hem that me list, and do hem shame.'

This messenger gan faste goon,
 And found wher, in a cave of stoon,
 In a contree that highte Trace, 1585
 This Eolus, with harde grace,
 Held the windes in distresse,
 And gan hem under him to presse,
 That they gonne as beres rore,
 He bond and pressed hem so sore. 1590

This messenger gan faste crye,
 'Rys up,' quod he, 'and faste hie,
 Til that thou at my lady be;
 And tak thy clarions eek with thee,
 And speed thee forth.' And he anon
 Took to a man, that hight Triton, 1596
 His clarious to bere tho,

And leet a certeyn wind to go,
 That blew so hidously and hie,
 That hit ne lefte not a skye 1600
 In al the welken longe and brood.

This Eolus no-wher abood
 Til he was come at Fames feet,
 And eek the man that Triton heet;

And ther he stood, as still as stoon. 1605
 And her-withal ther com anon
 Another huge companye
 Of gode folk, and gunne crye,
 'Lady, graunte us now good fame,
 And lat our werkes han that name 1610
 Now, in honour of gentillesse,
 And also god your soule blesse!
 For we han wel deserved hit,
 Therfor is right that we ben quit,
 'As thyrve I,' quod she, 'ye shal faile,
 Good werkes shal yow nocht availe 1616
 To have of me good fame as now.
 But wite ye what? I graunte yow,
 That ye shal have a shrewed fame
 And wikked loos, and worse name, 1620
 Though ye good loos have wel deserved.
 Now go your wey, for ye be served;
 And thou, dan Eolus, let see!
 Tak forth thy trumpe anon,' quod she,
 'That is y-cleped Sclaunder light, 1625
 And blow hir loos, that every wight
 Speke of hem harm and shrewednesse,
 In stede of good and worthinesse.
 For thou shalt trumpe al the contraire
 Of that they han don wel or faire.' 1630
 'Alas,' thoughte I, 'what adventures
 Han these sory creatures!
 For they, amonges al the pres,
 Shul thus be shamed gilteles!
 But what! hit moste nedes be.' 1635
 What did this Eolus, but he
 Tok out his blakke trumpe of bras,
 That fouler than the devil was,
 And gan this trumpe for to blowe,
 As al the world shulde overthrowe; 1640
 That through-out every regioun
 Wente this foule trumpes soun,
 As swift as pelet out of gonne,
 Whan fyr is in the poudre ronne.
 And swiche a smoke gan out-wende
 Out of his foule trumpes ende, 1646
 Blak, blo, grenish, swartish reed,
 As doth wher that men melte leed,
 Lo, al on high fro the tuel!
 And therto oo thing saugh I wel, 1650
 That, the ferther that hit ran,
 The gretter wexen hit began,
 As doth the river from a welle,
 And hit stank as the pit of helle.
 Alas, thus was hir shame y-ronge, 1655
 And gilteles, on every tonge.
 Tho com the thriddle companye,

And gunne up to the dees to hyc,
 And doun on knees they fille anon,
 And seyde, 'We ben everichon 1660
 Folk that han ful trewely
 Deserved fame rightfully,
 And praye yow, hit mot be knowe,
 Right as hit is, and forth y-blowe.'
 'I graunte,' quod she, 'for me list 1665
 That now your gode werk be wist;
 And yit ye shul han better loos,
 Right in dispyt of alle your foos,
 Than worthy is; and that anon:
 Lat now,' quod she, 'thy trumpe goon,
 Thou Eolus, that is so blak; 1671
 And out thyn other trumpe tak
 That highte Laude, and blow hit so
 That through the world hir fame go
 Al escly, and not to faste, 1675
 That hit be knowen atte laste.'
 'Ful gladly, lady myn,' he seyde;
 And out his trumpe of golde he brayde
 Anon, and sette hit to his mouthe, 1679
 And blew hit est, and west, and southe,
 And north, as loude as any thunder,
 That every wight hadde of hit wonder,
 So brode hit ran, or than hit stente.
 And, certes, al the breeth that wente
 Out of his trumpes mouthe smelde 1685
 As men a pot-ful bawme helde
 Among a basket ful of roses;
 This favour dide he til hir loses.
 And right with this I gan aspye,
 Ther com the ferthe companye — 1690
 But certeyn they were wonder fewe —
 And gonne stonden in a rewe,
 And seyden, 'Certes, lady brighte,
 We han don wel with al our mighte;
 But we ne kepen have no fame. 1695
 Hyd our werkes and our name,
 For goddes love! for certes we
 Han certeyn doon hit for bountee,
 And for no maner other thing.'
 'I graunte yow al your asking,' 1700
 Quod she; 'let your werk be deed.'
 With that aboute I clew myn heed,
 And saugh anon the fift route
 That to this lady gonne loute,
 And doun on knees anon to falle; 1705
 And to hir tho besoughten alle
 To hyde hir gode werkes eek,
 And seyde, they yeven nocht a leek
 For fame, ne for swich renoun;
 For they, for contemplacioun 1710

And goddes love, hadde y-wrought;
 Ne of fame wolde they nought.
 'What?' quod she, 'and be ye wood?
 And wene ye for to do good,
 And for to have of that no fame? 1715
 Have ye dyspyt to have my name?
 Nay, ye shul liven everichoon!
 Blow thy trumpe and that anoon,
 Quod she, 'thou Eolus, I hote,
 And ring this folkes werk by note, 1720
 That al the world may of hit here.'
 And he gan blowe hir loos so clere
 In his golden clarioun,
 That through the world wente the soun,
 So kenely, and cek so soft; 1725
 But atte laste hit was on-lofte.
 Thoo com the sexte companye,
 And gonne faste on Fame crye.
 Right verrailly, in this manere
 They seyden: 'Mercy, lady dere! 1730
 To telle certain, as hit is,
 We han don neither that ne this,
 But ydel al our lyf y-be.
 But, natheles, yit preyre we,
 That we mowe han so good a fame, 1735
 And greet renoun and known name,
 As they that han don noble gestes,
 And ached alle hir lestes,
 As wel of love as other thing;
 Al was us never broche ne ring, 1740
 - elles nought, from wimmen sent,
 Ne ones in hir herte y-ment
 To make us only frendly chere,
 But mighte temen us on bere;
 Yit lat us to the peple seme 1745
 Swiche as the world may of us deme,
 That wimmen loven us for wood.
 Hit shal don us as moche good,
 And to our herte as moche availe
 To countrepeise ese and travaile, 1750
 As we had wonne hit with labour;
 For that is dere boght honour
 At regard of our grete ese.
 And yit thou most us more ples; 1755
 Let us be holden eek, therto,
 Worthy, wyse, and gode also,
 And riche, and happy unto love.
 For goddes love, that sit above,
 Though we may not the body have
 Of wimmen, yet, so god yow save! 1760
 Let men glewe on us the name;
 Suffyeth that we han the fame.'
 'I graunte,' quod she, 'by my trouthe!

Now, Eolus, with-outen slouthe,
 Tak out thy trumpe of gold, let see, 1765
 And blow as they han axed me,
 That every man wene hem at ese,
 Though they gon in ful badde lese.'
 This Eolus gan hit so blowe,
 That through the world hit was y-knowe.
 Tho com the seventh route anoon, 1771
 And fel on knees everichoon,
 And seyde, 'Lady, graunte us sone
 The same thing, the same bone,
 That [ye] this nexte folk han doon.' 1775
 'Fy on yow,' quod she, 'everichoon!
 Ye masty swyn, ye ydel wrecches,
 Ful of rotten slowe tecches!
 What? false theves! wher ye wolde 1780
 Be famous good, and no-thing nolde
 Deserve why, ne never roughte? 1781
 Men rather yow to-hangen oughte!
 For ye be lyk the sweynt cat,
 That wolde have fish; but wostow what?
 He wolde no-thing wete his clowes. 1785
 Yvel thrift come on your Iowes,
 And eek on myn, if I hit graunte,
 Or do yow favour, yow to avaunte!
 Thou Eolus, thou king of Trace!
 Go, blow this folk a sory grace,' 1790
 Quod she, 'anoon; and wostow how?
 As I shal telle thee right now;
 Sey: "These ben they that wolde honour
 Have, and do noskinnes labour,
 Ne do no good, and yit han laude; 1795
 And that men wende that bele Isaude.
 Ne coude hem noght of love werne; deny
 And yit she that grint at a querne
 Is al to good to ese hir herte."
 This Eolus anon up sterte, 1800
 And with his blakke clarioun
 He gan to blasen out a soun,
 As loude as belweth wind in helle.
 And eek therwith, [the] sooth to telle,
 This soun was [al] so ful of Iapes, 1805
 As ever mowes were in apes.
 And that wente al the world aboute,
 That every wight gan on hem shoute,
 And for to lauge as they were wode;
 Such game fonde they in hir hode. 1810
 Tho com another companye,
 That had y-doon the traierye,
 The harm, the grettest wikkednesse
 That any herte couthe gesse;
 And preyed hir to han good fame, 1815
 And that she nolde hem doon 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 lustyce, 1820
 Me listeth not to do hit now,
 Ne this nil I not graunte you.'

Tho come ther lepinge in a route,
 And gonne choppen al aboute
 Every man upon the croune, 1825
 That al the halle gan to sounne,
 And seyden: 'Lady, lefe and dere,
 We ben swich folk as ye mowe here.
 To tellen al the tale aight,
 We ben shrewes, every wight, 1830
 And han delyt in wikkednes,
 As gode folk han in goodnes;
 And Ioye to be knowen shrewes,
 And fulle of vyce and wikked thewes;
 Wherfor we preyen yow, a-rowe, 1835
 That our fame swich be knowe
 In alle thing right as hit is.'

'I graunte hit yow,' quod she, 'y-wis.
 But what art thou that seyst this tale,
 That werest on thy hose a pale, 1840
 And on thy tipet swiche a belle!'
 'Madame,' quod he, 'sooth to telle,
 I am that ilke shrewe, y-wis,
 That brende the temple of Isidis
 In Athenes, lo, that citee.' 1845
 'And wherfor didest thou so?' quod she.
 'By my thrift,' quod he, 'madame,
 I wolde fayn han had a fame,
 As other folk hadde in the toun,
 Al-though they were of greet renoun 1850
 For hir vertu and for hir thewes;
 Thoughte I, as greet a fame han shrewes,
 Thogh hit be [but] for shrewednesse,
 As gode folk han for goodnesse;
 And sith I may not have that oon, 1855
 That other nil I noight for-goon.
 And for to gette of Fames hyre,
 The temple sette I al a-fyre.

Now do our loos be blowen swythe,
 As wisly be thou ever blythe.' 1860
 'Gladly,' quod she; 'thou Eolus,
 Herestow not what they preyen us?'
 'Madame, yis, ful wel,' quod he,
 'And I wil trumpen hit, parde!'
 And tok his blakke trumpe faste, 1865
 And gan to puffen and to blaste,
 Til hit was at the worldes ende.

With that I gan aboute wende;
 For oon that stood right at my bak,

Me thoughte, goodly to me spak, 1870
 And seyde: 'Frend, what is thy name?
 Artow come hider to han fame?'
 'Nay, for-sothe, frend!' quod I;
 'I cam noight hider, graunt mercy!
 For no swich cause, by my heed! 1875
 Suffyceth me, as I were deed,
 That no wight have my name in honde.

I woot my-self best how I stonde;
 For what I drye or what I thinke,
 I wol my-selven al hit drinke, 1880
 Certeyn, for the more part,
 As ferforth as I can myn art.'
 'But what dost thou here than?' quod he.
 Quod I, 'that wol I tellen thee,
 The cause why I stondē here: — 1885
 Som newe tydings for to lere: —
 Som newe things, I not what,
 Tydings, other this or that,
 Of love, or swiche things glade.

For certeynly, he that me made 1890
 To comen hider, seyde me,
 I shulde bothe here and see,
 In this place, wonder things;
 But these be no swiche tydings
 As I mene of.' 'No?' quod he. 1895
 And I answerde, 'No, pardee!
 For wel I wiste, ever yit,
 Sith that first I hadde wit,
 That som folk han desyred fame
 Dyversly, and loos, and name; 1900
 But certeynly, I niste how
 Ne wher that Fame dwelte, er now;
 Ne eek of hir descripcioun,
 Ne also hir condicioun,
 Ne the ordre of hir dome, 1905
 Unto the tyme I hider come.'

'[Whiche] be, lo, these tydings,
 That thou now [thus] hider bringes.
 That thou hast herd?' quod he to me;
 'But now, no fors; for wel I see 1910
 What thou desyrest for to here.
 Com forth, and stond no longer here,
 And I wol thee, with-outhe drede,
 In swich another place lede,
Ther thou shalt here many oon.' 1915

Tho gan I forth with him to goon
 Out of the castel, soth to seye.
 Tho saugh I stonde in a valeye,
 Under the castel, faste by,
 An hous, that *domus Dedali*, 1920
 That *Laborintus* cleped is,
 Nas maad so wonderliche, y-wis,

- Ne half so queynteliche y-wrought.
 And evermo, so swift as thought,
 This queynte hous aboute wente, 1925
 That never-mo hit stille stente.
 And ther-out com so greet a noise,
 That, had hit stonden upon Oise,
 Men mighte hit han herd esely
 To Rome, I trove sikerly. 1930
 And the noyse which that I herde,
 For al the world right so hit ferde,
 As doth the routing of the stoon
 That from thengyn is leten goon.
 And al this hous, of whiche I rede, 1935
 Was made of twigges, falwe, rede,
 And grene eek, and som weren whyte,
 Swiche as men to these cages thwyte,
 Or maken of these paniers,
 Or elles hottes or dossers; 1940
 That, for the swough and for the twigges,
 This hous was also ful of giggess,
 And also ful eek of chirkinges,
 And of many other werkinges;
 And eek this hous hath of entrees 1945
 As fele as leves been on trees
 In somer, whan they grene been;
 And on the roof men may yit seen
 A thousand holes, and wel mo,
 To leten wel the soun out go. 1950
 And by day, in every tyde,
 Ben al the dores open wyde,
 And by night, echoon, unshette;
 Ne porter ther is non to lette
 No maner tydings in to pace; 1955
 Ne never reste is in that place,
 That hit nis filld ful of tydinges,
 Other loude, or of whispringes;
 And, over alle the houses angles,
 Is ful of rouninges and of langles 1960
 Of werre, of pees, of mariages,
 Of reste, of labour of viages,
 Of abood, of deeth, of lyfe,
 Of love, of hate, acorde, of stryfe,
 Of loos, of lore, and of winninges, 1965
 Of hele, of sekenesse, of bildinges,
 Of faire windes, of tempestes,
 Of qualme of folk, and eek of bestes;
 Of dyvers transmutaciouns
 Of estats, and eek of regiouns; 1970
 Of trust, of drede, of Ielousye,
 Of wit, of winninge, of folye;
 Of plentee, and of greet famyne,
 Of chepe, of derth, and of ruyne;
 Of good or mis government, 1975
- Of fyr, of dyvers accident.
 And lo, this hous, of whiche I wryte,
 Siker be ye, hit nas not lyte;
 For hit was sixty myle of lengthe;
 Al was the timber of no strengthe, 1980
 Yet hit is founded to endure
 Whyl that hit list to Aventure,
 That is the moder of tydinges,
 As the see of welles and springes, —
 And hit was shapen lyk a cage. 1985
 ‘Certes,’ quod I, ‘in al myn age,
 Ne saugh I swich a hous as this.’
 And as I wondred me, y-wis,
 Upon this hous, tho war was I
 How that myn egle, faste by, 1990
 Was perched hie upon a stoon;
 And I gan streighte to him goon
 And seyde thus: ‘I preye thee
 That thou a whyl abyde me
 For goddes love, and let me seen 1995
 What wondres in this place been;
 For yit, paraventure, I may lere
 Som good ther-on, or sumwhat here
 That leef me were, or that I wente.’
 ‘Peter! that is myn entente,’ 2000
 Quod he to me; ‘therfor I dwelle;
 But certain, oon thing I thee telle,
 That, but I bringe thee ther-inne,
 Ne shalt thou never cunne ginne
 To come in-to hit, out of doute, 2005
 So faste hit whirleth, lo, aboute.
 But sith that Ioves, of his grace,
 As I have seyde, wol thee solace
 Fynally with [swiche] thinges,
 Uncouthe sightes and tydinges, 2010
 To passe with thyn hevynesse;
 Suche routhle hath he of thy distresse,
 That thou suffrest debonairly —
 And wost thy-selven utterly
 Disesperat of alle blis, 2015
 Sith that Fortune hath maad a-mis
 The [fruit] of al thyn hertes reste
 Languishe and eek in point to breste —
 That he, through his mighty meryte,
 Wol do thee ese, al be hit lyte, 2020
 And yaf expres commaundement,
 To whiche I am obedient,
 To furthre thee with^{al} my might,
 And wisse and teche thee aright 2024
 Wher thou maist most tydinges here;
 Shaltow anon heer many oon lere.’
 With this worde he, right anon,
 Hente me up bitwene his toon,

And at a windowe in me broghte, 2029
 That in this hous was, as me thoghte —
 And ther-withal, me thoghte hit stente,
 And no-thing hit aboute wente —
 And me sette in the flore adoun.
 But which a congregacioun
 Of folk, as I saugh rome aboute 2035
 Some within and some withoute,
 Nas never seen, ne shal ben eft;
 That, certes, in the world nis left
 So many formed by Nature,
 Ne deed so many a creature; 2040
 That wel unethe, in that place,
 Hadde I oon foot-brede of space;
 And every wight that I saugh there
 Rouned ech in others ere
 A newe tyding prevely, 2045
 Or elles tolde al openly
 Right thus, and seyde: 'Nost not thou
 That is betid, lo, late or now?'
 'No,' quod [the other], 'tel me
 what;' — 2049
 And than he tolde him this and that,
 And swoor ther-to that hit was sooth —
 'Thus hath he seyde' — and 'Thus he
 dooth' —
 'Thus shal hit be' — 'Thus herde I
 seye' —
 'That shal be found' — 'That dar I
 leye:' —
 That all the folk that is a-lyve 2055
 Ne han the cunning to discryve
 The things that I herde there,
 What aloude, and what in ere.
 But al the wonder-most was this: —
 Whan oon had herd a thing, y-wis, 2060
 He com forth to another wight,
 And gan him tellen, anoon-right,
 The same that to him was told,
 Or hit a furlong-way was old,
 But gan somewhat for to eche 2065
 To this tyding in this speche
 More than hit ever was.
 And nat so some departed nas
 That he fro him, that he ne mette
 With the thriddle; and, or he lette 2070
 Any stounde, he tolde him als;
 Were the tyding sooth or fals,
 Yit wolde he telle hit natheles,
 And evermo with more encrees
 Than hit was erst. Thus north and
 southe 2075
 Went every [word] fro mouth to mouth,

And that encreasing ever-mo,
 As fyr is wont to quikke and go
 From a sparke spronge amis,
 Til al a citee brent up is. 2080
 And, whan that was ful y-spronge,
 And woxen more on every tonge
 Than ever hit was, [hit] wente anoon
 Up to a windowe, out to goon;
 Or, but hit mighte out ther pace, 2085
 Hit gan out crepe at som crevace,
 And fleigh forth faste for the nones.
 And sometyme saugh I tho, at ones,
 A lesing and a sad soth-sawe, *for the first time*
 That gonne of aventure drawe 2090
 Out at a windowe for to pace;
 And, when they metten in that place,
 They were a-checked bothe two;
 And neither of hem moste out go;
 For other so they gonne croude, 2095
 Til eche of hem gan cryen loude,
 'Lat me go first!' 'Nay, but lat me!
 And here I wol ensuren thee,
 With the nones that thou wolt do so,
 That I shal never fro thee go, 2100
 But be thyn owne sworn brother!
 We wil medle us ech with other,
 That no man, be he never so wrothe,
 Shal han that oon [of] two, but bothe
 At ones, al beside his leve, 2105
 Come we a-morwe or on eve,
 Be we cryed or stille y-rouned.'
 Thus saugh I fals and sooth compouned
 Togerder flec for oo tydinge.
 Thus out at holes gonne wringe 2110
 Every tyding streight to Fame;
 And she gan yeven eche his name,
 After hir disposicioun,
 And yaf hem eek duracioun,
 Some to wexe and wane sone, 2115
 As dooth the faire whyte mone,
 And leet hem gon. Ther mighte I seen
 Wenged wondres faste fleen,
 Twenty thousand in a route,
 As Eolus hem blew aboute. 2120
 And, lord! this hous, in alle tymes,
 Was ful of shipmen and pilgrymes,
 With scrippes bret-ful of lesinges,
 Entremedded with tydinges,
 And eek alone by hem-selve. 2125
 O, many a thousand tymes twelve
 Saugh I eek of these pardoneres,
 Curroures, and eek messangeres,
 With boistes crammed ful of lyes

<p>As ever vessel was with lyes. 2130 And as I alther-fastest wente Aboute, and dide al myn entente Me for to pleye and for to lere, And eek a tyding for to here, That I had herd of som contree 2135 That shal not now be told for me;— For hit no nede is, redely; Folk can singe hit bet than I; For al mot out, other late or rathe, Alle the sheves in the lathe; — 2140 I herde a gret noise withalle In a corner of the halle, Ther men of love tydings tolde, And I gan thiderward beholde;</p>	<p>For I saugh renninge every wight, 2145 As faste as that they hadden might; And everich cryed, 'What thing is that?' And som seyde, 'I not never what.' And whan they were alle on an hepe, Tho behinde gonne up lepe, 2150 And clamben up on othere faste, And up the nose on hye caste, And troden faste on othere heles And stampe, as men don after eles. Atte laste I saugh a man, 2155 Which that I [nevne] naught ne can; But he semed for to be A man of greet auctoritee 2158 —</p>
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(Unfinished.)

*Met. in
2116*

THE LEGEND OF GOOD WOMEN.



THE Prologue to this Poem exists in two different versions, which differ widely from each other in many passages. The arrangement of the material is also different.

For the sake of clearness, the earlier version is here called 'Text A,' and the later version 'Text B.'

'Text A' exists in one MS. only, but this MS. is of early date and much importance. It is the MS. marked Gg. 4. 27 in the Cambridge University Library. This text is printed on the left-hand side of the following pages.

'Text B' occupies the right-hand side of the following pages. It follows the Fairfax MS. mainly.

THE PROLOGE OF .IX. GOODE WIMMEN.

A THOUSAND sythes have I herd men
telle,

That ther is Ioye in heven, and peyne
in helle;

And I acorde wel that hit be so;
But natheles, this wot I wel also,

That ther nis noon that dwelleth in this
contree, 5

That either hath in helle or heven y-be,
Ne may of hit non other weyes witen,
But as he hath herd seyde, or founde hit
writen;

For by assay ther may no man hit preve.
But goddes forbode, but men shulde leve
Wel more thing then men han seen with
yë! II

Men shal nat wenen every-thing a lyë
For that he seigh it nat of yore ago.
God wot, a thing is never the lesse so

Thogh every wight ne may hit nat
y-see. 15

Bernard the monk ne saugh nat al,
parde!

Than mote we to bokes that we finde,
Through which that olde thinges been
in minde,

And to the doctrine of these olde wyse,
Yeve credence, in every skilful wyse, 20
And trowen on these olde approved stories
Of holinesse, of regnes, of victories,

THE PROLOGE OF .IX. GOODE WIMMEN.

A THOUSAND tymes have I herd men
telle,

That ther is Ioye in heven, and peyne
in helle;

And I acorde wel that hit is so;
But natheles, yit wot I wel also,

That ther nis noon dwelling in this
contree, 5

That either hath in heven or helle y-be,
Ne may of hit non other weyes witen,
But as he hath herd seyde, or founde hit
writen;

For by assay ther may no man hit preve.
But god forbode but men shulde leve
Wel more thing then men hau seen with
yë! II

Men shal nat wenen every-thing a lyë
But-if him-self hit seeth, or elles dooth;
For, god wot, thing is never the lasse
sooth,

Thogh every wight ne may hit nat
y-see. 15

Bernard the monk ne saugh nat al,
parde!

Than mote we to bokes that we finde,
Through which that olde thinges been in
minde,

And to the doctrine of these olde wyse,
Yeve credence, in every skilful wyse, 20
That tellen of these olde approved stories,
Of holinesse, of regnes, of victories,

Of love, of hate, of other sundry thinges,
Of which I may not maken rehersinges.
And if that olde bokes were a-weye, 25
Y-loren were of remembraunce the keye.
Wel oghte us than on olde bokes leve,
Ther-as ther is non other assay by preve.

And, as for me, though that my wit be
lyte,
On bokes 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 there is wel unethe game noon
That from my bokes make me to goon,
But hit be other up-on the haly-day, 35
Or elles in the Ioly tyme of May;

Whan that I here the smale foules singe,
And that the floures ginne for to springe,
Farwel my studie, as lasting that sesoun!

Now have I therto this condicioun 40
That, of alle the floures in the mede,
Than love I most these floures whyte and
rede,
Swiche as men callen daysies in our
toun.

To hem have I so greet affecciou, 44
As I seyde erst, whan comen is the May,
That in my bed ther daweth me no day
That I nam up, and walking in the mede
To seen these floures agein the sonne
sprede,

Whan hit up-riseth by the morwe shene,
The longe day, thus walking in the
grene. 50

And whan the sonne ginneth for to weste,
Than closeth hit, and draweth hit to reste.
So sore hit is afered of the night,
Til on the morwe, that hit is dayes light.
This dayesye, of alle floures flour, 55
Fulild of vertu and of alle honour,
And ever y-lyke fair and fresh of hewe,
As wel in winter as in somer newe,

Of love, of hate, of other sundry thinges,
Of whiche I may not maken rehersinges.
And if that olde bokes were a-weye, 25
Y-loren were of remembraunce the keye.
Wel oghte us than honouren and beleve
These bokes, ther we han non other
preve.

And as for me, though that I can but
lyte,
On bokes for to rede I me delyte, 30
And to hem yeve I feyth and ful credence,
And in myn herte have hem in rever-
ence

So hertely, that ther is game noon
That fro my bokes maketh me to goon,
But hit be seldom, on the holyday; 35
Save, certeynly, whan that the month of
May .

Is comen, and that I here the foules singe,
And that the floures ginnen for to springe,
Farwel my book and my devocioun!

Now have I than swich a condicioun,
That, of alle the floures in the mede, 41
Than love I most these floures whyte and
rede,
Swiche as men callen daysies in our
toun.

To hem have I so greet affecciou, 44
As I seyde erst, whan comen is the May,
That in my bed ther daweth me no day
That I nam up, and walking in the mede
To seen this flour agein the sonne sprede,

Whan hit upryseth erly by the morwe;
That blisful sighte softneth al my sorwe,
So glad am I whan that I have presence
Of hit, to doon al maner reverence, 52

As she, that is of alle floures flour,
Fulfilled of al vertu and honour,
And ever y-lyke fair, and fresh of hewe;
And I love hit, and ever y-lyke newe, 56
And ever shal, til that myn herte dye;
Al swere I nat, of this I wol nat lye,
Ther loved no wight hotter in his lyve. 59

And whan that hit is eve, I renne blyve,
As sone as ever the sonne ginneth weste,
To seen this flour, how it wol go to reste,
For fere of night, so hateth she derknesse!
Hir chere is pleynly sprad in the bright-
nesse

Fain wolde I preisen, if I coude aright;
But wo is me, hit lyth nat in my might! 60

For wel I wot, that folk han her-beforn
Of making ropen, and lad a-wey the
corn;

And I come after, glening here and
there,

And am ful glad if I may finde an ere
Of any goodly word that they han left. 65

And, if hit happe me rehercen eft
That they han in her fresshe songes sayd,
I hope that they wil nat ben evel apayd,
Sith hit is seid in forthering and honour
Of hem that either serven leef or flour. 70

For trusteth wel, I ne have nat under-
take

As of the leef, ageyn the flour, to make;
Ne of the flour to make, ageyn the leef,
No more than of the corn ageyn the
sheef. 74

For, as to me, is leefer noon ne lother;
I am with-holde yit with never nother.

I not who serveth leef, ne who the flour;
That nis nothing the entent of my labour.

For this werk is al of another tunne, 79
Of olde story, er swich stryf was begunne.
But wherfor that I spak, to yeve credence

To bokes olde and doon hem reverence,

Is for men shulde autoritees beleve,
Ther as ther lyth non other assay by
preve.

For myn entent is, or I fro yow fare, 85
The naked text in English to declare

Of the sonne, for ther hit wol unclose. 65
Allas! that I ne had English, ryme or
prose,

Suffisant this flour to preyse aright!
But helpeth, ye that han conning and
might,

Ye lovers, that can make of sentement;
In this cas oghte ye be diligent 70
To forthren me somewhat in my labour,
Whether ye ben with the leef or with the
flour.

For wel I wot, that ye han her-biforn
Of making ropen, and lad away the
corn;

And I come after, glening here and
there, 75

And am ful glad if I may finde an ere
Of any goodly word than ye han left.

And though it happen me rehercen eft
That ye han in your fresshe songes sayd,
For-bereth me, and beth nat evel apayd,
Sin that ye see I do hit in the honour 81
Of love, and eek in service of the flour,
Whom that I serve as I have wit or
might.

She is the clernesse and the verray light,
That in this derke worlde me wynt and
ledeth, 85

The herte in-with my sorowful brest yow
dredeth,

And loveth so sore, that ye ben verrayly
The maistrisse of my wit, and nothing I.
My word, my werk, is knit so in your
bonde,

That, as an harpe obeyeth to the honde
And maketh hit soune after his finger-
inge, 91

Right so mowe ye out of myn herte
bringe

Swich vois, right as yow list, to laughe or
pleyne.

Be ye my gyde and lady sovereyne;
As to myn erthly god, to yow I calle, 95

Bothe in this werke and in my sorwes alle.
But wherfor that I spak, to give cred-
ence

To olde stories, and doon hem rever-
ence,

And that men mosten more thing beleve
Then men may seen at eye or elles preve?

That shal I seyn, whan that I see my
tyme; 101

I may not al at ones speke in ryme.

Of many a story, or elles of many a geste,
As autours seyn; leveth hem if yow leste!

Whan passed was almost the month of
May,

And I had romed, al the someres day, 90
The grene medew, of which that I yow
tolde,

Upon the fresshe daysy to beholde,
And that the sonne out of the south gan
weste,

And closed was the flour and goon to
reste

For derknesse of the night, of which she
dredde, 95

Hoom to myn hous ful swiftly I me
spedde;

And, in a litel erber that I have,
Y-benched newe with turves fresshe
y-grave,

I bad men shulde me my couche make;
For deyntee of the newe someres sake
I bad hem strowe floures on my bed. 101

Whan I was layd, and had myn eyen
hed,

I fel a-slepe with-in an houre or two.
Me mette how I was in the medew tho,
And that I romed in that same gyse, 105
To seen that flour, as ye han herd devyse.

Fair was this medew, as thoughte me
overal;

With floures swote embrowded was it al;

As for to speke of gomme, or erbe, or
tree,

Comparisoun may noon y-maked be. 110
For hit surmounted pleynly alle odoures,
And eek of riche beaute alle floures.
Forgeten had the erthe his pore estat

Of winter, that him naked made and
mat,

And with his swerd of cold so sore had
greved. 115

Now had the atempre sonne al that
releved,

And clothed him in grene al newe agayn.
The smale foules, of the seson fayn,

My besy gost, that thrusteth alwey newe
To seen this flour so yong, so fresh of
hewe,

Constreyned me with so gledy desyr, 105
That in my herte I fele yit the fyr,
That made me to ryse er hit wer day —

And this was now the firste morwe of
May —

With dredful herte and glad devocioun,
For to ben at the resureccioun 110

Of this flour, whan that it shuld unclose
Agayn the sonne, that roos as rede as
rose,

That in the brest was of the beste that
day,

That Agenores doghter ladde away.

And down on knees anon-right I me
sette, 115

And, as I coude, this fresshe flour I grette;
Kneling alwey, til hit unclosed was,
Upon the smale softe swote gras,

That was with floures swote embrowded
al,

Of swich swetnesse and swich odour
over-al, 120

That, for to speke of gomme, or herbe,
or tree,

Comparisoun may noon y-maked be;
For hit surmounteth pleynly alle odoures,
And eek of riche beaute alle floures.

Forgeten had the erthe his pore estat 125
Of winter, that him naked made and
mat,

And with his swerd of cold so sore
greved;

Now hath the atempre sonne al that
releved

That naked was, and clad hit new agayn.
The smale foules, of the seson fayn, 130

That from the panter and the net ben
scaped,

Upon the fouler, that hem made
a-whaped 120

In winter, and distroyed had hir brood,
In his despyt, hem thoughte hit did hem
good

To singe of him, and in hir song despyse
The foule cherl that, for his covetyse,
Had hem betrayed with his sophistrye.

This was hir song—'the fouler we
defye!' 126

Somme songen [layes] on the braunches
clere

Of love and [May], that Ioye hit was to
here,

In worship and in preysing of hir make,

And of the newe blisful someres sake, 130

That songen, 'blissed be seynt Valentyn!

[For] at his day I chees yow to be myn,
With-oute repenting, myn herte swete!
And therwith-al hir bekes gonne mete.
[They dide honour and] humble obeis-
saunces, 135

And after diden other observaunces
Right [plesing] un-to love and to nature;
So ech of hem [doth wel] to creature.
This song to herkne I dide al myn entente,
For-why I mette I wiste what they
mente. 140

That from the panter and the net ben
scaped,

Upon the fouler, that hem made
a-whaped

In winter, and distroyed had hir brood,
In his despyt, hem thoughte hit did hem
good 134

To singe of him, and in hir song despyse
The foule cherl, that, for his covetyse,
Had hem betrayed with his sophistrye.

This was hir song—'the fouler we
defye,

And al his craft!' And somme songen
clere 139

Layes of love, that Ioye hit was to here,

In worshipinge and preysinge of hir
make.

And, for the newe blisful somers sake,
Upon the braunches ful of blosmes softe,

In hir delyt, they turned hem ful ofte,
And songen, 'blessed be seynt Val-
entyn! 145

For on his day I chees yow to be myn,
Withouten repenting, myn herte swete!
And therwith-al hir bekes gonne mete,
Yelding honour and humble obeisaunces
To love, and diden hir other observ-
aunces 150

That longeth unto love and to nature;
Construeth that as yow list, I do no cure.

And tho that hadde doon unkinde-
nesse —

As dooth the tydif, for new-fangelnesse —
Besoghte mercy of hir trespassinge, 155
And humbly songen hir repentyng,
And sworn on the blosmes to be trewe,
So that hir makes wolde upon hem rewte,
And at the laste maden hir acord.

Al founde they Daunger for a tyme
a lord, 160

Yet Pitee, through his stronge gentil
might,

Forgaf, and made Mercy passen Right,
Through innocence and ruled curtesye.
But I ne clepe nat innocence folye,
Ne fals pitee, for 'vertu is the mene,' 165
As Etik saith, in swich maner I mene.

And thus thise foules, voide of al malyce,
Acordeden to love, and laften vyce
Of hate, and songen alle of oon acord.
'Welcome, somer, our governour and
lord!' 170

And Zephirus and Flora gentilly
 Yaf to the floures, softe and tenderly,
 Hir swote breth, and made hem for to
 sprede,
 As god and goddesse of the floury
 mede;
 In which me thoghte I mighte, day by
 day, 175
 Dwellen alwey, the Ioly month of May,
 Withouten sleep, withouten mete or
 drinke.
 A-doun ful softly I gan to sinke;
 And, leninge on myn elbowe and my
 syde, 179
 The longe day I shoop me for to abyde
 For nothing elles, and I shal nat lye,
 But for to loke upon the dayesye,
 That wel by reson men hit calle may
 The 'dayesye' or elles the 'ye of day,'
 The emperice and flour of floures alle.
 I pray to god that faire mot she falle, 186
 And alle that loven floures, for hir sake !
 But natheles, ne wene nat that I make
 In preysing of the flour agayn the leef,
 No more than of the corn agayn the
 sheef: 190
 For, as to me, nis lever noon ne lother;
 I nam with-holden yit with never
 nother
 Ne I not who serveth leef, ne who the
 flour;
 Wel brouken they hir service or labour;
 For this thing is al of another tonne, 195
 Of olde story, er swich thing was be-
 gonne.
 Whan that the sonne out of the south
 gan weste,
 And that this flour gan close and goon to
 reste
 For derknesse of the night, the which
 she dredde,
 Hoom to myn hous ful swiftly I me
 spedde 200
 To goon to reste, and erly for to ryse,
 To seen this flour to sprede, as I devyse.
 And, in a litel herber that I have,
 That benched was on turves fresshe
 y-grave, 204
 I bad men sholde me my couche make;
 For deyntee of the newe someres sake,
 I bad hem strawen floures on my bed.
 When I was leyd, and had myn eyen
 hed,

Til at the laste a lark song above:
'I see,' quod she, 'the mighty god of
love!

Lo! yond he cometh, I see his winges
sprede!'

Tho gan I loken endelong the mede,
And saw him come, and in his hond a
quene, 145

Clothed in ryal abite al of grene.
A fret of gold she hadde next hir heer,

And up-on that a whyt coron she beer
With many floures, and I shal nat lye;
For al the world, right as the dayesye 150
I-coroned is with whyte leves lyte,
Swich were the floures of hir coron
whyte.

For of o perle fyn and oriental
Hir whyte coron was y-maked al;
For which the whyte coron, above the
grene, 155

Made hir lyk a daysie for to sene,
Considered eek the fret of gold above.

Y-clothed was this mighty god of love
Of silke, y-brouded ful of grene greves;
A garlond on his heed of rose-leves 160
Steked al with lilie floures newe;
But of his face I can nat seyn the hewe.

For sekirly his face shoon so brighte,
That with the gleem a-stoned was the
sighte; 164

A furlong-wey I mighte him nat beholde.
But at the laste in hande I saw him holde

Two fyry dartes, as the gledes rede;
And aungellich his wenges gan he sprede.
And al be that men seyn that blind is he,
Al-gate me thoughte he mighte wel
y-see; 170

For sternely on me he gan biholde,
So that his loking doth myn herte colde.

And by the hande he held the noble
quene,
Coroned with whyte, and clothed al in
grene, 174

So womanly, so benigne, and so meke,
That in this world, thogh that men wolde
seke,

Half hir beautee shulde men nat finde

I fel on slepe in-with an houre or two;
Me mette how I lay in the medew thu, 210

To seen this flour that I so love and
drede.

And from a-fer com walking in the mede
The god of love, and in his hande a
quene;

And she was clad in real habit grene.
A fret of gold she hadde next hir
heer, 215

And upon that a whyt coron she beer
With flourens smale, and I shal nat lye;
For al the world, ryght as a dayesye
Y-coroned is with whyte leves lyte,
So were the flourens of hir coron
whyte; 220

For of o perle fyne, oriental,
Hir whyte coron was y-maked al;
For which the whyte coron, above the
grene,

Made hir lyk a daysie for to sene,
Considered eek hir fret of gold above. 225

Y-clothed was this mighty god of love
In silke, enbrouded ful of grene greves,
In-with a fret of rede rose-leves,
The freshest sin the world was first
bigonne.

His gilte heer was coroned with a
sonne, 230

In-stede of gold, for hevynesse and wighte;
Therwith me thoughte his face shoon so
brighte

That wel unnethes mighte I him beholde;
And in his hande me thoughte I saugh
him holde

Two fyry dartes, as the gledes rede; 235
And aungellyke his winges saugh I sprede.
And al be that men seyn that blind is he,
Al-gate me thoughte that he mighte see;

For sternely on me he gan biholde,
So that his loking doth myn herte
colde. 240

And by the hande he held this noble
quene,
Coroned with whyte, and clothed al in
grene,

So womanly, so benigne, and so meke,
That in this world, thogh that men wolde
seke,

Half hir beautee shulde men nat finde 245

In creature that formed is by kinde,
 Hir name was Alceste the debonayre;
 I prey to god that ever falle she fayre! 180
 For ne hadde confort been of hir presence,
 I had be deed, withouten any defence,
 For drede of Loves wordes and his chere,
 As, whan tyme is, her-after ye shal here.
 Byhind this god of love, up-on this grene,
 I saw cominge of ladyës nyntene 186
 In ryal abite, a ful esy pas,
 And after hem com of wemen swich a
 tras
 That, sin that god Adam made of erthe,
 The thiredde part of wemen, ne the
 ferthe, 190
 Ne wende I nat by possibilittee
 Hadden ever in this world y-be;
 And trewe of love these wemen were
 echoon.

Now whether was that a wonder thing
 or noon,
 That, right anoon as that they gonne
 espye 195
 This flour, which that I clepe the dayesye,
 Ful sodeinly they stinten alle at-ones,
 And kneled adoun, as it were for the
 nones.
 And after that they wenten in compas,
 Daunsinge aboute this flour an esy
 pas, 200
 And songen, as it were in carole-wyse,
 This balade, which that I shal yow
 devyse.

BALADE.

Hyd, Absolon, thy gilte tresses clere;
 Ester, ley thou thy meknesse al a-doun;
 Hyd, Ionathas, al thy frendly man-
 ere; 205
 Penelopee, and Marcia Catoun,
 Mak of your wyfhod no comparisoun;
 Hyde ye your beautes, Isoude and
 Eleyne,
 Alceste is here, that al that may des-
 teyne.

Thy faire body, lat hit nat appere, 210
 Lavyne; and thou, Lucesse of Rome
 toun,
 And Polixene, that boghte love so
 dere,
 Eek Cleopatre, with al thy passiou,

In creature that formed is by kinde.

And therfor may I seyn, as thinketh
 me, 247
 This song, in preysing of this lady fre.

BALADE.

Hyd, Absolon, thy gilte tresses clere;
 Ester, ley thou thy meknesse al a-doun;
 Hyd, Ionathas, al thy frendly manere;
 Penelopee, and Marcia Catoun, 252
 Mak of your wyfhod no comparisoun;
 Hyde ye your beautes, Isoude and Eleyne,
 My lady cometh, that al this may dis-
 teyne. 255

Thy faire body, lat hit nat appere,
 Lavyne; and thou, Lucesse of Rome
 toun,
 And Polixene, that boghten love so
 dere,
 And Cleopatre, with al thy passiou,

Hyde ye your trouthe in love and your
renoun;
And thou, 'Tisbe, that hast for love swich
peyne: 215
Alceste is here, that al that may des-
teyne.

Herro, Dido, Laudomia, alle in-fere,
Eek Phyllis, hanging for thy Demophoun,
And Canace, espyed by thy chere,
Ysiphile, betrayed with Jasoun, 220
Mak of your trouthe in love no bost ne
soun;
Nor Ypermistre or Adriane, ne pleyne;
Alceste is here, that al that may des-
teyne.

Whan that this balade al y-songen was,

Hyde ye your trouthe of love and your
renoun; 260
And thou, 'Tisbe, that hast of love swich
peyne;
My lady cometh, that al this may dis-
teyne.

Herro, Dido, Laudomia, alle y-fere,
And Phyllis, hanging for thy Demophoun,
And Canace, espyed by thy chere, 265
Ysiphile, betrayed with Jasoun,
Maketh of your trouthe neyther boost ne
soun;
Nor Ypermistre or Adriane, ye tweyne;
My lady cometh, that al this may dis-
teyne.

This balade may ful wel y-songen
be, 270
As I have seyde erst, by my lady free;
For certeynly, alle these mow nat suffyse
To apperen with my lady in no wyse.
For as the sonne wol the fyr disteyne,
So passeth al my lady sovereyne, 275
That is so good, so fair, so debonaire;
I prey to god that ever falle hir faire!
For, nadde comfort been of hir presence,
I had ben deed, withouten any defence,
For drede of Loves wordes and his
chere; 280
As, when tyme is, her-after ye shal here.
Behind this god of love, upon the
grene,
I saugh cominge of ladyës nyntene
In real habit, a ful esy paas;
And after hem com of women swich a
traas, 285
That, sin that god Adam had mad of
erthe,
The thridde part of mankynd, or the
ferthe,
Ne wende I nat by possibilitee,
Had ever in this wyde worlde y-be;
And trewe of love these women were
echoon. 290
Now whether was that a wonder thing
or noon,
That, right anon as that they gonne
espye
This flour, which that I clepe the dayesye,
Ful sodeinly they stinten alle at ones,
And kneledoun, as it were for the
nones, 295

Upon the softe and swote grene gras 225

They setten hem ful softely adoun,
By ordre alle in compas, alle enverroun.
First sat the god of love, and than this
queene

With the whyte coroun, clad in grene;
And sithen al the remenant by and
by, 230

As they were of degree, ful curteisly;
Ne nat a word was spoken in the
place

The mountance of a furlong-wey of
space.

I, lening faste by under a bente,
Abood, to knowen what this peple
mente, 235
As stille as any stoon; til at the laste,

The god of love on me his eye caste,
And seyde, 'who resteth ther?' and I
answerde

Un-to his axing, whan that I him herde,
And seyde, 'sir, hit am I'; and cam him
neer, 240

And salued him. Quod he, 'what dostow
heer

In my presence, and that so boldely?
For it were better worthy, trewely,
A worm to comen in my sight than thou.'

'And why, sir,' quod I, 'and hit lyke
yow?' 245

'For thou,' quod he, 'art ther-to nothing
able.

My servaunts been alle wyse and honour-
able.

Thou art my mortal fo, and me warreyest,

And of myne olde servaunts thou mis-
seyest,

And hinderest hem with thy transla-
cioun, 250

And lettest folk to han devocioun
To serven me, and haldest hit folye
To troste on me. Thou mayst hit nat
denye;

And songen with o vois, 'Hele and
honour

To trouthe of womanhede, and to this
flour

That berth our alder prys in figuringe!
Hir whyte coroun berth the witnessinge!'

And with that word, a-compas en-
viroun, 300

They setten hem ful softely adoun.

First sat the god of love, and sith his
queene

With the whyte coroun, clad in grene;
And sithen al the remenant by and by,

As they were of estaat, ful curteisly; 305
Ne nat a word was spoken in the
place

The mountance of a furlong-wey of
space.

I kneling by this flour, in good entente
Abood, to knowen what this peple
mente,

As stille as any stoon; til at the
laste, 310

This god of love on me his eyen caste,
And seyde, 'who kneleth ther?' and I
answerde

Unto his asking, whan that I hit herde,
And seyde, 'sir, hit am I'; and com him
neer,

And salued him. Quod he, 'what dostow
heer 315

So nigh myn owne flour, so boldely?
For it were better worthy, trewely,
A worm to neghen near my flour than
thou.'

'And why, sir,' quod I, 'and hit lyke
yow?' 320

'For thou,' quod he, 'art ther-to nothing
able. 320

Hit is my relik, digne and delytable,

And thou my fo, and al my folk werrey-
est,

And of myn olde servaunts thou mis-
seyest,

And hindrest hem, with thy translacioun,

And lettest folk from hir devocioun 325
To serve me, and holdest hit folye

To serve Love. Thou mayst hit nat
denye;

For in pleyn text, hit nedeth nat to
glose,
Thou hast translated the Romauns of the
Rose, 255
That is an heresyce ageyns my lawe,
And makest wyse folk fro me withdrawe.
And thinkest in thy wit, that is ful cool,
That he nis but a verray propre fool
That loveth paramours, to harde and
hote. 260
Wel wot I ther-by thou beginnest dote
As olde foles, whan hir spirit fayleth;
Than blame they folk, and wite nat what
hem ayleth.
Hast thou nat mad in English eek the
book
How that Crisseyde Troilus forsook, 265
In shewing how that wemen han don
mis?
But natheles, answeere me now to this,
Why noldest thou as wel han seyde good-
nesse
Of wemen, as thou hast seyde wikked-
nesse?
Was ther no good matere in thy minde,
Ne in alle thy bokes coudest thou nat
finde 271
Sum story of wemen that were goode and
trewe?
Yis! god wot, sixty bokes olde and newe
Hast thou thy-self, alle fulle of stories
grete,
That bothe Romains and eek Grekes
trete 275
Of sundry wemen, which lyf that they
ladde,
And ever an hundred gode ageyn oon
badde.
This knoweth god, and alle clerkes eke,
That usen swiche materes for to seke.
What seith Valerie, Titus, or Claudian?
What seith Ierome ageyns Iovinian? 281
How clene maydens, and how trewe
wyves,
How stedfast widwes during al hir lyves,
Tellethe Ierome; and that nat of a fewe,
But, I dar seyn, an hundred on a rewe;
That hit is pitee for to rede, and routhe,
The wo that they enduren for hir trouthe.
For to hir love were they so trewe,
That, rather than they wolde take a
newe, 289

For in pleyn text, with-outhe nede of
glose,
Thou hast translated the Romaunce of
the Rose,
That is an heresyce ageyns my lawe, 330
And makest wyse folk fro me withdrawe.

And of Crisseyde thou hast seyde as thee
liste,
That maketh men to wommen lasse triste,
That ben as trewe as ever was any steel.
Of thyn answeere avyse thee right weel;
335

They chosen to be dede in sundry wyse,
 And deyden, as the story wol devyse;
 And some were brend, and some were
 cut the hals,
 And some dreynt, for they wolden nat be
 fals.

For alle keped they hir maydenhed,
 Or elles wedlok, or hir widwehed. 295
 And this thing was nat kept for holinesse,
 But al for verray vertu and clennesse,
 And for men shulde sette on hem no lak;
 And yit they weren hethen, al the pak,
 That were so sore adrad of alle shame. 300
 These olde wemen kepte so hir name,
 That in this world I trow men shal nat
 finde

A man that coude be so trewe and kinde,
 As was the leste woman in that tyde.
 What seith also the epistels of Ovyde 305
 Of trewe wyves, and of hir labour?
 What Vincent, in his Storial Mirour?
 Eek al the world of autours maystow
 here,

Cristen and hethen, trete of swich
 matere;

It nedeth nat alday thus for tendyte. 310
 But yit I sey, what eyleth thee to wryte
 The draf of stories, and forgo the corn?
 By seint Venus, of whom that I was
 born,

Although [that] thou reneyed hast my lay,

As othere olde foles many a day, 315

Thou shalt repente hit, that hit shal be
 sene!'

Than spak Alceste, the worthieste
 quene,

And seyde, 'god, right of your curtesye,
 Ye moten herkennen if he can replye
 Ageyns these points that ye han to him
 meved; 320

A god ne sholde nat be thus agreved,
 But of his deitee he shal be stable,
 And therto rightful and eek merciabe.
 He shal nat rightfully his yre wreke 324
 Or he have herd the tother party speke.
 Al ne is nat gospel that is to yow pleynd;
 The god of love berth many a tale y-feynd.

For in your court is many a losengeour,
 And many a queynte totelere accusour,

For, thogh that thou reneyed hast my
 lay, 336

As othere wrecches han doon many a day,
 By seynt Venus, that my moder is,
 If that thou live, thou shalt repenten this
 So cruelly, that hit shal wel be sene!' 340

Tho spak this lady, clothed al in grene,

And seyde, 'god, right of your curtesye,
 Ye moten herkennen if he can replye
 Agayns al this that ye han to him meved;

A god ne sholde nat be thus agreved, 345
 But of his deitee he shall be stable,
 And therto gracious and merciabe.

And if ye nere a god, that knowen al,
 Than mighte hit be, as I yow tellen shal;
 This man to you may falsly been ac-
 cused, 350

Ther as by right him oghte been excused.
 For in your court is many a losengeour,
 And many a queynte totelere accusour,

That tabouren in your eres many a thing
For hate, or for Ielous imagining, 331
And for to han with yow som daliaunce.
Envye (I prey to god yeve hir mis-
chaunce!)

Is lavender in the grete court alway.
For she ne parteth, neither night ne day,
Out of the hous of Cesar; thus seith
Dante; 336
Who-so that goth, alwey she moot [nat]
wante.

This man to yow may wrongly been
accused,

Ther as by right him oghte been excused.
Or elles, sir, for that this man is nyce, 340
He may translate a thing in no malyce,
But for he useth bokes for to make,
And takth non heed of what matere he
take;

Therfor he wroot the Rose and eek Cris-
seyde

Of innocence, and niste what he seyde;
Or him was boden make thilke tweye 346
Of som persone, and durste hit nat with-
seye;

For he bath writen many a book er this.
He ne hath nat doon so grevously amis
To translaten that olde clerkes wryten,
As thogh that he of malice wolde en-
dyten 351

Despyt of love, and hadde him-self
y-wroght.

This shulde a rightwys lord han in his
thoght,

And nat be lyk tiraunts of Lumbardye,
That usen wilfulhed and tirannye, 355
For he that king or lord is naturel,
Him oghte nat be tiraunt ne cruel,
As is a fermour, to doon the harm he
can.

He moste thinke hit is his lige man,
And that him oweth, of verray duectee,
Shewen his peple pleyn benignitee, 361
And wel to here hir excusaciouns,
And hir compleyntes and peticiouns,
In duewe tyme, when they shal hit profre.
This is the sentence of the philosopre:
A king to kepe his liges in Iustyce; 366
With-ouen doute, that is his offyce.

And therto is a king ful depe y-sworn,
Ful many an hundred winter heer-biforn;
And for to kepe his lordes hir degree, 370
As hit is right and skilful that they be

That tabouren in your eres many a soun,
Right after hir imaginacioun, 355
To have your daliance, and for envye;
These been the causes, and I shall nat
lye.

Envye is lavender of the court alway;
For she ne parteth, neither night ne day,
Out of the hous of Cesar; thus seith
Dante; 360
Who-so that goth, algate she wol nat
wante.

And eek, paraunter, for this man is nyce,
He mighte doon hit, gessing no malyce,
But for he useth thinges for to make;
Him rekketh noght of what matere he
take; 365

Or him was boden maken thilke tweye
Of som persone, and durste hit nat with-
seye;

Or him repenteth utterly of this.
He ne hath nat doon so grevously amis
To translaten that olde clerkes wryten,
As thogh that he of malice wolde en-
dyten 371

Despyt of love, and had him-self hit
wroght.

This shulde a rightwys lord have in his
thoght,

And nat be lyk tiraunts of Lumbardye,
Than han no reward but at tirannye. 375
For he that king or lord is naturel,
Him oghte nat be tiraunt ne cruel,
As is a fermour, to doon the harm he
can.

He moste thinke hit is his lige man, 379

And is his tresour, and his gold in cofre.
This is the sentence of the philosopre:
A king to kepe his liges in Iustyce;
With-ouen doute, that is his offyce.

Al wol he kepe his lordes hir degree,
As hit is right and skilful that they be 385

Enhanced and honoured, and most
dere —

For they ben half-goddes in this world
here —

This shal he doon, bothe to pore [and]
riche,

Al be that here stat be nat a-liche, 375
And han of pore folk compassioun.

For lo, the gentil kind of the lioun!

For whan a flye offendeth him or byteth,
He with his tayl away the flye smyteth

Al esily; for, of his genterye, 380

Him deyneth nat to wreke him on a flye,
As doth a curre or elles another beste.

In noble corage oghte been areste,
And weyen every thing by equitee, 384

And ever han reward to his owen degree.
For, sir, hit is no maystrie for a lord

To dampne a man with-oute answer of
word;

And, for a lord, that is ful foul to use.

And if so be he may him nat excuse,
[But] axeth mercy with a sorweful
herte, 390

And profreth him, right in his bare
sherte,

To been right at your owne Iugement,
Than oghte a god, by short avyement,

Considre his owne honour and his trespas.

For sith no cause of deeth lyth in this
cas, 395

Yow oghte been the lighter merciabe;
Leteth your yre, and beth somewhat tret-
able!

The man hath served yow of his conning,
And fortherd your lawe with his making.

Whyl he was yong, he kepte your estat;
I not wher he be now a renegat. 401

But well I wot, with that he can endyte,
He hath maked lewed folk delyte

To serve you, in preysing of your name.
He made the book that hight the Hous

of Fame, 405

And eek the Deeth of Blaunche the
Duchesse,

And the Parlement of Foules, as I gesse,
And al the love of Palamon and Arcyte

Of Thebes, thogh the story is knowen
lyte;

And many an ympne for your halydayes,
That highten Balades, Roundels, Vire-
layes; 411

Enhanced and honoured, and most
dere —

For they ben half-goddes in this world
here —

Yit mot he doon bothe right, to pore
and riche,

Al be that hir estat be nat y-liche,
And han of pore folk compassioun. 390

For lo, the gentil kynd of the leoun!

For whan a flye offendeth him or byteth,
He with his tayl away the flye smyteth

Al esily; for, of his genterye,

Him deyneth nat to wreke him on a flye,
As doth a curre or elles another beste. 396

In noble corage oghte been areste,
And weyen every thing by equitee,

And ever han reward to his owen degree.
For, sir, hit is no maystrie for a lord 400

To dampne a man with-oute answer of
word;

And, for a lord, that is ful foul to use.

And if so be he may him nat excuse,
But asketh mercy with a dredful herte,

And profreth him, right in his bare
sherte, 405

To been right at your owne Iugement,
Than oghte a god, by short avyement,

Considre his owne honour and his tres-
pas.

For sith no cause of deeth lyth in this
cas,

Yow oghte been the lighter merciabe;
Leteth your yre, and beth somewhat tret-
able! 411

The man hath served yow of his conning,
And forthred wel your lawe in his making.

‘Al be hit that he can nat well endyte,
Yet hath he maked lewed folk delyte 415

To serve you, in preysing of your name.
He made the book that hight the Hous

of Fame,

And eek the Deeth of Blaunche the
Duchesse,

And the Parlement of Foules, as I gesse,
And al the love of Palamon and Arcyte

Of Thebes, thogh the story is knowen
lyte; 421

And many an ympne for your halydayes,
That highten Balades, Roundels, Vire-
layes;

And for to speke of other businesse,
He hath in prose translated Boëce;
And of the Wreched Engending of
Mankinde, 414

As man may in pope Innocent y-finde;
And mad the Lyf also of seynt Cecyle;
He made also, goon sithen a greet whyl,
Origenes upon the Maudeleyne;
Him oghte now to have the lesse peyne;
He hath mad many a lay and many a
thing. 420

'Now as ye been a god, and eek a
king,

I, your Alceste, whylom quene of Trace,
I axe yow this man, right of your grace,
That ye him never hurte in al his lyve;
And he shal sweren yow, and that as
blyve, 425

He shal no more agilten in this wyse;
But he shal maken, as ye wil devyse,
Of wemen trewe in lovinge al hir lyve,
Wher-so ye wil, of maiden or of wyve,
And forthren yow, as muche as he mis-
seyde 430

Or in the Rose or elles in Crisseide.'

The god of love answerde hir thus
anoon,

'Madame,' quod he, 'hit is so long agoon
That I yow knew so charitable and
trewe,

That never yit, sith that the world was
newe, 435

To me ne fond I better noon than ye.

That, if that I wol save my degree,

I may ne wol nat warne your requeste;

Al lyth in yow, doth with him what yow
leste 439

And al foryeve, with-uten lenger space;
For who-so yeveth a yift, or doth a grace,
Do hit by tyme, his thank is wel the
more;

And demeth ye what he shal do therfore.
Go thanke now my lady heer,' quod he.

I roos, and doun I sette me on my
knee, 445

And seyde thus: 'Madame, the god
above

Foryelde yow, that ye the god of love
Han makid me his wrathe to foryive;
And yeve me grace so long for to live,
That I may knowe soothly what ye be
Than han me holpen, and put in swich
degree. 451

And, for to speke of other holynesse,
He hath in prose translated Boëce, 425

And mad the Lyf also of seynt Cecyle;
He made also, goon sithen a greet whyl,
Origenes upon the Maudeleyne;
Him oghte now to have the lesse peyne;
He hath mad many a lay and many a
thing. 430

'Now as ye been a god, and eek a
king,

I, your Alceste, whylom quene of Trace,
I aske yow this man, right of your grace,
That ye him never hurte in al his lyve;
And he shal sweren yow, and that as
blyve, 435

He shal no more agilten in this wyse;
But he shal maken, as ye wil devyse,
Of wommen trewe in lovinge al hir lyve,
Wher-so ye wil, of maiden or of wyve,
And forthren yow, as muche as he mis-
seyde 440

Or in the Rose or elles in Creseyde.'

The god of love answerde hir thus
anoon,

'Madame,' quod he, 'hit is so long agoon
That I yow knew so charitable and
trewe,

That niver yit, sith that the world was
newe, 445

To me ne fond I better noon than ye.

If that I wolde save my degree,

I may ne wol nat werne your requeste;

Al lyth in yow, doth with him as yow
leste.

I al foryeve, with-uten lenger space; 450
For who-so yeveth a yift, or doth a grace,
Do hit by tyme, his thank is wel the
more;

And demeth ye what he shal do therfore.
Go thanke now my lady heer,' quod he.

I roos, and doun I sette me on my
knee, 455

And seyde thus: 'Madame, the god
above

Foryelde yow, that ye the god of love
Han makid me his wrathe to foryive;
And yeve me grace so long for to live,
That I may knowe soothly what ye be 460
That han me holpe and put in this de-
gree.

But trewely I wende, as in this cas,
Naught have agilt, ne doon to love tres-
pas. 453

Forwhy a trewe man, with-outen drede,
Hath nat to parten with a theves dede;
Ne a trewe lover oghte me nat blame,
Thogh that I speke a fals lover som
shame.

They oghte rather with me fro to holde,
For that I of Creseyde wroot or tolde,
Or of the Rose; what-so myn auctour
mente, 460

Algate, god wot, hit was myn entente
To forthren trouthe in love and hit
cheryce;

And to be war fro falsnesse and fro vyce
By swich ensample; this was my men-
inge.'

And she answerde, 'lat be thyn
arguinge; 465

For Love ne wol nat countrepleted be
In right ne wrong; and lerne this at
me!

Thou hast thy grace, and hold thee right
ther-to.

Now wol I seyn what penance thou shalt
do

For thy trespas, and understand hit
here: 470

Thou shalt, whyl that thou livest, yeer
by yere

The moste party of thy lyve spende
In making of a glorious Legende
Of Gode Wemen, maidenes and wyves,
That weren trewe in lovinge al hir lyves;
And telle of false men that hem bitrayen,
That al hir lyf ne doon nat but assayen
How many wemen they may doon a
shame; 478

For in your world that is now holden
game.

And thogh thee lesteth nat a lover be,
Spek wel of love; this penance yeve I
thee. 481

And to the god of love I shal so preye,
That he shal charge his servants, by any
weye,

To forthren thee, and wel thy labour
quyte;

Go now thy wey, thy penance is but
lyte.' 485

But trewely I wende, as in this cas,
Naught have agilt, ne doon to love tres-
pas. 463

Forwhy a trewe man, with-outen drede;
I hath nat to parten with a theves dede;
Ne a trewe lover oghte me nat blame,
Thogh that I speke a fals lover som
shame.

They oghte rather with me fro to holde,
For that I of Creseyde wroot or tolde,
Or of the Rose; what-so myn auctour
mente, 470

Algate, god wot, hit was myn entente
To forthren trouthe in love and hit
cheryce;

And to be war fro falsnesse and fro vyce
By swich ensample; this was my men-
inge.'

And she answerde, 'lat be thyn
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For Love ne wol nat countrepleted be
In right ne wrong; and lerne that of
me!

Thou hast thy grace, and hold thee right
ther-to.

Now wol I seyn what penance thou shalt
do

For thy trespas, and understand hit
here: 480

Thou shalt, whyl that thou livest, yeer
by yere,

The moste party of thy tyme spende
In making of a glorious Legende 483
Of Gode Wommen, maidenes and wyves,
That weren trewe in lovinge al hir lyves;
And telle of false men that hem bitrayen,
That al hir lyf ne doon nat but assayen
How many wommen they may doon a
shame;

For in your world that is now holde a
game.

And thogh thee lyke nat a lover be, 490
Spek wel of love; this penance yive I
thee.

And to the god of love I shal so preye,
That he shal charge his servants, by any
weye,

To forthren thee, and wel thy labour
quyte;

Go now thy wey, this penance is but
lyte. 495

And whan this book is maad, yive hit the
quene

The god of love gan smyle, and than he
scyde,

'Wostow,' quod he, 'wher this be wyf or
mayde,

Or quene, or countesse, or of what de-
gree,

That hath so litel penance yeven thee,
That hast deserved sorer for to smerte?
But pitce renneth sone in gentil herte;
That mayst thou seen, she kytheth what
she is.' 493

And I answerde, 'nay, sir, so have I
blis,

No more but that I see wel she is good.'

'That is a trewe tale, by myn hood,'
Quod Love, 'and that thou knowest wel,
pardee, 496

If hit be so that thou avyse thee.
Hastow nat in a book, lyth in thy cheste,
The grete goodnesse of the quene
Alceste,

That turned was into a dayesye : 500
She that for hir husbonde chees to dye,
And eek to goon to helle, rather than
he,

And Ercules rescued hir, pardee,
And broghte hir out of helle agayn to
blis?'

And I answerde ageyn, and seyde,
'yis, 505

Now knowe I hir! And is this good
Alceste,

The dayesye, and myn owne hertes reste?
Now fele I wel the goodnesse of this
wyf,

That bothe after hir deeth, and in hir
lyf, 509

Hir grete bountee doubleth hir renoun!

Wel hath she quit me myn affeccioun

That I have to hir flour, the dayesye!

No wonder is thogh Iove hir stellifye,

As telleth Agaton, for hir goodnesse!

Hir whyte coroun berth of hit wit-
nesse; 515

For also many vertues hadde she,

As smale floures in hir coroun be.

In remembraunce of hir and in honour,

Cibella made the dayesy and the flour

Y-coroned al with whyt, as men may
see; 520

And Mars yaf to hir coroun reed, pardee,

On my behalfe, at Eltham, or at Shene.'

The god of love gan smyle, and than
he scyde,

'Wostow,' quod he, 'wher this be wyf or
mayde,

Or quene, or countesse, or of what de-
gree, 500

That hath so litel penance yiven thee,
That hast deserved sorer for to smerte?
But pitce renneth sone in gentil herte;
That maystow seen, she kytheth what
she is.'

And I answerde, 'nay, sir, so have I
blis, 505

No more but that I see wel she is good.'

'That is a trewe tale, by myn hood,'
Quod Love, 'and that thou knowest wel,
pardee,

If hit be so that thou avyse thee.
Hastow nat in a book, lyth in thy cheste,
The grete goodnesse of the quene
Alceste, 511

That turned was into a dayesye :
She that for hir husbonde chees to dye,
And eek to goon to helle, rather than
he,

And Ercules rescowed hir, pardee, 515
And broghte hir out of helle agayn to
blis?'

And I answerde ageyn, and seyde,
'yis,

Now knowe I hir! And is this good
Alceste,

The dayesye, and myn owne hertes reste?
Now fele I wel the goodnesse of this
wyf, 520

That bothe after hir deeth, and in hir
lyf,

Hir grete bountee doubleth hir renoun!

Wel hath she quit me myn affeccioun

That I have to hir flour, the dayesye!

No wonder is thogh Iove hir stellifye, 525

As telleth Agaton, for hir goodnesse!

Hir whyte coroun berth of hit witnessse;

For also many vertues hadde she,

As smale floures in hir coroun be.

In remembraunce of hir and in hon-
our, 530

Cibella made the dayesy and the flour

Y-coroned al with whyt, as men may
see;

And Mars yaf to hir coroun reed, pardee,

In stede of rubies, set among the whyte.
 Therwith this queene wex reed for
 shame a lyte,
 Whan she was preysed so in hir presence.
 Than seyde Love, 'a ful gret negli-
 gence 525
 Was hit to thee, to write unstedfast-
 nesse
 Of women, sith thou knowest hir good-
 nesse
 By preef, and eek by stories heer-biforn;
 Let be the chaf, and wryt wel of the
 corn.
 Why noldest thou han writen of Al-
 ceste, 530
 And leten Criseide been a-slepe and
 reste?
 For of Alceste shulde thy wryting be,
 Sin that thou wost that kalender is she
 Of goodnesse, for she taughte of fyn
 lovinge,
 And namely of wyfhood the livinge, 535
 And alle the boundes that she oghte
 kepe;
 Thy litel wit was thilke tyme a-slepe.
 But now I charge thee, upon thy lyf,
 That in thy Legend thou make of this
 wyf,
 Whan thou hast othere smale mad be-
 fore; 540
 And fare now wel, I charge thee no
 more.

In stede of rubies, set among the whyte.
 Therwith this queene wex reed for
 shame a lyte, 535
 Whan she was preysed so in hir presence.
 Than seyde Love, 'a ful gret negligence
 Was hit to thee, that ilke tyme thou
 made
 "Hyd, Absolon, thy tresses," in balade,
 That thou forgete hir in thy song to
 sette, 540
 Sin that thou art so gretly in hir dette,
 And wost so wel, that kalender is she
 To any woman that wol lover be.
 For she taughte al the craft of fyn lov-
 inge,
 And namely of wyfhood the livinge, 545
 And alle the boundes that she oghte
 kepe;
 Thy litel wit was thilke tyme a-slepe.
 But now I charge thee, upon thy lyf,
 That in thy Legend thou make of this
 wyf,
 Whan thou hast other smale y-maad
 before; 550
 And fare now wel, I charge thee no
 more.
 'But er I go, thus muche I wol thee
 telle,
 Ne shal no trewe lover come in helle.
 These other ladies sittinge here arowe
 Ben in thy balade, if thou canst hem
 knowe, 555
 And in thy bokes alle thou shalt hem
 finde;
 Have hem now in thy Legend alle in
 minde,
 I mene of hem that been in thy know-
 inge.
 For heer ben twenty thousand mo sit-
 tinge
 Than thou knowest, that been good
 wommen alle 560
 And trewe of love, for aught that may
 befall;e
 Make the metres of hem as thee leste.
 I mot gon hoom, the sonne draweth
 weste,

'At Cleopatre I wol that thou beginne;
And so forth; and my love so shalt thou
winne.'

And with that word of sleep I gan
a-awake,
And right thus on my Legend gan I
make.

545

Explicit prohemium.

To Paradys, with al this companye;
And serve alwey the fresshe dayesye. 565
'At Cleopatre I wol that thou beginne;
And so forth; and my love so shalt thou
winne.
For lat see now what man that lover
be,
Wol doon so strong a peyne for love as
she.
I wot wel that thou mayst nat al hit
ryme, 570
That swiche lovers diden in hir tyme;
It were to long to reden and to here;
Suffyceth me, thou make in this manere,
That thou reherce of al hir lyf the
grete,
After this olde auctours listen to
trete. 575
For who-so shal so many a storie telle,
Sey shortly, or he shal to longe dwelle.'
And with that word my bokes gan I
take,
And right thus on my Legend gan I
make.

I. THE LEGEND OF CLEOPATRA.

INCIPIIT LEGENDA CLEOPATRIE, MARTI-
RIS, EGIPTI REGINE.

AFTER the death of Tholomee the
king, 580
That al Egipte hadde in his governing,
Regned his quene Cleopataras;
Til on a tyme befel ther swiche a cas,
That out of Rome was sent a senatour,
For to conqueren regnes and honour 585
Unto the toun of Rome, as was usaunce,
To have the world unto her obeisaunce;
And, sooth to seye, Antonius was his
name.
So fil hit, as Fortune him oghte a shame
Whan 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 wolde algates han another wyf;
For whiche he took with Rome and
Cesar stryf. 595

Natheles, for-sooth, this ilke senatour
Was a ful worthy gentil werreyour,
And of his deeth hit was ful greet
damage.
But love had broght this man in swiche
a rage,
And him so narwe bounden in his
las, 600
Al for the love of Cleopataras,
That al the world he sette at no value.
Him thoughte, nas to him no thing so due
As Cleopatras for to love and serve;
Him roghte nat in armes for to sterve 605
In the defence of hir, and of hir right.
This noble quene cek lovede so this
knight,
Through his desert, and for his chivalrye;
As certainly, but-if that bokes lye,
He was, of persone and of gentillesse, 610
And of discrecioun and hardinesse,
Worthy to any wight that liven may.
And she was fair as is the rose in May.

And, for to maken shortly is the beste,
She wex his wyf, and hadde him as hir
leste. 615

The wedding and the feste to devyse,
To me, that have y-take swiche emprise
Of so many a storie for to make,
Hit were to long, lest that I sholde slake
Of thing that bereth more effect and
charge; 620

For men may overlade a ship or barge;
And forthy to theeffect than wol I skippe,
And al the remenant, I wol lete hit slippe.

Octovian, that wood was of this dede,
Shoop him an ost on Antony to lede 625
Al-outerly for his destruccioun,
With stoute Romains, cruel as leoun;
To ship they wente, and thus I let hem
saile.

Antonius was war, and wol nat faile
To meten with thise Romains, if he
may; 630

Took eek his reed, and bothe, upon a
day,

His wyf and he, and al his ost, forth wente
To shippe anoon, no lenger they ne stente;
And in the see hit happed hem to mete —
Up goth the trompe — and for to shoute
and shete, 635

And peynen hem to sette on with the
sonne.

With grisly soun out goth the grete gonne,
And heterly they hurlten al at ones,
And fro the top doun cometh the grete
stones.

In goth the grapnel so ful of crokes 640
Among the ropes, and the shering-hokes.

In with the polax presseth he and he;
Behind the mast beginneth he to flee,
And out agayn, and dryveth him over-
borde; 644

He stingeth him upon his speres orde;
He rent the sail with hokes lyke a sythe;
He bringeth the cuppe, and biddeth hem
be blythe;

He poureth pesen upon the hacches
slider;

With pottes ful of lym they goon to-gider;
And thus the longe day in fight they
spende 650

Til, at the laste, as every thing hath ende,
Antony is shent, and put him to the
flighte,

And al his folk to-go, that best go mighte.

Fleeth eek the queen, with al her pur-
pre sail,

For strokes, which that wente as thikke
as hail; 655

No wonder was, she mighte hit nat en-
dure.

And when that Antony saw that aventure,
'Allas!' quod he, 'the day that I was
born!

My worshipe in this day thus have I
lorn!

And for dispeyr out of his witte he
sterte, 660

And roof him-self anoon through-out the
herte

Er that he ferther wente out of the place.
His wyf, that coude of Cesar have no
grace,

To Egipte is fled, for drede and for dis-
tresse;

But herkneth, ye that speke of kinde-
nesse. 665

Ye men, that falsly sweren many an
ooth

That ye wol dye, if that your love be
wrooth,

Heer may ye seen of women whiche a
trophe!

This woful Cleopatre hath mad swich
routhe

That ther nis tonge noon that may hit
telle. 670

But on the morwe she wol no lenger
dwelle,

But made hir subtil werkmen make a
shryne

Of alle the rubies and the stones fyne
In al Egipte that she coude espye;

And putte ful the shryne of spycerye, 675
And leet the cors embaume; and forth
she fette

This dede cors, and in the shryne hit
shette.

And next the shryne a pit than doth she
grave;

And alle the serpents that she mighte
have,

She putte hem in that grave, and thus she
seyde: 680

'Now love, to whom my sorweful herte
obeyde

So ferforthly that, fro that blisful houre
That I yow swor to been al frely youre,

I mene yow, Antonius my knight! 684
 That never waking, in the day or night,
 Ye nere out of myn hertes remembraunce
 For wele or wo, for carole or for daunce;
 And in my-self this covenant made I
 tho,
 That, right swich as ye felten, wele or wo,
 As ferforth as hit in my power lay, 690
 Unreprovable unto my wyfhood ay,
 The same wolde I felen, lyf or deeth.
 And thilke covenant, whyl me lasteth
 breeth,
 I wol fulfille, and that shal wel be sene;
 Was never unto hir love a trewer quene.'

Explicit Legenda Cleopatrie, martiris.

And with that word, naked, with ful good
 herte, 696
 Among the serpents in the pit she sterte,
 And ther she chees to han hir buryinge.
 Anoon the needres gonne hir for to stinge,
 And she hir deeth receyveth, with good
 chere, 700
 For love of Antony, that was hir so
 dere:—
 And this is storial sooth, hit is no fable.
 Now, er I finde a man thus trewe and
 stable,
 And wol for love his deeth so freely take,
 I pray god lat our hedes never ake! 705

II. THE LEGEND OF THISBE OF BABYLON.

INCIPT LEGENDA TESBE BABILONIE, MARTIRIS.

AT Babiloine whylom fil it thus,
 The whiche toun the queen Semiramus
 Leet dichen al about, and walles make
 Ful hye, of harde tyles wel y-bake.
 Ther weren dwellinge in this noble toun
 Two lordes, which that were of greet re-
 noun, 711
 And woneden so nigh, upon a grene,
 That ther nas but a stoon-wal hem bitwene,
 As ofte in grete tounes is the wone.
 And sooth to seyn, that o man hadde a
 sone, 715
 Of al that londe oon of the lustieste.
 That other hadde a doghter, the faireste,
 That estward in the world was tho dwel-
 linge.
 The name of everich gan to other springe
 By wommen, that were neighebores
 aboute. 720
 For in that contree yit, withouten doute,
 Maidens been y-kept, for Ielosye,
 Ful streite, lest they diden som folye.
 This yonge man was cleped Piramas,
 And Tisbe hight the maid, Naso seith
 thus; 725
 And thus by report was hir name y-shove
 That, as they wexe in age, wex hir love;
 And certein, as by reson of hir age,
 Ther mighte have been bitwix hem
 mariage,

But that hir fadres nolde hit nat assente;
 And bothe in love y-lyke sore they
 brente, 731
 That noon of alle hir frendes mighte hit
 lette
 But prively somtyme yit they mette
 By sleighte, and spoken som of hir
 desyr;
 As, wry the gleeed, and hotter is the fyr;
 Forbede a love, and it is ten so wood. 736
 This wal, which that bitwix hem bothe
 stood,
 Was cloven a-two, right fro the toppe
 adoun,
 Of olde tyme of his fundacioun;
 But yit this clifte was so narwe and lyte,
 It nas nat sene, dere y-nogh a myte. 741
 But what is that, that love can nat espye?
 Ye lovers two, if that I shal nat lye,
 Ye founden first this litel narwe clifte;
 And, with a soun as softe as any shrifte,
 They lete hir wordes through the clifte
 pace, 746
 And tolden, whyl that they stode in the
 place,
 Al hir compleynt of love, and al hir wo,
 At every tyme whan they dorste so.
 Upon that o syde of the wal stood he,
 And on that other syde stood Tisbe, 751
 The swote soun of other to receyve,
 And thus hir wardeins wolde they de-
 ceuwe.
 And every day this wal they wolde threte,

And wisshē to god, that it were doun
y-bete. 755

Thus wolde they seyn — ‘allas! thou
wikked wal,

Through thyn envye thou us lettest al!
Why nilt thou cleve, or fallen al a-two?
Or, at the leste, but thou woldest so,
Yit woldestow but ones lete us mete, 760
Or ones that we mighte kissen swete,
Than were we covered of our cares colde.
But natheles, yit be we to thee holde
In as muche as thou suffrest for to goon
Our wodes through thy lyme and eek
thy stoon. 765

Yit oghte we with thee ben wel apayd.’
And whan thise ydel wordes weren
sayd,

The colde wal they wolden kisse of stoon,
And take hir leve, and forth they wolden
goon.

And this was gladly in the even-tyde 770
Or wonder erly, lest men hit espyde;
And longe tyme they wroghte in this
manere

Til on a day, whan Phebus gan to clere,
Aurora with the stremes of hir hete
Had dreyed up the dew of herbes wete;
Unto this clifte, as it was wont to be, 776
Com Pyramus, and after com Tisbe,
And pligheten trouthe fully in hir fey
That ilke same night to stele away,
And to begyle hir wardeins everichoon,
And forth out of the citee for to goon;
And, for the felde been so brode and
wyde,

For to mete in o place at o tyde,
They sette mark hir meting sholde be
Ther king Ninus was graven, under a
tree; 785

For olde payens that ydoles heried
Useden tho in felde to ben beried;
And faste by this grave was a welle.
And, shortly of this tale for to telle,
This covenant was affermed wonder faste;
And longe hem thoughte that the sonne
laste, 791

That hit nere goon under the see adoun.

This Tisbe hath so greet affeccioun
And so greet lyking Pyramus to see,
That, whan she seigh her tyme mighte
be, 795

At night she stal away ful prively
With her face y-wimplid subtilly;

For alle her frendes — for to save her
trouthe —

She bath for-sake; allas! and that is
routhe

That ever woman wolde be so trewe 800
To trusten man, but she the bet him
knewe!

And to the tree she goth a ful good pas,
For love made her so hardy in this cas;
And by the welle adoun she gan her
dresse.

Allas! than comth a wilde leonesse 805
Out of the wode, withouten more areste,
With bloody mouthe, of strangling of a
beste,

To drinken of the welle, ther as she sat;
And, whan that Tisbe had espyed that,
She rist her up, with a ful dreary herte, 810
And in a cave with dredful foot she sterte,
For by the mone she seigh hit wel with-
alle.

And, as she ran, her wimpel leet she
falle,

And took noon heed, so sore she was
a-whaped.

And eek so glad of that she was escaped;
And thus she sit, and darketh wonder
stille. 816

Whan that this leonesse hath dronke her
fille,

Aboute the welle gan she for to winde,
And right anon the wimpel gan she
finde,

And with her bloody mouth hit al to-
rente. 820

Whan this was doon, no lenger she ne
stente,

But to the wode her wey than hath she
nome.

And, at the laste, this Pyramus is come,
But al to longe, allas! at hoom was he.
The mone shoon, men mighte wel y-see,
And in his weye, as that he com ful faste,
His eyen to the grounde adoun he caste,
And in the sonde, as he beheld adoun,
He seigh the steppes brode of a leoun,
And in his herte he sodeinly agroos, 830
And pale he wex, therwith his heer aroos,
And near he com, and fond the wimpel
torn.

‘Allas!’ quod he, ‘the day that I was
born!

This o night wol us lovers bothe slee!

How sholde I axen mercy of Tisbe 835
 Whan I am he that have yow slain,
 allas!
 My bidding hath yow slain, as in this cas.
 Allas! to bidde a woman goon by nighte
 In place ther as peril fallen mighte,
 And I so slow! allas, I ne hadde be 840
 Here in this place a furlong-wey or ye!
 Now what leoun that be in this foreste,
 My body mote he renden, or what beste
 That wilde is, gnawen mote he now myn
 herte!'
 And with that worde he to the wimpel
 sterte, 845
 And kiste hit ofte, and weep on hit ful
 sore,
 And seide, 'wimpel, allas! ther nis no
 more
 But thou shalt fele as wel the blood of
 me
 As thou hast felt the bleding of Tisbe!'
 And with that werde he smoot him to the
 herte. 850
 The blood out of the wounde as brode
 sterte
 As water, whan the conduit broken is.
 Now Tisbe, which that wiste nat of
 this,
 But sitting in her drede, she thoghte
 thus,
 'If hit so falle that my Pirusus 855
 Be comen hider, and may me nat y-finde,
 He may me holden fals and eek unkinde.'
 And out she comth, and after him gan
 espyen
 Bothe with her herte and with her yēn,
 And thoghte, 'I wol him tellen of my
 drede 860
 Bothe of the leonesse and al my dede.'
 And at the laste her love than hath she
 founde
 Beting with his heles on the grounde,
 Al bloody, and therwith-al a-bak she
 sterte,
 And lyke the waves quappe gan her
 herte, 865
 And pale as box she wex, and in a throwe
 Avysed her, and gan him wel to knowe,
 That hit was Pirusus, her herte dere.
 Who could wryte whiche a deedly chere
 Hath Tisbe now, and how her heer she
 rente, 870
 And how she gan her-selve to turmente,

And how she lyth and swowneth on the
 grounde,
 And how she weep of teres ful his
 wounde,
 How medeleth she his blood with her
 compleynte,
 And with his blood her-selven gan she
 peynte; 875
 How clippeth she the dede cors, allas?
 How doth this woful Tisbe in this cas!
 How kisseth she his frosty mouth so
 cold!
 'Who hath doon this, and who hath been
 so bold
 To sleen my leef? O spek, my Pirusus!
 880
 I am thy Tisbe, that thee calleth thus!'
 And therwith-al she lifeth up his heed.
 This woful man, that was nat fully
 deed,
 Whan that he herde the name of Tisbe
 cryen,
 On her he caste his hevy deedly yēn 885
 And down again, and yeldeth up the
 gost.
 Tisbe rist up, withouten noise or bost,
 And seigh her wimpel, and his empty
 shethe,
 And eek his swerd, that him hath doon
 to dethe;
 Than spak she thus: 'My woful hand,
 quod she, 890
 'Is strong y-nogh in swiche a werk to
 me;
 For love shal yive me strengthe and
 hardinesse
 To make my wounde large y-nogh, I
 gesse.
 I wol thee folwen deed, and I wol be
 Felawe and cause eek of thy deeth,'
 quod she. 895
 'And thogh that nothing save the deeth
 only
 Mighte thee fro me departe trewely,
 Thou shalt no more departe now fro
 me
 Than fro the deeth, for I wol go with
 thee!
 'And now, ye wrecched Ielous fadres
 oure, 900
 We, that weren whylom children youre,
 We prayen yow, withouten more envye,
 That in o grave y-fere we moten lye,

Sin love hath brought us to this pitous
ende!

And rightwis god to every lover sende,
That loveth trewely, more prosperitee 906
Than ever hadde Piramus and Tisbe!

And lat no gentil woman her assure
To putten her in swiche an aventure.

But god forbode but a woman can 910
Been as trewe and loving as a man!

And, for my part, I shal anoon it kythe!'

And, with that worde, his swerd she took
as swythe,

That warm was of her loves blood and
hoot, 914

And to the herte she her-selven smoot.

And thus ar Tisbe and Piramus ago.

Of trewe men I finde but fewe mo

In alle my bokes, save this Piramus,

And therfor have I spoken of him thus.

For hit is deyntee to us men to finde 920

A man that can in love be trew and
kinde.

Heer may ye seen, what lover so he be,
A woman dar and can as well as he.

Explicit legenda Tesbe.

III. THE LEGEND OF DIDO, QUEEN OF CARTHAGE.

INCIPIIT LEGENDA DIDONIS MARTIRIS,
CARTAGINIS REGINE.

GLORY and honour, Virgil Mantuan,
Be to thy name! and I shal, as I can, 925
Folow thy lantern, as thou gost biforn,
How Eneas to Dido was forsworn.

In thyn Eneïd and Naso wol I take
The tenour, and the grete effectes make.

Whan Troye broght was to destruc-
cioun 930

By Grekes sleighte, and namely by Si-
noun,

Feyning the hors y-offred to Minerve,
Through which that many a Troyan moste
sterve;

And Ector had, after his deeth, ap-
pered,

And fyr so wood, it mighte nat be stered,
In al the noble tour of Ilioun, 936

That of the citee was the cheef dunge-
goun;

And al the contree was so lowe y-broght,
And Priamus the king fordoon and
nought;

And Eneas was charged by Venus 940
To flee away, he took Ascanius,

That was his sone, in his right hand, and
fledde;

And on his bakke he bar and with him
ledde

His olde fader, eleped Anchises, 944

And by the weye his wyf Creusa he lecs.
And mochel sorwe hadde he in his minde
Er that he coude his felawshippe finde.

But, at the laste, whan he had hem
founde,

He made him redy in a certein stounde,
And to the see ful faste he gan him

hye 950
And sailleth forth with al his companye
Toward Itaille, as wolde destinee.

But of his adventures in the see
Nis nat to purpos for to speke of here,

For hit acordeth nat to my matere. 955

But, as I seide, of him and of Dido
Shal be my tale, til that I have do.

So longe he sailed in the salte see
Til in Libye unnethe aryved he,

With shippes seven and with no more
navye; 960

And glad was he to londe for to hye,
So was he with the tempest al to-shake.

And whan that he the haven had y-take,
He had a knight, was called Achates;

And him of al his felawshippe he chees
To goon with him, the contre for tespye;

He took with him no more companye.
But forth they goon, and lafte his shippes

ryde, 968
His fere and he, with-ouen any gyde.

So longe he walketh in this wildernessse
Til at the laste, he mette an hunteresse.

A bowe in honde and arwes hadde she,
Her clothes cutted were unto the knee;

But she was yit the fairest creature
That ever was y-formed by nature; 975

And Eneas and Achates she grette,
And thus she to hem spak, whan she
hem mette.

'Sawe ye,' quod she, 'as ye han walked
 wyde,
 Any of my sustren walke yow besyde,
 With any wilde boor or other beste 980
 That they han hunted to, in this foreste,
 Y-tukked up, with arwes in her cas?'
 'Nay, soothly, lady,' quod this Eneas;
 'But by thy beaute, as hit thinketh me,
 Thou mightest never erthely womman
 be, 985
 But Phebus suster artow, as I gesse.
 And, if so be that thou be a goddesse,
 Have mercy on our labour and our wo.'
 'I nam no goddes, soothly,' quod she
 tho;
 'For maidens walken in this contree
 here, 990
 With arwes and with bowe, in this
 manere.
 This is the regne of Libie, ther ye been,
 Of which that Dido lady is and queen' —
 And shortly told him al the occasioun
 Why Dido com into that regioun, 995
 Of which as now me lusteth nat to ryme;
 Hit nedeth nat; hit nere but los of
 tyme.
 For this is al and som, it was Venus,
 His owne moder, that spak with him
 thus;
 And to Cartage she bad he sholde him
 dighte, 1000
 And vanished anoon out of his sighte.
 I coude folwe, word for word, Virgyle,
 But it wolde lasten al to longe a whyle.
 This noble queen, that cleped was
 Dido,
 That whylom was the wyf of Sitheo, 1005
 That fairer was then is the brighte sonne,
 This noble toun of Cartage hath be-
 gonne;
 In which she regneth in so greet honour,
 That she was holde of alle queenes flour,
 Of gentillesse, of freedom, of beautee;
 That wel was him that mighte her ones
 see; 1011
 Of kinges and of lordes so desyred,
 That al the world her beaute hadde
 y-fyred;
 She stood so wel in every wightes grace.
 Whan Eneas was come un-to that
 place, 1015
 Unto the maister-temple of al the toun
 Ther Dido was in her devocioun,

Ful prively his wey than hath he nome.
 Whan he was in the large temple come,
 I can nat seyn if that hit be possible, 1020
 But Venus hadde him maked invisible —
 Thus seith the book, with-ouen any
 lees.
 And whan this Eneas and Achates
 Hadden in this temple been over-al,
 Than founde they, depeynted on a wal,
 How Troye and al the lond destroyed
 was. 1025
 'Allas! that I was born,' quod Eneas,
 'Through-out the world our shame is kid
 so wyde,
 Now it is peynted upon every syde!
 We, that weren in prosperitee, 1030
 Be now disslaundred, and in swich
 degre,
 No lenger for to liven I ne kepe!' —
 And, with that worde, he brast out for to
 wepe
 So tendrely, that routhe hit was to sene
 This fresche lady, of the citee quene, 1035
 Stood in the temple, in her estat royal,
 So richly, and eek so fair with-al,
 So yong, so lusty, with her eyen glade,
 That, if that god, that heven and erthe
 made,
 Wolde han a love, for beaute and good-
 nesse, 1040
 And womanhod, and trouthe, and seem-
 liness,
 Whom sholde he loven but this lady
 swete?
 There nis no womman to him half so
 mete.
 Fortune, that hath the world in gov-
 ernaunce,
 Hath sodeinly broght in so newe a
 chance, 1045
 That never was ther yit so fremd a cas.
 For al the companye of Eneas,
 Which that he wende han loren in the
 see,
 Aryved is, nat fer fro that citee;
 For which, the grettest of his lordes
 some 1050
 By aventure ben to the citee come,
 Unto that same temple, for to seke
 The quene, and of her socour her
 beseke;
 Swich renoun was ther spronge of her
 goodnesse.

And, whan they hadden told al hir dis-
tresse, 1055
And al hir tempest and hir harde cas,
Unto the quene appered Eneas,
And openly beknew that hit was he.
Who hadde Ioye than but his meynce,
That hadden founde hir lord, hir gov-
ernour? 1060
The quene saw they dide him swich
honour,
And had herd ofte of Eneas, er tho,
And in her herte she hadde routhe and
wo
That ever swich a noble man as he
Shal been disherited in swich degree;
And saw the man, that he was lyk a
knight, 1066
And suffisaunt of persone and of might,
And lyk to been a veray gentil man;
And wel his wordes he besette can,
And had a noble visage for the nones,
And formed wel of braunes and of
bones. 1071
For, after Venus, hadde he swich fair-
nesse,
That no man might be half so fair, I
gesse.
And wel a lord he semed for to be.
And, for he was a straunger, somewhat
she 1075
Lyked him the bet, as, god do bote,
To some folk ofte newe thing is swote.
Anoon her herte hath pitee of his wo,
And, with that pitee, love com in also;
And thus, for pitee and for gentilesse,
Refreshed moste he been of his dis-
tresse. 1081
She seide, certes, that she sory was
That he hath had swich peril and swich
cas;
And, in her frendly speche, in this
manere
She to him spak, and seide as ye may
here. 1085
'Be ye nat Venus sone and Anchises?
In good feith, al the worship and encrees
That I may goodly doon yow, ye shul
have.
Your shippes and your meynce shal I
save;
And many a gentil word she spak him
to; 1090
And comaunded her messageres go

The same day, with-uten any faile,
His shippes for to seke, and hem vitale.
She many a beste to the shippes sente,
And with the wyn she gan hem to
presente; 1095
And to her royal paleys she her spedde,
And Eneas alway with her she ledde.
What nedeth yow the feste to descryve?
He never beter at ese was his lyve.
Ful was the feste of deyntees and
richesse, 1100
Of instruments, of song, and of glad-
nesse,
And many an amorous loking and devys.
This Eneas is come to Paradys
Out of the swolow of helle, and thus in
Ioye 1104
Remembreth him of his estat in Troye.
To dauncing-chambres ful of parements,
Of riche beddes, and of ornaments,
This Eneas is lad, after the mete.
And with the quene whan that he had sete,
And spyces parted, and the wyn agoon,
Unto his chambres was he lad anoon 1111
To take his ese and for to have his reste,
With al his folk, to doon what so hem
leste.
Ther nas coursere wel y-bryddled noon,
Ne stede, for the lusting wel to goon,
Ne large palfrey, esy for the nones, 1116
Ne Iuwel, fretted ful of riche stones,
Ne sakked ful of gold, of large wighte,
Ne ruby noon, that shynede by nighte,
Ne gentil hautein faucon heronere, 1120
Ne hound, for hert or wilde boor or
dere,
Ne coupe of gold, with florins newe
y-bete,
That in the lond of Libie may be gete,
That Dido ne hath hit Eneas y-sent;
And al is payed, what that he hath
spent. 1125
Thus can this [noble] quene her gestic
calle,
As she that can in freedom passen alle.
Eneas sothly eek, with-uten lees,
Hath sent un-to his shippe, by Achates,
After his sone, and after riche thinges,
Both ceptre, clothes, broches, and eek
ringes, 1131
Som for to were, and som for to presente
To her, that all these noble thinges him
sente;

And bad his sone, how that he sholde
make

The presenting, and to the quene hit
take. 1135

Repaired is this Achates again,
And Eneas ful blisful is and fain
To seen his yonge sone Ascanius.
But natheles, our autour telleth us,

That Cupido, that is the god of love, 1140
At preyere of his moder, hye above,

Hadde the lyknes of the child y-take,
This noble quene enamoured to make
On Eneas; but, as of that scripture,

Be as be may, I make of hit no cure. 1145
But sooth is this, the quene hath mad
swich chere

Un-to this child, that wonder is to here;
And of the present that his fader sente
She thanked him ful ofte, in good entente.

Thus is this quene in plesaunce and in
Ioye, 1150

With al this newe lusty folk of Troye.
And of the dedes hath she more enquired
Of Eneas, and al the story lered

Of Troye; and al the longe day they
tweye

Entendeden to speken and to pleye; 1155
Of which ther gan to bredden swich a fyr,

That sely Dido hath now swich desyr
With Eneas, her newe gest, to dele,
That she hath lost her hewe, and eek
her hele.

Now to theeffect, now to the fruit of al,
Why I have told this story, and tellen
shal. 1161

Thus I beginne; hit fil, upon a night,
When that the mone up-reysed had her
light,

This noble quene un-to her reste wente;
She syketh sore, and gan her-self tur-
mente. 1165

She waketh, walweth, maketh many a
brayd,

As doon these loveres, as I have herd
sayd.

And at the laste, unto her suster Anne
She made her moon, and right thus spak
she thanne.

'Now, dere suster myn, what may hit
be 1170

That me agasteth in my dreme?' quod
she.

'This ilke Troyan is so in my thought,

For that me thinketh he is so wel
y-wroght,

And eek so lykly for to be a man, 1174
And therwithal so mikel good he can,

That al my love and lyf lyth in his cure.
Have ye not herd him telle his aventure?

Now certes, Anne, if that ye rede hit me,
I wolde fain to him y-wedded be;

This is theeffect; what sholde I more
seye? 1180

In him lyth al, to do me live or deye.'

Her suster Anne, as she that coude
her good,

Seide as her thoughte, and somdel hit
with-stood.

But her-of was so long a sermoning,
Hit were to long to make rehersing; 1185

But fynally, hit may not been with-stonde;
Love wol love—for no wight wol hit
wonde.

The dawening up-rist out of the sec;
This amorous quene chargeth her meynce

The nettes dresse, and speres brode and
kene; 1190

An hunting wol this lusty fresshe quene;
So priketh her this newe Ioly wo.

To hors is al her lusty folk y-go;
Un-to the court the houndes been y-
brought, 1194

And up-on coursers, swift as any thought,
Her yonge knightes hoven al aboute,

And of her women eek an huge route.
Up-on a thikke palfrey, paper-whyt,

With sadel rede, embrouded with delyt,
Of gold the barres up-embossed hye, 1200

Sit Dido, al in gold and perre wrye;
And she is fair, as is the brighte morwe,

That heleth seke folk of nightes sorwe.
Up-on a courser, startling as the fyr,

Men mighte turne him with a litel wyr,
Sit Eneas, lyk Phebus to devyse; 1206

So was he fresshe arayed in his wyse.
The fomy brydel with the bit of gold

Governeth he, right as him-self hath
wold.

And forth this noble quene thus lat I
ryde 1210

An hunting, with this Troyan by her
syde.

The herd of hertes founden is anoon,
With 'hey! go bet! prik thou! lat goon,

lat goon!

Why nil the leoun comen or the bere,

That I mighte ones mete him with this
spere? 1215

Thus seyn thise yonge folk, and up they
kille

These hertes wilde, and han hem at hir
wille.

Among al this to-romblen gan the
heven,

The thunder rored with a grisly steven;
Doun com the rain, with hail and sleet
so faste, 1220

With hevenes fyr, that hit so sore agaste
This noble quene, and also her meynee,
That ech of hem was glad a-wey to flee.

And shortly, fro the tempest her to save,
She fledde her-self into a litel cave, 1225

And with her wente this Eneas al-so;
I noot, with hem if ther wente any mo;
The autour maketh of hit no mencion.

And heer began the depe affecioun
Betwix hem two; this was the firste
morwe 1230

Of her gladnesse, and ginning of her
sorwe.

For ther bath Eneas y-kneled so,
And told her al his herte, and al his wo,
And sworn so depe, to her to be trewe,
For wele or wo, and change for no
newe, 1235

And as a fals lover so wel can pleyne,
That sely Dido rewed on his peyne,
And took him for husband, [to been] his
wyf

For ever-mo, whyl that hem laste lyf.
And after this, whan that the tempest
stente, 1240

With mirth out as they comen, hoom
they wente.

The wikked fame up roos, and that
anon,

How Eneas hath with the quene y-gon
In-to the cave; and demed as hem liste;
And whan the king, that Yrbas hight,
hit wiste, 1245

As he that had her loved ever his lyf,
And wowed her, to have her to his wyf,
Swich sorwe as he hath maked, and swich
chere,

Hit is a routhe and pitee for to here.
But, as in love, al-day hit happeth
so, 1250

That oon shal laughen at anothers wo;
Now laugheth Eneas, and is in Ioye

And more richesse than ever he was in
Troye.

O sely womman, ful of innocence,
Ful of pitee, of trouthe, and con-
science, 1255

What maked yow to men to trusten so?
Have ye swich routhe upon hir feined wo,
And han swich olde ensamples yow be-
foren?

See ye nat alle, how they been for-sworn?
Wher see ye oon, that he ne hath laft his
leaf, 1260

Or been unkinde, or doon her som mis-
cheef,

Or pilled her, or bosted of his dede?
Ye may as wel hit seen, as ye may rede;
Tak heed now of this grete gentil-man,
This Troyan, that so wel her plesen
can, 1265

That feineth him so trewe and obeising,
So gentil and so privy of his doing,
And can so wel doon alle his obei-
saunces,

And waiten her at festes and at daunces,
And whan she goth to temple and hoom
ageyn, 1270

And fasten til he hath his lady seyn,
And bere in his devyses, for her sake,
Noot I nat what; and songes wolde he
make,

Iusten, and doon of armes many thinges,
Sende her lettres, tokens, broches,
ringes— 1275

Now herkneth, how he shal his lady serve!
Ther-as he was in peril for to sterve
For hunger, and for mischeef in the see,
And desolat, and fled from his contree,
And al his folk with tempest al to-
driven, 1280

She hath her body and eek her reame
yiven

In-to his hond, ther-as she mighte have
been

Of other lond than of Cartage a queen,
And lived in Ioye y-nogh; what wolde
ye more? 1284

This Eneas, that hath so depe y-swore,
Is wery of his craft with-in a throwe;
The hote earnest is al over-blowe.
And prively he doth his shippes dighte,
And shapeth him to stele a-wey by
nighte.

This Dido hath suspeciou of this, 1290

And thoughte wel, that hit was al a-mis;
For in his bedde he lyth a-night and
syketh;

She asketh him anoon, what him mis-
lyketh —

‘My dere herte, which that I love most?’
‘Certes,’ quod he, ‘this night my fadres
gost 1295

Hath in my sleep so sore me tormented,
And eek Mercurie his message hath pre-
sented,

That nedes to the conquest of Itaile

My destinee is sone for to saile;
For which, me thinketh, brosten is myn
herte!’ 1300

Ther-with his false teres out they sterte;
And taketh her with-in his armes two.

‘Is that in earnest,’ quod she; ‘wil ye
so?

Have ye nat sworn to wyve me to take,
Alas! what womman wil ye of me
make?’ 1305

I am a gentil-woman and a queen,
Ye wil nat fro your wyf thus foule fleen?
That I was born! alas! what shal I do?’

To telle in short, this noble queen Dido,
She seketh halwes, and doth sacrificyse;
She kneleth, cryeth, that routhe is to
devyse; 1311

Coniureth him, and profreth him to be
His thral, his servant in the leste gree;
She falleth him to fote, and swowneth
there

Dischevele, with her brighte gilte here,
And seith, ‘have mercy! let me with yow
ryde!’ 1316

These lordes, which that women me besyde
Wil me destroyen only for your sake.

And, so ye wil me now to wyve take,
As ye han sworn, than wol I give yow
leve 1320

To sleen me with your swerd now sone
at eve!

For than yit shal I dyen as your wyf.
I am with childe, and give my child his
lyf.

Mercy, lord! have pite in your thought!’
But al this thing availeth her right
nought; 1325

For on a night, slepinge, he let her lye,
And stal a-vey un-to his companye,
And, as a traitour, forth he gan to saile
Toward the large contree of Itaile. 1329

Thus hath he laft Dido in wo and pyne;
And wedded ther a lady hight Lavyne.

A cloth he lafte, and eek his swerd
standing,

Whan he fro Dido stal in her sleping,
Right at her beddes heed, so gan he
hye 1334

Whan that he stal a-vey to his navye;
Which cloth, whan sely Dido gan awake,
She hath hit kist ful ofte for his sake;

And seide, ‘O cloth, whyl Iupiter hit
leste,

Tak now my soule, unbind me of this
unreste!

I have fulfilled of fortune al the cours.’ 1340
And thus, alas! with-outhe his socours,
Twenty tyme y-swowned hath she thanne.

And, whan that she un-to her suster
Anne

Compleyned had, of which I may nat
wryte —

So greet a routhe I have hit for ten-
dyte — 1345

And bad her norice and her suster goon
To fecchen fyr and other thing anoon,

And seide, that she wolde sacrificy.
And, whan she mighte her tyme wel
espye,

Up-on the fyr of sacrificys she sterte, 1350

And with his swerd she roof her to the
herte.

But, as myn autour seith, right thus
she seyde;

Or she was hurt, before that she deyde,
She wroot a lettre anoon, that thus be-
gan: —

‘Right so,’ quod she, ‘as that the
whyte swan 1355

Ayeins his deeth beginneth for to singe,
Right so to yow make I my compleyn-
inge.

Nat that I trowe to geten yow again,
For wel I woot that it is al in vain,

Sin that the goddes been contraire to
me. 1360

But sin my name is lost through yow,’
quod she,

‘I may wel lese a word on yow, or letter,
Al-be-it that I shal be never the better;

For thilke wind that blew your ship
a-vey,

The same wind hath blowe a-vey your
fey.’ — 1365

But who wol al this letter have in
minde,

Rede Ovide, and in him he shal hit
finde.

Explicit Legenda Didonis martiris, Cartaginis regine.

IV. THE LEGEND OF HYSIPYLE AND MEDEA.

INCIPIIT LEGENDA YSIPHILE ET MEDEE,
MARTIRUM.

Part I. The Legend of Hypsipyle.

THOU rote of false lovers, duk Iasoun!
Thou sly devourer and confusioun
Of gentil-wommen, tender creatures, 1370
Thou madest thy reclaiming and thy lures
To ladies of thy statly apparaunce,
And of thy wordes, farced with plesaunce,
And of thy feyned trouthe and thy manere,
With thyn obeisaunce and thy humble
chere, 1375
And with thy counterfeted peyne and wo.
Ther other falsen oon, thou falsest two!
O! ofte swore thou that thou woldest dye
For love, when thou ne feltest maladye
Save foul delyt, which that thou callest
love! 1380
If that I live, thy name shal be shove
In English, that thy sleighte shal be
knowe!
Have at thee, Iasoun! now thyn horn is
blowe!
But certes, hit is bothe routhe and wo
That love with false loveres werketh so;
For they shul have wel better love and
chere 1386
Than he that hath aboght his love ful
dere,
Or had in armes many a bloody box.
For ever as tendre a capoun et the fox,
Though he be fals and hath the foul be-
trayed, 1390
As shal the good-man that ther-for hath
payed.
Al have he to the capoun skille and right,
The false fox wol have his part at night.
On Iasoun this ensample is wel y-sene
By Isiphile and Medea the quene. 1395
In Tessalye, as Guido telleth us,
Ther was a king that highte Pelleus,
That had a brother, which that highte
Eson;

And, whan for age he mighte unnethes
gon,
He yaf to Pelleus the governing 1400
Of al his regne, and made him lord and
king.
Of which Eson this Iasoun geten was,
That, in his tyme, in al that lond, ther
nas
Nat swich a famous knight of gentillesse,
Of freedom, and of strengthe and lusti-
nesse. 1405
After his fader deeth, he bar him so
That ther nas noon that liste been his fo,
But dide him al honour and companye;
Of which this Pelleus hath greet envye,
Imagining that Iasoun mighte be 1410
Enhaunsed so, and put in swich degree
With love of lordes of his regioun,
That from his regne he may be put
adoun.
And in his wit, a-night, compassed he
How Iasoun mighte best destroyed be
Withoute slaunder of his compasment.
And at the laste he took avisement 1417
To senden him in-to som fer contree
Ther as this Iasoun may destroyed be.
This was his wit; al made he to Iasoun
Gret chere of love and of affecciou, 1421
For drede lest his lordes hit espyde.
So fil hit so, as fame renneth wyde,
Ther was swich tyding over-al and swich
los,
That in an yle that called was Colcos,
Beyonde Troye, estward in the see, 1426
That ther-in was a ram, that men mighte
see,
That had a flees of gold, that shoon so
bryghte,
That no-wher was ther swich an-other
sighte;
But hit was kept alway with a dragoun,
And many othere merveils, up and down,
And with two boles, maked al of bras,
That spitten fyr, and moche thing ther
was. 1433

But this was eek the tale, nathelees,
That who-so wolde winne thilke flees,
He moste bothe, or he hit winne mighte,
With the boles and the dragon fighte;
And king Oëtes lord was of that yle.

This Pelleus bethoghte upon this yle;
That he his newew Iasoun wolde en-
horte 1440

To sailen to that lond, him to disporte,
And seide, 'Nezew, if hit mighte be
That swich a worship mighte fallen thee,
That thou this famous tresor mightest
winne, 1444

And bringen hit my regioun with-inne,
Hit were to me gret plesaunce and
honour;

Than were I holde to quyte thy labour.
And al the cost I wol my-selven make;
And chees what folk that thou wilt with
thee take; 1449

Lat see now, darstow taken this viage?
Iasoun was yong, and lusty of corage,
And under-took to doon this ilke em-
pryse.

Anoon Argus his shippes gan devyse;
With Iasoun wente the stronge Ercules,
And many an-other that he with him
chees. 1455

But who-so axeth who is with him gon,
Lat him go reden Argonauticon,
For he wol telle a tale long y-now.
Philoteles anoon the sail up-drow,
Whan that the wind was good, and gan
him hye 1460

Out of his contree called Tessalye.
So long he sailed in the salte see
Til in the yle Lemnoun aryved he —
Al be this nat rehersed of Guido,
Yet seith Ovyde in his Epistles so — 1465
And of this yle lady was and quene
The faire yonge Isiphilce, the shene,
That whylom Thoas doghter was, the
king.

Isiphilce was goon in her playing;
And, roming on the clyves by the see,
Under a banke anoon espyed she 1471
Wher that the ship of Iasoun gan arryve.
Of her goodnesse adoun she sendeth
blyve

To witen yif that any straunge wight
With tempest thider were y-blowe a-
night, 1475
To doon him socour; as was her usaunce

To forthren every wight, and doon
plesaunce

Of veray bountee and of curtesye.

This messagere adoun him gan to hye,
And fond Iasoun, and Ercules also, 1480
That in a cogge to lond were y-go
Hem to refresshen and to take the eyr.
The morwening atempre was and fair;
And in his wey the messagere hem
mette. 1484

Ful cunningly thise lordes two he grette,
And dide his message, axing hem anoon
Yif they were broken, or oght wo begoon,
Or hadde nede of lodesmen or vitaile;
For of socour they shulde no-thing faile,
For hit was utterly the quenes wille. 1490

Iasoun answerde, mekely and stille,
'My lady,' quod he, 'thanke I hertely
Of her goodnesse; us nedeth, trewely,
No-thing as now, but that we wery be,
And come for to pleye, out of the see, 1495
Til that the wind be better in our weye.'

This lady rometh by the clif to pleye,
With her meynee, endelong the stonde,
And fynt this Iasoun and this other stonde,
In spekinge of this thing, as I yow
tolde. 1500

This Ercules and Iasoun gan beholde
How that the quene hit was, and faire
her grette

Anon-right as they with this lady mette;
And she took heed, and knew, by hir
manere,

By hir aray, by wordes and by chere, 1505
That hit were gentil-men, of gret
degree.

And to the castel with her ledeth she
Thise straunge folk, and doth hem gret
honour,

And axeth hem of travail and labour
That they han suffred in the salte
see; 1510

So that, within a day, or two, or three,
She knew, by folk that in his shippes be,
That hit was Iasoun, ful of renomee,
And Ercules, that had the grete los,
That soghten the adventures of Col-
cos; 1515

And dide hem honour more then before,
And with hem deled ever lenger the
more,

For they ben worthy folk, with-outen
lees.

And namely, most she spak with Er-
cules;

To him her herte bar, he sholde be 1520
Sad, wys, and trewe, of wordes avisee,
With-outen any other affeccioun
Of love, or evil imaginacioun.

This Ercules hath so this Iasoun
preysed,

That to the sonne he hath him up
areysed, 1525

That half so trewe a man ther nas of
love

Under the cope of heven that is above;
And he was wys, hardy, secree, and
riche.—

Of these three pointes ther nas noon him
liche;

Of freedom passed he, and lustihede,
Alle tho that liven or ben dede; 1531

Ther-to so greet a gentil-man was he,
And of Tessalie lykly king to be.

Ther nas no lak, but that he was agast
To love, and for to speke shamefast. 1535
He hadde lever him-self to mordre, and
dye

Than that men shulde a lover him
espye:—

'As wolde almighty god that I had yive
My blood and flesh, so that I mighte
live,

With the nones that he hadde o-wher a
wyf 1540

For his estat; for swich a lusty lyf
She sholde lede with this lusty knight!'

And al this was compassed on the
night

Betwix him Iasoun and this Ercules.
Of these two heer was mad a shrewed
lees 1545

To come to hous upon an innocent;
For to be-dote this queen was hir assent.

And Iasoun is as coy as is a maide,
He loketh pitously, but noght he saide,

But frely yaf he to her conseileres 1550
Yiftes grete, and to her officeres.

As wolde god I leiser hadde, and tyme,
By proces al his wowing for to ryme.

But in this hous if any fals lover be,
Right as him-self now doth, right so
dide he, 1555

With feyning and with every sotil dede.
Ye gete no more of me, but ye wil rede

Thoriginal, that telleth al the cas.

The somme is this, that Iasoun wedded
was

Unto this quene, and took of her sub-
staunce 1560

What-so him liste, unto his purvey-
aunce;

And upon her begat he children two,
And drow his sail, and saw her never-
mo.

A lettre sente she to him certein,
Which were to long to wryten and to
sein, 1565

And him repreveth of his grete un-
trouthe,

And preyeth him on her to have som
routhe.

And of his children two, she seide him
this,

That they be lyke, of alle thing, y-wis,
To Iasoun, save they coude nat be-
gyle; 1570

And preyed god, or hit were longe
whyle,

That she, that had his herte y-raft her
fro,

Moste finden him to her untrewre al-so,
And that she moste bothe her children
spille,

And alle tho that suffreth him his
wille. 1575

And trew to Iasoun was she al her lyf,
And ever kepte her chast, as for his
wyf;

Ne never had she Ioye at her herte,
But dyed, for his love, of sorwes smerte.

PART II. *The Legend of Medea.*

To Colcos comen is this duk Iasoun,
That is of love devourer and dragoun.

As matere appetyteth forme al-wey,
And from forme in-to forme hit passen
may, 1583

Or as a welle that were botomlees,
Right so can fals Iasoun have no pees.

For, to desyren, through his appetyt,
To doon with gentil women his
delyt,

This is his lust and his felicitee.

Iasoun is romed forth to the citee,
That whylom cleped was Iaconitos, 1590

That was the maister-toun of al Colcos,
And hath y-told the cause of his coming

Un-to Oëtes, of that contre king,
 Preying him that he moste doon his
 assay
 To gete the flees of gold, if that he
 may; 1595
 Of which the king assenteth to his bone,
 And doth him honour, as hit is to done,
 So ferforth, that his doghter and his eyr,
 Medea, which that was so wys and fair
 That fairer saw ther never man with
 yë, 1600
 He made her doon to Iasoun companye
 At mete, and sitte by him in the halle.
 Now was Iasoun a semely man with-
 alle,
 And lyk a lord, and had a greet renoun,
 And of his loke as real as leoun, 1605
 And goodly of his speche, and famulere,
 And coude of love al craft and art plen-
 ere
 With-oute boke, with everich obser-
 vance.
 And, as fortune her oghte a foul mes-
 chaunce,
 She wex enamoured upon this man. 1610
 'Iasoun,' quod she, 'for ought I see or
 can,
 As of this thing the which ye been aboute,
 Ye han your-self y-put in moche doute.
 For, who-so wol this aventure acheve,
 He may nat wel asterten, as I leve, 1615
 With-uten deeth, but I his helpe be.
 But natheles, hit is my wille,' quod she,
 'To forthren yow, so that ye shal nat
 dye,
 But turnen, sound, hoom to your Tes-
 salye.'
 'My righte lady,' quod this Iasoun
 tho, 1620
 'That ye han of my dethe or of my wo
 Any reward, and doon me this honour,
 I wot wel that my might ne my labour
 May nat deserve hit in my lyves day;
 God thanke yow, ther I ne can ne
 may. 1625
 Your man am I, and lowly you beseche,
 To been my help, with-oute more
 speche;
 But certes, for my deeth shal I nat
 spare.'
 Tho gan this Medea to him declare
 The peril of this cas, fro point to
 point, 1630

And of his batail, and in what disioint
 He mote stande, of which no creature,
 Save only she, ne mighte his lyf assure.
 And shortly, to the point right for to
 go,
 They been accorded ful, betwix hem
 two, 1635
 That Iasoun shal her wedde, as trewe
 knight;
 And term y-set, to come sone at night
 Unto her chambre, and make ther his
 ooth,
 Upon the goddess, that he, for leef ne
 looth,
 Ne sholde her never falsen, night ne
 day, 1640
 To been her husbond, whyl he liven
 may,
 As she that from his deeth him saved
 here.
 And her-upon, at night they mette
 y-fere,
 And doth his ooth, and goth with her
 to bedde.
 And on the morwe, upward he him
 spedde; 1645
 For she hath taught him how he shal
 nat faile
 The flees to winne, and stinten his
 bataile;
 And saved him his lyf and his honour;
 And gat him greet name as a conquer-
 our
 Right through the sleight of her en-
 chantement. 1650
 Now hath Iasoun the flees, and hoom
 is went
 With Medea, and tresor ful gret woon.
 But unwist of her fader is she goon
 To Tessaly, with duk Iasoun her leef,
 That afterward hath brought her to mes-
 cheef. 1655
 For as a traitour he is from her go,
 And with her lafte his yonge children
 two,
 And falsly hath betrayed her, allas!
 And ever in love a cheef traitour he
 was;
 And wedded yit the thridde wyf
 anon, 1660
 That was the doghter of the king Creon.
 This is the meed of loving and guer-
 don

That Medea received of Iasoun
 Right for her trouthe and for her kinde-
 nesse,
 That loved him better than her-self, I
 gesse, 1665
 And lafte her fader and her heritage.
 And of Iasoun this is the vassalage,
 That, in his dayes, nas ther noon y-
 founde
 So fals a lover going on the grounde.
 And therfor in her lettre thus she
 seyde 1670
 First, whan she of his falsnesse him um-
 breyde,

' Why lyked me thy yelow heer to see
 More then the boundes of myn hon-
 estee,
 Why lyked me thy youthe and thy fair-
 nesse,
 And of thy tonge the infinit gracious-
 nesse? 1675
 O, haddest thou in thy conquest deed
 y-be,
 Ful mikel untrouthe had ther dyed with
 thee!'
 Wel can Ovyde her lettre in vers endyte,
 Which were as now to long for me to
 wryte.

Explicit Legenda Ysiphile et Medee, Martirum.

V. THE LEGEND OF LUCRETIA.

INCIPIT LEGENDA LUCRECIE ROME, MAR-
 TIRIS.

Now moot I seyn the exiling of kinges
 Of Rome, for hir horrible doinges, 1681
 And of the laste king Tarquinius,
 As saith Ovyde and Titus Livius.
 But for that cause telle I nat this storie,
 But for to preise and drawn to mem-
 orie 1685
 The verray wyf, the verray trewe Lu-
 cresse,
 That, for her wyfhood and her stedfast-
 nesse,
 Nat only that thise payens her comende,
 But he, that cleped is in our legende
 The grete Austin, hath greet compas-
 sioun 1690
 Of this Lucresse, that starf at Rome
 toun;
 And in what wyse, I wol but shortly
 trete,
 And of this thing I touche but the grete.
 Whan Ardea beseged was aboute
 With Romains, that ful sterne were and
 stoute, 1695
 Ful longe lay the sege, and litel wroghte,
 So that they were half ydel, as hem
 thoghte;
 And in his pley Tarquinius the yonge
 Gan for to iape, for he was light of
 tonge,
 And seyde, that 'it was an ydel lyf; 1700

No man did ther no more than his wyf;
 And lat us speke of wyves, that is best;
 Praise every man his owne, as him lest,
 And with our speche lat us ese our
 herte.'
 A knight, that highte Colatyne, up
 sterte, 1705
 And seyde thus, 'nay, for hit is no nede
 To trowen on the word, but on the dede.
 I have a wyf,' quod he, 'that, as I trowe,
 Is holden good of alle that ever her
 knowe;
 Go we to-night to Rome, and we shul
 see.' 1710
 Tarquinius answerde, 'that lyketh me.'
 To Rome be they come, and faste hem
 dighte
 To Colatynes hous, and down they
 lighte,
 Tarquinius, and eek this Colatyne.
 The husband knew the estres wel and
 fyne, 1715
 And prively into the hous they goon;
 Nor at the gate porter was ther noon;
 And at the chambre-dore they abyde.
 This noble wyf sat by her beddes syde
 Dischevele, for no malice she ne
 thoghte; 1720
 And softe wolle our book seith that she
 wroghte
 To kepen her fro slouthe and ydelnesse;
 And bad her servants doon hir businesse,
 And axeth hem, 'what tydings heren ye?'

How seith men of the sege, how shal
hit be? 1725

God howe the walles weren falle adoun;
Myn husbond is so longe out of this
toun,

For which the dreed doth me so sore
smerte,

Right as a swerd hit stingeth to myn
herte

Whan I think on the sege or of that
place; 1730

God save my lord, I preye him for his
grace:—

And ther-with-al ful tenderly she weep,
And of her werk she took no more keep,
But mekely she leet her eyen falle;
And thilke semblant sat her wel with-
alle. 1735

And eck her teres, ful of honestee,
Embellished her wyfly chastitee;
Her countenance is to her herte digne,
For they acordeden in dede and signe.
And with that word her husbond
Colatyn, 1740

Or she of him was war, com sterthing in,
And seide, 'dreed thee noght, for I am
here!'

And she anon up roos, with blisful
chere,
And kiste him, as of wyves is the
wone.

Tarquinius, this proude kinges sone,
Conceived hath her beautee and her
chere, 1746

Her yelow heer, her shap, and her man-
ere,

Her hew, her wordes that she hath com-
pleyned,

And by no crafte her beautee naȝ nat
feyned;

And caughte to this lady swich de-
syr, 1750

That in his herte brende as any fyr
So woodly, that his wit was al forgeten.

For wel, thoghte he, she sholde nat be
geten;

And ay the more that he was in dispair,
The more he coveteth and thoghte her
fair. 1755

His blinde lust was al his covetinge.

A-morwe, whan the brid began to
singe,

Unto the sege he comth ful privily,

And by himself he walketh sobrelly,
Thimage of her recording alwey newe;
'Thus lay her heer, and thus fresh was
her hewe; 1761

Thus sat, thus spak, thus span; this was
her chere,

Thus fair she was, and this was her man-
ere.'

Al this conceit his herte hath now y-
take.

And, as the see, with tempest al to-
shake, 1765

That, after whan the storm is al ago,
Yet wol the water quappe a day or two,
Right so, thogh that her forme wer ab-
sent,

The plesaunce of her forme was present;
But natheles, nat plesaunce, but delyt,
Or an unrightful talent with despyt; 1771
'For, maugre her, she shal my lemman
be;

Hap helpeth hardy man alday,' quod he;
'What ende that I make, bit shall be
so;'

And girt him with his swerde, and gan
to go; 1775

And forth he rit til he to Rome is come,
And al aloon his wey than hath he nome
Unto the house of Colatyn ful right.

Down was the sonne, and day hath lost
his light;

And in he com un-to a privy halke, 1780
And in the night ful theefly gan he
stalke,

Whan every night was to his reste
brought,

Ne no wight had of tresoun swich a
thoght.

Were hit by window or by other gin,
With swerde y-drawe, shortly he comth

in 1785

Ther as she lay, this noble wyf Lucesse.

And, as she wook, her bed she felte
presse.

'What beste is that,' quod she, 'that
weyeth thus?'

'I am the kinges sone, Tarquinius,'
Quod he, 'but and thou crye, or noise
make, 1790

Or if thou any creature awake,
By thilke god that formed man on lyve,

This swerd through-out thyn herte shal I
ryve.'

And ther-withal unto her throte he sterte,
 And sette the point al sharp upon her
 herte. 1795
 No word she spak, she hath no might
 therto.
 What shal she sayn? her wit is al ago.
 Right as a wolf that fynt a lomb aloon,
 To whom shal she compleyne, or make
 moon?
 What! shal she fighte with an hardy
 knight? 1800
 Wel wot men that a woman hath no
 might.
 What! shal she crye, or how shal she
 asterte
 That hath her by the throte, with swerde
 at herte?
 She axeth grace, and seith al that she
 can.
 'Ne wolt thou nat,' quod he, this cruel
 man, 1805
 'As wisly Iupiter my soule save,
 As I shal in the stable slee thy knave,
 And leye him in thy bed, and loude crye,
 That I thee finde in suche avouterye;
 And thus thou shalt be deed, and also
 lese 1810
 Thy name, for thou shalt non other
 chese.'
 These Romain wyves loveden so hir
 name
 At thilke tyme, and dredden so the
 shame,
 That, what for fere of slaundre and drede
 of death,
 She loste bothe at-ones wit and breeth,
 And in a swough she lay and wex so
 deed, 1816
 Men mighte smyten of her arm or heed;
 She feleth no-thing, neither foul ne fair.
 Tarquinius, that art a kinges eyr,
 And sholdest, as by linage and by
 right, 1820
 Doon as a lord and as a verray knight,
 Why hastow doon dispyt to chivalrye?
 Why hastow doon this lady vilanye?
 Allas! of thee this was a vileins dede!
 But now to purpos; in the story I
 rede, 1825
 Whan he was goon, al this mischaunce
 is falle.
 This lady sente after her frendes alle,
 Fader, moder, husbond, al y-fere;

And al dischevele, with her heres clere,
 In habit swich as women used tho 1830
 Unto the burying of her frendes go,
 She sit in halle with a sorweful sighte.
 Her frendes axen what her aylen mighte,
 And who was deed? And she sit ay
 wepinge,
 A word for shame ne may she forth out-
 bringe, 1835
 Ne upon hem she dorste nat beholde.
 But atte laste of Tarquiny she hem tolde,
 This rueful cas, and al this thing hor-
 rible.
 The wo to tellen hit were impossible,
 That she and alle her frendes made
 atones. 1840
 Al hadde folkes hertes been of stones,
 Hit mighte have maked hem upon her
 rewe,
 Her herte was so wyfly and so trewe.
 She seide, that, for her gilt ne for her
 blame,
 Her husbond sholde nat have the foule
 name, 1845
 That wolde she nat suffre, by no wey.
 And they answerden alle, upon hir fey,
 That they foryeve hit her, for hit was
 right;
 Hit was no gilt, hit lay nat in her might;
 And seiden her ensamples many oon.
 But al for noght; for thus she seide
 anoon, 1851
 'Be as be may,' quod she, 'of forgyving,
 I wol nat have no forgift for no-thing.'
 But prively she caughte forth a knyf,
 And therwith-al she rafte her-self her
 lyf; 1855
 And as she fel adoun, she caste her look,
 And of her clothes yit she hede took;
 For in her falling yit she hadde care
 Lest that her feet or swiche thing lay
 bare;
 So wel she loved clenness and eek
 trouthe. 1860
 Of her had al the toun of Rome routhe,
 And Brutus by her chaste blode hath
 swore
 That Tarquin sholde y-banisht be ther-
 fore,
 And al his kin; and let the peple calle,
 And openly the tale he tolde hem
 alle, 1865
 And openly let carie her on a bere

Through al the toun, that men may see
and here

The horrible deed of her oppressioun.
Ne never was ther king in Rome toun
Sin thilke day; and she was holden
there 1870

A seint, and ever her day y-halwed dere
As in hir lawe: and thus endeth Lu-
cresse,

The noble wyf, as Titus bereth witsnesse.

I tell hit, for she was of love so trewe,
Ne in her wille she chaunged for no
newe. 1875

And for the stable herte, sad and kinde,

Explicit Legenda Lucrecie Rome, Martiris.

That in these women men may alday
finde;

Ther as they caste hir herte, ther hit
dwelleth.

For wel I wot, that Crist him-selve
telleth,

That in Israel, as wyd as is the lond,
That so gret feith in al the lond he ne
fond 1881

As in a woman; and this is no lye.

And as of men, loketh which tyrannye

They doon alday; assay hem who so
liste,

The trewest is ful brotel for to triste. 1885

VI. THE LEGEND OF ARIADNE.

INCIPIT LEGENDA ADRIANE DE ATHENES.

IUGE infernal, Minos, of Crete king,
Now cometh thy lot, now comestow on
the ring;

Nat for thy sake only wryte I this storie,
But for to clepe agein unto memorie
Of Theseus the grete untrouthe of love;
For which the goddess of the heven
above 1891

Ben wrothe, and wreche han take for thy
sinne.

Be reed for shame! now I thy lyf be-
ginne.

Minos, that was the mighty king of
Crete,

That hadde an hundred citees stronge
and grete, 1895

To scole hath sent his sone Androgeus,
To Athenes; of the whiche hit happed
thus,

That he was slayn, lerning philosophye,
Right in that citee, nat but for envye.

The grete Minos, of the whiche I
speke, 1900

His sones deeth is comen for to wreke;
Alcathoe he bisegeth harde and longe.

But natheles the walles be so stronge,
And Nisus, that was king of that citee,

So chivalrous, that litel dredeth he; 1905
Of Minos or his ost took he no cure,
Til on a day befel an aventure,

That Nisus doghter stood upon the wal,
And of the sege saw the maner al.

So happed hit, that, at a scarmishing,
She caste her herte upon Minos the
king, 1911

For his beautee and for his chivalrye,

So sore, that she wende for to dye.

And, shortly of this proces for to pace,

She made Minos winnen thilke place,

So that the citee was al at his wille, 1916

To saven whom him list, or elles spille;

But wikkedly he quitte her kindnesse,

And let her drenche in sorowe and dis-
tresse,

Nere that the goddess hadde of her pite;

But that tale were to long as now for
me. 1921

Athenes wan this king Minos also,

And Alcathoe and other tounes mo;

And this theeffect, that Minos hath so
driven

Hem of Athenes, that they mote him
yiven 1925

Fro yere to yere her owne children dere
For to be slayn, as ye shul after here.

This Minos hath a monstre, a wikked
beste,

That was so cruel that, without areste,

Whan that a man was brought in his
presence, 1930

He wolde him etc, ther helpeth no de-
fence.

And every thridde yeer, with-uten
doute,

They casten lot, and, as hit com aboute
On riche, on pore, he moste his sone
take, 1934

And of his child he moste present make
Unto Minos, to save him or to spille,
Or lete his beste devoure him at his
wille.

And this hath Minos don, right in
despyt; 1938

To wreke his sone was set al his delyt,
And maken hem of Athenes his thral
Fro yere to yere, whyl that he liven shal;
And hoom he saileth whan this toun is
wonne.

This wikked custom is so longe y-ronne
Til that of Athenes king Egeus
Mot sende his owne sone, Theseus, 1945
Sith that the lot is fallen him upon,
To be devoured, for grace is ther non.

And forth is lad this woful yonge knight
Unto the court of king Minos ful right,
And in a prison, fetered, cast is he 1950
Til thilke tyme he sholde y-freten be.

Wel maystow wepe, O woful Theseus,
That art a kinges sone, and dampned
thus.

Me thinketh this, that thou were depe
y-holde

To whom that saved thee fro cares colde!
And now, if any woman helpe thee, 1956
Wel oughtestow her servant for to be,
And been her trewe lover yeer by yere!
But now to come ageyn to my matere.

The tour, ther as this Theseus is
throwe 1960

Doun in the botom derke and wonder
lowe,

Was ioyning in the walle to a foreyne;
And hit was lunging to the doghtren
tweyne

Of king Minos, that in hir chambres
grete

Dwelten above, toward the maister-
strete, 1965

In mochel mirthe, in Ioye and in solas.

Not I nat how, hit happed ther, per cas,
As Theseus compleyned him by nighte,
The kinges doghter, Adrian that highte,
And eek her suster Phedra, herden al
His compleyning, as they stode on the
wal 1971

And lokeden upon the brighte mone;
Hem leste nat to go to bedde sone.
And of his wo they had compassioun;
A kinges sone to ben in swich prisoun
And be devoured, thoughte hem gret
pitee. 1976

Than Adrian spak to her suster free,
And seyde, 'Phedra, leve suster dere,
This woful lordes sone may ye nat here,
How pitously compleyneth he his kin,
And eek his pore estat that he is in, 1981
And gilteless? now certes, hit is routhe!
And if ye wol assenten, by my trouthe,
He shal be holpen, how so that we do!'

Phedra answerde, 'y-wis, me is as wo
For him as ever I was for any man; 1986
And, to his help, the beste reed I can
Is that we doon the gayler prively
To come, and speke with us hastily,
And doon this woful man with him to
come. 1990

For if he may this monstre overcome,
Than were he quit; ther is noon other
bote.

Lat us wel taste him at his herte-rote,
That, if so be that he a wepen have,
Wher that he dar, his lyf to kepe and
save, 1995

Fighten with this fend, and him defende.
For, in the prison, ther he shal descende,
Ye wite wel, that the beste is in a place
That nis nat derk, and hath roum eek
and space

To welde an ax or swerd or staf or knyf,
So that, me thinketh, he sholde save his
lyf; 2001

If that he be a man, he shal do so.
And we shul make him balles eek also
Of wexe and towe, that, whan he gapeth
faste,

Into the bestes throte he shal hem caste
To slake his hunger and encombre his
teeth; 2006

And right anon, whan that Theseus seeth
The beste achoked, he shal on him lepe
To sleen him, or they comen more to-
hepe.

This wepen shal the gayler, or that tyde,
Ful prively within the prison hyde; 2011
And, for the hous is crinkled to and fro,
And hath so quainte weyes for to go —
For hit is shapen as the mase is wrought —
Therto have I a remedie in my thought,

That, by a clewe of twyne, as he hath
 goon, 2016
 The same way he may returne anoon,
 Following alway the threed, as he hath
 come.
 And, whan that he this beste hath over-
 come,
 Then may he fleen away out of this
 drede, 2020
 And eek the gayler may he with him
 lede,
 And him avaunce at hoom in his contree,
 Sin that so greet a lordes sone is he.
 This is my reed, if that he dar hit take.'
 What sholde I lenger sermoun of hit
 make? 2025
 The gayler cometh, and with him Theseus.
 And whan these things been acorded
 thus,
 Adoun sit Theseus upon his knee: —
 'The righte lady of my lyf,' quod he,
 'I, sorweful man, y-dampned to the
 deeth, 2030
 Fro yow, whyl that me lasteth lyf or
 breeth,
 I wol nat twinne, after this aventure,
 But in your servise thus I wol endure,
 That, as a wrecche unknowe, I wol yow
 serve
 For ever-mo, til that myn herte sterve.
 Forsake I wol at hoom myn heritage, 2036
 And, as I seide, ben of your court a page,
 If that ye vouche-sauf that, in this place,
 Ye graunte me to han so gret a grace
 That I may han nat but my mete and
 drinke; 2040
 And for my sustenance yit wol I swinke,
 Right as yow list, that Minos ne no
 wight —
 Sin that he saw me never with eyen
 sight —
 Ne no man elles, shal me conne espye;
 So slyly and so wel I shal me gye, 2045
 And me so wel disfigure and so lowe,
 That in this world ther shal no man me
 knowe,
 To han my lyf, and for to han presence
 Of yow, that doon to me this excellence.
 And to my fader shal I senden here 2050
 This worthy man, that is now your gay-
 lere,
 And, him to guerdon, that he shal wel
 be

Oon of the grettest men of my contree.
 And yif I dorste seyn, my lady bright,
 I am a kinges sone, and eek a knight;
 As wolde god, yif that hit mighte be 2056
 Ye weren in my contree, alle three,
 And I with yow, to here yow companye,
 Than shulde ye seen yif that I ther-of
 lye!
 And, if I profre yow in low manere 2060
 To ben your page and serven yow right
 here,
 But I yow serve as lowly in that place,
 I prey to Mars to yive me swiche a grace
 That shames deeth on me ther mote
 falle,
 And deeth and povert to my frendes
 alle; 2065
 And that my spirit by nighte mote go
 After my deeth, and walke to and fro;
 That I mote of a traitour have a name,
 For which my spirit go, to do me shame!
 And yif I ever claime other degree, 2070
 But-if ye vouche-sauf to yive hit me,
 As I have seid, of shames deeth I deye!
 And mercy, lady! I can nat elles seye!
 A seemly knight was Theseus to see,
 And yong, but of a twenty yeer and
 three; 2075
 But who-so hadde y-seyn his counte-
 nance,
 He wolde have wept, for routhe of his
 penaunce;
 For which this Adriane in this manere
 Answerde to his profre and to his chere.
 'A kinges sone, and eek a knight,'
 quod she, 2080
 'To been my servant in so low degree,
 God shilde hit, for the shame of women
 alle!
 And leve me never swich a cas befall!
 But sende yow grace and sleighte of
 herte also,
 Yow to defende and knightly sleen your
 fo, 2085
 And leve hereafter that I may yow finde
 To me and to my suster here so kinde,
 That I repente nat to give yow lyf!
 Yit were hit better that I were your wyf,
 Sin that ye been as gentil born as I, 2090
 And have a rēanne, nat but faste by,
 Then that I suffred giltles yow to sterve,
 Or that I let yow as a page serve;
 Hit is not profit, as unto your kinrede;

But what is that that man nil do for
drede? 2095

And to my suster, sin that hit is so
That she mot goon with me, if that I go,
Or elles suffre deeth as wel as I,
That ye unto your sone as trewely
Doon her be wedded at your hoom-
coming. 2100

This is the fynal ende of al this thing;
Ye swere hit heer, on al that may be
sworn.'

'Ye, lady myn,' quod he, 'or elles
torn

Mote I be with the Minotaur to-morwe!
And haveth her-of my herte-blood to
borwe, 2105

Yif that ye wile; if I had knyf or spere,
I wolde hit leten out, and ther-on swere,
For than at erst I wot ye wil me leve.

By Mars, that is the cheef of my bileve,
So that I mighte liven and nat faile 2110

To-morwe for tacheve my bataile,
I nolk never fro this place flee,
Til that ye shuld the verray preve see.

For now, if that the sooth I shal yow say,
I have y-loved yow ful many a day, 2115
Thogh ye ne wiste hit nat, in my contree.

And aldermost desyred yow to see
Of any erthly living creature;
Upon my trouthe I swere, and yow assure,
This seven yeer I have your servant
be; 2120

Now have I yow, and also have ye me,
My dere herte, of Athenes duchesse!'

This lady smyleth at his stedfastnesse,
And at his hertly wordes, and his chere,
And to her suster seide in this man-
cre, 2125

Al softly, 'now, suster myn,' quod she,
'Now be we duchesses, bothe I and ye,
And sikered to the regals of Athenes,
And bothe her-after lykly to be quenes,
And saved fro his deeth a kinges
sone, 2130

As ever of gentil women is the wone
To save a gentil man, emforth hir might,
In honest cause, and namely in his right.
Me thinketh no wight oghte her-of us
blame,

Ne beren us ther-for an evel name.' 2135
And shortly of this matere for to make,
This Theseus of her hath leve y-take,
And every point performed was in dede

As ye have in this covenant herd me
rede.

His wepen, his clew, his thing that I have
said, 2140

Was by the gayler in the hous y-laid
Ther as this Minotaur hath his dwelling,
Right faste by the dore, at his entring.

And Theseus is lad unto his deeth,
And forth un-to this Minotaur he
geeth, 2145

And by the teching of this Adriane
He overcom this beste, and was his bane;
And out he cometh by the clewe again
Ful prevely, whan he this beste hath
slain; 2149

And by the gayler geten hath a barge,
And of his wyves tresor gan hit charge,
And took his wyf, and eek her suster
free,

And eek the gayler, and with hem alle
three

Is stole away out of the lond by nighte,
And to the contree of Ennopye him
dighte 2155

Ther as he had a frend of his knowinge.
Ther festen they, ther dauncen they and
singe;

And in his armes hath this Adriane,
That of the beste hath kept him from his
bane; 2159

And gat him ther a newe barge anoon,
And of his contree-folk a ful gret woon,
And taketh his leve, and hoomward sail-
eth he.

And in an yle, amid the wilde see,
Ther as ther dwelte creature noon
Save wilde bestes, and that ful many
oon, 2165

He made his ship a-londe for to sette;
And in that yle half a day he lette,
And seide, that on the lond he moste
him reste.

His mariners han doon right as him
leste;

And, for to tellen shortly in this cas, 2170
Whan Adriane his wyf a-slepe was,
For that her suster fairer was than she,
He taketh her in his hond, and forth
goth he

To shippe, and as a traitour stal his way
Whyl that this Adriane a-slepe lay, 2175
And to his contree-ward he sailleth
blyve —

A twenty devil way the wind him
dryve! —
And fond his fader drenched in the see.
Me list no more to speke of him,
parde;
Thise false lovers, poison be hir bane!
But I wol turne again to Adriane 2181
That is with slepe for werinesse atake.
Ful sorwefully her herte may awake.
Allas! for thee my herte hath now pite!
Right in the dawening awaketh she, 2185
And gropeth in the bedde, and fond
right noght.
'Allas!' quod she, 'that ever I was
wroght!
I am betrayed!' and her heer to-rente,
And to the stronde bar-fot faste she wente,
And cryed, 'Theseus! myn herte swete!
Wher be ye, that I may nat with yow
mete, 2191
And mighte thus with bestes been y-slain?'
The holwe rokkes answerde her again;
No man she saw, and yit shynd the
mone, 2194
And hye upon a rokke she wente sone,
And saw his barge sailing in the see.
Cold wex her herte, and right thus seide
she.
'Meker than ye finde I the bestes wilde!
Hadde he nat sinne, that her thus be-
gylde?
She cryed, 'O turne again, for route and
sinne! 2200
Thy barge hath nat al his meiny inne!
Her kerchef on a pole up stikked she,

Ascaunce that he sholde hit wel y-see,
And him remembre that she was be-
hinde.
And turne again, and on the stronde her
finde; 2205
But al for noght; his wey he is y-goon.
And down she fil a-swown upon a stoon;
And up she rist, and kiste, in al her care,
The steppes of his feet, ther he hath fare,
And to her bedde right thus she speketh
tho: — 2210
'Thou bed,' quod she, 'that hast receyved
two,
Thou shalt answerde of two, and nat of
oon!
Wher is thy gretter part away y-goon?
Allas! wher shal I, wrecched wight, be-
come!
For, thogh so be that ship or boot heer
come, 2215
Hoom to my contree dar I nat for drede;
I can my-selven in this cas nat rede!
What shal I telle more her complein-
ing?
Hit is so long, hit were an hevy thing.
In her epistle Naso telleth al; 2220
But shortly to the ende I telle shal.
The goddes have her holpen, for pitee;
And, in the signe of Taurus, men may see
The stones of her coroun shyne clere. —
I wol no more speke of this mat-
ere; 2225
But thus this false lover can begyle
His trewe love. The devil quyte him his
whyle!

Explicit Legenda Adriane de Athenes.

VII. THE LEGEND OF PHILOMELA.

INCIPIE LEGENDA PHILOMENE.

Deus dator formarum.

THOU yiver of the formes, that hast
wroght
The faire world, and bare hit in thy
thought
Eternally, or thou thy werk began, 2230
Why madest thou, unto the slaundre of
man,

Or — al be that hit was not thy doing,
As for that fyn to make swich a thing —
Why sufferest thou that Tereus was bore,
That is in love so fals and so forswore,
That, fro this world up to the firste
hevene, 2236
Corrupmeth, whan that folk his name
nevne?
And, as to me, so grisly was his dede,
That, whan that I his foule story rede,
Myn eyen wexen foule and sore also;

Yit last the venim of so longe ago, 2241
That hit enfeteth him that wol beholde
The story of Tereus, of which I tolde.

Of Trace was he lord, and kin to
Marte,

The cruel god that stant with bloody
darte; 2245

And wedded had he, with a blisful chere,
King Pandiones faire doghter dere,
That highte Progne, flour of her contree,
Thogh Iuno list nat at the feste be,
Ne Ymeneus, that god of wedding is;

But at the feste redy been y-wis, 2251
The furies three, with alle hir mortel
broun.

The owle al night aboute the balkes
wond,

That prophet is of wo and of mis-
chaunce.

This revel, ful of songe and ful of
daunce, 2255

Lasteth a fourteenight, or litel lasse.
But, shortly of this story for to passe,

For I am wery of him for to telle,
Five yeer his wyf and he togeder dwelle,
Til on a day she gan so sore longe 2260
To seen her suster, that she saw nat
longe,

That for desyr she niste what to seye.
But to her husband gan she for to preye,

For goddes love, that she moste ones
goon

Her suster for to seen, and come anoon,
Or elles, but she moste to her wende, 2266
She preyde him, that he wolde after her
sende;

And this was, day by day, al her prayere
With al humblesse of wyf hood, word, and
chere. 2269

This Tereus let make his shippes yare,
And into Grece him-self is forth y-fare
Unto his fader in lawe, and gan him
preye

To vouche-sauf that, for a month or
tweye,

That Philomene, his wyves suster, mighte
On Progne his wyf but ones have a
sighte — 2275

'And she shal come to yow again anoon.
Myself with her wol bothe come and
goon,

And as myn hertes lyf I wol her kepe.'
This olde Pandion, this king, gan wepe

For tendernesse of herte, for to leve 2280
His doghter goon, and for to yive her
leve;

Of al this world he lovede no-thing so;
But at the laste leve hath she to go.
For Philomene, with salte teres eke,
Gan of her fader grace to beseke 2285
To seen her suster, that her longeth so;
And him embraceth with her armes two.
And therwith-al so yong and fair was she
That, whan that Terëus saw her beautee,
And of array that ther was noon her
liche, 2290

And yit of bountee was she two so riche,
He caste his fyry herte upon her so
That he wol have her, how so that hit go,
And with his wyles kneled and so preyde,
Til at the laste Pandion thus seyde: —

'Now, sone,' quod he, 'that art to me
so dere, 2296

I thee betake my yonge doghter here,
That bereth the key of al my hertes lyf.

And grete wel my doghter and thy wyf,
And yive her leve somtyme for to pleye,
That she may seen me ones er I deye.'

And soothly, he hath mad him riche feste,
And to his folk, the moste and eek the
leste,

That with him com; and yaf him yiftes
grete,

And him conveyeth through the maister-
strete 2305

Of Athenes, and to the see him broghte,
And turneth hoom; no malice he ne
thoghte.

The ores pulleth forth the vessel faste,
And into Trace arriveth at the laste,

And up into a forest he her ledde, 2310
And to a cave privily him spedde;

And, in this derke cave, yif her leste,
Or leste noght, he bad her for to reste;
Of whiche her herte agroos, and seyde
thus,

'Wher is my suster, brother Tereus?'
And therwith-al she wepte tenderly, 2316

And quook for fere, pale and pitously,
Right as the lamb that of the wolf is
biten;

Or as the colver, that of the egle is
smiten,

And is out of his claws forth escaped,
Yet hit is afered and awhaped 2321

Lest hit be hent eft-sones, so sat she.

But utterly hit may non other be.
 By force hath he, this traitour, doon that dede,
 That he hath reft her of her mayden-
 hede, 2325
 Maugree her heed, by strengthe and by his might.
 Lo! here a dede of men, and that a right!
 She cryeth 'suster!' with ful loude stevene,
 And 'fader dere!' and 'help me, god in hevене!'
 Al helpeth nat; and yet this false thief
 Hath doon this lady yet a more mischeef, 2331
 For fere lest she sholde his shame crye,
 And doon him openly a vilanye,
 And with his swerd her tong of kerveth he,
 And in a castel made her for to be 2335
 Ful privily in prison evermore,
 And kepte her to his usage and his store,
 So that she mighte him nevermore asterte.
 O sely Philomene! wo thyn herte;
 God wreke thee, and sende thee thy bone!
 Now is hit tyme I make an ende sone.
 This Tereus is to his wyf y-come, 2342
 And in his armes hath his wyf y-nome,
 And pitously he weep, and shook his heed,
 And swor her that he fond her suster deed; 2345
 For which this sely Progne hath swich wo,
 That ny her sorweful herte brak a-two;
 And thus in teres lete I Progne dwelle,
 And of her suster forth I wol yow telle.
 This woful lady lerned had in youthe
 So that she werken and enbrouden couthe, 2351
 And weven in her stole the radevore
 As hit of women hath be woned yore.
 And, shortly for to seyn, she hath her fille
 Of mete and drink, and clothing at her wille, 2355
 And coude eek rede, and wel y-nogh endyte,
 But with a penne coude she nat wryte;
 But lettres can she weven to and fro,
 So that, by that the yeer was al a-go,
 She had y-woven in a stamin large 2360

Hou she was broght from Athenes in a barge,
 And in a cave how that she was broght;
 And al the thing that Tereus hath wrought,
 She waf hit wel, and wroot the story above,
 Hou she was served for her suster love; 2365
 And to a knave a ring she yaf anon,
 And prayed him, by signes, for to goon
 Unto the quene, and beren her that clooth,
 And by signes swor him many an ooth,
 She sholde him yeve what she geten mighte. 2370
 This knave anon unto the quene him dighte,
 And took hit her, and al the maner tolde.
 And, whan that Progne hath this thing beholde,
 No word she spak, for sorwe and eek for rage;
 But feyned her to goon on pilgrimage
 To Bachus temple; and, in a lital stounde, 2376
 Her dombe suster sitting hath she founde,
 Weping in the castel her aloon.
 Allas! the wo, the compleint, and the moon
 That Progne upon her dombe suster maketh! 2380
 In armes everich of hem other taketh,
 And thus I lete hem in hir sorwe dwelle.
 The remenant is no charge for to telle,
 For this is al and som, thus was she served,
 That never harm a-gilte ne deserved 2385
 Unto this cruel man, that she of wiste.
 Ye may be war of men, yif that yow liste.
 For, al be that he wol nat, for his shame,
 Doon so as Tereus, to lese his name,
 Ne serve yow as a mordroure or a knave,
 Ful lital whyle shul ye trewe him have,
 That wol I seyn, al were he now my brother, 2392
 But hit so be that he may have non other.

Explicit Legenda Philomene.

VIII. THE LEGEND OF PHILLIS.

INCIPIT LEGENDA PHILLIS.

By preve as wel as by auctoritee,
 That wikked fruit cometh of a wikked
 tree, 2395
 That may ye finde, if that it lyketh yow.
 But for this ende I speke this as now,
 To telle you of false Demophon.
 In love a falsher herde I never non,
 But-if hit were his fader Theseus, 2400
 'God, for his grace, fro swich oon kepe
 us!'
 Thus may thise women prayen that hit
 here.
 Now to theeffect turne I of my matere.
 Destroyed is of Troye the citee;
 This Demophon com sailing in the see
 Toward Athenes, to his paleys large; 2406
 With him com many a ship and many a
 barge
 Ful of his folk, of which ful many oon
 Is wounded sore, and seek, and wo be-
 goon.
 And they han at the sege longe y-lain.
 Behinde him com a wind and cek a
 rain 2411
 That shoof so sore, his sail ne mighte
 stonde,
 Him were lever than al the world a-
 londe,
 So hunteth him the tempest to and fro.
 So derk hit was, he coude nowher go;
 And with a wawe brosten was his
 stere. 2416
 His ship was rent so lowe, in swich man-
 ere,
 That carpenter ne coude hit nat amende.
 The see, by nighte, as any torche brende
 For wood, and posseth him now up now
 doun, 2420
 Til Neptune hath of him compassioun,
 And Thetis, Chorus, Triton, and they
 alle,
 And maden him upon a lond to falle,
 Wher-of that Phillis lady was and quene,
 Ligurgus doghter, fairer on to sene 2425
 Than is the flour again the brighte sonne.
 Unne-the is Demophon to londe y-wonne,
 Wayk and cek wery, and his folk for-
 pyued

Of werinesse, and also enfamynd; 2429
 And to the deeth he almost was y-driven.
 His wyse folke to conseil han him given
 To seken help and socour of the quene,
 And loken what his grace mighte been,
 And maken in that lond som chevi-
 saunce,
 To kepen him fro wo and fro mis-
 chance. 2435
 For seek was he, and almost at the
 deeth;
 Unne-the mighte he speke or drawe his
 breeth,
 And lyth in Rodopeya him fro to reste.
 Whan he may walke, him thoughte hit
 was the beste
 Unto the count to seken for socour. 2440
 Men knewe him wel, and diden him
 honour;
 For at Athenes duk and lord was he,
 As Theseus his fader hadde y-be,
 That in his tyme was of greet renoun,
 No man so greet in al his regioun; 2445
 And lyk his fader of face and of stature,
 And fals of love; hit com him of nature;
 As doth the fox Renard, the foxes sone,
 Of kinde he coude his olde faders wone
 Withoute lore, as can a drake swimme,
 Whan hit is caught and caried to the
 brinne. 2451
 This honourable Phillis doth him chere,
 Her lyketh wel his port and his manere.
 But for I am agroted heer-bifron
 To wryte of hem that been in love for-
 sworn, 2455
 And cek to haste me in my legende,
 Which to performe god me grace sende,
 Therfor I passe shortly in this wyse;
 Ye han wel herd of Theseus devyse
 In the betraying of fair Adriane, 2460
 That of her pite kepte him from his bane.
 At shorte wordes, right so Demophon
 The same wey, the same path hath gon
 That dide his false fader Theseus.
 For unto Phillis hath he sworn thus,
 To wedden her, and her his trouthe
 plighte, 2466
 And piked of her al the good he mighte,
 Whan he was hood and sound and hadde
 his reste;

And doth with Phillis what so that him
leste.

And wel coude I, yif that me leste so,
Tellen al his doing to and fro. 2471

He seide, unto his contree moste he
saile,

For ther he wolde her wedding appar-
aile

As fil to her honour and his also.

And openly he took his leve tho, 2475

And hath her sworn, he wolde nat
soiourne,

But in a month he wolde again retourne.

And in that lond let make his ordi-
nauunce

As verray lord, and took the obeisaunce
Wel and hoonly, and let his shippes
dighte, 2480

And boom he goth the nexte wey he
mighte;

For unto Phillis yit ne com he nocht.

And that hath she so harde and sore
aboght,

Allas! that, as the stories us recorde,

She was her owne deeth right with a
corde, 2485

Whan that she saw that Demophon her
trayed.

But to him first she wroot and faste
him prayed

He wolde come, and her deliver of peyne,
As I reherse shal a word or tweyne.

Me list nat vouche-sauf on him to
swinke, 2490

Ne spende on him a penne ful of inke,
For fals in love was he, right as his syre;

The devil sette hir soules bothe a-fyre!

But of the lettre of Phillis wol I wryte

A word or tweyne, al-thogh hit be but
lyte. 2495

'Thyn hostesse,' quod she, 'O Demo-
phon,

Thy Phillis, which that is so wo begon,
Of Rodopeye, upon yow moot compleyne,

Over the terme set betwix us tweyne,
That ye ne holden forward, as ye
seyde; 2500

Your anker, which ye in our haven leyde,
Highte us, that ye wolde comen, out of
doute,

Or that the mone ones wente aboute.

But tymes foure the mone hath hid her
face 2504

Sin thilke day ye wente fro this place,
And foure tymes light the world again.
But for al that, yif I shal soothly sain,
Yit hath the stream of Sitho nat y-brought
From Athenes the ship; yit comth hit
nocht.

And, yif that ye the terme rekne wolde,
As I or other trewe lovers sholde, 2511
I pleyne not, god wot, before my day. —

But al her lettre wryten I ne may
By ordre, for hit were to me a charge;
Her lettre was right long and ther-to
large; 2515

But here and there in ryme I have hit
laid,

Ther as me thoughte that she wel hath
said. —

She seide, 'thy sailles comen nat again,
Ne to thy word ther nis no fey certain;

But I wot why ye come nat,' quod
she; 2520

'For I was of my love to you so free.

And of the goddes that ye han forswore,
Yif that hir vengeance falle on yow ther-
fore,

Ye be nat suffisaunt to here the peyne.
To moche trusted I, wel may I
pleyne, 2525

Upon your linage and your faire tonge,
And on your teres falsly out y-wronge.

How coude ye wepe so by craft?' quod
she;

'May ther swiche teres feyned be?

Now certes, yif ye wolde have in mem-
orie, 2530

Hit oghte be to yow but litel glorie
To have a sely mayde thus betrayed!

To god,' quod she, 'preye I, and oft
have prayed,

That hit be now the grettest prys of alle,
And moste honour that ever yow shal
befalle! 2535

And whan thyn olde auncestres peynted
be,

In which men may hir worthiness see.

Than, preye I god, thou peynted be als
That folk may reden, for-by as they go.

'Lo! this is he, that with his flaterye
Betrayed hath and doon her viant'

That was his trewe love in thoght and
dede!'

But sothly, of go point vit may they rede,
That ye ben lyl your fader as in this;

For he begyled Adriane, y-wis, 2545
 With swiche an art and swiche sotelte
 As thou thy-selven hast begyled me.
 As in that point, al-though hit be nat fayr,
 Thou folwest him, certein, and art his
 eyr.
 But sin thus sinfully ye me begyle, 2550
 My body mote ye seen, within a whyle,
 Right in the haven of Athenes fletinge,
 With-ouren sepulture and buryng;
 Though ye ben harder then is any stoon.'

And, whan this lettre was forth sent
 anon, 2555
 And knew how brotel and how fals he
 was,
 She for dispeyr for-dide herself, allas!
 Swich sorwe hath she, for she besette her
 so.
 Be war, ye women, of your sotil fo,
 Sin yit this day men may ensample
 see; 2560
 And trusteth, as in love, no man but me.

Explicit Legenda Phillis.

IX. THE LEGEND OF HYPERMNESTRA.

INCIPIT LEGENDA YPERMISTRE.

In Grece whylom weren brethren two,
 Of whiche that oon was called Danao,
 That many a sone hath of his body
 wonne,
 As swiche false lovers ofte conne. 2565
 Among his sones alle ther was oon
 That aldermost he lovede of everichoon.
 And whan this child was born, this
 Danao
 Shoop him a name, and called him Lino.
 That other brother called was Egiste, 2570
 That was of love as fals as ever him liste,
 And many a doghter gat he in his lyve;
 Of which he gat upon his righte wyve
 A doghter dere, and dide her for to calle
 Ypermistra, yongest of hem alle; 2575
 The whiche child, of her nativitee,
 To alle gode thewes born was she,
 As lyked to the goddess, or she was born,
 That of the shefe she sholde be the corn;
 The Wirdes, that we clepen Destinee, 2580
 Hath shapen her that she mot nedes be
 Pitouse, sadde, wyse, and trewe as steel;
 And to this woman hit accordeth weel.
 For, though that Venus yaf her greet
 beautee,
 With Jupiter compounded so was she 2585
 That conscience, trouthe, and dreed of
 shame,
 And of her wyf hood for to kepe her name,
 This, thoughte her, was felicitee as here.
 And rede Mars was, that tyme of the
 yere,

So feble, that his malice is him raft, 2590
 Repressed hath Venus his cruel craft;
 What with Venus and other oppressioun
 Of houses, Mars his venim is adoun,
 That Ypermistra dar nat handle a knyf
 In malice, though she sholde lese her
 lyf. 2595
 But natheles, as heven gan tho turne,
 To badde aspectes hath she of Saturne,
 That made her for to deyen in prisoun,
 As I shal after make mencion.
 To Danao and Egistes also — 2600
 Al-though so be that they were brethren
 two,
 For thilke tyme nas spared no linage —
 Hit lyked hem to maken mariage
 Betwix Ypermistra and him Lino,
 And casten swiche a day hit shal be so;
 And ful acorded was hit witterly; 2606
 The array is wroght, the tyme is faste by.
 And thus Lino hath of his fadres brother
 The doghter wedded, and eche of hem
 hath other.
 The torches brennen and the lampes
 bryghte, 2610
 The sacrifices been ful redy dighte;
 Thencens out of the fyre reketh sote,
 The flour, the leef is rent up by the rote
 To maken garlands and corones hye;
 Ful is the place of soun of minstralceye,
 Of songes amorous of mariage, 2616
 As thilke tyme was the pleyn usage.
 And this was in the paleys of Egiste,
 That in his hous was lord, right as him
 liste;

And thus the day they dryven to an
ende; 2620

The frendes taken leve, and hoom they
wende.

The night is come, the bryd shal go to
bedde;

Egiste to his chambre faste him spedde,
And privily he let his doghter calle.

Whan that the hous was voided of hem
alle, 2625

He loked on his doghter with glad
chere,

And to her spak, as ye shul after here.

'My righte doghter, tresor of myn
herte!

Sin first that day that shapen was my
sherte,

Or by the fatal sustren had my dom, 2630

So ny myn herte never thing me com

As thou, myn Ypermistra, doghter
dere!

Tak heed what I thy fader sey thee
here,

And werk after thy wyser ever-mo.

For alderfirste, doghter, I love thee so

That al the world to me nis half so
leef; 2636

Ne I nolde rede thee to thy mischeef

For al the gode under the colde mone;

And what I mene, hit shal be seid right
sone,

With protestacioun, as in this wyse, 2640

That, but thou do as I shal thee devyse,
Thou shalt be deed, by him that al hath

wrought!

At shorte wordes, thou nescapest nocht

Out of my paleys, or that thou be deed,
But thou consente and werke after my

reed; 2645

Tak this to thee for ful conclusioun.'

This Ypermistra caste her eyen down,
And quook as dooth the leef of aspe

grene;

Deed wex her hewe, and lyk as ash to
sene,

And seyde, 'lord and fader, al your
wille, 2650

After my might, got wot, I shal fulfille,

So hit to me be no confusioun.'

'I nil,' quod he, 'have noon excep-
cioun;'

And out he caughte a knyf, as rasour
kene;

'Hyd this,' quod he, 'that hit be nat y-
sene; 2655

And, whan thyn husbond is to bedde
y-go,

Why! that he slepeth, cut his throte
a-two.

For in my dremes hit is warned me

How that my newew shal my bane be,

But whiche I noot, wherfor I wol be
siker. 2660

Yif thou sey nay, we two shul have a
biker

As I have seyde, by him that I have
sworn.'

This Ypermistra bath ny her wit
forlorn;

And, for to passen harmles of that place,
She graunted him; ther was non other

grace. 2665

And therwith-al a costrel taketh he,

And seyde, 'herof a draught, or two or
three,

Yif him to drinke, whan he goth to
reste,

And he shal slepe as longe as ever thee
leste,

The narcotiks and opies been so stronge :

And go thy wey, lest that him thinke
longe.' 2671

Out comth the bryd, and with ful sober
chere,

As is of maidens ofte the manere,

To chambre is broght with revel and with
songe,

And shortly, lest this tale be to longe,

This Lino and she ben sone broght to
bedde; 2676

And every wight out at the dore him
spedde.

The night is wasted, and he fel a-
slepe;

Ful tenderly beginneth she to wepe.

She rist her up, and dredfully she
quaketh, 2680

As doth the braunche that Zephirus
shaketh,

And husht were alle in Argon that citee.

As cold as any frost now wexeth she;

For pite by the herte her streyneth so,

And dreed of deeth doth her so moche
wo, 2685

That thryes down she fil in swiche a
were.

She rist her up, and stakereth heer and
 there,
 And on her handes faste loketh she.
 'Allas! and shul my handes blody be?
 I am a maid, and, as by my nature, 2690
 And by my semblant and by my ves-
 ture,
 Myn handes been nat shapen for a knyf,
 As for to reve no man fro his lyf.
 What devil have I with the knyf to do?
 And shal I have my throte corve a-two?
 Than shal I blede, allas! and me be-
 shende; 2696
 And nedes cost this thing mot have an
 ende;
 Or he or I mot nedes lese our lyf.
 Now certes,' quod she, 'sin I am his
 wyf,
 And hath my feith, yit is it bet for me
 For to be deed in wyfly honestee 2701
 Than be a traitour living in my shame.
 Be as he may, for ernest or for game,
 He shal awake, and ryse and go his way
 Out at this goter, or that hit be day!'—
 And weep ful tenderly upon his face, 2706

And in her armes gan him to embrace,
 And him she roggeth and awaketh softe;
 And at the window leep he fro the lofte
 Whan she hath warned him, and doon
 him bote. 2710
 This Lino swifte was, and light of fote,
 And from his wyf he ran a ful good pas.
 This sely woman is so wayk, allas!
 And helples so, that, or that she fer
 wente,
 Her cruel fader dide her for to hente. 2715
 Allas! Lino! why art thou so unkinde?
 Why ne haddest thou remembred in thy
 minde
 To taken her, and lad her forth with
 thee?
 For, whan she saw that goon away was
 he,
 And that she mighte nat so faste go, 2720
 Ne folwen him, she sette her doun right
 tho,
 Til she was caught and fetered in
 prisoun.
 This tale is seid for this conclu-
 sioun

[Unfinished.]

A TREATISE ON THE ASTROLABE.

PROLOGUS.

LITELL Lowis my sone, I have perceived wel by certeyne evidences thyn abilite to lerne sciencez touchinge nombres and proporcions; and as
5 wel considere I thy bisy preyere in special to lerne the Tretis of the Astrolabie. Than, for as mechel as a filosofre seith, 'he wrappeth him in his frend, that condescendeth to the
10 rightful preyers of his frend,' ther-for have I geven thee a suffisaunt Astrolabie as for oure orizonte, compowned after the latitude of Oxenford; up-on which, by mediacion of this litel tretis,
15 I purpose to teche thee a certain nombre of conclusions apertening to the same instrument. I seye a certain of conclusions, for three causes. The furste cause is this: truste wel
20 that alle the conclusiouns that han ben founde, or elles possibly mighten be founde in so noble an instrument as an Astrolabie, ben un-knowe perfitty to any mortal man in this regioun,
25 as I suppose. A-nother cause is this; that sothly, in any tretis of the Astrolabie that I have seyn, there ben some conclusions that wole nat in alle thinges performen hir bihestes;
30 and some of hem ben to harde to thy tendre age of ten yeer to conseve. This tretis, divided in fyve parties, wole I shewe thee under ful lighte rewles and naked wordes in English;
35 for Latin ne canstow yit but smal, my lyte sone. But natheles, suffyse to thee these trewe conclusiouns in English, as wel as suffyseth to these

noble clerkes Grekes thise same conclusiouns in Greek, and to Arabiens
40 in Arabik, and to lewes in Ebrew, and to the Latin folk in Latin; whiche Latin folk han hem furst out of othre diverse langages, and writen in hir owne tonge, that is to sein, in Latin. 45
And god wot, that in alle these langages, and in many mo, han these conclusiouns ben suffisantly lerned and taught, and yit by diverse rewles, right as diverse pathes leden diverse
50 folk the righte wey to Rome. Now wol I prey meekly every discret persone that redeth or hereth this litel tretis, to have my rewde endyting for excused, and my superfluite of wordes, 55
for two causes. The firste cause is, for that curious endyting and hard sentence is ful hevvy atones for swich a child to lerne. And the seconde
60 cause is this, that sothly me semeth betre to wyten un-to a child twyes a good sentence, than he for-gete it ones. And Lowis, yif so be that I shewe thee in my lighte English as
65 trewe conclusiouns touching this matere, and naught only as trewe but as many and as subtil conclusiouns as ben shewed in Latin in any commune tretis of the Astrolabie, con me the
70 more thank; and preye god save the king, that is lord of this langage. and alle that him feyth bereth and obeyeth, everech in his degree, the more and the lasse. But considere
75 wel, that I ne usurpe nat to have founde this werk of my labour or of myn engin. I nam but a lewd compilatour of the labour of olde Astrologiens,

and have hit translated in myn English only for thy doctrine; and with this swerd shal I sleen envye.

I. The firste partie of this tretis shal reherse the figures and the members of thyn Astrolabie, bi-cause that 85 thou shalt han the grette knowing of thyn owne instrument.

II. The second partie shal teche thee werken the verrey practik of the forseide conclusiouns, as ferforth and 90 as narwe as may be shewed in so smal an instrument portatif aboute. For wel wot every astrologien that smailest fraccions ne wol nat ben shewed in so smal an instrument, as in subtil 95 tables calculated for a cause.

III. The thridde partie shal contien diverse tables of longitudes and latitudes of sterres fixe for the Astrolabie, and tables of declinacions 100 of the sonne, and tables of longitudes of citeez and of townes; and as wel for the governance of a clokke as for to finde the altitude meridian; and many another notable conclusioun, 105 after the kalendres of the reverent clerkes, frere I. Somer and frere N. Lenne.

IV. The ferthe partie shal ben a theorik to declare the moeving of the 110 celestial bodies with the causes. The whiche ferthe partie in special shal shewen a table of the verray moeving of the mone from houre to houre, every day and in every signe, after 115 thyn almenak; upon which table ther folwith a canon, suffisant to teche as wel the maner of the wyrking of that same conclusioun, as to knowe in oure 120 orizzonte with which degree of the zodiac that the mone ariseth in any latitude; and the arising of any planete after his latitude fro the ccliptik lyne.

V. The fiftie partie shal ben an in- 125 troductorie after the statutz of oure doctours, in which thou maist lerne a gret part of the general rewles of theorik in astrologie. In which fiftie 130 partie shaltow finde tables of equacions of houses aftur the latitude of Oxenford; and tables of dignetes of

planetes, and other noteful thinges, yif god wol vouch-sauf and his modur the mayde, mo than I be-hete, &c.

PART I.

HERE BIGINNETH THE DESCRIPCION OF THE ASTROLABIE.

1. Thyn Astrolabie hath a ring to putten on the thoumbe of thy right hand in taking the heighte of thinges. And tak keep, for from hennes-forthward, I wol clepe the heighte of any 5 thing that is taken by thy rewle, the altitude, with-oute mo wordes.

2. This ring renneth in a maner turet, fast to the moder of thyn Astrolabie, in so rowm a space that hit desturbeth nat the instrument to hangen after his righte centre. 5

3. The Moder of thyn Astrolabie is the thikkeste plate, perced with a large hole, that resseyveth in hir wombe the thinne plates compowned for diverse clymatz, and thy riet 5 shapen in manere of a net or of a webbe of a loppe; and for the more declaracioun, lo here the figure.

4. This moder is devyded on the bak-half with a lyne, that cometh descendinge fro the ring down to the nethereste bordure. The whiche 5 lyne, fro the for-seide ring un-to the centre of the large hole amidde, is cleped the south lyne, or elles the lyne meridional. And the remenant of this lyne downe to the bordure is 10 cleped the north lyne, or elles the lyne of midnight. And for the more declaracioun, lo here the figure.

5. Over-thwart this for-seide longe lyne, ther crosseth him another lyne of the same lengthe from est to west. Of the whiche lyne, from a litel croys 5 + in the bordure un-to the centre of the large hole, is cleped the Est lyne, or elles the lyne Orientale; and the remenant of this lyne fro the forseide + un-to the bordure, is cleped the 10 West lyne, or the lyne Occidentale. Now hastow here the foure quarters of thin Astrolabie, devyded after the

four principals plages or quarters of the firmament. And for the more
15 declaracioun, lo here thy figure.

6. The est side of thyn Astrolabie is cleped the right side, and the west side is cleped the left side. Forget nat this, litel Lowis. Put the ring
5 of thyn Astrolabie upon the thombe of thy right hand, and thanne wole his right syde be toward thy left syde, and his left syde wol be toward thy right syde; tak this rewle gen-
10 eral, as wel on the bak as on the wombe-side. Upon the ende of this este lyne, as I first seide, is marked a litel +, wher-as evere-mo generally is considered the entring of the first
15 degree in which the sonne aryseth. And for the more declaracioun, lo here the figure.

7. Fro this litel + up to the ende of the lyne meridional, under the ring, shaltow finden the bordure deuyded with 90 degrees; and by that
5 same proporcioun is every quarter of thin Astrolabie deuyded. Over the whiche degrees ther ben nombres of augrim, that deuyden thilke same degrees fro fyve to fyve, as sheweth
10 by longe strykes by-twene. Of whiche longe strykes the space by-twene contienith a mile-wey. And every degree of the bordure contieneth four minutes, that is to seyn, minutes of
15 an heure. And for more declaracioun, lo here the figure.

8. Under the compas of thilke degrees ben writen the names of the Twelve Signes, as Aries, Taurus, Gemini, Cancer, Leo, Virgo, Libra,
5 Scorpio, Sagittarius, Capricornus, Aquarius, Pisces; and the nombres of the degrees of the signes ben writen in augrim above, and with longe devisiouns, fro fyve to fyve;
10 deuyded fro tyme that the signe entreth un-to the laste ende. But understond wel, that these degrees of signes ben everich of hem considered of 60 minutes, and every
15 minute of 60 secondes, and so forth in-to smale fraccions infinit, as with Alkabucius. And ther-for, know wel,

that a degree of the bordure contieneth four minutes, and a degree of a signe contieneth 60 minutes, and
20 have this in minde. And for the more declaracioun, lo here thy figure.

9. Next this folweth the Cercle of the Dayes, that ben figured in maner of degrees, that contienen in noumbre 365; diuyded also with longe strykes fro fyve to fyve, and the nombres in augrim writen under that cercle. And for more declaracioun, lo here thy figure.

10. Next the Cercle of the Dayes, folweth the Cercle of the names of the Monthes; that is to seyn, Ianuare, Februare, Marcus, Aprile, Mayus, Iuin, Iulius, Augustus, Septembre,
5 October, Novembre, Decembre. The names of these monthes were cleped in Arabiens, somme for hir propretees, and some by statutz of lordes, some by other lordes of Rome. Eek
10 of these monthes, as lyked to Iulius Cesar and to Cesar Augustus, some were compowned of diverse nombres of dayes, as Iuil and August. Thanne hath
15 Ianuare 31 dayes, Februare 28, March 31, Aprile 30, May 31, Iunius 30, Iulius 31, Augustus 31, September 30, Octobre 31, Novembre 30, December 31. Natheles, al-though that Iulius Cesar took 2 dayes out of
20 Feverer and put hem in his moneth of Iuille, and Augustus Cesar cleped the moneth of August after his name, and ordeyned it of 31 dayes, yit truste wel, that the sonne dwelleth
25 ther-for nevere the more ne lesse in oon signe than in another.

11. Than folwen the names of the Halidays in the Kalender, and next hem the lettres of the Abc. on which they fallen. And for the more declaracioun, lo here thy figure.
5

12. Next the forseile Cercle of the Abc., under the cros-lyne, is marked the scale, in maner of two squyes, or elles in manere of laddres, that serveth by hise 12 poyntes and his
5 devisiouns of ful many a subtil conclusioun. Of this forseile scale, fro the cros-lyne un-to the verre angle,

is cleped *umbra versa*, and the nether
10 partie is cleped the *umbra recta*, or
elles *umbra extensa*. And for the
more declaracioun, lo here the figure.

13. Thanne hastow a brood Rewle,
that hath on either ende a square
plate perced with a certein holes, some
more and some lesse, to resseyven
5 the stremes of the sonne by day, and
cek by mediacioun of thyn eye, to
knowe the altitude of sterres by
nighte. And for the more declara-
cioun, lo here thy figure.

14. Thanne is ther a large Pyn, in
maner of an extree, that goth thorow
the hole that halt the tables of the
clymates and the riet in the wombe
5 of the Moder, thorw which Pyn ther
goth a litel wegge which that is
cleped 'the hors,' that streyneth alle
these parties to-hepe; this forseide
grete Pyn, in maner of an extree, is
10 imagined to be the Pol Artik in
thyn Astrolabie. And for the more
declaracioun, lo here the figure.

15. The wombe-side of thyn Astro-
labie is also devyded with a longe
croys in foure quarters from est to
west, fro south to north, fro right
5 syde to left syde, as is the bak-syde.
And for the more declaracioun, lo
here thy figure.

16. The bordure of which wombe-
side is devyded from the poynt of the
est lyne un-to the poynt of the south
lyne under the ring, in 90 degres;
5 and by that same proporcioun is
every quarter devyded as is the bak-
syde, that amonteth 360 degrees.
And understand wel, that degrees of
this bordure ben answering and con-
10 sentrik to the degrees of the Equi-
noxiol, that is devyded in the same
nombre as every othere cercele is in
the heye hevene. This same bordure
is devyded also with 23 lettres capitals
15 and a smal croys + above the south
lyne, that sheweth the 24 houres
equals of the klokke; and, as I have
said, 5 of these degrees maken a
myle-wey, and 3 mile-wey maken an
20 houre. And every degree of this
bordure conteneth 4 minutes, and

every minut 60 secondes; now have
I told thee twye. And for the more
declaracioun, lo here the figure.

17. The plate under thy riet is
descryved with 3 principal cercles;
of whiche the leste is cleped the
cercele of Cancere, by-cause that the
heved of Cancere turneth evermor
5 consentrik up-on the same cercele.
In this heved of Cancere is the gret-
test declinacioun northward of the
sonne. And ther-for is he cleped
the Solsticioun of Somer; whiche
10 declinacioun, aftur Ptholome, is 23
degrees and 50 minutes, as wel in
Cancere as in Capricorne. This signe
of Cancere is cleped the Tropik of
Somer, of *tropos*, that is to seyn
15 'agaynward;' for thanne by-ginneth
the sonne to passe fro us-ward. And
for the more declaracioun, lo here the
figure.

The middel cercele in wydnesse, of
20 thise 3, is cleped the Cercele Equi-
noxiol; up-on whiche turneth evermo
the heddes of Aries and Libra. And
understand wel, that evermo this
Cercele Equinoxiol turneth iustly fro
25 verrey est to verrey west; as I have
shewed thee in the spere solide.
This same cercele is cleped also the
Weyere, *equator*, of the day; for
whan the sonne is in the hevedes of
30 Aries and Libra, than ben the dayes
and the nightes ilyke of lengthe in al
the world. And ther-fore ben thise
two signes called the Equinoxies.
And alle that moeveth with-in the
35 hevedes of thise Aries and Libra, his
moeving is cleped northward; and
alle that moeveth with-oute thise
hevedes, his moeving is cleped south-
ward as fro the equinoxiol. Tak keep
40 of thise latitudes north and south,
and forget it nat. By this Cercele
Equinoxiol ben considered the 24
houres of the klokke; for evermo
the arysing of 15 degrees of the equi-
45 noxiol maketh an houre equal of the
klokke. This equinoxiol is cleped
the girdel of the firste moeving, or
elles of the *angulus primi motus vel*
50 *primi mobilis*. And nota, that firste

moeving is cleped 'moeving' of the firste moeuable of the 8 spere, whiche moeving is fro est to west, and eft agayn in-to est; also it is clepid
 55 'girdel' of the first moeving, for it departeth the firste moeuable, that is to seyn, the spere, in two ilyke parties, evene-distantz fro the poles of this world.

60 The wydeste of these three principal cercles is cleped the Cercle of Capricorne, by-cause that the heved of Capricorne turneth evermo consentrik up-on the same cercle. In
 65 the heved of this for-seide Capricorne is the grettest declinacioun southward of the sonne, and ther-for is it cleped the Solsticioun of Winter. This signe of Capricorne is also
 70 cleped the Tropik of Winter, for thanne byginneth the sonne to come agayn to us-ward. And for the more declaracioun, lo here thy figure.

18. Upon this forseide plate ben compassed certein cercles that highten Almicanteras, of which som of hem
 5 semen perfit cercles, and somme semen inperfit. The centre that standith a-middes the narwest cercle is cleped the Senith; and the nether-
 10 est cercle, or the firste cercle, is clepid the Orisonte, that is to seyn, the cercle that devydeth the two emispheres, that is, the partie of the hevne a-bove the erthe and the partie be-nethe. These Almicanteras
 15 ben compowned by two and two, alle be-it so that on divers Astrolabies some Almicanteras ben devyded by
 20 oon, and some by two, and somme by three, after the quantite of the Astrolabic. This forseide senith is
 25 imagened to ben the verrey point over the crowne of thyn heved; and also this senith is the verrey pool of the orisonte in every regioun. And for the more declaracioun, lo here thy
 25 figure.

19. From this senith, as it semeth, ther come a maner crokede strykes lyke to the clawes of a loppe, or elles
 5 like to the werk of a womanes calle, in kerving overthwart the Almikan-

teras. And these same strykes or divisious ben cleped Azimuthz. And they devyden the orisonte of thyn
 Astrolabic in four and twenty devisious. And these Azimuthz serven to
 10 knowe the costes of the firmament, and to othre conclusiouns, as for to knowe the cenith of the sonne and of every sterre. And for more declaracioun, lo here thy figure.

20. Next this azimuthz, under the Cercle of Cancer, ben ther twelve
 15 devisious embelif, moche like to the shap of the azimuthes, that shewen the spaces of the houres of planetes; and for more declaracioun, lo here
 5 thy figure.

21. The Riet of thyn Astrolabic with thy zodiak, shapen in maner of
 a net or of a loppe-webbe after the olde descripcioun, which thow mayst
 5 tornen up and down as thy-self lyketh, conteneth certein nombre of sterres fixes, with hir longitudes and latitudes determinat; yif so be that the
 10 makere have nat erred. The names of the sterres ben writen in the margin of the riet ther as they sitte; of whiche sterres the smale poynt is
 15 cleped the Centre. And understand also that alle sterres sittinge with-in the zodiak of thyn Astrolabic ben
 20 cleped 'sterres of the north,' for they arysen by northe the est lyne. And alle the remenant fixed, out of the zodiak, ben cleped 'sterres of the
 25 south;' but I sey nat that they arysen alle by southe the est lyne; witesse on Aldeberan and Algomeysa. Generally understand this rewle, that
 30 thilke sterres that ben cleped sterres of the north arysen rather than the degree of hir longitude, and alle the sterres of the south arysen after the
 35 degree of hir longitude; this is to seyn, sterres fixed in thyn Astrolabic. The mesure of this longitude of sterres is taken in the lyne ecliptik of hevne, under which lyne, when
 that the sonne and the mone ben lyne-right or elles in the superficie of
 this lyne, than is the eclips of the
 sonne or of the mone; as I shal de-

clare, and cek the cause why. But sothly the Ecliptik Lyne of thy zodiak is the outtereste bordure of thy zodiak, ther the degrees ben marked.

Thy Zodiak of thyn Astrolabie is shapen as a compas which that conteth a large brede, as after the quantite of thyn Astrolabie; in ensample that the zodiak in hevене is imagened to ben a superfice contening a latitude of twelve degrees, wheras al the remanent of cercles in the hevene ben imagined verrey lynes with-oute eny latitude. Amiddes this celestial zodiak ys imagined a lyne, which that is cleped the Ecliptik Lyne, under which lyne is evermo the wey of the sonne. Thus ben ther six degrees of the zodiak on that on side of the lyne, and six degrees on that other. This zodiak is devided in twelve principal devisiouns, that departen the twelve signes. And, for the streitnes of thin Astrolabie, than is every smal devisioun in a signe departid by two degrees and two; I mene degrees contening sixty minutes. And this forseide hevenissh zodiak is cleped the Cerle of the Signes, or the Cerle of the Bestes; for *zodia* in langage of Greek sowneth 'bestes' in Latin tonge; and in the zodiak ben the twelve signes that han names of bestes; or elles, for whan the sonne entreth in any of the signes, he taketh the propretee of swich bestes; or elles, for that the sterres that ben there fixed ben disposed in signes of bestes, or shape like bestes; or elles, whan the planetes ben under thilke signes, they causen us by hir influence operaciouns and effectes lyk to the operaciouns of bestes. And understonde also, that whan an hot planete cometh in-to an hot signe, than encesseth his hete; and yif a planete be cold, thanne amenuseth his coldnesse, by cause of the hote signe. And by this conclusioun maystow take ensample in alle the signes, be they moist or drye, or moeble or fix; rekening the qualitee of the planete as I first seide.

And everich of these twelve signes hath respecte to a certain parcelle of the body of a man and hath it in governance; as Aries hath thyn heved, and Taurus thy nekke and thy throte, Gemini thyn armholes and thyn armes, and so forth; as shal be shewed more pleyn in the fiftie partie of this tretis. This zodiak, which that is part of the eighte spere, over-kerveth the equinoxial; and he over-kerveth him again in evene parties; and that on half declineth southward, and that other northward, as pleynly declareth the tretis of the spere. And for more declaracioun, lo here thy figure.

22. Thanne hastow a label, that is schapen lyk a rewle, save that it is streit and hath no plates on either ende with holes; but, with the smale point of the forseide label, shaltow calcule thyne equaciouns in the bordure of thin Astrolabie, as by thyn almyry. And for the more declaracioun, lo here thy figure.

23. Thyn Almyry is cleped the Denticle of Capricorne, or elles the Calculer. This same Almyry sit fix in the hed of Capricorne, and it serveth of many a necessarie conclusioun in equaciouns of thinges, as shal be shewed; and for the more declaracioun, lo here thy figure.

Here endeth the descripcioun of the Astrolabie.

PART II.

HERE BIGINNEN THE CONCLUSIONS OF THE ASTROLABIE.

1. *To fynde the degree in which the sonne is day by day, after hir cours a-boute.*

[*Ilic incipiunt Conclusiones Astrolabii; et prima est ad inveniendum gradus solis in quibus singulis diebus secundum corsum sol est existens.*]

Rekene and knowe which is the day of thy monthe; and ley thy rewle up that same day; and thanne wol

the verray point of thy rewle sitten in
 5 the bordure, up-on the degree of thy
 sonne. Ensample as thus; the yeer
 of oure lord 1391, the 12 day of
 March at midday, I wolde knowe the
 degree of the sonne. I soughte in
 10 the bak-half of myn Astrolabie, and
 fond the cercle of the dayes, the
 which I knowe by the names of the
 monthes writen under the same cercle.
 Tho leide I my rewle over this forseide
 15 day, and fond the point of my rewle
 in the bordure up-on the firste degree
 of Aries, a litel with-in the degree;
 and thus knowe I this conclusioun.
 Another day, I wolde knowe the
 20 degree of my sonne, and this was at
 midday in the 13 day of Decembre;
 I fond the day of the monthe in
 maner as I seide; tho leide I my
 rewle up-on this forseide 13 day, and
 25 fond the point of my rewle in the
 bordure up-on the firste degree of
 Capricorne, a lite with-in the degree;
 and than hadde I of this conclusioun
 the ful experience. And for the more
 30 declaracioun, lo here thy figure.

2. *To knowe the altitude of the sonne,
 or of othre celestial bodies.*

[*De altitudine solis et aliorum corporum supra celestium.*]

Put the ring of thyn Astrolabie
 up-on thy right thombe, and turne
 thy lift syde agayn the light of the
 sonne. And remeve thy rewle up
 5 and down, til that the stremes of the
 sonne shyne thorgh bothe holes of
 thy rewle. Loke thanne how many
 degrees thy rewle is areised fro the
 litel crois up-on thyn est line, and
 10 tak ther the altitude of thy sonne.
 And in this same wyse maistow knowe
 by nighte the altitude of the mone,
 or of brighte sterres. This chapitre
 is so general ever in oon, that ther
 15 nedith no more declaracion; but
 forget it nat. And for the more
 declaracioun, lo here the figure.

3. *To knowe every tyme of the day
 by light of the sonne, and every*

*tyme of the night by the sterres fixe,
 and eke to knowe by night or by day
 the degree of any signe that assendeth
 on the Est Orisonte, which that is
 cleped communly the Assendent, or
 elles Oruscupum.*

[*Ad cognoscendum quodlibet tempus
 diei per solis indicacionem, et quod-
 libet tempus noctis per quasdam
 stellas in celo fixas; ac etiam ad
 inveniendum et cognoscendum sig-
 num super orizontem qui com-
 munitur vocatur ascendens.*]

Tak the altitude of the sonne whan
 thee list, as I have said; and set the
 degree of the sonne, in cas that it be
 by-forn the middel of the day, among
 thyn almikanteras on the est side of
 thyn Astrolabie; and yif it be after
 the middel of the day, set the degree
 of thy sonne up-on the west side; tak
 this manere of setting for a general
 rewle, ones for evere. And whan
 10 thou hast set the degree of thy sonne
 up as many almikanteras of heyghte
 as was the altitude of the sonne
 taken by thy rewle, ley over thy label,
 up-on the degree of the sonne; and
 15 thanne wol the point of thy label
 sitten in the bordure, up-on the
 verrey tyd of the day. Ensample as
 thus: the yeer of oure lord 1391, the
 12 day of March, I wold knowe the
 20 tyd of the day. I took the altitude
 of my sonne, and fond that it was
 25 degrees and 30 of minutes of
 heyghte in the bordure on the bak-
 syde. Tho turnede I myn Astrolabie,
 and by cause that it was by-forn mid-
 day, I turnede my riet, and sette the
 degree of the sonne, that is to seyn,
 the 1 degree of Aries, on the right
 syde of myn Astrolabie, up-on that
 30 25 degrees and 30 of minutes of
 heyghte among myn almikanteras;
 tho leide I my label up-on the degree
 of my sonne, and fond the poynte of
 my label in the bordure, up-on a capi-
 35 tal lettre that is cleped an X; tho
 rekened I alle the capitalles lettres
 fro the lyne of midnight un-to this
 forseide lettre X, and fond that it was

40 9 of the klokke of the day. Tho
 looked I down up-on the est orisonte,
 and fond there the 20 degree of
 Geminis assending; which that I tok
 for myn assendent. And in this wyse
 45 hadde I the experience for ever-mo
 in which maner I sholde knowe
 the tyd of the day, and eek myn
 assendent. Tho wolde I wite the
 same night folwing the hour of the
 50 night, and wroughte in this wyse.
 Among an heep of sterris fixe, it
 lyked me for to take the altitude of
 the feire white sterre that is cleped
 Alhabor; and fond hir sitting on the
 55 west side of the lyne of midday, 18
 degrees of heichte taken by my rewle
 on the bak-syde. Tho sette I the
 centre of this Alhabor up-on 18 de-
 grees among myn almikanteras, up-on
 60 the west syde; by-cause that she was
 founden on the west syde. Tho
 leide I my label over the degree
 of the sonne that was descended under
 the weste orisonte, and rikened alle
 65 the lettres capitals fro the lyne of
 midday un-to the point of my label
 in the bordure; and fond that it was
 passed 8 of the klokke the space of
 2 degrees. Tho looked I down up-on
 70 myn est orisonte, and fond ther 23
 degrees of Libra assending, whom I
 tok for myn assendent; and thus
 lerned I to knowe ones for ever in
 which manere I shuld come to the
 75 houre of the night and to myn as-
 sendent; as verreyly as may be taken
 by so smal an instrument. But nathe-
 les, in general, wolde I warne thee
 for evere, ne mak thee nevere bold
 80 to have take a iust ascendent by thyn
 Astrolabie, or elles to have set iustly
 by which that thow weneest governe
 thilke thinges ben ney the south lyne;
 85 for trust wel, whan that the sonne is
 ney the meridional lyne, the degree of
 the sonne renneth so longe consentrik
 up-on the almikanteras, that sothly
 thou shalt erre fro the iust assendent.
 90 The same conclusioun sey I by the
 centre of any sterre fix by night; and
 more-over, by experience, I wot wel

that in oure orisonte, from 11 of the
 klokke un-to oon of the klokke, in
 taking of a iust assendent in a pota-
 95 tif Astrolabie, hit is to hard to knowe.
 I mene, from 11 of the klokke biforn
 the houre of noon til oon of the klok
 next folwing. And for the more
 declaracion, lo here thy figure. 100

4. *Special declaracion of the assendent.*

[*Specialis declaracio de ascendente.*]

The assendent sothly, as wel in alle
 nativitez as in questiouns and elec-
 ciouns of tymes, is a thing which that
 these astrologiens gretly observen;
 wherfore me semeth convenient, sin
 5 that I speke of the assendent, to make
 of it special declaracioun. The assen-
 dent sothly, to take it at the largeste,
 is thilke degree that assendeth at any
 of these forseide tymes upon the est
 10 orisonte; and there-for, yif that any
 planet assende at that same tyme in
 thilke for-seide degree of his longi-
 tude, men seyn that thilke planete is
 15 *in horosco*. But sothly, the hous
 of the assendent, that is to seyn, the
 firste hous or the est angle, is a thing
 more brood and large. For after the
 statutz of astrologiens, what celestial
 body that is 5 degrees above thilk de-
 20 gree that assendeth, or with-in that
 nombere, that is to seyn, nere the de-
 gree that assendeth, yit rikne they
 thilke planet in the assendent. And
 what planete that is under thilke de-
 25 gree that assendith the space of 25
 degrees, yit seyn they that thilke
 planete is lyk to him that is in the
 hous of the assendent; but sothly, yif
 he passe the bondes of these forseide
 30 spaces, above or byneth, they seyn
 that the planete is failing fro the as-
 sendent. Yit sein these astrologiens,
 that the assendent, and eke the lord
 of the assendent, may be shapen for
 35 to be fortunat or infortunat, as thus:
 a fortunat assendent clepen they whan
 that no wykkid planete, as Saturne or
 Mars, or elles the Tail of the Dragoun,
 is in the hous of the assendent, ne 40

that no wikked planete have non aspecte of enemite up-on the assendent; but they wol caste that they have a fortunat planete in hir assendent and
 45 yit in his felicittee, and than sey they that it is wel. Forther-over, they seyn that the infortuning of an assendent is the contrairie of thise forseide things. The lord of the assendent,
 50 sey they, that he is fortunat, whan he is in good place fro the assendent as in angle; or in a succedent, where-as he is in his dignitee and confortd with frendly aspectes of planetes and
 55 wel received, and eek that he may seen the assendent, and that he be nat retrograd ne combust, ne ioigned with no shrewe in the same signe; ne that he be nat in his descencioun, ne
 60 ioigned with no planete in his descencioun, ne have up-on him non aspecte infortunat; and than sey they that he is wel. Natheles, thise ben obser-
 65 vauncez of iudicial matiere and rytes of payens, in which my spirit ne hath no feith, ne no knowing of hir *horoscopus*; for they seyn that every signe is departed in 3 evene parties by 10 degrees, and thilke porcioun
 70 they clepe a Face. And al-thogh that a planete have a latitude fro the ecliptik, yit sey some folk, so that the planete aryse in that same signe with any degree of the forseide face in
 75 which his longitude is rekned, that yit is the planete *in horoscopo*, be it in nativite or in eleccioun, &c. And for the more declaracioun, lo here the figure.

5. *To knowe the verrey equacion of the degree of the sonne, yif so be that it falle by-twixe thyn Almikanteras.*

[*Ad cognoscendum veram equacionem de gradu solis, si contigerit fore in duas Almicanteras.*]

For as moche as the almikanteras in thyn Astrolabie been compounded by two and two, where-as some almikanteras in sondry Astrolabies ben
 5 compounded by on and on, or elles by two and two, it is necessarie to thy

lerning to teche thee first to knowe and worke with thyn owne instrument. Wher-for, whan that the degree of thy sonne falleth by-twixe two
 10 almikanteras, or elles yif thyn almikanteras ben graven with over gret a point of a compas, (for bothe thise things may causen errour as wel
 15 in knowing of the tyd of the day as of the verrey assendent), thou most werken in this wyse. Set the degree of thy sonne up-on the heyer almikanteras of bothe, and waite wel wher
 20 as thin almury toucheth the bordure, and set ther a prikke of inke. Set doun agayn the degree of thy sonne up-on the nethere almikanteras of bothe, and set ther another prikke. Remewe thanne thyn almury in the
 25 bordure evene amiddes bothe prikkes, and this wol lede justly the degree of thy sonne to sitte by-twixe bothe almikanteras in his right place. Ley
 30 thanne thy label over the degree of thy sonne; and find in the bordure the verrey tyde of the day or of the night. And as verreyly shaltow finde
 35 up-on thyn est orisonte thyn assendent. And for more declaracioun, lo here thy figure.

6. *To knowe the spring of the dawing and the ende of the evening, the which ben called the two crepusculis:*

[*Ad cognoscendum ortum solis et eius occasum, que vocatur vulgariter crepusculum.*]

Set the nadir of thy sonne up-on 18 degrees of heighte among thyn almikanteras on the west syde, and ley thy label on the degree of thy sonne, and thanne shal the poynt of thy label
 5 schewe the spring of day. Also set the nadir of thy sonne up-on 18 degrees of heighte a-mong thyn almikanteras on the est side, and ley over thy label
 10 up-on the degree of the sonne, and with the point of thy label find in the bordure the ende of the evening, that is, verrey night. The nadir of the sonne is thilke degree

15 that is opposit to the degree of the sonne, in the seventh sign, as thus : every degree of Aries by ordre is nadir to every degree of Libra by ordre; and Taurus to Scorpion; Gemini to Sagittare; Cancer to Capricorne; Leo to Aquarie; Virgo to Pisces; and yif any degree in thy zodiak be dirk, his nadir shal declare nim. And for the more declaracioun, lo here thy figure.

7. To knowe the arch of the day, that some folk callen the day artificial, from the sonne arysing til hit go to reste.

[*Ad cognoscendum archum diei, quem vulgus vocat diem artificialem, in hoc, ab ortu solis usque ad occasum.*]

Set the degree of thy sonne up-on thyn est orisonte, and ley thy label on the degree of the sonne, and at the poynt of thy label in the bordure set a prikke. Turn thanne thy riet aboute til the degree of the sonne sit up-on the west orisonte, and ley thy label up-on the same degree of the sonne, and at the point of thy label set a-nother prikke. Rekne thanne the quantitee of tyme in the bordure by-twix bothe prikkes, and tak ther thyn ark of the day. The remenant of the bordure under the orisonte is the ark of the night. Thus maistow rekne bothe arches, or every porcion, of whether that thee lyketh. And by this manere of wyrking maistow see how longe that any sterre fix dwelleth a-bove the erthe, fro tyme that he ryseth til he go to reste. But the day natural, that is to seyn 24 houres, is the revolucioun of the equinoxial with as moche partie of the zodiak as the sonne of his propre moevinge passeth in the mene whyle. And for the more declaracioun, lo here thy figure.

8. To turn the houres in-euales in houres equales.

[*Ad convertendum horas inequales in horas equales.*]

Knowe the nombre of the degrees in the houres in-euales, and departe hem by 15, and tak ther thyn houres equales. And for the more declaracioun, lo here thy figure.

9. To knowe the quantitee of the day vulgare, that is to seyn, from spring of the day un-to verrey night.

[*Ad cognoscendum quantitatem diei vulgaris, viz. ab ortu diei usque ad noctem.*]

Know the quantitee of thy crepusculis, as I have taught in the chaptre bi-forn, and adde hem to the arch of thy day artificial; and tak ther the space of alle the hole day vulgar, un-to verrey night. The same manere maistow worke, to knowe the quantitee of the vulgar night. And for the more declaracioun, lo here the figure.

10. To knowe the quantitee of houres in-euales by day.

[*Ad cognoscendum horas inequales in die.*]

Understond wel, that these houres in-euales ben cleped houres of planetes, and understond wel that som-tyme ben they lengere by day than by night, and som-tyme the contrarie. But understond wel, that evermo, generally, the hour in-equal of the day with the hour in-equal of the night contenen 30 degrees of the bordure, whiche bordure is evermo answering to the degrees of the equinoxial; wher-for departe the arch of the day artificial in 12, and tak ther the quantitee of the hour in-equal by day. And yif thow abate the quantitee of the hour in-equal by daye out of 30, than shal the remenant that levethe performe the

hourc inequal by night. And for
20 the more declaracioun, lo here the
figure.

11. *To knowe the quantite of houres
equales.*

[*Ad cognoscendum quantitatem hora-
rum inequalium.*]

The quantitee of houres equales,
that is to seyn, the houres of the
clocke, ben departed by 15 degrees
al-redy in the bordure of thyn Astro-
5 labie, as wel by night as by day,
generaly for evere. What nedeth
more declaracioun? Wher-for, whan
thee list to know how manye houres
of the clocke ben passed, or any part
10 of any of thise houres that ben
passed, or elles how many houres
or partie of houres ben to come, fro
swich a tyme to swich a tyme, by
day or by nighte, knowe the degree
15 of thy sonne, and ley thy label on
it; turne thy riet aboute ioyntly with
thy label, and with the point of it
reke in the bordure fro the sonne
aryse un-to the same place ther thou
20 desirest, by day as by nighte. This
conclusioun wol I declare in the laste
chapitre of the 4 partie of this tretis
so openly, that ther shal lakke no
worde that nedeth to the declara-
25 cioun. And for the more declara-
cioun, lo here the figure.

12. *Special declaracioun of the houres
of planetes.*

[*Specialis declaracio de horis plane-
tarum.*]

Understond wel, that evere-mo,
fro the arysing of the sonne til it go
to reste, the nadir of the sonne shal
shewe the houre of the planete, and
5 fro that tyme forward al the night til
the sonne aryse; than shal the verrey
degree of the sonne shewe the houre
of the planete. Ensampl as thus.
The 13 day of March fil up-on a
10 Saterdag per aventure, and, at the
arising of the sonne, I fond the
secounde degree of Aries sitting

up-on myn est orisonte, al-be-it that
it was but lite; than fond I the 2
degree of Libra, nadir of my sonne, 15
dessending on my west orisonte,
up-on which west orisonte every day
generally, at the sonne ariste, entreth
the houre of any planete, after which
planete the day bereth his name; 20
and endeth in the nexte stryk of the
plate under the forside west or-
isonte; and evere, as the sonne climb-
eth upere and upere, so goth his
nadir dounere and dounere, teching 25
by swich strykes the houres of plane-
tes by ordere as they sitten in the
hevene. The first houre inequal of
every Saterdag is to Saturne; and
the secounde, to Iupiter; the 3, to 30
Mars; the 4, to the Sonne; the 5, to
Venus; the 6, to Mercurius; the 7,
to the Mone; and thanne agayn, the
8 is to Saturne; the 9, to Iupiter;
the 10, to Mars; the 11, to the 35
Sonne; the 12, to Venus; and now
is my sonne gon to reste as for that
Setterday. Thanne sheweth the
verrey degree of the sonne the houre
of Mercurie entring under my west 40
orisonte at eve; and next him suc-
cedeth the Mone; and so forth by
ordre, planete after planete, in houre
after houre, al the night longe til the
sonne aryse. Now ryseth the sonne 45
that Sunday by the morwe; and the
nadir of the sonne, up-on the west
orisonte, sheweth me the entring of
the houre of the forside sonne.
And in this maner succedeth planete 50
under planete, fro Saturne un-to the
Mone, and fro the Mone up a-gayn
to Saturne, houre after houre generally.
And thus knowe I this conclusioun.
And for the more declaracioun, lo 55
here the figure.

13. *To knowe the altitude of the
sonne in middes of the day, that is
cleped the altitude meridian.*

[*Ad cognoscendum altitudinem solis
in medio diei, que vocatur altitudo
meridiana.*]

Set the degree of the sonne up-on

the lyne meridional, and rikene how many degrees of almikanteras ben by-twix thyn est orisonte and the degree of the sonne. And tak ther thyn altitude meridian; this is to seyne, the heyest of the sonne as for that day. So maystow knowe in the same lyne, the heyest cours that any sterre fix climbeth by night; this is to seyn, that whan any sterre fix is passed the lyne meridional, than by-giuneth it to descende, and so doth the sonne. And for the more declaracioun, lo here thy figure.

14. *To knowe the degree of the sonne by thy riet, for a maner curiositee, &c.*

[*Ad cognoscendum gradum solis curioso.*]

Seke bysily with thy rewle the heyest of the sonne in midde of the day; turne thanne thyn Astrolabie, and with a prikke of ink marke the nombre of that same altitude in the lyne meridional. Turne thanne thy riet a-boute til thou fynde a degree of thy zodiak acording with the prikke; this is to seyn, sittinge on the prikke; and in sooth, thou shalt finde but two degrees in al the zodiak of that condicioun; and yit thilke two degrees ben in diverse signes; than maistow lightly by the sesoun of the yere knowe the signe in whiche that is the sonne. And for the more declaracioun, lo here thy figure.

15. *To know which day is lyk to which day as of lengthe, &c.*

[*Ad cognoscendum quales dies in longitudine sunt similes.*]

Loke whiche degrees ben y-lyke fer fro the hevedes of Cancer and Capricorn; and lok, whan the sonne is in any of thilke degrees, than ben the dayes y-lyke of lengthe. This is to seyn, that as long is that day in that monthe, as was swich a day in swich a month; ther varieth but lite.

Also, yif thou take two dayes naturally in the yer y-lyke fer fro eyther pointe of the equinoxial in the opposit parties, than as long is the day artificial of that on day as is the night of that other, and the contrarie. And for the more declaracioun, lo here thy figure.

16. *This chapitre is a maner declaracioun to conclusiouns that folwen.*

[*Illud capitulum est quedam declaracio ad certas conclusiones sequentes.*]

Understond wel that thy zodiak is departid in two halfe cercles, as fro the heved of Capricorne un-to the heved of Cancer; and agaynward fro the heved of Cancer un-to the heved of Capricorne. The heved of Capricorne is the lowest point, wher-as the sonne goth in winter; and the heved of Cancer is the heyest point, in whiche the sonne goth in somer. And ther-for understond wel, that any two degrees that ben y-lyke fer fro any of these two hevedes, truste wel that thilke two degrees ben of y-lyke declinacioun, be it southward or northward; and the dayes of hem ben y-lyke of lengthe, and the nightes also; and the shadwes y-lyke, and the altitudes y-lyke at midday for evere. And for more declaracioun, lo here thy figure.

17. *To knowe the verrey degree of any maner sterre straunge or unstraunge after his longitude, though he be indeterminat in thyn Astrolabie; sothly to the troothe, thus he shal be knowe.*

[*Ad cognoscendum verum gradum alicuius stelle aliene secundum eius longitudinem, quamvis sit indeterminata in astrolabio; veraciter isto modo.*]

Tak the altitude of this sterre whan he is on the est side of the lyne meridional, as ney as thou mayst gesse;

and tak an assendent a-non right by
 5 som maner sterre fixe which that thou
 knowest; and for-get nat the altitude
 of the firste sterre, ne thyn assendent.
 And whan that this is don, espye
 diligently whan this same firste sterre
 10 passeth any-thing the south west-
 ward, and hath him a-non right in
 the same noubre of altitude on the
 west side of this lyne meridional as he
 was caught on the est side; and tak
 15 a newe assendent a-non right by som
 maner sterre fixe which that thou
 knowest; and for-get nat this secoude
 assendent. And whan that this is don,
 rikne thanne how manye
 20 degrees ben by-twix the firste as-
 sendent and the secoude assendent,
 and rikne wel the middel degree
 by-twene bothe assendentes, and set
 thilke middel degree. up-on thin est
 25 orisonte; and waite thanne what
 degree that sit up-on the lyne
 meridional, and tak ther the verrey
 degree of the ecliptik in which the
 sterre stondesth for the tyme. For
 30 in the ecliptik is the longitude of a
 celestial body rekened, evene fro the
 heved of Aries un-to the ende of
 Pisces. And his latitude is rikned
 after the quantite of his declinacion,
 35 north or south to-warde the poles
 of this world; as thus. Yif it be of
 the sonne or of any fixe sterre, re-
 kene his latitude or his declinacioun
 fro the equinoxial cerce; and yif it be
 40 of a planete, rekne than the quantitee
 of his latitude fro the ecliptik lyne.
 Al-be-it so that fro the equinoxial
 may the declinacion or the latitude
 of any body celestial be rikned, after
 45 the site north or south, and after the
 quantitee of his declinacion. And
 right so may the latitude or the
 declinacion of any body celestial,
 save only of the sonne, after his site
 50 north or south, and after the quan-
 titee of his declinacioun be rekned
 fro the ecliptik lyne; fro which lyne
 alle planetes som tyme declynen
 north or south, save only the for-
 55 seide sonne. And for the more dec-
 laracioun, lo here thy figure.

18. *To knowe the degrees of the longi-
 tudes of fixe sterres after that they
 ben determinat in thin Astrolabie,
 yif so be that they ben trewly set.*

[*Ad cognoscendum gradus longitudi-
 nis de stellis fixis que determinantur
 in astrolabio, sicut in suis locis
 recte locentur.*]

Set the centre of the sterre up-on
 the lyne meridional, and tak keep
 of thy zodiak, and loke what degree
 of any signe that sit on the same lyne
 meridional at that same tyme, and
 5 tak the degree in which the sterre
 standeth; and with that same degree
 comth that same sterre un-to that
 same lyne fro the orisonte. And for
 more declaracioun, lo here thy figure. 10

19. *To knowe with which degree of
 the zodiak any sterre fixe in thyn
 Astrolabie aryseth up-on the est
 orisonte, although his dwelling be in
 a-nother signe.*

[*Ad cognoscendum cum quibus gradi-
 bus zodiaci que stella fixa in astro-
 labio ascendit super orientem
 orientalem, quamvis eius statio sit
 in alio signo.*]

Set the centre of the sterre up-on
 the est orisonte, and loke what degree
 of any signe that sit up-on the same
 orisonte at that same tyme. And
 understand wel, that with that same
 5 degree aryseth that same sterre; and
 this merveyllous arysing with a strange
 degree in another signe is by-cause
 that the latitude of the sterre fixe is
 either north or south fro the equi-
 10 noxial. But sothly, the latitudes of
 planetes ben comunly rekned fro the
 ecliptik, bi-cause that non of hem
 declineth but fewe degrees out fro
 the brede of the zodiak. And tak
 15 good keep of this chapitre of arysing
 of the celestial bodies; for truste wel,
 that neyther mone ne sterre as in
 oure embelif orisonte aryseth with
 that same degree of his longitude,
 20 save in o cas; and that is, whan they
 have no latitude fro the ecliptik lyne.

But natheles, som tyme is everiche of these planetes under the same
25 lyne. And for more declaracioun, lo here thy figure.

20. *To knowe the declinacioun of any degree in the zodiak fro the equinoxial cercele, &c.*

[*Ad cognoscendum declinacionem alicuius gradus in zodiaco a circulo equinoctiali.*]

Set the degree of any signe up-on the lyne meridional, and rikne his altitude in almikanteras fro the est orizonte up to the same degree set
5 in the forseide lyne, and set ther a prikke. Turne up thanne thy riet, and set the heved of Aries or Libra in the same meridional lyne, and set ther a-nother prikke. And whan
10 that this is don, considere the altitudes of hem bothe; for sothly the difference of thilke altitudes is the declinacion of thilke degree fro the equinoxial. And yif so be that
15 thilke degree be northward fro the equinoxial, than is his declinacion north; yif it be southward, than is it south. And for the more declaracioun, lo here thy figure.

21. *To knowe for what latitude in any regioun the almikanteras of any table ben compounded.*

[*Ad cognoscendum pro qua latitudine in aliqua regione almicantere tabule mee sunt compositae.*]

Rikne how manye degrees of almikanteras, in the meridional lyne, be fro the cercele equinoxial un-to the senith; or elles fro the pool artik
5 un-to the north orizonte; and for so gret a latitude or for so smal a latitude is the table compounded. And for more delaracion, lo here thy figure.

22. *To knowe in special the latitude of oure countray, I mene after*

the latitude of Oxenford, and the heighte of oure pol.

[*Ad cognoscendum specialiter latitudinem nostri regionis, scilicet latitudinem Oxonie, et altitudinem poli nostri.*]

Understond wel, that as fer is the heved of Aries or Libra in the equinoxial fro oure orizonte as is the senith from the pole artik; and as hey is the pol artik fro the orizonte,
5 as the equinoxial is fer fro the senith. I prove it thus by the latitude of Oxenford. Understond wel, that the heyghte of oure pool artik fro oure north orizonte is 51 degrees and 50
10 minutes; than is the senith from oure pool artik 38 degrees and 10 minutes; than is the equinoxial from oure senith 51 degrees and 50 minutes; than is oure south orizonte from oure equinoxial 38 degrees and 10 minutes.
15 Understond wel this rekning. Also for-get nat that the senith is 90 degrees of heyghte fro the orizonte, and oure equinoxial is 90 degrees from oure pool artik. Also this shorte rewle is soth, that the latitude of any place in a regioun is the distance fro the senith unto the equinoxial. And for more declaracioun, lo here thy
25 figure.

23. *To prove evidently the latitude of any place in a regioun, by the preve of the heyghte of the pol artik in that same place.*

[*Ad probandum evidenter latitudinem alicuius loci in aliqua regione, per probacionem altitudinis de polo artico in eodem loco.*]

In some winters night, whan the firmament is clere and thikke-sterred, waite a tyme til that any sterre fix sit lyne-right perpendicularer over the pol artik, and clepe that sterre A. And
5 wayte a-nother sterre that sit lyne-right under A, and under the pol, and clepe that sterre F. And understond wel, that F is nat considered but only to declare that A sit evene
10

overe the pool. Tak thanne a-non
 right the altitude of A from the
 orisonte, and forget it nat. Lat A
 and F go farwel til agayns the dawen-
 15 ing a gret whyle; and come thanne
 agayn, and abyd til that A is evene
 under the pol and under F; for
 sothly, than wol F sitte over the pool,
 and A wol sitte under the pool. Tak
 20 than eft-sones the altitude of A from
 the orisonte, and note as wel his
 secounde altitude as his firste alti-
 tude; and whan that this is don,
 rikne how many degrees that the
 25 firste altitude of A exceedeth his se-
 conde altitude, and tak half thilke
 porcioun that is exceeded, and adde
 it to his secunde altitude; and tak
 ther the elevacioun of thy pool, and
 30 eke the latitude of thy regioun. For
 these two ben of a nombre; this is to
 seyn, as many degrees as thy pool is
 elevat, so michel is the latitude of the
 regioun. Ensample as thus: par
 35 aventure, the altitude of A in the
 evening is 56 degrees of heyghte.
 Than wol his secunde altitude or the
 dawing be 48; that is 8 lasse than 56,
 that was his firste altitude at even.
 40 Take thanne the half of 8, and adde
 it to 48, that was his secunde alti-
 tude, and than hastow 52. Now
 hastow the heyghte of thy pol, and
 the latitude of the regioun. But
 45 understand wel, that to prove this
 conclusioun and many a-nother fair
 hanging on a lyne heyer than thin
 heved on a perche; and thilke lyne
 50 mot hange evene perpendicularer by-
 twice the pool and thyn eye; and
 thanne shaltow seen yif A sitte evene
 over the pool and over F at evene;
 and also yif F sitte evene over the
 55 pool and over A or day. And for
 more declaracioun, lo here thy figure.

24. *Another conclusioun to prove the
 heyghte of the pool artik fro the
 orisonte.*

[*Alia conclusio ad probandum alti-
 tudinem de polo artico ab orizonte.*]

Tak any sterre fixe that nevere dis-
 sendeth under the orisonte in thilke
 regioun, and considere his heyst
 altitude and his lowest altitude fro
 the orisonte; and make a nombre of
 5 bothe these altitudes. Tak thanne
 and abate half that nombre, and tak
 ther the elevacioun of the pol artik
 in that same regioun. And for more
 declaracioun, lo here thy figure. 10

25. *A-nother conclusioun to prove
 the latitude of the regioun, &c.*

[*Alia conclusio ad probandum lati-
 tudinem regiouis.*]

Understand wel that the latitude
 of any place in a regioun is verreyly
 the space by-twix the senith of hem
 that dwellen there and the equinoxial
 cerkle, north or southe, taking the
 5 mesure in the meridional lyne, as
 sheweth in the almikanteras of thyn
 Astrolabie. And thilke space is as
 moche as the pool artik is hey in the
 same place fro the orisonte. And
 10 than is the depressioun of the pol
 antartik, that is to seyn, than is the
 pol antartik by-nethe the orisonte,
 the same quantite of space, neither
 more ne lasse. Thanne, yif thow
 15 desire to knowe this latitude of the
 regioun, tak the altitude of the sonne
 in the middel of the day, whan the
 sonne is in the hevedes of Aries or of
 20 Libra; (for thanne moeveth the sonne
 in the lyne equinoxial); and abate
 the nombre of that same sonnes alti-
 tude out of 90, and thanne is the
 remenaunt of the nombre that leveh
 the latitude of the regioun. As thus: 25
 I suppose that the sonne is thilke day
 at noon 38 degrees and 10 minutes
 of heyghte. Abate thanne these de-
 grees and minutes out of 90; so leveh
 30 there 51 degrees and 50 minutes, the
 latitude. I sey nat this but for en-
 sample; for wel I wot the latitude of
 Oxenforde is certain minutes lasse, as
 I mighte prove. Now yif so be that
 thee semeth to long a taryinge, to
 35 abyde til that the sonne be in the
 hevedes of Aries or of Libra, thanne

waite whan the sonne is in any other
 degree of the zodiak, and considere
 40 the degree of his declinacion fro the
 equinoxial lyne; and yif it so be that
 the sonnes declinacion be northward
 fro the equinoxial, abate thanne fro
 the sonnes altitude at noon the nombre
 45 of his declinacion, and thanne hastow
 the heyghte of the hevedes of Aries
 and Libra. As thus: my sonne is,
 par aventure, in the firste degree of
 Leoun, 58 degrees and 10 minutes of
 50 heyghte at noon and his declinacion
 is almost 20 degrees northward fro
 the equinoxial; abate thanne thilke
 20 degrees of declinacion out of the
 altitude at noon, than leveth thee 38
 55 degrees and odde minutes; lo ther
 the heved of Aries or Libra, and thyn
 equinoxial in that regioun. Also yif
 so be that the sonnes declinacioun be
 southward fro the equinoxial, adde
 60 thanne thilke declinacion to the alti-
 tude of the sonne at noon; and tak
 ther the hevedes of Aries and Libra,
 and thyn equinoxial. Abate thanne
 the heyghte of the equinoxial out of
 65 90 degrees, and thanne leveth there
 the distans of the pole, 51 degrees
 and 50 minutes, of that regioun fro
 the equinoxial. Or elles, yif thee
 lest, take the heyest altitude fro the
 70 equinoxial of any sterre fix that thou
 knowest, and tak his nethere clonga-
 cioun lengthing fro the same equi-
 noxial lyne, and wirke in the maner
 forseid. And for more declaracion,
 75 lo here thy figure.

26. *Declaracioun of the assensioun
 of signes, &c.*

[*Declaracio de ascensione signorum.*]

The excellence of the spere solide,
 amonges other noble conclusiouns,
 sheweth manifeste the diverse assen-
 ciouns of signes in diverse places, as
 5 wel in the righte cerce as in the
 embelif cerce. These auctours wryten
 that thilke signe is cleped of right
 ascensioun, with which more part
 of the cerce equinoxial and lasse part
 10 of the zodiak ascendeth; and thilke

signe assendeth embelif, with whiche
 lasse part of the equinoxial and more
 part of the zodiak assendeth. Ferther-
 over they seyn, that in thilke cuntrey
 where as the senith of hem that dwellen
 15 there is in the equinoxial lyne, and
 her orisonte passing by the poles of
 this worlde, thilke folke han this
 right cerce and the right orisonte;
 and evere-mo the arch of the day
 20 and the arch of the night is ther
 y-like long, and the sonne twyes
 every yeer passinge thorow the se-
 nith of her heved; and two someres
 and two winteres in a yeer han this
 25 forseide peopel. And the almikan-
 teras in her Astrolabies ben streighte
 as a lyne, so as sheweth in this figure.
 The utilite to knowe the assenciouns
 in the righte cerce is this: truste wel
 30 that by mediacioun of thilke assen-
 ciouns these astrologiens, by hir tables
 and hir instrumentz, knowen verreyly
 the assencioun of every degree and
 minut in al the zodiak, as shal be
 35 shewed. And *nota*, that this forseid
 righte orisonte, that is cleped *orison
 rectum*, divydeth the equinoxial in-to
 right angles; and the embelif orisonte,
 wher-as the pol is enhaused up-on
 40 the orisonte, overkerveth the equi-
 noxial in embelif angles, as sheweth
 in the figure. And for the more
 declaracioun, lo here the figure.

27. *This is the conclusion to knowe
 the assenciouns of signes in the
 right cerce, that is, circulus di-
 rectus, &c.*

[*Ad cognoscendum ascenciones sig-
 norum in recto circulo, qui vocatur
 circulus directus.*]

Set the heved of what signe thee
 liste to knowe his assending in the
 right cerce up-on the lyne meri-
 dional; and waite wher thyn almury
 toucheth the bordure, and set ther
 5 a prikke. Turne thanne thy riet west-
 ward til that the ende of the forseide
 signe sitte up-on the meridional lyne;
 and eft-sones waite wher thyn almury
 toucheth the bordure, and set ther
 10

another prikke. Rikne thanne the nombre of degrees in the bordure by-twix bothe prikkes, and tak the assencioun of the signe in the right
15 cercle. And thus maystow wyrke with every porcioun of thy zodiak, &c. And for the more declaracioun, lo here thy figure.

28. *To knowe the assencions of signes in the embelif cercle in every region, I mene, in circulo obliquo.*

[*Ad cognoscendum ascenciones signorum in circulo obliquo, in omni regione.*]

Set the heved of the signe which as thee list to knowe his ascensioun up-on the est orisonte, and waite wher thyn almury toucheth the bordure, and set ther a prikke. Turne
5 thanne thy riet upward til that the ende of the same signe sitte up-on the est orisonte, and waite eft-sones wher as thyn almury toucheth the
10 bordure, and set ther a-nother prikke. Rikne thanne the noubre of degrees in the bordure by-twix bothe prikkes, and tak ther the assencioun of the signe in the embelif cercle. And
15 understond wel, that alle signes in thy zodiak, fro the heved of Aries unto the ende of Virgo, ben cleped signes of the north fro the equinoxial; and these signes arysen by-twix the
20 verrey est and the verrey north in oure orisonte generally for evere. And alle signes fro the heved of Libra un-to the ende of Pisces ben cleped signes of the south fro the equinoxial; and
25 these signes arysen ever-mo by-twix the verrey est and the verrey south in oure orisonte. Also every signe by-twix the heved of Capricorne un-to the ende of Geminis aryseth on
30 oure orisonte in lasse than two houres equales; and thisse same signes, fro the heved of Capricorne un-to the ende of Geminis, ben cleped 'tortuos signes' or 'croked signes,' for they
35 arisen embelif on oure orisonte; and thisse crokede signes ben obedient to the signes that ben of right assen-

cioun. The signes of right assencioun ben fro the heved of Cancer to the ende of Sagittare; and thisse signes
40 arysen more upright, and they ben called eke sovereyn signes; and everich of hem aryseth in more space than in two houres. Of which signes, Gemini obeyeth to Cancer; and
45 Taurus to Leo; Aries to Virgo; Pisces to Libra; Aquarius to Scorpioun; and Capricorne to Sagittare. And thus ever-mo two signes, that ben y-lyke fer fro the heved of Capricorne, obeyen everich of hem til
50 other. And for more declaracioun, lo here the figure.

29. *To knowe iustly the foure quarters of the world, as est, west, north, and south.*

[*Ad cognoscendum evidentem quatuor partes mundi, scilicet, orientem, austrum, aquilonem, et occidentem.*]

Take the altitude of thy sonne whan thee list, and note wel the quarter of the world in which the sonne is for the tyme by the azimuth. Turne thanne thyn Astrolabie, and
5 set the degree of the sonne in the almikanteras of his altitude, on thilke side that the sonne stant, as is the manere in taking of houres; and ley thy label on the degree of the sonne,
10 and rikene how many degrees of the bordure ben by-twix the lyne meridional and the point of thy label; and note wel that noubre. Turne thanne a-gayn thyn Astrolabie, and
15 set the point of thy gret rewle, ther thou takest thyne altitudes, up-on as many degrees in his bordure fro his meridional as was the point of thy label fro the lyne meridional on the
20 wombe-syde. Tak thanne thyn Astrolabie with bothe handes sadly and slely, and lat the sonne shyne thorow bothe holes of thy rewle; and slely, in thilke shyninge, lat thyn Astrolabie
25 couch adoun evene up-on a smothe grond, and thanne wol the verrey lyne meridional of thyn Astrolabie

lye evene south, and the est lyne wole
 30 lye est, and the west lyne west, and
 north lyne north, so that thou werke
 softly and awisely in the couching;
 and thus hastow the 4 quarters of the
 firmament. And for the more decla-
 35 racion, lo here the figure.

30. *To knowe the altitude of planetes
 fro the wey of the sonne, whether so
 they be north or south fro the for-
 seide wey.*

[*Ad cognoscendum altitudinem plane-
 tarum a cursu solis, utrum sint in
 parte australi vel boreali a cursu
 supra dicto.*]

Lok whan that a planete is in the
 lyne meridional, yif that hir altitude
 be of the same heyghte that is the
 degree of the sonne for that day, and
 5 than is the planete in the verrey wey
 of the sonne, and hath no latitude.
 And yif the altitude of the planete be
 heyere than the degree of the sonne,
 than is the planete north fro the wey
 10 of the sonne swich a quantite of lati-
 tude as sheweth by thyn almikanteras.
 And yif the altitude of the planete be
 lasse than the degree of the sonne,
 thanne is the planete south fro the
 15 wey of the sonne swich a quantite of
 latitude as sheweth by thyn almikan-
 teras. This is to seyn, fro the wey
 wher-as the sonne wente thilke day,
 but nat from the wey of the sonne in
 20 every place of the zodiak. And for
 the more declaracion, lo here the
 figure.

31. *To knowe the senith of the arys-
 ing of the sonne, this is to seyn,
 the partie of the orisonte in which
 that the sonne aryseth.*

[*Ad cognoscendum signum de ortu
 solis, scilicet, illam partem orientis
 in qua oritur sol.*]

Thou most first considere that the
 sonne aryseth nat al-wey verrey est,
 but some tyme by north the est, and
 some tyme by southe the est. Sothly,
 5 the sonne aryseth never-mo verrey

est in oure orisonte, but he be in the
 heved of Aries or Libra. Now is
 thyn orisonte departed in 24 parties
 by thy azimuth, in signification of 24
 partiez of the world; al-be-it so that
 10 shipmen rikne thilke partiez in 32.
 Thanne is ther no more but waite in
 which azimuth that thy sonne entreth
 at his arysing; and take ther the
 senith of the arysing of the sonne. 15
 The manere of the devisioun of thyn
 Astrolabie is this; I mene as in this
 cas. First is it devided in 4 plages
 principalx with the lyne that goth
 from est to west, and than with 20
 a-nother lyne that goth fro south to
 north. Than is it devided in smale
 partiez of azimuth, as est, and est by
 southe, whereas is the firste azimuth
 above the est lyne; and so forth, fro 25
 partie to partie, til that thou come
 agayn un-to the est lyne. Thus
 maistow understand also the senith of
 any sterre, in which partie he ryseth,
 &c. And for the more declaracion, 30
 lo here the figure.

32. *To knowe in which partie of the
 firmament is the coniunccion.*

[*Ad cognoscendum in qua parte
 firmamenti sunt coniunciones
 solis et lune.*]

Consider the tyme of the coniunc-
 cion by thy kalender, as thus; lok
 how many houres thilke coniunccion
 is fro the midday of the day pre-
 cedent, as sheweth by the canoun of 5
 thy kalender. Rikne thanne thilke
 nombre of houres in the bordure of thyn
 Astrolabie, as thou art wont to do in
 knowing of the houres of the day or
 of the night; and ley thy label over 10
 the degree of the sonne; and thanne
 wol the point of thy label sitte up-on
 the hour of the coniunccion. Loke
 thanne in which azimuth the degree
 of thy sonne sitteth, and in that 15
 partie of the firmament is the con-
 iunccion. And for the more decla-
 racion, lo here thy figure.

33. *To knowe the senith of the altitude of the sonne, &c.*

[*Ad cognoscendum signa de altitudine solis.*]

This is no more to seyn but any tyme of the day tak the altitude of the sonne; and by the azimut in which he stondeth, maystou seen in 5 which partie of the firmament he is. And in the same wyse maystou seen, by the night, of any sterre, whether the sterre sitte est or west or north, or any partie by-twene, after the 10 name of the azimut in which is the sterre. And for the more declaracioun, lo here the figure.

34. *To knowe sothly the degree of the longitude of the mone, or of any planete that hath no latitude for the tyme fro the ecliptik lyne.*

[*Ad cognoscendum veraciter gradum de longitudine lune, vel alicuius planete qui non habet longitudinem pro tempore causante linea ecliptica.*]

Tak the altitude of the mone, and rikne thyn altitude up among thyne almikanteras on which syde that the mone stande; and set there a prikke. 5 Tak thenne anon-right, up-on the mones syde, the altitude of any sterre fix which that thou knowest, and set his centre up-on his altitude among thyn almikanteras ther the sterre is 10 founde. Waite thanne which degree of the zodiak toucheth the prikke of the altitude of the mone, and tak ther the degree in which the mone standeth. This conclusioun is verrey 15 soth, yif the sterres in thyr. Astrolabie stonden after the trowthe; of comune, tretis of Astrolabie ne make non excepcioun whether the mone have latitude, or non; ne on whether syde 20 of the mone the altitude of the sterre fix be taken. And *nota*, that yif the mone shewe himself by light of day, than maystow wyrke this same conclusioun by the sonne, as wel as by

the fix sterre. And for the more 25 declaracioun, lo here thy figure.

35. *This is the workinge of the conclusioun, to knowe yif that any planete be directe or retrograde.*

[*Hec conclusio operatur ad cognoscendum si aliqua planeta sit directa vel retrograda.*]

Tak the altitude of any sterre that is cleped a planete, and note it wel. And tak eek anon the altitude of any sterre fix that thou knowest, and note it wel also. Come thanne agayn the 5 thridde or the ferthe night next following; for thanne shaltow aperceyve wel the moeving of a planete, whether so he moeve forthward or bakward. Awaite wel thanne when that thy 10 sterre fix is in the same altitude that she was when thou toke hir firste altitude; and tak than eftsones the altitude of the forseide planete, and note it wel. For trust wel, yif so be 15 that the planete be on the right syde of the meridional lyne, so that his seconde altitude be lasse than his firste altitude was, thanne is the planete directe. And yif he be on 20 the west syde in that condicion, thanne is he retrograd. And yif so be that this planete be up-on the est syde when his altitude is taken, so that his secoude altitude be more 25 than his firste altitude, thanne is he retrograde, and yif he be on the west syde, than is he directe. But the contrarie of these parties is of the cours of the mone; for sothly, the mone 30 moeveth the contrarie from othere planetes as in hir episicle, but in non other manere. And for the more declaracioun, lo here thy figure.

36. *The conclusiouns of equaciouns of houses, after the Astrolabie, &c.*

[*Conclusio de equacione domorum.*]

Set the by-ginning of the degree that assendeth up-on the ende of the 8 houre unequal; thanne wol the by-ginning of the 2 hous sitte up-on the

5 lyne of midnight. Remeve thanne the degree that assendeth, and set him on the ende of the 10 hour unequal; and thanne wol the byginning of the 3 hous sitte up-on the 10 midnight lyne. Bring up agayn the same degree that assendeth first, and set him up-on the orisonte; and thanne wol the be-ginning of the 4 hous sitte up-on the lyne of midnight. 15 Tak thanne the nadir of the degree that first assendeth, and set him on the ende of the 2 houre unequal; and thanne wol the by-ginning of the 5 hous sitte up-on the lyne of midnight; set thanne the nadir of the assendent on the ende of the 4 houre, than wol the byginning of the 6 house sitte on the midnight lyne. The byginning of the 7 hous is nadir of the 25 assendent, and the byginning of the 8 hous is nadir of the 2; and the byginning of the 9 hous is nadir of the 3; and the by-ginning of the 10 hous is the nadir of the 4; and the byginning of the 11 hous is nadir of the 5; 30 and the byginning of the 12 hous is nadir of the 6. And for the more declaracion, lo here the figure.

37. *A-nother manere of equacionis of houses by the Astrolabie.*

[*De aliqua forma equacionis domorum secundum astrolabium.*]

Tak thyn assendent, and thanne hastow thy 4 angles; for wel thou most that the opposit of thyn assendent, that is to seyn, thy by-ginning of 5 the 7 hous, sit up-on the west orizonte; and the byginning of the 10 hous sit up-on the lyne meridional; and his opposit up-on the lyne of midnight. Thanne ley thy label over 10 the degree that assendeth, and rekne fro the point of thy label alle the degrees in the bordure, til thou come to the meridional lyne; and departe alle thilke degrees in 3 evene parties, 15 and take the evene equacion of 3; for ley thy label over everich of 3 parties, and than maistow see by thy label in which degree of the zodiak

is the by-ginning of everich of these same houses fro the assendent: that 20 is to seyn, the beginning of the 12 house next above thyn assendent; and thanne the beginning of the 11 house; and thanne the 10, up-on the meridional lyne; as I first seide. 25 The same wyse wirke thou fro the assendent down to the lyne of midnight; and thanne thus hastow other 3 houses, that is to seyn, the byginning of the 2, and the 3, and the 4 30 houses; thanne is the nadir of these 3 houses the by-ginning of the 3 houses that folwen. And for the more declaracioun, lo here thy figure.

38. *To fynde the lyne merydional to dwelle fix in any certein place.*

[*Ad inveniendum lineam meridionalem per subtiles operationes.*]

Tak a rond plate of metal; for warping, the brodere the better; and make ther-upon a iust compas, a lite with-in the bordure; and ley this 5 ronde plate up-on an evene grond, or on an evene ston, or on an evene stok fix in the gronde; and ley it even by a level. And in centre of the compas stike an evene pin or a wyr upright; the smallere the betere. Set 10 thy pin by a plom-rewle evene upright; and let this pin be no lengere than a quarter of the diametre of thy compas, fro the centre. And waite 15 bisily, aboute 10 or 11 of the klokke and whan the sonne shyneth, whan the shadwe of the pin entreth anything with-in the cercle of thy plate an heer-mele, and mark ther a prikke with inke. Abyde thanne stille wait- 20 ing on the sonne after 1 of the klokke, til that the schadwe of the wyr or of the pin passe ony-thing out of the cercle of the compas, be it never so lyte; and set ther a-nother prikke 25 of inke. Take than a compas, and mesure evene the middel by-twixe bothe prikkes; and set ther a prikke. Take thanne a rewle, and draw a stryke, evene a-lyne fro the pin un-to 30 the middel prikke; and tak ther thy

lyne meridional for evere-mo, as in that same place. And yif thou drawe a cross-lyne over-thwart the compas, 35 iustly over the lyne meridional, than hastow est and west and south; and, par consequence, than the nadir of the south lyne is the north lyne. And for more declaracioun, lo here thy figure.

39. *Description of the meridional lyne, of longitudes, and latitudes of citees and townes from on to a-nother of clymatz.*

This lyne meridional is but a maner description of lyne imagined, that passeth upon the poles of this world and by the senith of oure heved. And 5 hit is y-cleped the lyne meridional; for in what place that any maner man is at any tyme of the yeer, whan that the sonne by moeving of the firmament cometh to his verrey meridian 10 place, than is hit verrey midday, that we clepen oure noon, as to thilke man; and therefore is it cleped the lyne of midday. And *nota*, for evere-mo, of 2 citees or of 2 townes, of 15 whiche that o toun aprocheth more toward the est than doth that other toun, truste wel that thilke townes han diverse meridians. *Nota* also, that the arch of the equinoxial, that is conteyned or bounded by-twix the 2 20 meridians, is cleped the longitude of the toun. And yif so be that two townes have y-lyke meridian, or oon meridian, than is the distance of hem 25 bothe y-lyke fer fro the est; and the contrarie. And in this manere they chaunge nat her meridian, but sothly they chaungen her almikanteras; for the enhausing of the pool and the distance of the sonne. The longitude 30 of a clymat is a lyne imagined fro est to west, y-lyke distant by-twene them alle. The latitude of a clymat is a lyne imagined from north to south the space of the erthe, fro the byginning 35 of the firste clymat unto the verrey ende of the same climat, evene directe agayns the pole artik. Thus seyn some auctours; and somme of hem

seyn that yif men clepen the latitude, 40 they mene the arch meridian that is contiened or intercept by-twix the senith and the equinoxial. Thanne sey they that the distaunce fro the equinoxial unto the ende of a clymat, 45 evene agayns the pole artyk, is the latitude of a clymat for sothe. And for more declaracioun, lo here thy figure.

40. *To knowe with which degree of the zodiak that any planete assendith on the orisonte, whether so that his latitude be north or south.*

Knowe by thyn almenak the degree of the ecliptik of any signe in which that the planete is rekned for to be, and that is cleped the degree 5 of his longitude; and knowe also the degree of his latitude fro the ecliptik, north or south. And by these samples folwinge in special, maystow 10 wirke for sothe in every signe of the zodiak. The degree of the longitude, par aventure, of Venus or of another 15 planete, was 6 of Capricorne, and the latitude of him was northward 2 degrees fro the ecliptik lyne. I tok a subtil compas, and cleped that oon 20 poynt of my compas A, and that other poynt F. Than tok I the point of A, and set it in the ecliptik lyne evene in my zodiak, in the degree of the longitude of Venus, that is to seyn, 25 in the 6 degree of Capricorne; and thanne sette I the point of F upward in the same signe, bycause that the latitude was north, up-on the latitude of Venus, that is to seyn, in the 6 30 degree fro the heved of Capricorne; and thus have I 2 degrees by-twix my two prikkes. Than leide I down softly my compas, and sette the degree of the longitude up-on the orisonte; 35 tho tok I and wexede my label in maner of a peyre tables to resceyve distinctly the prikkes of my compas. Tho tok I this forside label, and leide it fix over the degree of my longitude; 40 tho tok I up my compas, and sette the point of A in the wex on my label, as

evene as I coude gesse over the ecliptik lyne, in the ende of the longitude; and sette the point of F endlang in my label up-on the space of the latitude, inwarde and over the zodiak, that is to seyn, north-ward fro the ecliptik. Than leide I doun my compas, and lokede wel in the wey upon the prikke of A and of F; tho turned I my riet til that the prikke of F sat up-on the orisonte; than saw I wel that the body of Venus, in hir latitude of 2 degrees septentrionalis, assended, in the ende of the 6 degree, in the heved of Capricorne. And nota, that in the same maner maistow wirke with any latitude septentrional in alle signes; but sothly the latitude meridional of a planete in Capricorne may not be take, by-cause of the litel space by-twix the ecliptik and the bordure of the Astrolabe; but sothly, in alle other signes it may.

Also the degree, par aventure, of Iuppiter or of a-nother planete, was in the first degree of Pisces in longitude, and his latitude was 3 degrees meridional; tho tok I the point of A, and sette it in the firste degree of Pisces on the ecliptik, and thanne sette I the point of F dounward in the same signe, by-cause that the latitude was south 3 degrees, that is to seyn, fro the heved of Pisces; and thus have I 3 degrees by-twix bothe prikkes; thanne sette I the degree of the longitude up-on the orisonte. Tho tok I my label, and leide it fix upon the degree of the longitude; tho sette I the point of A on my label, evene over the ecliptik lyne, in the ende evene of the degree of the longitude, and sette the point of F endlang in my label the space of 3 degrees of the latitude fro the zodiak, this is to seyn, southward fro the ecliptik, toward the bordure; and turned my riet til the prikke of F sat up-on the orisonte; thanne saw I wel that the body of Iuppiter, in his latitude of 3 degrees meridional, ascended with 14 degrees of Pisces in horoscopo. And in this

maner maistow wirke with any latitude meridional, as I first seide, save in Capricorne. And yif thou wolt pleye this craft with the arysing of the mone, loke thou rekne wel hir cours houre by houre; for she ne dwelleth nat in a degree of hir longitude but a litel wyle, as thou wel knowest; but natheles, yif thou rekne hir verreye moeving by thy tables houre after houre, [thou shalt do wel y-now].

Explicit tractatus de Conclusionibus Astrolabii, compilatus per Galfridum Chauciers ad Filium suum Lodewicum, scolarem tunc temporis Oxonie, ac sub tutela illius nobilissimi philosophi Magistri N. Strode etc.

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SUPPLEMENTARY PROPOSITIONS.

41. *Umbra Recta.*

Yif it so be that thou wilt werke by *umbra recta*, and thou may come to the bas of the toure, in this maner thou schalt werke. Tak the altitude of the tour by bothe holes, so that thy rewle ligge even in a poynt. Ensam- ple as thus: I see him thorw at the poynt of 4; than mete I the space be-tween me and the tour, and I finde it 20 feet; than be-holde I how 4 is to 12, right so is the space betwix thee and the tour to the altitude of the tour. For 4 is the thridde part of 12, so is the space be-tween thee and the tour the thridde part of the altitude of the tour; than thryes 20 feet is the heyghte of the tour, with adding of thyn owne persone to thyn eye. And this rewle is so general in *umbra recta*, fro the poynt of oon to 12. And yif thy rewle falle upon 5, than is 5 12-partyes of the heygth the space be-tween thee and the toure; with adding of thyn owne heygth.

42. *Umbra Versa.*

Another maner of werkinge, by *umbra versa*. Yif so be that thou may nat come to the bas of the tour, I see him thorw the nombre of 1; I sette ther a prikke at my fote; than go I near to the tour, and I see him thorw at the poynt of 2, and there I sette a-nother prikke; and I beholde how I hath him to 12, and ther finde I that it hath him twelwe sythes; than beholde I how 2 hath him to 12, and thou shalt finde it sexe sythes; than thou shalt finde that as 12 above 6 is the nombre of 6, right so is the space between thy two prikkes the space of 6 tymes thyn altitude. And note, that at the ferste altitude of 1, thou settest a prikke; and afterward, whan thou seest him at 2, ther thou settest an-other prikke; than thou findest between two prikkys 60 feet; than thou shalt finde that 10 is the 6-party of 60. And then is 10 feet the altitude of the tour. For other poyntis, yif it fille in *umbra versa*, as thus: I sette caas it fill upon 2, and at the secunde upon 3; than schalt thou finde that 2 is 6 parties of 12; and 3 is 4 parties of 12; than passeth 6 4, by nombre of 2; so is the space between two prikkes twyes the heyghte of the tour. And yif the differens were thryes, than shulde it be three tymes; and thus mayst thou werke fro 2 to 12; and yif it be 4, 4 tymes; or 5, 5 tymes; *et sic de ceteris.*

43. *Umbra Recta.*

An-other maner of wyrking be *umbra recta*. Yif it so be that thou mayst nat come to the baas of the tour, in this maner thou schalt werke. Sette thy rewle upon 1 till thou see the altitude, and sette at thy foot a prikke. Than sette thy rewle upon 2, and beholde what is the differense be-tween 1 and 2, and thou shalt finde that it is 1. Than mete the space be-tween two prikkes, and that

is the 12 partie of the altitude of the tour. And yif ther were 2, it were the 6 partye; and yif ther were 3, the 4 partye; *et sic deinceps.* And note, yif it were 5, it were the 5 party of 12; and 7, 7 party of 12; and note, at the altitude of thy conclusion, adde the stature of thyn heyghte to thyn eye.

* * * * *

44. *Another maner conclusion, to knowe the mene mote and the argumentis of any planete. To knowe the mene mote and the argumentis of every planete fro yere to yere, from day to day, from houre to houre, and from smale fractionis infinite.*

[*Ad cognoscendum medios motus et argumenta de hora in horam cuiuslibet planete, de anno in annum, de die in diem.*]

In this maner shalt thou worche: consider thy rote first, the whiche is made the beginning of the tables fro the yere of oure lord 1397, and entere hit in-to thy slate for the laste meridie of December; and than consider the yere of oure lord, what is the date, and be-hold whether thy date be more or lasse than the yere 1397. And yf hit so be that hit be more, loke how many yeris hit passeth, and with so many entere into thy tables in the first lync ther-as is writen *anni collecti et expansi*. And loke where the same planet is writen in the hede of thy table, and than loke what thou findest in directe of the same yere of oure lord whiche is passid, be hit 8, or 9, or 10, or what nombre that evere it be, til the tyme that thou come to 20, or 40, or 60. And that thou findest in directe wryte in thy slate under thy rote, and adde hit to-geder, and that is thy mene mote, for the laste meridian of the December, for the same yere whiche that thou hast purposed. And if hit so be that hit passe 20,

consider wel that fro 1 to 20 ben *anni*
 30 *expansi*, and fro 20 to 3000 ben *anni*
collecti; and if thy numbere passe 20,
 than take that thou findest in directe
 of 20, and if hit be more, as 6 or 18,
 than take that thou findest in directe
 35 there-of, that is to sayen, signes,
 degrees, minutes, and secondes, and
 adde to-gedere un-to thy rote; and
 thus to make rotes; and note, that if
 hit so be that the yere of oure lord
 40 be lasse than the rote, whiche is the
 yere of oure lord 1397, than shalt
 thou wryte in the same wyse furst thy
 rote in thy slate, and after entere in-to
 thy table in the same yere that be
 45 lasse, as I taught be-fore; and than
 consider how many signes, degrees,
 minutes, and secondes thyn entringe
 conteyneth. And so be that ther be
 2 entrees, than adde hem togeder,
 50 and after with-drawe hem from the
 rote, the yere of oure lord 1397; and
 the residue that levet is thy mene
 mote fro the laste meride of Decem-
 ber, the whiche thou hast purposed;
 55 and if hit so be that thou wolt weten
 thy mene mote for any day, or for
 any fraccioun of day, in this maner
 thou shalt worche. Make thy rote
 fro the laste day of Decembere in the
 60 maner as I have taught, and after-
 ward behold how many monethis,
 dayes, and houres ben passid from
 the meride of Decembere, and with
 that entere with the laste moneth
 65 that is ful passed, and take that thou
 findest in directe of him, and wryte
 hit in thy slate; and entere with as
 many dayes as be more, and wryte
 that thou findest in directe of the same
 70 planete that thou worchest for; and
 in the same wyse in the table of
 houres, for houres that ben passed,
 and adde alle these to thy rote; and
 the residue is the mene mote for the
 75 same day and the same houre.

45. *Another manere to knowe the
 mene mote.*

Whan thou wolt make the mene
 mote of eny planete to be by Arse-

chieles tables, take thy rote, the whiche
 is for the yere of oure lord 1397; and
 if so be that thy yere be passid the
 5 date, wryte that date, and than wryte
 the numbere of the yeres. Than with-
 drawe the yeres out of the yeres that
 ben passed that rote. Ensampul as
 thus: the yere of oure lord 1400, I
 10 wolde witen, precise, my rote; than
 wroot I furst 1400. And under that
 numbere I wrote a 1397; than with-
 draw I the laste numbere out of that,
 and than fond I the residue was 3
 15 yere; I wiste that 3 yere was passed
 fro the rote, the whiche was wryten
 in my tables. Than after-ward soghte
 I in my tables the *annis collectis et*
expansis, and amonge myn expanse
 20 yeres fond I 3 year. Than tok I alle
 the signes, degrees, and minutes, that
 I fond directe under the same planete
 that I wroghte for, and wroot so many
 signes, degrees, and minutes in my
 25 slate, and afterward added I to signes,
 degrees, minutes, and secondes, the
 whiche I fond in my rote the yere of
 oure lord 1397; and kepte the residue;
 and than had I the mene mote for
 30 the laste day of Decembere. And if
 thou woldest wete the mene mote of
 any planete in March, Aprile, or May,
 other in any other tyme or moneth of
 the yere, loke how many monethes
 35 and dayes ben passed from the laste
 day of Decembere, the yere of oure
 lord 1400; and so with monethes
 and dayes entere in-to thy table ther
 thou findest thy mene mote y-writen
 40 in monethes and dayes, and take alle
 the signes, degrees, minutes, and sec-
 ondes that thou findest y-write in
 directe of thy monethes, and adde to
 signes, degrees, minutes, and secondes
 45 that thou findest with thy rote the yere
 of oure lord 1400, and the residue that
 levet is the mene mote for that same
 day. And note, if hit so be that thou
 woldest wete the mene mote in ony
 50 yere that is lasse than thy rote, with-
 drawe the numbere of so many yeres
 as hit is lasse than the yere of oure
 lord a 1397, and kepte the residue;
 and so many yeres, monethes, and 55

60 dayes entere in-to thy tabelis of thy
 mene mote. And take alle the signes,
 degrees, and minutes, and secondes,
 that thou findest in directe of alle the
 yeris, monethes, and dayes, and wryte
 hem in thy slate; and above thilke
 nombre wryte the signes, degrees,
 minutes, and secondes, the whiche
 thou findest with thy rote the yere
 65 of oure lord a 1397; and with-drawe
 alle the nethere signes and degrees
 fro the signes and degrees, minutes,
 and secondes of other signes with
 thy rote; and thy residue that leveh
 70 is thy mene mote for that day.

46. *For to knowe at what houre of the
 day, or of the night, shal be flode or
 ebbe.*

First wite thou certainly, how that
 haven stondesth, that thou list to werke
 for; that is to say in whiche place of
 the firmament the mone being, mak-
 5 eth fulle see. Than awayte thou
 redly in what degree of the zodiak
 that the mone at that tyme is inne.
 Bringe furth than the labelle, and
 set the point therof in that same cost
 10 that the mone maketh flode, and set
 thou there the degree of the mone
 accordyng with the egge of the label.
 Than afterward awayte where is than
 the degree of the sonne, at that tyme.
 15 Remeve thou than the label fro the
 mone, and bringe and sette it iustly
 upon the degree of the sonne. And
 the point of the label shal than declare
 to thee, at what houre of the day or
 20 of the night shal be flode. And there
 also maist thou wite by the same
 point of the label, whether it be, at
 that same tyme, flode or ebbe, or half
 flode, or quarter flode, or ebbe, or
 25 half or quarter ebbe; or ellis at what
 houre it was last, or shal be next by
 night or by day, thou than shalt esely
 knowe, &c. Furthermore, if it so be
 that thou happe to werke for this
 30 matere aboute the tyme of the con-
 iunccioun, bringe furthe the degree of
 the mone with the labelle to that

coste as it is before seyde. But than
 thou shalt understonde that thou may
 not bringe furthe the label fro the
 degree of the mone as thou dide
 35 before; for-why the sonne is than
 in the same degree with the mone.
 And so thou may at that tyme by the
 point of the labelle unremoved knowe
 40 the houre of the flode or of the ebbe,
 as it is before seyde, &c. And ever-
 more as thou findest the mone passe
 fro the sonne, so remeve thou the
 labelle than fro the degree of the
 45 mone, and bringe it to the degree of
 the sonne. And worke thou than as
 thou dide before, &c. Or elles knowe
 thou what houre it is that thou art
 inne, by thyn instrument. Than bringe
 50 thou furth fro thennes the labelle and
 ley it upon the degree of the mone,
 and therby may thou wite also whan
 it was flode, or whan it wol be next,
 be it night or day; &c. 55

[*The following sections are spurious ;
 they are numbered so as to shew
 what propositions they repeat.*]

41 a. *Umbræ Recta.*

Yif thy rewle falle upon the 8 poynt
 on right schadwe, than make thy
 figure of 8; than loke how moche
 space of feet is be-tween thee and
 the tour, and multiplie that be 12,
 5 and whan thou hast multiplied it,
 than divyde it be the same nombre
 of 8, and kepe the residue; and adde
 therto up to thyn eye to the residue,
 and that shal be the very heygth
 10 of the tour. And thus mayst thou
 werke on the same wyse, fro 1 to 12.

41 b. *Umbræ Recta.*

An-other maner of werking upon
 the same syde. Loke upon which
 poynt thy rewle falleth whan thou
 seest the top of the tour thorow two
 litil holes; and mete than the space
 5 fro thy foot to the baas of the tour;
 and right as the nombre of thy poynt
 hath him-self to 12, right so the
 mesure be-tween thee and the tour

10 hath him-self to the heichte of the same tour. Ensample: I sette caas thy rewle falle upon 8; than is 8 two-thrid partyes of 12; so the space is the two-thrid partyes of the tour.

42 a. *Umbra Versa.*

To knowe the heighth by thy poyntes of *umbra versa*. Yif thy rewle falle upon 3, whan thou seest the top of the tour, set a prikke 5 there-as thy foot stont; and go ner til thou mayst see the same top at the poynt of 4, and sette ther another lyk prikke. Than mete how many foot ben be-tween the two prikkes, and 10 adde the lengthe up to thyn eye ther-to; and that shal be the heyght of the tour. And note, that 3 is [the] fourthe party of 12, and 4 is the thridde party of 12. Now passeth 4 15 the nombre of 3 be the distaunce of 1; therefore the same space, with thyn heyght to thyn eye, is the heyght of the tour. And yif it so be that ther be 2 or 3 distaunce in the 20 nombres, so shulde the mesures between the prikkes be twyes or thryes the heyghte of the tour.

43 a. *Ad cognoscendum altitudinem alicuius rei per umbram rectam.*

To knowe the heyghte of thinges, yif thou mayst nat come to the bas of a thing. Sette thy rewle upon what 5 top of the thing thorw the two holes, and make a marke ther thy foot standeth; and go ner or forther, til

thou mayst see thorw another poynt, and marke ther a-nother marke. And loke than what is the difference 10 be-tween the two poyntes in the scale; and right as that difference hath him to 12, right so the space be-tween thee and the two markes 15 hath him to the heyghte of the thing. Ensample: I set caas thou seest it thorw a poynt of 4; after, at the poynt of 3. Now passeth the nombre of 4 the nombre of 3 be the difference of 1; and right as this difference 20 I hath him-self to 12, right so the mesure be-tween the two markes hath him to the heyghte of the thing, putting to the heyghte of thy-self to thyn 25 eye; and thus mayst thou werke fro 1 to 12.

42 b. *Per umbram versam.*

Furthermore, yif thou wilt knowe in *umbra versa*, by the craft of *umbra recta*, I suppose thou take the altitude at the poynt of 4, and makest a 5 marke; and thou goost ner til thou hast it at the poynt of 3, and than makest thou ther a-nother mark. Than muste thou devyde 144 by eche of the poyntes be-fornseyd, as thus: 10 yif thou devyde 144 be 4, and the nombre that cometh ther-of schal be 36, and yif thou devyde 144 be 3, and the nombre that cometh ther-of schal be 48, thanne loke what is the difference 15 be-tween 36 and 48, and ther shalt thou fynde 12; and right as 12 hath him to 12, right so the space be-tween two prikkes hath him to the altitude of the thing.

THE CANTERBURY TALES.

GROUP A. THE PROLOGUE.

HERE BIGINNETH THE BOOK OF THE
TALES OF CAUNTERBURY.

WHAN that Aprille with his shoures sote
The droghte of Marche hath perced to
the rote,

And bathed every veyne in swich licour,
Of which vertu engendred is the flour;
Whan Zephirus eek with his swete
breeth 5

Inspired hath in every holt and heeth
The tendre croppes, and the yonge sonne
Hath in the Ram his halfe cours y-ronne,
And smale fowles maken melodye,
That slepen al the night with open yē, 10
(So priketh hem nature in hir corages):
Than longen folk to goon on pilgrim-
ages

(And palmers for to seken straunge
strondes)

To ferne halwes, couthe in sondry londes;
And specially, from every shires ende 15
Of Engelond, to Caunterbury they wende,
The holy blisful martir for to seke,
That hem hath holpen, whan that they
were seke.

Bifel that, in that seson on a day,
In Southwerk at the Tabard as I lay 20
Redy to wenden on my pilgrimage
To Caunterbury with ful devout corage,
At night was come in-to that hostelrye
Wel nyne and twenty in a companye,
Of sondry folk, by aventure y-falle 25
In felawshipe, and pilgrims were they
alle,

That toward Caunterbury wolden ryde;
The chambres and the stables weren
wyde,

And wel we weren esed atte beste.
And shortly, whan the sonne was to
reste, 30

So hadde I spoken with hem everichon,
That I was of hir felawshipe anon,
And made forward erly for to ryse,
To take our wey, ther as I yow devyse.

But natheles, whyl I have tyme and
space, 35

Er that I ferther in this tale pace,
Me thinketh it acordaunt to resoun,
To telle yow al the condicioun
Of ech of hem, so as it semed me,
And whiche they weren, and of what
degree; 40

And eek in what array that they were
inne:

And at a knight than wol I first biginne.
A KNIGHT ther was, and that a worthy
man,

That fro the tyme that he first bigan
To ryden out, he loved chivalrye, 45
Trouthe and honour, fredom and cur-
teisye.

Ful worthy was he in his lordes werre,
And therto hadde he riden (no man
ferre)

As wel in Cristendom as hethenesse,
And ever honoured for his worthi-
nesse. 50

At Alisaundre he was, whan it was
wonne;

Ful ofte tyme he hadde the bord bigonne
Aboven alle naciouns in Pruce.

In Lettow hadde he reysed and in Ruce,
No Cristen man so ofte of his degree. 55
In Gernade at the sege eek hadde he be
Of Algezir, and riden in Belmarye.

At Lyeys was he, and at Satalye,
Whan they were wouned; and in the
Grete See

At many a noble aryve hadde he be. 60
At mortal batailles hadde he been fiftene,
And foughten for our feith at Tramis-
sene

In listes thryes, and ay slayn his foo.
This ilke worthy knight had been also
Somtyme with the lord of Palatye, 65
Ageyn another hethen in Turkye:
And evermore he hadde a sovereyn prys.
And though that he were worthy, he was
wys,

And of his port as meke as is a mayde.
He never yet no vileinye ne sayde 70
In al his lyf, un-to no maner wight.
He was a verray parfit gentil knight.

But for to tellen yow of his array,
His hors were gode, but he was nat gay.
Of fustian he wered a gipoun 75
Al bismotered with his habergeoun;
For he was late y-come from his viage,
And wente for to doon his pilgrimage.

With him ther was his sone, a yong
SQUYER,
A lovyere, and a lusty bachelor, 80
With lokkes crulle, as they were leyd in
pukke.

Of twenty yeer of age he was, I gesse.
Of his stature he was of evene lengthe,
And wonderly deliver, and greet of
strengthe.

And he had been somtyme in chivachye,
In Flaundes, in Artoys, and Picardye, 86
And born him wel, as of so litel space,
In hope to stonden in his lady grace.

Embrouded was he, as it were a mede
Al ful of fresshe floures, whyte and rede.
Singinge he was, or floytinge, al the day;
He was as fresh as is the month of May.
Short was his goun, with sleeves longe
and wyde. 93

Wel coude he sitte on hors, and faire
ryde.

He coude songes make and wel endyte,
Iuste and eek daunce, and wel purtreye
and wryte. 96

So hote he lovede, that by nightertale
He sleep namore than dooth a nightin-
gale.

Curteys he was, lowly, and servisable,
And carf biforn his fader at the table. 100

A YEMAN hadde he, and servaunts
namo

At that tyme, for him liste ryde so;
And he was clad in cote and hood of
grene;

A sheef of pecok-arwes brighte and kene
Under his belt he bar ful thriftily; 105
(Wel coude he dresse his takel yemanly:
His arwes drouped nought with fetheres
lowe),

And in his hand he bar a mighty bowe.
A not-heed hadde he, with a broun vis-
age.

Of wode-craft wel coude he al the usage.
Upon his arm he bar a gay bracer, 111
And by his syde a swerd and a bokeler,
And on that other syde a gay daggere,
Harnaised wel, and sharp as point of
spere;

A Cristofre on his brest of silver shene.
An horn he bar, the bawdrik was of
grene; 116

A forster was he, soothly, as I gesse.
Ther was also a Nonne, a PRIORESSE,
That of hir smyling was ful simple and
coy;

Hir gretteste ooth was but by seynt Loy;
And she was cleped madame Eglentyne.
Ful wel she song the service divyne,

Entuned in hir nose ful semely; 123
And Frensh she spak ful faire and fetisly,
After the scole of Stratford atte Bowe,
For Frensh of Paris was to hir unknowe.

At mete wel y-taught was she with-alle;
She leet no morsel from hir lippes falle,
Ne wette hir fingers in hir sauce depe.

Wel coude she carie a morsel, and wel
kepe, 130

That no drope ne fille up-on hir brest.
In curteisye was set ful muche hir lest.

Hir over lippe wyped she so clene,
That in hir coppe was no ferthing sene
Of grece, whan she dronken hadde hir
draughte. 135

Ful semely after hir mete she raughte,
And sikerly she was of greet disport,
And ful plesant, and amiable of port,
And peyned hir to countrefete chere

Of court, and been estatlich of manere,
And to ben holden digne of reverence.
But, for to speken of hir conscience, 142

She was so charitable and so pitous,
She wolde wepe, if that she sawe a mous

Caught in a trappe, if it were deed or
bledde. 145

Of smale houndes had she, that she
fedde

With rosted flesh, or milk and wastel-
breed.

But sore weep she if oon of hem were
deed,

Or if men smoot it with a yerde smerte:
And al was conscience and tendre herte.
Ful semely hir wimpel pinched was; 151
Hir 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 spanne brood, I trowe;
For, hardily, she was nat undergrowe.

Ful fetis was hir cloke, as I was war. 156
Of smal coral aboute hir arm she bar
A peire of bedes, gauded al with grene;
And ther-on heng a broche of gold ful
shene, 160

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

Another NONNE with hir hadde she,
That was hir chapeleyn, and PREESTES
three.

A MONK ther was, a fair for the
maistrye, 165

An out-rydere, that lovede venerye;
A manly man, to been an abbot able.
Ful many a deyntee hors hadde he in
stable:

And, whan he rood, men mighte his
brydel here

Ginglen in a whistling wind as clere, 170
And eek as loude as dooth the chapel-
belle,

Ther as this lord was keper of the celle.
The reule of saint Maure or of saint
Beneit,

By-cause that it was old and som-del
streit,

This ilke monk leet olde thinges pace,
And held after the newe world the
space. 176

He yaf nat of that text a pulled hen,
That seith, that hunters been nat holy
men;

Ne that a monk, whan he is cloisterlees,
Is lykned til a fish that is waterlees; 180
This is to seyn, a monk out of his
cloistre.

But thilke text held he nat worth an
oistre;

And I seyde, his opinioun was good.
What sholde he studie, and make him-
selven wood, 184

Upon a book in cloistre alwey to poure,
Or swinken with his handes, and labour, e,
As Austin bit? How shal the world be
served?

Lat Austin have his swink to him
reserved.

Therefore he was a pricisour aright;
Grehoundes he hadde, as swift as fowel
in flight; 190

Of prikking and of hunting for the hare
Was al his lust, for no cost wolde he
spare.

I seigh his sleeves purfild at the hond
With grys, and that the fyneste of a
lond;

And, for to festne his hood under his
chin, 195

He hadde of gold y-wroght a curious
pin:

A love-knotte in the gretter ende ther
was.

His heed was balled, that shoon as any
glas,

And eek his face, as he had been anoint.
He was a lord ful fat and in good point;
His eyen stepe, and rollinge in his heed,
That stemed as a forneys of a leed; 202
His botes souple, his hors in greet estat.

Now certainly he was a fair prelat;
He was nat pale as a for-pyned goost.

A fat swan loved he best of any roost.
His palfrey was as broun as is a berye.

A FREERE ther was, a wantoun and a
merye,

A limitour, a ful solempne man. 209

In alle the ordres foure is noon that can
So muche of daliaunce and fair langage.

He hadde maad ful many a mariage
Of yonge women, at his owne cost.

Un-to his ordre he was a noble post.
Ful wel biloved and famulier was he 215

With frankleyns over-al in his contree,
And eek with worthy women of the
toun:

For he had power of confessioun,
As seyde him-self, more than a curat,

For his ordre he was licentiat. 220
Ful swetely herde he confessioun,

And plesaunt was his absoluciou;
 He was an esy man to yeve penaunce
 Ther as he wiste to han a good pitaunce;
 For unto a povre ordre for to yive 225
 Is signe that a man is wel y-shrive
 For if he yaf, he dorste make avaunt,
 He wiste that a man was repentaunt.
 For many a man so hard is of his herte,
 He may nat wepe al-thogh him sore
 smerte. 230
 Therefore, in stede of weping and
 preyeres,
 Men moot yeve silver to the povre
 freres.
 His tipet was ay farsed ful of knyves
 And pinnes, for to yeven faire wyves.
 And certainly he hadde a mery note; 235
 Wel coude he singe and pleyen on a
 rote.
 Of yeddinges he bar utterly the prys.
 His nekke whyt was as the flour-de-lys;
 Ther-to he strong was as a champioun.
 He knew the tavernes wel in every toun,
 And everich hostiler and tappestere 241
 Bet than a lazor or a beggestere;
 For un-to swich a worthy man as he
 Acorded nat, as by his facultee,
 To have with seke lazars aqueyntaunce.
 It is nat honest, it may nat avaunce 246
 For to delen with no swich poraille,
 But al with riche and sellers of vitaille.
 And over-al, ther as profit sholde aryse,
 Curteys he was, and lowly of servyse 250
 Ther nas no man no-wher so vertuous.
 He was the beste beggere in his hous;
 [And yaf a certeyn ferme for the graunt;
 Noon of his bretheren cam ther in his
 haunt;] 252 b, c
 For thogh a widwe hadde noght a sho,
 So plesaunt was his "*In principio*,"
 Yet wolde he have a ferthing, er he
 wente. 255
 His purchas was wel bettre than his
 rente.
 And rage he coude, as it were right a
 whelpe
 In love-dayes ther coude he muchel
 helpe.
 For there he was nat lyk a cloisterer,
 With a thredbar cope, as is a povre
 scoler, 260
 But he was lyk a maister or a pope.
 Of double worsted was his semi-cope,

That rounded as a belle out of the
 presse.
 Somwhat he lipped, for his wantownesse,
 To make his English swete up-on his
 tonge; 265
 And in his harping, whan that he had
 songe,
 His eyen twinkled in his heed aright,
 As doon the sterres in the frosty night.
 This worthy limitour was cleped Huberd.
 A MARCHANT was ther with a forked
 berd, 270
 In mottelee, and bye on horse he sat,
 Up-on his heed a Flaundrish bever hat;
 His botes clasped faire and fetisly.
 His resons he spak ful solempnely,
 Souninge alway thencrees of his win-
 ning. 275
 He wolde the see were kept for any
 thing
 Bitwixe Middelburgh and Orewelle.
 Wel coude he in eschaunge sheeldes
 selle.
 This worthy man ful wel his wit bisette;
 Ther wiste no wight that he was in
 dette, 280
 So estatly was he of his governaunce,
 With his bargaynes, and with his chevi-
 saunce.
 For sothe he was a worthy man with-
 alle,
 But sooth to seyn, I noot how men him
 calle.
 A CLERK ther was of Oxenford also,
 That un-to logik hadde longe y-go. 286
 As lene was his hors as is a rake,
 And he nas nat right fat, I undertake;
 But loked holwe, and ther-to soberly.
 Ful thredbar was his overest courtepy;
 For he had geten him yet no benefyce,
 Ne was so worldly for to have offyce.
 For him was lever have at his beddes
 heed
 Twenty bokes, clad in blak or reed,
 Of Aristotle and his philosophye, 295
 Than robes riche, or fithele, or gay
 sautrye.
 But al be that he was a philosophre,
 Yet hadde he but litel gold in cofre;
 But al that he mighte of his freendes
 hente,
 On bokes and on lerninge he it spente,
 And bisily gan for the soules preye 301

Of hem that yaf him wher-with to
scoleye.
Of studie took he most cure and most
hede.
Noght o word spak he more than was
nede,
And that was seyde in forme and rever-
ence, 305
And short and quik, and ful of hy sen-
tence.
Souninge in moral vertu was his speche,
And gladly wolde he lerne, and gladly
teche.
A SERGEANT OF THE LAWE, war and
wys,
That often hadde been at the parvys, 310
Ther was also, ful riche of excellence.
Discreet he was, and of greet reverence:
He semed swich, his wordes weren so
wyse.
Iustyce he was ful often in assyse, 314
By patente, and by pleyn commissioun;
For his science, and for his heigh renoun
Of fees and robes hadde he many oon.
So greet a purchasour was no-wher
noon.
Al was fee simple to him in effect, 319
His purchasing mighte nat been infect.
No-wher so bisy a man as he ther nas,
And yet he semed bisier than he was.
In termes hadde he caas and domes alle,
That from the tyme of king William were
falle.
Therto he coude endyte, and make a
thing, 325
Ther coude no wight pinche at his
wryting;
And every statut coude he pleyn by rote.
He rood but hoonly in a medlee cote
Girt with a ceint of silk, with barres
smale;
Of his array telle I no lenger tale. 330
A FRANKLEYN was in his companye;
Whyt was his berd, as is the dayesyce.
Of his complexioun he was sangwyn.
Wel loved he by the morwe a sop in
wyn.
To liven in delyt was ever his wone, 335
For he was Epicurus owne sone,
That heeld opinioun, that pleyn delyt
Was verrailly felicitie parfyt.
An housholdere, and that a greet, was
he;

Seint Iulian he was in his contree. 340
His breed, his ale, was alwey after oon;
A better envyned man was no-wher
noon.
With-oute bake mete was never his
hous,
Of fish and flesh, and that so plentevous,
It snwed in his hous of mete and
drinke, 345
Of alle deyntees that men coude thinke.
After the sondry sesons of the yeer,
So chaunged he his mete and his soper.
Ful many a fat partrich hadde he in
mewe,
And many a breem and many a luce in
stewe. 350
Wo was his cook, but-if his sauce
were
Poynaunt and sharp, and redy al his
gere.
His table dormant in his halle alwey
Stood redy covered al the longe day.
At sessionis ther was he lord and
sire; 355
Ful ofte tyme he was knight of the shire.
An anlas and a gipser al of silk
Heng at his girdel, whyt as morne milk.
A shirreve hadde he been, and a coun-
tour;
Was no-wher such a worthy vavasour. 360
AN HABERDASSHER and a CARPENTER,
A WEBBE, a DYERE, and a TAPICER,
Were with us eek, clothed in o liverce,
Of a solempne and greet fraternitee.
Ful fresh and newe hir gere apyked
was; 365
Hir knyves were y-chaped noght with
bras,
But al with silver, wrought ful clene and
weel
Hir girdles and hir pouches every-deel.
Wel semed ech of hem a fair burgeys,
To sitten in a yeldhalle on a deys. 370
Everich, for the wisdom that he can,
Was shaply for to been an alderman.
For catel hadde they y-nogh and rente,
And eek hir wyves wolde it wel assente;
And elles certein were they to blame. 375
It is ful fair to been y-clept "*ma dame*,"
And goon to vigilyës al bifore,
And have a mantel royalliche y-bore.
A COOK they hadde with hem for the
noncs,

To boille the chiknes with the mary-
bones, 380

And poudre-marchant tart, and galingale.
Wel coude he knowe a draughte of
London ale.

He coude roste, and sethe, and broille,
and frye,

Maken mortreux, and wel bake a pye.
But greet harm was it, as it thoughte
me, 385

That on his shine a mormal hadde he;
For blankmanger, that made he with the
beste.

A SHIPMAN was ther, woning fer by
weste:

For aught I woot, he was of Derte-
mouthe.

He rood up-on a rouncey, as he couthe,
In a gowne of falding to the knee. 391

A daggere hanging on a laas hadde he
Aboute his nekke under his arm adoun.
The hote somer had maad his hewe al
broun;

And, certeinly, he was a good felawe. 395
Ful many a draughte of wyn had he
y-drawe

From Burdeux-ward, whyl that the chap-
man sleep.

Of nyce conscience took he no keep.

If that he faught, and hadde the hyer
hond,

By water he sente hem hoom to every
lond. 400

But of his craft to rekene wel his tydes,
His stremes and his daungers him
bisydes,

His herberwe and his mone, his lode-
menage,

Ther nas noon swich from Hulle to
Cartage. 404

Harly he was, and wys to undertake;
With many a tempest hadde his berd
been shake.

He knew wel alle the havenes, as they
were,

From Gootland to the cape of Finistere,
And every cryke in Britayne and in
Spayne;

His barge y-cleped was the Maudelayne.

With us ther was a DOCTOUR OF
PHISYK, 411

In al this world ne was ther noon him
lyk

To speke of phisik and of surgerye;

For he was grounded in astronomye.

He kepte his pacient a ful greet del 415
In houres, by his magik naturel.

Wel coude he fortunen the ascendent
Of his images for his pacient.

He knew the cause of everich maladye,
Were it of hoot or cold, or moiste, or
drye, 420

And where engendred, and of what
humour;

He was a verrey parfit practisour.

The cause y-knowe, and of his harm the
rote,

Anon he yaf the seke man his bote.

Ful redy hadde he his apothecaries, 425
To sende him drogges and his letuaries,

For ech of hem made other for to
winne;

Hir frendschipe nas nat newe to biginne.

Wel knew he the olde Esculapius,
And Deiscorides, and eek Rufus, 430

Old Ypocras, Haly, and Galien;

Serapion, Razis, and Avicen;

Averrois, Damascien, and Constantyn;

Bernard, and Gatesden, and Gilbertyn.

Of his diete mesurable was he, 435
For it was of no superfluitee,

But of greet norissing and digestible.

His studie was but litel on the Bible.

In sangwin and in pers he clad was al,
Lyned with taffata and with sendal; 440

And yet he was but esy of dispence;

He kepte that he wan in pestilence.

For gold in phisik is a cordial,

Therefore he lovede gold in special.

A good WYF was ther of bisyde
BATHE,

But she was som-del deaf, and that was
scathe. 446

Of clooth-making she hadde swiche an
haunt,

She passed hem of Ypres and of Gaunt.

In al the parisshe wyf ne was ther noon
That to the offring before hir sholde

goon; 450
And if ther dide, certeyn, so wrooth was
she,

That she was out of alle charitee.

Hir coverchiefs ful fyne were of ground;
I dorste swere they weyeden ten pound

That on a Sunday were upon hir heed.

Hir hosen weren of fyn scarlet reed, 456

Ful streite y-teyd, and shoos ful moiste
and newe.

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

She was a worthy womman al hir lyve,
Housbondes at chirche-dore she hadde
fyve, 460

Withouten other companye in youthe;
But therof nedeth nat to speke as nouthe.
And thryes hadde she been at Ierusalem;
She hadde passed many a straunge
stream;

At Rome she hadde been, and at
Boloigne, 465

In Galice at seint Iame, and at Coloigne.
She coude muche of wandring by the
weye:

Gar-tothed was she, soothly for to seye.

Up-on an amblere esily she sat,
Y-wimpled wel, and on hir heed an hat

As brood as is a bökeler or a targe; 471

A foot-mantel aboute hir hipes large,
And on hir feet a paire of spores sharpe.

In felawschip wel coude she laughe and
carpe.

Of remedies of love she knew per-
chance, 475

For she coude of that art the olde
daunce.

A good man was ther of religioun,
And was a povre PERSON of a toun;
But riche he was of holy thought and
werk.

He was also a lerned man, a clerk, 480
That Cristes gospel trewely wolde
preche;

His parissshens devoutly wolde he teche,
Benigne he was, and wonder diligent,
And in adversitee ful pacient;

And swich he was y-preved ofte sythes.
Ful looth were him to cursen for his
tythes, 486

But rather wolde he yeven, out of doute,
Un-to his povre parissshens aboute

Of his offering, and eek of his substaunce.
He coude in litel thing han suffisaunce.

Wyd was his parisshe, and houses fer
a-sonder, 491

But he ne lafte nat, for reyn ne thonder,
In siknes nor in mieschief, to visytc

The ferreste in his parisshe, muche and
lyte,

Up-on his feet, and in his hand a staf.

This noble ensample to his sheep he
yaf, 496

That first he wroughte, and afterward he
taughte;

Out of the gospel he tho wordes caughte;
And this figure he added eek ther-to,
That if gold ruste, what shal iren do?

For if a preest be foul, on whom we
truste, 501

No wonder is a lewed man to ruste;
And shame it is, if a preest take keep,
A shiten shepherde and a clene sheep.

Wel oghte a preest ensample for to yive,
By his clenness, how that his sheep
shold live. 506

He sette nat his benefice to hyre,
And leet his sheep encombred in the
myre,

And ran to London, un-to seynt Poules,
To seken him a chaunterie for soules,

Or with a bretherhed to been withholde;
But dwelte at hoom, and kepte wel his
folde, 512

So that the wolf ne made it nat mis-
carie;

He was a shepherde and no mercenarie.
And though he holy were, and vertuous,

He was to sinful man nat despitous, 516
Ne of his speche daungerous ne digne,
But in his teching discreet and benigne.

To drawn folk to heven by fairnesse
By good ensample, was his bisnesse:

But it were any persone obstinat, 521
What-so he were, of heigh or lowe estat,
Him wolde he snibben sharply for the
nones.

A better preest, I trowe that nowher
noon is.

He wayted after no pompe and rever-
ence, 525

Ne maked him a spyced conscience,
But Cristes lore, and his apostles twelve,
He taughte, and first he folwed it him-
selve.

With him ther was a PLOWMAN, was
his brother,

That hadde y-lad of dong ful many a
fother, 530

A trewe swinker and a good was he,
Livinge in pees and parit charitee.

God loved he best with al his hole herte
At alle tymes, thogh him gamed or
smerte,

And thanne his neighbeour right as him-
selve. 535

He wolde thresshe, and ther-to dyke and
delve,

For Cristes sake, for every povre wight,
Withouten hyre, if it lay in his might.

His thythes payed he ful faire and wel,
Bothe of his propre swink and his catel.
In a tabard he rood upon a mere. 541

Ther was also a Reve and a Millere,
A Somnour and a Pardoner also,
A Maunciple, and my-self; ther were
namo.

The MILLER was a stout carl, for the
nones, 545
Ful big he was of braun, and eek of
bones;

That proved wel, for over-al ther he cam,
At wrastling he wolde have alwey the
ram.

He was short-sholdred, brood, a thikke
knarre,

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

Or breke it, at a renning, with his heed.
His berd as any sowe or fox was reed,
And ther-to brood, as though it were a
spade.

Up-on the cop right of his nose he hade
A werte, and ther-on stood a tuft of
heres, 555

Reed as the bristles of a sowes eres;
His nose-thirles blake were and wyde.

A swerd and bokeler bar he by his
syde;

His mouth as greet was as a greet for-
neys.

He was a Ianglere and a goliardeys, 560
And that was most of sinne and har-
lotryes.

Wel coude he stelen corn, and tollen
thryes;

And yet he hadde a thombe of gold,
— pardee.

A whyt cote and a blew hood wered he.
A baggepype wel coude he blowe and
sowne, 565

And ther-with-al he broghte us out of
towne.

A gentil MAUNCIPLE was ther of a
temple,

Of which achatours mighte take exemple
For to be wyse in bying of vitaille.

For whether that he payde, or took by
taille, 570

Algate he wayted so in his achat,
That he was ay biforn and in good stat. *aread*

Now is nat that of God a ful fair grace,
That swich a lewed mannes wit shal pace. *197*

The wisdom of an heep of lerned men?
Of maistres hadde he mo than thryes
ten, 576

That were of lawe expert and curious;
Of which ther were a doseyn in that
hous,

Worthy to been stiwardes of rente and
lund

Of any lord that is in Engelond, 580

To make him live by his propre good,
In honour dettelees, but he were wood,

Or live as scarsly as him list desire;
And able for to helpen al a shire

In any cas that mighte falle or happe;
And yit this maunciple sette^h hir aller
cappe. 586

The REVE was a sclendre colerik man,
His berd was shave as ny as ever he can.

His heer was by his eres round y-shorn.
His top was dokked lyk a preest biforn.

Ful longe were his legges, and ful lene,
Y-lyk a staf, ther was no calf y-sene. 592

Wel coude he kepe a gerner and a binne;
Ther was noon auditour coude on him
winne.

Wel wiste he, by the droghte, and by the
reyn, 595

The yelding of his seed, and of his greyn.
His lordes sheep, his neet, his dayerye,

His swyn, his hors, his stoor, and his
pultrye,

Was hoolly in this reves governing, 599

And by his covenaut yaf the rekening,
Sin that his lord was twenty yeer of age;

Ther coude no man bringe him in arrer-
age.

Ther nas baillif, ne herde, ne other hyne,
That he ne knew his sleighte and his
covyne; 604

They were adrad of him, as of the deeth.
His woning was ful fair up-on an heeth,

With grene treës shadwed was his place.
He coude bettre than his lord purchase.

Ful riche he was astored prively,
His lord wel coude he plesen subtilly,

To yeve and lene him of his owne
good, 611

And have a thank, and yet a cote and hood.

In youth he lerned hadde a good mīster;

He was a wel good wrighte, a carpenter.
This reve sat up-on a ful good stot, 615
That was al pomely grey, and highte Scot.
A long surcote of pers up-on he hade,
And by his syde he bar a rusty blade.
Of Northfolk was this reve, of which I telle,

Bisyde a toun men clepen Baldeswelle.
Tukked he was, as is a frere, aboute, 621
And ever he rood the hindreste of our route.

A SOMNOUR was ther with us in that place,

That hadde a fyr-reed cherubinnes face,
For sawcefleem he was, with eyen narwe.
As hoot he was, and lecherous, as a sparwe; 626

With scalled browes blake, and piled berd;

Of his visage children were aferd.
Ther nas quik-silver, litarge, ne brimstoon,

Boras, ceruce, ne oille of tartre noon, 630
Ne oynement that wolde clense and byte,
That him mighte helpen of his whelkes whyte,

Nor of the knobbes sittinge on his chekes.

Wel loved he garleek, oynons, and eek lekes,

And for to drinken strong wyn, reed as blood. 635

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

And whan that he wel dronken hadde the wyn,

Than wolde he speke no word but Latyn.
A fewe termes hadde he, two or three,

That he had lerned out of som decree;
No wonder is, he herde it al the day; 641

And eek ye knowen wel, how that a lay
Can clepen 'Watte,' as well as can the pope.

But who-so coude in other thing him grope,

Thanne hadde he spent al his philoso-
phy; 645

Ay 'Questio quid iuris' wolde he crye.
He was a gentil harlot and a kinde;

A better felawe sholde men nocht finde.
He wolde suffre, for a quart of wyn,

A good felawe to have his concubyn 650
A twelf-month, and excuse him atte fulle:

Ful prively a finch eek coude he pulle.
And if he fond o-wher a good felawe,

He wolde techen him to have non awe,
In swich cas, of the erchedeknes curs, 655

But-if a mannes soule were in his purs;
For in his purs he sholde y-punished be.

'Purs is the erchedeknes helle,' seyde he.
But wel I woot he lyed right in dede;

Of cursing oghte ech gilty man him drede— 660

For curs wol slee, right as assoilling saveth—

And also war him of a *significavit*.
In daunger hadde he at his owne gyse

The yonge gīrles of the dioyse,
And knew hir counseil, and was al hir reed. 665

A gerland hadde he set up-on his heed,
As greet as it were for an ale-stake;

A bokeler hadde he maad him of a cake.
With him ther rood a gentil PARDONER

Of Ronneival, his freend and his com-
peer, 670

That streight was comen fro the court of Rome.

Ful loude he song, 'Com hider, love, to me.'

This somnour bar to him a stif burdoun,
Was never trompe of half so greet a soun.

This pardoner hadde beer as yelow as wax, 675

But smothe it heng, as dooth a strike of flex;

By ounces henge his lokkes that he hadde,

And ther-with he his shuldres over-
spradde;

But thinne it lay, by colpons oon and oon;

But hood, for Jolitec, ne wered he noon,
For it was trussed up in his walet. 681

Him thoughte, he rood al of the newe Iet;

Dischevele, save his cappe, he rood al bare.

Swiche glaringe eyen hadde he as an hare. 684

A vernicle hadde he sowed on his cappe.

His walet lay biforn him in his lappe,
Bret-ful of pardoun come from Rome al
hoot.

A voys he hadde as smal as hath a goot.
No berd hadde he, ne never sholde have,
As smothe it was as it were late y-
shave; 690

I trowe he were a gelding or a mare.
But of his craft, fro Berwil: into Ware,
Ne was ther swich another pardoner.
For in his male he hadde a pilwe-beer,
Which that, he seyde, was our lady
veyl: 695

He seyde, he hadde a gobet of the seyl
That seynt Peter hadde, whan that he
wente

Up-on the see, til Iesu Crist him hente.
He hadde a croys of latoun, ful of
stones,

And in a glas he hadde pigges bones. 700
But with thise relikes, whan that he fond
A povre person dwelling up-on lond,
Up-on a day he gat him more moneye
Than that the person gat in monthes
tweye.

And thus, with feyned flaterye and
Iapes, 705
He made the person and the peple his
apes.

But trewely to tellen, atte laste,
He was in chirche a noble ecclesiaste.
Wel coude he rede a lessoun or a storie,
But alderbest he song an offertorie; 710
For wel he wiste, whan that song was
songe,

He moste preche, and wel affyle his
tonge,
To winne silver, as he ful wel coude;
Therefore he song so meriely and loude.

Now have I told you shortly, in a
clause, 715
Thestat, tharray, the nombre, and eek
the cause

Why that assembled was this companye
In Southwerk, at this gentil hostelrye,
That highte the Tabard, faste by the
Belle.

But now is tyme to yow for to telle 720
How that we baren us that ilke night,
Whan we were in that hostelrye alight.
And after wol I telle of our viage,
And al the remenaunt of our pilgrimage.
But first I pray yow, of your curteisye,

That ye narette it nat my vileinye, 726
Thogh that I pleyntly speke in this
matere,

To telle yow hir wordes and hir chere;
Ne thogh I speke hir wordes properly.
For this ye knowen al-so wel as I, 730
Who-so shal telle a tale after a man,
He moot reherce, as ny as ever he can,
Everich a word, if it be in his charge,
Al speke he never so rudeliche and
large;

Or elles he moot telle his tale untrewe,
Or feyne thing, or finde wordes
newe. 736

He may nat spare, al-though he were his
brother;

He moot as wel seye o word as another.
Crist spak him-self ful brode in holy writ,
And wel ye woot, no vileinye is it. 740
Eek Plato seith, who-so that can him
rede,

The wordes mote be cosin to the dede.
Also I prey yow for foryeve it me,
Al have I nat set folk in hir degree
Here in this tale, as that they sholde
stonde; 745

My wit is short, ye may wel understonde.
Greet chere made our hoste us everi-
chon,

And to the soper sette he us anon;
And served us with vitaille at the beste.
Strong was the wyn, and wel to drinke
us leste. 750

A semely man our hoste was with-alle
For to han been a marshal in an halle;
A large man he was with eyen stepe,
A fairer burgeys is ther noon in Chepe:

Bold of his speche, and wys, and wel y-
taught, 755
And of manhood him lakkede right
naught.

Eek therto he was right a mery man,
And after soper pleyen he bigan,
And spak of mirthe amonges othere
things,

Whan that we hadde maad our reken-
inges; 760

And seyde thus: 'Now, lordinges,
trewely,

Ye been to me right welcome hertely:
For by my trouthe, if that I shal nat lye,
I ne saugh this yeer so mery a com-
panye

At ones in this herberwe as is now. 765
Fayn wolde I doon yow mirthe, wiste I
how.

And of a mirthe I am right now bi-
thought,

To doon yow ese, and it shal coste
nought.

Ye goon to Caunterbury; God yow
spede,

The blisful martir quyte yow your
mede. 770

And wel I woot, as ye goon by the weye,
Ye shapen yow to talen and to pleye;

For trewely, confort ne mirthe is noon
To ryde by the weye doumb as a stoon;

And therefore wol I maken yow disport,
As I seyde erst, and doon yow som con-
fort. 776

And if yow lyketh alle, by oon assent,
Now for to stonden at my Iugement,

And for to werken as I shal yow seye,
To-morwe, whan ye ryden by the
weye, 780

Now, by my fader soule, that is deed,
But ye be merye, I wol yeve yow myn
heed.

Hold up your hond, withouten more
speche.'

Our counseil was nat longe for to
seche;

Us thoughte it was nought worth to make
it wys, 785

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

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

But tak it not, I prey yow, in desdeyn;
This is the poynt, to speken short and
pleyn 790

That ech of yow, to shorte with your
weye,

In this viage, shal telle tales tweye,
To Caunterbury-ward, I mene it so,
And hom-ward he shal tellen othere
two,

Of adventures that whylom han bifalle.
And which of yow that bereth him best
of alle, 796

That is to seyn, that telleth in this cas
Tales of best sentence and most solas,
Shal have a soper at our aller cost
Here in this place, sitting by this post,

Whan that we come agayn fro Caunter-
bury. 801

And for to make yow the more mery,
I wol my-selven gladly with yow ryde,
Right at myn owne cost, and be your
gyde.

And who-so wol my Iugement with-
seye 805

Shal paye al that we spenden by the
weye.

And if ye vouche-sauf that it be so,
Tel me anon, with-outen wordes mo,
And I wol erly shape me therfore.'

This thing was graunted, and our
othes swore 810

With ful glad herte, and preyden him
also

That he wold vouche-sauf for to do so,
And that he wolde been our governour,
And of our tales Iuge and reportour,
And sette a soper at a certeyn prys; 815

And we wold reuled been at his devys,
In heigh and lowe; and thus, by oon
assent,

We been acorded to his Iugement.
And ther-up-on the wyn was fet anon;

We drunken, and to reste wente echon,
With-outen any lenger taryinge. 821

A-morwe, whan that day bigan to
springe,

Up roos our host, and was our aller cok,
And gadrede us togidre, alle in a flok,
And forth we riden, a litel more than
pas, 825

Un-to the watering of seint Thomas.
And there our host bigan his hors areste,
And seyde; 'Lordinges, herkneth, if yow
leste.

Ye woot your forward, and I it yow re-
corde.

If even-song and morwe-song acorde, 830
Lat se now who shal telle the firste tale.

As ever mote I drinke wyn or ale,
Who-so be rebel to my Iugement
Shal paye for al that by the weye is
spent.

Now draweth cut, er that we ferrer
twinne; 835

He which that hath the shortest shal bi-
ginne.

Sire knight,' quod he, 'my maister and
my lord,

Now draweth cut, for that is myn acord.

Cometh neer,' quod he, 'my lady prior-
esse;

And ye, sir clerk, lat be your shamfast-
nesse, 840

Ne studieth noght; ley hond to, every
man.'

Anon to drawn 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
knight, 845

Of which ful blythe and glad was every
wight;

And telle he moste his tale, as was resoun,
By forward and by composicioun,

*Here endeth the prolog of this book; and here biginneth the first tale, which is the
Knights Tale.*

As ye han herd; what nedeth wordes
mo?

And whan this gode man saugh it was
so, 850

As he that wys was and obedient
To kepe his forward by his free assent,
He seyde: 'Sin I shal biginne the game,
What, welcome be the cut, a Goddes
name!

Now lat us ryde, and herkneth what I
seye.' 855

And with that word we riden forth our
weye;

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

THE KNIGHTES TALE.

*Iamque domos patrias, Scithice post aspera gentis
Prelia, laurigero, &c.*

[Statius, *Theb.* xii. 519.]

WHYLOM, as olde stories tellen us,
Ther was a duk that highte Theseus; 860
Of Athenes he was lord and governour,
And in his tyme swich a conquerour,
That gretter was ther noon under the
sonne.

Ful many a riche contree hadde he
wonne;

What with his wisdom and his chival-
rye, 865

He conquered al the regne of Femenye,
That whylom was y-cleped Scithia;
And weddede the quene Ipolita,
And broghte hir hoom with him in his
contree

With muchel glorie and greet solempni-
tee, 870

And eek hir yonge suster Emelye.
And thus with victorie and with melodye
Lete I this noble duk to Athenes ryde,
And al his hoost, in armes, him bisyde.

And certes, if it nere to long to
here, 875

I wolde han told yow fully the manere,
How wonnen was the regne of Femenye

By Theseus, and by his chivalrye;
And of the grete bataille for the nones
Bitwixen Athenes and Amazones; 880

And how asseged was Ipolita,
The faire hardy quene of Scithia;
And of the feste that was at hir weddinge,
And of the tempest at hir hoom-cominge;
But al that thing I moot as now for-
bere. 885

I have, God woot, a large feeld to ere,
And wayke been the oxen in my plough.
The remenant of the tale is long y-nough.
I wol nat letten eek noon of this route;
Lat every felawe telle his tale aboute,
And lat see now who shal the soper
winne; 891

And ther I lefte, I wol ageyn biginne.
This duk, of whom I make mencioniun,
When he was come almost unto the
toun,

In al his wele and in his moste pryde, 895
He was war, as he caste his eye asyde,
Wher that ther kneled in the hye weye
A companye of ladies, tweye and tweye,
Ech after other, clad in clothes blake;

But swich a cry and swich a wo they
make, 900

That in this world nis creature livinge,
That herde swich another weymentinge;
That of this cry they nolde never stenten,
Til they the reynes of his brydel henten.

'What folk ben ye, that at myn hoom-
cominge 905
Perturben so my feste with cryinge?'

Quod Theseus, 'have ye so greet envye
Of myn honour, that thus compleyne and
crye?

Or who hath yow misboden, or offended?
And telleth me if it may been amended;
And why that ye ben clothed thus in
blak?' 911

The eldest lady of hem alle spak,
When she hadde swowned with a deedly
chere,

That it was routhe for to seen and here,
And seyde: 'Lord, to whom Fortune
hath given 915

Victorie, and as a conquerour to liven,
Noght greveth us your glorie and your
honour;

But we biseken mercy and socour.
Have mercy on our wo and our distresse.
Som drope of pitee, thurgh thy gentil-
lesse, 920

Up-on us wrecched women lat thou
falle.

For certes, lord, ther nis noon of us alle,
That she nath been a duchesse or a
quene;

Now be we caitifs, as it is wel sene:
Thanked be Fortune, and hir false
wheel, 925

That noon estat assureth to be weel.
And certes, lord, to abyden your presence,
Here in the temple of the goddesse
Clemence

We han ben waytinge al this fourtenight;
Now help us, lord, sith it is in thy
might. 930

I wrecche, which that wepe and waille
thus,

Was whylom wyf to king Capaneus,
That starf at Thebes, cursed be that day!
And alle we, that been in this array,
And maken al this lamentacioun, 935

We losten alle our housbondes at that
toun,

Whyl that the sege ther-abouty lay.

And yet now the olde Creon, weylaway!
That lord is now of Thebes the citee,
Fulild of ire and of iniquitee, 940

He, for despyt, and for his tyrannye,
To do the dede bodyes vileinye,
Of alle our lordes, whiche that ben slawe,

Hath alle the bodyes on an heep y-drawe,
And wol nat suffren hem, by noun
assent, 945

Neither to been y-buried nor y-brent,
But maketh houndes ete hem in despyt.
And with that word, with-ouen more
respyt,

They fillen gruf, and cryden pitously,
'Have on us wrecched women som
mercy, 950

And lat our sorwe sinken in thyn herte.'
This gentil duk down from his courser
sterte

With herte pitous, whan he herde hem
speke.

Him thoughte that his herte wolde breke,
Whan he saugh hem so pitous and so
mat, 955

That whylom weren of so greet estat.
And in his armes he hem alle up hente,
And hem comforteth in ful good entente;

And swoor his ooth, as he was trewe
knight, 959

He wolde doon so ferforthly his might
Up-on the tyraunt Creon hem to wreke,
That al the peple of Grece sholde speke

How Creon was of Theseus y-served,
As he that hadde his deeth ful wel de-
served. 964

And right anon, with-ouen more abood,
His baner he desplayeth, and forth rood
To Thebes-ward, and al his host bisyde;

No neer Athenes wolde he go ne ryde,
Ne take his ese fully half a day,
But onward on his wey that night he
lay; 970

And sente anon Ipolita the quene,
And Emelye hir yonge suster shene,
Un-to the toun of Athenes to dwelle;

And forth he rit; ther nis namore to
telle.

The rede statue of Mars, with spere
and targe, 975

So shyneth in his whyte baner large,
That alle the feeldes gliteren up and
doun;

And by his baner born is his penoun

Of gold ful riche, in which ther was
y-bete
The Minotaur, which that he slough in
Crete. 980
Thus rit this duk, thus rit this conquerour,
And in his host of chivalrye the flour,
Til that he cam to Thebes, and alighte
Faire in a feeld, ther as he thoghte
fighte.
But shortly for to speken of this thing, 985
With Creon, which that was of Thebes
king,
He faught, and slough him manly as a
knight
In pleyn bataille, and putte the folk to
flight;
And by assaut he wan the citee after,
And rente adoun bothe wal, and sparre,
and rafter; 990
And to the ladyes he restored agayn
The bones of hir housbondes that were
slayn,
To doon obsequies, as was tho the gyse.
But it were al to long for to devyse
The grete clamour and the wayment-
inge 995
That the ladyes made at the brenninge
Of the bodyes, and the grete honour
That Theseus, the noble conquerour,
Doth to the ladyes, whan they from him
wente;
But shortly for to telle is myn entente. 1000
Whan that this worthy duk, this Theseus,
Hath Creon slayn, and wonne Thebes thus,
Stille in that feeld he took al night his
reste,
And dide with al the contree as him leste.
To ransake in the tas of bodyes
dede, 1005
Hem for to strepe of harneys and of
wede,
The pilours diden businesse and cure,
After the bataille and disconfiture.
And so bifel, that in the tas they founde,
Thurgh-girt with many a grevous bloody
wounde, 1010
Two yonge knyghtes ligging by and by,
Bothe in oon armes, wrought ful richely,
Of whiche two, Arcita hight that oon,
And that other knight hight Palamon.
Nat fully quike, ne fully dede they
were, 1015
But by hir cote-armures, and by hir gere,

The heraudes knewe hem best in special,
As they that weren of the blood royal
Of Thebes, and of sustren two y-born.
Out of the tas the pilours han hem
torn, 1020
And han hem caried softe un-to the tente
Of Theseus, and he ful sone hem sente
To Athenes, to dwellen in prisonn
Perpetuelly, he nolde no raunsoun.
And whan this worthy duk hath thus
y-don, 1025
He took his host, and hoom he rood
anon
With laurer crowned as a conquerour;
And there he liveth, in Ioye and in
honour,
Terme of his lyf; what nedeth wordes
mo?
And in a tour, in angwish and in wo, 1030
Dwellen this Palamoun and eek Arcite,
For evermore, ther may no gold hem
quyte.
This passeth yeer by yeer, and day by
day,
Til it fil ones, in a morwe of May,
That Emelye, that fairer was to sene 1035
Than is the lillie upon his stalke grene,
And fresher than the May with floures
newe —
For with the rose colour stroof hir hewe,
I noot which was the fairer of hem two —
Er it were day, as was hir wone to do, 1040
She was arisen, and al redy dight;
For May wol have no slogardye a-night.
The sesoun priketh every gentil herte,
And maketh him out of his sleep to sterte,
And seith, 'Arys, and do thyn obser-
vaunce.' 1045
This made Emelye have remembrance
To doon honour to May, and for to ryse.
Y-clothed was she fresh, for to devyse;
Hir yelow heer was broyded in a tresse,
Behinde hir bak, a yerde long, I
gesse. 1050
And in the gardin, at the sonne up-riste,
She walketh up and down, and as hir
liste
She gadereth floures, party whyte and
rede,
To make a sotil gerland for hir hede, 1055
And as an aungel hevenly she song. 1056
The grete tour, that was so thikke and
strong,

Which of the castel was the chief don-
geoun,

(Ther-as the knightes weren in prisoun,
Of whiche I tolde yow, and tellen shal)

Was evene Ioynant to the gardin-wal, 1060
Ther as this Emelye hadde hir pleyng.

Bright was the sonne, and cleer that
morweninge,

And Palamon, this woful prisoner,
As was his wone, by leve of his gayler,

Was risen, and romed in a chambre on
heigh, 1065

In which he al the noble citee seigh,
And eek the gardin, ful of braunches
grene,

Ther-as this fresshe Emelye the shene
Was in hir walk, and romed up and
doun.

This sorweful prisoner, this Palamoun,
Goth in the chambre, roming to and
fro, 1071

And to him-self compleyning of his wo;
That he was born, ful ofte he seyde, 'alas!'

And so bifel, by aventure or cas,
That thurgh a window, thikke of many a
barre 1075

Of yren greet, and square as any sparre,
He caste his eye upon Emelya,

And ther-with-al he bleynte, and cryde
'a!'

As though he stongen were un-to the
herte. 1079

And with that cry Arcite anon up-sterre,
And seyde, 'Cosin myn, what eyleth thee,

That art so pale and deedly on to see?
Why crydestow? who hath thee doon
offence?

For Goddes love, tak al in pacience
Our prisoun, for it may non other be; 1085

Fortune hath yeven us this adversitee.
Som wikke aspect or disposicioun

Of Saturne, by sum constellacioun,
Hath yeven us this, al-though we hadde
it sworn;

So stood the heven whan that we were
born; 1090

We moste endure it: this is the short and
pleyn.'

This Palamon answerde, and seyde
ageyn,

'Cosyn, for sothe, of this opinioun
Thou hast a veyn imaginacioun.

This prison caused me nat for to crye. 1095

But I was hurt right now thurgh-out myn
yë

In-to myn herte, that wol my bane be.
The fairnesse of that lady that I see

Yond in the gardin romen to and fro,
Is cause of al my crying and my wo. 1100

I noot wher she be womman or goddesse;
But Venus is it, soothly, as I gesse.'

And ther-with-al on kneës doun he fil,
And seyde: 'Venus, if it be thy wil 1104

Yow in this gardin thus to transfigure
Bifore me, sorweful wrecche creature,

Out of this prisoun help that we may
scapen.

And if so be my destinee be shapen
By eterne word to dyen in prisoun,

Of our linage have som compassioun, 1110
That is so lowe y-brought by tyrannye.'

And with that word Arcite gan espye
Wher-as this lady romed to and fro.

And with that sighte hir beautee hurte
him so,

That, if that Palamon was wounded
sore, 1115

Arcite is hurt as muche as he, or more.
And with a sigh he seyde pitously:

'The fresshe beautee sleeth me sodeynly
Of hir that rometh in the yonder place;

And, but I have hir mercy and hir
grace, 1120

That I may seen hir atte leeste weye,
I nam but deed; ther nis namore to seye.'

This Palamon, whan he tho wordes
herde,

Dispitously he loked, and answerde:
'Whether seistow this in earnest or in
pley?' 1125

'Nay,' quod Arcite, 'in earnest, by my
fey!'

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

This Palamon gan knitte his browes
tweye:

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

For to be fals, ne for to be traytour 1130
To me, that am thy cosin and thy brother

Y-sworn ful depe, and ech of us til other,
That never, for to dyen in the peyne,

Til that the deeth departe shal us tweyne,
Neither of us in love to hindren other,

Ne in non other cas, my leve brother;
But that thou sholdest trewely forthen

me 1137

In every cas, and I shal forthren thee.
 This was thyn ooth, and myn also, cer-
 teyn;
 I wot right wel, thou darst it nat with-
 seyn. 1140
 Thus artow of my counseil, out of doute.
 And now thou woldest falsly been aboute
 To love my lady, whom I love and serve,
 And ever shal, til that myn herte sterve.
 Now certes, fals Arcite, thou shalt nat
 so. 1145
 I loved hir first, and tolde thee my wo
 As to my counseil, and my brother sworn
 To forthre me, as I have told biforn.
 For which thou art y-bounden as a knight
 To helpen me, if it lay in thy might, 1150
 Or elles artow fals, I dar wel seyn.'

This Arcitë ful proudly spak ageyn,
 'Thou shalt,' quod he, 'be rather fals
 than I;
 But thou art fals, I telle thee utterly;
 For *par amour* I loved hir first er
 thou. 1155
 What yetlow seyn? thou wistest nat yet
 now
 Whether she be a womman or goddesse!
 Thyn is affeccioun of holinesse,
 And myn is love, as to a creature;
 For which I tolde thee myn aventure 1160
 As to my cosin, and my brother sworn.
 I pose, that thou lovedest hir biforn;
 Wostow nat wel the olde clerkes sawe,
 That 'who shal yeve a lover any lawe?'
 Love is a gretter lawe, by my pan, 1165
 Than may be yeve to any erthly man.
 And therefore positif lawe and swich de-
 cree
 Is broke al-day for love, in ech degree.
 A man moot nedes love, maugree his
 heed.
 He may nat fleen it, thogh he sholde be
 deed, 1170
 Al be she mayde, or widwe, or elles wyf.
 And eek it is nat lykly, al thy lyf,
 To stonden in hir grace; namore shal I;
 For wel thou woost thy-selven, verraily,
 That thou and I be dampned to pris-
 oun 1175
 Perpetually; us gayneth no raunsoun.
 We stryve as dide the houndes for the
 boon,
 They foughte al day, and yet hir part was
 noon;

Ther cam a kyte, whyl that they were
 wrothe,
 And bar away the boon bitwixe hem
 bothe. 1180
 And therefore, at the kinges court, my
 brother,
 Ech man for him-self, ther is non other.
 Love if thee list; for I love and ay shal;
 And soothly, leve brother, this is al.
 Here in this prisoun mote we en-
 dure, 1185
 And everich of us take his aventure.'

Greet was the stryf and long bitwixe
 hem tweye,
 If that I hadde leyser for to seye;
 But to theffect. It happed on a day,
 (To telle it yow as shortly as I may) 1190
 A worthy duk that highte Perotheus,
 That felawe was un-to duk Theseus
 Sin thilke day that they were children
 lyte,
 Was come to Athenes, his felawe to
 visyte,
 And for to pleye, as he was wont to
 do, 1195
 For in this world he loved no man so:
 And he loved him as tendrely ageyn.
 So wel they loved, as olde bokes seyn,
 That whan that oon was deed, sothly to
 telle,
 His felawe wente and soghte him doun
 in helle; 1200
 But of that story list me nat to wryte.
 Duk Perotheus loved wel Arcite,
 And hadde him knowe at Thebes yeer
 by yere;
 And fynally, at requeste and preyere
 Of Perotheus, with-oute any raunsoun,
 Duk Theseus him leet out of prisoun,
 Freely to goon, wher that him liste over-
 al, 1207
 In swich a gyse, as I you tellen shal.
 This was the forward, pleynly for ten-
 dyte,
 Bitwixen Theseus and him Arcite: 1210
 That if so were, that Arcite were y-
 founde
 Ever in his lyf, by day or night or stounde
 In any contree of this Theseus,
 And he were caught, it was accorded thus,
 That with a swerd he sholde lese his
 heed; 1215
 Ther nas non other remedye ne reed,

But taketh his leve, and homward he him
 spedde;

Let him be war, his nekke lyth to wedde!
 How greet a sorwe suffreth now Ar-
 cite!

The deeth he feleth thurgh his herte
 smyte; 1220

He wepeth, wayleth, cryeth pitously;
 To sleen him-self he wayteth prively.
 He seyde, 'Allas that day that I was
 born!

Now is my prison worse than biforn;
 Now is me shape eternally to dwelle 1225
 Noght in purgatorie, but in helle.
 Allas! that ever knew I Perotheus!
 For elles hadde I dwelled with Theseus
 Y-fetered in his prison ever-mo.
 Than hadde I been in blisse, and nat in
 wo. 1230

Only the sighte of hir, whom that I serve,
 Though that I never hir grace may de-
 serve,

Wolde han suffised right y-nough for me.
 O dere cosin Palamon,' quod he, 1234
 'Thyn is the victorie of this aventure,
 Ful blisfully in prison maistow dure;
 In prison? certes nay, but in paradys!
 Wel hath fortune y-turned thee the dys,
 That hast the sighte of hir, and I thab-
 sence.

For possible is, sin thou hast hir pres-
 ence, 1240

And art a knight, a worthy and an able,
 That by som cas, sin fortune is change-
 able,

Thou mayst to thy desyr som-tyme atteyne.
 But I, that am exyled, and bareyne
 Of alle grace, and in so greet despeir, 1245
 That ther nis erthe, water, fyr, ne eir,
 Ne creature, that of hem maketh is,
 That may me helpe or doon confort in
 this.

Wel oughte I sterve in wanhope and
 distresse;

Farwel my lyf, my lust, and my glad-
 nesse! 1250

Allas, why pleynen folk so in com-
 mune
 Of purveyaunce of God, or of fortune,
 That yeveth hem ful ofte in many a gyse
 Wel bettre than they can hem-self de-
 vyse?

Som man desyreth for to han richesse,

That cause is of his mordre or greet sik-
 nesse. 1256

And som man wolde out of his prison
 fayn,

That in his hous is of his meynee slayn.
 Infinite harmes been in this matere;
 We witen nat what thing we preyen
 here. 1260

We faren as he that dronke is as a mous;
 A dronke man wot wel he hath an hous,
 But he noot which the righte wey is
 thider;

And to a dronke man the wey is slider.
 And certes, in this world so faren we;
 We seken faste after felicitee, 1266
 But we goon wrong ful often, trewely.
 Thus may we seyen alle, and namely I,
 That wende and hadde a greet opinioun,
 That, if I mighte escapen from prison,
 Than hadde I been in Ioye and perfit
 hele, 1271

Ther now I am exyled fro my wele.
 Sin that I may nat seen yow, Emelye,
 I nam but deed; ther nis no remedye.'

Up-on that other syde Palamon, 1275
 Whan that he wiste Arcite was agon,
 Swich sorwe he maketh, that the grete
 tour
 Resouneth of his youling and clamour.
 The pure fettes on his shines grete
 Weren of his bitter salte teres wete. 1280
 'Allas!' quod he, 'Arcita, cosin myn,
 Of al our stryf, God woot, the fruyt is
 thyn.

Thow walkest now in Thebes at thy
 large,
 And of my wo thou yevest litel charge.
 Thou mayst, sin thou hast wisdom and
 manhede, 1285
 Assemblen alle the folk of our kinrede,
 And make a werre so sharp on this
 citee,
 That by som aventure, or som trettee,
 Thou mayst have hir to lady and to wyf,
 For whom that I mot nedes lese my lyf.
 For, as by wey of possibilitee, 1291
 Sith thou art at thy large, of prison free,
 And art a lord, greet is thyn avauntage,
 More than is myn, that sterve here in a
 cage. 1294
 For I mot wepe and wayle, whyl I live,
 With al the wo that prison may me
 yive,

And eek with peyne that love me yiveth
also,
That doubleth al my torment and my
wo.'

Ther-with the fyr of Ielousye up-sterre
With-inne his brest, and hente him by
the herte 1300

So woody, that he lyk was to biholde
The box-tree, or the aassen dede and
colde.

Tho seyde he; 'O cruel goddes, that
governe

This world with binding of your word
eterne, 1304

And wryten in the table of athamaunt
Your parlement, and your eterne graunt,
What is mankinde more un-to yow holde
Than is the sheep, that rouketh in the
folde?

For slayn is man right as another beste,
And dwelleth eek in prison and areste,
And hath siknesse, and greet adversitee,
And ofte tymes giltelees, pardee! 1312

What governaunce is in this prescience,
That giltelees tormenteth innocence?

And yet encreseth this al my penaunce,
That man is bounden to his observaunce,
For Goddes sake, to letten of his wille,
Ther as a beest may al his lust fulfillen.

And whan a beest is deed, he hath no
peyne;

But man after his deeth moot wepe and
pleyne, 1320

Though in this world he have care and
wo:

With-ouen doute it may stonden so.
The answer of this I lete to divynis,
But wel I woot, that in this world gret
pyne is.

Allas! I see a serpent or a thief, 1325
That many a trewe man hath doon mes-
cheef,

Goon at his large, and wher him list may
turne.

But I mot been in prison thurgh Saturne,
And eek thurgh Iuno, Ialous and eek
wood, 1329

That hath destroyed wel ny al the blood
Of Thebes, with his waste walles wyde.
And Venus sleeth me on that other syde
For Ielousye, and fere of him Arcite.'

Now wol I stinte of Palamon a lyte,
And lete him in his prison stille dwelle,

And of Arcite forth I wol yow telle, 1336
The somer passeth, and the nightes
longe

Encresen double wyse the peynes stronge
Bothe of the love and the prisoner.

I noot which hath the wofullere mester.
For shortly for to seyn, this Palamoun 1341

Perpetuely is dampned to prisoun,
In cheynes and in fettes to ben deed;
And Arcite is exyled upon his heed
For ever-mo as out of that contree, 1345
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,
But in prison he moot dwelle alway. 1350
That other wher him list may ryde or go,
But seen his lady shal he never-mo.
Now demeth as yow liste, ye that can,
For I wol telle forth as I bigan.

*Explicit prima Pars. Sequitur pars
secunda.*

Whan that Arcite to Thebes comen
was, 1355
Ful ofte a day he swelte and seyde
'allas,'

For seen his lady shal he never-mo.
And shortly to concluden al his wo,
So muche sorwe had never creature
That is, or shal, whyl that the world may
dure. 1360

His sleep, his mete, his drink is him
biraft,

That lene he wex, and drye as is a shaft.
His eyen holwe, and grisly to biholde;
His hewe falwe, and pale as asshen
colde,

And solitarie he was, and ever alone,
And wailing al the night, making his
mone. 1366

And if he herde song or instrument,
Then wolde he wepe, he mighte nat be
stent;

So feble eek were his spirits, and so
lowe,

And chaunged so, that no man coude
knowe 1370

His speche nor his vois, though men it
herde.

And in his gere, for al the world he
ferde

Nat oonly lyk the lovers maladye
 Of Hereos, but rather lyk manye
 Engended of humour malencolyk, 1375
 Biforen, in his celle fantasyk.
 And shortly, turned was al up-so-doun
 Bothe habit and eek disposicion
 Of him, this woful love daun Arcite.
 What sholde I al-day of his wo en-
 dyte? 1380
 When he endured hadde a yeer or two
 This cruel torment, and this peyne and
 wo,
 At Thebes, in his contree, as I seyde,
 Up-on a night, in sleep as he him leyde,
 Him thoughte how that the winged god
 Mercurie 1385
 Biforn him stood, and bad him to be
 murye.
 His slepy yerde in hond he bar uprighte;
 An hat he werede up-on his heres brighte.
 Arrayed was this god (as he took keep)
 As he was whan that Argus took his
 sleep; 1390
 And seyde him thus: 'To Athenes shal thou
 wende;
 Ther is thee shapen of thy wo an ende.'
 And with that word Arcite wook and
 sterte.
 'Now trewely, how sore that me smerte,'
 Quod he, 'to Athenes right now wol I
 fare; 1395
 Ne for the drede of deeth shal I nat spare
 To see my lady, that I love and serve;
 In hir presence I recche nat to sterve.'
 And with that word he caughte a greet
 mirour,
 And saugh that chaunged was al his
 colour, 1400
 And saugh his visage al in another kinde.
 And right anon it ran him in his minde,
 That, sith his face was so disfigured
 Of maladye, the which he hadde endured,
 He mighte wel, if that he bar him
 lowe, 1405
 Live in Athenes ever-more unknowe,
 And seen his lady wel ny day by day.
 And right anon he changed his array,
 And cladde him as a povre laborer,
 And al alone, save oonly a squyer, 1410
 That knew his privetee and al his cas,
 Which was dysgyed povrely, as he was,
 To Athenes is he goon the nexte way.
 And to the court he wente up-on a day,

And at the gate he profreth his
 vyse, 1415
 To drugge and drawe, what so men w
 devyse.
 And shortly of this matere for to seyn,
 He fil in office with a chamberleyn,
 The which that dwelling was with Emelye.
 For he was wys, and coude soon aspye
 Of every servaunt, which that serveth
 here. 1421
 Wel coude he hewen wode, and water
 bere,
 For he was yong and mighty for the
 nones,
 And ther-to he was strong and big of
 bones 1424
 To doon that any wight can him devyse.
 A yeer or two he was in this servyse,
 Page of the chambre of Emelye the
 brighte;
 And 'Philostrate' he seide that he highte.
 But half so wel biloved a man as he
 Ne was ther never in court, of his de-
 gree; 1430
 He was so gentil of condicioun,
 That thurghout al the court was his renoun.
 They seyden, that it were a charitee
 That Theseus wolde enhauncen his de-
 gree, 1434
 And putten him in worshipful servyse,
 Ther as he mighte his vertu excercyse.
 And thus, with-inne a whyle, his name is
 spronge
 Bothe of his dedes, and his goode tonge,
 That Theseus hath taken him so neer
 That of his chambre he made him a
 squyer, 1440
 And yaf him gold to mayntene his degree;
 And eek men broghte him out of his
 contree
 From yeer to yeer, ful prively, his rente;
 But honestly and slyly he it spente,
 That no man wondred how that he it
 hadde. 1445
 And three yeer in this wyse his lyf he
 ladde,
 And bar him so in pees and eek in werre,
 Ther nas no man that Theseus hath derre.
 And in this blisse lete I now Arcite,
 And speke I wol of Palamon a lyte. 1450
 In derkenesse and horrible and strong
 prisoun
 This seven yeer hath seten Palamoun,

Forprowd, what for we and for distresse;
 Who faren in this stour and vermesses
 Ben Palamoun? that live Astreygheth
 1455
 That wood out of his wote good for we!
 And sek wher he is a prisoner
 Forprowd, noght only for a year
 With some crime in Englaund properly
 His marston? for sooth, in all that
 1456
 Therefore I passe as lightly as I may,
 In feith that in the seveneth year, in May,
 The thirde night, as this bookes term,
 That a his some toun made playn,
 Were it by aventure or bestesse, 1457
 And what a thing is shapen it shal be,
 That soth after the morning Palamoun
 In seking of a friend, brode his prison,
 And deeth the more faste as he may go:
 For he had grete gader drinke so 1458
 Of a damere, maid of a betseyn wyf,
 With bewtykes and ope of Thebes fyr,
 That a that night thought that men wote
 1459
 The gader sleep, he mighte nat awake,
 And thus he faste as faste as ever he
 1460
 The night was short, and faste by the day,
 That he seide, he muste him-selfen
 1461
 And to a grave faste that hegyde,
 Who so wote, for that sake, Palamoun,
 Forprowd, this was his opinion, 1462
 That in that grave he wote him byle a
 1463
 And in the night that wote he take his
 1464
 To Thebes-ward, his freendes for to prey,
 On Thebes to helpe him to weryte
 And shortly, wote he wote Jete his
 1465
 In wiche Emere, wote his wyf,
 This wote, and he entente playn,
 Now wote, wote he wote agayn,
 That he wote, wote that was his bare,
 The that wote, wote to get him in the
 1466
 The that wote, wote of day,
 Baldoun, wote wote in the two gray,
 And for the wote, wote up at onyght,
 That a wote, wote of the wote,
 And wote, wote wote, wote in the
 1467

The silver drope, hanging on the leves,
 And Arriue, that is in the court royal
 With Thebes, his soper principal,
 Is risen, and liketh on the myrie day,
 And, for to doon his observance to
 1468
 May, 1469
 Remembering on the povre of his desty,
 He on a cours, stering as the fy,
 Is risen into the feildes, him to playe,
 Out of the court, were it a myle or tweye;
 And to the grave, of which that I yow
 1470
 By aventure, his way he gan to holde,
 To make him a garland of the groves,
 Whereof of wodebunde or lawethorn-leves,
 And wote he seing agayn the sunnesheene:
 'May, wote and toy doores and toy
 1471
 Wote, wote be thou, faire frende May,
 I hope that I sum grene gate may,
 And from his court, with a busy herte,
 Into the grave, ful hastily he scerte,
 And in a path, he comen up and
 1472
 Ther-as, by aventure, this Palamoun
 Was in a bush, that no man mighte him
 1473
 For soth, afere of his feith, was he
 Noghting he knew he that it was Arriue:
 God wote he wote have wote in fol
 1474
 But sooth is seyd, god wote many yeres,
 That feeld, eke, eye, and the wote, hert
 1475
 It is ful fair a man to bere him evene,
 For al-day meteth men at onset sterve,
 Ful hert, wote Arriue, of his folawe, 1476
 That was seing to heren al his sawe,
 For in the bush, he sterte, now ful stille,
 'Whan that Arriue had rumed al his
 1477
 And songen al the roundel lustyly,
 That a wote, wote he, wote, 1478
 As wote, wote wote, in his queynte
 1479
 Now in the droppes, now down in the
 1480
 Now up, now down, as wote, in a welle,
 Right as the Fyrie, southe for to telle,
 Now in agayn, now in reyneth fante,
 Right as the gery Venus overcaste 1481
 The hertes of her folk, right as for day
 It geth, right so, chaungen, wote array.

Selde is the Friday al the wyke y-lyke

Whan that Arrote had songe, he gan

to syke, 1340

And sette him down with-outen any more:

'Alas!' quod he, 'that day that I was here!

How longe, Juno, thugh thy cruetee,

Wolkow werreyen Thebes the citee?

Allas! y-brought is to confusioun 1345

The blood royal of Cadme and Amphion:

Of Cadmus, which that was the firste man

That Thebes bukte, or first the town bigan,

And of the citee first was crowned king,

Of his lineage am I, and his of-spring 1350

By verray ligne, as of the stok royal:

And now I am so cauf and so thral,

That he, that is my mortal enemy,

I serve him as his syyer poorly,

And yet doth lene me wel more shame,

For I dar nocht biknowe myn owne name: 1355

But ther-as I was wont to highte Arrote,

Now highte I Philostrate, nocht worth a myte.

Allas! thou felle Mars, alas! Juno,

Thus hath your ire our kinrede al fordo, 1360

Save only me, and wretched Palamoun,

That Thebes martyreth in prisonn,

And over al this, to sleen me utterly,

Love hath his fyre dart so breunningly

Y-stiked thugh my trowe careful herte, 1365

That shapen was my death erst than my sherte.

Ye sleen me with your even, Emelye:

Ye been the cause wher-to that I dye,

Of al the remenant of myn other care

No sette I nat the mountaunce of a tare, 1370

So that I coude don aught to your ples-
aunce!

And with that word he sl down in a trance

A longe tyme; and after he up-sterie.

This Palamoun, that thoughte that thugh his herte

He felle a cold swerd sodeynlyche glyde, 1375

For ire he quok, no longer woude he bide.

And woot that he had herd Arrote tale,

As he were woun, with face deed and pale.

He sterre him up out of the buskes thikke,

And seyde: 'Arrote, false traitour wikk, 1380

Now artow best that lovest my lady swete,

For whom that I have al this payne and wete,

And art my blood, and to my crowned swere,

As I ful ofte have told thee here-before,

And hast by-spyed here sike Thebes,

And falsly changed hast thy name thus: 1385

I wil be deed, or elles thou shalt dye,

Thou shalt nat love my lady Emelye,

But I wol love hir only, and name,

For I am Palamoun, thy mortal foe, 1390

And thugh that I no wepne have in this place,

But out of prison am astart by grace,

I drede nocht that neither thou shalt dye,

Or thou ne shalt nat loved Emelye,

Chees which thou wilt, for thou shalt nat astarte.' 1395

This Arrote, with ful despyous herte,

Whan he him knew, and hadde his tale herd,

As fier as leoun, pulled out a swerd,

And seyde thus: 'by God that sit above,

Nere it that thou art sike, and woude do love, 1400

And sek that thou no wepne hast in this place

Thou sholdest never out of this grave pace,

That thou ne sholdest even of myn hand,

For I deye the sountee and the bond

Which that thou seyst that I have maad to thee, 1405

What verray folk think wel that live is free,

And I wol love hir, maugre al thy might;

But for as muche thou art a worthy knight,

And wilst to darrene by by bataille,

Have heer my trouthe, to-morrow I wol nat fayle, 1410

With-outen woting of any other wight.

That here I wol be founden as a knight,
 And bringen harneys right y-nough for
 thee;
 And chees the beste, and leve the worste
 for me.
 And mete and drinke this night wol I
 bringe 1615
 Y-nough for thee, and clothes for thy
 beddinge.
 And, if so be that thou my lady winne,
 And slee 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,
 When ech of hem had leyd his feith to
 borwe.
 O cupide, out of alle charitee!
 O regne, that wolt no felawe have with
 thee!
 Ful sooth is seyde, that love ne lord-
 shipe 1625
 Wol noight, his thankes, have no felawe-
 shipe;
 Wel finden that Arcite and Palamoun.
 Arcite is riden anon un-to the toun,
 And on the morwe, er it were dayes
 light,
 Ful prively two harneys hath he
 dight, 1630
 Bothe suffisaunt and mete to darreyne
 The bataille in the feeld betwix hem
 tweyne.
 And on his hors, allone as he was born,
 He carieth al this harneys him biforn;
 And in the grove, at tyme and place y-
 set, 1635
 This Arcite and this Palamon ben met.
 Tho chaungen gan the colour in hir face;
 Right as the hunter in the regne of
 Trace,
 That stondesth at the gappe with a spere,
 Whan hunted is the leoun or the bere,
 And hereth him come russing in the
 greves, 1641
 And breketh bothe bowes and the leves,
 And thinketh, 'heer cometh my mortel
 enemy,
 With-oute faile, he moot be deed, or I;
 For outhur I mot sleen him at the
 gappe, 1645

Or he mot sleen me, if that me mis-
 happe:'
 So ferden they, in chaunging of hir hewe,
 As fer as everich of hem other knewe.
 Ther nas no good day, ne no saluing;
 But streight, with-uten word or rehers-
 ing, 1650
 Everich of hem halp for to armeen other,
 As freendly as he were his owne brother;
 And after that, with sharpe speres
 stronge
 They foynen ech at other wonder longe.
 Thou mightest wene that this Palamoun
 In his fighting were a wood leoun, 1656
 And as a cruel tygre was Arcite:
 As wilde bores gonne they to smyte,
 That frothen whyte as foom for ire
 wood.
 Up to the ancle foghte they in hir blood.
 And in this wyse I lete hem fighting
 dwelle; 1661
 And forth I wol of Theseus yow telle.
 The destinee, ministre general,
 That executeth in the world over-al
 The purveyaunce, that God hath seyn
 biforn, 1665
 So strong it is, that, though the world
 had sworn
 The contrarie of a thing, by ye or nay,
 Yet somtyme it shal fallen on a day
 That falleth nat est with-inne a thousand
 yere.
 For certainly, our appetytes here, 1670
 Be it of werre, or pees, or hate, or love,
 Al is this reuled by the sighte above.
 This mene I now by mighty Theseus,
 That for to honten is so desirous,
 And namely at the grete hert in May, 1675
 That in his bed ther daweth him no day,
 That he nis clad, and redy for to ryde
 With hunte and horn, and houndes him
 bisyde.
 For in his hunting hath he swich delyt,
 That it is al his Ioye and appetyt 1680
 To been him-self the grete hertes bane;
 For after Mars he serveth now Diane.
 Cleer was the day, as I have told er
 this,
 And Theseus, with alle Ioye and blis,
 With his Ipolita, the fayre quene, 1685
 And Emelye, clothed al in grene,
 On hunting be they riden royally.
 And to the grove, that stood ful faste by,

In which ther was an hert, as men him
tolde,

Duk Theseus the streighte wey hath
holde. 1690

And to the launde he rydeth him ful right,
For thider was the hert wont have his
flight,

And over a brook, and so forth on his
weye.

This duk wol han a cours at him, or
tweye,

With houndes, swiche as that him list
comaunde. 1695

And when this duk was come un-to the
launde,

Under the sonne he loketh, and anon

He was war of Arcite and Palamon,

That foughten breme, as it were bores
two;

The brighte swerdes wenten to and
fro 1700

So hidously, that with the leeste strook

It seemed as it wolde felle an ook;

But what they were, no-thing he ne woot.

This duk his courser with his spores
smoot,

And at a stert he was bitwix hem two, 1705

And pulled out a swerd and cryed, 'ho!

Namore, up peyne of lesing of your heed.

By mighty Mars, he shal anon be deed,

That smyteth any strook, that I may
seen!

But telleth me what mister men ye
been, 1710

That been so hardy for to fighten here

With-ouen Iuge or other officere,

As it were in listes royally?

This Palamon answerde hastily,

And seyde: 'sire, what nedeth wordes
mo? 1715

We have the deeth deserved bothe two.

Two woful wrecches been we, two cay-
tyves,

That been encumbred of our owne lyves;

And as thou art a rightful lord and Iuge,

Ne yeve us neither mercy ne refuge, 1720

But slee me first, for seynte charitee;

But slee my felawe eek as wel as me.

Or slee him first; for, though thou knowe
it lyte,

This is thy mortal fo, this is Arcite,

That fro thy lond is banished on his
heed, 1725

For which he hath deserved to be deed.

For this is he that cam un-to thy gate,

And seyde, that he highte Philostrate.

Thus hath he laped thee ful many a yeer,

And thou has makid him thy chief
squyer; 1730

And this is he that loveth Emelye.

For sith the day is come that I shal dye,

I make pleynly my confessioun,

That I am thilke woful Palamoun,

That hath thy prison broken wik-
kedly. 1735

I am thy mortal fo, and it am I

That loveth so hote Emelye the brighte,

That I wol dye present in hir sighte.

Therefore I axe deeth and my Iuwysse;

But slee my felawe in the same wyse, 1740

For bothe han we deserved to be slayn.'

This worthy duk answerde anon agayn,

And seyde, 'This is a short conclusioun:

Youre owne mouth, by your confessioun,

Hath dampned you, and I wol it re-
corde, 1745

It nedeth noght to pyne yow with the
corde.

Ye shul be deed, by mighty Mars the
rede!'

The quene anon, for verray womman-
hede

Gan for to wepe, and so dide Emelye,

And alle the ladies in the companye. 1750

Gret pitee was it, as it thoughte hem alle,

That ever swich a chaunce sholde falle;

For gentil men they were, of greet estat,

And no-thing but for love was this debat;

And sawe hir bloddy woundes wyde and
sore 1755

And alle cryden, bothe lasse and more,

'Have mercy, lord, up-on us wommen
alle!'

And on hir bare knees adoun they falle,

And wolde have kist his feet ther-as he
stood, 1759

Til at the laste aslaked was his mood;

For pitee renneth sone in gentil herte.

And though he first for ire quook and
sterte,

He hath considered shortly, in a clause,

The trespas of hem bothe, and eek the
cause:

And al-though that his ire hir gilt ac-
cused, 1765

Yet in his reson he hem bothe excused;

As thus: he thoghte wel, that every man
 Wol helpe him-self in love, if that he can,
 And eek delivere him-self out of prisoun;
 And eek his herte had compassioun 1770
 Of wommen, for they wepen ever in oon;
 And in his gentil herte he thoghte anon,
 And softe un-to himself he seyde: 'fy
 Up-on a lord that wol have no mercy,
 But been a leoun, bothe in word and
 dede, 1775
 To hem that been in repentaunce and
 drede

As wel as to a proud despitous man
 That wol maynteyne that he first bigan!
 That lord hath litel of discrecioun,
 That in swich cas can no divisoun, 1780
 But weyeth pryde and humblesse after
 oon.'

And shortly, whan his ire is thus agoon,
 He gan to loken up with eyen lighte,
 And spak thise same wordes al on
 highte:—

'The god of love, a! *benedicite*, 1785
 How mighty and how greet a lord is he!
 Ayeins his might ther gayneth none
 obstacles,

He may be cleped a god for his miracles;
 For he can maken at his owne gyse
 Of everich herte, as that him list de-
 vyse. 1790

Lo heer, this Arcite and this Palamoun,
 That quitly weren out of my prisoun,
 And mighte han lived in Thebes royally,
 And witen I am hir mortal enemy,
 And that hir deeth lyth in my might
 also, 1795

And yet hath love, maugree hir eyen two,
 Y-brought hem hider bothe for to dye!
 Now loketh, is nat that an heigh folye?
 Who may been a fool, but-if he love?
 Bihold, for Goddes sake that sit above,
 Se how they blede! be they noght 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! 1805

But this is yet the beste game of alle,
 That she, for whom they han this Iolitee,
 Can hem ther-for as mucche thank as me;
 She woot namore of al this hote fare,

By God, than woot a cokkow or an
 hare! 1810

But al mot been assayed, hoot and cold;
 A man mot been a fool, or yong or old;
 I woot it by my-self ful yore agoon:
 For in my tyme a servant was I oon.

And therefore, sin I knowe of loves
 peyne, 1815

And woot how sore it can a man dis-
 treyne,
 As he that hath ben caught ofte in his
 las,

I yow foryeve al hoolly this trespas,
 At requeste of the quene that kneleth
 here,

And eek of Emelye, my suster dere. 1820
 And ye shul bothe anon un-to me swere,
 That never-mo ye shul my contree dere,
 Ne make werre up-on me night ne day,
 But been my freendes in al that ye may;
 I yow foryeve this trespas every del.' 1825
 And they him swore his axing fayre and
 wel,

And him of lordshipe and of mercy
 preyde,

And he hem graunteth grace, and thus
 he seyde:

'To speke of royal linage and richesse,
 Though that she were a quene or a prin-
 cesse, 1830

Ech of yow bothe is worthy, doutelees,
 To wedden whan tyme is, but nathelees
 I speke as for my suster Emelye,
 For whom ye have this stryf and Ielousye;
 Ye woot your-self, she may not wedden
 two 1835

At ones, though ye fighten ever-mo:
 That oon of yow, al be him looth or leef,
 He moot go pypen in an ivy-leef;
 This is to seyn, she may nat now han
 bothe, 1839

Al be ye never so Ielous, ne so wrothe.
 And for-thy I yow putte in this degree,
 That ech of yow shal have his destinee
 As him is shape; and herkneith in what
 wyse;

Lo, heer your ende of that I shal devyse.

My wil is this, for plat conclusioun,
 With-uten any replicacioun, 1846
 If that yow lyketh, tak it for the beste,
 That everich of yow shal gon wher him
 leste

Frely, with-uten raunson or daunger;

And this day fifty wykes, fer ne ner, 1850
Everich of yow shal bringe an hundred
knightes,

Armed for listes up at alle rightes,
Al redy to darreyne hir by bataille.

And this bihote I yow, with-outen faille,
Up-on my trouthe, and as I am a knight,
That whether of yow bothe that hath
might, 1856

This is to seyn, that whether he or thou
May with his hundred, as I spak of now,
Sleen his contrarie, or out of listes dryve,
Him shal I yewe Emelya to wyve, 1860
To whom that fortune yeveth so fair a
grace.

The listes shal I maken in this place,
And God so wisly on my soule rewe,
As I shal even Iuge been and trewe.

Ye shul non other ende with me maken,
That oon of yow ne shal be deed or
taken. 1866

And if yow thinketh this is wel y-sayd,
Seyeth your avys, and holdeth yow apayd.
This is your ende and your conclusioun.'

Who loketh lightly now but Pala-
moun? 1870

Who springeth up for Ioye but Arcite?
Who couthe telle, or who couthe it en-
dyte,

The Ioye that is makid in the place
Whan Theseus hath doon so fair a grace?
But down on knees wente every maner
wight, 1875

And thanked him with al her herte and
might,

And namely the Thebans ofte sythe.

And thus with good hope and with herte
blythe

They take hir leve, and hom-ward gonne
they ryde 1879

To Thebes, with his olde walles wyde.

*Explicit secunda pars. Sequitur pars
tercia.*

I trowe men wolde deme it negligence,
If I foryete to tellen the dispence
Of Theseus, that goth so bisily
To maken up the listes royally;
That swich a noble theatre as it was, 1885
I dar wel seyn that in this world ther
nas.
The circuit a myle was aboute,

Walled of stoon, and diked al with-
oute. 1888

Round was the shap, in maner of compas,
Ful of degrees, the heichte of sixty pas,
That, whan a man was set on o degree,
He letted nat his felawe for to see.

Est-ward ther stood a gate of marbel
whyt,

West-ward, right swich another in the
opposit. 1894

And shortly to concluden, swich a place
Was noon in erthe, as in so litel space;
For in the lond ther nas no crafty man,
That geometrie or ars-metrik can,
Ne purtreyour, ne kerver of images,
That Theseus ne yaf him mete and
wages 1900

The theatre for to maken and devyse.

And for to doon his ryte and sacrificse,
He est-ward hath, up-on the gate above,
In worship of Venus, goddessse of love,
Don make an auter and an oratorie; 1905
And west-ward, in the minde and in
memorie

Of Mars, he makid bath right swich
another,

That coste largely of gold a fother.

And north-ward, in a touret on the wal,
Of alabastre whyt and reed coral 1910
An oratorie riche for to see,

In worship of Dyane of chastitee,

Hath Theseus don wrought in noble wyse.
But yet hadde I foryeten to devyse

The noble kerving, and the portreitures,
The shap, the countenance, and the
figures, 1916

That weren in thise oratories three.

First in the temple of Venus maystow
see

Wrought on the wal, ful pitous to bilholde,
The broken slespes, and the sykes colde;
The sacred teres, and the waymenting;
The fry strokes of the desiring, 1922
That loves servaunts in this lyf enduren;
The othes, that hir covenants assuren;
Plesaunce and hope, desyr, fool-hardi-
nesse, 1925

Beautee and youthe, bauderie, richesse,
Charmes and force, lesinges, flaterye,
Dispence, bisynesse, and Ielousye,
That wered of yelwe goldes a gerland,
And a cokkow sitting on hir hand; 1930
Festes, instruments, caroles, daunces,

Lust and array, and alle the circum-
staunces

Of love, whiche that I rekne and rekne
shal,

By ordre weren peynted on the wal, 1934
And mo than I can make of menciuon.

For soothly, al the mount of Citheroun,
Ther Venus hath hir principal dwelling,
Was shewed on the wal in portreyng,
With al the gardin, and the lustynesse.

Nat was foryeten the porter Ydelnesse,
Ne Narcisus the faire of yore agon, 1941

Ne yet the folye of king Salamon,
Ne yet the grete strengthe of Hercules —

Thenchautements of Medea and Circes —
Ne of Turnus, with the hardy fiers corage,

The riche Cresus, caytif in servage. 1946
Thus may ye seen that wisdom ne rich-

esse,
Beautee ne sleighte, strengthe, ne hardi-

nesse,
Ne may with Venus holde champartye;

For as hir list the world than may she
gye. 1950

Lo, alle thise folk so caught were in hir
las,

Til they for wo ful ofte seyde 'allas!'
Suffyceth heer ensamples oon or two,

And though I coude rekne a thousand
mo.

The statue of Venus, glorious for to
see, 1955

Was naked fleting in the large see,
And fro the navele down all covered was

With wawes grene, and brighte as any
glas.

A citole in hir right hand hadde she, 1959
And on hir heed, ful semely for to see,

A rose gerland, fresh and wel smellinge;
Above hir heed hir dowves flikeringe.

Biforn hir stood hir sone Cupido,
Up-on his shuldres winges hadde he two;

And blind he was, as it is ofte sene;
A bowe he bar and arwes brighte and

kene. 1966
Why sholde I noght as wel eek telle

yow al
The portreiture, that was up-on the wal

With-inne the temple of mighty Mars the
rede?

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

Lyk to the estres of the grisly place,

That highte the grete temple of Mars in
Trace,

In thilke colde frosty regioun,
Ther-as Mars hath his sovereyn man-

sioun.
First on the wal was peynted a foreste,

In which ther dwelleth neither man ne
beste, 1976

With knotty knarry bareyn treës olde
Of stubbes sharpe and hidous 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 armipo-

tente,
Wroght al of burned steel, of which

thentree
Was long and streit, and gastly for to see.

And ther-out cam a rage and such a
vese, 1985

Tha it made al the gates for to rese.
The northren light in at the dores shoon,

For windowe on the wal ne was ther
noon,

Thurgh which men mighten any light dis-
cerne.

The dores were alle of adamant eterne,
Y-clenched overthwart and endelong 1991

With iren tough; and, for to make it
strong,

Every piler, the temple to sustene,
Was tonne-greet, of iren bright and

shene.
Ther saugh I first the derke imagin-

ing 1995
Of felonye, and al the compassing;

The cruel ire, reed as any glede;
The pykepurs, and eek the pale drede;

The smyler with the knyf under the cloke;
The shepne brenning with the blake

smoke; 2000
The treson of the mordring in the bedde;

The open werre, with woundes al bi-
bledde;

Contek, with bloody knyf and sharp man-
ace;

Al ful of chirking was that sory place.
The sleere of him-self yet saugh I ther,

His herte-blood hath bathed al his
heer; 2006

The nayl y-driven in the shode a-night;

The colde deeth, with mouth gaping up-
right.

Amiddes of the temple sat meschaunce,
With disconfort and sory contenaunce.
Yet saugh I woodnesse laughing in his
rage; 2011

Armed compleint, out-hees, and fiers out-
rage.

The careyne in the bush, with throte y-
corve :

A thousand slayn, and nat of qualm
y-storve;

The tiraunt, with the prey by force
y-raft; 2015

The toun destroyed, ther was no-thing
laft.

Yet saugh I brent the shippes hoppes-
teres;

The hunte strangled with the wilde beres :
The sowe freten the child right in the
cradel;

The cook y-scalded, for al his longe
ladel. 2020

Noght was foryeten by the infortune of
Marte;

The carter over-riden with his carte,
Under the wheel ful lowe he lay adoun.

Ther were also, of Martes divisioun,
The barbour, and the bocher, and the
smith 2025

That forgeth sharpe swerdes on his stith.
And al above, depeynted in a tour,

Saw I conquest sittinge in greet honour,
With the sharpe swerde over his heed
Hanginge by a sotil twynes threed. 2030

Depeynted was the slaughtre of Iulius,
Of grete Nero, and of Antonius;

Al be that thilke tyme they were unborn,
Yet was hir deeth depeynted ther-biforn,
By manasinge of Mars, right by fig-
ure; 2035

So was it shewed in that portreiture
As is depeynted in the sterres above,

Who shal be slayn or elles deed for love.
Suffyceth oon ensample in stories olde,
I may not rekne hem alle, thogh I
wolde. 2040

The statue of Mars up-on a carte stood,
Armed, and loked grim as he were wood;
And over his heed ther shynen two figures
Of sterres, that ben cleped in scriptures,
That oon Puella, that other Rubeus. 2045
This god of armes was arrayed thus:—

A wolf ther stood biforn him at his feet
With eyen rede, and of a man he eet ;
With sotil peneel was depeynt this storie,
In redoutinge of Mars and of his glorie.

Now to the temple of Diane the
chaste 2051

As shortly as I can I wol me baste,
To telle yow al the descripcioun.

Depeynted been the walles up and doun
Of hunting and of shamfast chastitee. 2055

Ther saugh I how woful Calistopce,
Whan that Diane agreved was with here,

Was turned from a womman til a bere,
And after was she maad the lode-sterre;

Thus was it peynt, I can say yow no
ferre; 2060

Hir sone is eek a sterre, as men may
see.

Ther saugh I Dane, y-turned til a tree,
I mene nat the goddesse Diane,

But Penneus doughter, which that highte
Dane.

Ther saugh I Attheon an hert y-maked,
For vengeaunce that he saugh Diane al
naked; 2066

I saugh how that his houndes have him
caught,

And freten him, for that they knewe him
naught.

Yet peynted was a litel forther-moor,
How Atthalante hunted the wilde boor,

And Meleagre, and many another mo,
For which Diane wroglite him care and
wo. 2072

Ther saugh I many another wonder storie,
The which me list nat drawn to mem-
orie.

This goddesse on an hert ful hye
seet, 2075

With snale houndes al aboute hir feet;
And undernethe hir feet she hadde a
mone,

Wexing it was, and sholde wanie sone.
In gaude grene hir statue clothed was,

With bowe in honde, and arwes in a
cas. 2080

Hir eyen caste she ful lowe adoun,
Ther Pluto hath his derke regioun.

A womman travailinge was hir biforn,
But, for hir child so longe was unborn,

Ful pitously Lucyna gan she calle, 2085
And seyde, 'help, for thou mayst best of
alle.'

Wel couthe he peynten lyfly that it
wroghte,

With many a florin he the hewes boghte.

Now been thise listes maad, and Theseus,

That at his grete cost arrayed thus 2090

The temples and the theatre every del,

Whan it was doon, him lyked wonder
wel.

But stinte I wol of Theseus a lyte,

And speke of Palamon and of Arcite.

The day approacheth of hir retourn-
inge, 2095

That everich sholde an hundred knyghtes
bringe,

The bataille to darreyne, as I yow tolde;

And til Athenes, hir covenant for to holde,

Hath everich of hem brought an hundred
knyghtes

Wel armed for the werre at alle rightes.

And sikerly, ther trowed many a man 2101

That never, sithen that the world bigan,

As for to speke of knyghthod of hir
hond,

As fer as God hath maked see or lond,

Nas, of so fewe, so noble a com-
panye. 2105

For every wight that lovede chivalrye,

And wolde, his thanks, han a passant
name,

Hath preyed that he mighte ben of that
game;

And wel was him, that ther-to chosen
was.

For if ther fille to-morwe swich a
cas, 2110

Ye knowen wel, that every lusty knight,

That loveth paramours, and hath his
might,

Were it in Engelond, or elles-where,

They wolde, hir thanks, wilnen to be
there.

To fighte for a lady, *benedicite!* 2115

It were a lusty sighte for to see.

And right so ferden they with Palamon.

With him ther wenten knyghtes many
oon;

Som wol ben armed in an habergeoun,

In a brest-plat and in a light gipoun;

And somme woln have a peyre plates
large; 2121

And somme woln have a Puce sheld, or
a targe;

Somme woln ben armed on hir legges
weel,

And have an ax, and somme a mace of
steel.

Ther nis no newe gyse, that it nas
old. 2125

Armed were they, as I have you told,
Everich after his opinioun.

Ther maistow seen coming with Pala-
moun

Ligurge him-self, the grete king of Trace;
Blak was his berd, and manly was his
face. 2130

The cercles of his eyen in his heed,
They gloweden bitwixe yelow and reed;

And lyk a griffon loked he aboute,
With kempe heres on his browes
stoute;

His limes grete, his braunes harde and
stronge, 2135

His shuldres brode, his armes rounde
and longe.

And as the gyse was in his contree,
Ful hye up-on a char of gold stood he,

With foure whyte boles in the trays.
In-stede of cote-armure over his harnays,

With nayles yelwe and brighte as any
gold, 2141

He hadde a beres skin, col-blak, for-old.
His longe heer was kembd bihinde his
bak,

As any ravens fether it shoon for-blak :

A wrethe of gold arm-greet, of huge
wighte, 2145

Upon his heed, set ful of stones brighte,
Of fyne rubies and of dyamaunts.

Aboute his char ther wenten whyte
alaunts,

Twenty and mo, as grete as any steer,
To huntun at the leoun or the deer, 2150

And folwed him, with mosel faste y-
bounde,

Colers of gold, and torets fyled rounde.

An hundred lordes hadde he in his
route

Armed ful wel, with hertes sterne and
stoute. 2154

With Arcita, in stories as men finde,
The grete Emetreus, the king of Inde,

Up-on a stede bay, trapped in steel,
Covered in cloth of gold diapred weel

Cam ryding lyk the god of armes, Mars.
His cote-armure was of cloth of Tars,

Couched with perles whyte and rounde
and grete. 2161
His sadel was of brend gold newe y-
bete;
A mantelet upon his shuldre hanginge
Bret-ful of rubies rede, as fyr sparklinge.
His crispe heer lyk ringes was y-ronne,
And that was yelow, and glitered as the
sonne. 2166
His nose was heigh, his eyen bright
citrin,
His lippes rounde, his colour was sang-
wyn,
A fewe fraknes in his face y-spreynd,
Betwixen yelow and somdel blak y-
meynd, 2170
And as a leoun he his loking caste.
Of fyve and twenty yeer his age I caste.
His berd was wel bigonne for to springe;
His voys was as a trompe thunderinge.
Up-on his heed he wered of laurer
grene 2175
A gerland fresh and lusty for to sene.
Up-on his hand he bar, for his deduyt,
An egle tame, as eny lillie whyt.
An hundred lordes hadde he with him
there,
Al armed, sauf hir heddes, in al hir
gere, 2180
Ful richely in alle maner thinges.
For trusteth wel, that dukes, erles,
kinges,
Were gadered in this noble companye,
For love and for encrees of chivalrye.
Aboute this king ther ran on every
part 2185
Ful many a tame leoun and lepart.
And in this wyse thise lordes, alle and
some,
Ben on the Sunday to the citee come
Aboute pryme, and in the toun alight.
This Theseus, this duk, this worthy
knight, 2190
Whan he had broght hem in-to his citee,
And inned 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 mannes
wit 2195
Of noon estat ne coude amenden it.
The minstralcy, the service at the feste,
The grete yiftes to the moste and leste,

The riche array of Theseus paleys,
Ne who sat first ne last up-on the deys,
What ladies fairest been or best daun-
singe, 2201
Or which of hem can dauncen best and
singe,
Ne who most felingly speketh of love :
What haukes sitten on the perche above,
What houndes ligen on the floor
adoun : 2205
Of al this make I now no menciuon;
But al theffect, that thinketh me the
beste;
Now comth the poynt, and herkneth if
yow leste.
The Sunday night, er day bigan to
springe,
When Palamon the larke herde singe,
Although it nere nat day by houres
two, 2211
Yet song the larke, and Palamon also.
With holy herte, and with an heigh
corage
He roos, to wenden on his pilgrimage
Un-to the blisful Citherea benigne, 2215
I mene Venus, honourable and digne.
And in hir houre he walketh forth a pas
Un-to the listes, ther hir temple was,
And down he kneleth, and with humble
chere
And herte soor, he seyde as ye shul
here. 2220
' Faireste of faire, o lady myn, Venus,
Doughter to Iove and spouse of Vul-
canus,
Thou glader of the mount of Citheroun,
For thilke love thou haddest to Adoun,
Have pitee of my bittre teres smerte,
And tak myn humble preyer at thyn
herte. 2226
Allas ! I ne have no langage to telle
Theffectes ne the tormentes of myn
helle;
Myn herte may myne harmes nat bi-
wreye;
I am so confus, that I can noight seye.
But mercy, lady bright, that knowest
weel 2231
My thought, and seest what harmes that
I fele,
Considere al this, and rewe up-on my
sore,
As wisly as I shal for evermore,

Emforth my might, thy trewe servant
be, 2235

And holden werre alwey with chastitee;
That make I myn avow, so ye me helpe.
I kepe noght of armes for to yelpe,
Ne I ne axe nat to-morwe to have vic-
torie, 2239

Ne renoun in this cas, ne veyne glorie
Of pris of armes blowen up and down,
But I wolde have fully possessioun
Of Emelye, and dye in thy servyse;
Find thou the maner how, and in what
wyse.

I recche nat, but it may better be, 2245
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

Your vertu is so greet in hevene above,
That, if yow list, I shal wel have my
love. 2250

Thy temple wol I worshipe evermo,
And on thyn auter, wher I ryde or go,
I wol don sacrifice, and fyres bete.
And if ye wol nat so, my lady swete,
Than preyre I thee, to-morwe with a
spere 2255

That Arcita me thurgh the herte bere.
Thanne rekke I noght, whan I have lost
my lyf,

Though that Arcita winne hir to his wyf.
This is theeffect and ende of my preyere,
Yif me my love, thou blisful lady dere.'

Whan thorisoun was doon of Palamon,
His sacrifice he dide, and that anon 2262
Ful pitously, with alle circumstaunces,
Al telle I noght as now his observaunces.
But atte laste the statue of Venus
shook, 2265

And made a signe, wher-by that he took
That his preyere accepted was that day.
For thogh the signe shewed a delay,
Yet wiste he wel that graunted was his
bone;

And with glad herte he wente him hoom
ful sone. 2270

The thridde houre inequal that Pala-
moun

Bigan to Venus temple for to goon,
Up roos the sonne, and up roos Emelye,
And to the temple of Diane gan hie.
Hir maydens, that she thider with hir
ladde, 2275

Ful redily with hem the fyr they hadde,
Thencens, the clothes, and the remenant al
That to the sacrificye longen shal; 2278
The hornes fulle of meth, as was the gyse;
Ther lakked noght to doon hir sacrificye.
Smoking the temple, ful of clothes faire,
This Emelye, with herte debonaire,
Hir body wessh with water of a welle;
But how she dide hir ryte I dar nat telle,
But it be any thing in general; 2285
And yet it were a game to heren al;
To him that meneth wel, it were no
charge:

But it is good a man ben at his large.
Hir brighte heer was kempt, untressed al;
A coroune of a grene ook cerial 2290
Up-on hir heed was set ful fair and mete.
Two fyres on the auter gan she bete,
And dide hir thinges, as men may biholde
In Stace of Thebes, and these bokes olde.
Whan kindled was the fyr, with pitous
chere 2295
Un-to Diane she spak, as ye may here.

'O chaste goddesse of the wodes grene,
To whom bothe hevene and erthe and
see is sene,

Quene of the regne of Pluto derk and
lowe,
Goddesse of maydens, that myn herte
hast knowe 2300

Ful many a yeer, and woost what I
desire,

As keep me fro thy vengeaunce and thyn
ire,

That Attheon aboughte cruelly.
Chaste goddesse, wel wostow that I
Desire to been a mayden al my lyf, 2305
Ne never wol I be no love ne wyf.

I am, thou woost, yet of thy companye,
A mayde, and love hunting and venerye,
And for to walken in the wodes wilde,
And noght to been a wyf; and be with
childe. 2310

Noght wol I knowe companye of man.
Now help me, lady, sith ye may and can,
For the thre formes that thou hast in
thee.

And Palamon, that hath swich love to
me, 2314

And eek Arcite, that loveth me so sore,
This grace I preyre thee with-oute more,
As sende love and pees bitwixe hem two;
And fro me turne away hir hertes so,

That al hir hote love, and hir desyr,
 And al hir bisy torment, and hir fyr 2320
 Be queynt, or turned in another place;
 And if so be thou wolt not do me grace,
 Or if my destinee be shapen so,
 That I shal nedes have oon of hem two,
 As sende me him that most desireth me.
 Bihold, goddesse of clene chastitee, 2326
 The bittre teres that on my chekes falle.
 Sin thou are mayde, and keper of us
 alle,
 My maydenhede thou kepe and wel con-
 serve,
 And whyl I live a mayde, I wol thee
 serve.' 2330
 The fyres brenne up-on the auter clere,
 Whyl Emelye was thus in hir preyere;
 But sodenly she saugh a sighte queynte,
 For right anon oon of the fyres queynte,
 And quiked agayn, and after that anon
 That other fyr was queynt, and al agon;
 And as it queynte, it made a whistelinge,
 As doon thise wete brondes in hir bren-
 ninge, 2338
 And at the brondes ende out-ran anon
 As it were bloody dropes many oon;
 For which so sore agast was Emelye,
 That she was wel ny mad, and gan to
 crye,
 For she ne wiste what it signified;
 But only for the fere thus hath she
 cryed,
 And weep, that it was pitee for to
 here. 2345
 And ther-with-al Diane gan appere,
 With bowe in hond, right as an hunter-
 esse,
 And seyde: 'Doghter, stint thyn hevi-
 nesse.
 Among the goddes hye it is affermed,
 And by eterne word write and con-
 fermed, 2350
 Thou shalt ben wedded un-to oon of
 tho
 That han for thee so muchel care and
 wo;
 But un-to which of hem I may nat telle.
 Farwel, for I ne may no lenger dwelle.
 The fyres which that on myn auter
 brenne 2355
 Shul thee declaren, er that thou go
 henne
 Thyn aventure of love, as in this cas.'

And with that word, the arwes in the
 cas
 Of the goddesse clateren faste and ringe.
 And forth she wente, and made a van-
 isshinge; 2360
 For which this Emelye astoned was,
 And seyde, 'What amounteth this, allas!
 I putte me in thy proteccioun,
 Diane, and in thy disposicioun.'
 And hoom she gooth anon the nexte
 weye. 2365
 This is theeffect, ther is namore to seye.
 The nexte houre of Mars folwinge
 this
 Arcite un-to the temple walked is
 Of fierse Mars, to doon his sacrificyse,
 With alle the rytes of his payen
 wyse. 2370
 With pitous herte and heigh devocioun,
 Right thus to Mars he seyde his orisoun:
 'O stronge god, that in the regnes
 colde
 Of Trace honoured art, and lord y-holde,
 And hast in every regne and every
 lond 2375
 Of armes al the brydel in thyn hond,
 And hem fortunest as thee list devyse,
 Accept of me my pitous sacrificyse.
 If so be that my youthe may deserve,
 And that my might be worthy for to
 serve 2380
 Thy godhede, that I may been oon of
 thyne,
 Than preye I thee to rewe up-on my
 pyne.
 For thilke peyne, and thilke hote fyr,
 In which thou whylom brendest for
 desyr,
 Whan that thou usedest the grete
 beautee 2385
 Of fayre yonge fresshe Venus free,
 And haddest hir in armes at thy wille,
 Al-though thee ones on a tyme misfille
 Whan Vulcanus had caught thee in his
 las,
 And fond thee liggig by his wyf,
 allas! 2390
 For thilke sorwe that was in thyn herte,
 Have routhe as wel up-on my peynes
 smerte.
 I am yong and unkonning, as thou wost,
 And, as I trowe, with love offended
 most,

That ever was any lyves creature; 2395
For she, that dooth me al this wo
endure,

Ne reccheth never wher I sinke or flete.
And wel I woot, er she me mercy hete,
I moot with strengthe winne hir in the
place;

And wel I woot, withouten help or grace
Of thee, no may my strengthe noght
availle. 2401

Than help me, lord, to-morwe in my
bataille,

For thilke fyr that whylom brente thee,
As wel as thilke fyr now brenneth me;
And do that I to-morwe have victorie.

Myn be the travaille, and thyn be the
glorie! 2406

Thy soverain temple wol I most honouren
Of any place, and alwey most labouren
In thy plesaunce and in thy craftes
stronge,

And in thy temple I wol my baner
honge, 2410

And alle the armes of my companye;
And evere-mo, un-to that day I dye,
Eterne fyr I wol biforn thee finde.

And eek to this avow I wol me binde:
My berd, myn heer that hongeth long
adoun, 2415

That never yet ne felte offensioun
Of rasour nor of shere, I wol thee yive,
And ben thy trewe servant whyl I live.
Now lord, have routhe up-on my sorwes
sore,

Yif me victorie, I aske thee namore.' 2420

The preyere stinte of Arcita the stronge,
The ringes on the temple-dore that
honge,

And eek the dores, clatereden ful faste,
Of which Arcita som-what him agaste.

The fyres brende up-on the auter
bryghte, 2425

That it gan al the temple for to lighte;
And swete smel the ground anon up-yaf,

And Arcita anon his hand up-haf,
And more encens in-to the fyr he caste,
With othere rytes mo; and atte laste 2430

The statue of Mars bigan his hauberk
ringe.

And with that soun he herde a murmur-
inge

Ful lowe and dim, that sayde thus, 'Vic-
torie':

For which he yaf to Mars honour and
glorie.

And thus with Ioye, and hope wel to
fare, 2435

Arcite anon un-to his inne is fare,
As fayn as fowel is of the bryghte sonne.

And right anon swich stryf ther is
bigonne

For thilke graunting, in the hevene
above,

Bitwixe Venus, the goddesse of love, 2440
And Mars, the sterne god armipotente,

That Iupiter was bisy it to stente;
Til that the pale Saturnus the colde,

That knew so many of adventures olde,
Fond in his olde experience an art, 2445

That he ful sone hath plesed every part.
As sooth is sayd, elde hath greet advantage;

In elde is bothe wisdom and usage;
Men may the olde at-renne, and noght at-
rede. 2449

Saturne anon, to stinten stryf and drede,
Al be it that it is agayn his kynde,

Of al this stryf he gan remedie fynde.
'My dere doghter Venus,' quod Saturne,

'My cours, that hath so wyde for to turne,
Hath more power than wot any man. 2455

Myn is the drenching in the see so wan;
Myn is the prison in the derke cote;

Myn is the strangling and hanging by the
throthe;

The murmure, and the cherles rebelling,
The groyning, and the pryvee empoysou-
ning: 2460

I do vengeance and pleyn correccioun
Whyl I dwelle in the signe of the leoun.

Myn is the ruine of the hye halles,
The falling of the toures and of the walles

Up-on the mynour or the carpenter. 2465
I slow Sampson in shaking the piler;

And myne be the maladyes colde,
The derke tresons, and the castes olde;

My loking is the fader of pestilence.
Now weep namore, I shal doon dili-
gence 2470

That Palamon, that is thyn owne knight,
Shal have his lady, as thou hast him hight.

Though Mars shal helpe his knight, yet
natheles

Bitwixe yow ther moot be som tyme pees,
Al be ye noght of o complexioun, 2475

That causeth al day swich divisioun.
I am thin aycl, rely at thy wille;

*2449-2450
2451-2452
2453-2454
2455-2456
2457-2458
2459-2460
2461-2462
2463-2464
2465-2466
2467-2468
2469-2470
2471-2472
2473-2474
2475-2476
2477-2478*

Weep thou namore, I wol thy lust ful-
fille.'

Now wol I stinten of the goddes above,
Of Mars, and of Venus, goddesses of
love, 2480
And telle yow, as pleynty as I can,
The grete effect, for which that I bigan.

*Explicit tercia pars. Sequitur pars
quarta.*

Greet was the feste in Athenes that
day,

And eek the lusty seson of that May
Made every wight to been in swich ple-
saunce, 2485

That al that Monday Iusten they and
daunce,

And spenden it in Venus heigh servyse.
But by the cause that they sholde ryse
Erly, for to seen the grete fight,
Unto hir reste wente they at night. 2490

And on the morwe, whan that day gan
springe,

Of hors and harneys, noyse and clateringe
Ther was in hostelryes al aboute;

And to the paleys rood ther many a route
Of lordes, up-on stedes and palfreys. 2495

Ther maystow seen devysing of herneys
So uncouth and so riche, and wrought so
weel

Of goldsmithrie, of browding, and of
steel;

The sheeldes brighte, testers, and trap-
pures;

Gold-hewen helmes, hauberks, cote-
armures; 2500

Lordes in paraments on hir courseres,
Knightes of retenue, and eek squyeres

Nailinge the speres, and helmes boke-
linge,

Gigginge of sheeldes, with layneres lac-
linge;

Ther as need is, they weren no-thing
ydel; 2505

The fomy stedes on the golden brydel
Gnawinge, and faste the armurers also

With fyle and hamer prikinge to and fro;
Yemen on fote, and communes many oon

With shorte staves, thikke as they may
goon; 2510

Pypes, trompes, nakers, clariounes,
That in the bataille blowne bloody sounes;

The paleys ful of peples up and doun,
Heer three, ther ten, holding hir ques-
tioun,

Divynge of thise Thebane knightes
two. 2515

Somme seyden thus, somme seyde it shal
be so;

Somme helden with him with the blake
berd,

Somme with the balled, somme with the
thikke-herd;

Somme sayde, he loked grim and he
wolde fighte;

He hath a sparth of twenty pound of
wighte. 2520

Thus was the halle ful of divynge,
Longe after that the sonne gan to springe.

¶ The grete Theseus, that of his sleep
awaked

With minstrelceye and noyse that was
maked,

Held yet the chambre of his paleys
riche, 2525

Til that the Thebane knightes, bothe y-
liche

Honoured, were into the paleys fet.

Duk Theseus was at a window set,
Arrayed right as he were a god in trone.

The peple preesseth thider-ward ful
sone 2530

Him for to seen, and doon heigh rever-
ence,

And eek to herkne his best; and his sen-
tence.

An heraud on a scaffold made an ho,
Til al the noyse of the peple was y-do;

And whan he saugh the peple of noyse
al stille, 2535

Tho showed he the mighty dukes wille.

'The lord hath of his heigh discrecioun
Considered, that it were destruccioun

To gentil blood, to fighten in the gyse
Of mortal bataille now in this empryse;

Wherfore, to shapen that they shul not
dye, 2541

He wol his firste purpos modifye.

No man therfor, up peyne of los of lyf,
No maner shot, ne pollax, ne short knyf

Into the listes sende, or thider bringe;

Ne short swerd for to stoke, with poynt
bytinge, 2546

No man ne drawe, ne here it by his syde.
Ne no man shall un-to his felawe ryde

But o' cours, with a sharp y-grounde
spere;
Foyn, if him list, on fote, him-self to
were. 2550
And he that is at meschief, shal be take,
And noght slayn, but be broght un-to
the stake
That shal ben ordeyned on either syde;
But thider he shal by force, and ther
abyde. 2554
And if so falle, the chieftayn be take
On either syde, or elles slee his make.
No lenger shall the turneyinge laste.
God spede yow; goth forth, and ley on
faste.
With long swerd and with maces fight
your fille.
Goth now your wey; this is the lordes
wille. 2560
The voys of peple touchede the
hevene,
So loude cryden they with mery stevene :
'God save swich a lord, that is so good,
He wilneth no destruccioun of blood!'
Up goon the trompes and the melo-
dye. 2565
And to the listes rit the companye
By ordinance, thurgh-out the citee
large,
Hanged with cloth of gold, and nat with
sarge.
Ful lyk a lord this noble duk gan ryde,
Thise two Thebanes up-on either
syde; 2570
And after rood the quene, and Emelye,
And after that another companye
Of oon and other, after hir degree.
And thus they passen thurgh-out the
citee, 2574
And to the listes come they by tyme.
It nas not of the day yet fully pryme,
Whan set was Theseus ful riche and hye,
Ipolita the quene and Emelye,
And other ladies in degrees aboute.
Un-to the seetes preesseth al the route.
And west-ward, thurgh the gates under
Marte, 2581
Arcite, and eek the hundred of his parte,
With baner reed is entred right anon;
And in that selve moment Palamon
Is under Venus, est-ward in the place,
With baner whyt, and hardy chere and
face. 2586

In al the world, to seken up and down,
So even with-outen variacioun,
Ther nere swiche companyes tweye.
For ther nas noon so wys that coude
seye, 2590
That any hadde of other avauntage
Of worthinesse, ne of estaat, ne age,
So even were they chosen, for to gesse.
And in two renges faire they hem dresse.
Whan that hir names rad were ever-
ichoon, 2595
That in hir nombre gyle were ther noon,
Tho were the gates shet, and cryed was
loude :
'Do now your devoir, yonge knightes
proude!'
The heraudes lefte hir priking up and
doun;
Now ringen trompes loude and clarioun;
Ther is namore to seyn, but west and
est 2601
In goon the speres ful sadly in arest;
In goth the sharpe spore in-to the syde.
Ther seen men who can Iuste, and who
can ryde;
Ther shiveren shaftes up-on sheeldes
thikke; 2605
He feleth thurgh the herte-spoon the
prikke.
Up springen speres twenty foot on
highte;
Out goon the swerdes as the silver
bryghte.
The helmes they to-hewen and to-shrede;
Out brest the blood, with sterne stremes
rede. 2610
With mighty maces the bones they to-
breste.
He thurgh the thikkeste of the throng
gan threste.
Ther stomblen stedes stronge, and doun
goth al.
He rolleth under foot as dooth a bal.
He foyneth on his feet with his tron-
choun, 2615
And he him hurtleth with his hors
adoun.
He thurgh the body is hurt, and sithen
y-take,
Maugree his heed, and broght un-to the
stake,
As forward was, right ther he moste
abyde;

Another lad is on that other syde. 2620
And som tyme dooth hem Theseus to
reste,

Hem to refreshe, and drinken if hem
leste.

Ful ofte a-day han thise Thebanes two
Togidre y-met, and wrought his felawe
wo;

Unhorsed hath ech other of hem tweye.
Ther nas no tygre in the vale of Galgo-
pheye, 2626

Whan that hir whelp is stole, whan it is
lyte,

So cruel on the hunte, as is Arcite
For Ielous herte upon this Palamoun:
Ne in Belmarye ther nis so fel leoun, 2630
That hunted is, or for his hunger wood,
Ne of his praye desireth so the blood,
As Palamoun to sleen his fo Arcite.

The Ielous strokes on hir helmes byte;
Out renneth blood on bothe hir sydes
rede. 2635

Som tyme an ende ther is of every
dede;

For er the sonne un-to the reste wente,
The stronge king Emetreus gan hente
This Palamon, as he faught with Arcite,
And made his swerd depe in his flesh to
byte; 2640

And by the force of twenty is he take
Unyolden, and y-drawe unto the stake.
And in the rescous of this Palamoun
The stronge king Ligurge is born adoun;
And king Emetreus, for al his strengthe,
Is born out of his sadel a swerdes
lengthe, 2646

So hitte him Palamon er he were take;
But al for noght, he was broght to the
stake.

His hardy herte mighte him helpe
naught;

He moste abyde, whan that he was
caught 2650

By force, and eek by composicioun.

Who sorweth now but woful Pala-
moun,

That moot namore goon agayn to fighte?
And whan that Theseus had seyn this
sighte, 2654

Un-to the folk that foghten thus echoon
He cryde, 'Ho! namore, for it is doon!
I wol be trewe luge, and no partye.
Arcite of Thebes shal have Emelye,

That by his fortune hath hir faire y-
wonne.'

Anon ther is a noyse of peple bigonne
For Ioye of this, so loude and heigh
with-alle, 2661

It semed that the listes sholde falle.

What can now faire Venus doon
above?

What seith she now? what dooth this
quene of love?

But wepeth so, for wanting of hir wille,
Til that hir teres in the listes fille; 2666
She seyde: 'I am ashamed, doutelees.'

Saturnus seyde: 'Doughter, hold thy
pees.

Mars hath his wille, his knight hath al
his bone,

And, by myn heed, thou shalt ben esed
sone.' 2670

The trompes, with the loude minstral-
eye,

The heraudes, that ful loude yolle and
crye,

Been in hir wele for Ioye of daun Arcite.
But herkneth me, and stinteth now a
lyte,

Which a miracle ther bifel anon. 2675

This fierse Arcite hath of his helm
y-don,

And on a courser, for to shewe his face,
He prikketh endelong the large place,
Loking upward up-on this Emelye;
And she agayn him caste a freendlich
yë, 2680

(For women, as to speken in comune,
They folwen al the favour of fortune,)

And she was al his chere, as in his herte.
Out of the ground a furie infernal sterte,

From Pluto sent, at requeste of Saturne,
For which his hors for fere gan to turne,

And leep asyde, and foundred as he leep;
And, er that Arcite may taken keep,

He pighte him on the pomel of his heed,
That in the place he lay as he were
deed, 2690

His brest-to-brosten with his sadel-bowe.

As blak he lay as any cole or crowe,
So was the blood y-ronnen in his face.

Anon he was y-born out of the place
With herte soor, to Theseus palyes. 2695

Tho was he corven out of his barneys,
And in a bed y-brought ful faire and blyve,

For he was yet in memorie and alyve,

And alway crying after Emelye. 2699
 Duk Theseus, with al his companye,
 Is comen hoom to Athenes his citee,
 With alle blisse and greet solempnitee.
 Al be it that this aventure was falle,
 He nolde nocht disconforten hem alle.
 Men seyde eek, that Arcite shal nat
 dye; 2705
 He shal ben heled of his maladye.
 And of another thing they were as fayn,
 That of hem alle was ther noon y-slayn,
 Al were they sore y-hurt, and namely oon,
 That with a spere was thirled his brest-
 boon. 2710
 To othere woundes, and to broken armes,
 Some hadden salves, and some hadden
 charmes;
 Fermacions of herbes, and eek save
 They dronken, for they wolde hir limes
 have. 2714
 For which this noble duk, as he wel can,
 Conforteth and honoureth every man,
 And made revel al the longe night,
 Un-to the straunge lordes, as was right.
 Ne ther was holden no disconfitinge,
 But as a Iustes or a tourneyinge; 2720
 For soothly ther was no disconfiture,
 For falling nis nat but an aventure;
 Ne to be lad with fors un-to the stake
 Unyolden, and with twenty knyghtes take,
 O persone allone, with-uten mo; 2725
 And haried forth by arme, foot, and to,
 And eek his stede driven forth with staves,
 With footmen, bothe yemen and eek
 knaves,
 It nas aretted him no vileinye, 2729
 Ther may no man clepen it cowardye.
 For which anon duk Theseus leet crye,
 To stinten alle rancour and envye,
 The gree as wel of o syde as of other,
 And either syde y-lyk, as othere brother;
 And yaf hem yiftes after hir degree, 2735
 And fully heeld a feste dayes three;
 And conveyed the kinges worthily
 Out of his toun a Iournee largely.
 And hoom wente every man the righte
 way.
 Ther was namore, but 'far wel, have good
 day!' 2740
 Of this bataille I wol namore endyte,
 But speke of Palamon and of Arcite.
 Swelthe the brest of Arcite, and the
 sore

Encresseth at his herte more and more.
 The clothered blood, for any leche-
 craft, 2745
 Corrupteth, and is in his bouk y-laft,
 That neither veyne-blood, ne ventusinge,
 Ne drinke of herbes may ben his help-
 inge.
 The vertu expulsif, or animal,
 Fro thilke vertu cleped natural 2750
 Ne may the venim voyden, ne expelle.
 The pypes of his longes gonne to swelle,
 And every lacerte in his brest adoun
 Is shent with venim and corrupcioun.
 Him gayneth neither, for to gete his
 lyf, 2755
 Vomyt upward, ne downward laxatif;
 Al is to-brosten thilke regioun,
 Nature hath now no dominacioun.
 And certainly, ther nature wol nat wirche,
 Far-wel, phisyk! go ber the man to
 chirche! 2760
 This al and som, that Arcite mot dye,
 For which he sendeth after Emelye,
 And Palamon, that was his cosin dere;
 Than seyde he thus, as ye shul after here.
 'Naught may the woful spirit in myn
 herte 2765
 Declare o poynt of alle my sorwes smerte
 To yow, my lady, that I love most;
 But I biquethe the service of my gost
 To yow aboven every creature,
 Sin that my lyf may no lenger dure. 2770
 Allas, the wo! allas, the peynes stronge,
 That I for yow have suffred, and so longe!
 Allas, the deeth! allas, myn Emelye!
 Allas, departing of our companye!
 Allas, myn hertes quene! allas, my
 wyf! 2775
 Myn hertes lady, endere of my lyf!
 What is this world? what asketh men to
 have?
 Now with his love, now in his colde
 grave
 Allone, with-uten any companye.
 Far-wel, my swete fo! myn Emelye! 2780
 And softe tak me in your armes tweye,
 For love of God, and herkneth-what I
 seye.
 I have heer with my cosin Palamon
 Had stryf and rancour, many a day a-gon,
 For love of yow, and for my Ielousye. 2785
 And Iupiter so wis my soule gye,
 To speken of a servant proprely,

With alle circumstaunces trewely,
 That is to seyn, trouthe, honour, and
 knighthede,
 Wisdom, humblesse, estaat, and heigh
 kinrede, 2790
 Fredom, and al that longeth to that art,
 So Iupiter have of my soule part,
 As in this world right now ne knowe I
 non
 So worthy to ben loved as Palamon,
 That serveth yow, and wol don al his
 lyf. 2795
 And if that ever ye shul been a wyf,
 Foryet nat Palamon, the gentil man.
 And with that word his speche faille gan,
 For from his feet up to his brest was come
 The cold of deeth, that hadde him over-
 come. 2800
 And yet more-over, in his armes two
 The vital strengthe is lost, and al ago.
 Only the intellect, with-ouen more,
 That dwelled in his herte syk and sore,
 Gan failen, when the herte felte
 deeth, 2805
 Dusked his eyen two, and failed breath.
 But on his lady yet caste he his yē;
 His laste word was, 'mercy, Emelye!'
 His spirit chaunged hous, and wente
 ther, 2809
 As I cam never, I can nat tellen wher.
 Therfor I stinte, I nam no divinistre;
 Of soules finde I nat in this registre,
 Ne me ne list thilke opiniouns to telle
 Of hem, though that they wryten wher
 they dwelle. 2814
 Arcite is cold, ther Mars his soule gye;
 Now wol I speken forth of Emelye.
 Sbrichte Emelye, and howleth Palamon,
 And Theseus his suster took anon
 Swowninge, and bar hir fro the corps
 away. 2819
 What helpeth it to tarien forth the day,
 To tellen how she weep, bothe eve and
 morwe?
 For in swich cas women have swich
 sorwe,
 Whan that hir housbonds been from hem
 ago,
 That for the more part they sorwen so,
 Or elles fallen in swich maladye, 2825
 That at the laste certainly they dye.
 Infinite been the sorwes and the teres
 Of olde folk, and folk of tendre yeres,

In al the toun, for deeth of this Theban;
 For him ther wepeth bothe child and
 man; 2830
 So greet a weping was ther noon, certayn,
 Whan Ector was y-brought, al fresh y-
 slayn,
 To Troye; allas! the pitee that was ther,
 Cracching of chekes, rending eek of heer.
 'Why woldestow be deed,' thise women
 crye, 2835
 'And haddest gold y-nough, and Emelye?'
 No man mighte gladen Theseus,
 Savinge his olde fader Egeus,
 That knew this worldes transmucioun,
 As he had seyn it chaungen up and
 doun, 2840
 Ioye after wo, and wo after gladnesse:
 And shewed hem ensamples and lyknesse.
 'Right as ther deyed never man,' quod
 he,
 'That he ne livede in erthe in som
 degree,
 Right so ther livede never man,' he
 seyde, 2845
 'In al this world, that som tyme he ne
 deyde.
 This world nis but a thurghfare ful of wo,
 And we ben pilgrimes, passinge to and
 fro;
 Deeth is an ende of every worldly sore.'
 And over al this yet seyde he muchel
 more 2850
 To this effect, ful wysly to enhorte
 The peple, that they sholde hem recon-
 forte.
 Duk Theseus, with al his bisy cure,
 Caste now wher that the sepulture
 Of good Arcite may best y-made be, 2855
 And eek most honorable 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 selve grove, swote and
 grene, 2860
 Ther as he hadde his amorous desires,
 His compleynt, and for love his hote fires,
 He wolde make a fyr, in which thoffice
 Funeral he mighte al accomplece;
 And leet comaunde anon to hakke and
 hewe 2865
 The okes olde, and leye hem on a rewe
 In colpons wel arrayed for to brenne;
 His officers with swifte feet they renne

And ryde anon at his comaundement.
 And after this, Theseus hath y-sent 2870
 After a bere, and it al over-spradde
 With cloth of gold, the richest that he
 hadde.
 And of the same suyte he cladde Arcite;
 Upon his hondes hadde he gloves whyte;
 Eek on his heed a croune of laurer
 grene, 2875
 And in his hond a swerd ful bright and
 kene.
 He leyde him bare the visage on the bere,
 Therwith he weep that pitee was to here.
 And for the peple sholde seen him alle,
 Whan it was day, he broghte him to the
 halle, 2880
 That roreth of the crying and the soun.
 Tho cam this woful Theban Palamoun,
 With flotery berd, and ruggy ashy heres,
 In clothes blake, y-dropped al with teres;
 And, passing othere of weping, Em-
 elye, 2885
 The rewfulleste of al the companye.
 In as muche as the service sholde be
 The more noble and riche in his degree,
 Duk Theseus leet forth three stedes
 bringe, 2889
 That trapped were in steel al glitteringe,
 And covered with the armes of daun
 Arcite.
 Up-on thise stedes, that weren grete and
 whyte,
 Ther seten folk, of which oon bar his
 sheeld,
 Another his spere up in his hondes heeld;
 The thriddle bar with him his bowe
 Turkeys, 2895
 Of brend gold was the cas, and eek the
 harneys;
 And riden forth a pas with sorweful chere
 Toward the grove, as ye shul after here.
 The nobleste of the Grekes that ther
 were
 Upon hir shuldres carieden the bere, 2900
 With-slakke pas, 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.
 Up-on the right hond wente old
 Egeus, 2905
 And on that other syde duk Theseus,
 With vessels in hir hand of gold ful fyn,

Al ful of hony, milk, and blood, and wyn;
 Eek Palamon, with ful greet companye;
 And after that cam woful Emelye, 2910
 With fyr in honde, as was that tyme the
 gyse,
 To do thoffice of funeral servyse.
 Heigh labour, and ful greet apparail-
 linge
 Was at the service and the fyr-makinge,
 That with his grene top the heven
 raughte, 2915
 And twenty fadme of brede the armes
 straughte;
 This is to seyn, the bowes were so brode.
 Of strée first ther was leyd ful many a
 lode.
 But how the fyr was maked up on heichte,
 And eek the names how the tree's
 highte, 2920
 As ook, firre, birch, asp, alder, holm, pop-
 ler,
 Wilow, elm, plane, ash, box, chasteyn, 2925
 lind, laurer,
 Mapul, thorn, beech, hasel, ew, whippel-
 tree,
 How they weren feld, shal nat be told for
 me;
 Ne how the goddes ronnen up and
 doun, 2925
 Disherited of hir habitacioun,
 In which they woneden in reste and pees,
 Nymphes, Faunes, and Amadrides;
 Ne how the bestes and the briddes alle
 Fledden for fere, whan the wode was
 falle; 2930
 Ne how the ground agast was of the
 light,
 That was nat wont to seen the sonne
 bright;
 Ne how the fyr was couched first with
 stree,
 And than with drye stokkes cloven a
 three, 2934
 And than with grene wode and spycerye,
 And than with cloth of gold and with
 perrye,
 And gerlandes hanging 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 swowned whan men made
 the fyr,
 Ne what she spak, ne what was hir desyr;
 Ne what leweles men in the fyr tho
 caste, 2945
 Whan that the fyr was greet and brente
 faste;
 Ne how som caste hir sheeld, and som hir
 spere,
 And of hir vestiments, whiche that they
 were,
 And cuppes ful of wyn, and milk, and
 blood, 2949
 Into the fyr, that brente as it were wood;
 Ne how the Grekes with an huge route
 Thryës riden al the fyr aboute
 Up-on the left hand, with a loud shout-
 inge,
 And thryës with hir speres clateringe;
 And thryës how the ladies gonne
 crye; 2955
 Ne how that lād was hom-ward Emelye;
 Ne how Arcite is brent to asshen colde;
 Ne how that liche-wake was y-holde
 Al thilke night, ne how the Grekes pleye
 The wake-pleyes, ne kepe I nat to seye;
 Who wrastleth best naked, with oille
 enoynt, 2961
 Ne who that bar him best, in no disioynt.
 I wol nat tellen eek how that they goon
 Hoom til Athenes, whan the pley is
 doon;
 But shortly to the poynt than wol I
 wende, 2965
 And maken of my longe tale an ende.
 By processe and by lengthe of certeyn
 yeres
 Al stinted is the moorning and the teres
 Of Grekes, by oon general assent.
 Than semed me ther was a parlement 2970
 At Athenes, up-on certeyn poynts and
 cas;
 Among the whiche poynts y-spoken was
 To have with certeyn contrees alliaunce,
 And have fully of Thebens obeisaunce.
 For which this noble Theseus anon 2975
 Leet senden after gentil Palamon,
 Unwist of him what was the cause and
 why;
 But in his blake clothes sorwefully
 He cam at his comaundement in hye.
 Tho sente Theseus for Emelye. 2980

When they were set, and hust was al the
 place,
 And Theseus abiden hadde a space
 Er any word cam from his wyse brest,
 His eyen sette he ther as was his lest,
 And with a sad visage he syked stille,
 And after that right thus he seyde his
 wille. 2986
 'The firste moevere of the cause
 above,
 Whan he first made the faire cheyne of
 love,
 Greet was theeffect, and heigh was his
 entente;
 Wel wiste he why, and what ther-of he
 mente; 2990
 For with that faire cheyne of love he
 bond
 The fyr, the eyr, the water, and the lond
 In certeyn boundes, that they may nat
 flee;
 That same prince and that moevere,
 quod he,
 'Hath stablised, in this wrecched world
 adoun, 2995
 Certeyne dayes and duracioun
 To al that is engendred in this place,
 Over the whiche day they may nat pace,
 Al mowe they yet tho dayes wel abregge;
 Ther needeth non auctoritee allegge, 3000
 For it is preved by experience,
 But that me list declaren my sentence.
 Than may men by this ordre wel dis-
 cerne,
 That thilke moevere stable is and eterne.
 Wel may men knowe, but it be a fool, 3005
 That every part deryveth from his hool.
 For nature hath nat take his beginning
 Of no partye ne cantel of a thing,
 But of a thing that parfit is and stable,
 Descending so, til it be corrumpable. 3010
 And therefore, of his wyse purveyaunce,
 He hath so wel biset his ordinaunce,
 That speeces of thinges and progressiouns
 Shullen enduren by successiouns,
 And nat eterne be, with-oute lye: 3015
 This maistow understonde and seen at
 yē.
 'Lo the ook, that hath so long a nor-
 issinghe
 From tyme that it first biginneth springe,
 And hath so long a lyf, as we may see,
 Yet at the laste wasted is the tree. 3020

'Considereth eek, how that the harde
 stoon
 Under our feet, on which we trede and
 goon,
 Yit wasteth it, as it lyth by the weye.
 The brode river somtyme wexeth dreye.
 The grete tounes see we wane and
 wende. 3025
 Than may ye see that al this thing hath
 ende.
 'Of man and womman seen we wel
 also,
 That nedeth, in oon of thise termes two,
 This is to seyn, in youthe or elles age,
 He moot ben deed, the king as shal a
 page; 3030
 Som in his bed, som in the depe see,
 Som in the large feeld, as men may se;
 Ther helpeth noght, al goth that ilke
 weye.
 Thanne may I seyn that al this thing
 moot deye.
 What maketh this but Iupiter the king?
 The which is prync and cause of alle
 thing, 3036
 Converting al un-to his propre welle,
 From which it is deryved, sooth to telle.
 And here-agayns no creature on lyve
 Of no degree availleth for to stryve. 3040
 'Thanne is it wisdom, as it thinketh
 me,
 To maken vertu of necessitee,
 And take it wel, that we may nat eschue,
 And namely that to us alle is due.
 And who-so grucbeth ought, he dooth
 folye, 3045
 And rebel is to him that al may gye.
 And certainly a man hath most honour
 To dyen in his excellence and flour,
 Whan he is siker of his gode name;
 Than hath he doon his freend, ne him,
 no shame. 3050
 And gladder oghte his freend ben of his
 deeth,
 Whan with honour up-yolden is his
 breeth,
 Than whan his name apalled is for age;
 For al forgeten is his vasselage.
 Than is it best, as for a worthy fame, 3055
 To dyen whan that he is best of name.
 The contrarie of al this is wilfulnesse.
 Why grucchen we? why have we hevi-
 nesse,

That good Arcite, of chivalrye flour
 Departedis, with duetee and honour, 3060
 Out of this foule prison of this lyf?
 Why grucchen heer his cosin and his
 wyf
 Of his wel-fare that loved hem so weel?
 Can he hem thank? nay, God wot, never
 a deel,
 That bothe his soule and eek hem-self
 offende, 3065
 And yet they mowe hir lustes nat
 amende.
 'What may I conclude of this longe
 serie,
 But, after wo, I rede us to be merie,
 And thanken Iupiter of al his grace?
 And, er that we departen from this
 place, 3070
 I rede that we make, of sorwes two,
 O parfyt loye, lasting ever-mo;
 And loketh now, wher most sorwe is
 her-inne,
 Ther wol we first amenden and biginne.
 'Suster,' quod he, 'this is my fulle
 assent, 3075
 With al thavys heer of my parlement,
 That gentil Palamon, your owne knight,
 That serveth yow with wille, herte, and
 might,
 And ever hath doon, sin that ye first
 him knewe,
 That ye shul, of your grace, up-on him
 rewe, 3080
 And taken him for housbonde and for
 lord:
 Leen me your hond, for this is our acord.
 Lat see now of your wommanly pitee.
 He is a kinges brother sone, pardee; 3084
 And, though he were a povre bacheler,
 Sin he hath served yow so many a yeer,
 And had for yow so greet adversitee,
 It moste been considered, leveth me;
 For gentil mercy oghte to passen right.'
 Than seyde he thus to Palamon ful
 right; 3090
 'I trowe ther nedeth litel sermoning
 To make yow assente to this thing.
 Com neer, and tak your lady by the
 hond.'
 Bitwixen hem was maad anon the bond,
 That highte matrimoine or mariage, 3095
 By al the counseil and the baronage.
 And thus with alle blisse and melodye

Hath Palamon y-wedded Emelye.
 And God, that al this wyde world hath
 wrought,
 Sende him his love, that hathe it dere
 a-boght. 3100
 For now is Palamon in alle wele,
 Living in blisse, in richesse, and in
 hele;

And Emelye him loveth so tendrely,
 And he hir serveth al-so gently,
 That never was ther no word hem
 bitwene 3105
 Of Ielousye, or any other tene.
 Thus endeth Palamon and Emelye;
 And God save al this faire companye! —
 Amen.

Here is ended the Knights Tale.

THE MILLER'S PROLOGUE.

*Here folwen the wordes bitwene the Host
 and the Millere.*

WHAN that the Knight had thus his tale
 y-told,
 In al the route nas ther yong ne old 3110
 That he ne seyde it was a noble storie,
 And worthy for to drawn to memorie;
 And namely the gentils everichoon.
 Our Hoste lough and swoor, 'so moot I
 goon,
 This gooth aright; unbokeled is the
 male; 3115
 Lat see now who shal telle another tale:
 For trewely, the game is wel bigonne.
 Now telleth ye, sir Monk, if that ye
 conne,
 Sumwhat, to quyte with the Knightes
 tale.'
 The Miller, that for-dronken was al
 pale, 3120
 So that unnethe up-on his hors he sat,
 He nolde avalen neither hood ne hat,
 Ne abyde no man for his curteisye,
 But in Pilates vois he gan to crye,
 And swoor by armes and by blood and
 bones, 3125
 'I can a noble tale for the nones,
 With which I wol now quyte the Knightes
 tale.'
 Our Hoste saugh that he was dronke
 of ale,
 And seyde: 'abyd, Robin, my leve
 brother,
 Som better man shal telle us first another:
 Abyd, and lat us werken thriftily.' 3131
 'By goddes soul,' quod he, 'that wol
 nat I;

For I wol speke, or elles go my wey.'
 Our Hoste answerde: 'tel on, a devel
 wey!
 Thou art a fool, thy wit is overcome.' 3135
 'Now herkneth,' quod the Miller, 'alle
 and some!
 But first I make a protestacioun
 That I am dronke, I knowe it by my
 soun;
 And therefore, if that I misspeke or
 seye,
 Wyte it the ale of Southwerk, I yow
 preye; 3140
 For I wol telle a legende and a lyf
 Bothe of a Carpenter, and of his wyf,
 How that a clerk hath set the wrightes
 cappe.'
 The Reve answerde and seyde, 'stint
 thy clappe,
 Lat be thy lewed dronken harlotrye. 3145
 It is a sinne and eek a greet folye
 To apeiren any man, or him diffame,
 And eek to bringen wyves in swich fame.
 Thou mayst y-nogh of othere thinges
 seyn.'
 This dronken Miller spak ful some
 ageyn, 3150
 And seyde, 'leve brother Osewold,
 Who hath no wyf, he is no cokewold.
 But I sey nat therefore that thou art
 oon;
 Ther been ful gode wyves many oon,
 And ever a thousand gode ayeyns oon
 badde, 3155
 That knowestow wel thy-self, but-if thou
 madde.
 Why artow angry with my tale now?
 I have a wyf, pardec, as well as thou,

Yet nolde I, for the oxen in my plough,
 Taken up-on me more than y-nogh, 3160
 As demen of my-self that I were oon;
 I wol beleve wel that I am noon.
 An housbond shal nat been inquisitif
 Of goddes privetee, nor of his wyf.
 So he may finde goddes foyson there,
 Of the remenant nedeth nat enquere.'

What sholde I more seyn, but this
 Millere 3167
 He nolde his wordes for no man forbere,
 But tolde his cherles tale in his manere;
 Me thinketh that I shal reherce it here.
 And ther-fore every gentil wight I preye,
 For goddes love, demeth nat that I seye
 Of evel entente, but that I moot reherce

Hir tales alle, be they bettre or werse,
 Or elles falsen som of my matere. 3175
 And therfore, who-so list it nat y-here,
 Turne over the leef, and chese another
 tale;

For he shal finde y-nowe, grete and
 smale,
 Of storial thing that toucheth gentillesse,
 And eek moralitee and holinesse; 3180
 Blameth nat me if that ye chese amis.
 The Miller is a cherl, ye knowe wel this;
 So was the Reve, and othere many mo,
 And harlotrye they tolden bothe two.
 Avyseth yow and putte me out of blame;
 And eek men shal nat make earnest of
 game. 3186

Here endeth the prologe.

THE MILLERES TALE.

Here biginneth the Millere his tale.

WHYLOM ther was dwellinge at Oxenford
 A riche gnof, that gestes heeld to bord,
 And of his craft he was a Carpenter.
 With him ther was dwellinge a povre
 scoler, 3190

Had lerned art, but al his fantasye
 Was turned for to lerne astrologye,
 And coude a certeyn of conclusiouns
 To demen by interrogaciouns,
 If that men axed him in certain houres,
 Whan that men sholde have droghte or
 elles shoures, 3196
 Or if men axed him what sholde bifalle
 Of every thing, I may nat rekene hem
 alle.

This clerk was cleped hende Nicholas;
 Of derne love he coude and of solas; 3200
 And ther-to he was sleigh and ful privee,
 And lyk a mayden meke for to see.
 A chambre hadde he in that hostelrye
 Allone, with-outen any companye,
 Ful fetisly y-dight with herbes swote; 3205
 And he him-self as swete as is the rote
 Of licorys, or any cetewale.
 His Almageste and bokes grete and
 smale,
 His astrelabie, longinge for his art,
 His augrim-stones layen faire a-part 3210

On shelves couched at his beddes heed:
 His presse y-covered with a falding reed.
 And al above ther lay a gay sautrye,
 On which he made a nightes melodye
 So swetely, that al the chambre rong;
 And *Angelus ad virginem* he song; 3216
 And after that he song the kinges note;
 Ful often blessed was his mery throte.
 And thus this swete clerk his tyme spente
 After his freendes finding and his rente.

This Carpenter had wedded newe a
 wyf 3221
 Which that he lovede more than his lyf;
 Of eightetene yeer she was of age.

Ialous he was, and heeld hir narwe in
 cage,

For she was wilde and yong, and he was
 old, 3225

And demed him-self ben lyk a cokewold.
 He knew nat Catoun, for his wit was
 rude,

That bad man sholde wedde his simili-
 tude.

Men sholde wedden after hir estaat, 3229
 For youthe and elde is often at debaat.

But sith that he was fallen in the snare,
 He moste endure, as other folk, his care.

Fair was this yonge wyf, and ther-
 with-al

As any wesele hir body gent and smal.

A ceynt she werede barred al of silk, 3235
 A barncloth eek as whyt as morne
 milk
 Up-on hir lendes, ful of many a gore.
 Whyt was hir smok, and brouded al
 bifore
 And eek bihinde, on hir coler aboute,
 Of col-blak silk, with-inne and eek with-
 oute. 3240
 The tapes of hir whyte voluper
 Were of the same suyte of hir coler;
 Hir filet brood of silk, and set ful hye:
 And sikerly she hadde a likerous yē.
 Ful smale y-pulled were hir browes
 two, 3245
 And tho were bent, and blake as any
 sloo.
 She was ful more blisful on to see
 Than is the newe pere-ionette tree;
 And softer than the wolle is of a wether.
 And by hir girdel heeng a purs of lether
 Tasseld with silk, and perled with la-
 toun. 3251
 In al this world, to seken up and down,
 There nis no man so wys, that coude
 thenche
 So gay a popelote, or swich a wenche.
 Ful brighter was the shyning of hir
 hewe 3255
 Than in the tour the noble y-forged
 newe.
 But of hir song, it was as loude and
 yerne
 As any swalwe sittinge on a berne.
 Ther-to she coude skippe and make
 game,
 As any kide or calf folwinge his dame.
 Hir mouth was swete as bragot or the
 meeth, 3261
 Or hord of apples leyd in hey or heeth.
 Winsinge she was, as is a Ioly colt,
 Long as a mast, and upright as a bolt.
 A brooch she baar up-on hir lowe coler,
 As brood as is the bos of a bocler. 3266
 Hir shoes were laced on hir legges hye;
 She was a prymerole, a pigges-nye
 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 hende Nicholas
 Fil with this yonge wyf to rage and
 pleye,
 Whyl that hir housbond was at Oseneye,

As clerkes ben ful subtile and ful
 queynte; 3275
 And prively he caughte hir by the
 queynte,
 And seyde, 'y-wis, but if ich have my
 will,
 For derne love of thee, lemman, I spille.'
 And heeld hir harde by the haunche-
 bones,
 And seyde, 'lemman, love me al at-ones,
 Or I wol dyen, also god me save!' 3281
 And she sprong as a colt doth in the
 trave,
 And with hir heed she wryed faste away,
 And seyde, 'I wol nat kisse thee, by my
 fey, 3284
 Why, lat be,' quod she, 'lat be, Nicholas,
 Or I wol crye out "harrow" and "allas."
 Do wey your handes for your curteisye!'
 This Nicholas gan mercy for to crye,
 And spak so faire, and profred hir so
 faste,
 That she hir love him graunted atte
 laste, 3290
 And swoor hir ooth, by seint Thomas of
 Kent,
 That she wol been at his comandement,
 Whan that she may hir leyser wel espye.
 'Myn housbond is so ful of Ialousye,
 That but ye wayte wel and been privee,
 I woot right wel I nam but deed,' quod
 she. 3296
 'Ye moste been ful derne, as in this cas.'
 'Nay ther-of care thee noght,' quod
 Nicholas,
 'A clerk had litherly biset his whyle,
 But-if he coude a Carpenter bigyle.' 3300
 And thus they been acorded and y-sworn
 To wayte a tyme, as I have told biforn.
 Whan Nicholas had doon thus everydeel,
 And thakked hir aboute the lendes weel,
 He kist hir swete, and taketh his sautrye,
 And pleyeth faste, and maketh melodye.
 Than fil it thus, that to the parish-
 chirche, 3307
 Cristes owne werkes for to wirche,
 This gode wyf wente on an haliday;
 Hir forheed shoon as bright as any day,
 So was it wasshen whan she lect hir
 werk. 3311
 Now was ther of that chirche a parish-
 clerk,
 The which that was y-cleped Absolon.

Crul was his heer, and as the gold it
shoon,

And strouted as a fanne large and
brode; 3315

Ful streight and even lay his Ioly shode.
His rode was reed, his eyen greye as
goos;

With Powles window corven on his
shoos,

In hoses rede he wente fetisly.

Y-clad he was ful smal and proprely, 3320
Al in a kirtel of a light wachet;

Ful faire and thikke been the poyntes
set.

And ther-up-on he hadde a gay surplys
As whyt as is the blosme up-on the rys.

A mery child he was, so god me save,
Wel coude he laten blood and clippe and
shave, 3326

And make a chartre of lond or acquit-
aunce.

In twenty manere coude he trippe and
daunce

After the scole of Oxenforde tho, 3329
And with his legges casten to and fro,

And pleyen songs on a small rubible;
Ther-to he song som-tyme a loud quin-
ible;

And as wel coude he pleye on his giterne.
In al the toun nas brewhous ne taverne

That he ne visited with his solas, 3335
Ther any gaylard tappestere was.

But sooth to seyn, he was somdel squay-
mous

Of farting, and of speche daungerous.

This Absolon, that Iolif was and gay,
Gooth with a sencer on the haliday, 3340

Sensenge the wyves of the parish faste;
And many a lovely look on hem he caste,
And namely on this carpenteres wyf.

To loke on hir him thoughte a mery lyf,
She was so propre and swete and like-
rous. 3345

I dar wel seyn, if she had been a mous,
And he a cat, he wolde hir hente anon.

This parish-clerk, this Ioly Absolon,
Hath in his herte swich a love-longinge,

That of no wyf ne took he noon offringe;
For curteisye, he seyde, he wolde noon.

The mone, when it was night, ful brighte
shoon, 3352

And Absolon his giterne hath y-take,
For paramours, he thoughte for to wake.

And forth he gooth, Iolif and amorous,
Til he cam to the carpenteres hous 3356

A litel after cokkes hadde y-crowe;

And dressed him up by a shot-windowe
That was up-on the carpenteres wal.

He singeth in his vois gentil and smal,
'Now, dere lady, if thy wille be, 3361

I preye yow that ye wol rewe on me,'
Ful wel acordaunt to his giterninge.

This carpenter awook, and herde him
singe,

And spak un-to his wyf, and seyde
anon, 3365

'What! Alison! herestow nat Absolon
That chaunteth thus under our boures
wal?'

And she answerde hir housbond ther-
with-al,

'Yis, god wot, Iohn, I here it every-del.'
This passeth forth; what wol ye bet

than wel? 3370

For day to day this Ioly Absolon

So woweth hir, that him is wo bigon.

He waketh al the night and al the day;

He kempte hise lokkes brode, and made
him gay;

He woweth hir by menes and brocage,
And swoor he wolde been hir owne
page; 3376

He singeth, brokkinge as a nightingale;
He sente hir piment, meeth, and spyced
ale,

And wafres, pyping hote out of the
glede;

And for she was of toune, he profred
mede. 3380

For som folk wol ben wonnen for rich-
esse,

And som for strokes, and som for gentill-
esse.

Somtyme, to shewe his lightnesse and
maistrye,

He pleyeth Herodes on a scaffold hye.

But what availleth him as in this cas?

She loveth so this hende Nicholas, 3386
That Absolon may blowe the bukkes
horn;

He ne hadde for his labour but a scorn;
And thus she maketh Absolon hir ape,

And al his earnest turneth til a lape. 3390
Ful sooth is this proverbe, it is no lye,

Men seyn right thus, 'alwey the nye slye
Maketh the ferre leve to be looth.'

For though that Absolon be wood or
wrooth, 3394
By-cause that he fer was from hir sighte,
This nye Nicholas stood in his lighte.

Now here thee wel, thou hende Nich-
olas!

For Absolon may waille and singe
'allas.'

And so bifel it on a Saturday,
This carpenter was goon til Osenay; 3400

And hende Nicholas and Alisoun
Acorded been to this conclusioun,

That Nicholas shal shapen him a wyle
This sely Ialous housbond to bigyle;

And if so be the game wente aright; 3405
She sholde slepen in his arm al night,
For this was his desyr and hir also.

And right anon, with-outen wordes mo,
This Nicholas no lenger wolde tarie,

But doth ful softe un-to his chambre
carie 3410

Bothe mete and drinke for a day or
tweye,

And to hir housbonde bad hir for to
seye,

If that he axed after Nicholas,
She sholde seye she niste where he was,

Of al that day she saugh him nat with
yë; 3415

She trowed that he was in maladye,
For, for no cry, hir mayde coude him
calle;

He nolde answer, for no-thing that
mighte falle.

This passeth forth al thilke Saturday,
That Nicholas stille in his chambre lay,

And eet and sleep, or dide what him
leste, 3421

Til Sunday, that the sonne gooth to
reste.

This sely carpenter hath greet mer-
veyle

Of Nicholas, or what thing mighte him
cyle,

And seyde, 'I am adrad, by seint Thomas,
It standeth nat aright with Nicholas. 3426

God shilde that he deyde 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 him
wirche. 3430

Go up,' quod he un-to his knave
anoon,

'Clepe at his dore, or knocke with a
stoon,

Loke how it is, and tel me boldely.'

This knave gooth him up ful sturdily,
And at the chambre-dore, whyl that he
stood, 3435

He cryde and knocked as that he were
wood: —

'What! how! what do ye, maister Nich-
olay?

How may ye slepen al the longe day?'
But al for noght, he herde nat a word;

An hole he fond, ful lowe up-on a bord,
Ther as the cat was wont in for to
crepe; 3441

And at that hole he looked in ful depe,
And at the laste he hadde of him a
sighte.

This Nicholas sat gaping ever up-righte,
As he had kyked on the newe mone. 3445

Adoun he gooth, and tolde his maister
sone

In what array he saugh this ilke man.
This carpenter to bleesen him bigan,

And seyde, 'help us, seinte Frideswyde!
A man woot litel what him shal bityde!

This man is falle, with his astromye, 3451
In som woodnesse or in som agonye;

I thoghte ay wel how that it sholde be!
Men sholde nat knowe of goddes prive-
tee.

Ye, blessed be alwey a lewed man, 3455
That noght but oonly his bileve can!

So ferde another clerk with astromye;
He walked in the feeldes for to pry

Up-on the sterres, what ther sholde
bifalle,

Til he was in a marle-pit y-falle; 3460
He saugh nat that. But yet, by seint

Thomas,

Me reweth sore of hende Nicholas.
He shal be rated of his studying,

If that I may, by Iesus, hevене king!
Get me a staf, that I may underspore,

Whyl that thou, Robin, hevest up the
dore. 3466

He shal out of his studying, as I
gesse' —

And to the chambre-dore he gan him
dresse.

His knave was a strong carl for the
nones,

And by the haspe he haf it up atones;

In-to the floor the dore fil anon. 3471
 This Nicholas sat ay as stille as stoon,
 And ever gaped upward in-to the eir.
 This carpenter wende he were in de-
 speir,
 And hente him by the sholdres might-
 ily, 3475
 And shook him harde, and cryde spit-
 ously,
 'What! Nicholay! what, how! what loke
 adoun!
 Awake, and thenk on Cristes passioun;
 I crouche thee from elves and fro
 wightes!'
 Ther-with the night-spel seyde he anon-
 righthes 3480
 On foure halves of the hous aboute,
 And on the threshold of the dore with-
 oute: —
 'Iesu Crist, and seynt Benedight,
 Blesse this hous from every wikked
 wight,
 For nightes verye, the white *pater-nos-
 ter!* 3485
 Where wentestow, seynt Petres soster?'
 And atte laste this hende Nicholas
 Gan for to syke sore, and seyde, 'allas!
 Shal al the world be lost eftsones now?'
 This carpenter answerde, 'what seys-
 tow? 3490
 What! thenk on god, as we don, men
 that swinke.'
 This Nicholas answerde, 'fecche me
 drinke;
 And after wol I speke in privetee
 Of certeyn thing that toucheth me and
 thee;
 I wol telle it non other man, certeyn.'
 This carpenter goth doun, and comth
 ageyn, 3496
 And broghte of mighty ale a large quart;
 And whan that ech of hem had dronke
 his part,
 This Nicholas his dore faste shette,
 And doun the carpenter by him he
 sette 3500
 He seyde, 'Iohn, myn hoste lief and
 dere,
 Thou shalt up-on thy trouthe swere me
 here,
 That to no wight thou shalt this conseil
 wreye;
 For it is Cristes conseil that I seyde,

And if thou telle it man, thou art for-
 lore; 3505
 For this vengauce thou shalt han ther-
 fore,
 That if thou wreye me, thou shalt be
 wood!'
 'Nay, Crist forbede it, for his holy
 blood!'
 Quod tho this sely man, 'I nam no
 labbe,
 Ne, though I seye, I nam nat lief to
 gabbe. 3510
 Sey what thou wolt, I shal it never
 telle
 To child ne wyf, by him that harwed
 helle!'
 'Now John,' quod Nicholas, 'I wol
 nat lye;
 I have y-founde in myn astrologye,
 As I have loked in the mone bright,
 That now, a Monday next, at quarter-
 night, 3516
 Shal falle a reyn and that so wilde and
 wood,
 That half so greet was never Noës flood.
 This world,' he seyde, 'in lasse than in
 an hour
 Shal al be dreynt, so hidous is the
 shour; 3520
 Thus shal mankynde drenche and lese
 hir lyf.'
 This carpenter answerde, 'allas, my
 wyf!
 And shal she drenche? allas! myn
 Alisoun!'
 For sorwe of this he fil almost adoun,
 And seyde, 'is ther no remedie in this
 cas?' 3525
 'Why, yis, for gode,' quod hende Nich-
 olas,
 'If thou wolt werken after lore and
 reed;
 Thou mayst nat werken after thyn owene
 heed.
 For thus seith Salomon, that was ful
 trewe,
 "Werk al by conseil, and thou shalt nat
 rewe." 3530
 And if thou werken wolt by good con-
 seil,
 I undertake, with-outhe mast and seyl,
 Yet shal I saven hir and thee and me.
 Hastow nat herd how saved was Noë,

When that our lord had warned him
 biforn 3535
 That al the world with water sholde be
 lorn?'
 'Yis,' quod this carpenter, 'ful yore
 ago.'
 'Hastow nat herd,' quod Nicholas,
 'also
 The sorwe of Noë with his felawshipe,
 Er that he mighte gete his wyf to
 shipe? 3540
 Him had be lever, I dar wel undertake,
 At thilke tyme, than alle hise wetheres
 blake,
 That she hadde had a ship hir-self
 alone.
 And ther-fore, wostou what is best to
 done?
 This asketh haste, and of an hastif
 thing 3545
 Men may nat preche or maken taryng.
 Anon go gete us faste in-to this in
 A kneding-trogh, or elles a kimelin,
 For ech of us, but loke that they be
 large,
 In whiche we mowe swimme as in a
 barge, 3550
 And han ther-inne vitaille suffisant
 But for a day; fy on the remenant!
 The water chal aslake and goon away
 Aboute pryme up-on the nexte day.
 But Robin may nat wite of this, thy
 knave, 3555
 Ne eek thy mayde Gille I may nat save;
 Axe nat why, for though thou aske me,
 I wol nat tellen goddes privetee.
 Suffiseth thee, but if thy wittes madde,
 To han as greet a grace as Noë hadde.
 Thy wyf shal I wel saven, out of doute,
 Go now thy wey, and speed thee heer-
 aboute. 3562
 But whan thou hast, for hir and thee
 and me,
 Y-geten us thise kneding-tubbes three,
 Than shaltow hange hem in the roof ful
 hye, 3565
 That no man of our purveyaunce spye.
 And whan thou thus hast doon as I have
 seyld,
 And hast our vitaille faire in hem y-leyld,
 And cek an ax, to smyte the corde atwo
 When that the water comth, that we
 may go, 3570

And broke an hole an heigh, up-on the
 gable,
 Unto the gardin-ward, over the stable,
 That we may frely passen forth our way
 Whan that the grete shour is goon
 away—
 Than shaltow swimme as myrie, I un-
 dertake, 3575
 As doth the whyte doke after hir drake.
 Than wol I clepe, "how! Alison! how!
 John!
 Be myrie, for the flood wol passe anon."
 And thou wolt seyn, "hayl, maister
 Nicholay!
 Good morwe, I se thee wel, for it is
 day." 3580
 And than shul we be lordes al our lyf
 Of al the world, as Noë and his wyf.
 But of o thyng I warne thee ful right,
 Be wel avyded, on that ilke night
 That we ben entred in-to shippes
 bord, 3585
 That noon of us ne speke nat a word,
 Ne clepe, ne crye, but been in his
 preyere;
 For it is goddes owne heste dere.
 Thy wyf and thou mote hange fer a-
 twinne,
 For that bitwixe yow shal be no sinne
 No more in looking than ther shal in
 dede; 3591
 This ordinance is seyde, go, god thee
 spede!
 Tomorwe at night, whan men ben alle
 aslepe,
 In-to our kneding-tubbes wol we crepe,
 And sitten ther, abyding goddes grace.
 Go now thy wey, I have no lenger
 space 3596
 To make of this no lenger sermoning.
 Men seyn thus, "send the wyse, and sey
 no-thing;"
 Thou art so wys, it nedeth thee nat
 teche;
 Go, save our lyf, and that I thee bi-
 seche.' 3600
 This sely carpenter goth forth his
 wey.
 Ful ofte he seith 'allas' and 'weyl-
 away,'
 And to his wyf he tolde his privetee;
 And she was war, and knew it bet than
 he.

What al this queynte cast was for to
seye. 3605

But nathelees she ferde as she wolde
deye,

And seyde, 'allas! go forth thy wey
anon,

Help us to scape, or we ben lost echon;
I am thy trewe verray wedded wyf;

Go, dere spouse, and help to save our
lyf.' 3610

Lo! which a greet thyng is affecioun!

Men may dye of imaginacioun,
So depe may impressioun be take.

This sely carpenter biginneth quake;
Him thinketh verrailly that he may
see 3616

Noës flood come walving as the see
To drenchen Alisoun, his hony dere.

He wepeth, weyleth, maketh sory chere,
He syketh with ful many a sory swogh.

He gooth and geteth him a kneding-
trog, 3620

And after that a tubbe and a kimelin,
And prively he sente hem to his in,

And heng hem in the roof in privetee.
His owne hand he made laddres three,

To climben by the ronges and the
stalkes 3625

Un-to the tubbes hanginge in the balkes,
And hem vitailed, bothe trogh and
tubbe,

With breed and chese, and good ale in a
tubbe,

Suffysinge right y-nogh as for a day.
But er that he had maad al this array,

He sente his knave, and eek his wenche
also, 3631

Up-on his nede to London for to go.
And on the Monday, whan it drow to
night,

He shette his dore with-oute candel-
light,

And dressed al thing as it sholde
be. 3635

And shortly, up they clomben alle three;
They sitten stille wel a furlong-way.

'Now, *Pater-noster*, clom!' seyde
Nicholay,

And 'clom,' quod John, and 'clom,' seyde
Alisoun.

This carpenter seyde his devocioun, 3640
And stille he sit, and biddeth his preyere,
Awaytinge on the reyn, if he it here.

The dede sleep, for wery businesse,
Fil on this carpenter right, as I gesse,

Aboute corfew-tyme, or litel more; 3645
For travail of his goost he groneth sore,
And eft he routeth, for his heed mislay.

Doun of the laddre stalketh Nicholay,
And Alisoun, ful softe adoun she spedde;

With-outen wordes mo, they goon to
bedde 3650

Ther-as the carpenter is wont to lye.
Ther was the revel and the melodye;

And thus lyth Alisoun and Nicholas,
In businesse of mirthe and of solas,

Til that the belle of laudes gan to
ringe, 3655

And freres in the chauncel gonne singe.
This parish-clerk, this amorous Ab-
solon,

That is for love alwey so wo bigon,
Up-on the Monday was at Oseneye

With companye, him to disporte and
pleye, 3660

And axed up-on cas a cloisterer
Ful prively after Iohn the carpenter;

And he drough him a-part out of the
chirche,

And seyde, 'I noot, I saugh him here nat
wirche

Sin Saterdag; I trow that he be
went 3665

For timber, ther our abbot hath him
sent;

For he is wont for timber for to go,
And dwellen at the grange a day or two;

Or elles he is at his hous, certeyn;
Wher that he be, I can nat sothly
seyne.' 3670

This Absolon ful Ioly was and light,
And thoughte, 'now is tyme wake al
night;

For sikirly I saugh him nat stringe
Aboute his dore sin day bigan to springe.

So moot I thryve, I shal, at cokkes
croe, 3675

Ful prively knokken at his windowe
That stant ful lowe up-on his boures wal.

To Alisoun now wol I tellen al
My love-longing, for yet I shal nat misse

That at the leste wey I shal hir
kisse. 3680

Som maner confort shal I have, parfay,
My mouth hath icched al this longe day;

That is a signe of kissing atte leste.

Al night me mette eek, I was at a feste.
 Therfor I wol gon slepe an houre or
 tweye, 3685
 And al the night than wol I wake and
 pleye.'

Whan that the firste cok hath crowe,
 anon
 Up rist this Ioly lover Absolon,
 And him arrayeth gay, at point-devys.
 But first he cheweth greyn and
 lycorys, 3690
 To smellen swete, er he had kembd his
 heer.

Under his tonge a trewe love he beer,
 For ther-by wende he to ben gracious.
 He rometh to the carpenteres hous,
 And stille he stant under the shot-
 window; 3695

Un-to his brest it raughte, it was so lowe;
 And softe he cogheth with a semi-soun —
 'What do ye, hony-comb, swete Alisoun?
 My faire brid, my swete cinamome,
 Awaketh, lemman myn, and speketh to
 me! 3700

Wel litel thenken ye up-on my wo,
 That for your love I swete ther I go.
 No wonder is thogh that I swelte and
 swete;

I moorne as doth a lamb after the tete.
 Y-wis, lemman, I have swich love-
 longinge, 3705

That lyk a turtel trewe is my moorninge;
 I may nat ete na more than a mayde.'
 'Go fro the window, lakke fool,' she
 sayde,

'As help me god, it wol nat be "com la
 me,"

I love another, and elles I were to
 blame, 3710

Wel bet than thee, by Iesu, Absolon!
 Go forth thy wey, or I wol caste a ston,
 And lat me slepe, a twenty devel wey!'

'Allas,' quod Absolon, 'and weylawey!
 That trewe love was ever so yvel
 biset! 3715

Than kisse me, sin it may be no bet,
 For Ies' love and for the love of me.'

'Wiltow than go thy wey ther-with?'
 quod she.

'Ye, certes, lemman,' quod this
 Absolon.

'Thanne make thee redy,' quod she,
 'I come anon;' 3720

And un-to Nicholas she seyde stille,
 'Now hust, and thou shalt laughen al thy
 fille.'

This Absolon doun sette him on his
 knees,
 And seyde, 'I am a lord at alle degrees;
 For after this I hope ther cometh
 more! 3725

Lemman, thy grace, and swete brid, thyn
 ore!'

The window she undoth, and that in
 haste,

'Have do,' quod she, 'com of, and speed
 thee faste,

Lest that our neighbores thee espye.'

This Absolon gan wpe his mouth ful
 drye; 3730

Derk was the night as pich, or as the
 cole,

And at the window out she putte hir hole,
 And Absolon, him fil no bet ne wers,

But with his mouth he kiste hir naked ers
 Ful savourly, er he was war of this. 3735

Abak he sterte, and thoghte it was
 amis,

For wel he wiste a womman hath no
 berd;

He felte a thing al rough and long y-herd,
 And seyde, 'fy! allas! what have I do?'

'Tehee!' quod she, and clapte the
 window to; 3740

And Absolon goth forth a sory pas.

'A berd, a berd!' quod hende
 Nicholas,

'By goddes corpus, this goth faire and
 weel!'

This sely Absolon herde every deel,
 And on his lippe he gan for anger
 byte; 3745

And to him-self 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 un-to Sathanas, 3750

But me wer lever than al this toun,' quod
 he,

'Of this despyt awroken for to be!
 Allas!' quod he, 'allas! I ne hadde
 y-bleynt!'

His hote love was cold and al y-queynt;

For fro that tyme that he had kiste hir
 ers, 3755
 Of paramours he sette nat a kers,
 For he was heled of his maladye;
 Ful ofte paramours he gan deffye,
 And weep as dooth a child that is y-bete.
 A softe paas he wente over the
 strete 3760
 Un-til a smith men cleped daun Gerveys,
 That in his forge smithed plough-harneys;
 He sharpeth shaar and culter bisily.
 This Absolon knokketh al esily,
 And seyde, 'undo, Gerveys, and that
 anon.' 3765
 'What, who artow?' 'It am I,
 Absolon.'
 'What Absolon! for Cristes swete tree,
 Why ryse ye so rathe, ey, *benedicite!*
 What eyleth yow? som gay gerl, god it
 woot,
 Hath broght yow thus up-on the viri-
 toot; 3770
 By seynt Note, ye woot wel what I mene.'
 This Absolon ne roghte nat a bene
 Of al his pley, no word agayn he yaf;
 He hadde more tow on his distaf
 Than Gerveys knew, and seyde, 'freend
 so dere, 3775
 That hote culter in the chimenee here,
 As lene it me. I have ther-with to done,
 And I wol bringe it thee agayn ful sone.'
 Gerveys answerde, 'certes, were it
 gold,
 Or in a poke nobles alle untold, 3780
 Thou sholdest have, as I am trewe
 smith;
 Ey, Cristes foo! what wol ye do ther-
 with?'
 'Ther-of,' quod Absolon, 'be as be
 may;
 I shal wel telle it thee to-morwe day'—
 And caughte the culter by the colde
 stele. 3785
 Ful softe out at the dore he gan to stele,
 And wente un-to the carpenteres wal.
 He cogheth first, and knokketh ther-
 with-al
 Upon the windowe, right as he dide er.
 This Alison answerde, 'Who is ther
 That knokketh so? I warante it a
 thief.' 3791
 'Why, nay,' quod he, 'god woot, my
 swete leef,

I am thyn Absolon, my dereling!
 Of gold,' quod he, 'I have thee broght a
 ring; 3794
 My moder yaf it me, so god me save,
 Ful fyn it is, and ther-to wel y-grave;
 This wol I yeve thee, if thou me kisse!'
 This Nicholas was risen for to pisse,
 And thoghte he wolde amenden al the
 Iape,
 He sholde kisse his ers er that he scape.
 And up the windowe dide he hastily 3801
 And out his ers he putteth prively
 Over the buttok, to the haunche-bon;
 And ther-with spak this clerk, this Abso-
 lon,
 'Spek, swete brid, I noot nat wher thou
 art.' 3805
 This Nicholas anon leet flee 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,
 And Nicholas amidde the ers he smoot.
 Of gooth the skin an hande-brede
 aboute, 3811
 The hote culter brende so his toute,
 And for the smert he wende for to dye.
 As he were wood, for wo he gan to crye—
 'Help! water! water! help, for goddes
 herte!' 3815
 This carpenter out of his slomber
 sterte,
 And herde anon cryen 'water' as he were
 wood,
 And thoghte, 'Alas! now comth Now-
 elis flood!'
 He sit him up with-outen wordes mo,
 And with his ax he snoot the corde a-
 two, 3820
 And doun goth al; he fond neither to
 selle,
 Ne breed ne ale, til he cam to the selle
 Upon the floor; and ther aswowne he
 lay.
 Up sterte hir Alison, and Nicholay,
 And cryden 'out' and 'harrow' in the
 strete. 3825
 The neighebores, bothe smale and grete,
 In ronnen, for to gauren on this man,
 That yet aswowne he lay, bothe pale and
 wan;
 For with the fal he brosten hadde his
 arm;

But stonde he moste un-to his owne
harm. 3830
For whan he spak, he was anon bore
doun
With hende Nicholas and Alisoun.
They tolden every man that he was wood,
He was agast so of 'Nowelis flood'
Thurgh fantasye, that of his vanitee 3835
He hadde y-boght him kneding-tubbes
three,
And hadde hem hanged in the roof
above;
And that he preyed hem, for goddes love,
To sitten in the roof, *par companye*. 3839
The folk gan laughan at his fantasye;
In-to the roof they kyken and they gape,

And turned al his harm un-to a lape.
For what so that this carpenter answerde,
It was for noght, no man his reson herde;
With othes grete he was so sworn adoun,
That he was holden wood in al the toun;
For every clerk anon-right heeld with
other. 3847
They seyde, 'the man is wood, my leve
brother;'
And every wight gan laughen of this stryf.
Thus swyved was the carpenteres wyf,
For al his keping and his lalousye;
And Absolon hath kist hir nether yë;
And Nicholas is scalded in the toute.
This tale is doon, and god save al the
route! 3854

Here endeth the Millere his tale.

THE REEVE'S PROLOGUE.

The prologe of the Reeves tale.

WHAN folk had laughen at this nyce cas
Of Absolon and hende Nicholas, 3856
Diverse folk diversely they seyde;
But, for the more part, they loughed and
pleyde,
Ne at this tale I saugh no man him
greve,
But it were only Osewold the Reve, 3860
By-cause he was of carpenteres craft.
A litel ire is in his herte y-laft.
He gan to grucche and blamed it a lyte.
'So theek,' quod he, 'ful wel coude I
yow quyte
With blering of a proud milleres yë, 3865
If that me liste speke of ribaudye.
But ik am old, me list not pley for age;
Gras-tyme is doon, my fodder is now
forage,
This whyte top wryteth myne olde yeres,
Myn herte is al-so mowled as myne heres,
But-if I fare as dooth an open-ers; 3871
That ilke fruit is ever leng the wers,
Til it be roten in mullok or in stree.
We olde men, I drede, so fare we;
Til we be roten, can we nat be rype; 3875
We hopen ay, whyl that the world wol
pype.
For in oure wil ther stiketh ever a nayl,

To have an hoor heed and a grene tayl,
As hath a leek; for thogh our might be
goon,
Our wil desireth folie ever in oon. 3880
For whan we may nat doon, than wol we
speke;
Yet in our asshen olde is fyr y-reke.
Foure gledes han we, whiche I shal
devyse,
Avaunting, lying, anger, coveityse;
Thise foure sparkles longen un-to
elde. 3885
Our olde lemes mowe wel been unwelde,
But wil ne shal nat failen, that is sooth.
And yet ik have alwey a coltes tooth,
As many a yeer as it is passed henne
Sin that my tappe of lyf bigan to
renne. 3890
For sikerly, whan I was bore, anon
Deeth drogh the tappe of lyf and leet it
gon;
And ever sith hath so the tappe y-ronne,
Til that almost al empty is the tonne.
The stream of lyf now droppeth on the
chimbe; 3895
The sely tonge may wel ringe and chimbe
Of wrecchednesse that passed is ful yore;
With olde folk, save dotage, is namore.'
Whan that our host hadde herd this
sermoning,

He gan to speke as lordly as a king; 3900
 He seide, 'what amounteth al this
 wit?
 What shul we speke alday of holy
 writ?
 The devel made a reve for to preche,
 And of a souter a shipman or a leche.
 Sey forth thy tale, and tarie nat the
 tyme, 3905
 Lo, Depeford! and it is half-way pryme.
 Lo, Grenewich, ther many a shrewe is
 inne;
 It were al tyme thy tale to biginne.'
 'Now, sires,' quod this Osewold the
 Reve,

'I pray yow alle that ye nat yow
 greve, 3910
 Though I answeere and somdel sette his
 howve;
 For leweful is with force force of-showve.
 This dronke millere hath y-told us heer,
 How that bigyled was a carpenteer,
 Peraventure in scorn, for I am oon. 3915
 And, by your leve, I shal him quyte
 anoon;
 Right in his cherles termes wol I speke.
 I pray to god his nekke mote breke;
 He can wel in myn yē seen a stalke,
 But in his owne he can nat seen a
 balke. 3920

THE REVES TALE.

Here biginneth the Reves tale.

At Trumpington, nat fer fro Cantebrigge,
 Ther goth a brook and over that a brigge,
 Up-on the whiche brook ther stant a
 melle; *mill*
 And this is verray soth that I yow telle.
 A Miller was ther dwelling many a
 day; 3925
 As eny pecok he was proud and gay.
 Eypen he coude and fisshe, and nettes
 bete,
 And turne coppes, and wel wrastle and
 shete;
 And by his belt he baar a long panade,
 And of a swerd ful trenchant was the
 blade. 3930
 A Ioly popper baar he in his pouche;
 Ther was no man for peril dorste him
 touche.
 A Sheffield thwitel baar he in his hose;
 Round was his face, and camuse was his
 nose.
 As piled as an ape was his skulle. 3935
 He was a market-beter atte fulle.
 Ther dorste no wight hand up-on him
 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 hoten dēynous Simkin.
 A wyf he hadde, y-comen of noble kin;
 The person of the toun hir fader was.
 With hir he yaf ful many a panne of
 bras,
 For that Simkin sholde in his blood
 allye. 3945
 She was y-fostred in a nonnerye;
 For Simkin wolde no wyf, as he sayde,
 But she were well y-norissed and a
 mayde,
 To saven his estaat of yomanrye.
 And she was proud, and pert as is a
 pye. 3950
 A ful fair sighte was it on hem two;
 On haly-dayes biforn hir wolde he go
 With his tipet bounden about his heed,
 And she cam after in a gyte of reed;
 And Simkin hadde hosen of the
 same. 3955
 Ther dorste no wight clepen hir but
 'dame.'
 Was noon so hardy that wente by the
 weye
 That with hir dorste rage or ones pleye,
 But-if he wolde be slayn of Simkin
 With panade, or with knyf, or boyde-
 kin. 3960
 For Ialous folk ben perilous evermo,
 Algate they wolde hir wyves wenden so.
 And eek, for she was somdel smoterlich,
 She was as digne as water in a dich;

And ful of hoker and of bisemare. 3965
 Hir thoughte that a lady sholde hir spare,
 What for hir kinrede and hir nortelyre
 That she had lerned in the nonnerye.

A doghter hadde they bitwixe hem two
 Of twenty year, with-outen any mo, 3970
 Savige a child that was of half-year
 age;

In cradel it lay and was a propre page.
 This wenche thikke and wel y-grown
 was,

With camuse nose and yēn greye as glas;
 With buttoke brode and brestes rounde
 and hye, 3975

But right fair was hir heer, I wol nat lye.

The person of the toun, for she was
 feir,

In purpos was to maken hir his heir

Bothe of his catel and his messuage, 3979

And straunge he made it of hir mariage.

His purpos was for to bistowe hir hye

In-to som worthy blood of auncetrye ;

For holy chirches good moot been de-
 scended

On holy chirches blood, that is descended.

Therefore he wolde his holy blood hon-
 our, 3985

Though that he holy chirche sholde
 devoure.

Gret soken hath this miller, out of
 doute,

With whete and malt of al the land
 aboute;

And nameliche ther was a greet collegge,
 Men clepen the Soler-halle at Cante-
 bregge, 3990

Ther was hir whete and eek 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 sholde dye.

For which this miller stal bothe mele
 and corn 3995

An hundred tyme more than biforn;

For ther-biforn he stal but curteisly,

But now he was a thief outrageously,

For which the wardeyn chidde and made
 fare. 3999

But ther-of sette the miller nat a tare;

He craketh boost, and swear it was nat
 so.

Than were ther yonge povre clerkes
 two,

That dwelten in this halle, of which I
 seye.

Testif they were, and lusty for to pleye,

And, only for hir mirthe and revel-
 rye, 4005

Up-on the wardeyn bisily they crye,

To yeve hem leve but a litel stounde

To goon to mille and seen hir corn
 y-grounde;

And hardily, they dorste leye hir nekke,

The miller shold nat stele hem half a
 pekke 4010

Of corn by sleighte, ne by force hem
 reye;

And at the laste the wardeyn yaf hem
 leve.

Iohn hight that oon, and Aleyn hight
 that other;

Of o toun were they born, that highte
 Strother,

Fer in the north, I can nat telle
 where. 4015

This Aleyn maketh redy al his gere,
 And on an hors the sak he caste anon.

Forth goth Aleyn the clerk, and also
 Iohn,

With good swerd and with bokeler by
 hir syde.

Iohn knew the wey, hem nedede no
 gyde, 4020

And at the mille the sak adoun he
 layth.

Aleyn spak first, 'al hayl, Symond, y-
 fayth;

How fares thy faire doghter and thy
 wyf?'

'Aleyn! welcome,' quod Simkin, 'by
 my lyf,

And Iohn also, how now, what do ye
 heer?' 4025

'Symond,' quod Iohn, 'by god, nede
 has na peer;

Him boës serve him-selve that has na
 swayn,

Or elles he is a fool, as clerkes sayn.

Our manciple, I hope he wil be deed,

Swa werkes ay the wanges in his
 heed. 4030

And forthy is I come, and eek Alayn,
 To grinde our corn and carie it ham
 agayn;

I pray yow spede us hethen that ye
 may.'

'It shal be doon,' quod Simkin, 'by
 my fay;
 What wol ye doon whyl that it is in
 hande?' 4035
 'By god, right by the hoper wil I
 stande,'
 Quod Iohn, 'and se how that the corn
 gas in;
 Yet saugh I never, by my fader kin,
 How that the hoper wagges til and fra.'
 Aleyn answerde, 'Iohn, and wiltow
 swa, 4040
 Than wil I be bynethe, by my croun,
 And se how that the mele falles down
 In-to the trough; that sal be my disport.
 For Iohn, in faith, I may been of your
 sort;
 I is as ille a miller as are ye.' 4045
 This miller smyled of hir nycetee,
 And thoughte, 'al this nis doon but for a
 wyle;
 They wene that no man may hem bi-
 gyle;
 But, by my thrift, yet shal I blere hir
 yē
 For al the sleighte in hir philosophye.
 The more queynte creakes that they
 make, 4051
 The more wol I stele whan I take.
 In stede of flour, yet wol I yeve hem
 bren.
 "The grettteste clerkes been noght the
 wysest men,"
 As whylom to the wolf thus spak the
 mare; 4055
 Of al hir art I counte noght a tare.'
 Out at the dore he gooth ful prively,
 Whan that he saugh his tyme, softly;
 He loketh up and down til he hath
 founde
 The clerkes hors, ther as it stood y-
 bounde 4060
 Bihinde the mille, under a levesel;
 And to the hors he gooth him faire and
 wel;
 He strepeth of the brydel right anon.
 And whan the hors was loos, he ginneth
 gon
 Toward the fen, ther wilde mares renne,
 Forth with webee, thurgh thikke and
 thurgh thenne. 4066
 This miller gooth agayn, no word he
 seyde,

But dooth his note, and with the clerkes
 pleyde,
 Til that hir corn was faire and wel
 y-grounde.
 And whan the mele is sakked and y-
 bounde, 4070
 This Iohn goth out and fynt his hors
 away,
 And gan to crye 'harrow' and 'weyla-
 way!
 Our hors is lorn! Alayn, for goddes
 banes,
 Step on thy feet, com out, man, al at
 anes!
 Allas, our wardeyn has his palfrey lorn.'
 This Aleyn al forgat, bothe mele and
 corn, 4076
 Al was out of his mynde his housbond-
 rye.
 'What? whilk way is he geen?' he gan
 to crye.
 The wyf cam leping inward with a ren,
 She seyde, 'allas! your hors goth to the
 fen 4080
 With wilde mares, as faste as he may go.
 Unthank come on his hand that bond
 him so,
 And he that bettre sholde han knit the
 reyne.'
 'Allas,' quod Iohn, 'Aleyn, for Cristes
 peyne,
 Lay down thy sward, and I wil myn
 alswa; 4085
 I is ful wight, god waat, as is a raa;
 By goddes herte he sal nat scape us
 bathe.
 Why nadstow pit the capul in the lathe?
 Il-hayl, by god, Aleyn, thou is a fonne!'
 This sely clerkes han ful faste y-ronne
 To-ward the fen, bothe Aleyn and eek
 Iohn 4091
 And whan the miller saugh that they
 were gon,
 He half a busshel of hir flour hath
 take,
 And bad his wyf go knede it in a cake.
 He seyde, 'I trowe the clerkes were
 aferd; 4095
 Yet can a miller make a clerkes berd
 For al his art; now lat hem goon hir
 weye.
 Lo wher they goon, ye, lat the children
 pleye;

They gete him nat so lightly, by my
croun!'

Thise sely clerkes rennen up and doun
With 'keep, keep, stand, stand, Iossa,
warderere, 4101

Ga whistle thou, and I shal kepe him
here!'

But shortly, til that it was verray night,
They coude nat, though they do al hir
might,

Hir capul cacche, he ran alwey so faste,
Til in a dich they caughte him atte
laste. 4106

Wery and weet, as beste is in the reyn,
Comih sely Iohn, and with him conith
Aleyn.

'Allas,' quod Iohn, 'the day that I was
born!

Now are we drive til hething and til
scorn. 4110

Our corn is stole, men wil us foles calle,
Bathe the wardeyn and our felawes alle,
And namely the miller; weylaway!'

Thus pleyneth Iohn as he goth by the
way

Toward the mille, and Bayard in his
hond. 4115

The miller sitting by the fyr he fond,
For it was night, and forther mighte
they noght;

But, for the love of god, they him bi-
soght

Of herberwe and of ese, as for hir peny.

The miller seyde agayn, 'if ther be
eny, 4120

Swich as it is, yet shal ye have your
part.

Myn hous is streit, but ye han lerned
art;

Ye conne by argumentes make a place
A myle brood of twenty foot of space.

Lat see now if this place may suffyse,
Or make it roum with speche, as is youre
gyse.' 4126

'Now, Symond,' seyde Iohn, 'by seint
Cutberd,

Ay is thou mery, and this is faire an-
swerd.

I have herd seyde, man sal taa of twa
things

Slyk as he fyndes, or taa slyk as he
bringes. 4130

But specially, I pray thee, hoste dere,

Get us som mete and drinke, and make
us chere,

And we wil payen trewely atte fulle.
With empty hand men may na haukes
tulle;

Lo here our silver, redy for to spende.'

This miller in-to toun his doghter
sende 4136

For ale and breed, and rosted hem a
goos,

And bond hir hors, it sholde nat gon
loos;

And in his owne chambre hem made a
bed

With shetes and with chalons faire y-
spred, 4140

Noght from his owne bed ten foot or
twelve.

His doghter hadde a bed, al by hir-selve,
Right in the same chambre, by and by;

It mighte be no bet, and cause why,
Ther was no roumer herberwe in the
place. 4145

They soupen and they speke, hem to
solace,

And drinken ever strong ale atte beste.

Aboute midnight wente they to reste.

Wel hath this miller vernissed his
heed;

Ful pale he was for-dronken, and nat
reed. 4150

He yexeth, and he speketh thurgh the
nose

As he were on the quakke, or on the
pose.

To bedde he gooth, and with him goth
his wyf.

As any Iay she light was and Iolyf,
So was hir Ioly whistle wel y-wet. 4155

The cradel at hir beddes feet is set,
To rokken, and to yeve the child to
souke.

And whan that dronken al was in the
crouke, 4158

To bedde went the doghter right anon;
To bedde gooth Aleyn and also Iohn.

Ther nas na more, hem nedede no dwale.
This miller hath so wisly bidden ale,

That as an hors he snorteth in his sleep,
Ne of his tayl bihinde he took no keep.

His wyf bar him a burdon, a ful strong,
Men mighte hir routing here two fur-
long; 4166

The wenche routeth eek *par compaigne*.

Aleyn the clerk, that herd this melodye,
He poked Iohn, and seyde, 'slepestow?
Herdestow ever slyk a sang er now? 4170
Lo, whilk a compline is y-mel hem alle!
A wilde fyr up-on thair bodyes falle!
Wha herkened ever slyk a ferly thing?
Ye, they sal have the flour of il ending.
This lange night ther tydes me na
reste; 4175

But yet, na fors; al sal be for the beste.
For Iohn, seyde he, 'als ever moot I
thryve,

If that I may, yon wenche wil I swyve.
Som esement has lawe y-shapen us;
For Iohn, ther is a lawe that says
thus, 4180

That gif a man in a point be y-greved,
That in another he sal be releved.
Our corn is stoln, shortly, it is na nay,
And we han had an il fit al this day.
And sin I sal have neen amendement, 4185
Agayn my los I wil have esement.
By goddes saule, it sal neen other be!'

This Iohn answerde, 'Alayn, avyve
thee,

The miller is a perilous man,' he seyde,
'And gif that he out of his sleep
abreyde, 4190
He mighte doon us bathe a vileinye.'

Aleyn answerde, 'I count him nat a
fye;'
And up he rist, and by the wenche he
crepte.

This wenche lay upright, and faste slepte,
Til he so ny was, er she mighte
espye, 4195

That it had been to late for to crye,
And shortly for to seyn, they were at on;
Now pley, Aleyn! for I wol speke of
Iohn.

This Iohn lyth stille a furlong-wey or
two,
And to him-self he maketh routhe and
wo; 4200

'Allas!' quod he, 'this is a wikked lape;
Now may I seyn that I is but an ape.
Yet has my felawe som-what for his
harm;

He has the milleris doghter in his arm.
He aunted him, and has his nedes spel,
And I lye as a draf-sek in my bed; 4206
And when this lape is tald another day,

I sal been halde a daf, a cokenay!

I wil aryse, and aunte it, by my fayth!
"Unhardy is unsely," thus men
sayth.' 4210

And up he roos and softely he wente
Un-to the cradel, and in his hand it
hente,

And baar it softe un-to his beddes feet.
Sone after this the wyf hir routing leet,
And gan awake, and wente hir out to
pisse, 4215

And gan agayn, and gan hir cradel
misse,
And groped heer and ther, but she fond
noon.

'Allas!' quod she, 'I hadde almost mis-
goon;

I hadde almost gon to the clerkes bed.
Ey, *benedicite!* thanne hadde I foule
y-sped:' 4220

And forth she gooth til she the cradel
fond.

She gropeth alwey forther with hir hond,
And fond the bed, and thoghte noght
but good,

By-cause that the cradel by it stood,
And niste wher she was, for it was
derk; 4225

But faire and wel she creep in to the
clerk,

And lyth ful stille, and wolde han caught
a sleep.

With-inne a whyl this Iohn the clerk up
leep,

And on this gode wyf he leyth on sore.
So mery a fit ne hadde she nat ful
yore; 4230

He priketh harde and depe as he were
mad.

This loly lyf han thise two clerkes lad
Til that the thridde cok bigan to singe.

Aleyn wex wery in the daweninge,
For he had swonken al the longe
night; 4235

And seyde, 'far wel, Malin, swete 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 dere lemman,' quod she, 'go,
far weel! 4240

But er thou go, o thing I wol thee telle,
Whan that thou wendest homward by
the melle,

Right at the entree of the dore bihinde,
 Thou shalt a cake of half a busschel finde
 That was y-maked of thyn owne
 mele, 4245
 Which that I heelp my fader for to stele.
 And, gode lemman, god thee save and
 kepe!’
 And with that word almost she gan to
 wepe.
 Aleyn up-rist, and thoughte, ‘er that it
 dawe,
 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
 misgon;
 Myn heed is toty of my swink to-night,
 That maketh me that I go nat aright.
 I woot wel by the cradel, I have
 misgo, 4255
 Heer lyth the miller and his wyf also.’
 And forth he goth, a twenty deyl way,
 Un-to the bed ther-as the miller lay.
 He wende have copen by his felawe
 Iohn;
 And by the miller in he creep anon, 4260
 And caughte hym by the nekke, and
 softe he spak:
 He seyde, ‘thou, Iohn, thou swynes-
 heed, awak
 For Cristes saule, and heer a noble game.
 For by that lord that called is seint lame,
 As I have thryes, in this shorte night, 4265
 Swyved the milleres doghter bolt-upright,
 Why! thou hast as a coward been agast.’
 ‘Ye, false harlot,’ quod the miller,
 ‘hast?’
 A! false traitour! false clerk!’ quod he,
 ‘Thou shalt be deed, by goddes dig-
 nitee! 4270
 Who dorste be so bold to disparage
 My doghter, that is come of swich
 linage?’
 And by the throte-bolle he caughte
 Aleyn.
 And he hente hym despitously agayn,
 And on the nose he smoot him with his
 fest. 4275
 Doun ran the bloody streem up-on his
 brest;
 And in the floor, with nose and mouth
 to-broke,
 They walwe as doon two pigges in a
 poke.

And up they goon, and doun agayn
 anon,
 Til that the miller sporned at a
 stoon, 4280
 And doun he fil bakward up-on his wyf,
 That wiste no-thing of this nyce stryf;
 For she was falle aslepe a lyte wight
 With Iohn the clerk, that waked hedde
 al night.
 And with the fal, out of hir sleep she
 breyde— 4285
 ‘Help, holy croys of Bromeholm,’ 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;
 There lyth oon up my wombe and up myn
 heed; 4290
 Help, Simkin, for the false clerkes fighte.’
 This Iohn sterte up as faste as ever he
 mighte,
 And graspeth by the walles to and fro,
 To finde a staf; and she sterte up also,
 And knew the estres bet than dide this
 Iohn, 4295
 And by the wal a staf she fond anon,
 And saugh a litel shimering of a light,
 For at an hole in shoon the mone bright;
 And by that light she saugh hem bothe
 two,
 But sikerly she niste who was who, 4300
 But as she saugh a whyt thing in hir yē.
 And whan she gan the whyte thing
 espye,
 She wende the clerk hadde wered a vol-
 upeer.
 And with the staf she drough ay neer and
 neer,
 And wende han hit this Aleyn at the
 fulle, 4305
 And smoot the miller on the pyled
 skulle,
 That doun he gooth and cryde, ‘harrow!
 I dye!’
 Thise clerkes bete him weel and lete him
 lye;
 And greythen hem, and toke hir hors
 anon,
 And eek hir mele, and on hir wey they
 gon. 4310
 And at the mille yet they toke hir cake
 Of half a busschel flour, ful wel y-bake.

Thus is the proude miller wel y-bete,
 And hath y-lost the grinding of the
 whete,
 And payed for the soper every-deel 4315
 Of Aleyn and of Iohn, that bette him
 weel.
 His wyf is swyved, and his doghter als;
 Lo, swich it is a miller to be fals!

And therfore this proverbe is seyde ful
 sooth,
 'Him thar nat wene wel that yvel
 dooth;
 A gyour shal him-self bigyled be.' 4320
 And God, that sitteth heighe in magestee,
 Save al this companye grete and smale!
 Thus have I quit the miller in my tale.

Here is ended the Reeves tale.

THE COOK'S PROLOGUE.

The prologe of the Cokes Tale.

THE Cook of London, whyl the Reve
 spak, 4325
 For loye, him thoughte, he clawed him
 on the bak,
 'Ha! ha!' quod he, 'for Cristes pas-
 sioun,
 This miller hadde a sharp conclusioun
 Upon his argument of herbergage!
 Wel seyde Salomon in his langage, 4330
 "Ne bringe nat every man in-to thyn
 hous;"
 For herberwing by nighte is perilous.
 Wel oghte a man avysed for to be
 Whom that he broghte in-to his privetee.
 I pray to god, so yeve me sorwe and
 care, 4335
 If ever, sith I highte Hogge of Ware,
 Herde I a miller bettre y-set a-werk.
 He hadde a lape of malice in the derk.
 But god forbede that we stinten here;
 And therfore, if ye vouches-sauf to
 here 4340
 A tale of me, that am a povre man,
 I wol yow telle as wel as ever I can
 A litel lape that fil in our citee.'
 Our host answerde, and seide, 'I
 graunte it thee;
 Now telle on, Roger, loke that it be
 good; 4345

For many a pastee hastow laten blood,
 And many a lakke of Dover hastow sold
 That hath been twyes hoot and twyes
 cold. ^{3d delp}
 Of many a pilgrim hastow Cristes curs,
 For of thy persly yet they fare the
 wors, 4350
 That they han eten with thy stubbel-
 goos;
 For in thy shoppe is many a flye loos.
 Now telle on, gentil Roger, by thy name.
 But yet I pray thee, be nat wrooth for
 game,
 A man may seye ful sooth in game and
 pley.' 4355
 'Thou seist ful sooth,' quod Roger,
 'by my fey,
 But "sooth pley, quaad pley," as the
 Fleming seith;
 And ther-fore, Herry Bailly, by thy feith,
 Be thou nat wrooth, er we departen
 heer,
 Though that my tale be of an hos-
 tileer. 4360
 But natheles I wol nat telle it yit,
 But er we parte, y-wis, thou shalt be
 quit.'
 And ther-with-al he lough and made
 chere,
 And seyde his tale, as ye shul after
 here.

Thus endeth the Prologe of the Cokes tale.

THE COKES TALE.

Heer bigynneth the Cokes tale.

A PRENTIS whylom dwelled in our
 citee, 4365
 And of a craft of vitailers was he;
 Gaillard he was as goldfinch in the
 shawe,
 Broun as a berie, a propre short felawe,
 With lokkes blake, y-kempt ful fetisly.
 Daunen he coude so wel and lolily, 4370
 That he was cleped Perkin Revelour.
 He was as ful of love and paramour
 As is the hyve ful of hony swete;
 Wel was the wenche with him mighte
 mete.
 At every brydale wolde he singe and
 hoppe, 4375
 He loved bet the tavernne than the shoppe.
 For whan ther any ryding was in
 Chepe,
 Out of the shoppe thider wolde he lepe.
 Til that he hadde al the sighte y-seyn,
 And daunced wel, he wolde nat come
 ageyn. 4380
 And gadered him a meinee of his sort
 To hoppe and singe, and maken swich
 disport.
 And ther they setten steven for to mete
 To pleyen at the dys in swich a strete.
 For in the toune nas ther no prentys, 4385
 That fairer coude caste a paire of dys
 Than Perkin coude, and ther-to he was
 free
 Of his dispense, in place of privetee.
 That fond his maister wel in his chaffare;
 For often tyme he fond his box ful
 bare. 4390
 For sikerly a prentis revelour,
 That haunteth dys, riot, or paramour,
 His maister shal it in his shoppe abyde,
 Al have he no part of the minstralcy;

For thefte and riot, they ben conver-
 tible, 4395
 Al conne he pleye on giterne or ribble.
 Revel and trouthe, as in a low degree,
 They been ful wrothe al day, as men may
 see.

This Ioly prentis with his maister
 bood, 4399
 Til he were ny out of his prentishood,
 Al were he snibbed bothe erly and late,
 And somtyme lad with revel to New-
 gate;
 But atte laste his maister him bithoghte,
 Up-on a day, whan he his paper soghte,
 Of a proverbe that seith this same word,
 'Wel bet is roten appel out of hord 4406
 Than that it rotie al the remenaunt.'
 So fareth it by a riotous servaunt;
 It is wel lasse harm to lete him pacc,
 Than he shende alle the servants in the
 place. 4410
 Therefore his maister yaf him acquittance,
 And bad him go with sorwe and with
 meschance;
 And thus this Ioly prentis hadde his
 leve.
 Now lat him riote al the night or leve.
 And for ther is no thief with-oute a
 koue, 4415
 That helpeth him to wasten and to
 souke
 Of that he brybe can or borwe may,
 Anon he sente his bed and his array
 Un-to a compeer of his owne sort,
 That lovede dys and revel and disport,
 And hadde a wyf that heeld for counte-
 nance 4421
 A shoppe, and swyved for hir susten-
 ance.

* * * * *

Of this Cokes tale maketh Chaucer na more.

[For The Tale of Gamelin, see the Appendix.]

GROUP B.

INTRODUCTION TO THE MAN OF LAWS PROLOGUE.

The wordes of the Hoost to the companye.

OUR Hoste sey wel that the brighte
sonne

The ark of his artificial day had ronne
The fourthe part, and half an houre, and
more;

And though he were not depe expert in
lore,

He wiste it was the eightetethe day 5
Of April, that is messenger to May;

And sey wel that the shadwe of every
tree

Was as in lengthe the same quantitee
That was the body erect that caused it.

And therfor by the shadwe he took his
wit 10

That Phebus, which that shoon so clere
and brighte,

Degrees was fyve and fourty clombe on
highte;

And for that day, as in that latitude,
It was ten of the clokke, he gan con-
clude,

And sodeynly he plighte his hors aboute.
'Lordinges,' quod he, 'I warne yow, al
this route, 16

The fourthe party of this day is goon;
Now, for the love of god and of seint
Iohn,

Leseth no tyme, as ferforth as ye may;
Lordinges, the tyme wasteth night and
day, 20

And steleth from us, what prively slep-
inge,

And what thurgh necligence in our wak-
inge,

As dooth the stream, that turneth never
agayn,

Descending fro the montaigne in-to
playn. 24

Wel can Senek, and many a philosopre
Biwailen tyme, more than gold in cofre.

"For los of catel may recovered be,
But los of tyme shendeth us," quod he.

It wol nat come agayn, with-ouen drede,
Na more than wol Malkins mayden-
hede, 30

Whan she hath lost it in hir wantow-
nesse;

Lat us nat moulen thus in ydelnesse.
'Sir man of lawe,' quod he, 'so have ye
blis,

Tel us a tale anon, as forward is;
Ye been submitted thurgh your free
assent 35

To stonde in this cas at my Iugement.
Acquiteth yow, and holdeth your biheste,
Than have ye doon your devoir atte
leste.'

'Hoste,' quod he, '*depardieux* ich
assente,

To breke forward is not myn entente. 40
Biheste is dette, and I wol holde fayn
Al my biheste; I can no better seyn.

For swich lawe as man yeveth another
wight,

He sholde him-selven usen it by right;
Thus wol our text; but natheles cer-
teyn 45

I can right now no thrifty tale seyn,
But Chaucer, though he can but lewedly
On metres and on ryming craftily,

Hath seyde hem in swich English as he
can 49

Of olde tyme, as knoweth many a man.
And if he have not seyde hem, leve
brother,

In o book, he hath seyde hem in another.
For he hath told of lovers up and down
Mo than Ovyde made of mencion

In his Epistles, that been ful olde. 55
What sholde I tellen hem, sin they ben
tolde?

In youthe he made of Ceys and Alcion,
And sithen hath he spoke of everichon,
Thise noble wyves and thise lovers eke.
Who-so that wol his large volume seke
Cleped the Seintes Legende of Cupyde,
Ther may he seen the large woundes
wyde 62

Of Lucresse, and of Babilan Tisbee;
The swerd of Dido for the false Enee;
The tree of Phillis for hir Demophon; 65
The pleinte of Dianire and Hermion,
Of Adriane and of Isiphilee;

Of olde tyme, as knoweth many a man.
And if he have not seyde hem, leve
brother,

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Totall
Condit
of C
of W

of Decker
of W

The bareyne yle stonde in the see;
 The dreynte Leander for his Erro;
 The teres of Eleyne, and eek the wo 70
 Of Brixseyde, and of thee, Ladamēa;
 The crueltee of thee, queen Medēa,
 Thy litel children hanging by the hals
 For thy Iason, that was of love so
 fals!

O Ypermistra, Penelopee, Alceste, 75
 Your wyfod he comendeth with the
 heste!

But certainly no word ne wryteth he
 Of thilke wikke ensample of Canacee,
 That lovede hir owne brother sinfully;
 Of swiche cursed stories I sey 'fy'; 80
 Or elles of Tyro Apollonius,
 How that the cursed king Antiochus
 Birafte his doghter of hir maydenhede,
 That is so horrible a tale for to rede,

Whan he hir threw up-on the pavement.
 And therfor he, of ful avysement, 86
 Nolde never wryte in none of his ser-
 mouns

Of swiche unkinde abhominaciouns,
 Ne I wol noon reherse, if that I may.

But of my tale how shal I doon this
 day? 90

Me were looth be lykned, doutelees,
 To Muses that men clepe Pierides —
Metamorphoscos wot what I mene: —
 But nathelees, I recche nought a bene
 Though I come after him with have-
 bake; 95

I speke in prose, and lat him rymes
 make.'

And with that word he, with a sobre
 chere,

Bigan his tale, as ye shal after here.

THE PROLOGE OF THE MANNES TALE OF LAWE.

O HATEFUL harm! condicion of poverté!
 With thirst, with cold, with hunger so
 confounded! 100

To asken help thee shameth in thyn
 herte;

If thou noon aske, with nede artow so
 wounded,

That verray nede unwrappeth al thy
 wounde hid!

Maugree thyn heed, thou most for indig-
 gence

Or stele, or begge, or borwe thy des-
 pence! 105

Thou blamest Crist, and seyst ful bit-
 terly,

He misdeparteth richesse temporal;
 Thy neighebour thou wytest sinfully,

And seyst thou hast to lyte, and he hath
 al.

'Parfay,' seistow, 'somtyme he rekne
 shal, 110

Whan that his tayl shal brennen in the
 glede,

For he nought helpeth needfulle in hir
 nede.'

Herkne what is the sentence of the
 wyse: —

'Bet is to dyen than have indigence;'
 'Thy selve neighebour wol thee de-
 spyse;' 115

If thou be povre, farwel thy reverence!
 Yet of the wyse man tak this sentence: —

'Alle the dayes of povre men ben wikke;'
 Be war therfor, er thou come in that
 prikke!

'If thou be povre, thy brother hateth
 thee, 120

And alle thy freendes fleen fro thee,
 alas!'

O riche marchaunts, ful of wele ben ye,
 O noble, o prudent folk, as in this cas!

Your bagges been nat filled with *ambes as*,
 But with *sis cink*, than renneth for your
 chaunce; 125

At Cristemasse merie may ye daunce!

Ye seken lond and see for your winningses,
 As wyse folk ye knowen al thestaat

Of regnes; ye ben fadres of tydinges
 And tales, bothe of pees and of debat.

I were right now of tales desolat, 131
 Nere that a marchaunt, goon is many a
 yere,

Me taughte a tale, which that ye shal
 here.

THE TALE OF THE MAN OF LAWE.

Here beginneth the Man of Lawe his Tale.

IN Surrie whylom dwelte a companye
Of chapmen riche, and therto sadde and
trewe, 135

That wyde-wher senten her spycerye,
Clothes of gold, and satins riche of hewe ;
Her chaffar was so thrifty and so newe,
That every wight hath deyntee to chaf-
fare

With hem, and eek to sellen hem hir
ware. 140

Now fel it, that the maistres of that sort
Han shapen hem to Rome for to wende ;
Were it for chapmanhode or for disport,
Non other message wolde they thider
sende,

But comen hem-self to Rome, this is the
ende ; 145

And in swich place, as thoughte hem
avantage

For her entente, they take her herber-
gage.

Soiourned han thise marchants in that
toun

A certain tyme, as fel to hir plesance.

And so bifel, that the excellent renoun 150
Of temperoures doghter, dame Cus-
tance,

Reported was, with every circumstance,
Un-to thise Surrien marchants in swich
wyse,

Fro day to day, as I shal yow devyse.

This was the commune vois of every
man— 155

' Our Emperour of Rome, god him see,
A doghter hath that, sin the world bigan,

To rekne as wel hir goodnesse as beautee,
Nas never swich another as is she ;

I prey to god in honour hir sustene, 160
And wolde she were of al Europe the
quene.

In hir is heigh beautee, with-oute pryde,
Yowthe, with-oute grenhede or folye ;

To alle hir werkes vertu is hir gyde,
Humblesse hath slayn in hir al tirannye.
She is mirour of alle curteisye ; 166

Hir herte is verray chambre of holi-
nesse,

Hir hand, ministre of fredom for almesse.'

And al this vois was soth, as god is
trewe,

But now to purpos lat us turne agayn ;

Thise marchants han doon fraught hir
shippes newe, 171

And, when they han this blisful mayden
seyne,

Hoom to Surrye been they went ful fayn,
And doon her nedes as they han don
yore,

And liven in wele ; I can sey yow no
more. 175

Now fel it, that thise marchants stode in
grace

Of him, that was the sowdan of Surrye ;
For when they came from any strange
place,

He wolde, of his benigne curteisye,
Make hem good chere, and bisily espye

Tydings of sondry regnes, for to lere 181
The wondres that they mighte seen or
here.

Amonges othere things, specially

Thise marchants han him told of dame
Custance,

So gret noblesse in earnest, ceriously, 185
That this sowdan hath caught so gret
plesance

To han hir figure in his remembrance,
That al his lust and al his bisy cure

Was for to love hir whyl his lyf may dure.

Paraventure in thilke large book 190
Which that men clepe the heven, y-written
was

With sterres, whan that he his birthe
took,

That he for love shulde han his deeth,
allas!

For in the sterres, clerer than is glas,

Is writen, god wot, who-so coude it
rede, 195
The deeth of every man, withouten
drede.

In sterres, many a winter ther-biforn,
Was writen the deeth of Ector, Achilles,
Of Pompey, Iulius, er they were born ;
The stryf of Thebes ; and of Ercoles, 200
Of Sampson, Turnus, and of Socrates
The deeth ; but mennes wittes been so
dulle,
That no wight can wel rede it atte fulle.

This sowdan for his privee conseil sente,
And, shortly of this mater for to pace,
He hath to hem declared his entente, 206
And seyde hem certein, 'but he mighte
have grace
To han Custance with-inne a litel space,
He nas but deed;' and charged hem, in
hye,
To shapen for his lyf som remedye. 210

Diverse men diverse thinges seyden ;
They argumenten, casten up and down ;
Many a subtil resoun forth they leyden,
They speken of magik and abusoun ;
But finally, as in conclusioun, 215
They can not seen in that non avantage,
Ne in non other wey, save mariage.

Than sawe they ther-in swich difficultee
By wey of resoun, for to speke al playn
By-cause that ther was swich diversitee
Bitwene hir bothe lawes, that they sayn,
They trowe 'that no Cristen prince wolde
fayn 222

Wedden his child under oure lawes swete
That us were taught by Mahoun our
prophete.'

And he answerde, 'rather than I lese 225
Custance, I wol be cristned douteles ;
I mot ben hires, I may non other chese.
I prey yow holde your arguments in pees ;
Saveth my lyf, and beeth nocht recche-
les 229

To geten hir that hath my lyf in cure ;
For in this wo I may not longe endure.'

What nedeth gretter dilatacioun ?
I seye, by tretis and embassadrye,

And by the popes mediacioun,
And al the chirche, and al the chiv-
alrye, 235
That, in destruccioun of Maumetrye,
And in encrees of Cristes lawe dere,
They ben acorded, so as ye shal here ;

How that the sowdan and his baronage
And alle his liges shulde y-cristned
be, 240
And he shal han Custance in mariage,
And certein gold, I noot what quantitee,
And her-to founden suffisant seurtee ;
This same acord was sworn on eyther
syde ;
Now, faire Custance, almighty god thee
gyde ! 245

Now wolde som men waiten, as I gesse,
That I shulde tellen al the purveyance
That theemperour, of his grete noblesse,
Hath shapen for his doghter dame
Custance.

Wel may men knowe that so gret ordi-
nance 250
May no man tellen in a litel clause
As was arrayed for so heigh a cause.

Bisshopes ben shapen with hir for to
wende,
Lordes, ladyes, knightes of renoun,
And other folk y-nowe, this is the
ende ; 255
And notified is thurgh-out the toun
That every wight, with gret devocioun,
Shulde preyen Crist that he this mariage
Receyve in gree, and spede this viage.

The day is comen of hir departinge, 260
I sey, the woful day fatal is come,
That ther may be no lenger tarynge,
But forthward they hem dreszen, alle and
some ;
Custance, that was with sorwe al over-
come,
Ful pale arist, and dresseth hir to
wende ; 265
For wel she seeth ther is non other ende.

Allas ! what wonder is it though she
wepte,
That shal be sent to strange nacioun
Fro freendes, that so tendrely hir kepte,

And to be bounden under subiec-
cioun 270

Of oon, she knoweth not his condicioun.
Housbondes been alle gode, and han ben
yore,

That knowen wyves, I dar say yow no
more. *knows the wife's name*

'Fader,' she sayde, 'thy wrecched child
Custance, 274

Thy yonge doghter, fostred up so softe,
And ye, my moder, my soverayn plesance
Over alle thing, out-taken Crist on-lofte,
Custance, your child, hir recomandeth
ofte

Un-to your grace, for I shal to Surrye,
Ne shal I never seen yow more with
yë. 280

Allas! un-to the Barbre nacioun
I moste anon, sin that it is your wille;
But Crist, that starf for our redempcioun,
So yeve me grace, his hestes to fullille;
I, wrecche womman, no fors though I
spille. 285

Wommen are born to thraldom and
penance,
And to ben under mannes governance.'

I trowe, at Troye, whan Pirrus brak the
wal

Or Ylion brende, at Thebes the citee,
Nat Rome, for the harm thurgh Hani-
bal 290

That Romayns hath venquished tymes
thre,

Nas herd swich tendre weping for pitee
As in the chambre was for hir departinge;
Bot forth she moot, wher-so she wepe or
singe.

O firste moevyng cruel firmament, 295
With thy diurnal sweigh that crowdest
ay

And hurlest al from Est til Occident,
That naturely wolde holde another way,
Thy crowding set the heven in swich
array

At the beginning of this fiers viage, 300
That cruel Mars hath slayn this mariage.

Infortunat ascendent tortuous,
Of which the lord is helpeles falle, alas!

Out of his angle in-to the derkest hous.
O Mars, O Atazir, as in this cas! 305
O feble mone, unhappy been thy pas!

Thou knittest thee ther thou art nat
received,

Ther thou were weel, fro thennes artow
weyved.

Imprudent emperour of Rome, alas!
Was ther no philosopre in all thy
toun? 310

Is no tyme bet than other in swich cas?
Of viage is ther noon eleccioun,
Namely to folk of heigh condicioun,
Nat whan a rote is of a birthe y-knowe?
Allas! we ben to lewed or to slowe. 315

To shippe is brought this woful faire
mayde

Solempnely, with every circumstance.
'Now Iesu Crist be with yow alle,' she
sayde;

Ther nis namore but 'farewel! faire
Custance!'

She peyneth hir to make good counte-
nance, 320

And forth I lete hir sayle in this manere,
And turne I wol agayn to my matere.

The moder of the sowdan, welle of vyces,
Espyëd hath hir sones pleyn entente,
How he wol lete his olde sacrificyes, 325
And right anon she for hir conseil sente;
And they ben come, to knowe what she
mente.

And when assembled was this folk in-
fere,

She sette hir down, and sayde as ye shal
here.

'Lordes,' quod she, 'ye knowen
everichon, 330

How that my sone in point is for to lete
The holy lawes of our Alkaron,
Yeven by goddes message Makomete.
But oon avow to grete god I hete, 334
The lyf shal rather out of my body sterte
Than Makometes lawe out of myn herte!

What shulde us tyden of this newe lawe
But thraldom to our bodies and pen-
ance?

And afterward in helle to be drawe

For we reneyed Mahoun our cre-
ance? 340

But, lordes, wol ye maken assurance,
As I shal seyn, assenting to my lore,
And I shall make us sauf for evermore?'

They sworn and assenten, every man,
To live with hir and dye, and by hir
stonde; 345

And everich, in the beste wyse he can,
To strengthen hir shal alle his freendes
fonde;

And she hath this emprise y-take on
honde,

Which ye shal heren that I shal devyse,
And to hem alle she spak right in this
wyse. 350

'We shul first feyne us Cristendom to
take,

Cold water shal not greve us but a lyte;
And I shal swich a feste and revel make,
That, as I trowe, I shal the sowdan quyte.
For though his wyf be cristned never so
whyte, 355

She shal have nede to wasshe away the
rede,

Thogh she a font-ful water with hir
lede.'

O sowdanesse, rote of iniquitee,
Virago, thou Semyram the secounde,
O serpent under femininitee, 360
Lyk to the serpent depe in helle
y-bounde,

O feyned womman, al that may confounde
Vertu and innocence, thurgh thy malyce,
Is bred in thee, as nest of every vyce!

O Satan, envious sin thilke day 365
That thou were chased from our heritage,
Wel knowestow to wommen the olde
way!

Thou madest Eva bringe us in servage.
Thou wolt fordoon this Cristen mariage.
Thyn instrument so, weylaway the
whyle! 370

Makestow of wommen, whan thou wolt
begyle.

This sowdanesse, whom I thus blame and
warie,
Lect prively hir conseil goon hir way.

2 M

What sholde I in this tale lenger tarie?
She rydeth to the sowdan on a day, 375
And seyde him, that she wolde reneye
hir lay,
And Cristendom of preestes handes
fonge,
Repenting hir she hethen was so longe,

Biseching him to doon hir that honour,
That she moste han the Cristen men to
feste; 380

'To plesen hem I wol do my labour.'
The sowdan seith, 'I wol don at your
heste,'

And kneeling thanketh hir of that requeste.
So glad he was, he niste what to seye;
She kiste hir sone, and hoom she gooth
hir weye. 385

*Explicit prima pars. Sequitur pars
secunda.*

Arryved ben this Cristen folk to londe,
In Surrie, with a gret solempne route,
And hastily this sowdan sente his sonde,
First to his moder, and al the regne
aboute,

And seyde, his wyf was comen, out of
doute, 390

And preyde hir for to ryde agayn the
quene,

The honour of his regne to sustene.

Gret was the prees, and riche was tharray
Of Surriens and Romayns met y-ferre;
The moder of the sowdan riche and gay,
Receyveth hir with al-so glad a chere 396
As any moder mighte hir doghter dere,
And to the nexte citee ther bisyde
A softe pas solempnely they ryde.

Noght trowe I the triumpe of Iulius, 400
Of which that Lucan maketh swich a
bost,

Was royaller, ne more curious
Than was thassemblee of this blisful host.
But this scorpioun, this wikked gost,
The sowdanesse, for al hir flateringe, 405
Caste under this ful mortally to stinge.

The sowdan comth him-self sone after
this
So royally, that wonder is to telle,

And welcometh hir with alle Ioye and blis.

And thus in merthe and Ioye I lete hem dwelle. 410

The fruyt of this matere is that I telle.

Whan tyme cam, men thoughte it for the beste

That revel stinte, and men goon to hir reste.

The tyme cam, this olde sowdanesse Ordeyned hath this feste of which I tolde, 415

And to the feste Cristen folk hem dresse

In general, ye! bothe yonge and olde.

Here may men feste and royaltée biholde,

And deyntees mo than I can yow devyse,

But al to dere they boughte it er they ryse. 420

O sodeyn wo! that ever art successour To worldly blisse, spreynd with bitternesse;

Thende of the Ioye of our worldly labour;

Wo occupieth the fyn of our gladnesse.

Herke this conseil for thy sikernes, 425

Up-on thy glade day have in thy minde

The unwar wo or harm that comth bihinde.

For shortly for to tellen at o word,

The sowdan and the Cristen everichone

Ben al to-hewe and stiked at the bord,

But it were only dame Custance al-lone. 431

This olde sowdanesse, cursed crone,

Hath with hir frendes doon this cursed dede,

For she hir-self wolde al the contree lede.

Ne ther was Surrien noon that was converted 435

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 shippe al sterelees, god woot,

They han hir set, and bidde hir lerne sayle 440

Out of Surryc agaynward to Itayle.

A certain tresor that she thider ladde,

And, sooth to sayn, vitaille gret plentee

They han hir yeven, and clothes eek she hadde,

And forth she sayleth in the salte see. 445

O my Custance, ful of benignitee,

O emperoures yonge doghter dere,

He that is lord of fortune be thy stere!

She blesseth hir, and with ful pitous voys Un-to the croys of Crist thus seyde she, 450

'O clere, o welful auter, holy croys,

Reed of the lambes blood full of pitee,

That wesch the world fro the olde iniquitee,

Me fro the feend, and fro his clawes kepe,

That day that I shal drenchen in the depe. 455

Victorious tree, proteccioun of trewe,

That only worthy were for to bere

The king of heven with his woundes newe,

The whyte lamb, that hurt was with the spere,

Flemer of feendes out of him and here 460

On which thy limes feithfully extenden,

Me keep, and yif me might my lyf tamenden.'

Yeres and dayes fleet this creature

Thurghout the see of Grece un-to the straye

Of Marrok, as it was hir aventure; 465

On many a sory meel now may she bayte;

After her deeth ful often may she wayte,

Er that the wilde wawes wole hir dryve

Un-to the place, ther she shal arryve.

Men mighten asken why she was not slayn? 470

Eek at the feste who mighte hir body save?

And I answer to that demaunde agayn,

Who saved Daniel in the horrible cave,

Ther every wight save he, maister and knave,

Was with the leoun frete er he asterte? 475

No wight but god, that he bar in his herte.

God liste to shewe his wonderful miracle

In hir, for we sholde seen his mighty werkes;

Crist, which that is to every harm triacle,
By certein menes ofte, as known
clerkes, 480

Doth thing for certein ende that ful
derk is

To mannes wit, that for our ignorance
Ne conne not knowe his prudent pur-
veyance.

Now, sith she was not at the feste y-slawe,
Who kepte hir fro the drenching in the
see? 485

Who kepte Ionas in the fisshes mawe
Til he was spouted up at Ninivee?
Wel may men knowe it was no wight but
he

That kepte peple Ebraik fro hir drench-
inge,

With drye feet thurgh-out the see pass-
inge. 490

Who bad the foure spirits of tempest,
That power han tanoyen land and see,
'Bothe north and south, and also west
and est,

Anoyeth neither see, ne land, ne tree?
Sethly, the comaundour of that was he,
That fro the tempest ay this womman
kepte 496

As wel whan [that] she wook as whan
she slepte.

Wher mighte this womman mete and
drinke have?

Three yeer and more how lasteth hir
vitaille?

Who fedde the Egipcien Marie in the
cave, 500

Or in desert? no wight but Crist, sans
faillie.

Fyve thousand folk it was as gret mer-
vaille

With loves fyve and fisshes two to fede.
God sente his foison at hir grete nede.

She dryveth forth in-to our oceane 505
Thurgh-out our wilde see, til, atte laste,

Under an hold that nempnen I ne can,
Fer in Northumberlond the wawe hir
caste,

And in the sond hir ship stiked so faste,
That thennes wolde it nocht of al a
tyde, 510

The wille of Crist was that she shulde
abeyde.

The constable of the castel down is fare
To seen this wrak, and al the ship he
soghte,

And fond this very womman ful of care;
He fond also the tresor that she broghte.
In hir langage mercy she bisoghte 516
The lyf out of hir body for to twinne,
Hir to delivere of wo that she was inne.

A maner Latin corrupt was hir speche,
But algates ther-by was she understonde;
The constable, whan him list no lenger
seche, 521

This woful womman broghte he to the
londe;

She kneleth down, and thanketh goddes
sonde.

But what she was, she wolde no man
seye,

For foul ne fair, thogh that she shulde
deye. 525

She seyde, she was so mased in the see
That she forgat hir minde, by hir trouthe;
The constable hath of hir so greet pitee,
And eek his wyf, that they wepen for
routhe,

She was so diligent, with-outen slouthe,
To serve and plesen everich in that
place, 531

That alle hir loven that loken on hir
face.

This constable and dame Hermengild his
wyf

Were payens, and that contree every-
where;

But Hermengild lovede hir right as hir
lyf, 535

And Custance hath so longe sojourned
there,

In orisons, with many a bitter tere,
Til Iesu hath converted thurgh his
grace

Dame Hermengild, constablesse of that
place.

In al that lond no Cristen durste route,
Alle Cristen folk ben fled fro that con-
tree 541

Thurgh payens, that conquereden al
aboute
The plages of the North, by land and
see;
To walis fled the Cristianitee 544
Of olde Britons, dwellinge in this yle;
Ther was her refut for the mene whyle.

But yet nere Cristen Britons so exyled
That ther nere somme that in hir pri-
vetee
Honoured Crist, and hethen folk bi-
gyled;
And ny the castel swiche ther dwelten
three. 550
That oon of hem was blind, and mighte
nat see
But it were with thilke yën of his minde,
With whiche men seen, after that they
ben blinde.

Bright was the sonne as in that someres
day,
For which the constable and his wyf
also 555
And Custance han y-take the righte way
Toward the see, a furlong wey or two,
To pleyen and to romen to and fro;
And in hir walk this blinde man they
mette
Croked and old, with yën faste y-shette.

'In name of Crist,' cryde this blinde
Britoun, 561
'Dame Hermengild, yif me my sighte
agayn.'
This lady wex affrayed of the soun,
Lest that hir housbond, shortly for to
sayn,
Wolde hir for Iesu Cristes love han
slayn, 565
Til Custance made hir bold, and bad hir
werche
The wil of Crist, as doghter of his
chirche.

The constable wex abashed of that sight,
And seyde, 'what amounteth al this
fare?'
Custance answerde, 'sire, it is Cristes
might, 570
That helpeth folk out of the feendes
snare.'

And so ferforth she gan our lay declare,
That she the constable, er that it were
eve,
Converted, and on Crist made him bi-
leve.

This constable was no-thing lord of this
place 575
Of which I speke, ther he Custance
fond,
But kepte it strongly, many wintres space,
Under Alla, king of al Northumberlond,
That was ful wys, and worthy of his hond
Agayn the Scottes, as men may wel
here, 580
But turne I wol agayn to my matere.

Sathan, that ever us waiteth to bigyle,
Saugh of Custance al hir perfeccioun,
And caste anon how he mighte quyte hir
whyte,
And made a yong knight, that dwelte in
that toun, 585
Love hir so hote, of foul affeccioun,
That verraily him thoughte he shulde
spille
But he of hir mighte ones have his wille.

He woweth hir, but it availleth noght,
She wolde do no sinne, by no weye; 590
And, for despyt, he compassed in his
thoght
To maken hir on shamful deth to deye.
He wayteth whan the constable was
aweye,
And prively, up-on a night, he crepte
In Hermengildes chambre whyl she
slepte. 595

Wery, for-waked in her orisouns,
Slepeth Custance, and Hermengild also.
This knight, thurgh Sathanas tempta-
ciouns,
Al softly is to the bed y-go,
And kitte the throte of Hermengild
a-two, 600
And leyde the bloody knyf by dame
Custance,
And wente his wey, ther god yeve him
meschance!

Sone after comth this constable hoom
agayn,

And eek Alla, that king was of that
lond,

And saugh his wyf despitously y-slain,
For which ful ofte he weep and wrong
his hond, 606

And in the bed the bloody knyf he fond
By dame Custance; alas! what mighte
she seye?

For verry wo hir wit was al aweye.

To king Alla was told al this meschance,
And eek the tyme, and where, and in
what wyse 611

That in a ship was founden dame
Custance,

As heer-biforn that ye han herd devyse.
The kinges herte of pitee gan agryse,
Whan he saugh so benigne a creature
Falle in disese and in misaventure. 616

For as the lomb toward his deeth is
brought,

So stant this innocent bifore the king;
This false knight that hath this tresoun
wrought

Berth hir on hond that she hath doon
this thing. 620

But natheles, ther was greet moorning
Among the peple, and seyn, 'they can
not gesse

That she hath doon so greet a wikked-
nesse.

For they han seyn hir ever so vertuous,
And loving Hermengild right as her lyf.
Of this bar witnessse everich in that
hous 626

Save he that Hermengild slow with his
knyf.

This gentil king hath caught a gret mo-
tyf

Of this witnessse, and thoughte he wolde
enquere

Depper in this, a trouthe for to lere. 630

Allas! Custance! thou hast no cham-
pioun,

Ne fighte canstow nought, so weyla-
wey!

But he, that starf for our redemp-
cioun

And bond Sathan (and yit lyth ther he
lay)

So be thy stronge champioun this day!
For, but-if Crist open miracle kythe, 636
Withouten gilt thou shalt be slayn as
swythe.

She sette her doum on knees, and thus
she sayde,

'Immortal god, that savedest Susanne
Fro false blame, and thou, merciful
mayde, 640

Mary I mene, doghter to Seint Anne,
Bifore whos child aungeles singe Osanne,
If I be gilleles of this felonye,
My socour be, for elles I shal dye!'

Have ye nat seyn som tyme a pale
face, 645

Among a prees, of him that hath be lad
Toward his deeth, wher-as him gat no
grace,

And swich a colour in his face hath had,
Men mighte knowe his face, that was
bistad,

Amonges alle the faces in that route: 650
So stant Custance, and loketh hir aboute.

O quenes, livinge in prosperitee,
Duchesses, and ye ladies everichone,
Haveth som routhe on hir adversitee;
An emperours doghter stant allone; 655
She hath no wight to whom to make hir
mone.

O blood royal, that stondest in this drede,
Fer ben thy freendes at thy grete nede!

This Alla king hath swich compassioun,
As gentil herte is fulfild of pitee, 660
That from his yën ran the water doum.

'Now hastily do fecche a book,' quod he,
'And if this knight wol sweren how that
she

This womman slow, yet wole we us avyse
Whom that we wole that shal ben our
Iustyse.' 665

A Briton book, writen with Evangyles,
Was fet, and on this book he swoor
anoon

She gilty was, and in the mene whyles
A hand him smoot upon the neckke-boon,
That doum he fil atones as a stoon, 670
And bothe his yën broste out of his face
In sight of every body in that place.

A vois was herd in general audience,
 And seyde, 'thou hast desclaundred
 gilteles
 The doghter of holy chirche in hey
 presence; 675
 Thus hastou doon, and yet holde I my
 pees.'
 Of this mervaille agast was al the prees;
 As mased folk they stoden everichone,
 For drede of wreche, save Custance
 allone.

Greet was the drede and eck the repent-
 ance 680
 Of hem that hadden wrong suspeccioun
 Upon this sely innocent Custance;
 And, for this miracle, in conclusioun,
 And by Custances mediacioun,
 The king, and many another in that
 place, 685
 Converted was, thanked be Cristes grace!

This false knight was slayn for his un-
 trouthe
 By Iugement of Alla hastily;
 And yet Custance hadde of his deeth
 gret routhe.
 And after this Iesus, of his mercy, 690
 Made Alla wedden ful solempnely
 This holy mayden, that is so bright and
 shene,
 And thus hath Crist y-maad Custance a
 quene.

But who was woful, if I shal nat lye,
 Of this wedding but Donegild, and na
 mo, 695
 The kinges moder, ful of tyrannye?
 Hir thoughte hir cursed herte brast
 a-two;
 She wolde nocht hir sone had do so;
 Hir thoughte a despit, that he sholde
 take
 So strange a creature un-to his make. 700

Me list nat of the chaf nor of the stree
 Maken so long a tale, as of the corn.
 What sholde I tellen of the royaltee
 At mariage, or which cours gooth biforn,
 Who bloweth in a trompe or in an horn?
 The fruit of every tale is for to seye; 706
 They ete, and drinke, and daunce, and
 singe, and pleye.

They goon to bedde, as it was skile and
 right;
 For, though that wyves been ful holy
 thinges,
 They moste take in pacience at night 710
 Swich maner necessities as been ples-
 inges
 To folk that han y-wedded hem with
 ringes,
 And leye a lyte hir holinesse asyde
 As for the tyme; it may no bet bityde.

On hir he gat a knave-child anon, 715
 And to a bishop and his constable eke
 He took his wyf to kepe, whan he is
 goon
 To Scotland-ward, his fo-men for to seke;
 Now faire Custance, that is so humble
 and meke,
 So longe is goon with childe, til that
 stille 720
 She halt hir chambre, abyding Cristes
 wille.

The tyme is come, a knave-child she ber;
 Mauricius at the font-stoon they him
 calle;
 This Constable dooth forth come a
 messenger,
 And wroot un-to his king, that cleped
 was Alle, 725
 How that this blisful tyding is bifalle,
 And other tydings speedful for to seye;
 He takth the lettre, and forth he gooth
 his weye.

This messenger, to doon his avantage, 729
 Un-to the kinges moder rydeth swythe,
 And salueth hir ful faire in his langage,
 'Madame,' quod he, 'ye may be glad and
 blythe,
 And thanke god an hundred thousand
 sythe;
 My lady quene hath child, with-outen
 doute.
 To loye and blisse of al this regne
 aboute. 735

Lo, heer the lettres seled of this thing,
 That I mot bere with al the haste I may;
 If ye wol aught un-to your sone the
 king,
 I am your servant, bothe night and day.'

Donegild answerde, 'as now at this tyme,
 nay; 740
 But heer al night I wol thou take thy
 reste,
 Tomorwe wol I seye thee what me leste.'

This messenger drank sadly ale and wyn,
 And stolen were his lettres prively
 Out of his box, whyl he sleep as a swyn;
 And countrefeted was ful subtilly 746
 Another lettre, wrought ful sinfully,
 Un-to the king direct of this matere
 Fro his constable, as ye shul after here.

The lettre spak, 'the queen delivered
 was 750
 Of so horrible a feendly creature,
 That in the castel noon so hardy was
 That any whyle dorste ther endure.
 The moder was an elf, by aventure
 Y-come, by charmes or by sorcerye, 755
 And every wight hateth hir companye.'

Wo was this king when he this lettre
 had seyn,
 But to no wighte he tolde his sorwes
 sore,
 But of his owene honde he wroot ageyn,
 'Welcome the sonde of Crist for ever-
 more 760
 To me, that am now lerned in his lore;
 Lord, welcome be thy lust and thy ples-
 aunce,
 My lust I putte al in thyn ordinaunce!

Kepeth this child, al be it foul or fair,
 And eek my wyf, un-to myn hoom-
 cominge; 765
 Crist, whan him list, may sende me an
 heir
 More agreable than this to my lykinge.'
 This lettre he se leth, prively wepinge,
 Which to the messenger was take sone,
 And forth he gooth; ther is na more to
 done. 770

O messenger, fulfil of dronkenesse,
 Strong is thy breath, thy limes faltren ay,
 And thou biwreyst alle screcenesse.
 Thy mind is lorn, thou Ianglest as a Iay,
 Thy face is turned in a newe array! 775
 Ther dronkenesse regneth in any route,
 There is no conseil hid, with-outen doute.

O Donegild, I ne have noon English
 digne
 Un-to thy malice and thy tirannye!
 And therfor to the feend I thee resigne,
 Let him endyten of thy traitorye! 781
 Fy, mannish, fy! o nay, by god, I lye,
 Fy, *feendly* spirit, for I dar wel telle,
 Though thou heer walke, thy spirit is in
 helle!

This messenger comth fro the king agayn,
 And at the kinges modres court he
 lighte, 786
 And she was of this messenger ful fayn,
 And plesed him in al that ever she
 mighte.
 He drank, and wel his girdel underpighte.
 He slepeth, and he snoreth in his gyse 790
 Al night, un-til the sonne gan aryse.

Eft were his lettres stolen everichon
 And countrefeted lettres in this wyse;
 'The king comandeth his constable
 anon,
 Up peyne of hanging, and on heigh
 Iuyse, 795
 That he ne sholde suffren in no wyse
 Custance in-with his regne for talyde
 Thre dayes and a quarter of a tyde;

But in the same ship as he hir fond,
 Hir and hir yonge sone, and al hir
 gere, 800
 He sholde putte, and croude hir fro the
 lond,
 And charge hir that she never eft come
 there.'

O my Custance, wel may thy goost have
 fere
 And sleeping in thy dreem been in pen-
 ance,
 When Donegild caste al this ordi-
 nance! 805

This messenger on morwe, whan he wook,
 Un-to the castel halt the nexte wey,
 And to the constable he the lettre took;
 And whan that he this pitous lettre sey,
 Ful ofte he seyde 'allas!' and 'weyla-
 wey!' 810
 'Lord Crist,' quod he, 'how may this
 world endure?
 So ful of sinne is many a creature!

O mighty god, if that it be thy wille,
 Sith thou art rightful luge, how may it
 be
 That thou wolt suffren innocents to
 spille, 815
 And wikked folk regne in prosperitee?
 O good Custance, alas! so wo is me
 That I mot be thy tormentour, or deye
 On shames deeth; ther is noon other
 weye!

Wepen bothe yonge and olde in al that
 plage, 820
 Whan that the king this cursed lettre
 sente,
 And Custance, with a deedly pale face,
 The ferthe day toward hir ship she
 wente.
 But natheles she taketh in good entente
 The wille of Crist, and, kneling on the
 stronde, 825
 She seyde, 'lord! ay wel-com be thy
 sonde!

He that me kepte fro the false blame
 Why! I was on the londe amonges yow,
 He can me kepe from harme and eek fro
 shame
 In salte see, al-though I se nat how. 830
 As strong as ever he was, he is yet now.
 In him triste I, and in his moder dere,
 That is to me my seyl and eek my stere.'

Hir litel child lay weping in hir arm,
 And kneling, pitously to him she
 seyde, 835
 'Pees, litel sone, I wol do thee non
 harm.'
 With that hir kerchef of hir hecd she
 breyde,
 And over his litel yën she it leyde;
 And in hir arm she lulleth it ful faste,
 And in-to heven hir yën up she caste. 840

'Moder,' quod she, 'and mayde bright,
 Marye,
 Sooth is that thurgh wommannes egge-
 ment
 Mankind was lorn and damned ay to dye,
 For which thy child was on a croys y-rent;
 Thy blisful yën sawe al his torment; 845
 Than is ther no comparisoun bitwene
 Thy wo and any wo man may sustene.

Thou sawe thy child y-slayn bifor thyn
 yën,
 And yet now liveth my litel child, par-
 fay!
 Now, lady bright, to whom alle woful
 cryën, 850
 Thou glorie of wommanhede, thou faire
 may,
 Thou haven of refut, brighte sterre of
 day,
 Rewe on my child, that of thy gentillesse
 Rewest on every rewful in distresse!

O litel child, alas! what is thy gilt, 855
 That never wroughtest sinne as yet, par-
 dee,
 Why wil thyn harde fader han thee spilt?
 O mercy, dere Constable!' quod she;
 'As lat my litel child dwelle heer with
 thee;
 And if thou darst not saven him, for
 blame, 860
 So kis him ones in his fadres name!'

Ther-with she loketh bakward to the
 londe,
 And seyde, 'far-wel, housbond routhel-
 lees!'
 And up she rist, and walketh doun the
 stronde
 Toward the ship; hir folweth al the
 prees, 865
 And ever she preyeth hir child to bolde
 his pees;
 And taketh hir leve, and with an holy
 entente
 She blesseth hir; and in-to ship she
 wente.

Vitailled was the ship, it is no drede,
 I abundantly for hir, ful longe space, 870
 And other necessaries that sholde nede
 She hadde y-nogh, heried be goddes
 grace!
 For wind and weder almighty god pur-
 chace,
 And bringe hir hoom! I can no bettre
 seye;
 But in the see she dryveth forth hir
 weye. 875

*Explicit secunda pars. Sequitur pars
 tercia.*

Alla the king comth hoom, sone after
this,
Unto his castel of the which I tolde, 877
And axeth wher his wyf and his child is.
The constable gan aboute his herte colde,
And pleynly al the maner he him tolde
As ye han herd, I can telle it no bettere,
And sheweth the king his seel and [eek]
his lettre,

And seyde, 'lord, as ye comaunded me
Up peyne of deeth, so have I doon, cer-
tein.'

This messenger tormented was til he 885
Moste biknowe and tellen, plat and plain,
Fro night to night, in what place he had
leyn.

And thus, by wit and subtil enqueringe,
Ymagined was by whom this harm gan
springe.

The hand was knowe that the lettre
wroot, 890

And al the venim of this cursed dede,
But in what wyse, certainly I noot.
Theeffect is this, that Alla, out of drede,
His moder slow, that men may pleynly
rede,

For that she traitour was to hir li-
geaunce. 895

Thus endeth olde Donegild with mes-
chaunce.

The sorwe that this Alla, night and day,
Maketh for his wyf and for his child also,
Ther is no tonge that it telle may.
But now wol I un-to Custance go, 900
That fleteth in the see, in peyne and wo,
Eyre yeer and more, as lyked Cristes
sonde,

Er that hir ship approached un-to londe.

Under an hethen castel, atte laste,
Of which the name in my text nocht I
finde, 905

Custance and eek hir child the see up-
caste.

Almighty god, that saveth al mankinde,
Have on Custance and on hir child som
minde,

That fallen is in hethen land eft-sonne,
In point to spille, as I shal telle yow
sonne. 910

Doun from the castel comth ther many a
wight

To gauren on this ship and on Custance.
But shortly, from the castel, on a night,
The lordes styward — god yeve him mes-
chaunce! —

A thief, that had reneyed our cre-
aunce, 915

Com in-to ship allone, and seyde he
sholde

Hir lemman be, wher-so she wolde or
nolde.

Wo was this wrecched womman tho
bigon,

Hir child cryde, and she cryde pitously;
But blisful Marie heelp hir right
anon; 920

For with hir strugling wel and mightily
The thief fil over bord al sodeinly,

And in the see he dreynete for ven-
geance;

And thus hath Crist unwemmed kept
Custance.

O foule lust of luxurie! lo, thyn
ende! *Auctor.*

Nat only that thou feyntest mannes
minde, 926

But verraily thou wolt his body shende;
Thende of thy werk or of thy lustes
blinde

Is compleyning, how many-oon may men
finde

That nocht for werk som-tyme, but for
thentente 930

To doon this sinne, ben outhur sleyn or
shente!

How may this wayke womman han this
strengthe

Hir to defende agayn this renegat?

O Goliath, unmesurable of lengthe,
How mighte David make thee so mat,

So yong and of armure so desolat? 936

How dorste he loken up-on thy dredful
face?

Wel may men seen, it nas but goddes
grace!

Who yaf Iudith corage or hardinesse
To sleen him, Olofernus, 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 saved hem out of mes-
chance,
So sente he might and vigour to
Custance. 945

Forth goth hir ship thurgh-out the
narwe mouth
Of Iubaltar and Septe, dryving ay,
Som-tyme West, som-tyme North and
South,
And som-tyme Est, ful many a very day,
Til Cristes moder (blessed be she
ay!) 950
Hath shapen, thurgh hir endelces good-
nesse,
To make an ende of al hir hevinesse.

Now lat us stinte of Custance but a
throwe,
And speke we of the Romain Emperour,
That out of Surrie hath by lettres
knowe 955
The slaughtre of Cristen folk, and dis-
honour
Don to his doghter by a fals traitour,
I mene the cursed wikked sowdanesse,
That at the feste leet sleen both more
and lesse.

For which this emperour hath sent
anoon 960
His senatour, with royal ordinance,
And othere lordes, god wot, many oon,
On Surriens to taken heigh vengeance.
They brennen, sleen, and bringe hem to
meschance
Ful many a day; but shortly, this is
thende, 965
Homward to Rome they shapen hem to
wende.

This senatour repaireth with victorie
To Rome-ward, sayling ful royally,
And mette the ship dryving, as seith the
storie,
In which Custance sit ful pitously. 970
No-thing ne knew he what she was, ne
why
She was in swich array; ne she nil seye
Of hir estaat, althogh she sholde deye,

He bringeth hir to Rome, and to his
wyf
He yaf hir, and hir yonge sone also; 975
And with the senatour she ladde her lyf.
Thus can our lady bringen out of wo
Woful Custance, and many another mo.
And longe tyme dwelled she in that
place,
In holy werkes ever, as was hir grace. 980

The senatoures wyf hir aunte was,
But for al that she knew hir never the
more;
I wol no lenger tarien in this cas,
But to king Alla, which I spak of yore,
That for his wyf wepeth and syketh
sore, 985
I wol retourne, and lete I wol Custance
Under the senatoures governance.

King Alla, which that hadde his moder
slayn,
Upon a day fil in swich repentance,
That, if I shortly tellen shal and plain,
To Rome he comth, to receyven his
penance; 991
And putte him in the popes ordinance
In heigh and low, and Iesu Crist bisoghte
Foryeve his wikked werkes that he
wroghte.

The fame anon thurgh Rome toun is
born, 995
How Alla king shal come in pilgrimage,
By herbergeours that wenten him biforn;
For which the senatour, as was usage,
Rood him ageyn, and many of his linage,
As wel to shewen his heighe magnifi-
cence 1000
As to don any king a reverence.

Greet chere dooth this noble senatour
To king Alla, and he to him also;
Everich of hem doth other greet honour;
And so bifel that, in a day or two, 1005
This senatour is to king Alla go
To feste, and shortly, if I shal nat lye,
Custances sone wente in his companye.

Som men wolde seyn, at requeste of
Custance,
This senatour hath lad this child to
feste; 1010

I may nat tellen every circumstance,
 He as he may, ther was he at the leste.
 But soth is this, that, at his modres
 heste,

Biforn Alla, during the metes space,
 The child stood, loking in the kinges
 face. 1015

This Alla king hath of this child greet
 wonder,

And to the senatour he seyde anon,
 'Whos is that faire child that stondeth
 yonder?'

'I moot,' quod he, 'by god, and by scint
 Iohn!

A moder he hath, but fader hath he non
 That I of woot'—but shortly, in a
 stounde, 1021

He tolde Alla how that this child was
 founde.

'But god wot,' quod this senatour also,
 'So vertuous a livere in my lyf,
 Ne saugh I never as she, ne herde of mo
 Of worldly women, mayden, nor of
 wyf; 1026

I dar wel seyn hir hadde lever a knyf
 Thurgh-out her breste, than been a wom-
 man wikke;

Ther is no man coude bringe hir to that
 prikke.'

Now was this childe as lyk un-to
 Custance 1030

As possible is a creature to be.
 This Alla hath the face in remembrance
 Of dame Custance, and ther-on mused he
 If that the childes moder were aught
 she

That was his wyf, and prively he sighte,
 And spedde him fro the table that he
 mighte. 1036

'Parfay,' thoghte he, 'fantome is in myn
 heed!

I oghte deme, of skilful Iugement,
 That in the salte see my wyf is deed.'
 And afterward he made his argument—
 'What woot I, if that Crist have hider
 y-sent 1041

My wyf by see, as wel as he hir sente
 To my contree fro thennes that she
 wente?'

And, after noon, hoom with the senatour
 Goth Alla, for to seen this wonder
 chaunce. 1045

This senatour dooth Alla greet honour,
 And hastily he sente after Custance.
 But trusteth weel, hir liste nat to daunce
 Whan that she wiste wherefor was that
 sonde.

Unnethe up-on hir feet she mighte
 stonde. 1050

When Alla saugh his wyf, faire he hir
 grette,

And weep, that it was routhe for to see.
 For at the firste look he on hir sette
 He knew wel verraily that it was she.
 And she for sorwe as domb stant as a
 tree; 1055

So was hir herte shet in hir distresse
 Whan she remembered his unkindnesse.

Twyës she swowned in his owne sighte;
 He weep, and him excuseth pitously:—
 'Now god,' quod he, 'and alle his halwes
 bryghte 1060

So wisly on my soule as have mercy,
 That of your harm as giltelees am I
 As is Maurice my sone so lyk your
 face;

Elles the feend me fecche out of this
 place!'

Long was the sobbing and the bitter
 peyne 1065

Er that hir woful hertes mighte cesse;
 Greet was the pitee for to here hem
 pleyne,

Thurgh whiche pleintes gan hir wo en-
 cresse.

I prey yow al my labour to relesse;
 I may nat telle hir wo un-til tomorwe,
 I am so wery for to speke of sorwe. 1071

But fynally, when that the sooth is wist
 That Alla giltelees was of hir wo,
 I trowe an hundred tymes been they
 kist,

And swich a blisse is ther bitwix hem
 two 1075

That, save the Ioye that lasteth evermo,
 Ther is non lyk, that any creature
 Hath seyn or shal, whyl that the world
 may dure.

Tho preyde she hir housbond mekely,
 In relief of hir longe pitous pyne, 1080
 That he wold preyde hir fader specially
 That, of his magestee, he wolde encline
 To vouche-sauf som day with him to
 dyne;
 She preyde him cek, he sholde by no
 weye
 Un-to hir fader no word of hir seye. 1085

Som men wold seyn, how that the child
 Maurice

Doth this message un-to this emperour;
 But, as I gesse, Alla was nat so nyce
 To him, that was of so sovereyn honour
 As he that is of Cristen folk the flour, 1090
 Sente any child, but it is bet to deme
 He wente him-self, and so it may wel
 seme.

This emperour hath graunted gentilly
 To come to diner, as he him bisoghte;
 And wel rede I, he loked bisily 1095
 Up-on this child, and on his doghter
 thoghte
 Alla goth to his in, and, as him oghte,
 Arrayed for this feste in every wyse
 As ferforth as his conning may suffyse.

The morwe cam, and Alla gan him
 dresse, 1100
 And eek his wyf, this emperour to
 mete;
 And forth they ryde in Ioye and in glad-
 nesse.
 And whan she saugh hir fader in the
 strete,
 She lighte down, and falleth him to
 fete.
 'Fader,' quod she, 'your yonge child
 Custance 1105
 Is now ful clene out of your remem-
 brance.

I am your doghter Custance,' quod she,
 'That whylom ye han sent un-to Surrye.
 It am I, fader, that in the salte see
 Was put allone and dampned for to
 dye. 1110
 Now, gode fader, mercy I yow crye,
 Send me namore un-to non hethenesse,
 But thonketh my lord heer of his kinde-
 nesse.'

Who can the pitous loye tellen al
 Bitwix hem three, sin they ben thus
 y-mette? 1115
 But of my tale made an ende I shal;
 The day goth faste, I wol no lenger
 lette.
 This glade folk to diner they hem sette;
 In Ioye and blisse at mete I lete hem
 dwelle
 A thousand fold wel more than I can
 telle. 1120

This child Maurice was sithen emperour
 Maad by the pope, and lived cristenly.
 To Cristes chirche he dide greet honour;
 But I lete al his storic passen by,
 Of Custance is my tale specially. 1125
 In olde Romayn gestes may men finde
 Maurices lyf; I bere it noght in minde.

This king Alla, whan he his tyme sey,
 With his Custance, his holy wyf so
 swete,
 To Engelond been they come the righte
 wey, 1130
 Wher-as they live in Ioye and in quiete.
 But litel whyl it lasteth, I yow hete,
 Ioye of this world, for tyme wol nat
 abyde;
 Fro day to night it changeth as the
 tyde.

Who lived ever in swich delyt o day 1135
 That him ne moeved outhur conscience,
 Or ire, or talent, or som kin affray,
 Envye, or pryde, or passion, or offence?
 I ne seye but for this ende this sen-
 tence, 1139
 That litel whyl in Ioye or in plesance
 Lasteth the blisse of Alla with Custance.

For deeth, that taketh of heigh and low
 his rente,
 When passed was a yeer, even as I
 gesse,
 Out of this world this king Alla he
 hente,
 For whom Custance hath ful gret hevi-
 nesse. 1145
 Now lat us preyen god his soule blesse!
 And dame Custance, fynally to seye,
 Towards the toun of Rome gooth hir
 weye.

To Rome is come this holy creature,
And fyndeth ther hir frendes hole and
sounde: 1150

Now is she scaped al hir aventure;
And whan that she hir fader hath y-
founde,

Doun on hir kneës falleth she to
grounde;

Weping for tendrenesse in herte blythe,
She herieth god an hundred thousand
sythe. 1155

Here endeth the Tale of the Man of Lawe; and next foloweth the Shipmannes Prolog.

In vertu and in holy almes-dede
They liven alle, and never a-sonder
wende;

Til deeth departed hem, this lyf they lede.
And fareth now weel, my tale is at an
ende.

Now Iesu Crist, that of his might may
sende 1160

Ioye after wo, governe us in his grace,
And kepe us alle that ben in this place!
Amen.

THE SHIPMAN'S PROLOGUE.

Here biginneth the Shipmannes Prolog.

OUR hoste up-on his stiropes stood anon,
And seyde, 'good men, herkneth everich
on;

This was a thrifty tale for the nones! 1165
Sir parish prest,' quod he, 'for goddes
bones,

Tel us a tale, as was thy forward yore.

I see wel that ye lerned men in lore
Can moche good, by goddes dignitee!'

The Persone him answerde, '*benedi-
cite!*' 1170

What cyleth the man, so sinfully to
swere?'

Our hoste answerde, 'O Iankin, be ye
there?'

I smelle a loller in the wind,' quod he.

'How! good men,' quod our hoste, 'herk-
neth me;

Abydeth, for goddes digne passioun, 1175
For we shal han a predicacioun;

This loller heer wil prechen us som-
what.'

'Nay, by my fader soule! that shal be
nat,'

Seyed the Shipman; 'heer he shal nat
preche,

He shal no gospel glosen heer ne
teche. 1180

We leve alle in the grete god,' quod he,
'He wolde sowen som difficultee,

Or springen cokkel in our elene corn;

And therfor, hoste, I warne thee biforn,
My Ioly body shal a tale telle, 1185

And I shal clinken yow so mery a belle,
That I shal waken al this companye;

But it shal nat ben of philosophye,

Ne *physices*, ne termes queinte of lawe;
Ther is but litel Latin in my mawe.' 1190

Here endeth the Shipman his Prolog.

THE SHIPMANNES TALE.

Here biginneth the Shipmannes Tale.

A MERCHANT whylom dwelled at Seint
Denys,

That riche was, for which men helde him
wys;

A wyf he hadde of excellent beautee,
And compaignable and revelous was
she,

Which is a thing that causeth more dis-
pence 1195

Than worth is al the chere and reverence
That men hem doon at festes and at
daunces;

Swiche salutaciouns and contenaunces
Passen as clooth a shadwe up-on the wal.

But wo is him that payen moot for
al; 1200

The sely housbond, algate he mot paye;
He moot us clothe, and he moot us
arraye,

Al for his owene worship richely,
In which array we daunce Iolily.
And if that he noght may, par-aventure,
1205

Or elles, list no swich dispence endure,
But thinketh it is wasted and y-lost,
Than moot another payen for our cost,
Or lene us gold, and that is perilous.

This noble Marchant heeld a worthy
hous, 1210
For which he hadde alday so greet re-
pair

For his largesse, and for his wyf was
fair,
That wonder is; but herkneth to my
tale.

Amonges alle his gestes, grete and
smale,
Ther was a monk, a fair man and a
bold, 1215

I trowe of thritty winter he was old,
That ever in oon was drawing to that
place.

This yonge monk, that was so fair of
face,
Aqueinted was so with the gode man,
Sith that hir firste knoweliche bigan, 1220
That in his hous as famulier was he
As it possible is any freend to be.

And for as muchel as this gode man
And eek this monk, of which that I
bigan,
Were bothe two y-born in o village, 1225
The monk him claimeth as for cosinage;
And he again, he seith nat ones nay,
But was as glad ther-of as fowel of day;
For to his herte it was a greet plesaunce.
Thus been they knit with eterne alli-
aunce, 1230

And ech of hem gan other for tassure
Of bretherhede, whyl that hir lyf may
dure.

Free was daun Iohn, and namely of
dispence,
As in that hous; and ful of diligence
To doon plesaunce, and also greet cos-
tage. 1235

He noght forgat to yeve the leeste page
In al that hous; but, after hir degree,
He yaf the lord, and sitthe al his meynce,

When that he cam, som maner honest
thing;

For which they were as glad of his com-
ing 1240

As fowel is fayn, whan that the sonne
up-ryseth.

Na more of this as now, for it suffyseth.

But so bifel, this marchant on a day
Shoop him to make redy his array
Toward the toun of Brugges for to
fare, 1245

To byën ther a porcioun of ware;
For which he hath to Paris sent anon
A messenger, and preyed hath daun Iohn
That he sholde come to Seint Denys to
pleye

With him and with his wyf a day or
tweye, 1250
Er he to Brugges wente, in alle wyse.

This noble monk, of which I yow de-
vyse,
Hath of his abbot, as him list, licence,
By-cause he was a man of heigh pru-
dence,

And eek an officer, out for to ryde, 1255
To seen hir graunges and hir bernes
wyde;

And un-to Seint Denys he comth anon.
Who was so welcome as my lord daun
Iohn,

Our dere cosin, ful of curteisye?
With him broghte he a Iubbe of Mal-
vesye, 1260

And eek another, ful of fyn Vernage,
And volatyl, as ay was his usage.
And thus I lete hem ete and drinke and
pleye,

This marchant and this monk, a day or
tweye.

The thridde day, this marchant up arys-
eth, 1265

And on his nedes sadly him avyseth,
And up in-to his countour-hous goth he
To rekene with him-self, as wel may be,
Of thilke yeer, how that it with him
stood,

And how that he despended hadde his
good; 1270

And if that he encessed were or noon.
His hokes and his bagges many oon
He leith biforn him on his counting-
bord;

Ful riche was his tresor and his hord,

For which ful faste his countour-dore he
 shette ; 1275
 And eek he nolde that no man sholde
 him lette
 Of his accountes, for the mene tyme ;
 And thus he sit til it was passed pryme.
 Daun Iohn was risen in the morwe
 also,
 And in the gardin walketh to and
 fro, 1280
 And hath his thinges seyde ful curteisly.
 This gode wyf cam walking prively
 In-to the gardin, ther he walketh softe,
 And him saleweth, as she hath don ofte.
 A mayde child cam in hir companye, 1285
 Which as hir list she may governe and
 gye,
 For yet under the yerde was the mayde.
 'O dere cosin myn, daun Iohn,' she
 sayde,
 'What eyleth yow so rathe for to ryse ?'
 'Neece,' quod he, 'it oghte y-nough
 suffyse 1290
 Fyve houres for to slepe up-on a night,
 But it were for an old appalled wight,
 As been thise wedded men, that lye and
 dare
 As in a forme sit a very here,
 Were al for-straught with houndes grete
 and smale. 1295
 But dere nece, why be ye so pale ?
 I trowe certes that our gode man
 Hath yow laboured sith the night bigan,
 That yow were nede to resten hastily ?'
 And with that word he lough ful merily,
 And of his owene thought he wex al
 reed. 1301
 This faire wyf gan for to shake hir
 heed,
 And seyde thus, 'ye, god wot al,' quod
 she ;
 'Nay, cosin myn, it stant nat so with
 me.
 For, by that god that yaf me soule and
 lyf, 1305
 In al the reme of France is ther no wyf
 That lasse lust hath to that sory pley.
 For I may singe "allas" and "weylawey,
 That I was born," but to no wight,' quod
 she,
 'Dar I nat telle how that it stant with
 me. 1310

Wherfore I thinke out of this land to
 wende,
 Or elles of my-self to make an ende,
 So ful am I of drede and eek of care.'
 This monk bigan up-on this wyf to
 stare,
 And seyde, 'allas, my nece, god for-
 bede 1315
 That ye, for any sorwe or any drede,
 Fordo your-self; but telleth me your
 grief ;
 Paraventure I may, in your meschief,
 Conscille or helpe, and therefore telleth
 me
 Al your anoy, for it shal been secree ; 1320
 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, 1325
 Though men me wolde al in-to peces
 tere,
 Ne shal I never, for to goon to helle,
 Biwreye a word of thing that ye me telle,
 Nat for no cosinage ne alliance,
 But verraily, for love and affiance.' 1330
 Thus been they sworn, and heer-upon
 they kiste,
 And ech of hem tolde other what hem
 liste.
 'Cosin,' quod she, 'if that I hadde a
 space,
 As I have noon, and namely in this
 place, 1334
 Than wolde I telle a legende of my lyf,
 What I have suffred sith I was a wyf
 With myn housbonde, al be he your
 cosyn.'
 'Nay,' quod this monk, 'by god and
 seint Martyn,
 He is na moore cosin un-to me
 Than is this leef that hangeth on the
 tree! 1340
 I clepe him so, by Seint Denys of
 Fraunce,
 To have the more cause of aqueintaunce
 Of yow, which I have loved specially
 Aboven alle wommen sikerly ;
 This swere I yow on my professioun.
 Telleth your grief, lest that he come
 adoun, 1346

And hasteth yow, and gooth your wey anon.'

'My dere love,' quod she, 'o my daun Iohn,

Ful lief were me this conseil for to hyde,
But out it moot, I may namore abyde.
Myn housbond is to me the worste man
That ever was, sith that the world bigan.
But sith I am a wyf, it sit nat me
To tellen no wight of our privetee,
Neither a bedde, ne in non other place;
God shilde I sholde it tellen, for his
grace! 1356

A wyf ne shal nat seyn of hir housbond
But al honour, as I can understonde;
Save un-to yow thus muche I tellen shal;
As help me god, he is noght worth at
al 1360

In no degree the value of a flye.
But yet me greveth most his nigardye;
And wel ye woot that wommen naturelly
Desyren thinges sixe, as wel as I.
They wolde that hir housbondes sholde
be 1365

Hardy, and wyse, and riche, and ther-to
free,

And buxom to his wyf, and fresh a-bedde.
But, by that ilke lord that for us bledde,
For his honour, my-self for to arraye,
A Sunday next, I moste nedes paye 1370
An hundred frankes, or elles am I lorn.

Yet were me lever that I were unborn
Than me were doon a sclandre or
vileinye;

And if myn housbond eek it mighte
espye,

I nere but lost, and therefore I yow preye
Lene me this somme, or elles moot I
deye. 1376

Daun Iohn, I seye, lene me thise hun-
dred frankes;

Pardee, I wol nat faille yow my thankes,
If that yow list to doon that I yow
praye.

For at a certein day I wol yow paye,
And doon to yow what plesance and
servyce 1381

That I may doon, right as yow list
devyse.

And but I do, god take on me ven-
geance

As foul as ever had Geniloun of
France!'

This gentil monk answerde in this
manere; 1385

'Now, trewely, myn owene lady dere,
I have,' quod he, 'on yow so greea
routhe,

That I yow swere and plighte yow my
trouthe,

That whan your housbond is to Flaun-
dres fare,

I wol delivere yow out of this care; 1390
For I wol bringe yow an hundred
frankes.'

And with that word he caughte hir by
the flankes,

And hir embraceth harde, and kiste hir
ofte.

'Goth now your wey,' quod he, 'al stille
and solte,

And lat us dyne as sone as that ye may;
For by my chilindre it is pryme of day.

Goth now, and beeth as trewe as I shal
be.'

'Now, elles god forbede, sire,' quod
she,

And forth she gooth, as Iolif as a pye,
And bad the cokes that they sholde hem
hye, 1400

So that men mighte dyne, and that anon.
Up to hir housbond is this wyf y-gon,
And knokketh at his countour boldely.

'*Qui la?*' quod he. 'Peter! it am I,'
Quod she, 'what, sire, how longe wol ye
faste? 1405

How longe tyme wol ye rekene and
caste

Your sommes, and your bokes, and your
thinges?

The devel have part of alle swiche reken-
inges!

Ye have y-nough, pardee, of goddes
sonde;

Come don to-day, and lat your bagges
stonde. 1410

Ne be ye nat ashamed that daun Iohn
Shal fasting al this day elenge goon?

What! lat us here a messe, and go we
dyne.'

'Wyf,' quod this man, 'litel canstow
devyne

The curious businessse that we have. 1415
For of us chapmen, al-so god me save,

And by that lord that cleped is Seint
Yve,

Scarsly amonges twelve ten shul thryve,
Continuelly, lasting un-to our age.

We may wel make chere and good
visage, 1420

And dryve forth the world as it may be,
And kepen our estaat in privetee,
Til we be deed, or elles that we pleye
A pilgrimage, or goon out of the weye.
And therfor have I greet necessitee 1425
Up-on this queinte world tavyse me;
For evermore we mote stonde in drede
Of hap and fortune in our chapmanhede.

To Flaundes wol I go to-morwe at
day,

And come agayn, as sone as ever I may.
For which, my dere wyf, I thee biseke,
As be to every wight buxom and meke,
And for to kepe our good be curious,
And honestly governe wel our hous.

Thou hast y-nough, in every maner
wyse, 1435

That to a thrifty houshold may suffyse.
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 down he gooth, ne lenger wolde he
lette, 1440

But hastily a messe was ther seyde,
And spedily the tables were y-leyde,
And to the diner faste they hem spedde;
And richely this monk the chapman
felde.

At-after diner daun Iohn sobrelly 1445
This chapman took a-part, and prively
He seyde him thus, 'cosyn, it standeth
so,

That wel I see to Brugges wol ye go.
God and seint Austin spede yow and
gyde!

I prey yow, cosyn, wysly that ye ryde;
Governieth yow also of your diete 1451
Atemprely, and namely in this hete.
Bitwix us two nedeth no strange fare;
Fare-wel, cosyn; god shilde yow fro
care.

If any thing ther be by day or night,
If it lye in my power and my might, 1456
That ye me wol comande in any wyse,
It shal be doon, right as ye wol devyse.

O thing, er that ye goon, if it may be,
I wolde prey yow; for to lene me 1460
An hundred frankes, for a wyke or tweye,

For certein beestes that I moste beye,
To store with a place that is oures.

God help me so, I wolde it were youre!
I shal nat faille surely of my day, 1465
Nat for a thousand frankes, a myle-way.

But lat this thing be secree, I yow
preye,

For yet to-night these beestes moot I
beye;

And fare-now wel, myn owene cosin
dere,

Graunt mercy of your cost and of your
chere.' 1470

This noble marchant gentilly anon
Answerde, and seyde, 'o cosin myn, daun
Iohn,

Now sikerly this is a smal requeste;
My gold is youre, whan that it yow
leste.

And nat only my gold, but my chaf-
fare; 1475

Take what yow list, god shilde that ye
spare.

But o thing is, ye knowe it wel y-nogh,
Of chapmen, that hir moneye is hir
plogh.

We may creauce whyl we have a name,
But goldlees for to be, it is no game. 1480
Paye it agayn whan it lyth in your ese;
After my might ful fayn wolde I yow
plese.'

This hundred frankes he fette forth
anon,

And prively he took hem to daun Iohn.
No wight in al this world wiste of this
lone, 1485

Savage this marchant and daun Iohn
allone.

They drinke, and speke, and rome a
whyle and pleye,

Til that daun Iohn rydeth to his abbeye.

The morwe cam, and forth this mar-
chant rydeth

To Flaundes-ward; his prentis wel him
gydeth, 1490

Til he cam in-to Brugges merily.

Now gooth this marchant faste and bisily
Aboute his nede, and byeth and creaun-
ceth.

He neither pleyeth at the dees ne daun-
ceth;

But as a marchant, shortly for to telle, 1495
He let his lyf, and there I lete him dwelle.

The Sondag next this Marchant was
 agon,
 To Seint Denys y-comen is daun Iohn,
 With crowne and berd all fresh and newe
 y-shave.
 In al the hous ther nas so litel a
 knave, 1500
 Ne no wight elles, that he nas ful fayn,
 For that my lord daun Iohn was come
 agayn.
 And shortly to the point right for to gon,
 This faire wyf accorded with daun Iohn,
 That for this hundred frankes he sholde
 al night 1505
 Have hir in his armes bolt-upright;
 And this acord parfourned was in dede.
 In mirthe al night a bisy lyf they lede
 Til it was day, that daun Iohn wente his
 way,
 And bad the meynee 'fare-wel, have good
 day!' 1510
 For noon of hem, ne no wight in the
 toun,
 Hath of daun Iohn right no suspeciuon.
 And forth he rydeth hoom to his abbeye,
 Or where him list; namore of him I seye.
 This marchant, whan that ended was
 the faire, 1515
 To Seint Denys he gan for to repaire,
 And with his wyf he maketh feste and
 chere,
 And telleth hir that chaffare is so dere,
 That nedes moste he make a chevisaunce.
 For he was bounde in a reconaissance 1520
 To paye twenty thousand sheeld anon.
 For which this marchant is to Paris gon,
 To borwe of certein frendes that he
 hadde
 A certein frankes; and somme with him
 he ladde.
 And whan that he was come in-to the
 toun, 1525
 For greet chertee and greet affeccioun,
 Un-to daun Iohn he gooth him first, to
 pleye;
 Nat for to axe or borwe of him moneye,
 But for to wite and seen of his welfare,
 And for to tellen him of his chaffare, 1530
 As freendes doon whan they ben met
 y-fere.
 Daun Iohn him maketh feste and mery
 chere;
 And he him tolde agayn ful specially,

How he hadde wel y-boght and gra-
 ciously,
 Thanked be god, al hool his marchan-
 dyse. 1535
 Save that he moste, in alle maner wyse,
 Maken a chevisaunce, as for his beste,
 And thanne he sholde been in Ioye and
 reste.
 Daun Iohn answerde, 'certes, I am
 fayn
 That ye in hele ar comen hoom agayn. 1540
 And if that I were riche, as have I blisse,
 Of twenty thousand sheeld shold ye nat
 misse,
 For ye so kindly this other day
 Lente me gold; and as I can and may,
 I thanke yow, by god and by seint
 Iame! 1545
 But natheles I took un-to our dame,
 Your wyf at hoom, the same gold ageyn
 Upon your bench; she woot it wel, cer-
 teyn,
 By certein tokenes that I can hir telle.
 Now, by your leve, I may no lenger
 dwelle, 1550
 Our abbot wol out of this toun anon;
 And in his companye moot I gon.
 Grete wel our dame, myn owene nece
 swete,
 And fare-wel, dere cosin, til we mete!' 1555
 This Marchant, which that was ful war
 and wys,
 Creauncey hath, and payd eek in Parys,
 To certeyn Lumbardes, redy in hir hond,
 The somme of gold, and gat of hem his
 bond;
 And hoom he gooth, mery as a papeyai.
 For wel he knew he stood in swich
 array, 1560
 That nedes moste he winne in that viage
 A thousand frankes above al his costage.
 His wyf ful redy mette him atte gate,
 As she was wont of old usage algate,
 And al that night in mirthe they
 bisette; 1565
 For he was riche and cleerly out of dette.
 Whan it was day, this marchant gan em-
 brace
 His wyf al newe, and kiste hir on hir
 face,
 And up he gooth and maketh it ful tough.
 'Namore,' quod she, 'by god, ye have
 y-nough!' 1570

And wantounly agayn with him she
pleyde;
Til, atte laste, that this Marchant seyde,
'By god,' quod he, 'I am a litel wrooth
With yow, my wyf, al-thogh it be me
looth.
And woot ye why? by god, as that I
gesse, 1575
That ye han maad a maner straungenesse
Bitwixen me and my cosyn daun Iohn.
Ye sholde han warned me, er I had gon,
That he yow hadde an hundred frankes
payed
By redy tokene; and heeld him yvel
apayed, 1580
For that I to him spak of chevisaunce,
Me semed so, as by his contenaunce.
But natheles, by god our hevene king,
I thoghte nat to axe of him no-thing.
I prey thee, wyf, ne do namore so; 1585
'Tel me alwey, er that I fro thee go,
If any dettour hath in myn absence
Y-payed thee; lest, thurgh thy negligence,
I mighte him axe a thing that he hath
payed.'
This wyf was nat afered nor affrayed,
But boldly she seyde, and that anon:
'Marie, I defye the false monk, daun
Iohn!
I kepe nat of hise tokenes never a deel;
He took me certein gold, that woot I
weel!
What! yvel thedom on his monkes
snoute! 1595
For, god it woot, I wende, withouten
doute,

That he had yewe it me bycause of yow,
To doon ther-with myn honour and my
prow,
For cosinage, and eek for bele chere
That he hath had ful ofte tymes here. 1600
But sith I see I stonde in this disioint,
I wol answere yow shortly, to the point.
Ye han mo slakker dettours than am I!
For I wol paye yow wel and redily
Fro day to day; and, if so be I faille, 1605
I am your wyf; score it up-on my taille,
And I shal paye, as some as ever I may.
For, by my trouthe, I have on myn array,
And nat on wast, bistowed every deel.
And for I have bistowed it so weel 1610
For your honour, for goddes sake, I seye,
As be nat wrooth, but lat us laughe and
pleye.
Ye shal my Ioly body have to wedde;
By god, I wol nat paye yow but a-bedde.
Forgive it me, myn owene spouse dere;
Turne hiderward and maketh bettre
chere.' 1616
This marchant saugh ther was no
remedye,
And, for to chyde, it nere but greet folye,
Sith that the thing may nat amended be.
'Now, wyf,' he seyde, 'and I foryeve it
thee; 1620
But, by thy lyf, ne be namore so large;
Keep bet our good, this yewe I thee in
charge.'
Thus endeth now my tale, and god us
sende
Taling y-nough un-to our lyves ende.
Amen.

Here endeth the Shipmannes Tale.

THE PRIORESSE'S PROLOGUE.

*Bihold the mery wordes of the Host to
the Shipman and to the lady Prioressse.*

'WEL seyde, by *corpus dominus*,' quod
our hoste, 1625
'Now longe moot thou sayle by the
coste,
Sir gentil maister, gentil marinceer!
God yewe this monk a thousand last quad
yeer!

A ha! felawes! beth ware of swiche a
Iape!
The monk putte in the mannes hood an
ape, 1630
And in his wyves eek, by seint Austin!
Draweth no monkes more un-to your in.
But now passe over, and lat us seke
aboute,
Who shal now telle first, of al this
route,

Another tale;’ and with that word he
sayde, 1635
As curteisly as it had been a mayde,
‘My lady Prioress, by your leve,
So that I wiste I sholde yow nat greve,

I wolde demen that ye tellen sholde
A tale next, if so were that ye wolde.
Now wol ye vouche-sauf, my lady dere?’
‘Gladly,’ quod she, and seyde as ye
shal here.

Explicit.

THE PRIORESSES TALE.

The Prologe of the Prioresses Tale.

Domine, dominus noster.

O LORD our lord, thy name how mer-
veillous
Is in this large worlde y-sprad — quod
she : —
For noght only thy laude precious 1645
Parfourned is by men of dignitee,
But by the mouth of children thy bountee
Parfourned is, for on the brest soukinge
Som tyme shewen they thyn herynge.

Wherfor in laude, as I best can or
may, 1650
Of thee, and of the whyte lily flour
Which that thee bar, and is a mayde alway,
To telle a storie I wol do my labour ;
Not that I may enresen hir honour ;
For she hir-self is honour, and the rote
Of bountee, next hir sone, and soules
bote. — 1656

O moder mayde ! O mayde moder free !
O bush unbrent, brenninge in Moyses
sighte,
That ravedest doun fro the deitee,
Thurgh thyn humblesse, the goost that in
thalighte, 1660
Of whos vertu, whan he thyn herte lighte,
Conceved was the fadres sapience,
Help me to telle it in thy reverence !

Lady ! thy bountee, thy magnificence,
Thy vertu, and thy grete humilitee 1665
Ther may no tonge expresse in no sci-
ence ;
For som-tyme, lady, er men praye to thee,
Thou goost biforn of thy benignitee,

And getest us the light, thurgh thy
preyere,
To gyden us un-to thy sone so dere. 1670

My conning is so wayk, O blisful quene,
For to declare thy grete worthinesse,
That I ne may the weighte nat sustene,
But as a child of twelf monthe old, or
lesse,
That can unnethes any word expresse,
Right so fare I, and therfor I yow preyre,
Gydeþ my song that I shal of yow seye.

Explicit.

Here biginneth the Prioresses Tale.

Ther was in Asie, in a greet citee,
Amonges Cristen folk, a Iewerye,
Sustened by a lord of that cuntree 1680
For foule usure and luere of vilanye,
Hateful to Crist and to his companye;
And thurgh the strete men mighte ryde
or wende,
For it was free, and open at either ende.

A litel scole of Cristen folk ther stood
Doun at the ferther ende, in which ther
were 1686
Children an heep, y-comen of Cristen
blood,
That lerned in that scole yeer by yeer
Swich maner doctrine as men used there,
This is to seyn, to singen and to rede,
As smale children doon in hir childbede.

Among these children was a widwes sone,
A litel clergeon, seven yeer of age,
That day by day to scole was his wone,
And eek also, wher-as he saugh
thimage 1695

Of Cristes moder, hadde he in usage,
As him was taught, to knele adoun and
seye
His *Ave Marie*, as he goth by the weye.

Thus hath this widwe hir litel sone
y-taught
Our blisful lady, Cristes moder dere, 1700
To worshiþe ay, and he forgat it naught,
For sely child wol alday sone lere;
But ay, whan I remembre on this matere,
Seint Nicholas stant ever in my presence,
For he so yong to Crist did rever-
ence. 1705

This litel child, his litel book lerninge,
As he sat in the scole at his prymer,
He *Alma redemptoris* herde singe,
As children lerned hir antiphoner;
And, as he dorste, he drough him ner and
ner, 1710
And herkned ay the wordes and the note,
Till he the firste vers coude al by rote.

Noght wiste he what this Latin was to
seye,
For he so yong and tendre was of age;
But on a day his felaw gan he
preye 1715
Texpounden him this song in his langage,
Or telle him why this song was in
usage;
This preye he him to construe and
declare
Ful ofte tyme upon his knowes bare.

His felaw, which that elder was than
he, 1720
Answerde him thus: 'this song, I have
herd seye,
Was makid of our blisful lady free,
Hir to salue, and eek hir for to preye
To been our help and socour whan we
deye.
I can no more expounde in this
matere; 1725
I lerne song, I can but smal grammere.'

'And is this song makid in reverence
Of Cristes moder?' seyde this innocent;
'Now certes, I wol do my diligence
To come it al, er Cristemasse is
went; 1730

Though that I for my prymer shal be
shent,
And shal be beten thryës in an houre,
I wol it come, our lady for to honoure.'

His felaw taughte him homward prively,
Fro day to day, til he coude it by
rote, 1735
And than he song it wel and boldly
Fro word to word, acording with the
note;
Twyës a day it passed thurgh his throte,
To scoleward and homward whan he
wente;
On Cristes moder set was his
entente. 1740

As I have seyde, thurgh-out the Iewerye
This litel child, as he cam to and fro,
Ful merily than wolde he singe, and crye
O Alma redemptoris ever-mo.
The swetnes hath his herte perced
so 1745
Of Cristes moder, that, to hir to preye,
He can nat stinte of singing by the weye.

Our firste fo, the serpent Sathanas,
That hath in Iewes herte his waspes nest,
Up swal, and seide, 'o Hebraik peple,
allas! 1750
Is this to yow a thing that is honest,
That swich a boy shal walken as him lest
In your despyt, and singe of swich
sentence,
'Which is agayn your lawes reverence?'

Fro thennes forth the Iewes han con-
spyred 1755
This innocent out of this world to chace;
An homicyde ther-to han they hyred,
That in an aley hadde a privee place;
And as the child gan for-by for to pace,
This cursed lew him hente and heeld
him faste, 1760
And kitte his throte, and in a pit him
caste.

I seye that in a wardrobe they him threwe
Wher-as these Iewes purgen hir entraille.
O cursed folk of Herodes al newe,
What may your yvel entente yow
availle? 1765
Mordre wol out, certein, it wol nat faille,

And namely ther thonour of god shal
sprede,
The blood out cryeth on your cursed
dede.

'O martir, souted to virginitee,
Now maystou singen, folwing ever in
oon 1770

The whyte lamb celestial,' quod she,
'Of which the grete evangelist, seint
Iohn,

In Pathmos wroot, which seith that they
that goon

Biforn this lamb, and singe a song al
newe,

That never, fleshly, wommen they ne
knewe.' 1775

This povre widwe awaiteth al that night
After hir litel child, but he cam noght;
For which, as sone as it was dayes light,
With face pale of drede and bisy thought,
She hath at scole and elles-wher him
soght, 1780

Til finally she gan so fer espye
That he last seyn was in the Iewerye.

With modres pitee in hir brest enclosed,
She gooth, as she were half out of hir
minde,

To every place wher she hath sup-
posed 1785

By lyklihedde hir litel child to finde;
And ever on Cristes moder meke and
kinde

She cryde, and atte laste thus she
wroghte,

Among the cursed Iewes she him soghte.

She frayneth and she preyeth pit-
ously 1790

To every Iew that dwelte in thilke place,
To telle hir, if hir child wente oght
for-by.

They seyde, 'nay'; but Iesu, of his grace,
Yaf in hir thought, inwith a litel space,
That in that place after hir sone she
cryde, 1795

Wher he was casten in a pit bisyde.

O grete god, that parfournest thy laude
By mouth of innocents, lo heer thy
might!

This gemme of chastitee, this emeraude,
And eek of martirdom the ruby
bright, 1800

Ther he with throte y-corven lay upright,
He '*Alma redemptoris*' gan to singe
So loude, that al the place gan to ringe.

The Cristen folk, that thurgh the strete
wente,

In coomen, for to wondre up-on this
thing, 1805

And hastily they for the provost sente;
He cam anon with-outen taryng,

And herieth Crist that is of heven king,
And eek his moder, honour of mankinde,

And after that, the Iewes leet he
binde. 1810

This child with pitous lamentacioun
Up-taken was, singing his song alway;

And with honour of greet processiou
They carien him un-to the nexte abbay.

His moder swowning by the bere
lay; 1815

Unnethe might the peple that was there
This newe Rachel bringe fro his bere.

With torment and with shamful deth
echon

This provost dooth thise Iewes for to
sterve

That of this mordre wiste, and that
anon; 1820

He nolde no swich cursednesse observe.
Yvel shal have, that yvel wol deserve.

Therfor with wilde hors he dide hem
drawe,

And after that he heng hem by the lawe.

Up-on his bere ay lyth this innocent
Biforn the chief auter, whyl masse laste,

And after that, the abbot with his covent
Han sped hem for to burien him ful faste;

And whan they holy water on him caste,
Yet spak this child, whan spreynd was
holy water, 1830

And song — '*O Alma redemptoris
mater!*'

This abbot, which that was an holy man
As monkes been, or elles oghten be,

This yonge child to coniare he bigan,
And seyde, 'o dere child, I halse thee,

In vertu of the holy Trinitee, 1836
Tell me what is thy cause for to singe,
Sith that thy throte is cut, to my seminge?'

'My throte is cut un-to my nekke-boon,'
Seyd this child, 'and, as by wey of
kinde, 1840
I sholde have deyed, ye, longe tyme agoon,
But Iesu Crist, as ye in bokes finde,
Wil that his glorie laste and be in minde,
And, for the worship of his moder dere,
Yet may I singe "O Alma" loude and
clere. 1845

This welle of mercy, Cristes moder swete,
I lovede alwey, as after my conninge;
And whan that I my lyf sholde forlete,
To me she cam, and bad me for to singe
This antem verrailly in my deyinge, 1850
As ye han herd, and, whan that I had
songe,
Me thoughte, she leyde a greyn up-on
my tonge.

Wherfor I singe, and singe I moot certeyn
In honour of that blisful mayden free,
Til fro my tonge of-taken is the greyn;
And afterward thus seyde she to me, 1856
"My litel child, now wol I fecche thee
Whan that the greyn is fro thy tonge
y-take;
Be nat agast, I wol thee nat forsake."'

Here is ended the Prioresses Tale.

This holy monk, this abbot, him mene
I, 1860
His tonge out-caughte, and took a-wey
the greyn,
And he yaf up the goost ful softly.
And whan this abbot had this wonder
seyn,
His salte teres triklidoun as reyn,
And gruf he fil al plat up-on the
grounde, 1865
And stille he lay as he had been y-bounde.

The covent eek lay on the pavement
Weping, and herien Cristes moder dere,
And after that they ryse, and forth ben
went,
And toke away this martir fro his
bere, 1870
And in a tombe of marbul-stones clere
Enclosen they his litel body swete;
Ther he is now, god leve us for to
mete.

O yonge Hugh of Lincoln, slayn also
With cursid Jewes, as it is notable, 1875
For it nis but a litel whyle ago;
Preye eek for us, we sinful folk un-
stable,
That, of his mercy, god so merciable
On us his grete mercy multiplye,
For reverence of his moder Marye.
Amen. 1880

PROLOGUE TO SIR THOPAS.

*Bihold the murye wordes of the Host to
Chaucer.*

WHAN seyde was al this miracle, every
man
As sobre was, that wonder was to se,
Til that our hoste Iapen tho bigan,
And than at erst he loked up-on me,
And seyde thus, 'what man artow?'
quod he; 1885
'Thou lokest as thou woldest finde an
hare,
For ever up-on the ground I see thee
stare.

Approche neer, and loke up merily.
Now war yow, sirs, and lat this man have
place;
He in the waast is shape as wel as I; 1890
This were a popet in an arm tenbrace
For any womman, smal and fair of
face.
He semeth elvish by his contenance,
For un-to no whyte dooth he daliaunce.
Sey now somewhat, sin other folk han
sayd; 1895
Tel us a tale of mirthe, and that
anoon;'

'Hoste,' quod I, 'ne beth nat yvel
apayd,
For other tale certes can I noon,
But of a ryme I lerned longe agoon.'

'Ye, that is good,' quod he; 'now shul
we here 1900
Som deyntee thing, me thinketh by his
chere.'

Explicit.

SIR THOPAS.

*Here biginneth Chaucer's Tale of
Thopas.*

LISTETH, lordes, in good entent,
And I wol telle verrayment
Of mirthe and of solas;
Al of a knyght was fair and gent 1905
In bataille and in tourneyment,
His name was sir Thopas.

Y-born he was in fer contree,
In Flaundes, al biyonde the see,
At Popering, in the place; 1910
His fader was a man ful free,
And lord he was of that contree,
As it was goddes grace.

Sir Thopas wex a doghty swayn,
Whyt was his face as payndemayn, 1915
His lippes rede as rose;
His rode is lyk scarlet in grayn,
And I yow telle in good certayn,
He hadde a semely nose.

His heer, his berd was lyk saffroun, 1920
That to his girdel raughte adoun;
His shoon of Cordewane.
Of Brugges were his hosen broun,
His robe was of ciclatoun,
That coste many a lane. 1925

He coude hunte at wilde deer,
And ryde an hauking for riveer,
With grey goshawk on honde;
Ther-to he was a good archeer,
Of wrastling was ther noon his peer, 1930
Ther any ram shal stonde.

Ful many a mayde, bright in bour,
They moorne for him, paramour,
Whan hem were bet to slepe;

But he was chast and no lechour, 1935
And sweet as is the bremble-flour
That bereth the rede hepe.

And so bifel up-on a day,
For sothe, as I yow telle may,
Sir Thopas wolde out ryde; 1940
He worth upon his stede gray,
And in his honde a launcegay,
A long swerd by his syde.

He priketh thurgh a fair forest,
Ther-inne is many a wilde best, 1945
Ye, bothe bukke and hare;
And, as he priketh north and est,
I telle it yow, him hadde alмест
Bitid a sory care.

Ther springen herbes grete and smale,
The lycorys and cetewale, 1951
And many a clowe-gilofre;
And notemuge to putte in ale,
Whether it be moyste or stale,
Or for to leye in cofre. 1955

The briddes singe, it is no nay,
The sparhawk and the papeciay,
That Ioye it was to here;
The thrustelcok made eek his lay,
The wodedowve upon the spray 1960
She sang ful loude and clere.

Sir Thopas fil in love-longinge
Al whan he herde the thrustel singe,
And priked as he were wood:
His faire stede in his prikinge 1965
So swatte that men mighte him wringe,
His sydes were al blood.

Sir Thopas eek so wery was
For prikinge on the softe gras,
So fiers was his corage, 1970

- That doun he leyde him in that plas
To make his stede som solas,
And yaf him good forage.
- 'O seinte Marie, *benedicite!*
What eyleth this love at me 1975
To binde me so sore?
Me dremed al this night, pardee,
An elf-queen shal my lemman be,
And slepe under my gore.
- An elf-queen wol I love, y-wis, 1980
For in this world no womman is
Worthy to be my make
In toune;
Alle othere wommen I forsake,
And to an elf-queen I me take 1985
By dale and eek by doune!'
- In-to his sadel he clamb anoon,
And priketh over style and stoon
An elf-queen for tespye,
Til he so longe had riden and goon 1990
That he fond, in a privee woon,
The contree of Fairye
So wilde;
For in that contree was ther noon
That to him dorste ryde or goon, 1995
Neither wyf ne childe.
- Til that ther cam a greet geaunt,
His name was sir Olifaunt,
A perilous man of dede;
He seyde, 'child, by Termagaunt, 2000
But-if thou prike out of myn haunt,
Anon I slee thy stede
With mace.
Heer is the queen of Fayërye, 2004
With harpe and pype and simphonye
Dwelling in this place.'
- The child seyde, 'al-so mote I thee,
Tomorwe wol I mete thee
Whan I have myn armoure;
And yet I hope, *par ma fay,* 2010
That thou shalt with this launcegay
Abyen it ful soure;
Thy mawe
Shal I percen, if I may,
Er it be fully pryme of day, 2015
For heer thou shalt be slawe.'
- Sir Thopas drow abak ful faste;
This geaunt at him stones caste
Out of a fel staf-slinge;
But faire escapeth child Thopas, 2020
And thurgh his fair beringe.
- Yet listeth, lordes, to my tale
Merier than the nightingale,
For now I wol yow rounne 2025
How sir Thopas with sydes smale,
Priking over hil and dale,
Is come agayn to toune.
- His merie men comanded he
To make him bothe game and glee, 2030
For nedes moste he fighte
With a geaunt with hevedes thre,
For paramour and Iolitee
Of oon that shoon ful brighte.
- 'Do come,' he seyde, 'my minstrales,
And gestours, for to tellen tales 2036
Anon in myn arminge;
Of romances that been royales,
Of popes and of cardinales,
And eek of love-lykinge.' 2040
- They fette him first the swete wyn,
And mede eek in a maselyn,
And royal spicerye
Of gingebred that was ful fyn,
And lycorys, and eek comyn, 2045
With sugre that is so trye.
- He dide next his whyte lere
Of clooth of lake fyn and clere
A breech and eek a sherte;
And next his sherte an aketoun, 2050
And over that an habergeoun
For percinge of his herte;
- And over that a fyn hauberk,
Was al y-wrought of Iewes werk,
Ful strong it was of plate; 2055
And over that his cote-armour
As whyt as is a lily-flour,
In which he wol debate.
- His sheeld was al of gold so reed,
And ther-in was a bores heed, 2060
A charboele bisyde;

And there he swoor, on ale and breed, How that 'the geaunt shal be deed, Bityde what bityde!'		Of bataille and of chivalry, And of ladyes love-drury Anon I wol yow telle.	2085
His Iambeux were of quirboilly, His swerdes shethe of yvory, His helm of laton bright; His sadel was of rewel-boon, His brydel as the sonne shoon, Or as the mone light.	2065 2070	Men speke of romances of prys, Of Horn child and of Ypotys, Of Bevis and sir Gy, Of sir Libeux and Pleyn-damour; But sir Thopas, he bereth the flour Of royal chivalry.	2090
His spere was of fyn ciprees, That bodeth werre, and no-thing pees, The heed ful sharpe y-grounde; His stede was al dappel-gray, It gooth an ambel in the way Ful softely and rounde In londe.	2075	His gode stede al he bistrood, And forth upon his wey he glood As sparkle out of the bronde; Up-on his crest he bar a tour, And ther-in stiked a lily-flour, God shilde his cors fro shonde!	2095
Lo, lordes myne, heer is a fit! If ye wol any more of it, To telle it wol I fonde.	2080	And for he was a knight auntrous, He nolde slepen in non hous, But ligen in his hode; His brighte helm was his wonger, And by him baiteth his dextrer Of herbes fyne and gode.	2100
[The Second Fit.]		Him-self drank water of the wel, As did the knight sir Percivel, So worthy under wede, Til on a day—	2105
Now hold your mouth, <i>par charitee</i> , Bothe knight and lady free, And herkneth to my spelle;			

Here the Host stinteth Chaucer of his Tale of Thopas.

PROLOGUE TO MELIBEUS.

'No more of this, for goddes dignitee,' Quod oure hoste, 'for thou makest me So very of thy verray lewednesse That, also wisly god my soule blesse, Myn eres aken of thy drasty speche; Now swiche a rym the devel I biteche! This may wel be rym dogerel,' quod he. 2115 'Why so?' quod I, 'why wiltow lette me More of my tale than another man, Sin that it is the beste rym I can?' 'By god,' quod he, 'for pleynly, at a word, Thy drasty ryming is nat worth a tord; Thou doost nought elles but despendest tyme, 2121	2111	Sir, at o word, thou shalt no lenger ryme. Lat see wher thou canst tellen aught in geste, Or telle in prose somewhat at the leste In which ther be som mirthe or som doe- tryne.' 2125 'Gladly,' quod I, 'by goddes swete pyne, I wol yow telle a litel thing in prose, That oghte lyken yow, as I suppose, Or elles, certes, ye been to daungerous. It is a moral tale vertuuous, 2130 Al be it told som-tyme in sondry wyse Of sondry folk, as I shal yow devyse. As thus; ye woot that every evangelist, That telleth us the peyne of Iesu Crist,
--	------	--

Ne saith nat al thing as his felaw
 dooth, 2135
 But natheles, hir sentence is al sooth,
 And alle acorden as in hir sentence,
 Al be ther in hir telling difference.
 For somme of hem seyn more, and somme
 lesse, 2139
 When they his pitous passioun expresse;
 I mene of Marke, Mathew, Luk and Iohn;
 But doutelees hir sentence is al oon.
 Therfor, lordinges alle, I yow biseche,
 If that ye thinke I varie as in my speche,
 As thus, thogh that I telle som-what
 more 2145

Of proverbes, than ye han herd bifore,
 Comprehended in this litel tretis here,
 To enforce with the theffect of my
 matere,
 And thogh I nat the same wordes seye
 As ye han herd, yet to yow alle I preye,
 Blameth me nat; for, as in my sen-
 tence, 2151
 Ye shul not fynden moche difference
 Fro the sentence of this tretis lyte
 After the which this mery tale I wryte.
 And therfor herkneth what that I shal
 seye, 2155
 And lat me tellen al my tale, I preye.'

Explicit.

THE TALE OF MELIBEUS.

[The mark / denotes the lines.]

*Here beginneth Chaucers Tale of
 Melibee.*

§ 1. A yong man called Melibeus,
 mighty and riche, bigat up-on his
 wyf that called was Prudence, a
 doghter which that called was
 Sophie. /

§ 2. Upon a day bifel that he for
 his desport is went in-to the feeldes
 him to pleye. / His wyf and eek
 his doghter hath he left inwith his
 hous, of which the dores weren fast
 y-shette. / Thre of his olde foos
 han it espyed, and setten laddres to
 the walles of his hous, and by the
 2160 windowes ben 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 eres,
 in hir nose, and in hir mouth; and
 leften hir for deed, and wenten
 away. /

§ 3. When Melibeus retourned
 was in-to his hous, and saugh al
 this meschief, he, lyk a mad man,
 rendinge his clothes, gan to wepe
 and crye. /

§ 4. Prudence his wyf, as ferforth
 as she dorste, bisoghte him of his
 weping for to stinte; / but nat for-
 thy he gan to crye and wepen ever
 lenger the more. /

§ 5. This noble wyf Prudence re-
 membered hir upon the sentence of
 Ovide, in his book that cleped is
 The Remedie of Love, wher-as he
 seith; / 'he is a fool that destourb-
 eth the moder to wepen in the deeth
 of hir child, til she have wept hir
 fille, as for a certain tyme; / and
 thanne shal man doon his diligence
 with amiable wordes hir to recon-
 forte, and preyen hir of hir weping
 for to stinte.' / For which resoun
 this noble wyf Prudence suffred hir
 housbond for to wepe and crye as
 for a certain space; / and whan she
 saugh hir tyme, she seyde him in
 this wyse. 'Allas, my lord,' quod
 she, 'why make ye your-self for to
 be lyk a fool? / For sothe, it 2170
 aperteneth nat to a wys man, to
 maken swiche a sorwe. / Your
 doghter, with the grace of god, shal
 warisshe and escape. / And al
 were it so that she right now were

deed, ye ne oghte nat as for
 hir deeth your-self to destroye. /
 Senck seith: "the wise man shal
 nat take to greet disconfort for the
 deeth of his children, / but certes
 he sholde suffren it in pacience, as
 wel as he abyde the deeth of his
 owene propre persone." /

2175

§ 6. This Melibeus answerde
 anon and seyde, 'What man,' quod
 he, 'sholde of his weping stinte,
 that hath so greet a cause for to
 wepe? / Iesu Crist, our lord, him-
 self wepte for the deeth of Lazarus
 his freend.' / Prudence answerde,
 'Certes, wel I woot, attemptree
 weping is no-thing defended to him
 that sorweful is, amonges folk in
 sorwe, but it is rather graunted him
 to wepe. / The Apostle Paul un-to
 the Romayns wryteth, "man shal
 reioyse with hem that maken Ioye,
 and wepen with swich folk as
 wepen." / But thogh attemptree

2180

weping be y-graunted, outrageous
 weping certes is defended. / Mes-
 sure of weping sholde be considered,
 after the lore that techeth us
 Senek. / "Whan that thy freend
 is deed," quod he, "lat nat thyne
 eye to moyste been of teres, ne to
 muche drye; although the teres
 come to thyne eye, lat hem nat
 falle." / And whan thou hast for-
 goon thy freend, do diligence to
 gete another freend; and this is
 more wysdom than for to wepe for
 thy freend which that thou hast
 lorn; for ther-inne is no bote. /
 And therefore, if ye governe yow by
 sapience, put away sorwe out of
 your herte. / Remembre yow that
 Iesus Syrak seith: "a man that is
 Ioyous and glad in herte, it him
 conserveth florissing in his age;
 but soothly sorweful herte maketh
 his bones drye." /

2185

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." /

Wherfore us oghte, as wel in the
 deeth of our children as in the losse
 of our goodes temporels, have
 pacience. /

§ 7. Remembre yow up-on the
 pacient Iob, whan he hadde lost his
 children and his temporels substance,
 and in his body endured and re-
 ceived ful many a grevous tribu-
 lacioun; yet seyde he thus: / "our
 lord hath yeven it me, our lord hath
 biraft it me; right as our lord hath
 wold, right so it is doon; blessed be
 the name of our lord." / To this
 foreside thinges answerde Melibeus
 un-to his wyf Prudence: 'Alle thy
 wordes,' quod he, 'been sothe, and
 ther-to profitable; but trewely myn
 herte is troubled with this sorwe so
 grevously, that I noot what to
 done.' / 'Lat calle,' quod Pru-
 dence, 'thy trewe freendes alle, and
 thy linage whiche that been wyse;
 telleth your cas, and herkneth what
 they seye in conseiling, and yow
 governe after hir sentence. / Sal-
 omon seith: "werk alle thy thinges
 by conseil, and thou shalt never
 repente." /

2190

§ 8. Thanne, by the conseil of
 his wyf Prudence, this Melibeus leet
 callen a greet congregacioun of
 folk; / as surgiens, phisiciens, olde
 folk and yonge, and somme of hise
 olde enemyes reconciled as by hir
 semblaunt to his love and in-to
 his grace; / and ther-with-al ther
 comen somme of hise neighebores
 that diden him reverence more for
 drede than for love, as it happeth
 ofte. / Ther comen also ful many
 subtile flatterers, and wyse advocats
 lerned in the lawe. /

2195

§ 9. And whan this folk togidre
 assembled weren, this Melibeus in
 sorweful wyse shewed hem his cas; /
 and by the manere of his speche it
 semed that in herte he bar a cruel
 ire, redy to doon vengeance up-on
 hise foom, and sodeynly desired that
 the werre sholde biginne; / but
 natheles yet axed he hir conseil
 upon this matere. / A surgien, by

2200

licence and assent of swiche as weren wyse, up roos and un-to Melibeus seyde as ye may here. /

2205 § 10. 'Sir,' quod he, 'as to us surgiens aperteneth, that we do to every wight the beste that we can, wher-as we been with-holde, and to our pacients that we do no damage; / wherfore it happeth, many tyme and ofte, that whan twey men han everich wounded other, oon same surgien heleth hem bothe; / wherfore un-to our art it is nat pertinent to norice werre ne parties to supporte. / But certes, as to the warissinge of your doghter, al-be-it so that she perilously be wounded, we shullen do so cntentif busnesse fro day to night, that with the grace of god she shal be hool and sound
2210 as sone as is possible.' / Almost right in the same wyse the phisiicians answerden, save that they seyden a fewe wordes more: / 'That, right as maladyes been cured by hir contraries, right so shul men warisshe were by vengeaunce.' / His neighbores, ful of envye, his feyned freendes that semeden reconciled, and his flatereres, / maden semblant of weping, and empeireden and agreggeden muchel of this matere, in preising greetly Melibee of might, of power, of richesse, and of freendes, despysinge the power of his adversaries, / and seiden outrely that he anon sholde wreken him on his foos and biginne
2215 werre. /

§ 11. Up roos thanne an advocat that was wys, by leve and by conseil of othere that were wyse, and seyde: / 'I ordinges, the nede for which we been assembled in this place is a ful hevy thing and an heigh matere, / by-cause of the wrong and of the wikkednesse that hath be doon, and eek by resoun of the grete damages that in tyme cominge been possible to fallen for this same cause; / and eek by resoun of the grete richesse and power of the parties bothe; / for the whiche

resouns it were a ful greet peril to erren in this matere. / Wherfore, 2215 Melibeus, this is our sentence: we conseilte yow aboven alle thing, that right anon thou do thy diligence in kepinge of thy propre persone, in swich a wyse that thou ne wante noon espye ne wacche, thy body for to save. / And after that we conseilte, that in thyn hous thou sette suffisant garnisoun, so that they may as well thy body as thyn hous defende. / But certes, for to moeve werre, or sodeynly for to doon vengeaunce, 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. / For the commune proverbe seith thus: "he that sone demeth, sone shal repente." / And
2220 eek men seyn that thilke Iuge is wys, that sone understandeth a matere and Iuggeth by leyser. / For al-be-it so that alle taryng be anoyful, algates it is nat to repreve in yevinge of Iugement, ne in vengeaunce-taking, whan it is suffisant and resonable. / And that shewed our lord Iesu Crist by ensample; for whan that the womman that was taken in avoutrie was broght in his presence, to knowen what sholde be doon with hir persone, al-be-it so that he wiste wel him-self what that he wolde answer, yet ne wolde he nat answer sodeynly, but he wolde have deliberacioun, and in the ground he wroot twyes. / And by thise causes we axen deliberacioun, and we shal thanne, by the grace of god, conseilte thee thing that shal be profitable.' /

§ 12. Up stirten thanne the yonge folk at-ones, and the moste partie of that companye han scorned the olde wyse men, and bigonnen to make noyse, and seyden: that, /
2225 right so as whyl that iren is hoot, men sholden smyte, right so, men sholde wreken hir wronges whyle that they been fresshe and newe;

and with loud voys they cryden,
'werre! werre!' /

Up roos tho oon of this olde
wyse, and with his hand made con-
tenaunce that men sholde holden
hem stille and yeven him audience. /
'Lordinges,' quod he, 'ther is ful
many a man that cryeth "werre!
werre!" that woot ful litel what
werre amounteth. / Werre at his
beginning hath so greet an entree
and so large, that every wight may
entre whan him lyketh, and lightly
finde werre. / But, certes, what
ende that shal ther-of bifalle, it is
2230 nat light to knowe. / For sothly,
whan that werre is ones bigonne,
ther is ful many a child unborn of
his moder, that shal sterve yong by-
cause of that ilke werre, or elles live
in sorwe and dye in wrecchednesse. /
And ther-fore, er that any werre
biginne, men moste have greet con-
seil and greet deliberacioun.' / And
whan this olde man wende to en-
force his tale by resons, wel ny
alle at-ones bigonne they to ryse for
to breken his tale, and beden him
ful ofte his wordes for to abregge. /
For soothly, he that precheth to
hem that listen nat heren his wordes,
his sermon hem anoyeth. / For
Jesus Syrak seith: that "musik in
wepinge is anoyous thing;" this is
to seyn: as muche availleth to
speken bifore folk to whiche his
speche anoyeth, as dooth to singe
2235 biforn him that wepeth. / And
whan this wyse man saugh that him
wanted audience, al shamefast he
sette him doun agayn. / For Sal-
omon seith: "ther-as thou ne mayst
have noon audience, enforce thee
nat to speke." / 'I see wel,' quod
this wyse man, 'that the commune
proverbe is sooth; that "good con-
seil wanteth whan it is most
nede."' /

§ 13. Yet hadde this Melibeus in
his conseil many folk, that prively
in his ere conseilled him certeyn
thing, and conseilled him the con-
trarie in general audience. /

Whan Melibeus hadde herd that
the gretteste partie of his conseil
weren accorded that he sholde
maken werre, anon he consented
to hir conseil, and fully affermed
hir sentence. / Thanne dame Pru-
dence, whan that she saugh how
2240 that hir housbonde shoop him for
to wreken him on his foom, and to
biginne werre, she in ful humble
wyse, when she saugh hir tyme,
seide him these wordes: / 'My lord,'
quod she, 'I yow biseche as hertely
as I dar and can, ne haste yow nat
to faste, and for alle guerdons as
yeveth me audience. / For Piers
Alfonse seith: "who-so that dooth
to that other good or harm, haste
thee nat to quyten it; for in this
wyse thy freend wol abyde, and
thyn enemy shal the lenger live in
drede." / The proverbe seith:
"he hasteth wel that wysely can
abyde;" and in wikked haste is no
profit.' /

§ 14. This Melibee answerde
un-to his wyf Prudence: 'I pur-
pose nat,' quod he, 'to werke by thy
conseil, for many causes and resouns.
For certes every wight wolde holde
me thanne a fool; / this is to seyn,
2245 if I, for thy conseil, wolde
chaungen thinges that been or-
deyned and affermed by so manye
wyse. / Secoundly I seye, that
alle women been wikke and noon
good of hem alle. For "of a thou-
sand men," seith Salomon, "I fond
a good man: but certes, of alle
women, good womman fond I
never." / 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
forbode that it so were. / For
Jesus Syrak seith; "that if the wyf
have maistrie, she is contrarious to
hir housbonde." / And Salomon
seith: "never in thy lyf, to thy wyf,
ne to thy child, ne to thy freend,
ne yeve no power over thy-self. For
bette it were that thy children aske
of thy persone thinges that hem

nedeth, than thou see thy-self in the
 2250 handes of thy children." / And
 also, if I wolde werke by thy con-
 seilling, certes my conseilling moste
 som tyme be secrete, til it were tyme
 that it moste be knowe; and this ne
 may nought be. / [For it is writen,
 that "the langlerie of wommen
 can hyden thinges that they witen
 nought." / Furthermore, the philo-
 sophre seith, "in wikked conseil
 wommen venquisshe men;" and
 for this resouns I ne owe nat usen
 thy conseil.'] /

§ 15. Whanna dame Prudence,
 ful debonairly and with greet pa-
 cience, hadde herd al that hir hous-
 bonde lyked for to seye, thanne
 axed she of him licence for to speke,
 and seyde in this wyse. / 'My
 lord,' quod she, 'as to your firste
 resoun, certes it may lightly been
 answered. For I seye, that it is no
 folie to change conseil whan the
 thing is chaunged; or elles whan
 the thing semeth otherweyes than
 2255 it was biforn. / And more-over I
 seye, that though ye han sworn and
 bihight to perfourne your emprise,
 and natheles ye weyve to perfourne
 thilke same emprise by luste cause,
 men sholde nat seyn therefore that
 ye were a lyer ne forsworn. / For
 the book seith, that "the wyse man
 maketh no lesing whan he turneth
 his corage to the bettre." / And
 al-be-it so that your emprise be
 establised and ordeyned by greet
 multitude of folk, yet thar ye nat
 accomplice thilke same ordinaunce
 but yow lyke. / For the trouthe
 of thinges and the profit been rather
 founden in fewe folk that been wyse
 and ful of resoun, than by greet
 multitude of folk, ther every man
 cryeth and clatereth what that him
 lyketh. Soothly swich multitude is
 nat honeste. / As to the seconde
 resoun, where-as ye seyn that "alle
 wommen been wikke," save your
 grace, certes ye despysen alle wom-
 men in this wyse; and "he that
 alle despyseth alle displeseth," as

seith the book. / And Senek seith 2260
 that "who-so wole have sapience,
 shal no man dispreise; but he shal
 gladly techen the science that he
 can, with-outen presumpcioun or
 pryde. / And swiche thinges as he
 nought ne can, he shal nat been
 ashamed to lerne hem and enquere
 of lasse folk than him-self." / And
 sir, that ther hath been many a good
 womman, may lightly be preved. /
 For certes, sir, our lord Iesu Crist
 wolde never have descended to be
 borne of a womman, if alle wommen
 hadden ben wikke. / And after
 that, for the grete bountee that is in
 wommen, our lord Iesu Crist, whan
 he was risen fro deeth to lyve, ap-
 peered rather to a womman than to
 his apostles. / And though that 2265
 Salomon seith, that "he ne fond
 never womman good," it folweth
 nat therefore that alle wommen ben
 wikke. / For though that he ne fond
 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 sov-
 ereyn bountee, he fond no wom-
 man; / this is to seyn, that ther is
 no wight that hath sovereyn bountee
 save god alone; as he him-self re-
 cordeth in his Evaungelie. / For
 ther nis no creature so good that
 him ne wanteth somewhat of the
 perfeccioun of god, that is his
 maker. / Your thridde resoun is 2270
 this: ye seyn that "if ye governe
 yow by my conseil, it sholde seme
 that ye hadde yeve me the maistrie
 and the lordshipe over your per-
 sone." / Sir, save your grace, it is
 nat so. For if it were so, that no
 man sholde be counselled but only
 of hem that hadden lordshipe and
 maistrie of his persone, men wolden
 nat be counselled so ofte. / For
 soothly, thilke man that asketh con-
 seil of a purpos, yet hath he free
 chois, wheither he wole werke by
 that conseil or noon. / And as to
 your fourthie resoun, ther ye seyn

that "the Ianglerie of women hath hid thinges that they woot nocht," as who seith, that "a woman can nat hyde that she woot;" / sir, these wordes been understonde of women that been Iangleresses and wikked; / of whiche women, men seyn that "three thinges dryven a man out of his hous; that is to seyn, smoke, dropping of reyn, and wikked wyves;" / and of swiche women seith Salomon, that, "it were better dwelle in desert, than with a woman that is riotous." / And sir, by your leve, that am nat I; / for ye han ful ofte assayed my grete silence and my gret pacience; and eek how wel that I can hyde and hele thinges that men oghte secreely to hyde. / And soothly, as to your fifte resoun, wher-as ye seyn, that "in wikked conseil women venquisshe men;" god woot, thilke resoun stant here in no stede. / For understand now, ye asken conseil to do wikkednesse; / and if ye wole werken wikkednesse, and your wyf restreyneth thilke wikked purpos, and overcometh yow by resoun and by good conseil; / certes, your wyf oghte rather to be preised than y-blamed. / Thus sholde ye understonde the philosophie that seith, "in wikked conseil women venquisshe hir housbondes." / And ther-as ye blamen alle women and hir resouns, I shal shewe yow by manye ensamples that many a woman hath ben ful good, and yet been; and hir conseil ful hoolsome and profitable. / Eek 2280 som men han seyde, that "the conseilliche of women is outhur to dere, or elles to litel of prys." / But al-be-it so, that ful many a woman is badde, and hir conseil vile and nocht worth, yet han men founde ful many a good woman, and ful discrete and wise in conseilliche. / Lo, Iacob, by good conseil of his moder Rebekka, wan the benisoun of Ysaak his fader, and the lordshipe over alle his

bretheren. / Iudith, by hir good conseil, delivered the citee of Bethulie, in which she dwelled, out of the handes of Olofernus, that hadde it biseged and wolde have al destroyed it. / Abigail delivered Nabal hir housbonde fro David the king, that wolde have slayn him, and apayed the ire of the king by hir wit and by hir good conseilliche. / Hester 2290 by hir good conseil enhaunced greetly the peple of god in the regne of Assuerus the king. / And the same bountee in good conseilliche of many a good woman may men telle. / And moreover, whan our lord hadde creat Adam our forme-fader, he seyde in this wyse: / "it is nat good to be a man allone; make we to him an help semblable to himself." / Here may ye se that, if that women were nat goode, and hir conseilliche goode and profitable, / our lord god of hevene 2295 wolde never han wrought hem, ne called hem help of man, but rather confusioun of man. / And ther seyde ones a clerk in two vers: "what is better than gold? Iaspere. What is better than Iaspere? Wisdom. / And what is better than wisdom? Woman. And what is better than a good woman? Nothing." / And sir, by manye of othre resouns may ye seen, that manye women been goode, and hir conseilliche goode and profitable. / And therefore sir, if ye wol triste to my conseil, I shal restore yow your doghter hool and sound. / And 2300 eek I wol do to yow so muche, that ye shul have honour in this cause. /

§ 16. 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 discretly by ordinaunce, been honycombes; for they yeven swetnesse to the soule, and hoolsomnesse to the body." / And wyf, by-cause of thy swete 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 thing.' /

2305 § 17. 'Now sir,' quod dame Prudence, 'and sin ye vouche-sauf to been governed by my conseil, I wol enforme yow how ye shul governe your-self in chesinge of your
conseillours. / Ye shul first, in alle your werkes, mekely biseken to the heighe god that he wol be your
conseillour; / 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 preyre him to dresse thy weyes"; and looke that alle thy con-
seils been in him for evermore. / Seint Iame eek seith: "if any of yow have nede of sapience, axe it of god." / And afterward thanne shul ye taken conseil in your-self, and examine wel your thoghtes, of swich thing as yow thinketh that is best for your
2310 profit. / And thanne shul ye dryve fro your herte three things that been contrariouse to good conseil, / that is to seyn, ire, covetise, and hastifnesse. /

2315 § 18. First, he that axeth conseil of him-self, certes he moste been with-ouen ire, for many causes. / The firste is this: he that hath greet ire and wratthe in him-self, he weneth alwey that he may do thing that he may nat do. / And secondely, he that is irous and wroth,
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 Senek, "ne may nat speke but he blame thinges;" / and with his vicious wordes he stireth other folk to angre and to ire. / And eek sir, ye moste dryve covetise out of your herte. / For
2320 the apostle seith, that "covetise is rote of alle harmes." / And trust wel that a covetous man ne can noght deme ne thinke, but only to fullille the ende of his covetise; /

and certes, that ne may never be accompliced; for ever the more habundaunce that he hath of richesse, the more he desyreth. / And sir, ye moste also dryve out of your herte hastifnesse; for certes, / ye ne may nat deme for the beste a sodeyn thought that falleth in youre herte, but ye moste avyse yow on it ful ofte. / For as ye herde bifore, the commune proverbe is this, that "he that sone demeth, sone repenteth." /

2325

§ 19. Sir, ye ne be nat alwey in lyke disposicion; / for certes, som thing that somtyme semeth to yow that it is good for to do, another tyme it semeth to yow the contrarie. /

§ 20. Whan ye han taken conseil in your-self, and han demed by good deliberacion swich thing as you semeth best, / thanne rede I yow, that ye kepe it secree. / Biwrey nat your conseil to no persone, but-if so be that ye wenen sikerly that, thurgh your biwreying, your condicioun shal be to yow the more profitable. / For Iesus Syrak
2330 seith: "neither to thy foo ne to thy freend discovere nat thy secree ne thy folie; / for they wol yeve yow audience and loking and supportacioun in thy presence, and scorne thee in thyn absence." / Another clerk seith, that "scarsly shaltou finden any persone that may kepe conseil secreely." / The book seith: "whyl that thou kepest thy conseil in thyn herte, thou kepest it in thy prisoun; / and whan thou biwreyest thy conseil to any wight, he holdeth thee in his
2335 snare." / And therefore yow is bettre to hyde your conseil in your herte, than prayre him, to whom ye han biwreyed your 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 other wight thy conseil secreely 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 better plyt, thanne shaltou tellen him thy conseil in this wyse. / First, thou shalt make no semblant whether thee were lever pees or werre, or this or that, ne shewe him nat thy wille and thyn entente; / for trust wel, that comunly these
 2340 conceillours been flatereres, / namely the conceillours of grete lordes; / for they enforcen hem alwey rather to speken plesante wordes, enclynge to the lordes lust, than wordes that been trewe or profitable. / And therefore men seyn, that "the riche man hath sold good conseil but-if he have it of him-self." / And after that, thou shalt considere thy freendes and thyne enemys. / And as touchinge thy freendes, thou shalt considere whiche of hem been most feithful and most wyse, and eldest and most approved in conseil-
 2345 ling. / And of hem shalt thou aske thy conseil, as the caas requireth. /

§ 21. I seye that first ye shul clepe to your conseil your freendes that been trewe. / For Salomon seith: that "right as the herte of a man delyteth in savour that is sote, right so the conseil of trewe freendes yeveth swetenesse to the soule." / He seith also: "ther may no-thing be lykned to the trewe freend." / For certes, gold ne silver beth nat so muche worth
 2350 as the gode wil of a trewe freend. / And eek he seith, that "a trewe freend is a strong deffense; who-so that it findeth, certes he findeth a greet tresour." / Thanne shul ye eek considere, if that your trewe freendes been discrete and wyse. For the book seith: "axe alwey thy conseil of hem that been wyse." / And by this same resoun shul ye clepen to your conseil, of your freendes that been of age, swiche as han seyn and been expert in manye thinges, and been approved in conseilinges. / For the

book seith, that "in olde men is the sapience and in longe tyme the prudence." / And Tullius seith: that "grete thinges 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 three thinges ne been nat feble by age, but certes they enforcen and encreesen day by day." / And thanne
 2355 shul ye kepe this for a general reule. First shul ye clepen to your conseil a fewe of your freendes that been especiale; / for Salomon seith: "manye freendes have thou; but among a thousand chese thee oon to be thy conceillour." / 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 loke alwey that thy conceillours have thilke three condiciouns that I have seyð bifore; that is to seyn, that they be trewe, wyse, and of old experience. / And werke nat alwey in every nede by oon conceillour alone; for somtyme bihoveth it to been conseilled
 2360 by manye. / For Salomon seith: "salvacioun of thinges is wher-as ther been manye conceillours." /

§ 22. Now sith that I have told yow of which folk ye sholde been counseilled, now wol I teche yow which conseil ye oghte to eschewe. / First ye shul eschewe the conseil of foles; for Salomon seith: "taak no conseil of a fool, for he ne can nocht conseil but after his owene lust and his affeccoun." / The book seith: that "the propretee of a fool is this; he troweth lightly harm of every wight, and lightly troweth alle bountee in him-self." / Thou shalt eek eschewe the conseil of alle flatereres, swiche as enforcen hem rather to praise your persone by flaterie than for to telle yow the sothfastnesse of thinges. /
 2365

§ 23. Wherefore Tullius seith: "amonges alle the pestilences that been in freendshipe, the grettete

is flaterye." And therefore is it more nede that thou eschewe and drede flatereres than any other peple. / The book seith: "thou shalt rather drede and flee fro the swete wordes of flateringe preiseres, than fro 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 innocents." / He seith also, that "he that speketh to his freend wordes of swetnesse and of plesauce, setteth a net bifrom his feet to cacche him." / And therefore seith Tullius: "encline nat thyne eres to flatereres, ne taketh no conseil of wordes of flaterye." / And Caton seith: "ayse thee wel, and eschewe the wordes of swetnesse and of plesauce." / And eek thou shalt eschewe the conseilling of thyne olde enemys that been reconciled. / The book seith: that "no wight retourneth saufully in-to the grace of his olde enemy." / And Isope seith: "ne trust nat to hem to whiche thou hast had somtyme werre or enmittee, ne telle hem nat thy conseil." / And Seneca 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 chere of humilitee, and louteth to thee with his heed, ne trust him never. / For certes, he maketh thilke feyned humilitee more for his profit than for any love of thy persone; by-cause that he demeth to have victorie over thy persone by swich feyned contenance, the which victorie he mighte nat have by stryf or werre. / And Peter Alfonse seith: "make no felawshipe with thyne olde enemys; for if thou do hem bountee, they wol perverten it in-to wikkednesse." / And eek thou most

eschewe the conseilling of hem that been thy servants, and beren thee greet reverence; for peradventure they seyn it more for drede than for love. / And therefore seith a 2380 philosophre in this wyse: "ther is no wight parflyt trewe to him that he to sore dredeth." / And Tullius seith: "ther nis no might so greet of any emperour, that longe may endure, but-if he have more love of the peple than drede." / Thou shalt also eschewe the conseilling of folk that been dronkewe; for they ne can no conseil hyde. / For Salomon seith: "ther is no privetee ther-as regneth dronkenesse." / Ye shul also han in suspect the conseilling of swich folk as conselle yow a thing prively, and conselle yow the contrarie openly. / For Cassidorie seith: 2385 that "it is a maner sleighte to hindre, when he sheweth to doon a thing openly and wikketh prively the contrarie." / Thou shalt also have in suspect the conseilling of wikked folk. For the book seith: "the conseilling of wikked folk is alwey ful of fraude." / And David seith: "blisful is that man that hath nat folwed the conseilling of shrewes." / Thou shalt also eschewe the conseilling of yong folk; for hir conseil is nat rype. /

§ 24. Now sir, sith I have shewed yow of which folk ye shul take your conseil, and of which folk ye shul folwe the conseil, / 2390 now wol I teche yow how ye shal examine your conseil, after the doctrine of Tullius. / In the examine thanne of your conseilour, ye shul considere manye thinges. / Alderfirst thou shalt considere, that in thilke thing that thou purposest, and upon what thing thou wolt have conseil, that verray trouthe be seyd 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 lyeth. / And after

this, thou shalt considere the
 things that acorden to that thou
 purposest for to do by thy conseil-
 2395 lours, if resoun acorde therto; /
 and eek, if thy might may atteine
 ther-to; and if the more part and
 the better part of thy conseilours
 acorde ther-to, or no. / Thanne
 shaltou considere what thing shal
 folwe of that conseilung; as hate,
 pees, werre, grace, profit, or dam-
 age; and manye othere thinges. /
 And in alle these thinges thou shalt
 chese the beste, and weve alle
 othere thinges. / Thanne shaltou
 considere of what rote is engendred
 the matere of thy conseil, and what
 fruit it may conceyve and engen-
 dre. / Thou shalt eek considere
 2400 alle these causes, fro whennes they
 been sprongen. / And whan ye
 han examined your conseil as I
 have seyde, and which partie is the
 better and more profitable, and hast
 approved it *by manye wyse folk
 and olde; / thanne shaltou considere,
 if thou mayst parfournen it and
 maken of it a good ende. / For
 certes, resoun wol nat that any
 man sholde biginne a thing, but-if
 he mighte parfournen it as him
 oghte. / Ne no wight sholde take
 up-on hym so hevy a charge that he
 mighte nat bere it. / For the pro-
 verbe seith: "he that to muche
 2405 embraceth, distreyneth litel." /
 And Catoun seith: "assay to do
 swich thing as thou hast power to
 doon, lest that the charge oppresse
 thee so sore, that thee bihoveth to
 weve thing that thou hast bigonne."
 / And if so be that thou be in
 doute, whether thou mayst parfournen
 a thing or noon, chese rather to
 suffren than biginne. / And
 Piers Alphonse seith: "if thou
 hast might to doon a thing 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. / Thanne
 may ye understonde by strengere
 resons, that if thou hast power to

parfournen a werk of which thou
 shalt repente, thanne is it better
 that thou suffren than biginne. / 2410
 Wel seyn they, that defenden every
 wight to assaye any thing of which
 he is in doute, whether he may
 parfournen it or no. / And after,
 whan ye han examined your conseil
 as I have seyde bifore, and knowen
 wel that ye may parfournen your
 emprise, conferme it thanne sadly
 til it be at an ende. /

§ 25. Now is it resoun and tyme
 that I shewe yow whanne, and
 wherfore, that ye may change
 your conseil with-outen your re-
 preve. / Soothly, a man may
 chaungen his purpos and his conseil
 if the cause cesseth, or whan
 a newe caas bitydeth. / For the
 lawe seith: that "upon thinges
 that newly bityden bihoveth newe
 conseil." / And Senek seith: 2415
 "if thy conseil is comen to the eres
 of thyn enemy, change thy conseil."
 / Thou mayst also change thy
 conseil if so be that thou finde
 that, by error or by other cause,
 harm or damage may bityde. /
 Also, if thy conseil be dishonest, or
 elles cometh of dishoneste cause,
 change thy conseil. / For the
 lawes seyn: that "alle bihestes
 that been dishoneste been of no
 value." / And eek, if it so be
 that it be impossible, or may nat
 goodly be parfourned or kept. / 2420

§ 26. 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. /

§ 27. This Melibeus, whanne he
 hadde herd the doctrine of his wyf
 dame Prudence, answerde in this
 wyse. / 'Dame,' quod he, 'as
 yet in-to this tyme ye han wel and
 covenantly taught me as in general,
 how I shal governe me in the
 chesinge and in the witholdinge
 of my conseilours. / But now
 wolde I fayn that ye wolde conde-

scende in especial, / and telle me how lyketh yow, or what semeth yow, by our conseilours that we
 2425 han chosen in our present nede.' /

§ 28. 'My lord,' quod she, 'I biseke yow in al humblesse, that ye wol nat wilfully replye agayn my resouns, ne destempre your herte thogh I speke thing that yow displese. / For god wot that, as in myn entente, I speke it for your beste, for your honour and for your profite eke. / And soothly, I hope that your benignitee wol taken it in pacience. / Trusteth me wel,' quod she, 'that your conseil as in this caas ne sholde nat, as to speke properly, be called a conselling, but a mocion or a moevyng of folyc; / in which conseil ye han erred in many a sondry
 2430 wyse.' /

§ 29. First and forward, ye han erred in thassemlinge of your conseilours. / For ye sholde first have cleped a fewe folk to your conseil, and after ye mighte han shewed it to mo folk, if it hadde been nede. / But certes, ye han sodeynly cleped to your conseil a greet multitude of peple, ful chargeant and ful anoyous for to here. / Also ye han erred, for there-as ye shokden only have cleped to your conseil your trewe freendes olde and wyse, / ye han y-cleped straunge folk, and yong folk, false flatereres, and enemys reconciled, and folk that doon yow reverence with-outhe love. / And
 2435 eek also ye have erred, for ye han brought with yow to your conseil ire, covetise, and hastifnesse; / the whiche three things been contrariouse to every conseil honeste and profitable; / the whiche three things ye han nat anientissed or destroyed hem, neither in your-self ne in your conseilours, as yow oghte. / Ye han erred also, for ye han shewed to your conseilours your talent, and your affeccioun to make werre anon and for to do vengeance; /

they han espyed by your wordes to what thing ye been enclined. /
 2440 And therefore han they rather consailed yow to your talent than to your profit. / Ye han erred also, for it semeth that yow suffyseth to han been consailed by these conseilours only, and with litel avys; / wher-as, in so greet and so heigh a nede, it hadde been necessarie mo conseilours, and more deliberacioun to parfourne your emprise. / Ye han erred also, for ye han nat examined your conseil in the forseide manere, ne in due manere as the caas requireth. / Ye han erred also, for ye han makid no divisoun bitwixe your conseilours; this is to seyn, bitwixen your trewe freendes and your feyned conseilours; / ne
 2445 ye han nat knowe the wil of your trewe freendes olde and wyse; / but ye han cast alle hir wordes in an hoche pot, and enclined your herte to the more part and to the gretter nombre; and ther been ye condescended. / And sith ye wot wel that men shal alwey finde a gretter nombre of foles than of wyse men, / and therefore the consails that been at congregaciouns and multitudes of folk, ther-as men take more reward to the nombre than to the sapience of persones, / ye see wel that in swiche conseilinges foles han the maistrie,' /
 2450 Melibeus answerde agayn, and seyde: 'I graunte wel that I have erred; / but ther-as thou hast told me heer-biforn, that he nis nat to blame that chaungeth hise conseilours in certain caas, and for certeine Iuste causes, / I am al redy to chaunge my conseilours, right as thow wolt devyse. / The proverbe seith: that "for to do sinne is mannish, but certes for to persevere longe in sinne is werk of the devel." /

§ 30. To this sentence answerde anon dame Prudence, and seyde: /
 2455 'Examineth,' quod she, 'your 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 examina-
 cioun is necessarie, lat us biginne at
 the surgiens and at the phisiciens,
 that first speken in this matere. /
 I sey yow, that the surgiens and
 phisiciens han seyde yow in your
 conseil discreetly, as hem oughte; /
 and in hir speche seyden ful wysly,
 that to the office of hem aperteneth
 to doon to every wight honour and
 profit, and no wight for to anoye; /
 and, after hir craft, to doon greet
 diligence un-to the cure of hem
 whiche that they han in hir govern-
 2460 aunce. / And sir, right as they han
 answered wysly and discreetly, /
 right so rede I - that they been
 heighly and sovereynly guerdoned
 for hir noble speche; / and eek for
 they sholde do the more ententif
 bisnesse in the curacioun of your
 doghter dere. / For al-be-it so
 that they been your freendes, there-
 fore shal ye nat suffren that they
 serve yow for noght; / but ye oughte
 the rather guerdone hem and shewe
 2465 hem your largesse. / And as touch-
 inge the proposcioun which that
 the phisiciens entreteden in this
 caas, this is to seyn, / that, in mala-
 dyes, that oon contrarie is warissed
 by another contrarie, / I wolde
 fayn knowe how ye understonde
 thilke text, and what is your sen-
 tence.' / 'Certes,' quod Melibeus,
 'I understonde it in this wyse: /
 that, right as they han doon me a
 contrarie, right so sholde I doon
 2470 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 con-
 trarie by another.' /

§ 31. 'Lo, lo!' quod dame Pru-
 dence, 'how lightly is every man
 enclined to his owene desyr and to
 his owene plesaunce! / Certes,'
 quod she, 'the wordes of the phisi-
 ciens ne sholde nat han been under-
 stonden in this wyse. / For certes,

wikkednesse is nat contrarie to wikkednesse, ne vengeance to ven-
 geance, ne wrong to wrong; but
 they been semblable. / And there-
 2475 fore, o vengeance is nat warissed
 by another vengeance, ne o wrong
 by another wrong; / but everich
 of hem encreeseth and aggregeth
 other. / But certes, the wordes of
 the phisiciens sholde been under-
 stonden in this wyse: / for good
 and wikkednesse been two contra-
 ries, and pees and werre, venge-
 aunce and suffraunce, discord and
 accord, and manye othere thinges. /
 But certes, wikkednesse shal be war-
 issed by goodnesse, discord by ac-
 cord, werre by pees, and so forth of
 othere thinges. / And heer-to ac-
 2480 cordeth Seint Paul the apostle in
 manye places. / He seith: "ne
 yeldeth nat harm for harm, ne wik-
 ked speche for wikked speche; /
 but do wel to him that dooth thee
 harm, and blesse him that seith to
 thee harm." / And in manye othere
 places he amonesteth pees and
 accord. / But now wol I speke to
 yow of the conseil which that was
 yeven to yow by the men of lawe
 and the wyse folk, / that seyden
 2485 alle by oon accord as ye han herd
 bifore; / that, over alle thynges, ye
 sholde doon your diligence to kepen
 your persone and to warnestore
 your hous. / And seyden also, that
 in this caas ye oughten for to werken
 ful avysely and with greet delibera-
 cioun. / And sir, as to the firste
 point, that toucheth to the keping
 of your persone; / ye shul under-
 stonde that he that hath werre shal
 evermore mekely and devoutly
 2490 preyen biforn alle thinges, / that
 Iesus Crist of his grete mercy wol
 han him in his proteccioun, and
 been his sovereyn helping at his
 nede. / For certes, in this world
 ther is no wight that may be con-
 seilled ne kept suffisantly withouten
 the keping of our lord Iesu Crist. /
 To this sentence accordeth the
 prophete David, that seith: / "if

god ne kepe the citee, in ydel waketh he that it kepeth." / Now sir, thanne shul ye committe the keping of your persone to your trewe freendes that been approved and
 2495 y-knowe; / and of hem shul ye axen help your persone for to kepe. For Catoun seith: "if thou hast nede of help, axe it of thy freendes; / for ther nis noon so good a phisicien as thy trewe freend." / And after this, thanne shul ye kepe yow for alle straunge folk, and fro lyeres, and have alwey in suspect hir companye. / For Piers Alfonse seith: "ne tak no companye by the weye of a straunge man, but-if so be that thou have knowe him of a lenger tyme. / And if so be that he falle in-to thy companye paraventure
 2500 withouten thyn assent, / enquire 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, hold thee on the right syde, and if he bere a swerd, hold thee on the lift syde." / And after this, thanne shul ye kepe yow wysely from alle 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, / that for any presumpcioun of your strengthe, that ye ne dispyse nat ne acounte nat the might of your adversarie so litel, that ye lete the keping of your persone for your
 2505 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 hardinesse of his herte and thurgh the hardinesse of him-self hath to greet presumpcioun, him shal yvel bityde." / Thanne shul ye evermore countreyte embusshements and alle espiaille. / For Senek seith: that "the wyse man that dredeth harmes escheweth
 2510 harmes; / ne he ne falleth in-to 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 kepinge of thy persone; / this is to seyn, ne be nat negligent to kepe thy persone, nat only fro thy gretteste enemys but fro thy leeste enemy. / Senek seith: "a man that is wel avysed, he dredeth his leste enemy." / Ovide seith: that "the litel welese wol see the grete bole and the wilde hert." / 2515
 And the book seith: "a litel thorn may prikke a greet king ful sore; and an hound wol holde the wilde boor." / But natheles, I sey nat thou shalt be so 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 companye of scorneres. / For the book seith: "with scorneres make no companye, but flee hir wordes as venom." / 2520

§ 32. Now as to the seconde point, wher-as your wyse conseilours conseilled yow to warnestore your hous with gret diligence, / I wolde fayn knowe, how that ye understonde thilke wordes, and what is your sentence. /

§ 33. Melibeus answerde and seyde, 'Certes I understande it in this wise; that I shal warnestore myn hous with toures, swiche as han castelles and othere manere edifices, and armure and arteleries, / by whiche thinges I may my persone and myn hous so kepen and defenden, that myne enemys shul been in drede myn hous for to approche.' /

§ 34. To this sentence answerde anon Prudence; 'warnestoring,' quod she, 'of heighe toures and of grete edifices apperteneth somtyme to pryde; / and eek men
 2525 make heighe toures and grete edifices with grete costages and with greet travaille; and whan that they been accomplished, yet be they nat

worth a stree, but-if they be defended by trewe freendes that been olde and wyse. / And understand wel, that the gretteste and strongeste garnison that a riche man may have, as wel to kepen his persone as his goodes, is / that he be biloved amonges his subgets and with his neighebores. / For thus seith Tullius: that "ther is a maner garnison that no man may venquise ne disconforte, and that is, / a lord to be biloved of his citeizens and of his peple." /

2530 § 35. Now sir, as to the thridde point; wher-as your olde and wise conseilours seyden, that yow ne oghte nat sodeynly ne hastily proceden in this nede, / but that yow oghte purveyen and apparailen yow in this caas with greet diligence and greet deliberacioun; / trewely, I trowe that they seyden right wysly and right sooth. / For Tullius seith, "in every nede, er thou biginne it, apparaille thee with greet diligence." / Thanne seye I, that in vengeance-taking, in werre, in bataille, and in warnestoring, / er thou biginne, I rede that thou apparaille thee ther-to, and do it with greet deliberacioun. / For Tullius seith: that "long apparailing biforn the bataille maketh short victorie." / And Cassidorus seith: "the garnison is stronger whan it is longe tyme avysed." /

2535 § 36. But now lat us speken of the conseil that was accorded by your neighebores, swiche as doon yow reverence withouten love, / your olde enemys reconciled, your flatereres / that conseilled yow certeyne thinges prively, and openly conseilleden yow the contrarie; / the yonge folk also, that conseilleden yow to venge yow and make werre anon. / And certes, sir, as I have seyd biforn, ye han greetly erred to han cleped swich maner folk to your conseil; / which conseilours been y-nogh repaved by the resouns afore-seyd. But na-

theeles, lat us now descende to the special. Ye shuln first procede after the doctrine of Tullius. / Certes, the trouthe of this matere or of this conseil nedeth nat diligently enquire; / for it is wel wist whiche they been that han doon to yow this trespas and vileinye, / and how manye trespassours, and in what manere they han to yow doon al this wrong and al this vileinye. / And after this, thanne shul ye examine the seconde condicioun, which that the same Tullius addeth in this matere. / For Tullius put a thing, which that he clepeth "consentinge," this is to seyn; / who been they and how manye, and whiche been they, that consenteden 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 your adversaries. / And certes, as to the firste poynt, it is wel knowen whiche folk been they that consenteden to your hastif wilfulnesse; / for trewely, alle tho that conseilleden yow to maken sodeyn werre ne been nat your freendes. / Lat us now considere whiche been they, that ye holde so greetly your freendes as to your persone. / For al-be-it so that ye be mighty and riche, certes ye ne been nat but allone. / For certes, ye ne han no child but a doghter; / ne ye ne han bretheren ne cosins germayns, ne noon other neigh kinrede, / wherfore that your enemys, for drede, sholde stinte to plede with yow or to destroye your persone. / Ye knowen also, that your richesses moten 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 enemys been three, and they han manie children, bretheren, cosins, and other ny kinrede; / and, though so were

that thou haddest slayn of hem two or three, yet dwellen ther y-nowe to wreken hir deeth and to slee thy persone. / And though so be that your kinrede be more siker and stedefast than the kin of your adversarie, / yet natheles your kinrede nis but a fer kinrede; they
 2565 been but litel sib to yow, / and the kin of your enemys been ny sib to hem. And certes, as in that, hir condicioun is bet than youres. / Thanne lat us considere also if the conscelling of hem that conselleden yow to taken sodeyn vengeance, whether it accorde to resoun? / And certes, ye knowe wel "nay." / For as by right and resoun, ther may no man taken vengeance on no wight, but the Iuge that hath the Iurisdiccioun of it, / whan it
 2570 is graunted him to take thilke vengeance, hastily or attemprely, as the lawe requireth. / And yet more-over, of thilke word that Tullius clepeth "consenting," / thou shalt considere if thy might and thy power may consenten and suffyse to thy wilfulnessse and to thy conseilours. / And certes, thou mayst wel seyn that "nay." / For sikerly, as for to speke proprely, we may do no-thing but only swich thing as we may doon rightfully. / And certes, rightfully ne mowe ye
 2575 take no vengeance as of your propre auctoritee. / Thanne mowe ye seen, that your power ne consenteth nat ne accordeth nat with your wilfulnessse. / Lat us now examine the thridde point that Tullius clepeth "consequent." / Thou shalt understonde that the vengeance that thou purposest for to take is the consequent. / And ther-of folweth another vengeance, peril, and werre; and othere damages with-oute nombre, of whiche we be nat war as at this tyme. / And as touchinge the fourthe point, that Tullius clepeth "engendinge," / thou shalt considere, that
 2580 this wrong which that is doon to

thee is engendred of the hate of thyne enemys; / and of the vengeance-takinge upon that wolde engendre another vengeance, and muchel sorwe and wastinge of richesses, as I seyde. /

§ 37. Now sir, 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, / whiche that clerkes cleepen *Oriens* and *Efficiens*, and *Causa longinqua* and *Causa propinqua*; this is to seyn, the fer
 2585 cause and the ny cause. / The fer cause is almighty god, that is cause of alle thinges. / The neer cause is thy three enemys. / The cause accidental was hate. / The cause material been the fyve woundes of thy doghter. / The cause formal is the manere of hir werkinge, that broghten laddres and cloumben in
 2590 at thy windowes. / The cause final was for to slee 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 bityde of hem in this caas, ne can I nat deme but by coniectinge and by supposinge. / For we shul suppose that they shul come to a wikked ende, / by-cause that the Book of Decrees seith: "selden or with greet payne been causes y-broght to good ende whanne they been baddely bigonne." /

§ 38. Now sir, if men wolde axe me, why that god suffred men to do yow this vileinye, certes, I can nat wel answere as for no sothfastnesse. / For thaPOSTLE seith, that
 2595 "the sciences and the luggementz of our lord god almighty been ful depe; / ther may no man comprehende ne serchen hem sufficiently." / Natheles, by certeyne presumpcions and coniectinges, I holde and bileve / that god, which that is ful of Iustice and of rightwisesse, hath suffred

this bityde by Iuste cause resonable. /

§ 39. Thy name is Melibee, this is to seyn, "a man that drinketh hony." / Thou hast y-dronke so muchel hony of swete temporel riches and delices and honours of this world, / that thou art dronken; and hast forgeten Iesu Crist thy creatour; / thou ne hast nat doon to him swich honour and reverence as thee oughte. / Ne thou ne hast nat wel y-taken kepe to the wordes of Ovide, that seith: / "under the hony of the godes of the body is hid the venim that sleeth the soule." / And Salomon seith, "if thou hast founden hony, etc of it that suffyseth; / for if thou etc of it out of mesure, thou shalt spewe," and be nedý and povre. / And peraventure Crist hath thee in despit, and hath turned away from thee his face and his eres of misericorde; / and also he hath suffred that thou hast been punished in the manere that thou hast y-trespased. / Thou hast doon sinne agayn our lord Crist; / for certes, the three enemys of mankinde, that is to seyn, the flesh, the feend, and the world, / thou hast suffred hem entre in-to thyn herte wilfully by the windowes of thy body, / and hast nat defended thy-self suffisantly agayns hir assautes and hir temptaciouns, so that they han wounded thy soule in fyve places; / this is to seyn, the deedly sinnes that been entred in-to thyn herte by thy fyve wittes. / And in the same manere our lord Crist hath wold and suffred, that thy three enemys been entred in-to thyn hous by the windowes, / and han y-wounded thy doghter in the fore-seyde manere. /

§ 40. 'Certes,' quod Melibee, 'I see wel that ye enforce yow muchel by wordes to overcome me in swich manere, that I shal nat venge me of myne enemys; / shewing me the perils and the yvels that mighten falle of this vengeance. / But

who-so wolde considere in alle vengeances the perils and yvels that mighte sewe of vengeance-takinge, / a man wolde never take vengeance, and that were harm; / for by the vengeance-takinge been the wikked men dissevered from the gode men. / And they that han wil to do wikkednesse restreyne hir wikked purpos, when they seen the punissinge and chastysinge of the trespassours.' / [And to this answerde dame Prudence: 'Certes,' seyde she, 'I graunte wel that of vengeance cometh muchel yvel and muchel good; / but vengeance-taking aperteneth nat unto everichoon, but only unto luges and unto hem that han Iurisdiccioun upon the trespassours.] / And yet seye I more, that right as a singuler persone sinneth in takinge vengeance of another man, / right so sinneth the luge if he do no vengeance of hem that it han deserved. / For Senek seith thus: "that maister," he seith, "is good that proveth shrewes." / And as Cassidore seith: "A man dredeth to do outrages, when he woot and knoweth that it displeth to the luges and sovereyns." / And another seith: "the luge that dredeth to do right, maketh men shrewes." / And Seint Paule the apostle seith in his epistle, when he wryteth un-to the Romayns: that "the luges beren nat the spere with-oute cause;" / but they beren it to punisse the shrewes and misdoeres, and for to defende the gode men. / If ye wol thanne take vengeance of your enemys, ye shul retourne or have your recours to the luge that hath the Iurisdiccioun up-on hem; / and he shal punisse hem as the lawe axeth and requyreth. /

§ 41. 'A!' quod Melibee, 'this vengeance lyketh me no-thing. / I bithenke me now and take hede, how fortune hath norissed me fro my childhede, and hath holpen me

2635 to passe many a strong pas. /
 Now wol I assayen hir, trowinge,
 with goddes help, that she shal
 helpe me my shame for to venge.' /
 § 42. 'Certes,' quod Prudence,
 'if ye wol werke by my conseil, ye
 shul nat assaye fortune by no wey; /
 ne ye shul nat lene or bowe unto
 hir, after the word of Senek: / for
 "things that been folily doon, and
 that been in hope of fortune, shullen
 never come to good ende." / And
 as the same Senek seith: "the
 more cleer and the more shyning
 that fortune is, the more brotil and
 2640 the sonner broken she is." / Trust-
 eth nat in hir, for she nis nat stide-
 fast ne stable; / for when thow
 trowest to be most seur or siker of
 hir help, she wol faille thee and
 deceyve thee. / And wher-as ye
 seyn that fortune hath norissed yow
 fro your childhede, / I seye, that in
 so muchel shul ye the lasse truste in
 hir and in hir wit. / For Senek
 seith: "what man that is norissed
 by fortune, she maketh him a greet
 2645 fool." / Now thanne, sin ye desyre
 and axe vengeance, and the ven-
 geance that is doon after the lawe
 and bifore the Iuge ne lyketh yow
 nat, / and the vengeance that is
 doon in hope of fortune is perilous
 and uncertein, / thanne have ye
 noon other remedie but for to have
 your recours unto the sovereyn Iuge
 that vengeth alle vileinyes and
 wronges; / and he shal venge yow
 after that him-self witnesseth, wher-
 as he seith: / "leveth the ven-
 2650 geance to me, and I shal do it." /
 § 43. Melibee answerde, 'if I ne
 venge me nat of the vileinye that
 men han doon to me, / I sompne
 or warne hem that han doon to me
 that vileinye and alle othere, to do
 me another vileinye. / For it is
 writen: "if thou take no ven-
 geance of an old vileinye, thou
 sompnest thyne adversaries to do
 thee a newe vileinye." / And also,
 for my suffrance, men wolden do to
 me so muchel vileinye, that I mighte

neither bere it ne sustene; / and so
 sholde I been put and holden over
 lowe. / For men seyn: "in 2655
 muchel suffringe shul manye things
 falle un-to thee which thou shalt
 nat mowe suffre." /

§ 44. 'Certes,' quod Prudence,
 'I graunte yow that over muchel
 suffraunce nis nat good; / but yet
 ne folweth it nat ther-of, that every
 persone to whom men doon vileinye
 take of it vengeance; / for that
 aperteneth and longeth al only to
 the Iuges, for they shul venge the
 vileinyes and iniuries. / And ther-
 fore tho two auctoritees that ye han
 seyd above, been only understonden
 in the Iuges; / for when they suf-
 fren over muchel the wronges and
 the vileinyes to be doon withouten
 punisshinge, / they sompne nat a
 man al only for to do newe wronges,
 but they comanden it. / Also a
 wys man seith: that "the Iuge that
 correcteth nat the sinnere comand-
 eth and biddeth him do sinne." /
 And the Iuges and sovereyns
 mighten in hir land so muchel suffre
 of the shrewes and misdoeres, /
 that they sholden by swich suffrance,
 by proces of tyme, wexen of swich
 power and might, that they sholden
 putte out the Iuges and the sover-
 eyns from hir places, / and atte 2665
 laste maken hem lesen hir lord-
 shipes. /

§ 45. But lat us now putte, that
 ye have leve to venge yow. / I
 seye ye been nat of might and
 power as now to venge yow. / For
 if ye wole maken comparisoun un-
 to the might of your adversaries, ye
 shul finde in manye things, that I
 have shewed yow er this, that hir
 condicioun is bettre than youres. /
 And therefore seye I, that it is good
 as now that ye suffre and be pa-
 2670 cient. /

§ 46. Further-more, ye knowen
 wel that, after the comune sawe, "it
 is a woodnesse a man to stryve with
 a strengier or a more mighty man
 than he is him-self; / and for

to stryve with a man of evene strengthe, that is to seyn, with as strong a man as he, it is peril; / and for to stryve with a weyker man, it is folie." / And therefore sholde a man flee stryvinge as muchel as he mighte. / For Salomon seith: "it is a greet worship to a man to kepen him fro noyse and stryf." / And if it so bifalle or happe that a man of gretter might and strengthe than thou art do thee grevaunce, / studie and bisie thee rather to stille the same grevaunce, than for to venge thee. / For Senek seith: that "he putteth him in greet peril that stryvet with a gretter man than he is him-self." / And Catoun seith: "if a man of hyer estaat or degree, or more mighty than thou, do thee any or grevaunce, suffre him; / for he that ones hath greved thee may another tyme releve thee and helpe." / Yet sette I caas, ye have bothe might and licence for to venge yow. / I seye, that ther be ful manye thynges that shul restreyne yow of vengance-takinge, / and make yow for to enelyne to suffre, and for to han pacience in the thynges that han been doon to yow. / First and forward, if ye wole considere the defautes that been in your owene person, / for whiche defautes god hath suffred yow have this tribulacioun, as I have seyd yow heer-biforn. / For the poete seith, that "we oghte patiently taken the tribulacions that comen to us, whan we thinken and consideren that we han deserved to have hem." / And Seint Gregorie seith: that "whan a man considereth wel the nombre of hise defautes and of his sinnes, / the peynes and the tribulaciouns that he suffreth semen the lesse un-to hym; / and in-as-muche as him thinketh hise sinnes more hevye and grevous, / in-so-muche semeth his peyne the lighter and the esier un-to him." / Also ye owen to enlyne and bowe

your herte to take the pacience of our lord Iesu Crist, as seith seint Peter in hise epistles: / "Iesu Crist," he seith, "hath suffred for us, and yeven ensample to every man to folwe and sewe him; / for he dide never sinne, ne never cam ther a vileinous word out of his mouth: / whan men cursed him, he cursed hem noght; and whan men betten him, he manaced hem noght." / Also the grete pacience, which the seintes that been in paradys han had in tribulaciouns that they han y-suffred, with-ouen hir desert or gilt, / oghte muchel stiren yow to pacience. / Forthermore, ye sholde enforce yow to have pacience, / consideringe that the tribulaciouns of this world but litel whyle endure, and sone passed been and goon. / And the Ioye that a man seketh to have by pacience in tribulaciouns is perdurable, after that the apostle seith in his epistle: / "the Ioye of god," he seith, "is perdurable," that is to seyn, everlastinge. / Also troweth and bivelveth stedefastly, that he nis nat wel y-norished ne wel y-taught, that can nat have pacience or wol nat receyve pacience. / For Salomon seith: that "the doctrine and the wit of a man is knowne by pacience." / And in another place he seith: that "he that is pacient governeth him by greet prudence." / And the same Salomon seith: "the angry and wrathful man maketh noyses, and the pacient man atempreth hem and stilleth." / He seith also: "it is more worth to be pacient than for to be right strong; and he that may have the lordshipe of his owene herte is more to preyse, than he that by his force or strengthe taketh grete citees." / And therefore seith seint Iame in his epistle: that "pacience is a greet vertu of perfeccioun."

§ 47. 'Certes,' quod Melibee, 'I graunte yow, dame Prudence, that pacience is a greet vertu of perfec-

cioun; / but every man may nat
have the perfeccioun that yeseken; /
ne I nam nat of the nombre of right
2710 parlite men, / for myn herte may
never been in pees un-to the tyme
it be venged. / And al-be-it so
that it was greet peril to myne en-
mys, to do me a vileinye in takinge
vengeance up-on me, / yet token they
their noon hede of the peril, but ful-
filleden hir wikked wil and hir cor-
age. / And therefore, me thinketh
men oghten nat preve me, though
I putte me in a litel peril for to venge
me, / and though I do a greet ex-
cesse, that is to seyn, that I venge
2715 oon outrage by another.' /

§ 48. 'A!' quod dame Prudence,
'ye seyn your wil and as yow lyk-
eth; / but in no caas of the world
a man sholde nat doon outrage ne
excesse for to vengen him. / For
Cassidore seith: that "as yvel doth
he that vengeth him by outrage, as
he that doth 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. / And also, if ye wol
venge yow of the outrage of your
adversaries in other maner than
2720 right comandeth, ye sinnen; / and
therefore seith Senek: that "a man
shal never vengen shrewednesse by
shrewednesse." / And if ye seye,
that right axeth a man to defenden
violence by violence, and fighting
by fighting, / certes ye seye sooth,
whan the defense is doon anon with-
outen intervale or with-outen tary-
ing or delay, / for to defenden him
and nat for to vengen him. / And
it bihoveth that a man putte swich
2725 attemperance in his defence, / that
men have no cause ne matere to
repreven him that defendeth him
of excesse and outrage; for elles
were it agayn resoun. / Pardee,
ye knowen wel, that ye maken no
defence as now for to defende yow,
but for to venge yow; / and so
seweth it that ye han no wil to do
your dede attemprely. / And ther-

fore, me thinketh that pacience is
good. For Salomon seith: that
"he that is nat pacient shal have
greet harm." /

§ 49. 'Certes,' quod Melibee, 'I
graunte yow, that whan a man is
impacient and wroth, of that that
toucheth him noght and that aper-
teneth nat un-to him, though it
harme him, it is no wonder. / For
2730 the lawe seith: that "he is coup-
able that entremetteth or medleth
with swich thyng as aperteneth nat
un-to him." / And Salomon seith:
that "he that entremetteth him of
the noyse or stryf of another man,
is lyk to him that taketh an hound
by the eres." / For right as he
that taketh a straunge hound by
the eres is outhewhyle biten with
the hound, / right in the same wyse
is it resoun that he have harm, that
by his impacience medleth him of
the noyse of another man, wher-
as it aperteneth nat un-to him. / But
ye knowen wel that this dede, that
is to seyn, my grief and my disese,
toucheth me right ny. / And ther-
2735 fore, though I be wroth and impac-
ient, it is no merveille. / And
savage your grace, I can nat seen
that it mighte greetly harme me
though I toke vengeance; / for I
am richer and more mighty than
myne enemys been. / And wel
knowen ye, that by moneye and by
havinge grete possessions been all
the thynges of this world governed. /
And Salomon seith: that "alle thynges
obeyen to moneye." /

§ 50. Whan Prudence hadde herde
hir housbonde avanten him of his
richesse and of his moneye, dis-
preisinge the power of hise adversa-
ries, she spak, and seyde in this
wyse: / 'certes, dere sir, I graunte
yow that ye been rich and mighty, /
and that the richesses been goode to
hem that han wel y-geten hem and
wel conne usen hem. / For right
as the body of a man may nat liven
with-oute the soule, namore may it
live with-outen temporel goodes. /

2745 And by richesses may a man gete him 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 hir housbonde; / for, of a thousand men, oon wol nat forsaken hir ne refusen hir." / And this Pamphilles seith also: "if thou be right happy, that is to seyn, if thou be right riche, thou shalt find a greet nombre of felawes and freendes. / And if thy fortune change that thou wexe povre, farewel freendshipe and felaweshipe; / for thou shalt be allone with-outen any companye, but-if it be the companye of povre folk." / And yet 2750 seith this Pamphilles moreover: that "they that been thralle and bonde of linage shullen been maad worthy and noble by the richesses." / And right so as by richesses ther comen manye goodes, right so by poverté come ther manye harmes and yvels. / For greet poverté constreyneth a man to do manye yvels. / And therefore clepeth Cassidore poverté "the moder of ruine," / that is to seyn, the moder of overthrowinge or fallinge down. / And therefore seith Piers 2755 Alfonce: "oon of the gretteste adversitees of this world is / whan a free man, by kinde or by burthe, is constreyned by poverté to eten the almesse of his enemy." / And the same seith Innocent in oon of hise bokes; he seith: that "sorweful and mishappy is the condicioun of a povre begger; / for if he axe nat his mete, he dyeth for hunger; / and if he axe, he dyeth for shame; and algates necessitee constreyneth 2760 him to axe." / And therefore seith Salomon: that "bet it is to dye than for to have swich poverté." / And as the same Salomon seith: "bette it is to dye of bitter deeth than for to liven in swich wyse." / By thise reons that I have seid un-to yow, and by manye othere reons that I coude seye, / I graunte

yow that richesses been goode to hem that geten hem wel, and to hem that wel usen tho richesses. / And therefore wol I shewe yow how ye shul have yow, and how ye shul bere yow in gaderinge of richesses, and in what manere ye shul usen hem. / 2765 § 51. First, ye shul geten hem with-outen greet desyr, by good leyser sokingly, and nat over hastily. / For a man that is to desyringe to gete richesses abaundoneth him first to thefte and to alle othere yvels. / And therefore seith Salomon: "he that hasteth him to bisily to wexe riche shal be noon innocent." / He seith also: that "the richesse that hastily cometh to a man, sone and lightly gooth and passeth fro a man; / but that richesse that cometh litel and litel wexeth alwey and multiplyeth." / And 2770 sir, ye shul geten richesses by your wit and by your travaille un-to your profit; / and that with-outen wrong or harm-doinge to any other 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 defendeth and forbedeth by right, that no man make him-self riche un-to the harm of another persone. / And Tullius seith: that "no sorwe ne no drede of deeth, ne no-thing that may falle un-to a man / is so muchel agayns nature, 2775 as a man to encessen his owene profit to the harm of another man. / And though the grete men and the mighty men geten richesses more lightly than thou, / yet shaltou nat been ydel ne slow to do thy profit; for thou shalt in alle wyse flee ydelnesse." / For Salomon seith: that "ydelnesse techeth a man to do manye yvels." / And the same Salomon seith: that "he that travailleth and bisieteth him to tilien his land, shal eten breed; / but he that 2780 is ydel and casteth him to no bisnesse ne occupacioun, shal falle in-to poverté, and dye for hun-

ger." / And he that is ydel and slow can never finde covenable tyme for to doon his profit. / For ther is a versifiour seith: that "the ydel man excuseth hym in winter, by cause of the grete cold; and in somer, by enchesoun of the hete." / For these causes seith Caton: "waketh and enclyneth nat yow over muchel for to slepe; for over muchel reste norisseth and causeth manye vices." / And therefore seith seint Ierome: "doth somme gode dedes, that the devel which is our enemy ne finde yow nat unoccupied." / For the devel ne taketh nat lightly un-to his werkinge swiche as he findeth occupied in gode werkes." /

§ 52. Thanne thus, in getinge richesces, ye mosten flee ydelnesse. / And afterward, ye shul use the richesces, whiche ye have geten by your wit and by your travaille, / in swich a manere, that men holde nat yow to scars, ne to sparinge, ne to fool-large, that is to seyn, over-large a spender. / For right as men blamen an avaricious man by-cause of his scarsetee and chincherye, / in the same wyse is he to blame that spendeth over largely. / And ther-fore seith Caton: "use," he seith, "thy richesces that thou hast geten / in swich a manere, that men have no matere ne cause to calle thee neither wrecche ne chinche; / for it is a greet shame to a man to have a povere herte and a riche purs." / 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 namore propre of hir owene, they shapen hem to take the goodes of another man. / I seye thanne, that ye shul flee avarice; / usinge your richesces in swich manere, that men seye nat that your richesces been y-buried, / but that ye have

hem in your might and in your weeldinge. / For a wys man repreveth the avaricious man, and seith thus, in two vers: / "wherto and why burieth a man hise goodes by his grete avarice, and knoweth wel that nedes moste he dye; / for death is the ende of every man as in this present lyf." / And for what cause or enchesoun loyneth he him or knitteth he him so faste un-to hise goodes, / that alle his wittes mowen nat disseveren him or departen him from hise goodes; / and knoweth wel, or oghte knowe, that whan he is deed, he shal no-thing bere with him out of this world. / And ther-fore seith seint Augustin: that "the avaricious man is liked un-to helle; / that the more it swelweth, the more desyr it hath to swelwe and devoure." / And as wel as ye wolde eschewe to be called an avaricious man or chinche, / as wel sholde ye kepe yow and governe yow in swich a wyse that men calle yow nat fool-large. / Therefore seith Tullius: "the goodes," he seith, "of thyn hous ne sholde nat been hid, ne kept so cloos but that they mighte 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 mannes goodes." / Afterward, in getinge of your richesces and in usinge hem, ye shul alwey have three thinges in your herte; / that is to seyn, our lord god, conscience, and good name. / First, ye shul have god in your herte; / and for no richesce ye shullen do no-thing, which may in any manere displese god, that is your creatour and maker. / For after the word of Salomon: "it is better to have a litel good with the love of god, / than to have muchel good and tressour, and lese the love of his lord god." / And the prophete seith: that "better it is to been a good

2820 man and have litel good and tre-
sour, / than to been holden a
shrewe and have grete richesse." /
And yet seye I fethermore, that ye
sholde alwey doon your bisnesse to
gete yow richesches, / so that ye gete
hem with good conscience. / And
thapostle seith: that "ther nis
thing in this world, of which we
sholden have so greet Ioye as whan
our conscience bereth us good
witness." / And the wyse man
seith: "the substance of a man is
ful good, whan sinne is nat in
2825 mannes conscience." / Afterward,
in getinge of your richesches, and in
usinge of hem, / yow moste have
greet bisnesse and greet dili-
gence, that your goode name be
alwey kept and conserved. / For
Salomon seith: that "bette it is
and more it availeth a man to have
a good name, than for to have grete
richesches." / And therfore he
seith in another place: "do greet
diligence," seith Salomon, "in kep-
ing of thy freend and of thy gode
name; / for it shal lenger abide
with thee than any tresour, be it
2830 never so precious." / And certes
he sholde nat be called a gentil
man, that after god and good con-
science, alle thinges left, ne dooth
his diligence and bisnesse to kepen
his good name. / And Cassidore
seith: that "it is signe of a gentil
herte, whan a man loveth and
desyreth to han a good name." /
And therfore seith seint Augustin:
that "ther been two thinges that
arn necessarie and nedefulle, / and
that is good conscience and good
loos; / that is to seyn, good con-
science to thyn owene persone in-
ward, and good loos for thy
2835 neigheboere outward." / And he
that trusteth him so muchel in his
gode conscience, / that he dis-
pleseth and setteth at noght his
gode name or loos, and rekketh
noght though he kepe nat his gode
name, nis but a cruel cheryl. /

§ 53. Sire, now have I shewed

yow how ye shul do in getinge
richesches, and how ye shullen usen
hem; / and I se wel, that for the
trust that ye han in youre richesches,
ye wole moeve werre and bataille. /
I conseilte yow, that ye biginne no
werre in trust of your richesches;
for they ne suffysen noght werres to
mayntene. / And therfore seith a 2840
philosophre: "that man that desy-
reth and wole algates han werre,
shal never have suffisaunce; / for
the richer that he is, the gretter
despenses moste he make, if he
wole have worship and victorie." /
And Salomon seith: that "the
gretter richesches that a man hath,
the mo despendours he hath." /
And dere sire, al-be-it so that for
your richesches ye mowe have muchel
folk, / yet bihoveth it nat, ne it is
nat good, to biginne werre, where-
as ye mowe in other manere have
pees, un-to your worship and
profit. / For the victories of bat- 2845
ailles that been in this world, lyen
nat in greet nombre or multitude of
the peple ne in the vertu of man; /
but it lyth in the wil and in the
hand of our lord god almighty. /
And therfore Iudas Machabeus,
which was goddes knight, / whan
he sholde fighte agayn his adver-
sarie that hadde a greet nombre,
and a gretter multitude of folk and
strenger than was this peple of
Machabee, / yet he reconforted his
litel companye, and seyde right in
this wyse: / "als lightly," quod he, 2850
"may our lord god almighty yeve
victorie to a fewe folk as to many
folk; / for the victorie of bataile
cometh nat by the grete nombre of
peple, / but it cometh from our lord
god of hevене." / And dere sir,
for as muchel as there is no man
certein, if he be worthy that god
yeve him victorie, [namore than he
is certein whether he be worthy of
the love of god] or naught, after
that Salomon seith, / therfore every
man sholde greetly drede werres to
biginne. / And by-cause that in 2855

batailles fallen manye perils, / and happeth outhere-while, that as sone is the grete man sleyn as the litel man; / and, as it is written in the seconde book of Kinges, "the dedes of batailles been aventureuse and nothing certeyne; / for as lightly is oon hurt with a spere as another." / And for ther is gret peril in werre, therefore sholde a man flee and eschewe werre, in as muchel as a man may goodly. / For Salomon seith: "he that loveth peril shal falle in peril." /

2860 § 54. After that Dame Prudence hadde spoken in this manere, Melibee answerde and seyde, / "I see wel, dame Prudence, that by your faire wordes and by your resons that ye han shewed me, that the werre lyketh yow no-thing; / but I have nat yet herd your conseil, how I shal do in this nede." /

2865 § 55. 'Certes,' quod she, 'I conseilte yow that ye accorde with youre adversaries, and that ye haue pees with hem. / For seint Iame seith in hise epistles: that "by concord and pees the smale richesses wexen grete, / and by debaat and discord the grete richesses fallen doun." / And ye knowen wel that oon of the gretteste and most sovereyn thing, that is in this world, is unitee and pees. / And therefore seyde oure lord Iesu Crist to hise apostles in this wyse: / "wel happy and blessed been they that loven and purchacen pees; for they been called children of god." /

2870 'A!' quod Melibee, 'now se I wel that ye loven nat myn honour ne my worship. / Ye knowen wel that myne adversaries han bigonnen this debaat and brige by hir outrage; / and ye see 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 crye hem mercy? / For sothe, that

2875 were nat my worship. / For right as men seyn, that "over-greet hom-

linesse engendreth dispreysinge," so fareth it by to greet humylitee or mekenesse.' /

§ 56. Thanne bigan dame Prudence to maken semblant of wratthe, and seyde, / "certes, sir, sauf your grace, I love your honour and your profit as I do myn owene, and ever have doon; / ne ye ne noon other syen never the contrarie. / And yit, if I hadde seyde that ye sholde han purchaced the pees and the reconciliacion, I ne hadde nat muchel mistaken me, ne seyde amis. / For the wyse man 2880 seith: "the dissensioun biginneth by another man, and the reconciling bi-ginneth 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 your adversaries for pees than they shuln to yow; / for I knowe wel that ye been so hard-herted, that ye wol do no-thing for me. / And Salomon 2885 seith: "he that hath over-hard an herte, atte laste he shal mishappe and mistyde." /

§ 57. Whanne Melibee hadde herd dame Prudence maken semblant of wratthe, he seyde in this wyse, / "dame, I prey yow that ye be nat displedes of thinges that I seye; / for ye knowe wel that I am angry and wrooth, and that is no wonder; / and they that been wrothe witen nat wel what they doon, ne what they seyn. / Therefore the prophete seith: that "troubled eye han no cleer sighte." / But seyeth and conseilte me as yow lyketh; for I am redy to do right as ye wol desyre; / and if ye repreve me of my folye, I am the more holden to love yow and to preysse yow. / For Salomon seith: that "he that repreveth him that doth folye, / he shal finde gretter grace than he that deceyveth him by swete wordes." /

2895 § 58. Thanne seide dame Pru-

dence, 'I make no semblant of wratthe ne anger but for your grete profit. / For Salomon seith: "he is more worth, that repreveth or chydeth a fool for his folye, shewing him semblant of wratthe, / than he that supporteth him and preyseth him in his misdoinge, and laugheth at his folye." / And this same Salomon seith afterward: that "by the sorrowful visage of a man," that is to sey, by the sory and hevye countenance of a man, / "the fool correcteth and amendeth himself." /

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§ 59. Thanne seyde Melibee, 'I shal nat conne answer to so manye faire resouns as ye putten to me and shewen. / Seyeth shortly your wil and your conseil, and I am al ready to fulfille and parfourne it.' /

§ 60. Thanne dame Prudence discovered al hir wil to him, and seyde, / 'I conseilte yow,' quod she, 'aboven alle thinges, that ye make pees bitwene god and yow; / and beth reconciled un-to him and to his grace. /

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For as I have seyde yow heer-biforn, god hath suffred yow to have this tribulacioun and disese for your sinnes. / And if ye do as I sey yow, god wol sende your adversaries un-to yow, / and maken hem fallen at your feet, redy to do your wil and your comandements. / For Salomon seith: "whan the condicioun of man is plesaunt and likinge to god, / he chaungeth the hertes of the mannes adversaries, and constreyneth hem to biseken him of pees and of grace." / And I prey yow, lat me speke with your adversaries in privee place; / for they shul nat knowe that it be of your wil or your assent. / And thanne, whan I knowe hir wil and hir entente, I may conseilte yow the more seurlly.' /

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§ 61. 'Dame,' quod Melibee, 'dooth your wil and your lykinge, / for I putte me hoolly in your dispisicioun and ordinaunce.' /

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§ 62. Thanne Dame Prudence, whan she saugh the gode wil of her

housbonde, delibered and took avys in hir-self, / thinkinge how she mighte bringe this nede un-to a good conclusioun and to a good ende. / And whan she saugh hir tyme, she sente for these adversaries to come un-to hir in-to a privee place, / and shewed wysly un-to hem the grete goodes that comen of pees, / and the grete harmes and perils that been in werre; / and seyde to hem in a goodly manere, how that hem oughte have greet repentance / of the iniurie and wrong that they hadden doon to Melibee hir lord, and to hir, and to hir doghter. /

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§ 63. And whan they herden the goodliche wordes of dame Prudence, / they weren so surprised and ravished, and hadden so greet loye of hir, that wonder was to telle. / 'A! lady!' quod they, 'ye han shewed un-to us "the blessinge of swetnesse," after the sawe of David the prophete; / for the reconcilinge which we been nat worthy to have in no manere, / but we oghte requeren it with greet contricioun and humilitee, / ye of your grete goodnesse have presented unto us. / Now see we wel that the science and the conninge of Salomon is ful trewe; / for he seith: that "swete wordes multiplyen and encresen freendes, and maken shrewes to be debonaire and meke." /

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§ 64. 'Certes,' quod they, 'we putten our dede and al our matere and cause al hoolly in your goode wil; / and been redy to obeye to the speche and comandement of my lord Melibee. / And therfore, dere and benigne lady, we preyen yow and biseke yow as mekely as we conne and mowen, / that it lyke un-to your grete goodnesse to fulfille in dede your goodliche wordes; / for we consideren and knowlichen that we han offended and greved my lord Melibee out of mesure; / so ferforth, that we be nat of power to maken hise

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amendes. / And therefore we oblige
and binden us and our freendes to
doon al his wil and hise comande-
ments. / But peraventure he hath
swich hevynesse and swich wratthe
to us-ward, by-cause of our offence, /
that he wole enioyne us swich a
peyne as we mowe nat bere ne sus-
tene. / And therefore, noble lady,
we biseke to your wommanly
2940 pitee, / to taken swich avysement
in this nede, that we, ne our
freendes, be nat desherited ne
destroyed thurgh our folye.' /

§ 65. 'Certes,' quod Prudence,
'it is an hard thing and right peril-
ous, / that a man putte him al
outruly in the arbitracioun and
Iuggement, and in the might and
power of hise enemys. / For Salo-
mon seith: "leveth me, and yeveth
credence to that I shal seyn; I
seye," quod he, "ye peple, folk,
and governours of holy chirche, /
to thy sone, to thy wyf, to thy
2945 freend, ne to thy brother / ne yev
thou never might ne maistrise of thy
body, whyl thou livest." / Now
sithen he defendeth, that man shal
nat yeven to his brother ne to his
freend the might of his body, / by
a strengere resoun he defendeth and
forbedeth a man to yeven him-self
to his enemy. / And natheles I
conseille you, that ye mistruste nat
my lord. / For I woot wel and
2950 knowe verraily, that he is debonaire
and meke, large, curteys, / and
nothing desyrous ne covetous of
good ne richesse. / For ther nis
no-thing in this world that he
desyreth, save only worship and
honour. / Forther-more I knowe
wel, and am right seur, that he shal
no-thing doon in this nede with-
outen my conseil. / And I shal so
werken in this cause, that, by grace
of our lord god, ye shul been recon-
siled un-to us.' /

§ 66. Thanne seyden they with o
vois, 'worshipful lady, we putten us
and our goodes al fully in your wil
2955 and disposicioun; / and been redy

to comen, what day that it lyke
un-to your noblesse to limite us or
assigne us, / for to maken our obli-
gacioun and bond as strong as it
lyketh un-to your goodnesse; /
that we mowe fulfille the wille of
yow and of my lord Melibee.' /

§ 67. Whan dame Prudence
hadde herd the answeres of these
men, she had hem goon agayn
prively; / and she returned to hir
lord Melibee, and tolde him how she
fond hise adversaries ful repentant, / 2960
knowleching ful lowly hir sinnes
and trespas, and how they were
redy to suffren al peyne, / requir-
inge and preyinge him of mercy and
pitee. /

§ 68. Thanne seyde Melibee, 'he
is wel worthy to have pardoun and
foryifnesse of his sinne, that ex-
cuseth nat his sinne, / but know-
lecheth it and repenteth him, axinge
indulgence. / For Senek seith:
"ther is the remissioun and foryif-
nesse, where-as confessioun is;" / 2965
for confession is neighebre to inno-
cence. / And he seith in another
place: "he that hath shame for his
sinne and knowlecheth it, is worthy
remissioun." And therefore I as-
sente and conferme me to have
pees; / but it is good that we do
it nat with-outen the assent and wil
of our freendes.' /

§ 69. Thanne was Prudence right
glad and Ioyeful, and seyde, /
'Certes, sir,' quod she, 'ye han wel
and goodly answered. / For right
2970 as by the conseil, assent, and help
of your freendes, ye han been stired
to venge yow and maken werre, /
right so with-outen hir conseil shul
ye nat accorden yow, ne have pees
with your adversaries. / For the
lawe seith: "ther nis no-thing so
good by wey of kinde, as a thing to
been unbounde by him that it was
y-bounde.'" /

§ 70. And thanne dame Pru-
dence, with-outen delay or taryng,
sente anon hir messages for hir kin,
and for hir olde freendes whiche

that were trewe and wyse, / and
 tolde hem by ordre, in the presence
 of Melibee, al this matere as it is
 2975 aboven expressed and declared; /
 and preyden hem that they wolde
 yeven hir avys and conseil, what
 best were to doon in this nedre. /
 And whan Melibees freendes hadde
 taken hir avys and deliberacioun of
 the forseide matere, / and hadden
 examined it by greet bisnesse and
 greet diligence, / they yave ful con-
 seil for to have pees and reste; /
 and that Melibee sholde receyve
 2980 with good herte hise adversaries to
 foryiffnesse and mercy. /

§ 71. And whan dame Prudence
 hadde herd the assent of hir lord
 Melibee, and the conseil of hise
 freendes, / accorde with hir wille
 and hir entencioun, / she was won-
 derly glad in hir herte, and seyde: /
 'ther is an old proverbe,' quod she,
 'seith: that "the goodnesse that
 thou mayst do this day, do it; /
 and abyde nat ne delaye it nat til
 2985 to-morwe." / And therefore I con-
 seille that ye sende your messages,
 swiche as been discrete and wyse, /
 un-to your adversaries; tellinge
 hem, on your bihalve, / that if they
 wole trete of pees and of accord, /
 that they shape hem, with-uten
 delay or taryng, to comen un-to
 us.' / Which thing parfourned
 2990 was in dede. / And whanne these
 trespassours and repentinge folk of
 hir folies, that is to seyn, the ad-
 versaries of Melibee, / hadden herd
 what these messagers seyden un-to
 hem, / they weren right glad and
 Ioyeful, and answereden ful mekely
 and benignely, / yeldinge graces
 and thankinges to hir lord Melibee
 and to al his companye; / and
 shopen hem, with-uten delay, to
 go with the messagers, and obeye to
 the comandement of hir lord Meli-
 2995 bee. /

§ 72. And right anon they token
 hir wey to the court of Melibee, /
 and token with hem somme of hir
 trewe freendes, to maken feith for

hem and for to been hir borwes. /
 And whan they were comen to the
 presence of Melibee, he seyde hem
 these wordes: / 'it standeth thus,'
 quod Melibee, 'and sooth it is, that
 ye, / causeless, and with-uten skile
 and resoun, / han doon grete iniu-
 3000 ries and wronges to me and to my
 wyf Prudence, and to my doghter
 also. / For ye han entred in-to
 myn hous by violence, / and have
 doon swich outrage, that alle men
 knowen wel that ye have deserved
 the deeth; / and therfore wol I
 knowe and wite of yow, / whether
 ye wol putte the punissement and
 the chastysinge and the vengeance
 of this outrage in the wil of me
 and of my wyf Prudence; or ye wol
 nat?' /

§ 73. Thanne the wyseste of hem
 three answerde for hem alle, and
 seyde: / 'sire,' quod he, 'we
 knowen wel, that we been un-
 worthy to comen un-to the court of
 so greet a lord and so worthy as ye
 been. / For we han so greetly mis-
 taken us, and han offended and agilt
 in swich a wyse agayn your heigh
 lordshipe, / that trewely we han de-
 served the deeth. / But yet, for
 the grete goodnesse and debonair-
 etee that all the world witnesseth
 of your persone, / we submitten us to
 the excellence and benignitee of
 3010 your gracious lordshipe, / and been
 redy to obeie to alle your comande-
 ments; / bisekinge yow, that of
 your merciable pitee ye wol con-
 sidere our grete repentaunce and
 lowe submissioun, / and graunten
 us foryevenesse of our outrageous
 trespas and offence. / For wel we
 knowe, that your liberal grace and
 mercy strecchen hem ferther in-to
 goodnesse, than doon our outrage-
 ous giltes and trespas in-to wike-
 kednesse; / al-be-it that cursedly
 3015 and dampnably we han agilt agayn
 your heigh lordshipe.' /

§ 74. Thanne Melibee took hem
 up fro the ground ful benignely, /
 and receyved hir obligaciouns and

hir bondes by hir othes up-on hir
 plegges and borwes, / and assigned
 hem a certeyn day to retourne un-to
 his court, / for to accepte and re-
 ceive the sentence and Iugement
 that Melibee wolde comande to be
 doon on hem by the causes afore-
 seyde; / whiche thinges ordeyned,
 every man retourned to his hous. /

3020 § 75. And when that dame Prudence
 saugh hir tyme, she freyned
 and axed hir lord Melibee, / what
 vengeance he thoughte to taken of
 hise adversaries? /

§ 76. To which Melibee an-
 swerde and seyde, 'certes,' quod
 he, 'I thinke and purpose me
 fully / to desherite hem of al that
 ever they han, and for to putte hem
 in exil for ever.' /

3025 § 77. 'Certes,' quod dame Prudence,
 'this were a cruel sentence,
 and muchel agayn resoun. / For
 ye been riche y-nough, and han no
 nede of other mennes good; / and
 ye mighte lightly in this wyse gete
 yow a covetous name, / which is a
 vicious thing, and oghte been es-
 chewed of every good man. / For
 after the sawe of the word of the
 apostle: "covetise is rote of alle
 harmes." / And therefore, it were
 bettere for yow to lese so muchel good
 of your owene, than for to taken of
 hir good in this manere. / For
 bettere it is to lesen good with wor-
 shipe, than it is to winne good with
 vileinye and shame. / And every
 man oghte to doon his diligence
 and his bisnesse to geten him a
 good name. / And yet shal he nat
 only bisie him in kepinge of his
 good name, / but he shal also en-
 forcen him alway to do som-thing
 by which he may renouvelle his good
 name; / for it is written, that "the
 olde good loos or good name of a
 man is sone goon and passed, when
 it is nat newed ne renovelled." /
 And as touchinge that ye seyn, ye
 wole exile your adversaries, / that
 thinketh me muchel agayn resoun
 and out of mesure, / considered the

power that they han yeve yow up-on
 hem-self. / And it is written, that
 "he is worthy to lesen his privilege
 that misuseth the might and the
 power that is yeven him." / And
 I sette cas ye mighte enioyne hem
 that payne by right and by lawe, /
 which I trowe ye mowe nat do, / I
 seye, ye mighte nat putten it to exe-
 cucion per-aventure, / and thanne
 were it lykly to retourne to the
 werre as it was biforn. / And ther-
 fore, if ye wole that men do yow
 obeisance, ye moste demen more
 curteisly; / this is to seyn, ye moste
 yeven more esy sentences and Iuge-
 ments. / For it is written, that "he
 that most curteisly comandeth, to
 him men most obeyen." / And
 therefore, I prey yow that in this
 necessitee and in this nede, ye
 caste yow to overcome your herte. /

3040 For Senek seith: that "he that
 overcometh his herte, overcometh
 twyen." / And Tullius seith: "there
 is no-thing so comendable in a greet
 lord / as when he is debonaire and
 meke, and appeseth him lightly." /
 And I prey yow that ye wole forbere
 now to do vengeance, / in swich a
 manere, that your goode name may
 be kept and conserved; / and that
 men mowe have cause and matere
 to preyse yow of pitee and of
 mercy; / and that ye have no cause
 to repente yow of thing that ye
 doon. / For Senek seith: "he over-
 cometh in an yvel manere, that re-
 penteth him of his victorie." /
 Wherefore I pray yow, lat mercy
 been in your minde and in your
 herte, / to theeffect and entente that
 god almighty have mercy on yow in
 his laste Iugement. / For seint
 Iame seith in his epistle: "Iuge-
 ment withouten mercy shal be doon
 to him, that hath no mercy of
 another wight." /

3045 § 78. Whanne Melibee hadde
 herd the grete skiles and resouns of
 dame Prudence, and hir wise infor-
 macions and techinges, / his herte
 gan encline to the wil of his wyf,

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consideringe hir trewe entente; /
 and conformed him anon, and as-
 sented fully to werken after hir con-
 seil; / and thonked god, of whom
 procedeth al vertu and alle good-
 nesse, that him sente a wyf of so
 greet discrecioun. / And whan the
 day cam that hise adversaries shokle
 apperen in his presence, / he spak
 unto hem ful goodly, and seyde in
 3065 this wyse: / 'al-be-it so that of your
 pryde and presumpcioun and folie,
 and of your necligence and uncon-
 ninge, / ye have misborn yow and
 trespassed un-to me; / yet, for as
 much as I see and biholde your grete
 humilitee, / and that ye been sory
 and repentant of your giltes, / it

constreyneth me to doon yow grace
 and mercy. / Therefore I receyve 3070
 yow to my grace, / and foryeve yow
 outrely alle the offences, iniuries,
 and wronges, that ye have doon
 agayn me and myne; / to this effect
 and to this ende, that god of his
 endeles mercy / wole at the tyme
 of our dyinge foryeven us our giltes
 that we han trespassed to him in
 this wrecched world. / For doute-
 lees, if we be sory and repentant of
 the sinnes and giltes whiche we han
 trespassed in the sighte of our lord
 god, / he is so free and so merci- 3075
 able, / that he wole foryeven us our
 giltes, / and bringen us to his blisse
 that never hath ende. Amen.' /

Here is ended Chaucers Tale of Melibee and of Dame Prudence.

THE MONK'S PROLOGUE.

*The mery wordes of the Host to the
 Monk.*

WHAN ended was my tale of Melibee,
 And of Prudence and hir benignitee, 3080
 Our hoste seyde, 'as I am faithful man,
 And by the precious *corpus Madrian*,
 I hadde lever than a bare ale
 That goode lief my wyf hadde herd this
 tale! 3084
 For she nis no-thing of swich pacience
 As was this Melibeus wyf Prudence.
 By goddes bones! whan I bete my
 knaves,
 She bringth me forth the grete clobbed
 staves,
 And cryeth, "slee the dogges everich-
 oon,
 And brek hem, bothe bak and every
 boon." 3090
 And if that any neighebor of myne
 Wol nat in chirche to my wyf encline,
 Or be so hardy to hir to trespace,
 Whan she comth hoom, she rampeth
 in my face,
 And cryeth, "false coward, wreck thy
 wyf, 3095

By *corpus* bones! I wol have thy knyf,
 And thou shalt have my distaf and go
 spinne!"
 Fro day to night right thus she wol bi-
 ginne; —
 "Allas!" she seith, "that ever I was
 shape 3099
 To wedde a milksop or a coward ape,
 That wol be overlad with every wight!
 Thou darst nat stonden by thy wyves
 right!"
 This is my lyf, 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 3105
 Be lyk a wilde leoun fool-hardy.
 I woot wel she wol do me slee som day
 Som neighebor, and thanne go my wey.
 For I am perilous with knyf in honde,
 Al be it that I dar nat hir withstonde,
 For she is big in armes, by my feith, 3111
 "That shal he finde, that hir misdooth or
 seith.
 But lat us passe away fro this matere.
 My lord the Monk,' quod he, 'be mery
 of chere;
 For ye shul telle a tale trewely. 3115
 Lo! Rouchestre stant heer faste by!

Ryd forth, myn owene lord, brek nat our
game,
But, by my trouthe, I knowe nat your
name,
Wher shal I calle yow my lord dan Iohn,
Or dan Thomas, or elles dan Albon? 3120
Of what hous be ye, by your fader kin?
I vow to god, thou hast a ful fair skin,
It is a gentil pasture thier thou goost;
Thou art nat lyk a penaunt or a goost.
Upon my feith, thou art som officer, 3125
Som worthy sexteyn, or som celerer,
For by my fader soule, as to my doom,
Thou art a maister whan thou art at
hoom;
No povre cloisterer, ne no novys,
But a governour, wyly and wys. 3130
And therwithal of brawnes and of bones
A wel-faring persone for the nones.
I pray to god, yeve him confusioun
That first thee broghte un-to religioun;
Thou woldest han been a trede-foul
aright. 3135
Haddestow as greet a leve, as thou hast
might
To parfourne al thy lust in engen-
drure,
Thou haddest bigeten many a creature.
Alas! why werestow so wyd a cope?
God yeve me sorwe! but, and I were a
pope, 3140
Not only thou, but every mighty man,
Thogh he were shorn ful hie upon his
pan,
Sholde have a wyf; for al the world is
lorn!
Religioun hath take up al the corn
Of treading, and we borel men ben
shrimpes! 3145
Of feble trees ther comen wrecched
impes.
This maketh that our heires been so
selendre

And feble, that they may nat wel engen-
dre.
This maketh that our wyves wol assaye
Religious folk, for ye may better paye
Of Venus payements than mowe we; 3151
God woot, no lussheburghes payen ye!
But be nat wrooth, my lord, for that I
pleye;
Ful ofte in game a sooth I have herd
seye.' 3154
This worthy monk took al in pacience,
And seyde, 'I wol doon al my diligence,
As fer as souneth in-to honestee,
To telle yow a tale, or two, or three.
And if yow list to herkne hiderward,
I wol yow seyn the lyf of saint Edward;
Or elles first Tragedies wol I telle 3161
Of whiche I have an hundred in my
celle.
Tragedie is to seyn a certeyn storie,
As olde bokes maken us memorie,
Of him that stood in greet prosperitee
And is y-fallen out of heigh degree 3166
Into miserie, and endeth wrecchedly.
And they ben versifyed comunly
Of six feet, which men clepe *exametron*.
In prose eek been endyted many oon,
And eek in metre, in many a sondry
wyse. 3171
Lo! this declaring oughte y-nough suf-
fise.
Now herkne, if yow lyketh for to
here;
But first I yow biseke in this matere,
Though I by ordre telle nat thise
things, 3175
Be it of popes, emperours, or kinges,
After hir ages, as men writen finde,
But telle hem som bifore and som bi-
hinde,
As it now comth un-to my remem-
braunce; 3179
I have me excused of myn ignoraunce.'

Explicit.

THE MONKES TALE.

*Here biginneth the Monkes Tale, de
Casibus Virorum Illustrium.*

I wol biwayle in maner of Tragedie
The harm of hem that stode in heigh
degree,
And fillen so that ther nas no remedie
To bringe hem out of hir adversitee;
For certein, whan that fortune list to
flee, 3185
Ther may no man the cours of hir with-
holde;
Lat no man truste on blind prosperitee;
Be war by thise ensamples trewe and
olde.

LUCIFER.

At Lucifer, though he an angel were,
And nat a man, at him I wol biginne;
For, thogh fortune may non angel dere,
From heigh degree yet fel he for his sinne
Doun in-to helle, wher he yet is inne.
O Lucifer! brightest of angels alle,
Now artow Sathanas, that maist nat
twinne 3195
Out of miserie, in which that thou art
falle.

ADAM.

Lo Adam, in the feld of Damassene,
With goddes owene finger wrought was
he,
And nat bigeten of mannes sperme un-
clene,
And welte al Paradys, saving o tree. 3200
Had never worldly man so heigh degree
As Adam, til he for misgovernance
Was drive out of his hye prosperitee
To labour, and to helle, and to mes-
chance.

SAMPSON.

Lo Sampson, which that was annunciat
By thangel, longe er his nativitee, 3206
And was to god almighty consecrat,
And stood in noblesse, whyl he mighte
see.

Was never swich another as was he,
To speke of strengthe, and therwith
hardnesse; 3210
But to his wyves tolde he his secree,
Through which he slow him-self, for
wrecchednesse.

Sampson, this noble almighty champioun,
Withouten wepen save his hondes tweye,
He slow and al to-rente the leoun, 3215
Toward his wedding walking by the
weye.
His false wyf coude him so plesse and
preye
Til she his conseil knew, and she untrew
Un-to his foos his conseil gan biwreye,
And him forsook, and took another
newe. 3220

Three hundred foxes took Sampson for
ire,
And alle hir tayles he togider bond,
And sette the foxes tayles alle on fire,
For he on every tayl had knit a brond;
And they brende alle the cornes in that
lond, 3225
And alle hir oliveres and vynes eek,
A thousand men he slow eek with his
hond,
And had no wepen but an asses cheek.

Whan they were slayn, so thursted him
that he
Was wel ny lorn, for which he gan to
preye 3230
That god wolde on his peyne han som
pitee,
And sende him drinke, or elles moste he
deye;
And of this asses cheke, that was dreye,
Out of a wang-tooth sprang anon a welle,
Of which he drank y-nogh, shortly to
seye, 3235
Thus heelp him god, as *Judicum* can telle.

By verray force, at Gazan, on a night,
Maugree Philistiens of that citee,
The gates of the toun he hath up-plaint,
And on his bak y-caried hem hath he

Hye on an hille that men mighte hem
see. 3241

O noble almighty Sampson, leef and dere,
Had thou nat told to wommen thy secree,
In al this worlde ne hadde been thy pere!

This Sampson never sicer drank ne wyn,
Ne on his heed cam rasour noon ne
shere, 3246

By precept of the messenger divyn,
For alle his strengthes in his heres were;
And fully twenty winter, yeer by yere,
He hadde of Israel the governaunce.
But sone shal he wepen many a tere, 3251
For wommen shal him bringen to mes-
chaunce!

Un-to his lemman Dalida he tolde
That in his heres al his strengthe lay,
And falsly to his fo-men she him solde.
And sleping in hir barme up-on a day
She made to clippe or shere his heer
away, 3257
And made his fo-men al his craft espyen;
And whan that they him fonde in this
array,
They bounde him faste, and putten out
his yën. 3260

But er his heer were clipped or y-shave,
Ther was no bond with which men might
him binde;

But now is he in prisoun in a cave,
Wher-as they made him at the querne
grinde.

O noble Sampson, strongest of man-
kinde, 3265

O whylom Iuge in glorie and in richesse,
Now maystow wepen with thyn yën
blinde,

Sith thou fro wele art falle in wrecched-
nesse.

Thende of this caytif was as I shal seye;
His fo-men made a feste upon a day, 3270
And made him as hir fool bifore hem
pleye,

And this was in a temple of greet array.
But atte laste he made a foul affray;
For he two pilers shook, and made hem
falle,

And down fil temple and al, and ther it
lay, 3275

And slow him-self, and eek his fo-men
alle.

This is to seyn, the princes everichoon,
And eek three thousand bodies wer ther
slayn

With falling of the grete temple of stoon.
Of Sampson now wol I na-more seyn.

Beth war by this ensample old and
playn 3281

That no men telle hir conseil til hir
wyves

Of swich thing as they wolde han secree
fayn,

If that it touche hir limmes or hir lyves.

HERCULES.

Of Hercules the sovereyn conquerour
Singen his workes laude and heigh re-
noun; 3286

For in his tyme of strengthe he was the
flour.

He slow, and rafte the skin of the leoun;
He of Centauros leyde the boost adoun;

He Arpies slow, the cruel briddes
felle; 3290

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 him, flesh
and boon;

He slow the firy serpent venimous; 3295
Of Achelois two hornes, he brak oon;

And he slow Cacus in a cave of stoon;
He slow the geaunt Antheus the stronge;

He slow the grisly boor, and that anoon,
And bar the heven on his nekke
longe. 3300

Was never wight, sith that the world
bigan,

That slow so many monstres as dide he.
Thurgh-out this wyde world his name
ran,

What for his strengthe, and for his heigh
bountee,

And every reaume wente he for to
see. 3305

He was so strong that no man mighte
him lette;

At bothe the worldes endes, seith Tro-
phee,
In stede of boundes, he a piler sette.

A lemman hadde this noble champioun,
That highte Dianira, fresh as May; 3310
And, as thise clerkes maken mencion,
She hath him sent a sherte fresh and gay.
Allas! this sherte, allas and weylaway!
Envenimed was so subtilly with-alle,
That, er that he had wered it half a
day, 3315
It made his flesh al from his bones falle.

But nathelees somme clerkes hir excusen
By oon that highte Nessus, that it maked;
Be as he may, I wol hir noght accusen;
But on his bak this sherte he wered al
naked, 3320
Til that his flesh was for the venim
blaked.
And whan he sey noon other remedye,
In hote coles he hath him-selven raked,
For with no venim deynded him to dye.

Thus starf this worthy mighty Hercules;
Lo, who may truste on fortune any
throwe? 3326
For him that folweth al this world of prees,
Er he be war, is ofte y-leyd ful lowe.
Ful wys is he that can him-selven knowe.
Beth war, for whan that fortune list to
glose, 3330
Than wayteth she hir man to overthrowe
By swich a wey as he wolde leest suppose.

NABUGODONOSOR (NEBUCHADNEZZAR).

The mighty trone, the precious tresor,
The glorious ceptre and royal magestee
That hadde the king Nabugodonosor,
With tonge unnethe may discryved be.
He twyes wan Ierusalem the citee;
The vessel of the temple he with him
ladde.

At Babiloyne was his sovereyn see,
In which his glorie and his delyt he
hadde. 3340

The fairest children of the blood royal
Of Israel he leet do gelde anon,
And maked ech of hem to been his
thral.

Amonges othere Daniel was oon, 3344
That was the wysest child of everichoon;
For he the dremes of the king expouned,
Wher-as in Chaldey clerk ne was ther
noon
That wiste to what fyn his dremes
sounded.

This proude king leet make a statue of
golde, 3349
Sixty cubytes long, and seven in brede,
To which image bothe yonge and olde
Comaunded he to loute, and have in
drede;
Or in a fourneys ful of flambes rede
He shal be brent, that wolde noght
obye. 3354
But never wolde assente to that dede
Daniel, ne his yonge felawes tweye.

This king of kinges proud was and claat,
He wende that god, that sit in magestee,
Ne mighte him nat bireve of his estaat:
But sodeynly he loste his dignitee, 3360
And lyk a beste him semed for to be,
And eet hay as an oxe, and lay ther-
oute;
In reyn with wilde bestes walked he,
Til certain tyme was y-come aboute.

And lyk an egles fetheres waxe his
heres, 3365
His nayles lyk a briddes clawes were;
Til god releessed him a certain yeres,
And yaf him wit; and than with many a
tere
He thanked god, and ever his lyf in
fere
Was he to doon amis, or more trespace,
And, til that tyme he leyd was on his
bere, 3371
He knew that god was ful of might and
grace.

BALTHASAR (BELSHAZZAR)

His sone, which that highte Balthasar,
That heeld the regne after his fader
day, 3374
He by his fader coude nought be war,
For proud he was of herte and of array;
And eek an ydolastre was he ay.
His hye estaat assured him in pryde.

But fortune caste him doun, and ther he
lay,
And sodeynly his regne gan divyde. 3380

A feste he made un-to his lordes alle
Up-on a tyme, and bad hem blythe be,
And than his officeres gan he calle —
'Goth, bringeth forth the vessels,' [tho]
quod he, 3384
'Which that my fader, in his prosperitee,
Out of the temple of Ierusalem birafted,
And to our hye goddes thanke we
Of honour, that our eldres with us lafte.'

His wyf, his lordes, and his concubynes
Ay dronken, whyl hir appetytes laste,
Out of these noble vessels sundry wyne ;
And on a wal this king his yēn caste,
And sey an hond armlees, that wroot ful
faste,
For fere of which he quook and syked
sore. 3394

This hond, that Balthasar so sore agaste,
Wroot *Mane, techel, phares*, and na-more.

In al that lond magicien was noon
That coude expoune what this lettre
mente ;

But Daniel expouned it anoon, 3399
And seyde, 'king, god to thy fader lente
Glorie and honour, regne, tresour, rente :
And he was proud, and no-thing god ne
dradde,

And therfor god gret wreche up-on him
sente,
And him birafted the regne that he
hadde.

He was out cast of mannes companye,
With asses was his habitacioun, 3406
And eet hey as a beste in weet and drye,
Til that he knew, by grace and by resoun,
That god of heven hath dominacioun
Over every regne and every creature ;
And thanne had god of him compassioun,
And him restored his regne and his
figure.

Eck thou, that art his sone, art proud
also,
And knowest alle these things verrailly,
And art rebel to god, and art his fo. 3415
Thou drank eek of his vessels boldely ;

Thy wyf eek and thy wenchis sinfully
Dronke of the same vessels sondry wyne,
And heriest false goddes cursedly ;
Therfor to thee y-shapen ful gret pyne
is. 3420

This hand was sent from god, that on
the walle

Wroot *mane, techel, phares*, truste me ;
Thy regne is doon, thou weyest nought at
alle ;

Divyded is thy regne, and it shal be
To Medes and to Perses yeven,' quod he.
And thilke same night this king was
slawe,

And Darius occupyeth his degree,
Thogh he therto had neither right ne
lawe.

Lordinges, ensample heer-by may ye
take 3429

How that in lordshipe is no sikernesse ;
For whan fortune wol a man forsake,
She bereth away his regne and his
richesse,

And eek his freendes, bothe more and
lesse ;

For what man that hath freendes thurgh
fortune, 3434

Mishap wol make hem enemys, I gesse :
This proverbe is ful sooth and ful
commune.

CENOBIA (ZENOBIA).

Cenobia, of Palimerie quene,
As writen Persiens of hir noblesse,
So worthy was in armes and so kene,
That no wight passed hir in hardinesse,
Ne in linage, ne in other gentillesse.

Of kinges blode of Perse is she de-
scended ;

I seye nat that she hadde most fair-
nesse,

But of hir shape she mighte nat been
amended.

From hir childhede I finde that she
fledde 3445

Office of women, and to wode she
wente ;

And many a wilde hertes blood she
shedde

With arwes brode 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, lepardes, and beres al to-rente,
And in hir armes welde hem at hir wille.

She dorste wilde beestes dennes seke,
And rennen in the montaignes al the
night,

And slegen under a bush, and she coude
eke 3455

Wrastlen by verray force and verray
might

With any yong man, were he never so
wight ;

Ther mighte no-thing in hir armes
stonde.

She kepte hir maydenhod from every
wight,

To no man deigned hir for to be
bonde. 3460

But atte laste hir frendes han hir married
To Odenake, a prince of that contree,

Al were it so that she hem longe taried ;
And ye shul understonde how that he

Hadde swiche fantasyes as hadde she,
But nathelees, whan they were knit in-

ferre, 3466

They lived in Ioye and in felicitee ;
For ech of hem hadde other leef and
dere.

Save o thing, that she never wolde
assente

By no wey, that he sholde by hir lye 3470
But ones, for it was hir pleyn entente

To have a child, the world to multiplye ;
And al-so sone as that she mighte

espye
That she was nat with childe with that
dede,

Than wolde she suffre him doon his
fantasye 3475

Eft-sonne, and nat but ones, out of drede.

And if she were with childe at thilke
cast,

Na-more sholde he pleyen thilke game
Til fully forty dayes weren past ;

Than wolde she ones suffre him do the
same. 3480

Al were this Odenake wilde or tame,
He gat na-more of hir, for thus she

seyde,
'It was to wyves lecherye and shame

In other cas, if that men with hem
pleyde.'

Two sones by this Odenake hadde she,
The whiche she kepte in vertu and let-
trure ; 3486

But now un-to our tale turne we.
I seye, so worshipful a creature,

And wys therwith, and large with me-
sure,

So penible in the werre, and curteis
eke, 3490

Ne more labour mighte in werre endure,
Was noon, thogh al this world men

sholde seke.

Hir riche array ne mighte nat be told
As wel in vessel as in hir clothing ;

She was al clad in perree and in gold,
And eek she lafte noght, for noon hunt-

ing, 3496

To have of sondry tonges ful knowing,
Whan that she leyser hadde, and for to

entende
To lernen bokes was al hir lyking,

How she in vertu mighte hir lyf dis-
pende. 3500

And, shortly of this storie for to trete,
So doughty was hir housbonde and eek

she,
That they conquered many regnes grete

In the orient, with many a fair citee,
Apertenaunt un-to the magestee 3505

Of Rome, and with strong hond helde
hem ful faste ;

Ne never mighte hir fo-men doon hem
flee,

Ay whyl that Odenakes dayes laste.

Hir batailes, who-so list hem for to
rede,

Agayn Sapor the king and othere mo,
And how that al this proces fil in

dede, 3511

Why she conquered and what title had
therto,

And after of hir meschief and hir wo,
How that she was biseged and y-take,
Let him un-to my maister Petrark go,
That writ y-nough of this, I undertake.

When Odenake was deed, she mightily
The regnes heeld, and with hir propre
honde

Agayn hir foos she faught so cruelly,
That ther nas king ne prince in al that
londe 3520

That he nas glad, if that he grace fonde,
That she ne wolde up-on his lond wer-
reye;

With hir they made alliaunce by bonde
To been in pees, and lete hir ryde and
pleye.

The emperour of Rome, Claudius, 3525

Ne him bifore, the Romayn Galien,
Ne dorste never been so corageous,
Ne noon Ermyne, ne noon Egipcien,
Ne Surrien, ne noon Arabien,
Within the feld that dorste with hir
fichte 3530

Lest that she wolde hem with hir hondes
slen,

Or with hir meynee putten hem to
flighte.

In kinges habit wente hir sones two,
As heires of hir fadres regnes alle,
And Hermanno, and Thymalaö 3535
Her names were, as Persiens hem calle.
But ay fortune hath in hir hony galle;
This mighty quene may no whyl endure.
Fortune out of hir regne made hir falle
To wrecchednesse and to misaventure.

Aurelian, whan that the governaunce
Of Rome cam in-to his hondes tweye,
He shoop up-on this queen to do ven-
geaunce,

And with his legiouns he took his
weye

Toward Cenobie, and, shortly for to
seye, 3545

He made hir flee, and atte laste hir
hente,

And fettred hir, and eek hir children
tweye,

And wan the lond, and hoom to Rome
he wente.

Amonges othere thinges that he wan,
Hir char, that was with gold wrought
and perree, 3550

This grete Romayn, this Aurelian,
Hath with him lad, for that men sholde
it see.

Bifore his triumpe walketh she
With gilte cheynes on hir nekke hang-
ing; 3554

Corouned was she, as after hir degree,
And ful of perree charged hir clothing.

Allas, fortune! she that whylom was
Dredful to kinges and to emperoures,
Now gaureth al the peple on hir, alas!
And she that helmed was in starke
stoures, 3560

And wan by force tounes stronge and
toures,

Shal on hir heed now were a vitremyte;
And she that bar the ceptre ful of
floures

Shal bere a distaf, hir cost for to quyte.

(NERO follows in T. ; see p. 591.)

DE PETRO REGE ISPANNIE.

O noble, o worthy Petro, glorie of
Spayne, 3565

Whom fortune heeld so hy in magestee,
Wel oughten men thy pitous deeth com-
playne!

Out of thy lond thy brother made thee
flee;

And after, at a sege, by subtiltee,
Thou were bitrayed, and lad un-to his
tente, 3570

Wher-as he with his owene hond slow
thee,

Succeeding in thy regne and in thy rente.

The feeld of snow, with thegle of blak
ther-inne,

Caught with the lymrod, coloured as the
glede,

He brew this cursednes and al this
sinne. 3575

The 'wikked nest' was werker of this
nede;

Noght Charles Oliver, that ay took hede
Of trouthe and honour, but of Armorique
Genilon Oliver, corrupt for mede,

Broughte this worthy king in swich a
brike. 3580

DE PETRO REGE DE CIPRO.

O worthy Petro, king of Cypre, also,
That Alisaundre wan by heigh maistrye,
Ful many a hethen wroghtestow ful wo,
Of which thyn owene liges hadde envye,
And, for no thing but for thy chivalrye,
They in thy bedde han slayn thee by the
morwe. 3586
Thus can fortune hir wheel governe and
gye,
And out of Ioye bringe men to sorwe.

DE BARNABO DE LUMBARDIA.

Of Melan grete Barnabo Viscounte,
God of delyt, and scourge of Lumbardy, e,
Why sholde I nat thyn infortune accounte,
Sith in estaat thou clombe were so hye?
Thy brother sone, that was thy double
allye,
For he thy newew was, and sone-in-lawe,
With-inne his prisoun made thee to dye;
But why, ne how, noot I that thou were
slawe. 3596

DE HUGELINO, COMITE DE PIZE.

Of the erl Hugelyn of Pyse the langour
Ther may no tonge telle for pitee;
But litel out of Pyse stant a tour,
In whiche tour in prisoun put was he,
And with him been his litel children
three. 3601
The eldeste scarsly fyf yeer was of age.
Allas, fortune! it was greet crueltee
Swiche briddes for to putte in swiche a
cage!

Dampned was he to deye in that pris-
oun, 3605
For Roger, which that bisshop was of
Pyse,
Hadde on him maad a fals suggestioun,
Thurgh which the peple gan upon him
ryse,
And putten him to prisoun in swich
wyse
As ye han herd, and mete and drink he
hadde 3610

So smal, that wel unnethe it may suffyse,
And therwith-al it was ful povre and
badde.

And on a day bifil that, in that hour,
Whan that his mete wont was to be
brought, 3614
The gayler shette the dores of the tour.
He herde it wel,—but he spak right
nought,
And in his herte anon ther fil a thought,
That they for hunger wolde doon him
dyen.
'Allas!' quod he, 'allas! that I was
wrought!' 3619
Therwith the teres fillen from his yën.

His yonge sone, that three yeer was of
age,
Un-to him seyde, 'fader, why do ye
wepe?
Whan wol the gayler bringen our
potage,
Is ther no morsel breed that ye do kepe?
I am so hungry that I may nat slepe.
Now wolde god that I mighte slegen
ever! 3626
Than sholde nat hunger in my wombe
crepe;
Ther is no thing, save breed, that me
were lever.'

Thus day by day this child bigan to crye,
Til in his fadres barme adoun it lay, 3630
And seyde, 'far-wel, fader, I moot dye,'
And kiste his fader, and deyde the same
day.
And whan the woful fader deed it sey,
For wo his armes two he gan to byte,
And seyde, 'allas, fortune! and weyla-
way! 3635
Thy false wheel my wo al may I wyte!'

His children wende that it for hunger
was
That he his armes gnou, and nat for wo,
And seyde, 'fader, do nat so, allas!
But rather eet the flesh upon us two;
Our flesh thou yaf us, tak our flesh us
fro 3641
And eet y-nough:' right thus they to
him seyde,
And after that, with-in a day or two,

They leyde hem in his lappe adoun, and
deyde.

Him-self, despeired, eek for hunger
starf; 3645

Thus ended is this mighty Erl of Pyse;
From heigh estaat fortune away him
carf.

Of this Tragedie it oghte y-nough suf-
fyse.

Who-so wol here it in a lenger wyse,
Redeth the grete poete of Itaille, 3650
That highte Dant, for he can al devyse
Fro point to point, nat o word wol he
faill.

NERO.

Al-though that Nero were as vicious
As any feend that lyth ful lowe adoun,
Yet he, as telleth us Swetonius, 3655
This wyde world hadde in subieccioun,
Both Est and West, South and Septem-
trioun;

Of rubies, saphires, and of perles whyte
Were alle his clothes brouded up and
doun; 3659
For he in gemmes greetly gan delyte.

More delicat, more pompous of array,
More proud was never emperour than
he;

That ilke cloth, that he had wered o day,
After that tyme he nolde it never see.

Nettes of gold-thred hadde he gret
plente; 3665

To fische in Tybre, whan him liste pleye.
His lustes were al lawe in his decree,
For fortune as his freend him wolde
obeye.

He Rome brende for his delicacye;
The senatours he slow up-on a day. 3670
To here how men wolde wepe and crye;
And slow his brother, and by his sister
lay.

His moder made he in pitous array;
For he hir wombe slitte, to biholde
Wher he conceyved was; so weilaway!
That he so litel of his moder tolde! 3676

No tere out of his yën for that sighte
Ne cam, but seyde, 'a fair womman was
she.'

Gret wonder is, how that he coude or
mighte

Be domesman of hir dede beautee. 3680
The wyn to bringen him comaunded he,
And drank anon; non other wo he
made.

Whan might is loyned un-to crueltee,
Allas! to depe wol the venim wade!

In youthe a maister hadde this emperour,
To teche him letterure and curteisey,
For of moralitee he was the flour,
As in his tyme, but-if bokes lye;
And whyl this maister hadde of him
maistrye,

He made him so conning and so souple
That longe tyme it was er tirannye 3691
Or any vyce dorste on him uncouple.

This Seneca, of which that I devyse,
By-cause Nero hadde of him swich drede,
For he fro vyces wolde him ay chastyse
Discreetly as by worde and nat by
dede; — 3696
'Sir,' wolde he seyn, 'an emperour moot
nede

Be vertuous, and hate tirannye' —
For which he in a bath made him to
blede 3699
On bothe his armes, til he moste dye.

This Nero hadde eek of acustumaunce
In youthe ageyn his maister for to ryse,
Which afterward him thoughte a greet
greaunce;

Therfor he made him deyen in this wyse.
But natheles this Seneca the wyse 3705
Chees in a bath to deye in this manere
Rather than han another tormentyse;
And thus hath Nero slayn his maister
dere.

Now fil it so that fortune list no lenger
The hye pryde of Nero to cheryce; 3710
For though that he were strong, yet was
she strengere;

She thoughte thus, 'by god, I am to nyce
To sette a man that is fulfuld of vyce
In heigh degree, and emperour him
calle.

By god, out of his sete I wol him tryce;
When he leest weneth, sonest shal he
falle.' 3716

The peple roos up-on him on a night
 For his defeaute, and whan he it espyed,
 Out of his dores anon he hath him dight
 Alone, and, ther he wende han ben allyed,
 He knocked faste, and ay, the more he
 cryed, 3721
 The faster shette they the dores alle;
 Tho wiste he wel he hadde him-self mis-
 gyed,
 And wente his wey, no lenger dorste he
 calle.

The peple cryde and rombled up and
 down, 3725
 That with his eres herde he how they
 seyde,
 'Wher is this false tyraunt, this Ne-
 roun?'
 For fere almost out of his wit he breyde,
 And to his goddes pitously he preyde
 For socour, but it mighte nat bityde. 3730
 For drede of this, him thoughte that he
 deyde,
 And ran in-to a gardin, him to hyde.

And in this gardin fond he cherles tweye
 That seten by a fyr ful greet and reed,
 And to this cherles two he gan to
 preye 3735
 To sleen him, and to girden of his heed,
 That to his body, whan that he were
 deed,
 Were no despyt y-doon, for his defame.
 Him-self he slow, he coude no better
 reed,
 Of which fortune lough, and hadde a
 game. 3740

DE OLOFERNO (HOLOFERNES).

Was never capitayn under a king
 That regnes mo putte in subieccioun,
 Ne strengre was in feeld of alle thing,
 As in his tyme, ne gretter of renoun,
 Ne more pompous in heigh presump-
 cioun 3745
 Than Oloferne, which fortune ay kiste
 So likerously, and ladde him up and
 down
 Til that his heed was of, er that he wiste.
 Nat only that this world hadde him in
 awe

For lesinge of richesse or libertee, 3750
 But he made every man reneye his lawe.
 'Nabugodonosor was god,' seyde he,
 'Noon other god sholde adoured be.'
 Ageyns his heste no wight dar trespace
 Save in Bethulia, a strong citee, 3755
 Wher Eliachim a prest was of that place.

But tak kepe of the deeth of Olofern;
 Amidde his host he dronke lay a night,
 With-inne his tente, large as is a bern,
 And yit, for al his pompe and al his
 might, 3760
 Iudith, a womman, as he lay upright,
 Sleping, his heed of smoot, and from his
 tente
 Ful prively she stal from every wight,
 And with his heed unto hir toun she
 wente.

DE REGE ANTHIOCHO ILLUSTR.

What nedeth it of King Anthiochus 3765
 To telle his hye royal magestee,
 His hye pryde, his werkes venimous?
 For swich another was ther noon as he.
 Rede which that he was in Machabee,
 And rede the proude wordes that he
 seyde, 3770
 And why he fil fro heigh prosperitee,
 And in an hill how wrechedly he deyde.

Fortune him hadde enhaunched so in
 pryde
 That verraily he wende he mighte attayne
 Unto the sterres, upon every syde, 3775
 And in balance weyen ech montayne,
 And alle the flodes of the see restrayne.
 And goddes peple hadde he most in
 hate,
 IItem wolde he sleen in torment and in
 payne,
 Wening that god ne mighte his pryde
 abate. 3780

And for that Nichanor and Thimothee
 Of Iewes weren venquished mightily,
 Unto the Iewes swich an hate hadde he
 That he bad greithe his char ful hastily,
 And swoor, and seyde, ful despitously,
 Unto Ierusalem he wolde eft-sone, 3786
 To wroken his ire on it ful cruelly;
 But of his purpos he was let ful sone.

God for his manace him so sore smoot
 With invisible wounde, ay incurable, 3790
 That in his guttes carf it so and boot
 That his peynes weren importable.
 And certainly, the wreche was reasonable,
 For many a mannes guttes dide he peyne;
 But from his purpos cursed and dampna-
 ble 3795
 For al his smert he wolde him nat re-
 streyne;

But bad anon apparailen his host,
 And soleynty, er he of it was war,
 God daunted al his pride and al his bost.
 For he so sore fil out of his char, 3800
 That it his limes and his skin to-tar,
 So that he neither mighte go ne ryde,
 But in a chayer men aboute him bar,
 Al for-brused, bothe bak and syde.

The wreche of god him smoot so
 cruelly 3805
 That thurgh his body wikked wormes
 crepte;
 And ther-with-al he stank so horribly,
 That noon of al his meynee that him
 kepte,
 Whether so he wook or elles slepte,
 Ne mighte noght for stink of him en-
 dure. 3810
 In this meschief he wayled and eek
 wepte,
 And knew god lord of every creature.

To al his host and to him-self also
 Ful wlatson was the stink of his careyne;
 No man ne mighte him bere to ne fro. 3815
 And in this stink and this horrible peyne
 He starf ful wrecchedly in a monteyne.
 Thus hath this robbour and this homi-
 cyde,
 That many a man made to wepe and
 pleyne, 3819
 Swich guerdon as bilongeth unto pryde.

DE ALEXANDRO.

The storie of Alisaundre is so comune,
 That every wight that hath discrecioun
 Hath herd somewhat or al of his fortune.
 This wyde world, as in conclusioun,
 He wan by strengthe, or for his hye re-
 noun 3825

They weren glad for pees un-to him
 sende.
 The pryde of man and beste he leyde
 aloun,
 Wher-so he cam, un-to the worldes ende.

Comparisoun might never yit be makid
 Bitwixe him and another conquerour;
 For al this world for drede of him hath
 quaked, 3831
 He was of knighthode and of freedom
 flour;
 Fortune him made the heir of hir honour;
 Save wyn and women, no-thing mighte
 aswage
 His hye entente in armes and labour; 3835
 So was he ful of leonyn corage.

What preys were it to him, though I yow
 tolde
 Of Darius, and an hundred thousand mo,
 Of kinges, princes, erles, dukes bolde,
 Whiche he conquered, and broghte hem
 in-to wo? 3840
 I seye, as fer as man may ryde or go,
 The world was his, what sholde I more
 devyse?
 For though I write or tolde you evermo
 Of his knighthode, it mighte nat suffyse.

Twelf yeer he regned, as seith Macha-
 bee; 3845
 Philippes sone of Macedoyne he was,
 That first was king in Grece the con-
 trece.
 O worthy gentil Alisaundre, alas!
 That ever sholde fallen swich a cas!
 Empoisoned of thyn owene folk thou
 were; 3850
 Thy *ys* fortune hath turned into *as*,
 And yit for thee ne weep she never a
 tere!

Who shal me yeven teres to compleyne
 The deeth of gentillesse and of fraun-
 chyse,
 That al the world welded in his
 demeyne, 3855
 And yit him thoughte it mighte nat
 suffyse?
 So ful was his corage of heigh emprise.
 Alas! who shal me helpe to endyte
 false fortune, and poison to despyse,

The whiche two of al this wo I
wyte? 3860

DE IULIO CESARE.

By wisdom, manhede, and by greet
labour

Fro humble bed to royal magestee,
Up roos he, Iulius the conquerour,
That wan al thoccident by lond and
see,

By strengthe of hond, or elles by
treetee, 3865

And un-to Rome made hem tributarie;
And sitthe of Rome the emperour was
he,

Til that fortune wex his adversarie.

O mighty Cesar, that in Thessalye 3869

Ageyn Pompeius, fader thyn in lawe,
That of thorient hadde al the chivalrye
As fer as that the day biggineth dawe,
Thou thurgh thy knighthode hast hem
take and slawe,

Save fewe folk that with Pompeius
fledde,

Thurgh which thou puttest al thorient in
awe. 3875

Thanke fortune, that so wel thee spedde!

But now a litel why! I wol biwaille
This Pompeius, this noble governour
Of Rome, which that fleigh at this
bataille; 3879

I seye, oon of his men, a fals traitour,
His heed of smoot, to winnen him favour
Of Iulius, and him the heed he broghte.
Allas, Pompey, of thorient conquerour,
That fortune unto swich a fyn thee
broghte!

To Rome ageyn repaireth Iulius 3885

With his triumphe, laureat ful hye,
But on a tyme Brutus Cassius,
That ever hadde of his hye estaat envye,
Ful prively hath maad conspiracye
Ageins this Iulius, in subtil wyse, 3890
And cast the place, in whiche he sholde
dye

With boydekins, as I shal yow devyse.

This Iulius to the Capitolie wente
Upon a day, as he was wont to goon,

And in the Capitolie anon him
hente 3895

This false Brutus, and his othere foon,
And stikede him with boydekins anoon
With many a wounde, and thus they lete
him lye;

But never gronte he at no strook but
oon,

Or elles at two, but-if his storie lye. 3900

So manly was this Iulius at herte
And so wel lovede estaatly honestee,
That, though his deedly woundes sore
smerte,

His mantel over his hippes casteth he,
For no man sholde seen his privitee. 3905
And, as he lay on deyng in traunce,
And wiste verrailly that deed was he,
Of honestee yit hadde he remembrance.

Lucan, to thee this storie I recomende,
And to Sweton, and to Valerie also, 3910
That of this storie wyrtten word and ende,
How that to thise grete conqueroures
two

Fortune was first freend, and sithen fo.
No man ne truste up-on hir favour longe,
But have hir in awayt for ever-mo. 3915
Witnessse on alle thise conqueroures
stronge.

CRESUS.

This riche Cresus, whylom king of Lyde,
Of whiche Cresus Cyrus sore him dradde,
Yit was he caught amiddes al his pryde,
And to be brent men to the fyr him
ladde. 3920

But swich a reyn down fro the welkne
shadde

That slow the fyr, and made him to
escape;

But to be war no grace yet he hadde,
Til fortune on the galwes made him
gape.

Whan he escaped was, he can nat stente
For to biginne a newe werre agayn. 3926
He wende wel, for that fortune him
sente

Swich hap, that he escaped thurgh the
rayn,

That of his foom he mighte nat be slayn;

And eek a sweven up-on a night he
mette, 3930
Of which he was so proud and eek so
fayn,
That in vengeance he al his herte sette.

Up-on a tree he was, as that him
thoughte,
Ther Iuppiter him wesh, bothe bak and
syde,
And Phebus eek a fair towaille him
broughte 3935
To drye him with, and ther-for wex his
pryde;

And to his doghter, that stood him bisyde,
Which that he knew in heigh science
habounde,
He bad hir telle him what it signifyde,
And she his dreem bigan right thus
expounde. 3940

'The tree,' quod she, 'the galwes is to
mene,
And Iuppiter bitokneth snow and reyn,

And Phebus, with his towaille so clene,
Tho ben the sonne stremes for to
seyn;
Thou shalt anhanged be, fader, cer-
teyn; 3945
Reyn shal thee wasshe, and somme shal
thee drye;'
Thus warned she him ful plat and ful
pleyn,
His doghter, which that called was
Phanye.

Anhanged was Cresus, the proude king,
His royal trone mighte him nat
availe. — 3950

Tragedie is noon other maner thing,
Ne can in singing crye ne biwaille,
But for that fortune alwey wol assaille
With unwar strook the regnes that ben
proude;
For when men trusteth hir, than wol she
faile, 3955
And covere hir brighte face with a
cloude.

— — — — — *Explicit Tragedia.*

Here stinteth the Knight the Monk of his Tale.

THE PROLOGUE OF THE NONNE PRESTES TALE.

*The prologue of the Nonne Prestes
Tale.*

'Ho!' quod the knight, 'good sir, na-
more of this,
That ye han seyde is right y-nough, y-wis,
And mochel more; for litel hevynesse
Is right y-nough to mochel folk, I
gesse. 3960

I seye for me, it is a greet disese
Wher-as men han ben in greet welthe
and ese,

To heren of hir sodeyn fal, allas!
And the contrarie is loie and greet solas,
As whan a man hath ben in povre es-
taat, 3965

And clymbeth up, and wexeth fortunat,
And ther abydeh in prosperitee,
Swich thing is gladsom, as it thinketh
me,

And of swich thing were goodly for to
telle.'

'Ye,' quod our hoste, 'by Seint Poules
belle, 3970
Ye seye right sooth; this monk, he
clappeth loude,

He spak how "fortune covered with a
cloude"

I noot never what, and als of a "Trage-
die"

Right now ye herde, and parde! no reme-
die

It is for to biwaille, ne compleyne 3975
That that is doon, and als it is a peyne,
As ye han seyde, to here of hevynesse.

Sir monk, na-more of this, so god yow
blesse!

Your tale anyeth al this companye;
Swich talking is nat worth a boterflye;
For ther-in is ther no desport ne game.

Wherfor, sir Monk, or dan Piers by
 your name,
 I preye yow hertely, telle us somewhat
 elles,
 For sikerly, nere clinking of your belles,
 That on your brydel hange on every
 syde, 3985
 By heven king, that for us alle dyde,
 I sholde er this han fallen doun for slepe,
 Although the slough had never been so
 depe;
 Than had your tale al be told in vayn.
 For certainly, as that thise clerkes seyn,
 "Wher-as a man may have noon audi-
 ence, 3991
 Noght helpeth it to tellen his sentence."
 And wel I woot the substance is in me,
 If any thing shal wel reported be.
 Sir, sey somewhat of hunting, I yow
 preye.' 3995
 'Nay,' quod this monk, 'I have no lust
 to pleye;
 Now let another telle, as I have told.'

Than spak our host, with rude speche
 and bold,
 And seyde un-to the Nonnes Preest
 anon,
 'Com neer, thou preest, com hider, thou
 sir Iohn, 4000
 Tel us swich thing as may our hertes
 glade,
 Be blythe, though thou ryde up-on a
 Iade.
 What though thyn hors be bothe foule
 and lene,
 If he wol serve thee, rekke nat a bene;
 Look that thyn herte be mery evermo.'
 'Yis, sir,' quod he, 'yis, host, so mote I
 go, 4006
 But I be mery, y-wis, I wol be
 blamed: '—
 And right anon his tale he hath at-
 tamed,
 And thus he seyde un-to us everichon,
 This swete preest, this goodly man, sir
 Iohn. 4010

Explicit.

THE NONNE PREESTES TALE.

*Here Biginneth the Nonne Preestes
 Tale of the Cok and Hen, Chaun-
 tecleer and Pertelote.*

A POVRE widwe, somdel stape in age,
 Was whylom dwelling in a narwe cot-
 age,
 Bisyde a grove, stonding in a dale.
 This widwe, of which I telle yow my
 tale,
 Sin thilke day that she was last a wyf,
 In pacience ladde a ful simple lyf, 4016
 For litel was hir catel and hir rente;
 By housbondrye, of such as God hir
 sente,
 She fond hir-self, and eek hir doghtren
 two.
 Three, large sowes hadde she, and namo,
 Three kyn, and eek a sheep that highte
 Malle. 4021
 Ful sooty was hir bour, and eek hir
 halle,

In which she eet ful many a sclendre
 meel.
 Of poynaunt sauce hir neded never a
 deel.
 No deyntee morsel passed thurgh hir
 throte; 4025
 Hir dyete was accordant to hir cote.
 Repleccioun ne made hir never syk;
 Attempree dyete was al hir phisyk,
 And exerceyse, and hertes suffisaunce.
 The goute lette hir no-thing for to
 daunce, 4030
 Napoplexye shente nat hir heed;
 No wyn ne drank she, neither whyt ne
 reed;
 Hir bord was served most with whyt and
 blak,
 Milk and broun breed, in which she fond
 no lak,
 Seynd bacoun, and somtyme an ey⁴⁹ or
 tweye, 4035
 For she was as it were a maner deye.

A yerd she hadde, enclosed al aboute
 With stikkes, and a drye ditch with-oute,
 In which she hadde a cok, hight Chaunte-
 cleer,
 In all the land of crowing nas his peer.
 His vois was merier than the mery or-
 gon 4041
 On messe-dayes that in the chirche gon;
 Wel sikerer was his crowing in his
 logge,
 Than is a klokke, or an abbey orlogge.
 By nature knew he ech ascencioun 4045
 Of equinoxial in thilke toon;
 For whan degrees listene were ascended,
 Thanne crew he, that it mighte nat ben
 amended.
 His comb was redder than the fyn coral,
 And batailed, as it were a castel-wal. 4050
 His bile was blak, and as the leet it
 shoon;
 Lyk asur were his legges, and his toon;
 His nayles whytter than the lillie flour,
 And lyk the burned gold was his colour.
 This gentil cok hadde in his govern-
 aunce 4055
 Sevene hennes, for to doon al his ples-
 aunce,
 Whiche were his sustres and his para-
 mours,
 And wonder lyk to him, as of colours.
 Of whiche the faireste hewed on hir
 throte
 Was cleped faire damoysele Pertelote.
 Curteys she was, discreet, and debon-
 aire, 4061
 And compaignable, and bar hir-self so
 faire,
 Sin thilke day that she was seven night
 old,
 That trewely she hath the herte in hold
 Of Chauntecleer loken in every lith;
 He loved hir so, that wel was him ther-
 with. 4066
 But such a Ioye was it to here hem
 singe,
 Whan that the brighte sonne gan to
 springe,
 In swete accord, 'my lief is faren in
 londe.'
 For thilke tyme, as I have understonde,
 Bestes and briddes coude speke and
 singe. 4071
 And so bifel, that in a daweninge,

As Chauntecleer among his wyves alle
 Sat on his perche, that was in the halle,
 And next him sat this faire Pertelote,
 This Chauntecleer gan Gronen in his
 throte, 4076
 As man that in his drem is drecched
 sore.
 And whan that Pertelote thus herde him
 rore,
 She was agast, and seyde, 'O herte dere,
 What eyleth yow, to grone in this
 manere? 4080
 Ye been a verray sleper, fy for shame!'
 And he answerde and seyde thus,
 'madame,
 I pray yow, that ye take it nat a-grief:
 By god, me mette I was in swich mes-
 chief
 Right now, that yet myn herte is sore
 afright. 4085
 Now god,' quod he, 'my swevene recche
 aright,
 And keep my body out of foul prisoun!
 Me mette, how that I romed up and
 doun
 Withinne our yerde, wher-as I saugh a
 beste,
 Was lyk an hound, and wolde han maad
 areste 4090
 Upon my body, and wolde han had me
 deed.
 His colour was bitwixe yelwe and reed;
 And tipped was his tail, and bothe his
 eres,
 With blak, unlyk the remenant of his
 heres;
 His snowte smal, with glowinge eyen
 tweye. 4095
 Yet of his look for fere almost I deye;
 This caused me my Groning, doutelees.'
 'Avoy!' quod she, 'fy on yow, herte-
 lees!
 Allas!' quod she, 'for, by that god above,
 Now han ye lost myn herte and al my
 love; 4100
 I can nat love a coward, by my feith.
 For certes, what so any womman seith,
 We alle desyren, if it mighte be,
 To han housbondes hardy, wyse, and
 free,
 And secree, and no nigard, ne no fool,
 Ne him that is agast of every tool, 4106
 Ne noon avauntour, by that god above!

How dorste ye seyn for shame unto your
love,

That any thing mighte make yow aferd?
Have ye no mannes herte, and han a
berd? 4110

Allas! and conne ye been agast of
swevenis?

No-thing, god wot, but vanitee, in sweven
is.

Swevenes engendren of replecciouns,
And ofte of fume, and of complecciouns,
Whan humours been to habundant in a
wight. 4115

Certes this dreem, which ye han met to-
night,

Cometh of the grete superfluitee
Of youre rede *colera*, pardee,
Which causeth folk to dreden in here
dremes

Of arwes, and of fyr with rede lemes,
Of grete bestes, that they wol hem
byte, 4121

Of contek, and of whelpes grete and
lyte;

Right as the humour of malencolye
Causeth ful many a man, in sleep, to crye,
For fere of blake beres, or boles
blake, 4125

Or elles, blake develes wole hem take.
Of othere humours coude I telle also,
That werken many a man in sleep ful wo;
But I wol passe as lightly as I can.

Lo Catoun, which that was so wys a
man, 4130

Seyde he nat thus, ne do no fors of
dremes?

Now, sire,' quod she, 'whan we flee fro
the bemes,

For Goddes love, as tak som laxatyf;
Up peril of my soule, and of my lyf,
I counseille yow the beste, I wol nat
lye, 4135

That bothe of colere and of malencolye
Ye purge yow; and for ye shul nat tarie,
Though in this toun is noon apotecarie,
I shal my-self to herbes techen yow,

That shul ben for your hele, and for your
prow; 4140

And in our yerd tho herbes shal I finde,
The whiche han of hir propretee, by
kinde,

To purgen yow binethe, and eek above.
Forget not this, for goddes owene love!

Ye been ful colerik of compleccioun. 4145
Ware the sonne in his ascencioun
Ne fynde yow nat replect of humours
hote;

And if it do, I dar wel leye a grote,
That ye shul have a fevere terciane,
Or an agu, that may be youre bane. 4150

A day or two ye shul have digestyves
Of wormes, er ye take your laxatyves,
Of lauriol, centaure, and fumeteré,
Or elles of ellebor, that groweth there,
Of catapuce, or of gaytres beryis, 4155
Of erbe yve, growing in our yerd, that
mery is;

Pekke hem up right as they growe, and
ete hem in.

Be mery, housbond, for your fader kin!
Dredeth no dreem; I can say yow na-
more.'

'Madame,' quod he, '*graunt mercy* of
your lore. 4160

But natheles, as touching daun Catoun,
That hath of wisdom such a greet renoun,
Though that he bad no dremes for to
drede.

By god, men may in olde bokes rede
Of many a man, more of auctoritee 4165
Than ever Catoun was, so mote I thee,
Than al the revers seyn of his sentence,

And han wel founden by experience,
That dremes ben significaciouns,
As wel of Ioye as tribulaciouns 4170
That folk enduren in this lyf present.

Ther nedeth make of this noon argu-
ment;

The verray preve sheweth it in dede.

Oon of the gretteste auctours that
men rede

Seith thus, that whylom two felawes
wente 4175

On pilgrimage, in a ful good entente;
And happed so, thay come into a toun,

Wher-as ther was swich congregacioun
Of peple, and eek so streit of herbergage,
That they ne founde as muche as o
cotage, 4180

In which they bothe mighte y-logged be.
Wherfor thay mosten, of necessitee,

As for that night, departen campaignye;
And ech of hem goth to his hostelrye,
And took his logging as it wolde falle.

That oon of hem was logged in a stalle,
Fer in a yerd, with oxen of the plough;

That other man was logged wel y-nough,
As was his aventure, or his fortune,
That us governeth alle as in commune.

And so bifel, that, longe er it were
day, 4191

This man mette in his bed, ther-as he lay,
How that his felawe gan up-on him calle,
And seyde, 'allas! for in an oxes stalle
This night I shal be mordred ther I
lye, 4195

Now help me, dere brother, er I dye;
In alle haste com to me,' he sayde.
This man out of his sleep for fere
abrayde;

But whan that he was wakned of his
sleep,

He turned him, and took of this no
keep; 4200

Him thoughte his dreem nas but a vanitee.
Thus twyës in his sleping dremed he.

And atte thridde tyme yet his felawe
Cam, as him thoughte, and seide, 'I am
now slawe;

Bihold my bloody woundes, depe and
wyde! 4205

Arys up erly in the morwe-tyde,
And at the west gate of the toun,' quod
he,

'A carte ful of donge ther shaltow see,
In which my body is hid ful prively;
Do thilke carte aresten boldely. 4210

My gold caused my mordre, sooth to
sayn;'

And tolde him every poynt how he was
slayn,

With a ful pitous face, pale of hewe.
And truste wel, his dreem he fond ful
trewe;

For on the morwe, as sone as it was day,
To his felawes in he took the way; 4216
And whan that he cam to this oxes stalle,
After his felawe he bigan to calle.

The hostiler answered him anon,
And seyde, 'sire, your felawe is agon, 4220
As sone as day he wente out of the toun.'
This man gan fallen in suspeciuon,
Remembring on his dremes that he mette,
And forth he goth, no lenger wolde he
lette,

Unto the west gate of the toun, and
fond 4225

A dong-carte, as it were to donge lond,
That was arrayed in the same wyse

As ye han herd the dede man devyse;
And with an hardy herte he gan to crye
Vengeaunce and Iustice of this fel-
onye:— 4230

'My felawe mordred is this same night,
And in this carte he lyth gapinge upright.
I crye out on the ministres,' quod he,
'That sholden kepe and reulen this citee;
Harrow! allas! her lyth my felawe
slayn!' 4235

What sholde I more un-to this tale sayn?
The peple out-sterte, and caste the cart
to grounde,

And in the middel of the dong they
founde

The dede man, that mordred was al newe.

O blisful god, that art so Iust and
trewe! 4240

Lo, how that thou biwreyest mordre
alway!

Mordre wol out, that see we day by day.
Mordre is so wlatson and abhominable
To god, that is so Iust and resonable,
That he ne wol nat suffre it heled be; 4245
Though it abyde a yeer, or two, or three,
Mordre wol out, this my conclusioun.

And right anoon, ministres of that toun
Han hent the carter, and so sore him
pyned,

And eek the hostiler so sore engyned, 4250
That thay biknewe hir wikkednesse
anoon,

And were an-hanged by the nekke-boon.
Here may men seen that dremes been
to drede.

And certes, in the same book I rede,
Right in the nexte chapitre after this, 4255
(I gabbe nat, so have I loye or blis,)

Two men that wolde han passed over see,
For certeyn cause, in-to a fer contree,
If that the wind ne hadde been contrarie,
That made hem in a citee for to
tarie, 4260

That stood ful mery upon an haven-syde.
But on a day, agayn the even-tyde,
The wind gan change, and blew right as
hem leste.

Iolif and glad they wente un-to hir reste,
And casten hem ful erly for to saille; 4265
But to that oo man fil a greet mervaille.

That oon of hem, in sleping as he lay,
Him mette a wonder dreem, agayn the
day;

Him thoughte a man stood by his beddes
 syde,
 And him comaunded, that he sholde
 abyde, 4270
 And seyde him thus, 'if thou to-morwe
 wende,
 Thou shalt be dreynt; my tale is at an
 ende.'
 He wook, and tolde his felawe what he
 mette,
 And preyde him his viage for to lette;
 As for that day, he preyde him to
 abyde. 4275
 His felawe, that lay by his beddes syde,
 Gan for to laughe, and scorned him ful
 faste.
 'No dreem,' quod he, 'may so myn herte
 agaste,
 That I wol lette for to do my thinges.
 I sette not a straw by thy dreminges, 4280
 For swevenes been but vanitees and Iapes.
 Men dreme al-day of owles or of apes,
 And eke of many a mase therwithal;
 Men dreme of thing that nevere was ne
 shal.
 But sith I see that thou wolt heer
 abyde, 4285
 And thus for-sleuthen wilfully thy tyde,
 God wot it reweth me; and have good
 day.'
 And thus he took his leve, and wente his
 way.
 But er that he hadde halfe his cours
 y-seyled,
 Noot I nat why, ne what mischaunce it
 eyed, 4290
 But casuelly the shippes botme rente,
 And ship and man under the water wente
 In sighte of othere shippes it byside,
 That with hem seyled at the same tyde.
 And therfor, faire Pertelote so dere, 4295
 By swiche ensamples olde maistow lere,
 That no man sholde been to recchelees
 Of dremes, for I sey thee, doutelees,
 That many a dreem ful sore is for to drede.
 Lo, in the lyf of seint Kenelm, I
 rede, 4300
 That was Kenulphus sone, the noble
 king
 Of Mercenrike, how Kenelm mette a
 thing;
 A lyte er he was mordred, on a day,
 His mordre in his avisioun he say.

His norice him expounded every del 4305
 His sreven, and bad him for to kepe
 him wel
 For traissoun; but he nas but seven yeer
 old,
 And therfore litel tale hath he told
 Of any dreem, so holy was his herte.
 By god, I hadde lever than my sherte 4310
 That ye had rad his legende, as have I.
 Dame Pertelote, I sey yow trewely,
 Macrobeus, that writ the avisioun
 In Affrike of the worthy Cipioum,
 Affermeth dremes, and seith that they
 been 4315
 Warning of thinges that men after seen.
 And further-more, I pray yow loketh
 wel
 In the olde testament, of Daniel,
 If he held dremes any vanitee.
 Reed eek of Ioseph, and ther shul ye
 see 4320
 Wher dremes ben somtyme (I sey nat
 alle)
 Warning of thinges that shul after falle.
 Loke of Egipt the king, daun Pharao,
 His bakere and his boteler also,
 Wher they ne felte noon effect in
 dremes. 4325
 Who-so wol seken actes of sondry remes,
 May rede of dremes many a wonder thing.
 Lo Cresus, which that was of Lyde
 king,
 Mette he nat that he sat upon a tree,
 Which signified he sholde anhanged
 be? 4330
 Lo heer Andromacha, Ectores wyf,
 That day that Ector sholde lese his lyf,
 She dremed on the same night biforn,
 How that the lyf of Ector sholde be
 lorn,
 If thilke day he wente in-to bataille; 4335
 She warned him, but it mighte nat availle;
 He wente for to fighte nathelees,
 But he was slayn anoon of Achilles.
 But thilke tale is al to long to telle,
 And eek it is ny day, I may nat dwelle.
 Shortly I seye, as for conclusioun, 4340
 That I shal han of this avisioun
 Adversitee; and I seye further-more,
 That I ne telle of laxatyves no store,
 For they ben venimous, I woot it
 wel; 4345
 I hem defye, I love hem never a del.

Now let us speke of mirth, and stinte
al this;
Madame Pertelote, so have I blis,
Of o thing god hath sent me large grace;
For whan I see the beautee of your
face, 4350
Ye ben so scarlet-reed about your yēn,
It maketh al my drede for to dyen;
For, also siker as *In principio*,
Mulier est hominis confusio; 4354
Malam, the sentence of this Latin is —
Womman is mannes Ioye and al his blis.
For whan I fele a-night your softe syde,
Al-be-it that I may nat on you ryde,
For that our perche is maad so narwe,
alas!
I am so ful of Ioye and of solas 4360
That I defyte bothe sweven and drem.
And with that word he fley down fro the
beem,
For it was day, and eek his hennes alle;
And with a chuk he gan hem for to
calle,
For he had founde a corn, lay in the
yerd. 4365
Royal he was, he was namore aferd;
He fethered Pertelote twenty tyme,
And trad as ofte, er that it was pryde.
He loketh as it were a grim leoun;
And on his toos he rometh up and down,
Him deynd not to sette his foot to
grounde. 4371
He chuketh, whan he hath a corn
y-founde,
And to him rennen thanne his wyves
alle.
Thus royal, as a prince is in his halle,
Leve I this Chauntecleer in his pasture;
And after wol I telle his aventure. 4376
Whan that the month in which the
world bigan,
That highte March, whan god first maked
man,
Was complet, and [y]-passed were also,
Sin March bigan, thritty dayes and two,
Bifel thar Chauntecleer, in al his pryde,
His seven wyves walking 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 somewhat
more; 4385
And knew by kynde, and by noon other
lore,

That it was pryde, and crew with blisful
stevene.
'The sonne,' he sayde, 'is clomben up on
hevene
Fourty degrees and oon, and more, y-wis.
Madame Pertelote, my worldes blis,
Herkneth thise blisful briddes how they
sing, 4391
And see the fresshe floures how they
springe;
Ful is myn herte of revel and solas.'
But sodeynly him fil a sorweful cas;
For ever the latter ende of Ioye is wo.
God woot that worldly Ioye is none
ago; 4396
And if a rethor coude faire endyte,
He in a cronique saully mighte it wryte,
As for a sovereyn notabilitee.
Now every wys man, lat him herkne me;
This storie is al-so trewe, I undertake,
As is the book of Launcelot de Lake,
That wommen holde in ful gret rever-
ence.
Now wol I torne agayn to my sentence.
A col-fox, ful of sly iniquitee, 4405
That in the grove hadde woned yeres
three,
By heigh imaginacioun forn-cast,
The same night through-out the hegges
brast
Into the yerd, ther Chauntecleer the
faire
Was wont, and eek his wyves, to re-
paire; 4410
And in a bed of wortes stille he lay,
Til it was passed undern of the day,
Wayting his tyme on Chauntecleer to
falle,
As gladly doon these homicides alle,
That in awayt ligen to mordre men.
O false morderer, lurking in thy den!
O newe Scariot, newe Genilon! 4417
False dissimilour, O Greek Sinon,
That brightest Troye al outrely to sorwe!
O Chauntecleer, acursed be that morwe,
That thou into that yerd flogh fro the
beemes! 4421
Thou were ful wel y-warned by thy
dremes,
That thilke day was perilous to thee.
But what that god forwoot mot nedes be,
After the opinioun of certeyn clerkis.
Witnesse on him, that any perfit clerk is,

That in scole is gret altercacioun 4426
 In this matere, and greet disputioun,
 And hath ben of an hundred thousand
 men.

But I ne can not bulte it to the bren,
 As can the holy doctour Augustyn, 4431
 Or Boece, or the bishop Bradwardyn,
 Whether that goddes worthy forwiting
 Streyneth me nedely for to doon a thing,
 (Nedely clepe I simple necessitee);
 Or elles, if free choys be graunted me
 To do that same thing, or do it noght,
 Though god forwoot it, er that it was
 wroght;

Or if his witing streyneth nevere a del
 But by necessitee condicional. 4440
 I wol not han to do of swich matere;
 My tale is of a cok, as ye may here,
 That took his counseil of his wyf, with
 sorwe,

To walken in the yerd upon that morwe
 That he had met the drem, that I yow
 tolde. 4445

Wommennes counseils been ful ofte
 colde;

Wommannes conseil broghte us first to
 wo,

And made Adam fro paradys to go,
 Ther-as he was ful mery, and wel at ese.
 But for I noot, to whom it mighte dis-
 please, 4450

If I counseil of women wolde blame,
 Passe over, for I seyde it in my game.
 Rede auctours, wher they trete of swich
 matere,

And what thay seyn of women ye may
 here.

These been the cokkes wordes, and nat
 myne; 4455

I can noon harm of no womman divyne.
 Faire in the sond, to bathe hir meryly,
 Lyth Pertelote, and alle hir sustres by,
 Agayn the sonne; and Chauntecleer so
 free

Song merier than the mermayde in the
 see; 4460

For Physiologus seith sikerly,
 How that they singen wel and meryly.
 And so bifel that, as he caste his yë,
 Among the wordes, on a boterflye,
 He was war of this fox that lay ful lowe.
 No-thing ne liste him thanne for to
 crowe, 4466

But cryde anon, 'cok, cok,' and up he
 sterte,

As man that was affrayed in his herte.
 For naturelly a beest desyret fle
 Fro his contrarie, if he may it see, 4470
 Though he never erst had seyn it with
 his yë.

This Chauntecleer, whan he gan him
 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 your
 freend? 4475

Now certes, I were worse than a feend,
 If I to yow wolde harm or vileinye.

I am nat come your counseil for tespye;
 But trewely, the cause of my cominge
 Was only for to herkne how that ye
 singe. 4480

For trewely ye have as mery a stevene
 As eny aungel hath, that is in hevene;
 Therwith ye han in musik more felinge
 Than hadde Boece, or any that can
 singe.

My lord your fader (god his soule
 blesse!) 4485

And eek your moder, of hir gentillesse,
 Han in myn hous y-been, to my gret
 ese;

And certes, sire, ful fayn wolde I yow
 plese.

But for men speke of singing, I wol saye,
 So mote I brouke wel myn eyen tweye,
 Save yow, I herde never man so singe,
 As dide your fader in the morweninge;
 Certes, it was of herte, al that he song.

And for to make his voys the more
 strong,

He wolde so peyne him, that with bothe
 his yën 4495

He moste winke, so loude he wolde
 cryen,

And stonden on his tiptoon ther-with-al,
 And strecche forth his nekke long and
 smal.

And eek he was of swich discrecioun,
 That ther nas no man in no regioun

That him in song or wisdom mighte
 passe. 4501

I have wel rad in daun Bernel the Asse,
 Among his vers, how that ther was a cok,
 For that a preestes sone yaf him a knok

Upon his leg, whyl he was yong and
 nyce, 4505
 He made him for to lese his benefyce.
 But certeyn, ther nis no comparisoun
 Bitwix the wisdom and discrecioun
 Of youre fader, and of his subtiltee.
 Now singeth, sire, for seinte Charitee,
 Let see, conne ye your fader countre-
 fete? 4511
 This Chauntecleer his wings gan to
 bete,
 As man that coude his tresoun nat
 espye,
 So was he ravished with his flaterye.
 Allas! ye lordes, many a fals flatour
 Is in your courtes, and many a losen-
 geour, 4516
 That plesen yow wel more, by my feith,
 Than he that soothfastnesse unto yow
 seith.
 Redeth Ecclesiaste of flaterye;
 Beth war, ye lordes, of hir trecherye. 4520
 This Chauntecleer stood hye up-on his
 toos,
 Strecching his nekke, and heeld his eyen
 cloos,
 And gan to crowe loude for the nones;
 And daun Russel the fox sterte up at
 ones,
 And by the gargat hente Chauntecleer,
 And on his bak toward the wode him
 beer, 4526
 For yet ne was ther no man that him
 sewed.
 O destinee, that mayst nat been es-
 chewed!
 Allas, that Chauntecleer fleigh fro the
 bemes!
 Allas, his wyf ne roghte nat of dremes!
 And on a Friday fil al this mes-
 chaunce. 4531
 O Venus, that art goddesse of plesaunce,
 Sin that thy servant was this Chaunte-
 cleer,
 And in thy service dide al his power,
 More for delyt, than world to multiplye,
 Why woldestow suffre him on thy day to
 dye? 4536
 O Gaufred, dere mayster soverayn,
 That, whan thy worthy king Richard was
 slayn
 With shot, compleynedest his deth so
 sore,

Why ne hadde I now thy sentence and
 thy lore, 4540
 The Friday for to chlyde, as diden ye?
 (For on a Friday soothly slayn was he.)
 Than wolde I shewe yow how that I
 coude pleyne
 For Chauntecleres drede, and for his
 peyne.
 Certes, swich cry ne lamentacioun 4545
 Was never of ladies maad, whan Ilioun
 Was wonne, and Pirrus with his streite
 swerd,
 Whan he hadde hent king Priam by the
 berd,
 And slayn him (as saith us *Eneyaas*),
 As maden alle the hennes in the clos, 4550
 Whan they had seyn of Chauntecleer the
 sighte.
 But sovereynly dame Pertelote shrighite,
 Ful louder than dide Hasdrubales wyf,
 Whan that hir housbond hadde lost his
 lyf,
 And that the Romayns hadde brend
 Cartage; 4555
 She was so ful of torment and of rage,
 That wilfully into the fyr she sterte,
 And brende hir-selven with a stedfast
 herte.
 O woful hennes, right so cryden ye,
 As, whan that Nero brende the citee 4560
 Of Rome, cryden senatoures wyves,
 For that hir housbondes losten alle hir
 lyves;
 Withouten gilt this Nero hath hem slayn.
 Now wol I torne to my tale agayn: —
 This sely widwe, and eek hir doghtres
 two, 4565
 Herden thise hennes crye and maken wo,
 And out at dores sterten they anoon,
 And syen the fox toward the grove goon,
 And bar upon his bak the cok away;
 And cryden, 'Out! harrow! and weyla-
 way! 4570
 Ha, ha, the fox!' and after him they
 ran,
 And eek with staves many another man;
 Ran Colle our dogge, and Talbot, and
 Gerland,
 And Malkin, with a distaf in hir hand;
 Ran cow and calf, and eek the verray
 hogges 4575
 So were they fered for berking of the
 dogges

And shouting of the men and wimmen
eke,

They ronne so, hem thoughte hir herte
breke.

They yelleden as feendes doon in helle;
The dokes cryden as men wolde hem
quelle; 4580

The gees for fere flowen over the trees;
Out of the hyve cam the swarm of bees;

So hidous was the noyse, a! *benedicite!*
Certes, he lakke Straw, and his meynee,

Ne made never shoutes half so shrille,
Whan that they wolden any Fleming
kille, 4586

As thiike day was maad upon the fox.
Of bras thay broghten bemes, and of box,

Of horn, of boon, in whiche they blew
and pouped,

And therewithal thay shryked and they
houped; 4590

It semed as that heven sholde falle.
Now, gode men, I pray yow herkneth

alle!

Lo, how fortune turneth sodeinly
The hope and pryde eek of hir enemy!

This cok, that lay upon the foxes bak,
In al his drede, un-to the fox he

spak, 4596
And seyde, 'sire, if that I were as ye,
Yet sholde I seyn (as wis god helpe

me),
Turneth agayn, ye proude cherles alle!

A verray pestilence up-on yow falle! 4600
Now am I come un-to this wodes syde,

Maugree your heed, the cok shal heer
abyde;

I wol him ete in feith, and that anon.' —
The fox answerde, 'in feith, it shal be

don,' —
And as he spak that word, al sodeinly

This cok brak from his mouth de-
liverly, 4606

And heighe up-on 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 tres-
pas, 4610

In-as-muche as I makend yow aferd,
Whan I yow hente, and broghte out of

the yerd;

But, sire, I dide it in no wikke entente;
Com don, and I shal telle yow what I

mente.
I shal seye sooth to yow, god help me

so.' 4615
'Nay than,' quod he, 'I shrewe us bothe
two,

And first I shrewe my-self, bothe blood
and bones,

If thou bigyle me ofter than ones.
Thou shalt na-more, thurgh thy flaterye,

Do me to singe and winke with myn yē.
For he that winketh, whan he sholde

see, 4621
Al wilfully, god lat him never thee!' —

'Na,' quod the fox, 'but god yeve him
meschaunce,

That is so undiscreet of governaunce,
That Iangleth whan he sholde holde his

pees.' 4625
Lo, swich it is for to be recchelees,
And necligent, and truste on flaterye.

But ye that holden this tale a folye,
As of a fox, or of a cok and hen,

Taketh the moralitee, good men. 4630
For seint Paul seith, that al that writen is,

To our doctryne it is y-write, y-wis.
Taketh the fruyt, and lat the chaf be

stille.

Now, gode god, if that it be thy wille,
As seith my lord, so make us alle good

men; 4635
And bringe us to his heighe blisse.

Amen.

Here is ended the Nonne Preestes Tale.

EPILOGUE TO THE NONNE PREESTES TALE.

'SIR Nonnes Preest,' our hoste seyde
 anon,
 'Y-blessed be thy breche, and every
 stoon!
 This was a mery tale of Chauntecleer.
 But, by my trouthe, if thou were secu-
 ler, 4640
 Thou woldest been a trede-foul a-right
 For, if thou have corage as thou hast
 might,
 Thee were nede of hennes, as I wene,
 Ya, mo than seven tymes seventene.

See, whiche braunes hath this gentil
 Preest, 4645
 So greet a nekke, and swich a large
 breest!
 He loketh as a sperhawk with his yen;
 Him nedeth nat his colour for to dyen
 With brasil, ne with greyn of Portin-
 gale.
 Now sire, faire falle yow for youre
 tale!' 4650
 And after that he, with ful mery chere,
 Seide to another, as ye shullen here.

GROUP C.

THE PHISIENS TALE.

Here folweth the Phisiciens Tale.

THER was, as telleth Titus Livius,
 A knight that called was Virginius,
 Fulfil of honour and of worthinesse,
 And strong of freendes and of greet
 richesse.
 This knight a doghter hadde by his
 wyf, 5
 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-formed hir in so greet excellence, 10
 As though she wolde seyn, 'lo! I, Na-
 ture,
 Thus can I forme and peynte a creature,
 Whan that me list; who can me countre-
 fete?
 Pigmalion noght, though he ay forge and
 bete,
 Or grave, or peynte; for I dar wel
 seyn, 15
 Apelles, Zanzis, sholde werche in veyn,
 Outher to grave or peynte or forge or
 bete,
 If they presumed me to countrefete.
 For he that is the former principal
 Hath maked me his vicaire general, 20
 To forme and peynten erthely creaturis

Right as me list, and ech thing in my
 cure is
 Under the mone, that may wane and
 waxe,
 And for my werk right no-thing wol I
 axe;
 My lord and I ben ful of oon accord; 25
 I made hir to the worship of my lord.
 So do I alle myne othere creatures,
 What colour that they han, or what
 figures.' —
 Thus semeth me that Nature wolde seye.
 This mayde of age twelf yeer was and
 tweye, 30
 In which that Nature hadde swich delyt.
 For right as she can peynte a lillie whyt
 And reed a rose, right with swich peyn-
 ture
 She peynted hath this noble creature
 Er she were born, up-on hir limes
 free, 35
 Wher-as by right swiche colours sholde
 be;
 And Phebus dyed hath hir tresses grete
 Lyk to the stremes of his burned hete.
 And if that excellent was hir beautee,
 A thousand-fold more vertuous was
 she. 40
 In hir ne lakked no condicioun,
 That is to preyse, as by discrecioun.

As wel in goost as body chast was she;
 For which she floured in virginitee
 With alle humilitee and abstinence, 45
 With alle attemperance and pacience,
 With mesure eek of bering and array.
 Discreet she was in answering alway;
 Though she were wys as Pallas, dar I
 seyn,
 Hir facound eek ful wommanly and
 pleyn, 50
 No countrefeted termes hadde she
 To seme wys; but after hir degree
 She spak, and alle hir wordes more and
 lesse
 Souninge in vertu and in gentillesse.
 Shaufast she was in maydens shaufast-
 nesse, 55
 Constant in herte, and ever in businesse
 To dryve hir out of ydel slogardye.
 Bacus hadde of hir mouth right no mais-
 trye;
 For wyn and youthe doon Venus encrece,
 As men in fyr wol casten oile or
 grece. 60
 And of hir owene vertu, unconstreyned,
 She hath ful ofte tyme syk hir feyned,
 For that she wolde fleen the companye
 Wher lykly was to treten of folye,
 As is at festes, revels, and at daunces, 65
 That been occasions of daliaunces.
 Swich thinges maken children for to be
 To sone rype and bold, as men may see,
 Which is ful perilous, and hath ben yore.
 For al to sone may she lerne lore 70
 Of boldnesse, whan she woxen is a wyf.
 And ye maistresses in your olde lyf,
 That lordes doghtres han in gov-
 ernance,
 Ne taketh of my wordes no disple-
 aunce;
 Thinketh that ye ben set in govern-
 inges 75
 Of lordes doghters, only for two thinges;
 Outher for ye han kept your honestee,
 Or elles ye han falle in freletee,
 And knowen wel y-nough the olde
 daunce,
 And han forsaken fully swich mes-
 chance 80
 For evermo; therefore, for Cristes sake,
 To teche hem vertu luke that ye ne
 slake.
 A thief of venisoun, that hath forlaft

His likerousnesse, and al his olde craft,
 Can kepe a forest best of any man. 85
 Now kepeth hem wel, for if ye wol, ye
 can;
 Loke wel that ye un-to no vice assente,
 Lest ye be dampned for your wikke en-
 tente;
 For who-so doth, a traitour is certeyn.
 And taketh kepe of that that I shal
 seyn; 90
 Of alle tresons sovereyn pestilence
 Is whan a wight bitrayseth innocence.
 Ye fadres and ye modres eek also,
 Though ye han children, be it oon or
 two,
 Your is the charge of al hir surveyaunce,
 Whyl that they been under your gov-
 ernance.
 Beth war that by ensample of your liv-
 inge, 97
 Or by your negligence in chastisinge,
 That they ne perisse; for I dar wel seye,
 If that they doon, ye shul it dere abeyt.
 Under a shepherde softe and negligent
 The wolf hath many a sheep and lamb
 to-rent.
 Suffyseth oon ensample now as here,
 For I mot turne agayn to my matere.
 This mayde, of which I wol this tale
 expresse, 105
 So kepte hir-self, hir neded no mais-
 tresse;
 For in hir living maydens mighten rede,
 As in a book, every good word or dede,
 That longeth to a mayden vertuous; 109
 She was so prudent and so bountevous.
 For which the fame out-sprong on every
 syde
 Bothe of hir beautee and hir bountee
 wyde;
 That thurgh that land they preyed hir
 echone,
 That loved vertu, save envye allone,
 That sory is of other meunes wele, 115
 And glad is of his sorwe and his unhele;
 (The doctour maketh this descripcioun).
 This mayde up-on a day wente in the
 toun
 Toward a temple, with hir moder dere,
 As is of yonge maydens the manere. 120
 Now was ther thanne a iustice in that
 toun,
 That governour was of that regioun.

And so bifel, this Iuge his eyen caste
 Up-on this mayde, avysinge him ful
 faste, 124
 As she cam forby ther this Iuge stood.
 Anon his herte chaunged and his mood,
 So was he caught with beautee of this
 mayde ;
 And to him-self ful prively he sayde,
 ' This mayde shal be myn, for any man.'
 Anon the feend in-to his herte ran,
 And taughte him sodeynly, that he by
 slighte 131
 The mayden to his purpos winne mighte.
 For certes, by no force, ne by no mede,
 Him thoughte, he was nat able for to
 spede ;
 For she was strong of freendes, and eek
 she 135
 Confermed was in swich soverayn bountee,
 That wel he wiste he mighte hir never
 winne
 As for to make hir with hir body sinne.
 For which, by greet deliberacioun, 139
 He sente after a cherl, was in the toun,
 Which that he knew for subtil and for
 bold.
 This Iuge un-to this cherl his tale hath
 told
 In secree wyse, and made him to ensure,
 He sholde telle it to no creature, 144
 And if he dide, he sholde lese his heed.
 Whan that assented was this cursed reed,
 Glad was this Iuge and makid him greet
 chere,
 And yaf hym yiftes precieuse and dere.
 Whan shapen was al hir conspiracye
 Fro point to point, how that his lecherye
 Parfourned sholde been ful subtilly, 151
 As ye shul here it after openly,
 Ioom gooth the cherl, that highte Clau-
 dius.
 This false Iuge that highte Apius, 154
 So was his name, (for this is no fable,
 But knowen for historial thing notable,
 The sentence of it sooth is, out of doute),
 This false Iuge gooth now faste aboute
 To hasten his delyt al that he may.
 And so bifel sone after, on a day, 160
 This false Iuge, as telleth us the storie,
 As he was wont, sat in his consistorie,
 And yaf his domes up-on sondry cas.
 This false cherl cam forth a ful greet
 pas, 164

And seyde, ' lord, if that it be your wille,
 As dooth me right up-on this pitous
 bille,
 In which I pleyne up-on Virginius.
 And if that he wol seyn it is nat thus,
 I wol it preve, and finde good witesse,
 That sooth is that my bille wol expresse.'
 The Iuge answerde, ' of this, in his
 absence, 171
 I may nat yeve diffinitif sentence.
 Lat do him calle, and I wol gladly here ;
 Thou shalt have al right, and no wrong
 here.'
 Virginius cam, to wite the Iuges wille,
 And right anon was rad this cursed
 bille ; 176
 The sentence of it was as ye shul here.
 ' To yow, my lord, sire Apius so dere,
 Sheweth your povre servant Claudius,
 How that a knight, called Virginius, 180
 Agayns the lawe, agayn al equitee,
 Holdeth, expres agayn the wil of me,
 My servant, which that is my thral by
 right,
 Which fro myn hous was stole up-on a
 night,
 Why! that she was ful yong ; this wol I
 preve 185
 By witesse, lord, so that it nat yow
 greve.
 She nis his doghter nat, what so he
 seye ;
 Wherfore to yow, my lord the Iuge, I
 preyre,
 Yeld me my thral, if that it be your
 wille.'
 Lo! this was al the sentence of his
 bille. 190
 Virginius gan up-on the cherl biholde,
 But hastily, er he his tale tolde,
 And wolde have preved it, as sholde a
 knight,
 And eek by witnessing of many a wight,
 That it was fals that seyde his adversarie,
 This cursed Iuge wolde no-thing tarie,
 Ne here a word more of Virginius, 197
 But yaf his Iugement, and seyde thus:—
 ' I deme anon this cherl his servant
 have ;
 Thou shalt no lenger in thyn hous hir
 save. 200
 Go bring hir forth, and put hir in our
 warde,

The cherl shal have his thral, this I
awarde.'

And whan this worthy knight Vir-
ginius,

Thurgh sentence of this Iustice Apius,
Moste by force his dere doghter yiven
Un-to the Iuge, in lecherye to liven, 206
He gooth him hoom, and sette him in
his halle,

And leet anon his dere doghter calle,
And, with a face deed as asshen colde,
Upon hir humble face he gan biholde,
With fadres pitee stiking thurgh his
herte, 211

Al wolde he from his purpos nat con-
verte.

'Doghter,' quod he, 'Virginia, by thy
name,

Ther been two weyes, outhere deeth or
shame,

That thou most suffre; allas! that I was
bore! 215

For never thou deservedest wherfore
To dyen with a swerd or with a knyf.
O dere doghter, ender 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 laste wo,
And in my lyf my laste Ioye also,
O gemme of chastitee, in pacience
Take thou thy deeth, for this is my sen-
tence.

For love and nat for hate, thou most be
deed; 225

My pitous hand mot smyten of thyn heed.
Allas! that ever Apius thee say!

Thus hath he falsly Iuged thee to-day' —
And tolde hir al the cas, as ye bifore
Han herd; nat nedeth for to telle it
more. 230

'O mercy, dere fader,' quod this mayde,
And, with that word she both hir armes
layde

About his nekke, as she was wont to do:
The teres broste out of hir eyen two,
And seyde, 'gode fader, shal I dye? 235
Is ther no grace? is ther no remedye?'

'No, certes, dere doghter myn,' quod
he.

'Thanne yif me leyser, fader myn,'
quod she,

'My deeth for to compleyne a litel
space;

For pardee, Iepte yaf his doghter grace
For to compleyne, er he hir slow, allas!
And god it woot, no-thing was hir trespas,
But for she ran hir fader first to see,
To welcome him with greet solempnitee.'
And with that word she fil aswowne
anon, 245

And after, whan hir swowning is agon,
She ryseth up, and to hir fader sayde,
'Blessed be god, that I shal dye a
mayde.

Yif me my deeth, er that I have a
shame;

Doth with your child your wil, a goddes
name!' 250

And with that word she preyed him
ful ofte,

That with his swerd he wolde smyte
softe,

And with that word aswowne doun she
fil.

Hir fader, with ful sorweful herte and
wil,

Hir heed of smoot, and by the top it
hente, 255

And to the Iuge he gan it to presente,
As he sat yet in doom in consistorie.

And whan the Iuge it saugh, as seith the
storie,

He bad to take him and anhange him
faste.

But right anon a thousand peple in
thraste, 260

To save the knight, for routhe and for
pitee,

For knowen was the false iniquitee.
The peple anon hath suspect of this
thing,

By manere of the cherles chalanging,
That it was by the assent of Apius; 265

They wisten wel that he was lecherous.
For which un-to this Apius they gon,

And caste him in a prison right anon,
Wher-as he slow him-self; and Claudius,

That servant was un-to this Apius, 270
Was demed for to hange upon a tree;

But that Virginius, of his pitee,
So preyde for him that he was exyled;

And elles, certes, he had been bigyled.
The remenent were anhanged, more and
lesse, 275

That were consentant of this cursed-
nesse.—

Heer men may seen how sinne hath
his meryte!

Beth war, for no man woot whom god
wol smyte

In no degree, ne in which maner
wyse

The worm of conscience may agryse 280
Of wikked lyf, though it so privee be,
That no man woot ther-of but god and he.
For be he lewed man, or elles lered,
He noot how sone that he shal been
afered.

Therefore I rede yow this conseil take, 285
Forsaketh sinne, er sinne yow forsake.

Here endeth the Phisiciens tale.

WORDS OF THE HOST.

*The wordes of the Host to the Phisicien
and the Pardoner.*

OUR Hoste gan to swere as he were
wood,

'Harrow!' quod he, 'by nayles and by
blood!

This was a fals cherl and a fals Iustyse!
As shamful deeth as herte may devyse 290

Come to this Iuges and hir advocas!

Algate this sely mayde is slayn, allas!

Allas! to dere boghte she beautee!

Wherfore I seye al day, as men may see,
That yiftes of fortune or of nature 295

Ben cause of deeth to many a creature.

Hir beautee was hir deeth, I dar wel
sayn;

Allas! so pitously as she was slayn!

Of bothe yiftes that I speke of now 299

Men han ful ofte more harm than prow.

But trewely, myn owene mayster dere,

This is a pitous tale for to here.

But natheles, passe over, is no fors;

I prey to god, so save thy gentil cors,

And eek thyne urinals and thy Ior-
danes, 305

Thyn Ypocras, and eek thy Galianes,

And every boist ful of thy letuarie;

God blesse hem, and our lady seinte
Marie!

So mot I then, thou art a propre man,
And lyk a prelat, by seint Ronyan! 310
Seyde I nat wel? I can nat speke in
terme;

But wel I woot, thou doost my herte to
erme,

That I almost have caught a cardiaele.

By corpus bones! but I have triacle,

Or elles a draught of moyste and corny
ale, 315

Or but I here anon a mery tale,

Myn herte is lost for pitee of this mayde.

Thou bel amy, thou Pardoner,' he seyde,

'Tel us som mirthe or Iapes right anon.'

'It shall be doon,' quod he, 'by seint
Ronyan! 320

But first,' quod he, 'heer at this ale-
stake

I wol both drinke, and eten of a cake.'

But right anon thise gentils gonne to
erye,

'Nay! lat him telle us of no ribaudye;

Tel us som moral thing, that we may
lere 325

Som wit, and thanne wol we gladly
here.'

'I graunte, y-wis,' quod he, 'but I mot
thinke

Up-on som honest thing, whyl that I
drinke.'

THE PROLOGUE OF THE PARDONERS TALE.

Here folweth the Prologe of the Pardoners Tale.

Radix malorum est Cupiditas: Ad Thimotheum, sexto.

'LORDINGS,' quod he, 'in chirches whan I preche,

I peyne me to han an hauteyn speche,
And ringe it out as round as gooth a belle, 331

For I can al by rote that I telle.
My theme is alwey oon, and ever was —
"Radix malorum est Cupiditas."

First I pronounce whennes that I come, 335
And than my bulles shewe I, alle and somme.

Our lige lordes seel on my patente,
That shewe I first, my body to warente,
That no man be so bold, ne preest ne clerk,

Me to destourbe of Cristes holy werk;
And after that than telle I forth my tales, 341

Bulles of popes and of cardinales,
Of patriarkes, and bishoppes I shewe;
And in Latyn I speke a wordes fewe,
To saffron with my predicacioun, 345
And for to stire men to devocioun.

Than shewe I forth my longe cristal stones,

Y-crammed ful of cloutes and of bones;
Reliks been they, as wenen they echoon.
Than have I in latoun a sholder-boon
Which that was of an holy Iewes shepe. 351

"Good men," seye I, "tak of my wordes kepe;

If that this boon be wasshe in any welle,

If cow, or calf, or sheep, or oxe swelle
That any worm hath ete, or worm y-stonge, 355

Tak water of that welle, and wash his tonge,

And it is hool anon; and forthermore,
Of pokkes and of scabbe, and every sore

Shal every sheep be hool, that of this welle

Drinketh a draughte; tak kepe eek what I telle 360

If that the good-man, that the bestes oweth,

Wol every wike, er that the cok him croweth,

Fastinge, drinken of this welle a draughte,

As thilke holy Iewe our eldres taughte,
His bestes and his stoor shal multiplye.

And, sirs, also it heleth Ialouyse; 366
For, though a man be falle in Ialous rage,

Let maken with this water his potage,
And never shal he more his wyf mistriste,

Though he the sooth of hir defaute wiste; 370

Al had she taken preestes two or thre.
Heer is a miteyn eek, that ye may see.

He that his hond wol putte in this miteyn,

He shal have multiplying of his greyn,
Whan he hath sowen, be it whete or otes, 375

So that he offre pens, or elles grotes.
Good men and wommen, o thing warne I yow,

If any wight be in this chirche now,
That hath doon sinne horrible, that he Dar nat, for shame, of it y-shriven be,

Or any womman, be she yong or old, 381
That hath y-maad hir housbond coked-wold,

Swich folk shul have no power ne no grace

To offren to my reliks in this place.
And who-so findeth him out of swich blame, 385

He wol com up and offre in goddes name,

And I assoille him by the auctoritee
Which that by bulle y-graunted was to me."

By this gaude have I wonne, yeer by yeer,

An hundred mark sith I was Pardoner.
 I stonde lyk a clerk in my pulpet, 391
 And when the lewed peple is doun y-set,
 I preche, so as ye han herd bifore.
 And telle an hundred false lapes more.
 Than peyne I me to strecche forth the
 nekke, 395
 And est and west upon the peple I
 bekke,
 As doth a dowve sitting on a berne.
 Myn hondes and my tonge goon so
 yerne,
 That it is loye to see my bisnesse.
 Of avaryce and of swich cursednesse 400
 Is al my preching, for to make hem
 free
 To yeve her pens, and namely un-to me.
 For my entente is nat but for to winne,
 And no-thing for correccioun of sinne.
 I rekke never, when that they ben
 beried, 405
 Though that her soules goon a-blake-
 beried!
 For certes, many a predicacioun
 Comth ofte tyme of yvel entencioun;
 Som for plesaunce of folk and flaterye,
 To been avaunced by ipocrisye, 410
 And som for veyne glorie, and som for
 hate.
 For, when I dar non other weyes de-
 bate,
 Than wol I stinge him with my tonge
 smerte
 In preching, so that he shal nat asterte
 To been defamed falsly, if that he 415
 Hath trespassed to my brethren or to me.
 For, though I telle noght his propre
 name,
 Men shal wel knowe that it is the same
 By signes and by othere circumstances.
 Thus quyte I folk that doon us disple-
 ances; 420
 Thus spitte I out my venim under hewe
 Of holynesse, to seme holy and trewe.
 But shortly myn entente I wol devyse;
 I preche of no-thing but for coveityse.
 Therfor my theme is yet, and ever
 was— 425

"Radix malorum est cupiditas."
 Thus can I preche agayn that same vyce
 Which that I use, and that is avaryce.
 But, though my-self be gilty in that
 sinne,
 Vet can I maken other folk to twinne
 From avaryce, and sore to repente. 431
 But that is nat my principal entente.
 I preche no-thing but for coveityse;
 Of this matere it oughite y-nogh suffyse.
 Than telle I hem ensamples many
 oon 435
 Of olde stories, longe tyme agoon :
 For lewed peple loven tales olde;
 Swich things can they wel reporte and
 holde.
 What? trowe ye, the whyles I may
 preche,
 And winne gold and silver for I teche,
 That I wol live in povert wilfully? 441
 Nay, nay, I thoghte it never trewely!
 For I wol preche and begge in sondry
 londes;
 I wol not do no labour with myn
 hondes,
 Ne make baskettes, and live therby, 445
 Because I wol nat beggen ydelly.
 I wol non of the apostles counterfete;
 I wol have money, wolle, chese, and
 whete,
 Al were it yeven of the povrest page,
 Or of the povrest widwe in a village, 450
 Al sholde hir children sterve for famyne.
 Nay! I wol drinke licour of the vyne.
 And have a Ioly wenche in every toun.
 But herkneth, lordings, in conclusioun;
 Your lyking is that I shal telle a tale. 455
 Now, have I dronke a draughte of corny
 ale,
 By god, I hope I shal yow telle a thing
 That shal, by resoun, been at your lyk-
 ing.
 For, though myself be a ful vicious man,
 A moral tale yet I yow telle can, 460
 Which I am wont to preche, for to
 winne.
 Now holde your pees, my tale I wol be-
 ginne.

THE PARDONERS TALE.

Here biginneth the Pardoners Tale.

IN Flaundes whylom was a companye
Of yonge folk, that haunteden folye,
As ryot, hasard, stewes, and tavernes, 465
Wher-as, with harpes, lutes, and giternes,
They daunce and pleye at dees bothe
day and night,

And ete also and drinken over hir might,
Thurgh which they doon the devel
sacrifyse

With-in that develes temple, in cursed
wyse, 470

By superfluitee abhominable;

Hir othes been so grete and so dampna-
ble,

That it is grisly for to here hem swere;

Our blisshed lordes body they to-tere;

Hem thoughte Iewes rente him noght
y-nough; 475

And ech of hem at otheres sinne lough.

And right anon than comen tombesteres
Fetys and smale, and yonge fruytesteres,
Singers with harpes, baudes, wafereres,
Whiche been the verray develes offi-
ceres 480

To kinde and blowe the fyr of lecherye,

That is annexed un-to glotonye;

The holy writ take I to my witnesse,

That luxurie is in wyn and dronkenesse.

Lo, how that dronken Loth, un-
kindely, 485

Lay by his doghtres two, unwittingly;

So dronke he was, he niste what he
wroghte.

Herodes, (who-so wel the stories
soghte),

When he of wyn was replet at his feste,

Right at his owene table he yaf his
heste 490

To sleen the Baptist Iohn ful giltelees.

Senek seith eek a good word doutedees;

He seith, he can no difference finde

Bitwix a man that is out of his minde

And a man which that is dronkelewe, 495

But that woodnesse, y-fallen in a shrewe,
Persevereth lenger than doth dronken-
esse.

O glotonye, ful of cursednesse,

O cause first of our confusioun,

O original of our dampnacioun, 500

Til Crist had boght us with his blood
agayn!

Lo, how dere, shortly for to sayn,

Aboght was thilke cursed vileinye;

Corrupt was all this world for glotonye!

Adam our fader, and his wyf also, 505

Fro Paradys to labour and to wo

Were driven for that vyce, it is no drede;

For whyl that Adam fasted, as I rede,

He was in Paradys; and whan that he

Eet of the fruyt defended 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 many maladyes

Folwen of excesse and of glotonyes,

He wolde been the more mesurable 515

Of his diete, sittinge at his table.

Allas! the shorte throte, the tendre
mouth,

Maketh that, Est and West, and North
and South,

In erthe, in air, in water men to-swinke
To gete a glotoun deyntee mete and
drinke! 520

Of this matere, o Paul, wel canstow trete,

'Mete un-to wombe, and wombe eek
un-to mete,

Shal god destroyen bothe,' as Paulus
seith.

Allas! a foul thing is it, by my feith,

To seye this word, and fouler is the
dede, 525

Whan man so drinketh of the whyte and
rede,

That of his throte he maketh his privee,
Thurgh thilke cursed superfluitee.

The apostel weping seith ful pitously,
'Ther walken many of whiche yow told
have I, 530

I seye it now weping with pitous voys,

That they been enemyes of Cristes croys,

Of whiche the ende is deeth, wombe is
her god.'

O wombe! O bely! O stinking cod,

Fulfil of donge and of corrupcioun! 535

At either ende of thee foul is the soun.
How greet labour and cost is thee to
finde!

Thise cokes, how they stampe, and
streynce, and grinde,
And turnen substance in-to accident,
To fulfille al thy likerous talent! 540
Out of the harde bones knocke they
The mary, for they caste nocht a-wey
That may go thurgh the golet softe and
swote;

Of spicerye, of leef, and bark, and rote
Shal been his sauce y-maked by delyt,
To make him yet a newer appetyt. 546
But certes, he that haunteth swich
delyces

Is deed, whyl that he liveth in tho vyces.
A lecherous thing is wyn, and dronk-
enesse

Is ful of stryving and of wrecchednesse.
O dronke man, disfigured is thy face, 551
Sour is thy breath, foul artow to embrace,
And thurgh thy dronke nose semeth the
soun

As though thou seydest ay 'Sampson,
Sampson';

And yet, god wot, Sampson drank
never no wyn. 555

Thou fallest, as it were a stiked swyn;
Thy tonge is lost, and al thyn honest
cure;

For dronkenesse is verray sepulture
Of mannes wit and his discrecioun. 559
In whom that drinke hath dominacioun,
He can no conseil kepe, it is no drede.
Now kepe yow fro the whyte and fro the
rede,

And namely fro the whyte wyn of Lepe,
That is to scelle in Fish-strete or in Chepe.
This wyn of Spayne crepeth subtilly 565
In othere wynes, growing faste by,

Of which ther yerseth swich fumositee,
That whan a man hath dronken
draughtes three,

And weneth that he be at hoom in
Chepe,

He is in Spayne, right at the toune of
Lepe, 570

Nat at the Rochel, ne at Burdeux toun;
And thanne wol he seye, 'Sampson,
Sampson.'

But herkneth, lordings, o word, I yow
preye,

That alle the sovereyn actes, dar I seye,
Of victories in the olde testament, 575
Thurgh verray god, that is omnipotent,
Were doon in abstinence and in preyere;
Loketh the Bible, and ther ye may it
lere.

Loke, Attila, the grete conquerour,
Deyde in his sleep, with shame and dis-
honour, 580

Bleding ay at his nose in dronkenesse;
A capitayn shoulde live in sobrenesse.

And over al this, avyseth yow right wel
What was comaunded un-to Lamuel —
Nat Samuel, but Lamuel, seye I — 585
Redeth the Bible, and finde it expresly
Of wyn-yeving to hem that han lustyse.
Na-more of this, for it may wel suffyse.

And now that I have spoke of
glotonye,

Now wol I yow defenden hasardrye. 590
Hasard is verray moder of lesinges,
And of deceite, and cursed forsweringes,
Blaspheme of Crist, manslaughter, and
wast also

Of catel and of tyme; and forthermo,
It is repreve and contrarie of honour 595
For to ben holde a commune hasardour.

And ever the hyer he is of estaat,
The more is he holden desolaat.
If that a prince useth hasardrye,
In alle governaunce and polycye 600
He is, as by commune opinioun,
Y-holde the lasse in reputacioun.

Stilbon, that was a wys embassadour,
Was sent to Corinthe, in ful greet hon-
our, 604

Fro Lacidomie, to make hir alliaunce.
And whan he cam, him happede, par
chance,

That alle the grettest that were of that
lond,

Pleyinge atte hasard he hem fond.
For which, as sone as it mighte be, 609
He stal him hoom agayn to his contree,
And seyde, 'ther wol I nat lese my name;
Ne I wol nat take on me so greet de-
fame,

Yow for to allye un-to none hasardours.
Sendeth othere wyse embassadours; 614

For, by my trouthe, me were lever dye,
Than I yow sholde to hasardours allye.
For ye that been so glorious in honours
Shul nat allyen yow with hasardours

As by my wil, ne as by my tretrec.⁷
 This wyse philosophre thus seyde he. 620
 Loke eek that, to the king Demetrius
 The king of Parthes, as the book seith
 us,
 Sente him a paire of dees of gold in
 scorn,
 For he hadde used hasard ther-biforn;
 For which he heeld his glorie or his re-
 noun 625
 At no value or reputacioun.
 Lordes may finden other maner pley
 Honeste y-nough to dryve the day away.
 Now wol I speke of othes false and
 grete
 A word or two, as olde bokes trete. 630
 Gret swering is a thing abhominable,
 And false swering is yet more reprevable.
 The heighe god forbad swering at al,
 Witnesse on Mathew; but in special
 Of swering seith the holy Ieremye, 635
 'Thou shalt seye sooth thyn othes, and
 nat lye,
 And swere in dome, and eek in right-
 wisesse;'
 But ydel swering is a cursednesse.
 Bihold and see, that in the firste table
 Of heighe goddes hestes honorable, 640
 How that the seconde heste of him is
 this —
 'Tak nat my name in ydel or amis.'
 Lo, rather he forbedeth swich swering
 Than homicyde or many a cursed thing;
 I seye that, as by ordre, thus it stond-
 eth; 645
 This knowen, that his hestes understand-
 eth,
 How that the second heste of god is
 that.
 And forther over, I wol thee telle al
 plat,
 That vengeance shal nat parten from his
 hous,
 That of his othes is to outrageous. 650
 'By goddes precious herte, and by his
 nayles,
 And by the blode of Crist, that it is in
 Hayles,
 Seven is my chaunce, and thyn is cink
 and treye;
 By goddes armes, if thou falsly pleye,
 This dagger shal thurgh-out thyn herte
 go' — 655

This fruyt cometh of the bicched bones
 two,
 Forswering, ire, falsnesse, homicyde.
 Now, for the love of Crist that for us
 dyde,
 Leveth your othes, bothe grete and
 smale; 659
 But, sirs, now wol I telle forth my tale.

THISE ryotoures three, of whiche I telle,
 Longe erst er pryme rong of any belle,
 Were set hem in a taverne for to drinke;
 And as they satte, they herde a belle
 clinke. 664

Biforn a cors, was caried to his grave;
 That oon of hem gan callen to his knave,
 'Go bet,' quod he, 'and axe redily,
 What cors is this that passeth heer forby;
 And lok that thou reporte his name
 wel.'

'Sir,' quod this boy, 'it nedeth never-
 a-del. 670
 It was me told, er ye cam heer, two
 houres;

He was, pardee, an old felawe of youres;
 And sodeynly he was y-slayn to-night,
 For-dronke, as he sat on his bench up-
 right;

Ther cam a privee theef, men clepeth
 Deeth, 675

That in this contree al the peple sleeth,
 And with his spere he smoot his herte
 a-two,

And wente his wey with-outen wordes
 mo.

He hath a thousand slayn this pesti-
 lence:

And, maister, er ye come in his pres-
 ence, 680

Me thinketh that it were necessarie
 For to be war of swich an adversarie:
 Beth redy for to mete him evermore.
 Thus taughte me my dame, I sey na-
 more.'

'By seinte Marie,' seyde this taverne,
 'The child seith sooth, for he hath slayn
 this yeer, 686

Henne over a myle, with-in a greet vil-
 lage,

Both man and womman, child and hyne,
 and page.

I trowe his habitacioun be there;
 To been avysed greet wisdom it were.

Er that he dide a man in dishonour.' 691
 'Ye, goddes armes,' quod this ryotour,
 'Is it swich peril with him for to mete?
 I shal him seke by wey and eek by strete,
 I make a vow to goddes digne bones!
 Herkneþ, felawes, we three been al
 ones; 696
 Lat ech of us holde up his hond til
 other,
 And ech of us bicomen oþeres brother,
 And we wol sleen this false traytour
 Deeth;
 He shal be slayn, which that so many
 sleeth, 700
 By goddes dignitee, er it be night.'
 Togidres han these three her trouthes
 plight,
 To live and dyen ech of hem for other,
 As though he were his owene y-boren
 brother.
 And up they sterte al dronken, in this
 rage, 705
 And forth they goon towards that vil-
 lage,
 Of which the taverner had spoke biforn,
 And many a grisly ooth than han they
 sworn,
 And Cristes blessed body they to-rente—
 'Deeth shal be deed, if that they may
 him hente.' 710
 When they han goon nat fully half a
 myle,
 Right as they wolde han troden over a
 style,
 An old man and a povre with hem mette.
 This olde man ful mekely hem grette,
 And seyde thus, 'now, lordes, god yow
 see!' 715
 The proudest of these ryotoures three
 Answerde agayn, 'what? carl, with sory
 grace,
 Why artow al forwrapped save thy
 face?
 Why livestow so longe in so greet age?'
 This olde man gan loke in his vis-
 age, 720
 And seyde thus, 'for I ne can nat finde
 A man, though that I walked in-to Inde,
 Neither in citee nor in no village,
 That wolde change his youthe for myn
 age;
 And therefore moot I han myn age stille,
 As longe time as it is goddes wille. 726

Ne deeth, allas! ne wol nat han my
 lyf;
 Thus walke I, lyk a resteles caityf,
 And on the ground, which is my modres
 gate,
 I knokke with my staf, bothe erly and
 late, 730
 And seye, "leve moder, leet me in!
 Lo, how I vanish, flesh, and blood, and
 skin!
 Allas! whan shul my bones been at
 reste?
 Moder, with yow wolde I change my
 cheste,
 That in my chambre longe tyme hath
 be, 735
 Ye! for an heyre clout to wrappe me!"
 But yet to me she wol nat do that grace,
 For which ful pale and welked is my
 face.
 But, sirs, to yow it is no curteisye
 To speken to an old man vileinye, 740
 But he trespasse in worde, or elles in
 dede.
 In holy writ ye may your-self wel rede,
 "Agayns an old man, hoor upon his
 heed,
 Ye sholde aryse;" wherfor I yeve yow
 reed,
 Ne dooth un-to an old man noon harm
 now, 745
 Na-more than ye wolde men dide to
 yow
 In age, if that ye so longe abyde;
 And god be with yow, wher ye go or
 ryde.
 I moot go thider as I have to go.'
 'Nay, olde cherl, by god, thou shalt
 nat so,' 750
 Seyde this other hasardour anon;
 'Thou partest nat so lightly, by seint
 Iohn!
 Thou spak right now of thilke traitour
 Deeth,
 That in this contree alle our frendes
 sleeth.
 Have heer my trouthe, as thou art his
 aspye, 755
 Tel wher he is, or thou shalt it abyde,
 By god, and by the holy sacrament!
 For soothly thou art oon of his assent,
 To sleen us yonge folk, thou false
 theef!'

'Now, sirs,' quod he, 'if that yow be
 so leef 760
 To finde Deeth, turne up this croked
 wey,
 For in that grove I lasfe him, by my fey,
 Under a tree, and ther he wol abyde;
 Nat for your boost he wol him no-thing
 hyde.
 See ye that ook? right ther ye shul him
 finde. 765
 God save yow, that boghte agayn man-
 kinde,
 And yow amende!'—thus seyde this
 olde man.
 And everich of these ryotoures ran,
 Til he cam to that tree, and ther they
 founde
 Of florins fyne of golde y-coyned rounde
 Wel ny an eighte bussshels, as hem
 thoughte. 771
 No lenger thanne after Deeth they
 soughte,
 But ech of hem so glad was of that
 sighte,
 For that the florins been so faire and
 brighte,
 That doun they sette hem by this pre-
 cious hord. 775
 The worste of hem he spake the firste
 word.
 'Brethren,' quod he, 'tak kepe what I
 seye;
 My wit is greet, though that I bourde
 and pleye.
 This tresor hath fortune un-to us yiven,
 In mirthe and Iolitee our lyf to liven, 780
 And lightly as it comth, so wol we
 spende.
 Ey! goddes precious dignitee! who wende
 To-day, that we sholde han so fair a grace?
 But mighte this gold be caried fro this
 place
 Hoom to myn hous, or elles un-to youres —
 For wel ye woot that al this gold is
 oures — 786
 Than were we in heigh felicitee.
 But trewely, by daye it may nat be;
 Men wolde seyn that we were theves
 stronge, 789
 And for our owene tresor doon us honge.
 This tresor moste y-caried be by nighte
 As wysly and as slyly as it mighte.
 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 herte
 blythe 795
 Shal renne to the toune, and that ful
 swythe,
 And bringe us breed and wyn ful prively.
 And two of us shul kepen subtilly
 This tresor well; and, if he wol nat tarie,
 Whan it is night, we wol this tresor
 carie 800
 By oon assent, wher-as us thinketh best.
 That oon of hem the cut broughte in his
 fest,
 And bad hem drawe, and loke wher it
 wol falle;
 And it fil on the yongeste of hem alle;
 And forth toward the toun he wente
 anon. 805
 And al-so sone as that he was gon,
 That oon of hem spak thus un-to that
 other,
 'Thou knowest wel thou art my sworne
 brother,
 Thy profit wol I telle thee anon.
 Thou woost wel that our felawe is agon;
 And heer is gold, and that ful greet
 plente, 811
 That shal departed been among us three.
 But natheles, if I can shape it so
 That it departed were among us two,
 Hadde I nat doon a freendes torn to
 thee?' 815
 That other 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 him
 seye?'
 'Shal it be conseil?' seyde the firste
 shrewe,
 'And I shal tellen thee, in wordes fewe,
 What we shal doon, and bringe it wel
 aboute.' 821
 'I graunte,' quod that other, 'out of
 doute,
 That, by my trouthe, I wol thee nat
 biweye.'
 'Now,' quod the firste, 'thou woost
 wel we be tweye,
 And two of us shul strenger be than
 oon. 825
 Look whan that he is set, and right anon

Arys, as though thou woldest with him
 pleye;
 And I shal ryve him thurgh the sydes
 tweye
 Why! that thou strogelest with him as in
 game,
 And with thy dagger look thou do the
 same; 830
 And than shal al this gold departed be,
 My dere freend, bitwixen me and thee;
 Than may we bothe our lustes al fulfillle,
 And pleye at dees right at our owene
 wille.
 And thus accorded been these shrewes
 tweye 835
 To sleen the thridde, as ye han herd me
 seye.
 This yongest, which that wente un-to
 the toun,
 Ful ofte in herte he rolleth up and doun
 The beautee of these florins newe and
 brighte.
 'O lord!' quod he, 'if so were that I
 mighte 840
 Have al this tresor to my-self alone,
 Ther is no man that liveth under the
 trone
 Of god, that sholde live so mery as I!'
 And atte laste the feend, our enemy,
 Putte in his thought that he shold poyson
 beye, 845
 With which he mighte sleen his felawes
 tweye;
 For-why the feend fond him in swich
 lyvinge,
 That he had leve him to sorwe bringe,
 For this was outrely his fulle entente
 To sleen hem bothe, and never to re-
 pente. 850
 And forth he gooth, no lenger wolde he
 tarie,
 Into the toun, un-to a pothecarie,
 And preyed him, that he him wolde selle
 Som poyson, that he mighte his rattes
 quelle;
 And eek ther was a polcat in his hawe,
 That, as he seyde, his capouns hadde
 y-slawe, 856
 And fayne he wolde wreke him, if he
 mighte,
 On vermin, that destroyed him by nighte.
 The pothecarie answerde, 'and thou
 shalt have

A thing that, al-so god my soule save, 860
 In al this world ther nis no creature,
 That ete or dronke hath of this confiture
 Noght but the mountance of a corn of
 whete,
 That he ne shal his lyf anon forlete;
 Ye, sterve he shal, and that in lasse
 whyle 865
 Than thou wolt goon a paas nat but a
 myle;
 This poyson is so strong and violent.'
 This cursed man hath in his hond
 y-hent
 This poyson in a box, and sith he ran
 In-to the nexte strete, un-to a man, 870
 And borwed [of] him large botels three;
 And in the two his poyson poured he;
 The thridde he kepte clene for his
 drinke.
 For al the night he shoop him for to
 swinke 874
 In caryinge of the gold out of that place.
 And whan this ryotour, with sory grace,
 Had filled with wyn his grete botels three,
 To his felawes agayn repaireth he.
 What nedeth it to sermone of it more?
 For right as they had cast his deeth
 bifore, 880
 Right so they han him slayn, and that
 anon.
 And whan that this was doon, thus spak
 that oon,
 'Now lat us sitte and drinke, and make
 us merie,
 And afterward we wol his body berie.'
 And with that word it happed him, par
 cas, 885
 To take the botel ther the poyson was,
 And drank, and yaf his felawe drinke
 also,
 For which anon they storven bothe two.
 But, certes, I suppose that Avicen
 Wroot never in no canon, ne in no fen,
 Mo wonder signes of empoisoning 891
 Than hadde these wrecches two, er hir
 ending.
 Thus ended been these homicydes two,
 And eek the false empoysoner also.
 O cursed sinne, ful of cursednesse! 895
 O traytours homicyde, o wikkednesse!
 O glotonye, luxurie, and hasardrye!
 Thou blasphemour of Crist with vilcinye

And othes grete, of usage and of pryde!
 Allas! mankinde, how may it bityde, 900
 That to thy creatour which that thee
 wroghte,
 And with his precious herte-blood thee
 boghte,
 Thou art so fals and so unkinde, allas!
 Now, goode men, god forgeve yow
 your trespas,
 And ware yow fro the sinne of ava-
 ryce. 905
 Myn holy pardoun may yow alle waryce,
 So that ye offre nobles or sterlinges,
 Or elles silver broches, spones, ringes.
 Boweth your heed under this holy bulle!
 Cometh up, ye wyves, offreth of your
 wolle! 910
 Your name I entre heer in my rolle
 anon;
 In-to the blisse of hevене shul ye gon;
 I yow assoile, by myn heigh power,
 Yow that wol offre, as clene and eek as
 cleer
 As ye were born; and, lo, sirs, thus I
 preche. 915
 And Iesu Crist, that is our soules leche,
 So graunte yow his pardon to receive;
 For that is best; I wol yow nat deceyve.
 But sirs, o word forgot I in my tale,
 I have relikes and pardon in my
 male, 920
 As faire as any man in Engelond,
 Whiche were me yeven by the popes
 hond.
 If any of yow wol, of devocioun,
 Offren, and han myn absolucioun,
 Cometh forth anon, and kneleth heer
 adoun, 925
 And mekely receyveth my pardoun:
 Or elles, taketh pardon as ye wende,
 Al newe and fresh, at every tonnes ende,
 So that ye offren alwey newe and newe
 Nobles and pens, which that be gode and
 trewe. 930
 It is an honour to everich that is heer,
 That ye mowe have a suffisant pardoneer
 Tassoile yow, in contree as ye ryde,
 For adventures which that may bityde.
 Peraventure ther may falle oon or
 two 935
 Doun of his hors, and breke his nekke
 atwo.

Look which a seuretee is it to yow alle
 That I am in your felaweship y-falle,
 That may assoile yow, bothe more and
 lasse,
 Whan that the soule shal fro the body
 passe. 940
 I rede that our hoste heer shal biginne,
 For he is most envoluped in sinne.
 Com forth, sir hoste, and offre first anon,
 And thou shalt kisse the reliks everichon,
 Ye, for a grote! unbokel anon thy
 purs.' 945
 'Nay, nay,' quod he, 'than have I
 Cristes curs!
 Lat be,' quod he, 'it shal nat be, so
 theech!
 Thou woldest make me kisse thyn old
 breech,
 And swere it were a relik of a seint,
 Though it were with thy fundament de-
 peint! 950
 But by the croys which that seint Eleyne
 fond,
 I wolde I hadde thy coillons in myn hond
 In stede of relikes or of seintuarie;
 Lat cutte hem of, I wol thee helpe hem
 carie;
 They shul be shryned in an hogges
 tord.' 955
 This pardoner answerde nat a word;
 So wrooth he was, no word ne wolde he
 seye.
 'Now,' quod our host, 'I wol no lenger
 pleye
 With thee, ne with noon other angry
 man.'
 But right anon the worthy knight
 bigan, 960
 Whan that he saugh that al the peple
 lough,
 'Na-more of this, for it is right y-nough;
 Sir pardoner, be glad and mery of
 chere;
 And ye, sir host, that been to me so
 dere,
 I prey yow that ye kisse the par-
 doner. 965
 And pardoner, I prey thee, drawe thee
 neer,
 And, as we diden, lat us laughe and
 pleye.'
 Anon they kiste, and riden forth hir weye.

Here is ended the Pardoners Tale.

GROUP D.

THE WIFE OF BATH'S PROLOGUE.

The Prologe of the Wyves Tale of Bathe.

‘EXPERIENCE, though noon auctoritee
Were in this world, were right y-nough
to me
To speke of wo that is in mariage;
For, lordinges, sith I twelf yeer was of
age,
Thonked be god that is eterne on lyve, 5
Housbondes at chirche-dore I have had
fyve;
For I so ofte have y-wedded be;
And alle were worthy men in hir degree.
But me was told certeyn, nat longe agon
is,
That sith that Crist ne wente never but
onis 10
To wedding in the Cane of Galilee,
That by the same ensample taughte he
me
That I ne sholde wedded be but ones.
Herke eek, lo! which a sharp word for
the nones
Besyde ¶ welle Iesus, god and man, 15
Spak in repreve of the Samaritan:
“Thou hast y-had fyve housbondes,”
quod he,
“And thilke man, the which that hath
now thee,
Is noght thyn housbond;” thus seyde he
certeyn;
What that he mente ther-by, I can nat
seyn; 20
But that I axe, why that the fifthe man
Was noon housbond to the Samaritan?
How many mighte she have in mariage?
Yet herde I never tellen in myn age
Upon this nombre diffinicioun; 25
Men may devyne and glosen up and
down.
But wel I woot expres, with-oute lye,
God bad us for to wexe and multiplye;
That gentil text can I wel understonde.
Eek wel I woot he seyde, myn hous-
bonde 30
Sholde lete fader and moder, and take me;
But of no nombre mencion made he,
Of bigamye or of octogamy;

Why sholde men speke of it vileinye?
Lo, here the wyse king, dan Salo-
mon; 35
I trowe he hadde wyves mo than oon;
As, wolde god, it leveful were to me
To be refreshed half so ofte as he!
Which yifte of god hadde he for alle his
wyvis!
No man hath swich, that in this worlde
alyve is. 40
God woot, this noble king, as to my wit,
The firste night had many a mery fit
With ech of hem, so wel was him on
lyve!
Blessed be god that I have wedded fyve!
Welcome the sixte, whan that ever he
shal. 45
For sothe, I wol nat kepe me chast in
al;
Whan myn housbond is fro the world
y-gon,
Som Cristen man shal wedde me anon;
For thanne thapostle seith, that I am free
To wedde, a goddes half, wher it lyketh
me. 50
He seith that to be wedded is no sinne;
Bet is to be wedded than to brinne.
What rekketh me, thogh folk seye
vileinye
Of shrewed Lameth and his bigamye?
I woot wel Abraham was an holy man, 55
And Iacob eek, as ferforth as I can;
And ech of hem hadde wyves mo than
two;
And many another holy man also.
Whan saugh ye ever, in any maner age,
That hye god defended mariage 60
By expres word? I pray you, telleth me;
Or wher 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. 65
Men may conseilte a womman to be
oon,
But conseilting is no comandement;
He putte it in our owene Iugement.

For hadde god comanded maydenhede,
Thanne hadde he dampned wedding
with the dede; 70

And certes, if ther were no seed y-sowe,
Virginitee, wher-of than sholde it growe?
Poul dorste nat comanden atte leste
A thing of which his maister yaf noon
heste.

The dart is set up for virginitee; 75
Cacche who so may, who renneth best
lat see.

But this word is nat take of every
wight,

But ther as god list give it of his might.
I woot wel, that thapostel was a mayde;
But natheless, thogh that he wroot and
sayde, 80

He wolde that every wight were swich as
he,

Al nis but conseil to virginitee;
And for to been a wyf, he yaf me leve
Of indulgence; so it is no repreve
To wedde me, if that my make dye, 85
With-oute 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 tasseble;
Ye knowe what this ensample may re-
semble. 90

This is al and som, he heeld virginitee
More parfit than wedding in freletee.
Freeltee clepe I, but-if that he and she
Wolde leden al hir lyf in chastitee.

I graunte it wel, I have noon envye, 95
Thogh maydenhede preferre bigamy;
Hem lyketh to be clene, body and goost,
Of myn estaat I nil nat make no boost.

For wel ye knowe, a lord in his hous-
hold,

He hath nat every vessel al of gold; 100
Somme been of tree, and doon hir lord
servyse.

God clepeth folk to him in sondry wyse,
And everich hath of god a propre yifte,
Som this, som that,—as him lyketh
shifte.

Virginitee is greet perfeccioun, 105
And continence eek with devocioun.
But Crist, that of perfeccioun is welle,
Bad nat every wight he sholde go selle
All that he hadde, and give it to the
pore,

And in swich wyse folwe him and his
fore. 110

He spak to hem that wolde live parfitly;
And lordinges, by your leve, that am
nat I.

I wol bistowe the flour of al myn age
In the actes and in fruit of mariage.

Telle me also, to what conclusioun 115
Were membres maad of generacioun,
And for what profit was a wight y-wrought?
Trusteth right wel, they wer nat maad
for noght.

Glose who-so wole, and seye bothe up
and down,

That they were makid for purgacioun 120
Of urine, and our bothe thinges smale
Were eek to knowe a femele from a
male,

And for noon other cause: sey ye no?
The experience woot wel it is noght so;
So that the clerkes be nat with me
wrothe, 125

I sey this, that they makid been for
bothe,

This is to seye, for office, and for ese
Of engendrure, ther we nat god displese.
Why sholde men elles in hir bokes sette,
That man shal yelde to his wyf hir
dette? 130

Now wher-with sholde he make his paye-
ment,

If he ne used his sely instrument?
Than were they maad up-on a creature,
To purge uryne, and eek for engendrure.

But I seye noght that every wight is
holde, 135

That hath swich harneys as I to yow
tolde,

To goon and usen hem in engendrure;
Than sholde 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 lived they ever in parfit chastitee.
I nil envye no virginitee;

Lat hem be breed of pured whete-seed,
And lat us wyves hoten barly-breed;
And yet with barly-breed, Mark telle
can, 145

Our lord Iesu refreshed many a man.
In swich estaat as god hath cleped us
I wol persevere, I nam nat precious.

In wyfhode I wol use myn instrument
 As frely as my maker hath it sent. 150
 If I be dangerous, god yeve me sorwe!
 Myn housbond shal it have bothe eve
 and morwe,
 When that him list com forth and paye
 his dette.
 An housbonde I wol have, I nil nat lette,
 Which shal be bothe my dettour and my
 thral 155
 And have his tribulacioun with-al
 Up-on his flessch, whyl that I am his wyf.
 I have the power duringe al my lyf
 Up-on his propre body, and nocht he.
 Right thus the apostel tolde it un-to
 me; 160
 And bad our housbondes for to love us
 weel.
 Al this sentence me lyketh every-deel'—
 Up sterte the Pardoner, and that anon,
 'Now dame,' quod he, 'by god and by
 seint Iohn,
 Ye been a noble prechour in this cas!
 I was aboute to wedde a wyf; allas! 166
 What sholde I bye it on my flesh so
 dere?
 Yet hadde I lever wedde no wyf to-yere!'
 'Abyde!' quod she, 'my tale is nat
 bigonne;
 Nay, thou shalt drincken of another tonne
 Er that I go, shal savoure wors than
 ale. 171
 And whan that I have told 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;— 175
 Than maystow chese whether thou wolt
 sippe
 Of thilke tonne that I shal abroche.
 Be war of it, er thou to ny approche;
 For I shal telle ensamples mo than ten.
 Who-so that nil be war by othere men,
 By him shul othere men corrected be.
 The same wordes wryteth Ptholomee;
 Rede in his Almageste, and take it
 there.'
 'Dame, I wolde pray yow, if your wil
 it were,'
 Seyde this Pardoner, 'as ye bigan, 185
 Telle forth your tale, spareth for no man,

And teche us yonge men of your prak-
 tike.'
 'Gladly,' quod she, 'sith it may yow
 lyke.
 But yet I praye to al this companye,
 If that I speke after my fantasye, 190
 As taketh not a-grief of that I seye;
 For myn entente nis but for to pleye.
 Now sires, now wol I telle forth my
 tale.—
 As ever mote I drincken wyn or ale,
 I shal seye sooth, tho housbondes that I
 hadde, 195
 As three of hem were gode and two were
 badde.
 The three men were gode, and riche,
 and olde;
 Unnethe mighte they the statut holde
 In which they were bounden un-to me.
 Ye woot wel what I mene of this, par-
 dee! 200
 As help me god, I laughe whan I thinke
 How pitously a-night I made hem
 swinke;
 And by my fey, I tolde of it no stoor.
 They had me yeven hir gold and hir
 tresoor;
 Me neded nat do lenger diligence 205
 To winne hir love, or doon hem rever-
 ence.
 They loved me so wel, by god above,
 That I ne tolde no deyntee of hir love!
 A wys woman wol sette hir ever in oon
 To gete hir love, ther as she hath noon.
 But sith I hadde hem hoolly in myn
 hond, 211
 And sith they hadde me yeven all hir
 lond,
 What sholde I taken hede hem for to
 pleye,
 But it were for my profit and myn ese?
 I sette hem so a-werke, by my fey, 215
 That many a night they songen "weila-
 way!"
 The bacoun was nat fet for hem, I trowe,
 That som men han in Essex at Dun-
 mowe.
 I governed hem so wel, after my lawe,
 That ech of hem ful blisful was and
 fawe 220
 To bringe me gaye things fro the fayre.
 They were ful glad whan I spak to hem
 fayre;

For god it woot, I chidde hem spitously.

Now herkneth, how I bar me proprely,
Ye wyse wyves, that can understonde.

Thus shul ye speke and bere hem
wrong on honde; 226

For half so boldely can ther no man

Swere and lyen as a womman can.

I sey nat this by wyves that ben wyse,

But-if it be whan they hem misavyse. 230

A wys wyf, if that she can hir good,

Shal beren him on hond the cow is
wood,

And take witness of hir owene mayde

Of hir assent; but herkneth how I sayde.

‘Sir olde kaynard, is this thyn array?

Why is my neighebores wyf so gay? 236

She is honoured over-al ther she goth;

I sitte at hoom, I have no thrifty cloth.

What dostow at my neighebores hous?

Is she so fair? artow so amorous? 240

What rowneye with our mayde? *bene-*
dicite!

Sir olde lechour, lat thy Iapes be!

And if I have a gossib or a freend,

With-uten gilt, thou chydest as a feend,

If that I walke or pleye un-to his hous!

Thou comest hoom as dronken as a
mous, 246

And prechest on thy bench, with yvel
preef!

Thou seist to me, it is a greet meschief

To wedde a povre woman, for costage;

And if that she be riche, of heigh parage,

Than seistow that it is a tormentrye 251

To suffre hir pryde and hir malencolye.

And if that she be fair, thou verray
knaue, *betw*

Thou seyst that every holour wol hir
have;

She may no whyle in chastitee abyde,

That is assailed up-on ech a syde. 256

Thou seyst, som folk desyre us for
richesse,

Somme for our shap, and somme for our
fairnesse;

And som, for she can outhir singe or
daunce,

And som, for gentillesse and daliounce;

Som, for hir handes and hir armes
smale; 261

Thus goth al to the devel by thy tale.

Thou seyst, men may nat kepe a castel-
wal;

It may so longe assailed been over-al.

And if that she be foul, thou seist that
she 265

Coveiteth every man that she may se;

For as a spaynel she wol on him lepe,

Til that she finde som man hir to chepe;

Ne noon so grey goos goth ther in the
lake,

As, seistow, that wol been with-oute
make. 270

And seyst, it is an hard thing for to
welde

A thing that no man wol, his thanks,
helde. *poscal*

Thus seistow, lorel, whan thou goost to
bedde;

And that no wys man nedeth for to
wedde, 274

Ne no man that entendeth un-to hevenc.

With wilde thonder-dint and fry leve

Mote thy welked nekke be to-broke!

Thow seyst that dropping houses, and
eek smoke,

And chydng wyves, maken men to flee

Out of hir owene hous; a! *benedicite!*

What cyleth swich an old man for to
chyde? 281

Thow seyst, we wyves wol our vyces
hyde

Til we be fast, and than we wol hem
shewe;

Wel may that be a proverbe of a shrewe!

Thou seist, that oxen, asses, hors, and
houndes, 285

They been assayed at diverse stoundes;

Bacins, lavours, er that men hem bye,

Spones and stoles, and al swich hous-
bondrye,

And so been pottes, clothes, and array;

But folk of wyves maken noon assay 290

Til they be wedded; olde dotard shrewe!

And than, seistow, we wol oure vices
shewe.

Thou seist also, that it displeth me

But-if that thou wolt preyse my beautee,
And but thou poure alwey up-on my
face, 295

And clepe me “faire dame” in every
place;

And but thou make a feste on thilke day

That I was born, and make me fresh and
gay,

And but thou do to my norice honour

And to my chamberere with-inne my
hour, 300

And to my fadres folk and his allyes; —
Thus seistow, olde barel ful of lyes!

And yet of our apprentice lanekyn,
For his crisp heer, shyninge as gold so fyn,
And for he squiereth me bothe up and
doun, 305

Yet hastow caught a fals suspeciou; —
I wol hym noght, thogh thou were deed
to-morwe.

But tel me this, why hydestow, with
sorwe,

The keyes of thy cheste away fro me?
It is my good as wel as thyn, pardee. 310
What wenestow make an idiot of our
dame?

Now by that lord, that called is seint Iame,
Thou shalt nat bothe, thogh that thou
were wood,

Be maister of my body and of my good;
That oon thou shalt forgo, maugree thyne
yën; 315

What nedeth thee of me to enquere or
spyën?

I trowe, thou woldest loke me in thy
chiste!

Thou sholdest seye, "wyf, go wher thee
liste,

Tak your disport, I wol nat leve no talis;
I knowe yow for a trewe wyf, dame
Alis." 320

We love no man that taketh kepe or
charge

Wher that we goon, we wol ben at our
large.

Of alle men y-blessed moot he be,
The wyse astrologien Dan Ptholome,
That seith this proverbe in his Alma-
geste, 325

"Of alle men his wisdom is the hyste,
That rekketh never who hath the world
in honde."

By this proverbe thou shalt understonde,
Have thou y-nogh, what that thee recche
or care

How merily that othere folkes fare? 330
For certeyn, olde dotard, by your leve,
Ye shul have queynte right y-nough at eve.

He is to greet a nigard that wol werne
A man to lighte his candle at his lanterne;

He shal have never the lasse light,
pardee; 335

Have thou y-nough, thee thar nat pleyne
thee.

Thou seyst also, that if we make us gay
With clothing and with precious array,
That it is peril of our chastitee;

And yet, with sorwe, thou most enforce
thee, 340

And seye thise wordes in the apostles
name,

"In habit, maad with chastitee and
shame,

Ye wommen shul apparaille yow," quod
he,

"And noght in tressed heer and gay
perree, 344

As perles, ne with gold, ne clothes 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 who-so wolde senge a cattes skin,
Thanne wolde the cat wel dwellen in his
in; 350

And if the cattes skin be slyk and gay,
She wol nat dwelle in house half a day,
But forth she wole, er any day be dawed,
To shewe hir skin, and goon a-cater-
wawed;

This is to seye, if I be gay, sir shrewe, 355
I wol renne out, my borel for to shewe.

Sire olde fool, what eyleth thee to
spyën?

Thogh thou preye Argus, with his hun-
dred yën,

To be my warde-cors, as he can best,
In feith, he shal nat kepe me but me
lest; 360

Yet coude I make his berd, so moot I
thee.

Thou seydest eek, that ther ben thinges
three,

The whiche thinges troublen al this erthe,
And that no wight ne may endure the
ferthe;

O leve sir shrewe, Jesu shorte thy lyf! 365
Yet prechestow, and seyst, an hateful wyf
Y-rekened is for oon of thise meschances.

Ben ther none othere maner resem-
blances

That ye may lykne your parables to,
But-if a sely wyf be oon of tho? 370

Thou lykenest wommanes love to helle,
To bareyne lond, ther water may not
dwelle.

Thou lyknest it also to wilde fyr;
The more it brenneth, the more it hath
desyr

To consume every thing that brent wol
be. 375

Thou seyst, that right as wormes shende
a tree,

Right so a wyf destroyeth hir housbonde;
This knowe they that been to wyves
bonde.'

Lordinges, right thus, as ye have un-
derstonde,

Bar I stifly myne olde housbondes on
honde, 380

That thus they seyden in hir dronkenesse;
And al was fals, but that I took wisesse
On Ianekin and on my nece also.

O lord, the peyne I dide hem and the wo,
Ful gilteles, by goddes swete pyne! 385
For as an hors I coude byte and whyne.
I coude pleyne, thogh I were in the gilt,
Or elles often tyme hadde I ben spilt.

Who-so that first to mille comth, first
grint; 389

I pleyned first, so was our werre y-stint.
They were ful glad to excusen hem ful
blyve

Of thing of which they never agilte hir
lyve.

Of wenches wolde I beren him on
honde,

Whan that for syk unnethes mighte he
stonde.

Yet tikled it his herte, for that he 395
Wende that I hadde of him so greet
chiertee.

I swoor that al my walkinge out by nighte
Was for tespye wenches that he dighte;
Under that colour hadde I many a mirthe.
For al swich wit is yeven us in our
birthe; 400

Deceite, weping, spinning god hath yive
To wommen kindly, whyl they may live.
And thus of o thing I avaunte me,
Atte ende I hadde the bettre in ech de-
gree,

By sleighte, or force, or by som maner
thing, 405

As by continuel murmur or grucching;
Namely a-bedde hadden they mes-
chaunce,

Ther wolde I chyde and do hem no
plesaunce;

I wolde no lenger in the bed abyde,
If that I felte his arm over my syde, 410

Til he had maad his raunson un-to me;
Than wolde I suffre him do his nycetee.

And ther-fore every man this tale I telle,
Winne who-so may, for al is for to selle.

With empty hand men may none haukes
lure; 415

For winning wolde I al his lust endure,
And make me a feyned appetyt;

And yet in bacon hadde I never delyt;
That made me that ever I wolde hem
chyde.

For thogh the pope had seten hem
bisperde, 420

I wolde nat spare hem at hir owene bord.
For by my trouthe, I quitte hem word for
word.

As help me verray god omnipotent,
Thogh I right now sholde make my
testament,

I ne owe hem nat a word that it nis quit.
I broghte it so aboute by my wit, 426

That they moste yeve it up, as for the
beste;

Or elles hadde we never been in reste.
For thogh he loked as a wood leoun,

Yet sholde he faille of his conclusioun. 430

Thanne wolde I seye, 'gode lief, tak

keep
How mekely loketh Wilkin oure sheep;
Com neer, my spouse, lat me ba thy
cheke!

Ye sholde been al pacient and meke,
And han a swete spyced conscience. 435

Sith ye so preche of Iobes pacience.
Suffreth alwey, sin ye so wel can preche;

And but ye do, certain we shal yow teche
That it is fair to have a wyf in pees.

Oon of us two moste bowen, doutelees;
And sith a man is more resonable 441

Than womman is, ye moste been suffra-
ble.

What eyleth yow to grucche thus and
grone?

Is it for ye wolde have my queynte allone?
Why taak it al, lo, have it every-deel; 445

Peter! I shrewe yow but ye love it weel!
For if I wolde selle my *bele chose*,

I coude walke as fresh as is a rose;
But I wol kepe it for your owene tooth.

Ye be to blame, by god, I sey yow
sooth.' 450

Swiche maner wordes hadde we on
honde.
Now wol I speken of my fourthe hous-
bonde.

My fourthe housbonde was a revelour,
This is to seyn, he hadde a paramour;
And I was yong and ful of ragerye, 455
Stiborn and strong, and Ioly as a pye.
Wel coude I daunce to an harpe smale,
And singe, y-wis, as any nightingale,
Whan I had dronke a draughte of swete
wyn.

Metellius, the foule cherl, the swyn, 460
That with a staf birafte his wyf hir lyf,
For she drank wyn, thogh I hadde been
his wyf,

He sholde nat han daunted me fro drinke;
And, after wyn, on Venus moste I thinke:
For al so siker as cold engendreth hayl,
A likerous mouth moste han a likerous
tayl. 466

In womman vinolent is no defence,
This knowen lechours by experience.

But, lord Crist! whan that it remem-
breth me

Up-on my yowthe, and on my Iolitee, 470
It tikleth me aboute myn herte rote.

Unto this day it dooth myn herte bote
That I have had my world as in my tyme.
But age, allas! that al wol envenyme,
Hath me biraft my beautee and my
pith; 475

Lat go, fare-wel, the devel go therwith!
The flour is goon, ther is na-more to
telle,

The bryn, as I best can, now moste I
selle;

But yet to be right mery wol I fonde.
Now wol I tellen of my fourthe hous-
bonde. 480

I seye, I hadde in herte greet despyt
That he of any other had delyt.

But he was quit, by god and by seint Ioe!
I made him of the same wode a croce;
Nat of my body in no foul manere, 485
But certainly, I made folk swich chere,
That in his owene grece I made him
frye

For angre, and for verray Ialousye.
By god, in erthe I was his purgatorie,
For which I hope his soule be in glorie.
For god it woot, he sat ful ofte and
song 491

Whan that his shoo ful bitterly him
wrong.

Ther was no wight, save god and he, that
wiste,

In many wyse, how sore I him twiste.
He deyde whan I cam fro Ierusalem,
And lyth y-grave under the rode-beem,
Al is his tombe noght so curious 497
As was the sepulcre of him, Darius,
Which that Appelles wroughte subtilly;
It nis but wast to burie him preciously.
Lat him fare-wel, god yeve his soule
reste, 501

He is now in the grave and in his cheste.
Now of my fifthe housbond wol I telle.

God lete his soule never come in helle!
And yet was he to me the moste shrewed;
That fele I on my ribbes al by rewe, 506
And ever shal, un-to myn ending-day.

But in our bed he was so fresh and gay,
And ther-with-al so wel coude he me
glose,

Whan that he wolde han my *bele chose*, 510
That thogh he hadde me bet on every
boon,

He coude winne agayn my love anon.
I trowe I loved him beste, for that he
Was of his love daungerous to me.

We wommen han, if that I shal nat lye,
In this matere a queynte fantasye; 516
Wayte what thing we may nat lightly
have,

Ther-after wol we crye al-day and crave.
Forbode us thing, and that desyren we;
Prees on us faste, and thanne wol we
flee. 520

With daunger oute we al our chaffare;
Greet prees at market maketh dere ware,
And to greet cheep is holde at litel prys;
This knoweth every womman that is wys.

My fifthe housbonde, god his soule
blesse! 525

Which that I took for love and no
richesse,

He som-tyme was a clerk of Oxenford,
And had left scole, and wente at hoom
to bord

With my gossib, dwellinge in oure toun,
God have hir soule! hir name was Ali-
soun. 530

She knew myn herte and eek my privtee
Bet than our parisshe-preest, so moot I
thee!

To hir biwreyed I my conseil al.
 For had myn housbonde pissed on a wal,
 Or doon a thing that sholde han cost his
 lyf, 535

To hir, and to another worthy wyf,
 And to my nece, which that I loved weel,
 I wolde han told his conseil every-deel.

And so I dide ful often, god it woot,
 That made his face ful often reed and
 hoot 540

For verray shame, and blamed him-self
 for he

Had told to me so greet a privetee.

And so bifel that ones, in a Lente,
 (So often tymes I to my gossib wente,
 For ever yet I lovede to be gay, 545
 And for to walke, in March, Averille, and
 May,

Fro hous to hous, to here sondry talis),
 That Iankin clerk, and my gossib deme
 Alis,

And I my-self, in-to the felde wente.

Myn housbond was at London al that
 Lente; 550

I hadde the bettre leyser for to pleye,
 And for to see, 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, 555

To vigilies and to processiouns,
 To preching eek and to thise pilgrimages,
 To pleyes of miracles and mariages,
 And wered upon my gaye scarlet gytes.

Thise wormes, ne thise motthes, ne thise
 mytes, 560

Upon my peril, frete hem never a deel;
 And wostow why? for they were used
 weel.

Now wol I tellen forth what happed
 me.

I seye, that in the feeldes walked we,
 Til trewely we hadde swich daliance, 565

This clerk and I, that of my purveyance
 I spak to him, and seyde him, how that
 he,

If I were widwe, sholde wedde me.
 For certainly, I sey for no bobance,

Yet was I never withouten purveyance
 Of mariage, nof othere thinges eek. 571

I holde a mouses herte nat worth a leek,
 That hath but oon hole for to sterte to,
 And if that faille, thanne is al y-do.

I bar him on honde, he hadde en-
 charnted me; 575

My dame taughte me that soutiltee.

And eek I seyde, I mette of him al night;

He wolde han slayn me as I lay up-right,

And al my bed was ful of verray blood,

And yet I hope that he shal do me good;

For blood bitokeneth gold, as me was
 taught. 581

And al was fals, I dremed of it right
 naught,

But as I folwed ay my dames lore,

As wel of this as of other thinges more.

But now sir, lat me see, what I shal
 seyn? 585

A! ha! by god, I have my tale ageyn.

Whan that my fourthe housbond was
 on bere,

I weep algate, and made sory chere,

As wyves moten, for it is usage,

And with my coverchief covered my vis-
 age; 590

But for that I was purveyed of a make,
 I weep but smal, and that I undertake.

To chirche was myn housbond born
 a-morwe

With neighebores, that for him maden
 sorwe;

And Iankin oure clerk was oon of tho

As help me god, whan that I saugh him
 go 596

After the bere, me thoughte he hadde a
 paire

Of legges and of feet so clene and faire,

That al myn herte I yaf un-to his hold.

He was, I trowe, a twenty winter old,

And I was fourty, if I shal seye sooth;

But yet I hadde alwey a coltes tooth.

Gat-tothed I was, and that bicam me
 weel; 604

I hadde the prente of sēynt Venus seel.

As help me god, I was a lusty oon,

And faire and riche, and yong, and wel
 bigoon;

And trewely, as myne housbondes tolde
 me,

I had the beste *quoniam* mighte be.

For certes, I am al Venerien

In felinge, and myn herte is Marciē. 610

Venus me yaf my lust, my likerousnesse,

And Mars yaf me my sturdy hardinesse.

Myn ascendent was Taur, and Mars ther-
 inne.

Allas! allas! that ever love was sinne!
I folwed ay myn inclinacioun 615
By vertu of my constellacioun;
That made me I coude noght withdrawe
My chambre of Venus from a good
felawe.

Yet have I Martes mark up-on my face,
And also in another privee place. 620
For, god so wis be my savacioun,
I ne loved never by no discrecioun
But ever folwede myn appetyt,
Al were he short or long, or blak or
whyt;

I took no kepe, so that he lyked me, 625
How pore he was, ne eek of what degree.

What sholde I seye, but, at the
monthes ende,

This Ioly clerk Iankin, that was so hende,
Hath wedded me with greet solempnitee,
And to him yaf I al the lond and fec 630
That ever was me yeven ther-bifore;
But afterward repented me full sore.
He nolde suffre nothing of my list.

By god, he smoot me ones on the list,
For that I rente out of his book a leef,
That of the strook myn ere wex al deaf.
Stiborn I was as is a leonesse, 637
And of my tonge a verray langleresse,
And walke I wolde, as I had doon bi-
forn,

From hous to hous, al-though he had it
sworn. 640

For which he often tymes wolde preche,
And me of olde Romayn gestes teche,
How he, Simplicius Gallus, lefte his
wyf,

And hir forsook for terme of al his lyf,
Noght but for open-headed he hir say
Lokinge out at his dore upon a day. 646

Another Romayn tolde he me by name,
That, for his wyf was at a someres game
With-oute his witing, he forsook hir eke.
And than wolde he up-on his Bible seke
That ilke proverbe of Ecclesiaste, 651
Wher he comandeth and forbedeth faste,
Man shal nat suffre his wyf go roule
aboute;

Than wolde he seye right thus, with-uten
doute,

“Who-so that buildeth his hous al of
salwes, 655

And priketh his blinde hors over the
falwes,

And suffreth his wyf to go seken halwes,
Is worthy to been hanged on the
galwes!”

But al for noght, I sette noght an hawe
Of his proverbes nof his olde sawe, 660
Ne I wolde nat of him corrected be.

I hate him that my vices telleth me,
And so do mo, god woot! of us than I.
Thus made him with me wood al outrely;
I nolde noght forbere him in no cas. 665
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, night
and day,

For his desport he wolde rede alway. 670
He cleped it Valerie and Theofraste,
At whiche book he lough alway ful
faste.

And eek ther was som-tyme a clerk at
Rome,

A cardinal, that highte Seint Ierome,
That made a book agayn Iovinian; 675
In whiche book eek ther was Tertulan,
Crisippus, Trotula, and Helowys,
That was abbesse nat fer fro Parys;
And eek the Parables of Salomon,

Ovydes Art, and bokes many on, 680
And alle thise wer bounden in o volume.

And every night and day was his custume,
When he had leyser and vacacioun
From other worldly occupacioun, 684
To reden on this book of wikked wyves.

He knew of hem mo legendes and lyves
Than been of gode wyves in the Bible.

For trusteth wel, it is an impossible
That any clerk wol speke good of wyves,

But-if it be of holy seintes lyves, 690
Ne of noon other womman never the mo.
Who peyntede the leoun, tel me who?

By god, if women hadde writen stories,
As clerkes han with-inne hir oratories,
They wolde han writen of men more wick-
kednesse 695

Than all the mark of Adam may redresse.
The children of Mercurie and of Venus

Been in hir wirking ful contrarious;
Mercurie loveth wisdom and science,
And Venus loveth ryot and dispence. 700
And, for hir diverse disposicioun,
Ech falleth in others exaltacioun;

And thus, god woot! Mercurie is desolat
 In Pisces, wher Venus is axaltat;
 And Venus falleth wher Mercurie is
 reysed; 705
 Therefore no womman of no clerk is
 pryseid.
 The clerk, whan he is old, and may
 noght do
 Of Venus werkes worth his olde sho,
 Than sit he doun, and writ in his dotage
 That wommen can nat kepe hir mariage!
 But now to purpos, why I tolde thee 711
 That I was beten for a book, pardee.
 Up-on a night Iankin, that was our syre,
 Redde on his book, as he sat by the fyre,
 Of Eva first, that, for hir wikkednesse, 715
 Was al mankinde broght to wrecched-
 nesse.
 For which that Iesu Crist him-self was
 slayn,
 That boghte us with his herte-blood
 agayn.
 Lo, here expres of womman may ye finde,
 That womman was the los of al man-
 kinde. 720
 Tho redde he me how Sampson loste
 his heres,
 Slepinge, his lemman kitte hem with hir
 sheres;
 Thurgh whiche tresoun loste he bothe
 his yën.
 Tho redde he me, if that I shal nat
 lyen,
 Of Hercules and of his Dianyre, 725
 That caused him to sette himself a-fyre.
 No-thing forgat he the penaunce and
 wo
 That Socrates had with hise wyves two;
 How Xantippa caste pisse up-on his
 heed;
 This sely man sat stille, as he were
 deed; 730
 He wyped his heed, namore dorste he
 seyn
 But "er that thonder stinte, comth a
 reyn."
 Of Phasipha, that was the quene of
 Crete,
 For shrewednesse, him thoughte the tale
 swete;
 Fy! spek na-more — it is a grisly thing —
 Of hir horrible lust and hir lyking. 736
 Of Clitemistra, for hir lecherye,

That falsly made hir housbond for to dye,
 He redde it with ful good devocioun.
 He tolde me eek for what occasioun
 Amphiorax at Thebes loste his lyf; 741
 Myn housbond hadde a legende of his
 wyf,
 Eriphilem, that for an ouche of gold
 Hath prively un-to the Grekes told
 Wher that hir housbonde hidde him in a
 place, 745
 For which he hadde at Thebes sory grace.
 Of Lyma tolde he me, and of Lucye,
 They bothe made hir housbondes for to
 dye;
 That oon for love, that other was for
 hate;
 Lyma hir housbond, on an even late, 750
 Empoysoned hath, for that she was his fo.
 Lucya, likerous, loved hir housbond so,
 That, for he sholde alwey up-on hir
 thinke,
 She yaf him swich a maner love-drinke,
 That he was deed, er it were by the
 morwe; 755
 And thus algates housbondes han sorwe.
 Than tolde he me, how oon Latumius
 Complyned to his felawe Arrius,
 That in his gardin growed swich a tree,
 On which, he seyde, how that his wyves
 three 760
 Hanged hem-self for herte despitous.
 "O leve brother," quod this Arrius,
 "Yif me a plante of thilke blissed tree,
 And in my gardin planted shal it be!"
 Of latter date, of wyves hath he red,
 That somme han slayn hir housbondes in
 hir bed, 766
 And lete hir lechour dighte hir al the
 night
 Whyl that the corps lay in the floor up-
 right.
 And somme han drive nayles in hir brayn
 Whyl that they slepte, and thus they han
 hem slayn. 770
 Somme han hem yeve poysoun in hir
 drinke.
 He spak more harm than herte may
 bithinke.
 And ther-with-al, he knew of mo pro-
 verbes
 Than in this world ther growen gras or
 herbes.
 "Bet is," quod he, "thyn habitacioun 775

Be with a leoun or a foul dragoun,
 Than with a womman usinge 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;
 They haten that hir housbondes loveth
 ay." 781
 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 ring in a sowes nose." 785
 Who wolde wenen, or who wolde sup-
 pose
 The wo that in myn herte was, and pyne?
 And whan I saugh he wolde never
 fyne
 To reden on this cursed book al night,
 Al sodeynly three leves have I plight
 Out of this book, right as he radde, and
 eke, 791
 I with my fist so took him on the cheke,
 That in our fyr he fil bakward adoun.
 And he up-stirte as dooth a wood leoun,
 And with his fist he smoot me on the
 heed, 795
 That in the floor I lay as I were deed.
 And when he saugh how stille that I lay,
 He was agast, and wolde han fled his
 way,
 Til atte laste out of my swogh I breyde:
 "O! hastow slayn me, false theef?" I
 seyde, 800
 "And for my land thus hastow mordred
 me?
 Er I be deed, yet wol I kisse thee."
 And neer he cam, and kneled faire
 adoun,
 And seyde, "dere suster Alisoun,
 As help me god, I shal thee never
 smyte; 805
 That I have doon, it is thy-self to wyte.
 Foryeve it me, and that I thee biseke"—
 And yet eft-sones I hitte him on the
 cheke,
 And seyde, "theef, thus muchel am I
 wreke;
 Now wol I dye, I may no lenger speke."
 But atte laste, with muchel care and wo,
 We fille acorded, by us selven two. 812
 He yaf me al the brydel in myn hond

To han the governaunce of hous and
 lond,
 And of his tonge and of his hond also,
 And made him brenne his book anon
 right tho. 816
 And whan that I hadde geten un-to me,
 By maistrie, al the soveraynetee,
 And that he seyde, "myn owene trewe
 wyf,
 Do as thee lust the terme of al thy lyf,
 Keep thyn honour, and keep eek myn
 estaat"— 821
 After that day we hadden never debaat.
 God help me so, I was to him as kinde.
 As any wyf from Denmark un-to Inde,
 And also trewe, and so was he to me.
 I prey to god that sit in magestee, 826
 So blesse his soule, for his mercy dere!
 Now wol I seye my tale, if ye wol here.'

*Biholde the wordes betwene the Somnour
 and the Frere.*

The Frere lough, whan he hadde herd
 al this,
 'Now, dame,' quod he, 'so have I loye or
 blis, 830
 This is a long preamble of a tale!
 And whan the Somnour herde the Frere
 gale,
 'Lo!' quod the Somnour, 'goddess
 armes two!
 A frere wol entremette him ever-mo.
 Lo, gode men, a flye and eek a frere 835
 Who falle in every dish and eek matere.
 What spekestow of preambulacioun?
 What! amble, or trotte, or pees, or go
 sit down;
 Thou lettest our disport in this manere.'
 'Ye, woltow so, sir Somnour?' quod
 the Frere, 840
 'Now, by my feith, I shal, er that I go,
 Telle of a Somnour swich a tale or two,
 That alle the folk shal laughen in this
 place.'
 'Now elles, Frere, I bishrewe thy
 face,'
 Quod this Somnour, 'and I bishrewe me,
 But-if I telle tales two or thre 846
 Of freres er I come to Sidingborne,
 That I shal make thyn herte for to
 morne;

For wel I woot thy pacience is goon.
 Our hoste cryde 'pees! and that
 anon!' 850
 And seyde, 'lat the womman telle hir
 tale.
 Ye fare as folk that dronken been of
 ale.

Do, dame, tel forth your tale, and that is
 best.
 'Al redy, sir,' quod she, 'right as yow
 lest,
 If I have licence of this worthy Frere.'
 'Yis, dame,' quod he, 'tel forth, and I
 wol here.' 856

Here endeth the Wyf of Bathe hir Prologe.

THE TALE OF THE WYF OF BATHE.

*Here biginneth the Tale of the Wyf of
 Bathe.*

IN tholde dayes of the king Arthour,
 Of which that Britons speken greet hon-
 our,
 Al was this land fulfilled of fayerye. 859
 The elf-queen, with hir Ioly companye,
 Daunced ful ofte in many a grene mede;
 This was the olde opinion, as I rede.
 I speke of manye hundred yeres ago;
 But now can no man see none elves mo.
 For now the grete charitee and pray-
 eres 865
 Of limitours and othere holy freres,
 That serchen every lond and every stream,
 As thikke as motes in the sonne-beem,
 Blessinge halles, chambres, kichenes,
 boures,
 Citees, burghes, castels, hye toures, 870
 Thropes, bernes, shipnes, dayeryes,
 This maketh that ther been no fayeryes.
 For ther as wont to walken was an elf,
 Ther walketh now the limitour him-self
 In undermeles and in morweninges, 875
 And seyth his matins and his holy thinges
 As he goth in his limitacioun.
 Wommen may go saufully up and doun,
 In every bush, or under every tree;
 There is noon other incubus but he, 880
 And he ne wol doon hem but dishonour.
 And so bifel it, that this king Arthour
 Hadde in his hous a lusty bachelor,
 That on a day cam rydinge fro river;
 And happed that, allone as she was
 born, 885
 He saugh a mayde walkinge him biforn,
 Of whiche mayde anon, maugree hir heed,
 By verray force he rafte hir maydenheed;

For which oppressioun was swich clamour
 And swich pursute un-to the king Ar-
 thour, 890
 That dampned was this knight for to be
 deed
 By cours of lawe, and sholde han lost his
 heed
 Paraventure, swich was the statut tho;
 But that the quene and othere ladies mo
 So longe preyeden the king of grace, 895
 Til he his lyf him graunted in the place,
 And yaf him to the quene al at hir
 wille,
 To chese, whether she wolde him save or
 spille.
 The quene thanketh the king with al
 her might,
 And after this thus spak she to the
 knight, 900
 Whan that she saugh hir tyme, up-on a
 day:
 'Thou standest yet,' quod she, 'in swich
 array,
 That of thy lyf yet hastow no suretee.
 I grante thee lyf, if thou canst tellen me
 What thing is it that wommen most de-
 syren? 905
 Be war, and keep thy nekke-boon from
 yren.
 And if thou canst nat tellen it anon,
 Yet wol I yeve thee leve for to gon
 A twelf-month and a day, to seche and
 lere
 An answer suffisant in this matere. 910
 And suretee wol I han, er that thou
 pace,
 Thy body for to yelden in this place.'
 Wo was this knight and sorwefully he
 syketh;

But what! he may nat do al as him lyk-
cth.

And at the laste, he chees him for to
wende, 915

And come agayn, right at the yeres ende,
With swich answeere as god wolde him
purveye;

And taketh his leve, and wendeth forth
his weye.

He seketh every hous and every place,
Wher-as he hopeth for to finde grace, 920
To lerne, what thing wommen loven most;
But he ne coude arryven in no cost,
Wher-as he mighte finde in this matere
Two creatures accordinge in-fere.

Somme seyde, wommen loven best
richesse, 925

Somme seyde, honour, somme seyde,
Iolynesse;

Somme, riche array, somme seyden, lust
abedde,

And ofte tyme to be widwe and wedde.

Somme seyde, that our hertes been
most esed,

Whan that we been y-flatered and
y-pled. 930

He gooth ful ny the sothe, I wol nat lye;
A man shal winne us best with flaterye;
And with attendance, and with bisnesse,
Been we y-lymed, bothe more and lesse.

And somme seyn, how that we loven
best 935

For to be free, and do right as us lest,
And that no man repreve us of our vyce,
But seye that we be wyse, and no-thing
nyce.

For trewely, ther is noon of us alle, 939
If any wight wol clawe us on the galle,
That we nil kike, for he seith us sooth;
Assay, and he shal finde it that so dooth.

For he we never so vicious with-inne,
We wol been holden wyse, and clene of
sinne.

And somme seyn, that greet delyt han
we 945

For to ben holden stable and eek secree,
And in o purpos stedefastly to dwelle,
And nat biwreye thing that men us telle.
But that tale is nat worth a rake-stele;
Pardee, we wommen conne no-thing
hele; 950

Witnesse on Myda; wol ye here the tale?
Ovyde, amonges othere things smale,

Seyde, Myda hadde, under his longe heres,
Growinge up-on his heed two asses eres,
The which vyce he hidde, as he best
mighte, 955

Ful subtilly from every mannes sighte,
That, save his wyf, ther wiste of it na-mo.
He loved hir most, and trusted hir also;
He preyede hir, that to no creature
She sholde tellen of his disfigure. 960

She swoor him 'nay, for al this world
to winne,

She nolde do that vileinye or sinne,
To make hir housbond han so foul a
name;

She nolde nat telle it for hir owene
shame.'

But nathelees, hir thoughte that she
dyde, 965

That she so longe sholde a conseil hyde;
Hir thoughte it swal so sore aboute hir
herte,

That nedely som word hir moste asterte;
And sith she dorste telle it to no man,

Doun to a mareys faste by she ran; 970
Til she cam there, hir herte was a-fyre,

And, as a bitore bombleth in the myre,
She leyde hir mouth un-to the water
doun:

'Biwreye me nat, thou water, with thy
soun,'

Quod she, 'to thee I telle it, and
namo; 975

Myn housbond hath longe asses eres two!
Now is myn herte all hool, now is it oute;
I mighte no lenger kepe it, out of doute.'
Heer may ye se, thogh we a tyme abyde,
Yet out it moot, we can no conseil
hyde; 980

The remenant of the tale if ye wol here,
Redeth Ovyde, and ther ye may it lere.

This knight, of which my tale is spe-
cially,

Whan that he saugh he mighte nat come
therby,

This is to seye, what wommen loven
moost, 985

With-inne his brest ful sorweful was the
goost;

But hoom he gooth, he mighte nat so-
iourne.

The day was come, that hoomward moste
he tourne,

And in his wey it happed him to ryde,

In al this care, under a forest-syde, 990
 Wher-as he saugh up-on a daunce go
 Of ladies foure and twenty, and yet mo;
 Toward the whiche daunce he drow ful
 yerne,

In hope that som wisdom sholde he
 lerne.

But certainly, er he came fully there, 995
 Vanissed was this daunce, he niste
 where.

No creature saugh he that bar lyf,
 Save on the grene he saugh sittinge a
 wyf;

A fouler wight ther may no man devyse.
 Agayn the knight this olde wyf gan
 ryse, 1000

And seyde, 'sir knight, heer-forth ne
 lyth no wey.

Tel me, what that ye seken, by your fey?
 L'araventure it may the bettre be;
 These olde folk can muchel thing,' quod
 she.

'My leve mooder,' quod this knight
 certeyn, 1005

'I nam but deed, but-if that I can seyn
 What thing it is that wommen most
 desyre;

Coude ye me wisse, I wolde wel quyte
 your hyre.'

'Plichte me thy trouthe, heer in myn
 hand,' quod she,

'The nexte thing that I requere thee, 1010
 Thou shalt it do, if it lye in thy might;
 And I wol telle it yow er it be night.'

'Have heer my trouthe,' quod the knight,
 'I grante.'

'Thanne,' quod she, 'I dar me wel
 avante, 1014

Thy lyf is sauf, for I wol stonde therby,
 Up-on my lyf, the queen wol seye as I.

Lat see 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;

Lat us go forth with-ouen lenger speche.'
 Tho rounded she a pistel in his ere, 1021
 And bad him to be glad, and have no
 fere.

When they be comen to the court, this
 knight

Seyde, 'he had holde his day, as he
 hadde hight,

And redy was his answer,' as he sayde.
 Ful many a noble wyf, and many a
 mayde, 1026

And many a widwe, for that they ben
 wyse,

The quene hir-self sittinge as a Iustysc,
 Assembled been, his answer for to here;
 And afterward this knight was bode
 appere. 1030

To every wight comanded was silence,
 And that the knight sholde telle in audi-
 ence,

What thing that worldly wommen loven
 best.

This knight ne stood nat stille as doth a
 best,

But to his questioun anon answerde 1035
 With manly voys, that al the court it
 herde :

'My lige lady, generally,' quod he,
 'Wommen desyren to have sovereyntee
 As wel over hir housbond as hir love,
 And for to been in maistrie him above;
 This is your moste desyr, thogh ye me
 kille, 1041

Doth as yow list, I am heer at your wille.'

In al the court ne was ther wyf ne
 mayde,

Ne widwe, that contraried that he sayde,
 But seyden, 'he was worthy han his lyf.'

And with that word up stirte the olde
 wyf, 1046

Which that the knight saugh sittinge in
 the grene :

'Mercy,' quod she, 'my sovereyn lady
 quene!

Er that your court departe, do me right.
 I taughte this answer un-to the knight;

For which he plichte me his trouthe
 there, 1051

The firste thing I wolde of him requere,
 He wolde it do, if it lay in his might.

Bifore the court than preye I thee, sir
 knight,'

Quod she, 'that thou me take un-to thy
 wyf; 1055

For wel thou wost that I have kept thy
 lyf.

If I sey fals, sey nay, up-on thy fey!'

This knight answerde, 'allas! and
 weylaway!

I woot right wel that swich was my
 biheste.

For goddes love, as chees a newe re-
 queste; 1060
 Tak al my good, and lat my body go.
 'Nay than,' quod she, 'I shrewe us
 bothe two!
 For thogh that I be foul, and old, and
 pore,
 I nolde for al the metal, ne for ore,
 That under erthe is grave, or lyth
 above, 1065
 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 foule disparaged be!
 But al for noght, the ende is this, that
 he 1070
 Constreyned was, he nedes moste hir
 wedde;
 And taketh his olde wyf, and gooth to
 bedde.
 Now wolden som men seye, paraven-
 ture,
 That, for my negligence, I do no cure
 To tellen yow the Ioye and al tharray
 That at the feste was that ilke day. 1076
 To whiche thing shortly answeere I shal;
 I seye, ther nas no Ioye ne feste at al,
 Ther nas but hevynesse and muche sorwe;
 For prively he wedded hir on a morwe,
 And al day after hidde him as an
 oule; 1081
 So wo was him, his wyf looked so foule.
 Greet was the wo the knight hadde in
 his thoght,
 When he was with his wyf a-bedde
 y-broght;
 He walweth, and he turneth to and fro.
 His olde wyf lay smylyng evermo, 1086
 And seyde, 'o dere housbond, *benedicite!*
 Fareth every knight thus with his wyf as
 ye?
 Is this the lawe of king Arthures hous?
 Is every knight of his so dangerous? 1090
 I am your owene love and eek your wyf;
 I am she, which that saved hath your lyf;
 And certes, yet dide I yow never unright;
 Why fare ye thus with me this firste
 night?
 Ye faren lyk a man had lost his wit; 1095
 What is my gilt? for goddes love, tel me
 it,
 And it shal been amended, if I may.'

'Amended?' quod this knight, 'allas!
 nay, nay!
 It wol nat been amended never mo!
 Thou art so loothly, and so old also, 1100
 And ther-to comen of so lowe a kinde,
 That litel wonder is, thogh I walwe and
 winde.
 So wolde god myn herte wolde breste!'
 'Is this,' quod she, 'the cause of your
 unreste?'
 'Ye, certainly,' quod he, 'no wonder
 is.' 1105
 'Now, sire,' quod she, 'I coude amende
 al this,
 If that me liste, er it were dayes three,
 So wel ye mighte bere yow un-to 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.
 Loke who that is most vertuouus alway,
 Privee and apert, and most entendeth ay
 To do the gentil dedes that he can, 1115
 And tak him for the grettest gentil man.
 Crist wol, we clayme of him our gen-
 tillesse,
 Nat of our eldres for hir old richesse.
 For thogh they yeve us al hir heritage,
 For which we clayme to been of heigh
 parage, 1120
 Yet may they nat biquethe, for no-thing,
 To noon of us hir vertuouus living,
 That made hem gentil men y-called be;
 And bad us folwen hem in swich degree.
 Wel can the wyse poete of Florence,
 That highte Dant, speken in this sen-
 tence; 1126
 Lo in swich maner rym is Dantes tale:
 "Ful selde up ryseth by his branches
 smale
 Prowesse of man, for god, of his good-
 nesse,
 Wol that of him we clayme our gen-
 tillesse;" 1130
 For of our eldres may we no-thing clayme
 But temporel thing, that man may hurte
 eek and mayme.
 Eek every wight wot this as wel as I,
 If gentillesse were planted naturelly
 Un-to a certeyn linage, doun the lyne,
 Privee ne apert, than wolde they never
 fyne 1136
 To doon of gentillesse the faire offyce;

They mighte do no vileinye or vyce.

Tak fyr, and ber it in the derkeste
hous

Bitwix this and the mount of Caucasus,
And lat men shette the dores and go
thenne; 1141

Yet wol the fyr as faire lye and brenne,
As twenty thousand men mighte it bi-
holde;

His office naturel ay wol it holde,
Up peril of my lyf, til that it dye. 1145
Heer may ye see wel, how that gen-
terye

Is nat annexed to possessioun,
Sith folk ne doon hir operacioun
Alwey, as dooth the fyr, lo! in his kinde.
For, god it woot, men may wel often
finde 1150

A lordes sone do shame and vileinye;
And he that wol han prys of his gentrye
For he was boren of a gentil hous,
And hadde hise eldres noble and vertuouus,
And nil him-selven do no gentle dedis,
Ne folwe his gentil auncestre that deed
is, 1156

He nis nat gentil, be he duk or erl;
For vileyns sinful dedes make a cherl.
For gentillesse nis but renomee
Of thyne auncestres, for hir heigh boun-
tee, 1160

Which is a strange thing to thy persone.
Thy gentillesse cometh fro god allone;
Than comth our verray gentillesse of
grace,
It was no-thing biquethe us with our
place.

Thenketh how noble, as seith Valerius,
Was thilke Tullius Hostilius, 1166
That out of povert roos to heigh noblesse.
Redeth Senek, and redeth eek Boëce,
Ther shul ye seen expres it that no drede
is,

That he is gentil that doth gentil dedis;
And therefore, leve housbond, I thus con-
clude, 1171

Al were it that myne auncestres were
rude,

Yet may the hye god, and so hope I,
Grante me grace to liven vertuously.
Thanne am I gentil, whan that I biginne
To liven vertuously and weyve sinne.

And ther-as ye of povert me repreve,
The hye god, on whom that we bileve,

In wilful povert chees to live his lyf. 1179
And certes every man, mayden, or wyf,
May understonde that Iesus, hevenc king,
Ne wolde nat chese a vicious living.

Glad povert is an honest thing, certeyn;
This wol Senek and othere clerkes seyn.
Who-so that halt him payd of his pov-
erte, 1185

I holde him riche, al hadde he nat a
sherte.

He that coveyteth is a povre wight,
For he wolde han that is nat in his
might.

But he that noght hath, ne coveyteth
have,

Is riche, al-though ye holde him but a
knave. 1190

Verray povert, it singeth proprely;
Juvenal seith of povert merily:

"The povre man, whan he goth by the
weye,
Bifore the theves he may singe and
pleye."

Povert is hateful good, and, as I gesse,
A ful greet bringer out of bisinesse;
A greet amender eek of sapience 1197
To him that taketh it in pacience.

Povert is this, although it seme elenge: *wild*
Possessioun, that no wight wol chalenge.
Povert ful ofte, whan a man is lowe,
Maketh his god and eek him-self to
knowe. 1202

Povert a spectacle is, as thinketh me,
Thurgh which he may his verray frendes
see.

And therefore, sire, sin that I noght yow
greve, 1205

Of my povert na-more ye me repreve.

Now, sire, of elde ye repreve me;
And certes, sire, thogh noon auctoritee
Were in no book, ye gentils of honour
Seyn that men sholde an old wight doon
favour, 1210

And clepe him fader, for your gentillesse;
And auctours shal I finden, as I gesse.

Now ther ye seye, that I am foul and
old,

Than drede you noght to been a coke-
wold; 1214

For filthe and elde, al-so moot I thee,
Been grete wardeyns up-on chastitee.
But nathelees, sin I knowe your delyt,
I shal fulfillle your worldly appetyt.

Chees now,' quod she, 'oon of thise
things tweye, 1219
To han me foul and old til that I deye,
And be to yow a trewe humble wyf,
And never yow displese in al my lyf,
Or elles ye wol han me yong and fair,
And take your aventure of the repair
That shal be to your hous, by-cause of
me, 1225
Or in som other place, may wel be.
Now chees your-selven, whether that
yow lyketh.'
This knight avyseth him and sore
syketh,
But atte laste he seyde in this manere,
' My lady and my love, and wyf so dere,
I put me in your wyse governance; 1231
Cheseth your-self, which may be most
plesance,
And most honour to yow and me also.
I do no fors the whether of the two;
For as yow lyketh, it suffiseth me.' 1235
' Thanne have I gete of yow maistrye,'
quod she,
' Sim I may chese, and governe as me
lest?'
' Ye, certes, wyf,' quod he, 'I holde it
best.'
' Kis me,' quod she, 'we be no lenger
wrothe;
For, by my trouthe, I wol be to yow
bothe, 1240

This is to seyn, ye, bothe fair and good.
I prey to god that I mot sterven wood,
But I to yow be al-so good and trewe
As ever was wyf, sin that the world was
newe.

And, but I be to-morn as fair to sene
As any lady, emperyce, or quene, 1246
That is bitwixe the est and eke the west,
Doth with my lyf and deeth right as yow
lest.

Cast up the curtin, loke how that it is.'
And whan the knight saugh verraily
al this, 1250

That she so fair was, and so yong ther-to,
For Ioye he hente hir in his armes to,
His herte bathed in a bath of blisse;
A thousand tyme a-rewe he gan hir
kisse.

And she obeyed him in everything 1255
That mighte doon him plesance or lyk-
ing.

And thus they live, un-to hir lyves
ende,

In parfit Ioye; and Iesu Crist us sende
Housbondes meke, yonge, and fresshe
a-bedde,

And grace toverbyde hem that we
wedde. 1260

And eek I preye Iesu shorte hir lyves
That wol nat be governed by hir wyves;
And olde and angry nigardes of dispence,
God sende hem sone verray pestilence.

Here endeth the Wyves Tale of Bath.

THE FRIAR'S PROLOGUE.

The Prologe of the Freres tale.

THIS worthy limitour, this noble Frere
He made alwey a maner louring chere
Upon the Somnour, but for honestee 1267
No vileyns word as yet to him spak he.
But atte laste he seyde un-to the Wyf,
' Dame,' quod he, 'god yeve yow right
good lyf! 1270
Ye han heer touched, al-so moot I thee,
In scole-matere greet difficultee;
Ye han seyde muchel thing right wel, I
seye;
But dame, here as we ryden by the weye,

Us nedeth nat to speken but of
game, 1275

And lete auctoritees, on goddes name,
To preching and to scole eek of clergye.
But if it lyke to this companye
I wol yow of a somnour telle a game.

Pardee, ye may wel knowe by the
name, 1280

That of a somnour may no good be
sayd;

I pray that noon of you be yvel apayd.
A somnour is a renner up and down
With mandements for fornicacioun,
And is y-bet at every tounes ende.' 1285

Our host tho spak, 'a! sire, ye sholde
 be hende
 And curteys, as a man of your estaat;
 In companye we wol have no debaat.
 Telleth your tale, and lat the Somnour be.'
 'Nay,' quod the Somnour, 'lat him
 seye to me 1290
 What so him list; whan it comth to my
 lot,

By god, I shal him quyten every grot.
 I shal him tellen which a greet honour
 It is to be a flateringe limitour;
 And his offyce I shal him telle, y-wis.'
 Our host answerde, 'pees, na-more of
 this.' 1296
 And after this he seyde un-to the Frere,
 'Tel forth your tale, leve meister
 deere.'

Here endeth the Prologe of the Frere.

THE FRERES TALE.

Here biginneth the Freres tale.

WHILOM ther was dwellinge in my con-
 tree
 An erchedeken, a man of heigh degree,
 That boldely dide execucioun 1301
 In punisshinge of fornicacioun,
 Of wicchecraft, and eek of bauderye,
 Of diffamacioun, and avoutrye,
 Of chirche-reves, and of testaments, 1305
 Of contractes, and of lakke of sacraments,
 And eek of many another maner cryme
 Which nedeth nat rehercen at this tyme;
 Of usure, and of symonye also.
 But certes, lechours dide he grettest
 wo; 1310
 They sholde singen, if that they were
 hente;
 An smale tytheres weren foule y-shent.
 If any persone wolde up-on hem pleyne,
 Ther mighte asterte him no pecunial
 peyne 1314
 For smale tythes and for smal offringe,
 He made the peple pitously to singe.
 For er the bisshop caughte hem with his
 hook,
 They weren in the erchedeknes book.
 Thanne hadde he, thurgh his Iurisdic-
 cioun,
 Power to doon on hem correccioun. 1320
 He hadde a Somnour redy to his hond,
 A slyer boy was noon in Engelond;
 For subtilly he hadde his espiaille
 That taughte him, wher that him mighte
 availle. 1324
 He coude spare of lechours oon or two,

To techen him to foure and twenty mo.
 For thogh this Somnour wood were as an
 hare,
 To telle his harlotrye I wol nat spare;
 For we been out of his correccioun;
 They han of us no Iuridiccioun, 1330
 Ne never shullen, terme of alle hir lyves.
 'Peter! so been the wommen of the
 styves,'
 Quod the Somnour, 'y-put out of my
 cure!'
 'Pees, with mischance and with mis-
 aventure,'
 Thus seyde our host, 'and lat him telle
 his tale. 1335
 Now telleth forth, thogh that the Som-
 nour gale,
 Ne spareth nat myn owene maister dere.'
 This false theef, this Somnour, quod
 the Frere,
 Hadde alwey baudes redy to his hond,
 As any hauk to lure in Engelond, 1340
 That tolde him al the secree that they
 knewe;
 For hir acqueyntance was nat come of-
 newe.
 They weren hise approwours prively;
 He took him-self a greet profit therby;
 His maister knew nat alwey what he
 wan. 1345
 With-outen mandement, a lewed man
 He coude somne, on peyne of Cristes
 curs,
 And they were gladde for to fille his
 purs,
 And make him grete festes atte nale. *ale-hous*

And right as Iudas hadde purses smale,
And was a theef, right swich a theef was
he; 1351

His maister hadde but half his duëtee.
He was, if I shal yeven him his laude,
A theef, and eek a Somnour, and a
baude. 1354

He hadde eek wenches at his retenue,
That, whether that sir Robert or sir Huwe,
Or Iakke, or Rauf, or who-so that it were,
That lay by hem, they told it in his ere;
Thus was the wenche and he of oon assent.
And he wolde fecche a feyned mande-
ment, 1360

And somne hem to the chapitre bothe
two,
And pile the man, and lete the wenche
go.

Thanne wolde he seye, 'frend, I shal for
thy sake

Do stryken hir out of our lettres blake;
Thee thar na-more as in this cas tra-
vailla; 1365

I am thy freend, ther I thee may availle.'
Certeyn he knew of bryberyes mo
Than possible is to telle in yeres two.

For in this world nis dogge for the bowe,
That can an hurt deer from an hool
y-knowe, 1370

Bet than this Somnour knew a sly lechour,
Or an avouter, or a paramour.
And, for that was the fruit of al his rente,
Therefore on it he sette al his entente.

And so bifel, that ones on a day 1375
This Somnour, ever waiting on his pray,
Rood for to somne a widwe, an old ribybe;
Feynyng a cause, for he wolde brybe.

And happed that he saugh bifore him ryde
A gay yeman, under a forest-syde. 1380
A bowe he bar, and arwes brighte and
kene;

He hadde up-on a courtepy of grene;
An hat up-on his heed with frenges blake.
'Sir,' quod this Somnour, 'hay! and
wel a-take!'

'Wel-come,' quod he, 'and every good
felawe! 1385

Wher rydestow under this grene shawe?'
Seyde this yeman, 'wiltow fer to day?'

This Somnour him answerde, and seyde,
'nay;

Heer faste by,' quod he, 'is myn entente
To ryden, for to reysen up a rente 1390

That longeth to my lordes duëtee.

'Artow thanne a bailly?' 'Ye!' quod
he.

He dorste nat, for verray filthe and shame,
Seyde that he was a somnour, for the name.

'*Depardieur,*' quod this yeman, 'dere
brother, 1395

Thou art a bailly, and I am another.

I am unknowen as in this contree;
Of thyn aqueeyntance I wolde praye thee,
And eek of brotherhede, if that yow leste.

I have gold and silver in my cheste; 1400
If that thee happe to comen in our
shyre,

Al shal be thyn, right as thou wolt desyre.'
'Grantmercy,' quod this Somnour, 'by
my feith!'

Everich in others hand his trouthe leith,
For to be sworne bretheren til they
deye. 1405

In daliance they ryden forth hir weye.
This Somnour, which that was as ful of
langles,

As ful of venim been these wariangles,
And ever enquering up-on every thing,
'Brother,' quod he, 'where is now your
dwelling, 1410

Another day if that I sholde yow seche?'
This yeman him answerde in softe
speche,

'Brother,' quod he, 'fer in the north con-
tree,

Wher, as I hope, som-tyme I shal thee
see.

Er we departe, I shal thee so wel
wisse, 1415

That of myn hous ne shaltow never misse.'
'Now, brother,' quod this Somnour, 'I
yow preye,

Teche me, whyl that we ryden by the
weye,

Sin that ye been a baillif as am I,
Som subtiltee, and tel me feithfully 1420
In myn offyce how I may most winne;

And spareth nat for conscience ne sinne,
But as my brother tel me, how do ye?'

'Now, by my trouthe, brother dere,'
seyde he,

'As I shal tellen thee a feithful tale, 1425
My wages been ful streite and ful smale.

My lord is hard to me and daungerous,
And myn offyce is ful laborous;

And therefore by extorcions I live.

For sothe, I take al that men wol me
yive; 1430

Algate, by sleighte or by violence,
Fro yeer to yeer I winne al my dispenche.
I can no better telle feithfully.'

'Now, certes,' quod this Somnour, 'so
fare I;

I spare nat to taken, god it woot, 1435
But-if it be to hevy or to hoot.

What I my gete in conseil prively,
No maner conscience of that have I;
Nere myn extorcoun, I mighte nat liven,
Ne of swiche lapes wol I nat be
shriven. 1440

Stomak ne conscience ne knowe I noon;
I shrewe thise shrifte-fadres everichoon.
Wel be we met, by god and by seint Iame!
But, leve brother, tel me than thy name,'
Quod this Somnour; and in this mene-
whyle, 1445

This yeman gan a litel for to smyle.
'Brother,' quod he, 'wiltow that I thee
telle?

I am a feend, my dwelling is in helle.
And here I ryde about my purchasing,
To wite wher men wolde yeve me any
thing. 1450

My purchas is theeffect of al my rente.
Loke how thou rydest for the same en-
tente,

To winne good, thou rekkest never how;
Right so fare I, for ryde wolde I now
Un-to the worldes ende for a preye.' 1455

'A,' quod this Somnour, 'benedicite,
what sey ye?

I wende ye were a yeman trewely.
Ye han a mannes shap as wel as I;
Han ye figure than determinat
In helle, ther ye been in your estat?' 1460
'Nay, certainly,' quod he, 'ther have
we noon;

But whan us lyketh, we can take us oon,
Or elles make yow seme we ben shape
Som-tyme lyk a man, or lyk an ape;
Or lyk an angel can I ryde or go. 1465
It is no wonder thing though it be so;

A lousy Iogelour can deceyve thee,
And pardee, yet can I more craft than he.'
'Why,' quod the Somnour, 'ryde ye
thanne or goon 1469

In sondry shap, and nat alwey in oon?'
'For we,' quod he, 'wol us swich formes
make

As most able is our preyes for to take.'
'What maketh yow to han al this
labour?'

'Ful many a cause, leve sir Somnour,'
Seyde this feend, 'but alle thing hath
tyme. 1475

The day is short, and it is passed pryme,
And yet ne wan I no-thing in this day.

I wol entende to winnen, if I may,
And nat entende our wittes to declare.
For, brother myn, thy wit is al to bare. 1480

To understonde, al-though I tolde hem thee.
But, for thou axest why labouren we;
For, som-tyme, we ben goddes instru-
ments,

And menes to don his comandements,
Whan that him list, up-on his creatures,
In divers art and in divers figures. 1486

With-outen him we have no might, cer-
tayn,

If that him list to stonden ther-agayn.
And som-tyme, at our prayere, han we
leve

Only the body and nat the soule greve;
Witnessse on Iob, whom that we diden
wo. 1491

And som-tyme han we might of bothe two,
This is to seyn, of soule and body eke.
And somtyme be we suffred for to seke
Up-on a man, and doon his soule un-
reste, 1495

And nat his body, and al is for the beste.
Whan he withstandeth our temptacioun,
It is a cause of his savacioun;

Al-be-it that it was nat our entente
He sholde be sauf, but that we wolde
him hente. 1500

And som-tyme be we servant un-to man,
As to the erchebisshop Seint Dunstan,
And to the apostles servant eek was I.'

'Yet tel me,' quod the Somnour, 'feith-
fully,

Make ye yow newe bodies thus alway 1505
Of elements?' the feend answerde, 'nay;
Som-tyme we feyne, and som-tyme we
aryse

With dede bodies in ful sondry wyse,
And speke as renably and faire and wel
As to the Phitonissa dide Samuel. 1510
And yet wol som men seye it was nat he;
I do no fors of your divinuitee.

But o thing warne I thee, I wol nat lape,
Thou wolt algates wite how we ben shape;

*Follows
D. (small
wite)*

Thou shalt her-afterward, my brother
dere, 1515

Com ther thee nedeth nat of me to lere.
For thou shalt by thyn owene experience
Comme in a chayer rede of this sentence
Bet than Virgyle, whyl he was on lyve,
Or Dant also; now lat us ryde blyve. 1520
For I wol holde companye with thee
Til it be so, that thou forsake me.'

'Nay,' quod this Somnour, 'that shal
nat bityde;

I am a yeman, knowen is ful wyde;
My trouthe wol I holde as in this cas. 1525
For though thou were the devel Sathanas,
My trouthe wol I holde to my brother,
As I am sworn, and ech of us til other
For to be trewe brother in this cas;
And bothe we goon abouten our purchas.
Tak thou thy part, what that men wol
thee yive, 1531

And I shal myn; thus may we bothe live.
And if that any of us have more than
other,

Lat him be trewe, and parte it with his
brother.'

'I graunte,' quod the devel, 'by my
fey.' 1535

And with that word they ryden forth hir
wey.

And right at the entring of the tounes
ende,

To which this Somnour shoop him for to
wende,

They saugh a cart, that charged was with
hey,

Which that a carter droof forth in his
wey. 1540

Deep was the wey, for which the carte
stood.

The carter smoot, and cryde, as he were
wood,

'Hayt, Brok! hayt, Scot! what spare ye
for the stones?

The feend,' quod he, 'yow fecche body
and bones,

As ferforthly as ever were we foled! 1545
So muche wo as I have with yow tholed!

The devel have al, bothe hors and cart
and hey!'

This Somnour seyde, 'heer shal we
have a pley;'

And neer the feend he drough, as nought
ne were,

Ful prively, and rouned in his ere: 1550
'Herkne, my brother, herkne, by thy
feith;

Herestow nat how that the carter seith?
Hent it anon, for he hath yeve it thee,
Bothe hey and cart, and eek hise caples
three.'

'Nay,' quod the devel, 'god wot, never
a deeli; 1555

It is nat his entente, trust me weel.
Axe him thy-self, if thou nat trowest me,
Or elles stint a while, and thou shalt
see.'

This carter thakketh his hors upon the
croupe,
And they bigonne drawn and to-stoupe;
'Heyt, now!' quod he, 'ther Iesu Crist
yow blesse, 1561
And al his handwerk, bothe more and
lesse!

That was wel twight, myn owene lyard
boy!

I pray god save thee and sęynt Loy!
Now is my cart out of the slow, pardee!'

'Lo! brother,' quod the feend, 'what
tolde I thee? 1566

Heer may ye see, myn owene dere brother,
The carl spak oo thing, but he thoghte
another.

Lat us go forth abouten our viage;
Heer winne I no-thing up-on cariage.'

When that they comen som-what out
of toune, 1571

This Somnour to his brother gan to
roune,

'Brother,' quod he, 'heer woneth an old
rebekke,

That hadde almost as lief to lese hir
nekke

As for to yeve a peny of hir good. 1575
I wol han twelf pens, though that she be
wood,

Or I wol sompne hir un-to our offyce;
And yet, god woot, of hir knowe I no
vyce.

But for thou canst nat, as in this contree,
Winne thy cost, tak heer ensample of
me.' 1580

This Somnour clappeth at the widwes
gate.

'Com out,' quod he, 'thou olde viritrate! *hag*
I trowe thou hast som frere or preest with
thee!'

'Who clappeth?' seyde this widwe,
 '*benedicite!*
 God save you, sire, what is your swete
 wille?' 1585
 'I have,' quod he, 'of somonce here a
 bille;
 Up deyne of cursing, loke that thou be
 To-morn bifore the erchedeknes knee
 Tenswere to the court of certeyn thinges.'
 'Now, lord,' quod she, 'Crist Iesu, king
 of kinges, 1590
 So wisly helpe 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, sir Somnour, 1595
 And answe're there, by my procoutour,
 To swich thing as men wol opposen me?'
 'Yis,' quod this Somnour, 'pay anon,
 lat se,
 Twelf pens to me, and I wol thee acquyte.
 I shall no profit han ther-by but lyte; 1600
 My maister hath the profit, and nat I.
 Com of, and lat me ryden hastily;
 Yif me twelf pens, I may no lenger tarie.'
 'Twelf pens,' quod she, 'now lady
 Seinte Marie
 So wisly help me out of care and sinne,
 This wyde world thogh that I sholde
 winne, 1606
 Ne have I nat twelf pens with-inne myn
 hold.
 Ye knowen wel that I am povre and old;
 Kythe your almesse on me povre wrecche.'
 'Nay than,' quod he, 'the foule feend
 me fecche 1610
 If I thexcuse, though thou shul be spilt!'
 'Alas,' quod she, 'god woot, I have no
 gilt.'
 'Pay me,' quod he, 'or by the swete
 seinte Anne,
 As I wol bere away thy newe panne
 For dette, which that thou owest me of
 old, 1615
 Whan that thou madest thyn housbond
 cokewold,
 I payde at hoom for thy correccioun.'
 'Thou lixt,' quod she, 'by my sava-
 cioun!
 Ne was I never er now, widwe ne wyf,
 Somoned un-to your court in al my lyf;
 Ne never I nas but of my body trewe! 1621
 Un-to the devel blak and rough of hewe

Yeve I thy body and my panne also!'
 And whan the devel herde hir cursen so
 Up-on hir knees, he seyde in this man-
 ere, 1625
 'Now Mabely, myn owene moder dere,
 Is this your wil in earnest, that ye seye?'
 'The devel,' quod she, 'so fecche him
 er he deye,
 And panne and al, but he wol him re-
 pente!'
 'Nay, olde stot, that is nat myn en-
 tente,' 1630
 Quod this Somnour, 'for to repente me,
 For any thing that I have had of thee;
 I wolde I hadde thy smok and every
 clooth!'
 'Now, brother,' quod the devel, 'be
 nat wrooth;
 Thy body and this panne ben myne by
 right. 1635
 Thou shalt with me to helle yet to-night,
 Where thou shalt knowen of our pri-
 vetee
 More than a maister of divinitee.'
 And with that word this foule feend him
 hente; 1639
 Body and soule, he with the devel wente
 Wher-as that somnours han hir heri-
 tage.
 And god, that maked after his image
 Mankinde, save and gyde us alle and
 some;
 And leve this Somnour good man to
 bicome!
 Lordinges, I coude han told yow, quod
 this Frere, 1645
 Hadde I leyser for this Somnour here,
 After the text of Crist [and] Poul and
 Iohn,
 And of our othere doctours many oon,
 Swiche peynes, that your hertes mighte
 agryse,
 Al-be-it so, no tonge may devyse, 1650
 Thogh that I mighte a thousand winter
 telle,
 The peyne of thilke cursed hous of
 helle.
 But, for to kepe us fro that cursed place,
 Waketh, and preyeth Iesu for his grace
 So kepe us fro the temptour Sathanas.
 Iherketh this word, beth war as in this
 cas; 1656
 The leoun sit in his await alway

To slee the innocent, if that he may.
 Disposeth ay your hertes to withstonde
 The feend, that yow wolde make thral
 and bonde. 1660
 He may nat tempten yow over your
 might;

For Crist wol be your champion and
 knight.
 And prayeth that thise Somnours hem
 repente
 Of hir misdedes, er that the feend hem
 hente. 1664

Here endeth the Freres tale.

THE SOMNOUR'S PROLOGUE.

The prologe of the Somnours Tale.

THIS Somnour in his stiropes hye stood;
 Up-on this Frere his herte was so wood,
 That lyk an aspen leef he quook for yre.
 'Lordinges,' quod he, 'but o thing I
 desyre;
 I yow biseke that, of your curteisye,
 Sin ye han herd this false Frere lye, 1670
 As suffereth me I may my tale telle!
 This Frere bosteth that he knoweth
 helle,
 And god it woot, that it is litel wonder;
 Freres and feendes been but lyte a-sonder.
 For pardee, ye han ofte tyme herd
 telle, 1675
 How that a frere ravished was to helle
 In spirit ones by a visiou;
 And as an angel ladde him up and down,
 To shewen him the peynes that ther
 were,
 In all the place saugh he nat a frere; 1680
 Of other folk he saugh y-nowe in wo.
 Un-to this angel spak the frere tho:
 "Now, sir," quod he, "han freres
 swich a grace
 That noon of hem shal come to this
 place?"
 "Yis," quod this angel, "many a mil-
 lion!" 1685
 And un-to Sathanas he ladde him down.

"And now hath Sathanas," seith he, "a
 tayl
 Brodder than of a carrik is the sayl.
 Hold up thy tayl, thou Sathanas!" quod
 he,
 "Shewe forth thyn ers, and lat the frere
 see 1690
 Wher is the nest of freres 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 gonne dryve
 Twenty thousand freres in a route, 1695
 And thurgh-out helle swarmeden aboute;
 And comen agayn, as faste as they may
 gon,
 And in his ers they crepten everichon.
 He clapte his tayl agayn, and lay ful
 stille.
 This frere, whan he loked hadde his
 fille 1700
 Upon the torments of this sory place,
 His spirit god restored of his grace
 Un-to his body agayn, and he awook;
 But natheles, for fere yet he quook,
 So was the develes ers ay in his minde,
 That is his heritage of verray kinde. 1706
 God save yow alle, save this cursed
 Frere;
 My prologe wol I ende in this manere.'

Here endeth the Prologe of the Somnours Tale.

THE SOMNOURS TALE.

Here biginneth the Somonour his Tale.

LORDINGES, ther is in Yorkshire, as I
gesse, 1709

A mersshy contree called Holdernesse,
In which ther wente a limitour aboute,
To preche, and eek to begge, it is no
doute.

And so bifel, that on a day this frere
Had preched at a chirche in his manere,
And specially, aboven every thing, 1715
Excited he the peple in his preching,
To trentals, and to yeve, for goddes sake,
Wher-with men mighten holy houses
make,

Ther as divyne service is honoured,
Nat theras it is wasted and devoured, 1720
Ne ther it nedeth nat for to be yive,
As to possessioners, that mowen live,
Thanked be god, in wele and habun-
daunce.

'Trentals,' seyde he, 'deliveren fro pen-
aunce 1724

Hir freendes soules, as wel olde as yonge,
Ye, whan that they been hastily y-songe;
Nat for to holde a preest Ioly and gay,
He singeth nat but o masse in a day;
Delivereth out,' quod he, 'anon the
soules;

Ful hard it is with fleshhook or with
oules 1730

To been y-clawed, or to brenne or bake;
Now spede yow hastily, for Cristes sake.'
And whan this frere had seyde al his en-
tente,

With *qui cum patre* forth his way he
wente.

Whan folk in chirche had yeve him
what hem leste, 1735

He wente his way, no lenger wolde he
reste,

With scrippe and tipped staf, y-tukked
hye;

In every hous he gan to poure and pryde,
And beggeth mele, and chese, or elles
corn.

His felawe hadde a staf tipped with
horn, 1740

A peyre of tables al of yvory,
And a poyntel polissed fetisly,
And wroot the names alwey, as he stood,
Of alle folk that yaf him any good
Ascaunces that he wolde for hem
preye. 1745

'Yeve us a busschel whete, malt, or reye,
A goddes kechil, or a trip of chese,
Or elles what yow list, we may nat
chese;

A goddes halfpenny or a masse-peny,
Or yeve us of your brawn, if ye have
eny; 1750

A dagon of your blanket, leve dame,
Our suster dere, lo! here I write your
name;

Bacon or beef, or swich thing as ye finde.
A sturdy harlot wente ay hem bihinde,
That was hir hostes man, and bar a
sak, 1755

And what men yaf hem, leyde it on his
bak.

And whan that he was out at dore anon,
He planed away the names everichon
That he biforn had writen in his tables;
He served hem with nyfles and with
fables. 1760

'Nay, ther thou list, thou Somnour,'
quod the Frere.

'Pees,' quod our Host, 'for Cristes
moder dere;

Tel forth thy tale and spare it nat at al.'
So thryve I, quod this Somnour, so I
shall.—

So longe he wente hous by hous, til
he 1765

Cam til an hous ther he was wont to be
Refresshed more than in an hundred
placis.

Sik lay the gode man, whos that the
place is;

Bedrede up-on a couche lowe he lay.
'*Deus hic*,' quod he, 'O Thomas, freend,
good day,' 1770

Seyde this frere curteisly and softe.
'Thomas,' quod he, 'god yelde yow! ful
ofte

Have I up-on this bench faren ful weel.

Here have I eten many a mery meel';
And fro the bench he droof away the
cat, 1775

And leyde adoun his potente and his
hat, ^{stuff}

And eek his scrippe, and sette him softe
adoun.

His felawe was go walked in-to toun,
Forth with his knave, into that hostelrye
Wher-as he shoop him thilke night to
lye. 1780

'O dere maister,' quod this syke man,
'How han he fare sith that March bigan?
I saugh yow noght this fourtenight or
more.'

'God woot,' quod he, 'laboured have I
ful sore;

And specially, for thy savacioun 1785
Have I seyde many a precious orisoun

And for our othere frendes, god hem
blesse!

I have to-day been at your chirche at
messe,

And seyde a sermon after my simple wit,
Nat al after the text of holy writ; 1790

For it is hard to yow, as I suppose,
And therfore wol I teche yow al the
glose.

Glosing is a glorious thing, certeyn,
For lettre sleeth, so as we clerkes seyn.

Ther have I taught hem to be charita-
ble, 1795

And spende hir good ther it is resonable,
And ther I saugh our dame; a! wher is
she?'

'Yond in the yerd I trowe that she be,'
Seyde this man, 'and she wol come anon.'

'Ey, maister! wel-come be ye, by seint
Iohn!' 1800

Seyde this wyf, 'how fare ye hertely?'
The frere aryseth up ful curteisly,

And hir embraceth in his armes narwe,
And kiste hir swete, and chirketh as a
sparwe

With his lippes: 'dame,' quod he, 'right
weel, 1805

As he that is your servant every deel.
Thanked be god, that yow yaf soule and
lyf,

Yet saugh I nat this day so fair a wyf
In al the chirche, god so save me!'

'Ye, god amende defautes, sir,' quod
she, 1810

'Algates wel-come be ye, by my fey!'

'Graunt mercy dame, this have I founde
alwey.

But of your grete goodnesse, by your leve,
I wolde prey yow that ye nat yow
greve,

I wol with Thomas speke a litel throwe.
This curats been ful necligent and
slove 1816

To grope tendrely a conscience.

In shrift, in preching is my diligence,
And studie in Petres wordes, and in
Poules.

I walke, and fische Cristen mennes
soules, 1820

To yelden Iesu Crist his propre rente;
To sprede his word is set al myn en-
tent.'

'Now, by your leve, o dere sir,' quod
she,

'Chydeh him weel, for seinte Trinitee.
He is as angry as a pissemyre, 1825

Though that he have al that he can
desyre.

Though I him wrye a-night and make ^{comen}
him warm,

And on hym leye my leg outhur myn
arm,

He groneth lyk our boor, lyth in our sty.
Other desport right noon of him have I;

I may nat plesse him in no maner
cas.' 1831

'O Thomas! *Ie vous dy*, Thomas!
Thomas!

This maketh the feend, this moste ben
amended.

Ire is a thing that hye god defended
And ther-of wol I speke a word or
two.' 1835

'Now maister,' quod the wyf, 'er that
I go,

What wol ye dyne? I wol go ther-
aboute.'

'Now dame,' quod he, '*Ie vous dy*
sanz doute,

Have I nat of a capon but the livere
And of your softe breed nat but a
shivere, 1840

And after that a rosted pigges heed,
(But that I nolde no beest for me were
deed),

Thanne hadde I with yow hoonly suffis-
aunce.

I am a man of litel sustenance. 1844
 My spirit hath his fostring in the Bible.
 The body is ay so redy and penyble
 To wake, that my stomak is destroyed.
 I prey yow, dame, ye be nat anoyed,
 Though I so frendly yow my conseil
 shewe;

By god, I wolde nat telle it but a fewe.
 'Now, sir,' quod she, 'but o word er
 I go; 1851

My child is deed with-inne thise wykes
 two,
 Sone after that ye wente out of this
 toun.'

'His deeth saugh I by revelacioun,'
 Seith this frere, 'at hoom in our dor-
 tour. 1855

I dar wel seyn that, er that half an hour
 After his deeth, I saugh him born to
 blisse

In myn avisoun, so god me wisse!
 So dide our sexteyn and our fermerer,
 That han been trewe freres fifty yeer;
 They may now, god be thanked of his
 lone, 1861

Maken hir Iubilee and walke allone.
 And up I roos, and al our covent eke,
 With many a tere triklng on my cheke,
 Withouten noyse or clateringe of belles;
Te deum was our song and no-thing
 elles, 1866

Save that to Crist I seyde an orisoun,
 Thankinge him of his revelacioun.

For sir and dame, trusteth me right weel,
 Our orisons been more effectueel, 1870
 And more we seen of Cristes secree
 thinges

Than burel folk, al-though they weren
 kinges.

We live in povert and in abstinence,
 And burel folk in richesse and despence
 Of mete and drinke, and in hir foul
 delyt. 1875

We han this worldes lust al in despyt.
 Lazar and Dives liveden diversly,
 And diverse guerdon 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; cloth and
 fode

Suffysen us, though they be nat ful gode.
 The clenness and the fastinge of us
 freres

Maketh that Crist accepteth our preyeres.
 Lo, Moyses fourty dayes and fourty
 night 1885

Fasted, er that the heighe god of might
 Spak with him in the mountain of Sinay.
 With empty wombe, fastinge many a
 day,

Receyved he the lawe that was writen
 With goddess finger; and Elie, wel ye
 witen, 1890

In mount Oreb, er he hadde any speche
 With hye god, that is our lyves leche,
 He fasted longe and was in contem-
 plaunce.

Aaron, that hadde the temple in gov-
 ernance, 1894

And eek the othere preestes everichon,
 In-to the temple whan they sholde gon
 To preye for the peple, and do servyse,
 They nolden drinken, in no maner wyse,
 No drinke, which that mighte hem
 dronke make,

But there in abstinence preye and
 wake 1900

Lest that they deyden; tak heed what I
 seye.

But they be sobre that for the peple
 preye,

War that I seye, — namore! for it suffy-
 eth.

Our lord Iesu, as holy writ devyseth,
 Yaf us ensample of fastinge and prey-
 eres. 1905

Therfor we mendinants, we sely freres,
 Been wedded to poverte and continence,
 To charitee, humblesse, and abstinence,
 To persecucion for rightwisnesse,
 To wepinge, misericorde, and clen-
 nesse. 1910

And therfor may ye see that our prey-
 eres —

I speke of us, we mendinants, we
 freres —

Ben to the hye god more acceptable
 Than youres, with your festes at the
 table.

Fro Parady, first, if I shal nat lye, 1915
 Was man out chaced for his glotonye;
 And chaast was man in Parady, cer-
 teyn.

But herkne now, Thomas, what I shall
seyn.
I ne have no text of it, as I suppose,
But I shall finde it in a maner glose, 1920
That specially our swete lord Iesus
Spak this by freres, whan he seyde thus:
"Blessed be they that povre in spirit
been."
And so forth al the gospel may ye seen,
Wher it be lyker our professioun, 1925
Or hirs that swimmen in possessioun.
Fy on hir pompe and on hir glotonye!
And for hir lewednesse I hem diffye.
Me thinketh they ben lyk Iovinian,
Fat as a whale, and walkinge as a
swan; 1930
Al vinolent as botel in the spence.
Hir preyer is of ful gret reverence;
Whan they for soules seye the psalm of
Davit,
Lo, "buf!" they seye "*cor meum cruci-*
tavit!"
Who folweth Cristes gospel and his
fore, 1935
But we that humble been and chast and
pore,
Werkers of goddes word, not auditours?
Therefore, right as an hawk up, at a sours,
Up springeth in-to their, right so prayeres
Of charitable and chaste bisy freres 1940
Maken hir sours to goddes eres two.
Thomas! Thomas! so mote I ryde or
go,
And by that lord that clepid is seint
Yve,
Nere thou our brother, sholdestou nat
thryve!
In our chapitre praye we day and
night 1945
To Crist, that he thee sende hele and
might,
Thy body for to welden hastily.
'God woot,' quod he, 'no-thing ther-of
fele I;
As help me Crist, as I, in fewe yeres,
Han spended, up-on dyvers maner
freres, 1950
Ful many a pound; yet fare I never the
bet.
Certeyn, my good have I almost biset.
Farwel, my gold! for it is al ago!
The frere answerde, 'O Thomas,
dostow so?

What nedeth yow diverse freres
seche? 1955
What nedeth him that hath a parlit
leche
To sechen othere leches in the toune?
Your inconstance is your confusioun.
Holde ye than me, or elles our covent,
To praye for yow ben insufficient? 1960
Thomas, that lape nis nat worth a myte;
Your maladye is for we han to lyte.
"A! yif that covent half a quarter
otes!"
"A! yif that covent four and twenty
grotes!"
"A! yif that frere a peny, and lat him
go!" 1965
Nay, nay, Thomas! it may no-thing be
so.
What is a ferthing worth parted in
twelve?
Lo, ech thing that is oned in him-selve
Is more strong than whan it is to-scat-
tered.
Thomas, of me thou shalt nat been y-
flatered; 1970
Thou woldest han our labour al for
nought.
The hye god, that al this world hath
wrought,
Seith that the werkman worthy is his
hyre.
Thomas! nocht of your tresor I deſyre
As for my-self, but that al our covent
To preye for yow is ay so diligent, 1976
And for to builden Cristes owene chirche.
Thomas! if ye wol lernen for to wirche,
Of buildinge up of chirches may ye
finde
If it be good, in Thomas lyf of
Inde. 1980
Ye lye heer, ful of anger and of yre,
With which the devel set your herte
a-fyre,
And chyden heer this sely innocent,
Your wyf, that is so meke and pacient.
And therfor, Thomas, trowe me if thee
leste, 1985
Ne stryve nat with thy wyf, as for thy
beste;
And ber this word away now, by thy
feith,
Touchinge this thing, lo what the wyse
seith:

"With-in thyn hous ne be thou no leoun ;

To thy subgits do noon oppressioun ; 1990

Ne make thyne aqueyntances nat to flee."

And Thomas, yet eft-sones I charge thee,
Be war from hir that in thy bosom slepeth ;

War fro the serpent that so slyly crepeth
Under the gras, and stingeth subtilly. 1995

Be war, my sone, and herkne paciently,
That twenty thousand men han lost hir lyves,

For stryving with hir lemmans and hir wyves.

Now sith ye han so holy and meke a wyf,

What nedeth yow, Thomas, to maken stryf ? 2000

Ther nis, y-wis, no serpent so cruel,
Whan man tret on his tayl, ne half so fel,

As-woman is, whan she hath caught an ire ;

Vengeance is thanne al that they desyre.
Ire is a sinne, oon of the grete of sevene, 2005

Abhominable un-to the god of hevene ;
And to him-self it is destruccion.

This every lewed viker or person
Can seye, how Ire engendreth homicide.

Ire is, in sooth, executour of pryde. 2010
I coude of Ire seye so muche sorwe,

My tale sholde laste til to-morwe.
And therfor preye I god bothe day and night,

An irous man, god sende him litel might !
It is greet harm and, certes, gret pitee,

To sette an irous man in heigh degree. 2016

Whilom ther was an irous potestat,
As seith Senek, that, duringe his estaat,

Up-on a day out riden knyghtes two,
And as fortune wolde that it were so, 2020

That oon of hem cam hoom, that other noght.

Anon the knight bifore the Iuge is broght,
That seyde thus, 'thou hast thy felawe slayn,

For which I deme thee to the deeth, certayn.'

And to another knight comanded he, 2025
'Go lede him to the deeth, I charge thee.'

And happed, as they wente by the weye
Toward the place ther he sholde deye,

The knight cam, which men wenden had be deed.

Thanne thoughte they, it was the beste reed, 2030

To lede hem bothe to the Iuge agayn.
They seiden, 'lord, the knight ne hath nat slayn

His felawe; here he standeth hool alyve.'
'Ye shul be deed,' quod he, 'so moot I thryve !

That is to seyn, bothe oon, and two, and three !' 2035

And to the firste knight right thus spak he,

'I dampned thee, thou most algate be deed.

And thou also most nedes lese thyn heed,
For thou art cause why thy felawe deyth.'

And to the thridde knight right thus he seyth, 2040

'Thou hast nat doon that I comanded thee.'

And thus he dide don sleen hem alle three.

Irous Cambyses was eek dronkelewe,
And ay delyted him to been a shrewe.

And so bifel, a lord of his meynce 2045
That lovede vertuous moralitee,

Seyde on a day bitwix hem two right thus :

'A lord is lost, if he be vicious;
And dronkenesse is eek a foul record

Of any man, and namely in a lord. 2050
Ther is ful many an eye and many an ere

Awaiting on a lord, and he noot where.
For goddes love, drink more attemprely;

Wyn waketh man to lesen wrecchedly
His minde, and eek his limes everichon.'

'The revers shaltou se,' quod he,
'anon; 2056

And preve it, by thyn owene experience,
That wyn ne dooth to folk no swich

offence.

Ther is no wyn bireveth me my might
Of hand ne foot, ne of myn eyen sight' —

And, for despyt, he drank ful muchel more 2061

An hondred part than he had doon bifore;
And right anon, this irous cursed wrecche

Leet this knightes sone bifore him fecche,
Comanding him he sholde bifore him
stonde. 2065

And sodeynly he took his bowe in honde,
And up the streng he pulled to his ere,
And with an arwe he slow the child right
there:

'Now whether have I a siker hand or
noon?'

Quod he, 'is al my might and minde
agoon? 2070
Hath wyn bireved me myn eyen sight?'

What sholde I telle thanswere of the
knight?

His sone was slayn, ther is na-more to
seye.

Beth war therfor with lordes how ye
pleye.

Singeth *Placebo*, and I shal, if I can, 2075
But if it be un-to a povre man.

To a povre man men sholde hise vyces
telle,

But nat to a lord, thogh he sholde go to
helle.

Lo irous Cirus, thilke Percien,
How he destroyed the river of Gysen, 2080
For that an hors of his was dreynt ther-
inne,

Whan that he wente Babiloigne to winne.
He made that the river was so smal,

That women mighte wade it over al.
Lo, what seyde he, that so wel teche can?

"Ne be no felawe to an irous man, 2086
Ne with no wood man walke by the weye,
Lest thee repente;" ther is na-more to
seye.

Now Thomas, leve brother, lef thyn ire;
Thou shalt me finde as Iust as is a
squire. 2090

Hold nat the develes knyf ay at thyn
herte;

Thyn augre dooth thee al to sore smerte;
But shewe to me al thy confessioun.'

'Nay,' quod the syke man, 'by Seint
Simoun!

I have be shriven this day at my curat;
I have him told al hoolly myn estat; 2096
Nedeth na-more to speke of it,' seith he,
'But if me list of myn humilitee.'

'Yif me thanne of thy gold, to make
our cloistre,'

Quod he, 'for many a muscle and many
an oistre, 2100

Whan other men han ben ful wel at eyse,
Hath been our fode, our cloistre for to
reyse.

And yet, god woot, unnethe the funde-
ment

Parfourned is, ne of our pavement 2104
Nis nat a tyle yet with-inne our wones;
By god, we owen fourty pound for stones!
Now help, Thomas, for him that harwed
helle!

For elles moste we are bokes selle.
And if ye lakke our predicacioun,
Than gooth the world al to destruccioun.
For who-so wolde us fro this world
bireve, 2111

So god me save, Thomas, by your leve,
He wolde bireve out of this world the
sonne.

For who can teche and werchen as we
conne?

And that is nat of litel tyme,' quod he;
'But sith that Elie was, or Elisee, 2116
Han freres been, that finde I of record,
In charite, y-thanked be our lord.

Now Thomas, help, for seinte charitee!
And doun anon he sette him on his
knee. 2120

This syke man wex wel ny wood for
ire;

He wolde that the frere had been on-fire
With his false dissimulacioun.

'Swich thing as is in my possessioun,'
Quod he, 'that may I yeven, and non
other. 2125

Ye sey me thus, how that I am your
brother?'

'Ye, certes,' quod the frere, 'trusteth
weel;

I took our dame our lettre with our seel.'
'Now wel,' quod he, 'and som-what
shal I yive

Un-to your holy covent whyl I live, 2130
And in thyn hand thou shalt it have
anoon;

On this condicioun, and other noon,
That thou departe it so, my dere brother,
That every frere have also muche as other.
This shaltou swere on thy professioun,
With-uten fraude or cavillacioun.' 2136

'I swere it,' quod this frere, 'upon my
feith!'

And ther-with-al his hand in his he
leith:

'Lo, heer my feith! in me shal be no lak.'

'Now thanne, put thyn hand down by my bak,' 2140

Seyde this man, 'and grope wel bihinde; Bynethe my buttok ther shaltow finde A thing that I have hid in privetee.'

'A!' thoghte this frere, 'this shal go with me!'

And down his hand he launcheth to the clifte, 2145

In hope for to finde ther a yifte.

And whan this syke man felte this frere Aboute his tuwel grope there and here, Amidde his hand he leet the frere a fart. Ther nis no capul, drawinge in a cart, 2150 That mighte have lete a fart of swich a soun.

'The frere up stirte as doth a wood leoun:

'A! false cheryl,' quod he, 'for goddes bones,

This hastow for despyt doon, for the nones!

Thou shalt abyde this fart, if that I may!'

His meynee, whiche that herden this affray, 2156

Cam lepinge in, and chaced out the frere;

And forth he gooth, with a ful angry chere,

And fette his felawe, ther-as lay his stoor. He looked as it were a wilde boor; 2160 He grinte with his teeth, so was he wrooth.

A sturdy pas down 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 frere cam, as he were in a rage, 2166 Wher-as this lord sat eting at his bord.

Unnetthes mighte the frere speke a word, Til atte laste he seyde: 'god yow see!'

This lord gan loke, and seide, '*benedictite!*' 2170

What, frere Iohn, what maner world is this?

I see wel that som thing ther is amis.

Ye loken as the wode were ful of thevis, Sit down anon, and tel me what your greef is,

And it shal be amended, if I may.' 2175

'I have,' quod he, 'had a despyt this day,

God yelde yow! adoun in your village, That in this world is noon so povre a page,

That he nolde have abhominacioun 2179 Of that I have receyved in your toun.

And yet ne greveth me no-thing so sore, As that this olde cheryl, with lokkes hore, Blasphemed hath our holy covent eke.'

'Now, maister,' quod this lord, 'I yow biseke.'

'No maister, sire,' quod he, 'but servitour, 2185

Thogh I have had in scole swich honour. God lyketh nat that "Raby" men us calle,

Neither in market ne in your large halle.'

'No fors,' quod he, 'but tel me al your grief.'

'Sire,' quod this frere, 'an odious meschief 2190

This day bitid is to myn ordre and me, And so *per consequens* to ech degree

Of holy chirche, god amende it sone!'

'Sir,' quod the lord, 'ye woot what is to done.

Distempre yow noght, ye be my confessour; 2195

Ye been the salt of the erthe and the savour.

For goddes love your pacience ye holde; Tel me your grief:' and he anon him tolde,

As ye han herd biforn, ye woot wel what.

The lady of the hous ay stille sat, 2200 Til she had herd al what the frere sayde:

'Ey, goddes moder,' quod she, 'blisful mayde!

Is ther oght elles? telle me feithfully.'

'Madame,' quod he, 'how thinketh yow her-by?'

'How that me thinketh?' quod she; 'so god me speede, 2205

I seye, a cheryl hath doon a cherles dede. What shold I seye? god lat him never thee!

His syke heed is ful of vanitee, I hold him in a maner frenesye.'

'Madame,' quod he, 'by god I shal nat lye; 2210

But I on other weyes may be wreke, I shal diffame him over-al ther I speke,

*art-metric
arithmeti-*

This false blasphemour, that charged
me
To parte that wol nat departed be, 2214
To every man y-liche, with meschaunce !'
The lord sat stille as he were in a
traunce,
And in his herte he rolled up and down,
'How hadde this cherl imaginacioun
To shewe swich a probleme to the frere?
Never erst er now herde I of swich
matere; 2220
I trowe the devel putte it in his minde.
In ars-metryke shal ther no man finde,
Biforn this day, of swich a questioun.
Who sholde make a demonstracioun,
That every man sholde have y-liche his
part 2225
As of the soun or savour of a fart?
O nyce proude cherl, I shrewe his face !
'Lo, sires,' quod the lord, with harde
grace,
'Who ever herde of swich a thing er
now?
To every man y-lyke? tel me how? 2230
It is an impossible, it may nat be !
Ey, nyce cherl, god lete him never thee !
The rumblinge of a fart, and every soun,
Nis but of eir reverberacioun, 2234
And ever it wasteth lyte and lyte away.
Ther is no man can demen, by my fey,
If that it were departed equally.
What, lo, my cherl, lo, yet how shrewedly
Un-to my confessour to-day he spak !
I holde him certeyn a demoniak ! 2240
Now ete your mete, and lat the cherl go
pleye,
Lat him go honge himself, a devel weye !'
Now stood the lordes squyer at the
bord,
That carf his mete, and herde, word by
word,
Of alle thinges of which I have yow
sayd. 2245
'My lord,' quod he, 'be ye nat yvel
apayd;
I coude telle, for a gounne-clooth,
To yow, sir frere, so ye be nat wrooth,
How that this fart sholde even deled be
Among your covent, if it lyked me.' 2250
'Tel,' quod the lord, 'and thou shalt
have anon
A gounne-cloth, by god and by Seint
Iohn !'

'My lord,' quod he, 'whan that the
weder is fair,
With-ouren wind or perturbinge of air,
Lat bringe a cartwheel here in-to this
halle, 2255
But loke that it have his spokes alle.
Twelf spokes hath a cartwheel comunly.
And bring me than twelf freres, woot
ye why?
For thrittene is a covent, as I gesse.
The confessour heer, for his worthinesse,
Shal parfourne up the nombre of his
covent. 2261
Than shal they knele doun, by oon
assent,
And to every spokes ende, in this
manere,
Ful sadly leye his nose shal a frere.
Your noble confessour, ther god him
save, 2265
Shal holde his nose upright, under the
nave.
Than shal this cherl, with bely stif and
toght
As any tabour, hider been y-brought;
And sette him on the wheel right of
this cart,
Upon the nave, and make him lete a
fart. 2270
And ye shul seen, up peril of my lyf,
By preve which that is demonstratif,
That equally the soun of it wol wende,
And eek the stink, un-to the spokes
ende;
Save that this worthy man, your con-
fessour, 2275
By-cause he is a man of greet honour,
Shal have the firste fruit, as reson is;
The noble usage of freres yet is this,
The worthy men of him shul first be
served; 2279
And certainly, he hath it weel deserved.
He hath to-day taught us so muchel
good
With preching in the pulpit ther he
stood,
That I may vouche-sauf, I sey for me,
He hadde the firste smel of fartes three,
And so wolde al his covent hardily; 2285
He bereth him so faire and holily.'
The lord, the lady, and ech man, save
the frere,
Seyde that lankin spak, in this matere,

As wel as Euclide or [as] Ptholomee.
 Touchinge this cherl, they seyde, sub-
 tiltee 2290
 And heigh wit made him speken as he
 spak;

He nis no fool, ne no demoniak.
 And Iankin hath y-wonne a newe
 goune.—
 My tale is doon; we been almost at
 toune. 2294

Here endeth the Somnours Tale.

GROUP E.

THE CLERK'S PROLOGUE.

*Here foloweth the Prologe of the Clerkes
 Tale of Oxenford.*

'SIR clerk of Oxenford,' our hoste sayde,
 'Ye ryde as coy and stille as dooth a
 mayde,
 Were newe spoused, sitting at the bord;
 This day ne herde I of your tonge a word.
 I trowe ye studie aboute som sophyme, 5
 But Salomon seith, "every thing hath
 tyme."

For goddes sake, as beth of better chere,
 It is no tyme for to studien here.
 Telle us som mery tale, by your fey;
 For what man that is entred in a pley, 10
 He nedes moot unto the pley assente.
 But precheth nat, as freres doon in Lente,
 To make us for our olde sinnes wepe,
 Ne that thy tale make us nat to slepe.

Telle us som mery thing of aven-
 tures; — 15
 Your termes, your colours, and your fig-
 ures,
 Kepe hem in stoor til so be ye endyte
 Ileigh style, as whan that men to kinges
 wryte.

Speketh so pleyn at this tyme, I wou
 preyde,
 That we may understonde what ye seye.' 20

This worthy clerk benignely answerde,
 'Hoste,' quod he, 'I am under your yerde;
 Ye han of us as now the governaunce,
 And therfor wol I do yow obeisaunce,
 As fer as reson axeth, hardily. 25
 I wol yow telle a tale which that I

Lerned at Padowe of a worthy clerk,
 As preved by his wordes and his werk.
 He is now deed and nayled in his cheste,
 I prey to god so yeve his soule reste! 30
 Fraunceys Petrark, the laureat poete,
 Highte this clerk, whos rethoryke sweete
 Enlumined al Itaille of poetrye,
 As Linian dide of philosophye
 Or lawe, or other art particuler; 35
 But deeth, that wol nat suffre us dwellen
 heer

But as it were a twinkling of an yē,
 Hem bothe hath slayn, and alle shul we
 dyē.

But forth to tellen of this worthy man,
 That taught me this tale, as I bigan, 40
 I seye that first with heigh style he en-
 dyteth,

Er he the body of his tale wryteth,
 A proheme, in the which discryveth he
 Pemond, and of Saluces the contree,
 And speketh of Apennyn, the hilles hye, 45
 That been the boundes of West Lum-
 bardye,

And of Mount Vesulus in special,
 Where as the Poo, out of a welle smal,
 Taketh his firste springing and his sours,
 That estward ay encresseth in his cours 50
 To Emelward, to Ferrare, and Venyse:
 The which a long thing were to devyse.
 And trewely, as to my Iugement,
 Me thinketh it a thing impertinent,
 Save that he wol conveyen his matere: 55
 But this his tale, which that ye may
 here.'

THE CLERKES TALE.

Here biginneth the Tale of the Clerk of Oxenford.

THIR is, at the west syde of Itaille,
Doun at the rote of Vesulus the colde,
A lusty playne, habundant of vitaille,
Wher many a tour and toun thou mayst
biholde, 60
That founded were in tyme of fadres olde,
And many another delitable sighte,
And Saluces this noble contree highte.

A markis whylom lord was of that londe,
As were his worthy eldres him bifore; 65
And obeisant and redy to his honde
Were alle his liges, bothe lasse and more.
Thus in delyt he liveth, and hath don yore,
Biloved and drad, thurgh favour of fortune,
Bothe of his lordes and of his commune. 70

Therwith he was, to speke as of linage,
The gentilleste y-born of Lumbardy, 75
A fair persone, and strong, and yong of
age,
And ful of honour and of curteisye;
Discreet y-nogh his contree for to gye, 75
Save in somme thinges that he was to
blame,
And Walter was this yonge lordes name.

I blame him thus, that he considereth
nogh
In tyme cominge what mighte him bityde,
But on his lust present was al his thoght, 80
As for to hauke and hunte on every syde;
Wel ny alle othere cures leet he slyde,
And eek he nolde, and that was worst of
alle,
Wedde no wyf, for noght that may bifalle.

Only that point his peple bar so sore, 85
That flokmele on a day they to him wente,
And oon of hem, that wysest was of lore,
Or elles that the lord best wolde assente
That he sholde telle him what his peple
mente,
Or elles coude he shewe wel swich mat-
ere, 90
He to the markis seyde as ye shul here.

'O noble markis, your humanitee
Assureth us and yeveth us hardinesse,
As ofte as tyme is of necessitee
That we to yow mowe telle our hevi-
nesse; 95
Accepteth, lord, now for your gentillesse,
That we with pitous herte un-to yow
pleyne,
And lete your eres nat my voys disleyne.

Al have I noght to done in this matere
More than another man hath in this
place, 100
Yet for as muche as ye, my lord so dere,
Han alwey shewed me favour and grace,
I dar the better aske of yow a space
Of audience, to shewen our requeste,
And ye, my lord, to doon right as yow
leste. 105

For certes, lord, so wel us lyketh yow
And al your werk and ever han doon,
that we
Ne coude nat us self devyssen how
We mighte liven in more felicitee,
Save o thing, lord, if it your wille be, 110
That for to been a wedded man yow
leste,
Than were your peple in sovereyn hertes
reste.

Boweth your nekke under that blisful yok
Of soveraynetee, noght of servyse,
Which that men clepeth spousaille or
wedlok; 115
And thenketh, lord, among your thoghtes
wyse,
How that our dayes passe in sondry wyse;
For though we slepe or wake, or rome,
or ryde,
Ay fleeth the tyme, it nil no man abyde.

And though your grene youthe floure as
yit, 120
In crepeth age alwey, as stille as stoon,
And deeth manaceth every age, and smit
In ech estaat, for ther escapeth noon:
And al so certein as we knowe echoon
That we shul deye, as uncerteyn we alle

Been of that day whan deeth shal on us
falle. 126

Accepteth than of us the trewe entente,
That never yet refuseden your heste,
And we wol, lord, if that ye wol assente,
Chese yow a wyf in short tyme, atte
leste, 130

Born of the gentilleste and of the meste
Of al this lond, so that it oghte seme
Honour to god and yow, as we can deme.

Deliver us out of al this bisy drede,
And tak a wyf, for hye goddes sake; 135
For if it so bifelle, as god forbede,
That thurgh your deeth your linage sholde
slake,
And that a straunge successour sholde
take
Your heritage, o! wo were us alyve!
Wherfor we pray you hastily to wyve.' 140

Hir meke preyere and hir pitous chere
Made the markis herte han pitee.
'Ye wol,' quod he, 'myn owene peple
dere,
To that I never erst thoghte streyne me.
I me reioyسد of my libertee, 145
That selde tyme is founde in mariage;
Ther I was free, I moot been in servage.

But nathelees I see your trewe entente,
And truste upon your wit, and have don
ay;
Wherfor of my free wil I wol assente 150
To wedde me, as sone as ever I may.
But ther-as ye han profred me to-day
To chese me a wyf, I yow relesse
That choys, and prey yow of that proffre
cesse.

For god it woot, that children ofte been
Unlyk her worthy eldres hem bifore; 156
Bountee comth al of god, nat of the
streen
Of which they been engendred and
y-bore;
I truste in goddes bountee, and therfore
My mariage and myn estat and reste 160
I him bitake; he may don as him leste.

Lat me alone in chesinge of my wyf,
That charge up-on my bak I wol endure;

But I yow preye, and charge up-on your
lyf,

That what wyf that I take, ye me assure
To worshippe hir, whyl that hir lyf may
dure, 166
In word and werk, bothe here and every-
where,
As she an emperoures doghter were.

And forthermore, this shal ye swere, that
ye
Agayn my choys shul neither grucche ne
stryve; 170

For sith I shal forgoon my libertee
At your requeste, as ever moot I thryve,
Ther as myn herte is set, ther wol I wyve;
And but ye wole assente in swich manere,
I prey yow, speketh na-more of this
matere.' 175

With hertly wil they sworn, and assenten
To al this thing, ther seyde no wight may;
Bisekinge him of grace, er that they
wenten,

That he wolde graunten hem a certain
day

Of his spousaille, as sone as ever he
may; 180

For yet alwey the peple som-what dredde
Lest that this markis no wyf wolde wedde.

He graunten hem a day, swich as him
leste,

On which he wolde be wedded sikerly,
And seyde, he dide al this at hir re-
queste; 185

And they, with humble entente, buxonly,
Knelinge up-on her knees ful reverently
Him thanken alle, and thus they han an
ende

Of hir entente, and hoom agayn they
wende.

And heer-up-on he to his officeres 190
Comaundeth for the feste to purveye,
And to his privee knightes and squyeres
Swich charge yaf, as him liste on hem leye;
And they to his comandement obeye,
And ech of hem doth al his diligence 195
To doon un-to the feste reverence.

Explicit prima pars.

Incipit secunda pars.

Noght fer fro thilke paleys honourable
 Ther-as this markis shoop his mariage,
 Ther stood a throp, of site delitable,
 In which that povre folk of that village
 Hadden hir bestes and hir herbergage, 201
 And of hir labour took hir sustenance
 After that the erthe yaf hem habundance.

Amonges this povre folk ther dwelte a
 man

Which that was holden povrest of hem
 alle; 205

But hye god som tyme senden can
 His grace in-to a litel oxes stalle:

Ianicula men of that throp him calle.
 A doghter hadde he, fair y-nogh to
 sighte, 209

And Grisildis this yonge mayden highte.

But for to speke of vertuous beautee,
 Than was she oon the faireste under
 sonne;

For povreliche y-fostred up was she,
 No likerous lust was thurgh hir herte
 y-ronne; 214

Wel ofter of the welle than of the tonne
 She drank, and for she wolde vertu plese,
 She knew wel labour, but non ydel ese.

But thogh this mayde tendre were of age,
 Yet in the brest of hir virginitee

Ther was enclosed rype and sad corage;
 And in greet reverence and charitee 221

Hir olde povre fader fostred she;
 A fewe sheep spinning on feeld she kepte,
 She wolde noght been ydel til she slepte.

And whan she hoomward cam, she wolde
 bringe 225

Wortes or othere herbes tymes ofte,
 The whiche she shredde and seeth for
 hir livinge,

And made hir bed ful harde and no-thing
 softe;

And ay she kepte hir fadres lyf on-lofte
 With everich obeisaunce and diligence

That child may doon to fadres reverence.

Up-on Grisilde, this povre creature, 232
 Ful ofte sythe this markis sette his yē

As he on hunting rood paraventure;

And whan it fil that he mighte hir
 espye, 235

He noght with wantoun loking of folye
 His yē caste on hir, but in sad wyse

Up-on hir chere he wolde him ofte avyse,
 Commending in his herte hir womman-
 hede,

And eek hir vertu, passing any wight 240
 Of so yong age, as wel in chere as dede.

For thogh the peple have no greet insight
 In vertu, he considered ful right

Hir bountee, and disposed that he wolde
 Wedde hir only, if ever he wedde
 sholde. 245

The day of wedding cam, but no wight
 can

Telle what womman that it sholde be;
 For which merveille wondred many a
 man,

And seyden, whan they were in privetee,
 'Wol nat our lord yet leve his vanitee? 250
 Wol he nat wedde? allas, allas the whyle!
 Why wol he thus him-self and us bigyle?'

But natheles this markis hath don make
 Of gemmes, set in gold and in asure,
 Broches and ringes, for Grisildis sake, 255

And of hir clothing took he the mesure
 By a mayde, lyk to hir stature,
 And eek of othere ornamentes alle

That un-to swich a wedding sholde falle.

The tyme of undern of the same day 260
 Approcheth, that this wedding sholde be;

And al the paleys put was in array,
 Bothe halle and chambres, ech in his de-
 gree;

Houses of office stuffed with plentee 264
 Ther maystow seen of deyntevous vitaille,
 That may be founde, as fer as last Itaille.

This royal markis, richely arrayed,
 Lordes and ladyes in his companye,
 The whiche unto the feste were y-prayed,
 And of his retenue the bachelrye, 270

With many a soun of sondry melodye,
 Un-to the village, of the which I tolde,
 In this array the righte wey han holde.

Grisilde of this, god woot, ful innocent,
 That for hir shapen was al this array, 275

To fecchen water at a welle is went,
And cometh hoom as sone as ever she
may.

For wel she hadde herd seyde, that thilke
day

The markis sholde wedde, and, if she
mighte,

She wolde fayn han seyn som of that
sighte. 280

She thoghte, 'I wol with othere maydens
stonde,

That been my felawes, in our dore, and
see

The markissee, and therfor wol I fonde
To doon at hoom, as sone as it may be,
The labour which that longeth un-to me;
And then I may at leysen hir biholde, 286
If she this wey un-to the castel holde.'

And as she wolde over hir threshfold
goon,

The markis cam and gan hir for to calle;
And she sette down hir water-pot anon

Bisyde the threshfold, in an oxes stalle, 291
And down up-on hir knees she gan to
falle,

And with sad contenance kneleth stille
Til she had herd what was the lordes
wille.

This thoughtful markis spak un-to this
mayde 295

Ful sobrely, and seyde in this manere,
'Wher is your fader, Grisildis?' he seyde,

And she with reverence, in humble chere,
Answerde, 'lord, he is al redy here.'

And in she gooth with-outen lenger lette,
And to the markis she her fader fette. 301

He by the hond than took this olde man,
And seyde thus, whan he him hadde
asyde,

'Ianicula, I neither may ne can 304
Lenger the plesance of myn herte hyde.

If that thou vouche-sauf, what-so bityde,
Thy doghter wol I take, er that I wende,

As for my wyf, un-to hir lyves ende.

Thou lovest me, I woot it wel, certeyn,
And art my feithful lige man y-bore; 310

And al that lyketh me, I dar wel seyn
It lyketh thee, and specially therfore

Tel me that poynt that I have seyde bifore,
If that thou wolt un-to that purpos drawe,
To take me as for thy sone-in-lawe?' 315

This sodeyn cas this man astoned so,
That reed he wex, abayst, and al quaking
He stood; unnethes seyde he wordes mo,
But only thus: 'lord,' quod he, 'my will-
ing

Is as ye wole, ne ayeines your lyking 320
I wol no-thing; ye be my lord so dere;
Right as yow lust governeth this matere.'

'Yet wol I,' quod this markis softly,
'That in thy chambre I and thou and she

Have a collacion, and wostow why? 325
For I wol axe if it hir wille be

To be my wyf, and reule hir after me;
And al this shal be doon in thy presence,

I wol nocht speke out of thyn audience.'

And in the chambre whyl they were
aboute 330

Hir tretis, which as ye shal after here,
The peple cam un-to the hous with-
oute,

And wondred hem in how honest manere
And tentify she kepte hir fader dere.

But outerly Grisildis wondre mighte, 335
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 swiche gestes woned, 339
For which she loked with ful pale face.

But shortly forth this tale for to chace,
These arn the wordes that the markis
sayde

To this benigne verray feithful mayde.

'Grisilde,' he seyde, 'ye shul wel under-
stonde

It lyketh to your fader and to me 345
That I yow wedde, and eek it may so
stonde,

As I suppose, ye wol that it so be.
But thise demandes axe I first,' quod he,

'That, sith it shal be doon in hastif wyse,
Wol ye assente, or elles yow ayse? 350

I seye this, be ye redy with good herte
To al my lust, and that I frely may,

As me best thinketh, do yow laughe or
smerte,

And never ye to grucche it, night ne
day ?

And eek whan I sey "ye," ne sey nat
"nay," 355

Neither by word ne frowning contenance;
Swer this, and here I swere our alliance.'

Wondring upon this word, quaking for
drede,

She seyde, 'lord, undigne and unworthy
Am I to thilke honour that ye me bede;
But as ye wol your-self, right so wol I. 361
And heer I swere that never willingly
In word ne thought I nil yow disobeye,
For to be deed, though me were looth to
deye.'

'This is y-nogh, Grisilde myn !' quod
he. 365

And forth he gooth with a ful sobre
chere

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
here.

Honoureth hir, and loveth hir, I preye,
Who-so me loveth; ther is na-more to
seye.' 371

And for that no-thing of hir olde gere
She sholde bringe in-to his hous, he bad
That women sholde dispoilen hir right
there;

Of which thise ladyes were nat right glad
To handle hir clothes wher-in she was
clad. 376

But natheles this mayde bright of hewe
Fro foot to heed they clothed han al
newe.

Hir heres han they kembd, that lay un-
tressed

Ful rudely, and with hir fingres smale 380
A corone on hir heed they han y-dressed,
And sette hir ful of nowches grete and
smale;

Of hir array what sholde I make a tale ?
Unnethe the peple hir knew for hir fair-
nesse,

Whan she translated was in swich rich-
esse. 385

This markis hath hir spoused with a ring
Brought for the same cause, and than hir
sette

Up-on an hors, snow-whyt and wel
ambling,

And to his paleys, er he lenger lette,
With loyful peple that hir ladde and
mette, 390

Conveyed hir, and thus the day they
spende

In revel, til the sonne gan descende.

And shortly forth this tale for to chace,
I seyde that to this newe markisese

God hath swich favour sent hir of his
grace, 395

That it ne semed nat by lyklinesse
That she was born and fed in rudenesse,
As in a cote or in an ox-stalle,
But norished in an emperoures halle.

To every wight she woxen is so dere 400
And worshipful, that folk ther she was
bore

And from hir birthe knewe hir yeer by
yere,

Unnethe trowed they, but dorste han
swore

That to Ianicle, of which I spak bfore,
She doghter nas, for, as by coniecture,
Hem thoughte she was another creature.

For thogh that ever vertuuous was she,
She was encessed in swich excellence
Of thewes gode, y-set in heigh bountee,
And so discreet and fair of eloquence,
So benigne and so digne of reverence,
And coude so the peples herte embrace,
That ech hir lovede that loked on hir
face.

Noght only of Saluces in the toun
Publiced was the bountee of hir name,
But eek bisyde in many a regioun, 416
If oon seyde wel, another seyde the
same;

So spradde of hir heigh bountee the fame,
That men and wommen, as wel yonge as
olde,

Gon to Saluce, upon hir to biholde. 420

Thus Walter lowly, nay but royally,
Wedded with fortunat honestete,

In goddes pees liveth ful esily
 At hoom, and outward grace y-nogh had
 he; 424
 And for he saugh that under low degree
 Was ofte vertu hid, the peple him helde
 A prudent man, and that is seyn ful
 selde.

Nat only this Grisildis thurgh hir wit
 Coude al the feet of wyfly hoomlinesse,
 But eek, whan that the cas requyred it,
 The commune profit coude she redresse.
 Ther nas discord, rancour, ne hevynesse
 In al that lond, that she ne coude apese,
 And wysly bringe hem alle in reste and
 ese.

Though that hir housbonde absent were
 anon, 435
 If gentil men, or othere of hir contree
 Were wrothe, she wolde bringen hem
 atoon;
 So wyse and rype wordes hadde she,
 And Ingemens of so greet equitee,
 That she from heven sent was as men
 wende, 440
 Peple to save and every wrong tamende.

Nat longe tyme after that this Grisild
 Was wedded, she a doughter hath y-bore,
 Al had hir lever have born a knave
 child.

Glad was this markis and the folk ther-
 fore; 445
 For though a mayde child come al bifore,
 She may unto a knave child atteyne
 By lyklihed, sin she nis nat bareyne.

Explicit secunda pars.

Incipit tercia pars.

Ther fil, as it bifalleth tymes mo,
 Whan that this child had souked but a
 throwe, 450
 This markis in his herte longeth so
 To tempte his wyf, hir sadnesse for to
 knowe,
 That he ne mighte out of his herte throwe
 This merveillous desyr, his wyf tassaye,
 Needless, god woot, he thoughte hir for
 taffraye. 455

He hadde assayed hir y-nogh bifore,

And fond hir ever good; what neded it
 Hir for to tempte and alwey more and
 more?

Though som men preise it for a subtil
 wit,

But as for me, I seye that yvel it sit 460
 Tassaye a wyf whan that it is no nede,
 And putten her in anguish and in drede.

For which this markis wroghte in this
 manere;

He cam alone a-night, ther as she lay,
 With sterne face and with ful trouble
 chere, 465

And seyde thus, 'Grisild,' quod he, 'that
 day

That I yow took out of your povre array,
 And putte yow in estaat of heigh no-
 blesse,

Ye have nat that forgeten, as I gesse.

I seye, Grisild, this present dignitee, 470
 In which that I have put yow, as I
 trowe,

Maketh yow nat foryetful for to be
 That I yow took in povre estaat ful lowe
 For any wele ye moot your-selven knowe.
 Tak hede of every word that I yow
 seye, 475

Ther is no wight that hereth it but we
 tweye.

Ye woot your-self wel, how that ye cam
 here

In-to this hous, it is nat longe ago,
 And though to me that ye be lief and
 dere,

Un-to my gentils ye be no-thing so; 480
 They seyn, to hem it is greet shame and
 wo

For to be subgets and ben in servage
 To thee, that born art of a smal village.

And namely, sith thy doghter was y-bore,
 These wordes han they spoken doute-
 lees; 485

But I desyre, as I have doon bifore,
 To live my lyf with hem in reste and
 pees;

I may nat in this caas be recchelees.
 I moot don with thy doghter for the
 beste, 489

Nat as I wolde, but as my peple leste.

And yet, god wot, this is ful looth to
me;

But natheles with-oute your witing
I wol nat doon, but this wol I, quod he,
'That ye to me assente as in this thing.
Shewe now your pacience in your werk-
ing 495

That ye me highte and swore in your
village

That day that maked was our mariage.'

When she had herd al this, she noght
ameved

Neither in word, or chere, or counte-
naunce;

For, as it semed, she was nat agreved:
She seyde, 'lord, al lyth in your ple-
saunce, 501

My child and I with hertly obeisaunce
Ben youre al, and ye mowe save or
spille

Your owene thing; werketh after your
wille.

Ther may no-thing, god so my soule
save, 505

Iyken to yow that may displese me;
Ne I desyre no-thing for to have,
Ne drede for to lese, save only ye;
This wil is in myn herte and ay shal be.
No lengthe of tyme or death may this
deface, 510
Ne change my corage to another place.'

Glad was this markis of hir answering,
But yet he feyned as he were nat so;
Al dreery was his chere and his loking
When that he sholde out of the chambre
go. 515

Sone after this, a furlong wey or two,
He prively hath told al his entente
Un-to a man, and to his wyf him sente.

A maner sergeant was this privee man,
The which that feithful ofte he founden
hadde 520
In thinges grete, and eek swich folk wel
can

Don execuciuon on thinges hadde.
The lord knew wel that he him loved
and dradde;

And whan this sergeant wiste his lordes
wille

In-to the chambre he stalked him ful
stille. 525

'Madame,' he seyde, 'ye mote foryeve it
me,

Though I do thing to which I am con-
streyned;

Ye ben so wys that ful wel knowe ye
That lordes hestes mowe nat been
y-feyned;

They mowe wel been biwailled or com-
pleyned, 530

But men mot nede un-to her lust obeye,
And so wol I; ther is na-more to seye.

This child I am comanded for to take'—
And spak na-more, but out the child he
hente

Despitously, and gan a chere make 535
As though he wolde han slayn it er he
wente.

Grisildis mot 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, 540

Suspect his face, suspect his word also;
Suspect the tyme in which he this bigan.
Allas! hir doghter that she lovede so
She wende he wolde han slawen it right
tho. 544

But natheles she neither weep ne syked
Consenting hir to that the markis lyked.

But atte laste speken she bigan,
And mekely she to the sergeant preyde,
So as he was a worthy gentil man,

That she moste kisse hir child er that it
deyde; 550

And in her barm this litel child she
leyde

With ful sad face, and gan the child to
kisse

And lulled it, and after gan it blisse.

And thus she seyde in hir benigne voys,
'Far weel, my child; I shall thee never
see; 555

But, sith I thee have marked with the
croys,

Of thilke fader blessed mote thou be,
That for us deyde up-on a croys of tree.
Thy soule, litel child, I him bitake,
For this night shaltow dyen for my
sake.' 560

I trowe that to a norice in this cas
It had ben hard this rewthe for to se;
Wel mighte a mooder than han cryed
'allas!'

But nathelees so sad stedfast was she,
That she endured all adversitee, 565
And to the sergeant meekly she sayde,
'Have heer agayn your litel yonge mayde.

Goth now,' quod she, 'and dooth my
lordes heste,
But o thing wol I preye yow of your
grace,

That, but my lord forbad yow, atte
leste 570

Burieth this litel body in som place
That bestes ne no briddes it to-race.'
But he no word wol to that purpos seye,
But took the child and wente upon his
weye.

This sergeant cam un-to his lord ageyn,
And of Grisildis wordes and hir chere 576
He tolde him point for point, in short
and playn,

And him presenteth with his doghter
dere.

Somwhat this lord hath rewthe in his
manere;

But nathelees his purpos heeld he stille,
As lordes doon, whan they wol han hir
wille; 581

And bad his sergeant that he prively
Sholde this child ful softe winde and
wrappe

With alle circumstances tendrely,
And carie it in a cofre or in a lappe;
But, up-on peyne his heed of for to
swappe, 586

That no man sholde knowe of his entente,
Ne whenne he cam, ne whider that he
wente;

But at Boloigne to his suster dere,
That thilke tyme of Panik was count-
esse, 590

He sholde it take, and shewe hir this
matere,

Bisekinge hir to don hir bisnesse
This child to fostre in alle gentillesse;
And whos child that it was he bad hir
hyde

From every wight, for oght that may
bytude. 595

The sergeant gooth, and hath fulfild this
thing;

But to this markis now retourne we;
For now goth he ful faste imagining
If by his wyves chere he mighte see,
Or by hir word aperceyve that she 600
Were chaunged; but he never hir coude
finde

But ever in oon y-lyke sad and kinde.

As glad, as humble, as bisy in servyse,
And eek in love as she was wont to be,
Was she to him in every maner wyse;
Ne of hir doghter noght a word spak
she. 606

Non accident for noon adversitee
Was seyn in hir, ne never hir doghter
name

Ne nempned she, in earnest nor in game.

*Explicit tercia pars. Sequitur pars
quarta.*

In this estaat ther passed been foure
yeer 610

Er she with childe was; but, as god
wolde,

A knave child she bar by this Walter,
Ful gracious and fair for to biholde.
And whan that folk it to his fader tolde,
Nat only he, but al his contree, meric 615
Was for this child, and god they thanke
and herie.

Whan it was two yeer old, and fro the
brest

Departed of his norice, on a day
This markis caughte yet another lest 619
To tempte his wyf yet after, if he may.
O needles was she tempted in assay!

But wedded men ne knowe no mesure,
Whan that they finde a pacient creature.

'Wyf,' quod this markis, 'ye han herd
er this,

My peple sikly berth our mariage 625
 And namely, sith my sone y-boren is,
 Now is it worse than ever in al our
 age.

The murmur sleeth myn herte and my
 corage;

For to myne eres comth the voys so
 smerte,

That it wel ny destroyed hath myn
 herte. 630

Now sey they thus, "whan Walter is
 agoon,

Then shal the blood of Ianicle succede
 And been our lord, for other have we
 noon;'

Swiche wordes seith my peple, out of
 drede.

Wel oughte I of swich murmur taken
 hede; 635

For certainly I drede swich sentence,
 Though they nat pleyn speke in myn
 audience.

I wolde live in pees, if that I mighte;
 Wherfor I am disposed outerly,
 As I his suster served by nighte, 640
 Right so thanke I to serve him pively;
 This warne I yow, that ye nat sodeynly
 Out of your-self for no wo sholde out-
 raye;

Beth pacient, and ther-of I yow preyre.'

'I have,' quod she, 'seyd thus, and ever
 shal, 645

I wol no thing, ne nil no thing, certayn,
 But as yow list; noght greveth me at al,
 Thogh that my doghter and my sone be
 slayn,

At your comandement, this is to sayn.

I have noght had no part of children
 tweyne 650

But first siknesse, and after wo and
 peyne.

Ye been our lord, doth with your owene
 thing

Right as yow list; axeth no reed at
 me.

For, as I lefte at hoom al my clothing,
 Whan I first cam to yow, right so,' quod
 she, 655

'Left I my wil and al my libertee,

And took your clothing; wherfor I
 yow preyre,
 Doth your plesaunce, I wol your lust
 obeye.

And certes, if I hadde prescience
 Your wil to knowe er ye your lust me
 tolde, 660

I wolde it doon with-outen necligence;
 But now I woot your lust and what ye
 wolde,

Al your plesaunce ferme and stable I
 holde;

For wiste I that my deeth wolde do yow
 ese, 664

Right gladly wolde I dyen, yow to plesse.

Deeth may noght make no comparisoun
 Un-to your love: ' and, whan this markis
 sey

The constance of his wyf, he caste
 adoun

His yën two, and wondreth that she
 may

In pacience suffre al this array. 670
 And forth he gooth with drery conte-
 naunce,

But to his herte it was ful greet ples-
 aunce.

This ugly sergeante, in the same wyse
 That he hir doghter caughte, right so he,
 Or worse, if men worse can devyse, 675
 Hath hent hir sone, that ful was of
 beautee.

And ever in oon so pacient was she,
 That she no chere made of hevinesse,
 But kiste hir sone, and after gan it
 blesse;

Save this; she preyed him that, if he
 mighte, 680

Hir litel sone he wolde in erthe grave,
 His tendre limes, delicat to sighte,
 Fro foules and fro bestes for to save.

But she non answer of him might have.
 He wente his wey, as him no-thing ne
 roghte; 685

But to Boloigne he tendrely it broghte.

This markis wondreth ever lenger the
 more

Up-on hir pacience, and if that he •

Ne hadde soothly knowen ther-bifore,
That paritly hir children lovede she, 690
He wolde have wend that of som sub-
tiltee,
And of malice or for cruel corage,
That she had suffred this with sad
visage.

But wel he knew that next him-self,
certayn,
She loved hir children best in every
wyse. 695
But now of wommen wolde I axen fayn,
If thise assayes mighte nat suffyse?
What coude a sturdy housbond more
devyse
To preve hir wyfhod and hir stedfast-
nesse, 699
And he continuing ever in sturdinesse?

But ther ben folk of swich condicioun,
That, whan they have a certein purpos
take,
They can nat stinte of hir entencioun,
But, right as they were bounden to a
stake,
They wol nat of that firste purpos slake.
Right so this markis fulliche hath pur-
posed 706
To tempte his wyf, as he was first dis-
posed.

He waiteth, if by word or contenance
That she to him was changed of corage;
But never coude he finde variance; 710
She was ay oon in herte and in visage;
And ay the forther that she was in age,
The more trewe, if that it were possible,
She was to him in love, and more
penible.

For which it semed thus, that of hem
two 715
Ther nas but o wil; for, as Walter leste,
The same lust was hir plesance also,
And, god be thanked, al fil for the beste.
She shewed wel, for no worldly unreste
A wyf, as of hir-self, no-thing ne sholde
Wille in effect, but as hir housbond
wolde. 721

The sclandre of Walter ofte and wyde
• spradde,

That of a cruel herte he wikkedly,
For he a povre womman wedded hadde,
Hath mordred bothe his children prively.
Swich murmur was among hem comunly.
No wonder is, for to the peples ere 727
Ther cam no word but that they mordred
were.

For which, wher-as his peple ther-bifore
Had loved him wel, the sclandre of his
diffame 730
Made hem that they him hatede ther-
fore;
To been a mordrer is an hateful name.
But natheles, for earnest ne for game
He of his cruel purpos molde stente; 734
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
Enformed of his wil, sente his message,
Comaunding hem swiche bulles to devyse
As to his cruel purpos may suffyse, 740
How that the pope, as for his peples
reste,
Bad him to wedde another, if him leste.

I seye, he bad they sholde countrefete
The popes bulles, making mencion
That he hath leve his firste wyf to lete,
As by the popes dispensacioun, 746
To stinte rancour and dissencioun
Bitwixe his peple and him; thus seyde
the bulle,
The which they han publiced atte fulle.

The rude peple, as it no wonder is, 750
Wenden ful wel that it had been right
so;
But whan thise tydinges cam to Gri-
sildis,
I deme that hir herte was ful wo.
But she, y-lyke sad for evermo,
Disposed was, this humble creature, 755
Thadversitee of fortune al tendure.

Abyding ever his lust and his plesauce,
To whom that she was yeven, herte and
al,
As to hir verray worldly suffisaunce;
But shortly if this storie I tellen shal, 760
This markis writen hath in special

A lettre in which he sheweth his entente,
And secrely he to Boloigne it sente.

To the erl of Panik, which that hadde
tho
Wedded his suster, preyde he specially
To bringen hoom agayn his children
two 766

In honourable estaat al openly.
But o thing he him preyede outerly,
That he to no wight, though men wolde
enquere,
Sholde nat telle, whos children that
they were, 770

But seye, the mayden sholde y-wedded
be
Un-to the markis of Saluce anon.
And as this erl was preyed, so dide he;
For at day set he on his wey is goon 774
Toward Saluce, and lordes many oon,
In riche array, this mayden for to gyde;
Hir yonge brother ryding hir bisyde.

Arrayed was toward hir mariage
This fresshe mayde, ful of gemmes clere;
Hir brother, which that seven yeer was
of age, 780
Arrayed eek ful fresh in his manere.
And thus in gret noblesse and with
glad chere,
Toward Saluces shaping hir Iourney,
Fro day to day they ryden in hir wey.

*Explicit quarta pars. Sequitur quinta
pars.*

Among al this, after his wikke usage, 785
This markis, yet his wyf to tempte more
To the uttereste preve of hir corage,
Fully to han experience and lore
If that she were as stedfast as bifore,
He on a day in open audience 790
Ful boistously hath seyde hir this sentence:

‘Certes, Grisilde, I hadde y-nough ple-
saunce
To han yow to my wyf for your goodnesse,
As for your trouthe and for your obei-
saunce,
Nought for your linage ne for your rich-
esse; 795
But now knowe I in verray soothfastnesse

That in gret lordshipe, if I wel ayseye,
Ther is gret servitude in sondry wyse.

I may nat don as every plowman may;
My peple me constreyneth for to take 800
Another wyf, and cryen day by day;
And eek the pope, rancour for to slake,
Consenteth it, that dar I undertake;
And treweliche thus muche I wol yow
seye,
My newe wyf is coming by the weye. 805

Be strong of herte, and voyde anon hir
place,
And thilke dower that ye broghten me
Tak it agayn, I graunte it of my grace;
Retourneth to your fadres hous,’ quod he;
‘No man may alwey han prosperitee; 810
With evene herte I rede yow tendure
The strook of fortune or of aventure.’

And she answerde agayn in pacience,
‘My lord,’ quod she, ‘I woot, and wiste
alwey
How that bitwixen your magnificence 815
And my poverte no wight can ne may
Maken comparison; it is no nay.
I ne heeld me never digne in no manere
To be your wyf, no, ne your chamberere.

And in this hous, ther ye me lady
made — 820
The heighe god take I for my witesse,
And also wisly he my soule glade —
I never heeld me lady ne maistresse,
But humble servant to your worthinesse,
And ever shal, whyl that my lyf may
dure, 825
Aboven every worldly creature.

That ye so longe of your benignitee
Han holden me in honour and nobleye,
Wher-as I was noight worthy for to be,
That thanke I god and yow, to whom I
preye 830
Foryelde it yow; there is na-more to
seye.
Un-to my fader gladly wol I wende,
And with him dwelle un-to my lyves
ende.

Ther I was fostred of a child ful smal,
Til I be deed, my lyf ther wol I lede 835

A widwe clene, in body, herte, and al.
 For sith I yaf to yow my maydenhede,
 And am your trewe wyf, it is no drede,
 God shilde swich a lordes wyf to take
 Another man to housbonde or to
 make. 840

And of your newe wyf, god of his grace
 So graunte yow wele and prosperitee :
 For I wol gladly yelden hir my place,
 In which that I was blisful wont to be,
 For sith it lyketh yow, my lord,' quod
 she, 845
 ' That whylom weren al myn hertes reste,
 That I shal goon, I wol gon when yow
 leste.

But ther-as ye me profe swich dowaire
 As I first broghte, it is wel in my minde
 It were my wrecched clothes, no-thing
 faire, 850
 The which to me were hard now for to
 finde.

O gode god! how gentil and how kinde
 Ye semed by your speche and your visage
 The day that makend was our mariage!

But sooth is seyð, algate I finde it
 trewe— 855
 For in effect it preved is on me —
 Love is noght old as whan that it is newe.
 But certes, lord, for noon adversitee,
 To dyen in the cas, it shal nat be
 That ever in word or werk I shal re-
 pente 860
 That I yow yaf myn herte in hool en-
 tente.

My lord, ye woot that, in my fadres place,
 Ye dede me strepe out of my povre wede,
 And richely me cladden, of your grace.
 To yow broghte I noghte elles, out of
 drede, 865
 But feyth and nakednesse and mayden-
 hede.
 And here agayn my clothing I restore,
 And eek my wedding-ring, for evermore.

The remenant of your Iewels redy be
 In-with your chambre, dar I sauffly
 sayn; 870
 Naked out of my fadres hous,' quod she,
 ' I cam, and naked moot I turne agayn.

Al your plesaunce wol I folwen fayn;
 But yet I hope it be nat your entente
 That I smoklees out of your paleys
 wente. 875

Ye coude nat doon so dishoneste a thing,
 That thilke wombe in which your children
 leye
 Sholde, biforn the peple, in my walking,
 Be seyn al bare; wherfor I yow preye,
 Let me nat lyk a worm go by the
 weye. 880
 Remembre yow, myn owene lord so dere,
 I was your wyf, thogh I unworthy were.

Wherfor, in guerdon of my maydenhede,
 Which that I broghte, and noght agayn
 I bere,
 As voucheth sauf to yeve me, to my
 mede, 885
 But swich a smok as I was wont to were,
 That I therewith may wrye the wombe of
 here
 That was your wyf; and heer take I my
 leve
 Of yow, myn owene lord, lest I yow
 greve.'

'The smok,' quod he, 'that thou hast on
 thy bak, 890
 Lat it be stille, and ber it forth with thee.'
 But wel unnethes thilke word he spak,
 But wente his wey for rewthe and for
 pitee.
 Biforn the folk hir-selven strepeth she,
 And in hir smok, with heed and foot al
 bare, 895
 Toward hir fader hous forth is she fare.

The folk hir folwe wepinge in hir weye,
 And fortune ay they cursen as they goon;
 But she fro weping kepte hir yën dreye,
 Ne in this tyme word ne spak she
 noon. 900
 Hir fader, that this tyding herde anon,
 Curseth the day and tyme that nature
 Shoop him to been a lyses creature.

For out of doute this olde povre man
 Was ever in suspect of hir mariage; 905
 For ever he demed, sith that it bigan,
 That whan the lord fulfild had his corage,
 Him wolde thinke it were a disparage

To his estaat so lowe for talighte,
And voyden hir as sone as ever he
mighte. 910

Agayns his doghter hastilich goth he,
For he by noyse of folk knew hir cominge,
And with hir olde cote, as it mighte be,
He covered hir, ful sorwefully wepinge;
But on hir body mighte he it nat
bringe. 915
For rude was the cloth, and more of age
By dayes fele than at hir mariage.

Thus with hir fader, for a certeyn space,
Dwelleth this flour of wyfly pacience,
That neither by hir wordes ne hir face 920
Biforn the folk, ne eek in hir absence,
Ne shewed she that hir was doon offence;
Ne of hir heigh estaat no remembraunce
Ne hadde she, as by hir countenaunce.

No wonder is, for in hir grete estaat 925
Hir goost was ever in pleyn humylitee;
No tendre mouth, non herte delicaat,
No pompe, no semblant of royaltee,
But ful of patient benignitee,
Discreet and prydeles, ay honorable, 930
And to hir housbonde ever meke and
stable.

Men speke of Job and most for his hum-
blesse,
As clerkes, whan hem list, can wel en-
dyte,
Namely of men, but as in soothfastnesse,
Thogh clerkes preyse women but a
lyte, 935
Ther can no man in humblesse him ac quyte
As womman can, ne can ben half so trewe
As women been, but it be falle of-newe.

[*Pars Sexta.*]

Fro Boloigne is this erl of Panik come,
Of which the fame up-sprang to more
and lesse, 940
And in the peples eres alle and some
Was couth eek, that a newe markisesse
He with him broghte, in swich pompe
and richesse,
That never was ther scyn with mannes yē
So noble array in al West Lumbardye. 945

The markis, which that shoop and knew
al this,
Er that this erl was come, sente his mes-
sage
For thilke sely povre Grisildis;
And she with humble herte and glad
visage,
Nat with no swollen thoght in hir corage,
Cam at his heste, and on hir knees hir
sette, 951
And reverently and wysly she him grette.

'Grisild,' quod he, 'my wille is outerly,
This mayden, that shal wedded been to
me,
Receyved he to-morwe as royally 955
As it possible is in myn hous to be.
And eek that every wight in his degree
Have his estaat in sitting and servyse
And heigh plesaunce, as I can best
devyse.

I have no women suffisaunt certayn 960
The chambres for tarraye in ordinaunce
After my lust, and therfor wolde I fayn
That thyn were al swich maner govern-
aunce;
Thou knowest eek of old al my plesaunce;
Thogh thyn array be badde and yvel
biseye, 965
Do thou thy devoir at the leeste weye.'

'Nat only, lord, that I am glad,' quod she,
'To doon your lust, but I desyre also
Yow for to serve and plesse in my degree
With-outen feynting, and shal evermo. *ugh*
Ne never, for no wele ne no wo, 971
Ne shal the gost with-in myn herte
stente
To love yow best with al my trewe en-
tente.'

And with that word she gan the hous to
dighte,
And tables for to sette and beddes make;
And peyned hir to doon al that she
mighte, 976
Preying the chambereres, for goddes sake,
To hasten hem, and faste swepe and
shake;
And she, the moste servisable of alle,
Hath every chambre arrayed and his
halle. 980

Abouten undern gan this erl alighte,
That with him broghte these noble chil-
dren tweye,
For which the peple ran to seen the sighte
Of hir array, so richely biseye;
And than at erst amonges hem they seye,
That Walter was no fool, thogh that him
leste 986
To chaunge his wyf, for it was for the
beste.

For she is fairer, as they demen alle,
Than is Grisilde, and more tendre of age,
And fairer fruit bitwene hem sholde falle,
And more pleasant, for hir heigh lin-
age; 991
Hir brother eek so fair was of visage,
That hem to seen the peple hath caught
plesaunce,
Commending now the markis govern-
aunce. —

Auctor. 'O stormy peple! unsad and
ever untrew! 995
Ay indiscreet and chaunging as a vane,
Delytyng ever in rumberl that is newe,
For lyk the mone ay waxe ye and wane;
Ay ful of clapping, dere y-nogh a lane;
Your doom is fals, your constance yvel
preveth, 1000
A ful greet fool is he that on yow leveth!'

Thus seyden sadde folk in that citee,
Whan that the peple gazed up and down,
For they were glad, right for the noveltee,
To han a newe lady of hir toun. 1005
Na-more of this make I now menciou;
But to Grisilde agayn wol I me dresse,
And telle hir constance and hir bis-
nesse. —

Ful bisy was Grisilde in every thing
That to the feste was apertinent; 1010
Right noght was she abayst of hir clothing,
Thogh it were rude and somdel eek to-
rent.
But with glad chere to the yate is went,
With other folk, to grete the markissee,
And after that doth forth hir bis-
nesse. 1015

With so glad chere his gestic she receyv-
eth,

And conningly, everich in his degree,
That no defaute no man aperceyveth;
But ay they wondren what she mighte be
That in so povre array was for to see, 1020
And coude swich honour and rever-
ence;
And worthily they preisen hir prudence.

In al this mene whyle she ne stente
This mayde and eek hir brother to com-
mende
With al hir herte, in ful benigne entente,
So wel, that no man coude hir prys
amende. 1026
But atte laste, whan that these lordes
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, 1030
'How lyketh thee my wyf and hir beau-
tee?'
'Right wel,' quod she, 'my lord; for, in
good fey,
A fairer say I never noon than she.
I prey to god yewe hir prosperitee;
And so hope I that he wol to yow
sende 1035
Plesance y-nogh un-to your lyves ende.

O thing biseke I yow and warne also,
That ye ne prikke with no tormentinge
This tendre mayden, as ye han don mo;
For she is fostred in hir norishinge 1040
More tendrely, and, to my supposinge,
She coude nat adversitee endure
As coude a povre fostred creature.'

And whan this Walter say hir pacience,
Hir glade chere and no malice at al, 1045
And he so ofte had doon to hir offence,
And she ay sad and constant as a wal,
Continuing ever hir innocence overal,
This sturdy markis gan his herte dresse
To rewen up-on hir wyfly stedfastnesse.

'This is y-nogh, Grisilde myn,' quod
he, 1051
'Be now na-more agast ne yvel apayed;
I have thy feith and thy benignitee,
As wel as ever womman was, assayed,
In greet estaat, and povreliche arrayed.

Now knowe I, dere wyf, thy stedfast-
nesse, — 1056
And hir in armes took and gan hir kesse.

And she for wonder took of it no keep;
She herde nat what thing he to hir seyde;
She ferde as she had stert out of a
sleep, 1060
Til she out of hir masednesse abreyde.
'Grisilde,' quod he, 'by god that for us
deyde,

Thou art my wyf, ne noon other I have,
Ne never hadde, as god my soule save!

This is thy doghter which thou hast sup-
posed 1065

To be my wyf; that other feithfully
Shal be myn heir, as I have ay purposed;
Thou bare him in thy body trewely.
At Boloigne have I kept hem prively;
Tak hem agayn, for now maystow nat
seye 1070
That thou hast lorn non of thy children
tweye. *Wolff for 12 years of her life*

And folk that otherweyes han seyde of me,
I warne hem wel that I have doon this
dede

For no malice ne for no crueltee,
But for tassaye in thee thy wommanhede,
And nat to sleen my children, god for-
bede! 1076
But for to kepe hem prively and stille,
Til I thy purpos knewe and al thy wille.'

had
more
could
have
changed
in
1111
'Whan she this herde, aswowne doun she
falleth

For pitous loye, and after hir swowninge
She bothe hir yonge children un-to hir
'calleth, 1081

And in hir armes, pitously wepinge,
Embraceth hem, and tendrely kissinge
Ful lyk a mooder, with hir salte teres
She batheth bothe hir visage and hir
heres. 1085

O, which a pitous thing it was to see
Hir swowning, and hir humble voys to
here!

'Grauntmercy, lord, that thanke I yow,'
quod she,

'That ye han saved me my children
dere!

Now rekke I never to ben deed right
here; 1090

Sith I stonde in your love and in your
grace,

No fors of deeth, ne whan my spirit pace!

O tendre, o dere, o yonge children myne,
Your woful mooder wende stedfastly

That cruel houndes or som foul ver-
myne 1095

Hadde eten yow; but god, of his mercy,
And your benigne fader tendrely

Hath doon yow kept;' and in that same
stounde

Al so deyntly she swapte adoun to grounde.

And in her swough so sadly holdeth she
Hir children two, whan she gan hem tem-
brace, 1101

That with greet sleighte and greet diffi-
cultee

The children from hir arm they gonne
arace.

O many a teer on many a pitous face
Doun ran of hem that stoden hir bi-
syde; 1105

Unnethe abouten hir mighte they abyde.

Walter hir gladeth, and hir sorwe slaketh;
She ryseth up, abaysed, from hir traunce,
And every wight hir loye and feste mak-
eth,

Til she hath caught agayn hir conte-
naunce. 1110

Walter hir dooth so feithfully plesaunce,
That it was deyntee for to seen the chere
Bitwixe hem two, now they ben met
y-ferre.

These ladyes, whan that they hir tyme say,
Han taken hir, and in-to chambre goon,
And strepen hir out of hir rude array, 1116
And in a cloth of gold that brighte shoon,
With a coroune of many a riche stoon
Up-on hir hede, they in-to halle hir broghte,
And ther she was honoured as hir
oghte. 1120

Thus hath this pitous day a blisful ende,
For every man and womman dooth his
might

This day in murthe and revel to dispende
Til on the welkne shoon the sterres light.

For more solempne in every mannes
sight 1125
This feste was, and gretter of costage,
Than was the revel of hir mariage.

Ful many a yeer in heigh prosperitee
Liven this two in concord and in reste,
And richely his doghter married he 1130
Un-to a lord, oon of the worthieste
Of al Itaille; and than in pees and reste
His wyves fader in his court he kepeth,
Til that the soule out of his body crepeth.

His sone succedeth in his heritage 1135
In reste and pees, after his fader day;
And fortunat was eek in mariage,
Al putte he nat his wyf in greet assay.
This world is nat so strong, it is no nay,
As it hath been in olde tymes yore, 1140
And herkneth what this auctour seith
therfore.

This storie is seyde, nat for that wyves
sholde
Folwen Grisilde as in humilitee,
For it were importable, though they wolde;
But for that every wight, in his de-
gree, 1145
Sholde be constant in adversitee
As was Grisilde; therfor Petrark wryteth
This storie, which with heigh style he
endyteth.

For, sith a womman was so pacient
Un-to a mortal man, wel more us oghte
Receyven al in gree that god us sent; 1151
For greet skile is, he preve that he wroghte.
But he ne tempteth no man that he boghte,
As seith seint Iame, if ye his pistel rede,
He preveth folk al day, it is no drede, 1155

And suffreth us, as for our excercyse,
With sharpe scourges of adversitee

Ful ofte to be bete in sondry wyse;
Nat for to knowe our wil, for certes he,
Ere we were born, knew al our frele-
tee; 1160
And for our beste is al his governaunce;
Lat us than live in vertuuous suffraunce.*

But o word, lordinges, herkneth er I go:—
It were ful hard to finde now a dayes
In al a toun Grisildes three or two; 1165
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
ye,
It wolde rather breste a-two than plye.

For which heer, for the wyves love of
Bathe, 1170
Whos lyf and al hir secte god mayntene
In heigh maistrye, and elles were it scathe,
I wol with lusty herte fressbe and grene
Seyn yow a song to glade yow, I wene,
And lat us stinte of earnestful matere:—
Herkneth my song, that seith in this man-
ere. 1176

Lenvoy de Chaucer.

Grisilde is deed, and eek hir pacience,
And bothe atones buried in Itaille;
For which I crye in open audience, 1179
No wedded man so hardy be tassaille
His wyves pacience, in hope to finde
Grisildes, for in certein he shall faille!

O noble wyves, ful of heigh prudence,
Lat noon humilitee your tonge naillie,
Ne lat no clerk have cause or diligence
To wryte of yow a storie of swich mer-
vaille 1186
As of Grisildis pacient and kinde;
Lest Chichevache yow swelwe in hir
entraillie!
Folweth Ekko, that holdeth no silence,

* *It seems to have been Chaucer's intention, in the first instance, to end this Tale here. Hence, we find, in MSS. E. Hn. Cm. Dd., the following genuine, but rejected stanza, suitable for insertion at this point:—*

Bihold the merye wordes of the Hoste.

This worthy Clerk, whan ended was his tale,
Our hoste seyde, and swoor by goddes bones,

'Me were lever than a barel ale
My wyf at hoom had herd this legende
ones;
This is a gentil tale for the nones,
As to my purpos, wiste ye my wille;
But thing that wol nat be, lat it be stille.'

*Here endeth the Tale of the Clerk of
Oxenford.*

But evere answereth at the countre-
taille; 1190

Beth nat bidaffed for your innocence,
But sharply tak on yow the governaille.
Emprinteth wel this lesson in your minde
For commune profit, sith it may availle.

Ye archewyves, stondeth at defence, 1195
Sin ye be stronge as is a greet camaille;
Ne suffreth nat that men yow doon
offence.

And sclendre wyves, feble as in bataille,
Beth egre as is a tygre yond in Inde;
Ay clappeth as a mille, I yow con-
saille. 1200

Ne dreed hem nat, do hem no rever-
ence;

For though thyn housbonde armed be in
maille,

The arwes of thy crabbed eloquence
Shal perce his brest, and eek his aven-
taille;

In Ialousye I rede eek thou him binde,
And thou shalt make him couche as
dooth a quaille. 1206

If thou be fair, ther folk ben in presence
Shew thou thy visage and thyn appar-
aille;

If thou be foul, be free of thy dispence,
To gete thee freendes ay do thy trav-
aille; 1210

Be ay of chere as light as leef on linde,
And lat him care, and wepe, and wringe,
and waille!

Here endeth the Clerk of Oxonford his Tale.

THE MERCHANT'S PROLOGUE.

The Prologe of the Marchantes Tale.

'WEPING and wayling, care, and other
sorwe

I know y-nogh, on even and a-morwe,'
Quod the Marchaunt, 'and so don othere
mo 1215

That wedded been, I trowe that it be so.
For, wel I woot, it fareth so with me.

I have a wyf, the worste that may be;
For though the feend to hir y-coupled
were,

She wolde him overmacche, I dar wel
swere. 1220

What sholde I yow reherce in special
Hir hye malice? she is a shrewe at al.

Ther is a long and large difference
Bitwix Grisildis grete pacience

And of my wyf the passing crueltee. 1225
Were I unbounden, al-so moot I thee!
I wolde never eft comen in the snare.

We wedded men live in sorwe and care;
Assaye who-so wol, and he shal finde
I seye sooth, by seint Thomas of Inde,
As for the more part, I sey nat alle. 1231
God shilde that it sholde so bifalle!

A! good sir hoost! I have y-wedded
be

Thise monthes two, and more nat, pardee;
And yet, I trowe, he that all his lyve

Wyflee hath been, though that men
wolde him ryve 1236

Un-to the herte, ne coude in no manere
Tellen so muchel sorwe, as I now here

Coude tellen of my wyves cursednesse!
'Now,' quod our hoost, 'Marchaunt,

so god yow blesse, 1240
Sin ye so muchel knowen of that art,
Ful hertely I pray yow telle us part.'

'Gladly,' quod he, 'but of myn owene
sore,
For sory herte, I telle may na-more.'

THE MARCHANTES TALE.

Here biginneth the Marchantes Tale.

WHYLOM ther was dwellinge in Lum-
bardye 1245

A worthy knight, that born was of Payve,
In which he lived in greet prosperitee;
And sixty yeer a wyfles man was he,
And folwed ay his bodily delyt

On women, ther-as was his appetyt, 1250
As doon thise foles that ben seculeer.

And whan that he was passed sixty yeer,
Were it for holinesse or for dotage,
I can nat seye, but swich a greet corage
Hadde this knight to been a wedded
man, 1255

That day and night he dooth al that he
can

Tespyen where he mighte wedded be;
Preyinge our lord to granten him, that
he

Mighte ones knowe of thilke blisful lyf
That is bitwixe an housbond and his
wyf; 1260

And for to live under that holy bond
With which that first god man and
womman bond.

'Non other lyf,' seyde he, 'is worth a
bene;

For wedlok is so esy and so clene,
That in this world it is a paradys.' 1265
Thus seyde this olde knight, that was so
wys.

And certainly, as sooth as god is king,
To take a wyf, it is a glorious thing,
And namely whan a man is old and
hoor;

Thanne is a wyf the fruit of his tresor.
Than sholde he take a yong wyf and a
feir, 1271

On which he mighte engendren him an
heir,

And lede his lyf in loye and in solas,
Wher-as thise bacheleres singe 'allas,'
Whan that they finden any adversitee
In love, which nis but childish vanitee.
And trewely it sit wel to be so, 1277
That bacheleres have often peyne and
wo;

On brotel ground they builde, and
brotelnesse 1279

They finde, whan they wene sikernesse.
They live but as a brid or as a beste,
In libertee, and under non areste,
Ther-as a wedded man in his estaat
Liveth a lyf blisful and ordinaat,

Under the yok of mariage y-bounde;
Wel may his herte in loye and blisse
habounde. 1286

For who can be so buxom as a wyf?
Who is so trewe, and eek so ententyf
To kepe him, syk and hool, as is his
make?

For wele or wo, she wol him nat for-
sake. 1290

She nis nat very him to love and serve,
Thogh that he lye bedrede til he sterve.
And yet somme clerkes seyn, it nis nat so,
Of whiche he, Theofraste, is oon of tho.

What force thogh Theofraste liste lye?
'Ne take no wyf,' quod he, 'for hous-
bondrye, 1296

As for to spare in household thy dis-
pence;

A trewe servant dooth more diligence,
Thy good to kepe, than thyn owene
wyf. 1299

For she wol clayme half part al hir lyf;
And if that thou be syk, so god me save,
Thy verray frendes or a trewe knave
Wol kepe thee bet than she that waiteth
ay

After thy good, and hath don many a day.'
And if thou take a wyf un-to thyn hold,
Ful lightly maystow been a cokewold.

This sentence, and an hundred thinges
worse, 1307

Wryteth this man, ther god his bones
corse!

But take no kepe of al swich vanitee;
Deffye Theofraste and herke me. 1310

A wyf is goddes yifte verrailly;
Alle other maner yiftes hardily,
As londes, rentes, pasture, or commune,
Or moebles, alle ben yiftes of fortune, 1314
That passen as a shadwe upon a wal.
But dredeclees, if pleynly speke I shal,

A wyf wol laste, and in thyn hous endure,

Wel lenger than thee list, paraventure.

Mariage is a ful gret sacrament;
He which that hath no wyf, I holde him shent; 1320

He liveth helples and al desolat,
I speke of folk in seculer estaat.

And herke why, I sey nat this for noght,
That womman is for mannes help y-wroght.

The hye god, whan he hadde Adam made, 1325

And saugh him al alone, bely-naked,
God of his grete goodnesse seyde than,
'Lat us now make an help un-to this man

Lyk to him-self; ' and thanne he made him Eve.

Heer may ye se, and heer-by may ye preve, 1330

That wyf is mannes help and his confort,
His paradys terrestre and his disport.

So buxom and so vertuou is she,
They moste nedes live in unitee.

O flesh they been, and o flesh, as I gesse, 1335

Hath but on herte, in wele and in distresse.

A wyf! a! Seinte Marie, *benedicite!*
How mighte a man han any adversitee

That hath a wyf? certes, I can nat seye.
The blisse which that is bitwixe hem tweye 1340

Ther may no tonge telle, or herte thinke.
If he be povre, she helpeth him to swinke;

She kepeth his good, and wasteth never a deel;

Al that hir housbonde lust, hir lyketh weel;

She seith not ones 'nay,' whan he seith 'ye.' 1345

'Do this,' seith he; 'al redy, sir,' seith she.

O blisful ordre of wedlok precious,
Thou art so mery, and eek so vertuou,

And so commended and appoved eek,
That every man that halt him worth a leek, 1350

Up-on his bare knees oghte al his lyf
Thanken his god that him hath sent a wyf;

Or elles preye to god him for to sende
A wyf, to laste un-to his lyves ende. 1354

For thanne his lyf is set in sikernesse;
He may nat be deceyved, as I gesse,

So that he werke after his wyves reed;
Than may he boldly beren up his heed,

They been so trewe and ther-with-al so wyse;

For which, if thou wolt werken as the wyse, 1360

Do alwey so as wommen wol thee rede.
Lo, how that Iacob, as thise clerkes rede,

By good conseil of his moder Rebekke,
Bond the kides skin aboute his nekke;

Thurgh which his fadres benisoun he wan. 1365

Lo, Judith, as the storie eek telle can,
By wys conseil she goddes peple kepte,

And slow him, Olofernus, whyl he slepte.

Lo Abigayl, by good conseil how she
Saved hir housbond Nabal, whan that he

Sholde han be slayn; and loke, Ester also 1371

By good conseil delivered out of wo
The peple of god, and made him, Mar-

dochee,

Of Assuere enhaunced for to be. 1374

Ther nis no-thing in gree superlatyf,
As seith Senek, above an humble wyf.

Suffre thy wyves tonge, as Caton bit;
She shal comande, and thou shalt suffren it;

And yet she wol obeye of curteisye.
A wyf is keper of thyn housbondrye; 1380

Wel may the syke man biwaille and wepe,

Ther-as ther nis no wyf the hous to kepe.

I warne thee, if wysly thou wolt wirche,
Love wel thy wyf, as Crist loveth his chirche.

If thou lovest thy-self, thou lovest thy wyf; 1385

No man hateth his flesh, but in his lyf
He fostreth it, and therefore bilde I thee,

Cherisse thy wyf, or thou shalt never thee.

Housbond and wyf, what so men lape or pleye, 1389

Of worldly folk holden the siker weye;

They been so knit, ther may noon harm
bityde;

And namely, up-on the wyves syde.
For which this Ianuarie, of whom I
tolde,

Considered hath, inwith his dayes olde,
The lusty lyf, the vertuous quiete, 1395
That is in mariage hony-swete;
And for his freendes on a day he sente,
To tellen hem theffect of his entente.

With face said, his tale he hath hem
told;

He seyde, 'freendes, I am hoor and old,
And almost, god wot, on my pittes
brinke; 1401

Up-on my soule somewhat moste I thinke.
I have my body folily despended;
Blessed be god, that it shal been
amended!

For I wol be, certeyn, a wedded man,
And that anoon in al the haste I can,
Un-to som mayde fair and tendre of age.
I prey yow, shapeth for my mariage
Al sodeynly, for I wol nat abyde; 1409
And I wol fonde tespyen, on my syde,
To whom I may be wedded hastily.
But for-as-muche as ye ben mo than I,
Ye shullen rather swich a thing espyen
Than I, and wher me best were to allyen.

But o thing warne I yow, my freendes
dere, 1415

I wol non old wyf han in no manere.
She shal nat passe twenty yeer, certayn;
Old fish and yong flesh wolde I have ful
fayn.

Bet is, quod he, 'a pyk than a pikerel;
And bet than old boef is the tendre veel.
I wol no womman thritty yeer of age,
It is but bene-straw and greet forage.

And eek thise olde widwes, god it woot,
They conne so muchel craft on Wades
boot,

So muchel broken harm, whan that hem
leste, 1425
That with hem sholde I never live in
reste.

For sondry scoles maken sotil clerkis;
Womman of manye scoles half a clerk is.
But certeynly, a yong thing may men
gye,

Right as men may warn wex with handes
plye. 1430

Wherfore I sey yow pleyedly, in a clause,

I wol non old wyf han right for this
cause.

For if so were, I hadde swich mis-
chance,

That I in hir ne coude han no plesaunce,
Thanne sholde I lede my lyf in avoutrye,
And go streight to the devel, whan I
dye. 1436

Ne children sholde I none up-on hir
geten;

Yet were me lever houndes had me eten,
Than that myn heritage sholde falle
In strange hand, and this I tell yow
alle. 1440

I dote nat, I woot the cause why
Men sholde wedde, and forthermore wot
I,

Ther speketh many a man of mariage,
That woot na-more of it than woot my
page,

For whiche causes man sholde take a
wyf. 1445

If he ne may nat liven chast his lyf,
Take him a wyf with greet devocioun,
By-cause of lefelful procreacioun

Of children, to thounour of god above,
And nat only for paramour or love; 1450
And for they sholde lecherye eschue,
And yelde hir dettes whan that they ben
due;

Or for that ech of hem sholde helpen
other

In meschief, as a suster shal the brother;
And live in chastitee ful holily. 1455

But sires, by your leve, that am nat I,
For god be thanked, I dar make avaunt,
I fele my limes stark and suffisaunt
To do al that a man bilongeth to;

I woot my-selven best what I may do. 1460
Though I be hoor, I fare as dooth a tree
That blommeth er that fruyt y-woxen be;
A blosmy tree nis neither dreye ne deed.

I fele me nowher hoor but on myn heed;
Myn herte and alle my limes been as
grene 1465

As laurer thurgh the yeer is for to sene,
And sin that ye han herd al myn entente,
I prey yow to my wil ye wole assente.'

Diverse men diversely him tolde
Of mariage manye ensamples olde. 1470
Somme blamed it, somme preyed it, cer-
teyn;

But atte laste, shortly for to seyn,

As al day falleth altercacioun
 Bitwixen freendes in disputisoun, 1474
 Ther fil a stryf bitwixe his bretheren two,
 Of whiche that oon was cleped Placebo,
 Iustinus soothly called was that other.
 Placebo seyde, 'o Ianuarie, brother,
 Ful litel nede had ye, my lord so dere,
 Conseil to axe of any that is here; 1480
 But that ye been so ful of sapience,
 That yow ne lyketh, for your heighe
 prudence,
 To weyven fro the word of Salomon.
 This word seyde he un-to us everichon:
 "Wirk alle thing by conseil," thus seyde
 he, 1485
 "And thanne shaltow nat repente thee."
 But though that Salomon spak swich a
 word,
 Myn owene dere brother and my lord,
 So wisly god my soule bringe at reste,
 I hold your owene conseil is the
 beste. 1490
 For brother myn, of me tak 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 lordes of ful heigh estaat; 1495
 Yet hadde I never with noon of hem de-
 baat.
 I never hem contraried, trewely;
 I woot wel that my lord can more than I.
 What that he seith, I holde it ferme and
 stable; 1499
 I seye the same, or elles thing semblable.
 A ful gret fool is any conseilour,
 That scraveth any lord of heigh honour,
 That dar presume, or elles thenken it,
 That his conseil sholde passe his lordes
 wit.
 Nay, lordes been no foles, by my fay; 1505
 Ye han your-selven shewed heer to-day
 So heigh sentence, so holily and weel,
 That I consente and conferme every-deel
 Your wordes alle, and your opinion. 1509
 By god, ther nis no man in al this toun
 Nin al Itaille, that coude bet han sayd;
 Crist halt him of this conseil wel apayd.
 And trewely, it is an heigh corage
 Of any man, that stopen is in age, 1514
 To take a yong wyf; by my fader kin,
 Your herte hangeth on a loly pin.
 Doth now in this matere right as yow
 leste,

For finally I holde it for the beste.'
 Iustinus, that ay stille sat and herde,
 Right in this wyse to Placebo answerde:
 'Now brother myn, be patient, I preye,
 Sin ye han seyde, and herkneth what I
 seye. 1522
 Senek among his othere wordes wyse
 Seith, that a man oghte him right wel
 avyse,
 To whom he yeveth his lond or his
 catel. 1525
 And sin I oghte avyse me right wel
 To whom I yeve my good away from me,
 Wel muchel more I oghte avysed be
 To whom I yeve my body; for alwey
 I warne yow wel, it is no childes pley 1530
 To take a wyf with-oute aysement.
 Men moste enquere, this is myn assent,
 Wher she be wys, or sobre, or dronkelewe,
 Or proud, or elles other-weys a shrewe;
 A chydester, or wastour of thy good, 1535
 Or riche, or poore, or elles mannish wood.
 Al-be-it so that no man finden shal
 Noon in this world that trotteth hool in al,
 Ne man ne beest, swich as men coude
 devyse;
 But natheles, it oghte y-nough suffise 1540
 With any wyf, if so were that she hadde
 Mo gode thewes than hir vyces hadde;
 And al this axeth leyser for tenquere.
 For god it woot, I have wept many a
 tere
 Ful prively, sin I have had a wyf. 1545
 Preyse who-so wole a wedded mannes lyf,
 Certain, I finde in it but cost and care,
 And observances, of alle blisses bare.
 And yet, god woot, my neighebores
 aboute, 1549
 And namely of women many a route,
 Seyn that I have the moste stedefast wyf,
 And eek the mekeste oon that bereth lyf.
 But I wot best wher wringeth me my sho.
 Ye mowe, for me, right as yow lyketh do;
 Avyseth yow, ye been a man of age, 1555
 How that ye entren in-to mariage,
 And namely with a yong wyf and a fair.
 By him that made water, erthe, and air,
 The yongest man that is in al this route
 Is bisy y-nough to bringen it aboute 1560
 To han his wyf alone, trusteth me.
 Ye shul nat plese hir fully yeres three,
 This is to seyn, to doon hir ful plesaunce.
 A wyf axeth ful many an observaunce.

I prey yow that ye be nat yvel apayd.' 1565
'Wel,' quod this Ianuarie, 'and hastow
said ?

Straw for thy Senek, and for thy prov-
erbes,

I counte nat a panier ful of herbes
Of scole-termes; wyser men than thow,
As thou hast herd, assenteden right
now 1570

To my purpos; 'Placebo, what sey ye ?'
'I seye, it is a cursed man,' quod he,
'That letteth matrimoine, sikerly.'

And with that word they rysen sodeynly,
And been assented fully, that he sholde
Be wedded whanne him list and wher he
wolde. 1576

Heigh fantasye and curious businesse
Fro day to day gan in the soule impresse
Of Ianuarie aboute his mariage. 1579

Many fair shap, and many a fair visage
Ther passeth thurgh his herte, night by
night.

As who-so toke a mirour polished bright,
And sette it in a commune market-place,
Than sholde he see many a figure pace
By his mirour; and, in the same wyse, 1585
Gan Ianuarie inwith his thoght devyse
Of maydens, whiche that dwelten him
bisyde.

He wiste nat wher that he mighte abyde.
For if that oon have beaute in hir face,
Another stant so in the peples grace 1590
For hir sadnesse, and hir benignitee,
That of the peple grettest voys hath she.
And somme were riche, and hadden
badde name.

But nathelees, bitwixe earnest and game,
He atte laste apoynted him on oon, 1595
And leet alle othere from his herte goon,
And chees hir of his owene auctoritee;
For love is blind al day, and may nat see.
And whan that he was in his bed y-brought,
He purtreied, in his herte and in his
thoght, 1600

Hir fresshe beautee and hir age tendre,
Hir myddel smal, hir armes longe and
sclendir,

Hir wyse governaunce, hir gentillesse,
Hir wommanly beringe and hir sadnesse.
And whan that he on hir was conde-
scended, 1605

Him thoughte his chois mighte nat ben
amended.

For whan that he him-self concluded
hadde,

Him thoughte ech other mannes wit so
badde,

That impossible it were to replye
Agayn his chois, this was his fan-
tasye. 1610

His freendes sente he to at his instaunce,
And preyed hem to doon him that
plesaunce,

That hastily they wolden to him come;
He wolde abregge hir labour, alle and
some.

Nedeth na-more for him to go ne
ryde, 1615

He was apoynted ther he wolde abyde.
Placebo cam, and eek his freendes
sone,

And alderfirst he bad hem alle a bone,
That noon of hem none argumentes
make

Agayn the purpos which that he hath
take; 1620

'Which purpos was plesant to god,'
seyde he,

'And verray ground of his prosperitee.'
He seyde, ther was a mayden in the
toun,

Which that of beautee hadde greet re-
noun,

Al were it so she were of smal
degree; 1625

Suffyseth him hir youthe and hir beautee.
Which mayde, he seyde, he wolde han to
his wyf,

To lede in ese and holinesse his lyf.
And thanked god, that he mighte han
hire al,

That no wight of his blisse parten
shal. 1630

And preyde hem to labouren in this nede,
And shapen that he faille nat to spede;
For thanne, he seyde, his spirit was at
ese.

'Thanne is,' quod he, 'no-thing may me
displese,

Save o thing priketh in my con-
science, 1635

The which I wol reherce in your pres-
ence.

I have,' quod he, 'herd seyde, ful yore
ago,

Ther may no man han parfite blisses two,

This is to seye, in erthe and eek in
hevene.

For though he kepe him fro the sinnes
sevene, 1640

And eek from every branche of thilke
tree,

Yet is ther so parfit felicitee,
And so greet ese and lust in mariage,
That ever I am agast, now in myn age,

That I shal lede now so mery a lyf, 1645
So delicat, with-ouften wo and stryf,

That I shal have myn hevене in erthe
here.

For sith that verray hevене is boght so
dere,

With tribulacioun and greet penaunce,
How sholde I thanne, that live in swich
plesaunce 1650

As alle wedded men don with hir wyvis,
Come to the blisse ther Crist eterne on
lyve is?

This is my drede, and ye, my bretheren
tweye,

Assoilthe me this questioun, I preye.
Justinus, which that hated his
folye, 1655

Answerde anon, right in his Japerye;
And for he wolde his longe tale abregge,
He wolde noon auctoritee allegge,
But seyde, 'sire, so ther be noon obstace
Other than this, god of his hye mir-
acle 1660

And of his mercy may so for yow wirche,
That, er ye have your right of holy
chirche,

Ye may repente of wedded mannes lyf,
In which ye seyn ther is no wo ne stryf.
And elles, god forbede but he sente 1665

A wedded man him grace to repente
Wel ofte rather than a sengle man!

And therefore, sire, the beste reed I can,
Dispeire yow noght, but have in your
memorie,

Paraunter she may be your purga-
torie! 1670

She may be goddes mene, and goddes
whippe;

Than shal your soule up to hevене skippe
Swifter than dooth an arwe out of the
bowe!

I hope to god, her-after shul ye knowe,
That their nis no so greet felicitee 1675
In mariage, ne never-mo shal be,

That yow shal lette of your savacioun,
So that ye use, as skile is and resoun,
The lustes of your wyf attemprely,
And that ye plesse hir nat to amor-
ously, 1680

And that ye kepe yow eek from other
sinne.

My tale is doon: — for my wit is thinne.
Beth nat agast her-of, my brother dere.' —
(But lat us waden out of this matere.

The Wyf of Bath, if ye han under-
stonde, 1685

Of mariage, which we have on honde,
Declared hath ful wel in litel space). —
'Fareth now wel, god have yow in his
grace.'

And with this word this Justin and his
brother

Han take hir leve, and ech of hem of
other. 1690

For when they sawe it moste nedes be,
They wroughten so, by sly and wys trectee,
That she, this mayden, which that Maius
highte,

As hastily as ever that she mighte,
Shal wedded be un-to this Ianuarie. 1695

I trowe it were to longe yow to tarie,
If I yow tolde of every scrit and bond,
By which that she was feffed in his lond;
Or for to herknen of hir riche array.

But finally y-comen is the day 1700
That to the chirche bothe be they went
For to receive the holy sacrament.

Forth comth the preest, with stole aboute
his nekke,

And bad hir be lyk Sarra and Rebekke,
In wisdom and in trouthe of ma-
riage; 1705

And seyde his orisons, as is usage,
And crouched hem, and bad god sholde
hem blesse,

And made al siker y-nogh with holinesse.
Thus been they wedded with solemp-
nitee,

And at the feste sitteth he and she 1710
With other worthy folk up-on the deys.

Al ful of Joye and blisse is the paleys,
And ful of instruments and of vitaille,
The moste deyntevous of al Itaille.

Biifon hem stooode swiche instruments of
soun, 1715

That Orpheus, ne of Thebes Amphiou,
Ne maden never swich a melodye.

At every cours than cam loud min-
straleye,
That never tromped Ioab, for to here,
Nor he, Theodomas, yet half so clere, 1720
At Thebes, whan the citee was in doute.
Bacus the wyn hem skinketh al aboute,
And Venus laugheth up-on every wight.
For Ianuarie was bicomē hir knight,
And wolde bothe assayen his corage 1725
In libertee, and eek in mariage;
And with hir fyrbrond in hir hand aboute
Daunceth biforn the bryde and al the
route.
And certinly, I dar right wel seyn this,
Ymenēus, that god of wedding is, 1730
Saugh never his lyf so mery a wedded
man.
Hold thou thy pees, thou poete Marcian,
That wrytest us that ilke wedding murie
Of hir, Philologye, and him, Mercurie,
And of the songes that the Muses
songe. 1735
To smal is bothe thy penne, and eek thy
tonge,
For to descryven of this mariage.
Whan tendre youthe hath wedded stoup-
ing age,
Ther is swich mirthe that it may nat be
writen;
Assayeth it your-self, than may ye witen
If that I lye or noon in this matere. 1741
Maius, that sit with so benigne a
chere,
Hir to biholde it semed fayēryē;
Quene Ester loked never with swich an
yē 1744
On Assuer, so meke a look hath she.
I may yow nat devyse al hir beautee;
But thus muche of hir beautee telle I
may,
That she was lyk the brighte morwe of
May,
Fulfil of alle beautéē and plesaunce.
This Ianuarie is ravished in a traunce
At every time he loked oȝ hir face; 1751
But in his herte he gan hir to manace,
That he that night in armes wolde hir
streyne
Harder than ever Paris dide Eleyne.
But nathelees, yet hadde he greet
pitee, 1755
That thilke night offendēn hir moste he;
And thoughte, 'allas! o tendre creature!

Now wolde god ye mighte wel endure
Al my corage, it is so sharp and kene;
I am agast ye shul it nat sustene. 1760
But god forbede that I dide al my might!
Now wolde god that it were woxen night,
And that the night wolde lasten evermo.
I wolde that al this peple were ago.
And finally, he doth al his labour, 1765
As he best mighte savinge his honour,
To haste hem fro the mete in subtil wyse.
The tyme cam that reson was to ryse;
And after that, men daunce and drinken
faste,
And spyces al aboute the hous they
caste; 1770
And ful of Ioye and blisse is every man;
All but a squyer, highte Damian,
Which carf biforn the knight ful many a
day.
He was so ravished on his lady May,
That for the verray peyne he was ny
wood; 1775
Almost he swelte and swowned ther he
stood.
So sore hath Venus hurt him with hir
brond,
As that she bar it daunsinge in hir hond.
And to his bed he wente him hastily;
Na-more of him as at this tyme speke I.
But ther I lete him wepe y-nough and
pleyne, 1781
Til fresshe May wol rewen on his peyne.
O perilous fyr, that in the bedstraw
bredeth! *Auctor.*
O famulier foo, that his servyce bedeth!
O servant traitour, false boonly hewe,
Lyk to the naddre in bosom sly un-
trewe, 1786
God shilde us alle from your aqueynt-
aunce!
O Ianuarie, dronken in plesaunce
Of mariage, see how thy Damian,
Thyn owene squyer and thy borne man,
Entendeth for to do thee vileinye. 1791
God graunte thee thyn boonly fo tespye.
For in this world nis worse pestilence
Than boonly foo al day in thy presence.
Parfourned bath the sonne his ark
diurne, 1795
No lenger may the body of him soiurne
On thorisonte, as in that latitude.
Night with his mantel, that is derk and
rude,

Gan oversprede the hemisperie aboute;
For which departed is this lusty route
Fro Ianuarie, with thank on every
syde. 1801

Hom to hir houses lustily they ryde,
Wher-as they doon hir thinges as hem
leste,

And whan they sye hir tyme, goon to reste.
Sone after that, this hastif Ianuarie 1805
Wolde go to bedde, he wolde no lenger
tarie.

He drinketh ipocras, clarree, and vernage
Of spyces hote, tencrenen his corage;
And many a letuarie hadde he ful fyn,
Swiche as the cursed monk dan Con-
stantyn 1810

Hath written in his book *de Coitu*;
To eten hem alle, he nas no-thing eschu.
And to his privee freendes thus seyde he:
'For goddes love, as sone as it may be,
Lat voyden al this hous in curteys wyse.'
And they han doon right as he wol de-
vyse 1816

Men drinken, and the travers drawe anon;
The bryde was brought a-bedde as stille
as stoon;

And whan the bed was with the preest
y-blessed.

Out of the chambre hath every wight him
dressed. 1820

And Ianuarie hath faste in armes take
His fresshe May, his paradys, his make.
He lulleth hir, he kisseth hir ful ofte
With thikke bristles of his berd unsofte,
Lyk to the skin of houndfish, sharp as
brere, 1825

For he was shave al newe in his manere.
He rubbeth hir aboute hir tendre face,
And seyde thus, 'allas! I moot trespass
To yow, my spouse, and yow gretly
offende,

Er tyme come that I wil doun de-
scende. 1830

But natheless, considereth this,' quod he,
'Ther nis no werkman, what-so-ever he
be,

That may bothe werke wel and hastily;
This wol be doon at leyser parfityly. 1834
It is no fors how longe that we pleye;
In trewe wedlok wedded be we tweye;
And blessed be the yok that we been
inne,

For in our actes we mowe do no sinne.

A man may do no sinne with his wyf,
Ne hurte him-selven with his owene
knyf; 1840
For we han leve to pleye us by the
lawe.'

Thus laboureth til that the daygan dawe;
And than he taketh a sop in fyn clarree,
And upright in his bed than sitteth he,
And after that he sang ful loude and
clere, 1845

And kiste his wyf, and made wantoun
chere.

He was al coltish, ful of ragerye,
And ful of Iargon as a flekked pye.

The slakke skin aboute his nekke
shaketh,

Why! that he sang; so chaunteth he and
craketh. 1850

But god wot what that May thoughte in
hir herte,

Whan she him saugh up sittinge in his
sherte,

In his night-cappe, and with his nekke
lene;

She preyseth nat his pleying worth a
bene.

Than seide he thus, 'my reste wol I
take; 1855

Now day is come, I may no lenger
wake.'

And doun he leyde his heed, and sleep
til pryme.

And afterward, whan that he saugh his
tyme,

Up ryseth Ianuarie; but fresshe May
Holdeth hir chambre un-to the fourthe
day, 1860

As usage is of wyves for the beste.

For every labour som-tyme moot han
reste,

Or elles longe may he nat endure;

This is to seyn, no lyves creature,

Be it of fish, or brid, or beest, or
man. 1865

Now wol I speke of woful Da-
mian, *Auctor.*

That languissheth for love, as ye shul
here;

Therefore I speke to him in this manere:
I seye, 'O sely Damian, allas!

Answer to my demaunde, as in this
cas, 1870

How shallow to thy lady fresshe May

Telle thy wo? She wole alwey seye
 "a nay";

Eek if thou speke, she wol thy wo
 biwreye;

God be thyn help, I can no bettre seye.'

This syke Damian in Venus fyr 1875

So brenneth, that he dyeth for desyr;

For which he putte his lyf in aventure

No lenger mighte he in this wyse endure;

But prively a penner gan he borwe,

And in a lettre wroot he al his sorwe, 1880

In manere of a compleynt or a lay,

Un-to his faire fresshe lady May.

And in a purs of silk, heng on his sherte,

He hath it put, and leyde it at his herte.

The mone that, at noon, was, thilke
 day 1885

That Ianuarie hath wedded fresshe May,

In two of Taur, was in-to Cancre gliden;

So longe hath Maius in hir chambre
 biden,

As custume is un-to these nobles alle.

A bryde shal nat eten in the halle, 1890

Til dayes foure or three dayes atte leste

Y-passed been; than lat hir go to feste.

The fourthe day compleet fro noon to
 noon,

Whan that the heighe masse was y-doon,

In halle sit this Ianuarie, and May 1895

As fresh as is the brighte someres day.

And so bifel, how that this gode man

Remembered him upon this Damian,

And seyde, 'Seinte Marie! how may
 this be,

That Damian entendeth nat to me? 1900

Is he ay syk, or how may this bityde?'

His squyeres, whiche that stoden ther
 bisyde,

Excused him by-cause of his siknesse,

Which letted him to doon his bisnesse;

Noon other cause mighte make him
 tarie. 1905

'That me forthinketh,' quod this Ianu-
 arie,

'He is a gentil squyer, by my trouthe!

If that he deyde, it were harm and
 routhe;

He is as wys, discreet, and as secree

As any man I woot of his degree; 1910

And ther-to manly and eek servisable,

And for to been a thrify man right able.

But after mete, as sone as ever I may,
 I wol my-self visyte him and eek May,

To doon him al the confort that I can.'

And for that word him blessed every
 man, 1916

That, of his bountee and his gentillesse,

He wolde so conforten in siknesse

His squyer, for it was a gentil dede.

'Dame,' quod this Ianuarie, 'tak good
 hede, 1920

At-after mete ye, with your wommen
 alle,

Whan ye han been in chambre out of
 this halle,

That alle ye go to see this Damian;

Doth him disport, he is a gentil man;

And telleth him that I wol him visyte,

Have I no-thing but rested me a lyte;

And spede yow faste, for I wole abyde

Til that ye slepe faste by my syde.' 1928

And with that word he gan to him to
 calle

A squyer, that was marchal of his halle,

And tolde him certeyn thinges, what he
 wolde. 1931

This fresshe May hath streight hir wey
 y-holde,

With alle hir wommen, un-to Damian.

Doun by his beddes syde sit she than,

Confortinge him as goodly as she may.

This Damian, whan that his tyme he
 say, 1936

In secree wise his purs, and eek his
 bille,

In which that he y-writen hadde his
 wille,

Hath put in-to hir hand, with-uten
 more,

Save that he syketh wonder depe and
 sore, 1940

And softly to hir right thus seyde he:

'Mercy! and that ye nat discovere me;

For I am deed, if that this thing be
 kid.'

This purs hath she inwith hir bosom hid,
 And wente hir wey; ye gete namore of
 me. 1945

But un-to Ianuarie y-comen is she,

That on his beddes syde sjt ful softe.

He taketh hir, and kisseth hir ful ofte,

And leyde him doun to slepe, and that
 anon.

She feyned hir as that she moste gon

Ther-as ye woot that every wight mot
 nede. 1951

And whan she of this bille hath taken
hede,

She rente it al to cloutes atte laste,
And in the privee softly it caste.

Who studieth now but faire fresshe
May? 1955

Adoun by olde Ianuarie she lay,
That sleep, til that the coughe hath him
awaked;

Anon he preyde hir strepen hir al
naked;

He wolde of hir, he seyde, han som ple-
saunce,

And seyde, hir clothes dide him encom-
braunce, 1960

And she obeyeth, be hir lief or looth.

But lest that precious folk be with me
wrooth,

How that he wroghte, I dar nat to yow
telle;

Or whether hir thoughte it paradys or
helle;

But here I lete hem werken in hir wyse
Til evensong rong, and that they moste
aryse. 1966

Were it by destinee or aventure,
Were it by influence or by nature,
Or constellacion, that in swich estat
The hevene stood, that tyme fortunat
Was for to putte a bille of Venus werkes
(For alle thing hath tyme, as seyn thise
clerkes) 1972

To any womman, for to gete hir love,
I can nat seye; but grete god above,
That knoweth that non act is causelees,
He deme of al, for I wol holde my pees.
But sooth is this, how that this fresshe
May

Hath take swich impression that day,
For pitee of this syke Damian, 1979

That from hir herte she ne dryve can
The remembraunce for to doon him ese.
'Certeyn,' thoghte she, 'whom that this
thing displese,

I rekke noght, for here I him assure,
To love him best of any creature,
Though he na-more hadde than his
sherte.' 1985

Lo, pitee renneth sone in gentil herte.

Heer may ye se how excellent fran-
chyse

In women is, whan they hem narwe
ayse.

Som tyrant is, as ther be many oon,
That hath an herte as hard as any stoon,
Which wolde han lete him sterven in the
place 1991

Wel rather than han graunted him hir
grace;

And hem reioysen in hir cruel pryde,
And rekke nat to been an homicyde.

This gentil May, fulfilled of pitee, 1995
Right of hir hande a lettre made she,
In which she graunteth him hir verray
grace;

Ther lakketh noght but only day and
place,

Wher that she mighte un-to his lust
suffyse :

For it shal be right as he wol devyse.

And whan she saugh hir time, up-on a
day, 2001

To visite this Damian goth May,
And sotilly this lettre down she threste
Under his pilwe, rede it if him leste.
She taketh him by the hand, and harde
him twiste 2005

So secrely, that no wight of it wiste,
And bad him been al hool, and forth she
wente

To Ianuarie, whan that he for hir sente.

Up ryseth Damian the nexte morwe,
Al passed was his siknesse and his
sorwe. 2010

He kembeth him, he proyneth him and
pyketh,

He dooth al that his lady lust and
lyketh;

And eek to Ianuarie he gooth as lowe
As ever dide a dogge for the bowe.

He is so plesant un-to every man, 2015
(For craft is al, who-so that do it can)

That every wight is fayn to speke him
good;

And fully in his lady grace he stood.

Thus lete I Damian aboute his nede,
And in my tale forth I wol procede. 2020

Somme clerkes holden that felicitee
Stant in delyt, and therefor certeyn he,
This noble Ianuarie, with-al his might,
In honest wyse, as longeth to a knight,
Shoop him to live ful deliciously. 2025

His housinge, his array, as honestly
To his degree was makid as a kinges.

Amonges othere of his honest thinges,
He made a gardin, walled al with ston;

So fair a gardin woot I nowher noon. 2030
 For out of doute, I verrailly suppose,
 That he that wroot the Romance of the
 Rose

Ne coude of it the beautee wel devyse;
 Ne Priapus ne mighte nat suffyse,
 Though he be god of gardins, for to
 telle 2035

The beautee of the gardin and the wellle,
 That stood under a laurer alwey grene.

Ful ofte tyme he, Pluto, and his queene,
 Proserpina, and al hir fayërye,
 Disporten hem and maken melodye 2040
 Aboute that wellle, and daunced, as men
 tolde.

This noble knight, this Ianuarie the
 olde,

Swich deintee hath in it to walke and
 pleye,

That he wol no wight suffren bere the
 keye

Save he him-self; for of the smale wicket
 He bar alwey of silver a smal cliket, 2046
 With which, whan that him leste, he it
 unshette.

And whan he wolde paye his wyf hir dette
 In somer seson, thider wolde he go,

And May his wyf, and no wight but they
 two; 2050

And thinges whiche that were nat doon
 a-bedde,

• He in the gardin parfourned hem and
 spedde.

And in this wyse, many a mery day,
 Lived this Ianuarie and fresshe May.

But worldly Ioye may nat alwey dure 2055
 To Ianuarie, ne to no creature.

O sodeyn hap, o thou fortune in-
 stable, *Auctor.*

Lyk to the scorpion so deceivable,
 That flaterest with thyn heed when thou
 wolt stinge;

Thy tayl is death, thurgh thyn envenim-
 inge. 2060

O brotil Ioye! o swete venim queynte!
 O monstre, that so subtilly canst peynte

Thy yfites, under hewe of stedfastnesse,
 That thou deceyvest bothe more and lesse!

Why hastow Ianuarie thus deceyved, 2065
 That haddest him for thy ful frend re-
 ceyved?

And now thou hast biraft hiur bothe hise
 yën,

For sorwe of which desyreth he to dyen.
 Allas! this noble Ianuarie free,
 Amidde his lust and his prosperitee, 2070
 Is woxen blind, and that al sodeynly.

He wepeth and he wayleth pitously,
 And ther-with-al the fyr of Ialousye,
 Lest that his wyf sholde falle in som
 folye,

So brente his herte, that he wolde fayn
 That som man bothe him and hir had
 slayn. 2076

For neither after his deeth, nor in his lyf,
 Ne wolde he that she were love ne wyf,

But ever live as widwe in clothes blake,
 Soul as the turtle that lost hath hir
 make. 2080

But atte laste, after a monthe or tweye,
 His sorwe gan aswage, sooth to seye;

For whan he wiste it may noon other be,
 He paciently took his adversitee;

Save, out of doute, he may nat for-
 goon 2085

That he nas Ialous evermore in oon;
 Which Ialousye it was so outrageous,

That neither in halle, nin noon other hous,
 Ne in noon other place, never-the-mo,

He nolde suffre hir for to ryde or go, 2090
 But-if that he had hand on hir alway;

For which ful ofte wepeth fresshe May,
 That loveth Damian so benignly,

That she mot outhur dyen sodeynly,
 Or elles she mot han him as hir leste; 2095

She wayteth whan hir herte wolde breste.

Up-on that other syde Damian
 Bicomen is the sorwefulleste man

That ever was; for neither night ne day
 Ne mighte he speke a word to fresshe

May, 2100

As to his purpos, of no swich matere,
 But-if that Ianuarie moste it here,

That hadde an hand up-on hir evermo.
 But nathelees, by wryting to and fro

And privee signes, wiste he what she
 mente; 2105

And she knew eek the fyn of his entente.
 O Ianuarie, what mighte it thee
 availle, *Auctor.*

Thou mightest see as fer as shippes saille?
 For also good is blind deceyved be,

As be deceyved whan a man may se. 2110
 Lo, Argus, which that hadde an hondred
 yën,

For al that ever he coude poure or pryen,

Yet was he blent; and, god wot, so ben
mo,

That wenen wisly that it be nat so.

Passé over is an ese, I sey na-more. 2115

This fresshe May, that I spak of so yore,
In warme wex hath emprented the cliket,

That Ianuarie bar of the smale wiket,

By which in-to his gardin ofte he wente.

And Damian, that knew al hir entente,
The cliket countrefeted prively; 2121

Ther nis na-more to seye, but hastily

Som wonder by this cliket shal bityde,

Which ye shul heren, if ye wole abyde.

O noble Ovyde, ful sooth seyestou, god
woot! *Auctor.*

What sleighte is it, thogh it be long and
hoot, 2126

That he nil finde it out in som manere?

By Piramus and Tesbee may men lere;

Thogh they were kept ful longe streite
overal,

They been accorded, rouninge thurgh a
wal, 2130

Ther no wight coude han founde out
swich a sleighte.

But now to purpos; er that dayes eighte

Were passed, er the monthe of Iul, bifil

That Ianuarie hath caught so greet a wil,

Thurgh egging of his wyf, him for to
pleye 2135

In his gardin, and no wight but they
tweye,

That in a morwe un-to this May seith he:

'Rys up, my wyf, my love, my lady free;

The turtles vois is herd, my douve swete;

The winter is goon, with alle his reynes
wete; 2140

Com forth now, with thyn eyen columbyn!

How fairer been thy brestes than is wyn!

The gardin is enclosed al aboute;

Com forth, my whyte spouse; out of doute,

Thou hast me wounded in myn herte, o
wyf! 2145

No spot of thee ne knew I al my lyf.

Com forth, and lat us taken our disport;

I chees thee for my wyf and my confort.'

Swiche olde lewed wordes used he;

On Damian a signe made she, 2150

That he sholde go biforen with his cliket:

This Damian thanne hath opened the
wiket,

And in he stirte, and that in swich man-
ere,

That no wight mighte it see neither
y-here;

And stille he sit under a bush anon. 2155

This Ianuarie, as blind as is a stoon,

With Maius in his hand, and no wight mo,

In-to his fresshe gardin is ago,

And clapte to the wiket soleylny.

'Now, wyf,' quod he, 'heer nis but thou
and I, 2160

That art the creature that I best love.

For, by that lord that sit in heven above,

Lever ich hadde dyen on a knyf,

Than thee offende, trewe dere wyf!

For goddes sake, think how I thee
chees, 2165

Noght for no coveityse, doutelees,

But only for the love I had to thee.

And thogh that I be old, and may nat
see,

Beth to me trewe, and I shal telle yow
why.

Three thinges, certes, shul ye winne
ther-by; 2170

First, love of Crist, and to your-self hon-
our,

And al myn heritage, toun and tour;

I yeve it yow, maketh chartres as yow
leste;

This shal be doon to-morwe er sonne
reste. 2174

So wisly god my soule bringe in blisse,

I prey yow first, in covenant ye me kisse.

And thogh that I be Ialous, wyte me
noght.

Ye been so depe emprented in my thought,

That, whan that I considere your beautee,

And ther-with-al the unlykly elde of
me, 2180

I may nat, certes, thogh I sholde dye,

Forbere to been out of your companye

For verray love; this is with-uten doute.

Now kis me, wyf, and lat us rome aboute.'

This fresshe May, whan she thise
wordes herde, 2185

Benignely to Ianuarie answerde,

But first and forward she bigan to wepe,

'I have,' quod she, 'a soule for to kepe

As wel as ye, and also myn honour, 2189

And of my wyfthod thilke tendre flour,

Which that I have assured in your hond,

Whan that the preest to yow my body
bond;

Wherefore I wole answeré in this manere

By the leve of yow, my lord so dere: 2194
I prey to god, that never dawe the day
That I ne sterve, as foule as womman
may,

If ever I do un-to my kin that shame,
Or elles I empeyre so my name,
That I be fals; and if I do that lakke,
Do strepe me and put me in a sakke, 2200
And in the nexte river do me drenche.
I am a gentil womman and no wenche.
Why speke ye thus? but men ben ever
untrewe,

And women have repreve of yow ay
newe.

Ye han non other contenance, I leve, 2205
But speke to us of untrust and repreve.⁷

And with that word she saugh wher
Damian

Sat in the bush, and coughen she bigan,
And with her finger signes made she, 2209
That Damian sholde climbe up-on a tree,
That charged was with fruit, and up he
wente;

For verraily he knew al hir entente,
And every signe that she coude make
Wel bet than Ianuarie, hir owene make
For in a lettre she had told him al 2215
Of this matere, how he werchen shal.
And thus I lete him sitte up-on the pyrie,
And Ianuarie and May rominge myrie.

Bright was the day, and blew the fir-
mament, 2219

Phebus of gold his stremes down hath sent,
To gladen every flour with his warmnesse.
He was that tyme *in Geminis*, as I gesse,
But litel fro his declinacioun

Of Cancer, Iovis exaltacioun. 2224

And so bifel, that brighte morwe-tyde,
That in that gardin, in the ferther syde,
Pluto, that is the king of fayërye,
And many a lady in his companye,
Folwinge his wyf, the quene Proserpyne,
Ech after other, right as any lyne — 2230
Whil that she gadered floures in the mede,
In Claudian ye may the story rede,
How in his grisly carte he hir fette: —
This king of fairye thanne adoun him sette
Up-on a bench of turves, fresh and grene,
And right anon thus seyde he to his
quene. 2236

'My wyf,' quod he, 'ther may no wight
sey nay;

The experience so preveth every day

The treson whiche that wommen doon to
man.

Ten hondred thousand [stories] telle I
can 2240

Notable of your untrouthe and brotilnesse.
O Salomon, wys, richest of richesse,
Fulfil of sapience and of worldly glorie,
Ful worthy been thy wordes to memorie
To every wight that wit and reson
can. 2245

Thus preiseth he yet the bountee of man:
"Amonges a thousand men yet fond I
oon,

But of wommen alle fond I noon."

Thus seith the king that knoweth your
wikkednesse;

And Iesus *filius Syrak*, as I gesse, 2250
Ne speketh of yow but selde reverence.

A wilde fyr and corrupt pestilence
So falle up-on your bodies yet to-night!
Ne see ye nat this honorable knight,
By-cause, allas! that he is blind and
old, 2255

His owene man shal make-him cokewold;
Lo heer he sit, the lechour, in the tree.

Now wol I graunten, of my magestee,
Un-to this olde blinde worthy knight
That he shal have ayecyn his eyen sight,
Whan that his wyf wold doon him vil-
einye; 2261

Than shal he knowen al hir harlotrye
Both in repreve of hir and othere mo.'

'Ye shal,' quod Proserpyne, 'wol ye so;
Now, by my modres sires soule I
swere, 2265

That I shal yeven hir suffisant answer,
And alle wommen after, for hir sake;
That, though they be in any gylt y-take,
With face bold they shulle hem-self ex-
cuse,

And bere hem down that wolden hem ac-
cuse. 2270

For lakke of answer, noon of hem shal
dyen.

Al hadde man seyn a thing with bothe
his yën,

Yit shul we wommen visage it hardily,
And wepe, and swere, and chyde subtilly,
So that ye men shul been as lewed as
gees. 2275

What rekketh me of your auctoritees?

I woot wel that this Iew, this Salomon,
Fond of us wommen foles many oon.

But though that he ne fond no good
womman,

Yet hath ther founde many another man
Wommen ful trewe, ful gode, and vertu-
ous. 2281

Witnesse on hem that dwelle in Cristes
hous,

With martirdom they preved hir con-
stance.

The Romayn gestes maken remembrance
Of many a verray trewe wyf also. 2285

But sire, ne be nat wrooth, al-be-it so,
Though that he seyde he fond no good
womman,

I prey yow take the sentence of the man;
He mente thus, that in sovereyn bontee
Nis noon but god, that sit in Trini-
tee. 2290

Ey! for verray god, that nis but oon,
What make ye so muche of Salomon?

What though he made a temple, goddes
hous?

What though he were riche and glorious?
So made he eek a temple of false god-
dis, 2295

How mighte he do a thing that more for-
bode 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

Y-spared him for his fadres sake, he
sholde

Have lost his regne rather than he wolde.
I sette noght of al the vileinye,

That ye of women wryte, a boterflye.
I am a womman, nedes moot I speke,

Or elles swelle til myn herte breke. 2306
For sithen he seyde that we ben Iangle-
resses,

As ever hool I mote brouke my tresses,
I shal nat spare, for no curteiseye,

To speke him harm that wolde us vil-
einye.' 2310

'Dame,' quod this Pluto, 'be no
lenger wrooth;

I yeve it up; but sith I swoor myn ooth
That I wolde graunten him his sighte

ageyn,
My word shal stonde, I warne yow,
certeyn.

I am a king, it sit me noght to lye.' 2315

'And I,' quod she, 'a queene of
fayerye.

Hir answer shal she have, I under-
take;

Lat us na-more wordes heer-of make.
For sothe, I wol no lenger yow con-
trarie.' 2319

Now lat us turne agayn to Ianuarie,
That in the gardin with his faire May

Singeth, ful merier than the papeiay,
'Yow love I best, and shal, and other

noon.'

So longe aboute the aleyes is he goon,
Til he was come agaynes thilke pyrie,

Wher-as this Damian sitteth ful myrie
An heigh, among the fresshe leves grene.

This fresshe May, that is so bright and
shene,

Can for to syke, and seyde, 'allas, my
syde!

Now sir,' quod she, 'for aught that may
bityde, 2330

I moste han of the peres that I see,
Or I mot dye, so sore longeth me

To eten of the smale peres grene.
Help, for hir love that is of hevене

queene! 2334

I telle yow wel, a womman in my plyt
May han to fruit so greet an appetyt,

That she may dyen, but she of it have.'
'Allas!' quod he, 'that I ne had

heer a knave
That coude climbe; allas! allas!' quod
he,

'That I am blind.' 'Ye, sir, no fors,'
quod she: 2340

'But wolde ye vouche-sauf, for goddes
sake,

The pyrie inwith your armes for to
take,

(For wel I woot that ye mistruste me)
Thanne sholde I climbe wel y-nogh,'

quod she,
'So I my foot mighte sette upon your
bak.' 2345

'Certes,' quod he, 'ther-on shal be no
lak,

Mighte I yow helpen with myn herte
blood.'

He stoupeth doun, and on his bak she
stood,

And caughte her by a twiste, and up
she gooth.

Ladies, I prey yow that ye be nat
wrooth; 2350
I can nat glose, I am a rude man.
And sodeynly anon this Damian
Gan pullen up the smok, and in he
throng.
And whan that Pluto saugh this grete
wrong,
To Ianuarie he gaf agayn his sighte, 2355
And made him see, as wel as ever he
mighte.
And whan that he hadde caught his
sighte agayn,
Ne was ther never man of thing so fayn.
But on his wyf his thought was evermo;
Up to the tree he caste his eyen two,
And saugh that Damian his wyf had
dressed 2361
In swich manere, it may nat ben ex-
pressed
But if I wolde speke uncurteisly:
And up he yaf a roring and a cry
As doth the moder whan the child shal
dye: 2365
'Out! help! allas! harrow!' he gan to
crye,
'O stronge lady store, what dostow?'
And she answerde, 'sir, what eyleth
yow?
Have pacience, and reson in your
minde,
I have yow holpe on bothe your eyen
blinde. 2370
Up peril of my soule, I shal nat lyen,
As me was taught, to hele with your yēn,
Was no-thing bet to make yow to see
Than strugle with a man up-on a tree.
God woot, I dide it in ful good entente.'
'Strugle!' quod he, 'ye, algate in it
wente! 2376
God yeve yow bothe on shames deeth
to dyen!
He swyved thee, I saugh it with myne yēn,
And elles be I hanged by the hals!'
'Thanne is,' quod she, 'my medicyne
al fals; 2380
For certainly, if that ye mighte see,
Ye wolde nat seyn thise wordes un-to me;
Ye han som glimsing and no parfit sighte.'
'I see,' quod he, 'as wel as ever I
mighte,

Thonked be god! with bothe myne
eyen two, 2385
And by my trouthe, me thoughte he
dide thee so.'
'Ye maze, maze, gode sire,' quod she,
'This thank have I for I have maad yow
see;
Allas!' quod she, 'that ever I was so
kinde!'
'Now, dame,' quod he, 'lat al passe
out of minde. 2390
Com doun, my lief, and if I have mis-
sayd,
God help me so, as I am yvel apayd.
But, by my fader soule, I wende han
seyn,
How that this Damian had by thee
leyn,
And that thy smok had leyn up-on his
brest.' 2395
'Ye, sire,' quod she, 'ye may wene as
yow lest;
But, sire, a man that waketh out of his
sleep,
He may nat sodeynly wel taken keep
Up-on a thing, ne seen it parfitly,
Til that he be adawed verraily; 2400
Right so a man, that longe hath blind
y-be,
Ne may nat sodeynly so wel y-see,
First whan his sighte is newe come
ageyn,
As he that hath a day or two y-seyn. 2404
Til that your sighte y-satled be a while,
Ther may ful many a sighte yow bigyle.
Beth war, I prey yow; for, by hevene
king,
Ful many a man weneth to seen a thing,
And it is al another than it semeth.
He that misconceyeth, he misdemeth.'
And with that word she leep doun for
the tree. 2411
This Ianuarie, who is glad but he?
He kisseth hir, and clippeth hir ful ofte,
And on hir wombe he stroketh hir ful
softe, 2414
And to his palays boom he hath hir lad.
Now, gode men, I pray yow to be glad.
Thus endeth heer my tale of Ianuarie;
God blesse us and his moder Seinte
Marie!

Here is ended the Marchantes Tale of Ianuarie.

EPILOGUE TO THE MARCHANTES TALE.

'Ey! goddes mercy!' seyde our Hoste
tho,
'Now swich a wyf I pray god kepe me
fro! 2420
Lo, whiche sleightes and subtilitees
In wommen been! for ay as busy as bees
Ben they, us sely men for to deceyve,
And from a sothe ever wol they weyve;
By this Marchauntes Tale it preveth
weel. 2425
But doutelees, as trewe as any steel
I have a wyf, though that she povre be;
But of hir tonge a labbing shrewe is she,
And yet she hath an heap of vyces mo;

Ther-of no fors, lat alle swiche thinges
go. 2430
But, wite ye what? in conseil be it seyde,
Me reweth sore I am un-to hir teyd,
For, and I sholde rekenen every vyce
Which that she hath, y-wis, I were to
nyce, 2434
And cause why; it sholde reported be
And told to hir of somme of this meynee;
Of whom, it nedeth nat for to declare,
Sin wommen connen outen swich claf-
fare;
And eek my wit suffyseth nat ther-to
To tellen al; wherfor my tale is do.' 2440

GROUP F.

THE SQUIERES TALE.

[THE SQUIRE'S PROLOGUE.]

'SQUIER, com neer, if it your wille be,
And sey somewhat of love; for, certes, ye
Connen ther-on as muche as any man.'
'Nay, sir,' quod he, 'but I wol seye as I
can
With hertly wille; for I wol nat rebelle 5
Agayn your lust; a tale wol I telle.
Have me excused if I speke amis,
My wil is good; and lo, my tale is this.

Here biginneth the Squieres Tale.

At Sarray, in the land of Tartarye,
Ther dwelte a king, that werreyed
Russye, 10
Thurgh which ther deyde many a doughty
man.
This noble king was cleped Cambinskan,
Which in his tyme was of so greet renoun
That ther nas no-wher in no regioun
So excellent a lord in alle thing; 15
Him lakked noght that longeth to a
king.

As of the secte of which that he was
born
He kepte his lay, to which that he was
sworn;
And ther-to he was hardy, wys, and
riche,
And piëtous and Iust, alwey y-liche. 20
Sooth of his word, benigne and honour-
able,
Of his corage as any centre stable;
Yong, fresh, and strong, in armes desir-
ous
As any bachelor of al his hous.
A fair persone he was and fortunat, 25
And kepte alwey so wel royal estat,
That ther was nowher swich another
man.
This noble king, this Tartre Cambinskan
Hadde two sones on Elpheta his wyf,
Of whiche the eldeste highte Algarsyf, 30
That other sone was cleped Cambalo.
A doghter hadde this worthy king also,
That yongest was, and highte Canacee.
But for to telle yow al hir beautee, 34
It lyth nat in my tonge, nin my coming;

I dar nat undertake so heigh a thing.
Myn English eek is insufficient;
It moste been a rethor excellent,
That coude his colours longing for that
art,

If he sholde hir discryven every part. 40
I am non swich, I moot speke as I can.

And so bifel that, when this Cam-
binskan

Hath twenty winter born his diademe,
As he was wont fro yeer to yeer, I deme,
He leet the feste of his nativitee 45
Don cryen thurghout Sarray his citee,
The last Idus of March, after the yeer.

Phebus the sonne ful Ioly was and cleer;
For he was neigh his exaltacioun
In Martes face, and in his mansioun 50
In aries, the colerik hote signe.

Ful lusty was the weder and benigne,
For whiche the foules, agayn the sonne
shene,

What for the seson and the yonge grene,
Ful loude songen hir affeccions; 55
Him semed han geten hem protecciouns
Agayn the swerd of winter kene and
cold.

This Cambinskan, of which I have yow
told,

In royal vestiment sit on his deys,
With diademe, ful heighe in his paleys, 60
And halt his feste, so solempne and so
riche

That in this world ne was ther noon it
liche.

Of which if I shal tellen al tharray,
Than wolde it occupye a someres day;
And eek it nedeth nat for to devyse 6
At every cours the ordre of hir servyse.

I wol nat tellen of hir strange sewes,
Ne of hir swannes, ne of hir heronsewes.
Eek in that lond, as tellen knightes olde,
Ther is som mete that is ful deyntee
holde, 70

That in this lond men recche of it but
smal;

Ther nis no man that may reporten al.

I wol nat tarien yow, for it is pryme,
And for it is no fruit but los of tyme;

Un-to my firste I wol have my recours. 75
And so bifel that, after the thridde
cours,

Whyl that this king sit thus in his no-
bleye,

Herkninge his minstralles hir thinges
pleye

Biforn him at the bord deliciously,
In at the halle-dore al sodeynly 80
Ther cam a knight up-on a stede 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 hanging;
And up he rydeth to the heighe bord. 85
In al the halle ne was ther spoke a word
For merveille of this knight; him to bi-
holde

Ful bisily ther wayten yonge and olde.
This strange knight, that cam thus
sodeynly,

Al armed save his heed ful richely, 90
Salueth king and queen, and lordes alle,
By ordre, as they seten in the halle,
With so heigh reverence and obeisaunce
As wel in speche as in contenance,
That Gawain, with his olde curteisye, 95
Though he were come ageyn out of
Fairye,

Ne coude him nat amende with a word.
And after this, biforn the heighe bord,
He with a manly voys seith his message,
After the forme used in his langage, 100
With-outen vyce of sillable or of lettre;
And, for his tale sholde seme the bettre,
Accordant to his wordes was his chere,
As techeth art of speche hem that it
lere;

Al-be-it that I can nat soune his
style, 105

Ne can nat climben 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 minde.

He seyde, 'the king of Arabie and of
Inde, 110

My lige lord, on this solempne day
Salueth yow as he best can and may,
And sendeth yow, in honour of your
feste,

By me, that am al redy at your heste,
This stede of bras, that esily and wel 115
Can, in the space of o day naturel,
This is to seyn, in foure and twenty
houres,

Wher-so yow list, in droghte or elles
shoures,
Beren your body in-to every place
To which your herte wilneth for to
pace 120
With-uten wem of yow, thurgh foul or
fair;
Or, if yow list to fleen as hye in the air
As doth an egle, whan him list to sore,
This same stede shal bere yow ever-more
With-uten harm, til ye be ther yow
leste, 125
Though that ye slepen on his bak or
reste;
And turne ayeyn, with wrything of a pin.
He that it wroghte coude ful many a gin;
He wayted many a constellacioun
Er he had doon this operacioun; 130
And knew ful many a seel and many a
bond.
This mirour eek, that I have in myn
hond,
Hath swich a might, that men may in it
see
Whan ther shal fallen any adversitee
Un-to your regne or to your-self also; 135
And openly who is your freend or foo.
And over al this, if any lady bright
Hath set hir herte on any maner wight,
If he be fals, she shal his treson see,
His newe love and al his subtiltee 140
So openly, that ther shal no-thing hyde.
Wherfor, ageyn this lusty someres tyde,
This mirour and this ring, that ye may
see,
He hath sent to my lady Canacee,
Your excellente doghter that is here. 145
The vertu of the ring, if ye wol here,
Is this; that, if hir lust it for to were
Up-on hir thombe, or in hir purs it bere,
Ther is no foul that fleeth under the
hevene
That she ne shal wel understonde his
stevne, 150
And knowe his mening openly and pleyn,
And answer him in his langage ageyn.
And every gras that groweth up-on rote
She shal eek knowe, and whom it wol do
bote,
Al be his woundes never so depe and
wyde. 155
This naked swerd, that hangeth by my
syde,

Swich vertu hath, that what man so ye
smyte,
Thurgh-out his armure it wol kerve and
byte,
Were it as thikke as is a branched ook;
And what man that is wounded with the
strook 160
Shal never be hool til that yow list,
of grace,
To stroke him with the platte in thilke
place
Ther he is hurt: this is as muche to
seyn,
Ye mote with the platte swerd ageyn
Stroke him in the wounde, and it wol
close; 165
This is a verray sooth, with-uten glose,
It failleth nat whyl it is in your hold.
And whan this knight hath thus his
tale told,
He rydeth out of halle, and doun he
lighte.
His stede, which that shoon as sonne
brighte, 170
Stant in the court, as stille as any stoon.
This knight is to his chambre lad anon,
And is unarmed and to mete y-set.
The presentes ben ful royally y-fet,
This is to seyn, the swerd and the
mirour, 175
And born anon in-to the heighe tour
With certeine officers ordeyned thfore;
And un-to Canacee this ring was bore
Solempnely, ther she sit at the table.
But sikerly, with-uten any fable, 180
The hors of bras, that may nat be re-
mewed,
It stant as it were to the ground y-glewed.
Ther may no man out of the place it
dryve
For noon engyn of windas or polyve; *unblowen*
And cause why, for they can nat the
craft. 185
And therefore in the place they han it
laft
Til that the knight hath taught hem the
manere
To voyden him, as ye shal after here.
Greet was the prees that swarmeth to
and fro, 189
To gauen on this hors that stondeth so;
For it so heigh was, and so brood and
long,

So wel porporcioned for to ben strong,
 Right as it were a stede of Lumbardye;
 Ther-with so horsly, and so quik of yē
 As it a gentil Poileys courser were. 195
 For certes, fro his tayl un-to his ere,
 Nature ne art ne coude him nat amende
 In no degree, as al the peple wende.
 But evermore hir moste wonder was,
 How that it coude goon, and was of
 bras; 200
 It was of Fairye, as the peple semed.
 Diverse folk diversely they demed;
 As many hedes, as many wittes ther
 been.
 They murmureden as dooth a swarm of
 been,
 And maden skiles after hir fantasies, 205
 Rehersinge of thise olde poetryes,
 And seyden, it was lyk the Pegasee,
 The hors that hadde wings for to flee;
 Or elles it was the Grekes hors Synon,
 That broghte Troye to destruccion, 210
 As men may in thise olde gestes rede.
 'Myn herte,' quod oon, 'is evermore in
 drede;
 I trowe som men of armes been ther-
 inne,
 That shapen hem this citee for to winne.
 It were right good that al swich thing
 were knowe.' 215
 Another rownded to his felawe lowe,
 And seyde, 'he lyeth, it is rather lyk
 An apparence y-maad by som magyk,
 As Iogelours pleyen at thise festes grete.'
 Of sondry doutes thus they Iangle and
 trete, 220
 As lewed peple demeth comunly
 Of thinges that ben maad more subtilly
 Than they can in her lewednes compre-
 hende;
 They demen gladly to the badder ende.
 And somme of hem wondred on the
 mirour, 225
 That born was up in-to the maister-tour,
 How men mighte in it swiche thinges
 see.
 Another answerde, and seyde it mighte
 wel be
 Naturelly, by composiciouns
 Of angles and of slye reflexiouns, 230
 And seyden, that in Rome was swich oon.
 They speken of Alocen and Vitulon,
 And Aristotle, that writen in hir lyves

Of queynte mirours and of prospectyves,
 As knowen they that han hir bokes
 herd. 235
 And other folk han wondred on the
 swerd
 That wolde percen thurgh-out every-
 thing;
 And fille in speche of Thelophus the
 king,
 And of Achilles with his queynte spere,
 For he coude with it bothe hele and
 dere, 240
 Right in swich wyse as men may with
 the swerd
 Of which right now ye han your-selven
 herd.
 They speken of sondry harding of metal,
 And speke of medicynes ther-with-al,
 And how, and whanne, it sholde y-harded
 be; 245
 Which is unknowe algates unto me.
 Tho speke they of Canaceës ring,
 And seyden alle, that swich a wonder
 thing
 Of craft of ringes herde they never non,
 Save that he, Moyses, and king Salo-
 mon 250
 Hadde a name of konning in swich art.
 Thus seyn the peple, and drawn hem
 apart.
 But nathelees, somme seyden that it was
 Wonder to maken of fern-asshen glas,
 And yet nis glas nat lyk asshen of
 fern; 255
 But for they han y-knowen it so fern,
 Therefore cesseth her Iangling and her
 wonder.
 As sore wondren somme on cause of
 thonder,
 On ebbe, on flood, on gossomer, and on
 mist,
 And alle thing, til that the cause is
 wist. 260
 Thus Iangle they and demen and devyse,
 Til that the king gan fro the bord aryse.
 Phebus hath laft the angle meridional,
 And yet ascending was the beest royal,
 The gentil Leon, with his Aldiaan 265
 Whan that this Tartre king, this Cambin-
 skan,
 Roos fro his bord, ther that he sat ful
 hye.
 Toform him gooth the loude minstraleye,

Til he cam to his chambre of parcements,
 Ther as they sownen diverse instruments,
 That it is lyk an heven for to here. 271
 Now dauncen lusty Venus children dere,
 For in the Fish hir lady sat ful hyc,
 And loketh on hem with a frendly yē.

This noble king is set up in his
 trone. 275
 This strange knight is fet to him ful sone,
 And on the daunce he gooth with Cana-
 cee.

I heer is the revel and the Iolitee
 That is nat able a dul man to devyse.
 He moste han knowen love and his ser-
 vyse, 280
 And been a festlich man as fresh as May,
 That sholde yow devysen swich array.

Who coude telle yow the forme of
 daunces,
 So uncouth and so fresshe contenaunces,
 Swich subtil loking and dissimulinges 285
 For drede of lalouse mennes aperceyv-
 inges?

No man but Launcelot, and he is deed.
 Therefor I passe of al this lustiheed;
 I seye na-more, but in this Iolynesse
 I lete hem, til men to the soper dresse. 290

The styward bit the spyces for to hyc,
 And eek the wyn, in al this melodye.
 The usshers and the squyers ben y-goon;
 The spyces and the wyn is come anon.
 They ete and drinke; and whan this
 hadde an ende, 295

Un-to the temple, as reson was, they
 wende.

The service doon, they soupen al by
 day.

What nedeth yow rehercen hir array?
 Ech man wot wel, that at a kinges feeste
 Hath plentee, to the moste and to the
 leeste, 300

And deyntees mo than been in my know-
 ing.

At-after soper gooth this noble king
 To seen this hors of bras, with al the
 route

Of lordes and of ladyes him aboute.
 Swich wondring was ther on this hors
 of bras 305

That, sin the grete sege of Troye was,
 Ther-as men wondreden on an hors also,
 Ne was ther swich a wondring as was tho.
 But fynally the king axeth this knight

The vertu of this courser and the might,
 And preyede him to telle his gover-
 naunce. 311

This hors anon bigan to trippe and
 daunce,

Whan that this knight leyde hand up-on
 his reyne,

And seyde, 'sir, ther is na-more to seyne.
 But, whan yow list to ryden any-
 where, 315

Ye moten trille a pin, stant in his ere,
 Which I shall telle yow bitwix vs two.

Ye mote nempne him to what place also
 Or to what contree that yow list to ryde.
 And whan ye come ther as yow list
 abyde, 320

Bidde him descende, and trille another
 pin,

For ther-in lyth the effect of al the gin,
 And he wol doun descende and doon
 your wille;

And in that place he wol abyde stille,
 Though al the world the contrarie hadde
 y-swore; 325

I he shal nat thennes ben y-drawe ne
 y-bore.

Or, if yow liste bidde him thennes goon,
 Trille this pin, and he wol vanishe anon
 Out of the sighte of every maner wight,

And come agayn, be it by day or night, 330
 Whan that yow list to clepen him ageyn
 In swich a gyse as I shal to yow seyn

Bitwixe yow and me, and that ful sone.
 Ryde whan yow list, ther is na-more to
 done.'

Enformed whan the king was of that
 knight, 335

And hath conceived in his wit aright
 The maner and the forme of al this thing,
 Thus glad and blythe, this noble doughty
 king

Repeireth to his revel as biforn.
 The brydel is un-to the tour y-born, 340

And kept among his Iewels leve and dere.
 The hors vanished, I noot in what man-
 ere,

Out of hir sighte; ye gete na-more of me.
 But this I lete in lust and Iolitee

This Cambynskan his lordes festeynge,
 Til wel ny the day bigan to springe. 346

*Explicit prima pars. Sequitur pars
 secunda.*

The norice of digestioun, the slepe,
 Gan on hem winke, and bad hem taken
 kepe,
 That muchel drink and labour wolde han
 reste;
 And with a galping mouth hem alle he
 keste, 350
 And seyde, 'it was tyme to lye adoun,
 For blood was in his dominacioun;
 Cherissheth blood, natures freend,' quod
 he.
 They thanken him galpinge, by two, by
 three,
 And every wight gan drawe him to his
 reste, 355
 As slepe hem bad; they toke it for the
 beste.
 Hir dremes shul nat been y-told for me;
 Ful were hir hedes of fumositee,
 That causeth dreem, of which ther nis no
 charge. 359
 They slepen til that it was pryme large,
 The moste part, but it were Canacee;
 She was ful mesurable, as wommen be.
 For of hir fader hadde she take leve
 To gon to reste, sone after it was eve;
 Hir liste nat appalled for to be, 365
 Nor on the morwe unfestlich for to see;
 And slepte hir firste sleep, and thanne
 awook.
 For swich a loye she in hir herte took
 Both of hir queynte ring and hir mirour,
 That twenty tyme she changed hir col-
 our; 370
 And in hir slepe, right for impressioun
 Of hir mirour, she hadde a visioun.
 Wherefore, er that the sonne gan up glyde,
 She cleped on hir maistresse hir bisyde,
 And seyde, that hir liste for to ryse. 375
 These olde wommen that been gladly
 wyse,
 As is hir maistresse, answerde hir anon,
 And seyde, 'madame, whider wil ye goon
 Thus erly? for the folk ben alle on reste.'
 'I wol,' quod she, 'aryse, for me leste 380
 No lenger for to slepe, and walke aboute.'
 Hir maistresse clepeth wommen a gret
 route,
 And up they rysen, wel a ten or twelve;
 Up ryseth fresshe Canacee hir-selve,
 As rody and bright as dooth the yonge
 sonne, 385
 That in the Ram is four degrees up-ronne;

Noon hyer was he, whan she redy was;
 And forth she walketh esily a pas,
 Arrayed after the lusty seson sote
 Lightly, for to pleye and walke on
 fote; 390
 Nat but with fyve or six of hir meynee;
 And in a trench, forth in the park, goth
 she.
 The vapour, which that fro the erthe glood,
 Made the sonne to seme rody and brood;
 But nathelees, it was so fair a sighte 395
 That it made alle hir hertes for to lighte,
 What for the seson and the morweninge,
 And for the foules that she herde singe;
 For right anon she wiste what they mente
 Right by hir song, and knew al hir en-
 tente. 400
 The knotte, why that every tale is told,
 If it be taried til that lust be cold
 Of hem that han it after herkned yore,
 The savour passeth ever lenger the more,
 For fulsomnesse of his prolixitee. 405
 And by the same reson thinketh me,
 I sholde to the knotte condescende,
 And maken of hir walking sone an ende.
 Amide a tree fordrye, as whyt as chalk,
 As Canacee was pleying in hir walk, 410
 Ther sat a faucon over hir heed ful hye,
 That with a pitous voys so gan to crye
 That all the wode resouned of hir crye.
 Y-beten hath she hir-self so pitously
 With bothe hir wings, til the rede
 blood 415
 Ran endelong 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 nis tygre, ne noon so cruel
 beste,
 That dwelleth either in wode or in
 foreste 420
 That nolde han wept, if that he wepe
 coude,
 For sorwe of hir, she shrighte alwey so
 loude.
 For ther nas never yet no man on lyve —
 If that I coude a faucon wel discryve —
 That herde of swich another of fairnesse,
 As wel of plumage as of gentillesse 426
 Of shap, and al that mighte y-rekened
 be.
 A faucon peregryn than semed she

Of fremde land; and evermore, as she
stood,

She swowneth now and now for lakke of
blood, 430

Til wel neigh is she fallen fro the tree.

This faire kinges doghter, Canacee,
That on hir finger bar the queynte ring,
Thurgh which she understood wel every
thing

That any foul may in his ledene seyn, 435
And coude answer him in his ledene
ageyn,

Hath understonde what this faucon
seyde,

And wel neigh for the rewthe almost
she deyde.

And to the tree she gooth ful hastily,
And on this faucon loketh pitously, 440
And heeld hir lappe abroad, for wel
she wiste

The faucon moste fallen fro the twiste,
When that it swowned next, for lakke of
blood.

A longe while to wayten hir she stood
Till atte laste she spak in this manere 445
Un-to the hauk, as ye shul after here.

'What is the cause, if it be for to telle,
That ye be in this furial pyne of helle?'
Quod Canacee un-to this hauk above.

'Is this for sorwe of deeth or los of
love? 450

For, as I trowe, thise ben causes two
That causen moost a gentil herte wo;
Of other harm it nedeth nat to speke.

For ye your-self upon your-self yow
wreke,

Which proveth wel, that either love or
drede 455

Mot been encheson of your cruel dede,
Sin that I see non other wight yow
chace.

For love of god, as dooth your-selven
grace

Or what may ben your help; for west
nor eest 459

Ne sey I never er now no brid ne best
That ferde with him-self so pitously.

Ye slee me with your sorwe, verraily;
I have of yow so gret compassioun.

For goddes love, com fro the tree adoun;
And, as I am a kinges doghter trewe, 465

If that I verraily the cause knewe
Of your disese, if it lay in my wight,

I wolde amende it, er that it were night,
As wisly helpe me gret god of kinde!

And herbes shal I right y-nowe y-finde
To hele with your hurtes hastily.' 471

Tho shrighite this faucon more pitously
Than ever she dide, and fil to grounde
anoon,

And lyth aswowne, deed, and lyk a
stoon,

Til Canacee hath in hir lappe hir take 475
Un-to the tyme she gan of swough
awake.

And, after that she of hir swough gan
breyde,

Right in hir haukes ledene thus she
seyde:—

'That pitee renneth sone in gentil herte,
Feling his similitude in peynes smerte,
Is prevel al-day, as men may it see, 481
As wel by werk as by auctoritee;

For gentil herte kytheth gentillesse.
I see wel, that ye han of my mistresse
Compassioun, my faire Canacee, 485

Of verray wommanly benignitee
That nature in your principles hath set.

But for non hope for to fare the bet,
But for to obeye un-to your herte free,

And for to maken other be war by me, 490
As by the whelp chasted is the leoun,

Right for that cause and that conclu-
sioun,

Whyl that I have a leysur and a space,
Myn harm I wol confessen, er I pace.'

And ever, whyl that oon hir sorwe tolde,
That other weep, as she to water wolde,
Til that the faucon bad hir to be stille;
And, with a syk, right thus she seyde
hir wille.

'Ther I was bred (allas! that harde
day!) 499

And fostred in a roche of marbul gray
So tendrely, that nothing eyed me,

I niste nat what was adversitee,
Til I coude flee ful hye under the sky.

Tho dwelte a tercelet me faste by,
That semed welle of alle gentillesse; 505

Al were he ful of treson and falsnesse,
It was so wrapped under humble chere,

And under hewe of trouthe in swich
manere,

Under plesance, and under bisy payne,
That no wight coude han wend he coude
feyne, 510

So depe in greyn he dyed his coloures.
 Right as a serpent hit him under floures
 Til he may seen his tyme for to byte,
 Right so this god of love, this ypocryte,
 Doth so his cerimones and obeisaunces,
 And kepeþ in semblant alle his obser-
 vances 516
 Than sowneth in-to gentillesse of love.
 As in a tounge is al the faire above,
 And under is the corps, swich as ye woot,
 Swich was this ypocryte, bothe cold and
 hoot, 520
 And in this wyse he served his entente,
 That (save the feend) non wiste what he
 mente.
 Til he so longe had 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 crowned malice, 526
 For-fered of his deeth, as thoughte me,
 Upon his othes and his seuretee,
 Graunted him love, on this condicioun,
 That evermore myn honour and renoun
 Were saved, bothe privee and apert; 531
 This is to seyn, that, after his desert,
 I yaf him al myn herte and al my
 thoght—
 God woot and he, that otherwyse
 noght—
 And took his herte in change for myn
 for ay. 535
 But sooth is seyð, gon sithen many a
 day,
 “A trew wight and a theef thenken nat
 oon.”
 And, whan he saugh the thing so fer
 y-goön,
 That I had graunted him fully my love,
 In swich a gyse as I have seyð above, 540
 And yeven him my trewe herte, as free
 As he swoor he his herte yaf to me;
 Anon this tygre, ful of doublenesse,
 Fil on his knees with so devout hum-
 blesse,
 With so heigh reverence, and, as by his
 chere, 545
 So lyk a gentil love of manere,
 So ravished, as it semed, for the Joye,
 That never Iason, ne Parys of Troye,
 Iason? certes, ne non other man,
 Sin Lameth was, that alderfirst bigan 550

To loven two, as writen folk biforn,
 Ne never, sin the firste man was born,
 Ne coude man, by twenty thousand part,
 Countrefete the sophimes of his art;
 Ne were worthy unbokete his galoche, 555
 Ther doublenesse or feyning sholde ap-
 proche,
 Ne so coude thanke a wight as he did me!
 His maner was an heven for to see
 Til any womman, were she never so wys;
 So peynted he and kembde at point-devys
 As wel his wordes as his contenance. 561
 And I so lovede him for his obeisaunce,
 And for the trouthe I demed in his herte,
 That, if so were that any thing him
 smerte, 564
 Al were it never so lyte, and I it wiste,
 Me thoughte, I felte deeth myn herte
 twiste.
 And shortly, so ferforth this thing is went,
 That my wil was his willes instrument;
 This is to seyn, my wil obeyed his wil
 In alle thing, as fer as reson fil, 570
 Keping the boundes of my worship ever.
 Ne never hadde I thing so leef, ne lever,
 As him, god woot! ne never shal na-mo.
 This lasteth lenger than a yeer or two,
 That I supposed of him noght but good.
 But fynally, thus atte laste it stood, 576
 That fortune wolde that he moste twinne
 Out of that place which that I was inne.
 Wher me was wo, that is no questioun;
 I can nat make of it discripcioun; 580
 For o thing dar I tellen boldely,
 I knowe what is the peyne of deth ther-
 by;
 Swich harm I felte for he ne mighte bi-
 leve.
 So on a day of me he took his leve, 584
 So sorwefully eek, that I wende verraily
 That he had felt as muche harm as I,
 Whan that I herde him speke, and saugh
 his hewe.
 But nathelees, I thoughte he was so
 trewe,
 And eek that he repaire sholde ageyn
 With-inne a litel whyle, sooth to seyn;
 And reson wolde eek that he moste go 591
 For his honour, as ofte it happeth so,
 That I made vertu of necessitee,
 And took it wel, sin that it moste be.
 As I best mighte, I hidde fro him my
 sorwe, 595

And took him by the hond, seint Iohn to
 borwe,
 And seyde him thus: "lo, I am youres
 al;
 Beth swich as I to yow have been, and
 shal."
 What he answerde, it nedeth nocht re-
 herce,
 Who can sey bet than he, who can do
 werse? 600
 When he hath al wel seyde, thanne hath
 he doon.
 "Therefor bihoveth him a ful long spoon
 That shal ete with a feend," thus herde I
 seye.
 So atte laste he moste forth his weye,
 And forth he fleeth, til he cam ther him
 leste. 605
 When it cam him to purpos for to reste,
 I trowe he hadde thilke text in minde,
 That "alle thing, repeiring to his kinde,
 Gladeth him-self"; thus seyn men, as I
 gesse;
 Men loven of propre kinde newfangel-
 nesse, 610
 As briddes doon that men in cages fede.
 For though thou night and day take of
 hem hede,
 And strawe hir cage faire and softe as
 silk,
 And yeve hem sugre, hony, breed and
 milk, 614
 Yet right anon, as that his dore is uppe,
 He with his feet wol spurne adoun his
 cuppe,
 And to the wode he wol and wormes ete;
 So newefangel been they of hir mete,
 And loven novelryes of propre kinde;
 No gentillesse of blood [ne] may hem
 binde. 620
 So ferde this terecelet, allas the day!
 Though he were gentil born, and fresh
 and gay,
 And goodly for to seen, and humble and
 free,
 He saugh up-on a tyme a kyte flece,
 And soley only he loved this kyte so, 625
 That al his love is clene fro me ago,
 And hath his trouthe falsed in this wyse;
 Thus hath the kyte my love in hir servyse,
 And I am lorn with-outen remedye!
 And with that word this faucon gan to
 crye, 630

And swowned eft in Canaceës barme.
 Greet was the sorwe, for the haukes
 harme,
 That Canacee and alle hir women
 made;
 They niste how they mighte the faucon
 glade. 634
 But Canacee hom bereth hir in hir lappe,
 And softly in plastres gan hir wrappe,
 Ther as she with hir beek had hurt hir-
 selve.
 Now can nat Canacee but herbes delve
 Out of the grounde, and make salves
 newe 639
 Of herbes precious, and fyne of hewe,
 To helen with this hauk; fro day to
 night
 She dooth hir businesse and al hir might.
 And by hir beddes heed she made a
 mewe,
 And covered it with veluëttes blewe,
 In signe of trouthe that is in women
 sene. 645
 And al with-oute, the mewe is peynted
 grene,
 In which were peynted alle thise false
 foules,
 As beth thise tidifs, terecelets, and oules,
 Right for despyt were peynted hem
 bisyde, 649
 And pyes, on hem for to crye and chyde.
 Thus lete I Canacee hir hauk keping;
 I wol na-more as now speke of hir ring,
 Til it come eft to purpos for to seyn
 How that this faucon gat hir love ageyn
 Repentant, as the storie telleth us, 655
 By mediacioun of Cambalus,
 The kinges sone, of whiche I yow tolde.
 But hennes-forth I wol my proces holde
 To speke of aventures and of batailles,
 That never yet was herd so grete mer-
 vailles. 660
 First wol I telle yow of Cambinskan,
 That in his tyme many a citee wan;
 And after wol I speke of Algarsyf,
 How that he wan Theodora to his wyf,
 For whom ful ofte in greet peril he
 was, 665
 Ne hadde he ben holpen by the stede of
 bras;
 And after wol I speke of Cambalo,
 That fought in listes with the bretheren
 two

For Canacee, er that he mighte hir winne.
And ther I lefte I wol ageyn biginne. 670

*Explicit secunda pars. Incipit pars
tercia.*

Appollo whirleth up his char so hyc,
Til that the god Mercurius hous the
slye —

* * * * *

*Here folwen the wordes of the Frankelin
to the Squier, and the wordes of the
Host to the Frankelin.*

'In feith, Squier, thou hast thee wel
y-quit,

And gentilly I preise wel thy wit,'

Quod the Frankeleyn, 'considering thy
youthe, 675

So feelingly thou spekest, sir, I allow
the!

As to my doom, there is non that is here
Of eloquence that shal be thy pere,

If that thou live; god yeve thee good
chaunce, 679

And in vertu sende thee continuance!

For of thy speche I have greet deyntee.

I have a sone, and, by the Trinitee,

I hadde lever than twenty pound worth
lond,

Though it right now were fallen in myn
hond,

He were a man of swich discrecioun 685
As that ye been! fy on possessioun

But-if a man be vertuous with-al.

I have my sone snibbed, and yet shal,

For he to vertu listeth nat entende;

But for to pleye at dees, and to de-
spende, 690

And lese al that he hath, is his usage.

And he hath lever talken with a page

Than to comune with any gentil wight

Ther he mighte lerne gentiltesse aright.'

'Straw for your gentiltesse,' quod our
host; 695

'What, frankeleyn? pardee, sir, wel
thou wost

That eche of yow mot tellen atte leste

A tale or two, or breken his biheste.'

'That knowe I wel, sir,' quod the
frankeleyn;

'I prey yow, haveth me nat in desdeyn

Though to this man I speke a word or
two.' 701

'Telle on thy tale with-outen wordes
mo.'

'Gladly, sir host,' quod he, 'I wol
obeye

Un-to your wil; now herkneth what I
seye.

I wol yow nat contrarien in no wyse 705

As fer as that my wittes wol suffyse;

I prey to god that it may plesen yow,

Than woot I wel that it is good y-now.'

[The Frankleyn's Prologue follows immediately.]

THE FRANKLIN'S PROLOGUE.

The Prologe of the Frankeleyns Tale.

THISE olde gentil Britons in hir dayes
Of diverse aventures maden layes, 710

Rymeyed in hir firste Briton tonge;
Which layes with hir instruments they
songe,

Or elles redded hem for hir plesaunce;

And oon of hem have I in remem-
braunce,

Which I shal seyn with good wil as I
can. 715

But, sires, by-cause I am a burel man,
At my biginning first I yow biseche

Have me excused of my rude speche;

I lerned never rethoryk certeyn;

Thing that I speke, it moot be bare and
pleyn. 720

I sleep never on the mount of Pernaso,

Ne lerned Marcus Tullius Cithero.

Colours ne knowe I none, with-outen
drede,

But swiche colours as growen in the
mede,

Or elles swiche as men dye or peynte. 725

Colours of rethoryk ben me to queynte;

My spirit feleth noght of swich matere.

But if yow list, my tale shul ye here.

THE FRANKELEYN'S TALE.

Here biginneth the Frankeleyn's Tale.

IN Armorik, that called is Britayne,
 Ther was a knight that loved and dide his
 payne 730
 To serve a lady in his beste wyse;
 And many a labour, many a greet em-
 pryse
 He for his lady wroghte, er she were
 wonne.
 For she was oon, the faireste under
 sonne,
 And eek therto come of so heigh kin-
 rede, 735
 That wel unnethes dorste this knight, for
 drede,
 Telle hir his wo, his peyne, and his dis-
 tresse.
 But atte laste, she, for his worthinesse,
 And namely for his meke obeysaunce,
 Hath swich a pitee caught of his pen-
 aunce, 740
 That prively she fil of his accord
 To take him for hir housbonde and hir
 lord,
 Of swich lordshipe as men han over hir
 wyves;
 And for to lede the more in blisse hir
 lyves,
 Of his free wil he swoor hir as a
 knight, 745
 That never in al his lyf he, day ne night,
 Ne sholde up-on him take no maistrye
 Agayn hir wil, ne kythe hir Ialouslye,
 But hir obeye, and folwe hir wil in al
 As any lovere to his lady shal; 750
 Save that the name of soveraynetee,
 That wolde he have for shame of his de-
 gree.
 She thanked him, and with ful greet
 humblesse
 She seyde, 'sire, sith of your gentillesse
 Ye profre me to have so large a reyne, 755
 Ne wolde never god bitwixe us tweyne,
 As in my gilt, were outhur werre or stryf.
 Sir, I wol be your humble trewe wyf,
 Have heer my trouthe, til that myn herte
 breste.'

Thus been they bothe in quiete and in
 reste. 760
 For o thing, sires, saully dar I seye,
 That frendes everich other moot obeye,
 If they wol longe holden companye.
 Love wol nat ben constreynd by mais-
 trye;
 Whan maistrie comth, the god of love
 anon 765
 Beteth hise wings, and farewel! he is
 gone!
 Love is a thing as any spirit free;
 Wommen of kinde desiren libertee,
 And nat to ben constreynd as a thral;
 And so don men, if I soth seyen shal. 770
 Loke who that is most pacient in love,
 He is at his avantage al above.
 Pacience is an heigh vertu certeyn;
 For it venquisseth, as thise clerkes seyn,
 Thinges that rigour sholde never at-
 teyne. 775
 For every word men may nat chyde or
 pleyne.
 Lerne 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
 amis. 780
 Ire, siknesse, or constellacioun,
 Wyn, wo, or chaunginge of complexioun
 Causeth ful ofte to doon amis or speken.
 On every wrong a man may nat be wroken;
 After the tyme, moste be temperaunce 785
 To every wight that can on governaunce.
 And therefore hath this wyse worthy knight,
 To live in ese, suffrance hir bihight,
 And she to him ful wisly gan to swere
 That never sholde ther be defeaute in
 here. 790
 Heer may men seen an humble wys
 accord;
 Thus hath she take hir servant and hir
 lord,
 Servant in love, and lord in mariage;
 Than was he bothe in lordship and ser-
 vage;

Servage? nay, but in lordshipe above,
 Sith he hath bothe his lady and his love;
 His lady, certes, and his wyf also,
 The which that lawe of love acordeth to.
 And whan he was in this prosperitee,
 Hoom with his wyf he gooth to his con-
 tree, 800
 Nat fer fro Penmark, ther his dwelling
 was,

Wher-as he liveth in blisse and in solas.
 Who coude telle, but he had wedded
 be,

The loye, the ese, and the prosperitee
 That is bitwixe an housbonde and his
 wyf? 805

A yeer and more lasted this blisful lyf,
 Til that the knight of which I speke of
 thus,

That of Kayrrud was cleped Arveragus,
 Shoop him to goon, and dwelle a yeer or
 tweyne

In Engelond, that cleped was eek Brit-
 eyne, 810

To seke in armes worship and honour;
 For al his lust he sette in swich labour;
 And dwelled ther two yeer, the book
 seith thus.

Now wol I stinte of this Arveragus,
 And speken I wole of Dorigene his wyf,
 That loveth hir housbonde as hir hertes
 lyf. 816

For his absence wepeth she and syketh,
 As doon thise noble wyves whan hem
 lyketh.

She moorneth, waketh, wayleth, fasteth,
 pleyneth;

Desyr of his presence hir so distreyneth,
 That al this wyde world she sette at
 noght. 821

Hir frendes, whiche that knewe hir hev-
 y thought,

Conforten hir in al that ever they may;
 They prechen hir, they telle hir night
 and day, 824

That causeles she sleeth hir-self, allas!
 And every confort possible in this cas
 They doon to hir with al hir bisnesse,
 Al for to make hir leve hir hevinesse.

By proces, as ye knowen everichoon,
 Men may so longe graven in a stoon, 830
 Til som figure ther-inne emprented be.
 So longe han they confortid hir, til she
 Receyved hath, by hope and by resoun,

The emprenting of hir consolacioun,
 Thurgh which hir grete sorwe gan
 aswage; 835

She may nat alwey duren in swich rage.
 And eek Arveragus, in al this care,
 Hath sent hir lettres hoom of his wel-
 fare,

And that he wol come hastily agayn;
 Or elles hadde this sorwe hir herte slayn.
 Hir frendes sawe hir sorwe gan to
 slake, 841

And preyede hir on knees, for goddes
 sake,

To come and romen hir in compayne,
 Awey to dryve hir derke fantasye.
 And finally, she graunted that requeste;
 For wel she saugh that it was for the
 beste. 846

Now stood hir castel faste by the see,
 And often with hir frendes walketh she
 Hir to disporte up-on the bank an heigh,
 Wher-as she many a ship and barge
 seigh 850

Seilinge hir cours, wher-as hem liste go;
 But than was that a parcel of hir wo.

For to hir-self ful ofte 'allas!' seith she,
 'Is ther no ship, of so manye as I see,
 Wol bringen hom my lord? than were
 myn herte 855

Al warisshed of his bittre peynes smerte.'
 Another tyme ther wolde she sitte and
 thinke,

And caste hir eyen downward fro the
 brinke.

But whan she saugh the grisly rokkes
 blake,

For verray fere so wolde hir herte quake,
 That on hir feet she mighte hir noght
 sustene. 861

Than wolde she sitte adoun upon the
 grene,

And pitously in-to the see biholde,
 And seyn right thus, with sorweful sykes
 colde:

'Eterne god, that thurgh thy purvey-
 aunce 865

Ledest the world by certein governaunce,
 In ydel, as men seyn, ye no-thing make;
 But, lord, thise grisly feendly rokkes
 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 cest,

Ther nis y-fostred man, ne brid, ne
 beest;
 It dooth no good, to my wit, but any-
 eth. 875

See ye nat, lord, how mankinde it de-
 stroyeth?
 An hundred thousand bodies of man-
 kinde

Ilan rokkes slayn, al be they nat in
 minde,
 Which mankinde is so fair part of thy
 werk

That thou it madest lyk to thyn owene
 merk. 880

Than semed it ye hadde a greet chiertee
 Toward mankinde; but how than may
 it be

That ye swiche menes make it to de-
 stroyen,
 Whiche menes do no good, but ever
 anoyen?

I woot wel clerkes wol seyn, as hem
 leste, 885

By arguments, that al is for the beste,
 Tho I ne can the causes nat y-knowe.
 But thilke god, that made wind to blowe,
 As kepe my lord! this my conclusioun;
 To clerkes lete I al disputioun. 890

But wolde god that alle these rokkes
 blake

Were sonken in-to helle for his sake!
 These rokkes sleen myn herte for the
 fere.'

Thus wolde she seyn, with many a pitous
 tere.

Hir freendes sawe that it was no dis-
 port 895

To romen by the see, but disconfort;
 And shopen for to pleyen somwher
 elles.

They leden hir by riveres and by welles,
 And eek in othere places delitable;
 They dauncen, and they pleyen at ches
 and tables. 900

So on a day, right in the morwe-tyde,
 Un-to a gardin that was ther bisyde,
 In which that they had maad hir ordi-
 naunce

Of vitaille and of other purveyaunce,

They goon and pleye hem al the longe
 day. 905

And this was on the sixte morwe of May,
 Which May had peynted with his softe
 shoures

This gardin ful of leves and of floures;
 And craft of mannes hand so curiously
 Arrayed hadde this gardin, trewely, 910
 That never was ther gardin of swich
 prys,

But-if it were the verry paradys.
 The odour of floures and the fresshe
 sighte

Wolde han maad any herte for to lighte
 That ever was born, but-if to gret sik-
 nesse, 915

Or to gret sorwe helde it in distresse;
 So ful it was of beautee with plesaunce.

At-after diner gonne they to daunce,
 And singe also, save Dorigen allone,
 Which made alwey hir compleint and hir
 mone; 920

For she ne saugh him on the daunce go,
 That was hir housbonde and hir love
 also.

But nathelces she moste a tyme abyde,
 And with good hope lete hir sorwe slyde.

Up-on this daunce, amonges othere
 men, 925

Daunced a squyer biforen Dorigen,
 That fressher was and lolyer of array,
 As to my doom, than is the monthe of
 May.

He singeth, daunceth, passinge any man
 That is, or was, sith that the world
 bigan. 930

Ther-with he was, if men sholde him
 discryve,

Oon of the beste faringe man on-lyve;
 Yong, strong, right vertuous, and riche
 and wys,

And wel biloved, and holden in gret
 prys.

And shortly, if the sothe I tellen shal,
 Unwiting of this Dorigen at al, 936

This lusty squyer, servant to Venus,
 Which that y-cleped was Aurelius,
 Had loved hir best of any creature

Two yeer and more, as was his aventure,
 But never dorste he telle hir his grev-
 aunce; 941

With-outen coppe he drank al his pen-
 aunce.

He was despeyred, no-thing dorste he
 seye,
 Save in his songes somewhat wolde he
 wreye
 His wo, as in a general compleyning; 945
 He seide he lovede, and was biloved
 no-thing.
 Of swich matere made he manye layes,
 Songes, compleintes, roundels, virelayes,
 How that he dorste nat his sorwe telle,
 But languissheth, as a furie dooth in
 helle; 950
 And dye he moste, he seyde, as dide
 Ekko
 For Narcisus, that dorste nat telle hir
 wo.
 In other manere than ye here me seye,
 Ne dorste he nat to hir his wo biwreye;
 Save that, paraventure, som-tyme at
 daunces, 955
 Ther yonge folk kepen hir observaunces,
 It may wel be he loked on hir face
 In swich a wyse, as man that asketh
 grace;
 But no-thing wiste she of his entente.
 Nathelees, it happed, er they thennes
 wente, 960
 By-cause that he was hir neighebour,
 And was a man of worship and honour,
 And hadde y-knowen him of tyme yore,
 They fille in speche; and forth more and
 more
 Un-to his purpos drough Aurelius, 965
 And whan he saugh his tyme, he seyde
 thus:
 'Madame,' quod he, 'by god that this
 world made,
 So that I wiste it mighte your herte
 glade,
 I wolde, that day that your Arveragus
 Wente over the see, that I, Aurelius, 970
 Had went ther never I sholde have come
 agayn;
 For wel I woot my service is in vayn.
 My guerdon is but bresting of myn
 herte;
 Madame, reweth upon my peynes smerte;
 For with a word ye may me sleen or
 save, 975
 Heer at your feet god wolde that I were
 grave!
 I ne have as now no leysur more to
 seye;

Have mercy, swete, or ye wol do me
 deye!'
 She gan to loke up-on Aurelius:
 'Is this your wil,' quod she, 'and sey ye
 thus? 980
 Never erst,' quod she, 'ne wiste I what
 ye mente.
 But now, Aurelie, I knowe your entente,
 By thilke god that yaf me soule and lyf,
 Ne shal I never been untrewed wyf
 In word ne werk, as fer as I have
 wit: 985
 I wol ben his to whom that I am knit;
 Tak this for fynal answer as of me.'
 But after that in pley thus seyde she:
 'Aurelie,' quod she, 'by heighe god
 above,
 Yet wolde I graunte yow to been your
 love, 990
 Sin I yow see so pitously complayne;
 Loke what day that, endelong Britayne,
 Ye remoeve alle the rokkes, stoon by stoon,
 That they ne lette ship ne boot to goon —
 I seye, whan ye han maad the coost so
 clene 995
 Of rokkes, that ther nis no stoon y-sene,
 Than wol I love yow best of any man;
 Have heer my trouthe in al that ever I
 can.'
 'Is ther non other grace in yow,' quod
 he.
 'No, by that lord,' quod she, 'that
 maked me! 1000
 For wel I woot that it shal never bityde.
 Lat swiche folies out of your herte slyde.
 What deyntee sholde a man han in his
 lyf
 For to go love another mannes wyf,
 That hath hir body whan so that him
 lyketh?' 1005
 Aurelius ful ofte sore syketh;
 Wo was Aurelie, whan that he this herde,
 And with a sorweful herte he thus
 answerde:
 'Madame,' quod he, 'this were an
 impossible!
 Than moot I dye of sodein deth hor-
 rible.' 1010
 And with that word he turned him anon.
 Tho come hir othere freendes many oon,
 And in the aleyes romeden up and down,
 And no-thing wiste of this conclusioun,
 But sodeinly bigonne revel newe 1015

Til that the brighte sonne loste his hewe;
For thiorisonte hath rest the sonne his
light;

This is as muche to seye as it was
night.

And hoom they goon in Ioye and in
solas,

Save only wrecche Aurelius, allas! 1020
He to his hous is goon with sorweful
herte;

He seeth he may nat fro his deeth
asterte.

Him semed that he felte his herte colde;
Up to the hevене his handes he gan
holde,

And on his knowes bare he sette him
doun, 1025

And in his raving seyde his orisoun.

For verray wo out of his wit he breyde.
He niste what he spak, but thus he
seyde;

With pitous herte his pleynt hath he
bigonne

Un-to the goddes, and first un-to the
sonne: 1030

He seyde, 'Appollo, god and gov-
ernour

Of every plaunte, herbe, tree and flour,
That yevest, after thy declinacioun,
To ech of hem his tyme and his sesoun,
As thyn herberwe chaungeth lowe or
bye, 1035

Lord Phebus, cast thy merciable yē
On wrecche Aurelie, which that am but
lorne.

Lo, lord! my lady hath my deeth y-sworn
With-oute gilt, but thy benignitee
Upon my dedly herte have som pitee!
For wel I woot, lord Phebus, if yow
lest, 1041

Ye may me helpen, save my lady, best.
Now voucheth sauf that I may yow
devyse

How that I may been holpe and in what
wyse.

Your blisful suster, Lucina the shene,
That of the see is chief goddesse and
quene, 1046

Though Neptunus have deitee in the
sec,

Yet emperresse aboven him is she:

Ye knowen wel, lord, that right as hir
desyr

Is to be quiked and lightned of your
fyr, 1050

For which she folweth yow ful bisily,
Right so the see desyretly naturelly
To folwen hir, as she that is goddesse
Bothe in the see and riveres more and
lesse.

Wherfore, lord Phebus, this is my re-
queste — 1055

Do this miracle, or do myn herte breste —
That now, next at this opposicioun,
Which in the signe shal be of the Leoun,
As preyeth hir so greet a flood to bringe,
That fyve fadme at the leeste it over-
springe 1060

The hyeste rokke in Armorik Briteyne;
And lat this flood endure yeres tweyne;

Than certes to my lady may I seye:

"Holdeth your heste, the rokkes been
aweye."

Lord Phebus, dooth this miracle for
me; 1065

Preye hir she go no faster cours than ye;
I seye, preyeth your suster that she go
No faster cours than ye thise yeres two.

Than shal she been evene atte fulle alway,
And spring-flood laste bothe night and
day. 1070

And, but she vouche-sauf in swiche
manere

To graunte me my sovereyn lady dere.

Prey hir to sinken every rok adoun

In-to hir owene derke regioun

Under the ground, ther Pluto dwelleth
inne, 1075

Or never-mo shal I my lady winne.

Thy temple in Delphos wol I barefoot
seke;

Lord Phebus, see the teres on my cheke,
And of my peyne have som compas-
sioun.'

And with that word in swowne he fil
adoun, 1080

And longe tyme he lay forth in a
traunce.

His brother, which that knew of his
penaunce,

Up caughte him and to bedde he hath
him broght.

Dispeyred in this torment and this thoght
Lete I this woful creature lye; 1085

Chese he for me, whether he wol live or
dye.

Arveragus, with hele and greet honour,
 As he that was of chivalrye 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 fresshe knight, the worthy man of
 armes,
 That loveth thee, as his owene hertes
 lyf.
 No-thing list him to been imaginatyf
 If any wight had spoke, whyl he was
 oute, 1095
 To hire of love; he hadde of it no
 doute.
 He noight entendeth to no swich matere,
 But daunceth, Iusteth, maketh hir good
 chere;
 And thus in Ioye and blisse I lete hem
 dwelle, 1099
 And of the syke Aurelius wol I telle.
 In langour and in torment furious
 Two yeer and more lay wrecche Aurelius,
 Er any foot he mighte on erthe goon;
 Ne confort in this tyme hadde he noon,
 Save of his brother, which that was a
 clerk; 1105
 He knew of al this wo and al this werk.
 For to non other creature certeyn
 Of this matere he dorste no word seyn.
 Under his brest he bar it more secree
 Than ever dide Pamphilus for Galathee.
 His brest was hool, with-oute for to sene,
 But in his herte ay was the arwe kene.
 And wel ye knowe that of a sursanure
 In surgerye is perilous the cure,
 But men mighte touche the arwe, or
 come therby. 1115
 His brother weep and wayled prively,
 Til atte laste him fil in remembraunce,
 That whyl he was at Orlens in Fraunce,
 As yonge clerkes, that been likerous
 To reden artes that been curious, 1120
 Seken in every halke and every herne
 Particuler sciences for to lerne,
 He him remembered that, upon a day,
 At Orlens in studie a book he say
 Of magik naturel, which his felawe, 1125
 That was that tyme a bachelor of lawe,
 Al were he ther to lerne another craft,
 Had prively upon his desk y-laft;
 Which book spak muchel of the opera-
 cious,

Touchinge the eghte and twenty man-
 siouns 1130
 That longen to the mone, and swich
 folye,
 As in our dayes is nat worth a flye;
 For holy chirches feith in our bileve
 Ne suffreth noon illusion us to greve.
 And whan this book was in his remem-
 braunce, 1135
 Anon for Ioye his herte gan to daunce,
 And to him-self he seyde prively:
 'My brother shal be warisshed hastily;
 For I am siker that ther be sciences, 1139
 By whiche men make diverse apparences
 Swiche as thise subtile tregetoures pleye.
 For ofte at festes have I wel herd seye,
 That tregetours, with-inne an halle large,
 Have maad come in a water and a barge,
 And in the halle rowen up and down.
 Somtyme hath semed come a grim
 leoun; 1146
 And somtyme floures springe as in a
 mede;
 Somtyme a vyne, and grapes whyte and
 rede;
 Somtyme a castel, al of lym and stoon;
 And whan hem lyked, voyded it anon.
 Thus semed it to every mannes sighte.
 Now than conclude I thus, that if I
 mighte 1152
 At Orlens som old felawe y-finde,
 That hadde this mones mansions in
 minde,
 Or other magik naturel above, 1155
 He sholde wel make my brother han his
 love.
 For with an apparence a clerk may
 make
 To mannes sighte, that alle the rokkes
 blake
 Of Britaigne weren y-voyded everichon,
 And shippes by the brinke comen and
 gon, 1160
 And in swich forme endure a day or
 two;
 Than were my brother warisshed of his
 wo.
 Than moste she nedes holden hir biheste,
 Or elles he shal shame hir atte leste.'
 What sholde I make a lenger tale of
 this? 1165
 Un-to his brotheres bed he comen is,
 And swich confort he yaf him for to gon

To Orliens, that he up stirte anon,
And on his wey forthward thanne is he
fare,
In hope for to been lissed of his care.

Whan they were come almost to that
citee, 1171

But-if it were a two furlong or three,
A yong clerk rominge by him-self they
mette,

Which that in Latin thriftily hem grette,
And after that he seyde a wonder thing:
'I knowe,' quod he, 'the cause of your
coming'; 1176

And er they ferther any fote wente,
He tolde hem al that was in hir entente.

This Briton clerk him asked of felawes
The whiche that he had knowe in olde
dawes; 1180

And he answerde him that they dede
were,

For which he weep ful ofte many a tere.

Doun of his hors Aurelius lighte
anon,

And forth with this magicien is he gon
Hoom to his hous, and made hem wel at
ese. 1185

Hem lakked no vitaille that mighte hem
plese;

So wel arrayed hous as ther was oon
Aurelius in his lyf saugh never noon.

He shewed him, er he wente to sopeer,
Forestes, parkes ful of wilde deer; 1190

Ther saugh he hertes with hir hornes
hye,

The grettteste that ever were seyn with
yē.

He saugh of hem an hondred slayn with
houndes,

And somme with arwes blede of bitter
woundes.

He saugh, whan voided were these wilde
deer, 1195

These fauconers upon a fair river,
That with hir haukes han the heron
slayn.

The saugh he knightes Iusting in a
playn;

And after this, he dide him swich plea-
saunce,

That he him shewed his lady on a
daunce 1200

On which him-self he daunced, as him
thoughte.

And whan this maister, that this magik
wroughte,

Saugh it was tyme, he clapte his handes
two,

And farewell! al our revel was ago.

And yet remoeved they never out of the
hous, 1205

Whyl they saugh al this sighte merveil-
lous,

But in his studie, ther-as his bookes be,
They seten stille, and no wight but they
three.

To him this maister called his squyer,
And seyde him thus: 'is redy our
soper? 1210

Almost an houre it is, I undertake,
Sith I yow had our soper for to make,

Whan that these worthy men wenten
with me

In-to my studie, ther-as my bookes be.'

'Sire,' quod this squyer, 'whan it lyketh
yow, 1215

It is al redy, though ye wol right now.'

'Go we than soupe,' quod he, 'as for the
beste;

This amorous folk som-tyme mote han
reste.'

At-after soper fille they in trettee,

Whan somme sholde this maistres guer-
don be, 1220

To remoeven alle the rokkes of Britayne,
And eek from Gerounde to the mouth of
Sayne.

He made it straunge, and swoor, so
god him save,

Lasse than a thousand pound he wolde
nat have,

Ne gladly for that somme he wolde nat
goon. 1225

Aurelius, with blisful herte anon,

Answerde thus, 'fy on a thousand pound!
This wyde world, which that men seye is
round,

I wolde it yeve, if I were lord of it.

This bargayn is ful drive, for we ben
knit. 1230

Ye shal be payed trewely, by my trouthe!

But loketh now, for no negligence or
slouthe,

Ye tarie us heer no lenger than to-
morwe.'

'Nay,' quod this clerk, 'have heer my
feith to borwe.'

To bedde is goon Aurelius whan him
 leste, 1235
 And wel ny al that night 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 toke they the righte way,
 Aurelius, and this magicien bisyde, 1241
 And been descended ther they wolde
 abyde;

And this was, as the bokes me remembre,
 The colde frosty seson of Decembre.

Phelus wex old, and hewed lyk latoun,
 That in his hote declinacioun 1246

Shoon as the burned gold with stremes
 brighte;

But now in Capricorn adoun he lighte,
 Wher-as he shoon ful pale, I dar wel
 seyn. 1249

The bittre frostes, with the slect and reyn,
 Destroyed hath the grene in every yerd.
 Ianus sit by the fyr, with double berd,
 And drinketh of his bugle-horn the wyn.
 Biforn him stant braun of the tusked
 swyn,

And "Nowel" cryeth every lusty man.

Aurelius, in al that ever he can, 1255
 Doth to his maister chere and reverence,
 And preyeth him to doon his diligence
 To bringen him out of his peynes smerte,
 Or with a swerd that he wolde slitte his
 herte. 1260

This subtil clerk swich routhe had of
 this man,

That night and day he spedde him that
 he can,

To wayte a tyme of his conclusioun;
 This is to seye, to make illusioun,
 By swich an apparence or Iogelrye, 1265
 I ne can no termes of astrologye,
 That she and every wight sholde wene
 and seye,

That of Britaigne the rokkes were aweye,
 Or elles they were sonken under grounde.
 So atte laste he hath his tyme y-founde
 To maken his lapes and his wrecched-
 nesse 1271

Of swich a superstitious cursednesse.
 His tables Toletanes forth he broght,
 Ful wel corrected, ne ther lakked noght,

Neither his collect ne his expans yeres,
 Ne his rotes ne his othere geres, 1276
 As been his centres and his arguments,
 And his proporcionels conventens
 For his equacions in every thing.
 And, by his eighte spere in his wirking,
 He knew ful wel how fer Alnath was
 shove 1281

Fro the heed of thilke fixe Aries above
 That in the ninthe speere considered is;
 Ful subtilly he calculated al this.

Whan he had founde his firste mansioun,
 1285

He knew the remenant by proporcioun;
 And knew the arysing of his mone weel,
 And in whos face, and terme, and every-
 deel;

And knew ful weel the mones mansioun
 Acordaunt to his operacioun, 1290

And knew also his othere observances
 For swiche illusiouns and swiche mes-
 chaunces

As hethen folk used in thilke dayes;
 For which no lenger maketh he delays,
 But thurgh his magik, for a wyke or
 tweye, 1295

It semed that alle the rokkes were
 aweye.

Aurelius, which that yet despeired is
 Wher he shal han his love or fare amis,
 Awaiteth night and day on this miracle;
 And whan he knew that ther was noon
 obstacle, 1300

That voided were thise rokkes everichon,
 Doun to his maistres feet he fil anon,
 And seyde, 'I woful wrecche, Aurelius,
 Thanke yow, lord, and lady myn Venus,
 That me han holpen fro my cares colde.'
 And to the temple his wey forth hath he
 holde, 1306

Wher-as he knew he sholde his lady see.
 And whan he saugh his time, anon-right
 he,

With dredful herte and with ful humble
 chere,

Salewed hath his sovereyn lady dere:

'My righte lady,' quod this woful
 man, 1311

'Whom I most drede and love as I best
 can,

And lothest were of al this world dis-
 please,

Nere it that I for yow have swich disece,

That I moste dyen heer at your foot
anon, 1315
Noght wolde I telle how me is wo bigon;
But certes outhere moste I dye or pleyne;
Ye slee me gilteles for verray peyne.
But of my death, thogh that ye have no
routhe,
Avyseth yow, er that ye breke your
trouthe. 1320
Repenteth yow, for thilke 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 any thing of right 1324
Of yow my sovereyn lady, but your grace;
But in a gardin yond, at swich a place,
Ye woot right wel what ye bihighten me;
And in myn hand your trouthe pligheten ye
To love me best, god woot, ye seyde so,
Al be that I unworthy be therto. 1330
Madame, I speke it for the honour of
yow,
More than to save myn hertes lyf right
now;
I have do so as ye comanded me;
And if ye vouche-sauf, ye may go see.
Doth as yow list, have your biheste in
minde, 1335
For quik or deed, right ther ye shul me
finde;
In yow lyth al, to do me live or deye; —
But wel I woot the rokkes been aweye!
He taketh his leve, and she astonied
stood,
In al hir face nas a drope of blood; 1340
She wende never han come in swich a
trappe:
'Alas!' quod she, 'that ever this sholde
happe!
For wende I never, by possibilitee,
That swich a monstre or merveille mighte
be!
It is agayns the proces of nature': 1345
And hoom she gooth a sorweful creature.
For verray fere unnethe may she go,
She wepeth, wailleth, al a day or two,
And swowneth, that it routhe was to
see; 1349
But why it was, to no wight tolde she;
For out of toune was goon Arveragus.
But to hir-self she spak, and seyde thus,
With face pale and with ful sorweful chere,
In hir compleynt, as ye shul after here:

'Allas,' quod she, 'on thee, Fortune,
I pleyne, 1355
That unwar wrapped hast me in thy
cheyne;
For which, tescapen, woot I no socour
Save only death or elles dishonour;
Oon of these two bihoveth me to chese.
But nathelees, yet have I lever to lese 1360
My lyf than of my body have a shame,
Or knowe my-selven fals, or lese my name,
And with my deth I may be quit, 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 trespass?
Yis, certes, lo, these stories beren wit-
nesse;
Whan thretty tyraunts, ful of cursed-
nesse,
Had slayn Phidoun in Athenes, atte
feste, 1369
They comanded his doghtres for taresten,
And bringen hem biforn hem in despyt,
Al naked, to fulfillen hir foul delyt,
And in hir fadres blood they made hem
daunce
Upon the pavement, god yeve hem mis-
chance!
For which these woful maydens, ful of
dredde, 1375
Rather than they wolde lese hir mayden-
hede,
They prively ben stirt in-to a welle,
And dreynete hem-selven, as the bokes
telle.
They of Messene lete enquire and
seke
Of Lacedomie fifty maydens eke, 1380
On whiche they wolden doon hir lech-
erye;
But was there noon of al that companye
That she nas slayn, and with a good
entente
Chees rather for to dye than assente
To been oppressed of hir mayden-
hede. 1385
Why sholde I thanne to dye been in
dredde?
Lo, eek, the tiraunt Aristocledes
That loved a mayden, heet Stimphalides,
Whan that hir fader slayn was on a night,
Un-to Dianes temple goth she right, 1390
And hente the image in hir handes two,
Fro which image wolde she never go.

No wight ne mighte hir handes of it
arace,

Til she was slayn right in the selve place.
Now sith that maydens hadden swich
despyt 1395

To been defouled with mannes foul
delyt,

Wel oghte a wyf rather hir-selven slee
Than be defouled, as it thinketh me.

What shal I seyn of Hasdrubales wyf,
That at Cartage birafte hir-self hir
lyf? 1400

For whan she saugh that Romayns wan
the toun,

She took hir children alle, and skipte
adoun

In-to the fyr, and chees rather to dye
Than any Romayn dide hir vileinye.

Hath nat Lucesse y-slayn hir-self,
allas! 1405

At Rome, whanne she oppressed was
Of Tarquin, for hir thoughte it was a
shame

To liven whan she hadde lost hir name?

The sevene maydens of Milesie also
Han slayn hem-self, for verray drede and
wo, 1410

Rather than folk of Gaule hem sholde
opprese.

Mo than a thousand stories, as I gesse,
Coude I now telle as touchinge this
matere.

Whan Habradate was slayn, his wyf so
dere

Hirselven slow, and leet hir blood to
glyde 1415

In Habradates woundes depe and wyde,
And seyde, "my body, at the leeste way,
Ther shal no wight defoulen, if I may."

What sholde I mo ensamples heer-of
sayn,

Sith that so manye han hem-selven
slayn 1420

Wel rather than they wolde defouled be?
I wol conclude, that it is bet for me

To sleen my-self, than been defouled
thus.

I wol be trewe un-to Arveragus,
Or rather sleen my-self in som manere,

As dide Demociones doghter dere, 1426

By-cause that she wolde nat defouled be.
O Cedasus! it is ful greet pitee,

To reden how thy doghtren deyde, allas!

That slowe hem-selven for swich maner
cas. 1430

As greet a pitee was it, or wel more,
The Theban mayden, that for Nichanore
Hir-selven slow, right for swich maner
wo.

Another Theban mayden dide right so;
For oon of Macedoine hadde hir op-
pressed, 1435
She with hir deeth hir maydenhede re-
dressed.

What shal I seye of Nicerates wyf,
That for swich cas birafte hir-self hir
lyf?

How trewe eek was to Alcebiades
His love, that rather for to dyen
chees 1440

Than for to suffre his body unburi'd be!
Lo which a wyf was Alceste,' quod she.

'What seith Omer of gode Penalopee?
Al Grece knoweth of hir chastitee.

Pardee, of Laodomya is writen
thus, 1445

That whan at Troye was slayn Prothese-
laus,

No lenger wolde she live after his day.
The same of noble Porcia telle I
may;

With-outh Brutus coude she nat live,
To whom she hadde al hool hir herte
yive. 1450

The parfit wyfhod of Arthemese
Honoured is thurgh al the Barbarye.

O Teuta, queen! thy wyfly chastitee
To alle wyves may a mirour be.

The same thing I seye of Bilia, 1455
Of Rodogone, and eek Valeria.'

Thus pleynd Dorigene a day or tweye,
Purposinge ever that she wolde deye.

But natheles, upon the thridde night,
Hom cam Arveragus, this worthy
knight, 1460

And asked hir, why that she weep so
sore?

And she gan wepen ever lenger the
more.

'Allas!' quod she, 'that ever was I
born!

Thus have I seyde,' quod she, 'thus have
I sworn'—

And told him al as ye han herd bi-
fore;

1465

It nedeth nat reherce it yow na mor.

This housbond with glad chere, in
freendly wyse,
Answerde and seyde as I shal yow de-
vyse :

'Is ther oght elles, Dorigen, but this?'

'Nay, nay,' quod she, 'god help me so,
as wis; 1470

This is to muche, and it were goddes
wille.'

'Ye, wyf,' quod he, 'lat slepen that is
stille;

It may be wel, paraventure, yet to-day.
Ye shul your trouthe holden, by my fay!
For god so wisly have mercy on me, 1475
I hadde wel lever y-stiked for to be,
For verray love which that I to yow
have,

But-if ye sholde your trouthe kepe and
save.

Trouthe is the hyeste thing that man may
kepe':—

But with that word he brast anon to
wepe, 1480

And seyde, 'I yow forbede, up peyne of
death,

That never, whyl thee lasteth lyf ne
breeth,

To no wight tel thou of this aventure.

As I may best, I wol my wo endure,
Ne make no contenance of hev-
nesse, 1485

That folk of yow may demen harm or
gesse.'

And forth he cleped a squyer and a
mayde:

'Goth forth anon with Dorigen,' he
sayde,

'And bringeth hir to swich a place
anon.'

They take hir leve, and on hir wey they
gon; 1490

But they ne wiste why she thider wente.
He nolde no wight tellen his entente.

Paraventure an heep of yow, y-wis,
Wol holden him a lewed man in this,
That he wol putte his wyf in Iupar-
tye; 1495

Herkneth the tale, er ye up-on hir crye.
She may have bettre fortune than yow
semeth;

And whan that ye han herd the tale,
demeth.

This squyer, which that highte Aurelius,

On Dorigen that was so amorous, 1500
Of aventure happed hir to mete
Amidde the toun, right in the quikkest
strete,

As she was boun to goon the wey forth-
right

Toward the gardin ther-as she had hight.
And he was to the gardinward also; 1505

For wel he spyed, whan she wolde go
Out of hir hous to any maner place.

But thus they mette, of aventure or
grace;

And he saleweth hir with glad entente,
And asked of hir whiderward she
wente? 1510

And she answerde, half as she were
mad,

'Un-to the gardin, as myn housbond bad,
My trouthe for to holde, allas! allas!'

Aurelius gan wondren on this cas,
And in his herte had greet compassioun
Of hir and of hir lamentacioun, 1516

And of Arveragus, the worthy knight,
That bad hir holden al that she had

hight,
So looth him was his wyf sholde breke
hir trouthe;

And in his herte he caughte of this greet
routhe, 1520

Consideringe the beste on every syde,
That fro his lust yet were him lever

abyde
Than doon so heigh a cherlish wrecched-
nesse

Agayns franchyse and alle gentillesse;

For which in fewe wordes seyde he thus :

'Madame, seyth to your lord Arvera-
gus, 1526

That sith I see his grete gentillesse
To yow, and eek I see wel your distresse,

That him were lever han shame (and
that were routhe)

Than ye to me sholde breke thus your
trouthe, 1530

I have wel lever ever to suffre wo
Than I departe the love bitwix yow two.

I yow relesse, madame, in-to your hond
Quit every surement and every bond,

That ye han maad to me as heer-biforn,
Sith thilke tyme which that ye were

born. 1536

My trouthe I plighte, I shal yow never
repreve

Of no biheste, and here I take my leve,
 As of the treweste and the beste wyf
 That ever yet I knew in al my lyf. 1540
 But every wyf be-war of hir biheste,
 On Dorigene remembreth atte leste.
 Thus can a squyer doon a gentil dede,
 As well as can a knight, with-outen
 drede.'

She thonketh him up-on hir knees al
 bare, 1545
 And hoom un-to hir housbond is she fare,
 And tolde him al as ye han herd me
 sayd;

And he 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 blisse leden forth hir lyf.
 Never eft ne was ther angre hem bi-
 twene;

He cherisseth hir as though she were a
 queene; 1554
 And she was to him trewe for evermore.
 Of these two folk ye gete of me na-more.

Aurelius, that his cost hath al forlorn,
 Curseth the tyme that ever he was born:
 'Allas,' quod he, 'allas! that I bihighte
 Of pure gold a thousand pound of
 wighte 1560

Un-to this philosophre! how shal I do?
 I see na-more but that I am fordo.
 Myn heritage moot I nedes selle,
 And been a begger; heer may I nat
 dwelle,

And shamen al my kinrede in this
 place, 1565
 But I of him may gete better grace.
 But nathelees, I wol of him assaye,
 At certeyn dayes, yeer by yeer, to paye,
 And thanke him of his grete curteisye;
 My trouthe wol I kepe, I wol nat lye.'

With herte soor he gooth un-to his
 cofre, 1571
 And broghte gold un-to this philosophre,
 The value of fyve hundred pound, I
 gesse,

And him bisecheth, of his gentillesse,
 To graunte him dayes of the remenaunt,
 And seyde, 'maister, I dar wel make
 avaunt, 1576
 I failed never of my trouthe as yit;
 For sikerly my dette shal be quit
 Towards yow, how-ever that I fare

To goon a-begged in my kirtle bare. 1580
 But wolde ye vouche-sauf, up-on seurtee,
 Two yeer or three for to respyten me,
 Than were I wel; for elles moot I selle
 Myn heritage; ther is na-more to telle.'

This philosophre sobrelly answerde,
 And seyde thus, whan he these wordes
 herde: 1586
 'Have I nat holden covenant un-to
 thee?'

'Yes, certes, wel and trewely,' quod he.
 'Hastow nat had thy lady as thee
 lyketh?'

'No, no,' quod he, and sorwefully he
 syketh. 1590
 'What was the cause? tel me if thou
 can.'

Aurelius his tale anon bigan,
 And tolde him al, as ye han herd bifore;
 It nedeth nat to yow reherce it more.

He seide, 'Arveragus, of gentillesse,
 Had lever dye in sorwe and in dis-
 tresse 1596
 Than that his wyf were of hir trouthe
 fals.'

The sorwe of Dorigen he tolde him
 als,
 How looth hir was to been a wikked
 wyf,

And that she lever had lost that day hir
 lyf, 1600
 And that hir trouthe she swoor, thurgh
 innocence:

'She never erst herde speke of appar-
 ence;
 That made me han of hir so greet pitee.
 And right as frely as he sente hir me,
 As frely sente I hir to him ageyn. 1605
 This al and som, ther is na-more to
 seyn.'

This philosophre answerde, 'leve
 brother,
 Everich of yow dide gentilly til other.
 Thou art a squyer, and he is a knight;
 But god forbede, for his blisful might, 1610
 But-if a clerk coude doon a gentil dede
 As well as any of yow, it is no drede!

Sire, I relesse thee thy thousand pound,
 As thou right now were copen out of
 the ground,
 Ne never er now ne haddest knowen
 me. 1615

For sire, I wol nat take a peny of thee

For al my craft, ne noight for my tra-
vaille.

Thou hast y-payed wel for my vitaille;
It is y-nogh, and farewel, have good day: '
And took his hors, and forth he gooth
his way. 1620

Lordinges, this question wolde I aske
now,

Which was the moste free, as thinketh
yow?

Now telleth me, er that ye ferther wende.
I can na-more, my tale is at an ende.

Here is ended the Frankeleyns Tale.

GROUP G.

THE SECONDE NONNES TALE.

THE PROLOGE OF THE SECONDE NONNES TALE.

THE ministre and the norice un-to vyces,
Which that men clepe in English ydel-
nesse,

That porter of the gate is of delyces,
To eschue, and by hir contrarie hir op-
presse,

That is to seyn, by leveful bisnesse, 5
Wel oghten we to doon al our entente,
Lest that the feend thurgh ydelnesse us
hente.

For he, that with his thousand cordes
slye

Continuelly us waiteth to biclappe,
Whan he may man in ydelnesse espye, 10
He can so lightly cacche him in his
trappe,

Til that a man be hent right by the
lappe,

He nis nat war the feend hath him in
honde;

Wel oughte us werche, and ydelnes with-
sonde.

And though men dradden never for to
dye, 15

Yet seen men wel by reson douteles,
That ydelnesse is roten slogardye,
Of which ther never comth no good en-
crees;

And seen, that slouthe hir holdeth in a
lees

Only to slepe, and for to ete and drinke,
And to devouren al that othere swinke. 21

And for to putte us fro swiche ydelnesse,
That cause is of so greet confusioun,

I have heer doon my feithful bisnesse,
After the legende, in translacioun 25
Right of thy glorious lyf and passioun,
Thou with thy gerland wroght of rose
and lilie;

Thee mene I, mayde and martir, seint
Cecilie!

Inuocacio ad Mariam.

And thou that flour of virgines art alle,
Of whom that Bernard list so wel to wryte,
To thee at my biginning first I calle; 31
Thou comfort of us wrecches, do me en-
dye

Thy maydens deeth, that wan thurgh hir
meryte

The eternal lyf, and of the feend victorie,
As man may after redem in hir storie. 35

Thou mayde and mooder, doghter of thy
sone,

Thou welle of mercy, sinful soules cure,
In whom that god, for bountee, chees to
wone,

Thou humble, and heigh over every crea-
ture,

Thou nobledest so ferforth our nature, 40
That no desdeyn the maker hadde of
kinde,

His sone in blode and flesh to clothe and
winde.

Withinne the cloistre blisful of thy
sydes

Took mannes shap the eternal love and
pees,
That of the tryne compas lord and gyde
is, 45
Whom erthe and see and heven, out of
reles,
Ay herien; and thou, virgin wemmelees,
Bar 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 excel-
lence,
Nat only helpest hem that preyen thee,
But ofte tyme, of thy benigntee,
Ful frely, er that men thyn help bi-
seche, 55
Thou goost biforn, and art hir lyves leche.

Now help, thou meke and blisful fayre
mayde,
Me, flemed wrecche, in this desert of
galle;
Think on the womman Cananee, that
sayde
That whelpes eten somme of the crommes
alle 60
That from hir lordes table been y-falle;
And though that I, unworthy sone of
Eve,
Be sinful, yet accepte my bileve.

And, for that feith is deed with-outen
werkes,
So for to werken yif me wit and space, 65
That I be quit fro thennes that most derk
is!
O thou, that art so fayr and ful of grace,
Be myn advocat in that heighe place
Ther-as withouten ende is songe 'Osanne,'
Thou Cristes mooder, doghter dere of
Anne! 70

And of thy light my soule in prison lighte,
That troubled is by the contagioun
Of my body, and also by the wighte
Of erthly luste and fals affecciou;
O haven of refut, o salvacioun 75
Of hem that ben in sorwe and in distresse,
Now help, for to my werk I wol me dresse.

Yet preye I yow that reden that I wryte,
Foryeve me, that I do no diligence
This ilke storie subtilly to endyte; 80
For both have I the wordes and sentence
Of him that at the seintes reverence
The storie wroot, and folwe hir legende,
And prey yow, that ye wol my werk
amende.

*Interpretacio nominis Cecilie, quam ponit
frater Iacobus Ianuensis in Legenda
Aurea.*

First wolde I yow the name of seint Ce-
cilie 85
Expoune, as men may in hir storie see,
It is to seye in English 'hevenes lilie,'
For pure chastnesse of virginitee;
Or, for she whytnesse hadde of honestee,
And grene of conscience, and of good
fame 90
The sote savour, 'lilie' was hir name.

Or Cecile is to seye 'the wey to blinde,'
For she ensample was by good techinge;
Or elles Cecile, as I writen finde,
Is ioyned, by a maner conioingne 95
Of 'hevene' and 'Lia'; and heer, in fig-
uringe,
The 'heven' is set for thought of holinesse,
And 'Lia' for hir lasting bisnesse.

Cecile may eek be seyde in this manere,
'Wanting of blindnesse,' for hir grete
light 100
Of sapience, and for hir thewes clere;
Or elles, lo! this maydens name bright
Of 'hevene' and 'leos' comth, for which
by right
Men mighte hir wel 'the heven of peple'
calle,
Ensamble of gode and wyse werkes
alle. 105

For 'leos' 'peple' in English is to seye,
And right as men may in the hevene see
The sonne and mone and sterres every
weye,
Right so men gostly, in this mayden free,
Seyen of feith the magnanimittee, 110
And eek the cleernesse hool of sapience,
And sondry werkes, brighte of excel-
lence.

And right so as thise philosophres wryte
That heven is swift and round and eek
brenninge, 114
Right so was fayre Cecilie the whyte
Ful swift and bisy ever in good werkinge,
And round and hool in good persever-
inge,
And brenning ever in charitee ful
bryghte;
Now have I yow declared what she
highte.

Explicit.

HERE BIGINNETH THE SECONDE NONNES
TALE, OF THE LYF OF SEINTE CECILE.

THIS mayden bryght Cecilie, as hir lyf
seith, 120
Was comen of Romayns, and of noble
kinde,
And from hir cradel up fostred in the
feith
Of Crist, and bar his gospel in hir minde;
She never cessed, as I writen finde,
Of hir preyere, and god to love and
drede, 125
Biseking him to kepe hir maydenhede.

And when this mayden sholde unto a
man
Y-wedded be, that was ful yong of age,
Which that y-cleped was Valerian,
And day was comen of hir mariage, 130
She, ful devout and humble in hir corage,
Under hir robe of gold, that sat ful fayre,
Had next hir flesh y-clad hir in an heyre.

And whyl the organs maden melodye,
To god alone in herte thus sang she; 135
'O lord, my soule and eek my body gye
Unwemmed, lest that I confounded be.'
And, for his love that deyde upon a tree,
Every seconde or thirde day she faste,
Ay biddinge in hir orisons ful faste. 140

The night cam, and to bedde moste she
gon
With hir housbonde, as ofte is the manere,
And prively to him she seyde anon,
'O swete and wel biloved spouse dere,
Ther is a conseil, and ye wolkte it
here, 145

Which that right fain I wolde unto yow
seye,
So that ye swere ye shul me nat biwreye.'

Valerian gan faste unto hir swere,
That for no cas, ne thing that mighte be,
He sholde never-mo biwreien here; 150
And thanne at erst to him thus seyde
she,
'I have an angel which that loveth me,
That with greet love, wher-so I wake or
slepe,
Is redy ay my body for to kepe.

And if that he may felen, out of drede, 155
That ye me touche or love in vileinye,
He right anon wol sleece yow with the
dede,
And in your yowthe thus ye shulden dye;
And if that ye in clene love me gye,
He wol yow loven as me, for your clen-
nesse, 160
And shewen yow his Joye and his bryght-
nesse.'

Valerian, corrected as god wolde,
Answerde agayn, 'if I shal trusten thee,
Lat me that angel se, and him biholde;
And if that it a verray angel be 165
Than wol I doon as thou hast preyed
me;
And if thou love another man, for sothe
Right with this swerd than wol I sleece
yow bothe.'

Cecile answerde anon right in this wyse,
'If that yow list, the angel shul ye
see, 170
So that ye trowe on Crist and yow bap-
tyse.
Goth forth to Via Apia,' quod she,
'That fro this toun ne stant but myles
three,
And, to the povre folkes that ther dwelle,
Sey hem right thus, as that I shal yow
telle. 175

Telle hem that I, Cecile, yow to hem
sente,
To shewen yow the gode Urban the olde,
For scree nedes and for good entente.
And whan that ye seint Urban han bi-
holde,

Telle him the wordes whiche I to yow
tolde; 180
And whan that he hath purged yow fro
sinne,
Thanne shul ye see that angel, er ye
twinne.'

Valerian is to the place y-gon,
And right as him was taught by his lern-
inge,

He fond this holy olde Urban anon 185
Among the seintes buriels lotinge.
And he anon, with-ouen tarynge,
Dide his message; and whan that he it
tolde,
Urban for Ioye his hondes gan up holde.

The teres from his yē leet he falle — 190
'Almighty lord, o Iesu Crist,' quod he,
'Sower of chast conseil, herde of us alle,
The fruit of thilke seed of chastitee
That thou hast sowe in Cecile, tak to
thee!
Lo, lyk a bisy bee, with-ouen gyle, 195
Thee serveth ay thyn owene thral Cecile!

For thilke spouse, that she took but now
Ful lyk a fiers leoun, she sendeth here,
As meke as ever was any lamb, to yow!
And with that worde, anon ther gan
appere 200
An old man, clad in whyte clothes clere,
That hadde a book with lettre of golde in
honde,
And gan biforn Valerian to stonde.

Valerian as deed fil doun for drede
Whan he him saugh, and he up hente
him tho, 205
And on his book right thus he gan to
rede —
'Oo Lord, oo feith, oo god with-ouen
mo,
Oo Cristendom, and fader of alle also,
Aboven alle and over al everywhere' —
These wordes al with gold y-written
were. 210

Whan this was rad, than seyde this olde
man,
'Levestow this thing or no? sey ye or
nay.'
'I leve al this thing,' quod Valerian,

'For sother thing than this, I dar wel
say,
Under the hevene no wight thinke
may.' 215
Tho vanished the olde man, he niste
where,
And pope Urban him cristened right
there.

Valerian goth hoom, and fint Cecilie
With-inne his chambre with an angel
stonde;
This angel hadde of roses and of lillie 220
Corones two, the which he bar in honde;
And first to Cecile, as I understonde,
He yaf that oon, and after gan he take
That other to Valerian, hir make.

'With body clene and with unwenmed
thoght 225
Kepeth ay wel thise corones,' quod he;
'Fro Paradys to yow have I heim broght,
Ne never-mo ne shal they roten be,
Ne lese her sote savour, trusteth me;
Ne never wight shal seen hem with his
yē, 230
But he be chaast and hatē vileinyē.

And thou, Valerian, for thou so sone
Assentedest to good conseil also,
Sey what thee list, and thou shalt han
thy bone.'
'I have a brother,' quod Valerian tho, 235
'That in this world I love no man so.
I pray yow that my brother may han
grace
To knowe the trouthe, as I do in this
place.'

The angel seyde, 'god lyketh thy re-
queste,
And bothe, with the palm of martir-
dom, 240
Ye shullen come unto his blisful feste.'
And with that word Tiburce his brother
com.

And whan that he the savour undernom
Which that the roses and the lilies caste,
With-inne his herte he gan to wondre
faste, 245

And seyde, 'I wondre, this tyme of the
yeer,

Whennes that sote savour cometh so
Of rose and lilies that I smelle heer.
For though I hadde hem in myn hondes
two, 249

The savour mighte in me no depper go.
The sote smel that in myn herte I finde
Hath chaunged me al in another kinde.'

Valerian seyde, 'two corones han we,
Snow-whyte and rose-reed, that shynen
clere,

Whiche that thyn yën han no might to
see; 255

And as thou smellest hem thurgh my
preyere,

So shaltow seen hem, leve brother dere,
If it so be thou wolt, withouten slouthe,
Bilve aright and knowen verray trouthe.'

Tiburce answerde, 'seistow this to me 260
In soothnesse, or in drem I herkne this?'

'In dremes,' quod Valerian, 'han we be
Unto this tyme, brother myn, y-wis.

But now at erst in trouthe our dwelling is,'
'How woostow this,' quod Tiburce, 'in
what wyse?' 265

Quod Valerian, 'that shal I thee devyse.

The angel of god hath me the trouthe
y-taught

Which thou shalt seen, if that thou wolt
reneye

The ydoles and be clene, and elles
naught.'— 269

And of the miracle of thise corones tweye
Seint Ambrose in his peface list to seye;

Solempnely this noble doctour dere
Commendeth it, and seith in this
manere :

The palm of martirdom for to receyve,
Seinte Cecile, fullild of goddes yifte, 275

The world and eek hir chambre gan she
weyve;

Witnes Tyburces and Valerians shrifte,
To whiche god of his bountee wolde
shifte

Corones two of floures wel smellinge,
And made his angel hem the corones
bringe: 280

The mayde hath broght thise men to
blisse above;

The world hath wist what it is worth,
certeyn,

Devocioun of chastitee to love.—

Tho shewede him Cecile al open and
pleyn

That alle ydoles nis but a thing in veyn;
For they been dombe, and therto they

been deve, 286
And charged him his ydoles for to leve.

'Who so that troweth nat this, a beste
he is,'

Quod tho Tiburce, 'if that I shal nat
lye.'

And she gan kisse his brest, that herde
this, 290

And was ful glad he coude trouthe
espye.

'This day I take thee for myn allye,'

Seyde this blisful fayre mayde dere;

And after that she seyde as ye may here :

'Lo, right so as the love of Crist,' quod
she, 295

'Made me thy brotheres wyf, right in
that wyse

Anon for myn allye heer take I thee,

Sin that thou wolt thyn ydoles despysse.

Go with thy brother now, and thee
baptyse,

And make thee clene; so that thou
mowe biholde 300

The angels face of which thy brother
tolde.'

Tiburce answerde and seyde, 'brother
dere,

First tel me whider I shal, and to what
man?'

'To whom?' quod he, 'com forth with
right good chere,

I wol thee lede unto the pope Urban.'

'Til Urban?' brother myn Valerian,' 306
Quod tho Tiburce, 'woltow me thider

lede?
Me thinketh that it were a wonder dede.

Ne menestow nat Urban,' quod he tho,

'That is so ofte dampned to be deed, 310
And woneth in halkes alwey to and fro,

And dar nat ones putte forth his heed?
Men sholde him brennen in a fyr so

reed

If he were founde, or that men mighte
him spye;
And we also, to bere him companye —

And whyl we seken thilke divinitee 316
That is y-hid in hevne prively,
Algate y-brend in this world shul we
be!

To whom Cecile answerde boldely, 319
Men mighten dreden wel and skilfully
This lyf to lese, myn owene dere brother,
If this were livinge only and non other.

But ther is better lyf in other place,
That never shal be lost, ne drede thee
nought,

Which goddes sone us tolde thurgh his
grace; 325

That fadres sone hath alle thinges
wroght;

And al that wroght is with a skilful
thoght,

The goost, that fro the fader gan procede,
Hath sowled hem, withouten any drede.

By word and by miracle goddes sone, 330
Whan he was in this world, declared
here

That ther was other lyf ther men may
wone.'

To whom answerde Tiburce, 'o suster
dere,

Ne seydestow right now in this manere,
Ther nis but o god, lord in soothfast-
nesse; 335

And now of three how maystow bere
witnesse?'

'That shal I telle,' quod she, 'er I go.
Right as a man hath sapiences three,
Memorie, engyn, and intellect also,
So, in o being of divinitee, 340
Three persones may ther right wel be.'
Tho gan she him ful bisily to preche
Of Cristes come and of his peynes teche,

And many pointes of his passioun;
How goddes sone in this world was
withholde, 345

To doon mankinde pleyn remissioun,
That was y-bounde in sinne and cares
colde:

Al this thing she unto Tiburce tolde.

And after this Tiburce, in good entente,
With Valerian to pope Urban he wente,

That thanked god; and with glad herte
and light 351

He cristned him, and made him in that
place

Parfit in his lerninge, goddes knight.

And after this Tiburce gat swich grace,
That every day he saugh, in tyme and
space, 355

The angel of god; and every maner
bone

That he god axed, it was sped ful sone.

It were ful hard by ordre for to seyn
How many wondres Iesus for hem
wroghte;

But atte laste, to tellen short and pleyn,
The sergeants of the toun of Rome hem
soghte, 361

And hem biforn Almache the prefect
broghte,

Which hem apposed, and knew al hir
entente,

And to the image of Iupiter hem sente,

And seyde, 'who so wol nat sacrificse,
Swap of his heed, this is my sentence
here.' 366

Anon this martirs that I yow devyse,
Oon Maximus, that was an officere
Of the prefectes and his corniculere,

Hem hente; and whan he forth the
seintes ladde, 370

Him-self he weep, for pitee that he
hadde.

Whan Maximus had herd the seintes lore,
He gat him of the tormentoures leve,
And ladde hem to his hous withoute
more; 374

And with hir preching, er that it were eve,
They gonnen fro the tormentours to reve,
And fro Maxime, and fro his folk echone
The false feith, to trowe in god allone.

Cecilie cam, whan it was woxen night,
With preestes that hem cristned alle
y-fer; 380

And afterward, whan day was woxen
light,

Cecile hem seyde with a ful sobre chere,

'Now, Cristes owene knightes leve and
dere,
Caste alle away the werkes of derknesse,
And armeth yow in armure of bright-
nesse. 385

Ye han for sothe y-doon a greet bataille,
Your cours is doon, your feith han ye
conserved,
Goth to the corone of lyf that may nat
faill;
The rightful Iuge, which that ye han
served,
Shall yeve it yow, as ye han it deserved.'
And whan this thing was seyde as I de-
vyse, 391
Men ladde hem forth to doon the sacri-
fyse.

But whan they weren to the place broght,
To tellen shortly the conclusioun,
They nolde encense ne sacrifice right
noht, 395
But on hir knees they setten hem adoun
With humble herte and sad devocioun,
And losten bothe hir hedes in the place.
Hir soules wenten to the king of grace.

This Maximus, that saugh this thing bi-
tyde, 400
With pitous teres tolde it anon-right,
That he hir soules saugh to heven glyde
With angels ful of cleernesse and of light,
And with his word converted many a
wight;
For which Almachius dide him so to-
bete 405
With whippe of leed, til he his lyf gan
lete.

Cecile him took and buried him anon
By Tiburce and Valerian softly,
Withinne hir buryng-place, under the
stoon.
And after this Almachius hastily 410
Bad his ministres fecchen openly
Cecile, so that she mighte in his presence
Doon sacrifice, and Jupiter encense.

But they, converted at hir wyse lore,
Wepten ful sore, and yaven ful credence
Unto hir word, and cryden more and
more, 416

'Crist, goddes son, withouten difference,
Is verray god, this is al our sentence,
That hath so good a servant him to serve;
This with o voys we trowen, thogh we
sterve!' 420

Almachius, that herde of this doinge,
Bad fecchen Cecile, that he might hir
see,
And alderfirst, lo! this was his axinge,
'What maner womman artow?' tho quod
he.
'I am a gentil womman born,' quod
she. 425
'I axe thee,' quod he, 'thogh it thee greve,
Of thy religioun and of thy bileve.'

'Ye han bigonne your question folily,'
Quod she, 'that wolden two answeres con-
clude
In oo demande; ye axed lewedly.' 430
Almache answerde unto that similitude,
'Of whennes comth thyn answering so
rude?'
'Of whennes?' quod she, whan that she
was freyned,
'Of conscience and of good feith un-
feyned.'

Almachius seyde, 'ne takestow non hede
Of my power?' and she answerde him
this — 436
'Your might,' quod she, 'ful litel is to
drede;
For every mortal mannes power nis
But lyk a bladdre, ful of wind, y-wis.
For with a nedles poynt, whan it is
blowe, 440
May al the boost of it be leyd ful lowe.'

'Ful wrongfully bigonne thou,' quod he,
'And yet in wrong is thy perseveraunce;
Wostow nat how our mighty princes free
Han thus comanded and maad ordi-
naunce, 445
That every cristen wight shal han pen-
naunce
But-if that he his cristendom withseye,
And goon al quit, if he wol it reneye?'

'Your princes erren, as your nobley dooth,'
Quod tho Cecile, 'and with a wood sen-
tence 450

Ye make us guilty, and it is nat sooth;
 For ye, that knowen wel our innocence,
 For as muche as we doon a reverence
 To Crist, and for we bere a cristen name,
 Ye putte on us a cryme, and eek a blame.

But we that knowen thilke name so 456
 For vertuous, we may it nat withseye.'

Almache answerde, 'chees oon of these

two,

Do sacrifice, or cristendom reneye,
 That thou mowe now escapen by that
 weye.' 460

At which the holy blisful fayre mayde
 Gan for to laughe, and to the Iuge seyde,

'O Iuge, confus in thy nycetee,
 Woltow that I reneye innocence,
 To make me a wikked wight?' quod
 she; 465

'Lo! he dissimuleth here in audience,
 He stareth and woodeth in his adverte-
 tence!'

To whom Almachius, 'unsely wrecche,
 Ne woostow nat how far my might may
 strecche?

I han noght our mighty princes to me
 yeven, 470

Ye, bothe power and auctoritee
 To maken folk to dyen or to liven?

Why spekestow so proudly than to me?'
 'I speke noght but stedfastly,' quod she,

'Nat proudly, for I seye, as for my
 syde, 475

We haten deedly thilke vyce of pryde.

And if thou drede nat a sooth to here,
 Than wol I shewe al openly, by right,
 That thou hast maad a ful gret lesing
 here.

Thou seyst, thy princes han thee yeven
 might 480

Bothe for to sleen and for to quiken a
 wight;

Thou, that ne mayst but only lyf bireve,
 Thou hast non other power ne no leve!

But thou mayst seyn, thy princes han thee
 maked

Ministre of deeth; for if thou speke of
 mo, 485

Thou lyst, for thy power is ful naked.'

'Do wey thy boldnes,' seyde Almachius
 tho,

'And sacrifice to our goddes, er thou go;
 I recche nat what wrong that thou me
 profre,

For I can suffre it as a philosopre; 490

But thilke wronges may I nat endure
 That thou spekest of our goddes here,'
 quod he.

Cecile answerede, 'o nyce creature,
 Thou seydest no word sin thou spak to
 me

That I ne knew therwith thy nycetee; 495
 And that thou were, in every maner
 wyse,

A lewed officer and a veyn Iustyse.

Ther lakketh no-thing to thyn utter yēn
 That thou nart blind, for thing that we
 seen alle

That it is stoon, that men may wel es-
 pyen, 500

That ilke 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
 finde,

Sin that thou seest nat with thyn yēn
 blinde.

It is a shame that the peple shal 505
 So scorne thee, and laughe at thy folye;

For comunly men woot it wel overal,
 That mighty god is in his hevenes hye,

And these images, wel thou mayst espye,
 To thee ne to hem-self mowe nought
 profyte, 510

For in effect they been nat worth a
 myte.'

Thise wordes and swiche othere seyde
 she,

And he weex wroth, and bad men sholde
 hir lede

Hom til hir hous, 'and in hir hous,'
 quod he,

'Brenne hir right in a bath of flambes
 rede.' 515

And as he bad, right so was doon in
 dede;

For in a bath they gonne hir faste shetten,
 And night and day greet fyr they under
 betten.

The longe night and eek a day also,
 For al the fyr and eek the bathes hete,
 She sat al cold, and felede no wo, 521
 It made hir nat a drope for to swete.
 But in that bath hir lyf she moste lete;
 For he, Almachius, with ful wikke en-
 tente 524
 To sleen hir in the bath his sonde sente.

Three strokes in the nekke he smoot hir
 tho,
 The tormentour, but for no maner chaunce
 He mighte noght smyte al hir nekke
 a-two;
 And for ther was that tyme an ordi-
 nauce,
 That no man sholde doon man swich
 penaunce 530
 The ferthe strook to smyten, softe or sore,
 This tormentour ne dorste do na-more.

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 hir
 were, 535

With shetes han the blood ful faire
 y-hent.
 Thre dayes lived she in this torment,
 And never cessed hem the feith to teche;
 That she hadde fostred, hem she gan to
 preche;

And hem she yaf hir moebles and hir
 thing, 540
 And to the pope Urban bitook hem tho,
 And seyde, 'I axed this at hevenc king,
 To han respyt thre dayes and na-mo,
 To recomende to yow, er that I go,
 Thise soules, lo! and that I mighte do
 werche 545
 Here of myn hous perpetuely a cherche.'

Seint Urban, with his deknes, prively
 The body fette, and buried it by nighte
 Among his othere seintes honestly.
 Hir hous the chirche of seint Cecillie
 highte; 550
 Seint Urban halwed it, as he wel mighte;
 In which, into this day, in noble wyse,
 Men doon to Crist and to his seint ser-
 vyse.

Here is ended the Secunde Nonnes Tale.

THE CANON'S YEOMAN'S PROLOGUE.

*The prologe of the Chanons Yemannes
 Tale.*

WHAN ended was the lyf of seint Cecyle,
 Er we had riden fully fyve myle, 555
 At Boghton under Blee us gan atake
 A man, that clothed was in clothes blake,
 And undernethe he hadde a whyte sur-
 plys.
 His bakency, that was al pomely grys,
 So swatte, that it wonder was to see; 560
 It semed he had priked myles thre.
 The hors eek that his yeman rood upon
 So swatte, that unnethe mighte it gon.
 Aboute the peytrel stood the foom ful
 hyc,
 He was of fome al flekked as a pye. 565
 A male tweyfold on his croper lay,

It semed that he caried lyte array.
 Al light for somer rood this worthy man,
 And in myn herte wondren I bigan
 What that he was, til that I understood
 How that his cloke was sowed to his
 hood; 571
 For which, when I had longe avysed me,
 I demed him som chanon for to be.
 His hat heng at his bak down by a laas,
 For he had riden more than trot or
 paas; 575
 He had ay priked lyk as he were wood.
 A clote-leef he hadde under his hood
 For swoot and for to kepe his heed from
 hete.
 But it was loye for to seen him swete!
 His forheed dropped as a stillatorie, 580
 Were ful of plantain and of paritorie.

And whan that he was come, he gan to crye,
 'God save,' quod he, 'this Ioly comp-
 anye!
 Faste have I priked,' quod he, 'for your sake,
 By-cause that I wolde yow atake, 585
 To ryden in this mery companye.'
 His yeman eek was ful of curteisye,
 And seyde, 'sires, now in the morwe-
 tyde
 Out of your hostelrye I saugh you ryde,
 And warned heer my lord and my sov-
 erayn, 590
 Which that to ryden with yow is ful fayn,
 For his desport; he loveth daliaunce.'
 'Freend, for thy warning god yeve thee
 good chaunce,'
 Than seyde our host, 'for certes, it wolde
 seme
 Thy lord were wys, and so I may wel
 deme; 595
 He is ful Iocund also, dar I leye,
 Can he oght telle a mery tale or tweye,
 With which he glade may this com-
 panye?'
 'Who, sire? my lord? ye, ye, with-
 outen lye,
 He can of murthe, and eek of Iolitee 600
 Nat but ynough; also sir, trusteth me,
 And ye him knewe as wel as do I,
 Ye wolde wondre how wel and craftily
 He coude werke, and that in sondry
 wyse.
 He hath take on him many a greet em-
 pryse, 605
 Which were ful hard for any that is here
 To bringe aboute, but they of him it lere.
 As homely as he rit amonges yow,
 If ye him knewe, it wolde be for your
 prow; 609
 Ye wolde nat forgoon his aqueyntaunce
 For mochel good, I dar leye in balaunce
 Al that I have in my possessioun.
 He is a man of heigh discrecioun,
 I warne you wel, he is a passing man.'
 'Wel,' quod our host, 'I pray thee,
 tel me than, 615
 Is he a clerk, or noon? tel what he is.'
 'Nay, he is gretter than a clerk, y-wis,'
 Seyde this yeman, 'and in wordes fewe,
 Host, of his craft som-what I wol yow
 shewe. 619

I seye, my lord can swich subtiltee —
 (But al his craft ye may nat wite at me;
 And som-what helpe I yet to his werk-
 ing) —
 That al this ground on which we been
 ryding,
 Til that we come to Caunterbury toun,
 He coude al clene turne it up-so-doun,
 And pave it al of silver and of gold.' 626
 And whan this yeman hadde thus
 y-told
 Unto our host, he seyde, '*benedicite!*
 This thing is wonder merveillous to me,
 Sin that thy lord is of so heigh prudence,
 By-cause of which men sholde him rever-
 ence, 631
 That of his worship rekketh he so lyte;
 His oversloppe nis nat worth a myte,
 As in effect, to him, so mote I go!
 It is al baudy and to-tore also. 635
 Why is thy lord so sluttish, I thee preye,
 And is of power better cloth to beye,
 If that his dede accorde with thy speche?
 Telle 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 avowe that I seye,
 And therfor kepe it secree, I yow preye).
 He is to wys, in feith, as I bileve;
 That that is overdoon, it wol nat preve
 Aright, as clerkes seyn, it is a vyce. 646
 Wherfor in that I holde him lewed and
 nyce.
 For whan a man hath over-greet a wit,
 Ful oft him happeth to misusen it;
 So dooth my lord, and that me greveth
 sore. 650
 God it amende, I can sey yow na-more.'
 'Ther-of no fors, good yeman,' quod
 our host;
 'Sin of the conning of thy lord thou
 wost,
 Tel how he dooth, I pray thee hertely,
 Sin that he is so crafty and so sly. 655
 Wher dwellen ye, if it to telle be?'
 'In the suburbes of a toun,' quod he,
 'Lurkinge in hernes and in lanes blinde,
 Wher-as thise robbours and thise theves
 by kinde
 Holden hir privee fereful residence, 660
 As they that dar nat shewen hir pres-
 ence;

So faren we, if I shal seye the sothe.
 'Now,' quod our host, 'yit lat me talke
 to the;
 Why artow so discoloured of thy face?'
 'Peter!' quod he, 'god yeve it harde
 grace, 665
 I am so used in the fyr to blowe,
 That it hath chaunged my colour, I
 trowe.
 I am nat wont in no mirour to pry,
 But swinke sore and lerne multiplye.
 We blondren ever and pouren in the fyr,
 And for al that we fayle of our desyr, 671
 For ever we lakken our conclusioun.
 To mochel folk we doon illusioun,
 And borwe gold, be it a pound or two,
 Or ten, or twelve, or many sommes mo,
 And make hem wenen, at the leeste
 weye, 676
 That of a pound we coude make tweye!
 Yet is it fals, but ay we han good hope
 It for to doon, and after it we grope.
 But that science is so fer us biforn, 680
 We mowen nat, al-though we hadde it
 sworn,
 It overtake, it slit away so faste;
 It wol us maken beggers atte laste.'
 Why! this yeman was thus in his talk-
 ing,
 This chanoun drough him neer, and herde
 al thing 685
 Which this yeman spak, for suspeciou
 Of mennes speche ever hadde this
 chanoun.
 For Catoun seith, that he that gilty is
 Demeth al thing be spoke of him, y-wis.
 That was the cause he gan so ny him
 drawe 690
 To his yeman, to herknen al his sawe.

And thus he seyde un-to his yeman tho,
 'Hold thou thy pees, and spek no wordes
 mo,
 For if thou do, thou shalt it dere abyge;
 Thou sclaudrest me heer in this com-
 panye, 695
 And eek discoverest that thou sholdest
 hyde.'
 'Ye,' quod our host, 'telle on, what so
 bityde;
 Of al his threting rekke nat a myte!'
 'In feith,' quod he, 'namore I do but
 lyte.'
 And whan this chanon saugh it wolde
 nat be, 700
 But his yeman wolde telle his privitee,
 He fledde away for verray sorwe and
 shame.
 'A!' quod the yeman, 'heer shal aryse
 game,
 Al that I can anon now wol I telle.
 Sin he is goon, the foule feend him
 quelle! 705
 For never her-after wol I with him mete
 For peny ne for pound, I yow bihete!
 He that me broghte first unto that game,
 Er that he dye, sorwe have he and
 shame!
 For it is earnest to me, by my feith; 710
 That fele I wel, what so any man seith.
 And yet, for al my smert and al my grief,
 For al my sorwe, labour, and meschief,
 I coude never leve it in no wyse.
 Now wolde god my wit mighte suffyse
 To tellen al that longeth to that art! 716
 But natheles yow wol I tellen part;
 Sin that my lord is gon, I wol nat spare;
 Swich thing as that I knowe, I wol de-
 clare.—

Here endeth the Prologe of the Chanouns Yemannes Tale.

THE CHANOUNS YEMANNES TALE.

HERE BIGINNETH THE CHANOUNS YE-
 MAN HIS TALE.

[*Prima pars.*]

WITH this chanoun I dwelt have seven
 year, 720
 And of his science am I never the neer.

Al that I hadde, I have y-lost ther-by;
 And god wot, so hath many mo than I.
 Ther I was wont to be right fresh and
 gay
 Of clothing and of other good array, 725
 Now may I were an hose upon myn
 heed;

And wher my colour was bothe fresh and
reed,

Now is it wan and of a leden hewe;
Who-so it useth, sore shal he rewe.

And of my swink yet blered is myn yē,
Lo! which avantage is to multiplie! 731
That slyding 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 borwed, trewely, 735
That whyl I live, I shal it quyte never.

Lat every man be war by me for ever!
What maner man that casteth him
ther-to,

If he continue, I holde his thrift y-do.

So helpe me god, ther-by shal he nat
winne, 740

But empte his purs, and make his wittes
thinne.

And whan he, thurgh his madnes and
folye,

Hath lost his owene good thurgh Iu-
partye,

Thanne he excyteth other folk ther-to,
To lese hir good as he him-self hath do.

For unto shrewes loye it is and ese 746
To have hir felawes in peyne and dis-
ese;

Thus was I ones lerned of a clerk.

Of that no charge, I wol speke of our
werk.

Whan we been ther as we shul exer-
cyse 750

Our elvish craft, we semen wonder wyse,
Our termes been so clerghial and so
queynte.

I blowe the fyr til that myn herte feynte.

What sholde I tellen ech proporcioun
Of things whiche that we werche upon,
As on five or sixe ounces, may wel be,
Of silver or som other quantite, 757

And bisie me to telle yow the names
Of orpiment, brent bones, yren squames,
That into poudre grounden been ful
smaal? 760

And in an erthen potte how put is al,
And salt y-put in, and also papeer,
Biforn these poudres that I speke of
heer,

And wel y-covered with a lampe of glas,

And mochel other thing which that ther
was? 765

And of the pot and glasses enluting,
That of the eyre mighte passe out no-
thing?

And of the esy fyr and smart also,
Which that was maad, and of the care
and wo

That we hadde in our matires sublyming,
And in amalgaming and calcening 771
Of quik-silver, y-clept Mercurie crude?
For alle our sleightes we can nat con-
clude.

Our orpiment and sublymed Mercurie,
Our grounden litarge eek on the por-
phurie, 775

Of ech of these of ounces a certeyn
Nought helpeth us, our labour is in veyn.
Ne eek our spiritis ascencioun,
Ne our materes that lyen al fixe adoun,
Mowe in our werking no-thing us avayle.
For lost is al our labour and travayle, 781
And al the cost, a twenty delev weye,
Is lost also, which we upon it leye.

Ther is also ful many another thing
That is unto our craft apertening; 785
Though I by ordre hem nat reherce
can,

By-cause that I am a lewed man,
Yet wol I telle hem as they come to
minde,

Though I ne can nat sette hem in hir
kinde;

As bole armoniak, verdegrees, boras, 790
And sondry vessels maad of erthe and
glas,

Our urinales and our descensories,
Violes, croslets, and sublymatories,
Cucurbites, and alembykes eek, 794
And othere swiche, dere y-nough a leek.

Nat nedeth it for to reherce hem alle,
Watres rubifying and boles galle,
Arsenik, sal armoniak, and brimston;
And herbes coude I telle eek many oon,
As egreimoine, valerian, and lunarie, 800
And othere swiche, if that me liste tarie.
Our lampes brenning bothe night and day,
To bringe aboute our craft, if that we
may.

Our fourneys eek of calcinacioun,
And of watres albificacioun, 805
Unslucked lyn, chalk, and gleyre of an
ey,

Poudrés diverse, ashes, dong, pisse, and cley,

Cered pokets, sal peter, vitriole;
And divers fyres maad of wode and cole;
Sal tartre, alkaly, and sal preparat, 810
And combust materes and coagulat,
Cley maad with hors or mannes heer,
and oile

Of tartre, alum, glas, berm, wort, and argoile,

Resalgar, and our materes enbibing;
And eek of our materes encorporing, 815
And of our silver citrinacioun,
Our cementing and fermentacioun,
Our ingottes, testes, and many mo.

I wol yow telle, as was me taught also,
The fourre sprites and the bodies sevene,
By ordre, as ofte I herde my lord hem
nevene. 821

The first spirit quik-silver called is,
The second orpiment, the thridde, y-wis,
Sal armoniak, and the ferthe brimstoun.
The bodies sevene eek, lo! hem heer
anoon: 825

Sol gold is, and Luna silver we threpe,
Mars yren, Mercurie quik-silver we clepe,
Saturnus leed, and Iupiter is tin,
And Venus coper, by my fader kin!

This cursed craft who-so wol exerceyse,
He shal no good han that him may
suffyse; 831

For al the good he spendeth ther-aboutte,
He lese shal, ther-of have I no doute.

Who-so that listeth outhen his folye,
Lat him come forth, and lerne multiplye;
And every man that oght hath in his
cofre, 836

Lat him appere, and wexe a filosofre.
Ascaunce that craft is so light to lere?

Nay, nay, god woot, al be he monk or frere,
Prest or chanoun, or any other wight,
Though he sitte at his book bothe day
and night, 841

In lernyng of this elvish nyce lore,
Al is in veyn, and parde, mochel more!

To lerne a lewed man this subtiltee, 844
Fy! spek nat ther-of, for it wol nat be;

Al conne he letterure, or conne he noon,
As in effect, he shal finde it al oon.

For bothe two, by my savacioun,
Concluden, in multiplicacioun,

Y-lyke wel, when they han al y-do; 850
This is to seyn, they faylen bothe two.

Yet forgat I to maken rchersaille
Of watres corosif and of limaille,

And of bodyes mollificacioun, 855
And also of hir induracioun,

Oiles, ablucions, and metal fusible,
To tellen al wolde passen any bible
That o-wher is; wherfor, as for the
beste,

Of alle thise names now wol I me reste.
For, as I trowe, I have yow told y-nowe
To reyse a feend, al loke he never so
rowe. 861

A! nay! lat be; the philosophres
stoon,

Elixir clept, we sechen faste echoon;
For hadde we him, than were we siker
y-now. 864

But, unto god of heven I make avow,
For al our craft, when we han al y-do,
And al our sleighte, he wol nat come us
to.

He hath y-maad us spenden mochel good,
For sorwe of which almost we wexen
wood, 869

But that good hope crepeth in our herte,
Supposing ever, though we sore smerte,
To be releved by him afterward;
Swich supposing and hope is sharp 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. 876

Yet of that art they can nat wexen sadde,
For unto hem it is a bitter swete;

So semeth it; for nadde they but a shete
Which that they mighte wrappe hem inne
a-night, 880

And a bak to walken inne by day-light,
They wolde hem selle and spenden on
this craft;

They can nat stinte til no-thing be laft.
And evermore, wher that ever they goon,
Men may hem knowe by smel of brim-
stoon; 885

For al the world, they stinken as a goot;
Her savour is so rammish and so hoot,

That, though a man from hem a myle be,
The savour wol infecte him, trusteth
me;

Lo, thus by smelling and threedbare
array, 890

If that men liste, this folk they knowe
may.
And if a man wol aske hem prively,
Why they been clothed so unthriftily,
They right anon wol rownen in his ere,
And seyn, that if that they espyed were,
Men wolde hem slee, by-cause of hir
science; 896
Lo, thus this folk bitrayen innocence!
Passe over this; I go my tale un-to.
Er than the pot be on the fyr y-do,
Of metals with a certein quantite, 900
My lord hem tempreth, and no man but
he —
Now he is goon, I dar seyn boldely —
For, as men seyn, he can don 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, 906
The pot to-breketh, and farewel! al is
go!
Thise metals been of so greet violence,
Our walles mowe nat make hem resist-
ence,
But if they weren wrought of lym and
stoon; 910
They percen so, and thurgh the wal
they goon,
And somme of hem sinken in-to the
ground —
Thus han we lost by tymes many a
pound —
And somme are scatered al the floor
about,
Somme lepe in-to the roof; with-ouen
doute, 915
Though that the feend noght in our
sight he shewe,
I trowe he with us be, that ilke shrewe!
In helle wher that he is lord and sire,
Nis ther more wo, ne more rancour ne
ire.
Whan that our pot is broke, as I have
sayd, 920
Every man chit, and halt him yvel
apayd.
Som seyde, it was long on the fyr-
making,
Som seyde, nay! it was on the blowing;
(Than was I fered, for that was myn
office);

'Straw!' quod the thridde, 'ye been
lewed and nyce, 925
It was nat tempred as it oghte be.'
'Nay!' quod the ferthe, 'stint, and
herkne me;
By-cause our fyr ne was nat maad of
beech,
That is the cause, and other noon, so
theech!'
I can nat telle wher-on it was long, 930
But wel I wot greet stryf is us among.
'What!' quod my lord, 'ther is na-
more to done,
Of thise perils I wol be war eft-sonne;
I am right siker that the pot was crased.
Be as be may, be ye no-thing amased;
As usage is, lat swepe the floor as
swythe, 936
Plukke up your hertes, and beth gladd
and blythe.'
The mullok on an hepe y-sweped was,
And on the floor y-cast a canevas, 939
And al this mullok in a sive y-throwe,
And sifted, and y-piked many a throwe.
'Pardee,' quod oon, 'somwhat of our
metal
Yet is ther heer, though that we han nat
al.
Al-though this thing mishapped have
as now,
Another tyme it may be wel y-now, 945
Us moste putte our good in aventure;
A marchant, parde! may nat ay endure,
Trusteth me wel, in his prosperitee;
Somtyme his good is drenched in the
see,
And somtym comth it sauf un-to the
londe.' 950
'Pees!' quod my lord, 'the next tyme
I wol fonde
To bringe our craft al in another plyte;
And but I do, sirs, lat me han the wyte;
Ther was defaute in som-what, wel I
woot.'
Another seyde, the fyr was over
hoot: — 955
But, be it hoot or cold, I dar seye this,
That we concluden evermore amis.
We fayle of that which that we wolden
have,
And in our madnesse evermore we rave.
And whan we been togidres everichoon,
Every man semeth a Salomon. 961

But al thing which that shyneth as the
gold
Nis nat gold, as that I have herd it
told;
Ne every appel that is fair at yē
Ne is nat good, what-so men clappe or
crye. 965
Right so, lo! fareth it amonges us;
He that semeth the wysest, by Iesus!
Is most fool, whan it cometh to the
preef;
And he that semeth trewest is a theef;
That shul ye knowe, er that I fro yow
wende, 970
By that I of my tale have maad an ende.

*Explicit prima pars. Et sequitur pars
secunda.*

Ther is a chanoun of religioun
Amonges us, wolde infecte al a toun
Though it as greet were as was Ninivee,
Rome, Alisaundre, Troye, and othere
three. 975
His sleightes and his infinit falsnesse
Ther coude no man wryten, as I gesse,
Though that he mighte liven a thousand
yeer.
In al this world of falshede nis his
peer;
For in his termes so he wolde him
winde, 980
And speke his wordes in so sly a kinde,
Whan he commune shal with any wight,
That he wol make him doten anon right,
But it a feend be, as him-selven is. 984
Ful many a man hath he bigyled er this,
And wol, if that he live may a whyle;
And yet men ryde and goon ful many a
myle
Him for to seke and have his aqueynt-
aunce,
Noght knowinge of his false gover-
naunce.
And if yow list to yeve me audience, 990
I wol it tellen heer in your presence.
But worshipful chanouns religious,
Ne demeth nat that I sclauandre your
hous,
Although my tale of a chanoun be.
Of every ordre som shrewe is, parde, 995
And god forbode that al a companye
Sholde rewe a singuler mannes folye.

To sclauandre yow is no-thing myn
entente,
But to correcten that is mis I mente.
This tale was nat only told for yow, 1000
But cek for othere mo; ye woot wel
how
That, among Cristes apostelles twelve,
Ther nas no traytour but Iudas him-
selve.
Than why sholde al the remenant have
blame
That gittles were? by yow I seye the
same. 1005
Save only this, if ye wol herkne me,
If any Iudas in your covent be,
Remeveth him bitymes, I yow rede,
If shame or los may causen any drede.
And beth no-thing displeed, I yow
preye, 1010
But in this cas herkneth what I shal seye.

In London was a preest, an annue-
leer,
That therin dwelled hadde many a
yeer, 1014
Which was so plesaunt and so servisable
Unto the wyf, wher-as he was at table,
That she wolde suffre him no-thing for
to paye
For bord ne clothing, wente he never
so gaye;
And spending-silver hadde he right
y-now. 1018
Therof no fors; I wol procede as now,
And telle forth my tale of the chanoun,
That broghte this preest to confusioun.
This false chanoun cam up-on a day
Unto this preestes chambre, wher he
lay,
Biseching him to lene him a certeyn
Of gold, and he wolde quyte it him
ageyn. 1025
'Lene me a mark,' quod he, 'but dayes
three,
And at my day I wol it quyten thee.
And if so be that thou me finde fals,
Another day do hange me by the hals!'
This preest him took a mark, and that a
swysthe, 1030
And this chanoun him thanked ofte
sythe,
And took his leve, and wente forth his
weye,

And at the thridde day broghte his
 moneye,
 And to the preest he took his gold
 agayn,
 Wherof this preest was wonder glad and
 fayn. 1035

'Certes,' quod he, 'no-thing anoyeth
 me

To lene a man a noble, or two or three,
 Or what thing were in my possessioun,
 Whan he so trewe is of condicioun, 1039
 That in no wyse he breke wol his day;
 To swich a man I can never seye nay.'

'What!' quod this chanoun, 'sholde
 I be untrew?

Nay, that were thing y-fallen al of-newe.
 Trouthe is a thing that I wol ever kepe
 Un-to that day in which that I shal
 crepe 1045

In-to my grave, and elles god forbede;
 Bileveth this as siker as is your crede.
 God thanke I, and in good tyme be it
 sayd, 1048

That ther was never man yet yvel apayd
 For gold ne silver that he to me lente,
 Ne never falskede in myn herte I mente.
 And sir,' quod he, 'now of my privetee,
 Sin ye so goodlich han been un-to me,
 And kythed to me so greet gentiltesse,
 Somwhat to quyte with your kindenesse,
 I wol yow shewe, and, if yow list to lere,
 I wol yow teche pleylnly the manere, 1057
 How I can werken in philosophye.
 Taketh good heed, ye shul wel seen at
 yē,

That I wol doon a maistrise er I go.' 1060
 'Ye,' quod the preest, 'ye, sir, and wol
 ye so?

Marie! ther-of I pray yow hertely!
 'At your comandement, sir, trewely,'
 Quod the chanoun, 'and elles god for-
 bede!'

Lo, how this thief coude his servyse
 bede! 1065
 Ful sooth it is, that swich profred ser-
 vyse

Stinketh, as witnessen thise olde wyse;
 And that ful sone I wol it verifye
 In this chanoun, rote of al trecherye,
 That ever-more delyt hath and glad-
 nesse — 1070

Swich feendly thoughtes in his herte im-
 presse —

How Cristes peple he may to meschief
 bringe;

God kepe us from his fals dissimulinge!
 Noght wiste this preest with whom
 that he delte,

Ne of his harm cominge he no-thing
 felte. 1075

O sely preest! O sely innocent!
 With covetise anon thou shalt be blent!
 O gracelees, ful blind is thy conceit,
 No-thing ne artow war of the deceit
 Which that this fox y-shapen hath to
 thee! 1080

His wyly wrenches thou ne mayst nat
 flee

Wherfor, to go to the conclusioun
 That refereth to thy confusioun,
 Unhappy man! anon I wol me hie
 To tellen thyn unwit and thy folye, 1085
 And eek the falsnesse of that other
 wrecche,
 As ferforth as that my conning may
 strecche.

This chanoun was my lord, ye wolden
 wene?

Sir host, in feith, and by the hevenes
 quene,

It was another chanoun, and nat he, 1090
 That can an hundred fold more subtiltee!
 He hath bitrayed folkes many tyme;
 Of his falskede it dulleth me to ryme.
 Ever whan that I speke of his falskede,
 For shame of him my chekes wexen
 rede; 1095

Algates, they biginnen for to glowe,
 For reednesse have I noon, right wel I
 knowe,

In my visage; for fumes dyverse
 Of metals, which ye han herd me re-
 herce,

Consumed and wasted han my reednesse.
 Now tak heed of this chanouns cursed-
 nesse! 1101

'Sir,' quod he to the preest, 'lat your
 man gon

For quik-silver, that we it hadde anon;
 And lat him bringen ounces two or
 three;

And whan he comth, as faste shul ye see
 A wonder thing, which saugh never er
 this.' 1106

'Sir,' quod the preest, 'it shal be doon,
 y-wis.'

He bad his servant fecchen him this thing,

And he al redy was at his bidding,
And wente him forth, and cam anon agayn 1110

With this quik-silver, soothly for to sayn,
And took these ounces three to the chanoun;

And he hem leyde fayre and wel adoun,
And bad the servant coles for to bringe,
That he anon mighte go to his werkinge. 1115

The coles right anon weren y-fet,
And this chanoun took out a crosselet
Of his bosom, and shewed it the preest.

'This instrument,' quod he, 'which that thou seest,

Tak in thyn hand, and put thy-self thereinne 1120

Of this quik-silver an ounce, and heer biginne,

In the name of Crist, to wexe a philoso- fre.

Ther been ful fewe, whiche that I wolde profre

To shewen hem thus muche of my science.

For ye shul seen heer, by experience,
That this quik-silver wol I mortifye 1126
Right in your sighte anon, withouten lye,

And make it as good silver and as fyn
As ther is any in your purs or myn,
Or elleswher, and make it malliable; 1130

And elles, holdeth me fals and unable
Amonges folk for ever to appere!

I have a poudre heer, that coste me dere,
Shal make al good, for it is cause of al
My conning, which that I yow shewen shal. 1135

Voydeth your man, and lat him be ther-oute,

And shet the dore, whyls we been aboute
Our privetee, that no man us espye

Whyls that we werke in this philoso- phye.'

Al as he bad, fulfilled was in dede, 1140
This ilke servant anon-right out yede,

And his maister shette the dore anon,
And to hir labour speedily they gon.

This preest, at this cursed chanouns bidding,

Up-on the fyr anon sette this thing, 1145

And blew the fyr, and bisied him ful faste;

And this chanoun in-to the croslet caste
A poudre, noot I wher-of that it was
Y-maad, other of chalk, other of glas,

Or som-what elles, was nat worth a flye,
To blynde with the preest; and bad him hye 1151

The coles for to couchen al above
The croslet, 'for, in tokening I thee love,'

Quod this chanoun, 'thyn owene hondes two

Shul werche al thing which that shal heer be do.' 1155

'Graunt mercy,' quod the preest, and was ful glad,

And couched coles as the chanoun bad.
And whyle he bisy was, this feendly wrecche,

This fals chanoun, the foule feend him fecche!

Out of his bosom took a bechen cole, 1160
In which ful subtilly was maad an hole,

And ther-in put was of silver lymaille
An ounce, and stopped was, with-outen fayle,

The hole with wex, to kepe the lymail in.
And understandeth, that this false gin 1165

Was nat maad ther, but it was maad bifore;

And othere things I shal telle more
Herafterward, which that he with him broghte;

Er he cam ther, him to see he thoghte,
And so he dide, er that they wente a-twinne; 1170

Til he had terved him, coude he not blinne.

It dulleth me whan that I of him speke,
On his falschede fayn wolde I me wreke,

If I wiste how; but he is heer and ther:
He is so variaunt, he abit no-wher. 1175

But taketh heed now, sirs, for goddes love!

He took his cole of which I spak above,
And in his hond he baar it prively.

And whyls the preest couchede busily
The coles, as I tolde yow er this, 1180

This chanoun seyde, 'freend, ye doon amis;

This is nat couched as it oghte be;

But sone I shal amenden it,' quod he.
 'Now lat me medle therwith but a whyle,
 For of yow have I pitee, by seint
 Gyle! 1185
 Ye been right hoot, I see wel how ye
 swete,
 Have heer a cloth, and wype away the
 wete.'
 And whyles that the preest wyped his
 face,
 This chanoun took his cole with harde
 grace,
 And leyde it above, up-on the midde-
 ward 1190
 Of the croslet, and blew wel afterward,
 Til that the coles gonne faste brenne.
 'Now yeve us drinke,' quod the chan-
 onoun thenne,
 'As swythe al shal be wel, I undertake;
 Sitte we down, and lat us mery
 make.' 1195
 And whan that this chanounes bechen
 cole
 Was brent, al the lymaille, out of the
 hole,
 Into the croslet fil anon adoun;
 And so it moste nedes, by resoun,
 Sin it so even aboven couched was; 1200
 But ther-of wiste the preest no-thing,
 alas!
 He demed alle the coles y-liche good,
 For of the sleighte he no-thing under-
 stood.
 And whan this alkamistre saugh his tyme,
 'Kys up,' quod he, 'sir preest, and stonde-
 eth by r 1205
 And for I woof wel ingot have ye noon,
 Goth, walketh forth, and bring us a chalk-
 stoon;
 For I wol make oon of the same shap
 That is an ingot, if I may han hap.
 And bringeth eek with yow a bolle or a
 panne, 1210
 Ful of water, and ye shul see wel thanne
 How that our bisnesse shal thryve and
 preve.
 And yet, for ye shul han no misbileve
 Ne wrong conceit of me in your absence,
 I ne wol nat been out of your pres-
 ence, 1215
 But go with yow, and come with yow
 ageyn.'
 The chambre-dore, shortly for to seyn,

They opened and shette, and wente hir
 weye.
 And forth with hem they carieden the
 keye, 1219
 And come agayn with-uten any delay.
 What sholde I tarien al the longe day?
 He took the chalk, and shoop it in the
 wyse
 Of an ingot, as I shal yow devyse.
 I seye, he took out of his owene sleve,
 A teyne of silver (yvele mote he
 cheve!) 1225
 Which that ne was nat but an ounce of
 weighte;
 And taketh heed now of his cursed
 sleighte!
 He shoop his ingot, in lengthe and eek
 in brede,
 Of this teyne, with-uten any drede, 1229
 So slyly, that the preest it nat espyde;
 And in his sleve agayn he gan it hyde;
 And fro the fyr he took up his matere,
 And in thingot putte it with mery chere,
 And in the water-vessel he it caste
 Whan that him luste, and bad the preest
 as faste, 1235
 'Look what ther is, put in thyn hand and
 grope,
 Thow finde shalt ther silver, as I hope;
 What, devel of helle! sholde it elles be?
 Shaving of silver silver is, pardee!'
 He putte his hond in, and took up a
 teyne 1240
 Of silver fyn, and glad in every veyne
 Was this preest, whan he saugh that it
 was so.
 'Goddes blessing, and his modres also,
 And alle halwes have ye, sir chanoun,'
 Seyde this preest, 'and I hir mali-
 soun, 1245
 But, and ye vouche-sauf to techen me
 This noble craft and this subtiltee,
 I wol be youre, in al that ever I may!'
 Quod the chanoun, 'yet wol I make
 assay
 The second tyme, that ye may taken
 hede 1250
 And been expert of this, and in your
 nede
 Another day assaye in myn absence
 This disciplyne and this crafty science.
 Lat take another ounce,' quod he tho,
 'Of quik-silver, with-uten wordes mo,

And do ther-with as ye han doon er this
With that other, which that now silver is.'

This preest him bisieith in al that he
can

To doon as this chanoun, this cursed man,
Comanded him, and faste he blew the
fyr, 1260

For to come to theeffect of his desyr.
And this chanoun, right in the mene
wyle,

Al redy was, the preest eft to bigyle,
And, for a countenance, in his hande he
bar 1264

An holwe stikke (tak keep and be war!)
In the ende of which an ounce, and na-
more,

Of silver lymail put was, as bifore
Was in his cole, and stopped with wex
weel

For to kepe in his lymail every deel.
And whyl this preest was in his bisi-
nesse, 1270

This chanoun with his stikke gan him
dresse

To him anon, and his pouder caste in
As he did er; (the devel out of his skin
Him terve, I pray to god, for his fals-
hede;

For he was ever fals in thoght and
dede); 1275

And with this stikke, above the croslet,
That was ordeyned with that false get,
He stired the coles, til relente gan
The wex agayn the fyr, as every man,
But it a fool be, woot wel it mot nede, 1280
And al that in the stikke was out yede,
And in the croslet hastily it fel.

Now gode sirs, what wol ye bet than
wel?

Whan that this preest thus was bigyled
ageyn,
Supposing noght but trouthe, soth to
seyn, 1285

He was so glad, that I can nat expresse
In no manere his mirthe and his glad-
nesse;

And to the chanoun he profred eftsone
Body and good; 'ye,' quod the chanoun
sone,

'Though povre I be, crafty thou shalt me
finde; 1290

I warne thee, yet is ther more bilinde.
Is ther any coper her-inne?' seyde he.

'Ye,' quod the preest, 'sir, I trowe wel
ther be.'

'Elles go by us som, and that as swythe,
Now, gode sir, go forth thy wey and by
the.' 1295

He wente his wey, and with the coper
cam,

And this chanoun it in his handes nam,
And of that coper weyed out but an
ounce.

Al to simple is my tonge to pronounce,
As minstre of my wit, the double-
nesse 1300

Of this chanoun, rote of al cursednesse.
He semed frendly to hem that knewe
him noght,

But he was feendly bothe in herte and
thoght.

It werieth me to telle of his falsnesse,
And natheles yet wol I it expresse, 1305
To tentente that men may be war therby,
And for noon other cause, trewely.

He putte his ounce of coper in the
croslet,

And on the fyr as swythe he hath it set,
And caste in poudre, and made the preest
to blowe, 1310

And in his werking for to stoupe lowe,
As he dide er, and al nas but a lape;
Right as him liste, the preest he made
his ape;

And afterward in the ingot he it caste,
And in the panne putte it at the
laste 1315

Of water, and in he putte his owene
hond.

And in his sleve (as ye biforn-hond
Herde me telle) he hadde a silver teyne.
He slyly took it out, this cursed heyne —
Unwiting this preest of his false
craft — 1320

And in the pannes botme he hath it
lajt;

And in the water rombled to and fro,
And wonder prively took up also
The coper teyne, noght knowing this
preest,

And hidde it, and him hente by the
breest, 1325

And to him spak, and thus seyde in his
game,

'Stoupepeth adoun, by god, ye be to blame,
Helpeth me now, as I dide yow whyl-er,

Putte in your hand, and loketh what is ther.'

This preest took up this silver teyne anon, 1330

And thanne seyde the chanoun, 'lat us gon.

With these three teynes, which that we han wrought,

To som goldsmith, and wite if they been oght.

For, by my feith, I nolde, for myn hood, But-if that they were silver, fyn and good, 1335

And that as swythe preved shal it be.'

Un-to the goldsmith with these teynes three

They wente, and putte these teynes in assay

To fyr and hamer; mighte no man sey nay,

But that they weren as hem oghte be. 1340

This sotted preest, who was gladder than he?

Was never brid gladder agayn the day, Ne nightingale, in the sesoun of May, Nas never noon that luste bet to singe; Ne lady lustier in carolinge 1345

Or for to speke of love and womman-hede,

Ne knight in armes to doon an hardy dede

To stonde in grace of his lady dere, Than had this preest this sory craft to lere;

And to the chanoun thus he spak and seyde, 1350

'For love of god, that for us alle deyde, And as I may deserve it un-to yow, What shal this receit coste? telleth now!'

'By our lady,' quod this chanoun, 'it is dere,

I warne yow wel; for, save I and a frere, 1355

In Engelond ther can no man it make.'

'No fors,' quod he, 'now, sir, for goddes sake,

What shal I paye? telleth me, I preye.'

'Y-wis,' quod he, 'it is ful dere, I seye; Sir, at o word, if that thee list it have, 1360

Ye shul paye fourty pound, so god me save!

And, nere the freendship that ye dide er this

To me, ye sholde paye more, y-wis.'

This preest the somme of fourty pound anon

Of nobles fette, and took hem ever-ichon 1365

To this chanoun, for this ilke receit;

Al his werking nas but fraude and deceit.

'Sir preest,' he seyde, 'I kepe 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 knewe al my subtiltee, By god, they wolden han so greet envye

To me, by-cause of my philosophye, I sholde be deed, ther were non other weye.'

'God it forbede!' quod the preest, 'what sey ye?' 1375

Yet hadde I lever spenden al the good Which that I have (and elles wexe I wood!)

Than that ye sholden falle in swich mescheef.'

'For your good wil, sir, have ye right good preef,'

Quod the chanoun, 'and far-wel, grant mercy!' 1380

He wente his wey and never the preest him sy

After that day; and whan that this preest sholde

Maken assay, at swich tyme as he wolde, Of this receit, far-wel! it wolde nat be!

Lo, thus byiaped and bigyled was he! 1385

Thus maketh he his introduccioun To bringe folk to hir destruccioun. —

Considereth, sirs, how that, in ech estaat,

Bitwixe men and gold ther is debaat

So ferforth, that unnethes is ther noon. 1390

This multiplying blent so many oon, That in good feith I trowe that it be

The cause grettest of swich scarsetee. Philosophres speken so mistily

In this craft, that men can nat come therby, 1395

For any wit that men han now a-dayes.

They mowe wel chiteren, as doon this
 layes,
 And in her termes sette hir lust and
 peyne,
 But to hir purpos shul they never atteyne,
 A man may lightly lerne, if he have
 aught, 1400
 To multiplye, and bringe his good to
 naught!
 Lo! swich a lucre is in this lusty game,
 A mannes mirthe it wol torne un-to
 grame,
 And empten also grete and hevy purses,
 And maken folk for to purchasen
 courses 1405
 Of hem, that han hir good therto y-lent.
 O! fy! for shame! they that han been
 brent,
 Allas! can they nat flee the fyres hete?
 Ye that it use, I rede ye it lete,
 Lest ye lese al; for bet than never is
 late. 1410
 Never to thryve were to long a date.
 Though ye prolle ay, ye shul it never
 finde;
 Ye been as bolde as is Bayard the blinde,
 That blundreth forth, and peril casteth
 noon;
 He is as bold to renne agayn a stoon 1415
 As for to goon besydes in the weye.
 So faren ye that multiplye, I seye.
 If that your yēn can nat seen aright,
 Loke that your minde lakke nought his
 sight.
 For, though ye loke never so brode, and
 stare, 1420
 Ye shul nat winne a myte on that chaf-
 fare,
 But wasten al that ye may rape and renne.
 Withdrawe the fyr, lest it to faste brenne;
 Medleth na-more with that art, I mene,
 For, if ye doon, your thrift is goon ful
 clene. 1425
 And right as swythe I wol yow tellen
 here,
 What philosophres seyn in this matere.
 Lo, thus seith Arnold of the Newe
 Toun,
 As his Rosarie maketh mencion;
 He seith right thus, with-ouen any
 ye, 1430
 'Ther may no man Mercurie mortifye,
 But it be with his brother knowleching.

How that he, which that first seyde this
 thing,
 Of philosophres fader was, Hermes;
 He seith, how that the dragoun, doute-
 leus, 1435
 Ne deyeth nat, but-if that he be slayn
 With his brother; and that is for to sayn,
 By the dragoun, Mercurie and noon other
 He understood; and brimstoon by his
 brother,
 That out of *sol* and *luna* were y-drawe.
 And therfor, seyde he, 'tak heed to my
 sawe, 1441
 Let no man bisy him this art for to seche,
 But-if that he thentencion and speelic
 Of philosophres understonde can;
 And if he do, he is a lewed man. 1445
 For this science and this conning, quod
 he,
 'Is of the secree of secrees, parde.'
 Also ther was a disciple of Plato,
 That on a tyme seyde his maister to,
 As his book Senior wol bere witness,
 And this was his demande in soothfast-
 nesse: 1451
 'Tel me the name of the privy stoon?'
 And Plato answerde unto him anoon,
 'Tak the stoon that Titanos men name.'
 'Which is that?' quod he. 'Magnesia
 is the same,' 1455
 Seyde Plato. 'Ye, sir, and is it thus?'
 This is *ignotum per ignotius*.
 What is Magnesia, good sir, I yow
 preye?'
 'It is a water that is maad, I seye,
 Of elementes foure,' quod Plato. 1460
 'Tel me the rote, good sir,' quod he tho,
 'Of that water, if that it be your wille?'
 'Nay, nay,' quod Plato, 'certe in, that I
 nille.
 The philosophres sworn were everichoon,
 That they sholden discovere it un-to
 noon, 1465
 Ne in no book it wryte in no manere;
 For un-to Crist it is so leef and dere
 That he wol nat that it discovered be,
 But wher it lyketh to his deitee
 Man for tenspyre, and eek for to defende
 Whom that him lyketh; lo, this is the
 ende.' 1471
 Thanne conclude I thus; sith god of
 hevene
 Ne wol nat that the philosophres nevene

How that a man shal come un-to this
stoon,

I rede, as for the beste, lete it goon. 1475
For who-so maketh god his adversarie,
As for to werken any thing in contrarie

Of his wil, certes, never shal he thryve,
Thogh that he multiplye terme of his lyve.
And ther a poynt; for ended is my tale;
God sende every trewe man bote of his
bale! — Amen. 1481

Here is ended the Chanouns Yemannes Tale.

GROUP H.

THE MANCIPLE'S PROLOGUE.

Here foloweth the Prologe of the Maunciples Tale.

WITE ye nat wher ther stant a litel toun
Which that y-cleped is Bob-up-and-doun,
Under the Blee, in Caunterbury weye?

Ther gan our hoste for to Iape and pleye,
And seyde, 'sirs, what! Dun is in the
myre! 5

Is ther no man, for preyere ne for hyre,
That wol awake our felawe heer bihinde?
A theef mighte him ful lightly robbe and
binde.

See how he nappeth! see, for cokkes
bones,

As he wol falle from his hors at ones. 10
Is that a cook of Londoun, with mes-
chaunce?

Do him come forth, he knoweth his pen-
aunce,

For he shal telle a tale, by my fey!
Al-though it be nat worth a botel hey.

Awake, thou cook,' quod he, 'god yeve
thee sorwe, 15

What eyleth thee to slepe by the morwe?
Hastow had fleen al night, or artow
dronke,

Or hastow with som quene al night
y-swonke,

So that thou mayst nat holden up thy
heed?' 20

This cook, that was ful pale and no-
thing reed,

Seyde to our host, 'so god my soule
blesse,

As ther is falle on me swich hevinesse,
Noot I nat why, that me were lever slepe
Than the beste galoun wyn in Chepe.'

'Wel,' quod the maunciple, 'if it may
doon ese 25

To thee, sir cook, and to no wight dis-
plese

Which that heer rydeth in this companye,
And that our host wol, of his curteise,
I wol as now excuse thee of thy tale;

For, in good feith, thy visage is ful pale,
Thyn yën daswen eck, as that me think-
eth, 31

And wel I woot, thy breeth ful soure
stinketh,

That sheweth wel thou art not wel dis-
posed;

Of me, certein, thou shalt nat been
y-glosed.

Se how he ganeth, lo, this dronken wight,
As though he wolde us swolve anon-
right. 36

Hold cloos thy mouth, man, by thy fader
kin!

The devel of helle sette his foot ther-in!
Thy cursed breeth infecte wol us alle;

Fy, stinking swyn, fy! foule moot thee
falle! 40

A! taketh heed, sirs, of this lusty man.
Now, swete sir, wol ye lusten atte fan?

Ther-to me thinketh ye been wel y-
shape!

I trowe that ye dronken han wyn ape,
And that is whan men pleyen with a
straw.' 45

Aud with this speche the cook wex
wrooth and wraw,

And on the maunciple he gan nodde faste
For lakke of speche, and down the hors
him caste,

Wher as he lay, til that men up him took;

This was a fayr chivachee of a cook ! 50
 Allas ! he hadde holde him by his ladel !
 And, er that he agayn were in his sadel,
 Ther was greet showing bothe to and
 fro,
 To lifte him up, and muchel care and wo,
 So unweldy was this sory palled gost. 55
 And to the maunciple thanne spak our
 host,
 'By-cause drink hath dominacioun
 Upon this man, by my savacioun
 I trowe he lewedly wolde telle his tale.
 For, were it wyn, or old or moysty
 ale, 60
 That he hath dronke, he speketh in his
 nose,
 And fneseth faste, and eek he hath the
 pose.
 He hath also to do more than y-nough
 To kepe him and his capel out of slough;
 And, if he falle from his capel eft-
 sone, 65
 Than shul we alle have y-nough to done,
 In lifting up his hevy dronken cors.
 Telle on thy tale, of him make I no fors.
 But yet, maunciple, in feith thou art to
 nyce,
 Thus openly repreve him of his vyce. 70
 Another day he wol, peraventure,
 Reclayme thee, and bringe thee to lure;
 I mene, he speke wol of smale thinges,
 As for to pinchen at thy rekeninges,
 That wer not honeste, if it cam to
 preef.' 75
 'No,' quod the maunciple, 'that were
 a greet mescheef !
 So mighte he lightly bringe me in the
 snare.
 Yet hadde I lever payen for the mare
 Which he rit on, than he sholde with me
 styve;

I wol nat wratthe him, al-so mote I
 thryve ! 80
 That that I spak, I seyde it in my
 bourde;
 And wite ye what ? I have heer, in a
 gourde,
 A draught of wyn, ye, of a rype grape,
 And right anon ye shul seen a good
 lape.
 This cook shal drinke ther-of, if I
 may; 85
 Up peyne of deeth, he wol nat seye me
 nay !'
 And certeinly, to tellen as it was,
 Of this vessel the cook drank faste,
 allas !
 What neded him ? he drank y-nough
 biforn.
 And whan he hadde pouped in this
 horn, 90
 To the maunciple he took the gourde
 agayn;
 And of that drinke the cook was wonder
 fayn,
 And thanked him in swich wyse as he
 coude.
 Than gan our host to laughen wonder
 loude,
 And seyde, 'I see wel, it is necessarie, 95
 Wher that we goon, good drink we with
 us carie;
 For that wol turne rancour and disese
 Tacord and love, and many a wrong
 apese.
 O thou Bachus, y-blessed be thy name,
 That so canst turnen ernest in-to game !
 Worship and thank be to thy deitee ! 101
 Of that matere ye gete na-more of me.
 Tel on thy tale, maunciple, I thee preye.'
 'Wel, sir,' quod he, 'now
 what I seye.' And by wordes bolde,

Thus endeth the Prologe of the Maunciple's Tale.
 he had doon hir lecherye,
 a shame and to gret vileinye;
 him ofte, he saugh it with his

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THE MAUNCIPLES TALE
 bus gan awayward for to wryen,
 oughthe his sorweful herte brast

*Here biginneth the Maunciples Tale of
 the Crowe.*

WHAN Phebus dwelled here in this erthe
 adoun, 105
 As olde bokes maken mencion,

He v.wo;
 In howe he bente, and sette ther-inne a
 flo,
 In his ire his wyf thanne hath he
 Sle slayn. 265
 is theeffect, ther is na-more to sayn ;

For men han ever a likerous appetyt
On lower thing to parfourne hir delyt 190
Than on hir wyves, be they never so
faire,

Ne never so trewe, ne so debonaire.
Flesh is so newefangel, with meschaunce,
That we ne come in no-thing han ple-
saunce

That souneth in-to vertu any whyle. 195
This Phebus, which that thoghte upon
no gyle,

Deceyved was, for al his lolitec;
For under him another hadde she,
A man of litel reputacioun, 199
Noght worth to Phebus in comparisoun.
The more harm is; it happeth ofte so,
Of which thier cometh muchel harm and
wo.

And so bifel, whan Phebus was absent,
His wyf anon hath for hir lemman sent,
Hir lemman? certes, this is a knavish
speche! 205

Foryeveth it me, and that I yow biseche.
The wyse Plato seith, as ye mey rede,
The word mot nede accorde with the
dede.

If men shal telle proprely a thing,
The word mot cosin be to the werking.
I am a boistous man right thus, seye I,
Ther nis no difference, trewely, 212

Bitwixe a wyf that is of heigh degree,
If of hir body dishonest she be,
And a povre wenche, other than this —
If it so be, they werke bothe amis — 216

But that the gentile, in estaat above,
She shal be cleped his lady, as in love;
And for that other is a povre womman,
She shal be cleped his wenche, or his
lemman. 220

And, god it woot, myn owene dere
brother,
Men leyn that oon as lowe as lyth that
other.

Right so, bitwixe a titleles tiraunt
And an outlawe, or a theef erraunt, 224
The same I seye, ther is no difference.
To Alisaundre told was this sentence;
That, for the tyrant is of gretter might,
By force of meynec for to sleen doun-
right,

And brennen hous and hoom, and make
al plain,
Lo! therfor is he cleped a capitain; 230

And, for the outlawe hath but smal
meynee,

And may nat doon so greet an harm as
he,

Ne bringe a contree to so greet mes-
cheef,

Men clepen him an outlawe or a theef.
But, for I am a man noght textuel, 235
I wol noght telle of textes never a del;
I wol go to my tale, as I bigan.

Whan Phebus wyf had sent for hir
lemman,

Anon they wroghten al hir lust volage.
The whyte crowe, that heng ay in the
cage, 240

Biheld hir werk, and seyde never a word.
And whan that hoom was come Phebus,
the lord,

This crowe sang 'cokkow! cokkow!
cokkow!'

'What, brid?' quod Phebus, 'what
song singestow?

Ne were thou wout so meryly to singe
That to myn herte it was a reioisinge 246
To here thy vois? allas! what song is
this?'

'By god,' quod he, 'I singe nat amis;
Phebus,' quod he, 'for al thy worthi-
nesse, 249

For al thy beautee and thy gentillesse,
For al thy song and al thy minstralceye,
For al thy waiting, blered is thyn yē
With oon of litel reputacioun,

Noght worth to thee, as in comparisoun,
The mountance of a gnat; so mote I
thryve! 255

For on thy bed thy wyf I saugh him
swyve.'

What wol ye more? the crowe anon
him tolde,

By sadde tokens and by wordes bolde,
How that his wyf had doon hir lecherye,
Him to gret shame and to gret vileinye;
And tolde him ofte, he saugh it with his
yēn. 261

This Phebus gan awayward for to wryen,
Him thoughte his sorweful herte brast
a-two;

His bowe he bente, and sette ther-inne a
flo,

And in his ire his wyf thanne hath he
slayn. 265

This is theeffect, ther is na-more to sayn;

For sorwe of which he brak his minstral-
eye,
Bothe harpe, and lute, and giterne, and
sautrye;
And eek he brak his arwes and his bowe.
And after that, thus spak he to the
crowe: 270
'Traitor,' quod he, 'with tonge of
scorpioun,
Thou hast me broght to my confusioun!
Allas! that I was wrought! why nere I
deed?
O dere wyf, o gemme of lustiheed,
That were to me so sad and eek so
trewe, 275
Now lystow deed, with face pale of hewe,
Ful gilteles, that dorste I swere, y-wis!
O rakel hand, to doon so foule amis!
O trouble wit, o ire reccheles,
That unavysed smytest gilteles! 280
O wantrust, ful of fals suspecioun,
Where was thy wit and thy discrecioun?
O every man, be-war of rakelnesse,
Ne trowe no-thing with-outen strong
witness;
Smyt nat to sone, er that we witen why,
And beeth avysed wel and sobrelly 286
Er ye doon any execucioun,
Up-on your ire, for suspecioun.
Allas! a thousand folk bath rakel ire
Fully fordoon, and broght hem in the
mire. 290
Allas! for sorwe I wol my-selven slee!
And to the crowe, 'o false theef!'
seyde he,
'I wol thee quyte anon thy false tale!
Thou songe whylom lyk a nightingale;
Now shaltow, false theef, thy song for-
gon, 295
And eek thy whyte fetheres everichon,
Ne never in al thy lyf ne shaltow speke.
Thus shal men on a traitour been
awreke;
Thou and thyn of-spring ever shul be
blake,
Ne never swete noise shul ye make, 300
But ever crye agayn tempest and rayn,
In tokening that thurgh thee my wyf is
slayn.'
And to the crowe he stirte, and that anon,
And pulled his whyte fetheres everichon,
And made him blak, and refte him al his
song, 305

And eek his speche, and out at dore him
slong
Un-to the devel, which I him bitake;
And for this caas ben alle crowes
blake. —
Lordings, by this ensample I yow
preye,
Beth war, and taketh kepe what I
seye: 310
Ne telleth never no man in your lyf
How that another man hath dight his
wyf;
He wol yow haten mortally, certeyn.
Daun Salomon, as wyse clerkes seyn,
Techeth a man to kepe his tonge
wel; 315
But as I seyde, I am nocht texuel.
But natheles, thus taughte me my dame:
'My sone, think on the crowe, a goddes
name;
My sone, keep wel thy tonge and keep
thy freend.
A wikked tonge is worse than a feend.
My sone, from a feend men may hem
blesse; 321
My sone, god of his endeles goodnesse
Walled a tonge with teeth and lippes eke,
For man sholde him avyse what he speke.
My sone, ful ofte, for to muche speche,
Hath many a man ben spilt, as clerkes
teche; 326
But for a litel speche avysely
Is no men shent, to speke generally.
My sone, thy tonge sholdestow restreyne
At alle tyme, but whan thou doost thy
peyne 330
To speke of god, in honour and preyere.
The firste vertu, sone, if thou wolt lere,
Is to restreyne and kepe wel thy tonge. —
Thus lerne children whan that they ben
yonge. —
My sone, of muchel speking yvel-avysed,
Ther lasse speking hadde y-nough suf-
fysed, 336
Comth muchel harm, thus was me told
and taught.
In muchel speche sinne wanteth naught.
Wostow wher-of a rakel tonge serveth?
Right as a swerd forcutteth and for-
kerveth 340
An arm a-two, my dere sone, right so
A tonge cutteth frendship al a-two.
A Iangler is to god abhominable;

Reed Salomon, so wys and honorable;
 Reed David in his psalmes, reed Sen-
 ekke. 345
 My sone, spek nat, but with thyn heed
 thou bekke.
 Dissimule as thou were deaf, if that thou
 here
 A langler speke of perilous matere.
 The Fleming seith, and lerne it, if thee
 leste,
 That litel Iangling causeth muchel
 reste. 350
 My sone, if thou no wikked word hast
 seyde,
 Thee thar nat drede for to be biwreyd;
 But he that hath misseyd, I dar wel
 sayn,

He may by no wey clepe his word
 agayn.
 Thing that is seyde, is seyde; and forth it
 gooth, 355
 Though him repente, or be him leef or
 looth.
 He is his thral to whom that he hath
 sayd
 A tale, of which he is now yvel apayd.
 My sone, be war, and be non auctour
 newe
 Of tydings, whether they ben false or
 trewe. 360
 Wher-so thou come, amonges hye or
 lowe,
 Kepe wel thy tonge, and think up-on
 the crowe.

Here is ended the Maunciples Tale of the Crowe.

GROUP I.

THE PARSON'S PROLOGUE.

*Here foloweth the Prologe of the Persones
 Tale.*

By that the maunciple hadde his tale al
 ended,
 The sonne fro the south lyne was de-
 scended
 So lowe, that he nas nat, to my sighte,
 Degreës nyne and twenty as in highte.
 Foure of the clokke it was tho, as I
 gesse; 5
 For eleven foot, or litel more or lesse,
 My shadwe was at thilke tyme, as there,
 Of swich feet as my lengthe parted were
 In six feet equal of proporcioun.
 Ther-with the mones exaltacioun, 10
 I mene Libra, alwey gan ascende,
 As we were entringe at a thropes ende;
 For which our host, as he was wont to
 gye,
 As in this caas, our Ioly compane,
 Seyde in this wyse, 'lordings everich-
 oon, 15
 Now lakketh us no tales mo than oon.
 Fulfild is my sentence and my decree;
 I trowe that we han herd of ech degree.

Almost fulfild is al myn ordinaunce;
 I prey to god, so yeve him right good
 chaunce, 20
 That tellethe this tale to us lustily.
 Sir preest, quod he, 'artow a vicary?
 Or art a person? sey sooth, by thy fey!
 Be what thou be, ne breke thou nat our
 pley;
 For every man, save thou, hath told his
 tale, 25
 Unbokel, and shewe us what is in thy
 male;
 For trevely, me thinketh, by thy chere,
 Thou sholdest knitte up wel a greet
 matere.
 Tel us a tale anon, for cokkes bones!' 30
 This Personne him answerde, al at
 ones,
 'Thou getest fable noon y-told for me;
 For Paul, that wryteth unto Timothee,
 Repreveth hem that weyven soothfast-
 nesse,
 And tellen fables and swich wrecched-
 nesse.
 Why sholde I sowen draf out of my
 fest, 35

When I may sowen whete, if that me
 lest?
 For which I seye, if that yow list to
 here
 Moralitee and vertuous matere,
 And thanne that ye wol yeve me audi-
 ence,
 I wol ful fayn, at Cristes reverence, 40
 Do yow plesaunce leefful, as I can.
 But trusteth wel, I am a Southren man,
 I can nat geste — rum, ram, ruf — by
 lettre,
 Ne, god wot, rym holde I but litel
 bettre;
 And therfor, if yow list, I wol nat glose. 45
 I wol yow telle a mery tale in prose
 To knitte up al this feeste, and make an
 ende.
 And Iesu, for his grace, wit me sende
 To shewe yow the wey, in this viage,
 Of thilke parfit glorious pilgimage 50
 That highte Ierusalem celestial.
 And, if ye vouche-sauf, anon I shal
 Biginne upon my tale, for whiche I preye
 Telle your avys, I can no bettre seye.
 But natheless, this meditacioun 55

I putte it ay under correccioun
 Of clerkes, for I am nat textuel;
 I take but the sentens, trusteth wel.
 Therfor I make protestacioun
 That I wol stonde to correccioun.' 60
 Up-on this word we han assented
 sone,
 For, as us semed, it was for to done,
 To enden in som vertuous sentence,
 And for to yeve him space and audi-
 ence;
 And bede our host he sholde to him
 seye, 65
 That alle we to telle his tale him preye.
 Our host hadde the wordes for us
 alle:—
 'Sir preest,' quod he, 'now fayre yow
 bifalle!
 Sey what yow list, and we wol gladly
 here'—
 And with that word he seyde in this
 manere — 70
 'Telleth,' quod he, 'your meditacioun.
 But hasteth yow, the sonne wol adoun;
 Beth fructuous, and that in litel space,
 And to do wel god sende yow his grace!'

Explicit prohemium.

THE PERSONES TALE.

HERE BEGINNETH THE PERSONES
 TALE.

*Ier. 6°. State super vias et videte
 et interrogate de viis antiquis, que
 sit via bona; et ambulate in ea, et
 inuenietis refrigerium animabus ves-
 tris, &c.*

§ 1. Our swete lord god of hevene,
 that no man wole perisse, but wole
 that we comen alle to the knowel-
 eche of him, and to the blisful lyf
 75 that is perdurable, / amonesteth us by
 the prophete Ieremie, that seith in
 this wyse: / 'stondeth upon the
 weyes, and seeth and axeth of olde
 pathes (that is to seyn, of olde sen-
 tences) which is the goode wey; /

and walketh in that wey, and ye shul
 finde refreshinge for your soules,
 &c. / Manye been the weyes espir-
 ituels that leden folk to oure Lord
 Iesu Crist, and to the regne of glorie. /
 Of whiche weyes, ther is a ful noble
 wey and a ful covenable, which may
 nat faille to man ne to womman, that
 thurgh sinne hath misgoun fro the
 righte wey of Ierusalem celestial; / 80
 and this wey is cleped Penitence, of
 which man sholde gladly herkennen and
 enquere with al his herte; / to witen
 what is Penitence, and whennes it is
 cleped Penitence, and in how manye
 maneres been the accions or werk-
 ings of Penitence, / and how manye
 spycs ther been of Penitence, and
 whiche thinges apertenen and bihoven

to Penitence, and whiche thinges de-
stourben Penitence. /

§ 2. Seint Ambrose seith, that
'Penitence is the pleyninge of man
for the gilt that he hath doon, and
na-more to do any thing for which
him oghte to pleyne.' / And som
doctour seith: 'Penitence is the way-
mentinge of man, that sorweth for his
sinne and pyneth him-self for he hath
85 misdoon.' / Penitence, with certeyne
circumstances, is verray repentance of
a man that halt him-self in sorwe and
other peyne for hise gyltes. / And
for he shal be verray penitent, he shal
first biwailen the sinnes that he hath
doon, and stidefastly purposen in his
herte to have shrift of mouthe, and to
doon satisfaccioun, / and never to
doon thing for which him oghte more
to biwayle or to compleyne, and to
continue in goode werkes: or elles
his repentance may nat availle. /
For as seith seint Isidre: 'he is a
Iaper and a gabber, and no verray
repentant, that eftsoone dooth thing,
for which him oghte repente.' /
Wepinge, and nat for to stinte to
90 doon sinne, may nat availle. / But
natheles, men shal hope that every
tyme that man falleth, be it never so
ofte, that he may arise thurgh Peni-
tence, if he have grace: but certainly
it is greet doute. / For as seith Seint
Gregorie: 'unnethe aryseth he out of
sinne, that is charged with the charge
of yvel usage.' / And therefore re-
pentant folk, that stinte for to sinne,
and forlete sinne er that sinne forlete
hem, holy chirche holdleth hem siker
of hir savacioun. / And he that sin-
neth, and verrailly repenteth him in
his laste ende, holy chirche yet hopeth
his savacioun, by the grete mercy of
oure lord Iesu Crist, for his repen-
tance; but tak the siker wey. /

§ 3. And now, sith I have declared
yow what thing is Penitence, now shul
ye understonde that ther been three
95 accions of Penitence. / The firste ac-
cion of Penitence is, that a man be
baptized after that he hath sinned. /
Seint Augustin seith: 'but he be

penitent for his olde sinful lyf, he may
nat biginne the newe clene lif.' / For
certes, if he be baptized withouten
penitence of his olde gilt, he receiv-
eth the mark of baptisme, but nat the
grace ne the remission of his sinnes,
til he have repentance verray. / An-
other defeaute is this, that men doon
deedly sinne after that they han re-
ceived baptisme. / The thriddle de-
faute is, that men fallen in venial
sinnes after hir baptisme, fro day to
day. / Ther-of seith Seint Augustin, 100
that 'penitence of goode and humble
folk is the penitence of every day.' /

§ 4. The spyces of Penitence been
three. That oon of hem is solempne,
another is commune, and the thriddle
is privee. / Thilke penance that is
solempne, is in two maneres; as to be
put out of holy chirche in lente, for
slaughtre of children, and swich
maner thing. / Another is, whan a
man hath sinned openly, of which
sinne the fame is openly spoken in
the contree; and thanne holy chirche
by Iugement destreinet him for to
do open penaunce. / Commune pen-
aunce is that preestes enioinen men
comunly in certeyn caas; as for to
goon, peraventure, naked in pilgrim-
ages, or bare-foot. / Privee penaunce 105
is thilke that men doon alday for
privee sinnes, of whiche we shryve
us prively and receyve privee pen-
aunce. /

§ 5. Now shaltow understande
what is bihovely and necessarie to
verray parfit Penitence. And this
stant on three thinges; / Contricioun
of herte, Confessioun of Mouth, and
Satisfaccioun. / For which seith Seint
Iohn Crisostom: 'Penitence destreyn-
eth a man to accepte benignely every
peyne that him is enioyned, with con-
tricion of herte, and shrift of mouth,
with satisfaccioun; and in werkinge
of alle maner humilitee.' / And this
is fruitful Penitence agayn three
thinges in whiche we wratthe oure
lord Iesu Crist: / this is to seyn, by 110
deleyt in thinkinge, by recchelesse
in spekinge, and by wikked sinful

werkinge. / And agayns this wik-
kede giltes is Penitence, that may be
lykned un-to a tree. /

§ 6. The rote of this tree is Con-
tricion, that hydeth him in the herte
of him that is verray repentant, right
as the rote of a tree hydeth him in
the erthe. / Of the rote of Contri-
cion springeth a stalke, that bereth
braunches and leves of Confession,
and fruit of Satisfaccion. / For which
Crist seith in his gospel: 'dooth digne
fruit of Penitence'; for by this fruit
may men knowe this tree, and nat by
the rote that is hid in the herte of man,
ne by the braunches ne by the leves
115 of Confession. / And therefore oure
Lord Iesu Crist seith thus: 'by the
fruit of hem ye shul knowen hem.' /
Of this rote eek springeth a seed of
grace, the which seed is moder of
sikernesse, and this seed is egre and
hoot. / The grace of this seed
springeth of god, thurgh remem-
brance of the day of dome and on
the peynes of helle. / Of this matere
seith Salomon, that 'in the drede
of god man forleteth his sinne.' / The
hete of this seed is the love of god,
and the desiring of the Loye perdur-
120 able. / This hete draweth the herte
of a man to god, and dooth him haten
his sinne. / For soothly, ther is no-
thing that savoureth so wel to a child
as the milk of his norice, ne no-thing
is to him more abhominable than
thilke milk when it is medled with
other mete. / Right so the sinful
man that loveth his sinne, him sem-
eth that it is to him most swete of
any-thing; / but fro that tyme that
he loveth sadly our lord Iesu Crist,
and desireth the lif perdurable, ther
nis to him no-thing more abhomi-
nable. / 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
125 lawe and his word. / This tree saugh
the prophete Daniel in spirit, up-on
the avision of the king Nabugodo-
nosor, whan he conseiled him to do

penitence. / Penauce is the tree
of lyf to hem that it receiven, and he
that holdeth him in verray penitence
is blessed; after the sentence of Salo-
mon. /

§ 7. In this Penitence or Contricion
man shal understonde foure thinges,
that is to seyn, what is Contricion: and
whiche been the causes that moeven a
man to Contricion: and how he sholde
be contrit: and what Contricion avail-
eth to the soule. / Thanne is it thus:
that Contricion is the verray sorwe that
a man receiveth in his herte for his
sinnes, with sad purpos to shryve him,
and to do penaunce, and nevermore to
do sinne. / And this sorwe shal been
in this manere, as seith seint Bernard:
'it shal been hevye and grevous, and
ful sharpe and poinant in herte.' / 130
First, for man hath agilt his lord and
his creatour; and more sharpe and
poinant, for he hath agilt his fader
celestial; / and yet more sharpe and
poinant, for he hath wrathed and agilt
him that boghte him; which with his
precious blood hath delivered us fro
the bondes of sinne, and fro the cruel-
tee of the devel and fro the peynes of
helle. /

§ 8. The causes that oghte moeve a
man to Contricion been six. First, a man
shal remembre him of hise sinnes; /
but loke he that thilke remembrance
ne be to him no delyt by no wey, but
greet shame and sorwe for his gilt.
For lob seith: 'sinful men doon werkes
worthy of Confession.' / And there-
fore seith Ezechie: 'wol remembre
me alle the yeres of my lyf, in bitter-
nesse of myn herte.' / And god seith 135
in the Apocalips: 'remembreth yow
fro whennes that ye been falle'; for
biforn that tyme that ye sinned, ye
were the children of god, and limes of
the regne of god; / but for your sinne
ye been woxen thral and foul, and
membres of the feend, hate of aungels,
sclaundre of holy chirche, and fode of
the false serpent; perpetual matere
of the fyr of helle. / And yet more
foul and abhominable, for ye tres-
passen so ofte tyme, as doth the hound

that retourneth to eten his spewing. / And yet be ye fouler for your longe continuing in sinne and your sinful usage, for which ye be roten in your sinne, as a beest in his dong. / Swiche manere of thoghtes maken a man to have shame of his sinne, and no delyt, 140 as god seith by the prophete Ezechiel. / 'Ye shal remembre yow of youre weyes, and they shuln displese yow.' Sothly, sinnes been the weyes that leden folk to helle. /

§ 9. The seconde cause that oghte make a man to have desdeyn of sinne is this: that, as seith seint Peter, 'who-so that doth sinne is thral of sinne'; and sinne put a man in greet thraldom. / And therfore seith the prophete Ezechiel: 'I wente sorweful in desdayn of my-self.' And certes, wel oghte a man have desdayn of sinne, and withdrawe him from that thraldom and vileinye. / And lo, what seith Seneca in this matere. He seith thus: 'though I wiste that neither god ne man ne sholde nevere knowe it, yet wolde I have desdayn for to do sinne.' / And the same Seneca also seith: 'I am born to gretter things than to be thral to my body, or than for to maken of my body a 145 thral.' / Ne a fouler thral may no man ne womman maken of his body, than for to yeven his body to sinne. / Al were it the fouleste cherl, or the fouleste womman that liveth, and leest of value, yet is he thanne more foule and more in servitute. / Evere fro the hyer degree that man falleth, the more is he thral, and more to god and to the world vile and abhominable. / O gode god, wel oghte man have desdayn of sinne; sith that, thurgh sinne, ther he was free, now is he made bonde. / And therfore seyth Seint Augustin: 'if thou hast desdayn of thy servant, if he agilte or sinne, have thou thanne desdayn that 150 thou thy-self sholdest do sinne.' / Take reward of thy value, that thou ne be to foul to thy-self. / Allas! wel oghten they thanne have desdayn to been servauntz and thralles to

sinne, and sore been ashamed of hem-self, / that god of his endelees goodnesse hath set hem in heigh estaat, or yeven hem wit, strengthe of body, hele, beautee, prosperitee, / and boghte hem fro the deeth with his herte blood, that they so unkindely, agayns his gentillesse, quyten him so vileinsly, to slaughtre of hir owene soules. / O gode god, ye wommen that been of so greet beautee, remembreth yow of the proverbe of Salomon, that seith: / 155 'he lyketh a fair womman, that is a fool of hir body, lyk to a ring of gold that were in the groyn of a sowe.' / For right as a sowe wrotheth in everich ordure, so wrotheth she hir beautee in the stinkinge ordure of sinne. /

§ 10. The thridde cause that oghte moeve a man to Contricion, is drede of the day of dome, and of the horrible peynes of helle. / For as seint Ierome seith: 'at every tyme that me remembreth of the day of dome, I quake; / for whan I ete or drinke, or what-so that I do, evere semeth me that the trompe sowneth in myn ere: / riseth up, ye that been dede, 160 and cometh to the Iugement.' / O gode god, muchel oghte a man to drede swich a Iugement, 'ther-as we shullen been alle,' as seint Poul seith, 'biforn the sete of oure lord Iesu Crist'; / wher-as he shal make a general congregacion, wher-as no man may be absent. / For certes, there availleth noon essayne ne excusacion. / And nat only that oure defautes shullen be iuged, but eek that alle oure werkes shullen openly be knowe. / And as seith Seint Ber- 165 nard: 'ther ne shal no pleding availle, ne no sleighte; we shullen yeven rekeninge of everich ydel word.' / Ther shul we han a Iuge that may nat been deceived ne corrupt. And why? For, certes, alle our thoghtes been discovered as to him; ne for preyere ne for mede he shal nat been corrupt. / And therfore 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 nis noon hope to escape. / Wherefore, as seith Seint Anselm: 'ful greet angewissh shul the sinful folk have at that tyme; / ther shal the sterne and wrothe Iuge sitte above, and under him the horrible put of helle open to destroyen him that moot biknowen hise sinnes, whiche sinnes openly been shewed biforn god and biforn every
170 creature. / And on the left syde, mo develes than herte may bithinke, for to harie and drawe the sinful soules to the pyne of helle. / And with-inne the hertes of folk shal be the bytinge conscience, and with-out-forth shal be the world al brenninge. / Whider shal thanne the wrecched sinful man flee to hyden him? Certes, he may nat hyden him; he moste come forth and shewen him.' / For certes, as seith seint Ierome: 'the erthe shal casten him out of him, and the see also; and the eyr also, that shal be ful of thonder-clappes and lightnings.' / Now sothly, who-so wel remembreth him of these thinges, I gesse that his sinne shal nat turne
175 him in-to delyt, but to greet sorwe, for drede of the peyne of helle. / And therefore seith Iob to god: 'suffre, lord, that I may a whyle biwaille and wepe, er I go with-oute returning to the derke lond, covered with the derknesse of deeth; / to the lond of mise and of derknesse, where-as ther is noon ordre or ordinance, but grisly drede that evere shal laste.' / Lo, here may ye seen that Iob preyde respyt a whyle, to biwepe and waille his trespas; for soothly oon day of respyt is bettre than al the tresor of the world. / And for-as-muche as a man may acquiten him-self biforn god by penitence in this world, and nat by tresor, therefore sholde he preye to god to yeve him respyt a whyle, to biwepe and biwailen his trespas. / For certes, al the sorwe that a man

mighte make from the beginning of the world, nis but a litel thing at regard of the sorwe of helle. / The cause
180 why that Iob clepeth helle 'the lond of derknesse'; / under-stondeth that he clepeth it 'londe' or erthe, for it is stable, and nevere shal faille; 'derk,' for he that is in helle hath defaute of light material. / For certes, the derke light, that shal come out of the fyr that evere shal brenne, shal turne him al to peyne that is in helle; for it sheweth him to the horrible develes that him tormenten. / 'Covered with the derknesse of deeth': that is to seyn, that he that is in helle shal have defaute of the sighte of god; for certes, the sighte of god is the lyf perdurable. / 'The derknesse of deeth' been the sinnes that the wrecched man hath doon, whiche that destourben him to see the face of god; right as doth a derk cloude bitwixe us and the sonne. / 'Lond of
185 misese': by-cause that ther been three maneres of defautes, agayn three thinges that folk of this world han in this present lyf, that is to seyn, honours, delycles, and riches. / Agayns honour, have they in helle shame and confusion. / 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, na-more reverence shal be doon there to a king than to a knave. / For which god seith by the prophete Ieremye: 'thilke folk that me despyen shul been in despyt.' / 'Honour' is eek cleped greet lordshipe; ther shal no man serven other but of harm and torment. 'Honour' is eek cleped greet dignitee and heighnesse; but in helle shul they been al fortroden of develes. / And god seith: 'the
190 horrible develes shulle goon and comen up-on the hevedes of the dampned folk.' And this is for-as-muche as, the hyer that they were in this present lyf, the more shulle they been abated and defouled in helle. / Agayns the riches of this world, shul they han misese of pov-

erte; and this povertē shal been in foure thinges: / in defaute of tresor, of which that David seith; 'the rieche folk, that embraceden and oneden al hir herte to tresor of this world, shul slepe in the slepinge of deeth; and no-thing ne shul they finden in hir handes of al hir tresor.' / And more-over, the miseise of helle shal been in defaute of mete and drinke. / For god seith thus by Moyses; 'they shul been wasted with hunger, and the briddes of helle shul devouren hem with bitter deeth, and the galle of the dragon shal been hir drinke, and the venom of the dragon hir morsels.' / And forther-over, hir miseise shal been in defaute of clothing: for they shulle be naked in body as of clothing, save the fyr in which they brenne and othere filthes; / and naked shul they been of soule, of alle manere vertues, which that is the clothing of the soule. Where been thanne the gaye robes and the softe shetes and the smale shertes? / Lo, what seith god of hem by the prophete Isaye: 'that under hem shul been strawed motthes, and hir covertures shulle been of wormes of helle.' / And forther-over, hir miseise shal been in defaute of freendes; for he nis nat povre that hath goode freendes, but there is no freend: / for neither god ne no creature shal been freend to hem, and everich of hem shal haten other with deedly hate. / 'The sones and the doghtren shullen rebelen agayns fader and mooder, and kinrede agayns kinrede, and chyden and despysen everich of hem other,' bothe day and night, as god seith by the prophete Michias. / And the lovinge children, that whylom loveden so fleshly everich other, wolden everich of hem eten other if they mighte. / For how sholden they love hem togidre in the peyne of helle, whan they hated ech of hem other in the prosperitee of this lyf? / For truste wel, hir fleshly love was deedly hate; as seith the prophete David: 'who-so

that loveth wikkednesse he hateth his soule.' / And who-so hateth his owene soule, certes, he may love noon other wight in no manere. / And therefore, in helle is no solas ne no frendshipe, but evere the more fleshly kinredes that been in helle, the more cursinges, the more chydinges, and the more deedly hate ther is among hem. / And forther-over, they shul have defaute of alle manere delycees; for certes, delycees been after the appetytes of the fyve wittes, as sighte, heringe, smellinge, savoringe, and touchinge. / But in helle hir sighte shal be ful of derknesse and of smoke, and therfore ful of teres; and hir heringe, ful of waymentinge and of grintinge of teeth, as seith Iesu Crist; / hir nosethirles shullen be ful of stinkinge stink. And as seith Isaye the prophete: 'hir savoring shal be ful of bitter galle.' / And touchinge of al hir body, y-covered with 'fyr that nevere shal quenche, and with wormes that nevere shul dyen,' as god seith by the mouth of Isaye. / And for-as-muche as they shul nat wene that they may dyen for peyne, and by hir deeth flee fro peyne, that may they understonden by the word of Iob, that seith: 'ther-as is the shadwe of deeth.' / Certes, a shadwe hath the lyknesse of the thing of which it is shadwe, but shadwe is nat the same thing of which it is shadwe. / Right so fareth the peyne of helle; it is lyk deeth for the horrible anguiss, and why? For it peyneth hem evere, as though they sholde dye anon; but certes they shal nat dye. / For as seith Seint Gregorie: 'to wrecche caytives shal be deeth with-oute deeth, and ende with-oute ende, and defaute with-oute failinge. / For hir deeth shal alwey liven, and hir ende shal everemo biginne, and hir defaute shal nat faille.' / And therefore seith Seint Iohn the Evangelist: 'they shullen folwe deeth, and they shul nat finde him; and they shul desyren to dye, and deeth shal flee fro hem.' / And eek Iob seith: that 'in helle is

noon ordre of rule.' / And al-be-it so that god hath creat alle thinges in right ordre, and no-thing with-outen ordre, but alle thinges been ordeyned and nombred; yet natheles they that been dampned been no-thing in ordre, ne holden noon ordre. / For the erthe ne shal bere hem no fruit. / For, as the prophete David seith: 'god shal destroie the fruit of the erthe as fro hem;' ne water ne shal yeve hem no moisture; ne the eyr no refresshing, ne fyr no light. / For as seith 220 seint Basile: 'the brenninge 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 hevne to hise children'; right as the gode man yeveth flesh to hise children, and bones to his houndes. / And for they shullen have noon hope to escape, seith seint Iob atte laste: that 'ther shal horroure and grisly drede dwellen with-outen ende.' / Horroure is alwey drede of harm that is to come, and this drede shal evere dwelle in the hertes of hem that been dampned. And therefore han they lorn al hir hope, for sevene causes. / First, for god that is hir Iuge shal be with-outen mercy to hem; ne they may nat plesse him, ne noon of hise halwes; ne they 225 ne may yeve no-thing for hir raunson; / ne they have no vois to speke to him; ne they may nat flee fro peyne; ne they have no goodnesse in hem, that they mowe shewe to delivere hem fro peyne. / And therfore seith Salomon: 'the wikked man dyeth; and whan he is deed, he shal have noon hope to escape fro peyne.' / Who-so thanne wolde wel understande these peynes, and bithinke him weel that he hath deserved thilke peynes for his sinnes, certes, he sholde have more talent to syken and to wepe than for to singen and to pleye. / For as that seith Salomon: 'who-so that hadde the science to knowe the peynes that been establissed and ordeyned for sinne, he wolde make sorwe.' / 'Thilke science,' as seith seint Au-

gustin, 'maketh a man to waymenten in his herte.' / 230

§ II. The fourthe point, that oghte maken a man to have contricion, is the sorweful remembrance of the good that he hath left to doon here in earthe; and eek the good that he hath lorn. / Soothly, the gode werkes that he hath left, outhere they been the gode werkes that he wroghte er he fel in-to deedly sinne, or elles the gode werkes that he wroghte while he lay in sinne. / Soothly, the gode werkes, that he dide biforn that he fil in sinne, been al mortified and astoned and dulled by the ofte sinning. / The othere gode werkes, that he wroghte whyl he lay in deedly sinne, they been outrely dede as to the lyf perdurable in hevne. / Thanne thilke gode werkes that been mortified by ofte sinning, whiche gode werkes he dide whyl he was in charitee, ne mowe nevere quiken agayn with-outen verray penitence. / And 235 ther-of seith god, by the mouth of Ezechiel: that, 'if the rightful man returne agayn from his rightwisnesse and werke wikkednesse, shal he live?' / Nay; for alle the gode werkes that he hath wrought ne shul nevere been in remembrance; for he shal dyen in his sinne. / And up-on thilke chapitre seith seint Gregorie thus: 'that we shulle understonde this principally; / that whan we doon deedly sinne, it is for noght thanne to rehernen or drawn in-to memorie the gode werkes that we han wrought biforn.' / For certes, in the werkinge of the deedly sinne, ther is no trust to no good werk that we han doon biforn; that is to seyn, as for to have therby the lyf perdurable in hevne. / 240 But natheles, the gode werkes quiken agayn, and comen agayn, and helpen, and availen to have the lyf perdurable in hevne, whan we han contricion. / But soothly, the gode werkes that men doon whyl they been in deedly sinne, for-as-muche as they were doon in deedly sinne, they may nevere quiken agayn. / For certes,

thing that nevere hadde lyf may nevere quikene; and natheles, albe-it that they ne availe nocht to han the lyf perdurable, yet availlen they to abregge of the peyne of helle, or elles to geten temporal richesse, / or elles that god wole the rather enlumine and lightne the herte of the sinful man to have repentance; / and eek they availlen for to usen a man to doon gode werkes, that the feend have the lasse power of his soule. /

245 And thus the curteis lord Iesu Crist wole that no good werk be lost; for in somwhat it shal availe. / But for-as-muche as the gode werkes that men doon whyl they been in good lyf, been al mortified by sinne followinge; and eek, sith that alle the gode werkes that men doon whyl they been in dedly synne, been outly dede as for to have the lyf perdurable; / wel may that man, that no good werke ne dooth, singe thilke newe Frenshe song: "*Jay tout perdu mon temps et mon labour.*" / For certes, sinne bireveth a man bothe goodnesse of nature and eek the goodnesse of grace. / For soothly, the grace of the holy goost fareth lyk fyr, that may nat been ydel; for fyr failleth anon as it foreteth his workinge, and right so grace fayleth anon as it foreteth his workinge. /

250 Than leseth the sinful man the goodnesse of glorie, that only is bihight to gode men that labouren and werken. / Wel may he be sory thanne, that oweth al his lif to god as longe as he hath lived, and eek as longe as he shal live, 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 accountes,' as seith seint Bernard, 'of alle the godes that han be yeven him in this present lyf, and how he hath hem depended; / in 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 rekening.' /

§ 12. The fiftie thing that oghte

moeve a man to contricion, is remembrance of the passion that oure lord Iesu Crist suffred for our sinnes. / 255 For, as seith seint Bernard: 'whyl that I live, I shal have remembrance of the travailes that oure lord Crist suffred in preching; / his wearinesse in travailling, hise temptacions whan he fasted, hise longe wakings whan he preyde, hise teres whan that he weep for pitee of good peple; / the wo and the shame and the filthe that men seyden to him; of the foule spitting that men spitte in his face, of the buffettes that men yaven him, of the foule mowes, and of the repreves that men to him seyden; / of the nayles with whiche he was nailed to the croys, and of al the remenant of his passion that he suffred for my sinnes, and no-thing for his gilt.' / And ye shul understonde, that in mannes sinne is every manere of orde or ordinance turned up-so-doun. / 260 For it is sooth, that god, and reson, and sensualitee, and the body of man been so ordeyned, that everich of these foure things sholde have lordshipe over that other; / as thus: god sholde have lordshipe over reson, and reson over sensualitee, and sensualitee over the body of man. / But sothly, whan man sinneth, al this orde or ordinance is turned up-so-doun. / And therefore thanne, for-as-muche as the reson 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. / And why? For sensualitee rebelleth thanne agayns reson; and by that wey leseth reson the lordshipe over sensualitee and over the body. / For 265 right as reson is rebel to god, right so is bothe sensualitee rebel to reson and the body also. / And certes, this disordnance and this rebellion oure lord Iesu Crist aboghte up-on his precious body ful dere, and herkeneth in which wyse. / For-as-muche thanne as reson is rebel to god, therefore is man worthy to have sorwe and

to be deed. / This suffred oure lord Iesu Crist for man, after that he hadde be bitraysed of his disciple, and distreynd and bounde, 'so that his blood brast out at every nail of hise handes,' as seith seint Augustin. / And forther-over, for-as-muchel as reson of man ne wol nat daunte sensualitee when it may, therfore is men worthy to have shame; and this suffred oure lord Iesu Crist for man, when they
 270 spetten in his visage. / And forther-over, for-as-muchel thanne as the caitif body of man is rebel bothe to reson and to sensualitee, therfore is it worthy the death. / And this suffred oure lord Iesu Crist for man upon the croys, where-as ther was no part of his body free, with-ouen greet peyne and bitter passion. / And al this suffred Iesu Crist, that nevere forfeled. And therfore resonably may be seyde of Iesu in this manere: 'to muchel am I peyned for the things that I nevere deserved, and to muche defouled for shend-shipe that man is worthy to have.' / And therfore may the sinful man wel seye, as seith seint Bernard: 'acursed be the bitterness of my sinne, for which ther moste be suffred so muchel bitterness.' / For certes, after the diverse discordances of oure wikkednesses, was the passion of Iesu Crist
 275 ordeyned in diverse things, / as thus. Certes, sinful mannes soule is bitraysed of the devel by covetise of temporel prosperitee, and scorned by deceite when he cheseth fleshly delyces; and yet is it tormented by inpacience of adversitee, and bispet by servage and subieccion of sinne; and atte laste it is slayn fynally. / For this disordinaunce of sinful man was Iesu Crist first bitraysed, and after that was he bounde, that cam for to unbynden us of sinne and peyne. / Thanne was he biscorned, that only sholde han been honoured in alle things and of alle things. / Thanne was his visage, that oghte be desired to be seyn of al man-kinde, in which visage aungels desyren to looke, vileynsly

bispet. / Thanne was he scourged that no-thing hadde agilt; and fynally, thanne was he crucified and slayn. / 280 Thanne was accompliced the word of Isaye: 'he was wounded for oure misdedes, and defouled for oure felonies.' / Now sith that Iesu Crist took up-on him-self the peyne of alle oure wikkednesses, muchel oghte sinful man wepen and biwayle, that for hise sinnes goddes sone of hevene sholde al this peyne endure. /

§ 13. The sixte thing that oghte moeve a man to contricion, is the hope of thre thynges; that is to seyn, foryifnesse of sinne, and the yifte of grace wel for to do, and the glorie of hevene, with which god shal guerdone a man for hise gode dedes. / And for-as-muche as Iesu Crist yeveth us these yiftes of his largesse and of his sovereyn bountee, therfore is he cleped *Iesus Nazarenus rex Iudeorum*. / Iesus is to seyn 'saveour' or 'salvacion,' on whom men shul hope to have foryifnesse of sinnes, which that is proprely salvacion of sinnes. / 285 And therfore seyde the aungel to Ioseph: 'thou shalt clepen his name Iesus, that shal saven his peple of hir sinnes.' / And heer-of seith seint Peter: 'ther is noon other name under hevene that is yeve to any man, by which a man may be saved, but only Iesus.' / *Nazarenus* is as muche for to seye as 'florissinge,' in which a man shal hope, that he that yeveth him remission of sinnes shal yeve him eek grace wel for to do. For in the flour is hope of fruit in tyme cominge; and in foryifnesse of sinnes hope of grace wel for to do. / 'I was atte dore of thyn herte,' seith Iesus, 'and cleped for to entre; he that openeth to me shal have foryifnesse of sinne. / I wol entre in-to him by my grace, and soupe with him,' by the goode werkes that he shal doon; whiche werkes been the foode of god; 'and he shal soupe with me,' by the grete Ioye that I shal yeven him. / Thus shal man
 290 hope, for hise werkes of penaunce,

that god shall yeven him his regne; as he bihoteth him in the gospel. /

§ 14. Now shal a man understonde, in which manere shal been his contricion. I seye, that it shal been universal and total; this is to seyn, a man shal be verray repentant for alle hise sinnes that he hath doon in delyt of his thoght; for delyt is ful perilous. / For ther been two manere of consentinges; that oon of hem is cleped consentinge of affeccion, when a man is moeved to do sinne, and delyeth him longe for to thinke on that sinne; / and his reson aperceyvethe it wel, that is is sinne agayns the lawe of god, and yet his reson refreyneth nat his foul delyt or talent, though he se wel apertly that it is agayns the reverence of god; al-though his reson ne consente noight to doon that sinne in dede, / yet seyn somme doctours that swich delyt that dwelleth longe, it is ful perilous, al be it nevere so
295 lite. / And also a man sholde sorwe, namely, for al that evere he hath desired agayn the lawe of god with perfit consentinge of his reson; for ther-of is no doute, that it is dedly sinne in consentinge. / For certes, ther is no dedly sinne, that it nas first in mannes thoght, and after that in his delyt; and so forth in-to consentinge and in-to dede. / Wherefore I seye, that many men ne repenten hem nevere of swiche thoghtes and delytes, ne nevere shryven hem of it, but only of the dede of grete sinnes outward. / Wherefore I seye, that swiche wikked delytes and wikked thoghtes been subtile bigyleres of hem that shullen be dampned. / More-over, man oghte to sorwe for hise wikkede wordes as wel as for hise wikkede dedes; for certes, the repentance of a singuler sinne, and nat repente of alle hise othere sinnes, or elles repenten him of alle hise othere sinnes, and nat of
300 a singuler sinne, may nat availle. / For certes, god almighty is al good; and ther-fore he foryeveth al, or elles right noight. / And heer-of seith

seint Augustin: 'I woot certeinly / that god is enemy to everich sinnere'; and how thanne? He that observeth o sinne, shal he have foryifnesse of the remenaunt of hise othere sinnes? Nay. / And forther-over, contricion sholde be wonder sorweful and anguissous, and therfore yeveth him god pleyully his mercy; and therfore, whan my soule was anguissous with-inne me, I hadde remembrance of god that my preyere mighte come to him. / Forther-over, contricion moste be continuel, and that man have stedefast purpos to shryven him, and for to amenden him of his lyf. / For
305 soothly, whyl contricion lasteth, man may evere have hope of foryifnesse; and of this comth hate of sinne, that destroyeth sinne bothe in him-self, and eek in other 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. /

§ 15. The laste thing that man shal understonde in contricion is this; wher-of avayleth contricion. I seye, that somtyme contricion delivereth a man fro sinne; / of which that David seith: 'I seye,' quod David, that is to seyn, 'I purposed fermely to shryve me; and thow, Lord, relesedest my sinne.' / And right so as contricion availleth noight, with-uten sad purpos of shrifte, if man have oportunittee, right so litel worth is shrifte or satisfaccion with-uten contricion. /
310 And more-over, contricion destroyeth the prison of helle, and maketh wayk and feble alle the strengthes of the develes, and restoreth the yiftes of the holy goost and of alle gode vertues; / and it clenseth the soule of sinne, and delivereth the soule fro the peyne of helle, and fro the companye of the devel, and fro the servage of sinne, and restoreth it to alle godes espirituels, and to the companye and communion of holy chirche. / And forther-over, it maketh him that whylom was sone of ire to be sone

of grace; and alle thise thinges been preved by holy writ. / And therefore, he that wolde sette his entente to thise thinges, he were ful wys; for soothly, he ne sholde nat thanne in al his lyf have corage to sinne, but yeven his body and al his herte to the service of Iesu Crist, and ther-of doon him hommage. / For soothly, oure swete lord Iesu Crist hath spared us so debonairly in our folies, that if he ne hadde pittee of mannes soule, a
315 sory song we mighten alle singe. /

Explicit prima pars Penitentie; et sequitur secunda pars eiusdem.

§ 16. The seconde partie of Penitence is Confession, that is signe of contricion. / Now shul ye understonde what is Confession, and whether it oghte nedes be doon or noon, and whiche thinges been covenable to verray Confession. /

§ 17. First shaltow understonde that Confession is verrayshewing of synnes to the preest; / this is to seyn 'verray,' for he moste confessen him of alle the condicions that bilongen to his sinne, as ferforth as he can. / Al moot be seyde, and no thing excused ne hid ne forwrapped, and nocht
320 avaunte him of his gode werkes. / And forther over, it is necessarie to understonde whennes that synnes springen, and how they encreesen, and whiche they been. /

§ 18. Of the springinge of synnes seith seint Paul in this wise: that 'right as by a man sinne entred first in-to this world, and thurgh that sinne deeth, right so thilke deeth entred in-to alle men that sinneden.' / And this man was Adam, by whom sinne entred in-to this world whan he brak the comaundement of god. / And therefore, he that first was so mighty that he sholde not have dyed, bicam swich oon that he moste nedes dye, whether he wolde or noon; and all his progenie in this world that in thilke man sinneden. / Loke that in thestaat of innocence, when Adam

and Eve naked weren in paradys, and no-thing ne hadden shame of hir nakednesse, / how that the serpent, that
325 was most wyly of alle othere bestes that god hadde made, seyde to the womman: 'why comaunded god to yow, ye sholde nat eten of every tree in paradys?' / The womman answerde: 'of the fruit,' quod she, 'of the trees in paradys we feden us; but soothly, of the fruit of the tree that is in the middel of paradys, god forbad us for to ete, ne nat touchen it, lest per-aventure we should 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, knowinge good and harm.' / The womman thanne saugh that the tree was good to feding, and fair to the eyen, and delytable to the sighte; she tok of the fruit of the tree, and eet it, and yaf to hir housbonde, and he eet; and anon the eyen of hem bothe opened. / And whan that they knewe that they were naked, they sowed of fige-leves a manere of breches to hiden hir membres. /
330 There may ye seen that deedly sinne hath first suggestion of the feend, as sheweth here by the naddre; and afterward, the delyt of the flesh, as sheweth here by Eve; and after that, the consentinge of resoun, as sheweth here by Adam. / For trust wel, thogh so were that the feend tempted Eve, that is to seyn the flesh, and the flesh hadde delyt in the beautee of the fruit defended, yet certes, til that resoun, that is to seyn, Adam, consented to the etinge of the fruit, yet stood he in thestaat of innocence. / Of thilke Adam toke we thilke sinne original; for of him fleshly descended be we alle, and engendred of vile and corrupt matere. / And whan the soule is put in our body, right anon is contract original sinne; and that, that was erst but only peyne of concupiscence, is afterward bothe peyne and sinne. / And therefore be we

alle born sones of wratthe and of dampnacion perdurable, if it nere baptesme that we receyven, which binimeth us the culpe; but for sothe, the peyne dwellefth with us, as to temptacion, which peyne highte concupiscence. / When it is wrongfully disposed or ordeyned in man, it maketh him coveite, by coveitise of flesh, fleshly sinne, by sighte of hise eyen as to erthely thinges, and coveitise of hynesse by pryde of herte. /

§ 19. Now as for to speken of the firste coveitise, that is, concupiscence after the lawe of oure membres, that weren lawefullliche y-maked and by rightful Jugement of god; / I seye, for-as-muche as man is nat obeisaunt to god, that is his lord, therefore is the flesh to him disobeisaunt thurgh concupiscence, which yet is cleped norissinge of sinne and occasion of sinne. / Therefore, al the whyle that a man hath in him the peyne of concupiscence, it is impossible but he be tempted somtyme, and moeved in his flesh to sinne. / And this thing may nat faille as longe as he liveth; it may wel wexe feble and faille, by vertu of baptesme and by the grace of god thurgh penitence; / but fully ne shal it nevere quenche, that he ne shal somtyme be moeved in him-self, but-if he were al freyded by siknesse, or by malefice of sorcerie or colde drinkes. / For lo, what seith seint Paul: 'the flesh coveiteth agayn the spirit, and the spirit agayn the flesh; they been so contrarie and so stryven, that a man may nat alwey doon as he wolde.' / The same seint Paul, after his grete penaunce in water and in lond (in water by night and by day, in greet peril and in greet peyne, in lond, in famine, in thirst, in cold and clotheles, and ones stoned almost to the deeth) / yet seyde he: 'allas! I, caytif man, who shal deliver me fro the prisoun of my caytif body?' / And seint Ierome, whan he longe tyme hadde woned in desert, where-as he hadde no companie but of wilde bestes, where-as he ne hadde no mete but herbes

and water to his drinke, ne no bed but the naked erthe, for which his flesh was blak as an Ethiopen for hete and ny destroyed for cold, / yet seyde he: that 'the brenninge of lecherie boiled in al his body.' / Wherefore I woot wel sikerly, that they been deceyved that seyn, that they ne be nat tempted in hir body. / Witesse on Seint Iame the Apostel, that seith: that 'every wight is tempted in his owen concupiscence'; that is to seyn, that everich of us hath matere and occasion to be tempted of the norissinge of sinne that is in his body. / And therefore seith Seint Iohn the Evaungelist: 'if that we seyn that we beth with-oute sinne, we deceyve usselve, and trouthe is nat in us.' /

§ 20. Now shal ye understonde in what manere that sinne wexeth or encreseth in man. The firste thing is thilke norissinge of sinne, of which I spak biforn, thilke fleshly concupiscence. / And after that comth the subieccion of the devel, this is to seyn, the develes bely, with which he bloweth in man the fyr of fleshly concupiscence. / And after that, a man bithinketh him whether he wol doon, or no, thilke thing to which he is tempted. / And thanne, if that a man withstonde and weyve the firste entysinge of his flesh and of the feend, thanne is it no sinne; and if it so be that he do nat so, thanne feleth he anon a flambe of delyt. / And thanne is it good to be war, and kepen him wel, or elles he wol falle anon in-to consentinge of sinne; and thanne wol he do it, if he may have tyme and place. / And of this matere seith Moyses by the devel in this manere: 'the feend seith, I wole chace and pursue the man by wikked suggestion, and I wole hente him by moevynge or stiringe of sinne. I wol departe my pryse or my praye by deliberacion, and my lust shal been accompliced in delyt; I wol drawe my swerd in consentinge: / for certes, right as a swerd departeth a thing in two peces, right so consent-

inge departeth god fro man: 'and thanne wol I sleen him with myn hand in dede of sinne'; thus seith the feend. / For certes, thanne is a man al deed in soule. And thus is sinne accompliced by temptacion, by delyt, and by consentinge; and thanne is the sinne cleped actual. /

§ 21. For sothe, sinne is in two maneres; outhur it is venial, or deedly sinne. Soothly, whan man loveth any creature more than Iesu Crist oure creatour, thanne is it deedly sinne. And venial synne is it, if man love Iesu Crist lasse than him oghte. / For sothe, the dede of this venial sinne is ful perilous; for it amenuseth the love that men sholde han to god more and more. / And therefore, if a man charge himself with many swiche venial sinnes, certes, but-if so be that he som tyme discharge him of hem by shrifte, they mowe ful lightly amenuse in him al the love that he hath to Iesu Crist; / and in this wise skippeh venial in-to deedly sinne. For certes, the more that a man chargeth his soule with venial sinnes, the more is he enclined to fallen in-to deedly sinne. / And therefore, let us nat be negligent to deschargen us of venial sinnes. For the proverbe seith: that manye smale maken a greet. / And herkne this ensample. A greet wawe of the see comth som-tyme with so greet a violence that it drencheth the ship. And the same harm doth som-tyme the smale drops of water, that entren thurgh a litel crevace in-to the thurrok, and in-to the botme of the ship, if men be so negligent that they ne discharge hem nat by tyme. / And therefore, al-thogh ther be a difference bitwixe these two causes of drenchinge, algates the ship is dreynt. / Right so fareth it somtyme of deedly sinne, and of anoyouse veniale sinnes, whan they multiplye in a man so greetly, that thilke worldly things that he loveth, thurgh whiche he sinneth venially, is as greet in his herte as the love of god, or more. /

And therefore, the love of every thing, 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 sinne; / and deedly sinne, whan the love of any thing weyeth in the herte of man as muchel as the love of god, or more. / 'Deedly sinne,' as seith seint Augustin, 'is, whan a man turneth his herte fro god, which that is verray sovereyn bountee, that may nat change, and yeveth his herte to thing that may change and flitte'; / and certes, that is every thing, 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, un-to a creature, certes, as muche of his love as he yeveth to thilke creature, so muche he bireveth fro god; / and therefore doth he sinne. 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. /

§ 22. Now sith man understandeth generally, which is venial sinne, thanne is it covenable to tellen specially of sinnes whiche that many a man per-aventure ne demeth hem nat sinnes, and ne shryveth him nat of the same thinges; and yet natheles they been sinnes. / Soothly, as these clerkes wryten, this is to seyn, that at every tyme that a man eteth or drinketh more than suffyseth to the sustenance of his body, in certain he dooth sinne. / And eek whan he speketh more than nedeth, it is sinne. Eke whan he herkneth nat benignely the compleint of the povre. / Eke whan he is in hele of body and wol nat faste, whan othere folk faste, withouten cause resonable. Eke whan he slepeth more than nedeth, or whan he comth by thilke enchesoun to late to chirche, or to othere werkes of charite. / Eke whan he useth his wyf, withouten sovereyn desyr 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 other worldly thing, more than resoun requyreth. Eke if he flater or blandishe more than him oghte for any necessitee. / Eke if he amenuse or withdrawe the almesse of the povre. Eke if he apparailleth his mete more deliciously than nede is, or ete it to hastily by likerousnesse. / Eke if he tale vanitees at chirche or at goddes service, or that he be a talker of ydel wordes of folye or of vileinye; for he shal yelden acountes of it at the day of dome. / Eke when he biheth or assureth to do thinges that he may nat perfourne. Eke when that he, by lightnesse or folie, misseyeth or scorneth his neighebores. / Eke when he hath any wikked suspicion of thing, ther he ne woot of it no
380 soothfastnesse. / These thinges and mo with-oute nombre been sinnes, as seith seint Augustin. /

Now shal men understonde, that al-be-it so that noon erthely man may eschue alle venial sinnes, yet may he refreyne him by the brenninge love that he hath to oure lord Iesu Crist, and by preyeres and confession and othere gode werkes, so that it shal but litel greve. / For, as seith seint Augustin: 'if a man love god in swiche manere, that al that evere he doth is in the love of god, and for the love of god verrailly, for he brenneth in the love of god: / loke, how muche that a drope of water that falleth in a fourneys ful of fyr anoyeth or greveth, so muche anoyeth a venial sinne un-to a man that is parfit in the love of Iesu Crist.' / Men may also refreyne venial sinne by receyvinge worthily of the
385 precious body of Iesu Crist; / by receyvinge eek of holy water; by almesdede; by general confession of *Confiteor* at masse and at complin; and by blessinge of bisshopes and of preestes, and by othere gode werkes. /

Explicit secunda pars Penitentie.

Sequitur de Septem Peccatis Mortalibus et eorum dependentiis circumstantiis et speciebus.

§ 23. Now is it bihovely thing to telle whiche been the deedly sinnes; this is to seyn, chieftaines of sinnes; alle they renne in o lees, but in diverse maneres. Now been they cleped chieftaines for-as-muche as they been chief, and springers of alle othere sinnes. / Of the roote of these sevene sinnes thanne is Pryde, the general rote of alle harmes; for of this rote springen certein braunches, as Ire, Envye, Accidie or Slewthe, Avarice or Coveitise (to commune understandinge), Glotonye, and Lecherye. / And everich of these chief sinnes hath hise braunches and hise twigges, as shal be declared in hir chapitres folwinge.

De Superbia.

§ 24. And thogh so be that no man can outrelly telle the nombre of the twigges and of the harmes that cometh of Pryde, yet wol I shewe a partie of hem, as ye shul understonde. /
390 Ther is Inobedience, Avauntinge, Ipocrisie, Despyt, Arrogance, Impudence, Swellinge of herte, Insolence, Elacion, Impacience, Strif, Contumacie, Presumpcion, Irreverence, Pertinacie, Veyne Glorie; and many another twig that I can nat declare. / Inobedient, is he that disobeyeth for despyt to the comandements of god and to hise sovereyns, and to his goostly fader. / Avauntour, is he that bosteth of the harm or of the bountee that he hath doon. / Ipocrite, is he that hydeth to shewe him swiche as he is, and sheweth him swiche as he nocht is. / Despitous, is he that hath desdeyn of his neighebores, that is to seyn, of his evenecristene, or hath despyt to doon that him oghte to do. / Arrogant, is he that
395 thinketh that he hath thilke bountees in him that he hath nocht, or weneth that he sholde have hem by hise desertes; or elles he demeth that he

be that he nis nat. / Impudent, is he that for his pride hath no shame of hise sinnes. / Swellinge of herte, is whan a man reioyseth him of harm that he hath doon. / Insolent, is he that despyseth in his Iugement alle othere folk as to regard of his value, and of his conning, and of his speaking, and of his bering. / Elacion, is whan he ne may neither suffre to have
 400 maister ne felawe. / Impacient, is he that wol nat been y-taught ne undernome of his vyce, and by stryf werreiech trouthe wityngly, and defendeth his folye. / *Contumax*, is he that thurgh his indignacion is agayns everich auctoritee or power of hem that been hise sovereyns. / Presumpcion, is whan a man undertaketh an emprise that him oghte nat do, or elles that he may nat do; and that is called Surquidrie. Irreverence, is whan men do nat honour there-as hem oghte to doon, and waiten to be revered. / Pertinacie, is whan man defendeth his folye, and trusteth to muchel in his owene wit. / Veyne glorie, is for to have pompe and delyt in his temporel hynesse, and glorifie
 405 him in this worldly estaat. / Iangling, is whan men speken to muche biforn folk, and clappen as a mille, and taken no kepe what they seye. /

§ 25. And yet is ther a privee spece of Pryde, that waiteth first to be salewed er he wole salewe, al be he lasse worth than that other is, peraventure; and eek he waiteth or desyeth to sitte, or elles to goon above him in the wey, or kisse pax, or been encensed, or goon to offring biforn his neighebores, / and swiche semblable thinges; agayns his duete, peraventure, but that he hath his herte and his entente in swich a proud desyr to be magnified and honoured biforn the peple. /

§ 26. Now been ther two maneres of Pryde; that oon of hem is withinne the herte of man, and that other is with-oute. / Of whiche soothly this forseide thinges, and mo than I have seyde, apertenen to pryde that is

in the herte of man; and that othere speces of pryde been with-oute. / 410 But natheles that oon of these speces of pryde is signe of that other, right as the gaye leefsel atte taverne is signe of the wyn that is in the celer. / And this is in manye thinges: as in speche and countenance, and in outrageous array of clothing; / for certes, if ther ne hadde be no sinne in clothing, Crist wolde nat have noted and spoken of the clothing of thilke riche man in the gospel. / And, as seith Seint Gregorie, that precious clothing is coupable for the derthe of it, and for his softenesse, and for his strangenesse and degysinesse, and for the superfluitee, or for the inordinat scantnesse of it. / Allas! may men nat seen, as in oure dayes, the sinful costlewe array of clothing, and namely in to muche superfluitee, or
 415 elles in to desordinat scantnesse? /

§ 27. As to the firste sinne, that is in superfluitee of clothing, which that maketh it so dere, to harm of the peple; / nat only the cost of embroudinge, the degye endentinge or baringe, oundinge, palinge, windinge, or bendinge, and semblable wast of clooth in vanitee; / but ther is also costlewe furringe in hir gounes, so muche pounsoninge of chisels to maken holes, so muche dagginge of sheres; / forth-with the superfluitee in lengthe of the forseide gounes, trailinge in the dong and in the myre, on horse and eek on fote, as wel of man as of womman, that al thilke trailing is verraily as in effect wasted, consumed, thredbare, and roten with donge, rather than it is yeven to the povre; to greet damage of the forseide povre folk. / And that in sondry wyse: this is to seyn, that the more that clooth is wasted, the more it costeth to the peple for the scantnesse; / and forther-over, if so be 420 that they wolde yeven swich pounsoned and dagged clothing to the povre folk, it is nat convenient to were for hir estaat, ne suffisant to bete hir necessitee, to kepe hem fro

the distemperance of the firmament. / Upon that other syde, to speken of the horrible disordinat scantnesse of clothing, as been thise cutted sloppes or hainselins, that thurgh hir shortnesse ne covere nat the shameful membres of man, to wikked entente. / Allas! somme of hem shewen the boce of hir shap, and the horrible swollen membres, that semeth lyk the maladie of hernia, in the wrapping of hir hoses; / and eek the buttokes of hem faren as it were the hindre part of a she-ape in the fulle of the mone. / And more-over, the wreeched swollen membres that they shewe thurgh the degysinge, in departinge of hir hoses in whyt and reed, semeth that half hir shameful
 425 privee membres weren flayn. / And if so be that they departen hire hoses in othere colours, as is whyt and blak, or whyt and blew, or blak and reed, and so forth; / thanne semeth it, as by variance of colour, that half the partie of hir privee membres were corrupt by the fyr of seint Antony, or by canere, or by other swich meschaunce. / Of the hindre part of hir buttokes, it is ful horrible for to see. For certes, in that partie of hir body ther-as they purgen hir stinkinge ordure, / that foule partie shewe they to the peple proudly in despyt of honestetee, the which honestetee that Iesu Crist and hise freendes observede to shewen in hir lyve. / Now as 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 hir array of atyr liker-
 430 ousnesse and pryde. / I sey nat that honestetee in clothinge of man or womman is unconvenable, but certes the superfluitee or disordinat scantitee of clothinge is reprevable. / Also the sinne of aornement or of appaillaie is in things that apertenen to rydinge, as in to manye delicat horses that been holden for delyt, 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 byddles covered with precious clothing and riche, barres and plates of gold and of silver. / For which god seith by Zakarie the prophete, 'I wol confounde the ryderes of swiche horses.' / This folk taken litel reward of the rydinge of goddes some of hevене, and of his harneys when he rood up-on the asse, and ne hadde noon other harneys but the povre clothes of hise disciples; ne we ne rede nat that evere he rood on other beest. / I speke this for the sinne
 435 of superfluitee, and nat for reasonable honestetee, whan reson it requyeth. / And further, certes pryde is greetly notified in holdinge of greet meinee, whan they be of litel profit or of right no profit. / And namely, whan that meinee is felonous and damageous to the peple, by hardnesse 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 meinee. / Or elles whan this folk of lowe degree, as thilke that holden hosteltries, sustenen the theft of hir hostilers, and that is in many manere of deceites. / Thilke manere of folk been
 440 the flyes that folwen the hony, or elles the houndes that folwen the careyne. Swiche forseide folk stranglen spiritually hir lordshipes; / for which thus seith David the prophete, 'wikked death mote come up-on thilke lordshipes, and god yeve that they mote descenden in-to helle al doun; for in hir houses ben iniquitees and shrewednesses,' and nat god of hevене. / And certes, but-if they doon amendement, right as god yaf his benison to Laban by the service of Iacob, and to Pharao by the service of Ioseph, right so god wol yeve his malison to swiche lordshipes as sustenen the wikkednesse of hir servaunts, but-if they come to amendement. / Pryde of the table appereth eek ful ofte; for

certes, riche men been cleped to festes, and povre folk been put away and rebuked. / Also in excesse of diverse metes and drinkes; and namely, swiche manere bake metes and dish-metes, brenninge of wilde fyr, and peynted and castelled with papir, and semblable wast; so that it
 445 is abusion for to thinke. / And eek in to greet preciousnesse of vessel and curiositee of minstrelcie, by whiche a man is stired the more to deluyces of luxurie, / if so be that he sette his herte the lasse up-on oure lord Iesu Crist, certein it is a sinne; and certeinly the deluyces mighte been so grete in this caas, that man mighte lightly falle by hem in-to deedly sinne. / The especes that souden of pryde, soothly whan they sourden of malice ymaged, avysed, and forncast, or elles of usage, been deedly synnes, it is no doute. / And whan they sourden by freletee unavysed sodeinly, and sodeinly withdrawn ayein, al been they grevous synnes, I gesse that they ne been nat deedly. / Now mighte men axe wher-of that Pryde sourdeth and springeth, and I seye: somtyme it springeth of the goodes of nature, and som-tyme
 450 of the goodes of fortune, and som-tyme 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 hele of body, as strengthe, deliveresse, beautee, gentrye, franchise. / Goodes of nature of the soule been good wit, sharp understondynge, subtil engin, vertu naturel, good memorie. / Goodes of fortune been riches, highe degrees of lordshipes, preisinges of the peple. / Goodes of grace been science, power to suffire spiritual travaille, benignitee, vertuous contemplacion, withstondinge of
 455 temptacion, and semblable thinges. / Of whiche forseide goodes, certes it is a ful greet folye a man to pryden him in any of hem alle. / Now as for to speken of goodes of nature, god woot that som-tyme we han

hem in nature as muche to oure damage as to oure profit. / As, for to speken of hele of body; certes it passeth ful lightly, and eek it is ful ofte encheson of the siknesse of oure soule; for god woot, the flesh is a ful greet enemy to the soule: and therefore, the more that the body is hool, the more be we in peril to falle. / Eke for to pryde him in his strengthe of body, it is an heigh folye; for certes, the flesh coveteth agayn the spirit, and ay the more strong that the flesh is, the sorer may the soule be: / and, over al this, strengthe of body and worldly hardnesse causeth ful ofte many a man to peril and meschaunce. / Eek for to pryde him
 460 of his gentrye is ful greet folye; for ofte tyme the gentrye of the body binimeth the gentrye of the soule; and eek we ben alle of o fader and of o moder; and alle we been of o nature roten and corrupt, both riche and povre. / For sothe, o manere gentrye is for to preise, that apparailleth mannes corage with vertues and moralitees, and maketh him Cristes child. / For truste wel, that over what man sinne hath maistrie, he is a verray chert to sinne. /

§ 28. Now been ther generale signes of gentillesse; as eschewing of vyce and ribaudye and servage of sinne, in word, in werk, and contenance; / and usinge vertu, curteisye, and clennessse, and to be liberal, that is to seyn, large by mesure; for thilke that passeth mesure is folye and sinne. / An-
 465 other is, to remembre him of bountee that he of other folk hath receyved. / Another is, to be benigne to hise goode subgetis; wherfore, as seith Senek, 'ther is no-thing more covenable to a man of heigh estat than debonairetee and pitee. / And therefore thise flyes that men clepeth bees, whan they maken hir king, they chesen oon that hath no prikke wherwith he may stinge.' / Another is, a man to have a noble herte and a

diligent, to attayne to heighe vertuose thinges. / Now certes, a man to pryde him in the goodes of grace is eek an outrageous folye; for thilke yiftes of grace that sholde have turned him to goodnesse and to medicine, turneth him to venim and to confu-
 470 sion, as seith seint Gregorie. / Certes also, who-so prydeh him in the goodes of fortune, he is a ful greet fool; forsom-tyme is a man a greet lord by the morwe, that is a caitif and a wrecche er it be night: / and som-tyme the richesse of a man is cause of his deeth; somtyme the delycles of a man is cause of the grevous maladye thurgh which he dyeth. / Certes, the commendacion of the peple is somtyme ful fals and ful brotel for to triste; this day they preyse, tomorwe they blame. / God woot, desyr to have commendacion of the peple hath caused deeth to many a bisy man. /

*Remedium contra peccatum
Superbie.*

§ 29. Now sith that so is, that ye han understonde what is pryde, and whiche been the speses of it, and whennes pride sourdeth and
 475 springeth; / now shul ye understonde which is the remedie agayns the sinne of pryde, and that is, humilitee or mekenesse. / That is a vertu, thurgh which a man hath verray knoweleche of him-self, and holdeth of him-self no prys ne deyn-tee as in regard of hise desertes, consideringe evere hise freletec. / Now been ther three maneres of humilitee; as humiltee in herte, and another humilitee in his mouth; the thridde in hise werkes. / The humilitee in herte is in foure maneres: that oon is, whan a man holdeth him-self as noght worth biforn god of hevenc. Another is whan he ne despyseth noon other man. / The thridde is, whan he rekketh nat thogh men holde him noght worth. The ferthe is, whan he nis nat sory of
 480 his humiliacion. / Also, the humilitee of month is in foure thinges: in

attempree speche, and in humblesse of speche, and whan he biknoweth with his owene mouth that he is swich as him thinketh that he is in his herte. Another is, whan he preiseth the bountee of another man, and nothing ther-of amenuseth. / Humilitee eek in werkes is in foure maneres: the firste is, whan he putteth othere men biforn him. 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 hise sovereyns, or of him that is in hyer degree; certain, this is a greet werk of humilitee. /

Sequitur de Invidia.

§ 30. After Pryde wol I speken of the foule sinne of Envye, which is, as by the word of the philosophre, sorwe of other mannes prosperitee; and after the word of seint Augustin, it is sorwe of other mannes wele, and Ioye of other mannes harm. / This foule sinne is platly agayns the holy goost. Al-be-it so that every sinne is agayns the holy goost, yet natheles, for as muche as bountee aperteneth proprely to the holy goost, and Envye comth proprely of malice, therefore it is proprely agayn the bountee of the holy goost. / Now hath malice 485 two speses, that is to seyn, hardnesse of herte in wikkednesse, or elles the flesh of man is so blind, that he considereth nat that he is in sinne, or rekketh nat that he is in sinne; which is the hardnesse of the devel. / That other spece of malice is, whan a man werreyeth trouthe, whan he woot that it is trouthe. And eek, whan he werreyeth the grace that god hath yeve to his neighebre; and al this is by Envye. / Certes, thanne is Envye the worse sinne that is. For soothly, alle othere sinnes been som-tyme only agayns o special vertu; / but certes, Envye is agayns alle vertues and agayns alle good-

nesses; for it is sory of alle the bountees of his neighebores; and in this manere it is divers from alle othere sinnes. / For wel unnethe is ther any sinne that it ne hath som delyt in itself, save only Envye, that evere hath in itself anguish and
 490 sorwe. / The spesces of Envye been thise: ther is first, sorwe of other mannes goodnesse and of his prosperitee; and prosperitee is kindly matere of loye; thanne is Envye a sinne agayns kinde. / The seconde spece of Envye is loye of other mannes harm; and that is proprely lyk to the devel, that evere reioyseth him of mannes harm. / Of thise two spesces comth bakbyting; and this sinne of bakbyting or detraction hath certeine spesces, 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 more blame, than worth is al the preisinge. / The seconde spece is, that if a man be good and dooth or seith a thing to good entente, the bakbyter wol turne all thilke goodnesse up-
 495 soun to his shrewed entente. / The thridde is, to amenuse the bountee of his neighebores. / The fourthe spece of bakbyting is this; that if men speke goodnesse of a man, thanne wol the bakbyter seyn, 'parfey, swich a man is yet bet than he'; in dispreisinge of him that men preise. / The fiftte spece is this; for to consente gladly and herkne gladly to the harm that men speke of other folk. This sinne is ful greet, and ay encreseth after the wikked entente of the bakbyter. / After bakbyting cometh grucching or murmuration; and somtyme it springeth of impacione agayns god, and somtyme agayns man. / Agayns god it is, whan a man gruccheth agayn the peynes of helle, or agayns poverté, or los of catel, or agayn reyn or tempest;

or elles gruccheth that shrewes han prosperitee, or elles for that goode men han adversitee. / And alle
 500 these thinges sholde men suffre patiently, for they comen by the rightful lugement and ordinance of god. / Som-tyme comth grucching of avarice; as Iudas grucched agayns the Magdaleyne, whan she enoynte the heved of oure lord Iesu Crist with hir precious oynement. / This maner murmure is swich as whan man gruccheth of goodnesse that him-self dooth, or that other folk doon of hir owene catel. / Som-tyme comth murmure of pryde; as whan Simon the Pharisee grucched agayn the Magdaleyne, whan she approached to Iesu Crist, and weep at his feet for hir sinnes. / And somtyme grucching souldeth of Envye; whan men discovereth a mannes harm that was privee, or bereth him on hond thing that is fals. /
 505 Murmure eek is ofte amonges servaunts, that grucchen whan hir sovereyns bidden hem doon levelful thinges; / and, for-as-muche as they dar nat openly withseye the comaundements of hir sovereyns, yet wol they seyn harm, and grucche, and murmure prively for verry despyt; / whiche wordes men clepen the develes *Pater-noster*, though so be that the devel ne hadde nevere *Pater-noster*, but that lewed folk yeven it swich a name. / Som tyme grucching comth of ire or prive hate, that norisseth rancour in herte, as afterward I shal declare. / Thanne cometh eek bitternesse of herte; thurgh which bitternesse every good dede of his neighbor semeth to him bitter and unsavory. / Thanne cometh
 510 discord, that unbindeth alle manere of frendshipe. Thanne comth scorninge, as whan a man seketh occasion to anoyen his neighebor, al do he never so weel. / Thanne comth accusinge, as whan man seketh occasion to anoyen his neighebor, which that is lyk to the craft of the devel, that waiteth bothe

night and day to accusen us alle. /
 Thanne comth malignitee, thurgh
 which a man anoyeth his neighebor
 prively if he may; / and if he
 nocht may, algate his wikked wil
 ne shal nat wante, as for to brennen
 his hous prively, or empoysone or
 sleen hise bestes, and semblable
 thinges. /

Remedium contra peccatum Inuidie.

§ 31. Now wol I speke of the
 remedie agayns this foule sinne of
 Envye. First, is the love of god prin-
 cipal, and loving of his neighebor as
 him-self; for soothly, that oon ne may
 515 nat been with-oute that other. / 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
 moder, that is to seyn, Adam and Eve;
 and eek o fader espirituel, and that is
 god of hevenc. / Thy neighebor
 artow holden for to love, and wilhe
 him alle goodnesse; and therefore
 seith god, 'love thy neighebor as
 thy-selve,' that is to seyn, to salvacion
 bothe of lyf and of soule. / And
 more-over, thou shalt love him in
 word, and in benigne amonestinge,
 and chastysinge; and conforten him
 in hise anoyes, and preye for him with
 al thyn herte. / And in dede thou
 shalt love him in swich wyse, that thou
 shalt doon to him in charitee as
 thou woldest that it were doon to
 thyn owene persone. / And there-
 fore, thou ne shalt doon him no damage
 in wikked word, ne harm in his
 body, ne in his catel, ne in his soule,
 520 by entysing of wikked ensample. /
 Thou shalt nat desyrge his wyf, ne
 none of hise thinges. Understond
 eek, that in the name of neighebor
 is comprehended his enemy. / Cer-
 tes man shal loven his enemy by the
 comandement of god; and soothly
 thy frend 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

hate his enemy, for sothe god nolde
 nat receiven us to his love that been
 hise enemys. / Agayns three man-
 ere of wronges that his enemy dooth
 to hym, he shal doon three thinges,
 as thus. / Agayns hate and rancour
 of herte, he shal love him in herte.
 Agayns chydng and wikkede wordes,
 he shal preye for his enemy. And
 agayn the wikked dede of his enemy,
 he shal doon him bountee. / For 525
 Crist seith, 'loveth youre enemys,
 and preyeth for hem that speke yow
 harm; and eek for hem that yow
 chacen and pursewen, and doth boun-
 tee to hem that yow haten.' Lo, thus
 comaundeth us oure lord Iesu Crist,
 to do to oure enemys. / For soothly,
 nature dryveth us to loven oure
 freendes, and parfey, oure enemys
 han more nede to love than oure
 freendes; and they that more nede
 have, certes, to hem shal men doon
 goodnesse; / and certes, in thilke
 dede have we remembrance of the
 love of Iesu Crist, that deyde for hise
 enemys. / And in-as-muche as thilke
 love is the more grevous to perfourne,
 in-so-muche is the more gretter the
 merite; and therefore the lovinge of
 oure enemy hath confounded the
 venim of the devel. / For right as
 the devel is disconfited by humilitee,
 right so is he wounded to the deeth
 by love of oure enemy. / Certes, 530
 thanne is love the medicine that
 casteth out the venim of Envye fro
 mannes herte. / The speses of this
 pas shullen be more largely in hir
 chapitres folwinge declared. /

Sequitur de Ira.

§ 32. After Envye wol I discryven
 the sinne of Ire. For soothly, who-
 so hath envye upon his neighebor,
 anon he wole comunly finde him a
 matere of wratthe, in word or in dede,
 agayns him to whom he hath envye. /
 And as wel comth Ire of Pryde, as of
 Envye; for soothly, he that is proude
 or envious is lightly wrooth. /

§ 33. This sinne of Ire, after the

discredyng of seint Augustin, is wikked wil to been avenged by word or
 535 by dede. / Ire, after the philosopre, is the fervent blood of man y-
 quiked in his herte, thurgh which he wole harm to him that he hateth. /
 For certes the herte of man, by eschaufinge and moevinge of his blood,
 wexeth so trouble, that he is out of alle Iugement of resoun. / But ye
 shal understonde that Ire is in two maneres; that oon of hem is good,
 and that other is wikked. / The gode Ire is by Ialousey of goodnesse,
 thurgh which a man is wrooth with wikkednesse and agayns wikked-
 nesse; and therefore seith a wys man, that 'Ire is bet than pley.' / This
 Ire is with debonairetee, and it is wrooth withouten bitternesse; nat
 wrooth agayns the man, but wrooth with the misdede of the man; as seith
 540 the prophete David, *Irascimini et nolite peccare.* / Now understandeth, that wikked Ire is in two man-
 eres, that is to seyn, sodeyn Ire or hastif Ire, withouten avisement and
 consentinge of resoun. / The mening 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 felonye of herte avysed
 and cast biforn; with wikked wil to do vengeance, and therto his resoun
 consenteth; and soothly this is deedly sinne. / This Ire is so displesant to
 god, that it troubleth his hous and chaceth the holy goost out of mannes
 soule, and wasteth and destroyeth the lyknesse of god, that is to seyn, the
 vertu that is in mannes soule; / and put in him the lyknesse of the devel,
 and binimeth the man fro god that is his rightful lord. / This Ire is a ful
 545 greet plesaunce to the devel; for it is the develes fourneys, that is es-
 chaufed with the fyr of helle. / For certes, right so as fyr is more mighty
 to destroyen ertlye thinges than any other element, right so Ire is mighty
 to destroyen alle spirituel thinges. / Loke how that fyr of smale gledes,

that been almost dede under asshen, wollen quike agayn when they been
 touched with brimstoon; right so Ire wol everemo quiken agayn, when it is
 touched by the pryde that is covered in mannes herte. / For certes fyr ne
 may nat comen out of no-thing, but-if it were first in the same thing natur-
 elly; as fyr is drawn out of flintes with steel. / And right so as pryde
 is ofte tyme matere of Ire, right so is rancour notice and keper of Ire. / 550
 Ther is a maner tree, as seith seint Isidre, that whan men maken fyr of
 thilke tree, and covere the coles of it with asshen, soothly the fyr of it wol
 lasten al a yeer or more. / 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 more. / But certes,
 thilke man is ful fer fro the mercy of god al thilke while. /

§ 34. In this forseide develes fourneys ther forgen three shrewes:
 Pryde, that ay bloweth and encreseth the fyr by chydinge and wikked
 wordes. / Thanne stant Envye, and holdeth the hote iren upon the herte
 of man with a peire of longe tonges of long rancour. / And thanne stant 555
 the sinne of contumelie or stryf and cheeste, and batereth and forgeth by
 vileyns reprevinges. / Certes, this cursed sinne anoyeth bothe to the
 man him-self and eek to his neighebor. For soothly, almost al the harm
 that any man dooth to his neighebor comth of wratthe. / For certes, out-
 rageous wratthe doth al that evere the devel him comaundeth; for he
 ne spareth neither Crist, ne his swete mooder. / And in his outrageous
 anger and Ire; allas! allas! ful many oon at that tyme felch in his herte
 ful wikkedly, bothe of Crist and of alle hise halwes. / Is nat this a
 cursed vice? Yis, certes. Allas! it binimeth from man his wit and his
 resoun, and al his debonaire lyf spirituel that sholde kepen his soule. / 560
 Certes, it binimeth eek goddes due

lordshipe, and that is mannes soule, and the love of hisse neighebores. It stryveth eek alday agayn trouthe. It reveth him the quiete of his herte, and subverteth his soule. /

§ 35. Of Ire comen these stinking engendures: first hate, that is old wratthe; discord, thurgh which a man forsaketh his olde freend that he hath loved 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 sinne of Ire cometh eek manslaughter. And understonde wel, that homicide, that is manslaughter, is in diverse wyse. Som manere of homicide is spirituel, and som is bodily. / Spirituel manslaughter is in six thinges. First, by hate; as seint Iohn seith, 'he that hateth his brother is homicide.' / Homicide is eek by bakhytinge; of whiche bakbyteres seith Salomon, that 'they han two swerdes with whiche they sleen hir neighebores.' For soothly, as wikke is to binime his good name as his lyf. / Homicide is eek, in yevinge of wykked conseil by fraude; as for to yeven conseil to areysen wrongful custumes and tailages. / Of whiche seith Salomon, 'Leon rorynge and bere hongry been lyke to the cruel lordshipes,' in withholdinge or abregginge of the shepe (or the hyre), or of the wages of servants, or elles in usure or in withdrawinge of the almesse of povre folk. / For which the wyse man seith, 'fedeth him that almost dyeth for honger'; for soothly, but-if thou fede him, thou sleest him; and alle these been deedly sinnes. / Bodily manslaughter is, when thou sleest him with thy tonge in other manere; as when thou comandest to sleen a man, or elles yevest him conseil to sleen a man. / Manslaughter in dede is in foure maneres. That oon is by lawe; right as a Iustice dampneth him that is coupable to the death. But lat the Iustice be war that he do it rightfully, and that he

do it nat for delyt to spille blood, but for kepinge of rightwisenesse. / Another homicide is, that is doon for necessitee, as when o man sleeth another in his defendaunt, and that he ne may noon otherwise escape from his owene deeth. / But certainly, if he may escape withouten manslaughter of his adversarie, and sleeth him, he doth sinne, and he shal bere penance as for deedly sinne. / Eek if a man, by caas or aventure, shete an arwe or caste a stoon with which he sleeth a man, he is homicide. / Eek if a womman by negligence overlyeth hir child in hir sleping, it is homicide and deedly sinne. / Eek when man⁵⁷⁵ destourbeth conception of a child, and maketh a womman outhere bareyne by drinkinge venemouse herbes, thurgh which she may nat conceive, or sleeth a child by drinks wilfully, or elles putteth certeine material thinges in hir secree places to slee the child; / or elles doth unkindly sinne, by which man or womman shedeth hir nature in manere or in place ther-as a child may nat be conceived; or elles, if a womman have conceived and hurt hir-self, and sleeth the child, yet is it homicide. / What seye we eek of women that morden hir children for drede of worldly shame? Certes, an horrible homicide. / Homicide is eek if a man approacheth to a womman by desir of lecherye, thurgh which the child is perished, or elles smyteth a womman wittingly, thurgh which she leseth hir child. Alle these been homicides and horrible deedly sinnes. / Yet comen ther of Ire manye mo sinnes, as wel in word as in thought and in dede; as he that arretteth upon god, or blameth god, of thing of which he is him-self guilty; or despyseth god and alle hisse halwes, as doon these cursede hasardours in diverse contrees. / This cursed sinne⁵⁸⁰ doon they, when they felen in hir hertes ful wikkedly of god and of hisse halwes. / Also, when they treten unreverently the sacrament of the

auter, thilke sinne is so greet, that unnethe may it been releseid, but that the mercy of god passeth alle hise werkes; it is so greet and he so benigne. / Thanne comth of Ire attray angre; whan a man is sharply amonested in his shrifte to forleten his sinne, / than wole he be angry and answeren hokerly and angrily, and defenden or excusen his sinne by unstedfastnesse of his flesh; or elles he dide it for to holde companye with hise felawes, or elles, he seith, the fend entyced him; / or elles he dide it for his youthe, or elles his complexioun is so corageous, that he may nat forbere; or elles it is his destinee, as he seith, unto a certein age; or elles, he seith, it cometh him of gentillesse of hise auncestres; and semblable 585 things. / Alle this manere of folk so wrappen hem in hir sinnes, that they ne wol nat delivere hem-self. For soothly, no wight that excuseth him wilfully of his sinne may nat been delivered of his sinne, til that he mekely biknoweth his sinne. / After this, thanne cometh swering, that is expres agayn the comandement of god; and this bifalleth ofte of anger and of Ire. / God seith: 'thou shalt nat take the name of thy lord god in veyn or in ydel.' Also oure lord Iesu Crist seith by the word of seint Mathew: '*Nolite iurare omnino*: / ne wol ye nat swere in alle manere; neither by hevene, for it is goddes trone; ne by erthe, for it is the bench of his feet; ne by Ierusalem, for it is the citee of a greet king; ne by thyn heed, for thou mayst nat make an heer whyt ne blak. / But seyeth by youre word, "ye, ye," and "nay, nay"; and what that is more, it is 590 of yvel,' seith Crist. / For Cristes sake, ne swereth nat so sinfully, in dismembriage of Crist by soule, herte, bones, and body. For certes, it semeth that ye thinke that the cursed Iewes ne dismembred nat y-nough the preciose persone of Crist, but ye dismembere him more. / And if so be that the lawe compelle yow to

swere, thanne rule yow after the lawe of god in youre swering, as seith Ieremye *quarto capitulo*, '*Jurabis in veritate, in iudicio et in iusticia*: thou shalt kepe three condicions; thou shalt swere in trouthe, in doom, and in rightwisnesse.' / This is to seyn, thou shalt swere sooth; for every lesinge is agayns Crist. For Crist is verray trouthe. And think wel this, that every greet swerere, nat compelled lawefully to swere, the wounde shal nat departe from his hous whyl he useth swich unleveful swering. / Thou shalt sweren eek in doom, whan thou art constreynd by thy domesman to witnessen the trouthe. / Eek thou shalt nat swere for envye ne for favour, ne for mede, but for rightwisnesse; for declaracioun of it to the worship of god and helping of thyne evene-cristene. / And therefore, 595 every man that taketh goddes name in ydel, or falsly swereth with his mouth, or elles taketh on him the name of Crist, to be called a Cristene man, and liveth agayns Cristes livinge and his techinge, alle they taken goddes name in ydel. / Loke eek what seint Peter seith, *Actuum quarto capitulo*, '*Non est aliud nomen sub celo*,' &c. 'Ther nis noon other name,' seith seint Peter, 'under hevene, yeven to men, in which they mowe be saved;' that is to seyn, but the name of Iesu Crist. / Take kepe eek how that the preciose name of Crist, as seith seint Paul *ad Philipenses secundo*, '*In nomine Iesu*, &c.: that in the name of Iesu every knee of hevenely creatures, or erthely, or of helle sholden bowe'; for it is so heigh and so worshipful, that the cursed feend in helle sholde tremblen to heren it y-nempned. / Thanne semeth it, that men that sweren so horribly by his blessed name, that they despyse him more boldely than dide the cursede Iewes, or elles the devel, that trembleth whan he hereth his name. /

§ 36. Now certes, sith that swering, but-if it be lawefully doon, is so

highly deffended, muche worse is
600 forswering falsly, and yet nedelees. /

§ 37. What seye we eek of hem
that delyten hem in swering, 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,
this is horrible sinne. / Sweringe
sodeynly with-oute avysement is eek
a sinne. / But lat us go now to
thilke horrible swering of adiuracioun
and conuriacioun, as doon these false
enchauntours or nigromanciens in
bacins ful of water, or in a bright
sword, in a cerle, or in a fyr, or in a
shulder-boon of a sheep. / I can
nat seye but that they doon cursedly
and damnable, agayns Crist and al
the feith of holy chirche. /

§ 38. What seye we of hem that
bileven in divynailes, as by flight or
by noyse of briddes, or of bestes, or
by sort, by geomancie, by dremes, by
chirkinge of dores, or crakkinge of
houses, by gnawynge of rattes, and
605 swich manere wretchednesse? /
Certes, al this thing is deffended by
god and by al holy chirche. For
which they been acursed, til they
come to amendement, that on swich
filthe setten hir bileve. / Charmes
for woundes or maladye of men, or of
bestes, if they taken any effect, it
may be peraventure that god suffreth
it, for folk sholden yve the more
feith and reverence to his name. /

§ 39. Now wol I speken of les-
inges, which generally is fals significa-
cioun of word, in entente to deceyven
his evene-cristene. / Som lesinge is
of which ther comth noon avantage
to no wight: and som lesinge turneth
to the ese or profit of o man, and to
disease and damage of another man. /
Another lesinge is for to saven his
lyf or his catel. Another lesinge
comth of delyt for to lye, in which
delyt they wol forge a long tale, and
peynten it with alle circumstaunces,
where al the ground of the tale is
610 fals. / Som lesinge comth, for he

wole sustene his word; and som
lesinge comth of recchelesnesse,
with-oute avysement; and semblable
things. /

§ 40. Lat us now touche the vice
of flateringe, which ne comth nat
gladly but for drede or for covetise. /
Flaterye is generally wrongful preis-
inge. Flatereres been the develes
nories, that norissen hise children
with milk of losengerie. / For sothe,
Salomon seith, that 'flaterie is wors
than detraccioun.' For som-tyme
detraccion maketh an hautein man be
the more humble, for he dredeth de-
traccion; but certes flaterye, that
maketh a man to enhauncen his herte
and his countenance. / Flatereres
been the develes enchauntours; for
they make a man to wene of him-self
be lyk that he nis nat lyk. / They 615
been lyk to Judas that bitraysed [god;
and these flatereres bitraysen] a man
to sellen him to his enemy, that is,
to the devel. / Flatereres been the
develes chapelleyens, that singen
evere *Placebo*. / I rekene flaterye
in the vyces of Ire: for ofte tyme,
if o man be wrooth with another,
thanne wol he flaterer som wight to
sustene him in his querele. /

§ 41. Speke we now of swich curs-
inge as comth of irous herte. Mali-
soun generally may be seyde every
maner power or harm. Swich
cursinge bireveth man fro the
regne of god, as seith seint Paul. /
And ofte tyme swich cursinge
wrongfully retorneth agayn to him
that curseth, as a brid that retorneth
agayn to his owene nest. / And 620
over alle thing men oghten eschewe
to cursen hir children, and yeven to
the devel hir engendrure, as ferforth
as in hem is; certes, it is greet peril
and greet sinne. /

§ 42. Lat us thanne speken of
chydinge and reproche, whiche been
ful grete woundes in mannes herte;
for they unsowen the semes of frend-
shipe in mannes herte. / For certes,
unnethes may a man pleynly been ac-
corded with him that hath him openly

revyled and repreved in disclaundre. This is a ful grisly sinne, as Crist seith in the gospel. / And tak kepe now, that he that repreveth his neighbor, outhere he repreveth him by som harm of peyne that he hath on his body, as 'mesel,' 'croked harlot,' or by som sinne that he dooth. / Now if he repreve him by harm of peyne, thanne turneth the repreve to Iesu Crist; for peyne is sent by the rightwys sonde of god, and by his suffrance, be it
 625 meselrie, or maheym, or maladye. / And if he repreve him uncharitably of sinne, as, 'thou holour,' 'thou dronkelewe harlot,' and so forth; thanne aperteneth that to the rejoysinge of the devel, that evere hath Ioye that men doon sinne. / And certes, chydinge 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 loke, by any wey, whan any man shal chastyse another, that he be war from chydinge or reprevinge. For trewely, but he be war, he may ful lightly quiken the fyr of ange and of wratthe, which that he sholde quenche, and per-aventure sleeth him which that he mighte chastyse with benignitee. / For as seith Salomon, 'the amiable tonge is the tree of lyf,' that is to seyn, of lyf esprituel: and sothly, a deslavee tonge sleeth the spirites of him that repreveth, and eek of him that is repreved. / Lo, what seith seint Augustin: 'ther is no-thing so lyk the develes child as he that ofte chydeth.' Seint Paul seith eek: 'I, servant of god, bihove nat to
 630 chyde.' / And how that chydinge be a vileyns thing bitwixe alle manere folk, yet it is certes most uncovenable bitwixe a man and his wyf; for there is nevere reste. And therefore seith Salomon, 'an hous that is uncovered and droppinge, and a chydinge wyf, been lyke.' / A man that is in a droppinge hous in many places, though he eschewe the droppinge o place, it droppeth on him in another place; so fareth it by a chydinge wyf.

But she chyde him in o place, she wol chyde him in another. / And therefore, 'bette is a morsel of breed with Ioye than an hous ful of delyces, with chydinge,' seith Salomon. / Seint Paul seith: 'O ye women, be ye subgetes to youre housbondes as bihoveth in god; and ye men, loveth youre wyves.' *Ad Colossenses, tertio.* /

§ 43. Afterward speke we of scorninge, which is a wikked sinne; and namely, whan he scorneth a man for hise gode werkes. / For certes, 635 swiche scorneres faren lyk the foule tode, that may nat endure to smelle the sote savour of the vyne whanne it florissbeth. / Thise scorneres been parting felawes with the devel; for they han Ioye whan the devel winneth, and sorwe whan he leseth. / They been adversaries of Iesu Crist; for they haten that he loveth, that is to seyn, salvacion of soule. /

§ 44. Speke we now of wikked conseil; for he that wikked conseil yeveth is a traytour. For he deceyveth him that trusteth in him, *ut Achitofel ad Absolonem*. But natheless, yet is his wikked conseil first agayn him-self. / For, as seith the wyse man, every fals livinge hath this propertee in him-self, that he that wole anoye another man, he anoyeth him-self. / And men shul under-640 stonde, that man shal nat taken his conseil of fals folk, ne of angry folk, or grevous folk, ne of folk that loven specially to muchel hir owene profit, ne to muche worldly folk, namely, in conseilinge of soules. /

§ 45. Now comth the sinne of hem that sowen and maken discord amonges folk, which is a sinne that Crist hateth outrely; and no wonder is. For he deyde for to make concord. / And more shame do they to Crist, than dide they that him crucifyede; for god loveth bettre, that frendshipe be amonges folk, than he dide his owene body, the which that he yaf for unitee. Therefore been they lykned to the devel, that evere been aboute to maken discord. /

§ 46. Now comth the sinne of double tonge; swiche as speken faire biforn folk, and wikkedly bihinde; or elles they maken semblant as though they speke of good entencioun, or elles in game and pley, and yet they speke of wikked entente. /

§ 47. Now comth biwreying of conseil, thurgh which a man is defamed; certes, unnethie may he restore the
645 damage. /

Now comth manace, that is an open folye; for he that ofte manaceth, he threteth more than he may perfourne ful ofte tyme. /

Now cometh ydel wordes, that is with-outen profit of him that speketh tho wordes, and eek of him that herkneth tho wordes. Or elles ydel wordes been tho that been nedeles, or with-outen entente of naturel profit. / And al-be-it that ydel wordes been som tyme venial sinne, yet sholde men douten hem; for we shul yve rekeninge of hem bifore god. /

Now comth langlinge, that may nat been withoute sinne. And, as seith Salomon, 'it is a sinne of apert folye.' / And therfore a philosophre seyde, whan men axed him how that men sholde plesse the peple; and he answerde, 'do many gode werkes, and
650 speke fewe langles.' /

After this comth the sinne of Iaperes, that been the develes apes; for they maken folk to laughe at hir Iaperie, as folk doon at the gaudes of an ape. Swiche Iaperes deffendeth seint Paul. / Loke how that vertuose wordes and holy conforten hem that travaillen in the service of Crist; right so conforten the vileyns wordes and knakkes of Iaperis hem that travaillen in the service of the devel. / These been the sinnes that comen of the tonge, that comen of Ire and of othere sinnes mo. /

Sequitur remedium contra peccatum Ire.

§ 48. The remedye agayns Ire is a vertu that men clepen Mansuetude, that is Debonairetee; and eek an-

other vertu, that men callen Pacience or Suffrance. /

§ 49. Debonairetee withdraweth and refreyneth the stiringes and the moevynges of mannes corage in his herte, in swich manere that they ne skippe nat out by angre ne by Ire. /
655 Suffrance suffreth swetely alle the anoyaunces and the wronges that men doon to man outward. / Seint Jerome seith thus of debonairetee, that 'it doth noon harm to no wight, ne seith; ne for noon harm that men doon or seyn, he ne eschaufeth nat agayns his resoun.' / This vertu somtyme comth of nature; for, as seith the philosophre, 'a man is a quik thing, by nature debonaire and treftable to goodnesse; but whan debonairetee is enformed of grace, thanne is it the more worth.' /

§ 50. Pacience, that is another remedye agayns Ire, is a vertu that suffreth swetely every mannes goodnesse, and is nat wrooth for noon harm that is doon to him. / The philosophre seith, that 'pacience is thilke vertu that suffreth debonairely alle the outrages of adversitee and every wikked word.' / This vertu
660 maketh a man lyk to god, and maketh him goddes owene dere child, as seith Crist. This vertu disconiteth thyn enemy. And therfore seith the wyse man, 'if thou wolt venquisse thyn enemy, lerne to suffre.' / And thou shalt understonde, that man suffreth foure manere of grevances in outward thinges, agayns the whiche foure he moot have foure manere of paciencies. /

§ 51. The firste grevance is of wikkede wordes; thilke suffrede Iesu Crist with-outen grucching, ful patiently, whan the Iewes despyssed and reprieved him ful ofte. / Suffre thou therfore patiently; for the wyse man seith: 'if thou stryve with a fool, though the fool be wrooth or though he laughe, algate thou shalt have no reste.' / That other grevance outward is to have damage of thy catel. Ther-agayns suffred Crist ful patiently,

whan he was despoyled of al that he hadde in this lyf, and that nas but hise 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 servants to travaillen to grevously, or out of tyme, as on halydayes, soothly they do gret sinne. / Heer-agayns suffred Crist ful paciently, and taughte us pacience, whan he bar up-on his blissed shulder the croys, up-on which he sholde suffren despitous deeth. / Heer may men lerne to be pacient; for certes, noght only Cristen men been pacient for love of Iesu Crist, and for guerdoun of the blisful lyf that is perdurable; but certes, the olde payens, that nevere were Cristene, commendeden and useden the vertu of pacience. /

§ 52. A philosophre up-on 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 whan this child saugh the yerde, he seyde to his maister, 'what thanke ye to do?' 'I wol bete thee,' quod the maister, 'for thy correccion.' / 'For sothe,' quod the child, 'ye oghten first correcte youre-self, that han lost al youre pacience for the gilt of a child.' / 'For sothe,' quod the maister al wepinge, 'thou seyst sooth; have thou the yerde, my dere 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. / And understond wel that obedience is perfit, whan that a man doth gladly and hastily, with good herte entierly, al that he sholde do. / Obedience generally, is to perfourne the doctrine of god and of his sovereyns, to whiche him oghte to ben obeisaunt in alle rightwysnesse. /

Sequitur de Accidia.

§ 53. After the sinnes of Envie and of Ire, now wol I speken of the sinne of Accidie. For Envye blindeth the herte of a man, and Ire troubleth a man; and Accidie maketh him hevvy, thoghtful, and wrawe. / Envye and Ire maken bitteresse in herte; which bitteresse is moder of Accidie, and binimeth him the love of alle goodnesse. Thanne is Accidie the anguiss of a trouble herte; and seint Augustin seith: 'it is anoy of goodnesse and loye of harm.' / Certes, this is a dampnable sinne; for it doth wrong to Iesu Crist, in-as-muche as it binimeth the service that men oghte doon to Crist with alle diligence, as seith Salomon. / But Accidie dooth no swich diligence; he dooth alle thing with anoy, and with wrawnesse, slaknesse, and excusacioun, and with ydelnesse and unlust; for which the book seith: 'acursed be he that doth the service of god negligently.' / Thanne is Accidie enemy to everich estaat of man; for certes, the estaat of man is in three maneres. / Outher it is thestaat of innocence, as was thestaat of Adam biforn that he fil into sinne; in which estaat he was holden to wirche, as in herynge and adouringe of god. / Another estaat is the staat of sinful men, in which estaat men been holden to labour in preyinge to god for amendement of hir sinnes, and that he wole graunte hem to aysen out of hir sinnes. / Another estaat is thestaat of grace, in which estaat he is holden to werkes of penitence; and certes, to alle these thinges is Accidie enemy and contrarie. For he loveth no businesse at al. / Now certes, this foule sinne Accidie is eek a ful gret enemy to the lyffode of the body; for it ne hath no purveaunce agayn temporel necessitee; for it forsluweth and forsluggeth, and destroyeth alle goodes temporeles by recchelesnesse. /

§ 54. The fourthe thinge is, that Accidie is lyk to hem that been in the

peyne of helle, by-cause of hir slouthe and of hir hevynesse; for they that been dampned been so bounde, that they ne may neither wel do ne wel thinke. / Of Accidie comth first, that a man is annoyed and encombred for to doon any goodnesse, and maketh that god hath abhominacion of swich Accidie, as seith seint Iohan. /

§ 55. Now comth Slouthe, that wol nat suffre noon hardnesse ne no penaunce. For soothly, Slouthe 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 sinne of Accidie and Slouthe sholde men exercise hem-self to doon gode werkes, and manly and vertuously cacchen corage wel to doon; thinkinge that oure lord Iesu Crist quyeth every good dede, be it never so lyte. / Usage of labour is a greet thing; for it maketh, as seith seint Bernard, the laborer to have stronge armes and harde sinwes; and Slouthe maketh hem feble and tendre. / Thanne comth drede to biginne to werke any gode werkes; for certes, he that is enclined to sinne, him thinketh 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 grevouse and so chargeaunt for to suffre, that he dar nat undertake to do werkes of goodnesse, as seith seint Gregorie. /

§ 56. Now comth wanhope, that is despir of the mercy of god, that comth somtyme of to muche outrageous sorwe, and somtyme of to muche drede; imagininge that he hath doon so muche sinne, that it wol nat availen him, though he wolde repenten him and forsake sinne: / thurgh which despir or drede he abandoneth al his herte to every maner sinne, as seith seint Augustin. / Which dampnable sinne, if that it continue un-to his ende, it is cleped sinning in the holy gost. / This horrible sinne is so perilous, that he that is despaired,

ther nis no felonye ne no sinne that he douteth for to do; as shewed wel by Iudas. / Certes, aboven alle sinnes thanne is this sinne most displeasnt to Crist, and most adversarie. / Soothly, he that despeireth him is lyk the coward champion recreant, that seith creant withoute nede. Allas! allas! nedeles is he recreant and nedeles despeired. / Certes, the mercy of god is evere redy to every penitent, and is aboven alle hise werkes. / Allas! can nat a man bithinke him on the gospel of seint Luk, 15., where-as Crist seith that 'as wel shal ther be Ioye in hevене upon a sinful man that doth penitence, as up-on nynete and nyne rightful men that neden no penitence?' / 700 Loke further, in the same gospel, the Ioye and the feste of the gode man that hadde lost his sone, whan his sone with repentaunce was returned to his fader. / Can they nat remembre hem eek, that, as seith seint Luk *xviii^o capitulo*, how that the thief that was hanged bisyde Iesu Crist, seyde: 'Lord, remembre of me, whan thou comest in-to thy regne?' / 'For sothe,' seyde Crist, 'I seye to thee, to-day shaltow been with me in Paradys.' / Certes, ther is noon so horrible sinne of man, that it ne may, in his lyf, be destroyed by penitence, thurgh vertu of the passion and of the deeth of Crist. / Allas! what nedeth man thanne to been despeired, sith that his mercy so rely is and large? Axe and have. / Thanne 705 cometh Sompnolence, that is, sluggy slombringe, which maketh a man be hevyn and dul, in body and in soule; and this sinne comth of Slouthe. / 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 most covenable, a man to seye his preyeres, and for to thincken on god, and for to honour god, and to yeven almesse to the povre, that first cometh in the name of Crist. / Lo! what seith Salomon: 'who-so

wolde by the morwe awaken and seke me, he shal finde.' / Thanne cometh Negligence, or recchelesnesse, that rekketh of no-thing. And how that ignoraunce be moder of alle harm,
 710 certes, Negligence is the norice. / Negligence ne doth no fors, when he shal doon a thing, whether he do it weel or baddely. /

§ 57. Of the remedie of these two sinnes, as seith the wyse 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 him-self, with al his might, 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 him at discovert, by temptacion on every syde. / This ydelnesse is the thurrok of alle wikked and vileyns thoughtes, and of alle Iangles,
 715 trufles, and of alle ordure. / Certes, the hevenc 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. /

§ 58. Thanne comth the sinne that men clepen *Tarditas*, as whan a man is to latrede or taryinge, er he wole turne to god; and certes, that is a greet folye. He is lyk to him that falleth in the dich, and wol nat aryse. / And this vyce comth of a fals hope, that he thinketh that he shal live longe; but that hope faileth ful ofte. /

§ 59. Thanne comth *Lachesse*; that is he, that whan he biginneth any good werk, anon he shal forleten it and stinten; as doon they that han any wight to governe, and ne taken of him na-more kepe, anon as they
 720 finden any contrarie or any anoy. / These been the newe shepherdes, that leten hir sheep witingly go renne

to the wolf that is in the breres, or do no fors of hir owene governaunce. / Of this comth poverte and destruc-cioun, bothe of spirituel and temporel thinges. Thanne comth a manere coldnesse, that freseth al the herte of man. / Thanne comth undevo-cioun, thurgh which a man is so blent, as seith Seint Bernard, and hath swiche langour in soule, that he may neither rede ne singe in holy chirche, ne here ne thinke of no devocioun, ne travaille with his handes in no good werk, that it nis him unsavory and al apalled. / Thanne wexeth he slow and slombry, and sone wol be wrooth, and sone is enclnyed to hate and to envye. / Thanne comth the sinne of worldly sorwe, swich as is cleped *tristicia*, that sleeth man, as seint Paul seith. / For certes, swich sorwe
 725 werketh to the deeth of the soule and of the body also; for ther-of comth, that a man is anoyed of his owene lyf. / Wherefore swich sorwe shorteth ful ofte the lyf of a man, er that his tyme be come by wey of kinde. /

Remedium contra peccatum Accidie.

§ 60. Agayns this horrible sinne of *Accidie*, and the branches of the same, ther is a vertu that is called *Fortitudo* or Strengthe; that is, an affecioun thurgh which a man depysseth anoyous thinges. / This vertu is so mighty and so vigorous, that it dar withstonde mightily and wysely kepen him-self fro perils that been wikked, and wrastle agayn the assautes of the devel. / For it enhaunceth and enforceth the soule, right as *Accidie* abateth it and maketh it feble. For this *Fortitudo* may endure by long suffraunce the travailles that been covenable. /
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§ 61. This vertu hath manye spesces; and the firste is cleped *Magnanimitie*, that is to seyn, greet corage. For certes, ther bihoveth greet corage agayns *Accidie*, lest that it ne swolwe the soule by the sinne of sorwe, or destroye it by wanhope. / This vertu

maketh folk to undertake harde thinges and grevouse thinges, by hir owene wil, wysely and resonably. / And for as muchel as the devel fighteth agayns a man more by queyntise and by sleighte than by strengthe, therefore men shal withstonden him by wit and by resoun and by discrecioun. / Thanne arn ther the vertues of feith, and hope in god and in hise seintes, to acheve and accomplice the gode werkes in the whiche he purposeth fermely to continue. / Thanne comth seuretee or sikernesse; and that is, whan a man ne douteth no travaille in tyme cominge of the gode werkes that a man hath bigonne. / 735 Thanne comth Magnificence, that is to seyn, whan a man dooth and perfourneth grete werkes of goodness that he hath bigonne; and that is the ende why that men sholde do gode werkes; for in the accomplissinge of grete goode werkes lyth the grete guerdoun. / Thanne is ther Constauce, that is, stableness of corage; and this sholde been in herte by stedefast feith, and in mouth, and in beringe, and in chere and in dede. / Eke ther been mo speciale remedies agains Accidie, in diverse werkes, and in consideracioun of the peynes of helle, and of the Ioyes of hevене, and in trust of the grace of the holy goost, that wole yeve him might to perfourne his gode entente. /

Sequitur de Auaricia.

§ 62. After Accidie wol I speke of Avarice and of Coveitise, of which sinne seith seint Paule, that 'the rote of alle harmes is Coveitise': *Ad Timotheum, sexto capitulo.* / For soothly, whan the herte of a man is confounded in it-self and troubled, and that the soule hath lost the comfort of god, thanne seketh he an ydel 740 solas of worldly thinges. /

§ 63. Avarice, after the descripcion of seint Augustin, is likerousnesse in herte to have erthely thinges. / Som other folk seyn, that Avarice is, for to purchacen manye erthely thinges,

and no thing yeve to hem that han nede. / And understand, that Avarice ne stant nat only in lond ne catel, but somtyme in science and in glorie, and in every manere of outrageous thing is Avarice and Coveitise. / And the difference bitwixe Avarice and Coveitise is this. Coveitise is for to coveite swiche thinges as thou hast nat; and Avarice is for to withholde and kepe swiche thinges as thou hast, withoute rightful nede. / Soothly, this Avarice is a sinne that is ful dampnable; for al holy writ curseth it, and speketh agayns that vyce; for it dooth wrong to Iesu Crist. / For it bireveth 745 him the love that men to him owen, and turneth it bakward agayns alle resoun; / and maketh that the avaricious man hath more hope in his catel than in Iesu Crist, and dooth more observance in kepinge of his tresor than he dooth to service of Iesu Crist. / And therefore seith seint Paul *ad Ephesios, quinto*, that 'an avaricious man is in the thraddom of ydolatrie.' /

§ 64. What difference is bitwixe an ydolastre and an avaricious man, but that an ydolastre, per aventure, ne hath but o mawmet or two, and the avaricious man hath manye? For certes, every florin in his cofre is his mawmet. / And certes, the sinne of Mawmetrye is the firste thing that God deffended in the ten comaundments, as bereth witnessse *Exodi, capitulo .xx.^o* / 'Thou shalt have no 750 false goddes bifore me, ne thou shalt make to thee no grave thing.' Thus is an avaricious man, that loveth his tresor biforn god, an ydolastre, / thurgh this cursed sinne of Avarice. Of Coveitise comen thise harde lordshipes, thurgh whiche men been distreynd by tailages, custumes, and cariages, more than hir ductee or resoun is. And eek they taken of hir bonde-men amerciments, whiche mighten more resonably ben cleped extorcions than amerciments. / Of whiche amerciments and raunsoninge of bondemen, somme lordes stywardes

seyn, that it is rightful; for-as-muche as a cherl hath no temporel thing that it ne is his lordes, as they seyn. / But certes, thise lordshipes doon wrong, that bireven hir bonde-folk thinges that they nevere yave hem: *Augustinus de Civitate, libro nono.* / Sooth is, that the condicioun of thraldom and the firste cause of thraldom
755 is for sinne; *Genesis, quinto.* /

§ 65. Thus may ye seen that the gilt disserveth thraldom, but nat nature. / Wherefore thise lordes ne sholde nat muche glorifyen hem in hir lordshipes, siththat by naturel condicion they been nat lordes of thralles; but for that thraldom comth first by the desert of sinne. / And forther-over, ther-as the lawe seith, that temporel godes of bonde-folk been the godes of hir lordshipes, ye, that is for to understonde, the godes of the emperour, to defenden hem in hir right, but nat for to robben hem ne reven hem. / And therfore seith Seneca: 'thy prudence sholde live benignely with thy thralles.' / Thilke that thou clepest thy thralles been goldes peple; for humble folk been Cristes freendes; they been contubernial with the lord. /
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§ 66. Think eek, that of swich seed as cherles springeth, of swich seed springen lordes. As wel may the cherl be saved as the lord. / The same deeth that taketh the cherl, swich deeth taketh the lord. Wherefore I rede, do right so with thy cherl, as thou woldest that thy lord dide with thee, if thou were in his plyt. / Every sinful man is a cherl to sinne. I rede thee, certes, that thou, lord, werke in swiche wyse 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 underlinges is dampnable. /

§ 67. And forther-over understand wel, that thise conquerours or tiraunts maken ful ofte thralles of hem, that

been born of as royal blood as been they that hem conqueren. / This 765 name of thraldom was nevere erst couth, til that Noe seyde, that his sone Canaan sholde be thral to hise bretheren for his sinne. / What seye we thanne of hem that pilen and doon extorcions to holy chirche? Certes, the swerd, that men yeven first to a knight whan he is newe dubbed, signifyeth that he sholde deffenden holy chirche, and nat robben it ne pilen it; and who so dooth, is traitour to Crist. / And, as seith seint Augustin, 'they been the devels wolves, that stranglen the sheep of Iesu Crist'; and doon worse than wolves. / For soothly, whan the wolf hath ful his wombe, he stinteth to strangle sheep. But soothly, the pilours and destroyours of goddes holy chirche ne do nat so; for they ne stinte nevere to pile. / Now, as I have seyde, sith so is that sinne was first cause of thraldom, thanne is it thus; that thilke tyme that al this world was in sinne, thanne was al this world in thraldom and subieccioun. / But certes, sith 770 the tyme of grace cam, god ordeyned that som folk sholde be more heigh in estaat and in degree, and som folk more lowe, and that everich sholde be served in his estaat and in his degree. / And therfore, in somme contrees ther they byen thralles, whan they han turned hem to the feith, they maken hir thralles free out of thraldom. And therfore, certes, the lord oweth to his man that the man oweth to his lord. / The Pope calleth him-self servant of the servaunts of god; but for-as-muche as the estaat of holy chirche ne mighte nat han be, ne the commune profit mighte 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 defenden hir underlinges or hir subjets in reson, as ferforth as it lyth in hir power; and nat to destroyen hem ne confounde. /

Wherfore I seye, that thilke lordes that been lyk wolves, that devoaren the possessiouns or the catel of povre folk wrongfully, with-outen mercy or
 775 mesure, / they shul receyven, by the same mesure that they han mesured to povre folk, the mercy of Iesu Crist, but-if it be amended. / Now comth deceite bitwixe marchant and marchant. And thou shalt understonde, that marchandyse is in two maneres; that oon is bodily, and that other is goostly. That oon is honeste and lewful, and that other is deshoneste and unlewful. / Of thilke bodily marchandyse, that is lewful and honeste, is this; that, there-as god hath ordeyned that a regne or a contree is suffisaunt to him-self, thanne is it honeste and lewful, that of habundance of this contree, that men helpe another contree that is more nedey. / And therefore, ther mote been marchants to bringen fro that o contree to that other hire marchandyses. / That other marchandise, that men haunten with fraude and trecherie and deceite, with lesinges and false
 780 othes, is cursed and dampnable. / Espirituel marchandyse is proprely Symonye, that is, ententif desyr to byen thing espirituel, that is, thing that apertenth to the seintuarie of god and to cure of the soule. / This desyr, if so be that a man do his diligence to parfournen it, al-be-it that his desyr ne take noon effect, yet is it to him a deedly sinne; and if he be ordred, he is irregular. / Certes, Symonye is cleped Symon Magus, that wolde han boght, for temporel catel, the yifte that god hadde yeven, by the holy goost, to seint Peter and to the apostles. / And therefore understonde, that bothe he that selleth and he that byeth thinges espirituels, been cleped Symonials; be it by catel, be it by procuringe, or by fleshly preyere of hise freendes, fleshly freendes, or espirituel freendes. / Fleshly, in two maneres; as by kinrede or othere freendes. Soothly, if they praye for him that is nat worthy and

able, it is Symonye if he take the benefice; and if he be worthy and able, ther nis noon. / That other
 785 manere is, whan a man or woman preyen for folk to avauncen hem, only for wikked fleshly affecciou that they have un-to the persone; and that is foul Symonye. / But certes, in service, for which men yeven thinges espirituels un-to hir servants, it moot been understonde that the service moot been honeste, and elles nat; and eek that it be with-outen bargayninge, and that the persone be able. / For, as seith Seint Damascie, 'alle the sinnes of the world, as regard of this sinne, arn as thing of nocht'; for it is the gretteste sinne that may be, after the sinne of Lucifer and Antecrist. / For, by this sinne, 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. / For they putten in theves, that stelen the soules of Iesu Christ and destroyen his patrimoine. / By
 790 swiche undigne preestes and curates han lewed men the lasse reverence of the sacraments of holy chirche; and swiche yeveres of chirches putten out the children of Crist, and putten in-to the chirche the develes owene sone. / They sellen the soules that lames sholde kepen to the wolf that strangleth hem. And therefore shul they nevere han part of the pasture of lames, that is, the blisse of hevene. / Now comth hasardrye with hise apurtenaunces, as tables and raffles; of which comth deceite, false othes, chydinges, and alle ravines, blaspheminge and reneyinge of god, and hate of hise neighebores, wast of godes, misspendinge of tyme, and somtyme manslaughtre. / Certes, hasardours ne move nat been with-outen gret sinne whyles they haunte that craft. / Of avarice comen eek lesinges, theftes, fals witesse, and false othes. And ye shul understonde that thise been grete sinnes, and expres agayn the comaundements of god, as I have seyde. / Fals witesse is in word and 795

eek in dede. In word, as for to bireve thy neighebores goode name by thy fals witnessig, or bireven him his catel or his heritage by thy fals witnessig; whan thou, for ire or for mede, or for envye, berest fals witnesse, or accusest him or excusest him by thy fals witnesse, or elles excusest thy-self falsly. / Ware yow, questemongeres and notaries! Certes, for fals witnessig was Susanna in ful gret sorwe and peyne, and many another mo. / The sinne of thefte is eek expres agayns goddes heste, and that in two maneres, corporel and espirituel. / Corporel, as for to take thy neighebores catel agayn his wil, be it by force or by sleighte, be it by met or by mesure. / By steling eek of false enditements upon him, and in borwinge of thy neighebores catel, in entente nevere to payen it agayn, and semblable thinges. / Espirituel thefte is Sacrilege, that is to seyn, hurtinge of holy thinges, or of thinges sacred to Crist, in two maneres; by reson of the holy place, as chirehes or chirche hawes, / for which every vileyns sinne 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 holy chirche. / And pleynly and generally, sacrilege is to reven holy thing fro holy place, or unholy thing out of holy place, or holy thing out of unholy place. /

Relevacio contra peccatum Avaricie.

§ 68. Now shul ye understonde, that the relevinge of Avarice is misericorde, and pitee largely taken. And men mighten axe, why that misericorde and pitee is relevinge of Avarice? / Certes, the avaricious man sheweth no pitee ne misericorde to the nedeful man; for he delyteth him in the kepinge of his tresor, and nat in the rescowinge ne relevinge of his evene-cristene. And therefore speke I first of misericorde. / Thanne is misericorde, as seith the philoso-

phre, a vertu, by which the corage of man is stired by the misese of him that is misese. / Up-on which misericorde folweth pitee, in parfourninge of charitable werkes of misericorde. / And certes, these thinges moeven a man to misericorde of Iesu Crist, that he yaf him-self for oure gilt, and suffred deeth for misericorde, and forgaf us oure originale sinnes; / 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. / The speces of misericorde been, as for to lene and for to yeve and to foryeven and relese, and for to han pitee in herte, and compassioun of the meschief of his evene-cristene, and eek to chastyse there as nede is. / Another manere of remedie agayns Avarice is resonable largesse; but soothly, here bihoveth the consideracioun of the grace of Iesu Crist, and of hise temporel goodes, and eek of the godes 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 only that he hath depended in gode werkes. /

§ 69. But for-as-muche as som folk been unmesurable, men oghten 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 thing that he yeveth for veyne glorie, as to ministrals and to folk, for to heren his renoun in the world, he hath sinne ther-of and noon almesse. / Certes, he leseth foule his good, that ne seketh with the yifte of his good nothing but sinne. / He is lyk to an hors that seketh rather to drinken drovy or trouble water than for to drinken water of the clere 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 dome to hem that shullen been dampned. /

Sequitur de Gula.

§ 70. After Avarice comth Glotonye, which is expres eek agayn the comandement of god. Glotonye is unmesurable appetyt to ete or to drinke, or elles to doon y-nogh to the unmesurable appetyt and desordeyne coveityse to eten or to drinke. / This sinne corrupted al this world, as is wel shewed in the sinne of Adam and of Eve. Loke eek, what seith seint Paul of Glotonye. / 'Manye,' seith seint Paul, 'goon, of whiche I have ofte seyde to yow, and now I seye it wepinge, that they been the enemys of the croys of Crist; of whiche the ende is deeth, and of whiche hir wombe is hir god, and hir glorie in confusioun of hem that so savenen erthely thinges.' / He that is usaunt to this sinne of Glotonye, he ne may no sinne withsonde. He moot been in servage of alle vyces, for it is the develes hord ther he hydeth him and resteth. / This sinne 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 sinne. / But soothly, whan that a man is nat wont to strong drinke, and peraventure ne knoweth nat the strengthe of the drinke, or hath feblesse in his heed, or hath travailed, thurgh which he drinketh the more, al be he sodeynly caught with drinke, it is no deedly sinne, but venial. / The seconde spece of Glotonye is, that the spirit of a man wexeth al trouble; for dronkenesse bireveth him the discrecioun of his wit. / The thridde spece of Glotonye is, whan a man devoureth his mete, and hath no
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rightful manere of etinge. / The fourthe is whan, thurgh the grete habundaunce of his mete, the humours in his body been destempred. / The fifthe is, foryetelnesse by to muchel drinkinge; for which somtyme a man foryeteth er the morwe what he dide at even or on the night biforn. /

§ 71. In other 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 him to delicat mete or drinke. / The thridde is, whan men taken to muche over mesure. The fourthe is curiositee, with gret entente to maken and apparailen his mete. The fifthe is, for to eten to gredily. / These been the fyve fingers of the develes hand, by whiche he draweth folk to sinne. / 830

Remedium contra peccatum Gule.

§ 72. Agayns Glotonye is the remedie Abstinence, as seith Galien; but that holde I nat meritorie, if he do it only for the hele of his body. Seint Augustin 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 hevene. /

§ 73. The felawes of Abstinence been Attemperance, that holdeth the mene in alle thinges: eek Shame, that eschueth alle deshonestee: Suffisance, that seketh no riche metes ne drinks, ne dooth no fors of to outrageous apparailinge of mete. / Mesure also, that restreyneth by resoun the deslavec appetyt of etinge: Sobrenesse also, that restreyneth the outrage of drinke: / Sparinge also, that restreyneth the delicat ese to sitte longe at his mete and softly; wherfore som folk stonden of hir owene wil, to eten at the lasse leyscr. / 835

Sequitur de Luxuria.

§ 74. After Glotonye, thanne comth Lecherie; for these two sinnes been so ny cosins, that ofte tyme they wol nat departe. / God woot, this sinne is ful displeasunt thing to god; for he seyde himself, 'do no lecherie.' And therefore he putte

grete peynes agayns this sinne in the olde lawe. / If womman thral were taken in this sinne, 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 bissoppes doghter, she sholde been brent, by goddes comandement. / Forther over, by the sinne of Lecherie, god dreynete al the world at the diluge. And after that, he brente fyve citees with thunderleyt, and sank hem in-to helle. /

840 § 75. Now lat us speke thanne of thilke stinkinge sinne of Lecherie that men clepe Avoutrie of wedded folk, that is to seyn, if that oon of hem be wedded, or elles bothe. / Seint Iohn seith, that avoutiers shullen been in helle in a stank brenninge of fyr and of brimston; in fyr, for the lecherie; in brimston, for the stink of hir ordure. / Certes, the brekinge of this sacrament is an horrible thing; it was makid of god him-self in paradys, and conferred by Iesu Crist, as witnesseth seint Mathew in the gospel: 'A man shal lete fader and moder, and taken him to his wyf, and they shullen be two in o flesh.' / This sacrament bitokneth the knittinge togidre of Crist and of holy chirche. / And nat only that god forbad avoutrie in dede, but eek he comanded that thou sholdest nat coveite thy neighebores wyf. / In this heeste, seith seint Augustin, 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 hir in his herte.' / Here may ye seen that nat
845 only the dede of this sinne is forboden, but eek the desyr to doon that sinne. / This cursed sinne anoyeth grevousliche hem that it haunten. And first, to hir soule; for he oblygeth it to sinne and to peyne of deeth that is perdurable. / Un-to the body anoyeth it grevously also, for it dreyeth him, and wasteth, and shent him, and of his blood he maketh sacrificee to

the feend of helle; it wasteth his catel and his substaunce. / And certes, if it be a foul thing, a man to waste his catel on women, yet is it a fouler thing whan that, for swich ordure, women dispenden up-on men hir catel and substaunce. / This sinne, as seith the prophete, bireveth man and womman hir gode fame, and al hir honour; and it is ful pleasaunt to the devel; for ther-by winneth he the moste partie of this world. / 850 And right as a marchant delyteth him most in chaffare that he hath most advantage of, right so delyteth the feend in this ordure. /

§ 76. This is that other hand of the devel, with fyve fingres, to cacche the peple to his vileinye. / The firste finger is the fool lookinge of the fool womman and of the fool man, that sleeth, right as the basilicok sleeth folk by the venim of his sighte; for the covetise of eyen folweth the coveitise of the herte. / The seconde finger is the vileyns touchinge in wikkede manere; and ther-fore seith Salomon, that who-so toucheth and handleth a womman, he fareth lyk him that handleth the scorioun that stingeth and sodeynly sleeth thurgh his envenimminge; as who-so toucheth warm pich, it shent hise fingres. / The thridde, is foule wordes, that fareth lyk fyr, that right anon brenneth the herte. / 855 The fourthe finger is the kissinge; and twrely he were a greet fool that wolde kisse the mouth of a brenninge ovne or of a fourneys. / And more fooles been they that kissen in vileinye; for that mouth is the mouth of helle: and namely, thise olde dotardes holours, 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 [busshes], 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 sinne, for no likerousnesse that he doth with his wyf; certes, that

opinion is fals. God woot, a man may sleen him-self with his owene knyf, and make him-selven dronken of his owene tonne. / Certes, be it wyf, be it child, or any worldly thing that he loveth biforn god, it is his maumet, and he is
 860 an ydolastre. / Man sholde loven his wyf by discrecioun, patiently and atempely; and thanne is she as though it were his suster. / The fifthe finger of the develes hand is the stinkinge dede of Lecherie. / Certes, the fyve fingres of Glotonic the feend put in the wombe of a man, and with hise fyve fyngres of Lecherie he gripeth him by the reynes, for to throwen him in-to the fourneys of helle; / ther-as they shul han the fyr and the wormes that evere shul lasten, and wepinge and wailinge, sharp hunger and thirst, and grimnesse of develes that shullen al to-trede hem, with-ouen respit and with-ouen ende. / Of Lecherie, as I seyde, souden diverse speces; as fornicacioun, that is bitwixe man and woman that been nat maried; and this
 865 is deedly sinne and agayns nature. / Al that is enemy and destruccioun to nature is agayns nature. / Parfay, the resoun of a man tellethe eek him wel that it is deedly sinne, for-as-muche as god forbad Lecherie. And seint Paul yeveth hem the regne, that nis dewe to no wight but to hem that doon deedly sinne. / Another sinne of Lecherie is to bireve a mayden of hir maydenhede; for he that so dooth, certes, he casteth a mayden out of the hyste degree that is in this present lyf, / and bireveth hir thilke precious fruit that the book clepeth 'the hundred fruit.' I ne can seye it noon other weyes in English, but in Latin it highte *Centesimus fructus*. / Certes, he that so dooth is cause of manye damages and vileinyes, mo than any man can reken; right as he som-tyme is cause of alle damages that bestes don in the feeld, that breketh the hegge or the closure; thurgh which he destroyeth
 870 that may nat been restored. / For

certes, na-more may maydenhede be restored than an arm that is smiten fro the body may retourne agayn to wexe. / She may have mercy, this woot I wel, if she do penitence; but nevere shal it be that she nas corrupt. / And al-be-it so that I have spoken somewhat of Avoutrie, it is good to shewen mo perils that longen to Avoutrie, for to eschue that foule sinne. / Avoutrie in Latin is for to seyn, approachinge of other mannes bed, thurgh which tho that whylom weren o flesh abaundone hir bodyes to othere persones. / Of this sinne, as seith the wyse man, folwen manye harmes. First, brekinge of feith; and certes, in feith is the keye of Cristendom. / And whan that feith is
 875 broken and lorn, soothly Cristendom stant veyn and with-ouen fruit. / This sinne is eek a thefte; for thefte generally is for to reve a wight his thing agayns his wille. / Certes, this is the fouleste thefte that may be, whan a womman steleth hir body fro hir housbonde and yeveth it to hire holour to defoulen hir; and stleth 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 thise Avoutiers 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. / Soothly of this thefte douted gretly Ioseph, whan that his lordes wyf preyed him of vileinye, 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-thing of hise thinges is out of my power, but only ye that been his wyf. / And how sholde I
 880 thanne do this wikkednesse, and sinne so horribly agayns god, and agayns my lord? God it forbede.' 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 matrimoine,

that is Crist. / For certes, in-so-muche as the sacrament of mariage is so noble and so digne, so muche is it gretter sinne for to breken it; for god made mariage in paradys, in the estaat of Innocence, to multiplie man-kinde to the service of god. / And therefore is the brekinge ther-of more grevous. Of which brekinge comen false heires ofte tyme, that wrongfully occupyen folkes heritages. And therefore wol Crist putte hem out of the regne of hevене, that is heritage to gode folk. / Of this brekinge comth eek ofte tyme, that folk unwar wedden or sinnen with hir owene kinrede; and namely thilke harlottes that haunten bordels of thise fool wommen, that mowe be lykned to a commune gonge, where-as
 885 men purgen hir ordure. / What seye we eek of putours that liven by the horrible sinne of putrie, and constreyne women to yelden to hem a certeyn rente of hir bodily puterie, ye, somtyme of his owene wyf or his child; as doon this baudes? Certes, thise been cursed sinnes. / Understond eek, that avoutrie is set gladly in the ten comandements bitwixe thefte and manslaughter; for it is the gretteste thefte that may be; for it is thefte of body and of soule. / And it is lyk to homicyde; for it kerveth a-two and breketh a-two hem that first were makid o flesh, and therefore, by the olde lawe of god, they sholde be slayn. / But nathelees, by the lawe of Iesu Crist, that is lawe of pitce, wifan he seyde to the womman that was founden in avoutrie, and sholde han been slayn with stones, after the wil of the Iewes, as was hir lawe: 'Go,' quod Iesu Crist, 'and have namore wil to sinne'; or, 'wille namore to do sinne.' / Soothly, the vengeance of avoutrie is awarded to the peynes of helle, but-if so be
 890 that it be destourbed by penitence. / Yet been ther mo spesces of this cursed sinne; as whan that oon of hem is religious, or elles bothe; or of

folk that been entred in-to ordre, as subdekne or dekne, or preest, or hospitaliers. And evere the hyer that he is in ordre, the gretter is the sinne. / The thinges that gretly agreggen hir sinne is the brekinge of hir avow of chastitee, whan they receyved the ordre. / And forther-over, sooth is, that holy ordre is chief of al the tresorie of god, and his especial signe and mark of chastitee; to shewe that they been ioyned to chastitee, which that is most precious lyf that is. / And thise ordred folk been specially tytled to god, and of the special meynee of god; for which, whan they doon deedly sinne, they been the special traytours of god and of his peple; for they liven of the peple, to preyre for the peple, and whyle they been suche traitours, hir prayers availen nat to the peple. / Preestes been angeles, as by the dignitee of hir misterye; but for sothe, seint Paul seith, that 'Sathanas transformeth him in an angel of light.' / 895 Soothly, the preest that haunteth deedly sinne, he may be lykned to the angel of derknesse transformed in the angel of light; he semeth angel of light, but for sothe he is angel of derknesse. / Swiche preestes been the sones of Helie, as sheweth in the book of Kinges, that they weren the sones of Belial, that is, the devel. / Belial is to seyn 'with-outen Iuge'; and so faren they; hem thinketh they been free, and han no Iuge, na-more than hath a free bole that taketh which cow that him lyketh in the toun. / So faren they by wommen. For right as a free bole is y-nough for al a toun, right so is a wikked preest corrupcioun y-nough for al a parisshe, or for al a contree. / These preestes, as seith the book, ne conne nat the misterie of preesthode to the peple, ne god ne knowe they nat; they ne helde hem nat apayd, as seith the book, of soden flesh that was to hem offred, but they toke by force the flesh that is rawe. / Certes, so 900 thise shrewes ne holden hem nat

apayed of rosted flesh and sode flesh, with which the peple fedden hem in greet reverence, but they wole have raw flesh of folkes wyves and hir doghtres. / And certes, these women that consenten to hir harlotrie doon greet wrong to Crist and to holy chirche and alle halwes, and to alle soules; for they bireven alle these him that sholde worshippe Crist and holy chirche, and preye for cristene soules. / And therefore han swiche preestes, and hir lemmanes eek that consenten to hir lecherie, the malisoun of al the court cristen, til they come to amendement. / The thridde spece of avourie is som-tyme bitwixe a man and his wyf; and that is whan they take no reward in hir assemblinge, but only to hire fleshly delyt, as seith seint Ierome; / and ne rekken of no-thing but that they been assembled; by-cause that they been married, al is good y-nough, as thinketh to
 905 hem. / But in swich folk hath the devel power, as seyde the aungel Raphael to Thobie; for in hir assemblinge they putten Iesu Crist out of hir herte, and yeven hem-self to alle ordure. / The fourthe spece is, the assemblee of hem that been of hire kinrede, or of hem that been of oon affinitee, or elles with hem with whiche hir fadres or hir kinrede han deled in the sinne of lecherie; this sinne maketh hem lyk to houndes, that taken no kepe to kinrede. / And certes, parentele is in two maneres, outhur goostly or fleshly; goostly, as for to delen with hise godsibbes. / For right so as he that engendreth a child is his fleshly fader, right so is his godfader his fader espirituel. For which a womman may in no lasse sinne assemblen with hir godsib than with hir owene fleshly brother. / The fifthe spece is thilke abhominable sinne, of which that no man unneth eoghte speke ne wryte, natheles it is openly reherced
 910 in holy writ. / This cursednesse doon men and women in diverse entente and in diverse manere; but though

that holy writ speke of horrible sinne, certes, holy writ may not been defouled, na-more than the sonne that shyneth on the mixen. / Another sinne aperteneth to lecherie, that comth in slepinge; and this sinne cometh ofte to hem that been maydenes, and eek to hem that been corrupt; and this sinne men clepen pollucioun, that comth in foure maneres. / Somtyme, of languissinge of body; for the humours been to ranke and habundaunt in the body of man. Somtyme of infermetee; for the feblesse of the vertu retentif, as phisik maketh menciuon. Som-tyme, for surfeet of mete and drinke. / And somtyme of vileyns thoughtes, that been enclosed in mannes minde whan he goth to slepe; which may nat been with-out sinne. For which men moste kepen hem wysely, or elles may men sinnen ful greuously. /

Remedium contra peccatum Luxurie.

§ 77. Now comth the remedie agayns Lecherie, and that is, generally, Chastitee and Contynence, that restreyneth alle the desordeyne moevinges that comen of fleshly talentes. / And evere the gretter merite
 915 shal he han, that most restreyneth the wikkede eschaufinges of the ordure of this sinne. And this is in two maneres, that is to seyn, chastitee in mariage, and chastitee of widwehede. / Now shaltow understonde, that matrimoine is leefful assemblinge of man and of womman, that receyven by vertu of the sacrament the bond, thurgh which they may nat be departed in al hir lyf, that is to seyn, whyl that they liven bothe. / This, as seith the book, is a ful greet sacrament. God maketh it, as I have seyde, in paradys, and wolde him-self be born in mariage. / And for to halwen mariage, he was at a weddinge, where-as he turned water in-to wyn; which was the firste miracle that he wroghte in erthe biforn hise disciples. / Trewe effect of mariage

clenseth fornicacioun and replenisseth holy chirche of good linage; for that is the ende of mariage; and it chaungeth deedly sinne in-to venial sinne bitwixe hem that been y-wedded, and maketh the hertes al oon of hem that been y-wedded, as wel as the bodies. /
 920 This is verray mariage, that was established by god er that sinne bigan, whan naturel lawe was in his right point in paradys; an dit was ordyned that o man sholde have but o woman, and o woman but o man, as seith Seint Augustin, by manye reasons. /

§ 78. First, for mariage is figured bitwixe Crist and holy chirche. And that other is, for a man is heved of a womman; algate, by ordinaunce it sholde be so. / For if a womman had mo men than oon, thanne sholde she have mo hevedes than oon, and that were an horrible thing biforn god; and eek a womman ne mighte nat plesse to many folk at ones. And also ther ne sholde nevere be pees ne reste amonges hem; for everich wolde axen his owene thing. / And further-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 time that she were conioynt to many men. /

§ 79. Now comth, how that a man sholde bere him with his wyf; and namely, in two thinges, that is to seyn in suffraunce and reverence, as shewed
 925 Crist whan he made first womman. / For he ne made hir 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 nedeen none ensamples of this. The experience of day by day oghte suffyse. / Also certes, god ne made nat womman of the foot of Adam, for she ne sholde nat been holden to lowe; for she can nat pacintly suffre: but god made womman of the rib of Adam, for womman sholde be felawe un-to man. / Man sholde bere him to his

wyf in feith, in trouthe, and in love, as seith seint Paul: that 'a man sholde loven his wyf as Crist loved holy chirche, that loved it so wel that he deyde for it.' So sholde a man for his wyf, if it were nede. /

§ 80. Now how that a womman sholde be subget to hir housbonde, that telleth seint Peter. First, in obedience. / And eek, as seith the de-930 cree, a womman that is a wyf, as longe as she is a wyf, she hath noon auctoritee to swere ne bere witnessse with-oute leve of hir housbonde, that is hir lord; algate, he sholde be so by resoun. / She sholde cek serven him in alle honestee, and been attemptree of hir array. I wot wel that they sholde setten hir entente to plesen hir housbondes, but nat by hir queyntise of array. / Seint Ierome seith, that wyves that been apparailled in silk and in precious purple ne mowe nat clothen hem in Iesu Crist. What seith seint Iohn eek in this matere? / Seint Gregorie eek seith, that no wight seketh precious array but only for veyne glorie, to been honoured the more biforn the peple. / It is a greet folye, a womman to have a fair array outward and in hir-self be foul inward. / A wyf sholde eek be mesurable in lokinge and in beringe and
 935 in laughinge, and discreet in alle hir wordes and hir dedes. / And aboven alle worldly thing she sholde loven hir housbonde with al hir herte, and to him 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 hir herte been, or elles ther is bitwixe hem two, as in that, no parfit mariage. / Thanne shal men understonde that for three thinges 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 fynal of matrimoine. / Another cause is, to yelden everich of hem to other the dette of hir bodies, for neither of hem hath power over his owene body. The thridde is, for to eschewe lechery

and vileinye. The ferthe is for sothe
 940 deedly sinne. / As to the firste, it is
 meritorie; the seconde also; for, as
 seith the decree, that she hath merite
 of chastitee that yelleth to hir hous-
 bonde the dette of hir body, ye, though
 it be agayn hir lykinge and the lust of
 hir herte. / The thridde manere is
 venial sinne, and trewely searsly may
 ther any of these be with-out venial
 sinne, for the corrupcion and for the
 delyt. / The fourthe manere is for to
 understonde, if they assemble only for
 amorous love and for noon of the for-
 seyde causes, but for to accomplye
 thilke brenninge delyt, they rekke
 nevere how ofte, sothly it is deedly
 sinne; and yet, with sorwe, somme
 folk wol peynen hem more to doon
 than to hir appetyt suffyseth. /

§ 81. The seconde manere of chas-
 titee is for to be a clene widewe, and
 eschue the embracings of man, and
 desyren the embracinge of Iesu Crist. /
 These been tho that han been wyves
 and han forgoon hir housbondes,
 and eek women that han doon le-
 cherie and been releved by Peni-
 945 tence. / And certes, if that a wyf
 coude kepen hir al chaast by licence
 of hir housbonde, so that she yve
 nevere noon occasion that he agilde,
 it were to hire a greet merite. /
 This manere women that observen
 chastitee moste be clene in herte as
 well as in body and in thoght, and
 mesurable in clothinge and in conte-
 nance; and been abstinent in etinge
 and drinkinge, in spekinge, and in
 dede. They been the vessel or the
 boyste of the blissed Magdelene, that
 fulfillith holy chirche of good odour. /
 The thridde manere of chastitee is vir-
 ginitee, and it bihoveth that she be
 holy in herte and clene of body;
 thanne is she spouse to Iesu Crist,
 and she is the lyf of angeies. / She
 is the preisinge of this world, and she
 is as thise martirs in egalitee; she
 hath in hir that tonge may nat telle
 ne herte thinke. / Virginitee baar
 950 oure lord Iesu Crist, and virgine was
 him-selve. /

§ 82. Another remedie agayns
 Lecherie is, specially to withdrawn
 swiche thinges as yve occasion to
 thilke vileinye; as ese, etinge and
 drinkinge; for certes, when the pot
 boyleth strongly, the beste remedie is
 to with-drawe the fyr. / Slepinge
 longe in greet quiete is eek a greet
 norice to Lecherie. /

§ 83. Another remedie agayns
 Lecherie is, that a man or a wom-
 man eschue the companie of hem by
 whiche he douteth to be tempted;
 for al-be-it so that the dede is with-
 stonden, yet is ther greet tempta-
 cioun. / Soothly a whyt wal,
 al-though it ne brenne nocht fully
 by stikinge of a candele, yet is the
 wal blak of the leyt. / Ful ofte tyme
 I rede, that no man truste in his
 owene perfeccioun, but he be stronger
 than Sampson, and holier than David,
 and wyser than Salomon. / 955

§ 84. Now after that I have de-
 clared yow, as I can, the sevene
 deedly sinnes, and somme of hir
 braunches and hir remedies, soothly,
 if I coude, I wolde telle yow the ten
 comandements. / But so heigh a
 doctrine I lete to divines. Natheles,
 I hope to god they been touched in
 this tretice, everich of hem alle. /

De Confessione.

§ 85. Now for-as-muche as the
 second partie of Penitence stant in
 Confessioun of mouth, as I bigan
 in the firste chapitre, I seye, seint Au-
 gustin seith: / sinne is every word
 and every dede, and al that men cov-
 eiten agayn the lawe of Iesu Crist;
 and this is for to sinne in herte, in
 mouth, and in dede, by thy fyve wittes,
 that been sighte, heringe, smellinge,
 tastinge or savouringe, and felinge. /
 Now is it good to understonde that
 that agreggeth muchel every sinne. / 960
 Thou shalt considere what thou art
 that doost the sinne, whether thou be
 male or femele, yong or old, gentil
 or thral, free or servant, hool or syk,
 wedded or senge, ordred or unordred,

wys or fool, clerk or seculer; / if she be of thy kinrede, bodily or goostly, or noon; if any of thy kinrede have sinned with hir or noon, and manye mo thinges. /

§ 86. Another circumstance is this; whether it be doon in fornicacioun, or in avoutrie, or noon; incest, or noon; mayden, or noon; in manere of homicycle, or noon; horrible grete sinnes, or smale; and how longe thou hast continued in sinne. / The thridde circumstance is the place ther thou hast do sinne; whether in other mennes hous or in thyu owene; in feeld or in chirche, or in chirche-hawe; in chirche dedicat, or noon. / For if the chirche be halwed, and man or womman spille his kinde inwith that place by wey of sinne, or by wikked temptacion, the chirche is entredited til it be reconciled by the bishop; / and the preest
965 that dide swich a vileynye, to terme of al his lyf, he sholde na-more singe masse; and if he dide, he sholde doon deedly sinne at every tyme that he so songe masse. / The fourthe circumstance is, by whiche mediatours or by whiche messagers, as for entycement, or for consentement to bere companye with felawshipe; for many a wrecche, for to bere companye, wil go to the devel of helle. / Wherfore they that eggen or consenten to the sinne been parteners of the sinne, and of the dampnacioun of the sinner. / The fifthe circumstance is, how manye tymes that he hath sinned, if it be in his minde, and how ofte that he hath falle. / For he that ofte falleth in sinne, he despiseth the mercy of god, and encresseth his sinne, and is unkinde to Crist; and he wexeth the more feble to withstonde sinne, and sinneth the
970 more lightly, / and the latter aryseth, and is the more eschew for to shryven him, namely, to him that is his confessour. / For which that folk, whan they falle agayn in hir olde folies, outhur 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 hise sinnes. / The sixte circumstance is, why that a man sinneth, as by whiche temptacioun; and if him-self procure thilke temptacioun, or by the excytinge of other folk; or if he sinne with a womman by force, or by hir owene assent; / or if the womman, maugree hir heed, hath been affored, or noon; this shal she telle; for covetise, or for poverté, and if it was hir procuringe, or noon; and swiche manere harneys. / The seventh circumstance is, in what manere he hath doon his sinne, or how that she hath suffred that folk han doon to hir. / 975 And the same shal the man telle pleynly, with alle circumstances; and whether he hath sinned with comune bordel-wommen, or noon; / or doon his sinne in holy tymes, or noon; in fasting-tymes, or noon; or biforn his shrifte, or after his latter shrifte; / and hath, per-aventure, broken therfore his penance enioyned; by whos help and whos conseil; by sorcerie or craft; al moste be told. / Alle these thinges, after that they been grete or smale, enreggen the conscience of man. And eek the preest that is thy luge, may the bettre been avysed of his luge-ment in yevinge of thy penance, and that is after thy contricioun. / For understand wel, that after tyme that a man hath defouled his baptesme by sinne, if he wole come to salvacioun, ther is noon other wey but by penitence and shrifte and satisfaccioun; / 980 and namely by the two, if ther be a confessour to which he may shryven him; and the thridde, if he have lyf to parfournen it. /

§ 87. Thanne shal man looke and considere, that if he wole maken a trewe and a profitable confessioun, ther moste be foure condiciouns. / First, it moot been in sorweful bitternesse of herte, as seyde the king Ezekias to god: 'I wol remembre me alle the yeres of my lyf 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 sinne, for he hath agilit his god and defouled his soule. / And herof seith seint Augustin: 'the herte travaileth for shame of his sinne'; and for he hath greet shamefastnesse, he is digne to have greet mercy of
 985 god. / Swich was the confession of the publican, that wolde nat heven up hise 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 Augustin, that swich shamefast folk been next foryevenesse and remissioun. / Another signe is humilitee in confessioun; of which seith seint Peter, 'Humbleth yow under the might of god.' The hond of god is mighty in confession, for ther-by god foryeveth thee thy sinnes; for he alone hath the power. / And this humilitee shal been in herte, and in signe outward; for right as he hath humilitee to god in his herte, right so sholde he humble his body outward to the preest that sit in goddes place. / For which in no manere, sith that
 990 Crist is sovereyn and the preest mene and mediatour bitwixe Crist and the sinnere, and the sinnere is the laste by wey of resoun, / thanne sholde nat the sinnere sitte as heighe as his confessour, but knele biforn him 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 down anon by the lord, men wolde holden him outrageous, and nat worthy so sone for to have remissioun ne mercy. / The thridde signe is, how that thy shrift sholde be ful of teres, if man may; and if man may nat wepe with hise bodily eyen, lat him wepe in herte. / Swich was the confession of seint Peter; for after that he

hadde forsake Iesu Crist, he wente out and weep ful bitterly. / The fourthe signe is, that he ne lette nat for shame to shewen his confessioun. / Swich was the confessioun 995 of the Magdelene, that ne spared, for no shame of hem that weren atte feste, for to go to oure lord Iesu Crist and biknowe to him hir sinnes. / The fifte signe is, that a man or a womman be obeisant to receyven the penaunce that him is enioyned for hise sinnes; for certes Iesu Crist, for the giltes of a man, was obedient to the deeth. /

§ 88. The seconde condicion of verray confession is, that it be hastily doon; for certes, if a man hadde a deedly wounde, evere the lenger that he taried to warisshē him-self, the more wolde it corrupte and haste him to his deeth; and eek the wounde wolde be the wors for to hele. / And right so fareth sinne, that longe tyme is in a man unshewed. / Certes, a man oghte hastily shewen hise sinnes 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 drechingē of o synne draweth in another; / 1000 and eek the lenger that he tarieth, the ferther he is fro Crist. And if he abyde to his laste day, scarsly may he shryven him or remembre him of hise sinnes, or repenten him, for the grevous maladie of his deeth. / And for-as-muche as he ne hath nat in his lyf herkned Iesu Crist, whanne he hath spoken, he shal crye to Iesu Crist at his laste day, and scarsly wol he herkne him. / And understound that this condicioun moste han foure things. Thy shrift moste be purveyed bifore and avysed; for wikked haste doth no profit; and that a man conne shryve him of hise sinnes, be it of pryde, or of envye, and so forth of the spesces and circumstances; / and that he have comprehended in his minde the nombre and the greetnesse

of hise sinnes, and how longe that he hath leyn in sinne; / and eek that he be contrit of hise sinnes, and in stedefast purpos, by the grace of god, nevere eft to falle in sinne; and eek that he drede and countrewaite him-self, that he flec the occasiouns of sinne to whiche
 1005 he is enclnyed. / Also thou shalt shryve thee of alle thy sinnes 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 nis but stranglinge of thy soule. / For certes, Iesu Crist is entierly al good; in him nis noon imperfeccioun; and therefore outhere he foryeveth al parfitly or never a deel. / I seye nat that if thou be assigned to the penitauncer for certein sinne, that thou art bounde to shewen him al the remenaunt of thy sinnes, of whiche thou hast be shriven to thy curat, but-if it lyke to thee of thyn humilitee; this is no departinge of shrifte. / Ne I seye nat, ther-as I speke of divisioun of confessioun, that if thou have lycence for to shryve thee to a discreet and an honeste preest, where thee lyketh, and by lycence of thy curat, that thou ne mayst wel shryve thee to him of alle thy sinnes. / But lat no blotte be bihinde; lat no sinne been untold, as fer as thou hast remembrance.
 1010 braunce. / And whan thou shalt be shriven to thy curat, telle him eek alle the sinnes that thou hast doon sin thou were last y-shriven; this is no wikked entente of divisioun of shrifte. /

§ 89. Also the verray shrifte axeth certein condicions. First, that thou shryve thee by thy free wil, nocht constreyned, ne for shame of folk, ne for maladie, ne swiche thinges; for it is resoun that he that trespasseth by his free wil, that by his free wil he confesse his trespass; / and that noon other man telle his sinne but he him-self, ne he shal nat nayte ne denye his sinne,

ne wratthe him agayn the preest for his amonestinge to leve sinne. / The seconde condicion is, that thy shrifte be lawful; that is to seyn, that thou that shryvest thee, and eek the preest that hereth thy confessioun, been verrailly in the feith of holy chirche; / and that a man ne be nat despeired of the mercy of Iesu Crist, as Caym or Iudas. /
 1015 And eek a man moot accusen himself of his owene trespass, and nat another; but he shal blame and wyten him-self and his owene malice of his sinne, and noon other; / but nathelees, if that another man be occasioun or entyceer of his sinne, or the estaat of a persone be swich thurgh which his sinne is agregged, or elles that he may nat pleyntly shryven him but he telle the persone with which he hath sinned; thanne may he telle; / so that his entente ne be nat to bakbyte the persone, but only to declaren his confessioun. /

§ 90. Thou ne shalt nat eek make no lesinges in thy confessioun; for humilitee, per-aventure, to seyn that thou hast doon sinnes of whiche that thou were nevere gilty. / For Seint Augustin seith: if thou, by cause of thyn humilitee, makest lesinges on thy-self, though thou ne were nat in sinne biforn, yet artow thanne in sinne thurgh thy lesinges. /
 1020 Thou most eek shewe thy sinne by thyn owene propre mouth, but thou be wexe doumb, and nat by no lettre; for thou that hast doon the sinne, thou shalt have the shame therefore. / Thou shalt nat eek peynte thy confessioun by faire subtille wordes, to covere the more thy sinne; for thanne bigylestow thyself and nat the preest; thou most tellen it pleyntly, be it nevere so foul ne so horrible. / Thou shalt eek shryve thee to a preest that is discreet to conseille thee, and eek thou shalt nat shryve thee for veyne glorie, ne for ypocrisye, ne for no cause, but only for the doute of

Iesu Crist and the hele of thy soule /
 Thou shalt nat eek renne to the
 preest sodeynly, to tellen him lightly
 thy sinne, as who-so telleth a lape
 or a tale, but avysely and with greet
 devocioun. / And generally, shryve
 thee ofte. If thou ofte falle, ofte
 1025 thou aryse by confessioun. / And
 though thou shryve thee ofter than
 ones of sinne, of which thou hast
 be shriven, it is the more merite.
 And, as seith saint Augustin, thou
 shalt have the more lightly relesing
 and grace of god, bothe of sinne
 and of peyne. / And certes, ones
 a yere atte leeste wey it is laweful
 for to been housled; for certes ones
 a yere alle things renovellen. /

*Explicit secunda pars Penitencie;
 et sequitur tercia pars eiusdem, de
 Satisfaccione.*

§ 91. Now have I told you of
 verray Confessioun, that is the sec-
 onde partie of Penitence. /

The thridde partie of Penitence
 is Satisfaccioun; and that stant
 most generally in almesse and in
 bodily peyne. / Now been ther
 three manere of almesses; contri-
 cion of herte, where a man offreth
 himself to god; another is, to han
 pitee of defeaute of hise neighebores;
 and the thridde is, in yevinge of
 good conseil goostly and bodily,
 1030 where men han nede, and namely
 in sustenance of mannes fode. /
 And tak keep, that a man hath
 need of these things generally; he
 hath need of fode, he hath nede of
 clothing, and herberwe, he hath
 nede of charitable conseil, and
 visitinge in prisone and in maladie,
 and sepulture of his dede body. /
 And if thou mayst nat visite the
 nedeful with thy persone, visite him
 by thy message and by thy yiftes. /
 These been generally almesses or
 werkes of charitee of hem that han
 temporel riches or discrecioun in
 conseilinge. Of these werkes shal-
 tow heren at the day of dome. /

§ 92. These almesses shaltow
 doon of thyne owene propre thinges,
 and hastily, and prively if thou
 mayst; / but nathelees, if thou
 mayst nat doon it prively, thou shalt
 nat forbere to doon almesse though
 men seen it; so that it be nat
 doon for thank of the world
 but only for thank of Iesu
 Crist. / For as witnesseth Scint 1035
 Mathew, *capitulo quinto*, 'A citee
 may nat been hid that is set on a
 montoyne; ne men lighte nat a
 lanterne and put it under a bussel;
 but men sette it on a candle-stikke,
 to yeve light to the men in the
 hous. / Right so shal youre light
 lighten bifore men, that they may
 seen youre gode werkes, and glorifie
 youre fader that is in hevene.' /

§ 93. Now as to speken of bodily
 peyne, it stant in preyeres, in wak-
 inges, in fastinges, in vertuouse
 techinges of orisouns. / And ye
 shul understonde, that orisouns or
 preyeres is for to seyn a pitous wil
 of herte, that redresseth it in god
 and expresseth it by word outward,
 to remoeven harmes and to han
 thinges esprituel and durable, and
 somtyme temporel thinges; of
 whiche orisouns, certes, in the
 orisoun of the *Pater-noster*, hath
 Iesu Crist enclosed most thinges. /
 Certes, it is privileged of three
 thinges in his dignitee, for which it
 is more digne than any other
 preyere; for that Iesu Crist him-
 self maketh it; / and it is short, for 1040
 it sholde be coud the more lightly,
 and for to withholden it the more
 esily in herte, and helpen him-self
 the ofter with the orisoun; / and
 for a man sholde be the lasse wery
 to seyn it, and for a man may nat
 excusen him to lerne it, it is so
 short and so esy; and for it com-
 prehendeth in it-self alle gode
 preyeres. / The exposicion of
 this holy preyere, that is so excel-
 lent and digne, I bitake to these
 maistres of theologie; save thus
 muchel wol I seyn: that, whan thou

prayest that god sholde foryeve thee thy giltes as thou foryevest hem that agilten to thee, be ful wel war that thou be nat out of charitee. / This holy orisoun amenuseth eek venial sinne; and therefore it aperteneth specially to penitence. /

§ 94. This preyere moste be trewely seyde and in verray feith, and that men preyre to god ordinatly and discretly and devoutly; and alwey a man shal putten his wil to be subget
1045 to the wille of god. / This orisoun moste eek been seyde with greet humblesse and ful pure; honestly, and nat to the anoyance of any man or woman. It moste eek been continued with the werkes of charitee. / It avayleth eek agayn the vyces of the soule; for, as seith seint Ierome, 'By fastinge been saved the vyces of the flesh, and by preyere the vyces of the soule.' /

§ 95. After this, thou shalt understande, that bodily peyne stant in wakinge; for Iesu Crist seith, 'waketh, and preyeth that ye ne entre in wikked temptacioun.' / Ye shul understanden also, that fastinge stant in three thinges; in forberinge of bodily mete and drinke, and in forberinge of worldly lolitee, and in forberinge of deedly sinne; this is to seyn, that a man shal kepen him fro deedly sinne with al his might. /

§ 96. And thou shalt understanden eek, that god ordeyned fastinge; and to fastinge appertenen foure thinges. / Largenesse
1050 to povre folk, gladnesse of herte espirituel, 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. /

§ 97. Thanne shaltow understande, that bodily peyne stant in disciplyne or techinge, by word or by wrytinge, or in ensample. Also in weringe of heyres or of stamin, or

of haubergeons on hir naked flesh, for Cristes sake, and swiche manere penances. / But war thee wel that swiche manere penances on thy flesh ne make nat thyn herte bitter or angry or anoyed of thy-self; for bettre is to caste away thyn heyre, than for to caste away the sikernesse of Iesu Crist. / And therfore seith seint Paul: 'Clothe yow, as they that been chosen of god, in herte of misericorde, debonairetee, suffraunce, and swich manere of clothinge'; of whiche Iesu Crist is more apayed than of heyres, or haubergeons, or hauberkes. /

§ 98. Thanne is disciplyne eek in knokkinge of thy brest, in scourginge with yerdes, in knelinges, in tribulacions; / in suffringe patiently
1055 wronges that been doon to thee, and eek in pacient suffraunce of maladies, or lesinge of worldly catel, or of wyf, or of child, or othere freendes. /

§ 99. Thanne shaltow understande, whiche thinges destourben penaunce; and this is in foure maneres, that is, drede, shame, hope, and wanhope, that is, desperacion. / And for to speke first of drede; for which he weneth that he may suffre no penaunce; / ther-agayns is remedie for to thinke, that bodily penaunce is but short and litel at regard of the peyne of helle, that is so cruel and so long, that it lasteth with-outen ende. /

§ 100. Now again the shame that a man hath to shryven him, and namely, these yprocrites that wolden been holden so parfite that they han
1060 no nede to shryven hem; / agayns that shame, sholde a man thinke that, by wey of resoun, that he that hath nat been ashamed to doon foule thinges, certes him oghte nat been ashamed to do faire thinges, and that is confessiouns. / A man sholde eek thinke, that god seeth and woot alle hise thoghtes and alle hise werkes; to him may no thing been hid ne covered. / Men

sholden eek remembren hem of the shame that is to come at the day of dome, to hem that been nat penitent and shriven in this present lyf. / For alle the creatures in erthe and in helle shullen seen apertly al that they hyden in this world. /

1065 § 101. Now for to speken of the hope of hem that been negligent and slowe to shryven hem, that stant in two maneres. / That oon is, that he hopeth for to live longe and for to purchacen muche richesse for his delyt, and thanne he wol shryven him; and, as he seith, him semeth thanne tymely y-nough to come to shrifte. / Another is, surquidrie that he hath in Cristes mercy. / Agayns the firste vyce, he shal thinke, that oure lyf is in no sikernesse; and eek that alle the riches-esses 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 right-wisnesse of god, that nevere shal the peyne stinte of hem that nevere wolde withdrawn hem fro sinne, hir thanks, but ay continue in sinne; for thilke perpetuel wil to do sinne shul they han perpetuel peyne. /

1070 § 102. Wanhope is in two maneres: the firste wanhope is in the mercy of Crist; that other is that they thinke, that they ne mighte nat longe persevere in goodnesse. / The firste wanhope comth of that he demeth that he hath sinned so greetly and so ofte, and so longe leyn in sinne, that he shal nat be saved. / Certes, agayns that cursed wanhope sholde he thinke, that the passion of Iesu Crist is more strong for to unbinde than sinne is strong for to binde. / Agayns the seconde wanhope, he shal thinke, that as ofte as he falleth he may aryse agayn by penitence. And thogh he never so longe have leyn in sinne, the mercy of Crist is alwey redy to receiven him to

mercy. / Agayns the wanhope, that he demeth that he sholde nat longe persevere in goodnesse, he shal thinke, that the feblesse of the devel may no-thing doon but-if men wol suffren him; / and eek he shal han strengthe of the help of god, and of al holy chirche, and of the proteccioun of aungels, if him list. / 1075

§ 103. Thanne shal men understonde what is the fruit of penaunce; and, after the word of Iesu Crist, it is the endeles blisse of hevене, / ther Ioye hath no contrarioustece of wo ne grevaunce, ther alle harmes been passed of this present lyf; ther-as is the sikernesse fro the peyne of helle; ther-as is the blisful companye that reioysen hem everemo, everich of otheres Ioye; / ther-as the body of man, that whylom was foul and derk, is more cleer than the sonne; ther-as the body, that whylom was syk, freele, and feble, and mortal, is immortal, and so strong and so hool that ther may no-thing apeyren it; / ther-as ne is neither hunger, thirst, ne cold, but every soule replenished with the sighte of the parlit knowinge of god. / This blisful regne may men purchace by poverté espirituel, and the glorie by lownesse; the plentee of Ioye by hunger and thirst, and the reste by travaille; and the lyf by deeth and mortification of sinne. / 1080

Here taketh the makere of this booke his leve.

§ 104. Now preye I to hem alle that herkne this litel tretis or rede, that if ther be any thing in it that lyketh hem, that ther-of they thanken oure lord Iesu Crist, of whom procedeth al wit and al goodnesse. / And if ther be any thing that displese hem, I preye hem also that they arrette it to the defaute of myn unconninge, and nat to my wil, that wolde ful fayn have seyð bettre if I hadde had

conninge. / For oure boke seith,
 'al that is writen is writen for oure
 doctrine'; and that is myn ente-
 tente. / Wherefore 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: / —and namely, of my
 translacions and endytinges of
 worldly vanitees, the whiche I re-
 1085 voke in my retracciouns: / as is
 the book of Troilus; The book also
 of Fame; The book of the nyne-
 tene Ladies; The book of the
 Duchesse; The book of seint Val-
 entynes day of the Parlement of
 Briddes; The tales of Caunterbury,
 thilke that sounen in-to sinne; /
 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 sinne. / But of the trans-
 lacion of Boece de Consolacione,
 and othere bokes of Legendes of
 seintes, and omelies, and moralitee,
 and devocioun, / that thanke I
 oure lord Iesu Crist and his blisful
 moder, and alle the seintes of he-
 vene; / bisekinge hem that they
 from hennes-forth, un-to my lyves
 ende, sende me grace to biwayle
 my giltes, and to studie to the sal-
 vacioun of my soule: — and graunte
 me grace of verray penitence, con-
 fessioun and satisfaccioun to doon
 in this present lyf; / thurgh the
 1090 benigne grace of him that is king
 of kinges and preest over alle
 preestes, that boghte us with the
 precious blood of his herte; / so
 that I may been oon of hem at the
 day of dome that shulle be saved:
Qui cum patre, &c. 1092

*Here is ended the book of the Tales of Caunterbury, compiled by Geffrey
 Chaucer, of whos soule Iesu Crist have mercy. Amen.*

APPENDIX TO GROUP A.

THE TALE OF GAMELYN.

LITHEETH, and lesteneth · and herkeneth
 a right,
 And ye schulle heere a talking · of a
 doughty knight;
 Sire Iohan of Boundys · was his righte
 name,
 He cowde of norture y-nough · and
 mochil of game.
 Thre sones the knight hadde · that with
 his body he wan; 5
 The eldest was a moche schrewe · and
 sone he bigan.
 His bretheren loved wel here fader · and
 of him were agast,
 The eldest deserved his fadre's curs · and
 had it at the last.

The goode knight his fader · livede so
 yore,
 That deth was comen him to · and hand-
 dled him ful sore. 10
 The goode knight cared sore · syk ther he
 lay,
 How his children scholde · liven after his
 day.
 He hadde ben wyde-wher · but non hous-
 bond he was,
 Al the lond that he hadde · it was verrey
 purchas.
 Fayn he wolde it were · dressed among
 hem alle, 15
 That ech of hem hadde his part · as it
 mighte falle.

Tho sente he in-to cuntre · after wyse
 knyghtes,
 To helpe delen his londes · and dresen
 hem to-rightes.
 He sente hem word by lettres · they schul-
 den hye blyve,
 If they wolde speke with him · whyl he
 was on lyve. 20
 Tho the knyghtes herden · syk that he
 lay,
 Hadde they no reste · nother night ne
 day,
 Til they comen to him · ther he lay
 stille
 On his deth-bedde · to abyde goddes
 wille.
 Than seyde the goode knight · syk ther
 he lay, 25
 ‘Lordes, I you warne · for soth, withoute
 nay,
 I may no lenger liven · heer in this
 stounde;
 For thurgh goddes wille · deth draweth
 me to grounde.’
 Ther nas non of hem alle · that herde
 him aright,
 That they ne hadden reuthe · of that
 ilke knight, 30
 And seyde, ‘sir, for goddes love · ne dis-
 may you nought;
 God may do bote of bale · that is now
 y-wrought.’
 Than spak the goode knight · syk ther
 he lay,
 ‘Boote of bale god may sende · I wot it
 is no nay;
 But I byseke you, knyghtes · for the love
 of me, 35
 Goth and dreseth my lond · among my
 sones three.
 And sires, for the love of god · deleth
 hem nat amis,
 And forgetith nat Gamelyn · my yonge
 sone that is.
 Taketh heed to that on · as wel as to that
 other;
 Selde ye see ony eyr · helpen his brother.’
 Tho leete they the knight lyen · that
 was nought in hele, 41
 And wenten in-to counsel · his londes for
 to dele;
 For to delen hem alle · to oon, that was
 her thought,

And for Gamelyn was yongest · he schulde
 have nought.
 Al the lond that ther was · they dalten
 it in two, 45
 And leeten Gamelyn the yonge · withoute
 londe go,
 And ech of hem seyde · to other ful lowde,
 His bretheren mighte yeve him lond ·
 whan he good cowde.
 Whan they hadde deled · the lond at here
 wille,
 They comen ayein to the knight · ther he
 lay ful stille, 50
 And tolden him anon-right · how they
 hadden wrought;
 And the knight ther he lay · lyked it
 right nought.
 Than seyde the knight · ‘by seynt Mar-
 tyn,
 For al that ye have y-doon · yit is the
 lond myn;
 For goddes love, neyhebour · stondeth
 alle stille, 55
 And I wil dele my lond · right after my
 wille.
 Iohan, myn eldeste sone · schal have
 plowes fyve,
 That was my fadres heritage · whyl he was
 on lyve;
 And my middeleste sone · fyve plowes
 of lond,
 That I halp for to gete · with my righte
 hond; 60
 And al myn other purchas · of londes
 and leedes,
 That I biquethe Gamelyn · and alle my
 goode steedes.
 And I biseke yow, goode men · that lawe
 conne of londe,
 For Gamelynes love · that my queste
 stonde.’
 Thus dalte the knight · his lond by his
 day, 65
 Right on his deth-bedde · syk ther he lay;
 And sone aftirward · he lay stoon-stille,
 And deyde whan tyme com · as it was
 Cristes wille.
 And anon as he was deed · and under
 gras y-grave,
 Sone the elder brother · gyled the yonge
 knave; 70
 He took into his hond · his lond and his
 leede,

And Gamelyn himselve · to clothen and
 to feede.
 He clothed him and fedde him · yvel and
 eek wrothe,
 And leet his londes for-fare · and his
 houses bothe,
 His parkes and his woodes · and dede
 nothing wel ; 75
 And seththen he it aboughte · on his faire
 fel.
 So longe was Gamelyn · in his brotheres
 halle,
 For the strengest, of good wil · they
 doutiden him alle;
 Ther was non ther-inne · nowther yong
 ne old,
 That wolde wraththe Gamelyn · were he
 never so bold. 80
 Gamelyn stood on a day · in his brotheres
 yerde,
 And bigan with his hond · to handlen his
 berde;
 He thoughte on his londes · that layen
 unsawe,
 And his faire okes · that down were
 y-drawe;
 His parkes were y-broken · and his deer
 bireved; 85
 Of alle his goode steedes · noon was him
 bileved;
 His howses were unhiled · and ful yvel
 dight;
 Tho thoughte Gamelyn · it wente nought
 aright.
 Afterward cam his brother · walkinge
 thare,
 And seyde to Gamelyn · ' is our mete yare?'
 Tho wraththed him Gamelyn · and swor
 by goddes book, 91
 'Thou schalt go bake thy-self · I wil
 nought be thy cook!'
 'How? brother Gamelyn · how answerest
 thou now?
 Thou spake never such a word · as thou
 dost now.'
 'By my faith,' seyde Gamelyn · 'now me
 thinketh neede, 95
 Of alle the harmes that I have · I tok
 never ar heede.
 My parkes ben to-broken · and my deer
 bireved,
 Of myn armure and my steedes · nought
 is me bileved;

Al that my fader me biquath · al goth to
 schame,
 And therfor have thou goddes curs ·
 brother by thy name!' 100
 Than bispak his brother · that rape was
 of rees,
 'Stond stille, gadeling · and hold right
 thy pees;
 Thou schalt be fayn for to have · thy mete
 and thy wede;
 What spekest thou, Gamelyn · of lond
 other of leede?'
 Thanne seyde Gamelyn · the child that
 was ying, 105
 'Cristes curs mot he have · that clepeth
 me gadeling!
 I am no worse gadeling · ne no worse
 wight,
 But born of a lady · and geten of a
 knight.'
 Ne durste he nat to Gamelyn · ner a-foote
 go,
 But clepide to him his men · and seyde to
 hem tho, 110
 'Goth and beteth this boy · and reveth
 him his wit,
 And lat him lerne another tyme · to an-
 swere me bet.'
 Thanne seyde the child · yonge Gamelyn,
 'Cristes curs mot thou have · brother art
 thou myn!
 And if I schal algate · be beten anon, 115
 Cristes curs mot thou have · but thou be
 that oon!'
 And anon his brother · in that grete hete
 Made his men to fette staves · Gamelyn
 to bete.
 When that everich of hem · a staf hadde
 y-nome,
 Gamelyn was war anon · tho he seigh
 hem come; 120
 Tho Gamelyn seigh him come · he loked
 over-al,
 And was war of a pestel · stood under a
 wal;
 Gamelyn was light of foot · and thider
 gan he lepe,
 And drof alle his brotheres men · right on
 an hepe.
 He loked as a wilde lyoun · and leyde on
 good woon; 125
 Tho his brother say that · he bigan to
 goon;

He fley up in-til a loft · and schette the
dore fast;
Thus Gamelyn with the pestel · made hem
alle agast.
Some for Gamelynes love · and some for
his eye,
Alle they drowe by halves · tho he gan to
pleye. 130
'What! how now?' seyde Gamelyn ·
'evel mot ye thee!
Wil ye biginne contek · and so sone
flee?'
Gamelyn soughte his brother · whider he
was flowe,
And saugh wher he loked · out at a win-
dowe.
'Brother,' sayde Gamelyn · 'com a litel
ner, 135
And I wil teche thee a play · atte boke-
ler.'
His brother him answerde · and swor by
seynt Richer,
'Why! the pestel is in thin hond · I wil
come no neer:
Brother, I wil make thy pees · I swere by
Cristes ore;
Cast away the pestel · and wraththe thee
no-more.' 140
'I mot neede,' sayde Gamelyn · 'wraththe
me at oones,
For thou wolde make thy men · to breke
myne boones,
Ne hadde I had mayn · and might in myn
armes,
To have y-put hem fro me · they wolde
have do me harmes.'
'Gamelyn,' sayde his brother · 'be thou
nought wroth, 145
For to seen thee have harm · it were me
right loth;
I ne dide it nought, brother · but for a
fonding,
For to loken if thou were strong · and
art so ying.'
'Com a-doun than to me · and graunte
me my bone
Of thing I wil thee aske · and we schul
saughte sone.' 150
Doun than cam his brother · that fikil was
and fel,
And was swithe sore · agast of the pestel.
He seyde, 'brother Gamelyn · aske me
thy boone,

And loke thou me blame · but I graunte
sone.' 154
Thanne seyde Gamelyn · 'brother, y-wis,
And we schulle ben at oon · thou most
me graunte this:
Al that my fader me biquath · why! he
was on lyve,
Thou most do me it have · yif we schul
nat stryve.'
'That schalt thou have, Gamelyn · I swere
by Cristes ore!
Al that thy fader thee biquath · though
thou woldest have more: 160
Thy lond, that lyth laye · ful wel it schal
be sowe,
And thyn howses reysed up · that ben
leyd so lowe.'
Thus seyde the knight · to Gamelyn with
mowthe,
And thoughte eek of falsnes · as he wel
couthe.
The knight thoughte on tresoun · and
Gamelyn on noon, 165
And wente and kiste his brother · and,
whan they were at oon.
Allas! yonge Gamelyn · nothing he ne
wiste
With which a false tresoun · his brother
him kiste:
Litheth, and lesteneth · and holleth
your tonge,
And ye schul heere talking · of Gamelyn
the yonge. 170
Ther was ther bisyden · cryed a wrastling,
And therfor ther was set up · a ram and a
ring;
And Gamelyn was in good wil · to wende
therto,
For to preven his might · what he cowthe
do.
'Brother,' seyde Gamelyn · 'by seynt
Richer, 175
Thou most lene me to-night · a likel
courser
That is freisch to the spore · on fur to
ryde;
I most on an erandle · a litel her bisyde.'
'By god!' seyde his brother · 'of steedes
in my stalle
Go and chese thee the best · and spare non
of alle 180
Of steedes or of coursers · that st in len
hem bisyde;

And tel me, goode brother · whider thou
wolt ryde.'

'Her bisyde, brother · is cryed a wras-
tling,

And therfor schal be set up · a ram and a
ring;

Moche worschip it were · brother, to us
alle, 185

Might I the ram and the ring · bring home
to this halle.'

A steede ther was sadeled · smertely and
skeet;

Gamelyn did a paire spores · fast on his feet.
He sette his foot in the styrop · the steede
he bistrood,

And toward the wrasteling · the yonge
child rood. 190

Tho Gamelyn the yonge · was ride out at
the gat,

The false knight his brother · lokked it
after that,

And bisoughte Iesu Crist · that is heven
king,

He mighte breke his nekke · in that
wrasteling.

As sone as Gamelyn com · ther the place
was, 195

He lighte doun of his steede · and stood
on the gras,

And ther he herd a frankeleyn · waylo-
way singe,

And bigan bitterly · his hondes for to
wringe.

'Goode man,' seyde Gamelyn · 'why
makestow this fare?

Is ther no man that may · you helpe out
of this care?' 200

'Allas!' seyde this frankeleyn · 'that ever
was I bore!

For tweye stalworthe sones · I wene that
I have lore;

A champion is in the place · that hath
y-wrought me sorwe,

For he hath slayn my two sones · but-if
god hem borwe.

I wold yeve ten pound · by Iesu Crist!
and more, 205

With the nones I fand a man · to han-
delen him sore.'

'Goode man,' seyde Gamelyn · 'wilt thou
wel doon,

Hold myn hors, whyl my man · draweth
of my schoon,

And help my man to kepe · my clothes
and my steede,

And I wil into place go · to loke if I may
speede.' 210

'By god!' seyde the frankeleyn · 'anon
it schal be doon;

I wil my-self be thy man · and drawn of
thy schoon,

And wende thou into the place · Iesu
Crist thee speede,

And drede not of thy clothes · nor of thy
goode steede.'

Barfoot and unger · Gamelyn in cam,
Alle that weren in the place · heede of
him they nam, 216

How he durste aunte him · of him to
doon his might

That was so doughty champion · in
wrastling and in fight.

Up sterte the champion · rapely and
anoon,

Toward yonge Gamelyn · he bigan to
goon, 220

And sayde, 'who is thy fader · and who
is thy sire?

For sothe thou art a gret fool · that thou
come hire!'

Gamelyn answerde · the champion tho,
'Thou knewe wel my fader · whyl he
couthe go,

Whyles he was on lyve · by seint Martyn!
Sir Iohan of Boundys was his name · and
I Gamelyn,' 226

'Felaw,' seyde the champion · 'al-so
mot I thryve,

I knew wel thy fader · while he was on
lyve;

And thyself, Gamelyn · I wil that thou it
heere,

Whyl thou were a yong boy · a moche
schrewe thou were.' 230

Than seyde Gamelyn · and swor by Cristes
ore,

'Now I am older woxe · thou schalt me
finde a more!'

'By god!' seyde the champion · 'wel-
come mote thou be!

Come thou ones in myn hond · schalt thou
never thee.'

It was wel withinne the night · and the
moone schon, 235

Whan Gamelyn and the champion · to-
gider gonne goon.

The champion caste tornes · to Gamelyn
that was prest,
And Gamelyn stood stille · and bad him
doon his best.
Thanne seyde Gamelyn · to the cham-
pion,
'Thou art faste aboute · to bringe me
adoun; 240
Now I have y-proved · many tornes of
thyne,
Thow most,' he seyde, 'proven · on or
two of myne.'
Gamelyn to the champion · yede smertely
anon,
Of all the tornes that he cowthe · he
schewed him but oon,
And caste him on the lefte syde · that
three ribbes to-brak, 245
And ther-to his oon arm · that yaf a gret
crak.
Thanne seyde Gamelyn · smertely anon,
'Schal it be holde for a cast · or elles for
noon?'
'By god!' seyde the champion · 'whether
that it be,
He that cometh ones in thin hand · schal
he never thee!' 250
Than seyde the frankeleyn · that had his
sones there,
'Blessed be thou, Gamelyn · that ever
thou bore were!'
The frankeleyn seyde to the champion ·
of him stood him noon eye,
'This is yonge Gamelyn · that taughte
thee this pleye.'
Agein ansverd the champion · that lyked
nothing wel, 255
'He is a lither mayster · and his pley is
right fel;
Sith I wrastled first · it is y-go ful
yore,
But I was nevere in my lyf · handeled so
sore.'
Gamelyn stood in the place · allone with-
oute serk,
And seyde, 'if ther be eny mo · lat hem
come to werk; 260
The champion that peyned him · to
werke so sore,
It semeth by his continaunce · that he
wil no-more.'
Gamelyn in the place · stood as stille as
stoon,

For to abyde wrasteling · but ther com
noon;
Ther was noon with Gamelyn · wolde
wrestle more, 265
For he handled the champion · so won-
derly sore.
Two gentil-men ther were · that yemede
the place,
Comen to Gamelyn · (god yeve him goode
grace!)
And sayde to him, 'do on · thyn hosen
and thy schoon,
For sothe at this tyme · this feire is
y-doon.' 270
And than seyde Gamelyn · 'so mot I wel
fare,
I have nought yet halven-del · sold up my
ware.'
Tho seyde the champion · 'so brouke I
my sweere,
He is a fool that ther-of byeth · thou sell-
est it so deere.'
Tho sayde the frankeleyn · that was in
moche care, 275
'Felow,' he seyde · 'why lakkest thou
his ware?
By scynt lame in Galys · that many man
hath sought,
Yet it is to good cheep · that thou hast
y-bought.'
Tho that wardynes were · of that wras-
teling
Come and broughte Gamelyn · the ram
and the ring, 280
And seyden, 'have, Gamelyn · the ring
and the ram,
For the beste wrasteler · that ever here
cam.'
Thus wan Gamelyn · the ram and the ring,
And wente with moche loye · home in
the morning.
His brother seih wher he cam · with the
grete rowte, 285
And bad schitte the gate · and holde him
withoute.
The porter of his lord · was ful sore
agast,
And sterte anon to the gate · and lokked
it fast.
Now litheth, and lesteneth · bothe
yonge and olde,
And ye schul heere gamen · of Gamelyn
the bolde. 290

Gamelyn come ther-to · for to have comen
in,
And thanne was it y-schet · faste with a
pin;
Than seyde Gamelyn · ‘porter, undo the
yat,
For many good mannes sone · stondeth
ther-at.’
Than answerd the porter · and swor by
goddess berde, 295
‘Thow ne schalt, Gamelyn · come into
this yerde.’
‘Thow list,’ seyde Gamelyn · ‘so browke
I my chin!’
He smot the wiket with his foot · and
brak away the pin.
The porter seyh tho · it might no better
be,
He sette foot on erthe · and bigan to flec.
‘By my faith,’ seyde Gamelyn · ‘that tra-
vail is y-lore, 301
For I am of foot as light as thou · though
thou haddest swore.’
Gamelyn overtook the porter · and his
teene wrak,
And gerte him in the nekke · that the
bon to-brak,
And took him by that oon arm · and
threw him in a welle, 305
Seven fadmen it was deep · as I have
herd telle.
Whan Gamelyn the yonge · thus hadde
pleyd his play,
Alle that in the yerde were · drewen hem
away;
They dredden him ful sore · for werkes
that he wroughte,
And for the faire company · that he thider
broughte. 310
Gamelyn yede to the gate · and leet it up
wyde;
He leet in alle maner men · that gon in
wolde or ryde,
And seyde, ‘ye be welcome · withouten
eny greeve,
For we wiln be maistres heer · and aske
no man leve. 314
Yestirday I lefte’ · seyde yonge Gamelyn,
‘In my brother seller · fyve tonne of wyn;
I wil not that this compaignye · parten
a-twinne,
And ye wil doon after me · whyl eny sope
is thrinne,

And if my brother grucche · or make foul
cheere,
Other for spense of mete or drink · that
we spenden heere, 320
I am oure catour · and bere oure aller
purs,
He schal have for his grucching · seint
Maries curs.
My brother is a niggoun · I swer by
Cristes ore,
And we wil spende largely · that he hath
spared yore;
And who that maketh grucching · that
we here dwelle, 325
He schal to the porter · into the draw-
welle.’
Seven dayes and seven night · Gamelyn
held his feste,
With moche mirth and solas · that was
ther, and no cheste;
In a little toret · his brother lay y-steke,
And sey hem wasten his good · but durste
he not speke. 330
Erly on a morning · on the eighte day,
The gestes come to Gamelyn · and wolde
gon here way.
‘Lordes,’ seyde Gamelyn · ‘wil ye so hye?
Al the wyn is not yet dronke · so brouke
I myn yē.’
Gamelyn in his herte · was he ful wo, 335
Whan his gestes took her leve · from him
for to go;
He wolde they had lenger abide · and
they seyde ‘nay,’
But bitaughte Gamelyn · god, and good
day.
Thus made Gamelyn his feest · and
broughte it wel to ende,
And after his gestes · took leve to wende.
Litheth, and lesteneth · and holdeth
youre tonge, 341
And ye schul heere gamen · of Gamelyn
the yonge;
Herkeneth, lordinges · and lesteneth
aright,
Whan alle gestes were goon · how Game-
lyn was dight.
Al the whyl that Gamelyn · heeld his
mangerye, 345
His brother thoughte on him be wreke ·
with his treccherye.
Tho Gamelyns gestes · were riden and
y-goon,

Gamelyn stood alone · frendes had he
noon;
Tho after ful soone · withinne a litel
stounde,
Gamelyn was y-taken · and ful harde
y-bounde. 350
Forth com the false knight · out of the
soleer,
To Gamelyn his brother · he yede ful
neer,
And sayde to Gamelyn · ‘who made thee
so bold
For to stroye my stoor · of myn hous-
hold?’
‘Brother,’ seyde Gamelyn · ‘wraththe
thee right nought, 355
For it is many day y-gon · siththen it was
bought;
For, brother, thou hast y-had · by seynt
Richer,
Of fiftene plowes of lond · this sixtene yer,
And of alle the beestes · thou hast forth
bred,
That my fader me biquath · on his deth-
bed; 360
Of al this sixtene yeer · I yeve thee the
prow,
For the mete and the drink · that we have
spended now.’
Thanne seyde the false knight · (evel
mot he thee!)
‘Herkne, brother Gamelyn · what I wol
yewe thee;
For of my body, brother · heir geten have
I noon, 365
I wil make thee myn heir · I swere by
seint Iohan.’
‘*Par ma foy!*’ sayde Gamelyn · ‘and if it
so be,
And thou thenke as thou seyst · god yelde
it thee!’
Nothing wiste Gamelyn · of his brotheres
gyle;
Therefore he him bigyled · in a litte
wyle. 370
‘Gamelyn,’ seyde he · ‘o thing I thee
telle;
Tho thou threwe my porter · in the draw-
welle,
I swor in that wraththe · and in that grete
moot,
That thou schuldest be bounde · bothe
hand and foot;

Therefore I thee biseche · brother Game-
lyn, 375
Lat me nought be forsworen · brother art
thou myn;
Lat me binde thee now · bothe hand and
feet,
For to holde myn avow · as I thee bi-
heet.’
‘Brother,’ sayde Gamelyn · ‘al-so mot I
thee!
Thou schalt not be forsworen · for the
love of me.’ 380
Tho made they Gamelyn to sitte · mighte
he nat stonde,
Til they hadde him bounde · bothe foot
and honde.
The false knight his brother · of Gamelyn
was agast,
And sente aftir feteres · to feteren him
fast.
His brother made lesinges · on him ther
he stood, 385
And tolde hem that comen in · that
Gamelyn was wood.
Gamelyn stood to a post · bounden in
the halle,
Tho that comen in ther · lokede on him
alle.
Ever stood Gamelyn · even upright;
But mete ne drink had he non · neither
day ne night. 390
Than seyde Gamelyn · ‘brother, by myn
hals,
Now I have aspyed · thou art a party
fals;
Had I wist that tresoun · that thou had-
dest y-founde,
I wolde have yewe thee strokes · or I had
be bounde!’
Gamelyn stood bounden · stille as eny
stoon; 395
Two dayes and two nightes · mete had he
noon.
Thanne seyde Gamelyn · that stood
y-bounde stronge,
‘Adam spenser · me thinkth I faste to
longe;
Adam spenser · now I byseche thee,
For the mochel love · my fader loved
thee, 400
If thou may come to the keyes · lese me
out of bond,
And I wil parte with thee · of my free lond.’

Thanne seyde Adam · that was the
 spencer,
 ‘I have served thy brother · this sixtene
 year,
 If I leete thee goon · out of his bour, 405
 He wolde say afterward · I were a tray-
 tour.’
 ‘Adam,’ sayde Gamelyn · ‘so brouke I
 myn hals!
 Thou schalt finde my brother · atte laste
 fals;
 Therfor, brother Adam · louse me out of
 bond,
 And I wil parte with thee · of my free
 lond.’ 410
 ‘Up swich a forward’ · seyde Adam,
 ‘y-wis,
 I wil do therto · al that in me is.’
 ‘Adam,’ seyde Gamelyn · ‘al-so mot I
 thee,
 I wol holde thee covenant · and thou wil
 me.’
 Anon as Adames lord · to bedde was
 y-goon, 415
 Adam took the keys, and leet · Gamelyn
 out anoon;
 He unlokked Gamelyn · bothe handes
 and feet,
 In hope of avauncement · that he him
 biheet.
 Than seyde Gamelyn · ‘thanked be god-
 des sonde! 419
 Now I am loosed · bothe foot and honde;
 Had I now eten · and dronken aright,
 Ther is noon in this hous · schulde binde
 me this night.’
 Adam took Gamelyn · as stille as ony
 stoon,
 And ladde him in-to spence · rapely and
 anon,
 And sette him to soper · right in a privee
 stede, 425
 He bad him do gladly · and Gamelyn so
 dede.
 Anon as Gamelyn hadde · eten wel and
 fyn,
 And therto y-dronke wel · of the rede wyn,
 ‘Adam,’ seyde Gamelyn · ‘what is now thy
 reed?
 Wher I go to my brother · and girde of
 his heed?’ 430
 ‘Gamelyn,’ seyde Adam · ‘it schal not be
 so.

I can teche thee a reed · that is worth
 the two.
 I wot wel for sothe · that this is no nay,
 We schul have a mangery · right on
 Soneday; 434
 Abbotes and priours · many heer schal be,
 And other men of holy chirche · as I telle
 thee;
 Thow schalt stonde up by the post · as
 thou were hond-fast,
 And I schal leve hem unloke · away thou
 may hem cast.
 Whan that they have eten · and wasschen
 here hondes,
 Thou schalt biseke hem alle · to bring
 thee out of bondes; 440
 And if they wille borwe thee · that were
 good game,
 Then were thou out of prisoun · and I
 out of blame;
 And if everich of hem · say unto us
 ‘nay,’
 I schal do an other · I swere by this day!
 Thou schalt have a good staf · and I wil
 have another, 445
 And Cristes curs have that oon · that fail-
 eth that other!’
 ‘Ye, for gode!’ sayde Gamelyn · ‘I say
 it for me,
 If I fayle on my syde · yvel mot I thee!
 If we schul algate · assoile hem of here
 sinne,
 Warne me, brother Adam · whan I schal
 biginne.’ 450
 ‘Gamelyn,’ seyde Adam · ‘by seynte
 Charite,
 I wil warne thee biforn · whan that it
 schal be;
 Whan I twinke on thee · loke for to goon,
 And cast away the feteres · and com to
 me anoon.’
 ‘Adam,’ seyde Gamelyn · ‘blessed be thy
 bones! 455
 That is a good counseil · yeven for the
 nones;
 If they werne me thanne · to bringe me
 out of bendes,
 I wol sette goode strokes · right on here
 lendes.’
 Tho the Sonday was y-come · and folk
 to the feste,
 Faire they were welcomed · both leste
 and meste; 460

And ever atte halle-dore · as they comen
in,
They caste their eye · on yonge Gamelyn.
The false knight his brother · ful of
trechery,
Alle the gestes that ther were · atte
mangery,
Of Gamelyn his brother · he tolde hem
with mouthe 465
Al the harm and the schame · that he
telle couthe.
Tho they were served · of messes two or
three,
Than seyde Gamelyn · ‘how serve ye me?
It is nought wel served · by god that al
made!
That I sitte fasting · and other men make
glade.’ 470
The false knight his brother · ther that
he stood,
Tolde alle his gestes · that Gamelyn was
wood;
And Gamelyn stood stille · and answerde
nought,
But Adames wordes · he held in his
thought.
Tho Gamelyn gan speke · dolfully with-
alle 475
To the grete lordes · that saten in the
halle:
‘Lordes,’ he seyde · ‘for Cristes pas-
sioun,
Helpeth bringe Gamelyn · out of prisoun.’
Than seyde an abbot · sorwe on his
cheeke!
‘He schal have Cristes curs · and seynte
Maries eeke, 480
That thee out of prisoun · beggeth other
borwe,
But ever worthe hem wel · that doth thee
moche sorwe.’
After that abbot · than spak another,
‘I wold thin heed were of · though thou
were my brother!
Alle that thee borwe · foule mot hem
falle!’ 485
Thus they seyden alle · that weren in the
halle.
Than seyde a priour · yvel mot he thryve!
‘It is moche scathe, boy · that thou art
on lyve.’
‘Ow!’ seyde Gamelyn · ‘so brouke I my
bon!

Now I have aspyed · that freendes have
I non. 490
Cursed mot he worthe · bothe fleisch and
blood,
That ever do priour · or abbot ony
good!’
Adam the spencer · took up the cloth,
And loked on Gamelyn · and say that he
was wroth;
Adam on the pantrye · litel he thoughte,
But two goode staves · to halle-dore he
broughte, 496
Adam loked on Gamelyn · and he was
war anoon,
And caste away the feteres · and he
bigan to goon:
Tho he com to Adam · he took that oo staf,
And bigan to worche · and goode strokes
yaf. 500
Gamelyn cam in-to the halle · and the
spencer bothe,
And loked hem aboute · as they had be
wrothe;
Gamelyn sprengeth holy-water · with an
oken spire,
That some that stooode upright · fellen in
the fire.
There was no lewed man · that in the
halle stood, 505
That wolde do Gamelyn · eny thing but
good,
But stood bisyden · and leet hem bothe
werche,
For they hadde no rewthe · of men of
holy cherche;
Abbot or priour · monk or chanoun,
That Gamelyn overtok · anon they yeeden
doun. 510
Ther was non of hem alle · that with his
staf mette,
That he ne made him overthrowe · and
quitte him his dette.
‘Gamelyn,’ seyde Adam · ‘for seynte
Charite,
Pay large liverye · for the love of me,
And I wil kepe the dore · so ever here I
masse! 515
Er they ben assoyled · there shal noon
passe.’
‘Dowt thee nought,’ seyde Gamelyn ·
‘whyl we ben in-feere,
Kep thou wel the dore · and I wol werche
heere;

Stere thee, good Adam · and lat ther
 noon flee,
 And we schul telle largely · how many that
 ther be. 520
 ‘Gamelyn,’ seyde Adam · ‘do hem but
 good;
 They ben men of holy chirche · draw of
 hem no blood,
 Save wel the croune · and do hem non
 harmes,
 But brek bothe her legges · and siththen
 here armes.’
 Thus Gamelyn and Adam · wroughte
 right fast, 525
 And pleyden with the monkes · and
 made hem agast.
 Thider they come ryding · Iolily with
 swaynes,
 And hom ayen they were y-lad · in cartes
 and in waynes.
 Tho they hadden al y-don · than seyde a
 gray frere,
 ‘Allas! sire abbot · what dide we now
 heere? 530
 Tho that we comen hider · it was a cold
 reed,
 Us hadde ben better at home · with water
 and with breed.’
 Why! Gamelyn made ordres · of monkes
 and frere,
 Ever stood his brother · and made foul
 chere;
 Gamelyn up with his staf · that he wel
 knew, 535
 And gerte him in the nekke · that he
 overthrew;
 A litel above the girdel · the rigge-bon
 to-barst;
 And sette him in the feteres · ther he sat
 arst.
 ‘Sitte ther, brother’ · sayde Gamelyn,
 ‘For to colen thy blood · as I dide myn.’
 As swythe as they hadde · y-wroken hem
 on here foon, 541
 They askeden watir · and wisschen
 anoon,
 What some for here love · and some for
 here awe,
 Alle the servants served hem · of the beste
 lawe.
 The scherreve was thennes · but a fyve
 myle, 545
 And al was y-told him · in a litel whyle,

How Gamelyn and Adam · had doon a
 sory rees,
 Bounden and y-wounded men · ayein the
 kinges pees;
 Tho bigan some · stryf for to wake,
 And the scherref was aboute · Gamelyn
 for to take. 550
 Now lytheth and lesteneth · so god yif
 you good fyn!
 And ye schul heere good game · of yonge
 Gamelyn.
 Four and twenty yonge men · that heelden
 hem ful bolde,
 Come to the schirref · and seyde that
 they wolde
 Gamelyn and Adam · fetten, by her fay;
 The scherref yaf hem leve · soth as I you
 say; 556
 They hyeden faste · wold they nought
 bilinne,
 Til they come to the gate · ther Gamelyn
 was inne.
 They knocked on the gate · the porter
 was ny,
 And loked out at an hol · as man that
 was sly. 560
 The porter hadde biholde · hem a litel
 whyle,
 He lovel wel Gamelyn · and was adrad
 of gyle,
 And leet the wicket stonden · y-steke ful
 stille,
 And asked hem withoute · what was here
 wille.
 For al the grete company · thanne spak
 but oon, 565
 ‘Undo the gate, porter · and lat us in
 goon.’
 Than seyde the porter · ‘so brouke I my
 chin,
 Ye schul sey your erand · er ye comen
 in.’
 ‘Sey to Gamelyn and Adam · if here
 wille be,
 We wil speke with hem · wordes two or
 thre.’ 570
 ‘Felaw,’ seyde the porter · ‘stond there
 stille,
 And I wil wende to Gamelyn · to witen
 his wille.’
 In wente the porter · to Gamelyn anoon,
 And seyde, ‘Sir, I warne you · her ben
 come your foon;

The scherreves meyne · ben atte gate,
 For to take you bothe · schulle ye nat
 scape.' 576
 'Porter,' seyde Gamelyn · 'so moot I wel
 thee!
 I wil allowe thee thy wordes · whan I my
 tyme see;
 Go agayn to the yate · and dwel with hem
 a while,
 And thou schalt see right sone · porter, a
 gyle.
 Adam,' sayde Gamelyn · 'looke thee to
 goon; 581
 We have foo-men atte gate · and frendes
 never oon;
 It ben the schirrefes men · that hider ben
 y-come,
 They ben swore to-gidere · that we schul
 be nome.'
 'Gamelyn,' seyde Adam · 'hye thee right
 blyve, 585
 And if I faile thee this day · evel mot I
 thryve!
 And we schul so welcome · the scherreves
 men,
 That some of hem schul make · here
 beddes in the fen.'
 Atte posterne-gate · Gamelyn out wente,
 And a good cart-staf · in his hand he
 hente; 590
 Adam hente sone · another gret staf
 For to helpen Gamelyn · and goode strokes
 yaf.
 Adam felde tweyne · and Gamelyn felde
 three,
 The other setten feet on erthe · and bi-
 gone fle.
 'What?' seyde Adam · 'so ever here I
 masse! 595
 I have a draught of good wyn! · drink er
 ye passe!
 'Nay, by god!' sayde thay · 'thy drink
 is not good,
 It wolde make mannes brayn · to lyen in
 his hood.'
 Gamelyn stood stille · and lokede him
 aboute,
 And seih the scherreve come · with a
 gret route. 600
 'Adam,' seyde Gamelyn · 'what be now
 thy reedes?
 Here cometh the scherreve · and wil
 have ourc heedes.'

Adam sayde, 'Gamelyn · my reed is now
 this,
 Abyde we no lenger · lest we fare amis:
 I rede that we to wode goon · ar that we
 be founde, 605
 Better is us ther loos · than in town
 y-bounde.'
 Adam took by the hond · yonge Gamelyn;
 And everich of hem two · drank a
 draught of wyn,
 And after took her cours · and wenten
 her way;
 Tho fond the scherreve · nest, but non
 ay. 610
 The scherreve lighte adoun · and went
 in-to the halle,
 And fond the lord y-fetered · faste with-
 alle.
 The scherreve unfetered him · sone, and
 that anon,
 And sente after a leche · to hele his rigge-
 boon.
 Lete we now this false knight · lyen in
 his care, 615
 And talke we of Gamelyn · and loke how
 he fare.
 Gamelyn in-to the woode · stalkede stille,
 And Adam the spenser · lykede ful ille;
 Adam swor to Gamelyn · by seynt
 Richer, 619
 'Now I see it is mery · to be a spenser,
 That lever me were · keyes for to bere,
 Than walken in this wilde woode · my
 clothes to tere.'
 'Adam,' seyde Gamelyn · 'dismaye thee
 right nought;
 Many good mannes child · in care is
 y-brought.'
 And as they stode talking · bothen in-
 feere, 625
 Adam herd talking of men · and neyh,
 him thought, they were.
 Tho Gamelyn under the woode · lokede
 aright,
 Sevene score of yonge men · he saugh wel
 a-dight;
 Alle satte atte mete · in compas aboute.
 'Adam,' seyde Gamelyn · 'now have we
 no doute, 630
 After bale cometh boote · thurgh grace
 of god almight;
 Me thinketh of mete and drink · that I
 have a sight.'

Adam lokede tho · under woode-bowgh,
 And whan he seyh mete · he was glad
 y-nough;
 For he hopede to god · for to have his deel,
 And he was sore alonged · after a good
 meel. 636
 As he seyde that word · the mayster out-
 lawe
 Saugh Gamelyn and Adam · under wood-
 schawe.
 ‘Yonge men,’ seyde the maister ‘· by the
 goode roode,
 I am war of gestic · god sende us non but
 goode; 640
 Yonder ben two yonge men · wonder wel
 a-dight,
 And paraventure ther ben mo · who-so
 lokede aright.
 Ariseth up, ye yonge men · and fetteth
 hem to me;
 It is good that we witen · what men they
 be.’
 Up ther sterten sevene · fro the diner,
 And metten with Gamelyn · and Adam
 spenser. 646
 Whan they were neyh hem · than seyde
 that oon,
 ‘Yeldeth up, yonge men · your bowes and
 your floon.’
 Thanne seyde Gamelyn · that yong was of
 elde,
 ‘Moche sorwe mot he have · that to you
 hem yelde! 650
 I curse non other · but right my-selve;
 They ye fette to yow fyve · thanne ye be
 twelve!’
 Tho they herde by his word · that might
 was in his arm,
 Ther was non of hem alle · that wolde do
 him harm,
 But sayde unto Gamelyn · mildely and
 stille, 655
 ‘Com afore our maister · and sey to him
 thy wille.’
 ‘Yonge men,’ sayde Gamelyn · ‘by your
 lewte,
 What man is your maister · that ye with
 be?’
 Alle they answerde · withoute lesing,
 ‘Oure maister is y-crowned · of outlawes
 king.’ 660
 ‘Adam,’ seyde Gamelyn · ‘go-we in Cristes
 name;

He may neyther mete nor drink · werne
 us, for schame.
 If that he be hende · and come of gentil
 blood,
 He wol yeve us mete and drink · and
 doon us som good.’
 ‘By seynt Iame!’ seyde Adam · ‘what
 harm that I gete, 665
 I wil aunte to the dore · that I hadde
 mete.’
 Gamelyn and Adam · wente forth in-
 feere,
 And they grette the maister · that they
 founde there.
 Than seide the maister · king of outlawes,
 ‘What seeke ye, yonge men · under
 woode-schawes?’ 670
 Gamelyn answerde · the king with his
 croune,
 ‘He moste needes walke in woode · that
 may not walke in townne.
 Sire, we walke not heer · noon harm for
 to do,
 But-if we meete with a deer · to scheete
 ther-to,
 As men that ben hungry · and mow no
 mete finde, 675
 And ben harde bistad · under woode-
 linde.’
 Of Gamelynes wordes · the maister hadde
 routhe,
 And seyde, ‘ye schal have y-nough · have
 god my trouthe!’
 He bad hem sitte ther adoun · for to take
 reste;
 And bad hem ete and drinke · and that
 of the beste. 680
 As they sete and eeten · and dronke wel
 and fyn,
 Than seyde that oon to that other ·
 ‘this is Gamelyn.’
 Tho was the maister outlawe · in-to coun-
 seil nome,
 And told how it was Gamelyn · that
 thider was y-come.
 Anon as he herde · how it was bifalle,
 He made him maister under him · over
 hem alle. 686
 Within the thridde wyke · him com tyding,
 To the maister outlawe · that tho was her
 king,
 That he schulde come hom · his pees was
 y-mad;

And of that goode tyding · he was tho ful
glad. 690

Tho seyde he to his yonge men · ‘soth
for to telle,

Me ben comen tydinges · I may no lenger
dwelle.’

Tho was Gamelyn anon · withoute taryng,
Maad maister outlawe · and crowned here
king.

Tho was Gamelyn crowned · king of
outlawes, 695

And walked a whyle · under woode-
schawes.

The false knight his brother · was scher-
reve and sire,

And leet his brother endite · for hate and
for ire.

Tho were his bonde-men · sory and noth-
ing glad,

When Gamelyn her lord · ‘wolves-heed’
was cryed and maad; 700

And sente out of his men · wher they
might him finde,

For to seke Gamelyn · under woodelinde,
To telle him tydinges · how the wind was
went,

And al his good reved · and his men schent
When they had him founde · on knees

they hem sette, 705

And a-doun with here hood · and here,
lord grette;

‘Sire, wraththe you nought · for the goode
roode,

For we have brought you tydinges · but
they be nat goode.

Now is thy brother scherreve · and hath
the baillye,

And he hath endited thee · and ‘wolves-
heed’ doth thee crye.’ 710

‘Allas!’ seyde Gamelyn · ‘that ever I
was so slak

That I ne hadde broke his nekke · tho I
his rigge brak!

Goth, greteth hem wel · myn housbondes
and wyf,

I wol ben atte nexte schire · have god
my lyf!’

Gamelyn com wel redy · to the nexte
schire, 715

And ther was his brother · bothe lord and
sire.

Gamelyn com boldelich · in-to the moot-
halle,

And putte a-doun his hood · among the
lordes alle;

‘God save you alle, lordinges · that now
here be!

But broke-bak scherreve · evel mot thou
thee! 720

Why hast thou do me · that schame and
vilonye,

For to late endite me · and ‘wolves-heed’
me crye?’

Tho thoughte the false knight · for to ben
awreke,

And leet take Gamelyn · moste he no
more speke;

Might ther be no more grace · but Game-
lyn atte laste 725

Was cast in-to prisoun · and fetered ful
faste.

Gamelyn hath a brother · that highte
sir Ote,

As good a knight and hende · as mighte
gon on foote.

Anon ther yede a messenger · to that
goode knight,

And tolde him al-togidere · how Gamelyn
was dight. 730

Anon as sire Ote herde · how Gamelyn
was a-dight,

He was wonder sory · was he no-thing
light,

And leet saddle a steede · and the way he
nam,

And to his tweyne bretheren · anon-right
he cam.

‘Sire,’ seyde sire Ote · to the scherreve tho,

‘We ben but three bretheren · schul we
never be mo; 736

And thou hast y-prisoned · the beste of
us alle;

Swich another brother · yvel mot him
bifalle!’

‘Sire Ote,’ seide the false knight · ‘lat be
thy curs;

By god, for thy wordes · he schal fare the
wurs; 740

To the kinges prisoun · anon he is
y-nome,

And ther he schal abyde · til the Iustice
come.’

‘Parde!’ seyde sir Ote · ‘better it schal
be;

I bidde him to maynpris · that thou
graunte him me

Til the nexte sitting · of deliver-
 aunce, 745
 And thanne lat Gamelyn · stande to his
 chaunce.
 ‘Brother, in swich a forward · I take him
 to thee;
 And by thy fader soule · that thee bigat
 and me,
 But-if he be redy · whan the Iustice sitte,
 Thou schalt bere the Iuggement · for al
 thy grete witte.’ 750
 ‘I graunte wel,’ seide sir Ote · ‘that it so
 be.
 Let deliver him anon · and tak him to
 me.’
 Tho was Gamelyn delivered · to sire Ote
 his brother,
 And that night dwellede · that on with
 that other.
 On the morn seyde Gamelyn · to sire Ote
 the hende, 755
 ‘Brother,’ he seide, ‘I moot · for sothe,
 from thee wende,
 To loke how my yonge men · leden here
 lyf,
 Whether they liven in Ioye · or elles in
 stryf.’
 ‘By god!’ seyde sire Ote · ‘that is a cold
 reed,
 Now I see that al the cark · schal fallen
 on myn heed; 760
 For when the Iustice sitte · and thou be
 nought y-founde,
 I schal anon be take · and in thy stede
 y-bounde.’
 ‘Brother,’ sayde Gamelyn · ‘dismaye thee
 nought,
 For by saint Iame in Gales · that many
 man hath sought,
 If that god almighty · holde my lyf and
 wit, 765
 I wil be ther redy · whan the Iustice sit.’
 Than seyde sir Ote to Gamelyn · ‘god
 schilde thee fro schame;
 Com whan thou seest tyme · and bring us
 out of blame.’
 Litheth, and Iesteneth · and holdeth
 you stille,
 And ye schul here how Gamelyn · hadde
 al his wille. 770
 Gamelyn wente ayein · under woode-rys,
 And fond there pleying · yonge men of
 prys.

Tho was yong Gamelyn · glad and blithe
 y-nough,
 Whan he fond his mery men · under
 woode-bough.
 Gamelyn and his men · talkeden in-
 feere, 775
 And they hadde good game · here maister
 to heere;
 They tolden him of adventures · that they
 hadde founde,
 And Gamelyn hem tolde ayein · how he
 was fast y-bounde.
 Whyl Gamelyn was outlawed · hadde he
 no cors;
 There was no man that for him · ferde
 the wors, 780
 But abbotes and priours · monk and
 chanoun;
 On hem left he no-thing · whan he mighte
 hem nom.
 Whyl Gamelyn and his men · made
 merthes ryve,
 The false knight his brother · yvel mot he
 thryve!
 For he was fast aboute · bothe day and
 other, 785
 For to hyre the quest · to hangen his
 brother.
 Gamelyn stood on a day · and, as he bi-
 heeld
 The woodes and the schawes · in the
 wilde feeld,
 He thoughte on his brother · how he him
 beheet
 That he wolde be redy · whan the Iustice
 seet; 790
 He thoughte wel that he wolde · withoute
 delay,
 Come afore the Iustice · to kepen his
 day,
 And seyde to his yonge men · ‘dighteth
 you yare,
 For whan the Iustice sitte · we moote be
 thare,
 For I am under borwe · til that I come,
 And my brother for me · to prisoun schal
 be nome.’ 796
 ‘By saint Iame!’ seyde his yonge men ·
 ‘and thou rede therto,
 Ordeyne how it schal be · and it schal be
 do.’
 Whyl Gamelyn was coming · ther the
 Iustice sat,

The false knight his brother · foryat he
 nat that, 800
 To huyre the men on his quest · to
 hangen his brother;
 Though he hadde nough that oon · he
 wolde have that other.
 Tho cam Gamelyn · fro under woode-rys,
 And broughte with him · his yonge men
 of prys.
 'I see wel,' seyde Gamelyn · 'the
 Iustice is set; 805
 Go aforn, Adam · and loke how it spet.'
 Adam wente into the halle · and loked al
 aboute,
 He seyh there stonde · lordes grete and
 stoute,
 And sir Ote his brother · fetered wel
 fast;
 Tho went Adam out of halle · as he were
 agast. 810
 Adam said to Gamelyn · and to his felawes
 alle,
 'Sir Ote stant y-fetered · in the moot-
 halle.'
 'Yonge men,' seide Gamelyn · 'this ye
 heeren alle;
 Sire Ote stant y-fetered · in the moot-
 halle.
 If god yif us grace · wel for to doo, 815
 He schal it abegge · that broughte him
 ther-too.'
 Thanne sayde Adam · that lokkes hadde
 here,
 'Cristes curs mote he have · that him
 bond so sore!
 And thou wilt, Gamelyn · do after my
 reed,
 Ther is noon in the halle · schal bere
 away his heed.' 820
 'Adam,' seyde Gamelyn · 'we wiln nought
 don so,
 We wil slee the giltif · and lat the other
 go.
 I wil into the halle · and with the Iustice
 speke;
 On hem that ben gultif · I wil ben
 awake.
 Lat non scape at the dore · take, yonge
 men, yeme; 825
 For I wil be Iustice this day · domes for
 to demc.
 God spede me this day · at my newe
 werk!

Adam, com on with me · for thou schalt
 be my clerk.'
 His men answereden him · and bade him
 doon his best,
 'And if thou to us have neede · thou
 schalt finde us prest; 830
 We wiln stande with thee · whyl that we
 may dure,
 And but we werke manly · pay us non
 hure.'
 'Yonge men,' seyde Gamelyn · 'so mot I
 wel thee!
 As trusty a maister · ye schal finde of
 me.'
 Right there the Iustice · sat in the
 halle, 835
 In wente Gamelyn · amonges hem
 alle.
 Gamelyn leet unfetere · his brother out
 of bende.
 Thanne seyde sire Ote · his brother that
 was hende,
 'Thou haddest almost, Gamelyn · dwelled
 to longe,
 For the quest is oute on me · that I
 schulde honge.' 840
 'Brother,' seyde Gamelyn · 'so god yif
 me good rest!
 This day they schuln ben hanged · that
 ben on thy quest;
 And the Iustice bothe · that is the Iugge-
 man,
 And the scherreve bothe · thurgh him it
 bigan.'
 Thanne seyde Gamelyn · to the Ius-
 tise, 845
 'Now is thy power y-don · thou most
 nedes arise;
 Thow hast yeven domes · that ben yvel
 dight,
 I wil sitten in thy sete · and dresen hem
 aright.'
 The Iustice sat stille · and roos nought
 anon;
 And Gamelyn cleved · [a-two] his cheque-
 boon; 850
 Gamelyn took him in his arm · and no
 more spak,
 But threw him over the barre · and his
 arm to-brak.
 Durste non to Gamelyn · seye but good,
 For ferd of the company · that withoute
 stood.

Gamelyn sette him doun · in the Iustices
 seet, 855
 And sire Ote his brother by him · and
 Adam at his feet.
 Whan Gamelyn was y-set · in the Iustices
 stede,
 Herkneht of a bourde · that Gamelyn
 dede.
 He leet fetre the Iustice · and his false
 brother,
 And dede hem come to the barre · that
 oon with that other. 860
 Tho Gamelyn hadde thus y-doon · hadde
 he no reste,
 Til he had enquired · who was on the
 queste
 For to deme his brother · sir Ote, for to
 hongre;
 Er he wiste which they were · him
 thoughte ful longe.
 But as some as Gamelyn · wiste wher they
 were, 865
 He dede hem everichone · feteren in-
 feere,
 And bringen hem to the barre · and sette
 hem in rewe;
 ‘By my faith!’ seyde the Iustice · ‘the
 scherreve is a schrewe!’
 Than seyde Gamelyn · to the Iustise,
 ‘Thou hast y-yeve domes · of the wors
 assise; 870
 And the twelve sisours · that weren of
 the queste,
 They schul ben hanged this day · so have
 I good reste!’
 Thanne seide the scherreve · to yonge
 Gamelyn,
 ‘Lord, I crye the mercy · brother art
 thou myn.’
 ‘Therefore,’ seyde Gamelyn · ‘have thou
 Cristes curs, 875
 For, and thou were maister · yit I schulde
 have wors.’
 For to make short tale · and nought to
 tarie longe,
 He ordeyned him a queste · of his men
 so stronge;

The Iustice and the scherreve · bothe
 honged hye,
 To weyven with the ropes · and with the
 winde drye; 880
 And the twelve sisours · (sorwe have that
 rekke!)
 Alle they were hanged · faste by the
 nekke.
 Thus ended the false knight · with his
 treccherye,
 That ever hadde y-lad his lyf · in falsnes
 and folye.
 He was hanged by the nekke · and nought
 by the purs; 885
 That was the meede that he hadde · for
 his fadres curs.
 Sire Ote was eldest · and Gamelyn was
 ying,
 They wenten with here · frendes even to
 the king;
 They made pees with the king · of the
 best assise.
 The king loved wel sir Ote · and made
 him Iustise. 890
 And after, the king made Gamelyn ·
 bothe in est and west,
 Chief Iustice · of al his free forest;
 Alle his wighte yonge men · the king
 foryaf here gilt,
 And sithen in good office · the king hem
 hath y-pilt.
 Thus won Gamelyn · his lond and his
 leede, 895
 And wrak him of his enemys · and quitte
 hem here meede;
 And sire Ote his brother · made him his
 heir,
 And siththen wedded Gamelyn · a wyf
 bothe good and feyr;
 They livenen to-gidere · whyl that Crist
 wolde,
 And sithen was Gamelyn · graven under
 molde. 900
 And so schal we alle · may ther no man
 flece:
 God bringe us to the Ioye · that ever
 schal be!

GLOSSARIAL INDEX.



The references in this index are governed by the following rules:—
The letter R. refers to "The Romaunt of the Rose." Thus, R. 150 indicates line 150 of the "Romaunt."

The Minor Poems are denoted by numerals and Arabic figures. Thus, *Arwelt*, M. P. iii. 1165, indicates Minor Poem, No. iii., line 1165.

The five books of Boethius are denoted by Bo. I., Bo. II., Bo. III., Bo. IV., Bo. V. respectively, the prose and metrical sections being denoted by p. and m. Thus, *Felliche*, Bo. II. m. iii. 16, indicates Boethius, Book II., metre iii., line 16.

The five books of Troilus are denoted by T. i., T. ii., T. iii., T. iv., T. v. Thus, T. i. 754 indicates Troilus, book i., line 754.

"The House of Fame" is denoted by H. F. Thus, H. F. 64 indicates House of Fame, line 64.

"The Legend of Good Women" is denoted by L. L. (A) refers to Legend, etc., of the text in the left-hand column. Thus, L. (A) 80 refers to Legend, line 80, of the text in the left hand column.

The two books of the Astrolabe are denoted by As i. and ii., section and line. Thus, As. i. 6, 4 indicates Astrolabe, book i., section 6, line 4. Prol. refers to the Prologue.

The Canterbury Tales are referred to by the letters A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I (without periods), the various groups into which the Tales are divided. Thus, C 8 indicates Group C, line 8.

Abbreviations.—The grammatical abbreviations *s.*, *adj.*, and *adv.*, for substantive, adjective, and adverb, will be readily understood. Special abbreviations are *v.*, verb in the infinitive; *pr. s.* (and *pl. s.*) mean the *third* person singular of the present (and past) tense, except when 1 or 2 (first person or second person) is prefixed; *pr. pl.* (and *pl. pl.*) mean likewise the *third* person plural of the present (and past) tense; *imp. s.* means second person singular of the imperative mood; and *imp. pl.*, second person plural of the same.

A.

A, *art.* a; one and the same, M. P. xxi. 5; one, T. iv. 1407; about, some, L. 2075; *al a*, the whole of a, E 1165.

A, *interj.* ah! R. 2627; M. P. iii. 213.

A, *prep.* on, in, for; *a-night*, in the night, by night, G 880; *now a dayes*, now in these days, E 1164; *a-morwe*, A 822; *a Goddes name*, in God's name, A 854.

Abaisnen, *ger.* to be dismayed, Bo. IV. p. vii. 89.

Abak, *adv.* aback, back, L. 864; backwards, B 2017.

Abakward, *adv.* backward, Bo. III. m. xii. 74.

Abasshed, *pp.* abashed, confused, M. P. v. 447; ashamed, disconcerted, B 568.

Abate, *pp.* enfeebled, Bo. III. p. v. 57.

Abaved, *pp.* confounded, disconcerted, M. P. iii. 614.

Abaved, *pp.* abashed, confounded, R. 3646.

Abaysshed, **Abayst**, **Abaysed**, *pp.* abashed, disconcerted, T. iii. 1233; E 317; amazed, E 1108.

Abbay, *s.* abbey, B 1814.

Abegge, *v.* atone for, A 3938.

Abet, *s.* instigation, T. ii. 357.

Abhominaciouns, *s. pl.* abominations, horrible occurrences, B 88.

Abit, *pr. s.* (for abideth), abides, G 1175.

Abit, *s.* habit, dress, R. 4914; Abite, L. (A) 146.

Able, *adj.* capable of receiving, fit for, M. P. iii. 779; prepared, deemed deserving, M. P. i. 184; fit, L. 320; fit, capable, adapted, A 167.

Ablinge, *pr. pt.* enabling, lifting, Bo. III. m. ix. 42; fitting, Bo. I. m. vi. 22.

Ablucions, *s. pl.* ablutions, washings, G 856.

Aboght, **Abought**. See **Abye**.

Abood, *pt. s.* expected, M. P. iii. 247; abode, stopped, H. F. 1602; remained, waited, L. 309.

Abood, *s.* abiding, delay, A 965; **Abodes**, *pl.* T. iii. 854.

Aboute, *adv.* around, here and there, M. P. v. 247.

Abouten, *prep.* about, around, near, E 1106.

Aboven, *adv.* uppermost in luck, R. 4352.

Aboven, *prep.* above, E 826.

Abrayde. See **Abreyde**.

Abregginge, *s.* abridging, Bo. V. p. i. 102.

A-breyde, *v.* awake, start, T. iii. 1113; awake, come to my senses, H. F. 559; *pt. s.* started, awoke, E 1061; **Abreyd**, *i pt. s.* started from sleep, H. F. 110; **Abrayd**, *pt. s.* started up, M. P. iii. 192.

Abroche, *v.* broach, D 177.

Abrood, *adv.* abroad, *i.e.* wide open, F 441.

- Abusioun**, *s.* an abuse, scandal, T. iv. 990, 1060; deceit, B 214.
Abyden, *v.* await, M. P. i. 131; wait for, H. F. 1086; *Abyde*, *v.* to remain, wait, E 1106;
Ahiden, *pp.* waited, Bo. III. p. ix. 221;
Abydeth, *imp. pl.* B 1175; **Abyding**, *pr. pt.* awaiting, E 757.
Abydinge, *s.* expectation, Bo. II. p. iii. 72.
Abye, *v.* pay for, C 756; *pr. pl.* undergo, Bo. IV. p. iv. 96; **Aboght**, *pp.* bought dearly, L. 1387; paid for, L. 2483; redeemed, atoned for, C 503; **Abought**, *pp.* purchased, M. P. xviii. 37.
Accesse, *s.* fever-fit, T. ii. 1543.
Accident, *s.* occurrence, T. iii. 918; unusual appearance, E 607; outward appearance, C 539.
Accidie, *s.* moral sloth, I 677.
Accioun, *s.* action, *i.e.* accusation, M. P. i. 20.
Accordaunt, *adj.* agreeable to, A 37.
Accorde, *pr. s. subj.* may agree, G 638; **Accorded**, *pp.* agreed, L. 1635; **Accordeth**, *pr. s.* agrees, beseems, L. 2583. See **Acorde**.
Accusement, *s.* accusation, T. iv. 556.
Accusour, *s.* accuser, L. 353.
Achat, *s.* buying, A 571.
Achatours, *s.* buyers, A 568.
A chekked, *pp.* checked, hindered, H. F. 2093.
Acheve, *v.* achieve, L. 1614.
Achoked, *pp.* choked, L. 2008.
Acloyeth, *pr. s.* overburdens, M. P. v. 517.
A-compas, *adv.* in a circle, L. 300.
Accomplissh, *pr. s. subj.* fulfil, comprehend, Bo. III. p. x. 200.
Acord, **Acorde**, *s.* harmony, agreement, concord, M. P. v. 381; *in acord*, in tune, M. P. v. 197; *al of oon acorde*, in tune, M. P. iii. 305; agreement, L. 159.
Acordable, *adj.* harmonious, Bo. II. m. viii. 25.
Acordant to, in harmony with, M. P. v. 203.
Acordaunce, *s.* concord, Bo. II. m. viii. 16.
Acorde, *1 pr. s.* grant, allow, L. 3; **Acordeth**, *pr. s.* agrees, concerns, L. 955; **Acordeden**, *pt. pl.* agreed, L. 168, 1739; **Acorden**, *pr. pl.* agree, B 2137; **Acording**, *pr. pt.* agreeing, B 1737. See **Accorde**.
Acounte, *ger.* to reckon up, M. P. xxii. 18; *v.* consider, B 3591; **Accounted**, *pt. s.* valued, cared, M. P. iii. 1237; **Accountedest**, *2 pt. s.* didst reckon, Bo. II. p. v. 125.
Acoye, *v.* caress, appease, R. 3564; **Acoyede**, *pt. s.* caressed, Bo. II. p. iii. 80.
Acquittance, *s.* acquittance, release, M. P. i. 60.
Acquyte, *v.* acquit one's self, E 936; **Acquitch**, *imp. pl.* B 37.
Accurse, *v.* accurse, T. iii. 1072.
Acustomaunce, *s.* system of habits, habitual method of life, H. F. 28; *had of a.*, was accustomed, B. 3701.
Adamant, *s.* ironstone, A 1990.
Adamaunt, *s.* magnet, R. 1182.
Adamauntes, *pl.* loadstones, M. P. v. 148.
Adawe, *v.* awake, T. iii. 1120.
Adjeccioun, *s.* addition, Bo. V. p. vi. 238
Adoun, *adv.* adown, down, M. P. ii. 15; down below, H. F. 889; downwards, down, L. 178, 1726; at the bottom, G 779; down, B 3630.
A-dred, *pp.* afraid, frightened, M. P. iii. 1190; **A-drad**, M. P. iii. 493; H. F. 928.
Adressinge, *s.* directing, Bo. V. p. iv. 111.
Advertence, *s.* attention, G 467.
Advocacyes, *s. pl.* pleas, T. ii. 1469.
A-fer, *adv.* afar, H. F. 1215; L. 212.
Aferd, *pp.* afraid, A 628; **Afered**, *pp.* frightened, afraid, L. (A) 53.
Affecioun, *s.* desire, L. 1522; A 1158.
Affectis, *s. pl.* desires, T. iii. 1391.
Affermed, *pp.* agreed upon, L. 790.
Affray, *s.* affright, fright, M. P. iv. 214; H. F. 553; fear, terror, B 1137; **Afray**, dread, M. P. vii. 334.
Affrayed, *pp.* frightened, roused, M. P. iii. 296.
Affye, *v.* trust, R. 3155.
Affyle, *v.* polish, A 712.
Afor, *adv.* before, R. 3614.
Afor-yeyn, *prep.* opposite, T. ii. 1183.
After, *prep.* according to, M. P. i. 143; L. 2651; in accordance with, M. P. viii. 4; after, by inheritance from, L. 1072; in expectation of, for, B 467; *after as*, according as, M. P. v. 216; *after me*, according to my command, E 327; *after the yeer*, according to the time of year, F 47.
After-tales, *adv.* afterwards, T. iii. 224.
Afyne, *adv.* finally, R. 3690.
A-fyr, *adv.* on fire, M. P. i. 94; **A-fyre**, H. F. 1858; L. 2493.
Again, *prep.* when exposed to, L. 2426; **Agayn**, in comparison with, L. 189; towards, L. 112; against, B 580; near, G 1279; to meet, B 391; **Ageyn**, against, F 142. See **Agein**.
Agame, *adv.* in play, in jest, in mockery, M. P. iv. 277.
Agast, *pp.* terrified, M. P. vii. 316; afraid, L. 1534; **Agaste**, *pr. s.* deters, frightens, Bo. IV. p. vi. 354; *v.* terrify, T. ii. 901; **Agasteth**, *pr. s.* frightens, L. 1171.
Agaynes, *prep.* against, M. P. iii. 16; **Agayns**, towards, to meet, E 911; before, in presence of, C 743. See **Again**.
Agayn-ward, *adv.* back again, B 441.
Agein, *prep.* against, towards, turned towards, L. 48. See **Again**.
Ag, *pl.* times, periods, B 3177.
Ageyns, *prep.* against, L. 330.
Aggredgeth, *v.* aggravates, B 2477; **Aggedden**, *pp.* aggravated, B 2209.
Agilten, *v.* do wrong, L. 436; **Agilte**, *pt. s.*

- wrongly committed, L. 2385; Agilt, *pp.* done wrong, L. 463; offended, M. P. i. 122.
- Aglo, *pp.* gone away, M. P. vii. 61; gone, dead, L. 916; past, L. 1766; *to ben ago*, to be off, M. P. v. 465; Agoon, passed away, dead, M. P. iii. 479; E 631; Agon, *pp.* gone away, C 810; Agoon, *pp. as adv.* ago, C 436.
- Agreeable, -es, *pl.* pleasant, Bo. III. m. ii. 34.
- Agreeably, *adv.* complacently, Bo. II. p. iv. 156.
- Agreeabletee, *s.* equability, Bo. II. p. iv. 142.
- Agree, *v.* please, T. i. 409.
- A-gref, *adv.* grievously, amiss, M. P. v. 543. Lit. 'in grief.'
- Agreved, *pp.* grieved, vexed, L. 345; aggrieved, E 500.
- Agrief, *adv.* sorrowfully, B 4083.
- Agroos, *pt. s.* shuddered, was terrified, was seized with fear, L. 830; grew terrified, L. 2314.
- Agroted, *pp.* surfeited, cloyed, L. 2454.
- Agryse, *v.* feel terror, H. F. 210; Agrysen, *v.* shudder, tremble, feel terror, Bo. I. p. iii. 25; 2 *pr. s.* dredest, Bo. II. p. i. 76; *pr. s.* trembles, shivers, Bo. I. m. vi. 12; A-grisen, *pp.* filled with dread, Bo. III. p. i. 19.
- Aguilier, *s.* needle-case, R. 98.
- Aiourne, *imp. s.* adjourn, summon on another day, M. P. i. 158.
- Ajuded, *pp.*: *a. biforn*, prejudged, Bo. I. p. iv. 124.
- Ake, *ger.* to ache, H. F. 632; Aken, *pr. fl.* ache, B 2113.
- Aketoun, *s.* a short sleeveless tunic, worn under the hauberk, B 2050.
- Aknowe, *pp.* conscious; *am aknowe*, I acknowledge, Bo. I. p. iv. 190.
- Akornes, *s. pl.* fruits, Bo. IV. m. iii. 32.
- Al, *adv.* quite, M. P. v. 110; although, M. P. i. 45; for all that, M. P. iv. 274; albeit, M. P. xiii. 7; *al and soume*, each and all, all, the whole, M. P. vii. 26; *al be*, although, M. P. v. 436; *al by oon assent*, quite with one accord, M. P. v. 557; *al day*, all the day, M. P. iii. 1105; *al thus*, exactly thus, M. P. v. 30; Al, quite, entirely, L. 1765; Al, completely, B 3215; all blood = completely covered with blood, B 1967.
- Al, *adj.* all; *al and som*, the whole gist of the matter, the whole matter, L. 997; *al a*, the whole of, G 996; *at al*, in every respect, E 1222; at all, wholly, C 633; Alle, *pl.* B 118; *alle and some*, one and all, E 941.
- Al, *conj.* although, even if, L. 58; whether, G 846; although, E 99; Al so = as, H 80.
- Al, *s.* awl, M. P. xiii. 11.
- Alambyk, *s.* alembic, T. iv. 520.
- Alaunts, *s.* hoarhounds, A 2148.
- Alayes, *s. pl.* alloy, E 1167.
- Albificacioun, *s.* albification, whitening, G 805.
- Alday, *adv.* every day, at any time, M. P. iv. 237; always, L. (A) 1250; Al day, continually, F 481; always, B 1702.
- Alder-, *prefix*, of all; *our alder*, of us all, R. 6948; M. P. i. 84; L. 298.
- Alderbest, *adv.* best of all, M. P. iii. 87.
- Alder-beste, *adv.* best of all, M. P. iii. 246.
- Alderfaireste, *adj. fem.* fairest of all, M. P. iii. 1050.
- Alderfirst, *adv.* for the first time, Bo. I. p. iii. 28; first of all, H. F. 1429; Alderfirste, first of all, L. 2635.
- Aldermost, *adv.* most of all, L. 2117. See Alder.
- Alder-next, nearest of all, next, M. P. v. 244.
- Ale and breed, drink and meat, B 2062.
- Allegge, 1 *pr. s.* allege, adduce, H. F. 314.
- Alemandres, *s. pl.* almond trees, R. 1363.
- Alembyses, *pl.* alembics, G 794.
- Alestake, *s.* a stake projecting from an ale-house by way of a sign, A 667.
- Aley, *s.* an alley, B 1758.
- Aleys, *s. pl.* fruit of the wild service tree, R. 1377.
- Algate, *adv.* any way, at any rate, M. P. iii. 887; at any rate, L. 361; C 292; G 318; nevertheless, M. P. ii. 115; L. 238; at all hazards, H. F. 943; in all respects, E 855.
- Algates, *adv.* at any rate, M. P. iii. 1171; any-way, T. iii. 24; at any rate, at all costs, L. 594; at any rate, in every way, wholly, F 246; nevertheless, all the same, at any rate, B 520; G 1096.
- Aliene, *v.* alienate, Bo. I. p. vi. 68.
- Alighte, *pt. s.* descended, M. P. i. 161.
- Alkaimistre, *s.* alchemist, G 1204.
- Alle, *dat.*; *at alle*, in any and every case, M. P. iv. 37; *ou alle thing*, in any case, M. P. iii. 141.
- Alleggith, *v.* alleviate (alleggith), R. 2583; Allegged, *pp.* allayed, Bo. IV. p. iv. 20.
- Aller, *gen. pl.* of Al, A 823.
- Alliaunce, *s.* alliance, kindred, M. P. i. 58; marriage, espousal, E 357.
- Allone, alone, M. P. iv. 141; v. 455.
- Allow, 1 *pr. s.* I approve, I applaud, F 676.
- Allye, *s.* relative, B 3593.
- Almesse, *s.* alms, B 168.
- Almost, *adv.* almost, B 1948.
- Almicanteras, *s. pl.* circles or parallels of altitude, As. i. 18, 2.
- Almyr, *s.* the pointer of an astrolabe, As. i. 27. 7.
- A-lofte, *adv.* aloft, T. i. 950.
- A-londe, *adv.* on land, ashore, I. 2166; *him were lever a-londe*, he would rather be on land, L. 2413.
- Aloon, alone; *her aloon*, all by herself, L. 2378.
- Alose, *v.* praise, T. iv. 1473; Alosed, *pp.* praise. R. 2354.
- Al-out, *adv.* entirely, R. 4326.
- Al-outerly, *adv.* quite utterly, quite absolutely,

- M. P. iii. 1244; L. 626. Lit. 'all utterly.' See **Al utterly**.
- Alpes**, *s. pl.* bullfinches, R. 658.
- Als**, *adv.* as, M. P. iv. 69; also, M. P. iii. 728; Al-so, as, M. P. iii. 1064; (in expressing a wish), vii. 202; as sure as, H. F. 273.
- Al-so**, *conj.* as, B 396; H 80.
- Alswa**, *adv.* also, A 4085.
- Alther-fastest**, *adv. sup.* as fast as possible, H. F. 2131.
- Altherfirst**, *adv.* first of all, at first, H. F. 1368.
- Alther-firste**, *adj.* first of all, M. P. iii. 1173.
- Altitude**, *s.* the elevation of a star, etc., above the horizon, As. i. 1, 6; 13, 6.
- Al to-shar**, *pt. s.* cut in pieces, R. 1858.
- Al-utterly**, *adv.* quite absolutely, beyond all doubt, H. F. 296. See **Al-outerly**.
- Alwey**, *adv.* continually, always, E 458; ceaselessly, F 422; I 11.
- Alwey**, *adv.* at all events, T. v. 298.
- A-lyve**, *adv.* alive, M. P. iii. 915.
- Am**, *in phr.* it am I; it is I, B 1109.
- Amadrides**, *s. pl.* hamadryads, A 2928.
- Amalgaming**, *s.* the formation of an amalgam. G 771.
- Amased**, *pp.* amazed, G 935.
- A-mayed**, *pp.* dismayed, T. iv. 641.
- Ambages**, *s. pl.* duplicities, T. v. 897.
- Ambel**, *s.* amble; *an a.*, in an amble, at an ambling place, B 2075.
- Ambes as**, double accs, B 124.
- Amblere**, *s.* easy-paced horse, A 469.
- Ameled**, *pp.* enamelled, R. 1080.
- Amende**, *v.* to improve, F 197; Amended, *pp.* surpassed, B. 3444; *pt. s.* improved, did good, M. P. iii. 1102.
- Amenuse**, *v.* diminish, I 360; depreciate, I 496.
- Amerciments**, *s. pl.* fines, I 752.
- Amesureth**, *pr. s.* measures, Bo. II. p. i. 104.
- Ameved**, *pt. s.* moved, changed; *nought a.*, changed not, altered not, E 498; Amoeved, *pp.* perturbed, I 670.
- Amidde**, *prep.* amid, in the midst of, F 409.
- Amiddes**, *adv.* in the midst, M. P. v. 277.
- Amis**, *adv.* amiss, M. P. iii. 1141; *scyde amis*, gave an unwelcome answer, M. P. v. 446; wrongly, B 3370; A-mis, amiss, wrong, L. 1291.
- Amonesten**, *v.* warn, admonish, I 76.
- Amonges**, *adv.* sometimes, variously, Bo. II. p. i. 131.
- Amonges**, *prep.* amongst, B 3344; G 608.
- Amoricoun**, *s.* pointing out, Bo. I. p. iv. 11.
- Amorettes**, *s. pl.* amorous girls, R. 892; amourettes, R. 4755.
- A-morwe**, **Amorwe**, in the morning, M. P. iii. 1103; H. F. 2106.
- Amounteth**, *pr. s.* means, B 569; amounts to, F 108.
- Amphibologies**, *s. pl.* equivocations, T. iv. 1406.
- Amy**, *s.* friend, C 318.
- An**, *a*: An eighte bussshels, a quantity equal to eight bushels, C 771.
- An**, *prep.* on, L. 1191.
- Ancille**, *s.* handmaiden, M. P. i. 109.
- Ancre**, *s.* anchor, M. P. x. 38.
- And**, *conj.* if, M. P. vi. 112; L. 319, 1790; E 2433; *and if*, if, M. P. iii. 548.
- Angerly**, *adv.* grievously, R. 3511.
- Angle-hook**, *s.* fish-hook, M. P. iv. 238.
- Angres**, *s. pl.* griefs, R. 2554.
- Angry**, *adj.* grievous, R. 2628.
- Anguiss**, *s.* anxiety, Bo. III. p. iii. 38.
- Anguisssheth**, *pr. s.* wounds, pains, Bo. III. m. vii. r.
- Anguyschous**, **Angwyssous**, *adj.* anxious, Bo. II. m. v. 37; Bo. III. p. i. 9.
- Anhanged**, *pp.* hung, B 3945, 3949.
- An hye**, on high, H. F. 215.
- Anientissed**, *pp.* annihilated, B 2438.
- A-night**, *adv.* by night, at night, L. 1292, 1475; E 464.
- Anker**, *s.* anchor, R. 3780; L. 2501; anchoress, R. 6348.
- Anlas**, *s.* dagger, A 357.
- Annexed**, *pp.* attached, C 482.
- Annueleer**, *s.* a priest who received annual payments, a chaplain, G 1012.
- Annunciat**, *pp.* pre-announced, *i.e.* whose birth was foretold, B 3205.
- Anon**, *adv.* immediately, forthwith, B 326; C 864.
- Anon-right**, *adv.* immediately, M. P. iii. 354; L. 115; G 1141; Anoon-right, H. F. 132.
- Anoon**, *adv.* immediately, M. P. iii. 1299; Anon, B 34.
- Anoy**, *s.* torture, Bo. III. m. xii. 44.
- Anoye**, *v.*; *pr. s.* annoys, vexes, M. P. v. 518; Anoyeth, *pr. s. impers.* it annoys, vexes, G 1036.
- Answer**, *v.* be suitable for, Bo. IV. p. iii. 78; Answerden, *pt. pl.* answered, L. 1847; Answerde, *pt. s.* answered, E 21.
- Antem**, *s.* anthem, B 1850.
- Antiphoner**, *s.* anthem-book, B 1709.
- Anvelt**, *s.* anvil, M. P. iii. 1165.
- Aornement**, *s.* adornment, I 432.
- Apaire**, *v.* deteriorate, grow worse, H. F. 756.
- Appaled**. See **Appalled**.
- Aparaile**. See **Apparaile**.
- Aparaillements**, *s. pl.* ornaments, Bo. II. p. v. 201.
- Aparayles**, *s. pl.* ornaments, Bo. II. p. iv. 78.
- Aparceyve**. See **Aperceyve**.
- Appased**, *pp.* passed away, Bo. II. p. v. 39.
- Apayd**, **Apayed**, *pp.* pleased, satisfied, L. 766; T. i. 649; *evcl apayd*, ill-pleased, M. P. vii. 123; L. 80; G 921.

Apayre. See **Apeiren.**
Apayse. See **Apese.**
Ape, *s.* ape, H. F. 1212; dupe, G 1313; Apes, *pl.* H. F. 1806.
Aperceyve, *v.* to perceive, E 600; **Aperceyveth,** *pr. s.* E 1018.
Aperceyvinges, *pl.* perceptions, observations, F 286.
Apert, Aperte, *adv.* openly, F 531.
Apertenant, *adj.* belonging to, such as belongs to, M. P. ii. 70; **Apertenaunt,** B 3505.
Apertenen, *v.* belong to, I 410.
Apertening, *pr. pt.* appertaining, G 785.
Apertinent, *adj.* appertaining, suitable, E 1010.
Apertly, *adv.* openly, clearly, I 294.
Apese, Apeise, *v.* appease, pacify, E 433; H 98.
Apeseth, *imp. pl.* appease, mitigate, M. P. iv. 10.
Apeyren, *v.* impair, depreciate, I 1078; A 3147; *pp.* impaired, Bo. I. p. v. 74.
Apeyse. See **Apese.**
Apeysen, *pr. pl.* appease, T. iii. 22.
Aposed. See **Apposed.**
Apostelles, *s. pl.* apostles, G 1002.
Apoynthe, *adv.* exactly, T. v. 1620.
Apoynthe, *refl. v.* make up one's mind, T. ii. 691.
Appalled, *pp.* made pale or feeble, F 365; B 1292.
Apparaile, *s.* apparel, attire, M. P. i. 153; E 1208.
Apparaile, *v.* prepare, L. 2473.
Apparence, *s.* appearance, seeming, H. F. 265; F 218.
Apese. See **Apese.**
Appetyteth, *pr. s.* seeks to have, desires, L. 1582.
Applyen, *v.* be attached to, Bo. V. p. iv. 16.
Apposen, *pp.* opposed, alleged, Bo. I. p. v. 60; *pt. s.* questioned, G 363.
Apprevd, *pp.* approved, E 1349.
Appropred, *pp.* appropriated, made the property of, M. P. xiv. 18.
Approwours, *s. pl.* informers, D 1343.
Apyked, *pp.* trimmed, A 365.
Aqueynte, *v.;* *me aqueynte,* make myself acquainted, M. P. iii. 532; **Aqueynteden,** *pt. pl.* became acquainted, H. F. 250.
Arace, *v.* eradicate, tear away, M. P. xxi. 18; E 1103; *pp.* torn away, Bo. III. p. xi. 186.
Aray, *s.* array, dress, M. P. iv. 176; order, E 262; ordinance, E 670.
Arayed, *pp.* dressed, L. 1207; F 389; arranged, ordered, B 252.
Arbitre, *s.* will, choice, Bo. V. p. iii. 20.
Arblasters, *s. pl.* crossbowmen, R. 4196.
Archaungel, *s.* titmouse, R. 915.
Arches. See **Ark.**
Archewyves, *s. pl.* archwives, ruling wives, E 1195.

Ardaunt, *adj.* ardent, Bo. III. m. xii. 17; eager, Bo. IV. p. iii. 130.
A-rede, *v.* read, interpret, M. P. iii. 289.
Aresoneth, *pr. s.* controverts, R. 6220.
Arest, *s.* socket of a spear, A 2602.
Areste, *s.* delay, L. 806; hesitation, L. 1929; *and hence,* deliberateness of action, deliberation, L. 397.
Arette, *v.* account, attribute, R. 3327; A 726; **Aretted,** *pp.* A 2729; **Aretten,** *v.* impute, Bo. II. p. iv. 15.
Arewe, *adv.* in a row, D 1254.
Areyseed, *pp.* extolled, praised, L. 1525.
Argoile, *s.* potter's clay, G 813.
Argumenten, *pr. pl.* argue, B 212.
Aright, *adv.* rightly, properly, F 694.
Arist, *pr. s.* arises, B 265.
Ariste, *s.* arising, As. ii. 12, 16.
Ark, *s.* arc, referring to the arc of the horizon extending from sunrise to sunset, B 2.
Arminge, *s.* arming, putting on of armor, B 2037.
Armipotent, *adj.* mighty in arms, A 2441.
Armlees, *adj.* armless, without an arm, B 3393.
Armoniak, *adj.* ammoniac; applied to *bole*, G 790, *and sal*, G 798.
Armonyne, *s.* harmony, M. P. iii. 313.
Armoure, Armure, *s.* armor, M. P. iv. 130; B 2009.
Arn, *pr. pl.* are, H. F. 1008; E 342.
Aroos, *pt. s.* arose, stood up, L. 831.
A-roume, *adv.* at large, in an open space, H. F. 540.
A-rowe, *adv.* in a row, H. F. 1835.
Arrace. See **Arace.**
Array, Arraye. See **Aray, Arayed.**
Arrette. See **Arette.**
Arrivage, *s.* coming to shore, H. F. 223.
Arryve, *pt. s.* drove ashore, Bo. IV. m. iii. 7.
Ars-metrik, *s.* arithmetic, A 1898.
Art, *s.* kind, sort, E 1241.
Art, *s.* cunning, M. P. v. 245.
Arten, *v.* constrain, T. i. 388.
Artik, *adj.* arctic, As. i. 14, 10.
Artow, *for art thou*, H. F. 1872.
Arwes, *pl.* arrows, M. P. v. 212; A 107.
Aryve. See **Arryve.**
As, as if, M. P. iii. 1323; *As, so, in assertions,* M. P. iii. 838, 1235; *As, like,* B 1804; *As, expletive, expressing a wish; as have,* may He have, B 1061; *as lat,* pray let, B 859; *as after,* according to, B 3555; *as in, i e for,* B 3688; *as now,* at this time, F 652; *ou the present occasion,* G 944; *for the present, with the matter on hand,* G 1019; *as to,* with reference to, F 107; *as of,* as concerning, M. P. v. 26; *as swythe,* at once, M. P. vii. 220; *as that,* as though, M. P. iii. 1200; as soon as,

- F. 615; *as ther*, there, M. P. iv. 117; *as to my wil*, according to my understanding, M. P. v. 547; *as ferforth as*, as far as, B 19. As is short for *Alsa*. See **ALS**.
- AS**, *s.* an ace, B 3851; Ambes as, double aces, B 124.
- Asay**. See **Assay**.
- Asaunce**, *conj.* in case that, on the chance that, L. 2203; *adv.* perhaps, G 838.
- Ascencioun**, *s.* ascension, rising up, G 778.
- Ascende**, *v.* ascend, rise (a term in astrology), I 11; *pr. pt.* ascending, in the ascendant, *i.e.* near the eastern horizon, F 264.
- Ascendent**, *s.* ascendant, A 417; Ascendentes, *pl.* H. F. 1268. The ascendent is (properly) that point of the zodiacal circle which is seen to be just ascending above the horizon at a given moment.
- Ascry**, *s.* shout, T. ii. 611.
- Asemble**. See **Assemble**.
- Ash**. See **Asshe**.
- Aske**, *pr. s. subj.* may ask, M. P. iii. 32; *Asken*, *v.* to ask, B 101.
- Aslake**, *v.* abate, A 3553; *pp.* A 1760.
- A-slope**, *adv.* aside, crossly, R. 4464.
- Asonder**, *adv.* asunder, apart, B 1157.
- Asp**, *s.* aspen, A 2921; *Aspe*, L. 2648.
- Aspectes**, planetary relations, T. ii. 682; astrological aspects, L. 2597.
- Aspre**, *adj.* fierce, hardy, M. P. vii. 23; vexatious, Bo. III. p. viii. 21; cruel, Bo. II. p. viii. 42.
- Asprenesse**, *s.* asperity, Bo. IV. p. iv. 179.
- Aspye**, *s.* spy, C 755.
- Aspyen**, *v.* espy, T. ii. 649.
- Assaille**, *v.* to assail, attack, B 3953.
- Assay**, *s.* trial, M. P. iii. 552; D 290; trial, test, L. (A) 28; *doon his assay*, make his attempt, L. 1594; *Assayes*, *pl.* trials, E 697.
- Assaye**, *v.* try, M. P. iii. 574; *imp.* *s.* let him try, E 1229; *pr. s.* experiences, Bo. III. m. ii. 24; *Assayed*, *pp.* tried, E 1054; *Assayen*, *pr. pl.* try, L. 487.
- Asse**, *s.* ass, M. P. v. 255.
- Asseged**, *pp.* besieged, A 881.
- Assemble**, *ger.* to amass, Bo. III. p. viii. 9; *Assembled*, *pp.* united, G 50.
- Assendent**, planetary influence, As. ii. 4. See **Ascendent**.
- Assent**, *s.* consent, conspiracy, C 758.
- Assente**, *v.* agree to, A 374; *Assenten*, *pr. pl.* assent, agree, E 176.
- Asseth**, *adv.* enough; *make asseth*, satisfy, R. 5600.
- Asshe**, *s.* ash tree, M. P. v. 176.
- Assoilen**, *ger.* to discharge, pay, Bo. V. p. i. 16; *pp.* explained, Bo. V. p. vi. 350; *pr. s.* absolve, pardon, C 913.
- Assoiling**, *s.* absolution, A 661.
- Assure**, *s.* assurance, protestation, M. P. vii. 331.
- Assure**, *v.* make sure; *her assure*, *refl.*, be bold enough, L. 908; 1 *pr. s.* comfort, give confidence to, M. P. v. 448; *Assured*, *pt. s.* confirmed, B 3378.
- Assured**, *adj.* settled, self-reliant, M. P. ii. 40.
- Assyse**, *s.* judgment, M. P. i. 36; *assize*, A 314.
- Astate**, *s.* estate, R. 6856.
- Asterte**, *v.* start away, get away, withdraw, M. P. iii. 1154; *escape*, L. 1802; *escape from*, L. 2338; *Asterted*, *pt. s.* escaped, B 437.
- A-stoned**, *pp.* astonished, amazed, L. (A) 164; *Astonied*, *pt. s.* astonished, E 316.
- Astonyeth**, *pr. s.* astonishes, M. P. v. 5.
- Astonyinge**, *s.* astonishment, Bo. IV. p. v. 37.
- Astored**, *pp.* stored, provided, A 609.
- Astromye**, *s.* astronomy, A 3451.
- Asure**, *adj. as s.* blue, M. P. vii. 330; *azure*, blue, E 254.
- Aswage**, *v.* to assuage, B 3834.
- A-sweved**, *pp.* dazed, put to sleep, H. F. 549.
- A-swown**, *pp. as adv.* in a swoon, M. P. iii. 123; *A-swowe*, M. P. vii. 354; *Aswowne*, E 1079.
- At**, *prep.* as to, M. P. vi. 114; *at shorte wordes*, briefly, in a word, M. P. v. 481; *at erste*, *adv.* first of all, H. F. 512; *At*, *prep.* at; *at me*, with me, with respect to me, B 1975; *from*, E 653; *from*, of, G 542, 621.
- At-after**, *prep.* after, F 302.
- Atake**, *v.* to overtake, G 556; *pp.* overtaken, M. P. iv. 55; L. 2182.
- Ataste**, 2 *pr. s. subj.* taste, Bo. II. p. i. 44.
- Atazir**, *s.* evil influence, B 305.
- Ataint**, *pp.* apprehended, Bo. III. p. iii. 27.
- Atempraunce**, *s.* temperament, Bo. IV. p. vi. 234.
- Atempre**, *adj.* temperate, mild, M. P. iii. 341; *Atempre*, M. P. v. 204.
- Atempre**, *v. pr. s.* attempers, Bo. I. m. ii. 26.
- Atempringe**, *s.* controlling, Bo. V. p. iv. 111.
- Ateyne**, *v.* attain, succeed in, M. P. iv. 161.
- Athinken**, *v.* vex, T. v. 878.
- Atones**, *adv.* at once, at one and the same time, L. 1840; B. 670.
- Atoon**, *adv.* at one, E 437.
- At point**, at point, ready, T. iv. 1638.
- At-rede**, *v.* outwit, surpass in advice, A 2449.
- At-renne**, *v.* outrun, A 2449.
- Attamed**, *pp.* broached, B 4008.
- Atte**, *for* at the, R. 4192; *atte fulle*, at the full, in completeness, B 203; *atte laste*, at the last, B 506; *atte leste*, at the least, at least, E 130.
- Attempre**. See **Atempre**.
- Atteyne**, *v.* to attain, E 447.
- Attour**, *s.* attire, R. 3718.
- Attricioun**, *s.* contrition, T. i. 557.
- Attry**, *adj.* venomous, I 583.
- A-tweyn**, *adv.* in two, M. P. iii. 1193.

Atwinne, *adv.* apart, G 1170.
A-two, *adv.* in two, asunder, L. 758; B 600.
Atyr, *s.* attire, dress, M. P. v. 225.
Auctor. See **Auctour**.
Auctoritee, *s.* authority, especially of an esteemed writer, D 1.
Auctour, *s.* author, H. F. 314; E 1141. See **Autor**.
Audience, *s.* audience, attention, hearing, M. P. v. 308; audience, B 3991; hearing, E 329.
Aught, *adv.* by any chance, in any way, B 1034; at all, G 597.
Augrim, *s.* arithmetical notation, As. i. 8, 7.
Augrim stones, arithmetical counters, A 3210.
Aumener, *s.* alms-bag, R. 2087.
Auncestre, *s.* ancestor, M. P. v. 41.
Aungel, *s.* angel, M. P. v. 191.
Aungellyke, *adv.* like an angel, L. 236.
Auntred, *pl.* *s.* adventured, A 4205.
Auntrous, *adj.* adventurous, B 2099.
Autentyke, *adj.* authentic, M. P. iii. 1086.
Auter, *s.* altar, M. P. v. 249.
Autoritees, *pl.* authorities, L. (A) 83.
Autour, *s.* author, L. 1228; **Autours**, *pl.* L. (A) 88. See **Auctour**.
Availeth, *pr. s. impers.* it avails, M. P. xi. 15.
Avale, *v.* fall, T. iii. 626; doff, A 3122.
Avantage, *s.* convenience, profit; *to don his a.*, to suit his own interests, B 729; *as adj.* advantageous, B 146.
Avante. See **Avaunte**.
Avaunce, *v.* aid, cause to prosper, H. F. 640; help, M. P. x. 31; profit, A 246; **Avauenced**, *pp.* advanced, C 410.
Avaunt, *adv.* forward, R. 4790.
Avaunt, *s.* vaunt, boast, A 227.
Avaunte, *ger.* to extol, H. F. 1788; *1 pr. s.* boast, M. P. v. 470; **Avaunte her**, *v.* boast herself, M. P. vii. 296.
Avauntour, *s.* boaster, M. P. v. 430.
Avenaunt, *adj.* comely, suitable, R. 1263.
Aventure, *s.* luck, chance, M. P. iv. 21; hard hap, M. P. iv. 199; peril, B 1151; misfortune, L. 657; *good aventure*, good fortune, M. P. v. 131; *in aventure and grace*, on luck and favor, M. P. iv. 60; *of aventure*, by chance, H. F. 2090; **Aventures**, *pl.* adventures, E 15; accidents, C 934.
Aventurous, *adj.* random, Bo. I. p. vi. 110; adventitious, Bo. II. p. iv. 19.
Avisee, *adj.* deliberate, L. 1521.
Avisement, *s.* determination, L. 1417.
Avisioun, *s.* vision, H. F. 7, 104.
Avouterye, *s.* adultery, M. P. v. 361.
A-vowe, *s.* vow, avowal, M. P. iii. 93.
Avys, *s.* deliberation, T. iii. 453; opinion, I 54.
Avyse, *1 pr. s.*; *avyse me*, reflect, M. P. iii. 697; **Avysen me**, *ger.* to reflect, consider, M. P. v.

648; **Avyse thee**, *imp. s.* bethink thyself, consider, L. 335; **Avysed her**, *pl. s.* reflected, considered, L. 867; **Avyse, v. refl.** consider, B 664.
Avyusement, *s.* deliberation, T. iv. 936; *of short avyusement*, after a brief deliberation, M. P. v. 555; consideration, L. 407.
Await, *s.* watch, H 149; **Have hir in awayt**, watch her, B 3915.
Awaiteth, *pr. s.* waits, watches, B 1776.
Awaitour, *s.* liar in wait, Bo. IV. p. iii. 137.
Awak, *imp. s.* awake, M. P. iii. 179; **Awaketh**, *imp. pl.* awake ye, M. P. iii. 183; **Awook**, *1 pl. s.* awoke, aroused, M. P. iii. 1324.
Awayt, *s.* delay, T. iii. 579.
Awaytes. See **Await**.
Awaytes, *pl.* plots, Bo. III. p. viii. 18.
Awayting, *s.* attending, M. P. vii. 250.
Aven, *adj.* own, A 4239.
Aweye, *adv.* away, gone, M. P. vii. 319; from home, B 593; astray, B 609.
A-whaped, *pp.* amazed, stupefied, M. P. vii. 215; terrified, scared, L. 132.
Awook. See **Awak**.
Awreke, *v.* avenge, M. P. ii. 11; **Awroken**, *pp.* A 3752.
Axe, *v.* ask, M. P. i. 120; *ger.* M. P. iii. 416; **Axeth**, *pr. s.* L. 1456; requires, M. P. xiii. 16; **Axed**, *pl. s.* M. P. iii. 185; **Axen**, *v.* ask, L. 835.
Axing, *s.* asking, request, H. F. 1541; question, L. (A) 239; **Axing**, questioning, M. P. xvii. 3.
Ay, *adv.* ever, always, M. P. ii. 95; *ay whil that*, all the time that, M. P. iv. 252.
Ay-dwelling, *adj.* perpetual, ever-abiding, Bo. V. p. vi. 108.
Ayeyn, *adv.* again, back, M. P. v. 100; **Ayeyn**, M. P. i. 68; **Ayen**, M. P. v. 295.
Ayeyn-ledinge, *adj.* returning, reconducting, Bo. III. m. ix. 46.
Ayeyns, *prep.* towards, at the approach of, M. P. v. 342; against, E 320. See **Ageyns**.
Ayeynward, *adv.* again, on the other hand, Bo. II. p. iv. 141; **Ayeynward**, on the other hand, T. iv. 1027.
Ayel, *s.* grandfather, A 2477.
Ayen, *prep.* against, when meeting, M. P. v. 443.
Aylen, *v.* ail, L. 1833.
Azimutz, *s. pl.* divisions of an astrolabe, As. i. 19, 9.

B.

Ba, *imp. s.* kiss, A 3709.
Babewinnes, *pl.* (lit. baboons), grotesque figures in architecture, H. F. 1189.
Bachelrye, *s.* company of young men, E 270.
Bad, *pl. s.* bade, E 373. See **Bidde**.
Badde, *adj.* bad, L. (A) 277; **Badder**, F 224.
Baggeth, *pr. s.* looks askant, M. P. iii. 623.

- Baggingly**, *adv.* squintingly, R. 292.
Baillie, *s.* jurisdiction, R. 4217.
Baily, bailiff, R. 6331.
Bak, *s.* cloth for the back, coarse mantle, cloak, G 881.
Bake, *pp.* baked, B 95.
Balaunce, *s.*: *in balaunce*, at hazard, in uncertainty, R. 4667.
Bale, *s.* bale, sorrow, M. P. iii. 535: *for bote ne bale*, for good nor for ill, M. P. iii. 227.
Balkes, *s. pl.* beams; the transverse beams beneath the roof, A 3626.
Balled, *adj.* bald, A 198.
Bane, *s.* destruction, ruin, death, H. F. 408; cause of death, M. P. iv. 196; death, L. 2159; bane, slayer, L. 2147.
Banes, *pl.* bones, A 4073.
Bar, *pt. s.* bore, carried, M. P. iii. 196; *bar her on honde*, brought against her a charge which he feigned to believe, M. P. vii. 158; *bar on honde*, accused, T. iii. 1154; *Barre*, 2 *pt. s.* didst bear, L. 2229. See **Bere**.
Barbe, *s.* a kind of veil, T. ii. 110.
Barbre, *adj.* barbarian, B 281.
Bareyne, *adj.* barren, B 68; E 448.
Bargeyn, *s.* strife, R. 2551.
Barm-clooth, *s.* apron, A 3236.
Barme, *s. dat.* bosom, lap, B 3256, 3630.
Baronage, *s.* company of barons, retinue of lords, B 329.
Barres, *s. pl.* cross-stripes, R. 1103; A 329; ornamental bands, L. 1200.
Barringe, *s.* cross-stripping, I 417.
Basilicok, *s.* basilisk, I 853.
Bataille, *s.* troop, Bo. V. m. i. 4; *Bataille*, battle, B 3879; G 386.
Bataillen, *v.* fight, Bo. I. p. iv. 258.
Batailled, *pp.* battlemented, indented, B 4050.
Batayle, *s.* battle, M. P. v. 539.
Bate, *s.* strife, R. 4235.
Bathe, *adj.* both, A 4087.
Bauderie, *s.* gayety, A 1926.
Baudy, *adj.* dirty, G 635.
Baundon, *s.* control, R. 1163.
Bawdrik, *s.* baldrick, belt, A 116.
Bawme, *s.* balm, T. ii. 53; H. F. 1686.
Bayard, a horse's name, G 1413.
Bayte, *v.* to bait, feed, eat, B 466; *Bayten*, T. i. 192; *Baiteth*, *pr. s.* feeds, B 2103.
Be, 1 *pr. s.* am, M. P. iii. 588; 1 *pr. pl.* are, M. P. iii. 582; *pr. s. subj.* it should be, M. P. iv. 49; *pp.* been, M. P. iii. 972; *I had be*, I should have been, M. P. iii. 222; *be as be may*, however it be, L. 1852. See **Ben**, **Beth**.
Beau, *adj.* fair; *beau sir*, fair sir, H. F. 643.
Be-bleed, *pp.* blooded, covered with blood, Bo. III. m. ii. 16.
Beechen, *adj.* made of beech, G 1160.
Become, *v.* go to, L. 2214.
Bed, *s.* station, B 3862.
Bede, *v.* offer, H. F. 32; T. v. 185; offer, proffer, G 1065; *ger.* to present, M. P. i. 110; 1 *pr. s.* proffer, M. P. vii. 304; 1 *pt. pl.* directed, I 65; *pp.* bidden, M. P. iii. 194. See **Bidde**.
Bede, *pt. pl. and pp.* of **Bidde**.
Bedes, *pl.* beads, A 159.
Bedote, *v.* befool, L. 1547.
Bedrede, *adj.* bedridden, E 1292.
Beek, *s.* beak, F 418.
Been, *pl.* bees, F 204.
Beest, *s.* beast, F 460; *beest roial*, royal beast, *i. e.* Leo, F 264.
Beet, *pt. s.* touched, R. 129.
Before, *adv.* before, previously, M. P. v. 107.
Began, 2 *pt. s.* didst begin, L. 2230 (the older form is *begunne*); *Begonne*, *pp.* begun, L. 196.
Beggester, *s.* beggar (female beggar), A 242.
Begon, *pp.* begone; *wo begon*, beset by woe, distressed, L. 2497; *wo begoon*, L. 1487.
Begoon, *pp.*; *wel begoon*, joyous, M. P. v. 171.
Behest, *s.* promise, M. P. v. 245.
Behewe, *pp.* hewn, carved, H. F. 1306.
Behoteth, *pr. s.* promises, M. P. iii. 621; *Behette*, *pl. s.* M. P. v. 436.
Bek, *s.* beak, M. P. v. 378; *Bekes*, *pl.* beaks, L. 148.
Bekke, 1 *pr. s.* I nod, C 396; *Bekked*, nodded, T. ii. 1260.
Beknew, *pt. s.* confessed, L. 1058.
Bel amy, *i. e.* good friend, fair friend, C 318.
Bele, *adj. fem.* fair, H. F. 1796.
Belle, *s.* bell (of a clock), M. P. iii. 1322.
Belweth, *pr. s.* belloweth, roars, H. F. 1803.
Bely, *s.* bellows, I 351.
Bely-naked, *adj.* stark naked, E 1326.
Beme, *s.* trumpet, H. F. 1240; *pl.* B 4588.
Ben, **Been**, *v.* be, M. P. i. 182; 2 *pr. pl.* are, M. P. xix. 24; *pp.* been, M. P. iii. 530; *Beth*, *imp. pl.* be ye, C 683.
Bench, *s.* bench (law-court), M. P. i. 159.
Bend, *s.* strap, R. 1079.
Bendinge, *s.* slant-stripping, I 417.
Bene, *s.* bean, M. P. xi. 29; B 94.
Benedicite, bless ye, T. i. 780; B 1170.
Benethen, *prcp.* below, M. P. iv. 219.
Bent, *s.* grassy slope; *Bente*, *dat.* A 1981.
Berafte, *pt. s.* robbed of, M. P. v. 87. See **Bereve**, **Bireve**.
Berd, *s.* beard, A 332; *make a berd*, outwit, A 4096.
Bere, *s.* the constellations Ursa Major and Ursa Minor, H. F. 1004; pillow, T. ii. 1638; bear, L. 1214; bier, M. P. ii. 105; head-sheet, pillow-case, M. P. iii. 254.
Bere, *v.* bear, carry, B 3564; transport, F 119; to carry about, F 148; *Bereth*, *pr. s.* B 2091;

- Berth, *in phr.* sickly berth = take with ill will, dislike, E 625; Berth hir on hond, bears false witness against her, B 620; Ber, *ft. s.* bore, B 722.
- Bereve, *v.* rob of; *me two bereve*, rob me of woe, M. P. vi. 12. See **Beraite**.
- Berie, *v.* bury, C 884.
- Beringe, *s.* bearing, behavior, B 2022.
- Berke, *v.* bark; Borken, *ff.* shrieked, Bo. I. p. v. 2.
- Berm, *s.* barm, *i.e.* yeast, G 813.
- Bern, Berne, *s.* barn, B 3759; C 397.
- Berth, *pr. s.* beareth, L. 298.
- Beryle, *s.* heryl, H. F. 1184.
- Besaunt-wight, weighing a bezant, R. 1106.
- Besette, *v.* bestow, M. P. iii. 772; 1 *ft. s.* employed, M. P. iii. 1096; Beset, *ff.* bestowed, M. P. iii. 863; set, employed, M. P. v. 598; Besette, *v.* place, dispose, use, employ, L. 1009; *ft. s.* disposed of, L. 2558.
- Beseye, *ff.* beseen; *wel beseye*, well beseen, well provided, M. P. iii. 829.
- Beshende, *v.* bring to ruin, L. 2696.
- Besnesse, *s.* task, M. P. iii. 1156; labor, M. P. v. 86.
- Besprenyt, *ff.* sprinkled, bedewed, M. P. ii. 10.
- Bestowed me weel, given me good fortune, M. P. vi. 37.
- Besy, *adj.* anxious, M. P. v. 89; busy, eager, active, L. 103. See **Bisy**.
- Besyde, beside; *ther besyde*, beside that place, M. P. iii. 1316.
- Besyed hem, *ft. pl.* busied, occupied themselves, M. P. v. 192.
- Bet, *adj. comp.* better, M. P. x. 47; H. F. 108.
- Bet, *adv.* better, M. P. iii. 668; quickly, M. P. iii. 136; faster, L. 1213.
- Betake, 1 *pr. s.* deliver, intrust, L. 2297.
- Bete, *v.* amend, M. P. vi. 78.
- Bete, *ff.* beaten, H. F. 1150; Beten, B 1732.
- Bete, *v.* kindle, A 2253; Betten, *ft. pl.* kindled, G 518.
- Beth, *imp. pl.* be, M. P. i. 134; *pr. pl.* are, B 2350. See **Be**.
- Bethenke, 1 *pr. s.* *bethenke me*, bethink myself, consider, M. P. iii. 698.
- Betid, *ff.* happened, H. F. 384.
- Betraysing, *s.* betrayal, L. 2460.
- Betraysed, *ft. s.* betrayed, M. P. iii. 1120.
- Bewrye, *v.* betray, M. P. v. 348.
- Beye, *v.* buy, C 845. See **Bye**.
- Bibbed, *ff.* drunk, A 4162.
- Bible, *s.* book, H. F. 1334; G 857.
- Bi-bledde, *ff.* bloodied, A 2002.
- Bieched bones, *s. pl.* dice, C 656.
- Bi-clappe, *ger.* to clasp, ensnare, G 9.
- Eidaiffed, *ff.* befooled, E 1191.
- Bidde, *v.* to bid, F 327; *ff.* bidden, commanded, B 440.
- Biddinge, *pr. ft.* praying, G 140.
- Bidelve, *v.* Bidolven, *ff.* buried, Bo. V. p. i. 91.
- Biden, *ff.* of Byde.
- Bifalle, *pr. s. subj. impers.* shall befall, M. P. viii. 1; *pr. s. subj.* may befall, I 68; *ff.* befallen, B 726; Bifalleth, *pr. s.* happens, E 449; Bifel, *ft. s.* it came to pass, F 42; Bifil, B 3613; Bifelle, *ft. s. subj.* were to befall, E 136.
- Biforn, *adv.* before, B 704; before, in anticipation, B 1668; beforehand, B 1184; of old time, F 551; Bifore, first, E 446.
- Biforn, *pr. ft.* before, B 997; C 665; in front of, G 680; Biforen, B 3553.
- Biforn-hond, *adv.* beforehand, G 1317.
- Bigamy, *s.* bigamy, M. P. vii. 153.
- Bigan, *ft. s.* hegan, B 98, 1883.
- Bigonne, *ff.* begun, L. 229. See **Began**.
- Bigoon, *ff.* begone, clothed, R. 943.
- Bigyle, *v.* to beguile, deceive, E 252.
- Bigyleres, *pl.* beguilers, I 299.
- Bigyns, *s. pl.* beguines, R. 6861.
- Bihate, *v.* hate; *ff.* Bo. III. m. iv. 7.
- Biheste, *s.* promise, B 37; F 698.
- Bihete, *v.* promise; 2 *pr. s.* dost promise, Bo. IV. p. ii. 2; 1 *pr. s.* I promise, G 707. See **Bihote**.
- Bihetinge, *s.* promising, Bo. II. p. viii. 18.
- Biholde, *ff.* beheld, G 179.
- Bihote, *v.* promise, A 1854.
- Bihove, *s.* profit, R. 1092.
- Bihovely, *adj.* advantageous, T. ii. 261.
- Bijaped, *ff.* tricked, A 1535.
- Biker, *s.* quarrel, L. 2661.
- Biknowe, *v.* acknowledge, B 886; I am bi-knownen = I acknowledge, Bo. III. p. x. 98.
- Bilden, *ger.* to build, H. F. 1133; Bilt, *ft. s.* built, H. F. 1135; *ff.* built, M. P. i. 183.
- Bilder, *s. as adj.* builder, used for building, M. P. v. 176.
- Bile, *s.* beak, B 4051.
- Bileve, *s.* belief, faith, L. 2109; G 63.
- Bileve, *v.* to remain, stay behind, F 583.
- Bileveth, *imp. pl.* believe ye, G 1047.
- Bille, *s.* bill, petition, M. P. i. 59, 110.
- Bimene, *v.* bemoan, R. 2667.
- Binime, *v.* take away, Bo. IV. p. iii. 40; Binemen, *pr. pl.* Bo. III. p. iii. 74; Bi nomen, *ff.* taken away, Bo. III. p. iii. 79.
- Biraft. See **Bireve**.
- Bireve, *v.* bereave, B 3359; take away, G 482; Biraft, *ft. s.* hereft, took away, B 3386.
- Biseged, *ff.* besieged, B 3514.
- Biseke, *v.* beseech, B 3174; Bisekinge, beseeching, E 178, 592.
- Bismare, *s.* abusiveness, A 3965.
- Bisette, *ft. s.* employed, A 279.

- Biseye**, *pp.* displayed, made apparent; *yvel b.*, ill-looking, E 965; *richely b.*, rich-looking, splendid, E 984.
- Bishet**, *pp.* shut up, T. iii. 602.
- Bisie**, *v.* to trouble, busy; *isie me*, employ myself, G 758.
- Bisily**, *adv.* busily, F 88.
- Bisynesse**, *s.* diligence, E 1008; busy endeavor, G 24; *Bisynesse*, F 642. See **Busynesse**.
- Bi-smokede**, *adj. pl.* dirtied with smoke, Bo. I. p. i. 33.
- Bismotered**, *pp.* soiled, A 76.
- Bistad**, *pp.* hard bestead, greatly imperilled, B 649.
- Bistroad**, *pl. s.* bestrode, B 2093.
- Bisy**, *adj.* busy, attentive, F 509. See **Besy**.
- Bisyde**, *prep.* beside, E 777, 1105; F 374.
- Bit**, *pr. s.* bids, F 291.
- Bitake**, 1 *pr. s.* commend, commit, E 161; *Bitook*, *pl. s.* delivered, gave, committed (to the charge of), G 541; *Bitaken*, *pp.* Bo. III. m. ii. 52.
- Biteche**, *pr. s.* commit to, B 2114.
- Bithinke**, 1 *pr. s.* bethink, M. P. i. 121.
- Bitid**, *pp.* befallen, B 1949. See **Bityde**.
- Bitit**, *beti*leth, T. ii. 48.
- Bitokneth**, *pr. s.* betokens, signifies, B 3942.
- Bitook**. See **Bitake**.
- Bitore**, *s.* bitter, D 972.
- Bitrayed**, **Bitraished**, **Bitrashed**, *pp.* betrayed, B 3570; R. 1648; R. 3910.
- Bitrent**, *pr. s.* clasps, encircles, T. iii. 1231.
- Bitwixen**, *prep.* between, C 832; *Bitwixe*, B 3830; *Bitwix*, F 317.
- Bityde**, *v.* befall, E 79; happen, arrive, B 3730; *pr. s. subj.* may betide, E 306; *bityde what bityde*, let that happen that may, whatever may happen, B 2064.
- Bitydinge**, *s.* an event, Bo. V. p. i. 42.
- Bitymes**, *adv.* betimes, soon, G 1008.
- Biwailen**, *v.* to bewail, lament, B 26; *Biwaille*, B 3952; *Biwailed*, *pp.* E 530.
- Biwreye**, *v.* to bewray, unfold, reveal, B 3219; *Biwreyen*, betray, G 150; *Biwreyst*, disclosest, B 773.
- Bladdre**, *s.* bladder, G 439.
- Blake**, *adj. pl.* black, G 557.
- Blakeberied**, *a*, a-blackberrying, *i. e.* a-wandering at will, astray, C 406.
- Blaked**, *pp.* blackened, rendered black, B 3321.
- Blankmanger**, *s.* blanc-mange, A 387.
- Blasen**, *v.* blow, H. F. 1802.
- Blaspheme**, *s.* blasphemy, M. P. xvi. 15.
- Blaste**, *v.* blow a trumpet, H. F. 1866.
- Blaunche**, *adj.* white, T. i. 916.
- Blaundisslinge**, *pret. pl. as adj.* bewitching, Bo. III. m. xii. 25; *Blaundissinge*, flattering, Bo. II. p. i. 34.
- Bleched**, *pp.* bleached, M. P. ix. 45.
- Blemished**, *pp.* injured, Bo. I. p. iv. 348.
- Blent**, *pr. s.* blinds, M. P. v. 600; *pp.* blinded, M. P. xv. 18.
- Blere**, *v.* blind, A 4049.
- Blered**, *adj.* bleared, G 730.
- Blesseth hir**, *pr. s.* crosses herself, B 449.
- Bleve**, *v.* remain, T. iii. 623.
- Blew**, *adj.* blue, M. P. iii. 340; *Blewe*, *adj. pl.* blue, livid, pale; *with teres blewe*, blue with weeping, M. P. iv. 8; *Blew*, *adj. as s.* blue, blue clothing, M. P. xxi. 7. See **Blö**.
- Bleyne**, *s.* blain, R. 553.
- Blinne**, *v.* stop, cease, R. 6611; G 1171.
- Blisful**, *adj.* blessed, B 845; happy, merry, E 844, 1121.
- Blisful**, *adv.* joyously, M. P. v. 689.
- Blisfulness**, *s.* happiness, Bo. II. p. iv. 127.
- Blisse**, *v.* bless, E 553.
- Blö**, *adj.* blue, ash-colored, smoke-colored, H. F. 1647. See **Blew**.
- Blondren**. See **Blundreth**.
- Blood**, *s.* progeny, offspring, E 632.
- Blosmes**, *s. pl.* blossoms, L. 143, 157.
- Blosmy**, *adj.* blossomy, covered with blossoms, M. P. v. 183.
- Blowe**, *pp.* blown, filled out with wind, G 440.
- Blundreth**, *pr. s.* runs heedlessly, G 1414; *Blondren*, 1 *pr. pl.* we fall into confusion, we confuse ourselves, become mazed, G 670.
- Blynde with**, *ger.* to blind (the priest) with, G 1151.
- Blythe**, *adj.* merry, of good cheer, L. 647.
- Blyve**, *adv.* quickly, M. P. iii. 152; L. 60; *as blyve*, as quickly as may be, as soon as possible, M. P. iii. 248.
- Bobance**, *s.* presumption, boast, D 569.
- Boch**, *s.* botch, pustule, Bo. III. p. iv. 15.
- Bocher**, *s.* butcher, A 2025.
- Bode**, *s.* foreboding, token, omen, M. P. v. 343.
- Bode**, *s.* abiding, delay, M. P. vii. 119.
- Bode**, *v.* proclaim; *pr. s.* heralds, Bo. IV. m. vi. 19.
- Boden**, *pp.* ordered, L. 366; *pp. of Bede*.
- Body**, *s.* principal subject, E 42; my body, myself, B 1185; *pl.* metallic bodies (metals), answering to celestial bodies (planets), G 820.
- Boes**, *pr. s.* it behoves, A 4027.
- Boght**, *pp.* bought, M. P. iv. 168; *Boghten*, 2 *pl. pl.* bought, L. 258.
- Boist**, *s.* box, C 307; *Boistes*, *pl.* H. F. 2129.
- Boistously**, *adj.* rough, H 211.
- Boistously**, *adv.* loudly, E 791.
- Bokeler**, *s.* buckler, A 112, 3266.
- Bokes**, *pl.* books, B 3499.
- Boket**, *s.* bucket, A 1533.
- Bolas**, *s.* bullace, R. 1377.
- Bolde**, *v.* grow bold, M. P. v. 144.

- Bole armoniak**, Armenian clay, G 790.
Boles, *pl.* bulls, M. P. iv. 86; L. 1432.
Bolle, *s.* a bowl, G 1210.
Bon, *adj.* good, H. F. 1022.
Bond, *pl.* *s.* bound, H. F. 1590; *Bonde*, *pp.* bound, in slavery, M. P. xvii. 32.
Bond, *s.* a band, F 131.
Bone, *s.* prayer, request, M. P. iii. 129; request, L. 1596; petition, L. 2340.
Boon, *s.* bone, M. P. iii. 940; B 3090.
Boor, *s.* boar, L. 980; B 3299.
Boost, *s.* noise, *hence* boast, L. 267; boast, pride, B 3289. See **Bost**.
Boot, *pl.* *s.* bit, B 3791.
Boot, *s.* boat, E 1424.
Boras, *s.* borax, A 630; G 790.
Bord, *s.* board, plank, M. P. iii. 74; table, B 430; board, *i.e.* meals, G 1017.
Bordels, *s. pl.* brothels, I 885.
Bordillers, *s. pl.* keepers of brothels, R. 7034.
Bore, *pp.* born, M. P. iii. 1301; *Bore*, *pp.* born, E 401; borne, carried, F 178; Born, borne, E 444; carried, F 176; worn, F 43.
Bore, **Boren**, *pp.* of Bere.
Borel, *adj.* coarse, common, B 3145.
Bores. See **Boor**.
Borneth, *pr. s.* burnishes, T. i. 327.
Borowe, *s. dat.* pledge; *to borowe*, in pledge, for surety, M. P. iv. 205.
Borwe, *v.* borrow, M. P. vi. 10; B 105.
Borwe, *s.* pledge; *to borwe*, in pledge, L. 2105.
Bosarde, *s.* buzzard, R. 4033.
Bost, *s.* boasting, M. P. iv. 37; noise, outcry, L. 887; pride, swelling, G 441. See **Boost**.
Bote, *s.* remedy, M. P. iii. 38; cure, M. P. xxii. 45; safety, salvation, B 1656; relief, G 1481; *doth bote*, gives the remedy for, M. P. v. 276; *for bote ne balt*, for good, nor for ill, M. P. iii. 227; boot, help, L. 1076.
Botel, *s.* bottle (of hay), H 14.
Boteler, *s.* butler, H. F. 592.
Boterflye, *s.* butterfly, B 3980.
Bothe, *adj. pl.* both, M. P. iii. 1068; *your bothes*, of both of you, M. P. i. 83.
Bother, *gen.* of both, T. iv. 168.
Botme, *s. dat.* bottom, G 1321.
Bottomless, *adj.* bottomless, L. 1584.
Botoun, *s.* bud, R. 1721, 2960.
Bougerons, *s. pl.* sodomites, R. 7022.
Bought, **Boughte**, *pt. s.* bought; *boughte agayn*, redeemed, C 766.
Bouk, *s.* body, A 2746.
Bountee, *s.* bounty, M. P. ii. 38; goodness, M. P. xxiii. 5; goodness, kindness, devotedness, L. 522.
Bour, *s.* inner room, B 4022.
Bourde, *s.* jest, H 81.
Bourded, *pp.* jested, M. P. v. 589.
Boures, *s. pl.* bowers, M. P. v. 304.
Bowes, *pl.* boughs, M. P. v. 183.
Box, *s.* boxwood, L. 866.
Box, *s.* blow, L. 1388.
Boxtre, *s.* box-tree, M. P. v. 178.
Boydekens, *s. pl.* poniards, lit. bodkins, B 3892.
Bracer, *s.* arm-guard, A 111.
Brade, *adj.* broad, R. 4200.
Bragot, *s.* ale and mead, A 3261.
Brak, *pt. s.* broke, M. P. iii. 71; B 288. *pt. l.* of Breken.
Branched, *adj.* full of branches, F 159.
Brast, **Braste**. See **Breste**.
Braun, *s.* muscle, A 546.
Brayd, *s.* start, L. 1166.
Brayde, *pt. s.* took hastily, H. F. 1678; *Brayd*, *pp.* started, gone suddenly, M. P. vii. 124. See **Breyde**.
Brede, *s.* roast meat, H. F. 1222.
Brede, *s.* breadth, M. P. iii. 956; B 3350.
Breden, *ger.* to breed, to arise, L. 1156.
Breech, *s.* breeches, B 2049; C 948.
Breed, *s.* bread, B 3624; F 614.
Breke, *pr. s. subj.* break, M. P. iv. 242; *Brak*, *pt. s.* M. P. iii. 71; *Breke*, *v.* break, C 936; *br. his day*, fail to pay at the appointed time, G 1040; *Breke*, *imp. s.* interrupt, I 24.
Brekers, *s. pl.* breakers, transgressors, M. P. v. 78.
Brekke, *s.* break, flaw, defect, M. P. iii. 940.
Breme, *adj.* fierce, T. iv. 184; *adv.* A 1699.
Bren, *s.* bran, A 4053.
Brend, *pp.* Brent, brend, R. 1109.
Brenne, *v.* burn, M. P. xvii. 18; *Brende*, *pt. s.* burnt, M. P. i. 90; was burnt, H. F. 163; was set on fire, H. F. 537; *pt. pl.* caught fire, H. F. 954; *Brent*, *pp.* burnt, M. P. vii. 115; *Brente*, *pt. pl.* L. 731; *Brenninge*, *pres. pt.* burning, M. P. i. 90; *Brend*, *pp.* burnt, L. (A) 292; *Brennen*, *pr. pl.* burn, L. 2610.
Brenning, *s.* burning, M. P. iv. 133.
Breres, *s. pl.* briars, R. 3006.
Brest, *s.* breast, E 617.
Breste, *v.* burst, break, E 1169; *ger.* to burst, H. F. 2018; *Brast*, *pt. s.* broke, M. P. iii. 1193; *Braste*, *pl.* B 671.
Bret-ful, *adj.* brimful, H. F. 2123; A 687.
Bretherhed, *s.* brotherhood, religious order, A 511.
Breve, *adj.* brief, R. 2350.
Brew, *pt. s.* brewed, contrived, B 3575.
Breyde, *v.* start suddenly, awake, F 477;
Breyde, *pt. s.* started, went (out of his wits), B 3728; drew, B 837.
Brid, *s.* bird, L. 1757; *Briddes*, *pl.* young of birds, M. P. v. 192.
Brige, *s.* quarrel, B 2870.
Brighte, *adv.* brightly, B 11, 2034.

Brike, *s.* a perilous state, ruin, downfall, B 3580.
Brimme, *s.* brim of a lake, water, L. 2451.
Bringen, *v.* bring, B 3623.
Brinkes, *pl.* sides, banks, H. F. 803.
Brinne. See **Brenne**.
Brocage, *s.* brokery, jobbery, A 3375.
Broche, *s.* any precious small ornament, here used of a bracelet, M. P. iv. 245.
Brode, *adj. pl.* broad, thick, B 3448. See **Brood**.
Brode, *adv.* far and wide, H. F. 1683; broadly, wide awake, G 1420.
Broken, *pp.* ship-wrecked, L. 1487.
Broken. See **Breke**.
Brokkinge, *pr. pl.* warbling, A 3377.
Bromes, *pl.* broom (bushes so called), H. F. 1226.
Brond, *s.* brand, torch, L. 2252; firebrand, B 3224; **Bronde**, *dat.* a piece of hot metal on the anvil, B 2095.
Brood, *adj.* broad, thick, large, F 82. See **Brode**.
Brosten, *pt. pl.* burst, M. P. iv. 96; *pp.* broken, L. 1300. See **Breste**, **Brast**.
Brotel, *adj.* brittle, frail; fickle, L. 1855; **Brutel**, *Bo. II.* p. v. 6.
Brotelnesse, *s.* fickleness, M. P. x. 63.
Brouded, *pp.* embroidered, B 3659.
Brouke, *v.* enjoy, use, B 4490; 1 *pr. s. subj.* (optative), may I have the use of, H. F. 263; **Brouken**, *pr. pl. subj.* may they enjoy, profit by, L. 194.
Browdinge, *s.* embroidery, A 2498.
Brutel. See **Brotel**.
Bryberyes, *s. pl.* rascalities, D 1367.
Brydel, *s.* bridle, M. P. vii. 184; F 340.
Brydeleth, *pr. s.* bridles, M. P. iv. 41.
Buk, *s.* buck, M. P. v. 195; **Bukke**, B 1946; Blow the bukkes horn, have trouble for nothing, A 3387.
Bulle, *s.* papal bull, C 909.
Bulte, *v.* sift, B 4430.
Bulte, *pt. s.* built, A 1548.
Burdoun, *s.* cudgel, R. 3401; bass, A 673.
Burel, *adj.* coarse, common, D 1872.
Buriels, *s. pl.* burial-places, *i. e.* the catacombs, C 186.
Burned, *pp.* burnished, polished, H. F. 1387.
Burnettes, *pl.* dresses of brown, R. 4756.
Businesse, *s.* business, industry, G 5. See **Bisinesse**.
Busk, *s.* bush, R. 54; *pl.* A 1579.
But, *conj.* unless, M. P. ii. 82; but and, but if, L. 1790; but-if, unless, M. P. iii. 1023.
Buxom, *adj.* obedient, B 1432.
Buxomly, *adv.* obediently, E 186.
Buxumnesse, *s.* yielding, submission, M. P. xiii. 15.
By, *prep.* in the case of, with reference to, M. P. iv. 263; concerning, H. F. 742; with respect

to, about, L. 271; *by the morwe*, at morn, L. 49.
By, *adv.* by, at hand, L. 2091.
By, *v.* to buy; *go by*, go to buy, G 1294. See **Beye**.
By and by, *adv.* one after another, in order, L. 304; side by side, in order, A 1011.
Bye, *pr. pl. subj.* buy, M. P. xviii. 26.
Byen, *pr. pl.* buy, R. 2452.
Byer, *s.* buyer, R. 5928.
Byforn, *prep.* before, H. F. 60.
Bynde, *v.* bind, enthrall, M. P. iv. 249; **Bynt** him, *pr. s.* bindeth himself, M. P. iv. 47; **Bynt** her, M. P. iv. 48.
Byte, *v.* bite, B 3634; to sting, F 513; to cut deeply, F 158.
Bytinge, *s.* wound, *Bo. III.* m. vii. 7.
By-twixe, *adv.* between, *As. ii.* 5.

C.

Caas. See **Cas**.
Cable, *s.* cord, M. P. xviii. 33.
Cacche, *v.* catch, M. P. iii. 781; G 11.
Caitif, *s.* wretch, M. P. i. 124.
Cake, *s.* loaf, C 322.
Cakeling, *s.* cackling, M. P. v. 562.
Calcening, *s.* calcination, G 771.
Calcinacioun, *s.* calcination, G 804.
Calculinge, *s.* reckoning, T. i. 71.
Calden, 2 *pt. pl.* called, M. P. vii. 251.
Caleweys, *s. pl.* pears, R. 7043.
Callē, *s.* head-dress, D 1018. See **Howve**.
Cam, *pt. s.* came, F 81.
Camaille, *s.* camel, E 1196.
Camelyne, *s.* camel's hair, R. 7367.
Camuse, *adj.* flat, A 3934.
Can, 1 *pr. s.* know, am able to say, M. P. v. 14. See **Coude**.
Candel, *s.* torch, light, M. P. iv. 7.
Canel-boon, *s.* collar-bone (lit. channel-bone, with reference to the depression in the neck behind the collar-bone), M. P. iii. 943.
Canelle, *s.* cinnamon, R. 1370.
Canevas, *s.* canvas, G 939.
Cankedort, *s.* state of suffering, T. ii. 1752.
Canon, *s.* the 'Canon,' the title of a book by Avicenna, C 890.
Canstow, *for* Canst thou, B 632.
Cantel, *s.* portion, A 3008.
Cape, *pr. pl.* gape, T. v. 1133.
Capel, *s.* horse, nag, H 64.
Capitayn, *s.* captain, C 582.
Capoun, *s.* capon, L. 1389.
Carbuncle, *s.* carbuncle-stone, H. F. 1363.
Cardiacle, *s.* pain about the heart, C 313.
Care, *s.* care, ill-luck, M. P. v. 363; anxiety, trouble, B 514.

- Care, *v.* feel anxiety, E 1212.
 Careful, *adj.* full of trouble, M. P. vi. 44.
 Careyne, *s.* carrion, dead body, M. P. v. 177.
 Carf, *pl. s.* carved, cut, B 3647.
 Carie, *v.* to carry, E 585; Carien, *pr. pl.* carry, B 1814; Carieden, *pl. pl.* carried, G 1219.
 Carl, *s.* churl, country fellow, C 717.
 Carmes, *s. pl.* Carmelites, R. 7462.
 Carole, *s.* carol, L. 687; singing dance, R. 744.
 Carole, *v.* dance round singing, M. P. iii. 849.
 Carpe, *v.* chatter, A 194.
 Carrik, *s.* ship of burden, D 1688.
 Cart, *s.* chariot, H. F. 943.
 Cartere, *s.* charioteer, Bo. V. p. iv. 110.
 Cart-hors, *pl.* chariot-horses, H. F. 944.
 Cas, *s.* chance, H. F. 1052; case, affair, L. 1558; adventure, L. 1630; mischance, L. 1056; case, occasion, B 36; circumstance, state, condition, B 123; chance, hap, E 316; to *deyen* in the *cas*, though death were the result, E 859.
 Cas, *s.* case for arrows, quiver, L. 982.
 Cast, *s.* plan, H. F. 1178.
 Caste, *r. pl. s.* cast, M. P. v. 172; *pr. s. subj.* let (him) cast, M. P. xx. 4; Casteth, *pr. s.* considers, G 1414; *refl.* casts himself, devotes himself, G 738; Casten, *pr. pl.* cast about, debate, B 212; Cast, *pp.* cunningly devised, M. P. ii. 26.
 Castel, *s.* castle, M. P. iii. 1318, 1322.
 Casually, *adv.* by chance, H. F. 679.
 Catel, *s.* chattels, A 373.
 Caughte, *pl. s.* pulled, L. 1854; took, conceived, E 619; Caught, *pp.* obtained, E 1110.
 Cause, *s.* reason, B 252; *cause why*, the reason why is this, E 2435.
 Causeles, *adv.* without reason, M. P. xxii. 32.
 Causen, *pr. pl.* cause, F 452.
 Cave, *s.* used to translate astrological term 'puteus,' M. P. iv. 119; cave, L. 1225.
 Caytif, *s.* wretch, wretched or unfortunate man, B 3269.
 Celebrable, *adj.* celebrated, Bo. IV. m. vii. 35.
 Celerer, *s.* keeper of a cellar, B 3126.
 Celestials, *adj. pl.* of heaven, heavenly, H. F. 460.
 Ceptre, *s.* sceptre, M. P. v. 256; B 3334.
 Cercle, *s.* circle, H. F. 791; sphere, M. P. xvi. 9.
 Cered, *pp. as adj.* waxed, G 808.
 Cerial ook, *s.* holm oak, A 2290.
 Cerimonies, *s. pl.* ceremonious acts, acts of courtship, F 515.
 Ceriously, *adv.* minutely, with full details, B 185.
 Certain, *adj.* a certain quantity of; *c. gold*, a stated sum of money, B 242; *c. tresor*, a quantity of treasure, B 442; Certeyn, a certain sum, a fixed quantity, G 776; Certeins, *pl.* certain, Bo. V. p. v. 125.
 Certes, *adv.* certainly, M. P. i. 28; G 1478.
 Certeyn, *adv.* certainly, M. P. i. 169; In certayn, certainly, T. iv. 908.
 Ceruce, *s.* white lead, A 630.
 Cese, *v.* put an end to, M. P. iv. 11. See Cesse.
 Cesse, *v.* cease, B 1066.
 Cetewale, *s.* either (1) zedoary, or (2) the herb valerian, B 1951. See Setewale.
 Ceynt, *s.* girdle, A 3235.
 Chaced, *pp.* chased, driven away, M. P. xi. 14.
 Chaffare, *s.* merchandise; *hence*, matter, subject, E 2438.
 Chaffare, *ger.* to trade, barter, deal, traffic, B 139.
 Chaires, *s. pl.* thrones, Bo. IV. m. ii. 4.
 Chalaundre, *s.* sort of lark, R. 914.
 Chalaunged, *pl. s.* arrogated, Bo. II. p. vi. 39.
 Chalk-stoon, *s.* a piece of chalk, G 1207.
 Chalons, *s.* coverlets from Chalons, A 4140.
 Chamberere, *s.* maidservant, chambermaid, E 819.
 Champartye, *s.* partnership, A 1949.
 Chanon, *s.* canon, G 573; Chanoun, G 972.
 Chapeleyne, *s.* nun who said minor offices, A 164.
 Chapitres, *pl.* chapters, M. P. v. 32.
 Chapmanhode, *s.* trade, barter, B 143.
 Chapmen, *s. pl.* traders, merchants, B 135.
 Char, *s.* car, chariot, M. P. vii. 24; F 671.
 Charbocle, *s.* carbuncle (a precious stone), B 2061.
 Charge, *s.* load, burden, M. P. vii. 32; a heavy thing, H. F. 746; importance, M. P. iii. 894; responsibility, E 163; weight, L. 020; consequence, L. 2383; *of that no ch.*, for that no matter, it is of no importance, G 749.
 Charge, *v.* load, L. 2151.
 Chargeant, *adj.* burdensome, B 2433.
 Charite, *s.* charity, M. P. iii. 642.
 Charmeresses, *fem. pl.* workers with charms, H. F. 1261.
 Chartres, *s. pl.* agreements, T. iii. 340.
 Chasted, *pp.* chastened, taught, F 491. See Chastyse.
 Chasteleyne, *s.* chatelaine, R. 3740.
 Chasteyn, *s.* chestnut, A 1921.
 Chastisinge, *s.* chastening, M. P. i. 129.
 Chastyse, *v.* chasten, M. P. i. 39; *imp. s.* M. P. i. 129. See Chasted.
 Chaunce, *s.* chance, incident, M. P. iii. 1285; hap, destiny, M. P. iii. 1113; luck, G 593; 'chance,' a technical term in the game of hazard, C 653.
 Change, *s.* change, exchange, F 535.
 Chauntepleure, title of a song upon grief following joy, M. P. vii. 320.
 Chaunterie, *s.* endowment for singing masses for the dead, A 510.
 Chayer, *s.* throne, Bo. I. m. v. 3.
 Cheef, *adj.* chief, M. P. iii. 910, 911.
 Cheek, *s.* check, *i.e.* checkboue, B 3228.

- Chees**, 1 *pl. s.* chose, M. P. iii. 791; *imp. s.* choose, L. 1449; **Cheest**, *pr. s.* chooseth, M. P. v. 623. See **Chese**.
Cheeste, *s.* strife, I 556.
Chek, *s. as int.* check (at chess), M. P. iii. 659.
Chekkere, *s.* chess-board, M. P. iii. 660.
Chelaundre, R. 81. See **Chalaundre**.
Chepe, *s.* a time of cheapness, H. F. 1974.
Cerche, *s.* a church, G 546.
Chere, *s.* cheer, look, manner, M. P. iii. 545; kindly greeting, M. P. iv. 146; face, countenance, L. 64; appearance, L. 2079; *doth him chere*, makes him good cheer, L. 2452; entertainment, B 180; show, E 678; kindly expression, E 1112.
Cherete, *s.* dearness, R. 3516.
Cherl, *s.* churl, L. 136; C 289.
Cheryce, *v.* cherish, M. P. ix. 52; **Cherisheth**, *imp. pl.* cherish ye, F 353.
Ches, *s.* chœs, M. P. iii. 619.
Chese, *v.* choose, M. P. v. 399; **Chesen**, *v.* M. P. xxii. 86; **Cheseth**, *imp. pl.* M. P. iv. 17; **Ches**, *pl. s.* chose, B 3706; **Chose**, *pp.* chosen, M. P. iii. 1004.
Chesinge, *s.* choosing, choice, E 162.
Cheste, *s.* coffin, E 29.
Chevalrye, *s.* chivalry, knighthood, H. F. 1340.
Chevauche, *s.* swift course (lit. a ride), M. P. iv. 144.
Chevauchee. See **Chivachee**.
Cheve, *v.*; *in phr.* yvel mote he cheve = ill may he end, or ill may he thrive, G 1225.
Chevered, *pp.* shivered, R. 1732.
Chevesaile, *s.* collar, R. 1082.
Chvisaunce, *s.* borrowing, L. 2434.
Chevise, *v.* procure, R. 6425; *refl.* accomplished her desire, M. P. iv. 289.
Cheyne, *s.* chain, M. P. xi. 16.
Chiche, *adj.* parsimonious, R. 5588.
Chideresse, *s.* scold, R. 4266.
Chiertee, *s.* dearness, B 1526; affection, F 881.
Chike, *s.* chick, R. 541.
Chiknes, *pl.* chickens, A 380.
Child, *s.* child, a term of address to a young man, B 2000.
Childhede, *s. dat.* childhood, B 1691.
Chilindre, *s.* pocket sun-dial, B 1396.
Chimbe, *s.* rim of the barrel, A 3895.
Chirche, *s.* church, A 460.
Chirche-hawes, *s. pl.* churchyards, I 80r.
Chirketh, *pr. pl.* rustling, Bo. I. m. vi. 11; *pr. s.* twitters, D 1804.
Chirking, *s.* murmuring, A 2004.
Chirkinges, *pl.* shriekings, cries, H. F. 1943.
Chit, *pr. s.* chides, G 921.
Chiteren, *v.* chatter, prattle, G 1397.
Chivachee, *s.* feat of horsemanship, H 50.
Chivachye, *s.* expedition, A 85.
Chivalrye, *s.* chivalry, company of knights, B 235; troops of horse, cavalry, B 3871.
Chogh, *s.* chough, M. P. v. 345.
Choppen, *v.* strike downwards, knock, H. F. 1824.
Chose. See **Chese**.
Choys, *s.* choice, M. P. v. 406; E 170.
Chyde, *v.* chide, complain, F 649.
Chyning, *adj.* gaping, yawning, Bo. I. p. 45.
Ciclatoun, *s.* a costly kind of thin cloth, B 1924.
Ciergis, *s. pl.* tapers, R. 6248.
Cink, *num.* cinque, five, C 653.
Cipres, *s.* cypress, M. P. v. 179; **Ciprees**, B 2071.
Citee, *s.* city, F 46.
Citezein, *s.* citizen, H. F. 930.
Citole, *s.* stringed instrument of music, A 1959.
Citrinacioun, *s.* citronizing, the turning to the color of citron, a process in alchemy, G 816.
Clamb, *pl. s.* climbed, B 1987; **Clamben**, *pl. pl.* climbed, H. F. 2151.
Claperes, *s. pl.* burrows, R. 1405.
Clappe, *s.* thunderclap, H. F. 1040.
Clappe, *pr. pl.* chatter, prattle, G 965; **Clappeth**, *imp. pl.* make a constant clatter, keep chattering, E 1200; *pr. s.* talks fast, B 3971.
Clapping, *s.* chatter, idle talk, E 999.
Clarioning, *s.* the music of the clarion, H. F. 1242.
Clarioun, *s.* clarion, H. F. 1240.
Clarre, **Clarree**, *s.* wine mixed with honey and spices, and afterwards strained till it was clear, M. P. ix. 16; A 1471.
Clause, *s.* sentence, B 251.
Clawe, *v.* rub, scratch, A 4326; D 940.
Cled, *pp.* clad, furnished, M. P. iii. 252.
Cleer nesse, *s.* clearness, brightness, glory, G 403.
Clene, *adj.* clean, pure, unmixed, B 1183.
Clene, *adv.* entirely, M. P. iii. 423; F 626.
Clepe, *v.* call, name, M. P. iii. 810; **Cleped**, *pp.* M. P. i. 159; **Clepen**, *v.* call, F 331; **Clepeth**, *pr. s.* calls, F 382; *men clepe*, people call, E 115.
Clere, *adj.* clear, noble, pure, H. F. 1575; *pl.* noble, M. P. v. 77; clear, beautiful, L. 249; clear, bright, E 779.
Clergeon, *s.* a chorister-boy, B 1693.
Clergial, *adj.* clerkly, learned, G 752.
Clerk, *s.* clerk, learned man, student, E 1.
Cleve, *v.* adhere; *pr. pl.* Bo. III. p. xi. 127.
Cleve, *v.* cleave, cut, split, L. 751; **Cloven**, *pp.* L. 738.
Clew, 1 *pl. s.* rubbed, H. F. 1702. *Pl. t. of* Clawen.
Clew, *s.* clew, L. 2140.
Cley, *s.* clay, G 807.

- Clif**, *s.* cliff, L. 1497; Clyves, *pl.* L. 1470; Clifles, cliffs, rocks, M. P. iii. 161.
Clifte, *s.* chink, Bo. IV. p. iv. 334; cleft, L. 740.
Cliket, *s.* latch-key, E 2046.
Clinck, Clinken, *v.* to ring, sound, clink, tingle, B 1186; C 664.
Clinking, *s.* tinkling, B 3984.
Clippe, *v.* clip, cut, B 3257.
Clippeth, *pr. s.* embraces, L. 876.
Clipsy, *adj.* eclipsed, obscure, R. 5349.
Clobbed, *adj.* clubbed, B 3088.
Cloisterer, *s.* a cloister-monk, B 3129.
Clocke, *s.* clock; *of the clock*, by the clock, B 14.
Clom, *interj.* hush, A 3638.
Clomb, 1 *pt. s.* climbed, M. P. iv. 271; Clamben, *pt. pl.* H. F. 2151.
Clombe. See **Clymben**.
Cloos, *adj.* secret, T. ii. 1534; close, secret, G 1369.
Clos, *s.* a pen, enclosure, B 4550.
Close, *v.* close, M. P. iii. 873.
Closer, *s.* enclosure, R. 4069.
Clote-leef, *s.* a leaf of the burdock or clote-bur, G 577.
Clothered, *pp.* clotted, A 2745.
Clout, *s.* a cloth, C 736; Cloutes, *pl.* cloths, portions of a garment, rags, C 348.
Cloven, *pp.* cleft, L. 738. See **Cleve**.
Clowe-gilofre, *s.* clove, spice, B 1952.
Clowes, *pl.* claws, H. F. 1785.
Clusted, *pp.* covered with clouds, Bo. I. m. iii. 6.
Clymben, *v.* to climb, F 106; Clymbeth, *pr. s.* B 3966; Clombe, *pp.* B 12; *were clombe*, hadst climbed, B 3592.
Clyven, *pr. pl.* cleave, keep, Bo. III. p. xi. 127.
Clyves. See **Clif**.
Coagulat, *pp.* coagulated, clotted, G 811.
Cod, *s.* bag, C 534.
Coempioun, *s.* an imposition so called, lit. joint purchase, the buying up of the whole of any commodity in the market, Bo. I. p. iv. 101.
Cofre, *s.* coffer, coffin, M. P. v. 177; coffer, chest, L. 380; coffer, money-box, G 836.
Cogge, *s.* cock-boat, L. 1481.
Coillons, *pl.* testicles, C 952.
Cok, *s.* cock, M. P. v. 350.
Cokenay, *s.* milksop, A 4208.
Cokes, *s. pl.* cooks, C 538.
Cokewold, *s.* cuckold, A 3152.
Cokkel, *s.* cockle, *i.e.* the corn-cockle, B 1183.
Cokkes, corruption of Goddess, H 9; I 29.
Cokkow, *s.* cuckoo, M. P. v. 498.
Col-blak, *adj.* coal-black, A 2142.
Colde, *v.* grow cold, B 879; *doth myn herte colde*, makes my heart grow cold, L. 240.
Colerik, *adj.* choleric, F 51.
Coles, *s. pl.* coals, G 1114.
Col-fox, *s.* brant-fox, B 4405.
Collacioun, *s.* conference, E 325.
Collect, *s.* table of planetary motions, F 1275.
Colour, *s.* color, outward appearance, M. P. ii. 66; Coloures, *pl.* colors, pretences (a pun), F 511.
Colpons, *pl.* shreds, A 679.
Columbyn, *adj.* dove-like, E 2141.
Colver, *s.* dove, L. 2319.
Comaundour, *s.* commander, B 495.
Combred, *pp.* encumbered, Bo. III. m. x. 9.
Combre-world, *s.* useless creature, T. iv. 279.
Combust, *pp.* burnt up, T. iii. 717; As. ii. 4, 53; G 811.
Come, *s.* coming, R. 7628; G 343.
Come, *v.* come; *come thereby*, come by it, acquire it, G 1395; Comestow, comest thou, L. 1887; Cometh, *pr. s.* as *fut.* shall come, M. P. iv. 11; Comth, *pr. s.* comes, B 407; Com, *pt. s.* came, M. P. iii. 134; Comen, *ger.* to come, M. P. v. 76; *pt. pl.* came, L. 1241; *pp.* come, B 260; *ben comen*, are come, B 1130; Coomen, *pt. pl.* came, B 1805.
Comeveden, *pt. pl.* influenced, T. iii. 17.
Comlinesse, *s.* comeliness, beauty, M. P. iii. 966.
Commaundement, *s.* command, H. F. 2021.
Commoeve, *ger.* to move, influence, Bo. IV. p. iv. 310.
Commoevinge, *s.* moving, disturbing, iv. 7.
Commune, *adj.* general, comm^o 437.
Commune, *s.* the commons, 279.
Commune, *v.* commune, converse, G 982.
Companye, *s.* com^o 437; nionship, M. P. iv. 219; company, B 134.
Comparisoned, *pp.* compared, Bo. II. p. vii. 129.
Compas, *s.* compass, circuit, M. P. iv. 137; a very large circle, H. F. 798; craft, contriving, H. F. 462; enclosure, continent; *tryne compass*, the threefold world, containing earth, sea, and heaven, G 45; Compace, plan, H. F. 1170.
Compassment, *s.* plotting, L. 1416.
Compassed, *pp.* enclosed, M. P. xi. 21; *pt. s.* plotted, planned, L. 1414.
Complexiouns, *pl.* the (four) temperaments, H. F. 21.
Compleyne, *v.* complain, lament, M. P. iv. 93; Compleyneth, *imp. pl.* lament ye, M. P. iv. 290.
Compleyninge, *s.* complaint, L. 1357.
Compleynt, *s.* complaint, a poem so called, M. P. ii. 43; iii. 464.
Complisshen, *v.* accomplish, Bo. IV. p. iv. 27.
Comporte, *v.* bear, T. v. 1397.
Composiciouns, *s. pl.* suitable arrangements, F 229.
Compotent, *adj.* all-powerful, Bo. V. p. vi. 59.

- Compounded**, *pp.* compounded, composed, H. F. 1029; As. ii. 5, 2; mingled, H. F. 2108.
- Comprehende**, *v.* take in (in the mind), F 223; Comprehended, *pp.* expressed in a brief saying, summed up, M. P. vii. 83.
- Comunalitee**, *s.* empire, Bo. IV. p. vi. 442.
- Comune**, *adj.* accustomed to, M. P. iii. 812; *Comun profit*, the good of the country, M. P. v. 47, 75.
- Comunly**, *adv.* commonly, E 726.
- Comuntee**, *s.* community, R. 5209.
- Comyn**, *s.* cummin, B 2045.
- Conclude**, *v.* draw a conclusion, B 14; include, put together, G 429; attain to a successful result, G 773.
- Conclusioun**, *s.* plan, M. P. xv. 11; *as in conclusioun*, after all, M. P. iv. 257; moral of a tale, L. 2723; result, successful end of an experiment, G 672; reason, F 492.
- Concours**, *s.* course, R. 4360.
- Condicion**, *s.* condition, stipulation; *in this condicion*, upon this condition, M. P. v. 407.
- Conestablerye**, *s.* constable's jurisdiction, R. 4218.
- Confedred**, *pp.* rendered confederates, conjoined, M. P. ii. 42, 52.
- Conferineth**, *imp. pl.* confirm, strengthen, M. P. iv. 20.
- Confiture**, *s.* composition, C 862.
- Qhevaude**, *v.* destroy, M. P. i. 40; *pp.* overwhelmed. *v.* B 100; destroyed in soul, G 137.
- Confus**, *adj.* confused, H. F. 1517; *pp.* as *adj.* convicted of folly, G 463.
- Congeled**, *pp.* congealed, frozen, H. F. 1126.
- Congeyen**, *v.* dismiss, T. 479.
- Coniecte**, *v.* conjecture, R. 6925.
- Conies**, *s. pl.* conies, rabbits, R. 1404.
- Coninges**, *s. pl.* conies, R. 7044.
- Conioingie**, *s.* conjunction, G 95.
- Conisaunce**, *s.* acquaintance, R. 4668; knowledge, R. 5465.
- Conne**, *ger.* to be able, M. P. iii. 279; 1 *pr. pl.* know, H. F. 1265; *Conne*, *v.* con, learn, B 1730; 1 *pr. pl.* we can, are able, B 483; *pr. s. subj.* he may know; *al conne he*, whether he may know, G 846. See **Can**.
- Conning**, *s.* skill, knowledge, L. 68.
- Conning**, *adj.* skillful, B 3690.
- Conningly**, *adv.* skilfully, E 1017.
- Conseil**, *s.* council, B 204; counsel, B 425.
- Conseillers**, *pl.* councillors, L. 1550.
- Conservatif**, *adj.* preserving; *conservatif the soun*, preserving the sound, H. F. 847.
- Conserved**, *pp.* preserved, H. F. 732.
- Consistorie**, *s.* judgment-seat, C 162.
- Conspiracye**, *s.* plot, B 3889.
- Constable**, *s.* governor, B 512.
- Constablesse**, *s.* constable's wife, B 539.
- Constance**, *s.* constancy, E 668, 1000, 1008.
- Constellacioun**, *s.* constellation, cluster of stars, F 129.
- Constreyneth**, *pt. s. refl.* contracted herself, Bo. I. p. i. 16; *pr. s.* constrain, E 800.
- Construe**, *imp. pl.* construe, interpret, L. 152.
- Consulers**, *s. pl.* consuls, Bo. II. p. vi. 14.
- Consumpte**, *pp. pl.* consumed, Bo. II. m. vii. 30.
- Contagious**, *adj.* contiguous, Bo. III. p. xii. 5.
- Contek**, *s.* strife, A 2003.
- Contenance**, *s.* pretence, appearance, G 1264; demenor, E 924; self-possession, E 1110.
- Contene**, *pt. s.* held together, Bo. III. p. xii. 46.
- Contraire**, *s.* the contrary, H. F. 1540; adversary, M. P. ii. 64.
- Contraire**, *adj.* adverse, L. 1360.
- Contraire**, *adj.* contrary, B 3964; *in contrarie*, in contradiction, G 1477.
- Contrarien**, *v.* to go contrary to, oppose, F 705.
- Contree**, fatherland, home, Bo. II. p. iv. 134; country, L. 5.
- Contree-ward**, to his, toward his country, L. 2176.
- Contre-houses**, *pl.* houses of his country, homes, M. P. vii. 25.
- Controve**, *v.* contrive, R. 7547.
- Contubernial**, *s.* fellow-soldier, I 760.
- Contune**, *v.* continue, R. 5205.
- Conveyen**, *v.* convey, introduce, E 55; *Conveyed*, *pt. pl.* accompanied, went as convoy, E 391.
- Convict**, *pp.* convicted (of evil), overcome, M. P. i. 86.
- Conyes**, *pl.* rabbits, conies, M. P. v. 193.
- Cool**, *adj.* unimaginative, dull, L. (A) 258.
- Coomen**, *pt. pl.* came, B 1805. See **Come**.
- Cop**, *s.* summit, Bo. II. m. iv. 7.
- Cope**, *s.* vault, L. 1527.
- Coper**, *s.* copper, H. F. 1487; G 829.
- Coppe**, *s.* hill-top, H. F. 1166; cup, A 134.
- Corage**, *s.* mind, M. P. iii. 794; heart, mind, L. 397; courage, B 1970; will, E 907; feeling, disposition, E 220; *of his corage*, in his disposition, F 22.
- Corhettes**, *pl.* corbels, H. F. 1304.
- Cordewane**, *s.* Cordovan leather, B 1922.
- Corfew-tyme**, *s.* curfew-time, about 8 P.M., A 3645.
- Corige**, *v.* correct; *pr. s.* Bo. IV. p. vii. 42.
- Cormeraunt**, *s.* cormorant, M. P. v. 362.
- Corn**, *s.* grain, C 863; *Cornes*, *pl.* cornfields, pieces of standing corn, B 3225; grains of corn, H. F. 698.
- Cornemuse**, *s.* bagpipe, H. F. 1218.
- Corniculere**, *s.* registrar, secretary, G 369.
- Corny**, *adj.* applied to ale, strong of the corn or malt, C 315, 456.
- Corosif**, *adj.* corrosive, G 853.

- Coroumpinge**, *s.* corruption, Bo. III. p. xii. 90.
- Coroun**, *s.* crown, L. 216; the constellation called 'the Northern Crown,' L. 224; Coroune, crown, M. P. ii. 58; Corone, crown, garland, E 381.
- Coroune**, *pp.* crowned, L. 242; B 3555.
- Corps**, *s.* dead body, M. P. ii. 19; F 519.
- Corpus**, *s.* body; *Corpus Dominus*, false Latin for *corpus Domini*, the body of the Lord, B 1625; *Corpus Madrian*, the body of St. Mathurin, B 3082; *Corpus bones*, an intentionally nonsensical oath, composed of 'corpus domini,' the Lord's body, and 'bones,' C 314.
- Correccioun**, *s.* correction, I 60.
- Corrumpable**, *adj.* corruptible, A 3010.
- Corrumpeth**, *pr. s.* (everything) becomes corrupt, L. 2237; *Corrupted*, *pt. s.* corrupted, I 819.
- Cors**, *s.* body, L. 676; *corpse*, C 665.
- Corseynt**, *s.* a saint (lit. holy body); esp. a shrine, H. F. 117.
- Corumpe**, *v.* become corrupt, Bo. III. p. xi. 65.
- Corve**, *pp.* cut, L. 2697; *cost*, B 3564.
- Corven**, *pp.* cut, M. P. v. 425; *carved*, H. F. 1295.
- Cos**, *s.* kiss, R. 3663.
- Cost**, *s.* coast, place, R. 3931; *choice*, *condition*; *Nedes cost*, of necessity (lit. by condition of necessity), L. 2697; *cost*, B 3564.
- Costage**, *s.* cost, expense, outlay, E 1126.
- Coste**, *s.* the coast, B 1626.
- Costeyng**, *pr. pt.* coasting, skirting, R. 134.
- Costrel**, *s.* flask, kind of bottle, L. 2666.
- Cote**, *s.* a cot, E 398.
- Cote**, *s.* a coat, outer garment, used of a pair of a woman's apparel, E 913.
- Cote-armour**, *s.* coat with armorial bearings, B 2056.
- Cote-armure**, *s.* surcoat, H. F. 1326.
- Couche**, *v.* to cower, E 1206.
- Couchen**, *v.* lay, R. 6903; *Couched*, *pt. s.* laid down, laid in order, M. P. v. 216.
- Coude**, *pt. s.* knew, M. P. iii. 667; *coude no good*, knew nothing that was good, was untrained, M. P. iii. 390; *Coud*, *pp.* known, M. P. iii. 787; *Coude*, *i. pt. s.* could, was able, L. 116; *pt. s.* knew; *coude her good*, knew what was for Dido's good, L. 1182. See **Can**, **Couthe**.
- Counsaile**, *imp. s.* counsel, M. P. i. 155.
- Counseyf**, *s.* secret, M. P. v. 348.
- Countenance**, *s.* appearance, show, M. P. x. 34; *looks*, *appearance*, M. P. iii. 613; *showing favor*, M. P. iii. 1022.
- Counterfete**, *v.* render exactly, repeat, M. P. iii. 1241. See **Counterfete**.
- Countour**, *s.* arithmetician, M. P. iii. 435; *auditor*, A 359.
- Countour**, *s.* abacus, counting-board, M. P. iii. 436.
- Counterfete**, *v.* counterfeit, copy, H. F. 1212; *Counterfeted*, *pp.* feigned, M. P. iii. 869. See **Counterfete**.
- Countrepeise**, *v.* cause to balance each other, render equivalent, H. F. 1750.
- Countrepleted**, *pp.* made the subject of pleadings and counter-pleadings, argued against, L. 476.
- Countre-taille**, *s.* counter-tally, E 1190.
- Countrewayte**, *v.* watch against, B 2509.
- Coupe**, *s.* cup, L. 1122.
- Coued**, *pp.* cowered, R. 465.
- Cours**, *s.* course, M. P. iv. 55; L. 1340.
- Coursere**, *s.* courser, horse, L. 1114.
- Courtepy**, *s.* cape, A 290.
- Couth**, *pp.* plain, evident, R. 4213; *known*, E 942.
- Couthe**, *i. pt. s.* knew, M. P. iii. 800; *could*, M. P. iii. 759. See **Coude**.
- Couthe**, *adv.* in a known way, manifestly, H. F. 757.
- Coveityse**, *s.* covetousness, C 424.
- Covenable**, *adj.* fit, proper, M. P. xviii. 25; *agreeable*, Bo. IV. p. vi. 245; *congruous*, Bo. III. p. xii. 198; *suitable*, I 80.
- Covent**, *s.* conventual body, the monks composing the conventual body, B 1827; *convent*, G 1007.
- Coverchiefs**, *s. pl.* kerchiefs, A 453.
- Covercle**, *s.* pot-lid, H. F. 792.
- Covered**, *pp.* recovered from, healed, *pt. s.* covered, E 914.
- Covetour**, *s.* one who covets, M. P. iv. 262.
- Covetyse**, *s.* covetousness, M. P. ix. 32; L. 136.
- Covyne**, *s.* craft, intriguing, R. 3799.
- Coward**, *adj.* cowardly, B 3100.
- Coy**, *adj.* shy, L. 1548; *adj. or adv.* quiet, E 2.
- Coye**, *v.* quiet, T. ii. 801.
- Coyne**, *s.* coin, M. P. ix. 20; E 1168.
- Coynes**, *s. pl.* quinces, R. 1374.
- Crabbed**, *adj.* shrewish, hoarse, bitter, E 1203.
- Cracching**, *s.* scratching, A 2834.
- Cradel**, *s.* cradle, G 122.
- Craft**, *s.* art, M. P. v. 1; *skill*, *way of doing a thing*, F 185; *secret power*, *might*, B 3258; *subtle contrivance*, F 249.
- Craftily**, *adv.* cunningly, skilfully, B 48.
- Crafty**, *s.* skilful, sensible, M. P. iii. 439.
- Crafty**, *adj.* skilful, clever, G 1290.
- Craketh**, *pr. s.* sings hoarsely, E 1850.
- Crampissheth**, *pr. s.* draws convulsively together, M. P. vii. 171.
- Crased**, *pp.* cracked, G 934.
- Creat**, *adj.* created, M. P. xvi. 2.
- Creatour**, *s.* Creator, C 901.

Creauce, *s.* belief, credence, M. P. i. 61; creed, B 915; Creance, object of faith, B 340.
Creauce, *v.* get credit, B 1479; creanced, *pp.* raised on credit, B 1556.
Crece, *s.* increase, R. 4875.
Crede, *s.* creed, belief, G 1047.
Credence, *s.* belief, credence, L. 20.
Crekes, *s. pl.* devices, A 4051.
Crepe, *v.* creep, B 3627; Crepeth, *pr. s.* E 1134.
Crepul, *s.* cripple, T. iv. 1458.
Crevice, *s.* crevice, crack, H. F. 2086.
Crinkled, *pp.* full of turns or cranks, L. 2012.
Crips, *adj.* crisp, curly, H. F. 1386.
Cristal, *adj.* crystal, C 347.
Cristemasse, *s.* Christmas, B 126, 1730.
Cristen, *adj.* Christian, B 222.
Cristendom, *s.* the Christian religion, B 351; Christianity, G 447.
Cristenly, *adv.* in a Christian manner, B 1122.
Cristianitee, *s.* company of Christians, B 544.
Cristned, *pp.* baptized, B 226; G 352.
Cristofre, *s.* image of St. Christopher worn as an amulet, A 115.
Croce, *s.* cross, crozier, R. 6470.
Crois, *s.* cross, M. P. i. 60. See **Cros**.
Crokes, *pl.* crooks, hooks, L. 640.
Crokke, *s.* earthenware pot, M. P. xiii. 12.
Crommes, *s. pl.* crumbs, G 60.
Crone, *s.* crone, hag, B 432.
Crop, *s.* top, summit, T. v. 25.
Cropen, *pp.* crept, A 4259.
Croper, *s.* crupper, G 566.
Crope, *s. pl.* tops, M. P. iii. 424.
Cros, *s.* cross, M. P. i. 82. See **Crois**.
Croslet, *s.* a crucible, G 1147; *Croslet*, *s.* *crucible*.
Crouche, *pr. s.* sign with the cross, A 3479.
Croude, *v.* crowd, push, H. F. 2095; Crowdest, *2 pr. s.* dost press, dost push, B 296.
Crouke, *s.* crock, A 4158.
Croune, *s.* crown, head, H. F. 1825.
Crowned, *pp.* crowned, M. P. i. 144; crowned, *i. e.* supreme, F 526. See **Corowned**.
Crowding, *s.* pressure, motive power, B 299.
Croweth, *pr. s. refl.*; *him croweth*, crows, C 362.
Crownet, *s.* coronet, R. 3203.
Croys, *s.* cross, B 450; C 532; E 556.
Crul, *adj. pl.* curly, A 81.
Cubyte, *s.* cubit, H. F. 1370.
Cucurbites, *s. pl.* flasks for distilling, G 794.
Cukkow, *s.* cuckoo, M. P. v. 358.
Culpe, *s.* guilt, I 336.
Cunne, *v.* be able, H. F. 2004.
Cunning, *s.* skill, M. P. v. 167, 487.
Cure, *s.* heed, care, M. P. ii. 82; H. F. 1298; *I do no cure*, I care not, L. 152; *lyth in his cure*, depends on whether he cares for me, L. 1176; remedy, cure, M. P. v. 128; *did his*

besy cure, was busily employed, M. P. v. 369; *his lyves cure*, the object of his thoughts always, M. P. iv. 131; charge, Bo. II. p. iii. 35; care, endeavor, B 188; honest cure = care for honorable things, C 557; in cure = in her care, in her power, B 230.
Cures, *s. pl.* cares, pursuits, E 82.
Curiositee, *s.* intricacy, M. P. xviii. 81.
Curre, *s.* cur, L. 396.
Currouns, *s. pl.* runners, couriers, H. F. 2128.
Cursedly, *adv.* wickedly, abominably, B 3419.
Cursednesse, *s.* malice, B 1821; wickedness, B 3575; shrewishness, E 1239.
Curteisly, *adv.* courteously, B 1636.
Curteisye, *s.* courtesy, refinement, B 3686; E 74; F 95.
Curteyn, *s.* curtain, M. P. v. 240.
Customere, *adj.* accustomed, R. 4936.
Cut, *s.* a lot, C 793.
Cutted, *pp.* cut short, L. 973.

D.

Daf, *s.* fool, A 4208.
Dagginge, *s.* slitting, I 418.
Dagon, *s.* fragment, D 1751.
Dale, *s.* the dale, M. P. v. 327.
Dalliance, **Dalliaunce**, *s.* favor, L. 356; playful demeanor; *he doth dalliaunce*, he behaves playfully and good-naturedly, B 1894.
Damage, *s.* pity, loss, L. 598.
Dame, *s.* mother, C 684.
Dampnable, *adj.* damnable, C 472.
Dampnacioun, *s.* damnation, C 500.
Dammene, *1 pr. s.* condemn, M. P. x. 49; Dampned, *pp.* condemned, M. P. iii. 725.
Dan, *s. as epithet of persons*, Sir, H. F. 161. See **Daun**.
Dar, *1 pr. s.* dare, M. P. i. 53; Darstow, darest thou, L. 1450; Darst, *2 pr. s.* darest, B 860; Dorste, *pl. s.* durst, B 753. See **Dorste**.
Dare, *v.* daze, D 1294.
Darketh, *pr. s.* lies in the dark, lies hid, L. 816.
Darreyne, *v.* contest, A 1609.
Daswed, *pp.* dazed, confused, H. F. 658; Dassen, *pl. pl.* daze, are dazed, are dazzled, H 31.
Date, *s.* a date, term, period, G 1411.
Daun, *s.* lord, sir, A 1379; Dan, B 3982.
Daunce, *s.* dance, set, H. F. 639.
Daunce, *v.* to dance, B 126; Dauncen, *pr. pl. F* 272; Daunceden, *pl. pl.* danced, M. P. v. 232.
Dauncing-chambres, *pl.* dancing-rooms, L. 1106.
Daungere, *s.* influence, dominion, R. 1470; Danger, Power to Harm (personified), M. P. v. 136.
Dangerous, *adj.* difficult to please, B 2129.
Daunte thyself, *imp. s.* subdue thyself, M. P.

- xiii. 13; Dauntest, 2 *pr.* s. tamest, M. P. v. 114.
- Dawe**, *v.* to dawn, B 3872; Daweth, *pr.* s. dawns, L. 46.
- Dawening**, s. dawning, dawn, L. 1188.
- Dawes**, *s. pl.* days, R. 2838.
- Dawing**, s. dawn, T. iii. 1466.
- Day**, *s.* day; also, an appointed day for the payment of a sum of money, G 1040; day, time, B 3374; *Dayes, pl.* days, lifetime, B 118; *now a dayes, now-a-days*, at this time, E 1164.
- Dayeseye**, *s.* daisy, L. 182; Daysic, L. 224.
- Debaat**, *s.* strife, G 1389.
- Debat**, *s.* struggle, mental conflict, M. P. iii. 1192; debate, strife, war, B 130.
- Debate**, *v.* to fight, war, B 2058.
- Debonaire**, *adj.* gracious, M. P. i. 6; *as s.* kind person, M. P. iii. 624.
- Debonairly**, *adv.* graciously, kindly, M. P. iii. 851; courteously, M. P. iii. 518; gently, T. ii. 1259; Debonerly, with kindness, M. P. vii. 127.
- Debonairtee**, *s.* graciousness, M. P. vi. 108.
- Deceivable**, *adj.* capable of deceiving, full of deceit, M. P. xv. 3; Deceyvable, M. P. xviii. 43.
- Declaring**, *s.* declaration, B 3172.
- Declyneth**, *pr.* s. turns aside, Bo. IV. p. vi. 212.
- Declyninge**, *adj.* sloping, Bo. V. m. i. 20.
- Decoped**, *pp.* slit, R. 843.
- Dede**, *pp.* dead, A 942. See **Deed**.
- Dede**, *s. dat.* deed, M. P. i. 45; in dede = indeed, in reality, B 3511.
- Dede**, *ger.* s. to grow dead, become stupefied, H. F. 552.
- Dedyt**, *s.* delight, A 2177.
- Deed**, *adj.* dead, M. P. ii. 14; *pp. as adj.* dead, B 209; *pp.* dead, F 287; *Dede, pl.* sluggish, M. P. v. 187; *with wounds dede*, deadly wounds, M. P. iii. 1211.
- Deedly**, *adj.* deathly, dying, L. 885.
- Deedly**, *adv.* deathly, mortally, G 476.
- Deef**, *adj.* deaf, A 446.
- Deel**, *s.* share, part, bit, H. F. 331; *pl.* times, M. P. vi. 35. See **Del**.
- Deer**, *s. pl.* animals, B 1926.
- Dees**, *s.* dais, H. F. 1360, 1658.
- Dees**, *s. pl.* dice, T. ii. 1347; F 690.
- Deeth**, *s.* death, B 3567; E 36, 510.
- Deface**, *v.* to obliterate, E. 510.
- Defame**, *s.* dishonor, C 612. See **Diffame**.
- Defaute**, *s.* lack, want, M. P. iii. 5; defect, M. P. xxii. 56; E 1018; fault (hunting term), *were on a defaute y-falle*, had a check, M. P. iii. 384; default, fault, wickedness, B 3718; fault, sin, C 370.
- Defence**, *s.* concealment, covering, M. P. v. 273; resistance, L. 1931; prohibition, R. 1142.
- Defenden**, *v.* to forbid, C 590.
- Defet**, *pp.* enfeebled, T. v. 618.
- Defoulen**, *pp.* disgraced, Bo. IV. m. vii. 54.
- Degyse**, *adj.* fashionable, I 417.
- Degree**, *s.* footstep, Bo. IV. m. i. 47; horizontal stripes, Bo. I. p. i. 42; rank, A 1168.
- Degrees**, *s. pl.* degrees of the zodiac, F 386.
- Deknes**, *s. pl.* deacons, G 547.
- Del**, *s.* part, bit, whit, M. P. iii. 937; share, M. P. iii. 1001; part; *every del*, every whit, entirely, G 1269; *pl.* times, H. F. 1495; *a gret del*, a great deal, very often, M. P. iii. 1159; *never a del*, not a whit, M. P. iii. 543. See **Decl**.
- Deled**, *pt. pl.* dealt, had intercourse, L. 1517.
- Delicacye**, *s.* luxury, wantonness, M. P. ix. 58; Delicasye, M. P. v. 359.
- Delices**, *s. pl.* tender feelings, Bo. II. p. iv. 87; sinful pleasures, Bo. III. p. vii. 1.
- Delitibly**, *adv.* pleasingly, Bo. IV. p. i. 2.
- Deliver**, *adj.* active, A 84.
- Delivere**, *ger.* to let go away, set free (after a legal decision has been passed), M. P. v. 508; *Delivered, pp.; to ben delivered*, to be let go (after the sentence has been passed), M. P. v. 491.
- Deliverly**, *adv.* adroitly, B 4606.
- Delivernesse**, *s.* agility, I 452.
- Delphyn**, *s.* the constellation I. or the Dolphin, H. F. 1006.
- Delte**, *pt. s.* dealt, G 1074.
- Delve**, *v.* to dig up, F 638; *Dau*, *pt. s.* dug, Bo. V. p. i. 111; *Dolve, pt. s. subj.* had digged, Bo. V. p. i. 97.
- Delyces**, *s. pl.* favorites, Bo. II. p. iii. 81; delights, pleasures, C 547; G 3.
- Delye**, *adj.* delicate, fine, Bo. I. p. i. 25.
- Delyt**, *s.* delight, M. P. iii. 606; *pleasing ornamentation*, L. 1199.
- Delytable**, *adj.* delightful, L. 321.
- Delyte**, *v.* delight, please. M. P. v. 27; *refl.* take pleasure, M. P. v. 66.
- Delyte me**, 1 *pr. s. refl.* delight, am delighted, L. 30.
- Delytyng**, *pr. pt.* delighting, E 997.
- Demandes**, *s. pl.* questions, E 348.
- Demaunde**, *s.* demand, question, B 472.
- Deme**, *v.* judge, M. P. xiv. 6; suppose, B 1033; give a verdict, G 595; *Demeth, pr. s.* passes an opinion, M. P. v. 166; fancies, G 681; *Demeth, imp. pl.* judge, L. 453; suppose ye, G 993; *Demed, pt. pl.* (people) thought, L. 1244; *Demem*, to give judgment, B 1639.
- Demeine**, *v.* manage, H. F. 959.
- Demem**, *v.* judge, B 3045.
- Demene**, *v.* endure, R. 5238.
- Demeyne**, *s.* dominion, B 3855.
- Denye**, *v.*; *Deneyed, pp.* denied, Bo. III. p. x. 17.

- Depardieux, *interj.* on the part of God, by God's help, B 39.
- Depart, *v.* part, separate, M. P. vii. 285; part, L. 897; distinguish, T. iii. 404; Departen, *pr. pl.* sever, M. P. iv. 207; Departed, *pt. s.* parted, B 1158; divided, C 812.
- Departing, *s.* parting, separation, departure, M. P. v. 675.
- Depe, *adv.* deeply, L. 1234; B 4.
- Depe, *adj.* deep, B 3988.
- Depe, *s.* the deep, the sea, B 455.
- Depeynted, *pp.* covered with paintings, M. P. iii. 322; depicted, painted, L. 1025.
- Depper, *adv. comp.* deeper, B 630.
- Dere, *adj.* dear, M. P. iv. 147; *pl.* F 272.
- Dere, *adv.* dearly, M. P. i. 86; *to dere*, too dearly, C 293.
- Dere, *v.* injure, wound, harm, F 240.
- Dereling, *s.* darling, A 3793.
- Derk, *adj.* dark, M. P. iii. 170; inauspicious, M. P. iv. 120; *as s.*, inauspicious position, M. P. iv. 122.
- Derke, *s.* darkness, gloom, M. P. iii. 609.
- Derked, *pp.* grown dim, M. P. x. 36.
- Derkest, *adj. superl.* darkest, B 304.
- Derne, *adj.* secret, A 3200.
- DERR, *adv. comp.* more dearly, A 1448.
- Desceñēs, *s. s.*, *s.* deception, Bo. III. p. viii. 58.
- Desceñ, *s. c. s.*, *s. pl.* vessels for extracting oil, G 792.
- Desclaundred, *pp.* slandered, B 674.
- Descryve, *v.* describe, H. F. 1105.
- Desert, *s.* desert, deserving, merit, F 532.
- Deserte, *adj.* desert, lonely, H. F. 417.
- Desespai red, *pp.* out of hope, in despair, M. P. vi. 7.
- Desjirous, *adj.* want, F 23.
- Deslavee, *adj.* unbridled, I 629.
- Desolaat, *adj.* deserted, alone; *holden desolaat*, shunned, C 598.
- Desolat, *adj.* desolate, M. P. iv. 286; desolate, *i. e.* void of, lacking in, B 131.
- Desordeynee, *adj.* inordinate, I 818.
- Desordinat, *adj.* disorderly, I 415.
- Despeired, *pp.* put in despair, M. P. ii. 91; filled with despair, B 3645.
- Despence, *s.* expenses, expenditure, money for expenses, B 105. See **Dispence**.
- Despendest, 2 *pr. s.* spendest, wastest, B 2121.
- Desperacioun, *s.* despair, M. P. i. 21.
- Despit, *s.* spite, B 591; vexation, dishonor, B 699.
- Despitous, *adj.* hateful, M. P. xxii. 12. See **Dispitousē**.
- Despitously, *adv.* spitefully, maliciously, B 605. See **Dispitously**.
- Desport, *s.* amusement, sport, C 592. See **Disport**.
- Despyse, *v.* to despise, B 115.
- Despyt, *s.* despise, scorn, L. 372; malice, L. 1771; *in his despyt*, in scorn of him, L. 134; despise, a deed expressive of contempt, B 3738; in your despyt = in spite of you, in contempt of you, B 1753.
- Despyte, *s.* disdain, M. P. xxiii. 18.
- Desray, *s.* disarray, confusion, I 927.
- Destemperaunce, *s.* inclemency, Bo. III. p. xi. 148.
- Destinal, *adj.* fatal, Bo. IV. p. vi. 187; predestined, Bo. IV. p. vi. 119.
- Destourbe, *v.* to disturb; *destourbe of*, to disturb in, C 340.
- Destourbing, *s.* disturbance, trouble, M. P. xviii. 44.
- Destrat, *pp.* distracted, Bo. III. p. viii. 20.
- Destreyne. See **Distreyne**.
- Destroubled, *pp.* disturbed, M. P. iii. 524.
- Determyne, *v.* come to an end, T. iii. 379; determined, *pp.* settled, Bo. V. p. iv. 10; Determynen, 2 *pr. pl.* end, H. F. 343.
- Dette, *s.* debt, L. 541.
- Deve, *adj. pl.* deaf, G 286.
- Deviaunt, *adj.* divergent, R. 4789.
- Devil; a twenty devil way, in the way of twenty devils, *i. e.* to utter destruction, L. 2177.
- Devoided, *pp.* banished, R. 2929.
- Devoir, *s.* duty, B 38; E 966.
- Devyne, *ger.* to divine, to prophesy (by), M. P. v. 182; *pr. s. subj.* let (him) guess, H. F. 14.
- Devys, *adj.* exact; *at point devys*, with great exactitude, H. F. 917.
- Devys, *s.* device, L. 1102; Devyses, *pl.* heraldic devices, badges, L. 1272.
- Devyse, *v.* devise, suggest, ordain, L. 437; plan, L. 1453; *ger.* to relate, tell, B 154; to describe, F 65; to plan, E 698; to frame, E 739; Devyssen, *v.* tell, M. P. v. 333; imagine, E 108; Devyse, 1 *pr. s.* say, M. P. iv. 18; relate, L. 202; I tell, B 3693; Devyse, *pr. pl.* imagine, discourse, F 261; Devyseth, *pr. s.* tells, describes, M. P. v. 317.
- Dextrer, *s.* a courser, war-horse, B 2103.
- Deye, *v.* die, M. P. v. 469; Deyen, *v.* die, E 665; Deyde, *pt. s.* died, C 580; Deyeth, *pr. s.* dies, G 1436; Deyed, *pp.* B 1841; Deydest, *pt. s.* didst die, T. iii. 263.
- Deyen, *ger.* to dye, to dip, Bo. IV. m. vi. 16.
- Deyinge, *s.* dying, death, B 1850.
- Deyneth, *impers. pr. s.*; *ne deyneth him*, he deigns not, troubles not, M. P. vii. 181; *her deyned, pt. s.* she deigned, M. P. iv. 39; *deyned him, pt. s.* it deigned him, *i. e.* he deigned, B 3324.
- Deynte, *s.* value; *took lesse deynete for*, set less value on, M. P. vii. 143.
- Deyntee, *s.* delight, pleasure, L. 206; a pleasant

- thing, L. 290; pleasure, B 139; F 681; Deyntees, *pl.* dainties, F 301.
- Deyntee**, *adj.* dainty, pleasant, rare, B 1901; C 520; E 1112; F 70.
- Deynteuous**, *adj.* dainty, E 265.
- Deys**, *s.* daïs, F 59.
- Diademe**, *s.* diadem, crown of an emperor, M. P. xiv. 7.
- Dichen**, *v.* make a dyke round, L. 708.
- Did**, *pt. s.* made, caused, M. P. v. 145; Dide, did, M. P. iii. 373; *dide of*, took off, M. P. iii. 516; Dide, *pt. s.* put on, B 2047; dide hem drawe = caused to be drawn, B 1823. See **Doon**.
- Dide**. See **Did**.
- Diffame**, *s.* evil name, ill report, E 540, 730. See **Defame**.
- Diffame**, *ger.* to defame, rob of fame, H. F. 1581.
- Diffinisse**, *pr. s. subj.* define, Bo. V. p. i. 40.
- Diffusioun**, *s.* diffuseness, T. iii. 296.
- Diffyne**, *ger.* define, state clearly, M. P. v. 529; Diffynen, 2 *pr. pl.* conclude, H. F. 344.
- Dighte**, *v.* dight, prepare, L. 1288; prepare (himself), L. 1000; *dighte me*, prepare myself to go, B 3104; Dighte him, *pt. s.* betook himself, L. 2155; *pt. pl.* betook themselves, L. 1712; Dighte, *pp. pl.* prepared, L. 2611.
- Digne**, *adj.* worthy, honorable, L. 321; worthy, noble, B 1175; worthy, honored, C 695; suitable, B 778.
- Digneliche**, *adv.* haughtily, T. ii. 1024.
- Dignitee**, *s.* dignity, rank, E 470.
- Dilatacioun**, *s.* diffuseness, B 232.
- Direct**, *adj.* directed, addressed, M. P. xviii. 75.
- Disavaunce**, *v.* hinder, T. ii. 511.
- Dischevele**, *adj.* with dishevelled hair, with hair in disorder, L. 1315.
- Discomfite**, *s.* discomfort, grief, M. P. vii. 326.
- Discorden**, *pr. pl.* disagree, Bo. IV. p. vi. 226.
- Discordinge**, *adj.* different, Bo. III. p. ii. 156.
- Discovere**, *v.* to reveal, G 1465.
- Discreven**, *v.* describe, R. 4803.
- Discripcioun**, *s.* description, F 580.
- Discryve**, *ger.* to describe, M. P. iii. 916; *Discryveth*, *pt. s.* describes, E 43.
- Discure**, *v.* reveal, discover, M. P. iii. 549.
- Discussed**, driven away, Bo. I. m. iii. 1.
- Disdeyn**, *s.* disdain, contempt, F 700.
- Disdeyne**, *v.* to disdain, E 98.
- Disencreseth**, *pr. s.* decreases, Bo. V. p. vi. 95.
- Disese**, *s.* discomfort, misery, M. P. iv. 216; discomfort, source of pain, distress, B 3961; misery, F 467; lack of ease, trouble, distress, misery, B 616; G 747; H 97.
- Disesperat**, *adj.* hopeless, without hope, H. F. 2015.
- Disfigurat**, *adj.* disguised, M. P. v. 222.
- Disherited**, *pp.* disinherited, L. 1065.
- Disjoint**, *s.* perilous situation, peril, L. 1631.
- Dismalle**, *s.* unlucky day, M. P. iii. 1206.
- Disobeysaunt**, *adj.* disobedient, M. P. v. 429.
- Disordinaunce**, *s.* irregularity, violation of rules, H. F. 27.
- Disparage**, *s.* disparagement, disgrace, E 908.
- Dispence**, *s.* favor, H. F. 260; expense, expenditure, E 1209. See **Despence**.
- Dispende**, *v.* to spend, B 3500.
- Dispitousē**, *adj. fem.* despitiful, cruel, M. P. iii. 624. See **Despitous**.
- Dispitously**, *adv.* despitely, cruelly, H. F. 161. See **Despitously**.
- Displesances**, *s. pl.* displeasures, annoyances, C 420.
- Dispoilen**, *v.* to despoil, *i. e.* strip, E 374.
- Dispone**, *pr. s.* disposes, orders, regulates, Bo. IV. p. vi. 66; *imp.* dispose, T. v. 300.
- Disport**, *s.* amusement, pastime, sport, M. P. iv. 177; pleasure, B 143. See **Desport**.
- Disporte**, *ger.* to cheer, amuse, H. F. 571.
- Disposed**, *pp.* inclined; *wel disposed*, in good health (the converse of *indisposed*), H 33.
- Dispoynge**, *s.* spoil, Bo. IV. m. vii. 38.
- Disrewlily**, *adv.* irregularly, R. 4900.
- Disseise**, *v.* dispossess, R. 2076.
- Dissever**, *pr. s. subj.* sever, M. P. iv. 49; *pp.* separated, Bo. IV. p. iii. 21; *ger.* to part, G 875.
- Disseveraunce**, *s.* severing, Bo. III. p. xi. 72.
- Disshevele**, *adj. pl.* with hair flowing, M. P. v. 235.
- Dissimulacioun**, *pl.* dissimulations, H. G 466.
- Dissimuleth**, *pr. s.* dissimulates, acts as if, G 466.
- Dissimulunge**, *s.* dissembling, G 1073.
- Dissimulour**, *s.* dissembler, M. P. x. 23.
- Disslaundred**, *pp.* defamed, L. 1031.
- Dissolveth**, *pr. s.* puts an end to, Bo. II. p. iii. 101.
- Distempre**, *adj.* distempered, furious, Bo. IV. p. iii. 140.
- Disteyne**, *v.* stain, bedim, dull, L. 255.
- Distincte**, *v.* distinguish, R. 6199.
- Distingwed**, *pp.* distinguished, Bo. II. p. v. 83.
- Distoned**, *pp.* put out of tune, R. 4248.
- Distreyn**, *v.* get into his grasp, clutch, M. P. xx. 8; *Distreyneth*, *pr. s.* grasps, clutches, M. P. v. 337; *Distreyneth*, vexes, constrains, A 1455.
- Disturbaunce**, *s.* disturbance; *thy disturbaunce*, the disturbance thou hadst to endure, M. P. iv. 107.
- Disturne**, *v.* turn aside, T. iii. 718.
- Ditee**, *s.* ditty, song, Bo. III. p. i. 2.
- Divers**, *adj.* diverse, various, M. P. iii. 653.
- Diversely**, *adv.* in different ways, F 202.
- Divisioun**, *s.*; *of my divisioun*, under my influence, M. P. iv. 273.

- Divyn, *adj.* divine, B 3247.
 Divynour, *s.* seer, soothsayer, Bo. V. p. iii. 164.
 Do. See Doon.
 Doand, *pr. pt.* doing, R. 2708.
 Doës, *s. pl.* does, M. P. iii. 429.
 Dogerel, *adj.* doggerel, B 2115.
 Dogges, *s. pl.* dogs, B 3089.
 Doughtren, *pl.* daughters, L. 1963.
 Doke, *s.* duck, M. P. v. 498, 539.
 Dokked, *pp.* cropped, A 590.
 Dole, *s.* dolefulness, R. 2956.
 Dolve. See Delve.
 Dolven, *pp.* buried, M. P. iii. 222.
 Domb, Dombe, *adj.* dumb, H. F. 656; L. 2377; Dom., R. 2220.
 Dome, *s.* sentence, decision; *her dome*, the decision passed on them, M. P. v. 308; *stonde to the dome*, abide by the decision, M. P. v. 546; *opinion*, M. P. v. 480; *judgment* C 637.
 Dominacioun, *s.* domination, supremacy, chiefest influence, F 352; *dominion*, C 560; *power*, H 57.
 Dominus. See Corpus.
 Domus Dedall, the labyrinth of Dædalus, H. F. 1920.
 Don, Done. See Doon.
 Don^{adj.}, *adj.* dun-colored, M. P. v. 334; *dun*, T. i. 289.
 Don^{tion}, *n.* *Donation*, R. 2364.
 Doon, *judgment*, opinion, B 3127; F 677.
 Desclaung, *lo*, M. P. iii. 194; G 166; *act*, B 90;
 Descryve, *3507*; *cause*, B 3618; *doon us hongre*,
 Desert, *us* to be hung, C 752; *don ner com-
 panye*, accompany her, M. P. iv. 125; *leet don
 cryen*, caused to be cried, F 46; *Doon, pp.*
 done, M. P. i. 54; *past*, ended, M. P. iii. 40;
 completed, G 387; *doon make*, caused to be
 made, E 253; *hath doon yow kept*, hath caused
 you to be kept, E 1093; *Doon, ger.* to make,
 cause, M. P. vii. 283; *to do*, M. P. iii. 374; *to
 force*, M. P. v. 221; *Do, v.* make, M. P. iii.
 145; *cause*, B 3107; *Do, pp.* done, M. P. iii.
 528; *ended*, M. P. v. 693; L. 957; *Do, imp. s.*
 make, H 12; *cause*, G 32; *do hange*, cause
 me to be hung, G 1029; *do fecche*, cause to
 be fetched, B 662; *do wey*, put away, lay
 aside, G 487; *Do, ger.* to make, M. P. iii.
 1260; *Do, 2 pr. pl.* cause, M. P. v. 651; *Do
 come, imp. s.* cause to come, B 2035; *Do kepe*,
 2 *pr. pl.* cause to be kept, B 3624; *Don, pp.*
 done, M. P. v. 70; *to don*, from doing, Bo. IV.
 p. vi. 354; *Done, ger.* to be done, L. 1597;
for to done, a fit thing to do, I 62; *to do*,
 to have business with, M. P. iv. 234; *what to
 done*, what is to be done, M. P. iii. 689; *Doost*,
 2 *pr. s.* makest, C 312; *Dostow, for* Dost
 thou, doest thou, L. 315; *Dooth, imp. pl.* do
 ye, C 745; *do*, E 568; *as dooth*, pray do, F
 458; *Dooth, doth*, B 23; *Doth, pr. s.* causes,
 M. P. vi. 21; *makes*, M. P. ii. 7; *Doth forth*,
pr. s. continues, E 1015.
 Dore, *s.* a door, E 282; F 615.
 Dorste, 1 *pt. s.* durst, might venture to, M. P. v.
 541; *pt. pl.* dared to do, L. 749. See Dar.
 Dossers, *pl.* baskets to carry on the back, H. F.
 1940.
 Dotage, *s.* folly, M. P. xvii. 8.
 Dote, *v.* dote, grow foolish, L. (A) 261; *Doten*,
 grow foolish, act foolishly, G 983.
 Doted, *pp. as adj.* doting, stupid, M. P. xvii. 13.
 Double, *adj.* two-faced, deceitful, M. P. vii. 87;
 H. F. 285.
 Doublesse, *s.* duplicity, G 1300.
 Doucet, *adj.* dulcet, *i.e.* dulcet (pipe), sweet-
 sounding (pipe), H. F. 1221.
 Doughter, *s.* daughter, B 151; E 608.
 Doughty, *adj.* doughty, strong, F 338; war-
 like, F 11.
 Doun, *s.* down, soft feathers, M. P. ix. 45.
 Doun, *adv.* down, F 323; up and down = in all
 directions, in all ways, B 53. See Adoun.
 Doune, *s.* down, hill (*dat.*), B 1986.
 Doute, *s.* doubt, M. P. i. 25; *with-outen doute*,
 certainly, L. 1932; *peril*, L. 1613; *out of doute*,
 doubtless, B 390.
 Douteles, *adv.* doubtless, without doubt, cer-
 tainly, C 492; without hesitation, B 226.
 Doutes, *s. pl.* fears, F 220.
 Doutremere, *adj.* from beyond the seas, foreign,
 imported, M. P. iii. 253.
 Douwe, Dowve, *s.* dove, pigeon, M. P. v. 341;
 C 397.
 Dowaire, *s.* dower, E 848.
 Dowe, *pr. s.* bestow, T. v. 230.
 Dradde, *pt. s.* dreaded, feared, B 3402; *pr. s.*
 fears, M. P. vii. 185; *Dradde him* = was afraid,
 B 3918; *Drad, pp.* dreaded, E 69; *Dradden*,
pt. pl. subj. should dread, should fear, G 15.
 See Drede.
 Draf, *s.* draff, refuse (of corn), L. (A) 312;
 draff, refuse, chaff, I 35.
 Dragoun, *s.* dragon, L. 1430, 1581.
 Drasty, *adj.* filthy, worthless, trashy, B 2113.
 Drat, dreadeth, T. iii. 328.
 Draughte, *s.* move at chess, M. P. iii. 682.
 Drawe, *pp.* drawn, moved, M. P. iii. 682; *drawe
 him*, withdraw himself, F 355; *Drawen a-long*,
pr. s. prolongs, Bo. I. m. i. 36; *Drawen hem*,
pr. pl. withdraw themselves, F 252; *Draweth*,
imp. pl. invite, B 1632.
 Drecched, *pp.* harassed, B 4077.
 Drecching, *s.* delaying, T. iii. 853.
 Dredde. See Drede.
 Drede, *s.* dread, terror, fear, M. P. i. 42; *fear
 of wrong-doing*, M. P. vi. 30; *uncertainty* M.
 P. xvii. 28; *doubt*, M. P. v. 52; *withoute*

- drede*, without doubt, M. P. iii. 1073; fear, G 204; doubt, C 507; *it is no drede*, there is no doubt, B 869; *out of drede*, out of doubt, certainly, E 634. See **Dreed**.
- Drede**, *v.* dread, fear, M. P. i. 76; Dred thee, *imp. s.* fear, M. P. v. 157; Dredele, 1 *pr. s.* I dread, fear, E 636; Dreed, *imp. s.* dread, fear, E 1201; Dredde, *pt. s.* dreaded, feared, L. 199; Dredde, *pt. s.* dreaded, L. 1813; Dreden, *v.* to fear, G 320; To drede, *ger.* to be feared, G 437.
- Dreddeles**, *adj.* fearless, Bo. III. m. xii. 12.
- Dredful**, *adj.* full of dread, timid, M. P. v. 195; fearful, timid, L. 109; terrible, B 3558.
- Dredles**, *adv.* of course, without doubt, M. P. iii. 1272; Dreddeles, M. P. iii. 764.
- Dreed**, *s.* doubt, H. F. 292; dread, fear, L. 1728. See **Drede**.
- Dreche**, *v.* drown, M. P. xvi. 12; H. F. 205; drown, be overwhelmed, L. 1919; Drenchen, to be drowned, B 455; Dreinte, *pt. s.* drowned, M. P. iii. 72; Dreynte, was drowned, H. F. 923; Dreynt, *pp.* drowned, M. P. iii. 143; iv. 89 (pronounced *drē-ynt*, in two syllables).
- Drenching**, *s.* drowning, B 485.
- Dreihed**, *s.* dreariness, R. 4728.
- Drery**, *adj.* terrified, L. 810; sad, E 514.
- Dresse**, *v.* prepare, L. 1190; address, prepare, E 1049; *dresse her*, settle herself, L. 804; *v. refl.* address himself, G 1271; Dress me, *ger.* address myself, prepare, M. P. v. 88; Dressed, *pp.* prepared, M. P. v. 665; Dresseth hir, *pt. s. refl.* prepares herself, B 265; Dressen, *pr. s.* prepare themselves, set forward, B 263; Dresse, *pr. s. refl.* direct themselves, *i. e.* take their places in order, B 416.
- Dreye**, *adj.* as *s.* dry, M. P. v. 380.
- Dreye**, *adj.* dry, B 3233.
- Dreynt**. See **Drenche**.
- Drive**, *pp.* driven, B 3203.
- Drof**, *pt. s.* drove, M. P. vii. 190.
- Drogges**, *s. pl.* drugs, A 426.
- Dronke**, *pt. s.* drunk, B 3418; Dronken, B 3390.
- Dronkelewe**, *adj.* drunken, overcome with drink, C 495.
- Dronkenesse**, *s.* drunkenness, B 771; C 434.
- Drope**, *s.* drop, G 522.
- Drough**, *pt. s. refl.* drew himself, approached, B 1710.
- Droughte**, *s.* thirst, Bo. II. p. vii. 48; drought, F 118.
- Drovy**, *adj.* turbid, I 816.
- Drow**, *pt. s.* drew, moved (of the sun), M. P. v. 490; drew, hoisted, L. 1563; drew, T. iii. 978; Drowe, 2 *pt. s.* drewest; *drowe to record*, didst bring to witness, M. P. xvi. 22. *Pt. t. of drawn*.
- Drurye**, *s.* love, affection, R. 844; Drury, R. 5063.
- Drugge**, *v.* drudge, A 1416.
- Drunken**, *adj.* causing drunkenness, M. P. v. 181.
- Drye**, *v.* endure, suffer, R. 3105.
- Drye**, *adj.* dry, M. P. iii. 1028; *pl.* dry, without water (of the fish caught at the mouths of rivers in weirs which are covered with water from half-flood to half-ebb, and are left dry as the tide ebbs further), M. P. v. 139.
- Dryve**, *v.* drive; *dryve away*, pass away, M. P. iii. 49; *dryve the day away*, pass the time, C 623. See **Drof**.
- Duewe**, *adj.* due, L. (A) 364.
- Duk**, *s.* duke, A 860.
- Dul**, *adj.* dull, F 279.
- Dulcarnon**, *s.* perplexity, T. iii. 931.
- Dulle**, *adj.* dull, without emotion, M. P. v. 162.
- Dulle**, *pr. s.* grow dull, R. 4792; Dulleth, *pr. s.* makes dull, stupefies, G 1172.
- Dun**, *s.* the dun horse, H 5.
- Dungeoun**, *s.* donjon-tower, keep-tower, chief castle, L. 937.
- Dure**, *v.* last, M. P. i. 96.
- During**, *adj.* enduring, lasting, M. P. iv. 228.
- Durre don**, dare do, T. v. 840.
- Durring don**, *s.* daring, T. v. 837.
- Durste**, 1 *pt. s.* durst, M. P. iii. 929.
- Dwale**, *s.* sleeping-draught, A 4161.
- Dwelle**, *v.* remain, M. P. iv. 74; *ger.* to tarry, delay, H. F. 252.
- Dwellings**, *s. pl.* delays, Bo. I. m. i. 37.
- Dwyned**, *pp.* dwindled, R. 360.
- Dye**, *v.* die, M. P. ii. 7; Dyen, *tie*, B 224; Dyde, *pt. s.* died, H. F. 106. See **Deye**.
- Dyed**, *pt. s.* dyed, steeped, F 511.
- Dyte**, *s.* ditty, M. P. xxiii. 16; Dytees, *pl.* H. F. 622.

E.

- Ebbe**, *s.* ebb, low water, F 259.
- Ech**, *adj.* each, M. P. i. 136.
- Eche**, *v.* eke, increase, T. i. 705; *ger.* to eke out, enlarge, add to, H. F. 2065; Eched, *pp.* increased, T. iii. 1329.
- Echines**, *s. pl.* sea-urchins, Bo. III. m. viii. 24.
- Echoon**, each one, L. 290; Echon, M. P. iii. 335.
- Edified**, *pp.* built up, Bo. IV. p. vi. 311.
- Eek**, *adv.* eke, also, B 59, 70; moreover, also B 140; also, T. v. 1510.
- Eem**, *s.* uncle, T. i. 1022.
- Eest**, *adv.* east, eastward, M. P. iii. 88.
- Eet**, *pt. s.* ate, C 510; *imp. s.* eat, B 3640; Eete, 3 *pl. pt. eat*, M. P. ix. 11. See **Ete**.
- Effect**, *s.* deed, reality, M. P. x. 34; *in effect*, in fact, in reality, G 511; Theffect (*for* the effect), the result, the sequel, L. 622; Effectes,

- results to be brought about, M. P. iv. 165; chief points of a story, events, results, L. 929.
- Eft**, *adv.* again, M. P. iv. 11; G 1263; another time, M. P. iii. 41.
- Eftsones**, *adv.* soon again, T. ii. 1468; soon afterwards, very soon, L. 2322; Eftstone, soon after, G 1288; soon after this, H 65; hereafter, G 933; again, B 909.
- Egal**, *adj.* equal, T. iii. 137.
- Egaly**, *adv.* equably, Bo. II. p. iv. 156; impartially, Bo. V. p. iii. 156.
- Edge**, *s.* edge, sword, M. P. ix. 19; edge, T. iv. 927.
- Eggement**, *s.* instigation, incitement, B 842.
- Egle**, *s.* eagle, M. P. v. 330; H. F. 499.
- Egre**, *adj.* sharp, bitter, R. 5475; eager, sharp, fierce, E 1199.
- Egreimoine**, *s.* agrimony, G 800.
- Egren**, *v.* incite (lit. make eager), Bo. IV. p. vi. 368.
- Eighte**, *num.* eight, C 771.
- Eightetethe**, *ord. adj.* eighteenth, B 5.
- Eir**, *s.* air, A 1246.
- Eisel**, *s.* vinegar, R. 217.
- Ekko**, *s.* echo, E 1189.
- elaat**, *adj.* elate, B 3357.
- elde**, *s.* old age, long lapse of time, M. P. vii. 12; Eld, old age, M. P. xviii. 76.
- Elder**, *adj. comp.* older, B 1720, 3450.
- Elder fader**, *s.* grandfather, Bo. II. p. iv. 56.
- Eldres**, *s. pl.* elders, forefathers, B 3388.
- Eleccioun**, *s.* choice, M. P. v. 409, 621.
- Elrtge**, *adj.* wretched, B 1412.
- Elengenesse**, *s.* wretchedness, R. 7406.
- Eles**, *pl.* eels, H. F. 2154.
- Elf-queen**, *s.* fairy queen, B 1978.
- Ellebor**, *s.* hellebore, B 4154.
- Elles**, *adv.* else, otherwise, M. P. iii. 997; *elles god forbede*, God forbid it should be otherwise, G 1046.
- Elleswher**, *adv.* elsewhere, G 1130.
- Elvish**, *adj.* lit. elvish, imp-like, mysterious; hut used in the sense of foolish, G 751; elf-like, abstracted, G 842.
- Embassadrye**, *s.* embassy, negotiation, B 233.
- Embaume**, *v.* embalm, L. 676.
- Embelif**, *adj.* oblique, As. i. 20, 3.
- Embelised**, *pp.* beautified, Bo. II. p. v. 83.
- Emboised**, *pp.* sheltered in the woods, M. P. iii. 353.
- Emeraude**, *s.* emerald, M. P. v. 175; B 1799.
- Emforth**, *prep.* to the extent of, according to, T. ii. 243.
- Emisperies**, *s. pl.* hemispheres, As. i. 18, 9.
- Empireiden**, *pt. pl.* made worse, B 2205.
- Empersse**, *s.* empress, M. P. v. 319; Emperice, M. P. iv. 285.
- Empeyre**, *pr. s.* impair, E 2198.
- Emplastre**, *pr. pl.* plaster over, 'whitewash,' E 2297.
- Empoisoned**, *pp.* poisoned, B 3850.
- Empoisoning**, *s.* poisoning, C 891.
- Empoysoner**, *s.* poisoner, C 894.
- Emprinteth**, *imp. pl.* imprint, impress, E 1193.
- Empryse**, *s.* enterprise, undertaking, G 605.
- Empte**, *v.* empty, make empty, G 741; *pp. as adj.* exhausted, Bo. I. p. i. 11; worn out, shrunken, Bo. I. m. i. 22; Empten, G 1404.
- Enbashinge**, *s.* bewilderment, amazement, Bo. IV. p. i. 48.
- Enbibing**, *s.* imbibition, absorption, G 814.
- Enbrace**, *v.* embrace, hold firmly, M. P. xxi. 11.
- Enbrouden**, *v.* embroider, L. 2351; Embrouded, *pp.* L. 119.
- Encens**, *s.* incense, A 2938.
- Encense**, *v.* to offer incense, G 395, 413.
- Enchaufeth**, *pr. s.* burns, Bo. V. m. iii. 21.
- Encheson**, *s.* occasion, cause, F 456; Enchesoun, B 2783.
- Enclyne**, *v.* induce to do, M. P. v. 325.
- Encomberous**, *adj.* cumbersome, oppressive, burdensome, M. P. xviii. 42.
- Encombre**, *v.* encumber, L. 2006.
- Encorporing**, *s.* incorporation, G 815.
- Encrees**, *s.* increase, B 237; G 18.
- Encrese**, *v.* increase, M. P. ii. 103; Encrease, B 1068; Encrezen, B 1654; Encrested, *pt. s.* M. P. v. 143; Encreseth, *pr. s.* E 50; Encrested, *pp.* E 408.
- Endamagen**, *v.* harm, Bo. I. p. iv. 103; *pp.* compromised, Bo. I. p. i. 81.
- Ende**, *s.* end, result, B 481.
- Ended**, *pp.* finite, Bo. II. p. vii. 124.
- Endelees**, *adj.* endless, B 951.
- Endelong**, *adv.* along, H. F. 1458.
- Endelong**, *prep.* all along, L. (A) 144; along, L. 1498; down along, F 416.
- Endenting**, *s.* scalloping, I 417.
- Endetted**, *pp.* indebted, G 734.
- Ending-day**, *s.* death-day, M. P. xviii. 55.
- Endure**, *v.* last, B 3538.
- Endyte**, *ger.* to compose, relate, M. P. v. 119; *v.* tell, L. 1678; indict, B 3858; Endyted, *pp.* composed, B 3170; Endyten, *v.* compose, write, L. 371; indite, write, B 781.
- Endyting**, *s.* composing, M. P. xviii. 77.
- Enfamyned**, *pp.* starved, L. 2429.
- Enfecteth**, *pr. s.* infects, L. 2242.
- Enformed**, *pp.* informed, E 738; F 335.
- Enfortuned**, *pt. s.* endowed with powers, M. P. iv. 259.
- Engendred**, *pp.* engendered, begotten, E 158.
- Engendring**, *s.* generation, L. (A) 414.
- Engendrure**, *s.* engendering, begetting, M. P. v. 306.

- English**, *s.* power of eloquent expression in English, L. 66.
- Engreggen**, *pr. pl.* weigh upon, I 979.
- Engrevehth**, *pr. s.* grieves, R. 3444.
- Engyn**, *s.* wit, contrivance, T. iii. 274; skill, craft, H. F. 528; gin, machine, F 184; genius, skill, G 339; Engynes, military machines, R. 4194.
- Enhabite**, *pr. s.* dwell, R. 6355.
- Enhauced**, *pp.* advanced, L. 386; Enhaused, promoted, L. 1411.
- Enhoused**, *pp.* elevated, As. ii. 26, 40.
- Enhorte**, *v.* exhort, L. 1440.
- Enlatheth**, *pr. s.* entangles, Bo. I. m. iv. 26; *pp.* involved, made intricate, Bo. III. p. viii. 7.
- Enlumined**, *pp.* illuminated, M. P. i. 73; *pl. s.* illumined, E 33.
- Enluting**, *s.* securing with 'lute,' daubing with clay, etc., to exclude air, G 766.
- Enmity**, *s.* enmity, M. P. iv. 236.
- Enpeiren**, *v.* injure, Bo. IV. p. iii. 63.
- Empoysoninge**, *s.* poisoning, Bo. I. p. iii. 67.
- Enpresse**, *v.* make an impression on, M. P. xxi. 8.
- Enquere**, *v.* inquire, search into, B 629.
- Enqueringe**, *s.* inquiry, B 888.
- Ensampler**, *s.* example, pattern, M. P. iii. 911.
- Ensaumpler**, *s.* prototype, Bo. III. m. ix. 18.
- Enseled**, *pp.* sealed up, confirmed, T. v. 151; iv. 559.
- Entalenten**, *pr. pl.* stimulate, Bo. V. p. v. 6.
- Entame**, *v.* re-open (lit. cut into), M. P. i. 79.
- Entayle**, *s.* shape, R. 162; Entaile, cutting, jaggng, R. 1081.
- Entayle**, *v.* carve, R. 3711; Entailed, *pp.* R. 140.
- Enteccheth**, *pr. s.* infects, Bo. IV. p. iii. 93.
- Enteched**, *pp.* endowed with (good) qualities, T. v. 832.
- Entencioun**, *s.* intention, intent, C 408.
- Entende**, *ger.* to direct one's attention, apply one's self, B 3498; to attend, dispose one's self, F 689; *pr. pl.* looking intently, Bo. I. p. ii. 3; *pr. s.* perceive, T. iv. 1649.
- Entendement**, *s.* perception, H. F. 983.
- Entente**, *s.* intent, intention, M. P. i. 11; feeling, M. P. v. 532; *do thyn intent*, give heed, M. P. iii. 752; meaning, L. 1149; will, B 824; design, B 3835; plan, B 147, 206; endeavor, G 6; wish, E 189; mind, B 1740; *in good entent*, with good will, B 1902; *as to commune entente*, with reference to its common (*i.e.* plain) meaning, *i.e.* in plain intelligible language, F 107.
- Ententeden**, *pl. pt.* gave their attention, L. 1155.
- Ententif**, *adj.* intent upon, eager to, H. F. 1120.
- Ententifly**, *adv.* attentively, zealously, H. F. 616.
- Entermete**, *v.* interpose, R. 2966.
- Entraille**, *s.* entrails, inside, E 1188.
- Entre**, *v.* enter, M. P. iv. 53; *ger.* M. P. v. 147; *Entreth*, *imp. pl.* H. F. 1109.
- Entrechanginges**, *s. pl.* mutations, Bo. I. m. v. 43; vicissitudes, Bo. II. m. iii. 25.
- Entrecomunen**, *v.* communicate, T. iv. 1354.
- Entrecomuninge**, *s.* interchange, Bo. II. p. vii. 68.
- Entredited**, *pp.* under an interdict, I 905.
- Entrees**, *pl.* entrances, H. F. 1945.
- Entrelaced**, *pp.* intricate, Bo. III. p. xii. 183.
- Entremedled**, *pp.* intermingled, H. F. 2124.
- Entremes**, *s.* intervening course, M. P. v. 665.
- Entremeten him**, *v. refl.* interfere in, meddle with, M. P. v. 515.
- Entryketh**, *pr. s.* holds fast in its subtle grasp, ensnares, M. P. v. 403.
- Entunes**, *s. pl.* tunes, M. P. iii. 309.
- Envenimed**, *pp.* envenomed, poisoned, B 3314.
- Envenyme**, *v.* poison, M. P. iii. 641.
- Enviroun**, *adv.* round about, L. 300.
- Enviroune**, *v.* encompass, Bo. III. m. ix. 50.
- Envoluped**, *pp.* wrapped up, enveloped, involved, C 942.
- Envvy**, *v.* vie, strive, M. P. iii. 406; *Envycn*, vie (with), H. F. 1231.
- Envvy**, *s.* to *envye*, in rivalry, M. P. iii. 173; envy, jealousy, B 3584.
- Envyned**, *pp.* supplied with wine, *deuce* *give*
- Equipolences**, *s. pl.* equivalents, *Bo. I. p. 137*
- Equitee**, *s.* equity, justice, E 439.
- Er**, *adv.* before, B 420; G 1273.
- Er**, *conj.* ere, before, M. P. i. 16; iv. 14; *er that*, before, M. P. ii. 35; ere, B 119; F 130; *er now*, ere now, F 460; *er that*, before, E 178.
- Er**, *prep.* before, M. P. i. 39; *er tho*, before then, L. 1062; before, C 892; *er that*, before that, G 375.
- Erbe**, *s.* herb, L. (A) 109.
- Erber**, *s.* arbor, L. (A) 97. See **Herber**.
- Erchedeken**, *s.* archdeacon, D 1300.
- Ere**, *s.* ear, M. P. i. 115; F 196, 316.
- Ered**, *pp.* ploughed, H. F. 485.
- Erke**, *adj.* irked, weary, R. 4867.
- Erl**, *s.* earl, B 3597, 2646.
- Erme**, *v.* feel sad, grieve, M. P. iii. 80; C 312.
- Ernes**, *s.* earnestness, R. 4838.
- Ernestful**, *adj.* serious, E 1175.
- Erraunt**, *adj.* errant, stray (because near the middle of the chess-board), M. P. iii. 661.
- Errour**, *s.* doubt, uncertainty, M. P. v. 146; perplexity, M. P. xvi. 7.
- Ers**, *s.* buttocks, A 3734.
- Erst**, *adv.* first, at first, M. P. i. 87; formerly, before, L. 271; *at erst*, for the first time, B

1884; G 151; *long erst er*, long first before, C 662. See *Er*.

Erthe, *s.* earth, M. P. i. 50; v. 57.

Eschaufede, *pl. s.* chafed, Bo. I. p. v. 74.

Eschaufeth, *pr. s.* grows warm, Bo. I. m. vi. 2.

Eschaunges, *pl.* exchanges, interchangings, H. F. 697.

Eschue, *v.* to eschew, avoid, shun, G 4.

Ese, *s.* ease, solace, delight, M. P. iv. 63; ease, E 217; pleasure, G 746; ease, relief, H 25; *do you ese*, give you pleasure, M. P. vi. 78.

Ese, *v.* ease, relieve, L. 1704.

Espleyten, *v.* perform, R. 6174.

Espye, *v.* espy, note, M. P. vii. 64; inquire about, B 180; *Espyen*, *v.* spy, look about, L. 858.

Essoyne, *s.* excuse for absence, I 164.

Est, *s.* east, B 297, 493, 3657.

Estaat, *s.* stateliness, state, M. P. ii. 41; rank, B 973; estate, condition, rank, B 3592; way, E 610.

Estableth, *pr. s.* settles, causes, Bo. IV. p. iv. 56.

Estat, *s.* estate, state, condition, L. 125.

Estatlich, *adj.* stately, A 140.

Estatuts, *s.* ordinances, Bo. II. p. i. 51.

Estres, *pl.* inner premises of a house, L. 1715.

Esy, *adj.* easy, M. P. iii. 1008; pleasant, gentle, M. P. v. 382.

Ete, *v.* eat, F 617; *Et*, *pr. s.* eats, L. 1389; *Eten*, *v.* eat, M. P. v. 325; *Ecte*, M. P. ix. 11.

Eleccioun, *s.* election, M. P. i. 56; xvi. 8.

Ethe, *adj.* easy, T. v. 850.

Etik, the Ethics of Aristotle, L. 166.

Evangyles, *s. pl.* gospels, B 666.

Eve, *s.* eve, evening, F 364; G 375.

Evel, *adv.* ill, M. P. iii. 501; B 1897.

Even, *adv.* evenly, aright, exactly, M. P. iii. 441; *ful even*, actually, M. P. iii. 1329.

Evène, *adj.* even, E 811.

Evène-lyk, *adj.* similar, Bo. V. p. ii. 28.

Everich, each one, M. P. v. 401; every one, E 1017; either of the two, B 1004.

Everichon, every one, B 330; *Everichoon*, each one, L. 2567; *Everichone*, each one, H. F. 337.

Ever in oon, constantly, continually, M. P. ii. 9.

Evermo, *adv.* evermore, always, continually, M. P. iii. 81; L. 1239.

Everydel, *adv.* entirely, wholly, every bit, M. P. iii. 222; exactly, M. P. iii. 1014.

Ew, *s.* yew, M. P. v. 180.

Exaltacioun, *s.* exaltation (a term in astrology), I 10.

Exametrón, *s.* a hexameter, B 3169.

Exces, *s.* excess, extravagance, T. i. 626.

Excusaciouns, *pl.* excuses, L. (A) 362.

Exercitacioun, *s.* exercise, Bo. IV. p. vi. 327.

Existence, *s.* reality, H. F. 266.

Exorsisaciouns, *pl.* exorcisms, spells to raise spirits, H. F. 1263.

Expans, *adj.* separate, F 1275.

Experience, *s.* experiment, H. F. 788.

Expert, *adj.* experienced, B 4; skilful in performing an experiment, experienced, G 1251.

Expoune, *v.* to expound, explain, B 3398; G 86; Expounded, *pl. s.* B 3399.

Extendén, *pr. pl.* are extended, B 461.

Extree, *s.* axle, As. i. 14, 2.

Ey, *interj.* eh! what! C 782.

Ey, *s.* egg, G 806.

Eye; *at eye*, evidently, L. 100.

Eyen, *pl.* eyes, M. P. i. 88; iii. 841.

Byleth, *pr. s.* ails, B 1171; aileth, H 16; Eyled, *pl. s. impers.* ailed, F 501.

Eyr, *s.* heir, L. 1598, 1819.

Byre, *s.* air, gas, G 767.

Byrish, *adj.* of the air, aerial, H. F. 932, 965.

Byth, *adj.* easy, R. 3955.

Byther, *adj.* either, M. P. v. 125.

F.

Face, *s.* face; a technical term in astronomy, signifying the third part of a sign (a part of the zodiac ten degrees).

Facound, *adj.* eloquent, fluent, M. P. v. 382. For.

Facounde, *s.* eloquence, fluency, M. P. v. 382. For.

Faculte, *s.* faculty, branch of study, Bo. III.

Fader, *s.* father, M. P. i. 52; *fader da*, day, father's time, B 3374; *Fadres*, gen. i. 130; fathers, ancestors, E 61; parents, B 129; *Fader*; *gen. in phr.* *fader* = father's race, ancestry, G 829.

Fadme, *s. pl.* fathom (s), M. P. iii. 422.

Fadres-in-lawe, *pl.* parents-in-law, Bo. II. p. iii. 45.

Failen, *v.* fail, grow dim, M. P. v. 85.

Faille, *s.* fail; *sauns faille*, 93. birds), M. P. v. 188.

Fain, *adj.* glad, L. 1137.

Faire, *adv.* fairly, well, M. P. v. 277.

Faire Rewthelees, *Fair Unpity*, *Belle Dame sans Merci*, M. P. v. 277.

Fairnes, *Fairnesse*, *s.* fairness, beauty, iv. 76; E 384.

Fairye, *s.* fairyland, F 96; fairy contrivance, magic, F 201.

Fal, *s.* fall in wrestling, M. P. xiii. 16.

Falding, *s.* coarse cloth, A 391.

Fallaces, *s. pl.* fallacies, R. 7077.

Falle, *v.* happen, M. P. ii. 23; fall; hence, prosper, L. 186; happen, light, E 126; suit, E 259; Falles, *pr. s.* belongs, M. P. iii. 257; *Falle*, *pp.* fallen, L. 1726, 1826; happened, E 938;

- pr. s. subj. impers.* may it befall, L. 277; Fallen, *v.* happen, F 134; accidentally placed, F 684; Fil, *pt. s.* fell, C 804; Fel, befell, B 141. See Fil.
- Fals**, *adj.* false, B 74.
- False**, *v.* deceive, be untrue to, M. P. iii. 1234; Falsed, *pt. s.* betrayed, M. P. vii. 147; *pp.* falsified, broken (faith), F 627.
- False get**, cheating contrivance, G 1277.
- Falsen**, *v.* deceive, L. 1640; Fallest, 2 *pr. s.* L. 1377.
- Falskede**, *s.* falsehood, G 979.
- Faltren**, *pr. pl.* falter, fail, B 772.
- Falwe-rede**, *adj. pl.* yellowish red, H. F. 1936.
- Falwes**, *s. pl.* fallows, D 656.
- Fame**, *s.* good report, E 418.
- Familer**, *s.* familiar friend, Bo. IV. p. vi. 279.
- Famulere**, *adj.* familiar, affable, L. 1606.
- Fan**, *s.* vane, quintain, H 42.
- Fantastyk**, *adj.* imaginative, A 1376.
- Fantasye**, *s.* imagining, H. F. 992; fancy, H. F. 593; Fantasys, *pl.* fancies, M. P. iii. 28.
- Fantom**, *s.* phantasm, kind of dream, illusion, H. F. 11.
- Farced**, *pp.* stuffed, L. 1373.
- Fard**, *imp.* paint, R. 2285.
- Fardels**, *s. pl.* burdens, R. 5683.
- Fare**, *s.* good speed, H. F. 682; proceeding, stir H. F. 1065; *evil fare*, ill hap, M. P. ii. fuss, disturbance, T. iii. 860; business, *g* on, B 569.
- Fare**, *ger.* to fare, prosper, M. P. v. 698; 1. I fare, it is with me (thus), M. P. vii. 320. G 733; am, B 1676; *pp.* gone, walked, L. 226. gone, B 512; Fareth, *pr. s.* happens, H. F. 271; it turns out, G 966; it fares, it is, E 1217; Faren, *v. pr. pl.* we fare, live, G 662; Far wel, *imp. s.* arewell, B 116.
- Fare-cart**, *s.* cart, T. v. 1162.
- Farewel**, *interj.* farewell! it is all over, G 907.
- Fasoun**, *s.* fashion, R. 708.
- Faste**, *adv.* fast, M. P. ii. 19; close, near, M. P. iii. 369; hard, soundly, M. P. v. 94; quickly G 245; *as faste*, very quickly, G 1235; *faste by*, close at hand, B 3116.
- Faster**, *adv.* closer, B 3722.
- Fattish**, *adj.* plump, M. P. iii. 954.
- Faucon**, *s.* falcon, F 411, 424.
- Fauconers**, *s. pl.* falconers, F 1196.
- Faught**, *pt. s.* fought, B 3519.
- Fauned**, *pl. s.* fawned on, M. P. iii. 389.
- Fawe**, *adj.* fain, R 6476; *adv.* T. iv. 887.
- Fay**, *s.* faith, R. 2887.
- Fayle**, *v.* make mistakes, R. 4249.
- Fayn**, *adv.* gladly, M. P. iii. 1101; gladly, willingly, B 41; wolde fayn = would fain, would be glad to, E 696.
- Fayn**, *adj.* glad, L. 130; H 92. See Fain.
- Fayr**, *adj.* fair, seemly, L. 2548; *a fayr*, a good one, T. iii. 850.
- Febble**, *adj.* feeble, weak, E 1198.
- Fecche**, *v.* to fetch, B 1857; Fecchen, E 276. See Fette.
- Fecches**, *s. pl.* vetches, T. iii. 936.
- Feeld**, *s.* field, in an heraldic sense. B 3573; Feld, *dat.* field, plain, B 3197.
- Feend**, *s.* the fiend, F 522.
- Feendly**, *adj.* fiendly, of a fiend, M. P. iii. 594.
- Feēs**, *s. pl.* fees, contributions, payments, M. P. iii. 266.
- Feet**, *s.* performance, E 429.
- Feffe**, *v.* fee, present, T. iii. 901.
- Feffed in**, *pp.* invested with, E 1698.
- Feined**, *adj.* feigned, L. 1257.
- Fel**, *s.* skin. T. i. 91.
- Fel**, *pt. s.* befell, happened, B 141. See Falle.
- Fel**, *adj.* fell, cruel, terrible, B 2019.
- Felawe**, *s.* fellow, companion, L. 895.
- Felawship**, *s.* company, M. P. iii. 978.
- Feld**, *s.* field, M. P. iii. 359. See Feeld.
- Feldefare**, *s.* fieldfare, M. P. v. 364; T. iii. 861.
- Fele**, *adj.* many, R. 189; E 917.
understand by experiment, H. F. 826;
1 *pt. s.* felt, M. P. iv. 217; Felcd, *pt. s.* 492.
adj. manifold, Bo. II. p. i. 18.
sentiment, hence love, M. P. iii. 1172.
cruel, T. i. 470. See Fel.
- Festien**, *adj.* severely, Bo. I. p. vi. 14.
- Fete**, *v.* to ally, R. 3251.
- Fetis**, *adj.* wellness, Bo. I. m. v.
- Fetisly**, *adv.* neatly, wicked, Bo. 394.
- Fette**, *pt. s.* fetched, *pp.* IV for rec-7; excellent, Gentsils, *pl. s.*
- Fetted**, *adj.* glad, B 702; fettered, I. father, B 222. noble folk, M. P.
- Fey**, *s.* ch. speak, foremost, M. P. iii. 1101.
- Fen**, *s.* fen, *phænix*.
- Fend**, *s.* fen.
- Fenix**, *s.* phoenix, 982.
- Fer**, *adv.* far, M. P. vii. 338; *how fer so*, how-ever far, M. P. v. 440.
- Fer**, *adj.* far, B 508, 653.
- Ferde**, *s. dat.* (after *for*) fear, terror, H. F. 950; fear, T. i. 557.
- Ferde**, *pt. s.* fared, was, seemed, M. P. iii. 501; went on, H. F. 1522; 1 *pt. s.* fared, felt, M. P. iii. 99; was placed, M. P. v. 152; *pt. s.* fared, *i. e.* behaved, E 1060. See Fare.
- Fere**, *s.* companion, mate, M. P. v. 410; L. 969.
- Fere**, *s. dat.* fear, B 3369.
- Fered**, *pp.* terrified, afraid, G 924.
- Perforth**, *adv.* far, M. P. vii. 90; *so ferforth*, to such an extent, M. P. i. 170; far, L. 690;

- as *ferforth* as, as far as, B 1099; so *ferforth*, to such a degree, G 40. See **Fer**.
- Ferforthly**, *adv.* so far, L. 682.
- Ferfulleste**, *adj. sup.* most timorous, T. ii. 450.
- Ferly**, *adj.* wonderful, A 4173.
- Fermacies**, *s. pl.* pharmacies, medicines, A 2713.
- Ferme**, *imp. s.* make firm, Bo. I. m. v. 70.
- Ferme**, *adj.* firm, E 663.
- Fermerere**, *s.* keeper of the infirmary, D 1859.
- Fermour**, *s.* farmer of taxes, L. 378.
- Fern**, *adv.* long ago; so fern = so long ago, F 250.
- Fern-assen**, *s. pl.* fern-ashes, ashes produced by burning ferns, F 254.
- Ferne yere**, past years, T. v. 1176.
- Ferre**, *adv. comp.* further, H. F. 600. See **Fer**.
- Ferreste**, *adj. super.* farthest, A 494.
- Fers**, *s.* queen (at chess), M. P. iii. 654.
- Ferse**, *adj. voc.* fierce, M. P. vii. 1.
- Ferses**, *pl.* the pieces at chess, M. P. iii. 723.
- Ferthe**, fourth, B 823; G 531.
- Ferther**, *adv.* further, M. P. v. 280; *adj.* B 1686.
- Ferther-over**, *adv.* furthermore, T. iv. 1027.
- Ferthing**, *s.* morsel, A 134.
- Fesaunt**, *s.* pheasant, M. P. v. 357.
- Fest**, *s.* fist, C 802.
- Feste**, *s.* feast, festival, M. P. iii. 974; *maketh feste*, pays court, flatters, M. P. iii. 638; *to feste*, to the feast, at a feast, B 1007; *han to feste*, to invite, B 380.
- Festeinge**, *pr. pt.* feasting, entertaining, F 1148.
- Ethe**, *s.* easy
- Etik**, the Ethio festive, fond of feasts, F 281.
- Evangyles**, *sten*, A 195.
- Eve**, *s. eve*, *lat.* feet; *to fete*, at his feet, B 1104.
- Evel**, *adv.* ill, *made*, neat, graceful, C 478.
- Even**, *adv.* evenly, *artificially*, A 273. 441; *ful even*, actually 676; *Fet*, *pp.* B 667.
- Evene**, *adj.* even, E 811. 3547.
- Evene-lyk**, *adj.* similar, B 778.
- Everich**, each one, M. P. v. 315.
- Eyn**, either of the two, *balsely*, M. P. ii. 4. Feyned, *iv. pret.* *ce*, B 544; *feyne us*, pretend as regards ourselves, B 351; *Feigne*, *whoso feigue may*, let him, who can, pretend, Bo. III. p. x. 104.
- Feyning**, *s.* pretending, cajolery, F 556.
- Feynting**, *s.* fainting, failing, E 970.
- Feyntyse**, *s.* feigning, R. 2947, 2998.
- Feyth**, *s.* faith, M. P. iii. 632.
- Fiance**, *s.* confidence, R. 5481.
- Ficchen**, *ger.* to fix, Bo. V. m. iv. 20.
- Fiers**, *adj.* fierce, R. 1482.
- Fifte**, fifth, M. P. xvi. 9.
- Figure**, *s.* shape, *i.e.* man's shape or form, M. P. xvi. 27; **Figures**, *pl.* figures of speech, E 16.
- Figuringe**, *s.* formation, form, L. 298; similitude, figure, G 66.
- Fil**, *pt. s.* fell, M. P. iii. 123; befell, L. 589; *pt. s. impers.* befell, L. 1162; was fitting, M. P. iii. 374; *pt. s.* fell, occurred, happened, B 1865; as fer as reason fil = as far as reason extended, F 570; **Fille**, *pt. pl. fell*, H. F. 1659; **Fillen**, fell, B 3183. See **Falle**.
- Fild**, *pp.* filled, M. P. v. 610.
- Fille**, *s.* fill, M. P. vi. 13; L. 817.
- Fingres**, *s. pl.* fingers, E 380.
- Firste**, *adj. used as a s.*; my firste = my first narration, F 75.
- Fish**, *s.* the sign Pisces, F 273.
- Fit**, *s. a* 'fyt' or 'passus,' a portion of a song, B 2078.
- Fithele**, *s.* fiddle, A 296.
- Fix**, **Fixe**, *pp.* fixed, solidified, M. P. i. 9; G 779.
- Flambes**, *s. pl.* flames, B 3353; G 515.
- Flater**, *pr. s.* flatter, M. P. iv. 188.
- Flateringe**, *s.* flattery, M. P. iii. 639.
- Flaume**, *s.* flame, M. P. v. 250; **Flaumbe**, H. F. 769.
- Flayn**, *pp.* flayed, I 425.
- Flee**, *v.* flee, M. P. iv. 98; **Fleen**, flee, M. P. i. 148; **Fleigh**, *pt. s.* fled, B 3879; **Fledde** herself, *pt. s. refl.* took refuge, L. 1225.
- Flee**, *v.* fly, F 503.
- Fleen**, *s. pl.* fleas, H 17.
- Flees**, *s.* fleece, L. 1428, 1647.
- Fleet**, *pr. s.* floats, B 463. See **Flete**.
- Fleigh**, *pt. s.* flew, T. ii. 194; **Fleinge**, *pres. pt.* flying, H. F. 543.
- Flekked**, *pp.* spotted, G 565.
- Flemen**, *v.* put to flight, T. ii. 852; **Flemeth**, *pr. s.* chases away, H 182; **Flemed**, *pt. s.* exiled, R. 3052; *pp.* banished, G 58.
- Flemer**, *s.* banisher, driver away, B 460.
- Flete**, *pr. s.* float, M. P. ii. 110; **Fleteth**, flows, abounds, Bo. I. m. ii. 31; **Fletinge**, *pres. pt.* flowing, Bo. I. p. iii. 89.
- Flex**, *s.* flax, A 676.
- Flitting**, *adj.* fleeting, unimportant, M. P. iii. 801.
- Flo**, *s.* dart, H 264.
- Flokmele**, *adv.* in a flock, in a great number, E 86.
- Flood**, *s.* flood, flowing of the sea, F 259.
- Florouns**, *s. pl.* florets, L. 217, 220.
- Floteren**, *pr. pt.* fluctuate, waver, Bo. III. p. xi. 258.
- Flotery**, *adj.* dishevelled, A 2883.
- Flour**, *s.* flower, L. 48; of alle *floures flour*, flower of all flowers, M. P. i. 4; flower, prime vigor, M. P. iii. 630; choice, pattern, E 919.
- Floure**, *pr. s. subj.* flower, flourish, E 120.
- Floureth**, *pr. s.* comes forth into flower, M. P. vii. 306.

- Floute, *s.* flute, H. F. 1223.
 Flowen, *pp.* flown, H. F. 905.
 Floytinge, *pres. pt.* fluting, A 91.
 Fneseth, *pr. s.* breathes heavily, puffs, snorts, H 62.
 Foison, *s.* abundance, B 504.
 Foles, *pl.* fools, L. (A) 315.
 Folily, *adv.* foolishly, R. 2603.
 Folk, *s.* sort, company, M. P. v. 524; Folkes, *pl.* companies of people, M. P. v. 278.
 Folwe, 1 *pr. s.* follow, M. P. iii. 585; Followed wel, followed as a matter of course, M. P. iii. 1012; Folwen, *pr. pl.* follow, C 514; Folweth, *imp. pl.* follow, imitate, E 1189.
 Foly, Folye, *s.* folly, M. P. iii. 610; E 236.
 Foly, *adv.* foolishly, M. P. iii. 874.
 Folyen, *pr. pl.* act foolishly, Bo. III. p. ii. 112.
 Fome. See Foom.
 Fomy, *adj.* covered with foam, L. 1208.
 Fond, *pt. s.* found, M. P. ii. 14.
 Fond, *pp.* fooled, R. 5367.
 Fondé, *v.* try, endeavor, M. P. iii. 1020; try to persuade, B 347; attempt, try, E 283. See Founde.
 Fonge, *v.* to receive, B 377.
 Fonne. *s.* fool, A 4089.
 Fontful water, fontful of water, B 357.
 Fontstoon, *s.* font, B 723.
 Foo, *s.* foe, M. P. v. 339; Foos, foes, *pl.* M. P. ii. 55; Foon, *pl.* M. P. v. 103.
 Fool, *adj.* foolish, M. P. v. 505.
 Fool, *s.* a fool, employed to make sport, B 3271.
 Fool-hardinesse, *s.* foolish daring, M. P. v. 227.
 Foom, *s.* foam, G 564; Fome, *dat.* G 565.
 Foo-mai, *s. pl.* foes, B 3255, 3507.
 Foon, Foon. See Foo.
 Foot-brede, *s.* foot-breadth, H. F. 2042.
 Foot-hot, *adv.* instantly, on the spot, B 438.
 For, *conj.* because, M. P. iii. 735, 789; in order that, B 478; F 102.
 For, *prep.* in respect of, M. P. v. 336; in spite of, notwithstanding, M. P. iii. 535; for my dethe, were I to die for it, for fear of my death, M. P. iv. 186; For to, with *inf.* to, M. P. iv. 94, *et passim*; for the sake of, Bo. IV. p. vi. 207; against, T. i. 928; against; in order to avoid, L. 231; for me = by my means, F 357.
 Forage, *s.* forage, food, B 1973.
 Forbode, *pr. s. subj.* may forbid, M. P. v. 582; Forbode, *pp.* forbidden, M. P. xvi. 17; Forbad, *pt. s.* forbade, E 570; Forbedeth, *pr. s.* forbids, C 643.
 For-bereth, *imp. pl.* forgive, L. 80.
 Forbode, *s.* prohibition; *goddess* forbode, it is God's prohibition (*i.e.* God forbid), L. (A) 10.
 Forbrak, 1 *pt. s.* broke off, interrupted, Bo. IV. p. i. 7.
 For-by, *adv.* past, L. 2539.
 Forbyse, *v.* exemplify, T. ii. 1390.
 Force, *no force*, no matter, M. P. xviii. 53. See Fors.
 Forcracchen, *v.* scratch, R. 323.
 For-dide, *pt. s.* slew, L. 2557; Fordoon, *pp.* slain, L. 939.
 For-do, *v.* destroy, T. i. 238; *pp.* destroyed, M. P. ii. 86; T. i. 74; Fordone, *pp.* destroyed, ruined, R. 4339.
 Fordoon, *v.* to do for, to destroy, B 369.
 Fordriven, *pp.* driven about, Bo. I. p. iii. 81.
 For-dronke, *pp.* very drunk, C 674.
 Fordrye, *adj.* very dry, exceedingly dry, withered up, F 409.
 Fordwyned, *pp.* wasted, R. 366.
 Fore, *s.* course, D 1935.
 Foresteres, *s. pl.* foresters, M. P. iii. 361.
 Foreyne, *adj.* extraneous, Bo. III. p. iii. 76.
 Foreyne, *s.* outer chamber, L 1962.
 Forfare, *v.* fare ill, R. 5778.
 For-fered, *pp.* exceedingly afraid; *forfered of*, very afraid for, F 527.
 Forgaf, *pt. s.* forgave, L. 162.
 Forgift, *s.* forgiveness, L. 1853.
 For-go, *pp.* overwalked, exhausted with walking, H. F. 115.
 Forgo, *v.* forego, give up, leave alone, L. (A) 312; lost, M. P. iv. 256.
 Forgoon, *v.* forgo, G 610.
 Forheved, *s.* forehead, Bo. I. p. iv. 157.
 Forlete, *v.* to leave, yield up, B 1848; to give up, C 864.
 Forliven, *v.* degenerate, Bo. III. p. vi. 121; lived, *pp. as adj.* degenerate, ignoble, M. P. vi. 15.
 Forlorn, *pp.* lost, L. 2663.
 Forloyn, *s.* note on a horn for rec-7; excellent, Gentils, *pl. s.* 386.
 Forme-fader, *s.* first father, B 2246; folk, M. P. Formel, *s.* companion (said of 371, 373).
 Formest, *adj. sup.* foremost, M. P. iii. 112.
 Forncast, *pp.* planned, I 448.
 Forneys, *s.* furnace, A 559.
 Forpampered, *pp.* exceedingly pampered, spoiled by pampering, M. P. ix. 5.
 For-pyned, *pp.* exhausted with suffering, L. 2428.
 Fors, *s.* matter, consequence, M. P. v. 615; *no fors*, no matter, never mind, M. P. iii. 522; *no fors of me*, no matter about me, M. P. iv. 197. *therof no fors*, no matter for that, never mind that, M. P. iii. 1170; *I do no fors*, I don't care, M. P. xi. 31; *I do no fors therof*, it is no matter to me, M. P. iii. 542; *make no fors*, take no heed, H 68. See Force.
 Forsake, *v.* deny, Bo. I. p. iv. 185.
 Forsake, *v.* to forsake, leave, B 3431.

- Forshapen, *pp.* misshapen, T. ii. 66.
 For-shright, *pp.* tired with shrieking, T. iv. 1147.
 Forsleuthen, *v.* over tarry, B 4286.
 For-sleweth, *pr. s.* is over-slothful, I 685.
 For-sluggeth, *pr. s.* is over-sluggish, I 685.
 Forsongen, *pp.* exhausted with singing, R. 664.
 Foister, *s.* forester, A 117.
 For-straight, *pp.* exhausted, B 1295.
 Forsweringe, *s.* forswearing, swearing falsely, H. F. 153.
 Forswor him, *pt. s.* forswore himself, was forsworn, H. F. 389.
 For-sworn, *pp.* forsworn, L. 1259.
 Forth, *adv.* on, M. P. v. 27; out, M. P. v. 352; forth, F 605; *used as v.* = go forth, F 604.
 Forthenke, *v.* repent, R. 3957.
 Forthering, *s.* furtherance, aid, L. (A) 69.
 Forthermo, *adv.* moreover, C 594.
 Forther over, *adv.* furthermore, moreover, C 648.
 Forthest, *adj. and adv.* furthest, Bo. IV. p. vi. 143.
 For-thinke, *v.* repent, T. ii. 1414.
 Forthren, *v.* further, help, L. 71; *ger.* to assist, L. 1618; Forthred, *pp.* helped, L. 413.
 Forth-right, *adv.* straight, directly, F 1503.
 Forthward, *adv.* forward, B 263.
 For-thy, *adv.* therefore, A 1841.
 Fortuit, *adj.* fortuitous, Bo. V. p. i. 102.
 Fortuned, *pt. pl.* happened, chanced, M. P. iii. 288; *pp.* endowed by fortune, M. P. iv. 180.
 Fortunel, *adj.* accidental, Bo. V. m. i. 18.
 Fortynen, *v.* presage, A 417.
 Ethereous, *adj.* fortuitous, accidental, Bo. I. p. 1.
 Evangy, *pp.* weary through watching, M. P. Eve, *s.* evyl, 596.
 Evel, *adv.* 596.
 Even, *adv.* *pp.* tired with wandering, R. 3336. 441; *ful evengreemant*, L. 2500; promise, B 40.
 Evene, *adj.* evyl, withered, R. 361.
 Evene-lyk, *ad.* weary, exhausted through weeping, R. 126.
 Everich, *pp.* worn out, R. 235.
 For-wery, *adj.* worn out with weariness, very tired, M. P. v. 93.
 Forwes, *pl.* furrows, M. P. ix. 12.
 Forwhy, *conj.* because, M. P. iii. 461.
 For-witer, *s.* foreknower, Bo. V. p. vi. 369.
 Forwiting, *s.* foreknowledge, B 4433.
 For wood, *adj.* extremely mad, furious, L. 2420.
 Forwot, *pr. s.* hath foreknowledge of, H. F. 45.
 Forwrapped, *pp.* wrapped up, C 718.
 Foryaf, *pt. s.* forgave, respited, T. iii. 1577.
 Foryede, *pt. s.* went, desisted from, T. ii. 1330.
 Foryelde, *pr. s. subj.* may (he) requite, reward, L. 457.
 Foryete, *v.* forget, M. P. iii. 1125.
 Foryetful, *adj.* forgetful, E 472.
 Foryetinge, *s.* forgetfulness, Bo. II. p. vii. 106.
 For-yeve, *v.* forgive, M. P. iii. 1284; *pt. pl.* forgave, L. 1848; For-yive, *imp. s.* forgive, M. P. iii. 525; given up, M. P. iii. 877; For-yeven, *pp. used absolutely*, being forgiven, M. P. v. 82.
 Forstred, *pp.* nurtured, brought (up), G 122; nurtured in the faith, G 539; nurtured, kept, E 1043.
 Fote, *s.* a foot; *on fote*, on foot, F 390.
 Fother, *s.* cartload, A 530.
 Pot-hoot, *adv.* hastily, immediately, M. P. iii. 375.
 Foudre, *s.* thunderbolt, H. F. 535.
 Foul, *adj.* foul, bad; *for foul ne fair*, by foul means or fair, B 525; Foule, *adj.* poor, wretched, B 4003.
 Foul, *s.* bird, fowl, M. P. iv. 13.
 Foule, *adv.* foully, M. P. iii. 623; v. 517; foully, shamefully, L. 1307.
 Foulter, *s.* fowler, L. 132.
 Founde, *v.* seek after, M. P. vii. 241; 1 *pr. s.* try, endeavor, M. P. vii. 47; Founden, *pp.* found, M. P. iii. 73; provided, B 243.
 Foundement, *s.* foundation, H. F. 1132.
 Foundred, *pt. s.* fell, A 2687.
 Founes, *s. pl.* fawns, M. P. iii. 429.
 Foure, four, B 491.
 Fournays, *s.* furnace, B 3353.
 Foynen, *pres. pl.* thrust, A 1654.
 Foyson, *s.* abundance, A 3165.
 Fraknes, *s. pl.* freckles, A 2169.
 Franchyse, *s.* liberality, M. P. xviii. 59.
 Frankeleyn, *s.* franklin, F 675.
 Frape, *s.* company, T. iii. 410.
 Fraught, *pp.* freighted, B 171.
 Fraunchyse, *s.* liberality, B 3854.
 Frayneth, *pr. s.* prays, beseeched, 790.
 Fre, *adj.* noble, good, bounteous, liberal, M. P. iii. 484; *as s.* noble one, M. P. vi. 104; profuse, E 1209.
 Freedom, *s.* liberality, bounty, M. P. iv. 175.
 Freele, *adj.* frail, Bo. III. p. x. 39.
 Freendes, *s. pl.* friends, B 269.
 Freletee, *s.* frailty, E 1160.
 Fremde, foreign, F 429.
 Frere, *s.* friar, M. P. xix. 19.
 Fret, *s.* ornament, L. 215, 228.
 Frete, *v.* devour, swallow up, M. P. vii. 12; *pp.* eaten, devoured, B. 475; Freten, *pp.* devoured, A 2068.
 Fretted, *pp.* adorned, L. 1117.
 Freyned, *pp.* asked, questioned, G 433.
 Fro, *prep.* from, M. P. ii. 116; out of, M. P. iv. 254; in fear of, T. i. 748.
 Frosty, *adj.* which accompanies frost, M. P. v. 364; frosty, cold, L. 878.
 Proteth, *pr. s.* rubs, A 3747.
 Frounced, *pp.* wrinkled, R. 365.
 Frounceles, *adj.* unwrinkled, R. 860.

- Front**, *s.* true countenance, Bo. II. p. viii. 8.
Fructifye, *v.* produce fruit, M. P. xvi. 48.
Fructuous, *adj.* fruitful, I 73.
Fruyt, *s.* result (lit. fruit), B 411.
Fruytesteres, *s. pl. fem.* fruit-sellers, C 478.
Fugitif, *adj.* fleeing from, H. F. 146.
Ful, *adj.* full, B 86.
Ful, *adv.* very, quite, M. P. ii. 33; very, B 3506; *ful many*, very many, F 128.
Fulfuld, *pp.* filled full, quite full, M. P. v. 89; fulfilled, E 596; completed, fully performed, I 17.
Fulfulle, *v.* fulfil; Fulfuldest, *2 pt. s.* didst satisfy, Bo. II. p. iii. 72.
Fulle; *at the fulle*, completely, M. P. iii. 899.
Fulliche, *adv.* fully, E 706.
Fulsomnesse, *s.* satiety, profuseness, F 405.
Fumetere, *s.* the herb fumitory, B 4153.
Fumositee, *s.* fumes arising from drunkenness, C 567; F 358.
Furial, *adj.* tormenting, F 448.
Furlong, *s.* furlong, *hence* time of walking a furlong, one-eighth part of twenty minutes, two minutes and a half, M. P. vii. 328; Furlong-way, H. F. 2064; Furlong-vey, L. 307.
Furthering, *s.* helping, M. P. v. 384.
Furthre, *v.* help, H. F. 2023.
Fusible, *adj.* fusible, capable of being fused, G 856.
Fy! *interj.* fie! M. P. iii. 1115.
Fyf, five, B 3602.
Fyle, *v.* file, smooth by filing, M. P. v. 212.
Fyn, *s.* end, M. P. iv. 218; end, purpose, result, B 3348, 3884.
Fynal, *adj.* final, L. 2101.
Fyne, *adj. pl.* fine, good, F 640.
Fyne, *v.* finish, cease, stop, T. iv. 26.
Fynt, *pr. s.* findeth, finds, L. 1499.
Fyr, *s.* fire, B 3734.
Fyry, *adj.* fiery, M. P. iv. 27.
Fysicien, *s.* physician, Bo. I. p. iii. 5.
- Gabbe**, *1 pr. s.* speak idly, lie, M. P. iii. 1075; *v.* talk idly, gossip, T. iii. 301.
Gadeliug, *s.* vagabond, R. 938.
Gadrede, *pl. s.* gathered, A 824.
Gaillard, **Gaylard**, *adj.* gay, merry, A 4367, 3336.
Galantyne, *s.* a kind of sauce, M. P. ix. 16.
Galaxye, *s.* the galaxy, Milky Way, M. P. v. 56; H. F. 936.
Gale, *v.* cry out, D 832.
Galianes, *s. pl.* medicines, C 306.
Galingale, *s.* sweet cypress root, A 381.
Galle, *s.* gall, M. P. x. 35; B 3537; G 58, 797; *Galles*, *pl.* feelings of envy, M. P. ix. 47.
- Galoche**, *s.* a shoe, F 555.
Galoun, *s.* gallon, H 24.
Galping, *pres. pl.* gaping, F 350.
Galwes, *s. pl.* gallows, B 3924, 3941.
Game, *s.* sport, M. P. xxii. 61; game, amusement, L. 489; joke, E 733.
Gan, *pt. s.* began, M. P. i. 133; ii. 19; *but commonly used as a mere auxiliary*, did, M. P. i. 92. *Pt. t. of ginnen.*
Ganeth, *pr. s.* yawmeth, H 35.
Gapeth, *pr. s.* opens his mouth, L. 2004.
Gapinges, *s. pl.* greedy wishes, Bo. II. m. ii. 18.
Gargat, *s.* throat, B 4525.
Garisoun, *v.* cure, R. 3249.
Garnisoun, *s.* garrison, B 2217.
Gas, goes, A 4037.
Gasnesse, *s.* terror, Bo. III. p. v. 32.
Gat, *pt. s.* got, obtained, M. P. vii. 206; L. 1649.
Gat-tothed, *adj.* goat-toothed, lascivious, A 468.
Gaude, *s.* trick, course of trickery, C 389.
Gauren, *ger.* to gaze, stare, B 912; *Gaureth*, *pr. s.* gazes, stares, B 3559.
Gayl, *s.* jail, R. 4745.
Gayler, *s.* jailer, B 3615; *Gaylere*, L. 2051.
Gayneth, *pr. s.* availeth, A 1787.
Gaytres beryies, berries of the dogwood tree, B 4155.
Geaunt, *s.* giant, M. P. v. 344; B 1997.
Gebet, *s.* gibbet, gallows, H. F. 106.
Geere. See Gere.
Gendres, *pl.* kinds, H. F. 18.
General, *adj.* with wide sympathies, liberal, M. P. iii. 990.
Gent, *adj.* refined, exquisite, noble, M. P. 558; B 1905. Short for *gentil*.
Genterye, *s.* nobility, magnanimity, L. 394.
Gentil, *adj.* gentle, worthy, B 1627; excellent, B 3123; compassionate, F 483; *Gentils*, *pl. s.* people of gentle birth, 'the noble folk,' M. P. vi. 67; C 323; E 480.
Gentillesse, *s.* nobility of nature and by *viour* courtesy, M. P. ii. 68; L. 610; *Gentillesse*, kindness, G 1051; condescension, B 853; nobleness, B 3441; F 483, 505; nobility, B 3854; worth, E 96; slenderness, symmetry, F 426; delicate nurture, E 593.
Gentileste, *adj. sup.* most beautiful, most delicate, M. P. v. 373.
Gentilleste, *adv.* noblest, E 72.
Gentilly, *adv.* courteously, B 1093; in a frank or noble manner, frankly, F 674.
Geomancie, *s.* divination by figures made on the earth, I 605.
Geometriens, *s. pl.* geometricians, Bo. III. p. x. 161.
Gere, *s.* changeable manner, M. P. iii. 1257.
Gere, *s.* gear, property, B 800; gear, clothing, E 372.

- Gerful*, *adj.* changeable, T. iv. 286.
Gerland, *s.* garland, G 27.
Gery, *adj.* changeable, A 1536.
Gesse, 1 *pr. s.* suppose, M. P. iv. 195; B 246; think, L. 893; *Gessing*, *pres. pt.* intending, L. 363.
Gessinge, *s.* opinion, Bo. I. p. iv. 351.
Gest, *s.* guest, H. F. 288.
Geste, *s.* romance, story, T. iii. 450; L. (A) 87; a stock story; in *geste*, like the common stock stories, B 2123; *Gestes*, *pl.* stories, B 1126; F 211.
Gestes (*g* as *j*), *pl.* doings, deeds, H. F. 1434.
Gestours (*g* as *j*), *pl.* story-tellers, H. F. 1198; *Gestours*, B 2036.
Get, *s.* contrivance, G 1277.
Geten, *ger.* to get, obtain, L. 1358; *pp. han geten hem*, to have acquired for themselves, F 56; *gotten*, obtained, won, L. 1753; *Gete*, 2 *pr. pl. as fut.* will get, M. P. v. 651; *pp.* obtained, M. P. iv. 265. See *Gat*.
Gif, *conj.* if, A 4181.
Giggas (*g* as *j*), *pl.* rapid movements, H. F. 1942.
Gigginge, *pres. pt.* strapping, A 2504.
Gilden, *adj.* of gold, golden, M. P. iii. 338.
Gilt, *s.* guilt, M. P. i. 178.
Giltles, *adj.* guiltless, B 643; *Giltelces*, B 1062; *Giltles*, L. 2092.
GIN, *s.* contrivance, L. 1784; *snare*, *contrivance*, G 1165; *Ginne*, *engine*, *contrivance*, R. 4176.
Etagebreed, *s.* gingerbread, B 2044.
Etnne, *v.* begin, attempt, H. F. 2004; *Ginnen*, 1 *pr. pl.* begin, L. 38.
Ginning, *s.* beginning, M. P. xxii. 80.
Gipoun, *s.* short vest, A 75.
Girdel, *s.* a girdle, B 1921.
Girden, *v.* to strike, B 3736.
Girt, *pr. s.* girdeth, M. P. iv. 100; *girdeth*, *girds*, L. 1775.
Everiche, *s.* halberd R. 5978.
Giser, *s.* gizzard, liver; P. III. n. xii. 52.
Giternes, *s. pl.* guitars, C 466.
Glade, *adj. pl.* glad, M. P. iii. 601.
Glade, *v.* gladden, cheer, M. P. iii. 563; to make glad, comfort, cheer, B 4001; *Gladen*, *ger.* to rejoice, M. P. v. 687; *Gladde*, *v.* cheer, relieve, M. P. iii. 702; *Gladeth*, *imp. pl.* rejoice, M. P. iv. 1.
Gladly, *adv.* by preference, L. 770; willingly, F 224; *that been gladly wyse*, that wish to be thought wise, F 376.
Gladsom, *adj.* pleasant, B 3968.
Glaresh, *pr. s.* glistens, H. F. 272.
Glas, *s.* glass, F 254.
Glase, *v.* glaze, T. v. 469. See *Howve*.
Glasing, *s.* glazing, M. P. iii. 327.
Glede, *s.* a burning coal, B 111, 3574.
Gledy, *adj.* glowing, burning, L. 105.
Glee, *s.* glee, singing, joy, M. P. i. 100; *entertainment*, B 2030.
Gleed, *s.* glowing coal, L. 735.
Glente, *pt. s.* glanced, T. iv. 1223.
Glewe, *v.* fasten, glue, H. F. 1761.
Gleyre, *s.* white (of an egg), G 806.
Glod, *pt. s.* glided, went quickly, B 2094.
Glose, *s.* comment, L. 328; *glosing*, *comment*, F 166.
Glose, *v.* to flatter, B 3330; I 45; *Glosen*, to comment upon, B 1180.
Gloutoun, *s.* glutton, M. P. v. 610, 613.
Gloumbe, *v.* frown, R. 4356.
Glyde, *v.* glide, M. P. iv. 53; *np glyde*, to rise up gradually, F 373; to glide, ascend, G 402. See *Glod*.
Gnow, *pt. s.* gnawed, B 3638.
Goddess, *pl.* gods, M. P. iii. 1328; *gen. sing.* God's, B 1166.
Gode, *adj. fem. s.* good, M. P. iii. 948.
Gode, *s.* property, wealth, L. 2638.
Gold-bete, adorned with beaten gold, gilt, M. P. vii. 24.
Golee, *s.* gabble, lit. mouthful, M. P. v. 556.
Golet, *s.* throat, gullet, C 543.
Gomme, *s.* gum, L. 121.
Gon, *v.* go, proceed, F 200; walk, L. 1399; *Gooth*, *pr. s.* goes, B 385; *Goost*, 2 *pr. s.* goest, walkest about, B 3123; *Goon*, *pr. pl.* go, proceed, E 898; *Goon*, *pp.* gone, B 17; *goon is many a yere*, many a year ago, B 132; *Go*, 2 *pr. pl.* ye walk, go on foot, C 748. See *Goon*.
Gonfanoun, *s.* pennon, banner, R. 1201.
Gonne, *s.* gun, cannon, H. F. 1643; *missile*, L. 637.
Gonne, *pt. pl.* did; *gonne arace*, did tear away, removed, E 1103. See *Gan*.
Good, *s.* goods, property, wealth, G 831.
Goodely, *adv.* kindly, M. P. iii. 1283.
Goodlich, *adj.* kind, bountiful, G 1053.
Goodlihed, *s.* goodness, M. P. iii. 829; *Goodliheed*, *goodly* seeming, H. F. 330; a *goodly* outside, H. F. 274.
Goodly, *adj.* good, proper, pleasing, right, B 3969; *good* looking, portly, B 4010.
Good-man, *s.* master of the house, C 361.
Goon, *v.* go, M. P. iii. 145; *lete it goon*, let it go, neglect it, G 1475; *pp.* gone, L. 792; *Gost*, 2 *pr. s.* goest, L. 926; *Go*, *v.* walk about, roam, L. 2066; *pr. s. subj.* may walk, L. 2069. See *Gon*.
Goos, *s.* goose, M. P. v. 358.
Goosish, *adj.* foolish, T. iii. 584.
Goost. See *Gon*.
Goost, *s.* a ghost, B 3124; *spirit*, T. iv. 187; the

- Holy Ghost, B 1660; *yaf up the goost*, died, B 1802. See **Gost**.
- Goot**, *s.* a goat, G 886.
- Gossomer**, *s.* gossamer, F 259.
- Gost**, *s.* spirit, soul, M. P. i. 56; spirit, M. P. i. 93; spirit. mind, L. 103; *yeldeth up the gost*, gives up the ghost, L. 886; ghost (ironically), H 55; the Holy Ghost, G 328; Goste, *dat.* M. P. xiv. 10. See **Goost**.
- Gost**. See **Goon**.
- Gostly**, *adv.* spiritually, mystically, G 109.
- Goter**, *s.* gutter, T. iii. 787; gutter, channel for water, L. 2705.
- Goth**, *pr. s.* goes, M. P. i. 68; *imp. pl.* go, B 3384. See **Gon**.
- Governaille**, *s.* management, mastery, E 1192.
- Governance**, *s.* government, B 287; providence, E 1161; arrangement, plan, E 994; Governauce, *s.* control, M. P. iv. 44; care, M. P. iii. 1286; self-control, M. P. ii. 41; rule, government, C 600; sovereignty, B 3541; *his governaunce*, the way to manage him, F 311.
- Governe**, *v.* govern, control, B 3587; Governeth, *imp. pl.* arrange, E 322.
- Governesse**, *s. fem.* governor, ruler, mistress, M. P. i. 141; ii. 80.
- Governour**, *s.* governor, master, principal, B 3130.
- Grace**, *s.* grace, honor, distinction, M. P. v. 45; *hard grace*, hard favor, displeasure, severity, M. P. v. 65; favor, kindness, F 458; favor, G 1348; *hir grace*, her favor (*i.e.* that of the blessed Virgin), B 980; pardon, B 647; *of grace*, out of favor, in kindness, F 161.
- Graceles**, *adj.* void of grace, unfavored by God, L. 1002.
- Grace**, *v.* grief, sorrow, M. P. vii. 276; harm, anger, L. iii. 228.
- Grant mercy**, much thanks, G 1380.
- Grapnel**, *s.* grapnel, L. 640.
- Gras**, *s.* grace, B 2021. See **Grace**.
- Gras**, *s.* grass, F 153.
- Graspe**, *v.* grope, T. v. 223.
- Graunges**, *pl.* granges, barns, granaries, H. F. 698.
- Graunten**, *v.* grant, fix, name, E 179; Graunted, *pt. s.* E 183; *graunted him*, agreed to what he said, L. 2665.
- Grave**, *ger.* to engrave, M. P. xxiii. 5; Graven, *pp.* engraved, graven, H. F. 193; R. 4799; Grave, H. F. 157.
- Grave**, *v.* dig; *doth she grave*, she causes to be dug, L. 678; bury, E 681; Graven, *pp.* buried, L. 785.
- Grayn**, *s.* dye; *in grayn*, in dye, *i.e.* dyed of a fast color, B 1917. See **Greyn**.
- Gree**, *s.* good will, M. P. xviii. 73.
- Gree**, *s.* degree, rank, L. 1313; gratitude, good part, E 1151.
- Greet**, *adj.* great, M. P. iii. 954. See **Grete**.
- Grene**, *adj.* green, fresh, M. P. xi. 5; moss-covered, M. P. v. 122, *as s.* green clothing (the color of inconstancy), M. P. xxi. 7; greenery, greenness, F 54; greenness, living evidence, G 90.
- Grenehede**, *s.* greenness, wantonness, B 163.
- Gres**, *s.* grass, T. ii. 515; Greeses, *pl.* grasses, H. F. 1353.
- Gret**, *adj.* great, F 463. See **Greet**, **Grete**.
- Grete**, *adj. as s.*; *the grete*, the chief part, essential part, substance, M. P. iii. 1242; v. 35; the chief part, L. 574, 1693. See **Greet**.
- Grete see**, *s.* the Mediterranean, R. 2748.
- Grete**, *i pt. s.* greeted, M. P. iii. 503; L. 116.
- Gretter**, *adj. comp.* greater, E 1126.
- Grevaunce**, *s.* grievance, complaint (against us), M. P. i. 63; discomfort, M. P. v. 205; affliction, M. P. x. 47; grievance, hardship, B 3703.
- Greve**, *v.* to grieve, vex, B 1638; Greveth, *pr. s. impers.* it vexes, it grieves, E 647; Greved, *pp.* L. 127.
- Greves**, *s. pl.* groves, M. P. iii. 417.
- Grevous**, *adj.* grievous, M. P. i. 20.
- Greyn**, *s.* a grain, B 1852; *in greyn*, in grain, *i.e.* of a fast color, F 511.
- Grille**, *adj.* rough, R 73.
- Grint**, *pr. s.* grindeth, H. F. 1798.
- Grisel**, *s.* name given to an old man, whose hair is gray (lit. old horse), M. P. xvi. 35.
- Grisly**, *adj.* terrible, awful, M. P. vii. 3; ¹³ *grewsome*, C 473.
- Grobbe**, *v.* dig, grub up, M. P. ix. 29.
- Groffe**, *adv.* prone, face downwards, R. 2561.
- Grome**, *s.* man; *grome and wenche*, man and woman, H. F. 206; Gromes, *pl.* men, R. 200.
- Grond**, *pl. s.* ground, M. P. ix. 15.
- Gronte**, *pl. s.* groaned, B 3899.
- Grottes**, *s. pl.* groats, foin! -ny pieces, C 376.
- Grucche**, *v.* to murmur, E 170; *grucche* - murmur at it, E 354.
- Gruf**, *adv.* grovellingly, all along, flat down, B 1865.
- Grys**, *s.* gray, G 559.
- Guerdon**, *s.* guerdon, reward, L. 1662; Guerdoun, H. F. 619.
- Guerdon**, *v.* reward, L. 2052.
- Guerdoning**, *s.* reward-giving, reward, M. P. v. 455.
- Gunne**, *pt. pl. aux.* did, M. P. v. 193. See **Gan**.
- Gyde**, *s.* guide, wielder, M. P. v. 136; ruler, G 45.
- Gyde**, *imp. s.* may (He) guide, B 245.
- Gyderesse**, *s.* conductress, Bo. IV. p. i. 11.
- Gye**, *v.* guide, conduct (myself), L. 2045; guide, rule, B 3587; *ger.* to guide, regulate, l 13.
- Gyle**, *s.* guile, M. P. iii. 620.

Geuse, *s.* way, L. (A) 105; guise, wise, way, manner, F 332; *in his geuse*, as he was wont, B 790.

H.

Haberdassher, *s.* seller of hats, A 361.
 Habergeoun, *s.* a habergeon. hauber, A 2119.
 Habitaclie, *s.* habitable space, Bo. II. p. vii. 65;
 Habitaclies, *pl.* niches, H. F. 1194.
 Haboundaunce, *s.* plenty, M. P. x. 29.
 Haboundaunt, *pres. pt.* abounding, Bo. III. p. ii. 35.
 Habounde, *v.* to abound, B 3938.
 Haboundinge, *pres. pt.* abounding, M. P. i. 135.
 Habundant, *adj.* abundant, E 59.
 Hacches, *pl.* hatches, L. 643.
 Haf, *pt. s.* heaved, A 3470.
 Hainselins, *s. pl.* smocks, I 422.
 Haire, *s.* hair shirt, R. 438.
 Hakeney, *s.* hack-horse, hackney, G 559.
 Hale, *v.* draw, attract, M. P. v. 151; Haleth, *pr. s.* draws back, M. P. i. 68.
 Half, *s.* side, H. F. 1136; Halfe, *dat.* M. P. v. 125; *ou my halfe*, from me, M. P. iii. 139; *a goddes halfe*, for God's sake, M. P. iii. 370, 758.
 Half-goddes, *pl.* demi-gods, L. 387.
 Halke, *s.* corner, hiding-place, L. 1780.
 Halp, *pt. s.* helped, B 3236.
 Hals, *s.* neck, M. P. v. 458; H. F. 394; *cut the hals*, cut in the throat, L. (A) 292.
 HALT, *1 pr. s.* I conjure, B 1835.
 Edith, *pr. s.* holdeth, holds, B 807; F 61; performs, M. P. iii. 621; considers, H. F. 630; remains firm, M. P. x. 38.
 Halts, *pr. s.* halts, goes lame, M. P. iii. 622;
 Halten, *v.* limp, T. iv. 1457.
 Halve, *adj. pl.* half, M. P. xxiii. 2.
 Halvendel, *adv.* half, T. iv. 100; girdeth, girds,
 Halwed, *pp. acc.*
 Halberd, *s.* halberd, R. 5978.
 Giser, *s.* gizzard, liver, Bo. III. m. xii. 52.
 Giternes, *s. pl.* guitars, C 466.
 Glade, *adj. pl.* glad, M. P. iii. 601.
 Glade, *v.* gladden, cheer, M. P. iii. 563; to make glad, comfort, cheer, B 4001; Gladen, *ger.* to rejoice, M. P. v. 687; Gladde, *v.* cheer, relieve, M. P. iii. 702; Gladeth, *imp. pl.* rejoice, M. P. v. i.
 Gladly, *adv.* by preference, L. 770; willingly, F 224; *that been gladly wyse*, that wish to be thought wise, F 376.
 Gladsom, *adj.* pleasant, B 3968.
 Glareth, *pr. s.* glistens, H. F. 272.
 Glas, *s.* glass, F 254.
 Glase, *v.* glaze, T. v. 469. See Howve.
 Glasing, *s.* glazing, M. P. iii. 327.

impers. pr. s. it happens to me, M. P. v. 10;
 Happede, *pt. s.* happened, C 606.
 Hard, *adj. s.* of hard, with difficulty, T. ii. 1236;
 Harde, *adj. def.* hard, cruel, F 499.
 Hardeiment, *s.* hardihood, R. 3392.
 Hardily, *adv.* surely, certainly, H. F. 359;
 boldly, without doubting, without question, E 25; Hardely, unhesitatingly, M. P. vi. 118;
 certainly, M. P. iii. 1043.
 Hardinesse, *s.* boldness, B 3210.
 Harding, *s.* hardening, tempering, F 243.
 Hardy, *adj.* bold, sturdy, F 19.
 Haried, *pp.* taken as a prisoner, A 2726.
 Harlot, *s.* rascal, A 647; D 1754.
 Harlotryes, *s. pl.* ribaldries, A 561.
 Harme, *s.* harm, injury, suffering (*dat.*), F 632.
 Harneised, *pp.* equipped, A 114.
 Harneys, *s.* armor, gear, furniture, harness, A 1006, 2896.
 Harre, *s.* hinge, A 550.
 Harrow, *interj.* alas! C 288.
 Harwed, *pp.* harrowed, devastated, A 3512; D 2107.
 Hasard, *s.* the game of hazard, C 591.
 Hasardour, *s.* gamester, G 596.
 Hasardrye, *s.* gaming, playing at hazard, C 590.
 Hasel-wodes, *s. pl.* hazel-woods, T. iii. 890.
 Haste her, *ger.* hasten, M. P. iv. 56.
 Hasteth, *imp. pl. refl.* hasten, make haste, I 72.
 Hastif, *adj.* hasty, E 349.
 Hastilich, *adv.* quickly, E 911.
 Hastow, *for* Hast thou, L. 510.
 Hatte, *v.* be called, T. iii. 797.
 Hatter, *adv.* more hotly, R. 2475.
 Hauber, *s.* coat of mail, M. P. iv. 97; B 2053.
 See Habergeoun.
 Hawking, *s.* hawking; *an hauking*, a-hawking, B 1927.
 Hanne, *pt. factive*, A 447; abede, *pt.* tear away, removed, E 1103. See Gan.
 Good, *s.* goods, property wealth, G 831.
 Goodly, *adv.* kindly, M. P. iii. 1283.
 Goodlich, *adj.* kind, bountiful, G 1053.
 Goodlihed, *s.* goodness, M. P. iii. 829; Goodlihed, goodly seeming, H. F. 330; a goodly outside, H. F. 274.
 Goodly, *adj.* good, proper, pleasing, right, B 3969; good looking, portly, B 4010.
 Good-man, *s.* master of the house, C 361.
 Goon, *v.* go, M. P. iii. 145; *lete it goon*, let it go, neglect it, G 1475; *pp.* gone, L. 792; Gost, *2 pr. s.* goest, L. 926; Go, *v.* walk about, roam, L. 2066; *pr. s. subj.* may walk, L. 2069.
 See Gon.
 Goos, *s.* goose, M. P. v. 358.
 Goosish, *adj.* foolish, T. iii. 584.
 Goost, *s.* ghost.
 Goost, *s.* a ghost, B 3124; spirit, T. iv. 187; the

- Hede**, *v.* put a head on, T. ii. 1042.
Hede, *s.* heed, care, B 3577.
Heed, *s.* head, M. P. ii. 24; source, M. P. xvi. 43; Hede, head, M. P. iv. 220; Hedes, *pl.* F 203; Hevedes, B 2032; *maugree thyn heed*, in spite of thy head, in spite of all thou canst do, B 104. See **Heved**.
Heeld, 1 *pt.* s. held, considered, E 818; *pt.* s. held, esteemed, C 625; possessed, B 3518; Helde, *pl.* held, B 3506.
Heep, *s.* heap, assembly, host, A 575.
Heer, *s.* hair, M. P. iii. 456; Heres, *pl.* L. 1829.
Heer, *adv.* here, M. P. v. 57; B 1177.
Heer-biforn, *adv.* herebefore, before now, M. P. i. 34.
Heer-mele, *s.* hair's-breadth, As. ii. 38, 17.
Heigh, *adj.* high, lofty, B 3192.
Heighly, *adv.* highly, ungently, T. ii. 1733.
Hele, *s.* health, healing, recovery, well-being, M. P. i. 80; health, L. 1159; prosperity, L. 206.
Hele, *v.* to heal, M. P. iii. 571; F 240.
Helelees, *adj.* without health, T. v. 1593.
Helen, *v.* heal, M. P. xi. 4.
Helle, *s.* *gen.* of hell, M. P. iii. 171; *dat.* hell, B 3292.
Helmed, *pp.* provided with a helmet, B 3560.
Helpe, *pr.* s. *subj.* may help, M. P. iii. 550; iv. 141.
Helpe, *s.* help, L. 1616.
Helply, *adj.* helpful, T. v. 128.
Hem, *pron.* them, M. P. iii. 1170.
Hem-self, *pron.* *pl.* themselves, M. P. v. 234.
Heng, *pt.* s. hung, M. P. iii. 122; Henge, *pt.* *pl.* M. P. ii. 174.
Henne, *adv.* hence, C 637.
Hennesforth, *adv.* henceforth, H. F. 782.
Hente, *pt.* s. caught, took, M. P. iv. 97; *ger.* to ange, *pl.* s. caught, took, M. P. iv. 97.
Grant mercy, much thanks, G 1380.
Grapnel, *s.* grapnel, L. 640.
Gras, *s.* grace, B 2021. See **Grace**.
Gras, *s.* grass, F 153.
Graspe, *v.* grope, T. v. 223.
Graunges, *pl.* granges, barns, granaries, H. F. 698.
Graunten, *v.* grant, fix, name, E 179; **Graunted**, *pt.* s. E 183; *graunted him*, agreed to what he said, L. 2665.
Grave, *ger.* to engrave, M. P. xxiii. 5; **Graven**, *pp.* engraved, graven, H. F. 193; R. 4799; **Grave**, H. F. 157.
Grave, *v.* dig; *doth she grave*, she causes to be dug, L. 678; bury, E 681; **Graven**, *pp.* buried, L. 785.
Grayn, *s.* dye; *in grayn*, in dye. *i.e.* dyed of a fast color, B 1917. See **Grey**n.
Gree, *s.* good will, M. P. xviii. 73.
Herberweden, *pt.* *pl.* lodged, Bo. II. p. vi. 82.
Her-biforn, *adv.* before this time, L. 73; herebefore, B 613.
Her bothe, *gen.* *pl.* of both of them, M. P. iv. 52.
Her-by, *adv.* hence, H. F. 263.
Herd, *pp.* haired, A 2518.
Herde, *s.* herdsman, R. 6453; T. iii. 1235.
Herde-gromes, *s.* *pl.* servants who look after the herds, herdsman, H. F. 1225.
Herdess, *s.* refuse of flax, R. 1233.
Herdesse, *s.* *fem.* herdsman, T. i. 653.
Here, *pron.* her, M. P. vii. 120; B 460.
Here, *v.* hear, M. P. i. 31; **Here**n, 2 *pr.* *pl.* hear, L. 1724; **Herd**, *pp.* heard, B 613; **Herestow**, for **Herest** thou, **herest** thou, H. F. 1031.
Here, *adv.* here, in this place, on this spot, M. P. iii. 93. See **Heer**.
Here and howne, one and all (?), T. iv. 210.
Heres, *s.* *pl.* hairs, hair, M. P. iii. 394. See **Heer**.
Herieth, *pr.* s. praiseth, B 1155; praises, B 1808; **Heriest**. 2 *pr.* s. praises, worshippest, B 3419; **Heric**, *pr.* *pl.* E 616; **Herien**, G 47; **Heried**, *pp.* H. F. 1405; B 872.
Herkne, *ger.* to hearken, listen to, B 3159; **Herknen**, *v.* L. 343; **Herkneth**, *imp.* *pl.* hearken ye, C 454; **Herkneth**, *imp.* *pl.* to hearken, listen to, B 1164; **Herkned**, *pt.* s. B 1711; **Herkning**, *pres. part.* listening to, F 703; **Herkned after**, *pp.* listened for, ex- F 403; **Herkene**, *v.* hearken, M. P. iii. 75.
Hernes, *s.* *pl.* corners, G 658.
Heroner, *s.* heron-killer, T. iv. 413.
Heronere, *adj.* used for flying at herons, I. 1120.
Heronewes, *s.* *pl.* heronshaws, young herons, 68.
Heroune, *s.* heron, M. P. v. 346.
Gronte, *pt.* s. groated, ii. 15, 36.
Grotes, *s.* *pl.* groats, four, P. iv. 118.
Gruccche, *v.* to murmur, E 1405; murmur at it, E 354.
Gruf, *adv.* grovellingly, all along, flat down, B 1865.
Grys, *s.* gray, G 559.
Guerdon, *s.* guerdon, reward, L. 1662; **Guerdoun**, H. F. 619.
Guerdon, *v.* reward, L. 2052.
Guerdoning, *s.* reward-giving, reward, M. P. v. 455.
Gunne, *pt.* *pl.* *aux.* did, M. P. v. 193. See **Gan**.
Gyde, *s.* guide, wielder, M. P. v. 136; ruler, G 45.
Gyde, *imp.* s. may (He) guide, B 245.
Gyderesse, *s.* conductress, Bo. IV. p. i. 11.
Gye, *v.* guide, conduct (myself), L. 2045; guide, rule, B 3587; *ger.* to guide, regulate, I 13.
Gyle, *s.* guide, M. P. iii. 620.

- Hertly**, *adj.* heartfelt, honest, L. 2124; hearty, lit. heart-like, E 502; F 5.
- Her-to**, *adv.* for this purpose, B 243.
- Herynge**, *p. pres.* praising, B 1649.
- Heste**, *s.* behest, command, B 382, 3754.
- Hete**, *s.* heat, M. P. iv. 88; G 1408; heat, *but put for surge*, Bo. I. m. vii. 5; passion, M. P. iv. 127.
- Hete**, *v.* promise, vow, M. P. iii. 1226.
- Heterly**, *adv.* fiercely, L. 638.
- Hethen**, *adj.* heathen, B 904.
- Hethenesse**, *s.* heathen lands, B 1112.
- Hething**, *s.* mockery, A 4110.
- Hette**, *pt. s.* heated, inflamed, M. P. v. 145.
- Hette**, *pt. s.* promised, M. P. iv. 185.
- Heve**, *pr. s.* lifts up, Bo. V. m. v. 20; Heef, *pt. s.* lifted, Bo. I. p. i. 20.
- Heved**, *s.* head, H. F. 550. See **Heed**.
- Heven**, *s.* heaven, the celestial sphere, B 3300; a supreme delight, F 558; Hevene, *gen.* heaven's, of heaven, M. P. i. 24.
- Hevenish**, *adj.* of the heavens, of the spheres, M. P. iv. 30; heavenly, H. F. 1395.
- Hevieth**, *pr. pl.* weigh down, Bo. V. m. v. 19.
- Hevinesse**, *s.* sadness, M. P. iii. 601.
- Hevy**, *adj.* sad, M. P. iv. 12.
- Hew**, *s.* complexion, L. 1748.
- Hewe**, *s.* hue, color, complexion, M. P. iii. 497; hue, color, L. 55; pretence, C 421; hue, appearance, mien, E 377.
- Hals**, *s.* domestic servant, E 1785.
- hæved**, *pl.* colored, of hue, R. 3014.
- hey!** *interj.* hey! L. 1213.
- dey**, *s.* hay, H 14.
- eyne**, *s.* a worthless person, G 1319.
- eyvre**, *s.* heir, M. P. iii. 168.
- Haître**, *adj.* hair, made of hair, C 724¹. iii. 622;
- Hjægge**, *s.* hedge-sparrow, M
- Hider**, *adv.* hither, M. P. iv. iii. 2.
- Hiderward**, *adv.* hither, *iii.* 707.
- Hidious**, *adj.* dreadful, holy, T. iii. 268; *pt. s.* **Hiede**, *pl.* hallowed, G 551.
- Laswes**, *s. pl.* saints (apostles), M. P. iii. 831; lit. holy ones, B 1060; *gen. pl.* of (all) saints, G 1244.
- Halydayes**, *pl.* holy days, festivals, A 3952; I 667.
- Hameled**, *pp.* mutilated, cut off, T. ii. 964.
- Hamers**, *pl.* hammers, M. P. iii. 1164.
- Han**, *v.* have, R. 4657; keep, retain, C 725; take away, C 727; obtain, G 234.
- Hande-brede**, *s.* hand-breadth, A 3811.
- Hap**, *s.* chance, luck, M. P. v. 402; luck, B 3928; G 1209; fortune, good fortune, M. P. iii. 1039; *hap other grace*, a mere chance or a special favor, M. P. iii. 810; Happes, *pl.* occurrences, M. P. iii. 1279.
- Happeth**, *pr. s.* chances, F 592; Happeth me,
- Hir**, *pron. pers.* her, B 162.
- Hirës**, *hers*, M. P. v. 482, 588.
- His**, *its*, M. P. i. 178; E 263; F 405.
- Hit**, *pron. it*, M. P. ii. 117; *hit am I*, it is I, L. 314.
- Hit**, *pr. s.* hides, F 512.
- Ho**, *interj.* halt! B 3957.
- Hoke**, *s.* hook, M. P. iv. 243.
- Hoker**, *s.* mockery, A 3965.
- Hokerly**, *adv.* scornfully, I 584.
- Hold**, *s.* fort, castle, B 507; hold, grasp, F 167.
- Holde**, *v.* keep to; *do than holde herto*, keep to it then, M. P. iii. 754; hold, keep, B 41; to keep to, F 658 (see **Procea**); *pp.* held, esteemed, M. P. xv. 10; forced, M. P. iii. 1078; *bet for the have holde*, better for thee to have held, M. P. v. 572; indebted, L. 763; bound, L. 1447; considered to be, F 70; Holden, *pp.* considered, E 205; held, esteemed, L. 1709; Holden, *v.* think, consider, L. 857; Holdest, 2 *pr. s.* accountest, L. 326; Holde, 1 *pr. s.* I consider, deem, G 739.
- Hole**, *adj. pl.* whole, hale; *hole and sounde*, safe and sound, B 1150.
- Holm**, *s.* holm, evergreen oak, M. P. v. 178.
- Holour**, *s.* lecher, D 254.
- Holpen**, *pp.* helped, L. 1984; helped, aided, F 666; Holpe, L. 461. *Pp.* of Helpen.
- Holsom**, *adj.* wholesome, healing, M. P. v. 206.
- Holt**, *s.* wood, grove, A 6.
- Holwe**, *adj.* hollow, G 1265.
- Hom**, *adv.* home, homewards, F 635.
- Homager**, *s.* one who does homage, vassal, R. 3288.
- Homicyde**, *s.* homicide, assassin, B 1757.
- Homicyde**, *inter. murd.*
- Hauking**, *s.* hawking; *an hauking*, a-hawking. B 1927.
- Haunt**, *s.* practice, A 447; abode, B 2001.
- Haunteth**, *pr. s.* practises, C 547; *Hau pt. pl.* practised, C 464; Haunten, 780.
- Hautein**, *adj.* highflying, L. 1120.
- Hauteyn**, *adj.* proud, stately, M. P. v. loud, C 330; Hauteyne, *adj.* haughty, 1 flying, R. 3739.
- Have**, *v.* have, B 114; *imp. s.* hold, consider, 7; receive, E 567; Haveth, *imp. pl.* hold, 1 700; *have doon*, make an end, M. P. v. 492.
- Havoir**, *v.* have, R. 4720.
- Hawe**, *s.* hawk, yard, enclosure, C 855.
- Hawe**, *s.* hawk; *with have bake*, with baked haws, with coarse fare, B 95; Hawes, *pl.* hips and haws, M. P. ix. 7.
- Hay**, *s.* hedge, R. 2987; Hayes, *pl.* T. iii. 351.
- He**, *used for it*, G 867, 868.
- He** — he, this one — that one, M. P. v. 166.
- Hed**, *pp.* hidden, L. 208.

Hoor, *adj.* hoary, gray, C 743.
Hoors, *adj.* hoarse, T. iv. 1147.
Hoot, *adj.* as *s.* hot, M. P. v. 380. See **Note**.
Hope, *s.* hope, expectation, G 870.
Hoppesteres, *s. pl.* dancers, A 2017.
Horð, *s.* hoarding, M. P. xiii. 3; hoard, treasure, C 775.
Hore, *adj.* hoary, gray-headed, M. P. xvi. 31.
Horn, *s.* horn (musical instrument), H 90.
Horowe, *adj. pl.* foul, scandalous, M. P. iv. 206.
Hors, *s.* a horse, B 15.
Hors, *adj.* hoarse, M. P. iii. 347.
Horsly, *adj.* horse-like, like all that a horse should be, F 194.
Hose, *s.* hose, old stocking, G 726; Hosen, *pl.* B 1923.
Hoste, *s.* host, B 1, 39; E 1.
Hostel, *s.* hostelry, H. F. 1022.
Hostelrye, *s.* hostelry, G 589.
Hostiler, *s.* innkeeper, A 241.
Hote, *adj. def.* voracious (lit. hot), M. P. v. 362; *adj.* hot, an epithet of Arius, as supposed to induce anger and heat of blood, F 51; *pl.* hot, M. P. v. 246. See **Hoot**.
Hote, *v.* be called, R. 38; 1 *pr. s.* command, F⁴ F. 1719.
Hottes, *pl.* baskets carried on the back, H. F. 1940.
Houndes, *s. pl.* dogs, E 1095.
Houndfish, *s.* shark, E 1825.
Houped, *pl. fl.* whooped, B 4590.
Hous, *s.* house, home; *to hous*, to a reception by, L. 1546; Houses, *pl.* astrological 'mansions' of the planets, L. 2593.
Housbond, *s.* husband, B 863.
Henne, *adv.* henceforth, H. F. 782.
Hennesforth, *adv.* henceforth, H. F. 782.
Hente, *pt. s.* caught, took, M. P. iv. 97; *ger.* to seize; *dide her for to hente*, caused her to be seized, L. 2715; seized, took forcibly, E 534; took in hunting, B 3449; caught away, B 1144; raised, lifted, G 205; *pr. s. subj.* may seize, G 7; *Hent*, *pp.* caught, L. 2322.
Henteres, *s. pl.* seizers, Bo. I. p. iii. 89.
Hepe, *s.* hip, B 1937.
Hepe, *s.* heap, number, M. P. iii. 295.
Her, *pron. poss.* their, B 138, 140.
Heraud, *s.* herald, A 2533.
Heraude, *ger.* to herald, proclaim as a herald does, H. F. 1576.
Her-before, *adv.* previously, M. P. iii. 1302; a while ago, M. P. iii. 1136; Her-beforem, M. P. iii. 1304.
Herber, *s.* arbor, L. 203.
Herbergage, *s.* lodging, abode, B 147.
Herbergeours, *s. pl.* receivers of guests, R. 5000; harbingers, providers of lodging, B 997.
Herberwe, lodging, inn, harbor, A 403, 765.

Hye, *ger.* to hasten, H. F. 1658; *hy the*, hasten thyself, be quick, G 1295; Hyed hem, *refl. pt. pl.* hastened, M. P. iii. 363.
Hye, *adj.* high, M. P. i. 37; Hyer, *comp.* H. F. 1117; Hyest, *superl.* M. P. v. 324.
Hye, *adv.* high, L. 1200; loudly, M. P. iii. 183; high, aloft, B 3592.
Hyene, *s.* hyena, M. P. x. 35.
Hyne, *s.* hind, peasant, C 688.
Hyre, *s.* hire, reward, M. P. i. 103.

I (for I and Y).

Iade, *s.* a jade, i. e. a miserable hack, B 4002.
Iagounces, *s. pl.* jacinths, R. 1117.
Ialous, *adj.* jealous, M. P. v. 342. See **Ielous**.
Ialousye, *s.* jealousy, C 366. See **Ielosye**.
Iambeux, *s. pl.* leggings, leg-armor, B 2065.
Iane, *s.* a small coin, properly of Genoa, B 1925; E 999.
Iangle, *pr. fl.* talk, prate, F 220.
Iangler, *s.* prater, babbler, M. P. v. 457; Ianglere, A 560.
Iangles, *pl.* pratings, babbings, H. F. 1960.
Ianglest, 2 *pr. s.* chatterest, B 774.
Iangling, *adj.* jangling, prating, M. P. v. 345.
Iangling, *s.* prating, idle talking, disputing, F 257; Iangling, I 649.
Iape, *s.* jest, mock, or laughing-stock, H. F. 414; a trick, B 1629.
Iape, *ger.* to jest, L. 1699; H 4; Iapen, *pr. s.* jest, B 1883.
Iape-worthy, *adj.* ridiculous, Bo. V. p. iii. 163.
Iaunyce, *s.* jaundice, R. 305.
Ieching, *s.* itching, R. 2450.
Heronsweyrou, I, B 39-68. F 47.
Heroune, *s.* heron, of
Herse, *s.* hearse, M. P. iv. 7. See **Ialousy**.
Herselven, *acc.* herself, M. P. iv. 140, 81.
Hert, *s.* hart, M. P. iii. 351; v. 1222.
Herte, *s.* heart, M. P. i. 12; courage, *pl.* 1222; *myn hertes*, of my heart, M. P. iv. 57; Hertes, *pl.* L. 1841.
Herte, *pt. s.* hurt, M. P. iii. 883.
Herte-blood, heart's blood, C 902.
Hertelees, without heart, cowardly, B 4098.
Hertely, *adv.* heartily, earnestly, M. P. iii. 1226; truly, M. P. iii. 85; heartily, thoroughly, L. 33.
Herte-rote, *s.* root of the heart, depth of the heart, L. 1993.
Hertes, *s. gen.* hart's, B 3447; *pl.* harts, L. 1212.
Herte-spoon, *s.* 'the concave part of the breast, where the ribs unite with the cartilago ensiformis,' A 2606.
Herth, *pr. s.* heareth, L. (A) 327.

Importable, *adj.* intolerable, insufferable, B 114.
 Impresse *pp. pl.* force themselves (upon), make an impression upon, G 1071.
 Impressions, *s.* impression, remembrance, F 371.
 In, *prep.* into, M P ix 6, B 119.
 In, *s.* in, Indiana, B 1057.
 Inde, *s.* indego, R 67.
 Indifferently, *adv.* impartially, Bo. V p iii.
 Induracioun, *s.* hardening, G 835.
 Infect, *pp.* invalidated, A 320.
 In-fere, *adv.* together, M P iv 290.
 Infortunat, *adj.* unfortunate, inauspicious, B 302.
 Infortune, *s.* misfortune, B 357.
 Ingot, *s.* an ingot, a mould for pouring metal into, G 120.
 Inhelde, *pp. pl.* infuse, T iii 41.
 Injure, *s.* injury, T iii 1013.
 Inknette, *pt. s.* confined, T iii 1035.
 Inly, *adv.* wholly, exquisitely, M P iii 276;
 inwardly, greedily, H F 31.
 In-mid, *prep.* into, amid, H F 223.
 Inne, *adv.* in, B 3123; within, G 680.
 Inne, *prep.* in, F 372.
 Inned, *pp.* housed, A 2192.
 Inparfit, *adj.* imperfect, Bo III p x 20.
 Inplitable, *adj.* intricate, impracticable, Bo. i p iv 101.
 Inset *pp.* implanted, Bo II. p iii 19.
 In-unge, *v.* press in, T iv 66.
 Intresse, *s.* interest, M P x 71.
 In-with, *prep.* within, B 1724; E 270.
 In, *v.* come about, T iii 33.
 Invelours, *s. pl.* jugglers, H F 1259.
 Hair, *s.* joy, B 164. See Ioye.
 Hair, *adj.* joyful, A 3355.
 Hide, *cc.* joviality, M P ii 39; C 750; F 273;
 amusement, B 233; enjoyment, F 344.
 Hilytee, *s.* joviality, merriment, happiness, H. F. 682;
 Hilyte, M P v 220.
 Hilyte, *cc.* pleasant, delightful, L 176.
 Hierdes, *s. p.* festivity, F 229.
 Hight, *pp. s.* humble, T ii 1037. u.
 with justice sense, L 117; Highte, *pt. s.*
 w. colod, M P iii 63. Highten, *pp. pl.* are
 called, L 123; Highte, *2 pt. pl.* promised, E
 47.
 Highte, *s.* height, B 12.
 Highteth, *pp. s.* whorls, gladdens, Bo I in ii.
 23.
 Hild, *pt. s.* here, swined, M P iii 393.
 Him selven, *cc.* abused, M P iv 93.
 Hindreste, *cc.* abused, A 622.
 Hipes, *pl.* hips, A 472.
 Hir, *pp. u.* poss. their, L 753; B 112, her, B
 15, 14.

Iubbe, *s.* jug, A 3623.
 Iuge, *s.* judge, M P i 134.
 Iugement, *s.* judgment, decision, L 406; opinion,
 P 1035.
 Iupartye, *s.* jeopardy, R. 2666.
 Iusten, *v.* just, L 1271; H 42.
 Iusting, *s.* jousting, L 1115.
 Iustise, *s.* punishment, R. 2077.
 Iustyse, *s.* justice, judge, M P i 37; judgment,
 condemnation, M P i 142.
 Iuwel, *s.* jewel, jewelled ornament, L 1117.
 Iuyse, *s.* justice, judgment, B 725.
 I-wis, *adv.* certainly, truly, M P. vi. 43.

K.

Kalender, *s.* calendar; and so a complete record
 of examples, L 542; Kalenders, *s. pl.* calen-
 dars, M P i 73.
 Kalendes, *s. pl.* calends, the first or beginning,
 T v. 1634.
 Kart, *pt. s.* cut, M P ix 21. See Kerve.
 Kecche, *v.* catch, T iii 1375.
 Kechil, *s.* cake, D 1747.
 Keepe, *s.* heed, care, M P vii 135; L. 1733.
 Kek! *interj.* (represents the cackle of a goose),
 M P v. 499.
 Kembe, *ger.* to comb, H. F. 136; Kembe, *pt. s.*
 combed, F 560; Kembe, *pp.* E 379.
 Kempe, *adj.* shaggy, A 2134.
 Ken, *s.* kin, kindred, men, M P iii 433.
 Kene, *adj.* keen, eager, M P xxi. 6; bold, B
 343; F 57.
 Kene, *adv.* keenly, M P xi 3; vi. 63.
 Kenne, *p.* perceive, discern, H F 493.
 Kepe, *s.* heed, care, note, M P iii 6, 123; heed,
 E 1033; taken kepe, take heed, F 343. See
 Keep.
 Kepe *v.* keep, preserve, L 324; *1 pr. s.* care,
 L 1032; I kepe, *1 2d.* I 325, to have, C 1668;
 Kepte, *cc.* honor, dignity, B 3157.
 Keptete, *s.* honorableness, honor, E 422.
 Keptely, *adv.* honorably, G 547.
 Honge, *v.* to hang, C 790; Hongen, *v.* hang, be
 hung, M P v 438. See Heng and Doon.
 Hony, *s.* honey, B 3537; F 614.
 Hoodles, *adj.* without a hood, M P iii 1028.
 Hook, *s.* sickle, Bo. III m i. 4.
 Hool, *adj.* whole, restored to health, L 2468;
 whole, all, entire, M P iii 534; well, F 161;
 whole, perfect, G 111, 117.
 Hool, *adj.* wholly, M P iii 991.
 Hoolly, *adv.* wholly, M P iii 15.
 Hoolnesse, *s.* integrity, Bo IV. p vi. 220.
 Hoom, *adv.* home, L 1619; homewards, B 3543.
 Hoomlinessse, *s.* homeliness, domesticity, E 429.

- Licour, *s.* juice, C 452.
 Lief, *adj.* dear, cherished, F 479; *goode lief my wyf*, my dear good wife, B 3084. See *Leef*.
 Lige, *adj.* liege; *lige man*, vassal, L. 379.
 Ligeaunce, *s.* allegiance, B 895.
 Ligen, *v.* to lie, lie down, B 2101.
 Light, *adj.* easy, M. P. v. 554.
 Light, *pp.* lighted, L. 2506.
 Lighte, *v.* descend, H. F. 508; *pr. pl.* alight, L. 1713.
 Lighted, *pp.* lighted up, brightened, M. P. i. 74.
 Lighter, *adv. comp.* more easily, more readily; *the lighter merciable*, more readily merciful on that account, L. 410.
 Lightly, *adv.* readily, M. P. iv. 205.
 Ligne aloës, *s.* aloes-wood, T. iv. 1137.
 Likerous, *adj.* lecherous, M. P. ix. 57; very vile, Bo. III. p. iv. 34; gluttonous, dainty, greedy, C 540.
 Litting-horne, *s.* horn to be played for a lilt, H. F. 1223.
 Limitour, *s.* licensed beggar, A 209.
 Linage, *s.* lineage, birth, descent, L. 1820; consanguinity, L. 2602; lineage, kindred, B 999.
 Lind, *s.* lime-tree, A 2922.
 Linde, *s.* linden-tree, E 1211.
 Lipsed, *pt. s.* lisped, A 264.
 Lisse, *v.* soothe, M. P. vi. 6; *pr. s. subj.* may alleviate, M. P. iii. 210.
 Lisse, *s.* cessation, assuaging, H. F. 220; alleviation; solace, M. P. iii. 1040.
 List, *s.* ear, D 634.
 List, *pr. s.* it pleases, M. P. i. 172; is pleased, likes to, M. P. xvi. 35; *me list right evel*, I was in no mind to, M. P. iii. 239; *you list*, it pleases you, M. P. x. 77; *Listeth, pr. s. pl.* is pleased, H. F. 511; *Listen, pr. pl.* listens, B 2234; *after these olde auctours*
 Hidee, *adj.* jovial, *rete*, as these old authors choose to amuseme
 Hylite, *n.* jollity, n pleased, L. 332; *her liste*, it pleased her
 Hylite, *n.* jollity, n pleased, M. P. iii. 878, 962; *him liste*, his list, M. P. iv. 92.
 Hierdes, *s. pl.* lists; *in his listes*, by means of his list, *pr. s.* is called.
 with passive sembel-pôts, 385. 1. . . .
 was called, M. P. T. v. 409.
 called, L. 422; York, R. 579.
 496. *s. pl.* cheeks, hence heads, H. F. 1786; Bo. I. p. iv. 121.
 ye, *s.* joy. See *Ioie*.
 Ioyne, *v.* enjoin, R. 2355.
 Ioyned, *pt. s.* joined, let (his ears) touch one another, M. P. iii. 393.
 Ioynture, *s.* union, Bo. II. p. v. 56.
 Irous, *adj.* passionate, D 2086.
 Isse, *v.* issue, R. 1992; *Issest, 2 pr. s.* issued, Bo. III. p. xii. 186.
 Lodesmen, *pl.* pilots, L. 1488.
 Lode-sterre, *s.* lodestar, A 2059.
 Lofte, *s. dat.* air; *on lofte*, in the air, H. F. 1727; B 277.
 Logge, *s.* a lodging, B 4043.
 Loigne, *s.* tether, R. 3882.
 Lokeden, *pt. pl.* looked, L. 1972; *Loked, pt. s.* looked, E 340; *Loketh, imp. pl.* look ye, behold, G 1329; search ye, C 578.
 Loken, *pp.* locked, enclosed, B 4065.
 Loking, *s.* manner of looking, gaze, M. P. iii. 870; examining, M. P. v. 110; aspect (astrological), M. P. iv. 51; glance, look, L. 240.
 Lokkes, locks of hair, A 81.
 Loller, *s.* a loller, a lollard, B 1173.
 Lomb, *s.* lamb, L. 1798.
 Lond, *s.* land; country, B 3548; *Londe, land, B* 522.
 Lone, *s.* loan, D 1861.
 Long, *prep.*; the phrase *wher-on . . . long=* long on wher, along of what, G 930; *long on*, along of, because of, G 922.
 Longe, *adv.* long, M. P. iv. 172; long, a long while, B 1626, 3300.
 Longe, *pl. adj.* long, high, M. P. v. 230.
 Longes, *s. pl.* lungs, A 2752.
 Longeth, *pr. s.* belongs, M. P. xiv. 1281. 7 'səɪlɪw 'sɔɪl be long, L. 151; *Longing, pres. p.* longing, L. 1963. 8ɔ ɪn ɪd ɔɪ 'sɔɪl
 Longing for, *i.e.* belonging to, suitable for, ɪrɔw-ɪrɔw
 Loos, *s.* praise, H. F. 1621; G 1368.
 Loos, *adj.* loose, M. P. v. 570. 7 : 628 G
 Looth, *adj.* loath, displeasing; *me were looth*, it would be displeasing to me, B 91.
 Loppe, *s.* spider, As. i. 19, 3.
 Loppe-webbe, *s.* spider's web, As. i. 21, 3.
 Lordeth, *pr. s.* rules over, M. P. iv. 166.
 Lordings, *s. pl.* sirs, B 573; C 329; I 15.
 Lore, *s.* teaching, L. 2450; study, G 842; lore, learning, experience, knowledge, B 4, 1168; E 87, 788.
 Lore, *pp.* lost, M. P. v. 172.
 Loren, *s.* kept, E 223; *pt. pl.* regarding, B 269; *Kepeth, imp. pl.* keep ye, L. 64; *pr. s.* keeps, E 1133; observes, F 1.
 Keping, *pres. part.* keeping, tending, F 1.
 Kepen, *1 pr. pl.* care, H. F. 1695; *Kept, pp.* E 1098.
 Kerchief, *s.* kerchief, finely woven loose covering to throw over one, M. P. v. 272; *Kerchief, s.* kerchief, L. 2202; B 837.
 Kernels, *s. pl.* R. 4195.
 Kerve, *ger.* to cut, M. P. v. 217; *v.* to cut, F 158; *Karf, pt. s.* carved, M. P. Kerveth, *pr. s.* carves, cuts, L. 233.
 Corve.
 Kerver, *s.* carver, A 1899.
 Kervings, *s. pl.* carvings, H. F. 1302.

- Lother**, *adj. comp.* more hateful, L. 191.
Lotinge, *pres. part.* lurking, G 186.
Loude, *adv.* loudly, M. P. iii. 344; *def. adj.* loud, F 268.
Lough, *pt. s.* laughed, B 3740.
Louke, *s.* fellow-rascal, A 4415.
Loured, *pp.* frowned, H. F. 409.
Lous, *adj.* loose, free, H. F. 1286. See **Loos**.
Loute, *v.* bow, bend, H. F. 1704; bow, T. iii. 683; *Louted*, *pt. s.* bow, R. 1554; *Loute*, *v.* to bow down, B 3352.
Love-dayes, *pl.* appointed days of reconciliation, H. F. 695.
Loveden, *pt. pl.* loved, L. 1812; *Loven*, *ger.* to love, M. P. iv. 48; *Lovede*, *pt. s.* loved, E 413; *Loveth*, *imp. pl.* love ye, E 370.
Love-drury, *s.* affection, B 2085.
Lovere, *s.* a lover, F 546.
Loves, *s. pl.* loves, B 503.
Lovyere, *s.* lover, A 80.
Lowe, *adv.* in lowly fashion, L. 2046; in a low voice, F 216.
Luce, *s.* pike, A 350.
Lucre, *s.* lucre, gain; *lucre of vilanye*, villanous lucre, vile gain, B 1681; profit, G 1402.
Lufsum, *adj.* lovable, T. v. 465.
Lulleth, *pr. s.* lulles, B 839.
Luna, *s.* the intermediate name for silver, G 1440. III. m. ix. 31.
Lunarij, *v.* 806. G 800.
Lure, *pr. s.* bemoan, R. 2596. G 800. which a hawk
pr. s. mean, L. 558; *Mer's hand*, H 309.
Lus, *s.* joy, delight, M. P. i. 100; desire, M. P. iii. 273; will, M. P. iv. 63; *Luste*, *dat.* pleasure, M. P. v. 15.
Lusteth, *pr. s. impers.* pleases, L. 996; *Lust*, *pr. s. impers.* it pleases, E 322; *Luste*, *pt. s. impers.* it pleased, M. P. iii. 1019; *pers.* was pleased, desired, G 1344. See **List**.
Lustihede, *s.* cheerfulness, M. P. iii. 27; vigor, M. P. xv. 1730.
Lustig, *adj. comp.* more joyous, G 1345. P. v. 15 *adv.* merrily, gayly, R. 1319.
Lusse, *s.* pleasure, A 1939.
Lustig, *adj.* cheerful, glad, pleasant, M. P. iv. 1000.
Knoppes, *s. pl.* buds, R. 1675.
Knotte, *s.* knot, principal point of a story, gist of a tale, F 401, 407.
Knotteles, *adj.* like an unknotted string, T. v. 769.
Knowe, *s.* knee, T. ii. 1202; *Knowes*, *pl.* B 1719.
Knowing, *s.* knowledge, M. P. iii. 960.
Knowinge, *adj.* conscious, Bo. III. p. xi. 189; *Knowinge with me*, *i. e.* my witnesses, Bo. I. p. iv. 55.
Lyk, *adj.* like, M. P. iv. 237. See **Liche**.
Lyke, *ger.* to please, H. F. 860; *Lyked*, *pt. s. impers.* it liked, pleased, M. P. vii. 109; *Lyketh yow*, *pr. s. impers.* it pleases you, M. P. v. 401; *Lyke*, *v.* please, T. i. 431; *pr. s. impers.* please, L. 319; *thogh thee lyke nat*, though it may not please you, L. 490; *Lyken*, *v.* to please, B 2128; *Lyketh*, *pr. s.* it pleases, E 311; *us lyketh yow*, it pleases us with respect to you, E 106; *how lyketh thee my wyf*, how does it please you with respect to my wife, E 1031; *Lykned*, *pp.* likened, compared, B 91.
Lyking, *s.* pleasure, liking, delight, B 3499.
Lyklihede, *s.* likelihood, probability, B 1786.
Lyklinesse, *s.* probability, M. P. xxii. 15.
Lykne, *1 pr. s.* liken, compare, M. P. iii. 636.
Lym, *s.* quicklime, L. 649; lime, G 910.
Lymaille, *s.* filings of any metal, G 1162; *Lymail*, G 1164.
Lymere, hound held in leash, M. P. iii. 365.
Lymrod, *s.* lime-rod, lime-twig, B 3574.
Lytargye, *s.* lethargy, T. i. 730.
Lyte, *adj.* little, M. P. v. 64; *as s.* a little, M. P. iii. 249.
Lyte, *adv.* little, M. P. iii. 884; in a small degree, G 632, 699. See **Lite**.
Lyth, *pr. s.* lieth, lies, M. P. iii. 181; *lyeth ther-to*, belongs here, is needed, M. P. iii. 527.
Lyth, *adj.* smooth, easy, R. 3762; *lyth*, *pr. s.* H. F. 118.
Lyve, *dat.* life, M. P. iii. 1200; *his lyve*, his life, M. P. iii. 151; *on lyve*, alive, L. 1624; *lyve*, *dat. from Lyf*, whence *on lyve*, during *i. e.* alive, F 423.
Lyves, *s. gen.* of my life, M. P. iii. 920; *present worldes lyves space*, the space of life in the present world, M. P. v. 53; *lyves*, *s. pl. gen.* souls', lives', G 56; *Lyve*, *sing. used as adv.* living, E 903.
Lyves, *adv.* living, alive, H. F. 1063.
Lyvinge, *s.* manner of life, C 84200; *lyvinge*, *pp.* L. 1260; *lyvinge*, *1 pt. s.* I left, C 702.
Lak, *s.* lack, defect, M. P. iii. 958; blame, dispraise, L. (A) 298; want, defect, L. 1534.
Lake, *s.* a kind of fine white linen cloth, B 2048.
Lakke, *s. dat.* lack, want, loss, M. P. v. 87.
Lakked, *pt. s.* wanted, lacked; *him lakked*, there lacked to him, *i. e.* he lacked, F 16; *Lakketh*, *pr. s.* lacks, G 498; *Lakken*, *v.* depreciate, T. i. 189.
Lambish, *adj.* gentle as lambs, M. P. ix. 50.
Lambren, *s. pl.* lambs, R. 7013.
Lampe, *s.* lamina, thin plate, G 764.

- Maille, *s.* mail, ringed armor, E 1202.
 Maister, *s.* master, B 1627, 3128.
 Maister-strete, *s.* main street, L. 1965.
 Maister-temple, *s.* chief temple, L. 1016.
 Maister-toun, *s.* capital, L. 1591.
 Maister-tour, *s.* principal tower, F 226.
 Maistow, *mayst* thou, H. F. 699.
 Maistres, *s. pl.* masters, B 141.
 Maistresse, *s.* mistress, M. P. i. 109.
 Maistrye, *s.* specimen of skill, H. F. 1094; mastery, victory, B 3582; governance, control, B 3689; Maistric, a masterly operation, G 1060. See *Maistrye*.
 Makejeste, *s.*; *his real majestee*, his royal majesty, *i.e.* high treason, Bo. I. p. iv. 183.
 Make, *s.* companion, love, mate, M. P. iv. 17, 154; match, equal, H. F. 1172; mate, wife, B 700; husband, G 224.
 Make, *pr. pl.* compose poetry, M. P. xviii. 82; 1 *pr. s.* write, L. 188; Maked, *pt. s.* made, B 3318; *pp.* B 1722; Maad, B 3607; Makestow, *i.e.* makest thou, B 371.
 Makelees, *adj.* matchless, T. i. 172.
 Making, *s.* poetry, composition, L. 413.
 Malapert, *adj.* impudent, T. iii. 87.
 Male, *s.* bag, wallet, C 920; G 566.
 Malefice, *s.* evil-doing, I 341.
 Malgre, *prep.* in spite of, M. P. iv. 220.
 Malisoun, *s.* curse, G 1245.
 Malliable, *adj.* malleable, such as can be worked
 hammer, G 1130.
 Malt, *s.* malt, H. F. 922. See *Molte*.
 Malt, *pr. s.* it pleases, R. 330.
 Malt, *likes to*, M. P. xvi. 35; and servant, or
 was in no mind to, M. P. iii. you list, it
 pleases you, M. P. x. 77; Listeth, *pr. s.*
 Halte, *s. pl.* is pleased, H. F. 511; Listen, *pr. pl.*
 Hys, *adj. pl.* B 2234; after these olde auctours
 Hide, *pr. s.* as these old authors choose to
 Hi, *pr. s.* 575; Liste, *pt. s.* liked, L. 1407;
 Hyllyte, *n.* pleased, L. 332; her liste, it pleased
 Hyllyte, M. P. iii. 878, 962; him liste,
 M. P. iv. 92.
 Hyllyte, *s. pl.* in his listes, by means of his
 Laureat, *adj.* crowned
 3886; E 31.
 Laurer, *s.* laurel, M. P. v. 182; vii. 24.
 Laurer crowned, *pp.* crowned with laurel, M. P.
 vii. 43.
 Laus, *adj.* loose, Bo. IV. p. vi. 160.
 Laven, *ger.* to exhaust, Bo. IV. p. vi. 15; Laved,
pp. drawn up, Bo. III. m. xii. 28.
 Lavender, *s.* laundress, L. 358.
 Lawe, *adj.* low, R. 5046.
 Lay, *s.* song, lay, M. P. iii. 471; B 1959.
 Lay, *s.* law, L. 336; religious belief, faith, creed,
 B 572; F 18.
 Marchant, *s.* merchant, B 132.
 Marcial, *adj.* martial, T. iv. 1669.
 Mare, *adv. comp.* more, R. 2709.
 Mareys, *pl.* marshes, Bo. II. p. vii. 46.
 Marie, *interj.* marry, *i.e.* by St. Mary, G
 1062.
 Married, *pt. s. trans.* he caused to be married, E
 1130.
 Mark, *s.* a piece of money, of the value of 13 s.
 4 d. in England, G 1026; Mark, *pl. i.e.* marks,
 C 390.
 Market-beter, *s.* bully at fairs, A 3936.
 Markis, *s.* a marquis, E 64.
 Markissee, *s.* a marchioness, E 394.
 Martyre, *s.* torment, T. iv. 818.
 Mary, *s.* marrow, C 542.
 Mary-bones, *s. pl.* marrow-bones, A 380.
 Mase, *s.* maze, labyrinth, L. 2014.
 Mased, *adj.* bewildered, M. P. iii. 12; stunned
 with grief, M. P. vii. 322.
 Masednesse, *s.* amaze, E 1061.
 Maselyn, *s.* a kind of drinking-cup, B 2042.
 Mast, *s.* mast, *i.e.* the fruit of forest-trees,
 acorns, and beech-nuts, M. P. ix. 7, 37.
 Masty, *adj.* fattened, sluggish, H. F. 1777. Lit.
 'fattened on mast.'
 Mat, *adj.* dead, L. 1085; M: dead, defeated
 utterly, B 935. longing, *pres. p.*
 Mate! *interj.* ch.
 Mate, *adj.* deprecating, belonging to, suitable for; ex-
 hausted, M. P. H. F. 1621; G 1368.
 Matere, *s.* noise, M. P. v. 570.
 Matere, *s.* loath, displeasing; me were loof,
 M. P. vi. it would be displeasing to me, B 91.
 Loppe, *s.* spider, As. i. 19, 3.
 Loppe-webbe, *s.* spider's web, As. i. 21, 3. eed,
 Lordeth, *pr. s.* rules over, M. P. iv. 166. || I
 Lordings, *s. pl.* sirs, B 573; C 329; I 15. 125-
 Lore, *s.* teaching, L. 2450; study, G 842; lore,
 learning, experience, knowledge, B 4, 1168; E
 87, 788. te.
 Lore, *pp.* lost M. P. xi. 28; M. P. xi. 28; M. P. xi. 28.
 Loren, *s.* kept, E 223; *pt. pl.* regarding
 Loren, B 269; Kepeth, *imp. pl.* k. 2797
 Lope, *pr. s.* keeps, E 1133; observ
 Keping, *pres. part.* keeping, tendi
 Keping, *s. pl.* gleams, flashes, R. 534.
 Lemman, *s.* lover; lit. dear man, B 917; sweet-
 heart, B 3253.
 Lendes, *s. pl.* loins, A 3237.
 Lene, *adj.* lean, M. P. xi. 28; B 4003.
 Lene, *ger.* to lend, G 1024, 1037.
 Lenger, *adv. comp.* longer, M. P. ii. 95; ever
 lenger the more, the longer, the more, E 687;
 F 404.
 Lengest, *adv. sup.* longest, M. P. v. 549.
 Lengthe, *s.* length; upon lengthe, after a l
 run, M. P. iii. 352.

pleases,
 list, choose
 listen &
 write.
 imp
 by

- Mede**, *s. dat.* mead, meadow, M. P. v. 184; Medew, L. 210.
- Mede**, *s. reward*, a bribe, B 3579.
- Medeleth**, *pr. s.* mingles, L. 874.
- Medeling**, *s.* admixture, Bo. I. p. iv. 312.
- Medle**, *v.* mingle, H. F. 2102; meddle, take part in, G 1184; dye, Bo. II. m. v. 11; Medly, *v.* mingle, mix, Bo. II. m. v. 8; Medleth, *imp. pl.* meddle, G 1424.
- Medlee**, *adj.* of mixed stuff, A 328.
- Meed**, *s. reward*, L. 1662.
- Meel**, *s. meal*, B 466.
- Meel-tyd**, *s.* meal-time, T. ii. 1556.
- Meiny**, *s. crew*, L. 2201. See **Meynce**.
- Meke**, *adj. pl.* meek, M. P. v. 341.
- Meked**, *pt. s.* meekened, R. 3584.
- Melancolious**, *adj.* melancholy, H. F. 30.
- Melancolye**, *s.* melancholy, M. P. iii. 23.
- Melle**, *s. mill*, M. P. ix. 6.
- Memorial**, *adj.* which serves to record events, M. P. vii. 18.
- Memorie**, *s. memory*, M. P. vii. 14; mention, remembrance, B 3164.
- Men**, *sing.* one, people, M. P. v. 22.
- Mendience**, *s.* mendicancy, R. 6657.
- Mendinants**, *s. pl.* begging friars, D 1906.
- Mene**, *adj. pl.* intermediate, M. P. vii. 286; *adj.* middle, Bo. III. m. ix. 31; middle, of middle size, T. v. 806.
- Mene**, *pr. s.* bemoan, R. 2596.
- Mene**, 1 *pr. s.* mean, L. 558; Mente, *pt. s.* meant, L. 309. Menestow, meanest thou, G 309.
- Mene**, 2 *pr. s.* joy, delight, M. P. i. 100; Mene, *s.* M. P. iii. 273; will, M. P. iv. 63; Mene, *dat.* pleasure, M. P. v. 15.
- Men**, *teth, pr. s. impers.* pleases, L. 996; Lust, Mene, *s. impers.* it pleases, E 322; Luste, *pt. s. impers.* it pleased, M. P. iii. 1019; *pers.* was pleased, desired, G 1344. See **List**.
- Lustihede**, *s.* cheerfulness, M. P. iii. 27; vigor, L. 1530.
- Lustier**, *adj. comp.* more joyous, G 1345.
- Lustily**, *adv.* merrily, gayly, R. 1319.
- Lustinesse**, *s.* pleasure, A 1939.
- Lusty**, *adj.* cheerful, glad, pleasant, M. P. ix. 1511; lusty, hearty, L. 1304; Lyleth, *imp. pl.* cease from, L. 411; Lete, *v.* let, B 3524; 1 *pr. s.* I leave, B 96; Lete, *v.* forsake, B 325. See **Lat. Leet**.
- Lette**, *ger.* to hinder, H. F. 1954; *v.* cease, M. P. iv. 186; *pt. s.* stopped, waited, H. F. 2070; Lettest, 2 *pr. s.* preventest, hinderest, stoppest, L. 325; Lette, *pt. s.* tarried, L. 2167; Lette, *v.* to hinder, delay; *used intrans.* to cause delay, B 1117; to hinder, B 2116; to oppose, stay, B 3306; *pt. s. intrans.* delayed, E 389.
- 3204; *with meschaunce*, with ill luck (to him), H 11.
- Meschief**, *s.* mischief, harm, L. 1655; tribulation, trouble, H 76; Meschief, misfortune, B 3513.
- Mesel**, *s.* leper, I 624.
- Messagere**, *s.* messenger, M. P. iii. 133; Messenger, H. F. 1568; Messenger, B 6; Messageres, *pl. L.* 1091.
- Messagerye**, the sending of messages (personified), M. P. v. 228.
- Messe**, *s. mass*, B 1413.
- Meste**, *adj. superl.* most, *i.e.* highest in rank, most considerable, E 131.
- Mester**, *s.* occupation, A 1340.
- Mesurable**, *adj.* moderate, C 515; F 362.
- Mesure**, *s.* measure, plan, M. P. v. 305; moderation, M. P. iii. 881; *by mesure*, not too much, M. P. iii. 872; *over mesure*, immeasurably, M. P. v. 300; *withoute mesure*, beyond measure, M. P. iii. 632.
- Met**, *s.* measure, I 799.
- Metamorphoseos**, *gen. s.* (the book) of Metamorphosis; it should be *pl. Metamorphoseon*, B 93.
- Mete**, *adj.* meet, befitting, M. P. iii. 316; meet, fit, L. 1043.
- Mete**, *s. equal*, M. P. iii. 486.
- Mete**, *s. meat*, L. 1108; food, meat, F 173, 618.
- Mete**, *v.* meet, find, M. P. v. 698; Mette, *pt. s.* met, M. P. v. 37; Metten *pt. pl.* H. F. 227.
- Mete**, *ger.* to dream, M. P. iii. 118; *pr. s.* am dreaming, M. P. iii. 118; *pr. s.* dreams, M. P. v. 104; *pr. s.* his lyf, *pr. s.* dreams, M. P. v. 104; *pr. s.* on lyve, alive, *pr. s.* iii. 151; *pr. s.* day, lifetime, L. 1624; *pr. s.* *dat. from* Lyf, whence *on lyve*, during *i.e.* alive, F 423.
- Lyves**, *s. gen.* of my life, M. P. iii. 920; *pr. s.* present worldes lyves space, the space of life in the present world, M. P. v. 53; *s. pl. gen.* souls', lives', G 56; *Lyv*, *sing. used as adv.* living, E 903. *pr. s.* vii. 81.
- Lyves**, *adv.* living, alive, H. F. 1063.
- Lyvinge**, *s.* manner of life, C 847.
- pr. s.* G 596; *pr. s.* we may out, we expend, G 783; Leyden fo *pt. pl.* brought forward, B 213.
- Leyser**, *s.* leisure, M. P. iii. 172.
- Leyt**, *s.* flame, lightning, I 839.
- Lia**, *put for* Lat. Lia, *i.e.* Leah in the book Genesis, G 96.
- Libardes**, *s. pl.* leopards, R. 894.
- Libel**, *s.* bill of complaint, D 1595.
- Licentiat**, one licensed by the Pope to hear confessions, independently of the local ordinaries, A 220.
- Liche**, *adj.* like, L. 1529; *it liche*, like it, M. P. i. Liche-wake, *s.* corpse-watch, A 2958.

of the other more and less, greater and lesser, all alike, B 247.

More, adv. more further in a greater degree, B 574.

More, a part, T 107.

Normal, a cancer, sore or gangrene, A 361.

Norme, adv. morning, A 361.

Musel, a musel, mouse, breed mouse of broad, B 214.

Murax, a murax, M 107.

Murax, a murax, T 107.

Murax, a murax, in a full, out of pro-
ducing change by the same action, B 214.

Murax, a kind of soup or postage, A 361.

Murax, a murax morning of the morning in
the morning, early in the day, B 214.

Murax, a murax, M 107.

Murax, a murax, A 361.

Murax, a murax, M 107.

Murax, a murax, M 107.

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Murax, a murax, M 107.

- Nat**, *adv.* not, M. P. iii. 425; *nat but*, only, merely, L. 1899; quite, L. 2091.
- Nat**, *for* Ne at, *i.e.* nor at, B 290.
- Nath**, *for* Ne hath, hath not, A 923.
- Natheless**, *adv.* nevertheless, H. F. 2073; **Natheles**, M. P. ii. 111.
- Nature**, *s.* kind, race, M. P. v. 615.
- Naturel**, *adj.* natural, M. P. iv. 122.
- Naught**, *adv.* not, B 1701; not so, G 269.
- Nay**, *adv.* nay, no, M. P. iii. 1243; *opposed to* yea, E 355; *answers a direct question*, B 1793; surely not! M. P. iii. 1309; *as s.* nay, untruth, M. P. iii. 147; *it is no nay*, there is no denying it, B 1956.
- Nayles**, *s. pl.* nails, B 3366.
- Nayte**, *v.* say no to, deny, I 1013.
- Ne**, *adv.* not, M. P. i. 53; *conj.* nor, M. P. iii. 2, 74; *ne . . . thing*, nothing, M. P. iii. 1262; *ne . . . never*, never, M. P. iii. 1196; **Ne**, *adv.* not; *ne dooth*, do ye not, C 745.
- Necesseden**, *pt. pl.* compelled, Bo. III. m. ix. 9.
- Neddres**, *pl.* adders, snakes, L. 699.
- Nede**, *adv.* of necessity, M. P. iii. 1074; **Nedes**, *gen. as adv.* of necessity, M. P. iii. 1201; **Nede**, *adv.* necessarily, needs, G 1280.
- Nede**, *s. dat.* need, M. P. i. 44; **Nedes**, *pl.* necessary things, business, B 174; needs, G 178.
- Nede**, *v.* to be necessary, B 871; **Nedeth**, *pr. s.* needs it, it needs, F 65; **Neded**, *pt. s.* it needed, E 457.
- Nedeth**, *pr. s.* needs it, it needs, A 1477.
- Nedeth**, *s. e. n.* needle's, G 440.
- Needless**, *adv.* needlessly, E 621; **Needless**, *with-like*, use, E 455.
- Needless**, *adv.* necessarily, Bo. III. p. ix. 102.
- None**, *adj.* none, no, A 4185.
- None**, *iv. comp.* nearer, L. 314.
- None**, *adj.* nearer, G 721.
- None**, *s.* neat, cattle, A 597.
- None**, *s.* niggardliness, M. P. x. 53.
- None**, *adv.* near, almost, M. P. iii. 907.
- None**, *v.* draw nigh, L. 318.
- None**, *adj.* near, nigh, F 49.
- None**, *pl.* neighbors, dwellers near, L. 720.
- Neither** **nother**, (in) neither the one nor the other, Bo. V. m. iii. 60.
- Nekke-boon**, *s.* nape of the neck, lit. neck-bone, B 669, 1839.
- Nekkes**, *pl.* necks, M. P. v. 671.
- Nempnen**, *v.* to name, B 507; **Nempne**, *v.* to name, tell, F 318.
- Ner**, *adv. comp.* nearer, M. P. ii. 19; **Nere**, M. P. iii. 38; *ner the les*, nevertheless, M. P. iv. 130; *ner and ner*, nearer and nearer, B 1710.
- Nercotikes**, *s. pl.* narcotics, A 1472.
- Nere**, *for* Ne were, 2 *pt. s.* wast not, M. P. iv. 112; *pt. s. subj.* should not be, M. P. iv. 35; were it not (for), M. P. i. 24, 180; **Nere**, *pt. s. subj.* were not (*put for ne were*), B 547.
- Nescapest**, *for* Ne escapest, escapest not, L. 2643.
- Nest**, *s.* nest; *wikked nest*, *i.e.* *mau ni*, or *Mauny*, B 3576; **Nestes**, *pl.* H. F. 1516.
- Nevene**, *v.* name, H. F. 562; *ger.* H. F. 1438; *pr. pl. subj.* may name, may mention, G 1473.
- Never**, *adv.* never, B 87; *never dide but*, never did anything that was not, M. P. iv. 297; *never the neer*, never the nearer, none the nearer, G 721.
- Neveradel**, *adv.* not a bit, C 670.
- Never-mo**, *adv.* never more, never, M. P. iii. 1125.
- Newew**, *s.* grandson, H. F. 617; L. 2659; nephew, L. 1440; B 3594.
- Newe**, *adj. fem. as s.*; a *newe*, a new (love), H. F. 302; **Newe**, *adv.* anew, afresh, L. 103.
- Newe**, 2 *pr. pl.* renew, M. P. xxiii. 11; **Newed**, *pt. s.* became new, had something new in it, M. P. iii. 906.
- Newfangel**, *adj.* newfangled, taken with novelty, F 618.
- New-fangelnesse**, *s.* fondness for novelty, M. P. vii. 141; L. 154; F 610.
- Nexte**, *adj. comp.* nearest, next preceding, last, H. F. 1775; *adj. sup.* nearest, L. 2481; B 1814.
- Nigard**, *s.* niggard, B 4105.
- Nighte**, *v.* become night, M. P. v. 209.
- Nighter-tale**, the night-time, A 97.
- Nigromaciens**, *s. pl.* magicians, I 603.
- Nil**, *for* Ne wil, will not, R. 4344; M. P. iii. 92; *pr. s.* will not (have), M. P. iii. 586; will (she) not, M. P. iii. 1140; **Nil**, *for* Ne wilt, wilt not, L. 758; **Nil**, 1 *pr. s.* I desire not, I dislike, E 646.
- Nillinge**, *s.* refusing, Bo. V. p. ii. 24.
- Nin**, *for* Ne in, nor in, F 35.
- Nis**, *for* Ne is, is not, M. P. ii. 77; *ther nis no more but* all that remains is that, L. 847.
- Niste**, *for* Ne wiste, 1 *pt. s.* (I) knew not, M. P. v. 152.
- Nobles**, *pl.* nobles (the coin worth 6s. 8d.), H. F. 1315; C 907.
- Noblesse**, *s.* nobility, magnificence, B 3438; high honor, B 3208.
- Nobley**, *s.* nobility, splendor, H. F. 1416; nobility, assembly of nobles, G 449; state, F 77.
- Noght**, *adv.* not, B 94, 112.
- Noght**, *s.* nothing, M. P. iii. 567.
- Noisen**, 2 *pr. pl.* cry aloud, Bo. III. m. vi. 11.
- Nolde**, *for* Ne wolde, (I) would not, M. P. iii. 311; did not want, M. P. v. 90; *pt. s.* would not, M. P. i. 31; **Nol'est**, *for* Ne woldest, wouldst not, M. P. iii. 482.
- Nombre**, *s.* number, A 716.
- Nome**, *pp.* taken, L. 822. *Pp. of* Nimen.

Nones, for the, for the once, for this special occasion, for the nonce, L. 295; B 1165; *with the nones*, on the condition, H. F. 2099; L. 1540.

Nonnes, *s. pl. gen. nuns'*, B 3999.

Noon, *adj.* none, M. P. i. 25; B 102; Non, M. P. iii. 941; Noon, *pl.* B 89.

Noot, for Ne woot, (I) know not, L. 2660; Not, for Ne not, (I) know not, L. 193; Noot, for Ne wot, *1 pr. s.* I know not, B 892.

Norice, *s.* nurse, L. 1346.

Norishinge, *s.* nurture, bringing up, E 1040.

Norishinges, *pl.* reflections, Bo. IV. p. vi. 42; sustenance, Bo. I. p. vi. 105.

Nortelrye, *s.* good manners, A 3967.

Nory, *s.* pupil (lit. foster-child), Bo. III. p. xi. 265; Norry, Bo. I. p. iii. 16.

Nose-thirles, *pl.* nostrils, A 557.

Noskinnes, for Nones kinnes, of no kind, H. F. 1794.

Nost, for Ne wost, knowest not, M. P. iii. 1137; Nostow, for Ne wost thou, H. F. 1010.

Not, not; *not but*, only, M. P. iv. 121.

Not, for Ne wot, know not, M. P. iii. 29; (she) knows not, M. P. iv. 214. See **Noot**.

Notabilitee, *s.* a thing worthy to be known, B 4399.

Notable, *adj.* notorious, B 1875.

Note, *s.* musical note, peal, H. F. 1720; tune, M. P. v. 677; Note, note (of music), B 1737.

Note, *s.* need, business, A 4068.

Noteful, *adj.* useful, Bo. I. p. i. 81.

Notemigges, *s. pl.* nutmegs, R. 1361.

Notemuge, *s.* nutmeg, B 1953.

Not-heed, *s.* crop-head, A 109.

Nother, neither (of them), L. 192.

No-thing, *adv.* not at all, in no way, M. P. i. 171; in no degree, L. 88; in no respect, B 575; not at all, C 404.

Notificacions, *pl.* hints, Bo. V. m. iii. 26.

Notified, *pp.* made known, proclaimed, B 256.

Nouchis, *pl.* ornaments (containing jewels), settings (for jewels), H. F. 1350.

Noumbre, *s.* number, M. P. v. 381.

Noumbre, *v.* number, M. P. iii. 439.

Nouncerteyn, *s.* uncertainty, M. P. xviii. 46.

Noun-power, *s.* impotence, Bo. III. p. v. 24.

Nouthe, now; *as nouthe*, at present, A 462.

Novelryes, *pl.* novelties, H. F. 686.

Now and now, *adv.* at times, from time to time, occasionally, F 430.

Nowches, *s. pl.* jewels, E 382. See **Nouchis**.

Noye, *v.* harm, R. 3772.

Noyous, *adj.* harmful, R. 3230; troublesome, hard, H. F. 574.

Ny, *adv.* nigh, nearly, M. P. xviii. 78; nearly, L. 2347; *wel ny*, almost, E 82.

Nyce, *adj.* foolish, M. P. iv. 262; foolish, weak, B 1088.

Nycete, *s.* foolishness, M. P. iii. 613; folly, M. P. v. 572; Nycetee, folly, G 463.

Nyntene, nineteen, L. 283.

O.

O, *adj.* one, one continuous and uniform, H. F. 1100; a single, Bo. V. p. vi. 178; *num.* one, R. 6398; *adj.* one, B 52. See **Oo**.

Obeisant, *adj.* obedient, E 66.

Obeisaunce, *s.* obedience, E 24, 502; obedient act, E 230; *in your obeisaunce*, in obedience to you, M. P. ii. 84; *unto her obeisaunce*, in obedience to her, L. 587; Obeisaunces, *pl.* acts of obedience, L. 149; duties, delicate observances, L. 1268; submissive acts, expressing obedient attention, F 515.

Obeising, *adj.* obedient, yielding, L. 1266.

Objecte, *adj.* presented, Bo. V. p. v. 5.

Observaunce, *s.* reverential attention, homage, M. P. xxiii. 18; Observaunces, *pl.* respectful attentions, M. P. vii. 249; observances, duties, L. 150.

Observe, *v.* to give countenance to, favor, B 1821.

Occasioun, *s.* cause, L. 994.

Occident, *s.* West, B 297.

Occupee, *imp. s.* hold up, *pp.* *occupied*, to occupy, take up, F 64; Occupieth, *pr. s.* takes up, dwells in, B 424.

Octogamye, *s.* marrying eight times, D 33.

Of, *adv.* off, away, M. P. v. 494; B 3748; off, L. 2334.

Of, *prep.* as to, in respect of, M. P. v. 317; for, M. P. i. 136; from, M. P. iii. 964; with reference to, in, M. P. v. 299; as to, M. P. v. 66; as the result of, upon, M. P. v. 555; *of lif*, in all my life, M. P. v. 484; *fulfilla* ex-filled with, M. P. vii. 42; **Of**, *prep.* by, L. 367; out of, L. 2664; during, B 510; with, G 626; by, E 70; with, for, B 1779, E 33; as regards, with respect to, B 90; *of grace*, by his favor, out of his favor, E 178.

Of-caste, *imp. s.* cast off, M. P. v. 132.

Offensioun, offence, damage, A 2416.

Office, *s.* duty, M. P. v. 236; duty, employment, B 3446; *houses of office*, servants' offices, pantries, larders, etc., E 264.

Offreth, *imp. pl.* 2 *pr.* offer ye, C 910.

Of-newe, *adv.* newly, lately, E 938.

Of-taken, *pp.* taken off, taken away, B 1855.

Ofte, *adv.* often, B 278; **Ofter**, oftener, E 215.

Ofte, *adj. pl.* many, frequent, E 226.

Ofte tyme, often, M. P. iii. 1158.

Of that, *conj.* because, L. 815.

- Of-thowed, *pp.* thawed away, H. F. 1143.
- Oght, *adv.* ought, in any way, at all, M. P. iii. 1141.
- Oghte, 1 *pt. s.* ought, M. P. iv. 216; Oghten, 2 *pt. pl.* M. P. iv. 282; Oghte, *pt. s.* owed, L. 589; *impers.* (he) ought, L. 377; *pt. s.* became: *as him oghte*, as it became him, B 1097; *pt. s. subj.* it should behove us, E 1150. See Oughte.
- Oistre, *s.* oyster, A 182.
- Oke, *s.* oak, M. P. v. 223. See Ook.
- Olifaunts, *s. pl.* elephants, Bo. III. p. viii. 32.
- Oliveres, *s. pl.* olive-trees, R. 1314; olive-yards, B 3226.
- Olyve, *s.* olive-tree, M. P. v. 181.
- On, *prep.* in behalf of, M. P. iv. 298; binding on, M. P. x. 43; *hir on*, upon her, M. P. iii. 1217; On, *prep.* upon, concerning, B 48; on, in, at; *on eve*, in the evening; *on morwe*, in the morning, E 1214; *on reste*, at rest, F 379.
- On, *adj.* one; *everich on*, every one, B 1164. See O, Oon.
- Onde, *s.* malice, R. 148.
- Onerous, *adj.* onerous, burdensome, R. 5633.
- Ones, *adv.* once, M. P. iii. 665; B 588; of one mind, united in design, C 696; *at ones*, at once, H 10.
- On-lofte, *adv.* aloft, up in the air, in the sky, M. P. v. 683; aloft, *i.e.* still above ground, E 229.
- On-lyve, *adv.* alive, M. P. vi. 94.
- ²² *um*, ¹¹¹¹ P. iii. 261; *adj.* one, G 207. See O, Oon.
- Ook, *s.* oak, M. P. v. 176. See Oke.
- Oon, *num.* one, M. P. iii. 39; always the same, M. P. iii. 649; xxii. 82; the same, *i.e.* of small consequence, M. P. iii. 1295; one and the same, C 333; *that oon*, the one, C 666; the same, B 2142; the same thing, alike, F 537; *oon the faireste*, one who was the fairest, one, *s. near*, fairest, E 212; *ever in oon*, continually
- regardye
N^{gh} *ke*, constantly in the same manner, E 602;
N^o *many oon*, many a one, E 775.
- Ooned, *pp.* united, Bo. IV. p. vi. 88.
- Open-ers, *s. pl.* medlars, A 3871.
- Open-headed, *pp.* bareheaded, D 645.
- Opies, *pl.* opiates, L. 2670.
- Oppresse, *v.* interfere with, suppress, M. P. x. 60; to put down, G 4.
- Oppressioun, *s.* oppression, wrong, L. 1868.
- Or, *adv.* ere. before, G 314.
- Or, *conj.* before, M. P. iii. 128; H. F. 101.
- Or, *prep.* before, M. P. iii. 234.
- Ordeal, *s.* ordeal, T. iii. 1046.
- Orde, *s. dat.* point, L. 645.
- Ordenaunce, *s.* ordinance, regulation, M. P. v. 390; Ordinaunce, command, M. P. x. 44; ordaining, governance, arrangement, B 763; provision, B 250.
- Ordenee, *adj.* well-ordered, Bo. IV. p. i. 52.
- Ordenely, *adv.* conformably, in order, Bo. IV. p. vi. 342.
- Ordenour, *s.* ruler, Bo. III. p. xii. 112.
- Ordeyne, *adj.* ordered, T. i. 892.
- Ordeyned, *pp.* appointed, F 177.
- Ordre, *s.* order, law, M. P. iv. 155; *by ordre*, in order, L 2514; order, class, G 995.
- Ores, *pl.* oars, L. 2308.
- Orfrays, *s.* gold embroidery, R. 1076.
- Organs, *s. pl.* 'organs,' the old equivalent of organ, G 134.
- Orient, the East, B 3504.
- Oriental, *adj.* eastern; *and so*, of superior quality, L. 221.
- Orisonte, *s.* horizon, T. v. 276.
- Orloge, *s.* clock, M. P. v. 350.
- Orphelin, *adj.* orphaned, Bo. II. p. iii. 36.
- Orpiment, *s.* orpiment, G 759, 774, 823.
- Osanne, *i.e.* Hosannah, B 642.
- Ost, *s.* host, army, H. F. 186; L. 1906.
- Ostelments, *s. pl.* furniture, household goods, Bo. II. p. v. 150.
- Ostesse, *s.* hostess, Bo. IV. m. iii. 26.
- Otes, *s. pl.* oats, C 375.
- Other, *pl.* others, M. P. iii. 891; *Othere, adj. pl.* other, B 3344; *Other, sing.* whence that other = the other, *answering to* that oon = the one, F 496.
- Other, *conj. or*, M. P. iii. 810; either, L. (A) 35.
- Otheres, *pron. sing.* each other's, lit. of the other, C 476.
- Otherweyes, *adv.* otherwise, E 1072.
- Other-whyle, *adv.* sometimes, Bo. II. p. i. 131.
- Otherwyse, *adv.* on any other condition, F 534.
- Othes, *s. pl.* oaths, C 472; F 528.
- Ouche, *s.* jewel, D 743.
- Ought, *s.* anything, M. P. iii. 459.
- Ought, *adv.* at all, M. P. iii. 537.
- Oughte, *pt. s. impers.* it behoved (us), M. P. i. 119; *pt. s. subj.* it would become, *as in* oughte us = it would become us, it would be our duty, G 14; Oghten, 1 *pt. pl.* we ought, G 6; Oghte, *pt. s. indic.* it was fit, it was due, E 1120.
- Oughtestow, *for* Oughtest thou, L. 1957.
- Oule, *s.* owl, M. P. v. 343.
- Oules, *s. pl.* awls, D 1730.
- Ounces, *s. pl.* small pieces, A 677.
- Ounded, *adj.* wavy, T. iv. 736.
- Oundy, *adj.* wavy, H. F. 1386.
- Oure, ours, M. P. v. 545.
- Out-breke, *v.* break out, break silence, M. P. ii. 12.
- Out-caughte, *pt. s.* caught out, drew out, B 1861.
- Outen, *v.* to come out with, utter, display, exhibit, E 2438; G 834.
- Outerly, *adv.* utterly, entirely, E 335.

Outfleyinge, *s.* flying out, H. F. 1523.
 Out-hees, *s.* hue and cry, A 202.
 Outher, *conj.* or, M. P. iii. 1100.
 Outlandish, *adj.* foreign, M. P. ix. 22.
 Outrage, *s.* excess, M. P. ix. 5; Bo. II. m. v. 5.
 Outrageous, *adj.* excessive, M. P. v. 336; violent, excessive, C 650.
 Outraye, *v.* pass beyond control, E 643.
 Outrely, *adv.* utterly, C 849.
 Out-taken, *pp.* excepted (lit. taken out), B 277.
 Over, *prep.* beyond, above, M. P. iii. 891.
 Over-al, *adv.* everywhere, M. P. iii. 171; *over al und al*, beyond every other, M. P. iii. 1003.
 Over-blowe, *pp.* blown over, past, L. 1287.
 Overcomer, *s.* conqueror, Bo. I. m. ii. 17.
 Over-goon, *v.* overspread, Bo. II. p. vii. 46.
 Over-kerveth, *pp.* *s.* intersects, As. i. 21, 99.
 Overlade, *v.* overload, L. 621.
 Overlight, *adj.* too feeble, Bo. IV. m. iii. 38.
 Over-loked, *pp.* looked over, perused, M. P. iii. 232.
 Over-passeth, *pp.* *s.* surpasses, Bo. V. p. vi. 131.
 Over-shake, *pp.* caused to pass away, shaken off, M. P. v. 681.
 Overshote, *pp.*; *had overshote hem*, had overrun the line, M. P. iii. 383.
 Over-skipte, *1 pl. s.* skipped over, omitted, M. P. iii. 1208.
 Oversloppe, *s.* upper garment, G 633.
 Over-sprat, *pp.* *s.* overspreadeth, T. ii. 707.
 Overte, *adj.* open, yielding, easy passage, H. F. 718.
 Overthrowe, *v.* be overturned, be ruined, H. F. 1640.
 Over-throwinge, *adj.* overwhelming, Bo. I. m. ii. 2; headlong, Bo. II. m. vii. 1; headstrong, Bo. I. m. vi. 28; revolving, Bo. III. m. xii. 47.
 Over-thwart, *adv.* across, T. iii. 685; Overthwert, M. P. iii. 863.
 Overtymeliche, *adv.* untimely, Bo. I. m. i. 20.
 Over-whelveth, *pp.* *s.* overturns, turns over, agitates, Bo. II. m. iii. 21.
 Owed, *pp.* due, Bo. IV. p. v. 20; Oweth, *pp.* *s.* owneth, owns, possesses, C 361.
 Owene, *adj.* own, B 3198; *pl.* B 3584.
 Ow, *interj.* alas, Bo. I. p. vi. 27.
 Owher, *adv.* anywhere, M. P. iii. 776.
 Oxes, *gen. sing.* ox's, E 207.
 Oxe-stalle, *s.* oxstall, E 398.
 Oynement, *s.* ointment, A 631.
 Oynons, *s. pl.* onions, A 634.

P.

Paas, *s.* pace, step, L. 284; G 575; *goon a paas*, go at a footpace, C 866.
 Pace, *v.* pass beyond, overstep, H. F. 392; go

away, M. P. xxi. 9; *ger.* to pass, H. F. 841; *of this thing to pace*, to pass over this in review, H. F. 239; *to pace of*, to pass from, B 205; *1 pp. s. subj.* er I pace = ere I depart, ere I die, F 494; *pp. s. subj.* may pass away, may depart, E 1092.
 Pacience, *s.*; *took in pacience*, was perfectly willing, M. P. iv. 40.
 Paillet, *s.* pallet, T. iii. 229.
 Paisible, *adj.* peaceable, M. P. ix. 1.
 Pak, *s.* pack, set, L. (A) 299.
 Palais, *s.* palace, M. P. i. 183.
 Palasye, *s.* palsy, R. 1098.
 Pale, *s.* perpendicular stripe, H. F. 1840. Still used in heraldry.
 Palestral, *adj.* athletic, T. v. 304.
 Paleth, *pp.* *s.* renders pale, Bo. II. m. iii. 4.
 Paleys, *s.* palace, mansion (in astrology), M. P. iv. 54.
 Paleys-yates, *pl.* gates of the palace, M. P. iv. 82.
 Palinge, *s.* the making a perpendicular stripe, I 417.
 Palis, *s.* palisade, stockade, Bo. I. p. vi. 45; paling, rampart, Bo. I. p. iii. 98.
 Palled, *adj.* enfeebled, languid, H 55.
 Pan, *s.* brain-pan, skull, A 1165.
 Panade, *s.* knife, A 3929.
 Paniers, *pl.* panniers, baskets for bread, H. F. 1920.
 Panne, *s.* a pan, G 1219.
 Panter, *s.* bag-net for birds, L. 131.
 Papeer, *s.* pepper, G 762.
 Papeiay, *s.* a popinjay, a parrot, B 1957.
 Papelard, *s.* deceiver, R. 7283.
 Papelardye, *s.* deceit, R. 6796.
 Paper-whytt, *adj.* white as paper, L. 1198.
 Paradys, *s.* paradise, heaven, B 3200.
 Parage, *s.* dignity, high-priest, R. 4759.
 Paraments, *s. pl.* rich array, A 2501.
 Paramours, *adv.* passionately, T. v. 158; excessively (said of love), L. (A) 260; *Paramour, i.e. par amour*, for love, B 2033.
 Paraunter, *adv.* peradventure, perhaps, M. P. iii. 779; per chance, peradventure, L. 362.
 Paraventure, *adv.* peradventure, perhaps, B 190; by chance, E 234.
 Parcel, *s.* (small) part, M. P. ii. 106.
 Pareeners, *s. pl.* partners, R. 6952.
 Parchemin, *s.* parchment, Bo. V. m. iv. 15.
 Parde! *interj.* answering to F. *par Dieu*, M. P. iii. 721; Pardee, B 1977. E 1234.
 Pardoner, *s.* seller of indulgences, A 543.
 Paregal, *adj.* equal, T. v. 840.
 Parements, *pl.* ornaments, L. 1106.
 Parlay, *interj.* by my faith, B 110; by my faith, verily, B 849.
 Parfey, *adv.* in faith, H. F. 938.

- Parfit, *adj.* perfect, M. P. ii. 38; G 353.
- Parfournest, 2 *pr.* s. performest, B 1797; Parfourneled, *pp.* B 1646.
- Parishshens, *s. pl.* parishioners, A 482.
- Paritorie, *s.* pellitory, *Parietaria officinalis*, G 581.
- Parlement, *s.* parliament, deliberation, A 1306.
- Paroche-prest, *s.* parish priest, R. 6384.
- Parodie, *s.* period, T. v. 1548.
- Parsoneres, *s. pl.* partners, partakers, Bo. V. p. v. 110.
- Parten, *ger.* to share; to parten with, to participate in, L. 465; Parteth, *pr.* s. departs, L. 359; Parted, *pp.* departed, gone away, taken away, L. 1110.
- Parting-felawes, *s. pl.* partners, I 637.
- Part-les, *adj.* without his share, Bo. IV. p. iii. 49.
- Partriches, *pl. gen.* partridges', H. F. 1392.
- Party, *s. part.* portion, L. 482; B 17.
- Parvys, *s.* church-porch, A 310.
- Pas, *s.* grade, degree, M. P. iv. 134; *pl.* degrees, M. P. iv. 121; *thousand pas*, a mile, Bo. I. p. iv. 301; Pas, *s.* pace, B 399; Pas, *pl.* paces, movements, B 306. See Paas.
- Passant, *adj.* surpassing, A 2107.
- Passen, *v.* surpass, L. 1127; Passeth, *pr.* s. L. 275; Passed, *pt.* s. excelled, L. 1530; Passe, *imp. s. or pl.* pass (over), go (on), proceed, B 110; *passer*, *pr.* s. *passer* away, F 404; Passed, *pp.* past, spent, E 610; Passing, *pres. part.* surpassing, extreme, E 240. See Pace.
- Passing, *adj.* surpassing, excellent, G 614.
- Passioun, *s.* suffering, M. P. iv. 255; passive feeling, impression, Bo. V. m. iv. 56; passion, suffering, B 1175.
- Patre, Patren, *v.* patter, chatter, R. 6794, 7243.
- Patroun, *s.* patron, M. P. iv. 275; protector, M. P. vii. 4; Patron, pattern, M. P. iii. 910.
- Paunche, *s.* paunch, belly, M. P. v. 610.
- Pawmes, *s. pl.* palms, T. iii. 1114.
- Pax, *s.* a painted tablet kissed during the celebration of mass, I 407.
- Pay, *s.* pleasure, M. P. v. 271; *more to pay*, so as to give more satisfaction, M. P. v. 474.
- Payed, *pp.* paid, satisfied, M. P. ix. 3; *holde her payd*, think herself satisfied, M. P. iii. 263.
- Payens, *pl.* pagans, L. 786; B 534.
- Payndemayn, *s.* bread of a peculiar whiteness, B 1915.
- Payre, *s.* pair, M. P. iii. 1289.
- Pecok, *s.* peacock, M. P. v. 356.
- Pecunial, *adj.* pecuniary, D 1314.
- Pes, *s.* peace, M. P. i. 69; B 130; *in pees*, in silence, B 228.
- Pees, *interj.* peace! hush! B 836; G 951.
- Pekke, to pick, B 4157.
- Pel, *s.* peel, small castle, H. F. 1310.
- Pelet, *s.* pellet, stone cannon-ball, H. F. 1643.
- Penaunce, *s.* suffering, torment, M. P. i. 82; trouble, xviii. 79; self-abasement, L. 2077.
- Penaunt, *s.* a penitent, one who does penance, B 3124.
- Pencil, *s.* small banner, T. v. 1043.
- Penible, *adj.* painstaking, careful to please, E 714.
- Penner, *s.* pen-case, E 1879.
- Penoun, a pennant or ensign borne at the end of a lance, A 978.
- Pens, *s. pl.* pence, C 402.
- Pensel, *s.* small banner, R. 6280.
- Peraventure, *adv.* perhaps, H. F. 304; perhaps, perchance, C 935. See Paraventure.
- Percas, *adv.* perchance, R. 6647; Per cas, by chance, L. 1967.
- Perce, Percen, *v.* to pierce, B 2014; Perceth, *pr.* s. pierces with his gaze, M. P. v. 331.
- Perchemin, *s.* parchment, R. 6584.
- Percinge, *s.* piercing; *for percinge*, to prevent any piercing, B 2052.
- Perdurable, *adj.* lasting, I 75.
- Perdurabletee, *s.* immortality, Bo. II. p. vii. 113.
- Pere, *s.* peer, equal, M. P. i. 97; B 3244; F 678.
- Peregryn, *adj.* peregrine, *i.e.* foreign, F 428.
- Pere-ionette, *s.* pear-tree, A 3248.
- Perfit, *adj.* perfect, A 1271. See Parfit.
- Perissed, *pp.* destroyed, I 579.
- Perle, *s.* pearl, L. 221.
- Permutacioun, *s.* change, M. P. xv. 19.
- Perpetually, *adv.* perpetually, M. P. iv. 20.
- Perrc, *s.* jewelry, precious stones, H. F. 124; Perrie, H. F. 1393; Perree, jewelry, precious stones, gems, B 3495.
- Pers, of a sky-blue color, A 439.
- Persaunt, *adj.* piercing, R. 2809.
- Perseverance, *s.* continuance, G 443.
- Persevereth, *pr.* s. lasteth, C 497.
- Perseveringe, *s.* perseverance, G 117.
- Person, *s.* parson, I 23; Personne, B 1170; Persoun, A 478.
- Perturbacioun, *s.* trouble, Bo. I. p. i. 110.
- Perturben, *pres. pl.* disturb, A 906.
- Pervenke, *s.* periwinkle, R. 903.
- Pervers, *adj.* perverse, self-willed, M. P. iii. 813.
- Pese, *v.* appease, R. 3397.
- Pesen, *pl.* peas, L. 648.
- Pesible, *adj.* calm, Bo. I. p. v. 3.
- Peter, *interj.* by St. Peter, G 665.
- Peyne, *s.* pain, grief, distress, torment, M. P. iii. 587; iv. 96; pain, suffering, B 2134; trouble, care, F 509; *upon peyne*, under a penalty, E 586.
- Peyne, 1 *pr.* s. *refl.* I peyne me = I take pains,

- C 330; Peyned hir, *ft. s. refl.* took pains, E 976; Peyneith hir, *pr. s. refl.* endeavors, B 320; Peyne me, *v.* put myself to trouble, H F. 246; Peyneith himself, M. P. v. 339; Peynen hem, strive, L. 636.
- Peynte**, *v.* paint, M. P. iii. 783; color highly, H. F. 246; *do peynte*, cause to be painted, M. P. iii. 259; Peynted, *pp.* M. P. v. 284; Peynte, *v.* paint, smear, L. 575.
- Peyre**, *s.* pair, A 2121.
- Peysible**, *adj.* tranquil, Bo. III. m. ix. 58.
- Peytre**, *s.* properly, the breastplate of a horse in armor, G 564.
- Phitonesses**, *pl.* pythonesses, witches, H. F. 1261.
- Pigges-nye**, *s.* pig's eye, a term of endearment, A 3268.
- Pighte**, *ft. s. subj.* should pierce, should stab, M. P. i. 163; *ft. s.* pitched, A 2689. *ft. t.* of *picchen*.
- Piked**, *ft. s.* picked, stole, L. 2467.
- Pilche**, *s.* a warm furred outer garment, M. P. xx. 4.
- Pilere**, *s.* pillar, M. P. iii. 739; *Piler*, *as adj.* serving as a prop, M. P. v. 177.
- Pilled**, *pp.* robbed, L. 1262.
- Pilours**, *s. pl.* plunderers, A 1007.
- Pilwe-beer**, *s.* pillow-case, A 694.
- Piment**, *s.* spiced wine, R. 6027.
- Pin**, *s.* pin, small peg, F 127, 316.
- Pinehen**, *ger.* to find fault, H 74.
- Piper**, *s. as adj.* suitable for pipes or horns, M. P. v. 178.
- Pissemyre**, *s.* ant, D 1825.
- Pistel**, *s.* epistle, E 1154.
- Pitaunce**, *s.* portion of food, A 224.
- Pite**, *s.* pity; *pite wære*, it would be a pity if, M. P. iii. 1266; *Pitee*, *s.* pity, B 292.
- Pitous**, *adj.* piteous, sad, M. P. iii. 84; pitiful, M. P. i. 88; sorrowful, M. P. vii. 9; piteous, L. 904; *Pitousë*, *fem.* full of compassion, L. 2582.
- Pitously**, *adv.* piteously, M. P. iii. 711; full of pity, M. P. ii. 18; piteously, sadly, pitifully, B 3729.
- Placee**, *s.* manor-house, residence of a chief person in a village or small town, B 1910.
- Plages**, *s. pl.* regions, B 543; coasts, quarters, As. i. 5, 13.
- Plastres**, *s. pl.* plasters, F 636.
- Plat**, *adv.* flat, B 1865; flatly, bluntly, B 3947.
- Plate**, *s.* plate-armor, M. P. ix. 49; stiff iron defence for a hauberck, B 2055.
- Plated**, *pp.* plated, covered with metal in plates, H. F. 1345.
- Platly**, *adv.* flatly, T. iii. 786.
- Platte**, *adj. dat.* flat, flat side (of a sword), F 162.
- Play**, *s.* play, amusement, M. P. iii. 50; *Playes*, *pl.* contrivances, M. P. iii. 570. See **Pley**.
- Playn**, *adj.* plain; in *short and playn*, in brief plain terms, E 577.
- Playn**, *s.* a plain, B 24; *Playne*, E 59.
- Pleading**, *s.* pleading, M. P. iii. 615; *v.* 495.
- Plee**, *s.* plea, pleading, M. P. v. 485; *Plees*, *pl.* suits, M. P. v. 101.
- Pleinedest**, 2 *ft. s.* didst complain, Bo. IV. p. iv. 188.
- Plainte**, *s.* complaint, lament, B 66.
- Plenere**, *adj.* plenary, full, L. 1607.
- Plenteuously**, *adv.* plentifully, Bo. II. p. ii. 95.
- Plesance**, *s.* pleasure, delight, M. P. iii. 704; pleasing behavior, F 509; *Plesaunce*, pleasure, M. P. iii. 767; complaisance, M. P. vii. 212; pleasant thing, M. P. iii. 773; pleasure, will, E 501; kindness, E 1111; pleasantness, L. 1373.
- Plese**, *v.* please, M. P. v. 478; *Plesen*, F 707.
- Plete**, *v.* plead, T. ii. 1468.
- Pletinges**, *pl.* law-suits, Bo. III. p. iii. 77.
- Pley**, *s.* play, dalliance, M. P. iv. 178; delusion, M. P. iii. 648; play, sport, diversion, E 10, 1030. See **Play**.
- Pleye**, *v.* to amuse one's self, B 3524, 3666; *Pleyde*, *ft. s.* played, was in play, M. P. iii. 875; *Pleye*, *ger.* to amuse ourselves, L. 1495; to amuse herself, take a holiday, L. 2300; *Pleying*, *pres. part.* amusing herself, F 410.
- Pleyinge**, *adj.* playful, Bo. III. m. ii. 30.
- Pleyyn**, *adj.* full, ~~M. P. v. 178~~ ^{bl.}
- Pleyn**, *adj.* open, honest, M. P. v. 178; *v.* clear, B 324; *Pleyne*, smooth, M. P.
- Pleyn**, *adv.* plainly, B 3947; openly, E 6520.
- Pleyne**, *v.* complain, lament, M. P. ii. 108; *v. r. u.* M. P. vii. 237; *ger.* M. P. iv. 286; *v.* to utter a plaintive cry, to whinny (said of a horse), M. P. vii. 157; *Pleyned*, *pp.* M. P. xxii. 76.
- Pleyning**, *s.* complaining, lamenting, M. P. iii. 599.
- Pleynly**, *adv.* plainly, T. ii. 272.
- Pleynte**, *s.* plaint, complaint, M. P. ii. 47.
- Plight**, *pp.* plighted, M. P. vii. 227; *Plighte*, *ft. s.* plighted, L. 2466; *Plighten*, *ft. pl.* L. 778; *Plighte*, *pp.* pledged, C 702.
- Plighte**, *pp.* plucked, D 790; *ft. s.* pulled, B 15
- Ploungen**, *ger.* to plunge, bathe, Bo. III. p. ii. 53.
- Ploungy**, *adj.* stormy, rainy, Bo. I. m. iii. 11.
- Plye**, *v.* bend, R. 4389; E 1169.
- Plyt**, *s.* plight, T. ii. 712.
- Plyte**, *s.* plight, wretched situation, M. P. xxiii. 19; mishap, M. P. v. 294.
- Plyte**, *v.* fold, T. ii. 1204.
- Poeplish**, *adj.* vulgar, T. iv. 1677.
- Poetryes**, *pl.* poetical works, poems, H. F. 61.
- Point-devys**, *s.* point-device, F 560. *am*
- Pointe**, *s. dat.* point, place, M. P. iii.

- point*, on the point of, about to, M. P. iii. 13; at *point devys*, with great exactitude, very clearly, H. F. 917; *Point*, s. *point*: *fro point to point*, from beginning to end, B 3652; *point for point*, exactly, in every detail, E 577.
- Pointel*, s. style, i.e. stylus, writing implement, Bo. I. p. i. 4.
- Poke*, s. pocket, bag, A 3780.
- Pokets*, s. *pl.* pockets, i.e. little bags, G 808.
- Pokkes*, s. *pl.* pocks, pustules, C 358.
- Pol*, s. pole, As. i. 14, 10.
- Polax*, s. pole-axe, L. 642.
- Polcat*, s. polecat, C 855.
- Pollicye*, s. public business, C 600.
- Pollax*, s. pole-axe, A 2544.
- Polut*, *pp.* polluted, Bo. I. p. iv. 314.
- Polyve*, s. pulley, F 184.
- Pomel*, s. crown, top, A 2689.
- Pomely*, *adj.* dapple; *Pomely-gris*, dapple-gray, G 559.
- Pomgarnettes*, s. *pl.* pomegranates, R. 1356.
- Pool*, s. pole, As. i. 18, 22.
- Popelote*, s. puppet, A 3254.
- Popet*, s. poppet, puppet, doll; spoken ironically, and here applied to a corpulent person, B 1891.
- Popiniay*, s. parrot, M. P. v. 359.
- Popped*, *pl.* s. benighted, R. 1019.
- Popper*, s. dagger, A 3931.
- Poraille*, s. poor folk, A 247.
- Porche*, s. *Porche*, *v.* *pl.* *iv.* *a.*
pp. pas poor, L. 1981.
surp. s. corollary, Bo. III. p. x. 186.
- Poraurie*, s. porphyry, a slab of porphyry used as a mortar, G 775.
- Port*, s. bearing, carriage, M. P. iii. 834; *Porte*, M. P. v. 262; *Port*, bearing, L. 2453.
- Portatif*, *adj.* portable, As. Prol. ii. 91.
- Porte-colys*, s. porticulis, R. 4168.
- Porthors*, s. breviary, B 1321.
- Portraiture*, s. portraiture, M. P. iii. 626; *Portreiture*, drawing, picturing, H. F. 131; *Portreitures*, *pl.* pictures, H. F. 125.
- Portreye*, *v.* portray, M. P. i. 81; draw, sketch, M. P. iii. 783.
- Pose*, s. cold in the head, H 62.
- Pose*, *pr.* s. put the case, suppose, T. iii. 310.
- Positionou*, s. supposition, hypothesis, Bo. V. p. iv. 54.
- Possessioners*, s. *pl.* members of endowed orders, D 1772.
- Possessioun*, s. large property, wealth, F 686.
- Possed*, *pp.* pushed, driven, R. 4625; *Possed*, *pp.* T. i. 415; *Posseth*, *pr.* s. pusheth, tosseth, L. 2420.
- Possible*, *adj.* possible; *possible is me*, is possible for me, M. P. v. 471.
- Pees*, s. pillar, support, A 214.
- Postum*, s. imposthume, abscess, Bo. III. p. iv. 15.
- Potage*, s. broth, C 368.
- Potente*, s. staff, R. 368; T. v. 1222.
- Potestat*, s. potentate, D 2017.
- Pothecarie*, s. apothecary, C 852.
- Pouche*, s. pocket, pouch, H. F. 1349.
- Poudre*, s. gunpowder, H. F. 1644; powder, G 760.
- Poudre-marchaunt*, s. flavoring powder, A 381.
- Pounage*, s. pannage, swine's food, M. P. ix. 7.
- Pound*, *pl.* pounds, F 683.
- Poune*, s. pawn at chess, M. P. iii. 661.
- Pounsoninge*, s. puncturing, I 418.
- Pouped*, *pp.* blown, H 90.
- Pouren*, *ger.* to pore, H. F. 1121; *i pr.* s. we pore, gaze steadily, G 670.
- Pous*, s. pulse, T. iii. 1114.
- Pouste*, s. power, R. 6484; Bo. IV. p. v. 15.
- Poverte*, s. poverty, H. F. 88; *Povertee*, M. P. iii. 410; *Poverte*, B 99; *Povert*, C 441.
- Povre*, *adj.* poor, B 116, 120; as s. poor, hence poverty, M. P. x. 2.
- Povre*, *adv.* poorly, E 1043.
- Povreliche*, *adj.* poorly, in poverty, E 213.
- Povrely*, *adv.* poorly, A 1412.
- Povrest*, *adj.* *superl.* poorest, C 449.
- Poynaunt*, *adj.* pungent, A 352.
- Poynt*, s. point; *in poynt is*, is on the point, is ready, M. i. i. 48; *fro poynt to poynt*, in every point, M. P. v. 461; a stop, G 1480. See *Pointe*.
- Poyntel*, s. pencil, stylus, D 1742.
- Practisour*, s. practitioner, A 422.
- Praye*, s. prey, M. P. i. 64.
- Prece*, *v.* press, R. 4198.
- Preche*, *v.* to preach, B 1179; *Prechen*, B 1177; *Precheth*, *imp. pl.* E 12.
- Predicacioun*, s. preaching, sermon, C 345, 407.
- Preef*, s. proof, experience, L. (A) 528; test, proof, G 968; the test, H 75. See *Preve*.
- Prees*, s. press, thronging, H. F. 1358; the throng of courtiers, M. P. xiii. 4; crowd, M. P. xvi. 40; *Pres*, press of battle, M. P. ix. 33; *Presse*, *dat.* throng, company, M. P. x. 52; crowd, T. ii. 1718.
- Preferre*, *pr.* s. *subj.* surpass, D 96.
- Preise*, *i pr.* s. I praise, F 674.
- Premises*, *pl.* statements laid down, Bo. III. p. x. 137.
- Prenoštik*, s. prognostic, prognostication, M. P. x. 54.
- Prenten*, *v.* imprint, T. ii. 900.
- Prescience*, s. foreknowledge, E 659.
- Prese*, *Presen*, *v.* press, R. 2899; *Presing*, *pr.* *pl.* R. 6436.
- Presence*, s. presence; *in presence*, in company, in a large assembly, E 1207.

- Present, *adv.* immediately, M. P. v. 424.
- Presentarie, *adj.* ever-present, Bo. V. p. vi. 88.
- Presenting, *s.* offering, L. 1135.
- Presently, *adv.* at the present moment, Bo. V. p. vi. 138.
- Prest, *adj.* ready, prepared, M. P. v. 307; ready, T. ii. 785.
- Prest, *s.* priest, B 1166.
- Pretende, *v.* intend, T. iv. 922.
- Preterit, *adj.* past, R. 5011.
- Pretorie, *s.* the Roman imperial body-guard, the Pretorian cohort, Bo. I. p. iv. 106.
- Preve, *v.* prove, H. F. 707; bide the test, G 645; to prove to be right, to succeed when tested, G 1212; Preved, *pp.* tested, G 1336; approved, E 28; exemplified, E 856; shown, F 481.
- Preve, *s.* proof, T. i. 470, 690.
- Prevey, *adj.* secret, Bo. IV. p. iii. 137.
- Previdence, *s.* seeing beforehand, Bo. V. p. vi. 147.
- Prevy, *adj.* privy, secret, unobserved, M. P. iii. 382; close, not confidential, H. F. 285.
- Preyde, *pt.* *s.* prayed, L. 2294; Preyed, *pp.* E 773; Preye, *pr.* *s.* pray, B 3995.
- Preyere, *s.* prayer, G 256.
- Preysed, *pp.* praised, L. 536.
- Pricasour, *s.* hard rider, A 189.
- Prigthe, *pt.* *s.* pricked, F 418. See **Prik**.
- Prik, 1 *pr.* *s.* spur, rouse, M. P. v. 389; Priketh, *pr.* *s.* excites, L. 1192; Priked, *pp.* spurred, G 561; Prigthe, *pt.* *s.* F 418; Prike, 2 *pr.* *s.* subj. B 2001; Prikke, prick, goad, torture, E 1038.
- Prikinge, *s.* spurring, hard riding, B 1965.
- Prikke, *s.* point, H. F. 907; prick, point, critical condition, B 119.
- Privee, *adj.* *privee man*, private individual, Bo. II. p. iii. 84; secret, privy, closely attendant, E 192; privy, private, secret, B 204.
- Privee, *adv.* privately, secretly, F 531.
- Prively, *adv.* secretly, B 21.
- Privetee, *s.* secret counsel, secrecy, B 548.
- Privy, *adj.* secret, L. 1267, 1780.
- Proces, *s.* process of time, M. P. v. 430; argument, Bo. III. p. x. 67; matter, L. 1914; narrative, history, occurrence of events, B 3511; *proces holdte*, keep close to my story, F. 658.
- Proeve, *s.* proof, Bo. V. p. iv. 91.
- Proeve, 1 *pr.* *s.* approve, Bo. V. p. iii. 32; *pr.* *s.* shows, Bo. II. m. i. 19.
- Profrothe, *pr.* *s.* offers, L. 405; Profre, 2 *pr.* *s.* subj. mayst proffer, mayst offer, G 489; Profred, *pp.* offered, E 152.
- Proheme, *s.* a proem, prologue, E 43.
- Prolaciouns, *s.* *pl.* utterances, Bo. II. p. i. 54.
- Prolle, 2 *pr.* *pl.* ye prowl, prowl about, search widely, G 1412.
- Proporcionables, *adj.* *pl.* proportional, Bo. III. m. ix. 22.
- Proporcioned, *pp.* made in proportion, F 192.
- Propre, *adj.* proper, own, T. ii. 1487; fine, handsome, C 309; own, peculiar, B 3518; *of propre kinde*, by their own natural bent, F 610.
- Propres, *pl.* own, Bo. I. m. vi. 22.
- Proprete, *s.* property, peculiarity, M. P. x. 69; Propretee, property, T. iv. 392.
- Prospectyves, *s.* *pl.* perspective-glasses, lenses, F 234.
- Prospre, *adj.* prosperous; *prospre fortunes*, well-being, Bo. I. p. iv. 70.
- Protestacioun, *s.* protestation, L. 2640.
- Provost, *s.* prefect, Bo. I. p. iv. 72.
- Provostrie, *s.* praetorship, Bo. III. p. iv. 98.
- Prow, *s.* profit, T. ii. 1664; profit, advantage, C 300; G 609.
- Prowesse, *s.* profit, Bo. IV. p. iii. 80.
- Prydeless, *adj.* without pride, M. P. vi. 29.
- Prye, *v.* to pry, look, peer, G 668.
- Pryme, *s.* the time between 6 and 9 A.M., B 1278, 4387; *fully pryme*, the end of the period of prime, *i.e.* nine o'clock, B 2015; *pryme large*, just past nine o'clock, F 360.
- Prymerole, *s.* primrose, A 3268.
- Prys, *s.* praise, glory, L. 2534; price, value, estimation, B 2087; fame, A 67.
- Pryved, *pp.* deprived, exiled, M. P. i. 146.
- Pryvee, *adj.* secret, A 2460.
- Puffen, *v.* puff, blow, ~~blow~~ H. F. 965.
- Pulle, *s.* a bout at wrestled; *referrow*, M. P. v. 164.
- Pulle, *v.* pluck; *pulle a finche*, pluck a pigeon, cheat a novice, A 652; Pulled, plucked, A 177.
- Pultrye, *s.* poultry, A 598.
- Puplisshen, *pr.* *pl. refl.* are propagated, Bo. III. p. xi. 153.
- Purchase, *v.* get, obtain, win, M. P. xxi. 19; obtain, T. iv. 557; *imp.* *s.* may (He) provide, B 873; Purchaced, *pp.* procured, brought about, M. P. xi. 17; Purchasen, *gvr.* to purchase, acquire, G 1405.
- Purchasing, *s.* prosecuting, A 320.
- Purchasour, *s.* conveyancer, A 318.
- Pure, *adj.* simple, mere, H. F. 280; very, M. P. iii. 490; utter, M. P. iii. 1209; *the pure deeth*, death itself, M. P. iii. 583; *adv.* purely, M. P. iii. 1010.
- Purely, *adv.* actually, simply, only, M. P. iii. 5, 843.
- Purified, *pp.* embroidered, fringed, A 193.
- Purgede, *pt.* *s.* expiated, Bo. IV. m. vii. 4; Purged, *pp.* absolved, cleansed (by baptism), G 181.
- Purpos, *s.* purpose; *to purpos*, to the subject, M. P. v. 26; purpose, design, B 170; *it cam him to purpos*, he purposed, F 606.

Purple, *adj.* purple, L. 654.
 Purs, *s.* purse, F 148.
 Pursevauntes, *pl.* pursuivants, H. F. 1321.
 Purtreve, *v.* draw, A 96.
 Purveyable, *adj.* with provident care, Bo. III. m. ii. 6.
 Purveyaunce, *s.*; unto his *purveyaunce*, to provide himself with necessaries, L. 1561; equipment, B 247; providence, B 483.
 Purveyeth, *pr.* *s.* provides, foresees, foreordains, M. P. x. 66.
 Putours, *s.* *pl.* whoremongers, I 886.
 Putte, *ger.* to put, M. P. iii. 1332; Put, *pr.* *s.* (for Putteth), puts; *put him*, puts himself, L. 652; Putte, *pl.* *s.* set, L. 675.
 Pye, *s.* magpie, T. iii. 527.
 Pyke, *v.* peep, T. iii. 60; Pyke on, prick against, T. ii. 1274.
 Pykepurs, *s.* pick-purse, A 1998.
 Pyne, *s.* pain, hurt, M. P. v. 335; place of torment, H. F. 1512; suffering, B 1080; pain, suffering, the passion, B 2126; woe, torment, B 3420.
 Pype, *s.* pipe, musical instrument, B 2005.
 Pype *v.* to pipe, to play music, H. F. 1220;
 Pyped, *pp.* faintly uttered, H. F. 785.
 Pyrie, *s.* pear-tree, E 2217.

Q.

Quad, *adj.* L. 1981.
 Quaille, *s.* quail, E 120.
 Quaking, *pres. part.* quaking, F 117; Quaked, *pp.* B 3831; Quook, *pl.* *s.* quaked, shook, B 3394.
 Quakke, *s.* hoarseness, A 4152.
 Qualme, *s.* pestilence, H. F. 1968; Qualm, death-note, T. v. 382.
 Quantite, *s.* quantity, vastness, M. P. v. 58.
 Quappe, *v.* flutter, T. iii. 57; heave, toss (lit. shake, palpitate), L. 1767; beat repeatedly, L. 865.
 Quayles, *gen. pl.* quails', M. P. v. 339.
 Queinte, *adj.* curious, L. 2013.
 Quek! *int.* quack! M. P. v. 499, 594.
 Quelle, *v.* to kill, C 854; *imp.* *s.* may (he) kill, G 705.
 Queme, *v.* please, T. v. 695; Quemen, *pr.* *pl.* T. ii. 803.
 Quene, *s.* queen, M. P. i. 1.
 Querle, *pl.* complaints, Bo. III. p. iii. 77.
 Quern, *s.* hand-mill, M. P. ix. 6; *dat.* B 3264.
 Querrou, *s.* quarryman, R. 4149.
 Questmongeres, *s.* *pl.* holders of inquests, I 797.
 Quethe, *pr.* *s.* say, cry, R. 6999.
 Queynt, *adj.* quaint, R. 2038; curious, well

devised, M. P. iii. 1330; Queynte, skilfully contrived, H. F. 126; curious, hard to understand, M. P. iii. 531; quaint, curious, F 369; Queynte, *pl.* curious, skilfully strange, M. P. iii. 784.
 Queynte, *adv.* artfully, H. F. 245.
 Queynte, *pl.* *s.* was quenched, A 2334.
 Queynteliche, *adv.* curiously, cunningly, H. F. 1923.
 Queyntise, *s.* elegance, I 932; contrivance, 733.
 Quik, *adj.* alive, M. P. iii. 121.
 Quiken, *ger.* to make alive, quicken, G 481.
 Quikke, *v.* quicken, take life, burst forth, H. F. 2078.
 Quiknesse, *s.* liveliness, life, M. P. iii. 26.
 Quinible, *s.* a part sung a fifth above the air, A 3332.
 Quirboilly, *s.* boiled leather, B 2065.
 Quisshin, *s.* cushion, T. ii. 1229.
 Quistroun, *s.* scullion, R. 886.
 Quit, *adj.* free, quit, M. P. v. 663.
 Quit, *pp.* rewarded, H. F. 1614; Quitte, *pl.* *s.* rewarded, requited, L. 1918; Quit, *pp.* set free, L. 1992. See *Quyte*.
 Quilty, *adv.* freely, A 1792.
 Quod, 1 *pl.* *s.* quoth, said, M. P. iii. 370; Quoth, M. P. iii. 90.
 Quook, *pl.* *s.* quaked, trembled, L. 2317. See *Quaking*.
 Quoynt, *adj.* quaint, R. 2038.
 Quyte, *v.* requite, recompense, M. P. v. 11; *ger.* to remove, free, M. P. vii. 263; Quytet, *pr.* *s.* requiteth, payeth, M. P. v. 9; Quyte *v.* to acquit, free; *hir cost for to quyte*, to pay for his expenses, B 3564; Quyten, *v.* repay (lit. quit), G 1027; *quyte with*, to repay . . . with, G 1055; to satisfy, pay in full, B 354; *quyte hir whyle*, requite her time or trouble, lit. repay her time, *i.e.* her occupation, pains, trouble, B 584; 1 *pr.* *s.* I requite, C 420; Quit, *pp.* freed, G 66.

R.

Raa, *s.* roe, A 4086.
 Racyne, *s.* root, R. 4881.
 Rad, *pp.* read, G 211. See *Rede*.
 Radde, *pl.* *s.* advised, M. P. v. 579; 1 *pl.* *s.* read, M. P. v. 21. *Pl. t.* of *reden*. See *Rede*.
 Radevore, or Radenore, *s.* piece of tapestry, L. 2352.
 Rafte, *pl.* *s.* bereft, L. 1855; Raft, *pp.* taken from, L. 2590; Rafte, *pl.* *s.* reft, B 3288. *Pl. t.* and *pp.* of *reven*.
 Rage, *s.* a raging wind, A 1985.
 Rage, *v.* play, toy wantonly, A 257.

- Raked, *pp.* raked, B 3323.
 Raket, *adj.* hasty, T. iii. 429.
 Rakelnesse, *s.* rashness, M. P. xvi. 16.
 Rake-stele, *s.* rake-handle, D 949.
 Rakle, *v.* be rash, T. iii. 1642.
 Ram, *s.* the ram, the sign Aries, F 386.
 Ramage, *adj.* wild, R. 5384.
 Rammish, *adj.* ramlke, strong-scented, G 887.
 Rampeth, *pr. s.* (lit. ramps, romps, rears, but here) rages, acts with violence, B 3094.
 Rancour, *s.* rancor, ill-feeling, H 97; rancor, malice, E 432, 747.
 Ransaked, *pp.* ransacked, come searching out, M. P. iv. 28.
 Rape, *adv.* hastily, R. 6516.
 Rape, *s.* haste, M. P. viii. 7.
 Rape, *v.* snatch up; *rufe and renne*, seize and plunder, G 1422. See *Renne*.
 Rasour, *s.* razor, B 3246.
 Rathe, *adv.* early, soon, H. F. 2139; Rather, *comp.* sooner, M. P. iii. 868.
 Raughte, *pt. s.* reached, B 1921.
 Raunsoun, *s.* ransom, A 1024.
 Rave, 1 *pr. pl.* we rave, we speak madly, G 959.
 Raven, *s.* raven, M. P. v. 363; the constellation Corvus, H. F. 1004.
 Ravines, *s. pl.* rapines, I 793.
 Ravinour, *s.* plunderer, Bo. IV. p. iii. 131.
 Ravisable, *adj.* ravenous, R. 7016.
 Ravisshe, *v.* snatch away, Bo. II. m. vii. 35; *part. pres.* snatching away, Bo. IV. m. vi. 44.
 Ravissing, *adj.* enchanting, M. P. v. 198; swift, violent, Bo. I. m. v. 4; destroying, Bo. I. m. v. 69.
 Ravyne, *s.* ravine, prey, M. P. v. 323; preying, ravening, M. P. v. 336.
 Ravysedest, 2 *pt. s.* didst ravish, didst draw (down), B 1659; Ravished, *pp.* ravished, overjoyed, F 547.
 Rayed, *pp.* arrayed, adorned, M. P. iii. 252. Short for *arrayed*.
 Real, *adj.* royal, L. 214, 1605. See *Ryal*.
 Realtee, *s.* royalty, sovereign power, M. P. x. 60.
 Reame, *s.* realm, kingdom, L. 1281; Reaume, L. 2091; B 3305.
 Rebekke, *s.* abusive term for an old woman, D 1573.
 Rebel, *adj.* rebellious, M. P. v. 457.
 Recche, *v.* care, reck, M. P. v. 593; *recche of it*, care for it, F 71. See *Rekke*.
 Reccheles, *adj.* reckless, careless, indifferent, M. P. v. 593; regardless, H. F. 668; Reccheles, careless, indifferent, B 229.
 Receipt, *s.* receipt; *i.e.* recipe for making a mixture, G 1353.
 Received, *pp.* accepted (as congenial), acceptable, B 307; Receyven, *v.* to receive, E 1151.
 Rechased, *pp.* headed back, M. P. iii. 379.
 Reche, *v.* reach, give, M. P. iii. 47.
 Reclaiming, *s.* enticement, L. 1371.
 Reclayme, *v.* to reclaim, as a hawk by a lure, *i.e.* check, H 72.
 Recomandeth, *pr. s. refl.* commends (herself), B 278; Reconiende, *ger.* to commend, commit, G 544.
 Recompensacioun, *s.* recompense, H. F. 665.
 Reconforte, *v.* to comfort, A 2852.
 Recorde, *s.* testimony, M. P. iii. 934.
 Recorde, *v.* (to) record, recording, M. P. v. 609; Recording, *pres. p.* remembering, recalling, L. 1760; Recorde, 1 *pr. s.* remember, remind, A 829.
 Recours, *pl.* orbits, Bo. I. m. ii. 15.
 Recours, *s.* recourse; *I wol have my recours*, I will return, F 75.
 Recovered, *pp.* gained, won, got, M. P. v. 688.
 Recoverer, *s.* succor, M. P. xxii. 3.
 Recured, *pp.* recovered, R 4920.
 Reddour, *s.* rigor, M. P. x. 13.
 Rede, *ger.* to read, M. P. iii. 98; *v.* interpret, M. P. iii. 279; advise, M. P. xiii. 6; 1 *pr. s.* counsel, advise, M. P. iv. 15; Redde, *pt. s.* read, interpreted, M. P. iii. 281; Red, *pp.* read, M. P. iii. 224; Redeth, *imp. pl.* read, B 3650; Rad, *pp.* read, G 211.
 Rede, *adj.* red, L. 112. See *Reed*.
 Rede, *adj.* as *s.* red, *i.e.* the blood, B 356; red wine, C 526, 537; Rede, *pl. red.* G 1095.
 Rede, *adj.* made of reed; referring to a musical instrument in which the sound was produced by the vibration of a reed, H. F. 1221.
 Redelees, *adj.* without reed or counsel; knowing which way to turn, M. P. ii. 27.
 Redely, *adv.* soon, H. F. 1392.
 Reder, *s.* reader, M. P. v. 132.
 Redily, *adv.* quickly, C 667.
 Redoute, *v.* fear, Bo. I. p. iii. 24.
 Redoutinge, *s.* glorifying, A 2050.
 Redresse, *imp. s.* direct anew, reform, M. P. i. 129; Redressed, *pp.* roused, Bo. IV. p. ii. 157; Redresse, *v.* to set right, E 431.
 Reducen, *v.* sum up, Bo. III. p. viii. 68.
 Redy, *adj.* ready, E 299; F 114; dressed, F 387.
 Red, *adj.* red (of the complexion), M. P. iii. 470.
 Rede, *def. M. P.* v. 442; Rede, *pl. M. P.* i. 89.
 Red, *adj.* red, B 452. See *Rede*.
 Red, *s.* advice, counsel, plan, M. P. iii. 105; profit, help, M. P. iii. 203; *without reed*, for which nothing can be done, M. P. iii. 587; *I can no reed*, I know not what to do, M. P. iii. 1187.
 Reed, *s.* red color, red part, L. 533.
 Rednesse, *s.* redness, G 1097.
 Rees, *s.* race; *in a rees*, hastily, T. iv. 350.
 Refect, *pp.* restored, Bo. IV. p. vi. 455.
 Referred, *pp.* brought back, Bo. III. p. x. 202.
 Reflexiouns, *s. pl.* ideas due to previous impres-

- sions, H. F. 22; reflections by means of mirrors, F 230.
- Refreyden, *v.* cool, T. v. 507.
- Refte, *pt. s.* took violently; *how he Turnus refte his lyf*, how he robbed Turnus of his life, H. F. 457.
- Refuseden, *pt. pl.* refused, E 128.
- Refut, *s.* refuge, safety, M. P. i. 14, 33.
- Regals, *pl.* royalties, royal attributes, L. 2128.
- Regalye, *s.* rule, authority, M. P. ii. 65.
- Regard, *s.* relation; *at regard of*, in comparison with, M. P. v. 58; *to the regard of*, in comparison with, Bo. II. p. vii. 138.
- Regioun, *s.* rule, dominion, realm, M. P. xv. 25.
- Regne, *s.* kingdom, realm, dominion, reign, B 389, 392, 735; Regnes, *pl.* B 129; governments, B 3954.
- Regneth, *pr. s.* reigns, M. P. iv. 43; Regnen, *pr. pl.* M. P. iv. 50; Regned, *pt. s.* reigned, B 3845.
- Rehersaille, *s.* enumeration, G 852.
- Reherse, *v.* rehearse, repeat, tell, M. P. iii. 474; Rehercen, L. 78.
- Rehersing, *s.* telling, recital, L. 1185; Reheringes, *pl.* repetitions, L. 24.
- Reighte, *pt. s.* reached, touched, H. F. 1374. *Pl. l. of rechen.*
- Reioyse, *v.* rejoice, make to rejoice, M. P. i. 101; Reioysed, 1 *pt. s. refl.* I rejoiced, E 145.
- Rekening, *s.* reckoning, account, M. P. iii. 699; *Queneinge*, judgment, M. P. i. 132.
- Queth, *pr. s.* smokes, reeks, L. 2612.
- Quever, 1 *pr. s.* (for *future*), (I) shall retrieve, o away, H. F. 354.
- Rekke, 2 *pr. pl.* care, reck, M. P. ii. 110; Rekeketh, *pr. s. impers.* it recks (him), he cares, M. P. vii. 182.
- Rekne, *v.* to reckon, account, B 110; *ger.* to reckon, B 158; Rekenen, reckon, count, E 2433.
- Relayes, *s. pl.* fresh sets of hounds, reserve packs, M. P. iii. 362.
- Relees, *s.* release, M. P. i. 3; relaxation, ceasing; *out of relees*, without ceasing, G 46.
- Relente, *v.* melt, G 1278.
- Relesse, *v.* to relieve, relax, B 1069; 1 *pr. s.* I release, E 153; Relessed, *pt. s.* forgave, B 3367.
- Releved, *pp.* raised up again, revived, L. 128; made rich again, G 872.
- Relik, *s.* relic, L. 321.
- Reme, *s.* realm, B 1306.
- Remedies, *s. pl.* Ovid's Remedia Amoris, M. P. iii. 568.
- Remembreth, *pr. s.* recurs to the mind, M. P. iv. 150; Remembre yow, *imp. pl.* remember, M. P. iii. 717.
- Remenant, *s.* remainder, M. P. v. 271.
- Remeveth, *imp. pl.* 2 *p.* remove ye, G 1008.
- Remewed, *pp.* removed, F 181.
- Remorde, *pr. s.* vexes, plagues, troubles, Bo. IV. p. vi. 321; *pr. subj.* cause remorse, T. iv. 1491.
- Remounted, *pp.* comforted, Bo. III. p. i. 9.
- Remuable, *adj.* capable of motion, Bo. V. p. v. 39; changeable, T. iv. 1682.
- Remuen, *v.* remove, Bo. II. p. vi. 59.
- Ren, *s.* run, A 4079.
- Renably, *adv.* reasonably, D 1509.
- Rending, *s.* tearing, A 2834.
- Renegat, *s.* renegade, L. (A) 401; renegade, apostate, B 932.
- Reneyed, *pp.* denied, L. 336; Reneye, *v.* renounce, deny, abjure, B 376.
- Reenges, *s. pl.* ranks, A 2594.
- Renne, *ger.* to run, M. P. i. 164; Renning, flowing, M. P. iii. 161; Renneth, *pr. s.* runs, *i.e.* arises, L. 503; spreads, L. 1423; *reuneth for*, runs in favor of, B 125; Ronne, *pp.* B 2.
- Renne, *v.* to ransack, plunder; *but only in the phrase* rape and renne, seize and plunder, G 1422. See Rape.
- Renomed, *pp.* renowned, Bo. III. p. ii. 138.
- Renomee, *s.* renown, L. 1513.
- Renoun, *s.* renown, fame, L. 260.
- Renovelaunces, *pl.* renewals, H. F. 693.
- Renoveleth, *imp. pl.* renew, M. P. iv. 19; Renovellen, *pres. pl.* renew, I 1027.
- Rente, *s.* rent, M. P. iii. 765; rent, *i.e.* revenue, B 3401.
- Repaire, *v.* repair, return, F 589; Repaireth, *pr. s.* returns, F 339; goes, B 3885; Repeiring, *pres. part.* returning, F 608.
- Reparaciouns, *pl.* reparations, making up, H. F. 688.
- Repentaunce, *s.* penitence, A 1776.
- Repentaunt, *adj.* penitent, A 228.
- Repenting, *s.*; *without repenting*, so as to exclude any after-repentance, any after-regret, M. P. iv. 17.
- Replet, *adj.* full, replete, C 489.
- Replicacioun, *s.* answer, ready reply, repartee, M. P. v. 536; involution, Bo. III. p. xii. 188.
- Reportour, *s.* reporter, A 814.
- Reprehende, *pr. pl.* blame, criticise, Bo. III. p. xii. 149; *v.* blame, T. i. 510.
- Reprevable (to), *adj.* likely to cast a slur on, M. P. xv. 24; reprehensible, C 632.
- Repreve, *s.* reproof, shame, C 595.
- Repreveth, *pr. s.* reproves, L. 1566.
- Reproeved, *pp.* stultified, Bo. II. p. vi. 139.
- Repugnens, *ger.* to be repugnant (to), Bo. V. p. iii. 7.
- Requerable, *adj.* desirable, Bo. II. p. vi. 35.
- Resalgar, *s.* realgar, G 814.
- Rescous, *s.* rescue, T. i. 478.
- Rescove, *v.* rescue, T. iii. 857; Rescowed, *pt. s.* rescued, L. 515.
- Rese, *v.* shake, A 1986.

- Resolven**, *pr. pl.* flow out, Bo. V. m. i. 1; *Resolved*, *pp.* dissolved, melted, Bo. II. p. vii. 179.
Reasonable, *adj.* talkative, M. P. iii. 534.
Resoun, *s.* reason, B 3408.
Resounded, *ft. s.* resounded, F 413.
Respit, *s.* respite, M. P. v. 648.
Resport, *v.* regard, T. iv. 850.
Respyt, *s.* respite, delay (of death), G 543.
Respyte, *ger.* to refuse to do, turn away from, despise, M. P. vii. 259.
Reste, *s.* rest, F 355; *at his reste*, as in its home, M. P. v. 376.
Restelees, *adj.* restless, C 728.
Resurreccioun, *s.* resurrection, opening (of the daisy), L. 110.
Retenue, *s.* retinue, suite, E 270.
Rethor, *s.* orator, F 38.
Rethorien, *adj.* rhetorical, Bo. II. p. i. 49.
Rethorien (*written* Retorien), *s.* orator, Bo. II. p. iii. 67.
Rethoryke, *s.* rhetoric, E 32.
Retorneth, *pr. s.* brings back, Bo. V. p. vi. 338.
Retorning, *ft. pr.* turning over, T. v. 1023.
Retourneth, *imp. pl.* return, E 809.
Retracciouns, *s. pl.* recantations, I 1085.
Retreteth, *pr. s.* reconsiders, Bo. V. m. iii. 64.
Reule, *s.* rule, M. P. x. 56.
Reule, *v.* to rule; *reule hir*, guide her conduct, E 327.
Reuthe, *s.* ruth, M. P. i. 127.
Reve, *s.* steward, bailiff, A 542.
Reve, *ger.* to bereave, rob of; *reve no man fro his lyf*, take away no man's life, L. 2693. See **Rafte**.
Revel, *s.* revelry, E 392.
Revelous, *adj.* sportive, B 1194.
Reven, *v.* take away, M. P. x. 50; **Reveth**, *pr. s.* forces away, M. P. v. 86.
Reverence, *s.* reverence, respect, honor, E 196; *thy reverence*, the respect shown to thee, B 116.
Revers, *s.* reverse, M. P. xviii. 32.
Revesten, *pr. pl.* clothe anew, T. iii. 353.
Revoken, *v.* call back, restore, T. iii. 1118.
Revolucioun, *s.* revolution, revolving course, M. P. iv. 30.
Reward, *s.* regard; *having reward to*, considering, M. P. v. 426; regard, consideration, L. 375.
Rewe, *v.* have pity, L. 158; to suffer for, do penance for, G 997; **Rewen**, *v.* to rue, have pity, E 1050.
Rewe, *s.* row, line, H. F. 1692; row, L. (A) 285. See **Rowe**.
Rewel-boon, *s.* (perhaps) rounded bone; or else, rock-crystal, B 2068.
Rewful, *adj.* lamentable, sad, L. 1838; sorrowful, sad, B 854.
Rewfulleste, *adj. sup.* most sorrowful, A 2886.
Rewledest, *2 pr. s.* didst control, Bo. I. p. iv. 266.
Rewliche, *adj.* pitiable, Bo. II. p. ii. 74.
Rewme, *s.* realm, R. 495.
Rewthe, *s.* pity, ruth, E 579; a pitiful sight, lit. ruth, E 562.
Rewthelees, *adj.* ruthless, un pitying, M. P. v. 613.
Reyes, *pl.* round dances, H. F. 1236.
Reyn, *s.* rain, B 1864, 3363.
Reyne, *v.* rain, M. P. iv. 287.
Reynes, *pl.* rains, H. F. 951.
Reysed, *pp.* raised, M. P. iii. 1278; *ger.* to raise, G 861; **Reysed**, *pp.* made an inroad or military expedition, A 54.
Rhetorice, Rhetoric, Bo. II. p. i. 52.
Riban, *s.* ribbon, *used as pl.* ribbons, II. F. 1318.
Ribaudye, *s.* ribaldry, ribald jesting, C 324.
Ribible, *s.* fiddle, A 4396.
Ribybe, *s.* old woman, D 1377.
Riche, *adj. pl.* rich, B 122.
Richely, *adv.* richly, F 90.
Richesse, *s.* riches, wealth; *of knighthode he is parfyt richesse*, M. P. xviii. 12; Wealth (personified), M. P. v. 261; richness, wealth, L. 1253; riches, B 107.
Rideded, *pp.* pleated, R. 1235.
Riden, *pp.* ridden, B 1990; *ft. pl.* rode, C 968.
Riet, *s.* the net or perforated plate revolving within ~~the~~ ^{an} ~~mother~~ ^{of} an ~~astrolabe~~ ^{astrolabe}, *Ar.* 14. 4.
Right, *adv.* precisely, just, exactly, F 193. 9;
Right, *s. dat. right*; *by right*, by rights, B of
Rightful, *adj.* righteous, well-doing, M. P. v. 5
Right that, that very thing, M. P. iii. 1307. 7.
Rightwis, *adj.* righteous, just, L. 905; **Rightwys**, L. 373.
Rightwisnesse, *s.* righteousness, C 637.
Rimpled, *pp.* wrinkled, R. 4495.
Ring, *s.* ring, concourse, L. 1887; **Ringes**, *pl.* E 255.
Risshe, *s.* rush, R. 1701; T. iii. 1161.
Rist, *pr. s.* riseth, rises, L. 810; *refl.* rises, L. 2680.
Rit, *pr. s.* rideth, rides, L. 1776.
Roche, *s.* rock, F 500; **Roches**, *pl.* M. P. iii. 156.
Rochet, *s.* rochet, linen vest, R. 4754.
Rode, *s. dat.* rood, cross; *by the rode*, M. P. iii. 924; H. F. 2.
Rode, *s.* complexion, B 1917.
Rody, *adj.* ruddy, red, M. P. iii. 143; ruddy, F 385.
Roës, *s. pl.* roes, M. P. iii. 430. See **Roö**.
Roggeth, *pr. s.* shaketh, L. 2708.
Roghte, *ft. s.* cared, recked, M. P. iv. 126.
Roignous, *adj.* rotten, R. 6190.
Rokes, *gen. pl.* rooks', II. F. 1516.

Roket, *s.* rochet, linen vest, R. 1242.
 Rokke, *s.* rock, M. P. iii. 164.
 Romauce, *s.* romance, M. P. iii. 48.
 Rombel. See Rumbel.
 Rombled, *pt. s.* rummaged, fumbled, G 1322.
 Rombled, *pt. s.* made a murmuring noise, rumbled, buzzed, muttered, B 3725.
 Rome, *v.* roam, H. F. 2035; Romed, *pp.* roamed, gone, L. 1589; Romen, *v.* to roam, B 558.
 Ron, *pt. s.* rained, T. iii. 640.
 Rong, *pt. s.* rang, M. P. v. 492.
 Ronnen, *pt. pl.* ran, M. P. iii. 163; Ronne, *pp.* run, B 2. See Renne.
 Rood, *s.* roc, M. P. v. 195. See Roës.
 Rood, *pt. s.* rode, E 234; Riden, *pp.* B 1990. See Ryde.
 Roof, *pt. s.* rived, pierced, H. F. 373; *pt. s.* 'rove,' pierced, L. 661. *Pt. t.* of Ryven.
 Roos, *pt. s.* rose, L. 112.
 Roost, *s.* a roast, A 206.
 Ropen, *pp.* reaped, L. 74.
 Rorc, *s.* uproar, T. v. 45.
 Rose-garland, *s.* garland of roses, H. F. 135.
 Rosen, *adj.* made of roses, R. 845.
 Rosene, *adj. def.* rosy, Bo. II. m. viii. 7.
 Roser, *s.* rose-tree, R. 1651, 3059.
 Rose-reed, *adj.* red as a rose, G 254.
 Rooste, *v.* roast, A 383.
 Rote, *s.* a stringed instrument, A 236.
 Rote, *dat.* root, L. 2613; an astrological term for the epoch of a nativity, B 314; the radix, the principle, G 1461; root, source, Qu. 358.
 Rothe, *s.* rote; *by rote*, by heart, B 1712.
 Rotten, *adj.* rotten, G 17.
 Roughte, *pt. s. impers.* it recked (him), *i.e.* he recked, M. P. i. 171; *pt. s.* recked, T. i. 496. See Roghte.
 Rouketh, *pr. s.* cowers, huddles, A 1308
 Roum, *s.* room, space, L. 1999.
 Rouncy, *s.* hackney, A 390.
 Rounde, *adv.* roundly, fully, melodiously, C 331.
 Roundel, *s.* roundel (poem), M. P. v. 675; a small circle, H. F. 791.
 Roundnesses, *pl.* orbs, orbits, Bo. IV. m. vi. 60.
 Rouned, *pt. s.* whispered, H. F. 2044; Rounce, *v.* whisper, B 2025; Rowned, *pt. s.* whispered, F 216.
 Rouninges, *pl.* whisperings, H. F. 1960. See above.
 Rouñe, *s.* rout, crowd, company, band, B 387, 650, 776.
 Route, *v.* to assemble in a company, B 540.
 Route, *v.* rumble, roar, murmur, H. F. 1038; *ger.* to snore, M. P. iii. 172.
 Routhie, *s.* ruth, compassion, pity, M. P. iii. 592; a pity, M. P. iii. 1000; lamentation, L. 669. See Reuthe.

Routheles, *adj.* un pitying, M. P. vii. 230.
 Routing, *s.* whizzing noise, H. F. 1933. See Route, *v.*
 Rowe, *adj. pl.* rough, R. 1838.
 Rowe, *adv.* roughly, T. i. 206.
 Rowe, *s.* line, H. F. 448; Rowes, *pl.* rays or beams of light, M. P. iv. 2. See Rewe.
 Rownen, *v.* to whisper, G 894.
 Rowthe, *s.* ruth, pity, M. P. iii. 465. See Reuthe, Rewthe.
 Royleth, *pr. s.* meanders, wanders, Bo. I. m. vii. 12.
 Roynne, *s.* itch, R. 553.
 Roynous, *adj.* scabby, rough, R. 988.
 Rubbe, *v.* rub out, M. P. viii. 6.
 Rubee, *s.* ruby, H. F. 1362.
 Rubible, *s.* kind of fiddle, A 3331.
 Rubifying, *s.* rubefaction, reddening, G 797.
 Ruddok, *s.* redbreast, robin, M. P. v. 349.
 Rude, *adj.* common, rough, poor, E 916.
 Rudeliche, *adv.* rudely, A 734.
 Rudenese, *s.* rusticity, E 397.
 Ruggy, *adj.* unkempt, rugged, rough, A 2883.
 Ruled, *pp. as adj.* well-mannered, L. 163.
 Rumbel, *s.* moaning wind, A 1979.
 Rumbleth, *pr. s.* moves to and fro with an indistinct murmuring noise, H. F. 1026.
 Rum, ram, ruf, nonsense words, to imitate alliteration, I 43.
 Rused, *pt. s.* roused herself, rushed away, M. P. iii. 381.
 Ryal, *adj.* royal, L. (A) 146. See Real.
 Ryde, *v.* ride at anchor, L. 968; Ryden, *pr. pl.* ride, E 784; Rood, *pt. s.* E 234; Riden, *pp.* B 1990.
 Rym, *s.* rime (commonly misspelt *rhyme*), I 44.
 Ryme, *s.* rhyme (*better* rime), L. 66.
 Ryme, *v.* tell in rhyme (*or* rime), put into poetry, B 2122.
 Ryming, *s.* the art of riming, B 48. See Rym.
 Ryoutoures, *s. pl.* rioters, roysterers, C 661.
 Rys, *s.* twig, A 3324.
 Ryse, *v.* to arise, get up, F 375; Rysen, *pr. pl.* rise, F 383; Roos, *pt. s.* B 3717.
 Ryve, *v.* thrust, L. 1793; rive, pierce, C 828; tear, E 1236; Roof, *pt. t.* pierced, L. 661.

S.

Sable, *s.* sable, black, M. P. iv. 284.
 Sachels, *s. pl.* bags, Bo. I. p. iii. 94.
 Sacrifye, *v.* do sacrifice, L. 1348.
 Sacrilege, *s.* sorcery, Bo. I. p. iv. 315.
 Sad, *adj.* serious, grave, M. P. iii. 918; sober, steadfast, L. 1876; sedate, fixed, constant, unmoved, settled, E 693; sober, E 220; Sadde, *pl.* discreet, grave, E 1002.

- Sadel, *s.* saddle, L. 1199.
- Sadly, *adv.* in a settled manner, *i.e.* deeply, unstintingly, B 743; firmly, tightly, E 1100.
- Sadnesse, *s.* soberness, staidness, M. P. vi. 29; constancy, patience, E 452.
- Saffron with, to tinge with saffron, to color, C 345.
- Saffroun, *s.*; like saffroun, of a bright yellowish color, B 1920.
- Sakkes, *pl.* sacks, bags, L. 1118.
- Sal armoniak, *s.* sal ammoniac, G 798.
- Sal peter, *s.* saltpetre, G 808.
- Sal preparat, *s.* prepared salt, G 810.
- Sal tartre, *s.* salt of tartar, G 810.
- Salte, *adj.* *pl.* salt, E 1084.
- Salued, *pl.* *s.* saluted, R. 3610; Salueth, *pr.* *s.* saluteth, M. P. iv. 146; Salue, *v.* salute, greet, B 1723; Salewed, *pp.* F 1310.
- Salvacioun, *s.* salvation, M. P. iv. 213.
- Salwes, *s.* *pl.* willows, D 655.
- Samit, *s.* samite, T. i. 109.
- Sangwyn, *adj.* red, A 333.
- Sans, *prep.* without, B 501.
- Saphires, *s.* *pl.* sapphires, B 3658.
- Sapience, *s.* wisdom, G 101; *pl.* kinds of intelligence, G 338.
- Sarge, *s.* serge, A 2568.
- Sarpulers, *s.* *pl.* sacks made of coarse canvas, Bo. I. p. iii. 94.
- Sarsinesshe, *adj.* made of Saracen cloth, soft silk, R. 1188.
- Sat, *pt.* *s.* sat; sat on knees, knelt, M. P. iii. 106; hit sat me sore, it was very painful for me, M. P. iii. 1220; Sat, *pt.* *s.* suited, L. 1735.
- Sauf, *adj.* safe, M. P. i. 27, 57; B 343; G 950.
- Sauf, *prep.* save, except, M. P. ii. 50.
- Saufly, *adv.* safely, with safety, H. F. 291; certainly, E 870.
- Saugh, *pt.* *s.* saw, M. P. i. 89.
- Saule, *s.* soul, A 4187.
- Sauns, *prep.* without, H. F. 188; sauns faille, without fail, certainly, H. F. 429.
- Sauter, *s.* psalter, R. 431.
- Sautrye, *s.* psaltery, small harp, A 296.
- Savacioun, *s.* saving from death; without any savacioun, without saving any, H. F. 208.
- Save, *prep.* save, except, B 3214.
- Save, *s.* sage (the herb), A 2713.
- Save, *v.* to save, keep, E 683; 3 *imp.* *s.* may he save, E 505, 1064; Saved, *pp.* kept inviolate, F 531.
- Save-garde, *s.* safe-conduct, T. iv. 139.
- Saveour, *s.* savior, M. P. xix. 16.
- Savetee, *s.* safety, R. 6869.
- Savorous, *adj.* pleasant, toothsome, R. 84, 2812.
- Savour, *s.* pleasant taste, liking, pleasure, M. P. x. 20; smell, G 887; pleasantness, F 404; Savours, *pl.* odors, M. P. v. 274.
- Savour, *imp.* *s.* have relish for, M. P. xiii. 5.
- Sawceflcem, *adj.* pimpled, A 625.
- Sawe, *s.* saying, H. F. 2089; discourse, G 691; Sawes, *pl.* tales, H. F. 676.
- Say, *v.* assay, R. 5162.
- Say, 1 *pt.* *s.* saw, M. P. iii. 806; v. 211.
- Saylours, *s.* *pl.* dancers, R. 770.
- Scabbe, *s.* scab, a disease of sheep, C 358.
- Scale, *s.* scale, circle under cross-line of astrolabe, As. i. 12, 3.
- Scales, *pp.* scales of fish, M. P. v. 189.
- Scalle, *s.* scab, M. P. viii. 3.
- Scalled, *adj.* scabby, A 627.
- Scantilone, *s.* mason's rule, R. 7064.
- Scaped, *pp.* escaped, B 1151.
- Scarmishing, *s.* skirmish, L. 1910.
- Scarsetee, *s.* scarcity, G 1393.
- Scarsly, *adv.* scarcely, B 3602.
- Scattered, *pp.* scattered, G 914.
- Scathe, *s.* scathe, harm, pity, E 1172.
- Science, *s.* learning, learned writing, B 1666.
- Sclat, *s.* slate, M. P. xi. 34.
- Sclaudre, *s.* slander, H. F. 1580; ill fame, E 722.
- Scleudre, *adj.* *pl.* slender, E 1198.
- Scochouns, *s.* *pl.* escutcheons, R. 893.
- Scale, *s.* school, B 1685, 1694.
- Scoleward; to scoleward, toward school, B 1739.
- Scoleye, *ger.* to study, A 302.
- Scomes, *s.* *pl.* ~~foam, lumps~~ ^{small medicinal} pills, Bo. II. *pl.*
- Scorkleth, *pr.* *s.* scorches, shrivels, Bo. II. *pl.* vi. 31.
- Scorpioun, *s.* scorpion, M. P. iii. 636; sign of the Scorpion, H. F. 948.
- Scourges, *s.* *pl.* scourges, whips, plagues, E 1157.
- Scourging, *s.* correction, M. P. iv. 42.
- Scrippe, *s.* scrip, R. 7405.
- Scripture, *s.* inscription, T. iii. 1369; passage of writing, L. 1144.
- Scrit, *s.* writing, T. ii. 1130.
- Scriveinish, *adv.* like a scribe, T. ii. 1026.
- Scriveyn, *s.* scribe, M. P. viii. 1.
- Seche, *ger.* to seek, A 784.
- Secree, *adj.* secret, trusty, M. P. v. 395.
- Secree, *s.* a secret, B 3211; *secree of secretes*, secret of secrets, Lat. Secreta Secretorum (the name of a book), G 1447.
- Secreenesse, *s.* secrecy, B 773.
- Secrely, *adv.* secretly, E 763.
- Secte, *s.* sect, company, E 1171; religion, faith (lit. following), F 17.
- Sede, *v.* bear seed, M. P. vii. 306.
- See, *s.* sea, M. P. i. 50.
- See, *s.* seat, T. iv. 1023; seat of empire, B 3339; *pl.* seats, H. F. 1210.
- See, *ger.* to see, look on; on to see, to look upon, M. P. iii. 1177; as fut. shall see, M. P. iv. 190;

- Saugh, *ft. s.* L. 16; Seigh, L. 795; Sey, *ft. s.* saw, T. ii. 277; B 1, 7; Seyn, *pp. seen*, B 1863; Sec, 3 *imp. s.* may (He) behold, *or* protect, B 156.
- Seed-foul, *s.* birds living on seeds, M. P. v. 512.
- Seek, *adj.* sick, M. P. v. 161; Seke, M. P. iii. 557; *def. as s.* sick man, man in a fever, M. P. v. 104.
- Seel, *s.* seal, B 882.
- Seel, *s.* happiness, A 4239.
- Seemliness, *s.* dignity of bearing, L. 1041.
- Seen, *v.* see, B 182.
- Seestow, *seest* thou, H. F. 911.
- Seeth, *ft. s.* seethed, boiled, E 227.
- Sege, *s.* throne, Bo. I. p. iv. 318; siege, L. 1696.
- Seggen, *pr. pl.* say, T. iv. 194.
- Seigh, *ft. s.* saw, L. 795.
- Seint, *s.* saint, B 1631; Seintes, *gen. pl.* B 61.
- Seintuarie, *s.* sanctuary, I 781.
- Seistow, *sayest* thou, B 110.
- Seith, *pr. s.* says, M. P. v. 22.
- Seke, *adj. pl.* sick, L. 1203.
- Seke, *v.* search through, B 60; Seken, *ger.* to seek, *i.e.* a matter for search, G 874; Seken to, 1 *pr. pl.* come seeking for, press towards, M. P. ii. 91.
- Secknes, *s.* security, M. P. vii. 345.
- Sekirly, *adv.* certainly, L. (A) 163.
- Selde, *adj. pl.* seldom few; *selde tyme*, few times, *pl. seldom*, L. 1076.
- Selde, *adv.* seldom, T. iv. 423; E 27.
- Seled, *pp.* sealed, B 736.
- Selfe, *adj.* self, same, M. P. v. 96; Selve, very, H. F. 1157; *thy selve neighebour*, thy very neighbor, B 115.
- Selily, *adv.* happily, Bo. II. p. iv. 108.
- Seliness, *s.* happiness, T. iii. 825.
- Selle, *v.* give, sell, A 278.
- Selly, *adj.* blessed, delightful, H. F. 513.
- Sely, kind, M. P. iv. 89; poor, innocent, M. P. iv. 141; innocent, unsuspecting, L. 2346; foolish, hapless, L. 1336; good, innocent, B 1702; holy, B 682; innocent, C 292; silly, simple, G 1076.
- Semblable, *adj.* like, I 408.
- Semblaunt, *s.* appearance, R. 3205; Semblant, appearance, look, L. 1735; outward show, semblance, E 928.
- Seme, *pr. s. subj.* seem, M. P. xiv. 13; *v.* seem, appear, F 102; Semed, *ft. s. impers.* it seemed, E 396; *him semed*, it appeared to them, they supposed, F 56; *the peple semed*, it seemed to the people, the people supposed, F 201.
- Semelihede, *s.* goodness, R. 1130.
- Semely, *adj.* seemly, comely, B 1919.
- Semicope, *s.* a short cope, A 262.
- Seming, *s.* appearance, M. P. iii. 944; Seminge, *s.* appearance; *to my seminge*, as it appears to me, B 1838.
- Semisoun, *s.* low noise, A 3697.
- Senatorie, *s.* senatorial rank, Bo. III. p. iv. 102.
- Sencer, *s.* censer, A 3340.
- Sendal, *s.* a thin silk, A 440.
- Sendeth, 2 *imp. pl.* send ye, C 614; Sente, *ft. s. subj.* would send, B 1091; Sent, *pr. s.* sendeth, sends, T. ii. 1123.
- Sene, *adj.* visible, evident, manifest, M. P. ii. 94; L. 340; apparent, F 645.
- Sene, *ger.* to see, M. P. v. 329; to look at, L. 2649; *on to sene*, to look on, L. 2425; *to sene*, to be seen, to seem, L. 224.
- Senith, *s.* zenith, As. ii. 26, 15.
- Sensibilittees, *s. pl.* perceptions, Bo. V. m. iv. 8.
- Sensible, *adj.* perceptible by the senses, Bo. V. p. iv. 232.
- Sentement, *s.* feeling, passion, L. 69.
- Sentence, *s.* opinion, decision, M. P. v. 530; sense, meaning, tenor, theme, M. P. iv. 24; H. F. 1100; decision, speech, M. P. v. 383; opinion, B 113, 3992; meaning, subject, result, B 1753; judgment, order, I 17; verdict, G 366; general meaning, I 58.
- Septetrioun, *s.* north, B 3657.
- Sepulture, *s.* burial, entombment, L. 2553; sepulchre, C 558.
- Sereyns, *s. pl.* sirens, R. 684.
- Sergeant, *s.* sergeant, officer, E 519.
- Sermon, *ger.* to preach, speak, C 879.
- Sermoning, *s.* talking, L. 1184.
- Sermoun, *s.* discourse, L. 2025; Sermouns, *pl.* writings, B 87.
- Servage, *s.* service, M. P. iii. 769; servitude, thraldom, bondage, A 1946; B 368.
- Servant, *s.* lover, servant, L. 1957.
- Servisable, *adj.* serviceable, useful, E 979.
- Servitude, *s.* servitude, E 798.
- Servyve, *s.* service, musical performance, M. P. iii. 302; service, serving, E 603.
- Sese, *pr. s. subj.* eeize, M. P. v. 481; Sesed, *pp.* caught, M. P. iv. 240.
- Sesoun, *s.* season, G 1343.
- Set, *pr. s.* setteth, M. P. ii. 101; putteth, M. P. iii. 635; *pp.* appointed, M. P. iv. 52; *wel set*, seemly, M. P. iii. 828; Sete, *v.* were seated, T. ii. 81; Sete, *pp.* sat, L. 1109; Sette me, 1 *pl. s.* put myself, placed myself, L. 115; *setten hem*, seated themselves, L. 301; *sette hir*, sat, B 329; *sette her on knees*, cast herself on her knees, B 638; *sette hem*, seated themselves, C 775; *setten hem adoun*, set themselves, G 396; Set, *pp.* placed, put, B 440; Seten, *ft. pl.* sat, B 3734.
- Sete, *subj.* would befit, T. ii. 117.
- Setewale, *s.* valerian, R. 1370. See Cetewale.
- Sethe, *v.* boil, scethe, A 383.

- Seur, *adv.* surely, T. iii. 1633.
- Scurtee, *s.* security, M. P. ix. 46; security, surety, B 243.
- Sewe, *ger.* to follow, M. P. xiv. 4; Seweth, *pr.* *s.* follows as a consequence, H. F. 840; Sewed, *pt. s.* pursued, B 4527.
- Sewes, *s. pl.* lit. juices, gravies; prob. used here for seasoned dishes, delicacies, F 67.
- Sewing, *adj.* conformable, in proportion, similar, M. P. iii. 959.
- Sexteyn, *s.* sacristan, B 3126.
- Sey, 1 *pt. s.* saw, M. P. iii. 1089; Seyen, *pt. pl.* M. P. iii. 842; Seyn, *pp.* M. P. iii. 854.
- Seyl, *s.* sail, A 696.
- Seyn, *pp.* seen, B 1863.
- Seyn, *v.* say, M. P. ii. 51; Sey, *v.* tell, M. P. v. 126; *ger.* to say, M. P. iii. 1090; To seye, to be said, M. P. ii. 21; To seyne, M. P. ii. 77; Seystow, *for* Seyst thou, sayest thou, M. P. x. 27; Seyd, *pp.* B 49; Seydestow, saidst thou, G 334.
- Seynd, *pp.* singed, broiled, B 4035.
- Seynt, *s.* saint, M. P. iii. 1319.
- Shad, *pp.* distributed, Bo. I. m. i. 19.
- Shadde, *pt. s.* shed, poured, B 3921.
- Shadwe, *s.* shadow, shade, M. P. iii. 426; scene, Bo. II. p. iii. 98; shadow, B 7, 10.
- Shaftes, *pl.* shafts, arrows, M. P. v. 180.
- Shal, 1 *pr. s.* must, am to be, M. P. ii. 53; *pr. s.* is to be, H. F. 82; owe, T. iii. 791; will, L. 1276; 1 *pr. s.* I shall (do so), F 688; Shaltow, shalt thou, A 3575; Shul, 1 *pr. pl.* we must, E 38.
- Shale, *s.* shell, H. F. 1281.
- Shalmyes, *pl.* shawms, H. F. 1218.
- Shamefast, *adj.* modest, shy, L. 1535; Shamfast, A 2055; C 55.
- Shames, *gen. s.* of shame, L. 2064; *shames deth*, death of shame, *i.e.* shameful death, B 819.
- Shamfastnesse, *s.* modesty, A 840.
- Shap, *s.* shape, form, M. P. v. 373, 398; L. 1747; G 44.
- Shape, *v.* make, devise, M. P. v. 502; ordained, M. P. xvi. 8; Shapen, *pp.* built, M. P. vii. 357; shaped, L. 2629; planned, E 275; prepared, B 249; appointed, B 253; Shapeth him, *pr. s.* intends, L. 1289; Shapen hem, *pr. pl.* dispose themselves, intend, F 214.
- Shaply, *adv.* likely, T. iv. 1452.
- Sharpe, *adv.* sharply, B 2073.
- Shave, *pp.* shaven, bare of money, M. P. xix. 19.
- Shaving, *s.* a thin slice, G 1239.
- Shawe, *s.* grove, T. iii. 720.
- Shedde, *pt. s.* shed, B 3447.
- Sheeldes, *s. pl.* French crowns, A 278.
- Shefe, *s.* sheaf, L. 2579; Sheef, A 104.
- Sheld, *s.* shield, A 2122.
- Shelde, *pr. s. subj.* may he shield, H. F. 88.
- Shende, *v.* ruin, M. P. v. 494; destroy, H. F. 1016; Shente, *pt. s.* put to confusion, M. P. v. 255; Shent, *pp.* scolded, discomfited, spoilt, R. 2584; defeated, L. 652; Shendeth, *pr. s.* ruins, confounds, B 28.
- Shendshipe, *s.* ignominy, I 273.
- Shene, *adj.* bright, beautiful, M. P. v. 299; bright, fair, L. (A) 49; showy, fair, B 692; bright, F 53.
- Shene, *adv.* brightly, M. P. iv. 87.
- Shepne, *s. pl.* sheep-folds, A 2000.
- Shere, *v.* to shear, cut, B 3257.
- Shere, *s.* shear, a cutting instrument, scissors, B 3246.
- Shering-hokes. *pl.* shearing-hooks, contrivances for severing ropes in a sea-fight, L. 641.
- Sherte, *s.* shirt, B 2049.
- Shet, *pp.* shut, A 2597.
- Shete, *v.* shoot, L. 635.
- Shete, *s.* sheet, G 879.
- Sheter, *s. as adj.* shooter, useful for shooting, M. P. v. 180.
- Shethe, *s.* sheath, L. 888; B 2066.
- Shette, *pt. s.* shut, T. iii. 1086; Shet, *pp.* M. P. iii. 335; Shetten, *v.* to shut, enclose; *gonne shetten*, did enclose, G 517.
- Sheves, *pl.* sheaves, H. F. 2140.
- Shewen, *v.* shew, M. P. v. 168.
- Shifte, *v.* to apportion, assign, G 278.
- Shilde, *pr. s. subj.* forbid (lit. shield), L. 2082; Shilde, 3 *imp. s.* may he shield may he defend, R 2098. SUBJECTIVUM *pl.*
- Shine, *s.* shin, leg, A 386.
- Shined, *pt. s.* shone, L. 2194; Shynede, L. 1119; Shoon, L. 1428.
- Shipman, *s.* shipman, skipper, B 1179.
- Shipnes, *s. pl.* stables, D 871.
- Shirreve, *s.* governor (reeve) of a shire or county, A 359.
- Shiten, *pp.* befouled, A 504.
- Sho, *s.* shoe, A 253.
- Shod, *pp.* with something on his feet, H. F. 98.
- Shode, *s.* the temple (of the head), A 2007.
- Shof, *pt. s.* shoved, T. iii. 487.
- Sholde, 1 *pt. s.* ought (to have done so), M. P. iii. 1200; should, B 56; *pt. s.* would, B 3627; had to, was to, G 1382; I 65; Sholdestow, shouldst thou, M. P. x. 60.
- Shonde, *s.* shame, disgrace, H. F. 88; B 2098.
- Shoof, *pt. s.* shoved, R. 533; pushed, M. P. v. 154; drove, L. 2412; Shove, *pp.* pushed forward, brought into notice, L. 1381.
- Shoon, *pt. s.* shone, M. P. iv. 87; B 11. *Pl. l.* of *Shynen*.
- Shoop, *pt. s.* shaped; *shoop me.* shaped, addressed myself, M. P. ii. 20; made, gave, L. 2569; *shoop him*, (he) got ready, L. 625; Shoop, *pt. s.* plotted, lit. shaped, B. 3543; prepared for, E 198; created, E 903; contrived, E 946.

- Shortly**, *adv.* to be brief, in short, M. P. iii. 830.
- Shot-windowe**, *s.* window with a bolt, A 3358.
- Shour**, *s.* onslaught, T. iv. 47; *Shoures*, *pl.* T. iii. 1064.
- Showting**, *s.* shouting, M. P. v. 693.
- Shovving**, *s.* shoving, pushing, H 53.
- Shredde**, *pt. s.* shred, cut, E 227.
- Shrewe**, *s.* a shrew, peevish woman, E 1222, 2428; evil one, G 917; an ill-tempered (male) person, C 496; *Shrewes*, *pl.* wicked people, H. F. 1830; wicked men, rascals, C 835.
- Shrewe**, *adj.* evil, wicked, G 995.
- Shrewed**, *adj.* wicked, L. 1545.
- Shrewed**, *adv.* evil, wicked, H. F. 275.
- Shrewednesse**, *s.* wickedness, H. F. 1853.
- Shrift**, *s.* confession, M. P. iii. 1114; *Shrifte*, L. 745.
- Shrighte**, *pt. s.* shrieked, F 417.
- Shryned**, *pp.* enshrined, canonized (*ironically*), M. P. xxi. 15.
- Shul**, *pr. pl.* shall, M. P. v. 658; *must*, M. P. v. 80; *Shullen*, 2 *pr. pl.* ye shall, G 241; *Shulde*, 1 *pt. s.* I should, I ought to, B 247; *pt. s.* had to, M. P. iv. 251.
- Shuldres**, *s. pl.* shoulders, M. P. iii. 952
- Shynede**, *pt. s.* shone, L. 1119.
- Sib**, *adj.* related, akin, R. 1199.
- Sicamour**, *s.* sycamore, H. F. 1278.
- Sicer**, *s.* strong drink, B 3245.
- Sighte**, *s.* sight: L. 50; look, L. 1832.
- Sikér**, *adj.* in security, M. P. xvii. 28, sure, H. F. 1978; secure, L. 2660; certain, G 1047; safe, G 864.
- Sikered**, *pp.* assured, L. 2128.
- Sikerly**, *adv.* surely, truly, M. P. iv. 59; certainly, H. F. 1930; certainly, assuredly, surely, B 3984.
- Sikirnesse**, *s.* security, surety, R. 7311; *Siker-nesse*, security, confidence, M. P. iii. 608; x. 69; security, safety, B 425.
- Sikly**, *adv.* ill, with ill will, E 625.
- Jimilitude**, *s.* comparison; hence, proposition, statement, G 431.
- Simphonye**, *s.* an instrument of music, B 2005.
- Sin**, *conj.* since, B 56; E 448.
- Singular**, *adj.* for *singular profyte*, for special advantage, H. F. 310.
- Singularitees**, *s. pl.* separate parts, particulars, Bo. V. m. iii. 51.
- Singuler**, *adj.* particular, Bo. II. p. vii. 70; a single, G 997.
- Singularly**, *adv.* singly, Bo. IV. p. vi. 85.
- Sinwes**, *s. pl.* sinews, I 690.
- Sir**, *s.* sir, a title of respectful address; *sir* man of lawe, B 33; *sir* parish prest, B 1166; *sir* gentil maister, B 1627.
- Sis cink**, *i.e.* six-five or eleven, a throw with two dice, which often proved a winning one in the game of 'hazard', B 125.
- Sisoures**, *pl.* scissors, H. F. 690.
- Sit**, *pr. s.* sits. See *Sitte*.
- Site**, *s.* site, situation, E 199.
- Sith**, *conj.* since, M. P. i. 77; because, M. P. iv. 125; *sith that*, since, M. P. ii. 22; since, as, L. 409; *Sithe*, since, B 3867.
- Sith**, *adv.* then, L. 302; afterwards, C 860.
- Sithen**, *adv.* afterwards, M. P. i. 117; since, M. P. xxii. 51; then, next, L. 304; since, afterwards, B 58.
- Sittand**, *pr. pt.* fitting, R. 2263.
- Sitte**, *v.* to sit, M. P. iii. 451; *Sitten*, *ger.* M. P. iii. 449; *Sit*, *pr. s.* sitteth, sits, L. 816.
- Sittingest**, *sup. adj.* most fitting, M. P. v. 551.
- Sive**, *s.* sieve, G 940.
- Skaffaut**, *s.* scaffold, R. 4176.
- Skant**, *adj.* scanty, sparing, niggardly, M. P. i. 175.
- Skarmish**, *s.* skirmish, T. ii. 611.
- Skars**, *adj.* scarce, M. P. ix. 36.
- Skile**, *s.* reason; *gret skile*, good reason, E 1152; *Skiles*, *pl.* reasons, reasonings, arguments, F 205.
- Skilful**, *adj.* reasonable, M. P. iii. 894; L. 385; discerning, B 1038.
- Skilfully**, *adv.* carefully, particularly, M. P. iv. 155; reasonably, with good reason, G 320.
- Skilinge**, *s.* reason, Bo. IV. p. vi. 168.
- Skille**, *s.* reason, reasonable claim, L. 1392; *Skilles*, *pl.* reasons, arguments, H. F. 750.
- Skippe**, *v.* pass over, L. 622.
- Skye**, *s.* cloud, H. F. 1600.
- Slake**, *ger.* to slake, assuage, L. 2006; *Slake of*, *v.* fail in, omit, L. 619; *Slake*, *v.* to slacken, desist from, E 705; to cease, E 137; to end, E 802; *Slaketh*, *pr. s.* assuages, E 1107; *Slakede*, *pt. s. subj.* should relax, Bo. II. m. viii. 20.
- Sledes**, *s. pl.* sledges, vehicles, Bo. IV. p. i. 87.
- Slee**, *v.* slay, M. P. iii. 351; *Sleyn*, *pp.* M. P. iv. 108; *Slawe*, *pp.* slain, B 2016; *Slawen*, *pp.* E 544; *Slayn*, *pp.* B 3708; *Sleen*, *v.* to slay, B 3736; *ger.* E 1076; *Sleeth*, *pr. s.* slays, E 628; *Slow*, *pt. s.* slew, B 3212; extinguished, B 3922.
- Sleere**, *s.* slayer, A 2005.
- Sleet**, *s.* sleet, L. 1220.
- Sleighte**, *s.* cunning, skill, L. 1382; contrivance, E 1102; craft, skill, G 867; *Sleightes*, *pl.* tricks, E 2421; devices, G 773.
- Slen**, *v.* to slay, B 3531.
- Slepe**, *s.* sleep, F 347; *on slepe*, asleep, L. 209.
- Slepe**, *ger.* to sleep, M. P. v. 94; *Sleep*, *pt. s.* slept, went to sleep, M. P. vii. 137; *Slepen*, *v.* to sleep, B 2100; *Slepte*, *pt. s.* slept, E 224.
- Sleping**, *s.* sleep, L. 1333.
- Slepy**, *adj.* causing sleep, A 1387.
- Slewthe**. See *Slouthe*.

- Sleye**, *adj.* sly, clever, T. iv. 972.
Slider, *adj.* slippery, L. 648.
Slit, *pr. s.* slideth, passeth away, M. P. v. 3.
 Short for *slideth*. See **Slyde**.
Slivere, *s.* sliver, part, T. iii. 1013.
Slogardye, *s.* sloth, sluggishness, G 17.
Slomrest, *pr. s.* slumberest, R. 2576.
Slough, *s.* mud, mire, H 64.
Slouthe, *s.* sloth, L. 1722; B 530.
Slow, *pt. s.* slew, M. P. iii. 727; H. F. 268;
 Slough, M. P. vii. 56. See **Slee**.
Slowe, *s.* moth, R. 4751.
Slowh, *pt. s.* slew, Bo. IV. m. vii. 50.
Sluttish, *adj.* slovenly, G 636.
Slyde, *v.* pass, go away, E 82. See **Slit**.
Slyding, *adj.* unstable, slippery, G 732.
Slye, *adj.* cunning, crafty, M. P. vii. 48; *pl.*
 skiful, M. P. iii. 570; artfully contrived, F
 230.
Slyk, *adj.* sleek, D 351.
Slyk, *adj.* such, A 4130.
Slyly, *adv.* prudently, wisely, A 1444.
Smal, *adj.* small; *a smal*, a little, M. P. vi.
 113; little, B 1726; *Smale*, *adj. pl. E* 380.
Smal, *adv.* but smal = but little, F 71.
Smart, *adj.* brisk (said of a fire), G 768.
Smelde, *pt. s.* smelt, H. F. 1685.
Smert, *pr. s.* smarts, pains (me), M. P. i. 152;
Smerte, *ger.* to smart, L. 502; *Smerte*, *v.* to
 smart, to feel grieved, E 353; *pt. s. subj.*
impers. grieved, F 564; *1 pr. pl. subj.* may
 smart, may suffer, G 871. Short for *smerteth*.
Smerte, *s.* smart, pain, pang, M. P. ii. 13; H.
 F. 316; smart, dolor, F 480.
Smerte, *adj. pl.* hard, bitter, painful, M. P. iii.
 507.
Smerte, *adv.* smartly, sorely, E 629.
Smete, *pp.* smitten, R. 3755.
Smit, *pr. s.* smites, E 122; *Smiten*, *pp.* struck,
 M. P. iii. 1323; *Smoot*, *pt. s.* smote, struck, B
 669. See **Smyte**.
Smok, *s.* smock, F 890.
Smoking, *pres. pt.* perfuming, A 2281.
Smoklees, *adj.* without a smock, E 875.
Smoot, *pt. s. of* Smyte.
Smoterlich, *adj.* smutty, A 3963.
Smothe, *adj.* smooth, M. P. iii. 942.
Smyte, *2 pr. pl. ye smite*, F 157. See **Smit**.
Snewed, *pt. s.* snowed, abounded, A 345.
Snibbed, *pp.* snubbed, reprov'd, F 688.
Snow, *s.* snow; *i. e.* argent in heraldry, white, B
 3573.
So, *conj.* if, provided that, L. 1319.
So as, as far as, as well as, M. P. iv. 161; *so*
have I love, as I hope to have bliss, M. P. iii.
 1065; So as, whereas, Bo. IV. p. iii. 45.
Sobre, *adj.* sober, sedate, B 97.
Socour, *s.* succor, M. P. i. 2, 10, 41, 55; *do you*
socour, help you, M. P. iv. 292; Socours, help,
 L. 1341.
Sodeyn, *adj.* sudden, B 421.
Sodeynliche, *adv.* suddenly, A 1575.
Sodeynly, *adv.* suddenly, B 15.
Softe, *adv.* timidly, M. P. iii. 1212; softly, E
 583; tenderly, B 275.
Sotte, *adj.* gentle, slow, B 399.
Softely, *adv.* softly, F 636; quietly, G 408.
Soiour, *s.* sojourn, R. 5150.
Soiourne, *v.* sojourn, dwell, M. P. i. 160; So-
 iourned, *pp.* remained, M. P. iv. 78.
Soken, *s.* toll, A 3987.
Sokingly, *adv.* gently, B 2766.
Sol, Sol (the sun), G 826.
Solace, *v.* comfort, cheer, amuse, M. P. v. 297.
Solas, *s.* rest, relief, B 1972; diversion, B 1904;
 comfort, solace, pleasure, B 3964.
Sole, *adj.* solitary, alone, R. 2955, 3023.
Solempne, *adj.* festive, M. P. iii. 302; magnifi-
 cent, illustrious, B 387; grand, festive, E 1125;
 superb, F 61; illustrious, F 111.
Solempnely, *adv.* with pomp, with state, B 317.
Solempnitee, *s.* feast, festivity, A 870.
Soleyn, *adj.* solitary, R. 3896; sole, solitary, M.
 P. iii. 982; unmated, M. P. v. 607, 614.
Som, *ind. f. pron.* one, M. P. iii. 305; another,
 M. P. v. 470, come, B 1182; one, a certain
 man, G 922; *som shewe is*, some one (at
 least) is wicked, G 992. 829.
Somdel, *adv.* somewhat, M. P. xii. ^{sub. steersman}
 L. 1183; partially, lit. some deal, ~~1072~~ *pl.*
Some, *num. pron.* one; *tenthe some*, ten in
 all, T. ii. 1249.
Someres, *s. gen.* summer's, M. P. iii. 821; Som-
 ers, L. 142; Someres, B 554.
Somer-season, *s.* spring, early summer, Bo. III.
 p. viii. 47.
Somer-sonne, *s.* the summer sun, M. P. v. 299.
Somme, *s.* sum, chief point, L. 1559; Sommes.
pl. G 675.
Somme, *v.* summon, D 1377.
Somnour, *s.* an officer employed to summon
 delinquents to appear in ecclesiastical courts,
 apparitor, A 543.
Somtyme, *adv.* at some time, some day, at a
 future time, B 110.
Sond, *s.* sand, M. P. v. 243; B 509.
Sonde, *s.* sending, message, B 388, 1049; dispen-
 sation of providence, visitation, B 760, 826;
 trial, B 902; message (or messenger), G 525.
Sone, *s.* son, L. 1130; F 688; *Sones*, *pl.* F 29.
Sone, *adv.* soon, B 709.
Sone-in-law, *s.* son-in-law, E 315.
Sonest, *adv. superl.* soonest, B 3716.
Song, *1 pt. s.* sang, M. P. iii. 1158; *Songen*, *pl.*
pl. sang, M. P. iii. 301.
Sonken, *pp.* sunk, M. P. vii. 8.

- Sonne, *s.* sun, G 52; Sonne, *gen.* sun's, B 3944.
 Sonnish, *adj.* sunny, T. iv. 736.
 Soor, *adj.* sore, F 1571.
 Sooth, *s.* truth, B 3971; Sothe, *dat.* B 1939.
 Sooth, *adj.* true; *used as adv.* truly, C 636.
 Soothfastnesse, *s.* truth, E 796.
 Soothly, *adv.* truly, L. 460; verily, E 689.
 Soper, *s.* supper, F 290.
 Sophistrye, *s.* evil cunning, L. 137.
 Sophyme, *s.* a sophism, trick of logic, E 5.
 Sore, *ger.* to soar, H. F. 531; soar, mount aloft, F 123.
 Sore, *s.* sore, misery, E 1243.
 Sore, *adv.* sorely; *bar so sore*, bore so ill, E 85.
 Sort, *s.* lot, fate, oracle, T. i. 76.
 Sorwe, *s.* sorrow, M. P. i. 81; sorrow, grief, sympathy, compassion, F 422.
 Sorweful, *adj.* sorrowful, L. 1832.
 Sorwefully, *adv.* sorrowfully, F 585.
 Sorwestow, thou sorrowest, Bo. I. p. vi. 90.
 Sorwful, *adj.* sorrowful, M. P. ii. 25.
 Sorwing, *s.* sorrowing, sorrow, M. P. iii. 606.
 Sory, *adv.* sorely, Bo. II. p. iv. 112.
 Sory, *adj.* sad, unfortunate, B 1949; ill, C 876; miserable, H 55.
 Sote, *adj.* sweet, A 1; F 389.
 Sote, *adv.* sweetly, L. 2612.
 Sotel, *adj.* subtle, cunning, M. P. xviii. 43.
 Soteftee, *s.* su'50; loo'skill, M. P. xviii. 77;
 Sotil, *adj.* subtle, cunning, L. 1556; thin, subtle, A 2030.
 Sotted, *adj.* besotted, befooled, G 1341.
 Souded, *pp.* attached, devoted, B 1769.
 Soudiours, *s. pl.* soldiers, R. 4234.
 Souked, *pp.* sucked, been at the breast, E 450;
 Soukinge, *pres. part.* sucking, B 1648.
 Soulfre, *s.* sulphur, H. F. 1508.
 Souun, *s.* sound, musical sound, H. F. 720; E 271; vaunt, L. 267.
 Sound, *adj.* unhurt, L. 1619.
 Sounde, *ger.* to heal, make sound, M. P. vii. 242.
 Soune, *v.* sound, L. 91; imitate in sound, speak like, F 105; Souneth, *pp.* s. tends (to), is consonant (with), B 3157.
 Soupen, *pp.* sup. F 297.
 Souple, *adj.* subtle, obedient, yielding, B 3690.
 Souden, *pres. pl.* rise from, I 448.
 Soure, *adj.* bitter, cruel, Bo. I. p. iv. 99.
 Soures, *s. pl.* sorrels, bucks of the third year, M. P. iii. 429.
 Sours, *s.* source, M. P. iv. 174; sudden ascent, a springing aloft, H. F. 544; source, origin, E 49.
 Souter, *s.* cobbler, A 3904.
 Soverayn, *adj.* chief, M. P. v. 254; Sovereyn, *s.* sovereign lord, M. P. i. 69.
 Sowdan, *s.* sultan, B 177.
 Sowdanesse, *s.* sultaness, B 358.
 Sowe, *v.* sew, fasten, T. ii. 1201.
 Sowen, *v.* to sow, B 1182.
 Sowled, *pp.* endowed with a soul, G 329.
 Sownen, *pp. pl.* sound, *i. e.* play, F 270; Sowne-eth, *pp. pl.* tend (to), are consonant (with), F 517; Sounded, *pp. pl.* tended, B 3348; Sowninge, sounding, M. P. iii. 926. See Soune.
 Space, *s.* opportunity, I 64.
 Spak, *pt. s.* spoke, M. P. iii. 503.
 Span, *pt. s.* spun, L. 1762.
 Spanishing, *s.* blooming, R. 3633.
 Span-newe, *adj.* newly spun, fresh, T. iii. 1665.
 Sparand, *pp. pl.* sparing, R. 5363.
 Spare, *v.* to refrain, abstain from, A 192.
 Sparhawk, *s.* sparrow-hawk, T. iii. 1192.
 Sparow, *s.* sparrow, M. P. v. 351.
 Sparre, *s.* bar, bolt, A 990.
 Sparred, *pt. s.* locked, R. 3320.
 Sparth, *s.* halberd, battle-axe, R. 5978.
 Sparwe, *s.* sparrow, A 626.
 Spece, *s.* species, kind, class, I 407.
 Speche, *s. dat.* speech, elocution, oratory, F 104.
 Special, *adj.*; *in special*, specially, A 444.
 Spede, *s.* advantage; *for comune spede*, for the good of all, M. P. v. 507.
 Spede me, hasten, be quick, M. P. v. 385; Sped, *pp.* terminated, turned out, M. P. v. 101;
 Spedde, *pt. s.* hastened, L. 1096; prospered, made to prosper, B 3876.
 Speedful, *adj.* advantageous, B 727.
 Speke, *v.* speak, M. P. iii. 852; Speken, *pt. pl.* spoke, M. P. iii. 350; Spak, *pt. s.* E 295.
 Spekestow, speakest thou, G 473.
 Speking, *s.* speech-making, oratory, M. P. v. 488.
 Spelle, *s. dat.* a spell, relation, story, B 2083.
 Spence, *s.* buttery, D 1931.
 Spending-silver, *s.* silver to spend, money in hand, G 1018.
 Spere, *s.* spear, M. P. v. 135; *as nigh as men may casten with a spere*, a spear's cast, H. F. 1048.
 Spere, *s.* sphere, orbit, M. P. iv. 137; sphere, F 1280.
 Spered, *pp.* shut, R. 2099.
 Sperhauke, *s.* sparrow-hawk, R. 4033.
 Spete, *v.* spit, T. ii. 1617.
 Spicerye, *s.* mixture of spices, B 2043.
 Spille, *v.* destroy, ruin, M. P. ii. 46; perish, M. P. vi. 121; kill, L. 1574; *ger.* to destroy, L. 1917; *doth me spille*, causes me to die, M.

- P. vi. 14; Spilt, *pp.* lost, M. P. i. 180; killed, B 857; *spillestow teres*, lettest thou tears fall, Bo. l. p. iv. 4.
- Spirites**, *s. pl.* the (four) spirits in alchemy, G 820.
- Spitously**, *adv.* angrily, A 3476.
- Spitten**, *pt. pl.* (or *pr. pl.*) spit, L. 1433. The usual *pt. t. pl.* is *spetten*.
- Spoons**, *pl.* spoons, C 908.
- Spores**, *pl.* spurs, A 473.
- Sporne**, *v.* spurn, kick, M. P. xiii. 11; Sporneth, *pr. s.* tramples, T. ii. 797.
- Spousaille**, *s.* espousal, wedding, E 180.
- Spoused**, *pp.* espoused, wedded, E 3, 386.
- Spouted**, *pp.* vomited, B 487.
- Sprede**, *v.* spread, open, M. P. iv. 4; Spradde, *pt. s.* covered, M. P. vii. 40; spread, E 418; Sprad, *pp.* spread, opened, M. P. iii. 874.
- Spreynd**, *pp.* sprinkled, B 1830. See Springen.
- Springe**, *v.* spring, be carried, L. 719; Spronge, *pp.* spring, grown, L. 1054; Springe, *v.* rise, dawn, F 346.
- Springen**, *v.* sprinkle, scatter, sow broadcast, B 1183; Spreynd, *pp.* sprinkled, B 1830.
- Springes**, *pl.* springs, merry dances, H. F. 1235.
- Springing**, *s.* beginning, source, E 49.
- Springoldes**, *s. pl.* stone-hurlers, R. 4191.
- Spronge**, *pp.* sprung; *spronge amis*, alight in a wrong place, H. F. 2079.
- Spurne**, *v.* spurn, kick, F 616.
- Spycerye**, *s.* spices, L. 675.
- Spyces**, *s. pl.* spices, F 291; *pl.* spicery, L. 1110.
- Squames**, *s. pl.* scales, G 759.
- Squamous**, *adj.* squeamish, A 3337.
- Squirelles**, *s. pl.* squirrels, M. P. iii. 431; Squerels, M. P. v. 196.
- Squyre**, *s.* squire, A 79; Squyeres, *pl.* E 192.
- Squyre**, *s.* measuring-square, R. 7064; Squyres, *pl.* As. i. 12, 3.
- Stable**, *adj.* firm, motionless, M. P. iii. 645; constant, firm, L. 703; not easily moved, L. 346; constant, E 931.
- Stablised**, *pp.* established, 1478995.
- Stadie**, *s.* race course, IV. p. iii. 12.
- Staf-slinge**, *s.* a staf-sling, B 2019.
- Stak**, *pt. s.* stuck, T. iii. 1372.
- Stakereth**, *pr. s.* staggers, L. 2687.
- Stal**, *pt. s.* stole, came cunningly, H. F. 418; 1 *pt. s.* went softly, L. 796.
- Stalke**, *v.* move stealthily, L. 1781; Stalked, 1 *pt. s.* stalked, crept quietly, M. P. iii. 458; Stalked him, *pt. s.* walked slowly, E 525.
- Stamin**, *s.* a kind of woollen cloth, L. 2360.
- Stampe**, *pr. pl.* stamp, bray in a mortar, C 538.
- Stank**, *s.* pool, I 841.
- Stant**, *pr. s.* standeth, H. F. 713; consists, M. P. xiii. 10; stands, L. 2245; is, B 3116.
- Stape**, **Stapen**, *pp.* advanced, B 4011.
- Stare**, *s.* starling, M. P. v. 348.
- Starf**, *pt. s.* died, B 283. *Pt. t.* of *Sterven*. See *Sterve*.
- Starke**, *adj. pl.* strong, H. F. 545; severe, B 3560.
- Startling**, *pres. pt.* moving suddenly, L. 1204.
- Stature**, *s.* being, existence, M. P. v. 366.
- Statut**, *s.* statute, ordinance, M. P. x. 43.
- Staunchen**, *v.* satisfy, Bo. III. m. iii. 3.
- Staves**, *gen.* of the shaft of a car, M. P. vii. 184.
- Stede**, *s.* steed, F 81.
- Stede**, *s.* place, H. F. 731; *in stede of*, in stead of, B 3308.
- Stedfastnesse**, *s.* steadfastness, firmness, E 699.
- Stedfastly**, *adv.* assuredly, E 1094.
- Steel**, *s.* steel, T. ii. 593.
- Steer**, *s.* a yearling bullock, A 2149.
- Steked**, *pp.* stuck, L. (A) 161.
- Stel**, *s.* steel, M. P. v. 395.
- Stefe**, *s.* handle, A 3785.
- Stele**, *v.* to steal, B 105; Steleth, *pr. s.* steals away, B 21; Stal, *pt. s.* stole away, B 3763.
- Stellifye**, *pr. s. subj.* make into a star or constellation, L. 525.
- Stemed**, *pt. s.* shone, A 202.
- Stente**, *pt. s.* stopped, ceased, L. 1240; remained, L. 821; delayed, L. 633; Stente, *v.* to cease, stint, leave off, B 3925.
- Si. pe. adj. pl. bright, glittering, A 201.**
- Steppe**, *pl.* footsteps, B 829.
- Stere**, *s.* rudder, guide, M. P. xii. 731; *steersman*, guide, T. iii. 1291; rudder-*empereur* *pl.* helmsman, B 448.
- Stere**, *v.* discuss, T. iv. 1451.
- Stere**, *v.* steer, guide, T. iii. 910; Stered, *pp.* controlled, L. 935.
- Stere**, *v.* stir, move, H. F. 567; Stereth, *pr. s.* stirs, H. F. 817; Stering, *pr. pt.* moving, II. F. 478.
- Stereless**, *adj.* rudderless, B 439.
- Steresman**, *s.* steersman, H. F. 436.
- Steringe**, *s.* stirring, motion, H. F. 800.
- Sterlinges**, *pl.* sterling coins, C 907.
- Sterre**, *s.* star, M. P. v. 68, 300; Sterres, *pr. pl.* of the stars, E 1124.
- Sterry**, *adj.* starry, full of stars, M. P. v. 43.
- Stert**, *pr. s.* starteth, rouses, H. F. 681; Sterte, *pt. s.* started, L. 851; rushed, L. 811; leapt, L. 697; went at once, L. 660; Sterting, *pres. pt.* bursting suddenly, L. 1741; Sterte, *v.* pass away, B 335; *pr. pl.* start, rise quickly, C 705.
- Sterve**, *v.* die, M. P. iii. 1266; die of famine, C 451; *ger.* to die, L. 605; Starf, *pt. s.* died, B 3325.
- Steven**, *s.* voice, sound, M. P. iii. 307; appointment, meeting by appointment, M. P. iv. 52; Stevens, voice, language, F 150.
- Stewe**, *s.* closet, T. iii. 601; brothel, II. F. 26; a fish-pound, A 350.

- Steyre, *s.* degree (translation of *gradus*), M. P. iv. 129; stair, T. ii. 1705.
- Stiborn, *adj.* stubborn, D 456.
- Stikke, *s.* stick, twig, M. P. i. 90.
- Stikked, *pt. s.* stuck, fixed, L. 2202; Steked, *pp.* L. (A) 161; Stiked, *pt. s.* stuck, fixed, B 2097; Stikede, pierced, B 3897; Stiked, *pp.* stabbed, B 430; *a stiked swyn*, a stuck pig, C 556.
- Stillatorie, *s.* still, vessel used in distillation, G 580.
- Stille, *adv.* quietly, L. 816.
- Stingeth, *pr. s.* pierces, L. 645.
- Stinte, *v.* stay, stop, cause to cease, M. P. i. 63; leave off, M. P. vi. 43; *1 pr. s.* leave off telling, L. F. 1417; Stinte, *pt. s.* stopped, was silent, M. P. iii. 1299; Stinting, *pres. pt.* stopping, M. P. iii. 1213; Stinten, *v.* stop, avert, L. 1647.
- Stintinge, *s.* ceasing, end, Bo. II. m. vii. 40.
- Stire, *v.* to stir, move, C 346.
- Stiropes, *s. pl.* stirrups, B 1163.
- Stith, *s.* anvil, A 2026.
- Stok, *s.* stock, source, M. P. xiv. 1.
- Stoke, *v.* stab, A 2546.
- Stokked, *pp.* set in the stocks, T. iii. 380.
- Stole, *pp.* stolen, L. 2154.
- Stole, *s.* stool, frame for tapestry work, L. 2352.
- Stonde, *v.* stand, M. P. v. 254; Stondeth, *pr. s.* M. P. ii. 64; Stoden, *pt. pl.* stood, M. P. ii. 36; Stonden, *pl.* stood, M. P. iii. 975; H. F. 1928; *1 pr. s.* B; *synt stonde*, finds standing, L. 1499; be understood, be fixed, E 346; be set in view (as a prize at a game), B 1931; Stode, stood, B 176.
- Stongen, *pp.* stung, A 1079.
- Stoon, *s.* stone, M. P. ii. 16; Stones, *pl.* precious stones, M. P. iii. 980.
- Stoor, *s.* store, farm-stock, C 365.
- Stopen, *pp.* advanced, E 1514.
- Store, *adj.* stubborn, E 2367.
- Storial, *adj.* historical, L. (A) 307; *storial sooth*, historical truth, L. 702.
- Storie, *s.* tale, history, B 3900.
- Stot, *s.* stallion, A 615.
- Stounde, *s.* a short time, M. P. v. 142; time, hour, M. P. vii. 238; space of time, H. F. 2071; moment, L. 949; short time, B 1021.
- Stoundemele, *adv.* momentarily, R. 2304; T. v. 674.
- Stoupe, *ger.* to stoop, G 1311.
- Stour, *s.* conflict, R. 1270; Stoures, *pl.* battles, combats, B 3560.
- Stout, *adj.* strong, A 545.
- Strake, *v.* move, proceed, M. P. iii. 1312.
- Strange, *def. adj.* strange, F 89.
- Strangling, *verbal s.* strangling; *of strangling*, caused by strangling, L. 807.
- Straughte, *pt. s.* stretched, A 2916.
- Straunge, *adj.* distant, unbending, M. P. v. 584; strange, foreign, A 13.
- Straw, *interj.* a straw! F 695.
- Strawen, *v.* strew, L. 207; Strawe, *2 pr. s. subj.* strew, F 613.
- Strayte, *s.* strait, B 464.
- Strecche, *v.* reach, M. P. vii. 341; stretch, T. i. 888. See *Streighte*.
- Stree, *s.* straw, M. P. iii. 671; Stre, H. F. 363.
- Streem, *s.* stream, river, A 464.
- Streen, *s.* strain, *i.e.* stock, progeny, race, E 157.
- Streighte, *adv.* straight, H. F. 1992.
- Streighte, *pt. s.* stretched, H. F. 1373. *Pt. t. of Strecchen*.
- Streit, *adj.* narrow, A 174.
- Streite, *adv.* strictly, L. 723.
- Streite, *pp. as adj. def.* drawn, B 4547.
- Stremes, *pl.* streams, rays, beams, B 3944.
- Strene, *s.* race, lineage, R. 4859.
- Strenger, *adj. comp.* stronger, B 3711.
- Strenghes, *pl.* strings, T. i. 732.
- Strengthes, *pl.* sources of strength, B 3248.
- Strepeth, *pr. s.* strips, E 894; Strepem, *pl.* E 1116.
- Strete, *s.* street, road, way, M. P. i. 70.
- Streyneth, *pr. s.* constrains, L. 2684; Streyne, *v.* constrain, E 144.
- Strike, *pp.* struck, M. P. xi. 35.
- Strike, *s.* hank (of flax), A 676.
- Strogelest, *2 pr. s.* strugglest, C 829.
- Strompetes, *s. pl.* trumpets, Bo. I. p. i. 60.
- Stronde, *s.* shore, L. 2205; B 825.
- Stroof, *pt. s.* strove, A 1038.
- Strook, *s.* a stroke, B 3899.
- Strouted, *pt. s.* spread, A 3315.
- Strowe, *v.* strew, L. (A) 101.
- Stroyer, *s.* destroyer, M. P. v. 360.
- Stryf, *s.* quarrel, strife; *took stryf*, took up the cudgels, Bo. I. p. iv. 105.
- Strykes, *pl.* strokes, As. i. 19, 2.
- Stryve, *v.* to strive, oppose, E 170.
- Stubbes, *s. pl.* stumps, A 1978.
- Studien, *v.* to study, E 8; Studie, *2 pr. pl. E* 5.
- Studies, *pl.* endeavors, Bo. III. p. ii. 105; de-sires, Bo. IV. p. ii. 61.
- Sturdinesse, *s.* sternness, E 700.
- Sturdy, *adj.* cruel, stern, E 698, 1049.
- Stye, *ger.* to mount up, Bo. IV. p. vi. 456.
- Style, *s.* stile, gate to climb over, C 712; F 106.
- Style, *s.* style, mode of writing, E 18, 41.
- Styves, *s. pl.* stews, brothels, D 1332.
- Styward, *s.* steward, B 914.
- Suasioun, *s.* persuasiveness, Bo. II. p. i. 48.
- Subgets, *s. pl.* subjects, E 482.
- Subieccioun, *s.* subjection, service, submission, M. P. iv. 32; subjection, obedience, B 270; subjection, governance, B 3656.

Sublymatories, *s. pl.* vessels for sublimation, G 793.
Sublymed, *pp.* sublimed, sublimated, G 774.
Sublyming, *s.* sublimation, G 770.
Submitted, *pp.* subjected, Bo. V. p. i. 49: *ye ben submitted*, ye have submitted, B 35.
Subtil, *adj.* finely woven, M. P. v. 272: skilful, L. 672.
Subtily, *adv.* subtly, F 222.
Subtiltee, *s.* subtlety, specious reasoning, H. F. 855: skill, craft, G 844: Subtiltee, subtlety, craft, secret knowledge, G 620. See **Soteltee**.
Succedent, *s.* subordinate house in astrology, As. ii. 4, 52.
Sucred, *pp.* sugared, T. ii. 384.
Suffisaunce, *s.* sufficiency, what is sufficient, enough, a competence, M. P. x. 15: treasure, M. P. xxiii. 13: Suffisaunce, wealth, M. P. iii. 703.
Suffisaunt, *adj.* sufficient, capable, L. 2524: well-endowed, L. 1067: Suffisant, sufficient, L. 67: able, sufficient, B 243.
Suffraunce, *s.* endurance, patience, E 1162.
Suffraunt, *adj.* patient, tolerant, M. P. iii. 1000.
Suffren, *v.* suffer, M. P. iii. 412.
Suffyse, *v.* suffice, B 3648.
Suget, *s.* subject, R. 3535.
Suggestioun, *s.* a criminal charge, B 3607.
Sugre, *s.* sugar, B 2046.
Sukkenye, *s.* gaberdine, R. 1272.
Summitted, *pp.* submitted, Bo. III. p. x. 16: subjected, Bo. IV. p. vi. 158.
Superfluitee, *s.* superfluity, excess, C 471.
Supplien, *v.* supplicate, entreat, Bo. III. p. viii. 12.
Surcote, *s.* upper coat, A 617.
Surement, *s.* surety, pledge, F 1534.
Suretee, *s.* careless confidence, M. P. vii. 215.
Surmounted, *pp.* surpassed; *surmounted of*, surpassed in, M. P. iii. 826.
Surplys, *s.* surplice, G 558.
Surquidrie, *s.* arrogance, over-confidence, I 403.
Sursanure, *s.* surface-healed wound, F 1113.
Suspicious, *adj.* suspicious, ominous of evil, E 540.
Suspect, *adj.* suspicious, ominous of evil, E 541.
Suspect, *s.* suspicion, E 905.
Sustenance, *s.* sustenance, food, L. 2041: support, living, E 202.
Sustene, *v.* sustain, maintain, M. P. i. 22: endure, M. P. xi. 2.
Suster, *s.* sister, H. F. 1547: *her suster love*, love for her sister, L. 2305: *Sustren*, *pl.* H. F. 1401: *Sustres*, M. P. vii. 16.
Suwe, *v.* follow, T. i. 379.
Swa, *adv.* so, A 4040.
Swal, *pt. s.* swelled; *up swal*, swelled up, was puffed up with anger, B 1750: *Swollen*, *pp.* proud, E 950.

Swalow, *s.* swallow, M. P. v. 553.
Swalwc, *s.* swallow, T. ii. 64.
Swappe, *s.* a swoop, the striking of a bird of prey, H. F. 543.
Swappe, *v.* to swap, strike, E 586: *Swapte*, *pt. s.* fell suddenly, E 1099: *Swap*, *imp. s.* strike off, G 366.
Swartish, *adj. as adv.* darkish, dark, H. F. 1647.
Swatte, *pt. s.* sweated, G 560.
Swayn, *s.* lad, young man, B 1914.
Sweigh, *s.* sway, motion, B 296.
Swelte, *v.* die, M. P. iv. 216: *Swelt*, *pr. s.* dies, M. P. iv. 128: *Swelte*, *pt. s.* fainted, T. iii. 347.
Swelwe, *pr. s. subj.* swallow, E 1188.
Swerde, *s. dat.* sword, L. 1775: *Swerd*, B 64.
Swere, *v.* swear, B 1171: *Swoor*, *pt. s.* B 2062: *Sworen*, *pl.* E 176: *Swore*, *pp.* sworn, E 403: *Sworn*, bound by oath, F 18.
Swering, *s.* swearing, C 631.
Swete, *adj.* sweet, H 42.
Swete, *ger.* to sweat, G 522: *Swatte*, *pt. s.* G 560.
Swety, *adj.* sweaty, M. P. ix. 28.
Sweven, *s.* dream, M. P. iii. 119; B 3930: *Swevenes*, *pl.* H. F. 3.
Sweynte, *pp.* tired out, slothful, H. F. 1783. *pp. of Swerchen*.
Swich, *adj.* such, M. P. i. 116; B 43: such a thing, M. P. v. 570: *swich a*, such a, B 3921: *swich oon*, such an one, *imp. s. pl.* B 88.
Swink, *s.* labor, toil, A 188; G 730.
Swinke, *v.* labor, toil, A 186; G 669: *ger.* labor, toil, C 874: *pr. pl.* gain by labor, work for, G 21: *Swonken*, *pp.* toiled, A 4235.
Swinker, *s.* laborer, A 531.
Swire, *s.* throat, R. 325.
Swogh, *s.* sighing noise, murmur, M. P. v. 247: H. F. 1031: swoon, M. P. ii. 16: *Swough*, whizzing noise, H. F. 1941: *Swow*, swoon, hence deep sorrow, M. P. iii. 215.
Swollen, *pp.* swollen, *i. e.* proud, E 950.
Swolow, *s.* gulf, L. 1104.
Swolwe, *v.* to swallow, H 36.
Swommen, *pt. pl.* swam, were filled with swimming things, M. P. v. 188.
Swonken. See **Swinke**.
Swoor, *pt. s.* swore, M. P. vii. 101.
Swoot, *s.* sweat, G 578.
Swote, *adj.* sweet, M. P. v. 296. See **Sote**, **Swete**.
Swough, *s.* fainting-fit, swoon, L. 1816. See **Swogh**.
Swoune, *v.* swoon, faint, M. P. iv. 216: *Swowneth*, *pr. s.* M. P. vii. 169.
Swow. See **Swogh**.
Swowneth, *pr. s.* swoons, F 430; **Swowned**,

pt. s. swooned, F 443; Swowning, *pres. part.* B 1815.

Swowninge, *s.* swooning, swoon, E 1080.

Swyn, *s.* swine, A 598.

Swythe, *adv.* quickly, H. F. 538; *as swythe*, as quickly as possible, B 637; G 936.

Swyve, *v.* have sexual intercourse with, A 4178.

Sy, *pt. s.* saw, G 1381.

Sye, *v.* sink, T. v. 182.

Sye, Seyen, *pt. pl.* saw, E 1804; G 110.

Syk, *s.* sigh, F 498.

Syke, 1 *pr. s.* sigh, M. P. xxii. 10; Syked, *pt. s.* sighed, B 3394; Syketh, *pr. s.* sigheth, sighs, B 985; Sichte, *pt. s.* sighed, B 1035.

Syklische, *adj.* sickly, T. ii. 1528.

Syre, *s.* sire, master, M. P. v. 12.

Sys, six, B 3851.

Sythe, *pl. times*, B 733; *ofte sythe*, many times, G 1031; *ful ofte sythe*, full oftentimes, E 233.

Sythe, *s.* scythe, L. 646.

T.

T', before a verb beginning with a vowel, to; *as* Tacord, etc.

Taa, *v.* take, A 4129.

Tabard, *s.* short coat for a herald, A 20; for a laborer, A 541.

Tabernaacles, *pl.* tabernacles, *pl.* F. 123,

1100; *s.* board; *table*, at board, *i.e.* entertained as a lodger, G 1015; Tables, *pl.* draughts, M. P. iii. 51.

Tabouren, *pr. pl.* drum, din, L. 354.

Tabyde, *for* To abide, B 797.

Tacepte, *for* To accept, M. P. xxiii. 16.

Tache, *s.* defect, M. P. xxi. 18. See Tecches.

Tacheve, *for* To acheve, to achieve, L. 2111.

Tacord, *for* To accord, *i.e.* to agreement, H 98.

Tacorde, *for* To acorde, to agree, M. P. i. 27.

Taffata, *s.* fine silk, A 440.

Taffraye, *for* To affraye, to frighten, E 455.

Taillages, *s. pl.* taxes, I 567.

Taille, *s.* a tally, credit, A 570.

Tak, *imp. s.* take; *tak kepe*, take heed, M. P. v. 563; Tak (she), let (her) take, M. P. v. 462;

Taketh, *imp. pl.* take, M. P. iv. 9; Take, *pp.* brought, M. P. i. 20; Took, 1 *pt. s.* drew in, breathed in, Bo. I. p. iii. 3; Take, *v.* present, offer, L. 1135; Tak, *imp. s.* receive, B 117;

Take me, 1 *pr. s.* offer myself, betake myself, B 1985; Takestow, 2 *pr. s.* takest thou, G 435.

Takel, *s.* tackle, arrow, A 106.

Tale, *s.* tale; *I gan finde a tale to him*, I thought of something to say to him, M. P. iii. 536; a long story, E 383; Tales, *pl.* B 130.

Tale, *v.* talk, tell stories, T. iii. 231.

Talent, *s.* longing, Bo. II. p. i. 13; inclination, L. 1771; desire, appetite, C 540.

Talighte, *for* To alighte, *i.e.* to alight, E 909.

Taling, *s.* story-telling, B 1624.

Talle, *adj.* docile, obsequious, M. P. iv. 38.

Tamen, *v.* make trial of, R. 3904.

Tamende, *for* To amende, to redress, E 441.

Tan, *pp.* taken, R. 5894.

Tanoyen, *for* To anoyen, to injure, B 492.

Tapicer, *s.* upholsterer, A 362.

Tapinage, *s.* hiding; *in tapinage*, incognito, R. 7363.

Tapite, *v.* cover with tapestry, M. P. iii. 260.

Tappestere, *s.* barmaid, tapster, A 241.

Targe, *s.* target, shield, defence, M. P. i. 176; shield, M. P. vii. 33.

Tarien, *v.* tarry, B 983; delay (used actively), F 73; Tarded, *pp.* delayed, F 402.

Tarraye, *for* To arraye, to array, arrange, E 961.

Tartre, *s.* tartar, G 813.

Tas, *s.* heap, A 1005.

Tassaile, *for* To assaile, *ger.* to assail, M. P. ix. 40; Tassaille, E 1180.

Tassaye, *for* To assaye, to try, M. P. iii. 346; to test, prove, try, E 454, 1075.

Tassoille, *for* To assoille, to absolve, C 933.

Tast, *s.* taste, relish for, M. P. v. 160.

Taste, *v.* try, test, L. 1993; *imp. s.* feel, G 503.

Tata, *pp.* tatters, R. 7259.

Taverner, *s.* inn-keeper, C 685.

Tavyse, *for* To avyse, to deliberate, B 1426.

Tawayte, *i.e.* to wait, M. P. xxiii. 7.

Taylage, *s.* taxation, M. P. ix. 54. Lit. 'taking by tally.'

Taylagiers, *s. pl.* tax-gatherers, R. 6811.

Tecches, *s. pl.* ill qualities, R. 6517; T. iii. 935; characteristics, H. F. 1778. See Tache.

Teche, *v.* teach, A 308; B 1180.

Teer, *s.* a tear, E 1104; Teres, *pl.* E 1084.

Telle, *v.* tell, compute, M. P. iii. 440; 1 *pr. s.*

Telle (no tale), account (nothing), reckon (of no importance), M. P. v. 326; Telleth, *imp. pl.*

tell, M. P. iii. 555; Tellen, *v.* tell, relate, B 56;

Tel, *imp. s.* B 1167.

Tembrace, *for* To embrace, E 1101.

Temen, *v.* bring; *temen us on bere*, bring us on our bier, let us die, H. F. 1744.

Tempest thee, *imp. s.* violently distress thyself, M. P. xiii. 8; 2 *pr. s. subj.* vex, perturb, Bo. II. p. iv. 85.

Temple, *s.* inn of court, A 567.

Tempred, *pt. s.* tempered, M. P. v. 214; Temprede, *pt. s.* modulated, Bo. III. m. xii. 25;

Tempred, *pp.* tempered, G 926.

Temprure, *s.* tempering, R. 4177.

Temps, *s.* tense; *futur tempus*, future tense, futurity, time to come, G 875.

- Ten so wood, ten times as mad, L. 736.
Tenbrace, for To embrace, to embrace, B 1891.
Tendure, *v.* to endure, E 756, 811.
Tendyte, for To endyte, to compose, write, M. P. v. 167; L. (A) 310; to relate, L. 1345.
Tene, *s.* sorrow, grief, H. F. 387; vexation, M. P. i. 3; sorrow, T. i. 814.
Tenour, *s.* outline of the story, L. 929.
Tenquere, for To enquere, to ask, M. P. i. 113.
Tenspyre, for To enspyre, *i.e.* to inspire, G 1470.
Tente, *s.* tent, M. P. i. 9, 41.
Tentify, *adv.* attentively, E 334.
Tercel, *adj.* male (of an eagle), M. P. v. 393; *as s.* male eagle, M. P. v. 405.
Tercelet, *s.* male falcon, M. P. v. 529; F 504, 621; Tercellets, *pl.* male birds of prey, M. P. v. 659; F 648.
Tere, *s.* a tear, B 3852.
Terins, *s.* tarins, R. 665.
Terme, *s.* period, space of time, M. P. iii. 79; appointed time, H. F. 392; *in terme*, in set terms or phrases, C 311; *terme of his lyve*, for the whole period of his life, G 1479; *Termes*, *pl.* set terms, pedantic expressions, G 1358.
Terme-day, *s.* appointed day, M. P. iii. 730.
Termyne, *v.* express in 'good set terms,' M. P. v. 530.
Terved, *pp.* stripped, G 1171.
Tery, *adj.* tearful, T. iv. 821.
Tescape, for To escape, M. P. xviii. 50.
Tespye, for To espye, to espy, B 1989.
Testers, *s. pl.* head-pieces, A 2499.
Testes, *s. pl.* vessels for assaying metals, G 818.
Testif, *adj.* headstrong, A 4004.
Texpounden, for To expounden, *i.e.* to expound, to explain, B 1716.
Text, *s.* text, quotation from an author, B 45.
Textuel, *adj.* literal, keeping strictly to the letter of the text, I 57.
Teyd, *pp.* tied, bound, E 2432.
Teyne, *s.* a thin plate of metal, G 1225, 1229.
Th', before substantives beginning with a vowel, *the*; *as* Theffect for the effect.
Thadversitee, *s.* the adversity, E 756.
Thakked, *pp.* stroked, A 3304.
Thalighte, for Thee alighte; *in thee alighte*, alighted in thee, B 1660.
Thalmyghty, for The Almighty, M. P. v. 379.
Thamendes, for The amendes, the amends, M. P. iii. 526.
Thanke, 1 *pr. s.* I thank, E 1088.
Thanne, *adv.* then, M. P. iii. 1191; Than, M. P. i. 118; next, M. P. v. 324; *er than*, sooner than, before, G 899.
Thapocalips, for The Apocalypse, H. F. 1385.
Thar, *pr. s. impers.* need; *him thar*, it is needful for him, M. P. i. 76.
Tharivaile, for The arivaile, the arrival, the landing, H. F. 451.
Tharmes, for The armes, the arms, armorial bearings, H. F. 1411.
Tharray, for The array, F 63.
Thassay, for The assay, the endeavor, M. P. v. 2.
That, introducing an optative clause, T. v. 944.
That, *rel.* that which, M. P. iii. 635; which, M. P. iii. 979; *conj.* so that, M. P. iii. 566; as that, M. P. iii. 959; *that other*, the other, M. P. iii. 634; *that oon*, *that other*, the one, the other, M. P. iii. 1290; *That*, *conj.* when, T. ii. 910; as, as well as, B 1036; *rel. pron.* with reference to whom, G 236.
Thavision, for The avision, the vision, M. P. iii. 285.
Thavys, the advice, A 3076.
The, *as in The bet*, by so much the better, M. P. iii. 668; *The las*, by so much the less, M. P. iii. 675.
The, *pron.* thee, F 676.
Thee, *v.* prosper, thrive, M. P. iv. 267; G 641; *also mote I thee*, so may I thrive, B 2007.
Theef, *s.* false wretch, M. P. vii. 161.
Theefly, *adv.* like a thief, L. 1781.
Theffect, for The effect, the consequence, result, H. F. 5; the matter, contents, M. P. ii. 56; the substance, pith, L. 1180; the moral, B 2148.
Thegle, for The egle, the eagle, B 3573.
Theme, *s.* text, thesis of a sermon, C 333.
Themperour, for The emperour, the emperor, B 248; *The aperou*, *is pier*, *emper*, *is pier*, *434*, *40*.
Then, *conj.* than, M. P. iv. 255; L. 1673.
Thencens, for The encens, the incense, L. 2612.
Thenche, *v.* think, A 3253.
Thende, for The ende, the end, B 423, 3269.
Thengendring, for The engendring, the process of production, H. F. 968.
Thengyne, for The engyne, the (warlike) engine, H. F. 1934.
Thenken, *ger.* to think, M. P. iii. 100; *Thenketh*, *pr. s.* M. P. vii. 105; *Thenke*, 1 *pr. s.* I think, I intend, E 641.
Thennes, *adv.* thence, B 308; *used as s.* the place that, G 66.
Thennes-forth, *adv.* thenceforth, B 1755.
Thentencioun, the intention, G 1443.
Thentente, for The entente, purpose, end, G 1306.
Thenvyous, for The envyous, the spiteful, malicious, M. P. iii. 642.
Theorik, *s.* theory, As. Prol. iv. 109.
Ther, *adv.* where, M. P. i. 145; whereas, M. P. i. 119; there, B 62; where, T. ii. 618; *ther as*, where that, L. (A) 28; when that, L. 1277; where, M. P. iii. 197; *ther that*, where, F 267.
Ther, introducing an optative clause, T. iii. 947.

- Ther-about**, *adv.* concerned with that matter, H. F. 597; thereupon, therein, G 832.
Therbe, *for* The erbe, the herb, H. F. 290.
Ther-bifore, *adv.* beforehand, E 689, 729.
Ther-biforn, *adv.* beforehand, before the event, B 197; C 624.
Ther-fore, *adv.* on that account, E 445; on that point, E 1141; for that purpose, F 177; for it, L. 1391.
Ther-geyn, there against, R. 6555.
Ther-inne, *adv.* therein, in it, B 1945, 3573.
Therof, *adv.* concerning that, M. P. iii. 1132; from that, M. P. iii. 1166; Ther-of, with respect to that, to that end, E 644.
Ther-on, *adv.* thereupon, thereof, F 3.
Ther-oute, *adv.* out there, out in the open air, B 3362; outside there, G 1136.
Therthe, *for* The erthe, the earth, M. P. v. 80.
Therto, *adv.* besides, moreover, F 19.
Ther-whyte, *adv.* for that time, M. P. i. 54; Ther-whyles, whilst, Bo. V. p. vi. 281.
Therwith, *adv.* withal, for all that, M. P. iii. 954; besides, at the same time, B 3210.
Therwith-al, *adv.* at that, therewith, M. P. v. 405; thereat, L. 864; besides, L. 1175; besides all that, as well, B 3131, 3612.
Theschewing, *for* The eschewing, the avoiding (of anything), M. P. v. 140.
Thestaat, *for* The estat, the state, condition, B 128.
Thes, *pl.* thieves, M. P. i. 15.
Thes, *pl.* habits, of good disposition, or habits, of good disposition, M. P. iv. 180.
Thewes, *pl.* habits, morals, H. F. 1834; natural qualities, L. 2577; qualities, E 409; virtues, good qualities, G 101.
Thexcellent, the excellent, B 150.
Thexecucion, *for* The execucion, the execution, M. P. x. 65.
Thider, *adv.* thither, B 144; C 749.
Thikke, *adj.* thick, F 159.
Thilke, that, M. P. iii. 785; that very, that same, C 753; that sort of, I 50.
Thimage, the image, L. 1760; B 1695.
Thing, *pl.* things, L. 11, 2140; possessions, G 540; Things, poems, L. 364; pieces of music, F 78.
Thingot, the ingot, G 1233.
Thinke, *v.* seem, T. i. 405; Thinketh, *pr. s. impers.*; *me thinketh*, it seems to me, B 1901; seems, L. 247; Thoughte, *pt. s. impers.* it seemed, L. 134; Thoughte, L. 1697.
Thinne, *adj.* thin, poor, scanty, limited, G 741.
Thirleth, *pr. s.* pierces, M. P. vii. 211; Thirled, *pp.* M. P. vii. 350.
This, *for* This is, T. ii. 363; This, *pl.* these, M. P. iii. 817; This, *pl. of* This, *but a monosyllable*, B 59.
Tho, those, M. P. iii. 914; L. 153, 1575.
Tho, *adv.* still, M. P. iii. 1054; then, L. 210.
Thoccident, *for* The Occident, B 3864.
Thogh, *adv.* though, M. P. iv. 200; yet, M. P. iii. 670.
Thought, *s.* care, anxiety, B 1779; E 80.
Thoughte, *1 pt. s.* thought, M. P. iii. 448.
Tholed, *pp.* suffered, D 1546.
Thombe, *s.* thumb, F 83, 148.
Thonder, *s.* thunder, F 258.
Thonder-leit, *s.* thunder-bolt, Bo. I. m. iv. 13.
Thonke, *1 pr. s.* I thank, E 830.
Thorgh, *prep.* through, M. P. v. 127, 129.
Thorint, *for* The Orient, B 3871, 3883.
Thoriginal, *for* The original, L. 1588.
Thorpes, *pl.* villages, M. P. v. 350.
Thorough-passen, *pr. pl.* penetrate, Bo. IV. m. iii. 55.
Thought, *s.* anxiety, R. 308.
Thoughte, *pt. s. impers.* seemed, B 146; *thoughte hem*, it seemed to them, C 475; Thoughte, M. P. iii. 535.
Thral, *s.* thrall, slave, servant, B 3343.
Thraldom, *s.* bondage, slavery, B 286.
Thraste, *pl. s.* thrust, T. ii. 1155.
Threde, *s.* thread, M. P. v. 267.
Threed, *s.* thread, L. 2018.
Threpe, *1 pr. pl.* we call, assert to be, G 826.
Threshold, *s.* threshold, E 288, 291.
Threste, *v.* thrust, A 2612.
Threte, *v.* threaten, L. 754.
Threting, *s.* threatening, menace, G 698.
Thridde, third, H. F. 308.
Thrift, *s.* success, prosperity in money-making, G 739, 1425.
Thrifty, *adj.* profitable, B 1165.
Thringe, *v.* thrust, T. iv. 66.
Thrittene, thirteen, D 2559.
Throf, *pt. s.* flourished, Bo. III. m. iv. 5. *Pt. s. of Thryve*.
Throng, *pt. s.* pressed, forced his way, M. P. vii. 55. *Pt. t. of Thringen*.
Throp, *s.* thorp, small village, E 199; Thropes, *s. gen.* village's, I 12.
Throstel, *s.* throstle, song-thrush, M. P. v. 364.
Throte, *s.* throat, M. P. iii. 945.
Throwe, *s.* a short space of time, a little while, B 953; E 450.
Throwe, *pp.* thrown, L. 1960.
Throwes, *s. pl.* throes, T. v. 206, 1201.
Thrust, *s.* thirst, R. 4722.
Thrustel, *s.* a throstle, thrush, B 1963; Thrustel-cok, B 1959.
Thrusteth, *pr. s.* thirsts, yearns, L. 103.
Thrye, thrice, T. ii. 89.
Thryve, *v.* thrive, prosper, E 172.
Thryvinge, *adj.* vigorous, Bo. V. m. iv. 26.
Thundringe, *s.* thundering, thunder, H. F. 1040.

- Thunworhiest**, the unworhiest, M. P. xxii. 19.
Thurfte, *pt. s.* needed, T. iii. 572.
Thurgh, *prep.* through, M. P. i. 27, 32; through, by help of, B 1669; by, F 11.
Thurgh-girt, *pp.* pierced through, A 1010.
Thurghout, *prep.* throughout, F 46; all through, B 256, 464; quite through, C 655.
Thurrok, *s.* hold of a ship, sink, I 363, 715.
Thurst, *s.* thirst, B 100.
Thursted him, *pt. s. impers.* he was thirsty, B 3229.
Thwitel, *s.* knife, A 3933.
Thwyte, *pr. pl.* whittle, cut up for, H. F. 1938; Thwiten, *pp.* whittle, R. 933.
Tid, *pp.* happened, H. F. 255. *Pp.* of *Tyden*. See *Tydeth*.
Tidifs, *s. pl.* small birds, F 648.
Tikel, *adj.* frail, A 3428.
Tikelnesse, *s.* lack of steadiness, instability, M. P. xiii. 3.
Til, *conj.* until, till, M. P. iv. 59.
Til, *prep.* to, G 306.
Tilier, *s.* tiller, R. 4339.
Tilyere, *s.* tiller, Bo. V. p. i. 97.
Timbres, *s. pl.* timbrels, R. 772.
Tipet, *s.* tippet, H. F. 184r.
Tirannye, *s.* tyranny, B 165.
Tiraunts, *pl.* tyrants, L. 374.
Tit, *pr. s.* betides, T. i. 333.
Titering, *s.* hesitating, T. ii. 1744.
Title, *s.* pretext, T. i. 483.
To, *adv.* too, B 2129; overmuch, G 1423; *to dere*, too dearly, C 293; *to and fro*, all ways, H 53.
To, *prep.* for, M. P. i. 184; *him to*, for him, M. P. iii. 771; *to* (used after its case), G 1449.
To, *s.* toe, A 2726.
To-bete, *v.* beat severely, G 405.
To-brekeeth, *pr. s.* is violently broken, H. F. 779; breaks in twain, G 907; *To-broken*, *pp.* broken through, destroyed, M. P. xvi. r.
To-breste, *pr. s. subj.* may be broken in twain, M. P. i. 16.
To-de, *s.* toad, I 636.
To-drawen, *pr. pl.* allure, Bo. IV. m. iii. 52; *To-drowen*, *pt. pl.* tore in pieces, Bo. I. p. iii. 47; *To-drawen*, *pp.* distracted, Bo. I. p. v. 84.
To-driven, *pp.* scattered, L. 1280.
To-forn, *adv.* in front, beforehand, Bo. V. p. vi. 337.
To-forn, *prep.* before, T. iii. 335.
Togedres, *adv.* together, M. P. iii. 809.
Toght, *adj.* taut, D 2267.
To-gider, *adv.* together, L. 649; B 3222; *To-gidres*, C 702.
To-go, *pp.* dispersed, L. 653.
To-hangen, *v.* hang thoroughly, put to death by hanging, H. F. 1782.
To-hepe, *adv.* together, L. 2009.
To-hewe, *pp.* hewn in pieces, B 430.
Toke, 2 *pt. s.* tookest, M. P. iii. 483.
Tokening, *s.* token, proof, G 1153.
Tolde, 1 *pt. s.* counted, H. F. 1380. *Pt. t.* of *Tellen*.
Tolis, *s. pl.* tools, T. i. 632.
Tollen, *v.* take toll, A 562.
Tollen, *v.* attract, entice, Bo. II. p. vii. 20.
Tombesteres, *s. pl. fem.* dancing girls, lit. female tumblers, C 477.
Tomblinge, *pr. pt. as adj.* fleeting, transitory, Bo. II. m. iii. 26.
To medes, as reward, T. ii. 1201.
Ton, The ton, that one, R. 5217.
Tong, *s.* tongue, L. 2334; *Tonge*, *dat.* L. 1675.
Tonge, *s.* tongue, M. P. iii. 930; *Tonges*, *pl.* languages, B 3497. See *Tunge*.
Tonged, *pp.* tongued, M. P. iii. 927.
Tonne, *s.* tun, cask, wine-cask, L. 195.
Tonne-greet, *adj.* great as a tun, A 1994.
Took, *pt. s.* handed over, gave, M. P. iii. 48; took, had, B 192.
Toon, *pl.* toes, claws, H. F. 2028.
Top and tail, beginning and end, H. F. 880.
To poynte, *adv.* point by point, T. iii. 497; apoynte, exactly, T. v. 1620.
To-race, *pr. pl. subj.* may scratch to pieces, E 572.
Tord, *s.* excrement, C 955.
To-rent, *pp.* torn in pieces, M. P. v. 432; *Torente*, *pt. s.* tore in pieces, L. 82r. 116. *Torently*, L. 2188. *Torn twain*, B. V. p. iv. 205. *pp.* torn to pieces.
Torets, *pl.* small rings or rivets, A 2. *urn*.
Tormentinge, *s.* torture, E 1038.
Tormentour, *s.* tormentor, *i.e.* executioner, B 818.
Tormentyse, *s.* torment. B 3707.
Torn, *s.* turn, C 815.
Torne, *v.* to turn, G 1274. *Terve*, 3 *imp. s.* may he turn, G 1274; *turned*, *pp.* turned, *i.e.* 'turned him round his finger,' G 1171.
Torney, *s.* tournament, T. iv. 1669.
To-romblen, *v.* rumble, crash, L. 1218.
Tortuous, *adj.* oblique, a technical term in astrology, used of the six of the zodiacal signs which ascend most obliquely, B 302.
To-shake, *pp.* shaken to pieces, L. 962; tossed about, L. 1765.
To-shivered, *pp.* broken to pieces, been destroyed, M. P. v. 493.
To-slittered, *pp.* slashed, R. 840.
To-swinke, *pr. pl.* labor greatly, C 519.
To-tar, *pt. s.* lacerated, B 380r.
Totelere, *subst. as adj.* tattling, tale-bearing, L. 353.
To-tere, *pr. pl.* rend, tear in pieces, C 474; *To-tore, *pp.* torn in pieces, G 635; *To-torn*, M. P. v. 110.*

- Tother, *the tother* (for that other), the other, L. (A) 325.
- Toty, *adj.* dizzy, A 4253.
- Touche, 1 *pr.* s. touch on, slightly indicate, M. P. v. 285; *pr.* s. *subj.* affect, concern, B 3284.
- Tough, *adj.* hard, harsh, M. P. iii. 531.
- Toumbling, *adj.* perishing, Bo. III. p. ix. 194. See Tomblinge.
- Tour, s. tower, M. P. i. 154; mansion (in astrology), M. P. iv. 113; in B 2096, it means that his crest was a miniature tower, with a lily projecting from it.
- Touret, s. turret, A 1909.
- Tourneyment, s. a tournament, B 1906.
- Tourne, s. backside, A 3812.
- Toverbyde, to outlive, D 1260.
- Towayle, s. towel, R. 161; Towaille, B 3935, 3943.
- To-wonde, *pl.* s. gave way, became broken, M. P. iv. 102.
- To-yeer, *adv.* this year, T. iii. 241.
- Traas, s. trace, procession, L. 285.
- Trace, 1 *pr.* s. trace out, follow, go, M. P. v. 54.
- Trad, *pl.* s. trod, B 4368.
- Tragedien, s. writer of tragedy, Bo. III. p. vi. 3.
- Traiterye, s. treachery, H. F. 1812; traitorye, B 78r.
- Traitour, s. traitor, H. F. 267; Traytour, M. P. iii. 1120.
- Transmutacioun, s. change, M. P. x. 1.
- Transmuten, *v.* transmute, T. iv. 467.
- Trappe, *v.* extend, P. ii. p. 268.
- Trappes, *pl.* snare, H. F. 14.
- Trappie, *pl.* trappi, a horse, A 2499.
- Trapp, *v.* tramp, T. 20.
- Travaile, s. 'labor and sorrow,' M. P. iii. 602; Travayle, work, motion, M. P. x. 70.
- Trave, s. frame for unrul' horses, A 3282.
- Travers, s. curtain, scren, T. iii. 674.
- Trayed, *pl.* s. betrayed, H. F. 390; L. 2486.
- Trays, s. *pl.* traces, T. i. 222.
- Trayteresse, s. *fem.* traitress, M. P. iii. 620.
- Traytor, s. go-between, pimp, T. iii. 273.
- Trecherye, s. treachery, trickery, M. P. v. 347.
- Trechour, s. traitor, R. 6602.
- Trede-foul, s. treader of fowls, B 3135.
- Treget, s. deceit, R. 6267.
- Tregetour, s. a juggler who used mechanical contrivances, H. F. 1277.
- Trench, s. a hollow walk, alley, F 392.
- Trenden, *v.* revolve, Bo. III. m. xi. 4.
- Trentals, s. series of masses for the dead, D 1717.
- Trepeget, s. engine for casting stones, R. 6279.
- Tresor, s. treasure, wealth, L. 1652; Tresore, M. P. iii. 854; Tressour, B 3401.
- Tresorere, s. treasurer, M. P. i. 107.
- Tresorie, s. treasury, H. F. 524.
- Trespas, *v.* trespass, transgress, sin, B 3370.
- Trespas, s. trespass, fault, M. P. iv. 49.
- Tressour, s. head-dress, R. 568.
- Tretable, *adj.* tractable, inclinable, M. P. iii. 923; inclined to talk, M. P. iii. 533; manageable, yielding, L. 411.
- Trete, *v.* treat of, tell, M. P. v. 34; treat, write, L. 575; *pp.* explained, Bo. V. p. i. 3; *pr.* *pl.* discourse, treat, C 630.
- Treteze, s. treaty, B 3865.
- Tretis, s. treatise, document, T. ii. 1697; B 2147.
- Tretys, *adj.* long, well-proportioned, A 152.
- Trewe, *adj.* true, M. P. iii. 1287; *pl.* used as s. the faithful, B 456.
- Trewe, s. truce, T. iii. 1779.
- Treweliche, *adv.* truly, E 804.
- Trewe love, s. condiment to sweeten breath, A 3692.
- Trewely, *adv.* truly, certainly, L. 317.
- Triacle, s. a sovereign remedy, B 479.
- Trichour, s. traitor, R. 6308.
- Trille, *v.* turn, F 316.
- Trippe, *v.* to trip, to move briskly with the feet, F 312.
- Trist, s. trust, T. iii. 403.
- Triste, s. trust, T. ii. 1534.
- Triste, *v.* to trust, trust to, L. 1885; *v.* trust, L. 333; Tristed, *pp.* trusted, R. 3929.
- Troden, *pp.* stepped, C 712.
- Trompe, s. trumpet, L. 635; B 705.
- Trompes, *gen.* s. trumpets', M. P. v. 344.
- Trompes, *pl.* trumpeters, M. P. vii. 30.
- Tronchoun, s. broken shaft of a spear, A 2615.
- Trone, s. throne, H. F. 1384; throne (of God), heaven, C 842.
- Troublable, *adj.* disturbing, Bo. IV. m. ii. 12.
- Trouble, *adj.* tempestuous, turbid, Bo. I. m. vii. 3; troubled, gloomy, E 465.
- Troubly, *adj.* cloudy, obscure, Bo. IV. m. v. 40.
- Trouthe, s. truth, G. 238; truth, fidelity, L. 267; troth, truth, B 527.
- Trowandyse, s. vagrancy, R. 3954.
- Trowe, 1 *pr.* s. believe, think, suppose, M. P. iii. 1042; Trowest, 2 *pr.* s. M. P. iii. 651; Trowen, *pr.* *pl.* believe (in), give trust (to), L. (A) 21; Trowestow, dost thou think, Bo. I. p. iii. 27.
- Truaunding, s. vagrancy, R. 6721.
- Trufles, s. *pl.* trifles, I 715.
- Trumpen, *v.* blow the trumpet, H. F. 1243; Trumpe, H. F. 1629.
- Tryce, *v.* pull away, B 3715.
- Trye, *adj.* choice, excellent, B 2046.
- Trye compas, the threefold world, containing earth, sea, and heaven, G 45.
- Tuel, s. pipe, slender chimney, H. F. 1649.
- Tulle, *v.* lure, A 4134.
- Tunge, s. tongue, M. P. i. 128.
- Turmente, *v.* torment, L. 1165.

ntrye, *s.* torture, P. 4740.
ed, *pp.* turned, at an end, M. P. iii. 689.
el, *s.* turtle-dove, M. P. v. 355.
es, *s.* *pl.* pieces of turf, turf-plots, L. 204.
lf, twelve, E 736.
lfte, *adj.* twelfth, M. P. iv. 139.
ye, two, M. P. i. 104; *Tweyne*, *twain*, P. ii. 76.
yfold, *adj.* twofold, double, G 566.
zges, *pl.* twigs, H. F. 1936.
ghte, *s.* twitched, pulled, T. iv. 1185.
ukeling, *s.* twinkling, opening and shutting the eye), M. P. iv. 222; *Twinkling*, momentary blinking, E 37.
Winkled, *pp.* winked, Bo. II. p. iii. 86.
Twinne, *v.* part, L. 2032; *twinne* from his wit, lose his mind, M. P. vii. 102; *ger.* to separate, B 517; to depart (from), C 430.
Twist, *pp.* twisted, H. F. 775; *Twiste*, *v.* to twist, wring, torment, F 566.
Twiste, *s.* (*dat.*) twig, sprang, F 442.
Twyes, *adv.* twice, B 1738.
Twyne, *s.* twine, L. 2016.
Tyde, *s.* time, M. P. v. 97; *on a tyde*, upon a time, M. P. iv. 51; time, L. (A) 304; season, F 142.
Tyden, *v.* befall, B 337; *Tydeh*, *pr.* *s.* betides, happens, M. P. iv. 202.
Tydf, *s.* small bird; perhaps a wren, L. 154.
Tyding, *s.* tidings, news, B 726.
Tygzes, *pl.* *gen.* tigers', H. F. 1459.
Tyles, *s.* *pl.* tiles, M. P. iii. 300; tiles, bricks, L. 709.
Tyme, *s.* time, B 19.
Tyren, *v.* tear, rend, Bo. III. m. xii. 54; *pr.* *pl.* feed on, T. i. 787.

U.

Umbreyde, *pt.* *s.* upbraided, reproached, L. 1671.
Unable, *adj.* wanting in ability, M. P. xv. 20.
Unagreable, *adj.* miserable, Bo. I. m. i. 36.
Unbityde, *v.* fail to happen, Bo. V. p. iv. 44.
Unbokele, *v.* unbuckle, F 555.
Unbounden, *pp.* unbound, unwedded, divorced, E 1226.
Unbrent, *pp.* unburnt, B 1658.
Unconning, *adj.* unskilful, M. P. vi. 75.
Uncouple, *v.* to let loose, B 3692.
Uncouthe, *adj.* *pl.* strange, F 284.
Unconvenable, *adj.* unfit (for good), Bo. IV. p. vi. 366.
Uncunninge, *adj.* ignorant, Bo. I. p. i. 75.
Unde fouled, undefiled, Bo. II. p. iv. 27.
Undepartable, *adj.* inseparable, Bo. IV. p. iii. 70.
Undergrowe, *pp.* undergrown, A 156.

Undermeles, *s.* *pl.* morning meal-time, D 875.
Undern, *s.* a particular period of the day, generally from 9 A.M. to midday; it here probably means the beginning of that period, or a little after 9 A.M., E 260, 981.
Undernom, *pt.* *s.* perceived, G 243.
Underput, *pp.* subjected, Bo. I. p. vi. 109.
Underpyghte, *pt.* *s.* stuffed, filled underneath, B 789.
Underspore, *v.* lever up, A 3465.
Understonde, *v.* to understand, E 20; *Understonieth*, *pr.* *pl.* understand, C 646.
Undertake, *v.* to affirm, E 803; 1 *pr.* *s.* I am bold to say, B 3516.
Undigne, *adj.* unworthy, E 359.
Undirfongeth, *pr.* *s.* undertakes, R. 5709.
Undo, *ger.* unfold, reveal, M. P. iii. 809.
Undoutous, *adj.* undoubting, Bo. V. p. i. 35.
Uneschewably, *adv.* inevitably, Bo. V. p. iii. 148.
Uneschuable, *adj.* inevitable, Bo. V. p. i. 117.
Unespyed, *pp.* undiscovered, T. iv. 1457.
Unethe, *adv.* scarcely: *wel unethe*, scarcely at all, H. F. 2041; *Unethes*, with difficulty, H. F. 900.
Unfamous, *adj.* lost to fame, forgotten by fame, H. F. 1146.
Unfestlich, *adj.* un festive, jaded, F 366.
Ungiltif, *adj.* innocent, T. iii. 1018.
Un-grobbed, *pp.* not digged round, M. P. ix. 14.
Unhappe, *s.* misfortune, M. P. xvi. 29; *Unhappes*, *pl.* mishaps, T. ii. 456.
Unhele, *s.* misfortune, sickness, C 116.
Univesitee, *s.* the universal, Bo. V. p. iv. 205.
Unkinde, *adj.* unnatural, B 88.
Unkindely, *adv.* unkindly, H. F. 275; unkindly, C 485.
Unkindenesse, *s.* unkindness, B 1057; unnatural conduct, L. 153.
Unknowe, *pp.* unknown, L. 2034.
Unkonninge, *adj.* stupid, T. v. 1139.
Unkorven, *pp.* uncut, untrimmed, M. P. ix. 14.
Unkouth, *adj.* strange, T. ii. 151.
Unlaced, *pp.* disentangled, Bo. III. p. xii. 184.
Unlefulle, *adj.* unlawful, R. 4880.
Unmerie, *adj.* sad, H. F. 74.
Unmete, *adj.* unfit, M. P. vi. 75.
Unneste, *imp.* quit thy nest, T. iv. 305.
Unneth, *adv.* scarcely, M. P. iii. 712; scarcely, hardly, with difficulty, B 1050, 1816; *Unneth*, M. P. iii. 270.
Unparigal, *adj.* unequal, Bo. III. p. i. 13.
Unpleyten, *v.* unpleat, explain, unfold, Bo. II. p. viii. 12.
Unpurveyed, *adj.* unprovided, uncared for, Bo. II. p. i. 24.
Unraced, *adj.* unbroken, untorn, Bo. IV. p. i. 60.
Unreprovable, *adj.* without reproach, L. 691.

Unresty, *adj.* restless, T. v. 1355.
 Unrightful, *adj.* wicked, L. 1771.
 Unsad, *adj.* unsetled, E 995.
 Unscience, *s.* unreal knowledge, no knowledge, Bo. V. p. iii. 125.
 Unselinesse, *s.* unhappiness, Bo. IV. p. iv. 42.
 Unselly, *adj.* unhappy, Bo. II. p. iv. 10.
 Unset, *adj.* unappointed, A 1524.
 Unshette, *pp.* not shut, H. F. 1953.
 Unsittinge, *adj.* unbefitting, T. ii. 307.
 Unskilfully, *adv.* unreasonably, Bo. I. p. iv. 249.
 Unslacked, *adj.* unslacked, G 806.
 Unsolempne, *adj.* uncelebrated, Bo. I. p. iii. 73.
 Unspeedful, *adj.* unprofitable, Bo. V. p. vi. 377.
 Unsperd, *pp.* unlocked, R. 2656.
 Unstaunchable, *adj.* inexhaustible, Bo. II. p. vii. 138.
 Unstaunched, *adj.* insatiate, Bo. II. p. vi. 126.
 Unstedfastnesse, *s.* inconstancy, L. (A) 526.
 Unswete, *adj.* bitter, dreadful, H. F. 72.
 Unthank, *s.* ingratitude, little thank, T. v. 699.
 Unthriftilly, *adv.* poorly, G 893.
 Unto, *conj.* until, M. P. v. 647.
 Untressed, *pp.* with hair not done up into tresses, M. P. v. 268.
 Untretable, *adj.* inexorable, Bo. II. p. viii. 3.
 Untrewe, *adj.* untrue, false, B 3218.
 Untrouthe, *s.* untruth, deceit, faithlessness, L. 1677. untruth, B 687.
 Unwar, *adj.* unexpected, B 427.
 Unweldy, *adj.* unwieldy, difficult to move, H 55.
 Unwemmed, *pp.* unspotted, spotless, M. P. i. 91; G 137, 225.
 Unwemed, *adj.* unexpected, Bo. IV. p. vi. 285.
 Unwist, *adj.* ignorant, T. i. 93; unknown; *unwist of*, unknown by, L. 1653.
 Unwit, *s.* folly, M. P. iv. 271.
 Unwot, *pr.* *s.* fails to know, Bo. V. p. vi. 198.
 Unwrye, *v.* uncover, T. i. 858.
 Unwys, *adj.* unwise, foolish, M. P. xvii. 27.
 Unyolden, without yielding, A 2642.
 Up, *prep.* upon, M. P. iii. 750; up with, H. F. 1021; Up and down, here and there, M. P. iv. 210; Up so down, topsy-turvy, M. P. xv. 5.
 Up-bounde, *pp.* bound up, T. iii. 517.
 Upbreyde, *v.* upbraid, reproach, M. P. vii. 118.
 Up-drow, *pt.* *s.* drew up, L. 1459.
 Up-embossed, *pp.* raised, embossed, L. 1200.
 Up frete, *v.* eat up, T. v. 1470.
 Up-haf, *pt.* *s.* uplifted, A 2428.
 Upon, *prep.* concerning; *upon her eye*, tell lies about her, M. P. iii. 1023.
 Upper, *adv. comp.* higher, H. F. 884, 961.
 Up-reysed, *pp.* raised, L. 1163.
 Uprist, *pr.* *s.* upriseth, M. P. iv. 4; Up-ris, *pr.* *s.* rises up, L. 1188.

Upryght, *adv.* upright, M. P. iii. 622; Upright, flat on the back, A 4194.
 Up-so-doun *adv.* upside down, A 1377.
 Upsterte, *pt.* *s.* upstarted, arose, A 1080.
 Up-yaf, *pt.* *s.* yielded up, A 2427.
 Urchouns, *s. pl.* hedgehogs, R. 3135.
 Usago, *s.* custom, habit, M. P. v. 15.
 Usauce, *s.* custom, L. 586, 1476.
 Useth, *pr.* *s.* is accustomed, L. 364; Useden, *pt.* *pl.* were accustomed, L. 787.
 Utter, *adj.* outer, R. 4208.

V.

Vache, *s.* cow, beast, M. P. xiii. 22.
 Vailith, *pr.* *s.* avails, R. 5765.
 Valance, *s.* (possibly) sign of the zodiac opposite the mansion of a planet, M. P. iv. 145.
 Valey, *s.* valley, M. P. iii. 165.
 Vane, *s.* weather-vane, E 996.
 Variant, *adj.* varying, changing, changeable, fickle, G 1175.
 Vassalage, *s.* prowess, R. 5871; L. 1667.
 Vavasour, *s.* landholder, A 360.
 Vekke, *s.* old woman, R. 4286.
 Veluettes, *pl.* velvets, F 644.
 Vendable, *adj.* salable, R. 5804.
 Venerye, *s.* hunting, A 166, 2308.
 Vengeresses, *s. pl.* avengeresses, avenging deities, Bo. III. m. xii. 42.
 Venim, *s.* venom, poison, A 2751.
 Venimous, *adj.* poisonous, M. P. i. 149.
 Veniquished, *pp.* vanquished, M. P. i. 8.
 Ventusinge, *v.* coupling, A 2741.
 Ver, *s.* spring, T. i. 157.
 Veray, *adj.* very, true, real, L. 1068.
 Verdegrees, *s.* verdigris, G 791.
 Verdit, *s.* verdict, A 787.
 Verger, *s.* orchard, R. 3234; Vergere, R. 3618.
 Vermayle, *adj.* red, R. 3645.
 Vermyne, *s.* vermin, E 1095.
 Vernage, *s.* white wine, E 1261.
 Vernicle, *s.* copy of the handkerchief with the impression of the face of the Saviour, A 685.
 Verray, *adj.* exact, H. F. 1079; Verrey, very, true, M. P. i. 21; Verray, very, true; *verray force*, main force, B 3237.
 Verrayly, *adv.* verily, truly, M. P. ii. 73.
 Verrayment, *adv.* truly, B 1903.
 Verre, *s.* glass, T. ii. 867.
 Vertu, *s.* mental faculty, H. F. 550; virtue, F 593; *vertu plesse*, satisfy virtue, be virtuous, E 216; magic power, magic influence, F 146, 157.
 Vertuous, *adj.* skilled, R. 2311.
 Verye, guard (?), A 3485.
 Vese, *s.* a rush of wind, draught, gush, A 1985.

Vessel, *s. (collectively)* vessels, plate, B 3338.
Vestiment, *s.* clothing, robes, F 59.
Veyn, *adj.* vain, M. P. i. 71; vain, empty, powerless, silly, G 497.
Veyne-blood, *s.* blood of the veins, A 2747.
Viage, *s.* journey, voyage, B 259; *Viages*, *pl.* travels, H. F. 1962.
Vicaire, *s.* deputy, deputed ruler, M. P. i. 140; Vicary, victor, I 22.
Victor, *s. as adj.* of victory, M. P. v. 182.
Vilanye, *s.* vileness, H. F. 96; villainous action, deed of a churl, L. 1823; wrong, L. 2541; evil-doing, B 1681.
Vileins, *gen.* of a villain, churl, L. 1824.
Vileinye, *s.* discourtesy, C 740; licentiousness, G 231.
Violes, *s. pl.* vials, phials, G 793.
Virelayes, *pl.* virelays, poems with a *veer* or turn, L. 423.
Virirtrate, *s.* hag, D 1582.
Visage, *s.* face, M. P. iii. 895.
Vitaile, *s.* victuals, food, M. P. ix. 38; L. 1488; *Vitaille*, E 59, 265.
Vitaile, *v.* provide with victuals, L. 1093; *Vitailed*, *pp.* provisioned, B 869.
remyte, *s.* woman's cap, B 3562.
ide, *adj.* solitary, M. P. iv. 114.
oided, *pp.* cleared, emptied, L. 2625.
ois, *s.* voice, M. P. i. 115.
oltor, *s.* vulture, Bo. III. m. xii. 51.
Voluntee, *s.* will, R. 5276.
Voluper, *s.* cap, A 3241.
Vouched, *pt. s.* vouched; *vouched sauf*, vouched (as) safe, vouchsafed, M. P. i. 27, 57; *Vouche-sauf*, 2 *pr. pl.* deign to give, M. P. vii. 254; *Voucheth sauf*, *imp. pl.* vouchsafe, M. P. xix. 8; *Vouche-sauf*, *v.* vouchsafe, permit, L. 2273; 2 *pr. pl.* deign, L. 2038.
Voyde, *s.* sleeping cup, T. iii. 674.
Voyden, *v.* to get rid of, E 910; F 188; *imp. s.* depart from, E 806; *Voydeth*, *imp. pl.* send away, G 1136.
Voys, *s.* voice, F 99; rumor, E 629.
Vyce, *s.* vice, fault, M. P. iv. 261.
Vyne, *s.* vine, M. P. v. 181.

W.

Waast, *s.* waist, B 1890.
Wachet, *s.* blue cloth, A 3321.
Waf, *pt. s.* wove, L. 2364. See **Weven**.
Wafereres, *s. pl.* makers of *gaufres* or wafer-cakes, confectioners, C 479.
Wages, *pl.* pay, recompense, M. P. iv. 244.
Waiten, *v.* attend on, L. 1269; *Waiteth*, *pr. s.* watches, E 708.
Wake, *v.* be awake, lie awake, M. P. xviii. 27;
Waked, *pp.* kept wake, caroused, M. P. iii. 977; **Waken**, *v. act.* to awake, B 1187.
Waker, *adj.* vigilant, M. P. v. 358.
Waking, *s.* watching, being awake, M. P. iii. 611; **Wakinge**, a keeping awake, period of wakefulness, B 22.
Wal, *s.* wall, E 1047.
Walked, *pp.* having walked, M. P. iii. 387.
Walsh-note, *gen.* walnut's, H. F. 1281.
Walwe, *v.* wallow, T. i. 699; **Walweth**, *pr. s.* tosses (lit. wallows), L. 1166; **Walwinge**, *pres. part.* causing to roll, Bo. I. m. vii. 4.
Wan, *pt. s.* won, B 3337.
Wanges, *s. pl.* cheek-teeth, A 4030.
Wang-tooth, *s.* molar tooth, B 3234.
Wanhope, *s.* despair, A 1249.
Wanie, *v.* wane, A 2078.
Wante, 1 *pr. s.* lack, have not, M. P. v. 287; **Wanten**, 2 *pr. pl.* are lacking, M. P. ii. 76; **Wante**, *v.* be wanting, be absent, L. 361.
Wantown, *adj.* wanton, free, unrestrained, A 208; **Wantoun**, E 236.
Wantownesse, *s.* wantonness, A 264.
Wantrust, *adj.* distrustful, H 281.
War, *adj.* aware; *was I war*, I noticed, saw, M. P. v. 218, 298; *I was war*, M. P. iii. 445; aware, L. 1741; *be war fro*, be on guard against, L. 473; *be war*, beware, take heed, B 119; *beth ware*, B 1629.
War, *imp. s. as pl.*; *war you*, take care of yourselves, make way, B 1889.
Warde, *s. dat.*; *on warde*, into his keeping, M. P. iii. 248.
Wardecors, *s.* bodyguard, D 359.
Warderere, look out behind, A 2191.
Wardeins, *pl.* guardians, L. 753.
Wardrobe, *s.* privy, B 1762.
Ware, *adj.* aware. See **War**.
Ware, *imp.* beware, B 4146.
Ware, *s.* merchandise, B 140.
Warente, *v.* to warrant, protect, C 338.
Wariangles, *s. pl.* butcher birds, D 1408.
Warien, *v.* curse, T. ii. 1619; **Warie**, 1 *pr. s.* I curse, B 372.
Warisoun, *s.* reward, R. 1537.
Warisshe, *v.* recover, B 2172; **Warished**, *pp.* cured, M. P. iii. 1104.
Warisslinge, *s.* healing, B 2205.
Warly, *adv.* warily, T. iii. 454.
Warne, *v.* reject, M. P. i. 11; 2 *pr. s. subj.* give notice to, H. F. 893; **Warne**, *v.* refuse, L. (A) 438; 1 *pr. s.* I warn, I bid you take heed, B 16, 1184. See **Werne**.
Warnestore, *ger.* to garrison, B 2521; **Warnestored**, *pp.* provisioned, Bo. I. p. iii. 97.
Waryce, *v.* heal, cure, C 906.
Wasshe, *pp.* washed, C 353.
Wast, *s.* waste, B 1609.

- Wastel-breed, *s.* cake of fine flour, A 147.
 Wawe, *s.* wave, B 508; Wawes, *pl.* M. P. ix. 21; L. 865; B 468.
 Waxe, *v.* grow, M. P. iii. 415; Waxen, *pp.* become, M. P. iii. 414.
 Wayk, *adj.* weak, L. 2428; B 1671.
 Wayn, *s.* car, Bo. IV. m. i. 38.
 Wayte, *imp. s.* look out for, await, H. F. 342; Wayten, *v.* to watch, F 444; Wayteth, *pr. s.* B 3331. See Waiten.
 Webbe, *s.* weaver, A 362.
 Wedde, *s. dat.* pledge, A 1218.
 Wede, *s.* a 'weed,' a garment, A 1006; B 2107.
 Weder, *s.* weather, F 52.
 Wedercock, *s.* weathercock, M. P. xxi. 12.
 Weders, *pl.* storms, M. P. v. 681.
 Wedres, *pl.* weathers, R. 73.
 Weel, *adv.* well, L. 335. See Wel.
 Weep, *pt. s.* wept, M. P. iii. 107; vii. 138; L. 846, 1732, 2706.
 Weeply, *adj.* tearful, sorrowful, Bo. I. p. i. 3.
 Weet, *s.* wet, B 3407.
 Weex, *pt. s.* waxed, grew, G 513.
 Wegge, *s.* wedge, As. i. 14, 6.
 Wel, *adv.* certainly, M. P. iii. 1117; *to be wel*, to be well off, M. P. iii. 845; well, much, L. 1386; many, L. 11; certainly, L. 452; *wel unethe*, scarcely at all, L. (A) 33; well, B 25; very, as in *wel royal*, very royal, F 26; about (used with numbers), F 383; certainly, by all means, E 635.
 Welaway, *int.* wellaway! alas! M. P. vii. 338; H. F. 318.
 Welde, *s.* weld, the name of a plant, M. P. ix. 17. ⲓⲃⲏⲛⲓⲛⲉ ⲛⲓⲛⲉ
 -wēlae, *v.* wield, L. 2000; *pt. s.* wielded, overpowered, B 3452.
 Weldy, *adj.* powerful, T. ii. 636.
 Wele, *s.* weal, good, well-being, M. P. iii. 603; good fortune, L. 1234; prosperity, B 175.
 Wele, *adv.* well, M. P. iii. 643.
 Welefulness, *s.* happiness, Bo. I. p. iii. 40.
 Welful, *adj.* full of weal, blessed, B 451.
 Wel-faring, *adj.* well-faring, thriving, prosperous, B 3132.
 Welk, 1 *pt. s.* walked, T. v. 1235.
 Welked, *pp.* withered, C 738.
 Welken, *s.* heaven, sky, H. F. 1601; Welkne, M. P. x. 62.
 Welle, *s.* well, source, M. P. i. 126.
 Welmeth, *pr. s.* wells, R. 1561.
 Welnigh, *adv.* well nigh, M. P. iv. 253.
 Welte, *pt. s.* wielded, *i.e.* lorded it over, possessed for use, B 3200.
 Wel-willy, *adj.* benevolent, T. iii. 1257.
 Wem, *s.* injury, hurt, F 121.
 Wemmelees, *adj.* stainless, G 47.
 Wenche, *s.* wench, woman, H. F. 206.
 Wende, *v.* go, L. 2266; *pt. s.* was going, H. F. 298; Wente him, *pt. s.* turned himself, *i.e.* went his way, G 1110; Went, *pp.* gone, L. 1651; *ben went*, are gone, B 173; *is went*, is gone, G 534.
 Wene, *s.* doubt, R. 574.
 Wenen, *v.* consider, L. 12; Wenest, 2 *pr. s.* thinkest, supposest, M. P. iii. 744; Weninge, *pres. pt.* H. F. 262; Wende, 1 *pt. s.* I thought, M. P. v. 493; *pt. s.* weened, supposed, M. P. i. 93; expected, L. 1913; supposed, L. 1048; Wenden, *pl. pt.* M. P. iii. 867; Wene, *imp. pl.* suppose, L. 188; Weneth, *pr. s.* imagines, C 569.
 Wenged, *adj.* winged, H. F. 2118.
 Wente, *pt. s.* went, M. P. iii. 397. See Wende.
 Wente, *s.* footpath, M. P. xviii. 69; turn, passage, T. ii. 815; iii. 787.
 Wepen, *s.* weapon, M. P. i. 118; L. 2010.
 Wepen, *pr. pl.* weep, B 820; *pp.* wept, T. i. 941; Wepte, *pt. s.* wept, B 267.
 Werbul, *s.* song, T. ii. 1033.
 Werche, *v.* to work, make, do, perform, B 566; G 14.
 Werdes, *s. pl.* fates, destinies, Bo. I. m. i. 15.
 Were, *s.* danger, R. 2827.
 Were, *s.* weir, M. P. v. 138; weir, pool, T. iii. 35.
 Were, *s.* doubt, M. P. iii. 1295; H. F. 979; doubt, distress, mental struggle, L. 2686.
 Were, *ger.* to wear, L. 1132; Wered, *pp.* worn, B 3315.
 Were, 2 *pt. s.* wast, M. P. i. 50; Wern, *pl. pt.* were, M. P. iii. 1289; Weren, 1 *pt. pl. subj.* should be, M. P. i. 180.
 Werk, *s.* work, *i.e.* reality, practice, F 482; Werkes, *s. pl.* deeds, actions, M. P. iii. 801.
 Werking, *s.* work, mode of operation, G 1367.
 Werne, *v.* deny, refuse, H. F. 1797; turn away, refuse, T. iv. 111.
 Werre, *adv.* worse, M. P. iii. 616.
 Werre, *s.* war, M. P. iii. 615; *to werre*, in enmity, M. P. i. 116.
 Werrey, *v.* make war on, persecute, R. 6926; Werreyd, *pp.* persecuted, R. 2078; Werreye, *v.* carry on war, fight, M. P. ix. 25; Werreyest, 2 *pr. s.* make war against, L. 322; Werreyed, *pt. s.* made war upon, warred against, F 10.
 Werreyour, *s.* warrior, L. 597.
 Wers, *adj. comp.* worse, M. P. iii. 1118; *adv.* M. P. iii. 814; Werste, *superl.* worst, M. P. iii. 1174.
 Werte, *s.* wart, A 555.
 Wery, *adj.* weary, M. P. iii. 127; B 2111.
 Wash, *pt. s.* washed, B 3934. See Wasshē.
 West, *s. as adv.* in the west, F 459.
 Weste, *ger.* to draw near the west, M. P. v. 266; *v.* turn to the west, L. 61, 197.

- Wete**, *adj. pl.* wet, M. P. iv. 89.
Wete, *s.* wet, perspiration, G 1187.
Weven, *v.* weave, L. 2352; *Waf*, *pt. s. l.* 2364.
Wex, *s.* wax, G 1164, 1268; *Wexe*, L. 2004.
Wexe, *v.* grow, become, M. P. iii. 497; *Wexeth*,
pr. s. grows, H. F. 1076; *Wex*, *pt. s.* grew,
 M. P. iii. 1300; *Wexen*, *pr. pl.* become, L.
 2240.
Wey, *s.* way, M. P. i. 75; *Weyes*, *pl.* M. P. iii.
 1272; *by al weyes*, in all things, M. P. iii.
 1271; *a furlong wey*, a small distance, a short
 time, E 516; *Weye*, *dat.* on (his) way, F 604.
Weyen, *v.* weigh; *oghte weyen*, he ought to
 weigh, L. 398.
Weyk, *adj.* weak, M. P. vii. 341.
Weyked, *pp.* weakened, R. 4737.
Weylaway, *interj.* wellaway, M. P. iii. 729.
Weymentinge, *s.* lamentation, R. 510.
Weynes, *s. pl.* chariots, Bo. IV. m. v. 7.
Weyve, *v.* relinquish, waive, cast aside, M. P.
 vii. 299; forsake, G 276.
Whan, *conj.* when, M. P. iii. 1236.
What, whatever, M. P. iv. 170; *What . . . what*,
 partly . . . partly, H. F. 2058; *What so, what-*
ever, M. P. ii. 99; *What, what sort of a*, L.
 1305; *conj.* why, L. 2025; *interj.* what! how!
 L. 1800.
Wheel, *s.* orbit, H. F. 1450; circle, H. F. 794;
Whefe, wheel, M. P. iii. 644.
Wheelen, *v.* wheel, T. i. 139.
Whennes, *adv.* whence, M. P. xvi. 6.
Wher, *conj.* whether, M. P. iii. 91; H. F. 586.
Wherfor that, wherefore is it that, why, M. P.
 iii. 1034.
Wher-so, *adv.* where-soever, M. P. iii. 10;
 whithersoever, M. P. ii. 102; *Wher that*,
 wherever, M. P. v. 172.
Wher-through, *adv.* by means of which, M. P.
 iii. 120.
Wherto, *adv.* for what purpose, M. P. iii. 670.
Whete, *s.* wheat, I 36.
Whetston, *s.* whetstone, T. i. 631.
Which, *pron.* what kind of, L. 1883; *Whiche a*,
 what kind of a, what a, M. P. iii. 734; *Whiche*,
 what sort of, what fine, M. P. iii. 859.
Whider, *adv.* whither, M. P. i. 124.
Whippes, *gen.* whips, M. P. v. 178.
Who, *pron. indef.* one who, M. P. iii. 559;
Whos, *gen.* whose, M. P. iv. 132.
Whom, *i.e.* one who, L. 1955.
Whyl, *conj.* whilst, M. P. iii. 1124.
Whyle, *s.* time, L. 2227.
Whyler, *adv.* formerly, G 1328.
Whyles, *gen. s. as adv.* while, time; *the whyles*,
 whilst, M. P. iii. 151.
Whylom, *adv.* formerly, once, M. P. iv. 29; L.
 1005.
Whyte, *adj. pl.* white, M. P. iii. 1318.
Widwe, *s.* widow, C 450.
Widwehed, *s.* widowhood, L. (A) 295.
Wierdes, *s. pl.* fates, T. iii. 617.
Wight, *s.* man, creature, person, L. 15; B 656;
Wightes, *pl.* beings, people, men, M. P. iii. 579.
Wighte, *s. dat.* weight, T. ii. 1385.
Wike, *s.* week, C 362.
Wiket, *v.* wicket-gate, H. F. 477.
Wikke, *adj.* wicked, bad, M. P. i. 44; poor, much
 alloyed, H. F. 1346.
Wil, 1 *pr. s.* desire, wish for, M. P. vii. 244.
Wildnesse, *s.* wilderness, M. P. ix. 34.
Wilful, *adj.* voluntary, Bo. III. p. xi. 188.
Wilfulhed, *s.* wilfulness, L. (A) 355.
Wille, *s.* will, M. P. i. 45, 57.
Wilne, 1 *pr. s.* desire, H. F. 1094; *Wilnen*, *pr.*
pl. H. F. 1312; *Wilned*, 1 *pt. s.* M. P. iii. 1262.
Wilninge, *s.* willing, wishing, Bo. III. p. xi. 100;
pl. desires, Bo. III. p. xi. 197.
Wiltow, *for* Wilt thou, *i.e.* wishest thou, B 2116.
Wimpele, *s.* wimple, veil, L. 813, 847.
Wimpele, *pr. s.* conceals (as with a wimple),
 Bo. II. p. i. 71.
Windas, *s.* windlass, F 184.
Wind-melle, *s.* wind-mill, H. F. 1280.
Windre, *v.* trim, R. 1020.
Windy, *adj.* unstable as wind, Bo. H. p. viii. 30.
Winke, *v.* shut the eyes and so sleep, fall asleep,
 M. P. ii. 109; 1 *pr. s.* sleep, M. P. v. 482.
Winsinge, *adj.* lively, A 3263.
Winter, *pl.* years, M. P. v. 473.
Wirche, *v. inf. in passive sense*, to be made,
 H. F. 474.
Wirdes, *pl.* Fates, L. 2580.
Wirkinge, *s.* efficiency, Bo. III. p. xi.
Wis, *adv.* surely, certainly, T. ii. 887.
Wisly, *adv.* surely, H. F. 1014.
Wisse, *imp. s.* direct, guide, T. P. i. 155; 2 *pr.*
s. subj. teach, M. P. v. 74; *ger.* teach, instruct,
 H. F. 491; *v.* guide, T. i. 622.
Wissh, *pt. s.* washed, R. 96.
Wiste, *pt. s.* knew, M. P. iii. 591.
Wit, *s.* wisdom, M. P. iii. 898; mind, M. P. iii.
 990; feeling, M. P. vi. 106; *Wittes*, *pl.* senses,
 M. P. vi. 98.
Wite, *ger.* to know, M. P. ii. 87; *Witeth*, *imp.*
pl. M. P. vi. 96; *Witen*, *v.* know, L. 7; *Wiste*,
pt. s. knew, L. 853.
With, *prep.* by, M. P. v. 248; L. 266.
With-alle, *adv.* withal, M. P. iii. 1205; L. 1603.
With-holden, *pp.* retained (in the legal sense),
 L. 192.
Withinne-forth, *adv.* within, Bo. V. p. v. 15.
Withouten, *prep.* without, L. 177.
With-seye, *v.* refuse, L. 367.
With-stonde, *pp.* withstood, L. 1186.
Witnesfully, *adv.* publicly, Bo. IV. p. v. 13.
Witterly, *adv.* plainly, truly, L. 2606.

- Wivere, *s.* viper, T. iii. 1010.
 Wlatsome, *adj.* loathsome, B 4243.
 Wo, *s.* woe, sorrow; *me is wo*, I am sorry, M. P. iii. 566.
 Wo, *adj.* sad, grieved, M. P. iii. 896; wretched, M. P. ii. 3.
 Wode, *s.* wood, M. P. iii. 414.
 Wode, *adj.* *pl.* mad, H. F. 1809. See Wood.
 Wodewales, *s. pl.* orioles, R. 658.
 Wol, *pr.* *s.* desires, wills, M. P. i. 167; Wolt, 2 *pr.* *s.* wilt M. P. i. 10; Wolde, *pt.* *s.* would gladly, wished to, M. P. iv. 124; *god wolde*, would God, M. P. iii. 665; Woldest, 2 *pt.* *s.* wouldst, M. P. iii. 561; Wold, *pp.* willed, M. P. xviii 11; wished, L. 1209; Woldestow, if thou wouldst, L. 760; Wol, *pr.* *s.* permits, H 28; *wol adoun*, is about to set, I 72; Wole, *pr.* *pl.* will, B 468; Woltow, wilt thou, G 307.
 Wolfe, *s.* wool, L. 1721.
 Wombe, *s.* the belly, C 522.
 Wommanhede, *s.* womanhood, B 851.
 Wommen, *pl.* women, L. 484.
 Wond, *pt.* *s.* wound, L. 2253.
 Wonde, *v.* desist, L. 1187.
 Wonder, *s. as adj.* a wonder, strange, M. P. iii. 233; *as adv.* wondrously, M. P. iii. 344.
 Wonder-most, *adj. sup.* most wonderful, H. F. 2059.
 Wone, *s.* habit, custom, H. F. 76.
 Woned, *pt.* *s.* dwelt, M. P. iii. 889; *pp.* accustomed, M. P. iii. 150; Wonen, *pr.* *pl.* dwell, L. 1317; Woneden, *pt.* *pl.* dwelt, L. 712.
 Wonger, *s.* pillow, B 2102.
 Woninge, *s.* dwelling, abode, M. P. i. 145.
ῥνεα, *pp.* won, M. P. v. 105; gained, *i.e.* ἀ-
 πῶρα *v. d.* M. P. iv. 31; begotten, L. 2564.
 Wood, *adv.* madly, P. ii. 11. v. 202; mad, fierce, madly *with*, L. 624; *ten so wood*, ten times as fierce, L. 736.
 Wood, *s.* woad, M. P. ix. 17.
 Woodeth, *pr.* *s.* plays the madman, acts madly, G 467.
 Woody, *adv.* madly, L. 1752.
 Woodnesse, *s.* madness, C 496.
 Wook, 1 *pt.* *s.* awoke, M. P. v. 695.
 Woon, *s.* plenty, R. 1673; quantity, abundance, M. P. iii. 475; dwelling, house, H. F. 1166; hope, T. iv. 1181; number, L. 2161.
 Woot, *pr.* *s.* knows, M. P. ii. 30. See Wite, Wost.
 Wopen, *pp.* wept, F 523.
 Worchere, *s.* worker, maker, M. P. iv. 261.
 Worcheth, *pr.* *s.* works, M. P. iii. 815.
 Worching, *s.* working, influence, M. P. v. 5.
 Word, *s.* for Ord, beginning, T. iii. 702.
 Worde, *dat.* word, saying, M. P. iii. 1311; Wordes, *pl.* words; *at shorte wordes*, shortly, L. 2462.
 Worldes, *gen.* of the world, M. P. v. 53.
 Worm-foul, *s.* birds which eat worms, M. P. v. 505.
 Wort, *s.* unfermented beer, wort, G 813.
 Wortes, *s. pl.* roots, vegetables, E 226.
 Worthe, *ger.* to become, M. P. iv. 248; *wel worthe*, may good befall, H. F. 53; *worth upon*, gets upon, B 1941.
 Wost, 2 *pr.* *s.* knowest, H. F. 729; Wostow, *for* Wost thou, knowest thou, M. P. iii. 1152; Wot, 1 *pr.* *s.* know, M. P. i. 10.
 Wot. See Wost.
 Wounde, *s.* wound, M. P. i. 79; *gen.* wound's, H. F. 374; Woundes of Egipte, *pl.* plagues of Egypt; unlucky days so-called, M. P. iii. 1207.
 Wowe, *v.* woo, T. v. 791; Wowcd, *pp.* wooed, L. 1247.
 Wowing, *s.* wooing, L. 1553.
 Woxen, *pp.* grown, H. F. 2082; Woxe, become, H. F. 1494.
 Wrak, *s.* wreck, B 513.
 Wrastling, *s.* wrestling, M. P. v. 165.
 Wrathed, *pp.* made angry, M. P. iii. 1151.
 Wraw, *adj.* savage, fierce, angry, H 46.
 Wrecche, *s.* unhappy being, M. P. iii. 577.
 Wreche, *s.* vengeance, M. P. xvi. 30.
 Wreek, *imp.* *s.* wreak, avenge, B 3095.
 Wreen, *v.* cover, R. 56.
 Wreigh, *pt.* *s.* covered, T. iii. 1056.
 Wreke, *v.* revenge, L. 395; *ger.* to avenge, L. 1901.
 Wreker, *s.* avenger, M. P. v. 361.
 Wrenche, *s.* deceit, R. 4292; Wrenches, *s. pl.* frauds, stratagems, tricks, G 1081.
 Wreying, *s.* betrayal, R. 5220.
 Wroghte, *pt.* *s.* was making, was working at, L. 1721; *pt. pl.* (they) effected, L. 1696.
 Wroken, *pp.* avenged, T. i. 88.
 Wroot, *pt.* *s.* wrote, M. P. i. 59.
 Wrooth, *adj.* wroth, angry, M. P. iii. 513.
 Wroteth, *pr.* *s.* digs with the snout, I 157.
 Wry, *imp.* *s.* cover up, L. 735; Wryen, *v.* cover, R. 6683; Wrye, *pp.* hidden, T. iii. 620.
 Wrye, *v.* turn, twist, T. ii. 906.
 Wryen, *v.* turn aside, M. P. iii. 627.
 Wryth, *pr.* *s.* winds, T. iii. 1231; Wrytheth, *pr.* *s.* writhes out, throws forth wreaths of smoke, Bo. I. m. iv. 11.
 Wyde-where, *adv.* widely, T. iii. 404.
 Wyf, *s.* woman, M. P. iii. 1037; wife, M. P. iii. 1082.
 Wyflees, *adj.* wifeless, E 1236.
 Wyfly, *adj.* wifelike, E 429.
 Wyle, *s.* wile, guile, M. P. v. 215.
 Wynde, *v.* wind, intertwine, M. P. v. 671; *ger.* turn, roam about, L. 818; Wynt, *pr.* *s.* turns, directs, L. 85; Wond, *pt.* *s.* wound, L. 2253.
 Wyr, *s.* wire; bit, L. 1205.

Wyse, *s.* wise, way, M. P. i. 34; *dat.* manner, way, l. 20.
 Wyse, *adj.* wise, M. P. vi. 32; *pl. as s.* wise people, M. P. xvii. 20.
 Wyser, *adj. comp.* wiser, *i.e.* wiser course, L. 2634.
 Wyte, *s.* blame, reproach, M. P. vii. 268.
 Wyte, *v.* blame, reproach, M. P. vii. 110.
 Wyve, *dat.* wife, l. 1304.

Y.

Y-, prefix to past participles. See below.
 Yaf, *pt. s.* gave, M. P. iii. 1269; Yave, 2 *pt. s.* gavest, M. P. xvi. 19. See Yeve.
 Yald, *pt. s.* afforded, Bo. IV. m. vii. 28.
 Yalt, *pt. s.* yielded; *yalt him*, betook himself, R. 4904.
 Yare, *adj.* ready, L. 2270.
 Yates, *pl. gen.* gates', H. F. 1301.
 Y-bake, *pp.* baked, L. 709.
 Y-banisht, *pp.* banished, L. 1863.
 Y-be, *pp.* been, H. F. 411, 1733.
 Y-benched, *pp.* furnished with benches, L. (A) 98. See Benched.
 Y-bete, *pp.* beaten, H. F. 1041; ornamented by means of the hammer, hence, struck, coined, L. 1122.
 Y-blent, *pp.* blinded, deceived, M. P. iii. 647.
 Y-blessed, *pp.* blessed, H. 99.
 Y-bleynt, *pp.* blenched, started aside, A 3753.
 Y-blowe, *pp.* blown. H. F. 1664; bruited by fame, H. F. 1139.
 Y-bore, *pp.* borne, H. F. 590; Y-boren, born, C 704.
 Y-bounden, *pp.* bound, M. P. v. 268.
 Y-bowed, *pp.* diverted, Bo. IV. p. vi. 195.
 Y-brent, *pp.* burned, H. F. 940.
 Y-brought, *pp.* brought, l. 938.
 Y-brouded, *pp.* embroidered, L. (A) 159.
 Y-caught, *pp.* caught; *she was y-caught*, the contagion of her charms made itself felt (in me), M. P. iii. 838.
 Y-chaped, having *chapes* or caps of metal at the end of a sheath. A 366.
 Y-cheyned, *pp.* chained, M. P. vii. 14.
 Y-clad, *pp.* clothed, G 133.
 Y-cleped, *pp.* called, *it* 2; Y-clept, G 772.
 Y-comen, *pp.* come, H. F. 1074.
 Y-coroued, *pp.* crowned, L. 219.
 Y-corumped, *pp.* corrupted, Bo. V. p. ii. 31.
 Y-corven, *pp.* cut, G 533.
 Y-coupled, *pp.* coupled, wedded, E 1219.
 Y-coyned, *pp.* coined, C 770.
 Y-crased, *pp.* cracked, broken, M. P. iii. 324.
 Y-ristned, *pp.* baptized, B 240.
 Y-dampned, *pp.* condemned, L. 2030.

Ydel, *adj.* idle, E 217.
 Ydelnesse, *s.* idleness, M. P. iii. 602.
 Y-do, *pp.* done, M. P. iii. 1236; finished, M. P. v. 542.
 Ydolastre, *s.* an idolater, B 3377.
 Ydole, *s.* idol, M. P. iii. 626.
 Ydrawe, *pp.* drawn, M. P. vii. 70.
 YË, *s.* eye, M. P. iii. 184; regard, M. P. v. 630;
 YËn, *pl.* eyes, l. 859.
 Ye, *adv.* yea, M. P. v. 52.
 Yed, *pp.* eyed, T. iv. 1459.
 Yeddinges, *pl.* songs, A 237.
 Yede, *pt. s.* went, G 1141.
 Yeer, *pl.* years, l. 2075.
 Yelden, *v.* to yield, E 843; Yeldeth, *pp. s.* yields, L. 886.
 Yeldhalle, *s.* guild-hall, A 370.
 Yelding, *s.* produce, yielding, A 596.
 Yelleden, *pt. pl.* yelled, B 4579.
 Yelpe, *v.* boast, A 2238.
 Yelw, *adj.* yellow, M. P. iii. 857.
 Yeman, *s.* yeoman, A 101.
 Yen, *pl.* eyes. See YË.
 Yerd, *s.* enclosure, yard, R. 492.
 Yerde, *s.* rod, hence correction, M. P. v. 640; rod, stick, T. ii. 154.
 Yeres, *pl. gen.* years', M. P. v. 67.
 Yerne, *v.* yearn, M. P. iii. 1092.
 Yerne, *adv.* eagerly, with interest, M. P. v. 21; *as yerne*, very eagerly, H. F. 910.
 Yeten, *v.* pour, shed, Bo. I. m. vii. 2.
 Yeve, *v.* give, M. P. v. 308; Yeven, *pt. pl. subj.* would give, H. F. 1708; *pp.* devoted, M. P. vii 111; Yeveth, *pp. s.* gives, L. 451; Yaf, *pt. s.* gave, l. 172. See Yive.
 Yeving, *s.* giving, what one gives, M. P. v.
 Yexeth, *pp. s.* hiccoughs, A 4151.
 Y-falle, *pp.* fallen, M. P. ii. 51.
 Y-fare, *pp.* gone, L. 2271.
 Y-ferre, *adv.* together, L. 263.
 Y-fet, *pp.* fetched, G 1116.
 Y-fetered, *pp.* fettered, A 1229.
 Y-feyned, *pp.* feigned, invented, L. (A) 327.
 Y-ficched, *pp.* fixed, Bo. IV. p. vi. 136.
 Y-flit, *pp.* moved, whirled along, Bo. I. m. ii. 16.
 Y freten, *pp.* eaten, devoured, L. 1951.
 Y-frounced, *pp.* wrinkled, R. 155.
 Y-fyred, *pp.* fired, L. 1013.
 Y-gerdoned, *pp.* rewarded, Bo. V. p. iii. 20.
 Y-glased, *pp.* glazed, M. P. iii. 323.
 Y-glewed, *pp.* glued, fixed tight, F 182.
 Y-glosed, *pp.* flattered, H 34.
 Y-goon, *pp.* gone, l. 2206.
 Y-grave, *pp.* dug, dug out, M. P. iii. 164; gra-
 ven, H. F. 1136.
 Y-halwed, *pp.* hallowed, consecrated, l. 1871.
 Y-hent, *pp.* seized, caught, C 868.

- Y-herd**, *pp.* haired, A 3733.
Y-hevied, *pp.* weighed down, Bo. V. m. v. 30.
Y-holde, *pp.* held, restrained, H. F. 1286; indebted, L. 1954; considered, C 602.
Yif, *imp. s.* give, M. P. v. 119.
Yif, *conj.* if, T. ii. 1063; L. 2059.
Yift, *s.* gift, M. P. iii. 247; L. 451.
Yilden, *ger.* to repay, Bo. V. p. i. 16; Yildeth, *pr. s.* yields, produces, Bo. IV. m. vi. 36. See Yelden.
Y-joined, *pp.* joined, Bo. II. p. vi. 101.
Yis, *adv.* yes, M. P. iii. 526.
Yit, *adv.* yet, notwithstanding, M. P. i. 46.
Yive, *v.* give, M. P. iii. 242; Yiven, *pp.* given, L. 501. See Yeve.
Yiver, *s.* giver, L. 2228.
Y-kneled, *pp.* kneeled, L. 1232.
Y-knit, *pp.* joined, M. P. vi. 32.
Y-knowe, *v.* know, recognize, H. F. 1336.
Y-korven, *pp.* cut, B 1801.
Y-koud, *pp.* been able to know, known well, M. P. iii. 666.
Y-lad, *pp.* carried (in a cart), A 530.
Y-laft, *pp.* left, M. P. iii. 792.
Y-laid, *pp.* laid, L. 2141.
Y-lain, *pp.* lain, remained, L. 2410.
Yle, *s.* island, H. F. 416; region, province, L. 1425.
Y-let, *pp.* hindered, obstructed, Bo. V. p. iv. 37.
Y-leten, *pp.* left, allowed, Bo. IV. p. iv. 347.
Yliche, *adj.* like, similar, H. F. 1328; alike, L. 389.
Yliche, *adv.* alike, equally, M. P. iii. 9.
Y-loren, *pp.* lost, L. 26.
Y-lyke, *adv.* alike, equally, L. 55.
Y-made, *pp.* made, H. F. 120.
Y-maad, *pp.* made, caused, F. 218.
Ymageries, *s.* Carved work, H. F. 1130.
Y-maked, *pp.* made, L. 122; Y-maad, composed, L. 550.
Y-marked, *pp.* set down, marked out, planned, H. F. 1103.
Y-ment, *pp.* intended, H. F. 1742.
Y-mette, *pp.* met, B 1115.
Y-meynd, *pp.* mingled, mixed, A 2170.
Y-moeved, *pp.* moved, Bo. IV. m. vi. 8.
Ympne, *s.* lyric poem, L. 422.
Y-mused, *pp.* mused, reflected, H. F. 1287.
Y-nogh, *adj.* enough, sufficient, M. P. iii. 965;
Y-now, *adj. pl.* M. P. v. 233.
Y-nome, *pp.* taken, M. P. v. 38. *pp.* of *Nimen*.
Y-now, *adv.* enough, G 864.
Y-offred, *pp.* offered, dedicated, L. 932.
Yolden, *pp.* yielded, A 3052.
Yolle, *pr. pl.* yell, A 2672.
Yond, *adv.* yonder, H. F. 889.
Yore, *adv.* long ago, long, M. P. i. 150; *yore* *agon*, long ago, M. P. v. 17.
Youling, *s.* yelling, A 1278.
Yow, *dat.* to you, M. P. iii. 1321; for yourselves, M. P. iv. 17.
Y-piked, *pp.* picked over, G 941.
Y-plounged, *pp.* plunged, sunk, Bo. III. p. xi. 139.
Y-plied, *pp.* pleated, gathered, Bo. I. p. ii. 34.
Ypocras, Hippocrates; *hence*, a kind of cordial, C 306.
Y-porveyed, *pp.* foreseen, Bo. V. p. iii. 50.
Y-prayed, *pp.* bidden, invited, E 269.
Y-priseid, *pp.* praised, H. F. 1577.
Y-preved, *pp.* proved to be, A 485.
Y-purveyed, *pp.* foreseen, Bo. V. p. iii. 97.
Y-raft, *pp.* reft, robbed, L. 1572. See Reven.
Yre, *s.* ire, anger, vexation, M. P. i. 30.
Y-reke, *pp.* spread about, A 3882.
Yren, *adj.* iron, G 759.
Yren, *s.* iron, G 827.
Y-rent, *pp.* rent, torn, B 844.
Y-ronge, *pp.* rung, told loudly, H. F. 1655.
Y-ronne, *pp.* run, *i.e.* continued, L. 1943.
Y-rounded, *pp.* whispered, H. F. 2107.
Y-sayd, *pp.* said, M. P. iii. 270.
Y-schette, *pp.* shut, B 560.
Yse, *s.* ice, H. F. 1130.
Y-see, *v.* see, M. P. i. 53; Y-seye, *pp.* H. F. 1367; Y-seyn, *pp.* seen, L. 2076.
Y-sene, *adj.* manifest, L. 1394; visible, L. 2655.
Y-set, *pp.* set down, F 173; agreed, fixed, L. 1637.
Y-seye. See Y-see.
Y-seyled, *pp.* sailed, B 4289.
Y-shad, *pp.* scattered, Bo. III. m. ii. 36.
Y-shaken, *pp.* quivering, sparking, Bo. I. m. iii. 19.
Y-shapen, *pp.* shaped, contrived, G 1080.
Y-shore, *pp.* shorn, shaven, T. iv. 996.
Y-shove, *pp.* borne about, L. 726.
Y-slawe, *pp.* slain, B 484.
Y-smite, *pp.* smitten, wounded, Bo. III. m. vii. 7.
Y-songen, *pp.* sung, L. 270.
Y-spended, *pp.* spent, Bo. V. p. iv. 27.
Y-sprad, *pp.* spread, B 1644.
Y-spreynd, *pp.* sprinkled, A 2169.
Y-spronge, *pp.* sprung, divulged, H. F. 2081.
Y-stalled, *pp.* set in a seat, installed, H. F. 1364.
Y-stiked, *pp.* stabbed, F 1476.
Y-stonge, *pp.* stung, C 355.
Y-storve, *pp.* dead, A 2014.
Y-strawed, *pp.* strewn, bestrewn, M. P. iii. 629.
Y-strike, *pp.* struck, M. P. xi. 34.
Y-sweped, *pp.* swept, G 938.
Y-swowned, *pp.* swooned, L. 1342.
Y-take, *pp.* taken, L. 617.
Y-thewed, *pp.* : *wel y-thewed*, of good thew or customs, M. P. v. 47.
Y-throgen, *pp.* confined, Bo. II. p. vii. 58.

- Y-throwe**, *pp.* thrown, cast out, M. P. ii. 89.
Y-torned, *pp.* turned, Bo. IV. m. v. 2.
Y-treted, *pp.* discussed, Bo. IV. p. i. 79.
Y-tukked, *pp.* tucked, L. 982.
Yvel, *adv.* ill, E. 460.
Yvoire, *s.* ivory, M. P. iii. 946.
Y-waxe, *pp.* grown, become, M. P. iii. 1275.
Y-went, *pp.* gone, H. F. 976.
Y-whet, *pp.* whetted, M. P. vii. 212.
Y-wimpled, *pp.* covered with a wimple, L. 797.
 See **Wimpel**.
Y-wis, *adv.* certainly, L. 1569. See **Wisly**.
- Y-wist**, *pp.* known, Bo. V. p. iii. 61.
Y-wonne, *pp.* won, arrived, L. 2427.
Y-worthe, *pp.* become, M. P. iii. 579.
Y-woven, *pp.* woven, L. 2360. *Pp.* of *Weven*.
Y-writhen, *pp.* wrapped, R. 160.
Y-wroght, *pp.* depicted, M. P. iii. 327;
 Y-wroghte, *pp. pl.* fashioned, M. P. v. 123.
Y-wroken, *pp.* avenged, M. P. xvi. 26. *Pp.* of
 Wreken.
Y-wronge, *pp.* wrung, L. 2527. *Pp.* of *Wringen*.
Y-wrye, *pp.* veiled, hid, T. iv. 1654; *Y-wryen*,
 covered over, M. P. iii. 628.

Ylic.

389.

Yliche, . . . v. alike, equa

Yloren, pp. lost, L. 26.

Ylyke, adv. alike, equally,

Ylyre, pp. made, H. F. 120.

Ylyre, pp. made, caused, F. 2.

Ylyre, pp. carved work, H. 1
de, L. 122; Y-ma



Ylic . . . e,
389.
Yliche, *adv.* alike, equa
Yloren, *pp.* lost, L. 26.
Ylyke, *adv.* alike, equally,
Yprouc, *pp.* made, H. F. 120.
Ywau, *pp.* made, caused, F. 2
Ywaries *sc.* Carved work, it. .
de, L. 122; Y-ma

