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THE FLOWER AND THE LEAF.



WHEN that Phebus his
 chaire of gold so hie
 Hadde whirled
 up the sterrie sky a-
 lofte, And in the
 Boole was entred cer-
 tainely: When
 shoures sweet of raine
 discended softe, Causing the ground,
 fele times & ofte, Up for to give many
 an wholesome aire, And every plaine
 was eke yclothed faire



WITH NEWE green,
 and maketh smalle
 floures. To spring-
 en here and there in
 field & mede; So
 very good & whol-
 some be the shoures,
 That it renueth
 that was old and dede In winter time;
 and out of every sede Springeth the
 hearbe, so that every wight Of this
 season wexeth ful glad and light.



AND I, so glad of the
season thus swete,
Was happed thus up-
on a certaine nighte:
As I lay in my bed,
sleepe ful unmete
Was unto me, but why
that I ne mighte

Rest, I newiste; for there nas earthly wight,
As I suppose, hadde more heartes ease
Than I, for I nadde sicknesse nor dis-
ease.



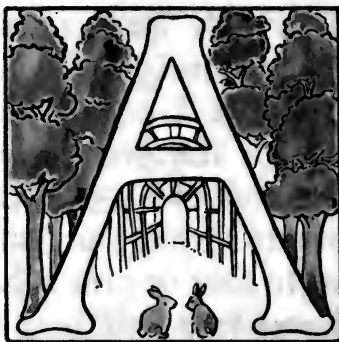
HEREFORE I mer-
vaile greatly of my-
selfe,
That I with-
outen sleepe so longe
lay;
And up I rose
three houres after
twelwe,
Aboute
the springing of the
day,
And on I putte my geare and mine
array,
And to a pleasaunt grove I gan to
passe,
Long or the brighte Sonne up-
risen was;



IN which were okes
great, streight as a
line, Under the
which the grasse, so
fresh of hewe, Was
newly sprong; and an
eight foot or nine
Every tree well fro his
fellow grew, With
branches brode,
lade with leves newe,
That sprongen
out ayen the sunne
shene, Some very
red and some a glad
light grene;



WHICH, AS ME
thoughte, was right
a plesant sight;
And eke the briddes
songes for to here
Would have re-
joiced any earthly
wight; And I,
that couthe not yet,
in no manere,
Heare the nightingale
of all the year,
Ful busily herkened
with hart & eare,
If I her voice perceiue
coud any where.








AND, at the last, a
path of little breede
I found, that great-
ly hadde not used be;
For it forgrowen was
with grasse & weede,
That well unneth a
wight ne might it se:
Thought I, 'This path some whider goth,
pardé!' And so I followede, till it me
broughte To right a pleasaunt herber,
well ywrought,






HAT benched was,
& ekewith turfes new
Freshly turved,
whereof the grene
gras, So small, so
thicke, so short, so
fresh of hewe, That
most ylike greene
wool, I wot, it was:
The hegge also that
yede in this compas,
And closed in all
the green herbere,
With sicamour was
set and eglatere,



RETHEN in fere so
well and cunningly,
That every branch
& leafe grew by me-
sure,  Plaine as a
bord, of oon height
by & by.  I ne segh
never thing, I you en-
sure,  So well y-done; for he that tooke
the cure  It for to make, Y trow did all
his peine  To make it passe alle tho that
men have seine.



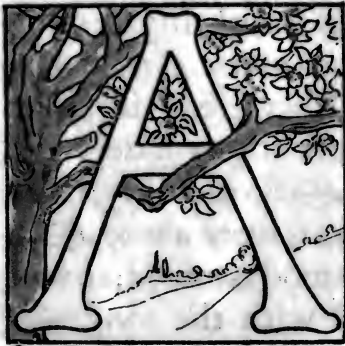
ND shapen was this
herber, rooffe and all,
As is a prety parlour;
& also  The hegge
as thicke as is a castle
wall,  That who
that list withoute to
stond or go, Though
he would all day prien to and fro,  He
shoulde not see see if there were any wighte
Within or no; but one within wel mighte.



PERCEIVE ALLE
tho that yeden there
without. Into the
field, that was on ev-
ery side Covered
with corne & grasse;
that out of doubt,
Though one woulde
seeke all the worlde wide,
So rich a
fielde ne coude not be espide
On any
coast, as of the quantitie;
For of alle
good thing there was plentie.



AND I that all this
pleasaunt sight aysie,
Thought sodain-
ly I felte so sweete an
aire Com of the
eglenterre, that cer-
tainely There is
no heart, I deme, in
such dispaire,
Ne with no thoughtes
froward and contraire
So overlaid, but
it shoulde soone have bote,
If it had
ones felt this savour sote.



AND as I stood & cast
aside mine eie, I
was of ware the fairest
medler tree, That
ever yet in all my life
I sie, As full of
blossomes as it mighte
be; Therein a gold-
finch leaping pretile
Fro bough to
bough; and, as him list,
gan eete Of
buddes here and there
and floures sweete.



AND to the herber side
ther was joyninge.
This faire tree, of
which I have you
told; And at the
last the brid began
to singe, When he
had eaten what he
eate wolde, So
passing sweetly, that
by manifolde
It was more
pleasaunt than
I coude devise.
And when his song
was ended in this
wise,



HE nightingale with
so mery a note
Answered him, that
all the woode rong
So sodainly, that,
as it were a sote, I
stood astonied; so was
I with the song
Thorow ravished, that till late and longe,
Ne wist I in what place I was, ne where;
And ay, me thoughte, she song even by
mine ere.



HEREFORE about I
waited busily,
On every side, if that I her
mighte see; And,
at the last, I gan full
well aspie Where
she sat in a fresh grene
laurer tree, On
the further side, even right by me,
That gave so passing a delicious smell,
According to the eglentere full well.



HEREOF I hadde
so inly great pleasure,
That, as me thought,
I surely ravished was
Into Paradiſe, where as
my deſire Was for
to be, and no farther
to paſſe. As for that day;
and on the ſote graſſe
I ſat me downe; for, as
for mine entent,
The birddes ſong was
more convenient,



AND more pleaſaunt
to me by many fold,
Than meat or drinke,
or any other thing.
Therto the herber
was ſo freſh and cold,
The wholeſome ſavours
eke ſo comforting,
That, as I demede,
ſith the beginning
Of thilke world was
never ſene or than
So pleaſaunt a ground
of none earthly man.



AND AS I SAT, the
 birdes harkening
 thus, Me thoughte
 that I hearde voices
 sodainly, The most
 sweetest & most de-
 licious, That ever
 any wight, I trow tru-
 ly, Heard in here life; for sothe the ar-
 mony And sweet accord was in so good
 musike, That the voices to angels most
 was like.



AND at the last, out of
 a grove faste by,
 That was right good-
 ly & pleasant to sight,
 I sie where there
 came, singing lustily,
 A world of ladies;
 but, to tell aright,
 Here grete beautie, it lieth not in my
 might, Ne here array; neverthelesse I
 shalle Telle you a part, though I speake
 not of alle.



HE surcotes white, of
velvet wele sitting,
They were in clad,
& the semes echone,
As it were a maner
garnishing, Was
set with emeraudes,
one and one. But
by and by ful many a riche stone
Was set on the purfiles, out of doute,
Of colors, sleves, and traines round aboute.



S GREATE pearles,
round & oriente,
Diamondes fine, and
rubies rede And
many another stone,
of which I wente
The names now; and
everich on her heade
A riche fret of gold, which, withoute
drede, Was full of stately riche stones
set; And every lady had a chapelet.



UPON HER HEAD
of floures fresh and
greene ☞ So wele
ywrought & so mer-
vellously, ☞ That
soth it was a noble
sight to seene; Some
of laurer, and some
full pleasantly ☞ Hadde chapelets of
woodbind, and sadly ☞ Some of agnus cas-
tus were also ☞ Chapelets freshe; but
there were many tho



THAT song & daunc-
ed, ekeful soberly, ☞
And all they yede in
manner of compace;
But one there yede in
mid the company,
☞ Soole by her selfe;
but alle followede the
pace ☞ Which that she kepte, whose hea-
venely faire face ☞ So pleasaunt was, and
her wele shape person, ☞ That of beautie
she past hem everichone.



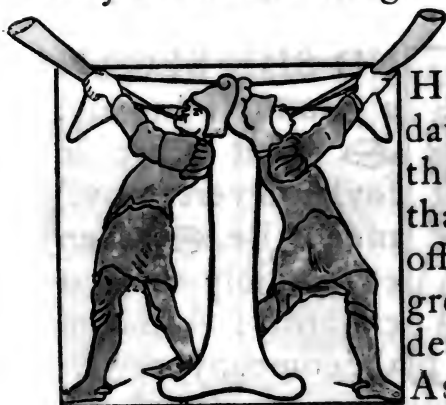
AND more richly be-
seene, by manifold,
☞ She was also in
every maner thing:
Upon her head, full
pleasaunt to beholde,
☞ A crowne of gold
riche for any kinge:
A braunch of agnus castus eke bearing ☞
In her hand; and to my sight truly, ☞ She
lady was of al the company.



AND SHE BEGAN
a roundell lustely,
☞ That 'Suse le
foyle, devers moy,'
men calle, ☞ 'Seen
et mon joly cuer est
endormy;' And than
the company answer-
ed alle, ☞ With voices sweet entuned, and
so smalle ☞ That it me thoughte the
sweetest melody ☞ That ever I heard in
my life soothly.



AND thus they came,
dauncing & singing
Into the middest
of the mede echone,
Before the herber
where I was sitting;
And, God wot, me
thought I was wel
bigone; For then I might avise hem one
by one, Who fairest was, who coude
best dance or singe, Or who most wom-
anly was in alle thinge.



THEY HADDE not
daunced but a little
throwe, When
that I hearde not ferre
off sodainely, So
great a noise of thun-
dering trumpes blow,
As though it should
have departed the skie; And, after that,
within a while I sie, From the same
grove where the ladies come oute, Of
men of armes coming such a route,



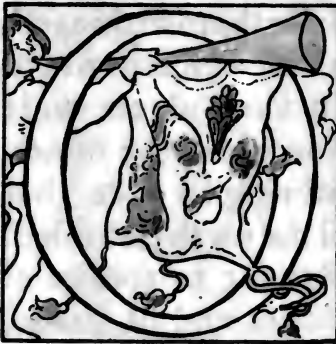
Salle themen on earth
hadde ben assembled
In that place, wele
horsed for the nones,
Stering so faste, that
al the earth trembled:
But for to speake of
riches and of stones,

And men and horse, I trow the large
wones. Of Prestir John, ne all his treso-
rie, Mighte not unneth have boght the
tenth partie



F here array: who
so list heare more,
I shall rehearse so as
I can a lite. Out
of the grove, that I of
spake before, I
sie come first, all in
here clokes white,

A company, that ware, for here delite,
Chapelets fresh of okes serialle, Newly
yspronge, and trumpets they were alle.



N EVERY trumpe
 hanging a broad ban-
 ere. Of fine tarta-
 rium fulrichely bete;
 Every trumpet his
 lordes armes bere;
 About here neckes,
 with greate pearles
 sete, Colleres brode; for cost they
 woulde not lete, As it woulde seeme,
 for here scochones echone Were set
 aboute with many a precious stone.

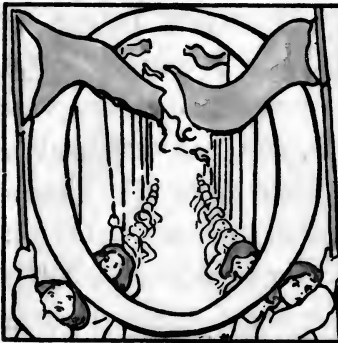


HERE horse harneis
 was all white also.
 And after hem next,
 in one company,
 Came kinges of armes,
 & nomo, In clokes
 of white cloth of gold
 richly; Chapelets
 of greene on here heades on hie; The
 crownes that they on here scochones bere,
 Were set with pearle, ruby, and saphere,



ND eke great dia-
mondés many one:
But all here horse
harneis & other geare
Was in a sute accord-
inge, everychone,
As ye have heard
the foresaid trumpets

were; And, by seeming, they were no-
thing to lere, And here guiding they
dide so manerly. And, after hem, came
a great company



F heraudes and pur-
sevauntes eke,
Ar-
rayed in clothes of
whit velvette,
And, hardily, they
were nothing to seke,
How they on hem
shoulde the harneis

sette; And every man had on a chap-
elet; Scochones and eke horse harneis,
indede, They had in sute of hem that
before hem yede.



NEXT after hem cam-
en, in armour bright
All save here heades,
seemely knightes
nine; And every
claspe and naile, as to
my sight, Of here
harneis were of red
golde fine; With cloth of gold, and
furred with ermine. Were the trappores
of here stedes strong, Wide and large,
that to the ground dide honge.



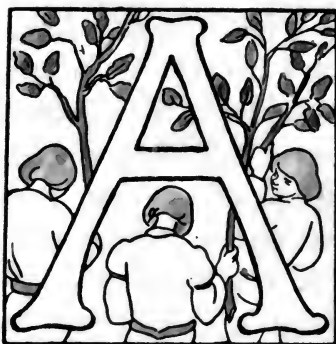
AND every bosse of
bridle & paitrell
That hadde they, was
worth, as I woulde
wene, A thou-
sand pound; and on
here heades, well
Dressed, were crowns
of laurer grene, The best ymade that
ever I hadde sene; And every knight
had after him riding Three henshe-
men on him ay awaiting.



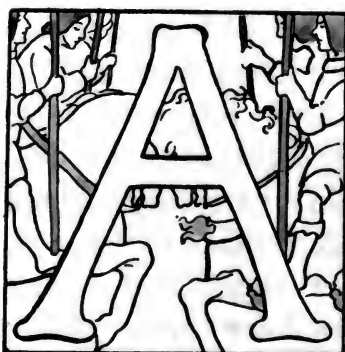
F which every first,
on a short tronchoun,
His lordes helme
bare, so richly dight,
That the worst was
worth the ransoun
Of any king; the se-
cond a shield bright
Bare at his backe; the thridde bare
upright A mightie spere, full sharpe
yground and kene, And every child
eke ware of leaves grene



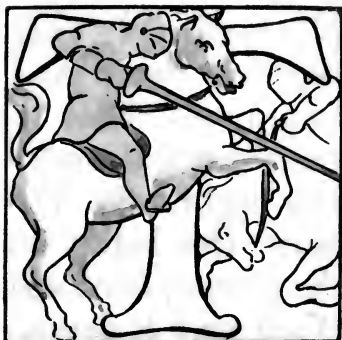
FRESHchapelet up-
on his haire brighte:
And clokes white of
fine velvet they were;
Here steedes trapped
& arraied righte,
Without difference,
as here lordes were;
And after hem, on many a fresh corsere,
There came of armede knightes such
a route, That they bespradde the large
field aboute.



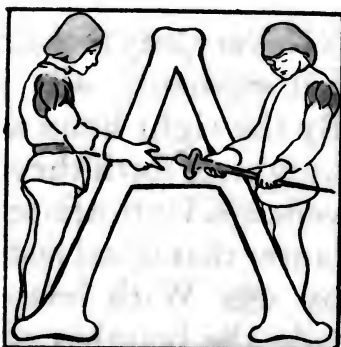
AND all they ware, af-
ter here degrees, ☞
Chapelets newe made
of laurer grene; ☞
Some of the oke, and
some of other trees,
Some in here hondes
bare boughes shene,
Some of laurer, and some of okes kene, ☞
Some of hauthorne, and some of the wood-
bind, ☞ And many mo which I hadde
not in mind.



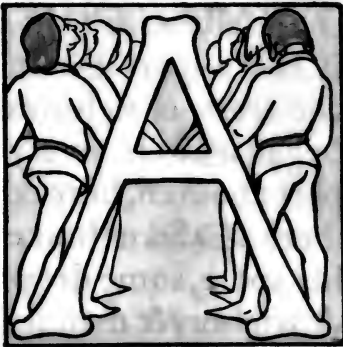
AND so they came,
here horses freshly
stering ☞ With
bloodiesownes of her
trompes loude; ☞
There sie I many an
uncouth disguising
☞ In the array of
these knightes proude; ☞ And at the last,
as evenly as they coude, ☞ They took here
places in middes of the mede, ☞ And
every knight turned his horse hede



O his fellow, & lightly laid a spere
In the arest; & so justes began
On every part abouten, here & there;
Some brake his spere, some drew down hors & manne;
Aboute the field astray the steedes ranne;
And, to behold here rule and governaunce,
I you ensure, it was a great pleasaunce.



ND so the justes last an houre and more;
But tho that crowned were in laurer grene
Wanne the prise; here dintes were so sore,
That there was none ayenst hem mighte sustene:
And the justing all was yleft off clene,
And fro here horse the ninth alight anone,
And so did all the remnant everichone.



AND forth they yede
togider, twain and
twain, ☞ That to
behold it was a wor-
thy sight, ☞ To-
ward the ladies on
the greeneplaine, ☞
That song & daunc-
ed, as I saide now righte: ☞ The ladies
tho, soone as they goodly mighte, ☞ They
braken of bothe the song and dance, ☞
And yede to meet hem with ful glad sem-
blance.



ANDevery lady tooke,
full womanly, ☞
By the right hond a
knight, & forth they
yede ☞ Unto a faire
laurer that stood fast
by, ☞ With leues
lade, the boughes of
great brede; ☞ And to my dome there
never was, indede, ☞ Man that hadde
sene halfe so faire a tree; ☞ For under-
neath there might it well have be



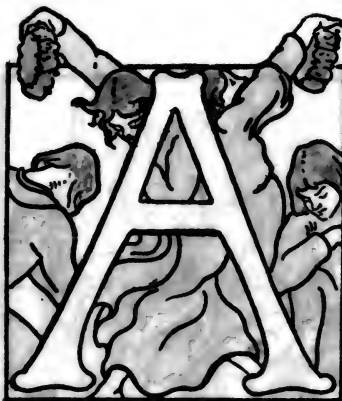
N hundred persons,
at here owne ples-
ance, ☞ Shadowed
fro the heat of Phe-
bus bright, ☞ Sothat
they shoulden have
felt no grevaunce ☞
Of raine ne haile that
hem ne hurte mighte. ☞ The savour eke
rejoice would any wighte ☞ That hadde
be sicke or melancolius, ☞ It was so very
good and vertuous.








AND with great rev-
erence encline they
lowe ☞ To thilke
tree so soot, and faire
of hewe; ☞ And af-
ter that, within a lit-
tle throwe, ☞ They
beganne to singe and
daunce of newe ☞ Some song of love,
some plaining of untrewē, ☞ Enviroun-
inge the tree that stood upright; ☞ And
ever yede a lady and a knight.









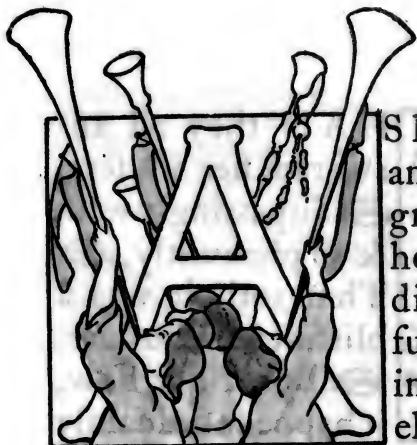




AND at the last mine
eye I caste aside, 
And was ware of a
lustie company 
That came roming
out of the field wide,
 Hond in hond
a knight and a lady;
The ladies all in surcotes, that richely 
Purfiled were with many a rich stone, 
And every knight of grene ware mantles
on,



EMBROUDED well
so as the surcotes
were:  And ever-
ich had a chapelet on
her hede,  Which
dide right well up-
on the shining here
 I-made of goodly
floures white and rede;  The knightes
eke, that they in hond gan lede,  In sute
of hem ware chapelets everychone, 
And before hem wente minstrels many one.



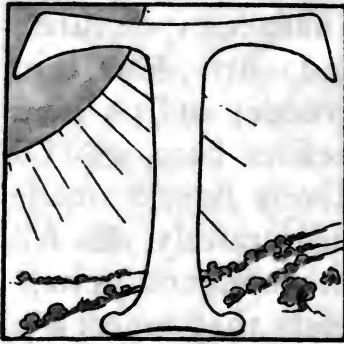
S harpes, pipes, lutes,
and sautry, All in
greene; and on here
heades bare, Of
divers floures, made
full craftely, All
in asute, goodly chap-
eletts they ware;

And, so dauncing, into the mede they fare.
In mid the which they found a tuft that
was Al oversprad with floures in com-
pas.



HERETO THEY
enclined everychone
With great rev-
erence, and that full
humbly; And, at
the laste, there be-
gan anone A la-
dy for to singe right

womanly A bargaret in praising the
daisie; For, as me thought, among her
notes swete, She said 'Si douse est la
Margarete.'



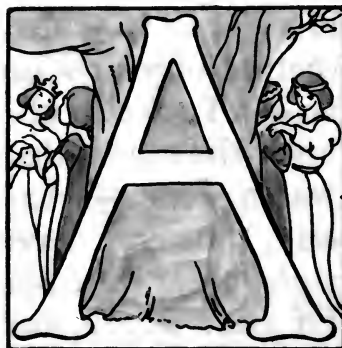
HAN they all answered her in fere,
☞ Sopassingly well,
& so plesauntly, ☞
That soth it was a blisfull noise to here.
☞ But, I not how,
it happede suddainly
☞ As aboute noone, the sonne so fervent-
ly ☞ Waxe hote, that the pretie tendre
floures ☞ Hadde lost the beautie of her
freshe colours,



ORSHRONKE with heat; the ladies
eke to-brent, ☞
That they ne wiste
where hem to be-
stowe; The knightes
swelte, for lack of
shade nie shent; ☞
And after that, within a little throwe, ☞
The wind began so sturdily to blowe, ☞
That down goeth alle the floures everich-
one, ☞ So that in all the mede there laft
not one;



AVE SUCH as succoured were among the leues 🍃 Fro every storme that mighte hem assaile, 🍃 Growing under hedges and thicke greves; 🍃 And after that there came a storme of haile 🍃 And raine in fere, so that, withouten faile, 🍃 The ladies ne the knightes nade o threed 🍃 Drie upon hem, so dropping was her weed.



ND whan the storm was cleane passed away, 🍃 Tho clad in white that stode under the tree, 🍃 They felte nothing of the great affray, 🍃 That they in greene without had in ybe; 🍃 To hem they yede for routhe and pité, 🍃 Hem to comfort after here greate disease, 🍃 So faine they were the helpesse for to ease.



HAN was I ware how
 one of hem in grene
 Had on a crowne,
 ful rich and wel sit-
 ting; Wherefore
 I demed wel she was
 a quene, And tho
 in greene on her were
 awaiting; The ladies then in white that
 were comming Towardes hem, and the
 knightes in fere, Beganne hem to com-
 fort, and make hem chere.



HE queen in white,
 that was of great beau-
 ty, Tooke by the
 hond the queen that
 was in grene, And
 said, 'Suster, I have
 right great pitie
 Of your annoy, and
 of the troublous tene, Wherein ye and
 your company have bene So long, alas!
 and if that it you please To go with
 me, I shall do you the ease,








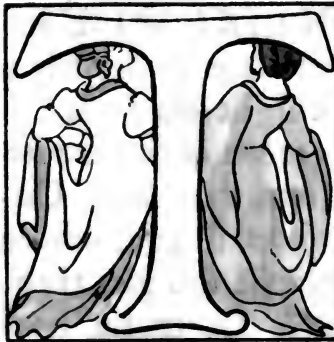
N all the pleasure
that I can or may;
Whereof the toth-
er, humbly as she
might, Thank-
ed her; for in right
ill array She was
with storm and heat,
I you behighte; And every lady, then
anone right, That were in white, one
of hem took in grene By the hond;
which when the knightes hadde sene,









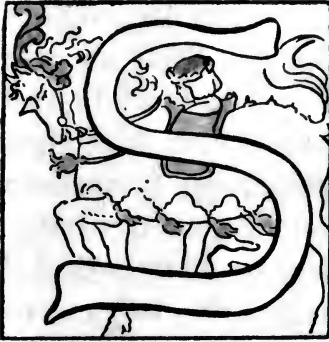
N LIKE WISE ech
of hem tooke hir a
knight I-clad in
greene, & forth with
hem they fare, Un-
to an hegge, where
they anon gan right
To make here
justes, woulde they not spare Boughes
to hewe down, and eke trees square,
Wherwith they made hem stately fires
greate, To dry here clothes that were
wringing weate.








AND AFTER that, of
hearbes that there
grewe, They made,
for blisters of the
sunne brenning, 
Very good & whole-
some ointmentes
newe,  Where that
they yede the sicke fast anointing;  And
after that they yede aboute gadering 
Pleasaunt salades, which they made hem
eate,  For to refresh here greate unkind-
ly heate.






THE lady of the Leafe
then gan to praye 
Her of the Floure
(for so to my seeming
 They shoulde be,
as by here arraye) 
To soupe with her,
& eek, for any thing,
 That she shoulde with her all her peo-
ple bringe;  And she ayen, in right good-
ly manere,  Thanketh her of her most
friendly cheare,





AYING plainly, that
she would obaye 
With all her hart all
her commaundement;
And then, anon, with-
oute lenger delaye,
 The lady of the
Leafe hath one ysent

 For a palfray, as after her intent, 
Arrayed well and faire in harneis of golde,
 For nothing lacked, that to him long
sholde.



ND after that, to all
her company 
She made to purvey horse
and every thing 
That they needed; &
then ful lustily, 
Even by the herber
where I was sitting,

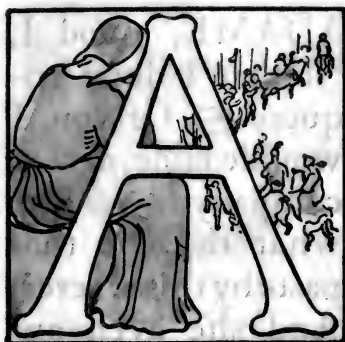
 They passed alle, so pleasantly singing,
That it would have comforted any wight.
 But then I sie a passing wonder sight;



OR then the night-
ingale, that all the
day ☞ Had in the
laurer sete, & did her
might, ☞ The whole
service to singe long-
ing to May, ☞ All
sodainly began to
take her flight; ☞ And to the lady of the
Leafe, forthright, ☞ She flew, and set her
on her hond softly, ☞ Which was a thing
I marveled of greatly.



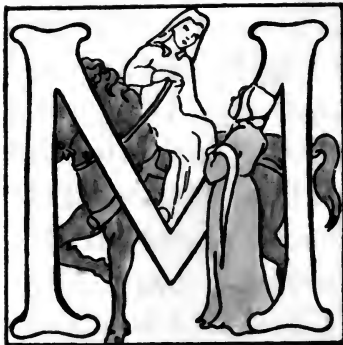
HE goldfinch eke,
that fro the medler
tree ☞ Was fled for
heat into the bushes
colde, ☞ Unto the
lady of the Flower
gan flee, ☞ And on
her hond he set him
as he wolde, ☞ And pleasauntly his winges
gan to folde; ☞ And for to singe they
pained hem both, as sore ☞ As they hadde
do of all the day before.



AND so these ladies
rode forth a great
pace, And all the
rout of knightes eke
in fere; And I that
hadde seene all this
wonder case,
Thought I would as-
say in some manere,
To knowe fully the
trouth of this matere;
And what they
were that rode so pleasantly.
And when
they were the herber passed by,



DRESTE me forth,
and happede to mete
anone Right a
faire lady, I you en-
sure; And she
come riding by her-
selfe alone, All
in white; with sem-
blance ful demure
I salued her, and
bad her good aventure
Might her be-
fall, as I coude most humbly;
And she
answered, 'My doughter, gramercy!'



ADAME,' quod I,
'if that I durst en-
quere ☞ Of you, I
woulde faine, of that
company, ☞ Wite
what they be that
paste by this arbere?'
And she ayen an-
swerede right friendly: 'My faire dough-
ter, all tho that passed here by ☞ In white
clothing, be servaunts everichone ☞ Un-
to the Lease, and I myselfe am one.



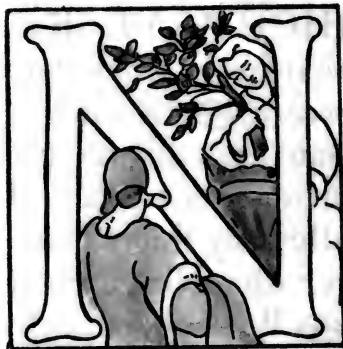
EE ye not her that
crowned is,' quod she,
☞ 'All in white?'—
'Madame,' quod I,
'yis:' ☞ That is Di-
ané, goddessse of chas-
tité; And for because
that she a maiden is,
☞ In her own hond the braunch she bear-
eth iwis, ☞ That agnus castus men calle
properly; ☞ And all the ladies in her
company,



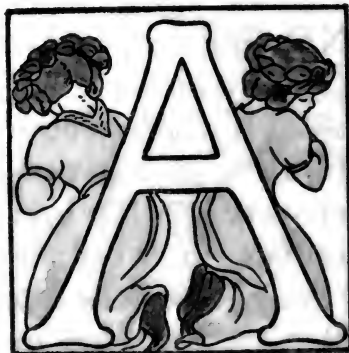
HICH AS YE SE of
 that hearb chapelets
 weare, Be such as
 han kept alway hir
 maidenheed: And
 alle they that of lau-
 rer chapelets beare,
 Be such as hardy
 were, and manly indeed,
 Victorious
 name which never may be dede! And
 alle they were so worthy of here honde,
 That in her time none might hem
 withstonde.



AND tho that weare
 chaplets on here hede
 Of fresh wood-
 bind, be such as never
 were To love
 untrue in word, in
 thought, ne dede,
 But aye stedfast; ne
 for pleasaunce, ne fere,
 Thogh that they
 shuld here hertes al to-tere,
 Wouldene
 flitte, but ever were stedfaste,
 Til that
 here lives there asunder braste.'



OW faire madame,' quod I, 'yet would I pray ☞ Your ladi-ship, if that it mighte be, ☞ That I mighte knowe, by some maner way, ☞ (Sith that it hath i-liked your beauté, ☞ The trowth of these ladies for to telle me); ☞ What that these knightes be in rich armour, ☞ And what tho be in grene and weare the flour?



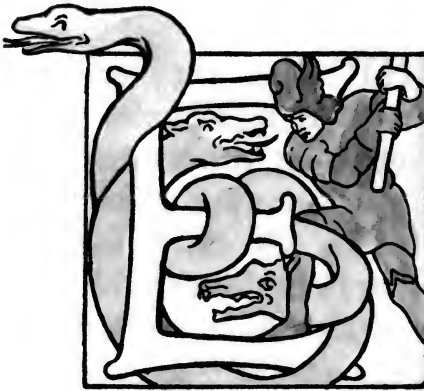
ND why that some dide reverence to the tre, ☞ And some unto the plot of floures faire?' 'With right good will, my fair doghter,' quod she, 'Sith your desire is good and debonaire; ☞ Tho nine crowned be very exemplaire, ☞ Of all honour long- ing to chivalry; ☞ And those certaine be called the Nine Worthy,



WHICH ye may see
now riding all before
That in her time
dide many a noble
dede, And for
here worthinessefull
oft have bore. The
crowne of laurer
leaves on here hede,
As ye may in your
olde bookes rede;
And how that he that
was a conquerour,
Hadde by laurer al-
way his most honour.



AND tho that beare
bowes in here honde
Of the precious
laurer so notable,
Be such as were, I
wolly understonde,
Noble knightes
of the rounde table,
And eke the Douseperis honourable,
Which they bearen in signe of victory;
It is witnesse of here deedes mightily.



KE there be knightes
old of the garter,
That in her time dide
right worthily;
And the honour
they dide to the lau-
rer, Is for by it
they have here laud

wholly, Here triumph eke, and mar-
shall glory; Which unto hem is more
parfit richesse, Than any wight im-
agine can or gesse.

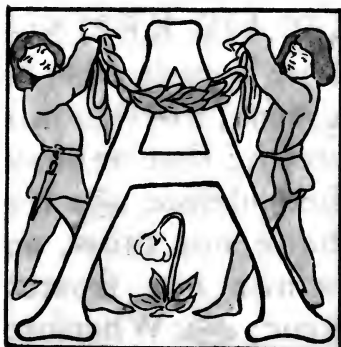


OR one leafe given
of that noble tree
To any wight that
hath done worthily,
And it be done
so as it oughte to be,
Is more honour
than anything earth-

ly; Witsesse of Rome that founder was
truly Of all knighthood and deedes
marvelous; Record I take of Titus
Livius.



AND as for her that
crowned is in greene,
It is Flora, of these
floures goddesse;
And all that here on
her awaiting beene,
It are such folk
that loved idelnesse,
And not delite hadde of no businesse,
But for to hunt and hauke, and pley in
medes, And many other such idle
dedes.



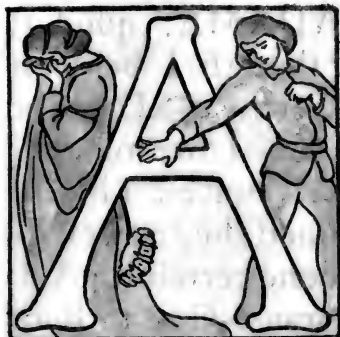
AND for the greate de-
lite and pleasaunce
They have to the
floure, and so rever-
ently They unto
it do such grete obei-
saunce. As ye may
se.' — 'Now faire Ma-
dame,' quod I, 'If I durst aske what is
the cause and why, That knightes have
the signe of honour, Wel rather by the
leafe than by the flour?'



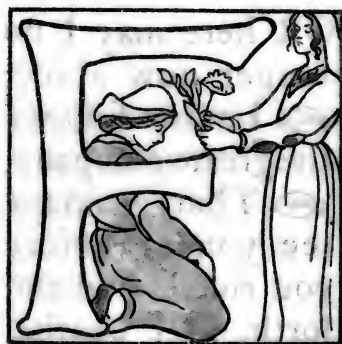
DOOETHLY, dough-
ter, 'quod she, 'this is
the trouth: For
knightes ever should
be persevering,
To seeke honour
without feintise or
slouth, Fro wele
to better in all manner thing;
In signe of
which, with leaves aye lasting
They be
rewarded after here degré,
Whose lusty
green may not appaired be,



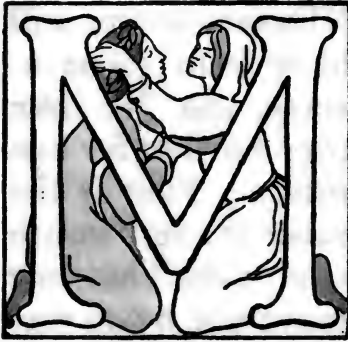
BUT AIE KEPING
here beautie fresh &
greene; For there nis
storme that ne may
hem deface, Ne
haile nor snow, ne
winde nor frostes
kene; Wherfore
they have this propertie and grace. And
for the floure, within a little space
Woll
be i-lost, so simple of nature
They be,
that they no greevance may endure;



ND every storme will
blow hem soone a-
waye, ☞ Ne laste
they not but for oon
season; That is the
cause, the very truth
to saye, ☞ That they
maye not, by no way
of reason, ☞ Be put to no such occupa-
tion.' ☞ 'Madame,' quod I, 'with all mine
whole servise ☞ I thanke you now, in my
most humble wise;



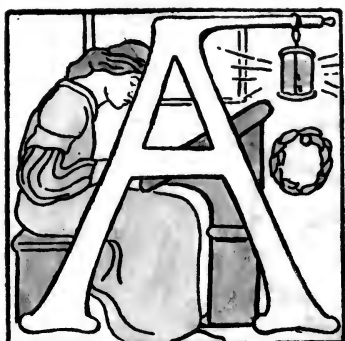
OR now I am acer-
tained throughly, ☞
Of every thing I de-
sired to knowe.' ☞
'I am right glad that
I have said, sothly,
☞ Ought to your
pleasure, if ye wille
me trowe,' ☞ Quod she ayen, 'but to whom
do ye owe ☞ Your service? and which
wolle ye honoure, ☞ Tel me I pray, this
yere, the Leafe or the Floure?'



ADAME,' quod I,
'though I be least
worthy, Unto the
Leafe I owe mine ob-
servaunce': 'That is,'
quod she, 'right well
done certainly; And
pray I God to hon-
our you avaunce, And kepe you fro the
wicked remembraunce Of Malebouch,
and all his crueltie, And all that good
and well conditioned be.



OR here may I no
lenger now abide,
I muste followe
the greate company,
That ye maye
see yonder before
you ride.' And tho
forth, as I couthe,
most humbly, I tooke my leve of her,
as she gan hie After hem as fast as ever
she mighte; And I drow homeward,
for it was nigh nighte,



AND put all that I hadde seene in writing, Under support of hem that lust it to rede. O little booke, thou art so unconning, How darst thou put thyself in prees, for drede? It is wonder that thou wexest not rede! Sith that thou wost full lite who shall beholde Thy rude language, ful boistously unfolde.

HERE ENDS CHAUCER'S FLOWER AND THE LEAF. PRINTED AT THE ESSEX HOUSE PRESS UNDER THE CARE OF C. R. ASHBEE. THE ORNAMENTAL LETTERS HAVE BEEN DRAWN AND COLOURED IN BY EDITH HARWOOD. MDCCCCII.



Published in England by EDWARD ARNOLD, 37 Bedford Street, Strand, and in America by SAMUEL BUCKLEY & Co., 100 William Street, New York.

165 copies only, and all on vellum. This copy is No. 138.



