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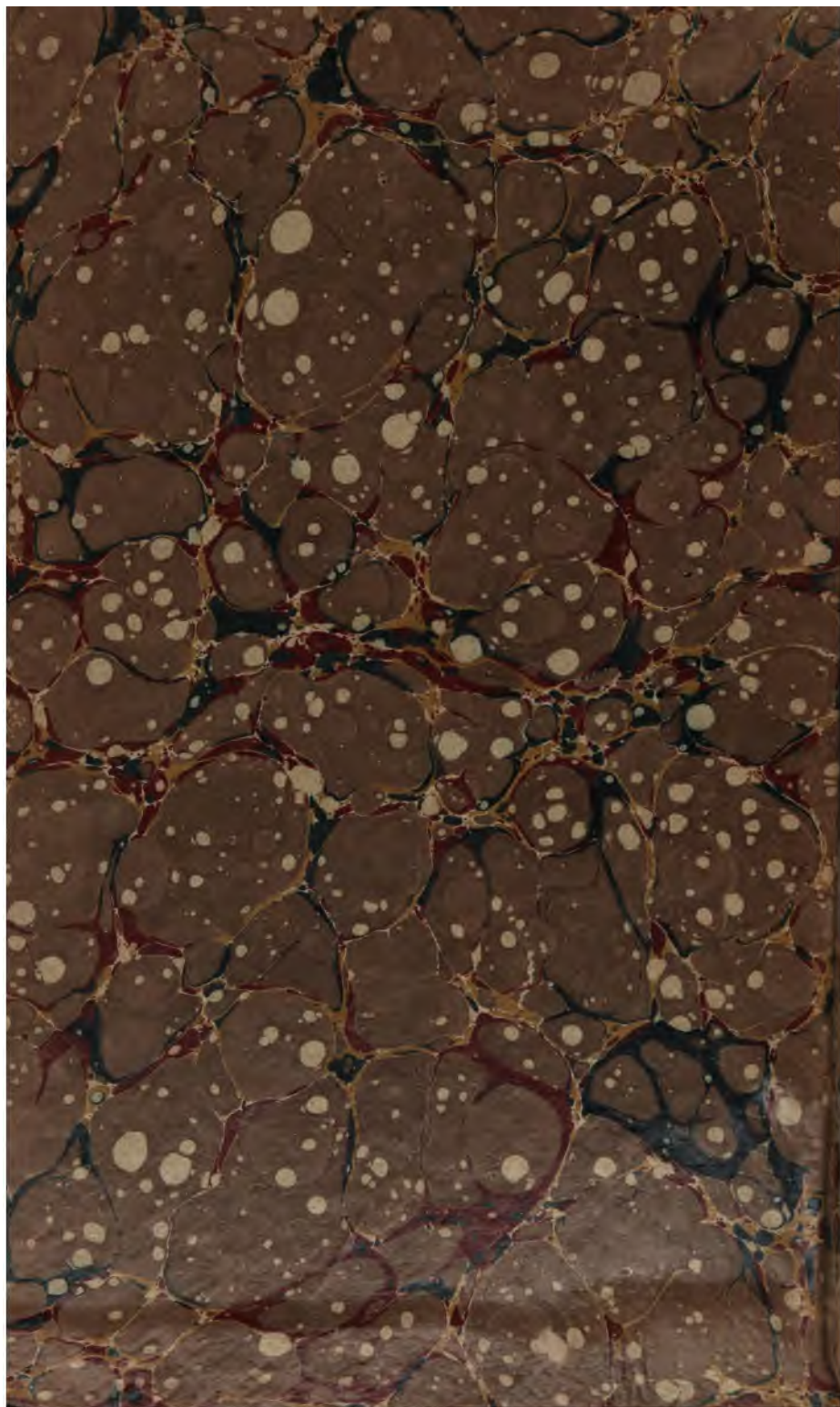
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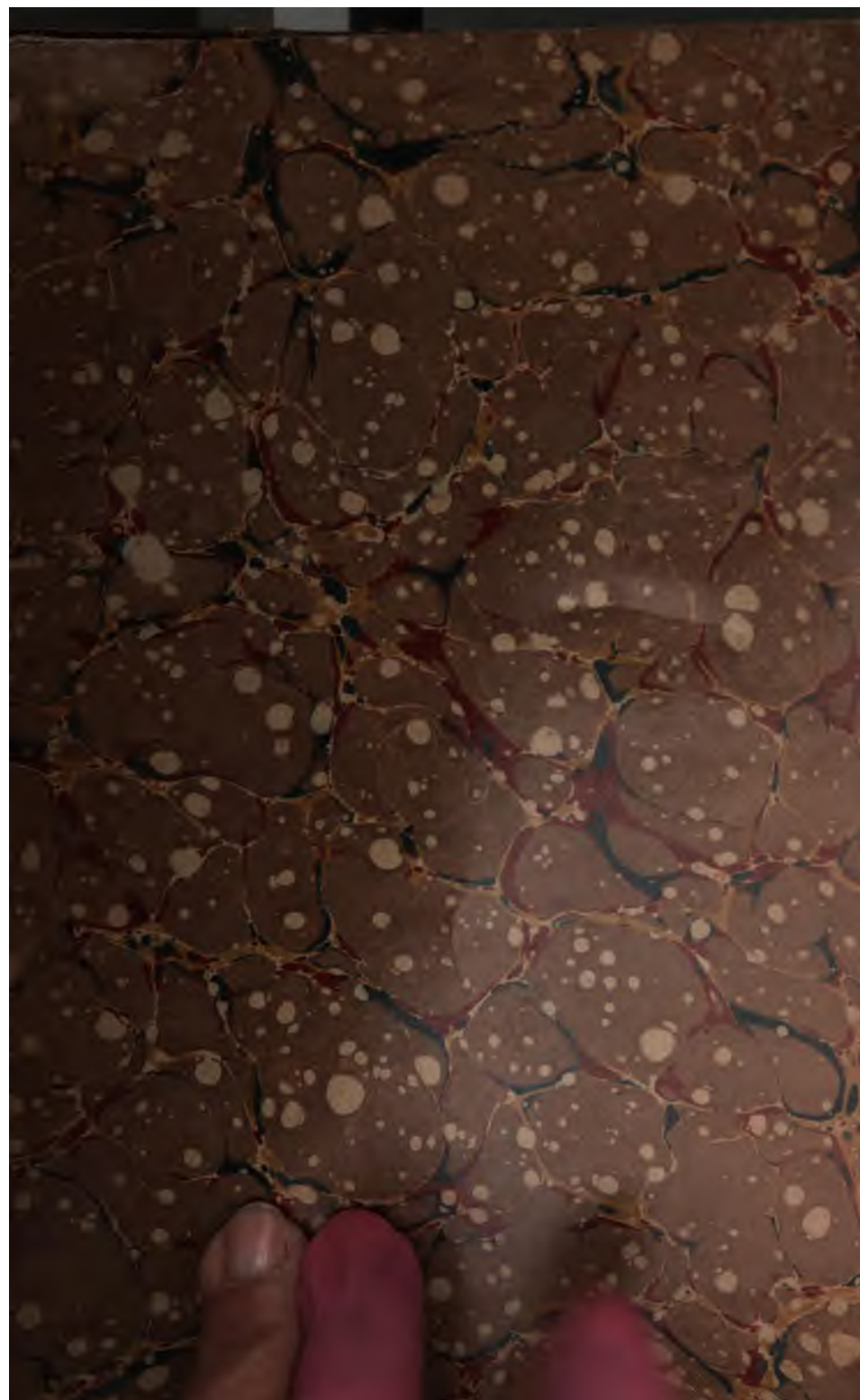
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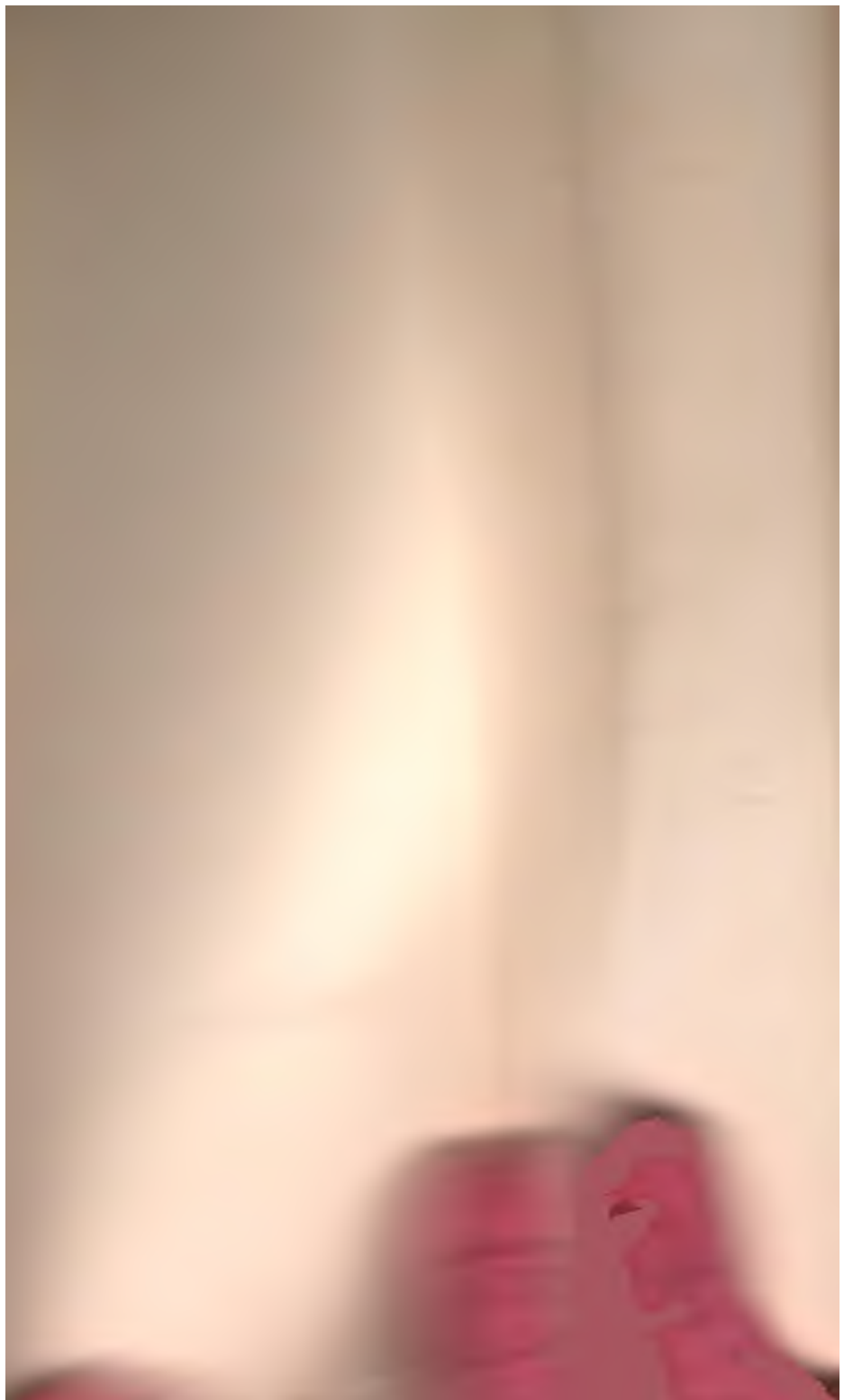
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1



1170-20272

THE

Hengwrt MS

OF

Chaucer's Canterbury Tales.



THE
Gengwrt MS
OF
Chaucer's Canterbury Tales.

EDITED BY
FREDERICK J. FURNIVALL.



LONDON:
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—
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159584

[*The Hengwrt Collection was left by its owner to his friend Mr.
William W. E. Wynne of Peniarth, Towyne, Merioneth.*]

YRABULI GORWAT

First Series.

CLAY AND TAYLOR, THE CHAUCER PRESS, HUNGAY.

DEDICATED

TO

Wm. Watkin Edward Wynne, Esq.,

OF PENIARTH,

BY WHOSE KIND LEAVE

THIS HENGWET MS IS PRINTED.

Christmas, 1888.

1

CONTENTS OF THE HENGWRT MS.

Group		Six-Text Pages	Hengwrt Pages
A.	§ 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE ¹	1	1
	§ 2. Knight's Tale (of Palamon, Arcite, and fair Emelye) (Pt. II, p. 40; Pt. III, p. 54; Pt. IV, p. 71) ...	26	26
	§ 3. KNIGHT-MILLER LINK	89	89
	§ 4. Miller's Tale (of Nicholas, Absolon, & the Oxford-Carpenter's Wife) ...	92	52
	§ 5. MILLER-REEVE LINK	111	111
	§ 6. Reeve's Tale (of the Trumpington Miller and Cambridge Clerks) ...	113	113
	§ 7. REEVE-COOK LINK	125	125
	§ 8. Cook's Tale (of the London Victual- ler's Apprentice) (<i>unfinished</i>) ² ...	127	127
D.	§ 1. Wife of Bath's Preamble (of her 5 Husbands, &c.)	334	129
	§ 2. Wife of Bath's Tale (of what Women most desire)	359	154
	§ 3. WIFE-FRIAR LINK	371	166
	§ 4. Friar's Tale (of the Sum'ner's car- rying-off to Hell)	372	167
	§ 5. FRIAR-SUM'NER LINK	383	178
	§ 6. Sum'ner's Tale (of the Friar being trickt)	385	180
B.	§ 11. MELIBE-MONK LINK	253	197
	§ 12. Monk's Tale ³ (of Men fallen from high estate)	256	200
	§ 13. MONK—NUN'S-PRIEST LINK	281	225
	§ 14. Nun's Priest's Tale (of the Cock and Fox)	283	227
	[Fbr B, § 15, NUN'S PRIEST'S END-LINK, <i>see</i> Appendix 2, p. 27*, after, p. 652, Heng.]		

¹ This is the only MS. of the *Six-Text* which has the two explanatory lines 252 *b*, *c*, p. 8, about the Friar's renting from his monastery the 'limit' or district in which he had the sole right of begging.

² For Appendix to Group A, the spurious *Tale of Gamelyn*, see Appendix 1, p. 1*-26*, after p. 652 Heng.

³ The "modern instances"—Peter the Cruel of Spain, Peter of Cyprus, Barnabo Visconti of Milan, and Count Ugolino of Pisa—are wrongly put at the end of the Tale, p. 221—224 Heng., instead of after Zenobia, l. 3564, p. 212 Heng.

Appendix.

Group	Six-Text Pages	Hengwrt Pages
1. Appendix to Group A. The Spurious <i>Tale of Gamelyn</i> , from Harl. MS. 1758	1*-26*	1*-26*
2. The genuine <i>Nun's-Priest's End-Link</i> , from Addit. MS. 5140, Brit. Mus. ...	301	27*
3. The genuine <i>Man-of-Law-Shipman Link</i> (tho' call'd <i>Squire's Prologue</i>), from the Royal MS. 18 C ii, Brit. Mus. ...	167	28*
4. The genuine <i>Clerk-Merchant Link</i> , from Shirley's Harl. MS. 7333, Brit. Mus.	442	29*
5. The genuine		
G. § 2. <i>Second-Nun-Canon's Yeoman Link</i> ,	547	30*
G. § 3. <i>Canon-Yeoman's Preamble</i> ,	552	35*
G. § 4. <i>Canon-Yeoman's Tale</i> , (from the Lichfield Cathedral MS.).	560	43*
6. Drawings of the 23 <i>Tellers of the 24 Can-</i> <i>terbury Tales</i> , ¹ copied from the Ellesm. MS., and cut on wood by Mr Hooper		
7. Drawings of 6 <i>Tellers of 6 Canterbury</i> <i>Tales</i> , and 6 <i>allegorical Figures</i> , from the Cambridge Univ. MS. Gg. 4. 27		

¹ The Ellesmere cuts can be arrang'd either in their order in the Ellesmere MS., or in the *Six-Text* order of the Tales. In the latter they'll be easier to find.

<i>Six-Text Order.</i>	Group.	<i>Ellesmere MS. Order.</i>	Group.
1. Knight	A	1. Knight	A
2. Miller		2. Miller	
3. Reeve		3. Reeve	
4. Cook		4. Cook	
5. Man of Law	B	5. Man of Law	B ₁
6. Shipman		6. Wife of Bath	
7. Prioress		7. Friar	
8. Chaucer		8. Sum'ner	
9. Monk	C	9. Clerk	E
10. Nun's Priest		10. Merchant	
11. Doctor		11. Squire	
12. Pardoner		12. Franklin	
13. Wife of Bath	D	13. Doctor	C
14. Friar		14. Pardoner	
15. Sum'ner		15. Shipman	
16. Clerk		16. Prioress	
17. Merchant	E	17. Chaucer	B ₂
18. Squire		18. Monk	
19. Franklin		19. Nun's Priest	
20. Second Nun		20. Second Nun	
21. Canon's Yeoman	G	21. Canon's Yeoman	G
22. Manciple		22. Manciple...	
23. Parson		23. Parson	
	H		H
	I		I

GROUP A. FRAGMENT I.

§ 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE

HENGWET MS.

Here bygynneth the Book of the tales of Caunterbury.

W Han that Auerylle with his shoures soote [leaf 2]
 The droghte of March / hath perced to the roote
 And bathed euery veyne in swich lycour
 Of which vertu engendred is the flour 4
 Whan zephirus eek with his sweete breeth
 Inspired hath in euery holt and heeth
 The tendre croppes / and the yonge sonne
 Hath in the Ram / his half cours yronne 8
 And smale foweles / maken melodye
 That slepen al the nyght with open Iye
 So priketh hem nature / in hir corages
 Thanne longen folk to goon on pilgrimages 12
 And Palmeres for to seeken straunge strondes
 To ferne halwes / kouthe in sondry londes
 And specially / from euery shyres ende
 Of Engeland to Caunterbury they wende 16
 The holy blisful martir / for to seke
 That hem hath holpen whan þat they weere seeke
 Bifel þat in that sesoun on a day
 In Southwerk at the Tabard / as .I. lay 20
 Redy to weenden / on my pilgrimage
 To Caunterbury / with ful deuout corage
 At nyght was comþe / in to that hostelrye
 Wel .xxix. in a compaignye 24
 Of sondry folk / by auenture yfalle
 In felawshipe / and pilgrymes weere they alle
 That toward Caunterbury wolden ryde

2 GROUP A. § 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE. Hengwrt MS.

The chambres and the stables / weeren wyde 28
 And wel we weeren esed / at the beste
 And shortly whan the sonne was to reste
 So hadde I spoken with hem euerichoon
 That I was of hir felaweshipe anoon 32
 And maade forward / erly for to ryse [leaf 2, back]
 To take oure wey / ther as .I. yow deuyse
 ¶ But nathelees / while .I. haue tyme and space
 Er that I ferther / in this tale pace 36
 Me thynketh it acordant to resoun
 To telle yow / al the condicioun
 Of eech of hem / so as it seemed me
 And whiche they weere and of what degree 40
 And eek in what array / þat they weere Inne
 And at a knyght thanne wol I first bigynne
 ¶ A knyght ther was / and that a worthy man Knyght
 That fro the tyme / þat he first bigan 44
 To ryden out he loued chivalrye
 Trouthe and honour / fredom and curteisye
 fful worthy was he / in his lordes werre
 And ther to hadde he ryden / no man ferre 48
 As wel in cristendom / as hethenesse
 And euere honored / for his worthynesse
 ¶ At Alisaundre he was / whan it was wonne
 fful ofte tyme / he hadde the bord bigonne 52
 Abouen alle nacions / in Pruce
 In lettow / hadde he reysed / and in Ruce
 No cristen man so ofte / of his degree
 In Gernade at the seege eek hadde he be 56
 At Algizir / and ryden in Belmarye
 At lyeys was he / and at Satalye
 Whan they weere wonne / and in the grete see
 At many a noble armee / hadde he bee 60
 ¶ At mortal batailles / hadde he been fiftene
 And foghten for oure feyth / at Tramysse
 In lystes thryes / and ay slayn his foo

GROUP A. § 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE. Hengwrt MS. 3

¶ This ilke worthy knyght hadde been also 64
 Somtyme / with the lord of Palatye
 Agayn another hethen in Turkye
 And euere moore / he hadde a souereyn prys
 And thogh þat he weere worthy / he was wys 68
 And of his poort' as meke / as is a mayde
 Ne neuere yet' no vileynye he sayde
 In al his lyf vn-to no manere wight
 He was a verray perfit' gentil knyght' 72
 But for to tellen yow / of his array (leaf 2)
 Hise hors weere goode / but he ne was nat gay
 Of ffustian / he wered a gypon
 Al bismotered / with his haubergeon 76
 ffor he was laate / comen from his viage
 And wente / for to doon his pilgrymage
 ¶ With hym / ther was his sone a yong' Squyer Squyer.
 A louere / and a lusty Bachiler 80
 With lokkes crulle / as they weere leyd in presse
 Of .xx. yeer / he was of age I gesse
 Of his stature / he was of euene lengthe
 And wonderly delyuere / and of greet strengthe 84
 And he hadde been som tyme / in chiuachye
 In fflaundres / in Artoys / and Picardye
 And born hym wel / as in so litel space
 In hope / to stonden / in his lady grace 88
 ¶ Embrouded was he / as it weere a meede
 Al ful of fresshe floures / white and reede
 Syngynge he was / or floytynge al the day
 He was as fressh / as is the Monthe of May 92
 Short was his gowne / with sleues / longe & wyde
 Wel koude he sitte on hors / and faire ryde
 He koude songes wel make / and endite
 Iuste and eek daunce / and wel portreye and write 96
 So hoote he loued / that by nyghtertale
 He slepte namoore / than dooth a nyghtyngale
 Curteys he was / lowely / and seruysable

4 GROUP A. § 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE. *Hengwrt MS.*

And carf biforn his fader / at the table	100
¶ A Yeman he hadde / and seruantz namo	Yeman.
At that tyme / for hym liste ryde so	
And he was clad / in coote and hood of greene	
A sheef of Pecok arwes / bright and keene	104
Vnder his belt he bar ful thriftily	
Wel koude he dresse his takel yemanly	
His arwes drowped noght with fetheres lowe	
And in his hand / he bar a myghty bowe	108
A not heed hadde he / with a broun visage	
Of wodecraft / koude he wel al the vsage	
Vp on his arm / he bar a gay bracer	
And by his syde / a swerd and a Bokeler	112
And on that oother syde / a gay daggere	[leaf 3, back]
Harneysed wel / and sharpe / as poynt of spere	
A Cristofre on his brest of siluer sheene	
An horn he bar / the bawdryk was of greene	116
A fforster was he / soothly as I gesse	
¶ Ther was also / a Nonne a Prioressse	Prioressse.
That of hir smylyng was ful symple and coy	
Hir grettteste ooth / was but by Seint Loy	120
And she was clepyd / madame Eglentyne	
fful wel she soong the seruyce dyuyne,	
Entuned in hir nose / ful semely	
And frenssh she spak ful faire and fetisly	124
After the scole / of Stratford at the Bowe	
ffor frenssh of Parys / was to hire vnknewe	
At mete / wel ytaught was she with alle	
She leet no morsel / from hir lyppe falle	128
Ne wette hir fyngres / in hir sauce deepe	
Wel koude she carye a morsel / and wel keepe	
That no drope / fille vp on hir brist	
In curteisye / was set muchel hir list	132
Hir ouer lyppe / wyped she so cleene	
That in hir coppe / ther was no ferthyng seene	
Of grece / whan she dronken hadde hir draghte	

GROUP A. § 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE. Hengwrt MS. 5

fful semely / after hir mete she raghte 136
 And sikerly / she was of greet' desport'
 And ful plesaunt' and amyable of port'
 And peyned hire / to countrefete chiere
 Of Court' and been estatlich of manere 140
 And to been holden / digne of reuerence
 But for to speken / of hir conscience
 She was so charitable / and so pitous
 She wolde wepe / if þat she sawe a Mous 144
 Caught in a trappe / if it weere deed / or bledde
 Of smale houndes / hadde she / þat she fedde
 With rosted flessch / or mylk / and wastel breed
 But soore wepte she / if oon of hem weere deed 148
 Or if men smoot' it / with a yerde smerte
 And al was conscience / and tendre herte
 fful semely / hir wympel pynched was
 Hir nose tretez / hir eyen / greye as glas 152
 Hir mouth ful smal / and ther to / softe and reed [leaf 4]
 But sikerly / she hadde a fair forheed
 It was almoost' a spanne brood I trowe
 ffor hardily / she was nat vndergrowe 156
 fful fetys was hir cloke / as I was war
 Of smal Coral / aboute hir arm she bar
 A peyre of bedes / gauded al with greene
 And ther on heeng' a brooch of gold ful sheene 160
 On which / was first writen / a crowned .A.
 And after / amor vincit' omnia.
 ¶ Another Nonne / with hire hadde she,
 That was hire Chapeleyne / and preestes thre. Nonne Chap-
 ¶ A Monk ther was / a fair for the maystrye Monk. eleyne and
 An outrydere / that' louede venerye thre prestes.
 A manly man / to been an Abbot able
 fful many a deyntee hors / hadde he in stable 168
 And whanne he rood / men myghte his brydel heere
 Gyngle in a whistlynge wynd / as cleere
 And eek' as loude / æ dooth the Chapel belle

6 GROUP A. § 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE. *Hengwrt MS.*

There as this lord / is kepere of the selle 172
 The rule of saint Maure / or of saint Beneyt
 By cause þat it was oold / and som deel streyt
 This ilke Monk / leet oolde thynges pace
 And heeld / after the newe world the space 176
 He yaf noght of that text a pulled hen
 That seith / þat hunterys been none holy men
 Ne þat a Monk. whan he is recchelees
 Is likned / til a fissh / þat is waterlees 180
 This is to seyn / a Monk out of his Cloystre
 But thilke text heeld he nat worth an Oystre
 And I seyde / his opynyon was good
 What sholde he studie / and make hym seluen wood 184
 Vp on a book in Cloystre alwey to poure
 Or swynke with his handes / and laboure
 As Austyn bit. how shal the world be serued
 Lat Austyn heue his swynk. to hym reserued 188
 Ther fore / he was a prykasour aryght
 Grehoundes he hadde / as swift as fowel in flyght
 Of prikyng and of huntyng for the haare
 Was al his lust. for no cost wolde he spaare 192
 I saugh his sleues / purfiled at the hond [leaf 4, back]
 With grys / and that the fyneste of a lond
 And for to festne his hood / vnder his chyn
 He hadde / of gold / wroght a ful curious pyn 196
 A loue knotte / in the gretter ende ther was
 His heed was balled / that shoon as any glas
 And eek his face / as he hadde been enoynt
 He was a lord ful fat and in good poynt 200
 Hise eyen steepe / and rollynge in his heed
 That stemed / as a fourneys of a leed
 Hise bootes souple / his hors / in greet estaat
 Now certeynly / he was a fair prelat 204
 He was nat paale / as is a forpyned goost
 A fat swan / loued he / best of any roost
 His palfrey / was as broun as any berye

GROUP A. § 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE. Hengwrt MS. 7

¶ A frere ther was / a wantowne and a merye,	¶ frere.
A lymytour / a ful solempne man	209
In alle the ordres foure / is noon þat kan	
So muche of daliaunce / and fair langage	
He hadde maked / ful many a mariage	212
Of yonge wommen / at his owene cost	
Vn to his ordre / he was a noble post	
fful wel biloued / and famylier was hee	
With ffrankeleyns / ouer al in his contree	216
And eek' with worthy wommen / of the town	
ffor he hadde / power of confessioun	
As seyde him self / moore than a curaat	
ffor of his ordre / he was licenciaat	220
fful swetely / herde he confessioun	
And plesant'. was his absolucioun	
He was an esy man / to yeue penaunce	
Ther as he wiste / to haue a good pitaunce	224
ffor vn to a poure ordre / for to yeue	
Is signe / that a man / is wel yshryue	
ffor if he yaf he dorste make auaunt	
He wiste / þat a man was repentaunt	228
ffor many a man / so hard is of his herte	
He may nat weepe / thogh þat he soore smerte	
Ther fore / in stede of wepyng / and preyer	
Men moote yeue siluer / to the poure freres	232
¶ His typet' was ay farsed ful of knyues	[leaf 5]
And pynnes / for to yeuen faire wyues	
And certeynly / he hadde a murye noote	
Wel koude he synge / and pleyen on a roote	236
Of yeddynges / he bar outrely the prys	
His nekke whit was / as the flour delys	
Ther to he stroong' was / as a Champioun	
He knew the tauernes wel in euery town	240
And euery hostiler / and Tappestere	
Bet / than a lazer / or a beggestere	
ffor vn to swich a worthy man / as he	

8 GROUP A. § 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE. *Hengwrt MS.*

Acorded nat / as by his facultee	244
To haue / with syke lazars aqueyntaunce	
It is nat honeste / it may noght auauunce	
ffor to deelen / with no swich poraille	
But al with riche / and sellerys of vitaille	248
And ouer al / ther as profit sholde aryse	
Curteys he was / and lowely of seruyse	
Ther was no man / nowheer / so vertuous	
He was the beste beggere / of his hous	252
And yaf a certeyn ferme / for the graunt	252 b
Noon of his bretheren / cam ther in his haunt	252 c
ffor thogh a wydwe / hadde noght a sho	253
So plesant was his In principio	
Yet wolde he haue a ferthyngt er he wente	
His purchaas / was wel bettere than his rente	256
And rage he koude / as it weere right a whelp	
In louedayes / koude he muchel helpe	
ffor there / he was nat lyk a Cloystrer	
With a threedbare cope / as is a poure scoler	260
But he was lyk a maister / or a Pope	
Of double worstede / was his semycope	
And rounded as a belle / out of the presse	
Somwhat he lyped / for his wantownesse	264
To make his englyssh / sweete vp on his tonge	
And in his harpyng whan þat he hadde songe	
Hise eyen twynkled / in his heed aryght	
As doon the sterres / in the frosty nyght	268
This worthy lymytour / was cleped Huberd	
¶ A Marchant was ther / with a forked berd	Marchaunt.
In Motlee / and hye on hors he sat	[leaf 5, back]
Vp on his heed / a fflaundryssh Beuere hat	272
His bootes clasped / faire and fetisly	
Hise resons / he spak ful solempnely	
Sownyng alway / thencrees of his wynnyng	
He wolde / the see weere kept for any thyng	276
Bitwixen Myddelburgh / and Orewelle	

GROUP A. § 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE. **Hengwrt MS.** 9

Wel koude he / in eschaunge / sheeldes selle
 This worthy man / ful wel his wit bisette
 Ther wiste no wight. that he was in dette 280
 So estaatly was he / of his gouernaunce
 With his bargaynes / and with his cheuysaunce
 ffor soothe / he was a worthy man with alle
 But sooth to seyn / I noot how men hym calle 284
 ¶ A Clerc ther was / of Oxenford also ¶ Clerc of Oxenforde.
 That vn to logyk. hadde longe ygo
 As leene was his hors / as is a rake
 And he was noght right fat I vndertake 288
 But looked holwe / and ther to sobrelly
 fful threedbaare / was his ouereste Courtepy
 ffor he hadde / geten hym yet no benefice
 Ne was so worldly / for to haue office 292
 For hym was leuere / haue at his beddes heed
 Twenty bookes / clad / in blak / or reed
 Of Aristotile / and his Philosophye
 Than robes riche / or ffithele / or gay Sautrye 296
 But al be / that he was a Philosophre
 Yet hadde he / but litel gold in Cofre
 But al that he myghte / of his frendes hente
 On bookes / and on lernynge / he it spente 300
 And bisily / gan for the soules preye
 Of hem / that yaf hym / wher with to scoleye
 Of studye / took he moost cure and moost heede
 Noght oo word spak he / moore than was neede 304
 And that was spoke / in forme / and reuerence
 And short and quyke and ful of heigh sentence
 Sowynge in moral vertu / was his speche
 And gladly wolde he lerne / and gladly teche 308
 ¶ A Sergeaunt of lawe / waar / and wys ¶ Sergeaunt of Lawe.
 That often / hadde been at the Parvys
 Ther was also / ful ryche of excellence [leaf 6] 312
 Discreet he was / and of greet reuerence
 He seemed swich / hise wordes weeren so Wyse

10 GROUP A. § 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE. *Hengwrt MS.*

Iustice he was / ful often in Assise
 By patente / and by pleyn commissioun
 ffor his science / and for his heigh renoun 316
 Of fees and robes / hadde he many oon
 So greet a purchasour / was nowher noon
 Al was fee symple / to hym / in effect'
 His purchasyng' myghte nat been infect' 320
 Nowher so bisy a man as he / ther nas
 And yet he seemed / bisyer than he was
 In termes / hadde he caas / and doomes alle
 That from tyme of kyng william / weere falle 324
 Ther to / he koude endite / and make a thyng'
 Ther koude no wight' pynchen at his writyng'
 And euery statut'. koude he pleyn by roote
 He rood but hoonly / in a medlee coote 328
 Girt with a ceynt of sylk'. with barres smale
 Of his array / telle I no lenger tale
 ¶ A frankleyn / was in his compaignye ¶ frankleyn. 332
 Whit was his berd / as is the dayesye
 Of his complexcion / he was sangwyn
 Wel loued he by the morwe / a sope in wyn
 To lyuen in delyt' was euere his wone
 ffor he was / Epicurus owene sone 336
 That heeld opynyon / þat pleyn delit
 Was verray / felicittee parfit'
 An housholdere / and that a greet was hee
 Seint Iulyan he was / in his contree 340
 His breed / his ale / was always after oon
 A bettre envyned man / was neuere noon
 With outen bake mete / was neuere his hous
 Of fresshe fische / and flesshe / and that so plenteuous 344
 It snewed in his hous / of mete and drynke
 Of alle deyntees / þat men koude bithynke
 After / the sondry sesons / of the yeer
 So chaunged he / his mete / and his soper 348
 fful many a fat partrych / hadde he in Muwe

GROUP A. § 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE. Hengwrt MS. 11

And many a breem / and many a luce in Stuwe
 Wo was his Cook' / but if his Sauce weere [leaf 6, back]
 Poynaunt' and sharpe / and redy al his geere 352
 His table dormaunt' in his halle alway
 Stood redy couered / al the longe day
 At sessions / ther was he / lord and sire
 fful ofte tyme / he was knyght of the Shire 356
 An Anlaas / and a Gipser / al of Sylk'
 Heeng' at his girdel / whit as morne mylk'
 A Shirreue hadde he been / and Countour
 Was nowheer / swich a worthy vauasour 360
 ¶ An haberdasshere / and a Carpenter { Haberdasshere
Carpenter.
Webbe.
Dyere.
Tapycer.
 A Webbe / a Dyere / and a Tapycer
 And they weere clothed alle / in oo lyueree
 Of a solempne / and a greet fraternytee 364
 fful fressh and newe / hir geere apyked was
 Hir knyues weere chaped / noght with bras
 But al with siluer / wroght ful clene and wel
 Hir girdles / and hir pouches / euerydel 368
 Wel seemed eech of hem / a fair Burgeys
 To sitten in a yeldehalle / on a deys
 Euerych / for the wisdom / þat he kan
 Was shaply / for to been an Alderman 372
 ffor catel / hadde they ynogh / and rente
 And eek hir wyues / wolde it wel assente
 And ellis certeyn / they weere to blame
 It is ful fair / to been yclepyd madame 376
 And goon to vigilies / al bifore
 And haue a Mantel / realliche ybore
 ¶ A Cook they hadde with hem / for the nones Cook/.
 To boille the chiknes / with the Marybones 380
 And poudre marchaunt'. tart' and / Galyngale
 Wel koude he knowe / a draghte of london ale
 He koude rooste / and seethe / and broille / & frye
 Maken Mortreux / and wel bake a pye 384
 But greet harm was it' as it thoughte me

12 GROUP A. § 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE. Hengwrt MS.

That on his Shyne / a Mormal hadde he	
ffor Blankmanger / that maade he with the beste	
¶ A Shipman was ther / wonyng fer by weste	Shipman.
ffor aught I woot he was of Dertemouthe	389
He rood vp on a Rouncey / as he kouthe	
In a gowne of faldyng to the knee	[leaf 7]
A daggere hangyng on a laas / hadde he	392
Aboute his nekke / vnder his arm adown	
The hoothe Somer / hadde maad his hewe al brown	
And certeynly / he was a good felawe	
fful many a draghte of wyn / hadde he drawe	396
ffro Burdeauxward / whil þat the Chapman sleepe	
Of nyce conscience / took he no keepe	
If þat he faght and hadde the hyer hond	
By watre he sente hem hoom / to euery lond	400
But of his craft to rekene wel his tydes	
His stremys / and his daungers hym bisydes	
His herberwe and his moone / his lodmenage	
Ther was noon swich / from hulle to Cartage	404
Hardy he was / and wys to vndertake	
With many a tempest hadde his beard been shake	
He knew alle the hauenes / as they weere	
ffro Gootlond / to the cape of ffynysteere	408
And euery cryke / in Britaigne / and in Spaigne	
His barge / y-clepyd was the Mawdelayne	
¶ With vs / ther was / a Doctour of Phisyk	Doctour of Phisyk.
In al this world / ne was ther noon hym lyk	
To speken of Phisyk and of Surgerye	413
ffor he was grounded / in Astronome	
He kepte his pacient a ful greet deel	
In houres / by his magyk natureel	416
Wel koude he fortunen / the ascendent	
Of hise ymages / for his pacient	
He knew the cause / of euery maladye	
Weere it of hoot or coold / or moyste / or drye	420
And where it engendred / and of what humour	

GROUP A. § 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE. *Hengwrt MS.* 13

He was a verray / perfit practisour
 The cause yknowe / and of his harm the roote
 Anoon he yaf / the sike man his boote 424
 ¶ fful redy hadde he / hise Apothecaryes
 To senden hym / his drogges / and his letuaryes
 ffor eech of hem / maade oother for to wynne
 Hir frendshipe / was noght newe to bigynne 428
 Wel knew he / the oolde Esculapyus
 And Discorides / and eek Rusus
 Olde ypocras / Haly / and Galyen [leaf 7, back]
 Serapion / Razis / and Avycen 432
 Auerroys / Damascien / and Constantyn
 Bernard / and Gatesden / and Gilbertyn
 Of his diete / mesurable was hee
 ffor it was / of no superfluytee 436
 But of greet norissynge / and digestible
 His studye / was but litel on the Bible
 In sangwyn and in Pers / he clad was al
 Lyncd with Taffata / and with Sendal 440
 And yet he was / but esy of dispence
 He kepte / þat he wan in pestilence
 ffor gold in Phisyk. is a Cordial
 Ther fore / he loued gold in special 444
 ¶ A good wyf was ther / of bisyde Bathe The Goode Wyf
 But she was som del deef and that was scathe of bisyde Bathe.
 Of clooth makynge / she hadde swich an haunt
 She passed hem / of Ipres / and of Gaunt 448
 In al the parysshe / wyf ne was ther noon
 That to the offrynge / bifore hire sholde goon
 And if ther dide / certeyn / so wrooth was shee
 That she was / out of alle charitee 452
 Hir Couerchiefes / ful fyne weere of grownd
 I dorste swere / they weyeden. ten pownd
 That on a Sonday / weeren vp on hir heed
 Hir hosen weeren / of fyn Scarlet reed 456
 fful streyte yteyd / and shoes / ful moyste & newe

14 GROUP A. § 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE. *Hengwrt MS.*

Boold was hir face / and fair and reed of hewe
 She was a worthy womman / al hir lyue
 Housbondes at chirche dore / she hadde fyue 460
 With outen oother compaignye / in yowthe
 But ther of / nedeth nocht to speke as nowthe
 And thries / hadde she been at Ierusalem
 She hadde passed / many a straunge strem 464
 At Rome she hadde been / and at Boloyn
 In Galyce at Seint Iame / and at Coloyne
 She koude muchel / of wandrynge by the weye
 Gattothed was she / soothly for to seye 468
 Vp on an Amblere / esily she sat
 Ywympled wel / and on hir heed an hat
 As brood as is / a Bokeler / or a Targe [leaf 8]
 A foot mantel / aboute hir hypes large 472
 And on hir feet a peyre of spores sharpe
 In felaweshipe / wel koude she laughe. and carpe
 Of remedies of loue / she knew *par* chaunce
 ffor she koude of that art the olde daunce 476
 ¶ A good man / was ther / of Religioun
 And was a poure *parson* / of a town *Parson of a town.*
 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 parisshe / deuoutly wolde he teche
 Benygne he was / and wonder diligent
 And in aduersitee / ful pacient 484
 And swich he was proeued / ofte sythes
 ful looth weere hym / to cursen for his tythes
 But rather wolde he yeuen / out of doute
 Vn to his poure parisshe aboute 488
 Of his offrynge / and eek of his substaunce
 He koude in litel thyng haue suffisaunce
 Wyd was his parisshe / and houses fer a sonder
 But he ne lafte nocht for reyn ne thonder 492
 In siknesse / nor in meschief to visite

GROUP A. § 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE. *Hengwrt MS.* 15

The ferreste in his parisshe / muche and lyte
 Vp on his feet and in his hond a staf
 This noble ensample / to his sheep he yaf 496
 That first he wroghte / 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 sholde Iren do 500
 ffor if a preest be foul / in whom we truste
 No wonder is / a lewed man to ruste
 And shame it is / if a preest take keepe
 A shiten shepherde / and a clene sheepe 504
 Wel oghte a preest ensample for to yiue
 By his clenness / how þat his sheep sholde lyue
 He sette noght. his benefice to hyre
 And leet his sheep / encombred in the Myre 508
 And ran to London / vn to Seint Poules
 To seeken hym / a Chauntrye for soules
 Or with a breetherede / to been withhoolde [leaf 8, back]
 But dwelte at hoom / and kepte wel his foolde 512
 So þat the wolf ne maade it noght myscarye
 He was a shepherde / and noght a Mercenarye
 And thogh he hooly weere / and vertuous
 He was noght to synful men despitous 516
 Ne of his speche / daungerous / ne digne
 But in his techyng discreet and benygne
 To drawen folk to heuene / with fairnesse
 By good ensample / this was his bisynesse 520
 But it weere / any persone obstynaat
 What so he weere / of heigh / or lowe estaat
 Hym wolde he snybben / sharply for the nonys
 A better preest I trowe ther nowher noon ys 524
 He wayted / after no pompe / and reuerence
 Ne maket hym / a spyced conscience
 But Cristes loore / and hise Apostles twelue
 He taughte / but first he folwed it hym selue 528
 ¶ With hym ther was a Plowman / was his broother *Plowman.*

16 GROUP A. § 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE. Hengwrt MS.

That hadde glad of donge / ful many a ffoother
 A trewe swynkere / and a good was he
 Lyuynge in pees / and perfit charitee 532
 God loued he best' with al his hoole herte
 At alle tymes / thogh hym gamed / or smerte
 And thanne his Neighebore / right as hym selue
 He wolde thresshe / and ther to / dyke and delue 536
 ffor Cristes sake / with euery poure wight'
 With outen hyre / if it laye in his myght'
 His tythes payde he / ful faire and wel
 Bothe of his propre swynk' and his catel 540
 In a Tabard' he rood / vp on a Mere
 Ther was also / a Reue / and a Millere
 A Somonour / and a Pardoner also
 A Maunciple / and my self ther weere namo 544
 ¶ The Millere / was a stout carl / for the nones Millere.
 fful byg' he was / of brawen / and eek of bones
 That proeued wel / for ouer al ther he cam
 At wrastlynge / he wolde haue alwey the Ram 548
 He was short shuldred / brood / a thikke knarre
 Ther was no dore / that he noolde heue of harre
 Or breke it at a rennyng / with his heed [leaf 9]
 His beard / as any sowe / or fox / was reed 552
 And ther to brood / as thogh it weere a spaade
 Vp on the cope right of his nose he haade
 A werte / and ther on stood / a tuft' of heerys
 Reede / as the bristles / of a Sowes eerys 556
 Hise nosethirles / blake weere and wyde
 A sword and a bokeler / baar he by his syde
 His mouth as greet was / as a greet fourneys
 He was a Ianglere / a Golyardeys 560
 And that was moost' of synne and harlotryes
 Wel koude he stelen corn / and tollen thryes
 And yet he hadde / a thombe of gold pardee
 A whit coote / and a blew hood wered hee 564
 A Baggepipe / wel koude he / blowe and sowne

GROUP A. § 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE. *Hengwrt MS.* 17

And ther with al / he broghte vs out of towne
¶ A gentil Maunciple / was ther / of a Temple *Maunciple.*
Of which / Achatours myghte take exemple 568
for to been wyse / in byyng of vitaille
for wheither þat he payde / or took by taille
Algate he wayted so / in his achaat
That he was ay biforn / and in good staat 572
¶ Now is nat that of god / a ful greet grace
That swich a lewed mannes wit shal pace
The wysdom / of an heepe / of lerned men
Of Maistres hadde he mo / than thryes ten 576
That weeren of lawe / expert and curious
Of whiche / ther weere a dozeyne / in that hous
Worthy / to been stywardes / of rente / and lond
Of any lord / that is in Engelonð 580
To make hym lyue / by his propre good
In honour dettelees / but if he weere wood
Or lyue as scarsly / as hym lyst desire
And able / for to helpen al a Shire 584
In any caas / that myghte falle or happe
And yet this Maunciple / sette hir aller cappe
¶ The Reue / was a sclendre coleryk man *Reue*
His beard was shaue / as neigh as euer he kan 588
His heer was by his eerys / ful rownd yshorn
His tope was dokked / lyk a preest byform
fful longe weere hise legges / and ful leene [*leaf 9, back*]
Ylik a staf. ther was no calf yseene 592
Wel koude he keepe / a Gerner and a Bynne
Ther was noon Auditour / koude on hym wynne
Wel wiste he / by the droghte and by the reyn
The yeldyng / of his seed / and of his greyn 596
His lordes sheepe / his neet / his dayerye
His swyn / his hors / his stoor / and his pultrye
Was hoolly / in this Reues gouernynge
And by his couenant. yaf the rekenynge 600
Syn that his loord / was twenty yeer of age

18 GROUP A. § 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE. Hengwrt MS.

Ther koude no man / brynge hym in arrerage
 Ther nas Baillyf. hierde / nor oother hyne
 That he ne knew / his sleyghte / and his couyne 604
 They weere adrad of hym / as of the deeth
 His wonyng' was ful faire vp on an heeth
 With greene trees / shadwed was his place
 He koude better / than his lord purchace 608
 fful riche / he was astoored pryuely
 His lord / wel koude he plesen subtilly
 To yeue / and leene hym / of his owene good
 And haue a thank'. and yet a coote and hood 612
 In youthe / he lerned hadde / a good Mister
 He was a wel good wrighte / a Carpenter
 This Reue sat' vp on a wel good Stot'
 That was a Pomely gray / and highte Scot' 616
 A long Surcote of Pers / vp on he haade
 And by his syde / he baar a rusty blaade
 Of Northfolk was this Reue / of which I telle
 Bisyde a town / men clepyn Baldeswelle 620
 Tukked he was / as is a ffrere aboute
 And euere he rood / the hyndreste of oure route
 ¶ A Somonour / was ther with vs / in that place Somonour.
 That hadde / a fyr-reed Cherubynnes face 624
 ffor Sawceflewm he was / with eyen narwe
 And hoot he was / and lecherous as a Sparwe
 With scaled browes blake / and pyled berd'
 Of his visage / children weere aferd' 628
 Ther nas quyk' siluer / lytarge / ne Brymstoon
 Borace / Ceruce / ne Oille of Tartre noon
 Ne oynement'. that wolde clense and byte [leaf 10]
 That hym myghte helpen / of his whelkes whyte 632
 Nor of the knobbes / sittynge on his chekes
 Wel loued he garlek' oynons and eek lekes
 And for to drynke strong wyn / reed as blood
 Thanne wolde he speke / and crye as he were wood 636
 [.]

[. *no gap in the MS.*]
A few termes hadde he / two / or thre
That he hadde lerned / out of som decree 640
No wonder is / he herde it al the day
And eek ye knowe wel / how þat a lay
Kan clepen watte / as wel as kan the Pope
But who so koude / in oother thyng hym grope 644
Thanne hadde he spent al his philosophie
Ay Questio quid iuris wolde he crye
¶ He was a gentil harlot and a kynde
A better felawe / sholde men noght fynde 648
He wolde suffre / for a quart of wyn
A good felawe / to haue his concubyn
A twelf monthe / and excusen hym at the fulle
ful pryuely / a fynch eek koude he pulle 652
And if he foond owher / a good felawe
He wolde techen hym / to haue noon awe
In swich caas / of the Ercedeknes curs
But if a mannes soule / were in his purs 656
ffor in his purs / he sholde ypunysshed be
Purs is the Ercedeknes helle / seyde he
¶ But wel I woot he lyed right in dede
Of cursyngt oghte ech gilty man [to] drede 660
ffor curs wol sle / right as assoillyngt sauyth
And also / war hym of a significaut /
¶ In daunger hadde he / at his owene gyse
The yonge gerles / of the diocise 664
And knew hir conseil / and was al hir reed
A gerland / hadde he set vp on his heed
As greet. as it were / for an Ale stake
A bokeler / hadde he maad hym of a cake 668
¶ With hym ther rood / a gentil Pardoner *Pardoner.*
Of Rounceyual / his freend / and his comper
That streight was comen / fro the Court of Rome
ful loude he soongt com hyder loue to me 672
This Somonour baar to hym / a styf burdoun *[leaf 10, back]*

20 GROUP A. § 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE. Hengwrt MS.

Was neuere trompe / of half so greet a soun
¶ This Pardoner / hadde heer / as yelow as wex
But smothe it heeng' as dooth a stryke of flex 676
By ounces / henge his lokkes þat he hadde
And ther with / he his shuldres ouerspradde
But thynne it lay / by colþons oon and oon
But hood for Iolitee / wered he noon 680
ffor it was trussed vp / in his walet'
Hym thoughte / he rood al of the newe Iet'
Discheuele saue his cappe / he rood al bare
Swiche glarynge eyen / hadde he as an hare 684
A vernycle / hadde he sowed / vp on his cappe
His walet' [lay] biforn hym / in his lappe
Bretful of pardon / comen from Rome al hoot'
A voys he hadde / as smal / as hath a Goot' 688
No berd hadde he / ne neuere sholde haue
As smothe it was / as it were late yshaue
I trowe he were a geldyng' or a Mare
But of his craft' fro Berwyk in to Ware 692
Ne was ther / swich another Pardoner
ffor in his Male / he hadde a pilwe beer
Which þat he seyde / was oure lady veyl
He seyde he hadde / a gobet of the seyl 696
That seint Peter hadde / whan þat he wente
Vp on the see / til Ihesu Crist hym hente
He hadde a cros of laton / ful of stones
And in a glas / he hadde pigges bones 700
But with thise relykes / whan þat he foond
A poure parson / dwellyng vp on lond
Vp on a day / he gat hym moore moneye
Than þat the parson gat / in Monthes tweye 704
And thus / with feyned flaterye and Iapes
He made the parson / and the peple his apes
But trewely / to tellen at the laste
He was in chirche / a noble Ecclesiaste 708
Wel koude he / rede a lesson / and a Storie

GROUP A. § 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE. Hengwrt MS. 21

But alderbest^t he soong an Offertorie
 ffor wel he wiste / whan þat soong was songe
 He moste preche / and wel affyle hys tonge 712
 To wynne siluer / as he ful wel koude (leaf 11)
 Ther fore he soong^t the muryerly and loude
 ¶ Now haue I toold yow / soothly in a clause
 Thesta^t / tharray / the nombre / and eek the cause 716
 Why þat assembled was this compaignye
 In Southwerk^t. at this gentil hostelrye
 That highte the tabard^t / faste by the belle
 But now is tyme / to yow for to telle 720
 How þat we baren vs / that ilke nyght^t
 Whan we weere / in that hostelrye alyght^t
 And after wol I telle / of oure viage
 And al the remenant^t of oure pilgrymage 724
 ¶ But first I pray yow / of youre curteisye
 That ye narete it / noght my vileynye
 Though þat I pleyⁿly speke / in this matere
 To telle yow / hir wordes / and hir cheere 728
 Ne thogh I speke / hir wordes proprely
 ffor this ye knowen / also wel as I
 Who so shal telle a tale / after a man
 He moot reherce / as neigh as euere he kan 732
 Euerich a word / if it be in his charge
 Al speke he / neuer so rudeliche and large
 Or ellis / he moot telle his tale vntrewe
 Or feyne thyng^t or fynde wordes newe 736
 He may noght spare / although he weere his brother
 He moot as wel / seye o word / as another
 Crist spak hym self ful brode in holy writ
 And wel ye woot^t no vileynye is it 740
 Ek Plato seith / who so kan hym rede
 The wordes / mote be cosyn / to the dede
 ¶ Also I pray yow / to foryeue it me
 Al haue I nat set folk / in hir degree 744
 Here in this tale / as þat they sholde stonde

22 GROUP A. § 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE. Hengwrt MS.

My wit is short^t ye may wel vnderstonde
 ¶ Greet cheere / made oure hoost vs euerichon
 And to the souper / sette he vs anon 748
 He serued vs / with vitaille / at the beste
 Strong was the wyn / and wel to drynke vs leste
 A semely man / oure hoost was with alle
 ffor to been / a Marchal in an halle 752
 A large man he was / with eyen stepe [leaf 11, back]
 A fairer burgeys / was ther noon in Chepe
 Boold of his speche / and wys / and well ytaught^t
 And of manhode / hym lakked right naught^t 756
 Eke ther to / he was right a murye man
 And after souper / pleyen he bigan
 And spak of murthe / amonges othere thynges
 Whan þat we hadde maad oure rekenynges 760
 And seyde thus / now lordes trewely
 Ye been to me / right wel come hertely
 ffor by my trouthe / if þat I shal nat lye
 I seigh noght this yeer / so mury a compaignye 764
 At ones in this herberwe / as is now
 ffayn wolde I doon yow myrthe / wiste I how
 And of a myrthe / I am right now bithoght^t
 To doon yow ese / and it shal coste noght^t 768
 ¶ Ye goon to Caunterbury / god yow spede
 The blisful Martir / quyte yow youre mede
 And wel I woot^t as ye goon by the weye
 Ye shapen yow / to talen and to pleye 772
 ffor trewely / confort / ne murthe is noon
 To ryde by the weye / domb as stoon
 And ther fore / wol I maken yow desport^t
 As I seyde erst^t and doon yow som confort^t 776
 And if yow liketh alle / by oon assent^t
 ffor to stonden / at my Iuggement^t
 And for to werken / as I shal yow seye
 Tomorwe / whan ye ryden by the weye 780
 Now by my fader soule / þat is deed

But ye be murye / I wol yeue yow myn heed
 Hoold vp youre hondes / with outen moore speche
 ¶ Oure conseil / was nat longe for to seche 784
 Vs thoughte / it was nat worth / to make it wys
 And graunted hym / with outen moore avys
 And bade hym seye / his voirdit as hym leste
 ¶ Lordynges quod he / now herkneth for the beste 788
 But taketh it noght I pray yow in desdeyn
 This is the poynt to speken short and pleyne
 That ech of yow / to shorte with oure weye
 In this viage / shal tellen tales tweye 792
 To Caunterburyward / I mene it so [leaf 12]
 And homward / he shal tellen othere two
 Of auentures / þat whilom haue bifalle
 And which of yow / þat bereth hym best of alle 796
 That is to seyn / that telleth in this cas
 Tales of best sentence / and moost solas
 Shal haue a Souper / at oure aller cost
 Here in this place / sittynge by this post 800
 Whan that we come agayn / fro Caunterbury
 And for to make yow / the moore mury
 I wol my self goodly wit[h] yow ryde
 Right at myn owene cost and be youre gyde 804
 And who so wole / my Iuggement with seye
 Shal paye / al that we spende by the weye
 And if ye vouche sauf / þat it be so
 Tel me anon / with outen wordes mo 808
 And I wol erly / shape me ther fore
 ¶ This thyng was graunted / and oure othes swore
 With ful glad herte / and preyden hym also
 That he wolde vouche sauf / for to do so 812
 And that he wolde been / oure gouernour
 And of oure tales / Iuge and reportour
 And sette a souper / at a certeyn prys
 And we wol ruled been / at his deuys 816
 In heigh and logh / and thus by oon assent

24 GROUP A. § 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE. Hengwrt MS.

We been acorded / to his Iuggement^t
 And ther vp on / the wyn was fet anoon
 We dronken / and to reste wente echon 820
 With outen / any lenger tarynge
 ¶ A morwe / whan þat day bigan to sprynge
 Vp roos oure hoost^t and was oure aller cok^t
 And gadred vs / togydres in a flok^t 824
 And forth we ryden / a litel moore than pas
 Vn to the wateryng^t of Seint Thomas
 And there oure hoost^t bigan his hors areste
 And seyde / lordes / herkneth if yow leste 828
 ¶ Ye woot youre forward / and it yow recorde
 If euensong / and morwesong^t acorde
 Lat se now / who shal telle the firste tale
 As euere mote I drynke wyn / or Ale 832
 Who so be rebel / to my Iuggement^t [leaf 12, back]
 Shal paye / for al / that by the wey is spent
 Now draweth cut^t er þat we ferrer twynne
 He which þat hath the shorteste / shal bigynne 836
 ¶ Sire knyght quod he / my mayster and my lord
 Now draweth cut^t for that is myn acord
 Cometh near quod he / my lady Prioress
 And ye sire Clerc. lat be your shamefastnesse 840
 Ne studieth noght^t ley hond to / euery man
 ¶ Anoon to drawen / euery wight bigan
 And shortly / for to tellen / as it was
 Were it by auenture / or sort^t or cas 844
 The sothe is this / the Cut fil to the knyght^t
 Of which ful blithe and glad was euery wight^t
 And telle he moste his tale / as was resoun
 By forward / and by composicioun 848
 As ye han herd / what nedeth wordes mo
 And whan this goode man / sawgh þat it was
 As he / þat wys was / and obedient^t
 To kepe his forward / by his free assent^t 852
 He seyde / syn I shal bigynne the game

GROUP A. § 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE. Hengwrt MS. 25

What wel come be the Cut in goddes name
Now lat vs ryde / and herkneth what I seye
And with that word / we ryden forth oure weye 856
And he bigan / with right a murye cheere
His tale anoon / and seyde as ye may heere

¶ *Iamque domos patria Scithice post aspera gentis
prelia laurigero.*

Here bigynneth the knyghtes tale.

Whilom / as olde stories tellen vs
 Ther was a duc þat highte Theseus 860
 Of Atthenes / he was lord and gouernour
 And in his tyme / swich a conquerour
 That gretter was ther noon vnder the sonne
 fful many a riche contree / hadde he wonne 864
 What with his wysdom / and his chialrye
 He conquered / al the regne of femenye
 That whilom / was ycleped Scithia [leaf 13]
 And wedded / the queene ypolita 868
 And broghte hire hom with hym / in his contree
 With muchel glorie / and greet solempnitee
 And eek / hir yonge suster Emelye
 And thus with victorie / and with melodye 872
 Lete I this noble duc to Atthenes ryde
 And al his hoost. in armes hym bisyde
 ¶ And certes / if it nere to long to heere
 I wolde haue toold / fully the manere 876
 How / wonnen was the regne of ffemenye
 By Theseus / and by his Chialrye
 And of the grete bataille / for the nones
 Bitwixen Atthenes / and Amazones 880
 And how assegeged was ypolita
 The faire hardy queene of Scithia
 And of the feste / þat was at hir weddyng
 And of the tempest at hir hom comyng 884
 But al that thyng / I moot as now forbere
 I haue god woot / a large feeld to ere
 And wayke / been the oxen in my plogh
 The remenant of the tale / is long ynogh 888
 I wol nat letten eek / noon of this route

Lat euery felawe / telle his tale aboute
 And lat se now / who shal the souper Wynne
 And ther I lefte / I wol ayein bigynne (A break in the MS. with)
 This duc / of Whom I make mencion Incipit narracio (2)
 ¶ Whanne he was come / almoost to the town
 In al his wele / and in his mooste pryde
 He was war / as he caste his eye asyde 896
 Wher þat ther kneled / in the heighe weye
 A compaignye of ladyes / tweye and tweye
 Ech after oother / clad in clothes blake
 But swich a cry and swich a wo they make 900
 That in this world / nys creature lyuyng
 That herde / swich another waymentyng
 And of this cry / they nolde neuere stenten [leaf 13, back]
 Til they / the reynes of his brydel henten 904
 ¶ What folk been ye / þat at myn hom comyng
 Perturben so my feste / with cryyng
 Quod Theseus / haue ye so greet envie
 Of myn honour / that thus compleyne and crye 908
 Or who hath yow mysboden / or offended
 And telleth me / if it may been amended
 And why þat ye / been clothed thus in blak/
 The eldeste lady / of hem alle spak 912
 Whan she hadde swowned / with a deedly cheere
 That it was routhe / for to seen and heere
 ¶ She seyde / lord / to whom ffortune hath yiuen
 Victorie / and as a Conquerour to lyuen 916
 Noght greueth vs youre glorie / and youre honour
 But we biseken / mercy and socour
 Haue mercy on oure wo / and oure distresse
 Som drope of pitee / thurgh thy gentillesse 920
 Vp on vs wrecched wommen / lat thow falle
 ffor certes lord / ther is noon of vs alle
 That she ne hath been / a duchesse / or a queene
 Now be we caytyues / as it is wel seene 924
 Thanked be ffortune / and hir false wheel

28 GROUP A. § 2. KNIGHT'S TALE. Hengwrt MS.

That noon estaat assureth to been weel
 Now certes lord / to abiden youre presence
 Heere in this temple / of the goddesse clemence 928
 We haue been waytynge / al this fourtenyght
 Now help vs lord / syth it is in thy myght
 ¶ I wrecche / which þat wepe and waille thus
 Was whilom wyf / to kyng Cappaneus 932
 That starf at Thebes / cursed be the day
 And alle we / þat been in this array
 And maken / al this lamentacioun
 We losten alle oure housbondes / at that town 936
 Whil þat the sege / ther aboute lay
 And yet now / the olde Creon weylaway
 That lord is now / of Thebes the Citee
 ffuld of Ire / and of Iniquitee 940
 He for despit / and for his tyrannye
 To doon / the dede bodyes vileynye
 Of alle oure lordes / whiche þat been slawe [leaf 14] 944
 Hath alle the bodyes / on an heepe ydrawe
 And wol nat suffren hem / by noon assent
 Neyther to been yburyed / nor ybrent
 But maketh houndes / ete hem in despit
 And with that word / with outen moore respit 948
 They fillen gruf and cryden pitously
 Haue / on vs wrecched wommen / som mercy
 And lat oure sorwe / synken in thyn herte
 ¶ This gentil duc down from his courser sterte 952
 With herte pitous / whan he herde hem speke
 Hym thoughte / þat his herte wolde breke
 Whan he saugh hem / so pitous / and so maat
 That whilom weren / of so greet estaat 956
 And in hise armes / he hem alle vp hente
 And hem conforteth / in ful good entente
 And swoor his ooth / as he was trewe knyght
 He wolde doon / so ferforthly his myght 960
 Vp on the tiraunt Creon / hem to wreke

That al the peple of Grece / sholde speke
 How Creon was / of Theseus yserued
 As he þat hadde his deeth / ful wel disserued 964
 And right anoon / with outen moore abood
 His baner he desplayeth / and forth rood
 To Thebesward / and al his oost bisyde
 No neer Atthenes / wolde he go ne ryde 968
 Ne take his ese / fully half a day
 But onward in his wey / that nyght he lay
 And sente anoon / ypolita the queene
 And Emelye / hir yonge suster sheene 972
 Vn to the town of Atthenes / to dwelle
 And forth he ryt ther nys namoore to telle
 ¶ The rede statue of Mars / with spere and targe
 So shyneth / in his white Baner large 976
 That alle the feeldes / glitren vp and down
 And by his Baner / born was his penoun
 Of gold ful ryche / in which ther was ybete
 The Mynotaur / which þat he wan in Crete 980
 ¶ Thus ryt this duc. thus ryt this conquerour
 And in his oost / of Chiualrye the flour
 Til þat he cam to Thebes / and alighte [leaf 14, back]
 ffaire in a feeld / ther as he thoghte fighte 984
 ¶ But shortly / for to speken of this thyng
 With Creon / which þat was of Thebes kyng
 He faught and slow hym manly / as a knyght
 In pleyn bataille / and putte the folk to flyght 988
 And by assaut he wan the Citee after
 And rente adoun / bothe wal / and sparre / and rafter
 And to the ladyes / he restored agayn
 The bones / of hir freendes / þat were slayn 992
 To doon obsequies / as was tho the gyse
 But it weere al to long for to deuyse
 The grete clamour / and the waymentynge
 That the ladyes made / at the brennynge 996
 Of the bodies / and the grete honour

30 GROUP A. § 2. KNIGHT'S TALE. Hengwrt MS.

That Theseus / the noble Conquerour
Dooth to the ladys / whan they from hym wente
But shortly / for to telle is myn entente 1000
¶ Whan þat this worthy duc this Theseus
Hath Creon slayn / and wonne Thebes thus
Stille in that feeld / he took al nyght his reste
And dide with al the / contree / as hym leste 1004
¶ To ransake in the taas / of bodies dede
Hem for to strepe / of harneys / and of wede
The pilours / didnen bisynesse / and cure
After the bataille / and disconfiture 1008
And so bifel / in the taas they founde
Thurgh girt with many a greuous bloody wownde
Two yonge knyghtes / liggyng by and by
Bothe in oon armes / wrought ful richely 1012
Of whiche two / Arcita highte that oon
And that oother knyght highte Palamon
Nat fully quyk / ne fully deed they weere
But by hir Cote armures / and by hir geere 1016
The heraudes / knewe hem best in special
As they þat weren / of the blood roial
Of Thebes / and of sustren two yborn
Out of the taas / the pilours han hem torn 1020
And han hem caryed / softe vn to the tente
Of Theseus / and he ful soone hem sente
To Atthenes / to dwellen in prisoñ [leaf 15]
Perpetually / he nolde no raunsoñ 1024
¶ And whan this worthy duc / hath thus ydoon
He took his oost / and hom he ryt anoon
With laurer corouned / as a conquerour
And there he lyueth / in ioye / and in honour 1028
Terme of his lyf / what nedeth wordes mo
And in a tour / in angwissh and in wo
Dwellen this Palamon / and eek Arcite
ffor euere moore / ther may no gold hem quyte 1032
¶ This passeth yeer by yeer / and day by day

Til it fil ones / in a morwe of May
 That Emelye / þat fairer was to seene
 Than is the lillie / vp on his stalke greene 1036
 And fressher than the May / with floures newe
 ffor 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 aysen / and al redy dight'
 ffor May wol haue / no slogardye a nyght'
 The seson pryketh / euery gentil herte
 And maketh it out of his sleep to sterte 1044
 And seith ays / and do thyn obseruance
 This maketh Emelye / haue remembrance
 To doon honour to May / and for to ryse
 Yclothed was she fressh / for to deuyse 1048
 Hir yelow heer / was broyded in a tresse
 Bihynde hir bak a yerde long I gesse
 And in the gardyn / at the sonne vp riste
 She walketh vp and down / and as hir liste 1052
 She gadreth floures / party white and rede
 To make a subtil gerland for hir hede
 And as an Aungel / heuenysshly she soong'
 ¶ The grete tour / þat was so thikke and strong' 1056
 Which of the Castel / was the chief dongeon
 Ther as the knyghtes / weren in prison
 Of whiche I tolde yow / and tellen shal
 Was euene ioynant / to the gardyn wal 1060
 Ther as this Emelye / hadde hir pley yng'
 Bright was the sonne / and cleer / in that morn yng'
 And Palamon / this woful prisoner (leaf 15, back)
 As was his wone / by leue of his Gailler 1064
 Was risen / and romed in a chambre an heigh
 In which / he al the noble Citee seigh
 And eek the gardyn / ful of braunches greene
 Ther as / the fresshe Emelye the sheene 1068
 Was in hir walk / and romed vp and down

32 GROUP A. § 2. KNIGHT'S TALE. Hengwrt MS.

This sorweful prisoner / this Palamon
 Gooth in the chambre / romyng to and fro
 And to hym self / compleynyng' of his wo 1072
 That he was born / ful ofte he seyde allas
 And so bifel / by auenture / or cas
 That thurgh a wyndow / thikke of many a barre
 Of Iren greet' and square as any sparre 1076
 He caste his eye / vp on Emelya
 And ther with al he bleynte / and cryde .A.
 As thogh / he stongen weere / vn to the herte
 ¶ And with that cry / Arcite anoon vp sterte 1080
 And seyde cosyn myn / what eyleth thee
 That art so pale / and deedly on to see
 Why cridestow / who hath thee doon offence
 ffor goddes loue / tak al in pacience 1084
 Oure prison / for it may noon oother be
 ffortune hath yeuen vs this aduersitee
 Som wikked aspect' or disposicion
 Of Saturne / by som constellacion 1088
 Hath yeuen vs this / al thogh we hadde it sworn
 So stood the heuene / whan þat we were born
 We mote endure it' this is the short and playn
 This Palamon answerde / and seyde agayn 1092
 ¶ Cosyn for sothe / of this opinioñ
 Thow hast' a vayn ymaginacion
 This prison / caused me noght to crye
 But I was hurt right now / thurgh out myn Iye 1096
 In to myn herte / that wol my bane be
 The fairnesse / of that lady þat I se
 Yond in the gardyn / romen to and fro
 Is cause / of al my cryyng' and my wo 1100
 I noot' wher she be womman / or goddesse
 But Venus / is it soothly as I gesse
 And ther with al / on knees down he fil [leaf 16]
 And seyde / Venus if it be thy wil 1104
 Yow in this gardyn / thus to transfigure

GROUP A. § 2. KNIGHT'S TALE. Hengwrt MS. 33

Bifore me / sorweful wrecched creature
 Out of this prison / help þat we may scape
 And if so be / my destynne be shape 1108
 By eterne word / to dyen in prison
 Of oure lynage / haue som compassion
 That is so lowe ybrought by tirannye
 ¶ And with that word / Arcite gan espye 1112
 Where as this lady / romed to and fro
 And with that sighte / hir beautee hurte hym so
 That if þat Palamon / was wounded soore
 Arcite is hurt. as muche as he / or moore 1116
 And with a syk /. he seyde pitously
 The fresahe beautee / sleeth me sodeynly
 Of hire / þat rometh in the yonder place
 And but I haue / hir mercy / and hir grace 1120
 That I may seen hire / at the leeste weye
 I nam but deed / ther nys namoore to seye
 ¶ This Palamon / whan he tho wordes herde
 Despitously he loked / and answerde 1124
 Wheither seistow this / in earnest or in pley
 ¶ Nay quod Arcite / in earnest by my fey
 God help me so / me list ful yuele pleye
 This Palamon / gan knytte his browes tweye 1128
 ¶ It were to thee quod he / no greet honour
 ffor to be fals / ne for to be traytour
 To me / that am thy cosyn and thy brother
 Ysworn ful depe / and ech of vs til oother 1132
 That neuere / for to dyen in the peyne
 Til þat the deeth / departe shal vs tweyne
 Neither of vs / in loue to hyndre oother
 Ne in noon oother caas / my leeue brother 1136
 But þat thow sholdest trewely forthre me
 In euery caas / and I shal forthren thee
 This was thyn ooth / as myn also certeyn
 I woot right wel / thow darst it nat withseyn 1140
 Thus artow of my conseil / out of doute

34 GROUP A. § 2. KNIGHT'S TALE. Hengwrt MS.

And now / thow woldest falsly been aboute
 To loue my lady / whom I loue and serue (leaf 16, back)
 And euere shal / til þat myn herte sterue 1144
 Now certes false Arcite / thow shalt nat so
 I loued hire first and tolde thee my wo
 As to my conseil / and my brother sworn
 To forthre me / as I haue told biforn 1148
 ffor which / thow art ybounden / as a knyght
 To helpe me / if it laye in thy myght
 Or ellis artow fals / I dar wel sayn
 This Arcite / ful proudly spak agayn 1152
 ¶ Thow shalt quod he / be rather fals than I.
 And thow art fals / I telle thee outrely
 ffor paramour / I loued hire first er thow
 What wiltow seyn / thow woost nat yet now 1156
 Wheither she be a womman / or goddesse
 Thyn is / affection of holynesse
 And myn is loue / as to a creature
 ffor which / I tolde thee myn auenture 1160
 As to my cosyn / and my brother sworn
 I pose / that thow louedest hire biforn
 Wostow nat wel / the olde clerkes sawe
 That who shal / yeue a louere any lawe // *Quis legem det amantibus.*
 Loue is a gretter lawe / by my pan
 Than may be yeue / to any erthely man
 And therfore / posityf lawe / and swich decree
 Is broke al day for loue / in ech degree 1168
 A man moot nedes loue / maugree his heed
 He may nat fleen it / thogh he sholde be deed
 Al be she mayde / wydwe / or ellis wyf
 And eek it is nat likly / al thy lyf 1172
 To stonden in hir grace / namoore shal .I.
 ffor wel thow woost thy self verrailly
 That thow and I / been dampned to prisoñ
 Perpetuelly / vs gayneth no raunsoñ 1176
 We stryue / as dide the houndes for the boon

They foghte alday / and yet hir part was noon
 Ther cam a kyte / whil þat they were so wrothe
 That bar away the boon / bitwix hem bothe 1180
 And therfore / at the kynges court my brother
 Ech man for hym self / ther is noon oother
 Loue if thee leet. for I loue / and ay shal (leaf 17)
 And soothly / leue brother this is al 1184
 Heere in this prison / moote we endure
 And euerich of vs / take his auenture
 ¶ Greet was the stryf / and long bitwix hem tweye
 If þat I hadde leyser for to seye 1188
 But to theeffect / it happed on a day
 To telle it yow / as shortly as I may
 A worthy duc. þat highte Parotheus
 That felawe was / vn to duc Theseus 1192
 Syn thilke day / þat they were children lyte
 Was come to Atthenes / his felawe to visite
 And for to pleye / as he was wont to do
 ffor in this world / he loued no man so 1196
 And he loued hym / as tendrely agayn
 So wel they loued / as olde bookes sayn
 That whan þat oon was deed / soothly to telle
 His felawe wente / and soghte hym down in helle 1200
 But of that storie / list me noght to write
 Duc Perotheus / loued wel Arcite
 And hadde hym knowe at Thebes / year oy yere
 And finally / at requeste and prayere 1204
 Of Perotheus / with outen any raunson
 Duc Theseus / hym leet out of prison
 firely to goon / wher þat hym liste ouer al
 In swich a gyse / as I yow tellen shal 1208
 This was the forward / pleyedly for tendite
 Bitwixe Theseus / and hym Arcite
 That if so weere þat Arcite weere yfounde
 Enere in his lyf / by day / or nyght or stounde 1212
 In any contree / of this Theseus

36 GROUP A. § 2. KNIGHT'S TALE. Hengwrt MS.

And he weere caught. it was acorded thus
 That with a swerd / he sholde lese his heed
 Ther nas noon oother / remedye ne reed 1216
 But taketh his leue / and homward he hym spedde
 Lat hym be war / his nekke lyth to wedde
 ¶ How greet a sorwe / suffreth now Arcite
 The deeth he feeleth / thurgh his herte smyte 1220
 He wepeth / wayleth / cryeth pitously
 To sleen hym self / he wayteth pryuely
 He seyde allas / the day þat I was born [leaf 17, back]
 Now is my prison / worse than biforn 1224
 Now is me shape / eternally to dwelle
 Noght in purgatorie / but in helle
 Allas / þat euere knew I Parotheus
 ffor ellis / hadde I dwelled with Theseus 1228
 Yfettred in his prison euere mo
 Thanne hadde I been in blisse / and nat in wo
 Oonly the sighte of hire / whom þat I serue
 Thogh þat I neuere / hir grace may disserue 1232
 Wolde haue suffised / right ynogh for me
 ¶ O deere cosyn / Palamon / quod he
 Thyn is the victorie / of this auenture
 fful blisfully in prison maystow dure 1236
 In prison? / nay certes / but in paradys
 Wel hath ffortune / yturned thee / the dys
 That hast the sighte of hire / and I thabsence
 ffor possible is / syn thow hast hire presence 1240
 And art a knyght a worthy and an able
 That by som caas / syn ffortune is chaungeable
 Thow mayst to thy desir / som tyme atteyne
 But I / that am exiled and bareyne 1244
 Of alle grace / and in so greet despeyr
 That ther nys Erthe / water / fyr / ne Eyr
 Ne creature / that of hem maked is
 That may me helpe / or do confort in this 1248
 Wel oghte I sterue / in wanhope / and distresse

farwel my lyf / my lust and my gladnesse
 ¶ Allas why pleynten folk so / in commune
 On purueiance of god / or of ffortune 1252
 That yeueth hem ful ofte / in many a gyse
 Wel bettre / than they kan hem self deuyse
 ¶ Som man desireth / for to haue richesse
 That cause is ofte / of his moerdre / or gret siknesse 1256
 And som man wolde / out of his prison fayn
 That in his hous / is of his meynne slayn
 Infinite harmes / been in this matere
 We woot nat what thyng pat we prayen heere 1260
 We fare as he / pat dronke is as a Mous
 A dronke man woot wel / he hath an hous
 But he noot / which the righte wey is thider [leaf 18]
 And to a dronke man / the wey is slider 1264
 And certes / in this world / so faren we
 We seken faste / after felicitye
 But we goon wrong ful ofte trewely
 Thus may we seyn alle / and nameliche .I. 1268
 That wende / and hadde a greet opinion
 That if I myghte / scapen fro prison
 Thanne hadde I been in ioye / and parfit heele
 Ther now / I am exiled fro my wele 1272
 Syn pat / I may nat seen yow Emelie
 I nam but deed / ther nys no remedie
 ¶ Vp on that oother syde Palamon
 Whan pat he wiste / Arcite was agon 1276
 Swich sorwe he maketh / pat the grete tour
 Resowneth / of his yowlyng and clamour
 The pure fettres / of his shynes grete
 Were / of his bittre salte teeris wete 1280
 Allas quod he / Arcite cosyn myn
 Of al oure stryf / god woot the fruyt is thyn
 Thow walkest now / in Thebes at thy large
 And of my wo / thow yeuest litel charge 1284
 Thow maystt syn thow hast wisdom / and manhede

Assemblen / al the folk' of oure kynrede
 And make a werre / so sharp / on this Citee
 That by som auenture / or som trettee 1288
 Thow mayst haue hire / to lady and to wyf
 ffor whom / þat I moste nedes lese my lyf
 ffor as by wey / of possibilittee
 Sith thow art' at thy large / of prison free 1292
 And art a lord / greet is thyn auantage
 Moore than is myn / that sterue here in a cage
 ffor I moot wepe / and waille whil I lyue
 With al the wo / þat prison may me yeue 1296
 And eek with peyne / þat loue me yeueth also
 That doubleth / al my torment' and my wo
 Ther with / the fyr of Ialousie vp sterte
 With Inne his brest' and hente hym by the herte 1300
 So woodly / þat he lyk was to byholde
 The Boxtree / or the Asshen dede / and colde
 ¶ Thanne seyde he / o crewel goddes / þat gouerne [leaf 18, back]
 This world / with byndyng' of youre word eterne 1304
 And writen / in the table of Atthamañt
 Yourre parlement /. and youre eterne grañt'
 What is man kynde / moore vn to yow holde
 Than is the sheepe / þat rowketh in the folde 1308
 ffor slayn is man / right as another beest'
 And dwelleth eek' in prison and arrest'
 And hath siknesse / and greet aduersitee
 And ofte tymes / gillees pardee 1312
 ¶ What gouernance / is in this prescience
 That gillees / tormenteth Innocence
 And yet' encreeceth this / al my penance
 That man is bounden / to his obseruance 1316
 ffor goddes sake / to letten of his wille
 Ther as a beest' may al his lust fulfille
 And whan a beest is deed / it hath no peyne
 But man after his deeth / moot wepe and pleyne 1320
 Thogh in this world / he haue care and wo

With outen doute / it moot stonden so
 The answer of this / lete I to diuynys
 But wel I woot þat in this world / greet pyne is 1324
 ¶ Allas / I se a serpent or a theef
 That many a trewe man / hath doon mescheef
 Goon at his large / and where hym lust may turne
 But I moot been in prison / thurgh Saturne 1328
 And eek thurgh Juno / Ialous / and eek wood
 That hath destroyed / wel neigh al the blood
 Of Thebes / with his waste walles wyde
 And Venus / sleeth me / on that oother syde 1332
 ffor Ialousie / and feere / of hym Arcite
 ¶ Now wol I stynte / of Palamon alite
 And lete hym / in his prison stille dwelle
 And of Arcite / forth I wol yow telle 1336
 ¶ The Somer / and the nyghtes longe
 Encreecen / double wise / the peynes stronge
 Bothe of the louere / and the prisoner
 I noot which hath / the sorwefuller myster 1340
 ffor soothly for to seyn / this Palamon
 Perpetuelly / is dampned to prison
 In cheynes / and in fettres / to been deed (leaf 19)
 And Arcite / is exiled / vp on his heed 1344
 ffor euere mo / as out of that contree
 Ne neueremo / ne shal his lady see
 ¶ Yow loueris / axe I now / this question
 Who hath the worse / Arcite / or Palamon 1348
 That oon may seen his lady / day by day
 But in prison / moot he dwelle alwey
 That oother where hym list may ride or go
 But seen his lady / shal he neuere mo 1352
 Now demeth as yow list ye þat kan
 ffor I wol telle forth / as .I. bigan

¶ Whan þat Arcite / to Thebes comen was
 fful ofte a day / he swelte / and seyde allas 1356
 ffor seen his lady / shal he neuere mo
 And shortly / to concluden al his wo
 So muchel sorwe / hadde neuere creature
 That is or shal / whil þat the world may dure 1360
 ¶ His sleepe / his mete / his drynke / is hym biraft
 That leene he weex / and drye as is a shaft
 Hise eyen holwe / and grisly to biholde
 His hewe falow / and pale as asshen colde 1364
 And solitarie he was / and euere alloone
 And waillynge al the nyght. makynge his moone
 And if he herde / soong^r or Instrument^r
 Thanne wolde he wepe / he myghte nat be stent^r 1368
 So feble eek were his spiritz / and so lowe
 And chaunged so / þat no man koude knowe
 His speche / nor his voys / thogh men it herde
 And in his gere / for al the world he ferde 1372
 Nat oonly / lyk the louteris maladye
 Of Hereos / but rather lyk Manye Mania
 Engendred / of humour malencolyk^r
 Biforn his Celle fantastyk^r 1376
 And shortly / turned was / al vp so down
 Bothe habit^r and eek disposicioun
 Of hym / this woful louere daun Arcite
 ¶ What sholde I al day / of his wo endite 1380
 Whanne he endured hadde / a yeer / or two
 This cruel torment^r and this peyne and wo
 At Thebes in his contree / as I seyde [leaf 19, back]
 Vp on a nyght^r in sleep / as he hym leyde 1384
 Hym thoughte / how þat the wynged god *Mercurye*
 Biforn hym stood / and bad hym to be murye
 His slepy yerde / in honde he bar vp righte
 An hat he wered / vp on his herys brighte 1388

Arrayed was this god / as he took keepe
 As he was / whan þat Argus took his sleepe
 And seyde hym thus / to Atthenes shaltow wende
 Ther is thee shapen / of thy wo an ende 1392
 ¶ And with that word / Arcite wook and starte
 Now trewely / how sore þat me smerte
 Quod he / to Atthenes right now wol I fare
 Ne for the drede of deeth / shal I nat spare 1396
 To se my lady / þat I loue and serue
 In hir presence / I recche nat to sterue
 ¶ And with that word / he caughte a greet Mirour
 And saugh / þat chaunged was al his colour 1400
 And saugh his visage / al in another kynde
 And right anoon / it ran hym in his mynde
 That sith his face / was so disfigured
 Of maladie / the which he hadde endured 1404
 He myghte wel / if þat he bar hym lowe
 Lyue in Atthenes / euere moore vnknowe
 And seen his lady / wel ny / day by day
 And right anoon / he chaunged his array 1408
 And cladde hym / as a poure laborer
 And al allone / saue onely a Squyer
 That knew his pryuetee / and al his cas
 Which was disguised / pourely as he was 1412
 To Atthenes / is he goon / the nexte way
 And to the Court he wente vp on a day
 And at the gate / he profreth his seruyse
 To drugge and drawe / what so men wol deuysel 1416
 ¶ And shortly / of this matere / for to seyn
 He fil in office / with a Chambreleyn
 The which / þat dwellyng was with Emelye
 ffor he was wys / and koude soone espye 1420
 Of euery seruant which þat serueth here
 Wel koude he / hewen wode / and water bere
 ffor he was yong. and myghty for the nones [leaf 50]
 And ther to / he was strong and byg of bones 1424

To doon / what any wight^t kan hym deuyse
 A yeer / or two / he was in this seruyse
 Page of the chambre / of Emelie the brighte
 And Philostrate / he seyde þat he highte 1428
 ¶ But half so wel biloued a man / as he
 Ne was ther neuere in Court^t of his degree
 He was so gentil / of condicion
 That thurgh out al the Court^t was his renom^t 1432
 They seiden / þat it were a charitee
 That Theseus / wolde enhauncen his degree
 And putten hym / in worshipful seruyse
 Ther as he myghte / his vertu excercise 1436
 And thus with Inne a while / his name is spronge
 Bothe of his dedes / and his goode tonge
 That Theseus / hath taken hym so ner
 That of his chambre / he made hym a Squier 1440
 And gaf hym gold / to mayntene his degree
 And eek men broghte hym / out of his contree
 ffor yeer to yeer / ful pryuely his rente
 But honestly / and sleighly / he it spent^e 1444
 That no man wondred / how þat he it hadde
 And thre yeer in this wise / his lyf he ladde
 And bar hym so / in pees / and ek in werre
 Ther was no man / that Theseus hath derre 1448
 And in this blisse / lete I now Arcite
 And speke I wole / of Palamon alite
 ¶ In derknesse / and horrible / and strong^t prison^t
 This seuen yeer / hath seten Palamon^t 1452
 fforpynd / what for wo / and for distresse
 Who feeleth / double soor / and heuynesse
 But Palamon / that loue destreyneth so
 That wood out of his wit^t he gooth for wo 1456
 And eek ther to / he is a prisoner
 Perpetuelly / nat oonly for a yer
 Who koude ryme / in englissh proprely
 His martirdom / for sothe it am noght I 1460

Ther fore I passe / as lightly / as I may
 ¶ It fil / þat / in that Seuenthe yeer of May
 The thridde nyght. as olde bokes seyn (Leaf 96, back)
 That al this storie / tellen moore pleyn 1464
 Were it by auenture / or destynnee
 As whan a thyng is shapen / it shal be
 That soone after the mydnyght Palamon
 By helpyng of a freend / brak his prison 1468
 And fleeth the Citee / faste as he may go
 ffor he hadde yeue / his Gailler drynke so
 Of a Clarree / maad of certeyn wyn 1471
 With Nercotikes / and opye / of Thebes fyn // *Opium Thebaicum.*
 That al that nyght. thogh þat men wolde hym shake
 The Gailler sleepe / he myghte noght awake
 ¶ And thus he fleeth / as faste as euere he may
 The nyght was short and faste by the day 1476
 That nedes cost he moste hym seluen hyde
 And til a groue / faste ther bisyde
 With dreedful foot thanne stalketh Palamon
 ffor shortly / this was his opynyon 1480
 That in that groue / he wolde hym hyde al day
 And in the nyght thanne wolde he take his way
 To Thebesward / his freendes for to preye
 On Theseus / to helpe hym to werreye 1484
 And shortly / outhere he wolde lese his lyf
 Or wynnen Emelie / vn to his wyf
 This is theeffect and his entente pleyn
 ¶ Now wol I turne / to Arcite ageyn 1488
 That litel wiste / how neigh þat was his care
 Til þat ffortune / hadde broght hym / in the snare
 ¶ The bisy larke / messenger of day
 Salueth in hir song the morwe gray 1492
 And firy Phebus / riseth vp so brighte
 That al the Orient. laugheth of the lighte
 And with his stremes / dryeth in the greues
 The siluer dropes / hangynge on the leues 1496

And Arcita / that in the Court roial
 With Theseus / Squyer principal
 Is risen / and looketh on the murye day
 And for to doon / his obseruance to May 1500
 Remembrynge / on the point of his desir
 He on a Courser / startlynge as the fir
 Is riden in to the feldes / hym to pleye [leaf 21]
 Out of the Court. were it a myle / or tweye 1504
 And to the groue / of which þat I yow tolde
 By auenture / his wey he gan to holde
 To maken hym / a gerland of the greues
 Were it of wodebynde / or hawethorn leues 1508
 And loude he soong. ayein the sonne shene
 May / with alle thy floures / and thy grene
 Wel come be thow / faire fresshe May
 In hope / þat I som grene gete may 1512
 And from his courser / with a lusty herte
 In to the groue / ful hastily he sterte
 And in a path / he rometh vp and down
 Ther as by auenture / this Palamon 1516
 Was in a bussþ / þat no man myghte hym se
 ffor soore afered / of his deeth was he
 No thyng knew he / þat it was Arcite
 God woot he wolde haue trowed it ful lite 1520
 But sooth is seyð / go sithen many yeris
 That feeld hath eyen / and the wode hath crys
 It is ful fair / a man to bere hym euene
 ffor alday meeten men / at vnset steuene 1524
 fful litel woot Arcite / of his felawe,
 That was so neigh / to herknen al his sawe
 ffor in the bussþ / he sitteth now ful stille
 ¶ Whan þat Arcite / hadde romed al his fille 1528
 And songen al the roundel lustily
 In to a studie / he fil sodeynly
 As doon thise louerys / in hir queynte gerys
 Now in the crope / now down in the brerys 1532

GROUP A. § 2. KNIGHT'S TALE. Hengwrt MS. 45

Now vp / now down / as boket in a well
 Right as the friday / soothly for to telle
 Now it shyneth / now it reyneth faste
 Right so / kan gery Venus ouercaste 1536
 The hertes of hir folk'. right as hir day
 Is gerful / right so chaungeth she array
 Selde is the friday / al the wike ylike
 ¶ Whan þat Arcite hadde songe / he gan to syke 1540
 And sette hym down / with outen any moore
 Allas quod he / that day / þat I was bore
 How longe Iuno / thurgh thy crueltee [leaf 21, back]
 Woltow werreyen / Thebes the Citee 1544
 Allas / ybroght is to confusion
 The blood roial / of Cadme and Amphion
 ¶ Cadmus / which þat was the firste man
 That Thebes bulte / and first bigan 1548
 And of the Citee / first was crowned kyng
 Of his lynage am I / and his of-spryng
 By verray ligne / as of the stok roial
 And now I am / so caytyf and so thral 1552
 That he þat is / my mortal enemy
 I serue hym / as his Squyer pourely
 And yet dooth Iuno / me wel moore shame
 ffor I dar noght biknowe myn owen name 1556
 But ther as I was wont to highte Arcite
 Now highte I Philostrate / noght worth a myte
 ¶ Allas thow felle Mars / allas Juno
 Thus hath youre Ire / oure lynage al fordo 1560
 Saue oonly me / and wrecchid Palamon
 That Theseus / martireth in prison
 And ouer al this / to sleen me outrely
 Loue hath his fyr dart so brennyngly 1564
 Ystiked / thurgh my trewe careful herte
 That shapen was my deeth / erst than my sherte
 Ye sleen me with youre eyen / Emelye
 Ye been the cause / wherfore þat .I. dye 1568

Of al the remenant^t of myn oother care
 Ne sette I noght^t. the mountaunce of a tare
 So þat I koude doon aught^t. to your^e plesaunce
 And with that word / he fil down in a traunce 1572
 A longe tyme / and afterward he vp sterte
 ¶ This Palamon / that thoughte / þat thurgh his herte
 He felte a coold swerd / sodeynly glyde
 ffor Ire he quook^t. no lenger wolde he byde 1576
 And whan þat he had herd / Arcites tale
 As he were wood / with face deed and pale
 He stirte hym vp / out of the buskes thikke
 And seyde Arcite / false traytour wikke 1580
 Now artow hent^t that louest my lady so
 ffor whom þat I haue / al this peyne and wo
 And art my blood / and to my conseil sworn [leaf 22]
 As I ful ofte / haue toold thee her biforn 1584
 And hast byiaped here / duc Theseus
 And falsly / chaunged hast thy name thus
 I wol be deed / or ellis thou shalt dye
 Thou shalt^t noght / loue my lady Emelye 1588
 But I wol loue hire oonly / and namo
 ffor I am Palamon / thy mortal foo
 And thogh þat I / no wepne haue in this place
 But out of prison / am astart by grace 1592
 I drede noght^t þat outhur thou shalt dye
 Or thou ne shalt^t noght louen Emelye
 Chees which thou wolt^t or thou shalt^t noght astarte
 ¶ This Arcite / with ful despitous herte 1596
 Whan he hym knew / and hadde his tale herd
 As fiers as leon / pulled out his swerd
 And seyde thus / by god þat sitteth aboue
 Nere it þat thou art syk^t and wood for loue 1600
 And eek^t þat thou / no wepne hast in this place
 Thou sholdest neuere / out of this groue pace
 That thou ne sholdest^t dyen of myn hond
 ffor I diffye / the seuretee and the bond 1604

Which þat thow seist þat I haue maad to thee
 What verray fool / thyng wel þat loue is free.
 And I wol loue hire / maugree al thy myght
 ¶ But for as muche / as thow art a worthy knyght 1608
 And wilnest to darreyne hire by bataille
 Haue here my trouthe / tomorwe I nyl nat faille
 With outen wityng of any oother wight
 That here / I wol be founden / as a knyght 1612
 And bryngen harneys / right ynogh for thee
 And chees the beste / and leef the worste to me
 And mete and drynke / this nyght wol I brynge
 Ynogh for thee / and clothes for thy beddyng 1616
 And if so be / þat thow my lady wynne
 And sle me in this wode / ther I am Inne
 Thow mayst wel haue thy lady / as for me
 ¶ This Palamon answerde / I graunte it thee 1620
 And thus they been departed / til amorwe
 Whan ech of hem / hadde leyd his feith to borwe
 O Cupide / out of alle charitee [leaf 22, back]
 O regne / that wolde no felawe haue to thee 1624
 fful sooth is seyð / þat loue ne lordshipe
 Wol noght his thankes / haue no felaweshipe
 Wel fynden that Arcite and Palamon
 ¶ Arcite / is riden anon / vn to the town 1628
 And on the morwe / er it were dayes lyght
 fful priuely / two harneys hath he dyght
 Bothe suffisaunt and mete to darreyne
 The bataille in the feeld / bitwix hem tweyne 1632
 And on his hors / allone / as he was born
 He carieth al this harneys / hym biforn
 And in the groue / at tyme and place yset
 This Arcite / and this Palamon been met 1636
 ¶ To chaungen / gan the colour in hir face
 Right as the hunterys / in the regne of Trace
 That stonden at the gappe / with a spere
 Whanne hunted is / the leon or the Bere 1640

And hereth hym / come russhynge in the greues
 And breketh / bothe bowes / and the leues
 And thynketh / here cometh my mortal enemy
 With oute faille / he moot be deed / or .I. 1644
 ffor outhur / I moot sleen hym / at the gappe
 Or he moot sle me / if þat me myshappe
 So ferden they / in chaungyng^t of hir hewe
 As fer / as euerich / oother of hem knewe 1648
 ¶ Ther nas no good day / ne no saluynge
 But streight^t with outhen word / or rehersynge
 Euerich of hem / heelp for to armen oother
 As frendly / as he weere / his owene brother 1652
 And after that / with sharpe speres stronge
 They foynen / ech at oother / wonder longe
 Thou myghtest wene / þat this Palamon
 In his fightynge were a wood leon 1656
 And as a crewel Tygre / was Arcite
 As wilde boores / gonnen they to smyte
 That frothen / whit as foom / for Ire wood
 Vp to the Ancles / foghte they in hir blood 1660
 And in this wise / I lete hem fightyng dwelle
 And forth I wole / of Theseus yow telle
 ¶ The destynce / Ministre general [leaf 23]
 That executeth / in the world ouer al 1664
 The purueiance / that god hath seyn biforn
 So stroong^t it is / þat thogh the world hadde sworn
 The contrarie of a thyng^t by ye / or nay
 Yet som tyme / it shal fallen on a day 1668
 That falleth nat eft / with Inne a thousand yeer
 ffor certainly / oure appetites heer
 Be it of werre / or pees / or hate / or loue
 Al is this ruled / by the sighte aboue 1672
 ¶ This mene I now / by myghty Theseus
 That for to hunten / is so desirus
 And namely / at the grete hert in May
 That in his bed / ther daweth hym no day 1676

That he nys clad / and redy for to ryde
 With hunte and horn / and houndes hym bisyde
 ffor in his huntynge hath he swich delit
 That it is / al his ioie and appetit 1680
 To been hym self / the grete hertes bane
 ffor after Mars / he serueth now Diane
 ¶ Cleer was the day / as I haue told er this
 And Theseus / with alle ioie and blys 1684
 With his ypolita / the faire queene
 And Emelie / clothed al in greene
 On huntynge be they riden roially
 And to the groue / that stood ful faste by 1688
 In which ther was an hert as men hym tolde
 Duc Theseus / the streighte wey hath holde
 And to the launde / he rideth hym ful right
 ffor thider was the hert wont haue his flight 1692
 And ouer a brook / and so forth on his weye
 This duc wol han a cours at hym / or tweye
 With houndes swiche / as þat hym list comaunde
 And whan this duc. was come vn to the launde 1696
 Vnder the sonne he looketh / and anon
 He was war / of Arcite and Palamon
 That foghten breme / as it were boles two
 The brighte swerdes / wenten to and fro 1700
 So hidously / that with the leeste strook
 It semed / as it wolde felle an ook
 But what they weere / no thyng he ne woot (leaf 22, back)
 This duc his courser / with the spores smoot 1704
 And at a stert he was bitwix hem two
 And pulled out a swerd / and cryed Hoo
 Namooore / vp on payne / of lesyng of youre heed
 By myghty Mars / he shal anon be deed 1708
 That smyteth any strook / þat I may seen
 But telleth me / what myster men ye been
 That been so hardy / for to fighten heer
 With outen Iuge / or oother officer 1712

As it weere in a lystes roially
 ¶ This Palamon / answerde hastily
 And seyde / sire / what nedeth wordes mo
 We haue the deeth deserued / bothe two 1716
 Two woful wrecches been we / two caytyues
 That been encombred / of oure owene lyues
 And as thow art a rightful lord and Iuge
 Ne yif vs / neither mercy ne refuge 1720
 But slee me first. for seinte charitee
 But slee my felawe eek / as wel as me
 Or slee hym first. for thogh thow knowe it lite
 This is thy mortal foo / this is Arcite 1724
 That fro thy lond / is banysshed on his heed
 ffor which / he hath deserued to be deed
 ffor this is he / þat cam vn to thy yate
 And seyde / þat he highte Philostrate 1728
 Thus hath he iaped thee / ful many a yeer
 And thow. hast maked hym / thy chief Squyer
 And this is he / þat loueth Emelye
 ffor sith the day is come / þat I shal dye 1732
 I make pleynty / my confession
 That I am / thilke woful Palamon
 That hath thy prison / broken wikkedly
 I am thy mortal foo / and it am I 1736
 That loueth so hoote / Emelye the brighte
 That I wol dyen / present in hir sighte
 Wherefore I axe deeth / and my Iuise
 But slee my felawe / in the same wise 1740
 ffor bothe haue we / deserued to be slayn
 ¶ This worthy duc answerde anon agayn
 And seyde / this is a short conclusion [leaf 24]
 Youre owene mouth / by youre confession 1744
 Hath dampned yow / and I wol it recorde
 It nedeth noght to pyne yow *with* the corde
 Ye shul be deed / by myghty Mars the rede
 ¶ The queene anon / for verray wommanhede 1748

Gan for to wepe / and so dide Emelye
 And alle the ladies / in the compaignye
 Greet pitee was it / as it thoughte hem alle
 That euere swich a chaunce / sholde falle 1752
 ffor gentil men they weere / of greet estaat
 And no thyng but for loue / was this debaat
 And sawe / hir bloody wowndes / wide and soore
 And alle cryden / bothe lasse and moore 1756
 Haue mercy lord / vp on vs wommen alle
 And on hir bare knees / adown they falle
 And wolde haue kist his feet ther as he stood
 Til at the laste / aslaked was his mood 1760
 ffor pitee / renneth soone in gentil herte
 And thogh he first for Ire quook and sterte
 He hath considred / shortly in a clause
 The trespass of hem bothe / and eek the cause 1764
 And al thogh þat his Ire / hir gilt accused
 Yet in his reson / he hem bothe excused
 ¶ As thus / he thoghte wel þat euery man
 Wol helpe hym self in loue / if þat he kan 1768
 And eek / deliuere hym self / out of prison
 And eek / his herte hadde compassion
 Of wommen / for they wepten euere in oon
 And in his gentil herte / he thoghte anoon 1772
 And softe vn to hym / self he seyde fy
 Vp on a lord / that wol haue no mercy ¶ note
 But be a leon / bothe in word / and dede
 To hem / that been in repentaunce and drede 1776
 As wel / as to a proud despitous man
 That wol mayntene / that he first bigan
 That lord / hath litel of discrecion
 That in swich caas / kan no dyuysion 1780
 But weyeth pryde / and humblesse / after oon
 And shortly / whan his Ire is thus agoon
 He gan to loken vp / with eyen lighte [leaf 24, back]
 And spak thise same wordes / al on highte 1784

- ¶ The god of loue / a benedicitee
 How myghty / and how greet a lord is he
 Agayns his myght. ther gayneth none obstacles
 He may be clepid a god / for his miracles 1788
 ffor he kan maken / at his owene gyse
 Of euerich herte / as þat hym list deuyse
 ¶ Lo here / this Arcite / and this Palamon
 That quitly were / out of my prison 1792
 And myghte haue lyued in Thebes roially
 And witen / I am hir mortal enemy
 And þat hir deeth / lyth in my myght also
 And yet hath loue / maugree hir eyen two 1796
 Broght hem hyder / bothe for to dye
 Now looketh / is nat that an heigh folye
 ¶ Who may been a fool / but if he loue
 Bihoold for goddes sake / þat sit aboue 1800
 Se how they blede / be they noght wel arrayed
 Thus hath hir lord / the god of loue ypayed
 Hir wages / and hir fees / for hir seruyse
 And yet they wenen to be ful wyse 1804
 That seruen loue / for aught þat may bifalle
 But this is yet the beste game of alle
 That she / for whom / they haue this Iolitee
 Kan hem ther fore / as muche thank as me 1808
 She woot namoore / of al this hoot fare
 By god / than woot a cokkow of an hare
 But al moot been assayed / hoot and coold
 A man moot been a fool / or yong' or oold 1812
 I woot it by my self / ful yooore agoon
 ffor in my tyme / a seruant was I oon
 And ther fore / syn I knowe of loues peyne
 And woot how soore / it kan a man distreyne 1816
 As he þat hath been caught ofte in his laas
 I yow foryeue / al hoolly this trespas
 At requeste of the queene / þat kneeleth heere
 And eek of Emelye / my suster deere 1820

And ye shal bothe anon / vn to me swere
 That neuere mo / ye shal my contree dere
 Ne make werre vp on me / nyght nor day [leaf 25]
 But been my freendes / in al that ye may 1824
 I yow foryeue / this trespass euerydel
 And they hym sworn / his axing faire and wel
 And hym of lordshipe / and of mercy preyde
 And he hem graunteth grace / and thanne he seyde 1828
 ¶ To speke of roial lynage / and richesse
 Thogh þat she weere a queene / or a princesse
 Ech of yow bothe / is worthy doutelees
 To wedden whan tyme is / but nathelees 1832
 I speke / as for my suster Emelye
 ffor whom / ye haue this stryf and Ialousye
 Ye woot your self. she may nat wedden two
 Atones / thogh ye fighten eueremo 1836
 That oon of yow / al be hym looth / or lief
 He moot go pipen / in an yuy leef
 This is to seyn / she may nat now haue bothe
 Al be ye neuere so Ialous / ne so wrothe 1840
 And for thy / I yow putte in this degree
 That ech of yow / shal haue his destynne
 As hym is shape / and herkneth in what wyse
 Lo here youre ende / of that I shal deuyse 1844
 ¶ My wyl is this / for þat conclusion
 With outen any replicacion
 If that yow liketh / take it for the beste
 That euerych of yow / shal goon where hym leste 1848
 ffrely / with outen raunson / or daunger
 And this day fifty wykes / fer ne neer
 Euerich of yow / shal brynge an hundred knyghtes
 Armed for listes / vp at alle rightes 1852
 Al redy / to darreyne hire by bataille
 And this bihoote I yow / with outen faille
 Vp on my trouthe / and as I am a knyght
 That wheither of yow bothe / þat hath myght 1856

This is to seyn / þat wheither he or thou
 May with his hundred / as I spak of now
 Sleen his contrarie / or out of lystes dryue
 Thanne shal I yeue / Emelye to wyue 1860
 To whom þat ffortune / yeueth so fair a grace
 The lystes / shal I maken in this place
 And god so wisly / on my soule rewe [leaf 25, back]
 As I shal / euene Iuge been and trewe 1864
 Ye shul noon oother ende / with me maken
 That oon of yow ne / shall be deed / or taken
 And if yow thynketh / this is well ysayd
 Sey youre ays / and holdeth yow apayd 1868
 This is youre ende / and youre conclusion
 ¶ Who looketh lightly now / but Palamon
 Who spryngeth vp for ioye / but Arcite
 Who koude telle / or who koude it endite 1872
 The ioye / that is maked in the place
 Whan Theseus / hath doon so fair a grace
 But down on knees / wente euery maner wight
 And thonken hym / with al hir herte and myght 1876
 And namely the Thebans ofte sythe
 And thus with good hope / and herte blythe
 They take hir leue / and homward gonne they ryde
 To Thebes / with olde walles wyde 1880

Explicit prima pars

Incipit pars secunda 𐀚

I trowe / men wolde deme it negligence
 If I foryete / to tellen the despenche
 Of Theseus / that gooth so bisily
 To maken vp the lystes / roially 1884
 That swich a noble Theatre / as it was
 I dar wel seyn / in this world ther nas
 The circuit a myle was aboute
 Walled of stoon / and dyched al with oute 1888
 Round was the shape / in manere of compas

ful of degrees / the heighte of sixty paas
 That whan a man / was set on o degree
 He letted noght his felawe for to see 1892
 ¶ Estward ther stood a gate / of Marbul whit
 Westward / right swich another / in the oposit
 And shortly to concluden / swich a place
 Was noon in erthe / as in so lite a space 1896
 ffor in the lond / ther was no crafty man (leaf 20)
 That Geometrye / or Ars metrik kan
 Ne purtreyour / ne keruere of ymages
 That Theseus / ne yaf mete and wages 1900
 The Theatre / for to maken and deuysen
 And for to doon / his ryte and sacrificen
 He Estward hath / vp on the gate aboute
 In worship of venus / goddesse of loue 1904
 Doon maad an Auter / and an oratorie
 And on the westward / in memorie
 Of Mars / he maketh hath right swich another
 That coste largely / of gold a fother 1908
 And Northward / in a touret on the wal
 Of Alabastre whit and reed Coral
 An oratorie / riche for to see
 In worshipe / of Diane of chastitee 1912
 Hath Theseus / doon wrought in noble Wise
 ¶ But yet hadde I forgeten / to deuysen
 The noble keruyng / and the purtreitures
 The shape / the contenance / and the figures 1916
 That weren / in thise oratories thre
 ¶ first / in the temple of Venus / maystow se
 Wroght on the wal / ful pitous to biholde
 The broken slepes / and the sykes colde 1920
 The sacred teerys / and the waymentynge
 The firy strokes / of the desirynges
 That loues seruantz / in this lyf enduren
 The othes / that hir couenantz assuren 1924
 Plesance / and hope / desir / foolhardynesse

Beautee and youthe / baudrye / richesse	
Charmes and force / lesynges / flaterye	
Despense / bisynesse / and Ialousye	1928
That wered / of yelowē gooldes a gerland	
And a Cokkow / sittynge on hir hand	
ffestes / Instrumentz / caroles / daunces	
Lust and array / and alle the circumstaunces	1932
Of loue / whiche þat I rekned / and rekne shal	
By ordre / weren peynted on the wal	
And mo than / I kan make of mencion	
ffor soothly / al the Mount of Citheron	1936
Ther Venus / hath hir princīpal dwellynge	[leaf 26, back]
Was shewed on the wal / in purtreyynge	
With al the gardyn / and the lustynesse	
Nat was foryeten / the porter ydelnesse	1940
Ne Narcisus the faire / of yoores agon	
Ne yet / the folie / of kyng Salomon	
Ne yet the grete strengthe of Ercules	
Thenchantementz / of Medea and Circes	1944
Ne of Turnus / with the hardy fiers corage	
The ryche Cresus / caytif in seruage	
¶ Thus may ye seen / þat wisdom ne richesse	
Beautee / ne sleighte / strengthe hardynesse	1948
Ne may with Venus / maken champartie	
ffor as hir lust the world than may she gye	
Lo all this folk / so caught were in hir laas	
Til they for wo / ful ofte seyde allas	1952
Suffiseth heere ensamples / oon or two	
And though / I koude rekne a thousand mo	
¶ The statue of Venus / glorious for to see	
Was naked / fletyng ^{ad vid} in the large See ^{ad mare}	1956
And fro the nauele down / al couered was	
With waves grene / and brighte as any glas	
A Citole in hir right hand / hadde she	
And on hir heed / ful semely for to se	1960
A rose gerland / fressh / and wel smellynge	

Aboue hir heed./ hir dowues flikerynge
 Biforn hire stood / hir sone Cupido
 Vp on his shuldres / wynges hadde he two 1964
 And blynd he was / as it is ofte seene
 A bowe he bar / and Arwes brighte and keene
 ¶ Why sholde I nat as wel / eek telle yow al
 The purtreiture / þat was vp on the wal 1968
 With Inne the temple / of myghty Mars the rede
 Al peynted was the wal / in lengthe and brede
 Lyk to the cestres / of the grisly place
 That highte the grete temple / of Mars in Trace 1972
 In thilke colde / frosty Region
 Ther as Mars / hath his souereyn mansion
 ¶ first on the wal / was peynted a fforest
 In which ther dwelleth / neither man ne best 1976
 With knotty / knarry / bareyne trees olde [leaf 27]
 Of stubbes sharpe / and hidouse to biholde
 In which / ther ran a rombul / in a swough
 As thogh a storm / sholde bresten euery bough 1980
 And downward on an hil / vnder a bente
 Ther stood the temple / of Mars armypotente.
 Wroght al of burned steel / of which the entree
 Was long and streyt and gastly for to see 1984
 And ther out cam a rage / and swich a veze^{.i. impetus}
 That it made / al the gate for to rese
 The Northren light in at the dores shoon
 ffor wyndow on the wal / ne was ther noon 1988
 Thurgh which men myghten / any light discerne
 The dore was al / of Athamant eterne
 Yclenched / ouerthwart and endelong/
 With Iren togh / and for to make it strong 1992
 Euery piler / the temple to sustene
 Was tonne greet of Iren bright and shene
 ¶ Ther say I first. the dirke ymagynyng
 Of felonye / and al the compassyng 1996
 The cruel Ire / reed as any gleede

The pike purs / and eek the pale drede	
The smylere / with the knyf vnder the cloke	
The shipne brennyng / with the blake smoke	2000
The treson / of the mordryng in the bed	
The open werre / with woundes al bibled	
Contek / with bloody knyf and sharpe manace	
Al ful of chirkyng was that sory place	2004
¶ The sleere of hym self / yet saugh I ther	
His herte blood / hath bathed al his heer	
The nayl ydryuen / in the shode a nyght	
The colde deeth / with mouth gapyng vp right	2008
Amyddes of the temple / sat meschaunce	
With discomfort and sory contenaunce	
¶ Yet saugh I woodnesse / laughyng in his rage	
Armed compleynt out hees / and fiers outrage	2012
The caroyne in the busshe / with throte ycorue	
A thousand slayn / and noght of qualm ystorue	
The tiraunt with the praye / by force yraft	
The town destroyed / ther was no thyng laft	2016
¶ Yet saugh I brent. the shippes hoppesteres	[leaf 27, back]
The hunte strangled / with the wilde beres	
The sowe freten the child / right in the Cradel	
The Cook yscalded / for al his longe ladel	2020
¶ Naught was forgeten / by the Infortune of Marte	
The Cartere / ouer ryden / with his Carte	
Vnder the wheel / ful lowe he lay adown	
Ther were also / of Martes deuysioun	2024
The Barbour / and the Bochier and the Smyth	
That forgeth sharpe swerdes / on his styth	
¶ And al aboue / depeynted in a tour	
Saugh I Conquest sitting in greet honour	2028
With the sharpe sword / ouer his heed	
Hangynge / by a subtil twynes threed	
¶ Depeynted was / the slaghtre of Iulius	
Of grete Nero / and of Anthonius	2032
Al be / þat thilke tyme / they were vnborn	

Yet was hir deeth / depeynted ther biforn
 By manacynge of Mars / right by figure
 So was it shewed / in that purtreiture 2036
 As is depeynted / in the Sertres aboue
 Who shal be slayn / or ellis deed for loue
 Suffiseth oon ensample / in stories olde
 I may nat rekne hem alle / thogh I wolde 2040
 ¶ The Statue of Mars / vp on a Carte stood
 Armed / and loked grym / as he were wood
 And ouer his heed / ther shynen two figures
 Of sterres / þat been clepyd in Scriptures 2044
 That oon Puella / that oother Rubeus
 This god of armes / was arrayed thus
 A wolf ther stood / bifore hym at his feet
 With eyen rede / and of a man he eet 2048
 With subtil pencil / was depeynted this storie
 In redoutynge of Mars / and of his glorie
 ¶ Now to the temple / of Diane the chaste
 As shortly as I kan / I wol me haste 2052
 To telle yow / al the discripsioun
 Depeynted been the walles / vp and down
 Of huntyng and of shamefast chastitee
 Ther saw .I. / how woful Calistopee 2056
 Whan þat Diane / agreued was with here [leaf 20]
 Was turned / fro a womman / til a Bere
 And after was she maad / the lode sterre // Vrsa maior
 Thus was it peynted / I kan seye yow no ferre 2060
 Hir sone is eek a sterre / as men may see
 Ther saw I Dane / yturned to a tree
 I mene nat / the goddesse diane
 But Penneus doghter / which þat highte Dane 2064
 ¶ Ther saw I Attheon / an hert ymaked
 ffor vengeance / þat he saw Diane al naked
 I seigh / how þat hise houndes haue hym caught
 And freten hym / for þat they knewe hym naught 2068
 ¶ Yet peynted was / a litel ferther moor

How Atthalante / hunted the wilde boor
 And Meleagree / and many another mo
 ffor which Diane / wroghte hym care and wo 2072
 Ther saw .I. many another wonder storie
 The whiche / me list nat drawn to memorie
 ¶ This goddesse on hert^t ful hye seet^t
 With smale houndes / al aboute hir feet^t 2076
 And vnder nethe hir feet^t. she hadde a moone
 Wexinge it was / and sholde wanye soone
 In gaude grene / hir statue yclothed was
 With bowe in honde / and arwes in a cas 2080
 Hir eyen caste she / ful lowe adown
 Ther Pluto / hath his dirke Regioun
 A womman trauallyng^t was hir biforn
 But for hir child / so longe was unborn 2084
 fful pitously / lucina gan she calle
 And seyde help / for thow mayst best of alle
 Wel koude he peynte lyfly / that it wroghte
 With many a floryn / he the hewes boghte 2088
 ¶ Now been thise listes maad / and Theseus
 That at his grete cost^t arrayed thus
 The temples / and the Theatre euery del
 Whan it was doon / hym liked wonder wel 2092
 But stynte I wole / of Theseus alite
 And speke of Palamon / and of Arcite
 ¶ The day approacheth / of hir retournynge
 That euerich / sholde an hundred knyghtes brynge 2096
 The bataille to darreyne / as I yow tolde [leaf 28, back
 And til Atthenes / hir couenant for to holde
 Hath euerich of hem / broght a hundred knyghtes
 Wel armed for the werre / at alle rightes 2100
 And sikerly / ther trowed many a man
 That neuere sithen / pat the world bigan
 As for to speke / of knyghthod of hir hond
 As fer / as god hath maked see and lond 2104
 Nas of so fewe / so noble a compaignye

ffor euery wight þat loued chivalrye
 And wolde his thankes / han a passant name
 Hath prayd / that he myghte been of that game 2108
 And wel was hym / þat ther to chosen was
 ffor if ther fille / tomorwe swich a cas
 Ye knowen wel / þat euery lusty knyght/
 That loueth paramours / and hath his myght 2112
 Were it in Engelond / or ellis where
 They wolde hir thankes / wilnen to be there
 To fighten for a lady / benedicitee
 It were a lusty sighte / for to see 2116
 ¶ And right so / ferden they with Palamon
 With hym ther wenten / knyghtes many oon
 Som wol ben armed / in an haubergeon
 And in a Brestplate / and in a light gypon 2120
 And som wol haue / a piere plates large
 And som wol haue / a Puce sheeld / or a targe
 Som wol been armed / on his legges weel
 And haue an Ax / and som a Maas of steel 2124
 Ther nys no newe gyse / þat it nas oold
 Armed were they / as I haue yow toold
 Euerich / after his opinyon
 ¶ Ther maystow seen / comynge with Palamon 2128
 Lygurge hym self the grete kyng of Trace
 Blak was his beard / and manly was his face
 The cercles of his eyen / in his heed
 They gloweden / bitwixen yelow and reed 2132
 And lyk a griffon / loked he aboute
 With keempe herys / on his browes stoute
 His lymes grete / his brawnes / harde and stronge
 Hys shuldres brode / hise armes rounde and longe 2136
 And as the gyse was / in his contree [leaf 29]
 fful hye / vp on a Chaar of gold stood he
 With foure white Boles / in the trays
 In stide of Cotearmure / ouer his harnays 2140
 With nayles yelwe / and brighte as any gold

He hadde a Berys Skyn / colblak / for old
 His longe heer / was kembed bihynde his bak
 As any Rauenes fetthere / it shoon for blak 2144
 A wrethe of gold / greet of huge wichte
 Vp on his heed / and ful of stones brighte
 Of fyne Rubyes / and of dyamauntz
 Aboute his Chaar / they wente white Alauntz 2148
 Twenty and mo / as grete as any Steer
 To hunten at the leon / and the deer
 And folwed hym / with mosel faste ybounde
 Colered of gold / and turrets filed rounde 2152
 An hundred lordes / hadde he in his route
 Armed ful wel / with hertes stierne and stoute
 ¶ With Arcita / in stories as men fynde
 The grete Emetrius / the kyng of Inde 2156
 Vp on a Steede bay / trapped in steel
 Couered in a clooth of gold / dyapred weel
 Cam ridynge / lyk the god of Armes Mars
 His cote armure / was of clooth of Tars 2160
 Couched with perlys white / and rounde and grete
 His sadel was / of brend gold newe ybete
 A Mantelet vp on his shulder hangynge
 Bretful of Rubies reede / as fyr sparklynge 2164
 His crispe heer / lyk rynges was yronne
 And that was yelow / and glitred as the sonne
 His nose was heigh / hise eyen bright Citryn
 His lyppes rounde / his colour was sangwyn 2168
 A fewe fraknes / in his face yspreynd
 Bitwixen yelow / and som del blak ymeynd
 And as a leon / he his lookyng caste
 Of .xxv. yeer / his age I caste 2172
 His beard / was wel bigonne for to sprynge
 His voys / was as a trompe thonderynge
 Vp on his heed / he wered of laurer grene
 A gerland fresch / and lusty for to seene 2176
 Vp on his hand / he bar for his deduyt

[leaf 22, back]

An Egle tame / as any lillie whyt
 An hundred lordes / hadde he with hym there
 Al armed saue hir heddes / in al hir gere 2180
 fful richely / in alle manere thynges
 ffor trusteth wel / þat dukes / Erles / kynges
 Were gadred / in this noble compaignye
 ffor loue / and for encrees of chivalrye 2184
 Aboute this kyng ther ran on euery part
 fful many a tame leon and leopart
 ¶ And in this wise / thise lordes alle and some
 Been on the Sonday / to the Citee come 2188
 Aboute pryde / and in the town alight
 ¶ This Theseus / this duc this worthy knyght
 Whan he hadde broght hem / in to his Citee
 And Inned hem / euerich at his degree 2192
 He festeth hem / and dooth so gret labour
 To esen hem / and doon hem al honour
 That yet men wenen / þat no mannes wit
 Of noon estaat ne koude amenden it/ 2196
 ¶ The Mynstralcy / the seruyce / at the feeste
 The grete yiftes / to the meeste and leeste
 The ryche array / of Theseus Paleys
 Ne who sat first or last vp on the deys 2200
 What ladyes fairest been / and best daunsynge
 Or which of hem / kan daunse best and synge
 Ne who moost feelyngly / speketh of loue
 What haukes sitten / on the perche aboue 2204
 What houndes lyggen / on the floor adown
 Of al this / make I now no mencion
 But al theffect that thynketh me the beste
 Now comth the point and herkneth if yow leste 2208
 ¶ The Sonday nyght er day bigan to sprynge
 Whan Palamon / the larke herde synge
 Al thogh it nere nat day / by houres two
 Yet soong the larke / and Palamon right tho 2212
 With holy herte / and with an heigh corage

64 GROUP A. § 2. KNIGHT'S TALE. Hengwrt MS.

He roos / to wenden on his pilgrymage
 Vn to the blisful / Scitherea benygne
 I mene Venus / honorable and digne 2216
 And in hir hour / he walketh forth a paas [leaf 30]
 Vn to the lystes / ther hir temple was
 And down he kneleth / and with humble cheere
 And herte soor / he seyde as ye shal heere 2220
 ¶ faireste of faire / o lady myn Venus
 Doghter of Ioue / and spouse to Vulcanus
 Thow gladere / of the mount of Cytheron
 ffor thilke loue / thow haddest to Adoon 2224
 Haue pitee / of my bittre teerys smerte
 And taak myn humble prayere at thyn herte
 ¶ Allas I ne haue no langage to telle
 Theffecte . ne the tormentz of myn helle 2228
 Myn herte / may myne harmes nat biwreye
 I am so confus / þat I kan nocht seye
 But mercy lady bright þat knowest wele
 My thought and seest what harmes þat I feele 2232
 Considre al this / and rewe vp on my soore
 As wisly / as I shal for euere moore
 Emforth my myght thy trewe seruant be
 And holden werre / alwey with chastitee 2236
 That make I myn avow / so ye me helpe
 I kepe nocht of armes for to yelpe
 Ne I ne axe nocht / tomorwe / to haue victorie
 Ne renoun in this cas / ne veyne glorie 2240
 Of prys of armes / blowen vp and down
 But I wolde haue / fully possessioun
 Of Emelye / and dye in thy seruyse
 ffynd thow the manere / how / and in what wyse 2244
 I recche nat but it may bettre be
 To haue victorie of hem / or they of me
 So þat I haue / my lady in myn armes
 ffor thogh so be / þat Mars is god of armes 2248
 Yourte vertu is so greet in heuene aboue

That if yow list I shal wel haue my loue
¶ Thy temple / wol I worshiþe euere mo
And on thyn Auter / wher I ryde or go 2252
I wol doon sacrifice / and fyres beete
And if ye wol noght so / my lady sweete
Thanne praye I thee / to morwe with a spere
That Arcita / me thurgh the herte bere 2256
Thanne rekke I noght' whan I haue lost my lyf (leaf 30, back)
Thogh þat Arcita / wynne hire to his wyf
This is theeffect' and ende of my prayere
Yif me my loue / thow blisful lady deere 2260
¶ Whan the orison was doon / of Palamon
His sacrifice he dide / and that anon
fful pitously / with alle circumstances
Al telle I nat as now / his obseruances 2264
But at the laste / the Statue of Venus shook'
And made a signe / wher by þat he took'
That his prayere / accepted was that day
ffor thogh the signe / shewed a delay 2268
Yet wiste he wel / þat graunted was his boone
And with glad herte / he wente hym hoom ful soone
¶ The thridde hour in equal / þat Palamon
Bigan / to Venus temple / for to gon 2272
Vp roos the soone / and vp roos Emelye
And to the temple of Diane / gan hye
Hir maydens / þat she thider with hire ladde
fful redily with hem / the fyr they hadde 2276
Thencens / the clothes / and the remenant al
That to the sacrifice / longen shal
The hornes ful of Mede / as was the gyse
Ther lakked noght' to doon hir sacrifice 2280
¶ Smokyng the temple / ful of clothes faire
This Emelye / with herte debonaire
Hir body wessh / with water of a welle
But hou she dide hir ryte / I dar nat telle 2284
But it be / any thyng' in general

And yet it were a game / to heren al
 To hym þat meneth wel / it nere no charge
 But it is good / a man be at his large 2288
 ¶ Hir brighte heer was kembed / vntressed al
 A corone / of a grene ook' cerial
 Vp on hir heed was set' ful fair and meete
 Two fyres / on the Auter gan she beete 2292
 And dide hir thynges / as men may biholde
 In Stace of Thebes / and othere bokes olde
 Whan kyndled was the fyr / with pitous cheere
 Vn to Diane / she spak / as ye may heere 2296
 ¶ O chaste goddesse / of the wodes grene [leaf 31]
 To whom / bothe heuene / and erthe / and See is seene^{i. mare}
 Queene of the regne of Pluto / derk and lowe
 Goddesse of maydenes / þat myn herte hast knowe 2300
 fful many a yeer / and woost what I desire
 As keepe me / fro thy vengeance and thyn Ire
 That Attheon / aboghte crewelly
 Chaste goddesse / wel wostow þat I 2304
 Desire / to been a mayden / al my lyf
 Ne neuere wol I be / no loue / ne wyf
 I am thow woost yet of thy compaignye
 A mayde / and loue huntyng' and venerye 2308
 And for to walken / in the wodes wilde
 And noght to been a wyf / and be with childe
 Noght wol I knowe / compaignye of man
 Now help me lady / sith ye may and kan 2312
 ffor tho thre formes / þat thow hast in thee
 And Palamon / þat hath swich loue to me
 And eek Arcite / þat loueth me so soore
 This grace I praye thee / with oute moore 2316
 As seend[e] loue and pees / bitwix hem two
 And fro me / turn' away / hir hertes so
 That al hir hote loue / and hir desir
 And al hir bisy torment' and hir fyr 2320
 Be queynt' and turned in another place

And if so be / thow wolt noght do me grace
 Or if my destynnee / be shape so
 That I shal nedes / haue oon of hem two 2324
 As seend me hym / þat moost desireth me
 Bihoold goddesse / of clene chastitee
 The bittre teerys / þat on my chekes falle
 Syn thow art mayde / and kepere of vs alle 2328
 My maydenhode thow kepe / and wel conserue
 And whil I lyue / a mayde I wol thee serue
 ¶ The fyres brenne / vp on the Auter cleere
 Whil Emelie / is thus in hir prayere 2332
 But sodeynly / she seigh a sighte queynte
 ffor right anon / oon of the fyres queynte
 And quyked agayn / and after that anon
 That oother fyr was queynt and al agon 2336
 And as it queynte / it made a whistlynge (leaf 81, back)
 As doon thise weete brondes / in hir brennyng
 And at the brondes ende / out ran anoon
 As it were / bloody dropes many oon 2340
 ffor which / so soore agast was Emelye
 That she was wel neigh mad / and gan to crye
 ffor she ne wiste / what it signyfyed
 But oonly for the feere / thus hath she cryed 2344
 And weepe / þat it was pitee for to heere
 ¶ And ther with al / Diane gan appeere
 With bowe in honde / right as an hunteressee
 And seyde doghter / stynt thyn heuynesse 2348
 Among the goddes hye / it is affermed
 And by eterne word / writen and confermed
 Thou shalt be wedded / vn to oon of tho
 That han for thee / so mucche care and wo 2352
 But vn to which of hem / I may noght telle
 ffare wel / for I ne may no lenger dwelle
 The fires / which þat on myn Auter brenne
 Shul thee declaren / er þat thow go henne 2356
 Thyn auenture of loue / as in this cas

And with that word / the Arwes in the Caas
 Of the goddesse / clateren faste and rynge
 And forth she wente / and made a vanysshynge 2360
 ffor which / this Emelye astoned was
 And seyde / what amounteth this allas
 I putte me / in thy proteccion
 Diane / and in thy disposicion 2364
 And hoom she gooth anoon / the nexte weye
 This is theeffect ther nys namoore to seye
 ¶ The nexte houre of Mars / folwyng this
 Arcite / vn to the temple walked is 2368
 Of fierse Mars / to doon his sacrificise
 With alle the rytes / of his payen wise
 With pitous herte / and heigh deuocion
 Right thus to Mars / he seyde his orison 2372
 ¶ O stronge god / þat in the regnes colde
 Of Trace / honoured art and lord yholde
 And hast in euery regne / and euery lond
 Of armes / al the brydel in thyn hond 2376
 And hem fortunest as thee list deuyse [leaf 32]
 Accepte of me / my pitous sacrificise
 If so be / þat my youthe may disserue
 And þat my myght be worthy for to serue 2380
 Thy godhede / þat I may be oon of thyne
 Thanne praye I thee / to rewe vp on my pyne
 ffor thilke peyne / and thilke hote fyr
 In which / thou whilom brendest for desir 2384
 Whan þat thou vsedest the beautee
 Of faire yonge / fresshe Venus free
 And haddest hire in armes at thy wille
 Al though thee ones / on a tyme mysfille 2388
 Whan Vulcanus / hadde caught thee in his laas
 And foond thee lyggyng by his wyf allas
 ffor thilke sorwe / þat was in thyn herte
 Haue routhe as wel / vp on my peynes smerte 2392
 I am yong / and vnkonnyng as thou woost/

And as I trowe / with loue offended moost
 That euere was / any lyues creature
 ffor she þat dooth me / al this wo endure 2396
 Ne reccheth neuere / wher I synke or fleete
 And wel I woot er she me mercy heete
 I moot with strengthe / wynne hire in the place
 And wel I woot with outen help and grace 2400
 Of thee / ne may my strengthe noght auaille
 Thanne help me lord / tomorwe in my bataille
 ffor thilke fyr / þat whilom brende thee
 As wel as thilke fyr / now brenneth me 2404
 And do þat I tomorwe / may haue victorie
 Myn be the trauaille / and thyn be the glorie
 Thy souereyn temple / wol I moost honouren
 Of any place / and alwey moost labouren 2408
 In thy plesaunce / and in thy craftes stronge
 And in thy temple / I wol my baner honge
 And alle the armes / of my compaignye
 And euere mo / vn til þat day I dye 2412
 Eterne fyr / I wol bifore thee fynde
 And eek to this auow / I wol me bynde
 My berd / myn heer / þat hangeth long adown
 That neuere yet ne felte offensioun 2416
 Of Rasour / nor of Shere / I wol thee yiue [leaf 32, back]
 And been thy trewe seruant whil I lyue
 Now lord haue routhe / vp on my sorwes soore
 Yif me the victorie / I axe thee namoore 2420
 ¶ The prayere stynt of Arcita the stronge
 The rynges / on the temple dore þat honge
 And eek the dores / clatereden ful faste
 Of which Arcita / som what hym agaste 2424
 The fires brende / vp on the Auter brighte
 That it gan al the temple for to lighte
 A swete smel / anon the ground vp yaf
 And Arcita / anon his hand vp haf 2428
 And moore encens / in to the fyr he caste

With othere rytes mo / and at the laste
 ¶ The statue of Mars / bigan his hauberk rynge
 And with that sown / he herde a *murmuryng* 2432
 fful lowe and dym / and seyde thus / Victorie
 ffor which / he yaf to Mars / honour and glorie
 ¶ And thus with ioye / and hope / wel to fare
 Arcite anoon / vn to his In is fare 2436
 As fayn as fowel / is of the brighte sonne
 ¶ And right anoon / swich stryf ther is bigonne
 ffor thilke grauntyng in the heuene aboue
 Bitwixe Venus / the goddesse of loue 2440
 And Mars / the sterne god armipotente
 That Iuppiter / was bisy it to stente
 Til þat the pale / Saturnus the colde
 That knew so manye / of auentures olde 2444
 ffoond in his olde experience / an art
 That he ful soone / hath plesed euery part
 As sooth is seyð / elde hath greet auantage
 In elde / is bothe wisdom and vsage 2448
 Men may the olde atrenne and nat atrede
 Saturne anoon / to stynten stryf and drede
 Al be it / þat it is agayn his kynde
 Of al this stryf he kan remedie fynde 2452
 ¶ My deere doghter Venus / quod Saturne
 My cours / that hath so wyde for to turne
 Hath moore power / than woot any man
 Myn is the drenchyng in the See so wan 2456
 Myn is the prison / in the derke cote [leaf ss]
 Myn is the stranglyng and hangyng by the throte
 The murmur / and the cherles rebellynge
 The groynyng and the pryuee empoysonyng 2460
 I do vengeance / and pleyn correccion
 Whil I dwelle / in the signe of the leon
 Myn is the ruyne / of the heighe halles
 The fallyng of the toures / and of the walles 2464
 Vp on the Mynour / or the Carpenter

I slow Sampson / shakynge the piler
 And myne be / the maladies colde
 The derke tresons / and the castes olde 2468
 My lookynge is the fader of pestilence
 Now weep namoore / I shal doon diligence
 That Palamon / that is thyn owene knyght
 Shal haue his lady / as thow hast hym hight 2472
 Thogh Mars shal helpe his knyght yet nathelees
 Bitwixe yow / ther moot be som tyme pees
 Al be ye noght of o complexion
 That causeth al day / swich diuision 2476
 I am thyn Aiel / redy at thy wille
 Weepe now namoore / I wol thy lust fulfille
 ¶ Now wol I stynten / of the goddes aboue
 Of Mars / and of Venus / goddesse of loue 2480
 And telle yow / as pleyntly as I kan
 The grete effect . for which þat I bigan

[No gap in the MS.]

¶ Greet was the feeste / in Atthenes that day
 And eek the lusty seson / of that May 2484
 Made euery wight to been in swich plesaunce
 That al that monday / Iusten they and daunce
 And spenden it in Venus heigh seruyse
 And by the cause / þat they sholde ryse 2488
 Erly / for to seen the grete sight
 Vn to hir reste / wente they at nyght
 And on the morwe / whan the day gan sprynge
 Of hors and harneys / noyse and claterynge 2492
 Ther was in hostelryes / al aboute
 And to the paleys / rood ther many a route
 Of lordes / vp on steedes and palfreys
 Ther maistow seen / deuysynge of harneys 2496
 So vnkouth / and so ryche / and wrought so weel [leaf 33, back]
 Of Goldsmythrye / of Broudynge and of steel

The sheldes brighte / testers / and trappures
 Goldhewen helmes / hauberkes / cote armures 2500
 Lordes in parementz / on hir coursers
 Knyghtes of retenue / and eek Squyers
 Nailynge the speres / and the helmes bokelynge
 Gyggynge of sheeldes / with layners lasynge 2504
 Ther as nede is / they were no thyng ydel
 The fomy steedes / on the golden brydel
 Gnawynge / and faste the Armurers also
 With fyle and hamer / prykyng to and fro 2508
 Yemen on foote / and communes many oon
 With shorte staues / thikke as they may goon
 Pipes / trompes / Nakers / Claryounes
 That in the bataille / blowen bloody sownes 2512
 The paleys ful of peples / vp and down
 Heer thre / ther ten / holdynge hir questioun
 Deuynynge / of thise Thebens knyghtes two
 Somme seyde thus / somme seyden it shal be so 2516
 Somme helden with hym / with the blake berd
 Somme with the balled / somme with the thikke herd
 Somme seyde / he looked grym / and he wolde fighte
 He hath a Sparth / of .xx. pound of wighte 2520
 Thus was the halle / ful of deuynynge
 Longe after / þat the sonne gan to sprynge
 ¶ The grete Theseus / þat of his sleepe awaked
 With mynstraleye / and noyse þat was maked 2524
 Held yet the chambres / of his paleys ryche
 Til þat the Theban knyghtes / bothe yliche
 Honoured / . weren in to the paleys fet
 ¶ Duc Theseus / is at a wyndow set 2528
 Arrayed / right as he weere a god in Trone
 The peple preeseth / thiderward ful soone
 Hym for to seen / and doon heigh reuerence
 And eek / to herkne his heste / and his sentence 2532
 ¶ An heraud on a Scaffold / made an .oo.
 Til al the noyse / of the peple was ydo

And whan he say the peple / of noyse al stille
 Thus shewed he / the myghty dukes wille 2536
 ¶ The lord hath / of his heighe discrecion (leaf 24)
 Considred / þat it were destruccion
 To gentil blood / to fighten in the gyse
 Of mortal bataille / now in this emprise 2540
 Wher fore / to shapen / þat they shal noght dye
 He wole / his firste purpos modifie
 ¶ No man ther fore / vp on peyne / of los of lyf
 No manere shot' ne polax / ne short knyf 2544
 In to the lystes sende / or thider brynge
 Ne short sword for to stoke / with point bitynge
 No man ne drawe / ne bere it by his syde
 Ne no man / shal vn to his felawe ryde 2548
 But o cours / with a sharp ygrounde spere
 ffoyne if hym list on foote / hym self to were
 And he þat is at meschief / shal be take
 And noght slayn / but be broght vn to the stake 2552
 That shal been ordeyned / on eyther syde
 But thider he shal bi force / and ther abyde
 And if so falle / the Chiefteyn be take
 On outhur syde / or ellis sleen his make 2556
 No lenger / shal the tourneying laste
 God spede yow / go forth and ley on faste
 With long sword / and with mace / fighteth your fille
 Go now youre wey / this is the lordes wille 2560
 ¶ The voys of peple / touched the heuene
 So loude cryde they / with loude steuene
 God saue swich a lord / that is so good
 He wilneth / no destruccion of blood 2564
 ¶ Vp goon the trompes / and the melodye
 And to the lystes / ryt the compaignye
 By ordinance / thurgh out the Citee large
 Hanged with clooth of gold / and noght with sarge 2568
 ¶ fful lyk a lord / this noble duc gan ryde
 Thise two Thebans / vp on eyther syde

74 GROUP A. § 2. KNIGHT'S TALE. Hengwrt MS.

And after rood the queene / and Emelye
 And after that another campaignye 2572
 Of oon and oother / after hire degree
 And thus they passen / thurgh out the Citee
 And to the lystes / coome they bityme
 It nas nat of the day / yet fully pryme 2576
 ¶ Whan set was Theseus / ful ryche and hye [leaf 34, back]
 Ypolita the queene / and Emelye
 And othere ladyes / in degrees aboute
 Vn to the setes / preeseth al the route 2580
 And westward / thurgh the gates vnder Marte^{.i. sub Marte}
 Arcite / and eek the hundred of his parte
 With baner reed / is entred right anon
 ¶ And in that selus moment Palamon 2584
 Is vnder Venus / Estward in the place
 With baner whit / and hardy cheere and face
 In al the world / to seken vp and down
 So euene / with outen variacioun 2588
 Ther nere / swiche campaignyes tweye
 ffor ther was noon so wys / þat koude seye
 That any hadde / of oother auantage
 Of worthynesse / ne of estaat ne age 2592
 So euene / were they chosen for to gesse
 And in two ringes / faire they hem dresse
 ¶ Whan þat hir names / rad were euerichon
 That in hir nombre / gyle were ther noon 2596
 Tho were the gates shet and cryd was loude
 Do now youre deuoir / yonge knyghtes proude
 ¶ The heraudes / lefte hir prikyng vp and down
 Now ryngen trompes loude / and Clarioun 2600
 Ther is namoore to seyn / but west and Est
 In goon the speres / ful sadly in the arest
 In gooth the sharpe spore / in to the syde
 Ther seen men / who kan Iuste / and who kan ryde 2604
 Ther shyueren shaftes / vp on sheeldes thikke
 He feeleth / thurgh the herte spoon the prykke

Vp spryngeth speres / twenty foot on highte
 Out goon the swerdes / as the siluer brighte 2608
 The helmes they tohewen / and to-shrede
 Out brest the blood / with sterne stremys rede
 With myghty maces / the bones they tobreste
 He thurgh the thikkeſt of the throng gan threſte 2612
 Ther stomblen ſteedes ſtronger / and doun gooth al
 He rolleth vnder foot as dooth a bal
 He foyneth on his feet with his tronchoun
 And he hym hurteth / with his hors adoun 2616
 He thurgh the body is hurt and ſithen ytake [leaf 35]
 Maugree his heed / and broght vn to the Stake
 As forward was / right there he moſte abyde
 Another / lad is on that oother ſyde 2620
 ¶ And ſom tyme / dooth hem Theſeus to reſte
 Hem to refreſſhe / and drynken if hem leſte
 ful ofte a-day / haue theſe Thebans two
 Togydre ymet and wroght his felawe wo 2624
 Vnhorsed hath ech oother / of hem tweye
 Ther nas no tygre / in the vale of Galgophey
 Whan þat hir whelp is ſtole / whan it is lyte
 So cruel on the hunte / as is Arcite 2628
 ffor Ialous herte / vp on this Palamon
 Ne in Belmarye / ther nys ſo fel leon
 That hunted is / or for his hunger wood
 Ne of his praye / deſireth ſo the blood 2632
 As Palamon / to ſleen his foo Arcite
 The Ialous ſtrokes / on hir helmes byte
 Out renneth blood / on bothe hir ſydes rede
 ¶ Som tyme an ende ther is / of euery dede 2636
 ffor er the ſonne / vn to the reſte wente
 The ſtronge kyng Emetrius / gan hente
 This Palamon / as he faught with Arcite
 And made his ſword / depe in his fleſh to byte 2640
 And by the force of twenty / is he take
 Vnyolden / and ydrawen to the ſtake

And in the rescous / of this Palamon
 The stronge kyng lygurge / is born adoun 2644
 And kyng Emetrius / for al his strengthe
 Is born out of his sadel / a swerdes lengthe
 So hitte hym Palamon / er he were take
 But al for noght^t he was broght to the stake 2648
 His hardy herte / myghte hym helpe naught^t
 He moste abyde / whan þat he was caught^t
 By force / and eek by composicion
 ¶ Who sorweth now / but woful Palamon 2652
 That moot namoore / goon agayn to fighte
 And whan þat Theseus / hadde seen this sighte
 Vn to the folk^t / that foghten thus echon
 He cryde / hoo namoore / for it is doon 2656
 I wol be trewe Iuge / and nat partye [leaf 35, back]
 Arcite of Thebes / shal haue Emelye
 That by his fortune / hath hire faire ywonne
 Anon ther is a noyse of peple bigonne 2660
 ffor ioye of this / so loude and heigh with alle
 It semed / þat the lystes sholde falle
 ¶ What kan now faire Venus / doon aboue
 What seith she now / what dooth this queene of loue 2664
 But wepeth so / for wantyng of hir wille
 Til þat hir teerys / in the lystes fille
 She seyde / I am ashamed doutelees
 ¶ Saturnus seyde / doghter hoold thy pees 2668
 Mars hath his wyl / his knyght^t hath al his boone
 And by myn heed / thow shalt been esed soone
 ¶ The trompours / with the loude Mynstralcye
 The heraudes / þat ful loude yelle and crye 2672
 Been in hir wele / for ioye of daun Arcite
 But herkneth me / and stynteth noyse a lite
 Which a myracle / ther bifel anon
 ¶ This fierse Arcite / hath of his helm ydon 2676
 And on a Courser / for to shewe his face
 He priketh / endelong^t the large place

GROUP A. § 2. KNIGHT'S TALE. Hengwrt MS. 77

Lookyng vpward / vp on this Emelye
 And she agayn / hym caste a freendly eye 2680
 [.
 : *no gap in the MS.*]
 And she was al his cheere / as in his herte
 Out of the ground / a furey Infernal sterte 2684
 ffrom Pluto sent at requeste of Saturne
 ffor which his hors / for feere gan to turne
 And leep asyde / and foundred as he leepe
 And er þat Arcite / may taken keepe 2688
 He pighte hym / on the pomel of his heed
 That in the place / he lay as he were deed
 His brest to brosten / with his Sadel bowe
 As blak he lay / as any col / or crowe 2692
 So was the blood / yronnen in his face
 Anon he was yborn out of the place
 With herte soor / to Theseus Paleys
 Tho was he coruen / out of his harneys 2696
 And in a bed ybrought ful faire and blyue
 ffor he was yet in memorie and alyue
 And alwey crying / after Emelye [leaf 36]
 ¶ Duc Theseus / with al his compaignye 2700
 Is comen hoom / to Atthenes his Citee
 With alle blisse / and greet solempnytee
 Al be it þat this auenture was falle
 He nolde noght disconforten hem alle 2704
 ¶ Men seyde eek Arcite / shal nat dye
 He shal been heelyd / of his maladye
 And of another thyng / they were as fayn
 That of hem alle / was ther noon yslayn 2708
 Al were they soore yhurt and namely oon
 That with a Spere / was thirled the brest boon
 ¶ To oothere woundes / and to broken armes
 Somme hadden salues / and somme hadden charmes 2712
 ffermacyes of herbes and eek saue
 They dronken / for they wolde hir lymes haue

for which this noble duc / as he wel kan
 Conforteth / and honoureth euery man 2716
 And made reuel / al the longe nyght
 Vn to the straunge lordes / as was right
 ¶ Ne ther was holden to disconfitynge
 But as a Iustes / or a tourneyinge 2720
 ffor soothly / there was no disconfiture
 ffor fallyng'. nys nat but an auenture
 Ne to been had by force vn to the stake
 Vnyolden / and with twenty knyghtes take 2724
 A persone allone / with outen mo
 And haryed forth / by arm / foot / and to
 And eek his steede / dryuen forth with stauies
 With footmen / bothe yemen and eek knaues 2728
 It nas arretted hym / no vileynye
 Ther may no man / clepe it cowardye
 ¶ ffor which anon / Duc Theseus leet crye
 To stynten / al rancour and enuye 2732
 The gre / as wel of oo syde as of oother
 And eyther syde ylyk' as otheres brother
 And yaf hem yiftes / after hir degree
 And fully heeld a feeste / dayes three 2736
 And conueyed / the kynges worthily
 Out of his toun / a iournee largely
 And hoom wente euery man / the righte way [leaf 96, back]
 Ther was namoore / but fare wel haue good day 2740
 Of this bataille / I wol namoore endite
 But speke of Palamon / and of Arcite [A break in the MS. with]
 Swelleth the brest of Arcite / and the soore ¶ Explicit secunda
 ¶ Incipit pars tercia
 & vltima
 Encreese that his herte / moore and moore
 The clothered blood / for any lechecraft
 Corrupteth / and is in his bouk / ylaft
 That neyther veyne blood / ne ventusyng
 Ne drynke of herbes / may been his helpyng 2748
 The vertu expulsyf / or animal
 ffro thilke vertu / clepyd natural

Ne may the venym / voyden ne expelle
 The pipes of his longes / gan to swelle 2752
 And euery lacerte / in his brest adown
 Is shent' with venym and corrupcioun
 Hym gayneth neither / for to gete his lyf
 Vomyt vpward / ne downward laxatyf' 2756
 Al is to brosten / thilke regioun
 Nature / hath no dominacioun
 And certainly / thier nature wol nat werche
 ffare wel Phisyk'. go ber the man to cherche 2760
 This al and som / þat Arcita moot dye
 ffor which / he sendeth after Emelye
 And Palamon / þat was his cosyn deere
 Thanne seyde he thus / as ye shal after heere 2764
 ¶ Nat may the woful spirit in myn herte
 Declare a point' of alle my sorwes smerte
 To yow my lady / þat I loue moost'
 But I byquethe / the seruice of my goost' 2768
 To yow / abouen euery creature
 Syn þat my lyf / may no lenger dure
 Allas the wo / allas the peynes stronge
 That I for yow haue suffred / and so longe 2772
 Allas the deeth / allas myn Emelye [leaf 37]
 Allas / departyng' of oure compaignye
 Allas myn hertes queene / allas my wif
 Myn hertes lady / endere of my lyf 2776
 What is this world / what axeth men to haue
 Now with his loue / now in his colde graue
 [.
 2780

 *no gap in the MS.*]
 ¶ I haue heer / with my cosyn Palamon
 Had stryf and rancour / many a day gon 2784
 ffor loue of yow / and for my Ialousye
 And Iuppiter / so wys my soule gye

To speken / of a seruaunt proprely
 With circumstaunces alle / trewely 2788
 That is to seyn / trouthe / honour / knyghthede
 Wisdom / humblesse / estaat / and heigh kynrede
 ffreedom / and al / that longeth to that art
 So Iuppiter / haue of my soule part 2792
 As in this world / right now ne knowe I non
 So worthy to been loued / as Palamon
 That serueth yow / and wol doon al his lyf
 And if þat euere / ye shal been a wyf 2796
 ffor yet nat Palamon / the gentil man
 And with that word / his speche faille gan
 ffor from his feet vp to his brest was come
 The coold of deeth / þat hadde hym ouercome 2800
 And yet moore ouer / for in his armes two
 The vital strengthe / is lost and al ago
 Oonly the Intellect with oute moore
 That dwelled in his herte / syk and soore 2804
 Gan faillen / whan the herte felte deeth
 Dusked hise eyen two / and fayled breeth
 But on his lady / yet caste he his eye
 His laste word / was mercy Emelye 2808
 His spirit chaunged hous / and wente ther
 As I cam neuere / I kan nat tellen wher
 Therfore I stynte / I nam no dyuynystre
 Of soules / fynde I nat in this Registre 2812
 Ne me ne lyst thilke opynyons to telle
 Of hem / thogh þat they writen wher they dwelle
 Arcite is coold / ther Mars his soule gye
 Now wol I speken / forth of Emelye 2816
 ¶ Shrighte Emelye / and howleth Palamon [leaf 37, back]
 And Theseus / his suster took anon
 Swownynge / and baar hire fro the corps away
 What helpeth it to tarien forth the day 2820
 To tellen how she weepe / bothe eue and morwe
 ffor in swich caas / wommen haue swich sorwe

Whan þat hir housbondes / been from hem ago
 That for the moore part they sorwen so 2824
 Or ellis fallen / in swich a maladye
 That at the laste / certainly they dye
 ¶ Infinite / been the sorwes and the teerys
 Of olde folk. and folk of tendre yeerys 2828
 In all the town for the deeth of this Theban
 ffor hym ther wepeth bothe child a[nd] man
 So greet wepyng was ther noon certayn
 Whan Ector was broght al fressh yslayn 2832
 To Troye / allas the pitée þat was ther
 Cracchyng of chekes / rentyng eek of heer
 Why woldestow be deed / thise wommen crye
 And haddest gold ynow / and Emelye 2836
 ¶ No man / myghte gladen Theseus
 Sauyng his olde fader Egeus
 That knew / this worldes transmutacioun
 As he hadde seyn it chaungen / bothe vp and down 2840
 Ioye after wo / and wo after gladnesse
 And shewed hem / ensample and lyknesse
 ¶ Right as ther deyed neuere man / quod he Argumentum.
 That he ne lyued in erthe / in som degree 2844
 Right so / ther lyued neuere man he seyde
 In al this world / þat som tyme he ne deyde
 This world nys but a thurghfare / ful of wo
 And we been pilgrymes / passyng to and fro 2848
 Deeth is an ende / of euery worldly soore
 And ouer al this / yet seyde he muchel moore
 To this effect ful wysly / to enhorten
 The peple / that they sholde hem reconforte 2852
 ¶ Duc Theseus / with al his bisy cure
 Caste now / wher that the sepulture
 Of goode Arcite / may best ymaked be
 And eek moost honorable / in his degree 2856
 And at the laste / he took conclusion
 That ther / as first Arcite and Palamon [leaf 88]

Hadden for loue / the bataille hem bitwene
 That in the selue groue / swoote and grene 2860
 Ther as he hadde / hise amoureuse desires
 His compleinte / and for loue his hote fyres
 He wolde make a fyr / in which the office
 ffuneral / he myghte al acomplise 2864
 And leet anon comaunde / to hakke and hewe
 The okes olde / and leyen hem on a rewe
 In colpons / wel arrayed for to brenne
 Hise officers / with swifte feet they renne 2868
 And ryde anon / at his comandement
 And after this / Theseus hath ysent
 After a Beere / and it al ouerspradde
 With clooth of gold / the richeste þat he hadde 2872
 And of the same suyte / he cladde Arcite
 Vp on his handes / his gloues white
 Eek on his heed / a coroune of laurer greene
 And in his hand / a swerd ful bright and keene 2876
 He leyde hym bare the visage / on the beere
 Ther with he weepe / þat pitee was to heere
 And for the peple / sholde seen hym alle
 Whan it was day / he broghte hym to the halle 2880
 That roreth / of the cryyng and the sown
 Tho cam / this woful Theban Palamon
 With flotry berd / and ruggy asshy heerys
 In clothes blake / ydropped al with teerys 2884
 And passyng othere / of wepyng Emelye
 The rufulleste / of al the compaignye
 In as muche / as the seruyce sholde be
 The moore noble / and ryche in his degree 2888
 Duc Theseus / leet forth thre steedes brynge
 That trapped weren in steel al gliterynge
 And couered with the armes / of daun Arcite
 Vp on thise steedes / grete and whyte 2892
 Ther seten folk / of which oon baar his sheeld
 Another his spere / vp on his hondes heeld

The thridde bar with hym / his bowe Turkeys
 Of brend gold / was the caas / and eek the harneys 2896
 And ryden forth a paas / with sorweful cheere [leaf 38, back]
 Toward the groue / as ye shul after heere
 The nobleste of the Grekys / þat ther were
 Vp on hir shuldres / carieden the beere 2900
 With slak[e] paas / and eyen rede and weete
 Thurgh out the Citee / by the maister streete
 That sprad was al with blak and wonder hye
 Right of the same / is the strete ywrye 2904
 Vp on the right hand / wente olde Egeus
 And on that oother syde / Duc Theseus
 With vessels in hir hand / of gold ful fyn
 As ful of hony / melk / and blood and wyn 2903
 Eek Palamon / with ful greet compaignye
 And after that / cam woful Emelye
 With fyr in hande / as was that tyme the gyse
 To do the office / of funeral seruyse 2912
 ¶ Heigh labour / and greet apparaillynge
 Was at the seruyce / and the fyr makyng
 That with his grene tope / the heuene raughte
 And twenty fadme of brede / the armes straughte 2916
 This is to seyn / the bowes / were so brode
 Of stree first ther was leyd many a lode
 But how the fyr was maked vp on highte
 Ne eek the names / how the trees highte 2920
 As ook / ffyrre / Birch / Asp / Alder / holm / popler
 Wylow / Elm / Plane / Assh / Box / Chestayn / lynde / laurer
 Mapul / Thorn / Beech / hasyl / Ew / Whippultree
 How they were feld / shal nat been told for me 2924
 Ne how the goddes / ronnen vp and down
 Desherited / of hir habitacioun
 In which they woneden / in reste and pees
 Nymphes / ffawnes / and Amadrides 2928
 Ne how the beestes / and the bryddes alle
 ffeidden / for fered / whan the wode was falle

84 GROUP A. § 2. KNIGHT'S TALE. Hengwrt MS.

Ne how the ground / agast was of the lyght
 That was nat wont to seen, the sonne bright 2932
 Ne how the fyr / was couched first with stree
 And thanne with drye stikkes / clouen a thre
 And thanne with grene wode / and spicerye
 And thanne with clooth of gold / and with perrye 2936
 And gerlandes hangyng / ful of many a flour [Deaf 30]
 The Mirre / thencens / with al so greet sauour
 Ne how Arcite / lay among al this
 Ne what richesse / aboute the body is 2940
 Ne how that Emelye / as was the gyse
 Putte in the fyr / of funeral seruyse
 Ne how she swowned / whan men made the fyr
 Na what she spek, ne what was hir desir 2944
 Ne what Iuels / men in the fyr caste
 Whan pat the fyr was greet and brente faste
 Ne how somme caste hir sheeld / and somme hir spere
 And of hir vestimentz / whiche pat they were 2948
 And coppes fulle of Milk / and wyn and blood
 In to the fyr / pat brente as it were wood
 Ne how the Grekys / with An huge route
 Thries ryden / al the fyr aboute 2952
 Vp on the left hand / with a loud shoutynge
 And thries / with hir speres claterynge
 And thries / how the ladyes gonne crye
 And how pat lad / was homward Emelye 2956
 Ne how Arcite / is brent to Asshen colde
 Ne how that lychwake / was yholde
 Al thilke nyght ne how the grekys pleye
 The wake playes / ne kepe I noght to seye 2960
 Who wrastleth best naked / with oille enoynt
 Ne who pat baar hym best in no disioynt
 I wol nat tellen al / how [that] they goon
 Hoom til Atthenes / whan the pleye is doon 2964
 But shortly to the poynt than wol I wende
 And maken / of my longe tale an ende

¶ By proces / and by lengthe of certeyn yerys
 Al stynt is / the moornyng and the terys 2968
 Of Grekys / by oon general assent
 Thanne semed me / ther was a parlement
 At Atthenes / vp on a certeyn point and caas
 Among the whiche pointes / y-spoken was 2972
 To haue / with certeyn contrees alliance
 And haue fully / of Thebans obeisance
 ffor which this noble Theseus anon
 Leet senden / after gentil Palamon 2976
 Vnwist of hym / what was the cause and why [leaf 30, back]
 But in his blake clothes / sorwefully
 He cam at his comandement / in hye
 Tho sente Theseus / for Emelye 2980
 ¶ When they were set and hust was al the place
 And Theseus / abiden hath a space
 Er any word / cam from his wise brest/
 His eyen sette he ther as was his lest 2984
 And with a sad visage / he siked stille
 And after that right thus he seyde his wille
 ¶ The firste moeuere / of the cause aboue Nota
 When he first made / the faire cheyne of loue 2988
 Greet was theeffect and heigh was his entente
 Wel wiste he why / and what ther of he mente
 ffor with that faire cheyne of loue he boond
 The fyr / the Eyr / the water / and the loond 2992
 In certeyn boundes / þat they may nat flee
 That same Prince / and that moeuere quod he
 Hath stabliced / in this wrecched world adoun
 Certaine dayes / and duracioun 2996
 To al / that is engendred / in this place
 Ouer the which day / they may nat pace
 Al mowe they yet / tho dayes abregge
 Ther nedeth / noon auctoritee to allegge 3000
 ffor it is proued / by experience
 But þat me list declaren my sentence

Thanne may men wel / by this ordre discerne
 That thilke moeuere / stable is and eterne 3004
 Wel may men knowe / but it be a fool
 That euery part. is diryued from his hool
 ffor nature / hath nat taken his bigynnyng
 Of no partie / or of cantel of a thyng 3008
 But of a thyng. that parfit is and stable
 Descendynge so / til it be corruptable
 And ther fore / for his wise purueiaunce
 He hath / so wel biset his ordinaunce 3012
 That specis of thynges / and progressions
 Shullen enduren / by successions
 And noght eterne / with outen any lye
 This maistow vnderstonde / and seen at Iye 3016
 ¶ Loo the ook / that hath so long a norisshynge [leaf 40]
 fro the tyme / that it first gynneth sprynge
 And hath so long a lyf / as ye may see
 Yet at the laste / wasted is the tree 3020
 ¶ Considreth eek / how þat the harde stoon
 Vnder oure foot on which we ryde and goon
 It wasteth / as it lyth by the weye
 The brode Ryuer / som tyme wexeth dreye 3024
 The grete townes / se we wane and wende
 Thanne se ye / þat al this thyng hath ende
 Of man and womman / se we wel also
 That nedeth / in oon of thise termes two 3028
 This is to seyn / in youthe / or ellis age
 He moot be deed / the kyng as shal a page
 Som in his bed / som in the depe see
 Som in the large feeld / as ye may se 3032
 Ther helpeth noght al gooth that ilke weye
 Thanne may I seyn / þat al this thyng moot deye
 What maketh this s but Iuppiter the kyng
 That is Prince / and cause of alle thyng 3036
 Conuertynge / al vn to his propre welle
 from which he is diryued sooth to telle

GROUP A. § 2. KNIGHT'S TALE. Hengwrt MS. 87

And heer agayns / no creature on lyue
 Of no degree / auailleth for to stryue 3040
 ¶ Thanne is it wisdom / as it thynketh me
 To maken vertu / of necessitee
 And take it wel / þat we may nat eschue
 And nameliche / that to vs alle is due 3044
 And who so gruccheth oght he dooth folye
 And rebel is / to hym þat al may gye
 And certainly / a man hath moost honour
 To dyen / in his excellence and flour 3048
 Whan he is siker / of his goode name
 Thanne hath he doon / his freend ne hym no shame
 And gladder oghte / his freend been of his deeth
 Whan with honour / yolden is vp his breeth 3052
 Than whan his name / apalled is for age
 ffor al forgeten is his vasselage
 Thanne is it best as for a worthy fame
 To dyen / whan he is best of name 3056
 ¶ The contrarie of al this / is wilfulnesse
 Why grucchen we / why haue we heuynesse
 That goode Arcite / of chiualrie flour [leaf 40, back]
 Departed is / with duetee / and with honour 3060
 Out of this foule prison / of this lyf
 Why gruccheth heere / his cosyn and his wyf/
 Of his welfare / þat loueth hem so weel
 Kan he hem thank's nay good woot neuer a deel 3064
 That bothe his soule / and eek hem self offende
 And yet they mowe / hir lustes nat amende
 ¶ What may I conclude / of this longe serye
 But after wo / I rede vs to be merye 3068
 And thanken Iuppiter / of al his grace
 And er we / departen from this place
 I rede we make / of sorwes two
 O parfit Ioye / lastynge euere mo 3072
 And loketh now / wher moost sorwe is her Inne
 Ther wol I first amenden and bigynne

88 GROUP A. § 2. KNIGHT'S TALE. Hengwrt MS.

¶ Suster quod he / this is my ful assent
 With al thauys / heer of my parlement 3076
 That gentil Palamon / youre owene knyght
 That serueth yow / with wyl and herte myght
 And euere hath doon / syn ye first hym knewe
 That ye shal of youre grace vp on hym rewe 3080
 And taken hym / for housbond and for lord
 Leen me youre hond / for this is oure acord
 Lat se now / of youre wommanly pitee
 He is / a kynges brother'sone pardee 3084
 And thogh he were / a poure Bachiler
 Syn he hath serued yow / so many a yeer
 And had for yow / so greet aduersitee
 It moste been considred / leueth me 3088
 ffor gentil mercy / oghte to passen right
 ¶ Thanne seyde he thus / to Palamon the knyght
 I trowe / ther nedeth litel sermonyng
 To make yow / assente to this thyng 3092
 Com neer / and taketh youre lady by the hond
 Bitwixe hem / was maad anon the bond
 That highte matrymoigne / or mariage
 By al the conseil / and the Baronage 3096
 And thus / with alle blisse / and melodye
 Hath Palamon / ywedded Emelye
 And god / that al this world hath wrought [leaf 41]
 Sende hym his loue / that hath it deere aboght 3100
 ffor now is Palamon / in alle wele
 Lyuyng in blisse / in richesse / and in heele
 And Emelye / hym loueth so tendrely
 And he / hir serueth so gentilly 3104
 That was ther no word hem bitwene
 Of Ialousie / or any oother teene
 Thus endeth Palamon / and Emelye
 And god saue / al this faire compaignye Amen 3108

¶ Here is ended the Knyghtes tale 𐀀

¶ The prologe of the Milleres tale 𐞂

W Han that the knyght hadde thus his tale ytoold
 In al the compaignie / nas ther yong ne oold
 That he ne seyde / it was a noble Storie
 And worthy / for to drawen to memorie 3112
 And namely / the gentils euerichon
 ¶ Oure hoost lough / and swoor so moot I gon
 This gooth aright vnbokeled is the male
 Lat se now / who shal telle another tale 3116
 ffor trewely / the game is wel bigonne
 Now telleth ye sire Monk / if þat ye konne
 Som what / to quite with the knyghtes tale
 ¶ The Millere / that for-dronken was a pale 3120
 So that vnnethe / vp on his hors he sat
 He nolde aualen / neither hood ne hat
 Ne abiden no man / for his curteisye
 But in Pilates voys / he gan to crye 3124
 And swoor by armes / and by blood and bones
 I kan a noble tale / for the nones
 With which / I wol now quite the knyghtes tale
 ¶ Oure Hoost saugh / þat he was dronke of ale 3128
 ¶ And seyde / abyde Robyn leue brother [leaf 41, back]
 Som better man / shal telle vs first another
 Abyde / and lat vs werken thriftily
 ¶ By goddes soule quod he / that wol nat I 3132
 ffor I wol speke / or ellis go my wey
 ¶ Oure Hoost answerde / tel on a deuele wey
 Thow art a fool / thy wit is ouercome
 ¶ Now herkneth quod the Millere / alle and some 3136
 But first I make a protestacioun
 That I am dronke / I knowe it by my sown
 And therfore / if þat I mysspeke / or seye
 Wite it / the ale of Southwerk I preye 3140


90 GROUP A. § 3. MILLER'S PROLOGUE. Hengwrt MS.

ffor I wol telle / a legende and a lyf
 Bothe of a Carpenter / and of his wyf
 How þat a clerk hath set the wrightes cappe
 ¶ The Reue answerde / and seyde stynt thy clappe 3144
 Lat be / thy lewed dronken harlotrye
 It is a synne / and eek a greet folye
 To apeyren any man / or hym diffame
 And eek to bryngen wyues / in swich fame 3148
 Thow mayst ynow / of othere thynges seyn
 ¶ This dronken Millere / spak ful soone ageyn
 And seyde / leue brother Osewold
 Who hath no wyf / he is no Cokewold 3152
 But I seye nat ther-fore / þat thow art oon
 Ther been ful goode wyues many oon
 [.
 no gap in the MS.] 3156
 Why artow angry / wit my tale now
 I haue a wyf pardee / as wel as thow
 Yet nolde I / for the oxen in my plough
 Take vp on me / moore than ynough 3160
 As demen of my self / þat I were oon
 I wol bileue wel / þat I am noon
 An housbonde / shal noght been Inquisityf/
 Of goddes pryuetee / nor of his wyf 3164
 So he may fynde / goddes foyson there
 Of the remenant nedeth noght enquire
 ¶ What sholde I moore seyn / but this Millere
 He nolde his wordes / for no man forbere
 But tolde his cherles tale / in his manere
 Me athynketh / that I shal reherce it heere
 And ther-fore / euery gentil wight I preye [leaf 42]
 Demeth noght for goddes loue / þat I seye 3172
 Of yuel entente / but for I moot reherse
 Hir tales alle / be they bet or werse
 Or ellis falsen / som of my matere
 And ther-fore / who so list it noght yhere 3176

GROUP A. § 3. MILLER'S PROLOGUE. Hengwrt MS. 91

Turne ouer the leef / and chese another tale
ffor he shal fynde ynowe / grete and smale
Of storial thyng that toucheth gentillesse
And eek moralitee / and holynesse 3180
Blameth noght me / if þat ye chese amys
The Millere is a cherl / ye knowe wel this
So was the Reue eek and othere mo
And harlotrye / they tolden bothe two 3184
Auyseth yow / and put me out of blame
And eek men shal noght maken ernest of game

[*Slight break in the MS.*]

¶ Here bigynneth the Millerys tale 

Whilom ther was dwellyng at Oxenford
 A riche gnof that gestes heeld to bord 3188
 And of his craft he was a Carpenter
 With hym ther was dwellynge a poure Scoler
 Hadde lerned art but al his fantasie
 Was turned / for to leere Astrologie 3192
 And koude / a certeyn of conclusions
 To damen / by interrogacions
 If þat men axed hym / in certain houres
 Whan þat men sholde haue droghte / or ellis shoures 3196
 Or if men axed hym / what shal bifalle
 Of euery thyng / I may nat rekene hem alle
 ¶ This clerk / was clepyd hende Nicholas
 Of derne loue he koude / and of solas 3200
 And ther-to he was sleigh / and ful pryuee
 And lyk a mayde meke / for to see
 A chambre hadde he / in that hostelrie
 Allone / with-uten any compaignye 3204
 fful fetisly dight / with herbes swoote
 And he hym self as sweete as is the roote
 Of lycorys / or any Cetuale [leaf 42, back]
 His Almageste / and bookes grete and smale 3208
 His Astrelabye / longynge for his Art
 His Augrym stones / layen faire a part
 On shelues couched / at his beddes heed
 His presse / ycouered with a ffaldyng reed 3212
 And al aboue / ther lay a gay Sautrye
 On which / he made a nyghtes melodye
 So swetely / þat al the chambre roong
 And Angelus ad virginem / he soong 3216
 And after that he soong the kynges note
 fful often blissed was / his murye throte

And thus this swete clerk / his tyme spent
 After his freendes fyndyng' and his rente 3220
 ¶ This Carpenter / hadde wedded newe a wyf
 Which þat he louede / moore than his lyf
 Of .xviij. yeer / she was of age
 Ialous he was / and heeld hire narwe in Cage 3224
 ffor she was wilde and yong / and he was old
 And demed hym self / been lyk a Cokewold
 He knew nat Catoñ / for his wit was rude
 That bad / man sholde wedde his similitude 3228
 Men sholde wedden / after hir estaat
 ffor youthe and Elde / is often at debaat
 But sith þat he / was fallen in the snare
 He moste endure / as oother folk' his care 3232
 ¶ ffair was this yonge wyf / and ther with al
 As any wesele / hir body gent and smal
 A ceynt she werde / barred al of sylk/
 A barmclooth / as whit as morne Mylk' 3236
 Vp on hir lendes / ful of many a goore
 Whit was hir smok' and broyden al bifoore
 And eek bihynde / on hir coler aboute
 Of col blak silk / with-Inne and eek *wit*-oute 3240
 The tapes / of hir white voluper
 Were of the same sute / of hir coler
 Hir filet brood of sylk' and set ful hye
 And sikerly / she hadde a likerous Iye 3244
 fful smale y pulled / were hir browes two
 And tho were bent / and blake as is a slo
 She was ful moore / blisful on to see [leaf 43]
 Than is the newe / Pereionette tree 3248
 And softer / than the wolfe is of a wether
 And by hir girdel / heeng a purs of lether
 Tasseled with silk / and perled with latoun
 In al this world / to seken vp and down 3252
 Ther nys no man so wys / þat koude thenche
 So gay a Popelote / or swich a wenche

fful brighter was / the shynyng of hir hewe
 Than in the Tour / the noble yforged newe 3256
 But of hir soong' it was as loude and yerne
 As any swalwe / sittynge on a Berne
 Ther-to / she koude skippe / and make game
 As any kyde / or Calf / folwyng his dame 3260
 Hir mouth was sweete / as Bragot' or the meeth
 Or hoord of Apples / leyd in hey or heeth
 Wynsyng she was / as is a ioly Colt'
 Loong as a Mast / and vprighte as a bolt' 3264
 A brooch she baar / vp on hir loue coler
 As brood / as is the boos of a Bokeler
 Hir shoes were laced / on hir legges hye
 She was a Prymerole / a piggesnye 3268
 ffor any lord / to leggen in his bedde
 Or yet' for any good yeman to wedde
 ¶ Now sire and eft sire / so bifel the cas
 That on a day / this hende Nicholas 3272
 ffil with this yonge wyf / to rage and pleye
 Whil þat hir housbonde / was at Osneye
 As clerkes been / ful subtil and ful queynte
 And pryuely / he caughte hire by the queynte 3276
 And seyde ywys / but if ich haue my wille
 ffor derne loue / of thee lemman I spille
 And heeld hire harde / by the haunche bones
 And seyde lemman / loue me al atones 3280
 Or I wol dyen / al so god me saue
 And she sproong' as a Colt dooth in the Traue
 And with hir heed / she wryed faste away
 She seyde I wol nat kisse thee by my fey 3284
 Wy lat be quod ich / lat be Nicholas
 Or I wol crye / out harrow and allas
 Do wey youre handes / for youre curteisye
 ¶ This Nicholas / gan mercy for to crye
 And spak so faire / and profred hym so faste
 That she hir loue / hym graunted atte laste,

[leaf 43, back]

And swoor hir ooth / by Seint Thomas of Kent
 That she wolde been / at his comaundement 3292
 Whan þat she may / hir leyser wel espie
 Myn housbonde / is so ful of Ialousie
 That but ye waite wel / and been pryuee
 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 clerc hadde lutherly / biset his while
 But if he koude / a Carpenter bigyle 3300
 And thus they been acorded and y-sworn
 To waite a tyme / as I haue told biforn
 Whan Nicholas / hadde doon thus euerydel
 And thakked hire / vp on the lendes wel 3304
 He kiste hir sweete / and taketh his sautrye
 And pleyeth faste / and maketh melodye
 ¶ Thanne fil it thus / þat to the parissh chirche
 Cristes owene werkes / for to wirche 3308
 This goode wyf / wente on an haliday
 Hir forheed shoon / as bright as any day
 So was it wasshen / whan she leet hir werk
 ¶ Now was ther of that chirche a parissh clerk 3312
 The which / þat was yclepid Absolon
 Crul was his heer / and as the gold it shoon
 And strouted as a fflanne / large and brode
 fful streight and euene / lay his ioly shode 3316
 His rode was reed / hise eyen greye as goos
 With Poules wyndow / coruen on his shoos
 In hoses rede / he wente fetisly
 Yelad he was / ful smal and proprely 3320
 Al in a kirtel / of a light waget
 fful faire and thikke / been the pointes set ¹ [1 set later]
 And ther vp on / he hadde a gay surplys
 As whit as is the blosme vp on the rys 3324
 A murye child he was / so god me saue
 Wel koude he laten blood / and clippe and shaue

96 GROUP A. § 4. MILLER'S TALE. Hengwrt MS.

And maken a chartre of lond / or Aquitaunce	[leaf 44]
On twenty manere / koude he trippe and daunce	3328
After the scole / of Oxenford tho	
And with his legges / casten to and fro	
And pleyen songes / on a smal Rubible	
Ther-to he soong som tyme / a loud quynnyble	3332
And as wel / koude he pleye on a gyterne	
In al the town / nas Brewhous ne Tauerne	
That he ne visited / with his solas	
Ther any gaylard tappestere was	3336
But sooth to seyn / he was som del squaymous	
Of fartying / and of speche daungerous	
¶ This Absolon / þat ioly was and gay	
Gooth with a sencer / on the haliday	3340
Sensynge the wyues / of the parisshe faste	
And many a louely look / on hem he caste	
And namely / on this Carpenters wyf	
To looke on hire / hym thoughte a murye lyf	3344
She was so propre and sweete and likerous	
I dar wel seyn / if she hadde been a Mous	
And he a cat he wolde hir hente anon	
This parisshe clerk this ioly Absolon	3348
Hath in his herte / swich a loue longynge	
That of no wyf / ne took he noon offrynge	
ffor curteisye / he seyde he wolde noon	
The Moone / whan it was nyght ful brighte shoon	3352
And Absolon / his gyterne / hath ytake	
ffor paramours / he thoghte for to wake	
And forth he gooth / iolyf and amorous	
Til he cam / to the Carpenters hous	3356
A litel after the cokkes hadde ycrowe	
And dressed hym vp / by a shot wyndowe	
That was / vp on the Carpenters wal	
He syngeth / in his voys / gentil and smal	3360
Now deere lady / if thy wille be	
I prey yow / þat ye wol rewe on me	

fful wel acordant to his giternynge
 This Carpenter awook and herde hym synge 3364
 And spak vn to his wyf / and seyde anon
 What Alison / herestow nocht Absolon
 That chaunteth thus / vnder oure boures wal [leaf 44, back]
 ¶ And she / answerde hir housbonde / ther with al 3368
 Yis god woot Iohn / I here it euerydel
 This passeth forth / what wol ye bet than wel
 ffor day to day / this ioly Absolon
 So woweth hire / þat hym is wo bigon 3372
 He waketh al the nyght and al the day
 He kembed his lokkes brode / and made hym gay
 He woweth hire by meenes / and brocage
 And swoor / he wolde been hir owene page 3376
 He syngeth brokkyng as a nyghtyngale
 He sente hir pyment Meeth / and spiced Ale
 And wafres pipyng hoot / out of the gleede
 And for she was of towne / he profred meede 3380
 ffor som folk / wol be wonnen for richesse
 And som for strokes / and som for gentillesse *Vnde Ouidius Ictibus Agrestis.*
 Som tyme to shewe / his lightnesse and maistrye
 He pleyeth Herodes / vp on a scaffold hye 3384
 But what auailleth hym / as in this cas
 She loueth so / this hende Nicholas
 That Absolon / may blowe the Bukkes horn
 He ne hadde for his labour / but a scorn 3388
 And thus she maketh / Absolon hir Ape
 And al his earnest / turneth til a Iape
 fful sooth is this prouerbe / it is no lye
 Men seith right thus / alwey the neighe slye 3392
 Maketh / the ferre leue to be looth
 ffor thogh þat Absolon / be wood or wrooth
 By cause / þat he fer was from hir sighte
 This neighe Nicholas / stood in his lighte 3396
 ¶ Now bere thee wel / thow hende Nicholas
 ffor Absolon / may waille / and synge allas

¶ And so bifel it on a Saterdag
 This Carpenter / was goon til Osenay 3400
 And hende Nicholas / and Alison
 Acorded been / to this conclusion
 That Nicholas / shal shapen hem a wile
 This sely Ialous housbonde / to bigile 3404
 And if so be / this game wente aright
 She sholde slepen / in his arm al nyght
 ffor this was hir desir / and his also [leaf 45]
 And right anon / with-uten wordes mo 3408
 This Nicholas / no lenger wolde tarie
 But dooth ful softe / vn to his chambre carie
 Bothe mete and drynke / for a day or tweye
 And to hir housbonde / bad hir for to seye 3412
 If þat he axed / after Nicholas
 She sholde seye / she nyste wher he was
 Of al that day / she seigh hym nought with Iye
 She trowed / þat he was in maladye 3416
 ffor / for no cry / hir mayde koude hym calle
 He nolde answere / for no thyng þat myghte falle
 ¶ This passeth forth / al thilke Saterdag
 That Nicholas / stille in his chambre lay 3420
 And eet and sleepe / or dide what hym leste
 Til Sonday / þat sonne gooth to reste
 ¶ This sely Carpenter / hath greet meruaille
 Of Nicholas / or what thyng myghte hym aille 3424
 And seyde / I am adrad / by Seint Thomas
 It stondeth nat aright with Nicholas
 God shilde / þat he deyde sodeynly
 This world is now / ful tikel sikerly 3428
 I seigh to day a corps / born to chirche
 That now a monday last I seigh hym wirche
 Go vp quod he / vn to his knaue anon
 Clepe at his dore / or knokke with a stoon 3432
 Looke how it is / and tel me boldely
 ¶ This knaue gooth hym vp / ful sturdily

And at the chambre dore / whil þat he stood
 He cryde and knockked / as þat he were wood 3436
 What how / what do ye maister Nicholay
 How may ye slepen / al the longe day
 But al for noght he herde nat a word
 An hole he foond / ful lowe vp on a bord 3440
 Ther as the Cat / was wont In for to crepe
 And at that hole / he looked In ful depe
 And atte laste / he hadde of hym a sighte
 ¶ This Nicholas / sat euere capyng vp-righte 3444
 As he hadde kiked / on the newe moone
 Adown he gooth / and tolde his maister soone
 In what array / he saw this ilke man [leaf 45, back]
 ¶ This Carpenter / to blessen hym bigan 3448
 And seyde / help vs seinte ffrideswyde
 A man woot litel / what hym shal bityde
 This man is falle / with his Astromye
 In som woodnesse / or in som Agonye 3452
 I thoughte ay wel / how þat it sholde be
 Men sholde noght knowe / of goddes priuete
 Ye blissed be alwey / a lewed man
 That noght but oonly his bileue kan 3456
 So ferde another clerk with Astromye
 He walked in the feeldes / for to pry
 Vp on the sterres / what ther sholde bifalle
 Til he was / in a Marle pit yfalle 3460
 He saw nat that but yet by Seint Thomas
 Me reweth sore / for hende Nicholas
 He shal be rated / of his studyng
 If þat I may / by Ihesus heuene kyng 3464
 Get me a staf / þat I may vnder-spore
 Whil þat thow Robyn / heuest vp the dore
 He shal out of his studyng as I gesse
 And to the chambre dore / he gan hym dresse 3468
 His knaue / was a strong carl / for the nones
 And by the haspe / he haaf it vp atones

100 GROUP A. § 4. MILLER'S TALE. Hengwrt MS.

In to the floor / the dore fil anoon
 This Nicholas / sat ay as stille as stoon 3472
 And euere caped vp / in to the Eyr
 This Carpenter / wende he were in despeyr
 And hente hym / by the sholdres myghtily
 And shook hym harde / and cryde spitously 3476
 What Nicholay / what how looke adoun
 Awake / and thenk on Cristes passioun
 I crouche thee / from Elues and fro wightes
 Ther-with the nyght spel / seyde he anon rightes 3480
 On foure halues / of the hous aboute
 And on the threshfold / on the dore with-oute
 Ihesu crist and Seint Benedight
 Blesse this hous / from enery wikked wight 3484
 ffor the nyghtesuerye / the white Pater noster
 Where wentestow / seinte Petres suster
 And at the laste / this hende Nicholas [leaf 46]
 Gan for to sike soore / and seyde allas 3488
 Shal al the world / be lost eft soones now
 ¶ This Carpenter answerde / what seistow
 What thenk / on god / as we doon men þat swynke
 ¶ This Nicholas answerde / fecche me drynke 3492
 And after / wol I speke in pryuetee
 Of certein thyng / þat toucheth me and thee
 I wol telle it / noon oother man certayn
 ¶ This Carpenter gooth down / and comth agayn 3496
 And broghte of myghty ale / a large quart
 And whan þat eech of hem / hadde dronke his part
 This Nicholas / his dore faste shette
 And doun the Carpenter / by hym he sette 3500
 And seyde / Iohn / myn hoost lief and deere
 Thou shalt vp on thy trouthe / swere me heere
 That to no wight thou shalt this conseil wreye
 ffor it is cristes conseil / that I seye 3504
 And if thou telle it man thou art forlore
 ffor this vengeance / thou shalt haue ther fore

GROUP A. § 4. MILLER'S TALE. Hengwrt MS. 101

That if thou wrye me / thou shalt be wood
¶ Nay Crist forbode it / for his holy blood 3508
Quod tho this sely man / I nam no labbe
And thogh I seye / I nam nat lief to gabbe
Sey what thou wolt I shal it neuere telle
To child ne wyf / by hym that harwed helle 3512
¶ Now Iohn quod Nicholas / I wol noght lye
I haue yfounde / in myn Astrologye
As I haue looked / in the moone bright
That now a monday next at quarter nyght 3516
Shal falle a reyn / and that so wilde and wood
That half so greet was neuere Nowels flood
This world he seyde / in lasse than in an hour
Shal al be dreynt so hidous is the shour 3520
Thus shal man-kynde drenche / and lese hir lyf
¶ This Carpenter answerde / allas my wyf
And shal she drenche / allas myn Alisoun
for sorwe of this / he fil almoost adoun 3524
And seyde / is ther no remedie in this cas
¶ Why yis for gode / quod hende Nicholas
If thou wolt werken / after loore and reed [leaf 46, back]
Thow mayst noght werken / after thyn owene heed 3528
for thus seith Salomon / þat was ful trewe
Werk al by conseil / and thou shalt noght rewe
And if thou werken wolt by good consayl
I vndertake / with-uten mast or sayl 3532
Yit shal I saue hire / and thee and me
Hastow nat herd / how sauel was Noe
Whan þat oure lord / hadde warned hym biforn
That al the world / with water sholde be lorn 3536
¶ Yis quod this Carpenter / ful yore ago
¶ Hastow nat herd / quod Nicholas also
The sorwe of Noe / with his felaweshipe
Er þat he myghte / gcte his wyf to shipe 3540
Hym hadde leuere / I dar wel vndertake
At thilke tyme / than alle hise wetheres blake

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

3544

3548

3552

3556

3560

3564

[leaf 47]

3568

3572

3576

GROUP A. § 4. MILLER'S TALE. *Hengwrt* MS. 103

And thou wolt seyn / hail maister Nicholay
 Good morwe / I see thee wel / for it is day 3580
 And thanne shal we be lordes al oure lyf/
 Of al the world / as Noe and his wyf/
 But of o thyng / I warne thee ful right
 Be wel auysed / on that ilke nyght 3584
 That we been entred / in to shippes bord
 That noon of vs / ne speke noght a word
 Ne clepe ne crye / but been in his prayere
 ffor it is / goddes owene heste deere 3588
 Thy wyf and thow / mote hange fer atwynne
 ffor þat bitwix yow / shal be no synne
 Namore in lookyng / than ther shal in dede
 This ordinaunce is seyde / go god thee spede 3592
 Tomorwe at nyght whan men been alle aslepe
 In to oure knedyng tubbes / wol we crepe
 And sitten there / abidyng goddes grace
 Go now thy wey / I haue no lenger space 3596
 To make of this / no lenger sermonyng
 Men seyn thus / seend the wise and sey no thyng
 Thow art so wys / it nedeth thee nat teche
 Go saue oure lyf and that I thee biseche 3600
 ¶ This sely Carpenter / gooth forth his wey
 fful ofte he seyde / allas and weylaway
 And to his wyf / he tolde his priuete
 And she was war / and knew it bet than he 3604
 What al this queynte cast was for to seye
 But natheles / she ferde as she wolde deye
 And seyde allas / go forth thy wey anon [leaf 47, back]
 Help vs to scape / or we been dede echon 3608
 I am thy trewe / verray wedded wyf
 Go deere spouse / and help to saue oure lyf
 ¶ Lo which a greet thyng / is affeccion
 Men may dyen / of ymaginacion 3612
 So depe / may impression be take
 This sely Carpenter / bigynneth quake

104 GROUP A. § 4. MILLER'S TALE. Hengwrt MS.

Hym thynketh verrailiche / þat he may se
 Noes flood / come walwyng as the see 3616
 To drenchen Alison / his hony deere
 He wepeth / waileth / maketh sory cheere
 He siketh / with ful many a sory swogh
 And gooth / and geteth hym a knedyng' trogh 3620
 And after / a tubbe and a kymelyn
 And pryuely / he sente hem to his In
 And heeng hem / in the roof in priuete
 His owene hand / he made laddres thre 3624
 To clymben / by the ronges and the stalkes
 Vn to the tubbes / hangyng' in the balkes
 And hem vitailed / bothe trogh and tubbe
 With breed and chese / and good ale in a Iubbe 3628
 Suffisynge right ynogh / as for a day
 But er þat he hadde maad / al this array
 He sente his knaue and / eek his wenche also
 Vp on his nede / to london for to go 3632
 And on the monday / whan it drogh to nyght'
 He shette his dore / with-uten candel lyght'
 And dressed alle thyng' as it sholde be
 And shortly / vp they clomben alle thre 3636
 They seten stille / wel a furlong way
 Now Pater noster / clom seyde Nicholay
 And clum quod Iohā / and clum seyde Alison
 This Carpenter / seyde his deuocion 3640
 And stille he sit' and biddeth his prayere
 Awaitynge on the reyn / if he it heere
 ¶ The dede sleepe / for wery bisynesse
 ffil on this Carpenter / right as I gesse 3644
 Aboute corfew tyme / or litel moore
 ffor trauailyng of his goost' he groneth soore
 And eft he routeth / for his heed myslay [leaf 48]
 ¶ Doun of the laddre / stalketh Nicholay 3648
 And Alison / ful softe adoun she spedde
 With-uten wordes mo / they goon to bedde

Ther as the Carpenter / is wont to lye
 Ther was the reuel / and the melodye 3652
 And thus lyth Alison / and Nicholas
 In busynesse of myrthe / and in solas
 Til that the belle of laudees / gan to rynge
 And freres in the chauncel / gonne synge 3656
 ¶ This parisshe clerk' this amorous Absolon
 That is for loue / alwey so wo bigon'
 Vp on the monday / was at Osneye
 With compaignye / hym to disporte and pleye 3660
 And axed vp on caas / a Cloistrer
 fful pryuely / after Iohn the Carpenter
 And he drogh hym a part' out of the cherche
 And seyde I noot' I saugh hym here noght werche 3664
 Sith Saterdag / I trowe þat he be went
 ffor tymber / ther oure Abbot hath hym sent'
 ffor he is wont' for tymber for to go
 And dwellen atte graunge / a day or two 3668
 Or ellis / he is at his hous certeyn
 Where þat he be / I kan noght soothly seyn
 ¶ This Absolon / ful iolyf was and lyght'
 And thoghte / now is tyme to wake al nyght' 3672
 ffor sikerly / I saugh hym noght stiryng
 Aboute his dore / syn day bigan to spryng
 So mote I thryue / I shal at Cokkes crowe
 fful priuely / knokken at hys wyndowe 3676
 That stant ful lowe / vp on his boures wal
 To Alison / now wol I tellen al
 My loue longyng'. for yit I shal nat mysse
 That at the leeste wey / I shal hir kisse 3680
 Som manere confort' / shal I haue parfay
 My mouth hath icched / al this longe day
 That is a signe of kysyng' at the leeste
 Al nyght me mette cek / I was at a feeste 3684
 Ther-fore I wol go slepe / an houre or tweye
 And al the nyght' than wol I wake and pleye

¶ Whan þat the firste cok^t hath crowe anon [leaf 48, back]

Vp rist / this ioly louere Absolon 3688

And hym arrayeth gay / at point deuys

But first / he cheweth grayn and likorys

To smellen swete / er he hadde kembd his heer

Vnder his tonge / a trewe loue he beer 3692

ffor ther by / wende he to be gracious

He rometh / to the Carpenters hous

And stille he stant^t vnder the shot wyndoweVn to his brest^t it raughte / it was so lowe 3696

And ofte he cogheth / with a semy sown

What do ye hony comb / swete Alisoun

My faire bryd / my swete cynamone

Awaketh lemman myn / and speketh to me 3700

Wel litel thynken ye / vp on my wo

That for youre loue / I swete ther I go

No wonder is / thogh þat I swelte and swete

I moorne / as dooth a lamb / after the tete 3704

Ywis lemman / I haue swich loue longyng^tThat lyk a turtle trewe / is my moornyng^t

I may nat ete / namoore than a mayde

¶ Go fro the wyndow / Iakke fool she sayde 3708

As help me god / it wol nat be com pa me

I loue another / and ellis I were to blame

Wel bet than thee / by Ihesu Absolon

Go forth thy wey / or I wol caste a stoon 3712

And lat me slepe / a twenty deuele wey

¶ Allas quod Absolon / and weilawey

That trewe loue / was euere so yuel biset^tThanne kys me / syn þat it may be no bet^t 3716

ffor Ihesus loue / and for the loue of me

¶ Woltow thanne / go thy wey ther-with quod she

¶ Ye certes lemman / quod this Absolon

¶ Thanne make thee redy quod she / I come anon 3720

[.]

. no gap in the MS.]

¶ This Absolon / doun sette hym on his knees

And seyde / I am a lord / at alle degrees 3724
 ffor after this / I hope ther cometh moore
 Lemman thy grace / and swete bryd thyn oore
 ¶ The wyndow she vndooth / and that in haste
 Haue do quod she / com of and speed thee faste 3728
 Lest þat oure neghebores / thee espye [leaf 49]
 ¶ This Absolon / gan wipe his mouth ful drye
 Derk was the nyght as psych / or as the cole
 And at the wyndow / out she putte hir hole 3732
 And Absolon / hym fil no bet ne wers
 But with his mouth / he kiste hir naked ers *Note malum quid*
 fful sauourly / er he were war of this
 Abak he sterte / and thoghte it was amys 3736
 ffor wel he wiste / a womman hath no berd
 He felte a thyng al rogh / and longe y-herd
 And seyde fy allas / what haue I do
 ¶ Te hee quod she / and clapte the wyndow to 3740
 And Absolon / gooth forth a sory paas
 ¶ A berd / a berd / quod hende Nicholas
 By goddes corpus / this gooth faire and wel
 ¶ This sely Absolon / herde euery del 3744
 And on his lippe / he gan for anger byte
 And to hym 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 / þat seith ful ofte allas
 My soule / bitake vn to Sathanas
 But me were leuere / than al this town quod he
 Of this despit awreken for to be 3752
 Allas quod he / allas I ne hadde ybleynt
 His hote loue was coold / and al yqueynt
 ffor fro that tyme / þat he hadde kist hir ers
 Of paramours / he sette noght a kers 3756
 ffor he was heelyd / of his maladye
 fful ofte paramours / he gan defye
 And weep / as dooth a child þat is ybete
 A softe paas / he went ouer the strete 3760

Vn til a smyth / men clepen daun Gerueys.
 That in his forge / smythed plogh harneys
 He sharpeth shaar / and cultour bisily
 This Absolon / knokketh al esily 3764
 And seyde / vndo Gerueys and that anoon
 ¶ What who artow^s / it am I Absolon
 What Absolon / what Cristes swete tree
 Why rise ye so rathe / ey benedicitee 3768
 What eyleth yow / som gay gerl / god it woot^t [leaf 49, back]
 Hath broght yow thus / vp on the viritoot^t
 By Seinte note / ye woot wel what I mene
 ¶ This Absolon / ne roghte nat a bene 3772
 Of al his pley / no word agayn he yaf^t
 He hadde moore tow / on his dystaf^t
 Than Gerueys knew / and seyde freend so deere
 That hoote cultour / in the chymenee heere 3776
 As lene it me / I haue ther-with to doone
 I wol brynge it thee / agayn ful soone
 ¶ Gerueys answerde / certes were it gold
 Or in a poke / nobles al vntold 3780
 Thow sholdest haue / as I am trewe Smyth
 Ey Cristes foo / what wol ye do ther-with
 ¶ Ther-of quod Absolon / be as be may
 I shal wel telle it thee / another day 3784
 And caughte the cultour / by the colde stele
 fful softe / out at the dore he gan to stele
 And wente / vn to the Carpenters wal
 He cogheth first^t and knokketh ther with al 3788
 Vp on the wyndow / right as he dide er
 ¶ This Alison answerde / Who is ther^s
 That knokketh so / I warante it a theef^t
 ¶ Wy nay quod he god woot^t my swete lief^t 3792
 I am thyn Absolon / my derelyng^t
 Of gold quod he / I haue thee broght a ryng^t
 My moder yaf it me / so god me saue
 fful fyn it is / and ther-to wel ygraue 3796

This wol I yeuen thee / if thow me kisse
 ¶ This Nicholas / was risen for to pisse
 And thoghte / he wolde amenden al the Iape
 He sholde kisse his ers / er þat he scape 3800
 And vp the wyndow / dide he hastely
 And out his ers / he putteth pryuely
 Ouer the buttoke / to the haunche bon
 ¶ And ther-with / spak this clerk this Absolon 3804
 Spek swete herte / I noot noght wher thow art
 This Nicholas / anon leet fle a fart
 As greet as it hadde been a thonder dent
 That with the strook he was almoost yblent 3808
 And he was redy / with his Iren hoot
 And Nicholas / in the ers he smoot
 Of gooth the skyn / an handbrede aboute
 The hote cultour / brende so his toute 3812
 That 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
 ¶ This Carpenter / out of his slomber sterte 3816
 And herde oon cryen water / as he were wood
 And thoghte allas / now cometh Nowelys flood
 He sette hym vp / with-out words mo
 And with his ax / he smoot the corde atwo 3820
 And down gooth al / he foond neither to selle
 Ne breed ne ale / til he cam to the Celle
 Vp on the floor / and there aswowne he lay
 ¶ Vp stirte hire / Alison and Nicholay 3824
 And cryden out and harrow / in the Strete
 The neghebores / bothe smale and grete
 In ronnen / for to gauren on this man
 That aswowne lay / bothe pale and wan 3828
 ffor with the fal / he brosten hadde his arm
 But stonde he moste / vn to his owene harm
 ffor whan he spak / he was anon bore doun
 With hende Nicholas and Alisoun 3832

110 GROUP A. § 4. MILLER'S TALE. Hengwrt MS.

They tolden euery man / þat he was wood
 He was agast so / of Nowelys flood
 Thurgh fantasie / þat of his vanytee
 He hadde ybought hym / knedyng tubbes thre 3836
 And hadde hem hanged / in the roof aboue
 And þat he preyde hem / for goddes loue
 To sitten in the roof / par compaignye
 ¶ The folk gan laughen / at his fantasye 3840
 In to the roof / they kiken and they cape
 And turned al his harm / vn to a lape
 ffor what so / þat this Carpenter answerde
 It was for noght^t no man his reson herde 3844
 With othes grete / he was so sworn adoun
 That he was holden wood / in al the toun
 ffor euery clerk / anon right heeld with oother
 They seyde / the man was wood / my leue brother 3848
 And euery wight^t gan laughen at this stryf^t [leaf 50, back]
 Thus swyued / was the Carpenters wyf^t
 ffor al his kepyng^t and his Ialousye
 And Absolon / hath kist hir nether Iye 3852
 And Nicholas / is scalded in the toute
 This tale is doon / and god saue al the route

¶ ¶ Here is ended / the Millerys tale.

[No gap in the MS.]

W
¶
 The prologe / of the Reunes tale
 Han folk hadde laughen / at this nyce cas
 Of Absolon / and hende Nicholas 3856
 Diuerse folk / diuersely they seyde
 But for the moore part they lowe and pleyde
 Ne at his tale I seigh no man hym greue
 But it were oonly / Osewold the Reue 3860
 By-cause he was / of Carpenters craft
 A litel Ire / is in his herte ylaft
 He gan to grucche / and blamed it a lite
 So the ik quod he / ful wel koude I thee quyte 3864
 With bleryng of a proud Millerys Iye
 If þat me liste / speke of rybaudye
 But ik am oold / me list no pleye for age
 Gras tyme is doon / my fodder is now forage 3868
 This white tope / writeth myne olde yerys
 Myn herte / is also mowled / as myne herys
 But if ik fare / as dooth an Openers
 That ilke fruyt is euer lenger the wers 3872
 Til it be roten / in Mollok / or in stree
 We olde men / I drede so fare we
 Til we be roten / kan we noght be rype
 We hoppe alwey / whil þat the world wol pipe 3876
 ffor in oure wil / ther stiketh ever a nayl
 To haue an hoor heer / and a grene tayl
 As hath a leek / for thogh oure myght be goon
 Oure wil desireth folie / euere in oon 3880
 ffor whan we may noght doon / than wol we speke
 Yet in oure asschen olde / is fyr yreke
 ffour gleedes haue we / whiche I shal deuyse [leaf 51]
 Auauntynge lyng Anger Coueitise 3884
 Thise foure sparkles / longen vn to eelde
 Oure lymes / mowe wel been vnweelde

112 GROUP A. § 5. RENE'S PROLOGUE. Hengwrt MS.

But wil ne shal noght faillen / that is sooth
 And yet I haue alwey / a coltes tooth 3888
 As many a yeer / as it is passed henne
 Syn þat my tappe of lyf / bigan to renne
 ffor sikerlik' whan ik was bore anon
 Deeth drogh the tappe of lyf / and leet it goon 3892
 And euere sith / hath so the tappe yronne
 Til þat almoost / al empty is the tonne
 The stream of lyf / now droppeth on the chymbe
 The sely tonge / may wel rynge and chymbe 3896
 Of wrecchednesse / þat passed is ful yooore
 With olde folk / saue dotage is namoore
 ¶ Whan þat oure hoost' hadde herd this sermonyng'
 He gan to speke / as lordly as a kyng' 3900
 He seyde / what amounteth al this wit
 What shal we speke al day / of holy writ
 The deuel made / a Reue for to præche
 Or of a Soutere / a Shipman / or a leche 3904
 Sey forth thy tale / and tarie noght the tyme
 Lo Depeford / and it is half wey pryme
 Lo Grenewych / ther many a sherewe is Inne
 It were al tyme / thy tale to bigynne 3908
 ¶ Now sires / quod this Osewold the Reue
 I pray yow alle / þat ye noght yow greue
 Thogh I answeere / and som del sette his howue
 ffor leueful is / with force / force of showue 3912
 This dronken Myllere / hath ytoold vs heer
 How þat / bigiled was a Carpenter
 Perauenture in scorn / for I am oon
 And by youre leue / I shal hym quyte anon 3916
 Right / in his cherles termes / wol I speke
 I pray to god / his nekke mote to-breke
 He kan wel / in myn eye / seen a stalke
 But in his owene / he kan noght seen a balke 3920

[No gap in the MS.]

A T Trompyngton / nat fer fro Cantebrygge	Narrative
Ther gooth a brook / and ouer that a brygge	
Vp on the which brook / ther stant a Melle	[leaf 51, back]
And this is verray soothe / þat I yow telle	3924
A Millere was ther dwellyng many a day	
As any Pecok he was proud and gay	
Pipen he koude / and fissue / and nettes beete	
And torne coppes / and wel wrastle and sheete	3928
And by his belt he baar a long Panade	
And of a swerd / ful trenchaunt was the blade	
A ioly poppere / baar he in his pouche	
Ther was no man / for peril dorste hym touche	3932
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	
He was a Market betere / atte fulle	3936
Ther dorste no wight hand vp on hym legge.	
That he ne swoor / he sholde anon abegge	
A theef he was for sothe / of corn and mele	
And þat a sleigh / and vsant for to stele	3940
His name was hoten / deynous Symkyn	
A wif he hadde / comen of noble kyn	
The person of the toun / hir fader was	
With hire he yaf / ful many a panne a bras	3944
ffor þat Symkyn / sholde in his blood allye	
She was yfostred / in a Nonnerye	
ffor Symkyn / wolde no wyf as he sayde	
But she were wel ynorissed and a mayde	3948
To sauen / his estaat of yemanrye	
And she was proud / and peert as is a pye	
A ful fair sighte / was it vp on hem two	
On halidayes / biforn hire wolde he go	3952

114 GROUP A. § 6. REEVE'S TALE. Hengwrt MS.

With his tipet' wounden aboute his heed
 And she cam after / in a gyte of reed
 And Symkyn / hadde hosen of the same
 Ther dorste no wight' clepen hire but dame 3956
 Was noon so hardy / þat wente by the weye
 That with hire / dorste rage / or ones pleye
 But if he / wolde be slayn of Symkyn
 With panade / or with knyft' or boydekyn 3960
 ffor Ialous folk / been perulouse eueremo
 Algate / they wolde hir wyues wenden so
 And eek / for she was som del smoterlich [leaf 58r]
 She was as diyne / as water in a dich 3964
 And ful of hoker / and of bismare
 Hir thoghte / þat a lady sholde hir spare
 What for hir kynrede / and hir nortelrye
 That she hadde lerned / in the Nonnerye 3968
 A doghter hadde they / bitwix hem two
 Of twenty year / with outen any mo
 Sauyng a child / þat was of hal[f] yeer age
 In Cradel it lay and was a propre page 3972
 This wenche / thikke and wel ygrowen was
 With camuse nose / and eyen greye as glas
 With buttokes brode / and brestes rounde and hye
 But right fair was hir heer / I wol nat lye 3976
 ¶ The person of the toun / for she was so feir
 In purpos was / to maken hire his heir
 Bothe of his catel / and his Mesuage.
 And straunge he made it' of hir mariage 3980
 His purpos was / for to bistowe hir hye
 In to som worthy blood of Auncetrye
 ffor holicherches good / moot been despended
 On holicherches blood / þat is descended 3984
 Ther-fore he wolde his holy blood honoure
 Thogh þat he / holy chirche sholde deuoure
 ¶ Greet sokne / hath this Millere out of doute
 With whete and malt' of al the lande aboute 3988

And nameliche / ther was a greet Collegge
 Men clepeth / the soler halle of Cantebregge
 Ther was hir whete / and eek hir malt ygrounde
 And on a day / it happed in a stounde 3992
 Syk was this maunciple / on a maladie
 Men wenden wisly / þat he sholde dye
 ffor which this Millere / stal bothe mele and corn
 An hondred tyme / moore than biforn 3996
 ffor ther biforn / he stal but curteisly
 But now / he was a theef outrageously
 ffor which the wardeyn / chidde and made fare
 But ther-of / sette the Millere noght a tare 4000
 He craked boost / and swoor it was noght so
 Thanne were ther / yonge poure scolers two
 That dwelten in the halle / of which I seye [leaf 52, back]
 Testyf they were / and lusty for to pleye 4004
 And oonly / for hir myrthe and reuerye
 Vp on the wardeyn / bisily they crye
 To yeue hem leue / but a litel stounde
 To go to Mille / and seen hir corn ygrounde 4008
 And hardily / they dorste leye hir nekke
 The Millere / sholde noght stelen hem half a pekke
 Of corn by sleighte / ne by force hem reue
 And atte laste / the wardeyn yaf hem leue 4012
 Ioħn highte that oon / and Aleyn highte that oother
 Of oon town were they born / þat highte Strother
 ffer in the North / I kan noght telle where
 This Aleyn / maketh redy al his gere 4016
 And on an hors / the sak he caste anon
 fforth gooth Aleyn the clerk / and also Ioħn
 With good swerd / and with bokeler by his syde
 Ioħn knew the wey / hym neded no gyde 4020
 And at the Mille / the sak adoun he layth
 ¶ Aleyn spak first al hayl Symkyn in fayth
 How fares thy faire doghter / and thy wyf
 ¶ Aleyn wel come / quod Symkyn by my lyf 4024

And Iohā also / how now / what do ye here
 ¶ By god quod Iohā / Symond nede has na peere
 Hym bihoues serue hym self / þat has na swayn
 Or ellis / he is a fool / as clerkes sayn 4028
 Oure maunciple / I hope he wol be deed
 Swa werkes ay / the wanges in his heed
 And ther-fore is I come / and eek Alayn
 To grynde oure corn / and carie it heem agayn 4032
 I pray yow / speed vs heythen / what ye may
 ¶ It shal be doon / quod Symkyn by my fay
 What wol ye doon / whil þat it is in hande
 By god / right by the hoper / wol I stande 4036
 Quod Iohā / and se how the corn gas In
 Yet saw I neuere / by my fader kyn
 How þat the hoper / wagges til and fra
 ¶ Aleyn answerde / Iohan wiltow swa 4040
 Thanne wol I be byneth / by my crown
 And se / how þat the mele falles down
 In to the trogh / that sal be my desport^[leaf 53]
 ffor Iohā in faith / I may been of youre sort⁴⁰⁴⁴
 I is as ille a Millere / as ar ye
 ¶ This Millere / smyled of hir nycetee
 And thoghte / al this nys doon / but for a wyle
 They wene / þat no man may hem bigile 4048
 But by my thrift / yet shal I blere hir Iye
 ffor al the sleighte / in hir Phislophye
 The moore queynte crekys / þat they make
 The moore wol I stele / whan I take 4052
 In stede of flour / yet wol I yeue hem bren
 The grettest clerkes / been noght the wisest men
 As whilom to the wolf thus spak the mare
 Of al hir art counte I noght a tare 4056
 Out of the dore / he gooth ful pryuely
 Whan þat he saugh his tyme / softely
 He looketh vp and down / til he hath founde
 The clerkes hors / ther as it stood ybounde 4060

Bihynde the Mille / vnder a leafsel
 And to the hors / he gooth hym faire and wel
 He strepeth of the bridel / right anon
 And whan the hors was laus / he gynneth gon 4064
 Toward the fen / ther wilde mares renne
 And forth with wehe / thurgh thikke and thenne
 This Millere gooth ayein / no word he seyde
 But dooth his note / and with the clerkes pleyde 4068
 Til þat hir corn / was faire and wel ygrounde
 And whan the mele / was sakked and ybounde
 ¶ This Iohā gooth out and fynt his hors away
 And gan to crye / harrow and weilaway 4072
 Oure hors is lost. Alayn for goddes banes
 Step on thy feet / com of man al atanes
 Allas oure wardeyn / has his palfrey lorn
 ¶ This Alayn al forgat bothe mele and corn 4076
 Al was out of his mynde / his housbondrye
 What whilk wey is he gane / he gan to crye
 ¶ The wyf cam lepyng Inward with a ren
 She seyde allas / youre hors gooth to the fen 4080
 With wilde mares / as faste as he may go
 Vnthank come on his hand / þat boond hym so
 And he þat bettre / sholde haue knyht the reyne [leaf 53, back]
 ¶ Allas quod Iohā / Aleyn for Cristes peyne 4084
 Lay down thy swerd / and I wol myn alswa
 I is ful wight / God waat as is a ra
 By god hert he sal nat scape vs bathe
 Why ne had thou / pit the capil in the lathe 4088
 Il hail / by god Alayn / thou is a fonne
 ¶ This sely clerkes / haan ful faste yronne
 Toward the fen / bothe Alayn and eek Iohā
 And whan the Millere seigh / þat they were gon 4092
 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
 Yet kan a Millere / maken a clerkes berd 4096

118 GROUP A. § 6. REEVE'S TALE. Hengwrt MS.

ffor al his art ye lat hem goon hir weye
 Lo where he gooth / ye lat the children pleye
 They gete hym noght so lightly / by my croun
 ¶ Thise sely clerkes / rennen vp and doun 4100
 With keep / keep / stand / stand / Iossa warderere
 Ga whistle thow / and I sal kepe hym heere
 But shortly / til þat it was verray nyght
 They koude noght thogh they dide al hir myght 4104
 Hir capyl cacche / he ran alwey so faste
 Til in a dych / they caughte hym at the laste
 ¶ Wery and weet as beest is in the reyn
 Comth sely Iohn / and with hym comth Aleyn 4108
 Allas quod Iohn / the day þat I was born
 Now ar we dryuen / til hethyng and til scorn
 Oure corn is stole / men wil vs foolis calle
 Bothe the wardeyn / and oure felawes alle 4112
 And namely the Millere / weilaway
 ¶ Thus pleyneth Iohn / as he gooth by the wey
 Toward the Mille / and Bayard in his hond
 The Millere / sitting by the fyr he fond 4116
 ffor it was nyght and ferther myghte they noght
 But for the loue of god / they hym bisoght
 Of herberwe and of ese / as for hir peny
 ¶ The Millere seide agayn / if ther be eny 4120
 Swich as it is / yet shal ye haue youre part
 Myn hous is streyt but ye han lerned art
 Ye kan by argumentz / make a place [leaf 54]
 A myle brood / of twenty foot of space 4124
 Lat se now / if this place may suffice
 Or make it rowm with speche / as is youre gyse
 ¶ Now Symond seyde this Iohn / by seint Cutberd
 Ay is thou myrie / and that is faire answerd 4128
 I haue herd seye / men sal tak of twa thynges
 Swilk as he fyndes / or tak swilk as he brynges
 But specially / I pray thee hoost deere
 Get vs som mete and drynke / and make vs cheere 4132

And we wol payen / trewely atte fulle
 With empty hand / men may none haukes tulle
 Lo heere oure siluer / redy for to spende
 ¶ This Millere in to town / his doghter sende 4136
 ffor ale and breed / and rosted hem a goos
 And boond hir hors / it sholde namoore go loos
 And in his owene chambre / hem made a bed
 With shetes and *wit*h chalone / faire yspred 4140
 Noght from his owene bed / but ten foot or twelue
 His doghter hadde a bed / al by hir selue
 Right in the same chambre by and by
 It myghte be no bet' and cause why 4144
 Ther was no rowmer herberwe / in the place
 They soupen / and they speken / hem to solace
 And drynken euere stroong ale / at the beste
 Aboute mydnyght / wente they to reste 4148
 Wel hath this Millere / vernysshed his heed
 fful pale he was for-dronke / and noght reed
 He yexeth / and he speketh thurgh the nose
 As he were / on the quakke / or on the pose 4152
 To bedde he goth / and *wit*h hym goth his wyf
 As any Iay / she light was and iolyf
 So was hir ioly whistle / wel ywet'
 The Cradel / at hir beddes feet is set' 4156
 To rokken / and to yeue the child to sowke
 And whan *pat* drunken / al was in the Crowke
 To bedde wente / the doghter right anon
 To bedde gooth Aleyn / and also Iohn 4160
 Ther nas namoore / hem neded no dwale
 This Millere / hath so wisly bibbed ale
 That as an hors / he snorteth in his sleepe [leaf 54, back]
 Ne of his tayl bihynde / he took no keepe 4164
 His wyf bar hym / a burdon / a ful strong'
 Men myghten hir routyng' heren a furlong'
 The wenche / routeth eek *par* compaignye
 ¶ Aleyn the clerc' that herde this melodye 4168

120 GROUP A. § 6. REEVE'S TALE. *Hengwrt MS.*

He poked Iohān / and seyde slepestow
 Herd thow euere / slyk a sang er now
 Lo swilk a conplyng / is ymel hem alle
 A wilde fyr / on thair bodyes falle 4172
 Wha herkned euere / swilk a ferly thyng
 Ye they sal haue / the flour of il endyng
 This lang night ther tydes me na reste
 But yet na force / al sal be for the beste 4176
 ffor Iohān seyde he / als euere moot I thryue
 If þat I may / yon wenche wol I swyue
 Som esement / has lawe shapen vs
 ffor Iohān / ther is a lawe / þat says thus 4180
 That gif a man / in a point be agreued
 That in another / he sal be releued
 Oure corn is stoln / soothly it is na nay
 And we han had / an ille fit to day 4184
 And syn I sal / haue naan amendement
 Agayn my los / I wil haue esement
 By goddes saule / it sal naan other be
 ¶ This Iohān answerde / Aleyn auyse thee 4188
 The Millere / is a perilous man he sayde
 And if þat he / out of his sleep abrayde
 He mighte doon vs bathe / a vileynye
 ¶ Aleyn answerde / I counte hym noght a flye 4192
 And vp he rist / and by the wenche he crepte
 This wenche lay vp righte / and faste slepte
 Til he so neigh was / er she myghte aspie
 That it hadde been / to late for to crie 4196
 And shortly for to seyn / they were at oon
 Now play Aleyn / for I wol speke of Iohān
 ¶ This Iohān lith stille / a furlang wey or two
 And to hym self he maketh routhe and wo 4200
 Allas quod he / this is a wikked Iape
 Now may I seyn / þat I is but an ape
 Yet has my felawe / som what for his harm [leaf 55]
 He has the Milleris doghter / in his arm 4204

He aunted hym / and has his nedes sped
 And I lye / as a draf sak / in my bed
 And whan this iape / is told another day
 I sal ben halden / a daf a Cokenay 4208
 I wil arise and aunte it by my fayth
 Vnhardy is vnsely / thus men sayth
 ¶ And vp he roos / and softly he wente
 Vn to the Cradel / and in his hand it hente 4212
 And baar it softe / vn to his beddes feet
 Soone after this / the wyf hir routynt leet
 And gan awake / and wente hir out to pisse
 And cam agayn / and gan hir Cradel mysse 4216
 And groped heer and ther / but she foond noon
 Allas quod she / I hadde almoost mysgoon
 I hadde almoost goon to the clerkes bed
 Ey benedicite / thanne had I foule ysped 4220
 And forth she gooth / til she the Cradel fond
 She gropeth alwey / forther with hir hond
 And foond the bed / and thoghte noght but good
 By cause / þat the Cradel by it stood 4224
 And nyste wher she was / for it was derk
 But faire and wel / she creep in to the clerk
 And lyth ful stille / and wolde haue caught a sleepe
 With-Inne a while / this Iohn the clerk vp leepe 4228
 And on this goode wyf / he leyth on soore
 So murie a fyt ne hadde she nat ful yoore
 He priketh harde and depe / as he were mad
 This ioly lyf / han thise two clerkes lad 4232
 Til þat / the thridde cok bigan to synge
 ¶ Aleyn wax wery / in the dawenyng
 for he hadde swonken / al the longe nyght
 And seyde / fare wel Malyn swete wight 4236
 The day is come / I may no lenger byde
 But eueremo / wher so I go or ryde
 I is thyn awen clerk so haue I sel
 ¶ Now deere lemman quod she / go fare wel 4240

122 GROUP A. § 6. REEVE'S TALE. **Hengwrt MS.**

But er thou go / o thyng^t I wol thee telle
 Whan that thou wendest / homward by the Melle
 Right at the entree / of the dore bihynde [leaf 55, back]
 Thou shalt a Cake / of half a busschel fynde 4244
 That was ymaked / of thyn owene mele
 Which þat I heelp / my sire for to stele
 And good lemman / god thee saue and kepe
 And with that word / almoost he gan to wepe 4248
 ¶ Aleyn vp rist^t and thoghte er þat it dawē
 I wol go crepen In / by my felawe
 And fond the Cradel / with his hond anon
 By god thoghte he / al wrang I haue mysyon 4252
 Myn heed is toty / of my swynk to nyght^t
 That maketh me / þat I go noght ariht^t
 I woot wel by the Cradel / I haue mysgo
 Here lyth the Millere / and his wyf also 4256
 And forth he gooth / on twenty deueleway
 Vn to the bed / ther as the Millere lay
 He wende haue copen / by his felawe Iohn
 And by the Millere / In he creep anoon 4260
 And caughte hym by the nekke / and softe he spak^t
 He seyde thou Iohn / thou Swyneshed awak^t
 ffor cristes saule / and here a noble game
 ffor by that lord / þat called is Seint Iame 4264
 As I haue thries / in this shorte nyght
 Swyued the Milleris doghter / bolt vp-right
 Whil thou hast^t as a coward been agast^t
 ¶ Ye false harlot quod the Millere hast^t 4268
 A false traytour / false clerk^t quod he
 Thou shalt be deed / by goddes dignytee
 Who dorste be so bold / to disparage
 My doghter / that is come of swich lynage 4272
 And by the throte bolle / he caughte Alayn
 And he hente hym / despitously agayn
 And on the nose / he smoot hym with his fest^t
 Doun ran the bloody streem / vp on his brest^t 4276

And on the floor / with nose and mouth tobroke
 They walwen / as doon two pigges in a poke
 And vp they goon / and doun agayn anoon
 Til þat the Millere / sporned on a stoon 4280
 And doun he fil / bakward vp on his wyf
 That wiste no thyng of this nyce stryf
 ffor she was falle aslepe / a litel wight [leaf 56]
 With Iohñ the clerk / that waked hadde al nyght 4284
 And with the fal / out of hir sleepe she brayde
 Help holy cros of Bromholm / she sayde
 In manus tuas / lord to thee I calle
 Awake Symond / the feend is on me falle 4288
 Myn herte is broken / help I nam but ded
 Ther lyth oon vp on my wombe / and vp myn hed
 Help Symkyn / for the false clerkes fighte
 ¶ This Iohñ sterte vp / as faste as euere he myghte 4292
 And graspeth by the walles / to and fro
 To fynde a staf / and she sterte vp also
 And knew the estres / bet than dide this Iohñ
 And by the wal / a staf she foond anon 4296
 And saugh / a litel shymeryng of a light
 ffor at an hole / in shoon the moone bright
 And by that light she saugh hem bothe two
 But sikerly / she nyste who was who 4300
 But as she saugh / a whit thyng in hir Iye
 And whan she gan / this white thyng espye
 She wende the clerk hadde wered a voluper
 And with the staf / she drow ay ner and ner 4304
 And wende han hit / this Aleyn atte fulle
 And smoot the Millere / on the piled skulle
 That doun he gooth / and cryde harrow I dye
 Thise clerkes bette hym wel / and lete hym lye 4308
 And greithen hem / and tooke hir hors anon
 And eek hir mele / and on hir wey they gon
 And at the Mille / yet they toke hir cake
 Of half a busschel flour / ful wel ybake 4312

124 GROUP A. § 6. REEVE'S TALE. Hengwrt MS.

¶ Thus is the proude Millere / wel ybete
 And hath ylost the gryndyng of the whete
 And payed for the souper / euerydel
 Of Aleyn / and of Iohā / that bette hym wel 4316
 His wyf is swyued / and his doghter als
 Lo which it is / a Millere to be fals
 And ther-fore this prouerbe / is seyde ful sooth
 Hym thar nat wene wel / þat yuele dooth 4320
 A gilour shal hym self / bigiled be
 And god / that sitteth heighe in magestee
 Saue al this compaignie / grete and smale [leaf 56, back]
 Thus haue I quyt the Millere / in my tale 4324

¶ Here endeth the Reunes tale. 𐀚

[*Small break in the MS.*]

¶ The prologe of the Cookes tale 𐀀

THe Cook of London / whil the Reue spak'
 ffor ioye hym thoughte / he clawed hym on the bak'
 Haha quod he / for Cristes passion)
 This Millere / hadde a sharpe conclusion) 4328
 Vp on his argument of herbergage
 Wel seyde Salomon / in his langage
 Ne bryng nat euery man / in to thyn hous
 ffor herberwyng' by nyghte is perilous 4332
 Wel oghte a man / auysed for to be
 Whom þat he broghte / in to his priuete
 I pray to god / so yeue me sorwe and care
 If euer sith / I highte Hogge of ware 4336
 Herde I a Millere / bettre yset awerk/
 He hadde a iape of malice / in the derk'
 But god forbede / that we stynten heere^{hic}
 ffor if ye / vouche sauf to heere^{audire} 4340
 A tale of me / that am a poure man
 I wol yow telle / as wel as euere I kan
 A litel iape / that fil in oure Citee
 ¶ Oure hoost answerde / and seyde I graunte it thee 4344
 Now tel on Roger / looke that it be good
 ffor many a pastee / hastow laten blood
 And many a lakke of Douere / hastow soold
 That hath been twies hoot and twies coold 4348
 Of many a pilgrym / hastow Cristes curs
 ffor of thy persle / yet they fare the wors
 That they han eten / with thy stubbul goos
 ffor in thy shoppe / is many a flye loos 4352
 Now tel on / gentil Roger / by thy name
 But yet I praye thee / be nat wrooth for game
 A man may seye ful sooth / in game and play
 ¶ Thow seist ful sooth / quod Roger by my fey 4356

GROUP A. § 7. COOK'S PROLOGUE. Hengwrt MS.

	sooth pley quade pley / as the flemyng seith	[leaf 57]
	ther-fore herry Bailly / by thy feith	
	hou nat wrooth / er we departen heer	
	gh þat my tale / be of an hostiler	4360
	nathelees / I wol nat telle it yit	
1	er we parte / ywis thow shalt be quyt	
A	ther with al / he lough / and made cheere	
A	seyde his tale / as ye shal after heere	4364

[*Small break in the MS.*]

¶ Here bigynneth the Cook his tale.

A Prentis / whilom dwelled in oure Citee
 And of a craft of vitailers was he
 Gaillard he was / as goldfynch in the shawe
 Broun as a berye / a propre short felawe 4368
 With lokkes blake / ykembd ful fetisly
 Dauncen he koude / so wel and iolily
 That he / was clepyd Perkyn Reuelour
 He was / as ful / of loue and paramour 4372
 As is the hyue / of hony swete
 Wel was the wenche / þat with hym myghte meete
 At euery bridale / wolde he synge and hoppe
 He loued bet the Tauerne / than the Shoppe 4376
 ffor / whan ther any ridyng was in Chepe
 Out of the shoppe / thider wolde he lepe
 Til þat he hadde / al the sighte yseyn
 And daunced wel / he wolde nocht come ageyn 4380
 And gadred hym / a meynne of his sort
 To hoppe and synge / and maken swich disport
 And ther / they setten steuene / for to meete
 To pleyen at the dees / in swich a streete 4384
 ffor in the town / nas ther no Prentys
 That fairer / koude caste a paire of dys
 Than Perkyn koude / and ther-to he was free
 Of his dispense / in place of pryuetee 4388
 That foond his maister wel / in his chaffare
 ffor ofte tyme / he foond his box ful bare
 ffor sikerly / a prentys reuelour
 That haunteth dees / ryot or paramour 4392
 His maister / shal it in his shoppe aby
 Al haue he / no part of the Minstralcy
 ffor thefte and riot / they been conuertible
 Al konne he pleye / on Giterne / or Rubible 4396

[leaf 57, back]

Reuel and trouthe / as in a lowe degree
 They been ful wrothe al day / as men may see
 ¶ This ioly Prentys / with his Maister bood
 Til he were neigh / out of his prentishood 4400
 Al were he snybbed / bothe erly and late
 And som tyme / lad with reuel to Newgate
 But atte laste / his maister hym bithoghte
 Vp on a day / whan he his papir soghte 4404
 Of a prouerbe / that seith this same word
 Wel bet is roten appul / out of hoord
 Than þat it rotte / al the remenaunt
 So fareth it / by a riotous seruaunt 4408
 It is ful lasse harm / to lete hym pace
 Than he shende / alle the seruantz in the place
 Ther fore / his maister gaf hym acquitaunce
 And bad hym go / with sorw / and with meschaunce 4412
 And thus this ioly prentys / hadde his leeu
 Now lat hym riote / al the nyght or leeu
 And for ther nys no thief / with-oute a lowke
 That helpeth hym / to wasten and to sowke 4416
 Of that he brybe kan / or borwe may
 Anon / he sente his bed / and his array
 Vn to a compeer / of his owene sort
 That loued dees / and reuel / and disport 4420
 And hadde a wyf / that heeld for contaunce
 A shoppe / and swyued for hir sustenaunce
 Of this Cokes tale
 maked Chaucer na
 moore [*in the left margin*]

[*Rest of the page blank.*]

GROUP D. FRAGMENT V.

§ 1. WIFE OF BATH'S PREAMBLE.

HENGWRT MS.

¶ Here bigynneth the prologe of the tale of [leaf 58]
the Wyf of Bathe.

Experience / thogh noon Auctoritee
Were in this world / is right ynogh for me
To speke of wo / that is in mariage
ffor lordynges / sith þat I twelf yeer was of age 4
Thonked be god / that is eterne on lyue.
Housbondes atte chirche dore / I haue had fyue
If I so ofte / myghte han wedded be
And alle were worthy men / in hir degree 8
But me was told certeyn / noght longe agon is
That sith þat Crist' ne wente neuere but onys
To weddyng' in the Cane of Galilee
That by the same ensample / taughte he me 12
That I ne sholde / wedded be but ones
¶ Herke eek / lo / which a sharp word for the nones
Bisyde a welle / Ihesus / god and man
Spak / in repreeue of the Samaritan 16
¶ Thow hast yhad / fyue housbondes quod he
And that ilke man / which that now hath thee
Is nat thyn housbonde / thus he seyde certeyn .
What that he mente ther-by / I kan nat seyn 20
But þat I axe / why þat the fifthe man
Was noon housbonde / to the Samaritan
How manye / myghte she han in mariage
Yet herde I neuere / tellen in myn age 24

Vp-on this nombre / diffynycioun
 Men may dyuyne / and glosen vp & down
 But wel I woot expres / with-uten lye
 God bad vs / for to wexe and multiplie 28
 That gentil text kan I wel vnderstonde
 ¶ Eek wel I woot he seyde þat myn housbonde
 Sholde lete / fader and moder / and take to me
 But of no nombre / mencion made he 32
 Of Bigamy / or of Octogamy
 Why sholde men thanne / speke of it vileynye
 ¶ Lo here / the wise kyng Dann Salomon
 I trowe / he hadde wyues many oon 36
 As wolde god / it leueful were to me [leaf 58, back]
 To be refreshed / half so ofte as he
 Which yifte of god hadde he / for alle hise wyuys
 No man hath swich / that in this world alyue is 40
 God woot this noble kyng as to my wit
 The firste nyght hadde many a murye fit
 With ech of hem / so wel was hym on lyue
 Blessed be god / that I haue wedded fyue 44
 Wel come the sixte / whan þat euere he shal
 ffor sith I wol nat kepe me / chaast in al
 Whan myn housbonde / is fro the world agon
 Som cristen man / shal wedde me anon 48
 ffor thanne thapostle seith / þat I am free
 To wedde a goddes half / where it liketh me
 He seith / that to be wedded is no synne
 Bet is to be wedded / than to brynne 52
 What rekketh me / theigh folk / seye vileynye
 Of shrewed Lameth / and his bigamy
 I woot wel / Abraham was an holy man
 And Iacob eek as fer as euere I kan 56
 And ech of hem / hadde wyues mo than two
 And many another / holy man also
 ¶ Where kan ye seye / in any maner age
 That heighe god / defended mariage 60

By expres word / I pray yow telleth me
 Or where comanded he virgynytee
 I woot as wel as ye / it is no drede
 Thapostle / whan he speketh of maydenhede 64
 He seyde / that precept ther-of / hadde he noon
 Men may conseille a womman / to be oon
 But conseillyng' nys no comandement'
 He put it in oure owene Iuggement' 68
 ffor hadde god / comanded maydenhede
 Thanne hadde he dampned weddyng' *with* the dede
 And certes / if ther were no seed ysowe
 Virgynytee thanne / wher-of sholde it growe 72
 Poul dorste nat comanden / at the leeste
 A thyng' of which / his mayster yaf noon heeste
 The dart/ is set vp for virgynytee
 Cacche who so may / who renneth best lat se 76
 But this word / is noght take of euery wight' [leaf 59]
 But ther as god / list yeue it of his myght'
 I woot wel / that thapostle was a mayde
 But nathelees / thogh þat he wroot' or sayde 80
 He wolde / that euery wight' were swich as he
 Al nys but conseil / to virgynytee
 And for to been a wyf / he yaf me leue
 Of Indulgence / so nys it no repreue 84
 To wedde me / if that my make dye
 With-uten excepciōn of bigamye
 Al were it good / no womman for to touche
 He mente / as in his bed / or in his couche 88
 ffor peril is / bothe fyr and tow tassemble
 Ye knowe / what this ensample may resemble
 This al and som / he heeld virgynytee
 Moore parfit' than weddyng in freletee 92
 ffreletee clepe I / but if þat he and she
 Wolde leden / al hir lyf in chastitee
 I graunte it wel / I haue noon enuye
 Thogh maydenhede / *preferre* bigamye 96

It liketh hem to be clene / in body and goost
 Of myn estat^t ne wol I make no boost^t
 ffor wel ye knowe / a lord in his houshold
 Ne hath nat every vessel / al of gold 100
 Somme been of tree / and doon hir lord *seruise*
 God clepeth folk to hym / in sondry wyse
 And euerich / hath of god a *propre* yifte
 Som this / som that^t as hym liketh shifte 104
 Virgynytee / is greet perfeccioñ
 And continence eek^t with deuocioñ
 But Crist^t that of perfeccioñ / is welle
 Bad nat every wight^t he sholde go selle 108
 Al that he hadde / and yeue it to the poore
 And in swich wise / folwe hym and his foore
 He spak to hem / that wol lyue *parfitly*
 And lordynges / by youre leue / that am nat I 112
 I wol bistowe / the flour of al myn age
 In thactes / and in fruyt of mariage
 ¶ Telle me also / to what conclusioñ questio :
 Were membres maad / of generacioñ 116
 And of so *parfit* wys a wight ywrought / [leaf 59, back]
 Trusteth right wel / they were nat maad for noght^t
 Glose who so wole / and seye bothe vp and down
 That they were maad / for purgacioun 120
 Of Vryne / and oure bothe thynges smale
 Was eek to knowe / a femelle/ from a male
 And for noon oother cause / sey ye / no?
 Thexperience / woot wel it is noght so 124
 So that the Clerkes / be nat with me wrothe
 I sey this / *pat* they maked been for bothe
 That is to seyn / for office and for ese
 Of engendrure / ther we nat god displese 128
 Why sholde men ellis / in hir bokes sette
 That man shal yelde / to his wyf hir dette
 Now wherwith / sholde he make his paiement
 If he ne vsed / his sely Instrument^t 132

Thanne were they maad / vp-on a creature
 To purge vryne / and eek for engendrure
 ¶ But I seye noght þat euery wight is holde
 That hath swich harneys / as I to yow tolde 136
 To goon / and vsen hem in engendrure
 Thanne sholde men take / of Chastitee no cure
 Crist was a mayde / and shapen as a man
 And many a Seynt sith that the world bigan 140
 yet lyued they euere / in parfit Chastitee
 I nyl envie / no virgynytee
 Lat hem be breed / of pured whete seed
 And lat us wyues / hote Barlybreed 144
 And yet *with* Barlybreed / Mark telle kan
 Oure lord Ihesu / refreshed many a man
 In swich estat as god hath clepyd vs
 I wol perseuere / I nam nat precius 148
 In wifhode / wol I vse myn Instrument
 As frely / as my makere hath it sent
 If I be daungerous / god yeue me sorwe
 Myn housbonde / shal it han / bothe eue and morwe 152
 Whan that hym list com forth and paye his dette
 And housbonde / wol I haue / I wol nat lette
 Which shal be / bothe / my dettour and my thral
 And haue / his tribulacion / with-al 156
 Vp-on his flessch / whil that I am his wyf [leaf 60]
 I haue the power / duryng al my lyf
 Vp-on his propre body / and nat he
 Right thus / thapostle / tolde it vn-to me 160
 And bad oure housbondes / for to loue vs wel
 Al this sentence / me liketh euery del
 ¶ Vp stirte the Pardoner / and that anon
 Now dame quod he / by god and by Seint Iohn 164
 Ye been a noble Prechour / in this cas
 I was aboute / to wedde a wyf allas
 What sholde I bye it / on my flessch so deere
 Yet hadde I leuere / wedde no wyf to yeere 168

¶ Abyd quod she / my tale is nat bigonne
 Nay / thow shalt drynken / of another tonne
 Er þat I go / shal sauoure wors than Ale
 And whan that I / haue toold thee forth my tale 172
 Of tribulacion / in maryage
 Of which I am expert in al myn age
 This is to seye / my self hath been the whippe
 Thanne maystow / chese / wheither þat thow wolt sippe
 Of thilke tonne / that I shal abroche 177
 Be war of it / er thow to neigh approche
 ffor I shal telle ensamples / mo than ten
 Who so þat nyle / be war / by othere men 180
 By hym / shal othere men corrected be
 Thise same wordes / writeth Protholome
 Rede in his Almageste / and take it there
 ¶ Dame I wolde pray yow / if youre wyl it were 184
 Seyde this Pardoner / as ye bigan
 Telle forth youre tale / spareth for no man
 And techeth vs yonge men / of youre praktyke
 ¶ Gladly quod she / syn it may yow lyke 188
 But that I praye / to al this compaignye
 If that I speke / after my fantasye
 As taketh nat agrief / of that I seye
 ffor myn entente / nys but for to pleye 192

Now sire / thanne wol I telle yow forth my tale
 As euere / moot I drynke / wyn or Ale
 I shal seye sooth / tho housbondes þat I hadde
 As three of hem were goode / and two were badde 196
 The thre men / were goode / and ryche / and olde [leaf 60, back]
 Vnnethe myghte they / the Statut holde
 In which / that they were bounden vn-to me
 Ye woot wel / what I mene of this pardee 200
 As help me god / I laughe whan I thynke
 How pitously / a nyght I made hem swynke
 And by my fey / I tolde of it no stoor
 They hadde me yeuen / hir land and hir tresoor 204

Me neded nat' do lenger diligence
 To wynne hir loue / or doon hem reuerence
 They loued me so wel / by god aboue
 That I ne tolde / no deyntee of hir loue 208
 A wys womman / wol bisye hire / euere in oon
 To gete hir loue / ye ther as she hath noon
 But sith I hadde hem / hoolly in myn hond
 And sith that they / hadde yeuen me al hir lond 212
 What sholde I take kepe / hem for to plesse
 But it were / for my profit' and myn ese
 I sette hem awerk' by my fey
 That many a nyght' they songen weylawey 216
 The bacon / was nat fet for hem I trowe
 That som men han / in Essex at Donmowe
 I gouerned hem / so wel after my lawe
 That ech of hem / ful blisful was and fawe 220
 To brynge me / gaye thynges fro the ffeyre
 They were ful glad / whan I spak to hem feyre
 ffor god it woot' I chidde hem spitously
 ¶ Now herkneth / how I bar me proprely 224
 ye wise wyues / that konne vnderstonde
 Thus sholde ye speke / and bere hem wrong on honde
 ffor half so boldely / kan ther no man
 Swere and lye / as a womman kan 228
 I sey nat this / by wyues þat ben wyse
 But if it be / whan they hem mysauyse
 A wys wyf / if that she kan hir good
 Shal bere hym an hond / the Cow is wood 232
 And take witnesse / of hir owene mayde
 Of hire assent' but herkneth how I sayde
 ¶ Sire olde kaynard / is this thyn array
 Why is / my Neghebores wyf so gay 236
 She is honoured / ouer al ther she goth [leaf 61]
 I sitte at hoom / I haue no thrifty cloth
 What dostow / at my neghebores hous
 Is she so fair / artow so amorous 240

What rowne ye with oure mayde / benedicite
 Sire olde lechour / lat thy Iapes be
 And if I haue / a gossib / or A freend
 With-uten gilt ye chiden as a feend 244
 If that I walke / or pleye vn-to his hous
 Thow comest hoom / as dronken as a mous
 And prechest on thy bench / with yuel preef
 Thow seyst to me / it is a greet mescheef 248
 To wedde a poure womman / for costage
 And if that she be ryche / of heigh parage
 Thanne seistow / that it is a tormentrye
 To suffre / hir pryde / and hir malencolye 252
 And if þat she be fair / thow verray knaue
 Thow seist that euery holour wol hire haue
 She may no while / in chastitee abyde
 That is assayled / vp-on ech a syde 256
 ¶ Thow seyst som folk / desiren vs for richesse
 Somme for oure shape / and somme for oure fairnesse
 And somme / for she kan outhur synge / or daunce
 And somme / for gentillesse / and dalyaunce 260
 Somme for hir handes / and hir armes smale
 Thus goth al to the deuel / by thy tale
 Thow seyst / men may nat kepe a Castel wal
 It may so longe / assaylled been ouer al 264
 And if that she be foul / thow seyst þat she
 Coueiteth euery man / that she may se
 ffor as a Spaynel / she wol on hym lepe
 Til that she fynde / som man hir to chepe 268
 Ne noon so grey goos / goth ther in the lake
 As seistow / wol be with-oute make
 And seyst it is an hard thyng / for to wolde
 A thyng / that no man wol his thankes holde 272
 Thus seistow lorel / whan thow goost to bedde
 And that no wys man / nedeth for to wedde
 Ne no man / that entendeth vn-to heuene
 With wilde thonder dynt and firy leuene 276

Moote thy welked nekke / be to-broke [leaf 61, back]
 Thow seyst that droppynge houses / and eek smoke
 And chidyng wyues / maken men to flee
 Out of hir owene houses / a benedicitee: 280
 What eyleth / swich an old man for to chide
 Thow seyst we wyues / wil oure vices hyde
 Til we be fast / and thanne we wol hem shewe
 Wel may that be / a prouerbe of a shrewe 284
 Thow seist þat Oxen / Asses / hors / and houndes
 They been assayed / at dyuerse stoundes
 Bacynes / lauours / er that men hem bye
 Spoones / stooles / and al swich housbondrye 288
 And so be pottes / clothes / and array
 But folk / of wyues / maken noon assay
 Til they be wedded / olde dotard shrewe
 And thanne seistow / we wil oure vices shewe 292
 Thow seist also / that it displeth me
 But if that thou / wolt preise my beautee
 And but thou powre / alwey vp-on my face
 And clepe me faire dame / in euery place 296
 And but thou make a feeste / on thilke day
 That I was born / and make me fressh and gay
 And but thou do / to my norice honour
 And to my chambrere / with-Inne my bour 300
 And to my fadres folk / and his allyes
 Thus seistow / olde baryl ful of lyes
 And yet of oure Apprentice / Iankyn
 ffor his crispe heer / shynyng as gold so fyn 304
 And for he squyereth me / bothe vp and doun
 Yet hastow caught fals suspecioun
 I wil hym nat thogh thou were deed to morwe
 ¶ But tel me this / why hidestow with sorwe 308
 The keyes of thy Chestre / away fro me
 It is my good / as wel as thyn pardee
 What wenestow / make an ydiote of oure dame
 Now by that lord / that called is Seint Iame 312

Thow shalt noght bothe / thogh þat thow were wood
 Be maister / of my body / and my good
 That oon thow shalt forgo / maugree thyne eyen
 What helpeth it of me enquere and spyen 316
 I trowe / thow woldest lok me in thy chiste [leaf 62]
 Thow sholdest seye / wyf / go wher thee liste
 Taak youre disport I nyl leue no talis
 I knowe yow / for a trewe wyf / Dame Alis 320
 We loue no man / that taketh kepe / or charge
 Wher þat we goon / we wol been at oure large
 Of alle men / yblessed moote he be
 The wise Astrologen / Daun Protholome 324
 That seith this prouerbe / in his Almageste
 Of alle men / his wisdom is hyeste
 That rekketh nat who hath the world in hond
 By this prouerbe / thow shalt vnderstonde 328
 Haue thow ynogh / what thar thee rekke / or care
 How myrily / that othere folkes fare
 ffor certes / olde dotard / by youre leue
 Ye shal han queynte / right ynogh at eue 332
 He is to greet a nygard / that wil werne
 A man to lighte a candle / at his lanterne
 He shal han / neuer the lasse light pardee
 Haue thow ynogh / thee thar nat pleyne thee 336
 ¶ Thow seist also / that if we make vs gay
 With clothyng and with precious array
 That it is peril / of oure chastitee
 And yet with sorwe / thow most enforce thee 340
 And seye this wordes / in thapostles name
 In habit maad with chastitee and shame
 Ye wommen / shal apparaille yow quod he
 And nat in tressed heer / and gay perree 344
 As perlys / ne with gold / ne clothes ryche
 After thy text ne after thy rubryche
 I wol nat werke / as muche / as is a gnat
 Thow seydest this / þat I was lyk a Cat 348

ffor who so wolde senge / a Cattes skyn
 Thanne wolde the Cat' wel dwellen in his In
 And if the Cattes skyn / be slyk' and gay
 She wol nat dwelle in house / half a day 352
 But forth she wole / er any day be dawed
 To shewe hir skyn / and goon a Caterwawed
 This is to seye / if I be gay sire shrewe
 I wol renne out' my borel for to shewe 356
 Sire olde fool / what helpeth thee tespyen [leaf 62, back]
 Thogh thou preyre Argus / with his hundred eyen
 To be my wardcorps / as he kan best
 In feith / he shal nat kepe me / but me lest 360
 Yet koude I make his berd / as mote I thee
 ¶ Thow seydest eek' þat ther ben thynges three
 The whiche thynges / troublen al this erthe
 And that no wight may endure the ferthe 364
 O leue sire shrewe / Ihesu shorte thy lyf
 Yet prechestow / and seist an hateful wyf
 Yrekened is / for oon of thise myschaunces
 Been ther / noone othere ressemblaunces 368
 That ye may likne / youre parables to
 But if a sely wyf be oon of tho
 ¶ Thow liknest eek / wommanes loue to helle
 To bareyne lond / ther water may nat dwelle 372
 Thow liknest it also / to wilde fyr
 The moore it brenneth / the moore it hath desyr
 To consumen euery thyng' þat brent wol be
 Thow seist' right as wormes shende a tree 376
 Right so a wyf / destroyeth hir housbonde
 This knowen they / that been to wyues bonde
 ¶ Lordynges / right thus / as ye han vnderstonde
 Bar I stifly / myne olde housbondes on honde 380
 That thus they seyden / in hir dronkenesse
 And al was fals / but that I took witnesse
 On Iankyn / and on my Nece also
 O lord / the pyne I dide hem / and the wo 384

ffyl gilleles / by goddes swete pyne
 ffor as an hors / I koude byte and whyne
 I koude pleyne / and I was in the gilt
 Or ellis / often tyme / I hadde been spilt' 388
 Who so that first to Mille comth / first grynt'
 I pleynd first' so was oure werre stynt'
 They were ful glad / to excusen hem ful blyue
 Of thyng' of which they neuere agilde hir lyue 392
 Of wenches / wolde I bern hem on honde
 Whan that for syk' they myghte vnnethe stonde
 Yet tikled I his herte / for that he
 Wende that I hadde had of hym / so greet chiertee 396
 I swoor / that my walkyng' out by nyghte [leaf 63]
 Was for to espye / wenches that he dighte
 Vnder that colour / hadde I many a myrthe
 ffor al swich wit' is yeuen vs in oure birthe 400
 Deceite / wepyng' spynnyng' god hath yeue
 To wommen kyndely / whil they may lyue
 And thus / of o thyng' I auante me
 At ende / I hadde the bet in ech degree 404
 By sleighte / or force / or by som maner thyng'
 As by continuel murmur / or grucchyng'
 Namely abedde / hadden they meschaunce
 Ther wolde I chide / and do hem no plesaunce 408
 I wolde no lenger / in the bed abyde
 If that I felte his arm / ouer my syde
 Til he hadde maad / his raunceon vn-to me
 Thanne wolde I suffre hym / do his nycetee 412
 And ther-fore / euery man / this tale I telle
 Wynne who so may / for al is for to selle
 With empty hond / men may none haukes lure
 ffor wynnyng' wolde I al his lust endure 416
 And make me / a feyned appetit'
 And yet in bacon / hadde I neuere delit
 That made me / that euere I wolde hem chyde
 For thogh the Pope / hadde seten hem bisyde 420

I wolde noght spare hem / at hir owene bord
 ffor by my trouthe / I quytte hem / word for word
 As help me / verray god omnipotent
 Togh I right now / sholde make my testament' 424
 I ne owe hem nat a word / that it nys quyt'
 I broghte it so aboute / by my wit
 That they moste yeue it vp / as for the beste
 Or ellis / hadde we neuere been in reste 428
 ffor thogh he looked / as a wood leof
 yet sholde he faille / of his conclusioñ
 ¶ Thanne wolde I seye / good lief taak keepe
 How mekely / looketh Wilkyn oure scheepe 432
 Com neer my spouse / lat me ba thy cheke
 Ye sholden be / al pacient/ and meke
 And han / a swete spyced conscience
 Sith ye so preche / of Iobes pacience 436
 Suffreth alwey / syn ye so wel kan preche [leaf 63, back]
 And but ye do / certeyn we shal yow teche
 That it is fair / to han a wyf in pees
 Oon of vs two / moste bowen doutelees 440
 And sith a man / is moore resonable
 Than womman is / ye mosten been suffrable
 What eyleth yow / to grucche thus and grone
 Is it' for ye wolde haue / my queynte allone 444
 Wy taak it al / lo haue it euery del
 Peter I shrewe yow / but ye loue it wel
 ffor if I wolde selle / my bele chose
 I koude walke / as fressh as is a rose 448
 But I wol kepe it' for youre owene tooth
 Ye be to blame / by god I sey yow sooth
 Swiche manere wordes / hadde we on honde
 Now wol I speke / of my ferthe housbonde 452
My ferthe housbonde / was a reuelour
 This is to seyn he hadde a paramour
 And I was yong' and ful of ragerye
 Stibourne and strong' and ioly as a pye 456

How koude I daunce / to an harpe smale
 And synge ywys / as any nyghtyngale
 Whan I hadde dronke / a draghte of swete wyn
 Metellyus / the foule cherl the swyn 460
 That with a staf / birafte his wyf hir lyf
 ffor she drank wyn / though I hadde been his wyf
 Ne sholde nat han daunted me fro drynke
 And after wyn / on Venus moste I thynke 464
 ffor also siker / as coold engendreth hayl
 A likerous mouth / moste han a likerous tayl
 In womman vynolent / is no defence
 This knowen lechours / by experience 468
 But lord crist whan þat it remembreth me
 Vp-on my youthe / and on my iolytee
 It tikeleth me / aboute myn herte roote
 Vn-to this day / it dooth myn herte boote 472
 That I haue had my world / as in my tyme
 But age alas / that al wole enuenyme
 Hath me biraft my beautee / and my pith
 Lat go farwel / the deuyl go ther-with 476
 The flour is goon / ther is namoore to telle
 The bren as I best kan / now moste I selle
 But yet to be right murye / wol I fonde
 Now wol I tellen / of my ferthe housbonde 480
 ¶ I seye I hadde in herte gret despit
 That he / of any oother had delit
 But he was quyt by god and by Saint Ioe
 I made hym / of the same wode a troce 484
 Nat of my body / in no foul manere
 But certeynly / I made folk swich chiere
 That in his owene grece / I made hym frye
 ffor angre / and for verray Ialousye 488
 By god / in erthe / I was his purgatorie
 ffor which I hope / his soule be in glorie
 ffor god it woot he sat ful ofte and soong
 Whan þat his shoo / ful bitterly hym wroong 492

Ther was no wight/ saue god and he / þat wiste
 In many wise / how soore I hym twiste
 He deyde / whan I cam fro Ierusalem
 And lyth ygraue / vnder the roode beem 496
 Al is his toumbe / noght so curyus
 As was the sepulcre / of hym Daryus
 Which that Appellus / wroghte subtilly
 It nys but wast to burye hym preciously 500
 Lat hym fare wel / god gyue his soule reste
 He is now / in his graue / and in his cheste
Now / of my fifthe housbonde / wol I telle
 God lat his soule / neuere come in helle 504
 And yet was he to me / the mooste shrewe
 That feele I / on my rybbes al by rewe
 And euere shal / vn-to myn endyng day
 But in oure bed / he was so fressh and gay 508
 And ther with al / so wel koude he me glose
 Whan that he wolde / han my bele chose
 That thogh he hadde me bet on euery bon
 He koude wynne agayn / my loue anon 512
 I trowe I loued hym best for that he
 Was of his loue / daungerous to me
 We wommen han / if that I shal nat lye
 In this matere / a queynte fantasye 516
 Wayte what thyng we may nat lightly haue [leaf 64, back]
 Ther after / wol we crye al day / and craue
 fforbede vs thyng and that desiren we
 Preesse on vs faste / and thanne wol we fle 520
 With daunger / oute we / al oure chaffare
 Greet prees at Market / maketh deere ware
 And to greet cheepe / is holden at litel prys
 This knoweth euery womman / that is wys 524
 ¶ My fifthe housbonde / god his soule blesse
 Which þat I took for loue / and no rychesse
 He som tyme / was a clerk of Oxenford
 And hadde laft scole / and wente at hom to bord 528

With my gossyb / dwellyng in oure town
 God haue hir soule / hir name was Alisoun
 She knew myn herte / and eek my pryuetee
 Bet than oure parysshe preest^t as mote I thee 532
 To hire biwreyed I / my conseil al
 ffor hadde myn housbonde / pissed on a wal
 Or doon a thyng^t / that sholde haue cost his lyf
 To hire / and to another worthy wyf 536
 And to my Nece / which þat I loued wel
 I wolde han toold / his conseil euery del
 And so I dide / ful often / god it woot^t
 That made his face / often reed and hoot 540
 ffor verray shame / and blamed hym self^t for he
 Hadde toold to me / so greet a pryuetee
 ¶ And so bifel / that ones in a lente
 So often tymes / I to my gossyb wente 544
 ffor euere yet^t I louede to be gay
 And for to walke / in March / Auerylle / and May
 ffrom hous to hous / to here sondry tales
 That Iankyn Clerk / and my gossyb dame Alys 548
 And I my self / in to the feeldes wente
 Myn housbonde was at london / al that lente
 I hadde / the bettre leyser for to pleye
 And for to se / and eek for to be seye 552
 Of lusty folk^t what wiste I wher my *grace*
 Was shapen for to be / or in what place
 Ther-fore / I made my visitacions
 To Vigilies / and to processions 556
 To *prechyng*^t eek / and to thise pilgrimages [leaf 65]
 To pleyes of myracles / and to mariages
 And wered vp on / my gaye scarlet gytes
 Thise wormes / ne thise moththes / ne thise Mytes 560
 Vp-on my peril / frete hem neuer a del
 And wostow / why / for they were vsed wel
 ¶ Now wol I tellen forth / what happed me
 I seye / that in the feeldes walked we 564

Til trewely / we hadde swich daliaunce
 This clerk / and I / that of my *purueiaunce*
 I spak to hym / and seyde hym / how that he
 If I were wydewe / sholde wedde me 568
 ffor certeynly / I seye for no bobaunce
 Yet was I neuere / with-uten *purueiaunce*
 Of mariage / nof othere thynges eek /
 I holde a mouses herte / noght worth a leek 572
 That hath but oon hole / for to sterte to
 And if that faille / thanne is al y-do
 [I bar him on honde / he had enchaunted me [*Camb. Univ. MS*
 My Dame taught me / that sotilte [*Dd. 4. 24,*
 And eke I seide / I mette of him al nyght [*leaf 73, back, line 21]*
 He wold han slayn me / as I lay vp right [*Not in B. M. Ad-*
 And al my bed / was ful of verray blod [*dit. 5140, f^o 96; or*
 But ȝet I hope / that ȝe shuln do me good [*Harl. 7335, f^o 68,*
 ffor blod bytokeneth gold / as me was taught [*bk; or Harl. 1755,*
 And al was fals / I dremed of it right nought [*f^o 96; or Sloane*
 But as I folwed ay / my dames loore [*1688, f^o 110, bk;*
 As wel of that / as of othere thynges more.] [*MS Reg. 18 C 4,*
 But now sire / lat me se / what shal I seyn [*f^o 112; Sloane*
 A .ha. by god / I haue my tale ageyn [*1688, f^o 127, bk;*
 ¶ Whan that my fourthe housbonde / was a beere [*Preamble not in*
 I weep algate / and made sory cheere 588 [*Harl. 1239; Pr.*
 As wyues mooten / for it is vsage [*and Tale not in*
 And with my couerchief / couered my visage [*Shirley's Harl.*
 But for that I was / purueyed of a make [*7335; not in*
 I wepte but smal / and that I vndertake 592 [*Camb. Univ. MS*
 ¶ To chirche was myn housbonde / born a morwe [*Mm 2. 5.]*
 With neghebores / that for hym maden sorwe
 And Iankyn oure clerk / was oon of tho
 As help me god / whan that I saw hym go 596
 After the beere / me thoughte he hadde a payre
 Of legges and of feet so clene and fayre
 That al myn herte / I gaf vn-to his hoold
 He was I trowe / twenty wynter oold 600

And I was fourty / if I shal seye sooth
 But yit I hadde alwey / a coltes tooth
 Gat tothed I was / & that bicam me weel
 I hadde the preente / of Seynt Venus seel 604
 As help me god I was a lusty oon
 And fayr/ and ryche / and yong' and wel bigoon
 And trewely / as myne housbondes tolde me [leaf 65, back]
 I hadde the beste quonyam / myghte be 608
 [ffor certes I am / al Venerien [Cambr. Univ. MS Dd. 4. 24, lf 74, line 9]
 In feelyng / and myn hert is Marcien] [Not in Addit. 5140,
 Venus me 3af my lust / my likerousnesse 1585, lf 69; or Harl.
 And Mars 3af me / my sturdy hardynesse] 1685, lf 111; MS Reg.
 Myn ascendent was Taur / and Mars ther-Inne 18 C ii, lf 112, bk;
 Allas / allas / that euere loue was synne Sloane 1686, lf 123;
 I folwed ay / myn Inclinacioñ or Cambr. Mm. 2. 5.]
 By vertu / of my constellacioñ 616
 That made me / I koude noght withdrawe
 My chambre of Venus / from a good felawe
 [3et haue I Mars merk / vp-on my face [Cambr. Univ. MS Dd. 4. 24,
 And also / in a nother pryue place leaf 74, line 19]
 ffor god so wysely / be my sauacioun [Not in Addit. 5140, lf 96, bk;
 I louede neuere / by no discrecioun or Harl. 7335, lf 69; or
 But euere folwed / myn appetit' Sloane 1685, lf 111; MS Reg.
 Al were he short / long blak or whijt 18 C ii, lf 112, bk; Sloane
 I toke no kepe / so that he liked me 1686, lf 128; or Cambr. Mm.
 How poore he was / ne eke of what degree] 2. 5.] 624
 ¶ What sholde I seye / but at the Monthes ende [MS Dd. 4. 24 ex-
 This ioly clerk / I ankyn þat was so hende tract stops] 628
 Hath wedded me / with greet solempnytee
 And to hym yaf I / al the lond and fee
 That euere was me yeuen / ther bfore
 But afterward / repented me ful sore 632
 He nolde suffre / no thyng of my list
 By god / he smoot me ones / on the lyst
 ffor that I rente / out of his book a leef
 That of the strook/ myn ere weex al deef 636

Stibourne I was / as is a leonesse
 And of my tonge / a verray Iangleresse
 And walke I wolde / as I hadde doon biforn
 ffrom hous to hous / al-though he hadde it sworn 640
 ffor which / he often tymes / wolde preche
 And me / of olde Romayn gestes teche
 How he Symplicius Gallus / lafte his wif
 And hire forsook^t for terme of al his lif^t 644
 Noght^t but for open heueded he hir say
 Lokynge out at his dore / vp-on a day
 ¶ Another Romayn / tolde he me by name
 That for his wyf / was at a Someres game 648
 With-uten his wityng^t / he forsook hire eke
 And thanne wolde he / vp-on his Bible seke
 That ilke prouerbe / of Ecclesiaste
 Where he comandeth / and forbedeth faste 652
 Man shal nat suffre his wyf / go roule aboute
 Thanne wold he seye right thus / with-uten doute
 Who so þat buyldeth his hous / al of salwes
 And priketh his blynde hors / ouer the falwes } nota 656
 And suffreth his wyf / to go seken halwes
 Is worthy / to ben hanged on the galwes
 But al for noght^t I sette noght an hawe [leaf 66] 656
 Of his prouerbe / nof his olde sawe 660
 Ny wolde nat^t of hym corrected be
 I hate hym / þat my vices telleth me
 And so doon mo / god woot of vs than I
 This made hym / with me wood al outrelly 664
 I nolde noght forbere hym / in no cas
 ¶ Now wol I sey yow sooth / by Seint Thomas
 Why þat I rente / out of his book a leef
 ffor which / he smoot me so / þat I was deaf 668
 He hadde a book/ þat gladly nyght and day
 ffor his disport^t he wolde rede alway
 He clepyd it^t Valerie and Theofraste
 At which book/ he logh alwey ful faste 672

And eek ther was / som tyme a clerk at Rome
 A Cardynal / that highte Seint Ierome
 That made a book' agayn Iovinian
 In which book' eek ther was Tertulan 676
 Crisippus / Trotula / and Helowys
 That was Abbesse / nat fer fro Parys
 And eek the parables / of Salomon
 Ouydes art' and bokes many on 680
 And alle thise were bounden / in o volume
 And euery nyght and day / was his custume
 Whan he hadde leyser / and vacacion
 ffrom oother / worldly ocupacion 684
 To reden in this book' of wikked wyues
 He knew of hem / mo legendes and lyues
 Than been of goode wyues in the Bible
 ffor trusteth wel / it is an impossible 688
 That any clerk' wol speke good of wyues
 But if it be / of holy seintes lyues
 Nof noon oother womman / neuer the mo
 Who peynted the leon' / tel me who 692
 By god / if wommen / hadden writen stories
 As clerkes han / with-Inne hir oratories
 They wolde han writen of men / moore wikkednesse
 Than al the mark of Adam may redresse 696
 The children / of Mercurie and Venus
 Been in hir wirkyng/ ful contrarius
 Mercurie loueth / wysdam and science [leaf 66, back]
 And Venus loueth / Riot and dispence 700
 And for hir diuerse / disposicion
 Ech faileth / in ootheres exaltacion
 And thus god woot' Mercurie is desolat
 In pisces / wher venus is exaltat' 704
 And venus faileth / ther Mercurie is reysed
 Ther-fore no womman / of no clerk is preysed
 The clerk' whan he is old / and may noght do
 Of venus werkes / worth his olde sho 708

Thanne sit he down / and writ in his dotage
 That wommen / kan nat kepe hir mariage
 ¶ But now to purpos / why I tolde thee
 That I was beten / for a book pardee 712
 Vp-on a nyght Iankyn þat was oure sire
 Redde on his book / as he sat by the fire
 Of Eua first / þat for hir wikkednesse
 Was al mankynde / broght to wrecchednesse 716
 [fforwhich that ihesu crist / him self was slayn [Camb. Univ. MS Dd. 4. 24, f^o 75, l. 26]
 That bought vs / with his hert blod a-gayn [Not in Mm. 2. 5; not in Hart. 7335, f^o 70, bk; Hart. 1756, f^o 96; Ad. 5140, f^o 96; Sloane 1685, f^o 112, bk; Sloane 1686, f^o 129, bk.]
 Loo heere expres of wommen / may 3e fynde
 That womman was the losse / of al mankynde]
 ¶ Tho redde he me / how Sampson loste his herys
 Slepynge / his lemman kitte it with hir sherys
 Thurgh which treson / loste he bothe hise eyen
 ¶ Tho redde he me / if that I shal nat lyen 724
 Of hercules / and of his Dianyre
 That caused hym / to sette hym self a fyre
 ¶ No thyng forgat he / the sorwe and wo
 That Socrates / hadde with his wyues two 728
 How Xantippa / caste pisse vp-on his heed
 This sely man sat stille / as he were deed
 He wipte his heed / namoore dorste he seyn
 But er that thonder stynte / comth a reyn 732
 ¶ Of Phasifpha / that was the queene of Crete
 ffor shrewednesse / hym thoughte the tale swete
 ffy spek namoore / it is a grisly thyng
 Of hire horrible lust and hir likyng 736
 ¶ Of Clitermystra / for hir lecherye
 That falsly / made hir housbonde for to dye
 He redde it with ful good deuocioun
 ¶ He tolde me eek for what occasioun 740
 Amphiorax / at Thebes loste his lyf
 Myn housbonde / hadde a legende of his wyf
 ¶ Exiphilem / that for an Ouche of gold [leaf 67]
 Hath priuely / vn-to the grekys told 744

Wher þat hir housbonde / hidde hym in a place
 ffor which / he hadde at Thebes sory grace
 ¶ Of lyma tolde he me / and of lucie
 They bothe / made hir housbondes for to dye 748
 That oon for loue / that oother was for hate
 Lyma hir housbonde / on an euen late
 Emplayned hath / for þat she was his fo
 Lucy likerous / loued hir housbonde so 752
 That for he sholde alwey / vp-on hir thynke
 She yaf hym / swich a manere loue drynke
 That he was deed / er it were by the morwe
 And thus algates / housbondes han sorwe 756
 ¶ Thanne tolde he me / how þat oon latumyus
 Complayned / vn-to his felawe Arrius
 That in his gardyn / growed swich a tree
 On which he seyde / how þat hise wyues thre 760
 Honged hem self / for hertes despitus
 ¶ O leue brother / quod this Arrius
 yif me a plante / of thilke blessed tree
 And in my gardyn / planted shal it be 764
 ¶ Of latter date of wyues / hath he red
 That somme han slayn / hir housbondes in hir bed
 And lete hir lechour / dighte hire al the nyght
 Whan þat the corps / lay in the floor vp ryght 768
 ¶ And somme / han dryuen nayles in hir brayn
 Whil þat they sleepe / and thus they han hem slayn
 ¶ Somme han hem yeuen poyson / in hir drynke
 He spak moore harm / than herte may bithynke 772
 And ther with al / he knew of mo prouerbes
 Than in this world / ther growen gras or herbes
 Bet is quod he / thyn habitacioun
 Be with a leon / or a foul dragoun 776
 Than with a womman / vsyng for to chide
 Bet is quod he / hye in the roof abyde
 Than with an angry wyf / down in the hous
 They been so wikked / and contrarious 780


They haten / that hir housbondes loueth ay
 He seyde / a womman / cast hir shame away
 Whan she cast of hir smok' and forther mo [leaf 97, back]
 A fair womman / but she be chaast also 784
 Is lyk a gold ryng' in a sowes nose
 Who wolde wene / or who wolde suppose
 The wo / that in myn herte was and pyne
 ¶ And whan I say / he wolde neuere fyne 788
 To reden / on this cursed book al nyght
 Al sodeynly / thre leues / haue I plyght
 Out of his book' right as he radde / and eke
 I with my fist' so took [him] on the cheke 792
 That in oure fyr/ he fil bakward adown
 And he vp stirte / as dooth a wood leoun
 And with his fest/ he smoot me on the heed
 That in the floor / I lay as I were deed 796
 And whan he say / how stille þat I lay
 He was agast' and wolde haue fled his way
 Til atte laste / out of my swowgh I brayde
 O hastow slayn me / false thief I sayde 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 adown
 And seyde / deere suster Alisoun 804
 As help me god / I shal thee neuere smyte
 That I haue doon / it is thy self to wyte
 fforyeue it me / and that I thee biseke
 And yet eft soones / I hitte hym on the cheke 808
 And seyde thief/ thus muchel am I wreke
 Now wol I dye / I may no lenger speke
 ¶ But at the laste / with muchel care and wo
 We fille acorded / by vs seluen two 812
 He yaf me / al the brydel in myn hond
 To han the gouernance / of hous and lond
 And of his tonge / and his hond also
 And made hym brenne his book' anon right tho 816

And whan that I hadde / geten vn-to me
 By maistrye / al the soueraynetee
 And þat he seyde / myn owene trewe wyf
 Do as thee lust the terme of al thy lyf 820
 Keepe thyn honour / and keepe eek myn estaat
 After that day / we hadde neuere debaat/
 God help me so / I was to hym as kynde [leaf 68]
 As any wyf / from Denmark vn-to Inde 824
 And also trewe / and so was he to me
 I pray to god / that sit in magestee
 So blesse his soule / for his mercy deere
 Now wol I seye my tale / if ye wol heere 828

[*The Wrangle between the Summoner and Friar.*]

The frere logh / whan he hadde herd al this
 Now dame quod he / so haue I ioie / or blys
 This is a long preamble / of a tale
 And whan the Somnour / herde the frere gale 832
 ¶ Lo quod the Somnour / goddes armes two
 A frere / wol entremette hym euere mo
 Loo goode men / a flye / and eek a frere
 Wol falle in euery dyssh and matere 836
 What spekestow / of preambulacioun
 What amble / or trotte / or pees / or go sit down
 Thow lettest oure 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 al the folk / shal laughen in this place
 ¶ Now ellis frere / I wol bishrewe thy face 844
 Quod this Somnour / and I bishrewe me
 But if I telle tales / two or thre
 Of freres / er I come to Sydyngborne
 That I shal make / thyn herte for to morne 848

ffor wel I woot' thy pacience is gon
 ¶ Oure hoost' cryde pees / and that anon
 And seyde / lat the womman / telle hir tale
 Ye fare as folk/ that dronken ben of Ale 852
 Do dame / tel forth youre tale / and that is best
 ¶ Al reddy sire quod she / right as yow lest
 If I haue licence / of this worthy frere
 ¶ Yis dame quod he / tel forth / and I wol heere 856
 ¶ Here endeth the prologe of the Wyf of Bathe ♀

¶ Here bigynneth the tale / of the Wyf of Bathe 
[leaf 68, back]

IN tholde dayes / of the kyng Arthour
 Of which that Britons / speken greet honour
 Al was this land / fulfild of ffairye
 The Elf queene / with hir ioly compaignye 860
 Daunced ful ofte / in many a grene mede
 This was / the olde opynyon / as I rede
 I speke / of many hundred yerys ago
 But now kan no man / se none Elues mo 864
 ffor now the grete charitee / and prayeres
 Of lymytours / and othere holy freres
 That serchen / euery lond and euery stream
 As thikke / as motes in the sonne beam 868
 Blessynge halles / chambres / kichenes boures
 Citees / Burghes / Castels / hye Toures
 Thropes / Bernes / Shipnes / dayeryes
 This maketh / þat ther been no fairyes 872
 ffor ther as wont to walken was an Elf
 Ther walketh now / the lymytour hym self
 In vndermelys / and in morwenynges
 And seith his matyns / and his holy thynges 876
 As he gooth / in his lymytacioun
 Wommen / may go sauffy vp and down
 In euery bussh / or vnder euery tree
 Ther is noon oother Incubus / but he 880
 And he ne wol doon hem / but dishonour
 ¶ And so bifel / that this kyng Arthour
 Hadde in his hous / a lusty Bachiler
 That on a day / cam ridyng fro Ryuer 884

And happed that allone / as he was born
 He say a mayde / walkynge hym biforn
 Of which mayde / anoon maugree hir hed
 By verray force / he rafte hir maydenhed 888
 ffor which oppressioun / was swich clamour
 And swich pursuete / vn-to the kyng Arthour
 That dampned was this knyght/ for to be deed
 By cours of lawe / and sholde han lost his heed 892
 Par auenture / swich was the statut tho [leaf 60]
 But that the queene / and othere ladyes mo
 So longe preyden / the kyng of grace
 Til he his lyf / hym graunted in the place 896
 And yaf hym to the queene / al at hir wille
 To chese / wheither she wolde / hym saue or spille
 The queen thanked the kyng with al hir might
 And after this / thus spak she to the knyght 900
 Whan that she saw / hir tyme vp-on a day
 Thow standest yet quod she / in swich array
 That of thy lyf / yet hastow no suretee
 I graunte thee lyf / if thow kanst tellen me 904
 What thyng is it þat wommen moost desiren
 Be war / and keepe thy nekke boon from Iren
 And if thow kanst nat / tellen me anon
 Yet wol I yeue thee leue / for to gon 908
 A twelf monthe and a day / to seche and lere
 An answee suffisant in this matere
 And seuretee wol I han / er that thow pace
 Thy body / for to yelden / in this place 912
 ¶ Wo was this knyght/ and sorwefully he siketh
 But what he may nat doon / al as hym liketh
 And atte laste / he chees hym for to wende
 And come agayn / right at the yeres ende 916
 With swich answee / as god wolde hym purueye
 And taketh his leue / and wendeth forth his weye
 He seketh euery hous / and euery place
 Where as he hopeth / for to fynde grace 920

To lerne / what thyng' wommen loue moost
 But he ne koude / arryuen in no coost'
 Where as he myghte fynde / in this matere
 Two creatures / acordyng' in feere 924
 ¶ Somme seyden / wommen louen best richesse
 Somme seyde honour / somme seyde Iolifnesse
 Somme riche array / somme lust abedde
 And ofte tyme / to be widwe and wedde 928
 Somme seyde / that oure herte / is moost esed
 Whan that we been / yflatered and yplesed
 He gooth ful ny the sothe / I wol nat lye
 A man shal wynne vs best / with flaterye 932
 And with attendaunce / and with bisynesse [leaf 69, back]
 Been we glymed / bothe moore and lesse
 ¶ And somme seyn / þat we louen best
 ffor to be free / and do as vs lest' 936
 And that no man / repreue vs of oure vice
 But seye þat we be wise / and no thyng nyce
 ffor trewely / ther is noon of vs alle
 If any wight' wolde clawe vs on the galle 940
 That we nyl like / for he seith vs sooth
 Assay / and he shal fynde it' that so dooth
 ffor be we / neuer so vicious / with-Inne
 We wol be holden wise / and clene of synne 944
 ¶ And somme seyn / that greet delit han we
 ffor to be holden / stable and eek secree
 And in o purpos / stedefastly to dwelle
 And nat biwreye thyng' that men vs telle 948
 But that tale / is nat worth a Rake stele
 Pardee / we wommen / konne no thyng hele
 Witnesse on Mida / wol ye heere the tale
 ¶ Ouyde / amonges othere thynges smale 952
 Seyde / Mida / hadde vnder his longe herys
 Growynge vp on his heed / two Asses erys
 The which vice he hidde / as he best myghte
 fful sotilly / from euery mannes sighte 956

That saue his wyf / ther wiste of it na mo
 He loued hire moost^t and trusted hire also
 He preyed hire / that to no creature
 She sholde tellen / of his diffigure 960
 ¶ She swoor hym nay / for al this world to wynne
 She nolde do / that vileynye / or syn
 To make hir housbonde / han so foul a name
 She nolde nat telle it^t for hir owene shame 964
 But nathelees / hir thoughte þat she dyde
 That she so longe / sholde a conseil hyde
 Hir thoughte / it swal so soore aboute hir herte
 That nedely / som word / hir moste asterte 968
 And sith / she dorste nat telle it to no man
 Doun to a Marys / faste by she ran
 Til she cam there / hir herte was a fyre
 And as a Bitore / bombleth in the Myre 972
 She leyde hir mouth / vn-to the water down [leaf 70]
 Biwrey me nat^t thow water with thy sown
 Quod she / to thee I telle it and namo
 Myn housbonde / hath longe Asses erys two 976
 Now is myn herte al hool / now it is oute
 I myghte no lenger / kepe it out of doute
 Heere may ye see / thogh we a tyme abyde
 Yet out it moot^t we kan no conseil hyde 980
 The remenant of the tale / if ye wol heere
 Redeth Ouyde / and ther ye may it leere
 ¶ This knyght^t of which my tale is specially
 Whan that he say / he myghte nat come ther by 984
 This is to seye / what wommen louen moost^t
 With-Inne his brest^t ful sorweful was the goost
 But hom he gooth / he myghte nat soiorne
 The day was come / that homward moste he torne 988
 And in his wey / it happed hym to ryde
 In al this care / vnder a fforest syde
 Wher as he say / vp on a daunce go
 Of ladyes .xxiiij. and yet mo 992

Toward the whiche daunce / he drow ful yerne
 In hope / that som wisdom sholde he lerne
 But *certeynly* / er he cam fully there
 Vanysshed was this daunce / he nyste where 996
 No creature say he / that bar lyf
 Saue on the grene / he say sittynge a wyf
 A fouler wight ther may no man deuise
 Agayn the knyght this olde wyf gan ryse 1000
 And seyde sire knyght heer forth ne lyth no wey
 Tel me / what þat ye seken by youre fey
 Par aventure / it may the better be
 This olde folk konne muchel thyng quod she 1004
 ¶ My leue moder / quod this knyght *certeyn*
 I nam but deed / but if that I kan seyn
 What thyng it is / that wommen moost desire
 Koude ye me wisse / I wolde wel quyte youre hyre 1008
 ¶ Plight me thy trouthe / here in myn hand quod she
 The nexte thyng that I requere thee
 Thow shalt it do / if it lye in thy myght
 And I wol telle it yow / er it be nyght 1012
 ¶ Hauē here my trouthe / quod the knyght I graunte [1012, bk]
 ¶ Thanne quod she / I dar me wel auaunte
 Thy lyf is sauf / for I wole stonde ther by
 Vp-on my lyf / the queene wol seye as I 1016
 Lat see / which is the proudeste of hem alle
 That wereth on / a couerchief / or a calle
 That dar seye nay / of that I shal thee teche
 Lat vs go forth / with-uten lenger speche 1020
 Tho rowned she / a pistel in his ere
 And bad hym to be glad / and haue no fere
 ¶ Whan they be comen to the Court this knyght
 Seyde / he hadde holde his day / as he had hight 1024
 And redy was his answer / as he sayde
 fful many a noble wyf and many a mayde
 And many a widwe / for þat they ben wise
 The queene hir self / sittynge as Iustise 1028

Assembled been / this answer for to here
 And afterward / this knyght was bode appere
 To euery wight comanded was silence
 And that the knyght sholde telle in audience 1032
 What thyng that worldly wommen louen best
 This knyght ne stood nat stille as dooth a best
 But to his question / anon answerde
 With manly voys / that al the court it herd 1036
 ¶ My lige lady / generally quod he
 Wommen desire / to haue souereyntee
 As wel / ouer hir housbonde / as hir loue
 And for to been in maistrie / hym aboue 1040
 This is youre mooste desir / thogh ye me kille
 Dooth as yow list I am here at youre wille
 ¶ In al the Court ne was ther wyf ne mayde
 Ne wydwe / that contraryed that he sayde 1044
 But seyden / he was worthy han his lyf
 ¶ And with that word / vp stirte that olde wyf
 Which that the knyght say sitting on the grene
 Mercy quod she / my souereyn lady queene 1048
 Er that youre Court departe / do me right
 I taughte this answer / vn-to the knyght
 ffor which / he plighte me his trouthe there
 The firste thyng I wolde hym requere 1052
 He wolde it do / if it laye in his myght
 Bifore the court thanne preye I thee sire knyght
 Quod she / that thow me take vn-to thy wyf
 ffor wel thow woost that I haue kept thy lyf 1056
 If I seye fals / sey nay vp-on thy fey
 ¶ This knyght answerde / allas and weilawey
 I woot right wel / that swich was my biheste
 ffor goddes loue / as chees a newe requeste 1060
 Taak al my good / and lat my body go
 ¶ Nay thanne quod she / I shrewe vs bothe two
 ffor thogh þat I be foul / old / and poore
 I nolde for al the metal / ne for oore 1064

That vnder erthe is graue / or lith aboute
 But if thy wyf I were / and eek thy loue
 ¶ My loue quod he / nay my dampnacioñ
 Allas / that any of my nacioñ 1068
 Sholde euere / so foule disparaged be
 But al for noght^t thende is this / that he
 Constreyned was / he nedes moste hir wedde
 And taketh his olde wyf / and goth to bedde 1072
 ¶ Now wolden som men / seye *par* auenture
 That for my negligence / I do no cure
 To tellen yow / the ioie / and al tharray
 That at the feste / was that ilke day 1076
 To which thyng^t shortly / answe^re I shal
 I seye / ther nas no ioie / ne feste at al
 Ther nas but heuynesse / and mucche sorwe
 ffor priuely / he wedded hire on morwe 1080
 And al day after / hidde hym as an Owle
 So wo was hym / his wyf looked so foule
 ¶ Greet was the wo / the knyght hadde in his thoght^t
 Whan he was with his wyf / a bedde ybroght^t 1084
 He walweth / and he turneth to and fro
 His olde wyf / lay smylyng euere mo
 And seyde / o deere housbonde benedicite
 ffareth euery knyght thus with his wyf / as ye 1088
 Is this the lawe / of kyng Arthures hous
 Is euery knyght of his / thus daungerous
 I am youre owene loue / and youre wyf
 I am she / which that saued hath youre lyf 1092
 And certes / yet ne dide I yow neuere vnright^t [leaf 71, back]
 Why fare ye thus with me / this firste nyght^t
 Ye faren lyk a man / hadde lost his wit
 What is my gilt / for goddes loue tel it 1096
 And it shal ben amended / if I may
 ¶ Amended quod this knyght^t allas nay / nay
 It wol nat ben amended neuere mo
 Thow art so loothly / and so old also 1100

And ther-to comen / of so lowe a kynde
 That litel wonder is / thogh I walwe and wynde
 So wolde god / myn herte wolde breste
 ¶ Is this quod she / the cause of youre vnreste 1104
 ¶ Ye *certeynly* quod he / no wonder is
 ¶ Now sire quod she / I koude amende al this
 If that me liste / er it were dayes thre
 So wel ye myghte / bere yow vn-to me 1108
 ¶ But for ye speken of swich gentillesse ¶ *Nota bene.*
 As is descended / out of old richesse
 That therfore / sholden ye be gentil men
 Swich errogañce / is nat worth an hen 1112
 Looke who þat is / moost *vertuous* alway
 Pryuee and apert^t and moost entendeth ay
 To do / the gentil dedes / þat he kan
 Taak hym / for the gentileste man 1116
 Crist/ wol we clayme of hym oure gentillesse
 Nat of oure eldres / for hir old richesse
 ffor thogh they yeue vs / al hir heritage
 ffor which we clame / to been of hir parage 1120
 Yet may they nat biquethe / for no thyng^t
 To noon of vs / hir *vertuous* lyuyng^t
 That made hem / gentil men ycalled be
 And bad vs / folwen hem in swich degree 1124
 ¶ Wel kan / the wise poete of fflorence
 That highte Dant^t speken in this sentence
 Lo / in swich manere rym / is Dantes tale
 fful selde vp riseth / by his branches smale 1128
 Prowesse of man / for god of his prowesse
 Wole /. that of hym / we clayme oure gentillesse
 ffor of oure eldres / may we no thyng clayme
 But temporel thyng^t that man may hurte and mayme 1132
 Eek euery wight^t woot this as wel I [leaf 72]
 If gentillesse / were planted naturelly
 Vn-to a *certeyn* lynage / doun the lyne
 Pryuee and apert^t thanne wolde they neuere fyne 1136

367 MIX-TEXT

162 ~~amur 2. § 2~~

WIFE'S TALE. Hengwrt MS.

To doon / of gentileme / the faire office
 They myghte do / no vileynye or vice
 ¶ Thak fyr / and bore it in the derkeste hous
 Bitwix this / and the mount of kaukasous 1140
 And lat men shette the dores / and go thenne
 Yet wol the fyr / as faire lye and brenne
 As twenty thousand men / myghte it biholde
 His office naturel / ay wol it holde 1144
 Vp peril of my lyf til that it dye
 Here may ye se wel / how þat genterye
 Is nat annexed / to possession
 Sith folk' ne doon hir operacion 1148
 Alwey / as dooth the fyr lo in his kynde
 ffor god it woot men may wel often fynde
 A lordes sone / do shame and vileynye
 And he þat wol han prys / of his gentrye 1152
 ffor he was born / of a gentil hous
 And hadde hise eldres / noble and vertuous
 And ayl hym seluen / do no gentil dedis
 Ne folwen his gentil Auncestre / that deed is 1156
 He nys nat gentil / be he duc or Erl
 ffor vileynes synful dedes / maken a cherl
 ffor gentilesse / nys but renomee
 Of thyne Auncestres / for hir hye bountee 1160
 Which is straunge thyng' for thy persone
 Thy gentilesse / cometh fro god allone
 Thanne comth / oure verray gentilesse of grace
 It was no thyng' biquethe vs / with oure place 1164
 Thenketh how noble / as seith Valerius
 Was thilke / Tullius hostillius
 That out of pouerte / roos to heigh noblesse
 Redeth Senek' and redeth eek Boece 1168
 Ther shul ye seen expres / þat no drede is
 That he is gentil / that dooth gentil dedis
 And ther-fore / leue housbonde / I thus conclude
 Al were it that myne Auncestres weren rude 1172

Yet may the hye god / and so hope I / [leaf 72, back]
 Graunte me grace / to lyuen *vertuously*
 Thanne am I gentil / whan þat I bigynne
 To lyuen *vertuously* / and weyue synne 1176
 ¶ And ther as ye / of *pouerte* me repreue
 The hye god / on whom þat we bileue
 In wilful *pouerte* / chees to lyue his lyf
 And certes euery man / mayden / or wyf 1180
 May vnderstonde / þat Ihesus heuene kyng
 Ne wolde nat chese / a vicious lyuyng
 Glad *pouerte* / is an honeste thyng *certeyn*
 This wol Senek and othere clerkes seyn 1184
 Who so þat halt hym payd / of his *pouerte*
 I holde hym riche / al hadde he nat a sherte
 He that coueiteth / is a poure wight
 ffor he wolde han / that is nat in his myght 1188
 But he þat nocht hath / ne coueiteth haue
 Is riche / al thogh we holde hym but a knaue
 Verray *pouerte* / is synne *propely*
 Iuuenal seith / of *pouerte* myrily 1192
 ¶ The poure man / whan he gooth by the weye
 Biform the theues / he may synge and pleye
Pouerte is hateful good / and as I gesse
 A ful greet bryngere / out of bisynesse 1196
 A greet amendere eek of Sapience
 To hym / that taketh it in pacience
Pouerte is thyng al thogh it seme elenge
 Possessiõ / that no wight wol chalenge 1200
Pouerte ful often / whan a man is lowe
 Maketh hym self / and eek his god to knowe
Pouerte / a spectacle is / as thynketh me
 Thurgh which he may / his verray freendes se 1204
 And ther-fore sire / syn þat I nocht yow greue
 Of my *pouerte* / namoore ye me repreue
 ¶ Now sire / of elde ye repreue me
 And certes sire / thogh noon auctoritee 1208

Were in no book/ ye gentils of honour
 Seyn / þat men an old wight sholde doon fauour
 And clepe hym fader / for youre gentillesse
 And Auctours / shal I fynden / as I gesse 1212
 ¶ Now ther ye seye / that I am foul and old [leaf 75]
 Thanne drede yow noght to been a Cokewold
 ffor filthe and elde / al-so mote I thee
 Been grete wardeyns / vp-on chastitee 1216
 But nathelees / syn I knowe youre delit/
 I shal fulfille / youre worldly appetit'
 ¶ Chees now quod she / oon of thise thinges tweye
 To han me foul and old / til that I deye 1220
 And be to yow / a trewe humble wyf
 And neuere yow displese / in al my lyf
 Or ellis / ye wol han me / yong and fair
 And take youre auenture / of the repair 1224
 That shal be to youre hous / by cause of me
 Or in som oother place / may wel be
 Now chees your seluen / wheither þat yow liketh
 ¶ This knyght auyseth hym / and soore siketh 1228
 But atte laste / he seyde in this manere
 My lady and my loue / and wyf so deere
 I putte me / in youre wise gouernañce
 Cheseth youre self which þat may be moost plesañce 1232
 And moost honour to yow / and me also
 I do no fors / the wheither of the two
 ffor as yow liketh / it suffiseth me
 ¶ Than haue I gete / of yow maistrye / quod she 1236
 Syn I may chese / and gouerne as me lest'
 ¶ Ye certes wyf quod he / I holde it best'
 ¶ Kys me quod she / we be no ienger wrothe
 ffor by my trouthe / I wol be to yow bothe 1240
 This is to seyn / ye bothe fair and good
 I pray to god / that I mote steruen wood
 But I to yow / be al so good and trewe
 As euere was wyf/ syn þat the world was newe 1244

And but I be to morn / as fair to sene
 Ay any lady / Emperice / or Queene
 That is bitwix the Est and eek the West
 Do with my lyf / and deth / right as yow lest 1248
 Cast vp the Curtyn / looke how þat it is
 And whan the knyght say verrailly al this
 That she so fair was / and so yong ther-to
 ffor ioye he hente hire / in his armes two 1252
 His herte bathed / in a bath of blisse [leaf 78, back]
 A thousand tyme a rewe / he gan hir kisse
 And she obeyed hym / in euery thyng
 That myghte do hym plesance / or likyng 1256
 And thus they lyue / vn-to hir lyues ende
 In parfit ioye / and Ihesu crist vs sende
 Housbondes meke / yonge / and fressh a bedde
 And grace / touerbyde hem that we wedde 1260
 And eek / I praye Ihesu shorte hir lyues
 That noght wol be gouerned / by hir wyues
 And olde / and angry nygardes of dispence
 God sende hem soone / verray pestilence 1264

¶ Here endeth the Wyues tale of Bathe

TEXT

UP D. § 3. WIFE-FRIAR LINK. Hengwrt MS.

The prologe of the ffreres tale [on leaf 73, back]

is worthy lymytour / this noble frere
made al wey / a manere louryng cheere
in the Somnour / but for honestee
wileyns word / as yet to hym spak he 1268
te laste / he seyde vn-to the wyf
quod he / god yeue yow right good lyf
Ye han heer touched / al so mote I thee
In scole matere / greet difficultee 1272
Ye han seyde muche thyng' right w I seye
But dame / here as we ryden by the weye
Vs nedeth nat' to speken / but of game
And lete Auctoritees / on goddes name 1276
To prechyng' and to scole of clergie
But if it like / to this compaignye
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 praye / that noon of yow / be ypayd
A somnour / is a rennere vp and down
With mandementz / for fornicacioun 1284
And is ybet' at every townes ende
¶ Oure hoost tho spak / a sire / ye sholde be hende
And curteys / as a man of youre estaat' [leaf 74]
In compaignye / we wol no debaat' 1288
Telleth youre tale / and lat the Somnour be
¶ Nay quod the Somnour / lat hym seye to me
What so hym list' whan it comth to my lot'
By god / I shal hym quyten every gro't 1292
I shal hym telle / which a gret honour
It is / to be a flaterynge lymytour
And of / many another manere cryme
Which nedeth nat' rehercen / for this tyme 1296
And his office / I schal hym telle ywys
¶ Oure hoost answerde / pees namoore of this
And after this / he seyde vn-to the frere
Tel forth youre tale / leue maister deere 1300
Here endeth the prologe of the ffrere

and bigynneth his tale

W Hilom / ther was dwellynge in my contree
 An Erchedekne / a man of hy degree
 That boldely / dide execucioñ
 In punysshynge of ffornicacioñ 1304
 Of wiccheecraft and eek of Bawderye
 Of diffamacioñ / and auoutrye
 Of chirche Reues / and of testamentz
 Of contractes / and eek of lakke of sacramentz 1308
 Of vsure / and of Symonye also
 But *certes* / lecchours / dide he grettest wo
 They sholde synge²n if that they were hent¹ [¹ From here to the
end of this line is in
a later 15th-century
hand in the MS.]
 And smale tyth²eres were foule yschent¹
 If any person /² wold vp-on hem pleyne
 Ther myghte² asterte hym no pecunial peyne
 ffor smale² tithes & for smal offryng¹
 He made the² peple ful pitusly to syng¹ 1316
 ffor er the² bysschop cagh¹t hem *with* hys hooce
 They were² in the erchdeknys book/
 And thanne² had he thurgh hys Iurisdiccioñ
 Power / to² do on hem correccion 1320
 He hadde a Somnour / redy to his hond [leaf 74, back]
 A slyer boy / nas noon in Engeland
 ffor subtilly / he hadde his espiaille
 That taughte hym / wher hym myghte auaille 1324
 He koude spare / of lecchours / oon or two
 To techen hym / to foure and twenty mo
 ffor theigh this Somnour / wood were as an hare
 To telle his harlotrye / I wol nat spare 1328

ffor we been / out of his correccion
 They han of vs / no Iurisdiccioñ
 Ne neuere shullen / terme of hir lyues
 ¶ Peter / so been the wommen of the styves 1332
 Quod this Somnour / yput out of my cure
 ¶ Pees with myschaunce / and with mysauenture
 Thus seyde oure hoost / and lat hym telle his tale
 Now telleth forth / thogh þat the Somnour gale 1336
 Ne spareth nat' myn owene mayster deere
 ¶ 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 hym / al the secree þat they knewe
 ffor hire aqueyntance / was nat come of newe
 They weren / hise Approwours pryuely
 He took hym self / a greet profit ther by 1344
 His maister knew nat alwey / what he wan
 With-uten mandement' a lewed man
 He koude somne / on peyne of cristes curs
 And they were glade / for to fille his purs 1348
 And make hym / grete festes atte nale
 And right as Iudas / hadde purses smale
 And was a theef / right swich a theef was he
 His maister / hadde but half his duetee 1352
 He was / if I shal yeuen hym his laude
 A theef / and eek a somnour / and a baude
 He hadde eek wenches / at his retenue
 That wheither þat sir Robert / or sire hewe 1356
 Or Iakke / or Rauf' or who so that it were
 That lay by hem / they tolde it in his ere
 Thus was the wenche and he / of oon assent'
 And he wolde fecche / a feyned mandement' 1360
 And somne hem to Chapitre / bothe two [leaf 75]
 And pile the man / and lete the wenche go
 ¶ Thanne wolde he seye / freend I shal for thy sake
 Do stryke hire / out of oure lettres blake 1364

Thee thar namore / as in this cas *trouaille*
 I am thy freend / ther I thee may auaille
 Certeyn / he knew of brybryes mo
 Than possible is / to telle in yeres two 1368
 ffor in this world / nys dogge for the bowe
 That kan an hurt deer / from an hool knowe
 Bet than this *Somnour* / *knewe* a sly leechour
 Or an Auouter / or a *paramour* 1372
 And for that was / the fruyt of al his rente
 Ther-fore on it he sette al his entente
 ¶ And so bifel / that ones on a day
 This *Somnour* / euere waityng on his pray 1376
 ffor to somne an old wydewe / a Ribibe
 ffeynyng a cause / for he wolde brybe
 Happed / that he say / bifore hym ryde
 A gay yeman / vnder a fforest syde 1380
 A bowe he bar / and arwes brighte & kene
 He hadde vp-on / a courtepy of grene
 An hat vp-on his heed / with frenges blake
 ¶ Sire quod this *Somnour* / hayl / and wel atake 1384
 ¶ Wel come quod he / and euery good felawe
 Where ridestow / vnder this grene shawe
 Seyde this yeman / wiltow fer to day
 ¶ This *Somnour* hym answerde / and seyde nay 1388
 Here faste by quod he / is myn entente
 To ryden / for to reysen vp a rente
 That longeth / to my lordes duetee
 ¶ Artow thanne a Bailly? / ye quod he 1392
 He dorste nat for verray filthe and shame
 Seye þat he was a *Somnour* / for the name
 ¶ *Depardieux* quod this yeman / deere brother
 Thow art a bailly / and I am another 1396
 I am vnknownen / as in this contree
 Of thyn aqueyntance / I wolde praye thee
 And eek of bretherhede / if þat yow leste
 I haue gold / and siluer / in my cheste 1400

If that thee happed to come in oure shire (leaf 75, back)
 Al shal be thyn / right as thow wolt desire
 ¶ Graunt mercy quod this Somnour / by my feith
 Euerich in ootheres hond / his trouthe leyth 1404
 ffor to be sworn bretheren / til they deye
 In daliaunce / they ryden forth and pleye
 ¶ This Somnour / which þat was / as ful of Iangles
 As ful of venym / been thise waryangles 1408
 And euere enqueryng' vp-on euery thyng'
 Brother quod he / where is now youre dwellyng'
 Another day / if þat I sholde yow seche
 This yeman hym answerde / in softe speche 1412
 ¶ Brother quod he / fer in the North contree
 Where as I hope / som tyme I shal thee see
 Er we departe / I shal thee so wel wisse
 That of myn hous / ne shaltow neuere mysse 1416
 ¶ Now brother quod this Somnour I yow preye
 Teche me / whil þat we ryden by the weye
 Syn þat ye been a Baillyf / as am I
 Som subtiltee / and tel me feithfully 1420
 In myn office / how I may moost wynne
 And spareth nat for conscience ne synne
 But as my brother / tel me how do ye
 ¶ Now by my trouthe / brother deere / seyde he 1424
 As I shal tellen thee / a feithful tale
 My wages been / ful streyte / and ful smale
 My lord is hard to me / and daungerous
 And myn office / is ful laborous 1428
 And therfore / by extorcions I lyue
 ffor sothe I take / al that men wol me yeue
 Algate / by sleighte / or by violence
 ffro yeer to yeer / I wynne al my dispence 1432
 I kan no bettre tellen / feithfully
 ¶ Now certes quod this Somnour / so fare I
 I spare nat to taken / god it woot'
 But it be to heuy / or to hoot' 1436

What I may gete / in conseil priuely
 No manere conscience / of that haue I
 Nere myn extorcioñ / I myghte nat lyuen
 Ne of swiche Iapes / wol I nat be shryuen 1440
 Stomak' ne Conscience / ne knowe I noon [leaf 70v]
 I sherewe / thise Shryftes-fadres euerychon
 Wel be we met by god / and by Seint Iame
 But leeue brother / tel me thanne thy name 1444
 Quod this Somnour / in this mene whyle
 This yeman / gan a litel for to smyle
 ¶ Brother quod he / woltow þat I thee telle
 I am a feend / my dwellyng' is in helle 1448
 And here I ryde / aboute my purchasyng'
 To wite / wher men wol yeue me any thyng'
 My purchas / is theeffect of al my rente
 Looke how thow rydest' for the same entente 1452
 To wynne good / thow rekkest neuere how
 Right so fare I / for ryde wold I now
 Vn-to the worldes ende / for a preye
 ¶ A quod this Somnour / benedicite what sey ye 1456
 I wende / ye were a yeman trewely
 Ye han a mannes shape / as wel as I
 Han ye a figure thanne / determynat
 In helle ther ye been / in youré estat 1460
 ¶ Nay certeynly quod he / ther haue we noon
 But whan vs liketh / we kan take vs oon
 Or ellis make yow seme / we ben shape
 Som tyme / lyk a man / or lyk an Ape 1464
 Or lyk an Aungel / kan I ryde or go
 It is no wonder thyng' theigh it be so
 A lousy Iogelour / kan deceyue thee
 And pardee yet kan I / moore craft than he 1468
 ¶ Whi quod this Somnour / ryde ye thanne or goon
 In sondry shape / and nat alwey in oon
 ¶ ffor we quod he / wol vs swiche formes make
 As moost able is / oure preyes for to take 1472

¶ What maketh yow / to han al this labour
 ¶ fful many a cause / leue sire Somnour
 Seyde this feend / but alle thyng hath tyme
 The day is short/ and it is passed pryme 1476
 And yet' ne wan I no thyng' in this day
 I wol entende / to wynnyng/ if I may
 And nat entende / oure wittes to declare
 ffor brother myn / thy wit is al to bare 1480
 To vnderstonde / al-thogh I tolde hem thee [leaf 76, back]
 But for thow axest' why labouren we
 ffor som tyme / we been goddes Instrumentz
 And meenes / to doon his comandementz 1484
 Whan that hym list/ vp on his creatures
 In diuers art' and in diuerse figures
 With-uten hym / we han no myght certayn
 If that hym lyst' to stonde ther agayn 1488
 And som tyme / at oure preyere / han we leue
 Oonly the body / and nat the soule greue
 Witnesse on Iob / whom þat we diden wo
 And som tyme / han we myght of bothe two 1492
 This is to seyn / of soule and body eke
 And som tyme / be we suffred for to seke
 Vp-on a man / and do his soule vnreste
 And nat his body / and al is for the beste 1496
 Whan he with-standeth / oure temptacioñ
 It is / a cause / of his sauacioñ
 Al be it' that it was / nat oure entente
 He sholde be sauf' but þat we wolde hym hente 1500
 And som tyme / be we seruant' vn-to man
 As to the Erchebisshope / Seint Dunstan
 And to the Apostles / seruant eek was I
 ¶ Yet tel me / quod the Somnour feithfully 1504
 Make ye yow newe bodyes / thus alway
 Of Elementz s / the feend answerde nay
 Som tyme we feyne / and som tyme we aryse
 With dede bodyes / in ful sondry wyse 1508

And speke as renably / and faire and wel
 As to the Phitonissa / dide Samuel
 And yet wol som men seye / it was nat he
 I do no fors / of youre dyuynytee 1512
 But o thyng warne I thee / I wol nat lape
 Thow wolt algates wite / how we be shape
 Thow shalt her afterwarde / my brother deere
 Come there / thee nedeth nat of me to lere 1516
 ffor thow shalt by thyn owene experience
 Konne in a chayer / rede of this sentence
 Bet than Virgile / whil he was on lyue
 Or Dant also / now lat vs ryde blyue 1520
 ffor I wol holde / compaignye with thee [leaf 77]
 Til it be so / that thow forsake me
 ¶ Nay quod this Somnour / that shal nat bityde
 I am a yeman / knowen is ful wyde 1524
 My trouthe wol I holde / as in this cas
 ffor theigh thow were / the deuel Sathanas
 My trouthe wol I holde / to thee my brother
 As I am sworn / and ech of vs til oother 1528
 ffor to be trewe brother / in this cas
 And bothe we goon / abouten oure purchas
 Taak thow thy part what þat men wol thee yeue
 And I shal myn / thus may we bothe lyue 1532
 And if that any of vs / haue moore than oother
 Lat hym be trewe / and parte it with his brother
 ¶ I graunte quod the deuel / by my fey
 And with that word / they ryden forth hir wey 1536
 And right at the entryng of the townes ende
 To which this Somnour / shoop hym for to wende
 They saye a Cart that charged was with hey
 Which that a Cartere / droof forth in his wey 1540
 Deep was the wey / for which the Carte stood
 This Cartere 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 1544

outhly / as euere were ye foled
 chel wo / as I haue with yow tholed
 uel haue al / bothe hors / and Cart and hey
 Somnour seyde / heer shul we han a pley 1548
 A eer the feend he drogh / as noght we were
 flu uely / and rowned in his ere
 Herkne my brother / herkne by thy feith
 Herestow nat how pat the Cartere seith 1552
 Hent it anon / for he hath yeue it thee
 Bothe hey / and Cart and eek his caples thre
 ¶ Nay quod the deuel / god woot neuer a del
 It is nat his entente / trust thow me wel 1556
 Axe hym thy self / if thow nat trowest me
 Or ellys stynt a while / and thow shalt se
 ¶ This Cartere / taketh his hors vp-on the croupe
 And they bigonne / drawen and to stoupe 1560
 Heyt now quod he / ther Ihesu crist yow blesse [leaf 77, back]
 And al his handes werk bothe moore and lesse
 That was wel twight myn owene lyard boy
 I pray god saue thee / and Seint loy 1564

Now is my Cart out of the slow pardee
 ¶ Lo brother quod the feend / what tolde I thee
 Heere may ye se / myn owene deere brother
 The Carl spak o thyng but he thoghte another 1568
 Lat vs go forth / abouten oure viage
 Heere wyne I no thyng vp-on cariage
 ¶ Whan that they comen / som what out of towne
 This Somnour / to his brother gan to rowne 1572
 Brother quod he / here woneth an old rebekke
 That hadde al-moost as leef to lese hir nekke
 As for to yeue a peny / of hir good
 I wol han .xij. pens / thogh that she be wood 1576
 Or I wol somne hire / vn-to oure office
 And yet god woot of hire knowe I no vice
 But for thow canst nat as in this contree
 Wynne thy cost taak heer ensample of me 1580

This Somnour / clappeth at the wydwes gate
 Com out quod he / thow olde viritrate
 I trowe thow hast som frere / or preest with thee
 ¶ Who clappeth seyde this wyf / benedicitee 1584
 God saue yow sire / what is youre swete wille
 ¶ I haue quod he / of somonce a bille
 Vp peyne of cursyng' looke that thow be
 To morn / bifore the Erchedeknes knee 1588
 Tanswere to the court' of certeyn thynges
 ¶ Now lord quod she / crist Ihesu kyng of kynges
 So wisly helpe me / as I ne may
 I haue been sykt and that ful many a day 1592
 I may nat go so fer quod she / ne ryde
 But I be deed / so priketh it in my syde
 May I nat axe a libel / sire Somnour
 And answere there / by my procutour 1596
 To swiche thyng' as men wole opposen me
 ¶ Yis quod this Somnour / pay anon lat see
 Twelf pens to me / and I wol thee acyute
 I shal no profyt han ther by / but lyte 1600
 My Maister hath the profit / and nat I [leaf 78]
 Com of / and lat me ryden hastily
 Yif me .xij. pens / I may no lenger tarye
 ¶ Twelf pens quod she / now lady Seinte Marie 1604
 So wisly help me god / out of care and synne
 This wyde world / thogh that I sholde wyne
 Ne haue I nat .xij. pens / with-Inne myn hoold
 Ye knowen wel / that I am poure and oold 1608
 Kythe youre almesse / on me poure wrecche
 ¶ Nay thanne quod he / the foule feend me fecche
 If I thexcuse / theigh thow shul be spilt
 ¶ Allas quod she / god woot I haue no gilt 1612
 ¶ Pay me quod he / or by the swete Seinte Anne
 As I wol bere away / thy newe panne
 ffor dette / which thow owest me of oold
 Whan þat thow madest / thyn housbonde cokewold 1616

I payde at hom / for thy correccion
 ¶ Thow lyxt quod she / by my sauacion
 Ne was I neuere er now / wydwe ne wyf
 Somoned vn-to youre court in al my lyf / 1620
 Ne neuere I nas / but of my body trewe
 Vn-to the deuel / blak and row of hewe
 Yeue I thy body / and my panne also
 ¶ And whan the deuel / herde hire cursen so 1624
 Vp-on hir knees / he seyde in this manere
 Now Mabely / myn owene moder deere
 Is this youre wyl in earnest / þat ye seye
 ¶ The deuel quod she / so fecche hym er he deye 1628
 And panne and al / but he wol hym repente
 ¶ Nay olde stot that is nat myn entente
 Quod this Somnour / for to repente me
 ffor any thyng that I haue had of thee 1632
 I wolde I hadde thy smok / and euery clooth
 ¶ Now brother quod the deuel / be noght wrooth
 Thy body and this panne / been myne by right
 Thow shalt with me to helle / yet to nyght 1636
 Wher thow shalt knowen / of oure pryuetee
 Moore / than a maister of dyuynytee
 And with that word / this foule feend hym hente
 Body and soule / he with the deuel wente 1640
 Wher as that Somnours / han hir heritage [leaf 78, back]
 And god / that made after his ymage
 Mankynde / saue / and gyde vs alle and some
 And leue this Somnours / goode men to bicom 1644
 ¶ Lordynges I koude han told yow / quod the frere
 Hadde I had leyser / for this Somnour heere
 After the text / of crist Poul and Ioñ
 And of oure othere doctours / many oon 1648
 Swich peynes / that youre hertes myghte agryse
 Al be it so / no tonge may it deuyse
 Thogh that I myghte / a thousand wynter telle
 The peynes / of thilke cursed hous of helle 1652

But for to kepe vs / fro that cursed place
 Waketh / and preyeth Ihesu for his grace
 So kepe vs / fro the temptour Sathanas
 Herketh this word / beth war as in this cas 1656
 The leon sit in his awayt alway
 To sle the Innocent if that he may
 Disposeth ay youre hertes / to withstonde
 The feend / that yow wolde maken thral and bonde 1660
 He may nat tempte yow / ouer youre myght
 ffor crist wol be youre champion and knyght
 And prayeth / that this Somnours hem repente
 Of hir mysdedes / er that the feend hem hente 1664


¶ Here endeth / the freres tale

¶ The Prologe / of the Somnours tale 𐀓 [on 178, bk]

This Somnour in his Stiropes / hye he stood
 Vp-on this frere / his herte was so wood
 That lyk an Aspen lief / he quook for Ire
 ¶ Lordynges quod he / but o thyng I desire 1668
 I yow biseke / that of youre curteisye
 Syn ye han herd / this false frere lye
 As suffreth me / I may my tale telle
 This frere bosteth / that he knoweth helle 1672
 And god it woot that it is litel wonder
 fferes and feendes / been but lyte a sonder
 ffor pardee / ye han ofte tyme herd telle [leaf 79]
 How that a frere / rauysshed was to helle 1676
 In Spirit ones / by avisioun
 And as an Aungel / ladde hym vp and down
 To shewen hym / the peynes þat ther were
 In al the place / say he nat a frere 1680
 Of oother folk / he say ynowe in wo
 Vn-to this Angel / spak the frere tho
 ¶ Now Sire quod he / han freres swich a grace
 That noon of hem / shal come to this place 1684
 ¶ Yis quod this Aungel / many a Milioun
 And vn-to Sathanas / he ladde hym doun
 And now hath Sathanas / seith he a tayl
 Brodder / than of a Carryk is the sayl 1688
 Hold vp thy tayl / thow Sathanas quod he
 Shewe forth thyn ers / and lat the frere se
 Where is thee nest of freres / in this place
 And er þat / half a furlong wey of space 1692

Right so as bees / out swarmen from an hyue
 Out of the deueles ers / ther gonne dryue
 Twenty thousand freres / on a route
 And thurgh-out helle / swarmeden aboute 1696
 And comen again / as faste as they may gon
 And in his ers / they crepten euerychon
 He clapte his tayl agayn / and lay ful stille
 This frere / whan he looked hadde his fille 1700
 Vp-on the tormentz / of this sory place
 His spirit^t god restored of his grace
 Vn-to his body agayn / and he awook^t
 But nathelees / for fere yet he quook^t 1704
 So was the deueles ers / ay in his mynde
 That is his heritage / of verray kynde
 God saue yow alle / saue this cursed frere
 My prologe / wol I ende / in this manere 1708

¶ Here endeth the prologe of the Somnours tale 

¶ Here bygynneth the Somnours tale  [leaf 79, back]

LOrdynge / ther is in Yorkshire / as I gesse
 A Merssh contree / called Holdernesse
 In which / ther wente a lymytour aboute
 To preche / and eek to begge / it is no doubte 1712
 And so bifel / that on a day this frere
 Hadde preched at a chirche / in his manere
 And specially / abouen euery thyng
 Excyted he the peple / in his prechyng 1716
 To trentals / and to yeue for goddes sake
 Wher-with men myghte / holy houses make
 Ther as dyuine seruice / is honoured
 Nat ther / as it is wasted and deuoured 1720
 Ne ther / it nedeth nat to be yeue
 As to possessioners / that mowen lyue
 Thanked be god / in wele and habundance
 Trentals seyde he / deliuereth from penaunce 1724
 Hir freendes soules / as wel olde as yonge
 Ye / whan that they / been hastily ysonge
 Nat for to holde a preest Ioly and gay
 He syngeth nat but o masse in a day 1728
 Deliuereth out quod he / anon the soules
 fful hard it is / *with* flessch-hook / or *with* oules
 To been y-clawed / or to brenne / or bake
 Now spede yow hastily / for cristes sake 1732
 And whan this frere / hadde seyd al his entente
 With qui cum patre / forth his wey he wente
 Whan folk in chirche / hadde yeue hym / what hem leste
 He wente his wey / no lenger wolde he reste 1736

With scryppe and typped staf / y-tukked hye
 In euery hous / he gan to poure and pry
 And beggeth Mele / and chese / or ellis corn
 His felawe hadde a staf / typped with horn 1740
 A peyre of tables / al of yuory
 And a poyntel / polysshed fetisly
 And wroot the names / alwey as he stood
 Of alle folk / that yaf hem any good 1744
 Ascaunces / that he wolde for hem preye [leaf 80]
 Yif vs a busshel whete / Malt or Reye
 A goddes kechyl / or a trype of cheese
 Or ellis what yow lyst we may nat chese 1748
 A goddes half peny / or a masse peny
 Or yif vs of youre brawn / if ye haue eny
 A dagon of youre Blanket leue dame
 Oure suster deere / lo heere I write youre name 1752
 Bacon / or boef / or swich thyng as ye fynde
 A sturdy harlot wente ay hem bihynde
 That was hir hostes man / and baar a sak
 And what men yaf hem / leyde it on his bak 1756
 And whan *that* he was out at dore anon
 He planed away / the names euerichon
 That he biforn / hadde writen in his tables
 He serued hem / with nyfles and *with* fables 1760
 ¶ Nay ther thow lixt thow Somnour quod the frere
 ¶ Pees quod oure hoost for cristes moder deere
 Tel forth thy tale / and spare it nat at al
 ¶ So thryue I quod this Somnour / so I shal 1764
 So longe he wente / hous by hous / til he
 Cam til an hous / ther he was wont to be
 Refreshed moore / than in an hundred placis
 Syk lay the goode man / whos the place is 1768
 Bedrede vp-on a couche / lowe he lay
 Deus hic quod he / O Thomas freend good day
 Seyde this frere / curteisly and softe
 Thomas quod he / god yelde yow ful ofte 1772

Haue I vp-on this bench / faren ful wel
 Heere haue I eten / many a murye mel
 And fro the bench / he droof away the cat
 And leyde adoun / his potente and his hat 1776
 And eek his scrippe / and sette hym softe adown
 His felawe / was go walked in to town
 fforth with his knaue / in-to that hostelrye
 Wher as he shoope hym / thilke nyght to lye 1780
 ¶ O deere maister / quod this syke man
 How han ye fare / sith that March bigan
 I say yow noght this fourtynyght or moore
 ¶ God woot quod he / laboured I haue ful soore 1784
 And specially / for thy sauacion [leaf 80, back]
 Haue I seyde / many a precious orison
 And for oure othere freendes / god hem blesse
 I haue to day / been at youre chirche at messe [at messe is in a later hand]
 And seyde a sermon / after my symple wit
 Nat al / after the text of holy writ
 ffor it is hard to yow / as I suppose
 And therfore / wol I teche yow al the glose 1792
 Glosyng is a glorious thyng certeyn
 ffor lettre sleeth / so as we clerkes seyn
 Ther haue I taught hem / to be charitable
 And spende hir good / ther it is resonable 1796
 And ther I say oure dame / a where is she
 ¶ Yond in the yerd / I trowe þat 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 ariseth vp / ful curteisly
 And hire embraceth / in hise armes narwe
 And kiste hir swete / and chirteth as a Sparwe 1804
 With his lippes / Dame quod he / right wel
 As he / that is youre seruant euery del
 Thanked be god / that yow yaf soule and lyf
 Yet say I nat this day / so fair a wyf 1808

In al the chirche / god so saue me
 ¶ Ye god amende defautes / sire quod she
 Al gates / wel come be ye / by my fey
 ¶ Graunt mercy dame / this haue I founde alwey 1812
 But of youre grete goodnesse / by youre leue
 I wolde pray yow / that ye nat yow greue
 I wol with Thomas / speke a litel throwe
 Thise Curatz / been ful necligent and alowe 1816
 To grope tendrely / a conscience
 In shrift in prechyng is my diligence
 And studie / in Petres wordes / and in Poules
 I walke / and fische / cristen mennes soules 1820
 To yelden Ihesu crist. his propre rente
 To sprede his word / is set al myn entente
 ¶ Now by youre leue / o deere sire quod she
 Chideth hym wel / for Seinte Trinitee 1824
 He is as angry / as a Pissemyre [leaf 81]
 Thogh that he haue / al that he kan desire
 Thogh I hym wrye a nyght and make hym warm
 And on hym leye / my leg outhur myn arm 1828
 He groneth lyk oure boor / lyth in oure Sty
 Oother disport right noon of hym haue I
 I may nat please hym / in no maner cas
 ¶ O Thomas Ie vous dy / Thomas / Thomas 1832
 This maketh the feend / this moste been amended
 Ire is a thyng that hye god defended
 And ther-of / wol I speke / a word / or two
 ¶ Now maister quod the wyf / er þat I go 1836
 What wol ye dyne / I wol go ther aboute
 ¶ Now dame quod he / now Ie vous dy sanz doute
 Haue I nat of a Capon / but the lyuere
 And of youre softe breed / nat but a shyuere 1840
 And after that a rosted pigges heed
 But þat I nolde / no beest for me were deed
 Thanne hadde I with yow / homly suffisaunce
 I am a man / of litel sustenaunce 1844

My Spirit hath his fostryng' in the bible
 The body is ay / so redy and penyble
 To wake / that my stomak' is destroyed
 I pray yow dame / ye be nat anoyed 1848
 Thogh I so freendly / yow my conseil shewe
 By god / I wolde nat telle it' but a fewe
 ¶ Now sire quod she / but o word / er I go
 My child is deed / with-Inne thise wykes two 1852
 Soone after that ye wente / out of this town
 ¶ His deeth say I / by reuelacioun
 Seith this frere / at hom in oure dortour
 I dar wel seyn / that er þat half an hour 1856
 After his deeth / I say hym born to blisse
 In myn avision / so god me wisse
 So dide oure Sexteyn / and oure ffermerer
 That han been trewe freres fifty yeer 1860
 They may now / god be thanked / of his lone
 Maken hir Iubilee / and walke allone
 And vp I roos / and al oure Couent eke
 With many a teere / triklyng on my cheke 1864
 With-uten noyse / or clateryng of belles [leaf 81, back]
 Te Deum was oure song' and no thyng elles
 Saue that to crist / I seyde an orison
 Thankynge hym / of his reuelacion 1868
 ffor sire and dame / trusteth me right wel
 Oure orisons / been wel moore effectuel
 And moore we seen / of cristes secree thynges
 Than bureH folk' al thogh þat they were kynges 1872
 We lyue in pouerte / and in abstinence
 And bureH folk' in richesse and dispence
 Of mete and drynke / and in hir foul delit'
 We han this worldes lust' al in despit 1876
 Lazar and Diues / lyueden diuersly
 And diuerse gerdon / hadde they ther-by
 Who so wol praye / he moot faste and be clene
 And fatte his soule / and make his body lene 1880

We fare as seith thapostle / clooth and foode	
Suffiseth vs / thogh they be nat ful goode	
The clennesses / and the fastyng ^t of vs freres	
Maketh / that crist accepteth oure prayeres	1884
¶ Lo Moyses / fourty dayes / and fourty nyght ^t	
ffasted / er that the heighe god of myght ^t	
Spak with hym / in the mountayne of Synay	
With empty wombe / fastyng many a day	1888
Receyued he the lawe / that was writen	
With goddes fynger / and Elye wel ye witen	
In Mount Oreb / er he hadde any speche	
With hye god / that is oure lyues leche	1892
He fasted longe / and was in contemplaunce	
Aaron / that hadde the temple in gouernaunce	
And eek / that othere preestes euerichon	
In-to the temple / whan they sholde gon	1896
To preye for the peple / and do seruyse	
They nolden drynken / in no maner wyse	
No drynke / which that myghte hem dronke make	
But there in abstinence / preye and wake	1900
Lest that they deyden / tak hede what I seye	
But they be sobre / that for the peple preye	
War that I seye namoore / for it suffiseth	
Oure lord Ihesu / as holy writ deuyseth	1904
Yaf vs ensample / of fastyng / and prayeres	[leaf 82]
Ther fore / we mendynantz / we sely freres	
Been wedded / to pouerte and continence	
To charitee / humblesse and abstinence	1908
To persecucion / for rightwisesse	
To wepyng ^t misericorde and clennesses	
And ther-fore may ye se / that oure prayeres	
I speke of vs / we mendinantz / we freres	1912
Be to the hye god / moore acceptable	
Than youre / with youre festes at the table	
ffro Paradys first if I shal nat lye	
Was man out chaced / for his glotonye	1916

And chaast was man / in Paradys certeyn
 ¶ But herkne Thomas / what I shal seyn
 I ne haue no text of it as I suppose
 But I shal fynde it in a maner glose 1920
 That specially / oure swete lord Ihesus
 Spak this by freres / whan he seyde thus
 Blessed be they / that poure in Spirit been
 And so forth / in the gospel / may ye seen 1924
 Wher it be likker / oure profession
 Or hire / that swymmen in possession
 ffy on hir pompe / and hir glotonye
 And for hir lewednesse / I hem diffye 1928
 Me thynketh / they been lyk Iouynyan
 ffat as a whale / and walkyng as a swan
 Al vynolent as Botel in the Spence
 Hir preyer is / of ful greet reuerence 1932
 Whan they for soules / seye the psalm of Daut
 Lo buf they seye / cor meum eructauit
 Who folweth cristes gospel / and his foore
 But we that humble been / and chaast / and poore 1936
 Werkers of goddes word / nat Auditours
 Ther fore / right as an hawk / vp at a sours
 Vp spryngeth in-to theyr / right so prayeres
 Of charitable / and chaste bisy freres 1940
 Maken hir sours / to goddes eryl two
 Thomas / Thomas / so mote I ryde or go
 And by that lord / that clepid is Seint yue
 Nere thow oure brother / sholdestow nat thryue 1944
 [In¹] oure chapitre / praye we day and nyght^[leaf 82, back]
 To crist that he thee sende / heele and myght^[1 Rate]
 Thy body / for to welden hastily
 ¶ God woot quod he / no thyng ther-of feele I 1948
 As help me crist as I in fewe yeres
 Haue spended / vp-on diuerse manere freres
 fful many a pound / yet fare I neuere the bet
 Certeyn / my good haue I almoost biset 1952

ffarwel my gold / for it is al ago
 ¶ The frere answerde / o Thomas doostow so
 What nedeth yow / diuerse freres seche
 What nedeth hym / that hath a parfit leche 1956
 To sechen / othere leches in the town
 Youre inconstance / is youre confusioun
 Holde ye thanne me / or ellis oure Couent
 To preye for yow / been insufficient 1960
 Thomas / that Iape / nys nat worth a myte
 Youre maladye / is for we han to lyte
 A yif that Couent / half a quarter otes
 A yif that Couent .xxiiij. grotes 1964
 A yif that frere a peny / and lat hym go
 Nay nay Thomas / it may no thyng be so
 What is a ferthyng worth / parted in twelue
 Lo / ech thyng / that is oned in hym selue 1968
 Is moore strong than whan it is to-scatered
 Thomas / of me / thow shalt nat been yflatered
 Thow woldest han oure labour / al for noght
 The hye god / that al this world hath wrought 1972
 Seith / that the werkman / worthy is his hire
 Thomas / noght of youre tresor I desire
 As for my self / but that al oure Couent
 To praye for yow / is ay so diligent 1976
 And for to buylden / cristes owene chirche
 Thomas / if ye wol lernen for to wirche
 Of buyldyng vp of chirches / may ye fynde
 If it be good / in Thomas lyf of Inde 1980
 Ye lye heere ful of Anger and of Ire
 With which / the deuel set youre herte afire
 And chiden heere / the sely Innocent /
 Youre wyf / that is so meke and pacient 1984
 And therfore Thomas / trowe me if thee leste [leaf 83]
 Ne stryue nat with thy wyf / as for thy beste
 And bere this word away / now by thy feith
 Touchyng swich thyng lo what the wise man seith 1988

¶ With-Inne thyn hous / ne be thow no leon	
To thy subgitz / do noon oppressiō	
Ne make thyne aqueyntances / nat for to flee	
And Thomas / yet eft soones I charge thee	1992
Be war from hire / that in thy bosom slepeth	
War fro the serpent that so sleighly crepeth	
Vnder the gras / and styngeth subtilly	
Be war my sone / and herkne paciently	1996
That twenty thousand men / han lost hir lyues	
ffor stryuyng with hir lemmans and hir wyues	
Now sith ye han / so holy meke a wyf	
What nedeth yow Thomas / to maken stryf /	2000
Their nys ywis / no serpent so cruel	
Whan man tret on his tayl / ne half so fel	
As womman is / whan she hath caught an Ire	
Vengeance is thanne / al that they desire	2004
Ire is a synne / oon of the grete of seuene	
Abhomynable / vn-to the god of heuene	
And to hym self / it is destruccioñ	
This euery lewed viker / or parson	2008
Kan seye / how Ire engendreth homicide	
Ire is in sooth / executour of pryde	
I koude of Ire / seye so muche sorwe	
My tale / sholde laste til to morwe	2012
And ther-fore praye I god / bothe day and nyght	
An Irous man / god sende hym litel myght	
It is greet harm / and certes greet pitee	
To sette an Irous man in heigh degree	2016
W Hilom / ther was an Irous potestat	
As seith Senek that durynge his estat	
Vp-on a day / out ryden knyghtes two	
And as ffortune wolde / that it were so	2020
That oon of hem cam hom / that oother noght	
Anon the knyght before the Iuge is broght	
That seyde thus / thow hast thy felawe slayn	
ffor which / I deme thee to the deeth certayn	2024

[1An]d to another knyght comanded he [leaf 88, back]
 Go leed hym to the deeth / I charge thee [1 Bate]
 And happed / as they wente by the weye
 Toward the place / ther he sholde deye 2028
 The knyght cam / which men wenden had be deed
 Thanne thoghten they / it were the beste reed
 To lede hem bothe / to the Iuge agayn
 They seyden / lord / the knyght ne hath nat slayn 2032
 His felawe / heere he stant hool alyue
 ¶ Ye shul be deed quod he / so moot I thryue
 This is to seyn / bothe oon and two and thre
 And to the firste knyght right thus spak / he 2036
 ¶ I dampned thee / thou most algate be deed
 And thow also / most nedes lese thyn heed
 ffor thow art cause / why thy felawe deyth
 And to the thridde knyght right thus he seith 2040
 Thow hast nat doon / that I comanded thee
 And thus he dide / do sleen hem alle thre
 ¶ Irous Cambyses / was eek dronkelewe
 And ay delited hym / to been a shrewe 2044
 And so bifel / a lord of his meynee
 That louede / vertuous moralitee
 Seyde on a day / bitwix hem two right thus 2047
 ¶ A lord is ²lost if he be vicius² [² in a later hand]
 And dronkenesse / is eek a foul record
 Of any man / and namely in a lord
 Ther is ful many an eighe / and many an ere
 Awaityng on a lord / he noot nat where 2052
 ffor goddes loue / drynk moore attemprely
 Wyn maketh man / to lesen wrecchedly
 His mynde / and eek his lymes euerychon
 ¶ The reuers shaltow se / quod he anon 2056
 And preue it by thyn owene experience
 That wyn ne dooth to folk no swich offence
 Ther is no wyn / bireueth me my myght
 Of hond ne foot ne of myne eyen sight 2060

And for despit^t he drank ful muchel moore
 An hundred part^t than he hadde doon bifore
 And right anon / this Irous cursed wrecche
 bifore hym Leet this knyghtes sone / fecche 2064
 Comandyng hym / he sholde bifore hym stonde [leaf 84]
 And sodeynly / he took his bowe in honde
 And vp the streng^t he pulled to his ere
 And with an arwe / he slow the child right there 2068
 Now / wheither haue I / a siker hand or noon
 Quod he / is al my myght and mynde agoon
 Hath wyn byreued me / myn eye sight
 ¶ What sholde I telle / thanswere of the knyght^t 2072
 His sone was slayn / ther is namoore to seye
 Beth war ther fore / with lordes how ye pleye
 Syngeth Placebo / and I shal if I kan
 But if it be / vn-to a poure man 2076
 To a poure man / men sholde his vices telle
 But nat to a lord / thogh he sholde go to helle
 ¶ Lo Irous Syrus / thilke Percien
 How he destroyed / the ryuer of Gysen 2080
 ffor that an hors of his / was dreynt ther-Inne
 Whan that he wente / Babiloyne to wynne
 He made / that the Ryuer was so smal
 That wommen / myghte wade it ouer al 2084
 Lo what seyde he / that so wel teche kan
 Ne be no felawe / to an Irous man
 Ne with no wood man / walke by the weye
 Lest thee repente / I wol no ferther seye 2088
 ¶ Now Thomas leue brother / lef thyn Ire
 Thow shalt me fynde / as Iust^t as is a Squyre
 Hoold nat the deueles knyf / ay at thyn herte
 Thyn angre dooth thee / al to soore smerte 2092
 But shewe to me / al thy confессиō
 ¶ Nay quod the sike man / by Seint Symoñ
 I haue be shryuen this day / at my Curat^t
 I haue hym toold / hoolly al myn estat^t 2096

Nedeth namoore to speke of it seith he
 But if me list of myn humylitee
 ¶ Yif me thanne of thy gold / to make oure cloystre
 Quod he / for many a Muscle / and many an Oystre 2100
 Whan othere men / han been ful wel at eyse
 Hath been oure foode / oure Cloystre for to reyse
 And yet god woot vnnethe the fundement/
 Parfourned is / ne of oure pauement 2104
 [¹N]ys nat a tyle / yet with-Inne oure wones [¹ *Rats. leaf 94, bk*]
 By god / we owen fourty pound for stones
 Now help Thomas / for hym þat harwed helle
 Or ellis mote we / oure bookes selle 2108
 And if yow lakke / oure predicaciō
 Thanne gooth the world / al to destrucciō
 ffor who so / fro this world / wolde vs bireue
 So god me saue / Thomas by youre leue 2112
 He wolde bireue / out of the world the sonne
 ffor who kan teche / and werchen as we konne
 And that is nat of litel tyme quod he
 But sith Elie was / or Elize 2116
 Han freres been / that fynde I of record
 In charitee / thonked be oure lord
 Now Thomas / help for Seinte charitee
 And down anon / he set hym on his knee 2120
 ¶ This sike man / weex wel neigh wood for Ire
 He wolde / that the frere / hadde been afire
 With his false dissimulaciō
 Swich thyng/ as is in my possession 2124
 Quod he / that may I yeue and noon oother
 Ye sey me thus / how that I am youre brother
 ¶ Ye certes quod the frere / trusteth wel
 I took oure dame / oure lettre with oure sel 2128
 ¶ Now wel quod he / and som what shal I yeue
 Vn-to youre holy Couent whil I lyue
 And in thyn hand / thow shalt it han anon
 On this condiciō / and oother noon 2132

That thou departe it so / my deere brother
 That euery frere / haue as muche as oother
 This shaltow swere / on thy profession
 With-outen fraude / or canelacioñ 2136
 ¶ I swere it quod this frere / vp-on my feith
 And ther with al / his hand in his he leith
 Lo here my feith / in me / shal be no lak
 ¶ Now thanne put thyn hand / down by my bak' 2140
 Seyde this man / and grope wel bihynde
 Bynethe my buttok' there shaltow fynde
 A thyng' that I haue hyd in pryuete
 ¶ A thoghte this frere / that shal go with me 2144
 And down his hand / he launcheth to the clifte [leaf 85]
 In hope / for to fynde there a yifte
 And whan this sike man / felte this frere
 Aboute his tuwel / grope there and heere 2148
 Amydde his hand / he leet the frere a fart'
 Ther is no capul / drawyng in a Cart'
 That myghte han late a fart' of swich a sown
 ¶ The frere vp stirte / as dooth a wood leoun 2152
 A false cheryl quod he / for goddes bones
 This hastow for despit' doon for the nones
 Thow shalt abyde this fart' if þat I may
 His meynne / which that herden this affray 2156
 Cam lepyng In / and chaced out the frere
 And forth he gooth / with a ful angry cheere
 And fette his felawe / ther as lay his stoor
 He looked / as he were a wilde boor 2160
 He grynt with his teeth / so was he wrooth
 A sturdy paas / down to the court he gooth
 Wher as ther woned / a man of greet honour
 To whom / that he was alwey confessour 2164
 This worthy man / was lord of that village
 This frere cam / as he were in a rage
 Where as this lord / sat etyng' at his boord
 Vnnethe / myghte the frere speke a woord 2168

Til atte laste / he seyde / god yow see
 ¶ This lord gan looke / and seyde benedicitee
 What frere Iohn / what manere world is this
 I se wel / that som thyng^t ther is amys 2172
 Ye looken / as the wode were ful of theuys
 Sit down anon / and tel me what youre grief is
 And it shal been amended / if I may
 ¶ I haue quod he / had a despit to day 2176
 God yelde yow / adown in youre village
 That in this world / ther nys so poure a page
 That he nolde haue / abhomynacioun
 Of that I haue receyued in youre toun 2180
 And yet / ne greueth me / no thyng so soore
 As that this olde cherl / with lokkes hoore
 Blasphemed hath / oure hooly Couent eke
 ¶ Now maister quod this lord / I yow biseke 2184
 No maister sire quod he / but seruytour [leaf 85, back]
 Thogh I haue had in scole / that honour
 God liketh nat^t that Raby men vs calle
 Neither in Market^t nyn youre large halle 2188
 ¶ No force quod he / but tel me al youre grief
 ¶ Sire quod this frere / an odious meschief
 This day bityd is / to myn ordre and me
 And so *par consequens* / to ech degree 2192
 Of holy chirche / god amende it soone
 ¶ Sire quod the lord / ye woot what is to doone
 Distempre yow noght^t ye be my confessour
 Ye been the salt of therthe / and the sauour 2196
 ffor goddes loue / youre pacience ye holde
 Tel me youre grief / and he anon hym tolde
 As ye han herd biforn / ye woot wel what
 The lady of the hous / ay stille sat^t 2200
 Til she hadde herd / what the frere sayde
 ¶ Ey goddes moder quod she / blisful mayde
 Is ther aught ellis / tel me feithfully
 ¶ Ma dame quod he / how thynketh yow ther by 2204

- ¶ How þat me thynketh quod she / so god me spede
 I seye / a cherl / hath doon a cherles dede
 What sholde I seye / god lat hym neuere thee
 His sike heed / is ful of vanytee 2208
 I holde hym / in a manere frenesye
- ¶ Madame quod he / by god I shal nat lye
 But I / on oother wise / may be wreke
 I shal diffame hym / ouer al wher I speke 2212
 The false blasphemour / that charged me
 To parte / that wol nat departed be
 To euery man yliche / with meschaunce
- ¶ The lord sat stille / as he were in a traunce 2216
 And in his herte / he rolled vp and down
 How hadde this cherl / ymaginacioun
 To shewe swich a probleme / to the frere
 Neuere erst er now / herde I swich matere 2220
 I trowe the deuel / putte it in his mynde
 In Arsmetrik¹ shal ther no man fynde
 Bifore this day / of swich a question
 Who sholde / make a demonstracioñ 2224
 That euery man sholde han / ylike his part/
 As of a soun / or sauour / of a fart¹ [leaf 86]
 O nyce prowde cherl / I shrewe his face
- ¶ Lo sires quod the lord / with harde grace 2228
 Who euere herde / of swich a thyng¹ er now
 To euery man ylike / tel me how
 It is an impossible / it may nat be
 Ey nyce cherl / god lat hym neuere thee 2232
 The rumblyng of a fart¹ and euery soun
 Nys but of Eyr / reuerberacioun
 And there it wasteth / lite and lite away
 Ther nys no man / kan deme by my fey 2236
 If that it were / departed equally
 What lo my cherl / lo yet how shrewedly
 Vn-to my confessour / to day he spak/
 I holde hym certeynly / demonyak¹ 2240

Now ete youre mete / and lat the cherl go pleye
 Lat hym go hange hym self / a deucl weye

[*The Solution of the "Probleme" by the Lord's Squire-
 and-Carver. No break in the MS.*]

¶ Now stood / the lordes Squyer at the boord
 That carf his mete / and herde word by woord 2244
 Of alle thyng^t of which I haue yow sayd
 ¶ My lord quod he / be ye nat yuele apayd
 I koude telle / for a gowne clooth
 To yow sire frere / so ye be nat wrooth 2248
 How that this fart^t sholde euene ydeled be
 Among youre Couent^t if it liked me
 ¶ Tel quod the lord / and thow shalt haue anon
 A gowne clooth / by god and by Seint Iohn 2252
 ¶ My lord quod he / whan that the weder is fair
 With-outen wynd / or perturbynge of Air
 Lat brynge a Cartwheel / heere in-to this halle
 But looke that it haue / his spokes alle 2256
 Twelf spokes / hath a Cartwheel comunly
 And brynge me thanne twelf freres / woot ye why
 For thrittene / is a Couent^t / as I gesse
 Yourre confessour heere / for his worthynesse 2260
 Shal parfourne vp / the nombre of this Couent^t
 Thanne shal they knele adown / by oon assent^t
 And to euery spokes ende / in this manere
 fful sadly / leye his nose / shal a frere 2264
 Yourre noble Confessour / ther god hym saue [leaf 86, back]
 Shal holde his nose / vp right vnder the Naue
 Thanne shal this cherl / with baly / stif and toght^t
 As any tabour / hider been ybrought^t 2268
 And sette hym on the wheel / right of this Cart^t
 Vp on the Naue / and make hym lete a fart^t
 And ye shal seen / on peril of my lyf
 By proue / which that is demonstratyf 2272

That equally / the soun of it wol wende
 And eek the stynk / vn-to the spokes ende
 Saue / that this worthy man / youre Confessour
 By cause / he is a man of greet honour 2276
 Shal han the firste fruyt as reson is
 The noble vsage of freres / yet is this
 The worthy men of hem / shul first be serued
 And certeynly / he hath it wel disserued 2280
 He hath to day / taught vs so muchel good
 With prechyng in the pulput ther he stood
 That I may vouche sauf / I seye for me
 He hadde the firste smel / of fartes thre 2284
 And so wolde / al his Couent hardily
 He bereth hym / so faire and holily
 ¶ The lord / the lady / ech man / saue the frere
 Seyden / that Iankyn spak in this matere 2288
 As wel / as Euclide / or Protholomee
 Touchynge the cherl / they seyde subtiltee
 And hy wit made hym speke / as he spak
 He nys no fool / ne no demonyak 2292
 And Iankyn hath y-wonne / a newe gowne
 My tale is doon / we been almoost at towne

¶ Here endeth the Somnours tale 𐀚

[A blank leaf follows in the MS.]

¶ Here bigynneth The Prologe of the Monkes ta^[le¹].
^[1 Bitten off by rule.]

WHan ended was my tale / of Melibee [leaf 86]
 And of Prudence / and hire benygnitee 3080
 Oure hoost seyde / as I am feithful man
 And by / that precious corpus Madrian
 I hadde leuere / than a barel Ale
 That goode lief my wyf / hadde herd this tale 3084
 She nys no thyng^t of swich pacience
 As was / this Melibeus wyf Prudence
 By goddes bones / whan I bete my knaues
 She bryngeth me / the grete clobbed staues 3088
 And crieth / slee the dogges euerichon
 And breke hem / bothe bak and euery bon
 And if þat / any neighebore / of myne
 Wol nat in chirche / to my wyf enelyne 3092
 Or be so hardy / to hire to trespase
 Whan she cometh / she raumpeth in my face
 And crieth / false coward wreke thy wyf
 By corpus bones / I wol haue thy knyf 3096
 And thou shalt haue my distaf / and go spyne
 ffor day to nyght^t right thus she wol bigynne
 Allas she seith / þat euere þat I was shape
 To wedden a Milksope / or a coward Ape 3100
 That wol been ouer-lad / of euery wight^t
 Thou darst nat stonden / by thy wyues right^t
 This is my lif^t but if þat I wol fighte
 And out at dore / anoon I moot me dighte 3104
 Or ellis I am but lost^t but if þat I
 Be lyk a wilde leon / fool hardy
 I woot wel / she wol do me sle som day
 Som neighebore / and thanne go my way 3108
 ffor I am perilous / with knyf in honde
 Al be it^t that I dar nat hire withstonde

ffor she is big in armes / by my feith
 That shal he fynde / þat hire mysdooth / or seith 3112
 But lat vs passe away / fro this matere
 ¶ My lord the Monk quod he / be myrie of cheere
 ffor / ye shul telle a tale trewely [leaf 88, back]
 Lo / Rouchestre / stant heer fasteby 3116
 Ride forth myn owene lord / brek nat oure game
 But by my trouthe / I knowe nat youre name
 Wher shal I calle yow / my lord Dann Iohn
 Or dann Thomas / or ellis Dann Albon 3120
 Of what hous be ye / by youre fader kyn
 I vow to god / thow hast a ful fair skyn
 It is a gentil pasture / ther thow goost'
 Thow art nat lyk' a penannt' or a goost' 3124
 Vp-on my feith / thow art som Officer
 Som worthy Sexteyn / or som Celerer
 ffor by my fader soule / as to my doom
 Thow art a maister / whan thou art at hom 3128
 No poure Cloistrer / ne no novys
 But a gouernour / wily and wys
 And ther with al / of brawnes & of bones
 A wel farynge persone / for the nones 3132
 I prey god / yeue hym confusioñ
 That first thee broghte / vn-to Religioñ
 Thow woldest han been a tredefoul aright'
 Haddestow / as greet a leue as thow hast myght' 3136
 To perfourne / al thy lust in engendrure
 Thow haddest bigeten / ful many a creature
 Allas / why werestow so wyd a cope
 God yeue me sorwe / but and I were a Pope 3140
 Nat oonly thow / but euery myghty man
 Thogh he were shore / ful hye vp on his pan
 Sholde haue a wyf' for al the world is lorn
 Religion / hath take vp al the corn 3144
 Of tredyng' and we borel men been shrympes
 Of feble trees / ther comen wrecched ympes

This maketh / þat oure heires beth so sklendre	
And feble / þat they may nat wel engendre	3148
This maketh / þat oure wyues wole assaye	
Religious folk / for ye mowe bettre paye	
Of Venus paiementz / than may we	
God woot no lussheburgh payen ye	3152
But be nat wrooth my Lord / thogh þat I pleye	
ful ofte in game / a sooth I haue herd seye	
¶ This worthy Monk / took al in pacience	[leaf 89]
And seyde / I wol doon al my diligence	3156
As fer / as sowneth 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 Seint Edward	3160
Or ellis first tragedies wol I telle	
Of whiche / I haue an hundred in my Celle	
Tragedie is to seyn / a certeyn storie	
As olde bokes / maken vs memorie	3164
Of hym / þat stood in greet prosperitee	
And is yfallen / out of heigh degree	
In to myserie / and endeth wrecchedly	
And they been / versified comunly	3168
Of .vj. feet whiche men clepyn Exametron	
In prose eek been endited many oon	
And eek in metre / in many a sondry wise	
Lo this declaryng oghte ynogh suffice	3172
¶ Now herkneth / if yow liketh for to heere	
But first I yow biseke / in this matere	
Though I by ordre / telle nat thise thynges	
Be it of Popes / Emperours / or Kynges	3176
After hir ages / as men writen fynde	
But telle hem / som bifore / and som bihynde	
As it now cometh / vn-to my remembrance	
Haueth me excused / of myn ignorance	3180

¶ Here bigynneth the Monkes tale.

I Wol biwaille / in manere of Tragedie
 The harm of hem / that stode in heigh degree
 And fillen so / that ther nas no remedie
 To brynge hem / out of hire Aduersitee 3184
 ffor certeyn / whan þat ffortune list to flee
 Ther may no man / the cours of hire withholde
 Lat no man triste / on blynd prosperitee
 Beth war / by thise ensamples trewe and olde 3188

[*Lucifer.*]

AT lucifer / thogh he an Aungel were [leaf 89, back]
 And nat a man / at hym I wol bigynne
 ffor thogh ffortune / may noon Aungel dere
 ffrom heigh degree / yet fil he for his synne 3192
 Doun in to Helle / where as he yet is Inne
 O Lucifer / brightest of Aungels alle
 Now artow Sathanas / that mayst nat twynne
 Out of Miserie / in which þat thou art falle 3196

[*Adam.*]

Lo Adam in the feld of Damyssene [this stanza is in the
 margin in a later
 15th-century hand]
 With godes owne fynger wrowt was he . .
 And nat bygeten of mannes sperme vnclene . .
 And welte al paradiis sauynge o tree . . 3200
 Had neuer wordly man so hey degre . .
 As Adam til he for mysgouernance . .
 Was dryue owt of his hey prosperitee . .
 To labour and to helle and to meschance 3204

[*Sampson.*]

Lo Sampson / which that was anunciat' Sampson.
 By the Aungel / longe er his natiuitee
 And was / to god almyghty consecrat'
 And stood in noblesse / whil that he myghte see 3208
 Was neuere swich another / as was he
 To speke of strengthe / and ther-with hardynesse
 But to hise wyues / tolde he his secree
 Thurgh which / he slow hym self for wrecchednesse 3212

¶ Sampson / this noble almyghty champion
 With-uten wepne / saue hise hondes tweye
 He slow / and al to-rente the leon
 Toward his weddyng' walkynge by the weye 3216
 His false wyf / koude hym so plese and preye
 Til she his conseil knew / and she vntrewe
 Vn-to his foos / his conseil gan biwrewe
 And hym forsook / and took another newe 3220

¶ Thre hundred foxes / took Sampson for Ire
 And alle hir tayles / he togydre bond
 And sette the foxes tayles / alle on fire
 ffor he on euery tayl / hadde knyht a brond 3224
 And they brende / alle the cornes in that Lond
 And alle hire Olyueris / and Vynes eke
 A thousand men / he slow with his hond
 And hadde no wepne / but an Asses cheke 3228

¶ Whan they were slayn / so thursted hym / þat he
 Was wel ny lorn / for which he gan to preye
 That god / wolde on his peyne / haue som pitee
 And sende hym drynke / or ellis moste he deye 3232
 And of this Asses cheke / that was dreye
 Out of a wang' tooth / sprang anon a welle
 Of which he drank ynogh / shortly to seye
 Thus heelp hym god / as Iudicum kan telle 3236

¶ By verray force / at Gazan / on a nyght [leaf 90]
 Maugree Philistiens / of that Citee
 The gates of the toun / he hath vp plight
 And on his bak' ycaried hem hath he 3240
 Hye on an hilt / where as men myght hem se
 O noble almyghty Sampson / leef and deere
 Had thow nat toold / to wommen thy secree
 In al this world / ne hadde been thy peere 3244

¶ This Sampson / neuere Ciser drank ne wyn
 Ne on his heed / cam Rasour noon ne shere
 By precept of the Messenger deyn
 ffor alle his strengthes / in his herys were 3248
 And fully .xx. wynter / yeer by yere
 He hadde of Israel / the gouernance
 But soone / shal he wepe many a teere
 ffor wommen / shul hym bryngen to meschaunce 3252

¶ Vn-to his lemman Dalida / he tolde
 That in his herys / al his strengthe lay
 And falsly / to his fomen she hym solde
 And slepynge in hir barm / vp on a day 3256
 She made to clippe / or shere his heer away
 And made his fomen / al this craft espion
 And whan þat they / hym fond in this array
 They bounde hym faste / and putten out his eyen 3260

¶ But / er his heer / was clipped or yshaue
 Ther was no bond / with which / men myghte hym bynde
 But now is he / in prisone in a Caue
 Where as they made hym / at the querne grynde 3264
 O noble Sampson / strengest of mankynde
 O whilom / Iuge in glorie / and in richesse
 Now / maystow wepen / with thyne eyen blynde
 Sith thow fro wele / art falle in wrecchednesse 3268

¶ The ende of this caytif was as I shal seye
 His fomen / made a feste vp-on a day
 And made hym as hire fool / bifore hem pleye
 And this was / in a temple of greet array 3272
 But atte laste / he made a foul affray
 ffor he two pilers shook / and made hem falle
 And down fil temple and al / and there it lay
 And slow hym self / and eek his fomen alle 3276

¶ This is to seyn / the Prynces euerychon [leaf 90, back]
 And eek thre thousand bodies / were ther slayn
 With fallyng' of the grete temple of stoon
 Of Sampson / now wol I namoore sayn 3280
 Beth war by this ensample / old and playn
 That no men / telle hir conseil / til hir wyues
 Of swich thyng' as they wolde han secree fayn
 If þat it touche / hir lymes / or hir lyues 3284

[*Hercules.*]

¶ Of hercules / the souereyn conquerour ¶ Hercules.
 Syngen hise werkes / laude and heigh renoun
 ffor in his tyme / of strengthe he was the flour
 He slow / and rafte the skyn fro the leoun 3288
 He of Centauros / leyde the boost adown
 He Arpies slow / the cruel briddes felle
 The golden Apples / rafte of the dragoun
 He drow out Cerberus / the hound of helle 3292

¶ He slow the cruel tyrant Busirus
 And made his hors / to frete hym flessch and bon
 He slow the firy serpent venymus
 Of Achilois two hornes / he brak oon 3296
 And he slow Cakus / in a Caue of stoon
 He slow the geant. Antheus the stronge
 He slow the grisly boor / and that anon
 And bar the heuene / on his nekke longe 3300

¶ Was neuere wight sith þat this world bigan
 That slew so manye monstres / as dide he
 Thurgh-out this wide world / his name ran
 What for his strengthe / and for his heigh bountee 3304
 And euery Reawme / wente he for to se
 He was so strong' þat no man myghte hym lette
 At bothe the worldes endes / seith Trophee / ¶ Ille vates Calde-
 In stede of boundes / he a piler sette 3308
 orum Tropheus.

¶ A lemman / hadde this noble champion
 That highte Dian[i]ra / fressh as May
 And as thise clerkes / maken mencion
 She hath hym sent a sherte / fressh and gay 3312
 Allas this sherte / allas and weylaway
 Enuenymed was / so subtilly with alle
 That er þat he / hadde wered it half a day
 It made his flessch / al from hise bones falle 3316

¶ But natheles / somme clerkes hire excusen [leaf 91]
 By oon þat highte Nessus / þat it maked
 Be as be may / I wol hire noght accusen
 But on his bak' the sherte he wered al naked 3320
 Til þat his flessch / was for the venym blaked
 And whan he say / noon oother remedie
 In hote coles / he hath hym seluen raked
 ffor with no venym / deigned hym to dye 3324

¶ Thus starf / this worthy myghty Hercules
 Lo who may truste on ffortune / any throwe
 ffor hym þat folweth / al this world of prees
 Er he be war / is ofte yleyd ful lowe 3328
 fful wys is he / þat kan hym seluen knowe
 Beth war / for whan þat ffortune list to glose
 Thanne waiteth she / hir man to ouerthrowe
 By swich a wey / as he wolde leest suppose 3332

[*Nebuchadnezzar.*]

The myghty trone / the precious tresor / Nabugodonosor
 The glorious ceptre / and roial maicstee
 That hadde / the kyng Nabugodonosor
 With tonge / vnnethe / may discryued be 3336
 He twies / wan Ierusalem the Citee
 The vessel of the temple / he with hym ladde
 At Babiloigne / was his souereyn see
 In which / his glorie / and his delit he hadde 3340

¶ The faireste children / of the blood roial
 Of Israel / he leet do gelde anon
 And maked ech of hem / to been his thral
 Amonges othere / Danyel was oon 3344
 That was / the wiseste child of euerychoon
 ffor he the dremes / of the kyng expowned
 Ther as in Chaldeye / clerk/ ne was ther noon
 That wiste / to what fyn his dremes sowned 3348

¶ This proude kyng' leet make a Statue of gold
 Sixty cubites long' and Seuene in brede
 To which ymage / he bothe yong' and old
 Comanded to loute / and haue in drede 3352
 Or in a fourneys / ful of flambes rede
 He shal be brend / that wolde noght obeye
 But neuere / wolde assente to that dede
 Danyel / ne hise yonge felawes tweye 3356

¶ This kyng of kynges / proud was and elat' [leaf 91, back]
 He wende / that god / þat sit in magestee
 Ne myghte hym nat bireue / of his estat
 But sodeynly / he loste his dignytee 3360
 And lyk a beest' hym semed for to be
 And eet hey as an Oxe / and lay ther oute
 In reyn / with wilde beestes walked he
 Til certeyn tyme / was ycome aboute 3364

¶ And lyk an Egles fetheres / wax hise herys
 Hise nayles / lyk a briddes clawes weere
 Til god relessed hym / a *certeyn* yerys
 And yaf hym wit' and thanne *with* many a teere 3368
 He thanked god / and euere his lyf in feere
 Was he to doon amys / or moore trespase
 And til that tyme / he leyd was on his beere
 He knew / that god / was ful of myght & grace 3372

[*Belshazzar.*]

¶ **H**is sone / which that highte Balthasar / Balthasar /
 That heeld the regne / after his fader day
 He by his fader / koude nocht be war
 ffor proud he was / of herte and of array 3376
 And eek an ydolastre / was he ay
 His hye estat / assured hym in pryde
 But ffortune caste hym down / and ther he lay
 And sodeynly / his regne gan dyuyde 3380

¶ A feste he made / vn-to hise lordes alle
 Vp-on a tyme / and made hem blithe be
 And thanne hise Officers / gan he calle
 Gooth bryngeth forth / the vessels quod he 3384
 Whiche that my fader / in his prosperitee
 Out of the temple of Ierusalem / birafte
 And to oure hye goddes / thanke we
 Of honour / that oure eldres / *with* vs lafte 3388

¶ His wyf / hise lordes / and hise concubynes
 Ay dronken / whil hire appetites laste
 Out of this noble vessels / sondry wynes
 And on a wal / this kyng' hise eyen caste 3392
 And say an hand armlees / that wroot ful faste
 ffor feere of which / he quook / and siked soore
 This hand / þat Balthasar so soore agaste
 Wroot Mane techel phares / and namoore 3396

¶ In al that land / Magicien was noon [leaf 92]
 That koude expounde / what that lettre mente
 But Danyel / expowned it anoon
 And seyde / Kyngt god to thy fader lente 3400
 Glorie / and honour / regne / tresor / rente
 And he was proud / and no thyng god ne dradde
 And ther-fore / god greet wreche vp-on hym sente
 And hym birefte / the regne þat he hadde 3404

¶ He was out cast of mannes compaignye
 With Asses / was his habitacioñ
 And eet hey as a beest in weet and drye
 Til þat he knew / by grace / and by resoñ 3408
 That god of heuene / han domynacioñ
 Ouer euery regne / and euery creature
 And thanne / hadde god of hym compassioñ
 And hym restored / his regne and his figure 3412

¶ Eke / thou that art his sone / art proud also
 And knowest Alle thise thynges verraily
 And art rebel to god / and art his fo
 Thou drank eek / of his vessel boldely 3416
 Thy wyf eke / and thy wenches synfully
 Dronke of the same vessels / sondry wynys
 And heriest false goddes cursedly
 Therefore to thee / yshapen ful greet pyne is 3420

¶ This hand was sent fro god / that on the wal
 Wroot Mane techel phares / truste me
 Thy regne is doon / thou weyest noght at al
 Dyuyded is thy regne / and it shal be 3424
 To Medes and to Perses / yeuen quod he
 And thilke same nyght this kyng was slawe
 And Darius / occupieth his degree
 Though he ther to / hadde neither right ne lawe 3428

¶ Lordynges / ensample heer-by may ye take
 How that in lordshipe / is no sikernesse
 ffor whan ffortune / wol a man forsake
 She bereth away / his regne and his richesse 3432
 And eke hise freendes / bothe moore and lesse
 ffor what man / þat hath freendes thurgh ffortune
 Mishape / wol make hem enemys I gesse
 This prouerbe / is ful sooth / and ful commune 3436

[Zenobia.]

CEnobia / of Palymerie queene [leaf 92, back]
 As writen Perciens / of hir noblesse
 So worthy was in Armes / and so keene
 That no wight passed hire in hardynesse 3440
 Ne in lynage / ne oother gentilesse
 Of kynges blood of Perce / is she descended
 I sey nat þat she hadde moost fairnesse
 But of hir shape / she myghte nat been amended 3444

¶ ffrom hire childhede / I fynde þat she fledde
 Office of wommen / and to wode she wente
 And many / a wilde hertes blood she shedde
 With Arwes brode / that she to hem sente 3448
 She was so swift þat she anon hem hente
 And whan þat she was elder / she wolde kille
 Leons / Leopardes / and Beres al torente
 And in hir Armes / welde hem at hir wille 3452

¶ Sche dorste / wilde beestes dennes seke
 And rennen in the montaynes / al the nyght
 And slepen vnder the busshe / and she koude eke
 Wrastlen / by verray force / and verray myght 3456
 With any yong man / were he neuer so wight
 Ther myghte no thyng in hir armes stonde
 She kepte hir maydenhede / from euery wight.
 To no man / deigned hire to be bonde 3460

¶ But atte laste / hir freendes han hire maryed
 To Onedake / a prynce of that contree
 Al were it so / that she hem longe taryed
 And ye shal vnderstande / how þat he 3464
 Hadde swiche fantasies / as hadde she
 But nathelees / whan they weere knygt in ^{stond} feere
 They lyued / in ioye / and in felicitie
 ffor ech of hem / hadde oother lief and deere 3468

¶ Saue o thyng that she wolde neuere assente
 By no wey / that he sholde by hire lye
 But ones / for it was hir pleynt entente
 To haue a child / the world to multiplie 3472
 And also soone / as that she myghte espye
 That she was nat with childe / with that dede
 Thanne wolde she suffren hym doon his fantasye
 Eft soone / and noght but ones / out of drede 3476

¶ And if she were with childe / at thilke cast^r [leaf 98]
 Namore / sholde he pleyen thilke game
 Til fully / .xl. dayes weren past^r
 Thanne wolde she ones / suffre hym do the same 3480
 Al were this Onedake / wilde / or tame
 He gat namore of hire / for thus she seyde
 It was to wyues / lecherie and shame
 In oother cas / if þat men with hem pleyde 3484

¶ Two sones / by this Onedake hadde she
 The whiche she kepte / in vertu and lettrure
 But now / vn-to oure tale turne we
 I seye / so worshipful a creature 3488
 And wys ther-with / and large with mesure
 So penyble in the werre / and curteis eke
 Ne moore labour / myghte in werre endure
 Was noon / thogh al this world men sholde seke 3492

¶ Hir riche array / ne myghte nat be toold
 As wel in vessel / as in hire clothyng
 She was al clad / in perree and in gold
 And eek she lafte noght for noon huntyng 3496
 To haue / of sondry tonges ful knowyng
 Whan þat she leyser hadde / and for to entende
 To lerne bookes / was al hir likyng
 How she in vertu / myghte hir lyf despende 3500

¶ And shortly / of this storie for to trete
 So doughty was hire housbonde / and eek she
 That they conquered / manye regnes grete
 In thorient with many a fair Citee 3504
 Appertenant vn-to the magestee
 Of Rome / and with strong hond / heeld hem ful faste
 Ne neuere myghte / hir fomen / doon hem flee
 Ay / whil that Onedakes dayes laste 3508

¶ Hir batailles / who so list hem for to rede
 Agayn Sapor the kyng / and othere mo
 And how / þat al this proces / fil in dede
 Why she conquered / and what title ther to 3512
 And after / of hire meschief and hire wo
 How that she was / biseged and ytake
 Lat hym / vn-to my maister Petrak go
 That writ ynow of this / I vndertake 3516

¶ Whan Onedake was deed / she myghtily [leaf 93, back]
 The regnes heeld / and with hire propre hond
 Agayns hir foos / she faught so cruelly
 That ther nas kyng ne Prince in al that lond 3520
 That he nas glad / if he þat grace fond
 That she ne wolde / vp-on his land werreye
 With hire / they made alliance by bond
 To been in pees / and lete hire ryde and pleye 3524

¶ The Emperour of Rome / Claudius
 Ne hym biforn / the Romayn Galien
 Ne dorsten neuere / been so corageus
 Ne noon Ermyn / ne noon Egipcien 3528
 No Surryen / ne noon Arabien
 With-Inne the feeldes / þat dorste with hire fighte
 Lest þat she wolde / hem with hir handes slen
 Or with hire meynee / putten hem to flighte 3532

¶ In kynges habit wenten hire sones two
 As heires / of hir fadres regnes alle
 And Hermanno / and Thymalao
 Hir names weere / as Persiens hem calle 3536
 But ay ffortune / hath in hire hony galle
 This myghty queene / may no while endure
 ffortune / out of hir regne made hire falle
 To wrecchednesse / and to mysauenture 3540

¶ Aurelian / whan þat the gouernance
 Of Rome / cam in-to hise handes tweye
 He shoope / vp-on this queene / to doon vengeance
 And with his legions / he took his weye 3544
 Toward Cenobie / and shortly for to seye
 He made hire flec / and atte laste hire hente
 And fettred hire / and eek hire children tweye
 And wan the land / and hoom to Rome he wente 3548

¶ Amonges othere thynges / that he wan
 His Chaar / þat was with gold wrought & perree
 This grete Romayn / this Aurelian
 Hath with hym lad / for þat men sholde it see 3552
 Biforn his triumphe / walketh she
 With gilte cheynes / on hire nekke hangynge
 Corowned was she / as after hire degree
 And ful of perree / charged hir clothynge 3556

¶ Allas ffortune / she that whilom was [leaf 94
 Dredeful / to kynges / and to Emperoures
 Now gawreth al the peple / on hire allas
 And she that helmed was / in starke stoures 3560
 And wan by force / townes stronge and toures
 Shal on hire heed / now were a vitremyte
 And she þat bar / the Ceptre ful of floures
 Shal bere a distaf hire cost for to quyte 3564

[The modern instances which should come here, are at the end of the Tale in this MS.]

[Nero.]

Al though / that Nero were vicius / De Nerone
 As any feend / that lyth ful lowe adown 3654
 Yet he / as telleth vs Swetonius
 This wide world / hadde in subieccioun 3656
 Bothe Est and West North / and Septemtrioun
 Of Rubies / Saphires / and of perles white
 Were alle hise clothes / browded vp and down
 ffor he in gemmes / greetly gan delite 3660

¶ Moore delicat moore pompous of array
 Moore proud / was neuere Emperour than he
 That ilke clooth / that he hadde weryd o day
 After that tyme / he nolde it neuere see 3664
 Nettes of gold threed / hadde he greet plentee
 To fisshen in Tybre / whan hym liste pleye
 Hise lustes were al lawe / in his decree
 ffor ffortune / as his freend / hym wolde obeye 3668

¶ He Rome brende / for his delicacie
 The Senatours / he slow vp-on a day
 To heere / how þat men wolde wepe & crye
 And slow his brother / and by his suster lay 3672
 His moder he made / in pitous array
 ffor he hire wombe slytte / to biholde
 Where he conceyued was / so weilaway
 That he so litel / of his moder tolde 3676

¶ No teere out of hise eyen / for that sighte
 Ne cam / but seyde / a fair womman was she
 Greet wonder is / how þat he koude / or myghte
 Be domesman / of hire dede beautee 3680
 The wyn to bryngen hym / comanded he
 And drank anon / noon oother wo he made
 Whan myght is ioyned / vn-to crueltee
 Allas to depe / wol the venym wade 3684

[¶] In youthe / a maister hadde this Emperour [leaf 94, back]
 To teche hym lettrure / and curteisye
 ffor of moralitee / he was the flour
 As in his tyme / but if bookes lye 3688
 And whil this maister / hadde of hym maistrye
 He maked hym / so louyng' and so souple
 That longe tyme it was / er tirannye
 Or any vice / dorste in hym vncouple 3692

¶ This Seneca / of which þat I deuyse
 By cause Nero / hadde of hym swich drede
 ffor he fro vices / wolde hym ay chastise
 Discretly / as by word / and nat by dede 3696
 Sire wolde he seyn / an Emperour moot nede
 Be vertuous / and hate tirannye
 ffor which he in a bath / made hym to blede
 On bothe hise armes / til he moste dye 3700

¶ This Nero / hadde eek / of acostumance
 In youthe / agayns his maister for to rise
 Which afterward / hym thoughte a greet greuance
 Therfore / he made hym dyen in this wise 3704
 But natheles / this Seneca the wise
 Chees / in a bath / to dye in this manere
 Rather than han / another tormentrise
 And thus hath Nero / slayn his maister deere 3708

¶ Now fil it so / that ffortune liste no lenger
 The hye pride of Nero / to cherice
 ffor thogh þat he was strong/ yet was she strengre
 She thoghte thus / by god I am to nyce 3712
 To sette a man / that is fulfild of vice
 In heigh degree / and Emperour hym calle
 By god / out of his sete I wol hym trice
 Whan he leest weneth / sonnest shal he falle 3716

¶ The peple roos / vp on hym / on a nyght
 ffor his defeaute / and whan he it espied
 Out of his dores / anon he hath hym dight
 Allone / and there he wende han been allyed 3720
 He knocked faste / and ay the moore he cryed
 The faster shette they / the dores alle
 ffor drede of this / hym thoughte þat he dyed
 And wente his wey / no lenger dorste he calle 3724

¶ The peple cryde / and rombled vp and down [leaf 95]
 That with hise erys / herde he / how they seyde
 Where is this false tirant this Neroun
 ffor fere almoost out of his wit he breyde 3728
 And to hise goddes / pitously he preyde
 ffor socour / but it myghte noght bityde
 ffor drede of this / hym thoughte þat he deyde
 And ran in to a gardyn / hym to hyde 3732

¶ And in this gardyn / foond he cherles tweye
 That seten by a fyr / greet and reed
 And to thise cherlis two / he gan to preye
 To sleen hym / and to girden of his heed 3736
 That to his body / whan þat he were deed
 Were no despit ydoon / for his defame
 Hym self he slow / he koude no better reed
 Of which / ffortune / lough and hadde a game 3740

[*Holofernes.*]

¶ Was neuere Capitayn / vnder a kyng^t / De Oloferno
 That regnes mo / putte in subieccioun
 Ne strengre was in feeld / of alle thyng^t
 As in his tyme / ne gretter of renoun 3744
 Ne moore pompous / in heigh *presumpcioun*
 Than Oloferne / which ffortune ay kiste
 So likerously / and ladde hym vp and doun
 Til þat his heed was of / er that he wiste 3748

¶ Nat oonly / that this world hadde hym in awe
 ffor lesynge / of richesse / or libertee
 But made euery man / reneyen his lawe
 Nabugodonosor / was god seyde he 3752
 Noon oother god / sholde adoured be
 Agayns this heste / no wight dorste trespace
 Saue in Bethulia / a strong Citee // Et fecerunt filij Israel / secundum
 Where Eliachym / a preest was of that place *quod constituerat eis sacerdos dom-*
ini Eliachym

¶ But tak kepe / of the deeth of Oloferne
 Amydde his oost^t he dronke lay a nyght^t
 With-Inne his tente / large as is a berne
 And yet^t for al his pompe / and al his myght^t 3760
 Iudith a womman / as he lay vpright^t
 Slepynge / his heed of smoot^t and from his tente
 fful pryuely she stal / from euery wight^t
 And with his heed / vn-to hir toun she wente 3764

[*Antiochus.*]

¶ What nedeth it^t of kyng Anthiochus [leaf 95, back]
 To telle / his hye Roial magestee
 His hye pryde / hise werkes venymus
 ffor swich another / was ther noon as he 3768
 Reed which that he was / in Machabee
 And reed / the proude wordes / þat he seyde
 And why he fil / fro heigh prosperitee
 And in an Hille / how wrecchedly he deyde 3772

¶ fortune / hym hadde enchaunted so in pride
 That verrailly / he wende he myghte attayne
 Vn-to the sterres / vp on euery syde
 And in balance / weyen ech montayne 3776
 And alle the floodes / of the see restrayne
 And goddes peple / hadde he moost in hate
 Hem wolde he sleen / in torment and in payne
 Wenynge / that god ne myghte / his pryde abate 3780

¶ And for that Nichanore / and Thymothe
 Of Iewes / weren venquysshed myghtily
 Vn-to the Iewes / swich an hate hadde he
 That he bad greithe his Chaar ful hastily 3784
 And swoor / and seyde ful despitously
 Vn-to Ierusalem / he wolde eft soone
 To wreken his Ire / on it ful cruelly
 But of his purpos / he was let ful soone 3788

¶ God for his manace / hym so soore smoot
 With invisible wounde / ay incurable
 That in hise guttes / carf it so and boot
 That hise peynes / weren inportable 3792
 And certainly / the wreche was resonable
 ffor many a mannes guttes / dide he peyne
 But from his purpos / cursed and dampnable
 ffor al his smert he wolde hym nat restreyne 3796

¶ But bad anon / apparaillen his hoost
 And sodeynly / er he was of it war
 God daunted / al his pride / and al his boost
 ffor he / so soore fil / out of his char 3800
 That it hise lymes / and his skyn ^{lacerant} totar
 So þat / he neither myghte go ne ryde
 But in a chayer / men aboute hym bar
 Al forbrused / bothe bak and syde 3804

¶ The wreche of god / hym smoot so cruelly [leaf 96]
 That thurgh his body / wikked wormes crepte
 And ther with al / he stank so horribly
 That noon / of al his meynne þat hym kepte 3808
 Wheither so he wook / or ellis slepte
 Ne myghte noght for styng of hym endure
 Is this meschief / he wayled and eek wepte
 And knew god / lord of euery creature 3812

¶ To al his hoost and to hym self also
 ful wlatom / was the styng of his careyne
 No man / ne myght hym bere to ne fro
 And in this styng and this horrible payne 3816
 He starf ful wrecchedly / in a monteyne
 Thus hath this Robbour / and this homycide
 That many a man / made to wepe and pleyne
 Swich gerdon / as bilongeth vn-to pryde 3820

[*Alexander the Great.*]

The Storie of Alisandre / is so commune / De Alexandro
 That euery wight þat hath discrecion
 Hath herd som-what or al / of his fortune
 This wide world / as in conclusiō 3824
 He wan by strengthe / or for hys hye renō
 They were glad / for pees vn-to hym sende
 The pryde / of man and beest / he leyde adoun
 Where so he cam / vn-to the worldes ende 3828

¶ Comparison / myghte neuere yet ben made
 Bitwixe hym / and another Conquerour
 ffor al this world / for drede of hym hath quaked
 He of knyghthod / and of fredom flour 3832
 ffortune hym made / the heir of hire honour
 Saue wyn and wommen / no thyng myghte aswage
 His hye entente / in armes and labour
 So was he ful / of leonyn corage 3836

¶ What prys were it to hym / thogh I yow tolde
 Of Darius / and an hundred thousand mo
 Of kynges / Prynces / Dukes / Erles bolde
 Whiche he conquered / and broghte hem in-to wo 3840
 I seye / as fer / as man may ride or go
 The world was his / what sholde I moore deuise
 ffor thogh I write / or tolde yow euere mo
 Of his knyghthode / it myghte nat suffise 3844

[T]welf yeer he regned / as seith Machabee [leaf 96, back]
 Philippes sone of Macidoyne / he was
 That first was kyng in Grece the contree
 O worthy / gentil Alisandre allas 3848
 That euere / sholde fallen swich a cas
 Empoysoned / of thyn owene folk thow weere
 Thyn sys / ffortune hath turned in-to Aas
 And for thee / ne weep she neuer a teere 3852

¶ Who shal me yeue teeris / to compleyne
 The deeth / of gentillesse / and of franchise
 That al this world / weldid in his demeyne
 And yet hym thoughte / it myghte nat suffise 3856
 So ful was his corage / of heigh emprise
 Allas / who shal me helpe to endite
 ffalse ffortune / and poyson to despise
 The whiche two / of al this wo I wyte 3860

[*Julius Cesar.*]

By wisdom / manhede / and by greet labour / De Iulio
 ffrom humble bed / to Roial magestee Cesare
 Vp roos / he Iulius the Conquerour
 That wan al the Occident by land and see 3864
 By strengthe of hond / or ellis by tretee
 And vn-to Rome / made hem tributarie
 And sith of Rome / the Emperour was he
 Til that ffortune / weex his Aduersarie 3868

¶ O myghty Cesar / that in Thessalie
 Agayn Pompeus / fader thyn in lawe
 That of thorient hadde al the chialrie
 As fer / as þat the day bigynneth dawe 3872
 Thow / thurgh thy knyghthod / hast hem take & slawe
 Saue fewe folk þat with Pompeus fledde
 Thurgh which / thow putttest al Thorient in Awe
 Thanke ffortune / that so wel thee spedde 3876

¶ But now a litel while / I wol biwaille
 This Pompeus / this noble gouvernour
 Of Rome / which þat fleigh at this bataille
 I seye / oon of hise men / a fals traitour 3880
 His heed of smoot / to wynnen hym fauour
 Of Iulius / and hym the heed he broghte
 Allas Pompeie / of Thorient conquerour
 That ffortune / vn-to swich a fyn thee broghte 3884

¶ To Rome agayn / repaireth Iulius [leaf 97]
 With his triumphe / lauriat ful hye
 But on a tyme / Brutus Cassius
 That euere hadde / of his heighe estat enuye 3888
 fful pryuely / hath maad conspiracie
 Agayns this Iulius / in subtil wise
 And caste the place / in which he sholde dye
 With Boydekyns / as I shal yow deuyse 3892

¶ This Iulius / to the Capitolie wente
 Vp-on a day / as he was wont to goon
 And in the Capitolie / anon hym hente
 This false Brutus / and hise othere foon 3896
 And stiked hym / with Boydekyns anon
 With many a wounde / and thus they lete hym lye
 But neuere gronte he / at no strook but oon
 Or ellis at two / but if his storie lye 3900

¶ So manly / was this Iulius of herte
 And so wel / louede estatly honestee
 And thogh hise deedly woundes / so sore smerte
 His mantel ouer his hipes / caste he 3904
 ffor no man / sholde seen his pryuetee
 And as he lay / of dyyng in a traunce
 And wiste verrailly that deed was he
 Of honestee / yet hadde he remembraunce 3908

¶ Lucan. / to thee this storie I recomende
 And to Sweton / and to Valerius also
 That of this storie / writen word & ende
 How that to thise grete Conquerours two 3912
 ffortune / was first freend / and siththe a foo
 No man ne triste / vp-on hire fauour longe
 But haue hire / in awayt for euere mo
 Witnesse / on alle thise Conquerours stronge 3916

[Cresus.]

This riche Cresus / whilom kyng of Lyde [Cresus]
 Of which Cresus / Cirus soore hym dradde
 Yet was he caught amyddes al his pryde
 And to be brent / men to the fyr hym ladde 3920
 But swich a reyn / doun fro the welkne shadde
 That slow the fyr / and made hym to escape
 But to be war / no grace yet he hadde
 Til ffortune / on the galwes made hym gape 3924

[¹Wh]anne he escaped was / he kan nat stente [¹Rats. 1f 97, bk]
 ffor to bigynne / a newe werre agayn
 He wende wel / for þat ffortune hym sente
 Swich hape / that he escaped thurgh the rayn 3928
 That of his foos / he myghte nat be slayn
 And eek a sweuene / vp-on a nyght he mette
 Of which / he was so proud / and eek so fayn
 That in vengeance / he al his herte sette 3932

¶ Vp on a tree he was / as þat hym thoughte
 Ther Iuppiter hym wessh / bothe bak and syde
 And Phebus eek / a fair towaille hym broughte
 To drye hym with / and ther-fore wax his pryde 3936
 And to his doghter / that stood hym bisyde
 Which that he knew / in heigh sentence habounde
 And bad hire telle hym / what it signyfide
 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 been / the sonnes stremes for to seyn 3944
 Thow shalt an hanged be / fader certeyn
 Reyn shal thee wasshe / and sonne shal thee drye
 Thus warned hym / ful plat and ful pleyn
 His doghter / which þat called was Phanye 3948

¶ An hanged was Cresus / the proude kyng
 His Roial trone / myghte hym nat auaille
 Tragedies noon oother manere thyng
 Ne kan in syngyng / crye ne biwaille 3952
 But þat ffortune / alwey wole assaille
 With vnwar strook / the regnes þat been proude
 ffor whan men trusteth hire / thanne wol she faille
 And couere hire brighte face / with a clowde 3956

[These 4 modern instances ought to follow 'Zenobia,' p. 268.]

[*Peter the Cruel, of Spain.*]

O noble / o worthy Petro / glorie of Spayne De Petro
 Whom ffortune heeld / so heighe in magestee Ispannie
 Wel oghten men / thy pitous deeth complayne
 Out of thy land / thy brother made thee flee 3568
 And after at a sege / by subtiltee
 Thow were bitrayسد / and lad vn-to his tente
 Where as he / with his owene hand slow thee
 Succedyng / in thy regne and in thy rente 3572

¶ The feeld of snow / with thegle of blak ther-Inne [leaf 98]
Caught with the lymrod / coloured as the glede [Bertrand du
Guesclin.]

He brew this cursednesse / and al this synne

The wikked nest was werkere of this nede 3576

Noght Charles Olyuer / þat took ay hede

of trouthe and honour / but of Armorike [Officer de Muny
of Brittany.]

Genylon Olyuer / corrupt for mede

Broghte this worthy kyng in swich a brike 3580

[Peter of Cyprus.]

O worthy Petro / kyng of Cipre also De Petro de

That Alisaundre wan / by heigh maistrie Cipro

fful many an hethen / wroghtestow ful wo

Of which / thyne owene liges hadde envie 3584

And for no thyng but for thy chivalrie

They in thy bed / han slayn thee by the morwe

Thus kan ffortune / hire wheel gouerne and gye

And out of ioye / brynge men to sorwe 3588

[Bernabo Visconti, of Milan.]

O of Melan / grete Barnabo Viscounte / De Barnabo /

God of delit and scourge of Lumbardye

Why sholde I noght thyn Infortune acounte

Sith in estat / thow clombe were so hye 3592

Thy brother sone / that was thy double allye

ffor he thy Nevew was / and sone in lawe

With-Inne his prison / made thee to dye

But why ne how / noot .I. that thow were slawe 3596

[Ugolino, Count of Pisa.]

O of the Erl Hugelyn of Pize / the langour / De hugelyn

Ther may no tonge / tellen for pitee Comite de Pize

But litel out of Pize / stant a tour

In which[e] tour / in prison put was he 3600

And with hym been / hise litel children thre

The eldeste scarsly / fyue yeer was of age

Allas ffortune / it was greet crueltee

Swiche briddes / for to putte in swich a cage 3604

¶ Dampned was he / to dyen in that prison
 ffor Roger / which þat bisshope was of Pize
 Hadde on hym maad / a fals suggestiō
 Thurgh which the peple / gan vp on hym rise 3608
 And putten hym to prison / in swich wise
 As ye han herd / and mete and drynke he hadde
 So smal / that wel vnnethe it may suffise
 And ther with al / it was ful poure and badde 3612

[¹A]nd on a day bifel / þat in that hour [¹ *Eats.* leaf 98, back]
 Whan þat his mete / wont was to be broght
 The Gayler / shette the dores of the tour
 He herde it wel / but he spak / right noght 3616
 And in his herte / anon ther fil a thought
 That they for hunger / wolde doon hym dyen
 Allas quod he / allas þat I was wroght
 Ther with / the teeris fillen from hise eyen 3620

¶ His yonge sone / þat thre yeer was of age
 Vn-to hym seyde / fader / fader / why do ye wepe
 Whanne wol the Gayler / bryngen oure potage
 Is ther no morsel breed / þat ye do kepe 3624
 I am so hungry / that I may nat slepe
 Now wolde god / þat I myghte slepen euere
 Thanne sholde noght hunger / in my wombe crepe
 Ther is no thyng but breed / þat me were leuere 3628

¶ Thus day by day / this child bigan to crye
 Til in his fadres barm / adoun it lay
 And seyde / farewel fader / I moot dye
 And kiste his fader / and deyde the same day 3632
 And whan the woful fader / deed it say
 ffor wo / hise armes two / he gan to byte
 And seyde / allas ffortune and weylaway
 Thy false wheele / my wo al may I wyte 3636

¶ Hise children wende / that it for hunger was
 That he hise armes gnou / and nat for wo
 And seyden fader / do nat so allas
 But rather / ete the flessch vp-on vs two 3640
 Oure flessch thow yaf taak oure flessch vs fro
 And ete ynow / right thus they to hym seyde
 And after that with-Inne a day / or two
 They leyde hem / in his lappe adoun / and deyde 3644

¶ Hym self despeired / eek / for hunger starf
 Thus ended is / this myghty Erl of Pize
 ffrom heigh estat. ffortune away hym carf
 Of this tragedie / it oghte ynogh suffise 3648
 Who so wole it heere it in a lenger wise
 Redeth / the grete Poete of Ytaille
 That highte Dant. for he kan al deuyse
 ffrom point to point nat o word wol he faille 3652

Here is ended the Monkes tale

¶ This is the Prologe / of the Nonne Prees [tes¹] ^[leaf 99] tale.
^[1 Eats.]

HO quod the knyght good sire namoore of this
 That ye han seyde / is right ynow ywis
 And muchel moore / for litel heynessee
 Is right ynow / to muche folk I gesse ^[no gap in Hengwrt] 3960
 [I seye for me hit is a grete disease ^[MS Reg. 18 G II, leaf 236]
 where as men han ben in grete welpe & ese
 To heren of her sodeyn fal allas
 And þe contrarie is ioye and grete solace 3964
 As whan a man hap be in pore estate
 And clymbeth vp and wexeth fortunate
 [And ther/ a-bideth in prosperite.] ^[Harl. 1758, ff 192, bk]
 Suche þing is gladsom as hit þinketh me 3968
 And þough suche þing were goodly forto telle
 3e quod oure Oste by seynt poules belle
 3e seie right soth þis monk he clappeth loude
 He spak how fortune couered in a cloude 3972
 I not neuere what & also of a treiadie
 Right now 3e herde and parde no remedie
 It is for to be-wayle ne complayne
 That that is doon and also hit is a payne 3976
 As 3e han saide to here of heynessee
 Sire monk nomore of þis so god 3ou blesse
 3oure tale annoyeth att þis companye
 Suche talkyng nys not worth a butterflye] ^[MS Reg. extract ends]
 Youre tales / doon vs no desport ne game
 Wherfore sire Monk / o. daun Piers by youre name
 I prey yow hertely / telle vs som what ellis
 ffor sikerly / nere clynkyng of youre bellis 3984

That on youre bridel hange / on euery syde
 By heuene kyng' þat for vs alle dyde
 I sholde er this / haue fallen down for sleeps
 Al thogh the slow / hadde neuere ben so deepe 3988
 Thanne hadde youre tale / al be toold in veyn
 ffor certeynly / as þat this clerkes seyn
 Where as a man / may haue noon audience
 Naught helpeth it' to tellen his sentence 3992
 And wel I woot' the substaunce is in me
 If any thyng' shal wel reported be
 Sire / sey som what of huntynge I yow preye
 ¶ Nay quod this Monk' I haue no lust to pleye 3996
 Now lat another telle / as I haue toold
 ¶ Thanne spak oure hoost' with rude speche & boold
 And seyde / vn-to the Nonnes preest anon
 Com neer thow preest' com hider thow sir Iohn 4000
 Telle vs swich thyng' as may oure hertes glade
 Be blythe / though thow ryde vp-on a Iade
 What' though thyn hors / be bothe foul and lene
 If he wol serue thee / rekke nat a bene 4004
 Looke / that thyn herte / be murye euere mo
 ¶ Yis sire quod he / yis hoost so mote I go
 But I be murye / ywis I wol be blamed
 And right anon / his tale he hath attamed 4008
 And thus he seyde / vn-to vs euerichon
 This sweete preest' this goodly man sir Iohn

Explicit 𐀚

¶ Here bigynneth the Nonnes preestes tale of the Cok/
and Hen / Chauntecler & Pertelote / [leaf 99, back]

A poore widwe / som del stape in age
was whilom dwellynge / in a narwe cotage 4012
Beside a groue / stondyng in a dale
This widwe / of which I telle yow my tale
Syn thilke day / þat she was last a wyf
In pacience / ladde a ful symple lyf 4016
ffor / litel was hire catel and hire rente
By housbondrye / of swich as god hire sente
She foond hire self / and eek hire doghtren two
Thre large sowes / hadde she and namo 4020
Thre kyn / and eek a sheepe / þat highte Malle
fful sooty was hire bour / and eek hire halle
In which she eet ful many a sklendre meel
Of poynañt sawce / hir neded neuer a deel 4024
No deyntee morsel / passed thurgh hir throte
Hir diete / was acordant to hir cote
Repleccioñ / ne made hire neuere syk
Attempree diete / was al hire phisyk 4028
And excercise / and hertes suffisaunce
The gowte / lette hire no thyng for to daunce
Napoplexie / shente nat hire heed
No wyn ne drank she / neither whit ne reed 4032
Hire bord was serued / moost *with* whit and blak
Milk and broun breed / in which she foond no lak
Seynd bacoñ / and som tyme an Ey / or tweye
ffor she was / as it were / a maner deye 4036
A yeerd she hadde / enclosed al aboute
With stikkes / and a drye dych *with*-oute
In which / she hadde a cok / heet Chauntecler
In al the land / of crowyng nas his peer 4040

His voys was murier / than the myrie Orgon
 On massedayes / þat in the chirche gon
 Wel sikerer / was his crowyng in his logge
 Than is a Clokke / or any Abbey Orlogge 4044
 By nature / he knew ech ascencion
 Of equinoxial / in thilke town
 ffor whan degrees .xv. / were ascended [leaf 100]
 Thanne krew he / þat it myghte nat ben amended 4048
 His komb / was redder / than the fyn coral
 And batayled / as it were a Castel wal
 His byle was blak and as the Iet it shoon
 Lyk Asure / were hise legges and his toon 4052
 Hise nayles whitter / than the lylve flour
 And lyk the burned gold / was his colour
 This gentil cok / hadde in his gouernaunce
 Seuene hennes / for to doon al his plesaunce 4056
 Whiche were hise sustres / and his paramours
 And wonder lyke to hym / as of colours
 Of whiche / the faireste hewed on hire throte
 Was clepid / faire damoysele Pertelote 4060
 Curteys she was / discret / and debonaire
 And compaignable / and bar hir self so faire
 Syn thilke day / þat she was seuene nyght oold
 That trewely / she hath the herte in hoold 4064
 Of Chauntecler / loken in euery lyth
 He loued hire so / þat wel was hym ther with
 But swich a ioye was it to here hem synge
 Whan þat / the brighte sonne gan to sprynge 4068
 In swete acord / my leef / is faren in londe
 ffor thilke tyme / as I haue vnderstonde
 Beestes / and briddes / kouden speke and synge
 And so bifel / þat in a dawenyng 4072
 As Chauntecler / among hise wyues alle
 Sat on his perche / that was in the halle
 And next hym sat this faire Pertelote
 This Chauntecler / gan gromen in his throte 4076

As man / þat in his dreem / is drecched soore
 ¶ And whan þat Pertelote / thus herde hym rore
 She was agast / and seyde herte deere
 What eyleth yow · to grone in this manere 4080
 Ye ben a verray slepere / fy for shame
 ¶ And he answerde / and seyde thus / madame
 I prey yow / þat ye take it nat agrief
 By god me mette / I was in swich meschief 4084
 Right now / þat yet myn herte is soore afright
 Now god quod he / my sweuene recche aright
¹[A]nd kepe my body / out of foul prisoun [*Rats. leaf 100, bk*]
 Me mette / how that I romed vp and doun 4088
 With-Inne oure yeerd / where as I say a beest
 Was lyk an hound / and wolde han maad arest
 Vp-on my body / and han had me ded
 His colour / was bitwixe yelow and red 4092
 And tipped was his tayl / and bothe hise erys
 With blak vnlik the remenañt of hise herys
 His snowte smal / with glowyng eyen tweye
 Yet of his look for fere almoost I deye 4096
 This caused me / my gronyng doutelees
 ¶ Avoy quod she / fy on yow hertelees
 Allas quod she / for by that god aboue
 Now han ye lost myn herte and al my loue 4100
 I kan nat loue a Coward / by my feith
 ffor certes / what so any womman seith
 We alle desiren / if it myghte be
 To han housbondes / hardy / wise and fre 4104
 And secree / and no nygard / ne no fool
 Ne hym / þat is agast of euery tool
 Ne noon auauntour / by that god aboue
 How dorste ye seyn / for shame / vn-to youre loue 4108
 That any thyng myghte make yow aferd
 Haue ye no mannes herte / and han a berd
 Allas / and konne ye ben agast of sweuenys
 No thyng god woot but vanytee in sweuene is 4112

Sweuenes / engendren of replexions
 And ofte / of fume / and of complexions
 Whan humours / ben to habundant in a wight
 Certes this dreem / which ye han met to nyght 4116
 Comth / of the grete superfluitee
 Of youre rede Colera pardee
 Which causeth folk / to dreden in hir dremes
 Of Arwes / and of fyr with rede lemes 4120
 Of rede bestes / that they wol hem byte
 Of contek' and of whelpes grete and lyte
 Right as the humour / of Malencolie
 Causeth ful many a man / in sleepe to crie 4124
 ffor fere of blake beres / or boles blake
 Or ellis / blake deuées wol hem take
 Of othere humours / koude I telle also [leaf 101]
 That werken many a man / in sleep ful wo 4128
 But I wol passe / as lightly as I kan
 Lo Caton which þat was so wys a man
 Seyde he nat thus / ne do no fors of dremes
 Now sire quod she / whan we fle fro thise bemes 4132
 ffor goddes loue / as taak som laxatif
 Vp peril of my soule / and of my lif
 I conseille yow the beste / I wol nat lye
 That bothe of Colere / and of Malencolye 4136
 Ye purge yow / and for ye shal nat tarye
 Thogh / in this town / is noon Apothecarye
 I shal my self / to herbes techen yow
 That shul ben / for youre heele and for youre prow 4140
 And in oure yerd / tho herbes shal I fynde
 The whiche han / of hire propretee by kynde
 To purge yow / bynethe and eek' aboue
 ffor yet nat this / for goddes owene loue 4144
 Ye ben ful colerik' of complexioñ
 Ware the sonne / in his Ascencioñ
 Ne fynde yow nat replet' of humours hote
 And if it do / I dar wel leye a grote 4148

That ye shul haue / a feure terciane
 Or an Agew / þat may be youre bane
 A day / or two / ye shul han degestyues
 Of wormes / er ye take youre laxatyues 4152
 Of Lauriol / Centaure and ffumetere
 Or ellis of Ellebor / that groweth there
 Of Katapuce / or of Gaytrys beryis
 Of herbe yue growyng in oure yerd / they merye is 4156
 Pekke hem vp right as ther growe / and ete hem In
 Be myrie housbonde / for youre fader kyn
 Dredeth no dreem / I kan sey yow namoore
 ¶ Madame quod he / grant mercy of youre loore 4160
 But nathelees / as touchyng^t dann Catoun
 That hath of wisdom / swich a gret renoun
 Thogh þat he bad / no dremes for to drede
 By god men may / in olde bokes rede 4164
 Of many a man / moore of auctoritee
 Than euere Caton was / so mote I thee
¹[T]hat al the reuers seyn / of his sentence [*Eate. leaf 101, bk*]
 And han wel founden / by experience 4168
 That dremes / ben signyficationis
 As wel / of ioye / as tribulacionis
 That folk enduren / in this lyf present^t
 Ther nedeth / make of this noon argument^t 4172
 The verray preue / sheweth it in dede
 ¶ Oon of the gretteste Auctour / þat men rede
 Seith thus / þat whilom two felawes wente
 On pilgrymage / in a ful good entente 4176
 And happed so / they coomen in a town
 Where as ther was / swich congregacioun
 Of peple / and eek^t so streit of herbergage
 That they ne founde / as muche as o cotage 4180
 In which they bothe / myghte ylogged be
 Wherefore / they mosten of necessitee
 As for that nyght^t departe compaignye
 And ech of hem / gooth to his hostelrye 4184

And took his loggyng^t as it wolde falle
 That oon of hem / was logged in a stalle
 ffer in a yeerd / with oxen of the plow
 That oother man / was logged wel ynow 4188
 As was his auenture / or his fortune
 That vs gouerneth alle / as in commune
 And so bifel / þat longe / er it were day
 This man mette in his bed / ther as he lay 4192
 How þat his felawe / gan vp-on hym calle
 And seyde allas / for in an Oxes stalle
 This nyght I shal be mordred ther I lye
 Now help me deere brother / or I dye 4196
 In alle haste / com to me / he sayde
 ¶ This man / out of his sleepe / for feere abrayde
 But whan þat he was wakned / of his sleep
 He turned hym / and took of this no keepe 4200
 Hym thoughte / his dreem nas but a vanytee
 Thus twies / in his slepyng dremed he
 And atte thridde tyme / yet his felawe
 Cam as hym thoughte / and seyde I am now slawe 4204
 Bihoold my bloddy woundes / depe and wyde
 Arys vp erly / in the morwe tyde
 And atte Westgate of the town quod he [leaf 102]
 A Carte ful of donge / ther shaltow se 4208
 In which / my body is hyd ful priuely
 Do thilke Cart aresten boldely
 My gold caused my mordre / sooth to seyn
 And tolde hym euery poynt how he was sleyn 4212
 With a ful pitous face / pale of hewe
 And truste wel / his dreem he fond ful trewe
 ffor on the morwe / as soone as it was day
 To his felawes In / he took the way 4216
 And whan þat he cam / to this Oxes stalle
 After his felawe / he bigan to calle
 ¶ The hostiler / answerde hym anon
 And seyde / sire / youre felawe is agon 4220

As soone as day / he wente out of the town
 ¶ This man / gan fallen in suspecioun
 Remembrynge / on hise dremes þat he mette
 And forth he goth / no lenger wolde he lette 4224
 Vn-to the westgate of the town / and fond
 A dong Carte / went as it were to donge lond
 That was arrayed / in that same wise
 As ye han herd / the dede man deuyse 4228
 And with an hardy herte / he gan to crye
 Vengeaunce / and Iustice / of this felonye
 My felawe / mordred is / this same nyght
 And in this Cart heere / he lyth gapyng vp-right 4232
 I crye / on the Mynystres / quod he
 That sholde kepe / and rulen this Citee
 Harrow / allas / heere lyth my felawe slayn
 What sholde I moore / vn-to this tale sayn 4236
 The peple vp sterte / and caste the Cart to grounde
 And in the myddel of the donge they founde
 The dede man / þat mordred was al newe
 ¶ O blisful god / þat art so Iust and trewe 4240
 Lo / how þat thow biwreyst mordre alway
 Mordre wol out that se we day by day
 Mordre / is so wlatson / and abhomynable
 To god / that is so Iust and resonable 4244
 That he ne wod nat suffre it helyd be
 Though it abyde / a yeer / or two / or thre
¹[M]ordre wol out this my conclusioun [¹ *Eats.* leaf 102, back]
 And right anon / Ministres of that town 4248
 Han hent the Cartere / and so soore hym pyned
 And eek the hostiler / so sore engyned
 That they biknewe / hire wikkednesse anon
 And were anhangid / by the nekke bon 4252
 Heere may men sen / þat dremes ben to drede
 ¶ And certes / in the same book I rede
 Right in the nexte Chapitre / after this
 I gabbe nat so haue I ioye or blys 4256

Two men / þat wolde han passed ouer see
 ffor certeyn cause / in-to a fer contree
 If þat the wynd / ne hadde ben contrarie
 That made hem / in a Citee for to tarie 4260
 That stood ful myrie / vp on an hauen syde
 But on a day / agayn the euen tyde
 The wynd gan chaunge / and blew right as hem leste
 Iolif and glad / they wenten vn-to reste 4264
 And casten hem / ful erly for to sayle
 But herkneth / to that o man / fil a gret meruaille
 ¶ That oon of hem / in slepyng^h as he lay
 Hym mette a wonder dreem / agayn the day 4268
 Hym thoughte / a man stood / by his beddes syde
 And hym comanded / þat he sholde abyde
 And seyde hym thus / if thow tomorwe wende
 Thow shalt be dreynt^h my tale is at an ende 4272
 ¶ He wook / and tolde his felawe what he mette
 And preyde hym / his viage to lette
 As for that day / he preyde hym to byde
 ¶ His felawe / þat lay / by his beddes syde 4276
 Gan for to laughe / and scorned hym ful faste
 No dreem quod he / may so myn herte agaste
 That I wol lette / for to do my thynges
 I sette nat a straw / by thy dremynges 4280
 ffor sweuenes ben / but vanytees and Iapes
 Men dreme al day / of Owles / or of Apes
 And of many a maze / ther with al
 Men dreme of thyng^h þat neuere was ne shal 4284
 But sith I see / þat thow wolt here abyde
 And thus forslewthen / wilfully thy tyde
 God woot it reweth me / and haue good day [leaf 103]
 And thus / he took his leue / and wente his way 4288
 But er þat he / hadde half his cours yseyled
 Noot I nat why / ne what meschaunce it eyled
 But casuelly / the shippes botme rente
 And shipe and man / vnder the water wente 4292

In sighte of othere shippes / it bisyde
 That *with* hem seyled / at the same tyde
 And therfore / faire Pertelote so deere
 By swiche ensamples olde / maystow leere 4296
 That no man / sholde ben to recchelees
 Of dremes / for I sey thee doutelees
 That many a dreem / ful soore is for to drede
 ¶ Lo / in the lyf of Seint Kenelm I rede 4300
 That was Kenulphus sone / the noble Kyng¹
 Of Mertenrike / how Kenelm mette a thyng¹
 Alite / er he was mordred / on a day
 His mordre / in his aysion he say 4304
 His norice / hym expowned euery del
 His sweuene / and bad hym for to kepe hym wel
 ffor trayson / but he nas but .vij. yeer old
 And therfore / litel tale hath he told 4308
 Of any dreem / so holy was his herte
 By god / I hadde leuere than my sherte
 That ye hadde rad his legende / as haue I
 Dame Pertelote / I sey yow trewely 4312
 Macrobeus / that writ the Aysioñ
 In Affrike / of the worthy Cipioñ
 Affermeth dremes / and seith þat they ben
 Warnynge of thynges / þat men after sen 4316
 ¶ And forther moore / I pray yow looketh wel
 In the olde testament of Danyel
 If he heeld dremes / any vanytee
 ¶ Rede eek of Ioseph / and there shul ye see 4320
 Wher dremes be som tyme / I sey nat alle
 Warnynge of thynges / þat shul after falle
 ¶ Looke of Egipte / the Kyng Daun Pharao
 His bakere / and his butiller also 4324
 Wher they ne felte / noon effect in dremes
 Who so wol seke / Actes of sondry Remes
¹[M]ay rede of dremes / many a wonder thyng¹ [¹ *Bate. 1103, bk*]
 ¶ Lo Cresus / which þat was of Lyde kyng¹ 4328

Mette he nat þat he sat vp-on a tree
 Which signyfide / he sholde an hanged be
 ¶ Lo here Andromacha / Ectores wyf
 That day that Ector / sholde lese his lyf 4332
 She dremed / on the same nyght biforn
 How þat the lyf of Ector sholde be lorn
 If thilke day / he wente in-to bataille
 She warned hym / but it myghte nat auaille 4336
 He wente for to fighte / nathelees
 And he was slayn anon / of Achilles
 But thilke tale / is al to long to telle
 And eek / it is ney day / I may nat dwelle 4340
 Shortly I seye / as for conclusiō
 That I shal han / of this auyssiō
 Aduersitee / and I seye forther moor
 That I ne telle / of laxatyues no stoor 4344
 ffor they ben venymes / I woot it wel
 I hem deffie / I loue hem neuer a del
 ¶ Now lat vs speke of myrthe and stynte al this
 Madame Pertelote / so haue I blys 4348
 Of o thyng^g god hath sent me large *grace*
 ffor whan I se / the beautee / of youre face
 Ye ben so scarlet reed / aboute youre eyen
 It maketh / al my drede for to deyen 4352
 ffor also siker / as In principio
 Mulier / est hominis confusio
 Madame / the sentence / of this latyn is
 Womman / is mannes ioye and al his blys 4356
 ffor whan I feele a nyght youre softe syde
 Al be it þat I may nat on yow ryde
 ffor þat oure perche / is maad so narwe allas
 I am so ful / of Ioye and of solas 4360
 That I deffie / bothe sweuene and dreem
 And with that word / he fley doun fro the beam
 ffor it was day / and eke hise hennes alle
 And with a chuk^h he gan hem for to calle 4364

ffor he hadde founde a corn / lay in the yerd
 Real he was / he was namoore aferd
 He fethered Pertelote / twenty tyme [leaf 104]
 And trad as ofte / er it was pryme 4368
 He looketh / as it were a grym leoun
 And on hise toos / he rometh vp and doun
 Hym deyned nat/ to sette his foot to grounde
 And chukketh / whan he hath a corn yfounded 4372
 And to hym rennen thanne / hise wyues alle
 Thus real / as a Prince is in his halle
 Leue I this Chauntecler / in his pasture
 And after / wol I telle his auenture 4376
 ¶ Whan that the Monthe / in which the world bigan
 That highte March / whan god first maked man
 Was complet and passed were also
 Syn March bigan / 30. dayes and two 4380
 Bifel / þat Chauntecler / in al his pryde
 Hise seuene wyues / walkyng him bisyde
 Caste vp hise eyen / to the brighte sonne
 That in the signe of Taurus / hadde yronne 4384
 xx. degrees and oon / and som what moore
 And knew by kynde / and by noon oother loore
 That it was pryme / and krew with blisful steuene
 The sonne he seyde / is clomben vp on heuene 4388
 40. degrees and oon / and moore ywis
 Madame Pertelote / my worldes blys
 Herkneth thyse blisful bryddes / how they synge
 And se the fresshe floures / how they sprynge 4392
 fful is myn herte / of reuel and solas
 But sodeynly / hym fil a sorweful cas
 ffor euere the latter ende of ioie / is wo
 God woot þat worldly ioie / is soone ago 4396
 And if a Rethor / koude faire endite
 He in a Cronycle / sauffy myghte it write
 As for a souereyn notabilitee Petrus Comestor
 Now euery wys man / lat hym herkne me 4400

This storie / is also trewe I vndertake
 As is the book/ of Launcelot de Lake
 That wommen holde / in ful gret reuerence
 Now wol I / torne agayn to my sentence 4404
 ¶ A Colfox / ful of sley Iniquitee
 That in the groue / hadde woned yeres thre
¹[By] heigh ymaginacioñ / forncast^t [1 Bate. leaf 104, back]
 The same nyght thurgh-out the hegges brast^t 4408
 In-to the yerd / ther Chauntecler the faire
 Was wont and eek hise wyues to repaire
 And in a bed of wortes / stille he lay
 Til it was passed / vndren of the day 4412
 Waitynge his tyme / on Chauntecler to falle
 As gladly doon / thise homycides alle
 That in awayt liggen / to mordre men
 O false mordreour / lurkyng in thy den 4416
 O newe Scariot^t newe Genylon
 ffalse dissimilour / o greek Synon
 That broghtest Troye / al outrely to sorwe
 O Chauntecler / acursed be that morwe 4420
 That thow in-to the yerd / flaugh fro the bemys
 Thow were / ful wel y-warned by thy dremys
 That thilke day / was perilous to thee
 But what þat god forwoot^t moot nedes be 4424
 After the opynyōñ of certeyn clerkis
 Witnesse on hym / þat any parfit clerk is
 That in scole / is gret altercacioñ
 In this matere / and gret disputisoñ 4428
 And hath ben / of an hundred thousand men
 But I ne kan / nat bulte it to the bren
 As kan / the holy doctour Augustyn
 Or Boece / or the Bisshope Bradwardyn 4432
 Wheither / þat goddes worthy forewityng^t
 Streyneth me nedely / for to doon a thyng/
 Nedely clepe I / symple necessitee
 Or ellis / if fre choys / be graunted me 4436

To do that same thyng' or do it noght'
 Though god forwoot' it/ er þat I was wroght'
 Or if his wityng' streyneth neuer a del
 But by necessitee / condicionel 4440
 I wol nat han to do / of swich matere
 My tale is of a Cok' as ye may heere
 That took his conseil / of his wyf/ with sorwe
 To walken in the yerd / vp-on that morwe 4444
 That he hadde met the dreem / þat I yow tolde
 Wommens conseils / be ful ofte colde
 Wommannes conseil / broghte vs first to wo [leaf 105]
 And made Adam / fro Paradys to go 4448
 Ther as he was / ful myrie and wel at ese
 But for I noot' to whom it myghte displese
 If I conseil of wommen / wolde blame
 Passe ouer / for I seyde it in my game 4452
 Rede Auctours / where they trete of swich matere
 And what they seyn of wommen heere
 Thise ben the Cokkes wordes and nat myne
 I kan noon harm / on no womman deuyne 4456
 ¶ ffaire in the Sond / to bathe hire myrily
 Lyth Pertelote / and alle hire sustres by
 Agayn the sonne / and Chauntecler so free
 Song myrier / than the Mermayde in the see 4460
 ffor Phisiologus / seith sikerly
 How þat they syngen / wel and myrily
 ¶ And so bifel / that as he caste his eye
 Among the wortes / on a Boterflye 4464
 He was war of this fox / þat lay ful lowe
 No thyng' ne liste hym thanne for to crowe
 But cryde anon / cok' cok' and vp he sterte
 As man / þat was affrayd in his herte 4468
 ffor naturelly / a beest desireth flee
 ffro his contrarie / if he may it see
 Though he neuere erst' hadde seye it with his eye
 This Chauntecler / whan he gan hym espye 4472

He wolde han fled / but þat the fox anon
 Seyde gentil sire / allas wher wol ye gon
 Be ye affrayd / of me þat am youre freend
 Now certes / I were worse than a feend 4476
 If I to yow / wolde harm / or vileynye
 I am nat come / youre conseil for tespye
 But trewely / the cause of my comynge
 Was oonly / for to herkne how þat ye synge 4480
 ffor trewely / ye han as myrie a steuene
 As any Angel hath / þat is in heuene
 Ther with / ye han in Musyk¹ moore feelynge
 Than hadde Boece / or any þat kan synge 4484
 My lord youre fader / god his soule blesse
 And eek youre moder / of hire gentillesse
¹[Ha]n in myn hous yben / to my gret ese [¹ Rats. leaf 105, back]
 And certes sire / ful fayn wolde I yow plesse 4488
 ¶ But for men speke of syngynge / I wol seye
 So mote I browke wel / myne eyen tweye
 Saue ye / I herde neuere man so synge
 As dide youre fader / in the morwenynge 4492
 Certes / it was of herte / al that he song¹
 And for to make his voys / the moore strong¹
 He wolde so payne hym / þat with bothe hise eyen
 He moste wynke / so loude he wolde cryen 4496
 And stonden on his typton / ther with al
 And strecche forth his nekke / long and smal
 And eek / he was of swich discrecion
 That ther nas no man / in no Region 4500
 That hym in song / or wisdom myghte passe
 I haue wel rad / in daun Burnelle the Asse
 Among hise vers / how þat ther was a cok¹
 ffor a preestes sone / yaf hym a knok¹ 4504
 Vp-on his leg¹ whil he was yong and nyce
 He made hym / for to lese his benefice
 But certeyn / ther nys no comparisoñ
 Bitwix the wisdom / and discrecion 4508

Of youre fader / and of his subtiltee
 Now syngeth sire / for seynte charitee
 Lat se / konne ye youre fader countrefete
 ¶ This Chauntecler / hise wynges gan to bete 4512
 As man þat koude / his trayson nat espie
 So was he rauysshed / with his flaterie
 ¶ Allas ye lordes / many a fals flatour
 Is in youre court and many a losengeour 4516
 That plesen yow wel moore / by my feyth
 Than he / þat soothfastnesse vn-to yow seith
 Redeth Ecclesiaste / of flaterye
 Beth war ye lordes / of hir trecherye 4520
 ¶ This Chauntecler / stood hye vp on his toos
 Strecchyng his nekke / and heeld hise eyen cloos
 And gan to crowe / lowde for the nones
 And daun Russelle the fox / stirte vp atones 4524
 And by the gargat hente Chauntecler
 And on his bak / toward the wode hym beer
 ffor yet ne was ther no man / þat hym sewed [leaf 106]
 ¶ O destynce / þat mayst nat ben eschewed 4528
 Allas þat Chauntecler / fly fro the bemes
 Allas / his wif / ne roghte nat of dremes
 And on a friday / fil al this meschaunce
 ¶ O Venus / þat art goddessse of plesaunce 4532
 Syn þat thy seruant was this Chauntecler
 And in thy seruyce / dide al his power
 Moore for delit than world to multiplie
 Why woldestow suffre hym / on thy day to dye 4536
 ¶ O Gaufred / deere maister souerayn
 That whan / thy worthy kyng Richard was slayn
 With shot compleynedest his deth so soore
 Why ne hadde I now / thy sentence and thy loore 4540
 The friday for to chide / as diden ye
 ffor on a friday / soothly slayn was he
 Thanne wolde I shewe yow / how þat I kowde pleyne
 ffor Chaunteclerys drede / and for his peyne 4544

- ¶ Certes / swich cry / ne lamentaciō
 Was neuere of ladyes maad / whan ylioñ
 Was wonne / and Pirrus / with his streite swerd
 Whanne he hadde hent kyng Priam by the berd 4548
 And slayn hym / as seith vs Eneydos
 As maden / alle the hennes in the cloos
 Whan they hadde seyn / of Chauntecler the sighte
 But souereynly / dame Pertelote shrighthe 4552
 fful louder / than dide Hasdrubales wyf
 Whan þat hire housbonde / hadde ylost his lyf
 And þat the Romainys / hadden brend Cartage
 She was / so ful of torment and of rage 4556
 That wilfully / vn-to the fyr she sterte
 And brende hir seluen / with a stedefast herte
 ¶ O woful hennes / right so cryden ye
 As / whan þat Nero / brende the Citee 4560
 Of Rome / cryden the senatours wyues
 ffor þat hir housbondes / losten alle hire lyues
 With-uten gilt this Nero hath hem slayn
 Now wol I turne / to my tale agayn 4564
 ¶ The sely widwe / and eek hire doghtres two
 Herden thise hennes crye / and maken wo
¹[And] out at dores / stirten they anon [¹ *Rate.* leaf 106, back]
¹[A]nd seyen the fox / toward the groue gon 4568
 And bar vp-on his bak / the cok / away
 And criden / out harrow and weilaway
 Ha / ha . the fox / and after hym they ran
 And eek with staues / many another man 4572
 Ran Colle oure dogge / and Talbot and Gerlande
 And Malkyn / with a distaf in hire hande
 Ran Cow and calf / and eek the verray hogges
 So fered / for berkynge of the dogges 4576
 And showtynge of the men / and wommen eek
 They ronne so / hem thoughte hire herte breek
 They yelleden / as fendes doon in helle
 The dokes cryden / as men wolde hem quelle 4580

The gees for feere / flownen ouer the trees
 Out of the hyue / cam the swarm of bees
 So hydous was the noyse / a benedicite
 Certes / he lakke Straw / and his meynne 4584
 Ne made neuere showtes / half so shrille
 Whan þat they wolden / any flemyng kille
 As thilke day / was maad vp-on the fox
 Of bras / they broghten bemys / and of box 4588
 Of horn / of boon / in whiche they blewe and powped
 And ther with al / they skryked and they howped
 It semed / as þat heuene sholde falle
 Now goode men / I prey yow herkneth alle 4592
 Lo / how ffortune / turneth sodeynly
 The hope / and pryde eek of hire enemy
 This cok' þat lay vp-on the foxes bak
 In al his drede / vn-to the fox he spak' 4596
 And seyde sire / if þat I were as ye
 Yit sholde I seyn / as wys god helpe me
 Turneth ayein ye proude cherles alle
 A verray pestilence / vp-on yow falle 4600
 Now I am come / vn-to this wodes syde
 Maugree youre heed / the cok shal here abyde
 I wol hym ete in feith / and that anon
 ¶ The fox answerde / in feith it shal be don 4604
 And [as] he spak that word / al sodeynly
 This cok / brak from his mouth delyuerly
 And hye vp on a tree / he fley anon [leaf 107]
 ¶ And whan the fox say / þat he was gon 4608
 Allas quod he / o Chauntecler Allas
 I haue to yow quod he / ydon trespas
 In as muche / as I maked yow aferd
 Whan I yow hente / and broghte in-to this yerd 4612
 But sire / I dide it in no wikke entente
 Com doun / and I shal telle yow what I mente
 I shal seye sooth to yow / god help me so
 ¶ Nay thanne quod he / I shrewe vs bothe two 4616

And first I shrewe my self / bothe blood and bones
 If thou bigile me / any ofter than ones
 Thou shalt namoore / thurgh thy flaterye
 Do me to syng / and wynken with myn eye 4620
 ffor he þat wynketh / whan he sholde see
 Al wilfully / god lat hym neuere thee
 ¶ Nay quod the fox / but god yeue hym meschaunce
 That is / so vndiscret / of gouernaunce 4624
 That langleth / whan he sholde holde his pees
 ¶ Lo swich it is / for to be recchelees
 And negliget and truste on flaterye
 But ye / þat holden this tale a folye 4628
 As of a fox / or of a cok and hen
 Taketh the moralitee / goode men
 ffor Seint Poul seith / þat al that writen is
 To oure doctryne / it is ywrite ywis 4632
 Taketh the fruyt and lat the chaf be stille
 Now goode god / if þat it be thy wille
 As seith my lord / so make vs alle goode men
 And brynge vs / to his heye blisse Amen

Dominus Archie-
 piscopus Cantu-
 ariensis

¶ Here is ended / the Nonnes Preestes tale 𐄂

[*The Manciple's Prologue follows in the MS.*]

DRAWINGS OF THE 23 TELLERS

OF THE

24 CANTERBURY TALES,

COPIED FROM THE ELLESMERE MS,

AND CUT ON WOOD,

BY

Mr W. H. Hooper.



In this first issue, 1871, only 14 of the Cuts are given. The other 10 will follow in 1872. When the print of each MS is bound, the cut of each Teller of a Tale can be put at the beginning of his Tale, as in the Ellesmere MS, or by his description in the General Prologue, to contrast the artist's hand with the poet's; or, all the cuts can be put together before or after the Prologue, or at the end of the volume (as not part of the MS), according to the fancy of each Member.





THE REVE.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 46.





THE COOK.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 51.



7



THE MAN OF LAWE.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 54, back.





THE SHIPMAN.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 147, back.





THE PRIORESSE.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 152, back.





CHAUCER.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 157, back.





THE PRIORESSE.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 152, back.





THE NONNES PREEST.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 188.





THE DOCTOR.

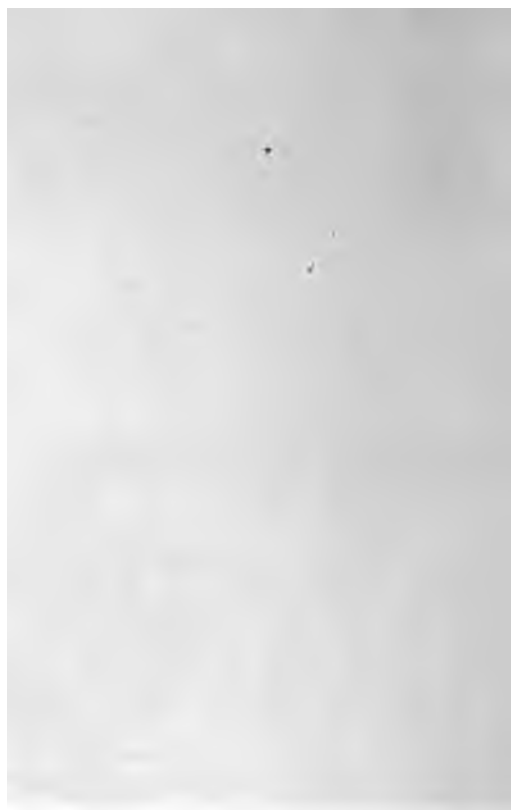
Ellesmere MS, leaf 137.





THE PARDONER.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 142.





THE WYF OF BATHE.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 76.





THE FRERE.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 80, back.





THE SOMONOUR.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 85, back.





THE CLERK OF OXFORD.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 92.





THE MERCHANT.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 106, back.



THE SQUIRE.

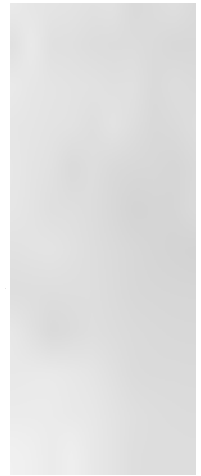
Ellesmere MS, leaf 119, back.





THE FRANKLIN.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 127, back.



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THE SECOND NUN.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 191.



THE CANON'S YEOMAN.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 198.



THE MANCIPLE.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 207.





THE PARSON.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 210, back.

[These coloured figures in the Ellesmere MS have evidently been drawn by two different persons. The little pieces of ground on which the later hand places his figures, mark those done by him.

His drawing is not so good as the first hand's; and his colours are badly ground, and of poor quality.—W. H. HOOPER.]

APPENDIX TO GROUP A.

[THE SPURIOUS TALE OF GAMELYN.]

Her endeth o tale of the Cooke *and* [MS Reg. 17 D. xv.
leaf 66, back]
her folowyth a nother tale of the same cooke

Lythen *and* listeneþe *and* harkenepþe Arighþe
And ye schulne here of A doughty knyghþe
Sir Iohan of Boundis was his name
He coupe of norture And mocheff of game 4
Thre sonnes þe knyghþe hadde with his bodye wonne
The eldeste was a mocche schrewe And soone he bigonne
His breþerne louede wele her ffadre And of hym were Agaste
The eldeste desaruode his ffaders Curse And hadde hitt atte
The gode knyghþe his ffadre lyuede so 3ore [þe laste
That depe was hym comen And handeled hym ffulle sore
The gode knyghþe carede sore syke þere he laye
How his chyltron schulde lyuen After his daye [leaf 67] 12
He hadde bene wyde where buttenon husbände he was [Reg. 17 D.
xv. ends.]
Aft the londe that he hadde it was purchas. [Harl. 1758, leaf 46,
begins.]
ffayn he wolde it were dressid among hem alle.
That eche of hem had his part as it myght falle. 16
Tho sent he in to contre after¹ wise knyghtis. [1 r. is for r.]
To helpe delen his londis *and* dresen hem to rightis.
He sent hem word bi *lettres* thei schulde hye blyue.
Yf thei wolde speke with hym while he was on lyue. 20

Tho the knyghtis herden sike that he lay .
 Had thei no rest nother¹ nyght ne day . [¹ NB. all r = MS r]
 Tilt thei come to hym ther' he lay stille .
 On his deth bed to a-bide goddis wille . 24
 Then seide the good knyght sike ther' he lay .
 Lordis I yow warne for sothe with-out nay .
 I may no lenger lyuen here in this stounde .
 ffor thorough goddis wilth deth drawes me to grounde . 28
 Ther' nas non of hem alle that herde hym a right .
 That thei ne had routhe of that knyght .
 And seiden sir/ for goddis loue ne dismay you noght .
 God may done bote of bale that is now wrought . 32
 Than spake the good knyght sike there he lay .
 Bote of bale god may sende I wot it is no nay .
 But I beseke you knyghtis for the loue of me .
 Gotth and dressith my londis among¹ my sones thre . 36
 And for the loue of god delith not hem a mys .
 And foryeteth not Gamelyn my yong' sone that is .
 Taketh hede to that one as well as to that other .
 Seeld ye seen any heier' helpen his brother./ 40
 Tho leten thei the knyght lyen that was not in hele .
 And wentyn in to counseile his londis for to dele .
 ffor to delen hem alle to oon that was here thoght .
 And for Gamelyn was yongist he schulde haue noght . 44
 All the londe that ther' was thei dalten it in two .
 And letyn Gamelyn the yong with-uten lond go .
 And eche of hem seide to other' full lowde .
 His brethren myght yeue hym londe when he good cowde .
 When thei had delid the londe at here wille . 49
 Thei comen to the knyght there he lay stille .
 And tolde hym a-non how thei had wroght .
 And the knyght ther' he lay likid it right noght . 52
 ¶ Than seide the knyght be seynt Martyn .
 ffor all that ye haue don yet is the londe myn .
 ffor goddis loue neighboris stonidith stille .
 And I wilth delyn my lond right aftir' my wille . 56

APPENDIX TO GROUP A. GAMELYN. *Harleian 1758.*

Iohn my eldist sone schaff haue plowes fyue.
 That was myn fadris heritage while he was on lyue.
 And my myddlist sone fyue plowes of londe.
 That I halp for to gete with my right honde. 60
 And all myn other purchas of londis *and* ledis. [*leaf 46, back*]
 That I be-quethe Gamelyn *and* all my good stedis.
 And beseke you good men that lawe con of londe.
 ffor Gamelyns loue that my quest stonde. 64
 Thus dalt the knyght his londe bi his day.
 Right on his deth bed sike ther he lay.
 And sone aftirward he lay stoon stille.
 And died whan tyme come as it was cristes wille. 68
 A-noon as he was deed *and* vndir gras graue.
 Sone the eldir brother giled the yong knaue
 He toke in to his honde his londe *and* his lede.
 And Gamelyn hym self to clothen *and* to fede. 72
 He clothed hym *and* fedde hym yueft *and* eke wrothe.
 And lete his londis for-fare *and* his housis bothe
 His parkes *and* his wodis *and* dide no thyng welle.
 And sithen he it a-bought on his owne felle. 76
 So long was Gamelyn in his brothris halle.
 ffor the strengest of good wiif thei doutedyn hym alle.
 Ther was none ther yn nother yong ne olde.
 That wolde wrath Gamelyn were he neuyr so bolde. 80
 ¶ Gamelyn stood on a day in his brothers yerde.
 And bigan wiif his honde to hondiff his berde.
 He thought on his londis that lay vnsawe.
 And his faire okis that doune were drawe. 84
 His Parkis were broken *and* his dere reuyd.
 Of all his good stedis noon was hym bi-leuyd./
 His housis were vn-hiled *and* full yueft dight
 Tho thought Gamelyn it went not a-right. 88
 Aftir-warde cam his brother walkyng thare.
 And seide to Gamelyn is our mete yare.
 Tho wrathed hym Gamelyn *and* swore bi goddis book.
 Thou schalt go bake thi self I wiif not be thi Cook. 92

DIX TO GROUP A. GAMELYN. Harleian 1758.

Now br^{er} Gamelyn how vnswarest thou now .
 Thou spakest neuyr^r suche a worde as thou dost now .
 Be my feith seide Gamelyn now me thynketh nede .
 Of alle the harmes that I haue I toke neuyr^r yet hede . 96
 My parkis/ ben broken *and* my deer^r bi-reuyd .
 Of myn armes *and* my stedis noght is me bileuyd .
 Aft^r that my fadir^r me bi-quath aft^r goth to schame .
 And therfore haue thou goddis curs brother^r be thyn name ./
 Than spake his brother^r that rape was of rees . 101
 Stonde stille gadlyng *and* holde^r i pees .
 Thou schalt be fayn to haue thi mete *and* thi wede .
 What spekest^r thou gadlyng^r of londe or of lede . 104
 Than seide Gamelyn the childe that was yeng^r .
 Cristes curs mote he haue that clepeth me gadlyng .
 I am no worse gadlyng^r ne no worse wight .
 But borne of a lady *and* geten of a knyght . [leaf 47]
 Ne dorst he not to Gamelyn neuer a foot go . 109
 But clepid to hym his men *and* seide to hem tho .
 Goth *and* betith this boy *and* reueth hym his witte .
 And lete hym lerne a nother^r tyme to vnsware me bette .
 Then seide the childe yong^r Gamelyn . 113
 Cristis curs mote thou haue brother^r art thou myn .
 And if I schaff^r algate be betyn a-noon .
 Cristes curs mote thou haue but thou be that oon . 116
 And a-non his brother^r in that grete hete .
 Made his men to fette staues Gamelyn to bete .
 When euery of hem had a staff^r nomen .
 Gamelyn was ware tho he sigh hem comen . 120
 Tho Gamelyn sigh hem comen he lokid ouer aft^r .
 And was war^r of a pesteff^r stood vndir^r the wall ./
 Gamelyn was light *and* thider^r gon to lepe .
 And droff alle his brethers men right sone on an hepe 124
 And lokid as a wilde lion *and* leide on good wone .
 Tho his brother^r sigh that he began to gone .
 He fleigh vp in to a lofte *and* schette the dore faste .
 Thus Gamelyn with his pesteff^r made hem alle a-gaste . 128

APPENDIX TO GROUP A. GAMELYN. Harleian 1758.

Some for Gamelyns loue and some for eie .
 Alle thei drowhen hem to halues tho he gan to pleie .
 What now seide Gamelyn euyt mote ye the .
 Wilt ye begynne kontek' *and* so sone fle . 132
 Gamelyn sought his brother' whither' he was flowe .
 And saugh where he loked oute at a wyndowe .
 Brother' seide Gamelyn come a liteft nere .
 And I wilt teche the to pleie at the bokelere . 136
 His brother' hym answerde *and* seide be seynt Richere .
 While that pestell is in thi honde I wilt come no nere .
 Brother' I wilt make thi pees I swere bi cristes ore
 Cast a-weie the pestell *and* wrath the no more . 140
 I most nede seide Gamelyn wrath me at ones .
 ffor thou wolde make thi men to breke my bones .
 Ne had I had mayn *and* myght in myn armes .
 To haue putte hem fro me thei wolde haue do me harmes .
 ¶ Gamelyn seide his brother' be thou not wroth . 145
 ffor to seen the haue harme me it were right' loth .
 I ne dide it noght brother' but for a fondyng .
 ffor to loken if thou art strong *and* art so yeng . 148
 Come a-doune then to me *and* graunt me my bone .
 Of oo thyng' I wilt the axe *and* we schult saught sone .
 Doune than come his brother' that fekiß was *and* felle .
 And was swithe sore a-ferd of the pestelle . 152
 He seide brothir' Gamelyn axe me thi bone .
 And loke thou me blame but I it graunt sone ./
 Than seide Gamelyn brother' y-wis . [leaf 47, back]
 ¶ And we schult be at one thou muste graunte me this .
 All that my fadir' me by-quath while that he was on lyue .
 Thou muste do me it haue yef we schult not stryue . 158
 That schalt thou haue Gamelyn I swere be cristes ore .
 Aft that thi fadir' the by-quath though thou woldest haue
 Thi londe that lieth leye weft it schalt be sowe . [more .
 And thyn housis reisid vp that ben leide full lowe .
 Thus seide the knyght to Gamelyn with mouth .
 And thought on falsnes as he weft couth . 164

HARLEIAN 1758. 5

RUSKIN HALL,

RD.

NDIX TO GROUP A. GAMELYN. Harleian 1758.

The knyght thought on treson *and* Gamelyn on noon.
 And wente and kissed his brother *and* whan thei were at
 Allas yong Gamelyn no thyng he ne wiste. [oon.
 With suche fals treson his brother hym kiste 168
 ¶ Lyitheneth *and* listeneth *and* holdith your' tonge.
 And ye schufft here talkyng of Gamelyn the yonge.
 Ther' was ther' be siden cried a wrastlyng'
 And therefore ther' was sette a Ram *and* a Ryng'./ 172
 And Gamelyn was in wiff to wende therto.
 for to preun hys myght what soude do.
 Brother' seide Gamelyn be seynt chere.
 Thou moste lene me to nyght a li ff cursere. 176
 That is fresch to the sporis on for to ride.
 I most on an erand a litell here be side.
 Bi god seide his brother' of stedis in my stalle.
 Go *and* chese the the best spare noon of hem alle. 180
 Of stedis *and* of cursers that stonden hem be side.
 And telle me good brother' whider' thou wilt ride.
 Here be side brother' is cried a wrastlynge.
 And there fore schaff be set a Ram *and* Ryng'. 184
 Moche worschip it were brother' to vs alle.
 Might I the Ram *and* the Ryng' bryngen home to this halle./
 A stede ther' was sadelid smertly *and* skete.
 Gamelyn dide a peire of sporis faste on his fete. 188
 He sette his foot in the stirop the stede he bi-strood.
 And toward the wrastlynge the yong' childe rood.
 Tho Gamelyn the yonge was riden oute at gate.
 The fals knyght his brother' loket yet aftir' thate. 192
 And besought ihesu crist that is heun kyng'.
 He myght breke his nekke in that wrastlyng'.
 As sone a Gamelyn come there the place was.
 He light downe of his stede *and* stood on the gras. 196
 And there he herde a ffrankeleyn welaweie syng'.
 And bi-gan bitterly his hondis for to wryng'.
 Gode man seide Gamelyn whi makist thou this fare.
 Is ther' no man that may you helpen out of care. 200

APPENDIX TO GROUP A. GAMELYN. **Harleian 1758.**

Allas seide the ffrankeleyn that euyr I was bore .
ffor twey stalworth sones I wene that I haue lore . [leaf 48]
A Champion is in the place that hath wrought me sorowe .
ffor he hath slayne my two sones but yef god hem borowe .
I wofft yeue ten pounde bi ihesu criste *and* more .
With the nones that I fonde a man to handle hym sore .
Gode man seide Gamelyn wilt thou weff done .
Holde my hors while my man draweth of my schone . 208
And helpe my man to kepe my clothes *and* my stede .
And I wiff in to place gone to loke if I may spede .
By god seide the ffrankeleyn it schalt be done .
I wiff my self be thi man to drawe of thi schone . 212
And wende thou in to place ihesu criste the spede .
And drede not of thi clothis ne of thi good stede .
Barfoot *and* vngirt Gamelyn yn cam .
Alle that were in the place hede of hym thei nam . 216
How he dorste aunte hym to done his myght .
That was so doughti a Champioun in wrastlyng *and* in fight .
Vp sterte the Champion rapeli a-noon .
Toward yong Gamelyn he bi-gan to goon . 220
And seide who is thi fadir *and* who is thi sire .
ffor sothe thou arte a gret foot that thou come here .
¶ Gamelyn answerde the Champion tho .
Thou knewe weff my fadir while he couthe go . 224
Whiles he was on lyue be seynt Martyn .
Sir Ion of Boundis was his name *and* I Gamelyn .
ffelawe seide the Champion so mote I thryue .
I knewe weff thi fadir whiles he was on lyue . 228
And thi self Gamelyn I wiff that thou it here .
While thou were a yong boy a moche schrewe thou were .
Than seide Gamelyn *and* swore bi cristes ore .
Now I am older wax thou schalt fynde me a more . 232
By god seide the Champion weff come mote thou be .
Come thou ones in my honde thou schalt neuer the .
¶ It was weff with-yn the nyght *and* the mone schone .
When Gamelyn *and* the Champion to gider gon gone . 236

PENDIX TO GROUP A. GAMELYN. Harleian 1758.

} Champion cast tornes to Gamelyn that was prest.
 And Gamelyn stood *and* bade hym done his best.
 Than seide Gamelyn to the Champioun.
 Thou art fast a-boute to bryng' me a-doun. 240
 Now I haue proued mony tornes of thyne.
 Thou most he seide proue oon or two of myne.
 Gamelyn to the Champion yede smertly a-none.
 Of all the tornes that he couthe he schewid hym but one.
 And kest hym on the lift side that thre ribbes to-brake.
 And therto his one arme that gaf a gret crake.
 Than seide Gamelyn smertly a-n on.
 Schaft it be holde for a cast or this for noon. 248
 By god seide the Champion whether it be. [leaf 48, back]
 He that cometh ones in thi honde shaft he neuyr' the.
 Than seide the ffrankeleyn that had his sones there.
 Blessid be thou Gamelyn that euyr' thou bore were. 252
 The ffrankeleyn seide to the Champion on hym stood hym
 This is yong' Gamelyn that taught the this pleye. [noon eye.
 A-yen vnswarid the Champion that liked no thyng well.
 He is alther' maister' *and* his pleie is right fell. 256
 Sithen I wrastlid first it is gone yore.
 But I was neuyr' in my lyf handelid so sore.
 Gamelyn stood in the place a-non with-out serke.
 And seide if ther' be mo lete hem come to werke. 260
 The Champion that payned hym to wirke sore.
 Hit semeth bi his contenance that he will no more.
 Gamelyn in the place stood still as stoon.
 ffor to a-bide wrastlyng' but ther' come noon. 264
 Ther' was non with Gamelyn that wolde wrastle more.
 ffor he handlid the Champion so wondirly sore.
 Two gentill men yemed the place.
 Come to Gamelyn god yeue hym good grace. 268
 And seide to hym do on thi hosen *and* thi schoon.
 fforsothe at this tyme this faire is doon./
 And than seide Gamelyn so mote I well fare.
 I haue not yet hauynde'll sold my ware. 272

APPENDIX TO GROUP A. GAMELYN. *Harleian 1758.*

¶ Tho seide the Champion so brok I my swere.
 He is a foot that ther-of bieth thou sellest it so dere.
 Tho seide the frankeleyn that was in moche care.
 felaw he seide whi lakkest thou this ware. 276
 Be seynt Iame in Gales that mony man hath soght.
 Yet is it to good chepe that thou hast boght.
 Tho that wardeyns were of that wrastlyng.
 Come and broughit Gamelyn the Ram *and* the Ryngt. 280
 [.
 *no gap in the MS.*]
 A Gamelyn thought it was a faire thyng.
 And went with moche ioye home in the mornynge. 284
 His brother sigh where he came with the gret route.
 And bad schit the gate *and* holde hym with-oute.
 The porter of his lord was sore a-gast.
 And sterte a-noon to the gate *and* lokked it fast. 288
 ¶ Now litheþ *and* listeneth bothe yong *and* olde.
 And ye schuff here gamyn of Gamelyn the bolde.
 Gamelyn come to þ^e yate for to haue comyn.
 Than was it schit fast with a pyn. 292
 Than seide Gamelyn porter vndo the yate.
 ffor a gode mannes sone stondeþ ther-ate.
 Than answard the porter *and* sware bi goddis berde.
 Thou ne schalt Gamelyn come in to this yerde. 296
 Thou lixt seide Gamelyn so broke I my chyn.
 He smote the wicket with his foot *and* brake a-waye the pyn.
 The porter sigh tho it myght no better be. [leaf 49]
 He sette foot on erthe *and* be-gan to flee. 300
 Be my fay seide Gamelyn that traueile is lore.
 ffor I am on foote as light as thou haddist it swore
 Gamelyn ouer-toke the porter *and* his tene wrake.
 And girt hym in the nekke that the boon to-brake. 304
 And toke hym by that one arme *and* threwe hym in a wellle./
 .Vij.^a fadome it was depe as I haue herd telle.
 Whan Gamelyn the yong thus had pleide his plaie.
 Alle that in the yeerde were drowen hem a-waie. 308

ENDIX TO GROUP A. GAMELYN. Harleian 1758.

sei drelyn hym full sore for werke that he wrought .
 And for the faire companye that he thider brought .
 Gamelyn yede to the yate *and* lete it vp wide .
 He lete yn alle that gone wolde or ride . 312
 And seide ye be welcome with-out any greue .
 for we will be maisters here *and* axe no man leue .
 Yestirday I left seide yong^r Gamelyne .
 In my brother^r seler^r fyue toun wyne . 316
 I will not this companye parten on twyn .
 And ye will don aftir me whi pe is ther-yn .
 And if my brother^r gruche or ma foule chere .
 Other of spence of mete *and* di ke that we spende here .
 I am our^r catour^r *and* bere our^r ai er purs .
 He schaff haue for his grucchyng^r seynt Marie curs .
 Mi brother^r is a nygon I swere be cristes ore .
 And we will spende largely that he hath sparid yore . 324
 And who that maketh grucchyng that we here dwelle .
 He schaff to the porter^r in to the draw welle .
 Vij. daies *and* .vij. nyght Gamelyn helde his fest .
 With moche solace was there *and* non chest . 328
 In a litell toret his brother^r lay steke .
 And sigh hem waste his good *and* dorst not speke .
 ¶ Erly in a mornyng on the .viij. day .
 The gestis come to Gamelyn *and* wolde gone here way . 332
 Lordis seide Gamelyn will ye so hye .
 All the wyne is not yet^r dronke so broke I myn eye .
 Gamelyn in his herte was full wo .
 When his gestis toke here leue fro hym for to go . 336
 He wolde thei had dwellid lenger^r *and* thei seide nay .
 But bi-taught Gamelyn god *and* good day .
 Thus made Gamelyn his fest *and* brought it well to ende .
 And after his gestis toke leue to wende . 340
 ¶ Litheth *and* listenyth *and* holdith your^r tonge .
 And ye schult here gamen of Gamelyn the yonge .
 Herkenyth lordyngis *and* listneth a-right .
 When alle gestis were gone how Gamelyn was dight . / 344

APPENDIX TO GROUP A. GAMELYN. **Harleian 1758.**

Aft the while that Gamelyn helde his mangerie . [leaf 40, back]
 His brothir' thought on hym be wreke with his trecherie .
 Tho Gamelyns gestis were riden *and* gone .
 Gamelyn stood a-none allone frend had he none . 348
 Tho aftir' fell sone with-yn a litill stonde .
 Gamelyn was taken *and* full hard bonde .
 forth come the fals knyght out of the solere .
 To Gamelyn his brother' he yede full nere . 352
 And seide to Gamelyn who made the so bolde .
 ffor to stroien my stour' of my housholde .
 Brother' seide Gamelyn wrath the right noght .
 ffor it is mony day gone sith it was boght . 356
 ffor brother' þe profite/ thou hast had be seynt Richere .
 Of .xv. plowes of londe this sixtene yere .
 And of alle the bestis thou hast forth bredde .
 That my fadir' me bi-quath on his deth bedde . 360
 Of aft this sixtene yere I yeue the the prowē .
 ffor the mete *and* the drynke that we haue spendid nowē .
 Than seide the fals knyght euyll mote he the .
 Herken brother' Gamelyn what I will yeue the . 364
 ffor of my body brother' here geten haue I non .
 I will make the myn eire I swere bi seynt Iohn .
 Parfay seide Gamelyn *and* it so be .
 And thou thynkist as thou seist god yelde it the . 368
 No thyng' wist Gamelyn of his brother' gile .
 Therefore he hym bi-giled in a litill while .
 Gamelyn seide he oo thyng I the telle .
 Tho thou threwe my porter' in the drawe welle . 372
 I swoor in that' wrath *and* in that gret moote .
 That thou schuldist' be bounde both hond *and* foote .
 [.
 *no gap in the MS.*] 376
 ffor to holden myn a-vow as I the bi-hote .
 To ben myn heire of londe hous *and* cote .
 Brother' seide Gamelyn as mote I the .
 Thou schalt not be for-swore for the loue of me . 380

PENDIX TO GROUP A. GAMELYN. **Harleian 1758.**

Tho maden thei Gamelyn to sitte for he schulde not stonde .
 Tilt thei had hym bounde bothe foot *and* honde .
 The fals knyght his brother' of Gamelyn was a-gast .
 And sent aftir' feters to feteren hym fast . 384
 His brother made lesyngis on hym there he stood .
 And tolde hem that comen yn that Gamelyn was wood ,
 Gamelyn stode to a post bounden in the halle .
 Tho that comen yn lokid on hym alle . 388
 Euer stood Gamelyn eyn vp right' .
 But mete ne drynke had he non neither' day ne nyght .
 Than seide Gamelyn brother' be iyr hals .
 Now I haue a-spied thou art a parti fals . 392
 Had I wist the treson that thou hast founde ./
 I wolde haue yeue strokis or I had be bounde . [leaf 60]
 Gamelyn stoed bounde stille as ony stoon .
 Two daies *and* two nyghtis mete had he noon . 396
 Than seide Gamelyn that stoed y-bounde strong' .
 Adam spenser' me thynketh I fast to long' .
 Adam spenser' now I beseche the .
 ffor the moche loue my fadir' loued the . 400
 Yf thou may come to the keys lese me out' of bond .
 And I wilf parte with the of my fre lond .
 Than seide Adam that was the spenser' .
 I haue seruyd thi brother' this .xvj. yere . 404
 Yf I lete the goon out of his boure .
 He wolde saie aftirwarde I were a traitoure ./
 Adam seide Gamelyn so brok I myn hals .
 Thou schalt fynde my brother' at the last fals . 408
 Therfore brother' Adam lose me out of bondis .
 And I wilf parte with the of my fre londis .
 Vp suche forward seide Adam y-wis .
 I wilf do ther-to all that in me is . 412
 Adam seide Gamelyn as mote I the .
 I wilf holde the couenaut *and* thou wilf helpe me .
 A-noon as Adams lord to bedde was goon .
 Adam toke the keyes *and* lete Gamelyn out a-noon . 416

APPENDIX TO GROUP A. GAMELYN. **Harleian 1758.**

He vnlokkeð Gamelyn bothe hondis *and* feet.
 In hope of auancement that he hym bi-heet.
 Than seide Gamelyn thankid be goddis sonde
 Now I am lose bothe foot *and* honde. 420
 Had I now eten *and* dronken a-right ./
 Ther' is noon in this hous schulde hynde me this nyght.
 Adam toke Gamelyn as stille as ony stoon.
 And lad hym in to spense raply a-noon. 424
 And sette hym to soper' right in a pryue stede.
 He bad hym do gladly *and* Gamelyn so dide.
 A-noon as Gamelyn had eten weft *and* fyne.
 And therto dronken weft of the rede wyne. 428
 Adam seide Gamelyn what is now thi reed.
 Or I go to my brother' *and* gird of his heed ./
 Gamelyn seide Adam it schafft not be so.
 I con teche the a rede that is worth the two. 432
 I wote weft for sothe that this is no nay.
 We schufft haue a mangerie right on sonday.
 Abbotes *and* priours mony here schafft be.
 And other' men of holy chirche as I telle the. 436
 Thou schalt stonde vp bi the post as thou were bound fast.
 And I schafft leue hem vn-loke that a-weie thou may hem
 Whan that thei haue eten *and* waschen here hondis. [cast ./
 Thou schalt biseke hem alle to bryng' the out of bondis.
 And if thei wilf borow the that were good game. [leaf 50, back]
 Than were thou out of prison *and* I out of blame.
 And if eche of hem saie to vs nay.
 I schafft do a nother/ I swere be this day. 444
 Thou schalt haue a good staf *and* I will haue a nother/
 And cristes curs haue that oon that failleth that other/
 Ye for god seide Gamelyn I say it for me.
 If I faile on my side yuett mote I the. 448
 Yf we schufft algate assoile hem of here synne.
 Warne me brother' Adam whan we schufft be-gynne.
 Gamelyn seide Adam be seynt charite.
 I wilf warne the biforne whan it schafft be. 452

PENDIX TO GROUP A. GAMELYN. Harleian 1758.

Whan I wynk on the loke for to gone.
 And cast a-weie thi fetters *and* come to me a-none.
 Adam seide Gamelyn blessid be thy bones.
 That is a good counseile yeuen for the nones. 456
 Yf thei warne me to bryng me out of bendis.
 I wil sette good strokes right on here lendis.
 Tho the sonday was comen *and* folke to the feste.
 ffaire thei were welcomed bothe leste *and* meste. 460
 And euer as thei at halle dore come yn.
 Thei cast here ye on yong' Game yn.
 The fals knyght his brother full of trecherie.
 Alle the gestis that ther' were at the mangerie. 464
 Of Gamelyn his brother' he tolde hem with mouth.
 Aft' the harme *and* the schame that he telle couth.
 Tho thei were seruyd of messis two or thre.
 Than seide Gamelyn how serue ye me. 468
 It is noght well seruyd bi god that aft' made.
 That I sitte fastyng *and* other' men make glade.
 The fals knyght his brother' ther' as he stood.
 Tolde alle gestis that Gamelyn was wood. 472
 And Gamelyn stood stille *and* vnswared right noght.
 But Adams wordis he helde in his thoght.
 Tho Gamelyn gan speke deolfully with alle.
 To the gret lordis that seeten in the halle. 476
 Lordis he seide for cristes passion.
 Helpe to bryng Gamelyn out of prison.
 Than seide an Abbot sorow on his cheke.
 He schaff haue cristes curs *and* seynt maries eke. 480
 That the out of prison beggith or borow.
 But euer worth hym well that doth the moche sorow.
 Aftir' that abbot' than spake a nother'.
 I wolde thyn heed were of theigh thou were my brother'.
 Alle that the borow foule mote hem falle. 485
 Thus thei seiden alle that were in the halle.
 Than seide a priour' euyt' mote he preue.
 It is gret sorow *and* care boy thou art on lyue. [leaf 51]

APPENDIX TO GROUP A. GAMELYN. Harleian 1758.

Ow seide Gamelyn so broke I my bone . 489
 Now I haue spied that frendis haue I none .
 Cursed mote he worth both flesch *and* blood .
 That euer doth priour' or Abbot any good . 492
 Adam the spenser' toke vp the cloth .
 And loked on Gamelyn *and* sigh that he was wroth .
 Adam on the pantrie litiff thoght .
 But two good staues to the halle dore he broght . 496
 Adam loked on Gamelyn *and* he was ware a-none .
 And cast a-weie the feters *and* bi-gan to gone .
 Tho he cam to Adam he toke the oon staf .
 And bigan to worche *and* good strokes yaf . 500
 Gamelyn come in to the halle *and* Adam spenser' bothe .
 And lokid hem a-boute as thei had ben wrothe .
 Gamelyn spreyneth holi water' with a Oken spire .
 That some that stood vp right fell in the fire . 504
 Ther' was no lewid man that in the halle stood .
 That wolde do Gamelyn any thyng' but good .
 But stodyn be siden *and* lete hem both wirche .
 ffor thei had no reweth of men of holi chirche . 508
 Abbot or priour' Monk' or Chanoun .
 That Gamelyn ouertoke a-noon thei yeden doun .
 Ther' was non of alle that with his staf mette .
 That he made hem ouerthrowe *and* quyt hem his dette . 512
 Gamelyn seide Adam for seynt charite .
 Paie good lyueray for the loue of me .
 And I will kepe the dore so euer here I masse ./
 Er' thei ben assoiled ther' schaff noon passe . 516
 Doute the noght seide Gamelyn while we ben in fere .
 Kepe thou weft the dore *and* I will worche here .
 By-stere the good Adam *and* let ther' non fle .
 And we schuff telle largely how mony that ther' be . 520
 Gamelyn seide Adam do hem but good .
 Thei ben men of holy chirche drawe of hem no blood .
 Saue weft the crowne *and* do hem no harmes .
 But breke both her' leggis *and* sithen her' armes . 524

Thus Gamelyn *and* Adam wrought right fast.
 And pleide with the monkis *and* made hem a-gast.
 Thider^r thei come rydyng^r ioly with swaynes.
 And home a-yen thei were lad in cartis *and* waynes. / 528
 Tho thei hadden alle y-doo, then seide a gray frere.
 Alas sir^r Abbot what dide we now here.
 Tho that we comen hider/ it was a colde reede.
 Vs hadde ben better^r at home with water^r *and* with breede.
 While Gamelyn made ordris of monkis *and* frere. 533
 Euyr^r stood his brother^r *and* made ^rrule chere.
 Gamelyn vp with his staf that he weft knew. [leaf 51, back]
 And girt^r hym in the nek that he ouer threw. 536
 A litill a-boue the girdill^r the rigge boon to-brast.
 And sette hym in the fetters ther^r he satt arst.
 Sitte there brother^r seide Gamelyn.
 ffor to colen thi body as I dide myn. 540
 As swithe as thei haddyn wroken hem on her^r foon.
 Thei asked water^r *and* waschen a-noon.
 What some for her^r loue *and* some for her^r awe.
 Alle the seruauantis serueth hem of the best lawe. 544
 ¶ The Schereue was thenne but fyue myle.
 And aft^r was tolde hym in a litell while.
 How Gamelyn *and* Adam haden doone a sory res.
 Bounden *and* wounden men a-yens the kyngis pes. 548
 Tho bi-gan sone strif for to wake.
 And the Schireue a-boute Gamelyn for to take.
 ¶ Now lithe^r *and* listneth so god yeue you good fyne.
 And ye schuff^r here good game of yong Gamelyne. 552
 ffoure *and* twenti yong^r men that helden hem full bolde.
 Come to the schireue *and* seide that thei wolde.
 Gamelyn *and* Adam fette bi her^r fay.
 The Schirreue yeue hem leue soth for to say. 556
 Thei hyeden fast wolde thei not lynne.
 Tiff^r thei come to the gate there Gamelyn was ynne.
 Thei knokkeden on the gate the porter^r was nyghe.
 And lokid out at an hole as man that was slighe. 560

APPENDIX TO GROUP A. GAMELYN. *Harleian* 1758.

The porter' had biholde hem a lituff while.
 He louyd weff Gamelyn *and* was drad of gile.
 And lete the wicket stond full stille.
 And asked hem with-oute what was here wille. 564
 ¶ ffor alle the gret companye than spak but oon.
 Vndo the gate porter' *and* lete vs yn goon.
 Than seide the porter' so brouke I my chyn.
 Ye schuff saie your' erand yer' ye come yn. 568
 Saie to Gamelyn *and* Adam yf theire will be
 We will speke with hem two wordes or thre.
 ffelaw seide the porter stonde there stille.
 And I will wende to Gamelyn to wite his wille. 572
 In wente the porter' to Gamelyn a-noon.
 And seide sir' I warne you here be comen your' foon.
 The Schereuys men ben atte the gate.
 ffor to take you both schuff ye not scape. 576
 Porter' seide Gamelyn so mote I weff the.
 I will allow the thi wordis when I my tyme se.
 Go a-geyn to the gate *and* dwelle with hem a while.
 And thou schalt se right sone porter' a gile. 580
 Adam seide Gamelyn loke the to gone.
 We haue foo-men atte yate *and* frendis neuer one. [leaf 52]
 Hit ben the Schereuys men that hider' ben come.
 Thei be swore to-gider' that we schaff be nome. 584
 Gamelyn seide Adam hye the right blyue.
 And if I faile the this day euyff mote I thryue.
 And we schuff so welcome the Schereuys men.
 That some of hem schaff make here beddis in the fen. 588
 At a posterne gate Gamelyn out went.
 And a good cartstaf in his honde hent.
 Adam hent sone a nother' gret staf.
 ffor to helpen Gamelyn *and* good strokis yaf. 592
 Adam felt tweyne *and* Gamelyn felt thre.
 The other' sette feet on erthe *and* bi-gan to fle.
 What seide Adam so euyr' here I masse
 I haue right good wyne drynke or ye passe. 596

Nay bi god seide thei thi drynke is not good.
 It wolde make a mannes brayn to lyen in his hood.
 Gamelyn stood stille *and* lokid hym a-boute.
 And seide the schereue cometh with a gret route. 600
 Adam seide Gamelyn what ben now thi redis.
 Here cometh the schereue *and* wiff haue our' hedis.
 Adam seide to Gamelyn myn rede is now this.
 A-bide we no lenger' lest we fare a-mys. 604
 I rede that we to wode gone or that we be founde.
 Better is there louse than in tow be bounde.
 Adam toke bi the honde yong' Gamelyne./
 And euery of hem drank a draug of wyne./ 608
 And after' token her' cours *and* wenten her' way.
 Tho fonde the schereue nest but non ay.
 The schereue light doun *and* wente in to halle.
 And fonde the lorde feterid fast with alle. 612
 The schereue vnfeterid hym right sone a-noon.
 And sent aftir' a leche to hele his rigge boon.
 ¶ Lete we now the fals knyght lie in his care.
 And talke we of Gamelyn *and* loke how he fare. 616
 Gamelyn in to the wode stalkid stille.
 And Adam spenser' liked this ille.
 Adam swore to Gamelyn be seynt Richere.
 Now I se it is mery to be a spensere. 620
 That leuyr' me were keies to bere.
 Than walken in this wilde wode my clothis to tere.
 Adam seide Gamelyn dismay the right nought.
 Mony a good mannys childe in care is brought. 624
 As thei stood talkyng' bothen in fere.
 Adam herde talkyng of men *and* nygh hem thought thei
 Tho Gamelyn vndir' wode lokid a-right. [were.
 Seuyñ score of yong men he sigh weft dight. 628
 Alle sate at the mete compas a-boute. [leaf 52, back]
 Adam seide Gamelyn now haue I no doute.
 After' bale cometh bote thorough goddis myght.
 Me thynke of mete *and* drynke I haue a sight. 632

APPENDIX TO GROUP A. GAMELYN. *Harleian 1758.*

Adam loked tho vndir' wode bough.
 And tho he say mete *and* he was glad y-nough.
 ffor he hoped to god to haue his dele.
 And he was sore a-longed after' a good mele. 636
 As he seide that worde the maister' outlawe.
 Saugh Adam *and* Gamelyn vndir' wode schawe.
 Yonge men seide the maister' bi the good rode.
 I am war' of gestis god sende vs gode. 640
 Yonde ben two yonge men well a-dight.
 And *perauenture* ther' ben more who so lokid a-right.
 A-riseth vp yong' men *and* fette hem to me.
 It is good that we witen what men thei be. 644
 Vp ther' stertyn seuene fro the dyner'.
 And metten with Gamelyn *and* Adam spenser'.
 Whan thei were nyghe hem than seide that one.
 Yeldeth vp yonge men your' bowes *and* your' flone. 648
 Than seide Gamelyn that yong was of elde.
 Moche sorow mote thei haue that to you hem yelde.
 I course non other' but right my selue.
 Thei ye fette to you fyue than be ye twelue. 652
 Tho thei herde bi his worde that myght was yn his arme.
 Ther' was non of hem that wolde do hem harme.
 But seide to Gamelyn myldely *and* stille.
 Come a-fore our' maister' *and* say to hym thi wille. 656
 Yonge men seide Gamelyn be your' lewte.
 What man is your' maister' that ye with be.
 Alle thei answerde with-oute lesynge.
 Our' maister' is crowned of outlawis kyng. 660
 Adam seide Gamelyn go we in cristes name.
 He may neither' mete ne drynke werne vs for schame.
 Yf that he be hende *and* come of gentilt blood. 663
 He will yeue vs mete *and* drynke *and* do vs some good.
 Be seynt Iame seide Adam what harme that I gete.
 I will auenture me that I had mete.
 Gamelyn *and* Adam went forth in fere.
 And thei grette the maister / that thei fonde there. 668

ADIX TO GROUP A. GAMELYN. Harleian 1758.

¶ Than seide the maister / kyng of outlawes .
 What seke ye yonge men vnder wode schawes .
 Gamelyn answerde . the kyng with his crowne . 671
 He most nedis walke in felde that may not walke in towne .
 Sire we walke not here non harme to do .
 But if we mete a deer to schete ther'to .
 As men that ben hungry *and* mow no mete fynde .
 ¶ And ben hard be-stad vnder wode lynde . [leaf 53] 676
 Of Gamelyn wordis the maister had reuthe .
 And seide ye schaff haue y-nogh haue god my treuthe .
 He bad hem sitte down for to take reste .
 And bad hem ete *and* drynke *and* that of the beste . 680
 As thei eten *and* dronken weft *and* fyne .
 Than seide oon to a nother this is Gamelyne .
 Tho was the maister outlawe in to counseile nome ./
 And tolde how it was Gamelyn that thider was come . 684
 A-non as he herde how it was be-falle .
 He made hym maister vnder hym ouer hem alle .
 With-yn the thrid wike hym come tithyng' .
 Tho the maister outlawe that was her kyng' . 688
 That he schulde come home his pees was made .
 And of that good tithyng' he was full glade .
 Tho seide he to his yong' men soth for to telle .
 Me ben comen tithynges I may no lenger dwelle/ . 692
 Tho was Gamelyn a-non with-oute taryng' .
 Made maister outlawe *and* crowned her kyng' .
 Tho was Gamelyn crowned kyng of outlawes .
 And walkid a while vnder wode schawes . 696
 ¶ The fals knyght his brother was schereue *and* sire .
 And lete his brother endite for hate *and* for hire .
 Tho were his bonde-men sory *and* no thyng' glade . 699
 When Gamelyn her lorde wolfes heed was cried *and* made .
 And sent out of his men where thei myght hym fynde .
 Ifor to go seke Gamelyn vnder wode lynde .
 To telle hym tithyng the wynde was went .
 Aft his good reuyd *and* alle his men schent . 704

APPENDIX TO GROUP A. GAMELYN. *Harleian 1758.*

Whan thei hadden hym founde on knees thei hem setten .
 And a-doun with here hood *and* her' lorde gretten .
 Sir' wrath yow nought for the good rode .
 ffor we han brought you tithyng but thei be not gode . 708
 Now is thi brother' schereue *and* hath the baillie .
 And hath endited the *and* wolfes heed doth the crie .
 Allas seide Gamelyn that euer I was so slak' .
 That I ne had broke his nekke tho I his rigge brak . 712
 Goth greteth well bope/ housbonde/ *and* wif .
 I wiff be at the next schire haue god my lyf .
 Gamelyn cam redy to the next schire .
 And ther' was his brother' both lorde *and* sire . 716
 Gamelyn boldely come in to the mote halle .
 And put a-doun his hood amonge the lordis alle .
 God saue you lordynges that here be .
 But broke bak schereue euyff mote thou the . 720
 Whi hast thou do me that schame *and* vilonye .
 ffor to late endite me *and* wolfesheed do me crie ./
 Tho thought the fals knyght for to ben a-wreke . [leaf 53, back]
 And let' Gamelyn most he no thyng' speke . 724
 Might' ther' be no grace but Gamelyn at the last .
 Was cast in prison *and* feterid fast ./
 Gamelyn hath a brother/ that hight sir' Ote .
 As a good a knyght *and* hende as myght gon on fote . 728
 A-non yede a messenger' to that good knyght .
 And tolde hym aft to-gider' how Gamelyn was dight .
 A-non as sire Ote herde how Gamelyn was dight .
 He was right sory was he no thyng light . 732
 And lete sadiiff a stede *and* the way he name .
 And to his tweie bretheryn right sone he came .
 Sire seide sir' Ote to the schereue tho .
 We ben but thre bretheren schuiff we neuer be mo . 736
 And thou hast prisoned the best of vs alle .
 Suche a nother' brother' euyff mote hym bi-falle .
 Sir' Ote seide the fals knyght late be thi curs/ .
 By god for thi wordis he schaff fare the wurs . 740

To the kyngis prison he is y-nome .
 And there he schaff a-bide tiff the iustice come .
 Parde seide sir' Ote bettir' it schaff be .
 I bid hym to maympris that thou graunte me . 744
 Tiff the next sittying of delyueraunce .
 And late than Gamelyn stonde to his chaunce .
 Brother' in suche a forwarde I take hym to the .
 And by my fadris soule that the bigat *and* me . 748
 But he be redy whan the iustice sitte ./
 Thou schalt bere the iugement for aff thi gret witte .
 I graunte weff seide sir' Ote that it so be .
 Late delyuer' hym a-non *and* take hym to me . 752
 Tho was Gamelyn delyuered to sir' Ote his brother' .
 And that nyght dwellid the oon with the other' .
 On the morowen seide Gamelyn to sir' Ote the hende .
 Brother' he seide I mote for sothe fro you wende . 756
 To loke how my yong men leden here lyf .
 Whethir' thei lyuen in ioy or ellis in strif .
 By god seide sir' Ote that is a colde rede .
 Now I see that alle the carke schaff fall on my hede . 760
 ffor whan the Iustice sitte *and* thou be not founde .
 I schaff a-non be take *and* in thi stede y-bounde .
 Brother' seide Gamelyn dismaie the noght .
 ffor bi seynt Iame in Galis that mony man hath sought . 764
 Yf that god Almyghty holde me my lyf *and* my witte .
 I will be redy whan the iustice sitte .
 Than seide sir' Ote to Gamelyn god schilde the fro schame .
 Come when thou seist tyme *and* bryng' vs oute of blame .
 Litheth *and* listneth *and* hold yow stille ./ 769
 And ye schuff here how Gamelyn had his wille . [leaf 54]
 Gamelyn wente vndir' wode rys .
 And fonde ther playyng yong' men of prys . 772
 Tho was yong' Gamelyn right glad y-noghe .
 When he fonde his men vndir' wode boghe .
 Gamelyn *and* his men talkeden in fere .
 And thei had good game here maister' to here . 776

APPENDIX TO GROUP A. GAMELYN. *Harleian 1758.*

His men tolde hym of auenturis that thei had founde .
 And Gamelyn hem tolde a-yen how he was fast bounde .
 While Gamelyn was outlawe had he no cors .
 Ther' was no man that for hym ferde the wors . 780
 But Abbotis *and* priours monk *and* Chanon .
 On hem left he noght when he myght hem nome .
 While Gamelyn *and* his men made myrthes ryue .
 The fals knyght his brother' euyff mote he pryue . 784
 ffor he was fast a-boute bothe day *and* other .
 ffor to hire the quest' to hangen his brother/
 ¶ Gamelyn stood on a day *and* behelde .
 The wodis *and* the schawis *and* the wilde filde . 788
 He thought on his brother' how he hym be-hette .
 That he wolde be redy whan the iustice sette .
 He thought well he wolde with-oute delay .
 Come a-fore the iustice to kepen his day . 792
 And seide to his yong men dighteth you yare .
 ffor whan the iustice sitte we moste be thare .
 ffor I am vndir borow till that I come .
 And my brother' for me to prison schaff be nome . 796
 Be seynt Iame seide his yong men *and* thou rede therto .
 Ordeyne how it schaff be *and* it schaff be do .
 While Gamelyn was comyng ther' the iustice satte .
 The fals knyght his brother' for-yate he not that . 800
 To hire the men on his quest to hangen his brother' .
 Thogh thei had not the oon thei wolde haue the other' .
 Tho come Gamelyn fro vndir' the wode rys .
 And broght with hym yong' men of prys . 804
 I se well seide Gamelyn the Iustice is sette .
 Go a-forn Adam *and* loke how it spette .
 Adam went in to the halle *and* loked aff a-boute .
 He sigh ther' stonde lordis grete *and* stoute . 808
 And sir' Ote his brother' feterid full faste .
 Tho went Adam oute of halle as he were a-gaste .
 Adam seide to Gamelyn *and* to his felawis alle .
 Sir' Ote stant feterid in the mote halle ./ 812

[.
 no gap in the MS.]

Yf god yeue vs grace weſt for to do .
He ſchaft it a-bigge that it brought ther-to . 816
Than ſeide Adam that lokkes had hore ./
Criſtes curs mote he haue that hym bond ſo ſore .
And thou wilt Gamelyn do aftir my rede . [leaf 54, back]
Ther is non in the halle ſchaft bere a-wey his hede . 820
Adam ſeide Gamelyn we wiſt not do ſo .
We wiſt ſle the giltif *and* late the other go .
I wiſt in to the halle *and* with the Juſtice ſpeke .
On hem that ben giltif I wiſt ben a-wreke . 824
Lete non ſcape at the dore take yong men yeme
ffor I wiſt be Juſtice this day domes to deme .
God ſpele me this day at my newe werke .
Adam come with me for thou ſchalt be my clerke . 828
His men vnſwarden hym *and* bad hym done his beſte .
And if thou to vs haue nede thou ſchalt fynde vs preſte .
We wiſt ſtonde with the while that we may dure .
And but we wirken manly pay vs non hure . 832
Yonge men ſeide Gamelyn ſo mote I weſt the ./
As truſti a maister ye ſchaft fynde me .
Right there the Juſtice ſatte in the halle
In went Gamelyn amongis hem alle . 836
Gamelyn lete vnfeter his brother out of bende .
Than ſeide ſir Ote his brother that was hende .
Thou haddiſt almoſt Gamelyn dwellid to longe .
ffor the queſt is oute on me that I ſchulde be honge . 840
Brother / ſeide Gamelyn ſo god yeue me good reſt .
This day thei ſchuſt ben hanged that ben on the queſt .
And the Juſtice bothe that is the Iuge man .
And the ſchereue bothe thorgh hym it be-gan . 844
¶ Than ſeide Gamelyn to the Juſtice .
Now is thi power done thou moſt nedis riſe .
Thou haſt yeuyn domyb that ben yueſt dight .
I wiſt ſitten in thi ſete *and* dresſen hem a-right . 848

APPENDIX TO GROUP A. GAMELYN. *Harleian 1758.*

The Iustice sate stille *and* ros not a-non .
 And Gamelyn in haste cleuyd his cheke bon .
 Gamelyn toke hym in his armys *and* no more spak .
 But threw him ouer the barre *and* his arme brak . 852
 Durst non to Gamelyn saie but good .
 ffor ferd of the companye that with hym oute stood .
 Gamelyn sette hym down in the Iustice sete .
 And sir Ote his brother bi hym *and* Adam at his fete . 856
 Whan Gamelyn was sette in the Iustice stide .
 Herken of a bourde that Gamelyn dide .
 He lete feter' the Iustice *and* his fals brother/
 And lete hem come to the barre that oon with that other/ .
 Tho Gamelyn had thus done had he no rest . 861
 Tiff he had enquerid who was on the quest .
 ffor to demyn his brother' sir' Ote for to honge .
 Er' he wiste whiche thei were hym thoght full longe . 864
 But as sone as Gamelyn wiste where thei were .
 He dide hem euerychon feter' in fere . [leaf 55]
 And bryngen hem to the barre *and* setten hem in rewe .
 Be my feith seide the Iustice the schereue is a schrewe .
 Than seide Gamelyn to the Iustice . 869
 Thou hast yeue domes of the worste assise .
 And the .xij. sisouris that weren on the quest .
 They schuff be hangid this day so haue I good rest . 872
 Than seide the schereue to yong Gamelyn .
 Lorde I crie the mercy brother' art thou myn .
 Therefore seide Gamelyn haue thou cristes curs .
 ffor *and* thou were mayster' yet schulde I haue wurs . 876
 ffor to make schort tale *and* noght to longe .
 He ordeyned hym a quest of his men so stronge .
 The Iustice and the schereue bothe hangid hye .
 To weyuen with the ropis *and* with the wynde drye . 880
 And the .xij. sisours sorw haue that rekke .
 Alle thei were hangid fast bi the nekke .
 ¶ Thus endid the fals knyght with his trechery .
 That euyr' had lad his lif in falsnes *and* foly . 884

APPENDIX TO GROUP A. GAMELYN. Harleian 1758.

He was hanged bi the nekke *and* not bi the purs.
That was the mede that he had for his fadirs curs.
Sir Otes was eldist *and* Gamelyn was yong.
Wenten to here frendis *and* passedyn to the kyng. 888
Thei maden pees with the kyng of the best sise.
The kyng^l loued weſt sir^l Ote *and* made hym Iustice.
And after^l the kyng made Gamelyn in Este *and* in west.
Chief Iustice of his fre forest. 892
Alle his wight yong men the kyng for-yaf here gilt.
And sithen in good office the kyng hath alle hem pilt.
¶ Thus wan Gamelyn his londe *and* his lede.
And wreke hym on hys enemyes *and* quyt hem here mede.
And sir^l Ote his brother^l made hym his heier^l ./ 897
And sithen weddid Gamelyn a wif good *and* feier^l.
Thei lyueden to-gider / while that crist wolde.
And sithen was Gamelyn grauen vndir^l molde. 900
And so schaff we alle may ther^l no man fle.
God bryng vs to the ioy that euyr^l schaff be.
here endith the Cokis tale./

Chaucer Society.

THE

Hengwrt MS

[No. 154]

OR

Chaucer's Canterbury Tales.

EDITED BY

FREDERICK J. FURNIVALL.



PART I.

LONDON:

PUBLISHED FOR THE CHAUCER SOCIETY

BY N. THURNER & CO., 57 & 59, LUDGATE HILL.

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[REPRINTED, 1877.]

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XXIII. *Old Towne's Chaucer's Minot Poems*, Part I, containing 1, two MSS fragments of 'The Parliament of Fowles,' & the two differing versions of 'The Pardour to the Lascivious of Good Women,' arranged so as to show their differences; an Appendix of Quene attributed to Chaucer; 1, 'The Remains of Poetry by Chaucer,' 2, 31. 'The Centurie made by Chaucer,' both from MSS written for Shirley, Chaucer's contemporary.

XXIV. *A Chaucer Text* of Chaucer's Minot Poems, being the best Text from the Parallel-Text Edition, Part I, containing: 1, The Dedite of Blanche the Duchess; 2, The Complaint of Pite, 3, The Parliament of Fowles, 4, The Complaint of Mars, 5, The A.D.C., with its original from the Institute's *Recherches de la Poésie Anglaise* (edited from the best Paris MSS by M. Paul Meyer).

The issue for 1872, in the *First Series*, is:

XXV. Chaucer's Tale of Meibys, the Monk's, Non's-Priest's, Doctor's, Pardour's, Wife of Bath's, Friar's, and Summoner's Tales, in a parallel Text from the MSS where found, with the remaining 12 coloured drawings of Teller's of Teller, after the originals in the Ellesmere MS, and with woodcuts of the variations of all MSS in the Doctor's Pardour Link. (The Link, pp. IV.)

XXVI. The Wife's, Priest's, and Summoner's Tales, from the Ellesmere MS, with 9 woodcuts of Teller's. (Part IV.)

XXVII. The Wife's, Priest's, Summoner's, Monk's, and Non's-Priest's Tales, from the Hereford MS, with 33 woodcuts of the Teller's of the Tales. (Part III.)

XXVIII. The Wife's, Priest's, and Summoner's Tales, from the Cambridge MS, with 9 woodcuts of Teller's. (Part IV.)

XXIX. A Treatise on the Astrological instrument to Sir John Lupton, in 1591 A.D., by Geoffrey Chaucer, edited by the Rev. Walter W. Skott, M.A.

The issue for 1872, in the *First Series*, is:

XXX. The Six-Text Canterbury Tales, Part V, containing the Clerk's and Merchant's Tales.

The issue for 1874, in the *First Series* (ready in June 1874) is:

XXXI. The Six-Text, Part VI, containing the Squire's and Franklin's Tales.

XXXII to XXXVI. Large Parts of the separate issues of the MSS:

The issue for 1874, in the *First Series* (ready in September 1874) is:

XXXVII. The Six-Text, Part VII, the Second Non's, Canon's Yeoman's, and Monk's Tales, with the Blank-Pardon Link.

XXXVIII to XLIII. Large Parts of the separate issues of the six MSS, beginning all up to the Merchant's Tale.

XLIV. A detailed Comparison of the *Trilogies and Chaucer's* with Boccaccio's *Trilogies*, with a Translation of all Passages used by Chaucer, and an Abstract of the Parts not used, by W. Michael Boccaccio, Esq., and with a print of the *Trilogies* from the Harleian MS. 2251. (Part I.)

XLV, XLVI. Rhyme-Indexes to the Ellesmere MS of the Canterbury Tales, by Henry Francis, Esq., M.A. Both in Royal 8to for the *Six-Text*, and in 8vo for the separate Ellesmere MS.

For 1876, Part VIII of the Six-Text edition, containing the Parson's Tale, and completing the *Canterbury Tales*, is in the Press for the *First Series*; and for 1877, Part 2 of Chaucer's *Minot Poems*, completing them. Prof. Hiram Cowen is making an Index to the Subjects and Names of *The Canterbury Tales*. He has also agreed to edit the *Society's Chaucer Glossary*.

Of the *Second Series*, the issue for 1868 is:

1. Early English Pronunciation, with especial reference to Shakespeare and Chaucer, by Alexander J. Ellis, Esq., F.R.S. Part I. This work includes an introduction of Prof. F. J. Child's two Papers on the use of the final -e for Chaucer (in T. Wright's ed. of *The Canterbury Tales*) and by Gower (in Dr Paul's ed. of the *Confessio Amantis*).

2. Essays on Chaucer, his Words and Works, Part I. - 1. Prof. Elton's Review of Sandroy's *Life and Chaucer*, translated by J. W. van Hook, M.A.; 2. A 14th-century Latin Treatise on the *Canterbury Tales* (in the *Notes on the Tales*), edited by Mr E. Bock.

3. A Contemporary Preface to the Society's Six-Text edition of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, Part I, attempting to show the right Order of the Tales, and the Days and Stages of the Progress, &c. &c., by C. J. Furnivall, Esq., M.A.

Of the *Second Series*, the issue for 1869 is:

4. Early English Pronunciation, with especial reference to Shakespeare and Chaucer, by Alexander J. Ellis, Esq., F.R.S. Part II.

Of the *Second Series*, the issue for 1870 is:

5. Early English Pronunciation, with especial reference to Shakespeare and Chaucer, by Alexander J. Ellis, Esq., F.R.S. Part III.

Of the *Second Series*, the issue for 1871 is:

6. Trial-Poems with a key Parallel-Text edition of Chaucer's *Minot Poems* for the Chaucer Society (with a try to set Chaucer's Works in their right order of Time), by Frank J. Furnivall. Part I. (This Part brings out, for the first time, Chaucer's long early but hopeless lives.)

The Chaucer Society

Chaucer Society.

THE

Gengwrt MS

(No. 164)

OF

Chaucer's Canterbury Tales.

EDITED BY

FREDERICK J. FURNIVALL.



PART II.

The Miller's, Reeve's, Cook's, and Manciple's Tales.

LONDON:

PUBLISHED FOR THE CHAUCER SOCIETY BY
N. TRÜBNER & CO., 57 & 59, LUDGATE HILL.

MDCCLXIX.

Reprinted 1881.

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Secy. : W. A. DALLIEL, Esq., 67, Victoria Rd., Finsbury Park, London, N.
Booksellers : THE UNION BANK OF LONDON, Head Office, PRINCE STREET, F.C.
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The Early English Text Society was started by Mr. Furnivall in 1864 for the purpose of bringing the mass of Old English Literature within the reach of the ordinary student, and of wiping away the reproach under which England had long laboured, of having felt little interest in the monuments of her early life and language.

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The Chaucer Society.

Chaucer Society.

THE

Hengwrt MS

(No. 154)

OF

Chaucer's Canterbury Tales.

EDITED BY

FREDERICK J. FURNIVALL.



PART III.

LONDON:

PUBLISHED FOR THE CHAUCER SOCIETY BY
N. TRÜBNER & CO., 57 & 59, LUDGATE HILL.

MDCCCLXXII.

Reprinted, 1887.

Chaucer Society.

THE

Hengwrt MS

(No. 151)

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Reprinted, 1887.

The Chaucer Society.

Editor in Chief.—Dr F. J. FURNIVALL, 2, St. George's Square, Portico, Hill, S. W.
Rev. Sec.—W. A. DALZIEL, Esq., 67, Victoria Road, Finsbury Park, London, N.

THE CHAUCER SOCIETY'S PUBLICATIONS.

To do honour to CHAUCER, and to let the lovers and students of his art know for the first unprinted Manuscripts of his works differed from the printed texts, this Society was founded in 1868. There were then, and are still, many questions of accent, pronunciation, orthography, and etymology yet to be settled, for which more copies of Manuscripts were and are wanted; and it is hardly too much to say that every line of Chaucer contains points that need reconsideration. The *Laudian* (Dr Furnivall) began with *The Canterbury Tales*, and has given of those (in parallel columns in Royal 4to) six of the best theretofore unprinted Manuscripts known. Inasmuch as the parallel arrangement necessitated the alteration of the places of certain lines in some of the MSS, a print of each MS has been issued separately, following the order of its original. The first six MSS printed have been: two *Ellesmere* (for leaves of the Earl of Ellesmere); the *Hengwrt* (by leave of W. W. & Wynne, Esq.); the *Cambridge* (Libr., MS. Gg. 4. 27); the *Corpus*, Oxford; the *Petworth* (by leave of Lord Lonsdale); and the *Lansdowne* 80 (Dor. Mus.). The *Harleian* 1034 has followed.

Of Chaucer's *Minor Poems*,—the MSS of which are generally later than the best MSS of the *Canterbury Tales*,—all the available MSS have been printed, so as to secure all the existing evidence for the true text.

The *Trinity Parallel-Text* from the 2 best MSS has been issued, and a 4th MS text of it with the English *Tricararia* Commentary.

To secure the fidelity and uniform treatment of the texts, Dr F. J. Furnivall has read and will read all with their MSS.

Antiquities of some of the best Chaucer MSS have been published.

The Society's publications are issued in two Series, of which the first contains the different texts of Chaucer's works; and the Second, such originals of and essays on them as can be procured, with other illustrative treatises, and Supplementary Texts.

Messrs. Trübner & Co., of 57 & 59, Ludgate Hill, London, E.C., are the Society's publishers. Messrs R. Clay and Sons of Bungay are printers, and the Alliance Book-Binding Co. of London, E.C., are binders. The yearly subscription, which constitutes Membership, is two guineas, due on every 1st January, beginning with Jan. 1, 1868. *More Members are wanted. All the Society's Publications can still be had. Those of the first year have been reprinted.*

Prof. Child of Harvard College, Cambridge, Massachusetts, is the Society's Honorary Secretary for America. Members' names and subscriptions may be sent to the Publishers, or to the Honorary Secretary.

W. A. DALZIEL, Esq., 67, Victoria Road, Finsbury Park, London, N.

FIRST SERIES.

The Society's issue for 1868, in the **First Series**, is,

- I. The Prologue and Knight's Tale, of the *Canterbury Tales*, in 6 parallel Texts (from the 6 MSS named below), together with Tables showing the Groups of the Tales, and their varying order in 28 MSS of the Tales, and in 5 old printed editions, and also Specimens from several MSS of the "Morte d'Arthur" of the *Canterbury Tales*.—The Shipman's Prologue, and Franklin's Prologue,—when moved from their right places, and of the Substitutes for them. (The Six-Text, Part I.)

II. The Prologue and Knight's Tale from the Ellesmere MS.						Part I.
III.	"	"	"	"	"	Hengwrt " 164 " "
IV.	"	"	"	"	"	Cambridge " Gg. 4. 27 " "
V.	"	"	"	"	"	Corpus " Oxford " "
VI.	"	"	"	"	"	Petworth " " "
VII.	"	"	"	"	"	Lansdowne " 85 " "

(separate issues of the Texts forming Part I of the Six-Text edition.)

The issue for 1869, in the **First Series**, is,

VIII. The Miller's, Reeve's, and Clerk's Tales: Ellesmere MS.						Part II.
IX.	"	"	"	"	"	Hengwrt " " " "
X.	"	"	"	"	"	Cambridge " " " "
XI.	"	"	"	"	"	Corpus " " " "
XII.	"	"	"	"	"	Petworth " " " "
XIII.	"	"	"	"	"	Lansdowne " " " "

(separate issues of the Texts forming the Six-Text, Part II, No. XIV.)

of the **Second Series**, the issue for 1886 is,

1. *Originals and Analogues of the Canterbury Tales*, Part IV: Eastern Analogs I, by W. A. Clouston.

2. *Life-Records of Chaucer*, Part III, a. The Household book of Isabella, wife of King Lionel, third son of Edward III, in which the name of GREGORY CHAUCER occurs; edited from the unique MS in the Brit. Mus., by Edward A. Bond, Librarian, & Chaucer as Forester of North Witherton, Somerset, 1400, by Walford D. Selby, Esq. With an Appendix by Walter Rye, Esq., 1. Chaucer's Grandfather; II, Chaucer's connection with Lynn and Norfolk.

If the **Second Series**, the issue for 1887 will probably be,

1. *Originals and Analogues of the Canterbury Tales*, Part V (completing the issue). Eastern Analogs, II, by W. A. Clouston.

2. John Lane's *Continuation of Chaucer's Squire's Tale*, edited from the 2 MSS. in the Bodleian Library, Oxford, by W. A. Clouston, with Facsimiles.

3. *The Tale of Beegyn*, Part II. Introduction and Glossary, by F. J. Furnivall; W. G. Stone; with an Essay on Analogs of the Tale, by W. A. Clouston.

4. *Trial-Forwards to Chaucer's Minor Poems*, Part II, by Dr John Koch.

Among the *Texts and Essays*, &c., preparing for the Chaucer Society are—*Early English Pronunciation*, with especial reference to Shakspeare and Chaucer, Alexander J. Ellis, Esq., F.R.S., Part V. [This will probably go to Press in 1888.

Life-Records of Chaucer, Part IV, Enrolments and Documents from the Public and Office, the City of London Town-Clerk's Office, &c., edited by Walford D. Selby, Esq., and Dr Furnivall. [This will probably go to Press in 1888.

Chaucer's Road to Canterbury, with Ogilby's Plan of it, 1675, and William Pitt's Plan of the City of Canterbury in 1688; by the Rev. W. A. Scott Robertson, M., Hon. Sec. of the Kent Archaeological Institute.

A detailed Comparison of Chaucer's *Knight's Tale* with the *Teseide* of Boecaccio, HENRY WARD, Esq., of the MS Department of the British Museum. [At Press.

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No. 2. *Ballads from Manuscripts. Vol. I, Part 2*, contains Ballads on W. Anne Boleyn, Somerset, Lady Jane Grey, &c., with an Index and Glossary J. H. Buckhouse, Esq., and Forewords to the whole Volume. Edited by FURNIVALL, M.A. 1872.

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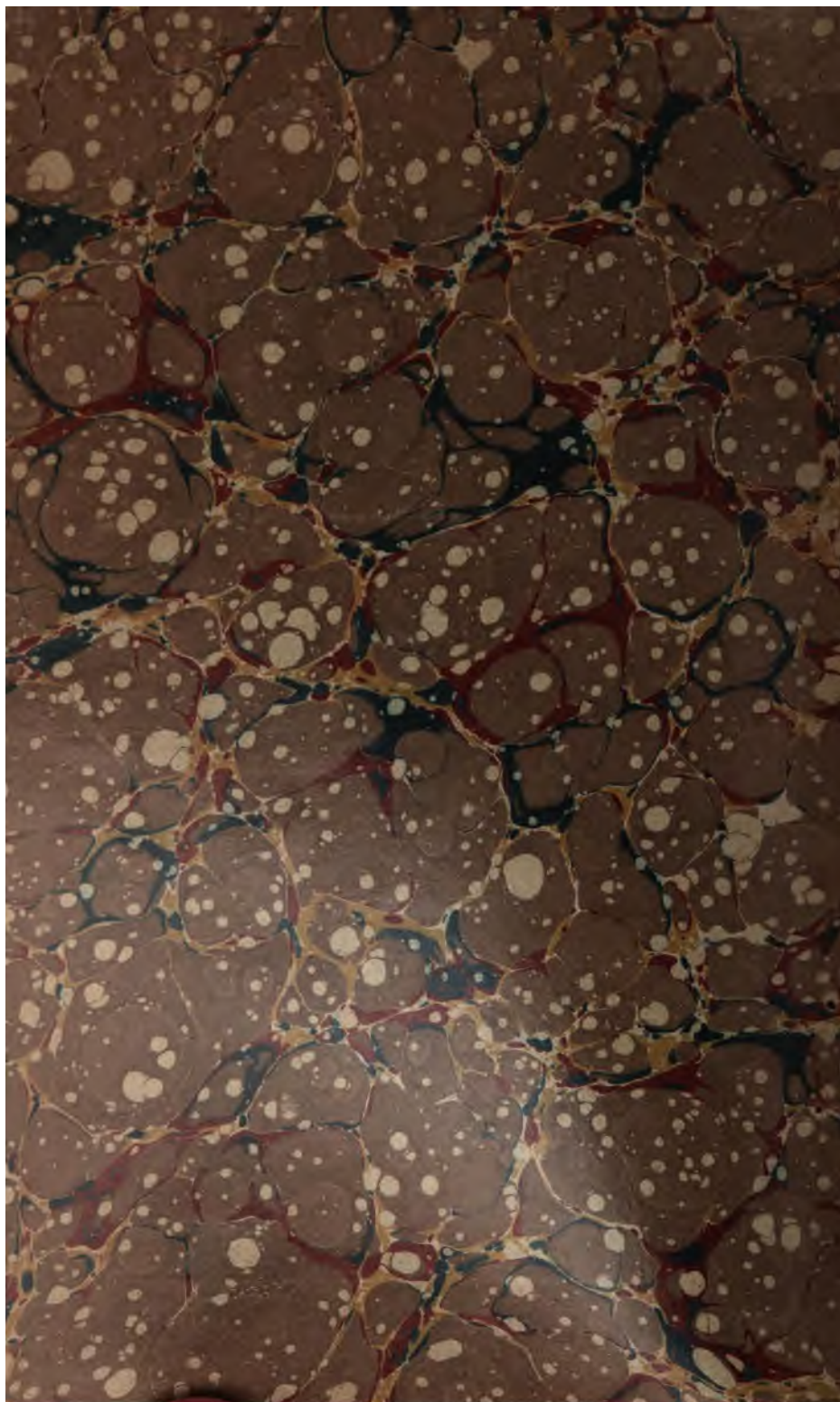
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