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The Tudor Facsimile Texts

Of Gentleness and Nobility

[By JOHN HEYWOOD?]

Date of only known Edition, 1535?

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Gentleness and Nobility

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The Tudor Facsimile Texts

[vol. 40]

Under the Supervision and Editorship of

JOHN S. FARMER



Of Gentleness and Nobility

[By JOHN HEYWOOD?]

[1535?]

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Of Gentleness and Nobility

[BY JOHN HEYWOOD?]

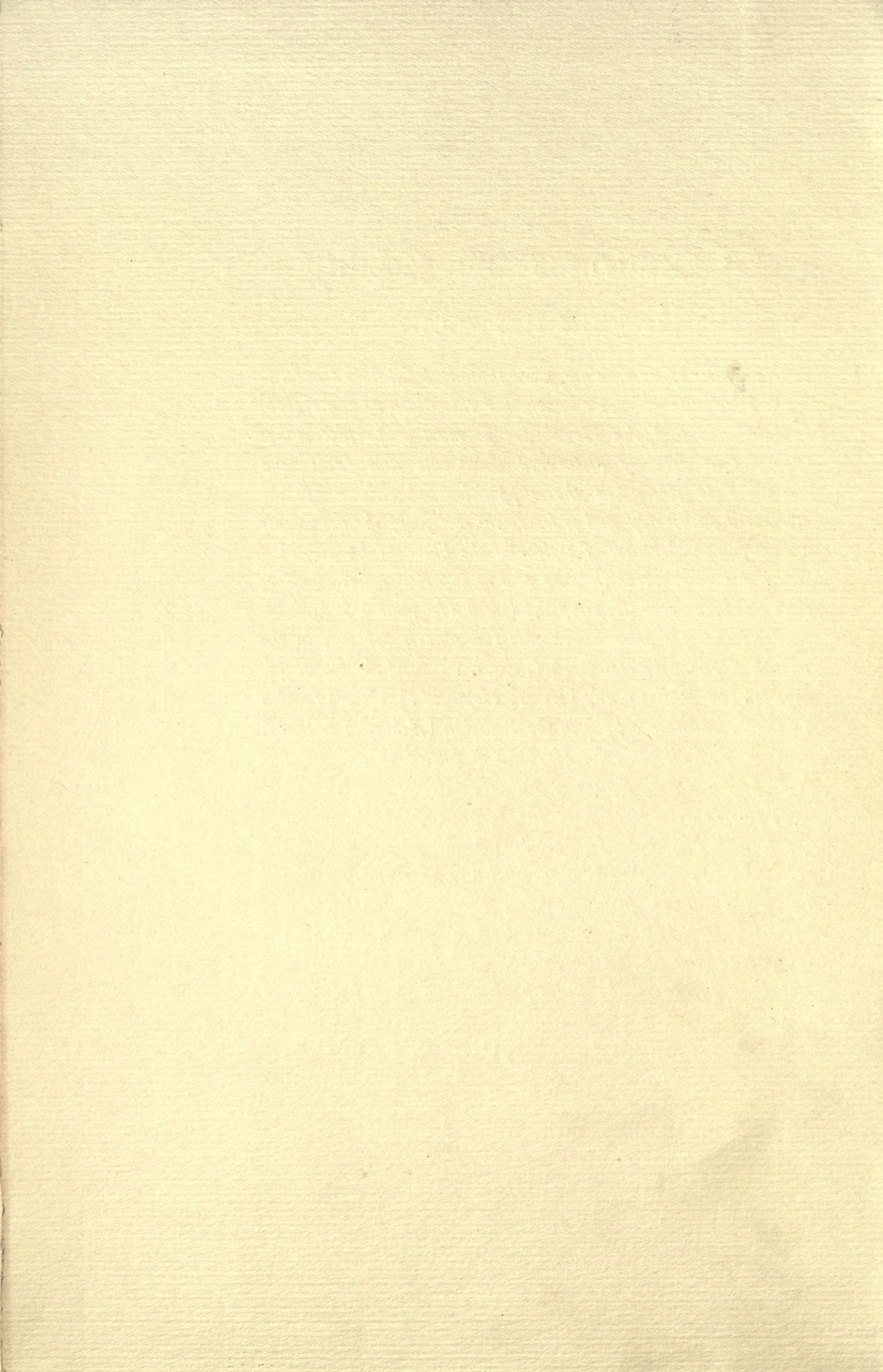
It is a matter of uncertainty, more than doubtful indeed according to some authorities, as to whether this dialogue can rightly be attributed to John Heywood. It must at present suffice to say that recently discovered documents and facts tend somewhat to strengthen the supposition in favour of the attributed authorship, and to lessen the weight of the arguments drawn from differences of style and the like. John Heywood was a far more versatile man and of superior social standing than has been generally supposed (see "The Four PP").

The example from which this facsimile is taken is in the British Museum (Press-mark C. 40, i. 16), and the Catalogue says "(The Philosopher) [By J. Heywood?] . . . [London 1535]." Another copy is in the Bodleian (Ashmole) Library.

The portrait of John Heywood is pasted on a blank fly-leaf opposite the title-page of the original.

Mr. J. A. Herbert, of the Manuscript Department of the British Museum, after comparing this facsimile with the original copy, says, "The reproduction is exceedingly good but for one fault in printing, viz., excess of heaviness and 'muzziness.' This nowhere amounts to actual misrepresentation even of a single letter, so far as I could see, but it does less than justice to the usually clear and good printing of original."

JOHN S. FARMER.





Of Gentylnes and Nobyltye.

A dyaloge between the Marchaunt the

knvyght and the plowman dysputyng who is a verey Gentylnman & who is a Noble man and how men shuld come to auctoryte / compiled in maner of an entrelude with diuers toys & gestis addyd thereto to make mery pastyme and disport.



The marchaunt

O what a gret welth and prosperyte
It is to any reme where marchauntes be
Hauing fre lyberte and entercours also
All marchaundyle to couey to and fro
Whych thyng I haue bled and the verey fet found
And thereby gotton many a thousand pound
Wherfore now be cause of my grete ryches
Thoroughout this land in euery place doubtles
I am magnyfyed and gretly regardyd
And for a wylse and noble man estemyd

The knyght

Maister marchaunt I here you ryght well
But now in presumption me thynk ye excell
To call yourself noble in presence here
I wys men know what your auncestours were
And of what grete stock descendid ye be
Your fadyr was but a blacke smyth perde

March. **W**hy syr what than what be you I pray you
Knyght **M**arry I am a gentylman I wold ye know
And may dispend yerely v. C. mark land
And I am sure all that ye haue in hand
Of yerely rent is not worth v. markys
M **B**ut I wold thou knewist for all thy krakkys
I am able to bye now all the land
That thou hast and pay for it out of hand

A. i.



K

Whych I haue got by myn own labour and wit
¶ Bet art thou but a chorle and I haue a skorn
Thou shuldist cōpare with me a gentylman born

M

K

¶ Why what callst thou a gentylman tel me
¶ Maye I call them gentylmen that be
Born to grete landys by inherytaunce

As myn auncestours by cōtynuaunce
Haue had this v. C. yere of whom now I
Am defendid and commyn lynyally
Beryng the same name and armys also
That they bare this v. C. yere ago

Myn auncestours also haue euer be
Lordys knyghtes and in grete auctorite
Capteyns in the warr and gouerneys
And also in tyme of pease gret rulers
And thyn were neuer but artyficers
As smyth^e mason^e carpentars or weuars

M

¶ All that is trewth I wyl not denye now
¶ Bet I am more gentylman born than thou
For I call hym a gentylman that gentilly
Doth gyf unto other men louyngly
Such thing as he hath of hys own pper
But he that takith ought away from a nother
And doth gyf hym no thyng agayn therefore
Ought to be callyd a chorle euermore
But myn auncestours haue giffyn alwey
To thyn auncestours such thyng as they
By their labours did trewly get and wyne
For myn auncestours bildid howsis wherē
Thyne auncestours haue had their dwelllyng place
Also myn auncestours haue made tolis
To all maner crafti men belongyng
Wherby clothis and euey other thyng
Wherof thyn auncestours nede haue had
With the same tolys haue euer be made
So myn auncestours haue giffin their labours
Euer to cōfort and help thyn auncestours

K

¶ I deny that euer thauncestours of thyn
Did euer gif to the auncestours of myne
At any tyme any thyng except that they
Gafe some what therfor other waze or money

M

¶ Maye god a mercy John for that now
That is euy a pyg of our own sow

How can lordys & estatys haue ought in store
 Except that artyfycers do get it before
 For all metalls be dyggyd furst by myners
 And after brought by the artyfycers
 woll sell and euery other thyng
 That is necessary to mannys coueryng
 And all other thyngis that men vse & were
 Is al wey made by the artyfycer
 I graunt that the artyfycers do make it
 But be cause comenly they haue lptell wyt
 Gentylnen that haue landys & domynyon
 Of all such ryches haue most posselion
 For reason wyll euet it shuld so be
 wyle men to haue folys in captuyte
 Mary as for wyt & subtell inuencyou
 Myne auncestours wyth thine may make chpilon
 For though my fader were a linyth what than
 yet was he a meruelous quyke wytryd man
 And coud work as well for hys pt
 As any in this land vsyng that art
 And deuyle new fassions in thynges that he made
 That euery man to bye hys ware was glad
 And carue & graue in yron & stele
 Both Image & letters meruelously wele
 And ther on ley gold & gylt it also
 Fyne & pure as any gold linyth coud do
 My graunfader also was a mason
 Of grete wyt as any in thys regyon
 And coud byld a castell & tour ryght wele
 In whych some of thy kynnyl men now do dwell
 wher in apert yth ryght good malonry
 wyth Jinnagys & acynys wrought curyously
 My grete graunfadyr lo was a weuer
 Of wollyn yarn & of other gere
 And made meruelous pleasaunt workis to be hold
 A myn dyap sylk & cloth of gold
 All such subtell thyngis as I haue reherlyd lo
 Myne auncestours by theyr wyttis coud work & do
 And as for thine auncestours I know no thyng
 Thei coud do bi their wittis worth of praisyng
 But vse occupi & wast euet moze
 Such thyngis as myn auncestours made before
 And thou & thie anncestours haug thoccupacion
 Of such thingis wrought bi the opacion

Of other men oughtist not be prayled therfore
But the prayle ought to be gyuen euer more
To the artyfycer whych by hys wyt
It deuyld and so cōnyngly wrought it
Wherfore yf thou sey that wyt & polesy
Be the thyng^e perteynyng to gentry
Thyn auncestours may neuer cōpare wyth mine
For theyr act^e proue them wyser than thyne
For thyn dyd neuer no thyng in theyr days
Concernyng quyk wyt that was worthy prays
yes I wis lewd Iauell I wold thou knewist it
Whyn auncestours haue had more wysedome & wyt
Than thyne haue had & coud do also
Many thynges that thyne coud neuer do
For in the contrey at sessyons and syle
They haue be electe to be Justyce
And for theyr wyt and grete dyscreccion
They haue Juggyd and donne correccion
Vpon thyne auncestours artyfycers
That haue made falle warys & ben dysseyuers
And holpe for to maynteyn euery thyng
That ys to the comyn welth pteynyng
They haue ben also in tyme of warr
Both in thys land & other coutreys farr
Dukys & leders of the hole army
And by theyre wyttis & warly polycy
Study forecast & dilygent trauayle
Haue won many a grete fyld & batayle
And thyne auncestours that were there
were neuer able to bere shyld noz spere
And were neuer but soldyars & pyoners
Noz neuer had wysdome to be ruleys
But because myn auncestours haue euer be
Dyscrete & wyle they haue had auctoryte
Nay nay thyne auncestours cam neuer all
To auctoryte for wysdome pncypall
For though soe were wise yet some of the agayn
Had small discreccion lxxvll wyt oꝝ brayn
But because of the long cōtynuanne
Of theyr grete possessions by enherytaunce
By the folyth maner of the worlde we see
For that cause euer they haue had auctoryte
And I say that good reason agreth to it
For though the fader haue no grete wyt

R

M

R

The sone that is wyse shuld neuer the more
 Lose hys land oz auctoryte therfore
 For he that by study drylygens & payn
 Grete landys oz possessyons doth attayn
 Hys owne lyfe is to shorre & to lyce
 For to take the frute of his mercyte
 Reason wolde therfore that after hys lyfe
 Hys heyes before straungers haue pragalyte
 And the cōtyruauance of such possessyons
 Hakyth noble men & gentyll condycyons
 And they whos blode hath long contynued
 As gentylmen so they shuld be honoured
 And so myn auncestours long tyme haue be
 Grete possyllsoners and in auctoryte
 Therefore consydeyng my grete lynage
 My blode my noble byrth and parentage
 Thou art not able to compare w me
 Nother in gentylnes nor in nobylte
 ¶ Here the plouman cōmith in with a short
 whypp in hys hand & spekyth as folowith

Plo. ¶ Now here is bybbyll babbyll clytter clatter
 I hard neuer of so folysh a matter
 But by goddys body to speke the troth
 I am better than other of you bothe
R ¶ Auunt kankerde chorle fro whens cōmyst thou
P ¶ Mary folysh peuysh daw euen fro my piow
M ¶ How sayst woldyst any thyng there w
 ye mary thou lewyd byllayn & cud rakall
 It is for the full yll beleyng
 To pturb any gentylmens talkyng
P ¶ Gentylnen ye gentyl men jak heryng
 Put your shone in your bolome for weryng
 I accmpt my self by goddys body
 Better than you bothe and more worthy
R ¶ Auunt knaue get the out of the gate
P ¶ Or I shall lay my sworde on thy pate
 That shall I proue I make god auow
 Neuer in better tyme haue at the now
 Et verberat eos
M ¶ Now holde thy hand felow I the pray
 And harkyn what I shall to the say
P ¶ Sey knaue say what canst sey
M ¶ Holde thy hand I pray the & com no narr
 I am a marchaunt & no man of warr

R Thou art not honest I tell the playnly
 To make any quarrel here so sodaynly
 To pturb our cōmunycacyon
P Here ye may se syrs by goddys passyon
 Two proude folys make a crakkyng
 And when it cōmyth to poynt dare do no thyrng
M Our cōmyng hyder & our entent
 ys not to fyght but by way of argument
 Euery man to shew hys oppinyon
 To see who coude shew the best reason
 To proue hym self noble & most gentylman
P By god all the reasons syth ye began
 That ye haue made therof be not worth a fly
R No syr I pray the than tell me why
P First as touchyng noblenes I say
 Ther is nother of you both dyd pue or lay
 Dny of your actys wherby that ye
 Shulde in reason pue you noble to be
 Or therby deserue any maner praylyng
 But all the effect of your arguyng
 To proue your noblenes was but only
 Of the deddys & act^s of your auncestry
 And of the act^s that your auncestours dōd before
 ye ar the nobler neuer the more
R As touchyng my self I dare make compyson
 Of as noble dedys as he hath any done
 For I am & haue ben one of the cheualtry
 At the cōmaundement of my prynce euer redy
 And euery tyne of warr haue be captayn
 And ledet of a .M. men or twayne
 And w hors & harnes spere and sheld
 haue Jopdyd my body in eucry felde
 The rent^s of my landys haue spende lyberally
 And kept a grete house contynually
 And holp to ponyssh theuys & brybers alwey
 To the grete tranqulyte of my contray
 And you maister marchaūt wyl neuer take labour
 Except it be for your pffet and lucoure
Plow. Go to go to now maister marchaunt
 There is a reason that gryyth you a taunt
 I trow more than you can answere well
M Nay I wyspyuyth & rude Tak Iauell!
 I can make an answere so substancyally
 wher to nother of you is able to reply

R
Q
Q

If thou canst answer my reason do
That can I well doo. **P.** Then go to folk go to
I say the comyn well of euey land
In feite of marchaunt dyle doth pryncypally stand
For if oure comoditees be vtteryd for nought
In to strange landis and no ryches brought
By dyt therfore / we shuld come to beggaly
And all men dryffyn to lyf in mysery
The we noble marchauntis that in this reame be
what a grete welth to thysland do we
we vtter our warys & by theyrs good chepe
And bryng them hyder that grete pffet
And pleasure dayly comyth to this regyon
Too all maner people that here do won
Forthermore ye see well w your eyes
That of strayinge landis the comodyttes
we haue such nede of them that be there
That in no wyse we may them for bere
As oyle sykis frutis & spyces also
Golde syluer pryn & other metallis moo
All drayms & druggys longyng to physyke
whych men must nedes haue when they be seke
whych in thys reame can not well grow
Our cotrey is to colde & not hote I no w
w out whych thyngis we shulde lyfe in mysery
And oft tymes for lak of them we shulde dye
And I spende my studi & labour continually
And cause such thyngis to come hyder dayly
For the comfort of thys land & comen welth
And to all the people grete pffet & helth
And for such noble dedys reason wyll than
That I ought to be callyd a noble man
And nother of you both that here now be
In noblenes may accompare w me
Now well hit by goddes body well hit
P. Of one that hath but lyttyll wyt
Answer me one worde furst I pray the
what is the noblest thyng that can be
what saist thou therto thi self let see
Is not y the noblyst thyng in dede
That of all other thyngis hath lest nede
As god which reynith etern in blysse
Is not he the noblest thyng y is
R yes mary no man in reason can that deny

P

R
P

R

¶

Well than there is no reason therof why
But because he is the thyng omnipotent
And is in him self so suffycient
And nedyth the helpe of no nothyr thyng
To the helpe of hys glorious beyng
But euery other thyng hath nede of his ayde

¶

¶

Mary that is very trowth & well sayde
And lyk wyse y thyng that hath most nede
Is the thyng that is most wretched
So suffycyency is euer noblenes
And necessyte is euer wrechydnes
And he that hath more nede of that thyng

¶

Foz the pseruacyon of hys lyuyng
Then his felow hath his felow must nedf be
By thys same reason more noble than he
what than. ¶ by the same reason it puith lo
ye be but captyf & wretched both two
And by the same reason pue I shall
That I am the noblyst man of vs all
Foz I haue nede of no inaner thyng
That ye can do to help of my lyfuyng
Foz euery thyng whereby ye do lyf
I norysch it & to you both do gyf
I plow I tyll & I ster the ground
wherby I make the corn to habounde
whereof ther is made both drynk & bred
wyth the which dayly ye must nedis be fed
I norysch the catell & fowlys also
Fyssh & herbis & other thyngis mo
fell herr & woll whych the bestis do bere
I norysch & preserue which ye do were
which yf ye had not no dowt ye shuld
Starue foz lak of clothis because of colde
So both you shulde die oz lyue in necessite
If ye had not cofort & help of me
And as foz your fyne cloth & costly aray
I cannot see whi ye ought oz mai
Call your self noble because ye were it
which was made bi other menis labour & wit
And also your dilicate drinkis & viand
Bi other menis labours be made so pleasand
Therefore mayster marchaunt now to you I sei
I can not see but I am able & mai
Lyf wythout you oz your purueaunce

Lyue wythout you or your purueyaunce
For of fode & cloth I haue suffisaunce
Of my self for lyffing necessary
And now sir knyght to you I sey playnly
I see not that ye can any thyng do
For the comyn well or ought longyng ther to
But ech man beyng in auctoryte
Hauyng wit may do it as well as ye
Therefore to speke now of necessitye
Ther is nother of you both but ye be
In more nede than I therefore I sey playn
I am more noble than other of you twayn
Now that is a folysh reason so god me saue
For by the same reason thou woldyst haue
Eueri best fylly & other foule than
To be more noble of birthe than a man
For man hath more nede of bodely coueryng
Than they haue for they nede no thinge
The best haue hert & alio a thik skin
The fish thalis or shells to kepe theyr bodyes in
The foulis fetheys & so eueri thing
Bi nature hath his pper coueryng
Saue man yun leu which is born all naked
And therefore he shuld be than most wretched
¶ Mary no man can make a better reason
For that is a sure & a trew concludyon
For if a child when he is first born
were not holp & coueryd he were sone lorn
He hath no strenght to help hym neuer a dell
yet bestis haue power to help them self well
¶ So cōsideryng māns body in dede
A best is moze noble & man moze wretched
Be cause he hath nede of many mo thyngis
Than bestis haue to help of theyr lyffingis
Also man must dayly labour & swete
To get hym sustynaunce as drynk & mete
The grownd he must dyg & the bestis kyl
For byde and mete his bodi to fyl
Grapis frutis and herbis nozsh dyligently
To make good drynkis to restresh his body
But all brut bestis haue coueryng natural
Sufficyent to couer their bodyes with all
And tynd theyr fode euer on the grownd redy
with out any payn labour or study

So euery man by reason of hys body
Is more wretched & in more mysery
Than best be / yet this not withstandyng
Man is most noble of creatur lyuyng
Not by hys body for that is impotent
But by hys soule beyng so excellent
For by reason of hys soule intyllectyue
He subde wyth all other best alyue
And copellyth all other bestis that be
By hys wit to releue his necessyte
But bestis haue no wyt them self to defende
Nor can get no more than god hath them send
For take any best that weryth heet
And do dyp it of bare a gayns wynter
That best hath no maner of polery
To get other coueryng for hys body
Of cloth nor skyns nor hath no wyt
To put it vppon hym though one haue made it
Nor can byld no house nor kyndyl no fyre
To warme hys body yf nede shuld requyre
But yet a man hath wyt & vnderstandyng
For to help hym self in euery such thyng
So man for his soule intellectuall
Is most noble creature of bestis all

That is a verey good & preguant reason
yet me thynkith thou makist a degression
from the argument that we first began
which was to proue who was most gentylman
whych we disputyd I wold thou haddist hard it

Tuff I hard what ye seyde euery whit
Then shew thy reason therein or thou go
Pay be god I haue some what ells to do
I must go by me a halporth of gresse
The spokes of my cart therwith to dresse
Trow ye that I wyll leue my bysynes
for your babelyng pomp & folyshnes
May by sent mary I wyll not do so
for I can now to the merket goo
And for an halpeny as much gresse by
As shall cost me in our town a peny
And I tell the playnly wout any boist
A halpeny is as well sauid as lost

Straight for an halpeny therein is no wast
Cary with vs a while phapps thou mast

By our acquayntaunce now heze get more
Chan thou gatist with thy cart this monyph before

P **C** Straw for thi counsell torde a fact
Crowist I wpll gyl up my plow or cart
And folow thy folish appityte and mynde
May I am not yet so mad nor so blynd
For when I am at my cart or plow
I am more meyer than other of you
I wold not chaunge my lyl nor my lyffyng
For to be made a grete lorde or a kyng
There is no ioy nor pleasuze in this world here
But hpll bely fyll and make good chere
Be it prynce lorde gentelman or knaue
Hit is all the ioy that heze he can haue
But these couetous and ambitious wretches
They set there myndys in honoure and ryches
So much that they be neuer content
So they lyl euer in payn and tozment
But a man that can this means fynd
To haue fode and cloth and a mery mynde
And to desyre no more than is nedefull
That is in this worlde the lyl most ioyfull
Which lyse in this worlde no man shall acquire
Till he suddew his infactat desyre

M **C** I see well thou has a curst appst wit
Then yf thou wylt depart I pray the yet
Come agayn when thy bisines is doo

P **C** For what intent now shuld I do so

M **C** For we will in owre olde argument prosede
Who shulde be callyd a gentylman in dede
And we wolde be glade to heze thy reason

P **C** I wpll come agayn uppon a condicion
That ye wpll wayt uppon me both twayn
And be not out of the way when I come agayn

K **C** We wpll not be farr hens **P.** then I wil not sayle

M **C** Then I pray the let not thi pmise quaste

P **C** Lo heze is my synger now trust me well

I will come agayn yf I haue my hele
For by god I promyse you one thyng
I am as trew of my worde as the kyng
But if I fynde you not heze then by my trough
I shall call you oppenly false knauys both

M **C** Thou shalt fynde us trew in euery thyng

P **C** I thynk so / except lyeng and stelyng

K Then far well for a season a dew
 Then fare ye well both I dare say as trew
 As some that be tyede in newgate
M well now he is gone god speed well his gate
 But what shall we do now the meane season
K Let us take now some recreacyon
 And come agayn here and keep our popntment
M Now thereto I am ryght well content
 And in the meayn wyle good lord of thy grace
 Preserue all the people here in this place
 Amen
 Finitis prime partis

C Secunda pars
 The Plouman

P Here I may walk and wander to and fro
M But I se not them whych I wold speke to
M Yes by rode here we be both twayn
 To whom thou dydyst promys to mete here agayn
 To dyspute the questyon that we began
 whych of us coud proue hym most gentylman
K Thou seydest thou hardyst our argumentes all
P so dyd I nother good nor substancyall
 For thy folysh and ppuysh oppynyon
 was because of the grete domynyon
 Of the landis and rentis wher to thou wast boze
 whych thyn auncestours had long tyme before
 Thou thynkyst thy self a gentylman to be
 Ant that is a folysh reason semyth ne
 For when adam dolf and eue span
 who was then a gentylman
 But then cam the chyl and gederyd good
 And ther began furst the gentyll blood
 And I thynk verely ye do beleue
 That we cam all of adam and eue
 Then to speke by reason grete possessions
 Make no gentylmen but gentyl condycyons
 That is the cause and best reason why
 One shuld be callyd a gentylman truly
 And forthermor mark well this reason then
 If a mānis auncestours haue be gentylmen
 And veyteous and good to commyn well
 That ought to be reputyd neuer adell
 To the pryple of the chylde whych doth refuse





Such good cōdyryons & the cōtrary vse
But he ought to be dyspraysyd the more
Because hys auncestours hath shewid hym before
A precedent of gentylnes & vertew
whych good example he dothe not insew
For the gentylnes of hys blode clery
In hym doth decay & vtterly dye
So he that vsyth cōdyryons verteous
Though that hys auncestours were vycyous
Dught not to be dyspraysyd therfore
But ought to be honoryd & praylyd the more
yet me thynkyth more honoz shulde be gyfyn
To hym whych ys of noble blood & kyn
Then yf thou wylt loke honoured to be
Be cause of thy blod then mark well & see
The vylst beggar that goth by the dore
Had ye not both one god & creature
ye cam of one furst stok & pgenye
Both of adam & eue ye wyll not denye
The beggar & thou wer both dowtles
Consepyd & born infylth & vndennes
Thy blood & the beggars of one colour be
Thou art as apt to take seknes as he
yf thou be in the body woundyd
Thy flesh is as yll as his to be helyd
Alas I haue knowen many oꝝ thys
So proud of theyr byrth that all theyr lyffys
wold gyf them to no labour nor lernyng
whych brought them to myserable endyng
That in pouerte wrechydly dyd dye
Dꝝ fallyn to theft & hangyd therfore full hys
So I sey vertew & good cōdyryons than
ys that whych makyth the very gentylman
And though the fadyr may bequeth to hys sōt
Hys ryches hys land & hys possessyon
yet may he nothyr gyf nor bequeth
Unto hym in no wyse after hys deth
Hys vertew nor hys gentyl cōdyryons
They can not descend as other possessyons
And yf thou wylt be a gentylman nedys
Thou must than vse vertew & gentyll dedys
why desyre men then prayle euermore
Of the actis of theyr auncestours done before
One cause ther of ys for lak of lernyng

They pleyue not the reason of the thyng
A nother is be cause ther be many
That call them self gentylnen vnworthy
whych lyfe voluptuously & bestyall
And do no good in the world at all
But lyfe in pryde slouth & vnthrystynes
And be cause they haue no maner goodnes
Nor pperte nor vertew in them wher by
Any man shulde thynk them any prayse worthy
Therefore they seke for comendacyon
Of the act that theyr auncestours haue done
¶ Then I meruell men desyre to be callyd
Of the blode of them that excellyd
In worldly honour as kyngs & empours
wher some were tyrantts some were conquerours
And few desyre to be callyd of theyr blod
whych haue ben callyd Just me verteous & good
And vlyd indyfferent Justice & equyte
¶ Wherof abtynens or wyllfull pouerte
¶ I shuld tell the the very cause trew
It is because they loue no such vertew
whych vertew & gentyll comendacyons shuld be
Longyng to gentylnen of pperte
¶ If gentyll comendacyons be the cause lo
¶ Then wyll I compare with both you two
For I haue vlyd euer gentyll maner
And so haue myn auncestours that before were
For furst of all when thys worlde began
Long after ther were but few people than
Men had suffycient of euery thyng
wyth oute gret labour for fode & clothyng
All thyng was in comyn among them dout les
But after warde when people dyd increse
Ich man to increse hys pleasure & volupte
Of goodf & landes desyryd pperte
wereof grete stryf & debate dyd aryse
The such as were auncestours were that were wyse
Did studi to make laws how the people myght be
Lyffyng to gedyr in pease & vnyte
And agayns ennytyes alwey defendyd
The people that tyllyd the ground & laboryd
The people pleyuyng than theyr goodnes
Theyr gret wyt dyscreffyon & gentylnes
were content to gyfe them pt of the pffet

Comyng of theyr lande whych they dyd get
 As corn catell & such thyng as they wan
 But after when that coyn of money began
 They chaūgid those reuenue & were cōtent
 To gyfe them in money an ānyell rent
 So for theyr good & verteous cōdyrons
 They cam furst to lād & possessyons
 So possessyons began & were furst found
 Uppon a good & resonable ground
 By gogge swete body thou lyeest falsely
 All possessyons began furst of tyranny
 For when people began furst to encrese
 Some gafe them self all to Idylnes
 And wold not labour but take by vyolence
 That other men gat by labour & dyligence
 Than they that labouryd were sayne to gyfe
 Them pt of theyr getting in peas to lyfe
 Or ell for theyr landis money a porcyon
 So possessyons began by extorcyon
 And when such extorcyoners had oppresyd
 The labouryng people than they ordeynyd
 And made laws incruelous straye & hard
 That theyr heyr myght inioy it after ward
 So the law of inherytaunce was furst begon
 whych is a thyng agayns all good reason
 That any inherytaunce in the world shuld be
 That is a shamefull opynyon lemyth me
 For when I haue labouryd & by grete study
 Gat & purchesyd landys truly
 It is good reason that I haue lyberte
 To gyfe thole landis to whom it lyketh me
 Or ell to let them descend lynyally
 To my chyld or colyn of my blod most nye
 For inherytaunce must nedys be a good thyng
 Because so much good therof is pcedyng
 Euery man to hys blod such loue doth bere
 Because the land shall descend to hys heyre
 He wyll byd theron & the land improu
 And make corn & grasse to encrese & grow
 Graft frute set trees & norsh tyMBER
 And to increse fysh make pondys wyth water
 Stok busshis & wedes whych dystroy herbage
 And all baren ground bryng to tyllage
 And amend the hye wayes that be ther about

And do many other good dedis no dowt
For the pfer of hys heyrys that shalbe
And for the cōyn welth of his countre
which thynge surely he wold neuer intend
yf the land shuld not to hys heyre descend
¶ By thy reason no nothyr thynge is ment
But a good dede vppon an yuell intent
when men for loue or pryde do such good dedis
¶ The dyuell therefore shall quyt the theyr medys
whyder god or the deuyll quyt them therefore
¶ Is now to our purpose neuer the more
For theyr mynd & intent no man can tell
But touchyng in herytaunce thys I wot well
¶ Much good cōmyth therof & dayli doth grow
¶ Nay mych all cōmyth therof I shall proue how
For these men that be of gret possessyons
¶ Unto theyr blod haue such affeccyons
yf any land lyke them that lyeth nye them
¶ Of theyr pore neighbors they wyll destroy them
Or by extort meanys they wyll them compell
¶ The land for half the worth to them to sell
And when they lake money they wyl allwey
¶ Euer borow & neuer wyllng to pay
And when they shall dye ye see theyr piens
¶ Few of them haue remors of cōlyens
To make any maner restytucyon
¶ Of any land so wrongfully gotton
¶ Thou hast spoke sore agayns gentylmen
But what seyst thou of marchaunde then
¶ Many be good and worshipful also
And many charitable dedis they do
¶ Byld churchys & amend the hye ways
Make almyshousys & help many decays
¶ But some be couetous & full falsely
Get theyr goodis by dysseyt & vsury
¶ And when they haue a .M. li. in theyr cofers
They wyll rather suffer theyr neyghbers
¶ To sterue for hunger & cold & to dye
Or they wyll gyfe to help them a peny
¶ And yet more ouer when any of them be
Promotyde to rule or auctoryte
¶ They dysdayn all lernyng law & reason
And iugge all by wyll & affeccyon
¶ Thou art but a rayler to speke so sore



Agayne gentylmen & marchaunt^r euermore
 We not plowmen & othe^r that dryfe the cart
 And such rusticall felows as thou art
 Fals shrews & lyfe as bycouly also
 As gentylmen of land^r & marchaunt^r do
 Yes this bylleyⁿ carters alinost echon
 Haue nother cōscyens nor deuocyon
 For brybe & stele euery thyng they wyll
 If they may secretly come theruntyl
 And as for prayer & dyuine seruyce
 They loue them in no maner wyle
 Nor neuyr wolde labour nor work do
 If ne^de of lyf^fing drede them not therto
 yet gentylmen & the ry^{ch} marchaunt^r that be
 Use my^{ch} more vyce & iniquyte
 why thynkyst all marchaunt^r & gentylmen nought
 Nay I sey not so that is not my thought
 I am not yet so folysh nor so mad
 For I know many good though some be bad
 yet some wyll suffer hys dett^r vnpayd to be
 And dye and Jeopd hys soule rather than he
 wyll any of hys land^r mynysh and empayre
 That shuld after hys deth come to hys heyre
 And some of them so proude be of theyre blod
 And vse small vertew and doo ly^l good
 But gyfe ali theyre myndys and theyre study
 To opprese the pore people by tyrrany
 And some of them thynk thys for a iurete
 It is the most honour to them that can be
 To be able for to doo extorcyon
 And to mayntayn it wythout puny^{cy}on
 Bi goggs swet bodi thou art a stark knaue
 Noble men and gentylmen so to depraue
 what thou proude horelō sole whō dost thou knaue
 I trow thou woldist a good blowe or two haue
 wyth a good whyplōke to tech the curtesy
 Quant beggerly knaue I the desye
 what wylt thou wage battell by & by now
 That shall I proue strayght I make god auowe
 Et hic verberat eos
 kepe the peace masters hold your hādys for shame
 To make thys besynes ye be gretely to blame
 ye wylt dysturb all thys hole company
 Nay mary it is a cause to make them mery

R To walke such a proude foole is but sport & gaie
 By cokkys body were not for wordly shame
M I wuld cut thy flesh oꝛ ellc see thy herte blode
 Sir hold your tōg your wordis benoethyng good
 We lose here w̄ thys lewyd altercacyon
P Mych good pastyme and recreacyon
 why what better pastyme her canst thou haue
 Then to here one to call an other knaue
M And see such a proud foole walkyd w̄ a whyp
 But I loue it not therfore of selyshyp
 Leue thys brablyng and w̄ good argument
P Trye the matter that is nost cōuenyent
 Nay I wyll trye it how so euer he wyll
 Be it w̄ wordys oꝛ dedc I wyll answere hym styll
 For be god yf he wyll not be cōtent
 To be cōcludyd by good argument
 I wyll cōclud hym one way oꝛ that I goo
R Or I shall pue it on hys pate that shall I doo
 Thow spekyst lyk a clerk that hath lrttyll wyt
 when a case is put yf he can not soyle it
 By no maner reason that he can ley
 Then wyll he answere hym thys wyse & sey
 Beware what ye sey syr now I aduyse you
 For it is treason oꝛ herysly that ye spek now
 To thentent to rebuke hym oppnyly
 Before the vnlernyd people that stand therby
 And yf he can no colour of such thyng fynd
 Then wyll he vex and chafe in hys mynd
 And cast owt some lewd wordc of quarelyng
 To torn the hole matter to chydyng & fyghtyng
P And so dost thou now lyke one that were mad
 Nay I wold thou knewist thou solysh lad
 I am nother mad nor dronken yet
 For myn oppynyon I haue well puyd it
 By substancyall reason and argument
 That enherytaunce is not conuenyent
 And shewyd better reasons than thou canst doo
R Nay thy reasons may soone be answered vnto
 For god defende that estates of enherytaunce
 Shuld be dystroyed for by tha t good oꝛ dynaunce
 Gentylnen of landes vndoutydly
 Dyrnge by theyꝝ chyldꝝen full honourably
 Some put to the scole to lerne cōyngge
 To instruct the people in vertuous luyngge



Some made to be actyfe in marcyall dede
Able to defend the land when nede is
And the rustycall people that haue no land
Such thyng be not able to take in hand
wherfore yf we shuld dystroy enherytaunce
we shulde dystroy all good rule and ordynaunce
But such men as haue gret rent and land
And no estate but terme of theyr lyuys
And euery thyng theron wyll norly and saue
For the grete zeale & loue that they only haue
To the comyn welth of theyr contrey
And for god sake lo these people be they
That be worthy to haue possessyons
And such people of vertuouse condycyons
And no nother shuld be chosyn gouernours
& thei shuld haue lād to maintain their honours
Terme of theyr lyuys as long as they take payn
For the comyn welth thys is good reason playn
So that noman owght to haue any land
But such as be apt and haue charge in hand
For the comyn welth as pryncys and rulers
Bysshopp curat prechers and techers
Iugges mynysters and other offycers
That of the comyn welth be executers
And valyant men of the chyualry
That be bounde to defende the people dayly
Such men as be apt to all such thyng
Shuld haue land to mayntayne theyr lyffyng
So enherytaunce is not belesmyng
To let them haue land that can do no such thing
No? I thynk it not resonable nother
One man to lyf by labour of an nother
For ych man is borne to labour truly
As a byrde is to fle naturally
No? a man ought not to haue such lyberte
To lese land to hys chyld wher by that he
Shall lust for to lyfe in slouth & gloteny
Compellyd to do nought but lyfe voluptuously
There is alway good remedy for that
That is to compell them to do som what
So that ych man hauyng enherytaunce
Haue some auctoryte and gouernaunce
wherein he shulde take payne and besynes
To constrayn hym to eschew Idelnes

¶ Then thys grete mylchef shuld folow of hit
 Of tymes they shuld rule that haue lyttyll wyt
 Or disposyd to be proud & couetous
 Or to lyfe after theyr lustis voluptuous
 which yf such men had auctoꝝyte
 Many thyng^e no do wote mys orderyd shuld be
 where Justyce shuld be / there wold be tyramy
 where peas shuld be warr debat & enuy
 So there is no good reason that I can se
¶ To proue that any enherytaunce shuld be
 yes that shall I proue by good auctoꝝyte
 For rede in the byble and thou shalt therein see
 God sayd to abraham tibi dabo
 Terram hanc et semine tuo
 which is as much to say to expounde yt trew
 I shall gyfe thys land to the and thyn yllow
 Here is a good proue that it was goddes wyll.
 That Abrahā and his blode shulde continew styl
 As possessyoners and haue the gouernaunce
 Of that lande as theyr propre enherytaunce
¶ Thou answerest me now euen lyke a sole
 As some of these fonde clarkes that go to scole
 when one putteth to them a subtyll questyon
 Of phylozophy to be proude by reason
 whan they haue all theyr wyttes & reason spende
 And can not tell how theyr parte to defende
 Than they wyll aledge some auctoꝝyte
 Of the lawes oꝝ elles of deuynite
 whiche in no wyle men may denye
 And yet ye knowe well that of phylozophy
 The pꝝncyples oft contraryant be
 vnto the very ground^e of deuynite
 For the phylozophers agre here vnto
 Quod mūdus fuit semper ab eterno
 And deuyneys quod in principio oim
 Creauit deus terram et celum
 But thou dydest promyse openly euen now
 Onely by naturall reason to proue how
 That enherytaunce ought for to be had
¶ By gogges body syz I holde you bothe mad
 ye be lyke some woman that I knowe well
 when they wolde any matter vnto a man tell
 They wyll tell. xx. talys by the way
 Nothyng to purpose to the matter that they



Dyd furst in tend to tell and declare
 And in lyke maner now both ye do fare
 For ye dyspute now whytheyr enherytaunce
 Be a relonable thyng or a good ordynaunce
 whych is a matter no thyng pteynyng
 To the questyon mouyd at the begynnyng
 For the questyon was whych of vs all three
 Coude proue hym selfe most gentyman to be
 As touchyng that we haue all spoke & sayd
 Ich man for hys pt as much as can be layd
 May I haue yet reasons last wherby I can
 pue my selfe of vs all most gentyman
 That nother of you both can voyde by reason
 If thou haue ought ell to say now speke on
 Then to you both answer me thys thort clause
 Is not gentyll condycyons the most pricyppall cause
 To make one to be a gentyman
 Paraduventure it may be so what than
 paduventure qd a
 May I shall pue that by examples many on
 For musyke makyth one a musycon
 Gramer to be good gramareon
 And also geomytry a good geometrycon
 And chorlyth condycyons a cyocle for to be
 And so of every other estate & degre
 And where gentyll condycyons be doutles
 In any pson there is gentyllnes
 Than as vertew makyth a good man
 So gentyll condycyons a gentyllman
 All those poyntes I thynk must nedys graūtyd be
 what arguyt more theroforth let vs see
 How fyrst than to pryde wrath & enuy
 They be nought & euyl I thynk verely
 what is mekenes pacyens & charyte
 Euerychone a gentyll & good ppte
 what is couctous & yberalyte
 The furst good the other nought for surete
 what is gloteny sloth & lechery
 They be nought all who can that deny
 what abstynens good belynes & chalyte
 Vertuous & gentyll ppertees they be
 Syth ye haue graūtyd thys I shall proue playn
 I am a gentyllman so is none of you twayn
 furst for pryde your rayner the wyth what ye be
 C. i.

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For ye wyll neuer be content except that ye
 Haue the fynest cloth & sylke for to were
 Of oryent colours & all your gere
 So costly / your houys gylt gloriously
 As though ye wold therein your self deify
 ye couet euerimore good land & rent
 what so euer ye get yet neuer content
 wrathfull ye be mouyd to anger anon
 And enuious dysdaynyng euery man
 And as for me I am content alwey
 wyth a pore cotage & symple aray
 I dysdayn no man & yet pacyently
 Can suffer to be caly'd knaue and not angry
 Somtyme I call hym knaue agayn in hast
 And when I haue sayd my anger is past
 ye haue your beddys so pleasaunt & soft
 wherein ye ease your self to long and to oft
 whych makyth your bodyes so tender to be
 That ye can not endure labour lyke me
 wyth no maner course fode ye wyll be fede
 But wyth pleasand wynys & most whyttest brede
 wyth flesch & fysh most dylcate & fat
 All frut & spyes that can be gat
 And when ye haue had such pleasaunt refeccyons
 To aswage your care all insurreccyons
 what so euer she be wyfe wedow or mayde
 If she come in the way she shalbe assayd
 Thou liest sklanderours chorle for I thik of troth
 Thou vlyst lych vlyse more then we both
 Pay by cokk body I vse no lych lyfe
 For I am content wyth blak maud my wyfe
 Crow ye y I care for these nise proude prinys
 These paityd popagays that hold by their chymn
 And loke so smotely as who say they wold
 Haue euery mā woo them that doth them behold
 Cote man for all lych venereall werk
 As good is the foule as the fayre in the derk
 Thou sayst trew / drafe is good Inough for swyne
 yet thou answerest to no reson of myne
 Thy reasons all ryght well answer I can
 For I sey it be cometh a noble man
 To haue rych appell & clothyng
 And goodly housys of costly byldyng
 And that ych man accordyng to hys degre

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Be knowyn from other and what they be
For yf such costly thyngē were not made
work for pore peple coud neuer be hade
And many folkē than shuld fall to Idylnes
whych is the moder of vyce and wretchydnes
ye but I delyte noo such banytefe worldly
I delyte nother in sloth nor gloteny
I dyg and delse & labour for my lybyng
Neuer ydyll but somewhat euer doyng
Dayly I ren and go beze swete & swynk
I ete broun brede and drynk small drynk
Content w^r cours meat what so euer it be
so it quench the hunger it suffylsyt me
These poyntes I use whych I haue rehercyd now
Be not these gentyl condycyons I pray you
If thou use them nede compellyth the theto
For if thou coudist hardli thou wold other wise do
what I wold doo then ye can not tell
It is not to purpose but thys I wot well
Syt that I use my lyse in such good maner
whych such gentyll condycyons explyd here
More than ye both do styll contynuyng
And syth that gentyll condycyons is the thyng
To make a gentylman the cause pryncypall
wherin I vse my lyse most of vs all
who can by any reason deny than
But that I am of us all most gentylman
In seyth yf thou be gentylman therefore
Thou art a gentylman agaynt thy wyll full sore
Syt I se he stadyth in his own cōsait so well
That oppnyon we shall neuer expell
From hym by no argument nor reason
Therefore now for a lytyll season
Let vs dept from hym I hold it best
Then we shall haue w^r hym some rest
I agre therto for caton sayth this
Contra verbosas noli cotendere verbis
Contend nor argu neuer in no matter
w^r hym that is full of words and clatter
wherefore for a season let us both dept
I am agreid therto w^r all myn hart
why sirs than wyll ye dept & be gon
ye that we wyll fazewel for a season
For to tarzy here lenger we see no grete cause

Then fare ye well as wyle as two dawys
 And I pray god sende you such grace both twayn
 To be stark cockeolde or ye come agayn
 Now matters they be both gone away
 Therefore one worde now harke what I sey
 wee see well now by playne expience
 when a man is set in a wyllfull credens
 All to fortetpe hys owne oppnyon
 If god hym selfe than wold wyth hym reason
 In effect it shall no more auayle
 Than w^r a whyp to dryfe a snayle
 Therefore no remedy is that I can see
 For puell men that be in auctorpte
 But let them alone tyll god wyll send
 A tyme tyll our gouernours may intend
 of all enormytes the reformatyon
 And bring in theyr handis the rod of coreccyon
 And the reformyng of iniuries them self see
 And wyll say pcytely thus it shall be
 For exortacions techyng and pchyng
 Gestyng and raplyng they mend no thyng
 For the amendement of the world is not in me
 Nor all the grete arguments that we thre
 haue made syth we resonpd here to gedye
 Do not puayle the weyght of a fether
 For the helpyng of any thyng that is amys
 we can not help it then syth it so is
 I wyll let the world wagge & home wyll I goo
 And dryfe the plowgh as I was wont to do
 And praye god send us peas I wyl no farr mell
 Therefore masters all now fare ye well

Hic miles & mercator iterum intrant

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Now by my troth I am glad that he is gon
 And so am I by swete seynt John
 I hard not a choell thys leupn yere
 Shew so curst reasons as he hath done here
 For the mayntenaunce of hys oppnyon
 yet he hys dysleupd for all hys reason
 For it is necessary that rulers be
 To haue posseyns to mayntayn theyr degre
 And those few to dryfe the multytude all
 of the other people to labour to fall
 For yf the rulers drof them not therto
 The peple wold be ydyll & nothyng doo



And most reason is that gouernaunce
Shuld come to such ruleys by inherytaunce
Rather than to haue them chose by eleccyon
Oft tymys by drede mede and affeccyon
Men of euill conscyens that grete tyraunts be
Rede old cronyclys the proue ye shall see
And though they haue grete wyt and lernyng
Yet so proud they be therof they fere nothyng
Nothor god nor man but euermore styll
w^t out counsell or aduysse folow theyr own wyll
But they that by inherytaunce rulers be
Though they haue no grete lernyng yet we see
yet makyth them more fezefull & better cotent
To folow wylse mens counsell and aduysment
And syth that yt hath ben so long cotynnyd
Enherytours to haue rule and so long usyd
And that they haue ruled by as dyscreccyon
As the other that haue be chose by eleccyon
If that order of rule by successyon of blode
Shuld be dystroyd it shuld doo hurte & no good
That reason is so grete no man can debarr
Neuertheles that churlysh knaue that cartter
After hys sond oppynyon thynkyth thus
Hymselfe more gentylman than us
And therin he lyeth for by expiens we see
That gentyll cobycrons most comenly be
In them that be of noble blode borne
For take .xx. cartters whych neuer were before
Aquayntyd let them be to gyder
Take .xx. straynge gentylmen in lyke maner
These churlysh cartters I dare well say
Wyll not agre to gyder skant one day
w^t out chydnyng quarrellyng or fyghtyng
ychone wyll slele from other and be pyknyng
And stryfe whych of them at the skot shall pay lest
And indeuer them who can play the knaue best
But these gentylmen I warant you wyll study
who can shew to other most ruztely
And of theyr gentylnes wyll pfer to pay
For the other and shew what pleasurs they may
So touchyng gentylnes I say suzely
Men of grete byrth vse it most comynly
There can be no truer saying nor sentence
And the cause thezof we see by expience

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R For these pore wretches that haue no thyng
 Must be nygardys churlysh and sparryng
 But gentylmen be taught to be lyberall
 And so they may be for they haue where w^r all
 And as touchyng noblenes that argument
 whych the plotoman made late puyth euydent
Chat gentylmen borne to land must nedys be
 For suffyency of most nobylte
 For helyde goddys gyfts of grace & of nature
 As wyt and bodely strynghe yet they be sure
 Of other ryches as of land and rent
 To auoyd nede so they be more suffyent
 of them self than other pore people doutles
Chen yf nede of straunge helpe cause wrechydnes
 And suffylauns be cause wrechydnes
A better reason no man can deuple
 And yet farther I thynk lykewyle
 He that hath grete haboundance of ryches
 May v^e lyberalyte and gentylnes
 And also it is euer necessary
Chat some lyfe in welth and some in mysery
 And let churllys bable and say what they wyll
 Hit hath ben so euer and wyll be so styl
 For it is almyghty goddys purueaunce
 wyle men of folys to haue the gouernaunce
 And they that rule well I beseech Ihesu
 Send them good lyfe & long to contynue
 Amen.

The Philosopher

ye soferayns all dyscrete & excellent
 Before whom thys dyalog shewyd hath be
 Touchyng iij. poynts by wey of argument
 First what is gentylnes & what nobylte
 And who shulde be chose to hve auctorite
Chys questyons they be so hve and sottell
 few dare plume to dyspyne them well



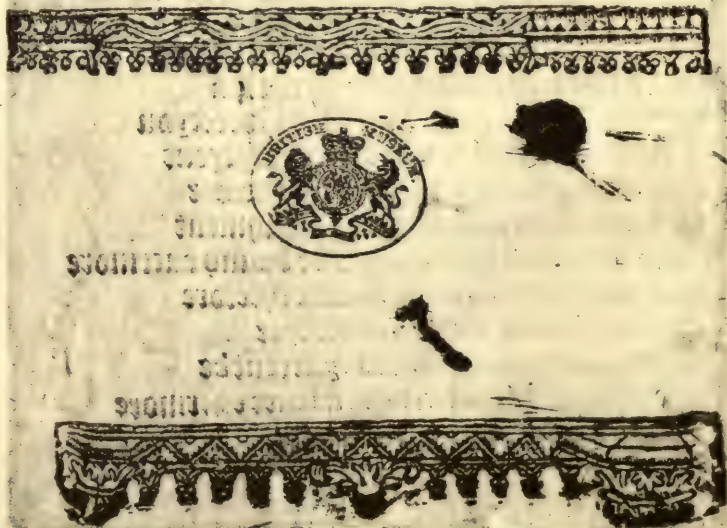


Yet I thynk now vnder your coreccyons
The thyng that makyth a gentylman to be
ys but vertew & gentyll condycyons
whych aswell in pore men oft tynys we se
As in men of grete byeth or hie degre
And also vycious & churlysh condycyons
May be in men born to grete possessyons
And forther as touchyng nobyltye
yet standyth much yt I thynk doutles
In suffycyencye reason doth agre
But that suffylaunce makyng noblenes
Must nedys be anerid vnto goodnes
For suffylauns is not the cause pryncypall
That god his noble but hys goodnes wythall
So vertue is euer the thyng pryncypall
That gentylnes & noblenes doth insue
Then these hedys rulers & gouernours all
Shuld come therto be cause of theyr vertue
And in auctoryte they ought not contynue
Except they be good men dyscrete & wysse
And haue a loue & zele vnto Iustyce
Wherefore souereyns all that here present be
Do to marke well these reasons here brought in
Both agayns men of hie & of low degre
For thys intent only to rebuke syn
For the best wyze that is for one to be gynn
To coÿert the people by exortacyon
ys to pswade them by naturall reason
For when that a man by hys owne reason
Juggyth hym selfe for to offend
That grudgyth his colcyens & gyffyth copuncyon
In to hys herte to cause hym amend
But such blynd best that wyl not intend
To here no good counsell nor reason
Dught by the law to haue sharp coreccyon
But then yf the laws be not iustycient
whych haue be made & ordeynyd before
To gyfe ther fore condygne ponyshment
The pryncys & gouernours be bound euermore
To cause new laws to be made therfore
And to put such men in auctoryte
That good men Just & indyfferent be
But because that men of nature euermore
Be trayle & folowyng sensualyte

yt is impossyble in a maner therfore
 For any gouernours that be in auctoryte
 At all tymys Just & indyfferent to be
 Except they be brydelyd & therto compellyd
 By some strayt laws for them deuysyd
CAs thus that no man such roine occupye
 But certayn yerys & than to be remouyd
 yet that whyle bound to attend dyligently
 And yf he offend & surely prouyd
 wyth out any fauour that he be ponysshyd
 For the ponysshment of a Iuge oz offyce
 Doth more good than of thousand other
And vntyll that such orders be deuysyd
 Substauncyally/and put in execucyon
 Ioke neuer to see the world amended
 Noz of the gret myscheses the reformation
 But they that be bounde to see the thyngs done
 I pray god of his grace put in theyr myndys
 To reforme shortly suche thynges amys
And though that I my selfe now prafe
 Thus myn oppynyon haue publyshyd
 Oz any of my felowes here in this place
 In any poynt here haue vs abuled
 we beseeche you to holde vs excused
 And so the auctour hereof requyret you all
 And thus I comyt you to god eternall.

A M E N.
 Johes rastell me fieri fecit

Cum priuilegio regali.





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Heywood, John
Of gentleness and nobility

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