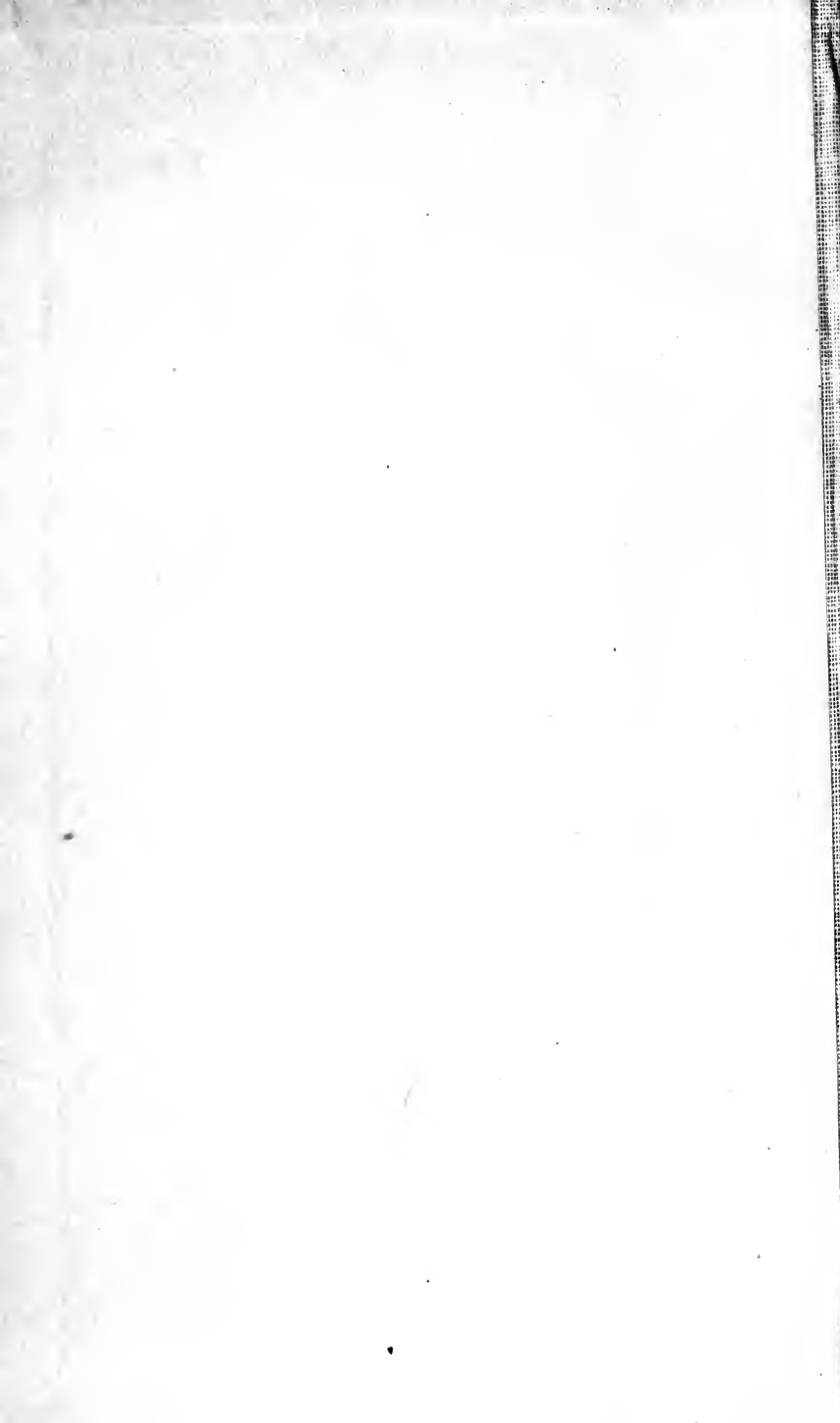


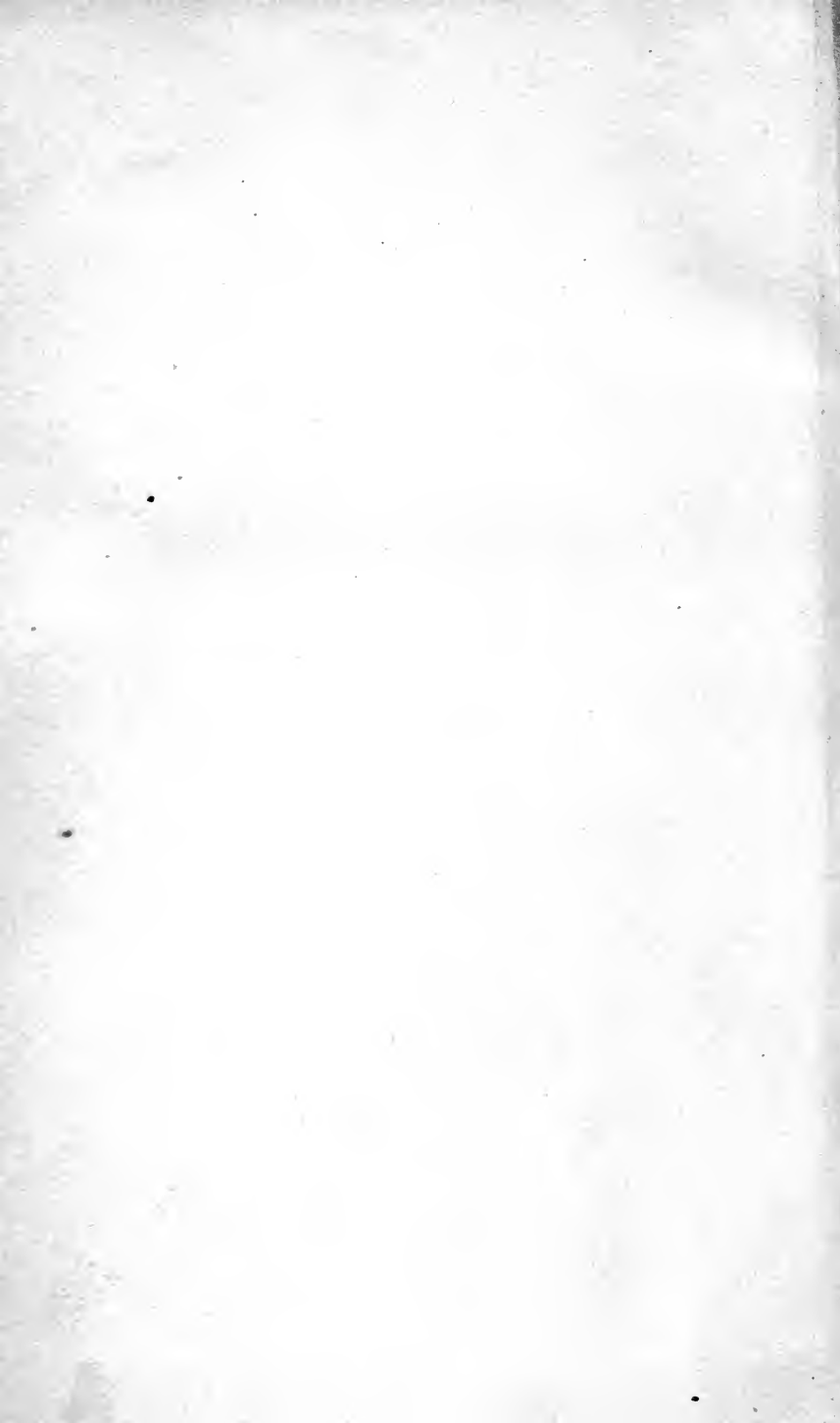
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THE

Corpus MS

OF

Chaucer's Canterbury Tales.



THE
Corpus MS

(*Corpus Christi Coll., Oxford.*)

OF

Chaucer's Canterbury Tales.

EDITED BY

FREDERICK J. FURNIVALL.



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¹ 6 stanzas of 6 lines each, ryming *ababcb*, each with the same 3 rymes, *-ence*, *-ayle*, *-ynde*, as against the 7-line stanzas of the Tale, ryming *ababbcc*, with varying rymes.

² Like the Petworth and Lansdowne MSS., the Corpus has a spurious l. 1778, instead of the genuine E 1777, p. 458 *S-T*, p. 336 *Corp.*, and a spurious l. 1816 (misplaced), p. 459 *S-T*, p. 337 *Corp.* Like Pet. and Lansd., it leaves out l. 1927-8, p. 462 *S-T*, p. 340 *Corp.*, but does not, like Lansd., leave out E 2281-8, p. 350, *Corp.*

³ Like the Petworth and Lansdowne MSS., the Corpus leaves

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¹ The 4 'Modern Instances' are in their right place, after
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GROUP A. FRAGMENT I.

§ 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE.

CORPUS MS. (Oxford).

[N.B. The first 72 lines, and other gaps, are supplied from MS. Arch. Seld. B. 14, Bodleian Library.]

Here bigynneth the prolog of this book the which is namede the talis of Caunturbury in the whiche prolog thautour openly declarith the names of alle the pilgremes there condicions *and* there array.

WHan that Apprille / with his shouris soote
the drought of Marche / hath pershid to the roote
and bathed euery veyne in swich licoure
of which vertue / engendrid is the floure 4
whan zepherus eke / with his swete brethe
inspirid hath / in euery holt *and* hethe
the tendre croppis / *and* the yonge sonne
hath in the Ram / his halff cours I-ronne 8
and smale fowlis make melodie
that slepen al nyght / with open eyghē
so priketh hem nature / in here coragis
that longen folk to gon / on pilgrimadis 12
and Palmeris for to seke strange strondes
to serue halowes couthe / in sondre londes
and specially / from euery shiris ende
of Ingelond to Caunturbury thei wende 16
the holy blisfull marter / for to seke
that hem hath holpen / whan thei were seke
bifitt that on that seson on a day
in Suthwork' atte Tabard as I lay 20
redy to wende / on my pilgrimage
to Caunterbury / with ful deuout corage
at nyght was come / in-to that hosterie
wel .xxixth in a companye 24
of sondry folk / bi auenture I-falle
in feloshipe / *and* pilgremes were thei alle
that toward Caunterbury wolde ryde

the chambres *and* stablis weren wyde 28
 and wel weren eased at the beste
 and shortly whan the sonne was to reste
 so hadde I spokyn / with hem euerychon
 that I was of here feloshipe anoñ 32
 and made forward erly for to ryse [Arch. Seld. B. 14, leaf 1, back]
 to take oure wey / there as I yow devise
 but nertheles while I haue tyme *and* space
 or that I ferther in this tale pace 36
 me thynketh it accordant to resoñ
 to telle yow al the condicioñ
 of ech of hem so as it semed me
 and which they were *and* of what degre 40
 and eke in what array that thei were inne
 and at a knyght than wolff I first bigynne
 A knyght ther was *and* that a worthi man ¶ A knyght.
 that fro the tyme / that he first bigan 44
 to riden owt / he loued chyualrie
 trouth *and* honour / fredom *and* curtesie
 ful worthi was he / in his lordis werre
 and ther-to had he riden / no man ferre 48
 as wel in cristendom / as in hethenesse
 and euere honoured / for his worthynesse
 At Alisandre he was whan it was wonne
 ful ofte tyme he hadde the bord bigonne 52
 aboven alle nacions in Pruce
 in Lectow hadde he reysed *and* in Ruce
 no cristenman / so ofte of his degre
 in Garnade at the sege eke hadde he be 56
 of Algezire *and* riden in Belmarye
 at Lyeis was he *and* at Satalye
 whan thei were wonne *and* in the grete see
 at many a noble arme hadde he be 60
 at mortal batailles had he ben ffittene
 and foughten for our' feith at Tramessene
 in listes thries *and* ay slayn his foo

this ilke worthi knyght hadde ben also 64
 somtyme with the lord of Palatye
 ayeyne another hethen in Turkye
 and euere-more he had a souerayne prys
 and though that he was worthy he was wys 68
 and of his port as meke as is a mayde [MS. Arch. Seld. B. 14, ff 2.]
 he neuere yit no vilonye ne saide
 in al his liff / vn no manere wight
 he was a verry perfit gentill knight 72
 ffor to telle 3ow of his array [The Corpus MS. begins here]
 His hors were goode but he was not gay
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A zeman hadde he and *seruantes* namo
 At þat time for him liste ride so
 And he was clad in coote and hood of greene
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 Vnder his belt' he bar ful þriftily
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 Vpon his arm he bar a gay bracer
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 And on þat' oþer side a gay daggere
 Harnaysed wel and scharp as point' of' spere
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| 3et' wolde he haue a ferþing' or he wente | |
| His purchas was wel bettere þan his rente | 256 |
| And rage he coupe right' as it were a whelpe / | |
| In louedayes þer coupe he moche helpe / | |
| ffor þer he was not' lich a cloysterer | |
| With a thred-bare cope as a pore scoler | 260 |
| But' he was lik' a maister or a pope | |
| Of' double worstede was his semy-cope / | |
| That' rounded as a belle on the presse | |
| Somwhat' he lipsed for his wantounesse | 264 |
| To make his englissh sweete vpon his tonge | |
| And in his harpyng' whan þat' he hadde songe / | |
| His yghen twyncl' in his heed aright' | |
| As don þe sterres in þe frosty night' | 268 |
| This worþi lymitour was cleped huberd | |
| A marchant' was þer with a forked berd | |
| In mottle and heigh on horse he satte | |
| Vp-on his heued a fflaundrissh beuer hatte | 272 |
| His bootes clapsed faire and fetysly | |
| His resons he spak' ful solempnely | |
| Schewyng' alwey þe ences of' his wynnynge | |
| He wolde þe see were kept' for eny þinge | 276 |
| By-twixe Middelburgh and Orewelle | |

Wel coupe he in eschaunge scheldes selle /
 This worpy man ful wel his witte bisette
 Ther wiste no wight that he was in dette 280
 So statly was he of his gouernance
 With his bargaynes and his cheuissance
 ffor soþe he was a worþi man with-aft
 But soplly to sein I not how men him caft 284
A Clerk þer was of Oxenford also
 That vnto logyk hadde long I-go
 As lene was his hors as is a rake
 And he nas not right fat I vndertake 288
 But loked holwe and þer-to soburly
 fful þredbare was his ouereste courtepy
 ffor he had geten him no benifice
 Ne was so worldly for to haue office 292
 ffor him was leuer to haue at his bed hede
 Twenty bookes clad in blak and rede
 Of Aristotle and his philosophie
 Than robes riche or fithel or gay Sautrie / 296
 But al by þat he was a philosophre
 3it had he but a litel gold in cofre
 But al þat he might of his frendes hente /
 On bokes and on lernyng he it /spente 300
 And besily gan for þe soules preye
 Of hem þat 3af him wher-with to scoleye
 Of studie took he most cure and most heede
 Nought o word spak he more þan was neede 304
 And þat was seyð in forme and reuerence
 And schort and quykt and ful of heigh sentence
 Sownyng in moral vertu was his speche
 And gladly wolde he lerne and gladly teche 308
A Sergeant of þe lawe war and wys
 That often hadde ben at þe Parvys
 That was also / ful riche of excellence
 Discret he was and of gret reuerence 312
 He semed swich his wordes were so wise

And many a brem and many a luce in stuwe
 Wo was his cooke but his sauce were
 Poynant and scharp and redy all his gere 352
 His table dormant. in his halle alway
 Stod redy couered all the longe day
 At Sessions þer was he lord and sire
 fful ofte tyme he was knight of þe schire 356
 An anelas and a gisper al of silke
 Heng at his girdel whit as morne mylke
 A scherref had he ben and a comptour
 Was nowher such a worþi vausour 360
 An haburdaiss her and a Carpenter [leaf 6]
 A Webbe a Dyer and a Tapeceer
 And þei were cloped alle in oo liuere
 Of a solempne and a gret ffraternite 364
 fful freissch and newe here gere a-piked was
 Here knyfes nere chaped nought wip bras
 But all wip siluer wrought ful clene and wel
 Here gerdles and here pouches eueridel 368
 Wel semed ech of hem a fair burgeys
 To sitten in a yeldehalle on a deys
 Euerich for þe wisdom þat he can
 Was schaply for to ben an Alderman 372
 ffor Catell hadde þei ynough and rente
 And eek here wyues wolde it wel assente
 And elles certein þei were to blame
 It is ful fair to be cleped ma dame 376
 And gon to vigilies al bifore
 And haue a mantel rialliche / bore
 A Cook þei hadde wip hem for þe nones
 To boyle þe chikenes with þe maryebones 380
 And poudre marchant tart and gallyngale
 Wel kowde he know a draught of london ale /
 He coupe rost and seþe and broile and frie
 Maken mortreux and wel bake a pye - 384
 But gret harm was it as it poughte me

| | |
|--|----------------|
| That' on his schyne a mormal hadde he ffor blank-manger þat made he wip þe beste / | |
| A schipman was þer wonyng' fer by weste | 388 |
| ffor ought' I wot' he was of' Dertemouthe He rood vpon a rouncy as he coupe In a gowne of' faldyng' to þe knee / | |
| A dagger hangyng' in a lace hadde he / | 392 |
| Aboute his nekke vnder his arm a-doun The hoot somer had mad his hiew al broun And certainly he was a good felawe fful many a draught' of' wyn he hadde drawe | 396 |
| ffrom Burdeaux warde whil þe chapmen sleepe | [leaf 6, back] |
| Of nyce conscience took' he no keepe If' þat' he faught' and had þe heigher honde By water he sent' hem hom to euery londe | 400 |
| But' of' his craft' to riken wel his tydes His stremes and his daunger him besydes His herberwe and his moone and his ledmannage | |
| Ther was non such from hulle to kartage | 404 |
| Hardy he was and wys to vndurtake With many a tempest' had his berd be schake He knew alle þe hauenes as they were ffro Gotlond to þe Cape de fynystere | 408 |
| And euery Cryke in Bretagne and in Spaigne His barge y-cleped was þe Mawdeleyne With vs þer was a Doctour of' Phisike | |
| In al þis world ne was þer non him like | 412 |
| To speke of' Phisik' and of' Surgerie ffor he was grounded in astronomie He kept' his pacient' a ful gret' del In houres by his magique naturel | 416 |
| Wel coupe he fortune the ascendent' Of' his ymages for his pacient He knewe þe cause of' euery maladie / | |
| Were it' of' hoot' of' cold or moist' or drie / | 420 |
| And wher engendred and of what' humour | |

He was a verray *parfit* practisour
 The cause I-knowe and of his harm þe rote /
 Anon he ʒaf þe sike man his bote 424
 fful redy had he his appotecaries
 To sende hem drugges and his letuaries
 ffor ech of hem made oþer for to wynne
 Here frendschip nas nat / newe for to gynne / 428
 Wel knew he þe olde Escalapius
 And discorides and eke Rusus
 Olde ypocras haly and Galien
 Serapion Razie and auyzen 432
 Auerois damascien and Constantine [leaf 7]
 Bernard and Gatisdene and Gilbertine
 Of his diete mesurable was he
 ffor it was of no *superfluite* 436
 But of gret norisshing and digestible
 His studie was but litel on the bible
 In sangweyn and in pers he clad was al
 Lyned wiþ Taffata and with Sendal 440
 And yet he was but esy of dispense
 He kepte þat he wan in Pestilence
 ffor gold in *phisique* is accordial
 Ther-fore he loued gold in special 444
 A good wif þer was of by-syde bathe
 But sche was somdel def and þat was skape
 Of cloþ-makynge sche hadde such an haunte
 Sche passed hem of ypres and of Gaunte 448
 In al þe parissche wif ne was þer noon
 þat to þe offryng toforn hire schulde gon
 And if þer dede certein wroþ was sche
 That sche was oute of alle charite / 452
 Hire couerchiefs ful fyne were of grounde
 I dorste swere þei weyeden ten pounde /
 That on a soneday weren vpon hir hede
 Hire hosen weren of fyn scarlet reede 456
 fful streyt yteyed and schoos ful moyste and newe

Bolde was hir face and fair and reed of^t hewe
 Sche was a wor^þi womman al hir lyue
 Housbondes atte chirche dore sche hadde fyue 460
 Wi^þouten o^þer companye in 3ou^þe
 But^t þer-of^t neede^þ nought^t to speke as nou^þe
 And þries hadde sche ben at Ierusalem
 Sche hadde passed many a strange strem 464
 At^t Rome sche hadde ben and at^t Boloigne
 In Galice at^t saint^t Iame and at^t Coloigne
 Sche cou^þe moche of wandring^t by þe weye
 Gat^t to^þed was sche soþly for to seye 468
 Vpon an ambler esely sche satte
 [leaf 7, back]
 I-wympled wel and on hir heed an hatte
 As brood as is a bokeler or a targe
 A fote-mantell^t abouten hir hipes large / 472
 And on hire feet^t a paire of^t spores scharpe
 In felaschipe wel cou^þe sche laughe and carpe
 Of remedies of^t loue sche knew *par* chance /
 ffor sche cou^þe of^t þat^t art^t þe colde daunce 476
 A good man was þer of religioun
 And was a poure *person* of^t a toun
 But^t riche he was of^t holy þought and werk^t
 He was also a lerned man and a clerk^t 480
 That^t cristes gospell^t trewly wolde preche
 His *parisshiens* deuoutly wolde he teche
 Benigne he was and wonder diligent
 And in aduersite ful pacient^t 484
 and swich he was preued ofte siþes
 fful loþ were him to cursen for his tyþes /
 But^t raþer wolde he yeuen out^t of^t doute
 Vnto his poure *parisshens* aboute 488
 Of his offryng^t and of his substance
 He cou^þe in litel þing^t haue suffisance
 Wyd was his *parissh*e and houses fer a-sondre
 But^t he ne lefte nought^t for rayn ne þondre 492
 In seknesse nor in meschief^t to visite

The ferreste in his parisshe moche and lite
 Vpon his feet and in his hond a staf
 This noble ensample to his scheep he yaf 496
 That ferst he wrought and affirward he taughte
 Out of þe gospel he þo wordes caughte
 And þis fugure he addede eek / þer-to
 That if gold ruste what schal Iren do 500
 ffor if a prest be foul on whom we truste
 No wonder is a lewed man to Ruste
 And schame it is if a prest take kepe
 A schiten schepperde and a clene schepe 504
 Wel ought a prest ensample for to 3yue [leaf 8]
 By his clenness how þat his scheep schulde lyue
 He sette nough his benefice to hire
 And leet his scheep acombred in þe myre 508
 And ran to london vnto Seinte Poules
 To seeke him a Chaunterie for soules
 Or with a breþerede for to be with-holde /
 But duelte at hom and kepte wel his folde 512
 So þat þe wolf ne made it not miscarie
 He was a schepperde and not a mercenarie
 And þough he holy were and vertuous
 He was nought to synful men dispitous 516
 Ne of his speche daungerous ne digne
 But in his teching discret and benigne
 To drawe folk to heuen by fairnesse
 By good ensample þis was his bisynesse / 520
 But it were ony persone obstinat
 What so he were of heigh or low estat
 Him wolde he snebbe scharply for þe nones
 A better prest I trowe þat nowher non es 524
 He waited after no pompe and reuerence
 Ne maketh him a spiced conscience
 But cristes lore and his apostles twelue
 He taught but ferst he folwed in himselue / 528
 With him þer was a plowman was his broþer

That hadde I-ladde of dong' ful many a foþer
 A trewe swynker and a good was he
 Lyuyng' in pees and parfit' charite 532
 God loued he best' wiþ alle his herte
 At alle tymes þough him gamed or smerte
 And þan his Neighebores right' as him selue
 He wolde þressche and þerto dike *and* delue 536
 ffor cristes sake for euery pouere wight'
 Wiþouten hire if it lay in his might'
 His tipes payed he ful fair and well
 Boþe of his propre swynk' and his catell 540
 In a Tabbard he rood vpon a mere [leaf 8, back]
 Ther was also a Reeue and a Mellere /
 A Sompnour and a Pardoner also
 A Maunciple *and* my self' þer nare no mo / 544
 The meller was a stout' carl for þe nones
 fful big' he was of brawn and eek' of bones
 That' proued wel for ouer al þar he cam
 Atte wrastlyng' he wold haue away þe ram 548
 He was schort' schuldred a þikke knarre
 The was no dore þat' he nolde heue of harre
 Or breke it at a rennyng' with his heede
 His berd as eny sowe or eny fox was reede 552
 And þerto brod as þough it were a spade /
 Vpon þe cop right' of his nose he hade
 A wert' and þer-on stood a tuft' of heeres
 Reed as the berstles of a sowes Eres / 556
 Hise nose-þrilles blake weren and wide
 A swerd and bokeler bar he by his syde
 His mouþ as gret' was as a gret' fourneys
 He was a Iangler and a goliardeys 560
 And þat' was most' of synne and harlotries
 Wel couþe he stele corn and tolle þries
 And ȝit' he hadde a þombe of gold parde
 A whit' cote and a blew hood wered he 564
 A Baggepipe wel couþe he blowe and sour

And þer-with-al he brought vs out of toun
 A gentil maunciple was þer of a temple /
 Of which achatours mighte take exsemple / 568
 ffor to ben wyse in byeng of vitaile
 ffor wheþer þat he paied or took by taile
 Algate he wayted so in his achate
 That he was ay biforn and in good estate / 572
 Now is not þat of god a ful fair grace
 That such a lewed mannes witt schal pace
 The wisdom of an heep of lernede men
 Of maistres hadde mo þan þries ten 576
 That were of lawe expert and curious [leaf 9]
 Of which þer was a dosein in that hous
 Worþi to ben Stywardes of Rente and londe
 Of any lord þat is in Ingelonde 580
 To make him lyue by his propre good
 In honour detteles but if þat he were wood
 Or lyue as skarsly as him list desire
 And abie for to helpen al a schire 584
 In any cas þat mighte falle or happe
 And ȝit þis manciple sette here alþer capp
 The Reeue was a slender colerik man
 His berd was schaue as nygh as euer he can 588
 His her was by his eeres ful round y-schorn
 His toppe was dokked lik a prest biforn
 fful longe were his legges and ful lene
 I-lik a staf þer was no calf y-sene 592
 Wel couþe he kepe a garner or a bynne
 Ther was non auditour couþe on him wynne
 Wel wist he by þe drought and by þe reyne
 The yeldyng of his seed and of his greyne 596
 His lordes scheep his neet his dayerie
 His swyn his hors his stoor and his pulletrie
 Was holly in þis Reeues gouernynge /
 And by his couenant ȝaf þe rikenynge 600
 Syn þat his lord was twenty ȝeer of age

Ther coupe no man brynge him in arrerage
 Ther nas baillif^t ne herde nor oper hyne
 That^t he ne knew his sleight^t and his covyne 604
 They were adrad of^t him as of^t þe dep
 His wonyng^t was ful fair vpon an heþ
 Wiþ greene trees schadewed was his place
 He coupe better þan his lord purchace 608
 fful Riche he was astored priuely
 His lord he coupe plese wel subtilly
 To yiue and lene him of^t his oughne good
 And haue a þank^t and yet^t a cote and hood 612
 In 3oupe he hadde lerned a good mester
 [leaf 9, back]
 He was a wel good wrighte a Carpenter
 This reue satte vpon a ful good stot^t
 That^t was al pomely grey and highte scot^t 616
 A long^t Surcote of^t pers vpon he hadde
 And by his syde he bar a rusty bladde
 Of Northfolk^t was þis Reue of^t which I telle
 Bysyden a toun men clepen it^t Baldeswelle 620
 Tukked he was as is a frere aboute
 And euer he rood þe hyndrest^t of oure route
 A Somynour was þer with vs in þat^t place
 That^t hadde a fyri cherubynnes face 624
 ffor Sauseflem he was with eyghen narwe /
 Als hoot^t he was and leccherous as a sparwe
 Wiþ scalled browes blak^t and piled berde /
 Of his visage children weren afferde 628
 Ther nas quy^k siluer litarge or bremston
 Boras orsure ne oyle of Tarte noon
 Ne oynement^t þat^t wolde clense and byte
 To him might^t helpe of^t his whelkes white 632
 Nor of^t þe knobbes sittyn^g in his cheekes
 Wel loued he garlik^t oynons and eek^t leekes
 And for to drinke strong^t wyn reed as blood
 Than wolde he speke and crye as he were wood 636
 And whan þat^t he wel dronken hadde þe wyn

Than wold he speke no word but latyne
 A fewe termes hadde he tuo or þre
 That he had lerned out of som decre 640
 No wonder is he herd it al þe day
 And eek 3e knowen it wel how þat a Iay
 Can clepe watte as wel as can þe pope
 But who so couþe in oþer þing him grope 644
 Than hadde he spent al his philosophie
 Ay questio quid Iuris wolde he crye
 He was a gentil harlot and a kynde
 A bettre felaw schulde men not fynde 648
 He wolde suffre for a quart of wyn
 [leaf 10]
 A good felawe to haue his concubyn
 A twelf moneth and excuse him atte fulle /
 fful priuely eek a fynch couþe he pulle / 652
 And if he fond owher a good felawe
 He wolde techen him to han non awe
 In such caas of þe Erchedeknes curs
 But if mannes soule were in his purs 656
 ffor in his purs he scholde punyssched be
 Purs is þe Erchedeknes helle seide he
 But wel I wot he lyhede right in dede
 Of cursyng ought eche gilty man him drede 660
 ffor curs wil sle right as assoylyng sauith
 And also war him of a Significauith
 In daunger hadde he at his owne gyse
 The yonge gerles of þe diocise 664
 And knew here counseil and what was al here rede
 A garland hadde he sette vpon his heede
 As gret as it were for an ale stake
 A bokeler hadde he made him of a cake / 668
 With him þer rood a gentill pardonere
 Of Rounceyuall his frend and his comper
 That streight was comen fro þe court of Rome
 fful loue he song come hider loue tome 672
 This Somnour bar to him a stif burdown

Was neuer trompe of half so gret a soun
 This pardonere hadde her as yelow as wax
 But smothe it hengt as doth a strik of flax. 676
 By ounces hengt his lokkes þat he hadde /
 And þer with he his schuldres ouer spradde
 But þinne it lay by culpoñs on and oon
 But hood for Iolite werede he noon 680
 ffor it was trussed vp in his walet
 Him þoughte he rood al of the newe get
 Discheuele saf his cappe he rood al bare
 Swich glaryngt yghen hadde he as an hare 684
 A vernicle hadde he sewid on his cappe [leaf 10, back]
 His walet [lay] biforn him in his lappe /
 Bret ful of pardoñ comen fro Rome al hoot
 A voys he hadde as smal as a goot 688
 No berd ne hadde he ne neuer schulde haue
 As smothe it was as it ware late schaue
 I trowe he were a geldyngt or a mare
 But of his craft fro Berwik in to ware 692
 Ne was þer such anoþer pardonere
 ffor in his male he hadde a pilewber
 Which þat he sayde was oure lady veyle
 He seide he hadde a gobet of þe seyle 696
 That seint petir hadde whan þat he wente
 Vpon the see til ihesu crist him hente
 He hadde a Croys of latoñ ful of stoness
 And in a glas he hadde pigges boones 700
 But with þese reliques whan þat he fonde
 A poure person dwellyngt vpon londe /
 Vpon a day he gat him more moneye
 Than þat þe person gat in monþes tweye 704
 And þus with feyned flateringt and lapes
 He made þe person and þe poeple his apes
 But trewely to tellen atte þe laste
 He was in chirche a noble ecclesiaste 708
 Wel couþe he rede a lessonn or a story

But alþer best' he song' an offertory
 ffor wel he wiste whan þat' song' was songe
 He moste preche and wel affile his tonge 712
 To wynne seluer as he [right] wel cowde
 Ther fore he song' so meriely and lowde /
 Now haue I told 3ow soply in a clause
 The estat'. the array þe nombre and eeke þe cause 716
 Whi þat' assembled was þis companie
 In Suthwerk' at' þis gentil hostelrie /
 That' highte þe Tabbard faste by þe belle
 But' now is tyme to yow for to telle / 720
 How þat' we beeren vs þat' ilke night' [leaf 11]
 Whan we were in þat' Osterie alight'
 And after wol I telle of' oure viage
 And aft' the remenant of' our pilgrimage 724
 But ferst' I pray 3ow of' your curtesie
 The 3e ne rette it nought' my vilenye
 Though þat I plainly speke in þis matere
 To telle 3ow here wordes and here cheere 728
 Ne þough I speke here wordes *propurly*
 ffor þis 3e knowen as wel as I
 Who so schal telle a tale after a man
 He mot' reherse as neyh as euer he can 732
 Euerich a word if' it' be in his charge
 Al speke he neuer so rudely and large
 Or elles he moot' telle his tale vntrewe
 Or feyne þinges or fynde wordes newe 736
 He may nought' spare al þough he were his broþer
 He moot' als wel seie o word as anoþer
 Crist' spak' himself' ful brode in holy writte
 And wel 3e wot' no vilenye is itte 740
 Ek' Plato seith who so can him rede
 The wordes mot' be cosyn to þe dede
 Also I prey3e 3ow forziue it me
 Al haue I not' set' folk' in here degre 744
 Heer in þis tale as þat' þei scholden stonde

My witt' is schort' 3e may wel vnderstonde
 Gret' cheere maad oure ost' vs euerychon
 And to þe souper' sette he vs anon 748
 He serued vs with vitailles atte beste
 Strong' was þe wyn and wel drynken vs leste
 A semly man our hoste he was with alle
 ffor to ben a marchaff in an halle 752
 A large man he was with eyzen stepe
 A fairer burgeys is þer non in Chepe
 Bold of' his speche and wys and wel y-taught
 And of' manhode him lakkede right' naught' 756
 Ek' þer to he was right' a merie man [leaf 11, back]
 And after soper pleyen he bigan
 And spak' of merþe amonges oþer þinges
 Whan þat' he hadde maad our rikenynges 760
 And seide þus Now lordynges trewely
 3e ben to me welcome right' hertely
 ffor by my trouthe if' þat' I schal not' lye
 I seyh not' þis yer so mery a companye 764
 At' oones in þis herberw as is now
 ffayn wold I don 3ou merthe wist' I how
 And of' a merþe I am right' now bipough't
 To don you eese and it' schal coste nough't 768
 ye gon to Caunturbury god yow speede
 The blisful martir quyte 3ou 3our meede
 And wel I woot' as 3e gon by þe weye
 ye schapen 3ou to talen and to pleye 772
 ffor trewely confort' ne merþe is non
 To riden by þe wey domb as a ston
 And þer for wol I make you disport'
 As I seide erst' and do you som confort' 776
 And if' 3ou likeþ aff' by on assent'
 ffor to stonden at' my Inggement
 And for to werken as I schal 3ou seie
 To morwe whan 3e riden by þe weie / 780
 Now by my fader soule þat' is deed

But 3e be merye I wil 3eue 3ow myn heed
 Hold vp 3our hond wipoute more speche /
 Our counseil was not longe for to seche / 784
 vs pought it was not worp to make it wys
 And graunted him wipoute more avys
 And bad him seye his verdit as him leste
 Lordynges quod he / now herkneþ for þe beste 788
 But take it nought I prey 3ow in disdeigne
 This is þe poynt to speke schort and pleigne
 That ech of 3ou to schorte with 3our weye
 In þis viage schal telle tales tweie 792
 To Caunturbury-ward I mene it so [leaf 12]
 And homward he schal tellen oper tuo
 Of auentures þat whilom haue bifallt
 And which of yow þat berip him best of all 796
 That is to sein that telleþ in þis cas
 Tales of best sentence and most solas ./
 Schal haue a souper at our alþer cost
 Her in þis place sittynge by þis post 800
 Whan þat we comen a3ein fro Canturbury
 And for to make 3ou þe more mury
 I wil my seluen goodly with 3ou ryde
 Right at myn owne cost and be 3our gyde 804
 And who so wol my Iuggement wip seye
 Schal paye al þat we spende by þe weye
 And if 3e vouche saf þat it be so
 Tel me anon wipouten wordes moo 808
 And I wol erly schape me þer fore
 This þing was graunted and our opes swore
 With ful glad herte and prey3en him also
 That he wolde vouche saf for to do so 812
 And þat he wolde ben our gouernour
 And of oure tales Iugge and reportour
 And sette a souper at a certain pris
 And we wiln rewled ben at his deuys / 816
 In heighe and lowe and þus by oon assent

We ben accorded to þe Iuggement
 And þer vpon þe wyn was fet' anon
 We dronken and to reste went' echon 820
 Wijpouten eny lenger taryyng'
 A morwe whan þe day bigan to spryng'
 vp ros oure oost' and was our alþer cok'
 And gadered vs to gider all in a flok' 824
 And forþ we riden a litel more þan paas
 vnto þe wateryng' of' seint' Thomas
 And þer our oost' gan his hors areste
 And seide lordes herkneþ if' you leste / 828
 3e wot' 3our forward and I it' 3ou recorde
 [leaf 12, back]
 If' euynsong' and morwesong' acorde
 lat' see now who schal telle þe firste tale
 As euer mote I drynke wyn of' ale 832
 Who so be rebel to my Iuggement /
 Schal paie for all that' by þe weie is spent'
 Now draweþ Cut' or þat' we ferþer twynne
 he which þat' hap' þe schortest' schal bigynne 836
 ¶ Sir knight' quod he my maister and my lord
 Now draweþ Cut' for þat' is myn acord
 Comeþ nerre quod he my lady prioresse
 And 3e sir clerk' let' be 3our schamfastnesse 840
 Ne studieþ nought' lay hond to euery man
 Anon to drawe euery wight' bygan
 And schortly for to tellen as it' was /
 Were it' by auenture or sort' or cas 844
 The soþ is þis the Cut' fel to þe knight'
 Of' which ful bliþe and glad was euery wight'
 And telle he moste his tale as it' was resoun
 By forward and by composiciozn 848
 As 3e han herd what' nedeþ wordes mo
 And whan þis good man saugh þat' it was so
 As he þat' wys was and obedient'
 To keepe his forward by his free assent 852
 He seide siþþe I schal begynne þe game

What' welcome be þe Cutte a goddes name
Now lat' vs ride and herkneþ what' I seye
And with þat' word we riden forþ ourē weye 856
And he bigan with right' a merye cheere
His tale anon and seyde as ȝe may heere

Iam que domos patrias scitice post aspera gentis
 Prelia laurigero etc.

Whilom was as olde stories tellen vs
 Ther was a Duk' that highte Theseus / 860
 Of' Athenes he was / lord and gouernour
 And in his tyme such a Conquerour
 That' grettere was non vnder þe sonne [leaf 13]
 fful many a riche Contre hadde he wonne 864
 What' with his wisdam and his chiuallerie
 He conquered aff' þe regne of' ffeminie
 That' whilom was I-cleped Scithia
 And weddede þe queen ypolita 868
 And brought' hir hom wiþ him in his contre
 With muche glorie and gret' solempnite
 And eek' hir 3onge suster Emelye
 And þus with victorie and with melodie 872
 Late I þis noble duk' to Athenes ride [line erased here, apparently
 the previous one repeated.]
 And aff' his host' in armes him bisyde
 And certes if' it nere to long' to heere
 I wolde haue tolde fully þe manere 876
 how wonnen was þe regne of ffeminie
 By Theseus and by his Chiuallrie
 And of' the grete bataille for þe noones
 Bitwixen athenes and Amazones 880
 And how asseged was Ipolita
 The faire hardy quene of' Scithia
 And of' þe fest' þat' was at' hir weddyng'
 And of' þe tempest' at' hir hom comyng' 884
 But' al þat' þing' I moot' as now forbere /
 I haue god wot' a large feeld to ere
 And weyke ben þe oxen in my plough
 The remnant' of' þe tale is long' ynough 888
 I wol not' letten eek' noon of' þis route

| | |
|--|-----------------|
| Lat euery felawe telle his tale aboute And lat se now who schal þe souper wynne And þer I latte I wil azein bigynne | 892 |
| This Duk' of' whom I make menciouun Whan he was comen almost' to þe toun In all' his wele and his moste pryde He was war as he cast' his eyhe asyde | 896 |
| Wher þat' þer kneled in þe heighe weye A company of' ladies tweye and tweye | [leaf 13, back] |
| Eche after oþer cladde in cloþes blake But' such a cry and such a woo þei make That' in þis world is creature lyuyng That' herde such anoþer weymentyng And of' þis cry þey nolde neuer stente Til þei þe Reynes of' his bridel hente | 900 |
| What' folk' ben 3e þat' at myn hom comyuge Pertourbe so my feste wiþ cryinge Quod Theseus haue 3e so gret' enuye Of' myn honour that' þus compleigne and crie | 908 |
| Or who hap 3ou mysboden or offended And telleþ me if' it may ben amended And whi þat' 3e ben cloped thus in blak The eldest' lady of' hem alle spak' | 912 |
| Whan sche had swouned with a dedly cheere That' it' was routhe for to seen and heere ¶ Sche seide lord to whom fortune hap yiuen Victorie and as a conquerour to lyuen | 916 |
| Not' greueþ ous 3oure gloire and your' honour But' we beseke mercy and socour Haue mercy on our woo and our distresse Som drope of' pite þurgh þi gentillesse / | 920 |
| vpon vs wrecched wommen let' 3e fallt ffor certes lord þer is non of' vs allt That' sche nath ben a duchesse or a queene Now be we Caytifs as it' is wel seene | 924 |
| Thanked be fortune and hir false whiel | |

That non estat' ensureth for to ben wel
 Now certes lord to abyde 3oure presence /
 Here in þis temple of the goddessse Clemence 928
 We haue be waytinge al þis fourte night'
 Helpe vs lord siþ it' is in þy might'
 ¶ I wrecche which þat' weepe and weile þus
 Was whilom wyf' of king Cappaneus 932
 That' starf' at' Thebes cursed be þat' day
 And alle we þat' ben in þis array [leaf 141
 And maken al þis lamentacioun
 We losten all' our housbondes at' þat' touz 936
 Whil þat' þassege þer aboute lay
 And yet' now þe olde Creon weiloway
 That' lord is now of' Thebes þe Cite
 ffulfild' of Ire and of' Iniquite 940
 He for despote and for his Tyrannie
 To don þe deede bodies vilenye
 Of' all' oure lordes whiche þat' ben slawe
 Hap' all' þe bodies on an heep y-drawe 944
 And wol nought' suffre hem by non assent
 Neither to ben y-buried noþer y-brent
 But' makeþ houndes ete hem in despyt'
 And with þat' word wipoute more respit' 948
 Thei fellen gruf' and cryden pitously
 Haue on vs wrecchede wommen som mercy
 And lat' our sorwe synken in þin herte
 This gentil duk' doun from his courser sterte 952
 With herte pitous whan he herde hem speke
 Him þoughte þat' his herte wolde breke
 Whan he saugh hem so pite and so mate
 That' whilom were of' so gret' astate 956
 And in his armes he hem all' vp hente
 And hem confortep' in ful good entente
 And swor his oth as he was trewe knight'
 He wolde don so ferforþly his might' 960
 Vpon þe tyrant' hem to wreke

| | |
|--|-----------------|
| That all þe poeple of grece scholde speke How Creon was of Theseus y-serued As he þat hadde his deþ ful wel deserued | 964 |
| And right anon wipouten more abod His baner he displaied and forth rood To Thebes-ward and al his host biside No nerre Athenes wolde he go ne ride | 968 |
| Ne take his ease fully half a day But onward on his way þat night he lay | [leaf 14, back] |
| And sente anon ypolita þe queene And Emelye hir zonge suster scheene | 972 |
| Vnto þe toun of Athenes to dwelle And forþ he ritte þer nys namore to telle The rede Statue of Mars with spere and targe So schineþ in his white baner large | 976 |
| That alle þe feelde gliteren vp and down And by his baner born is his pynoun Of gold ful riche in which þer was y-bete The Mynataur which þat he wan in Grece | 980 |
| Thus rit þis duk þus rit þis conquerour And in his host of Chiuallerie þe flour Til þat he come to Thebes and alight ffaire in þe feeld þer as he þought to fight | 984 |
| But schortly for to speken of þis þing With Creon which þat was of Thebes king He faught and slough him manly as a knight In pleyne bataile and putte þe folk to flight | 988 |
| And by assent he wan þe Cite after And rente adoun boþe wall and sparre and rafter And to þe ladies he restored ageyn The bones of here frendes þat were slayn | 992 |
| To don obsequies as was þo þe gyse But it were all to longe to deuyse The grete clamour and þe waymentyng That the ladys made atte brennyng | 996 |
| Of þe bodies and þe gret honour | |

- Til it^r fel oones in a morwe of May
 That^r Emely þat^r fairer was to seene
 Than is þe lilye vpon his stalke grene 1036
 And freisscher þan þe may wiþ floures newe
 ffor wiþ þe rose colour strof^r hir hewe /
 I not^r which was þe fairer of^r hem tuo
 Er it were day as was hire wone to do 1040
 Sche was arisen and al redy dight^r
 ffor May wil haue no sluggardie on night [leaf 15, back]
 The seson prikeþ euery gentil herte /
 And makeþ it^r out^r of^r his sleep to sterte 1044
 And siþen arise and don may obseruance
 This makeþ Emelye to haue remembrance
 To don honour to May and for to rise
 I-cloþed was sche freissch for to deuyse 1048
 Hir yelow her was broyded in a tresse
 By-hinde hir bak^r a yerde long^r I gesse
 And in þe gardyn atte sonne vpriste
 Sche walkeþ vp and doun and as hir liste 1052
 Sche gadreth floures party whit / and reede /
 To make a sotyl garland for hir heede
 And as an angel heuenysshely sche song
 The grete tour þat^r was so þikke and strong 1056
 Which of^r þe Casteñ was þe chief^r dongeon
 Ther as þe knightes weren in prisoñ
 Of^r which I tolde 3ou and telle schal
 Was euen ioynant^r to þe gardein wal 1060
 Ther as þis Emely had hir pleyng^r
 Bright^r was þe sonne and cler in þat^r mornyng^r
 And Palamon þis woful prisoner
 As was his wone by leue of^r his gailler 1064
 Was risen and romed in a chambre on heigh
 In which he al þe noble cite seigh
 And ek^r þe gardyn ful of^r branches grene
 Ther as þe freisshe Emely þe schene 1068
 Was in hir walk^r and romed vp and doun

This sorwful prisoner this Palamoyn
 Goþ in þe chambre Romyngē to and fro
 And to himself compleynng' of his wo 1072
 That he was born ful ofte seide allas
 And so byfett by auenture or caas
 That þorugh a wyndow þikke of many a barre
 Of yren gret' and square as any sparre 1076
 He cast' his eyghen vpon Emelya
 And þer with al he bleynt' and cryed a [leaf 16]
 As þough he stongen were vnto þe herte
 And with þat' crye Arcite anon vp sterte / 1080
 And seide Cosyn myn what' eyleþ þe
 That art' so pale and dedly on to se
 Why crydestow who haþ þe don offence
 ffor goddes loue tak' al in pacience 1084
 Oure prisoun for it' may non oþer be
 ffortune haþ yiue vs þis aduersite
 Som wicke aspect' or disposicioñ
 Of Saturne by som constollacioñ 1088
 Haþ ȝiuen vs þis al þough we had it' sworn
 So stood þe heuen whan þat' we ware born
 We mote endure it' þis is schort' and playn
 This Palamon answerd and seide again / 1092
 Cosyn for soþe of þis opynioñ
 þou hast' a vain Imaginacioñ
 This prisoun causede me nought to crie
 But' I was hurt' right' now þorugh out' myn yhe 1096
 In to myn hert' þat' wol my bane be
 The fayrnesse of þat' lady þat' I see
 ȝonde in the gardyn rome to and fro
 Is cause of' al my crying' and my wo 1100
 I not' wher sche be womman or goddesse
 But' Venus is it soþly as I gesse.
 And þer with al on knees a doun he fille
 And seyde Venus if it' be þy wille 1104
 yow in þis gardeyn þus to transfigure

Byfore me sorwful wrecched creature
 Out' of þis prison help þat' we mowe scape
 And if' so be oure destenye be schape/ 1108
 By eterne world to deyen in prison.
 Of oure lynage haue som compassiõ
 That is so lowe y-brough't' by tyrannie
 And with þat' word Arcite gan aspye 1112
 Wher as þis lady romed to and fro
 And with þat' sigh't' hir beaute hurt' him so [leaf 16, back]
 That if' þat' Palamon was wounded sore
 Arcite is hurt' as muche as he or more / 1116
 And with a syke he seyde pitously
 The freissche beaute sleþ me sodeinly
 Of hire þat' rometh in þe yonder place
 And but' I haue hir mercy and hir grace 1120
 That' I may seen hir atte leste wey
 I nam but' ded þer nys no more to sey
 This Palamon whan he þis wordes herde
 Dispitously he loked and answerde 1124
 Wheþer seistow þis in earnest' or in pleye
 Nay quod Arcite in earnest' by my feye
 God helpe me so me lust' ful yuel playe
 This Palamon gar knet' his browes twaye 1128
 It' were to þe quod he no gret honour
 ffor to be fals ne for to be traytour
 To me þat' am þi cosyn and þi broþer
 y-sworn ful deepe and ech of' vs til oþer 1132
 That' neuer for to deyen in þe payn
 Til þat' þe deþ departe schal vs twayn
 Neither in loue for to hinder oþer
 Ne in non oþer cas my lieue broþer 1136
 But' þat' þou scholdest' trewly forþer more
 In euery caas and I schal forþre þe þore
 This was þin oþ and myn also certeine
 I wot' right' wel þou darst' it' not' wip-seyne 1140
 Thus art' þou of' my counseil out of' doute

And now þou woldest falsly ben aboute
 To loue my lady whom I loue and serue
 And euer schal til þat myn herte sterue 1144
 Now certes fals Arcite þou schalt not so
 I loued hir ferst and tolde þe my wo
 As to my counseil and my broþer sworn
 To forthre me as I haue told biforn 1148
 ffor which þou art y-bounden as a knight
 To helpe me if it lay in thy might [leaf 171
 Or elles art þou fals I dar wel sayn
 This Arcite ful proudly spak agayn 1152
 Thou schalt quod he be raper fals þan I
 But þou art fals I telle þe witterly
 ¶ ffor paramour I loued hir first er þou
 What wilt þou seyn þou wist it nought yit now 1156
 Wheþur sche be a womman or goddesse
 Thin is affeccioñ of holynesse
 And myn is loue as to a creature
 ffor which I tolde þe myn auenture 1160
 As to my cosyn and to my broþer sworn
 I pose þat þou louedest hire biforn
 Wostow nought wel þe olde clerkes sawe 1163
 That who schal ȝiue a louer eny lawe ¶ *Quis legem dat amantibus.*
 loue is a gretter lawe by my þan
 Than may be yeue to eny erthly man
 And þefore positif lawe and such decree
 Is broke alday for loue in eche degree 1168
 A man moot needes loue maugre his hede
 He may not fleen hit þough he scholde be dede
 Al be sche mayde or wydow or elles wif
 And eek it is not likly al þi lif 1172
 To stonden in hir grace namore schal I
 ffor wel þou wost þi selue verreily
 That þou and I ben dampned to prisoñ
 Perpetuely vs gaigneth no Ramsoñ 1176
 We stryuen now as houndes for þe bon

They fought alday and 3et here part was non
 Ther com a kyte whil þat þei were so wroþe
 That bar a way þe bon bytwixe hem boþe 1180
 Ak þerfore atte kinges court my broþer
 Ech man for him self þer is non oþer
 Loue if þou list for I loue and ay schal
 A soothly leue broþer þis is al 1184
 Her in þis prison mote we endure
 And euerich of vs take his auenture [leaf 17, back]
 Gret was þe strif and long bitwix hem tweye
 If þat I hadde leyser for to seie / 1188
 But to þis effect it happed on a day
 To telle it þou as schortly as I may
 A worþi duk þat highte Perotheus
 That felawe was vnto duk Theseus 1192
 Syn þilke day þat þai were children lite
 Was come to Athenes his felawe to visite
 and for to pleye as he was wont to do
 ffor in þis world he loued noman so 1196
 And he loued him als tendurly agayn
 So wel þei loued as olde bokes sayn
 That whan þat oon was ded soþly to telle /
 his felaw went and sought him doun in helle 1200
 But of þat story list me nought to write
 Duk Perotheus louede wel arcite
 And had him knowe at Thebes þer be yere
 And finally at request and preyere 1204
 Of Perotheus wiþoute ony Raunson
 Duk Theseus him leet out of prison
 ffirely to gon wher þat him list ouer al
 In such a gise as I þou telle schal 1208
 This was þe forward plainly for tendite /
 Bitwixe Theseus and him Arcite
 That if so were þat arcite were founde /
 Euer in his lif by day or night or stounde 1212
 In eny contre of þis Theseus

ffare wel my lif^t my lust^t and my gladnesse
 Allas why pleynten men so in comune
 Of purueance of^t god or of^t fortune 1252
 That^t 3iue^th hem ful ofte in many a gyse
 Wel bet^t þan þey can hemself^t deuyse
 Som man desireþ for to haue richesse
 That^t cause is of^t his mordre or gret^t seknesse / 1256
 And som wolde out^t of^t his prisonⁿ fain
 That^t in his hous is of^t his meyne slain / [leaf 18, back]
 Infinite harmes ben in þis matiere
 We wot^t not^t what^t þing^t þat^t we preyen heere / 1260
 We faren as he þat^t dronken is as Mous
 A dronke man wot^t wel he haþ an hous
 But^t he not^t which þe righte weie is þider
 And to a dronke man þe weye is slider 1264
 And certes in þis world so faren we
 We seeken fast^t after felicitye
 But^t we gon wrong^t ful ofte trewely
 Thus may we seyn all^t and namlich I 1268
 That^t wende and hadde a gret^t opynion
 That^t if I mighte skapen fro prisonⁿ
 Than hadde I ben in ioye and parfyt^t hele
 Ther now I am exiled fro my wele 1272
 Syn þat^t I may not^t seen 3ou Emelye
 I am but^t ded þer nys no remedye
 vpon þat^t oper syde Palamon
 Whan þat^t he wiste þat^t arcite was gon 1276
 Swich sorwe he makeþ þat^t þe grete tour
 Resouneþ of^t his yollyng^t and clamour
 The pure fettres of^t his schynes grete
 Were of^t his bittre salte teeres wete 1280
 Allas quod he arcita cosyn myn
 Of^t all^t our strif^t god wot^t þe fruyt^t is þin
 Thou walkest^t now in Thebes at^t þi large
 And of^t my woo þou yernest^t litel charge 1284
 Thou maist^t syn þou hast^t wisdom and manhede

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Assemble all þe folk' of oure kinrede | |
| And make a werre so scharp on þis Cite | |
| That' by som auenture or som trettee | 1288 |
| Thou maist' haue hir to lady and to wif / | |
| ffor whom þat' I most' needes leese my lif' | |
| ffor as by weie of possibilite | |
| Sitthe þou art' at' þi large of' prison fre | 1292 |
| And art' a lord gret' is þin auantage . | |
| More þan is myn þat sterue her in a kage | [leaf 191 |
| ffor I mot' weepe and wayle whil þat' I lyue | |
| With all þe woo þat' prison may me 3iue | 1296 |
| And eek' with peyne þat' loue me yiueþ also | |
| That' doubleþ al my torment' and my wo | |
| Ther with þe fyr of gelousie vpsterte | |
| With Inne his brest and hente him by þe herte | 1300 |
| So woodly þat' he lik' was to byholde | |
| The boxtre or þe asshen deed and colde | |
| Than seide he o cruel goddes þat' gouerne | |
| This world with bynding' of' your word eterne | 1304 |
| And writen in þe table of' athamaunt' | |
| youre parlement and 3our eterne graunt' | |
| What' is mankynde more vnto 3ou holde | |
| Than is þe scheep þat' roukeþ in þe folde | 1308 |
| ffor slain is man right' as anoþer beeste | |
| And dwelleþ eek' in prison and in arreste | |
| And haþ siknesse and gret aduersite | |
| And ofte tymes gilteles parde | 1312 |
| ¶ What' gouernance is in þis prescience | |
| That' gilteles tormenteþ Innocence | |
| And encreseth þis is al my penaunce | |
| That' man is bounden to his obseruaunce | 1316 |
| ffor goddes sake to letten of' his wille | |
| Ther as a beeste may all his lust' fulfille | |
| And whan a beeste is ded he haþ no peyne | |
| But' after his deth þe man mot' weepe and pleyne | 1320 |
| Though in þis world he haue care and wo | |

Wipouten doute it may stonden so
 The answe're of þis lete I to diuines
 But wel I wot þat in þis world gret pyne is 1324
 Allas I see a *serpent* or a þeeft
 That many a trewe man haþ do meschieft
 Gon at his large and wher him list may turne
 But I moot ben in *prisoñ* þurgh Saturne 1328
 And eek þurgh Iuno Ialous and eek wood
 That haþ destroyed wel neyh al þe blood [leaf 19, back]
 Of Thebes with his waste walles wide
 And venus sleeþ me on þat oper syde 1332
 ffor Ialousye and fere of him Arcite
 ¶ Now wil I stynte of Palamon alite
 And lat him in his *prisoñ* stille dwelle
 And of Arcite forþ I wil 3ou telle 1336
 The somer passeþ and þe nightes longe
 Encresceth double wise þe peynes stronge
 Boþe of þe louer and of þe prisoner
 I not which haþ þe wofuller myster 1340
 ffor schortly for to sein of Palamon
 Perpetuelly is dampned to prison
 In cheynes and in fettres to þe ded
 And arcite is exiled vp his hed 1344
 ffor euermore as out of þat contre
 Ne neuer he ne schal his lady se
 ¶ yow louers aske I now þis question
 Who haþ þe wors arcite or Palamōn 1348
 That oon may seen his lady day by day
 But in *prisoñ* moot he duellen ay
 That oper wher him list may ride or go
 But seen his lady schal he neuer mo 1352
 Now diuineth as 3ou list þat 3e can
 ffor I wol telle forth as I bigan

[No gap in the MS.]

[PART II. *No gap in the MS.*]

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Whan þat' arcite to Thebes comen was fful ofte a day he swelte and saide allas | 1356 |
| ffor seen his lady schal he neuere mo And schortly to concluden al his wo So mochel sorwe hadde neuer creature | |
| That' is or schal whil þat' þe world may dure His sleep . his mete . his drink' is him by-raft' | 1360 |
| That' lene he wex and drye as is a schaft' His yghen holwe grisly to biholde His hewe falwe and pale as ayssche colde | 1364 |
| And solitarie he was and euer allone And waylyng' al þe night' makyng' his mone | [leaf 20] |
| And if' he herde song' or instrument Than wolde he weepe he mighte nough't' be stent' | 1368 |
| So feble were his spiritz and he lowe And chaunged so þat' no man couþe knowe His speche noþer his voys þough men it herde | |
| And in his gere for al þe world he ferde / Not' comly lyk' to louers maladye Of' heres but rapþer lik' manye Engendred of' <i>humour</i> malencolik' | 1372 |
| Biform his celle fantastik' And schortly torned was al vp and douñ Boþe habite and disposiciozn Of him þis woful louere daun arcite | 1376 |
| What' scholde I alday of his woo endite Whan he endured hadde a 3eer or tuo This cruel torment and þis peyne and woo At' Thebes in his contre as I seyde | 1380 |
| Vpon a night' in sleep as he him leyde Him þoughte þat' þe wengede god mercurie Biform him stood and bad him to be merie His sleepy 3erde in honde he bar vpright' | 1384 |
| An hatte he wered vppon his heeres bright' | 1388 |

Arrayed was þis god as he took' keepe
 As he was whan þat' argus took' his sleepe
 And seyde him þus to Athenes schalt' þou wende
 Ther is þe schapen of' þi wo an ende 1392
 And with þat' word arcite wook' and sterte
 Now trewely how sore þat' me smerte
 Quod he to Athenes right' now wol I fare
 Ne for þe drede of' deþ schal I nought' spare 1396
 To see my lady þat' I loue and serue /
 In hire presence I ne recche nouȝt' to sterue /
 And with þat' word he caughte a gret mirour
 And saugh þat' chaunged was al his colour 1400
 And saugh his visage al in anoþer kinde
 And right' anon it' ran him in his mynde [leaf 20, back]
 Than siþen his face was so disfigured
 Of' maladie þe which he hadde endured 1404
 He mighte wel if' þat' he bar him lowe
 Lyue in Athenes eueremore vnknowe /
 And seen his lady wel neigh' day by day
 And right' anon he changed his array 1408
 And cladde him as a poure laborer
 And al allone saf' oonly a squier
 That' knew his priuete and al þe caas
 Which was desgised pouerly as he was 1412
 To Athenes is he gon þe nexte way
 And to þe courte he wente vpon a day
 And atte gate he profred his seruise
 To drugge and drawe what' so men wol deuise 1416
 And schortly of' þis matier for to sein
 He fille in office with a chamburlein /
 The which þat' was dwellyng' with Emelye
 ffor he was wys and sone couþe aspye 1420
 Of' euery seruant' which þat' serueþ here
 Wel couþe he hewen woode and water bere
 ffor he was yong' and mighty for þe nones
 And þerto he was strong' and bigge of' bones 1424

Ther fore I passe als lightly as I may
 ¶ It felle þat in þe seuenþe 3er of may
 The þridde night as olde bokes sein /
 That als þis storie telleþ more plein 1464
 Were it by auenture or destinee
 As whan a þing is schape it schal be
 That sone after þe mydnyght Palamon
 By helpyng of a frende brak prison 1468
 And fleþ þe cite faste as he may goo
 ffor hadde yeue his gailler drunke soo
 Of a clarre maad of a certeyn wyn
 With nercotiks and opie of Thebes fyn 1472
 That al þat night þough þat men wolde him schake
 The gailler sleep he mighte not awake [leaf 21, back]
 And þus he fleeth as fast as euer he may
 The night was schort and faste by þe day 1476
 That needes cost he most himseluen hyde
 And til a groue faste þer bisyde
 With dredful foot þan stalkeþ Palamon
 ffor schortly þis was his opinion 1480
 That in þat groue he wolde him hide alday
 And in þe night þan wolde he take his way
 To Thebes-ward his frendes for to pray
 On Theseus to helpe him to werray 1484
 And schortly ouþer he wolde leese his lif
 Or wynnen Emely to his louely wif /
 This is þeffecte and his entente playn
 ¶ Now wol I torne vnto arcite agayn 1488
 That litel wiste how neih þat was his care
 Til þat fortune hadde kaught him in his snare
 The besy larke messanger of day
 Salueth in hir song þe morwe gray 1492
 And fyry phebus riseþ vp so bright
 That al þe orient laugheth of þe light
 And with his streemes drieth in þe greues
 The seluir dropes hangyng in þe lecuës 1496

| | |
|--|-----------------|
| Now vp now doun as boket in a welle | |
| Right as þe friday soþly for to telle | |
| Now it schineþ and now it reyneþ faste | |
| Right so gan gery venus ouer caste | 1536 |
| The hertes of hir folk right as hire day | |
| Is geerful right so chaungeþ sche array | |
| Seelde is þe fryday al þe wike y-like | |
| ¶ Whan þat arcite hadde songe he gan to syke | 1540 |
| And sette him doun wiþouten eny more | |
| Allas quod he þat day þat I was bore | |
| How longe Iuno þurgh þi cruelte | |
| Wiltow werreien Thebes þe Cite | 1544 |
| Allas y-brought is to confusiõ | |
| The blood Roial of Cadme and Amphioñ | [leaf 22, back] |
| Of Cadmus which þat was þe ferste man | |
| That Thebes bult or ferst þe toun bigan | 1548 |
| And of þe cite first was crowned king | |
| Of his lynage am I and his ofspring | |
| By verray ligne as of þe stok roiañ | |
| And now I am so caytif and so þrañ | 1552 |
| That he þat is my mortel enemy | |
| I serue him as his squier pouerly | |
| And 3it doþ me Iuno wel more schame | |
| ffor I dar nought biknowe myn owne name | 1556 |
| But þer as I was wont to hight arcite | |
| Now highte I Philostrate nought worþ a myte | |
| Allas þou felle mars allas þou Iuno | |
| Thus hap your ire oure lignage al fordo | 1560 |
| Saf only me and wrecched Palamon | |
| That Theseus martireþ in prison | |
| And ouer al þis to slen me vtterly | |
| loue hap his faire dart so brennyngly. | 1564 |
| y-stiked þurgh my trewe carful herte | |
| That schapen was my deþ arst þan my scherte | |
| ye sleen me with 3our eyzen emelye | |
| 3e ben þe cause wher fore þat I dye | 1568 |

Of all þe remanant / of myn oþer care
 Ne sette I nought þe montance of a tare
 So þat I coude don aught to 3oure plesance
 And with þat word he fel down in a traunce 1572
 A long tyme and aftirward he vpsterte
 This Palamon þat þought þat þorugh his herte
 he felte a cold swerd sodeinliche glyde
 ffor yre he quok no lenger wolde he byde 1576
 And whan þat he had herd Arcites tale
 As he were wood with face deed and pale
 he sterte him vp out of þe buskes þikke
 And seide arcite false traytour wikke 1580
 Now art þou hent þat louest my lady so
 ffor whom þat I haue al þis peyne and wo [leaf 23]
 And art my blood and to my counseil sworn
 As I ful ofte haue told þe heer biforn 1584
 And hast be-iaped here duk Theseus /
 And falsly chaunged hast þi name þus
 I wol be ded or elles þou schalt dye
 Thou schalt not loue my lady Emelye 1588
 But I wol loue hire oonly and nomo
 ffor I am Palamon þi mortel foo
 And þough þat I no wepene haue in þis place
 But out of prisoun am astert by grace 1592
 I drede nought þat ouþer þou schalt die
 Or þou ne schalt not louen Emelye
 Chees which þou wilt or þou schalt not asterte
 This arcite with ful despitous herte 1596
 When he him knew and hadde his tale herde
 As fers as a leon pulled out a swerde
 And seide þus by god þa[t] sitteþ aboue
 Nere it were þat þou art sike and wood for loue 1600
 And eek þat þou no wepne hast in þis place /
 Thou schuldest neuer out of þis groue pace
 That þou ne schuldest deyen of myn honde
 ffor I diffie þe sewrte and þe bonde 1604

Which þat þou seist I haue maad to þe /
 What' verray fool þink' weel þat' loue is fre
 And I wol loue hir maugre al þy might'
 But for as moche þou art' a worpy knight' 1608
 And willest to derreyne hir by batayle
 Haue her my troupe to morwe I wol nough't fayle
 Wipouten wityng' of eny oþer wight'
 That' heer I wol be founden as a knight' 1612
 And bringen herneys right' ynough for þe
 And chese þe beste and lef' þe worste for me
 And mete and drynk' þis night' wol y bringe
 ynough for þe and cloþes for þi beddyng'e 1616
 And if' so be þat' þou my lady wyne
 And sle me in þis woode þer I am Inne [leaf 23, back]
 Thou mayst' wel haue þy lady as for me
 This Palamon answerd I graunt' it' þe 1620
 And þus þei ben departed til a morwe
 Whan ech of' hem hadde leyd his feiþ to borwe
 Occupied out' of' alle charite
 O regne þat' wolde no felawe haue with þe 1624
 fful soþ is seid þat' loue ne lorschepe
 Wol not' his þankes haue no felaschipe
 We fynde þat' of' arcite and of' Palamon
 Arcite is riden anon in to þe toun 1628
 And on the morwe er it' were dayes light'
 fful priuely tuo herneys haþ he dight'
 Boþe sufficant' and meete to darreyne
 The batail in þe feld bitwix hem tweyne 1632
 And on his hors allone as he was borne
 He carieth al his harneys him biforne
 And in þe groue at tyme and place y-set'
 This arcite and þis Palamon ben mette 1636
 To changen gan þe colour in hire face
 Right' as þe hunters in þe Reigne of' trace
 That' stondeþ atte gappe with a spere
 Whan hunted is þe leoun or þe bere 1640

That he nys cladde and redy for to ride
 Wiþ hunte and horn and houndes him besyde
 ffor in his huntyng' haþ he such delit'
 That it is aff his ioye and appetyt' 1680
 To ben himself' þe grete hertes bane
 ffor after mars he serueth now Diane
 Cler was þe day as I haue told er þis
 And Theseus with alle ioye and blys 1684
 With his ypolita þe faire queene
 And Emelye cloped al in greene
 On huntyng' ben þei riden really
 And to þe groue þat' stood ful faste by 1688
 In which þer was an hert' as men him tolde
 Duk' Theseus þe streighte wey haþ holde / [leaf 24, back]
 And to þe lannde he rideþ him ful righte
 ffor þider was þe hert' wont' to haue his flighte 1692
 And ouer a brook' and so forþ on his wey
 This Duk' wol haue a cours at' him or twey
 Wiþ houndes swich as þat' him list' to comaunde /
 And whan þis Duk' was come vnto þe launde 1696
 vnder þe sonne he loked and anon
 He was war of' arcite and Palamon
 That' foughten breeme as it' were boles tuo
 The bryghte swerdes wenten to and fro 1700
 So hidously þat' with þe leste strook'
 It' semeþ þat' it' wolde felle an ook'
 But' what' þei were noþing' he ne woot'
 This duk' his courser with his spores smot' 1704
 And at' a stert' he was betwixe hem tuo
 And pulled out a swerd and cried ho
 No more vp peyne of' lesyng' of' þour' hed
 By mighty mars he schal anon be ded 1708
 That' smyteth eny strok' þat' I may seen
 But' telleþ me what' myster men þe ben
 That' ben so hardy for to fighten heere
 Wiþoute Iuge or oþer officere 1712

Com for to wepe and so dide Emelye
 And all þe ladies of þe compaignye
 Gret' pite was it as it' þough't' hem alle
 That' euer such a chaunce schulde falle 1752
 ffor gentil men þei were of' gret' estat' ·
 And noþing' but' for loue was þis debat'
 And saugh hire bloody woundes wide and sore
 And alle cryeden boþe lasse and more 1756
 Haue mercy lord vpon vs wommen alle
 And on here bare knees doun þei falle
 And wolde haue kist' his feet' þer as he stood
 Til atte last aslaked was his mood 1760
 ffor pite renneþ sone in gentil herte /
 And þough' he ferst' for Ire quook' and sterte [leaf 25, back]
 he haþ considered schortly in a clause
 The trespas of' hem bothe and eek' þe cause 1764
 And al þough' þat' his Ire hire gilt' accused
 3it' in his resoñ he hem boþe excused
 As þus he þoughte wel þat' euery man
 Wil helpe himself' in loue if' þat' he can 1768
 And eek' deliuere himself' out' of' prison
 And eek' his herte hadde compassioñ
 Of' wommen for þey wepen euer in oon
 And in his gentil herte he þought' anon 1772
 And softe vnto himself' he seide fy
 vpon a lord þat' wol haue no `mercy
 But' be a leoñ boþe in word and dede /
 To hem þat' ben in repentance and drede 1776
 As wel as to a proud dispitous man
 That' wol maintene þat' he first' bigan
 That' lord haþ litel of' discrecioñ
 That' in such cas can no diuision 1780
 But' weyeth pride and humblesse after oon
 And schortly whan his Ire is þus goon
 he gan to loken vp with eyghen light'
 And spak' þis same wordes al on hight' 1784

- ¶ The god of loue a benedicite
 How mighty and how gret a lord is he
 Azeins his might' þer gayneþ non obstacles
 He may be cleped a god of his miracles 1788
 ffor he can maken at his owne gise
 Of euerich herte as þat him list' deuise
 lo her þis arcite and þis Palamon
 That' quyttly were out' of my prisoun 1792
 And might' haue lyued in Thebes rially
 And witen I am here mortel enemy
 And þat here deþ lith in my might' also /
 And 3it' haþ loue maugre here yghen tuo 1796
 Brought' hem hider boþe for to deye
 Now lokeþ is not' þat' an heih folye [leaf 26]
- ¶ Who may ben a fool but' if' he loue
 Byhold for goddes sake þat' sitteþ aboue 1800
 See how þai bleede be þai not' wel arrayed
 Thus haþ hire lord þe god of loue y-paized
 Hire wages and hire fees for hire seruise
 And 3it' þei wenen for to ben ful wise 1804
 That' seruen loue for aught' þat' may bifall
 But' þis is 3et' þe beste game of' all
 That' sche for wham þei haue þis iolyte
 Can hem þefore as moche thank' as me 1808
 Sche woot' na more of' all þis hoothe fare
 By god þan woot' a Cockow of' an hare
 But' al moot' ben assayed hoot' and colde
 A man moot' ben a fool or 3ong' or olde 1812
 I wot' it by my self' ful yore agon
 ffor in my tyme a seruant' was I on
 And þefore syn I knowe of' loues peyne
 And woot' how sore it' can a man distreyne 1816
 As he þat' hath ben caught' often in his laas
 I you forziue al holly þis trespass
 At' þe requeste of' þe queen þat' kneeleþ heere
 And eek' of Emelye my soster deere 1820

And 3e schal boþe anon vnto me swere
 That neuere 3e schal my coroune dere
 Ne make werre vpon me night ne day
 But ben my frendes in alle þat 3e may 1824
 I 3ou forziue þis trespas euery del
 And þey him sworn his axing fair and wel
 And him of lordschipe and of mercy preide
 And he hem graunteþ grace and þus he seide 1828
 To speke of riall lynage and richesse
 þough þat sche were a queen or a princesse
 Ech of 3ou boþe is worþy douteles
 To wedde whan tyme is but napeles 1832
 I speke as for my suster Emelye /
 ffor whom 3e haue þis strif and Ialousie [leaf 26, back]
 3e wite 3oure self sche may not wedde tuo
 At oones þough 3e fighten eueremo 1836
 That oon of 3ou al be him loþ or leef
 He moot go pypen in an yuy leef
 This is to sey sche may not haue boþe
 Al be 3e neuer so Ialouse ne so wroþe 1840
 And for-þi I 3ou putte in þis degre
 That ech of 3ou schal haue his destine
 As him is schape and kerkneþ in what wise
 Lo heer 3our ende of þat I schal deuyse / 1844
 ¶ My wil is þis for plat conclusion
 Wipouten eny replicacion
 If þat 3ow likeþ takeþ it for þe beste /
 That euerych of 3ou schal gon wher him leste 1848
 ffrely wipouten Raunceon or daunger
 And þis day fifty wykes fer ne near
 Euerich of 3ou schal bringe an hundred knightes
 Armed for þe lystes vp al rightes 1852
 Al redy to darreyne hir by bataile
 And þis biheete I 3ou wipoute faile
 vpon my trouþe and as I am a knight
 That wheþer of 3ou boþe þat hap might 1856

| | |
|---|-----------|
| This is to sein þat' wheþer he or þou May with his hundred as I spak' of now Sle his contrarie or out' of lystes dryue That' schal I 3iue Emelya to wyue | 1860. |
| To whom þat' fortune 3eueþ so fair a grace The lystes schal I maken in þis place And god so wisly on my soule rewe As I schal euen Iugge ben and trewe | 1864 |
| 3e schal non oþer eende wiþ me maken þat' on of' 3ou schal ben deed or taken And if' 3ou þinkeþ þis is wel y-sayed Sey 3our avys and holdeþ 3ou appaied | 1868 |
| This is 3our ende and 3our conclusioñ Who lokeþ lighty now but' Palamoñ | [leaf 27] |
| Who springeþ vp for ioye but' arcite Who couþe telle or who couþe it endite | 1872 |
| The ioye þat' is maked in þe place Whan Theseus haþ don so fair a grace But' doun on knees went' euery maner wight' And þonked him wiþ aþt here hert' and might' | 1876 |
| And namely þe Thebanes ofte siþe And þus wiþ good hope and wiþ herte bliþe They take þeir leue and homward gon þei ride To Thebes with olde walles wyde | 1880 |

[PART III. No gap in the MS.]

| | |
|--|------|
| I trowe men wold it' deme necligence yf' I for3ete te tellen þe dispense Of' Theseus þat' goþ so busily To maken vp þe lystes ryally | 1884 |
| That' such a noble theatre as it' was I dar wel seyn in þe world þer nas The circuite a Mile was aboute Walled of' stoon and diked al wipoute | 1888 |
| Round was þe schap in maner of' compas | |

| | |
|--|-----------------|
| fful of degrees þe heighte of sixty paas Than whan a man was sette on oo degre He lettede nought his felawe for to see | 1892 |
| Estward þer stood a gate of marbel white Westward right south anoþer in opposite And schortly to conclude such a place Was non in erþe as in so litel a space | 1896 |
| ffor in þe lond þer nas no crafty man That Geometrie or ars metrike can Ne purtreiour ne keruer of ymages That Theseus ne gain him mete <i>and</i> wages | 1900 |
| The Teatre for to make and deuyse And for to don his rite and sacrificise he estward hath vpon þe gate aboue In worschip of Venus þe goddesse of loue | 1904 |
| Don make an auter and an oratorie And of þe westward in memorie | [leaf 27, back] |
| Of Mars he maketh hath right such anoþer That coste largely of gold a foþer | 1908 |
| And northward in a toret on þe walle Of alabaustre whit and reed coralle An oratori riche for to see In worschip of Diane of chastite | 1912 |
| hath Theseus don wrought in noble wise But þit hadde I forgetyn to deuyse þe noble peynting and þe purtraitures The schap þe contenance and þe figures | 1916 |
| That weren in þise oratories þre fferst in þe temple of venus maist þou se Wrought in þe walle ful pitous to biholde The broken sleepes and þe sikes colde | 1920 |
| þe sacrede teeres and þe waymentyng The fyre strokes of þe desyring That loues seruantz in þis lijf enduren The othes þat here couenantz ensuren | 1924 |
| Plesant and hope desir fol-hardynesse | |

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Beaute and youþe bauderie Richesse Charmes and force lesynges flaterie Dispense bysynesse and Ialousie | 1928 |
| That' werede of' yalow of' gooldes a garlond And a cukkow sittynge' on his hond ffestes instrumentz karoles daunces lust' and array and aft' þe circumstances | 1932 |
| Of' loue which þat' rekned and rekene schal By ordre were peynted on þe wal And mo þan I can make of' mencioñ ffor sothly al þe mont' of' Citheroñ | 1936 |
| Ther venus haþ hir principal dwellyng' Was schewed on þe wal in portreyng' Wiþ al þe gardyn and þe lustynesse Nat' was forþeten þe porter ydelnesse | 1940 |
| Ne Narcisus þe faire of' yore agon Ne yet' þe folie of' king' Salomon | [leaf 28] |
| Ne 3it' þe grete strengþe of' Hercules Thenchaumentenz of' Medea and Circes | 1944 |
| Ne of' Turnus wiþ þe hardy fiers corrage The riche Crysus kaytif' in seruage / Thus may 3e seen þat' wisdom ne richesse Beaute ne sleighte strengþe ne hardynesse / | 1948 |
| Ne may wiþ venus holde champartye ffor as hire list' þe world þanne may sche gye lo aft' þise folk' so kaught' were in here lace Til þei for woo ful ofte seyde allase | 1952 |
| Suffiseth here ensamples oon or tuo And þough I couþe rekne a þousand mo The statue of' venus glorious for to see Was inaked fleetyng' in þe large see | 1956 |
| And fro þe' nauel doun al couered was Wiþ wawes greene and bright' as eny glas O citole in hir right' hond hadde sche / And on hire heed ful semely for to see | 1960 |
| A rose garlond freissch and wel smellynge | |

- About hir heed her doufes flykerynge
 Biforn hire stode hir sone Cupido
 vpon his schuldernes wenges hadde he tuo 1964
 And blynd he was as it is ofte seene /
 A bowe he bar and arwes bright and keene
 Whi schulde I nought as wel eek telle þe halle
 The purtraiture þat was vpon þe walle / 1968
 Wipinne þe temple of mighty mars þe reede
 Al peynted was þe wal in lengþe and brede /
 lik to þe eestres of þe grisly place
 That highte þe grete temple of Mars in trace 1972
 In þilke colde frosty regioun
 Ther as Mars hap his soueraigne mansioun
 first on þe wal was peynted a foreste
 In which þer dwelled neyþer man ne beste 1976
 Wip knotty knarry bareyne trees olde
 Of Stubbes scharpe and hidous to biholde/ [leaf 28, back]
 In which þer ran a Rombel in a swough
 And þought a storm schulde bresten euery bough 1980
 And downward from an huff vnder a bente
 Ther stood þe temple of mars armypotente
 Wrought all of burned steel of which þentre
 Was long and streyt and gastly for to see 1984
 And þer out cam a rage and such a vese
 That it made all þe gates for to rese
 The northerne light in atte dores schone
 ffor wyndowe on þe walf ne was þer none 1988
 Thorugh which men mighte eny light discerne
 The dores waren all of Atthemant eterne
 ychenchede ouertwart and endlong
 Wip Iren towgh and for to make it strong 1992
 Euery piler þe temple to sustene
 Was tonne gret of Iren bright and scheene
 Ther say I ferst þe derk ymagynyng
 Of felonye and al þe compassyng 1996
 The cruel Ire reed as eny glede

| | |
|---|-----------|
| The pykpurs and eek' þe pale drede | |
| The smyler wiþ þe knyft vnder þe cloke | |
| The schepene brennyng' wiþ þe blake smoke | 2000 |
| The tresoun of' þe morthering' in þe bedde | |
| The open werre wiþ woundes aft' bibledde | |
| Contek' wiþ bloody knyft' and scharp manace | |
| Al ful of' schrikyng' was þat' sory place | 2004 |
| The sleer of' himself' yet' saugh I þere | |
| His herte hath baped al his here | |
| The nayl y-dryuen in þe schood on night' | |
| The colde deth wiþ mouþ gapende vpright | 2008 |
| Amyddes of' þe temple sat' meschañce | |
| With discomfort' and sory contenañce | |
| yet' saugh I woodnesse laughyng' in his rage | |
| Armed compleint / out' hees and feers outrage | 2012 |
| The karoigne in þe busk' wiþ þrote y-korue | |
| A þousand y-slayn and nought' of' qualme y-storue | [leaf 29] |
| The Tiraunt' with his preye his force thraste / | |
| The toun destroyed þer was noþing' lafte | 2016 |
| yet' saugh I brent' þe schippes hoppestereres | |
| The hunte strangled wiþ þe wilde breeres / | |
| The sowe freten þe child right' in þe cradel | |
| The Cook' I-scalded for al his longe ladel | 2020 |
| Nought' was forgeten by þe infortune of' marte / | |
| The carter ouer-Riden wiþ his carte | |
| vnder þe wheel ful lowe he lay a doun | |
| Ther were also of' martis diuision | 2024 |
| The barbour and þe bocher and þe smith | |
| That' forgeþ scharpe swerdes on his stith | |
| And aft' aboute depeynted in a toure | |
| Saugh I conqeste in gret' honoure | 2028 |
| With þe scharpe swerd ouer his heed | |
| Hangynge by a subtyl twyned þreed | |
| Depeynted was þe slaughtre of' Iulius | |
| Of' grete Nero and of' Anthonius | 2032 |
| Al be þat' ilke time þei were vnborn | |

- 3et was hire deth depeynted þer biforn
 By manasyng^t of^t mars right^t by figure
 So was it^t schewed right in þat^t purtreiture 2036
 As is depeynted in þe sertres aboue
 Who schal be slain or elles deed for loue
 Sufficeþ oon ensample in stories olde
 I may not^t rekne hem alle þough I wolde 2040
 The statue of^t mars vpon a carte stood
 Armed and loked grym as he were wood
 And ouer his heed þer schineþ tuo figures
 Of^t sterres þat^t ben closed in scriptures 2044
 That^t oon Puella þat oþer Rubeus
 This god of^t armes was arrayed þus
 A wolf^t þer stood biforn him at^t his feete
 Wiþ eighen reede and of^t a man he eete 2048
 Wiþ subtilt penseit was depeynted þis storie /
 In redoutyng^t of^t mars and of^t his glorie [leaf 29, back]
 Now to þe temple of^t Diane þe chaste /
 As schortly as I can I wol me haste 2052
 To telle 3ou all þe discripcioun
 Depeynted ben þe walles vp and down
 Of^t huntynge^t and of^t schamefast^t chastite
 Ther saugh I how woful Calistope 2056
 Whan þat^t Diane agreued was with here
 Was torned fro a womman til a bere / ¶ Vrsa maior
 And after was sche maad þe loode-sterre
 þus was sche peynted I can 3ou seye no ferre 2060
 Hire sone is eek^t a sterre as men may se
 Ther saugh I dane torned til a tree
 I mene nat^t þe goddesse Diane
 But^t Penneus doughter which þat^t highte Dane 2064
 ¶ Ther saugh I accheon an herte y-maked
 ffor vengance þat^t he saugh Diane al naked
 I saugh how þat^t his houndes haue him caught^t /
 and freten him for þat^t þei knewe him naught 2068
 yet ypeynted was a litel forþere more /

how atthalance hounted þe wilde bore
 And Meliagre and many anoþer mo
 ffor which Diane wrought him care and wo 2072
 Ther saugh I many anoþer storie /
 The which me list nat drawe to memorie /
 ¶ This goddesse on an hert ful wel hiegh seet
 Wiþ smale honndes all aboute hir feet 2076
 And vnder neþe hire feet sche hadde a moone
 Wexynge it was and schulde wanye soone
 In gaude greene hir statue cloþed was
 Wiþ bowe in honde and arwes in a caas 2080
 Hir eyhen caste sche ful lowe a doun
 Ther Pluto haþ his derke regioun
 A womman trauaillynge was hire biforn
 But for hire childe so longe was vnborn 2084
 fful pitou[s]ly lucyna gan sche calle
 And seyde helpe for þou mayst best of alle [leaf 30]
 Wel coupe he peynte lifly þat it wrought
 Wiþ many a floreyne he þe hewes bought 2088
 Now ben þise listes maad an Theseus
 That at his grete cost arraied thus
 The temples and þe Theatres euerydel
 Whan it was don him liked wonder wel 2092
 ¶ But stynte I wol of Theseus alite
 And speke of Palamon and of arcite
 The day approchep and hir retornynge
 That eueriche scholde an hundred knightes bringe 2096
 The bataille to darrayne as I 3ou tolde
 And til athenes hire couenant for to holde
 Haþ euerych of hem brought an .C. knightes
 Wel armed for þe werre at alle rightes 2100
 And sikerly þer trowed many a man
 That neuer siþþen þat þe world bigan
 That for to speke of knighthode of here hond
 As ferre as god haþ maked sec or lond 2104
 Nas of so fewe so noble a companye

ffor euery wight' þat' loued chiuallrie
 And wolde his þankes haue a passant' name
 Haþ preyed þat' he mighte ben of' þat' game 2108
 A wel was him þat' þer to chosen was /
 ffor if' þer fille to morwe such a caas
 3e knowe wel þat' euery lusty knight'
 That' loueþ paramours and haþ his might' 2112
 Were it' in Ingelond or elles where
 Thei wolde here þankes wilnen to be þere
 To fighte for a lady benedicite
 It' were a lusty sighte for to see 2116
 And right' so ferden þey with Palamon
 With him þer wente knightes many on
 Som wol ben armed in an habergeon
 And in a brest' plate and in a light' Iepon 2120
 And some wol haue a paire plates large
 And som wil haue a pruce scheld or a targe [leaf 30, back]
 Som wol ben armed on his legges wel
 and haue an axe and som a mace of' steel 2124
 Ther nys no newe gyse þat' it' nas olde
 Armed were þei as I haue 3ou tolde
 Euerich after his opynioun
 Ther maystow see comyng' wiþ Palamon 2128
 ligure himself' þe grete king' of' trace
 Blak' was his berd and manly was his face
 The cercles of' his yhen in his heede
 Thei gloweden bitwixe yelow and rede 2132
 And lik' a griffon loked he aboute
 With kempe heres on his browes stoute
 his lymes grete his braunes harde and strong'
 his schuldernes brode his armes round and long' 2136
 And as þe gyse was in his cuntre
 fful heighe vpon a chaar of' gold stood he
 Wiþ foure white boles in þe trays
 In stede of' cote armour ouer his harnays 2140
 Wiþ nayles yelowe and bright' as eny golde

he hadde a berskynne coleblak' for olde
 his longe her was kumbed byhynde his bak'
 As eny rauenes fejer it' schon for blak' 2144
 A wreþe of gold arme gret' of huge weighte
 vpon his heed sette ful of stones brighte
 Of fyne Rubies and of Diamantz
 Aboute his chaar þer wente wit' Alantz 2148
 Twenty and mo as gret as eny steere
 To huntten atte leoñ or þe deere
 And folwed him with mosel fast' y-bounde
 Coleres of gold and torettes filed rounde 2152
 An C. lordes hadde he in his route
 Armed ful wel wip hertes sterne and stoute
 ¶ With arcita in stories as men fynde
 The grete Emetreus þe king' of Inde 2156
 vpon a steede bay trapped in steel
 Couered in cloth of gold diapred weel [leaf 31]
 Com ridyng' lyk' þe god of armes mars
 His cote armure was of cloþ of Tars 2160
 Couched with perles whit' and round and grete /
 His sadel was of brent gold newe I bete
 A mantelet' vpon his schulderñ hangyng
 Bret' ful of Rubyes reede as fyr sparclynge 2164
 His crispe her lik' rynges was I-ronne
 And þat' was yelow and glitering' as þe sonne
 His nose was highe his eyen bright' Cytryn
 His lippes rounde his colour was sanguyn 2168
 A fewe frakenes in his face y-spreynd
 Betwixe yelow and somdel blak' y-meynd
 And as a leoñ he his lokyng' caste
 Of fyue and twenty 3eer his age I caste 2172
 His berd was wel begonne for to springe
 His voys was as a trompe thunderinge
 vpon his heed he wered a laurer grene
 A garland freissche and lusty for to seene 2176
 vpon his hand he bar for his deduyt'

- An Egle tame as eny lillie whit
 An C. lordes hadde he with him þere
 All armed saue her heedes in al here gere 2180
 fful richely in alle maner þinges
 ffor trusteþ wel þat Dukes Erles kynges.
 Were gadred in þis noble companye
 ffor loue and for encrees of chiuallrie 2184
 aboute þis king þer ran on euery part
 fful many a tame leon and lepart
 And in þis wise þise lordes all and some
 Ben on þe soneday to þe Cite come 2188
 Aboute prime and in þe toun alighte
 This Theseus þis Duk þis worþi knighte
 Whan he hadde brought hem in to his Cite
 And Inned hem euerich at his degre / 2192
 He festeþ hem and doþ so gret labour
 To eesen hem and don hem all honour [leaf 31, back]
 That yet men weneþ þat no mannes wit
 Of non estat ne coupe amenden it / 2196
 The menstralcye þe seruisse atte feste
 The grete giftes to þe meste and leste
 The riche array of Theseus Paleys
 Ne who sat first ne last vpon þe deys 2200
 What ladies fairest ben or best daunsynge
 Or which of hem can best daunsen or synge /
 Ne who most felynglik spekeþ of loue
 What haukes sitten on þe perche aboue / 2204
 What houndes liggen on þe flor adoun
 Of all þis make I now no mencion
 But alle þeffecte þat þinkeþ me þe beste
 Now comeþ þe poynt and herkneþ if þou lest 2208
 ¶ The soneday night ar day bigan to springe
 Whan Palamon þe larke herde synge
 Al þough it / nere nought day by houres tuo
 3et song þe larke and Palamon right þo 2212
 Wiþ holy herte and with an heigh corage

He ros to wenden on his pilgrimage
 vnto þe blisful Citharea benigne
 I mene Venus honorable and digne 2216
 And in here houre he walkeþ forþ a paas
 vnto þe lystes þer hire temple was
 And down he kneleþ and wiþ humble chere
 And herte sore he seyde as 3e schal heere 2220
 ¶ ffairest^t of faire O lady myn Venus
 Doughter to Ioue and spouse to Vulcanus
 Thou glader of þe mount^t of Citheroñ
 ffor þilke loue þou haddest^t to adoñ 2224
 Haue pite of^t my bittre teeres smerte /
 and tak^t myn humble preier at^t þin herte
 Allas I ne haue no langage to telle /
 Theffectes ne þe torment of^t myn helle 2228
 Myn herte may myn harmes nought^t bewreie
 I am so confuse þat^t I can not^t seye [leaf 32]
 But^t mercy lady bright^t þat^t knowest^t wele
 My þought^t and seest^t what^t harmes þat^t I feele 2232
 Considere al þis and rewe vpon my soore
 As wisly as I schal for euermore
 Emforth my myght^t þi trewe seruauñt^t be
 And holden werre alwey wiþ chastite 2236
 That^t I make myn avow so 3e me helpe
 I keepe nough^t of^t armes for to yelpe
 Ne I ne axe nought^t to morwe to haue victorie
 Ne renoun in þis caas ne veine glorie 2240
 Of pris of^t armes blowen vp and down
 But^t I wolde haue fully possessioun
 Of^t emelye and dye in þi seruise
 ffynde yow þe maner how and in what^t wise 2244
 I recche nat^t but it^t may bettre be
 To haue victorie of hem or þei of^t me
 So þat^t I may haue my lady in myn armes
 ffor þough so be þat^t mars is god of^t armes 2248
 youre vertue is so gret^t in heuen aboue

That if yow list I schal wel haue my loue
 Thy temple wil I worschipe euermo
 An on þin auter wher I ride or go 2252
 I wil don sacrifice and feeres beete
 And if 3e wol not so my lady sweete
 Than pray I þe to morwe with a spere
 þat arcite me þurgh þe herte bere 2256
 Than rekke I nat whan I haue lost my lyf
 þough þat arcite wynne hir to his wyf
 This is þeffect and ende of my preyere
 yif me my loue þou blisful lady deere 2260
 Whan þe orison was don of Palamon
 his sacrificise he dide and þat anon
 fful pitously wiþ alle circumstances
 Al telle I not as now his obseruances 2264
 But atte laste þe Statue of Venus schook
 And made a signe wherby þat he took [leaf 32, back]
 That his prayer accepted was þat day
 ffor þough þe signe schewed a delay 2268
 3it wist he weel þat graunted was his boone
 And with glad herte he went him home ful soone
 The þridde hour inequal þat Palamon
 Bigan to venus temple for to gon 2272
 vp roos þe sonne and vp roos Emelye
 And to þe temple of Diane gan hye
 Hir maydenes þat þider with hir ladde
 fful redily with hem þe fyr þey hadde 2276
 Thencens þe clopes and þe remenant aft
 That to þe sacrifice longen schaff
 The hornes fful of methe as was þe gise
 Ther lacked nat to do hir sacrificise 2280
 Smokyng þe temple ful of clopes faire
 This Emelye with herte debonaire
 Hire body [wessh] with þe water of a welle
 But how sche dide hire rite I dar not telle 2284
 But it be eny þing in general

And if^t so be þou wolt^t not^t do me *grace*
 Or if^t my destyne be schape so
 That I schal needes haue oon of^t hem tuo 2324
 As sende me him that^t most^t desireth me
 Biholde goddesse of^t clene chastite
 The bittre teeres þat^t on my cheekes falle
 Syn þou art^t maiden and kepere of vs alle 2328
 My maydenhode þou kepe and wel conserue
 And whil I lyue a maide I wol þou serue
 ¶ The fires brennen vpō þe auter cleer
 Whil Emelye was þus in hire preyer 2332
 But^t sodeinly sche saugh a sighte queynte
 ffor right^t anon on of^t þe fyres queynte
 And quiked agayn and after þat^t anon
 That^t oþer fyr was queint and al a-gon 2336
 And as it^t queinte it^t made a whistlinge
 As don þese wete brondes in here brennynge / [leaf 33, back]
 And at^t þe brondes ende out^t ran anon
 As it were bloody dropes many on 2340
 ffor which so sore a-gast was Emelye
 That^t sche was ful ny mad and gan to crie
 ffor sche ne wiste what^t it signefied
 But^t oonly for þe feer þus haþ sche cried 2344
 And weepe þat^t it was pite for to heere
 And þer with al Diane gan appeere
 With bowe in hand right^t as an hunteresse
 And seyde doughter stynt^t þin heynesse 2348
 Among^t þe goddes heigh it is affermed
 And by eterne word writen and confermed
 Thou schalt^t be wedded vnto oon of^t þo
 þat^t han for þe So mochel care and wo 2352
 And vnto which of^t hem I may not^t telle
 ffar-wel for I ne may no lenger dwelle
 The fyres which þat^t on myn auter brenne
 Schul þe declare ar þat^t 3e gon heñne / 2356
 Thin auenture of^t loue as in þis caas

And wiþ þat' word þe arwes in þe caas
 Of þe goddesse clateren faste and ryngē
 And forþ sche wente and made a vanysschyngē 2360
 ffor which þis Emelye astoned was
 And seide what' amontēþ þis allas
 I putte me in þi proteccioñ
 Diane and in þi disposicioñ 2364
 And home sche goþ anon þe nexte weye
 This is þeffecte þer nys namore to seye
 The nexte hour of' mars folwyngē þis
 Arcite vnto þe temple walked is 2368
 Of' fiers mars to don his sacrificise
 Wiþ all' þe rites of' his payen wise
 Wiþ pitous hert' and heigh deuocioñ
 Right' þus to mars he seide his orisoñ 2372
 O stronge god þat' in þe regnes colde /
 Of' trace honoured art' and lord y-holde [leaf 34]
 And hast' in euery regne and euery londe
 Of' armes al þe bridel in þin honde, 2376
 And hem fortunest' as þe lest' deuysel
 Accepte of' me my pitous sacrificise /
 If' so be þat' my youthe may deserue
 And þat' I mighte be worthy for to serue 2380
 Thy godhede þat' I may ben oon of' þine
 Than pray I þe to rewe vpon my pyne
 ffor þilke pyne and þilke hoote fyre
 In which þou whilom brendest' for desire 2384
 Whan þat' þou vsedest' þi beaute
 Of' faire zonge freissche Venus free /
 And haddest' hire in armes at' þi wille
 Al þough þe oones on a tyme mysfille / 2388
 Whan Walcanus hadde caught' þe in his laas
 And fond þe ligging' by his wijf' allas
 ffor þilke sorwe þat' was in þin herte
 Haue rouþe as wel vpon my peynes smerte 2392
 I am yong' and vnconnyng' as þou wost'

And as I trowe with loue offended moost
 That euer was ony lyues creature
 ffor sche þat doth me all þis woo endure 2396
 Ne reccheþ neuer wher I synke or fleete
 And wel I woot ar sche me mercy heete
 I moot wip strengþe wynne hire in þe place
 And wel I woot wipoute helpe or grace 2400
 Of þe ne may my strengþe nought auaile
 Than helpe me lord to morwe in my bataille
 ffor þilke fyr þat whilom brente þe
 As wel as þilke fir now brenneþ me 2404
 And do þat I to morwe haue victorie
 Myn be þe trauaile and þin be þi glorie /
 Thy souerein temple wil I most honouren
 Of eny place and alwey most labouren 2408
 In þi plesance and in þi craftes stronge
 And in þi temple. I wil my baner honge, [leaf 34, back]
 And all þe armes of my companye
 And euere mo vnto til þat day I dye 2412
 Eterne fire I wol byfore þe fynde
 And eek to þis avow I wil me bynde
 My berd myn here þat longeþ longe a doun
 That neuer zet ne felte offensioun 2416
 Of rasour nor of schere I wil þe yiue
 And ben þi trewe seruant whil I liue
 Now lord haue rouþe vpon my sorwes sore
 If me þe victorie I axe þe namore 2420
 ¶ The preyer stynte of Arcita þe stronge
 The rynges on the temple dore þat honge
 And eek þe dores clateren ful faste,
 Of which arcita somewhat him agaste 2424
 þe fyres brenden vp þe auter bright
 That it gan al þe temple for to light
 And sweete smel the ground anon vp yaf
 And arcita anon his hand vp haf 2428
 And more encense in to þe fir he caste

With oþre rites moo and atte laste
 The statut of mars bigan his hauberk rynge
 And with þe soun he herd a mormoringe 2432
 fful lowe *and* dym þat seyde þis victorie
 ffor which he ȝaf to mars honour and glorie
 And þus with ioye and hope wel to fare
 Arcite anon vnto his Inne is fare 2436
 As fayn as foul is of þe bryghte sonne
 And right anon such strif is bygonne
 ffor þilke grauntyng in þe heuen aboue
 Bitwixe venus þe goddesse of loue 2440
 And Mars þe sterne god armipotent
 That Iubiter was besy it to stent/
 Til þat þe pale Saturnus þe colde
 That knewe so many of auentures olde 2444
 ffond in his olde experience an arte
 That he ful sone haþ plesed eury parte / [leaf 35]
 A soþ is seyde elde haþ gret auantage
 In eelde is boþe wisdom and vsage / 2448
 Men may þe olde at renne and nought a-trede
 Saturne anoon to stynte strif and drede
 Al be it þat it is agayn his kinde
 Of all þis strif he gan remedye fynde 2452
 My deere doughter Venus *quod* Saturne
 My cours þat haþ so wide for to turne
 Haþ more power þan wot any man
 Myn is þe drynclyng in þe see so wan 2456
 Myn is þe prisoñ in þe derke cote
 Myn is þe strañgle and hangyng by þe þrote
 The murmure and þe cherles rebellinge
 The gronyng and þe priue emprisonyng 2460
 I do vengeance and plein correccioñ
 Wil I dwelle in þe signe of þe leoñ
 Myn is þe ruine of þe hihe halles
 The fallyng of þe toures and of þe walles 2464
 vpon þe mynour and þe Carpenter

I slough Sampson schakyngē þe piler
 And myne ben þe maladies colde
 þe derke tresons, and þe castes olde 2468
 my lokingt is þe fader of pestilence
 Now weep namore I schal don diligence
 That Palamon þat is þin owne knight
 Schal haue his lady as þou him bihight 2472
 Though mars schal helpe his knight zet napeles
 Betwixe 3ow þer moot be som tyme pees
 All be 3e nought boþe of oo complexiōn
 That causeþ alday swich diuision 2476
 I am þin ayell redy at þi wille
 Weepe now namore I wil þi lust fulfille
 ¶ Now wol I stente of þe goddes aboue
 Of mars and of venus goddesses of loue 2480
 And telle yow as plainly as I can
 The grete effect for which þat I bygan [leaf 35, back]

[PART IV. No gap in the MS.]

Gret was þe feste in Athenes þat day
 And eek þat lusty sesoun of þat may 2484
 Made euery knight to ben in such plesance
 That al þat monday ioustne þei and daunce
 And spend in heigh venus seruise
 But by þe cause þat þai scholde rise 2488
 Erly for to seen þe grete fight
 vnto here reste wente þei at night
 And on the morwe whan þat day gan springe,
 Of hors and harneys noyse and clateringe 2492
 Ther was in hostelleries al aboute
 And to þe paleys rood þer many a route
 Of lordes vpon steedes and palfreys
 Ther maystow seen diuisyngt of harneys 2496
 So vncouth and so riche wrought so wel
 Of goldsmythrie of broudyngt and of steel

| | |
|---|-----------|
| þe scheelde bright ^t testeres and trappures Gold hewen helmes hauberkes cote armures | 2500 |
| lordes in paramentz on here courseres Knightes of Retenu and eek ^t squieres Nayling ^t þe speres and helmes boclyng ^t Gydyng ^t of ^t scheldes wiþ layners lasyng ^t | 2504 |
| There as neede is þei were noþing ^t ydel The fomy steedes on þe goldene bridel Gnawen and faste þe armureres also / Wiþ file and hamer priking ^t to and fro / | 2508 |
| yomen on foote and comunes many oon Wiþ schorte staues þikke as þey may gon Pypes trompes nakers Clariouns That ^t in þe bataille blowe bloody sownes | 2512 |
| The paleys ful of ^t poeples vp and down Here þre þere ten holdyng ^t here questioun Dyuynyng ^t of ^t þise Thebane knightes tuo Som seide þus som seide it schal be so | 2516 |
| Som holden with him with þe blake berde Som wiþ þe balled som with þe þikke herde | [leaf 36] |
| Som seide he loked grym and he wold fighte He haþ a Sparth of ^t xx. pound of ^t highte Thus was þe halle ful of ^t diuinyng ^t | 2520 |
| longe after þat ^t þe sonne gan to spring ^t The grete Theseus þat ^t of his sleep awaked Wiþ menstralcye and noyse þat ^t was maked | 2524 |
| Heeld ȝet ^t þe chambres of ^t his paleys riche Til þat ^t þe Thebane knightes boþen I-liche Honorably weren in to þe paleys fette | 2528 |
| Duc ^t Theseus is at ^t þe wyndow sette Arraied right ^t as he were god in trone The poepel presed þiderward fulsone / Him for to seen and don heigh reuerence / | 2532 |
| And eek ^t to herkne his heste and his sentence An herald on a scaffold made an hoo Til al þe noise of ^t þe poepul was I-doo | |

And whan he say þe pepul of' noyse al stille
 Thus schewed he þe mighty dukes wille 2536
 The lord hath of' his heigh' discrecion
 Considered þat' it' were destruccioñ
 To gentil blood to fighten in þis gise
 Of mortel bataille now in þis emprise 2540
 Wher fore to schapen þat' þei schal not' deye
 He wol his ferste purpos modifye
 No man þerfore vpon peyne of' his lyf'
 No maner schot' ne pollax ne schort' knyft' 2544
 In to þe lystes sende or þider brynge
 Ne schort' swerd for to stoke with poynt' bytynge
 No man ne drawe ne bere it by his syde
 No man schal to his felawe ride 2548
 But' oo cours with a scharp y-grounde spere
 ffoyne if' him list' on foote himself' to were /
 And he þat' is at' meschief' schal be take
 And nought' slain but' be brought' vnto þe stake 2552
 That' schal ben ordeyned on eyþer syde /
 But' þider he schal be force and þer abyde / [leaf 36, back]
 And if' so falle þe cheuntein be take /
 On eyther syde or elles sleen his make 2556
 No lenger ne schal þe torneyenge laste
 God speede 3ou go forth and lay on faste /
 Wiþ longe swerdes and 3our' maces fighteþ 3our' fille
 Go now your wey þis is þe lordes wille 2560
 The voys of' þe poeple touchede heuene *
 So lowde criede þei with merie steuene
 God saf' swich a lord þat' is so good
 He wilneþ no distructioñ of' blood 2564
 Vp goþ þe trompes and þe melodye
 And to þe listes ritte the compaignye
 By ordinance þorough out' þe cite large
 Hanged wiþ cloþ of' gold and nought with Sarge / 2568
 fful lik' a lord this noble duk' gan ryde
 These tuo Thebanes vpon eyþer syde

And after roode þe queene and Emelye /
 And after þat' another compaignye / 2572
 Of on and oþer after here degre
 And þus þey passen þurgh out' þe Citee
 And to þe lystes come þey be tyme
 It' nas nat' of' þe day zet' fullich prime 2576
 Whan sette was Theseus ful riche and hye
 ypolita þe queen and Emelye
 And oþer ladyes in degree aboute
 vnto þe seetes preseþ al þe route 2580
 And westward þurgh þe gates vnder marte
 Arcite and eek' þe hundred of' his parte
 Wiþ baner reed is entred right' anon
 And in þat' selue moment' Palamon 2584
 Is vnder venus Estward in þe place
 Wiþ baner whit' and hardy chere and face
 In al þe world to seken vp and down
 So euene wiþoute variacioun 2588
 Ther nere swiche companyes tweye
 ffor þer was non so wys þat' couþe seie [leaf 37]
 That' eny hadde of' oþer auantage
 Of' worþinesse ne of' astaat' ne age 2592
 So euene were þei chose for to gesse
 And in to Rynge faire þei hem dresse
 Whan þat' here names rad were euerychon
 That' in here nombre gyle were þer non 2596
 Tho were þe gates schette and cryed was lowde
 Do now þour deuoir yonge knightes proude
 ¶ The heraudes lefte here prikyng' vp and down
 Now ryngeþ trompes lowde *and* clarioun 2600
 Ther is namore to sein West' and Est'
 In goþ þe speres ful sadly in arest
 In goþ the scharpe spore in to þe syde
 þer seen men who can Iustne and who can ryde 2604
 Ther schyueren schaftes vpon scheeldes þikke
 He feelep þorugh þe herte spoon þe prikke

| | |
|---|-----------------|
| vp springeþ speres twenty foot' on heichte | |
| Out' gon þe sweerdes as þe seluer brighte | 2608 |
| The helmes þer to hewen and to schrede | |
| Out brest' þe blood with sterne streemes reede | |
| With mighty maces þe bones þei tobreste | |
| he þurgh þe þikkest' on þe þrong' gan þreste. | 2612 |
| Ther stomblen steedes stronge and doun gon alle | |
| he rolleþ vnder foot' as doþ a balle | |
| he foyneþ on his foot' with his tronchozn | |
| And he him hurteþ with his hors a doun | 2616 |
| he þurgh þe body is hurt' and sippen take | |
| Maugre his heed and brought' vnto þe stake | |
| As forward was right' þer he moste abyde | |
| Anoþer is ladde on þat oþer syde | 2620 |
| And som tyme doþ hem Theseus to reste | |
| hem to refreissche and drynken if' hem leste | |
| fful ofte a-day han þise Thebanes two | |
| Togydre ymett' and wrought' his felawe wo | 2624 |
| vnhorsed haþ ech oþer of' hem tweye | |
| Ther nas no Tygre in vale of' Galgopheie | [leaf 37, back] |
| Whan þat' hire whelp is stole whan it is lite | |
| So cruel on þe hunte as is Arcite | 2628 |
| ffor Ialouse herte vpon þis Palamon | |
| Ne in belmaryn þer nys so fel leoñ | |
| That' hunted is or for his hunger wood | |
| Ne of' his prey desireþ so þe blood | 2632 |
| Of' Palamon to sle his foo arcite | |
| The Ialous strokes on here helmes byte | |
| Out' renneth blood on boþe here sydes reed | |
| Som tyme an ende þer is of' euery deed | 2636 |
| ffor or þe sonne vnto þe reste wente | |
| The stronge king' Emetreus gan hente | |
| This Palamon as he faught' with arcite | |
| And made his sweerd deepe in fleissh byte | 2640 |
| And by þe force of' twenty is he take | |
| vn-yolden and drawn to þe stake | |

And in þe rescous of þis Palamoun
 The stronge knight ligurge is born a down 2644
 And king Emetreus for all his strengþe
 Is born out of his sadell a swerdes lengthe
 So hitte him Palamon or he were take
 But al for nought he was brought to þe stake 2648
 his hardy herte might him helpe naught
 he moste abide whan þat he was caught
 By force and eek by composicioñ
 Who sorweþ now but woful Palamoñ 2652
 þat moot nomore gon aȝen to fighte
 And whan þat Theseus hadde seen þis sighte
 he cried ho namore for it is doñ
 Ne non schal lenger to his felaw gon 2656
 I wil be trewe Iugge and not partie /
 Arcite of Thebes schal haue Emelye
 That by his fortune haþ hir faire y-wonne
 Anon þer is a noyse of poepel bygonne 2660
 ffor ioye of þis so loude and heigh wiþ alle /
 It semed þat þe lystes scholde falle [leaf 38]
 ¶ What can now faire venus don aboute
 What seiþ sche now what doþ þis queen of loue 2664
 But weepþ so for wantyng of hir wille
 Til þat hire teeres in þe lystes-fille /
 Sche seyde I am aschamed douteles
 Saturnus seyde doughter hold pi pees 2668
 Mars haþ his wille his knight hath all his boone
 And by myn heed þou schalt ben eesed soone
 The trompoures wiþ þe lowde menstralcye
 The heraudes þat ful lowde yelle and crye/ 2672
 Ben in here wele for ioye of daun Arcite
 But herkneþ me and stynteþ noyse alite/
 Which a miracle þer bifel anon
 This fiers Arcite haþ of his helm y-doon 2676
 And on a courser for to schewe his face
 He prikeþ endelong þe large place

lokyng' vponward vpon þis Emelye
 And sche again him caste a frendlich yhe 2680
 ffor wommen as to speken in comune
 Thei folwen aft' þe fauour of fortune/
 And was al his chier as in his herde/
 Out' of þe ground a fir Infernal sterte/ 2684
 ffrom pluto sent' atte request' of Saturne/
 ffor which his hors for feere gan to turne/
 And leep a syde and foundred as he leep
 And ar þat' arcite may taken keep 2688
 he plight' him on þe pomel of his heede
 That' in þe place he lay as he were deede
 His brest' to-brosten with his sadel bowe
 As blak' he lay as any cole or crowe 2692
 So was þe blood y-ronne in his face
 Anon he was born out' of þe place
 Wip' herte soor to Theseus paleys
 Tho was he coruen out' of his harneys 2696
 And in a bed I-brought' ful fair and blyue
 ffor he was yet' in memorie and a lyue / [leaf 38, back]
 And alwey cryeng' after Emelye
 Duc' Theseus with aft' his companye/ 2700
 Is comen hom to Athenes his Citee
 With alle blisse and gret' solempnete
 Al be it' þat' þis auenture was falle
 he nolde not' disconforten hem alle 2704
 Men seyde eek' þat' arcite schal not' dye
 he schal ben heled of his maladye
 And of' anoþer þing' þei were as fayn
 That' of' hem alle was þer non y-slayn 2708
 Alle were þei sore hurt' and namely oon
 That' with a spere was þerled his brest' boon
 To oþer woundes and to broken armes
 Some hadden salue *and* some hadden charmes 2712
 ffermacies of' herbes and eek' saue
 Thei dronke for þei wolde here lyues haue

ffor which þis noble Duc as he wel can
 Confortep and honourep euery man 2716
 And makep reuel al þe lange night'
 vnto þe straunge lordes as it' was right'
 Ne þer was holden no disconfytyng'
 But' as a Iustnes or a torneying' 2720
 ffor sobly þer was no disconfiture
 ffor fallyng' nys but' an auenture
 Ne to be ladde by force to þe stake
 vnyolden and with twenty knightes take 2724
 A *persone* alone wipouten mo
 And haried forþ by arme foot' and too
 And eek' his steede driuen forþ wip staues
 Wip foot' men boþe yomen and knaues 2728
 It' was arretted him no vilanye
 Ther may no man clepe it' Cowardie
 ffor which anon Duk' Theseus leet' crie
 To stynte alle rancour and enuye 2732
 The gree as wel of' oo syde as of' oþer
 And eiper side ylik' as oþer broþer [leaf 39]
 And yaf' hem ȝiftes after here degre
 and fully heeld he feste dayes þre 2736
 And conueyed þe kynges worþily
 Out' of' his toun a iorney largely
 And hom went' euery man þe righte way
 Ther was namore but' far wel and haue good day 2740
 Of' þis bataille I wol no more endite
 But' speke of' Palamon and [of] arcite
 ¶ Swellep þe brest' of Arcite and þe sore
 Encrecep at' his herte more and more 2744
 The cloþ-red blood for eny lechecraft'
 Coruptep and is in his bouk' I-laft'
 That' neyþer veyne blood ne ventusyng'e
 Ne drynk' of herbes may ben his helpyng'e 2748
 The vertue expulsif' or animal
 ffro þilke vertu cleped natural

Ne may þe venym voide ne expelle/
 The pipes of his longes gan to swelle 2752
 And euery lacerte in his brest' adoun
 Is schent' with venym and corrupcioun
 Him gayneþ neyþer for to gete his lijf'
 vomyt' vpward ne dounward laxatif' 2756
 Al is to-brusten þilke regioñ
 Nature hap no dominacioñ
 And certeynly þer nature wil not' werche
 ffare wel phisik' go bere þe man to cherche / 2760
 This al and som þat' arcita mot' dye
 ffor which he sendeth after Emelye
 And Palamon þat' was his cousyn deere
 Than seyde he þus as 3e schal after heere 2764
 ¶ Nat' may þe woful spirit' in myn herte
 Declare a poynt' of alle my sorwes smerte
 To you my lady þat' I loue moost'
 But' I biqueþe þe seruice of' my gost' 2768
 To yow abouen euery creature /
 Syn þat my lijf' may no lenger dure [leaf 39, back]
 Allas þe woo allas þe peynes stronge /
 That' I for 3ou haue suffred and so longe / 2772
 Allas þe deth allas myn Emelye
 Allas departyng' of oure companye
 Allas myn hertes queene allas my lyf'
 Myn hertes lady endere of' my lif' 2776
 What is þis world what' axed men to haue
 Now with with his loue now in his colde graue
 Allone wipouten eny companye
 ffar-wel my sweete foo myn Emelye 2780
 And softe take me in 3oure armes tweye
 ffor loue of' god and herkneþ what' I seye
 ¶ I haue here with my cosyn Palamon
 Hadde strif' and rancour many a day agon 2784
 ffor loue of' yow and for my Ialousye
 And Iuppiter so wis my soule gye

| | |
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| To speken of a seruant <i>propurly</i> | |
| With circumstances alle trewely | 2788 |
| That is to sein troupe honour and knighthede | |
| Wisdom humblesse estat and heigh kynrede | |
| ffredom and al þat longeþ to þat art | |
| So Iuppiter haue of my soule parte | 2792 |
| As in þis worlde right now knowe I non | |
| So worþi to be loued as Palamon | |
| That serueþ yow and wil don aft his lijf | |
| And if þat euere ze schal be a wijf | 2796 |
| fforyete nat Palamon the gentilman | |
| And with þat word his speche faile gan | |
| ffor from his feet vnto his brest was come | |
| The colde of deþ þat hadde him ouercome / | 2800 |
| And yet more ouer for in his armes tuo | |
| The vital strengþe is lost and aft ago | |
| Oonly þe intellecte wiþoute more | |
| That dwelled in his herte sik and sore / | 2804 |
| Gan failen whan þe herte felte deþ | |
| Busked his yhen tuo and failed breþ | [leaf 40] |
| But on his lady zet cast he his yhe | |
| His laste word was mercy Emelye | 2808 |
| his spirit changed hous and wente þere | |
| As I cam neuer I can nough t telle where | |
| Therefore I stynte I am no dyuinistre | |
| Of soules fynde I nat in þat registre | 2812 |
| Ne me ne list þilke opinions to telle | |
| Of hem þough þat þey writen wher þei duelle | |
| Arcite is cold þat mars his soule gye | |
| Now wol I speke forth of Emelye | 2816 |
| Schrighte Emelye and houleþ Palamon | |
| And Theseus his suster took anoon | |
| Swounyng and bar hire fro þe cors away | |
| What helpeþ it to tarien forþ þe day | 2820 |
| To tellen how sche weepe boþe eue and morwe | |
| ffor in such caas wommen haue such sorwe | |

| | |
|---|-----------------|
| Whan þat here housbondes ben fro hem a-go | |
| That for þe more part þei sorwen so | 2824 |
| Or elles fallen in swich a maladye | |
| That atte laste certeinly þey dye | |
| Infinite ben þe sorwes and þe teeres | |
| Of olde folk And folk of tendre ȝeeres | 2828 |
| In aft þe toun for dep of þis Teban | |
| ffor him þer weepþ boþe child and man | |
| So gret weepyng was þer non certayn | |
| Whan Ector was brought al fressh y-slayn | 2832 |
| To Troye allas the pite þat was þere | |
| Cracching of cheekes rendyng eek of here | |
| Whi woldestow ben deed þis wommen crye | |
| And haddest gold ynough and Emelye | 2836 |
| No man mighte gladen Theseus | |
| Sauyng his olde fader Egeus | |
| That knew þis worldes transmutacioun | |
| As he hadde seyn it vp and down | 2840 |
| Ioye after woo . and woo after gladnesse | |
| And scheweth hem ensample and liknesse | [leaf 40, back] |
| Right as þer dede neuer man quod he | |
| That he ne lyued in erþe in som degree / | 2844 |
| Right so þer lyuede neuere man he seyde | |
| In al þis world þat som tyme he ne deyde | |
| This world is not but a þurghfare ful of wo | |
| And we ben pilgrimes passyng to and fro | 2848 |
| Dep is an ende of euery worldly sore | |
| And ouer al þis ȝet seide he mochel more | |
| To þis effect ful wisly to enhorte | |
| The poeple . þat þei schulde him reconforte | 2852 |
| Duc Theseus with aft his busy cure | |
| Cast now wher þat þe Sepulture | |
| Of good arcite may best y-maked be | |
| And eek most honorable in his degre. | 2856 |
| And at þe last he took conclusion | |
| That þer as ferst arcite and Palamoñ | |

- The bridde bar with him his bowe turkeys
 Of brent gold was þe caas and eek þe harneys 2896
 And ryden forþ a paas with sorwful cheere
 Toward þe groue as 3e schul after heere
 The noblest of þe Greekes þat þer were
 vpon here schuldres carieden þe beere 2900
 With slake paas and eighen reede and wete
 þurghout þe Cite by þe maistre streete /
 That sprad was al with blak and wonder highe
 Right of þe same is þe same is þe street y-wrye 2904
 vpon þe right hond went olde Egeus
 And on þat other syde duk Theseus
 With vessels in here hand of gold ful fyne
 As ful of hony melk and blood and wyne 2908
 Ek Palaman with ful gret companye
 And after þat com woful Emelye
 With fire in honde as was þat tyme þe gyse
 To do þoffice of funeral seruise 2912
 Heigh labour and ful gret apparaillyng
 Was atte seruise and þe fir making
 [leaf 41, back]
 That wiþ his greene top þe heuene raughte
 And twenty fadme of brede þe armes straughte / 2916
 This is to sein þe bowes were so brode
 Of stree first þer was leyd many a loode
 But how þe fir was maked vp on heighte
 Ne eek þe names how þe trees highte 2920
 As Ok. fir. birch. asp. Alder. holm. popeler
 Willow. Elm. plane. Assh. box. chesteyn lynde laurer.
 Mapel. þorn. beech. hasill. ew. whipiltre
 how þey were felde schal not be told for me 2924
 Ne how þe goddes ronnen vp and doun
 Disherited of here habitacioun
 In which þei woneden in reste and pees
 Nymphes ffawnes and amadries / 2928
 Ne how þe beestes and þe briddes alle
 fleden for feered whan þe woode was falle /

Ne how þe ground agast' was of þe light'
 That' was not' wont' to see þe sonne bright' 2932
 Ne how þe fyr was couched first' with stree /
 And þanne with drye stockes clouen a þre
 And þanne with greene woode and spicerie
 And þanne with cloth of' gold and wiþ Perrye 2936
 And garlandes hangyng' with ful many a flour
 The mirre þencens with al so sweete odour
 Ne how arcite lay among' al þis
 Ne what' richesse aboute his body is . 2940
 Ne how þat' Emelye as was þe gyse
 Putte in þe fyre of' funeral seruise /
 Ne how sche swounede whan maad was þe fire
 Ne what' sche spak' ne what' was hire desire 2944
 Ne what' Iuwels men in þe fyre cast'
 Whan þat' þe fyr was greet' and brende fast'
 Ne how som cast' hir scheeld and som hire spere
 And of' here vestimentz whiche þat' þey were 2948
 And coppes full' of' melk' and wyn and blood
 Into þe fyr þat' brente as it' were wood [leaf 42]
 Ne how þe Grekes with an huge route
 Thries ryden al þe fir aboute 2952
 vpon þe left' hond with a bowe schotyng
 And þries with here speres claterynge
 And þries how þe ladyes gon to crye
 Ne how þat' lad was homward Emelye 2956
 Ne how arcite is brent' to aisshes colde
 Ne how þat' liche-wake was y-holde
 Al pilke nyght' ne how þe greekes play
 The wake-pleyes ne kepe I nought' to say 2960
 Who wrastelep' best' naked with oyle anyont'
 Ne who þat' bar him best' in no disioynt'
 I wol not' tellen alle how þey goon
 hom til athenes whan þe play was don . 2964
 But' schortly to þe poynt' þan wol I wende
 And maken of' my longe tale an ende

| | |
|--|-----------------|
| ¶ By proces and of lengthe of certeyn ȝeeres | |
| Al stynt' is þe mournyng' and þe teeres | 2968 |
| Of grekes by on general assent' | |
| Than semede þer was a parlement | |
| At' atthenes vpon a certein point and caas | |
| Among' þe whiche poyntes y-spoken was | 2972 |
| To haue with certain contrees alliance | |
| And haue fully of Thebane obeissañce | |
| ffor which þis noble Theseus anon | |
| leet' seende after gentil Palamon | 2976 |
| vnwist' of' him what' was þe cause and why | |
| But' in his blake clopes sorwfully | |
| he com at' his comandement' in hye | |
| Tho sente Theseus for Emelye | 2980 |
| Whan þey were sette and huyst' was in þe place / | |
| An Theseus abyden haþ a space' | |
| Or eny word com fro his wise breste | |
| his eyzen sette he þer as was his leste / | 2984 |
| And with a sad visage he siked stille / | |
| And after þat' right' þus he seyde his wille | [leaf 42, back] |
| The ferste maner of þe cause aboue | |
| Whan he first' maade þe faire cheine of loue | 2988 |
| Gret' was þeffect' and heigh was his entente | |
| Wel wist' he why and what' þer of' he mente | |
| ffor with þat' faire cheyne of' loue he bonde | |
| The fyr. þe aier. the water and þe londe | 2992 |
| In certeyn boundes þat' þei may not' flee / | |
| That' same prince and þat' same mouer quod he | |
| haþ stablissed in þis wrecchede world a-doun | |
| Certeine daies and dominacioun | 2996 |
| To aft' þat' beþ engendred in þis place | |
| Ouer þe whiche day þay may not' pace | |
| Alle mowe þey yet' þo dayes abregge | |
| Ther needeþ nought' non auctomite to legge | 3000 |
| ffor it is proeued by experience | |
| But' þat' me list' to declaren my sentence / | |

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Than may men wel by þis ordre discernen | |
| That þilke mouere stable is and eterne | 3004 |
| Wel may men knowe but it be a foole | |
| That euery partie darreynd from his hoole | |
| ffor nature haþ nat taken his bygynnyng | |
| Of no partye nor of cantel of a þing | 3008 |
| But of a þing þat parfyt is and stable | |
| Descendyng so til it be corumpable | |
| And þefore for his wise purueance | |
| he haþ so wel byset his ordinance | 3012 |
| That specie of þinges and progressions | |
| Schullen endure by successions | |
| And nought eterne wipouten any lye | |
| This maystow vnderstonden and seen at yhe | 3016 |
| Loo þe Ok þat haþ so long a norshing | |
| ffro þe tyme þat it first bygynneþ to spring | |
| And hath so long a lijf as 3e may see | |
| Yet atte laste wasted is þe tree / | 3020 |
| Consideren eek how þat þe harde ston | |
| vnder oure foot on which we trede and goon | [leaf 43] |
| Yet wasten it as it lijþ by þe weye | |
| The brode ryuer som tyme wexen dreye | 3024 |
| The grete townes see we wane and wende | |
| þan 3e see þat all þis þing haþ ende | |
| Of man and woman se we wel also | |
| That needeth in oon of þe termes tuo | 3028 |
| That is to sein in 3ouþe or elles age | |
| He moot be deed þe king as schal þe page | |
| Sum in his bedd. som in þe deepe see | |
| Som in the large feeld as 3e may see / | 3032 |
| Ther helpen nought al god þat ilke weye | |
| Than may I sein that al þis þing moot deye | |
| What maketh þis but Iuppiter þe king | |
| That is Prince and cause of alle þing | 3036 |
| Conuerting alle vnto his propre wille | |
| ffrom which it is darreynd soþ to tille | |

- And heer agayns no creature on lyue
Of no degree auailleþ for to stryue 3040
Thanne is it wisdom as it þenkeþ me
To make vertue of necessite /
And take it wel þat we may not eschewe
And nameliche þat to vs alle is dewe 3044
. [No gap: line left out.]
And rebell is to him þat all may gye
And certainly a man haþ most honour
To deyen in his excellence and flour 3048
Whan he is siker of his goode name
Than haþ he doon his freendes ne him no schame
And gladder oughte his freendes ben of his dep
Whan wiþ honour y-yolden is vp þe brep 3052
Than whan his name apalled is for age
ffor al forgeten is his vessellage
Than is the beste as for a worpy fame
To deyen whan he is best of name 3056
The contrarie of alle þis is wilfulnesse
Why grucchen we why haue we heuynesse
That goode Arcite of Chiuallerie þe flour [leaf 43, back]
Departed is wiþ duete and with honour 3060
Out of þis foule prison of þis lyf
Why gruccheþ heere his cosyn and his wyf
Of his welfare þat loueþ him so wel
Kan he hem þank nay god woot neuer a deel 3064
That boþen his soule and eek him offende /
And yet þei mowe her lustes nought amende
What may conclude of þis longe serie
But after wo I rede vs to be merye 3068
And þanken Iupiter of all his grace
And er we departen from þis place
I rede we make of oure sorwes tuo
O parfyt ioye lastyng euer mo 3072
And lokeþ now where most sorwe is Inne
Ther wol I ferst amenden and bygynne

[no gap in the MS.]

¶ The Millewardes tale/

Whan þat þe knight had þus his tale y-told
 In aȝ þe companye nas þer zong' ne old
 That he ne seyde it / was a noble storye
 And worþi for to drawen in memorie 3112
 And nameliche þe gentils euerych oon
 Oure Oost' lough and swor so mot' I gon
 This goþ aright' vnbokeled is þe male/
 lat' se now who schal telle anoþer tale 3116
 ffor trewely þe game is wel bygonne
 Now telleþ 3e sire monk' if' 3e kunne
 Somwhat' to quyte with þe knightes tale
 The meller þat' for-drunken was al pale 3120
 So þat' vnneþe vpon his hors he sat'
 he nolde aualen neyþer hood ne hat'
 Ne abide noman for his curtesie/
 But' in Pilates vois he gan to crye 3124
 And swor by armes and by blood and bones
 I can a noble tale for þe nones
 Wiþ which I wol now quite þe knightes tale
 Oure oost' saugh þat' he was drunken of ale 3128
 And seyde abyde Robyn leue broþer
 Som better man schal telle vs ferst anoþer [leaf 44, back]
 Abyd and lat' vs werken þriftily
 By goddes soule quod he þat' wol nat' I 3132
 ffor I wol speken or elles go my weye
 Oure oost' answerde /telle on a deuelleweye
 Thou art' a fool þi witte is ouercome
 Now herkneþ quop þe meller alle and some 3136
 But' first' I make a protestacioun
 That' I am dronke I knowe it' by my soun
 And þefore if I speke or mys say
 Wite 3e it' þe ale of' Suthwerk' I 3ou pray 3140

- ffor I wol telle a legende and a lyf
 Boþe of a Carpenter and of his wijf/
 how þat a clerk haþ sett þe wrightes cappe
 The Reeue answerde and seyde stynt þy clappe 3144
 lat be þi lewed dronken harlotrie
 It is a synne and eeke gret folye
 To apeiren eny man or diffame
 And eek to bringe wyfes in such fame 3148
 Thou maist ynough of oþer þinges sain
 This dronken meller spak ful soone agayn
 And seyde leue broþer Osewold /
 Who has no wyf he is no Cokewold 3152
 But I seye nought þerfore þat þou art oon
 Ther been ful goode wyfes many on
 [.
 *no gap in the MS.*] 3156
 Why art þou angry wiþ my tale now
 I haue a wif parde as wel as þou
 Yet nolde I not for þe Oxen in my plough
 Take vpon me more þan ynough 3160
 As demen on my self þat I were oon
 I wil bileeue þat I am noon
 And housbonde schal not ben Inquysitif
 Of goddes priuetees ne of his wijf 3164
 So he may fynde goddes foysoñ þere/
 Of þe remenant needeþ nought to enquire
 What scholde I more sayn but þis Mellere
 he nolde his wordes for no man forbere [leaf 45]
 But tolde his cherles tale in his manere
 Me apinkeþ þat I schal reherce hem heere
 And þerfore euery gentil wight I preye
 Demeþ nought for goddes loue þat I seye 3172
 Of yuel entent but for þat I moot reherse
 Here tales alle be þei bettre or worse
 Or elles falsen som of my matiere
 And þerfore who so list it nought to heere 3176

Torne ouer þe leef^t and chees anoþer tale
 ffor 3e schulle fynde ynowe grete *and* smale
 Of^t storial þing^t þat^t toucheþ gentilesse
 And eek^t moralite and holynesse 3180
 Blameþ not^t me if^t þat^t 3e cheese amys
 The meller is a cherl 3e knowe wel þis
 So was þe Reeue eek^t and oþer mo
 And harlotrie þey tolden boþe tuo 3184
 Auiseþ 3ou and putteþ me out of blame
 And eek^t men schal not^t make ernest of game

[*No gap in the MS.*]

Whilom þer was dwellyng^t at Oxenfoord^t
 A Riche gnoffe þat^t gestes heeld to boorde 3188
 And of^t his crafte he was a Carpunter
 Wip^t him þer was dwellyng^t a pouer scoler
 hadde lerned art^t but all^t his fantasye
 Was torned for to lerne astrologie/ 3192
 And couþe a certein of^t conclusions
 To demen by *interrogaciõs*
 If^t þat^t men axed him in certeyn houres
 Whan men schuld haue drough^t or elles schoures 3196
 Or if^t men axed him what^t schal bifalle
 Of^t euery þing^t I may nought^t reknen alle
 This clerk^t was cleped heende Nicholas
 Of derne loue he couþe and of^t Solas 3200
 And þer-to he was sleigh and ful priue
 And like a mayde meeke for to see
 A chambre hadde he in þat^t hostellerie
 Allone wip^touten eny companye [leaf 45, back]
 fful fetisly dight^t wip^t herbes soote
 And he himself^t as sweete as is þe roote
 Of^t licoris or any Settewale
 his almagist^t and bokes grete and smale 3208
 his astrelabre longyng^t for his art^t
 his augrym stones' layen faire a part
 On schelfes couched at his beddes heede
 His presse y-couered with a faldyng^t reed 3212
 And al aboute þer lay a gay sautrie
 On which he made a night melodye
 So swetly þat^t alle þe chambre ronge
 And angelus ad virginem he songe 3216
 And after þat^t he song^t þe kinges note
 fful ofte blessed was his meric þrote

And þus þe sweete clerk' his tyme spente
 After his freendes fyndyng' and his rente 3220
 This Carpenter hadde wedded a newe wyf'
 Which þat' he louede more þan his lyf'
 Of xvij. 3eer sche was of' age
 Ialous he was and heeld hir narwe in cage 3224
 ffor sche was wylde and 3ong' and he was old
 And demed him self' ben lik' a Cokewold
 he knew not' Catoñ for his witte was rude
 That' bad men wedde his similitude 3228
 Men scholde wedde after here astat
 ffor youþe and eelde is often in debat
 But' siþen þat' he was fallen in the snare
 He most' endure as oþer folk' his care 3232
 ffair was þis 3onge wijf' and þer wijf' al
 As eny wesele hire body gent' and smal
 A ceynt' sche wered barred al of' self'
 A barmcloþ as whit' as morne melk' 3236
 Vpon hire lendes ful of' many a goore
 Whit' was hir smok' and brouded al bifore
 And eek' byhynde on hire coler aboute
 Of' kolblak' silk' wipinne and eek' wipoute [leaf 46]
 The tapes of' hir white voluper
 Were of' þe same suyte of' hire coler
 hire filet' brood of' silk' and sitt' ful hye
 and sikerly sche hadde a likerous yhe 3244
 fful smal y-pulled were hire browes tuo
 And þo were bent' and blak' as any slo
 Sche was ful more blisful for to see/
 Than is þe newe perionette tree 3248
 And softer þan þe wolle is of' a weþer
 And by hir gerdul hinge a purs of' leþer
 Tassed wijf' selk' and perled wijf' latoun
 In al þis world to seeken vp and down 3252
 Ther is no man so wys þat' couþe þenche
 So gay a popelote or swich a wenche/

And swor hir oþ by sent Thomas of kent
 That sche wolde ben at his comaundement 3292
 Whan þat sche may hir leysir wel aspye
 Myn housbonde is so ful of Ialousye
 That but I wayte wel and be priue
 I woot right wel I nam but deed quop sche 3296
 Ye moote ben ful derne as in þis caas
 Nay þer-of kare 3e nought quod Nicholas
 A clerk hadde litherly biset his while
 But if he coupe a carpunter begile 3300
 And þus þey ben acorded and y-sworn
 To wayte a tyme as I haue told biforn
 Whan Nicholas hadde þis euerydel
 And thakked hire aboute þe lendes wel 3304
 he kist hir sweete and takþ his Sauterie
 And playeþ faste and makeþ melodye
 Than fil it þus þat to þe parissche cherche/
 Cristes owne werkes for to werche 3308
 This goode wijf wente on an haly day
 hir forhed schon as bright as any day
 So was it waissche whan sche leet hir werk
 Now was þer of þat chirche a parissche clerk [leaf 47]
 The which þat was y-cleped absolon
 Crul was his heer and as þe gold it schon
 And strouted as a fanne large and brode
 fful streyte and euene lay his Ioly schode 3316
 his rode was reed his eyhen gray as goos
 Wijþ poules wyndow coruen in his schoos
 In hoses rede he wente fetisly
 I-clad he was ful smal and propurly 3320
 Al in a kertest al of light waget
 fful faire an pikke ben þe poyntz y-sett
 And þer vpon he hadde a gay surplys
 As whit as is þe blosme on þe Rys 3324
 A merie child he was so god me saue
 Wel coupe he laten blood or clippe or schaue

And make a charter of lond or an aquitance
 In twenty maner coupe he trippe and daunce 3328
 After þe scole of Oxenforde þo
 And wiþ his legges casten to and fro
 And playen songes on a smal rubible
 Ther-to he songt som tyme a lowde quynnyble/ 3332
 And as wel coupe he pleye on a giterne
 In all þe toun nas brewhous ne tauerne
 That he ne visited wiþ his solas
 Ther any gaillard tappestere was 3336
 But soth to sein he was somdel squaymous
 Of fartyngt and of speche daungerous
 ¶ This absolon þat Ioly was and gay
 Gop with a censer on þe haly day 3340
 Sensyngt þe wyfes of þe parische fast
 And many a louely look on hem he cast
 And namely on þis carpunteres wyf
 To loke on hire him þought a mery lijf 3344
 Sche was so proper and swete and swete and licorous
 I dar wel sein if sche hadde ben a mous
 And he a catte he wolde hire hente anon
 This parissche clerk þis ioly absolon [leaf 47, back]
 hap in his herte such a loue longynge
 That of no wijf took he non offrynge
 ffor curtesie he seide he wolde non
 The moone whan it was night ful brighte schon 3352
 And Absolon his giterne hap I-take
 ffor paramoure he þoughte for to wake
 And forþ he goþ iolyf and amorous
 Til he com to þe carpunteres hous 3356
 A litel after cokkes had y-crowe
 And dressed him vp by a schot wyndowe
 Thas was vpon þe carpenteres walle
 he syngē in his voys gentil and smalle 3360
 Now dere lady if þi willes be
 I prey yow þat 3e wil Rewe on me

ffol wel acordant to his giternyng'
 This Carpenter awok' and herde him syng' 3364
 And spak' vnto his wijf' and seyde anoon
 What Alison heris þou not absolon
 That' chaunteþ þus vnder oure boures walle
 And sche answerde hir housbonde þer wiþ alle 3368
 Yis god woot' Iohan I here it euery del
 This passeþ forþ what' wile 3e bet' þan wel
 ffor day to day þis ioly Absolon
 So woweþ hire þat' him is woo bigon 3372
 he wakeþ al þe night' and al þe day
 he kembede his lokkes brode and made hem gay
 he woweþ hire by menes and brocage/
 And swore he wolde ben hir oughne page/ 3376
 he syngeþ brokking' as a nightyngale
 he sente hire pyment meth and spiced ale/
 And wafres ppyng' hoot' out of' þe gleede
 And for sche was of' town he profred meede 3380
 ffor somme folk' wol be woznen for richesse
 And somme for strokes and somme for gentilnesse
 Som tyme to schewe his lightnesse and maystrie
 he pleieth heraudes vpon a scaffold hye [leaf 48]
 But' what' auayleþ him as in þis caas
 Sche loueþ so þis heende Nicholas
 That' Absolon may blowe þe buckes horn
 he ne haþ for his labour but' a skorn 3388
 And þus sche makeþ absolon here ape
 And aft' his Ernest' turneþ tiff a Iape
 ffor soþ is þis prouerbe it' is no lye
 Men sein right' þus alwey þey neighe slye 3392
 makeþ þe ferre leef' to be loth
 ffor þough þat' absolon be wood or wroþ
 By cause þat' he fer was from hire sight'
 þis neigh Nicholas stood in his light 3396
 ¶ Now bere ye wel heende Nicholas
 ffor absolon may waille and synge allas

And at þe chambre dore whil þat he stood
 he criede and knockede as þat he were wood 3436
 What how what do 3e mayster Nicholay
 how may 3e sleepen al þe longe day
 But al for nought he herde nought a word
 An hole he fond ful lough vpon a bord 3440
 Ther as þe catte was wont in for to creepe
 And at þat hole he loked in ful deepe/
 And atte last he hadde of him a sight
 This nicholas sat euer capyng vpright 3444
 As he hadde keked on þe newe moone
 And down he goþ and tolde his mayster soone
 In what array he saugh þis ilke man
 This Carpunter to blessen him bigan 3448
 And seyde help vs seinte ffredeswide
 A man woot litel what him schal betyde/
 This man is falle with his astronomie
 In som woodnesse or in som agonye 3452
 I pougnt ay wel how þat it scholde be
 Men scholde not knowe of goddes priuite
 3e blessed be alwey a lewed man
 That nought but oonly his bileeue can [leaf 49]
 So ferd anoper clerk with astronomie
 he walked in þe feeldes for to prie
 vppon þe sterres what þer schulde bifalle
 Til he was in a Marle pit y-falle 3460
 he saugh nought þat but 3it by seint Thomas
 Me reweth sore of heende Nicholas
 he schal be rated of his studyng
 If þat I may by Ihesu¹ heuene king [1 MS. the]
 Gete me a staf þat I may vnderspore
 Whil þat þou Robyn heuest vp þe dore
 he schal out of his studyng as I gesse
 And to þe chambre dore he gan him dresse 3468
 his knaue was a strong carl for þe nones
 And by þe hasp he heef it / of at oones

In to þe floor þe dore fiſt anon
 This Nicholas sat ay as stille as stoon 3472
 And euere capede vpward in to the ayre
 This Carpunter wende he were in despaire
 And hent' him by þe schuldres mightyly
 And schook' him harde and cryed spitously 3476
 What Nicholas what' how looke a doun
 Awake and þenk' on cristes passioun
 I crouche þe from Elues and fro wightes
 Ther-wiþ þe night' speſt seyde he anon rightes 3480
 Of foure halues of' þe hous aboute
 And on þe þresschefold on þe dore wiþoute
 Ihesu crist' and seynt' Benedight'
 Blesse þis hous from euery wikkede wight' 3484
 ffor þe nightes verye þe white Pate noster
 Where wentestow þou seinte peteris suster
 And atte laste þis heende Nicholas
 Gan for to sike sore and seyde allas 3488
 Schal al þe werld be lost' eft' sones now
 This Carpenter answerde what' seist' þou
 What' þink' on god as we doon men þat' swynke
 This nicholas answerde feche me drynke [leaf 49, back]
 And after wol I speke in priuutee
 Of' certein þing' þat' toucheþ þe and me
 I wil telle it non oþer man certeyn
 This Carpenter goþ down and comeþ agein 3496
 And brought' of' mighty ale a large quart'
 And whan þat' ech of' hem hadde dronken his part'
 This Nicholas his dore faste schette
 And doun þe Carpunter by him he sette 3500
 And seyde Iohñ myn hooste leef' and deere
 Thou schalt' vpon my trouþe swere me heere
 That' to no wight' þou schalt' þis counseil wreye
 ffor it' is cristes counseill þat' I seie/ 3504
 And if' þou telle it man þou art' forlore/
 ffor þis vengeance þou schalt' haue þerfore

That if þou wreie me þou schalt' be wood
 ¶ Nay crist' forbede it for his holy blood 3508
 Quod þo þis sely man I nam no labbe
 Ne þough I seie I nam not' leef' to gabbe
 Sey what' þou wolt' I schal it neuer telle
 To child ne wijf' by him þat' hariede helle/ 3512
 Now Iohan quod Nicholas I wil nouz't lye
 I haue I-founde in myn astrologie/
 As I haue loked in þe moone bright'
 That' now a monday next at quarter night 3516
 Schal falle a Rayn and þat' so wilde *and* wood
 That' half' so gret' was neuer Nowels flood
 This world he seide in lasse þan in an hour
 Schal al be dreynt' so hidous is þe schour 3520
 Thus schal mankynde drenche and leese here lif
 This Carpunter answerde allas my wijf'
 And schal sche drenche allas myn alisoun
 ffor sorwe of' þis he fell almost' a doun 3524
 And seyde is þer no remedye in þis caas
 Whi ʒis for gode quod heende Nicholas
 If' þou wolt' worchen after lore and red
 Thou mayst' noz't werken after þin oughne heed [leaf 50]
 ffor þus seip Salamon þat' was ful trewe
 Work' aft' by counseill' and þou schalt' nought' rewe
 And if' þou worken wolt' by good counseille
 I vndertake wipoute mast' or seile 3532
 Yet' schal I saue hire and þe and me/
 hast' þou nought' herde how saued was Noe
 Whan þat' owre lord hap warned him biforn
 That' aft' þe world with water schulde be lorn 3536
 ʒis quod þis Carponter ful ʒore ago
 hastow not' herd quod Nicholas also
 The sorwe of' Noe wip his felaschipe
 Or þat' he mighte gete his wif' to schipe 3540
 him hadde leuer I dar wel vndertake
 At' pilke tyme þan aft' his weþeres blake

That' sche hadde a schip hir self' allon
 And þer-fore wost' þou what' is best' to doon 3544
 This axeþ haste and of' an hastyf' þing'
 Men may nought preche or make taryng'
 Anon go gete vs faste in to þis Inne
 A knedyng' trougħ or elles a kemelynne 3548
 ffor ech of' vs but' look' þat þey ben large
 In which men mowe swymme as in a barge
 And han þer vitailles suffisaunt'
 But' for a day fy on þe remenaunt 3552
 The water schal aslake and gon a way
 Aboute prime vpon þe nexte day
 But' Robyn may not' wite of' þis þi knaue/
 Ne eek' þy mayde gylle I may nought' saue/
 Axe nought' why for þough þou axe me 3556
 I wol nought' tellen goddes priuite
 Sufficeþ þe but' if' þi wittes madde
 To haue as gret' a grace as noe hadde 3560
 Thi wif' schal I wel sauē out' of' doute
 Go now þi wey and speed þe heer aboute/
 But when þou hast for hire and þe and me
 Y-geten vs þese knedyng' tubbes þre [leaf 50, back]
 Than schalt' þou hang' hem in þe rof' ful hye
 That' noman of' oure purueance espye
 And whan þou þus hast' don as I haue seyde
 And hast' oure vitailles faire in hem y-leyde 3568
 And eek' an ax to smyte þe corde a tuo
 Whan þat' þe water comeþ þat' we may go
 And broke an hole an heigh vpon þe gable
 vnto þe gardeynward ouer þe stable 3572
 That' we may freely passen forþ' oure wey
 Whan þat' þe grete schour is gon a wey
 Thanne schalt' þou swymme as mery I vndertake
 As doþ þe white doke after his drake 3576
 Than wol I clepe how alisoñ how Ioon
 Be merie for þe flood wol passe anon

And þou wolt^t sein haiff maister Nicholay
 Goode morwen I see þe wel for it is day 3580
 And þanne schal we be lordes aft^t oure lif^t
 Of alle þe world as Noe and his wijf^t
 But^t þat^t of^t oo þing I warne þe ful right^t
 Be wel auysed on þat^t ilke night^t 3584
 That^t we ben entred in to þe schippes boord
 That^t noon of^t vs ne speke nought^t a word
 Ne clepe ne crye but been in his preyere
 ffor it^t is goddes oughne heeste deere 3588
 Thy wijf^t and þou mot^t hange fer atwynne
 ffor þat^t betwixe 3ou schal be no synne
 No more in lokyng^t þan þer schal in dede
 This ordinance is seid go god þe speede 3592
 To morwe at^t night^t whan men ben aft^t on sleepe
 In to our knedyn tubbes wil we creepe
 And sitten þer abidyng^t goddes grace
 Go now þy wey I haue no lenger space 3596
 To make of^t þis no lenger sermonyng^t
 Men sein þus sende þe wise and sey no þing^t
 þou art^t so wys it needeþ þe nought^t to teche
 Go saue oure lijf^t and þat I þe beseche [leaf 51]
 ¶ This seely Carpunter goþ forþ his wey
 fful ofte he seyde allas and weylawey
 And to his wijf he tolde his priuitee
 And sche was warr and knew it^t bet^t þan he 3604
 What^t al þis queynte cast^t was for to seye
 But^t napeles sche ferde as sche wolde deye
 And seyde allas go forþ þi weie anon
 help vs to scape or we ben deede echon 3608
 I am þi trewe verray wedded wijf^t
 Go deere spouse and help to saue oure lijf^t
 ¶ lo which a gret^t þing^t is affection
 Men may dye of^t ymaginacion 3612
 So deepe may impressions be take
 This seely Carponter bygynneþ quake

him þenketh verraily þat he may se
 Noe flood come walkyng^t as þe see 3616
 To drenchen alisoñ his hony deere
 he weepeþ wailleþ maketh sory cheere/
 he sykeþ wiþ ful many a sory swogh
 And goþ and geteþ him a knedyng^t trough 3620
 And after a tubbe and a kemelyn
 And priuily he sent^t hem to his In
 And hyng^t hem in þe roof^t in priuite
 his oughne hond he made eek^t leddres þre 3624
 To clymben by þe ronges and þe stalkes
 vnto þe tubbes hangyng^t in þe balkes
 And hem vitailed boþe trough and tubbe
 Wiþ bred and cheese and good ale in a Tubbe/ 3628
 Suffisyng right^t ynough as for a day
 But^t ar þat^t he hadde maad al þis array
 he sent^t his knaue and eek^t his wenche also
 vpon his neede to london for to go 3632
 And on þe monday whan it^t drough to night^t
 he schette his dore wiþoute candel light^t
 And dressed all þing^t as it^t scholde be/
 And shortly clomben vp all þre/
 [leaf 51, back]
 Thei setten stille wel a forlong^t way
 Now pater noster clum seide Nicholay
 And Clum *quod* Iohñ and Clum seide alisoñ
 This Carpenter seide his deuocioñ 3640
 And stille he sitte and biddeþ his prayere
 Awaityng^t on the rayn if he it heere
 The deth sleepe for wery bysynesse
 fil on þis Carpenter right^t as I gesse 3644
 Aboute corfew tyme or litel more
 ffor trauaille of his gost^t he groneþ sore
 And eft^t he routeþ for his heed myslay
 Doun of þe laddre stalkeþ Nicholay 3648
 And alisoñ ful softe a doun sche spedde
 Wiþouten wordes mo þey gon to bedde

Ther as þe carpunter is wont to lye
 Ther was þe reuel and þe melodye/ 3652
 And þus lith alison and Nicholas
 In busynesse of merþe and of solas
 Til þat þe belle of laudes gan to ryng
 And the freres in þe chaunceff gonne synge/ 3656
 This parische clerk þis amorous absolon
 That is for loue alwey so wo bigon
 vpon þe monday was at Osenay
 With compaignie him to desport and play 3660
 And axed vpon caas a cloisterer
 fful priuily after Iohā þe Carpunter
 And he drough him a part out of þe chirche
 And seyde I not I saugh him heere nought werche 3664
 Sippe Saturday I trowe þat he be went
 ffor tymber þere oure abbot hap him sent
 ffor he is wont for tymber for to go
 And dwelle atte graunge a day or tuo 3668
 Or elles he is at his hous certeyn
 Wher þat he be I can nought soþly sein
 This absolon ful ioly was and light
 And þoughte now is tyme to wake al nyght [leaf 52]
 ffor sikerly I saugh him nought styryng
 Aboute his dore syn day bigan to spring
 So mote I þriue I schal at cokkes crowe
 fful priuily knocken as his wyndowe 3676
 That stant ful lowe vpon his boures walle
 To alison now wol I tellen alle
 My loue longyng for 3it I schal not misse
 That atte laste wey I schal hir kisse 3680
 Som maner comfort schal I haue par fay
 My mouþ hap icched al þis longe day
 That is a signe of kissing atte leste
 Al nyght me mette eek I was at a feeste 3684
 Therefore I wol go sleepe an our or tweye
 And al þe nyght þan wol I wol I wake and pleye

Whan þat þe ferste cok' hap' crowe anon
 vp rist' þis Ioly loue absolon 3688
 And him arrayeþ gay and poynt/ deuysel
 But' ferst' he cheweþ grayn and likorise
 To smellen swoote or he hadde kempt' his here
 vnder his tonge a trewe loue he beere/
 ffor þer-by wende he to be gracious 3692
 he rowmeth to þe carpenteres hous
 And stille he stant' vnder þe schot wyndowe
 vnto his brest' it' raught' it' was so lowe/
 And softe he coughed wiþ a semy soun 3696
 What' do 3e hony combe swete alisoun
 My faire brid my sweete synamome/
 Awaketh lemman myn and spekeþ to me 3700
 We[1] litel þenken 3e vpon my woo
 That' for 3oure loue I swete as I go
 No wonder is þough þat' I swelte and swete
 I morne as doþ þe lambe after þe teete 3704
 I-wys lemman I haue such loue longyng'
 That' lik' a turtel trewe is my moornyng'
 I may not' ete namore þan a mayde/
 Go fro þe wyndow Iakke fool sche sayde [leaf 52, back]
 As help me god it' wil not' be com pame/
 I loue anoper and elles I were to blame/
 Wel bette þan þe by Ihesu absolon
 Go forþ þi wey or I wil caste a stoon 3712
 And lete me slepe a twenty deuel way
 Allas quod absolon and weyloway
 That' trewe loue was euer so yuel besette/
 Than kisse me syn it may be no bette/
 ffor iñesus loue and for þe loue of me 3716
 Wolt' þou þan go þi way þer-with quod sche
 Ye certes lemman quod þis absolon
 Than make þe redy quod sche I come anon 3720
 [.
 no gap in the MS.]
 This absolon doun sette him on his knees

| | |
|---|-----------|
| And saide I am a lord at alle degrees | 3724 |
| ffor after þis I hope þer comeþ more | |
| lemman þi grace and sweete brid þin ore | |
| The wyndow sche vndop and þat in hast/ | |
| haue do quod sche com of and speed þe faste | 3728 |
| lest þat our neighebores þe espie | |
| This absolon gan wipe his mouþ ful drye | |
| Derk was þe night as piche or as þe cole | |
| And at the wyndow out sche putte hire hole | 3732 |
| And absolon him fil no bet ne wers | |
| But wip his mouþ he kiste hire naked ers/ | |
| fful sauorly er he were war of þis/ | |
| A bak he stert and þought it was amys/ | 3736 |
| ffor wel he wiste a womman hap no berd | |
| he felt a þing al rough and longe y-hered | |
| And sayde fy allas what haue I do | |
| Tehe quod sche and clapt þe wyndow to | 3740 |
| And absolon goþ forþ a sory pas | |
| A berde a berd seide heende Nicholas | |
| By goddes corpus þis goth faire and wel | |
| This sely absolon herde it euery del | 3744 |
| And on his lippe he gan for anger byte | |
| And to himself he seyde I schal þe quyte | [leaf 53] |
| Who rubbeþ now who froteþ now his lippes | |
| With dust with sond wip straw with cloþ wip chippes | |
| But absolon þat seith ful ofte allas/ | |
| My soule bitake I to Saternas/ | |
| But me were leuere þan al þis toun quod he/ | |
| Of þis despite awroken for to be | 3752 |
| Allas quop he allas I ne hadde y-bleynt | |
| his hote loue is cold and al yqueynt | |
| ffor fro þat tyme þat he hadde kest hire ers | |
| Of paramours he sette not a kers/ | 3756 |
| ffor he was heled of his maladie/ | |
| fful ofte paramoures he gan diffie | |
| And weepe as doþ a child þat is y-bete/ | |
| A softe paas he wente ouer þe strete/ | 3760 |

- vntil a Smyth men clepen daun Geruays
 That in his forge smythieþ plough harnays
 he scharpeþ scharre and Culter bisyly.
 This absolon knobkeþ al Esely 3764
 And sayde vnto Geruays and þat anon
 What who art þou it am I absolon
 What absolon for cristes swete tree
 Why ryse so rape benedicite 3768
 What eyleþ 3ou som gay gerl god it woot
 hap brought þou þus vpon þe viritoot
 By seinte note 3e wot wel what I me[ne]
 This absolon ne roughte nat a bene 3772
 Of aft his pley no word a-gayn he gaf
 he hadde more tow on his distaft
 Than Geruays knew and sayde frend so deere
 The hote Culter in þe Chemenye heere 3776
 As lene it me I haue þer-wip to done/
 I wol bringe it agayn ful soone
 Geruais answerde certes were it gold
 Or in a poke nobles aft vtold 3780
 Thou scholdest haue as I am trewe smith
 Ey cristes foo what wol 3e don þer-with [leaf 53, back]
 Ther-of quod absolon be as be may
 I schal wel telle it þe to morwe day 3784
 And caughte þe culter by þe colde stele
 fful softe out aþ þe dore he gan to stele
 And went vnto þe Carpenteres wal
 he koughede ferst and knobkede þer wip al 3788
 vpon þe wyndow right as he dede ere/
 This alisoñ answerde who is þere
 That knobkeþ as I warant it a þeef
 Why nay quod he god woot my sweete leef 3792
 I am þin absolon þi dereling
 Of gold quod he I haue þe brought a ryng
 My moder yaf it me so god me saue/
 fful fyn it is and þer-to wel y-graue 3796

| | |
|--|-----------|
| This wol I yiuen þe ift þou me kisse | |
| This Nicholas was risen for to pisse/ | |
| And þought he wolde amenden al þe Iape/ | |
| he schulde kisse his ers or þat he scape | 3800 |
| And vp þe wyndow dide he hastily | |
| And out his ers he putte priuily | |
| Ouer þe buttoke to þe haunche bon | |
| And þer-wiþ spak þis clerk þis absolow | 3804 |
| Spek swete brid I not wher þou art | |
| This Nicholas anon leet flee a fart | |
| As gret as it hadde ben a þonder dent | |
| That wiþ þe strook he was almost y-blent | 3808 |
| And he was redy wiþ his Iren hoot | |
| And Nicholas in þe ers he smoot | |
| Of goþ þe skyn an hande brood aboute/ | |
| The hote culter brenned so his toute/ | 3812 |
| And for þe suerte he wende for to dye | |
| As he were wood for woo he gan to crye/ | |
| help water water help for goddes herte | |
| This Carpunter out of his slomber sterte | 3816 |
| And herde on cryen watir as he were wood | |
| And þought allas now comeþ Noweles flood | [leaf 54] |
| And sette him vppe wiþoute wordes mo | |
| And wiþ an ax he smot þe corde a tuo | 3820 |
| And down goþ al he fond neyþer to selle/ | |
| No breed nor ale til he com to þe selle/ | |
| vpon þe floor and þer a swowen he lay | |
| vp sterte hire alisoñ and Nicholay | 3824 |
| and cried out and harrow in þe strete | |
| The neighebourres boþe smale and grete | |
| In ronnen for to gauren on þis man | |
| That a swowen lay boþe pale and wan | 3828 |
| ffor with þat falle he brosten hap his arm | |
| But stonde he moste vnto his oughne harm | |
| ffor whan he spak he was anon bore down | |
| With heende Nicholas and alisoyn | 3832 |

They tolden euery man þat he was wood
 he was a-gast so of þe Nowels flood
 Thurgh fantasie þat of his vanite
 he hadde y-bought him knedyng tubbes þre 3836
 And hadde hem hanged in þe roof aboue
 And þat he preyed him for goddes loue
 To sitten in þe roof *par* companye
 The folk gan laughen at his fantasie 3840
 And to þe roof þay loken and þei cape
 And torned aft his harm vnto a Iape
 ffor what so þis Carpenter answerde
 It was for nought no men his resoñ herde 3844
 With oþes grete he was so sworn a doun
 That he was holden wood in aft þat toun
 ffor euery clerk anon right heeld with oþer
 They seyde þe man is wood my leeu broþer 3848
 And euery wight gan laughen at his strif
 Thus swyued was þe Carpunteres wijf
 ffor aft his keepyng and his Ialousye/
 And absolon hap kist hir neþer yhe 3852
 And Nicholas is scalded in his toute//
 This tale is don and god saue al þe route [leaf 54, back]

¶ Explicit fabula Molendinarij

[No gap in the MS.]

¶ Here bygynneþ þe Reeues tale

Whan folk' han laughen at' þis nyce cas
 Of' absolou and heende Nicholas ¶ C°. iij°.
 Diuerse folk' diuersely þey seyde
 But' for þe more part' þei lough and pleyde
 Ne at' þis tale I saugh noman him greeue
 But' it' were oonly Osewold þe Reeue 3860
 By cause he was of' Carpenteres craft'
 A litel Ire is in his herte laft'
 he gan to grucche and blamen it' a lite
 So þe ik' quod he ful wel coupe I þe quyte 3864
 With bleryng' of a proud melleres ye
 If' þat' me liste to speke of' Ribaudie
 But' yk' am old me list' not' pley for age
 Gras tyme is don my fodder is forage/ 3868
 This white top writeþ myn olde zeres
 myn herte is also mouled as myn heeres
 But' if' I fare as doþ an open ers
 That' ilke fruyt' is euer lengere þe twers 3872
 Til it' be roten in mullok' or in stree/
 We olde men I drede so fare we
 Til we be roten can we nought' be ripe
 We hoppen alwey whil þe world wil pipe 3876
 ffor in oure wille þer stikeþ euer a naile
 To haue an hoor heer and a greene taile
 As haþ a leek' for þough oure might' be gon
 Oure wille desireþ folie euer in oon 3880
 ffor whan we may nought' doon þan wole we speke
 yet' in oure asschen olde is fyr y-reke
 ffoure gleedes han we whiche I schal deuyse/
 Auauntyng' lyuyng' anger couetyse 3884
 This foure sparkes longep vnto eelde
 Oure olde lymes now wel ben vnwelde

But wil ne schal nat failen þat is soþ
 And yet haue I alway a Coltes top [leaf 55]
 As many a 3eer as it is passen henne
 Syn þat my tappe of lif bygan to renne
 ffor sikerly whan I was born anoon
 Dep drough þe tappe of lijft and leet it goon 3892
 And euer siþen haþ so þe tappe y-ronne
 Til þat almost al empty is þe tonne
 The stream of lijft now droppeþ on þe chimbe.
 The sely tonge may wel ryngge and chymbe. 3896
 Of wrecchedenese þat passed is ful yore
 With old folk saue dotage is nomore/
 Whan þat oure oost hadde herde þis sermonyngt
 he gan to speken as loodly as a kingt 3900
 he seyde what amounteþ aft þis witte
 What schal we speke alday of holy writte
 The deuel maade a reeue for to preche
 Or of a Soutere schipman or a leche 3904
 Sey forþ þi tale and tarie nought þe tyme
 lo deppefeld and it is halfwey prime
 lo Grenewich þat many a schrewe is Inne
 It were al tyme þi tale for to begynne 3908
 Now sires quod þis Osewold þe Reeue
 I pray you alle þat ye nought 3ou greene
 Thou I answeere and somdel sette his houe
 ffor leueful it is with force force of schouue 3912
 This dronken mellere haþ y-told vs heere
 how þat bygyled was a Carpuntere/
 Peraenture in scorn for I am oon
 And by youre leue I schal him quyte anoon 3916
 Right in his cherles termes wil I speke/
 I preye to god his nekke mote tobreke
 he can wel in myn 3e sen a stalke
 But in his owne he can nought seen a balke/ † ffabula

[No gap in the MS.]

- A**T Trumpyngton nought fer fro Cantabregge
 Ther goþ a brook and ouer þat a bregge
 vppon þe whiche brook þer stant a Melle 3923
 And þis is verray soþ þat I 3ou telle [leaf 55, back]
 A meller was þer duellyng many a day
 As any pecok he was proud and gay
 Pype he coupe and fische and nettes beete
 And torne coppes and wel wrastle and scheete/ 3928
 Ay by his belt he bar a long Panade
 And of a swerd ful trenchant was þe blade/
 A Ioly popper bar he in his pouche
 Ther was noman for peril durste him touche/ 3932
 A scheffeld thwitel bar he in his hose
 Round was his face and Camuse was his nose/
 As pyled as an ape was his sculle
 he was a market betere atte fulle 3936
 Ther was no wight þat dorst hand on him legge
 But if he swor he scholde anon abegge
 A þeef he was forsoþe of corn and mele
 And þat a sleigh and vsaunt for to stele 3940
 his name was hote deynous Symkyn
 A wijf he hadde come of noble kyn
 The parsoun of þe toun hir fader was/
 With hire he yaf ful many a panne of bras 3944
 ffor þat Symkyn scholde in his blood allye
 Sche was y-fostred in a Nonnerie/
 ffor symkyn wolde no wyf as he sayde
 But sche were wel ynorissched and a mayde/ 3948
 To sauen his estate of yomanrie/
 And sche was proud and pert as is a pye
 A ful fair sight was it vppon hem tuo
 On halidayes biforn hire wolde he go 3952

Wiþ his typer^t wounden aboute his heede/
 And sche cam after in a gyte of^t reede/
 And Symkyn hadde hosen of^t þe same
 Ther dorste no wight^t clepen hire but dame 3956
 Was non so hardy þat^t wente by þe way
 That^t wiþ hire dorste or ones rage or play
 But^t if^t he wolde be slain of^t Symkyn
 With panade or with knyf^t or boydekyn [leaf 56]
 ffor Ielous folk^t ben *perilous* eueremo
 Algate þei wolde here wyues wenden so
 And eek^t for sche was somdel smoterlich
 Sche was as digne as water in a dich 3964
 As ful of^t hoker and of bisemare
 hire þoughte þat^t a lady schulde hir spare
 What^t for hire kynrede and hire nortelrie
 That^t sche hadde lerned in þe nonnerie 3968
 A doughter hadde þe betwixe hem tuo
 Of twenty 3er wiþouten eny moo
 Sauyng^t a childe þat^t was of^t half^t 3eer age
 In cradel it^t lay it^t was a *proper* page/ 3972
 This wenche þikke and wel ygrowen was
 Wiþ Camoys nose and eyen grey as glas
 Wiþ buttokes brode and brestes rounde and hye
 But^t right^t fair was hire heer I wol nough^t lye 3976
 ¶ The *parsoñ* of þe toun for sche was fair
 In purpos was to maken hire his hair
 Boþe of^t his catel and his mesuage
 And strange he made it/ of^t hire mariage 3980
 his purpos was for to bistowe hire hye
 In to som worþi blood of^t auncetrie/
 ffor holy chirches good moot^t ben dispended
 On holy cherche blood þat^t is descended 3984
 Therefore he wolde his holy blood honoure/
 þough þat^t þe holy chirche scholde deuoure
 Gret^t soken hap þis meller out^t of doute
 Wiþ whete and malt^t of all þe land aboute/ 3988

- And nameliche þer was a gret collegge
Men clepeþ þe Soler halle of Cantabregge
þere was here whete and eek' here malt' y-grounde
And on a day it happeþ in a stounde 3992
Syk' lay þe manciple on a maladie/
Men wenden wisly þat' he schulde dye
ffor which þis mellere stal boþe mele and corn
An hundred tyme more þanne biforn [leaf 56, back]
ffor þer biforn he stal but' curteysly.
But' now he was a theef' outrageously
ffor which þe wardein chidde and made fare/
But' þer-of' sette þe meller nough't a tare/ 4000
he crakede bost and swor it was nough't so/
Thanne were þere 3onge scoleres tuo
That' dwelten in þe halle of' which I seye
Testyf' þey were and lusty for to pleye 4004
And oonly for here mirthe and reuerye
vpon þe wardein bisily þei crye
To 3if' hem leue but' a litel stounde
To go to melle and seen here corn y-grounde 4008
And hardily þei dorste leye here nekke
The mellere schulde nat' stele hem half' a pekke/
Of' corn ne by sleigh't ne by force hem Reue
And atte laste þe wardeyn yaf' hem leue 4012
Iohā hight' þat' oon and alayn hight' þat' oþer
Of' oo toun were þei born þat' highte strother
ffer in the North I can not' telle where
This alayn makeþ redy aff' his gere 4016
And on an hors þe sak' he cast' anon
fforþ goþ alayn þe clerk' and also Iohā
Wiþ good swerd and wiþ bokeler by his syde
Iohā knew þe wey him needede no guyde/ 4020
And atte melle þe sak' a doun he layth
Alain spak' first'. alhail Symoñ in faip
how fares þi faire doughter and þi wyf'
Alayn welcome quod Symkyn by my lyf' 4024

And Iohñ also how now what' do 3e heere
 By god quod Iohñ Symond neede haþ no peere
 him bihoues serue himself' þat' has na swayn
 Or elles he is a folt' as clerkes sayn 4028
 Oure manciple I hope he wil be deed
 Swa werkes him ay þe wanges in his heed
 And þerfore is I come and eek' alayn
 To grynde oure corn and carie it ham agayn [leaf 57]
 I pray you speedes vs heithen þat 3e may
 It' schal be don quod Symkyn by my fay
 What' wil 3e doon whil þat it' is in hande
 By god right' by þe hoper wil I stande 4036
 Quoþ Iohan and se how gates þe corn gas Inne
 3it' saugh I neuer by my fader kynne
 how þat' þe hoper wagged til and fra
 Alayn answerde Iohñ and wiltow swa 4040
 Than wil I be byneþe by my croune
 And se how gates þe mele falles a doune
 In-til þe trough þat' sal be my disporte
 Quod Iohñ in faath I may ben of' 3our sorte 4044
 I is as ille a melle as ere 3e
 This mellere smylede at here nycete
 And þough't al þis nys don but' for a wile
 They wene þat' no man hem may begyle 4048
 But' by my þrift' yit' schal I blere here ye
 ffor al þe sleigh't in here philosophie
 The more queinte crekes þat' þay make/
 The more wol I stele whan I take 4052
 In stede of' flour 3it' wol I yeue hem brenne/
 The grettest' clerkes ben nough't þe wisest menne
 As whilom to þe wolf' þus spak' þe mare
 Of' aff' here arte counte I nou3't a tare/ 4056
 ¶ Out' of' þe dore he goþ ful priuely
 Whan þat' he saugh his time softly
 he lokeþ vp and doun til he haþ founde
 The clerkes hors þer as it stood ybounde 4060

Behynde þe mille vnder a leuesel
 And to þe hors he goþ him faire and wel
 he strepeþ of þe bridel right anoon
 And whan þe hors was laus he gynneþ goon 4064
 Toward þe fen þare wilde mares renne/
 And forth with wehe þorough þikke and þorough þenne
 This meller goþ agayn no word he sayde
 But doþ his note and wiþ hise clerkes pleyde [leaf 57, back]
 Til þat hire corn was faire and wel y-grounde
 And whan þe mele is sakked and y-bounde
 This Iohñ goþ out and fynt his hors away
 And gan to crye harrow and weylaway 4072
 Oure hors is lost Alayn for goddes banes
 Steppe on þi feet com of man al at anes
 Allas oure wardein has his palfray lorn
 This aleyn al forgat boþe mele and corn 4076
 Al was out of his mynde his housbondrye
 What whilk wey is he gon he gan to crye
 The wyf cam leepyng in ward at a ren
 Sche seyde allas þour hors goth in þe fen 4080
 With wilde mares as faste as he may goo
 Vnthank come on his hand þat bond him so
 And he þat bettre scholde haue knyht þe reyne
 Allas quod Iohñ Alayn for cristes peyne 4084
 lay doun þi swerd and I wol myn als wa
 I is ful swift god wat as is a Ra
 By goddes harte he sal nouzt scape vs baþe
 Why ne had þou put þe caple in þe lathe 4088
 Ilhaille by godde alayn þou is a fonne
 Thise sely clerkes han fulfaste y-ronne
 Toward þe fen boþe alayn and eek Iohñ
 And whan þe Mellere seigh þat þei were gon 4092
 he half a buisschel of here corn haþ take
 And bad his wijf go knede it in a cake
 And seide I trowe þe clerkes weren aferd
 Yet kan a mellere make a clerkes berd 4096

ffor all his art yet lat hem gon here weye
 Lo where he goþ ye lat þe children pleye
 They gete him noughþ so lightly by my croun
 Thise seely clerkes rennen vp and doun 4100
 With keep. keep. stand. stand. iossa. wardercre /
 Ga whistel þou and I schal keepe him heere
 But schortly til it was verray night
 They couþe noughþ þough þei dede all here might [leaf 58]
 here capel cacche he ran alwey so faste
 Til in a diche þei caught him atte laste
 Wery and wet as beest is in þe rayn
 Comeþ seely Iohn and with him comþ alayn 4108
 ¶ Allas quod Iohn þe day þat I was born
 Now ere we dryuen til hething and til scorn
 Oure corn is stole men wil vs fooles calle
 Boþe þe wardein and oure felawes alle 4112
 And namely þe meller weylawey
 Thus pleyneþ Iohan as he goþ by þe wey
 Toward þe melle and bayard in his hond
 The meller sitting by þe fyr he fond 4116
 ffor it was nyght and ferþer might he noughþ
 But for þe loue of god þei him bisoughþ
 Of herberwe and of eese as for here peny
 The mellere seyde agayn if þer be eny 4120
 Such as if is 3it schal 3e haue 3oure part
 Myn hous is streit but 3e han lerned art
 3e can by argumentes make a place
 A myle brood of twenty foote of space 4124
 lat se now if þis place mow suffise
 Or make it rowmere with speche as is 3oure gyse
 Now Symond seyde þis Iohn by seint Cuthberd
 As is þou mery and þat is faire answerd 4128
 I haue herd say men sal take of tua þinges
 Swilk as he fyndes or take swilk as he brynges/
 But specially I pray þe ooste deere
 Gete vs som mete and drynk and mak vs cheere 4132

And we wol payen trewly atte fulle
 With empty handes men may naan haukes tulle
 Lo heeroure siluer reedy for til spende
 This meller to þe toun his doughter sende 4136
 ffor ale and breed and rosted hem a goos
 And boond here hors it scholde namore go loos
 And in his owne chambre he made a bedde
 With scheetes and wip chalons faire y-spreddede [leaf 58, back]
 Nought^t from his oughne bed ten foote or twelue/
 his doughter hadde a bed al by hir selue/
 Right^t in þe same chambre by and by
 It^t mighte be no bette and cause why 4144
 Ther was no romer herberwe in þe place
 þey soupen and þey speken hem of^t solace
 And drynken euere strong ale atte beste
 A-boute mydnygh^t wente þei to reste 4148
 Wel haþ þe mellere vernysshed his heed
 fful pale he was for-drunken and nouz^t reed
 he yexeth and he spekeþ þurgh þe nose/
 As he were on þe quakke or on þe pose/
 4152
 To bedde he goþ and with him goþ his wijf
 As eny Iay he light^t was and Iolif^t
 So was hire Ioly whistel wel y-wette
 The cradell at^t hire beddes feet^t is sette/
 4156
 To rokken and yeue þe childe to souke
 And whan þat^t dronken was al in þe crouke
 To bedde wente þe doughter right^t anoon
 To bedde goþ Alayn and also Iohⁿ
 4160
 Ther was nomore þem needede no dwale
 This meller haþ so wisely bibbed ale
 That as an hors he snorteþ in his slepe
 Ne of^t his tayl behynde he took^t no keepe 4164
 his wijf^t bar him a burdoñ a ful strong^t
 Men mighten heere here routyng^t a furlong^t
 The wenche routeþ eek *par* compaignie
 Alayn þe clerk^t þat^t herde þis melodye 4168

he pokede Ioh̄n and seyde sleepist þou
 herdestow euer slik' a sang' ar now
 lo swilk' a couplyng' is bitwixe hem alle
 A wilde fyr on þair bodies falle 4172
 ho herkned euer slik' a ferly þing'
 Ye þai saff haue þe flour of yff endyng'
 This lange night' þer tydes me na reste/
 But' ȝit' na force al schal be for þe beste [leaf 59]
 ffor Ioh̄n seide als euer mote I þriue
 If' þat' I may yon wenche wol I swyue
 Som esement haþ lawe schapen vs
 ffor Ioh̄n þer is a lawe þat' seith þus 4180
 That' if' a man in a poynt' be agreeued
 That' in anoþer he schal be releued
 Oure corn is stolen soþly it is no nay
 And we han had an ylle fitte to day 4184
 And syn I schal haue noon amendement
 Agayn my losse I wol haue esement
 By goddes sale it' sal nan oþir be
 This Ioh̄n answerde Alayn so mot' I þe 4188
 The meller is a perilous man he sayde
 And if' þat' he out' of his slape abraýde
 he mighte don vs boþe a vilanye
 Alayn answerde I counte him nought' a flye 4192
 And vp he rist' and by þe wenche he crepte
 This wenche lay vpright' and faste slepte
 Til he so neigh was or sche mighte spye
 That' it' hadde been to late for to crye 4196
 And schortly for to seyn þey were at' oon
 Now play alayn for I wol speke of' Ioon
 This Ioh̄n liþ stille a forlong' wey or tuo
 And to himself' he makeþ rouþe and wo 4200
 Allas quod he þis is a wikke Iape
 Now may I sayn þat' I is but an ape
 ȝet haþ my felaw somewhat' for his harm
 he has þe myllers doughter in his arm' 4204

he aunted him and hap his needes spedde
 And I lye as a draf^t sak^t in my bedde
 And whan þis Iape is told anoþer day
 I schal be holde a daffe a Cokenay 4208
 I wol arise and aunter it by my faith
 vnhardy is vnseely as men saith
 And vp he ros and softly he went^t
 vnto þe cradiff and in his hand it hent [leaf 59, back] 4212
 And bar it softe vnto his beddes feet
 Sone after . þe wif hire routyng^t leet^t
 And gan to wake and went hire out^t to pisse
 And com agayn and gan hir cradel mysse 4216
 And groped heer and þer but sche fond noon
 Allas quod sche I hadde almost^t mys goon
 I hadde almost^t goon to þe clerkes bedde
 Ey benedicite þan hadde I foule y-spedde 4220
 And forþ sche goþ til sche þe cradil fond
 Sche gropeþ alwey forþer with hire hond
 And fond þe bed and þoughte nought^t but^t good
 By cause þat^t þe cradel by it stood 4224
 And nyste wher sche was for it was derk^t
 But^t faire and wel sche crepe in to þe clerk^t
 And lith ful stille and wolde haue caught^t a slepe
 With-Inne a while þis Iohⁿ þe clerk^t vp lepe 4228
 And on þis goode wijf^t he leiþ on sore
 So mery a fitte ne hadde sche not^t ful yore
 he prikeþ harde and deepe as he were madde
 This Ioly lyf^t han pise tuo clerkes ladde 4232
 Til þat^t þe þridde cok^t bygan to synge
 Aleyn wax wery in þe dawenyng
 ffor he hadde swonken all^t þe longe nygh^t
 And sayde far wel Malyn sweete wigh^t 4236
 The day is come I may no lenger byde
 But^t euermoo wher so I go or ryde
 I am þin oughne clerk^t so haue I hele
 Now deere lemman quod sche go far wele 4240

But or þou go oo þing' I wol þe telle
 Whan þat þou wendest' homward by þe melle
 Right' at' þe entre of' þe dore behynde
 Thou schalt' a cake of' half' a busshel fynde 4244
 That' was y-maked of' þin oughne mele
 Which þat' I hilpe my sire for to stele
 And goode lemman god þe saue and keepe/
 And with þat' word almost' sche gan to wepe [leaf 60] 4248
 Alayn vprist' and þough't' or þat' it' dawe/
 I wol go creepen in by my felawe/
 And fond þe cradel wiþ his hond anon
 By god þough't' he al wrang' I haue mysгон 4252
 Myn heed is toty of' my swynk' to nyght
 That' makeþ me þat' I go nough't' aright'
 I wot' wel by þe cradel I haue mysго
 here lith þe meller and his wijf also 4256
 And forth he goþ on twenty deuelway
 vnto þe bed þer as þe meller lay
 he wende haue copenþ by his felawe Iohñ
 And by þe mellere in he creep anoon 4260
 And caught' him by þe necke and softe he spakt'
 he seyde þou Iohñ þou swyneshed awak'
 ffor cristes sawle and heer a noble game/
 ffor by þat' lord þat' called is saint' Iame 4264
 As I haue þries in þis schorte nigh't'
 Swyued þe mellers doughter bolt' vprigh[t]
 Whil þou hast' as a coward ben agast
 þe false harlot' quod þe meller hast 4268
 A fals traitour false clerk' quod he
 þou schalt' be ded by goddes dignite
 Who durste be so bolde to disparage
 My doughter þat' is comen of' such lynage 4272
 And by þe þrote bolle he caught' alayn
 And he hent' him dispitously agayn
 And on þe nose he smot' him with his fiste/
 Doun ran þe bloody streen vpon his briste 4276

And in þe floor with nose and mouth to-broke
 þei walwe as doþ tuo pigges in a poke
 And vp þai gon and doun a-gayn anoon)
 Til þat' þe meller spurned at' a stoon 4280
 And doun he fel bakward vpon his wijf'
 That' wiste noþing' of þis nyce strijf'
 ffor sche was falle a sleepe a litel wight'
 With Ioħn þe clerk' þat waked hadde al þe night' [leaf 60, back]
 And with þe falle out of' hir sleep sche brayde
 help holy cros of bromeholm sche sayde/
 In manus tuas lord to þe I calle
 Awake Symond þe feend is on me falle 4288
 Myn herte is broken help I nam but' ded
 Ther lip on vp my wombe and vp myn heed
 help Symkyn for þe false clerkes fighte
 This Ioħn starte vp as fast' as euer he mighte 4292
 And grasped by þe walles to and fro
 To fynde a staf' and sche stert' vp also
 And knew þe estris bet' þan did þat' Ioħn
 And by þe wal a staf' sche fond anon 4296
 And saugh a litel schymeryng' of' a light/
 ffor at' an hole in schoon þe moone bright'
 And by þat' light' sche saugh hem boþe tuo
 But' sikerly sche nyste who was who 4300
 But' as sche saugh a whit' þing' in hir eye
 And whan sche gan þis white þing' aspye
 Sche wende þe clerk' had wered a voluper
 And wiþ þe staf' sche drough ay ner and ner 4304
 And wende han hitte þis alayn atte fulle
 And smot' þe meller on þe pilede skulle
 That' doun he goth and cryed harrow I dye
 This clerkes beet' him weel and leet' him lye 4308
 And greyþen hem and tooke here hors anon
 And eek' here mele and on here wey þey goon
 And atte Mille yet' þai toke here cake/
 Of' half' a busschel flour ful wel y-bake 4312

Thus is þe proude Meller wel y-bete
 And haþ y-lost þe gryndyng' of þe whete
 And payed for þe soper euery dele/
 Of Alayn and of Iohn þat' bette him weel 4316
 his wyf' is swyued and his doughter als/
 lo swich it is a mellere to be fals
 And þerfore þis prouerbe is seyð ful soth
 him þar nat' weene wel þat' yuel doþ [leaf 61] 4320
 A gilour schal himself' begyled be/
 And god þat' sitteþ highe in mageste/
 Saue all þis companye grete and smale
 Thus haue I quytte þe meller in my tale 4324

[No gap in the MS.]

- T**he Cook of london whil þe Reue spak'
 ffor ioye he þoughte he clawed him on þe bak'
 ha ha *quod* he for cristes passioun
 This meller haþ a scharp conclusioun 4328
 vpon his argument of herbergage
 We[l] seide Salamon in his langage/
 Ne bryng' nat euery man in to þin hous
 ffor herberwyng' be night' is *perilous* 4332
 Wel oughte a man auysed for to be
 Whom þat' he broughte in to his priuite
 I praie to god so yeue me sorwe and care
 If' euere sithen I highte hogge of' of' ware 4336
 herde I mellere bettere y-set a werke
 he hadde a Iape of' malice in þe derke/
 And þefore if' 3e vouche sauþ' to heere/
 But' god forbede þat' we stynte heere 4340
 A tale of' me þat' am a pouere man
 I wol yow telle as wel as euer I can
 A litel Iape þat' fil in oure Citee
 Oure oost' answerde and seide I *graunte* it þe 4344
 Now telle on Roger loke þat' it' be good
 ffor many a paste hast þou latyn blood
 And many a Iakke of' Douer hast þou sold
 That' haþ ben twyes hoot' and twyes cold 4348
 Of' many pilgrym hastow cristes curs
 ffor of' þy *persely* 3it' þey fare þe wors
 þat' þei haue eten wiþ þe stubbul goos
 ffor in þy schoppe is many a flye loos 4352
 Now tel on gentil Roger by þi name
 But' yet I preye þe be not' wroþ for game
 A man may say ful soth in game and play
 Thou seist' ful soþ *quod* Roger by my fay [leaf 61, back] 4356

But' soþ play quad play as þe flemyng' seith
 And þerfore herry baillyf' by þi feith
 Be þou nouzt' wroth or we departen heere
 Though þat my tale be of' an Ostelleere 4360
 But' napeles I wol not tellen it' 3it'
 But' or we parte I-wys þou schalt' be quyrt
 And þer wiþ al he lough and made cheere/
 And saide his tale as 3e schal after heere 4364

[*No gap in the MS.*]

Incipit fabula

C^m iij^m

- A** Prentys whilom dwelled in oure Citee
 And of a craft of vitailers was he
 Gaillard he was as goldfynch in þe schawe
 Broun as a berye a *propur* schort felawe/ 4368
 Wiþ lokkes blake y-kempt ful fetysly
 Daunce he couthe so wel and Iolyly
 That he was cleped Perkyn Reuolour
 he was as ful of loue *paramour* 4372
 As is þe hyue ful of hony sweete
 Wel was þe wenche with him mighte meete
 At euery brydale wolde he synge and hoppe
 he louede bet þe tauerne þan þe schoppe 4376
 ffor whan þer any rydyng was in chepe
 Out of þe schoppe þider wolde he leepe
 Til þat he hadde al þe sight y-seyn
 And daunced wel wolde he not come ageyn 4380
 And gadered him a meyne of his sorte
 To hoppe and synge and maken such desporte
 And þere þei setten steuene for to mete
 To pleyen atte dys in such a streete 4384
 ffor in þe toun nas þer no prentys
 That fairere coupe caste a paire of dys :
 Than Perkyn coupe and þer-to he was fre
 Of his dispense in place of priuite/ 4388
 That fond his maister wel in his chaffare/
 ffor ofte tyme he fond his box ful bare
 ffor sikerly a prentys Reuelour [leaf 62]
 That haunteþ dys ryot or *paramour* 4392
 his maister schal it in his schoppe abeye
 Al haue he not part of þe menstraleye
 ffor theft and riot þei ben conuertible
 Al conne he play on gyterne or Rubible 4396

Reuel and trouthe as in a lough degre
 þey been ful wroþe alday as men may se
 This Iolif prentys with his maister bood
 Til he were neigh out of his prentyshood 4400
 Al were he snybbed boþe erly and late
 And som tyme lad with Reuel to Newgate
 But atte last his mayster him biþoughte
 vpon a day whan he his paper soughte 4404
 Of a prouerbe þat seiþ þis same word
 Wel bette is roten appul out of hord
 þan þat it rotye al þe remenant
 So fareþ it by þe riotous seruant 4408
 It is ful lasse harm to late it pace
 þanne he schende all þe seruantz in þe place
 Therefore his mayster gaf him a quitance
 And bad him go with sorwe and with meschance 4412
 And þus þis Ioly prentys hadde his leue
 Now lat him riote al þe night or leue
 And for þer nys no þeef wiþouten a lowke
 That helpeþ him to wasten and to sowke/
 Of þat he brybe can or borwe may 4416
 Anon he sente his bedde and his array
 vnto a Coupere of his owne sorte
 That louede dys and Reuel and disporte 4420
 And hadde a wyf þat heeld for contynance/
 A schoppe / and swyued for hire sustynance.

[No break in the MS.]

APPENDIX TO GROUP A.

[THE SPURIOUS TALE OF GAMELYN.]

Incipit ffabula/

L Ithen & lesteneþ and herkeneþ aright
 And 3e schulle heeren of a doughty knight
 Sire Ioññ of Boundys was his name
 he coupe of norture and mochil of game. 4
 Thre sones þe knight hadde and with his body he hem wan
 The eldest was a moche schrewe and sone he bigan ^[leaf 62]
 his breþeren loued wel here fader and of him were agast
 The eldest deserueþ his faderes curs & hadde it atte last 8
 The goode knight his fader lyued so yore
 That deþ was comen him to and handlid him ful sore/
 The goode knight cared sore sik þer he lay
 how hise children schulde lyuen after his day 12
 he hadde ben wyde wher but non housbond he was
 Alle þe lond þat he hadde it was verrey purchas
 ffayn he wolde it were dressed among hem alle
 That eche of hem hadde his part as it mighte falle 16
 Tho sente he in to contre after wise knightes
 To helpen delen his londes and dresen hem to rightes
 he sent hem word by *lettres* þey scholden hyze blyue
 If þey wolde speke wip him whil he was on lyue 20

Tho þe knightes herden seekt þat he lay
 hadde þei no reste neiþer night ne day
 Til þei comen to him þer he lay stille
 On his deþ bedde to abyde goddes wille 24
 Thanne seyde þe goode knight sykt þer he lay
 lordes I 3ou warne for soþe wiþouten nay
 I may no lengere lyuen heer in þis stounde
 ffor þorough goddes wille deth draweþ me to grounde/ 28
 Ther nas noon of hem aft þat herde him aright
 That þay hadden reuþe of þat ilke knight
 And seyde sire for goddes loue dismaye 3ou nought
 God may don boote of bale þat is now y-wrought 32
 Than spakt þe goode knight sike þer he lay
 Boote of bale god may sende I wot it is no nay
 But I beseke 3ou knightes for þe loue of me
 God and dresseth my lond amongt my sones þre 36
 And for þe loue of god deleþ hem nat amys
 And forzetep nought Gamelyn my 3onge sone þat is
 Takeþ heede to þat oon as wel as to þat oþer
 Seelde 3e see ony heir helpen his broþer 40
 Tho leeten þey þe knight lyen þat was not in hele [leaf 63]
 And wenten in to counseilt his londes for to dele/
 ffor to delen hem aft to oon was here þought
 And for gamelyn was yongest he scholde haue nought 44
 Alle þe lond þat þer was þai dalten it it tuo
 And leeten Gamelyn þe 3onge wiþoute lond go
 And ech of hem seyde to oþer ful loude
 his breþeren mowe 3iue him lond whan he good coude 48
 Whan þei hadde deled þe lond at here wille
 Thei camen to þe knight þere he lay ful stille
 And tolden him anon how þei hadden wrought
 And þe knight þer he lay liked it right nought 52
 Than seide þe knight by seint Martyn
 ffor al þat 3e haue don 3it is þe lond myn
 ffor goddes loue neighebour stondeþ alle stille
 And I wol dele my lond right after my wille/ 56

Iohā myn eldeste sone schal haue plowes fyue
 That was my fadres heritage whil he was on lyue
 And my myddelest sone fyue plowes of londe
 That I halp for to geten with my right honde 60
 And aft myn oþer purchas of londes and leedes
 That I bequeþe Gamelyn and aft my goode steedes
 And I beseke þou goode men þat lawe conne of londe
 ffor Gamelynes loue þat my bequeste stonde 64
 Thus dalte þe knight his lond by his day
 Right on his deþ bedde sik þer he lay
 And sone afterward he lay stoon stille
 And deyde whan tyme com as it was cristes wille 68
 Anon as he was deed and vnder gras graue
 Sone þe oldere broþer gylede þe yonge knaue
 he took in to his hond his lond and his leede
 And Gamelyn himselue to cloþen and to feede 72
 he cloþed him and fedde him yuel and eek wroþe
 And leet his londes and his houses boþe
 his parkes and his woodes and dede no þing wel
 And sethen he it aboughte on his faire fel 76
 So longe was Gamelyn in his broþeres halle [leaf 63, back]
 ffor þe strengeste of good þei douteden him alle
 Ther was non þer-Inne nowþer zong ne olde
 That wolde wrappe Gamelyn were he neuer so bolde 80
 Gamelyn stood on a day in his broþeres 3erde/
 And bygan with his hond to handlen his berde
 he þought on his londes þat layen vnsawe
 And his faire Okes þat down were drawe 84
 his parkes were broken and his deere reued
 Of aft his goode steedes non was him bileued
 hise houses were vnhiled and ful yuel dight
 Tho þoughte Gamelyn it wente nought aright 88
 Afterward cam his broþer walkynge þare
 And seyde to Gamely is oure mete yare
 Tho wrapped him Gamelyn and swor by goddes book
 þou schat go bake þi self I wol not be þi eok 92

how broþer Gamelyn / how answerest þou now
 Thou spake neuer such a word as þou dost now
 By my faip sayde Gamelyn now me þinkeþ neede
 Of aʃt þe harmes þat I haue I took' neuer are heede 96
 My parkes ben y-broken and my deer bireued
 Of myn armure and my steedes nought' is me bileued
 Alle þat' my fader me biquaþ al goþ to schame
 And þer fore haue þou goddes curs broþer by þy name 100
 Thanne bispak' his broþer þat rape was of' rees
 Stond stille gadelyng' and hold right' þi pees/
 Thou schalt' be fayn for to haue þi mete and þi wede
 What' spekest' þou Gamelyn of' lond oþer of' leede 104
 Than seyde Gamelyn þe child þat' was ying'
 Cristes curs mote he haue þat' clepeþ me gadelyng'
 I am no worse gadelyng' ne no worse wigh't'
 But' born of' a lady and geten of' a knight' 108
 Ne durste he not' to Gamelyn neer a foote go
 But clepede to him his men and seyde to hem þo
 Goþ and beteþ þis body and reueþ him his wit/
 And lat' him lere anoþer tyme to answeere me bet' 112
 Than seyde þe child yonge Gamelyn) [leaf 64 a]
 Cristes curs mot' þou haue broþer art/ þou myn
 And if' I schal algate be beten anon
 Cristes curs mote þou haue but' þou be þat' oon 116
 And anon his broþer in þe grete hete
 Made his men to fette staues Gamelyn to beete
 Whan þat' euerych of hem hadde a staf' I-nomen
 Gamelyn was war þo he seigh hem comen) 120
 Tho Gamelyn seigh hem comen he loked ouer aʃt
 And was war of' a pestel stood vnder a waʃt
 Gamelyn was light' and þider gan he lepe
 And drof' alle his broþeres men right' soone on an heepe
 he loked as a leon a layde on good won 125
 Tho his broþer seigh þat' he bigan to gon
 he fleigh vp in til a loft' and schette þe dore fast'
 Thus Gamelyn wiþ his pestelle made hem agast' 128

Somme for gamelynes loue and some for his eye
 Aft þei drowen by halues þo he bigan to pleye
 What' now seyde Gamelyn yuel mot' þou þee
 Wil ye bigynne contek' and so soone flee 132
 Gamelyn sougħt' his broþer' whider he was flowe
 And saugh wher he loked out' at' a wyndowe
 Broþer saide Gamelyn come a litel neer
 And I wil teche þe a play atte Bokeleer 136
 his broþer him answerde and sayde be seint' Richere
 Whil þe pestel is in þin hond I wol come no neer
 Broþer I wel make þy pees I swere by cristes oore/
 Cast' a-way þe pestel and wrapþe þe nomore 140
 I moot' neede sayde Gamelyn wrapþe me at oones
 ffor þou wolde make þi men to breke my boones
 Ne hadde I had mayn and might' in myn armes
 To haue hem driuen fro me þei wolde haue do me harmes
 Gamelyn sayd his broþer be þou nought' wroþ 145
 ffor to see þe haue harm were me right' loþ
 I dide it nought' broþer but' for a fondyng'
 ffor for to loken or þou were strong' and art' so 3ing' 148
 Com a doun þan to me and graunte me my boone [leaf 64a, back]
 Of þing' I wol þe asken and we schul saughte soone
 Doun þan cam his broþer þat' fikel was and felle
 And was swithe sore agast' of' þe pestelle 152
 he seyde broþer Gamelyn aske me þy boone
 And loke þou me blame but I it' graunte soone
 Thanne seyde Gamelyn broþer y-wys
 And we schulle ben at' on þou most me graunte þis 156
 Al þat' my fader me biquath whil he was on lyue
 Thou most' do me it haue if' we schulle nou3t' stryue
 That' schalt' þou haue Gamelyn I swere by cristes oore
 Al þat' þi fader þe byquath þough þou woldest' haue more
 Thi lond þat' lieth laye wel it schal be sowe 161
 And þine houses reised vp þat' ben y-leyd so lowe
 Thus sayde þe knight' to Gamelyn by mouþe
 And þoughte of' falsnesse as he wel coupe 164

The knight' pought' on tresoñ and Gamelyn on noon
 And went' and kissed his broþer and when þey weren at' oon
 Allas yonge Gamelyn noþing' he ne wist'
 Wiþ such fals tresoun his broþer him kist/ 168
 liþeneth and lestenep and holdeþ youre tonge
 And 3e schul heere talkyng' of' gamelyn þe 3onge
 Ther was þer besyden cried a wrastelyng'
 And þer fore þer was vp y-set' a Ram and a ryng' 172
 And Gamelyn was in wille to wende þerto
 ffor to preuen his might' what' he couþe doo
 Broþer seyde Gamelyn by seint' Richer
 Thou most' lene me to night' a litel courser 176
 That' is freissch to þe spores on for to ryde
 I moste on an Erande a litel here besyde/
 By god seyde his broþer of' steedes in my stalle
 Go and chese þe þe beste spare non of alle 180
 Of' steedes or of' coursers þat' stonden him bysyde
 And telle me goode broþer whider þou wolt' ryde
 here besyde broþer is cryed a wrastlyng'
 And þerfore schal be sette a Ram and a Ryng' 184
 Moche worschipe it were broþer to vs alle [l. af 64 b]
 Might' I þe Ram and þe ryng' bryngen hom to þis halle
 A steede þer was sadeled smartly and skeet'
 Gamelyn dide a paire spores fast' on his feet 188
 he sette his foot' in þe styrop þe steede he bistrood
 And toward þe wrastelyng' þe 3onche child rood
 Tho Gamelyn þe 3onge was ryden out' atte gate
 The false knight' his broþer loked it after þate 192
 And bisoughte ihesu crist' þat is heuen king'
 he mighte breke his necke in þat' wrastlyng'
 As sone as gamelyn com ther þe place was
 he lighte doun of' his steede and stood on þe gras 196
 And þere he herde a ffrankelyn wayloway syng'
 And bigan bitterly his hondes for to wryng'
 Goode man seide Gamelyn whi makest' þou þis fare
 Is þer noman þat' may 3ou helpen out' of' þis care 200

Allas seide þis ffrankleyn þat euer was I bore
 ffor tweye stalworþe sones I wene þat I haue lore
 A champion is in þe place þat haþ y-wrought me sorwe
 ffor he haþ slayn my tuo sones but if god hem borwe 204
 I wolde ȝiue ten pound by ihesu crist and more
 Wiþ þe nones I fand a man to handelen him sore
 Goode man seide Gamelyn wilt þou wel done
 hold myn hors whil my man draweþ of my schone 208
 And help my man to kepe my cloþes and my steede
 And I wil in to þe place gon to loke if I may speede
 By god seide þe ffrankeleyn it schal be doon
 I wol my self be þy man to drawen of þi schoon 212
 And wende þou in to þe place ihesu crist þe speede
 And drede not of þi cloþes nor of þi goode steede
 Barfot and vngert Gamelyn in came
 Alle þat were in þe place heede of him þei name 216
 how he dorste aunte him of him to don his might
 That was so doughty a champioun in wrastelyng and in fight
 vp sterte þe Champioun rapely anon
 Toward ȝonge Gamelyn he bigan to goon 220
 And seide who is þi fader and who is þi sire/ [leaf 64 b, back]
 ffor soþe þou art a gret fool þat þou come hire/
 Gamelyn answerde þe Champioun þo/
 Thou knewe wel my fader whil he couþe goo 224
 Whiles he was on lyue by seint Martyn
 Sire Iohñ of Boundes was his name and I Gamelyn
 ffelawe seide þe Champioun so mote I þriue
 I knew wel þi fader whil he was on lyue 228
 And þi self Gamelyn I wol þat þou it heere
 Whil þou were a ȝong boy a moche schrewe þou were/
 Than seide Gamelyn and swor by cristes oore
 Now I am oldere woxe þou schalt fynde me a more 232
 By god sayde þe champion welcome mote þou be/
 Come þou ones in myn hond schalt þou neuer þe
 It was wel wiþinne þe night and þe moone schon
 Whan Gamelyn and þe Champion togidere gonne gon 236

The champion caste tornes to Gamelyn þat' was preste
 And Gamelyn stood stille and bad him don his beste
 Thanne seyde Gamelyn to þe champion
 Thou art' faste aboute to bringe me down 240
 Now I haue proued many tornes of' þine
 Thou most' he seyde prouen on or tuo of' myne
 Gamelyn to þe champiōn yede smertly anocn
 Of' alle þe turnes þat' he couþe he schewed him but oon
 And kast' him on þe left' syde þat' þe ribbes to-brak' 245
 And þarto his oon arm þat' yaf' a gret' crak'
 þan seyde Gamelyn smertly anoon
 Schal it be holde for a cast' or elles for noon 248
 By god seyde þe champion wheþer þat' it be
 he comeþ oones in þin hond schal he neuer þe
 Than seyde þe ffrankelein þat' hadde his sone þere/
 Blessed be þou Gamelyn þat' euer þou bore were 252
 The ffrankeleyn seide to þe champiōn of him stod him noneye
 This is 3onge Gamelyn þat' taughte þe þis pleye
 A3ein answerde þe Champion þat' liked noþing welle
 he is oure alþer maister and his pley is right' felle/ 256
 Siþen I wrastlede ferst' it' is y-go ful yore [leaf 65]
 But I was neuere my lyf' handled so sore
 Gamelyn stood in þe place alone wiþoute sirk'
 And sayde if' þer be moo lat' hem come to werke 260
 The champion þat' payned him to werke so sore
 It' semeth by his continance þat' he wol no more
 Gamelyn in þe place stood stille as a stoon
 [. no gap in the MS.] 264
 Ther was non with Gamelyn wolde wrastle more
 ffor he handled þe Champiōn so wonderliche sore/
 Tuo gentil men yemedede þe place
 Come to Gamelyn god 3iue him goode grace 268
 And sayden to him do on þin hosen and þi schoon
 ffor soþe at' þis tyme þis faire is y-done
 And þanne sayde Gamelyn so moot' I wel fare
 I haue nought' 3it' haluendel sold my ware/ 272

Tho sayde þe Champiōn so brouke I my sweere
 He is a fool þat' þer-of' byeþ þou sellest it so deere
 Tho saide þe ffrankeleyn that was in moche care/
 ffelawe he sayde whi lakkest' þou his ware/ 276
 By seint' Iame in Galeys þat' many man haþ sougħt'
 yit' it' is to good chepe þat' þou hast' y-bougħt'
 Tho þat' wardeynes were of' þat' wrastlyng'
 Come and brougte Gamelyn þe Ram & þe ryng' 280
 And sayde haue gamelyn þe Ring' and þe Ram
 ffor þe beste wrastelere þat' euer heere cam
 ¶ Thus wan Gamely þe Ram and þe Ryng'
 And wente with moche Ioye hom in þe mornyng' 284
 his broþer seigh wher he cam wiþ þe grete route
 And bad schitte þe gate and holde him wiþoute
 þe porter of' his lord was sore agast'
 And stert' anon to þe gate and lokked it fast' 288
 Now liþeþ and lesteneþ boþe 3ong' and olde/
 And 3e schul heere game of' Gamelyn þe bolde/
 Gamelyn com þer for to haue come In
 Than was it' schett' faste wiþ a pyn 292
 Thanne seyde Gamelyn porter vndo þe gate/
 ffor many a good mannes sone stondeþ þerate [leaf 65, back]
 Than answerd þe porter and swor' by goddes berde
 Thou ne schalt' Gamelyn come in to þis 3erde 296
 Thou lixt' sayde Gamelyn so brouke I my chyn
 he smot' þe wiket' with his foot' and brak' away þe pyn
 The porter seih þo it mighte no better be
 he sette foot' on erþe he bigan to flee 300
 By my faiþ sayde Gamelyn þat' trauaile is lore
 ffor I am of' foote as light' as þou þough þou haddest swore
 Gamelyn ouertok' þe porter and his teene wrak'
 And gert' him in þe necke þat' þe boon tobrak' 304
 And took' him by þat' oon arm and þrew him in a welle/
 vij. fadmen it' was deep as I haue herd telle/
 Whan Gamelyn þe yonge þus hadde playd his play
 Alle þat' in yerde weren drewen hem a-way 308

þei dredden him ful sore for wreke þat he wrought
 And for þe faire companye þat he þider brought
 Gamelyn ȝede to þe gate and leet [it] vp wyde
 he leet hem in alle þat gone wolde or ryde 312
 And seyde ȝe be welcome wiþouten eny greeue
 ffor we wiln ben maisteres heere and aske no man leeu
 yesterday I lefte seyde ȝonge Gamelyn
 In my broþer seler .v. tonne of wyn 316
 I wol not þis companye parten a twynne
 And ye wol doon after me whil ony sope is þrinne
 And if my broþer grucche or make foul cheere
 Oþer for spense of mete *and* drink þat we spenden heere/
 I am oure catour and bere oure alþer purce
 he schal haue for his grucching seint maries curse
 My broþer is a negoñ I swere by cristes oore
 And we wol spende largely þat he haþ spared yore 324
 And who þat makeþ grucching þat we heere dwelle/
 he schal to þe porter in to þe drawe welle/
 vij. dayes and seue night Gamelyn heeld his feeste/
 With mochel solace was þere and no cheste/ 328
 In a litel toret his broþer lay steke
 And seigh hem wasten his good but durst he not speke [leaf 66]
 Erly on a mornyng on þe viij^e. day
 The gestes come to Gamelyn and wolde gon here way 332
 lordes sayde Gamelyn wil ye so hye
 All þe wyn is not yet drunken so brouk I myn ye
 Gamelyn in his herte was wel woo
 Whanne his gestes toke hire leue from him for to goo 336
 he wolde þei hadde dwelled lenger *and* þai saide nay
 But bitaughten Gamelyn god and good day
 Thus maade Gamelyn his feeste and brought it wel to eende
 And after his gestes tok leue to wende 340
 litheþ and lesteneþ and holdeþ ȝoure tonge
 And ȝe schul heere gamen of Gamelyn þe ȝonge
 herkeneth lordynges and listeneth aright
 Whan all gestes were goon how Gamelyn was dight 344

- All þe whil þat Gamelyn held his mangerie
 his broþer þought on him be wreke with his treccherie
 Tho Gamelynes gestes were riden and y-gon
 Gamelyn stood anoon allone frend had he noon 348
 Tho after ful soone wipinne a litel stounde
 Gamelyn was taken and ful harde bounde
 fforþ com þe false knight out of þe sellere
 To Gamelyn his broþer he ȝede ful neere 352
 And seyde to Gamelyn who made þe so bold
 ffor to stroyen my stoore of myn houshold
 Broþer sayde Gamelyn wraþþe þe right nouȝt
 ffor it is many day go siþþen it was bought 356
 ffor broþer þou hast had by seint Richer
 Of fiftene plowes of lond þis xvj. ȝer
 And of alle þe beestes þou hast forþ bred
 That my fader me byquath on his deth bed 360
 Of alle þis .xvj. ȝeer I yiue þe þe prow/
 ffor þe mete and þe drink þat we haue spended now
 Thanne seyde þe false knight yuel mote he þee
 herkne broþer Gamelyn what I wol yiue þee/ 364
 ffor of my body broþer geten heer haue I noon
 I wil make þe myn heir I swere by sein Iohān [leaf 66, back]
 Par ma fay seyde Gamelyn and it so bee
 And þou þenke as seist god ȝelde it þe 368
 No þing wiste Gamelyn of his broþeres gile
 Therfore he him begiled in a litel while/
 Gamelyn seyde he o þing I þe telle
 Tho þou þrewe my porter in to þe drawe welle 372
 I swoor in þat wraþþe and in þat grete moot
 þat þou scholdest be bounde boþe hand and foot
 Therefore I þe beseche broþer Gamelyn
 Lat me nouȝt be forsworne broþer artow myn 376
 Lat me bynde þe boþe hand and foote
 ffor to halde myn avow as I þe bihoote
 Broþer seyde Gamelyn as so mote I þee
 Thou schalt nouȝt be forsworne for þe loue of me 380

Tho maden þei gamelyn to sitte might' he not' stonde
 Til þei hadden him bounde/ boþe foot' and honde
 The false knight' his broþer of' Gamelyn was agast'
 And sente after feteres to feteren him atte last 384
 his broþer made lesynges on him þer he stood
 And tolde hem þat comen In that' Gamelyn was wood
 Gamelyn stood to a post bounden in þe halle,
 Tho that' comen in lokeden on him alle 388
 Euer stood Gamelyn euen vpright'
 But mete and drink' hadde he noon noþer day ne night'
 Thanne sayde Gamelyn broþer by myn hals
 Now I haue aspied þou art' a party fals 392
 hadde I wist' þat' treson þat' þou haddest y-founde
 I wolde haue youe strokes or I hadde be bounde
 Gamelyn stood bounden stille as eny stoon'
 Tuo daies and tuo nightes mete hadde he noon 396
 Thanne sayde Gamelyn þat' stood y-bounde stronge
 Adam spenser me þink' I faste to longe
 Adam þe spenser now I beseche þe
 ffor þe moche loue my fader loued þe 400
 If' þou may come to þe kayes leese me out' of' bonde
 And I schal parte wiþ þe of my free londe [leaf 67]
 Thanne sayde adam þat' was þe spenser
 I haue serued þi broþer þis .xvj. 3er 404
 If' I lete þe gon out' of' his boure
 he wolde say afterward I were a traitour
 Adam seyde Gamelyn so brouke I myn hals
 þou schalt' fynde my broþer atte laste right fals/ 408
 Ther-fore broþer adam loose me out of' bondes
 And I wil parte with þe of' my free londes
 vp swich a forward seide adam y-wys/
 I wol do þerto al þat' in me is 412
 Adam seyde Gamelyn also mote I þee
 I wil holde þe couenañt and þou wil lose me
 Anon as adames lord to bedde was y-goon
 Adam tok' þe kayes and leet' Gamelyn out a-non 416

He vnlokked Gamelyn boþe handes *and* feet
 In hope of auancement þat' he him biheet •
 Thanne seide Gamelyn þanked be goddes sonde
 Now I am loosed boþe foot' and honde 420
 hadde I now eten and drunken aright
 Ther is non in þis hous schulde bynde me þis night
 Adæm took' Gamelyn stille as stille as eny stoon
 And ladde him in to spense rapely and anoon) 424
 And sette him to soper right' in a priue stede
 he bad him do gladly and Gamelyn so dede
 Anon as Gamelyn hadde eten wel and fyn
 And þerto y-dronke wel of' þe reede wyn 428
 Adæm seyde Gamelyn what' is now þy rede
 ffor I go to my broþer and gyrde of' his hede
 Gamelyn seyde adæm it schal nouȝt' be so
 I can teche þe a reede þat' is worth þe tuo 432
 I wot' wel for soþe þat' þis is no nay
 We schulle haue a mangery right' on sonday
 Abbotes and Priours many heer schal be
 And oþer men of' holy chirche as I telle þe 436
 þou schalt' stonde vp by þe poste as þou were hond fast'
 And I schal leue þam vnloke þat' away þou may hem caste
 Whan þat' þei haue eten and wasshen here hondes ^[lf 67, bk]
 Thou schalt' biseke hem alle to bringe þe out' of' bondes 440
 And if' þei wil borwe þe þat' were good game
 Thanne were þou out' of' prison and I out' of' blame
 And if' ech of' hem sey to vs nay
 I schal don anoþer I swere by þis day 444
 Thou schalt' haue a good staff/ and I wol haue anoþer
 And cristes curs haue þat' oon) þat' failleþ þat' oþer
 Ya for gode seyde Gamelyn I say it' for me
 If' I faile on my syde yuele mote I þe 448
 If' we schulle algate assoile hem of' here synne
 Warne me broþer adæm whan we schul begynne
 Gamelyn seyde adæm by seinte charite/
 I wil warne þe biforn whan þat' it' schal be 452

Whan I twynk' on þe loke for to gone
 And cast' away þe fetteres and come to me anoon
 Adam seyde Gamelyn blessed be þy boones
 That' is a good counsail yeuyng' for þe nones 456
 If' þey werne me to bringe me out' of beendes
 I wol sette goode strokes right' on here lendes
 Tho þe sonday was y-come and folk' to þe feeste
 ffaire þei were welcomed boþe leste and meeste 460
 And euere as þey atte hañ dore comen In
 Thay caste þair yhe on 3onge Gamelyn
 The false knight' his broþer and ful of' trecchery
 Alle þe gestes þat' þer were atte mangery 464
 Of' Gamelyn his broþer he tolde hem with mouþe/
 Añ þe harme and þe schame þat' he telle couþe
 Tho þei were serued of' messes tuo or þre
 Thanne seyde Gamelyn how serue 3e me/ 468
 It' is not' wel serued by god þat' al made
 That' I sitte fastyng' and oþer men make hem glade
 The fals knight' his broþer þere þat' he stood
 Tolde añ his gestes þat' Gamelyn was wood 472
 And Gamelyn stood stille and answerde nough't
 But' adames wordes he heeld in his þought' [leaf 68]
 Tho Gamelyn gan speke dolfully wiþ alle
 To þe grete lordes þat' saten in þe halle 476
 lordes he seyde for cristes passioñ
 help to brynge Gamelyn out of' prison
 Thanne seyde an abbot' sorwe on his cheeke
 he schal haue cristes curs and seinte maries eeke 480
 That' þe out' of' prisoun beggeth or borweth
 But' euere worþe hem wel þat' doþ þe moche sorwe
 After þat' abbot' þan spak' anoþer
 I wolde þin hed were offe þey þou were my broþer 484
 Alle þat' þe borwe foule moot' þam falle
 Thus þei seide alle þat' weren in þe halle
 Than seyde a priour yuel mote he priue
 It' is moche sorwe & and skape boy þat' þou art on lyue 488

Ow seyde Gamelyn so brouke I my bon
 Now I haue aspied þat' freendes haue I noon
 Cursed mot' he worthe boþe fleisshe and blood
 That euere do priour or abbot' eny good 492
 Adam þe spenser took' vp þe cloþe
 And loked on Gamelyn and seih þat' he was wrooth
 Adam on þe Pantrie litul he þought'
 But' tuo goode staues to halle dore he brought' 496
 Adam looked on Gamelyn and he was war anon
 And cast' away þe feteres and he bygan to goon
 Tho he cam to adam he took' þat' oo staf'
 And bigan to worche and goode strokes yaf' 500
 Gamleyn cam in to þe halle and þe spencer bothe
 And loked hem aboute as þei hadde be wroþe
 Gamelyn sprengēþ holy water with an ook spire
 That' somme þat' stode vpright' felle in the fire 504
 Ther was no lewed man þat' in þe halle stood
 That' wolde do Gamelyn any þing' but' good
 But' stoden besyden and lete hem boþe werche
 ffor þei hadde no reuþe of' men of' men of' holy cherche 508
 Abbot' or priour monk' or chanoñ
 That' Gamelyn ouertok' anon þei ʒeden down) [leaf 63, back]
 Ther was non of' hem alle þat' wiþ his staf' mette
 That' he made hem ouerþrowe and quitte hem his dette 512
 Gamelyn sayde adam for sainte charite/
 Pay good lyueray for þe loue of' me
 And I wol kepe þe dore so euere heere I masse/
 Er þei ben assoiled þer schal non passe 516
 Dout' þe nouzt' seide Gamelyn) whil we ben in feere/
 Kepe þou wel þe dore and I wol werche heere
 Stere good adam and late þer none flee
 And we schulle telle largely how many þer be 520
 Gamelyn seyde adam do hem but' good
 They ben men of' holy che[rche] draw of' hem no blood
 Saue wel þe croune and do hem non harmes
 But' breke boþe here legges and sipþen here armes 524

Thus Gamelyn and adam wroughte right^t faste/
 And pleyden with þe monkes and made hem agaste/
 Thider þey come rydyng^t Iolyly wiþ swaynes
 And hom azein þei were ledde in Cartes *and* in waynes 528
 Tho þei hadden alle y-don þan seyde a gray frere
 Allas sire abbot^t what^t dide we now heere
 Tho þat^t we comen hider it was a cold rede
 vs hadde ben better at^t home wiþ water and wiþ breed 532
 Whil Gamelyn made ordres of^t monkes and freere/
 Euer stood his broþer and made foul cheere
 Gamelyn vp wiþ his staf^t þat^t he wel knew
 And gerte him in þe nekke þat^t he ouerþrew 536
 A litel aboue þe girdel þe riggebou tobarst^t
 And sette him in þe feteres þer he sat^t arst^t
 Sitte þere broþer seyde Gamelyn
 ffor to coole þi blood as I dide myn 540
 As swiþe as þei hadde wroken hem on here foon
 They askede water and wisshen anoon
 What^t somme for here loue and somme for awe
 Alle þe seruantz serued hem of^t þe beste lawe 544
 The scherreu was þenne but fyue myle/
 And al was told him in a litel while/ [leaf 69]
 how Gamelyn and adam hadde don a sory res
 Bounden and wounded men azein þe kinges pees 548
 Tho bigan sone strif^t for to wake
 And þe scherref^t aboute Gamelyn for to take
 Now litheþ and lesteneþ so god 3iue 3ou good fyn
 And 3e schul heere good game of^t 3onge Gamelyn 552
 ffour and twenty 3onge men þat^t helden ful bolde
 Come to þe scherref^t and seyde þat^t þai wolde
 Gamelyn and adam fette be way
 The scherref^t yaf^t hem leue soþ as I 3ou say 556
 þei hieden faste wolde þay nought^t belynne
 Til þei comen to þe gate þer gamelyn was Inne
 They knokken on þe gate þe porter was ney
 And loked out^t at^t an hole as man þat^t was sleigh 560

The porter hadde beholde þam a litel while
 he louede Gamelyn and was adrad of gile/
 And leet þe wiket stonde ful stille
 And asked hem wiþoute what was here wille 564
 ffor all þe grete company þanne spak but oon
 Vndo þe gate porter and lat vs In goon
 Than seyde þe porter so brouke I my chynne
 3e schul sey 3our erand er 3e comen Inne 568
 Sey to Gamelyn and adam if þeir wille be
 We wol speke to hem two wordes or þre
 ffelaw sayde þe porter stond þere stille
 And I wol wende to Gamelyn to witen his wille 572
 In wente þe porter to Gamelyn anon
 And saide sire I warne 3ou here ben come 3oure foon
 The scherreues men ben atte gate
 ffor to take 3ou boþe schulle 3e not scape 576
 Porter seyde Gamelyn so mote I wel þe
 I wol allowe þe þi wordes whan I my tyme see
 Go a3ein to þe gate and dwelle wiþ hem a while/
 And þou schalt see right soone porter a gyle 580
 Adam seyde Gamelyn loke þe to goone
 We haue foomen atte gate and freendes neuer oone [leaf 69, back]
 It ben þe scherreues men þat hider ben y-come/
 Thei ben swore to-gidere þat we schul be nome 584
 Gamelyn saide adam hye þe right blyue
 And if I faile þe þis day yuel mote I þriue
 And we schulle so welcome þe Scherreues men
 That somme of hem schulle make here beddes in þe fen 588
 Atte posterne gate Gamelyn out wente
 And a good cart staf in his hond he hente
 Adam hente soone anoþer gret staf
 ffor to helpe Gamelyn and goode strokes he 3af 592
 Adam felde tweyne and Gamelyn felde þre
 That oþer sette feet on erþe and bigan to flee
 What seide adam so euere heere I masse/
 I haue right good wyn / drynke or 3e passe 596

Nay by god sayde þai þi drink' is not' good
 It' wolde make a mannes brayn to lyen in his hood
 Gamelyn stood stille and loked him aboute
 And saide þe scherref' comeþ with a gret' route 600
 Adam seide Gamelyn what' be now þy redes
 here comeþ þe scherreue and wil haue oure heedes
 Adam sayde to Gamelyn my reed is now þis
 Abyde we no longere if' we fare amys 604
 I rede þat' we to woode goon' ar þat' we be founde
 Better is it' þer louse þan in toune y-bounde
 Adam tok' by þe hond zonge Gamelyn
 And euery of' hem drank' a draught' of' wyn 608
 And after token here cours and wenten here way
 Tho fond þe scherreue nest' and noon ay
 The scherref' lighte doun and went' in to þe halle
 And fond þe lord fetered faste wiþ alle 612
 þe scherreue vnfetered him right' soone anon
 And sente after a leche to hele his regge bon
 lete we now þis false knight' lye in his care
 And talke we of' Gamelyn and loke how he fare 616
 Gamelyn in to þe woode stalkede stille
 And adam þe spenser likede right' ylle [leaf 70]
 Adam swore to Gamelyn by seint' richeer
 Now I see it is mery to ben a spenser 620
 That' leuere me were keyes to bere
 Than walken in þis wilde woode my clopes to tere
 Adam sayde Gamelyn dismaye þe right' nought'
 Many good mannes childe in care is brought' 624
 As þei tooke talking' boþe in feere
 Adam herde talking' of men and neigh him þought' þei were
 Tho Gamelyn vnder woode loked aright'
 vij. score of' zonge men he say wel adight' 628
 Alle satte atte mete compas aboute
 Adam sayde Gamelyn now haue 3e no doute
 After bale comes boote þorugh goddes might'
 Me pinkeþ of' mete and drynk' þat' I haue a sight' 632

Adam lokede þo vnder woode bowgh
 And þo he say mete he was glad ynough
 ffor he hopede to god for to haue his deele
 And he was sore alonged after a good meelee 636
 As he saide þat' word þe mayster outlawe
 Saugh Gamelyn and adam vnder woode schawe/
 zonge men seyde þe maister by þe god roode
 I am war of' gestes god sende vs goode 640
 zond been tuo yonge men right' wel adigh't
 And perauenture þer ben mo who so loked arigh't
 Ariseþ vp yonge men and sette hem to me
 It' is good þat' we witen what' men it' be 644
 vp þei sterten .vij. fro þe dyner
 And metten with Gamelyn and adam spenser
 Whan þei were neih hem þan seyde þat' oon
 yeldeþ vp yonge men zour bowes & your flood 648
 Thanne seide Gamelyn þat' yong' was of' elde
 Moche sorwe mote he haue þat' to yow hem zeelde
 I corse non oþer but' right' my selue
 þey ze fette to yow fyue þanne ye be twelue 652
 þo þei herde by his word þat' might' was in his arm
 There was non of' hem þat' wolde don him harm [leaf 70, back]
 But' seide to gamelyn myldely and stille/
 Com afore oure maister and say to him þi wille 656
 yonge men seyde Gamelyn by your leute/
 What' man is zour maister þat' ye with be
 Alle þei answerde wijpoute lesyng'
 Oure mayster is crowned of' outlawes king' 660
 Adam sayde Gamelyn go we in cristes name/
 he may neyþer mete ne drynk' werne vs for schame/
 If þat' he be kynde and come of' gentil [blood]
 he wol yeue vs mete & drynk' and don vs som good 664
 By saint' Iame saide adam what' harm þat' I gete/
 I wol auenture me to þe dore þat' I hadde mete/
 Gamelyn and adam wente forþ in feere
 And þei grette þe maister þat' þey founde þere 668

Than seyde þe mayster king' of' outlawes
 What' seeke 3e yonge men vnder þe woode schawes/
 Gamelyn answerde þe king' wiþ his croune
 he moste needes walke in woode þat' may not' walke in towne
 Sire we walke not' heere non harm to do 673
 But' if we meete a deer to schete þer to
 As men þat' ben hungry and mowe no mete fynde
 And ben harde bestad vnder woode lynde 676
 Of' Gamelynes wordes þe mayster hadde rewþe
 And seyde ye schal haue ynough haue god my treuþe
 he bad hem sitte doun for to take reste
 And bad hem ete and drynke and þat' of' þe beste 680
 As þei eeten and dronke wel and fyn
 Than saide þat' oon to þat' oþer þis is Gamelyn
 Tho was þe maister out-lawe in to counseil nome
 And tolde how it / was Gamelyn þat' þider was y-come 684
 Anon as he herde how it was byfalle
 he made him maister vnder him ouer hem alle
 Wiþinne þe þridde weke him come tydynges
 To þe mayster outlawe þat' was here kynges 688
 þat' he schulde come home his pees was maad
 And of' þat' goode tydyng' he was ful glaad [leaf 71]
 Tho sayde he to his 3onge men soþ for to telle
 Me ben comen tydynges I may no lenger dwelle 692
 Tho was Gamelyn anon wiþoute taryyng'
 Maad mayster outlawe and crowned here king'
 Tho was Gamelyn crowned king' of' out-lawes
 And walked a while vnder woode schawes 696
 The false knight' his broþer was scherreuē and sire
 And leet' his broþer endite for hate and for Ire
 Tho were his bonde men sory and noþing' gladde
 Whan Gamelyn here lord wolfes heed was cried and maad
 And sente out' of' his men wher þey might' him fynde 701
 ffor to seeke Gamelyn vnder þe woode lynde
 To tellen him tydynges the wynd was went'
 And aft' his good reued and his men schent 704

Whan þei had him founden on knees þey hem setten
 And a-doun with here hood and here lord gretten
 Sire wrappe you nought for þe goode roode
 ffor we haue brought you tydynges but þei ben not goode
 Now is þy broþer scherreue and haþ þe baillie 709
 And haþ endited þe and wolfes heed doþ þe crye
 Allas sayde Gamelyn þat euer I was so slak
 That I ne hadde broke his necke þo I his rigge brak 712
 Gop greetþ wel myn housbondes and wijf
 I wil ben atte nexte schire haue god my lijf
 Gamelyn cam wel redy to þe nexte schire
 And þere was his broþer boþe lord and sire 716
 Gamelyn com boldely in to þe moot halle
 And putte adoun his hood among þe lordes alle
 God saue yow lordynges þat now heere be
 But broke bak Scherreue yuel mote þou þee 720
 Why hast þou do me þat schame and vilenye
 ffor to late endite me and wolues heed do me crye
 Tho þoughte þe false knight for to ben awreke
 And leet take Gamelyn most he nomore speke 724
 Might þer be no more grace but Gamelyn atte laste/
 Was cast in to prison and fetered faste/ [leaf 71, back]
 ¶ Gamelyn haþ a broþer þat highte sire Oote
 As good a knight and heende as mighte gon on foote 728
 Anon zeede a messenger to þat goode knight
 And told him altogider how Gamelyn was dight
 Anon as sire Oote herde how Gamelyn was dight
 he was right sory was he noþing light 732
 And leet saddle a steede and þe way he nam
 And to his tweyne breþeren right soone he cam
 Sire sayde sire Ote to þe Scherreue þo
 We ben but þre breþeren schulle we neuer be mo 736
 And þou hast prisoned þe beste of vs alle
 Swich anoþer broþer yuel him mote bifalle
 Sire Ote seyde þe fals knight lat be þi curs
 By god for þi wordes he schal fare þe wurs 740

To þe kinges prisone he is y-nome
 And þer he schal abyde to þe Iustice come
 Parde saide sire Ote better it schal be
 I bidde him to maympris þat þou graunte to me 744
 Til þe nexte sittynge of deliuerance
 And late þanne Gamelyn stande to his cnaunce
 Broþer in swich a forward I take him to þe
 And by þi fader soule þat þe bigat and me 748
 But he be redy whan þe Iustice sitte
 Thou schalt bere his Iuggement for all þi grete witte
 I graunte wel seide sire Ote þat it so be
 let deliuiere him anon and tak him to me 752
 Tho was Gamelyn deliuered to sire Ote his broþer
 And þat night dwelleden þat oon wiþ þat oþer
 On þe morwe seyde Gamelyn to sire Ote þe heende
 Broþer he seyde I moot for soþe fro þe weende 756
 To loke how my yonge men leden here lyf
 Wheþer þey lyuen in Ioye or elles in strif
 By god seyde sire Ote þat is a cold rede
 Now I se þat all þe cark schal falle on myn hede 760
 ffor whan þe Iustice sitte and þou be nought y-founde
 I schal anon be take and in þy stede y-bounde [leaf 72]
 Broþer sayde Gamelyn dismaie þe nough
 ffor by saint Iame in Gales that many man haþ sought 764
 If þat god almighty holde me my lyf and witte
 I wil be þere redy whan þe Iustice sitte
 Thanne seide sire Ote to Gamelyn god schilde þe fro schame
 Com whan þou seest tyme and bryng vs out of blame 768
 ¶ litheth and lesteneth and holdeþ þou stille
 And þe schulle heere how Gamelyn hadde his wille
 Gamelyn wente vnder þe woode Rys
 And fond þere pleyng yonge men of pris 772
 Tho was yonge Gamelyn right glad ynough
 Whan he fond his men vnder þe woode bough
 Gamelyn and his men talked in feere
 And þey hadde good game here maister to heere/ 776

his men tolden him of auentures þat þei hadde y-founde
 And Gamelyn him tolde aȝein how he was faste bounde
 Whil Gamelyn was outlawe hadde he no curs
 Ther was no man þat for him ferde þe wors 780
 But abbotes and priours monk and Chanōn
 On of hem lefte he nought whan he might hem nom
 Whil Gamelyn and his men made merþes Ryue
 The false knight his broþer yuel mote he þriue 784
 ffor he was faste aboute boþe o day and oþer
 ffor to hire þe queste to hangen his broþer
 Gamelyn stood on a day and he biheeld
 The woodes and þe schawes in þe wilde feeld 788
 he þought on his broþer how he him beheet
 þat he wolde be redy whan þe Iustice seet
 he þoughte wel þat he wolde wiþoute delay
 Come afore þe Iustice to keepen his day 792
 And seide to his yonge men dighte yow ȝare
 ffor whan þe Iustice sitte we mote be þare
 ffor I am vnder borwe til þat I come/
 And my broþer for me to prisoñ schal be nome 796
 By seint Iame seide his ȝonge men and þou rede þerto
 Ordeigne how it schal be and it schal be do [leaf 72, back]
 Whil Gamelyn was comyng þer þe Iustice satte
 The false knight his broþer for-yatte he not þatte 800
 To hire þe men on his quest to hangen his broþer
 Though þey hadde nought þat oon he wolde haue þat oþer
 Tho cam Gamelyn fro vnder woode Rys
 And broughte with him ȝonge men of prys 804
 I se wel seyde Gamelyn the Iustice is sette
 Go afor adam and loke how it spette
 Adam wente in to þe halle and loked aff aboute
 he seih þere stonde lordes boþe grete and stoute 808
 And sire Ote his broþer fetered wel fast
 Tho went adam out of halle as he were agast
 Adam seide to Gamelyn and to his felawes alle
 Sire Ote stant fetered in þe moot halle 812

yonge men sayde Gamelyn þis þey heeren alle
Sire Ote stant' fetered in þe moot' halle
If' god yif vs grace wel for to do
he schal it' abegge þat' it broughte þerto 816
Thanne seyde Gamelyn þat lokkes hadde hore
Cristes curs most' he haue þat' him¹ bond so sore [¹ four strokes
to the m.]
And þou wolt' Gamelyn don after my reed
Ther is non in þe halle schal bere away his heed 820
Adam seyde Gamelyn we wille nought' doon so
We wol sle þe guiltyf' and late þe oþer go
I wil in to þe halle and wiþ þe Iustice speke
On hem þat' ben guiltyf' I wol ben a-wreke 824
late non scape at' þe dore yonge men take yeme
ffor I wol be Iustice þis day doomes to deeme
God speede me þis day at' my newe werk'
Adam com with me for þou schalt' be my clerk' 828
his men answerde him and bad him don his best'
And if' þou to vs haue neede þou schalt' fynde vs preste
We wiln stande with þe whil þat we may dure
And but' we werken manly pay vs non hure 832
Yonge men sayde Gamelyn so mot' I wel þee/
As trusty a maister ye schal fynde of' me [leaf 73]
Right þer þe Iustice sat' in þe halle
In wente Gamelyn amonges hem alle 836
Gamelyn leet' vnfettere his broþer out' of' bende
Thanne seide sire Otes his broþer þat' was heende
Thou haddest' almost' Gamelyn dwelled to longe
ffor þe queste is out' on me þat' I scholde hongre 840
Broþer seide Gamelyn so god yif' me good rest
This day þey schul ben hanged þat' ben vpon þe quest'
And þe Iustice boþe þat' is þe Iugge man
And þe schirriue boþe þorugh him it bigan 844
Thanne seyde Gamelyn to þe Iustise
Now is þy power don þou most' nedes arise
Thou hast' yiuen doomes þat' ben yuel dight'
I wil sitten in þi sete and dresen hem aright' 848

The Iustice sat stille and roos nought anoon
 And Gamelyn cleuede his cheke boon
 Gamelyn tok him in his armes and nomore spak
 But prewe him ouer þe barre and his arme tobrak 852
 Durste non to Gamelyn seye but good
 ffor fered of þe companye þat wiþoute stood
 Gamelyn sette him down in þe Iustices sete
 And sire Otes his broþer by him and adam at his feet 856
 Whan Gamelyn was sette in þe Iustices sete/
 herkne of a bourde þat Gamelyn dede
 he leet fetere þe Iustice and his false brother
 And leet hem come to þe barre þat oon wiþ þat oper 860
 Tho Gamelyn hadde þus y-don hadde he no rest
 Til he hadde enquired who was on þe quest
 ffor to deemen his broþer sire Otes for to honge
 Er he wiste which þei were he þoughte ful longe 864
 But as sone as Gamelyn wiste wher þey were
 he dede hem euerichon feteren in fere
 And bringen hem to þe barre and sette hem in Rewe
 By my faith seide þe Iustice þe Scherreue is a schrewe/ 868
 Thanne sayde Gamelyn to þe Iustice
 Thou hast youe doomes of þe wors assise [leaf 73, back]
 And þe .xij. Sisours that weren of þe queste
 They schulle ben hanged þis day so haue I good reste 872
 Thanne seyde þe Scherreue to yonge Gamelyn
 lord I crye þe mercy broþer art þou myn
 Ther-fore saide Gamelyn haue þou cristes curs
 ffor and þou were maister yet I schulde haue wors 876
 ffor to make schort tale and nought to long
 he ordeigned him a queste of his men so strong
 The Iustice and þe Scherreue bep honged hye
 To weiuen with þe Ropes and with þe wynd drye 880
 And þe .xij. Sisours sorwe haue þat rekke
 Alle þey were hanged faste by þe nekke
 Thus endeth þe false knight with his treccherie
 That euer hadde lad his lyf in falsnes and folye 884

he was hanged by þe necke and nought by þe purs
 That was þe meede þat he hadde for his fadres curs
 Sire Otes was eldest and Gamelyn was ying'
 Wenten with here frendes and passed with þe king' 888
 They made pees with þe king' of þe best assise
 The king' loued wel sire Ote and made him Iustice
 And after þe king' made Gamelyn boþe in est' and west'
 Cheef' Iustice of' his fre fforest' 892
 Alle his wighte yonge men þe king' for-yaf' here gilt'
 And siþþen in good office þe king' haþ alle hem pilt'
 ¶ Thus wan Gamelyn his lond and his leede
 And wrak' *him* of' his enemys and quitte *hem* here meede 896
 And sire Ote his broþer made him his heir
 And siþþen wedded Gamelyn a wyf' a good and a fair
 They lyueden togidere whil þat crist' wolde
 And siþþen was gamelyn grauen vnder molde 900
 And so schal we alle may þer noman flee
 God bring' vs to þe Ioye þat euer schal be AmcN *pour charite*

[*No gap in the MS.*]

GROUP B. (α. FRAGMENT II.)

§ 1. MAN OF LAW'S HEAD-LINK.

CORPUS MS.

Owre oost' saugh wel þat' by þe bryghte sonne .C^m.v^m.
 The ark' of' his artificial day hadde ronne
 The ferþe part' of' half' an hour and moore
 And þough he were nought' deepe expert' in lore [leaf 74]
 he wist' it was þe xvij.^e day
 Of Aprille þat' is messenger to May
 And saugh wel þat' þe schadwe of' euery tree
 Was as in lengþe þe same quantite 8
 That' was þe body erect þat' caused it'
 And þefore by þe schadewe he took' his wit'
 That' Phebus which þat' schon so cler and bryght'
 Degrees was xlv clombe on hight' 12
 And for þat' day as in þat' latitude
 It' was ten atte klokke he gan conclude
 And sodeinly he pligh't his hors aboute
 lordynges quod he I warne þou alle þis route 16
 The ferþe party of' þis day is gon
 Now for þe loue of' god and of' seint' Iohn
 leseþ no tyme as ferforth as ye may
 Lordynges þe time it' wasteþ night' and day 20
 And steleþ from vs what' priuely slepyng'
 And what' þurgh necligence in oure waking'
 As doth þe stream þat' turneþ neuer agayn
 Descendyng' from þe mountayn in to playn 24
 Wel can senek' and many a Philosophre
 Biweilen tyme more þan gold in cophre
 ffor los of' catelle may recouered be
 But' los of' tyme schendeþ vs quod he 28

- It wil nough^t come agayn wipouten drede
 Namore þan wile Malkyns maydenhede
 Whan sche haþ lost it / in hir wantonnesse
 lat vs nough^t mowlen þus in ydelnesse 32
 Sire Man of lawe quod he saue 3e blis
 Tel vs a tale anon as forward is
 ye be submitted þurgh your free assent^t
 To stonde in þis cas of my Iuggement^t 36
 Aquiteþ 3ow now of 3oure beheste
 Thanne haue 3e doon your deuer atte leste
 Oost^t quod he depardeux ich assente
 To breke forward is nough^t myn entente [leaf 74, back]
 Biheste is dette and I wil holde fayn
 Al my biheste I can no better sain
 ffor swich lawe as a man yeueþ anoþer wight^t
 he schulde himself vsen it by right^t 44
 Thus wile oure text^t but napeles certain
 I can right^t now no þrifty tale sein
 That Chaucer þogh he can but lewedly
 On metris and in rymyng^t craftily 48
 haþ sayd hem in such englissh as he can
 Of olde tyme as knoweþ many a man
 And if he haue nough^t seyde hem leue broþer
 In o book^t / he haþ seyde hem in anoþer 52
 ffor he haþ told of louers vp and doñ
 Mo þan Ovide made mencioñ
 In his Epistles þat been ful olde
 What scholde I tellen hem sen þei ben tolde 56
 In youþe he made of Ceys and alcione
 And siþþen haþ he spoke of euerychone
 These noble wyfes and þese louers eeke
 Who so þat wile his large volom seekē 60
 Cleped þe seintes legende of Cupide
 Ther may he seen þe large woundes wyde
 Of lucesse & of Babilan Tisbe
 The swerd of Dido for þe fals Ene 64

The tree of Phillis for hire Demophon
 The pleynt of Dyanyre and of Ermion
 Of Adriane and of ysyphile
 The barayne ysle stondyng in þe see 68
 The dreynt leander for his Erro
 The teeres of helyne and eek þe woo
 Of Brixseyde and of þe ladomya
 þe cruelte of queen medea 72
 The litel children hangyng by þe hals
 ffor þe Iason þat was of loue so fals
 Of ypmistra Penelope Alceste
 youre wifhode he comendeth wiþ þe beste [leaf 75]
 But certainly no word ne writeþ he
 Of þikke wicke ensample of Canace
 That loued hir owne brother synfully
 Of suche cursed stories I sei fy 80
 Or elles of Tyro Appoloneus
 how þat þe cursed king Antiochus
 Biraft his doughter of hir maydenhede
 That is so horrible a tale for to rede 84
 Whan he hir þrew þorough þe pament
 And þefore he of ful auisement
 Nolde neuer write in none of his sermons
 Of which vnkynde abhominacioñs 88
 Ne I ne wil not reherce if þat I may
 But of my tale how schal I don þis day
 Me were loþ be likned douteles
 To muses þat men clepen pieriedes 92
 Methamorphoseos wot what I mene
 But napeles I recche nought a bene
 Though I come after him with hawe bake
 I speke in prose and lat him Rimes make 96
 And with þat word he with a sobre chere
 Bigan his tale as 3e schal after heere.

[PROLOGUE OF THE MAN OF LAW'S TALE.]

[There are no breaks in the MS between stanzas or Parts.]

¶ Incipit ffabula.

O Hateful harm condicioñ of^t pouert^t
 With thurst^t with cold with hunger he confoundethⁿ
 To asken helpe þe schameþ in þin hert^t
 If^t þou now axe wiþ neede art^t þou so wounded 102
 That^t verray neede vnwrappeth al þi wounde hid
 Maugre þin heed þou most^t for Indigence
 Or stele or begge or borwe þi dispence 105

Thou blamest^t crist^t and seist^t ful bitterly
 he mys departeþ richesse temporal
 Thy neyghebour þou witest^t synfully
 And seist^t þou hast^t to litel and he hap^t al 109
 Par fey seistow somtyme he rekene schal
 Whan þat^t his tail schal brennen in þe gleede
 ffor he nought^t helpeþ needeful in here neede [leaf 75, back]

¶ Herkne what^t is þe menyng^t of þe wise
 Bet^t is to deyen þan haue Indigence
 Thi self^t neighebores wile þe dispise
 If^t þou be pouer far wel þi reuerence 116
 yet^t of^t þe wise man tak^t þis sentence
 Alle þe dayes of^t pore men ben wikke
 Be war þerfore or þou come in þat^t prikke 119

¶ If^t þou be pouere þi broþer hateþ þe
 And alle þi freendes fleen fro þe allas
 O Riche marchantz ful of^t wele be
 O noble prudent^t folk^t as in þis cas 123
 youre bagges ben nought^t filled with ambes aas
 But with Sis Cynk^t þat^t renneþ for þour chañce
 At^t Cristes masse merye may 3e daunce 126

¶ ye seeken lond and see for 3our' wynnynges
 As wys folk' þat' knowen alle thestat'
 Of regnes 3e ben fadres of' tyþinges
 And tales bothen of' pees and of' debat' 130
 I were right' now of' tales desolat'
 Nere þat' a marchant' gon is many a yere
 Me taught' a tale which as ye schal heere 133

[As there is no room in this print for the Latin notes in the margin of the MS, they are put here, with the numbers of the lines to which they refer.]

1. 161. *Europa est tertia pars mundi.* [MS, leaf 76.]

1. 198. ¶ *Ceptra pharonei fratrum discordia Thebe flamma pnetontis deucalionis aque in stellis priami species audacia turni sensus vlixu herculeus que vigor.* [MS, leaf 76, back.]

1. 294. ¶ *Vnde P[t]holomeus libro j^o, Capitulo g^o primi motus celi duo sunt quorum vnus est qui mouet totum semper ab oriente in occidentem vno modo super orbem & cetera. Item aliter vero motus est qui mouet orbem stellarum currencium. Contra motum primum videlicet ab occidente in orientem super alios duos polos & cetera. Omnes enim concordati sunt quod electiones sint debiles nisi in diuitibus, habent enim isti licet debilitentur eorum electiones radicem .i. natiuitates eorum que confortat omnem planetam debilem in itinere. huc. philosophus.* [MS, leaf 78.]

1. 421. ¶ *Semper mundane leticie tristicia repentina succedit. Mundana ergo felicitas multis amaritudinibus est respersa. Extrema gaudij luctus occupat audi ergo salubre consilium in die bonorum ne immemor sis malorum.* [MS, leaf 79, back.]

1. 771. ¶ *Quid turpius ebrioso cui fetor in ore tremor in corpore qui promit stulta prodit occulta cui mens alienatur facies transformatur nullum enim latet secretum vbi regnat ebrietas.* [MS, leaf 84, back.]

1. 925. ¶ *O extrema libidinis turpitude que non solum mentem effeminat sed eciam corpus eneruat semper sequuntur dolor & penitencia post & cetera.* [MS, leaf 86, back.]

1. 1126. ¶ *A mane vsque ad vesperam mutabitur tempus tenent tympanum & gaudent ad sonum organi.* [MS, leaf 89, back.]

1. 1135. *Quis vnquam vnicam diem totam duxit in sua delectacione iocundam quem in aliqua parte diei reatus consciencie vel impetus ire vel motus concupiscencie inde non turbauerit quem liuor inuidie vel ardor auaricie vel tumor superbie non vexauerit vel quem aliqua iactura vel offensa vel passio non commouerit.* [MS, leaf 89, back.]

[PART I.]

[No break in the MS.]

- ¶ In Surrye whilom dwelt a companye
 Of Chapmen riche and þer-to sad and trewe
 That wyde where sente here spicerie
 Cloþes of gold and Satyn riche of hewe . 137
 here chaffare was so thrifty and so newe
 That euery wight haþ deynte to chaffare
 With hem and eek to sellen hem here ware 140
- ¶ Now fil it þat þe maistres of þat sort
 han schapen hem to Rome for to wende
 Were it fo chapmanhode or for disport
 Non oþer message wolde þey þider sende 144
 But comen hemself to Rome þis is þe ende
 And in swich place as þought hem auantage
 ffor here entente þei take here herbergage 147
- Soiorned han þise marchantez in þat toun [leaf 76]
 A certein tyme as felle to hire plesance
 But so felle þat þe excellent renoun
 Of þe Emperour doughter dame Custance 151
 Reported was with euery circumstance
 vnto þise Surrien marchantz in swich wise
 ffro day to day as I schal you deuyse/ 154
- ¶ This was þe comone voys of euery man
 Oure emperour of Rome god him see
 A doughter he haþ þat syn þe world bigan
 To rekne as wel hir goodnesse as beaute 158
 Nas neuer such anoþer as is sche
 I pray to god in honour hir sustene
 And wolde sche were of alle Europe þe queene 161

¶ In hire is heigh beaute wiþoute pride [Latin note, p. 133.]
 youþe wiþoute greenhod of folye
 To alle hire werkes vertu is hire guyde
 humblesse haþ slayn in hire al tyrannye 165
 Sche is a merour of alle curtesye
 hire herte is verray chambre of holynesse
 hire hand ministre of fredam for almesse 168

¶ And al þis voys is soþ as god is trewe
 But now to purpos lat vs turne again
 These marchantz han doon fraught here schippes newe
 And whan þay haue þis blisful mayde sain 172
 hom to Surrey beþ þei went agayn
 And don here needes as þey han don yore
 And lyuen in wele I can seye yow nomore 175

Now fil it þat þis marchantz stoden in grace
 Of him þat was þe Sowdon of Surrie
 ffor whan þei came from eny strange place
 he wolde of his benigne curtesie/ 179
 Make hem good chere and besily asprie
 Tythynges of sundy Remes for to leere
 The wondres þat þey mighte seen or heere 182

Amonges oþer þinges specially
 These marchantz han him told of Dame Custance [leaf 76, back]
 So gret noblesse in earnest ceriously
 That þis Sowdan haþ caught so gret/ plesance 186
 To han hire figure in his remembrance
 And alle his lust and alle his besy cure
 Was for to loue hire whil his lijf may dure 189

Parauenture in þilke large book
 Which þat þei cleped þe heuen write was
 Wiþ sterres whan þat he his birþe took
 That he for loue schulde han his deþ allas 193

ffor in þe sterres clerer þan is þe glas
 Is writen god wot / who so cowde it rede/
 The deþ of euery man wipouten drede 196

¶ In sterres many a wynter þer biforn
 Was write þe deth of Ector Achilles [Latin note, p. 133.]
 Of Pompe Iulius or þei were born
 The stryft of Thebes and of hercules/ 200
 Of Sampson Turnus and of Socrates
 The deth/ but mennes wittes ben so dulle
 That no wight can wel rede it atte fulle 203

This Sowdoñ for his priuey counseil sente
 And schortly of þis mater for to pace
 he haþ to hem declared his entente
 And seide hem certein but if he might haue grace 207
 To haue Custance wipinne a litel space
 he nas but ded and charged hem in hye
 To schapen for his lyf som remedye 210

¶ Diuerse men diuerse þinges seiden
 The argumentes casten vp and down
 Many a sotil resoñ forþ þey leyden
 They speken of Magique and abusioñ 214
 But fynally as in conclusioñ
 They can not seen in þat non auantage
 Ne in non oþer weye saf mariage 217

¶ Than saugh þey þer in such difficulte
 By way of resoñ for to speke al playn
 By cause þat þer was such diuersite [leaf 77]
 Bitwen here boþe lawes þat þei sayn 221
 They trowe þat no cristne prince wolde fain
 Wedde his child vnder oure lawes so sweete
 That vs was taught by mahoñ oure prophete 224

¶ And he answerde raþer þan I leese
 Custance I wol be cristned douteles
 I mot' ben hires I may non oþer cheese
 I pray 3ow holdeþ 3our argumentz in pees 228
 Saueþ my lif' and beþ nough't Recheles
 To geten hire þat' haþ my lif' in cure
 ffor in this woo I may not' longe endure 231

¶ What' nedep' grettere dilataciõ
 I seie by tretys and embassadrie/
 And by þe popes mediaciõ
 And alle þe chirche and alle þe chiualrie 235
 That' in distructiõ of' mawmattie
 And in ences of' cristes lawe deere
 They ben accorded so as 3e schal heere/ 238

¶ how þat' þe Sowdan and his Baronage
 And alle his lieges schold y-cristened be/
 And he schal han Custance in mariage
 And certein gold y not' what' quantite 242
 And herto founden sufficeant' seurte
 This same accord was sworn in either syde
 Now faire Custance almighty god þe gyde 245

Now wolde sommen waiten as I gesse/
 That' I schulde tellen al þe purueance
 That' þe Emperour of' his noblesse
 hath schapen for his doughter dame Custance 249
 Wel may men knowe þat' so gret' ordinafice
 May noman tellen in a litel clause
 As was arrayed for so heigh' a cause 252

¶ Bisschoppes ben schapen wiþ hire for to wende
 lordes ladies knightes of' renoun
 And oþer folk' ynowe þis is þe ende
 And notified is þurgh' out' þe touñ

[leaf 77, back]

That euery wight' wip gret' deuocioñ
 Scholde preye crist' þat' he þis mariage
 Resceyue in gree. and speede þis viage 259

¶ The day is come of' hir departyng'
 I sey þe woful lady¹ fatal is come [1 so]
 That' þer may be no lenger tarying'
 But' forþward þey hem dresen alle & some 263
 Custance þat' with sorw is al ouercome
 fful pale arist' and dresseþ hire to wende
 ffor wel sche seeth þer is non oþer ende 266

Allas what' wonder is it' þough sche wepte
 That' schal be sent' to strange nacioñ
 ffro freendes þat' so tendrely hire kepte
 And to be bounden vnder subiection 270
 Of' oon sche knoweth not' his condicioñ
 housbondes ben alle goode and han ben yore
 That' knowen wyfes I dar say 3ou namore 273

¶ ffader sche sayde þi wrecchede child Custaunce
 Thy yonge doughter fostred vp so softe
 And ye my mooder my souereigne plesañce
 Ouer alle þing' out' taken crist' a lofte 277
 Custance youre child hir recomandep ofte
 vnto your grace for I schal to Surrie
 Ne schal I neuer seen 3ou more with ye 280

Allas vnto þe Barbarie nacioñ
 I moste anon sippen it' is your wille
 But' crist' þat starf' for oure Redempcion
 So yeue me grace his hestes to fulfille 284
 I wrecche womman no fors þough I spille
 Wommen are born to thraldom and penance
 And to ben vnder mannes gouernance 287

- ¶ I trowe at Troye whan Purrus brak' þe walle
 Or ylion þat' brende Thebes þat' Citee
 Not' Rome for the harme thurgh hanybal
 That' Romayns haþ venquissed tymes þre 291
 Nas herde such tendre weeping' for pite [leaf 78]
 As in þe Chambre for hire departyng'
 But' forþ sche moot' wher so sche weepe or syng' 294
 [Latin note, p. 133.]
- ¶ O ferste moeuyng' cruel firmament'
 Wip þy diuinal sweigh that' crowdest' ay
 And hurlest' alle fro Est' to Occident'
 That' naturelly wolde holde anoþer way 298
 Thy crowdyng' sett' þe heuen in such array
 Atte bygynnyng' of' þis fiers viage
 That' cruel mars haþ slain þis mariage 301
- ¶ Infortunat' ascendent' tortuous
 Of' which þe lord is helples falle allas
 Out' of' his angle in to þe derkest' hous
 O. mars .o. atazir as in þis cas 305
 O fieble moone vnhappy been þy paas
 Thou knettest' þe þer þou nart' nought' receyued
 There þou were wel fro þens now art' þou weyued 308
- ¶ Imprudent' Emperour of' Rome allas
 Was þer no Philosophre in al þi toun
 Is no tyme bet' þan oþer in such caas
 Of' viage is þer non election 312
 Namly to folk' of' heigh condicioñ
 Nat' whan a roote is of' a burthe y-knowe
 Allas 3e ben to lewed or to slowe 315
- ¶ The schip is brought' þis woful faire mayde
 Solempnely wip euery circumstance
 Now Ihesu crist' be with 3ou alle sche sayde
 Ther nys nomore but' far wel faire Custance 319

Sche peyneþ hire to make good contynance
 And forþ I lete hire saile in þis manere
 And torne I wille again to my matiere 322

The mooder of þe Sowdon welle of vices
 Espied haþ hir sones pleyne entent
 how he wol lete his olde Sacrifices
 And right anon sche for hire counseil sent 326
 And þei ben come to knowe what sche ment
 And whan assembled was þis folk in feere [leaf 78, back]
 Sche sette hire doun and seide as ye schal heere 329

¶ lordes quop sche 3e knowen euerych on
 how þat my sone in poynt is for to lete
 The holy lawes of oure alkaron
 yeuen by goddes messenger Makomete 333
 But oon avow to grete god I hete
 The lyf schal rather out of my body sterte
 Or makometis lawe out of myn herte 336

What scholde vs tyden of þis newe lawe
 But þraldam to oure bodyes and penance
 And afterward in helle to ben drawe
 ffor we reneyed mahoñ oure creance 340
 But lordes wol ye maken assurance
 As I schal sein assentyng to my lore
 And I schal make vs sauf for eueremore 343

¶ They sworn and assenten euery man
 To lyue with hire and dye and by hire stonde
 And euerich in þe beste wise he can
 To strengþen hire schal alle his frendes fonde 347
 And sche haþ þis emprise take on honde
 Which 3e schal here þat I schal deuyse
 And to hem alle sche spak in þis wise 350

¶ We schulle first feyne vs cristendom to take/
 Cold water schal not greue vs but a lite
 And I schal swich a reuel and feste maken
 That as I trowe I schal þe soudon quite 354
 ffor þough his wijf be cristened neuer so white
 Sche schal haue neede to waissche a-way þe reede
 Though sche a ffonte ful of water wip hire leede/ 357

¶ O soudanesse roote of Iniquite
 Virago þou Semyram þe secounde
 O. serpent vnder femeninete
 lik to þe serpent deepe in helle y-bounde 361
 O feyned womman al þat may confounde
 Vertu and Innocence þorgh þy malice
 Is bredd in þe as nest of euery vice [leaf 79]

¶ O Sathan envious syn þilke day
 That þou were chased fro oure heritage
 Wel knewestow to wommen þe olde way
 Thow madest Eua to bringen in seruage 368
 Thow wilt fordon cristene mariage
 Thin Instrument so weylowey þe while
 Makest þou of wommen whan þou wilt begile 371

¶ This Sowdanesse whom I þus blame and warie
 leet priuely hire counseil gon here way
 What schulde I in þis tale lenger tarye
 Sche rideth to þe Sowdan on a day 375
 And seide him þat sche wolde reneye hir lay
 And cristendom of prestes handes fonge
 Repentyng sche heþene was so longe 378

¶ Besekyng him to doon hire þat honour
 That sche most han þe cristne folk to feste
 To plesen hem I wol do my labour
 The Sowdan seith I wil don at your heste 382

And knelyng^t þanketh hire of^t þat^t requeste
 So glad he was he nyste what^t to seye
 Sche kiste hir sone and hom sche goþ hir weye 385

[PART II.]

¶ Arryued been þise cristene folk^t to londe
 In Surrie with a gret^t solempne route
 And hastiliche þis sowdan sent^t his sonde
 first^t to his mooder and alle þe regne aboute 389
 And saide his wijf^t was come out^t of^t doute
 And preyde hir for to ryde agein þe queene
 The honour of^t his regne to susteene 392

¶ Gret^t was þe prees and riche was þarray
 Of^t Surriens and Ramains met^t y feere
 The mooder of^t þe Soudan riche and gay
 Receyued hire with also glad a cheere 396
 As any mooder might^t hir doughter deere
 And to þe nexte Citee þer bisyde
 A softe paas solempnely þei ryde 399

¶ Naught^t trowe I þe tryumphe of^t Iulius [leaf 79, back]
 Of^t which þat^t lukan makeþ such a bost^t
 Was riallere ne more curious
 Than was thassemble of^t þis blisful oost^t 403
 But^t þis scorpion this wikkede goost^t
 The Sowdanesse for alle hir flateringe
 Caste vnder þis ful mortally to styngre 406

¶ The Sowdan comeþ himself^t sone after þis
 So really that^t wonder is to telle
 he welcomeþ hire with alle ioye and blis
 And þus in merthe and Ioye I lete hem dwelle 410

The fruyt of þis matiere þat I telle
 Whan tyme come men þought it for þe best
 That Reuel stynte and men gon to here Rest 413

¶ The tyme com þis olde Sowdanesse
 Ordeyned haþ þis feeste of which I tolde
 And to þe feste cristene folk hem dresse
 In general boþe zonge and olde 417
 here may men feste and rialte biholde
 And deyntees mo þan I can 3ou deuyse
 But all to deere þei bought it ar þey ryse 420

¶ O sodein woo þat euer art Successour [Latin note, p. 133.]
 To worldly blysse spreynd is with bitternesse
 The ende of þe ioye of oure worldly laboure
 Wo occupieth þe fyn of oure gladnesse 424
 herk þis counseille for þi sikernesse
 vpon þi glade day haue in thy mynde
 The vnwar wo or harm þat comth behynde 427

ffor schortly for to tellen at oo word
 The Sowdan and þe cristene euerychone
 Ben al to-hewe and stiked atte bord
 But it were oonly dame Custance allone 431
 This olde Sowdanesse cursede crone
 haþ with hire freendes doon þis cursede dede
 ffor sche hir self wolde alle þe contre lede 434

¶ Ne þer nas Surrian non þat was conuerted
 That of þe conseil of þe Sowdan wot [leaf 80]
 That he nas al to-hewe or he asterted
 And circumstance han þei take anon foot hoot 438
 And in a Schippe al steereles god woot
 Thay han hire sette and bidden hire lerne sayle
 Out of Surrie agaynward to ytaile 441

¶ A certein tresour þat sche þider ladde
 And soþ to sain vitaile gret plente
 They han hire yeuen and cloþes eek sche hadde
 And forþ sche saileþ in þe Salte see 445
 O my Custance ful of benignite
 O emperoures yonge doughter deere
 he þat is lord ouer fortune be þy steere 448

¶ Sche blisseþ & with ful pitous vois
 vnto þe croys of crist þus seyde sche
 O cler o welful auter holy croys
 Rede of þi lambes blood ful of pite 452
 That wisshe þe world fro þe olde iniquite
 Me fro þe feend and fro his clawes keepe
 That day þat I schal drenchen in þe deepe 455

¶ victorious tree proteccion of trewe
 That oonly worþi were for to bere
 The king of heuene with his woundes newe
 The white lambe þat hurt was with a spere 459
 fleemer of feendes out of him and here
 On whych þi lymes feithfully entenden
 Me keepe and yef me might my lijf tamenden 462

¶ yeeres and dayes fleet þis creature
 Thurgh out þe see of grece vnto þe strayte
 Of Marrok as it was hire auenture
 O many a sory meel now may sche bayte 466
 After hire deþ fulofte may sche wayte
 Or þat þe wilde wawes wil hir dryue
 vnto þe place þer sche schal arryue 469

¶ Men mighten [aske] whi sche nas nat slayn
 Eke atte feste who might hir body saue
 I answeere to þat demande agayn
 he saued daniel in þe horrible caue 473

[leaf 80, back]

Ther euery wight^t saue he maister or knaue
 Was wiþ þe leon frete or asterte
 No wight^t but^t god þat^t he bar in his herte 476

¶ God list^t to schewe his wonderful myracle
 In hire . for sche scholde seen his mighty werkes
 Crist^t which þat^t is to euery harm triacle
 By certein menes oft^t as knowen clerkes 480
 Doþ þing^t for certein ende þat^t ful derk^t is
 To mannes wit^t þat^t for oure ignorance
 Ne konne nought^t knowe his prudent^t purueance 483

¶ Now siþ sche was not^t atte feste y-slawe
 Who kept^t hir fro þe drenching^t in þe see
 Who kepte Ionas in þe fisses mawe
 Til he was spouted vp at Nyniue 487
 Wel may men knowe it^t was no wight^t but^t he
 That^t kepte pepul ebraik^t from here drenchyng^t
 With drye feet^t þurgh out^t þe see passyng^t 490

¶ Who bad þe foure spiritz of^t tempest^t
 That^t power han boþe to annoyen lond and see
 Boþe north and south and also west^t and est^t
 Anoyeþ neyþer see ne lond ne tree 494
 Sonly þe comandour of^t þat^t was he
 That^t fro þe tempest^t ay þis womman kepte
 As wel whan sche wook^t as whan sche slepte 497

¶ Wher might^t þis womman mete and drynke haue
 Three 3eer and moore how lasteþ hire vitaille
 Who fedde þe Egipcien marie in the Caue
 Or in desert^t no wight^t but^t crist^t sanz faille 501
 v. þousand folk^t it was a gret meruaille
 With loues fyue and fisses tuo to feede
 God sent^t his foysoñ at^t hire grete neede 504

¶ Sche driueþ forþ in to oure Occean
 þurghout' oure wilde see til atte last'
 vnder an hold þat' nempnen I ne can
 ffor in Northumburland þe wave hir cast' [leaf 81]
 And in þe sond hir schippe stiked so fast'
 That' þennes wold it' nought' of' alle a tyde
 The wille of' crist' was þat' sche scholde abyde 511

¶ The Constable of' þe castelle doun is fare
 To seen þis wrak' and alle þe schippe he sought'
 And fond þis wery womman ful of' care
 he fond also þe tresow þat' sche brought' 515
 In hire langage mercy sche bisought'
 The lyf' out' of' hir body for to twynne
 hire to deliuere of' wo þat' sche was Inne 518

¶ A maner latyn corrupt' was hire speche
 But' algates þer by was sche vnderstonde
 The constable whan him list' no lengere seche
 This woful womman brought' he to þe londe 522
 Sche kneeleth doun and þankeþ goddes sonde
 But' what' sche was sche wolde no man seye
 ffor foul ne fair þough þat' sche scholde deye 525

¶ Sche seyde sche was so mased in þe see/
 That' sche foryat' hire mynde by hire troupe
 The constable of' hire hap' so gret' pite
 And eek' his wyf' þat' þei weepen for roupe 529
 Sche was so diligent' wiþouten sloupe
 To serue and plese euerich in þat' place
 That' alle hire louen þat' loken on hire face 532

¶ The constable and dame hermengheld his wif'
 Were payens and þat' contray euery where
 But' hermyngeld loued hir right' as hire lijf'
 And Custance hap' so longe soiorned þere 536

In orisons wiþ many a bitter teere
 Til Ihesu haþ conuerted þurgh his *grace*
 Dame hermyngeld constablesse of þilke place 539

¶ In alle þat' land durste no cristene route
 Alle cristene folk' ben fled from þat' contre
 Thurgh payens þat' conquereden heer aboute
 The plages of þe north by land & see 543
 To wales fledde þe *cristianite*/ [leaf {1, back}]
 Of olde britoñs dwellyng in þis Isle/
 There was hire refut' / for þe meene while 546

¶ But' yit' nas neuer cristene britoñs so exiled
 That' þer nas somme in here *pru*yte
 honourede crist' and hethen folk' bygiled
 And neygh þe castelle swich þer dwelden þre 550
 That' oon of' hem was blynd and might' not' se
 But' it' were wiþ þilk' eyen of' his mynde
 With whiche men seen after þat' þai ben blynde 553

¶ Bright' was þe sonne as in þat' Someres day
 ffor which þe Constable and his wyf' also
 And Custance han y-take þe righte way
 Toward þe see a forlong' weye or two 557
 To pleyen and to Romen to and fro
 And in here walk' þre blynde men þey mette
 Crokede and olde with fast' eyen y-schette 560

¶ In the name of' crist' criede þis blynde bretoñ
 dame hermyngild' yeue me sight' agayn
 This lady wax affrayed of' þe soun
 lyst' þat' hir housbond shortly for to sein 564
 Wolde hire for ihesu cristes loue haue slain
 Til Custance made hire bold and made hire werche
 The wille of' crist' as daughter of' his chereh 567

¶ The Constable wax abaissed of þat sight
 And sayde what amounteþ al þis fare
 Custance answerde sire it is cristes might
 That helpeþ folk out of þe feendes snare 571
 And so ferforth sche gan oure lay declare
 That sche þe Constable or þat it was eue
 Conuerteþ and on cryst made him bileue 574

¶ This Constable was noþing lord of þis place
 Of which I speke þere he Custance fond
 But kepte it strongly many a wynter space
 vnder .alla. kyng of all Northumberlond 578
 þat was ful wys and worþy of his hond
 Agayn þe Scottes as men may wel heere [leaf 82]
 But torne I wil again to my mateere / 581

¶ Sathan þat euer vs wayteth to begile
 Saugh of Custance al hire perfection
 And cast anon how he might quite her while
 And made a yong knight þat dwelte in þe toun 585
 loue hire so hoot of fowl affection
 That verrailly him þought he schulde spill
 But he of hire might ones haue his wille 588

¶ he woweth hire but it auaileþ nought
 Sche wolde do no synne by no weye
 And for dispit he compassed in his þought
 To make hir on schameful deþ to deye 592
 he wayteþ whan þe Constable was aweye
 And priuily vpon a night he crept
 In hermyngildes chambre whil sche slept 595

¶ Wery for-waked in his orisons
 Slepeth Custance and hermenghild also
 This knight þurgh Sathanas temptacion
 Al softely is to þe bedde I-go 599

And kutte þe þrote of hermengild a tuo
 And leyde þe bloody knyft by dame Custance
 And wente his wey þer god yeue him meschance 602

¶ Sone after comth þis constable hom a gayn
 And eek' Alla þat' king' was of þat' lond
 And saugh his wyf' dispitousliche slain
 ffor which ful ofte he wepte and wrong' his hond 606
 And in þe bed þe bloody knyft' he fond
 By dame Custance allas what' might' sche seye
 ffo verray woo hir witte was alle aweye 609

¶ To king' Alla was told al þis meschance
 And eek' þe tyme and wher and in what' wise
 That' in a schip was founde þis Custance
 As heer biforn 3e han herd eer deuisse 613
 The kinges herte of' pite gan agrise
 Whan he seiþ so benigne a creature
 ffalle in disese and in mysaventure [leaf 82, back]

¶ ffor as þe lomb toward his deth is brought'
 So stant' þis Innocent' bifore þe king'
 This false knight' þat' haþ þis traysoñ wrought'
 Bereþ hire an hand þat' sche haþ do þis þing' 620
 But' napeles þer was gret' mornyng'
 Among' þe poeple and seye þay can not' gesse
 That' sche hadde don so gret' a wickednesse 623

¶ ffor þey han sein hir euer so vertuous
 And louyng' hermynghild right' as hire lif'
 Of' þis bar witnessse euerich in þat' hous
 Sauf' he þat' hermegild slough wiþ his knif' 627
 This gentil king' haþ caught' a gret' motyf'
 Of' þis witnessse and þought' he wolde enquere
 Deppere in þis cas a trouthe for to lere 630

¶ Allas Custance þou nast' no champion
 Ne fighte canst' þou nought' so weyloway
 But' he þat' for oure redempcion
 And bond Sathan and lith yet' þer he lay 634
 So be þy stronge champion þis day
 ffor but' vpon þe miracle kithe
 Wipouten gilt' þou schalt' ben slayn as swithe 637

¶ Sche sitte hir doun on knees and þus sche sayde
 Immortal god þat' sauedest' Susanne
 ffro false blame and þou merciful mayde
 Marie I mene doughter to seint' Anne 641
 Biforn whos child aungelis synge Osanne
 If' I be gilteles of' þis felonie
 My socour be for elles schalt' I dye 644

¶ I haue ye not' sein som tyme a pale face/
 Among' a prees of' him þat' hap' be lad
 Toward his deth wher as him get' no grace/
 And swich a colour in his face hap' had 648
 Men mighte knowe his face þat' was bystad
 Amonges alle þe faces in þat' route
 So stant' Custance and loketh hire aboute 651

¶ O queenes lyuyng in prosperite [leaf 83]
 Duchesses and 3e ladies euerichone
 haue som routhe on hir aduersite
 An emperoures doughter stant' allone 655
 Sche hap' no wight' to whom to make hir moone
 O blood real þat' stondest' in þis drede/
 ffer been þi freendes at' þy grete neede 658

¶ This alla king' hap' such compassion
 As gentil herte is fulfild of' pite
 That' from his eyhen ran þe water doñ
 Now hastilich do fecche a book' quod he 662

And if þis knight wol swere how þat sche
 This womman slough ȝit wol we vs auyse /
 Whom þat we wolde þat schal be oure Iustise 665

¶ A briton book y-writen with euangiles
 Was fette and on þis book he swor anon
 Sche giltif was in þe mene whiles
 An hand him smot vpon þe nekke bon 669
 That doun he felle at ones as a stoon
 And boþe his eyen Brust out of his face/
 In sight of euery body in þat place 672

¶ A vois was herd in general audience
 And seyde þou hast disclandred gilteles
 The doughter of holy chirche in heigh presence
 Thus hast þou doon and ȝet I moot holde my pees 676
 Of þis merueyle agast was alle þe prees
 As m[a]zed folk þei stoden euerychone
 ffor drede of wreche saue Custance allone 679

Gret was þe drede and eek þe repentance
 Of hem þat hadden wrong suspencion
 vpon þis seely Innocent Custance
 And for þis miracle in conclusiõ 683
 And by Custance mediacion
 The king and many anoper in þat place
 Conuerted was þanked be goddes grace 686

¶ This false knight was slain for his vntrouthe
 By Iuggement of. alla. hastily [leaf 83, back]
 And yet Custance hap of his deth gret rouþe
 And after þis ihesus¹ of his mercy [1 MS ihc]
 Made Alla wedden ful solempnely
 This holy mayden þat is so bright and scheene
 And þus hap Crist made Custance a queene 693

¶ But who was woful if I schul nat' lye
 Of þis wedding' but' Donegilde and nomo
 The kinges mooder ful of tyrannye
 hir þought' hir cursed herte barst/ a two 697
 Sche wolde nought' hir sone hadde don so
 hir þought' a despit' þat' he schulde take
 So strange a creature vnto his make 700

¶ Me list' nouzt' of þe chaf' ne of þe stre
 Make so long' a tale as of þe corn
 What' schulde I tellen of þe realte
 Of mariage or which cours goþ biforn 704
 Who bloweþ in a trompe or in an horn
 The fruyt' of euery tale is for to seie/
 Thei ete and drynke and daunce and synge and pleye 707

They gon to bedde as it was skile and right'
 ffor þough þat' wyfes ben ful holy þinges
 They moste take a pacience a night'
 Such manere necessaries as ben plesynges 711
 To folk' þat' han y-wedded hem wiþ rynges
 And leye a litel here holynesse asyde
 As for þe time it' may non oþer betyde 714

¶ On hire he gat' a knaue child anon
 And to a bisshope and his counseil eeke
 he took' his wijf' to kepe whan he is goon
 To Scotland ward his fomen for to seeke 718
 Now faire Custance þat' is so humble and meeke
 So longe is gon wiþ childe til þat' stille
 Sche halt' hir chambre abydyng' at' cristes wille 721

¶ The tyme is come a knaue child sche beer
 Mauricius atte font' ston þei him calle
 This Constable doþ forþ come a messagere [leaf 84]
 And wrot' to his king' þat' cleped was alle. 725

how þat þis blisful tyding^t is bifalle
 And oþer tydynges spedful for to seye
 he takeþ þe lettre and forth he goþ his weye 728

¶ This messenger to don his auantage/
 vnto þe kinges moder rideþ swiþe
 And salueth hire ful faire in his langage
 Ma dame quop he 3e may be glad and bliþe 732
 And thanke god an hundred þousand siþe
 My lady queen haþ child wiþouten doute
 To Ioye and blisse of^t alle þis regne aboute 735

¶ lo here þe lettres seled of^t þis þing^t
 That I mot^t bere with al þe haste I may
 If^t ye wole aught^t vnto your sone þe king^t
 I am your *seruañt* boþe night^t and day 739
 Dongyld answerd as now at^t þis tyme nay
 But^t heer al night^t I wole þou take þi rest^t
 Tomorwe wil I seie what^t me lest^t 742

¶ This messenger drank^t sadly ale and wyn
 And stolen weren his *lettres* priuily
 Out^t of^t his box whil he sleep as a swyn
 And counterfeted was ful subtilly 746
 Anoþer *lettre* wrought^t ful synfully
 vnto þe king^t direct^t of^t þis matiere
 ffro his Conestable as 3e schal after heere 749

The lettre spak^t þe queen deliuered was
 Of^t so horrible a feendlich creature
 That^t in þe Castelle non so hardy was
 That^t ony while dorste þerinne endure 753
 The mooder was an elf^t by auenture
 ycome by charmes or by sorcerie
 And euery wight^t hateþ hire companye 756

Wo was þis king^t whan he þis *lettre* hadde seyn
 But^t to no wight^t he tolde his sorwes sore
 But^t of^t his oughne hond he wrot ageyn
 Welcome þe sonde of^t crist^t for eueremore [leaf 84, back]
 To me þat^t am now lerned in his lore
 lord welcome be þi lust^t and þi plesance
 My lust^t is put^t al in þin ordinance 763

¶ kepeth þis child al be it^t foul or faire
 And eek^t my wif^t vnto myn hom comyng^t
 Crist^t whan him list^t may sende me an haire
 More agreable þan þis is to my liking^t 767
 This *lettre* he seleþ priuily wepyng^t
 Which to þe messenger was take sone
 And forth he goþ þer is nomore to doone 770

¶ O messenger fulfild of^t dronkenesse / [Latin note, p. 133.]
 Strong^t is þi breþ þi lymes faltren ay
 And þou biwreyest^t alle sikernesse /
 Thy mynde is lorn þou iangelest^t as a Iay 774
 Thy face is torned in a newe aray
 Ther dronkenesse regneþ in ony route
 Ther nys no conseil hid wiþouten doute 777

¶ O donegild I haue non englišh digne
 vnto þy malice and þy tyrannye
 And þefore to þe feend I þe resigne /
 lat^t him enditen of^t þi traiterie / 781
 ffy mannyssh fy o nay by god I lye
 ffy feendlich spirit^t for I dar wel telle
 Though þou here walke þy spirit^t is in helle / 784

¶ This messenger comþ fro þe king^t agayn
 And at^t þe kinges moodres court^t he light^t
 And sche was of^t þis messenger ful fain
 And plesed him in al þat^t euer sche might^t 788

he drank' and wel his gerdel vnderpight'
 he sleepeþ and he snortep¹ in his gyse [1 MS fn . . .]
 Al night' til þe sonne gan arise 791

¶ Eft' were his lettres stolen euerich on
 And countrefeted *lettres* in þis wise
 The king' comandeþ his constable anon
 vp peyne of' hangyng' on a heih Iuyse 795
 That' he ne schulde suffre in no wise/ [leaf 85]
 Custance in with his Regne for tabide
 Thre dayes and a quarter of' a tyde 798

¶ But' in þe same schip as he hire fond
 hire and hire zonge sone and alle hir gere
 he schulde putte and croude fro þe londe
 And charge hire þat' sche neuer eft' come þere 802
 O my Custance wel may þi goost' haue feere/
 And sleping' in þi drem ben in penaunce/
 Whan Donegild caste al þis ordinance 805

¶ This messenger on morwe whan he wook'
 Vnto þe castel halt' þe nexte way
 And to þe Constable he þe *lettre* took'
 And whan þat' he þis pitous *lettre* say 809
 fful ofte he seyde allas and weylaway

¶ lord crist' *quod* he how may þis *lettre* endure
 So ful of' synne is many a creature 812

¶ O mighty god if' þat' it' be þi wille
 Sith þou art' rightful Iuge how may it' be
 That' þou wolt' suffren Innocentz to spille
 And wikke folk' regnen in prosperite 816

¶ O goode Custance allas so wo is me
 That' I moot' be þi tormentour or deye
 On schames deþ þer is non oþer weye 819

¶ Wepen boþe 3onge and olde in al þat place
 Whan þat þe king þis cursede *lettre* sente
 And Custance with a dedly pale face
 The ferþe day toward hir schip sche wente 823
 But napeles sche takeþ in good entente
 The wille of crist and knelyng in þe stronde
 Sche seyde lord ay welcome be þi sonde 826

he þat me kepte fro þe false blame
 Whil I was on þe lond amonges yow /
 he kan me kepe from harm and eek fro schame
 In salte see al þough I se not how 830
 As strong as euer he was he is right now /
 In him trust I and in his mooder deere [leaf 85, back]
 That is to me my sail and eek my steere 833

hir litel child lay weepynge in hire arm
 And knelyng pitously to him sche seide
 Pees litel sone I wol do þe non harm
 Wiþ þat hir couerchef of hir heed sche breyde 837
 And ouer his litel eyzen sche it leyde/
 And in hir arm sche lulleth it ful faste /
 And in to heuen hir yhen vp sche caste 840

¶ Moder *quod* sche and mayde bright marie
 Soth is þat þurgh wommannes eggement
 Mankynde was lorn and dampned ay to deye
 ffor which þi child was on a croys y-rent 844
 Thy blisful eighen saugh al his torment
 Than is þer no comparison bitwene
 Thy wo and any wo man may sustene 847

¶ Thou saugh þi sone y-slayn biforn þin eyen
 And 3it now lyueþ my litel child *par fay*
 Now lady bright to whom alle woful cryen
 Thow glorie of wommanhod þou faire may 851

Thou hauen of^t refut^t brighte sterre of^t day
 Rewe on my child þat^t of^t þi gentillesse
 Rewest^t on euery rewful in distresse 854

¶ O litel child allas what^t is þi gilt^t
 That^t neuer wroughtest^t synne as ȝit^t par de
 Why wil þin harde fader haue þe spilt^t
 O mercy deere Conestable quod sche 858
 As lat^t my litel child dwelle heer with^h þe
 And if^t þou darst^t nought^t sauē him for blame
 So kisse him ones in his fadres name 861

¶ Ther with sche lokeþ bakward to þe lond
 And sayde farewel housbonde routheles
 And vp sche rist^t and walketh doun þe stronde
 Toward þe schip hir folweþ alle þe prees 865
 And euer sche preieþ hir child to holde his pees
 And takeþ hire leeuē and with an holy entent^t
 Sche blisseþ hire and in to schip sche wente [leaf 86]

vitailled was þe schip it^t is no drede
 habundauntly for hire ful longe space
 And oþer necessaries þat^t scholden neede
 Sche hadde ynough heried be goddes grace 872
 ffor wynd and weder almighty god purchase
 And brynge hir home I can no better sey
 But^t in þe see sche dryueþ forþ hir wey 875

[PART III.]

Alla þe king^t comþ hom sone after þis /
 vnto his castelle of^t þe which I tolde
 And axeþ wher his wyf^t and his child is
 The Constable gan aboute his herte colde 879

And pleynly al þe maner he him tolde
 As ye han herd I can telle it' no better
 And scheweth þe king' his seal and his lettre 882

And seyde lord as ȝe comaunded me
 vp peyne of' deth so haue I don certain
 This messenger tormented was til he
 Moste biknowen and tellen plat' and plein 886
 ffrom night' to night' in what' place he hadde leyn
 And þus by witt' and subtil enqueryng'
 ymaged was by whom þis harm gan spring' 889

¶ The hond was knowe þat' þe *lettre* wrot'
 And alle þe venym of' þe cursed dede
 But' in what' wise certainly I not'
 The effect' is þis þat' alla out' of' drede 893
 his mooder slough þat' many men pleynly reede
 ffor þat' sche traitour was to hire ligeance /
 Thus endeþ olde Donegild wiþ meschance 896

The sorwe þat' þis Alla night' and day
 Makeþ for his wyf' and for his child
 Ther is no tonge þat' it' telle may
 But' now wol I vnto Custance g 900
 That' fleetep in þe see in peyne and wo
 .v. yeer and more as likede cristes sonde
 Ar þat' hire schip approched vnto londe 903

¶ Vnder an heþen castelle atte laste [leaf 86, back]
 Of' which þe name in my text' nouȝt' I fynde
 Custance and eek' hir childe þe see vp caste
 Almighty god þat' saueþ al mankynde 907
 haue on Custance and hir child som mynde
 That' fallen is in hethene hond eft' sone
 In poynt' to spille as I schal telle yow soone 910

Doun fro þe Castelle comþ þer many a wighþ
 To gawren on þis schip and on Custañce
 But schortly fro þe castel on a night
 The lordes styward god yeue him meschance 914
 A theef þat hadde renyed oure creance /
 Com in to schip allone and seide he scholde
 hir lemman be wher so sche wolde or nolde/ 917

¶ Wo was þis wrecchede womman þo bigon
 hir child cryede and sche cried pitously
 But blisful marie halp hir right anoon
 ffor with hir strogelyn wel and mightily 921
 The theef fel ouer bord al sodeinly
 And in þe see he dreynte for vengance
 And þus hap crist / vnwemmed kept Custance 924

O foule lust of luxurie lo þin ende [Latin note, p. 133.]
 Nought / oonly þat þou fayntest mannes mynde
 But verreyly þou wolt his body schende
 The ende of þi werk or of þi lustes blynde 928
 Is compleynyng how many oon may men fynde
 That nought for werk somtyme but for þentent
 To don þis synne ben eyþer slayn or schent 931

¶ how may þis weyke womman han þe strengþe
 hire to defende ageyn þis renegat
 O. golyas vnmesurable of lengþe
 how mighte Dauid make þe so mat 935
 So yonge and of armure so desolat
 how dorst he loke vpon þi dredful face
 Wel may men sen it was but goddes grace 938

Who yaf Iudith corage or hardynesse
 To slen him Olefernus in his tent [leaf 87]
 And to delyueren out of wrecchednesse
 The poeple of god. I sey for þis entent 942

þat' right' as god spirit' and vigor sent'
 To hem and saued hem out' of meschance
 So sent' he might' and vigor to Custance 945

fforþ goþ hir schip forþ on þe narwe mouth
 Of Iubaltar and Septe dryuyng' ay
 Somtyme west' and som tyme north and south
 And som tyme est' ful many a very day 949
 Til cristes mooder blissed be sche ay
 haþ schapen þurgh hir endeles goodnesse
 To make an ende of' alle hir heuynesse 952

¶ Now lat' vs stynte of' Custance but a þrowe
 And speke we of' þe Romeyn Emperour
 That' out' of' Surrie haþ þe lettres knowe
 The slaughtere of' cristene folk' and deshonour 956
 Don to his doughter by a fals traytour
 I mene þe cusede wickede Sowdonesse
 That' at' þe feste let' slen boþe more and lesse 959

¶ ffor which þis Emperour haþ sent' anon
 his senatour wiþ real ordinance
 And oþer lordes god wot' many on
 On Surriens to taken his vengauce 963
 They brennen sleen and bringen hem to meschānce
 fful many a day but' schortly þis is þende
 homward to Rome þei schapen hem to wende 966

This Senatour repaireth with victorie
 To Romeward saylinge really
 And mette þe schip dryuyng' as seiþ þe storie
 In which Custance sitte ful pitously 970
 No þing' ne knew he what' sche was ne why
 Sche was in swich aray ne sche nyl seye
 Of' hire astate þough sche scholde deye 973

he bringeþ hire to Rome and to his wijf
 he yaf hire and hire zonge sone also
 And wijþ þe Senatour sche ladde hir lyf [leaf 87, back]
 Thus kan oure lady bringen out of woo 977
 Woful Custance and many anoþer mo
 And long tyme dwelled sche in þat place
 In holy werkes euere as was hir grace 980

¶ The Senatoures wijf hir aunte was
 But for al þat sche knew hir neuer þe more
 I wil no lenger tarien in þis caas
 But to king Alla which I spak of yore 984
 That for his wyf wepeþ and sikeþ sore /
 I wol retorne and lete I wil Custance
 vnder þe Cenatoures gouernance / 987

¶ kyng Alla which þat hadde his moder slayn
 vpon a day fil in such repentance
 That if I shortly tellen schal and playn
 To Rome he comeþ to receyuen his penance 991
 And put him in þe popes ordinance
 In heigh and low and Ihesu crist besoughte
 fforyeue his wikkede werkes þat he wroughte 994

¶ The fame ano þurgh Rome toun is born
 how Alla king schal comen in pilgrinage
 By herberious þat wenten him biforn
 ffor which þe Senatour as was vsage 998
 Rood him agayn and many of his lynage
 As wel to schewen his hie magnificence
 As to don any king a reuerence 1001

¶ Gret cheere doth þis noble Senatour
 To king Alla and he to him also
 Euerich of hem doþ oþer gret honour
 And so bifille þat in a day or tuo 1005

This Senatour is to king^t alla go
 To feeste and schortly if^t I schal not^t lye
 Custance sone is in his companye / 1008

¶ Som men wolde seyn atte requeste of^t Custance
 This Senatour haþ lad þis child to feste
 I may not^t tellen euerich circumstance /
 Be as be may þer was he atte leste [leaf 88]
 But^t soþ is þis þat^t at his moodres heste
 Byforn Alla duryng^t þe metes space
 The child stood loking^t in þe kinges face 1015

This alla king^t haþ of^t þe child gret^t wonder
 And to þe Senatour he sayde anon
 Whos is þat^t faire child þat^t stondeþ yonder
 I not^t quod he by god and by seint^t Iohn 1019
 A mooder he haþ but^t fader haþ he non
 That^t I of^t woot^t and schortly in a stounde /
 he tolde alla how þat þis child was founde 1022

¶ But god wot^t quod þis Senatour also
 So vertuous a lyuere in my lyf^t
 Ne saugh I neuer as sche ne herde of^t mo
 Of worldly wommen mayde ne of^t wijf^t 1026
 I dar wel sayn sche hadde leuer a knyf^t
 Thurghout^t hire brest^t þan ben a womman wikke
 Ther is noman kowde bringe hire to þat^t prikke 1029

Now was þis child as lik^t vnto Custance /
 As possible as is a creature to be
 This alla haþ þe face in remembrance
 Of dame Custance and þer on mused he 1033
 If^t þat^t þe childes moder were aught^t sche /
 That^t is his wyf^t and priuily he sighte
 And spedde him fro þe table þat^t he mighte 1036

¶ Par fay he þought þe fantome is in myn hed
 I oughte demen of skilful Iuggement
 That in þe salte see my wyf is deed
 And aftirward he made his argument 1040
 What wot I if þat crist hap hider sent
 My wyf by see as wel as he hir sente
 To my contre fro þennes þat sche wente 1043

¶ And after non hom with þe Senatour
 Gop alla for to seen þis wonder chaunce
 This Senatour doþ alla gret honour
 And hastily he sente after Custance 1047
 But trusteþ wel hire luste nought to daunce [leaf 88, back]
 Whan þat sche wiste wherfore was þat sonde
 Vnneþe vppon hire feet sche mighte stonde / 1050

¶ Whan alla saugh his wyf faire he hire grette /
 And wepte þat it was reuþe for to se
 ffor atte ferste look he on hire sette /
 he knew wel verrelly þat it was sche / 1054
 and for sorwe as domb stant as a tre
 So was hir herte schet in hire distresse
 Whan sche remembered his vnkyndenesse / 1057

¶ Twies sche swowneþ in his owne sight
 he wepte and him excuseth pitously
 Now god quod he and his halwes bright
 So wisly on my saule as haue mercy 1061
 That of youre harm as gilteles am I
 As is Maurice my sone so lik 3oure face
 Elles the feende me fecche out of þis place / 1064

¶ longe was þe sobbyng and þe bittre peyne /
 Or þat here wofulle hertes mighte cesse /
 Gret was þe pite for to heere hem pleyne /
 þurgh whiche pleyntes gan hire wo encesse / 1068

I pray 3ou alle my labour to relese
 I may not' tellen hir wo vntil to morwe
 I am so very for to speke of' hire sorwe 1071

¶ But finally whan þat' þe soþe is wist'
 That' Alla gilteles was of' hire woo /
 I trowe an hundred tymes ben þei kiste
 And such a blisse is þer betwixe hem tuo 1075
 That' saue þe ioye þat' lasteth eueremo
 Ther is non lik' þat' ony creature
 haþ seyn or schal whil þe world may dure 1078

¶ Tho preyed sche hire housbonde mekely
 In relief' of' hir longe pitous pyne
 That' he wolde preye hire fader specially
 That' of' his mageste he wolde enclyne 1082
 To fouche sauf' som day with him to dyne
 Sche preyde him eek' he scholde by no weye [leaf 89]
 vnto hir fader no word of' hire seye 1085

¶ Some men wolde sein how þat' þe child Maurice
 Doþ þis message vntil þis Emperour
 But' as I gesse Alla was nought' so nyce
 To him þat' was of' so souereigne honour 1089
 As he þat' is of' cristene folk' þe flour
 Sent' eny child but it is bet' to deme
 he went' himself' and so it may wel seme 1092

¶ This Emperour hath graunted gentily
 To come to dyner as he him bysought'
 And wel redy he lokede bisily
 vpon þis child and on his doughter þought'
 Alla goþ to his In and as him ought'
 Arrayed for þis feste in euery wise 1096
 As ferforth as his konnyng' may suffise 1099

¶ The morwe com and alla gan him dresse
 And eek^t his wyf^t þis Emperour to meete
 And forþ þey ryde in ioie and in gladnesse /
 And whan sche seigh hir fader in þe strete 1103
 Sche light^t a doun and falleþ him to feet
 ffader *quod* sche youre 3onge child Custance
 Is now ful clene out^t of^t 3oure remembrance 1106

¶ I am 3oure doughter Custance *quod* sche
 That whilom ye sent vnto Surrye
 I am I fader þat^t in þe salte see
 Was putte allone and dampned for to dye 1110
 Now goode fader mercy to you I crye
 Send me nomore vnto non hethenesse
 But^t þonk^t my lord heer of^t his kyndenesse 1113

¶ Who can þe pitous Ioye tellen al
 Bitwexe hem þre syn þey ben þus y-mette
 But^t of^t my tale make an ende I schal
 The day goþ faste I wol no lenger lette 1117
 This glad folk^t to dyner þey hem sette
 In ioie and blisse at^t mete I lete hem dwelle
 A þousand fold wel more þan I can telle / [leaf 89, back]

This child maurice was sitthen Emperour
 Made by þe pope and lyuede cristenely
 To cistes chirche he dede gret honour
 But^t I letete¹ alle his story passen by [1 so] 1124
 Of^t Custance is my tale specially
 In olde Romeyn gestes men may fynde [Latin note, p. 133.]
 Maurices lyf^t I bere it nought^t in mynde 1127

¶ This king^t Alla. whan he his tyme say
 With his Custance his holy wif so sweete
 To Engelond þei come þe redy way
 Wher as þay lyue in ioie and in quiete 1131

- But litel while it lasteþ I 3ou heete
 Ioye of þis world for tyme wil nou3t abyde
 firo day to nyghþ it' chaungeþ as þe tyde 1134
- ¶ Who lyued euere in such delyt' a day [Latin note, p. 133.]
 That' ne meued eyþer conscience /
 Or Ire or talent' of som kyn affray
 Enuye or pride or passiõ or offense / 1138
 I ne say but' for þis ende þis sentence
 That' litel while in Ioye or in plesance
 lasteþ þe blisse of alla wiþ Custance / 1141
- ffor dep þat' takeþ of heigh and lough his rent
 Whan passed was a yeer euene as I gesse
 Out' of þis world þis king' Alla he hent
 ffor whom Custance haþ ful gret' heynesse / 1145
 Now lat' vs prayen god his soule blesse /
 And dame Custance finally to seye
 Toward þe toun of Rome goþ hire weye 1148
- To Rome is come þis holy creature
 And fyndeþ hire freendes hol and sounde
 Now is sche scaped alle hire auenture
 And whan sche hir fader haþ I-founde 1152
 Doun on hir knees falleth sche to grounde
 Wepyng for tendirnesse in herte bliþe
 Sche herieþ god an C. þousand sithe 1155
- In vertue and holy almesdede / [leaf 90]
 They lyuen alle and neuer asonder wende
 Til deth departe hem þis lif' þey lede
 And fareþ now wel my tale is at' an ende 1159
 Now ihesu crist' þat' of his might' may sende
 Ioye after wo gouerne vs in his grace
 And kepe vs alle þat' ben in þis place / Explicit 1162

- O**wre oost' vpon his stiropes stood anoon [on leaf 96]
 And seyde goode men herkenep euerych on
 This was a thrifty tale for þe nones
 Sire parissche prest' quod he for goddes boones 1166
 Telle vs a tale as was þi forward yore
 I se wel þat' ye lerned men in loore
 Can moche good by goddes dignete
 The parson him answerde benedicite 1170
 What' eyleþ þe man so synfully to swere /
 Oure ost' answerde . O Ianekyn be ye þere
 I smelle a lollere in þe wynd quod he
 how goode men quod oure host' herkenep me 1174
 Abydeþ for goddes digne passioñ
 ffor we schal han a predicacioñ
 This lollere heer wil prechen vs som what'
 Nay by my fader soule þat' schal he nat 1178
 Seyde þe Esquier heer schal he nat' preche
 He schal no gospel glosen here ne teche
 he leueþ aH in þe grete god he
 he wolde sowen som difficulte 1182
 Or springen Cokkel in oure clene corn
 And þerfore oost' I warne þe biforn
 My Ioly body schal a tale telle
 And I schal clynken 3ou so mery a belle 1186
 That' I schal waken al þis compaignie
 But' it schal not' ben of' philosophie
 Ne Phislyas ne termes queinte of' lawe
 Ther is but' litel latyn in my nawe 1190

A T Sarray in þe land of Tartarye [leaf 90, back]
 Ther dwelt a king þat werreyed Russye
 Thurgh which þer deyed many a doughty man
 This noble king was cleped kambynskan 12
 Which in his tyme was of so gret renoñ
 That þer nas nowher in no regioñ
 So excellent a lord in alle þing
 him lacked nought þat longed to a kyng 16
 As of þe secte of which þat he was born
 he kepte his lay to which þat he was sworn
 And þerto he was hardy wys and riche
 And pitous and Iust alwey y-liche 20
 Soþ of his word benigne and honorable
 Of his corage as eny centre stable centrum circuli
 yong freissh and strong in armes desirous
 As eny bachelor of alle his hous 24
 A fair persone he was and fortunat
 And kepte alway so wel real astat
 That þer nas no wher swich anoþer man
 This noble king this Tartre Kambynskan 23
 hadde tuo sones in Eltheta his wyf
 Of which þe eldest highte Algarsyf
 That oþer was y-cleped Camballo
 A doughter hadde þis worþy king also 32
 That yongest was and highte Canace
 But for to telle you al hire beaute
 It lyþ nough in my tonge ne in my konnyng
 I dar not vndertake so heigh a þing 36

GROUP F. § 2. SQUIRE'S TALE. Corpus MS.

| | |
|---|----|
| Myn englissch eek' is insufficient It' moste ben a Rethor excellent' That' coupe his colours longyng' for þat art' If' he schulde hir discryue in any part | 40 |
| I am non swich I moot' speke as I can And so bifelle that' whan þis Cambynskan hap twenty wynter born his Diademe As he was wonte fro yeer to yeer I deeme | 44 |
| he leet' þe feste of' his natiuite Don cryen þurgħ Sarray his Cite The laste Idus of' March after þe 3eer Phebus þe sonne Iolif' was and cleer | 48 |
| ffor he was neigh his exaltacioñ In martes face and his mansioñ In aries þe Colerik' þe hote signe fful lusty was þe weder and benigne | 52 |
| ffor which þe foules a3ein þe sonne sshene What' for þe sesoñ and þe yonge grene fful loude songe hire affections hem semed han geten hem protections | 56 |
| A3ein þe swerd of' wynter keene and cold This Kambynskan of' which I haue 3ou told In Real vestiment' sit' on his deys With dyademe ful heigh in his paleys | 60 |
| And halt' his feste solempne and so riche That' in þis world ne was þer non it' liche Of' which if' I schal telle al þe array Than wold it' occupye a someres day | 64 |
| And eek' it' needeþ nat' to deuysel At euery cours þe ordre of' here seruise I wol not' tellen of' here straunge sewes Ne of' here swannes ne of' here heron-sewes | 68 |
| Ek' in þat' lond as tellen knightes olde Ther is som mete þat' is ful deynte holde That' in þis lond men recche but' smal Ther nys no man þat' may reporten al | 72 |

| | |
|---|-----------------|
| I wol not tarien yow for it is prime | |
| And for it is no fruyt but los of tyme | |
| vnto my first purpos I wole haue my recours / | |
| And so bifelle þat after þe þridde cours | 76 |
| Whil þat þis king sit þus in his nobleye | |
| herknyng his menstreles here þinges pleye | |
| Biforn him atte bord deliciously | |
| In atte halle dore al sodeinly | 80 |
| Ther com a knight vpon a steede of bras | [leaf 91, back] |
| And in his hond a brood Mirour of glas | |
| vpon his thombe he hadde of gold a ryngt | |
| And by his syde a naked swerd hangyng | 84 |
| And vp he rydeþ to þe heihe bord | |
| In alle þe halle ne was þer spoke a word | |
| ffor merueille of þis knight him to biholde | |
| fful bysyly þey wayten zonge and olde / | 88 |
| This strange knight þat com þus sodeynly | |
| Al armed saue his heed ful richely | |
| Salued þe king and queen and lordes alle | |
| By ordre as þey seten in þe halle | 92 |
| with so heigh reuerence and obeissances | |
| As wel in speche as in contenances | |
| That Gawayn with his olde curtesye / | |
| Though he com agayn out of fayrie / | 96 |
| Ne couþe him nough amende wiþ no word | |
| And after þis bifore þe heihe bord | |
| he with a manly vois sayde his message | |
| After þe forme vsed in his langage | 100 |
| wiþoute vice of Sillable or of lettre | |
| And for his tale scholde seme þe bettere | |
| Acordant to his wordes was his chere / | |
| As techeþ art of speche hem þat it lere / | 104 |
| Al be it þat I can nat sowne his stile | |
| Ne can not clymben ouer so heigh a style | |
| yet/ seye I þis þat as to commune entente | |
| Thus moche amounteþ al þat euer he mente | 108 |

GROUP F. § 2. SQUIRE'S TALE. Corpus MS.

If it so be þat I haue it in my mynde
 he seyde þe king of Arabie and of Inde
 My liege lord on þis solempne day
 Salueþ þou as he best can and may 112
 And sendeþ yow in honour of your feste
 By me þat am redy at al your heste /
 This steede of Bras þat esily and wel
 kan in þe space of a day naturel 116
 This is to seie in .xxiiiijth. houres [leaf 92]
 Wher so yow list in droughþe or in schoures
 Beren youre body in to euery place /
 To which youre herte wilneth for to pace 120
 wipoute wem of þou þorough foul or fair
 Or if þou list to flee as hye in þair
 As doþ an Egle whan him list to sore
 This same steede schal bere þou eueremore 124
 wipouten harm til ye be þer you leste
 Though þat þe slepen on his bak or reste
 And torne azayn wip wryþing of a pyn
 he þat it wroughte couþe ful many a gyn 128
 he waitede many a constellacōn
 Or he hadde do þis operaciōn
 And knew ful many a seal and many a bond
 This Mirour eek þat I haue in myn hond 132
 haþ such a might that men may in it see
 whan þer schal fallen any aduersite
 Vnto youre regne or to your self also
 And openly who is þour frend or foo 136
 And ouer al þis if ony lady bright
 haþ set hire herte on any maner wight
 If he be fals sche schal his traysoñ se
 his newe loue and al his subtilite 140
 So openly þat þer schal no þing hyde
 wherfore ageyn þis lusty somer tyde
 This mirour and þis ryng as ye may see /
 he haþ sent to my lady Canacee 144

youre excellent' doughter þat' is heere
 The vertu of þis ring' if' 3e wol heere
 Is þis . þat' if' hir list' it' for to were /
 vpon hir þombe or in hir purs it bere 148
 Ther is no foule þat' fleigh vnder þe heuene
 þat' she ne schal vnderstonde his steuene
 And knowe his menyng' openly and pleyn
 And answe're him in his langage ageyn 152
 And euery gras þat' groweþ vpon a roote / [leaf 92, back]
 Sche schal wel knowe and whom it wol do boote
 Al be his woundes neuer so deepe and wyde
 This naked swerd þat' hongeth by my syde 156
 Swich vertu haþ þat' what' man so ye smyte
 Thurghout' his armour it wole kerue and byte
 Were it as þikke as is a braunched oke
 And what' man þat' is wounded wip þe stroke 160
 Schal neuer be hol til þat' yow list' of' grace
 To stroke him wip þe plat' in þilke place
 Ther he is hurt' þis is as moche to sayn
 ye moote with þe platte swerd agayn 164
 Stroke him on þe wounde and it' wil close
 This is a verray soth wipouten glose
 It' failleþ nough't' whiles it' is in youre hold
 And whan þis knight' haþ þus his tale told 168
 he rydeth out' of' þe halle and doun he light'
 his steede which þat' schon as sonne bright'
 Stant' in þe court' stille as ony stoon
 This knight' in to his chambre is lad anoon 172
 And is vnarmed and to þe mete y-set'
 The presentes ben ful richely y-fet'
 This is to sein þe swerd and þe mirour
 And born anon vnto þe hihe tour 176
 Wip certein officers ordeyned þerfore
 And vnto Canacee þe ryng' is bore
 Solempnely þer sche sitt' atte table
 But' sikerly wipouten eny fable / 180

GROUP F. § 2. SQUIRE'S TALE. Corpus MS.

| | |
|--|-------------------|
| The hors of bras þat may nat' be remewed It stant' as it' were to þe ground y-glewed Ther may noman out' of' þe place it' dryue ffor non engyn of' wyndas or polyue / | 184 |
| And cause why for þey can nouzt' þe craft' And þefore in the place þei han it laft' Til þat' þe knight' hap' taught' hem þe maneere To voyden him as 3e schal after heere | 188 |
| Gret' was þe prees þat' swarmed to and fro To gauren on þis hors þat' stondeþ so ffor it' so heih was and so brood and long' So wel proporciouned for to be strong' | 192 |
| Right' as it' were a steede of' lumbardy Ther with so horsly and so quyk of' ye As it' a gentil poyleys courser were ffor certes fro his tail vnto his eere | 196 |
| Nature ne art' ne coupe him nought' amende In no degre as al þe poeple wende But' euermore here mooste wonder it was how þat' it' cowde gon and was of' Bras | 200 |
| It' was of' ffaierye as þe peple semede diuerse folk' diuersely han demede As many heedes as many wittes þer been They murmerede as don a swarm of' been | 204 |
| And maden skyles after here fantasies Rehersyng' of' þe olde poetries | .i. equis pedasdu |
| And seyden it' was lik' þe Pagasee The hors þat' hadde wynges for to flee Or elles it' was þe Grekes hors Synoñ That' broughte troye to destruction | 208 |
| As men in þise olde gistes reede Myn herte quod oon is eueremore in drede I trowe som men of' armes ben þer Inne That' schapen hem þis cite for to wyne | 212 |
| It' were right' good þat' alle swich þing' were knowe Anoþer rowned to his felawe lowe | 216 |

And seyde he lyeth for it^t is rapere lik^t
 An apparence y-maad by som magyk^t
 As Iogelours pleyen at^t þese festes grete /
 Of^t sondry þoughtes þus þey Iangle and trete 220
 As lewed peple demeþ communly
 Of^t þinges þat^t been more maad subtilly
 Than þey can in here lewednesse comprehende /
 They demen gladly to þe baddere ende 224
 And some of^t hem wondren on þe mirour [leaf 93, back]
 That^t born was vp vnto þe maistre tour
 how men might^t in it^t suche þinges se
 Anoper answerde and seyde it might^t wel be 228
 Naturelly by composicioñs
 Of^t aungels and of^t sleygh reflexioñs
 And seyde þat^t in Rome was such oon
 They speke of^t alocen and vitilion 232
 And of^t aristotle þat^t writen in here lyues
 Of^t queinte mirours and of^t perspectyues
 As knowen þey þat^t han here bookes herde
 And oper folk^t han wondred on þe swerde 236
 That^t wolde perce þurgh euery þing^t
 And fille in speche of^t Thelophus þe king^t
 And of^t achilles for his queinte spere /
 ffor he coupe with it^t boþe hele and dere / 240
 Right^t in swich wise as men may wij þe sword
 Of^t which right^t now ye haue youre seluen herd
 They speken of^t sondry hardyng^t of^t metalle
 And speke of^t medicynes þer wijpalle 244
 And how and whanne it^t scholde harded be
 Which is vnknowe algate vnto me /
 Tho speeke þey of^t Canaces ryng^t
 And seyden alle þat^t swich a wonder þing^t 248
 Of^t craft^t of^t rynges herde þey neuere non
 Saue þat^t he moyses and king^t Salomon
 hadde a name of^t konnyng^t in swich art^t
 Thus seyen þe peple and drawen hem a part^t 252

But napeles somme seyde þat it was
 Wonder to maken of fern aisschen glas
 And 3it' is glas not lik' aisschen of fern
 But for þey han knowen it so fern 256
 Therefore ceseþ here Ianglyng' and here wonder
 As sore wondren some on cause of þonder
 On ebbe and flood on gossomer and on myst /
 And alle þing' til þe cause is wist' [leaf 94] 260
 Thus Ianglen þei and demen and deuyse
 Til þat' þe king' gan fro his bord arise
 ¶ Phebus hap laft' þe angle meridional
 And 3it' ascendyng' was þe best' roial 264
 The gentil leon wip his Aldrian
 Whan þat' þis Tartre kyng' Kambynskan
 Ros from his bord ther as he sat' ful hye
 Biforn him goþ þe lowde menstralcie / 268
 Til he com to his chambre of paramentz
 Ther as þey sownen diuerse instrumentz
 That' is lik' an heuene for to heere /
 Now dauncen lusty venus children decre 272
 ffor in þe fische hir lady sat' ful hye Piscis
 And lokeþ on hem with a freendy yhe
 This noble king' is set' vp on his troone
 This straunge knight' is fet' to him ful sone / 276
 And on þe daunce he goþ with Canacee
 here is þe reuel and þe Iolite
 That is nat' able a dul man to deuyse /
 he moste han knowe loue and his seruise / 280
 And ben a festlich man as freisch as may
 That' scholde 3ow deuisen such array
 who couþe telle yow þe forme of daunces
 So vncouthe and such freische continaunces 284
 Swich subtile lokynges and dissimulynges
 ffor drede of Ialouseye mennes aperceyuynges
 Noman but lañcelet' and he is deed
 Therefore I passe ouer al þis lustyhed 288

GROUP F. § 2. SQUIRE'S TALE. Corpus MS.

I say nomore but in þis Iolynesse
 I lete hem til men to soper hem dresse
 The stiward bit spices for to hye
 And eek þe wyn in al þis melodye 292
 The vssheres and þe squyers ben y-gon
 The spices and þe wyn is come anon
 They eete and dronke and whan þis hadde an ende
 vnto þe temple as resoun was þey wende [leaf 94, back]
 ¶ The seruise doon. þey soupen al by day
 What needeþ you rehersen here aray
 Ech man woot wel þat at a kinges feste
 haþ plente to þe meste and to þe leste 300
 And deyntees mo þan ben in my knowyngt
 And after soper goþ þis noble kingt
 To seen þis hors of bras wiþ al a route
 Of lordes and of ladyes him aboute 304
 Swich wondryngt was þer on þis hors of bras
 That siþþen þe grete seege of Troye was
 Ther as men wondren on an hors also
 Ne was þer swich a wondryngt as was þo / 308
 But finally þe kingt askep þe knightt
 The vertue of þis courser and þe mightt
 And preyde him to telle his gouernañce
 The hors anon bigan to trippe and daunce 312
 Whan þat þis knightt layde hond vpon his reyne /
 And seyde sire þer is namore to seyne
 But whan þou list to ryden eny where
 ye moote trille a pyn stant in his eere 316
 which I schal telle you bitwen vs tuo /
 ye moot nempne him to what place also
 Or to what Contre þat yow list to ryde
 And whan ye come þer as yow list tabyde 320
 Bid him descende and trille anoþer pyn
 ffor þer-in liþ þeffect of al þat gyn
 And wole doun descende and don your wille
 And in þat place he wol abyde stille 324

beigh alle þe world hadde þe contrarie swore
 he schal not þennes be þrowe ne y-bore
 Of if yow liste bidde him þennes gon
 Trille þis pynne and he wil vanysseche anon 328
 Out of þe sight of euery maner wight
 And come ayein be it day or night
 whan þat yow list to clepen him agayn
 In swich a gyse as I schal to yow sayn [leaf 95] 332
 Bitwixen yow and me and þat ful soone
 Ryd whan yow list þer is no more to doone
 Enformed whan þe kyng was of þe knight
 And hap conceyued in his witt aright 336
 The maner and þe forme of alle þis þing
 fful glad and bliþe þe noble doughty kyng
 Repeyryng to his reuel as biforn
 The brydel is in to þe tour y-born 340
 And kept among his Ieweles lief and diere
 The hors vanysst y not in what manere
 Out of here sight ye gete namore of me
 But þus I lete in lust and Iolite 344
 This Kambynskañ his lordes festeynge
 Til wel neigh þe day bigan to springe ¶ Explicit
 prima pars

¶ The Stag of an hert

¶ The norice of digestioñ is slepe
 Gan on hem wynke and bad hem take kepe 348
 That moche mete and labour wol haue reste /
 And with a galpyng hem alle he keste /
 And seyde þat it was tyme to lye a down
 ffor blood was in his dominacioñ 352
 Cherisshet blood natures frend quod he
 þey þanken him galpynge by tuo by þre
 And ecery wight gan drawn him to his reste
 As sleep hem bad þey tooke it for þe beste 356

GROUP F. § 2. SQUIRE'S TALE. Corpus MS.

here dremes schulle not^t mowe be told for me
 fful were here heedes of^t fumosite
 That^t causeþ drem of^t which þer is no charge /
 They sleepen til it^t was pryme large / 360
 The moste part^t but^t it^t were Canace
 Sche was ful mesurable as wommen be
 ffor of^t hire fader hadde sche take hir leeu
 To go to reste sone after it^t was eue 364
 hir list^t not^t appalled for to be
 ffor on þe morwe vnfestlich for to see /
 And slepte hir ferste sleep and awok^t [leaf 95, back]
 ffor swich a ioie sche in hir herte took^t 368
 Boþe of^t hire queynte ryng^t and hire mirour
 That twenty tyme sche chaungeth hire colour
 And in hire sleep right^t for impression
 Of^t hire mirour sche hadde a vision 372
 Wherfore ar þat^t þe sonne vp gan glyde
 Sche cleped vp on hire maystresse bysyde
 And seyde þat^t hir liste for to arise
 Thise olde wommen þat^t ben gladly wyse 376
 As is hire maystresse answerde anon *
 And seyde ma dame whider wolde ye gon^t !
 Thus erely for folk^t ben alle in reste
 I wole quod sche arise for me leste / 380
 No lengere sleepen but^t walken aboute
 hire maistresse clepeþ wommen a gret^t route /
 And vp þey risen wel ten or twelue
 vp riseþ freisshe Canace hir selue 384
 As rody as bright^t as þey þe yonge sonne
 That^t in þe Ram. is ten degrees vpronne
 Non hiher was he whan sche redy was
 And forth sche walkede eesyly a pas 388
 Arrayed after þe lusty sesoñ soote
 lightly for to pleye and walke on foote
 Nat^t but^t .v. or .vj. of^t hire meyne
 And in a trench fer in þe park^t goþ sche 392

GROUP F. § 2. SQUIRE'S TALE. Corpus MS.

| | |
|---|-----------|
| The vapour which þat' fro þe erþe glood makeþ þe sonne to seeme rody and brood But' napeles it' was so fair a sight' That' it' made alle here hertes for to light' | 396 |
| What' for þe sesoun) and þe morwenynge And for þe foules þat' sche herde synge ffor right' anon sche wiste what' þey mente Right' by here song' and knew alle here entente | 400 |
| // The knotte why þat' euery tale is told If' it' be taryed til lust be cold Of hem þat' han it' herkned after yore | [leaf 96] |
| The sauour passeþ euer lenger þe more ffor fulsomnesse of' <i>prolixite</i> And by þis same resoun þenkeþ me I scholde to þe knotte condescende | 404 |
| And maken of' hire walkyng' sone an ende ¶ Amydde a tree for-drye as whit' as chalk/ As Canacee was pleyng' in hire walk' Ther sat' a ffaukoñ ouer hir heed ful hye | 408 |
| That' with a pitous voys so gan to crye That' al þe woodē resede of' hire crye And beten hadde hire self' so pitously / With boþen hire wynges til þe reede blood | 412 |
| Ran endelong/ þe tree þer as sche stood And euer in oon sche cryed alwey and schrighte And with hire beek' hir seluen so sche pighte That' þer ne was tygre ne cruel beste | 416 |
| That' duelleþ eyþer in woode or in foreste þat' nolde han wept' if' þat' he wepe couþe ffor sorwe of' hire sche schright' alwey so louþe ffor þer nas neuere yit/ no man on lyue | 420 |
| If' þat' I couþe a fawkoñ wel descryue That' herde of' such anoþer of' fayrnesse As wel of' plumage as of' gentilnesse Of' schap of' al þat' mighte rekened be | 424 |
| A fawkoñ peregryn þanne semed sche | 428 |

GROUP F. § 2. SQUIRE'S TALE. Corpus MS.

Of fremde londe and euermore as sche stood
 Sche swounede now and now for lak^t of^t blood
 Til wel neigh is sche fallen fro þe tree
 This faire kinges doughter þis kanacee 432
 That^t on hir fynger bar þe queynte ryng^t
 þurgh which sche vnderstood wel euery þing^t
 That^t any foul may in his ledne sayn
 And kowde answeere him in his ledne agayn 436
 haþ vnderstande þat^t þis fawkoñ sayde
 And wel neigh for þe rouþe almost^t sche deyde
 And to þe tree sche goþ ful hastily [leaf 96, back]
 And on þis fawkoñ lokeþ pitously 440
 And held hire lappe abrood for wel sche wiste /
 The fawkoñ moste falle from þe twyste /
 whan þat^t it^t swownede next^t for lakke of^t blood
 A long^t while to wayte hire sche stood 444
 Til atte laste sche spak^t in þis maneere
 Vnto þe hauk^t as 3e schal after heere
 what^t is þe cause if^t it^t be for to telle
 That^t ye ben in þis furial peyne of^t helle 448
 Quod Canacee vnto þis hawk^t aboue
 Is þis for sorwe of^t deth or los of^t loue
 ffor as I trowe þise beþ causes tuo
 That^t causen moost^t a gentil herte woo 452
 Of oper harm it^t redeþ nought^t / to speke
 ffor þi your self^t vpon your self^t yow wreke
 which þat^t prouep wel þat^t eyþer Ire or drede
 Moot^t ben enchesoñ of^t youre cruel dede 456
 Syn þat^t I se non oper wight^t yow chace
 ffor loue of^t god so doþ your selue grace
 Or what^t may be your help for west^t nor est^t
 Ne saugh I neuer er now no bryd ne best^t 460
 That^t ferde with himself^t so pitously
 ye slee me with youre sorwe verrayly
 I haue of^t yow so gret compassioun
 ffor goddes loue com fro þe-tree a doun 464

And as I am a kinges doughter trewe
 If þat I verrailly þe causes knewe
 Of youre disease if it lay in my might
 I wolde amende it or þat it were night 468
 Als wisly help me grete god of kynde
 And herbes schal I right ynowe fynde
 To hele wiþ þour hurtes hastily
 Tho schrighte þis faukoñ yet more pitously 472
 Than euer sche dide and fil to grounde anon
 And liþ on swowne deed as ony stoon
 Til Canacee haþ in hir lappe hire take [leaf 97]
 vnto þat tyme sche gan of swowne awake / 476
 And after þat sche of swowne gan abreide
 Right in hir hawkes leodne þus sche seyde
 That pite renneth sone in gentil herte
 ffeelyng his similitude in peynes smerte / 480
 Is proued alday as men may it see
 As wel by werk as by auctorite
 ffor gentil herte kepeþ gentillesse
 I se wel þat ye han of my distresse 484
 Compassion my faire Canace /
 Of verray wommanly benignite /
 That nature in youre principles haþ set
 But for non hope for to fare þe bet 488
 But for to obeye vnto youre herte fre /
 And for to maken oper be war by me /
 As by þe whelp chastised is þe leon
 Right for þat cause and for þat conclusion 492
 Whil þat I haue a leyser and a space
 Myn harm I wol confessen er I pace
 And euer whil sche can hir sorwe tolde
 That oper wepte as sche to water wolde 496
 Til þat þe fawkoñ bad hir to be stille /
 And with a sike þus sche seyde hire till
 Ther I was bred allas þat ilke day
 And fostred in a roche of marþul gray 500

So tendrely þat' noþing' eylede me
 I ne wiste nouȝt' what' was aduersite
 Til I couþe flee ful hye vnder þe sky
 þo dwelte a tercelet' me faste by 504
 That' semede welle of' alle gentillesse
 Al were he ful of' tresoñ and falsnesse /
 It' is wrapped vnder humble cheere
 And vnder hiew of' trouþe and in swich manere 508
 Vnder plesance and vnder bysy peyne
 That' no wight' couþe han wende he coude feyne
 So deepe in greyn he dyed his colours [leaf 97, back]
 Right as a *serpent* hit' him vnder flours 512
 Til he may se his tyme for to byte
 Right' so þis god of' loues ypocrite
 Dop so his cerymonijs obeissances
 And kepte in semblañt alle his obseruances 516
 That' sowneþ in to gentillesse of' loue
 As in a tombe is al þe faire aboute
 And vnder is þe corps swich as 3e woot'
 Swich was þis ypocrite boþe cold and hoot' 520
 And in þis wise he *serued* his entente
 That' saue þe feende non wiste what' he mente
 Til he so longe hadde wopen and compleyned
 And many a yeer his seruise to me feyned 524
 Til þat' myn herte to pitous and to nyce
 Al Innocent' of' his crowned malice
 ffor-fered of' his deþ as þoughte me
 vpon his oþes and his seurte 528
 Grauntede him loue vpon þis condicioñ
 That' euer mo myn honour & renoñ
 were saued boþe preuy and apert'
 This is to sein þat' after his dissert' 532
 I yaf' him al myn herte and my þouȝt'
 God woot' and he þat' oþer wise nouȝt'
 And tok' his herte in chaunge of' myn for ay
 But' soþ is seyð go sethen many a day 536

GROUP F. § 2. SQUIRE'S TALE. Corpus MS.

A trewe wight and a þeeft þenkeþ nat' oon
 And whan he saugh þe þing' so fer y-gon
 That' I grauntede him fully my loue /
 In swich a gyse as I haue sayd aboue / 540
 And yeuen him my trewe herte as fre /
 As he swore he yaf' his herte to me /
 Anon þis Tygre ful of' doublenesse
 ffil on his knees wiþ so deuoute humblesse 544
 wiþ hye reuerence and as by his cheere /
 So lik' a gentil louere of' manere /
 So rauysshed as it' semede for þe ioye [leaf 98]
 That' neuere Iason ne paris of' Troye 548
 Iason certes ne non oþer man)
 Syn lameth was þat' Aldirfirst' bygan)
 To louen tuo as writen folk' biforn
 Ne neuer siþþe þe firste man was born 552
 Ne couþe man by twenty þousand part'
 Countrefete þe sophimes of' his art'
 Ne were worþi to vnbokele his galoche
 Ther doublenesse or feynyng' scholde aproche 556
 Ne so couþe þanke a wight' as he dide me /
 his manere was an heuene for to se
 Til eny womman were sche neuer so wys
 So peynted he and kembeþ at' poynt' devys 560
 As wel his wordes as his continaunce
 And I so loued him for his obeissaunce
 And for þe troupe I demed in his herte
 That' if' so were þat' any þing' him smerte 564
 Al were it' neuer so lite and I it' wiste
 Me þoughte I felte deþ at' myn herte twiste
 And schortly so ferforth þis þing' went'
 That' my wille has his willes Instrument' 568
 This is to sein my wille obeyede his wille
 In alle þing' as fer as resoñ fille
 Kepyng' þe boundes of' my worschipe euere
 Ne neuer hadde I þing' so leef' ne leuere 572

As him god woot^t ne neuere schal no mo
 This laste lengere þan a yer or tuo
 ¶ That I supposed of^t him no þing^t but good
 But^t fynally þus atte laste it stood 576
 That^t fortune wolde þat^t he moste twynne
 Out^t of^t þat^t place which þat^t I was Inne
 Wher me was wo it^t is no question
 I kan not^t make of^t it^t discripciōn 580
 ffor o þing^t dar I telle boldely
 I knowe what^t is þe peyne of^t deþ þer by
 Such harm I felte for he ne mighte beleue [leaf 98]
 So on a day of^t me he tok^t his leue / 584
 So sorwfully eek^t I wende verrayly
 That^t he hadde feeled as moche harm as I
 Whan þat^t I herde him speke and sawe his hewe /
 But^t napeles I þoughte he was so trewe/ 588
 And eek^t þat^t he repaire scholde agayn .
 Wipinne a litel while soþ to sayn
 And resoñ wolde eek^t þat^t he moste go
 ffor his honour as ofte happeþ so 592
 That^t I made vertu of^t necessite /
 & took^t it^t wel syn þat^t it / moste be
 As I best^t mighte I hidde from him my sorwe
 And took^t him by þe hond seint^t Iohn to borwe. 596
 And seyde þus lo I am youres al
 Beþ swich as I haue be to yow and schal
 What^t he answerde it^t needeþ nat^t reherse
 Who can seyn bet^t þan he who can do werse 600
 Whan he haþ al wel seyd þan haþ he doon
 Therfore byhoueþ him a wel long^t spoon
 That^t schal eten wiþ a feend þus herde I seye /
 So atte laste he moot^t forþ his weye 604
 And forth he fleþ til he com þer him leste
 Whan it^t com him to purpos for to reste /
 I trowe he hadde þilke text^t in mynde /
 That^t alle þing^t repeyryng^t to his kynde / 608

¶ Reditui suo singula
gaudent/.

Gladeþ himself / þus seyn men as I gesse /
 Men louen of propre kynde newfangilnesse /
 As briddes doon þat men in cages feede / 612
 ffor þeigh þou night & day take of hem heede /
 And strawe here cages faire as softe as silkt
 And yeue hem sucre hony bred and mylkt
 Yet right anon as þat his dore is vppe
 he wip his feet wil sporne doun his cuppe 616
 And to þe woode he wole and wormes ete
 So newefangel ben þei of here mete
 And louen noueleries of propre kynde [leaf 99]
 No gentillesse of blood may hem bynde 620
 So ferde þis tercelet allas þe day
 Though he were gentil born fressche and gay
 And goodly for to seen and humble and fre
 he saugh vpon a tyme a kyte flee 624
 And sodeinly he loued þe kyte so
 That alle his loue is clene fro me go
 And hap his troupe falsed in þis wyse
 Thus hap þe kite my loue in hire seruise 628
 And I am lorn wipoute remedye
 And wip þat word þis faukoñ gan to crye
 And swouned eft/ in Canacees barm
 Gret was þe sorwe for þe haukes harm 632
 That Canacee and alle hire wommen maade
 They nyste how þey mighte þe fawkoñ glade
 But Canacee home bereþ hire in hire lappe
 And softely in plastres gan hire wrappe 636
 Ther as sche with hir beek hap hurt hir selue
 Now kan not Canace but herbes delue
 Out of þe grounde and maken salues newe
 Of herbes precieuses and fyn of hewe 640
 To helen wip þe hauk fro day to nyght
 Sche doþ hir besynesse and alle hire myght
 And by hire beddes heed sche made a muwe
 And couered it with veluettes bluwe 644

GROUP F. § 2. SQUIRE'S TALE. Corpus MS.

In signe of troupe þat is in wommen seene
 And alle wiþoute þe muwe is peynted greene
 In which were peynted alle þese false fowles
 As ben þise tydifs tercelettes and owles 648
 Right for þe spyte were peynted hem bysyde
 Pyes on hem for to crye and chyde
 Thus leet I Canacee hire hawk' keeping'
 I wole nomore as now speke of hire ryng' 652
 Til it come eft to purpos for to seyn
 how þat þis ffaukon gat hire loue ageyn
 Repentañt as þe storie telleþ vs [leaf 99, back]
 By mediacion of Camballus 656
 The kinges sone of which I yow tolde /
 But hennes forth I wol proces holde
 To speke of auentures and of batailles
 That yet was neuer herde so gret meruailles 660
 first wil I telle yow of Kambynskan
 That in his tyme many a cite wan
 And after wol I speke of Algarsif
 how þat he wan Theodora to his wyf 664
 ffor whan ful ofte in gret peril he was
 Ne hadde he ben holpen by þe hors of bras
 And after wol I speken of Camballo
 That faught in listes with þe breþeren tuo 668
 ffor Canacee er þat he might hir wynne
 And þer I lefte I wol ageyn bygynne
 Appollo whirleth vp his char so hye
 Til þat þe god mercurius hous þe slye / ¶ Explicit .ij.^a pars.

GROUP D. FRAGMENT V.

§ 1. WIFE OF BATH'S PREAMBLE.

CORPUS MS.

Prologus vxoris de Bathe. [*headline*] [leaf 100]

¶ *Prologus vxoris
de Bathe .C°.vij°.*

Experiment' pougħ non auctorite
Were in þis world is right' nougħ for me
To speke of' wo þat' is in mariage
ffor lordynges syn I twelue ȝeer was of' age / 4
Thanked be god þat' is eterne alyue
housbondes atte chirche dore I haue had fyue/
If I so often might' haue wedded be
But' alle were worþy men in here degre 8
But' me was told certein nought' longe agones
[that criste ne wente / neuere but onys] [MS Arch. Seld. B. 14.]
To weddyng' in þe Cane of' Galile /
That' by þilke ensample taught' he me 12
That' I ne schulde wedded be but' ones
herk' eek' lo which a scharpe worde for þe nones
Besyde a welle Ihesu god and man
Spak' in reproof' of' þe Samaritan 16
Thow hast' y-hadde .v. housebondes quod he .
And þat' ilke man þat' now haþ þe
Is not' þin housbonde þus sayde he certayne
What' he mente þer-by I can nougħt sayne 20
Wele But' þat' / I axe why þe fyfte man
Was non housbonde to þe Samaritan
how many might' sche han in mariage 23
13itt' hardde I neuere telle in al myn age

[¹ This line is by another
hand, over an erasure.]

GROUP D. § 1. WIFE'S PREAMBLE. Corpus MS.

Vppon þis nombre diffinicioun
 Men may deuyne and glosen vp and doun
 But wel I woot' expresse wiþouten lye
 God bad vs for to wexe and multiplie 28
 That' gentil text' can I wel vnderstonde
 Eke wel I woot' he seyde myn housebonde
 Schulde lete fader & mooder and take to me ¶ *Relinquet homo*
 But' of' noon nombre mension made he / *patrem & matrem &*
adherebit &c /
 Of' Bigamye or of' Octogamye 33
 Why schulde men þenne haue it' in vilanye /
 loke here þe wise man king' Salomon
 I trowe he hadde wyues moo þan on ¶ *Genesis ij. Quamobrem*
 Now wolde god it' leeful were to me / 37
 To be refreissed half' so ofte as he [leaf 100, back]
 Which 3ifte of' god hadde he for alle his wyues
 No man haþ such þat' in þis world a lyue is 40
 God wot' þis noble king' as to my witte
 The firste night' hadde many a mery fitte
 Wiþ iche of' hem so wel was him alyue
 Blissed be god þat' I haue wedded fyue 44
 Welcome þe sixte whan þat' euer he schal
 ffor sippe I wille nought' kepe chaste in al
 Whan myn housebonde is fro þe world y-gon
 Som crystne man schal wedde me anon 48
 ffor þan þe apostle seiþ þat' I am free
 To wedde a goddes half' wher it' likeþ me
 he seiþ þat' to be wedded is no senne ¶ *Melius est nubere quam vri*
 Betre is it' to be wedded þan to brenne 52
 What' rekkeþ me þough folk' sey vylanye
 Of' schrewed lameth and his Bygamye /
 I woot' wel Abraham was an holy man
 And Iacob eek' as fer as euer I can 56
 And ech of' hem hadde wyues mo þan tuo
 And many anoþer holy man also
 Wher can 3e say in any maner age
 That' vs god defended mariage 60

GROUP D. § 1. WIFE'S PREAMBLE. Corpus MS.

By expresse word I pray yow telleþ me
 Or wher comaunded he *virginite*
 I wot' as wel as ye it' is no drede
 þe apostel whan he spekeþ of' maydenhede 64
 he seyde þer-of' precepte hadde he noone
 Men may counseille a womman to ben oone
 But' counseilling' is no comaundement
 he putte it' in oure owne Iuggement' 68
 ffor hadde god commaunded maydenhede
 þanne hadde he dampned weddyng' with þe dede
 And certes if' þer were no seed y-sowe
virginite þanne wher-of' scholde it' growe 72
 Poule dorste nough't comanden at' þe leste
 A þing' of' which his mayster 3af' him non heste [leaf 101]
 The darte is sette vppe fro *virginite*
 Chase who so may who so renneþ best' lat' see 76
 But' þis word is nough't take of' euery wight'
 But' þere as god wolde yeue it' of' his might'
 I wot' wel þat' þe apostel was a mayde /
 But' napeles þough þat' he wrot' or sayde 80
 he wolde þat' euery wight' were such as he /
 Al nys nat' but' counseile to *virginite*
 And for to be a wijf' he yaf' me leue
 Of' Indulgence so is it' no repreue 84
 To wedde me if' þat' my make deye /
 Wipoute excepcioñ of' Bygamie /
 Al were it good no womman for to touche
 he mente as his body or in his couche 88
 ffor peril is boþe to touche and for to assemble
 3e knowe what' þis ensample may resemble
 This al and some he heeld *virginite*
 More *perfy't* þan wedded in freelte 92
 ffreeltee clepe I not' but' þat' he and sche
 Wolde leede here lijf' al in chastite
 I graunte it' wel I haue non envye
 Though maydenhede preferre Bygamie 96

GROUP D. § 1. WIFE'S PREAMBLE. Corpus MS.

It likeþ hem to be clene in body and gost^t
 Of myn estate I wole make no boost^t
 ffor wel 3e knowe a lord in his houshold
 haþ not^t euery vessele of^t golde / 100
 Some ben of^t tree / and doon here lord seruise
 God clepeþ folk^t to him in sondry wise
 And euerich haþ of^t god a propre 3ifte /
 Some þis some þat^t as him likeþ schifte 104
 virginite is gret^t perfectionⁿ
 And conscience eek^t with deuocionⁿ
 But^t crist^t þat^t of^t perfectionⁿ is welle
 Bad nough^t euery wigh^t he schulde selle 108
 Al þat^t he hadde and 3iue it to þe pore
 And in swich wise folwe him and his lore
 he spak^t to hem þat^t wolde lyue parfitylly
 And lordynges by 3oure leue þat^t am not^t I
 I wole bystowe þe flour of^t alle myn age 113
 In charite and fruyt^t of^t maryage
 Telle me also to what^t conclusioⁿ
 Were membres maade of^t generacioⁿ 116
 And of^t so parfyt^t wise and why y-wrought^t
 Tristeþ right^t wel þey were not^t made for nough^t
 Glose who so wile and seye boþe vp and doun
 That^t þey were made for purgacioun 120
 Of vryne and oure boþe þinges smale
 Were eek^t to knowe a femal from a male
 And for non oper cause what^t seye 3e no^t
 The experience woot^t it^t is nou3t^t so 124
 So þat^t þe clerkes be not^t with me wroþe
 I seye þis þat^t þey maked be for boþe
 This is to seyn for office and for eese
 Of engendrynge þare we not^t god displese 128
 Why schulden men elles in here bokes sette
 That^t man schal yelde to his wijf^t his dette
 Now wher-wiþ scholde he paye his payement
 yf^t þat^t he ne vsed his seely instrument 132

[leaf 101, back]

† Mathel xix^o. Dixit
 autem ihesus vade &
 vende omnia que habes
 & da pauperibus

GROUP D. § 1. WIFE'S PREAMBLE. **Corpus MS.**

Than were þey maade vpon a creature
 To purgie vryne and eek' for engendure
 But' I seye nouȝt' þat' euery wight' is holde
 That' haþ such harneys as I to yow of' tolde 136
 To gon and vsen hem in engendrure
 Thanne scholde men take of' chastite no cure
 Crist' was a mayden and schapen as a man
 And many a seynt' syn þat' þe world bygan 140
 Yet' lyued þey euere in parfyt' chastite
 I nel envye with no virginite
 lete hem ete brede of' pured whete seed
 And late vs wyues ete barly breed 144
 And yet' with barly breed Mark' telle can <sup>[¹ catchword: a leaf out;
a sheet misplaced]</sup>
 Oure lord' <sup>[Ihesu refreshed / many a man [MS Arch. Seld. B. 14,
leaf 84, back]</sup>
 in suche estate as god hath cleped vs
 I wol perceiver / I am nouȝt' precious 148
 in wiffhode wol I vse myn instrument
 as frely as my maker / hath hit sent
 yiff I be dangerous / god yeve me sorowe
 myn housbonde shal it haue both' eve *and* amorwe 152
 whan that him list / com forth' *and* pay his dette
 an housbonde wol I haue / I wol not lette
 which' shal be / both' my dettour *and* my thralle
 and han his tribulacioun with' alle 156
 vpon his flesshe / while that I am his wiff
 I haue the power' / durynge al my liff <sup>¶ Ad Corinthios vijo vir
sui corporis non habet
potestatem set mulier &c</sup>
 vpon his propre body / *and* not he
 right thus the Appostel / tolde vn-to me 160
 and bad oure housbondes / for to love vs welle
 alle this sentence / me liketh' euerydelle
Uppe sterte the pardoner / *and* that anoon
 now dame quod he / bi god *and* bi seint Iohn 164
 ye ben a noble prechoure / in this caas
 I was abovte to wedde a wiff allaas
 what shulde I bye it / on my flesshe so dere
 yit had I lever wedde noon to yere 168

GROUP D. § 1. WIFE'S PREAMBLE. Corpus MS.

abyde *quod* she / my tale is not bigonne [MS Arch. Seld. B. 14]
 nay thow shalt drynken / of another tonne
 or that I go / shal sauour wers than ale [leaf⁸⁵]
 and whan I haue tolde forth my tale 172
 of tribulacioun / that is in mariage
 of which I am expert / in myn age
 this is to seie / my-silff hath ben the whippe
 than maistow chese / whether thow wilt sippe 176
 of thilke tonne / that I shal abroche
 be war of hit / or thow to nygh approche
 for I shal telle ensamples / mo than ten
 who so that wil not / be war bi other men 180
 by him shulle other men corrected be
 these same wordis / writeth Protholome ¶ Protholome
 rede in his Almageste / and take it there
 dame I wol pray yow / if youre wille were 184
 seide this Pardonere / as ye bigan
 telle forth youre tale / spare for no man
 and teche vs yongemen / of youre practike
 gladly *quod* she / sith it may yow like 188
 but that I pray / to al this companye
 if that I speke / after my fantesie
 as taketh nought agreff / of that I seye
 for myn entente / is not / but for to pleye . 192
Now sirs than shal I telle yow my tale
 as euere mot y drynke wyn or ale
 I shal sey soth / tho housbondes that I hadde
 as thre of hem were goode / and two were badde 196
 the thre were goode men / riche and olde
 vnneth myghiten thei / the statute holde
 in which thei were bounden vn-to me
 ye wot wel what I meene of this parde 200
 as god me helpe / I laugh whan I thynke
 how pitously a nyght / I made hem swynke
 but bi my fay / I tolde of hit no store
 thei hadde me yeve here londe / and here tresore 204

GROUP D. § 1. WIFE'S PREAMBLE. **Corpus MS.**

me nedede nough^t / do lenger diligence [MS Arch. Seld. B. 14]
 to wynne here love / *and* do hem reuerence
 they loued me so wel / bi god above [leaf 85, back]
 that I ne tolde no deynte / of here love 208
 a wise woman wol besy hir / euere in oon
 to gete hir love / ye there as she hath noon
 but sith I hadde hem / holly in myn honde
 and that thei hadde / yeve me al here londe 212
 what schulde I take kepe hem for to please
 but if it were my *profy*te / *and* myn ease
 I sette hem so a worke / bi my fay
 that many a night / thei songen welaway 216
 the Bacoun was not fette for hem I trowe] [Arch. Seld. B. 14 ex-
 tract stops]
 That some men haue in Essex at Dunmowe [leaf 107; for 102]
 I gouerned hem so wel after my lawe
 That iche of hem ful blisful was and fawe / 220
 To bringe me gay þinges fro þe feyre
 They were ful glad whan I spak to hem faire [This line is by
 another hand.]
 ffor god it woot I chidde hem spytously
 Now herkneþ how I bar me proprely 224
 ye wyse wyues þat can vnderstande
 Thus schulde ye speke and bere hem wrongt on hande
 ffor half so boldely þer can no man
 Swere and lye as a womman can 228
 I seye not þis by wyues þat ben wise /
 But it be whan þat þey hem mysavysse /
 A wise wijf schal if þat sche can hire good
 Bere him on hond þat þe kow is wood 232
 And take witnessse of hir owne mayde /
 Of hire assent but herkeþ how I sayde /
 Sire olde kaynard is þis þin array
 Why is my neyhebores wijf so gay 236
 Sche is honoured ouer al wher sche goþ
 I sitte at hom I haue no þrifty cloþ
 What dostow at my neyhebores hous
 Is sche so fair art þou so amerous 240

What' rounē 3e wiþ oure mayde benedicite
 Sire olde lechour let' þy iapes be /
 And if' I haue a gossibb or a freende
 Wiþoute gilte 3e chide as a feende 244
 If' þat' I walke or pleye vnto his hous
 þou comest' home as drunken as a mous
 And prechest' on þi benche wiþ euel preef'
 þou seist' to me it is a gret' meschief' 248
 To wedde a pouer womman for costage
 And if' þat' sche be riche of' gret' parage
 þanne seistow þat' it' is a tormentrie /
 To suffre hire pryde and hire malencolie / 252
 And if' þat' sche be fair þou verray knaue /
 Thow seist' þat' euery holour wol hir haue / [leaf 107, back]
 Sche may no while in chastite abyde
 That' is assayed vppon eche syde 256
 Thou seist' some folk' desire vs for richesse
 Some for oure schapp and some for oure fayrnesse
 And some for sche can oþer synge or daunce
 þus saistow wernard god 3iue þe meschañce 260
 Some for here hondes and here armes smale
 Thus goþ al to þe deuel by þy tale/
 þou seist' men may not' kepe a castel walle
 It' may so longe assailed ben ouer alle / 264
 And if' þat' sche be foule þou seist' þat' sche
 Coueiteþ euery man þat' sche may see
 ffor as a spaynel sche wol on him lepe
 Til þat' sche fynde som man þat' wol hir chepe 268
 Ne non so grey goos goþ þer in þe lake
 As seist' þou þat' wol be wiþouten make
 And seist' it is an hard þing' for to weelde
 A wight' þat' noman wille his þankes helde 272
 Thus seistow lorel whan þou gost' to bedde
 And þat' no wys man needeþ for to wedde
 And noman þat' entendip' to þe heuene
 Wiþ wilde þunder dent' and fyre leuene / 276

Mote þy wicked necke be to-broke
 þou seist' þat' droppynge houses and eek' smoke
 And chydyng' wyues maken men to fle
 Out' of' here owne houses a benedicite 280
 What' eyleþ swich an olde man for to chyde
 Thou seist' we wyues wille oure vices hyde
 Til we be faste and þanne we wille hem schewe
 Wel may þis be a prouerbe of' a schrewe 284
 Thou seist' þat' Oxen assen hors and houndes
 They ben assayed at' diuerse stoundes
 Bacynes lauours or þat' men hem bye
 Spooones stooles and swich housbondrye 288
 And so ben cloþes pottes and oþer arrayes
 But' of' wommen aren maked non assayes [leaf 108, for 103]
 Til þei ben wedded olde dotard schrewe
 And seist' how þanne we wil oure vices schewe 292
 Thou seist' also þat' it' displeases me
 But' if' þou wille preyse my beaute
 And but' þou poure alwey vpon my face
 And clepe me faire dame in euery place 296
 And but' þou make a feste on þat' ilke day
 That' I was born and make me freische and gay
 And but' þou do to my norys honour
 And to my chambre wiþinne my bour 300
 And to my fadres folk' and his allyes
 Thus seist' þou olde barel ful of' lyes
 And yit of' oure apprentys Iankyn
 ffor his criske heer schynyng' so gold fyn 304
 And for he squyeres me boþe vp and doun
 yet' hastow þought' and fals suspicioñ
 I wil him nought' þough þou were deed to morwe
 But' telle me þis why hydest' þou with sorwe 308
 Thy keyes of' þi cheste away fro me /
 It' is my good as wel as þin parde
 What' wenestow make an ydyot' of' oure dame /
 Now by þat' lord þat' called is seint' Iame 312

GROUP D. § 1. WIFE'S PREAMBLE. Corpus MS.

- þou schalt' not' boþe þough þou were wood
 Be maister of' my body and my good
 That' oon þou schalt' forgo maugre þin eyzen
 What' helpeþ it' on me enquere and spyen 316
 I trowe þough þou woldest' loke me in þi cheste
 þou scholdest' seie wyf' go where þe leste
 Take youre disporte I wol not' leue no tales
 I knowe 3ow for a good wyf' dame Alis. 320
 We loue no man þat' takeþ keepe or charge
 Where þat' we go we wole be at' oure large
 Of' alle men blessed mote he be
 The wise astrologien dann ptholome 324
 That' seiþ þis prouerbe in his almageste
 Of' alle men his wisdam is hyeste [leaf 108, back].
 That' rekkeþ not' who haþ þe world in hande
 By þis prouerbe þou schalt' wel vnderstande 328
 haue þou ynough what' þar þe rekke or kare
 how meryly þat' oþer folkes fare
 ffor certes olde dotard by youre leue
 ye schulle haue queynte right' ynough at' eue 332
 he is to gret' a nygard þat' wol warne
 A man to light' a candel at' his lantarne
 he schal haue neuer þe lesse light' / parde
 haue þou ynough þe þar not' pleyne þe 336
 þou seist' also þat' if' þou make vs gay
 Wijþ cloþing' or with precious array
 That' it' is peril of' oure chastite
 And 3it' with wordes þou most' enforce me / 340
 And seie þise wordes in þe apostels name
 In habyt' made with chastite and schame
 ye wommen schulle apparaille you quod he/
 And nat' in tressed heer and gay perre 344
 As perle ne wijþ golde ne cloþes riche
 After þi texte ne after þi rubriche
 I wol not' werke as mochil as a gnatt'
 pou saydest' als þat' I was like a catt' 348

GROUP D. § 1. WIFE'S PREAMBLE. **Corpus MS.**

But who so wolde senge a cattes skyn
 panne wolde þe catt' wel dwellen in his In
 And if þe cattes skyn be slike and gay
 Sche nel not' dwelle in house half' a day 352
 But forþ sche wille or ony day be dawed
 To schewe hire skyn and go a caterwrawed
 þis is to say if I be gay sir schrewe
 I wil renne out' my borel for to schewe 356
 Sire olde fool what' helpeþ þe to spien
 They þou prey argus with his þousand yhen argus habuit
mille oculos.
 To be my warde corps as he can best'
 In feiþ he schal not' kepe me but' if' me lest 360
 yet' coupe I make his berd so mote I þee
 þou seist' eek' þat' þer ben þinges þree [leaf 109, for 104]
 þe whiche þinges troublen al þis Erþe
 And þat' no wight' may endure þe ferþe 364
 O leue sire schrewe ihesu schorte þi lijf'
 yet' prechest' þou and seist' an hateful wijf'
 y-rekned is for oon of' þis meschances
 Ben þer non oper maner resemblances 368
 þat' ye may likene 3oure parables to
 But' if' a sely wijf' be on of' þo
 And likenest' wommannes loue to helle
 To bareyne lond þer water may not' dwelle 372
 þou likenest' it/ also to wilde fyre
 The more it brenneth þe more it' haþ desire
 To consume eny þing' þat' brende wolde be
 Thou seist' þat' right' as wormes schende a tree 376
 Right' so a wyf' destroyeþ hir housebonde
 This knowen þey þat' ben to wyues bonde
 lordynges right' þus 3e han vnderstande
 Bar I stifly myn olde housbondes on hande 380
 þat' þus þey seyden in here drunkenesse
 And eek' þat' he hadde suspicioñ and Ielousnesse
 On Iankyn and on my nefe also
 O lord þe peyne I dede hem and þe woo 384

fful gilteles by goddes sweete pyne
 ffor as an hors I couþe boþe byte and whyne
 I couþe pleyne and I was in þe gilte
 Or elles ofte tyme I hadde ben spilte 388
 Who so þat first to mylle comþ first grynte
 I pleynd first so was oure werre stynte
 þey were ful glade to excusen hem ful blyue /
 Of þing which þei agilte neuer here lyue 392
 Of wenches wolde I beren hem on honde
 Whan þat for sike þey might vnneþe stonde
 yet tykeled I his herte for þat he
 Wende I hadde of him so gret chiertee 396
 I swore þat al my walkynge be night
 Was for to aspye wenches þat he dighte [leaf 109, back]
 vnder þat colour hadde I many a myrþe
 ffor alle such witte is ȝiue vs in oure birþe 400
 Desceipte wepyng spynnyng god haþ ȝiue
 To womman kyndely whil þat þei may lyue ¶ *fallere fiere nere*
 And þus of o þing I auunte me *dedit deus in muliere*
 At þe ende I hadde þe beste in eche degre 404
 By sleighte or force or by som maner þing
 As by continuel murmur and grucching
 Namely a bedde hadde þey meschaunce
 Ther wolde I chide and do hem no plesaunce 408
 I wolde no lenger in þe bedde abyde
 If þat I felte his arm ouer my syde
 Til he hadde made his raansom vnto me
 Thanne wolde I suffre him do his nycete 412
 And þerfore euery man þis tale I telle
 Wynne who so may al are for to selle
 Wiþ empty hande men may non haukes lure
 ffor wynnynge wolde I al his lust endure 416
 And make me a feyned appetyt
 And ȝit in bakoñ hadde I neuer delit/
 That maked me þat euer I wolde him chyde
 ffor þough þe pope hadde sete him besyde 420

GROUP D. § 1. WIFE'S PREAMBLE. Corpus MS.

I wolde nouzt spare him at his oughne bord
 ffor by my troupe I quitte him word for word
 As helpe me verrey god omnipotent
 pough I right now schulde make my testament 424
 I ne owe him a word þat it nys quitte
 I brought it so aboute by my witte
 That he muste 3iue it vp as for þe beste /
 Or elles hadde we neuere ben in reste 428
 ffor pough he loked as a leoun
 3et scholde he faile of his conclusiõ
 Thenne wolde I seye now goode leef take keepe /
 how mekely lokeþ wilkyn oure scheepe 432
 Com ner my spouse lat me ba þi cheeke
 3e schulle be al pacient and meeke [leaf 110, for 105]
 And han a sweete spiced conscience /
 Syn 3e so preche of Iobis pacience 436
 Suffreþ alwey syn 3e so wel can preche
 And but 3e do certein we schul 3ou teche
 That it is fair to haue a wyf in pees
 On of vs moot bowen doutelees 440
 And siþþe a man is more resonable
 Than woman is sire 3e moste be suffrable /
 What eyleþ 3ou to grucche þus and grone
 Is it for 3e wolde haue my queynte allone 444
 Whi tak it al / lo haue it euery del
 Petir I schrewe 3ou but 3e loue me wel
 ffor If I wolde selle my bele chose
 I coupe walke as freissche as a rose 448
 But I wil kepe it for 3our owne toþ
 3e be to blame by god I seye 3ou soþ
 Suche maner wordes hadde we on honde
 Now wol I speke of my ferþe housbonde / 452
 ¶ My ferþe housbond was a reuelour
 This is to seye he hadde a paramour
 And I was yong and ful of Ragerie
 Styborne and strong and ioly as a pye 456

- lord how coupe I daunce to an harpe smale /
 And synge ywys as eny nyghtyngale /
 Whan I hadde dronke a draughte of^t sweete wyn
 Meteling^t þe foule cherle þe swyn 460
 That^t with a staf^t byraft^t his wif^t hir lyf^t
 ffor sche drank^t wyn þough I hadde ben his wijf^t
 Ne schulde he nough^t han daunted me fro drynke
 And after wyn on venus most^t I þinke 464
 ffor also syker as colde engendreþ hayl
 A likerous mouþ^t moste han a likerous tail
 In womman violent^t is no defence
 This knowen lecchoures by experience 468
 But^t lord crist^t whan þat^t it^t remembreþ me /
 vpon my zouþe and my Iolyte [leaf 110, back]
 It^t tykeleþ me about^t myn herte roote
 vnto þis day it^t dop^t myn herte boote 472
 þat^t I haue had my world as in my tyme
 But^t age allas þat^t al wol envenyme
 haþ me byraft^t my beaute and my pip
 lat^t go far wel þe deuel go þer-wiþ 476
 The flour is gon þer is nomore to telle
 The bren as I best^t can now moot^t I selle
 But^t zet^t to be right^t mery wol I fonde /
 Now forþ to telle of^t my ferþe housbonde 480
 I seye I hatte in herte gret^t despyt^t
 That^t he of^t eny oþer hadde delyt^t
 But^t he was quyte by god and by sent Iose
 I made him of^t þe same woode a crose 484
 Not^t of^t my body in no foul manere
 But^t certainly I made folk^t such cheere
 That^t in his owne grece I made him frye
 ffor angery and for verray Ialousie / 488
 By god in erþe I was his purgatorie
 ffor which I hope his soule be in glorie /
 ffor god it^t wot^t he sat^t ful ofte and song^t
 Whan þat^t his scho ful bitterly him wrong^t 492

GROUP D. § 1. WIFE'S PREAMBLE. **Corpus MS.**

ffor þer was non sauf^t god and he þat^t wiste
 In many wise where I him twistē
 he deyed whan I cam fro Ierusalem
 And lip y-graue vnder þe Roode beem 496
 Al nys his tombe not^t so curious
 As was þe sepulcre of^t him Darius
 Which þat^t appelles wroughten subtilly
 It^t nys but^t waste to burye him preciously 500
 lat^t him far wel god ȝiue his soule reste
 he is now in his graue and in his cheste
 ¶ Now of^t my fyfþe housbonde wil I telle
 God late neuer his soule come in helle / 504
 And ȝit^t was he to me þe moste schrewe /
 That^t feele I on my ribbes al by rewe [leaf 111, for 106]
 And euere schal vnto myn endyng^t day
 But^t in a bed he was so freiss^h and gay 508
 And þer-wip-al so wel coupe he me glose /
 Whan þat^t he wolde han my bele chose /
 þat^t þough he hadde me bete on euery boon
 he coupe wynne agayn my loue anon 512
 I trowe I loued him þe bet^t for he
 Was of^t his loue daungerous to me
 We wymmen han if^t þat^t I schal not^t lye
 In þis manere a queinte fantasye 516
 Wayte what^t þing we may nought^t lightly haue
 Ther-after wole we crye alday and craue /
 fforbede vs þing^t and þat^t desyren we
 Prees on vs faste and þanne wil we flee / 520
 Wip daunger outen we alle oure chaffare
 Gret^t prees at^t market^t makeþ deere ware /
 And to gret^t cheep is holde / at^t litel pris
 This knoweþ euery womman þat^t is wys 524
 My .v.^e housbonde god his soule blesse
 Which þat^t I took^t for loue and no richesse /
 he som tyme was a clerk^t of^t Oxenforde
 And hadde left^t scole and wente at^t hom to borde 528

Wiþ my gossybb dwellyng^t in oure toun
 God haue hire soule hir name was alisoun
 Sche knew myn herte and al my priuyte /
 Better þan oure parissche prest^t so mote I þee / 532
 To hire bywreyed I my counseil al
 ffor hadde myn housbonde pyssed on a wal
 Or don a þing^t þat^t schulde haue cost^t his lyf^t
 To hire and to anoþer worþy wyf^t 536
 And to my neece which I loue wel
 I wolde han told his counseil euerydeþ
 And so I dede ful ofte god it^t woot^t
 That^t made his face often reed and hoot^t 540
 ffor verray schame and blamed himself^t for he
 hadde told to me so gret^t a pryuyte [leaf 111, back]
 And so it^t felle þat^t ones in a lente
 So ofte tyme vnto my gossib wente / 544
 ffor euer 3it I loued to be gay
 And for to walke in march^t aueril and may
 ffrom hous to hous to herkne sondry tales
 That^t Iankyn clerk^t and my gossibb dame alis 548
 And I my self^t in to þe felde wente
 myn housbond was at^t london al þat^t lente
 I hadde þe better leysir for to pleye
 And for to see and eek^t for to be seye 552
 Of^t lusty folk^t what^t wist^t I wher my *grace*
 Was schapen for to be or in what^t place
 þerfore made I my visitaciõs
 To vigilies and to processiõs 556
 To prechyng^t eek^t and to þis pilgrimages
 To pleyes of^t myracles and of^t mariages
 And wered vpon my gaye skarlet^t gytes
 This wormes ne þise moþþes ne þise mytes 560
 vpon my *peril* frete hem neuer a del
 And wostow why for þey were vsed wel
 ¶ Now wol I tellen forþ what^t happed me
 I seye þat^t in þe feeldes walked we 564

GROUP D. § 1. WIFE'S PREAMBLE. **Corpus MS.**

Til trewely we hadde such dalyance
 þis clerk' and I þat' of' my purueiaunce
 I spak' to him and seyde how þat' he
 If I were wydow schulde wedde me 568
 ffor certeynly I seye for no bobaunce /
 þat' was I neuer 3it' wipoute purueance
 Of' mariage ne of' oþer þinges eeke
 I holde a mouses witte nat' worþ a leek' 572
 þat' haþ but' oon hole for to stirten to
 And if' þat' faile þan is al y-do
 [I bar him on honde / he had enchaunted me [MS Arch. Seld. B. 14. No other Oxford MS has these lines.—G. Parker.]
 my dame taughte me / that subtilte
 and eke I seide / I mette of him al night
 he wolde haue shamed me / as I lay vpright
 and al my bed was ful / of verry blood
 but yit I hope / that ye shul do me good 580
 for blood bitokeneth gold / as me was taughte
 and al was fals / for I dremed right naughte
 but as I folwed ay / my dames lore
 als wel of that / as of other things more] [MS Arch. Seld. B. 14. extract stops]
 But' now sire lat' me see what' I schal seyn
 A ha . by god I haue my tale agayn
 Whan þat' my ferþe housbonde was on bere
 I wepe algate and made sory chere [leaf 112, for 107] 588
 As wyues mooten for it' is vsage /
 And with my keuercheeff' couered my visage
 But' for þat' I was purueyed of' a make /
 I weep but' smale and þat' I vndertake 592
 To chirche was myn housbond y-born on morwe
 With neghebour's þat' for him made sorwe
 And Iankyn oure clerk' was on of' þo
 As help me god whan þat' I seih him go 596
 After þe beere me þough't' he hadde a paire
 Of legges and of' feet' so cleene and faire
 That' al myn herte I yaf' vnto his holde
 he was I trowe twenty wynter oide 600

And I was fourty if I schal seye sop
 But yet I hadde alwey a coltes top
 Gat topped I was and pat bycam me wel
 I hadde þe printe of seint venus sel 604
 As help me god I was a lusty oon
 And fair and riche and 3ong and wel bygon
 And trewely as myn housbond tolde me
 I hadde þe beste queynte pat/ mighte be 608
 [for certis I am al fully Venerian [MS Arch. Seld. B. 14. Only
this Oxf. MS has these lines.
Barlow 20 omits ll. 605-8
too.—G. P.]
 in feling / and myn herte is Marcian
 Venus me yaff my lust / my likerousnes
 and Mars yaff me / my sturdy hardynes] 612
 Myn ascendent was Taur and Mars þerinne
 Allas allas pat euer loue was synne /
 I folwed ay myn inclinacioñ
 By vertue of my constellacioñ 616
 That made me I couþe not wiþdrawe
 My chambre of venus from a good felawe
 [yit haue I Mars is marke / vppon my face [MS Arch. Seld. B.
14. Laud 600 also
has these lines, 619
—226, but no other
Oxford MS has
them.—G. P.]
 and also in another prevy place
 for god so wis be / my sauacioun
 I loued neuere / bi no discessioun
 but euere folwed / myn appetite
 al were he long / shorte / blak or white 624
 I toke no kepe / so that he liked me
 how pore he was / ne eke of what degre]
 What schulde I seye but at þe monþes ende
 This Ioly clerk Iankyn pat was so heende / 628
 hap wedded me with gret solempnite
 And to him 3af I al þe lond and fee /
 That euere was me 3iuen þer byfore
 But afterward repentede me ful sore 632
 he nolde suffre no þing of my lest
 By god he smot me onys on þe lest
 ffor pat I rente out of his book a leef
 That of pat strook my eeren woxen deef [leaf 112, back] 636

¶ Stiborne I was as is a leonesse /
 And of my tonge a verray Iangleresse /
 And walke I wolde as I hadde don biforn
 ffrom hous to hous al þough he hadde it sworn 640
 ffor wiþ ful often tyme he wolde preche
 And me olde romañce gestes teche
 how he simplicius Gallus lefte his wijf^t
 And hire forsook^t for *terme* of his lijf^t 644
 Not^t but^t for openhede he hir say
 Lokyng^t out^t at his dore on a day
 Anoper Romayn tolde he me by name
 That^t for his wyf^t was at a Somer game / 648
 Wipoute his wytyng^t he forsook^t hire eeke
 And þanne wolde he vpon his bible seeke
 That^t ilke *prouerbe* of ecclesiaste
 Wher he comaūdeþ and forbedeþ faste 652
 Man schal not^t suffre his wyf^t to roule aboute
 þan wolde he seye right^t þus wipouten doute
 Who so þat^t buldeth his hous al of salwes *nota bene*
 And prikeþ his blynde hors ouer þe falwes 656
 And suffreþ his wijf^t go for to seeken halwes
 Is worþy for to be hanged on þe galwes
 But^t al for nough^t I sette nat^t an hawe
 Of his *prouerbes* ne of his olde lawe 660
 Ne I wolde not^t of him corrected be /
 I hate him þat^t my vice telleþ me
 And so don mo god woot^t of^t vs þan I
 This made him with me wood al outerly 664
 I nolde not^t forbere him in no caas
 Now wil I seie 3ou soþ by seint Thomas
 Why þat^t I rent^t out^t of his book^t a leef^t
 ffor which he smot^t me þat^t I was deef^t 668
 he hadde a book^t þat^t gladly night^t and day
 ffor his disporte he wolde rede alway
 he clepede valery and Theofraste
 At^t which book^t he lowh alwey ful faste [leaf 113, for 108] 672

GROUP D. § 1. WIFE'S PREAMBLE. Corpus MS.

And eek' þer was som tyme a clerk' in Rome /
 A Cardinal þat' highte seint' Ierome
 That' made a book' azein Iouynian
 In which book' eeke þer was Terculan 676
 Crisippus Trocula and helowys
 That' was abbesse nat' fer fro Parys
 And eek' þe parables of' Salomon
 Ovides art' and bokes many oon 680
 And alle þise were bounde in oo volume
 And euery nigh't and day was his custume
 Whan he hadde leysyr and vacacioun
 ffrom oþer worldly occupaciōn 684
 To reden in þis book' of' wikked wyues
 he knew of' hem mo legendes and lyues
 Than ben of' goode wyues in þe bible /
 ffor trusteþ wel it' is an impossible 688
 That' ony clerk' wole speken good of' wyues
 But' if' it' be of' holy seintes lyues
 Ne of' non oþer wommen neuer þe mo
 Who peynted þe lyoun tel me who 692
 By god if' wommen hadden writen stories
 As clerkes han wiþinne here oratories
 They wolde haue writen of' men more wickednesse
 Than alle þe marke of' adam may redresse 696
 The children of' mercurie and venus
 Ben in here werkyng contrarious
 Mercurie loueþ wisdam and science /
 And venus loueþ ryot' and dispence / 700
 And for here diuerse disposicioñ
 Eche falleþ in oþres exaltacioñ
 As þus god wot' mercurie is desolat
 In Piscis. where venus is exaltat' 704
 And venus falleþ þer mercurie is reised
 Therfore no womman of' no man is preysed
 The clerk' whan he is olde and may not' do
 To Venus werk' nought' worþ his olde scho

[leaf 113, back]

GROUP D. § 1. WIFE'S PREAMBLE. Corpus MS.

Than sitte he doun and writ in his dotage /
 That wommen con not keepe here mariage
 But now to purpos why I tolde þe
 That I was beten for a book pardee 712
 Vppon a night I ankyn þat was oure syre
 Redde on his book as he sat by þe fyre
 Of Eua first þat for hire wickednesse
 Was al mankynde brought to wrecchednesse 716
 [for which Ihesu crist / him silff was sleyne [MS Arch. Seld. B. 14, leaf 92, back]
 that bought vs with his herte blood ageyne [Laud MS 739 omits 716-720.]
 lo here expresse of recorde / may ye fynde
 that woman was the loos / of al mankynde] 720
 Tho redde he me how Sampson lost his heris
 Slepynge his lemman kit it wif hir scheris
 Thurgh which treson lost he boþe his eyen
 Tho redde he me if þat I schal not lyen 724
 Of ercules and of his deyanire /
 That caused him to sette himself a fyre
 No þing for-gat he þe penance and woo
 That Socrates hadde with his wyues tuo 728
 how þat ancipa caste pisse on his heed
 This seely man sat stille as he were deed
 he wyped his heed no more durste he seyn
 But or þat þundir stynte comeþ a reyn 732
 Of Phasipha þat was þe queen of Grete /
 ffor schrewednesse him þought þe tale swete
 ffy spek nomore it is a grisly þing
 Of hire horrible lust and hire likyng 736
 Of Clitermistra for hire leccherie
 That falsly made hir housbonde for to dye
 he redde it wif wel good deuocion
 he tolde me for what occasion 740
 Amphiorax at Thebes lost his lyf
 Myn housbond had a legend of his wif
 Eriphilem þat for an ouche of golde
 haþ pryuyly vnto þe Grekes tolde 744

GROUP D. § 1. WIFE'S PREAMBLE. *Corpus MS.*

Wher þat^t hir housbond hid him in a place
 ffor which he hadde at^t Thebes sory *grace*
 Of lyma tolde he me and of^t lueye 747
 They boþe made here housbondes for to dye [leaf 114, for 109]
 That^t on for loue þat^t oþer was for hate
 lyma hire housebonde on euen late
 Enpoysoned hadde for sche was his foo
 Lucia likerous loued hir housbonde so 752
 That^t for he scholde vppon hir alwey þinke
 Sche yaf^t him such a loue maner drynke
 That^t he was deed er it^t was by þe morwe
 And þus algates housbondes han sorwe 756
 Than tolde he me how oon latumyus
 Compleigned to his felaw arius
 That^t in his gardyn growed such a tree
 On which he seyde þat^t his wyues þre 760
 hanged hemselue for hertes dispitous
 O leue broþer quod þis arious
 3if^t me a plante of^t þat^t blisful tree
 And in my gardyn planted schal it be/ 764
 Of later date of^t wyues haþ he redde
 That^t han slayne here housbondes in þe bedde
 And leet^t hir lecchour dight^t hir al þe night^t
 Whan þat^t þe corps lay in þe floor vpright^t 768
 And some han dryuen nayles in here brayn
 Whil þat^t þey sleepe and þus þey han hem slayn
 Some han 3iuen poyson in here drynke
 He spak^t more harme þan herte may beþynke 772
 And þer-wiþ-al he knew of^t mo prouerbes
 þan in þis worlde þer growen gresse or herbes ¶ *Solo melius est*
 Bet^t is *quod* he þin habitacioñ *habitare*
 Be with a leoun or a foul dragoñ 776
 Than with a womman vsyng^t for to chyde
 Bet^t is *quod* he heihe in þe roof^t abyde
 Than wiþ an angry wyf^t doun in an hous
 They ben so wicked and contrarious 780

þey hateþ þat' here housbondes loueþ ay
 he seyde a womman cast' hir schame away
 Whan sche cast' of hir smok' and forþermo
 A fair womman but' sche be chast' also [leaf 114, back] 784
 Is lyk' a golddryng' on a sowes nose
 Who wolde wene or wolde suppose
 þe woo þat' in myn herte was and pyne
 And whan I saugh he wolde neuer fyne 788
 To reden on þis cursed book' al night'
 Al sodeinly þre leues haue I pligh't
 Out' of his book' right' as he red and eeke
 I with my fest' so took' him on þe cheeke 792
 þat' in oure fire he fille bakward adoun
 And he vpstirte as doþ a wood leoun
 And with his fest' he smot' me on þe heed
 þat' in þe floor I lay as I were deed 796
 And whan he saugh how stille þat' I lay
 he was agast and wolde han fledde away
 Til atte laste out' of my swowe I brayde
 O hast' þou slayn me false þeef' I sayde 800
 And for my lond þus hastow moerdred me /
 Or I be deed 3it' wol I kisse þe
 And neer he come and kneled faire adoun
 And seyde deere suster alisoun 804
 As help me god I schal þe neuer smyte
 þat' I haue doon it' is þiself' to wyte
 fforziue it' me and þat' I þe beseke /
 And 3it' eftsones I hitte him on þe cheeke / 808
 And seyde þeef' þus mochel am I wreke
 Now wil I dye I may no lenger speke
 But' at' þe laste / wiþ mochel care and woo
 We felle acorded by vs seluen tuo 812
 he 3af' me al þe brydel in myn hond
 To haue þe gouernance of' hous and lond
 And of' his tunge and of' his hand also/
 And made him brenne his book' anon right' þo 816

GROUP D. § 1. WIFE'S PREAMBLE. *Corpus MS.*

And whan þat I hadde geten vnto me
 By maistrie al þe souerainte
 þan he seyde myn owne trewe wyf<sup>[leaf 114, back, at bottom
of the page]</sup>
 Do as þou list þe terme of alle þy lif /^[leaf 101b. for 110]
 kepe þin honour and keep eek' myn estate /
 After þat' day we hadde neuer debate /
 God help me so I was to him as kynde
 As eny wijf' from Denmark' in to ynde 824
 And al so trewe and so was he to me /
 I pray to god þat' sitte in mageste
 So blisse his soule for his mercy deere
 Now wol I telle my talé if' 3e wol heere 828
 ¶ Here endeþ þe prologe of' þe gode wif' of' Baþe

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

The frere lowh̄ whan he haþ herd al þis
 Now dame *quod* he so haue I ioye or blis
 This is a long' preamble of' a tale
 And whan þis somnour herde þe freere gale / 832
 Lo *quod* þe somnour goddes armes tuo
 A freere wille entremette him euermo
 lo goode men a flye and eek' a freere
 Wille falle in euery dissche and eek' / matiere / 836
 What' spekest' þou of' preambulaciõn
 What' amble or trotte or pees or go sit' down
 Thou lettest / oure disport' in þis manere /
 3e woltow so þou sompnour *quod* þe frere / 840
 Now by my fay I schal er þat' I go
 Telle of' a Somnour such a tale or tuo
 That' alle þe folk' schulle laughen in þis place
 Now elles frere I beschrewe þy face 844
 Quod þis somnour and I byschrewe me /
 But' if' I telle þe tales tuo or þre
 Of' freres or I come to Sydyngborne
 þat' I schal make þin herte for to morne 848

GROUP D. § 1. WIFE'S PREAMBLE. **Corpus MS.**

ffor wel I wot þy pacience is gon
 Oure hoste cryde pees and þat anon
 And seyde lat þe womman telle hir tale /
 Ye faren as folk þat dronken ben of ale 852
 Do dame telle forþ youre tale and þat is beste
 Al redy sire *quod* sche right as yow leste
 [¹If I have licens o]f þis worþi frere [¹ *MS cut away. lf 101b, bk*]
 [¹Yis dame telle] forþ þi tale I wol here 856

[¹ Here bigynneth] þe goode wyues tale of^t bathe [*on lf 101, bk*]
[¹ MS cut away.]

IN olde dayes of^t þe king^t arthour
 [O]^f which þat^t britons speken gret^t honour
 [A]^l was þis land fulfild of^t fayerie
 [T]^{he} elfe queen with hire ioly compaignie 860
 [D]^aunced wipouten in many a greene meede
 [T]^{his} was þe olde opynioñ as I rede
 [I speke of many] hundred 3eer ago
 [But] now can noman see non elues moo 864
 [For] þe grete charite and þe preyeres
 [Of] lymytoures and oþre pouere freeres
 [T]^{hat} serchen euery land and euery stream
 [A]^s þikke as motes in þe sonne beem^t 868
 Blissyng halles chambres boures
 [C]^{itees} burghes castels hihe toures
 [T]^{hropes} bernes schipenes dayeries
 This makeþ þat^t þer ben no fayeries 872
 ffor þer as wont^t to walke was an elf^t
 Ther walkeþ now þe lymytour himself^t
 In vndermeles and in morwenynges
 And seiþ his matyns and his holy þinges 876
 As he goþ in his lymytacioun
 Wommen may go now sauffy vp and down
 In euery busch or vnder euery tree
 þer is non oþer Incubus but^t he 880
 And he wol do hem but^t dishonour
 And so felle it / þat^t þis king^t arthour
 hadde in his hous a lusty bacheler
 þat^t on a day cam rydyng^t fro ryuer 884

And happed alone as sche was born
 he saugh a mayden walkyng' him biford
 Of which mayde maugre hire heed
 By verray force he refte hir maydenhed 888
 for which oppression was such clamour
 And swich pursute vnto þe king' artour [leaf 102, for 111]
 That dampned was þis knight' for to be deed
 By cours of' lawe and scholde haue lost' his heed 892
 Perauenture such was þe statute þo
 But þat' þe queene and oþer ladyes mo
 So longe preyede þe king' of' grace /
 Til he his lijf' him graunted in þe place 896
 And yaf' him to þe queen al at' hire wille
 To cheese wheþer sche wolde him saue or spille
 The queen þankeþ þe king' with alle hire might'
 And after þis þus spak' sche to þe knight'
 Whan þat' sche seigh hir tyme on a day 900
 þou stondest' 3et' *quod* sche in such aray
 þat' of' þi lijf' 3et' hast' þou no suerte
 I graunte þe lijf' if' þou canst' telle me 904
 What' þing' is it/ þat' wommen most desiren
 Be war and keep þi neeke bon from yren
 And if' þou canst' nough't' telle it' me anon
 3it/ wol I 3iue þe leue for to gon 908
 A twelf' monþe and a day to seeke and lere
 An answeere sufficient/ in þis matiere
 And seurte wil I han or þat' þou pace
 Thy body for to yelden in þis place 912
 Wo was þis knight' and sorufully he sikeþ
 But what' he may not' do al as him likeþ
 And at' þe laste he chese him for to wende /
 And come a3ein riġht' at' þe yeres ende / 916
 With swich answeere as god wolde him purueye /
 And takeþ his leue and wendeþ forþ his weye
 he seekeþ euery hous and euery place /
 Wher as he hopeþ for to fynde grace 920

GROUP D. § 2. WIFE'S TALE. Corpus MS.

To lerne what þing' wommen louen most
 But' he now couþe arryuen in no coost'
 Wher as he mighte fynde in þis matere /
 Tuo creatures acordyng' in feere 924
 Some seyden wommen loue best' richesse
 Some seyde honour some seyden Iolynesse / [leaf 102, back]
 Some riche array some seyden lust' a bedde /
 And ofte time to be wydewe and wedde / 928
 Some seyden þat' we be most' yesed
 Whan þat' we ben y-flatered and y-pleased
 he goþ ful neigh þe soþe I wol nat' lye
 A man schal wynne vs best' wiþ flaterie 932
 And with attendaunce and wiþ besynesse
 Ben we y-lymed boþe more and lesse /
 And some men sein how þat' we louen best'
 ffor to be fre and do right' as vs lest' 936
 And þat' noman / repreue vs of' oure vice
 But' seye þat' we be wyse and noþing' nyce
 ffor trewely þer nys non of' vs alle /
 If' eny wight' wol clawe vs on þe galle / 940
 þat' we nyl loke or he seiþ vs soþ
 Assay and he schal fynde it' þat' he doþ
 ffor be we neuer so vicious wiþinne
 We wil be holden wys and clene of' synne 944
 And some men sein þat' gret' delyt' haue we
 ffor to be holden stable and ek' secre
 And in oo purpos stedefastly to dwelle
 And not' bewreie þing' þat' men vs telle 948
 But' þat' tale is not' worþ a rake stele
 Parde we wommen konnen noþing' hele
 Witnesse on Myda wil 3e heere þe tale /
 Ovide amonges oþer þinges smale 952
 Setthe myda hadde vnder his longe heris
 Growynge vp his heed two assis eeres
 þe whiche vice he hidde as he best' might'
 fful sotilly from euery mannes sight 956

þat' saf' his wijf' þer wist' of' it no mo
 he loued hire most' and trusted to hire also
 he preyde hire most' þat' vnto no creature
 Sche scholde not' tellen of' his disfigure 960
 Sche swor him nay for al þis world to wynne /
 Sche wolde do þat' vylanye or þat' synne [leaf 103, for 112]
 To make hire housbonde han so foul a name
 ffor reproeuynge of' him and foule schame 964
 But' napeles hir þoughte þat' sche dyde
 That' sche so longe scholde a counseil hyde
 hir þought' it' sat' so sore aboute hir herte
 That' needely som word hir most' asterte 968
 And sippe sche dorste tellen it no man
 Doun to a mareys faste sche ran
 Til sche cam þer hir herte was a fyre
 And as a bytore bumliþ in þe myre 972
 Sche leyde hire mouþ vnto þe water doun
 Bewreie me nough't þou water with þy soun
 Quod sche to þe I telle it and nomo
 Myn housebonde haþ longe asses eeres tuo 976
 Now is myn herte al hool now it' is oute
 I might' no lenger kepe it' out' of' doute
 here may 3e see þough we a tyme abyde
 Yet' out' it' moot' we mowe no counseil hyde 980
 The remenant' of' þe tale if' ye wol heere
 Redeþ Ovyde and 3e may it' leere
 This knight' of' which my tale is specially
 Whan þat' he saugh he mighte nough't come þerby 984
 þis is to seye what' wommen louen most'
 Wipinne his herte sorwful was þe gost'
 But' home he goþ he mighte nough't soiourne
 þe day was come þat' homward most' he tourne 988
 And in his way it' happed him to ryde
 In alle his care vnder a forest' syde
 Wher he saugh on one daunce go
 Of' ladyes xxiiij. and 3it' mo 992

| | |
|--|------------------|
| Toward þe daunce he drowe him yerne | |
| In hope þat som wisdam schulde he lerne | |
| But certeinly or he cam fully þere / | |
| Vanyssched was þe daunce he nyste not where / | 996 |
| No creature saugh he þat bar lyf | |
| Saue in þe grene he saugh sittynge a wijf | [leaf 103, back] |
| A foulere wight þer may non deuyse | |
| Agayn þe knight þe olde wijf gan arise | 1000 |
| And seyde sire knight here forþ ne liþ no wey | |
| Telle me what þat 3e seken by 3oure fey | |
| Peraenture it may þe better be / | |
| This olde folk konne mochel þing quod sche / | 1004 |
| my leue mooder quod þis knight certeyn | |
| I am but ded but if þat I can seyn | |
| What þing it is þat wommen most desire | |
| Cowde 3e me wisse I wolde wel quyte youre hyre | 1008 |
| Plight me þi troupe here in myn hand quod sche | |
| The nexte þing þat I require þe | |
| Thou schalt it do if it lye in þy might | |
| And I wil telle it 3ou or it be night | 1012 |
| haue here my troupe quod þe knight I graunte | |
| Than quod sche I may me wel auaunte | |
| Thy lyf is sauf for I wol stonde þer by | |
| vpon my lijf þe queen wole seye as I | 1016 |
| lat se which is þe proudest of hem alle | |
| That wereþ on a kerchef or a calle | |
| þat dar say nay of þat I schal 3ou teche | |
| lat vs go forþ wijoute lenger speche | 1020 |
| Tho rowned sche a pystel in his eere | |
| And bad him to be glad and haue no feere | |
| Whan þey be comen to þe court þis knight | |
| Seyde he hadde holde his day as he hadde hight | 1024 |
| And redy was his answer as he sayde | |
| fful many a noble wijf and many a mayde | |
| And many a wydowe for þat þey ben wyse / | |
| The queen hir seluen sittynge as Iustyse | 1028 |

GROUP D. § 2. WIFE'S TALE. **Corpus MS.**

Assembled ben his answer for to heere
 And afterward þis knight was bode appeere
 And þat þe knight schal telle in audience
 To euery wight comanded was scilence 1032
 What þing þat worldly wommen louen meest
 This knight ne stood nat stille as doþ a beest [leaf 104, for 113]
 But to his question anon answerde /
 With manly vois þat al þe court / it herde 1036
 My liege lady generally quod he /
 Womman desireþ to haue soueraynte
 As wel ouer hir housbonde and hire loue
 And for to be in maystrie him aboute 1040
 þis is þoure most desyr þough 3e me kille
 Doþ as you list I am heer at your wille
 In al þe court ne was þer wijf ne mayde
 Ne wydewe þat contraried þat he sayde 1044
 But seyden he was worþy han his lijf
 And wijf þat word vp sterte þat olde wijf
 Which þat þe knight saugh sitting on þe grene
 Mercy quod sche my souerayn lady queene / 1048
 Or þat youre court departe do me right
 I taughte þis answere vnto þis knight
 ffor which he plichte me his treuþe þere
 The firste þing I wolde of him requere 1052
 he wolde it do if it lay in his might
 Byfore þe court þan preye I þe sire knight
 Quod sche þat þou me take vnto þi wijf
 ffor wel þou wost þat I haue kept þy lijf 1056
 If I seye fals sey nay vpon þy fey
 This knight answerde allas and weylowey
 I wot right wel þat such was my biheste /
 ffor goddes loue chese a newe requeste / 1060
 Tak al my good and lat my body go
 Nay þan quod sche I schrewe vs boþe tuo
 ffor þough þat I be foule and olde and poure
 I nolde for al þe metal ne for oure 1064

- þat' vnder erþe is graue or liþ aboute
 But' if' þat I þy wyf' were and þi loue
 My loue *quod* he nay my dampnaciõ
 Allas þat' eny of' my naciõ 1068
 Scholde euere so foule y-disparaged be
 But' al for nougħt' þe ende is þis þat' he [leaf 104, back]
 Constreynd was he nedes moste hire wedde
 And takeþ þis olde wijf' and goþ to bedde 1072
 Now wolden some men seyn *perauenture*.
 That for my neegligence I do no cure
 To telle þou þe Ioye and þe array
 That' at' þe feste was þat' ilke day 1076
 To which þing' schortly answe're I schal
 I seye þer was no ioye ne feste at' al
 þer nas but' heynesse and mochil sorwe
 ffor priuely he wedded hire on a morwe 1080
 And al day after hidde him as an owle /
 So wo was him his wijf' loked so foule
 Gret' was þe sorwe þe knight' hadde in his þougħt'
 Whan he was with' his wyf' a bedde brought'
 he walweþ and torneþ to and fro
 his olde wijf' lay smylyng' euere mo
 And seide O dere housbonde o *benedicite*
 ffareþ euery knight' þus with his wijf' as þe 1088
 Is þis þe lawe of' king arthures hous
 Is euery knight' of' his loue þus daungerous
 I am þour owne loue and eek' þoure wijf'
 I am sche which þat' saued haþ þoure lijf' 1092
 And certes þit' dede I þou neuer vnright'
 Why fare þe þus wiþ me þe ferste night
 þe faren like a man þat' hadde lost' his wit
 ffy what' is my gilt' for godes loue tel it' 1096
 And it' schal ben amended if' I may
 Amended *quod* þis knight' nay nay
 That' wil nat' ben amended neueremo
 þou art' so loþly and so olde also 1100

GROUP D. § 2. WIFE'S TALE. Corpus MS.

And þer-to comen of so lowh a kynde
 That litel wonder is þough I walwe & wynde
 So wolde god myn herte wolde breste
 Is þis *quod* sche þe cause of þoure vnreste : 1104
 3e · certainly *quod* he no wonder is
 Now sire *quod* sche I couþe amende al þis [leaf 105, for 114]
 If þat me liste or it were dayes þre
 So wel 3e mighte bere þou vnto me 1108
 ¶ But for 3e speken of such gentillesse ¶ *Nota bene de Nobilitate*
 As is descended out of alle richesse /
 þat þefore schulden 3e be gentil men
 Such erregance nys nat worþ an hen 1112
 lo who þat most is vertuous alway
 Preuy and aperte and most endeþ ay
 To do þe gentil dedes þat he can
 And take him for þe grettest gentil man 1116
 Crist wole we clayme of him oure gentilnesse
 Nat of oure elders for here olde richesse
 ffor þough þey 3eue vs alle here heritage
 ffor which we clayme to be of heigh parage 1120
 3et may þey not bequeþe for no þing
 To non of vs here vertuous lyuyng
 That made hem gentil men y-called be
 And bad vs folwen hem in such degre 1124
 Wel can þe wise poete of fflorence
 That highte dante speke in þis sentence
 Lo in swich maner ryme is dauntes tale
 fful seelde vp riseþ by his branches smale 1128
 Prowesse of man for god of his prowesse /
 Wil þat of him we clayme oure gentilnesse
 ffor of oure elders may we noþing clayme
 But temperel þing þat we may hurte and mayme 1132
 Ek euery wight wot þis as wel as I
 If gentillesse were plaunted naturelly
 Vnto a certein linage doun þe lyne
 Pryue and aperte þanne wolde þey neuer fyne 1136

- To don of gentillesse þe faire office
 þey mighten do no vylanye ne vice
 Tak' fyre and bere it' in þe derkest' hous
 Bitwixe þis and þe mount' of Caucasous 1140
 And lat' men schette þe dores and go þenne
 3et' wol þe fyr as faire lye and brenne [leaf 105, back]
 As þough a þousand men might' it beholde
 his office naturel ay wol it' holde / 1144
 vp peril of lyf til þat' it dye /
 here may 3e se wel how þat' genterie /
 Is not' annexed to possession
 Sippe folk' do nat' here operacion 1148
 alwey as doþ þe fir lo in his kinde
 ffor god it' wot' men may ful often fynde
 A lordes sone do schame and vilanye
 And he þat' wol haue pris of his genterie 1152
 ffor he was boren of a gentil hous
 And hadde his eldres noble and vertuous
 And nyl himseluen do no gentil dedes
 Ne folwe his gentil ancestre þat' ded is 1156
 he nys nat' gentil be he duk' or eerle
 ffor vyleyns synful dedes make a cheerle
 ffor gentilnesse nys but' reneute
 Of þin ancestres for here beaute 1160
 Which is a strong' þing' for þi persone
 The gentillesse comeþ fro god allone
 Thanne comeþ oure verray gentillesse of' grace
 It' was noþing' byqueþe vs wiþ oure place / 1164
 þinkeþ how noble as seiþ valerius
 Was þilke Tullius hostilius
 That' out' of pouert' ros to heigh noblesse
 Redeþ Senec/ and redeþ eek Boesse / 1168
 þer schulde 3e seen expres þat' it' no dredis
 That' he is gentil þat' doþ gentil dedis
 And þerfore deere housebonde I þus conclude
 Al were it' þat' myn ancestres were rude 1172

- zet' may þat' heye god and so hope I
 Graunte me grace to lyue *vertuously*
 Thanne am I gentil whan þat' I begynne
 To lyuen *vertuously* and weyuen synne 1176
 And þer as ye of' pouert' me repreue
 The hihe god on whom þat' we bileue [leaf 106, for 115a]
 In wilful pouert' chese to leese his lijf' Nota de paupertate
 And certes euery man and mayde and wijf' 1180
 May vnderstonde ihesu heuen king'
 Ne wolde not' chese a vicious lyuyng'
 Glad pouert' is an honest' þing' certeyn
 þis wille Senec' and oþer clerkes sein 1184
 Who so þat' holt' him payed of' his pouert'
 I holde him riche al hadde he nought' cert'
 he þat' coueyteþ is a pouere wight'
 ffor he wolde han þat' nys nat' in his might' 1188
 But' he þat' nought' haþ ne coueyteþ to haue
 Is riche al þough men holde him but a knaue
 Verray pouert' is synne proprely
 Iuuenal seiþ of' pouert' myrily 1192
 The pouere man whan he goþ by þe way
 Bifore þe þeues he may synge and play
 Pouert' is hatel good and as I gesse /
 A ful gret' brynger out' of' busynesse 1196
 A gret' amender eek' of' Sapience
 To him þat' lackeþ it in pacience
 Pouert' is þis al þough it' seme alenge
 Possession þat' no wight' wol challenge 1200
 Pouert' ful often whan a man is lowe
 Makeþ his god and eek' himself' to knowe
 Pouert' a spectacle is as þinkeþ me
 þurgh which he may his verray freendes se 1204
 And þerfore syn þat' I you nought' greue
 Of' my pouerte nomore me repreue
 Now sire of' eelde 3e reproeue me
 And certes sire þough non auctorite 1208

GROUP D. § 2. WIFE'S TALE. Corpus MS.

Were in no book^t / 3e gentil of^t honour
 Seyn þat^t men schulde an old wijf^t do fauour
 And clepe him fader for 3our gentilnesse /
 And auctours schal I fynden as I gesse / 1212
 Now þer 3e seyn þat^t I am foul and olde
 Than drede 3ou nough^t to ben a cokewolde [leaf 106, back]
 ffor filþe and helþe al so mote I þe
 Ben grete wardeyns vpon chastite 1216
 But^t napeles syn I knowe 3oure delyt^t
 I schal fulfille your worldly appetyt^t
 Chees now *quod* sche on of^t þese þinges tweye /
 To han me foule and olde til þat^t I deye 1220
 And be to 3ow a trewe humble wijf^t
 And neuere 3ow displese in alle my lijf^t
 Or elles 3e wol haue me 3ong^t and fair
 And take 3our auenture of^t þe repair 1224
 That^t schal come to your hous by cause of^t me
 Or in som oþer place wel may be
 Now chees 3our seluen wheþer þat^t 3ou likeþ
 þis knight^t auysed him and sore sikeþ 1228
 But^t atte laste he seyde in þis manere
 My lady and my loue and wijf^t so deere
 I putte me in 3oure wise gouernañce
 Cheseþ 3our self^t which may be most^t plesance 1232
 And most^t honour to yow and me also
 I do no force þe wheþer of^t þe tuo
 ffor as 3ou likeþ it sufficeþ me
 þanne haue I gote of^t 3ou maystrie *quod* sche 1236
 Syn I may cheese and gouerne as me list^t
 3e certes wijf^t *quod* he I holde it^t for best^t
 kisse me *quod* sche we be no lenger wroþe /
 ffor by my trouþe I wol be to yow boþe 1240
 þis is to sein / to be boþe fair and good
 I pray to god þat^t I mote steruen wood
 But^t I to 3ou be also sad and trewe /
 As euer was wijf^t syn þat^t þe world was newe 1244

GROUP D. § 2. WIFE'S TALE. Corpus MS.

And but I be to morwe as fair to seene
 As eny lady emperice or queene /
 þat is bitwen þe est and eek þe weste /
 Do wiþ my lijf and deþ right as 3ou leste 1248
 Cast vp þe curteyne loke how it is / [bottom of leaf 106]
 And whanne þat þe knight sawh al þis [leaf 115 b]
 That sche so fair was and so 3ong þerto
 ffor ioye he hente hir in his armes tuo 1252
 his herte baped in a baþ of blisse
 A þousand tyme a rowe he gan hire kisse
 And sche obeyed him in euery þing
 That mighte doon him pleisance or likyng 1256
 And þus þey lyued vnto here lyues ende
 In perfyt ioye and ihesu crist vs sende
 housboudes meke 3onge and freissche abedde
 And grace to ouerlede hem þat we wedde 1260
 And eek I pray to Ihesu schorte here lyues
 That wol not be gouerned by here wyues
 And olde and angry nyggardes of dispence 1263
 God send hem sone a verray pestilence ¶ Explicit

¶ Here bygynneþ þe prologe of þe ffrere /

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>This worþy lymytour þis noble ffrere he made alway lowrynge cheere vpon þe somnour but for honeste No vyleynes word as 3it' spak' he / But atte laste he seyde vnto þe wijf Dame goode god 3if' 3ou right' good lijf 3e han touched heer al so mote I þe In scole matier gret' difficile 3e han seid mochel ping' right' wel I seye But dame heere as we ryden by þe weye Vs nedeþ nat' to speken but of game And late auctoritees a goddes name To preching' & to scole eek' of' clergie / But if' it' like vnto þis companye I wol 3ou of' a somnour telle a game Parde 3e may wel knowe by þe name That' of' no somnour may no good be sayd I pray þat' non of' 3ou be yuele payd A somnour is a romere vp and doun Wijþ amendement' of' fornicacioun And is y-bete at' euery townes ende Oure host' þo spak' a sire 3e scholde ben heende And curteys as a man of' 3our astat' In companye we wille no debat' / Telleþ 3oure tale and lateþ þe somnour be Nay <i>quod</i> þe somnour lat' him seye to me What' so him list' whan it comþ to my lot' By god I schal him quiten euery grot' I schal him telle such a gret' honour It' is to be a flater yng' lymytour And eek' of' ful many an oþer cryme Which nedeþ nat' / rehersen at þis tyme And his office I schal him telle y-wys Oure host' answerde pees nomore of' þis And afterward he seyde vnto þe frere / Telle forþ 3oure tale my leue mayster deere</p> | <p>¶ Incipit' pro- logus ffratris</p> <p>1268</p> <p>1272</p> <p>1276</p> <p>1280</p> <p>1284</p> <p>[leaf 115, back]</p> <p>1288</p> <p>1292</p> <p>1296</p> <p>1300</p> |
|--|--|

¶ Here bygynneth þe

Whilom þer was dwellyng^t in Couentre ¶ ffreres tale
 An erchedekne a man of^t heih degre
 That^t boldely dide execuciōn
 In punysshchyng^t of^t fornicaciōn 1304
 Of^t wichcraf^t and eek^t of^t Bawderie
 Of^t diffamacioñ and auoutrie
 Of^t chirche reeves and of^t testamentes
 Of^t contractes and of^t lak^t of^t sacramentes 1308
 Of^t vsure and Symonye also
 But^t certes lecchours dede he grettest^t wo
 They scholden synge if^t þey were hent
 And smale tyþeres weren foule y-schent 1312
 If eny *person* wolde vpon hem pleyne
 Ther might^t astirte him no pecunial peyne
 ffor smale tyþes and eek^t for smal offrynge
 he made þe poeple spitously to synge 1316
 ffor or þe bisschop caught^t hem wiþ his hook^t
 They weren in þe Erchedeknes book^t
 And þanne hadde he þurgh his Iurdictiōn
 Power to don on hem correctiōn 1320
 he hadde a somnour redy to his hande [leaf 116]
 A sleyere boy was non in engelande
 ffor sotilly he hadde his especiaile
 That^t taughte him where þat^t him mighte auayle 1324
 he coude spare of^t lecchours on or tuo
 To techen him to foure and twenty mo
 ffor þough þis somnour wood were as an hare
 To telle his harlottrie I wil not^t spare 1328

GROUP D. § 4. FRIAR'S TALE. Corpus MS.

| | |
|--|------------------|
| ffor we ben oute of ^t here correction | |
| They han of ^t vs no Iuresdictionē | |
| We neuer schullen terme of ^t alle hire lyues | |
| Petur so ben þe wommen of ^t þe Styues | 1332 |
| Quod þis Somnour y-putt ^t out ^t of ^t oure cure | |
| Pees with meschance and with mysauenture | |
| Thus seyde oure host ^t and let ^t him telle his tale | |
| Now telleþ forþ and late þe somnour gale | 1336 |
| Ne spareþ nouȝt ^t myn ougline maister deere | |
| This false þeef ^t þis somnour quod þe ffrerē / | |
| hadde alwey bawdes redy to his hond | |
| As eny hauke to lure in Engelond | 1340 |
| That ^t telle him al þe secre þat ^t þey knewe | |
| ffor here aqueintance was nat ^t come of ^t newe | |
| þey weren his approuours priuely | |
| he tok ^t himself ^t a gret ^t profyt þerby | 1344 |
| his maister knew nat ^t alwey what ^t he wan | |
| Wipouten maundement ^t of ^t a lewed man | |
| he coude somne on peyne of ^t cristes curs | |
| And þey were ynly gladdē to fille his purs | 1348 |
| And made him grete festes atte nale | |
| And right ^t as Iudas hadde purses smale | |
| And was a þeef ^t right ^t swich a þeef ^t was he | |
| his mayster hadde but ^t half ^t his dewete | 1352 |
| he was if ^t I schal ȝiuen him his laude | |
| A theef ^t and eek ^t a sompnour and a baude | |
| he hadde eek ^t wenches of ^t his retenue | |
| That ^t wheþer þat ^t <i>sir</i> Roberd or <i>sir</i> huwe | 1356 |
| Or Iohn ^t or Rauf ^t or who þat ^t it ^t were | [leaf 116, back] |
| That ^t lay by hem þat ^t tolde it in his eere | |
| Thus was þe wenche and he of ^t oon assent ^t | |
| And he wolde fecche a feyned maundement ^t | 1360 |
| And somne hem to þe Chapitre boþe tuo | |
| And pile þe man and late þe wenche go | |
| þanne wolde he seye I schal freend for þy sake | |
| Do strike þe out ^t of ^t oure lettres blake | 1364 |

GROUP D. § 4. FRIAR'S TALE. Corpus MS.

| | |
|---|------------|
| þe þar nomore as in þis cas trauayle | |
| I am þi frend þer I þe may auayle | |
| Certein he knew of briberies mo | |
| þan possible is to telle þou vnto | 1368 |
| ffor in þis worlde is dogge for no bowe | |
| That knew an hurt' deer from an old bite kowe | |
| Than þat þis sompnour knew a sleigh lecchour | |
| Or avouter or elles a paramour | 1372 |
| And for þat was þe fruyt' of alle þe rent | |
| Therefore on it he sette al his entent | |
| And so bifelle þat ones on a day | |
| This somnour euer waytyng' on his pray | 1376 |
| Rode for to somne an old wijf a ribibe | |
| ffeynyng' a cause for he wolde bribe | |
| And happede þat he seigh byfore hym ryde / | |
| A gay yoman vnder a forest' syde | 1380 |
| A bowe he bar and arwes bright' and keene | |
| he hadde vppon a courtepy of grene / | |
| An hatte vppon his heed wiþ frenges blake | |
| Sire quod þis Sompnour hail and wel atake / | 1384 |
| Welcome quod he and euery good felawe | |
| Whider ridestow vnder þis greene schawe | |
| Seyde þis zeman wilt þou fer to day | |
| This somnour him answerde and seyde nay | 1388 |
| here faste by quod he is myn entente | |
| To ryden for to reysen vp a rente / | |
| It longeþ to my lordes dewete | |
| Art þou þanne a baillif ze quod he | 1392 |
| he dorste nouzt' for verray filþe and schame | [leaf 117] |
| Seie þat he was a somnour for þe name | |
| Depardieux quod þis zoman dere broþer | |
| þou art a bailly and I am anoþer | 1396 |
| I am vnknowen as in þis cuntre | |
| Of þin aqueintance I wil preye þe | |
| And eek' of breþerhode if þat þou leste | |
| I haue golde and siluer in my cheste | 1400 |

- If þat þe happed come in-to oure schire
 Al schal be þin right' as þou wolt' desyre
 Graunt' mercy quod þis somnour by my feiþ
 Euerich in oþeres hond his trouþe leiþ 1404
 ffor to be swore broþer til þey deye
 and wiþ þat' word þey ryden forþ here weye
 This somnour wiþ þat' was so /
- As ful of venym ben þis wary-angles 1408
 And euer enquiryng' vpon euery þing'
 Broþer quod he wher is þoure dwellyng'
 An oþer day if' I scholde þou seche
 This þoman him answerde in softe speche 1412
 Broþer quod he fer in þe Norþ cuntre
 Wher as I hope som tyme I schal þe se
 Or we departe I schal þe so wel wisse
 That' of' myn hous schalt' þou neuer misse / 1416
 Now broþer quod þis sompnour I þou pray
 Teche me whil we ryden by þe way /
 Syn þat' 3e ben a baillyf' as am I
 Som subtilte telle me feiþfully 1420
 In myn office how þat' I may most' wynne
 And spareþ not' for conscience ne synne
 But' as my broþer tell me how do 3e
 Now by my trouþe broþer deere seyde he 1424
 As I schal tellen þe a feiþful tale /
 My wages ben ful streyte and smale /
 My lord is hard to me and daungerous
 And my office ful laborious 1428
 And þerfore by extorcious I lyue
 ffor soþe I [take] al þat' men wil me 3iue
 Algate be sleigte or violence
 ffrom 3eer to 3er I wynne al my dispence / 1432
 I can no bettre tellen feiþfully
 Now certes quod þis sompnour so fare I·
 I spare not' to take god it' wot'
 But' if' it' be to heuy or to hoot' 1436

[leaf 117, back]

- What^t I may gete in counseil *pru*ely
 No maner conscience of^t *pat*^t haue I
 Ner myn extorcioñ I might^t no³t^t lyuen
 Of swiche iapes wil I nat^t be schriuen 1440
 Stomake ne fro conscience knowe I noon
 I schrewe þese schriftefadres euerichon
 Wel be we mette by god and by seint^t Iame
 But^t leeue *broþer* telle me þanne þy name 1444
 Quod þis somnour in þis mene while
 This 3eman gan a litel for to smyle
Broþer quod he wiltow *pat*^t I þe telle
 I am a steue my dwellyng^t is in helle 1448
 And heer I ryde aboute my purchasyng^t
 To wite wher men wil 3if^t me eny þing^t
 my purchace is to fette of^t alle my rente
 loke how þou rydest^t for þe same entente 1452
 To wynne good þou rekkest^t neuer how
 Right^t so fare I for ryde wolde I now
 vnto þe worldes ende for a preye
 A quod þis somnour *benedicite* what^t 3e seye 1456
 I wende 3e were a yoman trewely
 3e han a mannes schappe as wel as I
 han 3e a figure þanne *determinat*^t
 In helle þer 3e ben in 3oure estat^t 1460
 Nay certainly quod he þer han we noon
 But^t whan vs likeþ we can take vs oon
 Or elles make 3ou wene we ben schape
 Som tyme [like] a man or like an ape / 1464
 Or lik^t an aungel can I ryde or go [leaf 118]
 It^t is no wonder þing^t þough^t it be so
 A lousy iogulour can deceyue þe
 And par de 3it^t can I more craft^t þan he / 1468
 Why quod þis somnour ryde 3e þanne or gon
 In sondry schappe and nat^t alwey in oon
 ffor we quod he wille vs swich forme make
 As most^t able is oure prayes for to take 1472

What' makeþ 3ou to han al þis labour
 fful many a cause leeu sire somonour
 Seyde þis feend but' al þing' haþ tyme
 The day is schort' and it' is passed prime 1476
 And 3et' ne wan I no þing' in þis day
 I wil entende to wynnyng' if' I may
 And nat' entende oure wittes to declare
 ffor broþer myn þi witte is al to bare 1480
 To vnderstonde þough I tolde hem þe
 But' for þou axest' whi labouren we
 ffor somtyme ben we goddes instrumentz
 And menes to do his comaundementz 1484
 Whan þat' him list' vpon his creatures
 In diuerse acte and in diuers figures
 Wipouten him we han no might' certayn
 If' þat' him liste to stonden þer agayn 1488
 And som time at' oure praye han we leue
 Only þe body and not' þe soule greeue /
 Witnessse on Iob whom þat' we dyden wo
 And som tyme han we might' of' boþe tuo 1492
 þis is to seyn of' soule and body eeke
 And som tyme we ben suffred for to seeke
 vpon a man and do his soule vnreste
 Nat' his body and al is for þe beste 1496
 Whan he wipstondeþ oure temptacioñ
 It' is a cause of' his saluacioñ
 Al be it' þat' it was not' oure entente
 he schulde be sauf' but' þat' we wolde him hente 1500
 And som tyme be we *seruantz* vn-to man [leaf 118, back]
 As þe erchebisschope seint' Dunstan
 And to þe apostles *seruant*/ was I
 3et' telleþ me *quod* þe somnour feiþfully 1504
 Make 3e 3ow newe bodyes þus alwey
 Of' elementz þe feend answerde nay
 Som tyme we feyne and som tyme we arise /
 Wip dede bodyes in ful sondry wise 1508

And speke as renabely and faire and wel
 As to þe phitonessa dede Samuel /
 And 3it' wol some men say it' was nat' he
 I do no force of' 3oure diuinite 1512
 But' o þing' warne I þe I wil nat' Iapé
 Thou wilt' algates wite how we be schape /
 þou schalt' her affirward my broþer deere
 Come wher þe needeþ nat' of' me to leere 1516
 ffor þou schalt' by þin owne experience
 Come in-to þe chayer rede þis sentence
 Bet' þan virgile whil he was a lyue
 Or dante also now lat' vs ryde blyue 1520
 ffor I wil holde company wiþ þe
 Til it' be so þat' þou forsake me
 Nay quod þis somnour þat' schal nat' betyde
 I am a 3eman knowe is ful wyde 1524
 my troupe wil I holde to þe as in þis cas
 ffor þey þou were þe deuyl Sathanas
 My troupe wil I holde to my broþer
 As I am sworne and eche of' vs to oþer 1528
 ffor to be trewe broþer in þis cas
 And broþer we gon to oure purchas
 Take þou þy part' what' men þe wole yiue
 And I schal myn þus may we boþe lyue 1532
 And if' þat' eny of' vs haue more þan oþer
 lat' him be trewe and parte it' wiþ his broþer
 I graunte quod þe deuyl by my fay
 And wiþ þat' word þey ryden forþ here way 1536
 And right' at' þentryng' of' þe tounes ende [leaf 119]
 To which þe somnour schop him for to wende
 They say a carte þat' charged was with hey
 Which þat' a cartere drof' forþ on his wey 1540
 Deep was þe wey for whiche þe carte strood
 This cartere smot' and striued as he were wood
 hayt' brok' hayt' scot' what' spare we for þe stones
 The feend quop he 3ow fecche boþe body and bones / 1544

GROUP D. § 4. FRIAR'S TALE. Corpus MS.

- As ferforþly as euere were 3e foled
 So moche woo as I haue for 3ou þoled
 þe deuel haue al boþe hors and cart' and hey
 þoughte þis somnour he schulle we haue a pley 1548
 And neer þe feend he drough̄ as nough̄t' ne were
 fful priuely and rouned in his eere
 herkne my broþer herkne by þy feiþ
 herestow nat' how þe cartere seiþ 1552
 hente it' anone for he haþ 3iuen þe
 Boþe hey and carte and eek' his caples þre /
 Nay quod þe deuyl god not' neuer a del
 It' is not' his entente truste me wel 1556
 Aske him þiself' if' þou nat' trowest' me
 Or elles stynte a while and þou schalt' se
 This carter þakked his hors on þe croupe /
 And þey bygonne to drawe and to stoupe / 1560
 hayt' now quod he þat' Ihesu crist' 3ou blisse
 And alle his hondywerk' boþe more and lesse /
 þat' was wel twigh̄t' myn owne lyard boy
 I pray god saue þe and seinte Loy. 1564
 Now is my carte out/ of' þe slough̄ par de
 lo broþer quod þe feend what' tolde I þe /
 here may ye see myn oughne deere broþer
 The carle spak' o þing' but' he þought' anoþer 1568
 late vs go forþ abouten oure viage
 here wyne I noþing' vpon cariage
 Whan þat' þey comen somewhat out' of' þe toun
 þis somnour to his broþer gan to roun 1572
 Broþer quod he here woneþ an old rebekke [leaf 119, back]
 That' hadde almost' as leef' to leese hire necke
 As for to 3iue a peny of' hire good
 I wil haue twelue pens þough þat' sche be wood 1576
 Or I wille sompne hire to oure office
 And 3it' god woot' of hire knowe I no vice
 But' for þou canst' nat' as in þis contre
 Wynne þi coste tak here ensample of/ me 1580

This somnour clappeþ at þe wydowes gate
 Com out he seyde þou olde viritrate
 I trowe þou hast som frere or prest wif þe
 Who clappeþ seyde þis wif benedicite 1584
 God saue þou sire what is þour swete wille
 I haue *quod* he a somonur of þe here a bille
 vp peyne of cursyng loke þat þou be
 To morwe biforn oure erchedekenes kne 1588
 To answeere to þe court of certein þinges
 Now lord *quod* sche crist ihesu heuen kinges
 So wisly helpe me as I ne may
 I haue ben syk and þat ful many a day 1592
 I may nat gon so fer *quod* sche ne ryde
 But I be deed so prikeþ it in my syde /
 May I nat axe a libel sire somonour
 And answeere þere by my *procutour* 1596
 To swich a þing as men wolde appose me /
 þis *quod* þis somnour pay anon lat se
 Twelue pens to me and I wil þe aquite
 I schal no *profyt* haue *þer*-by but lite 1600
 My maister hap þe *profyt* and nat I
 Come of and late me ryden hastily
 þeue me twelue [pens] I may no lenger tarye
 twelue *quod* sche lady seinte marie 1604
 So wisly help me out of care and synne
 þis wyde world þough þat I scholde it wynne
 Ne haue I not xij. pens wipinne myn holde
 þe knowen wel þat I am pouer and olde 1608
 kyþe þoure almesse on me pouere wrecche [leaf 120]
 Nay þanne *quod* he þe foule feend me fecche
 If I þe excuse þough þou scholde be spilt
 Allas *quod* sche god wot I haue no gilt 1612
 Pay me *quod* he or by þe swete seint anne
 As I wol bere a-way þy newe panne /
 ffor dette which þou owest me of old
 Whan þat þou madest þin housbond kukkewold 1616

I preyde at home for þy correctiō
 Thow lixt *quod* sche by my sauacioñ
 Ne was I neuer or now wydewe ne wijf
 Somoned vnto your court in al my lijf 1620
 Ne neuer I nas but of my body trewe /
 vnto þe deuēl blake and rowe of hewe
 yeue I þy body and my panne
 And whan þe deuyl herde hir curse so 1624
 vpon hir knees he seyde in þis manere
 Now mabely myn owne mooder deere
 It is þour wille in ernest þat þe seye
 þe deuyl *quod* sche fette him or he deye / 1628
 And panne and al but he wil him repente
 Nay olde stot þat is not myn enteñte
 Quoþ þis somnour for to repente me
 ffor any þing þat I haue had of þe 1632
 I wolde I hadde þy smok and euery cloþ
 Now broþer *quod* þe deuyl be nat wroþ
 þy body and þis panne is myn by right
 þou schalt wiþ me to helle yet to night 1636
 Wher þou schalt knowen of oure priuete
 More þan a mayster of diuinite
 And wiþ þat word þis foule feend him hent
 Body and soule he with þe deuyl went 1640
 Where þat somnours han here heritage
 And god þat made after his ymage
 Mankynde saue and gyde vs alle and some
 And leue þis somnour good man to bycome 1644
 lordinges I couþe han told þou *quod* þis frere
 hadde I had leysir for þis somnour heere
 After þe tixte of crist poule and Iohn
 And of oure oþer doctours many oon 1648
 Suche peynes þat þoure hertes might agrise
 Al be it so no tonge may deuyse /
 pough þat I might a þousand wynter telle
 þe peyne of þilke cursed hous of helle 1652

[leaf 120, back]

But for to kepe vs fro þat' cursed place
 Wakeþ and prayeþ ihesu for his grace
 So kepe vs fro þe temptour Sathanas
 herkneþ þis word be war as in þis cas 1656
 þe leoun sitte in his awayte alway
 To sle þe Innocent' if' þat' he may
 Disposeþ ay 3our hertes to wiþstonde
 þe feend þat' 3ou wolde make þralle and bonde 1660
 he may nat' tempten yow ouer your might'
 ffor crist' wille be 3our champion and knight'
 And preyed þat' þis somnour him repente 1663
 Of' his mysdede or þat' þe feend him hente ¶ Explicit

 ¶ Her endeþ þe frere his tale /

This Somnour in his styrop heyhe stood [on leaf 120, back]
 Vpon þis frere his herte was so wood
 That lik' an aspen leef' he quok' for Ire
 lordynges *quod* he but' o þing' I desire / 1668
 I 3ou beseche þat' of' 3our curtesye
 Siþ 3e han herde þis false frere lye
 As suffreþ me I may a tale telle
 This frere bostep þat' he knowep helle/ 1672
 And god wot' þat' it' is litel wonder
 ffreres and feendes ben but litel asonder
 ffor parde 3e han . ofte tyme herd telle/
 how þat' a frere rauyssched was in helle 1676
 In spirit' ones by avisioun
 And as an aungel ladde him vp and down
 To schewen him þe peynes þat' þer were
 In alle þe place saugh he nat' a ffrere [leaf 121] 1680
 Of' oþer folk' he saugh ynowe in woo
 Vnto þis aungel spak' þe frere þo
 Now sire *quod* he han freres such a grace /
 That non of' hem schal come to þis place / 1684
 3is quod þis aungel many a milioun
 And vnto Sathanas he hadde him doun
 And now haþ Sathanas saip he a taile
 Bradder þan of' þe Caryk' is þe saile 1688
 hold vp þi tayl þou Satanas *quod* he /
 Schew forþ þin ersand lat þe frere se /
 Wher is þe neste of' ffreres in þis place
 And er þat' half' a forlong' wey of' space 1692

GROUP D. § 5. FRIAR-SUMMONER LINK. Corpus MS.

Right^t so as bees swermen out^t of^t an hyue
 Out^t of^t þe deueles ers þey gon to dryue
 Twenty þousand freres on a route
 And þoughte helle swarme al aboute 1696
 And camen aʒein as faste as þey mighte gon
 And in his ers þey crepeden euerichon
 he clapte his tayl aʒein and lay stille
 This frere whan he loked hadde his fille 1700
 vpon þis tormentes of^t þis sory place /
 his spirit^t god restored of^t his grace /
 Vnto his body aʒein and he awok^t
 But^t napeles for feere ʒit^t he quok^t 1704
 So was þe deueles ars ay in his mynde
 þat^t is his heritage of^t verray kinde
 God saue ʒow alle saue þis cursed frere /
 My prologe wol I ende in þis manere / 1708

¶ Here begynneþ þe Somnours tale

LOrdyngeþ þer is in york' schire / as I gesse
 A mersshy countre called Holdernesse
 In which þer wente a lymytour aboute /
 To preche and eek' to begge it' is no doute 1712
 And so bifelle þat' on a day þis frere
 Hadde preched atte cherche in þis manere
 And specially abouen euery þing' [leaf 121, back]
 Excited he þe poeple in his preching' 1716
 To trentales and for goddes sake
 Ther-with men mighten holy houses make
 Ther as diuin seruice is honoured
 Nought' þer as it' is wasted and deuoured 1720
 Ne þer it' nedeþ not' for to be 3iue
 As to possessioners þat' may elles lyue
 þanked be god in wele and haþundañce
 Trentales seyde he deliuereþ fro penañce 1724
 here frendes soules as wel olde as 3onge
 If' þat' þey ben hastily y-songe
 Nough't' for to holde a prest' ioly and gay
 he syngeþ not' but o messe in a day 1728
 Delyuereþ out' *quod* he anon þe soules
 fful hard it is wiþ fleisshook' oþer with oules
 Now speed 3ou hastely for cristes sake 1732
 to kepe 3ou fro peynes of' feendes blake 1731
 And whan þe frere hadde seyde al his entente
 Wiþ Qui cum *patre* forþ he wente
 Whan folk' in chirche hadde 3iue him what hem leste
 he wente his way no lenger wolde he reste 1736

Wip scrippe and tipped staf' tukked ful hye
 In euery hous he gan to pore and pryē
 And beggeþ mele or chese or elles corn
 his felaw had a staf' typped with horn 1740
 A payre of' tableles of' yuory
 And a poyntel polissched fetously
 And wrot' þe names alwey as he stood
 Of' any folk' þat' 3af' hem eny good 1744
 Ascance þat' he wolde for hem preye
 3iue vs a busshel whete malt/ or reye
 A goddes kechil or a trippe of' chese
 Oþer elles what 3ow list' we may nat cheese 1748
 A goddes halpeny oþer a masse peny
 Oþer 3iue vs of' 3our brañ if' 3e haue eny
 A dagoun of' 3our blanket' leeuē dame [leaf 122]
 Oure suster deere here I write 3oure name 1752
 Bacoñ or beef' or such þing' as 3e fynde
 A sturdy harlot' wente hem ay behynde
 That' was here hostes man and bar a sakke
 And what' men 3af' hem leyde it on his bakke 1756
 And whan he was out' at' þe dore anoon
 he planed away þe names euerychoon
 That' he bifore hadde writen in his tables
 he serued hem with nyfles and with fables 1760
 Nay þer þou lixt' þou somnour quod þe frere /
 Pees quod oure host' for cristes moder deere
 Telle forþ þi tale spare it not' at' al
 So þryue I quod þis somnour so I schal 1764
 So longe he wente hous by hous quod he
 Til he come to an hous þer he was wont' to be
 Refreshed more þan in an .C. places
 Seke lay þe bonde man' whos þe place is 1768
 And vpon a kowche lowe he lay
 Deus hic' quod he / O Thomas frend good day
 Seyde þis frere curteysly and softe
 Thomas sayde he god 3elde 3ow ful ofte 1772

- haue I vpon þis benche faren wel
 heere haue I eten many a mery meel
 And fro þe benche he drof^t away þe cat
 And leyde doun his potent^t and his hat 1776
 And eek^t his scrippe and sette him softe a dounð
 his felawe was go walked in þe toun
 fforþ with his knaue in-to þat^t ostelrie
 Wher as he schop him þilke night^t to lye 1780
 O deere maister *quod* þis seeke man
 how han 3e fare siþenes þat^t marche bigan
 I say 3ow nough^t þis fourtenigh^t and more
 God woot^t *quod* he laboured haue I ful sore 1784
 And specially for þy Saluacioñ
 haue I seyde many a *precious* orisoñ
 And for oure oþer frendes god hem blesse [leaf 122, back]
 I haue to day don at^t 3oure chirche a messe 1788
 A sayd a *sermoñ* after my simple wit^t
 nough^t alle after þe text^t of^t holy writ^t
 ffor it is hard to 3ou as I suppose
 þefore wol I teche to 3ou al þe glose 1792
 Glosyng^t is a glorious þing^t certein
 ffor lettre sleep so as clerkes sein
 þer haue I taught^t hem to be charitable
 And spende here good þer it^t is resonable 1796
 There I sawh oure dame a wher is sche
 yonde in þe yerde I trowe þat^t sche be /
 Seyde þis man and sche wil come anonð
 Ey mayster welcome be 3e by seint/ Iohn 1800
 Seyde þis wijf^t how fare 3e hertely
 þe frere ariseþ vp ful curteisly
 And hir enbrased in his armes narwe
 And kisseþ hir swete and chirkeþ as a sparwe 1804
 Wip his lippes dame *quod* he right^t wel
 As he þat is your *seruant*^t eueridel
 I-þanked be god þat^t 3ou 3aft soule and lyf^t
 3it/ sawh I not^t to day so fair a wijf^t 1808

In al þe chirche god so saue me
 3e god amende defautes *sir quod* sche
 Algates welcome be 3e by my fey
 Gramercy dame þis haue I founde alwey 1812
 But of 3our grete goodnes by 3our leue
 I wolde pray 3ou þat 3e nought 3ou greue
 I wole with Thomas speken a litel þrowe
 þese curates ben ful necligent/ and slowe 1816
 To grope tendrely a conscience
 In schrifte and in *preching* is my diligence
 And studye in petres wordes and in poules
 I walke and fische mennes soules 1820
 To 3elde ihesu crist/ his *propre* rente
 To sprede his wordes is sette al myn entente
 ¶ Now by 3our leue o deere sire *quod* sche [leaf 123]
 Chydeþ him wel for god in trinite 1824
 he is as angry as a pisse mire
 þey þat he haue al þat he can desire
 þey I him wrye a night and make him warm
 And ouer him leye my legg or arm 1828
 he groyneþ lik oure boor gronyng in sty
 Oþer desport of him right non haue I
 I may not plesen him in no maner caas
 ¶ Ieo *vous* dy trescher & bien amy O Thomas 1832
 This makeþ þe feende þis mot ben amended
 Ire is a þing þat heye god defended
 And þer-of wol I speke a word or tuo
 Now maister *quod* þe wijf or þat I go 1836
 What wol 3e dyne I wole go þer aboute
 Now dame *quod* he Ieo *vous* dye sanz doute
 haue I not of a Capon but þe lyuere
 And of 3our softe brede but a schyuere 1840
 And after þat a rosted pigges heed
 But þat I wolde for me no beeste were deed
 þanne hadde I wiþ 3ou holly suffisañce
 I am a man of litel sustenance / 1844

- My spirit^t is fostred in þe bible
 þe body is ay so redy and penyble
 To wake þat^t my stomak^t is destroyed
 I pray 3ou dame þat^t 3e be nought^t anoyed 1848
 þey I so frendly my counseil to 3ou schewe
 By god I wolde not^t telle it/ but^t a fewe
 Now sire *quod* sche but^t oo word or I go
 my child is deed wiþinne þise wikes tuo 1852
 Siþþen þat^t 3e wente out of þis toun
 his deþ saugh I by reuelacioñ
 Seiþ þis frere at home in oure dortour
 I dar wel seyn þat/ er þat^t half^t an hour 1856
 after his deþ I sawh him born to blisse
 In myn avision so god me wisse
 So dede our sextein and oure fermorer [leaf 123, back]
 That^t han ben trewe freres . fyfty 3eer 1860
 They may now god by þanke of^t his lone
 maken here Iubile and walken allone
 And vp I ros and alle oure couent^t eeke
 With many a teere trillyng^t on my cheeke 1864
 Wiþouten noyse or clateryng^t of^t bellis
 Te *deum* was oure song^t and no þing^t elles
 Saue þat^t to crist^t I seyde an orison
 Thankyng^t him of^t his reuelacioñ 1868
 ffor sire and dame trusteþ me right^t wel
 Oure orisons ben more spirituel
 And more we se of^t cristes secre þinges 1871
 Than burel folk^t [though they were kynges [Harl. 1758, leaf 109]
 We lyue in pouerte & in abstynence .
 And boreh^t folke] in richesse and wynnynge^s1 [1 in dispence.
 Of mete and drynk^t and in here foul delit/ Harl. 1758]
 We han þis worldes lust^t al in despit^t 1876
 Lazar and Diues liueden dyuersely
 And dyurse guerdoñ hadde þey þerby
 Who-so wol preye he moot^t faste and be clene
 And fatte his soule and make his cheekes lene 1880

| | |
|--|------------|
| We fare as seiþ þapostil cloþ and foode Sufficeþ vs þey; þey ben not' goode The clenness and þe fastyng' of' ous ffreres makeþ þat' crist' accepteþ oure prayeres | 1884 |
| lo moyses .xl. dayes and .xl. nyght' ffasted or þat' þe heihe god of' might Spak' wiþ him in þe mount' of' Synay With empty wombe fastyng' many a day | 1888 |
| Receyued he þe lawe þat' was writen Wiþ goddes fynger and helthe wel 3e witen In þe moñt or elles er he hadde eny speche With heyhe god þat' is oure lyues leche | 1892 |
| he fasted longe and was in contemplañce And aaron þat' hadde þe temple of' god in gouernañce And eek' þat' oþer prestes euerichon In-to þe temple whan þey scholden gon | 1896 |
| To praye for þe poeple and do seruise They nolden drynken in no maner wise/ No drynk' þe which hem mighte drunke make | [leaf 124] |
| But' euere in abstynence to preye and wake lest' þat' þey deyede tak' heede what' I seye But' þey ben sobre þat' for þe poeple preye Ware þat' I say no more for it' sufficeþ | 1900 |
| Oure lord ihesus / as holy god deuyseþ 3iueþ ous ensample of' fastyng' and prayeres Therefore we mendinañtz we pouere freres Ben wedded to pouert' and to continence | 1904 |
| To charite humblesse and also pacience To persecucion for rightwisnesse / To wepyng' misericorde and clennesses And þerfore may 3e see þat' oure prayeres | 1908 |
| I speke of' vs we mendenañte ffreres Ben to þe hihe god more acceptable Than 3oures wiþ 3oure feste at' þe table ffro paradys first' if' I schal nought' lye | 1912 |
| Was man out' chaced for his glotonye | 1916 |

GROUP D. § 6. SUMMONER'S TALE. Corpus MS.

- And chast' was man in *paradys* certayn
 But' herkne þere what' I schal 3ou sayn
 I haue no text' of' þat' as I suppose
 But' I schal fynde it in a maner glose 1920
 That' specially oure swete lord Ihesus
 Spak' þus by vers whan he seyde þus
 Blessed ben þey þat' pore in spirit/ ben
 And so forþ al þe gospel may 3e seen 1924
 Wher it' be like oure *profession*
 Or hem þat' swymmen in possession
 ffy on here pompe and on here glotonye
 And for here lewednesse I hem diffye 1928
 Me þinkeþ þey ben like Iovinian
 ffatte as a whale and walking' as a swan
 As vynolent' as botel in þe spence
 here prayer is ful of' gret' reuerence 1932
 Whan þey for soules sein þe psalme of' dauid [leaf 124, back]
 lo buff' þey sain cor meum eructauit
 Who folweþ cristes gospel and his lore
 But' we þat' humble be and chaste and pore 1936
 Werkers of' goddes word and eek' auditoures /
 þerfore right' as an hauke rype at' a *sours*
 vp springeþ vnto þe ayre right' so prayeres
 Of' charitable and chaste besy freres 1940
 maken here *sours* to goddes eeren and who
 Thomas þerfore so mote I ride or go
 And by þat' god þat' cleped is seint' yue
 Nere þou oure broþer schuldest' þou not' þriue 1944
 In oure chapitre praye we day and night
 To crist' þat' he sende þe hele and might
 Thy body for to welden hastily
 God wot' *quod* he noþing' þer-of' wot' I 1948
 As helpe me crist' as in fewe 3eeres
 haue I spended vpon diuers maner freres
 fful many a pound 3it' fare I neuer þe bett'
 Certein my good haue I almost' bisett' 1952

GROUP D. § 6. SUMMONER'S TALE. Corpus MS.

ffar wel my golde for it' is al a-go
 The ffere answerde o Thomas why dost' þou so
 What' needeþ 3ou diuerse freres to seche
 What' needeþ him þat' haþ a parfit' leche 1956
 To sechen oþer leches in þe toun
 3our inconstance is 3our confusioun
 holde 3e þen me or elles oure couent
 To preye for 3ou ben insufficient' 1960
 Thomas þat' Iape is not' worþ a myte
 3oure maladye is for 3e han 3iuen vs so lite
 A 3if' þat' couent' half' a quarter otes
 A 3iue hem) one or tuo grotes 1964
 A 3iue þe frere a peny and let' him go
 Nay nay Thomas it' may no þing' be so
 What' is a ferþing' worþ parted in twelue
 lo eche þing' þat' is oned by himselue 1968
 Is more straunge þen when it' is skatered [leaf 125]
 Thomas of' me þou schalt' nat be flatered
 þou woldest' cure labour haue for nough't
 The hihe god þat' al þis world haþ wrought' 1972
 Seip þat' þe werkman is worþi his hyre
 Thomas nough't' of' 3our tresore I desire
 As for my self' but' þat' alle oure couent
 To pray for 3ou is ay so diligent' 1976
 And for to bulden cristes oughne chirche
 Thomas if' 3e wol lerne for to wirche
 Of' buldyng' vp of' chirches may 3e fynde
 If' it' be good in Thomas lijf' of' Inde 1980
 3e ligge heer ful of' anger and of' Ire
 With þe which þe deuyll sette 3oure ers a fyre
 And chyden heere þis sely Innocent'
 3oure wijf' þat' is so meeke and pacient' 1984
 And þerfore Thomas trowe me if' 3ou list'
 Ne stryue not' wiþ þy wijf' al for þe beste
 And bere þis word away now by þy feith
 Touchinge such þing' lo what' þe wise man seip 1988

Wipinne þin hous ne be þou no leound
 To þy subiectis do non oppressioun
 Ne make þin acquaintance not for to fle
 And Thomas 3it^e eft^e sones say I þe 1992
 Be war for hire þat in þy bosom slepeþ
 Be war of þe serpent þat so slyly crepeþ
 vnder þe grasse þat styngeþ subtilly
 Be war my sone and herkene patiently 1996
 That xx^{ti} þousand men han lost here lyues /
 ffor þat þei han ben spitous to here wyues
 Now siþ 3e han so holy and so meeke a wijf
 What needeþ 3ou Thomas to make strif 2000
 þer is y-wys no serpent so cruel
 Whan men trede on his tail ne half so fel
 As womman is whan sche hap caught an Ire
 Vengance is þanne al þat þey desyre 2004
 Ire is a synne on of þe grete of seuene [leaf 125, back]
 Abhominable vnto þe god of heuene
 And to himself it is destruction
 þis euery lewed vicary or parson 2008
 Can say how Ire engendreþ homicide
 Ire in soþ is executor of pryde
 I couþe of Ire seye so mochil sorwe
 My tale scholde laste til to morwe 2012
 And þerfore I praye god boþe day and night
 An Irous man sende him litel might
 It is gret harm and certes gret pite
 To sette an Irous man in heih degre 2016
 ¶ Whilom þer was an Irous potestat
 As seiþ Senek durynge his estat
 Vpon a day out riden knightes tuo
 And as fortune wolde it were so 2020
 That oon of hem cam home þat oþer nough
 Anon þe knight bifore þe Iuge is brough
 And seyde þus þou hast þy felaw slayn
 ffor which I deme þe to dep certain 2024

And to anoþer knight comaunded he
 Go lede him to þe deþ I charge þe
 And happed as þey wente by þe weye
 Toward þe place þer as he schulde deye 2028
 The knight cam which þey wend hadde be deed
 Thenne þoughten þey it were þe beste reed
 To lede hem boþe to þe Iuge azein
 þey seyden lord þe knight ne haþ not sleyn 2032
 his felawe here he stant on lyue
 3e schulle be deed *quod* he so mot I þriue
 þis is to say boþe oon and tuo and þre
 And to þe firste knight right þus spak he 2036
 I dampned þe þou most algate be deed
 And þou also most needes lese þin heed
 ffor þou art cause why þy felaw deyþ
 And to þe þridde knight right þus he seip 2040
 Thou hast not don þat I comaunded þe. [leaf 126]
 And þus he dede do slee hem alle þre
 Irous kambises was eek drunkelewe
 And ay delited him to ben a schrewe 2044
 And so bifelle a lord of his meigne
 That loued *vertuous* moralite
 Sayde on a day vnto himself right þus
 A lord is lost if he be vicious 2048
 And drunkenesse is eek a foul record
 Of any man and namly in a lord
 Ther is ful many an ey and many an eere
 Awaytyng on a lord and he not where 2052
 ffor goddes loue drynkeþ more attemperelly
 Wyn makeþ a man to lese wrecchedly
 his mynde and eek his lymes euerychon
 The reuers schalt þou see *quod* he anoon . 2056
 And proue it by þin owne experience
 That wyn doþ to folk no such offence
 Ther is no wyn byreueþ me my might
 Of hande ne foot ne of myn eyzen sight 2060

And for despite he dranke ful moche more
 An hundred part þan he had don bifore
 And right anon þis cursede wrecche
 lete þis knightes sone biforn him fecche 2064
 And commaundyng hem þey schulde biforn him stonde
 And sodeinly he took his bowe on honde
 And vp þe streng he pulled to his eere
 And wiþ an arwe he slough þe child right þere 2068
 Now wheþer haue I a siker hond or non
 Quoþ he is al my might and my witte agon
 haþ wyn byreued me myn yhe sight
 What schulde I telle þe answere of þe knight 2072
 his sone was slayn þer is namore to say
 Beþ war þerfore wiþ lordes how 3e play
 Syngeþ placebo and I schal if I can
 But if it be vnto a pouere man 2076
 To a pouere man men scholde his vices telle / [leaf 126, back]
 But not to a lord þei he schulde go te helle /
 Lo Irrous Sirus pilke Percien
 how he destroyed þe ryuer of Gysen 2080
 ffor þat an hors of his was dreynt þerinne
 Whan þat he wente Babilon to wynne
 he made þat þe ryuer was so smal
 That wommen mighten waden oueral 2084
 lo what seyde he þat so wel teche can
 Ne he no felawe to an yrous man
 Ne wiþ no wood man walke by þe way
 leste þe repente I wol nomore say 2088
 Now Thomas leue broþer leue þin Ire
 Thou schalt me fynde as iuste as is a squire
 holde noughþ þe deueles knyf ay at þin herte /
 Thin anger doþ þe al to sore smerte 2092
 But schewe to me alle þy confessioñ
 Nay quod þis seeke man by seint Symoñ
 I haue ben schriuen þis day at my curate
 I haue him tolde al holly myn estate 2096

It needeþ nomore speke of it sayde he
 But if me luste of myn humilite
 3iue me þenne of þy gold to make oure cloystre
 Quod he for many a muscle and many an oystre 2100
 haþ ben our foode oure cloystre for to reyse
 Whan oþer men han ben ful wel at eyse
 And 3it god wot vnneþes þe fundament
 Parformed is ne of oure pauyment 2104
 Nis nought a tile 3it wiþinne oure wones
 By god we owen fourty pound for stoones /
 Now helpe thomas for him þat harwed helle
 Or elles moote we oure bokes selle 2108
 And if we lacke oure predicaciõ
 þanne goþ þe world al to destrucciõ
 ffor whos wolde fro þis world vs byreue
 So god me saue Thomas by 3oure leue 2112
 he wolde byreue out of þe world þe sonne / [leaf 127]
 ffor who can teche and werchen as we konne
 And þat is not of litel time quod he
 But sethyns Elye was or Elyze 2116
 han freres ben þat fynde I of record
 In charite I-þanked be oure lord
 Now Thomas help for seinte charite
 A-doun anon he sette him on his kne 2120
 This sike man wex wel neigh wood for Ire
 he wolde þat þe frere hadde ben a fuyre
 With his fals dissimilaciõ
 Such þing as is her in my possessiõ 2124
 Quod he þat I may 3iue and non oþer
 3e sein me þus / þat I am 3our broþer
 3e certes quod þe frere trusteþ me wel
 I took oure dame oure lettres wiþ oure seel 2128
 ¶ Now wel quod he and somewhat schal I 3iue
 vnto 3our holy couent whil I lyue
 And in þin hand þou schalt it han anon
 vp þis condiciõ and oþer non 2132

- þat þou depart it so myn owne deere broþer
 That euery frere haue as moche as oþer
 þis schalt þou swere on þy profession
 Wiþouten fraude or cauellacion 2136
 I swere it *quod* þis frere vpon my feiþ
 And þer wiþal his hond in his he leiþ
 lo heer my feiþ in me schal be no lacke
 þan putte þin hond down by my bakke 2140
 Sayde þis man and grope wel byhynde
 Byneþe my buttoke þere schalt þou fynde
 A þing þat I haue hidde in priuete
 A þought þis frere þat schal go wiþ me 2144
 And down his hande he launceþ vnto þe clifte
 he hopeþe þere for to fynden a zifte
 And þanne ful besy was þis frere
 Abouten his tuwel gropyng here and þere 2148
 ¶ Amydde his hand he leet þe frere a fart
 [leaf 127, back]
 Ther is no capel drawyng in þe cart
 þat might haue lete a fart of such a soun
 þe frere vp sterte as it were a fers leoun 2152
 A false cherl *quod* he for cokkes bones
 This hast þou for despite doon for þe nones
 þou schalt abeye þi farte if þat I may
 his meigne which þat herden þis affray 2156
 Cam lepyng in and chased out þe frere
 And forþ he goþ wiþ a ful angry cheere
 And fette his felawe þer as lay his store
 he loked as it were a wilde boor 2160
 he grynded his teef so was he wroþ
 A stourdy paas down to þe court he goþ
 Wher as þer woned a man of gret honour
 To whom þat he was alwey confessour 2164
 This worþy man was lord of þat village
 þis frere cam as þough it were in a rage
 Wher as þis lord sat etyng at his bord
 vnnepes might þe frere speke a word 2168

Til atte laste he seyde god 3ou se
 þis lord gan loke and seyde benedicite
 Quod he frere Iohn what maner world is þis
 I see wel þat som þing is amys 2172
 3e loken as þe woode were ful of þeeues
 Sit doun anon and telle me what 3our greef is
 And it schal ben amended if þat I may
 I haue quod he had a despit to day 2176
 God 3elde 3ou a-down in 3oure village
 þat in þis world is non so pore a page
 þat he nolde han abhominacion
 Of þat I haue receyued in þis toun 2180
 And 3it me greueþ no þing so sore
 As þat þis olde cherl wiþ lokkes hore
 Blasphemed hap oure holy couent eeke
 Now maister quod þis lord I 3ou beseke 2184
 No maister quod he but a seruitour [leaf 125]
 þey I haue had in scole þat honour
 God likeþ nouzt þat men vs Raby calle
 neiþer in market ne in 3our halle 2188
 No force quod he but telle me of 3our greef
 sire quod þis frere an ydious mescheef
 This day betidde is to myn ordre and to me
 And so par consequens to eche degre 2192
 Of holy chirche god amende it sone
 Sire quod þe lord 3e wot what is to doone
 Distempre 3ou noughit 3e be my confessour
 3e ben þe salt/ of þerþe and þe sauour 2196
 ffor goddes loue 3oure pacience 3e holde
 Telleþ me 3our greef and he anon him tolde
 As 3e han herd byfore 3e wot wel what
 The lady of þe hous ay stille sat 2200
 Til sche hadde herde what þe frere sayde
 Ey goddes moder quod sche blisful mayde
 Is þer nouzt elles telleþ me feiþfully
 ¶ madame quod he how þenke 3ou þerby 2204

how þat me þenkeþ *quod* sche so god me spede
 I say a cherl hap don a cherles deede
 what schulde I say god let him neuer þe
 his seeke heed is ful of vanite 2208
 I holde him in a maner frenesye
 Madame *quod* he by god I schal not lye
 but I on oþer wise may ben awreke
 I schal sclauandre him oueral wher I speke 2212
 The false blasphemour þat charged me
 To parte þat might nouȝt departed be
 To euery man y-liche wiþ meschaunce
 þe lord sat stille as he lay in a traunse 2216
 And in his herte he rolled vp and down
 how hadde þis cherl ymaginacioun
 To schewe such a probleme to þe frere
 Neuer erst er now herde I of such matere 2220
 I trowe þe deuyl putte it in his mynde [leaf 128, back]
 In ars metrik schal þer no man fynde
 Biforn þis day of such a question
 Who schulde make a demonstracion 2224
 þat euery man schulde haue y-lik his part
 Of a soun or of a sauour of a fart
 O nyce proude cherle I schrewe his face
 lo sires *quod* þe lord wiþ harde grace 2228
 Who herde euer of such a þing er now /
 To euery man ylike telle me how .
 It is a impossible it may not be
 O nyce cherle god let him neuer þe 2232
 þe rublyng of a fart and euery soun
 Nys but of eyre reuellacioun
 And þer-wiþ wastep litel and litel away
 þer is no man can deme by my fay 2236
 If þat it/ were departed equaly
 What lo my cherle lo ȝit how schrewedely
 vnto my confessour to day he spak
 I holde him certein a demoniak 2240

Now eteþ 3oure mete and leteþ him go pleye
lete him go hange himself a deuelweye

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

Now stood þe lordes squier at þe bord
þat karf here mete and herde word for word 2244
Of alle þing^t of which I haue 3ou sayd
my lord *quod* he beþ not yuele payd
I couþe telle for a gowne clop
To 3ou sir frere so 3e ben nat wroþ 2248
how þat þis fart^t scholde euene deled be
Among^t 3our couent/ if it like me
Telle on *quod* þe lord and þou schalt^t haue anon
A gowne clop by god and by seint Iohā 2252
My lord *quod* he whan þat þe weder is faire
Wipouten wynd or *pertourbyng^t* of ayre
let bringe a cart^t whel heer in-to þis halle
But loke þat he haue his spokes alle 2256
xij. spokes hap a carte whel comunly [leaf 129]
And bringe me þanne .xij. freres wite 3e why
ffor .xiiij. is a couent^t as I gesse
3oure confessour hede for his worþinesse 2260
Schal performe vp þe nombre of his couent^t
þanne schullen þey knelen down by oon assent^t
And to euery spokes ende in þis manere
fful sadly leye his nose schal þe freere 2264
3oure noble confessour þere god him saue
Schal holde his nose vpright^t vnto þe naue
þanne schal þis cherl wip bely styf^t and touz^t
As any tabour hider ben y-brought^t 2268
And sette him on þe wheel right^t on þis carte
vpon þe naue and make him lete a farte
And 3e schuln se vp peril of my lijf^t
By preof^t which þat is demonstratif^t 2272

þat' equaly þe soun of' hit' wole wende
 And eeke þe stynke vnto þe spokes ende
 Saue þat' þis worþi man þis confessour
 By cause he is a man of' gret honour 2276
 Schal haue þe ferste fruytes as resoñ is
 þe noble vsage of' freres 3it' is þis
 þe worþy men of' hem schuln first' be serued
 And certainly he haþ it' wel disserued 2280
 he haþ to day taught vs so mochil good
 Wiþ preching' in þe pulpit' þer he stood
 þat' I may vouche sauþ' I say for me
 ne hadde þe firste smelle of' fartes þre 2284
 And so wolde alle his couent' hardily
 he bereþ him so faire and holyly
 þe lord þe lady & eche man saue þe ffrere
 Sayden þat' Iankyn) spak' in þis matiere 2288
 As wel as euclide or protholome
 Touchinge þe cherle þey seyden subtilite
 And by heyh witte make him speke as he spake
 he is no fool ne no demonyake 2292
 And Iankyn haþ y-wonne a newe goune [leaf 129, back]
 My tale is doon) we ben almost' at' towne

¶ Here endep þe Somnours tale

GROUP E. FRAGMENT VI.

§ 1. THE CLERK'S HEAD-LINK.

CORPUS MS.

¶ here bygenneþ þe prologe of þe clerk' of Oxenford'

[on leaf 129, back]

Sire clerk' of Oxenford' oure oste sayde
 þe ryde as stille and coy as doþ a mayde
 Were newe spoused sittynge' atte bord
 This day ne herde I of þoure tonge a word 4
 I trowe þat' þe studye aboute som sophime
 But' Salamon saiþ euery þing' haþ tyme ¶ Pausacio
 ffor goddes sake beþ of' bettre cheere
 It' nys no tyme for to stodyen heere 8
 Telle vs som mery tale by þoure fay
 ffor what' man þat' is entred in-to play
 he needes mote vnto þe play assente
 But' preches nat' as freres don in lente 12
 To make vs for oure olde synnes wepe
 Ne þat' þy tale make vs not' to sleepe ¶ Pausacio
 Telle vs som mery þing' of' auentures /
 þoure termes þoure coloures þoure figures 16
 keep hem in store til so be þe enditen
 by stile as when þat' men to kinges writen
 Spekeþ so plein at' þis tyme I þou pray
 þat' we may vnderstonde what' þe say ¶ Pausacio
 This worþi clerk' benignely answerde
 Oft' quod he I am vnder þour 3erde
 þe han of' vs as now þe gouernance
 And þerfore wol I do yow obeissance 24

As fer as resoñ axeþ hardel
 I wil 3ou telle a tale which þat I
 lernede at' paradovse of' a worþi clerk'
 As preued by his wordes and his werk' 28
 he is now deed and nayled in his cheste
 I pray to god to 3iue his soule reste ¶ Pausacio
 ffraunces Petrake þe laureat' poete
 highte þis clerk' whos retorique sweete [a leaf out] 32
 [enlumynede al ytaille / of Poyetrie [MS Arch. Seld. B. 14, leaf 66
 as Lynyan dide / of Philosophie
 or lawe / or other arte par-ticulere
 but deth̄ that wol not suffre vs / duelle here 36
 but as it were / a twynkelyng of an yghe
 hem both hath̄ sleyn / and alle shulle we dye
 but forthe to tellen / of this worthy man
 that taughte me this tale / as I bigan 40
 I sey that he first / wight̄ highte stile enditeth̄
 er he the body of his tale writeth̄
 a proheme / in the which̄ discerneth̄ he
 the mounde / and of Saluce the contre 44
 and spekith̄ of Appenyn the hilles highte
 that ben the boundes / of west Lumbardie
 and of the Mounte Vesulus / in special
 where as the Poo / out of a wel smal 48
 takith̄ his first spryngyng / and his sours
 and holte even streighte wey / his cours
 to Emel-ward / to Ferrare / and to Venyse
 the which̄ a longe thing were / to devise 52
 and trewely / as to my Iugement
 me thinkith̄ it a thing / inpertynent
 save he wol conveye / his matiere
 but this is the tale / which̄ ye shal hier 56

Here endith̄ the clerke of Oxonford his prolog

And next folwyng bigynneth his tale of Gresilde .

[MS Arch. Seld. B. 14, on leaf 66]

Ther was in the weste side of ytaylle
 down̄ at the rote / of Vesulus the colde
 a lusty playne / habundaunte of vitaylle
 where many a toure *and* towne / thow maist biholde 60
 that founded were / in tyme of faders olde
 and many a-nother / dilectable sight
 and Saluces / this noble contre high̄t 63

A Marques whilom / was lord of that londe 64
 as were his worthi elders / *him* bifore
 and obeysaunte / ay redy to his honde
 were alle his liges / both̄ lesse *and* more [leaf 66, back] 67
 thus in delite he lyved / *and* hath̄ done yore
 biloued *and* drad / thorough̄ favour of fortune
 both of his lordis / *and* of his comune 70

¶ Therwith he was / to speken of lynage 71
 the gentilest borne / of al Lumbardy
 a faire persone *and* strong / *and* yonge of age
 and ful of honoure / *and* of curtesie 74
 discrete I-nough̄ / his contre for to gye
 saue in som thingis / he was to blame
 and Walter was this yonge lord-is name 77

¶ I blame him thus / that he considred nough̄te 78
 in tyme comyng / what myghte him betide
 but on his lust present / was al his thoughte
 as for to havke *and* hounte / on euery side 81
 wel nygh̄ al other cures / lete he slide
 and eke he nolde / *and* that was worst of alle
 wedde no wiff / for aughte that myghte bifalle 84

GROUP E. § 2. CLERK'S TALE. Corpus MS.

| | |
|--|----------------------|
| ¶ Only that poynt / his peple bare soore [MS Arch. Seld. B. 14.] that flokmele on a day / they to him wente and oon of hem / that wysest was of loore or ellis that the lord / best wolde assente | 88 |
| that he shulde telle him / what his peple mente or ellis coude he wel / shewe suche matire he to the Marques seide / as ye shulle hire | 91 |
| ¶ O noble Marques / youre humanite assurith vs / <i>and</i> yevith vs hardynesse as offte as tyme / is of necessite that we to yow mow telle / oure hevynesse | 92 95 |
| acceptith now lord / of youre gentilnesse that we with pitevous herte / to yow pleyne and lete not youre eeris / my voys disdeyne | 98 |
| ¶ Al haue I nought to done / in this matire more than a-nother man hath / in this place yit for as meche / as ye my lord / so dere haue alwey shewed to me / favoure <i>and</i> grace | 99 102 |
| I dar the better axe of yow / a space of audience / to shewe oure requeste and ye my lord / to do right as ye leste | [leaf 67] 105 |
| ¶ For certes lord / so wel vs likith yow and al youre werke / <i>and</i> haue done that we] [Arch. Seld. B. 14 extract ends] | 106 |
| Ne coude nought vs self deuysen how [Corpus MS, leaf 130] We mighte lyue in more felicite | 109 |
| Saue o þing lord if it þour wille be That for to be a wedded man þou leste þen were þoure peple in souereyn hertes reste | 112 |
| [No breaks in the Corpus MS between the stanzas.] | |
| Boweþ þoure nekke vnder þat blisful þok Of souerainte and nought of seruise Which þat men clepe spousaile or wedlok And þenkeþ lord amonges þoure þoughtes wise | 113 116 |

GROUP E. § 2. CLERK'S TALE. Corpus MS.

| | | |
|--|----------------------|-----|
| [how that oure dayes pas / in sondre gise] | [Arch. Seld. B. 14.] | |
| ffor þough we slepe or wake or renne or ryde | | |
| Ay fleep þe tyme and wol noman abyde | | 119 |
| And þough þoure greene þoughtes floure as þit | | 120 |
| In crepeþ age alway as stille as stoon | | |
| And deth manaceþ euery age and smyt | | |
| In ech astat for þer askapeþ noon | | 123 |
| And also certein as we knowe echoon | | |
| þat we schulle deye as vncertein we alle | | |
| Ben of þat day þat deþ schal on vs falle | | 126 |
| ¶ Accepteþ þanne of vs þe trewe entent | | 127 |
| þat neuere þit ne refused þour heste | | |
| And we lord if þat þe wile assent | | |
| To chese þou a wijf in schort tyme atte leste | | 130 |
| Borne of þe gentilest and of þe meste | | |
| Of alle þis lond so þat it oughte seme | | |
| honour to god and þou as we can deme | | 133 |
| ¶ Delyuer vs out of al þis busy dede | | 134 |
| And tak a wijf for hihe goddes sake | | |
| ffor if it so bifelle as god forbede | | |
| þat þorugh þoure deþ þour lynage schulde slake | | 137 |
| And þat a straunge successour schulde take | | |
| þoure heritage. o wo were vs on lyue | | |
| wherfore we pray þow hastily to wyue | | 140 |
| ¶ here meke preyer and here pitous cherte | | 141 |
| Made þe marquys herte haue pite | | |
| [ye wol quod he / myn owne peple dere] | [Arch. Seld. B. 14.] | |
| To þat I neuer erst þouzte streyne me | | 144 |
| I me reioysed of my liberte | | |
| That selden tyme is founden mariage | [leaf 130, back] | |
| Ther I was free I moste be in seruage | | 147 |

GROUP E. § 2. CLERK'S TALE. **Corpus MS.**

- ¶ But napeles I se 3our trewe entente 148
 And truste vpon 3our witte and haue don ay
 Wherfore with al my fre wille I wil assente
 To wedde me as sone as euer I may 151
 But þer as 3e han profred me to day
 To chese me a wijf I 3ou relesse
 þat' choys and pray 3ou of 3oure profre cesse 154
- ¶ ffor I wot þat' children often ben 155
 vnlike here eldres hem byfore
 Bounte comp al of god not' of þe stren
 Of which þei beþ engendred and y-bore 158
 I truste in goddes bounte and þerfore
 my mariage and myn astat' and reste
 I him bitake he may do as him leste 161
- ¶ lat' me alone in chesyng' of my wijf 162
 But I 3ou pray and charge vpon 3our lijf'
 That' charge vpon my bak' I wil endure
 þat' what' wijf' I take I þe assure 165
 To worschipe hire whil þat' hire lijf' may dure
 In word in werk' boþe heere and euerywhere
 As sche an Emperoures doughter were 168
- ¶ And forþermore þis schal 3e swere þat' 3e 169
 A3ein my choys schulle neuer grucche ne stryue
 ffor sipp'e I schal forgo my liberte
 At 3oure request' as euer mote I þriue 172
 [there as myn herte is sett / there woþ I wyve] [Arch. Seld. B. 14.]
 And but' 3e wol assente in such manere
 I pray 3ou speke nomore of þis matiere 175
- ¶ Wijf hertly wil þey sweren and assenten 176
 To al þis þing' þer seyde no wight' nay
 Beseking' him of grace or þat' þei wenten
 þat' he wolde graunten hem a certein day 179

GROUP E. § 2. CLERK'S TALE. Corpus MS.

| | |
|---|------------------------------|
| Of his spousaile as sone as euer he may ffor 3et' alway þe poeple somewhat' dredde lest' þat' þis marquys no wijf' wolde wedde | 182 |
| He graunted hem a day such as him leste On which he wolde be wedded sikerly And sayde he dide al þis at' þair requeste And þay wiþ humble entent ful buxomly knelyng' vpon here knees ful reuerently him þonkyng' alle and þus þay haue an ende Of' here entent' and home a3ein þei wende | [leaf 131] 183 186 189 |
| And her vpon he to his officers Comandep' for þe feste to purveye And to his priue knightes and squyers Such charge 3af' as him list' on hem leye And þay to his comaundement obeye And ech of' hem doþ al his diligence To do vnto þe feste reuerence | 190 193 196 |

[PART II.]

¶ Prima pars

| | |
|--|--|
| N ought' fer fro þe paleys honorable Wher as þe marquys schop his mariage Ther stood a throop of' þe Cite delitable In which þat' pore folk' of' þat' village hadden here bestes and here herbergage And of' here labour toke here sustienance After þe erþe 3af' hem abundañce Among' þis pore folk' þer dwelled a man Which was holde pouerest' of' hem alle But heihe god sum tyme sende can his <i>grace</i> in to a litel oxe stalle Ianicula men of' þat' throop him calle A doughter hadde he fair ynough to sight' ¶ And Grisildis þis 3onge mayden highte | 197 200 203 204 207 210 |
|--|--|

| | |
|--|------------------|
| But for to speke of ^t vertuous beaute | 211 |
| þanne was sche on þe fairest ^t vnder sonne | |
| fful pouerely y-fostered was sche | |
| No likerous lust ^t was in hire herte ronne | 214 |
| Wel oftere of ^t þe welle þan of ^t þe tonne | |
| Sche drank ^t for sche wolde vertues plese | |
| Sche knew wel labour but ^t non ydel ese | 217 |
| ¶ But ^t þough þis mayden tendre were of ^t age | 218 |
| 3et in þe brest ^t of ^t hire virginite | [leaf 131, back] |
| Ther was y-closed rype and scharpe corage | |
| And in a gret ^t reuerence and charite | 221 |
| hire olde pouere fader fostred sche | |
| A fewe scheep spynnyng ^t on feld sche kepte | |
| Sche nolde not ^t ben ydel til þat ^t sche slepte | 224 |
| And whan sche com homward sche wolde bringe | 225 |
| Wortes or oþer herbes tymes ofte | |
| The which sche schredde and seth for hir lyuyng | |
| And made hir bed ful harde and no þing ^t softe / | 228 |
| And ay sche kepte hir faderes lif ^t on lofte | |
| Wiþ euery obeissance and diligence | |
| That ^t childe may do to faderes reuerence / | 231 |
| ¶ vpon Grisilde þe pouer creature | 232 |
| fful ofte siþe þe marquys sette his ye | |
| As he on huntyng ^t rood perauenture | |
| And whan it ^t fell þat ^t he might ^t hir aspye | 235 |
| he not ^t wiþ wantoun lokyng ^t of ^t folye | |
| his eyen caste on hire but in sad wyse | |
| vpon hir cheere he wolde him ofte auyse | 238 |
| ¶ Commendyng ^t in his herte hir wommanhede | 239 |
| And eek ^t hire vertu passyng ^t any wight ^t | |
| Of so 3ong ^t age as wel in cheere as in dede | |
| ffor þough þe poeple haue no gret ^t insight ^t | 242 |

In vertu he considerd ful right
 hir bounte and disposed þat he wolde
 Wedde hir oonly if euer he wedde scholde 245

The day of weddyng com but no wight can 246

Telle what womman þat it schulde be
 ffor which meruayle wondreþ many man
 And seyde whan þey were in pryuyte 249

Wil natoure lord ȝit leue his vanite
 Wil he natoure wedde allas allas þe while
 Why wol he þus himself and vs begile 252

But napeles þis marquys haþ don make 253

Of gemmes sette in golde and in asure
 Broches and rynges for Grisildes sake [leaf 132]

And of hire cloþing tok he þe mesure 256
 Of a mayden like to hire stature

And eek of oþer ornamentes alle
 That vnto such a weddyng schulde falle 259

¶ þe tyme of vnderne of þe same day 260

Approcheþ þat þis weddyng schulde be
 And al þe paleys but was in aray

Boþe halle and chambre eche in his degre 263
 houses of offices stuffed wiþ plente

Ther maystow se of deyntheuous vitayle
 That may be founde as feer as last ytayle 266

¶ This real marquys richely arrayed 267

lordes and ladyes in his companye
 The which vnto þe feste were prayed
 And of his retenue þe bachelrie 270

With many a soun of sondry melodye
 vnto þe vilage of which I tolde
 In þis array þe righte wey haþ holde 273

- ¶ Grisilde of þis god wot ful Innocent 274
 þat for hire schapen al þis array was
 To fecche water at a welle is wente
 And comeþ home as sone as euer sche may 277
 ffor wel sche hadde herd seyde þat ilke day
 That marquys schulde wedde and if sche might
 Sche wolde fayn han seyn some of þat sight 280
- ¶ Sche þought I wille wiþ oþre maydens stonde 281
 þat ben my felawes in oure dore and se
 The marquisesse and þerfore wol I fonde
 To do at home as sone as it may be 284
 þe labour which þat longep vnto me
 And þanne I may at leysyr hire by-holde
 If sche þis wey vnto þe castel holde 287
- ¶ And as sche wolde ouer hire þressshfold gon 288
 The marquys cam and gan hir for to calle
 And sche sette down hir water potte anon
 Bysyde þis þressshfolde of þis oxe stalle [leaf 132, back] 291
 And doun vpon hir knees sche gan to falle
 Wiþ sad contynañce and kneleþ stille
 Til sche had herd what was þe lordes wille 294
- þis þoughtful marquys spak vnto þis mayde 295
 fful soberly and seyde in þis manere
 Wher is þour fader Grisildis he sayde
 And sche wiþ reuerence in humble chere 298
 Answerde lord he is al redy heere
 And in sche goþ wiþoute lenger lette
 And to þe marquys hir fader sche fette 301
- ¶ he by þe hond þan took þis olde man/ 302
 And sayde þus whan he him hadde a syde
 Ianycala I neyþer may ne can
 lengere þe plesaunce of myn herte hyde 305

GROUP E. § 2. CLERK'S TALE. Corpus MS.

If þat þou vouche safft what so betyde
 þy doughter I wol take or þat I wende
 As for my wijf vnto hire lyues ende 308

¶ þou louest me I wot it wel certain 309

And art my feiþful liege man y-bore
 And al þat likeþ me I dar wel sayn
 It likeþ þe and specialliche þerfore 312

Telle me þat poynt as I haue sayd bifore
 If þat þou wilt vnto þat purpos drawe
 To take me as for þi sone in lawe 315

¶ The sodeyn cas þe man astoned so 316

þat reed he wax abayst and al quakyng
 he stood vnneþe he sayde worde no mo
 But only þus lord quod he my willyng 319

Is as 3e wille noughȝt azeins 3our likyng
 I wole noþing 3e be my lord so dere
 But as 3ou luste gouerneþ þis matiere 322

¶ 3it wol I quod þis marquys softly 323

þat in þi chambre I and þou and sche
 haue a collacion and wostow why
 ffor I wil axe if þat hire wille be 326

To be my wijf and reule hire after me
 And al þis schal be doon in þi presence
 I wol not speke out of þin audience 329

¶ And in here chambre whil þay were aboute 330

here tretees which þat 3e schul after heere
 þe poeple cam in to þe hous wipoute
 And wondred hem in hor honeste manere 333

And tentyfly sche kepte hir fader deere
 But outerly Grysildis wondre might
 ffor neuer erst ne saugh sche such a sight 336

GROUP E. § 2. CLERK'S TALE. Corpus MS.

- ¶ No wonder is þouȝ þat sche were astoned 337
 To se so gret a geste in þat place
 Sche neuer was to suche gestes woned
 ffor which sche loked wiþ ful pale face 340
 But schortly forþ þis mater for to chace
 This aren þe wordes þat þe marquys sayde
 To his benigne verray feyþful mayde 343
- ¶ Grisilde he seyde ȝe schule wel vnderstonde 344
 It likeþ to ȝoure fader and to me
 That I ȝou wedde and eek it may so stonde
 As I suppose ȝe wil þat it so be 347
 But þese demaundes ax I first *quod* he
 ¶ þat siþþen it schal be don in hasty wise
 Wille ȝe assente or elles ȝou auyse 350
- I seye þis be redy wiþ good herte 351
 To al my lust and þat I frely may
 As me best þinkeþ do ȝou knowe or smerte
 And neuer þe to grucche it night ne day 354
 And eek whan I say ȝe ne say not nay
 Neiper by word ne by frounyng contynance
 Swere þis and heer I swere oure alliance 357
- ¶ Weddyng vpon þis word quakyng for drede 358
 Sche sayde lord vndigne or vnworþy
 Am I to þat ilke honour þat ȝe me bede
 But as ȝe wille ȝoure self right so wol I 361
 And here I swere þat neuer willyngly
 In werk ne þought I nyl ȝou disobeye [leaf 133, back]
 ffor to be deed þough me were loþ to deye 364
- ¶ This is ynough Grisylde myn *quod* he 365
 And forþ he goþ wiþ a ful sobre cheere
 Out at þe dore and after þat cam sche
 And to þe poeple he sayde in þis manere 368

þis is my wyf^t *quod* he þat^t stondeþ heere
 honoureþ hire and loueþ eek^t I preye
 Who so me loueþ þer is no more to seye 371

And for þat^t noþing^t of^t hir olde gere 372
 Sche scholde bringe in to his hous he bad
 That^t wommen schulde dispoylen hire right^t þere
 Of^t which þis ladyes were noþing^t glad 375
 To handle hire cloþes wher Inne sche was clad
 But naþeles þis mayden bright^t of^t hewe
 ffro foot^t to heed þey cloþed han al newe 378

¶ hire heres han þey kempte þat^t layn vntressed 379
 fful rudely and wiþ hire fyngres smale
 þay tyred hire heed þat^t longe rudely lay dressed
 Of^t hire array what^t schulde I make a tale 382
 Sche is now fair of^t hew þat^t arst^t was pale
 vnneþe þe poeple hir knew for hir fairnesse
 Whan sche *transmewed* was in such richesse 385

¶ This marquys haþ hir wedded wiþ a ryng^t 386
 Brouȝt^t for þe same cause and hire sette
 vpon an hors snow whyt^t and wel amblyng^t
 And to þe paleys or he lenger lette 389
 Wiþ ioyful poeple þat hire ladde and mette
 Conueyed hire and þus þe day þay spende
 In reuel til þe sonne gan descende 392

¶ And schortly forþ þis tale for to chace 393
 I seye þat^t to þis newe marquysesse
 God haþ such fauour sent^t hire of^t his *grace*
 That^t it^t ne semed nouȝt be kykenesse 396
 That^t sche was born and fedde in rudenesse
 As in a cote or in an Oxe stalle/
 But^t norissed in an emperoures halle [leaf 134] 399

GROUP E. § 2. CLERK'S TALE. Corpus MS.

- ¶ To euery wight^t sche woxen is so deere 400
 And worschipful þat^t folk^t þer sche was bore
 And from hire burþe knewe hire þere by 3eere
 vneþe trowede þey but^t durst^t han swore 403
 þat^t to Ianicle of^t which I spak^t byfore
 Sche doughter nas for as by coueiture
 hem þoughte sche was anoþer creature 406
- ¶ ffor þough euere vertuous was sche 407
 Sche was encessed in such excellence
 Of^t þewes good y-sette in heih bounte
 And so discrete and fair of^t eloquence
 So benigne and digne of^t reuerence
 And coude so þe poeples herte embrace
 þat^t ech hir loueþ þat^t lokeþ on hir face 413
- ¶ Not^t only of^t salues in þe toun 414
 Pirplissched was þe bounte of^t hir name
 But^t eek^t besyde in many a regioñ
 If^t on sayde wel anoþer sayde þe same 417
 So spredeþ of^t hire heih bounte & fame
 That^t men and wommen als wel 3onge as olde
 Gon to salice vpon hir to byholde 420
- ¶ Thus Walter lowly nat^t but^t really 421
 Wedded wiþ fortunate ñoneste
 In goddes pees lyueþ ful esily
 At^t hom and outward grace ynough^t hadde he 424
 And for he saugh^t þat^t vnder lough^t degre
 Was ofte vertu hyd þe poeple him helde
 A prudent man and þat^t is seyn ful seelde 427
- ¶ Nat^t oonly þis Grisildis purgh^t hir witte 428
 Coude al þe fait^t of^t wyfly homlynesse
 But^t eke whan þat^t þe cas requyred it
 The comun profyt^t coude sche redresse 431

þer nas discorde rancour ne heuynesse
 In al þat lond þat sche couþe appese
 And wisly bringe hem alle in hertes eese 424

¶ Though þat hire housbonde absent were anon [leaf 134, back]

If gentil men or oþer of hire countre
 Were wroþe sche wolde bringen hem at on
 So wys and rype wordes hadde sche / 438
 And Iuggements of so gret equite

þat sche from heuen sent was as men wende
 þe poeple to plese and euery wrong to amende 441

¶ Nat long tyme after þat þis Grisilde 442

Was wedded sche a douȝter hap y-bore
 Al hadde hir leuer haue born a knaue childe
 Glad was þis marquys and his folk þefore 445

ffor þough a mayden childe come al bifore
 Sche may vnto a knaue child atteyne
 Be lykened siþþe sche is not bareyne 448

¶ Explicit ij^a pars.

Ther felle as it bifalleþ tymes mo 449

When þat þis childe had souked but a þrowe
 This marquys in his herte longeþ so
 To tempte his wyf hir sadnesse for to knowe 452

þat he ne might out of his herte þrowe
 ¶ This merueylous desir his wijf to assaye
 Needeles god wot he þought hir to affraye 455

he hadde assayed hire ynough bifore 456

And fond hir euer good what needed it
 hire for to tempte and alway more and more
 But as for me I seye þat euele it sitte 459

þough some men it preyse for a subtil witte
 To assaye a wijf whan þat it is no neede
 And putten hire in anguissche and in dreede 462

- ¶ ffor which þis marquys wrought in þis manere 463
 he com a night allone þer as sche lay
 Wiþ sterne fate and wiþ trouble cheere
 And seyde þus Grisilde *quod* he þat day 466
 þat I 3ou took out of 3oure pore aray
 And putte 3ou in astat of heye noblesse
 3e haue nou3t forgotten as I gesse 469
- ¶ I seye Grisilde þis present dignite 470
 In which I haue putte 3ow as I trowe [leaf 135]
 makeþ 3ou nou3t for3eteful for to be
 þat I 3ou took in pouer astate ful lowe 473
 ffor eny wele 3e mote 3oure selue knowe
 Tak heed of euery word þat I 3ou say
 þer nys no wight þat heereþ it but we tway 476
- ¶ 3e wote 3oure selue wel how þat 3e come here 477
 In to þis hous þat nys nat longe ago
 And þough to me 3e be right leue and deere
 vnto my gentiles 3e ben noþing so 480
 þey say to hem it is gret schame and wo
 ffor to be sogette and ben in seruage
 To þe þat art born of a smal vilage 483
- ¶ And namely sippe þy dou3ter was y-bore 484
 This wordes han þey spoke douteles
 But I desire as I haue don byfore
 To lyue my lyf wiþ hem in reste and pees 487
 I may not in þis cas be recheles
 I mot do wiþ þi dou3ter for þe beste
 Nou3t as I wolde but as my gentils leste 490
- ¶ And 3it god wot þis is ful loþ to me 491
 But napeles wiþouten 3our wetynge
 I wil nat do but þis wil I *quod* he
 That 3e to me assent/ as in þis þinge 494

- Schewe now 3our pacience as in werkyng
 þat' 3e me high't and swor in 3our village
 That' day þat' maked was our mariage 497
- ¶ Whan sche had herd al þis sche nat ameued 498
 Noyþer in word ne cheere ne contynañce
 ffor as it semed sche was nat' agreued
 Sche sayde lord al liþ in 3our plesaunce 501
 My childe and I wiþ hertely obeissance
 ben 3oures al and 3e mowe saue & spille
 3oure owne þing' workiþ after 3our wille 504
- ¶ Ther may no þing' so god my soule saue 505
 liken to 3ou þat' may displesen me
 Ne I desyre noþing' for to haue [leaf 135, back]
 Ne drede for to lese saue oonly þe 508
 þis wille is in myn herte and ay schal be
 No lengþe of tyme or deþ may þis deface
 Ne chaunge my corrage to anoþer place 511
- ¶ Glad was þis marquys for hire answeyng' 512
 But' 3it' he feigned as it were not' so
 Al dreery was his cheer' as his lokyng'
 Whan þat' he schulde out/ of þe chambre go 515
 Sone after þis a forlong' way or tuo
 he priuely hap tolde al his entente
 vnto a man and to his wijf' him sente 518
- ¶ A maner *sergeant'* was þis priue man 519
 The which he feiþful often founden hadde
 In þinges gret' and eek' such folk' wel can
 Don execucioñ of þinges badde 522
 The lord knew wel þat' he him loued and dradde
 And whan þis *sergaunt'* knew his lordes wille
 In to þe chambur he stalked him ful stille 525

GROUP E. § 2. CLERK'S TALE. Corpus MS.

- ¶ Ma dame he sayde 3e moote forziue it me 526
 Though I do þing' þe which I am constreyned
 3e ben so wys þat' ful wel knowe 3e
 þat' lordes heestes mowe not' be feyned 529
 þey mowe wel be weyled or compleyned
 But' men moot' needes to here lust' obeye
 And so wol I þer nys nomore to seye 532
- ¶ þis child am I comaunded for to take 533
 And spak' no more but' out' þe childe he hente
 Dispitously and gan a cheere make
 As þough he wold han slayn it' or he wente 536
 Grisildes mot' al soffre and consente
 And as a lombe sche sitteþ meke & stille
 And lete þis cruel *sergant'* han his wille 539
- ¶ Suspeccious was þe defame of' þis man 540
 Suspecte his face suspecte his word also
 Suspecte þe tyme in which he þis bygan .
 Allas hir doughter þat' sche loued so [leaf 136] 543
 Sche wende he wolde haue slayen it' right' þo
 But' napeles sche nouþer weep ne siked
 Conformyng' hire to þat' þe marquys liked 546
- ¶ But' atte laste speke sche bigan 547
 And mekely sche to þe *sergaunt'* preyed
 So as he was a worþy gentil man
 þat' sche moste kisse hir childe or þat' it' deyde 550
 And in hir barm þis litel child sche leyde
 Wiþ ful sadde face and gan þis childe to blisse
 And lulled it' and after gan it' kisse 553
- ¶ And þus sche seyde in hire benigne vois 554
 ffar wel my child I schal þe neuer se
 But' siþ I haue þe marked wiþ þe croys
 Of' þilke fader blessed mote þou be 557

GROUP E. § 2. CLERK'S TALE. Corpus MS.

- þat for vs deyed vpon a crosse of tre
 þy soule litel child I him bytake
 ffor þis night schalt þou deye for my sake 560
- ¶ I trowe to a norice in þis cas 561
 It hadde ben hard þis reuþe for to se
 Wel might a mooder þan han cryed allas
 But napeles so sadde stedefast was sche 564
 þat sche endured alle aduersite
 And to þe *sergeant* mekely sche sayde
 haue her azein þour litel þonge mayde 567
- ¶ God now *quod* sche and doþ my lordes heste 568
 But o þing wold I pray þou of þour grace
 þat but my lord forbad þou atte leste
 Burieþ þis litel body in som place 571
 þat bestes ne no briddes it to-race
 But he ne wolde no word to þe purpos seye
 But/ tok þe childe and went vpon his weye 574
- ¶ þis *sergaunt* cam vnto þis lord ageyne 575
 And of Grisildes wordes and hir cheere
 he tolde him word for word in schort and pleyne
 And him presentep with his douzter dere 578
 Somwhat þis lord hadde reuþe in his manere [leaf 136, back]
 But napeles his purpos held he stille
 As lordes don whan þay wol haue here wille 581
- And bad þis *sergaunt* þat he priuily 582
 Schulde þis child ful ofte wynde and wrappe
 Wiþ alle *circumstaunces* tendrely
 And carye it in a coffre or in a lappe 585
 But vpon peyne his heed of for to swappe
 þat noman schulde knowe of his entent
 Ne when he come ne whider þat he went 588

- ¶ But at Boloigne it to his suster deere 589
 That ilke time of Panyke was Countesse /
 he schulde it take and schewe hir þis mateere /
 Besekyng hire to don hire besynesse 592
 This child to fostre in alle gentilnesse
 And whos child þat it was he bad hire hyde
 ffrom euery wight for ought þat may betyde 595
- ¶ þis sergaunt goþ and haþ fulfilled þis þing 596
 But now to þis markys retorne we
 ffor now goþ he ful ofte ymagynyng
 If by his wyffes cheer he mighte se 599
 Or by hire word apperceyue þat sche
 Were chaunged but he neuer coude hir fynde
 But euer in oon ylike sad and kynde 602
- ¶ As glad as besy as humble in seruice 603
 And eek in loue as sche was wont to be
 Was sche to him in euery maner wyse
 Ne of hir doughter nought a word spak sche 606
 Accident for non aduersite
 Was seyn in hire ne neuer hir douzter name
 Ne nempned sche in ernest ne in game 609

¶ Explicit iij^a pars.

- I**N þis astat þer ben passed .iiij. 3er 610
 sche wiþ childe was but as god wolde
 A knaue childe sche bar by þis walter
 fful gracious and fair for to biholde 613
 And whan þat folk it to his fader tolde
 Nat onlich he but al þe coñtre merye [leaf 137]
 Was for þis child and god þey þank and herye 616
- ¶ Whan it was tuo 3eer old and fro be breste 617
 Departed of his norice on a day
 This marquys caughte 3it anoþer leste

GROUP E. § 2. CLERK'S TALE. **Corpus MS.**

- To tempte his wijf 3it' after if he may 620
 O nedeles was sche tempted in assay
 But' wedded men knowen no mesure
 Whan þat' þay fynde a pacient creature 623
- ¶ Wijf' *quod* þis marquys 3e han herd of' þis 624
 My poeple sekerly bereþ heuy of' oure mariage
 And namely siþþe my sone boren is
 Now is it' wers þan euer in al oure age 627
 The murmur sleþ myn herte and my corage
 ffor to myn eeres comeþ þe voys so smerte
 That' it' wel neih destroyed haþ myn herte 630
- ¶ Now sey þey þus whan walter is agon 631
 þanne schal þe blood of' Ianicle succede
 And ben oure lord for oþer haue we non
 Suche wordes seiþ my poeple it is no drede 634
 Wel ought' I of' such murmur taken heede
 ffor certainly I drede such sentence
 þough þey nought' pleyne speke in myn audience 637
- ¶ I wolde lyue in pees if' þat' I mighte 638
 Wher fore I am disposed outerly
 As I his suster seruede be nighte
 Right' so þenke I to serue him priuely 641
 þus warne I 3ou for 3e nou3t' sodeinly
 Out' of' 3our self' for no wo schulde outraye
 Beþ pacient' and þerfore I 3ou praye 644
- ¶ I haue *quod* sche sayd þus and euer schal 645
 I wille no þing' ne nyl no þing' certayne
 But' as 3ou liste nou3t' greueþ me al
 þough þat' my doughter and my sone be slayne 648
 At' 3our comaundement' þis is to sayne
 I haue nou3t' had no part' of' children tweyne
 But' first' siknesse and after wo and peyne [leaf 137, back] 651

GROUP E. § 2. CLERK'S TALE. Corpus MS.

- ¶ 3e ben oure lord doþ wiþ 3our owne þing^t 652
 Riȝt^t as 3ou liste askeþ no rede at me
 ffor as I lifte at^t home al my cloþinge
 Whan I first^t come to 3ou riȝt^t so *quod* sche 655
 lefte I my wille and al my liberte
 And tok^t 3our cloþing^t wherfore I 3ou preye
 Doþ 3our plesaunce I wil 3our lust^t obeye 658
- ¶ And certes if^t I hadde *prescience* 659
 3oure wille to knowe or 3e 3our lust^t me tolde
 I wolde it^t do wiþouten necligence
 But^t now I wot^t 3our lust^t and what^t 3e wolde 662
 Al 3our plesaunce ferme and stable I holde
 ffor wiste I þat^t my deþ wolde do 3ou ese
 Riȝt^t gladly wolde I deye 3ou to plesse 665
- ¶ Deþ may not^t make no *comparisoun* 666
 vnto oure loue and whan þis marquys say
 þe contenaunce of^t his wijf^t he cast a down
 his eyzen tuo and wondreþ þat^t sche may 669
 In pacience suffre al þis array
 And forþ he goþ wiþ drery contynaunce
 But^t to his herte it was riȝt^t gret^t plesaunce 672
- ¶ þis Oggel *sergaunt* in þe same wise 673
 þat^t he hir douȝter caughte riȝt^t so he
 Or worse if^t men worse can deuyse
 haþ hent^t hir sone þat^t ful was of^t beaute 676
 And euer in oon so pacient was sche
 That^t sche no cheere made of^t heuynesse
 But^t kiste hir sone and after gan it^t blesse 679
- ¶ Saue þis sche preyed him if^t þat^t he mighte 680
 hir litel sone he wolde in erþe graue
 his tendre lymes delicat^t to sight^t
 firo foules and fro bestes for to saue 683

- but sche non answer of him mighte haue
 he wente his wey as he no þing ne roughthe
 But to Boloigne he tendrely it brouzte 686
- ¶ This marquys wondreþ euer lenger þe more [leaf 138] 687
 vpon hir pacience and if þat he
 Ne hadde soþly knowe þer bifore
 þat parfitly hir children loued sche 690
 he wolde haue wende þat of som subtilte
 And of malice or for cruel corrage
 That sche hadde suffred þis wiþ sad visage 693
- ¶ But wel he knewe next himself certayne 694
 Sche loued hir children best in euery wise /
 But now of wommen wolde I aske fayne
 If þise assayes mighte nouzt suffise / 697
 What couþe a stordy housbonde more deuyse
 To proeue his wijf and hire stedfastnesse
 And he contynuyng euer in sturdynesse 700
- ¶ But þer ben folk of such condicioñ 701
 That whan þey haue a certein purpos take
 They can nought stynte of here entencioñ
 But right as þey were bounden to a stake 704
 þey wil nat of þat firste purpos slake /
 Right so þis marquys fully haþ purposed
 To tempte his wijf as he was first disposed 707
- ¶ he wayteþ if by word or contynance 708
 That sche to him was chaunged of corage
 But neuer coude he fynde variance
 Sche was ay oon in hert and in visage 711
 And ay þe furþer þat sche was in age
 þe more trewe if þat it were possible
 Sche was to him more lowe and more pesible 714

- ¶ ffor which it' semed þus þat' of hem tuo 715
 þer nas but' oo wille for as walter liste
 That' same lust' was hire plesance also
 And god he þanked al fel for þe beste 718
 Sche schewed weel for no worldly vnreste
 A wijf' as of hir self' no þing' ne scholde
 Wille in effecte but' as hir housbond wolde 721
- þe sclandre of walter ofte and wyde spradde 722
 That' of a cruel herte he wikkedly [leaf 138, back]
 ffor he a pore womman wedded hadde
 haþ murdred boþe his children priuely 725
 Such murmur was among' hem comunly
 No wonder is for to þe poeples eere
 Ther com no word but' þat' þay mordred were 728
- ffor which þer as his poeple þer bifore 729
 hadde loued him wel þe sclander of his diffame
 Made hem þat' þey him hatede þerfore
 To ben a murdrer is an hateful name 732
 But' napeles for ernest' ne for game
 he of his cruel purpos nolde stente
 To tempte his wijf' was sette al his entente 735
- ¶ Whan þat' his douzter twelf' 3er was of age 736
 he to þe court' of Rome in subtil wise
 Enformed of his wille and sente his message
 Comaundyng' hem suche bulles to deuysel/ 739
 In þis maner and in þis same gyse
 how þat' þe pope as for his poeples reste
 Bad him to wedde anoþer if' him leste 742
- ¶ I say he bad þay scholden countrefete 743
 The popes bulles making' mencioñ
 þat' he haþ leue his firste wijf' to lete
 As by þe popes dispensacioñ 746

- To stynte rancour and discencion
 Bitwixe his poeple and him þus spak' þe bulle
 þe which þey han publisshed atte fulle 749
- ¶ The rude poeple as it' no wonder is 750
 Wenden ful wel þat' it hadde be riȝt' so
 But' whan þis tyþinges come to Grisildis
 I deme þat' hir herte was ful wo 753
 And sche ylike sad for euermo
 Disposed was þis humble creature
 To aduersite of' fortune al tendure 756
- ¶ Abydyng' euer his lust' and his plesaunce 757
 To whom sche was ȝiuen herte and al
 As to hire worldly verray suffisaunce [leaf 139]
 But' schortly if' þis story telle I schal 760
 This marquys writen haþ in special
 A *lettre* in which he scheweþ his entente
 And secretly he to boloigne it' sente 763
- ¶ To þe erl of' Panyke which þat' hadde þo 764
 Wedded his suster preyed he specially
 To bringen home aȝein his children tuo
 But' he o þinge preyed outrely 767
 With alle his herte ful affectuously
 þat' he to no wight þough men wolde enquere
 Schulde nouȝt telle whos children þat' þei were 770
- ¶ But' seye þe mayden schulde y-wedded be 771
 Vnto þe marquys of' Saluce riȝt' anon
 And as þis erle was preyed riȝt' so dede he
 ffor at' day sette he on his day is goom 774
 Toward Saluce and lordes many oon
 In riche array þis mayden for to gyde
 hire ȝonge broþer ryding' by hir syde 777

| | |
|---|-----|
| Arrayed was toward hir mariage | 778 |
| This freisshe mayde ful of gemmes cleere | |
| hir broþer which þat' vij. 3eer was of age | |
| Arrayed eek' ful freissch in his manere | 781 |
| And þus in gret' noblesse and wiþ glad cheere | |
| Toward Saluces schapyng hire iourneye | |
| ffro day to day þey ryden in here weye | 784 |

¶ Quarta pars.

[PART V.]

| | |
|---|----------------------|
| A Mong' al þis after his wicked vsage | 785 |
| þis marquys 3it' his wijf' gan tempte more | |
| To þe outrest' proef' of hire corage | |
| ffully to han experiment' and lore | 788 |
| If' þat' sche was as stidefast' as bifore | |
| he on a day in open audience | |
| fful boustously haþ seid hir þis sentence | 791 |
| Certes Grisildis I hadde ynough plesaunce | 792 |
| To han 3ou to my wijf' for 3our goodnesse | |
| As for 3our trouþe and 3our obeissañce | |
| Nat' for 3our lignage ne for 3our richesse | [leaf 139, back] 795 |
| But' now <i>quod</i> he in verray soþfastnesse | |
| þat' in gret' lorschepe if' I wol auyse | |
| þer is gret' seruytute in sondry wise | 798 |
| ¶ I may not' do as euery ploughman may | 799 |
| My poeple me constreyneþ for to take | |
| anoþer wijf' and cryen day by day | |
| And eek' þe pope rancour for to slake | 802 |
| Consenteþ it' þat' dar I vndertake | |
| And tewelich þus meche I wil 3ou seye | |
| My newe wijf' is comynge by þe weye | 805 |
| ¶ Be strong' of herte and voyde anon hire place | 806 |
| And þilke doware þat' 3e broughten me | |
| Tak' it' a3ein and graunte it' of my grace | |

GROUP E. § 2. CLERK'S TALE. Corpus MS.

| | |
|---|------------|
| Retorneþ to 3our fadres hous <i>quod</i> he | 809 |
| No man may alwey haue prosperite | |
| Wip euene herte I rede 3ou tendure | |
| þe strok ^t of ^t fortune or of ^t auenture | 812 |
| ¶ And sche a3ein answerde in pacience | 813 |
| My lord seyde sche I wot ^t & wiste alway | |
| how þat ^t bitwixe 3oure magnificence | |
| And my pouerte no wight ^t can ne may | 816 |
| maken comparisoñ it/ is no nay | |
| I helde me neuer digne in no manere | |
| To be 3our wijf ^t ne 3it ^t 3our chamberere | 819 |
| And in þis hous þer 3e me lady made | 820 |
| ¶ þe hihe god take I for my witesse | |
| And also wisly he my soule glade | |
| I neuer heelde me lady ne maystresse | 823 |
| But ^t humble <i>seruaunt</i> ^t to 3our worþinesse | |
| And euere schal whil þat ^t my lijff ^t may dure | |
| Abouen euery worldly creature | 826 |
| ¶ That ^t 3e so longe of ^t 3oure benignite | 827 |
| han holde me in honour and nobleye | |
| Wher as I was nouzt ^t worþy for to be | |
| þat ^t þanke I god and 3ow whom I preye | 830 |
| fforzelde it ^t 3ow þer nys no more to seye | [leaf 140] |
| vnto my fader gladly wol I wende | |
| And wip him dwelle vnto my lyues ende | 833 |
| ¶ Ther I was fostred of ^t a child ful smal | 834 |
| Til I be dede my lijff ^t þer wil I lede | |
| A wydewe clene in body herte and al | |
| ffor sippe I 3af ^t to 3ow my maydenhede | 837 |
| And am 3our trewe wijf ^t it ^t is no drede | |
| God schilde such a lordes wijf ^t to take | |
| Anoþer man to housbonde or to make | 840 |

GROUP E. § 2. CLERK'S TALE. Corpus MS.

- ¶ And of 3oure newe wyf god of his grace 841
 So graunte 3ou wele and heigh prosperite
 ffor I wille gladly 3elden hire my place
 In which I was blisful wont to be 844
 ffor sippe it likeþ 3ow my lord quod sche
 That whilom weren al myn hertes reste
 þat I schal go I wol go whan 3ou leste 847
- ¶ But þer as 3e me profre swich dowayre 848
 Ay I first brought it is wel in my mynde
 It were my wrecched cloþes no þing fayre
 The whiche to me were now ful hard to fynde 851
 O goode god how gentil and how kynde
 3e semede by 3our speche and 3our visage
 þe day þat maked was our mariage 854
- But soþ is seyde algate I fynde it trewe 855
 ffor in effecte it preuede is on me
 loue is nat olde as whan þat it is newe
 But certes lord for non aduersite 858
 To deyen in þe cas it schal not be
 þat euer in word or werk I schal repente
 þat I 3ou 3af myn herte in hol entente 861
- ¶ My lord 3e wot þat in my fadres place 862
 3e dede me strepe out of my pore wede
 And richely me cladden of 3our grace
 To 3ou brought I nouzt elles out of drede 865
 But feiþ and nakednesse and maydenhede
 And here a3ein 3our cloþing I restore [leaf 140, back]
 And eek 3our weddyng ryng for euermore 868
- ¶ The remenaunt of 3oure Iewellis redy be 869
 Wipinne 3our chambre dar I sauely sayn
 Naked out of my fadres hous quod sche
 I cam and naked I mot agayn 872

| | |
|---|-------------------|
| Al 3oure plesaunce wolde I folwe fayn But 3it I hope it be nat 3oure entente That smokles out of 3oure paleys I wente | 875 |
| ¶ 3e coude nou3t do so dishoneste a þing That þilke wombe in which 3our children leye Schulde bifore þe poeple in my walkyng Be seyn al bare wher fore I 3ou preye / lat me not lik a worme go by þe weye Remembre 3ou myn owne lord so deere I was 3oure wijf þough I vnworþy were | 876 879 882 |
| Wherfore in guerdoñ of my maydenhede Which þat I brought and not away I bere As voucheþ sauf to 3if me to my mede But such a smok as I was wont to were þat I þer wiþ may wrye þe wombe of here þat was 3our wijf and here take I my leue Of 3ou myn owen lord lest I 3ou greue | 883 886 889 |
| ¶ The smok/ <i>quod</i> he þat þou hast on þi bak lat it be stille and bere it forþ wiþ þe But vneþes þilke word he spak But wente his wey for rewþe and pite Biforn þe folk hir seluen strepeþ sche And in hire smok wiþ heued and foot al bare Toward hir fader hous is sche fare | 890 893 896 |
| The folk hir folwen wepyng in hire weye And fortune ay þey cursen as þey gon But sche fro wepyng kepte hire eyhen dreye Ne in þis tyme word ne spak sche noon hire fader þat þis tydinge herde anon Curseþ þe day and tyme þat nature Schope him to be a lyues creature | 897 900 |
| | [leaf 141] 903 |

GROUP E. § 2. CLERK'S TALE. **Corpus MS.**

| | |
|--|-----|
| ¶ ffor out' of' doute þis olde pouere man | 904 |
| þat' whan þe lord had fulfilde his corage | 906 |
| ffor euer it demed siþ it' ferst' bigan | 905 |
| him wolde þinke it' were disparage | 907 |
| To wedde oon of' so pore a lynage | |
| To his astat' so lowe to alighte | |
| And voyde hire as sone as euer he mighte | 910 |
| ¶ Azein his doughter hastely goþ he | 911 |
| ffor he by noyse of' folk' knew hire comyng' | |
| And wiþ hire olde cote as it' mighte be | |
| he couered hire ful sorwfully wepynge | 914 |
| But' on hir body might' he it not' bringe | |
| ffor rude was þe cloþ and more of' age | |
| By fele dayes þan was hire mariage | 917 |
| Thus wiþ hir fader for a certein space | 918 |
| Dwelleþ þis flour of' wyfly pacience | |
| þat' neyþer by hir wordes ne hir face | |
| Biforn þe folk' ne eekt' in here absence / | 921 |
| Ne schewede sche þat' hire was don offence | |
| Ne of' hire heih astat' þe remembrance | |
| Ne hadde sche as by hire contynauce | 924 |
| No wonder is for in hire gret' astate | 925 |
| hire gost' was euer in plein humilite | |
| No tendre mouþ non herte delicate | |
| No pompe ne semblañt' of' realte | 928 |
| But' ful of' pacience and benignite | |
| Discrete and prydeles ay honorable | |
| And to hir housbonde euer meeke and stable | 931 |
| ¶ Men speke of' Iob. and most' for his humblesse | 932 |
| As clerkes whan hem liste can endite | |
| Namly of' men but as in soþfastnesse | |
| þough clerkes preyse wommen but a lite | 935 |

þer can no man in humblesse him aquite
 As wommen can ne can be half' so trewe
 As wommen ben but' it' be falle of' newe 938

[PART VI.]

- ¶ ffo Boloigne is þis erl of' Panyke come / [leaf 141, back]
 Of which þe fame vp sprong' to more & lesse /
 And to þe poeples eres alle and some /
 Was coup' eek' þat' a newe marquysesse 942
 he wiþ him brought' in such pompe and richesse
 That' neuer was þer seyn wiþ mannes eye
 So noble array in al west' lumbardy 945
- ¶ The marquys which þat' schope and knew al þis 946
 Or þat' þis erl were come sent' his message
 ffor þilke sely pore Grisildis
 And sche with humble herte and glad visage 949
 nouzt' wiþ no swollen herte in hire corage
 Cam at' his heste and on hir knees hir sette
 And reuerently and wysly sche him grette 952
- ¶ Grisildis *quod* he my wille is vtterly 953
 þis mayden þat' schal be wedded to me
 Receyued be to morn als really
 As possible is in myn hous for to be 956
 And eke þat' euery wight' in his degre
 haue his astat' in sitting' and seruise
 And heih plesaunce as I can best' deuyse 959
- ¶ I haue no womman sufficaunt' certayn 960
 þe chambres for to arraye in ordinañce
 After my lust' and þefore wolde I fayn
 Thyn were al such maner gouernance 963
 þou knowest' eek' of' olde al my plesaunce
 þough' þin array be badde and yuel beseye
 Do þou þi deuer atte leste weye 966

- ¶ Nat' oonly lord þat' I am glad *quod* sche 967
 To do 3oure lust' but' I desire also
 3ou for to serue and plese in my degre
 Wipouten feynyng' and schal eueremo 970
 Ne neuer for no wele ne no woo
 Ne schal þe goost' wipinne myn herte stente
 To loue 3ou best/ wip al my trewe entente 973
- ¶ And wip þat' word sche gan the house to dighte 974
 And tables for to sette and beddes make [leaf 142]
 And peyned hire to do al þat' sche mighte
 Preyinge þe chambereres for goddes sake 977-
 To hasten hem and faste swepe and schake
 And sche þe moste *seruisable* of' alle
 haþ euery chambre arrayed and his halle 980
- ¶ Abouten vndren gan þis erl alighte 981
 And wip him brought' his noble children tweye
 ffor wip þe poeple ran to see þe sight'
 Of' hire array so richely byseye 984
 And þan at' erst' amonges hem þey seye
 That' walter was no fool þough þat' him liste
 To change his wyf' for it' was for þe beste 987
- ¶ ffor sche is fairer as þey demen alle 988
 þan is Grisilde and more tendre of' age
 And fairer fruyt' between hem schulde falle
 And more plesaunce for hire heih lynage 991
 hire broþer eek' so fair was of' visage
 That' hem to se þe poeple haþ cau3t' plesaunce
 Commendynge now þe marquys gouernaunce 994
- ¶ O stormy poeple vnsad and euer vntrewe 995
 Ay vndiscrete and chaungyng' as a fane
 Delityng' ay in rombile þat' is newe
 ffor lik' þe mone ay wexen 3e and wane 998

GROUP E. § 2. CLERK'S TALE. Corpus MS.

- Ay ful of clappyng^t dere y-nough^t a Iane
 3oure dome is fals 3our inconstance wel preueþ
 A ful gret^t fool is he þat^t on 3ou leueþ 1001
- ¶ Thus saiden sadde folk^t in þat Cite 1002
 Whan þat^t þe peple gazed vp and doun
 ffor þey wer^c glade right^t for þe nouelte
 To han a newe lady of oure toun 1005
 No more of þis now make I menciound
 But^t to Grisilde anon wil I me dresse
 And telle hire constañce and hire besynesse 1008
- ¶ fful besy was Grisilde in euery þing^t 1009
 That^t to þe feste was apertenent
 Right^t nough^t was sche abayssh^t of hire cloþing^t [ff 142, bk.]
 þough^t it^t were rude and eek^t somdel torent^t 1012
 But^t with glad chere to þe gate is went
 With oþer folk^t to grete þe marquysesse
 And after þat^t doþ forþ hire besynesse 1015
- ¶ Wiþ so glad chere his gestes sche reseceyueþ 1016
 And connyngly euerich in his degre
 That^t defaute no man appareceyueþ
 But^t ay þey wondren what^t sche mighte be 1019
 þat^t in so pore array was for to se
 And coude such honour & reuerence
 And worþily þey preysen hire prudence 1022
- ¶ In al þis mene while sche ne stente 1023
 þis mayde and eek^t hir broþer to comende
 With alle hire herte in ful benigne entente
 So wel þat^t no man couþe hire pris amende 1026
 But atte laste whan þise lordes wende
 To sitte doun at mete he gan to calle
 Grisilde as sche was besy in his halle 1029

- ¶ Grisilde *quod* he as it were in his play 1030
 how likeþ þe my wijf and hire beaute
 Right wel *quod* sche my lord for in good fey
 A fairer sawe I neuer non þan sche 1033
 I pray to god 3if 3ou prosperite
 And so hope I þat he wil to 3ou sende
 Plesaunce ynow vnto 3our lyues ende 1036
- ¶ O þing beseke I 3ou and warne also / 1037
 þat 3e prike wijþ no tormentynge
 þis tendre mayden as 3e han do mo
 ffor sche is fostred in hire norischinge 1040
 more tenderly and to my supposynge
 Sche coude nough aduersite endure
 As coude a pore fostred creature/ 1043
- And whan þis walter saugh hir pacience 1044
 hire glad cher and no malice at al
 And he so often hadde don hire offence
 And sche ay sadde and constant as a wal [leaf 143]
 Continuyng euere hire Innocence oueral
 This sturdy marquys gan hire herte dresse
 To rewen on hire wyfly stedfastnesse 1050
- ¶ This is ynough Grisilde myn *quod* he 1051
 Be now no more agast ne yuel apayed
 I haue þy feiþ and þi benignite
 As wel as euer womman was assayed 1054
 In gret astate and pouereliche arrayed
 Now knowe I deere wijf þy stedfastnesse /
 And hire in armes toke and gan hire kesse 1057
- ¶ And sche for wonder took of hit no keepe 1058
 Sche þouzte nough what þing he to hir sayde/
 Sche ferde as sche hadde stirte out of hir slepe
 Til sche out of hir masednesse abrayde 1061

- Grisilde *quod* he god þat / for vs deyed
 þou art my wyf ne non oþer I haue
 Ne neuer hadde so god my soule saue 1064
- ¶ This is þy doughter which þou hast supposed 1065
 To be my wijf þat oþer feipfully
 Schal be myn [heir] as I haue ay purposed
 þou bare him in þi body trewely 1068
 At boloygne haue I kept hem pryuyly
 Tak hem azein for now mayst þou not seye
 þat þou hast lorn non of þy children tweye 1071
- ¶ And folk þat oþerwise han sayd of me 1072
 I warne hem wel þat I haue don þis dede
 ffor no malice ne for no cruelte
 But for tassaye in þe þy wommanhede 1075
 And nat to slee my children god forbede
 But for to kepe hem pryuyly and stille
 Tit I þi purpos knewe and al þy wille 1078
- ¶ Whan þis herde a swowne doun sche falleþ 1079
 ffor pytous ioie and after hir swownyng
 Sche boþe hire zonge children to hire calleþ
 And in his armes pitously wepyng 1082
 Embraceþ hem and tendrely kysinge [leaf 143, back]
 ful like a moder wijþ hire salte teeres
 Sche baþeþ boþe hire visage and hire heres 1085
- ¶ O which a pytous sight it was to see 1086
 hir swownyng and hire humble voys to heere
 Graunt mercy lord god I þanke it þou *quod* she
 þat þe han saued me my children deere 1089
 now rekke I neuer to be ded right heere
 Sipþe I stonde in þour loue and in þour grace
 No fors of deþ ne whan my spirit pace 1092

- ¶ O tendre o dere o 3onge children myne 1093
 3our woful moder wende stedefastly
 That' cruel houndes or som foul vermyne
 hadde eten 3ou but' god of' his mercy 1096
 And 3oure benigne fader tenderly
 haþ don 3ou kepte and in þe same stounde
 Al sodeinly sche swapte a doun to grounde. 1099
- ¶ And in hire swowne so sadly holdeþ sche 1100
 hire children tuo whan sche gan hem embrace
 þat' with gret' sleighte and wiþ gret' difficulte
 þe children from hire arm þei gon arace 1103
 O many a teer on many a pitous face
 Doun ran of' hem þat' stoden hire besyde
 vnneþe aboute hire mighten þey abyde 1106
- Walter hir gladeþ and hir sorwe slakeþ 1107
 Sche ryseþ vp abaysshed from hire traunce
 And euery wight' hire ioye and feste makeþ
 til sche haþ caught' azein hir contenañce 1110
 Walter hire doþ feiþfully plesaunce
 þat' it' is deynte for to se þe cheere
 Bitwixe hem tuo now þey ben mett' in feere 1113
- ¶ This ladyes whan þat' þey here tyme saye 1114
 han taken hire and in to chambre goon
 And streepen hire out' of' hire ruyde array
 And in a cloþ of' gold þat' brighte schoon) 1117
 Wiþ a coroune of' many a riche stoon)
 vpon hire heed þey in to halle hir broughte [leaf 144]
 And þan sche was honoured as sche oughte 1120
- ¶ Thus haþ þis pitous day a blisful ende 1121
 ffor euery man and womman doþ here might
 This day in mirþe and reuel to dispende
 Til on þe welken schone þe sterres bright 1124

GROUP E. § 2. CLERK'S TALE. Corpus MS.

- ffor more solempne in euery mannes sight
 þis feste was and gretter of^t costage
 Than was þe reuel of^t hire mariage 1127
- ¶ fful many a 3eer in hih prosperite 1128
 lyuen þise tuo in concord and in reste
 And richely his dou3ter maryed he
 vnto a lord on of^t þe worpieste 1131
 Of alle ytayle þanne and pes & reste
 his wyues fader in his court^t he kepeþ
 Til þat^t his soule out^t of^t his body creepeþ 1134
- ¶ his sone succediþ in his heritage 1135
 In reste and pees after his fader day
 And fortunat^t eek^t was in mariage
 Al putte he not^t his wijf^t in gret^t assay 1138
 This world is not^t so strong^t it^t is no nay
 As it^t haþ ben in olde tyme 3ore
 And herkneþ what^t þis auctor seiþ þerfore 1141
- This story is sayd not^t for þat^t wyues scholde 1142
 ffolwen grisilde as in humilite
 ffor it^t were importable þough þey wolde
 But^t for þat^t euery wight^t in his degre 1145
 Schulde be constante in aduersite
 As was Grisilde þerfore Petrayke writeþ
 þis story which he wiþ his stile enditeþ 1148
- ffor siþþe a womman was so paciente 1149
 vnto a mortel man wel more vs ou3te
 Resceyuen al in gree þat^t god vs sente
 ffor grete skiles he preeueþ þat^t he wrou3te 1152
 But^t he ne tempteþ no man þat^t he brou3te
 As seiþ seint^t Iame 3if^t 3e his pistil rede
 He preeueþ folk^t alday it is no drede [leaf 144, back] 1155

GROUP E. § 2. CLERK'S TALE. Corpus MS.

| | |
|---|------|
| And suffreþ vs as for oure excercise | 1156 |
| Wiþ scharpe scorges of' aduersite ful often to ben betyn in sondry wyse | |
| Nought' for to knowe oure wille for certes he | 1159 |
| Or we were born knew al oure frelete | |
| And for oure beste is al oure gouernañce lat' vs þanne lyue in vertuouus suffraunce | 1162 |
| ¶ But' lordinges o word herkenep ar I go | 1163 |
| It' were ful hard to fynde now a dayes In alle a toun Grisildes þre or tuo | |
| ffor if' þat' þey were putte to suche assayes | 1166 |
| The golde of' hem haþ now so badde layes Wiþ bras þat' þough þe coyne be fayr at eye | |
| It' wolde raþer berst/ a tuo þan plye | 1169 |
| ¶ ffor which here for þe wyues loue of' Baþe | 1170 |
| Whos lijf' and al hire helþe god mayntene In hire maystrye and elles were it' skape | |
| I wolde wiþ lusty herte freisshe and grene | 1173 |
| Sey 3ou a song' to glade 3ou I wene And late vs stynte of' earnestful matiere | |
| herkneþ my song' þat' seiþ in þis manere | 1176 |

¶ lenvoye de Chaucere

| | |
|--|------|
| ¶ Grisild is deed and eek' hir pacience. | |
| And boþe at' oones buried in ytayle Wher fore I crye in open audience | 1179 |
| No wedded man be hardy to assayle / his wyues pacience in hope to fynde / Grisildis for in certes he schal fayle / | 1182 |

GROUP E. § 2. CLERK'S TALE. Corpus MS.

- O noble wyues ful of heih prudence
 lat' non humilite 3oure tonge nayle /
 Ne lat' no clerk' haue cause or diligence 1185
 To write of' 3ou a story of' such meruayle
 As Grisildis pacient' and kynde
 lest' chychevache 3ow swolwe in hire entrayle 1188
- ffolweþ herto and holdeþ no scilence [a leaf out]
 [but euer answerith / in the contir-taille [MS Arch. Seld. B. 14, leaf 82]
 beth nat bidaffid / for youre innocence 1191
 but sharply take on yow / the gouernaille
 enpoynteth wel this lessoun / in youre mynde
 for comune profit / sith hit may availle 1194
- And ye Archiwivis / stondith at defence
 syn ye be stronge / as is a grete Camaille
 ne suffrith not / that men do yow offence 1197
 and slender wivis / as feble in bataille
 beith egre as a Tigre / bi-yende the se fer in ynde
 ay clappith as a mylle / I yow consaille 1200
- Ne dredith hem nought doith hem no reuerence
 for though thyn housbond armed be / in maille
 the wordis of thi crabbed eloquence 1203
 shal persshe his breste / and eke his auentaille
 in gelousie I rede eke / thow him bynde
 and thow shalt make him covche / as a quaille 1206
- Yf thow be feyre / there folk ben in presence
 shewe thow thi visage / and thin apparaille
 yf thow be foule / be fre of thi dispence 1209
 to gete the frendis / ay do thi travaille
 be euer of chere as light / as leff on lynde
 and lete him care wepe / wrynge and waille 1212

Here endith the Clerke of Oxonford
 his tale /]

[and next folwith his tale of Ianuare and May. [MS Arch. Seld. B. 14.]

Whilom ther was dwellyng / in Lumbardye
 a worthi knyght / that borne was in Pavië
 in which he lived / in grete prosperite
 and sexti yere / a wiffles man was he 1248
 and folwed ay / his bodyly delite
 on women / there as was his appetite
 as don these foolis / that ben seculere
 and whan he was passed sexti yere 1252
 were hit for holynes / or for dotage
 I can not sey / but suche a grete corage
 had this knyght / to be a wedded man
 that day *and* night / he doth al that he can 1256
 to espien where he myghte / wedded be
 prayng oure lord / graunte him that he
 myghte onys knowe / of that blisful liff
 that is bitwixe an housbonde / *and* his wiff 1260
 and for to live / vnder that holy bonde
 with which first / god man *and* woman bonde
 noon other liff seide he / is worthe a bene
 for wedlok is so esy / *and* so clene 1264
 that in this world / hit is a paradise
 thus seide this olde knyght / that was so wise
 and *certeynly* / as soth as god is kyng
 to take a wiff / hit is a glorious thinge 1268
 and namely whan a man is olde / *and* hore
 than is a wiff the fructe / of his tresore
 than shulde he take a yonge wiff / *and* a feyre [leaf 115, back]
 on which he myghte / engender him an heyre 1272
 CORPUS 321 (6-T. 443) [this page, Arch. Seld. B. 14]

| | |
|--|--|
| and lede his liff in ioie / <i>and</i> in solas | [MS Arch. Seld. B. 14] |
| where that these bachelers / synge alas | |
| whan that thei fynden / any aduersite | |
| in love / which nys but childis vanyte | 1276 |
| and trewely hit sit wel / to be so | |
| that bachelers han ofte peyne <i>and</i> wo | |
| on brotil gronde thei hilde / <i>and</i> brotilnes | |
| they fynden / whan thei wenyn sikernes | 1280 |
| thei live but as a brid / or as a beste | |
| in liberte / <i>and</i> vnder noon a-reste | |
| there as a wedded man / in his estate | |
| livith a liff blisful / <i>and</i> ordynate | 1284 |
| vnder the yoke of mariage I-bounde | |
| wel may his herte / in ioie <i>and</i> blis habounde | |
| for who can be so boxom / as a wiff | |
| who is so trewe / <i>and</i> eke so ententiff | 1288 |
| to kepe him sike <i>and</i> hole / as his make | |
| for wel or wo / she wol him not forsake | |
| she is not wery / him to loue <i>and</i> serue | |
| though that he lye bedred / til he sterve] | [MS Arch. Seld. B. 14 extract ends] |
| And 3it ^t some clerkes seyn it ^t nys nouzt so | [Corpus MS, leaf 145] |
| Of ^t which Theoffraste / is on of ^t þo | |
| What ^t fors þeiz theoffraste luste lye | |
| Ne take no wiff ^t <i>quod</i> he for husbandrye | 1296 |
| As for to spare in housholde þin dispence | |
| A trewe seruaunt doþ more diligence | |
| þy good to kepe þan þin owen wiff ^t | |
| fior sche wol clayme half ^t part ^t al hire lijf ^t | 1300 |
| And if ^t þat ^t þou be seek ^t so god me saue | |
| þy verray frendes oþer a trewe knaue | |
| Wol kepe þe bet ^t þan sche þat ^t wayteþ ay | |
| After þy good and haþ don many a day | 1304 |
| [and if thou take a wiff / in thin age oolde | |
| fful lightly maist thou be a Cokewoolde] | [MS Arch. Seld. B. 14] |
| To þis entente and an C sipes wurse | 1307 |
| [writeth this man / there / god his bonys cors] | [MS Arch. Seld. B. 14] |

But tak' no kepe of alle such vanyte
 Defye theofrast' and herkne me
 A wyff' is goddes 3ifte verrayly
 Alle oþer maner 3iftes hardily 1312
 As landes rentes pasture or comune
 Oþer oþer 3iftes þat' moebles of' fortune
 þat' passen as a schadewe on a waß
 But' drede nouȝt if' pleynly speke I schaff 1316
 A wyf' wil laste and in þin hous endure
 Wel lenger þan þe luste to endure
 mariage is a ful gret' sacrament
 he which haþ no wijf' I holde him schent 1320
 he lyueþ helples and is al desolat'
 I speke of' folk' in seculer estat'
 And herkne why I say nouȝt' þis for nouȝt'
 þe womman is for mannes help y-wrouȝt 1324
 þe hihe god when he hadde adam maked
 And sawe him allone bely naked
 God of' his grete goodnesse sayde he þanne
 lete vs now make an helpe to þis manne 1328
 ylike to himself' and þen he made Eue
 here may 3e se and here-by 3e preue
 That' wijf' is mannes helpe and his comfort'
 his paradys terrestre and his disport' [leaf 145, back] 1332
 So buxom and so vertuouus is sche
 þey mosten needes lyue in vnite
 Of' fleisshe þei ben and O fleisch as I gesse
 nouȝt' but' on herte in wele and in distresse 1336
 A wyf': A seinte mary benedicite
 how might' a man han any aduersite
 þat' haþ a wyf' certes I can nouȝt' say
 þe blisse þat' is bitwexe hem tway 1340
 þer may no tonge telle or herte þynke
 If' he be pore sche helpeþ him to swynke
 Sche keepiþ his good and wasteþ neuer a del
 And al þat' hire housband lust' hir likeþ wel 1344

Sche saip nouzt' ones nay whan he saip 3e
 Do pis saip he al redy sire seyþ sche
 O blisful ordre O wedlok' *precious*
 þou art' so mery and eek' so *vertuous* 1348
 And so comended and aproued eke
 That' *euery* man þat' halt/ him worþ a leek'
 vpon his bare knees aught' al his lijf'
 þanken his god þat' him haþ sent a wyf' 1352
 Oþer preyed god him for to sende
 A wijf' to laste vnto his lyues ende
 ffor þanne his lijf' is sett' in sikernesse
 he may nouzt' be desceyued as I gesse 1356
 So þat' he werche after his wyues reed
 þanne may he boldely beren vp his heed
 þey ben so trewe and so wys
 ffor which if' þou wolt' worchen as þe wyse 1360
 Do alway so as þe womman wol þe rede
 lo how þat' Iacob as þise clerkes rede
 By good counseil of' his moder rebekke
 Band þe kydes skyn abouten his nekke 1364
 ffor which his fadres benysoñ he wan
 lo Iudith as þe story eek' telle can
 By wys counseil sche goddes poeple kepte
 And slough him Olophinus whiles he slepte [leaf 146] 1368
 Lo how Abygayle by good counseil how þat' sche
 Saued hire housbonde Nabal whan þat' he
 Schulde han be slayn and loke after also
 By good counseil delyuered out' of' wo 1372
 The poeple of' god and made him mardoche
 Of' Assuer enchaunced for to be
 Ther is no þing' gree *superlatiff*
 As seiþ Senek' aboue an humble wyf' 1376
 Suffre þyn wyues tonge as Catoun byt'
 Sche schal comaunde and þou schalt' suffre yt'
 And 3it' sche wolde obeye of' curtesye
 A wyf' is kepere of' þin housbondrye 1380

GROUP E. § 4. MERCHANT'S TALE. Corpus MS.

Wel may þe seeke man bewayle and wepe /
 Ther as þer nys no wijf þe hous to keepe
 I warne þe ift wysly þou wilt wirche
 loue wel þy wyf as crist loueþ his chirche 1384
 Ift þou loue þy self þou louest þy wyf
 No man hateþ his flesh but in his lyf
 he fostreþ it/ and þefore byd I þe
 Cherissche þy wijf or þou schalt neuer þe 1388
 housbond & wijf what so men Iape or pleye
 Of worldly folk holde þe righte weye
 þey ben so knyht þer may non harm betyde
 And namely vpon þe wyues syde 1392
 ffor which þis Iannuarye of which I tolde
 Considereþ haþ in wijþ his dayes olde
 þe lusty þe vertuous quyete
 þat is in mariage hony swete 1396
 And for his frendes on a day sent
 To telle hem þeffect of his entent
 Wijþ face sadde he haþ hem þis tale tolde
 he sayde frendes I am hoor and olde 1400
 And almost god wot at my pittis brinke
 vpon my sowle somewhat most I þinke
 I haue my body folyly dispended
 y-blessed be god þat it schal ben amended [leaf 146, back] 1404
 ffor I wol be certein a wedded man
 And þat in alle þe haste þat I can
 vnto som mayde fayr and tendre of age
 I pray you schapeþ for my mariage 1408
 Al sodeinly for I wol nouzt abyde
 And I wole fonde aspye on my syde
 To whom I may be wedded hastely
 But for as moche þat ze ben mo þen I 1412
 ze schullen rapre such a þing aspyen
 þan I and wher me luste best allyen
 But o þing warne I zou my frendes deere
 I wol non old wyf haue in no manere / 1416

She schal nouȝt^t passe xvj ȝer certayn
 Old fleiss^h and ȝong^t fleiss^h þat^t wolde I han ful fayn^t
 Bet^t is *quod* he a pyk^t þan a pykrelle
 And bet^t þan olde beef^t is þe tendre feelle 1420
 I wol no womman xx^{ti} ȝer of^t age
 It^t nys but^t benestraw and gret^t forage
 And eek^t þis olde wydewes god it^t woot^t
 þey konne so moche craft^t on wades boot^t 1424
 So mochil broken harme whan þat^t hem liste
 þat^t wiþ hem schulde I neuer lyuen in reste
 ffor sondry scoles makeþ subtile clerkys
 Wommen of^t many a scole half^t a clerk^t is 1428
 But^t certainly a ȝong þing^t may me gye
 Right^t as men may warm wax wiþ handes to-plye
 þefore I sey ȝow plainly in a clause
 I wol non old wijf^t haue for þis cause 1432
 ffor if^t so were if^t I hadde so myschaunce
 That^t I in hire ne coupe han no plesaunce
 þenne scholde I lede my lijf^t in aduoutrye
 And so streyt^t to þe deuy^l whan I dye 1436
 Ne children schulde I non vpon hire geten
 ȝit^t were me leuer houndes hadde me eten
 þan þat^t myn heritage scholde falle
 In straunge hande and þus I telle ȝou alle [leaf 147] 1440
 I dowte nouȝt^t I wot^t þe cause why
 men schulde wedde and forþermore wot^t I
 þer spekeþ many men of^t mariage
 þat^t wot^t nomore of^t hit^t þen wot^t my page 1444
 ffor whiche causes men schulde take a wyf^t
 If^t he may not^t chaste be by his lijf^t
 Tak^t him a wijf^t wiþ gret^t deuocioun
 By cause of^t leofful procreaciō 1448
 Of^t children to þe honour of^t god aboue
 And nouȝt^t only for *paramour* and for loue
 And for þei schulden leccherie eschue
 And ȝelde here dette whil þat^t it^t is newe 1452

Or for þat ilke man schulde helpe oþer
 In meschief as a soster schal do a broþer
 And lyue in chastite ful heuenly
 But sires by 3our leue þat am not I 1456
 ffor [god] be þanked I dar make auaunt
 I feele my lemes starke and suffisaunt
 To don al þat a man bilongeþ to do
 I wot my seluen best what I may do 1460
 þough I be hoor and fare / as doþ a tree
 þat blometh er þat fruyt y-waxe be
 A blossomed tree nys neyþer druye ne deed
 I feele me no wher hoor but on myn heed 1464
 Myn herte and myn lymes ben as greene
 As laurere þat purgh þe 3er is seene
 And seþenes 3e han herd al myn entent
 I pray 3ou to my wille þat 3e assent 1468
 Dyuerse men dyuersely him tolde
 Of mariages many ensamples olde
 Some blamed it some preysed it certein
 But atte laste schortly for to seyn 1472
 As alday falleþ altercaciõ
 Bitwixe frendes in disputaciõ
 þer fel a stryft betwixe his breþeren tuo
 Of which þat on was cleped Placebo [leaf 147, back] 1476
 Placebo seyde o Ianuare broþer
 To 3ou telle I þis tale and to non oþer
 fful litel need hadde 3e my lord so deere /
 Counsel to aske of any þat is heere 1480
 But þat 3e be on so ful of sapience
 þat 3ou ne likeþ for 3our heigh prudence
 To weyue fro þe word of Salomon
 This word sayde he vnto vs euerychon 1484
 Wirke alle þing by counsel þus seyde he
 And þanne schalt þou nouzt repente þe
 But þough þat Salomon speke such a word
 myn owen deere brother and my lord 1488

So wisly god my soule bringe at' reste
 I halde 3oure owne counseil for þe beste
 ffor broþer myn of' me take þis motyft'
 I haue now ben a court' man al my lyft' 1492
 And 3it' god wot' þough I vnworþy be
 I haue standen in ful gret' degre
 Abouten lordes in ful gret' estate
 3it' hadde I neuer wiþ non of' hem debate 1496
 I neuer hem contraried trewely
 I wot' wel þat' my lord can more þan I
 What' þat' he saiþ I halde it' ferme & stable
 I saye þe same or oþer þing' semblable 1500
 A ful gret' fool is eny counseilour
 þat' serueþ eny lord of' heih honour
 þat' dar presume or ones þenken it/
 þat' his counseil schulde passe his lordes witt 1504
 Nay lordes ben no fooles by my fay
 3e haue 3oure self' spoken here to day
 So heih sentence so holy and so wel
 That' I consente and conferme eury del 1508
 3oure wordes alle and 3oure opynioun
 By god þer nys no man in al þis toun
 Ne in ytaille coupe bet' han sayd
 Crist' haldeþ him of' þis ful wel a-payd [leaf 148] 1512
 And trewely it' is an heih corage
 Of' eny man þat' stopen is in age
 To take a 3ong' wyf' by my fader kyn
 3oure herte hangeþ vpon a Ioly pyn 1516
 Doþ now in þis matier right' as 3ou leste
 ffor fynally I halde it' for þe beste
 ¶ Iustynus þat' ay stille sat' and herde
 he right' on þis wise to Placebo answerde 1520
 Now broþer myn be pacient' I preye
 Siþenes 3e han sayd and herkneþ what' I seye
 Senek' amonges oþer wordes wyse
 Seiþ þat' a man him oughte right' wel auyse 1524

To whom he 3euyþ his lond oþer his catel
 And seþenes I aught/ auyse me right' wel
 To whom I 3iue my good away fro me
 Wel, more I au3te to au3se me 1528
 To whom I 3iue my body for alwey
 I warne 3ou wel it' nys no childes pley
 To take a wijf' wiþoute auysement'
 Men moste enquere þis is myn assent' 1532
 Wheþer she be wys or sobre or drunkelewe
 Oþer proude oþer oþerwey a schrewe
 A chydester or a wastour of' þy good
 Oþir riche or pore or of' maneres wood 1536
 Al be it' so þat' no man fynde schal
 None in þis worlde þat' trottip' hool in al
 Ne man ne beeste suche as men conne deuysel
 But' napeles it au3t' ynough' suffise 1540
 Wiþ any wijf' if' þat' so were sche hadde
 mo goode þewes þan hire vices badde
 And al þis askep' leiser for to enquere /
 ffor god it' woot' I haue wepte many a teere 1544
 fful priuily sip þat' I hadde a wyf'
 Preyse who so wole a wedded mannes lijf'
 Certayn I fynde in hit' but coste and care
 And obseruaunces of' alle blisses bare [leaf 148, back]
 And 3it' god wot' my neygheburs aboute.
 And namely of' wommen many a rowte
 Sayn þat' I haue þe moste stedefast' wijf'
 And eek' þe meekest' oon þat' bereþ lijf' 1552
 But' I wot' best' wher wryngeþ me my scho
 3e may for me right' as 3ou likeþ do
 Auyseþ 3ou 3e ben a man of' age
 how þat' 3e entren in to mariage 1556
 And namely wiþ a 3ong' wijf' and a fayr
 By him þat' made water erþe and ayr
 þe 3ongest man þat' is in al þis route
 Is besy ynough' to bringen it' aboute 1560

- To han his wijf^t allone trusteþ to me
 3e schulle nouzt^t plesen hire oonly 3eres þre
 þis is to seyn to don hire plesaunce
 A wijf^t axeþ ful many an obseruaunce 1564
 I pray 3ou þat^t 3e ne ben euyl payed
 Wel *quod* þis Ianuare and hast^t þou al sayd
 Straw for þyn Senek^t and for þy prouerbis
 I counte nought^t a paner ful of^t herbes 1568
 Of^t scole termes wiser men þan þou
 And þou hast^t herde assenteden right^t now /
 To my purpos Placebo what^t say 3e
 I say it is a cursed man *quod* he 1572
 þat^t letteþ matrimonye sikerly
 And wiþ þat^t word þay rysen sodeinly
 And ben assented fully þat^t he scholde
 Be weddid whan him luste and whan he wolde 1576
 þe fantasye and þe besy curiousnesse
 fro day to day gan in þe soule impresse /
 Of^t Ianuare aboute his mariage /
 many fayr schapp and many fayr visage / 1580
 þer passeþ þorgh^t his herte night^t be night
 As whos took^t a myroure polished bright^t
 And sette it^t in a comune market^t place
 þenne scholde he se many a figure pace [leaf 149] 1584
 By his myroure and in þe same wise
 Gan Ianuare in wiþ his þouzt^t deuyse
 Of^t maydenes whiche þat^t dwelte besyde
 he wiste nought^t wher he might^t abyde 1588
 ffor þouz þat^t oon haþ beaute in hire face /
 Anoper stant^t so in þe poeples grace /
 ffor hire sadnes and hire benignite
 þat^t of^t þe poeple grettest^t voys hadde sche 1592
 And some were riche and hadde badde name
 but^t napeles bitwixe earnest^t and game
 he atte laste appoynted him on oon
 And leet^t alle oper fro his herte gon 1596

GROUP E. § 4. MERCHANT'S TALE. Corpus MS.

And ches hir of his owen auctorite
 ffor loue is blynd alday and may not se
 And whan þat he was in þe bed y-brought
 he purtreied in his herte and in his þoughȝt 1600
 hire freisshe beaute / and hir age tender
 hire myddel smal and hir armes long and sklender
 hire wise gouernaunce and hire grete gentilnes
 hir wommanly berynge and hire sadnes 1604
 And whan þat he was fro hire condescended
 him þouȝte his þouȝt might nouȝt ben amended
 ffor whan þat he himself concluded hadde
 him þouȝt euer oþer mannes witte so badde 1608
 þat impossible it were to reþlye
 aȝein his choys þis was his fantasye
 his frendes sent he to at his instance
 And preyed hem to don him þat plesaunce 1612
 þat hastely þey wolden don him come /
 he wolde abregge here labour alle and some
 Needeþ nomore for him to goon or ryde
 he was apoynted þer he wolde abyde 1616
 Placebo cam and eek his freendes sone
 And alþer first he bad hem alle a bone
 þat non of hem non argumentes make
 Aȝeins þe purpos which þat he haþ take [leaf 149, back]
 Which purpos was plesaunt / to god sayde he
 And verray ground of his prosperite
 he sayde þer was a mayden in þe toun
 Which þat of beaute hadde gret renoun 1624
 Al were it so sche were of smal degre
 Sufficeþ him hire ȝouþe and hire beaute
 Which mayde he seyde schulde ben his wiff
 To lede in ese and holynesse his lijf 1628
 And þanked god þat he might han hire al
 þat no wighȝt wiþ his blisse parten schal
 And preyed hem to laboure in þis neede /
 And schaped þat he fayled not to spede 1632

GROUP E. § 4. MERCHANT'S TALE. Corpus MS.

ffor þanne he seyde his spirit^t was at^e ese
 þen is *quod* he no þing^t may me displese /
 Saue o þing^t prikeþ in my conscience
 þe which I wol reherse in þoure presence / 1636
 I haue *quod* he herd seyð ful þore ago
 þer may no man han parfyt^t blisses tuo
 þis is to say in erþe and eek^t in heuene
 ffor þey he kepte him fro þe synnes seuene 1640
 And eek^t for euery braunche of^t þilke tre
 3it^t is þer so parfit^t prosperite
 And so gret^t ese and lust^t in mariage
 þat^t euer I am agast^t now in myn age 1644
 þat^t I schal lede now so mery a lijf^t
 [so delicate withouten wo / or striff [MS Arch. Seld. B. 14;
no gap in Corpus.]
 that I shal haue myn heuen / in erthe] heere
 ffor siþenes þat verray heuene is bought^t so deere 1648
 Wiþ tribulacioñ and gret^t penaunce
 how scholde I lyue in such plesaunce
 As alle wedded men doþ wiþ here wyues /
 Come to þe blisse þer crist^t eterne on lyue is 1652
 þis is my drede and 3it^t myn breþeren tweye
 Assoylleþ me þis question I 3ou preye
 Iustynus which þat^t hated his folye
 Answeyng^t anon ri3t^t in his Iapere 1656
 And for he wolde his longe tale abregge
 he wolde non auctorite alegge [leaf 150]
 But^t seyde sire so þer be non obstacle
 Oþer þan þis god of^t his heih miracle 1660
 And of^t his mercy may so for 3ou wirche
 þat^t er 3e han 3our 3iftes of holy chirche
 3e may repente of^t wedded mannes lijf^t
 In which ye sayn þer is neiþer woo ne strijft^t 1664
 And elles god forbede but^t if^t he sente
 A wedded man grace to repente
 Wel often rapen þan a sengil man
 And þefore sire þe beste reed I can 1668

Dispeyreþ 3ou nouzt' haueþ in memory
 Paraunter sche may be 3our purgatory
 Sche may be goddes mene and goddes whippe
 þan schal 3our soule vp to heuene skippe 1672
 Swifter þan doþ an arwe out' of a bowe
 I hope to god her-after schalt' þou knowe
 þat' þer nys non so gret' felicite
 In mariage ne neuer more schal be 1676
 þat' 3ou schal lakke of' 3our saluacioñ
 So þat' 3e vse as skile is and resoun
 þe lustes of' 3our wijf' attemperelly
 And þat' 3e plese hir nouzt' to amerously 1680
 And þat' 3e kepe 3ou eek' fro oþer synne /
 Myn tale is doon for my witte is þinne
 Beþ nouzt' agast' here-of' my broþer
 But' let' vs wade fro þis mater to anoþer 1684
 þe wijf' of' Bathe if' 3e han vnderstonde
 Of' mariage which 3e han on honde
 Declared hap ful wel in litel space
 ffareþ now wel god haue 3ou in his grace 1688
 And wiþ þis word þis Iustyne and his broþer
 han take here leue and ilke of' hem of' oþer
 ffor whan þey sawe it' moste needes be
 þey wrouzten so by wys and sleigh trete 1692
 þat' sche þis mayden which þat' mayus high't'
 As hastely as euer þat' sche might' [leaf 150, back]
 Schal wedded be vnto Ianuarie /
 It' trowe it' were to long' 3ou to tarie 1696
 If' I 3ou tolde of' euery scryt' or band
 By which þat' sche was feffed in his land
 Oþer for to herken of' hire riche aray
 But fynally y-comen is þis day 1700
 That to þe chirche boþe ben þey went'
 ffor to resceyue þe holy sacrament
 fforþ comþ þe prest' wiþ stole aboute his nekke /
 And bad hire be ylike Sarra and Rebekke 1704

GROUP E. § 4. MERCHANT'S TALE. Corpus MS.

In wisdom and troupe of mariage
 And sayde his orisouns as is his vsage
 And crouched hem and bad god schulde hem blesse
 And made al siker ynough with holynesse / 1708
 þus ben þey weddid with solempnite
 And atte feste sitteþ he and sche
 Wiþ oþer worpy folk' vpon þe deys
 Al ful of ioye and blisse is þe paleys 1712
 And ful of instrumentz and of vitayle
 þe moste deyntevous of alle ytayle
 Byforn hem of instrumentz which a soun
 That Orpheus ne of Phebes ampheoun 1716
 Ne maden neuer such a melodye
 And at euery cours cam lowde menstralcie
 þat' neuer Ioab trumped for to heere /
 Neiper Theodomas 3it' half' so cleere 1720
 And Thebes whan þe cite was in doute /
 Bacus þe wyn hem schenkeþ al aboute
 And venus lawheþ vpon euery wight'
 ffor Ianuarye was bycome here knight' 1724
 And wolde boþe assayen his corage
 In liberte and eek' in mariage
 And wiþ hir fyr brond wiþ hire hand aboute
 Daunsiþ byforn þe bryde al aboute 1728
 And certeynly I dar wel seyn rizt' þis
 Emyneus þat' god of weddyng' is [leaf 151]
 Sawe neuer in his lijf' so mery a wedded man)
 halde þou þy pes þou poete Marcean 1732
 þat' writest' vs þat' ilke weddyng' mery
 Of hire phylologie and of mercurye
 And of þe sanges þat' þe muses song'
 So smale as eek' þin penne and eek' þy tong' 1736
 ffor to discryuen of þis mariage
 When tendre zouþe haþ wedded stowpyng' age
 þer is such myrþe þat' it may nouzt' be write
 Assayep' it' zou self' þen may 3e wite / 1740

If þat I lakke or non in þis matere
 Mayus þat sitt' wiþ so benigne a cheere
 hire to beholde it' semed fayerye
 Queene Ester loked neuer wiþ such an yhe 1744
 On assuer so meke a look' hap sche
 I may 3ou nou3t' deuyse al hire beaute
 But' þus moche of' hir beaute telle I may
 þat' sche was like þe brighte morwe of' may 1748
 ffulfilde of beaute and of' plesaunce
 þis Ianuarye is rauyssht' in a traunce
 And at' euery tyme he loked on hire face /
 But' in his herte he gan hire to manace 1752
 þat' he þat' night' in armes wolde hir streyne
 harder þan euyr parys did Eleyne
 But' napeles 3it' had he gret' pite
 þat' þilke night' offenden hire moste he 1756
 And þou3t' allas O tender creature
 Now wolde god 3e mighte wel endure
 Al my corrage / it' is so scharpe and kene
 I am agast' 3e schullen it' nat' sustene 1760
 But' god forbede þat' I did al my myght'
 Now wolde god þat' it' were waxen nyght'
 And þat' þe night' wolde lasten eueremo
 I wolde þat' al þis poeple were a go 1764
 And finally he doþ alle his labour
 As he best' mighte sauynge his honour [leaf 151, back]
 To hasten hem fro þe mete in subtil wise
 þe tyme came þat' resoun was to ryse 1768
 And after þat' men daunce and drynke faste
 And spices al aboute þe hous þay caste
 And ful of' ioye and blisse is euery man
 Al but' a squyer þat' highte damyan 1772
 Which karf' byforn þe knight' many a day
 he was so rauysshed on his lady may
 That' for þe verray peyne he was ney3 wood
 Almost' he swelt' and swowned þer he stood 1776

As þat' sche bare daunsyng' in hir hand
 So freisshe sche was and þerto so likand [spurious]
 And to his bed he went' him hastily
 Nomore of' him at' þis tyme speke I 1780
 But' þere I lete him weepe ynough and pleyne
 Till freissche may wil rewen on his peyne
 ¶ O perilous fyr þat' in þe bedstraw brediþ
 O famuler foo þat' his seruise beediþ 1784
 O seruañt' traytour fals holy hewe
 I-like to þe neddre sley3 and in Bosom vntrewe
 God schilde vs alle fro 3oure iniquitance
 O Ianuare drunken in plesaunce 1788
 O mariage see how þine Damyan
 þin oughne squyer and þyn borne man
 Entendiþ to do þe vylenye
 God graunte þe þin harmly foo to aspye 1792
 ffor in þis world nys worse pestylence
 Than homly foo alday in þy presence
 Parfourmed haþ þis deuyn day his ark' dyurne
 No lenger may þe body of' him soiourne 1796
 The Orisowte as in þat' latitude
 Night' wiþ his mantel þat' is so derk' & rude
 Gan for to sprede þe mysperye aboute
 ffor which departed is þe lusty route 1800
 ffor Ianuare wiþ þank' on euery syde
 home to here houses lustily þei ryde / [leaf 152]
 þer as þey don here þinges as hem leste
 And whanne þay seye her tyme gon to reste 1804
 Sone after þat' þis hastyf' Ianuare
 Wol go to bedde he wol no lengere care
 he drynkeþ ypocras clarre and vernage
 Of' spices hote to encresen his corage 1808
 And many a letuare hadde he ful fyn
 Suche as þe cursed monk' daun Constantyn
 haþ writen in his book' of' coytu
 To eten hem alle he nas no þing' eschewe 1812

- And þus to his priue freendes seyde he
 ffor goddes loue as sone as it may be
 let' voyden alle þis hous in curteys wyse soone 1815
 Men drunken and þe trauers drowe anone 1817
 The bryde was brouȝt to bedde as stille as stoon 1818
 So hastede Ianuer it' moste be doon [*spurious*]
 And whan þe bed was wiþ þe prest y-blessed
 Out' of þe chambre haþ euery wight' him dressed 1820
 And Ianuare haþ faste in armes take
 his freissche may his paradys his make
 he lullip hire he kisseþ hire ful ofte
 Wiþ þikke brystles of' his berd vnsofte 1824
 Ylike to þe skyn of' an houndfissĥ scharp as brere
 ffor he was schauē al newe in his manere
 he rubbeþ hire vpon hire tendre face
 And-sayde þus allas I mot' trespace 1828
 To ȝou my spouse and ȝou gretly offende
 Or tyme come þat' I wol doun descende
 But' napeles considereþ þis *quod* he
 þis nys no werkman what' so euer he be 1832
 þat' may boþe wirche wel and hastely
 þis wol be don at' leyser parfity
 It' is no force how longe þat' we pleye
 I trowe in wedlok' coupled be we tweye 1836
 And y-blessed be þe ȝok' þat' we ben Inne
 ffor in oure actis we may do no synne / [*leaf 152, back*]
 A man may do no synne wiþ his wijf'
 Ne hurte himselue wiþ his owene knyf' 1840
 Now we han leue to pleye vs by þe lawe
 Thus laboureþ he til þat' þe day gan dawē
 And þenne he takeþ a soppe in fyn clarre
 And vpright' in his bedde þanne sitteþ he / 1844
 And after þat' he sang' ful lowde and cleere
 And kissed his wijf' and made wantoun cheere
 he was al coltissĥ and ful of ragerie
 And ful of' Girgoun as is a flekked pye / 1848

þe slakke skyn aboute his nekke schakeþ
 Whil þat he sang so chaunteþ he and crakeþ /
 But god wot what may þouzte in hire herte /
 Whan sche him saugh vp sittynge in his scherte 1852
 In his night cappe and wip his nekke lene /
 Sche preyseþ nouzt his pleyng worþ a bene
 þenne seyde he þus my restyng wol I take
 Now day is come I may no lenger wake 1856
 And doun he leyd his heed and sleep til prime
 And aftirward whan þat he saugh his tyme
 vp ryseþ Ianuare but/ freissche may
 holt hire chambre vnto þe ferþe day 1860
 As vsage is of wyues for þe beste /
 ffor euery labour som tyme mot haue reste
 Oþer elles longe may he nouzt endure
 þis is to say no lyues creature 1864
 Be it of ffish or brid or best or man
 Now wol I speke of woful dauyan
 þat langureþ for loue as 3e schullen heere
 þefore I speke to him in þis manere 1868
 I say O sely Damyan allas
 Answer to þis demaunde as in þis cas
 how schalt þou þy lady freisshe may
 Telle þy wo sche wole alway say nay 1872
 Eke if þou speke sche wole þy wo bewreye
 God be þin helpe I can no bettre seye : [leaf 153]
 þis sike damyan in venus fyre
 So brenneþ þat he deyeþ for desire 1876
 ffor which he putte his liff/ in aduenture
 No lenger might he in þis wise endure
 But priuily a penner gan he borwe
 And in a lettre wrot he alle his sorwe 1880
 In maner of a complaynt oþer a lay
 vnto þis fair and freissche lady may
 And in a purs of silk heng on his scherte
 he hap y-put and leyd it/ at his herte/ 1884

- þe more þat' at' noon was þilke day
 That' Ianuare haþ wedded þat' freissche may
 In tuo of' Taure was in þe Cancre Gliden
 So longe haþ sche in hire chambre abyden 1888
 As costume is vnto þise noblis alle
 A bryde schal nouzt' eten in þe halle
 Til dayes foure oþer þre dayes atte leste
 y-passed ben þen lat' hire go to feste 1892
 þe ferþe day complet' froo noon to noon
 Whan þat' þe hihe masse was y-doon
 In halle sitt' þis Ianuare and may
 As freissĥ as is þe brighte someres day 1896
 And so bifelle how þat' þis goode man
 Remembreþ him vpon þis damyan
 And sayde seinte mary how may þis be
 That' Damyan entendip' nouzt' to me 1900
 Is he ay sike or how may þis betyde
 his squyers whiche þat' stoden him besyde
 Excusyngē him be cause of' his seknesse
 Which letted him to don his busynesse 1904
 Non oþer cause mighte make him care
 That' me forþinkeþ quod þis Ianuare
 he is a gentil squyer by my trouþe /
 If' þat' he deyde it were harm and rouþe 1908
 he is as wys discrete and secre
 As eny man I wot' of' his degre [leaf 153, back]
 And þerto manly and eek' seruisable
 And for to ben a þrifty man right' able 1912
 But' after mete as sone as euer I may
 I wole my self' visite him and eek' may
 To don him al þe confort' þat' I can
 And for þat' word him blessed euery man 1916
 That' of' his bounte and of' his gentilnesse
 He wolde so conforten him in his siknesse
 His squyer for it' was a gentil dede
 Dame quod he þis Ianuar take good hede 1920

GROUP E. § 4. MERCHANT'S TALE. Corpus MS.

That' at' after mete 3e wip 3our wommen alle
 Whan 3e han ben in chambre out' of' þis halle
 That' alle 3e gon to se þis Damyan
 Doþ him disport' he is a gentil man 1924
 And telleþ him þat I wil him visite
 haue I no þing' but rested me a lite
 [and spede yow faste / for I wol abide
 til that ye slepe / right bi my side] [MS Arch. Seld. B. 14]
 Now wip þat' worde he gan to him calle
 A squyer þat' was marschal of' his halle
 And tolde him certeyn þinges what' he wolde
 This freisshe may haþ streyt' hir weye holde 1932
 Wip alle hire wommen vnto þis damyan
 Doun by his beddes syde sat' sche þan
 Confortyng' him as goodly as sche may
 This damyan whan he his tyme say 1936
 In secret' wise his purs and eek' his bille
 In which þat' he writen hadde his wille
 haþ putte in to hire hond wipouten more
 Saue þat' he siked wonder sore 1940
 And softely to hire right þus sayde he
 mercy and þat' 3e discouereþ nou3t' me
 ffor I am ded if' þat' þis þing' be kyd
 This purs haþ sche wipinne hir bosme hid 1944
 And went' hir way 3e gete nomore of' me
 But' vnto Ianure y-comen is sche
 And on his beddes syde sitte ful softe
 He takeþ hire and kisseþ hire ful ofte [lea 154] 1948
 And leyde him doun to slepe and þat' anon
 Sche feyned hire as þat' sche moste gon
 þer as 3e woot' þat' euery wight' mot' neede
 And when sche of' þis bille haþ taken heede 1952
 Sche rent' it al to cloutes at' þe laste
 And in þe pryue softely sche it caste
 Who studieþ now but' fayre freissche may
 And a doun by Ianuer sche lay 1956

That sleep til þat þe coughe him haþ awaked
 Anon he preyed hir to strepen hire al naked
 he wolde of hire he sayde of hire haue som plesaunce
 he seyde hire cloþes dide him encombraunce 1960
 And sche obeyeþ be he leef or loþ
 But lest þat precious folk be wiþ me wroþ
 how þat he wrouzte I dar to 3ou nouzt telle
 Oþer whether þat he þouzt on paradys oþer of helle 1964
 But I lete hem worchen in here wise
 Til euesong rynge and þat þey moste aryse /
 Were it by destyne oþir by auenture
 Were it by influence or by nature 1968
 Oþer in constillaciō þat in such estat
 The heuene stood þat tyme fortunat
 Was for to putte a bille of venus werkis
 ffor alle þing haþ tyme as seyn þise clerkis 1972
 To any womman for to gete hir loue
 I can nouzt say but þe grete god aboue
 þat knoweþ þat non acte is causeles
 he demep of alle for I wol holde my pes 1976
 But soþ is þis how þat þis freissche may
 haþ take such impressiō þat day
 On pite of þis sike Damyan
 þat fro hir herte sche ne dryue can 1980
 þe remembrance for to don him eese
 Certain þouzt sche whom þat þis þing displese
 I rekke nouzt for here I him assure
 To loue him best of eny creature / [leaf 154, ba k] 1984
 þough he na more nadde þan his scherte
 lo pite renneþ sone in gentil herte
 Her may 3e se how excellent franchise
 In wommen is whan þey narwe hem auyse 1988
 Som tyrañt þer is as þer ben many oon
 þat haþ an herte as hard as eny stoon
 Which wolde han lete him steruen in þe place
 Wel raþer þan haue graunted him þat grace 1992

And hem reioysen in here cruel pryde
 And recched nouȝt to ben an homicide
 ¶ This gentil may fulfild of alle pite
 Right so of hire hond a *lettre* made sche 1996
 In which sche *graunteþ* him of hire *verray grace*
þer lackeþ nouȝt oonly but day and space
 Wher þat sche mighte to his lust suffise
 ffor it schal be right as he wol deuysen 2000
 And whan sche saugh hire tyme vpon a day
 To visite þis damyan goþ faire may
 And sotilly þis *lettre* doun sche þriste
 vnder his pilwe rede iff him liste 2004
 Sche takeþ him by þe hond and harde him twiste
 So secrely þat no wight hit wiste
 And bad him be al hool and forþ sche wente
 To Ianuare whan þat he for hire sente 2008
 vp ryseþ Damyan þe nexte morwe
 Al passed was his siknesse and his sorwe
 he kembþ him and proyneþ him and pikeþ
 he doþ al þat þis lady lust and likeþ 2012
 And ek to Ianuare he goþ as lowe
 As euer did a dogge for þe bowe
 he is so plesaunt vnto euery man
 ffor craft is al who so þat it can 2016
 þat euery wight is fayn to teche him good
 And fully in his lady grace he stood
 þus lete I Damyan aboute his neede
 And my tale forþ I wil procede [leaf 155] 2020
 Some clerkes halden þat felicite!
 Stant in delite and þefore he
 This noble Ianuare wiþ alle his might
 In honeste wise as longeþ to a knight 2024
 Schop him to lyue ful deliciously
 his housynge his array al honestely
 To his degre was maked as a kinges
 Among opir of his honeste þinges 2028

he hadde a gardyn walled al wiþ stoon
 So fair a gardyn wot' I nowher noon
 ffor out' of' doute I verrayly suppose
 þat' he þat' wroot' þe romance of' þe rose 2032
 Ne coupe of' it' þe beaute wel deuysen
 ne pryapus ne mighte nat' suffise
 þou3 he be god of' gardyns for to telle
 The beaute of' þe gardyn and of' þe welle 2036
 þat' stood vnder a laurer alway greene
 fful often tyme king' Pluto and his queene
 Preserpyna and alle hire fayerie
 Disporten hem and maken melodye 2040
 aboute þat' welle and daunced as men tolde
 þis noble knight' þis Ianuare þe olde
 Suche deynte hap' in it' to walken and to pleye
 þat' he wol suffre no wight' to bere þe keye 2044
 Saue he himself' or of' þe smale wiket'
 he bar alwey of' siluer a clyket'
 Wiþ þe whiche whan þat' him lust' vnschette
 And whan þat' he wolde paye his wijf' his dette 2048
 In scmer sesoñ þider wolde he go
 And may his wijf' and no wight' but' þay tuo
 A þinges whiche þat' were nou3t' don a bedde
 þey in þe gardyn parformed han and spedde 2052
 And in þis wise many a mery day
 lyuede þis Ianuare and freissche may
 But' worldly ioye may nou3t' alwey endure
 To Ianuare ne to no worldly creature [leaf 155, back] 2056
 O sodeyn happ O þou fortune vnstable /
 I-like to þe scorpion vnstable /
 That' flaterest' wiþ þin heed whan þou wolt' styng
 Thyn tayl is deþ þoru3 þin enuenemyng 2060
 O brutel ioye O swete poysoñ queynte
 O mustier þat' sotilly canst' peynte
 þine 3iftes vnder þe hewe of' stedefastnesse
 þat' þou disceyuedest' boþe more and lesse 2064

GROUP E. § 4. MERCHANT'S TALE: Corpus MS.

Why hast' þou Ianuare þus deceyued
 And haddist' him for þi fulle frend receyued
 And now þou hast' byraft' him boþe his eyen
 ffor sorwe of' which desireþ he to deyen 2068
 Allas þis noble Ianuare þat' is so fre
 Amydde his lust' and his prosperite
 Is woxen blynde and al sodeynly
 his deþ þerfore desireþ he outrely 2072
 And þer wiþ al þe fyr of' Ielousye
 leste þat' his wijf' schulde falle in som folye
 So brent' his herte þat' he wolde fayn
 That' som man boþe hire and him hadde slayn 2076
 ffor neuer [after] his deþ ne in his lyf'
 Ne wolde he þat' sche were loue ne wyf'
 But euer lyue as a wydewe in cloþes blake
 Soule as þe turtill doþ þat' hap' lost' hire make / 2080
 But' at' þe laste after a monþe or tweye
 his sorwe gan to swage soþ to seye
 ffor when he wiste it/ may non oþer be
 he paciently took' his aduersite 2084
 Saf' out' of' doute may he nouzt' forgon
 þat' he nas Ielous euermore in oon
 Which Ielousie it' was so outrageous
 þat' neiþer in halle ne in non oþer hous 2088
 he nolde suffre hire for to ryde ne go
 Ne in non oþer place neuer þe mo
 But' if' þat' he hadde hond on hire alway
 ffor which ful ofte wepeþ freisshe may . [leaf 156] 2092
 That' loueþ Damyan so benignely
 þat' sche moot' eyþer deye sodeinly
 Or elles sche mote han him at' hire leste
 sche wayteþ whan hir herte wolde toberste 2096
 vpon þat' oþer syde Damyan
 Bycomen is þe sorwfulleste man
 þat' euere was. for neiþer night' nor day
 Ne might' he speke a word to freisshe may 2100

As to his purpos of no such matiere /
 But if þat Ianuarie most it here /
 þat hadde oon hond on hir euer mo
 And napeles by wrytyng' to and fro 2104
 And pryue signes wist' he what' sche ment/
 And sche knew of þe signe of his entent
 O Ianuarie what' mighte þe affayle /
 þou mightest' see as fer as schippes sayle . 2108
 ffor a[s] good is a blynd disceyued be
 As to be deceyued whan a man may se
 Lo argus which þat hadde an C. eyen
 ffor al þat euer he couþe poure or prien 2112
 3it' was he blent' and god wot' so ben mo
 þat wenyn wisly þat it nys nat' so
 Passe ouer is an ese and say nomore
 This freissche may of' which I spak' of' yore 2116
 In warm wax haþ emprynted þis cliket'
 þat Ianuarye bar of' þis smale wyket'
 By which vnto his gardyn ofte he wente
 And Damyan þat knew hire entente 2120
 þe clyket' countrefeted priuily
 Ther nys no more to say but hastily
 Som wonder by his cliket' schal betyde /
 Which 3e schullen heere if' 3e woln abyde 2124
 O noble Ovyde soþ saist' þou god wot
 What' sleight' is it' þough it be long' and hoot
 That' he nyl fynde it out in som manere
 By Pyramus and Thysbe may men leere [leaf 156, back]
 þough þey were kepte ful longe strei3t' ouer al
 þey ben acorded rownynge þurgh a wal
 þer is no wight' couþe han founde out' such a slei3te
 But' now to purpos er þat' dayes ey3te 2132
 Were passed or þe monþe of' Iuyl byfille
 þat' Ianuarye haþ caught' so gret' a wille
 þurgh eggyng' of' his wijf' him for to pleye
 In his gardyn and no wight' but' þey tweye 2136

GROUP E. § 4. MERCHANT'S TALE. Corpus MS.

| | |
|--|-----------------|
| That in a morwe vnto his may sayde he | |
| Rise vp my wijf/ my loue my lady fre | |
| þe turtlis voys is herd my doufe sweete | |
| The wynter is gon with alle his reynes weete | 2140 |
| Com forþ now wijþ þin eyen columbyne | |
| how fairer ben þy brestes þan is wyne | |
| þe gardyn is enclosed al aboute | |
| Come forþ my white spouse out of doute | 2144 |
| þou hast me wounded in myn herte O wyf | |
| No spotte in þe nas in al þy lyf | |
| Com forþ and let vs taken oure disport | |
| I chees þe for my wyff and my confort | 2148 |
| Suche olde lowde wordes vsed he | |
| On damyan a signe made sche | |
| That he schulde go biforn wijþ his clyket | |
| þis damyan haþ opened þe wyket | 2152 |
| And in he sterte and þat in such manere | |
| þat no wight might it se ne heere | |
| And stille he sitt vnder a bussch anon | |
| This Ianuare so blynd as is a stoon | 2156 |
| Wijþ mayus in his hond and no wight mo | |
| In to his freisshe gardyn is he go | |
| And clapte to þe wyket sodeynly | |
| Now wiff quod he her nys but þou and I | 2160 |
| þat art þe creature þat I best loue | |
| ffor by þat lord þat sitt vs alle aboute | |
| I hadde leuer deyen on a knyf | |
| Then þe offenden deere trewe wyf | [leaf 157] 2164 |
| ffor goddes sake þenk how I þe chees | |
| Nouzt for no coueytise dowteles / | |
| But onoly for þe loue I hadde to þe | |
| And þough þat I be olde and may nouzt se | 2168 |
| Be to me trewe and I wol telle þou why | |
| Certes þre þinges scholden þe wynne þerby | |
| ffirst loue of crist and to þour self honour | |
| And al myn heritage toun and tour | 2172 |

- I 3iue it^t 3ow makeþ *Chartres* as 3ou leste
 This schal be do to morwe er sonnes reste
 So wisly god my soule bringe in blisse
 And preye 3ou on couenaunt þat^t 3e me kisse 2176
 And þough þat^t I be Ielous wyte me nouzt
 3e ben so deepe enprynted in my þouzt^t
 þat^t whan þat^t I considere 3our beaute
 And þer wiþ al þe vnlikly elde of^t me 2180
 I may nouzt^t certes þough I schulde deye
 ffor-bere to ben out^t of^t 3our companye
 ffor verray loue þis is wiþouten doute
 Now kisse me wijf^t and let^t vs rome aboute 2184
 ¶ This freissche may whan sche þis wordes herde /
 Benignely to Ianuarye answerde
 But^t first^t and forward sche bygan to weepe
 I haue *quod* sche a soule for to keepe 2188
 As wel as 3e and also myn honour
 And of^t my wifhede þilke tendre flour
 Which þat^t I haue asseured in 3our hand
 Whan þat^t þe prest^t to yow my body band 2192
 Wher-fore I wol answer in þis manere
 Wiþ þe leue of^t 3ou my lord so deere
 I pray god þat^t neuer dawe þat^t day
 þat^t I ne sterue as foule as womman may 2196
 If^t euer I do vnto my kynne þat^t schame /
 Oþer elles I empeyre so my name /
 þat^t y be fals and if^t I do þat^t lak^t
 To strype me and putte me in a sakk^t [leaf 157, back] 2200
 And in þe nexte ryuer do me drenche
 I am a gentil womman and no wenche
 Why speke 3e þus but^t men ben euer vntrewe
 And wommen han reproof^t of^t 3ou ay newe 2204
 3e can non oþer contynauce I leeu
 But^t speke to vs as vntriste and in repreue
 And wiþ þat^t word sche saugh wher damyan
 Sat in þe bussħ and knelen he bigan 2208

And wiþ hire fynger signes made sche
 þat Damyā schulde clymbe vpon a tree
 þat charged was wiþ fruyt and vp he wente
 ffor verrayly he knew al hire entente 2212
 And euery signe þat sche couþe make
 Wel bet þā Ianuarye hir owne make
 ffor in a *lettre* sche hadde told him al
 Of þis matiere how he worche schal 2216
 And þus I lete him sitte in þe Pyry
 And Ianuarye and mayus rownyngē myry
 ¶ Bright was þe day and blew þe firmament
 Phebus of gold doun haþ his stremes sent 2220
 To gladen euery flour wiþ his warmnesse
 he was þat tyme in Gemynys as I gesse
 But litel fro his declynaciō
 Of Cancer Iouys exaltaciō 2224
 And so bifelle þat in a bright morwetyde
 þat in þe gardyn on þat ferþer syde /
 Pluto þat is þe king of fayerye
 And many a lady in his companye 2228
 ffolwyng his wyf þe queene *proserpyna*
 Which þat he rauyssched out of *Proserpyna*
 Whiles þat sche gaderede floures in a mede
 In Claudian 3e may þe storyes rede 2232
 how in his grysly carte he hire fette
 This kyng of fayerie a doun him sette
 vpon a benche of toruys freissch and grene
 And right anon seyde he þus to his queene [leaf 158] 2236
 My wijf *quod* he þat may no wight seye nay
 þe experiens prouep it euery day
 þe tresoun which þat womman doþ to man
 Ten hundred þousand tellen I can / 2240
 Notable of 3our vntroupe and brytilnes
 O Salamon richest of alle richesse
 ffulfild of sapiencie and of worldly glorie
 fful worþy ben þyne wordes to memorie 2244

To every wight þat witt and reson can
 þus preiseþ he 3it þe bounte of man
 Among a þousand men 3it fond I on
 But of alle wommen fond he neuer noon 2248
 þus seiþ þe king þat knoweþ 3oure wickednes /
 And *Ihesus filius Cyrak* as I ges /
 Ne spekeþ of 3ou but seeldyn reuerens
 A wilde fuyre a corrupte pestilens 2252
 So falle vpon 3our bodyes 3it to nyght
 Ne se 3e nought þis honorable knight
 By cause allas þat he is blynd and old
 his owne man schal make him kokewold 2256
 Lo wher he sitte þe lecchour in þe tree
 Now wol I graunte of myn mageste
 vnto þis olde blynde worpy knight
 þat he schal han 3ein his eyzen sight 2260
 Whan þat his wijf wolde don him vlyenye
 þan schal he knowe al hire harlottrie
 Boþe in reproof of hire and oþer mo
 3e schal *quod* Proserpyn and wol 3e so 2264
 Now by mo moodres syres soule I swere
 þat I schal 3euyne hire suffisaunt answere
 And alle wommen after for 3our sake /
 þat þough þey ben in eny gilt y-take 2268
 Wijf face bold þei scholden hemself excuse
 And bere hem doun þat wolden hem accuse /
 ffor lakke of answere non of hem scholde deyen
 Al hadde 3e seye a þing wijf boþe 3our eyzen [leaf 158, back].
 3it schullen we so visagen it hardyly
 And weepe and swere and chide subtyly
 þat 3e schuln ben as lewed as here gees
 What rekkeþ me of 3our auctoritees 2276
 I wot wel þis Iewe þis Salamon
 ffind of vs wommen fooles many oou
 But þough þat he ne fond no good womman
 þer hap I-founde many anoþer man 2280

GROUP E. § 4. MERCHANT'S TALE. Corpus MS.

Wommen ful trewe ful good ful vertuous
 Witnesse on hem þat dwellen in cristes hous
 Wijþ martirdom þey prouyd hir¹ constance [1 MS h]
 þe Romaine Iestes maken remembrance 2284
 Of many a verray trewe wijf also
 but sire ne beþ nouzt wroþ as be it so
 pouþ þat he seyde he fond no good womman
 I pray þou take þe sentence of þe man 2288
 he mente þus þat in souerayne bounte
 Nis non but god but neyþer he ne sche
 Ey for verray god þat nys but oon
 What make 3e so moche of Salamon 2292
 What þough he made a temple goddes hous
 What þough he were riche and glorious
 So made he a temple of false godis
 Who mighte do a þing þat more forbode is 2296
 Parde as fayr as he his name in-plastre
 he was a lecchour and an ydolastre
 And in his eelde he verry god forsookt
 And if þat god ne hadde as seiþ þe bookt 2300
 y-spared him for his fadres sake he scholde
 haue lost his regne sonner þan he wolde
 I sette nouzt of alle þe vylenye
 þat 3e of wommen wite a bottirflye 2304
 I am a womman needes moot I speke
 Oþer elles swelle til myn herte breke
 ffor siþenes he seyde þat we ben Iangelereses
 As euer mote I brouke boþe my tresses [leaf 159] 2308
 I schal not spare for no curtesye
 To speke him harm þat wolde vs vilanye
 Dame *quod* þis pluto be no lengere wroþ
 I 3iue it vp but seþens I swor myn oþ 2312
 þat I wolde graunten him his sight aþein
 My word schal stonde þat warne I þe certayn
 I am a king it sitt me nouzt to lye
 And I *quod* sche a queen of fayerye 2316

hire answe're sche schal haue I vndertake
let vs no more wordes make

2318

[*For the rest of the Tale (from MS Arch. Seld. B. 14) see
the Appendix.*]

[THE PROEM.]

¶ The p[ro]loge of þe ffránkeleyn

Thise olde gentile britouns in here dayes [on leaf 159]
 Of diuerse auentures maden layes
 Rymeden in here firste britoun tonge
 Whiche layes with here instrumentz þey songe 712
 Oper elles radden hem for here plesaunce
 And on of hem haue I in remembraunce
 Which I schal seye wiþ as good wille as I can
 But sires by cause þat I am a burel man 716
 At my begynnyng first I 3ou beseche
 haueþ me excused of my rude speche
 I lerned neuer rethorik certayn
 þing þat I speke it mot be bare and playn 720
 I slepte neuer on þe mount of pernaso
 Ne neuer lered Marcus Thullius ne Cithero
 Colours of Rethorik ne knowe I non wiþouten drede
 But suche coloures as growen in þe mede 724
 Oper elles suche as men dye or peynte
 Colours of Rethorik ben me to queynte
 Myn spyrit feleþ nough of such matere
 But if 3e luste my tale schul 3e not here 728

[THE TALE.]

Ther was a knight þat loued and did his peyne 730
 In amoryke þat cleped is Briteyne 729
 To seruen a lady in his beste wise
 And many a labour and many a gret emprise 732

he for his lady wrou3t^t er sche were wonne
 ffor sche was on þe fairest^t vnder sonne [leaf 159, back]
 And eek^t þerto come of^t so heih kynrede
 That^t wel vnneþes durst^t þis knight^t for drede 736
 Telle hire his wo his peyne and his distresse
 But^t atte laste sche for his worþinesse
 And namely for his meke obeissance
 haþ such a pite caught^t of^t his penaunce 740
 That^t priuely sche felle of^t his acord
 To take him for hir housbonde and hire lord
 Of^t such lordschipe as men han ouer here wyues
 And for to lede þe more in blisse here lyues 744
 Of^t his fre wille he swor hire as a knight
 þat^t neuer in his wille by day ne by night/
 Ne schulde he vpon him take no maystrie
 A3eins hire wille ne kuyþe hire Ialouslye 748
 But^t hire obeye and folwe hire wille in al
 As ony louere to his lady schal
 Saue þat^t þe name of^t souereynete
 That^t wolde he han for schame of^t his degre 752
 Sche þankeþ him and wiþ ful gret^t humblesse
 Sche sayde sire seþþen of^t your gentilnesse
 3e profre me to han a large reyne
 Ne wolde neuer god betwixe vs tweyne 756
 As in my gilt^t were eyþer werre or stryft
 Sire I wil be 3our owne humble trewe wijf^t
 haue here my trouþe til þat^t myn herte breste
 Thus be þey boþe in quiete and in reste 760
 ffor o þing^t syres sauffly dar I seye
 That^t frendes euerich oþer mote obeye
 If^t þay wole longe holde companye
 loue wol nough^t ben constreigned by maystrie 764
 Whan maystrie comeþ þe god of^t loue anon
 Betep^t on his wynges and fare wel he is gon
 loue is a þing^t as any spiry^t fre
 Wommen of^t kynde desiren liberte 768

GROUP F. § 4. FRANKLIN'S TALE. Corpus MS.

And nouȝt to be constreigned as a þral
 And so do men if I þe soþe seye schal [leaf 160]
 loke who þat is most pacient in loue /
 he is at his auantage aboue 772
 Pacience is an heih vertu certeyn
 ffor it venquissheþ as þese clerkes seyn
 Thynges þat Rigor schulde neuer atteigne
 ffor euery word men may nouȝt chyde ne pleyne / 776
 lerneþ to suffre or elles so mote I gon
 ȝe schullen it lerne wheþer ȝe wole or non
 ffor in þis worlde certeyn no wight nys /
 þat he ne doþ or saiþ sumtyme amys / 780
 Or oþir siknesse oþer constillacioñ
 Wyn wo or chaungyng of complexioñ
 Causeþ ful often to don amys oþer speken
 On euery wrongt men may nouȝt ben awreken 784
 After þe tyme moste be temperaunce
 To euery wight þat can no gouernance /
 And þerfore haþ þis worþy wise knight
 To lyue in ese suffraunce hire behight 788
 And sche to him ful wisly gan to swere
 That neuer schulde þer be defaute in here /
 here may men sen an humble wyse acord
 Thus haþ sche take hir seruañt and hire lord 792
 Seruaunt in loue and lord in mariage
 Then was he boþe in lordschipe and seruage
 Seruage nay but in lordschipe aboue
 Seþyns þat he haþ boþe his lady and his loue 796
 his lady certes and his wyf also
 The whiche þat lawe of loue acordeþ þer to
 And whan he was in þis prosperite
 home wiþ his wyf he goþ to his cuntre 800
 Nouȝt fer fro pedmark þer as his dwellyng was
 Wher as he lyueþ in blisse and in solas
 Who couþe telle but he hadde wedded be
 þe ioye þe ese and þe prosperite / 804

That is bitwixe an housebond and his wyf
 A 3eer and more lasted þis blisful lijf [leaf 160, back]
 Til þat þis knight of which I spak of þus
 þat of kynrede was cleped arneragus 808
 Schope him to gon and dwelle a 3eer or tweyne
 In engelond þat cleped eek was bretayne
 To seche in armes worschipe and eek honour
 ffor alle his lust he sette in such labour 812
 And dwelleþ þere þe book saip þus
 Now wol I stynte of þis arneragus
 And speken I wole of dorygen his wijf
 þat loueþ hir housbonde as hire hertes lyf 816
 And for his absens wepeþ sche and sikeþ /
 As don þese noble wyues when hem likeþ
 Sche mournep wakeþ waylep fastep & pleynep
 Desire of his presence hire so destreynep 820
 That alle þis wyde world sche sette at nouzt
 hire freendes which þat knewe hire heuy þouzt
 Conforted hire in al þat euer þey mighte or may
 They prechen hire þay tellen hire night and day 824
 þat causeles sche sleep hire self allas /
 And euery confort possible in þis cas
 þey don to hire wiþ alle here busynes /
 And alle to make hire lete hir heuynes 828
 By processe as 3e knowe wel euerychon
 Men may so longe grauen in þe ston
 Til som figure þerinne enprentyd be
 So longe han þey conforted hire þat sche 832
 Receyued hap by hope and by resoñ
 The empryntyg of hir constillacioñ
 Thurgh which hire grete sorwe gan aswage /
 Sche may nougt alway endure in such a rage / 836
 And eek arneragus in al þis care
 hap sent his lettres home in al þis fare
 And þat he wolde come hastily azayn
 Oþer hadde þis sorwe hire herte slayn 840

GROUP F. § 4. FRANKLIN'S TALE. Corpus MS.

hire frendes sawe hire herte gan to slake /
 And preyed hire on knees for goddes sake [leaf 161]
 To come and rome hire in companye
 Away to dryue hire derke fantasye 844
 And fynally sche graunted þat' requeste
 ffor wel sche sawe it' was for þe beste
 Now stood hire castel faste by þe see
 And often wiþ hire freendes walked sche 848
 hire to disporte on þe banke on heih
 Wher as sche many schippe and barge seih
 Seylinge here cours where hem luste to go
 But' 3it' was þere a parcelle of' hir wo 852
 ffor to hir self' ful often seyde sche
 Is þer no schippe of' so many as I se
 Wole brynge home my lord þen wolde myn herte
 Al waryssche of' þis bitter peynes smerte 856
 Anoþer tyme þer wole sche sitte and þinke
 And caste hire eyen downward fro þe brynke
 But' whan sche saugh þe grisly rokkes blake
 ffor verray fere so wolde hire herte quake 860
 þat' on hire feet' sche mighte nough't hire sustene
 Thenne wolde sche sitte a doun vpon þe grene
 And pitously in to þe see byholde
 And sayn right' þus wiþ sorowful hertes colde 864
 Eterne god þat' þurgh þy puruyaunce
 ledest' þe world by certein gouernaunce
 In ydelnesse as men sayn 3e no þing' make
 But' lord þese grisely feendly rokkes blake 868
 That' semen rap'er a foul confusioñ
 Of' werk' þen any fayr creacion
 Of' whiche a parfyt' god and a stable
 Why han 3e wrou3t' þis werk' vnresonable 872
 ffor by þis werke south north est' and west'
 Ther nys y-fostred man ne bryd ne best'
 hit' doþ no good to my witt' but' annoyep
 Se 3e nou3t' lorde how mankynde it destroyep 876

GROUP F. § 4. FRANKLIN'S TALE. **Corpus MS.**

| | |
|--|------------------|
| An hundred þousand bodyes of mankynde / han rokkes slayn al be þey nouȝt in mynde | [leaf 161, back] |
| Which mankynde is a fair part of þy werk' That þou it madest y-like to þin hond werk' | 880 |
| Thenne semed it ȝe hadde a gret' chierte Toward mankynde but how þan may it be That ȝe suche menys make it to distroyen Whiche menys doþ no good but euer annoyen | 884 |
| I wot wel clerkes woln sayn as hem leste By argumentz þat al þing' is for þe beste Though I ne can þe causes for soþe knowe but þilke god þat made wynd to blowe | 888 |
| As kepe my lord þis is my conclusiõ To clerkes lete I al disputaciõ But wolde god þat alle þe rokkes blake Were sonken in to helle for his sake / | 892 |
| These rokkes sleen myn herte for feere Thus wolde sche sayn with many a pitous teere hire freendes sawe þat nas no disport To romen by þe see but discomfort' | 896 |
| And schopen for to pleyen som where elles / þey leden hire by Ryueres and by welles And eek' in oþer places delitables þey daunce and pleye at Chesse and at tables | 900 |
| So on a day right' on þe morne tyde vnto a gardyne þat was right' þere besyde In which þat þey hadde made here ordynañce Of vitaille and of oþer puruyaunce | 904 |
| They gon and pleyen hem al þe longe day And þis was on þe sixte morwe of may Which may hadde peynted wiþ his softe schoures / This gardyn ful of leues and of floures | 908 |
| And wiþ crafte of mannes hande so curiously Arayed haþ þis gardyn trayelly That neuer nas þer gardyn of such prys But if it were þe verrey paradys | 912 |

GROUP F. § 4. FRANKLIN'S TALE. Corpus MS.

| | |
|--|------------|
| The odure of floures and þe freisshe sight / | |
| Wolde han made ony pensyf herte light | [leaf 162] |
| That euer was born / but if to gret siknesse / | |
| Oþer to gret sorwe hyld it in distresse / | 916 |
| And after dynere gan þey to daunce | 918 |
| So ful it was of beaute with plesaunce / | 917 |
| And synge also but dorigen allone | |
| Sche made alwey hire compleynt and hire mone | 920 |
| ffor sche ne saugh him on þe daunce go | |
| þat was hire housbond and hir loue also | |
| But napeles sche moste a tyme abyde / | |
| And with good hope sche let hir sorwe glyde | 924 |
| vpon þis daunce amonges oþer men | |
| Daunced a squier biforen Dorigen | |
| That freisscher was and iolyer of array | |
| As to my dome þan is þe monþe of May | 928 |
| he syngeþ and daunceþ passyng any man | |
| That is or was siþenes þis world bygan | |
| Ther wiþ he was if men schulde him discryue / | |
| On þe beste farynge man on lyue / | 932 |
| þong strong right vertuou riche and wys | |
| And wel biloued and holden in gret prys | |
| And schortliche if þe soþe telle I schal | |
| vnywytyng of þis Dorigen at al | 936 |
| This lusty squyer seruaunt to venus | |
| Which þat y-cleped was Aurelius | |
| had loued hire best of eny creature | |
| Tuo þeer and more as was his aduenture / | 940 |
| But neuer durste he telle hire of his greuance | |
| Wipoute cuppe he drank al his penaunce | |
| he was dispeyred no þing durst he seye | |
| Sauē in his sawe somewhat wolde he wreye | 944 |
| his woo as in general compleynyng | |
| he sayde he louede and was biloued noþing | |
| Of such matiere made he many layes | |
| Songes compleigntes roundeletis virrelays | 948 |

how þat he durste nouzt his sorwe telle /
 That langusshij as fuyre doþ in helle [leaf 162, back]
 And deye seyde he moste as did Ekko
 ffor narsisus þat durste nouzt telle hir wo 952
 In oþer manere þenne 3e here me seye
 Ne durst he nouzt to hire his wo bewreye
 Saue peradventure som tyme at daunces
 There 3ongt folk kepen here obseruaunces 956
 hit may wel be he loked on hire face
 In such a wise as man þat askep grace
 But no þing wiste sche of his entent
 Napeles it happed or þey þennes went 960
 By cause þat he was hire ney3ebourre /
 And was a man of worschipe and honour
 And hadde knowen him ofte tymes 3ore /
 þey felle in speche ofte more and more / 964
 vnto his purpos drowe aurelius
 And whan he saw his tyme he sayde þus
 Ma dame quod he by god þat þis world made
 So þat I wiste it mighte 3our herte glade. 968
 I wolde þat day þat 3oure arneragus /
 Went on þe see þat I aurelius
 had went þat I schulde neuer haue come azain
 ffor wel I woot my seruise is in vayn 972
 My guerdoñ nys but berstyng of myn herte /
 Ma dame rewep vpon my peynes smerte
 ffor as wiþ a swerd 3e may me sle or saue
 her at 3oure foot god wolde þat / I werē graue / 976
 I haue as now no more leysir for to seye /
 haue mercy on me swete or 3e wolen do me deye
 Sche gan to loke vpon aurelius
 Is þis 3oure wille quod sche and say 3e þus 980
 Neuer erst quod sche ne wist I what 3e mente
 But now Aurely I knowe 3oure entente
 By þilke god þat 3af me soule and lyf
 Ne schal I neuer be vntrewe wyf 984

GROUP F. § 4. FRANKLIN'S TALE. Corpus MS.

| | |
|--|------------|
| In word ne in werk' as fer as I haue wit' / | |
| I wole ben his to whom þat' I am knyht' | [leaf 163] |
| But after þat' in pleyn þus seyde sche / | 988 |
| Tak' þis for fynal answer as for me / | 987 |
| Aurely <i>quod</i> sche by hihe god aboue | |
| ʒit' wol I <i>graunte</i> ʒou to be ʒoure loue | |
| Sepyns I ʒou se so pitously compleyne / | |
| loke what' day þat' engelond is Bryteyne / | 992 |
| ʒe remewe alle þe rokkes ston by stoon | |
| þat' þay ne lette schip no boot' to goon | |
| I say whan ʒe han made þese costes so clene | |
| Of Rokkes þat' þer nys no ston y-sene / | 996 |
| þan wol I loue ʒou best/ of' any man | |
| haue here my troupe in al þat' euer I can | |
| Is þere non oþer grace <i>quod</i> he / | |
| No by þat' lord <i>quod</i> sche þat' made me | 1000 |
| ffor wel I wot' þat' þat' schal neuer betyde | |
| let' such folye out' of' ʒour herte glyde | |
| What' deynte schulde man haue by his lijft' | |
| ffor to loue an oþer mannes wyf' | 1004 |
| That' haþ hir body whan so þat' him likeþ | |
| Aurelius ful ofte sore sikeþ / | |
| Wo was aurely whan þat' he þis herde / | |
| And wiþ a sorwful herte þus answerde / | 1008 |
| ma dame <i>quod</i> he þis were impossible / | |
| Thenne mot' I deye on sodeyn deþ orrible / | |
| And wiþ þat' word he torned him anon | |
| þo came hire oþer frendes many oon | 1012 |
| And in þe aleyes romed vp and doñ | |
| And no þing' wiste of' þis conclusiõ | |
| But' sodeinly bygan to reuel newe / | |
| Til þat' þe brighte sonne loste his hewe / | 1016 |
| ffor thorisowte haþ raft' þe sonne his lighht' | |
| þis is as moche to say as it was night' | |
| And home þey gon in Ioye and in solas / | |
| Saue oonly wrecched aurelius allas / | 1020 |

he to his hous is gon wiþ sorwful herte
 he seiþ he may not fro his deþ asterte [leaf 163, back]
 him semeþ he felip his herte colde
 vp to þe heuene his handes gan he holde 1024
 And on his knees bare he sette him doñ
 And in his rauynge sayde his orisoñ
 ffor verray wo out of his witte he breyde /
 he nyste nouzt what he spak but þus he seyde 1028
 Wiþ pitous herte haþ he his compleint bygonne
 vnto þe goddesse and first vnto þe sonne
 he sayde appollo god and gouernour
 And euery plaunte herbe tre and flour 1032
 þat zeuest after þi declinacioñ
 To ilk of hem his tyme and his sesoun
 And þin herborwe chaungeþ lowe and heiþe
 lord Phebus cast þin merciable eyþe 1036
 On wrecched Aurely þat am but lorn
 lo lord my lady haþ my deþ y-sworn
 Wipouten gilt but þin benignite
 vpon my dedly herte haue sum pite 1040
 But wel I wot lord Phebus if þou leste
 þe may me helpe saue my lady beste
 Now voucheþ sauf þat I may þou deuise
 how þat I may be holpe and in what wyse 1044
 þoure blisful suster lucyna þe schene
 þat of þe see is cheef goddesse & queene
 Though Neptunus haue deyte in þe see
 þit Emperesse abouen him is sche / 1048
 þe knowen wel lord right as hire desire
 Is to be quyked and letþ of þoure fire
 ffor which sche folweþ þou ful besyly
 Right so þe see desireþ naturelly 1052
 To folwen hire as sche þat is goddesse
 Boþe in þe see and in Ryueres more and lesse
 Wherfore lord Phebus þis is myn requeste
 Do þis myracle or I do myn herte to breste 1056

.i. luna lucyna.

þat þou next at þis apposcioun
 Which in þe signe schal be of þe leoun [leaf 164]
 And preyed hire so gret a flood to brynge
 That .v. fatheme at þe leste it ouer springe 1060
 þe hyeste rokke in armorik Britayne
 And lete his flood endure 3eres twayne
 Thenne certes to my lady may I saye
 holdeþ 3oure hestes þe rokkes ben awaye 1064
 lord Phebus do þis myracle for me
 Pray hire sche go no faster cours þan 3e
 I say 3ou þus pray 3our suster þat sche go
 None faster cours þan 3e þis 3eres tuo 1068
 Then schal sche be euer at þe fulle alway
 And springe flood lasten boþe night and day
 And but sche fouche sauf in such manere
 To graunte me my lady souerein dere / 1072
 Preye hire to synken euery rokke a doun
 In to hire owne darke Region
 vnder þe grounde þer Pluto duelleþ Inne
 Oþer neuer more schal I my lady wynne 1076
 Thy temple in Delphos wol I barfoot seeke
 lord Phebus seeþ þe teeres on my cheeke /
 And of my peyne haue compassion
 And wiþ þat word in swowne he felle a doun 1080
 And long tyme he lay in a traunce
 his broþer which þat knew of his penaunce
 vp caught him and to bedde him broughte
 Dispeyred in his torment and in his þougħt 1084
 Lo y þis woful creature lete lye
 Chese he for me wheþer he wol lyue or dye
 Arneragus wiþ hele and gret honour
 As he was of Chynalry þe flour 1088
 Is comen home and oþere worþy men
 O blisful art þou Dorigen
 þat hast þin lusty housbonde in þin armes
 þe freissche knight þe worþy man of armes 1092

That' loueþ þe as his owen hertes lyf'
 No þing' luste he to be ymaginatyff' [leaf 164, back]
 Of' any wigh't' hadde spoke while he was oute
 To hire of' loue he made þer-of' no doute 1096
 he nouzt entendeþ to no such matere
 But daunceþ Iustip' and makeþ good cheere
 As þus in Ioye and blisse I lete hem dwelle
 And of' þe swete Aurelyus wol I telle 1100
 In langure and in furious tormentz þus
 Tuo 3er and more lay wrecche aurelius
 Or ony foot' on erþe he mighte gon
 No confort' in þis tyme nade he non 1104
 Saue of' his broþer which þat' was a clerk'
 he knew of' al þis wo and of' al þis werk'
 ffor to non oþer creature certeyn
 Of' þis matiere ne durste he no word seyn 1108
 vnder his brest' he bar it more secre
 Then euer did Pamphilius for Galathe
 his brest' was hole wiþouten for to sene
 But' in his herte was ay þe arwe kene 1112
 And wel 3e knowen þat' a sore sauure
 In surgerie ful perilous is þe cure
 But' man might' touche þe arwe or come þerby
 his broþer wepeþ and wayleþ priuily 1116
 Til atte laste him felle in remembraunce
 That' whiles he was at Orlyauce in ffraunce
 As 3onge clerkes þat' ben likerous
 To reden artes þat' ben curious 1120
 Seken in euery halk' and euery herne
 Particuler sciences for to lerne
 he him remembreþ vpon a day
 At' Orlyauce in studye a book' he say 1124
 Of' magique naturell which his felawe
 That' was þat' tyme a bachiler of' lawe
 Al were he þere to lerne anoþer craft
 And priuely vpon his deske y-laft' 1128

| | |
|---|---------------------------|
| This book' spak' mochil of' þis operaciõs | |
| Touchynge þe .xviij. manciõs | [leaf 165] |
| That' longen to þe mone and suche folye | |
| As in oure dayes nys nough't' worþ a flye | 1132 |
| ffor holy chirche saiþ in oure byleeue | |
| Ne suffreþ non illusiõn vs to greeue | |
| And whan þis book' was in remembraunce | |
| Anon for ioye he gan for to daunce | 1136 |
| And to himselue sayde pryuely | |
| My broþer schal be warissched hastily | |
| ffor I am siker þat' þer ben sciences | |
| By whiche men maken dyuerse apparences / | 1140 |
| Whiche as þe subtile tregetoures pleyen | |
| ffor ofte at' festes herde I seyen | |
| That' tregettours wipinne an halle large | |
| han made in come water and a barge / | 1144 |
| And in þe halle rowen vp and down | |
| Som tyme haþ semed a grym leoun | |
| [and somtyme flouris springe / as in a mede | [MS Arch. Seld. B. 14] |
| somtyme a vyne & grapes / white & rede] | |
| Som tyme a castel al of' lym and ston | |
| And whan hem liked voyded it anon | |
| þus semed it' to euery mannes sight' | |
| Now þenne conclude I þus if' þat' I might' | 1152 |
| At' Orliaunce som olde felawe I-fynde | |
| That' hadde þe moones manciõns in mynde | |
| Oþer magike naturel aboue | |
| he scholde wel make my broþer han his loue / | 1156 |
| ffor wiþ apparens a man may make | |
| To mannes sight' þat' alle þe Rokkes blake | |
| Of' Britaigne were y-went' euerychon | |
| And schippes by þe brinke mighte comen and goon | 1160 |
| And in such forme endure a 3eer or tuo | |
| þen were my broþer warissched of' his wo | |
| þen most' sche needes knowen hire byheste | |
| Or elles he schal schamen hire at' þe leste | 1164 |

- What schulde I make a lenger tale of þis
 Vnto his broþer bedde come he is
 And such confort he 3aff him for to gon
 To Orlyauce þat he vpstarte anon [leaf 165, back] 1168
 And on his way forþward is he fare
 In hope to ben y-lissed of his care /
 When þay were come almost to þat Cite
 But if it were a tuo forlong opir þre 1172
 A 3ong clerk romyng by himself þey mette
 Which þat in latyn thriftily hem grette
 And after þat he sayde a wonder þing
 I knowe quod he þe cause of 3oure comyng 1176
 And er þey forþer any foote went
 he tolde hem alle þat was in here entent
 This brytoun clerk him asked of felawes
 The which þat he had knowen in olde dawes 1180
 And he answerde him þat þey dede were /
 ffor which he wepe ful ofte many a tere
 Doun of his hors Aurelius light anon
 And forþ wiþ þis magicien forþ is he gon 1184
 home to his hous and made hem wel at ese /
 hem lacked no vitayle þat hem might plesse /
 So wel arrayed hous as þer was oon
 Aurelius in his lyf saugh noon 1188
 He schewed him er he wente to sopere
 fforestes parkes ful of wilde deere
 [there saw he hartes / with hornys ful highe [MS Arch. Seld. B. 14.]
 pasturyng right faire / & merilie 1192
 he saw of hem an hundred / sleyn with houndes
 and somme with arwis blede / & bitter woundes
 he saw when voided were / the wilde dere
 these ffaukeners / vppon a faire Rivere] 1196
 And how ffaukons han þe heroñ slayne
 Then sawe he knightes iusten in a playne
 And after þis he dide him such plesaunce
 That he him schewed his lady in a daunce 1200

GROUP F. § 4. FRANKLIN'S TALE. Corpus MS.

- On which himself he daunced as him þoughit
 And whan þis mayster þat þis magique wrought
 Sawh it was tyme to clappe his hondes tuo
 And fare wel al oure reuel is y-do 1204
 And 3it/ remewe þey neuer out of þis hous /
 Whiles þey sawe al þis sight merueylous
 But in his study þer as his bookes be
 þey saten stille and no wight but þey þre 1208
 To him his mayster called þanne a squiere
 And seyde him þus is redy oure sopere [leaf 166]
 Almost an hour it is I vndertake
 Seþyns I 3ou bad oure souper to make 1212
 When þat þis worþy men wenten with me
 vnto my study þer as my bokes be
 Sire quod this squyer when it likeþ 3ou
 It is al redy þey 3e wolen right now / 1216
 Go we þen soupe quod he and for þe beste /
 These auerous folk som tyme mote haue reste
 And after souper felle þey in trete
 What somme schulde þis maystres guerdoñ be / 1220
 Te remewe alle þe rokkes of Brytaigne
 And eek fro Geroun to þe mouþ of Sayne
 he made it straunge / and swore so god him saue
 lasse þan a þousand pound he nolde nou3t haue 1224
 Ne gladly for þat somme ne wolde he gon
 Aurelius wiþ blisful herte anon
 Answerde þus fy on a þousand pound
 þis wyde worlde þat men seyn is round 1228
 þat wolde I 3iue if I were lord of it
 This bargayn is ful dryue for we be knyht /
 3e schulle be payed trewely by my troupe
 But lokeþ now for no necligence or slouþe 1232
 3e tary vs heere no lenger þan to morwe
 Nay quod þis clerk haue heer my troupe to borwe
 To bedde is gon aurelius whan him liste
 And wel neigh al þat night he hadde his reste 1236

GROUP F. § 4. FRANKLIN'S TALE. Corpus MS.

| | |
|--|------------------|
| That for his labour and for his hope of blisse his woful herte of penaunce hadde a lisse vpon þis morwe when þat it was day To Britaigne toke þay þe righte way | 1240 |
| Aurelius and þis magicien besyde And ben descendid þer þey woln abyde And þis was as þe bokes me remembre þe colde frosty sesoun of Decembre | 1244 |
| Phebus wax olde and hewed lik latoun That in his hoote declinaciō | [leaf 166, back] |
| Schon as þe burnyd gold wiþ stremes bright But now in Scorpiō a doun he light | 1248 |
| Wher as he schon ful pale I dar wel sayn The bitter frostes wiþ þe slete and rayn Destroyed hap þe grene in euery 3erde / Ianus sit by þe furye wiþ double berde | 1252 |
| And drynkeþ of his bugle horn þe wyn Biforn him stant þe braun of tuxed swyn And a nowel cryeþ euery lusty man Aurelius in al þat euer he can | 1256 |
| Doþ to his maister cheere and reuerence And preyeþ him to don his diligence To bryngen him out of his peynes smerte Or wiþ a swerd þat he wolde slitte his herte | 1260 |
| þat subtil clerk which þat rouþe hadde of þis man þat night and day he him spedde þat he ne lan To wayte a tyme of his conclusiō This is to say to make illusioun | 1264 |
| I ne can no termes of astrologie / | 1266 |
| By which an apparence of Iogellerie / | 1265 |
| That sche and euery wight scholde wene and seye þat of Britaigne þe rokkes were aweye | 1268 |
| Oþer elles þey were sonken vnder grounde So atte laste whan þat he his tyme fonde To make his Iapes and his wrecchednes Of which a supersticious cursednesse | 1272 |

GROUP F. § 4. FRANKLIN'S TALE. Corpus MS.

| | |
|---|--------------------|
| his tables colletanes forþ he brought fful wel corrected ne þer lakked nouzt/ Ne his collectes ne his expans 3eres Ne his rotes ne his oþer geres / | 1276 |
| As ben his centrys and his argumentz And his <i>proporcions</i> conuenientz ffor his equacioñs in euery þing And by his viij spere in his werkyng he knew how fer Alnaþe was y-schoue ffro þe hede of þilke fixe aries aboue | 1280 [leaf 167] |
| That in þe ix ^e . spere considered is fful subtilly he calkeþ al þis / | 1284 |
| And whan he hadde founde his firste mansioñ he knewe þe remenaunt by <i>proporcioñ</i> And knewe þe arisyng of þe mone wel And in whos face and terme euery del And knew ful wel þe moones mansioñ acordañt to his operacioñ | 1288 |
| And knew also his oþer <i>obseruaunces</i> / ffor suche illusions and suche meschaunces / | 1292 |
| As heþin folk vsed þilke dayes ffor whiche no lenger maked he delayes But þough his magik for a wike or tweye / It semed as alle þe rokkes were aweye | 1296 |
| Aurelyus which þat dispeyred is Wheþer he schal han his loue or fare amys Awayteþ night and day of þis myracle / And whan he knewe þat þer was non obstacle | 1300 |
| þat voyded were þise rokkes euerychon Doun to þis maistres feet he felle anon And seyde I woful wrecche aurelius þanke 3ou lord and lady myn venus | 1304 |
| That me han holpe fro my cares colde / And to þe temple forþ his way haþ holde Where he knewe he scholde his lady se And whan he saugh his tyme anon right he | 1308 |

- Wip dredful herte and humble cheere /
 Salued hap his souerayn lady deere /
 My rightful lady *quod* þis woful man
 Whom I most drede and loue as I best kan 1312
 And lopest were of alle þis world displese /
 Nere it þat I for 3ou haue suche disese
 That I moste dye her at 3our foot anon
 But not wolde I telle how me is wo bygon 1316
 But certes eyþer most I deye or pleyne /
 3e sleen me gilteles for *verrey* peyne / [leaf 167, back]
 But of my dep þough 3e haue no roupe
 Auyseþ 3ou er þat 3e lese 3our troupe 1320
 Repentþ 3ou for þilke god aboute /
 Or 3e me sleen by cause þat I 3ou loue /
 ffor ma dame wel 3e wot þat 3e han highþ
 Nought / þat I chalenge eny þing of right 1324
 Of 3ou souereyne lady but 3oure grace
 But in a gardyn 3onde at such a place
 3e wot right wel þat 3e behighte me
 And in myn hande my troupe plighte me 1328
 To loue me best god wot 3e sayde so
 Al be þat I vnworþy am þerto
 Madame I speke it for þe honour of 3ow
 More þen to saue myn hertes lyf right now / 1332
 I haue don so as 3e haue *commanded* me
 And if 3e vouche sauf 3e may go se /
 And as 3ou luste haueþ 3oure byheste in mynde
 ffor quykt or deed right þus 3e schulle me fynde 1336
 In 3ow lip al to do me lyue or deye
 But wel I wot þe rokkes ben awaye /
 he took his leue and sche astoned stood
 In alle hir face þer nas a drop of blood 1340
 Sche wende neuer han comyn in such a trappe
 Allas *quod* sche þat þis euer schulde happe
 ffor wende I neuer by possibilitie
 þat such a muster or such a meruaile schulde be 1344

- It is aȝein þe processe of nature¹ [¹ These lines are transposed in the MS.]
 And home sche goþ a sorwful creature¹
 ffor verray feere vnneþes may sche go
 Sche wepeþ and wayleþ a day or tuo 1348
 And swowneþ þat it rouþe was to se
 But why it was to no wight tolde sche
 ffor out of touna was gon arneragus
 But to hir self sche sayde and spak þus 1352
 In hire compleynt as ȝe schullen after heere
 Wiþ face pale and wiþ sorweful cheere [leaf 168]
 Allas *quod* sche on þe fortune I pleyne
 That vnwar hast wrapped me in þi cheyne 1356
 ffor which þe eschape wot I no socour
 Saue oorly deþ oþer elles dishonour
 On of þese tuo bihoueþ me to chese
 But napeles ȝit hadde I leuer to lese / 1360
 My lif þan of my body to han a schame
 Oþer knowe my self fals oþer lese my name /
 And wiþ my deþ I may be quyte y-wys
 haþ þer nouȝt many a wyf er þis 1364
 And many a mayden y-slayn hem self allas
 Rapir þan wiþ here bodyes don trespas
 And certes lo þise stories beren witnesse
 Whan xxx tyrauntz ful of cursednesse 1368
 hadde slayn Phydon in athenes atte leste
 þey comaunded his douȝtres to areste /
 And bryngen hem byforn hem in dispyt
 Al naked to fulfille here foule delyt 1372
 And in here fadres blod þey made hem daunce
 vpon þe pament god ȝeue hem meschaunce
 ffor whiche þese woful maydens ful of drede /
 Rapir þan þey wolde lese here maydenhede / 1376
 þay pryuely ben stert in to a welle /
 And dreynt hemselue as þe bookes tell
 They of mesue lete enquere and seke
 Of lacedemye .L. maydens eeke 1380

| | |
|---|------------------|
| On which þey wolden don here leccherie But was þer non of al þat companye / þat sche nas slayn and wiþ a glad entent Chese rapir for to dye þan for to assent' | 1384 |
| To ben oppressed of here maydenhede Why schulde I þanne to deye ben in drede lo eke þe tyraunt Anstoclydes þat loued a mayde þat/ hight Symphalides | 1388 |
| Whan þat hir fader slayn was on a night/ vnto þe Dyanes temple goþ sche anon right' | [leaf 168, back] |
| hente þe ymage with hire armes tuo ffro which ymage wolde sche neuere go | 1392 |
| No wight' might' of hit hir armes race Til sche was slayn in þe selue place / Now seþyns þat maydens hadde such despit/ To ben defouled wiþ mannes foul delyt' | 1396 |
| Wel aught' a wyf rapir himself to sle/ þan ben defouled as þenkeþ me þat schal I sayn of hasdrubaldes wyf That/ at kartage byraft' hir self' hir lyf' | 1400 |
| ffor whan sche sawh þat/ Romayns wan þe toun Sche took' hir children alle and swept' a doun In to þe fuyr and ches rapir to dye þan eny Romeyn did hir vilanye | 1404 |
| hap nouzt' luces y-slayn hir self' allas At Rome þere sche oppressed was Of Tarquyn for hir þought' it' was a schame / To lyue whan þat' sche had lost' hire name / | 1408 |
| The viij. maydens of Milesye also / han slayn hem self' for drede and for wo Rapir þan folke of gaule scholde hem oppresse / Mo þen a þousend stories as I gesse / | 1412 |
| Coupe I now telle as touchinge þis matere Whan habradas was slayn his wyf' so dere hire self' slough and let hir blood to glyde In habradas woundes brode and wyde / | 1416 |

GROUP F. § 4. FRANKLIN'S TALE. Corpus MS.

- And seyde my body at þe leste way
 þer schal no wight defoule it if þat I may
 What schulde I mo ensamples her of sayn
 Sippen þat so many han hemselue slayn 1420
 Wel raþer þan þey wolde defouled be /
 I wol conclude what is best for me
 [to sle my selue / than be defouled thus [MS Arch. Seld. B. 14]
 I wol be trewe / to Arueragus] 1424
 Oþir raþer sle my self in som manere
 As Demonicious doughter dere
 By cause þat sche nolde not defouled be /
 O Cedasus it is ful gret pite [leaf 169] 1428
 To reden how þi doughtren deyeden allas
 þat slowe hemself for such a maner caas
 As gret appetyt was it or more
 The Theban mayden þat for Nichasore 1432
 [hir selue slowe / right for suche manere woo [MS Arch. Seld.
 another Theban maiden dide right so] B. 14]
 hire hadde wedded and y-dressed [spurious]
 ffor on of Macedoigne hadde hire oppressed 1435
 þat schal I sayn of Nicharatiffs wijf
 þat for such cas byrafte hir self hir lyf
 how trewe was eek to alcebiades
 his loue þat for to deyen chees 1440
 þan for to suffren his body vmbreyde be
 lo which a wyf was Alcestem *quod* sche
 What Emore of good Penolope /
 Al Grece knoweþ of hir chastite 1444
 Pardee of leodomia is write þus
 That when at Troye was slayn protheselayus
 No lenger nolde sche lyue after his day
 The same of noble Porcia I telle may 1448
 Wipoute Brutus coupe sche not lyue
 To whom he hadde al hol his herte 3iue
 The parfyt wyfhod of archemesy
 honoured is þurgh al þe Barbary 1452

- O teuta queen in þy wyfly chastite
 To alle wyfes may a myroure be
 [. . . *no gap in the MS: these lines*
 *known only in Ellesmere MS.*] 1456
- þus playned Dorigen a day or tweye
 Purposed euere þat sche wolde deye
 But napeles vpon þe þridde night
 hom cam arneragus þe worþy knight 1460
 And asked hire why þat sche weep so sore
 And sche gan weepen euer lenger þe more
 Allas *quod* sche þat euer was I born
 þus haue I seyð *quod* he þus haue I sworn 1464
 I told him alle as 3e han herde bifore
 It needeþ nouȝt/ to rehersen it nomore
 This housbond wiþ glad cheere in sondry wise /
 Answerd and sayde as I schal 3ou deuise / [leaf 169, back]
 Is þer ouȝht elles Dorigen but þis
 Nay nay *quod* sche god help me so as wis
 This is to meche and it were goddes wille
 3e wyf *quod* he let slepe þat is stille 1472
 It may be wel 3it peraduenture to say
 3e schullen 3our troupe holden by my fay
 ffor god so wisly helpe me
 I hadde wel leuere y-stiked for to be / 1476
 ffor verray loue which þat I to 3ou haue
 But if 3e schulde 3oure troupe saue
 Troupe is 3e heihest þing þat man may kepe
 But wiþ þat word he brast anon to weepe / 1480
 And sayde I 3ou forbede vp payne of deþ
 That neuer whiles þe lasteþ lyf and breþ
 To no wight telle how þat þis matere /
 As I may kepe I wole my woo endere 1484
 Ne make no contynauce of heynesse
 That folk of 3ou may deme harme or gesse
 And forþ he cleped a squyer and a mayde
 God forþ anon wiþ Dorigen he sayde / 1488

GROUP F. § 4. FRANKLIN'S TALE. **Corpus MS.**

ffor which in fewe wordes sayde he þus
 Ma dame seiþ to 3oure lord Arneragus
 þat seiþyns I se þis grete gentilnes /
 To 3ou and ek' I se wel 3oure distres 1528
 þen 3e to me þus schulde breke 3oure trouþe 1530
 Certes me þinkeþ it' were right' gret' rouþe [*spurious* 1529]
 I haue wel leuer euer to suffre wo
 þen I departe þe loue betwixe 3ou tuo 1532
 I 3ou relese ma dame in to 3oure hand
 Quyte euery surement' and euery band
 That' 3e han made to me as here byforn
 Siþens þilke tyme that 3e were born 1536
 My trouþe I pligh't I schal 3ou neuer repreue
 Of' no biheste and here I take my leue /
 As of' þe trewest' and þe beste wyf'
 þat' euer 3it' / I knew in al my lyf' 1540
 But' euery wigh't' be war of' hire byheste
 On Dorigen remembreþ atte leste /
 Thus can a squier don a gentil dede
 As wel as can a knight' wiþouten drede 1544
 Sche þanked him vpon hir knees al bare
 And home vnto hire housbonde is sche fare [*leaf 170, back*]
 And tolde hem alle as 3e han herde me sayde
 And be 3e siker he was so wel a-payde / 1548
 þat' it' were impossible to write /
 What' schulde I lengere of' þis cas endite /
 Arneragus and dorigen his wijff'
 In souerayn blisse leden forþ here lyff' 1552
 Neuer eft' ne was þer anger hem betwene
 he cherisscheþ hire as þough' sche were a quene
 And sche was to him trewe for euermore 1555
 Aurelius þat' his cost' hap al forlore 1557
 Curseþ þe tyme þat' euer he was y-born 1558
 ffor certes he seiþ I am forlorn [*spurious*]
 Allas *quod* he allas þat' I behigh't'
 Of' pured gold a þousand pound of' wigh't' / 1560

GROUP F. § 4. FRANKLIN'S TALE. Corpus MS.

- vnto þis filosofre how schal I do
 I se no more but' þat' I am fordo /
 Myn heritage moot' I needes selle
 And ben a beggere here may I no lenger dwelle 1564
 And schamen al my kynrede in þis place
 But' I of' him may gete better grace /
 [but natheles / I wol of him assaye [MS Arch. Seld. B. 14]
 at certeyne dayes / yere bi yere to paye] 1568
 I wole þonke him of' his grete curtesye
 My troupe wol I kepe I wol nouzt' lye
 Wiþ herte sore he goþ vnto his coffre
 And broughte gold vnto his philosophre 1572
 The value of' .v. hundred pound I gesse
 And him besecheþ of' his gentilnesse
 To graunte him dayes of' þe remenaunt
 And maister I dar wel make auant 1576
 I fayled neuer my troupe as 3it'
 ffor sikerly my dettes schal be quyt
 Towardes 3ou how euer þat' I fare
 To gon abegged in my kirtel bare 1580
 But' wolde 3e fouche sauf' vpon suerte
 Two 3ere or þre to respiten me
 þenne were I wel for elles moste I selle /¹ [1 a leaf out of the
 Corpus MS.]
 [myn heritage / ther is no more to telle [MS Arch. Seld. B. 14,
 leaf 261, back]
 this Philosophre soburly answerde
 and seide thus / whan he these wordes herde
 haue I nat holden couenaunt / vn-to the
 yis certes / wel & trewely / quod he 1588
 hast thow nat had thi lady / as the liketh
 no no quod he / & sorowfully he siketh
 what was the cause / telle me if thou can
 Aurelius his tale / anoon bigan 1592
 and tolde him al / as ye han herde bifore
 hit nedith nat / to rehersen it no more
 he seide Arueragus / of gentilnesse
 had leuer dien / in sorow & distresse 1596

GROUP F. § 4. FRANKLIN'S TALE. Corpus MS.

than his wiff / were of hir trouthe fals [MS Arch. Seld. B. 14]
 the sorow of Dorigen / he told him als
 how loth hir was / to ben a wikked wiff
 and that she leuere had that day lost hir liff 1600
 and that hir trouthe she swore / thorough innocence
 she neuere erst herde speke / of apparence
 that made me han of hir / so grete pite
 and right as frely / as he sente hir to me 1604
 as frely sente I hir / to him ageyne
 this is al & som / ther is no more to seyne
 this Philosophre answerde / leue brother [leaf 262]
 eueryche of yow dide gentilly / to other 1608
 thow art a squyer / & he is a knyght
 but god forbede / for his blisful myght
 but if a Clerke / couthe do a gentil dede
 as wel as any of yow / it is no drede 1612
 sir I relece the / thi thousand ponde
 as thow right now / were crope out of the grounde
 ne neuere er now / ne haddist thow knowe me
 for sir I wol nat taken / a peny of the 1616
 for al my crafft / ne nought for my travaile
 thow hast I-paide wel / for my vitaile
 hit is I-now / & farewel haue good day
 and toke his hors / & forth he goth his way 1620
 lordinges this question / than wold I axe now
 whiche was the most fre / as thenketh yow
 now telleth me / er that I ferther wende
 I can no more / my tale is at an ende. 1624
Here endith the ffrankeleyne his tale [Arch. Seld. extr. ends]

GROUP G. FRAGMENT VIII.

§ 1. THE SECOND NUN'S TALE.

CORPUS MS.

[*THE PROEM.*] [No breaks in the Corpus MS between the stanzas.]

[And next [Arch. Seld. B. 14, leaf 215]

bigynneth the seconde nonne hir tale. &c.

(1)

The ministre *and* norice / vn-to vices 1
 which that men clepen / in englissh / Idelnesse
 that porter of the gate is / of delices
 to eschewen / *and* bi hir contrarie to oppresse 4
 that is to seyne / bi leoful besynesse
 wel oughite we to don / al oure entente
 lest that the fende / thorough Idelnesse vs hente. 7

(2)

ffor he that with his thousand cordes slighe 8
 contenuelly vs waiteth / to bi-clappe
 whan he may man / in Idelnesse aspice
 he can so lightly cacche him / in his trappe 11
 til that a man be hente / right bi the lappe
 he nys not ware / the fende hath him in honde
 wel oughite vs werche / *and* Idelnesse with-stonde. 14

(3)

And though men dradden neuere / for to die 15
 yit se men wel bi reson / doutelese
 that Idelnesse is hoten / slogardie
 of whiche cometh neuere / noon encrease 18
 and sithen that slouth hir holdith in a lese
 only for to slepe / *and* ete *and* drynke
 and to devouron / al that other swynke [leaf 215, back] 21

CORPUS 377 (6-T. 527) [this page, Arch. Seld. B. 14]

(4)

¶ And for to putten vs / from suche Idelnesse [MS Arch. Seld. B. 14]
 that cause is / of so grete confusion
 I haue here don / my feithful besynesse
 after the legende / in translacion 25
 right after thi glorious liff / *and* passion
 thow with thi garland / wroughte of rose *and* lylve
 the mene I / maide / *and* martir / seynt Cecelye . 28

(5)

¶ And thow that floure art / of virgynes alle 29
 of whom that Bernard / list so wel to write
 to the at my bigynnyng / first I calle
 thow comforte of vs wrecches / do me endite 32
 thi maidens deth / that was thorough hir merite
 the eternal liff / *and* of the fende victorie
 as men mow after rede / in hir storie . 35

(6)

¶ Thow maiden *and* moder / doughter of thi sone] [Arch. Seld. B. 14 extr. ends]
 Thou welle of^t mercy synful soules cure [leaf 171]
 In whom þat^t god for bounte chees to wone
 Thou humble and heih ouer euery creature 39
 Thou nobledest^t so ferre oure nature
 That^t no desdeyn þe makere hadde of kynde
 his sone in blood and fleissch to cloþe and wynde 42

(7)

¶ Wiþinne þe cloystre blisful of^t pine sydes 43
 Took^t mannes schap þe eterne loue and pees
 That of^t þe trine compas lord and gyde is
 Whom erþe and see and heuene out of^t reles 46
 Ay herien and þou virgine wemmeles
 Bare of^t þy body and dwelledest / mayde pure
 The creatour of^t euery creature 49

(8)

| | |
|--|----|
| ¶ Assembled is in þi magnificence | 50 |
| Wip mercy goodnesse and with such pite | |
| þat þou art þe sonne of excellence | |
| Nouȝt only helpest hem þat prayen þe | 53 |
| But ofte tyme of þin benignite | |
| fful frely er þat men þin helpe beseche | |
| þou gost byforn and art here lyfes leche | 56 |

(9)

| | |
|---|----|
| ¶ Now help þou meke and blisful faire mayde | 57 |
| Me flemyd wrecche in þis desert of galle | |
| Thenk on þe womman Canane þat sayde | |
| That whelpes eten some of þe crommes alle | 60 |
| þat from here lordes table ben y-falle | |
| And þough þat I þe vnworþy sone of eue | |
| be synful ȝit accepte my byleeue | 63 |

(10)

| | |
|---|----|
| And for þat feip is deed wipoute werkes | 64 |
| So for to worchen ȝif me witte and space | |
| þat I be quyt from place þat most derk is | |
| O þou þat art so fair and so ful of grace | 67 |
| Be myn aduocate in so heih a place | |
| Ther as wipouten ende is longe Osanna | |
| Thou cristes moder and doughter of Anna | 70 |

(11)

| | |
|---|------------------------|
| And of þin lighȝt my soule kepe in prison | 71 |
| That troubled is by þe contagioun | |
| [of my body / & also bi the wighte | [MS Arch. Seld. B. 14] |
| of erthely lust / & fals affeccion] | 74 |
| O heuene o refute O saluaciōn | [leaf 171, back] |
| Of hem þat ben in sorwe and in destresse / | |
| Now help for vnto my werk I wol me dresse / | 77 |

(12)

| | |
|---|----|
| ¶ 3et ^t pray I 3ou þat ^t reden þat ^t I write | 78 |
| ffor3eueþ me for I do no diligence | |
| þis ilke story subtil to endite | |
| ffor boþe haue I þe wordes and þe sentence / | 81 |
| Of ^t hem þat ^t atte seyntes reuerence / | |
| The story wroot ^t & solewen <i>hir</i> legende | |
| And pray I 3ou þat ^t 3e woln my werk ^t amende | 84 |

(13) [*THE TALE.*]

| | |
|---|----|
| fferst ^t wolde I 3ou þe name of ^t seint ^t Cecile | 85 |
| Expoune as men may in here stories se | |
| It ^t is to say on engliss ⁿ heuene lylie | |
| ffor pure chastnesse of ^t virginite / | 88 |
| Oþer for sche witnesse hadde of ^t honeste | |
| Of ^t greue of ^t conscience and of ^t good fame | |
| The soote sauour lilye was hire name | 91 |

(14)

| | |
|---|----|
| Ouþer Cecile is to say þe way to blynde | 92 |
| ffor sche ensample was by good techynge | |
| Or elles . Cecile is as I writen fynde | |
| Is ioyned by a maner conioygnyng | 95 |
| Of ^t heuen and lya and heiher in figuringe | |
| The heuen is set ^t for þought ^t of ^t holynesse | |
| And lya for hire lastyng ^t busynesse / | 98 |

(15)

| | |
|--|-----|
| Cecile may eek ^t be sayd in þis manere | 99 |
| Wantynge of ^t blyndnesse for hire grete light | |
| Of ^t sapiens and for hir þewes clere | |
| Oþer elles þis maydenes name bright/ | 102 |
| Of ^t heuen and leos comeþ for which by right ^t | |
| men mighte þe heuene of ^t poeple hire calle | |
| Ensample of ^t goode and wise werkes alle | 105 |

(16)

| | |
|---|------------|
| ffor leos poeple in englisch is to say | 106 |
| And right' as men may in þis heuene se | |
| þe sonne and moone and þe sterres euery way | |
| Right' so gostly in þis mayden fre | 109 |
| Seyen þe feiþ of' magnificence | |
| And ekyng' of' helpe and of' sapience | [leaf 172] |
| And sondry werkes bright' of' excellence / | 112 |

(17)

| | |
|--|-----|
| And right' as þis philosophres wryte | 113 |
| That' heuen is swyft' round and brynnynge' | |
| Right' so was faire Cecile þe whyte | |
| fful swift' and besy euer in good werkyng' | 116 |
| And round & hool in good perseueryng | |
| And brenne euere in charite lighte / | |
| Now haue I declared 3ou what' sche highte | 119 |

(18)

| | |
|--|-----|
| This mayden bright' Cecile as hire lyf' saiþ | 120 |
| Was comen of' Romayns and of' noble kynde | |
| And so forþ fostred vp in þe faip | |
| Of' crist' and bar his gospel in hire mynde | 123 |
| Sche neuer cessede as I writen fynde | |
| Of' hire prayere and god to loue and drede | |
| Besechinge him to kepe hire maydenhede / | 126 |

(19)

| | |
|--|-----|
| And what' þis mayden schulde vnto a man | 127 |
| y-wedded be þat' was ful 3ong' of' age | |
| Which þat' y-cleped was valerian | |
| And þe day was comen of' hire mariage | 130 |
| Sche fil deuoute and humble /in hire corage | |
| Vnder hire robe of' gold þat' sat' ful faire | |
| And next' hire fleissþi sche clad hire in an haire | 133 |

(20)

And whiles þe Orgles maden melodye 134
 To god allone þus in herte sangt sche
 O lord my soule and eek' my body gye
 Vnwemmed lest' þat' I confoundid be 137
 And for his loue þat' deyde vpon a tre
 Euery secounde or þridde day sche faste
 Ay byddyngt in hire orisons ful faste 140

(21)

The night' com and to bedde sche moste gon 141
 Wiþ hire housbonde as often is þe manere
 And pryuely sche sayde to him anon
 O swete and wel biloued spouse dere 144
 Ther is a counseil and 3e wolde it here /
 Which þat' right' fayn I wol vnto 3ou sayn
 So þat' 3e me assure it' nought' to bewrayn [1f 172, bk] 147

(22)

Valerian gan faste / vnto hire swere 148
 That' for no cas ne þing' þat' mighte be
 he scholde for no þing' neuer bywreyen hire
 And þanne at' erst' þus to him sayde sche 151
 I haue an aungel which þat' loueþ me
 That' wiþ gret' loue wheþer so I wake or slepe
 Is redy ay my body for to kepe 154

(23)

And if' þat' he may felen out of drede 155
 [that ye me touche / or loue in vilonye [MS Arch. Seld. B. 14]
 he right anoon wol sle yow / with the dede
 and in youre youthe / thus shul ye die 158
 and if that ye / in clene loue me guye]
 he wolde 3ou loue as me for 3our clenness
 And schewe 3ou of' his ioie and his brightnesse 161

(24)

| | |
|--|-----|
| valerian corrected as god wolde | 162 |
| Answerde aȝein if I schal truste to þe / | |
| let me þat aungel see and him biholde | |
| And if þat it a verray aungel be | 165 |
| Thanne wol I don as þou hast preyed me | |
| And if þou loue anoþer man for soþe / | |
| Right wiþ þis swerd I wol sle þou boþe | 168 |

(25)

| | |
|--|-----|
| Cecily answerde anon in þis wise | 169 |
| If þat þou luste þat aungel schul ȝe se | |
| So þat ȝe trowe on crist and þou baptise | |
| Gop forþ to <i>via apia quod</i> sche | 172 |
| þat from þis toun ne stant by myles þre / | |
| And to þe pouere folkes þat þere dwelle / | |
| Sey hem right þus as þat / I schal þou telle / | 175 |

(26)

| | |
|--|-----|
| Telle hem þat I Cecile þou to hem sent | 176 |
| To schewen þou þe goode vrbān þe olde | |
| ffor secre needes and fro good entent | |
| And whan þat ȝe seint vrbān han byholde / | 179 |
| Telle him þe wordes whiche þat I þou tolde / | |
| And whan þat he haþ purged þou from synne | |
| þanne schal ȝe see þat aungel er ȝe twynne | 182 |

(27)

| | |
|--|------------------|
| Valerian is to þat place y-gon | 183 |
| And right as him was taught by his lernyng | |
| he fond þis holy Vrbān þer anon | |
| Among þese seyntes buriels lotyng | .i. latitans 186 |
| And he anon wiþoute taryng | [leaf 178] |
| Dide his message and whan he hadde tolde | |
| Vrbān for ioȝe gan his handes vpholde | 189 |

(28)

| | |
|--|-----|
| The teeres from his eyhen leet' he falle / | 190 |
| Almighty god O Ihesu crist <i>quod</i> he | |
| Sowere of' chaste counseille and herde of' vs alle | |
| þe fruyt' of' þilke seed of' chastite / | 193 |
| þat' þou hast' sowe in Cecile tak' to þe | |
| Lo y-like a busy bee wipoute gyle | |
| The serueþ ay þin oughne þralle Cecile | 196 |

(29)

| | |
|--|-----|
| ¶ ffor þilke spouse þat' sche tok' but' now / | 197 |
| fful like a fiers leoñ sche sendeþ heere / | |
| As meke as eny lambe was to 3ow / | |
| And wip þat' word anon þer gan apeere / | 200 |
| An olde man clad wip white cloþes cleere | |
| And hadde a book' wip <i>lettres</i> of' gold in honde | |
| And gan biforn Valerian to stonde | 203 |

(30)

| | |
|--|---------------------------|
| Valerian as deed fel doun for drede | 204 |
| Whan he him saugh and him vp hente þo | |
| And on his book' right' þus he gan to rede / | |
| O lord o feiþ o god wipoute mo ¹ | ¹ Et lamentat' |
| Of' cristendom and fader of' al also | <i>[is the next line]</i> |
| Abouen alle and ouer alle euery where | |
| This wordes alle with golde writen were / | 210 |

(31)

| | |
|--|--------------|
| Whan þis was rad þan sayde þis olde man | 211 |
| leeuest' þou þis þing' or no sey 3e or nay | |
| I leue alle þis þing' þan þis [<i>quod</i> tho Valerian | [MS Arch. |
| for sother thing than this /] I dar wel say | Seld, B. 14] |
| Vnder þe heuene no wight' ne þenke may | 214 |
| þo vanyssched þe olde man he nyste where | |
| And pope vrban him cristned right' þere | 217 |

(32)

| | |
|---|------------------|
| Valerian goþ hom and seint' Cecile | 218 |
| Wipinne his chambre an aungel stande | |
| þis aungel hadde of' Rose and of' lylie | |
| Corounes tuo þe which he bar in hande | 221 |
| And ferst' to Cecile as I vnderstande / | |
| he 3af' þat' oon and after gan he take | [leaf 173, back] |
| þat' oþer to Valerian hire make | 224 |

(33)

| | |
|---|-----|
| With body clene and wiþ vnwemmyd þouzt' / | 225 |
| kepeþ ay wel þis corounes quod he | |
| ffrom paradys to 3ou haue I hem brouzt' | |
| Ne neuer more schulle þey roten be | 228 |
| ¶ Ne leese here swete sauour trusteþ me | |
| Ne neuere wight' schal seen hem wiþ his yhe | |
| But' he be chaste and hate vilonye / | 231 |

(34)

| | |
|---|-----|
| And þou valerian for þou so sone | 232 |
| Assentedest' to good counseil also | |
| Sey what' þe luste and þou schalt' haue þy bone / | |
| I haue a broþer quod valerian þo | 235 |
| þat' in þis world I loue no man so | |
| I pray 3ou þat' my broþer may han grace | |
| To knowe þe troupe as I do in þis [place] | 238 |

(35)

| | |
|--|-----|
| The aungel answerde god likeþ 3oure requeste | 239 |
| And boþe with þe palme of' martirdome | |
| 3e schulle come vnto þe blisful feste | |
| And wiþ þat' word Tiburce his broþer come | 242 |
| And whan þat' he þe sauour vndernome | |
| Which þat' þe roses and þe lylies caste / | |
| Wipinne his herte he gan to wondre faste / | 245 |

(36)

| | |
|--|-----|
| And seyde in þis tyme I wondre of þe ȝeere | 246 |
| Whenne þis swote sauour comeþ so / | |
| And Rosis and lilyes þat I smelle heere | |
| ffor þough I hadde hem in myn hondes tuo | 249 |
| The sauour might in me no deppere go | |
| þe swete smelle þat in myn herte I fynde | |
| hap chaunged me al in anoþer kinde | 252 |

(37)

| | |
|--|----------------|
| valerian sayde tuo corounes han we | 253 |
| Snow whit and Rose Reed þat schyneþ cleere | |
| Which þat þin yhe hap no might to see | |
| And as þou smellest hem þorough my preyere | 256 |
| So schalt þou seen hem leue broþer deere | |
| If it/ so be þat þou wolt wiþouten slouþe | |
| Bileeue aright and knowe verray trouþe | [leaf 174] 259 |

(38)

| | |
|--|-----|
| Tiburce answerde saist þou þis to me | 260 |
| In soþnesse or in drem herkne ȝe þis | |
| In dremes quod valerian han we be | |
| vnto þis tyme broþer myn y-wys | 263 |
| But now at erste oure trouþe dwellyng is | |
| how wost þou quod Tiburce and in what wyse / | |
| Quod valerian þat I schal þe deuyse / | 266 |

(39)

| | |
|---|-----|
| þe aungel of god hap me þe trouþe y-taught | 267 |
| Which thou schalt seen if þat þou wolt reneye | |
| þe ydolis and be clene and elles naught | |
| And of þe miracles of þise corounes tweye | 270 |
| Seint ambrose in his pꝛeface lust to seye | |
| Solempnely þis noble doctor deere | |
| Comendip it/ and saiþ in þis maneere | 273 |

(40) -

| | |
|--|-----|
| The palme of martirdom for to receyue | 274 |
| Saint' Cecile fulfilde of goddes gifte | |
| þe worlde and eek' hire chambre gan sche weyue | |
| Witnesse Tiburce and Cecyles schrifte/ | 277 |
| To which god of his bounte wolde schifte | |
| Corounes two of floures wel smellynge / | |
| And made þe aungel hem þo corounes brynge | 280 |

(41)

| | |
|---|-----|
| ¶ þe mayde haþ brought þise men to blisse aboue | 281 |
| The world haþ wist' what it' is worþ certeyn | |
| Deuocioñ of chastite to loue | |
| þo schewed him Cecile open and pleyn | 284 |
| That' alle ydolis nys but' þing' in veyn | |
| ffor þey ben dombe and þer-to þey ben deue | |
| And charged him his ydolis for to leue | 287 |

(42)

| | |
|---|-----|
| ¶ Who þat' þis troweþ not' a beste he is / | 288 |
| Quod þo Tiburce if' þat' I schal not' lye | |
| Sche gan þanne kisse his breste and þat herde þis | |
| And was ful glad he couþe trouþe aspye | 291 |
| This day take þe for myn allye | |
| Seyde þis blisful mayde fair and deere | |
| ffor after þat' sche sayde as 3e may heere | 294 |

(43)

| | |
|--|---|
| Lo right' so þe loue of crist' quod sche | 295 |
| [leaf 174, back] | |
| made me þin broþeres wyf' right' in þat' wyse | |
| Anoon for myn allye here take I þe | |
| Sipenes þat' þou wolt ¹ þine ydolis despise | [¹ ink spill over the page] |
| Go with þy broþer now and þe baptise / | |
| And make þe clene so þat' þou mayst' beholde | |
| þe aungels face of' which þy broþer tolde | 301 |

(44)

| | |
|--|------|
| Tiburce answerde and seyde broþer deere | 302 |
| ffirst telle me whider I schal and to what man | |
| To whom <i>quod</i> he com forþ with right good cheere | |
| I wol þe lede vnto þe pope vrbān | 305 |
| To Vrbān broþer myn Valerian | |
| Quoþ þo Tiburce wilt þou me þider lede | |
| Me þinkeþ þat it were a wonder dede | 308. |

(45)

| | |
|---|-----|
| ¶ Remenest þou nouȝt vrbān <i>quod</i> he þo | 309 |
| That is so ofte dampned to be deed | |
| And woneþ in hales to & fro / | |
| And dar nouȝt ones putte forþ his-heed | 312 |
| Men schulle him brenne in a fir so reed | |
| If þat he were founde if þat men might him spye | |
| And we also þat bere him companye | 315 |

(46)

| | |
|---|------|
| And whiles we seken þilke diuinyte | 316 |
| þat is y-hyd in heuene priuely | |
| Algate y-brent in þis world schul we be | |
| To whom Cecile answerde bodyly | 319. |
| Men mighte drede wel and skilfully | |
| þis lyf to lese myn owne deere broþer | |
| yif þis were lyuyngē oonly and non oþer | 322 |

(47)

| | |
|---|------------------------|
| But þer is bettere lyf in oþer place | 323 |
| þat neuer schal be lost ne drede þe nouȝt | |
| Which goddes sone vs tolde þorugh hi ^s grace | |
| [that the fadris sone / hath al thing wrought | [MS Arch. Seld. B. 14] |
| and al that wrought is / with a skilful thought | |
| the goost that from the fader / gan procede | |
| hath souled hem / withouten eny drede. | 329 |

(48)

¶ By worde & bi myracle / godis sone [MS Arch. Seld. B. 14]
 whan he was in this world / declared here
 that ther was other liff / there men may wone
 to whom answerde Tyburce / O suster dere 333
 ne seidist thou right now / in this manere
 ther nas but O god / lord in sothfastnesse
 and now of thre / how maist thou bere witnessse. 336

(49)

¶ That shal I telle *quod* she or that I go] [MS Arch. Seld. B. 14
extract ends]
 Right as a man hap sapiences þre /
 Memorie Ingenie and Intellecte also
 So in o beyng of diuynite / 340
 Thre persones right wel þer may be
 Tho gan sche him besyliche preche /
 Of cristes come . and of his peynes teche [leaf 175] 343

(50)

And many poyntes of his passioñ 344
 how goddes sone in þis world was wipholde
 To do mankynde pleyn remissioñ
 That was y-bounde in synne and cares colde 347
 Al þis þing sche vnto Tiburce tolde
 And after þis Tiburce in good entent
 To pope vrbān wip Valerian he went 350

(51)

which þanked god and wip glad herte & light 351
 he cristned him and made him in þat place
 Parfyt in his lyuyngē goddes knight
 And after þis Tiburce gat such grace 354
 þat euery day he seyñ in tyme and space
 þe aungel of god and euery maner bone
 þat he god asked it was sped ful sone 357

(52)

¶ It were ful hard by ordre for to seyn 358
 how many wondres ihesu for him wrouzt'
 But atte laste to telle schort' and pleyñ
 þe sergeaunt' of þe toun of Rome hem sought' 361
 And hem byforn Almache þe prouost' brougħt'
 Which hem opposede and knew al here entent'
 And to þe ymage of Iubiter he hem sent / 364

(53)

And sayde who so wol not Sacrifise 365
 Swap of his heed þis is my sentence heere /
 Anon þise martires þat I 3ou deuyse /
 On Maximius þat was an officere / 368
 Of þe Prefectis and of Corniculere
 hem hente and when he forþ þe seintes ledde
 himself he weep for pite þat he hadde 371

(54)

¶ Whan maximine hadde herde þe seintes lore / 372
 he gat hem of þe tormentoures leue /
 And hadde hem in his hous wiþoute more
 And wiþ here prechyng' er þat it / were eue 375
 þey gonne from þe tormentours to reue /
 And from Maximius and from his folk' ilkon
 þe false feiþ to trowe in god allon 378

(55)

Cecile cam whan it was woxen night' [leaf 175, back] 379
 Wiþ prestes þat hem cristned alle in feere
 And aftirward . whan day was waxen light'
 Cecile hem sayde wiþ a sobre chere 382
 Now cristes owne knightes leue and deere
 Casteþ alle a wey þe werkes of derknesse /
 And armeþ 3ou in armure of lightnesse 385

(56)

3e han forsoþe ydon grete batailie 386
 3oure is doon 3oure feiþ han 3e conserued
 Gop to þe coroune of^t lyf^t þat^t may nou3t^t faille
 þe rightful Iuge which þat^t 3e han [served [MS Arch. Seld. B. 14] 389
 shal yeue hit yow / as ye han it] deserued
 And whan þis þing^t was sayd as I deuysel
 men ladde hem forth to don þe sacrifice / 392

(57)

But^t whan þey were vnto þe place y-brou3t / 393
 To telle schortly þe conclusiõn
 þey nolde encense no sacrifice right nou3t^t
 But^t on here knees þey setten hem adoun 396
 Wiþ humble herte and sad deuociõn
 And losten boþe here hedes in þe place
 here soules wenten to þe kyng^t of^t gracé 399

(58)

This maximus þat^t say þis þing^t betyde / 400
 Wiþ pitous tales tolde it/ anon right^t
 þat^t he here soules saugh to heuen glyde
 With aungels ful of^t elernes and of^t ligh^t 403
 And wiþ his word conuerted many a wigh^t
 ffor which Almachus dede him so to bete
 Wiþ whippe of^t leed til he his lyf^t gan lete / 406

(59)

Cecile him took^t and buried him anon 407
 By Tyburce and Valerian softly
 Wiþinne hire herynge place vnder þe ston
 And after þis Almachius hastily 410
 Bad his mynistres fecchen openly
 Cecile so sche mighte in his presence
 Do sacrifice and Iubiter encense 413

(60)

| | |
|--|------------|
| But þey conuertid þorugh hire wise lore | 414 |
| Wepten sore and ȝauen credence / | |
| Vnto hire word and cryden more and more | [leaf 176] |
| Crist ^t goddes sone wiþouten difference | 417 |
| his verray god þis is alle oure sentence | |
| þat ^t haþ so good a <i>seruañt</i> him to serue | |
| þus wiþ oo vois we trowe þeyȝ we sterue | 420 |

(61)

| | |
|---|-----|
| Almachius þat herde al þis speking ^t | 421 |
| Bad fecche Cecile þat ^t he might ^t hir se | |
| And alþer first ^t lo þis was his askyng ^t | |
| What ^t maner womman artow þo <i>quod</i> he / | 424 |
| I am a gentil womman born <i>quod</i> sche / | |
| I aske <i>quod</i> he þouȝ it þe greue | |
| Of ^t þin religion and of ^t þin byleeue | 427 |

(62)

| | |
|--|-----|
| Whi þanne bygan ȝoure question folily | 428 |
| <i>Quod</i> sche þat ^t woldest ^t tuo answers conclude / | |
| In oo demaunde ȝe askide lewedly | |
| Almachie answerde to þat ^t similitude / | 431 |
| [of whens cometh ⁿ thin answer / so rude] [MS Arch. Seld. B. 14] | |
| Of ^t whennes <i>quod</i> sche . whan þat ^t sche was refreyned | |
| Of ^t conscience and of ^t good feiþ vnfeyned | 434 |

(63)

| | |
|--|-----|
| Almachius sayde takest ^t þou non heede / | 435 |
| Of ^t þin answer and sche him answerde þus | |
| ȝoure might ^t <i>quod</i> sche litel is to drede / | |
| ffor euery mortel mannes power nys | 438 |
| But ^t y-like a bladdre ful of ^t wynd y-wys / | |
| ffor wiþ a neldis poynt/ when þat ^t is blowe | |
| may al þe bost ^t of ^t it ^t be leyd ful lowe / | 441 |

(64)

fful wrongfully bigan þou *quod* he 442
 And 3it' in wrong' is þin *perseuerance*
 Wost' þou nou3t' how oure mighty *princes* fre
 Ben þus comaundid and maken *ordinance* 445
 That euery *cristne* wigh't' schal han *penance*
 But' if' þat' he his *cristendom* wiþ-seye
 And gon al quyt' if' he wol it' *receyue* 448

(65)

¶ 3oure *princes* erren as 3oure *noblen* doth 449
 Quod þo *Cecile* / and a wood *sentence*
 3e make vs *gulty* and it nys nou3t' *soþ*
 ffor 3e þat' *known* wel oure *Innocence* 452
 ffor as moche as we don a *reuerence* [leaf 176, back]
 To *crist'*. and for we bere a *cristene* name
 3e putte on vs a *cryme* and eek' a *blame* 455

(66)

But' we þat' *known* þilke name so 456
 ffor *vertuous* we may it' not' say
Almachie answerde chese on of' þise *tuo*
 Do *sacrifice* or *cristendom* *reneyne* 459
 þat' þou *mow* now *skapen* by þat' *wey*
 At' which þe *holy* *blisful* *mayde*
 gan for to *laughe* and to þe *Iuge* *sche* *sayde* 462

(67)

O *Iuge* *confuse* in þy *nycete* 463
 Wolt' þou þat' I *reneye* *Innocence* /
 To make me a *wicked* *wight'* *quod* *sche*
 loo he *dissimileþ* here in *audience* / 466
 he *stareþ* and *woodeþ* in his *aduertence*
 To whom *almachius* O *Vnseely* *wrecche* /
 Ne wost' þou *nough't'* how fer my *migh't'* may *strecche* 469

(68)

| | |
|---|-----|
| hæþ nought' oure mighty prince to me y-3ouen | 470 |
| 3e boþe power and auctorite / | |
| To make folk' to deyen and to lyuen | |
| Why spekest' þou so proudly þenne to me | 473 |
| I ne speke it' nouzt' but' stedefastly <i>quod</i> sche / | |
| Nought' proudly for I say as for my syde | |
| I hate dedly pilke vice of' pryde | 476 |

(69)

| | |
|--|-----|
| ¶ And if' þou drede nouzt' a soþ to heere | 477 |
| þan wol I schewen al openly by right' | |
| That' þou hast' maad a ful gret' lesyng' heere | |
| þou sayst' þy princes han 3eue þe might' | 480 |
| Boþe to sleen and eek' for to quike a wight' | |
| þou þat' ne mayst' but' oonly lyf' here byreue | |
| þan nast' þerto neyþer power ne leue | 483 |

(70)

| | |
|--|-----|
| But' þou mayst' see þin princes han þe maked | 484 |
| Ministre of' deþ for if' þou speke of' mo / | |
| þou lyst' for þy power is ful naked | |
| Do wey þy boldenesse/ seyde almachius þo | 487 |
| And sacrifice to oure goddes or two | |
| [leaf 177] | |
| I ne recche nouzt' what' wrang' þat' þou me profre | |
| ffor I can suffre it' as a philosophre | 490 |

(71)

| | |
|---|-----|
| But' pilke wronges may I nought' endure | 491 |
| þat' þou spekest' of' oure goddes here <i>quod</i> he / | |
| Cecile answerde O nyce creature | |
| þou saydest' no word syns þou speeke to me | 494 |
| þat' I ne knewe þerwith þy nycete | |
| And þat' þou were in euery maner wyse / | |
| A lewed officer and a vein Iustise | 497 |

(72)

þer lackeþ noþing^t to þin vtter yhen 498
 þat^t þou nart^t blynd for þing^t þat we seen alle
 That^t is a ston y^t men wel may aspyen
 That ilke ston a god þou wilt^t it calle 501
 I rede þe let^t þin hond vpon it^t falle
 And taste it^t wel and stoon þou schalt^t it fynde /
 Syns þat^t þou sixt^t it nought^t wiþ þin yzen blynde / 504

(73)

It is a schame þat^t þe poeple schaff 505
 So skorne þe and lawhe at^t þy folye /
 ffor comunely wommen woot^t it wel ouer al
 þat^t mighty god is in his heuene^s hihe 508
 And þese ymages wel þanne mayst^t þou aspye
 To þe ne to hemself^t may þey not^t profyte
 ffor in here effecte þey be not^t worþ a myte 511

(74)

þis and such oþer wordes seyde sche / 512
 and he wax wroþ and bad þey schulde hire lede /
 home to hire hous and in hire hous *quod* he
 Brenne hire in a fire wiþ flammes reede 515
 And as he bad right^t so was don in dede
 And in a bathe þey gan hire faste scheten
 And night^t and day gret^t fuyr vnder þey beetyn 518

(75)

Al þe longe night^t and eek^t þe day also / 519
 ffor alle þe fuyr and eek^t þe baþes hete /
 Sche satte al colde and felt^t of^t it/ no wo
 Ne made hire a drop nouz^t for to swete / 522
 But^t in þat^t baþe hire lyf^t sche moste lete /
 ffor he Almachie wiþ ful wikked entent^t
 To slen hure in þe bath his sonde sent 525

[leaf 177, back]

(76)

pre strokes in þe necke he smot^t hire þo 526
 The tormentour but^t for no maner chaunce
 he might^t not^t smyten al hire necke a tuo
 And for þer was þat^t tyme an ordynaunce 529
 That no man scholde do man such penañce
 þe ferþe strook^t to smyten softe or sore
 þis tormentour ne durste nomore 532

(77)

But^t half^t ded wiþ hire necke koruen þere / 533
 he laft^t hir lye and in his wey he went^t
 þe cristne folke whiche abouten hire were /
 Wiþ scheetes home ful faire hire hent^t 536
 pre dayes lyued sche in þis torment
 And neuer cessed hem þe feiþ to teche
 þat^t sche hadde fostred hem sche gan to preche 539

(78)

And hem sche 3aff^t hire moebles and hire þing^t 540
 And to þe pope vrban bitok^t hem þo /
 And sayde þus I askede þis of^t heuen king^t
 To haue respyt^t pre dayes and no mo / 543
 To recomande to 3ou er þat^t I go
 þise soules lo and þat^t I mighte do wirche
 here of^t myn hous perpetuelliche a chirche 546

(79)

Seint vrban wiþ his deaknes priuely 547
 The body fette and buried it by nighte
 Among^t his oþere seintes honestly
 hire hous þe chirche of^t seint^t Cecile highte 550
 Seynt^t vrban halwed it^t as he wel mighte
 In þe which in to þis day in noble wyse /
 Men don to cryst^t and to his seintz seruise 553

¶ Here endep Seint^t Ceciles Tale /

[on leaf 177, back]

¶ Hic incipit fabula Canonici

Whan ended was þe lyf of seint Cecile
 Er we fully hadde ryden fyue myle
 At Boghton vnder þe blee. vs gan atake /
 A man þat cloped was in clopes blake 557
 And vnder þat he hadde a whit surplys
 his hakeney þat was al pomel grys [leaf 178]
 So swette þat it wonder was to see
 It semed he hadde priked myles þre 561
 þe hors eek þat his 3oman rood vpon
 So swette þat vnneþe mighte he gon
 Aboute þe peytrel stood þe foom ful hize
 he was of fome al flekked as a pye 565
 A male twyfold on his croper lay
 It semed þat he caryed lytel aray
 Al light for somer rood þis worþy man
 And in myn herte wondren I bygan 569
 What þat he was til þat I vnderstood
 how þat his cloke was sewed to his hood
 ffor which whan I longe hadde avised me /
 I demed him som chanoñ for to be / 573
 his hat hyng at his bak doun by a las /
 ffor he hadde ryde more þan trot or pas /
 he hadde ay priked lyk as he were wood
 A clote leef he hadde vnder his hood 577
 ffor swot and for to kepe his heed from hete
 But it was ioie for to seen him swete /
 his forhed dropped as a stillatorie
 Were ful of plaunteyne and of peritorie 581

- And whan þat' he cam he bigan to crye 582
 God saue *quod* he þis Ioly companye
 ffaste haue I priked *quod* he for þoure sake
 By cause þat' I wolde þou ouertake / 585
 To ryden in þis merye companye
 His þoman eek' was ful of' curtesye
 And sires now in þe morwe tyde /
 Out' of' þoure ostellerye I sayþ þou ryde 589
 And warned heer my lord and my souerayn
 Which þat' to ryde wiþ þou is ful fayn
 ffor his disport' he loueþ daliaunce
 ffrend for þy warnyng' god þiue þe good chaunce 593
 Sayde oure oost' certes it' wolde seeme /
 Thy lord were wys and so I may wel deme / [leaf 178, back]
 he is ful iocunde also dar I lay
 Kan he ough't' telle a merye tale or tway 597
 Wiþ which he glade may þis companye
 Who sire . my lord : þe þe wiþoute lye
 he can of merþe and eek' of' Iolite
 Nough't' but' ynough' also sire trusteþ to me 601
 And þe him knewe als wel as do I
 þe wolde wondre how wel and þriftyly
 he couþe werke and þat' in sondry wyse
 he haþ take on him many sondry aprise 605
 Which were ful hard for eny þat' is heere /
 To bringe aboute but' þey of' him it' lere /
 As homely as he ryt' amonges þou
 If' þe him knewe it' wolde be þoure prow / 609
 þe nolde not' forgon his aqueintance
 ffor mochil good I dar leye in balañce
 Al þat' I haue my possession
 he is a man of' heigh discrecion 613
 I warne þou wel he is a passyng man
 Wel quop' oure host' I pray þe telle me þan
 Is he a Clerk' or noon telle what' he is
 Nay he is gretter þan a clerk' y-wys 617

GROUP G. § 2. 2ND NUN-CAN.-YEOMAN LINK. Corpus MS.

Seyde 3e 3oman and in wordes fewe 618
 Ost' and of his craft' somewhat' I wol 3ou schewe
 I say my lord can such a sotilte
 But' alle his crafte 3e may not' wite at' me 621
 And somewhat' helpe I 3it' to his worchinge
 That' al þis ground which þat' we ben on rydyng
 Til þat' we come to Caunturbury toun
 he couþe al clene turne it/ vp se doun 625
 And paue it' al of' siluer and of' gold
 And whan þis 3oman hadde þus y-told
 vnto oure hoost' // he seyde benedicite
 þis þing' is wonder merueylous to me 629
 Siþens þat' þi lord is of' so heigh prudence /
 By cause of' which men scholde him reuerence / [leaf 179]
 That' of' his worschipe rekkeþ he so lyte
 his ouer sloppe / nys nou3t' worþ a myte / 633
 As in effecte to him so mote I go
 It' is al baudy and to-tore also
 Whi is þi lord so sluttissche I þe prey
 And is of' power better cloþes to bey 637
 If' þat' his dede acorde wiþ þy speche
 Telle me þat and þat' I þe byseche /
 Why *quod* þis 3eman wherto aske 3e me /
 God help me so for he schal neuer y-the 641
 But' I wol not' avowe þat' I say
 And þerfore kepe it secre I 3ou pray
 he is to wys in faip as I bileeue
 And þat' is ouer doon it' nyl not' preue 645
 And right' as clerkes sein it' is a vice /
 Wherefore in þat' I holde him lewed and nyce
 ffor whan a ma[n] haþ ouer gret' a witt
 fful often it happeþ to mysvsen it' 649
 So doþ my lord and þat me greueþ sore
 God it' amende I can seye now no more
 Ther-of' no fors goode 3oman *quod* oure hoost'
 Siþens of' þe connyng' of þy lord þou woost 653

- Telle how he doþ I pray þe hertely 654
 Siþens þat' he is so crafty and so sly
 Wher dwellen 3e if' to telle be
 In Subarbes of' a toun *quod* he 657
 lurkyng' in hernes and in lanes blynde
 Where þise Robbers and þeeues be kynde
 holden here preuy ferful resydençe
 As þay þat' dur nat' schewe here presence 661
 So fare we if' I schal saye þe soþe
 3it' *quod* oure hoste lat' me talke toþe
 Why art' þou discoloured on þy face
 Peter *quod* he god 3iue hit' harde grace 665
 I am so vsed in þe fyre to blowe
 That' it haþ chaunged my colour as I trowe [leaf 179, back]
 I nam nat' wont' in myroure to pryē
 But' swynke sore and lerne to multiplie 669
 We bloundren euer and pouren in þe fyr
 And for al þat' we failen of' oure desir
 ffor euer we lacken oure conclusiō
 To moche folk' we ben but' Illusiō 673
 And borwe gold be it' a pound or tuo
 Or ten or twelue or manye *sommes mo*
 And make hem wenen atte leste weye
 þat' of' a pound we couþe make tweye 677
 3it' is it' fals and ay we han good hope
 It' for to don and after it' we grope
 But' þat' science is so fer vs biforn
 We mowe not' al þough we hadde it' sworn 681
 It' ouertake it'¹ slyt' away so faste [1 a second it scratcht out]
 It' wole us make beggeres atte laste
 Whil þis 3oman was þus in þis talking'
 þis chanoñ drough him ner and herde alle þing' 685
 Which þat' þis 3oman spak' for suspeciō
 Of' mennes speche euere hadde þis Chanoñ
 ffor Catoñ seith he þat' gulty is
 Demeþ alle þing' be spoke of' him ywys 689

GROUP G. § 2. 2ND NUN-CAN.-YEOMAN LINK. Corpus MS.

By cause of þat' he gan so neigh to drawe / 690
 his ʒoman. þat' he herde alle his sawe /
 And þus he sayde vnto his ʒoman þo
 holde now þy pees and speke wordes no mo / 693
 ffor if' þou dost' þou schalt' it dere aby
 Thou sclaudrest' me here in þis compaignye
 And eek' discouerest' þat' þou scholdest' hyde
 ʒee *quod* oure hoost' telle on what' sò betyde 697
 Of alle þis þretynge' recche I nat' a myte
 I faiþ quod he no more do I but' a lite
 And whan þis Chanoñ say it' wolde nat' be
 But' his ʒoman wolde telle his priuyte 701
 he fledde away for verray sorwe and schame /
 A *quod* þe ʒoman here schal aryse a game [leaf 180]
 Al þat' I can anon right' / wol I telle
 Sipens he is gon þe foule feend him quelle / 705
 ffor neuer her after wol I wiþ him mete
 ffor peny ne for pound I ʒou biheete /
 he þat' me broughte ferst' vnto þat game /
 Er þat' he deye sorwe haue he and schame 709
 ffor it' is earnest' to me by my fayþ
 That' feele I wel what so eny man saiþ /
 And ʒit' for al my smert' and al my greef'
 ffor al my sorwe labour and mescheef' 713
 I couþe neuer leue it in nō wyse
 Now wolde god my witt' mighte suffise
 To tellen al þat' longeþ to þat art'
 But' napeles ʒit' wol I telle a part' 717
 Syþens þat' my lord is gon I wol not' spare
 Such þing' as I knowe I wol declare /

[No break in the MS.]

[THE PREAMBLE.]

With þis chanoñ dwelled haue I seuen 3eer
 And of his science am I neuer þe near 721
 Al þat I hadde I haue y-lost þerby
 And god wot so haue many mo þan I
 þer I was wont to be right freissch and gay
 Of cloþing and of good array 725
 Now may I were an hose vpon myn heed
 And wher my colour was boþe freissch and reed
 Now is it wan and of a ledene hewe
 Who so it vseth sore schal he rewe 729
 And of my swynk 3it blered is myn y3e
 lo which auauntage it is to multiplie
 That slydyng science haþ me maad so bare
 That I haue no good where þat euer I fare 733
 And 3it I am endetted so þer by
 Of gold þat I haue borwed trewely
 þat whil I lyue I schal it quite neuere /
 lat euery man be war by me for euere 737
 What maner man þat casteþ him þerto
 If he continue I holde his þrifte y-do [leaf 180, back]
 So help me god þer-by schal he not wynne
 But empte his purs and make his wittes þinne 741
 And whan he þorough his madnesse and folye
 haþ lost his owne good þorough Iepardye
 þanne he exciteþ oþer men þerto
 To lese here good as himself haþ do 745
 ffor vnto schrewes Ioye it is and ese
 To haue here felawes in peyne and disese

GROUP G. § 3. CAN.-YEOMAN'S PREAMBLE. **Corpus MS.**

Thus was I ones lerned of a clerk
 Of þat no charge I wol speke of oure werk 749
 Whan we ben þere as we schulle exercise
 Oure eluysshe craft: we semen wonder wise
 Oure termes ben so clergeal and so queynte
 I blowe þe fuyr. til þat myn herte feynte 753
 What scholde I telle eche proporcioñ
 Of þinges whiche þat we worchen vpon
 As on fyue or sixe vnces may wel be
 Of siluer or of som oþer quantite 757
 And besye me to telle 3ou þe names
 Of Opyment brent bones yren squames
 That in to poudre grounden ben ful smal
 And in an erþen pot how þat put is al 761
 And salt y-put in and also paupere
 Bifore þise poudres þat I speke of here
 And wel y-couered wiþ a laumpe of glas
 And of muche oþer þing what þat þer was 765
 And of þe pot and glas englutyng
 That of þe aier mighte passe no þing
 And of þe esy fyr and smert also
 Which þat was mad and of þe care and wo 769
 þat we hadde in oure matiers sublymyng
 And amalgamyng and Calcenyng
 Of quyk syluer y-cleped mercurie crude
 ffor alle oure sleightes we can nouzt conclude 773
 Oure orpymed and sublimed mercurie
 Oure grounde litarge eek on þe porphirie [leaf 181]
 Of ech of þise of vnces a certayn
 Nouzt helpeþ vs oure labour is in vain 777
 Ne eek oure spirites ascencioun
 Ne eek oure matieres þat lyn al fixe a down
 Mowen in oure werkyng no þing vs auayle
 ffor lost is alle oure labour and trauaile 781
 And al þe cost on twenty deuele wey
 Is lost also which we vpon it ley

þer is also many anoþer þing/
 þat' is to oure crafte aperteynyng' 785
 þough I by ordre hem here ne reherse can
 By cause þat' I am a lewed man
 3it' wol I telle hem as þey come to mynde
 Though I ne kan nat' sette hem in here kynde 189
 As boole armonyak' verdegres Boras
 And sondry vesseles made of' erþe and glas
 Oure vrinales and oure descensories
 Violes creseletes and sublimatories 793
 Concurbites and Alemykes eeke
 And oþer swiche deere ynough a leeke
 Nat' needeþ it/ to rehersen hem alle
 Wateres Rubysyng and boles galle 797
 Arsynek' Sal armonyak' and Brymston
 And herbes coupe I telle eek' many oon
 As Egrymoyne Valerian and lunarie
 And oþer suche if' þat' me luste tarie 801
 Oure laumpes brennyng' boþe night' and day
 To bringe aboute oure craft' if' þat' we may
 Oure fornays eke of' Calcynacioñ
 And of' watres albyficacioñ 805
 vnslekked lym chalk' and glaire of' an ey
 Poudres dyuers aisshes dong' pisse and cley
 Seryd pokettes Sal petre and vitriole
 And diuerse fyres made of' woode and cole 809
 Salt' tartre Alcaly and Salt' preparat
 And combust' matieres and coagulat [leaf 181, back]
 Cley maad wiþ horses or mannes heer and oyle
 Of' tartre alym glas berme wort' and argoyle 813
 Rysalgar and oþer matieres enbykyng
 And eek' of' oure matieres encorporyng
 And eek' of' Siluer Citrynacioñ
 Oure sementyng and fermentacioñ 817
 Oure Ingotes testes and many mo
 I wol 3ou telle as was me taught' also /

GROUP G. § 3. CAN.-YEOMAN'S PREAMBLE. Corpus MS.

þe foure spirites and þe bodyes seuene /
 By ordre ofte as I herde my lord neuene 821
 The fyfte spirit quyk' siluer called is
 þe seconde orpiment. þe þridde y-wys
 Sal armoniak' and þe ferþe bremston
 The bodyes seuene eek' lo hem heere anon 825
 Sol gold is and luna siluer we threpe /
 Mars yren mercurie quyk syluer we clepe
 Saturnus leed and Iubiter is tyn
 And venus Copur by my fader kyn 829
 This cursede craft' who so wol exercise
 he schal no good han þat' may him suffise
 ffor alle þe good he spendeþ þer aboute
 he lese schal þer-of' haue I no doute 833
 Who so þat' list' to outen his folye
 let' him come forþ and lerne to multiplie
 And euery man þat' hap aught' in his cofre
 lat' him appere and wexe a philosophre 837
 As-scaunce þat' craft' is so light' for to lere
 Nay nay god woot' al be he monk' or frere /
 Preste or Chanoñ or eny oþer wight
 þough he sitte at' his book' boþe day and night 841
 In lernyng' of' þis eluyssh nyce lore /
 Al is in veyn and par de moche more
 Is to lerne a lewed man þis sotilte
 ffy speke nouzt' þerof' for it/ wol not' be 845
 Al cowde he letterure or couþe he non
 As in effecte he schal fynde it al on
 ffor boþe tuo by my saluacioñ
 Concluden in multiplicacioñ 849
 I-liche wel whan þey han alle y-do
 This is to seyn þey faille boþe tuo
 3it' forȝat' I to moche rehersaille
 Of' watres corosif' and of' lymaille 853
 And of' bodyes mollificaciõ
 And also of' here induraciõ

[leaf 182]

Oyles ablucioñ and metalle fusible
 To tellen alle wolde passen ony bible 857
 þat' owher is wherfore as for þe beste
 Of alle þise names now wole I me reste
 ffor as I trowe I haue 3ou told ynough
 To reysen a feende loke he neuer so rough 861
 A nay let' be þy philosophres ston
 Elixir cleped we sechen faste echoon
 ffor hadde we him þan were we syker ynough
 But' vnto god of' heuene I make avow 865
 ffor alle oure craft' whan we han al y-do
 And al oure sleighte / he wol not' come vs to
 He haþ vs maad spende moche good
 ffor sorwe of' which almost' we wexen wood 869
 But' þat' good hope crepeþ in oure herte
 Supposyng' euere þough we sore smerte
 To be releuyd by him aftirward
 Supposyng' and hope is scharp and hard 873
 I warne 3ou wel it' is to seken euere
 þat' future temps haþ maad men disseuere
 In trust' þer-of' fram al þat' euer þey hadde
 3it' of' þat' art' þey coupe not' wexe sadde 877
 ffor vnto hem it is a bitterswete
 So semep it' for ne hadde þey but a scheete
 Which þat' þey mighte wrappe hem In a night
 And a bak' to walken in by day light' 881
 þey wolde hem sellen and spenden on þis craft'
 They can nou3t' stynte til no þing' be laft' [leaf 182, back]
 And euermore wher þat' euer þey gon
 men may hem knowe by smel of' Bremston 885
 ffor al þe world þey stynken as a goot
 here sauour is so Rammissñ and so hoot'
 That' þough a man from hem a myle be
 That' sauour wol enfecte him trustep me 889
 lo þus by smellyng' and by þred bare array
 If' þat' men list' þis folk' þey knowe may

And if a man wol aske him priuely
 Why þey ben cloped so vnþriftily 893
 Right anon þey wole rownen in his eere
 And seye if þay aspyed were
 Men wolde hem sle by cause of here science
 lo þus þis folk bytrayen Innocence 897
 Passe ouer þis I go my tale vnto
 Er þen þe pot be on þe fyr y-do
 Of metals wij a certein quantite
 My lord hem tempref and no man but he 901
 Now he is gon. I dar say boldely
 ffor as men sein he can do craftily
 Algate I wot wel he haþ such a name
 And 3it ful ofte he renneþ in þe blame 905
 And wite 3e how ful ofte it haddeþ so
 The pot tobrekeþ and far wel alle is go
 þise metals ben of so gret violence /
 Oure walles may not make hem resistance 909
 But if þey were wrouzt of lym and ston
 þey persen so and þoru3 þe wal þey gon
 And some of hem synken in to þe ground
 þus haue we lost by tymes many a pound 913
 And somme are scatered al þe floor aboute
 Somme lepen in to þe roof wijouten doute
 þough þat þe fende nougħt in oure sighte him schewe
 I trowe þat he wij vs be þat schrewe 917
 In helle wher þat he is lord and sire /
 Ne is þer no more woo ne angur nor Ire [leaf 183]
 Whan þat oure pot is broke as I haue sayd
 Euery man chit and halt him yuel payd 921
 Som seyde it was long on þe fyr makyng
 Somme sayde nay it was on þe blowyng
 þan was I fered for þat was myn office
 Straw quod þe þridde 3e ben lewed and nyce 925
 It was not tempred as it ougħte be /
 Nay quod þe ferþe stynt and herkne me

By cause oure fyr was nat' made of' bech
 þat' is þe cause non oþer so peeche 929
 I can not' telle wher-on it is a long'
 But' wel I wot' gret' stryft' is vs among'
 What' *quod* my lord þer is nomore to done /
 Of þise periles I wil be war eft' sone / 933
 I am right' syker þat' þe pot' was crased
 Be as be may be 3e no þing' amased
 As vsage is let' swope þe floor as swyþe
 Pluk' vp 3our herte and be 3e glad and bliþe 937
 The mullok' on an heep y-swoped was
 And on þe floor cast' a kaneuas
 And al þis mullok' in a Syue y-þrowe
 And y-sifted and y-plucked many a þrowe 941
 Parde *quod* oon som what' of' oure metal
 3et' is þer heere þough' we haue not' all
 And þough' þis þing' myshapped haþ as now
 Anoþer tyme it may be wel ynow 945
 vs moste putte oure good in aduenture /
 A marchañt' parde may not' ay endure /
 Trustneþ me wel in his *prosperite*
 Som tyme his good is drowned in þe see / 949
 And som tyme comeþ it' sauft' vnto þe londe
 Pees *quod* my lord þe nexte tyme I wol fonde
 To bringe oure crafte alle in anoþer plyt'
 And but' I do sires lat' me haue þe wyte 953
 Ther was defaute in somewhat' wel I woot'
 Anoþer seyde þe fyr was ouer hoot'
 But' be it' hoot' or cold I dar seye þis
 þat' we concluden eueremore amys / 957
 We faille of' þat' which þat' we wolde haue /
 And in oure madnesse eueremore we raue
 And whan we ben togidere euerich on
 Euery man semeþ as wys as Salomon 961
 But' alle þing' which þat' semeþ as þe goolde /
 Is nat' golde as I haue herd it' tolde /

[leaf 183, back]

GROUP G. § 3. CAN.-YEOMAN'S PREAMBLE. Corpus MS.

Ne euery appul þat' is fair at' ye
 Ne is not' good what' so men clappe or crye / 965
 Right' so lo fareþ it' amonges vs
 he þat' semeþ þe wysest' by Ihesus
 Is most' fool whan it' comeþ to þe preef'
 And he þat' semeþ trewest' is a þeef' 969
 That schul 3e knowe er þat' I fro 3ou wende /
 By þat' I of' my tale haue maad an ende

[No break in the MS.]

[THE TALE.]

Ther is a chanoun of Religioun
 Amonges vs wolde enfecte al a toun 973
 þough it as gret were as was Nynyue /
 Rome Alisandre . Troye and oþre þre
 his sleightes and his infinite falsnesse /
 þer coupe noman writen as I gesse / 977
 þough þat he mighte lyuen a þousend 3eer
 In alle þis world of fal[s]nesse nys his peer
 ffor in his termes he wole him so wynde
 And speke his wordes in so sleigh a kynde 981
 When he commune schal wiþ ony wight
 What he wol make him dote anon right
 But it þe feend be as his seluen is /
 fful many a man hap he begyled er þis 985
 And wile if þat he may lyue a while /
 And 3it men ryden and gon ful many a myle
 him for to seeke and haue his aqueyntance
 Nou3t knowyng of his false gouernance / 989
 And if ye lust to 3iue me audience
 I wol it tellen here in 3oure presence [leaf 184]
 But worschipful Chanoñ religious
 Ne demep nou3t þat I sclaundre 3our hous 993
 Al þough my tale of a Chanoñ be
 Of euery ordre som schrewe is parde
 And god forbede þat alle a compaignie
 Scholde rewe a synguler mannes folye 997
 To sclaundre 3ou it is not myn entent
 But to correcten þat mys I-ment

GROUP G. § 4. CANON'S-YEOMAN'S TALE. Corpus MS.

This tale nas nat' oonly told for 3ou
 But' eek' for oþer mo 3e wot' wel how 1001
 That' amonges cristes apostles twelue
 Ther was no traytour but' Iudas himselue
 þanne why scholde þe remenañt' alle haue blame
 That' gulteles were by 3ou sey I þe same 1005
 Sauft' oonly þis if' 3e wiln herkne me
 If' ony Iudas in 3oure couent' be
 Remeueþ him by tyme I 3ou rede
 If' schame or losse may causen ony drede 1009
 And beþ no þing' displeasid I 3ou pray
 But' in þis caas herkneth what' I say
IN london was a prest' an annueler
 That' þer-Inne dwelled hadde many a 3eer 1013
 Which was so plesañt / and so *seruisable* /
 Vnto þe wyf' wher he was at' þe table
 That' sche wolde suffre him no þing' for to pay
 ffor bord nor cloþing' wente he non so gay 1017
 And spendyng' siluer had he right' ynough
 þer-of no force I wol procede as now /
 And telle forþ my tale of' þe Chanoñ
 þat' brou3te þis prest to confusioñ 1021
 This false Chanoñ cam vpon a day
 vnto þe prestes chambre þer he lay
 Byseching' him to lene him a certeyn
 Of' golde and he wold quite it' him ageyn 1025
 lenep me a mark' *quod* he but' dayes þre
 And at' my day I wol it' quite þe [leaf 184, back]
 And if' so be þat' þou fynde me fals
 Anoper day hang' me vp by þe hals 1029
 This prest' him tok' a mark' and þat' as swiþe
 And þis Chanoun him þanked often siþe
 And took' his leue and wente forth his wey
 And atte þridde day brou3t' his money 1033
 And to þis prest' he took' þis gold a3ein
 Ther-of' þis prest' was glad and fayn

Certes *quod* he no þing^t anoyeth me
 To lene a man a noble or tuo or þre 1037
 Or what^t þing^t were in my possession
 Whan he so trewe is of^t condicioñ
 þat^t in no wise he breke wole his day
 To swich a man I can neuer say nay 1041
 What^t *quod* þis Chanoñ scholde I be vntrewe
 Nay þat^t were þing^t fallen al of^t þe newe
 Trouþe is a þing^t þat^t I wol euer kepe /
 Vnto þe day in which þat^t I schal crepe 1045
 in to my graue and elles god forbede
 Bileeueþ þis as siker as is þoure Crede
 God þanke I and in good tyme be it sayd
 þat^t þer was neuer man 3it^t euel payd 1049
 ffor gold ne siluer þat^t he to me lente
 Ne neuere falshede in myn herte I mente
 And sire *quod* he now of^t my priuyte
 Sipens 3e so goodlich haue ben to me 1053
 And kiped to me so gret^t gentilnesse
 Somwhat^t to quite with þoure kyndenesse
 I wol þou schewe and if^t þou lest^t to leere /
 I schal it^t schewe to þou anon right^t heere 1057
 how I kan worchen in philosophie
 Takeþ good heed 3e schuln seen wel at^t ye
 That^t I wol don a maystry ar I go
 3e quop þe prest^t / 3e sire and wil 3e so 1061
 Marie þer of^t I pray þou hertily
 At^t þoure comaundement^t sire trewely [leaf 185]
 Quop þe Chanoñ and elles god forbede
 lo how þis þeef^t couþe his seruise beede 1065
 fful soþ it^t is þat^t such profred seruise
 Stynkeþ as witnessen þise olde wise
 And þat^t ful sone I wol it^t veresye
 In þis Chanoñ is roote of^t alle treccherie 1069
 þat^t eueremore delyt^t hap and gladnesse/
 Suche feendly þoughtes in his herte impresse /

GROUP G. § 4. CANON'S-YEOMAN'S TALE. Corpus MS.

how cristes poeple he may to meschief^t bringe
 God kepe vs from his fals dissimilynge 1073
 What^t wiste þis prest^t wiþ whom þat^t he delte
 Ne of^t his harm comynge no þing^t he felte
 O sely prest^t o sely Innocent
 Wiþ coueytise anon þou schalt^t be blent^t 1077
 O graceles ful blynd is þy conceyt^t
 No þing^t artow war of^t þe deceyt^t
 Which þat^t þis fox y-schapien haþ to þe
 his wyly wrenches þou mayst^t nouzt^t fle 1081
 Wher-fore to go to þe conclusioñ
 þat^t referreþ to þi confusioñ
 vnhappy man anon I wol me hiþe
 To telle þin vnwytte and þy folye 1085
 And eek^t þe falsnesse of^t þat^t oþer wrecche
 As ferforþ as my connyng wol strecche
 This Chanoñ was my lord 3e wolde weene
 Sire oste in faith and by þe heuen quene 1089
 It^t was anoþer chanoun and nat^t he
 That^t can an hundred fold more sotyltee
 he haþ bytrayed folkes many tyme
 Of^t his falsnesse it/ dulleþ me to Ryme 1093
 Euer whan I speke of^t his falshede
 ffor schame of^t him my chekes wexen reede
 Algates þey bygynne for to glowe
 ffor reednesse haue I now right^t wel I knowe 1097
 In my visage for fumes diuerse
 Of^t metals whiche 3e haue herd me reherce [leaf 185, back]
 Consumed and wasted han my reednesse /
 Now take heede of^t þis Chanoñs cursednesse 1101
 Sire quod he to þe prest^t lat^t 3oure man gon
 ffor quykt^t siluer þat^t we it^t hadde anon
 And lat^t him bringe vnces tuo or þre
 And whan he comeþ as faste schul 3e see 1105
 A wonder þing^t which 3e say neuer ar þis
 Sire quod þe prest^t it^t schal ben don y-wys

he bad his seruañt fechen him) his þing^t
 And he al redy was at his biddyng^t 1109
 And wente him forþ and cam anon agayn
 Wip þis quykt siluer schortly for to sayn
 And tok^t þis vnces þre to þe Chanoñ
 And he it leyde faire and wel a doun 1113
 And bad þe seruañt coles for to bringe
 þat he anon mighte go to his worchinge
 The coles right^t anon weren y-fette
 And þis chanoñ tok^t out^t a crosselette 1117
 Of his bosom and schewed it^t þe prest^t
 This Instrument^t *quod* he which þat þou seest
 Tak^t in þin hond and put^t þiself^t þer Inne
 Of þis quykt siluer an vnce and here bygynne 1121
 In þe name of^t crist^t to wexe a Philosophre
 Ther ben ful fewe which þat^t I wolde profre
 To schewen hem þus mochel of^t my science
 ffor 3e schuln seen heere by experience 1125
 þat^t þis quykt siluer I wol mortefye
 Right^t in 3oure sight^t anon wipoute lye
 And make it^t as good siluer and as fyn
 As þer is ony in 3oure purs or myn 1129
 Or elles where and make it malliable/
 And elles holde me fals and vnable
 Amonges folk^t euere to appere
 I haue a poudre here þat coste me deere 1133
 schal make al good for it^t is cause of^t aH
 My connyng which þat^t I 3ou schewe schaff [leaf 186]
 Voydeth 3oure man) and lat^t him be þeroute /
 And schitte þe dore whiles we ben aboute / 1137
 Oure pryuyte þat^t noman vs espie
 Whiles we werken in þis philosophie /
 Al as he bad fulfilled was in dede /
 This ilke seruañt^t anon right^t out 3ede 1141
 And his maistrer schitte þe dore anon
 Al l to here labour speedily þey gon

GROUP G. § 4. CANON'S-YEOMAN'S TALE. Corpus MS.

This prest' at' þis cursed chanōns byddyng'
 Vpon þe fire anon sêtte þis þing' 1145
 And blew þe fyr and busyed him ful faste
 And þis chanoñ in to þis Crosselet' caste
 A poudre not' I wher-of' þat' it' was
 I-maad oþer of' chalk' oþer of' glas 1149
 Or som what' elles was not' worþ a flye
 To blynde wiþ þis prest' and bad him hye
 þise coles for to couchen al aboue
 þe cresselet' for in tokne þat' I þe loue 1153
 Quoþ þis Chanoñ þine hondes tuo
 Schulle worche alle þing' which as schal be do
 Graunt mercy quod þe prest' and was ful glad
 And couchede coles as þe Chanoñ bad 1157
 And whils he besy was þis feendly wrecche
 þis false Chanoñ þe foule feend him fecche
 Out' of' his bosom took' a bechene cole /
 In which ful sotilly was maad an hole 1161
 And þer Inne put' was of' siluer lymaille
 An vnce and stopped was wiþoute faille
 This hole wiþ wex to kepe þe lymaille In
 And vnderstondeþ þat' þis false gyn 1165
 Was not' made þere but' it was maad bifore
 And oþere þinges I schal telle more /
 here aftirward which þat' he wiþ him broughte
 Er he cam þer to begyle him he þoughte 1169
 And so he dide er þey wente a twynne /
 Til he hadde torned him coupe he not' blynne [leaf 186, back]
 It' dulleþ me whan þat' I of' him speke
 On his falshede fayn wolde I me wreke / 1173
 If' I wiste how. but' he is heer and þere /
 he is so variaunt' þat' he aby't' no where /
 But' takeþ heed now sires for goddes loue
 He took' his cole of' which I spak' aboue 1177
 And in his hond he bar it' priuely
 And whiles þe prest' couchide busily

- The coles as I tolde 3ou er þis /
 This Chanoñ sayde freend 3e don amys 1181
 This is nough't couched as it' ough'te be
 But' sone I schal amenden it' *quod* he
 Now lat me medle *þerwiþ* but a while
 ffor of' 3ou haue I pite by seint' Gyle 1185
 3e ben right' hoot' I se wel how 3e swete
 haue heer a cloþ and wype away þe' wete
 And while þat' þe prest' him wyped has
 This Chanoñ took' his cole I schrewe his fas 1189
 And leyde it' vppon abouen þe myddeward
 Of' þe Crosselet' and blew wel aftirward
 Til þat' þe coles gonne faste brenne
 Now 3if' vs drinke *quod* þe Chanoñ þenne 1193
 as swiþe it' schal be wel I vndertake
 Sitte we down and let' vs merie make
 And whan þe Chanoñs bechene cole
 Was brent' alle þe lymail out' of' þe hole 1197
 In to þe Crosselet' anon fel down
 And so it' moste neede by resoñ
 Syns it' so euene aboue couched was
 But' þerof' wiste no þing' þe prest' allas 1201
 he demed alle þe coles liche goode
 ffor of' þe sleight' no þing' he vnderstoode
 And whan þis alkamistre say his tyme
 Riseþ vp sire prest' and stondeþ byme 1205
 And for I wot' wel Ingot' haue 3e non
 Gop' walkeþ forþ and bring' a chalk' ston [leaf 187]
 ffor I wol make it' of' þe same schappe
 þat' is an Ingot' if' I may haue happe 1209
 And bring wiþ 3ou a bolle oþer a panne
 ful of' water and 3e schul see þanne
 How þat' oure busynesse schal happe & preeue
 And 3it' for 3e schul haue no mysbyleeue 1213
 Ne wrong' conceyt' of' me in 3oure absence
 I wol not' ben out' of' 3oure presence

But' go with 3ou and come with 3ou agayn
 The chambre dore schortly for to sayn 1217
 þey opeynd and schette and wente forþ here weye
 And forþ wiþ hem þey caryed þe keye
 And comen agayn wiþouten eny delay
 What' scholde I tarie al þe longe day 1221
 he took' þe chalk' and schoop it' in þe wyse
 Of' an yngot' as I schal 3ou deuyse
 I say he took' out' of' his owne sleeue
 A teyne of' Siluer euele mote he cheeue 1225
 Which þat' was but' an vnce of' weighth
 And takeþ heede now of' his cursed sleight
 he schop his Ingot' in lengþe and in brede
 Of' þe theyne wiþouten eny drede 1229
 So slyly þat' þe prest' it not' aspyde
 And in his sleeue again he gan it' hyde
 And from þe fyre took' vp his matiere /
 And in to þe Ingot' it' putte wiþ merye cheere 1233
 And in to þe watir vessel he it' caste
 Whan þat' him liste and bad þe prest' as faste
 loke what' þer' is / put' in þin hond and grope
 Thou schalt' fynde þere siluer as I hope 1237
 What' deuyll of helle schuld it' elles be
 Schafyng' of' siluer siluer is *parde*
 he putte in his hond and took' vp a teyne
 Of' siluer fyn and glad in euery veyne 1241
 Was þis prest' whan he saugh þat' it was so
 Goddes blessing' and his modres also [leaf 187, back]
 And alle halwes haue 3e sire Chanoñ
 Seyde þe prest' and I here malisoñ 1245
 But' and 3e vouche sauf' to teche me
 þis noble crafte and þis sotilte
 I wol be 3oure in alle þat' euer I may
 Quoþ þe Chanoñ 3it' wol I make assay 1249
 The seconde tyme þat' 3e mowe take heede
 And ben expert' of' þis and in 3oure neede

Anoper day in myn absence /
 þis discipline and þis crafty science 1253
 ¶ let' take anoper vnce *quod* he þo
 Of quykt siluer wipoute wordes mo
 And do þerwip as 3e han don ar þis
 Wip þat' oper which þat' now siluer is 1257
 þis prest' him busieþ in al þat' he can
 To don as þis Chanōn þis cursede man
 Comaundeþ him and faste blew þe fire
 ffor to come to þeffecte of' his desire 1261
 And þis Chanōn right' in þe mene while
 Al redy was þis prest' eft' to begyle
 And for a contynaunce in his hond bar
 An holough stikke tak' heede and be war 1265
 In þe ende of' which an vnce and no more
 Of siluer lymaile put' was al bifore
 Was in his coole and stopped wip wex wel
 ffor to kepe in his lymayl euery del 1269
 And whiles þis prest' was in his businesse
 This Chanon wip his stikke gan him dresse
 To him anon and his poudre caste In
 As he dede er þe deuel out' of' his skyn 1273
 him torne I *pray* to god for his falshede
 ffor he was euer fals in oþe and dede
 And wip his stikke aboue þe crosselette
 þat' was ordeigned wip þat' false gette 1277
 he stereþ þe coles til it' relente gan
 The wax agayn þe fyr as euery man [leaf 188]
 But' it' a fool be woot' wel and moot' neede
 And al þat' in þe hole was out 3ede 1281
 And in to þe Crosselet' hastily it' fel
 The prest' supposede noþing' but wel
 But' busyed him faste and was wonder fayn
 Supposyng' nouzt' but' trouþe soþ to sayn 1285
 he was so glad I can nouzt' expresse
 In no maner his merþe and his gladnesse

GROUP G. § 4. CANON'S-YEOMAN'S TALE. Corpus MS.

And þe chanoñ he profred eft' sone
 Body and good 3e *quod* þe Chanōn soone 1289
 þough pore I be crafty þou schalt/ me fynde
 I warne þe 3it' is þer more behynde
 Is þer eny coper here Inne seyde he
 3e sire *quod* þe prest' I trowe þer bee 1293
 Elles go bey som and þat as swithe
 Now sire go forþ þy way and hy the
 And went his way and wiþ þis coper he cam
 And þis Chanōn in his hond it nam 1297
 And of' þat' coper weyde out' but' an vnce
 Al to symple is my tonge to pronounce
 his moustre and his wit' þe doublenesse
 Of' þis Chanoñ roote of' Cursednesse 1301
 he semyd freendly to hem þat' knewe him noughit'
 But' he was feendly boþe in werk' and þou3t'
 It' wyrieþ me to telle of' his falsnesse
 And napeles 3et' wol I it' expresse 1305
 To þat' entent þat' men may be war þerby
 And for non oþer cause trewely
 he putte þis vnce of' coper in to þe Crosselette
 And of' þe fyur as swiþe he hap it' sette 1309
 And kast' in poudre and made þe prest' to blowe
 And in his worching' for to stoupe lowe
 As he dide erst and al nas but' a Iape
 Right' as him liste þe prest' he made his ape 1313
 And afterward in to þe Ingot' he it' caste
 And in þe panne putte it' atte laste / [leaf 188, back]
 Of' water and in he put' his owne hand
 And in his sleeue as 3e byforn hand 1317
 herde me telle he hadde a siluer teyne
 he slyly took' it' out' þis cursed heyne
 vnwetyng' þis prest' of' his false craft'
 And in þe pannes botme he hap it' laft' 1321
 And in þe water rombleþ to and fro
 And wonder pryuyly tok' it' vp also

- þe coper teyne nought knowyngt þis prest/
 And hidde it and hente him by þe breest 1325
 And to him spak and þus sayde in his game
 Stowpeþ a doun by god 3e ben to blame
 helpeþ me now as I dide 3ou whiler
 Put in 3oure hand and lokeþ what is þer 1329
 þis prest tok vp þis siluer teyne anon
 And þanne seyde þe chanon let vs gon
 Wip þise þre teynes whiche þat we haue wrought
 To som goldsmith and wite if it be ought 1333
 ffor by my faip I nolde for myn hond
 But if þei were siluer fyn and good
 And þat as swiþe proued schal it be
 Vnto þe goldsmith wip þise teynes þre 1337
 þey wente and putte þise teynes in assay
 To fyr and hamer might no man say nay
 But þey were as hem ouzte for to be
 þis sottide prest who was gladder þan he 1341
 Was neuer bryd gladder azeins þe day
 Ne nightyngale in þe seson of May
 Was neuere non þat liste better to synge
 Ne lady lustiere in Carolyng / 1345
 And for to speke of loue and wommanhede
 Ne knight in armes don an hardy dede
 To stonden in grace of his lady deere
 þan hadde þis prest þis craft to lere 1349
 And to þe chanoñ þus he spak and sayde
 ffor þe loue of god þat for vs alle deyde / [leaf 189]
 And as I may deserue it vnto 3ow
 What schal þis receyt coste telleþ now / 1353
 By oure lady quod þe chanoñ it is deere
 I warne 3ou for saue I and a frere /
 In Engelond þer can no man it make
 No fors quod he now sire for goddes sake 1357
 What schal I paye tel me I 3ou pray
 I-wys quod he it/ is ful deere I say

Sire at' oo word if' þat' þe list' it haue
 3e schulle paye fourty pound so god me saue 1361
 And ne were þe frendschipe þat' 3e dide er þis
 To me 3e scholde paye more y-wys
 This prest' þe somme of' .xl. pound anon .
 Of' nobles fette and took' hem euerychon' 1365
 To þis chanoñ for þis ilke receyt'
 Al his worchinge was fraude and deceyt'
 Sire prest' he seyde I kepe for to haue no loos
 Of' my craft' for I wolde it were kept' cloos 1369
 And as 3e loueþ me kepeþ it' secre
 ffor and men knewen al my subtilte
 By god men wolde haue so gret' enye
 To me by cause of my philosophie 1373
 I scholde be deed þer were non oþer weye
 God it' forbede *quod* þe preest' what' seye
 3et' hadde I leuer spenden al þe good
 Which þat' I haue and elles waxe I wood 1377
 þan þat' 3e schulde falle in such mescheef'
 ffor 3oure good wil sire haue 3e right' good preef'
 Quoþ þe chanoñ and sire wol *graunt* mercy
 he wente his way and neuer þe prest' he sey 1381
 After þat' day and whan þat' þis prest' scholde
 maken assay at' swich tyme as he wolde
 Of' þis receyt' far wel it' wolde not' be
 lo þus byiaped and bygyled was he 1385
 þus makeþ he his introduccioñ
 To bringe folk' to here destruccioñ [leaf 189, back]
 Considereþ sires how þat' in eche astate
 Bitwixe men and gold þer is debate 1389
 So ferforþ þat' vnneþes þer is non
 This multiply3ing' blendeþ so many oon
 þat' in good faip I trowe þat' it' be
 þe cause grettest' of' þis skarsete 1393
 This philosophres speken so mystily
 In þis craft' þat' men can not' come þerby

ffor any witte þat men han now a dayes
 þey may wel chitre and Iangle as don þis Iayes 1397
 And in here termes sette lust^t and peyne
 But^t to here purpos schul þey neuer atteyne
 A man may lightliche lerne if^t he haþ ought
 To multiplie and brynge his good to nouz^t 1401
 lo such a lucre is in þis lusty game
 A mannes merþe it wol torne alle to grame
 And empte also grete and heuye purses
 And make folk^t to purchacen curses 1405
 Of^t hem þat han þerto here good y-lent^t
 O fy for schame þey þat^t haue be brent
 Allas can þey nat^t fle þe fyres hete
 3e þat^t it^t vsen I rede 3e it^t lete 1409
 lest^t 3e lese al for. bet^t þan neuer is late
 Neuer to þriue were to longe a date
 þough^h 3e prolle ay 3e schulle it neuer fynde
 3e ben as bolde as is bayard þe blynde 1413
 þat^t blundreth forþ and peril casteþ he non
 he is as bold to renne a-gayn a stoon
 As for to go bysydes in þe weye
 So fare 3e þat^t multiplie I seye 1417
 If^t þat^t 3oure y3en may not^t seen aright
 lokeþ þat^t 3oure mynd lakke nough^t his sight
 ffor þough^h 3e loke neuer so brode and stare /
 3e schulle nat^t wyne a myte in þat^t chaffare 1421
 But^t wasten al þat^t 3e may Rappe and renne
 Wipdrawe þe fir lest^t it^t so faste brenne [leaf 190]
 Medleþ nomore wip þat^t art^t I mene
 ffor if^t 3e doon 3our þrift^t is gon ful clene / 1425
 And right^t as swithe I wol 3ou telle heere
 What^t þat^t þe philosophres sein in þis matere
 lo þus seiþ arnold of^t þe newe toun
 As his Rosarie makeþ mencion 1429
 he seiþ right^t þus wipouten eny lye
 þer may no man mercurie mortifie

But if it be wiþ his broþeres knowleching
 how þat he which þat first seyde þis þing/
 Of Philosophres fader was hermes / 1433
 he saiþ how þat þe dragon douteles
 Ne dyep not but if he be slayn
 Wiþ his broþer and þat is for to sayn 1437
 By þe dragon mercurie and non oþer
 he vnderstood þat bremston were his broþer
 þat on of Sol and luna were y-drawe
 And þerfore sayde he tak heed to my sawe 1441
 lat no man busye him þis art for to seche
 But he þat þe entencion and þe speche
 Of philosophres vnderstonde can
 And if he do he is a lewed man 1445
 ffor þis science and þis connyng quod he /
 Is of þe secre of Secrees parde
 Also þer was a disciple of Plato
 That on a tyme sayde his mayster to 1449
 As his book Somer wil bere witnessse
 And þis was his demaunde in soþfastnesse
 Telle me þe name of þe pryuy stoon
 And plato answerde vnto him anon 1453
 Tak þe stoon þat titanos men name
 Which is þat quod he magnasia þe same /
 Seyde Plato 3ee Sire and is it þus
 This is ignotum per ignocius 1457
 What is magnasia goode sire I pray
 It is a water þat is maad I say [leaf 190, back]
 Of elementes foure quod Plato
 Tel me þe roche goode sire quod he þo 1461
 Of þat water if it be 3our wille
 Nay nay quod Plato certeyn þat I nylle.
 þe Philosophres were sworn echon
 þat þey scholde discouere it to no mon 1465
 Ne in no book it write in no manere
 ffor vnto crist it is so leef and deere

þat he wil nat þat it discouered be
 But where it likeþ to his deite 1469
 Man to enspire and eek for to defende
 Whom þat him likeþ lo þis is þe ende /
 Thanne conclude I þus siþens þat god of heuene
 Ne wole nat þat þe Philosophres neuene 1473
 how þat a man schal come vnto þis stoon
 I rede as for þe beste lat it goon
 ffor who so maketh god his aduersarie
 As for to worche eny þing in contrarie / 1477
 vnto his wille certes neuer schal he þriue
 þough þat he multiplie terme of his lyue
 And þere a poynt for ended is my tale
 God sende euery trewe man boote of his bale amen 1481

GROUP C. FRAGMENT IV.

§ 1. THE DOCTOR'S TALE.

CORPUS MS.

¶ The doctour of phisik'

[on leaf 190, back.]

THer was as telleþ vs Titus Iyueus
A knight' þat' cleped was *virgineus*
ffulfilled of honoures and worþinesse
And strong' of frendes and of gret' richesse 4
A doughter he hadde by his wyf'
And neuere hadde he mo in alle his lyf'

ffair was þis mayde in excellent' beaute
Abouen euery wight' þat' man may se 8
ffor nature haþ with souerein diligence
fformed hire in so gret' excellence

As þough sche wolde say lo I nature
Thus can I forme and peinte a creature 12

Whan þat' me list' who can me countrefete [leaf 191] .
Pigmalion nouzt' þough he alwey forge and bete

Or graue or peynte for I dar wel sayn
Apollus zephirus schulde worche in vayn 16

To graue or paynte or forge or bete
3if' þey presumede me for to countirfete
ffor he þat' is þe formour *principal*
haþ maad me his viker *general* 20

To forme and peynte ech erþely creature
Right' as me lyst' for al þing' is in my cure
vnder þe moone þat' may wane and waxe
And for my werke no þing' wol I axe 24

My lord and I ben fully at acord
 I made hire to þe worschip of my lord
 So do I alle myn oþre creatures
 Of what colour þey be or what figures 28
 Thus semeþ me þat nature wolde say
 This mayde was of age .xij. 3eer and tway
 In which þat nature haþ such delyt
 ffor righþt as sche can paynte as lily whit 32
 And rody as rose righþt wiþ such peynture
 Sche peynted haþ þis noble creature /
 Er sche was born vpon hire lymes fre
 Were also brigþt as such colours scholde be / 36
 And Phebus dyed haþ his tresses grete
 like to þe stremes of his boornyd hete
 And if þat excellent was hire beaute
 A þousend fold more vertuous was sche 40
 In hire ne lakkeþ no condicioñ
 þat is to preise as by discrecioñ
 As wel in body as gost chaste was sche
 ffor which sche floured in virginite 44
 Wiþ alle humilite and abstinence
 Wiþ alle attemperance and pacience
 Wiþ mesure eek and beryng of array
 Discret sche was in answering alway 48
 þough sche were wys as Pallas dar I seyn [leaf 191, back]
 hire faucond eek ful wommanly and pleyn
 None counterfeted termes hadde sche
 To seme wys but after hire degre 52
 Sche spak and alle hire wordes more and lesse
 Sownyng in vertue and in gentillesse
 Schamefast sche was in maydens schamefastnesse
 Constant in herte and euere in busynesse 56
 To dryue hire oute of hire slogardy
 Bachus hadde of hir mouþ no maystrie
 ffor will and þoughþt doon venus encrece
 As men in fyr wol casten oyle or grece / 60

GROUP C. § 1. DOCTOR'S TALE. Corpus MS.

And of hire owne vertue constreyned
 Sche hap ful ofte tyme hire seek' feyned
 ffor þat' sche wolde flee þe companye /
 Wher likly was to treten of' folye 64
 As is at festes . Reueles . and at Daunces
 That' ben occasiõs of dalyaunces
 Suche þinges maken children for to be
 To sone rype and bolde as men may se 68
 Which is ful perilous and hap ben 3ore
 ffor al to sone may sche lerne lore /
 Of' boldenesse whan sche is a wijf'
 And 3e maystresses in 3oure olde lyf' 72
 þat' lordes doughtres han in gouernañce /
 Ne takeþ of' my word no displesañce
 þinges þat' ben sette in gouernynge
 Of' lordes doughtres only for tuo þinges 76
 Ouþer for 3e han kept' 3our honeste /
 Oþer 3e han falle in frelete
 And knowen wel ynough þe olde daunce
 And konne forsake fully meschaunce 80
 ffor euermo þerfore for cristes sake /
 kepeþ wel þo þat' 3e vndertake
 A þeeft' of' venyson þat' hap forlaft'
 his likorousnesse and alle his theues craft' 84
 Kan kepe a forest' best' of' ony man [leaf 192]
 Now kepeþ hem wel for and 3e wil 3e can
 lokeþ wel to no vice þat' 3e assente
 lest' 3e be dampned for 3oure yuel entente 88
 ffor who so doþ a tretour is certayn
 And takeþ heed of' þat' þat' I schal sayn
 Of' alle tresoun suffreyn pestilence
 Is whan a wigh't' betrayeþ Innocence 92
 3e fadres and 3e modres eek' also
 þough 3e haue children be it oon or mo
 3oure is þe charge of' alle here sufferañce
 Whil þey ben vnder 3oure gouernañce 96

Bep war þat by ensample of 3oure lyuyngē
 Owþer by necligence in chastysynge
 þat þey ne perissche I dar wel seye
 If þat þey don 3e schulle ful sore abeye 100
 vnder a schepperde softe and necligent
 þe wolf haþ many a scheep and lamb torent
 Sufficeth oon ensample now as heere
 ffor I moot torne aȝen to my mateere / 104
 This mayde of which I telle my tale expresse /
 Sche kepte hir self hir needed no maistresse
 ffor in hire lyuyng' maydens mighte rede /
 As in a book' euery good word and dede 108
 þat longeþ to a mayde vertuous
 Sche was so prudent' and so bountyuous
 ffor which out' sprong' þe fame on euery syde
 Bōþe of hire beaute and of hire bounte wyde 112
 þat þurgh þe lond þey praised hire echone
 That' loucde vertu saue envye alone
 þat' sory is of' oþer mennes wele
 And glad is of' his sorwe and vnhele 116
 The doctour makeþ þis discripciō
 þis mayde wente on a day in-to þe toun
 Toward þe temple wiþ hire mooder deere
 As is of' 3onge maydens þe manere 120
 Now was þer a Iustice in þe toun
 That' gournour was of' þat' regiō
 And so bifelle þis Iuge his yhen caste
 vppon þis mayde hire ful faste 124
 As sche cam forthby þer þe Iuge stood
 Anon his herte chaungeþ and his mood
 So was he caught' wiþ beaute of' þis mayde /
 And to himself' ful priuely he sayde / 128
 This mayde schal be myn for ony man
 Anon þe feend in-to his herte ran
 And taught' him sodeynly by what' sleightē
 þe mayde to his purpos wyne he mighte 132

[leaf 192, back]

GROUP C. § 1. DOCTOR'S TALE. **Corpus MS.**

ffor certes by no force ne by no mcede
 him þought/ he was not' able for to speede /
 ffor he was strong' of freendes and eek' sche
 Cōfermed was in such souereyn beaute 136
 þat' wel he wiste he might' hire neuer wynne
 As for to make hire wiþ hire body synne
 ffor which wiþ gret' deliberaciōn
 he sente after a clerk' in-to þe touñ 140
 The which he knew for subtil and for bold
 This Iuge vnto þis clerk' his tale haþ told
 In secre wise and made him to assure /
 he scholde telle it' to no creature 144
 And if' he dide he scholde leese his heed
 Whan assented was þis cursed reed
 Glad was þe Iuge and made glad chere /
 And 3af' him 3iftes precious and deere / 148
 Whan schapen was al þis conspiracie
 ffrom poynt' to poynt' how þat' his leccherie
 Parformed schulde be ful subtilly
 as 3e schal here aftirward openly 152
 hom goþ þis clerk' þat' highte Claudius
 þis false Iuge þat' highte Apius
 So was his name for it is no fable /
 But' knowen for an historial þing' notable 156
 The sentence of it' soþ is out' of' doute [leaf 198]
 þis false Iuge goþ now faste aboute
 To hasten his delyt' al þat' he may
 And so bifelle sone after on a day 160
 þis false Iuge as telleþ vs þe story
 As he was woned sat' in his consistory
 And 3af' his domes vpon sondry cas
 This false clerk' cam forþ a wel good paas 164
 And seyde lord if' þat' it' be 3our wille /
 As doþ me right' vpon þis pitous bille
 In which I pleyne vppon virginus
 And if' þat' he wol seyn it' is not' þus 168

GROUP C. § 1. DOCTOR'S TALE. Corpus MS.

I wol proue it' and fynde good wisse
 That' soþ is þat' my bille wol expresse
 þe Iuge answerde of' þis in his absence
 I may not' 3iue diffinityf' sentence 112
 let' don him calle and I wol gladly heere
 Thou schalt' haue right' and no wrong heere
 Virginius cam to wite þe Iuges wille
 And right' anon was rad þis cursed bille / 176
 The sentence of' it' was as 3e schul heere
 To 3ou my lord sire Apius so deere
 Scheweþ 3oure pouere seruauñt Claudius
 how þat' a knight' called virginius 180
 A3ens þe lawe a3eins alle equite
 holdeþ expres a3eins þe will of' me
 my seruauñt' which þat' is my þral by right
 Which from myñ hous was stolen on a night 184
 Whils sche was ful 3ong' I wol it' preue
 By wisse lord so þat' 3e 3ou not' greue
 Sche is nougñt' his doughter what' so he say
 Wherefore my lord þe Iuge to 3ou I pray 188
 3elde me my þralle if' þat' it' be 3our wille
 lo þis was al þe sentence of' þe bille
 Virgineus gan vpon þe clerk' biholde
 But' hastily er he his tale tolde / 192
 he wolde haue defended it' as scholde a knight' [leaf 113, back]
 And by wisse of' many a trewe wight
 That' al was fals þat' seyde his aduersarie
 This cursed Iuge wolde no lenger tarie / 196
 Ne here a word more of' virgineus
 But' 3af' his Iuggement and seyde þus
 I deme anon þis clerk' his seruauñt' haue
 þou schalt' no lenger in þin hous hire saue 200
 Go bring' hire forth and put' hire in oure warde
 þis clerk' schal haue his þral þus I awarde /
 And whan þis worþi knight' virgineus /
 þurgh þe assent' of' þe Iuge apius 204

GROUP C. § 1. DOCTOR'S TALE. Corpus MS.

| | |
|---|------------|
| Moste by force his deere doughter 3yuen vnto þe Iuge in lecchorie to lyuen he goþ him hom) and sette him in his halle | |
| And leet' anon his deere douzter calle / | 208 |
| And with a face deed as ayssches colde vppon hire humble face he gan biholde Wiþ fadres pite stiking' þorough his herte | |
| Al wolde he not' from his purpos conuerte | 212 |
| Doughter <i>quod</i> he virginea by þy name þer ben tuo weyes oþer deþ or schame That' þou most' suffre allas þat' I was bore ffor neuer þou deseruedest' wherfore | 216 |
| To deyen with a swerd or wiþ a knyft' O deere doughter endere of' my lijf' Which I haue fostred vp wiþ such plesaunce þat' þou ne were out' of' my remembrance / | 220 |
| O doughter which þat' art' my laste wo / And in my lijf' my laste ioye also O <i>gemme</i> of' chastite in pacience Tak' þou þi deþ for þis is my sentence / | 224 |
| ffor loue and nat/ for hate þou most' be deed My pitous hond moot' smyten of' þin heed Allas þat' euer Apius þe say þus haþ he falsly iugged þe to day | 228 |
| And tolde hire al þe cas as 3e bifore | [leaf 194] |
| han herd it' nedep' not' to telle it more Mercy deere fader <i>quod</i> þis mayde And wiþ þat' word sche boþe hire armes layde | 232 |
| Aboute his necke as sche was woned to dc þe teeres barsten out' of' hire eyen tuo And sayde goode fader schal I dye Is þer no grace is þer no remedye | 236 |
| No certes deere douzter <i>myn quod</i> he þanne 3if' me leue fader <i>myn quod</i> sche My deþ to compleigne a litel space ffor <i>parde</i> Ieffa 3af' his douzter grace | 240 |

ffor to compleyne ar he hir slough allas
 And god it' wot' noþing' was hire trespas
 But' þat' sche ran hire fader first' to see
 To welcome him wiþ gret' solempnite 244
 And wiþ þat' word sche felle on swown anon
 And after whan hir swownyng' was agon
 Sche riseþ vp and to hire fader sayde /
 Blessed be god þat' I schal deye a mayde 248
 ʒif' me my deth er þat' I haue a schame
 Doþ wiþ ʒour child ʒour wil a goddes name
 And wiþ þat' word sche prayeþ him ful ofte
 þat' wiþ his swerd he schulde hir smyte softe 252
 And wiþ þat' word on swoune doun sche fel
 hir fader wiþ ful sorweful herte and fel
 hire heed of' smoot' and by þe top it' hente
 And to þe Iuge he ʒaf' it' to presente 256
 As he sat' in his doom in consistory
 Whan þe Iuge it' say as saiþ þe story
 He bad take him and honge him also faste
 But' riht' anon al þe poeple in þraste 260
 To saue þe knight' for rouþe and for pite
 ffor knowen was þe fooles Iniquite
 The poeple anon hadde suspecte in þis þing'
 By maner of þis clerkes chalangyng' 264
 That' it' was by þassent' of' Apius [leaf 194, back]
 They wisten wel þat' he was lechorous
 ffor which vnto þis Apius þey gon
 And casten him in prisoñ riht' anon 268
 Wher as he slough himself' and Claudius
 þat' seruant' was vnto þis Apius
 Was demed for to honge vpon a tre
 But/ virgineus of' his grete pite 272
 Prayde for him þat' he was exiled
 And elles certes he hadde be bygyled
 The remenant' were honged more & lesse
 þat' consented were to his cursednesse 276

GROUP C. § 1. DOCTOR'S TALE. **Corpus MS.**

Here may men se how synne haþ his meryt /
 Be war for noman wot' how god wol smyt'
 In no degre ne in which maner wise
 The worm of' conscience wol arise 280
 Of' wicked lyf' þough it' so preuy be
 þat' noman woot' of' it' but' god and he
 Wheþer he be lewed man or lered
 he not' how soone þat' he may ben afeered 284
 þer-fore I rede 3ou þis counseil take
 fforsakeþ synne er synne 3ou fõrsake

[on leaf 194, back]

Owre oost^t gan for to swere as he were wood *Prologus*
 harrow quod he by nayles and by blood 288
 This was a cursed þeef^t a fals Iustisè
 As schamful deþ as herte can deuysel
 So falle vpon his body and his bones [*]
 þe deuyl I bekenne him al at ones [*] 292
 Allas to deere boughte sche hire beaute
 Wherefore I say þat^t alle men may se
 That^t ȝiftes of^t fortune or of^t nature
 Beþ cause of^t deþ of^t many a creature 296
 hire beaute was hire deþ I dar wel sayn
 Allas so pitously as sche was slayn
 But^t her of^t wil I not^t procede as now [*spurious*]
 Men haue ful often more harm þan prow 300
 But^t trewely myn owne mayster deere [leaf 195]
 This is a pitous tale for to heere
 But^t napeles passe ouer is no fors
 I pray to god so saue þin gentil cors 304
 And þin vrynals and þin Iurdanes
 Thyn ypocras and þin Galianes
 And euery box ful of^t þin letuarie
 God blesse hem and oure lady seinte marie 308
 So mote I þe þou art^t a propre man
 And ylike a prelat^t by saint Runyan
 Sayde I nouȝt^t wel can I nouȝt^t speke in terme
 But^t wel I woot^t þou dost^t myn herte to erme 312
 That^t I almost^t haue caught^t a Cardyacle /
 By Corpus bones but^t if^t I haue triacle
 Oper elles a draught^t of^t moyste and corny ale /
 Or but^t I heere anon a merye tale / 316

¹bygynneþ þe Pardoneres tale folwyngre

C^m xvj^m

LOrdynge*s quod* he in chirches whan I preche
 I peyne me to haue an hauteyn speche
 I ryng^t it^t out^t as round as goþ a belle
 ffor I can al by rote þat^t I telle 332
 My teeme is alway oon and euer was

¹*malorum est* Cupiditas

[¹ Part of the MS is cut away here]

¹whennes þat^t I come

A þenne my bulles schewe I alle and some [leaf 195, back]
 Oure liege lordes seal is my patent
 þat^t schewe I first^t my body to warant
 That^t no man be so bolde ne prest^t ne clerk^t
 me to destourbe of^t cristes holy werk^t 340

And after þat^t telle I forþ my tales
 Bulles of^t Popes and of^t Cardinales
 Of Patriarkes and bisschoppes I schewe
 And in latyn I speke wordes a fewe 344
 To saffran wiþ my predicacioñ

And for to stere men to deuoicoñ
 þanne schewe I forþ my lange cristal stones
 I-crammed ful of^t cloutes and of^t bones 348

Relikes þey ben as wenen þey echone
 þan haue I in latoun a schulder bone
 Which þat^t was of^t an holy icwes sheep
 Goode men say I takeþ of^t my wordes keep 352

If^t þat^t þis bon be waisshe in any welle
 If^t kow or calf^t sheep or oxe swelle
 That^t eny worme hap y-bite or stronge
 Touche he þis boon anon he schal be sounde 356

GROUP C. § 3. PARDONER'S PREAMBLE. Corpus MS.

And 3it^t also I seye forþermore
 Of pokkes of scabbes and of euery sore
 Schal euery scheep be hool þat^t of þis wellle
 Drinkeþ a draught^t and take keep what I telle 360
 Wole euery wight^t er þat^t þe cok^t him croweþ
 And do þing^t þat^t him oweþ
 ffastynge drinke of þis wellle a draught^t
 As þilke holy iewe oure eldre ous taught^t 364
 his bestes and his store schal multiplye
 And sires also it^t heleþ Ielousie
 And þey a man be falle in gelouse rage
 Let^t make wiþ þis water his potage 368
 And neuer schal he more his wijf^t mystreste
 þey he in soþe a defaute by hire wiste
 Al had sche taken prestes tuo or þre
 heer is a myteyn eek^t as 3e may see [leaf 196] 372
 he þat^t his hond wol putte in þat^t myteyne
 he schal haue multiplyng^t of his greyne
 When he haþ sowen be it whete or ootes
 So þat^t of pens oþer elles of grootes 376
 And men and wommen o þing^t warne I 3ou
 If^t any wight^t be in þis chirche now
 That^t haþ don synne orrible þat^t he
 Dar nought^t for schame schriuen be 380
 Or eny womman be sche zong^t or old
 þat^t haþ y-maad hire housbonde kokewold
 Such folk^t schuln haue no power ne grace
 To offre to my relikes in þis place 384
 And who so fyndeþ him out of such blame
 þey wole come vp and offre in goddes name
 And I assoile him by þe auctorite
 Which þat^t by bulle was y-graunted me 388
 By þis gande haue I wonne euery 3ere
 An hundred mark^t seþenes I was pardonere
 I stande lik^t a clerk^t in many a pulpette
 And schewe lewed poeple and doun þey sette 392

I preche so as 3e haue herd byfore
 And telle an hundred Iapes more /
 þenne peyne I me to strecche forþ my nekke
 And Est^t and west^t vpon þe poeple I bekke 396
 As doþ a dowfe sitting^t vpan a berne
 myn handes and my tonge gon so 3erne
 þat^t is it^t ioye to se my busynes
 Of^t auarice and such oþer cursednes 400
 Is al my prechinge to make hem fre
 To 3iue here pans and namely vnto me
 ffor myn entent^t is nou3^t but^t for to wynne
 And noþing^t for correccioñ of^t synne 404
 I rekke neuer whan þat^t þey ben beried
 þough^t þat^t here soules gon a blake beryed
 ffor certes many a predicacioñ
 Sowneþ ofte tyme of^t yuel intencioñ [leaf 196, back] 408
 Somme for plesaunce of^t folk^t and for flaterie
 To ben auaunced by ypocresye
 And somme for veynglorie and somme for hate /
 ffor whan I dar nou3^t oþerwise debate 412
 þaïne wil I styng^t hem with my tonge smerte
 In preching^t so þat^t þei schal nou3^t asterte
 To be diffamed falsly if^t þat he
 haþ trespassed to my breþeren oþer to me 416
 ffor þough I telle nou3^t his propre name
 Men schal wel knowe þat^t it^t is þe same
 By symony and by oþer circumstaunces
 þus quyte I folk^t þat^t doþ vs displesaunces 420
 þus spitte I out my venym vnder hewe
 Of^t holynesse to seme holy and trewe
 But^t schortly myn entent I wil deuys^e
 I preche of^t no þing^t but^t of^t coueytise 424
 þefore my teeme is 3it^t and euer was
 Radix malorum est cupiditas /
 Thus gan I preche azeins þe same vice
 Such þat^t I vse and þat^t is auarice 428

That þough I my self be gulty in þat synne
 3it kan I make oþer folk for to wynne
 ffrom auarice and sore to repente
 But þat nys nouȝt my principal entente 432
 I preche no þing but for coueityse
 Of þis matiere I ought ynough suffise
 þenne telle I of ensamples many on
 Of olde stories longe tyme agon 436
 ffor lewed poeple louen tales olde
 Whiche þinges can þey wel reporte and holde
 What trowe 3e whiles þat I may preche
 And wynne gold and siluer for I teche 440
 That I wol lyue in pouert wilfully
 Nay nay I þouȝt it neuer trewely
 ffor I wol preche and begge in sondry landes
 ffor I wole do no labour wiþ myn handes [leaf 197] 444
 And make basketes and lyue þerby
 By cause I wol not beggen ydelly
 I wole none of þe aposteles countrefete
 I wole haue money chese and whete 448
 Al were it 3euen of þe porest page
 Oþer of þe porest wydewe in a village
 Al scholde here children sterue for famyne
 Nay I wol drynke þe likour of þe vyne 452
 And haue a Ioly wenche in euery toun
 But herkneþ lordynges in conclusioñ
 3oure liking is þat I schal telle a tale
 Now I haue drunke a draught of corny ale 456
 By god I hope I schal telle 3ou a þing
 þat schal by resoun ben at 3our liking
 ffor þough my selue be a vicious man
 A more-ille tale 3it I 3ou telle can 460
 Which I am wont to preche for to wynne
 Now holde 3oure pees my tale I wol begynne

IN fflaundes whilom was a companye /
 Of 3ong^t folk^t þat^t haunteden folye 464
 As Ryot^t hasard stewes and tauernes
¹Where as whyþ harpes lutes and gyternes¹ [¹⁻¹ *In a different hand.*]
 They daunce and pleye at dyse boþe day and night^t
 And eeten also and drunken ouer al here might^t 468
 þorugh^h which þey doon þe deueles sacrificise
 Wipinne þe deueles temple in cursed wyse
 þe Superflues abhominable
 here oþes ben so grete and dampna[b]le / 472
 þat^t it^t is grisly for to here hem swere
 Oure blessed lordes body they to-tere
 hem þoughte Iewes rent/ him nough^t ynough^h
 And ilke of^t hem at^t oþer synnes low^h 476
 And right^t anon þenne come tomlisteres
 ffetys and smal 3ong^t fruyteteres /
 Syngers with harpes bawdes wafereres
 Suche ben verray þe deueles officers [leaf 197, back] 480
 To kyndle and blowe þe fyr of^t leccherie /
 That^t is annexed to glotonye /
 The holy writ^t take I to wisse / ¶ *Nolite inebriari vino in*
 That^t leccherie is in wyn and drunkenesse ¶ *quo est luxuria*
 Lo how þat^t drunken loth vnkyndely 485
 lay by his doughtres tuo vnwetyngly .
 So drunke he was he nyste what^t he wrought^t
 And þerfore sore repente him ough^te [spurious] 487b
 heroudes who so wole þe stories seche 488
 þer may 3e lerne and by ensample teche [spurious] 488b

| | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| Whan he of wyn was replet at his feste | 489 |
| Right at his owen table 3at his heste | |
| To slen þe Baptist Iohan ful gulteles | |
| Senek saip eek goode wordes douteles | 492 |
| he seip he can no difference fynde | |
| Bitwix a man þat is out of his mynde | |
| And a man þat is drunkelewe | |
| But þat wodnesse is fallen in a schrewe | 496 |
| Perseuereþ lenger þan doþ drunkenes | |
| O gloteny ful of cursednes | |
| O cause ferst of oure confusioñ | |
| O original of oure dampnacioñ | 500 |
| Til crist hadde brought out wip his blood agayn | |
| lo how deere and schortly was to sayn | |
| Aboute was þe cursed vilanye / | |
| Corrupte was al þis world þurgh gloteny | 504 |
| Adam oure fader and his wyf also | ¶ <i>Ieronimus contra Iouinianum</i> |
| fro paradys to labour and to wo | <i>quandiu ielunauit in paradiso</i> |
| | <i>fuit commedit et electus est</i> |
| | <i>statim duxit vxorem</i> |
| Were dryuen for þat vice it nys no drede | |
| ffor whiles þat adam fasted as I rede | 508 |
| He was in paradys and whan þat he / | |
| Ete of þe fruyte defended on a tre | |
| Anon he was out cast to woo and pleyne | |
| O glotonye on þe wel oughte ous pleigne | 512 |
| O wiste a man how many maladyes | |
| ffolweþ of excesse and of gloteny | [leaf 198] |
| he schulde be þe more mesurable | |
| Of his diete sittyng at þe table | 516 |
| Allas þe schorte þrote þe tendre mouþ | |
| Makeþ þat Est and West north and souþ | |
| In erþe in aier in water men to swynke / | |
| To gete a glotoun mete and drynke | 520 |
| Of þis matiere o poule wel canst þou entrete | |
| Mete vnto wombe and wombe eek vnto mete | |
| Schal god discryuen boþe as poule saip | |
| Allas a foul þing is it by my faip / | 524 |

- To say þis word and fouler is þe dede ¶ ¶ Esca ve tibi & venter escis deus
[P] aurtem & hunc in illam destre.
 When men so drynkeþ of þe white and þe rede /
 þat of his þrote he makeþ his pryue
 þurgh þilke cursed superfluite 528
 The apostel wepyng' saiþ ful pitously
 Ther walken many of which þou told haue I
 I say it now wepyng' wiþ pitous voys
 Ther ben enemys of cristes croys 532
 Of which þe ende is deþ þe wombe is here god
 O wombe o holy o stynkyng'e kod
 ffulfild'e of dunge and of corrupciõ
 At eyþer ende of þe foule is þe soun 536
 How gret' cost' and labour is to fynde
 þise cookes how þey scampe and streyne and grynde /
 And turnen substaunce in-to accident
 To fulfille al þy likerous talent' 540
 Out' of þe harde bones knokken þay
 þe mary for þay caste nough't away
 þat may go þurgh þe golet' softe and swoote
 Of spicerie of leues bark' and roote 544
 Schal ben his sause y-maad by delyte
 To make him ȝit' a newer appetite
 But' certes he þat' haunteþ suche delices
 Is deed whiles þat' he lyueþ in þe vices 548
 A lecherous þing' is wyn and drunkenes /
 Is ful of stryuyng' and of wrecchednes [leaf 198, back]
 O drunken man disfigured is þi face
 ffoul is þi breþ foul art' þou to embrace 552
 And þurgh þin drunken nose semeþ þi soun
 As þough þou seydest' ay Sampsoñ Sampsoñ
 And ȝit' god woot' Sampsoñ drank' neuer no wyn
 Thow fallest' as it were a stiked swyn 556
 Thyn tunge is lost' and alle þin honeste cures
 ffor drunkenes is verrey sepultures
 Of mannes wit' and his discreciõ
 In whom þat' drynke haþ dominaciõ 560

He can no counseil kepe it' is no drede
 Now kepe 3ou fro þe white and fro þe rede
 Namly fro þe white wyn of' lepe
 þat' is to selle in ffischstret' or in Chepe / 564
 This wyn of' Spayne crepeþ subtilly
 In oþer wynes growyng' faste by
 Of' which þer ryseþ such fumosite
 þat' whan a man haþ drunken draughtes þre / 568
 And weneþ þat' he be at' home in chepe
 he is in spayne right' at' þe toune of' lepe
 Nough't at' þe Rochel ne at' Burdeux toun
 And þenne wolen þey sayn Sampson Sampson 572
 But' herkneþ lordinges o word I 3ou prey
 That' all þe souerein actes dar I say
 Of' victories in þe olde testament'
 þat' þurgh verray god þat' is omnipotent' 576
 Were don in abstinence and in prayere
 lokeþ þe bible and þere 3e may it leere
 lokeþ attyla þe grete conquerour
 Deyed in his sleepe wiþ schame and dishonour 580
 Bledyng' ay at' his nose in drunkenes
 A Capitayne schulde lyue in sobernes /
 And ouer al þis averse 3ou right' wel
 What' was comaunded vnto lamuel 584
 Nough't Samuel but lamuel say I /
 Redeþ þe bible and fyndeþ it' expressely [leaf 199]
 Of' wyn 3euynge to hem þat' han iustice
 Nomore of' þis for it' may wel suffice 588
A Nd now þat' I haue spoke of' glotonye
 Now wole I defende 3ou hasardye
 hasard is verray mooder of' lesynges
 And of' disceipt' cursed forswerynges 592
 Blaspheme of' crist' and mansleynges also
 Of' batayle of' tyme and of' oþer mo
 It' is repreff' and contrarie to honour
 ffor to be holde a comune hasardour 596

And euer þe hyer he is of^t astate
 þe more he is y-halden desolate
 If^t þat^t a prince vse hasardrye
 In alle gouernaunce and alle polesye 600
 he is as by comun opynyōn
 y-halde þe lasse in reputaciōn
 [Stilbon that^t was holde . a wise ambassatour
 Was sent^t in-to Corynthy . with ful grete honour] [Reg. 17 D xv,
 ffro Calydonye to maken him alleaunce leaf 222]
 And whan he cam him happede þis chaunce
 þat^t alle þe grettest^t þat^t were of^t þis lande
 Pleyng^t at^t þe hasard he hem fande 608
 ffor which as sone as þat^t mighte be
 he stal him home aȝein to his cuntre
 And sayde þer I wol nough^t lese my name
 I ne wol nough^t take on me so gret^t diffame 612
 ȝou to alleye to none hasardoures
 Sendeþ oþerwise embassetoures
 ffor by my trouþe me were leuer deye /
 þan I to ȝou schulde hasardoures alleye / 616
 ffor ȝe þat^t ben so glorious in honoures
 Schal nouȝt^t aleye ȝou wiþ hasardoures
 As by my wille ne as by my trete
 þis wise Philosophre sayde to me 620
 loke þou vse no pley of^t dees in þin hous
 loke eek^t þat^t to þe king^t Demetrus
 Sente him a payre of^t dees of^t gold in scorn
 ffor he hadde vsed hasardye þer byforn [leaf 199, back] 624
 ffor which he helde his glorie and his renoun
 At^t no value of^t reputacioun
 lordes mighten fynden oþer maner pley
 honeste ynough^t to dryue þe day away 628
Now wol I speke of^t oþes false and grete
 A word or tuo as oþer bookes entrete
 Gret^t sweryng^t is a þing^t abhominable
 And fals swerynge is more reprobable 632

þe hihe god forbad sweryng' at' al
 Witnesse at' Matthew but' in special
 Of' sweryng' saiþ þe holy Ieromie
 þou schalt' swere soþ þin oþes and nough't lye / 636
 And swere in doome and eek' in rightwisenesse
 But' ydel sweryng' is a cursednesse
 Bihold and see þat' in þe ferste table /
 Of' heyhe goddes hestes honorable / 640
 how þat' þe secunde heste of' him is þis /
 Take nough't my name in ydelnesse amys /
 lo raþer he forbedeþ such sweryng'
 Or Omycyde or eny oþer cursed þing' 644
 I say as by ordre þus it' standeþ
 This knoweþ þat' his hestes vnderstandeþ
 how þat' þe secunde heste of' god is þat'
 And forþermore I wol þe telle al plat' 648
 þat' vengeaunte schal nouzt' parte fro his hous
 þat' of' his othis is so outrageous
 By goddes precious herte and his nayles
 And by his blood þat' is in hayles 652
 Seuen is my chaunce and þin is fyue and þre /
 By goddes armes if' þou falsly pleye me
 þis dagger schal þurgh þin herte go
 þis fruyt' comeþ of' þe bicched bones tuo 656
 fforsweryng' Ire falsnes homicyde
 Now for þe loue of' crist' þat' for vs dyde
 leueþ þoure oþes boþe grete and smale
 ffor cristes sake and herkne to my tale [leaf 206] 660
 þise ryetoures þre of' which I telle
 longe er pryme ronge eny belle
 Were sette hem in a tauerne for to drynke /
 And as þey sate þey herde a belle clynke / 664
 Byforn a corps was caryed to his graue
 þat' oon of' hem gan calle to his knaue /
 Go bet' quop he and axe redyly
 What' corps is þis þat' passeþ faste by / 668

GROUP C. § 4. PARDONER'S TALE. Corpus MS.

And loke þat þou reporte his name wel
 Sire *quod* þis boye it nedeþ neuer a del
 It was me told er 3e came here to oures
 He was *parde* an old felawe of 3oures 672
 Al sodeynly was he slayn to night /
 ffor-drunke as he sate vp his benche vpright
 Ther came a pryue þeef men cleped deþ
 þat in his cuntre al þe poeple sleþ 676
 And with his spere he smot his herte a tuo
 And went his way wipouten wordes mo
 And maister er 3e come in his *presence* / 680
 he haþ a þousend slain þis pestilence / 679
 Me þinkeþ it were necessarie /
 ffor to be war of such an aduersarie /
 Beþ redy for to metè him euermore /
 þus taughte me my dame I say no more / 684
 By seinte mary seyde þis tauernere
 þe child saiþ soþ for he haþ slayn to 3ere
 Hens ouer a myle wipinne a gret village
 Boþe man and womman child and page 688
 I trowe his habitacioñ be þere /
 To ben auysed gret wisdom it were /
 Er þat he dede a man dishonour
 3e goddes armes *quod* þis ryetour 692
 Is it/ such *peril* wip him for to mete
 I schal him seeke by wey and eek by strete
 I make avow to goddes digne bones
 Herkne felawes we þre ben alle ones [leat 200, back] 696
 let eche of vs halde vp his hand to oþer
 And eche of vs bycome oþeres broþer
 And we woln slee þis false traytour deþ
 He schal be slayn he þat so many sleþ 700
 By goddes dignite er it be night
 To-gidre haue þese þre here hertes hight
 To lyue and deye ilk of hem to oþer
 As pough he were his owen sworne broþer 704

And vp þey sterte al drunken in þis rage
 And forþ þey gon toward þat' village
 Of which þe tauerner haþ spoke byforn
 And many a grisly oþ þenne haue þey sworn 708
 And cristes blessed body þey torent
 Deth schal be deed if þat' we may him hent/
 Whan þey han goon nough't fully a myle /
 Right' as þey wolde haue treden ouer a style 712
 And olde and a pore man with hem mette
 þis olde man ful mekely hem grette
 And seyde þus now lordes god þou se
 þe proudest' of þese ryettoures þre 716
 Answered agayn what' carle wiþ harde grace
 Why art' þou al forwrapped saue þy face /
 Why lyuest' þou so longe in so gret' age /
 þis olde man gan loke in his visage / 720
 And sayde þus for I can nough't fynde /
 A man þough þat' I walked in-to ynde /
 Neyþer in Cite ne in village
 That' wol chaunge his þouþe for myn age 724
 And þefore moot' I haue myn age stille
 As lange tyme as it' is goddes wille /
 Ne deþ allas nel nough't haue my lyf'
 þus walke I lyk' a resteles kaytyf' 728
 And on þe ground which is my moodres gate /
 I knobbe wiþ my staff' erly and late
 And saye leeu mooder lete me Inne
 Lo how I wanse fleissch and blood and skyn [leaf 201] 732
 Allas whan schullen myne bones ben at' reste
 Moder with þou wolde I chaunge my cheste
 That' in my chambre lange tyme haue be
 þe for an here clout/ to wrappe me 736
 But' þit' to me sche wole nouzt' do þat/ grace
 ffor which ful hale and welked is my face
 But' sires to þou it nys no curtesye
 To speken vntil an olde man vilenye 740

But he trespace in word oþer elles . in dede
 In holy wryt þe may þoure self wel rede /
 Aþeins an olde man hoor vpon his heede /
 þe schullen aryse wherfore I þiue þow rede 744
 Ne doþ nouȝt to an olde man non harme now
 No more þat men dede to þow
 In age if þat þe so longe abyde
 And god be wiþ þou wheþer þe go or ryde 748
 I mot go þider þer as I haue to go
 Nay olde cherl by god þou schalt nouȝt so
 Sayde þis olde hasardour anon
 þou þartest noughȝt so lightly by seint Ion 752
 þou spake right now of þilke traitour deþ
 þat in þis cuntre alle oure frendes sleep
 haue heer my trouþe as þou art his aspye /
 Telle wher he is or þou schalt abyde 756
 By god and by þe holy sacrament/
 ffor sobly þou art on of his assent
 To slen vs þonge folk þou false þeeft
 Now sires if þat it be to þou so leefȝt 760
 To fynde deþ turne vp þis croked wey
 ffor in þat groue I lafte him by my fey
 vnder a tre and þere he wole abyde
 Ne for þoure bost he nyl him no þing hyde 764
 Se þe þat Oke right þere þe schuln him fynde
 God saue þou þat bouȝt aþein mankynde.
 And þou amende þus sayde þis olde man
 And euery of þise ryetoures ran [leaf 201, back] 768
 Til þey came to þe tree and þer þey founde
 Of floryns fyne of gold y-coyned rounde
 Wel neih a seuen buscheles as hem þoughȝt
 No lenger þenne after deþ þey souȝt 772
 But eche of hem so glad was of þe sight
 ffor þat þe floryns so faire ben and bright
 That down þey sette hem by þe precious horde
 The worste of hem he spak / þe firste worde 776

GROUP C. § 4. PARDONER'S TALE. Corpus MS.

Breperen quod he take keepe what' I say
 My witte is gret' þough þat' I bourde and play
 þis tresour haþ fortune to vs ȝiuen
 In merþe and Iolyte oure lijf' to lyuen 780
 And lightly as it' comeþ so wole we spende
 Ey goddes *precious* dignite who wende
 To day þat' we schulde haue so fair a grace
 But' mighte þis golde be caryed fro þis place 784
 home to myn hous oþer elles vnto ȝoures
 þanne mighte we seye þat' it/ were al oures /
 þenne were we in heih felice
 but' trewely by day it' may nough't be / 788
 Men wolde say þat' we were þeues stronge
 And for oure oughne tresour don vs honge
 þis tresour moste y-karied be by night'
 As wysly and as sleighly as hit' might'
 792
 Wherfore I rede let' loke among' vs alle
 Be drawe and let see wher þe cutte wol falle
 he þat' haþ þe cutte wiþ herte blythe
 Schal renne to toun and þat' ful swythe 796
 To brynge vs breed and wyn ful pryuyly
 And tuo of' ous schuln kepe ful subtylly
 þis tresour wel and if' he wol nough't tarien
 Whan þat' it' is night' we woln þy tresour carien 800
 By on assent' wher as vs luste best
 þat' oon of' hem broughte in his feste
 And bad hem drawe and loke on whom it wol falle
 And it' fille on þe ȝongeste of' hem alle [leaf 202] 804
 And forþ toward þe toun he wente anon
 And also soone as he was y-gon
 þat' on of' hem spak' þus vnto þat' oþer
 þou wost' wel þat' þou art' myn owen sworne broþer 808
 Thyn *prophyte* wol I telle þe anon
 þou wost' wel þat' oure felawe is gon
 And heere is gold and þat' ful gret' plente
 That' it' schal departed be among' vs þre 812

GROUP C. § 4. PARDONER'S TALE. **Corpus MS.**

But napeles if I can schape it/ so
 þat it departed were amongst vs tuo
 had I nouȝt don a frendes turne to þe
 þat oþer answerde I not how þat mighte be 816
 I woot wel þat þe gold is oure tuo
 What schulde we seye what schulde we do
 Schal it be counseil sayde þe firste schrewe /
 And I schal telle in wordes fewe 820
 What we schuln doon and bringe it wel aboute
 I graunte *quod* þat oþer out of doute
 þat by my trewþe I wol þe nouȝt bewreye
 Now quop þe firste þou wost wel we be tweye 824
 And tweyne of vs schuln strengre ben þan oon
 loke whenne he is sette and þanne anon
 Aryse as þou woldest wiþ him pleye
 And I schal renne him þurgh þe sydes tweye 828
 Whiles þat þou struggelist wiþ him in game
 And wiþ þy dagger loke þou do þe same
 And þenne schal al þis gold departed be
 My deere freend bitwixe þe and me 832
 þenne may we boþe oure lustes fulfille
 And pleye atte dys right at oure owen wille
 And þus accorded ben þese schrewes tweye
 To sleen þe þridde as ȝe herde me seye 836
 þis ȝongest which þat wente to þe toun
 fful ofte in herte he rolleþ vp and doun
 þe beaute of þese floreyne newe and bright
 O lord quop he if so were þat I might [leaf 202, back] 840
 Al þis tresour wynne to my self allone
 þer nys no man þat lyueþ vnder þe trone /
 Of god þat scholde lyue as mery as I
 And at þe laste þe feend oure enemy 844
 Putte in his þouȝt þat he schulde poysoñ beye
 With which he mighte sleen his felawes tweye
 For why þe feend fand him in such lyuyng
 That hadde leue him to sorwe brynge 848

GROUP C. § 4. PARDONER'S TALE. Corpus MS.

ffor þis was vtterly his entent'
 To slen hem boþe and neuer to repent
 And forþ he goþ no lenger nolde he tarye
 In-to þe toun vnto a potycarie / 852
 And preyde him þat' he him wolde selle
 Som poysoun þat' he might' his rattes quelle
 And eek' þer was a polkat' in his hawe
 þat' as he sayde his Capons had y-slawe / 856
 And sayde he wolde wreken him if' he might'
 Of' vermyn þat' destroyed him by night'
 þe apotykaries answerde þou schalt' haue
 A þing' þat' als god my soule saue 860
 In al þis world þer nys no creature
 þat' eten or drunken haþ of' þis confecture
 Nough't' but' þe mountaunce of' a corn of' whete
 þat' he ne schal his lyf' anon forlete 864
 3e sterue he schal and þat' in lasse while /
 þenne þou wolt' gon a pace nough't' but' a myle
 þis poysoun is so strong' and so vyolent'
 þis cursed man haþ in his hand y-hent' 868
 þis þoysoun in a box and seþenes he ran
 In-to þe nexte strete vnto a man
 And borwed him large botelles þre
 And in þe tweyne þis poysouñ poured he 872
 þe þridde he keped clene for his drynke
 ffor al þe night' he schop him to swynke
 In karying' of' þe golde out' of' þat' place
 And whan þis ryetour wiþ sory grace [leaf 208] 876
 had felled wiþ him his grete botelles þre
 To his felawes azayn repayreþ he
 What' nedeþ it' to sermone þer-of' more
 ffor right' as þay hadde cast' his dep' afore 880
 Right' so þey haue him slayn and þat' anon
 And whenne þat' þis was don þen 'spak' þat' oon
 Now let' vs drynke and sytte and make vs mery
 And afterward we wolen his body bery 884

GROUP C. § 4. PARDONER'S TALE. Corpus MS.

And aftirward it' happed hem *per cas*
 To take þe botel þer-in þe poysoñ was
 And drank' and ȝaf' his felawe drynke also
 ffor which anon þey storuen boþe tuo 888
 But' certes I suppose þat' Auycenne
 Wrot' neuer in no Canoun ne in no fenne
 Mo wonder sorwes of' enpoysonyng'
 Thus hadde þise wrecches tuo here endyngē 892
 Thus ended ben þis Omycides tuo
 And eek' þe false enpoysonere also
 O cursed synne ful of' cursednes
 O traytours Omycyderes o wikkednes 896
 O glotenye o luxurie O hasardye
 þou blasphemer of' crist' wiþ vilenye
 And oþes grete of' vsage and of' pryde
 Allas mankynde how may it betyde 900
 þerto þin creatour / which þat' þe wrought'
 And wiþ his precious blood þe bought'
 þou art' so fals and so vnkynde allas
 Now goode men god forȝiue ȝoure trespas 904
 And ware ȝou fro þe synne of' auarice /
 Myn holy pardoun may ȝou alle warische
 So þat' ȝe offre nobles or sterlinges
 Oþer elles seluer spones broches and rynges / 908
 Boweþ ȝoure hed vnder þis holy bulles
 Comeþ vp ȝe wyues offreþ ȝoure wulles
 ȝoure name I entre here in my rolle anon
 In-to þe blisse of' heuen schul ȝe gon [leaf 203, back] 912
 I ȝou assoille by myn heih powere
 ȝe þat' woln offre as clene and eek' as cleere
 As ȝe were born and sires lo þus I preche
 And Ihesu crist' þat' is oure soules leche 916
 So graunte ȝou his pardoun to reseceyue
 ffor þat' is best' I wol ȝou nouȝt disceyue
 But' sires o word forgat' I in my tale
 I haue reliques and pardoñ in my male 920

As faire as eny man in Engelond
 Whiche were me y-3oue by þe popes hond
 Ift eny oft 3ou wole of deuocioñ
 Offren and haue myn absolucioñ 924
 Comeþ forþ anon and kneleþ down heere
 And 3e schuln haue my pardoñ þat' is deere
 Oþer elles takeþ pardoun as 3e wende
 Al newe and freissche at' euery tounes ende 928
 So þat' 3e offren alway newe and newe /
 Nobles and pens which þat' ben good and trewe
 It' is an honour to euerich þat' is heere
 þat' 3e may haue a suffisaunt' pardonere 932
 To assoille 3ou in cuntre as I ryde
 ffor auentures which þat' may betyde
 ffor peradventure þer may falle on or tuo
 Doun of' his hors and breke his necke a tuo 936
 loke which a suerte it' is to 3ou alle
 þat' I am in 3our felaschipe y-falle
 þat' may assoille 3ou boþe more and lasse
 Whan þat' þe soule schal fro þe body passe / 940
 I rede þat' oure hooste schal begynne
 ffor he is most' enveloped in synne
 Comeþ forþ sire Ost' and offreþ first' anon
 And þou schalt' kisse þe relikes euerychoon 944
 3e for a grote vnbokel anon þy purs
 Nay. nay *quod* he þenne haue I cristes curs
 Let' be *quod* he it' / schal nouzt' be so þeche
 þou woldest' make me kesse þin olde breche [leaf 204] 948
 And swere it' were a relyk' of' a seint'
 þough it' were wiþ þyn fundament' depeynt
 But' by þe Crosse which þat' seint' Eleyne fand
 I wolde I hadde þine coyllons in myn hand 952
 In stede of' relikes oþer of' seintuary
 let' cutte hem of' I wol þe helpe hem cary
 þey schuln be schryned in an hogges tord
 þis pardonere answerde nouzt' a word 956

GROUP C. § 4. PARDONER'S TALE. **Corpus MS.**

So wroþ he was he nolde no word say
 Now *quod* oure Oost' I wil no lenger play
 Wiþ þe ne with non oþer angry man
 But' riht' anon þe worþy knight' bygan 960
 Whan þat' he saugh þat' al þe poeple l[ough]
 Nomore of' þis for it is riht' ynough
 Sire *pardoner* be mery and glad of' cheere
 And 3e sire Oste þat' ben to me so deere 964
 I pray 3ou þat' 3e kisse þe *pardoneere*
 And *pardoner* I pray þe þat' þou drawe þe neere
 And as we dide let' vs laughe and pleye 967
 Anon þey kisse and ryden forþ here weye ¶ *Explicit. fabula*
Pardonarii

GROUP B. (β. FRAGMENT III.)

§ 4. THE SHIPMAN'S TALE.

¶ Here bygynneþ þe schipmannes tale [on leaf
204]

A Marchaunt^t whilom dwelled at^t Seint^t Denys Ca^m
 That^t riche was for which men heelde him wys xviij^m.
 A wyf^t he hadde of^t excellent^t beaute
 And compynable and reuerent^t was sche
 Which is a þing^t þat^t causeþ more dispence
 þen worþ is alle þe cheere and reuerence 1196
 That^t men haue doon at^t festes and at^t daunces
 Suche salutaciouns and contynañces
 Passeþ as doþ þe schadewe on a wal
 But woo is him þat^t paye moot^t for al 1200
 þe sely housband algates he moste paye
 he moot^t vs cloþe and vs arraye
 As for his owen worschipe richely
 In which aray we daunce Iolyly 1204
 And if^t þat^t he nouzt^t may *per* aduenture [leaf 204, back]
 Or elles luste no suche spenses endure /
 But^t þenkeþ it^t is waste and y-loste /
 Thenne moot^t anoþer payen for oure coste 1208
 Or lene us golde and þat^t is perilous
 þis noble marchand held a noble hous
 ffor which he hadde alday gret^t repayre
 ffor his largenesse and for his wyf^t was fayre 1212
 þat^t wonder is but^t herkeneþ to my tale
 Amonges aȝ his gestes grete and smale /
 þer was a monk^t a fair man and a bolde
 I trowe a þritty wynter he was olde / 1216
 That^t euer in oon was drawyng^t to þe place
 þis ȝonge monk^t þat^t was so fair of face

Aqueynted was so wiþ þis goode man
 Siþenes þat' here firste knowleche bygan 1220
 That' in his hous as ffamuler was he
 As it is possible eny frend to be
 And for as mekel as þe goode man
 And eek' þis monk' of' which þat' I bygan 1224
 Were boþe tuo y-born in o village
 The monk' him claymeþ as for cosynage
 And he aȝein he saiþ nouȝt' ones nay
 But' was as glad þer of' as foul of' day 1228
 ffor to his herte it was a gret' plesaunce
 þus ben þay knitte wiþ eterne alliaunce /
 And ilke of' hem gan oþer for to assure /
 Of' broþerhode whiles þat' here lyf' may dure 1232
 ffre was daun Iohn and namely of' dispense
 As in þat' hous and ful of' diligence
 To do plesaunce and also gret' costage /
 he nouȝt' forgat' to ȝiue þe leste page / 1236
 In al þat' hous but' after here degre
 He ȝaf' þe lord and seþins al his meyne /
 Whan þat' he came som maner honest' þing'
 ffor which þey were al glad of' his comyng' 1240
 As foul is fayn whan sonne vp ariseþ
 Namore of' þis as now for it' suffiseþ
 But' so bifeþ þis marchaund vpon a day
 Schop him to make redy his array 1244
 Toward þe toun of' Bruges for to fare
 To byen þere a porcioun of' ware
 ffor which he haþ to Parys sent' anon)
 A messanger and preyed haþ doun Ion 1248
 That' he schulde come to seint' Denys and pleye
 Wiþ him and with his wyf' a day or tweye
 Or he to Bruges wente in aȝ wyse
 This noble monk' of' which I ȝou deuyse 1252
 haþ of' his abbot' as him lust' licence
 By cause he was a man of' heih prudence

GROUP B. § 4. SHIPMAN'S TALE. Corpus MS.

- And eek' an officer out' for to ryde
 To see here graunges and here bernes wyde 1256
 And vnto seynt' Denys he comeþ anon
 Who was so welcome as my lord daun Iohñ
 Oure deere cosyn ful of' curtesye
 Wiþ him brought' he a Iobbe of' maluesye 1260
 And eek' anoþer ful of' good vernage
 And volatille as ay was his vsage
 And þus I lete hem ete and drynke and pleye
 This marchand and þis monk' a day or tweye / 1264
 The þridde day þis marchand vp ariseþ
 And on his needes sadly him aviseþ
 And vp in to his countourhous goþ he /
 To rekne wiþ himselue wel may be 1268
 Of' pilke 3eer how þat' it' with him stood
 And how þat' he despended hadde his good
 And if' þat' he encrested were or non
 his bokes and his bagges many oon 1272
 he leyþ bifore him on his countyng' bord
 fful riche was his tresour and his hoord
 ffor which ful faste his counterhous dore he schette
 And eek' he nolde noman schulde him lette 1276
 Of' his acountes for þe mene tyme [leaf 205, back]
 And þus he sitte til it' was passed prime
 Daun Iohñ was rysen in þe morne also /
 And in þe gardyn walkeþ to and fro 1280
 And haþ his þinges sayde deuoutely
 þis goode wyf' cam walkyng'e pryuely
 In to þe gardyn þer he walkeþ softe
 And him salueth as sche haþ don ofte 1284
 A mayden childe came in hire companye
 Which at hire luste may gouerne and gye
 ffor 3it vnder þe 3erde was þe mayde
 O deere Cosyn myn daun Iohñ sche sayde / 1288
 What' eyleþ 3ou so raþe to aryse
 Nec̄ quod he it' aughte ynough suffise

- ffyue houres for to slepen on a nyght
 But it were for an olde palled knight 1292
 As ben þese wedded men þat lye and dare
 As in a forme sitte alway an hare
 Were al forstraught wip houndes grete and smale
 But deere neece why be 3e so pale / 1296
 I trowe certes þat oure goode man
 haþ 3ou laboured seþenes þe nyght bygan
 þat 3ou were neede to resten hastily
 And wip þat word he lough ful meryly 1300
 And of his owne þought he wax al reed
 This fayre wyf gan to schake hire heed
 And sayde þus 3e god wot al *quod* sche
 Nay cosyn myn it stant nouzt so wip me / 1304
 ffor by þat god þat 3aff/ me soule and lyf
 In all þe rewme of fraunce is þer no wyf
 That lasse lust haþ to þat sory pley
 ffor I may synge allas and welawey 1308
 þat I was born but to no wight *quod* sche
 Dar I nouzt telle how it stant wip me
 Wherefore I þenke out of þis lond to wende
 Or elles of myself to make an ende / 1312
 So ful am I of drede and of care [leaf 206]
- This monk bygan vpon þis wyf to stare
 And sayde allas my neece god it forbede
 That 3e for eny sorwe or ony drede 1316
 ffordo 3oure self but telleþ forþ 3oure greef
 Peradventure I may in 3our mescheef
 Counseile or helpe and þerfore telleþ me
 All 3oure annoye for it schal be secre 1320
 ffor on my portos I make an oth
 þat neuer in my lijf for leef ne loþ
 Ne schal I of no counseil 3ou bewreye
 The same a3ein to 3ou *quod* sche I seye 1324
 By god and by þis portos I swere
 þey men wolde me al to peeces tere

GROUP B. § 4. SHIPMAN'S TALE. Corpus MS.

- Ne schal I neuer for to go in to helle
 Bewreye a word of þing þat 3e me telle / 1328
 Nought for no cosyng ne alliaunce
 But verreily for loue and affiaunce
 Thus ben þey swore and her-vpon y-kiste
 And ilk of hem tolde oþer what hem liste 1332
 Cosyn *quod* sche if I hadde a space
 As I haue non and namely in þis place
 þanne wolde I telle a legende of my lyf
 What I haue suffred sethens I was a wyf 1336
 Wiþ myn housband and þeigh he be 3our cosyn
 Nay *quod* þis monk by god and by seint Martyn
 he nys no more cosyn vnto me
 þan is þis leef þat hangeþ on þe tre 1340
 I clepe him so by seint Denys in ffraunce
 To haue þe more cause of acqueyntaunce
 Of 3ou which I haue loued specially
 Abouen aȝ wommen sikerly 1344
 This were ynough on my profession
 Telleþ 3oure greef lest þat he come a-doun
 And hasteþ 3ou and goþ 3oure wey anon
 My deere loue *quod* sche O daun Iohn 1348
 fful leef me were þis counseil to hyde [leaf 206, back]
 But out it mot it may no lenger abyde
 myn housbond is to me þe worste man
 þat euer was siþenes þe world bygan 1352
 But siþenes I am a wyf it sit nouzt me
 To telle no wight of oure pryuyte
 Neyþer a bedde ne in non oþer place
 God schilde I scholde telle it for his grace 1356
 A wyf ne schal nat seyn of hire housband
 But aȝ honour as I can vnderstande
 Saue vnto 3ou þus moche telle I schal
 As help me god he nys nouzt worþ at al 1360
 In no degre þe value of a flye
 But 3it me greueþ most his nyggardye

- And wel 3e woot þat wommen naturelly
 Desyren þinges seuen as wel as I 1364
 þey wolden þat here housbandes scholde be
 hardy and wys riche and þer-to fre
 And buxum to his wyf and freissch a bedde
 But by þat ilke lord þat for vs bledde 1368
 ffor his honour my selue to arraye
 A sonday next I moste paye
 An hundred ffrankes or elles am I lorn
 3et were me leuer þat I were vnborn 1372
 þenne me were don a sclauder or vilenye
 And if myn housbande eeke might aspye
 I nere but lost and þerfore I 3ou preye
 lene me þis somme and elles mot I deye 1376
 Daun Ioħn I say lene me þese hundred frankes
 Par de I wol not fayle þe my þankes
 If þat 3ou luste to do þat I 3ou pray
 ffor at a certein day I wole 3ou pay 1380
 And do to 3ou what plesaunce and seruise
 That I may do right as 3ou lust deuyse
 And but I do god take on me vengauce
 As foule as hadde genyloñ of ffrauunce 1384
 This gentil monk answerde in þis manere [leaf 267]
 Now trewely myn owen lady deere
 I haue quod he on 3ou so gret a rouþe
 That I 3ou swere and plighite 3ou my trouþe 1388
 That whan 3oure housbonde is to fflaundes fare
 I wol delyuer 3ou out of þis worldes care /
 ffor I wol bringen 3ou an hundred frankes
 And wiþ þat he caught hir by þe schankes 1392
 And hire embraced harde and kissed ofte
 God now 3oure weye quod he al stille and softe
 And let vs dyne as sone as euer 3e may
 ffor by my chilyndre it is prime of þe day 1396
 God now and beþ as trewe as I schal be /
 Now elles god forbede sire quod sche

GROUP B. § 4. SHIPMAN'S TALE. Corpus MS.

And forþ sche goþ as gelous as a pye
 And bad þe cokes þat' þey schulde hem hye 1400
 So þat' men mighte dyne and þat' anon
 vp to hir housbonde is þis wyf' y-gon
 And knokkeþ at his countour' boldely
 Quy la *quod* he peter it' am I 1404
 Quoþ sche what' how longe wol 3e faste /
 how longe tyme wol 3e rekne and caste
 3oure *sommes* 3oure bokes and 3oure þinges
 þe deuyll haue part' on aþt' suche rekenynges 1408
 3e han ynough' parde of' goddes sonde
 Come down to day and lete 3oure bagge stonde
 Ne be 3e nough't' aschamed þat' Daun Ioħn
 Schal fastyng' al þis day elenge gon 1412
 What' lete vs heere masse go we dyne
 Wyf' *quod* þis man ful lytel canstow dyuyne
 The curious busynesse þat' we haue
 ffor of' vs chapmen so god me saue 1416
 And by þat' lord þat' called is seint' yue
 Skarsly amonges twelue tweye schuln priue
 Continuelly lastyng' vnto oure age
 We may wel make chere and good visage 1420
 And dryue forþ þe world as it may be [leaf 207, back]
 And kepen oure estate in priuite
 Til we be deed or elles þat' we pleye
 A pylgrymage or gon out' of' þe weye 1424
 And þerfore haue I gret' necessite
 vpon þis queynte worlde to auyse me
 ffor euermore we mote stande in drede
 Of' happe and fortune in oure chapmanhede 1428
 To fflaundes wol I go to morne at' day
 And come a3ein as sone as euer I may
 ffor which my deere wyff' I þe beseke
 As be to euery wight' buxom and meke 1432
 And for to kepe oure good be curious
 And honestly gouerne wel oure hous

þou hast ynough in euery maner wyse
 That to a thrifty housbonde may suffise 1436
 The lakkeþ non array ne no vitayle
 Of Siluer in þi purs þou mayst nouzt fayle
 And wiþ þat word his countour dore he schette
 And doun he goþ no lenger nolde he lette 1440
 And hastyly a masse was þer sayde
 And speedly þe tables were layde
 And to þe dyner faste þey hem speede
 And richely þis monkt þe Chapman fedde 1444
 And after dyner daun Ioħn soburly
 This Chapman took a part al pryuyly
 he seyde him þus cosyn it standeþ so
 þat wel I see to Bruges wolle 3e go 1448
 God and seint austyn spede 3ou and gyde
 I pray 3ou Cosyn wysly þat 3e ryde
 Gouverneþ 3ou also of 3oure dyete
 And temperally and namely in þis hete 1452
 Bytwixe vs tuo needeþ no straunge fare
 ffare wel cosyn god schilde 3ou fro care
 If eny þing þer be by day or by night
 If it ligge in my power and my might 1456
 That 3e me wol comaunde in eny wyse [leaf 208]
 It schal be doon right as 3e wil deuyse
 O þing er þat 3e gon if þat it may be
 I wolde preye 3ou for þe loue of me 1460
 An hundred frankes for a wyke or tweye
 ffor certeyn bestes þat I moste beye
 To store with a place þat is owres
 God helpe me I wolde þat it were 3owres 1464
 I schal noughþt fayle suerly of my day
 Noughþt for a þousand frankes a myle way
 But lete þis þing be secre I 3ou preye
 3e schulle be payed wher þat I lyue or deye 1468
 And fare now wel myn owen cosyn dere
 Graunt mercy of 3oure cost and of 3oure chere

This noble marchaunt^t gentilly anon
 Answerde and sayde O Cosyn daun Iohn 1472
 Now sikerly þis is a smal requeste
 My gold is 3oures whan þat^t euer 3ou leste
 And nought^t oonly my gold but^t my chaffare
 Tak^t what^t 3ou leste god schilde þat^t 3e spare 1476
 But^t o þing^t is 3e knowe it wel ynough
 Of^t chapmen þat here monee is here plough
 We may creauce whiles we haue a name /
 But^t goldles for to be it^t is no game 1480
 Pay it^t a3ein whan it^t liþ in 3our ese
 After my might^t ful fayn wolde I 3ou plese
 þise hundred frankes he fette forþ anon
 And pryuyly he took^t hit^t to daun Iohn 1484
 No wight^t in al þis world wist of^t þis lone
 Sauyng^t þis marchaunt^t and daun Iohn allone
 þey drunken and romed out^t to pleye
 Til þat^t daun Iohn rydeþ to his abbeye 1488
 þe morne came and forþ þis marchaunt^t rydeþ
 To fflaundes ward his prentys wel him gydeþ
 Til he cam in to Bruges meryly
 Now goþ þis marchaunt^t faste and bysyly 1492
 Aboute his neede and byeþ and creaunceþ [leaf 208, back]
 he neyþer pleyeþ at^t þe dys ne daunceþ
 But^t as a marchand schortly for to telle
 he leet^t his wyf^t and þer I lete him dwelle 1496
 þe sonday next^t þe marchaunt^t was agon
 To seint^t Denys I-comen is Daun Iohn
 Wiþ croune and berde freissch and newe schauē
 In al þe hous þer nas so lite a knaue 1500
 Ne no wight^t elles þat^t he nas fayn
 ffor þat^t my lord doun Iohn was come agayn
 And schortly to here poynt^t for to gon
 þis fayre wyf^t acordeþ to daun Iohn 1504
 And for þis hundred ffrankes he schulde al night^t
 haue hire in his armes bolt^t vpright^t

And þis acorde *parfourmed* was in dede
 In myrþe al niȝt / a busy lyf þey lede 1508
 Til it was day þat daun Ioħn went his way
 And bade þe meyne far wel haue good day
 ffor non of hem ne no wight in þe toun
 haþ of daun Ioħn right non suspeciou 1512
 and forþ he rydeþ home to his abbay
 Or wher him luste no more of him I say
 This marchaunt whan þat ended was þe ffayre
 To seint Denys he gan for to repayre 1516
 And wiþ his wyf he makeþ feste and chere
 And telleþ hire þat chaffare is so deere
 þat needes moste he make a Cheuesaunce
 ffor he was bounden in a reconysaunce 1520
 To paye xx þousand scheldes anon
 ffor which þis marchaunt is y-wont to gon
 To borwe of certein frendes þat he hadde
 A certeyn frankes and some wiþ him he ladde 1524
 And whan þat he was come in to þe toun
 ffor gret chierte and gret / affeccioun
 vnto daun Ioħn he ferst him goþ to pleye
 Nought for to borwe of him no moneye 1528
 But for to wite and se of his welfare
 [leaf 209]
 And for to tellen him of his chaffare
 As frendes don when þey ben mette in feere
 Daun Ioħn him makeþ feste and mery cheere 1532
 And he him tolde aȝein ful specially
 how he hadde brought ful wel and graciously
 þanked be god al hool his marchaundise
 Saue þat he moste in aħ maner wyse 1536
 Maken a cheuysance as for his beste
 And þenne he schulde be in ioye and resto
 Daun Ioħn answerde certes I am fayn
 þat ȝe in hele be come home agayn 1540
 And if þat I were riche as haue I blisse
 Of twenty þousand scheldes scholde ȝe nouȝt misse

GROUP B. § 4. SHIPMAN'S TALE. Corpus MS.

ffor 3e so kyndely þis oþer day
 Lente me golde as I can and may 1544
 I þanke 3ou by god and by seint' Iame
 But' napeles I took' vnto oure dame
 3oure wyf' at' home þe same gold a3ain
 vpon 3oure benche sche wot' it' wel certain 1548
 By certein toknes þat' I can hire telle /
 Now by 3oure leue I may no lenger dwelle
 Oure abbot' wol out' of' þis toun anon
 And in his companye mot' I gon 1552
 Gret' wel oure dame myn owen nece swete
 And fare wel dere cosyn til we mete
 This marchaunt' wiþ þat' was ful war and wys
 Creaunsed hap and eek' payed in Parys 1556
 To certein lumbardes redy in here hand
 þis somme of' gold and gat' of' hem þe band
 And home he goþ mery as popyngay
 ffor wel he knew he stood in such aray 1560
 þat' needes moste he wynne in such a viage
 A þousend frankes abouen al his costage
 his wyf' ful redy mette him atte gate
 As sche was wont of' old vsage algate 1564
 And al þat' night' in mirþe þey besette / [leaf 209, back]
 ffor he was riche and clerly out' of' dette
 Whan it' was day þis marchant' gan enbrace /
 his wyf' al newe and kissed hire on hire face 1568
 And vp he goþ and makeþ it' wonder tough
 No more *quod* sche by god 3e haue ynough
 And wantounly a3ein wiþ him sche pleyde
 Tille atte laste þat' þis marchant' seyde 1572
 By god *quod* he I am a litel wroþ
 Wiþ 3ou my wyf' þough it' be me loth
 And wote 3e why by god as þat' I gesse
 ffor ye haue made a maner straungenesse 1576
 Bytwixen me and my cosyn daun Iohn
 3e schulde haue warned me er I hadde gon

þat' he hadde 3ou an hundred frankes payed
 By redy tokne and he him held yuel payed 1580
 ffor þat' I to him spak' of' cheuysaunce
 Me semed so as by his contynaunce
 But' napeles by god and heuen king'
 I þoughte nough't' to axe of' him) no þing' 1584
 I pray þe wyf' ne do no more so
 Telle me alway er þat' I fro þe go
 If' eny dettour hap in myn absence
 I-payed þe leste þurgh þin necligence 1588
 I might' him axe a þing' þat' he hap payed
 þis was nas nough affered ne affrayed
 But' boldely sche seyde and þat' anon
 Mary I diffye þat' false monk' daun Iohn 1592
 I kepe nough't' of' his tokenes neuer a deel
 he tok' me certein gold þis wot' I wel
 What' euele þedam on his monkes snowte /
 ffor god it' wot' I wende wiþouten doute / 1596
 þat' he hadde 3oue it' me by cause of' 3ou
 To do þer wiþ myn honour and my prow
 ffor cosynage and eek' for bele chere
 þat' he hap had fulofte tyme heere' <sup>[¹ Skip a leaf which
is headed *Thopas*.]</sup>
 But' seþins I see I stonde in such disioynt' [leaf 211]
 I wol answeere 3ou schortly to þis poynt'
 3e haue mo slakker dettours þen am I
 ffor I wol paye 3ow wel and redily 1604
 ffro day to day and if' so be I fayle
 I am 3our wyf' score it' vpon my tayle
 And I schal paye as sone as euer I may
 ffor by my trouþe I haue on myn array 1608
 And nough't' on waste bestowed euery del
 And for I haue bestowed it' so wel
 To 3oure honour for goddes sake I say
 As be nough't' wroþ but' lete vs laughe and play 1612
 3e schuln my ioly body haue to wedde /
 By god I nyl nough't' paye 3ou but' a bedde

GROUP B. § 4. SHIPMAN'S TALE. Corpus MS.

fforziue it me myn owen spouse deere /
 Turne hideward and makeþ bettre cheere 1616
 This marchaunt seyh þer was no remedye
 And for to chyde it nere but folye /
 Sepins þat þe þing may nough amended be
 Now wyf he sayde and I forziue it þe 1620
 But by þin lyf ne be no more so large
 kepe bet my good þis ziue I þe in charge /
 þus endeþ now my tale and god vs sende
 Toylyng ynough vnto oure lyues ende ¶ Explicit 1624

Here endeþ þe schipmannes tale

W El seyde by corpus *dominus*
 Now lange mote þou sayle by þe coste
 Sire gentil mayster gentil marynere /
 God ȝiue þe monk' a þousand last' quade ȝere / 1628
 A ha felawes beþ war of' such a Iape /
 þe monk' putte in þe mannes hood an ape /
 And in his wyues eek' by seint' austyn
 Draweþ no monkes more in to ȝoure In 1632
 But' now passe ouer and let' vs seke aboute
 Who schal now telle ferst' of' al þis route
 Anoper tale and wip þat' word he sayde
 As curteysly as it' hadde ben a mayde [leaf 211, back]
 My lady prioresse by ȝour leue
 So þat' I wiste I schulde ȝou nough't greue /
 I wolde deme þat' ȝe telle schulde
 A tale next' if' so were þat' ȝe wolde 1640
 Now wole ȝe fouche sauf' my lady deere /
 Gladly quop sche and sayde in þis manere

[*No gaps between the stanzas.*]

, Here begynneth þe tale of Alma redemptoris
þe prioresses Tale. ¶ Prologe

¶ Domine dominus noster

O lord oure lord þin name how merueilous
Is in þis large word y-sprede *quod* she
ffor nought only þyn laud precious
Parfourned is by men of dignite 1646
But by þe mouth of children þin bounte
Parformed is for on oure brest soukyng
Som tyme schewen þey þin heryng 1649

¶ Wherefore in laude as I can best or may
Of þe and of þe white lyly flour
Which þat þe bar and is a mayde alwey
To telle a story I wol don my labour 1653
Noughþ þat I may encrece hire honour
ffor sche hireself is honour and þerto roote /
Of bounte next hire sone of soules boote 1656

¶ O mooder mayde O mayde moder fre
O busch vnbrant brennyng in moyses sight
That rauyscheþ doun fro þe deytele
þurgh þin humbles þe gost þat in þe alight 1660
Of whos vertu whan he in þin herte alight
Conceyued was þe fadres sapience
Help me to telle it in þin reuerence 1663

¶ Lady þin bounte and þin magnificence
þin vertu and þin gret humilite
Ther may no tonge expresse in no science
ffor som tyme lady er men preye to þe 1667
þou gost biforn and þin benigrite
And getest vs to light þurgh þin prayere
To gyden vs vnto þin sone so clere

[leaf 212]

My connyng' is to wayk' o blisful queene
 ffor to declare þin grete worþinesse
 That' I ne may þe weighte nougħt' susteene /
 But' as a childe of' xij monthe elde or lesse 1674
 That' can vnneþes any word expresse /
 Right' so fare I and þerfore I 3ou preye
 Gydeþ my song' þat' I schal of' 3ou seye 1677

[THE TALE.]

Ther was in a cite in a gret' cite
 Amonges cristen folk' and Iewerye
 Susteyned by a lord of' þat' cuntre 1681
 ffor foule vsure and lucre of' vilanye
 hatful to crist' and to his companye
 And þurgh þe strete men mighte ryde or wende
 ffor it' was fre and open at' euery ende 1684

A lytel scole of' cristen folk' þer stood
 Doun at' þe furþer ende in which þer were
 Children an heepe y-come of' cristes blood
 That' lered in þat' scole 3ere by 3eere 1688
 Such maner doctrine as men vsed þere
 This is to say to syngen and to rede
 As smale children don in here childhede 1691

Among' þis children was a wydewes sone
 A litel clergoun vij 3er of' age
 That' day by day to scole was his wone /
 And eek' also wher he saugh the ymage / 1695
 Of' cristes mooder hadde he in vsage
 As him was taugh't' to knele a doun and seye
 his aue marie as he goþ by þe weye 1698

GROUP B. § 6. PRIORESS'S TALE. Corpus MS.

Thus hap þis wydewe hire litel child y-tauȝt'
 Oure blisful lady cristes mooder deere /
 To worschipe ay and he forgat' it' noughȝt'
 ffor sely child wol alday sone lere 1702

But' ay whan I remembre me on þis matere
 Seynt' Nicholas stant' euer in my presence
 ffor he so ȝonge to crist' dede reuerence 1705

¶ This child his litel book' lernynge [leaf 212, back]
 As he sat' in þe scole at' his primere
 he alma redemptoris herde synge /
 As children lerned here antiphoner 1709

And as he durste he droughȝ him ner and neer
 And herkned ay þe wordes and þe noote /
 Til he þe firste vers couþe aȝ by roote / 1712

Nouȝt' wiste he what' þe latyn was to say
 ffor he so ȝong' and tender was of' age /
 But' on a day his felawe gan he preye
 To expounen him þis song' in his langage / 1716

Or tellen him why þis song' was in vsage /
 This preyde he him to construe and declare /
 fful ofte tyme vpon his knees bare / 1719

his felawe which þat' elder was þan he
 Answerde him þus þis song' I haue herd say
 Was maked of' oure blisful lady fre
 hire to salue and eeke hire for to pray 1723

To ben oure helpe and socour whan we deye
 I can no more expounde in þis matiere
 I lerne song' I can but' smale gramere / 1726

¶ And is þis song' ymade in reuerence
 Of' cristes mooder sayde þis Innocent
 Now certes I wol don my diligence
 To konne it' er Cristemas be went' 1730

pough þat I for my prymer schal be schent
 And schal [be] beten þries in an houre
 I wol it konne oure lady to honoure 1733

¶ his felawe taught him homward pryuyly
 fro day to day til he couþe it by roote
 And þenne he sang it wel and boldely
 fro word to word accordyng to þe note / 1737

þries on a day it passeþ þurgh his þrote /
 To scoleward and homward whan he went
 On cristes moder sette was his entent / 1740

As I haue sayde þurghout þe Iewerie
 This litel childe as he came to and fro [leaf 213]
 ful meryly þen wolde he synge and crye /
 On alma redemptoris euermo 1744

The swetnes hap his herte perced so
 Of cristes mooder þat to hure to preye
 He can nought stynte of syngynge by þe weye / 1747

¶ Oure firste foo þe serpent Sathanas
 That hap in Iewes his waspes neste
 vp swalle and sayde O Ebrayke poeple allas /
 Is þis a þing to þou þat is honeste / 1751

þat suche a boy schal walken as him leste /
 In þoure despite and syngen of such sentence
 Which is aþein oure lawes reuerence / 1754

¶ fro þennes forth þe Iewes han conspired
 This Innocent out of þis world to chace
 In homicidie þer-to han þey hyred
 þat in an aley had a pryue place 1758

And as þe childe gan forby for to pace
 þis cursed Iew him hente and heeld faste
 And cutte his þrote and in a putte him caste / 1761

¶ I say þat in a wardrobe þey him drewe /
 Wher as þise Iewes purgen entraille
 O' cursed folk' of heroudes al newe /
 What' may 3oure euyl entent' 3ou auayle / 1765
 Mordre wole out' certain it' wol nought' fayle
 And namely þere honour of' god schulde sprede
 þe blood out' cryeþ on 3our cursed dede 1768

¶ O martyr sonded to virginite
 Now maystow syngen folwyng' euer in oon
 The white lambe celestial quod he /
 Of' which þe grete euangelist' seint' Iohn 1772
 In Pathmos wrot' which seiþ þey þat' gon
 Byforn þis lambe and synge a song' al newe
 þat' neuer fleisschly wommen þey knewe 1775

¶ þis pore wydewe wayteþ al þat' night'
 After þis litel childe but' hom cam he nouzt'
 ffor whom as sone as it' was dayes light' [leaf 213, back]
 Wiþ face pale for drede and busy þought' 1779
 Sche haþ at' scole and elles wher him sought'
 Til fynally sche gan so fer aspye
 þat' he was seyn last' in þe Iewerye 1782

¶ With moodres pyte in hire brest' enclosed
 Sche goþ as þough sche were half' out' of' mynde /
 To euery place where sche haþ supposed
 By lyklyhede hire childe for to fynde 1786
 And euer on cristes moder meke and kynde
 Sche cryed and at' þe laste þus sche wrought'
 Among' þe cursed Iewes sche him sought' 1789

Sche freyneþ and sche preyþ pitously
 To euery Iewe þat' dwelt' in þilke place
 To telle hire if' hire child went' hem by
 They sayden nay but' ihesus¹ of' his grace [1 MS ihc]

3af' in hire þougħt' wiþ-in a litel space
 þat' in þat' place after hire sone sche cryede
 þer he was caste in a putte besyde 1796

¶ O grete lord þat' performed þin laude
 By mouþ of Innocence lo here þy might'
 This gemme of chastite þis Emeraude
 And eek' of martirdome þe ruby bright' 1800
 þer he wiþ þrote y-korue lay vpright'
 he alma redemptoris gan to synge
 So loude þat' al þe place gan to rynge 1803

¶ The cristen folk' þat' þurgh þe strete went
 In comen for to wondren on þis þing'
 And hastely þey for þe prouost' sent
 he came anon wiþouten eny taryyng' 1807
 And herieþ crist' þat' is of heuen king'
 And eek' his mooder honour of mankynde
 And after þat' þe Iewes let' he bynde 1810

This childe wiþ pitous lamentacioñ
 vp taken syngyng' his song' alway
 And with honour and gret processioñ /
 They carien him to þe next' abbay (leaf 214)
 his moder swownyng' by þe bere lay
 vnneþes mighte þe poeple þat' was þere
 This newe rachel bringe fro his bere 1817

Wiþ torment' and with schameful deþ ilkon
 This prouost' doþ þis Iewes for to sterue
 That' of þis moerdre wiste and þat' anon
 he nolde non such cursednesse obserue / 1821
 Euel schal haue þat' euel wol deserue
 þerfore with wilde hors he dede him drawe
 And after þat' he hynged him by þe lawe 1824

GROUP B. § 6. Prioress's Tale. Corpus MS.

¶ Vpon þis beere ay liþ þis Innocent'
 Biforn þe chief' auter whiles masse last'
 And after þat' þe abbot' / wiþ his couent
 hadde spedde him for to burye him als fast 1828
 And whan þey halywater on him cast'
 3it' spak' þe child when spreynt' was þe holy water
 And sang' O alma redemptoris mater 1831

¶ This abbot' which þat' was an holy man
 As monkes *ben* or elles oughten to¹ be [1 ? to later]
 This 3onge childe to coniure he bigan
 And sayde O deere childe I hailse þe 1835
 By vertu of' þe holy trinite
 Telle me what' is þy cause for to synge
 Sipenes þat' þy þrote is kutte at my semynge 1838

¶ My þrote is cutte vnto my nekke bon
 Sayde þis childe and as by way of' kynde
 I schulde haue deyed 3e long' tyme agon
 But' ihesu crist' as 3e in bookes fynde 1842
 Wol þat' his glorie laste and be in mynde
 And for þe worschipe of' his moder deere /
 3et' may I synge O alma lowde and cleere 1845

¶ This welle of' mercy crystes mooder swete
 I loued alwey as after my konnyng'
 And whan þat' I my lyff' schulde lete
 To me sche cam and bad me for to synge 1849
 This anteme verrailly in my mynde deyng'e [leaf 214, back]
 as 3e haue herd and when þat' I hadde songe
 Me þought' sche leyde a greyn vpon my tonge / 1852

¶ Wherefore I synge and synge moot' certein
 In honour of' þe blisful martir fre
 Til of' my tonge of' taken is þe greyn
 And after þat' sayde sche þus to me 1856

GROUP B. § 6. Prioress's Tale. Corpus MS.

My litel childe now wol I fecche þe
 Whan þat' þy grein is fro þy tonge y-take
 Be nouȝt' a-gast' I wol þe nouȝt' forsake 1859

¶ þis holy monk' þis abbot' him mene I
 his tunge out' caught' / and took' away þe greyn
 And he ʒaf' up þe gost' ful softly
 And when þis abbot' / hadde þis wonder seyn 1863
 his salte teeres stryked doun as reyn
 And gruff' he fell al plat' vnto þe grounde
 And stille he lay as he hadde ben y-bounde / 1866

¶ þe couent' eek' lay vppon þe pauyment'
 Wepynȝ' and herynȝ' cristes moder deere
 And after þat' þay ryse and for ben went'
 And toke away þis martir fro his bere / 1870
 And in a tombe of' marbiȝ' stones clere
 Enclosen þey his litel body swete
 Ther he is now god leue vs for to mete 1873

¶ O ʒonge hewe of' lincolle slayn also
 Wip cursed Iewes as it' is notable
 ffor it' nys but' a litel while ago
 Preye eek' for vs we synful folk' vnstable 1877
 That' of' his mercy god so merciabile
 On vs his grete mercy multiplye
 ffor reuerence of' his mooder marie AmeN ¶ Explicit' //

Whan seyde was þis tale euery man
 As sober was þat' wonder was to se
 Til þat' owre Oste Iape þo bygan
 And þenne at' erst' he loked vpon me ¶ Chaucere
 And sayde þus what' man art' þou *quod* he
 Thou lokest' as þou woldest' fynde an hare / [leaf 215]
 ffor euer vpon þe ground I se þe stare 1887

Approche ner and loke meryly
 Now ware þou sires and let' þis man han place
 he in þe waste is schapen as wel as I
 This were a popet' in armes to embrace 1891
 ffor any womman smal and fair of' face
 he semeþ eluyssch by his contynauce
 ffor vnto no wight' doþ he dalyaunce 1894

Say now somewhat' seþins oþer folk' han sayd
 Telle vs a tale of' merþe and þat' anon
 Oste *quod* I ne be nought' yuel a-payde
 ffor oþer tale certes can I non 1898
 But' of' a Ryme I lerned longe agon
 þe þat' is good *quod* he schuln we here
 Som deynte þing' me þinkeþ by his cheere. 1901

[*No gaps between the stanzas in the MS.*]

¶ Here bygynneth þe tale of Chaucer of sire Thopas
Ca^m xix^m

[*Fytte I.*]

L Esteneþ lordes in good entent'
 And I wol telle verrament'
 Of miracle and solace 1904
 Al of a knight' was fayr and gent'
 In bataille and in tornament'
 His name was sire Thopace 1907

I-born he was in ferre cuntre
 In fflaundes al bezonde þe se
 At poperyng' in þe place 1910
 his fader was a man ful fre
 And lord he was of þat' contre
 As it' was goddes grace 1913

Sire Thopas was a doughty swayn
 Whyt' was his face as Payndemayn
 his lyppes reed as Rose 1916
 his robe is like Scarlet' en grayn
 And I 3ou telle in good certayn
 he hadde a semely nose 1919

his berd his heer was lik' saffroun
 That' to his gurdel straught' a-doun [leaf 215, back]
 his schoon of Cordewayne / 1922
 Of Bruges were his hosen broun
 his robe was of Ciclatoun
 That' coste many a Iayne 1925

GROUP B. § 8. SIR THOPAS. Corpus MS.

- he coupe hunte at wylde deer
 And Ryde an haukyng by þe ryuer
 Wiþ gray goshawk' on honde 1928
 Ther to he was a good archer
 Of wrastlyng' was þer non his peer
 Ther any man schulde stonde 1931
- fful many a mayde bright' in bour
 They mourne for him paramour
 When þey were bet' to slepe 1934
 But' he was chaste and no lecchour
 And swete as is þe bremble flour
 þat' bereþ þe rede hepe 1937
- ¶ And so byfeh vpon a day
 ffor soþe as I 3ou telle may
 Sire Thopas wolde out' ryde 1940
 he worþe vpon his steede gray
 And in his hande a launcegay
 A long' swerd by his syde 1943
- he prikeþ þurgh a fair forest'
 Ther Inne is many a wilde beest'
 3e boþe bucke and hare 1946
 And as he prikeþ north and Est'
 I telle 3ou him hadde almeþ'
 Betydde a sory care 1949
- Ther springen herbes grete and smale
 The lycoris and þe Setuale
 And many a clowe Gylofre 1952
 And notemuges to put' in ale
 Wheþer it' be moyst' or stale
 Or for to leye in Coffre 1955

GROUP B. § 8. SIR THOPAS. Corpus MS.

- In to his sadel he cam anon
 And prikeþ ouer stile and ston
 And elf^t queene for to aspie 1989
 Til he so longe haþ ryden and gon
 That he fond in a priue woon
 The cuntre of fayrre 1992
 ¶ So wylde
 ffor in þat cuntre nas þer non [leaf 216, back]
 [. *no gap in the MS.*]
 Neyþer wijf^t ne childe / 1996
- Til him þer cam a Ioly geaunt^t
 his name was cleped sire Olyphaunt
 A perilous man of^t dede 1999
 he seyde child by Termagaunt
 But if þou prike out^t of myn haunt^t
 Anon I slee þin steede 2002
 ¶ Wiþ mace
 here is þe queene of^t fayerye
 Wiþ harpe and pype and Synphonye
 dwellynge in þis place / 2006
- The childe seyde so mote I þe
 To morne wol I meeten þe
 When I haue myn armure 2009
 And 3it I hope *par* ma fay
 That þou schalt wiþ þis launcelay
 Abeyen it^t ful sore 2012
 ¶ þurgh þine mawe /
 Schal I perce if I may
 Or it^t be fully pryme day
 ffor heere þou schalt be slawe / 2016

Sire Thopas drow a bak' ful faste
 þis geaunt' at' him stoness caste /
 Out' of' a felle staf' slynge 2019
 But' faire askapeþ child Thopas
 And al it' was þurgħ goddes gras
 And þurgħ his faire berynge 2022

3it' lesteneþ lordes to my tale/
 Murier þen þe nightyngale
 ffor now I wole 3ou rounne / 2025
 how sire Thopas with sydes smale /
 Prykyng' ouer downe and dale /
 Is come a3ain to tounne 2028

his mery men comaunded he /
 To maken him boþe game and glee
 ffor needes moste he fight' 2031
 Wiþ o geaunt' with hedes þre
 ffor *paramour* and Iolyte . [go back to leaf 210
 Of' on þat' schon ful bright' 2034

Do come he seyde myne menstrales
 And gestours for to telle vs tales /
 Anon in myn armyng' 2037
 Of' Romances þat' ben realles /
 Of' popes and of' Cardynalles /
 And eek' of' loue lykyng' 2040

They fette him ferst' þe¹ swete wyn [1 *wrongly dotted under*]
 [. [In margin of MS, {And mede eek in a mas . . .
 in a later hand, & ryal spicerye.
 Of gyngbreed þat was f..]
 *no gap in the MS.*]
 And lycoryus and eek' comyn
 Wiþ sucre þat' is trye 2046

GROUP B. § 8. SIR THOPAS. Corpus MS.

- He dede next^t his white leere
 Of^t cloþ of^t lake fyn and clere
 A breche and eek^t a scherte 2049
 And next^t his scherte an aketoun
 And ouer þat^t an habergoun
 ffor persyng^t of^t his herte 2052
- And ouer þat^t a fyn hauberk^t/
 Was al y-wrought^t of^t Iewes werk^t
 fful strong^t it^t was of^t plate 2055
 And ouer þat^t his cote armure /
 As whyt^t as is a lyly flour
 In which he wole debate 2058
- his schelde was al of^t gold so red
 And þer Inne was a boores heed
 A charbokil him¹ besyde <sup>[¹ bi his syde
in a later hand]</sup> 2061
 And þer he swore on ale and breed
 That^t þe geaunt^t schulde be deed
 betyde what^t betyde 2064
- his Iambes were of^t quyrboyly
 his swerdes scheþe of^t yuory
 his helme of^t latoun bright^t 2067
 his sadel was of^t ruel bon
 his bridel as þe sonne schon
 Or as þe mone so light^t 2070
- his spere was of^t fyn Cypres
 That^t bedeþ werre and no þing^t pees ^[back of leaf 210]
 The heed ful scharpe y-grounde 2073
 his steede was al dappel gray
 It^t goþ an ambel by þe way
 fful softly and rounde 2076

In londe

Lo lordes myne heere¹ a fyttē [¹ ys, put in by a later hand]

If¹ 3e wole eny more of¹ hitte

To telle it¹ wol I fonde 2080

[*Fytte II.*]

Now halde 3oure mouþe *par* charite

Boþe knight¹ and lady fre

And herkneþ to my spelle 2083

Of¹ bataile and of¹ chivalry

And of¹ ladyes loue drery

Anon I wol 3ou telle 2086

Men speke of¹ Romance of¹ prys

Of¹ horn child¹ and of¹ ypotys

Of¹ Beuys and sire Gy 2089

Of¹ sire libeus and pleyndamour

But¹ sire Thopas he bereþ þe flour

Of¹ real chivalry 2092

his goode steed al he bestrod

And forþ upon his way he glod

As sparles out¹ of¹ þe bronde 2095

vpon his crest¹ he bar a tour

And þer Inne styked a lily flour

God schilde his corps fro schonde 2098

And for he was a knight¹ aunterous

he nolde slepen in non hous .

But¹ ligen in his hood 2101

his brighte helme was his wanger

And by him bayteþ his destrer

Of¹ herbes fyne and goode 2104

GROUP B. § 8. SIR THOPAS. Corpus MS.

[. [In a later hand, {him self drank water of þe welle
 in the margin, is as dede þe knyzt sire Percyuelle
 {so worþili vnder wede]

 no gap in the MS.] 2108

NO more of þis for goddes dignite [on leaf 210, back]
 Quoþ oure hoste for þou makest me
 So wery of þy lewednes
 That also wisly god me bles 2112
 Myn eres ake of þin darsty speche [go on to leaf 217]
 Now such a rymere þe deuel y beteche
 This may be wel rym dogereþ *quod* he
 Why so *quod* I why wilt þou lette me 2116
 More of my tale þan anoþer man
 Sepens it is þe beste Rym I can
 By god *quod* he pleyntly I þe say
 þou schalt no lenger rymen heere to day 2120
 Thow dost nought elles but dispendest tyme
 Sire at O word þou schalt no lengere ryme
 Let se wheþer þou canst telle ought in geste
 Or telle in prose somewhat at þe leste 2124
 In which þer be som merþe and som doctrine
 Gladly quod I by goddes swete pyne
 I wol þou telle a litel þing in prose
 þat oughte like þou as I suppose / 2128
 Or elles certeyn þe ben to daungerous
 It is a moral tale vertuous
 Al be it tolde somtyme in sondry wyse
 Of sondry folk as I schal þou deuyse 2132
 As þus þe wote euery euaungeliste
 That telleþ vs of ihesu crist
 Ne saiþ nouȝt al þing as his felawe doþ
 But natheles here sentence is al soþ 2136
 And all acorden as in here sentence
 Al be þer in here tellyng difference

ffor some of^t hem seyn more and some lesse
 Whan þey his pytous passioun expresse 2140
 I mene of^t mark^t matheu luke and Ioħin
 But^t douteles here sentence is al on
 Therefore lordinges aħ I 3ou beseche
 If^t þat^t 3e þinke I varie in my speche 2144
 As þus if^t þat^t I telle somewhat^t more
 Of^t prouerbis þen 3e haue herd byfore
 Comprehendit^t in þis litel tretis heere
 To enforce with^t þeffecte of my matiere 2148
 And þough^t I nadde¹ þe same wordes saye [leaf 217, back]
[¹ nat in a later hand]
 As 3e han herd 3it^t to alle 3ou I praye
 Blameþ me nough^t for as in my sentence
 3e schal nough^t fynde mochil difference / 2152
 ffro þe sentence of^t þe tretys lyyte² [² lite in a later hand]
 After þe which þis mery tale I wryte
 And³ herkene what^t I schal seye [³ perfore added on margin
of MS in another hand]
 And let^t me telle my tale I 3ou preye / 2156

[*There are no line-numbers or breaks between the paragraphs in the MS. Tyrwhitt's breaks are kept here to prevent slight differences in the Six Texts throwing out many lines.*]

[*Corpus MS, on leaf 217, back.*]

¶ Cm. xx^m.

Here bygynneþ Chauceres tale of Melibe and his wyf Prudence and his daughter Sapience

[2157]

A 3ong^t man whilom called Melibe mighty & riche bigate vpon his wyf þat^t called was Prudence. a doughter which þat^t cleped was Sapience

[2158] ¶ vpon a day felle þat^t he for his disporte is went^t in to þe feeldes him to pleye [2159] his wyf and eek^t his doughter haþ he lefte wiþinne his hous of which þe dores weren faste schette. [2160] ffoure of his olde foos han it aspyed. and setten ladders to þe walles of his hous and by þe wyndowes ben y-entred [2161] ¶ and beeten his wyf and wounded his doughter with fyue mortaille woundes in .v. sondry places. [2162] þis is to say in hire feet^t in hire hand. in hire eeres in hire nose in hire mouþ ¶ and laften hire for deed and wenten here wey

[2163] ¶ When Melibeus retourned was azein in-til his hous and sawe al þis meschief^t ¶ he y-like a mad man rendyng^t his clopes gan to weepe and crye

[2164] ¶ Prudence his wyf as ferforþ as sche dorste bysough^t him of his weepyng^t for to stynte [2165] ¶ but nou3^t for-þy he gan to wepe and crye euer lenger þe more

[2166] ¶ This noble wyf^t prudence remembred hire on þe sentence of Ovide in his bok^t þat^t cleped is þe remedy of loue where he saiþ [2167] he is a fool þat^t distourbeþ þe mooder for to wepe in þe deþ of hire childe til sche haue wepte hire fille as for a certein tyme [2168] Then schal man don his diligence with amyable wordes hire to comforte and to prýe hire of

GROUP B. § 10. MELIBEUS. Corpus MS.

hire wepyng^t for to stynte [2169] ¶ ffor which resoun þis noble prudence suffred hire housbond for to weepe and crye as for a certeyn space [2170] ¶ And when sche saugh hire tyme sche seyde him in þis wyse ¶ Allas my lord *quod* sche why make 3e 3oure self^t for to be ylike a fool [2171] ffor soþe it^t apertyneþ nou3t^t to a wise man to maken such a sorwe [2172] ¶ 3oure doughter wiþ þe grace¹ of god schal be warisshed and askape [2173] ¶ And alle were it^t so þat^t sche right^t now were deed^t: 3e oughte nou3t^t as for hire deþ 3oure self^t to destryue [2174] ¶ Senek^t saiþ þe wiseman schal nou3t^t take to gret^t discomfort^t for þe deþ of^t his children [2175] but^t certes he schulde suffre it^t in pacience as wel as he abydeþ þe deþ of^t his owen *propre persone*

[2176] ¶ This Melibeus answerde anon and sayde ¶ What^t man *quod* he schulde of^t his wepyng^t stynte þat^t haþ so gret^t a cause for to weepe [2177] ¶ *Ihesus crist* oure lord himself^t wepte for þe deþ of^t lazarus his freend [2178] ¶ Prudens answerde ¶ certes wel I woot a-tempre weeping^t is nou3t^t defendid vnto him þat^t sorwful is among^t folk^t in sorwe ¶ But^t it^t is raper y-graunted him to wepe [2179] ¶ The apostel Poule. vnto þe Romayns writeþ. Man schal reioyse wiþ hem þat^t maken ioye ¶ And weepen wiþ suche folk^t as wepen [2180] ¶ But þough^t a-tempre wepyng^t be y-graunted Outragous wepyng^t certes is defended [2181] ¶ Mesurable wepyng^t schulde be considered after þe lore þat^t techeþ vs Senek ¶ [2182] ¶ Whan þat^t þi freend is deed^t let^t nough^t þin yen to moyste ben of^t teeres ne to druye ¶ Al þough^t þe teeres comen of^t þin eyen let^t hem nou3t^t fallen [2183] ¶ And whan þou hast^t forgon þi frende I rede þou do þy diligence to gete þe anoþer. and þis is more wiser þan for to wepe for þyn freend þe which þat^t þou hast^t lore ¶ ffor þer-in is no boote [2184] ¶ And þerfore if^t þou lust^t gouerne þe by Sapience: putte away sorwe of^t 3oure herte. [2185] ¶ Remembreþ 3ou þat^t *Ihesus* Cyrak^t / seiþ

¶ Senek/

¶ *Ihesus*
Cyrak /

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a man þat' is Ioyous and glad in herte hit' him conserueþ florisching' in his age ¶ But' soþly sorwful herte makeþ his bones dryue [2186] ¶ he saiþ eek þus ¶ Salomon ¶ þat' sorwe in herte sleþ ful many a man [2187] Salamon. seiþ þat' right' as moughtes in þe schepes flees annoyep to þe cloþes and þe smale wormes of' þe trees ¶ Right' so annoyep sorwe to þe herte [2188] ¶ Wherefore we ouzt as wel in þe deþ of' oure children as in þe losse of' oure good haue pacience

¶ Iob

[2189] ¶ Remembreþ 3ow vpon þe pacient' Iob. whan he hadde lost' his children and his temperel substañce / In his body endured and suffred many a greuouus temptacion ¶ 3et' sayde he þus [2190] ¶ Oure lord *quod* he haþ 3oue it' me ¶ Oure lord haþ byrest' it' me Right' so as oure lord haþ wolde right' so be it don. y-blessed be þe name of oure lord [2191] ¶ To þese afore þinges Melibeus answerde to his wyf' dame Prudence / Alle þine wordes *quod* he ben soþe and þerto profitable ¶ But' trewly myn herte is troubled wiþ þis sorwe so greuouusly þat' I not' what' to done [2192] ¶ let' calle *quod* Prudence þin trewe frendes alle and þin lynage whiche þat' ben wise Telle hem þyn [caas]¹ and herkne what' þay say in counseillynge and 3ou gouerneth þer after here sentence [2193] Salomon saiþ werk' alle þing' by conseil and þou schalt' neuer repente þe

Salomon

[2194] ¶ Thenne by þe conseil of' his wyf' dame Prudence: Melibeus let' callen a gret' congregaciõ of folk' [2195] [. *no gap*] olde and 3onge and some of' his olde enemys reconsiled as by here semblañt in to his loue and in to his *grace* [2196] ¶ And þer-wiþ-al þer come somme of his olde neyghebouris and þat' deden him reuerence more for drede þan for loue as it' happeþ ofte [2197] ¶ Ther comeþ also ful many subtile flaterers and wyse aduocatis lerned in þe lawe

[2198] And whan þis folk' / togidre assembled were: This Melibeus in sorwful wise schewed hem þis caas

[2199] ¶ And by þe manere of þis speche he bar in his herte a cruel yre redy · to don vengeaunce vpon his foos And sodeynly desired þat þe werre schulde begynne [2200] ¶ But napeles ȝit asked he here counseil vpon þis matere [2201] A Surgien by licence and assent of suche as were wyse vp ros vnto Melibeus and sayde as ȝe may heere

[2202] Sire *quod* he as to vs surgiens aperteyneth to euery wight þe beste þat we can were as we ben wipholde ¶ And to oure paciencis þat we do no damages [2203] þerfore it happeþ many tymes and ofte þat when tuo men haue euerich wounded oþer O same Surgien heleþ hem boþe [2204] ¶ Wherfore vnto oure art it nys nouȝt pertynent to norische werre ne parties to supporte [2205] ¶ But certes as to þe warisshyng of ȝour doughter be it so þat sche is perilously wounded: we schulde do so ententyfly busynes fro day to night þat wip þe grace of god sche schal be sound and hool as sone as it is possible [2206] ¶ Alle men in þis same wyse answerden and þe Phisiciens. saue þat þay sayden a fewe wordes more [2207] þat right as maladies ben heled by þe contraries Right so schal men warissche werre by vengauce [2208] his neyghebers fulle of enuye his feynede freendes þat semed reconsiled his flaterers [2209] maden semblaunt of wepyng enpeyred and engregged meche of his matiere in preysynge gretly Melibeus of might of power of riches and of frendes despysynge þe power of his aduersaries [2210] and sayden outrely þat he anon schulde awreken him on his enemys and begynne werre

[2211] ¶ Vp ros þanne an aduoket þat was wys and sayde by leue and by counseil of oþere þat were wyse ¶ And sayde [2212] lordynges the neede for þe which we ben assembled in þis place is a ful heuy þing and an heigh matiere [2213] by cause of þe wrong and of þe wikkednesse þat hap ben don and eeke by resound of þe grete damage /

in tyme comynge ben possible to ¹falle for þis same cause [2214] and eek^t by resoun Of^t þe grete richesse and power of^t þe parties boþe [2215] ¶ ffor þe whiche resouns it^t were a gret^t perile for to erren in þis matiere // [2216] wherfore melibeus þis is oure sentence we counseile þou abouen alle þinges þat^t right^t anon þou do þi diligence in kepyng^t of^t þi propre persone in suche a wyse þat þou ne wante none aspye ne wacche þi body for to saue [2217] ¶ And after þat^t we counseile þat þou sette in þin hous suffisaunt^t garnysoun ¶ So þat^t þey may as wel þy body and þin hous defende [2218] ¶ But^t certes for to meve werre ne sodeinly for to do vengeance ¶ We may nouzt^t deme in so litel tyme þat^t it^t were profitable [2219] wherfore we asken leysir and space to haue deliberaciõ in þis cas to deme [2220] for þe commune prouerbe saiþ þus. he. þat^t sone demep^t sone schal repente [2221] ¶ And eek^t men say þus þat^t þilke Iuge is wys þat^t sone vnderstandep^t a matiere and Iugeþ by leysyr [2222] ¶ ffor al be it^t so þat^t alle tarynge be anoyful : algates it^t nys nouzt^t to reprove in ʒeuynge of Iuggementz ne in vengeance takynge whanne it^t is suffisaunt^t and resonable. [2223] and þat^t schewed oure lord ihesus crist^t by ensample ¶ ffor when þat^t þe womman was taken in adoutrye was brought^t in his presens to knowe what schal ben don with hire persone ¶ Al be it^t so þat^t he wiste wel himself^t what^t þat^t he wolde answerē : ʒit^t ne wolde he nouzt^t answerē sodeinly but^t he wolde haue deliberaciõ and in þe grounde he wrot^t twyes [2224] ¶ And by þis cause we axen deliberaciõ And we schullen þanne by þe grace of^t god counseile þe þinge þat^t schal be profitable

[2225] ¶ Vp sterte þenne þe ʒonge folk^t atones : and þe moste partye of^t þat^t company haue scorned þis olde wise man and bygonne to make noyse and sayden [2226] right^t so ¶ as whiles þat^t yren is hoot men schulden smyte ¶ Right^t so men schulden wreken here wronges whiles

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þay ben freissche and newe ¶ And with lowde voys þey cryden werre werre

[2227] vp ros þe on of þe olde wise and with his hande he made a contynauce þat þey schulde halden hem stille and 3iuen hem audience [2228] ¶ lordynges quod he þer is ful many a man þat criep werre werre þat wot ful litel what þat werre amounteþ [2229] ¶ werre at his bygynnyng haþ so gret an enteryng and so large ¶ That euery wight may entre when him likeþ. and lightly fynde werre [2230] ¶ But certes to what ende þat schal þer-of bifalle it nys nouzt lightly to knowe [2231] ¶ whan þat werre is ones bygonne þer is ful many a childe vnborne of his moder þat schal sterue 3ong by cause of þilke werre Oþer elles lyue in sorwe and deye in wrecchednesse [2232] ¶ And þefore er þat eny werre be bygonne men mosten han gret counseil and good deliberacioñ [2233] ¶ And when þis olde man wende to enforcen his tale by resoñ wel neiñ alle at ones bygonne for to ryse for to breken his tale / and beden him fuloften of his wordes for to abregge [2234] ¶ ffor sople he þat precheþ to hem þat luste nought his wordes ne his sermoñ hem annoyep [2235] ¶ ffor Ihesus Cirak saip þat musyke in wepyng is ¶ Ihesus Cirak / annoyous þing þus moche is to sayn as moche annoyep to speke bifore folk to whiche his speche annoyep: as it is for to syngen byforn him þat wepeþ [2236] ¶ And when þis wise man saugh þat him wantede audience: al schamfast he sette him down azein. [2237] ffor Salomon seip. þer ¶ Salomon as þou mayst haue non audience: enforce þe nouzt to speke [2238] ¶ I se wel quod þis wyse man þat þe commune prouerbe is soþ þat good counseil wantep. whan it is most nede

[2239] ¶ 3it hadde þis Melibeus in his counseille many folk þat priuely in his eere counseled him certein þing. and counseilled him þe contrary in general audience

[2240] ¶ When Melibeus hadde herd þat þe gretteste

party of his counseil were acorded þat he schulde make werre: anon he consentede to here counseilyng ¶ and fully affermed to here sentence [2241] ¶ Thanne dame Prudence whan þat sche saugh how þat hire housbonde schope him for to wreke him on his foes and to begynne werre ¶ Sche in ful humble wyse whan sche saugh hire tyme / seyde him in þise wordes [2242] ¶ My lord *quod* sche I 3ou beseche as hertely as I dar and can ¶ Ne haste 3ou nou3t to faste ¶ And afore alle guerdouns 3if me audience [2243] ¶ ffor Pieres Alphons. saiþ ¶ O who so doþ to þe good oþer harme haste þe nougħt to quyten hit ¶ ffor in þis wise þy frend wole abyde and þin enemy schal þe lengere lyue in drede [2244] ¶ The prouerbe saiþ þat he hasteþ him wel þat wisly can abyde ¶ and in wicked haste is no profyte

[2245] ¶ This melybe answerde to his wijf ¶ ¶ Prudence I purpose nougħt *quod* he to werke by þy counseille for many causes and resoñs ¶ ffor certes euery wigħt wolde halde me þenne a fool [2246] ¶ This is for to say ¶ If I for þy counseillyng wolde chaunge þinges þat ben ordeynt and affermed by so many wyse [2247] ¶ Secondly I say þat alle wommen ben þikke and none goode of hem alle ffor of a þousend men saiþ Salomon I fand a good man But certes of alle wommen fond I neuer good womman [2248] ¶ And also *certes* if I gouerned me by þy counseil it schulde seme þat I hadde 3oue to þe ouer me þe maystrie ¶ and god forbede þat it so were [2249] ¶ ffor *Ihesus* Cyrak¹ saiþ. þat if þin wijf haue maistrie: sche is contrarious to hire housebonde [2250] ¶ and Salomon saiþ ¶ Neuer in þy lyf to þy wyf ne to þy childe ne to þy freende ne 3iue no power ouer þi self ¶ ffor bettre it were þat þin children asken of þy persone þinges þat hem needeþ ¶ þen þou [be] þi self in þe handes of þin children [2251] ¶ And also if I wole wirche by þi counseylyng: certes my counseille moste som tyme be secree til it were tyme þat it moste be

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knowe and þis ne may nouȝt be doo [2252. For it is written, 'þe Iangelry of wommen can huyde þinges þat þey wot nouȝt' [2253] Furthermore, the philosopher saith, 'in wikked counseil, wommen venquysshþ men;' and for these reasons I ought not to make use of thy counsel. (See *Prudence's answers to Reasons 4 & 5, below.*)]

[2254] ¶ When dame Prudence ful debonerly and wiþ alle pacience hadde herde alle þat hire housbonde liked for to say: Then asked sche of him licence for to speke and sayde in þis wise [2255] ¶ My lord *quod* sche. as to ȝoure ferste resoun it may lightly ben answerde ¶ ffor I say þat it nys foly to chaunge counseille when þe þing is chaunged Oþer elles when þe þing semeþ oþer weyes þenne it semeþ aforn [2256] ¶ And more ouer I say þay þat ȝe haue sworn and behight to parfourme ȝoure emprise [*et tu la laissoies a faire* (Le Ménagier de Paris, i. 193)] by iuste cause: men schulde nouȝt seyn þerfore þat ȝe were a lyere ne forsworn [2257] ¶ ffor þe book seip þat þe wise man makeþ no lesynge when he torneþ his corage / to þe better [2258] ¶ And if it be so þat ȝoure emprise be establisshþ and ordeyned by gret multitude of folk ¶ ȝet þar þe nouȝt acomplyse þilke ordynaunce but ȝou like [2259] ¶ ffor þe troupe of þinges and for profite ben raþer founde. in fewe folk þat ben wise / and fulle of resoñ þen by gret multitude of folk þer euery man cryeþ and clatereþ when him likeþ ¶ soþly such multitude nys nouȝt honeste [2260] and as to þe secounde resoñ wher as ȝe sayn þat alle wommen ben wikke: Saue ȝoure grace ffor certes ȝe despyseþ alle wommen in þis wise. and he þat alle despiseþ all dispyseþ as seip þe book [2261] ¶ And Senek seip þat who so wole haue sapience. schal no man dispreyse ¶ But he schal gladly teche þe science þat he can wiþouten presumpsioun or pryde [2262] and suche þinges þat he nouȝt ne can he schal nouȝt be asshamed to lere him and to enquere of lasse

folk^t þan of^t himself^t [2263] ¶ And sire þat^t þer haþ
 ben ful many a good womman may lightly be proued
 [2264] ¶ certes sire oure lord ihesu crist^t nolde
 neuer han descendet^t to be borne of^t a womman if^t alle
 wommen hadde be wicke [2265] ¶ And after þat^t
 for þe grete bounte þat^t is in wommen oure lord Ihesus
 when he was rysen fro deþ to lyfe appered rap^rer to
 womman þan to his apostels [2266] ¶ and þough^t
 þat^t Salomon saiþ þat^t he ne fond neuer womman
 good it^t ¹fo^wweþ nough^t þefore þat^t alle wommen ben
 wikke [2267] ¶ For þough^t þat^t he ne fonde no good
 womman Certes many anoþer man haþ founden
 many a womman ful good and trewe [2268] Or elles
 perauenture þe entent^t of^t Salamon was þus þat^t as in
 souereyn bounte he fande no womman [2269] This is to
 say þat^t þer nys no wight^t þat^t haþ parfyt^t bounte
 saue god allone as he himself^t recorderþ in his euang-
 gelist^t [2270] ¶ For þer nys no creature so good that^t him
 ne wanteþ som what/ of^t þe perfeccioñ of^t god þat^t is his
 makere [2271] ¶ The þridde resoun is þis 3e say þat^t if^t
 3e gouerne 3ou by my conseil hit^t schulde seme þat^t 3e
 hadde 3oue me þe maystry And þe lordschiþ of^t 3oure
 persone // [2272] Sire saue 3oure grace hit nys nought^t so
 ¶ For if^t so were þat^t no man schulde be counseled but^t oonly
 of^t hem þat^t hadde lorschipe and maystrye of^t his persone
 men nolde nough^t be counseled so ofte. [2273] For sople
 þilke men þat^t askeþ conseil of^t a purpos ¶ 3et^t haþ he
 free wille wheþer he wol do after þat^t counsel or
 no [2274] ¶ And as to 3oure fourþe resoñ þer as 3e
 sayn þat^t þe Iangelry of wommen can huyde þinges þat^t
 þey wot^t nou3t^t ¶ As who saiþ þat^t a womman can nough^t
 huyde what^t sche wot^t [2275] ¶ Sire þese wordes ben vnder-
 stonde of^t wommen þat^t ben Iangleresses and wicked
 [2276] of^t whiche wommen men sayn þat^t þre þinges
 dryueþ a man out^t of^t his hous. That^t is to say Smoke
 droppynge of^t Rayn and wickidde wyfes [2277] And

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swiche wommen saip Salamon þat he were better to dwelle in desert þan with a womman þat is ryetous [2278] And sire by 3oure leue þat am nought I [2279] ¶ For 3e haue ful ofte assayed my grete Cilence and my grete pacience and eek how wel þat he can huyde and hele þinges þat men oughten secrely to huyden [2280] ¶ and soþ as to 3oure fite resoñ wher as 3e say þat in wikked counseil wommen venquysshē men ¶ God wot þilke resoñ stant heere in no stede [2281] ¶ For vnderstandeth now 3e axeth counseil for to do wikkednes [2282] and if 3e wolen werke wikkednesse and 3oure wijf restreyneþ þilke wikked purpos and ouercome 3ou by resoñ and by good counseil: [2283] certes 3oure wyf oughte raper to be preysed þen to be blamed [2284] ¶ This scholde 3e vnderstande þe philosophre þat saip In wicked counseil wommen venquysshē here housebondes [2285] ¶ and þere as 3e blamen alle wommen & here resoñs: I schal schewe 3ou by many ensamples þat many wommen han ben ful goode and zet ben and here counsel holsome and profitable [2286] ¶ eeke some men han sayde þat þe counselyng of wommen is eyþer to deere or elles to lytel of pris [2287] ¶ But al be it so þat ful many womman is badde and here counseil vile & nouzt worþ: zet han men founde many a good womman and ful discret and wys in counselyng // [2288] lo Iacob þurgh þe goode counseil of his moder Rebekka wan þe benysoñ of his fader and þe lordschipe ouer alle his breþeren . [2289] Iudith þurgh hire goode counseil delyuered þe Cite of Buphelye in which sche dwelte out of þe lande of Olyuerne þat hadde it al byseged and wolde han al destruyet it [2290] ¶ Abegayle delyuered Nabal hir housbonde fro Daud þe king þat wolde han slayn him and appaysede þe yre of þe king by hire witte and by hire goode counselyng [2291] ¶¶ Ester by hire counceil enchaunced gretly þe poeple of god in þe Regne of Assueres þe king [2292] and þe same bounte. in good counselyng of

many a womman may men telle [2293] ¶ And furthermore
whan þat' oure lord had created Adam oure forme fader:
he sayde in þis wise / [2294] It' nys nought' good to be a
man allone ¶ Make we an helper semblable to him-
self. [2295] ¶ Here may 3e see þat' if þat' womman
were nou3t' good and hire counseil good and profytable:
[2296] Oure lord god of' heuene ne wolde neuer han y-wrou3t'
hem ne called hem þe helper of' man [.
no gap.] [2297] ¶ And þer sayde ones a clerk' in tuo vers /
what' is bettre þan a good Iaspre [.
. . . *no gap.*] wisdom [2298] And what' is bettre þan
wisdam womman and what' is bettre þan womman þat' is a
good womman no þing' [2299] ¶ And sire by many of'
oþer resoñs may 3e seen þat' many wommen ben goode and
eek' here counseil good and profitable [2300] ¶ And þerfore
sire if' 3e wiln truste to my counseil: I schal restore 3ou
3oure doughter hool and sound [2301] ¶ And eek' þat' I wol
to 3ou don so moche þat' 3e schuln haue honour in þis caas
. [2302] ¶ When melybe had herde þe wordes of' his
wif' Prudence: he sayde þus [2303] þat' þe
wordes of' Salamon is soþ ¶ For he saiþ þat' wordes þat'
ben' spoken discretly by ordynauce ben hony combes
ffor þey 3iuen swetnesse to þe soule and holsomnes
to þe body [2304] ¶ And wyf' by cause of' þine swete
wordes and eeke for I haue y-proued and sayd þin grete
sapiencie and þin grete trouþe I wol gouerne me by þyn
counseyl in alle þing'

[2305] ¶ Now sire *quod* dame Prudence and seþenes 3e
fouche sauf' to be gouerned by my counseil: I wol
enforme 3ou how þat' 3e schuln gouerne 3oure self' in chesyng'
of' 3oure conseilours [2306] ¶ 3e schuln ferst' fourme alle
3oure wekes mekely byseken to þe hihe god þat' he wol
ben 3our conseilour [2307] And schapeþ 3ou to such
entent' þat' he 3iue 3ou counseil and confort as taughte
Thoby'e ¹ to his sone [2308] at alle tymes. thou schalt/ blesse

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god and preyen him to dresse / þine weyes . and loke also þat
þine counseiles ben in him for euermore [2309] ¶ Seint
Iame saiþ ¶ If any of 3ou haue neede of Sapience: aske
it of god [2310] ¶ And afterward þenne schullen 3e take
counsel in 3oure self and examyn wel 3oure owne þouztes of
swiche þinges as 3ou þenkeþ þat is best for 3oure profyt
[2311] ¶ And þenne schulle 3e dryue fro 3oure hertes
þinges þat ben contrarious to good conseil [2312]
þat is to say . Ire . Coueytise . and hastynes .

[2313] ffirst he þat askeþ conseil of himself: certes
he moste be wiþouten Ire [. [2314]
. *no gap in the MS.*] and wrappe in
himselþ he weneþ alwey þat he may do þing þat he
may not do [2315] ¶ And secoundly he þat is Irous
and wroþ he [. [2316] *no gap
in the MS.*] may noughþ wel counseille [2317] ¶ The
þridde is þis . þat he þat is Irous and wroþ as saiþ
Senek ne may noughþ speke but blameful þinges [2318]
And with þilke vicious wordes he stereþ oþer folk to
anger and to Ire [2319] And eek sire 3e moste drede
coueytise out of 3oure herte . [2320] ffor þe apostel seiþ
þat coueytise is þe roote of alle harmes . [2321] And trusteth
right wel þat a coueytous man ne can noughþ deme ne þenke
but only to fulfille þe ende of his coueytise . [2322] and
certes þat ne may neuer be acomplised . ffor ener
þe more habundance þat he haþ of richesse: þe more
he desireþ [2323] ¶ And sire 3e moste also driue out
of 3our hertes hastynes [2324] ¶ For certes 3e may
nouzt deme for þe beste a sodeyn þoughþ þat falleþ in
3oure herte ¶ But 3e moste averse 3ou on hit ful ofte
[2325] ¶ ffor as 3e haue herd here biforn þe comune proverbe
is þis That he þat some demeþ some repentþ //

[2326] Sire 3e ne be nouzt alwey in ylike disposicioñ
[2327] ffor certes som þing þat some tyme semeþ to
3ou þat is good for to do . An oþer tyme it semeþ
to 3ou þe contrarie . [A great bit is now omitted in Corpus.]

[Laud MS 600,
leaf 233]

[2328] [When ye han taken counseile in *your* self And han demed bi good deliberacion siche þing as you semib best [2329] ¶ þanne rede I / you that ye kepe it secre / [2330] bewrie not *your* counseile to no *persone*. bot it so be. þat ye wene sikerli þat þurgh *your* bewrieng / *your* condicion shal be to you þe more profitable [2331] ¶ For Ihesus Sirac saiþ ¶ Neiþer to þi foo ne to þi frende. discouer not þi secre ne þi foli. [2332] for þai wol yeue you audience and loking and supportacion in þi presence and scorne in þi absence. [2333] ¶ Anoper clere saiþ þat scarsli shalt þou finde any *persone* þat mai kepe conseil secreli. [2334] ¶ The book saiþ while þou kepest þi counsaile in þin hert þou kepist it in þi prison / [2335] and whan þou bewriest þi counsaile to any wight / he holdeþ þe in his snare. / [2336] And þerfore you is better hide *your* counsaile. in *your* hert / þan praien him to whom ye haue bewried *your* conseil þat he wol kepe it clos and stille. [2337] ¶ For Seneca saiþ if so be. þat þou ne maist not. þin owne counseile hide. How darst þou praien any oþer wight / þi conseil secreli to kepe. [2338] ¶ Bot napeles if þou wene sicurli / þat þi bewriyng¹ of þi counsaile to a *persone* wol make þi condicion to stonde in a better plite. Then shalt þou tellen him þi conseil in þis wise [2339] ¶ First þou shalt make no semblant / where þe were leuer werre or pees. or þis. or þat. ne shew him not þi wille / and þin entent [2340] ¶ For trust wel þat comunli þise conseilours. ben flaterers And [2341] namely þe conseilours of grete lordes. [2342] for þei enforcen hem alwei. raper to speke plesant wordes. enclynyng to þe lordes lust þan wordes þat ben trewe. and profitable. [2343] ¶ And þerfore men sai þat þe riche man hap selden good counsaile / bot he haue it of himself [2344] ¶ And aftir þat þou shalt considre þi frendes and þi enemyes. / [2345] And as touching þi frendes. þou shalt con-

[¹ Laud MS, leaf 233, back]

sidre whiche of hem beth most faipful and most [Laud MS 600]
 wise. and eldest and most approued in counseilyng
 [2346] and of hem shalt þou axe þi counsaile as þe
 caas requireth

[2347] ¶ I / sai þat first ye shul clepe to youre coun-
 saile / youre frendes þat ben trewe. / [2348] For Salamon
 saiþ / for right as þe hert of a man delitiþ in sauour.
 þat is soote / right so þe counsaile of your' trewe frendes /
 yeueþ swetnes to þe soule [2349] ¶ He saiþ also þer
 mai noþing be likned to þe trewe frende / [2350] ¶ For
 certes gold ne siluer be not so moche worþ. as þe
 good wille of a trewe frende / [2351] and eke he saiþ
 þat a trewe frende. is a stronge defence / who þat
 it findeþ. certis he findeþ a gret tresour
 [2352] ¶ þene shul ye eke considre / if þat youre
 trewe frendes ben discrete and wise / for þe book
 saiþ. axe þi counsaile alwai of hem þat ben wise.
 [2353] And bi þis same resoun. shul ye clepe to youre
 counsaile of youre frendes þat ben age. siche as haue
 sai sightes and ben expert in mony þinges. and ben
 approued in counseiling. [2354] for þe book saiþ
 þat in olde men is þe sapience. and in longe time
 þe prudence [2355] ¶ And tullius saiþ þat grete
 þinges ben not' aye accompleed bi strengþe ne bi
 delyuernes of bodi. bot bi good counsail. bi auctorite
 of *persones* and bi science. þe whiche þre þinges
 ben not feble bi age. / bot certes þai enforcen to en-
 cresen dai by dai. [2356] and þan shul ye kepe
 þis for a general rewle ¶ First shul ye clepe to youre
 counsaile a fewe of *your* frendes þat ben especial
 [2357] ¶ For Salamon saiþ mony frendes haue þou.
 bot among a þousand chese þe on to be þi conseil-
 lour / [2358] For al be it so þat þou first ne telle þi
 conseil bot to a fewe. þou maist aftirward telle it to
 moo folk / if it be nede. [2359] bot loke alwey þat þi
 conseilours haue þi [l]k þre condiciouns. þat I / haue said
 CORPUS 501 (6-T. 214) [this page, Laud 600.]

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[Laud MS] before. þat is to sai þat þei be trewe and olde. and of wis experience. [2360] ¶ And wirke not alwey in euery nede / bi on counseilour allone. For somtyme behouep it be counseilid bi many. [2361] ¶ For Salamon saip. Saluacion of þinges is. where as þer ben many counselors.]

[Laud MS extract ends]

[Corpus MS, on leaf 221, back]

[2362] Now haue I tolde 3ou of which folk^t 3e scholde be counseled **N**OW wol I teche 3ou which counseil 3e owe to eschewe [2363] fferst^t 3e schuln eschewe þe counseilyng^t of^t fooles. Salomon saip take no counseil of^t a fool ffor he wol counseile but^t after his owne luste and his affection^s [2364] ¶ The book/ saip þat^t þe proprete of^t a fool is þis ¶ he trowep lightly harme of^t euery wight^t and lightly trowep a bounte in himself^t [2365] ¶ Thou schalt^t eke eschewe þe counseiling^t of^t alle flaterers whiche enforcen hem rap^rer to preysen 3oure persone by flaterye þan for to telle 3ou þe soþfastnesse of^t þinges

[2366] ¶ Wherfore Tullius saip among^t alle þe pestilence ¹þat ben in frendschipe þe grettest^t is flaterie ¶ And þerfore is it^t more nede þat^t þou eschewe and drede flaterers þan any oþer poeple / [2367] The book^t saip þou schalt^t rap^rer [drede and] fle fro þe swete wordes of^t flaterynge & preysyng^t þen fro þe egre wordes of^t þy frend þat^t saip þe þin soþes [2368] Salomon saip þat^t þe wordes of^t a flaterer is a snare to cacche Innocence [2369] ¶ he saip also. he þat^t spekep to his frend wordes of^t swetnes and of plesaunce[!] setteþ a nette biforn his feet^t to cacche him [2370] ¶ And þerfore Tullius saip Enclyne nouzt^t þin eeres to flaterers Ne take no counseil of^t wordes of flaterie / [2371] and Catoñ saip ¶ Avise þe wel and eschewe þe wordes of^t swetnes and of plesaunce [2372] ¶ And eek^t þou schalt^t eschewe þe counsellyng^t of^t þine olde enemys þat^t be reconciled [2373] The book^t saip þat^t no wight^t retourneþ sauflly in to þe

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grace of his olde enemy [2374] ¶ And Isope saiþ ¶ Ne
 truste nouȝt to hem to whiche som tyme þou hast had werre /
 or enmyte ne telle hem nouȝt þi counseille [2375] ¶ And
 Senek' telleþ þe cause why it may nouȝt be saith he
 þat where long' tyme fuyr haþ endured þat
 þer dwelleþ som tyme vapour of hete [2376] ¶ And
 þefore saiþ Salamon in þin olde foo truste þou neuere
 [2377] ffor sikerly þough þin enemy be reconsiled
 and makeþ þe chere of humilite and lowteþ to þe
 wiþ his heed ne truste him neuere [2378] ffor certes
 he makeþ þilke feyned humilite more for his profyt
 þan for eny humilite or for eny loue of þin persone by
 [. no gap] such
 feyned contynance The which victory hē might' haue by
 stryf' or werre [2379] And Petre Alfouns saiþ. make no
 felaschipe wiþ þine olde enemyes: ffor if þou do hem
 bounte þey wollen peruerten hit' to wickednesse
 [2380] And eeke þou most' eschewe þe counseilyng' of hem
 þat ben þin seruañtz and beren the gret' reuerence ffor
 perauenture þey seyn it' more for drede þan for loue
 [2381] ¶ And þefore saiþ a Philosophre in þis
 wise ¶ Ther nys no wight' parfytly trewe to him þat' he to
 sore dredeþ [2382] ¶ And Tullius saiþ ¶ Ther nys no
 wight' so gret' of eny emperour þat' longe may endure /
 but' if' he haue loue of þe poeple and drede
 [2383] ¶ Thow schalt' eschewe also þe counseiling' of folk'
 þat' ben drunkelewe for þey ne can no counseille huyde.
 [2384] Salamon saiþ þer nys no pryuyte þer as
 regneþ drunkenes [2385] ¶ 3e schullen han also in suspecte
 to þe counseling' of such folk' as counseile 3ow a þing'
 priuily and counseile 3ou a þing' þat' is contrarie openly .
 [2386] ffor Cassidory saiþ þat' it' is a maner sleighte to
 hyndre his enemy when ¹he scheweþ to don a þing' openly
 and werkeþ priuily þe contrarie [2387] ¶ Thou schalt' haue
 also in þin suspecte þe coñselynge of wikked folk' [. . .
 : no gap] þat' is alwey ful

of fraude [2388] and David saip þat blisful is þe man
 þat haþ nougħt folwed þe counseling of schrewes [2389]
 ¶ Thow schalt also eschewe þe counsellig of 3ong folk
 ffor here counseilyng nys nougħt rype as Salomon saip

[2390] ¶ Now sire sipenes I haue schewed 3ou of which
 folk 3e schuln take counsel and of which folk 3e schuln
 folwe þe counsel / [2391] Now wol I teche 3ou how 3e
 schuln examyn 3oure counsel after the doctrine of Tullius
 [2392] in þe examynyng þenne of 3oure counsellour
 3e schuln considere many þinges [2393] ¶ Alþer first þou
 schalt considere þilke þing þat þou *purposest*
 and vpon what þing þou wolt han counsell þat verray
 troupe be sayde and conserued þis is to say telle
 trewly þin tale [2394] ¶ For he þat saip fals may [not]
 wel be counseiled in þat caas of which [he lyeth] [2395]
 ¶ And after þis þou schalt consideren þe þinges þat
 acorden to þat þou *purposest* for to be by þin counsell-
 ours if reson acordeþ þerto [2396] ¶ And eek if þi
 might may atteyne þerto ¶ And if þe more part and þe
 bettre part of 3oure counsellours acorden þerto or no.
 [2397] þen schalt þou considere what þing schal
 folwe of here counseiling. as hate pees werre
 grace profyt other damage and many oþer þinges
 [2398] And in alle þinges þou schalt chese þe
 beste and weyfe alle oþer þinges [2399] ¶ Thenne
 schalt þou considere of what roote it is engendred þe matier
 of þin counsell and what fruyt it may conceyue and
 engendre [2400] þou schalt eek considere alle þese
 causes for þe whiche þey ben spronge [2401] ¶ and
 whan 3e haue examyned 3oure counsell as I haue sayde
 and which partie is þe bettre and more profitable and
 hast aproued it by many wise folk and olde [2402]
 þanne schalt þou considere if þou mayst performe hit and
 make of hit a good ende [2403] ¶ For certes reson wol nouzt
 þat any man schal begynne a þing but if he mighte
 performe hit as him owzte [2404] ¶ Ne no wight schulde

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taken vpon him so heuy a charge þat he mighte [not] bere it [2405] ¶ For þe prouerbe saiþ he þat to mochel enbraceþ distreyneþ litel [2406] ¶ And Catoñ saiþ ¶ Assay such þing^t as þou hast^t power to done leste þe charge oppresse þe to sore þat þe bihoueþ to weyue þing^t þat þou hast^t bygonne [2407] ¶ And if^t so be þat þou be in doute. wher þou maist^t performe a þing^t or non: chese raper for to suffre þan for to bygynne [2408] ¶ And Pieres alphouns saith If^t þou hast^t might^t to don a þing^t of^t which þou most^t repente it is bettere [. [2409] no gap] halde þi tunge ¹stille þan for to speke [2410] ¶ Then may I vnderstonde by strengre resouns þat if^t þou hast^t power to performe a werk^t of^t which þou schalt^t repente þe ¶ Thenne is it bettere þat þou suffre þan bygynne [2411] wel seyn þey þat defenden euery wight^t to assaye a þing^t of^t which he is in doute wher he may performe it or non [2412] ¶ And after when 3e haue examynd 3oure coñseil^t as I haue sayd biforn and knowe wel þat 3e may performe 3oure emprise: conferme it þenne sadly til it be at an ende

[2413] ¶ Now is it resoñ and tyme þat I schewe 3ou whenne and where-fore þat 3e may chaunge 3oure counselours wipouten 3oure reprofes [2414] ¶ Soplly man may chaunge his purpos and his counseil^t if^t þe cause cesseth or whan a newe cause betydeþ [2415] ¶ For þe lawe seiþ vpon þinges þat newly betyden bihoueþ newe coñseil^t [2416] ¶ And Senek^t saiþ ¶ If^t þin counseil come to þe eeres of^t þin enemys: chaunge þi coñseil^t [2417] [*Après, l'en peut changier son conseil*] if^t so be þou fynde þat by errour or by ony oþer cause harme or damage may betyde [2418] ¶ Also of^t þin counsel be dishoneste oþer elles come of^t dishoneste cause: chaunge þin counsel [2419] ¶ For þe lawe saiþ/ þat alle bihestes þat ben dishoneste ne ben of^t no value.

[2420] and eek^t if^t so be þat^t it be impossible oþer may nouȝt^t gladly be performed oþer kepte

[2421] And take þis for a general reule / þat euery counsel þat^t is enformed so strongly þat^t it^t may nought^t be chaunged for no condicioñ þat^t may betyde: I say þat ilke coñsel is wicked.

[2422] ¶ Melibeus whan he hadde herd þe doctrine of his wijf^t dame prudence: he answerde in þis wyse.

[2423] Dame *quod* he as ȝet^t vnto þis tyme ȝe han wel taught^t me as in generale how I schal gouerne me and in þe chesyng^t and in þe wipholdyng^t of my counseilours. [2424] But^t now wolde I fayn þat ȝe wolde condescende in special [2425] and telle me how þat^t likeþ ȝou or how þat^t semeþ ȝou by oure counseilours þat^t we haue chose in þis present^t neede

[2426] ¶ My lord *quod* sche I beseche ȝou in al humbles þat^t ȝe wolde nought^t wilfully reproeuen aȝein myn resoñs ne distempre ȝoure herte þough I speke þing^t þat^t ȝou displese [2427] ¶ ffor god woot^t as in myn entent^t I speke it^t as for þe beste for ȝoure honour and for ȝour profyt^t eeke [2428] ¶ And soþly I hope þat^t ȝoure benigrite wol take it^t in pacience [2429] ¶ and trusteþ to me wel þat^t ȝoure counsel in þis cas ne scholde nouȝt^t as to speke *propely* be called a counselynge but^t a mocion or a meuyng^t of^t folye [2430] In which counsel ȝe haue herde in many a sondry wise

[2431] ¶ ffirst^t and forþward ȝe han herd in þe assemblyng^t of^t ȝour counsellours [2432] ¶ ffor first^t ȝe schulde haue cleped ¹a fewe folk^t to ȝoure counseille ¶ And after þat^t ȝe might^t haue schewed it^t to mo folk^t if^t it^t hadde be neede. [2433] But^t certes sodeinly ȝe han cleped to ȝoure counseil a gret^t multitude of^t poeple fulle chargaunt^t and ful annuyous for to heere [2434] ¶ And also ȝe haue herde further as ȝe schulde only haue cleped to ȝoure counseille ȝoure trewe frendes olde & wise [2435] ¶ ȝe han cleped also straunge folk^t ȝong^t folk^t fals flaterers and enemys

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reconsiled and folk' þat don 3ou reuerence wipouten loue / [2436] and eek' also 3e haue herd for 3e han brought wip 3ou to 3oure counseil. Ire. coueytise and hastines [2437] þe whiche þre þinges ben contrary to euery good counseil and honest' & profitable [2438] þe whiche þre þinges 3e han nou3t' anyntesched oþer destroyed hem neyþer in 3oure self' ne in 3oure / counceillours as 3e aughte [2439] ¶ 3e han herde also for 3e han schewed to 3oure counceillours 3oure talent' 3oure affeccioñ to make werre anon for to do vengeance [2440] And þey haue aspied by 3oure wordes to what' þing' 3e ben enclyned [2441] ¶ and þerfore haue þey raþer counseled 3ou to 3oure talent' þan to 3oure profyt' [2442] 3e han herde also for semeþ it / sufficeþ to han ben counceled by þis counceillours oonly and wip litel auyse [2443] where as in so grete and in so heih a neede it' hap be necessarye mo counselours and mo deliberacioñs to parfome 3oure emprise [2444] ¶ 3e han herd also for 3e han herd nough't' 3oure counsel in þe forseide manere ne in dewe manere as þe cas requyreþ [2445] ¶ 3e haue herd also for 3e haue maad no dyuysioñ betwixe [. no gap] 3oure trewe frendes and 3oure feyned coñcelours [2446] ¶ Ne 3e haue nou3t' knowe þe wille of' 3oure trewe frendes olde and wise . [2447] but' 3e haue cast' alle here wordes in an hoche potte and enclyned 3oure herte to þe more part' and to þe grettere nombre [. [2448] no gap in the MS.] of fooles þenne of' wise men. [2449] ¶ And þerfore þe counselynge þat' ben at congregacioñs and multitudes of' folk' þer as men take more reward to þe nombre þen to Sapience of persones: [2450] 3e seen wel þat in suche counselynges fooles haue þe maystrie [2451] ¶ Melybe answerde and sayde a3ein I graunte wel þat' I haue herd [2452] ¶ But' þer as þou hast' tolde me þer biforn þat' he nys nough't' to blame þat' chaungeþ his coun-

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ceiloures for certein caas and for certein and iuste cause [2453] I am al redy to chaunge myne counceillours right as þou woldest' deuyse [2454] ¶ ffor þe prouerbe saith þat for to don synne is mannyssch But' certes for to perseueren longe in synne is werkes of' þe deuel.

[2455] ¹To þis sentence answered anon dame Prudence and sayde. [2456] examyneþ *quod* sche 3oure coñselle and let' vs se þe which of' hem haþ spoke more resonably and taught' 3ou best' coñseil [2457] ¶ And for as moche as þat' examinacion is necessary. let' vs begynne at' surgiens and at phisiciens þat' first' spaken of' þis matiere [2458] ¶ I say þat' Phisiciens & surgiens haue sayd 3ou in 3oure coñsel discretly as hem ougħte [2459] & in here speche sethens ful wisly þat' to þe office of' hem apperteyneþ to don to euery wigh't' honour and profyt' and nouzt' for to ennoye [2460] and after here crafte to don gret' diligence vnto þe cure of' hem whiche þat' þey haue in here gouernance [2461] and *sir* right' as þey han answered wisly and discretly: [2462] Right' so. rede I þat' þey ben heighly and souereynly guerdout' for here noble speche [2463] and eek' for þey schullen more do þe ententyf' busynes in þe curacion of' þin doughter deere [2464] ¶ ffor al be it so þat' þei ben 3oure freendes: þerfore schuln 3e nouzt' suffre þat' þey serue 3ou for nought [2465] ¶ But' 3e augh'te þer after guerdon hem and payen hem here largesse [2466] ¶ and as touchynge þe *proporcioñ* which þat' þe phisiciens encreseden in þis caas ¶ This is to sayn [2467] þat' in maladyes is þat' a contrary is warished by anoper *contrarie* [2468] ¶ I wolde fayn knowe how 3e vnderstode þilke text' and what' is 3oure sentence [2469] ¶ Certes *quod* Mellibeus I vnderstande it in þis wise. [2470] Right' as þey haue done me a contrary: so schuld I don hem anoper [2471] ¶ ffor right' as þey haue venged hem vpon me: and don me wrong': Right' so wol I venge me vpon hem

and don hem wrongt [2472] and þenne haue I cured a contrary by anoþer

[2473] ¶ lo lo *quod* dame prudence how lightly is euery man enclined to his owne desir to his plesaunce [2474] ¶ Certes *quod* sche þe wordes of þe phisicien ne schulde nouzt be vnderstande in þat wise [2475] ffor certes wikkednesse is nouzt contrary to wickednes ne vengeance is nouzt contrary to vengeance ne wrongt to wrongt [*mais sont semblables*. [2476] *Et pour ce, vengeance par vengeance, ne injure par injure, n'est pas curé* (Men. i. 206-7)] [2477] But euery of hem encreaseþ and engregeþ oþer [2478] ¶ But certes þe wordes of þe phisicien schullen ben vnderstonde in þis wise [2479] ¶ ffor good and wickednesse ben tuo contrarious ¶ And pees and werre vengeance and sufferance discord and acord and many oþer þinges [2480] ¶ But certes wickednesse schal ben y-warished by goodnes. discord by acord. werre by pees and so forþ and oþer þinges [2481] ¶ And herto acordeþ seint Poule þe appostel and in many place [2482] he saiþ ¶ Ne zeldeþ nouzt harm for ¹harm ne wicked speche [*pour mesdit*] [2483] But do wel to hem þat don þe harme and blesse hem þat saiþ to þe harme [2484] And many oþer places he amonysscheþ pees and acord [2485] ¶ But now wol I speke of þe counseil which was y-3oue vnto 3ou by men of lawe þe wise folk and olde folk [2486] þat sayden alle by on acorde as 3e haue herde biforn [2487] ¶ That ouer alle þinges 3e schullen don 3oure diligence to kepe 3oure persone and to warmstore 3oure hous [2488] ¶ And þay sayden also þat in þis caas 3e oughten to wirchen ful avisily and wiþ gret deliberacion [2489] ¶ And *sir* as to þe first poynt þat toucheþ vnto þe kepyng of 3oure persone [2490] 3e schullen vnderstande þat he þat haþ werre schal euermore deuoutely and mekely preyen biforn alle þinges [2491] þat Ihesus crist of his mercy wole

haue him in his *proteccioñ* and ben his souerein helpynge
 at his neede [2492] ffor certes in þis world nys no
 wight þat may be counseled ne kepte sufficiauntly wip-
 outen þe kepyng^t of oure lord *ihesus crist* [2493] To þis
 sentence accordeþ þe prophete dauid þat saip. [2494]
 If god ne kepe þe cite in ydel wakeþ he þat it kepeþ
 [2495] ¶ Now *sir* þenne schulle 3e quyte þe kepyng^t of
 3oure persone to 3oure trewe frendes þat ben aproved
 and y-knowe [2496] and of hem schuln 3e asken helpe 3oure
 persone for to kepe ¶ ffor Catoñ saip ¶ If þou hast
 neede of helpe: aske it of þin frendes [2497] ffor þer nys
 non so good a phisicien as þin trewe freend [2498]
 and after þis þenne schulle 3e kepe 3ou fro alle
straunge folk and fro lyeres And haue alway in suspecte
 here companye [2499] ¶ ffor pieres alphouns saip ¶ Ne
 take no companye by þe way of *straunge man* but it
 so be þou haue knowe him of lengere tyme. [2500]
 and if so be þat he falle in to þin company per-
 aduenture wipouten þin assent^t [2501] enquere þenne
 as subtilly as þou canst^t of his *conuersacioñ* and of his lyf
 byfore and feyne þy way seyng þou woldest go þider
 as þou woldest nouzt go. [2502] and if he bereþ a spere
 holde þe on þe right^t syde of him. and if he bereþ a swerde
 holde þe on þe left^t syde of him. [2503] and
 þenne schul 3e kepe 3ou wisly fro alle such manere of
 poeple as I haue sayde 3ou here bifore and hem and here coun-
 sel eschewe [2504] And after þis þenne schulle 3e kepe 3ou
 in such manere [2505] þat for any *presumpcioun* of 3oure
 bodily strengþe þat 3e ne dispise nought^t ne accounte nouzt
 þe might^t of 3oure aduersary so lyte þat 3e lete þe
 kepyng^t of 3oure persone for 3oure *presumpcioun* [2506]
 ffor euery wysman dredeþ his enemy [2507] ¶ And
 Salamon saip wel fool is he þat of al hap drede
 [2508] ¶ ffor ¹certes he þat þurgh hardynesse of his
 herte and þurgh þe hardynes of himself hap so
 gret *presumpcioun* him schal yuele betyde [2509] ¶ Thenne

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schuln 3e euermore encountrewayte enbuschement3 and alle
 espyaile. [2510] ffor as saiþ þe wise man
 [. *no gap in the MS.*] [2511] he ne
 falleþ in to no periles þat periles escheweþ [2512] ¶ And al
 be it/ so þat þou seme þat þou be in secre place zet
 schalt þou alwey don diligence in the keypyng of þin persone
 [2513] þis is to say. Ne be nouzt necligent to kepe þin
 persone nought only fro þin grettest enemy. but only fro
 þin leste enemy [2514] Senek saiþ a man þat is
 wel auysed he dredeþ his leste enemy [2515] Ovide
 seiþ þat þe lytel wesel wol sle þe grete bole and þe
 wilde hert [2516] And þe prouerbe saiþ þat a luytel þorne
 may greeue a king ful sore ¶ And a litel hound wol
 holde þe wilde bore [2517] ¶ But napeles I say nought
 þou schalt be so coward þat þou doute wher as is no
 drede [2518] ¶ The bok saiþ that some men haue
 gret lust to disceyue but zit þey drede to be de-
 sceyued [2519] [. *no gap in the MS.*]
 And kepe þe fro þe company of Scorners [2520]
 ¶ ffor þe book saiþ þat scorners ne makeþ no companye
 but flee here word as venym

[2521] ¶ Now as to þe secounde poynt where as 3oure
 wise counceillours counseiled 3ou to warmstore 3oure houses
 wiþ gret diligence [2522] ¶ I wolde fayn knowe how þat
 3e vnderstande þilke wordes and what is 3oure sentence.

[2523] Mellibeus answerde and sayde Certes I vnder-
 stande in þis wise þat I schal warmstore myn hous
 wiþ toures suche as haue castelles and oþer maner
 of edifices & armure and archers [2524] betwen which
 þing if I may my persone and myn hous so kepe and
 defende þat myn enemys schuln be in drede myn
 hous for to approche.

[2525] to þis sentence answerde anon prudence
 warnysshing quod sche of heihe toures and of heihe edifices
 appertyneþ somtyme to pryde [2526] And eek men make
 heihe toures [*et les grans édifices à grant travail et à grans*

despens, et quant elles sont faites, elles ne vallent riens se elles ne sont defendues par sages et par bons amis loyaux, et à grans missions (Le Ménagier, i. 209)] [2527]

¶ And vnderstande wel þat þe grettest and þe strengest garnysoñ þat riche man may haue / as wel to kepen his persone and his goodes is [2528] þat he [be] biloued wip his subiectes and with his neihebouris [2529] ¶ ffor þus saip Tullius That þer is a maner garnysoñ þat no man may venquysschen ne discomfite and þat is [2530] a lord to be loued of his citezeins and of his poeple

¶ Tullius

[2531] ¶ Now sire as to þe þridde poynt where as zoure olde and wise conseiloures sayden ¶ þat zou ne oughte nouzt sodeinly ne hastely proceden in þis neede [2532] But þat ze oughten purueyen and apparayle zou in þis caas wip gret diligence and with gret deliberaciõ

¶ Tullius.

[2533] ¶ Trewely I trowe þat þay sayden right wisly and right sob [2534] ¶ ffor Tullius saip In euery neede er þou begynne it apparayle þe with gret diligence. [2535] þenne say I þat in vengauce

¶ Tullius.

takyng in werre in ¹ bataille and in warnestoringe [2536] er þou bygynne ¶ I rede þat þou apparayle þe þer to ¶ And do it wip gret deliberaciõ [2537] ¶ ffor

¶ Cassidorus

Tullius saip. þat lange apparaylinge biforn þe bataile makeþ schort victory [2538] ¶ And Cassidorus saip þe garnysoñ is strengere than it is long tyme avised

[2539] But now lete vs speke of þe conseil þat was acorded by oure neyheboures suche as don zou reuerence wipouten loue [2540] zoure olde enemys reconciled ¶ zoure flaterers [2541] þat counceleden zou certeyn þinges priuely and openly counceileden zou þe contrarie [2542] ¶ The zonge folk also þat counceileden zou to vengen zou and to maken werre anon. [2543] ¶ And certes sire as I haue sayde byform ze haue gretly y-erred to han y-clepede suche maner of folk to zoure counselle [2544] ¶ Whiche conseiloures / ben ynough reproued by þe resoñs afor sayde [2545] ¶ But napeles let vs now descende to

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þe special 3e schuln ferst^t proceden after þe doctrine of Tullius [2546] ¶ Certes the troupe of þis matier eyþer of þis conseil nedep not^t diligently enqueren [2547] ¶ ffor it is wel wiste whiche þey ben þat^t doon 3ou þis trespas & vilenye [2548] and how many trespasoures and in what^t manere þey han don to 3ou al þis wronge and alle þis vilanye [2549] ¶ And after þis þanne schullen 3e examine 3e secounde condicioñ þe which þat^t Tullius addeth in þis matiere [2550] ¶ ffor Tullius putteþ a þing^t which þat^t he clepeþ consentynge þis is to say [2551] who ben þay and whiche ben þay and how many þat^t consenten to þin conseil in þin willefulnessse to don hasty vengeance [2552] ¶ And let^t vs concidre also who ben þay and how many ben þay [.
. . . *no gap*] þat^t consenten to 3oure aduersaries [2553] And certes as to þe ferste poynt ¶ hit^t is wel knownen whiche ben þay þat^t consenten to oure hastyf^t wilfulnessse [2554] ¶ ffor trewely alle þo þat^t counselen 3ou to maken sodeyn werre ne ben nought^t 3oure frendes [2555] ¶ let^t se now whiche ben þey þat^t 3e holden so gretly 3oure frendes as to 3oure persone [2556] ¶ ffor al be it^t so þat^t 3e ben mighty and ryche: certes 3e ben but^t allone [2557] ¶ ffor certes 3e ne han no childe but^t a doughter [2558] ne 3e han no breþeren ne cosyns germayns ne non oþer neih kynrede [2559] ¶ Wherfore 3oure enemys scholden stinte to plede wip 3ou ne to destruye 3oure persone. [2560] 3e knownen also þat^t 3oure richesse moot^t ben dispended in diuerse partyes [2561] & when þat^t euery wight^t hap his parte: þey woln take but^t litel rewarde to vengen þy dep^t [2562] ¶ But^t þin enemys ben þre and þey haue many children breþeren cosyns and oþer neyh kynrede [2563] ¶ And þough so were þat^t þou haddest^t slayn of hem two oþer .iij. 3et^t dwellen þere ynowe to ¹awreken here dep^t and to slen þin persone [2564] ¶ And þei h so be þat^t 3oure kynrede be more siker and stedefast^t þen

þe kyn of þoure aduersary [2565] ¶ 3et' neuer þe les þoure kynrede is but' after kynrede þey ben but' litel sibbe to þou [2566] ¶ And þe kyn of þoure enemys ben neigh' sibbe to hem ¶ And certes as in þat' he condicioñ is better þen is þoures [2567] ¶ þenne let' vs consideren also of þe counseilynge of hem þat' counseleden þou to taken sodeyn vengeaunce wheþer it' acorde to resoñ or non. [2568] and certes 3e knowen wel nay. [2569] ffor as by right' and resoñ þer may no man take vengauce of' no wight' ¶ But þe Iugge þat' hap' Iurdixioñ of' hit [2570] whan it' is graunted him to take þilke vengeauce hastely or attemperelly as þe lawe requyreþ [2571] ¶ And 3et' more ouer of' þilke worde þat' Tullius clepeþ consenting' : [2572] þou schalt' consente if' þin mighte & þin power may consente and suffice to þin wilfulnesse and to þin counseiloures [2573] ¶ And certes þou mayst' wel say þat' nay [2574] ¶ ffor sikerly as for to speken *propely* we may do no þing' but' oonly such þing' as we may doon rightfully [2575] ¶ And certes rightfully ne may 3e take no vengauce as of' þoure *propere* auctorie [2576] ¶ Then may 3e seen þat' þoure power ne consentep' nouzt' ne acordeþ nouzt' *with* þour willefulnesse [2577] Now lete vs examine þe þridde poynt' þat' Tullius clepeþ *consequent* [2578] Thou schalt' vnderstanden þat' þe vengauce þat' þou *purposest'* for to take is *consequent'* [2579] And þefore falleþ *anoper* vengauce. *Peril.* and werre and opre damages *withouten* nombre of' whiche we ben nouz warre as at' þis tyme [2580] ¶ And as touchinge þe forþe poynt'/. þat' Tullius clepeþ *engendrynge* [2581] ¶ þou schalt' considere þat' þis wrang' which þat' is don to þe is engendred of' þe hate of' þin enemys [2582] and of' þe vengeaunce takynge ¶ And vpon þat' wolde engendre *anoper* vengeaunce and mochel sorwe and wastynge of' richesse as I sayde er

[2583] ¶ Now *sir* as touchinge to þe poynt' þat' Tullius clepeþ causes which þat' is þe laste poynt' [2584] ¶ Thou

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schalt' vnderstande þat' þe wrong' þat' þou hast' receyued
 haþ certain causes [2585] whiche þat' clerkes clepen
 Oriens. et' Officiens and causa longinqua and causa
 propinqua ¶ This is to sayn þe ferre cause [*et la prou-*
chaine; [2586] *la loingtaine est Dieu qui est*
cause de toutes causes [2587] *la prouchaine est tes*
trois ennemis (Le Mén. i. 212)] [2588] accidental was hate
 [2589] The causes material ben þe .v. woundes of'
 þin douzter [2590] ¶ The cause formale is þe maner of'
 here worchinge þat' brouzten laddres and clomben in at'
 þine wyndowes / [2591] ¶ The cause final was for to slee þin
 douzter it' latted nought' in as moche as in hem was [2592]
 ¶ But' for to speken of' þe ferre cause as ¹what' ende þey
 schullen come Or what' schal betyden of' hem in þis
 caas ne can I nouz't deeme. but' by coniectyng' and by
 supposyng [2593] ffor we schuln suppose [*qu'ils*
avendront] to a wicked ende. [2594] by cause þe book'
 of' decrees saith ¶ Selden or wip' gret' peyne ben causes
 brouz't to an ende when þey ben baldly bygonne

[2595] Now *sir* if' men asked me why þat'
 3e suffren men to don þou þis vilenye Certes I can
 not' wel answeere as for no soþfastnes [2596] ffor
 þe appostel saiþ þat' þe sciences and þe Iuggementz of'
 oure lord god ben mighty and deepe [2597] ¶ Ther may
 no man *comprehende* ne serche hem sufficiently [2598]
 ¶ Napeles by certains *presumpcions* & coniectynges
 I halde and bileue [2599] þat' god þat' is ful of'
 Iustice and of' rightwisnesse haþ suffred þis bytyde by
 iuste cause resonable

[2600] ¶ þin name is mellibe þis is to say a man
 þat' drinkeþ hony [2601] ¶ Thou hast y-drunke so meche
 hony of' þe swete temperel riches and delices & hon-
 ures of' þis world [2602] þat' þou art' drunken and
 hast' forzeten oure lord ihu crist' þin creatour [2603] ¶ Thou
 hast' nouz't don to him such honour as þe
 oughte [2604] ¶ Ne þou hast' nouz't wel take heede to

þe wordes of Ovide þat saib [2605] vnder þe hony of þe goodes of þin body is hyd þe venym þat sleep þe soule [2606] ¶ And Salomon saib ¶ If þou hast founden hony ete of hit what sufficeþ [2607] ¶ ffor if þou ete of hit out of mesure / þou schalt spewe and be needy and pore [2608] ¶ And peradventure crist hath þe in spite and haþ turned away fro þe his face and his eres of misericorde [2609] and also he haþ suffred þat þou hast ben y-punyssht / in þe maner þat þou hast y-trespast [2610] ¶ Thow hast don synne azeins oure lord ihu crist [2611] ¶ ffor certes þe þre enemys of mankynde þat is to say þe fleissch. þe ffeend. and þe worlde [2612] ¶ þou hast suffred hem to entre in þin herte wilfully by þe wyndowes of þy body [2613] and hast nouȝt defended þe sufficeantly azeins here defautes and here temptacioñs So þat þay haue wounded þi soule in fyue place. [2614] ¶ this is to sayn þe deedly synnes þat ben entrede in to þin herte by þine .v. wittes [2615] And in þe same manere oure lord ihesu crist haþ and wolde and haþ suffred þat þine þreenemys ben entred in to þin hous by þe wyndowes [2616] and han wounded þine doughtres in þe forseide manere

[2617] ¶ Certes *quod* Mellibe I se wel þat þat 3e enforce 3ou mochel by wordes to ouercome me in such a manere þat I schal now vengen me of myn enemys [2618] Schewyng me þe periles and þe eueles þat mighten ffalle of þis vengeaunce [2619] ¶ But who so wolde considere in alle vengañces ¹þe periles and eueles þat mighte sewe of vengañce takynge : [2620] a man wolde neuere take vengañce and þat were harme : [2621] ffor by þe vengauce takynge ben þe wickede men disseuered fro þe goode men [2622] ¶ And þo þat han wille to don wickednesse restreyne here wickede purpos whan þey seen þe punysshing and þe chastysing of trespasours

[2623] [And to this answered dame Prudence : ‘ Certes,’ said she, ‘ I grant you that from vengeance come many

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benefits as well as many evils : [2624] yet vengeance be-
 longeth not to "a singuler persone," but only to the judges,
 and to those who have jurisdiction over evil-doers.]
 [2625] ¶ And 3it' say I more þat' right' as a singuler
 persone synneþ in takinge vengañce of' anoþer man :
 [2626] Right' so synneþ þe Iugge if' he take no vengañce
 of hem þat' it' han desserved // [2627] ffor Senek' saiþ
 þus þat' mayster is good þat' reproeuþ schrewes
 [2628] ¶ And as Cassidory saiþ. A man dredeth to don
 outrages : whan he woot' and knoweþ þat' it' displeseþ
 þe Iuge and þe soueraignes [2629] ¶ And anoþer saiþ þe
 Iugge þat' dredeth do don right' makeþ schrewes
 [2630] ¶ And seint' Poul þe appostel saiþ in his epistle
 whan he writeþ vnto þe Romayns that' þe Iuges beren
 nough't þe spere wiþouten cause. [2631] but' þay beren it
 to punysschen þe schrewes and þe mysdoers and for to de-
 fende þe goode men [2632] ¶ If' 3e woln þenne take vengañce
 of' 3oure enemys : 3e schuln retourne or haue 3oure recours
 to þe Iuge þat' haþ þe Iurdexioñ vpon him [2633]
 & he schal punyssche hem as þe lawe axeþ and requyreþ
 [2634] ¶ A *quod* Mellibe þis vengañce likeþ me
 noþing' [2635] ¶ I beþinke me now
 how fortune haþ norished me fro my childhode
 and haþ holpen me to passe many a *straunge pas* [2636]
 ¶ Now wol I assayen here trowynge *with* goddes grace and
 helpe þat' sche schal helpe me my schame for to venge

[2637] ¶ Certes *quod* Prudence if' 3e woln worche by my
 counseille : 3e schuln nouzt assaye fortune by no way. [2638]
 Ne 3e schuln nough't lene ne borwe vnto hire after þe word
 of' Senek' [2639] ffor þinges þat' ben folily doon and
 þat' ben in hope of' ffortune schuln neuere come to a good
 ende [2640] ¶ and as þe same senek' seiþ ¶ The more
 clere and þe more schynynge þat' fortune is : þe more
 brutel and þe sonnere y-broke sche is [2641] ¶ trusteþ nouzt
 in hire for sche nys noþing' stedefast' ne stable [2642] ffor
 when þou trowest' to be most' siker or seure of' hire

helpe: sche wol fayle þe and disceyue þe [2643] ¶ And wher as 3e sayn þat' fortune haþ norissched 3ou fro 3oure childhode [2644] I say 3ou þat' in so mochel schuln 3e þe lasse trusten in hire and in hire witte [2645] ¶ ffor Senek' saip that' what man is norisched by fortune: sche makeþ him to gret' a fool [2646] ¶ Now þenne seþens 3e desire and aske vengañce ¶ And þe vengañce þat' is doon after þe lawe and biforn þe Iugge ne likeþ 13ou nough't' [2647] and þe vengañce þat' is don in hope of' fortune is perilous and vncerteyn [2648] ¶ Thenne haue 3e non oþer remedye but' for to haue 3oure recours vnto þe soueraign Iuge þat' vengeþ alle vilanyes and wronges [2649] ¶ And he schal venge 3ou after þat' þin self' witnesseth [.] [2650] leueþ þe vengañce to me and I schal don hit'

[2651] ¶ Mellibe answerde ¶ If' I ne venge me nou3t' of' þe wrong' þat' men han doon to me [2652] ¶ I schal sompne or warne hem þat' han don þis vilanye to me and alle oþre to don me anoþer vilanye [2653] ¶ ffor it is writen ¶ If' þou take no vengañce of' an olde vilanye: þou sompnest' þin aduersarie to don þe a newe vylanye [2654] [*Et ainsi, par souffrir l'en me feroit tant de villenies de toutes pars*] þat' I mighte neyþer bere it' ne sustene [2655] and so schulde I be ouersetete and halden ouerlowe [2656] ¶ ffor men sayn ¶ In mochil suffrynge schullen many þinges falle vnto þe whiche þou schalt' not' mowe suffre

[2657] ¶ Certes quod Prudence I graunte þat' ouer mochil suffrañce / is nought' good [2658] ¶ But' 3et' ne folweþ it' nou3t' þer-of' þat' euery persone to whom men don vilanye take of' it' vengañce [2659] ffor þat' apperteneþ and longeþ al only to þe Iuges ffor þey schuln venge þe vilenyas and þe iniuries [2660] and þefore þo tuo auctoritees þat' 3e han sayde aboue ben oonly vnderstanden in þe Iuges [2661] ¶ ffor whan þey suffren ouer mochil þe wronges and vilanyes ben don

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wiþouten punysshinge [2662] þay sompne nouȝt a man only for to do newe wronges but þay comaunden it [2663] ¶ Also a wise man saiþ þat þe Iuge þat correcteþ nouȝt þe synnere comaundeþ and biddeþ him to do synne [2664] ¶ And þe souerains and þe Iuges / mighten in here lande so mochel suffren of þe schrewes and mysdoers [2665] þat þey schulden by such suffraunce / by proces of tyme wexen of suche power and might þat þey schulde putte oute þe Iuges and þe soueraignes from here places [2666] and at þe laste maken hem leesen here lordschipes

[2667] ¶ But let vs now putte þat ȝe han leue to vengen ȝou [2668] ¶ If ȝe ben nouȝt of might and power as now to vengen ȝou [2669] ffor if ȝe woln maken comparisoñ vnto þe might of ȝoure aduersaries ¶ ȝe schullen fynden in many þinges þat I haue schewed ȝou ben þis þat here condicioñ is bettre þan ȝoures [2670] ¶ And þerfore say I þat it is good as now þat ȝe suffre and be pacient

[2671] ¶ fferþermore ȝe knowen þat after þe commune sawe it is a woodnesse a man to streyne¹ aȝeins a strengre or a more mighty man þen is himself [2672] ¶ And for to stryue wiþ a man of euene strengþe þat is to say² wiþ a strong^t man as he is it is peril [2673] ¶ And for to stryue wiþ a waykare man it is folye. [2674] and þerfore schulde a man fle stryuyng/ as mochel as he mighte [2675] ¶ As Salomon saith ¶ It is a gret worschipe to kepyn him fro noyse and stryft [2676] ¶ And if it so bifalle or happe þat a man of grettere might and strengþe þan þou art do þe greuaunce [2677] study and busy þe raper to stille þe same greuaunce þan for to venge þe [2678] ¶ ffor Senek^t saiþ þat he putteþ him in gret perile þat stryueþ wiþ a gretter man þan he is himself [2679] ¶ And Catoun saiþ if a man of heyer astate or degre or more mighty þen þou do þe annoye or greuañce Suffre him [2680] for he þat ones haþ greued þe

[¹ (margin) stryue]

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may anoþer tyme releue þe and helpe þe [2681] ¶ 3it sette I cas 3e han boþe might and licence to vengen 3ou [2682] I say þat þer ben many þinges þat schuln restreynen 3ou of vengannce takinge [2683] and make 3ou for to encline and for to suffre and for to haue pacience in þe wronges þat han be don to 3ou [2684] ¶ ffirste and forþward if 3e woln concider þe defautes þat ben in 3oure owne persone [2685] for whiche defautes god haþ suffred 3ou to haue þis tribulacioñ as I haue sayde 3ou here byform. [2686] ¶ ffor þe Poete saiþ þat we oughten paciently taken þe tribulacioñs þat comeþ / to vs when we þenken and consydren þat we han disserued to han hem [2687] ¶ And seint Gregory saiþ ¶ þat whan a man considereþ wel þe nombre of his defautes and of his synnes [2688] þe peynes and þe tribulacioñs þat he suffreþ semen þe lasse vnto him [2689] ¶ And in als mochel as him þenk-eþ his synnes þe more heuy and greuous. [2690] ¶ In so moche semeþ his peyne þe lighte and þe esyer vnto him [2691] ¶ Also 3e owen to encline and to bowen 3oure herte to taken þe pacience of oure lord Ihesu crist as saiþ seint Petre in his Epistles [2692] ¶ Ihesu crist he saiþ haþ suffred for vs and 3euen ensample vnto euery man to folwe and to sewe him [2693] ffor he dede neuer synne ne neuere ne came a vileyns word out of his mouþ [2694] when men cursed him he cursed hem noughit ¶ And when men beten him he manased hem noughit [2695] ¶ Also þe grece pacience whiche seintes þat ben in paradys. han had in tribulacioñs þat þey han suffred wipouten eny desert or gilte [2696] aughte mochel to stere 3ou to pacience [2697] [*Après, moult te doit encliner à patience*] [2698] considerynge þat þe tribulacioñs of þis worlde but litel while endureþ and soone passed ben and goon [2699] ¶ And þe Ioye þat man sekeþ to haue by pacience in tribulacioñ is perdurable / after þat þe

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apostel seiþ in þe epistle [2700] ¶ The ioye of god he seiþ is *perdurable* þat is to sayn ¹euer lastynge [2701] ¶ Also troweþ and belieueþ stedefastly þat he is nough^t wel ynorissht ne wel y-taught^t þat can nouzt haue pacience [. *no gap*] [2702] ¶ ffor salamon seiþ þat þe doctrine of þe witte of man is knowen by pacience [2703] ¶ And in anoþer place he seiþ ¶ he þat is pacient^t gouerneþ him by gret prudence [2704] ¶ And zet^t Salamon seiþ þe angry and þe wrapful man makeþ noyse ¶ And þe pacient^t man attempereth him and stilleþ him. [2705] he seiþ also ¶ It is more worþ to be pacient^t þen to be right^t strong^t [2706] And he þat may haue þe lordschipe of his owne herte is more to prayse þen he þat by his force and strengþe takeþ grete cites [2707] ¶ And þefore seiþ seint Iame in his Epistle þat pacience is a gret^t vertu of perfection

[2708] ¶ Certes *quod* Mellibe I graunte zou dame Prudence and pacience is a gret^t vertu of perfeccioñ [2709] ¶ But^t euery man may not^t haue þe perfeccioñ þat ze sechen [2710] ne I am nough^t of þe nombre of right^t *parfyt* men [2711] ¶ ffor myn herte may neuer ben in pees vnto þe tyme it be venged [2712] ¶ and al be it so þat it was gret^t peril to myn enemys to don a vilanye in takinge vengauce vpon me [2713] ¶ zet^t token þey non heede of þe *perille* ¶ But^t fulfilleden here wikkede wille and here corage. [2714] and þefore me þenkeþ þat men ouzten not^t to reprove me þough I putte me in-to a litel peril for to auenge me [2715] ¶ And þough I do a gret^t excesse þat is to say þough I do a vengauce outrage by anoþer

[2716] ¶ A *quod* dame prudence ze seyn zoure wille and as zou likeþ [2717] ¶ But^t in no caas of þe world a man ne scholde nouzt don outrage ne excesse for to vengen him [2718] ¶ ffor Cassidory seiþ þat as euel dop he þat auengeþ him by outrage as he þat dop þe

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outrage [2719] and þefore 3e schullen vengen 3ou after þe ordre of right þat is to sayn by þe lawe and [nought] by excesse ne by outrage [2720] ¶ Also if 3e woln vengen 3ou of þe outrage of 3oure aduersaries in oþer manere þenne right comaundeþ: 3e synnen [2721] ¶ Therefore saiþ Senek þat a man schal neuer vengen schrewedenesse [by schrewedenesse] // [2722] And if 3e say þat right axeþ to defende violence by violence and fightynge by fyghtynge [2723] ¶ Certes 3e say soþ when þe defens is don right anon wipouten interualle or wipouten taryenge or delay [2724] for to defenden him and nought for to vengen him [2725] ¶ And it bihouep þat a man putte such attemperaunce in his defense [2726] þat men han no cause ne matier to reproeuen him þat defendeþ him of excesse and of outrage [. no gap.] [2727] ¶ Par de 3e knowe wel þat 3e maken non deffense / as now for to defende 3ou But for to venge 3ou [2728] and so seweþ it þat 3e haue no wille to do 3oure deede attemperelly [2729] and þefore me þenkiþ¹ þat pacience is good ¶ ffor Salamon saiþ þat he þat is nought pacient schal haue gret harme

[2730] ¶ Certes *quod* Mellibe ¶ I graunte wel þat whan a man is vnpatient and wroþ of þat þat toucheþ him nouzt and þat appertieneþ nought vnto him þough hit harme him it is no wonder [2731] ¶ ffor þe lawe saiþ þat he þat is coupable þat entermeteþ him or medeleþ him wip suche þing as apperteyneþ nouzt vnto him [2732] ¶ And Salomon saith þat he þat entremeteþ him of þe noyse or þe stryft of anoþer man is ylike to him þat takeþ an hound by þe eeres [2733] ¶ ffor right as he þat takeþ a straunge hounde by þe eeres is oþerwhile y-byten wip þe hounde / [2734] Right in þe same wyse is þe resoñ þat he haue harme þat by his inpacience medleþ him of þe noyse of anoþer man wher as it apperteyneþ nouzt vnto him [2735] ¶ But 3e knowen wel þat þis dede þat

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is to sayn my grief and myn disese toucheþ me right
neigh [2736] and þerfore þough I be wroþ and in-
patient it is no meruaylle [2737] ¶ And sauynge þoure
grace I can nouȝt se þat it mighte gretly harme
þough I toke vengañce [2738] ¶ ffor I am richer and
more mighty þen myn enemys ben [2739] ¶ And wel
knowe ȝe þat by monye and by hauyng grete posses-
sions ben alle þe þinges of þis world gouernede [2740]
¶ And Salamon saiþ. alle þinges obeyen to
moneye

[2741] ¶ Whan Prudence hadde herd hire housbande to
aauanten him of his richesse and of his moneye and dispreys-
inge of power and his aduersaries ¶ Sche spake and sayde
on þis wise [2742] ¶ Certis deere sir I graunte þou þat
ȝe ben riche and mighty [2743] ¶ And þat þe riches-
ses ben goode to hem þat han wel y-geþen hem and þat
wel can vsen hem [2744] ¶ ffor right as þe body of
man may nouȝt lyue wipoute þe soule ¶ No more may it
lyue withouten temperele goodes [2745] and by rich-
esse may a man geten him grace [2746] ¶ And
þerfore saiþ Pamphilles If eny gaddes doughter he saiþ
be riche. Sche may cheese he saiþ of a þousand men [which
she will for her husband [2747] and of the
thousand] ¶ oon wol nouȝt forsaken hire ne refusen
hire [2748] ¶ And þis Pamphilles saith also ¶ If þou be
right happy ¶ þat is to say. If þou be right riche þou
schalt fynden a gret nombre of felawes and frendes [2749]
¶ And if þin fortune chaungeþ þat is if þou wexe pore : fare
wel frendschipe and felaschipe [2750] ¶ ffor þou schalt ben
allone wipouten any companye but if it be þe
companye of good folk [2751] ¶ And ȝit saiþ þis
Pamphilles more ouer / þat þey þat ben þralle &
bonde of linage schuln ben maad worþy and noble by
þe richesces. [2752] ¶ And right so as by richesces þer
comen many goodes ¶ Right so by pouert comeþ
many harmes and eueles. [2753] ffor gret pouert con-

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streigneþ 1a man to don many eueles. [2754] And þerfore clepeþ Cassidore Pouert. þe mooder of ruyne [2755] þat is to say þe moder of ouerþrowing or fallynge doun [2756] ¶ And þerfore saith Pieres alphouns ¶ On of þe grettest aduersary of þis world is [2757] when a freo by kynde or of birþe is constreigned by pouert to eten þe almes of his enemy [2758] ¶ And þe same saiþ Innocent in oon of his bookes. þat sorwfulle and myshappy is þe condicioñ of a pouere begger [2759] ¶ ffor if he axe noughþ his mete he deyeþ for hunger [2760] ¶ And if he axe he deyeþ for schame ¶ And algates necessite constreigneþ him to axe [2761] ¶ And þerfore saiþ Salamon þat bettre is to deye þan to haue such pouert [2762] ¶ 3et saiþ Salamon þat bettre is to deye of bitter deþ þan for to lyue in suche wyse [2763] ¶ By þese resoñs þat I haue sayde vnto 3ou and by many oþer resoñs þat I kouþe say [2764] ¶ I graunte 3ou þat richesse ben good to hem þat geten hem wel and to hem þat wel vsen þe richesces [2765] ¶ And þerfore wol I schewe 3ow how 3e schuln haue 3ou [*en acquerant Richesses et en amassant icelles* (MS Reg. 19 C vii, leaf 140, back.)]

[2766] ¶ fferst 3e schuln geten hem wiþouten gret desire by good leysir sokyngly and nou3t ouer hastily [2767] ¶ ffor a man þat is to desyringe to gete richesse: abandoneþ him ferst to þeste and to alle oþer eueles [2768] ¶ And þerfore saiþ Salamon ¶ he þat hastep him ouer busyly to waxe ryche schal ben non Innocent [2769] ¶ he saiþ also þat þe richesse þat hastely comeþ to a man ¶ sone and lightly goþ and passeþ fro a man [2770] ¶ But þat richesse þat comeþ lytel and litel waxeþ alwey and multiplieþ [2771] And sir 3e schuln gete richesse ynough by 3oure witte and by 3oure trauayle vnto 3oure profyt/ [2772] and þat wiþouten wrangt or harme doyng to ony oþer persone [2773] ¶ ffor þe lawe

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saip þat þer makeþ no man himselfe ryche if he do harm to anoþer wight [2774] [*car la loy dit que nul ne se face riche au dommage d'autrui* (Le Ménagier de Paris, tome i. page 222)] [2775] ¶ And Tullius saip ¶ þat no sorwe ne no drede of dep ne no þing þat may falle vnto man [2776] is so mochil azeins nature ¶ as a man to encesce his owne profyt to þe harme of anoþer man [2777] ¶ And þou þe grete men and þe riche men geten richesse more lightly þen þou [2778] zet schalt þou nouzt ben ydel ne slowe to don þin profyt ¶ ffor þou schalt in alle wise flee ydelnesse [2779] ¶ ffor Salamon saip þat ydelnesse techeþ man to don many eueles [2780] ¶ And eek he saip þat he þat trauayleþ and busyeþ him to tylyen his lande schal eten breed [2781] but he þat is ydel and casteþ him nought to no busynesse ne occupacioñ schal falle in-to pouert and deye for hunger [2782] ¶ and he þat is ydel & slowh can neuer fynde couenable tyme for to doon his profyte [2783] ffor þer is a *versifiour* þat saip þat þe ydel man excuseþ him in wynter by cause of þe grete colde ¶ And in somer by cause of þe grete hete [2784] ¶ ffor þise causes saip Catoñ ¶ wakeþ and enclyneþ þou nought ouer mochil for to slepe ¶ ffor ouermoche reste norisshet and causeþ many vices [2785] ¶ And þerfore saip Seint Ierom ¶ Dop some goode deedes þat þe deuyll which is oure enemy ne fynde þou vnoccupied [2786] ¶ ffor þe deuel ne takeþ nouzt lightly vnto his worchinge suche as he fyndeþ y-occupied in goode werkes

[2787] ¶ Thenne þus ¶ In getynges riches: þe mosten flee ydelnesse [2788] ¶ and afterwarde þe schuln vse þe riches þe whiche þe han geten by þoure witte and by þoure trauayle [2789] in suche a manere þat men halden þou not to scars ne to sparynge ne to fool large þat is to say ouer large a spender [2790] ¶ ffor right as men blamen an auerous man by cause of his skarste and þinking [2791] in þe same wyse is he to blame

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þat' spendeþ ouer largely [2792] ¶ And þerfore saiþ
 Catoñ ¶ vse þine riches þat' þow hast' y-ge-
 ten [2793] in such manere þat' men han no matiere ne
 cause to clepe þe wrecche ne chynche [2794]
 ¶ ffor it is gret' schame to a man to haue a pouere herte
 and a riche purse [2795] ¶ he saiþ also þe goodes þat'
 þou haste y-ge-ten vse hem by mesure þat' is to sayn
 spende mesurably [2796] ¶ ffor þey þat' folily wasten
 and dispenden þe goodes þat' þey han [2797] whan
 þay haue no more propre of here owne: þey schapen hem
 to take þe goodes of' anoþer man [2798] ¶ I say þanne
 þat' he schal flee auarice [2799] vsynge þoure richesse
 in suche a manere that men say not þat' þoure riches-
 ses ben y-buried [2800] but' þat' 3e han hem in þoure
 might' and in þoure weldynge [2801] ffor a wise man
 reproveþ þe auerous man and saiþ þus in tuo
 vers [2802] ¶ wherto and why burieþ a man his
 goodes by his auarice and knoweþ wel þat' needes
 moste he dye [2803] ¶ ffor deþ is þe ende of' euery man
 as in þis present' lyf' [2804] ¶ And for what' cause or
 enchesoñ ioigneþ he him or knetteþ he hem so faste
 vnto his goodes [2805] þat' alle his wittes mowen nouzt'
 disseueren him or departen him fro his goodes.
 [2806] and knoweþ wel or owghte to knowe þat' whan he
 is deed he schal nouzt' bere out' of' þe
 world wiþ him [2807] ¶ and þerfore saiþ seint' Austyn þat'
 þe auerous man is likned vnto helle [2808] ¶ þat' þe
 more it' cheweþ þe more desir it' haþ to swelwe and
 deuoure [2809] ¶ And as wel alle 3e wolde eschewe to ben
 y-cleped an auerous man or a chynche [2810] ¶ As wel
 schulde 3e gouerne þou and kepe þou in such a wyse
 þat' men clepe þou nouzt' to large [2811] ¶ þerfore
 Tullius¹ saiþ ¶ The goodes he saiþ of' þin hous schulde
 not' ben hydde ne kepte in cloos but' þat' þay mighte
 ben opened wiþ pitee and with debonairtee [2812] þat' is to
 say to 3euen hem part' þat' han gret' neede [2813]

¶ Ne þine goodes schullen not' ben so opene to ben euery mannes goodes [2814] ¶ afterward in getyng of 3our richesses ¶ And in vsyng hem 3e schuln alway haue þre þinges in 3oure herte [2815] [*c'est assavoir, Dieu, conscience, et bonne fame, et renommée.* [2816] *Tu dois doncques avoir Dieu en ton cuer* (Le Ménagier, i. 224)] [2817] ¶ And for no richesse 3e schuln doon no þing' þat' may be displesaunce to god þat' is 3oure creatour and 3oure maker [2818] ¶ ffor after þe word of' Salamon ¶ hit' is bettre to haue a lytel good wiþ þe loue of' god. [2819] þan to haue mochild good and tresour and lese þe loue of' his lord god [2820] ¶ And þe prophete saiþ. þat' better it is to ben a good man and haue lytel good and tresour. [2821] þan to be halden a schrewe and to haue gret' richesse [2822] ¶ 3et' say I forþermore þat' 3e schuln don 3oure busynesse to geten 3ou richesse [2823] So þat' 3e geten hem wiþ good conscience [2824] ¶ And þe apostel saiþ þat' þer is no þing' in þis world of' which we schulden haue so gret' ioye: as when oure conscience bereþ vs good witness [2825] ¶ And þe wise man saiþ ¶ The substaunce of' a man is ful good when synne is nought in mannes conscience [2826] ¶ Afterward in getyng of' 3oure Richesses and in vsyng of' hem: [2827] 3e moste haue gret' busynesse and gret' diligence that' 3oure goode name be alwey kepte and conserued [2828] ¶ ffor Salamon saiþ ¶ þat' better it is and more auayleþ a man to haue good name þen to haue grete richesses [2829] ¶ And þerfore he saiþ in anoþer place ¶ Do gret' diligence saiþ Salamon in kepyng of' þin frende and of' þin goode name [2830] ¶ ffor it schal lenger abyde with þe þan eny tresour be it' neuer so precious [2831] ¶ And certes he schulde nouzt' be cleped a gentil man þat' after god and good conscience alle þinges lefte þat' he ne dop his busynesse ne diligence to kepen his good name [2832] ¶ And Cassidorie saiþ þat' it' is signe of' a good herte whan a man loueþ and desyreþ to haue a good name

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[2833] ¶ And *perfore* seip seint' austyn þat' þer
ben tuo þinges þat' ben necessary and needfulle

[2834] ¶ And þat' is good consciens [2835]
to þin owne persone

inward and good loos ffor þin neyhebour outward

[2836] ¶ And he þat' trusteþ him so mechel in his goode

conscience [2837] þat' he displeseþ and setteþ it' at

nouzt' his good name or loos and rekkeþ nouzt' þat

he kepeþ nouzt' his good name nys but' a cruel cherle

[2838] ¶ Sire now haue I schewed 3ow how 3e schuln
doon in getyng of' richesse and how 3e schuln vsen hem

[2839] ¶ And I se wel þat' for þe trüste þat' 3e han in

richesse 3e wollen moeue bataile ¹and werre [2840]

¶ I counsele 3ou þat' 3e begynne no werre in truste of'
3oure richesches ¶ ffor þey sufficien nouzt' werres to meyn-

tene [2841] ¶ And *perfore* saip a Philosophre ¶ That'

a man desireþ and wol algates han werre schal

neuer haue sufficaunce [2842] ¶ ffor þe richere þat' he is

þe gretter despenses moot' he make if' he wole haue wor-

schipe and victory [2843] ¶ And Salamon saith þat' þe

grettere richesse þat' a man haþ þe more dispendoures he

haþ [2844] ¶ And deere *sir* al be it' so þat' for 3oure

richesses 3e may han moche folk' [2845] ¶ 3et' byhoueþ

it' nough't ne it' is nouzt' good to begynne werre wher as 3e

may in oþer manere haue pees vnto 3oure worschipe

and profyt' [2846] ¶ ffor þe victories of' Batailles þat' ben

in þis world liþ nouzt' in gret' nombre of' multitude of'

poeple ne in þe vertu of' man' [2847] but' it' lith in

þe wille and in þe hande of' our lord ihesu crist' //

[2848] And *perfore* Iudas Makabeus which was

goddes knigh't [2849] when he schulde fighten azeins his

aduersaries þat' hadde a gretter nombre & a gretter mul-

titude of' folk' and streng'er þen was þe poeple of' Macha-

bee [2850] ¶ 3et' he recomforted his litel companye and

sayde right' in þis wise [2851] ¶ As lightly *quod* he

may our lord god almighty 3eue victory to fewe folk'

GROUP B. § 10. MELIBEUS. Corpus MS.

as to many folk' [2852] ¶ ffor þe victory of' bataile comeþ nouȝt by gret' nombre of' poeple: [2853] but' it' comeþ fro oure lord of' heuene // [2854] ¶ And deere sire for as mochil as þer is no man certein if' it' be worþy þat' god ȝeue him victory [.
. *no gap in the MS.*] or nouȝt'. after þat' Salomon seiþ [2855] ¶ þerfore euery man schulde gretly drede werres to begynne [2856] ¶ And by cause þat' in batailles schuln fallen many periles [2857] ¶ And happeþ oþerwhile þat' as sone is þe grete man slayn as þe litel man [2858] ¶ And as it' is writen in þe secoñde book' of' kynges ¶ The deedes of' batailles ben aduenturous and vncertein [2859] ffor as lightly as is oon y-hurt' wip a spered as anoþer. [2860] and þerfore is gret' perile in werre ¶ Therefore schulden men flee and eschewe werre in as mechel as a man may goodly [2861] ¶ ffor Salomon seiþ ¶ he þat' loueþ perill: schal falle in perille

[2862] ¶ After þat' dame prudence hadde spoken in þis manere ¶ Mellibe answerde and sayde [2863] ¶ I se wel dame Prudence þat' by ȝoure faire wordes and by ȝoure resoñs þat' [*vous mettez avant, que*] þe werre lykeþ ȝou noþing' [2864] ¶ But' I haue not' ȝit' herde ȝoure wyse counsel how I schal do in þis neede .

[2865] Certes *quod* sche I counseile ȝou þat' ȝe acorde wip ȝoure aduersaries and þat' ȝe haue pees wip hem [2866] ¶ ffor seint' Iame seiþ in his Epistles þat' by concord and pees þat' smale richesses waxen grete [2867] ¶ And by debat' and discord þe grete richesses fallen 'doun [2868] ¶ And ȝe knowen þat' oon of' þe grettest' and most' souerayn þing' þat' is in þis world is vnite and pees [2869] ¶ And þerfore sayde oure lord Ihesu crist' to his appostles in þis wyse [2870] ¶ Wel happy and blessed ben þay þat' louen and purchacen pees ffor þey ben cleped þe children of' god [2871] ¶ A *quod* Mellibe now I se wel þat' ȝe louen nouȝt' myn honour ne my worschipe [2872] ¶ ȝe knowe wel þat' myn

GROUP B. § 10. MELIBEUS. *Corpus MS.*

aduersaries han bygonne þis debaat and brigge by here outrage [2873] ¶ And 3e seen wel þat þey neuer queren ne preyen me nouȝt' of' pees Ne þey asken me nouzt' to be recon-siledede [2874] ¶ Wole 3e þanne þat' I go meke me and obeye me to hem . and crye hem mercy : [2875] ffor soþe þat' were not' my worschipe [2876] ¶ ffor righ't as men sayn þat' ouer gret' homlynesse¹ engendreþ despysyng So fareþ it' by to gret' humilite and mekenesse [1 corrected]

[2877] ¶ Then bygan dame prudence to make semblaunt' of' wrapþe and sayde [2878] ¶ Certez sire saue 3our *grace* ¶ I loue 3our honour and 3our *profyt* as I do myn owne and euer haue doon [2879] ne 3e ne noon oþer ne saugh neuer þe contrarye [2880] ¶ And 3et' if' I hadde sayd 3e schulde haue purchaced þe pees and þe reconsiliacion' : I nad nouȝt' mochel mystaken me ne y-sayde amys [2881] ¶ ffor þe wise man saith . þe dis-sencioñ bygynneþ by anoþer man and þe reconsilynge begynneþ by þinsel'f [2882] ¶ And þe *prophete* saiþ ¶ ffilee schrewednesse and do goodnesse [2883] ¶ Seche pees and folwe it' as mechil as in þe is / [2884] ¶ 3et' saiþ he nouȝt' ¶ 3et' schuln 3e raþer pursewe to 3our aduersaryes for pees þan þey schuln to 3ou [2885] ¶ ffor I knowe wel þat' 3e ben so harde y-herted þat' 3e wolen don no þing' for me [2886] ¶ And Salamon saiþ ¶ þat' he þat' haþ euer an hard herte : atte laste he schal myshappe and mystryde

[2887] ¶ Whan Mellibe hadde herde dame Prudence make semblañt' of' wrapþe ¶ he sayde in þis wyse [2888] ¶ Dame I *pray* 3ou þat' 3e ben nouzt' displesed of' þinges þat' I say 3ou [2889] ffor 3e knowe wel þat' I am angry and wroþ and þat' is no wonder [2890] ¶ and þo þat' ben wroþ witen not' wel what' þey doon ne what' þay sayn [2891] ¶ Wherfore þe *prophete* saiþ þat' / troubled eyen han no cleer sight' [2892] ¶ But' sitteþ and counseileþ me righ't as 3ow liste . ffor I am redy to doon righ't' as 3e woln desire [2893] ¶ And if' 3e reproeuen me of' my folye ¶ I am þe more halden to loue 3ow and to preysen

GROUP B. § 10. MELIBEUS. Corpus MS.

3ou [2894] ¶ ffor Salomon saip ¶ he þat' reprouep
him þat doop folye: [2895] he schal fynden grettere grace
þan he þat' disceyueþ him by wordes

[2896] ¶ Then sayde dame Prudence ¶ I make no
semblaunt of wrappe / ne of anger but for 3oure owne profyt
[2897] ¶ ffor Salomon saip ¶ he is ¹more worþ þat re-
prouep or chideþ a fool for his folye schewing' him
semblaunt of wrappe: [2898] þan he þat' supporteþ him /
[. . . . no gap] in his mysdoynge & laugheþ at' his
folye [2899] ¶ And þis same Salomon saip afterward
þat' by þe sorwful visage of' man þat' is to say by
sory and heuy contynance of' a man [2900] þe folk'
correcteþ and amendeþ him self'

[2901] ¶ Than sayde Mellibe ¶ I schal nouzt' konne an-
swere vnto so many resoñs as 3e putteþ to me and
scheweþ [2902] Sayeþ schortly 3our wille and 3oure coun-
seil and I am al redy to fulfille and parforme

[2903] ¶ Thenne dame Prudence discouered al hire wille
vnto him and sayde [2904] ¶ I counseile 3ou *quod* he
abouen alle þing' þat' 3e maken pees betwixen god and
3ou [2905] and beþ reconsiled vnto him and vnto his
grace [2906] ¶ ffor as I haue sayde 3ou here-byforn god
hap suffred 3ou to haue þis tribulacion and disese for
3oure synnes [2907] and if' 3e doon as I say 3ou god wol
sende 3oure aduersaries vnto 3ou [2908] and maken 3oure
aduersaries fallen at' 3oure feet'. redy to doon 3our wille and
3oure comaundement [2909] ¶ ffor Salomon saip whan þe con-
dicion of' man is plesaunt' and likinge vnto god // [2910] he
changeþ þe hertes of' mannes aduersaries and con-
streigneþ hem to besechen him of' pees and of' grace
[2911] ¶ And I pray 3ou let' me speke wiþ 3our aduersaries
in priue place [2912] ¶ ffor þey schuln nouzt' knowe þat' it
be 3oure wille or 3oure assent' [2913] and þenne whan
I knowe here wille and here assent' ¶ I may counsel 3ou
þe more seurlly

[2914] ¶ Dame *quod* Mellibe doþ 3oure wille and

3oure likynge [2915] ¶ ffor I putte me holly in 3oure
disposicioñ and ordinañce

[2916] ¶ Thenne dame Prudence whan sche saugh þe
goode wille of hire housbonde sche delyuered and tookt a-vys
in hire self [2917] þenkingt how sche mighte bringe þis
neede. vnto a good conclusioñ and to a good ende
[2918] ¶ And whan sche saugh hire tyme sche sente for þe
aduersaries to come vnto hire in-to a priue place
[2919] and schewed wysely vnto hem þe grete goodnesse
þat comeþ of pees [2920] and þe grete harmes and
periles þat ben in werre [2921] ¶ And sayde to hem in
a goodly manere hou þat hem ¶ aughte to haue gret re-
pentaunce [2922] of þe Iniury and wrongt þat þey
hadden doon to Mellibe hire lord and vnto hire and vnto
hire doughter

[2923] ¶ And when þey herden þe goode wordes of
dame Prudence. [2924] þey weren so supprised and
rauyscht and hadden so gret ioye of hire þat wonder
was to telle [2925] ¶ A lady *quod* þay 3e han schewed
vnto vs þe blessyngt of swetnesse after þe sawe of
dauid þe prophete [2926] ¶ ffor þe reconsilyngt which
we ne ben nouzt worþy to haue in no manere [2927] ¶ But
we oughten requiren hit wip gret contricioñ & ¹humilite
[2928] 3e of 3oure grete goodnesse han presented vnto vs
[2929] ¶ Now se we wel þat þe science and þe connyngt
of Salamon is ful trewe. [2930] ffor he saip þat
swete wordes multiplyen and encrescen freendes and
maken schrewes to be debonaire and meeke

[2931] ¶ Certes *quod* þay we putten oure dede and
aht oure matiere and cause al holly in 3oure goode wille
[2932] and ben redy to obeye to þe speche of þe comaunde-
mentt of my lord Mellibe [2933] ¶ And þerfore deere
and benigne lady we preyen 3ou and besechen 3ou as
mekely as we conne and mowen [2934] þat itt like vnto
3oure grete goodnesse to fulfille in dede 3oure goode
wordes [2935] ¶ ffor we considren and knowlechen

þat we han offended and y-greued my lord Mellibe out of
 resoñ and mesure [2936] so ferforþ þat we be nouzt of power
 to maken him amendes [2937] ¶ And þefore we oblige
 vs and oure frendes for to don alle his wille and his
 comaundement [2938] ¶ But þerauenture he haþ such
 heuynesse and such wrappe to vs ward by cause of oure
 offense [2939] ¶ That woln enioygne vs such peyne
 þat we may not bere ne sustene [2940] ¶ And þefore
 noble lady we beseche to þoure wommanly pite [2941]
 to taken such avisement/ in þis neede þat we ne oure
 frendes ne þen nouzt disherited þurgh oure
 folye

[2942] ¶ Certes *quod* Prudence ¶ It is an hard þing and
 right perilous [2943] þat a man putte him al outrelly
 in þe arbitracioñ and Iuggement and in þe might &
 power of his enmys [2944] ¶ ffor Salamon saip ¶ leueþ
 me and þeueþ credence to þat þat I schal sayn
 ¶ I say yeuere peple and gouernours of holy chirche
 [2945] to þin sone to þin wyf [*à ton frère*] and to
 þin freende [2946] [*ne donne puissance sur toy
 en toute ta vie*] [2947] *Se il a doneques deffendu
 que l'en ne donne . . . à frère ne à ami*
 (Le Ménagier, i. 230)] þe might of his body
 [2948] ¶ By a strenger resoñ he defendeþ and forbedeþ a
 man to þiue himself vnto his enemy [2949] ¶ And naþe-
 les I counseile þou þat þe mystruste nouzt my lord
 [2950] ¶ ffor I wot wel and knowe wel þat he is
 debonaire and meke large & courteys [2951] and no
 þing desirous of good ne coueytous to haue richesse [2952]
 ¶ ffor þer is no þing in þis world þat he desireþ
 saue worschipe and honour [2953] ¶ fforþer more
 I knowe wel and I am right seur þat he schal noþing
 do in þis neede withouten my conseil [2954] ¶ And I
 schal so worchen in þis cause by þe grace of oure lord
 god þat þe schuln ben reconciled vnto vs

[2955] ¶ þenne sayden þey wiþ oo voys ¶ Worschিপful

GROUP B. § 10. MELIBEUS. Corpus MS.

lady we putten vs and oure goodes al fully in 3oure wille and disposicioñ [2956] and [been] redy to come what [day] 3ou likeþ vnto 3oure noblesse to lymyten vs or to assignen vs [2957] for to maken oure obligacioñ and bond as strong^t as it^t likeþ vnto 3oure goodnesse [2958] þat^t we may fulfillle þe wille of^t 3ou and of^t my lord Mellibe

[2959] ¶ Whan dame Prudence hadde herd þe answeres of þese men: sche bad hem gon ayayn pryuyly [2960] ¶ And sche¹ returned a3ein to hire lord Mellybe and tolde him how sche fond his aduersaries ful repentaunt^t [2961] and knowleching ful reuerently and lowely here synnes and here trespaces and how þey weren redy to suffre alle peyne. [2962] requyrynge and preyng^t him of^t mercy and pite

[2963] ¶ Thenne sayde Mellibe: he is wel worþy to haue pardoñ and for3euenesse [*qui ne excuse point son péchié,* [2964] *mais le reconnoist et s'en repent et demande indulgence;* [2965] *car Sénèque dit là est rémission* (Le Ménagier, i. 231)] wher as confessioñ is [2966] ¶ ffor confessioñ is neighebor to Innocence [2967] ¶ And he saith in anoþer place ¶ he þat^t haþ schame for his synne and knowlecheþ it [. *no gap*] ¶ And þerfore I assente and conferme to haue pees [2968] ¶ But^t it^t is good þat^t we do it^t nou3t^t wiþouten þe assente and wille of^t oure freendes

[2969] ¶ Then was Prudence right^t glad and Ioyeful and sayde [2970] ¶ Certes sire *quod* sche ¶ 3e han goodly and wel answered [2971] ¶ ffor right^t as by counseil assent and helpynge of^t 3oure frendes 3e han ben styred to vengen 3ou and make werre: [2972] Right^t so wiþouten here counseil schulle 3e nough^t acorde þough 3e ne haue pees wiþ 3oure aduersaries [2973] ¶ ffor þe lawe saith ¶ þer is no þing^t so good by way of^t kynde as þing^t to ben vnbounden by hym þat^t it was y-bounde

[2974] ¶ And þenne dame Prudence wiþouten delay or tarynge sent anon messagers for hire kyn and for hire olde frendes whiche þat were trewe and wyse [2975]

GROUP B. § 10. MELIBEUS. **Corpus MS.**

¶ and tolde hem by ordre in þe presence of Mellybe al þe matiere as it is abouen expressed and declared [2976] ¶ and preyden hem þat þey wolden yeuen hire a wyse counseille ¶ what best were to doon in þis matiere [2977] ¶ And whan mellibeus counseil hadde taken here avys and good deliberacion of þe forsayde matiere [2978] and hadden examyned it by gret busynesse and gret diligence [2979] þey ȝeuen ful counseil for to haue pees and reste [2980] And þat Mellibe schulde receyue hit with good herte of his aduersaries to forȝiuenes and mercy

[2981] ¶ And whan dame Prudence hadde herde þe assent of hire lord Mellibe and þe counseil of hire frendes [2982] acorde wip hire wille and entencion [2983] sche was wonderly glad in herte and sayde [2984] ¶ Ther is an olde prouerbe *quod* sche saiþ þat þe goodnesse þat þu mayst do þis day do it [2985] and abyd it/ nought ne delay it nought til to morwe [2986] ¶ And þerfore I counseile þat ȝe sende ȝoure messagers whiche þat ben discrete and wise [2987] vnto ȝoure aduersaries / tellynge hem in ȝoure bihalue [2988] if þey wolen trete of pees and acorde [2989] þat þey schapen hem wipouten delay or tarynge comyng to vs [2990] ¶ which þing performed was in dede [2991] and whan þese trespasoures and repentyng folk of here folyes þat is to say þe aduersaries of Mellibe [2992] hadden herde what þese messangeres ¹sayden vnto hem; [2993] þey weren ful glad and ioyfulle and answerden ful mekely and benygnely [2994] ȝeldyng *graces* and þankes to here lord Mellibe and to alle his companye [2995] ¶ and schopen hem wipouten delay to go wip þe messangeres and obeye to þe comaundement of here lord Mellibe

[2996] ¶ And right anon þey token here wey to Mellibe [2997] ¶ And toke þe *somme* of here trewe wordes and frendes to maken feiþ for hem and for to ben here borwes [2998] ¶ And whanne þey comen to

GROUP B. § 10. MELIBEUS. **Corpus MS.**

þe presence of Mellibe ¶ he seyde hem þese wordes,
 [2999] ¶ It .stant' þus *quod* Mellibe and soþ it is
 þat' 3e [3000] causeles and wipouten skile and resoñ.
 [3001] han don grete Iniuries and wronges to me and
 to my wyf' Dame Prudence and to myn doughter also [3002].
 ¶ ffor 3e han entred in-to myn hous by vyolence [3003] and
 han doon suche outrage þat' alle men knowen wel þat' 3e han
 disserued þe dep [3004] ¶ And þerfore wil I knowen
 and wyten of' 3ou [3005] wheþer þat' 3e wollen putte þe
 punysschement' and chastisyng' and þe vengauce of'
 þis outrage in þe wille of' me and my wyf' dame Prudence
 or 3e woln nou3t'

[3006] ¶ Thenne þe wisest' of hem þre answerde for
 hem alle and sayde [3007] *sir quod* he we knowen
 wel þat' we ben vnworþy to come to 3oure court'
 of' so gret' a lord and of' so worþy as 3e ben [3008] ffor
 we han so gretly mystaken vs and han offended and agult'
 in such a wise azeins 3our heighe lordschipe. [3009] þat'
 trewly we han deserued þe deth [3010] ¶ But' 3it' for
 þe grete goodnesse and debonairte þat' alle þe world
 witnesseth of' 3oure persone [3011] ¶ we submitten vs to
 þe excellence and benignite of' 3oure *gracious* lordschipe
 [3012] and ben redy to obeye to alle 3our comaundementz
 [3013] besechyng 3ou þat' of' 3oure *mercycable* pite. 3e
 woln considre oure grete repentaunce and lowe submission
 [3014] and to *graunte* vs forzeuenesse of' oure outragous
 trespas and offence [3015] ¶ ffor wel we knowe þat' 3oure
 liberalle grace & mercy stretcheþ ferþer in-to good
 nesse þan don oure outrageous gultes and trespaces in-to
 wickednesse. [3016] al be hit'. þat' cursedly and damp-
 nably we han gult' azeins 3oure heyhe lordschipe

[3017] ¶ Thenne Mellibe took him vp fro þe grounde
 ful benygnely [3018] and receyued here obligacion's and here
 bandes by here oþes vppon here plegges and here borwes [3019]
 and assigned hem a certeyn day to retournen vnto his
 courtes [3020] ¶ ffor to accepte and receyue þe sentences and

þe Iuggementes þat Mellibe wolde comañde to bendon on hem by þe causes a-forn sayde / [3021] whiche þinges ordeyned : euery man retournede ¹to his hous

[3022] ¶ And when þat dame Prudence saugh hire tyme sche f[r]eyned and axede hire lord mellibe [3023] what vengañce he þou3t to take of his aduersaries

[3024] To which mellibe answerde and sayde ¶ Certez *quod* he I þenke and purpose fully [3025] to disherite hem of al þat þay han ¶ And for to putten hem in exile for euere

[3026] ¶ Certes *quod* Dame Prudence þis were a cruel sentence and mochel azeins resoñ [3027] ¶ ffor 3e ben riche ynough and han no neede of oþer mennes good [3028] and 3e mighte lightly geten 3ou a coueytous name [3029] which is a vicious þing and oughte [be] eschewed of euery man [3030] ¶ ffor after þe sawe of þe appostel Coueitise is roote of alle harmes [3031] ¶ And þerfore it were bettre to lese so mochel good of 3oure owne þan for to take of here good in þis manere [3032] ¶ ffor better it is to leese good wiþ worschipe þenne it is good to wynne worschipe wiþ vilanye and schame [3033] ¶ And euery man oughte to don his busynesse and to geten him a good name [3034] ¶ and 3et schal he nou3t only kepen him in kepyng of his good name [3035] ¶ But he schal also enforcen him alwey to don som þing by which he may renouelle his good name [3036] ¶ ffor it is write þat þe olde goode loos or good name of a man is sone goon and passed when it is nou3t newed and renouelled [3037] ¶ And as touchinge þat 3e sayn þat 3e woln exile 3oure aduersaries [3038] þat þenkeþ me mochil azeins resoñ and out of mesure [3039] ¶ Considereþ þe power þat 3e han 3ouen 3ou vpon hemself [3040] and it is writen. þat he is worþy to lesen his priuilege þat misvseþ it ¶ The might and þe power þat is 3ouen him. [3041] And I sette caas þat 3e might annoye hem þat peyne by right and by lawe [3042] which I

trowe 3e may nouȝt do [3043] I say ne ne mighte nouȝt
 putte it to execucioñ *peraventure* [3044] and þenne
 were it likly to retorne to þe werre as it was byforn
 [3045] ¶ And þerfore if 3e woln þat men do 3ou obeis-
 sañce: 3e moste deme more curteisly [3046] þis is to
 sayn 3e moste 3iue more esy sentences and Iugementz
 [3047] ¶ for it is writen þat he þat most curteisly
 comaundeth: to him men most obeyen [3048] ¶ And þer-
 fore I pray 3ou þat in þis necessite and in þis neede:
 3e casten þerfore to ouercome 3oure herte [3049] ¶ ffor Senek
 saip ¶ he þat oones ouercomeþ his herte: ouercomeþ
 twyes [3050] ¶ And Tullius saip ¶ Ther is no þing so
 comendable in a gret lord [3051] as whan he is debon-
 aire and meekeand appeseþ him meekely [3052] ¶ And I pray
 3ou þat 3e woln forbere now to do vengañce [3053] in
 such a manere. þat 3oure goode name may be kepte and
 conserued [3054] and þat man may haue ¹cause and
 matiere to preyse 3ou of pite and of mercy [3055] and
 þat 3e han no cause to repente 3ou of þing þat 3e doon
 [3056] ¶ ffor Senek seip: he ouercomeþ in euel
 manere þat repenteth him of his victory [3057] ¶ Where-
 fore I pray 3ou let mercy be in 3oure
 herte [3058] to þeffecte and þe entent þat god
 almighty haue mercy vpon 3ou in his laste Iuggement [3059]
 [*Car saint Jacques dit en son épistre: jugement*²] ¶ wip-
 outen mercy schal be to him þat haþ no mercy of
 anoper wight

[² Le Mén. i. 235]

[3060] ¶ Whan mellibe had herde þe grete skiles
 and resoñs of Damé Prudence and of hire wise informacioñs
 and techinges: [3061] his herte gan encline to þe wille of
 his wyf consyderyng to þe trewe entent [3062] con-
 formed him anon ¶ And assented fully to worchen after hire
 counseil. [3063] and þankeþ god of/ whom procedeth all
 goodnesse þat him sente a wyf of so gret
 discrecioñ [3064] ¶ And when þe day came þat his aduer-
 saries schulde apperen in his presence: [3065] he spake

GROUP B. § 10. MELIBEUS. Corpus MS.

to hem ful goodly and sayde to hem in þis wise/ [3066] ¶ Al
 be it' so þat' of' zoure pruyde and by *presumpcion* and folye
 ¶ and of' zoure necligence and vnkunnynge [3067] ze han
 mysborn zou and trespassed to me ./ [3068] zet' for as
 meche as I se and byholde zoure grete humilite
 [3069] and þat' ze ben sory and repentaunt' of' zoure gultes :
 [3070] it' constreigneth me to do zou *grace* and *mercy*
 [3071] ¶ Wherfore I receyue zou vnto my grace/ [3072] and
 forziue zou outrely alle þe offenses Iniuries and wronges
 þat' ze han doon azeins me and myne [3073] to þis
 effecte and to þis ende / þat' god of' his endeles mercy
 [3074] wol at' þe tyme of' oure deyinge forziuen oure
 gultes þat' we han trespass' vnto him in þis wrecchede
 world // [3075] ¶ ffor douteles if' we ben sory and repentaunt'
 of' þe synnes and gultes þe whiche we han trespassed in þe
 sight' of' oure lord god : [3076] he is so fre and so mercy-
 ful [3077] þat' he wol forziuen vs oure gultes [3078]
 and bryngen vs to þilke blisse þat' neuer haþ ende.
 To which blisse he vs bringe That blood on crosse for vs
 gan springe *Qui cum patre /*

¶ Here endep Chaucers tale of' Mellibe //

¶ *Prologus Monachi*
 [on leaf 234, back]

Whan ended was þe tale of Mellibe
 And of Prudence and hire benignite 3080
 Oure hoost sayde as I am feyþful man
 And By þe precious corpus Madryan
 I hadde leuer þan a barel ale
 That goode leef my wyf had herd þis tale 3084
 ffor sche nys no þing of such pacience
 As was þis Mellibeus wyf Prudence
 By goddes bones whan I bete my knaues [leaf 235]
 Sche bringeþ me þe grete clobbed stanes 3088
 And cryeþ sle þe dogges euerychon
 And breke boþe bak and bon
 And if þat any neyghebour of myne
 Wol nouzt in chirche to my wif enclyne 3092
 Or be so hardy to hire to trespace
 Whan sche comeþ home sche rumpeth me þe face
 and cryeþ false coward wreke þin wyf
 By corpus bones I wol haue þy knyft 3096
 And þou schalt haue my distaf and go spyne
 ffro day to night right þus sche wol begynne
 Allas sche saiþ þat euer I was y-schape
 To wedde a melksop or a coward ape / 3100
 That wil ben ouerled wiþ euery wight
 Thou darst nouzt stonde by þy wyf aright
 This is my lyf but if þat I wolde fight
 And out at þe dore anon I mot me dight 3104
 Or elles I am lost but if þat I
 Be like a wilde leon fool hardy
 I wot wel sche wol do me slee som day
 Som neihebre and þanne I go my way 3108
 ffor I am perilous wiþ knyft on honde /
 Al be it þat I dar hire nouzt wiþstonde /

GROUP B. § 11. MELIBE-MONK LINK. Corpus MS.

ffor sche is bigge in armes by my feiþ
 That schal he fynde þat hire mysdoþ or seiþ 3112
 But lat vs passe away fro þis matiere /
 My lord sire monk he saiþ be mery of cheere /
 ffor ye schul telle a tale trewely
 Lo Rouchestre stant here faste by 3116
 Ryd forþ myn owne lord brek nouzt our game
 But by my troupe I knowe nouzt zoure name /
 Wheþer I schal calle zou my lord daun Iohn
 Or Daun Thomas or elles Daun Alboñ 3120
 Of what hous be ze by your fader kyn
 I vowe to god þou hast a ful fayr skyn
 It is a gentil pasture þer þou gost [leaf 235]
 Thou art nouzt like a penañt or a gost 3124
 Vppon my feiþ þou art som officer
 Som worþy Sexteyn or som Celerer
 ffor by my fader soule as to my dome
 Thou art a maister whan þou art at home 3128
 No pouer cloysterer ne no pouer novys
 But governour wyly and wys
 And þer-with-al of brawnes and of bones
 A wel faryng persone for þe nones 3132
 I pray to god ziue him confusiõ
 That ferst þe brought in to religiõ
 Thou woldest haue ben a tredefoul aright
 Haddest þou as gret leue as þou hast might 3136
 To perfourme al þy lust in engendure /
 Thou haddest bygeten many a creature
 Allas why werest þou so wyd a Cope
 God zif me sorwe and I were a Pope 3140
 Nouzt oonly þou but euery mighty man
 Though he were schore heyhe vpon his pan
 Schulde haue a wyf for al þis world is lorn
 Religiõ hap take vp al þe corn 3144
 Of tredyng and we borelle men ben schrimpes
 Of feeble trees þer comeþ wrecched ympes

This makeþ þat' oure heires ben so sclendre
 And feble þat' þay may not' wel engendre 3148
 This makeþ þat' oure wyfes wol assay
 Religious folk' for þey may bettre pay
 Of' venus payment' þen mowen we
 God woot' no lussheburghes paye 3e 3152
 But' beþ nought' wroþ my lord þough þat' I play
 fful ofte in game a soþ I haue herd say
 This worþy monk' took' al in pacience
 And sayde I wil do al my diligence 3156
 As fer as sowneþ in to honeste
 To telle 3ou a tale or tuo or þre
 And if' 3ou liste herkne hiderward [leaf 236]
 I wol 3ou seyn þe lyf' of' seint' Edward 3160
 Or elles tregedys first' wol I telle
 Of' whiche I haue an hundred in my selle
 Tregedye is for to telle a certein storye
 As olde bookes maken memorie 3164
 Of' hem þat' stood in gret' prosperite
 And is y-falle out' of' heigh degre
 In-to miserie and endeþ wrecchedly
 And þey ben vercefyed comenly 3168
 Of' sixe foote whiche þat' men clepen examytron
 In proce eek' ben endited many oon
 And eek' in metre in many a sondry wyse
 Lo þis aughte 3ou ynough suffyse 3172
 Now herkneþ if' 3ou liste for to heere
 But' first' I 3ou beseche in þis mateere /
 þough I by ordre telle nou3t' þese þinges
 Be it' of' Popes Emperours or Kynges 3176
 And after here ages as men writen fynde
 But' telle hem some bifore some behinde
 As it' comeþ now to my remembrance
 Haueþ me excused of' myn ignorance

¶ Explicit
 prologus monachi

¶ Here telleþ þe monk // De casibus virorum illustrium
 ¶ C^m xxj^m

[No breaks between the stanzas in the MS.]

I Wol bewayle in maner of Tregedye
 The harme of hem þat standeþ¹ in heih degre <sup>[¹ stoden,
 later, in the
 margin]</sup>
 And fellen so þat þer nas no remedye
 To bringen hem out of here aduersite 3184
 ffor certein when þat fortune lust to fle
 Ther may no man of hire þe cours wipholde /
 [²Lat nonis truste on blyn[d] prosperite²] [²—² later, in margin]
 Beþ war by þis ensamples 3ong^t and olde 3188

[Lucifer.]

At lucifer þough he an aungel were ¶ Primo de lucifero
 And nough^t a man at him I wol begynne
 ffor þeiġh fortune may non aungel dere
 ffrom heih degre 3et felle he for his synne 3192
 Doun in-to helle wher as he 3et is Inne
 O lucifer brightest of aungeles alle
 Now art þou Sathanas þat mayst not twynne [leaf 236, back]
 Out of miserie which þou art y-falle 3196

De Adamo [in margin.]

[LO Adam in the felde of/ Damascene. [Harl. MS 1758, leaf 184]
 With goddis/ owne finger/ wroght/ was/ he.
 And not bi getyng/ of/ mannes/ sperme vnclene.
 And welte aH Paradis/ sauynge/ oo tre. 3200
 Had neuyr/ worldly man so hye degree.
 As/ Adam had tilf he for his/ gouernaunce.
 Was/ dryuen out/ of/ his/ hye prosperite.
 To labour/ an to helle & to myschaunce.] [Harl. extract ends]

[*Sampson.*]

¶ Lo Sampson which was annunciate
 By þangel long' er his natiuite /
 And was to god almighty consecrate
 And stood in nobles whiles he mighte se 3208
 Was neuer such anoper as was he
 To speke of' strengþe and þerto hardynes
 But' to his wyues tolde he his secre
 Thurgh which he slough himself' þurgh wrecchednes 3212

¶ Sampson þis noble and mighty champion
 Wiþouten wepen sauf' his handes tweye
 he slough and al to-rente þe leoun
 Toward his weddyng' walkyng' by þe weye 3216
 his false wyf' couþe him so plese and preye /
 Til sche his counseil knewe and sche vntrewe
 Vnto his foos his counseil gan bewrewe
 And him forsok' and took' anoper newe 3220

¶ An hundred foxes tok' Sampson for Ire
 And alle here tayles he togyder bond
 And sette þe foxes tayles alle on fuyre
 ffor he in euery tail haþ putt' a brond 3224
 And þey brent' alle þe cornes in þat' lond
 And eek' here Olyues and here vynes eeke
 A þousend men eek' he slough wiþ his hond
 And hadde no wepne but' an asse cheeke 3228

¶ Whan þey were slayn so þursted him þat' he
 Was wel neigh lorn for which he gan to preye
 That' god wolde of' his peyne haue som pite [leaf 237]
 And sende him drinke or elles most' he deye / 3232
 And of' þis asse cheeke þat' was so druye
 Out' of' a wang' toop sprang' anon a welle
 Of' which he drank' ynough schortly to seye
 Thus hilpe him god as Iudicium can telle 3236

¶ By verray force at Gasan on a night
 Maugre philistiens of þat Cite
 The gates of þe toun he haþ vp plighþ
 And on his bakke y-karyed hem haþ he 3240
 heighe on an hille where as men mighte se
 O noble almighty Sampson leef and deere
 That strong and noble haþ be /
 In alle þis world ne hadde þer ben þy peere 3244

¶ This Sampson neuer cyder drank ne wyn
 Ne on his heed came Rasour non ne scheere
 By precepte of þe messenger deuyn 3248
 ffor alle his strengþe was in his here
 And fully twenty 3eer by 3ere
 he hadde of Israel þe gouernañce
 But after soone schal he wepe many a teere
 ffor wommen schuln bringe him to meschañce 3252

¶ Vnto his lemman Dalida he tolde
 That in his heeres alle his strengþe lay
 And falsly to his fomen sche him solde
 And slepyng vpon hire barme vpan a day 3256
 Sche made to clippe or schere his here away
 And made his foomen alle his crafte aspyen
 And whan þat þay him fond in such aray
 They bonde him faste and putte out his eyen 3260

¶ But er his heer was y-clipped or y-schaue
 Ther was no bond þat might him bynde
 But now is he in prisoun putte in a Caue
 Where as þey made him at þe querne grynde 3264
 O noble Sampson strengest of mankynde
 O whilom Iugge in glorie and in richesse
 Now maystow wepe with þin eyen blynde [leaf 237, back]
 Seþenes þou art fro wele falle in to wrecchidnesse 3268

¶ The ende of þis Caytiffe was as I schal seye
 his foomen made a feste vp-on a day
 And made him as here fool biforn hem pleye
 And þis was [in] a temple of gret aray 3272
 But at þe laste he made a foul affray
 ffor he tuo postes schookt and made hem falle /
 And doun fel temple and al þer it lay
 And slough himself and eek his foomen alle 3276

¶ This is to say þe princes euerichon
 And eek a þousand bodyes were þey slayn
 Wiþ fallyng of þe grete temple of stoon
 Of Sampson ne wol I no more sayn 3280
 Beþ war of þis ensample olde and playn
 That noman telle here conseil to here wyues
 Of such þing as þay wolde haue secre fayn
 If þat it touche here lymes or here lyues 3284

[Hercules.]

| | |
|--|-------------|
| ¶ Of Ercole þe soueraign conquerour | ¶ De Ercole |
| Syngen his werkes lewede and heih renown | |
| ffor in his tyme of strengþe he bar þe flour | |
| he slough and rafte þe skyn fro þe leoun | 3288 |
| he of sent arwes leyde þe boost a doun | |
| he arpyes slough þe cruel briddes felle | |
| he golden apples rafte þe dragoun | |
| he drough out Serberois þe hound of helle | 3292 |

¶ He slough þe cruel tyraunt Buserus
 And made his hors to frete him fleissþ and boon
 He slough þe verray serpent venymous
 Of Achilles tuo hornes brarkt he oon 3296
 And he slough Cacus in a Cave of ston
 He slough þe geaunt Anteus þe stronge /
 He slough þe grisly boor and þat anoon
 And bar þe heed vpon his necke longe 3300

GROUP B. § 12. MONK'S TALE. Corpus MS.

- ¶ Was neuer wigh't sijen þe world bygan
 þat slough so many monstres as dede he
 Thurgh out þis wilde world his name ran [leaf 236]
 What for his strengþe and for his bounte 3304
 And euery Reeme went he for to see
 He was so strong' þat no man might' him lette
 And boþe þe worldes ende saith trophe /
 In stede of' boundes he a piler sette 3308
- ¶ A lemman hadde þis noble Campioñ
 That' highte Deianyre freissh as may
 And as þe clerkes maden mencioñ
 Sche haþ him sent a scherte freisch and gay 3312
 Allas þis scherte and weylaway
 Enuenymed was subtilly wiþ alle
 That' or þat' he had wered it half' a day
 It' made his boones fro his fleissch to falle / 3316
- ¶ But' napeles some clerkes hire exusen
 By oon þat' highte Nessus þat' it' maked
 Be as be may I wol hire nough't' accusen
 But' on his bakke þe scherte he weres al naked 3320
 Tille þat' his fleissch was fro þe venym blaked
 And whan he saugh non oper remedye
 In hote coles he haþ himself' y-raked
 ffor wiþ no venym deynd he to dye 3324
- ¶ Thus starf' þis worþy mighty hercules
 Lo who may truste on fortune ony þrowe
 ffor him þat' folweþ alle þis world of' prees
 Er he be war is ofte y-leyd ful lowe 3328
 fful wys is he þat' himself' can knowe
 Beþ war for when þat' fortune lust' to glose /
 Than wayteþ sche hire man doun to þrowe
 By such a way as he wolde lest' suppose // 3332

[*Nebuchadnezzar.*]

| | |
|--|------------------|
| ¶ The mighty trone þe precious tresor | ¶ De Rege Nabu- |
| The glorious septir and realle mageste | godonosore |
| That hadde þe king Nabugodonosor | |
| Wiþ tunge vnneþe may discryued be | 3336 |
| he twyes nam Iherusalem þe cite / | |
| The vessel of þe temple he wiþ him ladde | |
| ¶ At Babiloyne was his souerain see / | [leaf 238, back] |
| In which his glorie and his delit he hadde / | 3340 |

| | |
|--|------|
| The fayrest children of þe blood royalle | |
| Of Ierusalem he dede do gylde anon | |
| And maked eche of hem to ben his þralle | |
| Among alle oþer Daniel was oon | 3344 |
| That was þe wisest childe of euerychon | |
| ffor he þe dremes of þe king expowned | |
| Wher as in Caldey clerk was þer non | |
| That wiste to what fyn his dremes sowned | 3348 |

| | |
|--|------|
| ¶ This proude king leet make a statue of golde | |
| Sixty cubites longe and seuen in brede | |
| To which Image boþe 3onge and olde | |
| Comaunded he to lowte and haue in drede / | 3352 |
| Or in a fourneys ful of flammes rede | |
| He schal be brent þat wolde nought obeye | |
| But neuere wolde assente to þat dede | |
| Danyel ne his 3onges felawes tweye | 3356 |

| | |
|--|------|
| ¶ This king of kynges proude and elat | |
| he wende god þat sitte in mageste | |
| Ne might him nought byreue of his estate | |
| But sodeinly he lost his dignite | 3360 |
| And like a beeste him seemed for to be | |
| And ete hey as an oxe and lay þer oute | |
| In reyn wiþ wilde bestes walked he | |
| Til a certain tyme was come aboute | 3364 |

¶ And ylike an Egles feþeres were his heres
 And nayles like briddes clawes were /
 God releued him at certeyn 3eeres
 And 3af^t him witte and þanne wiþ many a tere · 3368
 he þankede god and euer his lyf^t in feere
 Was he to don amys or more trespas
 And or þat^t y-leyd was on his beere
 he knew wel þat^t god was ful of^t might^t and grace 3372

[*Belshazzar.*]

¶ his sone which þat^t highte Baltyzar ¶ De Baltazar *dícti*
 þat^t heeld þe regne after his fader day *Regis Nabugodo-*
 he by his fader couþe nou3^t be war [leaf 239] *nosor filio*
 ffor prowde he was of^t herte and of^t array 3376
 And eek^t an ydolatre was he ay
 his heihe astate asseured him in pryde
 But^t fortune caste him down and þer he lay
 And sodeinly his regne gan deuyde / 3380

¶ A feste he made vnto his lordes alle
 vpon a tyme he made hem bliþe be /
 And þenne his officeres gan he calle
 Goode bringeth forth þe vesselles *quod* he 3384
 Which þat^t my fader in his *prosperite*
 Out^t of^t þe temple of^t Ierusalem byrafte
 And to oure heihe goddes þanke we
 Of^t honour þat^t oure eldres wiþ vs lafte 3388

¶ His wyf^t his lordes and his concubynes
 Ay drunken whiles here appetyte laste /
 Out^t of^t þis noble vesseles sondry wynes /
 And on a wal þis king^t his eyhen caste 3392
 And saugh^t an hande armles þat^t wrot^t ful faste
 ffor feer of^t which he quook^t and siked sore
 This hande þat^t Baltazar made so sore agast^t
 Wrot^t mane techel phares and no more 3396

- ¶ In al þat lond magicien was þer non
 That couþe expoune what þis lettre ment'
 But Daniel expounded it anon
 And sayde king' god to þi fader sent' 3400
 Glory and honour Regne tresor and rent
 And he was prowde and no þing' god ne dradde /
 And þefore god gret' wreche vpon him sent
 And him byrafte þe regne þat he hadde 3404
- ¶ He was out' cast' of mannes companye
 Wiþ asses was his habitacioñ
 And eete hey as a beeste in wete and drye
 Til þat he knew by grace and by resoun 3408
 That god of heuen haþ domynacioñ
 Ouer euery regne and euery creature
 And þenne hadde god of him compassioñ [leaf 239, back]
 And him restored his regne and his figure 3412
- ¶ Eke þou þat art' his sone art' proud also
 And knowest' alle þis þinges pryuyly
 and art' rebell to god and art' his foo
 Thou drank' eeke of his vessels boldely 3416
 Thy wyf' eek' and þy wenche synfully
 Drank' of þe same vessels sondry wynes
 And heryed false goddes cursedly
 Ther fore to þe schapen gret' pyne is / 3420
- ¶ This hand was sent fro god þat on þe wal
 Wrot' mane techel phares truste me
 Thin regne is doon þou weyest' not' at al
 Deuyded is þy regne and it schal be 3424
 To Medes and to Perses zeuen quod he
 And þilke same night' þe king' was slawe
 And Daryus occupieth his degre
 They he þerto nad neyþer right' ne lawe 3428

¶ Lordynges her-by ensample may 3e take
 How þat in lordschipe is no sikernesse
 ffor whan fortune wole a man forsake
 He bereþ a-vey his regne and his richesse / 3432
 And eek his freendes boþe more and lesse
 And what man haþ freendes þurgh fortune
 Mishap wole make hem enemys I gesse
 This *proverbe* is ful soþ and ful *commune* 3436

[*Zenobia.*]

¶ Cenobya of Palymere þe queene ¶ De Cenobia Paly-
 As writen *Persiens* of hire noblesse merie regina
 So worþy was in armes and so keene
 That no wight passed hire in hardynesse / 3440
 Ne in lynage ne in oþer gentillesse /
 Of kinges blood of *Perce* sche descended
 I saye þat sche nad nouzt most fairnesse
 But of hire schap sche might nough ben amended 3444

¶ ffro hire childhode I fynde þat sche fledde
 Office of wommen and to woode sche wente
 And many a wilde hertes blood sche schedde [leaf 240]
 With arwes brode þat sche to hem sente / 3448
 Sche was so swyfte þat sche anon hem hente
 And whan þat sche was elder sche wold kille
 Leouns luperdes and beres alto-rent
 And in hire armes welde hem at hire wille 3452

¶ Sche dorste wilde bestes dennes seeke
 And rennen in þe mounteinz al þe night
 And slepe vnder a bussche and sche coupe eeke
 Wrastlen by *verray* force and *verray* might 3456
 Wiþ any 3ongt man were he neuer so wight
 Ther mighte no þing in hir armes stonde
 Sche kepte hir maydenhed fro euery wight
 To no man deyned hire to be bonde / 3460

¶ But' atte laste hir freendes han hire maryed
 To Odenake a Prince of þat' Cite
 Al were it' so þat' sche hem longe taryed
 And 3e schuln vnderstonde how þat' he 3464
 Hadde suche fantasies as hadde sche
 But napeles whan þey were knette in feere
 They lyueden in ioye and in felicite
 ffor sche of' hem hadde oþer leef' and deere / 3468

[Saue oo thyng/ that/ sche wolde neuyr/ assente.] [Harl. MS
1758, U187]
 By no wey þat' he schulde by hire lye
 But' ones for it/ was hire pleyne entent
 To haue a childe þe world to multiplie 3472
 And al so sone as sche might aspye
 That' sche nas nou3t' wiþ childe wiþ þat' dede
 Thanne wolde sche suffre him don his fantasye
 Eftsonne and nou3t' but ones out' of' drede / 3476

¶ And if' sche were wiþ childe at' þilke caste
 No more schulde he pleye þilke game
 Til fully fourty dayes were paste
 Thenne wolde sche ones do suffre him þe same 3480
 Al were þis Odenak' wilde or tame
 he gat' nomore of' hire for þus sche sayde
 It' was to wyfes lechery and schame /
 In oþer caas if' þat' men with hem playde [leaf 240, back]

¶ Tuo sones by þis Odonak' had sche
 The whiche sche kepte in vertu and lettrure
 But' now vnto oure tale turne we /
 I saye þat' worschiphul creature 3488
 And wys þerwith and large wiþ mesure
 So penyble in þe werre and curteys eeke
 No more labour mighte in werre endure
 Was non þey alle þis world men schulde seke 3492

¶ Hire riche aray mighte nough^t be told
 As wel in vessel as in hir cloþinge
 Sche was al cladde in perrye and in goolde
 And eek^t sche lefte nough^t for non huntyng
 To haue of sondry tonges folk^t knowyng
 Whan þat^t sche leyser hadde and for to entende
 To lerne bookes was al hire likyng
 How sche in vertu might^t hir lyf^t dispende

3496

3500

[And schortly of/ this/ storie for to entrete.]

[Harl. MS 1758,
leaf 187, back]

¶ So dough^ty was hire housebaude as sche
 That^t þey conquered many regnes grete
 In þe orient^t wiþ many a fair Cite
 Inportienaūt vnto þe mageste
 Of Rome and with strong^t hand heeld hem faste
 Ne neuer might^t here fomen don hem fle
 Ay whiles þat^t Oedenak^t dayes laste

3504

3508

¶ Here batayles who so luste hem for to ride
 Agayn Sapor þe king^t and oþer mo
 And how þat^t al þis proces felle in dede
 Why sche conquered and what title had þerto
 And after of hire meschief^t and hire woo
 how þat^t sche was beseged and y-take
 let^t him vnto my mayster Petrarke go
 That^t writ of þis ynough^t I vndertake

3512

3516

¶ Whan Odenake was deed sche mightily
 The regnes huld and wiþ hir propre hand
 Agayn hire foos sche faugh^t trewely
 That^t þer nas king^t ne Prince in al þat land
 That he nas gladde if^t þat^t he grace fand
 That sche ne wolde vpon his land werrey
 With hire þey made alleynce by band
 To ben in pees and lete hir ryde and pley

3520

[leaf 241]

3524

- ¶ The Emperour of Rome Claudius
 Ne him byforn þe Romain Galien
 Ne dorste neuer be so coragius
 Ne non Ermyne ne non Egipcien 3528
 Ne Surrien ne non arabien
 Wipinne þe feeld þat dorste with hire fight
 Lest þat sche wolde hem wiþ hir handes sleen
 Or with hire meyne putten hem to flight 3532
- [IN kynges/ abite wente hir/ sones/ two .] [Harl. MS 1758,
 leaf 187, back]
 As Eyres of here regnes alle
 And hermanno and Thymalao
 Here names were as Perciens hem calle 3536
 But ay fortune haþ ay in hir hony galle
 This mighty queene may no while en-dure
 ffortune out of hire regne made hire falle
 To wrecchednes and to mysauenture 3540
- ¶ Aurelion whan þat þe gouernance
 Of Rome cam in-to his handes tweye
 he schoop vpon þis queen to do vengañce
 And wiþ his legiouns he took his weye 3544
 Toward Cenobye and schortly for to seye
 He made hir flee and at þe last hir bent
 And fetered hire and eek hir children tweye
 And wan þe lond and home to Rome þey went 3548
- ¶ Among þese oþer þinges þat he wan
 hire char þat was wiþ gold wrought and perre
 This grete Romayn þis aurelian
 Haþ wiþ him ladde for þat men schulde se 3552
 Byforn his tryumphe walkeþ sche
 Wiþ gilte cheynes on hire necke hangyng
 Coroued sche was as after hire degre
 And ful of perre charged hire cloþyng 3556

¶ Allas fortune sche þat' whilom was
 Dredful to kynges and to emperoures · [leaf 241, back]
 Now gaureþ al þe poeple on hire allas ·
 And sche þat' helmed was in starke stoures · 3560
 And wan by force townes strong' and toures ·
 Schal on hire heede were a vytremyte
 And sche þat' bar þe septre ful of' floures
 Schal bere a distaff' hir costes for to quyte 3564

[*Peter the Cruel, of Spain.*]

1¶ O noble o worþy petre glorie of' Spayne ¶ De Petro
 Whom fortune helde so heyh in mageste Spayne
 Wel ough'te men þin pitous deþ complayne ¶ Rege
 Thy bastard broþer made þe to fle [¹wrongly marked in
margin, by a later
corrector, to follow a
(De nero &c).]
 And after at a sege by subtilte
 þow were betrayed and lad to his tent' 3570
 Wher as he wiþ his owen hand slough þe
 Succedyng' in þy regne and in þin rent' 3572

¶ The feeld of' snow wiþ þe egle blak' þer-Inne ¶ Bertheun
 Caught' wiþ þe lymrodde coloures as þe gledes Claykyn
 he brew þis cursednes and al þe synne ¶ Olyuer
 The wicked neste was werker of' þis needes Mawny
 Nought Charles Olyuer þat' ay took' god heede [Bertrand du Guesclin,
& his cousin Sir Oliver
de Mauny, l. 3579.]
 Of' trouþe and honour but of' armorekke 3578
 Genyloun Olyuer corupte for meede
 Broughtest' þis worþi king' in such a brekke 3580

[*Peter of Cyprus.*]

¶ Worþy Petre king' of' Cypre also ¶ De petro regis
 þat' alisaundre wan by heigh maystrie ¶ Cypri
 fful many an heþen wroughtest' þou ful wo
 Of' which þin owen liege had enuye 3584
 And for no þing' but' for þin Chiualrie
 They in þin bedde han slayn þe by þe morwe
 Thus gan fortune gouerne and gye
 And out' of' ioye bringe men in-to sorwe 3588

GROUP B. § 12. MONK'S TALE. **Corpus MS.**[*Bernabo Visconti, of Milan.*]

| | |
|--|---------------|
| ¶ Of Melane gret barnabo viscounte | ¶ De Barnabo |
| God of delite and scourge of lumbardye | vicecomite |
| Why schulde nouȝt I þin fortune acounte / | ¶ Mediolano / |
| Seþpen in estaat þou clombe were so hihe | 3592 |
| Thin broþer sone þat was þin double allye | |
| ffor he þin neuwe was and sone in lawe | [leaf 242] |
| Wiþinne his prison made þe to deye | |
| But why ne how wot I þat þou were slawe // | 3596 |

[*Ugolino, Count of Pisa.*]

| | |
|--|----------------|
| ¶ Of þe erl hugelyne of Pyse þe langour | ¶ De hugylino |
| Ther may no tunge telle for pite | Comite Pisano. |
| But lytel out of pyse stant a toure | |
| In which toure in prison putte was he | 3600 |
| And wiþ him ben his litel children þre | |
| The eldest skarsly .v. ȝer was of age | |
| allas fortune it was gret cruelte | |
| Suche briddes for to putte in such a kage | 3604 |
| ¶ Dampned he was to deyen in þat prison | |
| ffor Roger which þat bisschop was of pyse | |
| Hadde on him maade a fals suggestioñ | |
| Thurgh which þe poeple gan on him aryse | 3608 |
| And putten him to pryson in swich wyse | |
| As ȝe haue herde and mete and drynk he hadde | |
| [. no gap in the MS.] | |
| And þer-wiþ-al it was ful pore and badde | 3612 |
| ¶ And on a day bifelle þat in þat oure | |
| Whan þat his mete was wont to be brought | |
| The Gailler schutte þe dores of þe toure | |
| He herde it wel but he saugh it nouȝt | 3616 |
| And in his herte anon þer felle a þouȝt | |
| þat þey for hunger wolde don him deyen | |
| Allas quod he allas þat I was wrought | |
| þer-wiþ þe teeres felle fro his eyen | 3620 |

GROUP B. § 12. MONK'S TALE. Corpus MS.

¶ his 3onge sone þat þre 3eer was of age
 vnto him sayde fader why do 3e wepe
 When wil þe Gaylere bringen oure potage
 Is þer no morsel bred þat 3e do kepe 3624
 I am so hungry þat I may nough't slepe
 Now wolde god þat I might' slepen euer
 Thanne schulde non hunger in my wombe crepe
 þer nys no þing' sauf' bred þat me were leuer 3628

¶ Thus day by day þis childe gan to crye
 Til in his fadres barme a doun it lay
 And sayde fare wel fader I mot' deye [leaf 242, back]
 And kissed his fader and deyde þe same day 3632
 And whan þe woful fader ded him say
 ffor wo his armes tuo he gan to byte /
 And sayde allas fortune and welaway
 Thyn fals wheel my wo I may al wyte 3636

¶ His children wende þat it' for hunger was
 þat he his armes gnowe and nough't for wo
 And sayde fader do nou3t' so allas
 But' rap'er ete þe fleissch vpon ous tuo 3640
 Oure fleissch þou 3af' vs take oure flessch vs fro
 And ete ynough' right' þus to him þay sayde /
 And after þat' wipinne a day or tuo
 They leyde hem doun right' in his lappe and deyde / 3644

Himself' dispeyred eek' for hunger starf'
 Thus ended is þe mighty erl of Pyse
 ffro heih estate fortune fro him karf'
 Of þis tregetrye it' ought' ynough' suffise / 3648
 Who so wol heere it' in a lenger wise
 Redep þe grete poete of ytayle /
 That' high'te daunte for he can it' deuyse
 ffro poynt' to poynt' nou3t' o word wol he fayle 3652

[Nero.]

- 1 ¶ Al þough þat Nero was as vicious De nero
 As eny feend þat liþ ful lowe adoun [*wrongly markt .a. by a*
 3et he as telleþ vs Swetheneus [*later corrector, to go before*
 This wilde world haþ in Subieccioun Peter of Spain.]
 3656
 Boþe Est' and west' and Septemptrioun
 Of Rubies Saphires and of perlis white
 Were alle his cloþes brouded vp and doun
 ffor he in gemmes grete gan delyte 3660
- ¶ More delicate more pompous of array
 More proud was neuer emperour þan he
 þat ilke cloþ þat he had wered a day
 After þat tyme he nolde it neuer se 3664
 Nettes of golde þred hadde he gret' plente
 To fische in Tybre when him leste to pleye
 his lustes were as lawe in his degre [leaf 243]
 ffor fortune as his freende wolde him obeye 3668
- ¶ He Rome brente for his delicacye
 The senatoures he slough vpon a day
 To heere how þat men wolde weepe and crye
 And slough his broþer and by his suster lay 3672
 His mooder made he in pitous aray
 ffor he hire wombe slitte to byholde
 Where he conseeuyed was so weylaway
 þat he so litel of his moder tolde 3676
- ¶ No teere out' of his eyhen for þat sight
 Ne came but sayde a fair womman was sche
 Gret' wonder is þat he couþe or might'
 Be domesman of hire ded beute 3680
 The wyn to brynge þo comañded he
 And drank anon . non oþer wo he made /
 Whan might' is ioygned vnto cruelte
 Allas to deepe wole þe venym wade 3684

¶ In zoupe a mayster hadde þis emperour
 To teche him lettrure and curtesye
 ffor of moralite he was þe flour
 As in his tyme but if bookes lye 3688
 And whiles his mayster hadde of him maystrye
 He made him so konnyng' and so souple /
 That longe tyme it was or tyrannye
 Or any vice dorste in him vncouple 3692

¶ This Seneka of which I deuyse
 By cause nero hadde of him such drede
 ffor he for vices wolde him chastise
 Discretly as by word and nought by drede 3696
 Sire wolde he sayn an Emperour moot' neede
 Be vertuous and hate tyrauntrye
 ffor which he him in bathe made to blede
 In bope his armes til he moste dye 3700

¶ This nero hadde eek' of a costumance
 In zoupe azeins his mayster for to ryse
 Which aftirward him þought a gret' greuance [leaf 243, back]
 Therefore he made him deye in þis wise 3704
 But nabeles þis Seneke þe wise /
 Chees in a bathe to deye in þis manere /
 Raþer þan han anoþer tormentrye
 And þus haþ Nero slayn his mayster deere 3708

¶ Now felle it' so þat' fortune lust' no lenger
 þe heihe pryde of' nero to cherissche
 ffor þough he were strong' zet' was sche streng'er
 Sche þoughite þus by god I am to nyse 3712
 To setten a man þat' is fulfild' of' vice
 In heigh degre and emperour him calle
 By god out' of' his sete I wol him tryce
 When he lest' weneþ sonnest' schal he falle 3716

¶ The poeple ros vpon him on a night
 ffor his defaute and whan he it' aspyed
 Out' of' his dores anon he haþ him dight'
 Allone and þer he wende han ben allyed 3720
 he knocked faste and ay þe more he cryed
 þe faster schutten þey þe dores alle
 Tho wiste he wel he hadde himself' begyled
 And went' his way no lenger dorste he calle / 3724

¶ The poeple cryed and rombled vp and down
 þat' wiþ his eeres herde he how þey sayde
 Wher is þis false tyraunt' þis Neroun
 ffor fere almost' out' of' his witte a brayde 3728
 And to his goddes pitously he sayde
 ffor socour but' it' mighte nough't' betyde
 ffor drede of' þis him þoughte þat' he deyde
 and ran in to a gardyn him to huyde 3732

¶ And in þis gardyn fond he cherles tweye
 And saten by a fuyre ful grete and rede
 And to þe cherles twey he gan to preye
 To slen him and to gurdyn of' his hede 3736
 That' to his body whan þat' he were dede
 Were no despite y-done for his deffame /
 Himself' he slough he couþe no better reed [leaf 244]
 Of' which fortune lough and hadde a game 3740

[*Holofernes.*]

¶ Was neuer Capitayn vnder a king' ¶ De Olipherno
 þat' regnes mo putte in subieccioun
 Ne strengre was in feeld of' alle þing'
 As in his tyme ne gretter of' Renoun 3744
 Ne more pompous in heigh' presumpcioun
 Then Olyferne which fortune ay keste /
 So likerously and ladde him vp and down
 Til þat' he hed was er þat' he wiste / 3748

GROUP B. § 12. MONK'S TALE. Corpus MS.

¶ Nough't oonly þat þis world had of him awe /
 ffor lesyng' of Richesse and liberte
 But he made euery man reneye his lawe /
 Nabugodonosor was lord sayde 3752
 Non ȝer god schulde honoured be
 Aȝeins his heste no wight' dar trespace /
 Saue in Bethulya a strang' Cite
 Where Elyachim a prest' was of þat' place 3756

¶ But' take keepe of þe deþ of Olypherne
 Amydde his hoste he drunke lay a nyght'
 Wipinne his tente large as is a berne /
 And ȝet' for alle his pompe and alle his might' 3760
 Iudith a womman as he lay vpright'
 Slepynge his heed of smot' and fro his tent /
 fful pryuyly sche stal fro euery wight'
 [. . . , . . . no gap in the MS.] 3764

[*Antiochus.*]

¶ What' needep it' of king' antiochus ¶ De antiochio
 To telle his heihe and real mageste illustri.
 his heighe pruyde his werkes venymous 3768
 ffor such anoþer nas neuer non as he
 Redep which þat' he was in Machabe
 And redeþ þe proude wordes þat' he sayde
 And why he felle fro his prosperite
 And in an hulle how wrecchedly he deyde 3772

¶ ffortune him hadde enhaunced so in pruyde
 þat' verrayly he wende he mighte atteyne 3775
 vnto þe sterres vpon euery syde
 And in a balaunce to weye vche mountayne / [leaf 241, back]
 And alle þe floodes of þe see restreyne
 And goddes poeple hadde he most' in hate
 Hem wolde he sle in torment' and peyne /
 Wenynge þat' god ne might' his pruyde abate 3780

- ¶ And for þat Nichamour and Thymothee
 Wiþ Iewes were venquyscht mightily
 Vnto þe Iewes swich an hate hadde he
 That he hadde greythed his chaar ful hastily 3784
 And swor and sayde ful dispitously
 vnto Ierusalem he wolde eft sone /
 To wreke his Ire on hit ful cruelly
 But of his purpos he was lette ful sone / 3788
- ¶ God for his manace him so sore smot/
 Wiþ inuisible wounde ay vncurable/
 That in his guttes karf so and bote
 That his peynes were importable 3792
 And certeynly þe wreche was resonable
 ffor many mannes guttes dede he payne
 But fro his pourpos cursed and dampnable
 ffor alle his smerte he nolde him nough restreyne 3796
- ¶ But bad anon apparaylen his Oste
 And sodeinly er he was of hit ware
 God daunted alle his pruyde and alle his boste
 ffor he so sore felle out of his chare 3800
 That hurt his lymes and his skyn totare
 So þat he ne mighte go ne ryde
 But in a Chayer men aboute him bare
 Al forbrused boþe bak and syde 3804
- ¶ The wreche of god him smot so cruelly
 That in his body wickede wormes crepte
 And þer-wiþ-al he stank so horribly
 That non of alle his meigne þat him kepte / 3808
 Wheþer so þat he wook or elles slepte /
 Ne mighte nough þe stynt of him endure
 In þis meschief he weyled and eek wepte /
 And knewe god lord of euery creature [leaf 245] 3812

GROUP B. § 12. MONK'S TALE. **Corpus MS.**

¶ To alle his host and to himself also
 fful wlatson was þe stynke of þis Careyne
 No man ne mighte him bere to ne fro
 And in his stynke and in his horrible peyne 3816
 He starf ful wrecchedly in a mounteyne
 Thus haþ þis robbour and þis homicide
 That many a man made to weepe and pleyne
 Such guerdoñ as bilongeþ vnto pruyde / 3820

[*Alexander the Great.*]

¶ The story of alisaundre is so commune ¶ De alexandro
 That euery wight þat haþ discrecioun magno philippi
 haþ herd somewhat or al of his fortune Regis Macedonie
 filio.
 This wilde world as in conclusioun 3824
 He wan by strengþe or for his heigh renoun
 They weren glad for pees vnto him sende
 The pruyde of man and beste he leyde a doun
 Wher so he cam vnto þe worldes ende 3828

¶ Comparisoñ might neuer 3it/ be maked
 Betwix him and anoper conquerour
 ffor alle þis worlde for drede of him haþ quaked
 he was of knighthede and of fredam flour 3832
 ffortune him made þe heier of hure honour
 Saue wyn and wommen no þing might aswage /
 His heihe entent in arnes and labour
 So was he fulle of louynge corage 3836

¶ What pite were it to him þey I 3ou tolde
 Of darius and an .C. þousand mo
 Of kinges princes dukes eerles bolde
 Which he conquered and brou3t hem in-to woo 3840
 I say as fer as man may ryde or goo
 þe worlde was his what schulde I more deuyse
 ffor þough I write or tolde 3ou euermo
 Of his knighthode he mighte nought suffice 3844

¶ Twelf^t 3eer he regned as saiþ Machabe
 Philippes sone of^t Macedo he was /
 That^t first^t was king^t of^t Grece þe Contre /
 O worþy gentil alisandre allas [leaf 245, back] 3848
 þat^t euer schulde falle such a caas
 Enpoysoned of^t þin folk^t þou were
 þyn . S fortune haþ torned in-to an aas
 And 3et^t for þe ne weep sche neuer a tere 3852

¶ Who schal men 3eue teeres to compleyne
 The dep^t of^t gentillesse and of^t fraunchise
 þat^t alle þe world weeldid in his demeygne /
 And 3et^t him þoughte it^t might^t not suffise / 3856
 So ful was his corage of^t heigh emprise
 Allas who schal me helpe to endite
 ffals fortune and poyson to despise
 þe whiche tuo of^t al þis wo I wite 3860

[*Julius Cesar.*]

¶ By wisdom manhede and by labour ¶ De Iulio Cesare.
 ffro humbleheed and fro Royal mageste
 vp ros he Iulius þe Conquerour
 That alle þe Occident by land and fee 3864
 By strengþe of hand or elles by trettee
 And vnto Rome made hem tributarie
 And seþenes of^t Rome þemperour was he
 Til þat^t fortune wax his aduersarie 3868

¶ O mighty Cesar þat^t in Tessalye
 A3ens Pompeus fader þin in lawe
 That^t of^t þe Orient^t hadde al þe chialrye
 as ferre as þat^t þe day begynneþ dawe 3872
 þou þorugh þin knighthode þou hast^t hem take and slawe /
 Saue fewe folk^t þat^t wiþ Pompeus fledde /
 þurgh which þou puttest^t al þe Orient in awe
 Thanke fortune þat^t so wel þe spedde 3876

¶ But now a litel while I wol bewayle /
 þis Pompeus þis noble gouernour
 Of Rome which þat' fleigh at' þis batayle
 I say on of' his men a fals traytour 3880
 His heed of' smoot/ to wynne him fauour
 Of Iulius and him þe heed broughte
 Allas Pompeye of' þe Orient' conquerour
 That fortune vnto such a finye broughte [leaf 246] 3884

¶ To Rome azein repayreþ Iulius
 Wiþ his triumphe laureate ful heyze
 But' on a tyme Brutus Cassius
 That' euer had of' his heigh' estaat' enuye 3888
 fful priuily had maad conspiracie
 Azeins þis Iulius in subtil wise
 And caste þe place in which he schulde deye
 Wiþ boydekynnes as I schal 3ou deuysel 3892

¶ þis Iulius to þe Capithole went
 vppon a day as he was wont' to goon
 And in þe Capityle anon him hent'
 This false brutus on his foule foon 3896
 And stiked him wiþ boydekynnes anon
 Wiþ many a wounde and þus þey leet/ him lye
 But' neuer gronte he at' no stroke but oon
 Or elles at' tuo but' if' his story lye 3900

¶ So manly was þis Iulius of' herte
 And so wel loued estaatly honeste
 That' þough his dedly woundes so sore smerte
 His mantel ouer his hepes caste he 3904
 ffor noman schulde seen his priuylte
 And as he lay as deyinge in a traunce
 And wiste verrily þat' deed was he
 Of honeste zet' hadde he remembrance 3908

¶ Lucane to þis story I recomende
 And to Swetoñ and to Valerius also
 That of þis story writeþ word and ende
 how þat þese grete conqueroures tuo 3912
 ffortune was ferst freend and siþen a foo
 No man ne truste vpon his fauour longe
 But haue hire in awayte for eueremo
 Witnesse on alle þise conqueroures stronge 3916

[*Cresus.*]

¶ This riche Cresus whilom king of lyde Cresus.
 Of whiche Cresus Cyquus sore him dradde
 3et was he caught amyddes alle his pryde 3919
 And to be brent men to þe fuyre him ladde [leaf 246, back]
 But such a reyn down fro þe walken schadde
 þat slough þe fuyr and made him to askape
 But to be war 3et no grace he hadde
 Til fortune on þe galwes made him gape 3924

¶ Whan he askaped was he can not stynte
 ffor to begynne a newe reyne azein
 he wende wel for þat fortune him sente
 Such happe þat he escaped þurgh þe rayn 3928
 That of his foos he mighte not be slayn
 And swich a swefne vppan a night he mette
 Of which he was so proud and eek so fayn
 That in vengauce he alle his herte sette 3932

¶ Vpon a tree he was as þat him þoughte
 There Iubiter him wisse boþe halse and syde
 And Phebus eek a fair towayle him broughte
 To druye him wij and þefore wax his pryde 3936
 And to his daughter þat stood him besyde
 Which þat he knew in heigh sentence abounde
 He bad hire telle him what it signefyed
 And sche his dreemes bygan right þus expounde 3940

¶ The tree *quod* sche þe galwes is to mene
 And Iubiter bitokneþ snow and rayn
 And Phebus wiþ his towayle so clene
 Tho be þe sonne stremes for to sayn 3944
 Thou schalt an honged be fader certayn
 Reyn schal þe waissche and sonne schal þe druye
 þus warned him ful platte and ful playn
 His doughter þat called was Phanye / 3948

¶ An honged was Cresus þe proude king
 His roial trone might him nought auayle
 Tegedie is non oþer maner þing
 Ne can synnyng crye ne by-wayle 3952
 But þat fortune alway wol assayle /
 Wiþ vnwar strook þe regnes that ben proude
 ffor whan men trusteþ hire þan wol sche fayle
 And couere hire brighte face wiþ a cloude [leaf 247] 3956

¶ Explicit/

¶ Here begynneþ þe prologe of þe nonne prestes tale
[on leaf 247]

HO *quod* þe knight goode sire nomore of þis
 þat 3e han sayde is right ynough ywis
 And meche more for litel heynesse
 Is right ynough to meche folk as I gesse / [no gap in the
 Corpus MS] 3960
 [I sey for me. it is a grete disease [MS Reg. 17 D. xv, lf 273, bk]
 Where as men han bien. in grete welth and ease
 To here of theyr sodayn falle alas
 And the contrary is Ioy. and grete solas 3964
 And whan a man hath bien in pouer estate
 And clymbith vp. and wexith fortunate
 And ther abydith in prosperite [leaf 274]
 Swiche thyng is gladsom. as it thynkyth me 3968
 And of swiche thynges. were goodely for to telle
 Ya *quod* oure host. be seynt poulis belle
 Ye say right soth. this monk be clappid lowde
 He spak how fortune. was couered with a clowde 3972
 I not neuer what. and als of a tregedye
 Right now ye herd. and parde no remedye
 Is it for to be-wailen. and compleyn
 That. that is don. and als it is a peyn 3976
 As ye have sayd. to here of hevynesse
 Sir monke nomore of this. so god yow blisse
 Yowre tale anoyeth. al this company
 Swiche thyng is nat worth a boterflye] [MS Reg. extract ends]
 3oure tales don vs no desport ne game
 Wherefore *sir* monk Doun Pieres by 3our name
 I pray 3ou hertely telle vs som what elles
 ffor siker nere clynkyng of 3oure belles / 3984

þat' on ʒoure brydel hangeþ on euery syde /
 By heuene king' þat' for vs alle dyde
 I schal for þis falle down for slepe /
 Al þough þe slough hadde neuer ben so depe 3988
 þan hadde ʒoure tale be told in vayn
 ffor certainly as þese clerkes sayn
 Wher as a man may han non audience
 Nough't helpeþ it to tellen his sentence 3992
 And wel I woot' þe substañce is in me /
 If' eny þing' schal wel reported be
 Sire say somewhat' of' huntynge' I ʒou pray
 Nay quod þe monk' I haue no lust' to play 3996
 Now lete anoþer telle as I haue tolde
 þanne spak' oure Ost' wiþ ruyde speche and bolde
 And sayde vnto þe nonnes prest' anon
 Come ner sire prest' com hider sir Iohn 4000
 Telle vs such þing' as may oure hertes glade
 Be mery þough þou ryde vpon a Iade /
 What' þough þin hors be hagged foul or lene
 If' he wol serue þe rekke þe nought' a bene 4004
 Loke þat' þin herte be mery euermo
 ʒis Ost' quod he so mote I ryde or go
 But' I be mery I-wys I wil be blamed
 And right' anon he haþ his tale tamed 4008
 And þus he seyde to vs euerychon
 This swete prest' þis goode man sir Iohn . ¶ Explicit
 prologus

Ca^m xxij^m

¶ Here begynneþ þe nonnes prestes tale of þe kokke &
 his vij. hennes

A Pouere wydewe somdel stope in age [leaf 247, back]
 Was whilom dwellyng^t in a narwe cotage 4012
 Besydes a groue standyng^t in a dale
 This wydewe of^t which I telle 3ou my tale
 Sepins pilke day þat^t sche was last/ a wyf^t
 In pacience ladde a ful simple lyf^t 4016
 ffor litel was hire catelle and hire rent
 By housbondrye of^t such as god hire sent^t
 Sche fand hire self^t and eek^t hire doughtren tuo
 þre large sowes hadde sche and nomo 4020
 Thre kyn and eek^t a scheep þat^t highte malle
 fful sooty was hire bour and eek^t hire halle
 In which sche eet^t ful many a sklender mel
 Of^t poynañt^t Sause hire needed neuer a del 4024
 No deynte morsell passed hire þrote
 Hire dyete was acordañt to hire cote
 Replecioñ ne made hire neuere seeke
 A-tempree diete was alle hire Phiseke 4028
 And excersise and hertes suffisañce
 The gowte letted hire no þing^t to daunce
 Ne Poplexie ne schente not hire heed
 No wyn ne drank^t sche neyþer whit ne reed 4032
 Hire bord was serued most^t wip^t whit and blak
 Milk^t and broun breed in which sche fond no lak
 Seynd bacoñ and somtyme an ey or tweye
 ffor sche was as it^t was a maner deye 4036
 A gardyn sche hadde enclosed alle aboute
 Wip^t stikkes and a druye diche wipoute
 In which sche hadde a cokk^t þat^t highte Chaunteclere
 In alle þe land of^t crowyng^t nas his peere 4040

GROUP B. § 14. NUN'S PRIEST'S TALE. **Corpus MS.**

his voys was merier þan þe mery Orgon
 On masse dayes þat' in þe chirche gon
 Wel sikerer was þe crowyng' in his logge
 þan is a klokke or eny abbay orlogge 4044
 By nature he knew eche assenciõ
 Of equinoxial of' þilke toun
 ffor whan degrees .xv. were discendid [leaf 248]
 þenne knew he þat' it' might' nought' ben amended 4048
 His cambe was redder þen þe fyn coralle
 And batailled as it' were a castel walle
 Ylike asure were his legges and his toon
 His byle was blak' and as þe Iet' it' schon 4052
 His nayles whitter þen þe lily flour
 And ylike burnysscht' gold was his colour
 This gentil cokke hadde in his gouernance /
 .vij. hennes for to doon his plesañce 4056
 Whiche weren his sustres and his paramoures
 And wonder ylike to him as of' coloures
 Of' which þe fairest' hewed on þe þrote
 Was cleped faire damisel pertelote 4060
 Curteys sche was discret' and debonaire
 And companable / and bar hire self' so faire
 Sipens þilke day þat' sche was seuenyght' olde
 þat' trewely sche hap' þe herte in holde 4064
 Of' chaunteclere loken in euery lip
 He loued hire so þat' wel was him þerwith
 But' such a ioye as it' was to heere hem synge
 Whan þat' þe bryghte sonne gan to springe 4068
 In swete acorde my leef' is fare in londe /
 ffor þilke tyme as I haue vnderstonde
 Beestes and briddes coupe speke and synge
 And so bifelle þat' in a dawenyng' / 4072
 As Chaunteclere among' his wyfes alle
 Satte on his perche þat' was in þe halle
 And next' him sat' þis faire Pertelote
 þis Chaunteclere gan gronen in his þrote 4076

As a man þat' is in his dreme drecched sore
 And when þat' Pertelote þus herde him rore
 Sche was agast/ and sayde herte deere
 What' eyleþ 3ou to grone in þis manere 4080
 3e ben a verray sleper fy for schame /
 And he answerde and sayde þus ma dame /
 I pray 3ou þat' 3e take it not to greef' [leaf 248, back]
 By god me mette þat' I was in such mescheef' 4084
 Right' now þat' 3et myn herte is sore afright'
 Now *quod* he my sweuene reed aright'
 And keepe my body out' of' foul prisoun
 Me mette þat' I romed vp and down 4088
 Wipinne oure 3erde wher as I saugh a beeste
 Was lik' an hound and wolde han made areste /
 vpon my body and wolde han had me deed
 His colour' was betwixe whit' and reed 4092
 And tipped was his tail and boþe his eeres
 Wip' blak' vnlik' þe remenañt of' his heeres
 his snowte smal with glowyng' eyen tweye
 3et' of' his look' for feer almost' I deye 4096
 This caused me my gronyng' douteles
 Avoy *quod* sche // ffy on 3ou herteles
 Allas *quod* sche! ffor by þat' god aboue
 Now haue 3e lost' myn herte and al my loue 4100
 I can nought' loue a coward by my feip
 ffor certes what' so eny womman seiþ
 We wolle alle desyren if' it mighte be
 To haue housbondes hardy wise and fre 4104
 And secre ne no nyggard ne no fool
 Ne him þat' is agast' of' euery tool
 Ne non auauntour by þat' god aboue
 How dorste 3e say for schame vnto 3oure loue / 4108
 That' eny þing' might' make 3ou aferd [1 not in Reg. 18 C 2, f 228]
 Han 3e no mannes herte and han a berd
 Allas and konne 3e be agast' of' sweuons
 [Nothyng' god wote. but vanite in sweuene is¹] [Reg. 17 D xv,
 leaf 276]

GROUP B. § 14. NUN'S PRIEST'S TALE. Corpus MS.

| | |
|---|------------------------------------|
| Sweuenes engendren of ^t replexiones | [¹ not in Reg. 18 C 2] |
| [And oft ^t of ^t synne . and of ^t complexiouns ¹] | [MS Reg. 17 D xv] |
| When humours ben to habundaunt in a wight | |
| Certes þis dreme which 3e han herd to nyght | 4116 |
| Cometh of ^t þe grete superfluite | |
| Of ^t 3oure reede colre sire <i>parde</i> | |
| Which causeþ folk ^t to dremen here dreemes | |
| Of ^t arwes and of ^t fuyre with reede leemes | 4120 |
| Of ^t reede bestes þat ^t woln hem byte | [leaf 249] |
| Of ^t Contelle and of ^t whelpes grete an lyte | |
| Right ^t as he humour malencolie | |
| Causeþ many a man in slepe to crye | 4124 |
| ffor feere of ^t beres and of ^t boles blake | |
| Or elles blake deueles woln hem take | |
| Of ^t oþer humours couþe I telle also | |
| þat ^t worken many a man in sleep ful woo | 4128 |
| But I wol passe as lightly as I can | |
| Lo Catoñ which þat ^t was so wys a man | |
| Sayde he nou3t ^t þus ne do no force of ^t dremes | |
| Now sire <i>quod</i> sche whan we flee fro þe beemes | 4132 |
| ffor goddes loue as takeþ som laxatif ^t | |
| Vp <i>peril</i> of ^t my soule and of ^t my lyf ^t | |
| I counceile 3ou þe beste I wol not ^t lye | |
| þat ^t boþe of ^t colre and of ^t malencolye | 4136 |
| 3e purge 3ou and for 3e schuln nought tary | |
| þough þat ^t in þis toun is non apotecary | |
| I schal my self ^t to herbes techen 3ou | |
| That ^t schal ben 3oure hele and 3oure prow | 4140 |
| And in þe gardyn ^r þo herbes schal I fynde | |
| The whiche han of ^t here <i>proprete</i> by kynde | |
| To purgen 3ou byneþe and eek ^t aboue | |
| fforzetep ^t nou3t ^t þis for goddes owne loue | 4144 |
| 3e ben ful Colrik ^t of Compleccioñ | |
| Were þe sonne in his ascencioñ | |
| Ne fynde 3ou replete and 3oure humors hote | |
| and if ^t it ^t do I dar wel leye a groote | 4148 |

GROUP B. § 14. NUN'S PRIEST'S TALE. Corpus MS.

That^t 3e schuln haue a feuer terciane
 Or an agu þat^t may ben 3oure bane
 A day or tuo 3e schuln haue digestyues
 Of^t wormes er 3e take 3oure laxatyues 4152
 Of^t laureole Centure and of^t fumytere
 Or ellis of^t Ellebore þat^t groweþ þere
 Of^t Catapuce or of^t gaytres buryes
 Of^t herbe yue growyng^t in oure 3erde þer mery is 4156
 Pek^t hem vp riġht^t as þey growe and et^t hem In [leaf 249, back]
 Be mery housbande for 3oure fadres kyn
 Dredeþ no dreem I can say 3ou no more
 Ma dame quod he gramercy of^t 3oure lore 4160
 But^t napeles as touching^t dann Catoun
 That^t haþ of^t wisdom such a gret^t renoun
 By god men may in olde bookes reede
 Oon of^t þe grettest^t auctour out^t of^t drede 4164
 Of^t many a man more of^t auctorite
 þenne euer Catoñ was so mote I þe
 That^t alle þe reuers sein of^t his sentence
 And han wel founden by experience 4168
 þat^t dreemes ben significaciõs
 As wel of^t ioye as of^t tribulaciõs
 þat^t folk^t endure in þis lyf^t present
 Ther needeþ nouzt^t to make of^t þis non argument^t 4172
 The verray preef^t scheweþ it in dede
 On of^t þe grettest^t auctour þat^t men rede
 Saiþ þus þat^t whilom tuø felawes went
 On pylgrimage in a ful good entent^t 4176
 And happed so þey camen in-to a toun
 Wher as þer was such congregaciõ
 Of^t poeple and eek^t of^t streiġht^t herburgage
 That^t þey ne fand as moche as a cotage / 4180
 In which þey bope might^t y-logged be
 Wherfore þey mosten of^t necessite
 As for þat^t niġht^t departe of^t companye
 And vche of^t hem goþ vnto his ostelrye 4184

GROUP B. § 14. NUN'S PRIEST'S TALE. **Corpus MS.**

And took' his loggyng as it' wolde falle
 That' oon of' hem was logged in a stalle
 fferre in a 3erde wip oxen of' þe plough
 þat' oþer man was logged wel ynough 4188
 As was his aduventure or his fortune
 þat' vs gouerneþ alle as in comune
 And so bifelle it' lange er it was day
 þis man mette in his bedde þer as he lay 4192
 how þat' his felaw gan on him to calle
 [leaf 250]
 And sayde allas for in an oxe stalle
 This night' schal I be mourdred þer I lye
 Now help me deere broþer er I dye 4196
 In alle haste come to me he seyde
 This man out' of' his sleep for feere abrayde
 But' whan þat' he was wakened out' of' his slepe
 he turned him and tok' of' þis no kepe / 4200
 Him þough't his dreem was nought/ but' vanyte
 þus twyes in his sleping' dremed he
 And at' þe þridde tyme 3et' his felawe
 Came as him þough't I am now y-slawe 4204
 Byholde my bloody woundes deepe and wyde /
 Arys vp erely in þe morne tyde /
 And at' þe west' gate of' þe toun quod he
 A carte fulle of' dunge þere schalt' þou se / 4208
 In which my body is hidde ful pryuyly
 Do þilke carte aresten boldely
 My golde caused my murdre soþ to sayn
 And tolde him euery poynt' how he was slayn 4212
 Wip a ful pitous face pale of' hewe
 And truste wel his dreem he fand ful trewe
 ffor on þe morwe as sone as it' was day
 To his felawes In he tok' þe way 4216
 And whan he com vnto þis Oxe stalle
 After his felawe he bigan to calle
 The Ostiler answered him anon
 And sayde sire 3oure felawe is y-gon 4220

GROUP B. § 14. NUN'S PRIEST'S TALE. Corpus MS.

As sone as day he wente out of þe toun
 This man gan falle in gret suspesciōn
 Remembryngt on his dreemes þat he mette
 And forþ he goþ no lenger wolde he lette 4224
 Vnto þe west gate of þe toun and fonde
 A dungt carte as he wente to dunge þe londe /
 þat was arrayed in þe same wyse
 As 3e han herde þe deede man deuyse 4228
 And wiþ an hardy herte he gan to crye [leaf 250, back]
 Vengauce and Iustice of þis felonye
 My felawe murdred is þis same night
 And in þis cart he lyþ gapyngt vpright 4232
 [I Crie oute on þe mynistris quod he [MS Harl. 7333 (Shirley's),
 þat shulde kepe and rewle þis citee leaf 113, col. 1. Not in
 Harrow allas here liþ my felaw slayn) Sloane 1685, leaf 217,
 back; or in Sloane 1686,
 leaf 285.]
 What shuld I more vn-to this tale sayn) 4326
 þe peple out sterte / & caste þe carte to grounde
 And in the medil of the donge þei founde] [Harl. extract ends]
 The deede man þat murdred was al newe
 O blisful god þat art so iuste and trewe / 4240
 Lo how þat þou bywreyest murdre alway
 Murdre wole out þat se we day by day
 Mordre is so wlatson and abhominable
 To god þat is so iuste and resonable 4244
 That he wol not suffre it hiled be
 They it abyde a 3eer or tuo or þre
 Mordre wole out þis is my conclusiōn
 And right anon ministres of þe toun 4248
 And hente þe cartere and sore him pynd
 And eek þe osteller so ferre engynd
 That þey beknewe here wickednesse anon
 And weren hanged by þe nekke boon 4252
 Heer may men see þat dreemes ben to drede
 And certes in þe same book I rede
 Right in þe nexte chapitre I rede of þis
 I gabbe nougħt/ so haue I ioye & blis 4256

GROUP B. § 14. NUN'S PRIEST'S TALE. Corpus MS.

Tuo men þat wolde han passed þe see
 ffor certein cause in-to a ferre cuntre
 If þat þe wynde nad y-be contrary
 þat made hem in a Cite for to tary 4260
 That stood ful mery vpon an hauen side
 But on a day aȝens þe euen tyde
 The wynd gan chaunge and blowen as him leste
 Iolyf and glad þey wenten vnto reste 4264
 And casten hem ful erly for to seyle
 But herkne þat oo man felle in gret pereyle
 That oon of hem in slepyng as he lay
 Him mette a wonder dreame aȝeins þe day 4268
 Him þoughȝt a man stood by his beddes syde
 And him comāded þat he schulde abyde
 And seyde him þus if þou to morwe wende [leaf 251]
 Thou schalt be draynt my tale is at an ende 4272
 he awook and tolde his felawe what he mette
 and prayed him his viage for to lette
 As for þat day he prayde him to abyde
 his felawe þat lay by his beddes syde 4276
 Gan for to laughe and scorned him ful faste
 No dreame *quod* he may *myn* herte agaste
 þat I wol lette for to do my þinges
 I sette nouȝt a straw by þy dremynges 4280
 ffor sweuenes ben but vanytes and Iapes
 Men dreame alway of owles and of apes
 And of many a mase þer-wiþ-aȝ
 Men dremen of þing þat neuer was ne schal 4284
 But siþenes I se þat þou wolt here abyde
 And þus forslowþen wilfully þe tyde
 God wot it rewep me and haue good day
 And thus he took his leue and went his way 4288
 And er þat he hadde half his cours y-sayled
 Not I nouȝt why ne what meschaunce it ayled
 But casuelly þe schippes botme rent
 And schip and man vnder þe water went 4292

In sight of oper schippes him besyde
 þat wiþ him seyled at þe same tyde
 And þerfore he seyde Pertelote so deere
 By suche ensamples olde maist' þou leere 4296
 þat no man schulde be to recheles
 Of dremes for I say þe dowteles
 That many a dreem fol sore is for to drede
 Lo in þe lyf of Seint' kenelme I rede 4300
 þat was kenulphes sone þe noble king'
 Of Mertenrike how kenelme met' a þing'
 A litel er was murdred on a day
 His murdre in his avision he say 4304
 His norice him expounded eury del
 His sweuene and bad him for to kepe him wel
 ffor tresoñ but he was seuen 3eer old [leaf 251, back]
 And þerfore litel tale haþ he told 4308
 Of eny dreem so holly was his herte
 By god I hadde leuer þan my scherte
 þat 3e hadde herde his legende as haue I
 Dame pertelote I say 3ou trewely 4312
 Macrobeus þat writ þe avisioun
 In affryke of þe worþy Cyprioun
 Affermeþ dremes and saij þat þay ben
 Warnyng' of þinges þat men after seen 4316
 And furþermore I pray 3ou lokeþ wel
 þe olde testament of Daniel
 If he heeld dreemes of any vanyte
 Reede eek' of Ioseph and þer schuln 3e see 4320
 Wheþer dremes ben som tyme I say not' alle
 Warnyng' of þinges þat schuln after falle
 Loke of Egypt' þe king' Daun Phrao
 His baker and his botiler also 4324
 Wher þey ne felten noon effecte in dremes
 Who so wol seche þe acte of sondry Remes
 May rede of dreemes many a wonder þing'
 Lo Cresus which þat was of lyde king' 4328

GROUP B. § 14. NUN'S PRIEST'S TALE. **Corpus MS.**

Mette he nouzt̃ þat̃ he sat̃ on a tree
 Which signified he schulde anhangd be
 Lo here adromacha Ectores wiff̃
 That̃ day þat̃ Ector schulde lese his lyff̃ 4332
 Sche dreemed on þe same night̃ byforn
 How þat̃ þe lyff̃ of̃ Ector schulde be lorn
 If̃ pilke day he went̃ in-to Batayle
 Sche warned him but̃ it might̃ nouzt̃ auayle 4336
 He wente for to feighten neuer þe les
 But̃ he was slayn of̃ oon achilles
 But̃ pilke tale is al to long̃ to telle
 And eek̃ it is neigh day I may nouzt̃ dwelle 4340
 Schortly I say as for conclusiō
 þat̃ I schal haue of̃ þis auisiō
 Of̃ aduersitees and I say forþermore [leaf 252]
 That̃ I nel telle of̃ laxatifs no store 4344
 ffor þey ben venymous I wot̃ right̃ wel
 I hem diffye I loue hem neuer a del
 Now let̃ vs speke of̃ myrþe and stynte al þis
 Madame pertelote so haue I blis 4348
 Of̃ o þing̃ god me haþ sent̃ large grace
 ffor when I se þe beaute of̃ þour face
 3e ben so skarlet̃ reed aboute þoure eyen
 It̃ makeþ alle my drede for to deyen 4352
 ffor al so siker as In principio
 Mulier est̃ hominis confusio
 Ma dame þe sentence of̃ þis latyn is
 Womman is mannes ioye and al his blys 4356
 ffor whan I feele a night̃ þoure softe syde
 Al be it̃ þat̃ I may nought̃ on þou ryde
 ffor þat̃ oure perche is maad so narwe allas
 I am so fulle of̃ ioye and solas 4360
 That̃ I diffye boþe sweuen and dreem
 And wiþ þat̃ word he fleigh̃ doun fro þe beam
 ffor it̃ was day and eek̃ his hennes alle
 And wiþ a chukke he gan hem for to calle 4364

ffor he had founde a corn lay in þe 3erde
 Real he was nomore aferde
 He feþerede *pertelote* twenty tyme
 And tradde as ofte er it were *prime* 4368
 He lokeþ as it' were a grym lyoun
 And on his toos he romed vp and down
 Him deygned nou3t' to sette his feet' on grounde
 Ay chukked he whan he hadde a corn y-founde 4372
 And to him þanne ranne his wyfes alle
 þus real as a prince in his halle
 leue I þis Chaunteclere in his pasture
 And after wol I telle of' his aduenture 4376
 When þe monþe in which þe world bigan
 þat' highte march when god ferst' made man
 Was complete and passed were also [leaf 252, back]
 Sepins marche bygan þretty dayes and tuo 4380
 Bifelle þat' Chaunteclere in alle his pryde
 his seuen wyues walkyng' him bysyde
 Caste vp his eyen to þe bryghte sonne
 That' in þe signe of Taurus was y-ronne: 4384
 Twenty degrees . and oon and somewhat' more
 He knew by kynde and by non oþer lore
 That' it' was pryme and crew wiþ blisful steuene
 The sonne he sayde is clumben vp on heuene 4388
 xl. degrees and oon and more y-wys
 Madame *pertelote* my worldes blys
 Herkne how þese blisful briddes synge
 and see þe freisshe floures how þay springe 4392
 fful is myn herte of' Reuel and solace
 But' sodeinly him fel a sorwful case
 ffor euer þe latter ende of' Ioye is sone ago
 And comunly often tyme it' falleþ so 4396
 And if' a Rethor couþe faire endite
 He in a *Cronique* mighte saufly write
 As for a souereyn notabilite /
 Now euery wise man herkene to me 4400

- This story is also trewe I vndertake
 As is þe book^t of launcelot^t þe lake
 þat^t wommen heelde in ful gret^t reuerence
 Now wol I torne aȝein to my sentence 4404
 A kolle fox ful of sleigh^te and iniquite
 That^t in þe groue had woned ȝeeres þre
 By heih ymaginacioⁿ aforⁿ caste
 þe same night^t þurghout^t þe hegges braste 4408
 In-to þe yerde þer Chaunteclere þe faire
 Was wont^t and eek^t his wyfes to repayre
 And in a hedde of^t worstes stille he lay
 Til it^t was passed vnderⁿ of^t þe day 4412
 Wayting^t his tyme on chaunteclere to falle
 As gladly doon þese homicydes alle [leaf 253]
 That^t in awayte ligge to murþre men
 O false murdrour roukyng^t in þy den 4416
 O newe scariote and newe Genyloun
 ffals dissimulour O greke Synoⁿ
 That^t broughtest^t Troye outrely to sorwe
 O Chaunteclere acorsed be þat^t morwe 4420
 þat^t þou in þe ȝerde fleȝȝe fro þe beemes
 Thou were ful wel y-warned by þin derems
 That^t þilke day was perilous to þe
 But^t þat^t at^t god afore wot^t moot^t needes be 4424
 After þe opyny^on of certein clerkes
 Witnessse on him þat^t any clerk/ is
 That^t in scole gret^t altercacioⁿ
 In þis matiere and gret^t disputesoⁿ 4428
 And haþ ben of^t an hundred þousand men
 But I ne can nouȝt^t bulte it to þe bren
 As can þe holy doctour augustyn
 Or Boece or þe Bisschoppe Bradwardyn 4432
 Wheþer þat/ goddes wille afore wetyng^t
 Streynþ me needely for to don a þing^t
 Needly clepe I simple necessite
 Or elles if^t þe free choys be graunted me / 4436

GROUP B. § 14. NUN'S PRIEST'S TALE. Corpus MS.

- To do þat same þing^t or to do it nouȝt
 þough god forwot it^t er it^t was y-wrought^t
 Or of his wetyng^t streigneþ neuer a del
 But^t by necessite condicionel 4440
- I wol not^t haue to doone of^t such matiere
 My tale is of^t a cokk^t as ȝe schuln after heere
 That^t took^t his counseil of^t his wyf^t wiþ sorwe
 To walke in-to þe ȝerd vpon þe morwe 4444
 That^t he had mette þe dreem as I ȝou tolde
 Wommens counseiles ben ful ofte colde
 Wommans counseil brought^t vs ferst^t to wo
 And made adam fro paradys to go 4448
 þer as he was ful mery and wel at^t ese /
 But^t for I not^t whom it^t might^t displese [leaf 253, back]
 If I councel of^t wommen wolde blame
 Passe ouer I seyde it^t in my game 4452
 Rede auctours wher þey trete of^t such matiere
 And what^t þay sein of^t wommen ȝe may heere
 These ben þe cokkes wordes and nouȝt myne
 I can non harme of^t no womman devyne 4456
 ffayre in þe sande to baþe hire merily
 liþ pertelote and alle hire sustres by
 Aȝein þe sonne and Chaunteclere so fre
 Sange meriere þan þe mere-mayde in þe see 4460
 ffor Physyalogus saiþ witterly
 How þat^t þey sungen wel and merily
 And so bifelle as he cast^t his ye
 amonges þe wortes vpon a butterflye 4464
 He was war of^t þis ffox þat^t lay ful lowe
 ¶ No þing^t ne luste him þanne for to crowe
 But^t cryed anon kok^t kok^t and vp he sterte
 As man þat^t was affrayed in his herte 4468
 ffor naturelly a beste desireþ to fle
 ffro his contrarye if^t he may it^t se
 þey he neuer hadde seye it^t erst^t wiþ his ye
 This Chaunteclere when he gan him espye 4472

GROUP B. § 14. NUN'S PRIEST'S TALE. Corpus MS.

| | |
|--|------|
| he wolde han fledde but þat þe fox anon Sayde gentil sire allas what wol 3e doon Been 3e affrayed of me þat am 3oure freende Certes sire þen be 3e vnheende | 4476 |
| If I to 3ou wolde harme or vilanye I am nought come 3oure counsel to asprie But trewely þe cause of my comynge Was oonly to herkne how þat 3e synge / | 4480 |
| ffor trewely 3e han as mery a steuene As any aungel hæþ þat is in heuene Ther-with 3e han in Physike more felynge þat hadde boys or eny þat can synge | 4484 |
| My lord 3oure fader god his soule blesse And eek 3oure mooder of hire gentilnesse han in myz hous I-ben ful wel at eese and certes sire ful fayn wolde I 3ou please | 4488 |
| But for men speken of syngyng I wolde seye So mote I brouke myne eyen tweye Saue 3ou I ne herde neuer man so synge As dide 3oure fader in þe morwentyng | 4492 |
| Certes it was of herte al þat he sange And for to make his voys þe more strange He wolde so peyne him þat wip boþe his eyen He moste wynke so lowde he dide cryen | 4496 |
| And standen on his typtoos þer-wip-al And strecche forþ his nekke long and smal And eek he was of such discrecion That þer was no man in no region | 4500 |
| That him in song or wisdom mighte passe I haue wel rad daun burnelle the asse Among his vers þer was a kok ffor a prestes sone 3af him a knok | 4504 |
| Vpon his legges whil he was yong and nyce He made him for to leese his benefice But certain þer is no comparison Betwixe þe wisdom and discrecion | 4508 |

GROUP B. § 14. NUN'S PRIEST'S TALE. Corpus MS.

| | |
|--|------------------|
| Of 3oure fader and of his subtilte | |
| Now syngelj sire for seinte Charite | |
| Let see conne 3e 3oure fader countrefete | |
| þis Chaunteclere his wynges gan to bete | 4512 |
| As man þat couþe his tresoñ not' aspye | |
| So was he rauysschit' wip his flaterye | ¶ Nota bene |
| ¶ Allas 3e lordes many a fals flatour | |
| Is in 3oure Court' and many a losengour | 4516 |
| þat' pleasen 3ou more by my feip | |
| Then he þat' soþfastnesse vnto 3ou seiþ | |
| Redeþ ecclesiastre of flaterie | |
| Beþ war 3e lordes of here treccherie | 4520 |
| This Chaunteclere stood heye vpon his toos | |
| Strecching' his necke and huld his eyen clos | [leaf 254, back] |
| And gan to crowe lowde for þe nones | |
| And daun Russel stert' vp al at' oones | 4524 |
| And by þe gargage hente Chaunteclere | |
| And on his bak' toward the woode him bere | |
| ffor 3et' was þere noman þat' him sewed | |
| O destyne þat' mayst not' ben eschewed | 4528 |
| Allas þat' Chaunteclere fel fro þe bemes | |
| Allas his wyf' ne roughte noughit' of dremes | |
| And on a friday felle al þis meschaunce | |
| O venus þat' art' goddesse of plesaunce | 4532 |
| Sepines þat' þi seruauñt was þis Chaunteclere | |
| And in þin seruise dede al his powere / | |
| More for delite þan þe world to multiplie | |
| Why woldestow suffre him / on þin day to dye | 4536 |
| O Gaufrede deere maister souerayn | |
| That' whan þy worþy king' Richard was slayn | |
| Wip schotte compleynedest' his dep so sore | |
| Why ne hadde I now þin sentence and þin lore | 4540 |
| The friday for to chyde as deden 3e / | |
| ffor on a ffriday schortly slayn was he | |
| þenne wolde I schewe 3ou how þat' I couþe pleyne | |
| ffor Chaunteclere and for his peyne | 4544 |

GROUP B. § 14. NUN'S PRIEST'S TALE. Corpus MS.

Certes such cry ne lamentaciōn
 Was of ladyes maade whan yleōn
 Was wonne and Purris wiþ his streighte swerd
 Whenne he hente king Pryam by þe berd 4548
 And slayn him as seyde Enneydos
 As maden alle þe hennes in þe cloos
 Whan þey hadde seye of chaunteclere þe sight
 But soueraynly dame Pertelote schright
 fful lowder þen dede hasdrubaldes wyff 4552
 Whan þat hire housbonde hadde lost his lyff
 And þat þe Romayns had berud Cartage
 Sche was so fulle of torment and of Rage 4556
 þat wilfully in to þe fuyr sche sterte
 And brend hir selue wiþ a stedefast herte [leaf 255]
 O wofulle hennes right so cryede 3e
 As whan þat Nero brende þe Cite 4560
 Of Rome cryden þe Senatours wyfes
 ffor þat here housbondes schulde leese here lyues
 Wiþouten gilte Nero haþ hem slayn
 ¶ Now wole I turne vnto my tale agayn 4564
 This seely widewe and hire doughtres tuo
 Herden þe hennes crien and make woo /
 And out at þe dore sterten þay anon
 And sawe þe fox toward þe groue goon 4568
 And bar vpon his bak þe kok away
 And cryden out harrow and weloway
 A ha þe fox and after him þay ran
 And eek with staues many anoþer man 4572
 Ran colle oure dogge Talbot and Garlond
 And Malkyn wiþ hire distaf in hire hond
 Ran cow and calf and eek þe verrey hogges
 Sore aferde for berkyng of þe dogges 4576
 And schowtyng of men and of wommen eeke
 þey ronne so her hert þey þought tobreeke
 They yelleden as feendes don in helle
 The dokes cryden as men wolde hem quelle 4580

Out' of' þe huyues come þe swarm of' bees
 þe gees for feere flowen ouer þe trees
 So hidous was þe noyse a benedicite
 Certes he Iakke strawe and his meynee 4584
 Ne maden neuere schoutes half' so schrille
 Whan þat' þay wolden eny flemyng' kille
 As þat' ilke day was maad vpon þe ffox
 Of' bras þey broughte beemes and of' Box 4588
 Of' horne and boon in whiche þey pouped
 And þer-wiþal þey schriched and þey schouted
 It' semed as þat' heuen schulde falle
 Now goode men I pray 3ou herkneþ alle 4592
 Lo how fortune turneþ sodeinly
 The hope and eek' þe pruyde of' here enuye [leaf 255, back]
 This Cok' þat' lay vpon þis foxes bak'
 In alle his drede vnto þe fox he spak'
 And sayde sire if' I were as 3e 4596
 3et' schuld I say as wis god helpe me
 Turneþ a3ein 3e proude cherles alle
 A verray pestilence vpon 3ou falle 4600
 Now am I come vnto þis woodes syde
 Maugre 3our heed þe cok' schal here abyde
 I wole him ete in feiþ and þat' anon
 The ffox answerde in feiþ it' schal be don 4604
 and [as] he spak' þat' word al sodeinly
 This Cok' brak' fro his mouþ delyuerly
 An heigh vpon a tree he fleigh anoon
 And whan þe fox saugh þat' he was goon 4608
 Allas *quod* he O Chaunteclere allas
 I haue *quod* he don to 3ow a trespas
 In als moche as I made 3ou afferd
 When I 3ou hente and brought' out' of' þe 3erd 4612
 But' sire I dede it nought in no wicked entent'
 Come down and I schal telle 3ou what I ment
 I schal 3ou seye soþ god helpe me so /
 Nay þanne *quod* he I schrewe vs boþe tuo / 4616

GROUP B. § 14. NUN'S PRIEST'S TALE. Corpus MS.

And ferst I schrewe my self boþe blood and bones
 If þou begile me ofter þan ones /
 Thou schalt nomore wiþ þin flaterye
 Do me to synge and wynke wiþ myn ye 4620
 ffor he þat wynkeþ whan he schulde se
 As wisly god let him neuer þe
 Nay quod þe fox god ȝiue him meschaunce
 That is so vndiscret of gouernaunce 4624
 þat iangleþ whan he schulde haue pees
 Lo suche it is for to be recheles /
 and necligent and trusteþ on flaterye
 But ȝe þat halden þis tale a folye 4628
 As of a fox and of a cok and an hen
 Takeþ þe moralite goode men [leaf 256]
 ffor seint poule saiþ / alle þat writen is
 To oure doctrine / it is y-writen y-wis 4632
 Takeþ þe fruit / and leteþ þe chaff be stille
 Now goode god if þat it be þin wille /
 As seiþ my lord so make vs alle goode men
 And bringe vs alle to his heihe blisse amen 4636

Here endeþ þe Nonne prestes tale

GROUP H. FRAGMENT IX.

§ 1. THE MANCIPLE'S HEAD-LINK.

CORPUS MS.

[on leaf 256] Here folweþ þe Prologe of þe mañ-
ciples tale Ca^m xxiiij^{mo}

WOt 3e not' wher þer stant/ a litel toun
Which þat' is cleped Bobbe vp and down
vnder þe Blee in Caunterbery way
Ther gan oure Oste for to Iape and play 4
And sayde syres what' donne is in þe myre
Is no man for preyer ne for huyre
That' wole awake oure felawe be-hynde /
A þeeft' might' him ful lightly robbe and bynde 8
Se how he nappede se for goddes bones
þat' he wol falle fro his hors at' ones
Is þat' a Cook' of london wip meschañce
Do him come forth he knoweþ his penañce 12
ffor he schal telle a tale by my fey
Al þough it be nought' worþ a botel hey
Awake þou Cook' *quod* he god 3iue þe sorwe
What eyleþ þe to slepe by þe morwe 16
hast' þou had fleen al night' or art' þou drunke
Or hast' þou wip som quene al night' y-swunke
So þat' þou mayst' nought' holden vp þin heed
This Cook' þat' was ful pale and no þing' reed 20
Seyde oure Ost' so god my-soule blesse
As þer is falle on me such heuynesse
Not' I nouzt' why me were leuer to slepe
Then þe beste galoñ of wyn in Chepe 24

GROUP H. § 1. MANCIPLE'S HEAD-LINK. Corpus MS.

| | |
|---|------------------|
| Wel <i>quod</i> þe maunciple if it þe may don ese | 25 |
| To þe <i>sir</i> Cook' and to no wight displese | |
| Which þat' heer rydeþ in þis companye / | |
| And þat' oure host' wole of his curtesye | 28 |
| I wole as now excuse þe of þin tale | [leaf 256, back] |
| ffor in good feiþ þi visage is ful pale | |
| Thin eyen dasewen soply as me þinkeþ | |
| And wel I woot' þi breþ ful soure stinkeþ | 32 |
| That' scheweþ wel þou art' nougħt' wel disposed | |
| Of me certeyn þou schalt' nougħt' ben y-glosed | |
| Se how he goneth lo his drunken wight' | |
| As þough' he wolde vs swolwe anon right' | 36 |
| hald clos þin mouþ man by þyn fader kyn | |
| The deuyll of helle sette his foot' þerin | |
| This cursed breth wol infecte vs alle | |
| ffy stynkyng'e swyn fy foule mote þe falle | 40 |
| Takeþ heede sires of þis lusty man | |
| Now sweete sire wole 3e iuste at' þe van | |
| Ther-to me þenkeþ 3e ben wel y-schape | |
| I trowe þat' 3e haue drunken wyn ape | 44 |
| And þat' is whan men pleye wiþ a straw / | |
| And wiþ his speche þe Cooke wax al wraw | |
| And on þe maunciple bygan he nodde faste | |
| ffor lakke of speche and doun þe hors him caste | 48 |
| Wher as he lay til þat' men him vp took' | |
| This was a fayr Chiuacheef' of a cook' | |
| Allas he ne hadde holde him by his ladel | |
| And er þat' he azein were in his sadel | 52 |
| Ther was a gret' schowuyng' boþe to and fro | |
| To lifte him vp and mochil care and woo | |
| So vnweldy was þis sely pallede goste | |
| And to þe maunciple þenne spak' oure Oste | 56 |
| By cause þat' drynke haþ dominaciõ | |
| Vpon þis man by my Sauaciõ | |
| I trowe he lewedly wolde telle his tale | |
| ffor were it' wyn or olde or moysty ale | 60 |

GROUP H. § 1. MANCIPLE'S HEAD-LINK. Corpus MS.

That he haþ drunke he spekeþ so in his nose / 61
 And fneseþ faste and eek' he haþ þe pose
 he hath also to don more þan ynough
 To kepe him and his capel out' of þe slough 64
 And if' he falle fro his capil eft' sone / [leaf 257]
 Thenne schulle we alle haue ynough to doone
 In liftyng' vp his heuy drunken cors
 Telle on þin tale of' him make I no fors 68
 But' 3it' maunciple in feiþ þou art' to nyce
 Thus openly to reprove him of' his vice
 Anoper day he wole perauenture
 Reclayme þe and bringen þe to lure 72
 I mene he speke wole of' smale þinges
 And for to pynchen at' þine rekenynges
 That' were not' honeste if' it' come to pref'
 No quod þe maunciple þat' were a gret' meschief' 76
 So might' he bringe me in to þe snare
 Yet' hadde I leuer payen for þe mare
 Which he ryt' on þan he schulde wiþ me stryue
 I wol not' wrappe him so mote I þryue 80
 þat' þat' I spak' I seyde it' in my bourde
 And wite 3e wel I haue heer in my gourde
 A draught' of' wyn ye of' a rype grape
 And right' anon 3e schullen seen a good Iape 84
 This Cook' schal drynke þer-of' if' I may
 vp peyne of' my lyf' he wol not' say nay
 And certeinly to tellen as it/ was
 Of' þis vesseþ þe Cook' drank' faste allas 88
 What' needeþ it' he drank' ynough afor
 And whan he hadde pouped in his horn
 To þe maunciple he took' þe gourde again
 And of' þat' drynke þe cook' was wonder fayn 92
 And þanked him in such wise as he cowde
 Then gan oure Oste to lawhe wonder lowde
 And sayde I se wel it' is necessarie
 Where þat' we goon good drink' wiþ vs to carie 96

| | |
|--|------------------------|
| ffor þat' wol tourne rancour and disese | 97 |
| To acord and loue and many a word to peese | |
| O Bachus y-blessed be þy name | |
| þat so canst' torne earnest' in to game | 100 |
| Worschipe and þonke be to þy deite | [leaf 257, back] |
| Of' þat' matiere ne gete 3e nomore of' me | |
| Tel on þi tale þou mañciple I þe preye | |
| Wel sire <i>quod</i> he now kerkneþ what' I seye | ¶ Explicit prologus |

[on leaf 257, back]

Incipit fabula

Whan phebus dwelde heer in þis erþe adoun
 As olde booke maken mencioum 106
 he was þe moste lusty bachiler
 Of/ alle þe world and eek' þe best' archeer
 he slough Phyton þe *serpent*/ as he lay
 Slepynge agayn þe sonne vpon a day
 And many anoper noble worþy dede /
 He wiþ his bowe brought as men nowe rede 112
 Pleyen he coupe of euery menstralcye
 And syngen þat it was a melodye
 To heeren of his cleere voys þe soun
 Certes þe king' of Thebes amphyoun 116
 That wiþ his syngyng' walled þat Cite
 Cowde neuer syngen half so wel as he
 Therto he was þe semlyeste man
 þat is or was siben þe world bygan 120
 What needeþ it his fetures to discryue
 ffor in þis world was non so fair on lyue
 he was þer-wiþ fulfild of gentilnesse
 Of honour and of parfyte worþinesse 124
 This Phebus þat was flour of Bachelrye
 As wel in freedam as in Chiualrie
 ffor disporte in signe eek' of victorie
 Of Phyton so as telleþ vs þe storye 128
 Was worþy to beren in his hond a bowe /
 Now hadde þis Phebus in his hous a crowe
 Which in a cage he fostred many a day
 And taught' it speke as þat men teche a Iay 132

| | |
|--|------------|
| Whit' was þis Crowe as is a snow whit' swan | 133 |
| And countrefeted þe speche of' euery man he cowde when he schulde telle a tale | |
| Ther-wiþ in al þe world no nightyngale | 136 |
| Ne coupe by an hundred þousend deel | [leaf 258] |
| Syngen so wonderly meryly and weel | |
| Now hadde þis Phebus in his hous a wyf' | |
| Which þat' he loued more þan his owne lyf' | 140 |
| And night' and day dyd euer his diligence Hir for to plese and don hire reuerence | |
| Saue oonly if' þe soþ þat' I schal sayn | |
| Gelous he was and wolde haue kept' hire fayn | 144 |
| ffor him were loþ by-laped for to be And so euery wight' in such degre | |
| But' al for nouzt' for it' auayleþ nouzt' | |
| A good wyff' þat is clene of' werk' and þought' | 148 |
| Schulde nought' be kepte in non awayte certain And trewely þe labour is in vayn | |
| To kepe a schrewe for it wol nouzt' be | |
| This halde I for a verray nycete | 152 |
| To spille labour for to keepe wyues Thus writen olde Clerkes in here lyues | |
| But' now to purpos as I first' bigan | |
| This worþy Phebus doþ al þat' he can | 156 |
| To plesen hyre wenyng' by such plesañce And for his manhode and his gouernañce | |
| That' no man schulde haue put him fro hir grace | |
| But' god it' woot/ þer may no man embrace | 160 |
| As to distreyne a þing' which þat nature Haþ naturelly sette in a creature | |
| Take eny bryd and put it' in a kage And do al þin entent and þy corage | 164 |
| To fostre it tendrely wiþ mete and drinke Of' alle deyntees þat' þou canst' byþinke | |
| And keepe it/ also clenly as þou may | |
| Al þough his cage of' golde be neuer so gay | 168 |

GROUP H. § 2. MANCIPLE'S TALE. Corpus MS.

| | |
|---|------------------|
| zet' haþ þis bridde by .xx. þousand folde | 169 |
| Leuer in a fforest' þat' is wilde and colde | |
| Gon ete wõrmes and such wrecchedenesse | |
| ffor euer þis bridde wol doon his busynesse | 172 |
| To eskape out' of' his cage when he may | [leaf 253, back] |
| his liberte þe bridde desireþ ay | |
| Let' take a catte and fostre him wel wiþ melk' | |
| An tendre fleissch' and make his couche of' selk' | 176 |
| And let' him seen a mous go by þe walle | |
| And anon he weyueþ milke fleissche and alle | |
| And euery deynte þat' is in þat' hous | |
| Such appetyt' haþ sche to ete a mous | 180 |
| Lo he[re] haþ luste his dampnaciõ | |
| And appetyt' flemyth discreciõ | |
| As þe wolf' haþ also a vyleyns kynde | |
| The lewedeste wolf' þat' sche may fynde | 184 |
| Of' lest' of' reputaciõ þat' wol sche take | |
| In tyme whan hire luste to haue a make | |
| Alle þise ensamples speke I by þese men | |
| That' ben vntrewe and noþing' by wommen | 188 |
| ffor men han euere a likerous appetyt' | |
| On lowere þing' to parforme here delyt' | |
| Then on here wyfes ben þay neuer so fayre | |
| Ne neuer so trewe ne so debonaire | 192 |
| ffleissche is so newefongul wiþ meschañce | |
| That' we ne konne in no þing' han plesañce | |
| That' sowneþ in to vertu eny while | |
| This Phebus which þat' þought' vpon no gile | 196 |
| Desceyued was for alle his Iolite | |
| ffor vnder him anoþer hadde sche | |
| A man of' litel reputaciõ | |
| Nought' worþ to Phebus in comparisiõ | 200 |
| The more harm it' is it' happeþ ofte so | |
| Of' which þer comeþ mochol harme and wo | |
| And so bifelle whan Phebus was absent' | |
| His wif' anon haþ for hir lemman sent' | 204 |

| | |
|---|------------|
| Hiré lemman certes þis is a kauissch speche | 205 |
| fforziueþ it me and þat I 3ou beseche | |
| The wyse Plato saiþ as 3e may rede | |
| þe worde moot' need acorde wiþ þe dede | 208 |
| 3if' men schal telle proprely a þing' | [leaf 259] |
| The word moot'/ cosyn be to þe workyng' | |
| I am a boystous man riht' þus say I | |
| Ther is no difference trewely | 212 |
| Betwix a wyf' þat' is of' heih degre | |
| If' of' hire body dishoneste sche be | |
| And a pouere wenche othir þan þis | |
| If' it' so be þey werke boþe amys | 216 |
| But' þat' þe gentil is in staat' aboue | |
| Sche schal be cleped his lady as in loue | |
| And for þat' oþer is a pouer womman | |
| Sche schal be cleped his wenche or his leūman | 220 |
| And god it' woot' myn owne deere broþer | |
| Men leyn þat' oon as lowe as liþ þat' oþer | |
| Right' so betwixe a titles tyraunt' | |
| And an outlawe or a þeef' erraunt' | 224 |
| The same I say þer is no difference / | |
| To alisaundre was tolde þis sentence / | |
| That' for þe tyraunt' is of' grettere might | |
| By force of' meyne for to sleen down right' | 228 |
| And brenne hous and home and make al playn | |
| Lo þerfore is he cleped a Capitayn | |
| ¶ And for þe outlawe hap' but' smal meigne | |
| And may not' doon so gret' an harm as he | 232 |
| Ne bringe a Contre to so gret' mescheef' | |
| Men clepen him an outlawe or a þeef' | |
| But' for I am a man not' texted wel | |
| I wol not' telle of' Tytus neuer a deel | 236 |
| I wol go to my tale as I began | |
| Whan Phebus [wyf] hadde sent' for hire lemman | |
| Anon þey wroughten alle here lust' volage | |
| This white crowe þat' heng' ay in þe kage | 240 |

| | |
|--|------------------|
| Bihelde hire werk' and seyde neuer a word | 241 |
| And whan þat home was come Phebus þe lord | |
| This crowe sange cokkow cokkow cokkow | |
| What' bryd <i>quod</i> Phebus what' song' syngest' þou | 244 |
| Ne were þou wont' so meryly to syng | [leaf 259, back] |
| þat' to myn herte it' was a reioisschinge | |
| To here þi voys allas what' song' is þis | |
| By god <i>quod</i> he I syng nough't amys | 248 |
| Phebus <i>quod</i> he for al þi worþinesse | |
| ffor alle þy beaute and þyn gentilnesse | |
| ffor alle þi song' and al þi menstralcy | |
| ffor al þi waytyng' blered is þin ye | 252 |
| Wip on of' litel reputaciõ | |
| Nough't' worþ to þe as in comparisoñ | |
| þe mountaĩce of' a gnatte so mote I þriue | |
| ffor on þy bed þy wyff / I say him swyue | 256 |
| What' wole 3e more þe crowe anon him tolde | |
| By sadde tokenes and by wordes bolde | |
| How þat' his wyf' hadde doon hire leccherie | |
| him to gret' schame and to gret' vilanye | 260 |
| And tolde him ofte he say it' wip' his eyen | |
| þis Phebus gan awayward for to wryen | |
| him þough't' his sorwful herte brast a tuo / | |
| His bowe he bente and sette þer-Inne a floo | 264 |
| And in his Ire þan hap he his wif' y-slayn | |
| This is þeffecte þer is nomore to sayn | |
| ffor sorwe of' which he brak' his mynstralcy | |
| Boþe harpe and lewte gyterne and Sawterye | 268 |
| And eek' he brak' his arwes and his bowe | |
| And after þat' þus spak' he to þe crowe | |
| Traytour <i>quod</i> he wip' tonge of' Scorpion | |
| Thou hast' me brought' to my confusiõ | 272 |
| Allas þat' I was wrought' why nere I ded | |
| O deere wyf' o gemme of' lustyhed | |
| That' were to me so sadde and eek' so trewe | |
| Now lyes þou deed wip' face pale of' hewe / | 276 |

| | |
|---|------------|
| fful gulteles þat' durst' I swere ywys | 277 |
| O rakel hound to don so foule amys | |
| O trouble witte .O. Ire recheles | |
| That' vnaused smytest' gulteles / | 280 |
| O wan-truste ful of' fals suspescioñ | [leaf 260] |
| Where was þy witte and þi discrecioñ | |
| O euery man be war of' rekelnesse | |
| Ne trowe noþing' wiþouten strong' witesse | 284 |
| Smyt' nouz't to sone er þat' þou wite why | |
| And be auysed wel and soburly | |
| Or 3e doon eny execucioñ | |
| Vpon 3oure Ire for suspescioñ | 288 |
| Allas a þousand folk' han rakel Ire | |
| ffully fordoon or brought' hem in þe myre | |
| Allas for sorwe I wil my selue slee | |
| And to þe crowe O false þeef' sayde he | 292 |
| I wol þe quyte anon þy false tale | |
| þou songe whilom lyk' a nightyngale | |
| Now schalt' þou false þeef' þi song' forgon | |
| Eeke þin white feþeres euerichon | 296 |
| Ne neuer in alle þi lyue schalt' þou speke | |
| Thus schal men on a traitour ben awreke | |
| Thou and þin hospreinge euere schuln be blake | |
| Ne neuere swete noyse schul 3e make / | 300 |
| But' euer crye agayn tempest' and reyn | |
| In toknyng' þat' þurgh þe my wyf' was slayn | |
| And to þe crowe he sterte and þat' anon | |
| And pulled his white feþeres euerychon | 304 |
| and made him blak' and ref't him alle his song' | |
| And eek' his speche and out' at' þe dore him slong' | |
| vnto þe deuel which I him betake / | |
| And for þis caas ben alle crows blake | 308 |
| Lordynges by þis ensample I 3ou preye | |
| Beþ war and takeþ keepe what' þat' 3e seye | |
| Ne telleþ neuer no man in 3our lyff / | |
| how þat' anoþer man haþ dight' his wyf' | 312 |

| | |
|--|------------------|
| He wole 3ow haten mortelly certain | 313 |
| Daun Salomon as wise clerkes sein | |
| Techeþ a man to kepe his tonge wel | |
| But' as I sayde I am nought text' wel | 316 |
| But napeles þus taughte me my dame | [leaf 260, back] |
| My sone þenk' on þe crowe a goddes name | |
| My sone keepe wel þi tonge and kepe þy frende | |
| A wikked tonge is worse þan a feende | 320 |
| My sone ffrom a feend men may hem blesse | |
| My sone god of' his endeles goodnesse / | |
| Walled a tonge wiþ teeþ and lippes eeke | |
| ffor man schulde him auyse what' he speeke | 324 |
| My sone ful ofte for to mochel speche | |
| haþ many a man be spilt' as clerkes teche | |
| But' for litel speche aunsily | |
| Is no man schent' to speke generally | 328 |
| My sone þy tonge schuldest' þou restreigne | |
| At' alle tyme but' whan þou dost' þy peyne | |
| To speke of' god in honour and preyere | |
| The ferste vertu sone if' þou wolt' lere | 332 |
| Is to restreyne and kepe wel þi tunge | |
| þus lernen children whanne þey ben 3onge | |
| My sone of mochel spekyng' euel auysed | |
| Ther lasse spekyng' hadde ynough suffised | 336 |
| Comeþ mochil harm þus was me told and taught | |
| In mochil speche synne wanteþ naught | |
| Wostow wher-of' a rakil tonge serueþ | |
| Right' as a swerd forkutteþ and forkerueþ | 340 |
| An arm a tuo my deere sone right so | |
| A tunge kutteþ frendschipe al a tuo | |
| A ianglere is to god abhominable / | |
| Rede Salamon so wys and honorable / | 344 |
| Rede Dauyd and his psalmys red senekke | |
| My sone speek' nought' but' wiþ þin heed þou bekke | |
| Dissimule as þou were defe if' þat' þou heere | |
| A Iangler speke of' perilous mateere / | 348 |

GROUP H. § 2. MANCIPLE'S TALE. Corpus MS.

| | |
|--|-----------------|
| þe flemyng' saip and lerne it if þe leste | 349 |
| þat lytel Iangelynge causeþ mechel reste | |
| My sone if þou no wickede word hast' seyð | |
| þe þar nouzt drede for to be bywreyd | 352 |
| But' he þat' haþ myssayd I dar wel sayn | [leaf 261] |
| he may by no way clepe his word agayn | |
| Thing' þat' is sayde is sayde and forþ it' goþ | |
| Though him repente or be him neuer so loþ | 356 |
| he is his þralle to whom þat' he haþ sayd | |
| A tale of' which he is now yuele payd | |
| My sone be war and be nouzt auctour newe | |
| Of tydynges wheþer þay ben fals or trewe | 360 |
| Wher so þou come amonges heihe or lowe | |
| Kepe wel þy tunge and þenk' vpon þe crowe | Explicit' |
| | fabula mancipii |

GROUP I. FRAGMENT X.

§ 1. THE BLANK-PARSON LINK.

[*This is really a link between some unwritten Tale and the Parson's. It has been made into the Manciple-Parson Link (or Yeoman-Parson by the Christ-Church MS) by Chaucer's copiers, though not meant for it.*]

CORPUS MS.

Here bygynneþ þe prologe ofþ þe parsoñ [on leaf 261]

By þatþ þe maunciple hadde his tale ended Ca^m xxiiij^m
The sonne fro þe souþ syde is descended
So lowe þatþ he was noughtþ to my sight
Degrees xxix as ofþ highte / 4
Ten ofþ þe klokke itþ was so as I gesse /
ffor xj foote a lytel more or lesse
My schadwe was atþ þilke tyme as þere /
Ofþ suche feetþ as my lengþe parted were / 8
In six foote equal ofþ proporcioñ
Ther-wiþ þe mones exaltacioñ
I mene libra alwey gan ascende
As we were entryngþ atþ a thropes ende 12
ffor wiþ oure Oste as he was wontþ to gye
As in þis caas oure ioly companye /
Sayde in þis wise lordynges euerychon
Now lakkeþ vs no tale more þan oon 16
ffulfilð is my sentence and my degre
Who wile now telle a tale letþ se
Almostþ fulfilled is myn ordynaunce
I pray to god so ʒiue him rightþ good chañce 20
þatþ telleþ þis tale to vs lustely
Sire prestþ quod he artþ þou a vicary
Or artþ þou a persoñ say soþ by þy fey
Be whatþ þou be ne breke noughtþ oure pley 24

GROUP I. § 1. BLANK-PARSON LINK. **Corpus MS.**

| | |
|--|------------------|
| ffor euery man saue þou haþ told his tale | 25 |
| vnbokele and schewe vs what ^t is in þy male | [leaf 261, back] |
| ffor trewely me þenkeþ by þy cheere | |
| Thou scholdest ^t knette vp wel a gret ^t matiere | 28 |
| Telle vs a fable anon for cokkes bones | |
| This person answered al at ^t oones | |
| Thou getest ^t fable non y-tolde for me | |
| ffor Poule þat ^t writeþ vnto Thimothe | 32 |
| Repreueþ hem þat ^t wayuen soþfastnesse | |
| And tellen fables and such wrecchednesse | |
| Whi schulde I schewen draff ^t out ^t of ^t my feste / | |
| Whan I may schewen whete if ^t þat ^t me leste | 36 |
| ffor which I saye if ^t þat ^t þou luste to heere | |
| Moralite and vertuous matiere | |
| And þenne þat ^t 3e woln 3iue me audience | |
| I wol ful fayn at ^t cristes reuerence / | 40 |
| Don 3ou plesaunce lefful as I can | |
| But ^t trusteþ wel I am a sothryn man | |
| I can nought geste rom ram ruf ^t by lettre | |
| Ne god wot ^t rym holde I but ^t lytel bettre | 44 |
| And þerfore if ^t 3ou luste I wol nought ^t glose | |
| I wol 3ou telle a mery tale in prose | |
| To knitte vp al þis feste an ende | |
| And ihesu for his grace witte me sende | 48 |
| To schewe 3ou þe wey in þis visage | |
| Of ^t þilke parfyt ^t glorious pilgrimage | |
| That ^t highte Ierusalem Celestial | |
| And if ^t 3e vouche sauf ^t anon 3e schal | 52 |
| Bygynne vpon my tale for which I preye | |
| Telle 3oure avis I can no bettre seye | |
| But ^t napeles þis meditacion | |
| I putte it ay vnder correction | 56 |
| Of ^t clerkes for I am nought text ^t wel | |
| I take but ^t þe sentence trustel wel | |
| þerfore I make protestacion | |
| That ^t I wol stonde to correction | 60 |

Vppon þis word we han assented sone
 [for as hit semed / hit was for to doone
 to enden / in som *vertuous* sentence
 and for to yeve him space / *and* audience 64
 and bad oure Oste / he shulde to him say
 that alle we / to telle his tale him pray
 oure Oste had the wordes / for vs alle
 sir prest *quod* he / now faire yow befalle 68
 sey what yow luste / *and* we wol gladly here
 and with that worde / he seide in this manere
 telleth *quod* he / youre meditacioun
 but hasteth yow / the sonne wol a-douñ 72
 beth fructuous / *and* that in litel space
 and to do wel / god sende yow his grace.
Here endith the parson his prolog [MS Arch. Seld. B. 14
extract stops]

THE PARSON'S TALE.

A TREATISE ON PENITENCE, IN 3 PARTS :

- Part I. On **Penitence**, and its 1st requisite **Contrition (A)** (p. 593—612).
 Part II. On its 2nd requisite, **Confession (B)** (p. 612—679).
 Part III. On its 3rd requisite, **Satisfaction (C)** (p. 679—684), with the Writer's Leave-taking and Retractions (p. 684-85).

PART I. (p. 593—612).

ON PENITENCE, AND ITS 1ST REQUISITE, CONTRITION.

Proem on Jeremiah vi. 16. The Tale is to be on *Penitence* as a full noble way to lead folk to Christ, and is to treat of

- i. 'what is Penitence' (p. 594).
 - ii. 'whennes it is cleped Penitence'. [*not in the Tale.*]
 - iii. 'in how manye maneres been the acciouns or werkynges of Penitence' (p. 594-5).
 - iv. 'how many speses ther been of Penitence' (p. 595).
 - v. 'whiche thynges apertenen and bihouen to Penitence' (p. 595—682: nearly all Parts I and III, and all Part II).
 - vi. 'whiche thynges destourben Penitence' (at end of Part III, p. 682) (p. 593).
- i. **Penitence** defined, by *a.* St Ambrose; *b.* 'som doctour'; *c.* the writer. Its requisites: 1. bewailing of sins; 2. purpose to have shrift, to do satisfaction, never to sin again, to continue in good works (p. 594).

[ii. *not given.*]

- iii. The 3 actions of Penitence: 1. Baptism after sin; 2. not to do deadly sin after baptism; 3. not thus to do venial sin (p. 594-95).
- iv. The 3 speses or kinds of Penitence: 1. Solemn (to be put out of church, or do open penance); 2. Common (to go naked on pilgrimage); 3. Private (p. 595).
- v. The 3 necessities or requisites for Penitence (p. 596—682):
 - A. **Contrition of heart** (p. 596—612).
 - B. **Confession of mouth** (Part II, p. 612—679).
 - C. **Satisfaction** (Part III, p. 679—682).

Penitence avails against 3 things, by which we wrath Christ (p. 595).

- A. **Contrition** is the root of Penitence, whose stem bears branches and leaves of Confession, and fruit of Satisfaction.

Contrition also bears a seed of grace, whose heat draws men to God. (Simile of the child and his nurse's milk.)

Penance is the tree of life (p. 596).

Four Points to be known about Contrition:

1. What it is; 2. the causes that move a man to it; 3. how to be contrite; 4. what it avails the soul (p. 597).
2. The 6 Causes that should move a man to Contrition:
 - a.* Remembrance of Sins (p. 597-8).
 - b.* Whoso does sin is the Thrall of Sin (p. 598-99).
 - c.* Dread of the Day of Doom and the Pains of Hell (p. 599—604).
 These described: the Doom (p. 599-600); Job's 'lond of myse and of derknesse' (p. 600-1); the 3 shames in hell against (1) 'Honours, (2) delices, and (3) riches' (p. 611); poverty in 4 things: no treasure, food, clothing, or friends (p. 602); and no delights of the 5 senses. The pain shall be eternal (p. 603). Hell is orderless (p. 603-4). The 7 causes why the damnd have lost all hope (p. 604).
 - d.* Remembrance of the good works we've left undone, and the loss of the good works done while we were in sin (p. 604-6).
 Deadly sin wipes out all good works formerly done (p. 605); and no good works can be done in deadly sin (p. 605-6).
 The new French song, *J'ai tout perdu mon temps* (also quoted in Chaucer's late poem of *Fortune*).

- e. Remembrance of Christ's suffering for our sins (p. 606). In man's sin, every ordinance is turned up-so-down (p. 607). For this disorder Christ suffered (p. 608).
- f. The hope of 3 things: 1. Forgiveness of Sins, 2. the Gift of Grace to do well, 3. the Glory of Heaven (p. 609).
- 3. How to be contrite. Contrition must be universal and total: for sins of thought, for desires against God's law, for wicked words as well as wicked deeds (p. 610). Contrition must be anguishous and continual (p. 609-11).
- 4. How Contrition helps the soul. It sometimes delivers a man from sin; destroys the prison of hell; cleanses the soul; changes the son of Wrath to the son of Grace (p. 611-12).

PART II (*no. v. continued*).

B. CONFESSION (THE 2ND REQUISITE FOR PENITENCE)
(p. 612—679).

- B. Confession. § 1. (l. 317) 'what is confession' (p. 612).
- § 2. 'whether it oughte nedes be doon or noon' (p. 672-9).
- § 3. 'whiche thynges been couenable to veray Confession' (p. 674-79).

CONFESSION, § 1.

- 1. 'Confession is veray shewynge of synnes to the preest' (l. 318) (p. 612). We must understand too
 - a. (l. 321) 'whennes that synnes spryngen' (p. 612—15).
 - b. 'how they encreessen' (p. 615-16; 672-74).
 - c. 'whiche they been' (p. 616—672).
- 1.a. Sin sprang from the fall of Adam (p. 612). The legend of Adam and Eve told (p. 613). From Adam we took Original Sin, and were born sons of eternal damnation; but Baptism rescues us; though we keep liability to temptation, or Concupiscence (p. 613-14).
Concupiscence, or the nourishing and occasion of sin. St Paul and St Jerome's temptations (p. 614-15).
- 1.b. How Sin grows in a man. 1. by Concupiscence; 2. Subjection to the Devil; 3. Hesitation; 4. Doing, the Sin becoming Actual (p. 615-16).
- 1.c. Sin is *a.* venial, *β.* deadly (or mortal).
 - a. 1. Venial Sin defined. It skips into Deadly Sin. (Simile of the drops of water into a vessel's hold drowning the ship;) (p. 616).
 - β. 1. Deadly Sin defined (p. 617).
 - a. 2. Of divers small venial sins, hardly thought sins (p. 617-18); eating, drinking, talking, too much; using your wife too much; not visiting the sick (p. 617); talking vanities at church, &c. (p. 618). Cure of venial sins by love to Christ, prayer, confession, good works, receiving the Sacrament, holy-water, &c. (p. 618).
- 1.c. β. 2. *The Seven Deadly Sins*. The Chieftains, head and spring, of all other Sins (p. 619).
 - i. Pride (p. 619-26), and its Remedy (p. 626-8).
 - ii. Envy (p. 628-30), and its Remedy (p. 630-1).
 - iii. Ire or Anger (p. 631-42), and its Remedy (p. 642-5).
 - iv. Accidie or Sloth (Discontent, Ennui) (p. 645-49), and its Remedy (p. 650-1).
 - v. Avarice or Covetousness (p. 651-7), and its Remedy (p. 657-8).
 - vi. Gluttony (p. 658-9), and its Remedy (p. 660).
 - vii. Lechery (p. 660-8), and its Remedy (p. 668-72).
- i. PRIDE (p. 619—626). Its 16 (and more) Twigs. 1. Disobedience, 2. Boasting, 3. Hypocrisy, 4. Despite, 5. Arrogance (p. 619), 6. Impudence, 7. Swelling of Heart (rejoicing in harm done), 8. Insolence, 9. Elation, 10. Impatience, 11. Contumacy, 12.

Presumption, 13. Irreverence, 14. Pertinacity, 15. Vain-glory, 16. Jangling (chattering).

A private kind of pride (the Host's Wife's and Wife of Bath's¹), wanting to go to offering first, &c. (p. 620).

Two kinds of Pride, *a.* 'within man's heart', *b.* without; *b.* being the sign of *a.*, 'as the gaye leafsel atte Taverne is sign of the wyn that is in the Celer'² (p. 620-21), *b.* outside pride.

a. in dear clothing, 1. superfluity of it: its cost, furring, chisel-holes, dragging in the dung, waste of material (p. 621), unfitness for giving to the poor: 2. scantness of it: showing men's privy members, and buttocks (like a she-ape's rump), and the former as half-flayd, in parti-colourd hose³. The 'outrageous array of Women' (p. 623).

β. in horses (p. 623), and vicious grooms to tend 'em; plate-harness, &c.

γ. in household: keeping too many retainers or servants, who oppress the poor (p. 624).

δ. in table: not asking the poor to feasts; having burning and ornamented dishes⁴; too costly cups, &c., and too choice minstrelsy (p. 624).

What Pride sins are deadly, and what venial (p. 624).

The Sources of Pride (p. 624): goods of Nature, Fortune, Grace (p. 624). The Folly of Pride in any of these goods of Nature: 'we ben alle of o fader and of o mooder, and . . . of o nature'⁵.

The general signs of *Gentleness*. (The flies calld 'bees', and their stingless king) (p. 625); 3 gifts of Grace; 3 of Fortune. The brittleness of popular praise⁶ (p. 626).

The Remedy against Pride.

Humility or Meekness, and its 3 kinds: in 1. heart, 2. mouth, 3. works. 4 kinds of each of these (p. 626-27).

ii. ENVY (p. 627-30): defined by the Philosopher and St Augustine. It springs from Malice (p. 627).

Malice; 2 kinds of: 1. hardness of heart, or recklessness; 2. opposing truth (p. 627).

The 2 kinds of Envy (p. 628): 1. sorrow at other men's prosperity; 2. joy at other men's harm: whence comes

Backbiting; 5 kinds (p. 628): 1. praise with a *but* at the end; 2. turning well-meant things upside down to ill ones; 3. lessening a neighbour's goodness; 4. putting one man above another; 5. glad listening to scandal (p. 628).

Grudging or murmuring (p. 628): 1. against God (p. 629); 2. Murmuring from avarice, 3. from pride, 4. from envy; 5. among Servants, who say 'the Devil's *Paternoster*'; 6. Murmuring from ire or hate: thence, *a.* Bitterness of Heart, *b.* Discord, *c.* Scorning; *d.* Accusing (p. 629); *e.* Malignity (p. 630).

The Remedy against Envy (p. 630-31).

Love of God and one's neighbour. How a man shall love his neighbour. How an enemy is included in the name 'neighbour' (p. 630). 3 Remedies of Love, against 3 deeds of Hate (p. 631). Love is the medicine that casts out the venom of Envy from man's heart (p. 631).

iii. IRE or ANGER (p. 631-42), and its 2 kinds: *a.* good Ire or Wrath (p. 632); *b.* wicked Ire, and its 2 kinds: sudden ire, and ire of malice aforethought (p. 632-33).

Three Shrews that forge in the Devil's furnace: Pride, Envy, and Contumely (p. 633).

¹ Melibe-Monk Link, B. § 11; and General Prologue, A.

² Chaucer's father no doubt had a sign outside his wine-shop or tavern in Thames Street, London.

³ The outspoken and somewhat coarse abuse of the new fashions in dress is a great change from Chaucer's admirable Third-Period chaff of the moral short-comings of the monks and friars, &c., in the Prologue and middle Tales. If this is not change of man, it's change of mood.

⁴ Chaucer must have seen plenty of these when he was page, valet, and squire.

⁵ Compare Chaucer's *Gentleness*, &c. ⁶ Compare Clerk's Tale, Part VI, st. 135.

Wrath takes away a man's wit and spiritual life (p. 634).

Fruits of Wrath: 1. Hate. 2. War and wrong. 3. Manslaughter, a. spiritual; b. bodily (p. 634).

a. The 3 kinds of spiritual Manslaughter (3, calld 6 in MSS. p. 634): 1. by Hate. 2. by Backbiting. 3. Giving wicked Counsel, by Fraud (p. 634).

b. bodily Manslaughter: slaying with your tongue, giving orders or counsel to slay a man (p. 634).

Manslaughter in deed: its 4 (that is, 7) kinds (p. 635): 1. by law: a Justice condemning a man to death; 2. justifiable homicide, in defence of one's own life; 3. by misadventure: shooting an arrow, &c.; 4. a woman overlying her child; 5. a man making a woman barren by drinks, &c., killing the foetus within her, shedding his seed in the wrong place; a woman killing the child in her womb; 6. a woman killing her child (after birth)* for shame; 7. a man by lechery or blows killing a foetus.

(Sixteen) other sins coming from Ire or Anger.

1. blaming or despising God, as hazarders do (Cp. *Pardoner's Tale*) (p. 635); and those who treat of the Sacrament of the altar irreverently (p. 636).

2. Attry anger: making angry false excuses for sin.

3. Swearing, which dismembers Christ (p. 636).

a. Of lawful Swearing, before a Judge: its 3 conditions, and its motives; b. God's name and Christ's, not to be taken in vain (p. 637); c. swearing for gentility or manliness (p. 638); d. swearing suddenly; e. of Adjuration and Conjurati^on by enchanters and necromancers; f. of Divination by Dreams, &c.; g. of Charms for Wounds and Maladies (p. 638).

4. Lying (p. 638), and its 6 kinds.

5. Flattering. How Flatterers are the Devil's Nurses, his Enchanters and Chaplains (p. 639).

6. Cursing that comes of irous heart: Malison.

7. Chiding and Reproach (p. 640); (specially a chiding wife¹) (p. 640-41).

8. Scorning (p. 641).

9. Giving wicked Counsel (p. 641).

10. Sowing and making Discord (p. 642).

11. Double tongue (p. 642).

12. Betraying of Counsel (p. 642).

13. Menace.

14. Idle words.

15. Jangling (chattering) (p. 642).

16. Japing (joking) (p. 642-43).

The Remedy against Anger (p. 643-5). Debonairtee and Patience (p. 643). Four kinds of grievances, and their remedies: 1. wicked words, 2. loss of goods, 3. harm of body, 4. outrageous labour (p. 644).

Incentives to Patience. Story of the Philosopher and Child (p. 644-45). Obedience comes from Patience (p. 645).

iv. ACCIDIE, or SLOTH (Discontent, Ennui) (p. 645-49), is an enemy to the 3 states of man,—1. innocence (p. 645), 2. prayer (p. 646), 3. grace;—and to one's livelihood. Its 12 bad consequences (p. 646): 1. Sloth (and its remedy); 2. Dread to begin good works (p. 646); 3. Wanhope, or Despair (and its Remedy) (p. 647); 4. Somnolence (p. 648), and 5. Negligence, or 6. Recklessness, and the Remedy for each; 7. Idleness; 8. *Tarditas*, or tarrying before turning to God (p. 649); 9. Lachesse, or giving up a good work begun; 10. Coldness; 11. Undevotion; 12. Worldly sorrow (p. 649).

The Remedy against Accidie (p. 650-51): Fortitude or Strength, and its 5 kinds. 1. Magnanimity² or great Courage; 2. Faith or Hope; 3. Assurance; 4. Magnificence; 5. Constancy (p. 651).

¹ Does Chaucer here refer to his former wife?

² Miswritten 'Magnificence' in Ellesmere and Lansdowne MSS.

- v. **AVARICE** (p. 651-57). The difference between Avarice and Covetousness (p. 651); and between an Idolater and an avaricious man (p. 652). Of Covetousness, and lords' extortion from their bondmen: "humble folk been Cristes freendes" (p. 652-53). The Duty of lords to their thralls or churls. Of those that pillage Holy Church (p. 653-54); lords who plunder the poor are like wolves (p. 654). Of Deceit between Merchant and Merchant (p. 654). Of honest bodily Merchandise (the surplus of one country may be sent to help another) (p. 654). Of spiritual Merchandise, or Simony, and its 2 kinds (p. 655),—thieves that steal Christ's souls get livings (p. 655-56);—Hasardry or Games of Chance (p. 656). Other outcomes of Avarice (p. 656): 1. Lying, 2. Theft (bodily and spiritual) (p. 656-57), 3. False Witness, 4. False Oaths (p. 657).

The Remedy against Avarice (p. 657): Mercy and Pity, and reasonable Liberality (p. 658). Of foolish largess (p. 658).

- vi. **GLUTTONY** (p. 658-59), and its 5 kinds (p. 659): 1. Drunkenness, or the burial of man's reason; 2. a troubled spirit; 3. bad way of eating; 4. distemperd bodily humours; 5. forgetfulness. Or, as St Gregory says, 1. eating too soon; 2. eating too delicate food; 3. taking too much; 4. troubling too much about cooking food; 5. eating greedily: these are the 5 fingers of the devil's hand (p. 659).

The Remedy against Gluttony (p. 660): Abstinence, and its fellows. Temperance, Shame, Content with plain food, Moderation, Sobriety, Sparing (p. 660).

- vii. **LECHERY** (p. 660). Its punishment in the Old Testament (p. 660). Adultery, and the desire of it (p. 661-62).

The 5 fingers of the Devil's other hand (p. 662); 1. foolish looking; 2. villainous touching; 3. foul words; 4. kissing (old dotards, and dry dogs at a rose-tree (p. 662); and how a man should love his wife); 5. the stinking deed of lechery (p. 663). Its kinds: 1. Fornication. Taking a maid's maidenhead, or 100th fruit (p. 663). 2. Adultery, defined. 3. Harms following from it: *a.* breaking of faith; *b.* theft (of the wife's body from her husband (Joseph and Potiphar's wife), and of her soul from Christ); *c.* breaking God's commandment, and defouling Christ (p. 664). Of Harlots and Bawds (p. 665). Adultery is set between Theft and Manslaughter. More kinds of Adultery: 1. by Men bound by Religious Vows, &c.; 2. those in Holy Orders (p. 665). Lecherous Priests are like a free Bull in a town, and they eat raw flesh of folk's wives and daughters (p. 666); 3. by man and wife copulating for pleasure only (p. 667); 4. copulation with kinsfolk, spiritual (or godchildren) or fleshly (blood relations). 5. the abominable unmentionable sin; 6. Pollution, of 3 kinds: 1. too rank humours; 2. weakness (p. 667); 3. evil thoughts (p. 668).

The Remedy for Lechery (p. 668): I. Chastity and Continence.

1. in Marriage. (The true effect of Marriage. One husband to have one wife (p. 668). How a man should behave to his wife (p. 669). How the wife should be subject to her husband (p. 669), and be moderate in behaviour, discreet in words, &c. (p. 669-70). The 3 causes for which man and wife may copulate (p. 670): *a.* begetting of children; *b.* to pay the mutual debt of their bodies; *c.* to avoid lechery (p. 670). The 4th cause, pleasure, is deadly sin (p. 670-71).)

2. In Widowhood; 3. Virginity (p. 671).

II. Special avoidance of causes of lechery: *a.* eating and drinking; long sleeping; *b.* the person who'd tempt you (p. 671-72). (I wish I could tell you the Ten Commandments; but it's too high doctrine (p. 672).) [End of *Confession*, § 1, c.]

Sin is in heart, mouth, deed, by the 5 Wits (p. 672).

- § 1. *b.* (see p. 615-16.) The 7 Circumstances that encrease or aggravate sins (p. 672). 1. the person who sins (male or female, &c.); 2. the kind of sin (fornication or homicide); 3. the place it was committed in (as in a church, by a priest) (p. 673); 4. for what motive; 5. the number of times it was committed; 6. by what temptation; 7. how it was committed; and all other circumstances (p. 674).

CONFESSION, § 2, § 3 (p. 674-79).

Profitable Confession, and its 4 (= 3) Conditions (p. 674):

1. sorrowful bitterness of heart (p. 674); its 5 signs: *a.* shamefastness (like the Publican's) (p. 675); *b.* humility; *c.* fulness of tears (p. 675); *d.* no hesitation (like the Magdalen) for shame; *e.* obedience to receive penance laid on you (p. 675).
2. speedy Confession (p. 676); its 4 Conditions: *f.* that it be well thought over; *g.* the greatness and number of sins must be understood; *h.* the sinner must be contrite, and *i.* avoid occasions of sins.
3. Shrift must be made to one man, not more (p. 676).

True Shrift, and its 10 Conditions (p. 677): 1. that it be of free will; 2. that it be lawful (both sinner and priest, Popish); 3. that it be not despairing of Christ's mercy; 4. that a man accuse himself only, and not another; 5. that it be not lying (accusing oneself of sins never committed) (p. 678); that it be by one's own mouth, and not by letter; 7. that the sin be not painted with fair words; 8. that the shrift be to a discreet priest; 9. that the shrift be not made for vain-glory, but for fear of Christ; 10. that the shrift be not made suddenly, for a joke (p. 678). You may be shaven more than once for the same sin; and should be houseled once a year (p. 679).

PART III (*no. v. continued, and no. vi.*).

SATISFACTION (THE 3RD REQUISITE FOR PENITENCE)
(p. 679—684).

In *a.* Alms. *β.* bodily punishment.

- a.* *Alms and its three kinds* (p. 679): 1. Contrition of heart. 2. Pity for one's neighbour's faults. 3. Giving good counsel to other's souls and bodies (food, visits in prison, burial). These Alms should be done privily, if possible (p. 680).
- β.* *Bodily Punishment (Penance), of 4 kinds*: 1. Prayers (chiefly of the Paternoster, whose expounding I leave to Masters of Theology) (p. 680). 2. Watching, and its 3 kinds: forbearing, *a.* meat and drink, *b.* worldly jollity, and *c.* deadly sin (p. 681). 3. Fasting, and its 4 kinds: Liberality to poor folk; spiritual gladness of heart; not grudging at fasting; reasonable eating. 4. Virtuous teachings, or Discipline: *a.* by word, writing, or example; *b.* by wearing hairshirts, &c., next your skin, scourging yourself, taking evils and injuries patiently (p. 682). [End of *no. v.* in Part i: p. 593.]

- vi.* The 4 Things that disturb Penance [*no. vi.* or last §, of p. 593 at foot] (p. 682). 1. Dread, and its remedy. 2. Shame, and its remedy. 3. Hope: *a.* of long life, and *b.* consequent overconfidence in Christ's mercy (p. 683). 4. Wanhope, or Despair of Mercy; its 3 kinds: *x.* from great and long continued sin; *y.* from falls-back into sin; *z.* from not being able to persevere in goodness (p. 683).

The fruit of Penance (p. 683-4).

EPILOGUE.

The Author's Leave-taking, and Lament over, and Withdrawal of, his Sinful Books, &c. (p. 684-85).

[*There are no breaks in the MS. Tyrnhitt's are kept here to prevent slight differences in the texts throwing the Six-Text out of gear.*]

[*Arch. Seld. B. 14, leaf 268, Bodleian Library.*]

[And

next folowyng bigynneth his tale.

[75] Oure swete lord god of heuen / that no man wol
 O perisshe / but wol that we come alle to the
 knewleche of him / *and* to the blisful liff
 that is perdurable / [76] amonesteth vs bi the
 prophete Ierome that seith in this wise / ¶ Jerome . state
 [77] stonddith vppon the weyes *and* seeth *and* axeth super vias . &c.
 of olde pathes / that is to seie ¹of olde sentences /
 whiche is the good weye / [78] *and* walketh in that weye /
and ye shulle fynde refresshyng / for youre soules //
 [79] Many ben the weyes spiritual that leden folke
 to oure lord ihesu criste *and* to the regne of glorie //
 [80] Of whiche weyes ther is a ful noble weye / *and* a
 ful couenable weye / whiche may not fayle to man ne to
 woman / that thorough synne hath mysگون / fro the right
 weye of Ierusalem celestial / [81] *and* this weie is cleped
 penaunce / of whiche men shulde gladly herken *and*
 enqueren / with al here herte / [82] to wete what is pen-
 aunce / *and* wherfore it is cleped penaunce / *and* in how
 many manere ben the accions of worching of penaunce /
 [83] *and* how many spicis ther ben of penaunce / *and*
 whiche thinges apperteyne *and* bihoven to penaunce / *and*
 whiche thinges disturben penance /

¶ Ambrosius.

[84] Seint Ambrose seith that penaunce is the pleyntyng of man for the gilt that he hath don and no more to do any thing / for whiche him aught to pleyne / [85] And som Doctor seith / penaunce is the weymentyng of man that sorowith for his synne / *and* peyneth him-self for he hath mys-doun / [86] penaunce with *certeyne* circumstaunce / is verry repentaunce of man that halt him-self in sorow *and* other peyne for his giltes / [87] And for he shal be verry penitent / he shal first biwailen the synne that he hath doun / *and* stedfastly purposen in his herte to haue shriff of mouthe / *and* to don satisfaccion / [88] *and* neuere to do thing for whiche him ought more to waile / or to compleyne / *and* to contene in goode werkes / or ellis his repentaunce may nat availe / [89] For as seint Isidor seith / he is a Iaper *and* a gabber *and* no verry repentaunte / that efft-sone doth thing / for whiche him ought to repent [90] weping / *and* nought for to stinte to do synne / may not availe [91] but natheles men shulde hope / that at euery tyme that a man falleth be it neuere so oft / that he may arise thorough penaunce if he haue grace / but *certeynely* ¹it is grete doute / [92] ffor as seith seint Gregory / vnnethes ariseth he oute of his synne / that is charged with the charge of euel vsage / [93] And ther-fore repentyng folke that stinte for to synne / *and* forlete synne / or synne for-lete hem / Holy chirche holt hem seker of here saluacioun [94] And he that stinteth *and* verrily repenteth him in his last ende / Holy chirche yit hopeth his saluacion bi the grete mercy of oure lord ihesu for his repentaunce / but taketh the seker weye that is *certeyne* //

¶ Gregorius.

[95] And now sithen I haue declared yow whath thing is penaunce / Now shulne ye vnderstonde that ther ben thre accions of penaunce / [96] The first is if a man be baptized *after* that he hath don synne / [97] seint Austyn seith / but he be penitent for his olde synful liff / he may nat bigynne / the newe

¶ Austyne

clene liff / [98] for certes if he be baptised withoute
penaunce of his olde gilte he reseivith the marke of
baptyme / but not the grace ne the remission of his
synnes / til he haue verry repentaunce // [99] Another
defaute is this / that men don dedely synne / after that
thei haue received baptyme / [100] The thrid defaute
is / that men fallen in venial synnes / after here baptyme /
¶ Austyne / fro day to day / [101] therof seith Seynt Austyne /
that the penaunce of goode *and* humble folke is the
penaunce of euery daie //

[102] The spices of penaunce ben thre / that oon
of hem is solempne / Another *comune* / And the
thride prive / [103] Tilke penaunce that is so-
lempne is in two maners / as is to be put out of holy
chirche in lente for slaughtur of children / *and* suche
manere thinge / [104] Another is whan a man
hath synned openly¹ ²of which synne þe fame is openly
spoken in þe contre ¶ And þenne holy chirche by Iugge-
ment² destreigneþ him for to do penaunce open. [105]
Som penaunce is þat prestes enioygnen me *communly* in
certein caas as for to gon *peraunture* naked in
pylgrimage or bare foot^t [106] ¶ Pruiue penaunce is
þilke þat men don alday for priue synnes of which
we schryuen vs pryuyly and reseceyuen priue penaunce

[107] ¶ Now schalt þou vnderstande what byhouep
and is necessarie to verray *perfyte* penaunce ¶ and þese
standen on þre þinges [108] ¶ Contricioñ of herte ¶ Con-
fessioñ of mouþ // and Satisfaccioñ [109] ¶ ffor which
saip Iohn Gresostomus ¶ Penitence destreigneþ man
to accepte benignely euery peyne þat is him enioyned
wip contricion of herte and schrift of mouþ wip satis-
faccioñ and in werching of alle maner humilite [110]
¶ And þis is fruytful penytence azein þre þinges in which
we wrappen oure lord ihesu *crist* [111] þis is to sayn
by delyt/ in þenking By rechelesnesse in speking
¶ By wicked synful worching [112] ¶ And azeins þise
ARCH. SELD. B. 14, AND CORPUS 607 (8-T. 595) [² Corpus, leaf 262]

¶ Austyne

[¹ Selden *extract*
ends][² Corpus *begins*]

¶ Gresostomus

wikkede gultes is penitence þat may be likened vnto a tre

[113] ¶ The rote of þis tre is contriciōn þat huydeþ him in þe herte of him þat is verray repentañt Right as þe roote of a tree huydeþ him in þe erþe [114] ¶ Of þe roote of contriciōn springeþ a stalke þat bereþ braunches and leues of confession and fruyt of satisfacciōn [115] ¶ ffor whiche crist saþ in þe gospelle Doþ digne fruyt of penitence ¶ ffor by þis fruyte may men knowe þis tree and nouzt by þe roote þat is hidde in þe herte of a man ne by þe braunches ne by þe leeuēs of confession [116] ¶ And þerfore oure lord ihesu crist saþ þus ¶ By þe fruyt of hem schuln 3e knowe hem. [117] of þis roote springeþ a seed of grace þe which seed is mooder of sikernesse and þis seed is egre and hoot [118] ¶ þe grace of þis seed springeþ of god þorough þe remembrañce of þe day of doome and on þe peynes of helle [119] ¶ Of þis matiere saþ Salamon ¶ þat in þe drede of god man forleteþ his synne [120] ¶ The hete of þis seed is þe loue of god and þe desiryngē of þe ioie perdurable [121] þis hete draweþ þe herte of man to god and doþ him hate hys synne [122] ¶ ffor soþly þer is no þing þat sauoureþ so wel a childe as þe mylkt of his norice ¶ ne no þing is to him more abhominable þen þilke mylkt whan it is medled wip oþer mete [123] ¶ Right so synful man þat loueþ his synne him semeþ þat it is to him most sweete / of any þing [124] ¶ but fro þat tyme þat he loueþ sadly oure lord ihesu crist and desireþ þe lyff perdurable þer nys to him more abhominable [125] ¶ ffor soþe þe lawe of god is þe loue of god ¶ ffor which .dauid. þe prophete saþ ¶ I haue loued þy lawe and hated wikkednesse & haten. he þat loueþ god kepeþ his lawe and his word [126] ¶ This tree saugh þe prophete Danyel in spirit vpon þe aysion of Nabugodonosor when he counseiled him to do penitence [127] ¶ Penaunce is þe tre of lyf to hem þat it resceyuen And he þat haldeþ him

¶ Textus

¶ Salomon

dauid

verray penitent^t is blessed after þe sentence of^t Salomon.
Salomon

[128] ¶ In þis penitence or contricioñ man schal vnderstonde .iiij. þinges: þat^t is to say what^t is contricioñ And whiche ben þe causes þat^t meuen a man to contricioñ and how he schulde be contrite and what^t contricioñ awayled to þe soule [129] þanne it^t is þus þat^t contricioñ is þe verray sorwe þat^t a man reseceyueþ in his herte for his synnes wiþ sadde purpos to schryuen him and to do penaunce / and neuer more to don synne [130] and þis sorwe schal ben in þis maneres as saip Seint^t Bernard ¶ hit^t schal be greuous and heuy and ful *Bernardus* scharp and poynañt^t in herte [131] ¶ ffirst^t for a man haþ agilt^t his lord and his creatour ¶ And more scharp and poynañt^t for he haþ agult^t his fader celestial [132] ¶ And 3et^t more scharp and poynañt^t ¶ ffor he haþ wrappēd and agilt^t him þat^t bougħt^t him þat^t with his precious blood haþ deliuered vs fro þe bandes of^t synne and fro þe cruelte of^t þe deuel and fro þe peynes of^t helle

[133] ¶ These causes þat^t oughten to meuen a man to contricioñ ben vj ¶ ffirst^t a man schal remembre him of^t .vj. causes his synnes [134] but^t loke þat^t þilke remembrance be to him no delyte by no wey: but^t gret^t schame & sorwe for his gulte ¶ ffor Iob saip ¶ Synful men don Iob werkes worþy of^t confessioun). [135] ¶ And þerfore saip Ezechie ¶ I wol remembre me alle þe 3eres of^t my lyf^t *Ezechiele* in bitternesse of^t myn herte ¶ [136] And god saip in papocalips ¶ Remembreþ 3ow fro whennes þat^t 3e ben *Apocalips* falle ¶ ffor biforn þat^t tyme þat^t 3e synned 3e were þe children of^t god and lymes of^t þe regne of^t god [137] ¶ But^t for 3oure synne 3e ben waxe þralles and foule and membres of^t þe feende / hate of aungeles sclaundre of^t holy chirche and foode of^t þe false serpent^t perpetuel mateere of^t þe furye of^t helle [138] ¶ and þat^t more foul and abhominable ffor 3e trespassen so often tyme as doþ þe hound þat^t torneþ to eten his spuyng^t [139] and 3et^t

ben 3e foulere for 3oure longe continuaunce in synne and 3oure synful vsage for whiche 3e ben roten in 3oure synne as a beeste in his dunge [140] Suche maner of þou3tes maken a man haue schame for his synne and no delite as god saiþ by þe prophete Ezechiel [141] ¶ 3e schuln remembre 3ow of 3oure weyes and þey schuln displese 3ow soþely ¶ Synnes ben þe weyes þat leden folk to helle

[142] ¶ The secounde cause that oughte to make a man to haue disdeyne of synne is þis þat as saiþ seint petre who so ¹dop synne is þralle of synne and synne putteþ a man in gret þraldom [143] and þerfore saiþ þe prophete Ezechiele I wente sorwful in desdeyn of myself Certes wel aughte a man haue disdeyne of synne and wiþdrawe him fro þat þraldom and vilenye [144] ¶ And lo what saiþ Seneca in þis matiere he saiþ þus Though I wiste þat neyþer god ne man ne schulde neuere knowen it: 3et wolde I haue disdeyne for to do synne. [145] And þe same Seneca seiþ ¶ I am born to gettere þinges þan to be þralle to my body. [146] More þralle may no man ne no womman make of his body: þan 3eue his body to synne [147] ¶ And were it þe foulest cheerl or þe foulest womman þat lyueþ and lest of value 3et is he changed and most foule and more in seruitute [148] euer fro þe heiher degre þat man falleþ þe more is he þralle and more vnto god and to þe worlde vile and abhominable [149] ¶ O goode god wel aughte men haue disdeyne of synne. seþþen þat þurgh synne þer he was free now is he maked bonde / [150] and þerfore seiþ seint austyn ¶ If þou haue desdeigne of þy seruant/ if he agilt or synned. haue þou þanne disdeyne þat þou þi self schuldest do synne [151] Take reward of þy value þat þou ne be to foul to þin value ne self [152] ¶ Allas wel oughten þey þanne haue disdeyn to be

seruantz and þralle to synne and sore ben aschamed
of hemsel^f [153] ¶ þat^t god of his endeles goodnesse
haþ set hem in heih astate or zeuen hem wiþ strengþe
of body hele. beaute. prosperite / [154] and
bought hem fro þe deth wiþ his herte blood þat^t
þay so vnkyndely azeins his gentilnesse quyten him so
vileynesly to slaughter of here owne soules [155] ¶ O
goode god ze wommen þat^t ben of so gret beaute
Remembreth zou of þe prouerbe of Salamon ¶ he seiþ ¶ Salamon
[156] he likeneþ a fair womman þat^t is a fool of hire body
y-like to a rynge of golde þat^t werith in þe groyne of a sowe
[157] ¶ ffor right as a sowe wroteþ in euery ordure so
wroteþ sche hire beaute in stynkyngne ordure of synne
[158] ¶ The þridde cause þat^t oughte to meuen a man ¶ *iiij. causa*
to contricioñ is drede of þe day of doome and of þe
horrible peynes of helle [159] ¶ ffor as seint Ierom saiþ ¶ *Ieronimus*
¶ At euery tyme þat^t me remembreþ of þe day of doome I
quake. [160] ffor whan I ete or drinke or do what so I
do: euere semeþ me þat^t þe trompe sowneþ in myn eere.
[161] Riseþ vp þat^t ben deede and comeþ to þe
Iuggement [162] of goode god mechel aughte a man to
drede such a Iuggement þere as we schuln ben alle
as seiþ seint Poule byfore þe strete of oure lord ihesu
crist [163] wher as he schal maken a general con-
gregacioñ wher as no man may ben absent [164] ffor
certes þere ne auayleþ non essoyne ne excusacion
[165] ¹And nouzt only þat^t oure defautes schullen ben
y-Iuged ¶ but eek þat^t alle oure werkes schuln openly
ben knowen [166] and as þat^t saiþ Seint bernard. þer ne *Bernardus*
schal no pledyngne auayle ne no sleighte we schullen zeuen
rekenyng of euery ydel word [167] ¶ Ther schuln we haue
a Iugge þat^t may nought / be deceyued ne corrupt. And why:
ffor certes alle oure þoughtes ben discouered as to him
ne for prayere. ne for meede he wil not ben corrupte
[168] ¶ And þerfore saith Salamon ¶ The wrappe of god *Salamon*
wol nought ben corrupte And þerfore saith Salamon þe wreche

of god ne wol nought spare no wight for praier ne for zifte
¶ And þerfore at þe day of doom þer nys non hope to eskape
[169] Wherfore as seip Anselme ¶ fful gret
anguyssche schuln þe synful folk haue at þat tyme
[170] ¶ Ther schal be þe sterne and þe wroth Iuge sitte aboue
And vnder him þe orrible putte of helle to de-
struye him þat mot byknowe his synnes whiche
synnes openly ben schewed byforn god and biforn
euery creature [171] and on þe lift syde moo deueles
þan þe herte may pinke for to harye and to drawe
þe sinful soules to þe pyne of helle [172] and with
Inne þe hertes of folk schal be þe bytyng Conscience
¶ And wipoute forþ schal be þe world al brennyng
[173] ¶ Whider schal þenne þe wrecched synful soule flee
to huyde him? Certes he may nouzt huyde him. he moste
come forþ and schewe him [174] ¶ ffor certes as saip
seint Ierom // The erþe schal caste him out of him
and þe see also and þe aier also þat schal ben ful of
þondir clappes and lightenynges [175] ¶ Now soþly
who so wol remembre him of þese þinges: I gesse
þat his synnes schal nought turne him in to delyte but to gret
sorwe for drede of þe peyne of helle [176] and þer-
fore saip Iob to god ¶ Suffre lord þat I may a while
bywayle and wepe er I go and wepe wipouten retournyng to
þe derke lande couered wip þe derknesse of deþ [177]
to þe land of mysese and of derkenesse where as is
schadewe of deth wher as þer nys non oþer or-
dinañce but grisly drede þat euer schal laste [178]
¶ Lo heere may 3e seen þat Iob preyede respite a while
to bywepe and wayle his trespas ¶ ffor soþly oo day of
respite is better þan alle þe tresour of þis world [179] ¶ And
for as moche as man may quyte himself biforn god
by penitence in þis world and nought by tresour ¶ þerfore
schulde he preye to god to 3iue him respyt a while to
byweepen and byweylen his trespas // [180] ¶ ffor certes al
þe sorwe þat a man mighte make fro þe Begynnyng

Anselmus

.Iob.

exemptum

of þe world nys but alytel þing at þe regarde of þe sorwe
of helle [181] ¶ The cause why þat Iob clepeþ helle
þe lond of derknesses: [182] vnderstondet^h þat he
clepeþ it lande of erþe ¶ ffor it is stable and neuer schal
faile ¹derknes ¶ ffor he þat is in helle haþ defaute of
ligh^t material [183] ¶ ffor certes þe derke ligh^t þat schal
come out of þe fuyre þat euer schal brenne schal turne /
him al to peyne ¶ þat is in helle ffor it scheweþ him to þe
Orrible deueles þat him tormenten [184] couered wiþ
þe derknesse of deþ [.]
. [185] . . .
no gap in the MS.] ben þe synnes þat þe wrecchede man
haþ don whiche þat distourben him to se þe face
of god Right as a derk^t clowde bitwixen hous and þe *exemplum*
sonne. [186] lond of myssese by cause þat þer ben
pre maneres of defautes azeins þre þinges þat folk^t
of þis world han in þis present lyf þat is to say
honoures delices and richesse [187] azeins honour
han þey in helle / schame and confusioñ [188] ¶ ffor wel 3e
wite þat men clepen honour þe reuerence þat men
don to man ¶ But in helle is non honour ne reuerence
¶ ffor certes nomore reuerence schal be do to a
king þan to a knaue [189] ¶ ffor which god saiþ by *textus*
þe prophete Ieremie ¶ Thilke folk þat me despysen schuln *Ieremie /*
ben in despite [190] ¶ Honour is eek^t cleped gret^t wor-
schipe þer schal no wigh^t seruen oper ¶ But of harme and
torment, honour is eek^t cleped gret^t dignite and heigh-
nesse ¶ But in helle schullen þey ben alle fortroden of deueles
[191] as god saiþ ¶ þe Orrible deueles schuln gon &
comen vpon þe heedes of dampned folk ¶ And þis
is for as meche as þe heyer þat þey weren in þis present^t
lyff/: þe more schuln þey ben abated and defouled in
helle [192] ¶ azeins þe riche of þis world schullen
þey haue myssese of pouerte and þis pouert^t schal be
.iiij. þinges [193] ¶ In defaute of tresour of which

.dauid.

Dauid saiþ ¶ The riche folk þat enbraceden and Oneden
in al here herte to tresour of þis world schullen slepe / in þe
slepyng^t of deþ as no þing^t schuln þey fynden in
here handes of alle here tresour [194] ¶ And more ouer þe
myseyse of helle schal ben in defaute of mete &
drinke [195] ffor god saiþ þus by moyses ¶ þey schuln
be wasted wiþ hunger and þe briddes of helle schuln
deuoure him wiþ bitter deþ and þe galle of þe
dragon [. *no gap in the MS.*]

*dominus per
moysen*

here morselle [196] and forþer ouer here
mysayse schal ben in defaute of cloþing^t ¶ ffor þey schuln
be naked in body as of cloþing^t saue þe fuyre in whiche
þey brenne and oþer filþes [197] and naked schuln
þey ben of soule of alle maner vertues which þat
is þe cloþing^t of soule ¶ Where be þenne þe gay
robes and þe softe schetes and þe smale schertes. [198]
lo what saiþ god of hem by þe prophete. Isaye

Isaye

¶ That vnder hem schuln be strawed mouthes ¶ and here
couertours schuln ben of wormes of helle [199] ¶ and
furþer ouer here mysayse schal ben in defaute of
freendes ¶ ffor he is nought pouere þat haþ goode freendes
¶ But þer is no freend [200] ¶ ffor neiþer god ne
creature schal be frend to hem and euerych of hem
schuln haten oþer ¹wiþ dedly hate [201] ¶ þe sones of
þe doughtren schullen rebellen azeins fader and mooder
and kynredes azein kynrede and chyden and despisen
euerich of hem oþer boþe day and night as god saiþ
by þe prophete. Michias. [202] and þe louynge children
þat whilom loueden so fleissly euerich oþer ¶ Wolden
euerich of hem eten oþer if þay mighte [203] ¶ ffor how
scholde þey louen hem to gydere in þe peynes of helle ¶ Whan
þey hateden euerich of hem oþer in þe prosperite of þis lyf
[204] ¶ ffor truste wel here fleisschly loue was deedly hate
as saiþ þe prophete .dauid. ¶ Who so þat loueþ wikked-
nesse he hateþ his soule [205] ¶ And who so hateþ
his owen soule ¶ certes he may loue non oþer wight^t

dauid

in no manere [206] ¶ And þerfore in helle is no
 frendschipe ¶ but euer þe more fleissshly kynredes
 þat ben in helle: þe more cursyng'. þe more chyd-
 yng' and þe more dedly hate þer is among' hem
 [207] ¶ and furþer ouer þey schullen haue defaute of alle
 maner delites ¶ ffor why delices ben þe appetites
 of þe .v. wittes ¶ as sight'. heeryng'. smellyng'. Sauor-
 yng'. and touchyng'. [208] but in helle here sighte schal be
 ful of derknesse and of smoke and ful of
 teeres and here heerynge ful of waymentyng and of
 gruntyng of teep as saip ihesu crist' [209] here nose ^{Ihesus}
 þrullles schuln ben ful of stynke ¶ And as saip ^{textus}
 Isaye þe prophete ¶ here sauorynge schal be ful of bitter
 galle [210] and touchyng' of here body ycouered
 wip fuyre þat neuer schal be quenched And wip wormes
 þat neuere / schullen deyen as god saip by þe mouþ of
 Isaye [211] ¶ And for as moche as þey schuln nouzt' wene ^{Isaye}
 þat þey may deyen for peyne and by here deþ flee fro
 peyne þat may þey vnderstonde in þe word of Iob
 þat saip. þer as is þe schadewe of deþ [212] ¶ Certes
 a schadewe hap þe liknes of þe þing' of which it / is
 schadewe ¶ but schadewe nys nought' þe same þing' of which it
 is schadewe [213] ¶ right' so fareþ þe peyne of helle hit' is
 y-like deþ for þe anguyssche horrible And why ¶ ffor it'
 peyneþ hem euere as þough men schullen deyen anon But
 certes þey schuln nough't' deyen [214] ¶ ffor as saip seint'
 Gregory to wrecchede Caytyfs synful schal ben deþ wipouten
 deþ and ende wipouten ende ¶ And defaute wipouten
 faylinge [215] ¶ ffor here deþ schal alway lyue ¶ And here
 ende schal eueremore begynne. and here defaute schal nough't'
 faile [216] ¶ And þerfore saip Seint Iohn ^{Iohannes euang-}
 euangelist' ¶ They schullen folwe deþ and þey schuln ^{gelista}
 nough't' fynden him ¶ and þey desiren to deye and deþ
 schal flee fro hem [217] ¶ And eek' Iob saip þat' in helle Iob
 is non ordre of reule. [218] and al be it' so þat' god hap
 created alle þing' in right' ordre and no þing' wip-

outhen ordre ¶ But alle þinges ben ordeigned and nombred ¶ 3et napeles þey þat ben dampned ben no þing in ordre ne holden non ordre [219] ¶ ffor þe erþe schal bere hem no fruyt [220] ffor as þe prophete saip Dauid. god schal destruye þe fruyt of þe erthe as fro hem Ne water schal 3eue hem no moysture ne þe aier no refreissching. ne fuyr no light [221] ¶ ffor as saip seint Basile ¶ The brennyng of þe fuyr of þis world schal god 3euen in helle to hem þat ben dampned [222] ¶ But þe light and þe clernesse schal be 3ouen in to heuene to his children ¶ Right as þe goode man 3eueþ fleissch to his children and bones to his houndes [223] ¶ And for þey schullen haue non hope to eschape saip Iob. at þe laste þat þer schal horroure and grisly drede dwelle wiþouten ende [224] ¶ horroure is alway drede of harme þat is to come. and þis drede schal euere dwelle in þe hertes of hem þat ben dampned ¶ And þerfore han þay lorne alle here hope for .vij. causes [225] ¶ ffirst for god þat is here Iuge schal be wiþouten mercy to hem. ne þey may nought please him ne non of his halwes ne þey may 3yue no þing for here raunsoñ [226] ne þay haue no voys / to speke to him. Ne þey may nou3t flee fro peyne. ne þay haue no goodnesse in hem þat þay may schewe to delyuere hem fro peyne [227] And þerfore saip Salomon ¶ The wikkede man deyep. and whan he is deed he schal haue non hope to eskape fro peyne [228] ¶ Who so schame wel wolde vnderstande þese peynes and bepinke him wel þat he hap disserued pilke peynes for his synnes Certes he schulde haue more talent to syke and to wepe. þen for to syngen and to pleye [229] ¶ ffor as seiþ Salomon ¶ Who so þat hadde þe science for to knowe þo peynes þat ben establissched and ordeyned for synne he wolde make sorwe. [230] þilke science as seiþ seint austyn makeþ a man to weymenten in his herte

Iob

Salomon

iiij^m capitulum[231] ¶ The .iiij^e. poynt þat oughte make a man

haue contricioñ is þe sorweful remembraunce of þe
 good þat/ he haþ lost/ to doon heere in erþe and
 eek' þe good þat' he haþ lorn [232] ¶ Soply þe goode
 werkes þat' he haþ lost': eyþer þey ben þe goode
 werkes þat' he wrought' er he felle in to dedly synne
 ¶ Or elles þe goode werkes þat' he wrought' whil he lay
 in synne [233] ¶ Soply þe goode werkes þat' he dide
 biforn þat' he fylle in synne ben alle mortefied and astonyed
 and dulled by þe ofte synnyng' // [234] þat' oþer
 goode werkes þat' he wroughte whiles he lay in
 synne þey ben outerly deede as to þe lyff' /perdurable in
 heuene [235] ¶ þenne þilke goode werkes þat' ben
 mortefyed by often synnyng' whiche goode werkes he dide
 whiles he was in charite ne mowen neuere quyken azein
 wipouten verray penytence [236] ¶ And þerof' saith god
 by þe mouþ of Ezechielle þat' is ¹þe rightful man re-
 tourne azein from his rightwisnesse and to wirche wikked-
 nesse schal he lyue [237] nay. ffor alle þe goode werkes
 þat' he haþ wrouzt / ne schuln neuer ben in remembrance
 ffor he schal deye in his synne [238] ¶ And vpon þilke
 chapitre seiþ Seint' Gregori þus þat' we schulde vnder-
 stande þis principally [239] þat' whenne we doon dedly
 synne it' is for noughit þanne to reherse or drawe in to
 memorie þe goode werkes þat' we han wrought' byforne
 [240] ¶ ffor certes in þe werkinge of' dedly synne
 / þer is no triste / to no good werk' þat' we han don toforne
 þat' is to sayn as for to haue þerby þe lyff' per-
 durable in heuene [241] [.

 no gap in the MS.] whan we
 han contricioñ [242] ¶ But' sobely þe goode werkes þat'
 men don whiles þat' þey ben in dedly synne for as moche
 as þey weren don in dedly synne þey may neuer quiken
 azein [243] ¶ ffor certes þing' þat' neuer haþ lyff' may
 neuere quyke ¶ And napeles al be it' þat' þey ne
 auailen noughit' to han þe lyff' perdurable: zet' auailen

þey to abreggen of þe peyne of helle or elles to geten
 temperal richesse [244] ¶ Or elles þat god wol þe
 rapere enlumyne and lightne þe herte of þe synful
 man to han repentañce. [245] and eek þey auaylen
 for to vsen a man to doon good werke þat þe feende
 haue þe lesse power of his soule [246] ¶ and þus þe
 curteyse lord ihesu crist ne wol þat no good werk
 be loste ¶ ffor in somewhat it schal auayle [247] ¶ But for as
 moche þe goode werkes þat men don whiles þey
 ben in good lijf ben al mortefyed by synne folwyng
 ¶ And eek seþenes alle þe goode werkes þat men doon
 whiles þey ben in dedly synne ben outrelly deede
 as for to haue þe lyff *perdurable*: [248] wel may þat man
 þat no good werk ne doþ Synge þilke newe freissche song.
 Iay tout *perdu* moñ temps & moñ labour [249] ¶ ffor
 certes synne byreueþ a man goodnesse and nature
 and eek þe goodnesse of grace [250] ¶ ffor soþe
 þe grace of þe holy gost fareþ as fuyr þat may nouzt
 ben ydel ffor fuyr fayleþ anon as it forleseþ his wirc-
 inge [. *no gap*
in the MS.] [251] þenne leseþ þe synful man þe goodnesse
 of glory þat oonly is behight to goode men þat labouren
 and werken [252] ¶ Wel may he be sory þenne þat
 oweth alle his lyff to god as lange as he lyueth haþ lyued and
 eek als longe as he schal lyue þat no goodnesse ne haþ
 to paye wij þis dette to god to whom he oweþ alle his
 lyff [253] ¶ ffor truste wel he schal 3iue acountes as saip
 seint Bernard of alle þe goodes þat han ben 3ouen him
 in þis present lyff / and how he haþ hem dispended
 [254] noughit so moche þat / þerschal noughit perissche an heer
 of his heede ne a moment of an houre ne schal not perissche
 of his tyme þat he ne schal 3iue of hit a rekenyng

v^a causa

[255] ¶ The v^{te}. þing þat oughte meue a man ¹to
 contricioñ is remembrance of þe passioñ þat oure lord
 ihesu crist suffred for oure synnes [256] ¶ ffor as saip
 seint Bernard ¶ Whil þat I lyue I schal haue remem-

brance of þe *trauailles* þat oure lord *ihesu crist* suffred in *preching*e [257] his *werynesse* in *trauaillynge*. his temptaciōns whan he fasted his longe wakinges when he prayed his teeres when þat he wepte for pite of good peple [258] ¶ þe woo and þe schame and þe filthe þat men seyden to him ofte foule spittinge þat men spitten on his face ¶ of þe buffettes þat men 3euen him ¶ of þe foule mouthes and of þe repreues þat men to him sayden [259] ¶ Of þe nayles wip þe whiche he was nayled to þe cros and of alle þe remenaūt of his passioñ þat he suffrede for my synnes and no þing for his gilte [260] ¶ And 3e schuln vnderstonde þat in mannes synne is euery maner ordre of ordinance turned vp so doun [261] ffor it is soþ þat god and resoñ and sensualite and þe body of man ben so ordeyned þat euerich of þise. .iiij. þinges/schulde haue lordschipe ouer þat oþer [262] and þus god schulde haue lordschipe ouer resoñ and resoñ ouer sensualite and sensualite ouer þe body of man [263] ¶ And soþly whan man synnep: al þis ordre of ordinañce is turned vp so doñ [264] ¶ And þerfore þanne for as moche as þe resoñ of man wol nougħt be subget ne obeissant to god þat is his lord by right: þerfore leeseþ it þe lordschipe þat it schulde haue in sensualite and eeke ouer þe body of man [265] ¶ And whi ¶ ffor sensualite rebellep þanne a3ein resoñ And by þat wey leseþ resoñ his lordschipe ouer sensualite and ouer þe body [266] ¶ ffor right as resoñ is rebelle to god Right so is boþe sensualite rebel to resoñ and þe body also [267] ¶ And certes þis ordinañce and þis rebellioñ oure lord *ihesu crist* aboughte vpon his *precious* body ful dere herkenep in which wise [268] ¶ ffor as meche þanne is resoun rebelle to god: þerfore is man worþi to haue sorwe and to be deed [269] ¶ This suffred oure lord *ihesu* for man after þat he hadde be betrayed of his disciple and destreynd &

bounde so þat þe blood brast' out' at' euery nayl of his
 handes as seiþ seint' Austyn [270] ¶ And forþermore
 for as moche as resoñ of man wol nought' daunte sensu-
 alite whenne it' may ¶ Therefore is man worpy to haue schame
 and þis suffrede oure lord ihesu crist' for man when þey
 spetten in his visage / [271] ¶ And furþer more for as
 moche þanne as þe caytiff' body of man is rebelle
 boþe to resoñ and to sensualite ¶ þerfore it' is worpy þe
 dep [272] ¶ And þis suffred oure lord ihesu crist' for man
 vppon þe crosse where as þer was no part' of his body
 fre wipouten gret' peyne and bitter passioñ / [273]
 and al þis suffrede ihesu crist' þat' neuer forfeþet
 [.
 *no gap in the MS.*] ¶ To mechil am I peyned for þe
 same þinges ¹þat' I neuer deserued and to mochil defouled
 for frendschipe þat' man is worpy to haue. [274] And þer-
 fore may þe synful man wel say as saiþ seint Bernard.
 Acursed be þe bitternes [.
 *no gap in the MS.*] [275] ¶ ffor certes
 after þe diuers discordaunces of oure wikkednesse
 was þe passioñ of Ihesu crist' y-ordeyned in diuerse þinges
 [276] as þus Certez synful mannes soule bytrayed
 of þe deuel by coueytise of temperel prosperite / and
 scorned by disceyte when he cheseþ flesschly delites / and
 3et' is he tormented by inpacience of aduersite ¶ And bispette
 ¶ By seruage in subiectioun of synne ¶ And atte laste it' is
 slayn fynally [277] for this disordynañce of synful man
 was ihesu crist' first' bytrayed ¶ And after þat' was he bounde
 þat' came for to vnbynde vs of synne and of peyne [278]
 ¶ Thanne was he by-scorned þat' only schulde be
 honoured in alle þinges of alle þinges [279]
 þenne was his visage þat' oughte be desired to be seyn
 of alle mankynde in which visage aungeles desiren to
 loken. vileynesly byspette [280] ¶ Thenne was he scourged
 þat' noþing' hadde gilt' ¶ and fynally þenne was he
 crucified & slayn [281] ¶ Thenne was he acompliced þe

wordes of Isaye ¶ he was wounded for
 oure mysdedes and defouled by oure vileynies [282]
 ¶ Now seþenes þat ihesu crist took vpon himself þe
 peyne of alle oure wickednesses: Mochil oughte synful
 man bywepe and bywayle þat for his synnes goddes sone
 of heuene schulde alle þis peyne endure [283] ¶ The sixte
 þing þat oughte meue a man to contricioñ is þe hope vj^a causa de con-
 tricione /
 of .iiij. þinges. þat is to sayn. forþeuenes of synne
 [. no gap in the MS.] and þe glorie of
 heuene wiþ þe which god schal guerdon man for his
 goode dedes [284] ¶ and for as moche as ihesu crist
 3eueþ vs þese 3iftes of his largesse and of his souereyn
 bounte: þefore is he cleped *Ihesus nazarenus rex*
iudeorum [285] *Ihesus* is for to sayn sauour of sa-
 uacion on whom men schuln hope to haue forþeuenesse of
 synnes which þat is proprely sauacioun of synnes
 [286] ¶ And þefore sayde þe aungel to Ioseph ¶ þou
 clepest his name *ihesus* þat schal saue his poeple of here
 synnes [287] ¶ And her of seiþ seint Petre ¶ Ther nys
 non oþer name vnder heuene þat is 3oue to any man
 by which a man may be saued but only by *ihesus* [288]
nazarenus is as moche to seyn as florissching in
 which a man schal hope þat he þat 3eueþ him remissioñ
 of synnes schal 3iue also him *grace* wel to do ¶ ffor
 in þe flour is hope of fruyt in tyme comynge. and in
 forþeuenesse of synnes is hope of *grace* wel to do [289] ¶ I
 was at þe dore of þin herte / seiþ ihc and cleped for to
 entre ¶ he þat openeþ to me schal haue forþeuenesse of
 synne / [290] I wol entre to him by my *grace* and
 soue wiþ him by þe goode werkes þat he schal doon
 whiche werkes ben þe foode of god and he schal soue
 with¹ [²me bi the grete ioye / that shal be yove to him || [291] [¹ Corpus MS.
 ends]
 [² Arch. Seld. B.
 14, leaf 275, back,
 for Corpus MS.]

[292] Now shal man vnderstonde / in which

manere shal be his contricion || I seie that hit shal
 be vniuersale & totale / this is to seine a man shal be
 verry repentaunt / ¹for alle his synnes that he hath done / in
 delite of his thought for delite is ful perilous / [293] ffor ther
 ben two manere of consentynges / that oon of hem is
 cleped consenting of affeccion / whan a man is meved
 to do synne / & deliteth him longe for to thenke on
 that synne / [294] he hath reson that perceiveth wel that
 hit is synne ageynste the lawe of god / [.

 no gap in the MS.] al though
 his reson ne consente nat to do the synne in dede /
 [295] yit seine somme doctours / that suche delite that
 duellith longe is ful perilous / al be it neuer so lite /
 [296] And also a man sholde sorowe for al
 that euer he hath desired ayeines the lawe of god with
 perfite consentynge of resoun / ffor ther-of is no doute /
 that hit is dedly synne / in consentynge / [297] ffor certes
 ther is no dedly synne / but hit is first in man-is
 thoughte / & after that in his delite / and so forthe in-to
 consentynge / & in-to dede / [298] wherfore I seie that
 many men repente hem neuere of suche thoughtes / &
 delites / ne neuere shriven hem of hit / but only of the
 dede || of grete synnes outwarde || [299] wherfore I seie
 that suche wikked delites / & wikked thoughtes / ben
 subtile begillours of hem that shullen be dampned / [300]
 More-ouere a man oughte to sorowe for his wikked
 wordes / as wel as for his wikked dedes || ffor certes
 the repentaunce of a singuler synne / and nought repent of al
 his other synnes or ellis repente him of alle his
 other synnes / & nat of a singuler synne / may nought
 availle || [301] ffor certes almyghti god is al good / And
 therefore he for-yevith al / or elles right nought / [302]
 And herof seith seint Austyne / I wote certeynly [303] that
 god is enemy to euery synne / And how than he
 that observith .oo synne shal he haue foryeuenesse of the

¶ Austyne.

remenaunt of his other synnes / Nay / [304] And ferther ouere contricion sholde be wonder sorowful / & anguysshous / & therefore yevith him god pleynty his mercy / And therefore whan my soule was anguysshous withinne me / I had remembraunce of god / that my prayere myghte come to him / [305] fforther ouere contricion must be contenuel / & that man haue stedfast purpos to shriuen him / & for to amende him of his liff / [306] ffor sothely whiles contricion lasteth man may ¹ haue hope of foryeuenesse / And of this cometh hate of synne / that distroyeth synne in him self / & eke in other folke / as to his powere / [307] ffor whiche seith Dauid / ye that louen god / hateth wikkednesse / ffor ¶ Dauid trusteth wel to love god / is for to love that he loueth / & hate that he hateth ||

[308] The laste thing that men shulle vnderstonde in contricion is this / wherof awayleth contricion / I seye that somtyme contricion delyuereth a man from synne / [309] off whiche that Dauid seith / I seye *quod* Dauid ¶ Dauid that is to seie / I purposed fermely to shriue me and thow lord reledest my synne / [310] And right so as contricion availeth nought withoute sadd purpos of shrifte / [. *no gap in the MS.*] or satisfaccion withoute contricion / [311] And more-ouere contricion distroyeth the prison of helle / & maketh weyke & febleth the strengethes of the deueles / & restoreth the yiftes of the holy goste & of alle goode vertues / [312] & clenstith the soule of synne / & delyuereth the soule fro the peyne of helle / & fro the companye of the deuel / & fro the seruage of synne / & restoreth to alle goodes espirituels / & to the companye of comunyon of holy chirche / [313] And ferther-ouere hit makyth him that was whilom the sone of synne / & Ire / to ben the sone of grace / & alle these thinges ben preued bi holy writte / [314] And therefore he that wol sette his entent to these thinges / he were ful

wise / ffor sothe he sholde nought than in al his liff
 haue corage to synne / but yeve his body / & al his herte
 to the *seruice* of Ihesu criste / & therof don him
 homage / [315] ffor sothly oure swete lord Ihesu criste
 he sparith vs so debonerly in oure folies / that if he ne
 had pite of man-is soule / a sori songe myghte we alle
 synge /

Explicit prima pars penitencie / ¶ & sequitur secunda.

[316]

The secunde parte of penaunce / is confession /
 that is signe of contricion / [317] Now shulle ye
 vnderstonde what is confession / And whether
 hit oughte nedes to ben or noon / & whiche
 thinges ben couenable to verry confession /

[318] first shalt thow vnderstonde that confession is
 verry shewyng of synnes to the preste / [319] That is to
 sey verry / that he mote confessen him / of alle the
 condicions that be-longen ¹to his synne / as ferforth as he
 can / [320] al mote be seide / & no thing excused ne
 hidde / ne for-wrapped / & nought auaunte him of his goode
 werkes / [321] And fer-ther-ouere it is necessarie to vnder-
 stonde / whens that synnes springen / & how thei
 encreasen / and whiche they ben

¶ Poule.

[322] of the springyng of synnes / as seith seint Poule
 on this wise / That right as bi a man synne entred
 in-to this world first / & thorough that synne deide / right so
 thilke deth entreth in-to alle men that synned [323]
 And this man was Adam / bi whom the synne entred in-to
 this world / whan that he breke the commaundement of god /
 [324] And therefore he that first was so myghti / that he
 sholde nat haue deide / bi-cam suche oon that he most
 nedes deye / whether he wolde or noon / & al his progenye
 that is in this worlde / that in thilke maneres synnen || [325] Loke
 that in the estate of innocence / whan Adam & Eue

naked were in paradise / & nothing ne hadden shame
of here nakednesse / [326] how that the serpent that was
moste wyly of al other bestes that god had maked
seide to the womman || Commaunded god to yow /
ye sholde nought eten of euery tre in paradise / [327] The
woman answerde / of the fruyte *quod* she of the trees
in paradise we feden vs / but sothly of the fruyte of the
tre that is in the myddel of paradise / god forbede vs /
for to eten ne to touche it / lest *perauenture* we sholden
deye / [328] The serpent seide to the woman / nay
nay / ye shol not deye of deth / ffor sothe god wote / that
what day ye eten therof youre eyghen shul open /
& ye shul be as godes knowynge goode & harme /
[329] The woman saw that the tre was goode
to fedyng / & faire to the eyghe / & dilectable to the
sighte / she toke of the fruyte of the tre & ete of it || &
yaf it to hir housbond & he ete / And anoon the eyghen of
hem bothe opened / [330] And whan that they knewe /
that thei weren naked / thei sowed of fyge leues in manere
of breches to hiden here membres || [331] Here may ye
se that dedly synne hath first suggestion of the
fende / as shewith here bi the adder / & afterward
the delite of the flesshe / as shewith here bi Eua / And ¶ Adam.
after that the consentinge of the reson / as shewith bi Eua.
Adam / [332] ffor trusteth¹ wel though so were that the
fende tempted oon / that is to seie / the flesshe / And the
flesshe had delite in the beaute of the fruyte defended ||
yit *certes* til that reson / that is to seie Adam con-
sented to the etyng of the fruyte / yit stode thei in the highē state
of Innocence || [333] Off thilke Adam toke we thilke
synne origynal / for of him fleshely discended ben we alle /
& engendred of vile & corrupte matire / [334] And
whan the soule is put in-to oure body / right anoon is con-
tracte original synne / And that was erst but only
peyne of concupiscence / is afterward botht peyne &
synne / [335] And therefore ben we alle I-borne sonnes of

wrathe & of dampnacion perdurable / if it nere baptyme
 that we receiven / whiche bynemyth vs the culpe / but for
 sothe the peyne dwellith with vs / as the temptacion / whiche
 peyne hight concupiscence / [336] And this concupiscence
 whan it is wrongfully disposed / or ordeyned in man / hit makith
 him coueite couetise of flesshely synne bi sight of his
 eyghen / and to erthely thinges / And eke coueitise of highnesse
 bi pride of herte /

[337] Now as for to speke of the first coueitise /
 that is concupiscence after the lawe of oure membres /
 that weren lawfully maked / & bi rightful iuge-
 ment of god / [338] I seie for-asmuche as man is nought
 obeisaunt to god / that is his lord / Therefore is his flesshe to
 him disobeisaunte / thorough concupiscence / [.

[339]
 *no gap in the MS.*] hit is impossible but he be

distempered somtyme / & noyede in his flesshe to synne /
 [340] & this thing may nought faile / as longe as he leueth /
 it may wexe feble & faile / bi vertu of baptime /
 & bi the grace of god / thorough penaunce / [341] but
 fully shal it neuere quenche / that he ne shal som-
 tyme be meved in him silff || but if he were refreynede bi
 sikenesse / ¹of bi malifice of sorcerie / or colde drynkes /

[¹ sic]

¶ Poule.

[342] ffor what seith seint Poule / The flesshe coueiteth
 ayeine the spirit / & the spirit ayeine the flesshe / thei
 ben so contrarie / & so striven / that a man may nought
 don alwey / as he wolde / [343] The same seith seint Poule /
 after his grete penaunce in water & in lande / In water
 bi night & bi daie in grete perile / & grete peyne /
 In lande in famyne / thruste / in colde and in ²clothes
 wantynge / & ones stoned almost to the dethe [344] yit seide he
 alas I caytiff man / who shal delyuer me fro the prison
 of my caytiff body / [345] And seint Ierome whan he
 longe tyme had woned in deserte / where as he had no
 companye but bestes / where as he had

¶ Ierome

no mete but erbes / & water to his drinke / ne no bedde
 but the naked erthe / ffor whiche his flesshe was blak as an
 Ethiopen for hete & nygh̄ destruyed for colde / [346]
 yit seide he that the brennyng of lecherie boiled in al
 his body / [347] wherefore I woote wel sekerly that thei
 ben disceived / that seine / that thei ne ben nought tempted in
 here body / [348] wittenesse of seint Iame thappostel / ¶ Iacobus .
 that seith that euery wight is tempted in his owne con-
 cupiscence / that is to seie / that eueryche of vs hath matire
 & occasion to be tempted / of the norissinge of synne
 that is in his body || [349] And therefore seith seint Iohn ¶ Iohn Euang .
 the Euangelist if that we seyne that we ben withouten
 synne we disceiven oure silff / & trouthe is nought in vs /

[350] Now shol ye vnderstonde in what manere
 synne wexeth & encreseth in man || The first
 thing is the norissinge of synne / of which I spak
 of biforne thilke fleshely concupiscence / [351] And after
 that cometh the suggestion of the Deuel / this is to seie
 the deuel-is bely / with which he blowith in man / the fire
 of fleshely concupiscence / [352] And after that a man bi-
 thinketh him / whether he wol do or noon thilke thinge /
 to which he is tempted || [353] And than if a
 man with-stande / & weive the firste entisinge of his
 flessch / & of the fende / than is hit no synne / And if
 so be that he do nat so / than felith he anon / a flamme
 of delite / [354] & than is hit goode to be-ware & kepe
 him wel / or elles he wol falle anon / in-to consentynge of
 synne / & than wol he do hit / if he may haue tyme
 and place || [355] And of this matire seith Moyses bi ¶ Moyses .
 the deuel in this manere / The fende seith I wol
 chace & pursue man bi wikked suggestiones /
 & I wol hente him / bi movynge or sterynge of
 synne / And I wol departe my prise or my preye bi de-
 liberacion / & my lust shal be accomplished in delite /
 I wol drawe my swerde in consentynge / [356] ffor 'certes
 right as a swerde departeth a thinge in two peces || Right

so consentynge departeth god fro man / And than
 wol I sle him with myn honde / in dethe of synne / thus
 seith the fende / [357] ffor certes than is a man al
 dede in soule / and thus is synne complexshed bi tempt-
 acion / bi delite / & bi consentinge / and than is
 synne cleped actual /

[358] Ffor sothe synne is in two maneres / outhere
 it is venial synne / or dedly synne / Sothely whan man loueth
 any creature / more than ihesu criste oure creatoure / than
 is it dedly synne / And venial synne is if man loue
 ihesu criste lesse than him oughite || [359] ffor sothe the
 dede of this venial synne / is ful perilous / ffor hit amennseth
 the loue that men sholde haue to god more & more /
 [360] And therefore if a man charge more him silff / with many
 suche venial synnes / certes but if it so be / that he som-
 tyme discharge him of hem bi shrifte / thei may ful
 lightly amennse in him al the loue / that he hath to ihesu
 criste / [361] & in this wise skippith venial synne / in-to dedly
 synne || ffor certes the more that a man chargeth his soule
 with venial synnes / the more is he enclnyed to falle in
 dedly synne / [362] And therefore lat vs not be necligent to
 discharge vs of venial synnes / ffor the prouerbe seith
 That many smale makith a grete / [363] And herken
 this ensample / A grete wawe of the see / cometh somtyme
 with so grete a violence / that hit drenchith the shippe /
 And the same harme doth somtyme / the smale dropes
 of water / that entren thorough a litil crevise / in-to the
 thurroke / & in-to the botme of the shippe / if men be so
 necligent / that men ne discharge hem nought be tyme ||
 [364] And therefore al-though ther be a difference bitwene
 these two causes of drenchynge / algates the shippe is
 dreynte || [365] Right so farith hit somtyme of dedly
 synne / & of anoyous venial synnes / whan thei
 multiplie in a man so grety / that thilke worldly thinges
 that he loueth / thorough whiche he synneth venially / is
 as grete in his herte / as the loue of god or more / [366]

¶ prouerbium.

prouerbium. [in
 a late hand.]

And therefore the loue of euery thinge / that is not bisette in
 god / ne don principally for godis sake / al-though a man
 loue it lasse than god / yit is it venial synne / [367] And
 dedly synne is / whan the loue of any thinge ¹weyeth
 in the herte of a man / as meche as the loue of god or
 more / [368] Dedly synne as seith seint Austyne ¶ Austyno
 is whan a man turneth his herte from god / whic[h]e that is
 verry souereyne bounte / that may nat chaunge / &
 yevith his herte to a thinge that may chaunge / & flitte ||
 [369] And certes that is euery thinge saue only god of heuen ||
 ffor sothe is / if that a man yeve his loue / the whiche that
 he owith al to god / with al his herte / vn-to a creature /
 certes as meche of his loue as he yevith [. . .] to that
 creature / so meche he birevith from god / [370] & ther-
 fore doth he synne / ffor he that is dettour to god / ne
 yeldeth nought al his dette to god / that is to seine al the
 loue of his herte /

[371] Now sithen that a man vnderstondeth generally
 whiche is venial synne || Than is it couenable to tellen of special
 synnes whiche that many a man peraventure
 demeth hem no synnes / ne shriven hem nat of the
 same thinges / & yit natheles thei ben synnes /
 [372] sothely as these clerkes witen / this [is]² to seine / <sup>[² a word (is?)
 erased here.]</sup>
 that euery tyme that a man eteth or drinketh more than ¶ ^{¶ nota bene}
 sufficeth to the sustenance of his body / in certeine he doth
 synne / [373] And eke whan he speket more than
 hit nedith / it is sinne || Eke whan he herkeneth nought
 mekely the compleynte of the pore || [374] Eke whan
 he is in hele of body & wol nought faste / whan other men
 faste withouten cause resonable || Eke whan he slepeth
 more than him nedith || or whan he cometh bi thilke encheson
 late to chirche / or to other good werkes of charite / [375]
 Eke whan he vsith his wiff / withouten souereyne desire
 of engendrure to the honour of god / or for thentent
 to yelde to his wiff the the (sic) dette of his body / [376] Eke
 whan he wol nought visite the sike / or prisoners whan he may ||

Eke if he loue wiff or childe or any worldly thinge / more than reson requirith / Eke if he flatre or blandisshe / more than him oughte / for any necessite || [377] Eke if he amennseth or withdrawith the almes of the pore || Eke if he apparailleth his mete more deliciously than nede is / or ete hit to hastily bi likerousnesse || [378] Eke if he telle vanitees at the chirche or in godes seruise / or that he be a talker of ydel wordes of folie / or of vilonye / for he shal yelde accou[m]ptes of it at the daie of dome / [379] Eke whan he biheteth or assureth to do thinges / that he may not ¹performe || Eke whan that bi lightnesse of folie misseieth or scorneth his neighbour / [380] Eke whan he hath any susspecion of thinge / there as he woote of it no sothfastnesse || [381] These thinges & mo withouten nombre ben synnes as seith seint Austin

¶ ydel wordes.

¶ Austyne.

[382] Now shul men vnderstonde that al be it so / that noon erthely man may eschewe al venial synnes / yit may he refreyne him bi the brennyng loue that he hath to oure lorde Ihesu criste / & bi praiere / & bi confession / & other goode workes / so that it shal but litel greve / [383] ffor as seith seint Austyne || If a man loue god / in suche manere / that al that euere he dothe is in the loue of god / or for the loue of god verrily || ffor he brenneth in the loue of god || [384] loke how meche meche that a drope of water that fallith in a furneys ful of fire anoyeth or grevith / so meche a venial synne is vn-to a man / that is perfite in the love of oure lord ihesu criste || [385] Men may also refreyne venial synne / bi the resseivinge of the precious body of ihesu criste / [386] bi resseivinge eke of holy water / bi almes-dede / bi the general confession of the Confitoor at the masse / & at the Complyne / and bi blissinge of Busshopes / and of prestes & bi other goode werkes /

De septem peccatis mortalibus & eorum &c

[387] **N**ow is it bihouely thinge / to tellen whiche ben
 the .vij. dedly synnes / that is to seyne cheveteynes
 of synnes / but alle thei renne in Ooles / but in
 dyuers maners / Now ben thei cleped cheveteynes /
 for-as-meche as thei ben cheff / & of hem springen alle
 other synnes / [388] of the rote of these .vij. sinnes /
 than is pride the general rote of alle harmes / ffor of
 this rote springen *certeine* branches / as Ire / Enuye /
 accidie / or slouthe / Auarice / or couetise to comune
 vnderstanding / Gloteneye / & Lecherie / [389] And
eueryche of these cheff synnes hath his branches & his
 twigges / as shal be declared in here chapitres folwyng /

[Of Pride, and its Twigs.]

[390] And though so be that no man can vtterly telle
 the nombre of the twigges & of the harmes that comyn of
 pride / yit wol I shewe a parte of hem as ye shul
 vnderstonde [391] || There is Inobedience || Avauntyng /
 Ypocrisie || Despite || Arrogance / In¹prudence || Swellinge of
 herte || Insolence || Elacion || [.
 . . . *no gap in the MS.*] Partinacie || Veynglorie || &
 many a-nother twigge that I can nat declare || [392] Ino-
 bedient is he / that disobeyeth for dispite to the commaunde- ¶ Inobedient
 ment of god / & to his souereynes / & to his gostly
 fader || [393] Auauntour is he that bosteth of the harme ¶ Auauntour
 or of the bounte / that he hath don / [394] ypocrisie is
 he that hideth him / to shewe him / suche as he is / and
 shewith him suche as he is not || [395] Dispitous ¶ Dispitous
 is he that hath disdeine of his neighbours / that is to
 seine / of his euen cristen / or hath dispite to do / that
 him oughte to do || [396] Arrogant is he / that thinketh ¶ Arrogant.
 that he hath thilke bounte in him / that he hath nought / or

- weneth that he sholde haue hem bi his desertes / or
 ellis that he weneth that he be that he nys nought / [397] In-
 ¶ Inpudent ipudent is he that for his pride hath no shame for his
 ¶ Swellinge of herte. swelling of herte is he / whan a man
 reioyseth him / of harme that he hath don || [399] Inso-
 ¶ Insolent. lent is he / that dispiseth in his iugement alle other
 folke / as to the regarde of his value / & of his connyng / & of
 ¶ Elacion his spekyng / & of his beryng || [400] Elacion is / whan
 he may neither suffre to haue maister ne felawe || [401]
 ¶ Impacient Impacient is he / that wol nought be taughte ne vnder-
 nome of his vice / & bi striff werreth trouthe wetingly /
 & maynteneth his folie || [402] Contymax is he that
 ¶ Contymax thorough his indignacion / is ayeins eueryche autorite or
 ¶ Presunpcion power of hem that ben his souereynes || [403] Pre-
 sumpcion is he / whan a man taketh an emprise / that
 him ought not to do / or ellis he may it not do / & that
 ¶ Irreuerent is called surquidrie || Irreuerent is whan a man doth not
 honour / there-as him oughte to do / & waiteth to be
 ¶ pertynacy reuerensed || [404] Pertynacy is whan a man defendith
 his folie / & trusteth to meche his owne witte || [405]
 ¶ Vaynglorie Vayneglorie is for to haue pompe / & delite in
 temporel richesse / & glorifieth hem in worldly
 ¶ Iangelynge. estates || [406] Iangelynge is / whan a man speketh to
 meche / to fore folke & clappeth as a Mille / & taketh no
 kepe what he seith

¹[407] and yit is there a prive spice of pride / that
 waiteth first to be halowed / er he wol be saluwed / al be he
 lasse worth than that other is perauenture / & eke
 waiteth or desireth to sitte or to go above / him in
 the weie / or kisse pax / or be ensensed / or go to
 offringe / to fore his neighbour || [408] & suche [. . .

 *no gap in the MS.*] a proude desire to be
 magnified / & honoured before the peple ||

[409] Now ben ther two maners of pride / that
 oon of hem is withinne the herte of man / & that

other is withoute / [410] off whiche sothely the forseide thinges & mo than I haue seide apertynent to pride / that is in the herte of man / And therto other spices of pride ther ben withoute / [411] but natheles oon of these spices of pride is signe of that other || Right as the gay levesel at the tauernes is signe of the wyne / that is in the seler || [412] And this is in many thinges / as in speche / & in contenances / & in outrageous aray of clothinge / [413] ffor certes if it nadde be no synne / in clothinge / Criste wold nought so soone haue noted & spoke of the clothinge / of thilke riche man in the gospel || [414] And as seint Gregorie seith That *precious* clothe is cou-
 ¶ Gregorie.
 pable / for the derth of hit / & for his softenesse / & for his strangenesse / & for his disgisinesse / & for the superfluyte / or for the inordynaunte scantnesse / [415]

.

 *no gap in the MS.*

[416] As to the first synne / that is in superfluyte of clothing whiche that makith hit so dere / to harme of the people / [417] nat onely the coste of enbroudyng / the degise endentyng or barryng / owndyng / palyng / or bendyng / & semblable waste of clothyng / in vanite || [418] But ther is also costlewe furryng in here gownes / so meche pounsyng of cheseles to make hooles / so meche daggyng of sheres / [419] forth with the superfluyte in lengthe of the forseide gownes / trailing in the donge / & in the myre / on hors & eke on foote / as wel of man / as of womman / that al thilke trailyng is verrily as in effecte wasted & consumed / thredbare & roten / with donge / rather than it is yoven to the pore / to grete damage of the forseide pore folke / [420] & that in sondry wise || this is to seie / the more that clothe is wasted / the more mot hit coste to the people / for the scarsenesse || [421]¹ And forther-ouer if it so be that thei wolde yeven suche pounsd &

daged clothinge / to the pore folke / it is nought conuenient
 to were for here estate / ne sufficeaunt to bete here necessite /
 to kepe hem from the distemperaunce of the colde firmament||
 [422] On that other side to speke of the
 disordinat scantnesse of clothing / as ben these cutted
 sloppes or hanse lynes that thorough here shortnes ne
 coueren not there shameful membres of man / to wikked
 entent / [423] Allas some of hem shewen the shappe & the boce /
 of the horrible swollen membres / that semeth
 I-like to the maladie of hirnya in the wrapping of here hoses /
 [424] and eke the buttokes of hem that faren / as it were
 the hinder parte of a she Ape / in the ful of the moone /
 [425] And more-ouer the wreched swolle membres /
 that thei shewe thorough disgisyng / in departyng of
 here hoses white & rede / semeth that halff here
 privy membres were flayne / [426] And if so be that
 thei departen here hoses in other colours / as is white
 & black / or white & blewe / or blak & rede / & so
 forthe / [427] than semeth hit as bi variaunce of coloure /
 that halff the partie of his priue membres ben corrupte /
 bi the fire of seint Antonye or bi Cancre / or bi suche other
 meschaunces / [428] Yit of the hinder parte of here
 buttokes / it is ful horrible to se / ffor certes in that
 partie of here bodie / there as thei purgen here stinkyng
 ordure / [429] that foule parte shewe thei vnto the peple /
 proudly / in dispite of honeste / whiche honeste
 Ihesu crist & his frendes obserued to shewe in his
 liff / [430] Now as to outrageous aray of wommen /
 god woot though the visages of hem semen
 ful chaste / & debonayre / yit notefien thei in there araye / in
 atire of likerousnesse & pride / [431] I seie nat that
 honeste in clothinge of man / & woman is vncouen-
 able / But certes the superfluyte / or the disordinat scantnesse
 of clothinge / is reprovabell / [432] Also the synne of
 an ornament / or apparaile / as in thinges that apperteynen
 to ridyng / as in to many delicate horses that ben hold-

en for delite / that ben so faire fatte / and costelewe / [433]
 And also many a vicious knave I-mayntened ¹bi-
 cause of hem // And in to curious harneyse / as in sadels
 croppers / peitresles / bridles couered with precious
 clothinge & riche barres / & plates / of golde & of
 siluer / [434] ffor whiche god seith bi Zakarie the ¶ Zakarias.
 prophete / I wol confounde the riders of suche horses /
 [435] This folke taken litel rewarde of the ridynge of
 god-is sone of heuen / & of his harneys whan he rode
 vppon the Asse / & had noon othir harneys but
 the clothes of his pore disciples / Ne we rede nat
 that euer he rode on other beste / [436] I speke thus
 of the sinne of superfluite / & nat for the resonable
 honeste / whan reson it requirith // [437] And forther
 ouere / certes pride is gretely notefied in holdynge of grete
 meyne / whan thei ben of litel profite / or right of no profite /
 [438] & namely whan meyne is vileynous & damage-
 ous to the peple / bi hardynesse of high lordshippe or bi
 wey of office // [439] ffor certes suche lordes sellen
 than here lordshippes to the deuel of helle / whan thei
 sustene the wikkednesse of here meyne // [440] Or elles
 whan these folke of lowe degre / as tho that holden
 hosteleries / & that is many manere of folke / that susteynen
 theffte / for here Ostelers / & that is in manere of disseites /
 [441] thilke manere of folke ben the flyes of felonye that fole-
 wen the hony / or elles the houndes that folowen the careyne /
 suche forseide folke strangelen *spirituely* here lordshippes
 // [442] ffor whiche thus seith Dauid the prophete wikked ¶ Dauid
 dethe mote come to thilke lordshippes / & god yeue that
 thei mowe descende a-doun in-to helle / ffor in here
 houses ben iniquitees & shrewdenesse & not god
 of heuen / [443] And certes but if thei do amende-
 ment / right so as god yaff his beneson to kyng Pharao bi the
 service of Iacob / and to Laban bi the *seruise* of Ioseph
 right so god wol yeue his malison to suche lordshippes /
 as susteyne the wikkednesse / of here *seruauntes* / but thei

come to amendement // [444] Pride of the table appereth eke ful offte / for *certes* riche men ben cleped to festes & pore folke ben put aweye / & rebuked [445] also in excesse of diuers metes & drinkes / & namely suche manere of bake ¹metes & dissh metes / brennynge in wilde fire / & peynted & castelled with papire / & in semblable waste / so that hit is abusion for to thenke / [446] & eke in the grete *preciousnesse* of vessel & curiosite of mynstralcie / bi the whiche a man is stered the more to delites of luxurie / [447] if so be that he sette his herte the lasse on oure lord Ihesu criste / *certeyne* it is sinne / And *certeynely* the delites myghten be so grete in this case that men myghte lightly falle bi hem in-to dedly synne // [448] The espices that sourden of pride / sothely whan thei sourden of malice ymaged / avised or a fore caste / or elles of vsage ben dedly synnes it is no doute / [449] And whan thei sourden bi freelte vn-avised sodenly / & sodenly withdrawe ageyne / al be thei greuous synnes / I gesse that thei ben nought dedly / [450] Now myghte men axe / wherof that pride sourdeth & springeth / & I seie somtyme hit springeth of the goodis of nature / & somtyme of the goodis of fortune / and somtyme of the goodis of grace / [451] Certes the goodis of nature / stonden in the goodis of bodye / or goodis of soule / [452] Certes the goodis of bodye / ben hele of bodie / strengthe / delyuernesse / beaute / genterie / franchises / [453] Goodis of nature of the soule / ben goodis with sharpe vnderstondynge / subtile engyne / *vertu* naturel / good memorie / [454] Goodis of fortune ben richesse / high degrees of lordshippes / preisinges of the peple // [455] ¶ Goodis of grace. Goodis of grace ben scienses / power to suffre / *spirituel* traivale / benyngnitees / *vertuous* contemplacion / with-standing of temptacion / & semblable thinges / [456] of whiche foreseide goodis / *certes* hit is a ful grete folie a man to pride him in any of hem alle // [457]

¶ Goodis of nature.

¶ Goodis of fortune

¶ Goodis of grace.

Now as for to speke of godis of nature / god wot that
 somtyme we haue hem in nature / als meche to oure
 damage / as to oure profite [458] And for to speke of
 hele of bodie / certes it passeth ful lightly / & eke hit
 is ful ofte encheson of sikenesse of the soule / ffor
 god woot the flessĥ is a ful grete enemy to the soule /
 and therefore the more the bodie is hoole / the more
 ben we in perel to falle / [459] Eke for to pride him / in
 his strengthe of bodie / hit is an highē folye / ffor certes
 the flesshe coueiteth ageine the spirit / and ay the more
 stronge the flessĥ is / the soriere may the soule be /
 [460] And ouer al this / strengthe of bodie / & worldly
 hardinesse / causith ful ofte many a man to perel &
 meschaunce / [461] Eke for to pride him in his
 gentrie / is a ful grete folie / ffor often tyme the gentrie of the
 bodie / bigynneth the gentrie of the soule / and eke we
 alle ben of on fader & of on moder / & alle we ben
 of oo nature roten & corrupte / riche & pore /
 [462] ffor sothe a manere of gentrie it is to preise
 that apparellith mannes corage / with vertues & moralitees /
 & makith him cristes childe / [463] ffor trusteth wel that
 ouer what man / that synne hath maistrie / he is verry
 chorle to synne /

[464] Now ben ther general thinges of gentillesse /
 as eschewynge of vices / or rebaudrie / & seruage of
 synne / In worde / in werke / & contenance / [465] &
 vsyng vertu / curtesie / and clenness / & to be
 liberal / that is to seie large bi mesure / ffor that
 that passith mesure / is folie & synne / [466] Another is
 to remembre him / of bounte / that he of other folke hath
 recevede / [467] Another is to be benigne / to his goode
 subiectes / wherfore as seith Seneca / ther nys nothing more ¶ Seneca.
 couenable to a man of high estate / than debonarte
 & pite / [468] And there [. *no gap in
 the MS.*] bees whan thei chese hem a kyng / thei chesen
 him that hath no prikke to styng with // [469]

Another is a man to haue a noble herte / & a diligent
to atteyne to highē vertues thinges / [470* see after 471 ;
and note the transposing of the clauses in 472

.
. no gap in the MS.]

[471] Certes also who that prideth him / in the goodes of
fortune / he is a ful grete foole / ffor somtyme is a man a
ful grete lorde bi the morowe / that is a wrecche
& a caitiff / or it be night / [*470] Now certes
a man to pride him in the goodes of grace / is eke
outragious folie / ffor the yiffes of grace / that shold
haue turned him to goodnesse / & to medicyne / turneth
him to venym & to confusion / as seith seint Gregorie /
[472] And somtyme the delites of man ben the cause
of his grete maladie of whiche he deyeth /
And somtyme the riches of a man is cause of his dethe /
[473] Certes the commendacion of the peple is sum-
tyme ful fals / & ful brotel for to truste also / this daie thei
preise to morne thei lakke / [474] God woote desire to
haue commendacion eke of the peple hath caused deth to
many a besy man / [475] Now sithens that so is that ye haue
vnderstonden what is pride / & whiche ben the spices of
it / & whence pride sourdeth & springeth

¶ Gregorie .

Remedium contra peccatum superbie.

[476]
N^Ow shal ye vnderstonde / whic[h]e is the remedie ayeines
the synne of pride and that is humilite or
mekenesse / [477] that is a vertu / thorough whiche a man
hath verry knewleche of him silff / & holdith of him
silff / no pris ne deynte / as in regarde of his desertes
considring euere his freelte // [478] Now ben ther three
maners of humilite / as humilite in herte / Another
humilite is in mouthe / The thride is in werkes /
[479] The humilite in herte / is in foure maners / that
on is whan a man ne holdith him silff nought worth
bifore god of heuen / Another is whan he dispisith

noon other man / [480] The thride is / that he
 rekketh nat though men holde him nought worthe / The
 ferthe is whan he is nat sory / of his humyliacion / [481]
 Also the humilite of mouthe is in foure thinges / In
 attempre speche / & in humble speche / and
 whan he biknowith with his owne mouth that he is
 suche / as him thinketh that he is in his herte / another
 is whan he preisith the bounte of another man / &
 no thing therof amennsith [482] humilite / Eke humilite in
 werkes is in foure maners / the firste is whan he putteth
 other men biforne him / the seconde is / to chese the
 loweste place ouer al / the thrid is gladly to assente
 to good counsaile / [483] the fourthe is gladly to stonde to
 the worde of his soueraignes / or of him that is in highere
 degre than he / & this is a grete werke of humylite //

De inuidia .

[484]
After pride wol I speke of the foule synne of envie /
 whiche that is / as bi the wordes of the Philosophre
 sorowe of other mannes prosperite / and after the
 worde of seint Austyne / hit is sorowe of other mennes ¶ Austyne.
 wele / & ioye of othe[r] men-is harme / [485] This
 foule synne is platly ayeine the holy goste / [.
 no gap in the MS.] yit natheles
 for-asmeeche that bounte apperteyneth properly to the
 holy gost / And envie cometh properly of malice / ther-
 fore it is properly ayeines the bounte of the holy goste //
 [486] Now hath malice two ¹spices / that is to seie
 hardnesse / & wikkednesse / or elles the flesshe of
 a man / that is so blinde that he considreth nought that he is in
 synne / [. no gap in the MS.] whiche
 is the hardnesse of the deuel // [487] That other
 spice of malice is / whan that a man werreiet^h trouthe /
 whan that he woote that hit is trouthe / & eke whan
 he werreiet^h the grace that god hath yive / to his

neighbour / and al this is bi envie / [488] Certes
 than is envie the worste synne that is / ffor sothely
 alle other synnes ben sumtyme ayeines .o. special
 vertu / [489] but certes envie is ayeines alle special vertues /
 & ayeines al goodnesse / for it is sory of al the
 bountees of his neighbour / And in this manere it is
 diuerse from al other synnes / [490] ffor wel vnnethe
 is ther any other synne / that hit ne hath sum delite in him silff /
 saue only envie / that euer hath in him selff angvisshe &
 sorowe / [491] The spices of envie ben these / ther is
 first sorowe / of other mennes / goodnesse / & of here pros-
 perite / whiche is kindly matire of ioye /
 than is envie a synne ayeins kynde / [492] The
 secounde spice of envie / is ioye of other men-is harme /
 & that is properly like to the Deuel / that euer reioyseth
 him of man-is harme / [493] Of these two spices cometh
 bagbitynge / [. . . *no gap in the MS.*] or detraccion
 hath twey spices / as thus / Somme man preisith his
 neighbour / bi a wikked entente / [494] for he makith
 alwey a wikked knotte at the laste ende / alwey he
 makith a butte at the laste ende / that is digne of more
 blame than worth is al the preisinge / [495] The secounde
 spice is / that if a man be good / & doth & seith al
 fthing to good entente / The bagbiter wol turne al the
 goodnesse vp so down / to his shrewede entente / [496]
 The thride is to amennse the bounte of his neigh-
 bour / [497] The ferthe spice of bagbityng is this /
 That if men speke goodnesse of a man / than wol the
 bakbiter seie *perfoy* / suche a man is better than he /
 in dispreisinge of him that men preise / [498] The
 .v. spice is this / for to consente gladly & herken
 the harme that men speke of other folke / this
 is ful grete / & ay encreseth after the wikked
 entente of the bakbiter || [499] Affter bakbityng cometh
 grucchinge or murmuracion / & somtyme it springeth
 of inpacience ayeines god / & somtyme ayeines man /

neighbour / whiche that is like the craffte of the deuel /
 that waiteth both day & night to accusen vs alle //
 [513] Than cometh malignite / thorough whiche a man /
¹anoyeth his neighbour priuely if he may / [514] & if he
 may nat algate his wikked wil ne shal nat wante /
 as for to brenne his hous priuely / or openly / or slen
 his bestes / and semblable thinges

Remedium contra peccatum Inuidie.

[515] **N**ow wol I speke of the remedie ayeines this foule
 synne of envie / ffirst is the loue of god
 principal / And louynge of his neighbour as him silff / ffor
 that on may nat be withouten that
 other / [516] And trusteth wel / that in the name of thi
 neighbour thow shalt vnderstonde the name of thi
 brother / ffor certes alle we haue but O fader flesshly & O
 moder / that is to seine Adam & Eve / And eke O fader
 spirituel that is to seie god of heuen / [517] thi
 neighbour artow holden to loue & willen al
 goodnesse / And therefore seith god / loue thi neighbour as
 thi silff / that is to saluacion bothe of bodie & of
 soule / [518] And more-ouere thow shalt loue him in
 worde / & in benigne amonesshing & chastising /
 & comfort him in his anoyes / & pray for him with
 al thin herte / [519] and in dede thow shalt loue him
 in suche wise / that thow shalt do to him in charite /
 as thow woldist hit were don to the in thin owne persone /
 [520] And therefore thow ne shalt do to him no damage
 in wikked worde / ne harme in his bodie / ne in his catel /
 ne in his soule / bi entisinge of wikked ensample / [521]
 thow shalt [not] desire his wiff / ne noon of his thinges /
 vnderstonde eke that in the name of thi neighbour is com-
 prehended his enemy / [522] Certes a man shal loue his
 enemy for the commaundement of god / & sothly thi
 frende shalt thow loue in god / [523] I seie thin
 enemy shalt thow loue for godis sake / bi his commaunde-

ment / ffor if hit were reson that man sholde hate his
 enemy / ffor sothe god wolde nat receive vs to his loue /
 that ben his enemyes / [524] ayeines thre manere of
 wronges that his enemy doth to him / he shal do thre
 thinges / as thus / [525] ayeines hate & rankour of herte /
 he shal loue him in herte / ayeine chiding & wikked
 wordes / he shal praie for his enemy / ayeine the wikked
 dede of his enemy / he shal don him bounte // [526] ffor
 criste ¹seith / loue youre enemyes / & praye for hem
 that speke yow harme / & eke for hem that yow chasen /
 & pursewen / & doth bounte to hem that yow haten /
 Lo thus commaundeth vs oure lorde Ihesu criste / to do
 to oure enemyes / [527] ffor sothe nature driveth vs
 to loue oure frendes / And perfay oure enemyes han
 we more nede to loue / than oure frendes / And thei that
 more nede haue / certes to hem shulde men do more good-
 nesse / [528] And certes in thilke dede haue we remem-
 braunce of the loue of Ihesu criste / that deyed for his
 enemyes / [529] And for-asmeche as that loue is the
 more grevous to performe / so meche is more
 the grete merite // And therefore the louynge of oure
 enemyes hath confounded the venym of the Deuel /
 [530] ffor right as the Deuel is discomfited bi humilite /
 Right so is he wounded to the dethe / bi the loue of oure
 enemyes / [531] Certes than is loue the medicyne that
 chaseth out the venym of envie / from man-is herte / [532]
 the spices of this pas shulne be more largely declared in here
 chapetles folowyng /

De Ira.

[533]

After envie wol I declare the synne of Ire / for
 sothely who that hath envie vppon his neighbour
 anon comunely he wol fynde him a matire of
 wrathe / in worde or in dede / ayeines him to whom
 he hath envie // [534] And as wel cometh Ire / of pride

as of envie / ffor sothely he that is proude or envious /
is lightly wrothe /

[535] this synne of Ire after the discriuyng of
seint Austyne / Is wikked wil / to ben avengede / bi
worde / or bi dede / [536] Ire after the Philosopre / is
the feruent blood of a man / I-quiked in his herte / thorough
whiche he wolde harme to him that he hateth / [537] ffor
certes the herte of a man / bi enchaufynge & mevyng of
his bloode / wexeth so trouble / that he is out of al
iugement of reson / [538] But ye shul vnderstonde
that Ire is in two maners / that on of hem is goode /
that other is wikked / [539] The goode Ire is / bi
Ielousie of goodnesse thorough the whiche a man is wrothe /
with wikkednesse / & ayeins wikkednesse / And ther-
fore seith th[e] wise man / that Ire is bett than pleye / [540]
this Ire is with debonairete and hit is wrothe / with-
outen bitternesse / nought wroth¹ ayeines the man / but
wrooth¹ with the misdede of the man / as seith the
prophete Daid / Irascimini & nolite peccare / [541] Now
vnderstondith that wikked Ire is in two maners /
that is to seine / sodeyne Ire / & hastiff Ire withouten
avisement / & consentyng of reson / [542] the menyng
and the sens / of this is that the reson of a man ne con-
sente nat to that sodeyne Ire / & than is hit venial /
[543] Another Ire is ful wikked / that cometh of
vilony of herte avised & cast biforne / with wikked wille
to do vengeaunce / & therto his reson consentith / &
sothely that is dedly synne / [544] This Ire is so dis-
pleasaunt to god / that hit troubllyth his hous / & chasith the
holy goste out of mannys soule / & wasteth & di-
stroiet¹ the likenes of god / that is to seie / the vertu
that is in man-is soule / [545] & putteth in him the like-
nes of the Deuel / & bynemeth the man from god that
is his rightful lord / [546] This Ire is a ful grete
pleasaunce to the Deuel / for hit is the deuels furneys /
that is enchafed with the fire of helle / [547] ffor *certes*

¶ Austyne

¶ Daid .
Irascimini &
nolite peccare &c

right so as the fire is more myghti to distroye erthely
 thinges / than eny other element / Right so is Ire myghti to
 distroye alle spirituel thinges / [548] Loke how that
 fire of smale gledes / that ben almoste dede vnder asshen
 wolne quiken ayeine / whan thei ben touched with
 brymstoñ / Right so wol Ire euer more quiken ayeine /
 whan hit is touched bi the pride that is couered in ¶ *exemplum.*
 man-is herte / [549] ffor *certes* fire ne may not come
 out of nothings / but if hit were first in the same thing
 naturelly / As fire is drawe out of flyntes with steeH /
 [550] And right so as pride is often tyme mater of Ire /
 Right so is rancoure / norice & keper of Ire / [551] Ther is
 a manere tre as seith seint Isodre / that whan men ¶ *Isidorus.*
 make fire of that tre / & couere the coles of hit with
 asshen / sothly the fire of hit wol lasten al a yere / or more /
 [552] And right so farith hit of rancoure / whan he is
 ones conceived in the hertes of som men / *certes* hit wol
 laste perauenture from on Esterday / til another
 [. . . *no gap in MS.*] or more / [553] But *certes* that man
 is ful fer from the mercy of god / al thilke while ||

[554] In ¹this foreseide deuels fforneys / thei
 forgen .iij. shrewis Pride that ay blowith & encresith
 the fire bi chidinges & wikked wordes / [555] Than
 stondeth Envie & holdeth the hote Iren vpon the herte
 of man / with a peire of longe tonges of longe rancour /
 [556] And than stondeth the synne of contumelie or
 striff / & cheste / & batereth, & forgeth bi vileynes
 reprovynge / [557] Certis this cursed synne anoyeth
 both the man him-silff / & eke to his neighbour /
 ffor sothly al-moste al the harme / that any man
 doth to his neighbour / cometh of wrathe / [558] ffor
certis outrageous wrathe doth al / that euer the
 deuel him commaundith / ffor he ne sparith neither
 criste / ne his swete moder / [559] And in his out-
 rageous anger & Ire / allas allas / ful many on
 that tyme felith in his herte ful wikkedly /

both of criste / & of alle his halowes / [560] Is
 nat this a cursed vice / yis *certis* allas / hit bynemeth
 from man his witt / & his reson / & al his debonayre
 liff spirituel / that shulde kepe his soule / [561]
Certes hit bynemeth eke god-is diwe lordshippe / &
 that is man-is soule / & the loue of his neighbour /
 hit strivith eke alday ayeines trouthe / hit reuyeth him the
 quiete of his herte / & subuertethe his soule /

[562] Off Ire comen these stinkyng engendrures /
 ffirst hate that is olde wratthe / discorde thorough which
 a man forsaketh his olde frende / that he hath louede ful
 longe // [563] And than cometh werre / & euery
 manere of wronge that man doth to his neighbour in
 body or in cateH [564] Off this cursed synne of Ire
 cometh eke manslaught^r / And vnderstondeth wel that
 homicide that is manslaught^r / is in diuerse wise / Some
 manere of homicide is spirituel / & some is bodily / [565]
 Spirituel manslaught^r is in .vj. thinges / ffirst bi
 hate as seith seint Iohn / that he that hateth his brother
 is an homicide // [566] homicide is eke bi bakbityng / of
 whiche bakbiters seith Salomon / that thei haue two
 swerdis with the whiche thei slen here neighbour / for
 sothly as wikked it is to byneme him his good name / as
 his liff / [567] Homicide is eke in yevinge of wikked
 consail bi fraude / as for to yeve consail to ¹areise
 wrongfully custumes & tallages / [568] of whiche seith
 Salomon / Lyoun rorynge / Bere hungry / ben like to
 cruel lordshippes / in withholdyng or abreggyng of the
 sheepe / or of the hyre / or of the wages of *seruautes* / or ellis in
 vsure / or in withdrawyng of almesse / fro the pore folke /
 [569] for which the wise man seith / ffedith him that
 almoste deyeth for hungre / for sothly but if thow fede him /
 thow sleest him / And alle these ben dedly synnes / [570]
 Bodily manslaught^r is whan thow sleest him with thi
 tonge / in other manere as whan thow commaundist to
 sle a man / or ellis yevist him consail to sle a

¶ Iohn .

¶ Salomon .

¶ Salomon

man / [571] Manslaughter in dede is in .iiij. maners /
 that on is bi lawe / right as a Iustice dampneth
 him that is coupable / to the dethe / but lat the Iustice
 be war that he do hit rightfully / & that he do it nat
 for delite to spille bloode / but for keping of rightwis-
 nesse / [572] Another homicide is doñ for
 necessite / as whan a man sleeth another in his defendaunt /
 & that he ne may non otherwise escape from his
 owne deth / [573] but certis if he may escape with-
 outen deth of his aduersarie / & sleeth him
 he doth synne / & he shal bere penaunce / as for dedly
 sinne / [574] Eke if a man bi caas or aenture shete
 an arowe / or cast a stoñ / with the whiche he sleeth a man
 hit is homicide / [575] Eke if a woman bi negligence
 ouerlithe hir childe in hir slepinge hit is homicide &
 dedly synne / [576] Eke whan a man distourbeth the con-
 cepcion of a childe / or maketh a woman bareyne
 bi drinkyng of venemous herbes thorgh whiche she may
 nat conceive / or sleeth a childe bi drynkes / or
 ellis putteth certeyne material thinges in hir secre
 place to sle the childe / [577] or ellis doth vnkyndly
 synne / bi the whiche man or woman shedith there nature
 in manere or in place / there as a childe ne may nat be con-
 ceived / or ellis if a woman haue conceived / and hurt-
 eth hir silff & sleeth hir childe / yit is it homicide /
 [578] what seie we eke of women that mordren
 there children for drede of worldly shame / certes an
 horrible homicide / [579] Homicide is eke if a man ap-
 procheth to a woman bi desire ¹of lecherie bi the whiche the
 childe is perished / or ellis smyteth a woman wetingly /
 thorgh whiche she lesith hir childe / alle these ben homi-
 cides & horrible dedly synnes / [580] yit cometh ther of
 Ire many mo synnes / as wel in worde / as in thought / &
 in dede / as he that arecceth vppon god / or blameth god
 of thinge / of whiche he is him-silff gilty / or dispisith
 god & alle his halowes / as don these cursed hasardours /

in diuerse contres / [581] this cursed synne don thei /
 whan thei felen in here herte ful wikkedly of god &
 his halowis / [582] Also whan thei treten vnreuerently
 the sacrament of the auter / Thilke synnes ben so grete /
 that vnnethes may hit ben relessed but that the mercy of
 god / passith his workes / hit is so grete / & he so
 benygne / [583] Than cometh of Ire attrie anger /
 whan a man is sharply amonessed in his shrifte to for-
 lete synne / [584] than wol he be angry and
 answeere hokerly / & angerly / or defende & excuse
 his synne bi vnstedfastnesse of his flesshe / or ellis he
 dide hit / for to holde companye with his felowes / or
 ellis he seith the fende entised him / [585] or ellis he
 dide hit for his youthe / Or ellis his complexion is so
 coragious / that he may nat forbere / Or ellis hit is his
 destenye / as he seith vn-to a certeyne age / Or ellis he
 seith hit cometh him of gentilnes of his auncetres /
 & semblable thinges / [586] Alle these manere of folke
 so wrappen hem / in here synnes / that thei ne wol nought
 delyuere hem-silff / ffor sothly no wighte that excusith
 him of his synne wilfully / may not be delyuered of his
 synne / til that he mekely biknowe his synne / [587]
 Affter than cometh sweringe / that is expresse
 ayeines the commaundement of god / & this bifallith ofte
 of anger & of Ire / [588] God seith thou shalt not
 take the name of thi lord god in veyne ne in ydel / Also
 oure lord ihesu seith bi the wordes of seint Mathewe /
 [. *no gap in the MS.*] [589] Ne wille ye
 nought to swere in no manere / neither bi
 heuen for it is godis trone / Ne bi the erthe for hit is the
 benche of his feete / Ne bi Ierusalem for it is the Cite of
 a grete kynge / Ne bi thin hede / for it¹ is nat thin owne / for
 thou maist nat make an heere white ne blak / [590] but seith
 bi youre ye / ye & nay / nay / And what that is more
 it is euel / thus seith criste / [591] ffor cristes sake ne swerith
 nought so synfully / in dismembringe of criste / bi soule

¶ Mathewe.

herte / bones / & body / ffor certes it semeth that ye
 thenke the cursed Iewes dismembred him nought
 I-nough / [. . . *no gap in the MS.*] but ye dismembren
 him more / [592] And if so be the lawe com-
 pelle yow to swere / than shul ye reule yow after the lawe of
 god in youre swerynge / As seith seint Ierome in .iiij.^{the} chap- ¶ Ierome.
 itle / [. *no gap in the MS.*] Thow
 shalt kepe .iiij. condicions / thow shalt swere in trouthe /
 in dome / & in rightwisnesse / [593] this is to seyne
 thow shalt swere sooth / for euery lesing is ayeines criste /
 ffor criste in verry trouthe / And thenke wel this / That
 euery grete swerer / nat compelled lawfully to swere /
 the wounde shal nat departe from his hous / whiles he
 vsith suche vnlawful swerynge / [594] Thou shalt swere
 eke in dome / whan thow art constreynd bi the Domes-
 man to wittnesse the trouthe / [595] Eke thou shalt
 nat swere for envie ne for fauour / ne for mede /
 but for trouthe & rightwisnesse the declaracion of hit to
 the wourshippe of god / & to helpinge of thin euen
 cristen / [596] And therefore euery man that
 taketh the name of god in ydel / or falsly swerith with
 his mouthe / or ellis taketh on him the name of criste
 to be called a cristen man / & levith ayeines cristes
 levyng & his techinge / alle thei taken godis name
 in ydel / [597] Loke eke what seith seint Peter ¶ Petrus.
Actuum .iiij^{to}. Non est aliud nomen sub celo / Ther act .iiij^{to}.
 nys noon other name seith seint Peter vnder heuen /
 I-youen to men in whiche thei mowe be saued / that is to
 seine / but in the name of Ihesu criste / [598] [. . . .
 *no gap in the MS.*] As seith seint Poule / ¶ Paule.
 [. *no gap in the MS.*] that in the
 name of Ihesu euery kne of heuenly creatures / or
 erthely / or of helle shulle bowe / for hit is so high
 & so wourshipful / that the cursed fende in helle sholde
 tremble for to hire hit nempned / [599] Than
 semeth hit that men that sweren so horribly bi his

blissed name / that thei dispisen it more boldly
than diden the cursed Iewes / or ellis the deucl that
tremblith whan he hyrith his name /

[600] Now certis sithe that sweringe but if hit be
lawfully doñ / is so highly defended / meche ¹wors is
forsweryng falsly / And yit nedeles

[601] what seie ye of hem / that deliten hem
in swering / & holde hit a gentrie / or a manly dede / to
swere grete othes / And what of hem that of verry
vsage ne sease nat to swere grete othes / al be the cause
nough^t worthe a strawe / certes this is an horrible synne / [602]
swering sodonly withoute avisement is eke a
synne / [603] Now lat vs go to thilke horrible & cursed swering /
of adiuracion & coniuracion / as doñ these false en-
chauntours / & nigromansours in basins ful of water / or
in a bright swerde / in a cerele / or in a fire / or in a shelder-
bon of a shepe / [604] I can not seyne but that thei
don cursedly / & dampnably / ayeines criste / & al the
feith of holy chirche /

† swerynges.

[605] what seie we of hem that bileven on
divynailles / as bi flight or bi noyse of briddes / or of
bestes / or bi sorte bi nigromancie / bi dremes / bi chirkyng
of doores / bi gnawynge of rattes / or crakyng of housus /
& suche manere of wrecchednesse / [606] certis al this
thinge is defended bi god & holy chirche / for
whiche thei ben acursed til thei come to amendement /
that in suche filthe setten here bileve / [607] Charmes
for woundes / of maladie of men or of bestes / if thei
take any effecte / hit may be perauenture / that god suffrith
hit / for folke sholde yeve the more feith & reuerence to
his name /

† Lesynges.

[608] Now wol I speke of lesinges / whiche gener-
ally is fals signifiante of wordes / in entente to disceiven
his euen cristen [609] Some lesinge is of whiche
ther cometh noon auantage to no wighte / And some lesinge
turneth to the ease and profite of a man / & to

GROUP I. § 2. PARSON'S TALE. Selden, for Corpus MS. 651

damage of another man / [610] Another lesinge is
for to saue his liff / or his catel / Another lesing cometh
of delite for to lye / in whiche delite thei wolne forge a longe
tale / & peynte hit with al circumstaunces / wher
al the grounde of the tale is fals / [611] Some lesinge
cometh for he wol sustene his worde / Some lesinge
cometh of rechelesnesse withouten avisement / & sem-
blable thinges /

[612] Late vs now touche the vice of flaterynge / ¶ flaterynge.
the whiche ne cometh nat gladly / but for drede / or for couetise /
[613] flaterie is generally wrongeful preisyng / flater-
ers ben the deuelis norices / that norisshen his children
with mylke of losengerye / [614] ffor soth Salomon seith ¶ Salomon.
that flaterie is worse than detraction / ffor somtyme de-
traccion maketh an havteyne man / to be the more humble /
for he dredith detraction // But *certes* flaterie makith
a man to enhansen his herte & his contenance /
[615] flaterers ben the deuelis enchauntours / for
thei maken a man to wene of him selff be like / that he
is nat like / [616] thei ben like to Iudas that bitrayed
[. *no gap in the MS.*] a man to selle him
to his enemy / that is to the deuell / [617] flaterers ben
the deuells Chapeleynes . that singen euere Placebo /
[618] I reken flaterie in the vice of Ire / ffor oft
tyme if a man be wroth with a-nother than wol
he flaterie som wight to sustene him in his quarel /

[619] Speke we now of suche cursinge as cometh ¶ Cursyng
out of Irons herte / Malison may be seide generally / euery
maner powere of harme / suche cursing birevith a man fro
the regne of god / As seith seint Poule [620] that ¶ Poule.
suche cursinge wrongefully / retorneth oftyn tyme ayeine to
him that cursith / as a bridde retorneth ayeine to his
ow[ne n]este / [621] And ouer al thing men oughte [MS. rubbed.]
to eschewe to curse here children / & yeven to the deuell
there engendrure / as fer forth as in hem is / *certis* hit is
a grete perille & a grete synne //

¶ Chidyngē.

[622] Late vs now speke of chidyngē & reproche
 whiche ben grete woundes in man-is herte for
 thei vn-sewen the seemes of frendeshippe in mennes herte /
 [623] ffor *certis* vnnethes may a man ben pleynly
 accorded with him / that hath him openly reviled / &
 reproued & disclaundred / this is a ful grysely synne /
 as criste seith in the gospel / [624] And take kepe now
 that he that reprovith his neighbour / outhere he reprovith
 him bi some harme of peyne that he hath in his body /
 As Mesel. Croked harlott / or bi some synne that he dothe //
 [625] Now if he reprove him bi harme of peyne /
 than turneth the reпреff to Ihesu criste / for peyne is
 sent bi the rightwis sonde of god / & bi his suffe^rraunce /
 be it Meselrie or mayme / or maladie. [626] And if he
 reprove him vncharitably / of synne / as thow holour thow
 dronkelewe harlott / & so forth / than apperteyneth that
 to the reioysing of the deuel / that euer hath ioye
 that men don synne / [627] And *certis* chidyngē may
 not come but of a vileyns herte / ffor after the
 ¶ ex habundancia habundaunce of the herte spekethe the mouthe ful offte /
 cordis os loquitur. [628] And ye shul vnderstonde that loke bi any wey /
 whan any man shal chastise another / that he be war
 of chidinge or reproving / ffor truly but he be
 wer / he may ful lightly queken the fire of anger & of
 wratthe / whiche that he sholde quenche / and peraventure
 sleth him that he myghte chastise with benyg-
 ¶ Salomon. nite / [629] ffor as seith Salomon the amyable tonge / is
 the tree of liff / that is to seyne of liff espirituel / And
 a dislaye tonge / sleth the spirites of him that
 reprovith / and eke of him that is reproved / [630] Lo
 what seint Austyne seith / ther is nothing so like the
 deueles childe as he that offte chideth / seint Poule seith
 ¶ Paule. eke / I *seruaunt* of god bihove nought to chide / [631] And
 how that chiding is a vileyns thing bitwix al
 manere folke / zit is hit *certis* most vncovenable
 bitwixe a man & his wiff / for there is neuer reste /

GROUP I. § 2. PARSON'S TALE. Selden, for Corpus MS. 653

And therefore seith Salomon / An hous that is vncouered
 in rayne & droppinge / & a chidyng wiff ben I-like
 [632] a man that is in a droppinge hous in many
 places / though he eschewe the droppinge in o place /
 yit it droppeth on him in a-nother place / so farith hit bi
 a chidinge wiff / but she chide him in o place / she
 wol chide him in another / [633] And therefore better is
 a morssel of brede with ioye / than an hous ful of
 delites with chidinge / seith Salomon [634] seint ¶ Salomon
 Poule seith / O ye women be ye subiectes to youre
 housbondes / as bihovith in god / And ye men lovith youre
 wives / as Colonisences .iiij^o.

¶ Ad Colonisen-
ses .iiij^o.

[635] Afterward speke we of scornynge / whiche is a
 wikked synne / and namely whan he scornyth a man for
 his goode workes / [636] ffor certes suche scorners
 faren I-like the foule toode that may nat endure to
 smelle the swete sauoure of the vyne / whan it
 flourith / [637] ¹These scorners ben partyng felawes
 with the deuel / for thei haue ioye whan the deuel
 wynneth / & sorowe whan he leseth / that is to seye sauacion
 of soule / [638] thei ben aduersaries to oure lord ihesu criste / for
 thei haten that he loveth / that is to seie sauacion of soule /

[639] Speke we now of wikked consail / ffor he that
 wikked consail yeueth is a traytoure / for he disceivith
 him that trusteth in him / vt Achitofel de Absone /
 But natheles yit is his wikked counsail first ayens him
 self / [640] ffor as seith the wise man Euery fals
 levyng man hath this properte in him self / that he that
 wol anoye another man / he anoyeth first him self /
 [641] And men shul vnderstonde / that man shal nat
 take his counsail of fals folke / ne of to angry folke / ne of
 grevous folke / ne of folke that louen to meche specially here
 owne profite / ne to meche wordly folke / & namely in con-
 saillynge of soules /

¶ wikked con-
saille.

[642] Now cometh the synne of hem that sowen &
 maken discorde / amonges folke / whiche is a synne that ¶ Discorde.

criste hateth vtterly / and no wonder is / for he deyed
to make concorde / [643] & more shame do thei to
criste / than dide thei that him crucified / ffor
loueth better that frendshippe be amonges folke / than
he dide his owne body / whiche that he yaff for vnitees /
therefore ben thei likened to the Deuel / that euere is
a-boughte to make discorde /

¶ Double tonge.

[644] Now cometh the synne of double tonge / suche
as speken faire bifore folke / & wikkedly be-hynde / or
ellis thei maken sembelaunt / as though thei spake of
goode entencion / or elles in game & pleye / & yit thei
speken of wikked entent /

¶ bi-wreiyng. of
consaille.

[645] Now cometh biwreiyng of consail / thorough the
whiche a man is defamed / certes vnnethe may he restore the
damages /

¶ Manace

[646] Now cometh manas that is an open folye / ffor
he that offte manassith / he thretith more than he may
do ful offt tyme /

¶ ydel wordes.

[647] Now cometh ydel wordes / that is withouten
profite / of him that speketh the wordes / & eke of him
that herkeneth the wordes / or ellis ydel wordes ben
tho that be nedeles / ¹or withouten entente of naturel
profite / [648] And al be hit that ydel wordes ben som-
tyme venial synne / yit sholde men doute hem / for we
shul yeue rekenyng of hem / biforne god /

¶ Iangelinge.

[649] Now cometh Iangelynge that may nat be with-
outen synne / as seith Salomon hit is a signe of aperte
folye / [650] And therefore a Philosophre seide / whan
a man asked him how men sholde please the peple /
And he answerde & seide / do many goode workes / & speke fewe
Iangelynge /

¶ Iapes.

[651] And after this cometh the synne of Iapes that
ben the deuels Apes / for thei maken folke to laughē at
here iaperye / as folke don at the gaudes of an Ape /
suche iapes defendith seint Poule // [652] Loke how
that vertuous wordes & holy / conforten hem.

that travaile in the *seruice* of criste / Right so conforten
 the vileyns wordes & knakkes of iapers hem / that
 travailen in the *seruice* of the deuel / [653] these ben
 the synnes that comen of the tonge / that comen of Ire /
 And other synnes many mo .

Remedium contra peccatum Ire .

[654]
THe remedie ayeines Ire / is a *vertu* that men
 clepen Mansuetude that is debonairte / &
 eke another vertu that men clepen Pacience / or ellis
 sufferaunce /

[655] Debonairte withdrawith & refreyneth
 the sterynges & the mevynges of man-is corage in his
 herte / in suche manere that thei ne skippe noughit out bi
 anger / ne bi Ire / [656] Suffraunce suffreth swetly alle
 the anoysaunces / & the wronges / that men don to a man
 outwarde / [657] seint Ierome seith thus of Debonairte ¶ Ierome
 that hit doth noon harme to no wighite / ne seith for noon
 harme that men him don ne seyne / he ne eschaungeth nat
 ayeines his reson / [658] This *vertu* cometh somtyme of
 nature / ffor as seith the Philosophre / a man is a quike
 thinge bi nature / debonaire & tretable bi goodnesse /
 But whan debonairte is enformed of grace / it
 is the more worthe /

[659] Pacience that is another remedie ayenst Ire /
 hit is a *vertu* that suffreth swetly *euery* mannys goodnesse /
 & is nat worthe for noon harme / that is don ¹vnto him /
 [660] the Philosophre seith that Pacience is that
vertu that suffreth debonairly alle the outrages of
 aduersite and *euery* wikked worde / [661] this *vertu*
 maketh a man I-like to god & maketh him his
 owne dere childe as seith criste / This *vertu* disconfiteth
 thin enemy / And therefore seith the wise man / If thou
 wolt venquysshe thin Enemy lerne to suffre / [662] And
 thou shalt vnderstonde / that a man suffreth .iiij. manere

of greuauces in outwarde thinges / ayeines the whiche .iiij.
he mote haue .iiij. manere of paciencies /

[663] The first greuauance is of wikked wordes / thilke gre-
uauance suffred oure lord ihesu criste / withouten grucchinge ful
paciently / whan the Iewes dispised him & reprovod him
ful offte / [664] suffre thow therfore patiently / ffor the
wise man eke seith / If thow strive with a fool / though
the fool be wroth or though he laughē algate
thow shalt haue no reste // [665] That other greuauance
outwarde is / to haue damage of thi catel / There ayeines
suffred criste ful paciently / whan he was dispoyled of al
that he hadde in this liff & that nas nought but the clothes /
[666] The .iiij. greuauance is to a man to haue harme in
his body / that suffred criste ful paciently in al his
passion / [667] The ferthe greuauance is an outragious
labour in werkes / wherfore I seie that folke that
maken here *seruauntes* to travaile to greuously or out of
tyme / as on halydayes / sothly thei don grete synne /
[668] Here ayeines suffred criste ful paciently &
taught vs pacience / whan he bare vppon his blessed
shildres the croys vppon the whiche he sholde suffre
dispitous deth / [669] Here may men lerne to be
paciente / ffor certes nought onely cristen men ben pacient /
for the loue of ihesu criste & for guerdon of the blisse
of heuen / & of the blisful liff that is *perdurable* / But
certes the olde paynemes that neuere were cristen com-
menden & vsen the *vertu* of pacience /

[670] A Philosophre vppon a tyme that wolde haue
beten his disciple for his grete trespace / for whiche he was
gretly ameved / & brought a yerde to scoure the
childe / [671] And whan the childe sawe the yerde / he
seide to his maister / ¹what wol ye don / I wol bete
the *quod* the maister for thi correccion / [672] ffor sothe
quod the childe ye oughte firste correcte youre silff / that
haue lost youre pacience for the gilte of a childe /
[673] ffor sothe *quod* the maister al weping thow

seist sothe / haue thow the yerde my dere sone &
 correcte me for myn impacience / [674] Off pacience cometh
 obedience thourgh the whiche a man is obedient to criste / &
 to alle hem to whiche he oughte to be obediente in criste /
 [675] And vnderstonde wel that obedience is *perfitte* /
 whan men doon gladly and hastyly with good
 herte entirely al that he shulde don / [676] Obedience
 generally is to performe the doctryne of god / &
 of his soueraignes to whiche him oughte to be obeissaunt
 to al manere of rightwisenesse /

De accidia.

[677]

After the synnes of Envie & Ire / now wol I
 speke of the synne of accidie / for envie
 blyndeth the herte of a man / And Ire troubleth
 a man / And accide maketh him hevie / thoughtful / &
 wrawe / [678] Envie & Ire maken bitterness in herte /
 whiche bitterness is moder of accidie / & bynemeth him
 the loue of al goodnesse / than is accidie the
 anguysshe of a troubled herte / And seint Austyne seith / ¶ Austyne.
 It is anoye of goodnesse / & anoye of harme / [679] certis
 this is a dampnable synne / for it doth wronge to Ihesu
 criste / in-asmeche as hit bynemeth the seruice that men
 don to criste with al diligence / as seith Salomon / ¶ Salomon.
 [680] But accide doth no suche diligence / he doth
 al thing with anoy / & wrawnesse / slaknesse
 & excusacion / & with ydulnesse & vnlust / ffor
 whiche the booke seith / Acursed be he that doth the
 seruice of god necligently / [681] than is accidie
 Enemy to euery estate of man / ffor certis thestate of
 man is in .iiij. maners / [682] The first estate is the estate of
 Innocencie as was thestate of Adam bifore or he fel in-to
 synne / in whiche estate he was holden to werche / as in
 heriyng & honouryng of god / [683] Another estate
 is the estate of synful men / in whiche estate men ben holden

to labour / in praiyng to god for amendement of here synnes / & that he wol graunte hem to arise out of here¹ synnes / [684] Another estate is thestate of grace / in whiche estate he is holde to do workes of penaunce / & certis to alle these thinges is accidie enemy & contrarie / for he loueth no besynesse at al / [685] Now certis this foule synne accidie is eke a ful grete enemy to the liflode of the body / for it hath no purviaunce ayeines temporel necessite / for hit is for slouthed / for slougged & distroyed alle goodes temporelles bi rechelesnesse /

[686] The fourthe thing is / that accide is like hem that ben in the peyne of helle / bicause of here slouthe / & of here hevynesse / ffor thei that ben dampned ben so bounde / that thei ne mow nat wel do / ne wel thenke / [687] Off accide cometh first / that a man is anoyed / & encombred to do any goodnesse / & maketh that god hath abhomynacion of suche accide as seith seint Iohn /

† Slouthe.

[688] Now cometh slouth that wol nat suffre noon hardenesse / ne no penaunce / ffor soth slouth is so tender & so delicate / as seith Salomon that he wol suffre noon hardnesse ne penaunce / And therefore he shendith al that he doth [689] ayeines his roten herted synne of accide / And slouth sholde men excersise & vse hem self to don good workes & manly / & vertuously cacchen corage wel to don / thenkyng that oure lord ihesu criste quiteth euery goode dede / be it neuere so lite / [690] vsage of labour is a grete thing / ffor hit maketh as seith seint Bernarde / the laborer to haue stronge armes / & harde senowes / & slouth maketh a man feble & tendre / [691] Than cometh drede to bigynne any goode workes / ffor certes he that is enclyned to synne him thenketh it is so grete an emprise / for to vndertake to do workes of goodnesse / [692] and casteth in his herte that the

† Bernard

circunstaunces of goodnesse ben so grevous & so chargeable for to suffre / that he dar nat vndertake to don workes of goodnesse / as seith seint Gregorie /

[693] Now cometh wanhope / that is dispeire of the ¶ Wanhope. mercy of god / that cometh somtyme of to meche outrageous sorow / And somtyme of to meche drede / ymagenyng¹ that he hath don so meche synne / that hit wold nat availe him / though he wolde repent him / & for sake synne & do good / [694] thorough whiche dispeire or drede/he habundith his herte to euery manere synne/as seith seint Austyne / [695] whiche *dampnable synne if it contene vn-to his ende / hit is cleped synnyng in the holy gost / [696] this horrible synne is so perilous / that he that is dispeired ther is no felonye ne no synne that he douteth for to do / as shewed wel bi Iudas / [697] Certes abouen alle synnes / than is this synne most displeasance to crist / & most aduersarie [698] to god / sothly he that dispeirith him / is like the cowarde Champion recreant / & seith creant withouten nede / Allas allas nedeles is he recreant / & nedeles dispeired / [699] ffor certes the mercy of god is euere redy to the penitente / & is above alle his workes / [700] Allas can nat a man bi-thinke him on the gospel of seint Luke. xv^{mo}. where as criste seith / That as wel shal ¶ luce .xv^{mo}. ther be Ioye in heuen vppon a sinful man / that doth penaunce / than vppon nynety & nyne. that [. . . . no gap in the MS.] nedith no penaunce / [701] loke ferthermore in the gospel / the Ioye & the feste of the goodman that had lost his sone / whan his sone with repentaunce was returned to his fader / [702] Can thei nought remembre hem that as seith seint luke . xiiij^o. Capitulo / how that the theff seide that was ¶ luce .xiiij^o. c^o. honged bi-side ihesu cristes side / lord remembre on me whan thou comest vn-to thi kingdome / [703] ffor sothe seide criste / to day thou shalt be with me in Paradise [704] Certes ther is noon so horrible synne of

man / that it ne may in his liff be destroyed bi penaunce /
 thorough vertu of the passion & the dethe of criste /
 [705] Allas what nedith a man than to be dispeired /
 sithen that his mercy so redy is / & so large / Aske & haue /
 † sompnolencia [706] Than cometh sompnolence that is sloggy
 slombrynge / whiche maketh a man hevy & dul in
 body / & in soule / & this synne cometh of slouthe /
 [707] And certes the tyme that ¹bi wey of reson men
 sholde nought slepe bi the morowe but if ther were
 cause resonable / [708] ffor sothely on the morowe tide is
 most couenable a man to seie his prayeres / & for
 to thenke on god / & for to honoure god / & to
 yeve almes to the pore that first comen in the name
 of criste / [709] Lo whath seith Salomon who so wol
 bi the morowe awake & seke me / he shal fynde
 † negligencie me / [710] Than cometh negligencie or rechelesnesse /
 that recketh of nothings / And how that ignoraunce is the
 moder of al thing / that toucheth harme / Certes negligencie is the
 norice / [711] negligencie doth no force whan he shal do
 a thinge / whether he do it wel or badly /

[712] Off remedy of these two synnes / as seith
 the wise man / That he that dredithe god / spareth not
 to don / that him oughte to don / [713] & he that loueth
 god / he wol do diligence to please god / bi his workes /
 and habunden him self with al his myghte wel for to don /
 † ydelnesse. [714] Than cometh ydelnesse / that is the yate of al
 harme / An ydel man is like to a place that hath no
 walles / there As deuels may entren bi euery side / or shete
 at him at discouert bi temptacion on euery side /
 [715] this ydelnes is the Thorroke of alle wikked &
 vileynes thoughtes / & of alle Ianglis / triflis / & of
 al ordure / [716] Certes the heuen is yeven to hem that
 wol laboure & nought to ydel folke / Eke Dauid seith /
 † Dauid thei ne be nat in the laboure of men / ne thei ne shal
 nat be whippede with men / that is to seie in purgarie /

[717] Certes than semeth hit that thei shul be turmented /
with the deuel in helle / but if thei don penitence /

[718] Than cometh the synne that men clepen
tarditas / as whan a man is to latrede or to tariyng / or ¶ tarditas
he wol turne to god / & certis that is a grete folye /
he is like him that fallith in the dicke & wol nought
arise / [719] as this vice cometh of fals hope that
he thenketh that he shal leve longe / bu[t] that hope
failith ful offte /

[720] Than cometh laches that is he / that whan he ¶ Laches.
bigynneth any goode werke / a-non he wol forlete it &
stynthe / as don thei that haue any wight ¹to gouerne /
& ne taken of him no more kepe / anoon as thei fynde
any contrarie or any anoye / [721] these ben the newe
shepperdes that laten here shepe renne weti[n]gly to
the wolff that is in the breres / or don no force of here owne
gouernaunce / [722] Of this cometh pouerte / and distruccion
bothe of spirituel & of temporel thinges / Than cometh
a manere of coldnesse / that fresith at the herte of man / ¶ coldnesse.
[723] Than cometh vndevocion / thorough the whiche a man is ¶ vndevocion.
blente / as seith seint Bernarde and suche langour in ¶ Bernar d.
soule / that he ne may neither rede ne syng / in holy chirche /
ne hire ne thenke of no deuocion / ne travaille with
his hondes in no goode workes / that hit nys to him vnsaverie /
& al appalled / [724] than wexeth he sore & slowe &
slombri & soone wol be wrothe / & soone is he enclined
to hate & to envie [725] Than cometh the synne of
wordly sorowe / whiche that is cleped tristicia / that sletth ¶ Sorow.
a man as seint Poule / [726] ffor certis suche sorowe ¶ Poule
wercheth to the dethe of the soule & of the bodie also /
fforther ouere than cometh that a man is anoyed of his owneliff /
[727] wherfore suche sorowe shorteth ful offte the lif of
men / or that here tyme come bi wey of kynde /

Remedium contra peccatum Accidie .

[728]

Ageyns this horrible synne of accidie / & the branches of the same / ther is a vertu that is cleped
 ¶ *ffortitudo.* *ffortitudo* / or strengthe / that is an affeccion thorough
 whiche / a man dispisithal maner of noyous thinges / [729] this
 vertu is so myghti & so vigorous / that hit dar withstonde
 myghtily & wisely kepe him selff from perellis that ben
 wikked / and wrestle ayeines the assavte of the deuel /
 [730] ffor hit enhaunseth & enforseth the soule / right as
 ¶ *ffortitudo.* *accidie abateth hit / & makith hit feble / for this ffortitudo*
may endure bi longe suffraunce / the travailes that ben
couenable /

[731] this vertu hath many spices [. . . *no gap in MS.*]

The first is cleped / Magnanymyte / that is to seie ¹grete corage /
 ffor certis ther bihoueth grete corage ayeines accidie / lest
 that hit swolowe the soule / bi the synne of sorowe / or
 distroye hit bi wanhope / [732] this vertu maketh
 folke to vndertake harde thinges / & grevous
 bi here owne wille / wisely & resonably / [733] And for-
 asmeche as the deuel fiteth ayeines man / more bi
 queyntise & bi slighte / than bi strengthe / therfor' a man
 sholde with-stonde him / bi witt / & bi reson & with dis-
 ¶ *ffides spes.* *gression / [734] Than ben ther the vertues of feith / &*
hope in god / & in his seintes / to atcheuen & accomplishe
goode werkes / in the whiche he purposeth fermely
 ¶ *Securitas* *to conteneue / [735] Than cometh surete or sekernesse /*
& that is / whan a man ne douteth nat to trauaile in tyme
comyng to performe the grete werkes of goodnesse / that he
 ¶ *Magnificencia* *hath bigonne / [736] Than cometh magnificence / that is to seie /*
whan a man doth & performeth grete werkes /
& that is the ende / whi that men sholde do goode
werkes / for in the accomplisshing of grete & goode
werkes lithe the grete guerdoun / [737] Than is ther
 ¶ *Constancia.* *Constaunce / that is stablenesse / of corage / & this sholde*
be in herte / bi stedefast feith / & in

the moovthe / & in berynge / in chere / & in dede / [738] Eke
 ther ben mo special thinges / & remedies / ageyns accidie in
 diuerse werkes / & in consideracion of peynes of helle / & of the
 ioyes of heuen / & in the truste of the grace of the holy
 goste / that wol yeve him myght to performe his goode
 entente /

De Auaricia .

[739]

After accidie wol I speke of avarice / & of
 couetise / of the whiche synne / as seith seint Poule /
 that the rote of alle synnes is couetise / Ad
 Tymotheum .vi. ^{to} [740] ffor sothely whan the herte of a
 man is confounded in hit self / & troubled / and that the
 soule hath loste the comfote of god / than seketh he an
 ydel solace of wordly thinges /

[741] Avarice after the discipcion of seint Augustyne / ¶ Austyne .
 Is a likerousnesse in herte to haue erthely thinges /
 [742] Somme other folke seie / ¹that auarice is / for to
 purchase many erthely thinges / & nothing yeve
 to hem that haue nede / [743] And vnderstondith wel that
 auarice nys nat onely in londe ne in catel / but som-
 tyme in science / and in glorie / & in euery manere of
 outrageous thinges / is auarice & couetise / [744] And
 the difference bitwixe auarice & couetise is this /
 Couetise is for to coueite suche thinges as thow
 hast nought / And auarice is to withholde & kepe / suche
 thinges as thow hast withouten rightful nede / [745] sothely
 this auarice is a synne that is ful dampnable / ffor al holy
 writt curseth hit / & speketh ayeines that vice / ffor it dothe
 wronge to Ihesu criste / [746] for it bireueth him the loue
 that men to him owen / and turneth hit bakwarde ayeines
 al reson / [747] & maketh that the auericious man /
 hath more hope in his catel than in Ihesu criste / &
 doth more obseruaunce in keping of his tresour / than
 he doth to the seruice of ihesu criste [748] And therefore seith

¶ Poule

seint Paule / Ad Ephecius / v.^{to} that an auarious man is
thral to ydolatrie /

[749] what difference is bitwixe an ydolastre / &
an auarous man / But that an ydolastre *per*aventure
ne hath but oon mavmet or two / And the auarous man
hath many / ffor *certis* euery floreyne or noble in his cofre is his
Mavmet / [750] And *certis* the synne of Mavmetrie is
the first thing / that god defendith in the ten commaund-
ementes / as berith wisse in Exodi c^o (*blank*) [751] thow
shalt haue no fals godis / bifore me / ne thow shalt make
to the no grave thinge / thus is than an auarous man that
loueth his tresour' biforne god / An ydolastre [752] thorough
his synne of avarice / & of couetise / comen these
harde lord-shippes / thorough whiche men ben distroyed /
bi tallages Custumes & cariages / more than here
duete or reson is / and eke take thei / of here bonde-
men *amersementes* / whiche myghte more resonably be
¹cleped extorcions than *mercymentes* / [753] of whic[h]e
mercimentes & raunsons of bondemen / some
lordis Stewardes seyne that hit is rightful / for-asmeche as
a Cherle hath no temporel thing / that hit ne is here lordes
as thei seie / [754] But *certis* thes lordes don
wronge / that thei bireve here bonde folke thinges / that thei
neuer gaff hem / Augusti[n]us de Ciuitate dei libro nono / [755]
sothe is that the condicion of thraldom / & the first
cause of thraldom is for synne / Genesis quinto /

¶ Austyne

¶ Genesis quinto

[756] thus may ye se that the gilte deservith
thraldom / but nat nature / [757] wherfore these lordes
ne shulde nat meche glorie hem in here lord-shippes /
sithen that bi naturel condicion thei ben lordis ouer
thrallis / but for that / that thraldom cam first bi deserte of
synne / [758] And ferther ouer there as the lawe seith /
that temporal goodes of bonde folke / ben the goodes
of here lordshippes / ye that is to vnderstonde / the goodes
of the Emperour' to defenden hem in here right / but nat
for to robben hem ne reuen hem / [759] And therfor'

seith Seneca / Thi prudence sholde leve benygneley with ¶ Seneca.
 thi thrallis / [760] thei that thow clepest thi thrallis /
 ben godis peple / ffor humble folke ben cristes frendes /
 thei ben contubernyal with the lorde /

[761] Thenke eke that of suche seede as Cherles
 springen / of suche seede springen lordes / as wel may
 the Cherle be saued / as the lorde / [762] The same dethe that
 taketh the Cherle / thesame dethe takith the lorde / wherfore I
 rede do right so with thi cherle / as thow woldest
 thi lord dide with the / if thow were in his plighte /
 [763] Euery sinful man is a cherle to synne / I rede ¶ Consilium.
 the lorde thow werche in suche wise / that
 thi cherles rather loue the than drede the / [764]
 I wot wel ther is degre / aboue degre / as reson
 is / & skele that if that mendon here devoyre there as hit is due //
 But certes extorcions & dispites of youre vnderlynges is
 dampnable /

[765] and therefore vnder-standith wel / that
 conquerou[r]s or tirauntes maken ful offt thralles of
 hem that ben borne / of as roial blood / as ben thei that
 hem conqueren / [766] This name of thraldom was
 neuere erst couthe / til that Noye seide / that his sone
 Cayme shulde be thral to his brother for his synne / ¶ Cayme cause of
 [767] what seie we than of hem that pelyn & don thraldom.
 extorcions to holy chirche / Certes the swerde that
 men yeven first to a knyght whan he is newe dubbed /
 signefieth that he sholde defende holy chirche / &
 nought robbe it / & who so doth is traitour
 to criste / [768] as seith seint Austyne / thei ben ¶ Austyne.
 deuels wolvis that strangelyn the shepe of ihesu
 criste / & don worse than wolves / [769] ffor sothly
 whan the wolff hath ful his wombe / he stinteth to
 strangelyn shepe / but sothely the pilours & the distroy-
 ours of holy chirche goodes ne don nat so / for thei ne
 stinte neuer to pilen / [770] Now as I haue seide / sithen so
 is that sinne was first cause of thraldom / than is it

thus / that thilke tyme that al the world was in synne /
 than was al the worlde in thraldom & subieccion) /
 [771] But certis sithen the tyme of grace cam / god
 ordeyned / that some folke shold be more high in estate
 & degre / than some / and some folke more lowe / And that
 eueryche sholde be serued in his estate / & in his degre /
 [772] And therefore in some contrees there they ben
 thrallis / whan thei haue turned hem to the feith / thei maken
 here thralles free / out of thraldom / And therefore certis
 the lord owith to his man / that the man owith to
 his lorde / [773] The Pope clepeth him silff *seruaunt*
 of the *seruautes* of god / But for-asmeche as the estate of
 holy chirche / ne myghte nat haue be kept / ne the comen
 profite ne myght nat haue be kept ne pees ne reste / in
 erthe / but if god had ordeyned that some men hadde
 higher degre / & some men lower / [774] And therefore was
 souereynthe ordeyned / to kepe and mayntene / & de-
 fende here vnderlinges / & here subiectes in reson / as fer-
 forthe as it lith in here powere / and nat to distroye hem /
 ne confounde / [775] wherfore I seie / that suche lordes
 as ben like wolves / that deuouren the possessions or
 the catel of pore folke wrongefully withouten *mercy* or
 mesure / [776] thei shullen receiven bi the same mesure /
 that thei haue mesured to pore folke / the *mercy* of Ihesu
 criste / but if hit be amended / [777] Now cometh disceite
 bitu[i]xe marchaunt & marchaunt / And thow shalt vnder-
 stonde that marchaundise is in many maners / that oon
 is bodily & that other is gostly / that oon is
 leful & honest / that othere is dishoneste & vuleful /
 [778] Of thilke bodily marchaundise that is leful &
 honest is this / that there as god hath ordeyned / that a
 Regne or a contre is sufficiaunt to him silff / than it is
 honest & leful / that of the abundaunce of this contre /
 that men helpe another contre that is more nedye /
 [779] And therefore ther mote be marchauntes to
 bringe from that oon contre / to that othere / here march-

aundise / [780] That other marchaundise is that / that men haunte with fraude / & trecherie / & disceite / with lesinges / & fals othes / is cursed & dampnable / [781] Espirituel marchaundise is properly Symonye / that is ententiff desire to bye thinge espirituel / that is thinge that apperteyneth to the seintuarie of god / & to the cure of soule / [782] This desire if it so be / that a man do his diligence to performe hit / al be it though his desire ne take noon effecte / yit is it to him a dedly synne / & if be ordrede he is irregulere / [783] Certis Symonye is cleped of Symon Magus / that wolde haue ¶ Symon Magus bought with the temporal catel / the yiff that god hadde yeuen bi the holy gost / to seint Peter / & to thapostles / [784] And therefore vnderstondith / that both he that sellith & he that bieth thinges espirituels ben cleped symonyals / be hit bi catel be hit bi procuryng / or bi fleshly praiere / of his frendes / or of his spirituel frendes / [785] ¹fleshely frendes / in two maners / as bi kynrede / or as bi other frendes / or of spirituel frendes / Sothely if thei praie for him that is nat able / & worthi it is symonye / iff he take that benefice / & if he be worthi & able hit nys noon / [786] The other manere is whan a man or a woman praie for folke to auance hem / onely for wikked fleshely affeccion / that thei haue vn-to the persones / & that is in soule Symonye / [787] but *certes* in seruices for whiche men yeuen thinges espirituels vn-to here seruauntes / hit mot ben vnderstonde / that the seruice mot be honeste / & elles nat / And eke that hit be withouten barganynge / & that the persone be able / [788] ffor as seith seint Damasia / Alle the synnes of the ¶ Damasia worlde / at the regarde of this sinne / ben as thinge of nought / ffor it is the grettest sinne that may be / after the sinne of Lucifer & of Antecriste / [789] ffor bi this sinne god forlesith the chirche & the soule / that he boughte with his precious bloode / bi hem that yeuen chirches to hem that ben nat digne / [790] ffor thei putten in theves that

stelen the soule of Ihesu criste / & distroyen his patry-
 moigne / [791] By suche vndigne prestes / & curates
 haue men the lasse reuerence of the sacramentes of
 holy chirche / And suche yeuers of chirches putten out
 the childerne of criste / & putten in-to the chirche the
 deuels owne sones / [792] thei sellen the soules /
 the lombes thei kepen to the wolff that strangeliþ
 hem / and therefore shul thei neuer haue parte
 of the pasture of the lombes / that is in the blisse of
 heuen / [793] Now cometh *hasardrie* / with his appur-
 tenaunce / as tables / Ravfles / of whiche comen disceite /
 & flas othes / Chidinges / & al ravynges / blasphemynge /
 & reuyng of god / & hate of his neighbours / wastynge
 of goodes / misspendynge of tyme / & somtyme man-
 slaughte / [794] Certis *hasardours* ne mowe nought be
 withouten grete synne / whiles thei haunten that craffte / [795]
 Off *Avarice* cometh eke lesinges / theft / fals witnesse ¹fals
 othes / and ye shul vnderstonde / that these ben grete synnes /
 & expresse ayeines the *commaundementes* of god as I haue
 seide / [796] fals witnesse is in worde & in dede eke /
 In worde / as for to bireve thi neighbouris good name /
 bi thi fals wittnesse / or bireve him his catel / or his
 heritage bi thi fals wittnesse / whan thow for Ire / or
 for mede / or for envie / berest fals witnesse / or accusest
 him / or excusest him bi thi fals wittnesse / or ellis ex-
 cusest thi self falsly // [797] War yow *questemonger*es &
notories / Certis for fals wittnesse was Susanna in
 grete sorowe & payne & many another mo / [798] The
 sinne of the theft is eke expresse ayeines godis heeste / & that in
 two maners / Corporel & *spirituel* / [799] [Corporel]
 as for to take thi neighboris catel / ayeines his wil /
 be hit bi force / or bi slighte / be it bi mette or bi mesure /
 [800] bi steling eke of fals enditementes vpon him / And
 in borowyng of thi neighboris catel / in that entente neuere
 to pay / & semblable thinges / . [801] *Es-*
pirituel theft is sacrilege / that is to seie in hurt-

† *hasardrie*.

† war yow
questemonger

ynge of holy thinges / or of thinges sacrede to criste / in two maners / bi reson / of the holy place / as chirches or chirchewawes / [802] ffor euery violente sinne that men don in suche places may be cleped sacrilege / or euery violence in semblable place / Also thei that withdrawen falsly the rightes that longen to holy chirche / [803] And playnly & generally is sacrilege to yeve holy thinge / fro holy place / and vn holy thinge out of holy place / Or holy thinge out of vn-holy place /

Remedium contra Auariciam.

[804]

Now shul ye vnderstonde / that the relevynge of Auarice is mesericorde / & pite largely taken / And men myght axe whi / that misericorde & pite / is the releuyng of Auarice / [805] Certes the auarouse man / shewith no misericorde ne pite / to the nedeful man / ffor he deliteth him in the kepinge of his tresoure / & not in the restoringe ne relevinge of his euen cristen / & therefore speke I first of misericorde [806] ¹Than is misericorde as seith the Philosophre a vertu bi whiche the corage of a man is stered / bi the myse of him that is mysessed / [807] vppon the whiche misericorde folwith pite / in performynge of charitable workes / of misericorde / [808] And certes this mevith man to misericorde of Ihesu criste / that yaff him silff for oure gult / & suffred dethe / for misericorde / & foreyaff vs oure original sinnes / [809] & therbi releued vs fro the peyne of helle / & amennshed the peyne of purgatorie bi penaunce / And yevith grace wel to do / And at the laste the ioye of heuen / [810] the spices of misericorde ben as for to leue / & for to yeve / & eke for to foryeve / & relese & haue pite / in herte / & to haue compassion of the mischeff of thi

eueneristen / & eke chastice there as nede is /
 [811] Another manere remedie ayeins auarice is
 resonable largesse / but sothely here bihovith the con-
 sideracion of the grace of Ihesu criste / & of his
 temporel goodes / & eke of the goodes perdurable
 that criste yaff vs / [812] & eke to haue remembraunce of
 the dethe that he shal resceiue he note whanne /
 & eke that he shal forgon al that he hath /
 saue only that / he hath dispendid in goode workes /

[813] But for-asmeche as *somme* folke ben vnmesur-
 able / men oughten eschue foole largesse that men
 clepen waste / [814] Certis he that is foole large ne
 yevith nought his catel / but he leseth his catel / Certes
 what thinge that he yevith for vaynglorie / as to
 mynstralles / & to folke for to bere his renoun in the
 worlde he hath don synne & noon almes /
 [815] Certis he leseth foule his goode / that ne seketh
 nothinge with his goode but synne /
 [816] he is like an hors that seketh rather to drynke
 droupy water or troublly / than for to drinke water of the
 clere welle / [817] And for-asmeche as thei yeuen there
 as they shulde nat yeuen / to hem apperteyneth that
 malison that crist shal yeue at the day of dome to
 hem that shulle be dampnede

De gula.

[818]

After auarice cometh gloteny / whiche is expresse eke
 ayeines the commaundementes of ¹god / gloteny is
 vnmesurable appetite to ete / or to drinke / or ellis
 [2 appetite erased] to don I-noughē / to the vnmesurable² & discorde
 covetise to ete & to drinke / [819] This sinne cor-
 rumppeth al this worlde / as is wel shewed in the synne of
 Adam & of Eue / Lo eke what seith seint Paule / of
 gloteny / [820] Many folke of whiche

† Paule

I haue oft seide to yow / & now I seie it wepinge /
 to hem that ben enemyes of the croyce of criste / of
 whiche the ende is dethe / and of whiche here wombe is
 here god / & here glorie in confusion of hem that sc
 deuouren erthely thinges / [821] he that is vsante to
 this synne of glotenye / he ne may no synne with-stande /
 he moste be in the seruage of alle synnes or vicis / for it is the
 deuels horde there he hideth him inne & resteth / [822] this
 synne hath many spices / The first is dronkenesse /
 that is the sepulture of manis reson / & ther-
 fore whan a man is dronke he hath loste his reson / &
 this is dedly synne / [823] but certis whan a
 man is nought wonte to stronge drinke / ne perauenture ne
 knowith nat the strengthe of the drinke / or hath feblenesse
 in his hede / or he hath travailled thorough whiche hedrynketh
 the more / al be he so sodenly caughte with drynke / it is no
 dedly synne but venial / [824] The seconde spice of
 gloteneye is / whan the spirite of man waxeth al trouble
 for dronkenesse / & birevith him the discrecion of his witt /
 [825] The thride spice of glotenye is whan a man
 deuoureth his meete / & hath no rightful manere of etynge /
 [826] The ferthe is whan thorough the grete abund-
 aunce of his meete / the humores of his body ben dis-
 temperede / [827] The .v. is foryetefulnesse / bi to mechel
 drynkyng / for whiche somtyme a man for-yetith bi the
 morowe / what he dide at eve or on the night biforne /

[828] In other manere ben discribed the spices of
 glotenye / affter seynt Gregorie / The first is for to ete bi ¶ Gregorie.
 fore tyme / The .ij.^{de} is whan a man geteth him
 to delicate meete / [829] The .iiij.^{de} is whan
 a man taketh to mechel ouere mesure / The .iiij.¹ is
 the curioustie / with grete entente to make & apparaille
 his meete / The .v. is to ete to gredily / [830] These
 ben the .v. fyngeris of the Deuels honde / bi the whiche
 he drawith folke to synne /

Remedium contra gulam.

[831]

¶ Galienus

A geynes glotenye is remedie / the abstinence of his body /
 as seith Galienus / but that holde I nat meritorie / if
 he do hit onely for helthe of the bodie / seint
 Austyne wolde that abstynence were doñ for vertu / &
 with pacience / [832] Abstynence he seith is litil worthe /
 but if a man haue goode wille therto / And but if he be enforced
 bi pacience and bi chaite / & that men do it for
 godis sake / & in hope to haue the blisse of heuen /

[833] The felowes of abstinence ben Attemper-
 aunce / that holdith the meene in al thinges Eke
 shame that eschewith al dishoneste / Suffisaunce that
 seketh no riche metes / ne drinks / ne doth no fors of noon
 outrageous apparaillynge of meete / [834] Mesure also
 that restreyneth bi reson the dislave appetite of etinge /
 Sobernesse also that restreyneth the outrageousnesse of drinke/
 [835] Sparynge also that restreyneth the delicate ease to
 sitte longe at his meete / & softly / wherfore somme men
 stonden of here owne wil / to eten here meete at the lasse leysyer /

De luxuria.

[836]

A fter glotenye / than cometh lecherie / ffor these
 two sinnes ben so nygh cosyns / that often tyme /
 thei wil nat departen / [837] god woot this
 sinne is ful displeaunt to god / for he seide him
 self / do no lecherie / And there he putte grete peynes
 ayeines this sinne in the olde lawe / [838] yff a wo-
 man thral were taken in this sinne // she sholde be
 beten with stanes to the dethe / And if she were a gentil-
 woman she sholde be sleyne with stones / And if she
 were a busshopes doughter / she sholde be brente / bi
 godis commaundement / [839] fforther-ouere / for the
 synne of lecherie god dreynte al the worlde at

dilivio / And after that he brente .v. Citees / with thonder
lighte / and ¹sanke hem in-to helle /

[840] Now lete vs speke than / of thilke foule stinkyng
synne of lecherie / that men clepen advoutrie / of wedded
folke / that is to seie if that oon of hem be wedded
or ellis bothe / [841] seint Iohn seith that advoutrers ¶ seint Iohan .
shulle ben in helle / in a stynkyng brennyng fire
of brymston / for here lecherie / In bremston for the
stinkyng of there ordure / [842] Certes the brekyng of
this sacrament is an horrible thinge / hit was made of
god him self in paradise / & confermed bi Ihesu criste / as
seith seint Mathew in the gospeß / A man shal lete ¶ Mathewe .
fader & moder / & take him to his wiff / & thei
shul be two in oo flesshe / [843] this sacrament bitoke-
neth the knyttyng to geder of criste / and of holy chirche /
[844] And nat onely that god forbade advoutrie in dede /
but eke he commaunded that thow shuldist nat coveite thi
neighbors wiff / [845] in this heeste seith seint
Austyne is forboden al manere of couetise to do
lecherie / Lo what seith seint Mathew quinto *capitulo* / in the ¶ Mathewe .
gospeß / That who so seeth a woman to couetise of his luste / he
hath don lecherie with hir / in his herte / [846] here may ye
sen / that nat onely the dede of this synne / is forboden /
but eke the desire to don that synne / [847] This cursed
synne annoyeth greuously hem that hit haunteth / & first
to here soules / ffor he obligeth hit to synne & to the peyne of
deth / that is *perdurable* / [848] vn-to the body annoyeth
it greuously also / for hit drieth him / & wasteth him / &
shendeth him / & of his blode he maketh sacrifice to the
fende of helle / hit wasteth eke his catel / & his substaunce /
[849] And *certis* if it be a foule thinge / a man to wasten
his catel on a woman / yit is it a fouler thinge / whan that
for suche ordure / wemmen dispenden vppon men here catel
& here substaunce / [850] this sinne as seith the prophete
birevith man & woman here gode fame / & al here
honour / And it is ful plesaunt to the deuel / for therby
SELDEN (for Corpus 673) (6-T. 661) [1 leaf 298, back]

wynneth he the most partie of ¹this worlde /
 [851] And right as a Marchaunt deliteth him moste
 in chaffare that he hath most auantage of / Right
 so deliteth the fende in this ordure /

[852] this is that other honde of the Deuel / with .v.
 fyngeres to that kaccheth the peple to his vilonye / [853] The
 first fynger is the fool lokyng of the fool man /
 & of the fool woman / that sleth / Right as the Basilicok
 sleth folke bi the venym of his sight / for the couetise
 of the eyghen folwith the couetise of the herte / [854] The
 .ij^{de}. fynger is the vileynes touchinge in wikked
 manere / and therefore seith Salomon / that who so
 toucheth & handelith a woman / he farith I-like him
 that handelith the Scorpion that stingeth & sodenly
 sleth / thorough his envenymynge / And who so toucheth
 warme picche/hit fouleth his fyngers/[855] The.iiij. fyngeris
 foule wordes that farith like fire that anoon
 brenneth the herte / [856] The .iiij. fynger is the
 kysse / & trewely he were a grete foole that wolde
 kisse the mouthe of a brennyng Oven / or of a forneys /
 [857] & more fooles ben thei that kysse in vilanye /
 for that mouth is the mouthe of helle / & namely these
 olde dotardes houlours / yit wol thei kisse / though
 thei may nat do & smater hem / [858] Certis thei
 ben I-like houndes / ffor an hounde whan he cometh bi
 the rosiere / or bi other beautees / though he may nought
 pisse / yit wol he lifft vp his legge / & make a con-
 tenaunce to pisse / [859] And for that many men wene
 that thei may nat synne / for no licorousnesse that he dothe
 with his wiff / Certis that oppinion is fals / god wote a
 man may sle him self with his owne knyff / & maken
 him dronken with his owne tonne / [860] Certes
 be it wiff / be it childe / or any other erthely thinge / that he
 loueth bifore god / hit is his mavmet / & he is an ydolastre /
 [861] A man sholde loue his wiff bi discrecion
 paciently & attemporally / & than is she ²as it

¶ Salomon.

were his suster / [862] The .v. fynger of the deuels honde is the stingkyng dede of lecherie / [863] Certes the .v. fyngers of gloteny the fende putteth in the wombe of a man / And with the .v. fyngers of lecherie he gripeth him bi the reynes for to throwe him in to the furneys of helle / [864] there as thei shul haue the fire & the wormes that euere shal laste / & wepinge / & wailynge / sharpe hunger / & thruste / griselynesse of deuels / that shullen al to treden hem withouten respite / & withouten ende / [865] Off lecherie as I seide sourden diuerse spices / as fornicacion that is bitwix man & woman / that ben nat maried / & this is dedly sinne & ayeines nature / [866] Al that is enemy & distruccion to nature / is ayeines nature / [867] Perfoy the reson of a man tellith him wel that it is dedly synne / for-asmeche as god forbade lecherie / And seynt Paule seith / yeueth him the regne that is due to no wight ¶ Paule. but to hem that don dedly synne / [868] Another synne of lecherie is / to bireven a maiden of hir maidenhede / ffor certis he that so dothe / he taketh a maiden out of the highest degre that is in this present liff / [869] & birevith hir thilke precious fruyte / that the booke clepeth the hundrede fruyte / I can nat seie it / in noon other wise in englisshe / but in latyn hit highit / Centes[i]mus fructus / ¶ Centes[i]mus fructus. [870] Certes he that so dothe / is cause of many damages & vilonyes mo than any man can reken / Right as he somtyme is cause of al the damages that bestes don in the felde / that breken the hegges or the clausure / thorough whiche he distroyeth that may nat be restorede / [871] ffor certis no more may maidenhede be restored / than an arme that is smeten from the body / may retorne ayeine to wexe / [872] she may haue mercy this woote I wel / if she do penaunce / but neuere shal hit be / that she nas corrupte / [873] And al be it so that I haue spoken somewhat of advoutrie / ¹it is goode to shewen mo perilles that longen to aduoutrie / ffor to eschewe the foule

synne of [874] aduoutrie/in latyn it is for to seie/approching
of other menis wivis / thorough whiche tho that whilom
were first oo flesshe / abunden here bodies to other persones /
[875] Off this synne / as seith the wise man / folowen
many harmes / first brekyng of feith / & certis in
the feith is the keye of cristendom / [876] & whan that
feith is broke & lorne / certis cristendom stondith in
wayne & withouten fruyte / [877] this sinne is eke a
theffte / for theffte generally is / to reve a wighte his thinge
ayeines his wille / [878] Certes this is the fouleste thefft
that may be / whan a woman stelith hir body from
hir housbond / & yivith hit to hir holour to defoule
hir / & stelith hir soule from criste / & yivith hit to
the deuel / [879] this is a fouler thefft than forto breke a
chirche & stele the chaleys / ffor these aduoutres
breken the temple of god spiritually / & stelen the vessel
of grace / that is the body & the soule / ffor whiche criste
shal distroien hem as seith seint Poule / [880] sothely
of this thefft dovedt gretely Ioseph / whan that his lordis
wiff praide him of vilonye / whan he seide lo my ladi
how my lorde hath taken to me vnder my warde al that he
hath in this worlde / ne nothing of his thinges is out of
my power / but onely ye that ben his wiff / [881] and
how sholde I than do this wikkednes / & synne so
orrible ayeines god / & ayeines my lorde / god hit forbede /
Allas al to litel is suche trouth now I-founde / [882] The
thridde harme is the filthe thorough whiche thei breken
the commaundement of god / & defoulen the auctor of
here matrimoigne that is criste / [883] ffor certis in-so-meche
that the sacrament of mariage is so noble / & so digne / so
meche hit is the gretter synne to breke hit / ffor god
made mariage in Paradise in the state of Innocence / to
multiplie ¹mankynde to the seruice of god / [884] &
therefore is the brekyng therof the more greuous / of whiche
breking cometh fals heires ofte tyme / that wrongfully
occupien other menis heritage / & therefore wol criste put

¶ Poule.

hem out of the regne of heuen / that is heritage to goode folke / [885] Of this brekyng cometh oftyn tyme / that folke vnwar wedden or synnen / with here owne kynrede / & namely thilke harlottes that haunten bordels / of these foole wemmen that mowe be likened to a comune gouge / where as men purgen there ordure / [886] what seie we eke of poytours that leuen bi the horrible synne of putrie & constreinen wommen to yelde hem a *certeyne* rente of here bodily putrie / y somtyme of his owne wiff / or his childe / as don these baudes / *Certes* these ben cursed synnes / [887] Vnderstondith eke that advoutrie is sette gladly in the ten *commaundementes* / bituexe theffte & manslaughter / ffor it is the grettest theffte that may be / ffor it is the theffte of body & of soule / [888] & hit is like homycide / for it kerveth a-two & breketh a-two hem that first were made Oo fleshe / & therefore bi the olde lawe of god / thei sholde be sleyne / [889] But natheles bi the lawe of ihesu criste that is the lawe of pite / whan he seide to the womman that was founden in advoutrie / & sholde haue ben sleyne with stones / *after* the wil of the Iewes / as was there lawe / Go *quod* ihesu criste & haue no more wille to synne / or willen to do no more no synne / [890] sothely the vengeaunce of advoutrie is awarded to the peyne of helle / but if it be distorbled bi penaunce / [891] yit ben ther mo spicis of this cursed synne / as whan that oon of hem is religious / or ellis both / or of folke that ben entred in-to order / as subdiacone / & deken / or preste / or hospitelers / & euer the higher that he is in order / the gretter is the synne / [892] The thinges that gretly agregen here synne / is the brekyng of here avowe / of chastite / that thei made whan thei resceivede order / [893] And forther ouere soth it is / that holy order is tresour ¹cheff of god / & his especial signe & marke of chastite / to shewe that thei ben Ioyned to chastite / whiche that is the most precious liff that is / [894] And eke these ordred folke ben specially entituled to god / & of the

special meyne of god / ffor whiche whan thei don dedly synne / thei ben the special traytours of god / & of his peple / ffor thei leven of the peple / to prairie for the peple / And while they ben suche traitours / here praiers availen nat to the peple / [895] ¶ Prestes ben as Aungels / as bi the dignite of here misterie / but for sothe seint Poule seith / that Sathanas transformeth him in an Aungel of light / [896] sothely the preste that haunteth dedly synne / he may be likened to the Angel of derkenesse / transformed / in the Angel of light / he semeth an Angel of light / & but for sothe he is an Angel of derkenesse / [897] suche prestes ben the sones of Belye as shewith in the boke of kynges / that thei weren the sones of Belial / that is the deuel / [898] Belyal is to seyne withouten Iugge And so faren thei / hem thenketh thei ben fre / & han no Iugge / no more than hath a fre Boole / that taketh whiche kow that him liketh in the towne / [899] Right so faren thei bi wommen / ffor right as a fre Boole is I-nough for al a toune / Right so is a wikked preste corrupt / I-nough for al a parissĥ / or for al a contre / [900] these prestes as seith the booke / ne conne nat the mynysterie of presthode to the pepel / ne god knowith hem nougĥt / thei holde hem nat a-paide as seith the booke / of soden flessĥ that was to hem offred / but thei toke bi force the flessĥ that is rawe / [901] Certes right so these olde shrewis / ne holde hem nat a-paide of rosted flessĥ / & soden flessĥ / with the whiche the peple feden hem with grete reuerence / but thei wol haue rawe flessĥ / as men-is wivis & here doughtren / [902] And certis these women that consenten to here harlotries / don grete wronges to criste / & to holy chirche / And to alle halowes / & to alle soules / ffor they ¹bireven him alle these that sholden wourshipe criste / & holy chirche / & pray for alle cristen soules / [903] And therefore haue suche prestes & here lemmans eke that consenten to here lecherie / the malison of al cristen courte / til thei come to amendement /

¶ Paulus .

¶ prestes wol
haue rawe flesshe.

[904] The thride spice of advoutrie / is bitwene
 a man and his wiff / & that is whan thei take no rewarde
 in here assemblynge / but onely to here flessly delite / as
 seith seint Ierome / [905] and rekken of nothings but ¶ Ierome.
 that thei ben assembled / bi-cause that thei ben I-mariede
 al is good I-nough / as thenkith to hem / [906] but in suche
 folke the deuel hath power / as seide the Aungel Raphael
 to Tobbye / ffor in al here assemblynge thei putten oute ihesu
 criste of here herte / & yeven hem self to al ordoure /
 [907] The .iiij. spice of advoutrie is the assemblyng of hem that
 ben of here kynrede / or of them that ben of oon affinite / or
 ellis with hem with whiche hir fader or here kynrede
 hath deled in the synne of lecherie / this synne maketh
 hem I-like to houndes / that taken no kepe to kynrede /
 [908] And *certis perentela* is in two maners / outhere
 gostly outhere flessly / gostly is to delen with here
 gossebes / [909] ffor right so as he that engendreth the childe
 is the flessly fader / right so is his gossebe his spirituel fader /
 ffor whiche a woman may no lasse synne
 assemble with hir gosseb / than with hir owne flessly
 brother / [910] The .v. spice is that abhomynable
 synne of whiche that no man vnnethes oughte to speke ne
 write / natheles hit is openly rehersed in holy writte /
 [911] this cursednes don men & women in diuers
 entente / & in diuers manere / but though that holy writte
 speke of horrible synne / *certis* holy writte may nat be
 defouled / no more than the sonne that shyneth on the
 mexen / [912] Another synne *perteyneth vn-to lecherie* / that
 cometh in sleping / & this synne cometh ofte to hem
 that ¹ben maydens / & eke to hem that ben corrupte /
 & this synne men clepen pollucion / that cometh in .iiij.
 maners / [913] somtyme of a languysshinge of body for
 the humours ben to ranke / & to habundaunte in the bodie
 of a man / Somtyme for the infirmite & for the feblenes of the
vertu retentiff / as phisike maketh mension / Somtyme for
 surfete of mete & drinke / [914] And somtyme of

violent thoughtes that ben enclosed in man-is mynde
whan he gooth to slepe / whiche may nat be withouten
synne / ffor the whiche men muste kepe hem wisely / or ellis
thei may synne greuously

¶ The remedie ayeines lecherie

[915]
Now cometh the remedie ayeinest lecherie / & that
is generally chastite / & continence / that re-
streyneth al the disordeine mevyngge that cometh
of fleshly talentes /. [916] & euer the gretter merite
shal we haue / that moste restreyneth the wikked enchaufynges / or ordour of this synne / And this is in two maners / that is to seie chastite of mariage / & chastite of widwhode / [917] Now shalt thou vnderstonde that matrymony is lefful assemblynge of man & of woman / that receiven bi vertu of sacrament / the bonde thorough whiche thei may nat be departed in al there liff / that is to seyn whiles that thei leuen bothe / [918] This is as seith the booke a ful gret sacrament / god made hit as I haue seide in Paradise / & wolde him self be borne in mariage / [919] And for to halowen mariage / he was at a wedding / whereas he tordned water vn-to wyne / whiche was the firste miracle that he wroughte here in erthe / bifore his disciples / [920] Trewe effecte of mariage clenstith fornicacion / & replesshith holy chirche of good lynage / for that is the ende of mariage / & hit changith dedly synne / in-to venial synne / bitwex hem that ben wedded / & makith the hertes al oon / of hem / [. . . no gap in the MS.] as wel as the bodies / [921] this is verry mariage that was establisshed bi god or that synne bigan / whan naturel lawe / was in his right poynte in Paradise / And hit was ordeyned that oo man / sholde haue but oo woman / And oo woman sholde haue but oo man / as seith seint Austyne bi many resons /

[922] ffirst for that mariage is figured bitw[i]x god &
SELDEN (for Corpus 680) (6-T. 668) [leaf 302, back]

holy chirche / And that other is / for that a man is the hede of
 the woman / algate bi ordinaunce hit sholde be so /
 [923] ffor if a woman had mo men than oon / than
 sholde she haue mo hedes than oon / & that were an
 horrible thinge bifore god / And eke oo woman
 myghte nat please to many folke attones / And also
 there shulde neuere be pees ne reste / amonges hem / ffor
 eueryche wolde axe his owne thinge / [924] And
 ferther ouer no man shulde knowe his owne en-
 gendrure / ne who sholde haue his heritage / And the
 woman sholde be the lesse biloued fro the tyme that
 she were comune to many men /

[925] Now cometh how that a man sholde bere him
 with his wiff / And namely in two thinges / that is to
 seie / in suffraunce & in reuerence / & that shewed criste
 whan he made first woman / [926] ffor he made hir
 nought of the hede of Adam / ffor she sholde nat cleyme to
 grete lordshippe / [927] ffor there as the woman hath the
 maistrie / she makith to meche disaray / there nedeth noon
 ensamples of this / thexperience day bi day
 oughte I-nough suffice / [928] Also certis god ne made nat
 woman of the foote of Adam / ffor she sholde nat be
 holden to lowe / ffor she can nat paciently suffre / but god
 made woman of the ribbe of Adam / ffor woman sholde
 be felowe vn-to man / [929] A man sholde bere him to his
 wiff / In feith / In trouthe / & in love / as seith seint
 Poule / that a man sholde love his wiff / As criste loueth ¶ Poule
 holy chirche / that loued hit so wel that he deyede for hit /
 so sholde a man for his wiff If hit were nede /

[930] Now how that a woman sholde be subiecte
 to hir housbonde / that tellith seint Peter / ffirst in obedi- ¶ Petrus.
 ence / [931] and eke as seith the Decree / A woman
 as longe ¹as she is a wiff / she hath noon
 auctorite to swere / ne to bere wittnesse / withoute leue of
 here housbondes / that is here lorde / algate he sholde be so
 bi reson / [932] She sholde eke serve him in al

honeste / & ben attempre of hir array I woot wel
 that thei shulde sette al here entente to please here hous-
 bondes / but nat bi queyntise of here array / [933] seint
 ¶ Ierome. Ierome seith that wives that ben apparelled in silke &
 in precious purpul / ne mowen nat clothen hem in ihesu
 ¶ Iohan. criste / Loke what seith seint Iohn eke in this matere
 ¶ Gregorie. [934] seint Gregorie seith eke that no wight seketh
 precious array but onely for vaynglorie to ben
 honoured the more biforn the peple / [935] hit is a grete
 folie a woman to haue feire array outwarde / &
 hir silff to be foule inwarde / [936] A wiff sholde eke be
 mesurable in lokinge / & eke in berynge / & in laughynge /
 & discrete in al hir wordes / & in hir dedes / [937] And
 aboven al wordly thinge she sholde loue hir housbonde
 with al hir herte / & to him be trewe of hir bodie /
 [938] so sholde an housbonde eke be trewe of his bodie to his
 wiff / ffor soth al the bodie of the wiff is the housbondes / so sholde
 hir herte be / or ellis ther is bitwex hem two / as in
 that no perfite mariage / [939] Than shal a man vnder-
 stonde / that for thre thinges a man & his wiff mowe flessly
 assemble The first is / in entente to engend-
 drure of children to the seruice of god / for certis that is
 the cause fynal of matrymony / [940] A-nother cause is / to
 yelden eueryche of hem to other the dette of here bodies /
 for neither of hem hath powere of his owne bodie /
 The thirde cause is to eschewe lecherie / & vilonye /
 The ferthe for-soth is dedly synne / [941] As to the
 first it is meritorie / the seconde also / ffor as seith the
 Decree / that she hath the merite of chastite / that yeldeth
 to hir housbonde the dette of hir bodie / ye though hit be
 ayeinst hir likyng & the lust of hir herte / [942] The
 thirde manere is venial synne / & trewly scarsly may
 any of these ben withoute venial synne / for the
 corrupcion & for the delite / [943] The ferthe
 manere is / for to vnderstonde ¹as is the assemble onely for
 amorous loue / & for noon of the forseide causes / but

GROUP I. § 2. PARSON'S TALE. Selden, for Corpus MS. 683

for to accomplissh thilke brennyng delite / & thei recke
neuere how offte / sothly hit is a dedly synne / And yit with
sorowe some folke wol peyne hem to do more than
here appetite suffisith /

[944] The secounde manere of chastite is to be
a clene wedowe & to eschewe thenbrasing of man /
& desire thenbrasing of ihesu criste / [945] these
ben tho that haue ben wives & haue forgon there hous-
bondes / And eke women that haue don lecherie / & ben
releued bi penaunce / [946] And *certes* if that a wiff
couthe kepe hir chaste in al / bi licence of hir housbonde / so
that she neuere yaff noon occasion that he agilt hit
were to hir a grete merite / [947] these manere
of women that observen chastite moste be clene in herte /
as wel as in bodie / & in thought / & mesurable in clothinge /
and in contenance / abstynente in etynge / &
in drinkinge / in spekyng / & in dede / & than is she the
vessel or the boiste / of the blissed Magdaleyne / that
fulfilled holy chirche ful of good odoure / [948] The thredde
manere of chastite / is virginite / & hit bihovith that she
be holy in herte / & clene in bodie / than is she
spouse to ihesu criste / & she is the liff of aungels /
[949] she is the preising of this world / & she is as
these martirs in Regalite / she hath in hir that no tonge may
telle / [950] virginite bare oure lorde /
ihesu criste / & virginite he was him self /

[951] A-nother remedie ayeines lecherie / is specially ¶ *remedium*
to withdrawe suche thinges / as yeven occasion to that *contra luxuriam.*
vilonye / as is ease / & etynge / & drinkinge / ffor *certis* whan
the pot boylyth strongelie / the beste remedie is / for to with- ¶ *nota bene*
drawe the the (*sic*) fire / [952] sleping longe in grete quiete
is eke a grete norice to lecherie /

[953] Another remedie a-yeines lecherie is that a
man or a woman eschue the companye of hem bi
whiche he douteth to be tempted / ffor al be it so that the
dede be with-stonde / yit is ther grete temptacion /

[954] sothely a white wal / al-though̄ it brenne nat
fully / bi stikynge of a candel / yit is the wal blak of the
lighte [955] ¹ful offte tyme / I rede that no man truste in
his owne perfeccion / but he be stronger than Sampson / or
holiere than Dauid / & wisere than Salomon /

¶ Sampson .

¶ Dauid .

¶ Salomon .

[956] Now that I haue declared yow as I can
the .vij. dedly synnes / & some of here braunches / &
here remedies / sothely if I couthe I wolde telle yow the
ten comaundementes [957] but so high̄ a doctryne I lete to
divines / but natheles I hope to god thei ben touched in this
litol tretise eueryche of hem alle /

De secunda parte penitencie .

[958]
NOW for-asmeche as the seconde partie of penaunce
stonte in confession of mouthe / as I bigan in the
chapitre / I seie seint Austyne seith̄ /
[959] synne is euery worde / & euery dede / & al that
men coveiten ayeines the lawe of ihesu criste / And this is
for to synne in herte / in mouthe / & in dede / bi the .v.
wittes / that ben / sighte / hirynḡe / smellynḡe / tastynḡe
or sauerynḡe / & felynḡe / [960] Now is hit good to
vnderstonde the circumstances that aggregen mechel euery
synne / [961] thow shalt considre what thow arte that doist
the synne / whether thow be male or female / y[o]nḡe or
olde / gentil or thral / fre or seruauante / hoole or sike /
wedded or sengle / ordred or vnordred / wise or foole /
clerke or seculere / [962] if she be of thi kynrede bodily
or gostly or non / if any of thi kynrede haue synned
with hir or non / & many mo thinges /

¶ prima circum-
stancia peccati

¶ Secunda

[963] That other circunstaunce is this / whether hit be
don in fornicacion / or in aduoutrie or non / or in ceste or
non / maiden or non / in manere of homicide or non /
orrible grete synne or smale / & how longe thow hast
contenued in synne / [964] The thride circunstaunce is
the place where as thow hast don synne / whether in other

¶ tercia

GROUP I. § 2. PARSON'S TALE. Selden, for Corpus MS. 685

men-is hous or in thin owne / in felde or in chirche
 or in chirchewawe / in chirche dedicate or non /
 [965] ffor if the chirche be halowed / & a man or a woman
 spilt his kynde bi wey of synne with-inne that place / or bi
 wikked temptacion the chirche were enterdited / til it were
 reconciled bi the ¹busshoppe / [966] And if he were a
 preste that dide suche a vilonye / the terme of al his liff he
 shulde neuere singe masse / & if he dide / he shulde ¶ war ye prestes.
 do dedly synne at euery tyme that he songe masse /
 [967] The ferthe circunstaunce is / bi suche mediat- ¶ quarta.
 ours / as be messangers as for enticement / or for
 consentement / to bere company with felowshippe / ffor
 many a wrecche for to bere companye / wil go to the
 deuel of helle / [968] ffor they that eggen / or con-
 senten to the synne / ben partyners of the sinne / &
 of the dampnacion of the synne /

[969] The .v. is how many tymes ¶ quinta.
 he hath synned / if it be in his mynde / & how ofte
 that he hath falle / [970] ffor he that oft fallith in synne /
 dispisith the mercy of god / & encreasith his synne /
 & is vnkynde to god / & he wexeth the more feble
 to withstonde synne / & synneth the more lighthiere /
 [971] & the latter arisith / & is the more eschue
 to shriven him / & namely to him that hath be his con-
 fessour / [972] ffor whiche that folke whan that they falle
 ayeine in here olde folies / outhere thei forleten here olde
 confessours / al vtterly / or ellis thei departen here shrift / in
 diuers places / but sothely such departed shrift deservith no
 mercy of god of his synnes / [973] The .vj. circun- ¶ Sexta.
 staunce is this / whi that a man synneth as bi temptacion /
 & if him self procure that temptacion / or bi the ex-
 ityng of other folke / or if he synne with a woman bi
 force / or bi hir owne assente / [974] or if the woman
 mavgre hir hede hath be enforced or noon / this
 shal she telle / ffor couetise or for pouerte / &
 if hit was hir procuryng or non / & suche manere

¶ Septima.

harneys / [975] The .vij. circunstaunce is / in what manere he hath doñ his synne / & how that she hath suffred folke to doñ to hir / [976] & the same shal the man telle pleynty / al circunstaunces / & whether he hath synned with comune bordel women or non / [977] or doñ his synne in holy tymes or non / In fastynge tymes or non / or biforn his shriffte or after his latter shriffte / [978] & hath *perauenture* / broken ¹therfore his penaunce enioyned / bi whos helpe / & whos consaille / bi sorcerie & craffte / al moot be tolde / [979] al these thinges after that thei ben grete & smale engregen the conscience of man / And eke the preste that is thi Iugge may the better ben avised in his iugement / & in yevinge of thi penaunce / & that is after thi contricion / [980] ffor vnderstondeth wel / that after the tyme that a man hath defouled his baptye bi synne / if he wil come to saluacion / ther is noon other wey but bi penaunce & shriff / & bi satisfaccion / [981] And namely bi tho two / if ther be a confessour to whiche he may shrive him / & the thridde if he may haue liff to performe hit /

¶ Ezechiel

[982] than shal a man loke & considre / if he wol make a trewe & profitable confession / ther moste be .iiij. condiciones therinne / [983] ffirst hit most be in sorowful bitternes of herte / As seith the kyng Ezechiel To god I wol remembre me alle the dayes & yeres of my liff in bitternesse of myn herte / [984] This condicion of bitternesse hath .v. signes / The first is that confessioni mote be shamefaste / nat for to couere ne to hide his sinne / but for he hath agilt his god / & defouled his soule / [985] & here-of seith seint Austyne / the herte travaileth for shame of his synne / & for he hath grete shamefastnes / he is digne to haue grete mercye of god [986] Suche was the confession of the Puplicane that wolde nat heve vp his eighen to heuen / for he had offended god of heuen ffor whiche shamefastnes he had anon the mercy of god / [987] And therefore seith

¶ Austyne

GROUP I. § 2. PARSON'S TALE. Selden, for Corpus MS. 687

seint Austyne / that suche shamefast folke / ben next
 for-yevenesse & remission / [988] That other signe is
 humylite of confession / of which seith seint Peter / ¶ Peter.
 humbleth yow vnder the myght of god / the honde of god
 is myghti in confession / ffor ther-bi god foryevith the
 thi synnes / for he alone hath the power / [989] & this
 humylite shal be in herte / & in signe outwarde / ffor
 right as he hath humilite to god in his herte / Right so
 sholde he humble his body outwarde to the preste that sitteth
 in godis place / [990] ffor¹ whiche in no manere / sithen that
 criste is souereyne / and the preste meene & mediatour^r bi-
 twex criste & the synnere / & the synnere is the laste
 bi wey of reson / [991] than sholde nat the synnere sitte
 as highē as his confessour / but knele biforū him / or at
 his feete / but if maladie disturbe hit / ffor he shal nat take
 kepe who sitte there / but in whos place that he sitteth /
 [992] A man that hath trespassed to a lorde / and cometh to
 axemercy / & maketh his accorde / And he sette him doun anon
 bi the lorde / men wold holde him outrageous / & nat
 worthi so sone to haue remission ne mercy / [993] The
 .iiij. signe is that thi confession shulde be ful of teres if
 ye may / & if ye may nat wepe with youre bodily eyghe /
 lete thin herte wepe / [994] suche was the confession
 of seint Peter ffor after that he had for-sake ihesu criste / ¶ Petrus.
 he went out & wept ful bitterly / [995] The .iiij.
 signe is that he lett nat for his shame to shewe
 his confession / [996] suche was the confession of the
 Magdaleyne / that spared for no shame of hem that were ¶ Magdaleyne.
 at the fest for to go to oure lorde ihesu criste / & biknowe
 to him hir synne / [997] The .v. signe that a man
 be obeisaunt or a woman to reseive the penaunce that
 is to him enioyned / ffor certis ihesu criste / for
 the giltes of oo man was obediente to the deth //

[998] The secunde condicion of verray confession /
 is that hit be hastily don / ffor certis if a man had a
 dedly wounde / euer the lenger that he tarieth to warisshe

him-self / the more wold hit corupte / & haste him to
 his dethe / & eke the wounde wolde be the wers to
 hele / [999] And right so farith hit bi synne / that longe
 tyme is in a man vnshewed // [1000] Certis a man ought
 hastily to shewe his synnes / for many causes / As for drede
 of dethe that cometh ofte sodeynly / & is in no certeyne what
 tyme hit shal be / ne in what place / And eke the drecching
 of oo synne / drawith in another synne / [1001] ¹and eke the
 lenger that he tarieth / the ferther is he from criste / & if he
 abide in-to his laste day / ful scarsly may he shrive him / or re-
 membre him on his synnes / or repente him / for the
 grevous maladie / of his dethe / [1002] And for-asmeche as
 he hath na in his lif / herkened ihesu criste / whan he
 hath spoken vn-to him / he shal crien vn-to oure lord ihesu crist
 at his laste day / & scarsly wol he herken to him / [1003] And
 vnderstonde that this condicion most haue .iiij. thinges /
 thi shriff moot be purveide biforn & avised /
 for wikked haste doth no profite / & that a man can
 shrive him of his synnes / be hit of pride or of envie / &
 so forth with the spices & the circumstaunces / [1004] & that
 he haue comprehended in his mynde / the nombre & the
 gretnesse of his synnes / & how longe that he hath leyne
 in synne / [1005] & eke that he be contrite / of his synnes /
 & in stedfast purpos bi the grace of god / neuere effte to
 falle ayeine in synne / & eke that he drede & contrewaite
 him-self / that he fle the occaciouns of synne / to whiche he
 is enclined / [1006] Also that thow shalt shrive the of alle
 thi synnes to oo man & nat a parcel to oon / &
 a parcel to another / that is to vnderstonde / in entente
 to departen thi confession / as for shame or drede / for hit
 is nought but strangelyng of this soule / [1007] ffor certis Ihesu
 criste is al good / in him is noon imperfeccion / &
 therefore outhere he foryevith al perfity / or ellis neuera-
 dele // [1008] I seie nat if thow be assigned to thi
 penitencere / for certeyne synne that thou art bounde to
 shewe to him / al the remanent of thi synnes / of whiche

thou hast be shriven to thi curate / but if it like the
of thin humilite / this is no departing of shriff /
[1009] ne I seie nat there as I speke of diuision of confes-
sion / if that thou haue licence for to shrive the to a discrete /
& an ¹honest preste / & where the liketh / bi the licence
eke of thi curate / that thou ne maiste wel shrive the /
of al thi synnes / [1010] but lat no blot be bihynde /
lete no synne be vntolde / as fer as thow hast remem-
braunce / [1011] And whan thow shalt be shriven to thi
curate / telle him eke of al thi synne that thou hast don /
sithen that thou were last I-shriven / this is no wikked entente
of division of shriff /

[1012] And also the verray shriff axeth *certeyne* con-
dicions / first that thou shrive the bi thi fre wil /
nat constreyned / ne for shame of folke ne for maladie /
or suche thinges / ffor it is reson that he that trespasseth
with his fre wil / he moot bi his fre wil confesse his
trespace / [1013] noon other man shal telle his synne
but he him self / ne hene shal nat nay it ne denye his synne /
ne wretthe him ayeines the preste / for his amonesshyng
to lete his synne / [1014] The secunde condicion is / that thi
shriff be lawful that is to seie / that thou that shrivist
the / & eke the preste that hireth thi confession / ben
verray in the feith of holy chirche // [1015] And that a
man be nought dispeired / of the mercy of ihesu criste / as
Cayme or Iudas / [1016] and eke a man most accuse
him of his owne trespace & nat another / but he
shal blame & witen him-self of his owne malice / & of his
synne / & noon other / [1017] but natheles if that
another man be occasion of his synne / or entiser of his synne /
or if the estate of a persone besuche / thorough whiche his synne
is aggregated / or that he ne may nat pleylnly shriven him /
but he telle the persone / with whiche he hath synned /
than may he telle it [1018] so / that his entente be nat
to bagbite the persone but onely to declare his con-
fession /

[1019] Thow shalt nat eke make no maner lesinges in
 thi confession / for humilite perauenture to seie
 that thou hast don synnes / of whiche thou were
 neuere gilty / [1020] ffor seint Austyne seith if
 thow bi cause of humilite makest lesinges
 of ¹thi selff / though thow ne were nat in synne biforne
 yit art thow than in synne thorough thi lesinges [1021]
 Thow most eke shewe thi synne / bi thi nowe propre
 mouthe / but if thou be wexe dome / & nat bi no
 letter / ffor thou that hast don the synne / thou shalt haue
 the shame in confession / [1022] Thow shalt nat eke
 peynte thi confession / bi faire & subtile wordes / to couere
 the more thi synne / ffor than bigilest thou thi selff &
 nat the preste / thou most telle it platly be it
 neuere so foule / ne so horrible / [1023] Thow shalt
 shrive the eke to a preste that is discrete / to counsaile the / And
 eke thou sha[l]t nat shrive for vaynglorie / ne for
 ypocresie / ne for no cause but onely for the dovtte of
 Ihesu criste / & the hele of thi soule / [1024] Thow
 shalt nat eke renne to the preste al sodeynly to telle him
 thi synne / as whos tellith a Iape or a tale / but
 avisily / & with grete deuocion / [1025] And generally
 shrive the offte / if thou offte falle / offte arise bi
 confession / [1026] And though thou shrive the offerter
 than ones of thi synne / of whiche thow hast be shriven it is
 the more merite / And as seith seint Austyne / thou
 shalt haue the more lightly relesynge / & the grace of god /
 both of synne & of peyne / [1027] And certis ones a
 yere at the leste weye hit is lawful for to be houselede / ffor
 certainly ones a yere alle thinges renouellen /

De satisfaccione .

[1028]
Now haue I tolde of verry confession that is the
 secunde parte of penaunce /

[1029] the .iiij. parte of penaunce is satisfaccion / & that stant most generally in almes & in bodily peyne / [1030] Now ben ther .iiij. manere of almes / Contricion of herte / that a man openeth him self to god / Another is to have pete of the defaute of his neighbours / And the thride is in yevyng good counsaile / & comferte gostly & bodily / where men haue nede / & namely in sustenaunce of man-is foode / [1031] & to take kepe of that ¹that a man hath nede of / off these thinges generally he hath nede / of foode / of clothing / & herborugh / he hath nede also of charitable counsaile / & visityng in prison / & maladie / & sepulture of his dede bodie / [1032] and if thou maist nat visite the nedeful with thi persone / visite hem bi thi massage / & thi yiftes / [1033] these ben the general almes & workes of charite / of hem that han temporal riches / or discrecion in counsaillyng / Off there workes shalt thou hyre at the day of dome /

[1034] these almesses shaltow don of thin owne propre thinges / & hastily & privily if thou maiste / [1035] but natheles if thou maiste nat don hit priuily / thou shalt nat forbere to do almes neuer a dele though men se hit / so that it be nat don for thanke of the world / but onely for to haue the thanke of oure lorde ihesu criste / [1036] ffor as wittnessith Seint Mathew. quinto *capitulo* / A Cite ^{¶ Mathei quinto Capitulo.} may nat be hidde that on a mountayne sette / ne men lighte nat a lanterne & put it vnder a busshel / but men sette hit on a candelstike / to lighten the men in the hous / [1037] Right so shal youre lighte lighten a-forne men that thei mowe seen youre goode workes / & glorifie / youre fader that is in heuen /

[1038] Now as for to speke of bodily peyne / it stonte in praieres / in wakynges / in ffastinges / & in vertuous

techinges of orisons / [1039] ye shul vnder-stonde
 that orisons / or praieris is for to seie / a pitous wil of
 herte / that redressith hit in god / & expressith it bi wordes /
 outwarde to renewe harmes / & to haue thinges
 espirituel & durable / & somtyme temporal thinges /
 ¶ Pater noster .
 off. whiche orisons / certis in the orison of the Pater noster /
 hath ihesu criste enclosed most thinges / [1040] Certis
 it is privileged of thre thinges in his dignite / ffor whiche
 it is more digne / than any other praier / ffor that ihesu
 criste him self maked / [1041] and it is shorte / for it sholde
 be couthe more lightly ¹and for to withholde hit the
 more esily in herte / & helpen hem self the offter / with
 the orison / [1042] And for a man sholde be the lasse wery
 to seie hit / And for a man may nat excuse him to lerne
 hit / for it is shorte & so esie / And for hit comprehendith in hit
 self / alle good praieris / [1043] The exposition of this
 holy praier / that is so excellent & digne / I bitake
 these maistres of Theologie / saue thus meche wol I seyne /
 that whan thou praieste that god sholde foryeve the thi
 giltes as thou foryeuest hem that agilten the / Be ful
 wel war / that thou be nat out of charite / [1044] This
 holy orison amennsith eke venial synne / & therefore
 hit apperteyneth specially to penaunce /

[1045] This praier most be trewly seide / & in
 verry feith // & that men praie to god / ordinatly / dis-
 cretly / & devoutely / And alwey a man shal putte his wil /
 to be subiette to the wil of god / [1046] this orison
 most eke be seide / with grete humblesse / & ful pure /
 honestly & nat to the anoysaunce of any man or woman /
 hit most eke be contened with the workes of charite /
 [1047] hit availeth eke ayeines the vices of the soule / ffor as
 seith seint Ierome / bi fastynge ben saued the vices of the
 flesshe / & bi praieris the vices of the soule /

¶ Ierome

[1048] Affter this thow shalt vnder-stonde / that
 bodily payne stonde in waking / for ihesu criste seith /
 waketh and praieith / that ye ne entre in to wikked

temptacion / [1049] ye shul vnder-stonde eke that fast-
yngc stonte in thre thinges / in forberyngc of bodily meete /
and drinke / & in forberinge of worldly iolitees / And in for-
beringe of dedly synne / this is to seie / that a man shal
kepe him fro dedly synne / with al his mygh̄t /

[1050] And thou shalt vnderstonde eke that god
ordeyned fastinges / & to fastinges apperteynen .iiij.
thinges [1051] largenesse to pore folke / gladnesse of
herte espirituel / nat to be angry / ne anoyed / ne
to grucche for he fasteth / & also at resonable houre for to
eete bi¹ mesure / that is for to seie / A man shulde nat eten in
vntyme / ne sitte the lenger at his table to ete / for he
fasteth /

[1052] Than shalt thou vnderstonde that bodily
peyne stante in disciplyne or teching / bi worde / or bi
wrytynge / or bi ensample / also in weryng^t of heires or
of stamyne / or of haberions on here naked flesshe / for cristes
sake / & suche manere penaunces / [1053] but war the wel
thatsuche penaunces on thi flessch / ne make nought thin herte
bitter/orangery/oranoyed / of thiself / ffor better it is to caste
awaie thin heire / than for to caste a-wey the swettnesse of oure
lorde ihesu criste / [1054] And therefore seit[h] saint Poule / ¶ Poule.
Clotheth yow as thei that ben chosen of god / in herte of
misericorde / debonaire / suffraunce / & suche manere of
clothinge / of whiche ihesu criste is more apaiede / than of
heire / or of haberioun /

[1055] Than is his disciplyne / in knockyngc of
thi breste / in schourgingc with yerdes / in knelynges / in
tribulacions / [1056] in sufferinge patiently wronges / that
ben don to him / And eke vnpacient sufferaunce of maladies /
or lesinge of worldly catel / or of wiff / or childe / or
other frendes /

[1057] Than shalt thou vnderstonde / whiche thinges
distourben penaunce / and that is in .iiij. maners / And that is
drede / shame / & wanhope / that is desperacion /
[1058] And for to speken first of drede / ffor whiche he

weneth̄ that he may suffre no penaunce / [1059] there
ayeines is remedie / for to thenke that bodily penaunce is
but shorte / litel / at the regarde of the peyne of helle / that
is cruel & so longe / that it lasteth withouten ende /

[1060] Now a-yeines the shame that a man hath to
shriven him / and namely these ypocrites / that wolden
be holde so perfite / that thei haue noon nede to shriven
hem / [1061] Ayeines that shame / shal a man thenke / that
bi wey of reson / that he / that hath nat ben a-shamed / to
do foule thinges / Certis him oughte nat to ben a-shamed to
don faire thinges / & goode thinges / & that is confessiouns /
[1062] A man shulde eke thenke / that god seeth̄ & woot welthi
thoughtes / ¹& al thi workes / to him may nothing¹ be
hidde ne couered / [1063] men shulde eke remembre
hem of the shame that is to come at the day of dome to
them that ben nat penitente / ne shriven in this present
liff / [1064] ffor alle the creatures in heuen erthe & in helle /
shulle se appertely al that they hiden in this worlde /

[1065] Now for to speke of the hope of hem that
ben so necligent & slowe to shrive hem / hit stante in
two maners / [1066] that on is that he hopeth̄ to live
longe / & for to purchase meche riches for his delite /
& than he wol shrive him / & as seith̄
he may as him semeth̄ tymely I-nough̄ come to shriffte /
[1067] Another is of the surquidrie that he hath̄ in the hope of
cristes mercy / [1068] And ayeines the first vice he shal thenke /
that oure liff is in no sekernesse / & eke that al the
riches in the worlde is in auenture & passinge as a
shadowe on a wal // [1069] And as seith̄ seint Gregorie /
that hit apperteyneth̄ to the grete rightwisesse of god / that
neuere shal the peyne stinte of hem / that neuere
wolde withdrawe hem fro synne here thanks but
euer conteneue in synne / for that perpetual wil to do
synne / shullen thei haue perpetual peine //

[1070] Wanhope is in two maners / The first wan-
hope is in the merci of criste / That other is that thei
SELDEN (for Corpus 694) (6-T. 682) [¹ thoughtes repeated; leaf 309]

thenke / that thei myghte nat longe perseuere in good-
 nesse / [1071] The first wanhope cometh of that he
 demeth that he hath synned so gretly / so ofte / & so
 longe lien in synne / that he shal nought be sauede /
 [1072] Certis ayeines that cursed wanhope he shulde
 thenke / that the passion of ihesu criste is more stronge for
 to vnbynde / than synne is for to bynde /
 [1073] Ayeines the seconde wanhope [.

 [1074] . . . *no gap in the MS.*] that he demeth that he
 shulde nat longe perseuere in goodnes / he shal thenke
 that the febelnesse of the Deuel may nothing don but if
 men wil suffre him / [1075] & eke he shal have strengthe
 of the helpe of god / & of al holy chirche & of the
 proteccions of Aungels / if hem luste //

[1076] Than shul men vnderstonde what is the
 fruyte of penaunce¹ as after the worde of ihesu criste / hit is
 the endeles blisse of heuen / [1077] there ioye hath no
 contrariouste of woo / ne greuaunce / there al harmes ben
 passed of this present liff / there as is the sekernesse from
 the peyne of helle / there as is the blisful companye that
 reioysenhemeuermore/eueryche of otheris Ioye/[1078] there
 as the body of man that whilom was foule & derke is
 more clere than the sonne / there as whilom the bodi
 was sike freyle feble & mortal / is immortal / &
 so stronge & so hole / that there may nothinge empeire
 it / [1079] there as neither is hungre / thrust / ne colde /
 but euery soule replenished with the sight of the perfite
 knowynge of god / [1080] this blisful regne may man
 purchace bi pouerte espirituel / & the glorie bi lowe-
 nesse / the plente of ioye bi hungre & thruste / & the
 reste bi trauaile / & the liff bi deth / & mortificacion of
 synne /

[¹ leaf 309, back, and last].

To thilke liif he vs bringe that bought vs with his precious bloode. Amen /

Here enden the talis of Caunturbury / And next thautour taketh leve.

[1081]
Now preye I to hem alle that herken this litil tretis
 or reden / that if ther be any thing in hit that liketh
 hem / that therof thei thanke oure lord ihesu
 criste / of whom procedeth al witte & al goodnesse /
 [1082] And if ther be any thing that displezen hem / I
 preie hem also that thei a-recte hit / to the defaute of myne
 vnconnyng / & nat to my wil that wolde ful fayne haue
 seide better if I hadde connyng / [1083] ffor oure
 booke seith / al that is writen is writen for oure
 doctryne / & that is myne entent / [1084] wherfore I
 biseke yow mekely for the mercy of god / that ye preie for
 me / that criste haue mercy on me / and foryeve me my
 gultes / [1085] & namely of my translacion / & endit-
 ynges of worldly vanytees / the which I revoke in my re-
 traccions / [1086] As is the booke of Troylus / the booke
 also of ffame / the booke of .xxv. ladies / the
 booke of the Duchesse / the booke of saint Valenty
 [1 day of þe parlement of briddes // The Tales Caunter-
 bury. tho þat sownen into syn / [1087] The boke
 of þe leon / And many anoper boke if thei were in my
 remembraunce / & many a songe / & many A lecherous
 tayl. ¶ Of þe which Crist for his grete mercy for-yeue me þe syn.
 [1088] ¶ But of the translacion of Boece de consolacion
 and oper boke3 of legendes of Seintes & Omelies /
 And moralite & deuocion / [1089] That thank I oure
 lorde Iesu Crist & his blisful moder and al the
 seinte3 in heuen [1090] Biseking hem þat þei fro
 hen forthe vnto my lyves ende send me grace to
 bewaile my giltes / And to stodiend to þe sauacioun of my
 soule ¶ And graunte me space of verrey penitence ¶ Con-

[Hatton MS. 1,
 leaf 275, back]

APPENDIX (to Group B, p. 587).

[*Christ Church MS. 152.*] [on leaf 173, back,
sign. k 2, back]

¶ Sire Nonnes preest oure hoost seyde a none
y-blessed be thy breth & euery stoon
This was a mery tale of Chaunteclere
But be my trouthe if *thou* were seculere
Thow woldeste bene a tredefoul a right
ffor if thow haue corage as *thou* haste myght
The were nede of hennes as I wene
Ye moo than .vij. tymes seventene
See whiche braunnes hath *this* gentel preeste
So grete a nekke & so large a breeste
He loketh as a Sparhauke with his yen
Hym nedeth nat his colour for to dyen
with Brasile ne with Greyne of Portyngale /
Now sire faire falle yow for youre tale
And affir he with full mery chere
Saide vnto a nother as ye shulle here

[leaf 174, sign. k. 3]

**Here is ended the Nonnes prestes tale
And folowith the prologe of the Maunciples tale**

CORPUS MS. APPENDIX

OF SECTIONS, WOODCUTS, ETC., NOT IN THE CORPUS MS.

| | PAGE |
|---|-------|
| 1. End of the <i>Merchant's Tale</i> , Group E, § 4, l. 2319-2418, from MS. Arch. Selden, B. 14, Bodleian Library. (See p. 350 above.) ... | 1*-3* |
| 2. The <i>Merchant's End-Link</i> , Group E, § 5, from MS. Arch. Selden, B. 14, Bodleian Library. ('Twould have followd p. 350 (or p. 3*) above, had it been in the Corpus MS.) ... | 4* |
| 3. The <i>Clerk-Merchant-Link</i> , Group E, § 3, p. 442 Six-Text, from MS. Arch. Selden, B. 14. ('Twould have followd p. 320 above, had it been in the Corpus MS.) ... | 5* |
| 4. The <i>Squire's Head-Link</i> , Group F, § 1, p. 478 Six-Text, from MS. Arch. Selden, B. 14. ('Twould have come next before p. 194, instead of the <i>Merchant-Shipman Link</i> , p. 193, had it been in the Corpus MS.) ... | 6* |
| 5. The <i>Squire-Franklin Link</i> , Group F, § 3, p. 498-9 Six-Text, from the Laud MS. 600, Bodleian Library. ('Twould have followd p. 212 above, had it been in the Corpus MS.) ... | 7* |
| 6. Woodcuts of the 23 <i>Tellers of the 24 Canterbury Tales</i> , from the Ellesmere MS. ¹ | |
| 7. Woodcuts of 6 <i>Tellers of Canterbury Tales</i> , the Cook, Reeve, Wife of Bath, Pardoner, Monk, and Manciple—and of 6 <i>Allegorical Figures in the Parson's Tale</i> —Wrath and Mercy, Gluttony and Abstinence, Lechery and Chastity, from MS. Gg. 4. 27 in the Univ. Libr., Cambridge. | |

¹ The Ellesmere cuts can be arrangd 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. See these two orders on p. 700.

Six-Text Order of Tales.

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

Ellesmere MS. Order.

| | <i>Group</i> |
|--------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Knight | |
| 2. Miller | |
| 3. Reeve | A |
| 4. Cook | |
| 5. Man of Law | B₁ |
| 6. Wife of Bath | |
| 7. Friar | D |
| 8. Sum'ner | |
| 9. Clerk | |
| 10. Merchant | E |
| 11. Squire | |
| 12. Franklin | F |
| 13. Doctor | |
| 14. Pardoner | C |
| 15. Shipman | |
| 16. Prioress | |
| 17. Chaucer | B₂ |
| 18. Monk | |
| 19. Nun's Priest | |
| 20. Second Nun | G |
| 21. Canon's Yeoman | H |
| 22. Manciple | H |
| 23. Parson | I |

1.

END OF THE MERCHANT'S TALE.

[for soth I wol no lenger yow contrarie
 now lete vs turne ageyne to Ianuarie 2320
 that in the gardeyne / with his fresshe May
 syngeth ful meryere / than the popyngay
 ¶ yow loue I beste / *and shal and* other noon
 so longe aboute the aleyis / is he goon 2324
 til he was comyn / ageyns the Perye
 where as this Damyan / sitteth ful merye
 an high amonge the fresshe levis grene
 this fresshe May / that is so bright *and shene* 2328
 gan for to sike / *and seide* allas my side
 now sir *quod* she / for aught that may bitide
 I moste haue of the perys / that I se
 or I mot dye / so sore longeth me 2332
 to eten of the smale peris grene
 helpe for hir loue / that is of heuen quene
 I telle yow wel / a woman in my plighte
 may haue to fruyte / so grete an appetite 2336
 that she may dye / but she hit haue
 allas *quod* he / that I nad here a knaue
 that coude clymbe / allas allas *quod* he
 that I am blynde / ye sir no fors *quod* she 2340
 but wolde ye vouchesaff / for godis sake
 the pery with-inne youre armes to take
 for wel I woot / that ye mystrute me
 than shulde I clymbe / wel I-now *quod* she 2344
 so I my fote myghit sette / vppon youre bak
 for soth *quod* he / in me shal be no lak
 myghit I yow helpen / with myn herte bloode
 he stoupith down / *and* on his bak she stode 2348
 and caughte hir bi a twiste / *and* vp she goothe
 ladyes I pray yow / be ye not wroothe
 I can not glose / I am a rude man [leaf 130, back]
 and sodeynly / anoon this Damyan 2352

gan pulle vp the smok / *and* in he thronge [MS Arch. Seld. B. 14]
 and whan that Pluto saw / that grete wronge
 to Ianuarie he gaff ageyne / his sight
 and made him se / as wel as euer he myght 2356
 and whan that he / had his sight agayne
 ther was neuer man of thing / so fayne
 but on his wiff / his thought was euermo
 vp to the tre / he caste his eyghen two 2360
 and saw how Damyan / his wiff had dressed
 in suche manere / hit may not ben expressed
 but if I wolde speke / vncurteysly
 and vp he gaff / a roryng *and* a cry 2364
 as doth the moder / whan the childe shal dye
 oowte helpe allas / harrow he gan crye
 o stronge lady stoure / what doist thou
 and she answerde / sir what eylyth yow 2368
 haue pacience *and* resoun / in youre mynde
 I haue yow holpen / on bothe youre eyghen blynde
 vp perel of my soule / I shal not lyen
 as me was taught / to hele with youre eyghen 2372
 was nothing bet / to make yow se
 than strogle with a man / vppon a tre
 god woot I did hit / in ful good entente
 stride *quod* he / ye algate in hit wente 2376
 god yeve yow both / on shames deth to dien
 he did the so / I sigh it with myn eyghen
 and ellis be I honged / by the hals
 than is *quod* she / my medicyne al fals 2380
 for certeynly if that ye myghen see
 ye wolde not seye / tho wordis vn-to me
 ye han som glymsyng / *and* no parfite sight
 I se *quod* he as wel / as euer I myght 2384
 thonked be god / with both myn eyghen two
 and bi my trouthe me thoughte he did the so
 ye mase mase goode sir / *quod* she [leaf 131]
 this thanke haue I / for I haue made yow se 2388

GROUP E. § 4. MERCHANT'S TALE. Arch. Seld. B. 14. 3*

allas *quod* she / that euer I was so kynde [MS Arch. Seld. B. 14]
 now dame *quod* he / lete al passe out of mynde
 com down my lef / *and* if I haue myssaide
 god helpe me so / as I am euel apaide 2392
 but bi my fader soule / I wende haue seyne
 how that this Damyan / had bi the leyne
 and that thi smok / had leyne vppon thi brest
 ye sir *quod* she / ye may wene as yow lest 2396
 but sir a man / that wakith out of his slepe
 he may not sodeynly / ne wel taken kepe
 vppon a thing / ne sen hit *parfitly*
 til that he ben a-dawed / verrily 2400
 right so a man / that longe hath blynde I-be
 ne may not sodeynly / so wel I-se
 first whan his sight / is newe com ageyne
 as he that hath / a day or two I-seyne 2404
 til that youre sight / I-stabled be a while
 ther may ful many a sight / yow bigile
 beth war I pray yow / for bi heuen kyng
 ful many a man wenyth / to se a thing 2408
 and hit is al another / than hit semeth
 he that mysconceivith / mys demeth
 and with that worde / she lepe down fro the tre
 this Ianuarie / who is glad but he 2412
 he kissith hir / *and* clippith hir / ful ofte
 and on hir wombe / he stroketh hir ful softe
 and to his paleys hoom / he hath hir lad
 now goode men I pray yow / to be glad 2416
 thus endith here my tale / of Ianuarie
 god blesse vs / *and* his moder seynt Marie. Amen. 2418
 Here endith the Marchauntis tale of Ianuarie and May.]

[Arch. Seld. MS B 14, on leaf 131.]

[and bigynneth the Squyers prologe]

By godis mercy / seide oure ost tho
 now such a wiff / I pray god kepe vs fro 2420
 lo whiche slighthis / & sotilteis [leaf 131, back]
 in women ben / for thei be besy as beis
 to vs sely men / for to disseive
 and fro a soth̄ / euer wol thei weive 2424
 bi this marchauntis tale / hit previth̄ wele
 but douteles as trewe as any stele
 I haue a wiff / though̄ she pore be
 but of hir tonge / a labbyng shrewe is she 2428
 and yit she hath an hepe / of vicis mo
 therof no force / lete al such̄ thingis go
 but woot ye what / in consail be hit seide
 me rewith sore / I am to hir I-teyde 2432
 for & I sholde reken / .euery manere vise
 whiche that she hath / I-wis I were to nyse
 and cause whi / hit sholde reported be
 and tolde to hir / bi some of this mayne 2436
 bi whom it nedith not / to declare
 syn women conne outere suche cheffare
 and eke my witt / suffisith̄ not ther-to
 to tellen al / ther-fore my tale is do] 2440

3.

[MS. Arch. Seld. B. 14, leaf 114, back.]

[And next folwith the Marchauntis prolog.

Weping *and* waylyng / care *and* other sorowe
 I knowe I-now on even / *and* on morowe
 quod the marchaunte / *and* so done other mo
 that wedded be / I trowe that hit be so 1216
 for wel I woot / hit farith so bi me
 I haue a wiff / the worst that may be
 for though the fende / to hir coupled were
 she wolde him ouer-macche / I dar wel swere 1220
 what shulde I yow rehers in special
 hir high malice / she is a shrewe at al
 ther is a longe / *and* a large difference
 bitwixe Gresildis grete pacience 1224
 and of my wiff / the passing cruelte
 were I vnbounden / also mot y the
 I wolde neuer efte comyn / in the snare
 we wedded men liven / in sorowe *and* care 1228
 a-say who so wol / *and* he shal fynde
 that I sey sothe / bi seint Thomas of ynde
 and for the more parte / I sey not alle
 god shilde that it sholde / so bi-falle 1232
 a goode sir oste / I haue wedded be
 this monthes two / *and* more not parde
 and yit I trowe / he wolde al his live
 wiveles han ben / though men wolde him rive 1236
 in-to the herte / ne coude in no manere [leaf 115]
 tellen so meche sorowe / as I now here
 couthe telle / of my wivis cursidnesse
 now quod oure oste marchaunt / so god yow blesse 1240
 syn ye so mechel knowen / of that arte
 ful hertely I pray yow / telle vs parte
 gladly quod he / but of myn owne sore
 for hevy herte / I telle may no more 1244

Here endith the Marchaunt is prolog

-4.

THE SQUIRE'S HEAD-LINK.

[MS. Arch. Seld. B. 14, on leaf 131, back.]

[Squyer com nere / if that youre wille be
 and sey somewhat of loue / for certis ye
 konne theron / as mech̄ as any man
 nay sir quod he / but I wol sey as I can
 with herty wil / for I wol not rebelle
 ageyne youre lust / a tale wol I telle
 haue me excused / if that I speke a-mys
 my wil is good / & lo my tale is this

Here endith the Squyers prolog]

5.

[Laud MS 600, leaf 171.]

[Here begynneþ þe prolog of þe frankeleyn

In faiþ squier þou hast þe wel I-quytt
 And gentilli I praise wel þi witt
 Quod þe frankeleyn considering þi youþe
 So felyngli þou spekest sir I alouþe 676
 As to my dome þer is noon þat is here
 Of eloquence shal be þi pere
 [yf þat þou lyve / god yeve þe gode chaunce [Haistwell MS]
 And in vertue / sende the contynuaunce] 680
 ffor of þi speche I haue gret deynte
 I haue a sone and bi þe Trinite
 I had leuere þan xx^{ti} pounde worþ lond
 þough it right now were fallen in my honde 684
 Ye ar a man of suche discrecion
 As þat ye ben fy vpon possession
 But if a man be vertuou with-al
 I haue my sone snybbed and yut shal 688
 ffor he to vertu listep not entende
 But for to pleie at dies and to despende
 And lese al þat he hap is his vsage
 And he hap leuere talke wiþ a page 692
 þan to commune wiþ any gentil wight
 Where he might lerne gentilnesse a-right
 Strawe for youre gentilnesse quod our host
 What frankeleyn parde wel þow wost Frankeleyn 696
 þat eche of of (*sic*) you mot tellen atte leste
 A tale or too / or breken his beheste [leaf 171, back]
 þat knowe I wel quod þe ffrankeleyn certeyn Frankeleyn
 I praie you not haueþ me in desdeyn 700

þow to þis man I speke a worde or too
 Telle on þi tale wiþouten wordes moo
 Gladli sir host *quod* he I wol obeie
 Vn-to youre wille now herkenef what I seie 704
 I wil you not contrarie in no wise
 As ferre as þat my wittes wil suffise
 I praie to god þat it mai plesen you
 þan wot I wel þat it is good Inow] 708

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 MILBERE.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 38, back.





THE KNYGHT.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 14.

(The brand on the horse's hip—M, ? for *Miles*—
is in ink, and probably by a later hand.)





THE COOK.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 51.





THE REVE.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 46.





THE WYF OF BATHE.

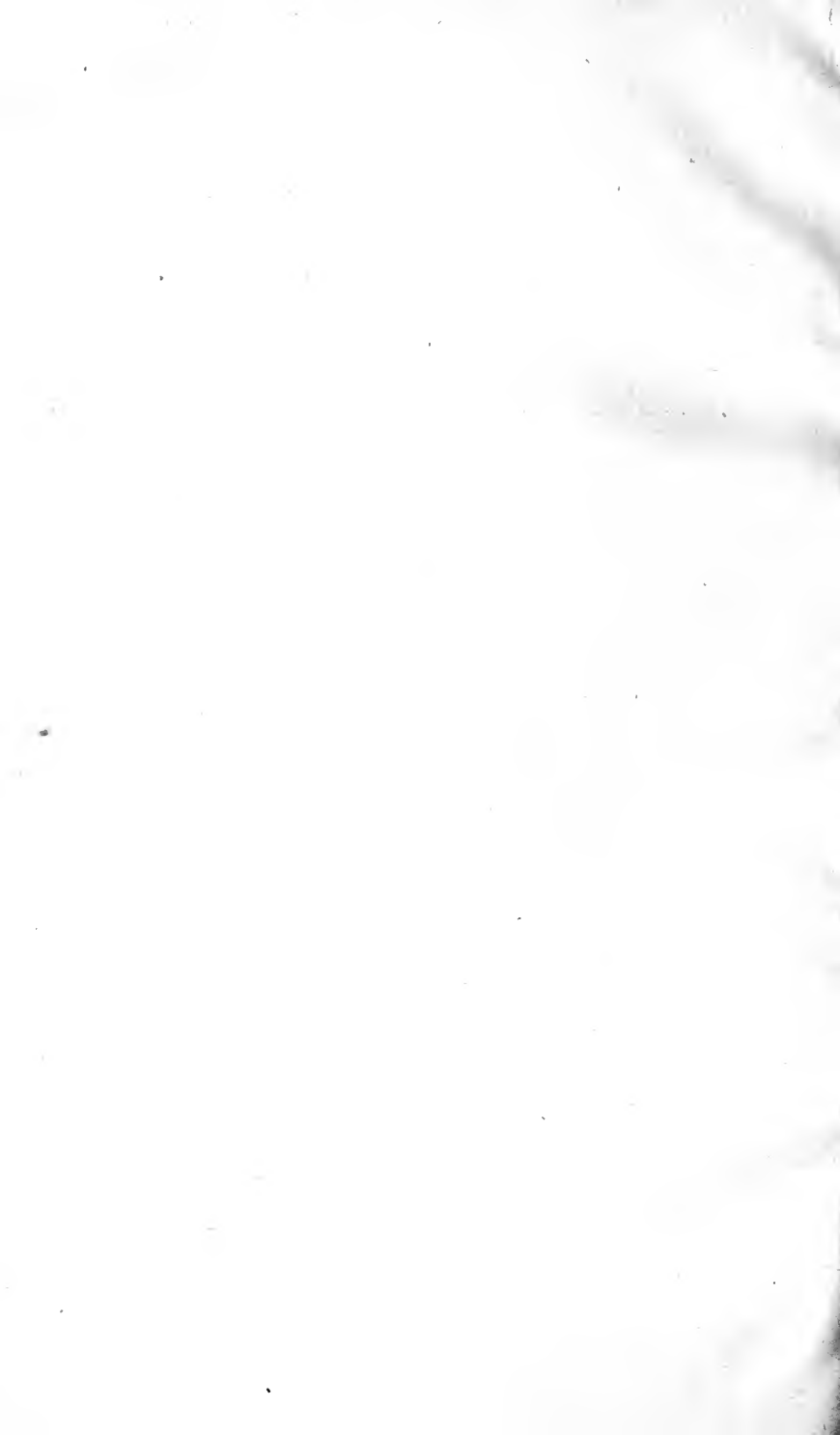
Ellesmere MS, leaf 76.





THE MAN OF LAWE.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 54, back.





THE FRERE.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 80, back.





THE SOMONOUR.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 85, back.





THE CLERK OF OXFORD.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 92.





THE SHIPMAN.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 147, back.





THE PRIORESSE.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 152, back.

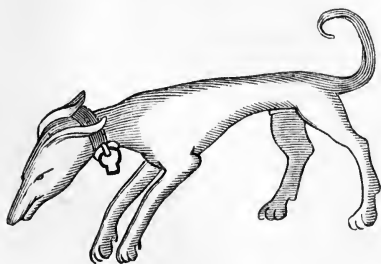




CHAUCER.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 157, back.





THE MONK.

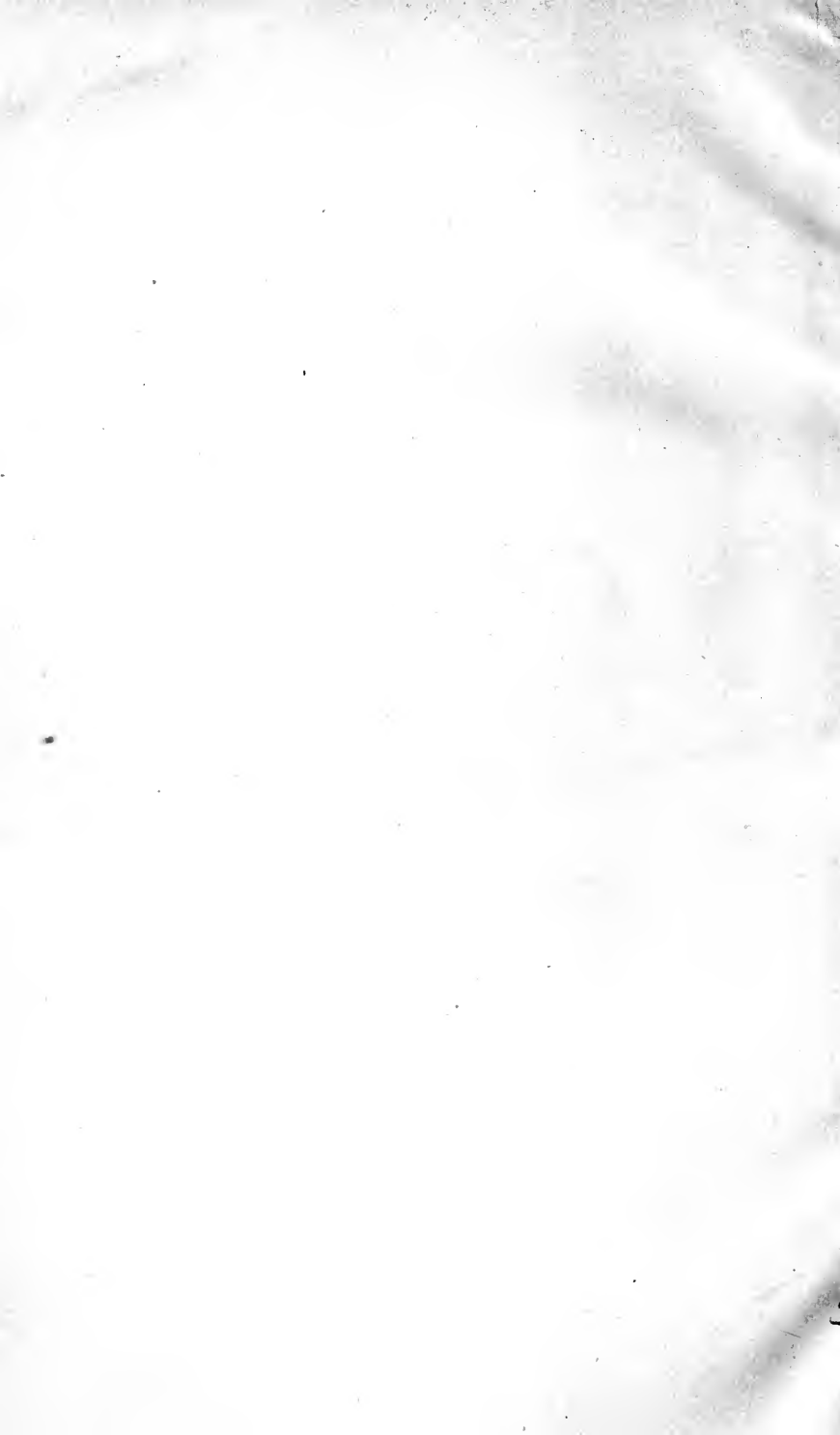
Ellesmere MS, leaf 173.

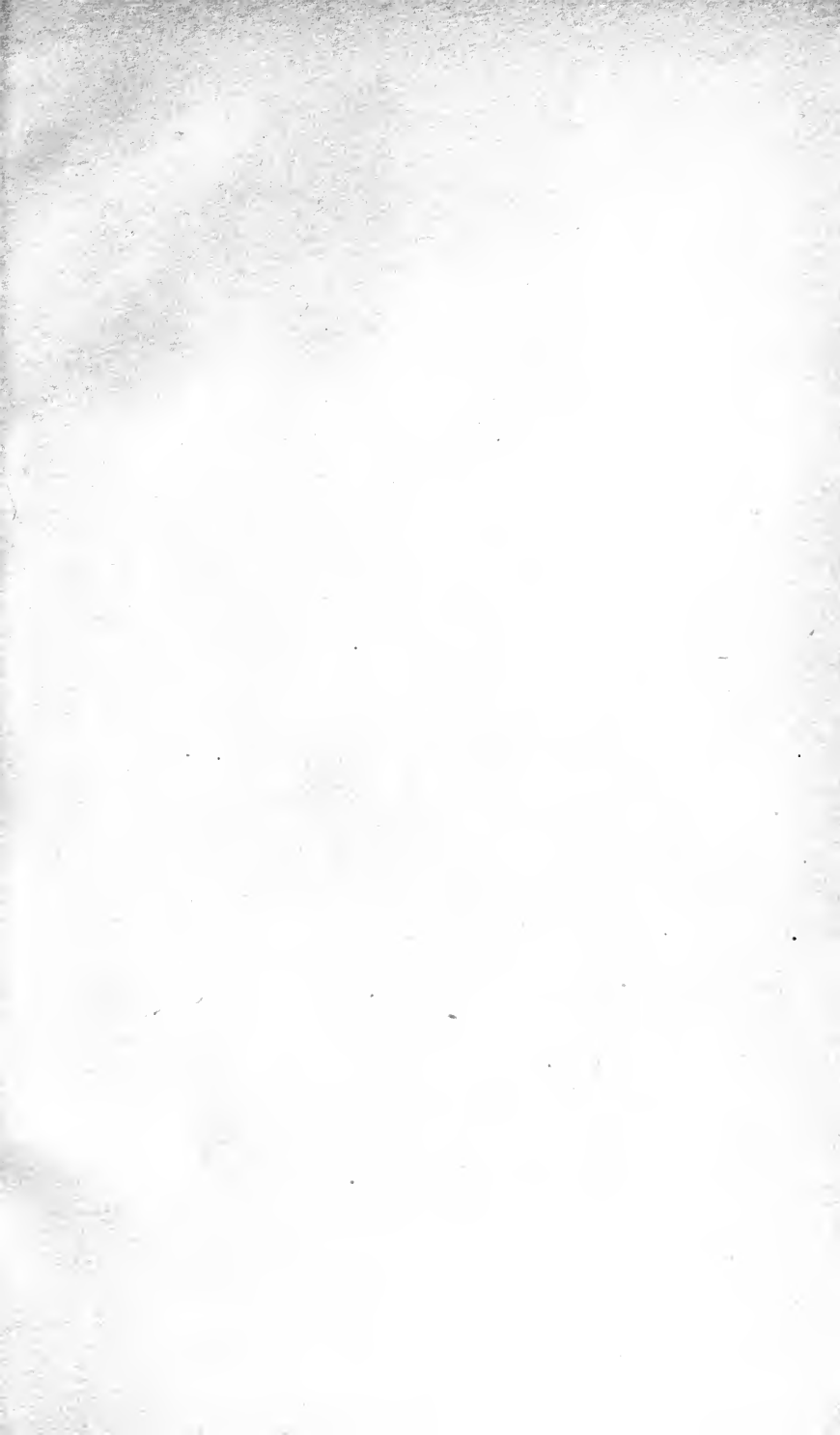




THE NONNES PREEST.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 183.







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