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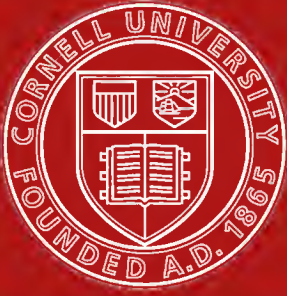
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*Hundred Merry Tales :*

*THE EARLIEST ENGLISH FEST-BOOK.*

NOW FIRST REPRODUCED IN PHOTO-LITHOGRAPHY  
FROM THE UNIQUE COPY  
OF 1526

IN THE ROYAL LIBRARY AT GÖTTINGEN.

*WITH AN INTRODUCTION, NOTES, AND  
GLOSSARIAL INDEX*

BY

W. CAREW HAZLITT.

LONDON :

*J. W. FARVIS & SON,*

28, KING WILLIAM STREET, STRAND.

1887.

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## EDITOR'S PREFACE.

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**T**HERE may be some, who will attach value and interest to the singular old volume, now first reproduced in exact imitation of the original, on account of the casual mention of it by Shakespear in one of his plays; but I hope and think that many more will welcome its appearance on another and higher ground, and will become of opinion that, where a solitary copy of such a relic as the earliest jest-book in the national tongue of England is only to be found in a foreign repository, and is liable to destruction at any moment, the survival, not of its mere substance alone, but of its very identity, in the shape of a facsimile, is one of those minor duties, which we owe to succeeding generations.

In the good former days, a gentleman who did his friends and the public the favour of reprinting a curious old book, was regarded as a sort of benefactor by a few who knew a little about the matter, and by the greater number, who knew nothing, he was considered a person of elegant tastes and of liberal disposition; for he usually engaged in the speculation on his own responsibility. The case is now altogether altered, and any one who proposes to give to the world a new edition of an old book or tract, is in peril of being received as a Frenchman receives the news of his third child, unless he can make out a pretty strong plea for his proceeding. He must bring his justification in his hand. The burden of proof is upon him.

In the present instance, the enterprise on which the Editor has entered, is one which seems, at first sight, not to be without its element of superfluity, for in 1866 the book which is now in question was brought out under the care of Dr. Herman Oesterley from the same copy which I employ.<sup>1</sup>

But I believe that I hold, notwithstanding, a very fair brief for my clients; for it was considered that the *Hundred Merry Tales* had so many claims to special consideration:—as being the most ancient book of its kind in the English language; as existing only in a complete state in a single copy preserved in a Continental library; and as the volume, out of which, in *Much Ado about Nothing*, 1600, Beatrice tells us she had been charged with stealing all her good wit. So the great poet makes her say, at least; but the accusation was, so far as we can judge, an unfair one, and between the wit of the book and that of the lady there is little in common.

When the present editor republished the work as one of a collection more than twenty years ago, he had access only to the text of Singer; he had, at a later period, an opportunity of collating it with the original, at that time in the possession of Mr. Halliwell-Phillipps; but the copy, as it is tolerably well-known, had been made up from an assortment of mutilated leaves, and presented a considerable number of *lacunæ*, including entire tales, so that, until the Göttingen copy occurred, we had in fact no means of studying this, in every sense, unique publication in its full integrity.

But the Göttingen copy and that included in *Old English Jest Books*, 1864, belonged to different impressions, and the former contains matter, which never formed part of the latter. Some items were left out to make room for others which were deemed fresher and more attractive; and the entire arrangement was altered. The edition of 1526 includes four tales, which are not in that without date, but omits three found in the latter.

The articles special to the present issue are the second,

<sup>1</sup> Shakespeare's Jest Book. A Hundred Merry Tales, from the only perfect copy known. Edited, with Introduction and Notes, by Dr. Herman Oesterley, London, 1866, 12mo, pp. 160 + XX.

ninth, ninety-first, and ninety-eighth stories. It does not give Numbers 97, 99, and 100 of the other issue, which I annex in an Appendix, all being unhappily defective. There appears more than one error in the numeration of the calendar or table; for there is no Number 42 in it, although a title, which should have been so registered, intervenes between 41 and 43; while, again, there is no 98 either in the Table or the text. These irregularities are of course of perpetual occurrence in the literary and typographical work of the period.

The Göttingen copy of 1526 consists of twenty-eight leaves in small folio, precisely answering to the present reproduction. It is stated by Dr. Oesterley that, according to an entry in the books of the Library, the volume was purchased in December, 1767, at an auction in Lüneburg, but that no clue could be discovered to its antecedents.

Dr. Oesterley puts forward a somewhat elaborate argument in favour of the priority of the impression first edited by himself in 1866, over the undated copy brought to light by Conybeare, and printed by Singer<sup>1</sup> and the present writer.<sup>2</sup> I shall subjoin what the learned gentleman advances:—

“The question, which of the two copies recovered up to the present moment is the original and older edition (and there is very little hope of ever discovering a third copy), will be very difficult to prove to an absolute certainty. By the want of any authentic indication, the inquiry is thrown back on a mere circumstantial proof; but I think the reasons to be given hereafter will be strong enough to produce a firm conviction of the priority of our original.

The first argument in favour of the edition of 1526 is founded on the selection and disposition of the tales. When a reprint of a collection of a hundred tales like the one in question is being prepared, and the removing of four stories seems desirable, it is unlikely enough, that the three or four last pieces should be cast off; but it is much more unlikely that the number required to complete a hundred should be inserted in entirely chance places. This, however, would have been the case in the Nos. 2, 7, 91 and 98 of our edition, if it had been a revision of the undated copy. On the other hand, it is quite natural simply to throw out the tales considered as unserviceable (which, as before mentioned, would hardly be placed together, but be scattered throughout the work), and to subjoin the additions at the end. This has been the case, if the undated edition is the result of a revision: Nos. 2, 7, 91 and 98

<sup>1</sup> Shakespeare Jest Book, 1814, 12mo.

<sup>2</sup> Shakespeare Jest Books, 1864, 12mo, 3 vols.

of the original edition have been suppressed, and in their stead Nos. 97 to 100 of the later impression are added. I must say, that this mode of revision, in a work where the disposition of the matter is entirely arbitrary, seems to me more natural than even putting the new stories in the place of the old ones. The substance of the tales in discussion can be of no moment for the question, for indeed the one is about as insipid as the other, and moreover, the taste of our ancestors in regard to jests and popular tales was so very different from ours, that it is next to impossible at present to decide which of them might be considered more palatable to the public at that time.

The transposition of a single tale to another place<sup>1</sup> can, of course, be no conclusive argument either for one view or the other, whereas the want of the morals in the undated copy is of consequence, if it really be found in the original and not be produced by a defect, which is not quite evident in Mr. Hazlitt's reprint. As our copy contains twenty-eight leaves and the undated one only twenty-four, therefore the arrangement of the type in each must have been quite different; the absence of these morals might have arisen from a desire of saving space, and thus furnish a new evidence for the priority of the dated edition.

The variations in the table favour my opinion in an equal manner. Wherever any essential differences occur in the headings, they are equal to as many emendations in the undated copy,<sup>2</sup> and these improvements evidently bear witness to the later appearance of the revised edition; the more, as there is no trace of a third edition earlier than both, of which the undated copy might possibly be a revised impression, ours being only a later and unrevised reprint.

This might, indeed, have been the case for the alterations of the text; but under the circumstances it is too improbable to be advanced as an objection, and I may fairly put it out of the question. Among the very large quantity of variations in the text, there are, of course, many entirely irrelevant in the decision of the question, as they cannot be considered as improvements. The greater part, nevertheless, proves that the undated edition is the product of a revision. In the first place the misprints are important. The typographical errors of our edition, about fifty or sixty, have all been corrected in Mr. Hazlitt's original, in which, however, there are about twenty new misprints. The most remarkable of these is p. 35, l. 13, of Mr. Hazlitt's reprint, where, evidently from the repetition of the words "tyed fast by the leggys" in three consecutive lines (at the top of fol. vi verso of our original), more than a line of our text has been omitted, the passage ending with the first repetition of those words being left out. As it would be impossible to enumerate all the passages which go to prove my proposition, I mention only some of the most striking instances. Fol. 1 verso, l. 39, the words "his neck," accidentally omitted in ours, are supplied in Mr. Hazlitt's edition; fol. 2 verso, l. 10, "for that that"—Hazl. "because;" fol. 10, l. 38,

<sup>1</sup> No. 43 to No. 32 of the undated edition.

<sup>2</sup> See the headings of Nos. 1 to 6, 44 and 66.



“by vyolence”—Hazl. “of the house;” fol. 11 verso, l. 16, “thy”—Hazl. “your;” fol. 14, l. 27, “up through”—Hazl. “through it,” &c. ; but especially fol. 21, l. 3 and 4, a very corrupt passage of our text has been corrected in Mr. Hazlitt's edition, p. 102, l. 8 ; fol. 23, l. 2, the words “sayde in sporte” are omitted, but have been inserted in the undated copy.

On the other hand, I feel obliged to mention that a few of the variations in the undated copy cannot well be considered as corrections from our text, but rather seem to indicate the reverse ;<sup>1</sup> this, however, is easily enough accounted for by the fact that alterations are not always improvements : indeed, in one instance,<sup>2</sup> the very corruption of the text proves its being a revised edition.

The orthography in both editions is too varied and unsettled to be of any moment for our question, although the frequent use of written numbers in the undated copy instead of the simple cypher, and perhaps the employing of the word “pence” for our abbreviation d. seem to strengthen my argument. On the whole, all the orthography proves is that only a few years elapsed between the appearance of the two editions.

These are the arguments I have to present ; although each taken singly may not be considered conclusive, the whole will form as unexceptionable a proof of the priority of our edition as can be expected, and this proof is the more cogent, as there is nothing worth mentioning to be offered in favour of the other edition.”

Yet to any one who is conversant with the lax and capricious manner in which editorial functions were formerly discharged, even the strong points adduced by Dr. Oesterley will scarcely seem conclusive ; and as a matter of fact the question is of no special relevance. It is of greater moment that the means exist for laying before the student a complete text, as it were, of both books, with the exception of the deficiency in the concluding tales in what the doctor holds to have been the second impression.

A much more interesting and more vital consideration is the literary history of the work ; and I do not recollect that any suggestion in furtherance or elucidation of this point has ever been submitted.

There is the excellent authority of Gabriel Harvey, the friend and fellow-collegian of Spenser, for believing that some of the epigrams of John Heywood were “conceits and devices of

<sup>1</sup> F. e. fol. 12, l. 34 ; fol. 12 verso, l. 27 ; fol. 16 verso, l. 23 ; fol. 20, l. 21, &c.

<sup>2</sup> Fol. 20 verso, l. 9 ; see the notes.

pleasant Sir Thomas More ;" in his copy of Speght's Chaucer, Harvey, a rare annotator of his books, made a memorandum to such an effect ; and, although he was not a contemporary of More, he was so of Heywood.

This authoritative statement seems to possess the virtue of establishing More and Heywood on a footing of intimacy ; and if we had not had such a piece of evidence, the congenial dispositions of the two men, and the connection of both with the court, might have combined to render such an intercourse and friendship on their parts alike probable and natural. Harvey explicitly declares that Heywood was under obligations to More for hints and notions, which he developed in his dramatic and poetical compositions ; and many a droll anecdote must have been exchanged in the course of time between these two kindred spirits, and many a quip and joke, which had their outlet in some interlude or epigram, were doubtless indebted for their germs to a merry-making at Chelsea, Greenwich, Hampton Court, or elsewhere.

The relationship between More and the Rastells, of whom one was the printer of both issues of the *Hundred Merry Tales*, is next to be received into account ; but the press of John Rastell was likewise employed in the production of all the earliest editions of the works of Heywood, as that of his brother William was of nearly all those of More. The pleasantries and outlines of plots, too, perhaps, were communicated to Heywood by his illustrious friend, and embodied in interludes, which made their appearance in type with the imprint of a typographer, who was connected by marriage with More, and whom it is not very fanciful to suppose that he had recommended to his brother humourist.

The two were, at one time, neighbours in Hertfordshire, if indeed Heywood was not actually domiciled with the Chancellor at one period of his life. They would be fond of collecting all the racy and diverting tales which fell in their way, to animate the conversation, as well as for literary use, and some of these were apt to be unsuited for dramatic purposes, while they might be thought deserving of preservation in some other form.

It does not strike me as at all improbable that the *Hundred Merry Tales*, looking at its great intrinsic merit, its relative freedom from grossness, the skilful manipulation of the narratives composing the series and their mainly original cast, and, lastly, the laconic and uncommercial title under which the book was ushered into publicity, that the collection was made by John Heywood with the assistance, possibly at the instigation, of Sir Thomas More, and committed to the press by More's kinsman in the same way that one or other of the two Rastells gradually executed the bulk of the publications of both authors. I propose to draw together the two or three scattered circumstances, which first led me to surmise that, in the most ancient and most interesting body of *facetiae* in our own or any other language, the writer of *Utopia* and his jocund acquaintance—both alike the favourites of kings—were intimately concerned; and it will be granted, I hope, that for this experimental attribution there is much more solid ground than ordinary conjecture.

Without any note of the year, but presumably in 1519, and at all events prior to the appearance of the *Tales*, John Rastell printed the Interlude of the *Four Elements*. This piece is usually regarded as anonymous; and I cannot go so far as to positively lift the veil from the authorship. But it is curious enough that No. 19 of the *Tales* treats "Of the iiiii. elemētys where they sould be found." The affinity of title and subject may amount to nothing, although it is to be borne in mind that the dramatic profession, at this time, had very few followers, and that the topic was a peculiar one. But, independently of all that, there is a link between the little entry in the old story-book and the interlude of a far more pronounced character. In the play occurs the following passage:—

*Humanity.* Thou art a mad guest; by this light!

*Sensual Appetite.* Yea, Sir, it is a fellow that never fails—

But canst get my master a dish of quails?

Small birds, swallows, or wagtails?

They be light of digestion.

*Tavener.* Light of digestion? for what reason?

*Sen.* For physic putteth this reason thereto,

Because those birds fly to and fro,  
And be continual moving.

*Tav.* Then know I of a lighter meat than that.

*Hu.* I pray thee, tell me what.

*Ta.* If ye will needs know at short and long,  
It is even a woman's tongue,  
For that is ever stirring."

Now, No. 9 of the *Tales* speaks "of hym that sayd that a womans tong was lightest met of degestion." It purports to be a London story; and the question arises, whether the compiler of the jest-book borrowed from the interlude, or the dramatist merely employed in the latter material which he had by him, and subsequently included in the *Tales*.<sup>1</sup> My own view is that the two passages are sufficiently like to have proceeded from the same source, and sufficiently different to make the hypothesis allowable, that the one was a dramatized development of the other, rather than that the jest was borrowed from the piece; and I should, moreover, be inclined to put on the same footing the parallel between the interlude of the *Four Elements* and the ninth story in the book before us. There is altogether a cross-thread of testimony, which can be, at any rate, hardly otherwise than worth the space which it has cost to set it forth, and the more so, since we may have thus succeeded in removing the common mystery, which has hitherto hung over the production both of play and jest-book; nor, in estimating the facts represented, ought we on any account to forget the condition of the press and the stage under Henry VIII., and how widely it differed from their aspect under Elizabethan and Stuart rule.

In the first moiety of the sixteenth century, the individuals in England capable of conceiving and carrying out such performances as the *Hundred Merry Tales* and the interludes of Heywood were countable on the fingers of one's hand; and even in the absence of the remarkable coincidence which I have above indicated, the sponsorship for all works of the kind really lies within a very narrow range. It was not then as it was in and after the days of Shakespear, when a crowd of adventurers

<sup>1</sup> I refer the reader, for the original of the story, to the Notes.

swamped the market with their competitive labours. In 1526, the buyers and readers of miscellaneous literature were chiefly to be found among courtiers and scholars, and if Beatrice had actually had the *Tales* under her eyes, it is excessively unlikely that her mother ever beheld a copy.

Having regard to the unique brevity of the title to the collection, the abstinence from prefatory comment and the unbroken silence on the quarter whence the MS. was obtained, I should, if the names of Heywood and More were given to me, adjudge the book to More rather than to Heywood; because, in the case of Heywood, the anonymity could have no meaning, whereas a man in a high official capacity might not have chosen to identify himself with a miscellany containing so many censures on the Church. Two poetical trifles had, during his earlier years, stolen into print without his name, perhaps without his sanction: *The Merry Jest how a Serjeant would learn to be a friar*,<sup>1</sup> and *the Book of Lady Fortune*;<sup>2</sup> and he had composed a series of stanzas illustrating the stages of human life for some hangings in his father's house.<sup>3</sup> *Jeux d'esprit* and light literature accorded with his taste, if not consonant with the dignity of his legal position.

I discern another corroboration of my theory in the sources to which the editor or adapter of the *Tales* went, where he drew from prior books, for they were just the class of literature to which the attention of scholars only would have been attracted. I beg to mention the *Summa Prædicantium* of Johannes de Bromyard and the *Joci ac Sales* of Luscinus, the latter bearing date 1524, two years before the appearance of the English collection, and a sort of volume which Desiderius Erasmus of Rotterdam might have sent across the sea to divert his Chelsea correspondent.

No. 19 of the *Tales* in the issue of 1526 seems to follow the cue of No. 8, and to be in the same misogynous vein; and in the

<sup>1</sup> Hazlitt's *Popular Poetry*, iii. Warton does not speak favourably of this piece; but I confess that it seems to me very entertaining and clever.

<sup>2</sup> Hazlitt's *Fugitive Tracts*, 1875, 1st Series.

<sup>3</sup> Warton's *H. of E. Poetry*, 1871, iv., 91.

former, as well as in No. 62, *Of the man that had the dove wyfe*, the aspen leaf is associated with the woman's tongue, though in a different sense.

If my idea as to the association of More with the *Tales* of 1526 be of any value, it may be an aid, in following the clue thus afforded, to remind the reader that, amid the multiplicity of topics embraced, there are several articles of a traditional cast, appertaining to the very commencement of the Tudor era, when More himself was a mere youth. I am looking at the anecdotes about the Welsh and Justice Vavasour, which belong to the fifteenth, rather than to the sixteenth, century; and these might have been communicated by his father Sir John More, or picked up in conversation with the old judge's friends. The advent to the throne of a prince of Cambro-British blood had led to a great scramble for places of profit among the Taffyhoo and to the migration of considerable numbers to London, where their *gaucheries* laid them open to ridicule and their predatory tastes to chastisement.

At the same time, the suspected and proposed ascription of the volume cannot very well be pushed farther than a claim on behalf of More and his friend as contributors to its contents; for that there was a third hand in the affair—probably that of the printer and editor—certain expressions seem clearly to denote, and, for instance, in the anecdote about a man fully as celebrated as More himself, neither the latter nor Heywood could surely have described the antagonist of Wolsey as “*one master Skelton, a poet laureat.*”

The *Hundred Merry Tales* were probably recommended to the compiler, as regards the complement, by the *Decameron* of Boccaccio, which had not yet been rendered into English, but was, of course, familiar to scholars in the original language. It has been often observed that in the old times a certain mystic affection existed for odd numbers, and that thence sprang the Three Fates, the Nine Muses, the Nine Sybilline Books, the Seven Wise Men, and so forth; but, as a matter of fact, the decimal and its multiples were nearly as usual, and even in the Scriptures we get the Ten Wise and Foolish Virgins, the Forty Years in the Wilderness, the Ten Commandments, the

Twelve Tables of the Mosaic Law, and the Twelve Judges of Israel. At all events, in early romantic lore no occult significance was attached to odd or even numbers ; but a century was not an unfrequent total.

One criterion of the special excellence of the *Hundred Tales*, 1526, is the manifest declension in merit of the *Merry Tales and Quick Answers*, which appeared a few years later in imitation of them, and which are equally entitled to be called Shakespear's Jest-Book, inasmuch as the trick of the boy on the blind man (No. 131) is quoted in the same drama, in which an incidental allusion occurs to the anterior publication.

The *Tales and Quick Answers*, by whomsoever they were brought together, are far more academical in their tone and complexion than the undertaking, in which I have attempted to trace the helping hand of More ; and this test is more applicable to the second edition (1567) than to the first of or about 1530. Yet, on the other hand, there is a certain proportion of matter in this volume germane in character and equal in interest to any found in the predecessor ; and one might be apt to indulge in a speculation, whether the editor or publisher had access to unused portions of the original MS., if it were not the case that the supplemental stories first added, so far as we at present know, in 1567 exhibit a similar admixture of the vernacular with the classical, of anecdotes of the ancients with humorous traits connected with the current or previous reign—little waifs of hearsay or report, which were calculated to lend a fillip to the book, at the same time that the citations from Plutarch and Lucian helped to communicate to the pages an odour of the ink-horn, acceptable to the more erudite ; but it is notable that no mention of Erasmus is made in the *Hundred Tales* nor in the first impression of the *Tales and Quick Answers*, although four consecutive items in the second known issue of the latter refer to him and his alleged heresies in a way which shews that the compiler was a friend to the Reformed Church, even if not that those insertions had formed part of some intermediate edition prior to the official establishment of Protestantism in England.

In the interlude of the *Four Elements* (1519), Tom Couper is introduced as a random name by one of the characters ; in

the *Merry Tales*, No. 53, Master Cooper occurs in the same sort of way, unless the jest was the report of a matter of fact. This is a very insignificant rivet in the chain of supposed relationship between our two earliest jest-books and one of our most ancient dramatic productions of its class ; but I jot it down for what it may be worth as a minor factor ; and, once more, as regards the identity of sources from which the *Tales* of 1526 and a portion of those of the second collection or series were by possibility derived, there is the evident correlation between No. 20 of the former work and No. 54 of the latter, of which both came from some one conversant with Vavasour and his eccentricities. A still more powerful plea for the notion that the two volumes had a common editor is the striking similarity of treatment and style, and the uniformity of tone toward the church and the female sex.

The popularity of the *Tales* in our hands survived, more or less, down to the time of Elizabeth, and there are traces, both in the Stationers' Register and in the literature of the period, of editions of the work, of which not so much as an unique copy has descended to us. The *Hundred Merry Tales*, properly so named, and the *Merry Tales and Quick Answers* seem after a while to have been occasionally confounded from the tolerably close correspondence in the titles ; thus Sir John Harington, in his *Apology (for the Metamorphosis of Ajax)*, 1596, observes :

“ Ralph Horsey, Knight, the best housekeeper in Dorsetshire, a good freeholder, a deputie Lieutenant. Oh, sir, you keep hauks and houndes, and hunting horses : it may be som madde fellowe will say, you must stand up to the chinne, for spending five hundred poundes, to catch hares, and Partridges, that might be taken for five poundes.” Then comes this note in the margin : “ according to the tale in the hundred Mery Tales.”

But Harington's memory deceived him, for he meant to refer to No. 52 of the *Merry Tales and Quick Answers*, where we meet with a story “ Of hym that healed franticke men ; ” and it is accompanied by this moral : “ This tale toucheth such young gentyll menne, that dispende ouer moche good on haukes, and other trifils.”

The allusion to the Henry VIII. book in works of later date, and even the entries at Stationers' Hall, do not absolutely prove



that the volume was ever republished after 1526. But Laneham, in his *Letter from Kenilworth*, 1575, enumerates the *Tales* among the contents of the library of Captain Cox of Coventry, which, as the writer usually cites books and tracts of contemporary date, may possibly serve as a piece of collateral evidence in favour of the existence at one period of impressions now unknown.

Taylor the Water-Poet, too, cites the *Tales* as one of the works of reference employed by him in the composition of *Sir Gregory Nonsense his Newes from no Place*, 1622, as if even at that epoch they had not quite lost their reputation.

As the plan adopted is to place the HUNDRED MERRY TALES before the public for the first time, in the very form and semblance which it wore at its issue from the press of John Rastell 360 years since, the original text is given without the slightest alteration in any respect, and the Additional Tales, in the other edition by Rastell without date, are inserted in the Appendix.

The Notes, for a few of which I am indebted to the erudition of Dr. Oesterley, are mainly illustrative of the sources whence the Anecdotes were taken, where they are not, as frequently happens, original, and occasionally of the later application of them in the books of the people, which cheered the life of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. But I did not consider it worth while to trace the stories through all their modern developments and modifications.

The reprint of *A C. Mery Talys* from the dateless edition of Rastell under the care of Mr. S. W. Singer, and from that text again in *Old English Jest Books*, 1864, is not literally accurate, as I discovered to my regret, when the original copy was lent to me many years ago by Mr. Halliwell-Phillipps.

W. C. H.

*Barnes Common, Surrey.*  
*March, 1887.*



## APPENDIX.

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THE three stories from the undated edition not included in that of 1526.<sup>1</sup>

---

¶ *Of the courtear that ete the hot custerd.* xcvi.

¶ A CERTAYNE merchaunt and a courtear, *being upon a time together* at dyner hauing a hote custerd, *the courtear being* somewhat homely of maner toke *parte of it and put it* in hys mouth, whych was so hote that made him *shed teares.* *The* merchaunt, lokyng on him, thought that he had *ben weeping, and asked hym why* he wept. This courtear, not wyllynge [it] to be known *that he had brent his* mouth with the hote custerd, answered and said: sir, *quod he I had* a brother whych dyd a certayn offence wherfore he was hanged; *and, chauncing* to think now vpon his deth, it maketh me to wepe. This merchaunt thought the courtear had said trew, and anon after the merchaunt was disposid to ete *of the custerd,* and put a sponefull of it in his mouth, and brent his mouth also, that his *eyes watered.* This courtear, that perceuyng, spake to the merchaunt and seyde: sir, *quod he, pray* why do ye wepe now? The merchaunt perseyued how he had *bene deceiued* and said: mary, quod he, I wepe, because thou wast not hangid, *when that thy* brother was hangyd.

¶ *Of the thre pointes belonging to a shrewd wyfe.* xcix.

¶ A YONG man, that was desirous to haue a wyf, cam to a company of *Philosofers* which were gadred to gider, requiring them to gif *him their opinion* howe he might chose him sich a wyf that wer no shrew. These *Philosofers* with gret study and delyberacion determinid and shewd this man that there *were iii especial* pointes, wherebi he shuld

(1) The matter in italics is supplied from conjecture.

sure know if a woman were a shrew. The *i point* is that if a woman have a shril voyce, it is a gret token that she is a shrew. The *ii point* is that, if a woman have a sharp nose, then most comenly she is a shrew. The *iii point* that neuer doth mis is<sup>r</sup> that if she were [a] kerchefer,<sup>2</sup> ye may be sure she is a shrew.

¶ Of the man that paynted the lamb upon his wyfes bely. c.

¶ A CONNING painter ther was dwelling in London, which had a fayre yong wife, and for thingis that he had to do went ouer se; but because he was somewhat jelous, he praed his wyfe to be content, that he might paint a lamb upon her bely, and praed her it might remain ther, til he cam home again; wherewith she was content. After which lamb so painted he departid; and sone after that, a lusti yong merchaunt, a bacheler, came and woed his wyf, and obtened her fauor, so that she was content he shuld lye with her; which resortid to her and had his plesure oftymes; and on time he toke a pensell, and to the lamb he painted ii hornys, wening to the wif that he had but refreshed the old painting. Than at the last, about a yere after, her husband cam home again, and the first night he lay with his wyfe, he loked uppon his wifes bely, and saw the ii hornes painted there. He said to his wif, that some other body had been besy there, and made a new painting: for the picture that he painted had no hornes and and this hath hornes; to whome this wif shortly

\* \* \* \* \*

*cetera desunt.*

(1) *The iii point is that neuer mis that, &c.*, old copy, according to Singer.

(2) The kerchief, which was a very costly item of ladies' dress during the Tudor and Stuart times, formed part of the head-gear, and was doubtless worn in a different way by different persons. In the *New Courtly Sonet of sthe Lady Greensleeves*, printed in Robinson's "Handful of Pleasant Delites," 1584, the lover says to his mistress :—

"I bought three kerchers to thy head,  
That were wrought fine and gallantly:  
I kept thee both at board and bed,  
Which cost my purse well-favourdly."

## NOTES.

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TALE I., f. i. *ro.* *Comande me.*] The jest turns here on the double meaning of the words *command* and *doubt* or *dout*. In French and early English the former signifies either *to command* or *to commend*.

TALE II., f. i. *ro.*] This does not occur in the undated edition.

TALE III., f. i. *ro.*] This is a very common story. It may be found, told somewhat differently, in Boccaccio, 7th Day, 7th Novel, in the *Pecorone* of Ser Giovanni Fiorentino, in Barbazan's *Fabliaux*, where it is related of the Bourgeoise d'Orleans, and in the *Facetiae* of Poggius (*de Muliere quæ virum defraudavit*). The imitations in more modern works are innumerable.

TALE IV., f. i. *vo.*] In the undated edition this is described as the tale ¶ Of John Adroyns in the dyuils apparell. A story very similar, as an actual incident, is inserted in the *Autobiography* of Walleit the Queen's Jester, 1870. See John Heywood's *Epigrams, &c.*, Spenser Soc. ed., p. 214.

At the bottom of fol. i. *verso* there is in the original copy an imperfection in the text after *broke*, where the words *his nek*, found in the other edition, are required to complete the sense.

TALE V., f. ii. *vo.*] In the undated edition this is ¶ *Of the ryche man and his two sonnes*. It is mutilated.

TALE VI., f. ii. *vo.*] Compare Les Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles, No. 62; Celio Malespini, *Novelle*, 1609, nov. 2; Decker and Webster's *Northward Hoe*, 1607 (Webster's works, by Hazlitt, 1857, i, 178—9).

TALE VII., f. iii. *ro.*] Not in the undated edition. This is a well known story in German; and compare Taylor's *Wit and Mirth*, 1630, p. 101, and Dr. Oesterley's edit., 1866, p. 14.

TALE IX., f. iii. *vo.*] This tale has served me as a clue to the probable or supposed authorship of the book. See what I have said in the *Introduction*. Dr. Oesterley observes:—The source of this tale is Johannes de Bromyard, Summa Prædicantium, s. l. & a. fol. Litt. L. v. § 21, Exempl. i.: "Patet per historiam qua fertur infirmum respondisse medico dicenti: quod comederet de parte piscium caude propinquiori: quia fanior erat pars: quia plus mouebatur: ergo inquit infirmus: lingua uxoris mee fanissima est, quia continue mouetur." See also Wright, "Latin Stories from MSS. of the 13th and 14th Centuries," 1842, No. 132: "De Linguis Mulierum."

Another version is found in Vincent of Beauvais, *Speculum Morale*, Duaci, 1624, fol. 86: Narratur de quodam, quod cum ipse in mari haberet vxorem suam secum

lingualam, grauem ad tolerandum : cum imminente tempestate clamatum effet a nautis, quod grauiora de nauis proicerentur, ille exhibuit vxorem dicens quod in tota nauis non erat aliquid grauius lingua eius. It is imitated in H. Bebelii *Facetiæ*, opuscula, s. l. & a. (circa 1512), 4<sup>o</sup>. sign. Cc verso: De quodam in tempestate maris deprehenso (de alio),” and repeated in Joh. Gafius “Convivialium Sermonum, tom. i. p. 281, Bafil. 1549.

TALE XI., f. iii. ro.] Compare Bebelius, *Facetiæ*, sign. Gg2, “De muliere citissime nubente post obitum primi viri.” It is versified in the *Uncasing of Machiavils Instructions to his sonne*, 1613, sign. C3 :

“ If thou be slow to speake, as one I knew,  
 Thou wouldst assure thy selfe my counsels true ;  
 Hee (too late) finding her upon her knees  
 In Church, where yet her husbands coorse she sees,  
 Hearing the Sermon at his funerall,  
 Longing to behold his buriall,  
 This sutor being toucht with inward love,  
 Approached neare his lovely sute to move,  
 Then stooping downe he whispered in her eare  
 Saying he bore her love, as might appeare,  
 In that so soone he shewed his love unto her,  
 Before any else did app[r]och to woo her,  
 Alass (said she) your labour is in vaine,  
 Last night a husband I did entertaine.”

See *Notes and Queries*, 3rd Series, v. 491. Stories of this kind are of very common occurrence in the modern collections of *facetiæ*.

TALE XII., f. iii. ro.] See *Retrospective Review*, New Series, ii, 326, where it is said that the tale of the miller with the golden thumb was still a favourite in Yorkshire in 1854. There is a Somersetshire proverb, “An honest miller hath a golden thumb, but none but a cuckold can see it.”

The reader may refer to my *Popular Antiquities of Great Britain*, 1870, iii, 342, where a good deal of information on this subject is collected.

“ When Davie Diker diggs, and dallies not,  
 When Smithes shoo horses, as they would be shod,  
 When millers toll not with a golden thumb.”—

Gascoigne’s *Steel Glas*, 1576.

(Works by Hazlitt, ii, 211 and Note)

TALE XIII., f. iii. ro.] Dr. Oesterley enumerates two German imitations of this story in his edition, 1866, p. 22-3. But compare Ellis’s *Original Letters*, 2nd Series, ii, 99, 101, for a glimpse of the disturbed condition of Ireland at this very juncture.

TALE XIV., f. iii. vo.] The Archdeacon here intended was probably Richard Rawson, who held the Archdeaconry of Essex from 1303 to 1343 (Le Neve’s *Fasti*, ed. Hardy, ii, 336).

TALE XVI., f. v. ro.] Compare Poggii *Facetiæ*, ap. *Opera*, 1538, fol. 439.—De quodam pastore simulatim confitente. Pastor ouium ex ea regni Neapolitani ora, quæ olim iatrociniis operam dabant femel confessore adijt, sua peccata dicturus. Cum ad sacerdotis genua procubisset, parce mihi (inquit ille lachrimans), pater mi, quoniam graviter deliqui. Cum iuberet dicere quid effet. Atque ille sæpius id verbum interraffet, tanquam qui nepharium admiffet scelus. Tamden hortatu sacerdotis, ait se, cum cafeum faceret, iciunij tempore, expreffuri lactis guttas quafdam quas non

spreuiffet in os defiliſſe. Tum ſacerdos qui mores illius patriæ noſſet ſubridens, cum dixiffet illum deliquiſſe qui quadrageſimam non ſeruaffet, quæſiuit numquid aliis obnoxius eſſet peccatis? Abnuente, paſtor rogauit num cum alijs paſtoribus quenquam peregrinum ut mos eſſet illius regionis tranſeuntem ſpoliaſſet aut peremiſſet? Sæpius, inquit, utraque in re cum reliquis ſum verſatus. Sed iſtud, ait, apud nos ita eſt conſuetum, ut nulla conſcientia fiat. . . .”

TALE XVIII., f. v. *vo.*] The ſource of this tale is perhaps the fabliau Etula, in Legrand d'Auffy, “Fabliaux,” tom. iii. p. 77; better in Sinner, “Catalogus Codicum MSS.” tom. iii. p. 379, No. 14. It is alſo related in the Scala Celi, 1480, de furto quinto, fol. 101 verso: “Legitur quod cum duo latrones conveniffent ut furarentur, unus nuces et alter carnes; perueniens ad fores eccleſiæ qui furatus fuerat nuces, incepit frangere et comedere eas ſibi. Cujus ſonitum audiens ille, qui cuſtodiebat eccleſiam, credens quod dæmon ingreſſus eſt clauſtrum et cuidam claudo, qui ire non potuit et forti ruſtico videnti nunciavit. Et dum ingreſſi fuiſſent eccleſiam, latro comedebat nuces, credens quod eſſet focus ſuus, qui portaret arietem, incepit clamare: Eſtne bene pinguis quem portas? Tunc ruſticus territus qui portabat claudum, credens quod eſſet dæmon: Neſcio ſi eſt pinguis vel macer, ſed nunc relinquo eum vobis. Et projecto claudo ad terram tibiam aliam ſibi fregit.” Alſo in Joh. de Bromyard, “Summa prædicantium,” Litt. O, ii, § 6.

Imitations are: J. Pauli, “Schimpff und Ernst,” Straßburg, 1535, fol. No. 76, fol. 15; G. Wickram, “Der Rollwagen,” s. l. 1557, No. 67, (Frankf. 1590, fol. 72: “Wie zween Dieb einem Pfaffen das Podagram vertriben”), reprinted in Wackernagel, “Deutſches Leſebuch,” Wickram; Hans Sachs, “Gedichte,” vol. ii. l. 4, fol. 73, Nürnberg, 1592, fol.: “Die zwen diebiſchen Bachanten in dem Toden Kercker.”—Oeſterley.

TALE XIX., f. vi. *vo.*] Dr. Oeſterley notes ſome modern German imitations of this anecdote. But it may perhaps be read advantageouſly with the Interlude of 1519 in my Dodsley, vol. i.

TALE XX., f. vii. *vo.*] The judge Vavasour here mentioned was probably John Vavasour, a member of an old Yorkſhire family, who was Recorder of York, 1st Henry VII., and became a juſtice of the Common Pleas in 1490. See Foſs, v. 78-9.

Compare *Merry Tales and Quicke Answers*, No. 54.

TALE XXII., f. vii. *vo.*] Dr. Oeſterley ſays that this ſtory originates in the *Summa Prædicantium* of Johannes de Bromyard, and is found in Holkot, *Super Libros Sapientia*, 1489, fol. iii. He alſo cites imitations of it in modern German works of later date.

TALE XXIV., f. viii. *vo.*] This is repeated in the *Merrie Tales of the Wiſe men of Gotham* in my “Shakespeare Jeſt-Books,” 1864, iii. No edition of the latter ſo early as 1526 is known or likely; and it is within the limits of probability that the inſertion of this anecdote ſuggested the formation of a ſeries of analogous noodledoms. 1526 was alſo before Borde’s time. Here we have only three ſimpletons; but the number was ſubſequentlly extended to twelve.

TALE XXVI., f. viii. *vo.*] This ſtory is ſlightly mutilated in the undated copy.

TALE XXVII., f. ix. *vo.*] Dr. Oeſterley aptly remarks: “To take a nap at ſermon or at church is quite a common ſaying in Germany, ſo common indeed, that a technical term, ‘Kirchenschlaf,’ has been given to this particular nap.”

The anecdote is quoted by Latimer in his ſixth ſermon before Edward VI., 1549; it is imitated in the *Conceits of Hobson*, 1607.

As regards St. Thomas of Acres, a contemporary writer, Skelton, in his *Colin Clout* (Works, by Dyce, i, 357), says:—

“At the Austen fryers  
They count us for Iyers:  
And at Saynt Thomas of Akers  
They carpe us lyke crakers.”

TALE XXVIII., f. ix. *ro.*] This item is a mere indecipherable fragment in the other edition.

TALE XXXI., f. ix. *vo.*] Borde, in his *Book of the Introduction of Knowledge* (1542), makes his Welshman say of himself:—

“I am a Welshman, and do dwel in Wales;  
I have loued to serche budgets, and loke in males.”

The Welsh have ceased to be borderers, but their celebrity for cheating, lying, and drinking, as well as a certain stolid malignity, has not deserted them. Had they been papists, instead of being mainly Protestant Dissenters, they would have been found even more troublesome than the Irish, to whom they are in many respects inferior.

TALES XXXIII.—IV., f. x. *ro.*] Both these are imperfect in the undated copy, where they are Nos. 31—2.

TALE XXXV., f. x. *vo.*] “Dr. *South*, visiting a gentleman one morning, was ask'd to stay Dinner, which he accepted of; the Gentleman stept into the next Room and told his Wife, and desired she'd provide something extraordinary. Hereupon she began to murmur and scold, and make a thousand Words; till at length her husband, provok'd at her Behaviour, protested, that if it was not for the stranger in the next Room, he would kick her out of Doors. Upon which the Doctor, who heard all that passed, immediately stept out, crying, *I beg, Sir, you'll make no Stranger of me.*—*Complete London Fester*, ed. 1771, p. 73.

TALE XXXVI., f. x. *vo.*] Too fragmentary in the other copy to make out the text or sense. Dr. Oesterly points out an analogue in Des Periers, *Nowvelles Recreations*, 1735, i, Nouv. 23, “Du jeune fils qui fit valoir le beau Latin que son Curé lui avoit montré.”

TALE XXXVIII., f. x. *vo.*] In *El Conde Lucanor*, an early collection of Spanish stories by Juan Manuel, a similar division of a woman occurs, except that there the servant girl has only two claimants, the Virtue and the Vice, of whom the latter selects the lower half. The same idea has been used in German literature.

TALE XL., f. xi. *vo.*] This story is in the *Fabliaux* under the title of *Les Trois Aveugles de Compiègne*, in Straparola, &c., and two variants occur in Scoggin's *Jests*, *Old English Jest Books*, 1864, ii, where I mention that the same material is worked up again in *Hobson's Conceits*, 1607.

Sarcinet, at the period to which the original anecdote points, was a texture, which only certain persons were entitled to wear. See note by Sir Harris Nicolas to the *Privy Purse Expenses of Elizabeth of York*, p. 220.

TALE XLI., f. xi. *vo.*] This is repeated in the *Merrie Tales of Skelton*, No. 6; but there capons are substituted for the pheasants. A similar anecdote occurs in the *Jests of Scoggin*. See *Old English Jest Books*, 1864, ii, pp. 10, 130.

TALE XLII., f. xii. *vo.*] A carter, when this book was published, and long after indeed, was not necessarily what we should now understand from the term, as ordinary



vehicles for the conveyance of passengers—in fact, carriages—were down to the Jacobean period of a form very similar to our carts. See *Sussex Archaeological Collections*, i, 178, and my note in the *Antiquary*, XIV, 252.

TALE XLIII., f. xii. *vo.*] This is No. 33 of the other copy.

TALE XLIV., f. xiii., *ro.*] In the other copy this is No. 42. It does not occur in the Table to the original edition, though Singer, and after him the present writer, inserted the heading both there and before the tale, which is found in the *Summa Prædicantium* of Johannes de Bromyard, as follows:—"De quodam domino, qui fatuum suum infirmum frequenter cum per illum transfret, confortari solebat. dicendo: Spera in deo: ibis ad cælum. Cui ille semper respondit: nolo illuc ire: a quo cum uno die quereret, quare nollet illuc ire, respondit: quia volo ire ad infernum; quare? inquit; quia, inquit, diligo te: & sicut fui tecum in vita, ita volo tecum esse in morte. & post mortem: & quia tu ibis ad infernum: ita volo ego ratione societatis. Cui dominus: quomodo scis quod ego illud vadam? quia, inquit, tota patria loquitur sic. dicentes. quod tu es pessimus homo. et ideo ibis ad infernum: Et in veritate: qui malus homo fuit prius. ex verbis illius compunctus: optime se postea correxit."

TALE XLVIII., f. xiii. *vo.*] This anecdote is also in the *Summa Prædicantium*, a book very likely, by the by, to have fallen in Sir Thomas More's way; but probably the original germ is the Latin *Fabliau* printed by Wright in his selection of Latin Stories, 1842, No. 129, under the title of "De rustico et simia." The text is incomplete in the copy of the other impression. The imitations of it are very numerous.

TALE XLIX., f. xiii. *ro.*] This is also mutilated in the copy of Rastell's other edition. Dr. Oesterley has collected a large body of imitations and analogues (*Shakesp. Fest Book*, 1866, p. 83—4).

TALE LI., f. xiiii. *vo.*] Imperfect in the undated copy.

TALE LII., f. xv. *ro.*] The Church of St. Nicholas Shambles was in Newgate Market; it was demolished at the Reformation.

TALE LIV., f. xv. *ro.*]

Thus these sysmatickes,  
And lowsy lunatickes,  
With spurres and prickes  
Call true men heretickes.  
They finger their fidles,  
And cry in quinibles,  
Away these bibles,  
For they be but ridles!  
And give them Robyn Whode,  
For to red howe he stode,  
In mery grene wode,  
Where he gathered good,  
Before Noyes Floodd.

*The Image of Iphocrisy*, part 3.

TALE LV., f. xv. *vo.*] Defective in the undated copy. The story is adopted by the compiler of *Scoggins Fests*, where we are told, "How the Priest said: *Deus qui viginti fluii tui*, when he should have said *Deus qui unigeniti*," but the text differs.

TALE LVI., f. xvi. *ro.*] The miracle play in Warwickshire was one of the series performed at Coventry, but does not occur in the printed collection entitled *Ludus*

Coventriæ. There is, however, the "Emission of the Holy Ghost," inserted among the Chester Mysteries, edited by Wright for the Shakespeare Society, ii, 134 :—

*"Petrus.*

I beleeve in God omnipotente,  
That made heaven and eirth and firmament,  
With steadfast harte and trewe intente,  
And he is my comferte.

*Andreas*

And I beleeve more I be lente,  
In Jesu his sonne from heaven sente,  
Vereye Christ that us hath kente,  
And is our elders lore.

*Jacobus Major.*

And I beleeve, with bofte,  
In Jesu Christe, in mightest mofte,  
Conseveith through the holye ghoste,  
And borne was of Marye.

*Johannes.*

And I beleeve, as I cane see,  
That under Pilate suffred he,  
Skourged and nayled on roode tree,  
And buryed was his fayre bodye.

*Thomas.*

And I beleeve, and south can tell,  
That he ghostly wente to helle :  
Delivered his that there did dwell,  
And rose the thirde daie.

*Jacobus Minor.*

And I beleeve fully this,  
That he steyed up to heaven bleffe,  
And on his fathers righte hand is,  
To raigne for ever and aye.

*Philipus.*

And I beleeve, with harte steadfaste,  
That he will come at the laste,  
And deeme mankinde as he has caste,  
Bouth the quicke and the dead.

*Barthelemewe.*

And I beleffe shalbe mofte  
In vertue of the holye ghost,  
And through his helpe, without bofte,  
My life I thinke to leade.

*Mathieus.*

And I beleeve, through Godes grace,  
 Suche beleffe as hollye chourch has,  
 That Godes bodye graunted us was  
 To use in forme of bredde.

*Symon.*

And I beleve with devocion  
 Of synne to have remiffion,  
 Through Christes bloode and passion,  
 And heaven, when I am dead.

*Jude.*

And I beleve, as all we mon,  
 In the generall refurrexcion  
 Of eiche bodye, when Christe is borne  
 To deme bouth good and evill.

*Matheus.*

And I beleve, as all we maye,  
 Everlastinge life after my daye  
 In heaven to have ever and aye,  
 And fo overcome the devill."

TALE LVII., f. xvi. *vo.*] Dr. Oesterley here writes :—"The division of the Decalogue followed in this tale is taken from Exodus xx; it was adopted by the Council of Trent, and used by the whole Latin Church. Luther approved of it, and it is still in use with the entire Lutheran denomination. The division now employed by the Church of England is the same which has always been used by the Greek Church. It was strongly recommended by Calvin in 1536, adopted by Bucer and the Tetrapolitan, and is to be found in any English formulary since 1537. Mr. Hazlitt's conjecture for the lacuna in his edition, p. 28, is therefore inadmissible; and this is more clearly shown by the fact, that in his interpolation either the seventh or eight commandment is omitted. To judge from the undamaged passages, however, there must have been some difference between Mr. Hazlitt's original and mine: the text of the mutilated copy cannot have read but thus: *The eighth, not to bear false witness against thy neighbour.* THE NINTH AND TENTH, *not to couete nor defyre no mannes goodes vnlefully. Thou shalt not defyre thy neyghbours wyfe, &c.*, this being exactly the form, which was nearly exclusively used since its acceptance by the Council of Trent Catechism. It is likewise found in Maskell's and Bishop Hilfe's Primers.

The seven deadly sins have always been the same, but their division is sometimes different. See Mr. Hazlitt's edition, p. 83, note 2, and Maskell's "Prymer," in "Monum. Ritual. Anglic." vol. ii. p. 178, London, 1846."

Richard Whitford, in his *Werke for Householdiers*, first printed before 1530, says of the *Seven deadly Sins* :—"yet must you have a lesson to teche your folkes to beware of the VII pryncipall synnes, whiche ben comunely called the seven dedely synnes, but in dede they done call them wronge: for they be not alway dedely synnes. Therefore they sholde be called capytall or pryncipall synnes, and not dedely synnes. These ben theyre names by ordere after our dyvysion: Pryde, Envy, Wrath, Covetyse, Glotony, Slouth, and Lechery."

TALE LVIII., f. xvi. *vo.*] A metrical imitation of this is to be found in John Cotgrave's *Wits Interpreter*, ed. 1662, p. 286.

TALE LXII., f. xvii. *vo.*] This is introduced by Rabelais into his narrative, lib. 3, c. 34; but he puts a physician in the devil's place. A metrical version is found in the *Schoolhouse of Women*, first printed about 1540. In the undated copy the text is imperfect.

TALE LXIII., f. xviii. *ro.*] It is by no means unlikely, as Dr. Oesterly first suggested, that the editor of *A. C. Mery Talys* borrowed this from Ottomar Luscinius, "Joci ac Sales miré festivi," 1524, No. 50, where however, it is related of Aristotle. There are later imitations.

TALE LXVI., f. xviii. *vo.*] In the Table to the undated copy, this purports to be told "of him that woulde gette the maystrye of his wyfe." The text is incomplete at the end; but in the *Schoolhouse of Women* we have a metrical paraphrase, which supplies the deficiency:—

"A husband man, having good trust  
His wife to him bad be agreeable,  
Thought to attempt if she had be reformable,  
Bad her take the pot, that sod over the fire,  
And set it aboove upon the astire.  
She answered him: 'I hold thee mad,  
And I more fool, by Saint Martine;  
Thy dinner is redy, as thou me bad,  
And time it were that thou shouldst dine,  
And thou wilt not, I will go to mine.'  
'I bid thee (said he) vere up the pot.'  
'A ha! (said she) I trow thou dote.'  
Up she goeth for fear, at last,  
No question mooved where it should stand  
Upon his hed the pottage she cast,  
And heeld the pot still in her hand,  
Said and swore, he might her trust,  
She would with the pottage do what her lust."

TALE LXIX., f. xix. *vo.*] This is a very common and favourite hoax. In *Foake upon Foake*, 1721, it is inserted of Charles II., Nell Gwynn, and the Duchess of Portsmouth, the last being made the sufferer.

But the editor of the *Tales* was probably indebted to the *Joci ac Sales* of Luscinius, 1524, already cited, although their texts do not perfectly accord in the details. The incident occurs with a slight variation among the *Fests of Scogin*.

TALE LXX., f. xix. *vo.*] There is a similar story in *Tarlton's Newes out of Purgatory*. Both have the air of having had a common Italian origin.

TALE LXXI., f. xx. *ro.*] Dr. Oesterley (*Shakesp. Fest Book*, 1866, p. 122) adduces several comparatively late parallels, and adds—"A very fimilar story can be heard to this day in Germany: A waiter in the Weidenbusch Hotel in Frankfort o. M. propofes the following riddle to a Pruffian Lieutenant: It is not my brother, it is not my fifter, and yet it is my mother's child. The lieutenant gueffes and gueffes, until at laft the waiter tells him that it is himself. On the following day the lieutenant puts the same riddle at an evening party. The whole company declares: That is your-felf, Lieutenant. No, Ladies and Gentlemen, it is the waiter at the Weidenbusch Hotel."

TALE LXXXIII., f. xx. *vo.*] The village of Shottery, mentioned as the scene of this Jest, is about a mile from Stratford, between that town and Bordon Hill.

TALE LXXXIV., f. xx. *vo.*] Undecipherable in the undated copy.

TALE LXXXV., f. xx. *vo.*] The saying, which constitutes the *stamina* of this anecdote, is a different form of the one, that a thousand angels can stand on the point of a needle. Ward of Stratford, in his Diary, ed. 1839, p. 94., has this passage :— One querying another, whether a thousand angels might stand on the point of a needle, another replied, “That was a *needles* point.”

TALE LXXXVI., f. xx. *vo.*] Imperfect in the undated copy.

TALE LXXXVIII., f. xxi. *vo.*] Borde, in the *Fyrst boke of the Introduction of Knowledge* (1542) puts into the mouth of the Welshman:—

“I do loue cause boby, good tosted chese.”

TALE LXXX., f. xxi. *vo.*] In his *Discovery of Witchcraft*, 1584, ed. 1651, p. 191, Scot has copied this anecdote as follows:— “So it was, that a certain Sir John, with some of his company, once went abroad jetting, and in a moon-light evening, robbed a miller’s weire and stole all his eeles. The poor miller made his mone to Sir John himself, who willed him to be quiet; for he would so curse the thief, and all his confederates, with bell, book, and candel, that they should have small joy of their fish. And therefore the next Sunday, Sir John got him to the pulpit, with his surplisse on his back, and his stole about his neck, and pronounced these words following:—

‘All you that have stolne the millers eeles,  
*Laudate Dominum de coelis,*  
And all they that have consented thereto,  
*Benedicamus Domino.*’

Lo (saith he), there is savce for your eeles, my masters.”

The text is too imperfect in the undated copy to ascertain the sense, and until the Göttingen one was discovered, the substantial transcript in Scot, which I first pointed out in my notes to *Old English Jest Books*, 1864, formed our only resource for a knowledge of the drift of the tale.

TALE LXXXI., f. xxi. *vo.*] Imperfect in the undated copy.

TALE LXXXII., f. xxii. *ro.*] Dr. Oesterley (*Shakespeare Jest Book*, 1866, p. 134) quotes an anecdote in the “Nouveaux Contes à rire,” 1702, where a family of thieves steal a hog, kill it, and upon search being made for it, cover it with a cloth, and weep for it as for their father.

TALE LXXXIII., f. xxii. *ro.*] Very imperfect in the undated copy.

The same story occurs in the *Facetiæ* of Bebelius, according to Oesterley, under the title of “De insatia cuiusdam sacerdotis fabula perfaceta,” and it is also found in the *Jests of Scoggin*, from which I tried to supply the *lacunæ* in the text, before the Göttingen copy became known.

TALE LXXXIV., f. xxii. *ro.*] This and the three next are imperfect in the undated copy. No. 84 also occurs with variations in the *Jests of Scoggin*.

TALE LXXXIX., f. xxiii. *ro.*] This was the famous Sir Richard Whittington, who is commemorated in plays, poems, and ballads. Thomas Heywood thus introduces him into his drama entitled: *If you know not me, you know nobody*, 1606; it

is a dialogue held between Hobson, the haberdasher of the Poultry, and Dr. Nowell, Dean of St. Paul's :—

*Dr. Now.* This Sir Richard Whittington, three times Mayor,  
 Son to a knight, and 'prentice to a mercer,  
 Began the library of Gray-friars in London,  
 And his executors after him did build  
 Whittington College, thirteen almshouses for poor men,  
 Repair'd Saint Bartholomew's in Smithfield,  
 Glazed the Guildhall, and built Newgate.

*Hob.* Bones a me, then, I have heard lies ;  
 For I have heard he was a scullion,  
 And rais'd himself by venture of a cat.

*Dr. Now.* They did the more wrong to the gentleman."

This, as well as the following story is defective in the other copy.

TALE XCI., f. xxiii. *vo.*] This story is omitted in the undated impression ; and it is one of the longest and best in the series.

TALE XCIV., f. xxiii. *vo.*] The text of the undated copy is mutilated both in this and the next article.

TALE XCVII., f. xxv. *ro.*] This is also imperfect in the other copy.

TALE XCVIII., f. xxv. *ro.*] This story is peculiar to the edition of 1526, and the next "Of the northern man that was all hart," has all but perished in the other copy, merely a few illegible fragments remaining.

TALE C., f. xxvi. *ro.*] This is also incomplete in the undated copy.

APPENDIX.] Tales numbered 97, 99, and 100 in the undated copy are wanting in that of 1526. They are all more or less incomplete, the last terminating abruptly from the failure of the fragments of pasteboard to supply the end.

## INDEX.

\*.\* The roman numerals refer to the Introductory matter, the folios to the text, and the arabic to the Appendix and Notes.

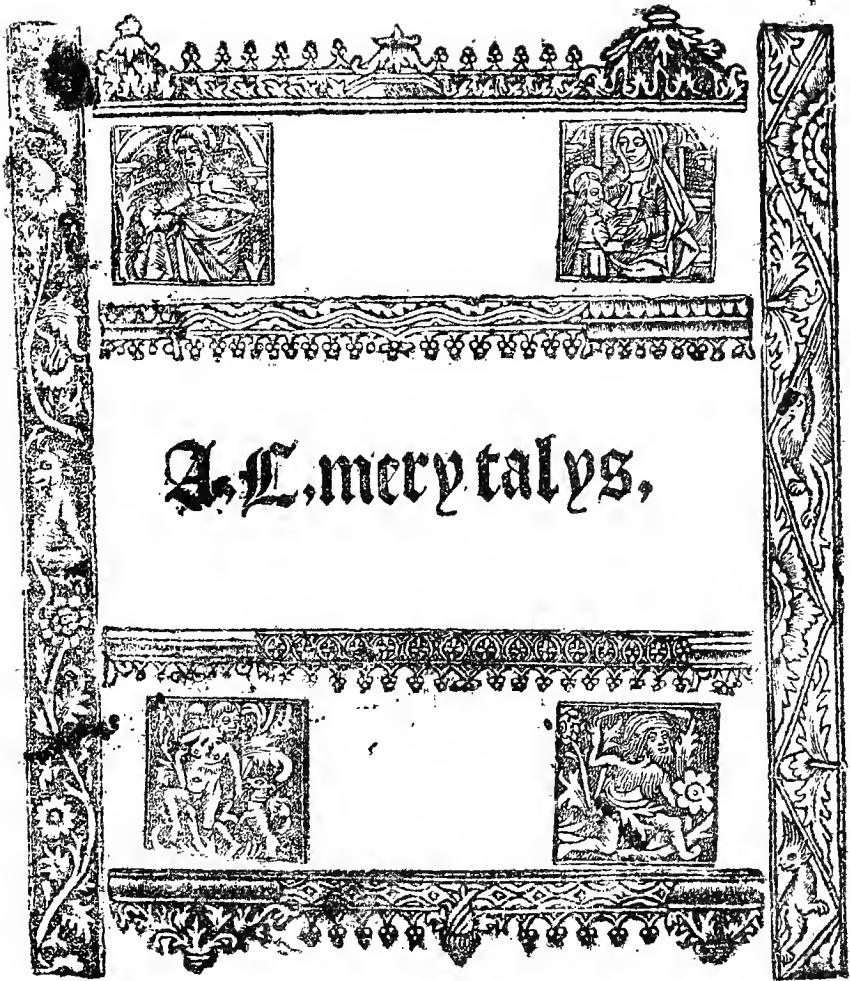
- Accoyntance**, acquaintance, f. ii. *verso*.
- Adroyns, John**, f. i. *verso*, ii. *recto*.
- Adventures**, at all, f. xii. *vo*.
- Andrews, St.**, Holborn, f. viii. *vo*.
- Antler**, a term for a deer, f. ix. *vo*.
- Arbour**, f. i. *ro*, and *vo*. f. xviii.
- Arches Court, proctor of the**, f. xviii. *vo*.
- As great pity to see a woman weep as a goose to go barefoot**, prov., f. iii. *vo*.
- Aspen leaf**, f. vi. *vo*, f. xvii. *ro*.
- Astronomy, judicial**, taught at Oxford, f. xxii. *vo*.
- Barnet**, f. xix. *vo*.
- Bartholomew's, St.**, Smithfield, 26.
- Bash**, fear, f. ii. *ro*.
- Bayard**, a horse, f. vii. *vo*.
- Beards in 1526**, f. x. *ro*.
- Beatrice, Shakespear's**, ii, ix.
- Bell, book, and candle**, f. xxi. *vo*.
- Boccaccio, Gio.**, 17.
- Borde, Andrew**, 19—20, 25.
- Bottelley or Botley**, possibly the place of that name in Hampshire, f. xii. *vo*.
- Bourgeoise d'Orleans**, 17.
- Bow Parish, London**, f. ix. *ro*.
- Bread Street, London**, f. iii. *ro*.
- Bull, sign of the**, Fleet Street, f. xi. *vo*.
- Burial, forms of**, f. iii. *vo*, iiiii. *ro*.
- Butcher**, f. xv. *ro*.
- Candles used to light people home**, f. xxv. *vo*.
- Cardinal's Hat**, in Lombard Street, f. xxiii. *vo*.
- Carter**, 20, f. xii. *ro*.
- Cause bobbe** (toasted cheese), 25, f. v. *ro*, f. xxi. *vo*.
- Chandler**, f. viii. *ro*.
- Chaucer, Speght's**, vi.
- Cheese, toasted**, 25, f. v. *ro*, f. xxi. *vo*.
- Chelsea**, vi, ix.
- Chester Plays**, 22—3.
- Chines, Chinks**, f. ii. *ro*.
- "City," The**, f. xi. *vo*.
- Chincough, The**, f. xi. *vo*.
- Coals**, f. viii. *vo*.
- Colebrook**, f. xxiii. *vo*.
- Conde Lucanor, El**, 20.
- Conjuration of the Devil**, f. ii. *ro*, f. vi. *ro*.
- Corpus Christi Plays**, f. xvi. *vo*.
- Cox, Captain, of Coventry**, xiii.
- Countenance, to make his**, f. xix. *vo*.
- Circuit, legal**, f. vii. *ro*.
- Cobbler**, f. iii. *vo*.
- Collation**, f. xix. *vo*.
- Collier's cart**, f. viii. *vo*.
- Command**, commend, f. i.
- Commandments, The**, 23, f. i.
- Confession**, f. v. *ro* and *vo*, f. viii. *vo*, f. xiii. *vo*, xviii *ro*, xxi *vo*, xxiii *ro*.
- Constable**, f. vi. *vo*.
- Cornhill**, f. xxiii. *vo*.
- Curfew**, f. v. *vo*, xviii. *ro*, xxi. *ro*, f. xxiii. *ro*.

- Curate, anecdote of a, f. xxiii. *ro.*  
 Dagger in Cheap, The, f. xxiii. *vo.*  
 Davys or Thavies Inn, f. viii. *ro.*, and *vo.*  
 ——— garden of, *ibid.*  
 Decalogue, The, 23, f. i.  
 "Devil's black breakfast," The, xix. *vo.*  
 Dog cheap, f. xx. *vo.*  
 Dogs, names of, f. xx. *ro.*  
 Dout, do out, extinguish, f. i.  
 Drab, term of reproach, f. ix. *ro.*  
 Draught board of a privy, f. viii. *vo.*  
 Edward III., Wars of, in France, f. xviii. *ro* and *vo.*  
 Eels, f. iiiii. *vo.*, f. xxi. *vo.*  
 Enough, to be, double meaning of, f. xxiv. *vo.*  
 Erasmus, Desiderius, ix., xi.  
 Feminine tales, f. xvii. *ro.*  
 Filberts, f. v. *vo.*, *et seqq.*  
 Fleet Street, f. xi. *vo.*  
 Fortune, Book of Lady, by Sir T. More, ix.  
 Four Elements, Interlude of the, vii.—viii., xi.  
 ——— Story of the, f. vi. *vo.*  
 Franklin's son sent to Oxford School, f. xix. *vo.*  
 French Wars of the English, f. xviii. *vo.*  
 Friars limiters, f. x. *vo.*, f. xiiii. *vo.*, f. xvi. *vo.*, f. xxii. *ro.*  
 Friars, anecdotes of, f. x. *ro.* and *vo.*, f. xiiii. *vo.*, f. xvi. *vo.*, f. xxi. *ro.*, xxii. *vo.*  
 Garlic, f. iii. *ro.*  
 Gollet, gullet, a small stream, f. ix. *vo.*  
 Gothamite Tales, 29, f. viii. *ro.*  
 Grey Friars, London, f. xvi. *vo.*  
 Halfpenny, f. xiiii. *vo.*  
 ——— the price of a ferry, f. xv. *vo.*  
 Harington, Sir John, xii.  
 Hart-pasty, f. xxv. *vo.*  
 Hawks and hounds, xii.  
 Harvey, Gabriel, v.—vi.  
 Heinging, hanging, f. ii. *ro.*  
 Henry VIII., f. xvii. *ro.*  
 Herber, harbour, f. i. *ro.* and *vo.*, f. xviii. *ro.*
- Hertfordshire, vi.  
 Heywood, John, v.—x.  
 Holborn Bridge, f. viii. *ro.*  
 Horsey, Ralph, xii.  
 Husbandry, thrift, f. vii. *ro.*  
 Jest, Merry, How a serjeant would learn to be a friar, by Sir T. More, ix.  
 Joeli ac Sales of Luscinius, 1524, ix.  
 Johannes de Bromyard, f. ix., 17—19.  
 John Daw, f. xix. *ro.*  
 John's, St., Clerkenwell, f. xviii. *ro.*  
 Jordan, a chamber pot, f. iii. *ro.*  
 Jordayn, Master, f. iii. *ro.*  
 Jury, Middlesex, f. xxiv. *vo.*  
 Kenilworth, xiii.  
 Kerchief, 16.  
 Kingston-upon-Thames, f. xiii. *ro.*  
 Kirchenschlaf, 19.  
 Knightsbridge, f. xxiv. *ro.*  
 Knakking, cracking, f. vi. *ro.*  
 Laneham, Robert, his Letter from Kenilworth, xiii.  
 Lask, looseness, f. iii. *ro.*  
 Latin taught by friars, f. x. *vo.*  
 Lawrence Jewry, St., f. xi. *vo.*  
 Lawyers, f. xiiii. *vo.*, f. xvii. *ro.*  
 Leman, f. xxii. *vo.*  
 Lombard Street, f. xxiii. *vo.*  
 Lord's Prayer, The, f. xv. *ro.* and *vo.*  
 Luscinius, Ottomarus, ix.  
 Maltman of Colebrook, The, f. xxiii. *vo.*  
 Manuel, Juan, 20.  
 Medicines, Book of, f. xi. *ro.*  
 Merry Tales and Quick Answers, xi.—xii.  
 Miller, The, and his golden thumb, 18, f. iiiii. *ro.*  
 Millers, 18, f. iiiii. *ro.*, f. v. *vo.* *et seq.*, f. xii. *vo.*, f. xxi. *vo.*  
 More, Sir John, x.  
 ——— Sir Thomas, vi.—xi., 21.  
 Muffed, mumbled, f. v. *vo.*  
 Naval strength of England, f. xvii. *ro.*  
 Nicholas Shambles, St., 23, f. xv. *ro.*  
 Niggin, niggard, f. x. *ro.*  
 Nigginship, f. xxv. *vo.*



- Nikke, Richard, Bishop of Norwich**,  
 f. xi. *vo.*, xii. *ro.*  
**Nobles, gold**, f. v. *vo.*  
**Northamptonshire**, f. ix. *vo.*  
**Nottis, nuts**, f. v. *vo.*  
**Nowell, Dr., Dean of St. Paul's**, 26.  
**Numbers, odd and even**, x.  
**Nuts**, f. v. *vo.*, f. vi. *ro.*, &c.  
**O'Connor**, f. iii. *ro.*  
**Or**, before, f. ii. *ro.*  
**Oxford, University of**, f. iii. *vo.*, f. xi.  
*vo.*, f. xix. *vo.*  
**Paternoster, The**, f. xv. *ro.* and *vo.*  
**Philip Spencer, the butcher's man**,  
 f. xv. *vo.*  
**Physician**, xliii. *vo.*  
**Pike**, *v.*—“Pyke the out of my  
 house,” f. xii. *ro.*  
**Piper, The**, f. xx. *vo.*  
**Play, Stage, in Suffolk**, f. i. *vo.*, ii. *ro.*  
**Porlews, purlieus**, f. ix. *vo.*  
**Pound garnet**, f. iii. *ro.*  
**Prepared, premeditated**, f. xxi. *ro.*  
**Pudding, liquid**, f. vii. *ro.*  
**Rascal**, a sort of deer, f. ix. *vo.*  
**Rastell, John and William**, vi.—vii.  
**Rawson, Richard, Archdeacon of  
 Essex**, 18, f. liii. *vo.*  
**Robin Hood**, f. xv. *vo.*  
**Robinson, Clement**, 16.  
**Rope, coals secured in a cart with  
 a**, f. viii. *vo.*  
**Sarcinet**, 20, f. xi. *vo.*  
**Scarlet robe of a judge**, f. vii. *ro.*  
**Scotland**, f. xvii. *ro.*  
**Scot's Discovery of Witchcraft**, 25.  
**Shalys, shells**, f. vi. *ro.*  
**Sheep, coward**, f. xxi. *ro.*  
**Shillings**, f. xliii. *ro.*, f. xxii. *vo.*  
**Shoes, price of mending**, f. iii. *vo.*  
**Shottery (near Stratford-on-Avon)**, f. xx.  
*vo.*  
**Sir John**, a priest, f. i.
- Sins, Seven Deadly**, f. v. *vo.*  
**Skelton, John**, x., 20, f. xi. *vo.* et seqq.  
**Sleeping in church**, 19, f. ix. *ro.*  
**Sleeves, wide, of friars**, f. xix. *vo.*  
**Slug**, *v.*, f. xxv. *ro.*  
**South, Dr.**, 20.  
**Sowne, swoon**, f. iii. *vo.*  
**Sowter**, f. xxi. *ro.*  
**Sparred, closed**, f. ii. *ro.*, f. xxi. *vo.*  
**Spenser, Edmund**, v.  
**Stage, state of the, in 1526**, viii.—ix.  
**Stiliard or Steelyard, The**, f. iii. *ro.*  
**Stony Stratford**, f. ix. *vo.*  
**Stools in churches**, f. ix. *ro.*  
**Stratford-upon-Avon**, f. xx. *vo.*  
**Stumble at a straw, and leap over  
 a block**, prov. f. v. *ro.*  
**Suffolk, stage-play in**, f. i. *vo.*  
**Summa prædicantium**, ix.  
**Taylor, John, the water-poet**, xliii.  
**Thomas of Aeres, St.**, 20, f. ix. *ro.*, f.  
 xxv. *vo.*  
**Tomorrow mass**, f. viii. *vo.*  
**Toothæche, rhyme for the**, f. xi. *ro.*  
**Trencher**, f. liii. *vo.*  
**Turpin, a servant**, vii. *ro.*  
**Two gospels for a groat**, f. xx. *vo.*  
**Vavasour, Mr. Justice**, x., f. vii. *ro.*  
**Vocation, vacation**, f. xix. *vo.*  
**Warwickshire**, f. xvi. *ro.*, f. xx. *vo.*  
**Waster, a cudgel**, f. i. *vo.*  
**Water or urine, judgment by the**,  
 f. iii. *ro.*  
**Welsh, The**, x., 20, f. v. *ro.*, f. ix. *vo.*, f.  
 xliii. *vo.*, f. xvii. *ro.* and *vo.*, f. xxi. *vo.*,  
 f. xxiv. *vo.*  
**Whitefriars, London**, f. xv. *vo.*  
**Whittington, Sir Richard**, 25—6, f.  
 xxlii. *ro.*  
**Wine, communion**, f. xi. *vo.*  
**Women, Schoolhouse of**, a poem, 24.  
 ——— properties of, f. vi. *vo.*





A. L. mery talys,



**The kalender**

- ¶ Of the mylner that sayd he hadde neuer but of .ii. commañdemens and .ii. dowtyes. folio .i.
- ¶ Of the cytelen that callyd the prest syz Johā & he callyd hys master raf. fo .i.
- ¶ Of the wyfe that mayd hys husbāde to go syt in the hecber in the nyght wchyle her pzentys lay with her in her bed fo .i.
- ¶ Of hym that playd the deuyll and came thozow the waten & mayd theym that stole the connyes to runne away. fo .i.
- ¶ Of the lvs man that bequethyd hys chyrd son a lypyl ground with the galows. fo .ii.
- ¶ Of the gentylman that lost his ryng in the gentylwomans bed & a nother gentylman found it after in the same bed. fo .ii.
- ¶ Of the husband man that askyd for master ppsot the physysyrs. fo .iiij.
- ¶ Of the scolet that bare his shoyes to cloutyng. fo .iii.
- ¶ Of him that sayd that aroomās tong was lightist met of degeestio. fo .iii.
- ¶ Of the woman that solowyd her fourth husbāndys herce & wept. fo .iii.
- ¶ Of the woman that sayd her woocer came to late. fo .iiij.
- ¶ Of the mylner with the golden thombe. fo .iiij.
- ¶ Of the horsman of yrelond that prayd dconer to hang by the scere. fo .iiij.
- ¶ Of the prest that sayd nother corpus meus noz corpum meum fo .iiij.
- ¶ Of the .ii. freerys wherof the one louyd not the ele hed noz the other the tayle fo .iiij.
- ¶ Of the welchynā that shroue hym for brykynge his fast on the fryday. fo .v.
- ¶ Of the merchaūt of lōdo that put nobles i his mouth i his deth bed. fo .v.
- ¶ Of the mylner that stole the nuttrys & of the tayler that stole a shep. fo .v.
- ¶ Of the .iiii. elemētys where they shulde sone be found. fo .vi.
- ¶ Of the woman that powryd the potage in the Juggys male. fo .vi.
- ¶ Of the weddyd men that cam to heuyn to clayme theyr herytage. fo .vi.
- ¶ Of the merchaunte that chargyd hys sonne to fynde one to synge for hys towle. fo .vii.
- ¶ Of the mayd washyng clothys and answeryd the scere fo .vii.
- ¶ Of the .iii. wyse men of gotam. fo .viii.
- ¶ Of the gray scere that answeryd his penyent fo .viii.
- ¶ Of the gentylman that bare the sege bozde on his nek folio .viii.
- ¶ Of the marchaūtyes wyfe that seyde she wolde take a nap at sermon. fo .ix.
- ¶ Of the woman that seyde & she lystyd a nother yere she wolde haue a kokol dis hat of her owne fo .ix.
- ¶ Of the gentylman that wysshyd his toth in the gentylwomans tayle. fo .ix.
- ¶ Of the welchman that confessyd hym how he had slayn a scere fo .ix.
- ¶ Of the welchman that cowde not get but a lypyl male fo .ix.
- ¶ Of the gentyl woman that sayd to a gentylman ye haue a berde & boue & none benefice. fo .x.

Of the frere that layd out lord fed. b. W. peple with. ij. fyfthys.	fo. r.
Of the frankelyne that wold haue had the frere gon.	fo. r.
Of the good n. in that layd to his wyfe he had yll fate.	fo. r.
Of the frere that bad hys chyld make a laten.	fo. r.
Of the gentylman that askyd the frere for hys beuct.	fo. r.
Of the .iii. men that chace the womā.	fo. r.
Of the gētylman that taught his cooke the medelyne for the tofhake.	fo. r.
Of the gētylman that promysyd the scolet of orfozd a farcenet tpyet.	fo. r.
Of master skelton that brought the byshop of Dorowich. ii. fefantys	fo. r.
Of the yeman of gard that layd he wold bete the carter.	fo. r.
Of the prest that layd our lady was not so curous a woman.	fo. r.
Of the sole that wold go to the deuyl.	fo. r.
Of the plotowannys sonne that layd he saw one make a gols to krece hys etly.	fo. r.
Of the maydys answere that was with chyld.	fo. r.
Of the seruant that rymyd with hys master.	fo. r.
Of the welchman that deluyeryd the letter to the ape.	fo. r.
Of hym that sold ryght nought.	fo. r.
Of the frere that told the .iii. chylders fortunys.	fo. r.
Of the boy that bare the frere hys masters money.	fo. r.
Of thylp spencer the bochers man.	fo. r.
Of the courtear and the carter.	fo. r.
Of the yonge man that prayd his felow to tech hym his pater noster.	fo. r.
Of the frere that prechyd in ryme expownyng the aue maria.	fo. r.
Of the curat that prechyd the artycles of the Crede.	fo. r.
Of the frere that prechyd the .x. comaundementys	fo. r.
Of the wyfe that bad her husband ete the candell furst	fo. r.
Of the man of lawys sonnys answere.	fo. r.
Of the frere in the pulpit that bad the woman leue her babelyng.	fo. r.
Of the welchman that cast the skot in to the see.	fo. r.
Of the man that bad the dome wyfe	fo. r.
Of the proctor of arches that had the lytell wyfe.	fo. r.
Of the .ii. nonnys that were shypyn of one prest.	fo. r.
Of the esquier that sholde haue bene made knyght.	fo. r.
Of the man that wold haue the pot stand there as he wold.	fo. r.
Of the penitent that layd the shepc of god haue mercy vpon me.	fo. r.
Of the hulband that layd he was Iohn daw.	fo. r.
Of the skoler of orfozd that prouyd by soupheltry. ii. chepyns. iii.	fo. r.
Of the frere that stale the podyng.	fo. r.

Of the traungelyns ion that cam to take ordets	folio. cx.
Of the husbandman that lodgyd the frere in hys obone bed.	fo. cx.
Of the prest that wold say. ii. gospels for a grote.	fo. cx.
Of the courteat that dyd cast the frere ouer the bote	fo. cx.
Of the frere that prechyd what meynys sowlys were	fo. cx.
Of the husband that cryed hie vnder the bed.	fo. cx.
Of the shoemaker that askyd the colyer what tydryngys in hell.	fo. cx.
Of seynt Peter that cryed cause bohe	fo. cx.
Of hym that aduenturyd body & soule for his pynce	fo. cx.
Of the parson that stall the mylners elys	fo. cx.
Of the welchman that saw one .xl. shyl. better than god	fo. cx.
Of the frere that sayd dyzige for the hoggs soule	fo. cx.
Of the parson that sayd masse of requē for Crystys soule	fo. cx.
Of the herdman that sayd ryde apace ye shall haue rayn	fo. cx.
Of hym that sayd I shall haue nere a peny.	fo. cx.
Of the husband that sayd his wyfe and he agreed well	fo. cx.
Of the prest that sayd conide episcopo	fo. cx.
Of the woman that stall the pot	fo. cx.
Of master whyttonys dzeme	fo. cx.
Of the prest that kyllyd hys hoyle callyd modicum.	fo. cx.
Of the maltman of Colbroke.	fo. cx.
Of the welchman that stole the englyshmans cok	fo. cx.
Of hym that brought a botell to a prest	fo. cx.
Of the endytemēt of Ihesu of Nazareth.	fo. cx.
Of hym that prechyd agaynst theym that code on the soday	fo. cx.
Of the one broder that founde a purs.	fo. cx.
Of the answer of the masters to the mayd.	fo. cx.
Of a certayn aldermans dedys of london.	fo. cx.
Of the northeren man that was all hart.	fo. cx.
Of the burnyng of old Iohn.	folio. cx.

Finis.

**C**ertayn Curat in the contrey there was that preched  
 in the pulpit of the ten commandmentys Seyng that  
 there were ten comaūdemētes that eucry man ought  
 to kepe / & he that brake any of the / comytted greuous  
 syn/hobo be it he sayd that somtyme it was dedly syn &  
 somtyme venyall/ But when it was dedly syn & when  
 venyall/ there were many doutis therein And a mynner  
 a yong mā a mad felow that cam seldom to chnrch / & had ben at very fewe  
 sermōs or none in all his lyfe answerd hym thā thortly this wyse. I meruel  
 master parson that ye say ther be so many comaūdemētis & so many doutys  
 For I neuer hard tell but of u. comādemētis that is to say comāde me to  
 you & comāde me fro you. For I neuer herd tell of mo doutis but twayn  
 that ys to say dout the candell. & dout the fyre. At which answer all the pe  
 ple fell a laughynge,

**W**hy this tale a man may well preue that they that be brought upwith  
 out leryng or good maner shall neuer be, but rude and bestely all though  
 they haue good naturall wyttys.

**A** tyme there was a Joly Citesyn walkyng in the cōtrey for  
 sport which met with a folysh prest/ & in dyspō in comūpraciō  
 cald hym syr Johā. this prest vnderstonding his mockyng calde  
 him master rafe/ why quod the cytesyn doste thou call me master rafe/ maye  
 quod the prest why callst me syr Johā. Then quod the cytesen I call the syr  
 Johā because eucry folysh preste most comonly is calde sic Johā/ Wary qu  
 the prest & I call the master rafe because eucry proud Cocold most comenly  
 is callyd master Rafe. At the which answer all that were by laught a pace  
 because dyuers there supposyd the same cytesen to be a cokcold in dede.

**W**hy thys tale ye may se that he that delyteth to derpde & laughe othe  
 to skorne is somtyme hym selfe moze derpdyd.

**A** wyfe ther was which had apointed her prētys to com to her bed  
 in the night which seruāt had long word her to haue his pleisure  
 which acordige to the apoitmēt cā to her bed syde i the night her  
 husbād lyng by her & when she preyuyd hym ther she caught hi by the hād &  
 byld hym fast & incōtinēt wakened her husbōd & sayd / Sic it is to ye haue  
 a fals & an vntru seruāt to you which is william your prentys & hath lōge  
 word me to haue his pleisur/ & because I coud nat anoyde his importunate  
 request I haue appoityd hym this night to met me in the gardē i the herber  
 & yf ye wyll aray your self in myn aray & go theder ye shall se the pic therof  
 & then ye may rebuke hym as ye thike best by your dyscrecyon / this husbād  
 thus aduertised by his wyfe/ put vpo hym his wyues raryntē & went to the

herter and when he was gone thydet the prentys cā in to bed to his mast-  
 res wher for a seais they wer both contēt & plealyd ech other by the space of  
 an hour oz. ii. but when she thought trime cōuenyēt she layd to the prentys  
 Now go thy way in to the herber & mete hym & take a good waster in thy  
 hād & say thou dydys it but to pue whether I woldbe a good womā oz no &  
 reward hym as thou thynkyst best. This prentys doig after his mastres cō  
 cell wēt to the herber wher he founde his master i his mastres appel & sayd  
 I thou harlot art thou comē hether/now I se well yf I wold be fals to my  
 master thou woldest be a strōg hore but I had leuer thou wer hāgyd thā I  
 wold do him so traterous a dede therfore I shall grue the some punishment  
 as thou lyke an hore hast delectuyd/ & therwith lapt hī wel about the sholbs  
 & bak & gaue hym a dole oz. ii. good strypys the master selynng hym selfe sō  
 what to imact sayd pefe wyllā myne own true good seruāt for godys sake  
 hold thy hādys for I ā thi master & not thi mastres na hore qd he thou lyst  
 thou art but an harlot & I dyd but to pue the/ & smote hī agayn Alas man  
 enod the master I beleche the nomore for I am not she for I am thy master  
 fele for I haue a berd and therwith he spacyd his hād & felt hys berd Alas  
 master qd the prentys I crye you mercy & then the mayster went vnto hys  
 wyfe & she askyd hym how he had sped & he āswerd I wis wyfe I haue bene  
 threwdly betyn howe be it I haue cause to be glad for I thanke god I haue  
 as trew a wyfe & as trew a seruant as any man hath in england.

**¶** By this talc ye may se that it is not wyldome for a man to be culyd  
 alway after hys wyues counsell.

**I** fortunyd that in a market towne in the counte of Suffolk  
 there was a stage play i the which playe on callyd John adro  
 yns wich dwelyd i a nother byllage ii. myle frō thēs playd the  
 deuyll. And whē the play was done this John ad. oyns i the  
 euenyng departyd fro the layd market towne to go hoine to his owne house  
 & be cause he had there no chāge of clothige he went forth i his deuylls a pell  
 whiche i the way comyng homeward cā thozow a waten of conys belōgyng  
 to a gētylmā of the byllage wher he hym selfe dwelt. at which tyme it fortu-  
 nyd a prest a bycar of a church therby with ii oz. iij. other vnthyfsty felowes  
 had brought with thē a hore a hey & a feret to therēt ther to get conis & whē  
 the feret was in the perth & the hey set ouer the path way wher i thys John  
 adroyns thold com. this prest & this other felowes sawe hym com i the deuylls  
 raynēt cōsiderig that they were i the deuylls scruple & stelig of cones & sup-  
 polynge it had ben the deuyll in dede for scere ran away. this John adroyns  
 i the deuylls raynēt & be cause it was sōwhat dark saw not the hey but wēt  
 forth i hast & stoblid therat & fell down & wyth the fall he had almost broke



But whē he was a lityll recuyd he lokyd bp & spyed it was a hay to chack  
 connyes & lokyd further / & saw that they ran away for fere of hym / & saw a  
 horle tyed to a bulh laden with connyes whych they had taken / & he toke the  
 horle & the haye & lepe vpo the horle & rode to the gentylmannys place that  
 was lozde of the waten / to the entente to haue thanke for takynge suche a  
 pray. And tohen he cam / knokyd at the gatys. To whome anone one of the  
 gentylmannys seruauntys alkyd who was there / and sodenly openyd the  
 gate / and allone as he perceuyd hym in the deuyls rayment was sodenly  
 abalhyd / and sparryd the doze agayn / & went in to his mayster / and sayd &  
 swate to hys mayster that the deuyl was at the gate / and wolde come in.  
 The gentylman heryng hym say io callyd another oi hys seruauntys & bad  
 hym go to the gate to knowe who was there. This seconde seruaūt cam to  
 the gate durst not open it / but aikyd with loud voyce who was there. thys  
 Johā Androyns in the deuyls apperell ar loerd with a hye voyce and sayd  
 Tell thy master I must nedys speke with hym or I go. This secōd seruaūt  
 heryng that answer supposynge also it had bene the deuyl / went in agayn  
 to his master and sayd thus / mayster yt is the deuyl in dede that ys at the  
 gate / and sayth he must nedys speke with you or he go hencs. The gentylmā  
 than began a lityll to bathe and callyd the steward of hys howse / whych  
 was the wysst seruaunt that he had and bad hym to go to the gate and to  
 bynge hym sure worde who was there. This steward be cause he thought  
 he wold se surely who was there came to the gate and lokyd thozow the chi  
 nys of the gate in dyuers placys / and saw well that yt was the deuyl and  
 sat vpon an horle and hangynge aboute the saddell on euery syde sacce the  
 cony heddys hengynge doun / than he came to his mayster aferde in greate  
 haste and sayd / By goddys body yt is the deuyl in dede that is at the gate  
 sytting vpon an horle laden all wyth sowllys / and by lykelyhede / he is com  
 for your sonle purpocely / and lakkyth but your soule / & yf he had your soule  
 I wene he shold be gone. This gentylman thā meruelously abalhyd callyd  
 bp his chapleyn / and made the holy candell to be lyght / and gat holy water  
 and wente to the gate wyth as many of hys seruauntys as durst go with  
 hym / where the chaplayn with holy wordys of coniuracyon sayde / In the  
 name of the fader / sonne and holy goost / I coniure the and charg the in the  
 holy name of god to tell me why and wherfoze thowe commytteste hyshe.  
 This Johā Androyns in the deuyllys apparell heryng theym begynne to  
 coure after suche maner sayd / May nay be not a ferd of me for I am a good  
 dyuell I am Johā Androyns your neghbour dwellyng in thys towne and  
 he that played the dyuell / to day in the play / I haue brought my mayster a  
 dosen or ii. of hys owne connyes that were stolyn in hys waten and they  
 horle & they hay / and make them for fere to ronne away / and when they

herde hym thus speke by hys voyce they kneto hym well ynoughe and openyd the gate and let hym come in. And so all the forsayd fere and dyed was toynyd to myrth and dysfoste.

By this tale ye may se that me feare many tymes more than they rede which hath causyd me to beleue that spyrtytys & deuyls haue bene sene in dyuers placys when it hath bene nothyng so.

**T**her was a riche man which lay loze seke in his bed lyke to dy wherfore his eldyf son cam to hym & bescechyd hym to grue hym his blyf syng to whom the fader sayd son thou shalt haue goddys blessing & myne / & for that that thou hast ben euer good of condycions I grue & bequeth the all my land / to whom he answered & sayd nay fader I trust you shal lyue & occupy them your selve full well by goddys grace. Some after came his ii. sone to hym lyke wyse & desyred his blessing / to whom the fader sayd because thou hast be euer kynde & gentyll & I geue the goddys blessing & myn and also I bequeth the all my mouable goodys / to whom he answered and sayd / nay fader I trust ye shall lyue & do well & spend and ble your goodys your selve by goddys grace. Anon after the iii. sone cam to hym & desyred his blessing to whom the fader answered & sayd by cause thou hast bene euyl & stoborn of condycions & wolde neuer be ruled after my counsell I haue nother land nor goodys onbequethyd but onely a lytell vacant ground wher a galow standyth which now I geue and bequeth to the / and goddys curle withall to whom the sone answered as hys byetherne dyd & sayd nay fader I trust ye shall lyue & be in good helth and haue yt and occupy it your selve by goddys grace. But after that the fader dyed & this thyrd son cotynnyd styll hys vnthyrsty condycions wherfore yt was hys fortune after warde for hys deseruyng to be hangyd on the same galow.

By this tale men may wel perceyue that yong people that wyll not be ruled by theyr frendys counsell in youth in tymys come to a shamfull ende.

Two gentylnen of accoyntaunce wer appoyntyd to ly with a geyll wo

**T**ma in one nyght the one not knowyng of the other at dryers tymis

This fyrst ad his houre appoyntyd ca / & in the bed ther he fortunid to lele a ryng / the ii. gentylna when he was gone cam / & fortunyd to fynd the same ryng / & when he had sped hys besynes departyd / & ii. or iii. dayes after the furst gentylnan seynng his ryng on the others syngget chalengyd yt of hym he & denyed yt hym & bad hi tell wher he had lost it & he seyde i such a gentylwomans bed / than quod the other & ther founde I yt. & the one sayd he wolde haue yt / the other sayd he schulde not / tha they agreyd to be iuggid by the next ma that they mote / & it fortunid theym to mete with the hulbad of the sayd gentyll woma & desyrd hym of his best Iugemēt the wyng hym all hole mater / then quod he by my iugemēt he that owde the iuctys shuld haue the ryng / the quod they & for your good iugemēt you shall haue the ryng.

**A** byllage in suffer there dwellyd a husbandmā whose wyfe  
 fortunyd to fall lyk. Thys husbandman came to the preest  
 of the church and desyryd hys counsell what thyng was best to  
 help his wyfe/whych answeryd hym & sayd þ̄ in bredstrete in londō there  
 was a connyng Phelycyon whose name is callyd master Jordayne/So  
 to hym & shew hym that thy wyfe is lyk and Impotent & not able to go &  
 shew hym her water and beseech hym to be good master to the/and praye  
 hym to do hys cure vppon her:and I warrant he wyll teche the some med-  
 lycne that shall help her. Thys husbandman folowynge hys counsell cā to  
 london & askyd of dyuers men which was the way to good ale strete so þ̄  
 euery man þ̄ hard hym laught hym to scoone. At the last one þ̄ harde hym  
 askyd him whether it were not bred strete that he wold haue/By god god  
 the husbandmā ye say treuth:for I wyll well it was ocher byede oꝝ drink:  
 So whē they had taught hym the way to bred strete & was eteryd into þ̄  
 strete he askyd of dyuers men where one master Phypot dwellyd whych  
 sayd they knew no such mā & laught at hym apace. At last one askyd him  
 whether it were not master Jordayn þ̄ phylsycio. ye þ̄ same god þ̄ husband  
 mā for I wot well a Jordayn & a pylspot is all one. So whē they had shew-  
 wyd hym hys house he wēt thyder & cā to hym & dyd hys erād thus & sayd  
 Syr if it please your māshyp I vnderstand ye ar callyd a connyng confu-  
 syon: So it is my wyfe is lyk & oimypotent & may not go & here I haue  
 brought you her water I beseech you do your corage vppon her & I shall  
 geue you māshyp a good reward. The phelysycio pleyuyng by the water  
 þ̄ she was weke of nature bad hym get her mete þ̄ were restoratyue & spe-  
 cyally if he could let her haue a poundgarnet & to let her not ouercōme her  
 stomak w̄ mych mete tyll she haue an apetyte. Thys husbandmā herd him  
 speke of a poundgarnet & an appetite had wend he had spoken of a pound  
 of garlyk and of an ape & shortly bought a pound of garlyk & after went  
 to the styward & bought an ape of one of the marchant & brought both  
 home to hys wyfe & tyed the ape w̄ a cheyn at hys bedde fete/ & made hys  
 wyfe to ete the pound of garlyk whether she wolde oꝝ no/whereby she fell  
 in so gret a lask that it purgyd all the corrupciō out of her body:wherby  
 & by resō þ̄ the ape that was tyde ther made so many mōkkys skypys &  
 knakk that made her oftynys to be mery & laugh that thankyd be god  
 she was shortly restoryd to helth.

**¶** By thys tale ye may se that oft tymys medelyns taken at ad-  
 uenturyrs do as mich good to the Patient as medelyns geuen  
 by the solempne counsell of connyng phylsycions.

**I** In the vniuersyte of Oxenford there was a skoler þ̄ deliuerd  
 mich to speke eloquent english & curious termes/ And ca to þ̄  
 cobbler wyth hys shoyes whych were p̄sid befoze as the p̄bid þ̄  
 feson to haue them d̄ouyd & sayd t̄ys wylle/ Cobler I pray the let me.ii  
 cryngyls & .ii. l̄eny cercles vppon my subpedytals & I shall gyue the loz  
 thy labor/ Thys cobbler becaule he vnderstode h̄; in not half well alwerid  
 tho; tly & sayd/ Syr youre eloquence passith myne itelligence/ but I pro-  
 myse you yf ye meddyll wyth me/ the d̄owtyng of youze shone shall coste  
 you.iii. pence.

**¶** By thys tale mē may lerne þ̄ it is foly to study to speke eloquēt  
 ly befoze them that be rude & vnlearnyd.

**I** Certayn artificer in londo there was wh̄ch was soze syk that  
 could not well dygest hys mete/ to wh̄o a phyysico cam to gyue  
 hym counsell & leyd þ̄ he must ble to ete metis þ̄ be light of dy-  
 gestyon as small byrdys/ as sparous or swallows & especyall þ̄ byrd þ̄ ys  
 callyd a wagtail whose t̄l̄shc ys meruelouie lyght of dygestyō becaule  
 that byrd ys euer mouyng & flyyng. The ilk man heryng the phelition  
 leyd so answeryd hym & leyd/ Syr yf that be the cause þ̄ those byrdys be  
 lyght of dygestyon/ Chan I know a mete mychlyghter of dygestyon than  
 other sparow swallow or wagtail/ & that ys my wyuys t̄og for it is ne-  
 uer in rest but euer mouyng & flyyng.

**¶** By thys tale ye may lerne a good generall rule of p̄hesyk.

**I** womā ther was whych had had.iiii. husbād̄. It fortunyd also  
 that this fourth hulband died & was brougt to ch̄rch vppon þ̄  
 here/ wh̄o this womā folowyd & made gret mone & wext very soz. In lo  
 mych that her neybours thought she wold s̄owne & dyfoz sozow/ wherfoz  
 one of her gollyps cam to her & spake to her in her ere & bad her foz godd̄  
 sake to comfort her leif & refrayne that lamentacōn o; ellys it wold hurt  
 her gretly & pauenture put her in seopdy of her lyfe. To wh̄o this womā  
 alweryd & sayd/ Alwys good gollyp I haue gret cause to mo;ne if ye knew  
 all/ so; I haue byryed .ii. husbandys besyde thys man/ but I was neuer i  
 the case þ̄ I am now/ so; there was not one of the but wh̄e that I folowid  
 the corse to chy; ch; et I was sure alway of an other husbād̄ befoze that þ̄  
 corse cam out of my house/ & now I am sure of no nother hulband & ther  
 foze ye may be sure I haue gret cause to be sad & heuy.

**¶** By thys tale ye may se that the olde p̄ue; be ys trew that yt is as  
 gret pyte to se a woman wepe as a golye to go baretate.

**A** Nother woman there was that knelyd at þ̄ mas' of requiē whyle the corse of her husbāde lay on the bere in the chyrch. To whom a yonge man came to speke wyth her in her ere as though he h̄t had bene for soim matre concernyng the funerallys/ howe be yt he spake of no such matter but only wo'yd her that he myghte be her husbāde / to whome she answerde & sayde thus/ Syr by my trouche I am loy that ye come so late / for I am sped all redy / For I was made sure yester day to a nother man.

**C** By thys tale ye maye perceyue that women ofte tymes be wyse and lothe to lose any tyme.

**A** Merchant that thought to deride a myllner seyde unto þ̄ myllner syttryng among company. Sir I haue hard say that euery trew myllner that tollythe trewye hāth a gylden thombe/ the myllner answered & seyde it was trewth/ Then quod the merchaunt I pray the let me se thy thomb/ & when the myllner shewyd hys thomb the merchaunt sayd I can not perceyue þ̄ thy thombe is gylt/ but yt ys but as all other mennys thōbis be/ to whom the myllner answerd & seyde/ Syr tze wthe yt ys that my thōbis gylt how be it ye haue no power to se it/ for thez is a properte cuer incidet therto þ̄ he þ̄ ys a cokecold shall neuer haue power to se yt.

**D** He callyd Oconer an yill lozde toke an horsman pylsoner that was one of hys gret euyns/ whiche for any request or yntrety þ̄ þ̄ horsman made gaue iugement that he shulde incōtynēt be hāgyd/ & made a frere to shypue hym and bad hym make hym redy to dye (Thys frere þ̄ shoue hym examyned hym of dyuers synes & askyd hym amōg othere whyche were the grettyste synys that euer he dyde/ thys horsmane answerd & sayde one of the grettyst actys that euer I dyde whyche I now most repent is that when I toke Oconer the laste weke in a churche and ther I myght haue bzennyd hym church and all & because I had conscyence & pyte of bzennyng of the churche I tarped þ̄ tyme so long þ̄ oconer escaped/ & that same deferring of bzennyng of the churche & so long taryng of that tyme is one of the worst actys þ̄ euer I dyd wher of I moste repente/ Thys frere perceyuyng hym in that mynd sayd pece man in the name of god & change þ̄ mynde & dye in charite or els thou shalt neuer come in heuen/ nay quod the hors man I wyll neuer change þ̄ mynde what so euer shall come to my soule/ thys frere pceuyng hym thus styll to contynen hys mīde cā to oconer & seyde syz in þ̄ name of god haue souz pyte vppō thys mannys soule & let hym not dye now tyll he be in a better mynde/

For yf he dye now he hys so far out of charyte þ vtterly hys soule shall be dampnyd / and she wyd hym what mynde he was in & all the holic matter as ys befoze shewyd. Thys horsman heryng þ frere thus intrete for hym sayd to oconer thus / Oconer thou seeyst well by thys mannys reporte þ yf I dye now I am out of charyte & not redy to go to heuen & so it ys þ I am now out of charyte in dede / but thou seest well þ this frere ys a good man he is now well dysposyd & in charyte / and he is redy to go to heuen & so am not I / therfoze I pray the hang vp thys frere whyle that he hys redy to go to heuyn and lette me tary tyl a nother tyme þ I may be i charyte and redy & mete to go to heuyn. This Oconer heryng this mad answer of hym spat yd the man & forgaue hym hys lyfe at that season.

¶ By thys ye may se that he that is in daunger of his enyng þ hath no pyte / he can do no better than shew to hym the vttern.oste of hys malycyous mynde whych that he betyth toward hym.

¶ The archdebyn of Essex þ had bene long in auctoryte in a tyme of vyl pracion when all the preestys apperyd betoze hym callyd al ydc. iii. of þ ydg prestys whych were accusyd þ they could not well say they deuine scrupit / & askyd of the whē they sayd was whether they sayd *corpus meus* or *corpū meū*. The furst preest sayd þ he sayd *corpus meus*. The seccōd sayd þ he sayd *corpū meū*. And the he alkyd of the thyd how he sayd / whych answeryd & sayd thus / ly? because it is so gret a dout & dyucts men be in dyuers opynyons / thertoze because I wold be sure I wold not offnd whē I come to þ place I leue it clene out & say nothyng therfoze / wherfoze he then openly rebukyd them all thye. But dyuers that were present thought moze defaut in hym because he hym seue befoze tyme had admittyd them to be preestys.

¶ By thys tale ye may se that one ought to take heed how he rebukyth an other lest it tozne most to hys owne rebuke.

¶ Two frerys sat at a gentylmans tabyll whych had betoze hym a fastyng day an ele & cut the hed of the ele & layd it vppō one of þ freris trechar / but the frere because he wold haue had of þ nyddyll part of the ele sayd to the gentylman he louyd no ele heddy / this gentylman also cut the taylor of þ ele & leyd it on the other freris trechar / he lykewylse because he wold haue had of the nyddyll pte of þ ele sayd he louyd no ele taylys. Thys gentylman perceuyng that gaue the taylor to the frere þ sayd he louyd not the hed / & gaue the hed to hym that sayd he louyd not þ taylor. And as for the nyddyll parte of the ele he ete part hym

self & part he gaue to other folke at y<sup>e</sup> table/wherfore these hertes for an  
ger wold etc neuer a in sell/ & so they for all theyr craft & subtylte were  
not onely decepued of y<sup>e</sup> best mollell of y<sup>e</sup> ele/ but therof had no part at al.

¶ By this ye le that they y<sup>e</sup> couet the best part somtyme therfore  
lose the mean: part and all.

**A** welchman dwellynge in a wylde place of walys came to hys  
curate in the tyme of lent & was cōfessyd. & when his confessyon  
was in maner at the end the curate asked him whether he had any othes  
thyng to say y<sup>e</sup> greuyd hys cōscyēce/whych sore abashyd answeryd no  
word a gret wyyle/at last by exortacion of hys gootly fadet he sayd y<sup>e</sup>  
there was one thyng in his mynd that gretly greuyd hys cōsciēce which  
he was ashamed to vtter /for it was so greuous y<sup>e</sup> he trowid god wold  
neuer forgyue hym/to whom the curate asweryd & sayd y<sup>e</sup> godd<sup>e</sup> mercy  
was aboue all/ & bad hym not dyspayre in the mercy of god/ for what so  
euer it was yf he were repentaūte y<sup>e</sup> god wold forguee hym/ And so by  
long exortacion at the last he shewyd it & seyde thus / Syr it happenyd  
onis that as my wyfe was making a chele vppon a fryday I wold haue  
sayd whether it had ben salt or freth and toke a lpyll of the whey in my  
hand & put it in my mouth & or I was ware part of it went downe my  
throte agaynst my wylt & so I brake my fast/to whom the curate sayd & if  
ther be no nother thyng I warant god shall forgyue the. So whā he had  
well comfortyd hym w<sup>th</sup> y<sup>e</sup> mercy of god the curate prayd hym to answer a  
question & to tell hym treuth/ & when the welchman had promysyd to tell  
the treuth/the curate sayd that there were robberyes & murders done nye  
the place where he dwelt & dyuers men souid slayne & askyd hym whether  
he were cōsentyng to any of them /to whō he answerid & seyde yes & sayd  
he was ptee to many of them & dyd helpe to robbe & to sle dyuers of them  
¶ Then the curate askyd hym why he dyd not cōfesse him therof/the welch  
man asweryd & sayd he toke y<sup>e</sup> for no synne for it was a custome amouge  
them y<sup>e</sup> whan any boty came of any ryche merchaunt rydyng y<sup>e</sup> it was but  
a good neybour dede one to help a nother when one callyd a nother/ &  
so they toke that but for good felshyp & neybourhod.

¶ Here ye may se y<sup>e</sup> some haue remozle of conscyence of small venyall  
syns & seere not to do gret offence w<sup>th</sup>out shame of y<sup>e</sup> world or dyede of  
god: & as y<sup>e</sup> cōen puerb is they lūble at a straw & lepe ouer a blok.

¶ A Ryche couetous marchāte ther was y<sup>e</sup> dwellyd in Lodon whych  
euer gaderyd money & coud neuer fynd in hys hert to spend no  
ght vppon hym self nor vppon no mā els/whych fell sore lyk/ & as he lay

on hys deth bed had hys purs lyeng at his beddys hed/ & had suche a louc to hys money that he put his hand in his purs & toke out therof. x. oz. xii. li i nobles & put them in his mouth/ And becaule his wyfe & other perceyvd hyin very lyk & lyke to dye they exortyd hyin to be contellyd and brought y curate vnto him/ whych when they had caulyd hyin to sey Benedicite y curat bad hyin cry god mercy & shew his synnys. Than this lyk man began to sey A cry god mercy I haue offendyd in y. vij. dedly synnys & broken the. x. comaundementys/ & becaule of the gold in hys mouth he mufflede so in hys speche that the curate coude not well vnderstande hyin / wherefoze the curate asked hyin what he hadde in hys mouthe that lettcd hys speche / I wos mastere persone quod the lyk inan muffleynge I haue nothyng in my mouth but a lyttyll money becaule I wot not whether I shall go I thoughte; I wolde take some spendyng money wythme for I wot not what nede I shall haue therof / And incontynent after that sey yngc dyed befoze he was confessed oz repentant that ony man could perceue/ and so by lyklyhode went to the deuyll.

**W**ythys tale ye may se that they that all theye lyuys wylle neuer do charyte to theye neyghbours/ that go in tyme of theye deth wyl not suffer them to haue gzaace of repentaunce.

**T**here was a certayn ryche husbandman in a byllage whych loued nottes mercielously well & set trees of silberdys & other nut trees in his orchard/ & nor shid them well all hys lyfe/ & when he dyed he made hys executours to make promise to bery w hyin yn hys graue a bage of nottis oz els they sholde not be hys executours/ which executours for feare of losyng theye coinys fulfyllid hys wyl & dyd so. It happenyd y the same nyght after that he was beryed there was a mylner in a whyte cote came to this mayns garden to thet et to stele a bage of nottis/ & in y way he met w a tayler in a blak cote an vnthi. ft. of hys accoyntauce & shewyd hyin hys intent/ (This tayler lykewyle shewyd hyin y he intedyd y same tyme to stele a shepe/ & so they both there agreyd to go forthward euery inan seuerally w hys pu pole & after y they apoynted to make good chere ech w oth. er & to mere agayne in y chyrch porch/ & he that came first to tary for the other. This mylner when he had spede of hys nottys came first to the chyrch porche & there taryed for hys felowe and the mene why le sette styll there & knakked nottys. It fortunyd than the lerten of the church becaule y was abowt. ix. of the klok cam to ryng cursu. & when he



lokyd in þ porch & saw onc all in whyte knakkyng nott<sup>e</sup>/he had went  
 it had bene þ dede man rylen owr of hys graue knakkyng þ nottes þ  
 wer byryed w hyin & ran home agayn in all hast and tolde to a krepull þ  
 was in hys howle what he had lene. This krepull thus heryng rebu  
 kyd þ sexten & leyd þ yf he were able to go he wold go thyder & coiure þ  
 spryte/by my trowth qd þ sexte & yf thou darst do þ I wyl bere the on my  
 nek & so they both agreed. The sexten toke þ crepul on hys nek & cam in  
 to þ chyrch agayn/ & þ mylner in þ porch saw onc comyng bering  
 a thing on his bak had went it had ben þ taylour comyng w the shepe  
 & rose vp to mete the & as he cam towarde the he askyd & leyd/ Is he  
 fat/ is he fat/ þ sexten heryng hym sey so/ for fere cast the crepul down &  
 leyd fat or lene take hym ther for me/ & ran away / & the creple by myra  
 cle was made hole & ra away as fast as he or faster / This mylner per  
 ceuyng þ they were. ii. & þ one ran after a nother suppolyng þ one had  
 spyed þ tayler stelyng þ shepe and þ he had ron after hym to haue taken  
 hym/ and feared þ ioum body also had spyed hym stelyng nottes he for fe  
 re left hys nottes behynd hym and as secretly as he coude ran home to  
 hys myll/ And anon after þ he was gon þ tayler cam w the stolyn shepe  
 vpon hys nek to the chyrch porch to lese the mylner & when he found  
 ther the not shalys he suppoled þ hys felow had be ther and gone home  
 as he was in oede/ wherfore he toke þ shepe agayne on hys nek and  
 went to ward the myll/ But yet duryng this whyle the sexte whych ran  
 away went not to hys owne house but wet to the pylly prytyt chāber/ &  
 shewd hym how the spryte of þ man was rylē out of hys graue knakkyng  
 nottes as ye haue hard before/ wherfor þ prest leyd that he wold go coiure  
 re hym yf the sexten wold go w hym / & so they both agreed/ þ prest dyd  
 on his iucples & a stole about hys nek & toke holy water w hym and cam  
 w the sexte toward þ church / & as sone as he enteryd in to þ church yar  
 de / The tayler w the whyte shepe on hys nek intenyng as I before ha  
 ue shewid. yow to go down to þ myll met w them & had went þ þ prest in  
 hys surples had ben þ mylner in hys whyte cote / & leyd to hym by god  
 I haue hym I haue hym meanyng by the shepe y he had stolyn/ the prest  
 perceuyng the tayler all in biak & a whyte thyng on hys nek had went  
 it had ben þ deuyll beryng away the spryte of þ dede man y was beryed  
 & ran away as faste as he coude takyng þ way downe toward the myll/ &  
 þ sexten comyng after hi. This tayler scyng onc folowpng hi had wet  
 þ one had folowed the mylner to haue don hym some hurt & thought he  
 wold folow if neede were to help þ mylner. & went forth tyl he cam to the  
 myll & knocked at þ myldore/ þ mylner beyng w yn asked who was ther  
 þ tayler alwerd & said by god I haue caught one of them & made hi sure

& tyed hym fast by þ leggys menynge by the shepe þ he had stoyln & had  
 thē on hys nek tyed fast by þ leggys. But þ mylner heryng him ley þ he  
 had hym tyed fast by the leggys had wente it had bē the conitable þ had  
 takē the tayler for stelyng of the shepe & had tyed him by þ leggs / & terid  
 þ he had comen to haue taken hym also to stelyng of the norrys / wherfo  
 ze the mylner openyd a bak doze & ran away as fast as he coude. The tay  
 lour heryng the bak doze openyng wēt on þ other syde of þ myll / & there  
 saw the mylner comyng away / & stode there a littyll whyle musyng w þ  
 shepe on his nek. Then was the parssh p̄cest & the sexte standyng there  
 vnder the myllhouse hydyng them toz tere & saw the taylour agayn w þ  
 shepe on his nek had wend styll it had bene the dyuyll w the sp̄yt of the  
 dede man on hys nek & soz fere ran away / but becaule they knew not the  
 ground well / the p̄cest lepte into a dyche almost ouer the hed lyke to be  
 drounyd that he cryed wyth a loud voyce help help. Then the taylour lo  
 kyd about & saw the mylner rōne away & the sexten a nother way & hard  
 the p̄cest cry help / had wend it had bene the cōstable w a gret cōpany cry  
 eng for help to take hym & to byyng hym to pylson for stelyng of þ shepe  
 wherfoze he threwe downe the shepe & ran away a nother way as faste as  
 he coude / & so euery man was affraid of other wythout cause.

¶ By thys ye may se well it is foly for any man to fere a thyng to  
 mych tyll that he se some p̄oue. oꝝ cause.

¶ In þ old world when all thyng coude speke þ. iiii. element met  
 to gedet for many thyngs whych they had to do becaule they  
 must meddyl alway one with a nother: & had cōmunicaciō to  
 gedet of dyuers matters / & becaule they coude not concludē all thez ma  
 ters at þ season they appoyntyd to byke comynpacyon for þ tyme & to  
 mete agayn a nother tyme / therfoze ech one of the she wyd to other wher  
 theyze most abydyng was & where theyze telows shuld fynd the in if nede  
 shuld requyre: & fult þ yetth sayd byethern ye know well as for me I am  
 p̄manēt alway & not remouable therfoze ye may be sure to haue me alway  
 whan ye lyst. The water seyde yf ye lyst to seke me ye shalbe sure euer to  
 haue me vnder a toft of grene rushys oꝝ ellys in a womans eye. The  
 wynde sayde yf ye lyst to seke me ye shalbe sure euer to haue me amonge  
 aspyn leuys oꝝ els in a womans tong. Then quod the fyre yf any of you  
 lyst to seke me: ye shal euer be sure to fynd me in a flynt stone oꝝ eis in a  
 womans hart.

¶ By thys tale ye may letne aswell the properetes of þ. iiii. elementz  
 tys as the properete of a woman.

**A** Here was a iustyce but late in þe realme of englonð called master Maupour a very homly man & rude of condycions & louyd neuer to spẽd mych money / This maister Maupour rode on a tyme in hys cyrcute in a place of the north cõtrei where he had agreed w̄ the shyrif for a certayn somme of money for hys chargys thorowe the shyre / so that at euery Anne & lodgynge thys maister bavelour payd for hys own collys It fortunyd so þ̄ when he cam to a certayn lodgynge he cõmaunded one Corppyn hys seruãt to se þ̄ he bled good hul bondry & to saue suche thynges as were last & to cary it w̄ hym to serue hym at the next baytyng / Thys Corppyn doynge hys masters cõ. nauðemēt toke þ̄ brokyn brede brokyn mete & all sych thiḡ þ̄ was last & put it in hys male / The wyfe of þ̄ house p̄ceuyng þ̄ he toke all suche fragimentys & bytaylor w̄ hym þ̄ was last & put it in hys male / she brought by þ̄ podge þ̄ was last i the pot & when corppyn had torned hys bak a lytyll syde she pouryd þ̄ podge in to þ̄ male whych ran vpon hys robe of skarlet & other hys garnem̄. tys & rayed them very euyll that they were mych hurt therw̄. Thys Corppyn sodenly tornyd hym & saw it / reuylpd the wyfe therfor & ran to hys maister & told hym what she had don / wherfor maister Maupour incõtt nēt callyd þ̄ wyfe & seyde to her thus. Thou drab qd̄ he what hast thou dō why hast thou pouryd þ̄ podge in my male & martyd my raynēt & gere / O syr quod þ̄ wyfe I know well ye ar a iudge of þ̄ realme / & I perceyue by you: you: mid is to do ryght & to haue that that is your owne / & your mynd is to haue all thyng w̄ you þ̄ ye haue payd for / both brokyn brede mete & other thynḡ þ̄ is left: & so it is reason that ye haue / & therfoze because you: seruãt hath taken the brede & the mete & put it i you: male I haue therfoze put in your male the podge þ̄ be last because ye haue well & truly payd for them for yf I shuld kepe ony thyng from you þ̄ ye haue payd for: peraduenture ye wold trouble me in the law an other tyme.

**¶** Here ye may se þ̄ he þ̄ playth the nygarde to mych cometyne yē torneth hym to hys owne losse.

**A** Certayne weddyd man there was whyche whan he was dede cā to heuen gatys to saynt Peter & sayd he cā to clayn his herytage which he had deseruyd. Seynt Peter askyd hym what he was / & he sayd a weddyd mā / anon Seynt peter openyd þ̄ gat̄ & bad hym come in & sayd he was worthy to haue hys herytage because he had had much trobyll & was worthy to haue a crowne of glory. Anon after þ̄ there cam a nother man that claynyd heuyn / & sayd to Seynt Peter he had had .ii. wyuys / to whom Seynt peter alsweyrd and sayd come in for thou art worthy to haue a double crown of glory / for thou hast had double trouble / at þ̄ last there cam a thyrd claynyng heuen & sayd to Saynt peter

þ he had had. iii. wyuys & delyu'd to come in/what quod Seynte Peter thou hast bene onys in trouble & therof delyueryd/ & then wyllingly woldest be troyld agayn & yet agayn therof delyueryd/ & for all þ could not beware þ thy:de tyme/ but enterest wyllngely in trobyll agayne therefore go thy way to hell for thou shalt neuer come in heuen for thou arte not worthy.

¶ Thys tale is a warnyng to them that haue bene twyse in parell to beware how they come therein the thy:de tyme.

**R**iche merchant of london there was which had but one sonne  
 ¶ I was somewhat vnthyfty therfore his fader vppon hys death bed called hym to hym & seyde he knew well þ he had ben vnthyft ty howbeyt yf he knew he wold amend hys condicions he wold make hym his executoure & leue hym in his goodys so þ he wold promyse to praye for hys soule: & to fynde one dayly to syng for hym/ whyche thyng to performe hys son there made a faythfull promyse. After þ thys mā made hym his executoure & dyed/ But after that hys sone kept luthyrot þ in short tyme he had wasted & spend all & had nothyng left but a hen & a cok that was hys faders. At fortunyd than that one of hys frendys came to hym & sayd he was sozry þ he had wastyd so mych & askyd hym how he wolde performe hys promyse made to hys father þ he wold kepe one to syng for him  
 ¶ Thys yong man answered & sayd by god yet I will performe my promyse/ for I will kepe thys same cok alyue styll and he will krowe euery daye and so he shall syng euery day for my faders soule/ & so I will performe my promyse well ynough.

¶ By thys ye may se that it is wysdome for a man to do good dedys hym self whyle he is here & not to trust to the prayer and promys of hys executours.

**T**here was a mayde stode by a ryuers syde in her smok washyng clothys. And as she stoupyd oft tymys her smokke cleuyd betwene her buttockes/ By whome there came a trete scyngge her and sayde in sport. Mayde take heed for Bayard bytys on the byddyll. þay wys master frere quod the mayden he doth but wyppen hys mouth and we mych ye will come & kysse hym.

¶ By thys ye may se that a womans answer is neuer to seke.

folto. bitt.

**A** Certayn man there was dwellinge in a towne callyd Gotaun  
which went to a fayre. iiii. myle of to by shepe / & as he cam ouer  
a byrpdge he met w<sup>th</sup> one of hys neybours & told him whether he  
went / & he askyd hym whych way he wold byrnyng the / whych sayd he wold  
byrnyng the ouer the same byrpdge / nay quod the other mā but thou shalt not  
by god qd he but I wyll / & other agayn said he shuld not / & he agayn said  
he wold byrnyng them ouer i pyte of his teth & so fell at word / & at the last  
to buffert that eche one knockyd other well about the heddoys w<sup>th</sup> theyre  
fystys. To whom there cam a thyrd man which was a myner wyth a lak  
of mele bypd a hoyle a neybour of theys & partyd them & askyd the what  
was the cause of theyr varyaunce / whych then she wyd hym the matter &  
cause as ye haue harde / & hys thyrd man the myner thought to rebuke  
theyr folyshnes with a famylyer example & toke hys lak of mele from his  
hoys bak & openyd it & pouryd all the mele in the lak ouer the byrpdge into  
the conyng ruer wherby all the mele was lost & sayd thus. By my trouthe  
neybours because ye stryue for byrnyng ouer the byrpdge thole shepe which  
be not yet bought nor wot not where they be / me thynkyth therfore there  
is curyn as mych wyt in your heddoys as there is mele in my lak.

**C**hys tale she wyth you that some man takyth bypd hym to  
shew other men wyldome when he is but a folc hym self.

**A** man there man that came to confesse hym self to a gray frere &  
shroue him that he had layne with a yong gentylwomā & frere  
than al sayd hym in what place / & he said it was in a goodly chā  
ber all nyght lōg in a lotte warme bed / & the frere heryng that shuggyd  
in hys clothyys & layd / now by swete seynt fraunces then wast thou verye  
well at ease.

**A** Chandeler being a wydo wer dwelling at holborne byrge in lōdō  
had a fayre doughter / whom a yōg gentylman of dauys Anne  
woyd gretly to haue hys pleatiue of her / whych by long sute to  
her made at p<sup>st</sup> last grautyd him & poyntyd hym to cōbe bypd a night to her  
faders house in p<sup>st</sup> euenyng & she wold conuey him into her chāber secretly  
whych was an inner chamber wythin her faders chāber / So accordyng to  
p<sup>st</sup> pōitnēt all thig was pfozmyd so p<sup>st</sup> he lay w<sup>th</sup> her all nyght & made good  
there tyll about. iiii. a clok i p<sup>st</sup> mornig / at which tyme it fortunyd this yōg  
gēt ymā fell a coughig / whych cā bypd hym so sore p<sup>st</sup> he couyd not refrayn

Thys yong wench then fering her fader that lay in the next chaüber bad hym go put hys hed in the draught lest þ her fader shuld here him: which after her counsell rose in hys shytt & so dyd / but the because of the sauoz of the draught it causyd hym to cough with moze & louder that þ wēchis fader hard hym & askyd of hys daughter what man was that þ coughid i her chaüber / she answeryd & sayd no body. But euer thys yōg mā coughid styll moze & moze whom the fader heyring seyde / by goddē body hoze thou lyeest I wyl se who hys there & rose out of hys bed : ¶ Thys wench perceyving her fader ryling cam to the gentylmā & sayd take hede sy? to your self my fader comyth. Thys gentylman lot efly ther wyth abashyd wolde haue pullyd hys hed out of the draught hole whych was very strepte fo: hys hed that he pullyd the sege bozd by ther wyth / & hangyng about hys nek ran vppon the fader beyng an o: d man & gaue hym a gret fall / & bare hym down & hurt hys arme / & openyd the doys & rā into þ strete wyth þ draught bozde about hys nek to ward dauys Inne as fast as he coude.

Thys wēch fo: fere rā out of her faders houle & cā not there a moneth after. Thys gentylman as he ran vppon holborne bydge in et wā a colyer cart laden w: colys where there was. ii. o: iii. (syttly) ho:lys / which when they saw thys gentylman rōnyng start asyde & thre w down þ cart wyth colys / & drew it asyde & brake þ cart rope / wherby the colys fell out some in one place some in an other / & after the ho:lys brake they? trasys & ran some toward smythfeld & some toward newgate that the colyer rā after them & was a howre & moze o: he coude get his horse to geder agayn / By whych tyme the people of the strete were rylen and cā to þ strete & saw yt strawyd wyth colys euerly one fo: hys part gaderyd by the colys: that þ most part of the colys were gone o: the colyer had got hys ho:lys. ¶ But duryng thys whyle the gētylman wēt thoro w seynt andrews churchyard toward dauys Inne / & there met wyth the sextē comyng to church i o rig to mo:ow mas: whych when he saw the gentylman in the churchyarde in hys shytt w: the draught bozd about hys nek / had wēd it had bene a spryt & cryed alas alas a spryt & ran bak agayn to hys house almost at þ bartys & fo: fere was almost out of hys wytt þ he was þ wo:se halfe a yere after.

¶ Thys gentylman than because dauys Inne gatys were not open went on the bak syde & lept ouer the garden wall / but in lepyng the sege bozd so troubled hym thot he fell down in to the garden & had almost brokē his nek & there ley styll tyll þ the p:ncipall cam in to the gardyn / whych when he saw hym ly there had wēd some man had be slayne & there cast ouer þ wall & durst not come nye him tyll he had callyd by hys company / whych when many of the gentylmen wher come to gether / lokyd well vppō him and knew hym & after releuyd hym / But the bozde þ was about hys nek

causyd his hed so to swell that they could not get it of tyll they were sayne to cutte it of with hatchettys. Thus was the wench well Japyd/ & for fere she can fro her fader/ her faders arme was hurt the colyar lost his colys the sexte was almost out of his wyt/ & the gentylman had almost broke his nek

**A** matchantys wyfe ther was in bolwe pacyth in london some what slept in age to woho her mayd cam on a sonday in lent after dynes & sayd maystres quod she they ryng at seynt Thomas of acres for ther shall be a sermo prechyd anon/ to whom the maystres answerd & sayd mary god dys blyssyng on thy hart for warnyng me therof & because I slept not wel all this nyght I pray the bynng my stole with me for I wyll go thyder to loke whether I can take a nap there whyle the prest is prechyng

By this ye may se that many on goth to churche as moche for othe thyngys as for deuocyon.

**H**er was a certayn company of women gatheryd to geder in comynracyon one happenyd thus to say her pyggys after they were farowyd dyed and wolde not lyue and one olde wyfe of her accoyntance heryng her say so bad her get a cockoldys hat and put the pyggys therein a whyle aftet they were farowyd and they tholde lyue/ whych wyfe interdyng to do after her counsell came to one of her gossypys and shewyd her what medecyne was thaught her for her pyggys & prayd her to lend her her husbandys hat/ whych answerd her angerly and sayd I wold thou knewst it Dabbe I haue none for my husbände is no cockold for I am a good woman and so lyke wyle euery wyfe answerd her in lyke maner that she departed frome many of them in anger and ikoldyng. But whan she sawe she coude get none she came agayne to her gossypys all angerly and sayd I haue gone round aboute to borro a cockoldys hat and I can get none wherfore yf I lyue another yere I wyll haue one of myn own and be out of my neyghbours daunger

By this tale a man may lerne that it is more wysdome for a man to trust more to his owne stoz than to his neyghtours gentylnes.

**A** gentylman & a gentylwoman sat togeder talkyn whiche gentylman had gret payn in one of his teth. & hapnyd to say to the gentywoman thus. Myss mastres I haue a toth i my hed which greuyth me very sore wherfore I wold yt were in your tayle. She heryng hym sayng so. answerd thus. In good fayth syz yf your toth were in my tale it coude do yt but lytyll good/ but yf there be any thyng in my tale that can do your toth good I wold yt were in your toth.

By this ye may se that a womans answer is feldome to seke.

**I** In the tyme of lent a welchman cam to be confestyd of hys curat. whych in hys cofessyon sayd that he had kyllyd a scere / to wohō the curat sayd he coude not assoyle hym / ycs qd̄ the walchmā yf thou knewest all thou woldyst assoyle me well ynough / & when the curat had cōmandyd hym to shew hym all the case he sayd thus mary ther wer. ii. freers & I myght haue slayn them both yf I had lyst but I let the one skape therfore master curat let the tone agaynst the tother & then the offence ys not so great but ye may assoyle me well ynough.

**C** By this ye may se that dyuers menne haue so euill & large cofessyons that they thynke yf they do one good dede or restrayne from the doynge of one euill synne that yt ys a satisfaccyon for other synnis and offence.

**C** Here was a company of gētylmen in northatonsbyre whych went to hunte for deere in the pozlews in the gollet besyde stony stratford / Among which gētylmen ther was one which had a walche man to his lycruante a good archer / whiche when they came to a place where they thought they shold haue game / they made a ston dyng and poyntyd thys welchman to stand by a tre nygh the hre way and bad hym in any wyse to take hede that he shot at no raskall nor medle nat with out it were a male & yf it were a male to spare not / wel qd̄ this welchman let me alone. And whan this walchman had stande there a whyle he sawe moche deere comynge / as well of Huntelere as of Raskall / but eur he let them go and toke no hede to theym. **C** And within an houre after he sawe come rydyng in the hre way a man of the countrey which had a boget hangynge at his sadyll bowe. And whan this walche man had espyed hym he bad hym stand & began to drawe his bow and bad hym deliuer that lptyll male that hynge at his sadell bowe / Thys man for fere of his lyfe was glad to deliuer hym his boget / & so dyd & than rode his way & was glad he was so esappyd. And whan this man of the countrey was gon thys welchman was very glad & went incontynent to seke his master & at last founde hym with his company / and whā he sawe hym he come to hym & sayd thus Master by cottys piut & her naye I haue stande yonder thys two howers and I coude se neuer a male but a lptell male that a man had hangynge at his sadell bowe / & that I haue gotten / & lo here it is / and toke his master the boget whych he had taken awoy from the forsayd man / for the whych dede bothe the master & the seruant were aſterwarde in great trouble.

**C** By thys ye may lerne yt ys greet foly for a master to put a seruant to that besynes wherof he can nothing skyll and wherin he hath nat be vsyd.



**A** yonge gentylman of the age of .xx. yere some whate dyspofyd to myght and game on a tyme talkyd with a geutylwoman which was ryght wyfe and also mery. this gentyl woman as she talz kyd with hym happenyd to loke vppon hys berde / whiche was but yong and growen some what vppon the ouer lyppe and but lyttyll growen beneth as all yonge mennys berdys comonly vse to growe sayd to hym thus. **Sy** ye haue a berde aboue and none beneth. and he her ryngge her say so / sayd in spozte / mastres ye haue a berde benethe and none aboue / mary quod she / then set the tone agaynst the tother / which answere made the gentylman so abashyd that he had not one worde to answer.

**C** Here was a certayn white frere which was a very glotton and a great nyggyn whiche had an vngracyouse boy that cuer folowyd hym and bare hys cloke / and what for the freres glottony & for his cholysynes the boy where he went coude skant get mete inough for the frere wolde eet almoste all hym selfe. But on a tyme the frere made a sermon in the cōtrey wherin he touchyde very many myracles whiche cryst dyd afore his passyon amonge whiche he specyally reherfyde the myracle that cryste dyd in fedynge fyue thousande people wth the fyue louys of bzyede and with iij lyttell fyshys and thys freres boy which carryd not gretely for hys master heryngge hym say so and consyderyng that hys master was so great a churle and glotton answerd with a loude voyce that all the church hard & sayd by my trowth mayster. Then there were no freres there. whiche answere made all the people to fall on luche a laboghynge that for shame the frere wente out of the pulpet. and as for the freres boy he than departyd out of the church that the frere neuer saw hym after.

**C** By thys ye may se that it is honesty for a mā that is at mete to depart with luche as he hath to them that be present.

Kyche fraynklyng dwellyng in the countrey had a freer vlyng to his howse of whom he could neuer be ryd & had tacyed with hym the space of a lenyght & neuer depart wherfore the fraynklyng beyng wery of hym / on a tyme / as he & his wyfe & this frere sat to gedet at supper saynyd hym selfe very angry with hys wyfe In somoche he sayd he wolde bete her. This frere pleyuyng wel what they mēt sayd this. master franklig I haue bene here this seuenyght when ye were frēdys & I wyll tary here this fortyght lenger but I wyll se you frendys agayne or I go thys man perleyuyng that he coude no good nor wolde not depart by none honest meanys answeryd hi shortly & sayd by god frere but thou shalt abyde here no lenger & toke hym by the shulders & thrust hym out of the dorys by vyolence.

¶ By this ye may se that he that wyll lette no good by example / nor good maner to hym the word is worthy to be taught with open rebukes.

¶ A freer Lymptour come into a poze manns howse in the countrey and because this poze man thought this frere myght do hym some good he therfore thought to make hym good chere / But bycause hys wyfe wolde dzesse hym no good mete for colte / he therfor at dyner tyme sayde thus / By god wyfe bycause thou dyddest dzesse me no good mete to my dyner / were it nat for master frere / thou sholdest haue half a dozyn stry pes / say sit quod the frere / I pray you spare nat for me / wherwith the wyf was angry & therfore at souper she cauled them to fare wors.

¶ By this ye may se it is good polycy for gestys yf they wyll haue any good chere to pleas alway the wyfe of the howse.

¶ Here was a frere whiche though he were well letnyd yet he was callyd wycked of condycions whiche had a Gentymanns sonne to waite vpon hym and to teche hym to speke latyn. ¶ Chys frere came to chys chydes fader dwelling in the contrey / and because this frere wold haue this Gentyman to knowe that this chyde had mety well spent his tyme for the whyle he had bene with hym / he bad this chyde to make in latyn shortly feres walke in the cloyster. ¶ This chyde halfe astonnyed bycause his master bad hym make this latyn so shortly answered at all aduentures and sayd In circuitu impu ambulat.

¶ A the tyme tyme a good old gentyman being a lawyer cam to london to the terme & as he came he hapened to ouertake a frere whiche was som vnthryft & wēt alone without his beuer wherfor this gentyman asked this frere where was his beuer that shold kepe hym cōpany and sayd it was contrary to his relygion to go alone / and it wolde cause people to suppose hym to be some apostata or some vnthryft. By god say quod the frere my felow cōmendeth hym vnto your mastership / who qd the gentyman / I knowe hym nat / than quod the frere to the gentyman ye are the more to blame to aske for hym.

¶ By this tale ye may se that he that geueth counsel to an vnthryft and te cheth hym his dutye shall haue oftentymes but a mocke for his labour.

¶ The gentyman cam into an Inne where a fayre woman was tapster wherfor as the she sat ther making mercy echone of the kyf sed her & made good pastyme & pleasure howbeit one spake mercyly & sayd / I can not se how this gentywoman is able to make pastyme & pleasure to vs all thye excepte that she were departed in thye partes. By my trouthe quod one of theym / yf that she myght be so departed than I wolde chose for my parte her hed and her fayre face that I myght alway kysse her

Then quod the secōd I wold haue the best and hart for ther lyeth her loue  
 Then quod the thyrd then ther is nothyng lesse for me but the loynys butts  
 toskys & leggyss & I am content to haue yt for my part. And when theie gē  
 tylnen had passyd the tyme ther by the space of one hour or y they toke the  
 leue & were goynge away but or they went the thyrd man that had cholen  
 the bely & the buttookys dyd kys the tapytter & bad her farewel what quod  
 the fyrst mā that had cholen the face & the mouth why dost thou so thou dost  
 me wronge to kys my parte that I haue cholen of her. Quod the other I  
 pray the be not angry for I wolbe cōtent that thou shalt kys my part for it.

**A**fter there dwellyd a mery gentylman which had a cooke callyd  
**T**homas that was gretly dysleasid with the tothake & complaynd  
 to his mayster thercof whiche sayd he had a boke of medycis & sayd  
 he wold loke vp his boke to se whether he couod fynde any medecyn therfor  
 it & so lende one of hys doughters to his study for his boke and incontynent  
 lokyd vppon yt alonge season & than sayde thus to hys coke. Thomas quod  
 he here is a medefyne for thy tothake & yt ys a charme but it wyll do you no  
 good except ye kncle on your knee and aske yt for seynt charyte. Thys man  
 glad to be releysd of hys payne knelyd & sayd mayster for seint charyte let me  
 haue that medecyne. Then quod thys gentylman knele on your knees & say  
 after me which knelyd doue and sayd after hym as he bad hym. ¶ Thys gē  
 tylnan began & sayd thus. The sone on the sonday The sone on the sonday  
 quod thomas. The mone on the monday The mone on the monday. the try  
 nyte on the trowday the trinyte on the trowday. The wite 5 the wednyfday  
 the wit on the wednyfday. The holy holy thurday The holy holy thurday  
 And all that fast on fryday and al that fast on fryday. Shite in thy mouthe  
 on saterday. This Thomas coke herynge his mayster thus mokkyng hym  
 in an anger start vp & sayd by goddys body mokkyng churle I wyll neuer  
 do the seruyce more. And wente forth to hys rhāber to get hys gere to gedet  
 to thentent to gon thens by & by. But what for the anger that he toke with  
 hys master for the moke that he gaue hym & what for labour that he toke to  
 gedet hys gere so shortly to gedet the payne of the tothake wente from hym  
 incontynent that his master com to hym & made hym tary still & tolde hym  
 that hys charme was the cause of the ease of the payn of his tothake.

¶ By this tale ye may se that anger oftymys putteth away bodely  
 payne.

**S**coler of Oxfoꝝd lately made maſter of arte come to the cyte of lo  
**A** . don & in polys met with the ſayd mꝛcy gēpymā of eſſex which was  
 euer dyſpoſed to playꝝ many mꝛcy paicantys with whome befoꝝe  
 he had bene offamplier accoyntance and prayd hym to geue hym a ſerccnet  
 tꝛypet This gentylman moꝝe lyberall of promys than of gyft grantyd hym  
 he ſholde haue one yf he wolde come to his lodgyng to the ſigne of the bulle  
 without byſhops gate in the next moꝝnyng at vi of the clocke. Thys ſco-  
 ler thanked hym & foꝝ that nyght departed to hys lodgyng in ſteteſtrete/ &  
 in the moꝝnyng erely as he poynted cam to hym to the ſigne of the bull/ &  
 non as this gentylman ſaw hym he bad hym go with hym in to the Cite &  
 he ſholde be ſped anon/ which incontynent went togeder tyll he cam in to  
 ſeynt laurence churche in the Jury wher the gentylman eſpyed a preſt rauē  
 ſhyd to maſſe & tolde the ſcoler that yonder is the preſte that hath the tꝛypet  
 foꝝ you & badde hym knele doꝝone in the pewe & he wolde ſpeke to hym foꝝ it/  
 And incontynent this gentylman went to the preſt and ſayd Syr here is a  
 ſcoler and kynſman of myne greatly dyſleaſed with the chynkowgh. I pray  
 yow when maſſe ys done gyue hym iij draughtys of your chales. The preſt  
 graūted hym & turned hym to the ſcoler and ſayd Syr I ſhall ſerue you as  
 ſon as I haue ſayd maſſe. the ſcoler thē tarped ſtyl & hard the maſſe truſtig  
 then whan the maſſe was done that the preſte wolde geue hym his tꝛypet of  
 ſarccnet. This gentylman in thꝛ meane wohyle departed out of the church  
 This preſt whan maſſe was don put wyne in the chalice & cam to the ſcoler  
 knelyng in the pewe profferyng hym to dꝛink of the chales. this ſcoler loꝝyd  
 vpon hym & mulcd & ſayd/ maſter perſon wherfoꝝe profer ye me the chalyce  
 mary quod the preſte for the gentylman tolde me ye were dyſelyd with the  
 chicough & prayd me thꝛfoꝝe that foꝝ a medcyn ye myght dꝛynk of the chalis  
 Nay by ſeynt mary quod the ſkolar he promyſyd me ye ſholdd delꝛue me  
 a tꝛypet of ſerccnet. Nay ſayd the preſte he ſpake to me of no tꝛypet/ but he de  
 ſpyd me to gyue you dꝛynk of the chales for the chynkowgh By goddys bo-  
 dy quod the ſcoler he is as he was euer wont to be but a mockyng wꝛech/ &  
 euer I lyue I ſhall quyte it hym & ſo departed out of the church i gret āgꝛe.

**W**hy thys tale ye may perceyue it were no wyſdom for a man to truſt to  
 a man to do a thꝛyng that ys contrary to hys olde accuſtūmyd condꝛyons.

**F**ortuned ther was a gret batꝛaūcc between the byſhop of Dor  
**I** which & one maſter Skelton a poꝛet lauriat. In ſoinoch that the  
 byſhope cōmaūded hym that he ſholde nat come in at hys gatys.  
 This maſter Skelton dyd abſent hym ſelfe for a longe ſeaſon but at the laſt  
 he thought to do his duty to hym and ſtudyed wayes how he myght obtayn

the byshopps fauour and detemnyd him selfe that he wold com to hi with  
 some present & humble hym selfe to the byshop & gat a couple of fclants and  
 cam to the byshopps place & requyrd the porter he myght come in to speke  
 wyth my lord. this porter knowyng hys lordys pleasure wolde not suffer  
 hym to come in at the gatys/ wherfore this master skelton went on the bak  
 syde to seke some other way to com in to the place. But the place was motid  
 that he coude se no waye to come ouer except in one place where there lay a  
 longe tre ouer the motte in maner of a bydg that was fallyn downe with  
 wynd wherfore this master skelton went a long bypon the tre to com ouer  
 & when he was almost ouer hys fore slyppid for lake of sure sotyng & fell in  
 to the motte by to the myddyl but at the last he recoueryd hym selfe & alwoel  
 as he coude dryed hym selfe agayn & sodenly cam to the byshop beyng in his  
 hall then lately rylen from dynet which when he saw skelton comig sodely  
 sayd to hym why thou chatyfe I wateyd the thou sholdys neuer come yn  
 at my gatys & chatygd my porter to kepe the owt. ¶ Forsoth my lord quod  
 skelton though ye gaue suche charge & though your gatys be neuer so luerly  
 kept/ yet it is no more possyble to kepe me owt/ of yowr dozys, than to kepe  
 out crowses or pres for I cāe not in at your gatys. but I came ou the motte  
 that I haue bene almost drownyd for my labour & shewd hys clothys how  
 euyl he was arayed which causyd many that stode thereby to laugh & pace  
 ¶ Then quod skelton yf it lyke your lordshyp I haue bro ught yow a drinke  
 to your supper a cople of fclantys. ¶ Day quod the byshop I desy the and thy  
 fclantys also And wreche as thou art pryke the out of my howse for I wyl  
 none of thy gyft. How be it with as humble wordys as he coude this skelton  
 desyrd the byshop to be hys good lord & to take his lypyl gyft of hym But  
 the byshop callyd hym dawc & sole osten tymys & in no wyse wolde receyue  
 that gyft. ¶ This skelton than consideryng that the byshop callyd hym sole  
 so oft sayd to one of his samplers therby that though it were euyl to be crys-  
 tynyd a sole yet it was moche woork to be confyrmyd a sole of suche a byshop  
 for the name of confyrmacyō must nedes a byde therfore he ymagynyd how  
 he might auoyd that cofyrmacyō & myshyd a whyl & at the last sayd to the by-  
 shop thus if your lordshyp knewe the namys of these fclantys ye wold be cotēt  
 to take them/ why caryt quod the byshop hastily & angerly what be theyre  
 namys ¶ Yours my lord quod skelton this fclant is callyd alpha. ys. pzumus  
 the fyrst. & this is callyd ¶ that ys nouissimus the last. & for the more playn  
 vnderstandyng of my mynde. If it plese your lordshyp to take them I pmyse  
 you ¶ This Alpha is the fyrst that euer I gaue you & this ¶ is the last that  
 euer I wyl gyue you whyl I lyue. at the which alwer al that wer by made  
 gret laghter & al they desyrd the byshop to be good lord to hi for hys mety-  
 conceptys at whose request o2 they went the byshop was cotcut to take hym

vnto his fauour agayn.

¶ By thys ye may se that mery conceptes dothe a man moche more good than to frett hym selfe with anger and melancoly.

A woman of the kynges gard dwellyng in a byllage besyde london had a very fayre yonge wyfe. To whom a cartt of the towne a tal felowc reioyced / & lay with her dyuers tymes wohan her husband was from home / & so openly knowe that all the town spake therof / wherfor ther was a yong man of the towne well accoynted with this yema of gard that tolde hym that suche a cartter had layne by his wyfe . To whome thys yeman of garde sayd swaure by godys body that yf he met hym it shold cost hym his lyfe. Mary quod the yong man yf ye go streyght euyn now the hwe way ye shall ouertak hym byyng of a cartt labyn with hay towarde london wherfoze this yeman of garde incontynent rode after this cartter / & within short space ouertoke hym & knewe hym well ynough / & incontynent called the cartt to hym & sayd thus Sirra I vnderstand that thou dost ly euery night with my wyfe when I am from home This cartter beyng no thyng afraid of the other / answered ye mary what than / what than quod the yeman of garde / by goddes hart haddest thou na tolde me the trowth I wolde haue broken thy hede. And so the yeman of garde retourned and no hurte done noz stroke stryken noz profored.

¶ By thys ye may se that the greatest creakers somtyme wohan it cometh to the prose be mozte cowardys.

A the towne of Bottelley dwelled a mylner whiche had a good homely wench to his daughter whom a curat of the next towne louyd / and as the same went had her at his pleasure. ¶ But on a tyme this curat preched of these curyous wyues now a dayes / & whether it were for the nones or whether it come out at all aduenturys he hapned to say thus in his sermo. ¶ Ye wyues ye be so curyous in all your warkes that ye wote nat what ye mene / but ye shold folowe our lady. For our lady was nothyng so curyous as ye be / but she was a good homly wench ike the mylners dought of bottellay. At which sayng all the parryshons made gret laughynge / & specpally they that knewe that he loued the same wench.

¶ By thys ye may se it is gret foly for a man that is suspected with any parson to prayle or to name the same parson openly lest it byyng hym for ther in sclander.

**F**ole there was that dwellyd with agētylīnā i the contrey whiche was callyd a great tyrant and an extorcyoner. But this sole loyd upd his master metuelously because he cheryshyd hym so well.

**I**t happenyd vppon a seafone one of the gentylmans seruauntys sayde to the folc. as they talkyd of sermon matters by my trowth Jak quod he wolde to god that thou and I were both of vs in heuyn. May by lady quod the sole I wyll not go to heuyn for I had leuer go to hell than the other askyd hym why he had leuer go to hell. By my trowth quod the sole for I wyll go with my master & I am sure my master shall go to hell. For euery man seyth he shall go to the deuyll of hell therfore I wyll go thither with hym.

**H**ere was a certayn ploughmannys sonne of the contrey of the age ofe. xvi. yeres that neuer come moche among company but alwey wēt to plough and husbandry on a tyme this yong lad wēt to a weddyng with hys fader where he see one lute vppon a lute. And when he came home agayne at nyght his moder askyd hym what spozte he hade at weddyng. This lad answeryd and sayd by my trowth moder quod he ther was one that brought in a gosse betwene hys armys and tykled her so vppo the nek that she creakyd the sweetest that ever I hard gosse croke in my lyfe.

**I**n a matchauntys house in london there was a mayd whiche was gotten with chyld to whome the mastres of the houle came & charged her to tell her who was the fader of the chyld. To whome the mayden answeryd forsoth no body. why quod the maystres yt ys not possyble but some māne muste be the fader thereof. To whome the mayd sayd why mastres why may not I haue a chyld without a man as well as a hen to lay eggrs wythout a cok.

**H**ere ye may se it is harde to fynde a woman wythout an excuse.

**A** gentylman there was dwellynge nygh kyngston vppon Temyse. rydyng in the contrey wyth his seruaute which was not the most quyckst felow. But rode alway sadly by hys mayster and hade be- ry few wordys. Hys mayster sayde to hym Johā quod he wyll ry-

Dyft so fadly I wold haue the tell me fom meey talys to paffe the tyme with by my trowth mafter quod he I can tell no talys/ why quod the mafter caft not fpyng, no by my trowth quod hys feruaunt I cowd neuer fpyng in all my lyfe/ why quod the mafter canft thou tyme than By my trowth mafter quod he I can not tell but yf ye wyll beginne to tyme I wyl folow as well as I can by my trowth quod the mafter that is well layd than I wyll begyn to make a tyme let me fe howe well thou canft folowoe/ fo the mafter myfyd a wbole and than began to tyme thus. Many mennys fwaimes fwoymnys in tennys and fo do myne. ¶ Then quod the feruaunt, And manny men lye by other mennys wyues and fo do I by thyne / what doft hozfon quod the mafter/ by my trowth mafter nothyng quod he but make by the tyme, but quod the mafter I charge the tell me why thou fayft fo/ fo the mafter quod he for nothyng in the worlde but to make by your tyme. Then quod the mafter yf thou do it for nothyng ellys I am concent/ So the mafter for gaue hym his faynge all though he had layd trowth.

¶ A knyght in Wyddylker had a feruaunt which had comyrtted a felony wherof he was endyted/ and becaufe the teryme drew nye he fered he holde be thortly acayned therof & in ieoperdye of his lyfe, wherfor in all the hafte lent a letter by a walchman a feruaunt of hys vnto the kynges Iustyce of the kynges bench requyryng hym to owe his lawfull fauout to hys feruaunt and comaunded hys feruaunt thortly to byryng hym an anfwere/ This walche man came to the chefe Iustyce place and at the gate lawe an ape fyttynge there in a cote made for hym as they vse to apparel appys for dylport/ This walchman dyd of hys cap & made curtely to the ape and layd my mafter recomendeth hym to my lord your fader & fendeth hym here a letter. Thys ape toke thys letter and opened it and loked thereon/ and after loked vpon the man makynge many mockes and mowes as the properte of appys is to do/ this welchman becaufe he vnderftode hym nat came agayn to his mafter accordyng to his comaundement and layde he had deliuered the letter vnto my Lozde chefe Iustyses sonne whiche fat at the gate in a furred cote/ Alnone his mafter asked hym what anfwere he had whiche layd he gaue hym an anfwere but it was outhere f renche oz Latyn for he vnderftode hym nat/ but fyr quod he ye nede nat to fear for I lawe by his countenance fo moche that I wocant pou he wyll do your errand furely to my lord hys fader. Thys gentylman in trnst therof made none other labour. For lacke wherof hys feruaunt that had done the felony within two dayes after was cayned at the kynges bench & cast and afterwarde hangyd.



¶ By this ye may se that euery wyse man ought to take hede that he sende no folysh seruante vpon a hasty messa- ge that is a mater of weyght.

¶ Certayne felow there was which proffered a dagger to sell to a felowe of his which answered hym and sayde that he had right nought to geue hym therfor. wherfor the other sayd that he shold haue his dagger vpon condycyon that he shoulde geue and deluy- uer vnto hym therfore within vi. dayes after right nought / or els xl. shyllynges in moncy / wherto this other was content. This bargeyn thus agreyd he that sholde deluyet thys ryght nought toke no thought vntyl luche tyme that the day apoynted drew nye. At the whiche tyme he be- gan to fymmagyne how he myght gyue hym right nought. And fyrst of all he thought on a feder / a straw / a pynnes poynce / and luche other. But no thyng could he deuyse but that it was somwhat / wherfore he come home al sad & penyfe for sorow of lesyng of his xl. shyllynges / & could nouthet slepe noz take rest / wherof his wyfe beyng agreyd demaunded the cause of his heynnes / whiche at the last after many demayes tolde her all. well syz quod she let me herewith alone & gete ye furthe a tobone / and I shall handle this well ynough. This man solowynge his toynes counsell went forthe of the towne & let his wyfe shyft. ¶ This woman than henge vp an yertthen pot- wherof the botom was out vpon the wall by a corde. And whan this other man come & asked for the good man she sayd that he was nat within / But Syz quod she I know your erand wel ynough / for I wote well ye wold haue of myn hulbonde xl. shyllynges because he can nat deluyet to you this day right nought / Therfore syz quod she put your hande into ronder potte and take your moncy / this man beyng glad thrust hir hande in suppolyng to haue taken xl. shyllynges of money & thrust his hand vp thzugh vp to the elbow / quod the wyfe than Syz what haue ye there. Wary quod he Ryght nought. Syz quod she than haue ye your bargeyn & than my hulbond hath contentyd you for his dagger acco:dring to his p:omys.

¶ By this ye may se that often tymes a womans wyt at an extempte is moche better than a manns.

**T** here was a certayn lymptout which went a lymptige to a certeyn  
 byllage wherin dwelled a certayn ryche man of whome he neuer  
 coude gette the valew of an halspen/ yet he thought he wolde go  
 thyder agayn to assay theyn. And as he went thyder ward the  
 wyfe stondyng at the doze perceyvinge hym comyng a farrre of  
 thought that he wolde come thyder and by & by ran in & bad her chyldren  
 standyng at the doze that yf the frere asked for her say she was nat within.  
 The frere saw her son in and suspected the carole and come to the doze and  
 asked for the wyfe / the chyldren as they were byddyn / sayde that she was  
 not within / than stode he styl lokyng on the chyldren / and at the last he cal  
 led to hym the eldest & bad hym let him se his hande / and whan he had sene  
 his hande **O** Jhesu quod he what fortune for the is ordeyned / Than called  
 he the seconde sonne to se his hande / and his hande sene the frere sayde / **O**  
 lord what a desteny is for the prepayred. Than loked he in the thyrd sones  
 hand / suerly quod he thy desteny is hardest of all / & therwith wente he his  
 way. The wyfe heyrng these thynges sodenly ran out and called the frere  
 agayne / and first made hym to come in / and after to spt downe and set be  
 fore hym the best mete that she had / and whan he had well etyn & dronken  
 she besought hym to tell her the destenyes of her chyldren / which at the last  
 after many denayes tolde her that the fyrst sholde be a beggar. The second  
 a thefe. The thir d an hompyrd / whiche she heyrng fell downe in a sowne &  
 toke it greuouly. The frere conforted her and sayd / that though these were  
 theyz fortune yet there myghte be remedy had. Than she besought hym of  
 his counsell. Than sayd the frere ye must make the eldest that shalbe a beg  
 ger & frere. and the second that shalbe a thefe a man of law / & the thir d that  
 shalbe an hompyrde / a philypson.

**C** By this ye may lerne that they that wyll come to  
 the speche or presence of any parson for theyz owne  
 carole they must fyrst endeuer theyme selve to shewe  
 suche maters as those parsons mooste deylte in.

**A** Certeyn frere had a boy that euer was wont to bere this  
 freres money and on a tyme whan the boy was farrre be  
 hynde his master as they two walked togeder by the way  
 there met a man the frere whiche knewe that the boy bare  
 the frerys money and sayde. Howe Mayster frere / shall  
 I byd thy boy hyc hym apace after the / ye quod the frere

Then went þ man to þ boy & sayd syre thy mayster byddeth þ gyue me xl. s. I wpll not quod the boy then called the man with an hpe voyce to þ frere & sayd syr he sayth he wyl not/ then quod the frere bete hym/ & when the boy herde his mayster say so he gaue the man. xl. pens.

¶ By this ye maye se it is foly for a man to say ye oz nay to a matter exce pt he knowe suerly what the matter is.

**A** Certayn bocher dwellyng in saynt Nicholas fleshamels in london callyd Doule had a seruaüt callyd Peter. This Peter on a sonday was at þ chicche heryng masse & one of his felawes whose name was Philip spencer was sent to call hym at the comaundement of his mayster. So it happened at the tyme that the curat prechyd. And in his sermon touched many auctozytes of the holy scrypture. Amonge all the wordes of the pystell of saynt Doule ad philippenses that we be not onely bounde to beleue in cryst but also to suffer for crystys sake & sayd the se wordes in þ pulpet/ what sayth Doule ad philippenses to this. This yonge man þ was called Philip spencer had went he had spoken of hym answered shortly & sayd/ mary syr he had Peter come home & take his parte of a podyng for he sholde go for a calfe at none. The curat heryng this was abashyd & all the audyence made grete laughter.

¶ By this tale ye may lerne that it is no token of a wyse man to gyue a sodayne answere to a questyõ before that he knowe suerly what the matter is.

**W**here came a courtyer by a cartter the whiche in derysyon preyed the cartters bak legges and other members of his body meruelously whose gestyng the cartter perceyued & sayd he had another properte than þ courtyer espyed in hym/ & when the courtyer had demaunded what it sholde be/ he loked asyde ouer his sholder ypon the courtyer & sayd thus/ lo syr this is my properte. ¶ I haue a wall eye in my hed/ for I neuer loke ouer my sholder this wyse but I lyghtly espye a knaue.

¶ By this tale a man maye se that he that vsed to deryde and mocke other folkys/ is sountyme hym selfe moze deryded & mocked.

**A**mong mā of þ age of .xx. yere tude & vnlearnyd in þ tyme of lēt cā to his curat to be tofessyd whiche whē he was of his lyfe serched & examyned coude not say his Water noster/ wherf oze his cofes

four erozted hym to lerne his Vater noſter / & ſhewed hym what an holy & goodly prayer it was / & the effect therof / & the. vii. petreyons therein cōteyned. The fyrſt petreyō begynneth. Vater noſter. ꝛc. ꝑ is to ſaye. O fader halowyd be thy name amōge mē in erth as amōge aūgels in heuen. The ii. Adueniat. ꝛc. Let thy kyngdome come & regne thou amonge vs men in erth as amonge aūgels in heuen. The. iii. Fiat. ꝛc. Make vs to fulfyl thy wyll here in erth as thy aūgels in heuen. The. iiii. Danē noſtrū. ꝛc. Gyue vs our dayly ſuſtenaūce alway & helpe vs as we gyue & helpe them ꝑ haue nede of vs. The. v. Dimitte. ꝛc. Forgyue vs our ſynnys done to the as we forgyue them ꝑ tteſpas agaynſte vs. The. vi. Et ne nos. Let vs not be ouercome with euyll temptacyō. The. vii. Sed libera. ꝛc. But delpyer vs fro all euyll amen. ¶ And then his confellour after this expolycyō to hym made inioyned hym in penaūce to faſt euery fryday bryde & water tyll he had his Vater noſter well & ſuffycyētly lerned. This yonge man mekely acceptyng his penaunce ſo departed & came home to one of his cōpanyons & ſayd to his ſelou. ſo it is that my goſtly fader hath gyuen me in penaūce to faſt euery fryday bryde & water tyll I can ſay my Vater noſter / therfore I pray ꝑ teche me my Vater noſter / & by my trowth I ſhall therfore teche the a longe of Robyn hode that ſhall be worth. xx. of it.

¶ By this tale ye maye lerne to knowe the effect of the holy prayer of the Vater noſter.

**A** Certayn frere there was whiche vpo our lady day the Anticypon made a ſermon in the whyte frerys in London / and began his anteteme this woyle / Ave maria gracia plena Dominus tecū / ꝛc. ¶ Theſe wordes quod the frere were ſpoken by the aungel Gabryel to our lady when ſhe cōceyued Cryſt / whiche is as moche to ſay in our moder tōgue as all heyle Mary well thou be ꝑ ſone of god is w the. And further moze the aūgell ſayd / thou ſhalt conceyue and bere a ſone. And thou ſhalt call his name Jelum / and Elyzabeth thy ſwete colyn / ſhe ſhall conceyue the ſwete ſaynt Johñ. And ſo procedyd ſtyll in his Sermon in ſuche fond cyme that dyuers & many gentylmen of the court that were there begā to ſmyle & laugh. The frere ꝑ percepyng ſayd thus Wapſters I pray you harke I ſhall tel you a narracyō. ¶ There was ones a yong preeſt ꝑ was not all ꝑ beſt clark ſayd maſſe & rede a colect thus. Vens q̄ viginti filij tui ꝛc. Where he ſholde haue ſayd vnigeniti filij tui. ꝛc. ¶ And after whē maſſ was done there was ſuche a gentylmā as one of you at now ꝑ had herde

his masse came to þ̄ p̄est & sayd thus. *Syr* I pray you tell me how many sonnyes had god almyghty / quod þ̄ p̄est why aske you þ̄. *Mary* syz quod þ̄ gentylman I suppose he had. *xx.* sonnyes / for ye sayd ryght now. *Deus* qui viginti filii tui. The p̄est perceyving how þ̄ he derydyd hym answerde hym shortly & sayd thus. How many sonnyes so euer god almyghty had / I am sure þ̄ thou art none of them for þ̄ skornyst þ̄ worde of god. And loo sayd the frere in the pulpet. Do more at ye none of þ̄ chyldere of god. For ye skorne & laugh at me now þ̄ preche to you the worde of god. which wordys made the gentylmen and all the other people laughe moche more thā they dyd before.

**¶** By this tale a man may lerne to perceyue well þ̄ the best the wysst & þ̄ most holpest matter þ̄ is by found pronounciacyon & vtteraunce may be marryd / nor shall nor edyfyte to þ̄ audyēce. Therefore euery proces wolde be vtteryd with wordys & cōtenaunce cōuenient to the matter. **¶** Also yet by this tale they that be vnlernd in þ̄ latyn tongue maye knowe the sentence of the aue maria.

**I**n a byllage in watwyrck shere there was a partye p̄est & though he were no gret clark nor graduat of þ̄ vniuersyte. yet he prechyd to his partyshons vpo a sonday / declaryng to thē þ̄. *xii.* articles of the Crede. shewyng them that the fyrst article was to beleue in god the fader almyghty maker of heuen & erth. The second. To beleue in Iesu Cryste his oney sone our lord coequall with þ̄ fader in all thynges perceyving to þ̄ deyte. The thyrz that he was cōceyuyd of the holy goost Bozne of the vyrgyn *Mary*. The fourth that he suffred deth vnder ponce pylate / & that he was crucyfyed dede & buryed. The fyft that he descendyd to hel & fet out þ̄ good lowlys þ̄ were in fayth & hope / and that he þ̄ thyrz day rose from deth to lyfe. The syrth he assendyd in to heuen to þ̄ ryght syde of god þ̄ fader wher he syttyth. The seuenth þ̄ he shall come at the day of dome to Judge both vs that be quyke & them that be dede. The eyght to beleue in the holy goost equall god w̄ the fader & the sone. The nynt in holy chyrche Catholyke & in þ̄ holy conunyo of sayntys. The tenth In þ̄ remysson of synnes. The leuynt In the resurreccyō generall of þ̄ body & soule. The twelfth In euetlastyng lyfe that god shall reward thē that be good. And sayd to his partyshons furthet þ̄ thele articles ye be bounde to beleue for they be trew & of auctozyte. And yf you beleue not me / thē loz a more herte & suffyrcēt auctozyte / go your way to couentre / and there ye

ye shall se them all playd itt cozpus cristi playe.

¶ By redyng of this tale they þ vnderstode no latyn may lerne to knde we the .xii. articles of the fayth.

**A** Limitour of the gray frerys in London whiche prechyd in a certayn byllage in the countrey in the tyme of his lymitacyō / & had but one sermō which he had lerned by hart þ was of þ declarng of the .x. cōmaūdemētes. The fyrst to beleue in one god / & to honour hym aboute all thyng. The secōd to lwere not in bayn by hym noz none other of his creatures. The thyrde to absteyne from wordly operacyō on þ holy day thou & all thy seruantys of whō thou hast charge. The fourthe to hoꝝ noz thy patētyꝝ & helpe thē in theyꝝ necessyte. The fyfth to se no man in dede noz wyll noz foz no hated hurte his body noz good name. The syxt to do no foznyacyō actual / noz by no vnlefull thought to desyre no fleshy delectacyō. The seuenth to stele noz depꝝue no mānes goodes by thefte robbery extorcyō / blety / noz dylceyt. The eyght to bere no false wytnesse to hurt another / noz to tell no lyes / noz to say nothyng agaynst tꝛebothe. The nyynth to couet noz desyre no mānys goodys vnlefull. The tenth to couet noz to desyre thy neyghbours wyfe foz thyn owne appetyte vnlefully. ¶ And because this frere had preched this sermon so of tyn / one þ had hard it befoze told the frerys seruaūt þ his mayster was callyd frere Johā .x. cōmaūdemētes wherfoz this seruaūt shewed þ frere his mayster thereof / and aduysed hym to preche some sermon of some other matter / foz it greuyd hym to here his mayster so deryded / & to be called frere Johā .x. cōmaūdemētys / foz euery man knoweth what ye wyll say as soone as euer ye begyn by cause ye haue preched it so oft. ¶ Why than quod þ frere I am sure thou knowest well whiche be þ .x. cōmaūdemētys þ hast harde thē so oft declaryd / ye syꝝ quod the seruaūt þ I do. Then quod the frere I praye the reherse thē vnto me now. Wher quod þ seruaūt these be they. Wyde Couetyse Slouth Enuy wꝝath Glotony and Lechery.

¶ By redyng this tale ye maye lerne to knowe the .x. cōmaūdemētys and the .vii. dedely synnes.

**T**he husbāde sayde to his wyfe thus / wyfe by this candell I dreȝmed this nyght that I was a cokcolde. To whome she answered and sayd husbonde. By this brede ye are none. Thē sayd he / wyfe ete the

brede. She answered & sayd to her husbände/ then ete you the candell for you sware fyrst.

¶ By this a man may se that a womans answer is neuer to seke.

**A** woman demaūdyd a questyon of a yong chyld sonne bnto a mā of lawe of what craft his fader was/ which chyld sayd his fader was a crafty man of lawe.

¶ By this tale a man may perceyue that sometyme peraduenture yōge innocents speke truely vnauyled.

**I**n a certayn parrysh chyrche in London after the olde lawdable & accustomed maner there was a frere mynoz all though he were not the best clark noz coude not make the best sermon/ yet by the lycence of the curat he there preched to the parryshons. Among the whiche audyence there was a wyfe at that tyme lityll dysposyd to contemplacyō talkyd with a gosyp of hers of other feminyne tales/ so loud that the frere hard & somwhat was perturbed therewith. To whom therefore openly the frere spake & sayd. Thou woman there in the tawny gown/ hold thy peace & leue thy habelyng thou troublest the worde of god. ¶ This woman there with sodeynly abalshyd bycause þ frere spake to her so openly þ al þ people her beheld answered shortly & sayd/ I belyewe I he hard that habelyd more of vs two. At þ whyche seyng þ people dyd laugh bycause they felt but lityll fruyte in his sermon.

¶ By this tale a man may lerne to be wate how he openly rebukyth a ny other & in what audyence lest it tourne to his owne reprofe.

**I**n the rayne of the most myghty and byctoryous Prynce kynge Henry the. viii. cruell warre began betwoene Englyshmen & Frenchmen / & Skottys. The Englyshmen were so myghty vpon þ se that none other people of other realmys were able to relyst the/ wherfore they toke many grete enterprysys/ & many shypys/ & many prysoners of other reynys þ were theyz enemyes. Among the which they happenyd on a season to take a skottys shyp. & dyuers skottys they slew & toke prysoners. Among whom ther was a welchmā that had one of the skottys prysoner & bad hym that he shold do of his harnes/ which to do the Skot was very loth/ howbeit for feere at þ last he pullyd it of w an yuill wyll/ & sayde to

þ welchmā / yf thou wilt nedys haue my harnes take it there / & cast it ouer  
the bozd in to the se. The welchman seyng that sayd. By Cottes blut & her  
nayll. I shal make her fat it agayn. And toke hym by þ legges & cast hym  
after ouer the bozd in to the se.

¶ By this tale a man maye lerne þ he that is subget to another oughe  
to forlake his owne wyll / & folow his wyll & comaūdement þ so hath  
subiectyon ouer hym / lest it tozne to his gretter hurt & damage.

**W**here was a man that maryed a woman whiche hath grete cyches  
& betote / howe be it she had suche an impedymēt of nature that she  
was dome and coude not speke / whiche thyng made hym full ofte to be  
cyght pelyfye & sad / wherfore vpon a dape as he walkyd alone ryght heuy  
in hart thynkig vpo his wyfe. There came one to hym & askyd hym what  
was the cause of his heuynes / which answeryd that is was onely bycaule  
his wyfe was bozne dome. To who this other sayd. I shal shewe þ loone  
a remedy & a medycyn therfore that is thus. So take an aspen lefe & lay it  
vnder her tōgue this nyght she beyng a slepe / & I warrant the þ she shall  
speke on the morow / whiche man beyng glad of this medycyne preparyd  
therfore / & gatheryd aspen leues. wherfore he layd. iiii. of them vnder her  
tōge whē she was a slepe. And vpon þ morowe whē he hym self walkyd he  
desyrous to know how his medycyne wroughte beyng in bed w her he de  
maunded of her how she dyd / & sodenly she answeryd & sayd. I beshewe  
you hart for wakynge me so erly / & so by vertew of þ medycyne she was  
restored to her speche. ¶ But in cōclusyon her speche so increfyd day by day  
& she was so curst of cōdycō that euery day she bzauyde & chyde with her  
hulbande so moche þ at y last he was more beryd and had moche more tro  
ble & dysseale with her shrewed wordes then he had before whan she was  
dome. ¶ Wherfore as he walked another tyme alone he happened to mete  
agayne with the same person that taught hym the sayde medycyne. And  
sayde to hym this wyle. ¶ Syr ye taught me a medycyne but late to make  
my dome wyfe to speke. Byddyng me laye an aspen lefe vnder her tonge  
when she slepte. And I layd. iiii. aspen leues there. wherfore now she spe  
keth. But yet she speket so moche and so shrewdly that I am more wery  
of her now than I was before when she was dome. ¶ Wherfore I praye  
you teche me a medycyne to modyfye her that she speke not so moche.  
¶ This other answeryd and sayd thus. Syr I am a deuyll of hell. But I  
am one of them that haue leest power there. Albeyt yet I haue power to  
make a woman to speke. But yet yf a woman begyn ones to speke / I noz



all the dyuels in helle that haue the most power be not able to make a wo-  
man to be styll / noz to cause her to leue her spekyng.

By this tale ye may note that a man of tymes desyrez and coueteth  
to moche that thyng that of t toznet to his dyspleure.

**O**ne askyd a proctoure of the Arches lately befoze maryed why he  
chase hym so lytell a wyfe / whiche answerde because he had a cert  
sayng thus. *Ex duobus malis minus malum est eliendum* / that is  
to saye in englyshe. Amonge euyl thynges the lest is to be chosen.

**I**n the tyme of lente there cam two nonnys to saynt Johns in lon-  
don bycause of the greate pardon there to be confessyd. Of y<sup>e</sup> whi-  
che nonnys the one was a yonge lady & the other was olde. This  
yonge lady chose fyrst her Confessoure. and confessyd her that she had syn-  
ned in Lechery. The confessoure asked w<sup>th</sup> whom it was. She sayde it was  
with a lusty Gallat. He demaundyd where it was. She sayd in a pleasaunt  
grene herber. He askyd further whye it was. She sayd in y<sup>e</sup> mery moneth of  
May. Then sayd y<sup>e</sup> confessour this wyse. A fayre yonge lady / with a lusty  
gallant / in a pleasaunt herber / in y<sup>e</sup> mery moneth of May / ye dyd but your  
kynde. Now by my trowth god forgyue you & I do. And so she departed  
and incōtyent the olde none met with her askyng her how she lyked her  
confessour / whiche sayde that he was the best gottly fader y<sup>e</sup>uer she hadde  
And the most easyt in penaunce geuyng. For cōfort wherof this other  
nonne went to the same confessour. And shoue her lyke wyse that she had  
synned in Lechery. And he demaunded with whom / which sayde with an  
olde frere / he askyd where. She sayd in her olde cloyster. He askyd what  
season. She sayd in lent. Then the confessour sayd thus. An olde hoze to  
lye with an olde frere / in the olde cloyster / in the holy tyme of Lent. By  
cokkys bodye pf god forgyue the yet wyll I neuer forgyue the. Whiche  
wordys cauylt her to departe all sad and soze abasshyd.

By this tale men may lerne that a bycoule acte is moze abhomy-  
nabie in one person than in an other / in one season than in an other and  
in one place than in an other.

**W**hen the most noble and fortunat pynce kynge Edward of En-  
glonde made warre in fraunce with a greatte puyssaunce and  
Armye of Peopple. Whome the frenche kynge with a nother

grette host incounteryd. And when bothe þe hostis shulde Joyne & the tūm  
 pettis began to blow/a yong squyer of englonde rydyng on a lusty courser  
 of whiche horse the noyse of þe tūpettys so prykkyd þe couraige þe squyer  
 coude not hym retayne/so that agaynst his wyll he ran vpon his enemys  
 whiche squyer seyng none other remedy set his spere in the rest/ and rode  
 through the thykkyt of his enemys/ & inconclusyon had good fortune and  
 sauēd hymselfe alyue without hurt/ & the englysh host folowed & had the  
 vycory. And after when þe feld was done this kyng Edward called the  
 squyer/ & bad hym knele done for he wolde make hym knyght/ because þe  
 he valpauntly was þe men þe day which with the most couragouse stomak  
 aduenturyd fyrt vpon thez enemys. To whom þe squyre thus answerde:  
 ꝑf it lyke your grace to make any body knyght therfore/ I beseeche you to  
 make my horse knyght & not me/ for certes it was his dede & not myne/ &  
 full soze agaynst my wyll. ¶ Whiche answer the kyng herpyng refray-  
 nyd to promote hym to the order of knyghthode/ repuyng hym in maner  
 but a cowarde/ & euer after fauozyd hym the lesse.

¶ By this tale a man may letne how it is wysdome for one that is in  
 good credence to kepe hym therein/ and in nowyse to dysable hymselfe  
 to moche.

**A** yonge man late maryed to a wyfe thoboght it was good polych  
 to get the maystry of her in the begynnynge. Cam to her the pot  
 lethyrge ouer þe fyze all though the mete therein were not inough  
 sodenly comaūdyd her to take the pot from the fyze. whiche answeryd &  
 sayde that þe mete was not redy to etc. And he sayd agayne I wyll haue it  
 taken of for my pleasure. ¶ This good woman loth yet to offend hym set þe  
 pot belyde the fyze/ as he had. And anon after he comaūded her to set the  
 pot behynde the doze/ & she sayd therto agayne ye be not wyle therein. But  
 he precisely sayd it sholde be so as he bad. And she gentyllly agayne dyd his  
 comaūdement. ¶ This man yet not satisfyed comaūded her to set the pot a  
 hygh vpon the hen roost/ what quod þe wyf agayne I trow ye be mad. And  
 he fyerly than comaūded her to set it there ozels he sayd she sholde reuēt  
 She somewhat aferde to mone his pacience toke a ladder and set it to the  
 roost/ and wēt herself vpon the ladder and toke the pot in her hande prayng  
 her husbāde than to holde the ladder fast for slydyng/ whiche so dyd.  
 ¶ And whenne the husbāde lokyd vpon and sawe the potte stande there  
 an hyght he sayd thus. ¶ No now standyth the pot there as I wolde haue it

This wyfe herynge that sodenly pouryd the hote potage on his hed & sayd thus. And now bene the potage there as I wolde haue them.

By this tale men may se it is no wysedome for a man to attempte & meke womans pacyēce to far lest it torne to his owne hurte & damage

**A** Certayne confessor in the holy tyme of lente inioyned his penitent to say dayly for his penaunce this prayer. Agnus dei misere mei/ whiche was as moche to saye in englyshe as þe Lambe of god haue mercy vpon me. This penitens acceptynge his penaunce departed & that tyme twelwe moneth after came agayne to be confessed of the same cōfessoure whiche demaundyd of hym whether he had fulfyllid his penaunce that he hym inioynyd þe last yere. And he sayd thus/ ye say I thank god I haue fulfyllid it/ for I haue sayde thus to daye mozynge and so dayly. The shepe of god haue mercy vpon me. To whom the confessor sayd. Nay I had þe say Agnus dei misere mei/ that is þe lambe of god haue mercy vpon me. He sayd quod þe penitent ye say trouth that was þe laste yere/ but now it is at twelwe month syth/ & it is a shepe by this tyme. Therfore I must nedys say now þe shepe of god haue mercy vpon me:

By this tale ye may perceyue that yf holy scripture be expownd to rude/ Lay people onely in the lytterall scence. Peraduenture it shal do but lytell good.

**I** Fourtuned dyuers to be in cōmunicacyon amonge whom there was a curate or a parrysh preeft & one Johan daw a parryshon of his whiche. ii. had cōmunicacyon moze busy than other in this maner. This preeft thought þe one myght not by felynge knowe one from another in the darke/ Johan daw his parryshon of contrary oppnyon layde with his curate for a wager. xi. pence. He herupon the parrysh preeft wyllynge to proue his wager wente to this Johan dawes house in the euenynge and sodenly gate hym to bed with his wyfe where whē he began to be somwhat dely. She felynge his crowne sayde shortly with a loude voyce. By god thou art not Johan daw. That herynge her husbond answerde. Thou sayst trouth wyfe I am here Johan daw. Therfore mayster person gyue me the money for ye haue lost your. xi. pence.

By this tale ye may lerne to perceyue þe it is no wysdome for a man for þe couetouse of wyynnynge of any wager to put in Jeoperdy a thyng

that may tozney hym to gretter dysplafure.

**A** knyght frankelyn in þe contrey hauynge by his wyfe but one chyld and no mo for the grete affectyon that he had to his fayde chyld founde hym at Oxford to scole by the space of .ii.oz. iii. yere. This yonge scoller in a vocacyon tyme for his dysport came home to his fader. ¶ It fortunyd afterwarde in a nyght the fader þe moder & the fayde yonge scoller syttinge at supper hauynge before them no moze mete but onely a cople of chykyns the fader sayd this wyse. Sone so it is that I haue spent moch money vpon the to fynde þe to scole/ wherfore I haue grete desyre to know what hast lernyd. To whom þe sone answerde & sayde. Fader I haue studyd louestrye & by that scyence I can proue þe these .ii. chykyns in þe dysse be thre chykyns. Mary sayd þe fader that wolde I sayne se. The scoller toke one of þe chykyns in his hand & sayd. Lo here is one chykyne/ and incōtyuent he toke both þe chykyns in his hand ioyntly & sayd here is .ii. chykyns and one & .ii. maketh .iii. Ergo here is .iii. chykyns. Then þe fader toke one of the chykyns to hymselfe and gaue another to his wyfe & sayd thus. Lo I wyll haue one of þe chykyns to my parte/ & thy moder shall haue another & bycause of thy good argument thou shalt haue þe thyrde to thy supper/ for thou gettest no moze mete here at this tyme/ whiche promysed the fader kept & to the scoller went without his supper.

¶ By this tale men may se that it is grete foly to put one to scole to lerne any subtyll scyence whiche hath no naturaill wytt

**A** freere of london there was that on a sondaye moornyng parly in þe somer seaso came from London to Barnet to make a colacyon/ & was there an houre before hys masse began/ & bycause he wolde come to þe chyrch honestly/ he went fyrst to an alehouse there to wypp his shoyes & to make hymself clenely. In the which house there were podyngis to selle/ & dyuers folkys there brykynge theyr faste & etyng podyngys. But þe freere brake his fast in a secrete place in þe same hous. ¶ This freere soone after came to the chyrch and by lycence of þe curat enteryd in to the pulpet to make a colacyon or sermon. And in his sermon there he rebused soze þe maner of them that byd to bryke theyr fast on the sonday before hys masse & sayd it was called þe dyuyls blak brykfast. And with that worde spekyng as he dyd cast his armys out to make his cōtēnaūce there fell a podynge out of his sleue/ which he hymself had stolē a lytel before in þe same alehouse

¶ when þe people sawe that & specially they þe brake theyz fast there þe same moornyng & knew wel that þe wyfe had compleyned how she had one of her podynges stolyn / they laughyd so moche at the frere þe he incōstynent went downe of the pulpet for shame.

¶ By this tale a man may se that whē a precher doth rebuke any synne or vyce wherein he is knowē openly to be gylty hymself / suche preaching shall lytell edyfy to the people.

**A** Certayne skoller ther was intendynge to be made prest whiche had nother grete wytte nor lernyng came to the bysshop to take orders / whos folyshnesse þe bysshop perceyving because he was a ryche mānes son wolde not very strongly appose hym but askyd hym this small questyon. Doe had. iij. sonnes / Sem / Cham & Japhet / now tell me quod þe bysshop wo was Japhetis father & thou shalt haue orders. Then layd þe scole By my trouthe my lord I pray you pardō me. For I neuer lernyd but lytell of the byble. Then quod the bysshop / go home & come agayn & soyle me this questyon & thou shalt haue orders. ¶ This scole so departed & came home to his fader & shewde hym þe cause of the hynderaunce of his orders. ¶ His fader beyng angry at his folyshnes thought to teche hym þe solucyon of this questyon by a famyler example & called his spangels before hym & layd thus / thou knowyst well Coll my dogge hath these iij. whelpys Ryg / Cryg / & Cryboll. Must not Coll my dog nedys be Syre to cryboll. Then quod the scole by god fader ye saye trouthe let me alone now / ye shall se me do well ynough þe nexte tyme. wherfore on þe mozowe he wente to þe bysshop agayne & layd he coud soyle his questyon. Then layd the bysshop Doe had. iij. sonnes Sem Cham & Japhet / now tell me who was Japhetys fader. Mary þe quod þe scole yf it please your lordshyp Coll my faders dog.

¶ By this tale a man may lerne that it is but lost tyme to teche a fole any thyng whych hath no wytt to perceyue it.

**I** Fortuned so that a frere late in the euenyng desyred lodgyng of a poore man of the countrey / the whiche for lake of other lodgyng glad to herborowe the frere lodgyd hym in his owne bed. And after he and his wyfe. The frere beyng a sleepe came and lay in the same bedde. ¶ And in the moornyng after the poore man rose and wente to the marketh leuyng the frere in þe bedde with his wyfe

And as he went he smyled & laughyd to hymselfe / wherfore his neighbours demaunded of hym why he so smyled / he answered & sayd I laugh to thynk how shamefast the frere shall be when he waketh / whom I left in bedde with my wyfe.

¶ By this tale a man may lerne that he that ouershoty th hymself doth folysly yet he is moze fole to shewe it openly.

**S**omtyme there dwellyd a prest in Stretforth vpon anyne of small lernynge whiche vndeoulytly sange masse / & often tymes twyle on one day. So it happened on a tyme after his secōde mas was done in hote rey not a myle from Stretforth there mete with hym dyuers merchaunt men whiche wolde haue harde masse / & desyred hym to synge masse and he sholde haue a grote / whiche answered them & sayd Syr I wyl say masse no moze this day / but I wyl say you. ii. gospels for one grote / & that is dog chepe a masse in ony place in englonde.

¶ By this tale a man may se that they that be rude & vnlernyd regard but lytell the meryt & goodnes of holy prayer.

**A** Courtyer & a frere happenyd to mete togyder in a fery bote & in cōuynycacyon betwene them fell at wordys angry & dyspleasyd eche with oher / & fought & stogled togyder / so that at the last the courtyer cast the frere ouer the bote / so was the frere drowned. The feryman whiche had ben a man of warre the most patte of his lyfe before and seynge the frere was so drowned & gon sayde thus to the courtyer / I beswewe thy hart thou sholdest haue tarped & foughte with hym a lande for now thou hast caused me to lese an half peny for my fare.

¶ By this tale a man may se that he is accustomed in byepous & cruell company shall lose that noble vertew to haue pyte & compassyōn vpon his neyghboure.

**A** Precher in the pulpet whiche prechyd the worde of god / & among other matters spake of mennys soullys & sayd they were so meruelous & so subtyll þa thousand soullys myght daūce in the space of a nayle of a manys fynget / amonge whiche audyence there was a merry concepted felowe of small deuocyon that answered and sayd thus / mayster doctor yf that a thousande soullys may daunce on a manys nayle I pray you tell then where shall the pyper stande.

¶ By this tale a man may se that it is but foly to shewe oz to teche betew to them that haue no pleasure noz mynde therto.

**I**n londo there was a certayn artycr hauyng a fayre wyf to whom a lusty galāt made pursute to accomplishe his pleasur. This womā

denyenge shewde the matter vnto her husbände / whiche mouryd therwith had his wyfe to appoynte hym a tyme to come secretly to lye with her all night. And w<sup>th</sup> gret krakys & othes sware y<sup>e</sup> agaynst his lyf except coming he wolde be redy harnesyd & wolde put hym in ieoperty of his comyng he wolde make hym a grete amendys. This nyght was them appoynted at whiche tyme this courtyer came at his howse & entred into the chaumber set his two handsworde downe & sayde these wordes. Stand thou there thou sworde the deth of .iii. men. ¶ This husbände lyege vnder y<sup>e</sup> bed in harnes heryng these wordes lay styl for fere. The courtyer anone gat hym to bed with the wyfe aboute his prepenlyd besynes / and within an houre or .ii. the husbände beyng wery of lyege began to remoue hym / the courtyer that herynge askyd the wyfe what thyng that was y<sup>e</sup> remouyd vnder y<sup>e</sup> bed / whiche excusyng y<sup>e</sup> matter sayde it was a lytell shepe that was wonte dayly to go about the hous & the husbände y<sup>e</sup> herynge anone cryed ble as it had ben a shepe. ¶ And so incōclusyon when y<sup>e</sup> courtyer saw his tyme he rose & kyssed the wyfe & toke his leue & departyd. And as soone as he was gone the husbände arose / & when the wyfe lokyd on hym somwhat a bashyd she began to make a sad cōtēnaunce & sayde Alas syr why dyd ye not crye & play the man as ye sayde ye wolde / whiche answerde and sayde why dame dydest thou not here hym say that his sworde had ben the deth of .iii. men / & I had ben a fole than yf y<sup>e</sup> I had put my selfe in ieopardy to haue ben the fourth. Then sayd the wyfe thus / but syr spake not I wysely then when I sayd ye were a shepe / yes quod y<sup>e</sup> husbände. But than dyd not I more wysely dame when that I cryed ble.

¶ By this ye maye se that he is not wyse that wyll put his confydens to moche vpon these grete crakers whiche of tymes wyll do but lytell when it comyth to the poynt.

¶ There was a shomaker syttinge in his shop y<sup>e</sup> sawe a colyer come by thought to deryde hym bycause he was so blacke / askyd hym what thydynges were in hell and howe the deuyl fared. To whome the colyer sayde / the deuyl fared well when I sawe hym last for he was rydyng for the and tarped but for a sowter to pluk on his botis.

¶ By this ye maye se that he that blyth to deryde other folkys is somtyme hymselfe more derydyd and mokkyd.

**I**fynde wytt amonge olde gestys how god made saynte peter porter of heuen / and that god of his goodnes soone after his passyon suffred many men to come to the kyngdome of heuen with small deseruyng / at whiche tyme there was in heuen a grete company of welchmen / whiche with thyrz krakynge & bablynge trobelyd all the other: wherfore god sayd to saynt peter þ he was wery of them / & that he wolde sayne haue them out of heuen. To whom: saynt Peter sayde good lord I warrant you þ þalbe shortly done wherfore saynt peter went out of heuen gatys & cryed w a loude voyce Cause bove / þ is as moche to say as rotyd chele / whiche thyng þ welchmen heryng ran out of heuen a gret pace. And when saynt Peter sawe them al out he sodenly went in to heuen and lokkyd the doze and so sparryd all the welchmen out.

**¶** By this ye may se that it is no wyldome for a man to loue oz to set his mynde to moche vpon ony delycate oz worldly pleasure wherby he shall lose the celestyall & eternall Joye.

**T**wo knyghtes there were whiche went to a stondyng felde w thyrz pryce. But one of them was cofessyd befoze he went / but the other wēt in to þ felde wout shryft oz repētaūce / afterward this pryce wā þ feld & had þ bycroze þ day / wherfore he þ was cofessyd came to þ pryce & askyd an offyce & sayd he had deseruyd it for he had don good seruyce & aduentured that day as far as ony man in þ felde / to whō the other þ was hncofessyd answeryd and sayd nay by the mas I am more worthy to haue a rewarde than he / for he aduenturyd but his body for your sake for he durst not go to þ felde tyl he was cofessyd / but as for me I dyd iupd both body lyfe & soule for your sake / for I went to the felde without cofessyon oz repētaūce.

**A**Certayn mylner ther was which had dyuets pōdys of elis wher was good store of elys / wherfore þ pson of þ town which lokyd like ā holy mā dyuets & many tymis stale many of thē in so moch þ he had left few oz none behind him / wherfore this milner seyng his elis stolyn & wilt not by whō cam to þ sayd pson & desirid hym to curse for thē þ pson sayd he wolde & þ next soday cā in to þ pulpet w book bell & cādell & pceuyng there were none in þ chirche þ bnderstode latyn sayd thus / he þ stale þ milners elis laudate dñm de celis but he þ stale þ gret elis gaudeat ipse in celis / ther w put out þ candell who syz quod þ mylner no more for this sauce is sharp ynough for hym.

**¶** By this ye may se that some curatys that loke full holyly be but desemblers & pproctis.

**A**welchmā on a tyme went to chirche to here mas whiche hapenyd to come in euyng at þ factyng tyme when he had hard þ mas to þ ende he wēt home wher one of his felowes askyd hym whether he had sene god almighty to day which āswerd & sayd nay but I saw one r. s. better thā he

**¶** By this ye maye se that they be euyl brought vp haue but lytyll deuocyon to pray and vertew:



**U**pon a tyme certayn women in the countrey were appoynted to de-  
ryde and mokke a frere a lymptour that vsyd moche to bysyt them  
wherupon one of them a lityll before that the frere came kyled an hog  
for dysport seyde it vnder the boorde after the maner of a cozle and tolde the  
frere it was her good mā and desyred hym to say dirige for his soule wher-  
fore the frere and his felaw began Placebo and Dirige and so forth sayd  
the scruple full deuotoly which the wyues so heryng/ coude not restayne  
them selfe from lawghynge and wente in to a lityll parler to lawgh mo-  
re at theyr pleasure. These frerys somewhat suspected the cause and quykly  
oz that y women were ware lokyd vnder the boorde and spyed that it was  
an hog / sodenly toke it bytwene them and bare it homeward as fast they  
myght. The women seyng that ran after the frere and cryed come agayn  
mayster frere come agayne and let it allone / nay by my fayth quod y frere  
he is a bzoder of oures and therfore he must nedys be buryed in oure cloy-  
ster / and so the frerys gate the hog.

¶ By this ye may se that they that vse to deryde and mok other some-  
tyme it toznyth to theyr one losse and damage.

**A** Certayne prest there was that dwellyd in y countrey which was  
not very letnyd. Therefore on Ester eyn he set his boy to y prest  
of the next town y was, ii. myle from thens to know what masse  
he sholde syng on y morowe. This boy came to the sayd prest and dyd his  
maysters errāde to hym. Then quod the prest tel thy mayster that he must  
syng to morow of the resurrexion / and furthermore quod he yf thou hap  
to forget it tel thy mayster that it begynneth w a gret R. and shewed hym  
the masse booke where it was wyzten Resurrexi. ac. This boy than wente  
home agayne and all the way as he went he clateryd styll. Resurrexi Re-  
surrexi / but at y last he hapenyd to forget it clene and whē he came home  
his mayster askyd hym what masse he sholde syng on y morowe. By my  
troth mayster quod the boy I haue forgotten it / but he bad me tell you it be-  
gā w a gret. R. By god quod the prest I trowe thou sayest trewth for now  
I remember well it muste be requiem eternam / for god almyghty dyed as  
on yester day & now we must say masse for his soule.

¶ By this ye may se that when one sole sendyth another sole on his er-  
rand oftentimes the besynes is folyshly spede.

**A** Skoler of Drenford whiche had studyed y iudycials of astrono-  
my o a tyme was rydyng by y way which cā by a herd mā & inqy-  
red of hym how far it was to y next town / syz qd y herd mā ye ha-  
ue notthyd past a myle & a half / but syz qd he ye nede to ryde a pace for ye  
shal haue a shour of rayn / ye cōe thyder / what qd y skoler y is not so for he  
re is no token of rayn for all y cloudys be both fayr & clere / by god syz qd y

herd mā but ye shall fynd it so. The skoler then rode forth his way & oz he had ryden half a myle forth ther there fel a good showre of rayn that the skoler was well wasshyd and wete to þ skyn / þ skoler then tournyd his horse and rode agayne to the herdman & desyred hym to teche hym that connyng nay quod þ herdman I wyll not teche you my connyng for nought / thā the skoler profferyd hym .xl. shyllingys to teche hym that connyng / the herdman after he had receyued his money sayde thus. Syr se you not yōder dun a kow with the whyte face / yes quod the skoler. Suerly quod þ herdman whē she daūlyth and holdyth bp her tayle it shal haue a showre of rayne within halfe an howre after.

¶ By this ye may se þ the connyng of herdman & shepardes as touchyng alteracyōs of weders is moze sure than þ iudyciallys of Astronomy.

**I**n a certayn town ther was a ryche man that lay on his deeth bed at poynte of deeth whiche chargyd his executours to dele for his soule a certayn some of money in pence & on this condicyon chargyd them as þ wolde answere afoze. God that euery poze man that came to them & tolde a trewe tale sholde haue a peny & they that sayd a fals thynge sholde haue none / & in the dole tyme there came one whiche sayd þ god was a good man / quod þ executours thou shalt haue a peny for thou sayste trouth. A none came another & said þ deuyl was a good man quod the executours there thou lyest therfoze thou shalt haue nere a peny. At last came one to þ executours & sayd thus / ye shall gyue me nere a peny / which woordys made the executours amalyd and toke aduysment whether they shold gyue hym the peny oz no.

¶ By this ye may se it is wysdome for Juggys in deutefull matters of law to beware of hasty iugement.

**A** mā askyd his neybour which was but late maryed to a wydow how he agreyd with his wyfe for he sayd þ her fyrst husband and she could neuer agre by god quod þ other we agre meruelous wel I pray þ how so / mary quod þ other I shall tell þ / when I am mery she is mery / & when I am sad she is sad / for whē I go out of my dooris I am mery to go from her & so is she / & when I come in agayne I am sad & so is she.

**I**n þ tyme of bylytacyō a bysshop whiche was somewhat lecherous & had got many chylterne preparyd to come to a prestes house to se what rule he kept whiche prest had a lemā in his house called Ede & by her had .ii. oz .iii. smale chyldre in short space / but agayn þ bysshop connyng þ prest sparyd arome to hyde his lemā & his chyldre ouer in þ rose of his hall / & whē þ bysshop was come & set at dyner in þ same hal haunyng .c. of his owne chyldre about hym this prest whiche could speke lytell latyn oz none bad the bysshop in latyn to ete saynge Comede episcope. This womā in the rose of the house hecyng the prest say so had wente he had callyd her

byddynge her com Edee & answered shortly & sayd Mall I bynge my chyld  
 ren w me also. This byllhop herynge this broz tua sicut vitis abundans  
 in lateribus domus tue. The pzeest the half amalydan woeryd shortly and  
 sayd Filii tui sicut nouelle olyuarum in circuitu menle tue.

By this ye may se that they that haue but small lernynge somtyme spe  
 ke truely vraduylid.

**O** As the wedny day in y mozynge was a curat of a chyrch whiche  
 had made good chere the nyght afore & sytten vp late & came to y  
 chyrche to here cofessyn to whom there came a woman/ and amo  
 ge other thynngys she cofessyd her that she had stolyn a pot. But than becau  
 se of grete watche that this pzeest had/ he there sodenly felle a slepe/ and  
 whē this woman sawe hym not wyllng to here her she rose vp & wēt her  
 way/ & anone an other woman kneled downe to the same prest & began to  
 say benedicite wherewith this pzeest sodenly wakyd wenyng she had ben  
 the other woma & sayd al angerly/ what art thou now at benedicite agay  
 ne tell me what dydest thou when thou hadst stolyn the pot.

**S** One after one mayster whyttintō had byldeed a colege on a nyght  
 as he slept he dzempd that he sad in his church & many folkys ther  
 also/ & further he dzempd y he sawe our lady in the same chyrch w a glas  
 of goodly oyntement in her hand goynge to one askyng hym what he had  
 done for her sake/ whiche sayd that he had sayd our ladys sauter every day  
 wherfoze she gaue hym a lytyll of the oyle. And anone se went to another  
 askyng hym what he had done for her sake whiche sayd that he had sayd. If  
 ladys sauters every day/ wherfoze our lady gaue hym more of y oyntement  
 than she gaue y other. This mayster whyttentō then thought that when  
 our le dy sholde come to hym she wolde gyue hym all the hole glas bycause  
 y he had byldeed such a gret colege & was very glad in his mynd. But whē  
 our lady cam to hym she asked hym what he had suffred for her sake/ which  
 wordys made hym gretly aballyd bycause he had nothyng to say for hym  
 selfe/ & so he dzempd that for all the gret dede of byldyng of y sayd Colege  
 he had no parte of y goodly oyntement.

By this ye may se that to suffer for goddys sake is more mercyfous than to gyue gret goodys.

**A** Certayne byllhop appoynted to go on bylytacyon to a pzeests hous  
 and bycause he wolde haue the pzeest do but lytell cost vpon hym he  
 bad hym dzesse but lytyl mete sayng thus in latyn. *Preparas mihi modicum*  
 This prest whiche vnderstode hym not halfe wel had a hore called modicum  
 wherfoze he thought to obtayne the byllhops fauour & agaynst y byllhops  
 conyng kplied his hore that was called modicum wherof the byllhop & his  
 seruantes etc pt which whē y byllhop knewe afterward was gretly displeid

By this ye may se that many a sole doth moche cost whiche hath but  
 lytyl chaak for his labour.

**A** Certayne maltman of colbroke whiche was a very conetous  
wozeché and had no pleasure but onely to get money came to Lon  
don to sell his malt and broughte with hym. iiii. capons & there  
reseyuyd. iiii. oz. v. ff. for malte and put it in a lycell purs tyed to his cote  
and after wente aboute the strettyes to sell his capons whom a pollyng fe  
lowe that was a dyer and an ynthyft had espyed and Imagyned how  
he myght begyle the man other of his capons oz of his money and came to  
this maltman in the street berryng these capons in his hande and askyd  
hym how he wolde sell his capons and when he had shewyd hym the pryse  
of them he bad hym go with hym to his mayster and he wolde shew them  
to his mayster and he wolde tauke hym to haue money for them whetto he  
agreed. This poler wente to the cardynalls hat in lombardys strete &  
when he came to the doze he toke the capons from the maltman and bad  
hym tary at the doze tyll he had shewed his mayster and he wolde come  
agayn to hym and bynge hym his money for them. This poler when he  
had gotten the capons wente in to the house and wente thowre the other  
bak entre in to Cornhyll and soo toke the capons with hym / and when  
this maltman had stond there a good sealon he askid one of the tauerners  
where the man was that had the Capons to shewe to his mayster / mary  
quod the tauerner I can not tell the here is nother mayster noz man in  
this house for this entre here is a comen hye way and gooth in to cornhyll  
I am sure he is gone a weye with thy capos. This maltman berryng that  
ran thowre the entre in to cornhyll and asayd for a felowe in a tawny cote  
that had capons in his hand. But no man coude tell hym whiche waye he  
was gone and soo the maltman losse his capons and after wente in to his  
Inne all heuy and sade and toke his horse to the tent to ryde home.  
This poler by that tyme had chaungyd his rayment and bozowyd a fur  
ryd gowne and came to the maltman syttyng on horseback and sayd thus  
good man me thought I harde the inquire euyn now for one in a tawny co  
te that had stolyn from the. iiii. capos yf thou wylt gyue me a quart of wy  
ne go with me and I shall bynge y to a place where he syttyth drynkynng  
with other felowes & had y capons in his hande. This maltman berryng  
glad therof graūtyd hym to gyue hym the wyne by cause he semyd to be an  
honest man / and went w hym vnto the dagger in chepe. This poler then  
sayd to hym go thy way streyght to the end of y long entre & there thou shalt  
se whether it be he oz no & I wyl holde thy horse here tyll thou come agayn  
This maltman thynkyng to fynde the felow with his capos wēt in & left  
his horse with the other at the doze. And as soone as he was gon in to the  
house this poler lad the horse awaye in to his owne lodgyng. This malt  
man inqueryd in the house for his felowe with the capons but no man

coude tell hym no tydyngys of suche man / wherfoze he came agayne to þe  
 doze all sad & lokyd for hym þe had his hozs to kepe / & bycause he sawe hym  
 not he askyd dyuers there for hym / & some sayd they sawe hym & some sayde  
 they sawe hym not / but no man coude tell whiche waye he was gone wher  
 foze he wente home to his Anne more sad thā he was befoze / wherfoze his  
 host gaue hym coucell to get hym home & beware howe he trustyd any men  
 in londo. ¶ This maltman seynge none other cōfort went his hy way home  
 warde. ¶ This poller which lyngetyd alway there aboute the Anne hard  
 tell that the maltman was goyng homewarde a fote apparelyd hym lyke  
 a manny's pzentysle & gat a lytell boget stuffyd full of stones on his bake &  
 wente befoze hym to charynge crosse & tarped tyll þe maltman came / & as  
 kyd hym whether he wente whiche sayd to Colbroke. Mary quod þe other  
 I am glad therof for I must goo to braynforde to my mayster to bere hym  
 money which I haue in my boget & I wolde be glad of cōpany. ¶ This malt  
 man bycaule of his owne money was glad of his cōpany / & so they agreed  
 & wente togyder a whyle. At the last this poller went somewhat befoze to  
 a nyghtbrygge & sat vpon þe brydge & restyd hym with his boget on his bak /  
 & when he sawe þe maltmā almost at hym he let his boget fall ouer þe brydge  
 in to þe water. & incontynent start vp & sayd to þe maltman alas I haue let  
 my boget fal in to þe water / & there is .xl. li. of money therin / yf thou wylt  
 wade in to þe water & go seke it & get it me agayne I shall gyue þe .xii. pence  
 for thy labour / this maltman haunynge pyte of his losse & also glad to get  
 the .xii. pence plukyde of his hole cote & shyrt & wadyd into þe water to seke  
 for the boget. And in þe mene whyle this poller gote his clothys & cote wher  
 so the purs of money was tyde & lepte ouer the hedge & wente to westmyn  
 ster. ¶ This maltman within a whyle after with grete payne & depe was  
 dynged founde þe boget & came out of the water & sawe not his felowe there  
 & sawe that his clothys & money were not there as he left them suspectyd þe  
 mater and openyd the boget and than founde nothyng therin but stonys  
 cryed out lyke a mad man and ran all nakyd to london agayne and sayde  
 alas alas helpe oz I shall be stolen. For my capons be stolen. My hozs is  
 stolen. My money and clothys be stolen and I shall be stolen myself. And  
 so ran aboute the streys in london nakyd & mad cryenge alway I shall be  
 stole. I shall be stolen. And so contynuyd mad durynge his lyfe & so dyed  
 lyke a wretche to the vtter dysturccyon of hymselfe & shame to all his kyn.

¶ By this ye may se that many a couetouse wretche þe louyd his good bet  
 ter than god and lettyth his mynde unordynatly thereon by the ryghte  
 iugment of god of tymes comyth to a myserable and shamfull ende.

**A** welchman dwellynge in englonde fortunēd to stele an englyssh mans cok & sette it on þe fyre to leth wherfoze this englysshman suspectyng þe welchmā cam in to his housle & saue þe cok setyng on þe fyre & sayd to þe welchmā thus. Syr this is my cok. Hary qd þe welchmā & yf it be thyne þe shalt haue thy parte of it / nay quod þe englysshmā þe is not ynough. By cottes blut & her nayle quod þe welchmā yf her be not ynough now her wyll be ynough anone for her hath a good fyre vnder her.

**C**ertayne of þe bycats of poulys dyspold to be mercy on a sondaye at hys masse tyme sent another mad felowe of theyr accoyntaūce vnto a folyshe dronken preste to gyue hym a botell / whiche man met with the preste vpon the top of þe starys by þe chaūcell doze & spake to hym & sayde thus. Syr my mayster hath send you a botel to put your dzyrke in bycause ye can kepe none in your bzaynes. This preste therwith beyng very angry all sodenly toke the botell & with his fote flange it downe in to þe body of the chyrche vpon the gentylmens hedes:

**A** Certayne Jury in the counte of Wyddesser was inpaneld for þe kyng to inquere of all indytementes murders & felonyes. The perions of this panel were folyshe couetous & vnlearned / for who so euer wolde gyue thē a grote they wolde assyne & verfy þe byll whether it were true or fals wout any other profe or euidence / wherfoze one þe was a mercy cōceptyd felowe perceyuyng theyr smale cōcyence & grette couetousnes put in a byll intyuled after this maner. Inquira tur pro dño regi si Iesus nazarenus furatus est vnū asinū ad equitandum in egiptū / & gaue thē a grote & despyed þe it myght be verfyed. The sayd Jury whiche looked all on þe grotz & nothyng on þe byll as was theyr vble wote billa vera on þe bak therof whiche byll when it was presentyd into þe court whē þe Jugs looked theron they sayd opely before all þe people lo syz here is þe merueloust verdyt þe euer was presentyd by any inquest for here they haue indyted Iesus of Nazareth for stelyng of an asse whiche whē þe people hard it / it made thē both to laugh & to wōder at þe folysshnes & shāful piuri of thē of þe equeste.

By this ye may se it is grette parell to enpanell any iurroous vpon any equest whiche be folyssh & haue but small concyence.

**I**n a certayn paryshe a frere prechyd / and in his sermon he rebuked them þe rode on þe sonday / euer lokyng vpon one man þe was botyd & scurryd redy to ryde. This man perceyuyng þe all þe people notyt hym sodenly half in anger answerde þe frere thus / why prechyst þe so moche agaynst them þe ryde on þe sonday for cryst hymselfe dyde ryde on palme soday / as thou knowyst well it is wyrtē in holy scrypture. To whō þe frere sodely answerd & sayd thus / but I pray þe what cā therof was he not hāgid on þe fryday after which heryng all þe people in þe church fell on laughyng

**T**here was a certayne man that had two sonnys vnlyke of condycy  
 ons. For the eldyt was lusty and quyk and vsyd moche to ryse erly  
 and walke in to the feldys/ than was the yonger slowe and vnlusty and  
 vsyd to lye in bed as longe as he myght. So on a daye the elder as he was  
 wonte to se erly and walkyd in to the feldys and there by fortune he foun  
 de a purs of money and brought it home to his fader. His fader when  
 he had it wente streyght to his other sone yet lyenge then in his bed & sayd  
 to hym. **T**hou slogarde quod he seyft thou not thyne elder broder how he  
 by his erly ryfing had found a purs with money whereby we shalbe grete  
 ly holpen all oure lyfe/ whyle thou sluggynge in thy bed dost no good but  
 slepe. He then wylt not what to sey but answeryd shortly and sayd fader  
 quod he ys he that hath lost the purs and money had lyne in his bed that sa  
 me tyme that he lost it as I do now my broder had founde no purs noz mo  
 ney to daye.

**B**y this ye may se that they that be accusomyd in vyce and syn  
 wyl alway fynd one excuse oz other to cloke there with theyr vyce  
 and vnthyfynes.

**A** Certayn wyfe there was whiche was somwhat fayze and as all  
 women be y be y fayze was somwhat proude of her bewoty/ & as  
 she and her mayd sat togeder she as one that was desyrous to be  
 preyfyd sayd to her thus. I sayth Ione how tynkyst thou am I not a fayze  
 wyfe/ yes by my trowth maystres quod she ye be the fayzest that euer was  
 except our lady/ why by Cryst quod y maystres though our lady were good  
 yet she was not so fayze as men speke of.

**B**y this ye may se it is harde to fynde a bewotyouse woman with  
 out pryde.

**A** Certayne alderman of London there was lately dysceased whi  
 che now shall be nameles whiche was very couetouse as well  
 before he was maryed as after/ for when he was bacheler euer  
 when his hoisen were broken so that he coude were them no longer for  
 shame then wolde he cutte them of by the knee and putte on a payze of  
 ledder buskyns on his bare leggys whiche wolde laste hym a two oz thre  
 yere. Furthermore it was his maner when he was a bacheler euer  
 nyght where that he was to boxtowe a randels ende to brynge hym home

whiche he wolde alway put in a chest that he had at his chamber. So that  
 by that tyme he was maryed / he had a chesse of candels endis that wayd  
 two or thre hondred weyghte. ¶ Some after that he was maryed to a wyf  
 the wydowe and than folkys thought he wolde be better than he was be-  
 fore. But so it happenyd that a gentyman gaue hym a pasty of an harte  
 whiche every day he caused to be sette on the table for securyce / howbeit he  
 wolde neuer for nygynshyp let it be openyd / so that it was a moneth or  
 vi. wekys or ever it was touched. At whiche tyme it fortunyd a man of his  
 accouetaunce beyng there often and seyng this pasty neuer to be ope-  
 nyd sayde syz by my trowth I wyll tame your pasty / whiche openyd þe pa-  
 sty and incontynent lepte out. iii. or. iiij. myce vpon other gentylmens tre  
 showys whiche had crept in at an hole vnderneche the bottam and hadde  
 etyn by all the mete therin. Also this alderman was of suche condycyon þe  
 he wolde here. ii. or. iii. massys every daye / and whan any pore folke came  
 to begge of hym he wolde rebuke them and say that they dyde lette hym in  
 helyng of them so that he wolde neuer gyue peny in almys. And on a tyme  
 as he sat at saynt Thomas of Acres helyng masse he sawe a yonge begyn-  
 ner a dettour of his that owoyd hym. xx. li. whiche as sone as he sawe hym  
 he commaunded one of his seruauntes to get a sergvaunt & to arest hym  
 whiche yonge man immediatly after was arestyd / and whan he was in  
 the counter he desyred dyuers of his frendys to intrete with this Alderma-  
 for dayes of payment whiche men in the moztynge after came to this Al-  
 derman knelyng at masse & inteteyd hym for this man desyryng hym to  
 take dayes of paymēt whiche answered them thus. I praye you trouble me  
 not now for I haue harde one masse all redy & I wyll here an other or I  
 medle with worldly matters. But yf ye haue the money here I wyll take  
 thz now or elles I praye you speke to me no more / and so these men coude  
 get no other answer. And this Alderman kept this yonge man styll in pry-  
 son tyll at the laste he there dyed. And so he causyd lyke wyse dyuers other  
 to dye in pryson and wolde neuer forgyue them / wherfoze afterward this  
 alderman dyed sodenly wherfoze dyuers & many were glad of his deth.

**A** Nozthen man there was whiche wente to seke hym a securyce.  
 So it happenyd that he came to a lordys place whiche lord than  
 had war w another lord. This lord thā askyd this nozthē mā yf  
 he durst fyght / ye by godd? bys god þe nozthē mā þe I dare for I is al hart



wherupon the lord retayned hym in to his seruyce. So after it happenyd  
 þ this lord sholde go fyght with his enemyes w whom also wēt this noz  
 thēman which shortly was smytē in þ hele w an arrow wherfoze he incō  
 rnyctly fell downe almost dede wherfoze one of his felawys sayd art thou  
 he þ art all hart and for so lypyll a stroke in the hele now art almost dede.  
 To whom he answeryd & sayd by goddes sale I is hard hed/leggys/ body  
 helps & all/ therfoze ought not one to fete when he is itryken in þ hart.

**I**f a certayn towne there was a wyfe somwhat agyd that had be  
 ryed her husband whose name was callyd Johā/whom she loued  
 so tenderly in his lyfe that after his deth she causyd an ymage of  
 tymber to be made in bylage and perlon as ly<sup>e</sup> to hym as coude be/whi  
 che ymage all day longe lay vnder her bed and every nyght she causyd her  
 mayde to wzap it in a shete & lay it in her bed & callyd it olde Johā. This  
 wyfe also had a p̄tyle whose name was Johā/which Johā wolde saynt  
 haue weddyd his maystres not for no grete pleasur but onely for her good  
 bycause she was ryth/wherfoz he imaginyd how he might obtayn his pur  
 pose & spake to þ mayde of þ hous & delyzd her to lay hym in his maystres  
 bed for one nyght in stede of the pycture/ & promysed her a rewarde for her  
 labour/ which mayd ouer nyght wzappyd þ sayd p̄og mā in a shete & layd  
 hym in his maystres bed as she was wōt to lay þ pycture. ¶ This wydow  
 was wōt every nyght before she slept & dyuers tymes whē she wakyd to  
 kys the sayd pycture of olde Johā/wherfoze þ sayd nyght she kysyd þ sayd  
 yong mā beleuyng that she had kyst þ pycture/ & he sodely start & toke her  
 in his armys and so well plesed her then/ that olde Johā from thēs forth  
 was clene out of her mynde & was cōtent þ this yong Johā sholde lye w  
 her styl all þ nyght & þ the pycture of olde Johā sholde lye styl vnder þ bed  
 for a thyng of nought. After this in þ moznyng this wydow intendyng  
 to plese this p̄og Johā which had made her so good pastyme all the nyght  
 had her mayd go dzesse some good mete for theyz bzekfast to fest therwith  
 her p̄og Johā. this mayd whā she had lōge sought for wood to dzes þ sayd  
 mete toid her mastres þ she coude fynd no wood þ was dyy except onely þ pic  
 ture of olde Johā þ lye th vnder þ bed/ thē qd þ wyf agayn/ fath hym down  
 & lay hym on þ fyze for I se well he wyll neuer dome good noz he wyll ne  
 uer do better seruyce though I kepe hym neuer so longe. So the mayd by  
 her cōmaudemēt fet the pycture of olde Johā frō vnder þ bed & therwith  
 made good fyze & dzesid þ bzekfast/ & so olde Johā was cast out for nought  
 & dzent & from thēs forth yong Johā occupped his place.

¶ By this tale ye may se it is no wysdome for a mā to kepe longe oꝝ to  
 chyrpye that thyng þ is able to do no pleasure noz seruyce.

¶ Finis.

**Thus** endeth the booke of a. C. mery  
 talys. Empryntyd at London at the sygne of  
 the Maymayd At Bowlyps gate next  
 to chepe syde. The yere  
 of our Lorde. M. D. C.  
 .xxvi. The .xvii.  
 day of Nouēber.



**Cum** privilegio  
 Regali.



















